

the islands are visited from time to time by immense numbers of migratory birds from that continent, especially during their great southern migration. Of these the American Golden Plover (*Charadrius marmoratus*) seems to visit Bermuda in the greatest numbers, but various other birds frequenting marshes—gallinules, rails, and snipes—arrive in no small quantities every year. These birds have possibly brought a good many plants to Bermuda, as seeds attached to their feet or feathers, or in their crops. Some of the most conspicuous of the present land birds of Bermuda, such as the “Red Bird,” or Cardinal, have been introduced for ornamental effect.

The birds most interesting to the naturalist encountering them for the first time,

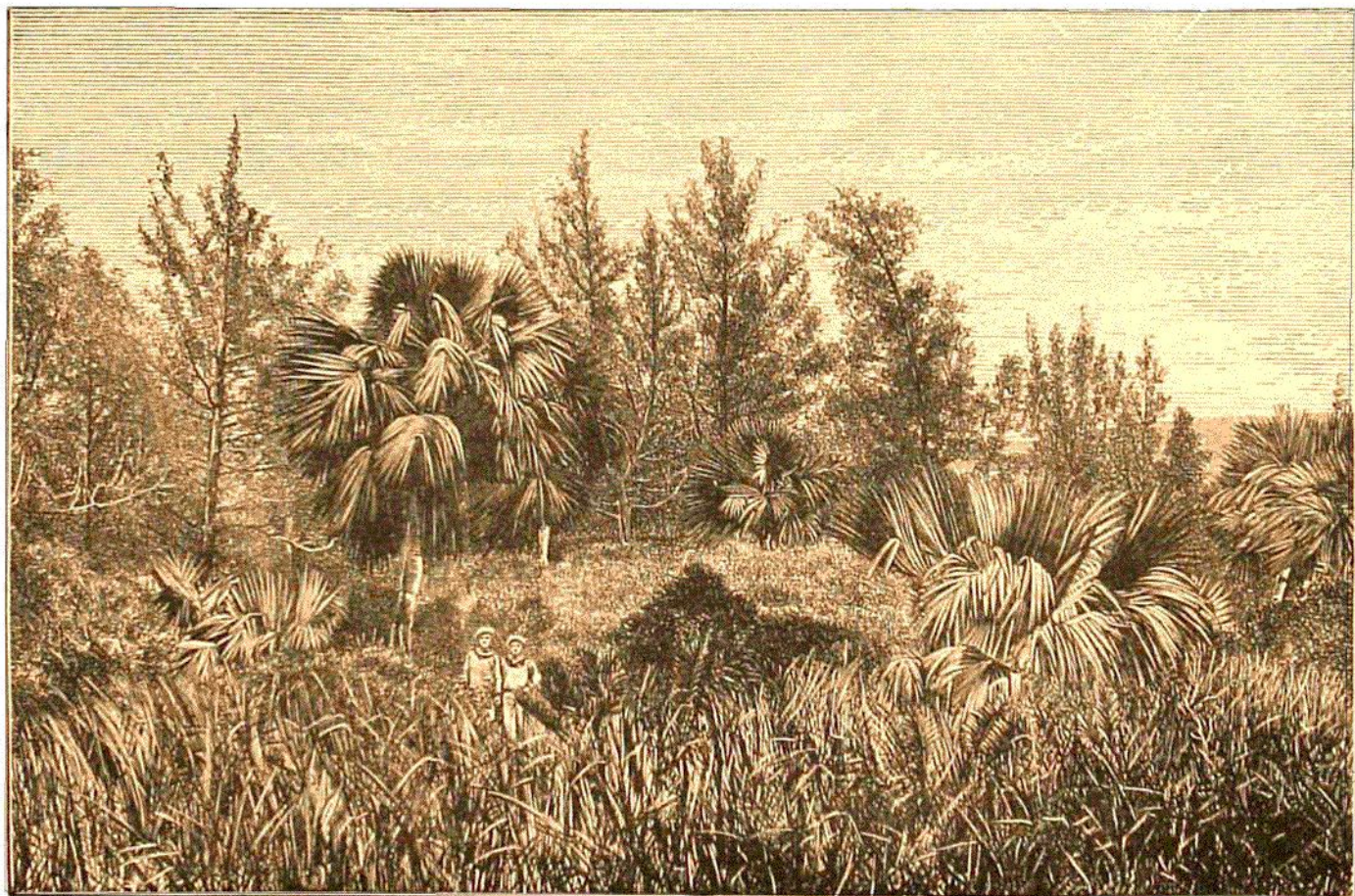


FIG. 53.—Natural Swamp-Vegetation, Bermuda. (From a Photograph.)

are the “Boatswain-birds” (*Phaëthon flavirostris*). They are white, a little smaller than the commonest English Gull, and shaped more like a Sea-swallow or Tern, though allied to the Gannets and Cormorants; in the tail are two long narrow feathers of a reddish tint, which, as the bird flies, are kept extended behind, and give it a curious appearance. The birds breed, more or less gregariously, in holes in the rock formed by the weathering out of softer layers; it is easy to secure them in the hole by clapping a cap over its mouth, when both male and female can often be caught together. It is, however, quite a different matter to get hold of them for skinning: their bills are very sharp and