According to the recitals in the oldest deeds for lands on Eagles' Island and in its vicinity on either side, the Northeast and the Northwest branches of the Cape Fear River come together at the southern point of that island. What is now called Brunswick River, on the west side of the island, was then the main River; and Wilmington was on the Northeast branch, and not on the main stream of the Cape Fear. That portion of the river which runs from the Northeast branch by Point Peter, or Negrohead Point, as it is called, to the Northwest branch at the head of Eagles' Island, is called in the old deeds and statutes of the State the "Thoroughfare," and sometimes the "Cut-through" from one branch to the other; and the land granted to John Maultsby, on which a part of Wilmington is situated, is described as lying opposite to the mouth of the "Thoroughfare." At another time, what is now known as Brunswick River was called Clarendon River.

THE CAPE FEAR INDIANS.

The tribal identity of the Cape Fear Indians has never been clearly established. We find Indian mounds, or tumuli, along the river and coast and in the midland counties, and we are told that the head waters of the Cape Fear River were known to our aborigines as "Sapona," a tribal name also known farther north, and that "King" Roger Moore exterminated these Indians at Big Sugar Loaf after they had raided Orton; but there is nothing in the mounds, where hundreds of skeletons are found, nor in the pottery and rude implements discovered therein, to identify the tribe or prove the comparatively unsupported statements which we have hitherto accepted as facts. Capt. S. A. Ashe says: "The Cape Fear Indians along the coast were Southern. The Saponas who resided higher up were probably Northern. They were not exterminated by 'King' Roger; in fact, in 1790 there were still some in Granville, and a considerable number joined the Tuscaroras on the Tuscarora Reservation on the Roanoke. They were both Northern, probably, otherwise the Saponas would not have been welcome."

There is reason to believe the tradition, generally known to our older inhabitants, that the Indians from the back country came regularly in the early springtime to the coast of the Cape Fear for the seawater fish and oysters which were abundant, and that their preparation for these feasts included the copious

drinking of a strong decoction of yopon leaves, which produced free vomiting and purgation, before they gorged themselves to repletion with the fish and oysters.

The beautiful evergreen leaf and brilliant red berries of the yopon still abound along the river banks near the remains of the Indian camps. The leaves were extensively used as a substitute for tea, which was unobtainable during our four years' war, and the tea made from them was refreshing and tonic in its effects.

Dr. Francis P. Venable says: "It belongs to the *Ilex,* or holly genus. My first analysis was on a small sample from New Bern and showed 0.32 per cent caffeine. Securing a larger sample from near Wilmington, I found 0.27 per cent. The maté, or Paraguay tea, is also gotten from an *Ilex* and contains 0.63 per cent. The percentage of tannin in the yopon is rather high and I suppose has something to do with the medicinal effect."

Dr. Curtis, an eminent botanist of North Carolina, says: "*Yopon I. Cassine,* Linn. An elegant shrub ten to fifteen feet high, but sometimes rising to twenty or twenty-five feet. Its native place is near the water (salt) from Virginia southward, but never far in the interior. Its dark green leaves and bright red berries make it very ornamental in yards and shrubberies. The leaves are small, one-half to one inch long, very smooth and evenly scalloped on the edges, with small rounded teeth. In some sections of the lower district, especially in the region of the Dismal Swamp, these are annually dried and used for tea, which is, however, oppressively soporific—at least for one not accustomed to it."

Our yopon (the above) is the article from which the famous Black Drink of the Southern Indians was made. At a certain time of the year they came down in droves from a distance of several hundred miles to the coast for the leaves of this tree. They made a fire on the ground, and putting a great kettle of water on it, they threw in a large quantity of these leaves, and sitting around the fire, from a bowl holding about a pint, they began drinking large draughts, which in a short time caused them to vomit easily and freely. Thus they continued drinking and vomiting for a space of two or three days, until they had sufficiently cleansed themselves, and then, every one taking a bundle of the leaves, they all retired to their habitations.