

botany of the two islands. This was based upon a small collection of plants, in the herbarium of the British Museum, from St Paul Island made by Sir George Staunton on Macartney's voyage in 1793, previously described by Reichardt in the place cited from a duplicate set in the Vienna Herbarium; a more extensive collection made by MacGillivray and Milne in 1853, and Reichardt's published enumeration of the plants collected in the same island in 1857 by the naturalists of the "Novara" Expedition. Only three plants were then known from Amsterdam Island—namely, the *Phyllica*, and the fern plucked by Commodore Goodenough in 1873, and *Spartina arundinacea*, identified by the Austrians, who landed, but were unable to penetrate into the interior of the island. In 1873, a French expedition for the observation of the transit of Venus took up its station on Amsterdam Island, and the naturalists appear to have thoroughly explored the island, though only portions of the botany have yet been published. But a set of the plants collected by them having been communicated to the Kew Herbarium, we have included them in the following enumeration. It is possible that this set was not a full one; and if this be the case, our list is incomplete. From the notes accompanying the plants collected by the French naturalists, it would appear that the *Phyllica* is not so abundant as in the time of Labillardière and Staunton. In Macartney's Embassy to China, i. p. 226, we find the following passage:—"St Paul's [now called Amsterdam], or the island lying in sight, and to the northward of Amsterdam [now called St Paul's], differed in appearance materially from the latter. . . . It was overspread with shrubs and trees of middling size." The French note that it formed small woods in 1873. It is noteworthy that this tree does not occur in St Paul Island, though it is so near Amsterdam, and covered all over, as Sir G. Staunton states, with a fine mould—that is, humus. *Spartina arundinacea* covers broad tracts in Amsterdam, growing in thickets as impenetrable as the densest virgin forests. In St Paul Island it is scattered, and not very abundant. Curiously enough, in a note on the vegetation of Amsterdam Island, Mr Velain does not mention *Spartina*; yet he states that *Scirpus nodosus* grows to the height of a man, and so close together that it is very tiring to push through it.<sup>1</sup> We suspect a slip of the pen here.

#### COMPOSITION OF THE VEGETATION.

A comparison of the table given below with that exhibiting the flora of Tristan da Cunha, reveals strong points of resemblance not shared by Kerguelen and the other islands in higher latitudes, although the latter are nearer to Tristan and Amsterdam than these are to each other.

<sup>1</sup> *Végétation du Globe*, Grisebach et Tchihatchef, i. p. 819.