

many it is not coal, since it contains wood in some parts or on burning gives a woody smell. It has less than 35% of carbon. In India little peat is available.



Fig. 10-2 Origin of coal from pre-historic forest environment (Imaginary picture)

- **Coal Producing Regions of India**—According to geological age two periods of coal is available in India—a) Gondwana Coal and b) Tertiary coal.

- **a) Gondwana coal**—Nearly 28 to 30 crore years ago, dense forests covered marshy river valleys of **Damodar, Mahanadi, Godavari, Wardha** etc. Slowly the huge trees were covered by soil in the marshy areas and the high temperature and pressure at these depths of the earth's crust converted them to coal. This is called **Gondwana age coal**. Gondwana coal was formed at the end of the Carboniferous period and early Permian period i.e. 28 to 30 crore years before. Most large coalfields in the world belong to this period—e.g. **Appalachian Coalfield** region in eastern USA. One metre thick layer of coal is formed when 100s of trees are buried one above another. The coal of Gondwana age is mostly 10 to 20 m. thick. Again, these thick layers of coal are not found in single layers but are found in successive layers.

- **Distribution of Gondwana Age Coal**—Nearly 90% of the coal mined annually in India belongs to the Gondwana Age. It is mainly found in—

1. **Damodar River Valley**—Main mines lie in Ranigunj and Asansol in W. B. ; Jharia, Bokaro, Karanpura, Giridih, Ramgarh, Daltonganj and Rajmahal in Jharkhand.
2. **Mahanadi Valley** in Orissa—Main mines lie in Talcher and Rampur.
3. **Mahanadi and Sone River Valleys** in Chattisgarh-M.P. region—Korba, Umaria, Singrauli, Tatapani, Kotma, Korba, Bishrampur,