

I have been South, I have said as little as I could in a public way, and that for several reasons. For one thing, there was an official policy which one would not care to counter unnecessarily; comity to state foresters holding similar views was another element in the case; then what one might say stood a good chance of being misunderstood or distorted when it got out into the country, with disastrous results. Finally here is an idea that is worth thinking about—that the answer to a problem of this sort may not be uniform always, but one thing in one set of circumstances and another in another.

Let me next state what has been my idea all along since I got my feet planted in that country. Not going into details for justification it is broadly this—that there is a field in those forests for the use of fire for both protection and silvicultural purposes, that there probably always will be no matter how high we may carry our management, that the practical present day question is a matter not so much of what is most desirable in the ideal sense as it is of doing the most practicable thing in the specific circumstances—natural factors, relation to population and means at command all considered. Looked at that way, the true answer for the owner of property of this kind is often much simpler than it would be to figure out the elements in the case from the technical standpoint. It is such practical situations with which I have dealt, for myself and associates as well as officially.

Mr. Hardtner referred to the fires of last April in south Georgia, and for the sake of the light it throws on the question as a whole I also will note some features. The 17,000 acre fire he speaks of started at noon one day and ran 13 miles before nightfall. That as he notes was on land long protected with a rank growth of grass and bushes. Weather conditions were as bad as could be; the

growth was largely slash pine, not longleaf, and very much of it young timber less than 30 feet in height. The growth on the area was not totally destroyed however. I was over the ground recently and my estimate is that on the acreage covered about a third of the timber, young and old, was killed. That was bad enough of course; the owner was converted thereby to a policy of protective burning, partial however, and in connection with the protective measures.

The same with other owners involved in the fires and other timber land owners in general in that territory. Having slash pine to deal with mostly, they know that for some years after it starts fire must be excluded from it. That stage passed, however, protection burning seems more and more desirable to them. Not uniformly, however. In the very southeast county of Georgia is a good sized property owned by a creosoting company of Brunswick. After my cruise of the burns referred to I went to see them to hear what they had concluded, what their policy would be thence forward. They said they meant to go as they had been going as far as possible excluding fires. That is a strong concern provided with equipment and well organized; a poor man couldn't possibly equip himself in any such way. The Superior Pine Products Company I have already referred to as following the same policy. Then over in southern Alabama is a big longleaf property successfully protected for around 15 years. The owners of that property, as far as I know, have no idea of changing their policy. Perhaps that is not correct; they would be willing to be shown no doubt. Other strong concerns, newer in the business are following their practice.

Let me note this fact—the wide differences in conditions in this big longleaf belt,—the extent to which other species mix with longleaf—shrub and grass growth vary vastly also. There is danger