



Palmettos on Smith's Island, N. C.

west winds. Hence it is comparatively easy to plant grasses and shrubbery in late winter or early spring and have them gain a firm footing and accomplish something of their growth before the strong winds come.

In January, 1886, the writer planted the seed of the loblolly pine on the back of a dune and covered the area with brush cut from a near-by road in process of making. The brush served not only to break the wind but to conserve the moisture of the sands, and today there is a forest of several acres where twenty years ago was a moving sand waste. The method so common abroad of building a barrier dune by means of wind breaks has been tried several times along this coast, but always without success.

The atmospheric humidity of Hatteras

Island is greater than that of any other station in the United States except in the Puget Sound region, and even there the excess over Hatteras is not great. Yet there are more days of sunshine on Hatteras than at Cape Henry, or Norfolk, or Wilmington. The heaviest rains come between late July and mid October, after the plants have done most of their growing for the year and when plants in many parts of the country are suffering greatly from the drouth.

The people of these islands are not the slothful bankers and rude wreckers pictured in song and story. They are fair women and brave men, most of whom live and do for others — life-savers, heroes. Their homes are comfortable and well kept; they attend regu-

larly upon the services of the church, and their children are in school for eight months of the year, for the inhabitants of Dare County have voted upon themselves a special tax for this purpose. The islanders have herds of small wild ponies and flocks of sheep and goats, as well as cattle, on some of these islands.

True, some primitive customs are preserved among them and some early English forms of speech. Their lodges used in fishing and hunting are built after the most primitive type of straw thatch, while a higher type, similar to that used in the village of Gabii in the days of Romulus and Remus, is used as a temporary residence during their camp meetings in the summer, and this higher type of dwelling is on Hatteras built of palmetto thatch.