

they contain: and that alkaline matter is also to many a poor peasant a substitute for soap; the lixivium, or ley, which may be obtained by filtering water through the ashes, owing its detergent quality to the alkali which it has dissolved in its passage. In those parts of the world indeed, as in North America, for instance, where it is requisite to clear the land of wood, for the purpose of bringing it into cultivation, the ashes of the forests, which are necessarily burned for this purpose, afford an enormous quantity of alkaline residuum; and this is the source of much of that alkali of commerce, which, from having been obtained by evaporation of its solution in iron pans or pots, is commonly known under the name of *potash*.

That other alkali of commerce, called *soda*, is derived from a similar, though indeed a much more humble source; for, in this case, the alkali does not result from the combustion of stately and aboriginal forests, but from the combustion of heaps of sea-weed; which, in various parts of the coast of Europe, has been collected from the surfaces of the adjoining rocks^k.

^k In some instances loose stones are intentionally placed on the sea-beach for the purpose of affording a substratum for the growth of various sea-plants, which attach themselves to the stones so placed.