



Photo R. H. Worth.

STONE IMPLEMENT, MARYTAVY.

ON A STONE IMPLEMENT FOUND NEAR WHEEL JEWELL, MARYTAVY.

BY R. HANSFORD WORTH.

AT one of the winter meetings of the Plymouth Branch of the Association Mrs. Terrell showed a stone implement which had been found at Wheel Jewell, near Willsworthy, in the parish of Marytavy.

This has some unusual features, and by the kindness of Mrs. Terrell I have been permitted to photograph and describe it.

The implement is made from the local 'epidiorite,' it is in part rough-hewn; in part has been ground and polished. The stone where polished is nearly black.

The length of the implement is $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches, its greatest width at the cutting edge is $3\frac{1}{16}$ inches, and its greatest thickness is $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches. The three photographs on Plate XIV. show either face and a side view. It will be seen that the tool has a general resemblance to a celt, but is very unusual in that the grinding is asymmetrical, the upper face in the photograph being strongly curved, and the under face nearly straight. At about two-thirds of the length from the cutting edge the stone has been reduced by two large flakes having been struck off, as shewn in the upper figure; between these the surface is that of a natural joint in the rock, and will be seen to have weathered a much lighter colour. The end farthest from the cutting edge is partly shaped by nature and gives no evidence of any intent to create a pointed tool.

The reduction of the section to which I have referred has the effect of giving a very comfortable grip when held in the hand with the curved face of the edge downward, and I attribute some importance to this fact, since that is precisely the position in which the implement would be held were it a flenching tool used for removing hides from carcases.

I have in my collection a flenching tool in stone, used within a generation by Canadian Indians; the curves at the edge are precisely similar to those of the implement under consideration, the curve on the one side being marked, with a practically plane face on the other side. The Indian tool is smaller, but the grip is identical.

I believe this implement from Marytavy to have been a

flenching tool, and I am not prepared to assert that it belongs to the days of pre-history, nor am I prepared to deny.

EVANS (*Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, p. 139, Fig. 85) figures a somewhat similar stone, but with the convexity of one face at the edge even more marked. This implement was found in the Shetlands, and is said to appear to be made of a hard clay slate. He figures yet another (p. 122, Fig. 66) from Yorkshire, and that has been formed from hard shelly limestone. In each case which he quotes the choice of material makes it more likely that the stones had some such use as the removal of hides, rather than that they were axes, adzes or other cutting tools. The Indian tool to which I have referred is formed in schistose rock.