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OFFICIAL PART.

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Sea-weed as a Manure.

M. Chapais, in the French edition of the *Journal* for October, speaks of the quantities of sea-weed collected by the coast-farmers of the lower provinces, and used as manure for their land. I was surprised to see, when at M^{tis} last year, how little pains the Scotch and Canadian farmers of that district took about this valuable adjunct to the ordinary manure of their barns and stables. On the coast of Scotland, in Cornwall and Devonshire, in Guernsey and the other Channel islands, after a severe storm, or even a heavy ground-swell, large quantities of this curious substance are thrown ashore in the bays and other indentations of the coast, and so valuable is it considered as a ready-made manure for the land, that, never mind what operation of the farm is being carried on, everything is left at a stand-still, and men, horses, carts, the whole strength, in short, of the establishment, are hurried off to the shore to secure as large a proportion of this gift of Providence, before the recession of the next tide sweeps it back into the insatiable maw of the domain of the silver-footed Thetis.

To make as sure as possible of not losing this harvest of the sea, all hands go to work with rakes, *graipts* as the Scotch call dung-forks, and dragging the *vraic*—Guernsey for sea-ware—out of the reach of the waves, leave it on the shore till a time of greater leisure. Heavy work it is, and hurried work too; but it pays well, as I had ocular evidence some 40 years ago on the coast-farms of Guernsey and Cornwall; but in those happy districts, there is no rigorous winter, and it is at that season that the greatest abundance of weed is driven ashore; whereas, here, our farmers have to content themselves with the comparatively scanty presents the sea offers them.

On the East coast of Scotland I saw them applying heavy dressings of weed to the stubbles in preparation for roots, the land being afterwards ploughed with a shallowish furrow, to keep the stuff as near the surface as possible, a deeper furrow being given in the spring, I was told, for the purpose of mixing the manure with the soil as much as possible. The Guernseyites, actually cut the *vraic* with hooks like a reap-hook, though rather stouter in make, from the rocks on which it grows, and cart it off the land at once. About 40 one-horse-loads should be sufficient for an acre, though the quality of the weed varies like other manurial matters.

Some of the species of the *algæ* are eatable. I remember well the mournful cry of the Edinburgh sellers of "Dulse and tangle," alternating with "Call'er'on," which inarticulate combination, I was told, meant "Fresh oysters"! On the Welsh coast *laver* was collected in large quantities, cleaned and boiled—in a silver saucepan, please, though I dare say a porcelain lined one would do as well—and eaten, boiling hot, with roast mutton: *Epulæ Deorum*; a squeeze of a lemon improves it.—*crede experto*.

They said, in Cornwall, that after being exposed to the air for a couple of months, a load of sea-weed would go into a