As we proceed into Manchuria the country gradually changes and becomes less fertile, with bare hills and mountains. It is, however, a fine grazing country and large herds of cattle are seen driven by the Buriats from southern China for the summer feeding. Approaching Harbin a flat country is reached, very like our Dakotas. The soil is black and appears to be very fertile. Adjacent to the railway much of the land is under cultivation by the Chinese population and large crops of soya beans, sorghum, etc. are raised. General cultivation is, however, retarded by the lack of wagon roads. I was much interested in noting the character of this country, as I had gathered the impression that Manchuria was an inhospitable waste, uninhabited and too cold for farming operations. Contrary to this, the fact is that an enormous area, probably five hundred miles square, from Mukden north, is of the finest agricultural character and already under cultivation, where it can be reached by roads or water transportation. It is true, however, that we are not far from the Great Gobi Desert, which lies to the south-west in Mongolia, but the entire southern portion of the Maritime province, extending to the sea and south into China, is a garden spot. The struggle between Russia and Japan to secure possession of this rich territory is, therefore, explicable. As matters at present stand, Japan has, by reason of the Russo-Japanese War, through mining and trade concessions, the possession of the entire Liaotung peninsula, with the harbors of Port Arthur and Dalny (Darien), the Railway to Chang-Chun, one hundred and fifty miles from Harbin and a large part of the Kirin province.

Here I might digress to explain the transportation situation in Manchuria. The plans of the Trans-Siberian Railway first contemplated a