

FROM THE INDIAN FORESTER - ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

AUGUST 1925 (Pages 404-406)

SILVICULTURAL NOTES SAL COPPICE AND BURNING

An area in the Western Dun in the Dehra Dun Forest Division was felled over in 1923-24 with only about twenty *sal* trees per acre left for shelter. In the cold weather of 1924-25 all the advance growth, saplings and poles up to 8" diameter were cut back at from 3 to 6 inches above ground-level. This work was begun in the middle of November and proceeded methodically throughout the compartment finishing early in March. The area was burnt, with a good clean, but not too severe, fire, on March 15th-16th. The area was carefully inspected on April 28th, *i.e.* exactly six weeks after the burning. The area was then completely stocked with strong *sal* shoots with on average height of about two feet, many shoots were over three feet and one was measured just over four feet in height. Previous to the felling in addition to the overwood the area was fairly well stocked with *sal* seedlings in the "whippy" stage, misshapen "woody stock growth" three to four feet high and about as thick as man's finger, small poles and saplings.

The development of the shoots from material in different stages was as follows:-

- (1) Older seedlings which were in the "whippy" stage have given fairly strong shoots up to 1½' and in some cases 2' in height.
- (2) The misshapen "woody advance growth" has given shoots of an average height of 3' with one measured just over 4'.
- (3) Saplings and small poles up to 6" diameter, shoots up to 1½' with an average of about 1' in height.
- (4) Large poles-up to six weeks after the burning no shoots at all or only just beginning to appear.

Other points of interest are:-

- (1) There is absolutely no difference whatever in the development of the shoots in the areas cut back in November-December or those in February and early March.
- (2) In all cases where the burning has been clean the shoots have appeared from below ground-level.

Although the burning was clean, there are a few small patches which escaped burning either where there was nothing to burn or on cart tracks, etc. The general development of the shoots in these unburnt patches is very little, if any, behind that of the burnt areas.

However where the advance growth, which often has a gnarled swollen collar, was cut back a little too high, shoots, in the unburnt areas, have invariably appeared from above ground-level, and cannot therefore develop into good trees.

W.A. BAILEY, I.F.S.,
Dehra Dun Division.