



On Some Small Highly Specialized Forms of Stone Implements, Found in Asia, North Africa, and Europe

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From the SOCIETY.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
Nos. 276, 278–280.

— Bulletin de la Société Impériale des Naturalistes de Moscou.
1888. No. 1.

— Bulletin de la Société Neuchateloise de Géographie. Tome
iii, 1887.

From the EDITOR.—Journal of Mental Science. New Series.
No. 109.

— Nature. Nos. 961, 962.

— Science. Nos. 267, 268.

— Photographic Times. Nos. 339, 340.

— American Antiquarian. Vol. x. No. 2.

— Revue Scientifique. Tom. xxxv–xl. Tom. xli, Nos. 1–14.

CAPTAIN STRACHAN exhibited a Papuan boy, and described the circumstances under which he was brought from New Guinea.

The SECRETARY read a paper on “The Early Age of Metal in the South-East of Spain,” by MM. Henri and Louis Siret, which is printed above at p. 121.

Mr. J. ALLEN BROWN exhibited a collection of small stone implements, and read the following paper:—

*On SOME SMALL HIGHLY SPECIALIZED FORMS of STONE
IMPLEMENTS, found in ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, and EUROPE.*

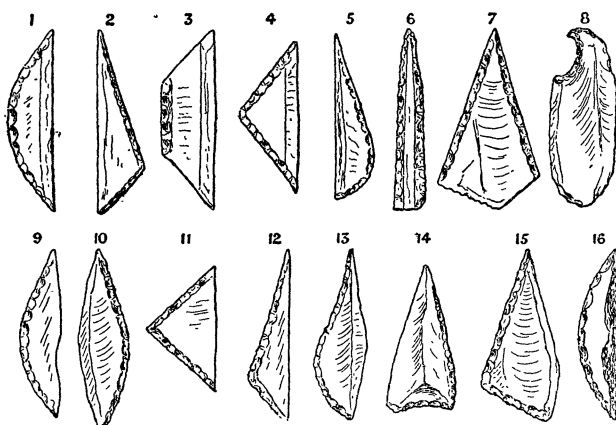
By JOHN ALLEN BROWN, F.R.G.S., F.G.S., &c.

DURING the past five or six years a large number of small implements formed of agate, jasper, chert, and flint have been found in India, Syria, Southern Europe, Africa, &c., to which I wish to call attention for the purpose of ascertaining whether they have been met with in the British Isles and other places not previously noticed.

These diminutive instruments, so highly specialized in form, have created some interest among French anthropologists, and they have been described and figured in papers and periodicals abroad, but notably in M. G. de Mortillet's very interesting and important magazine of anthropology, “L'Homme;” they have not, however, met with the attention in this country I think they deserve, nor have they, as far as I am aware, been noticed in British scientific serials.

These instruments are of various forms which are generally found associated together, crescent, quadrilateral, scalene and

obtusely triangular, while others may be described as thin, acute knifelets, very small spoke-shaves, &c. They rarely exceed five-eighths of an inch in length, and those of crescent shape very neatly worked on the convex side, and the long scalene and obtuse angle forms, as well as many of those of trapezoid shape, are often little more than half that size, as shown in the following figures.



SMALL STONE IMPLEMENTS. (Natural Size).

Figs. 1 to 8, from caves in the Vindhya Hills, Baghelkand, and Bundelkand, Banda, &c.

Figs. 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14, from Coincy L'Abbaye (Aisne).

„ 10 and 15, from Hédouville (Seine et Oise).

„ 16, from Bethlehem, Syria.

The whole series bears the impress of the same thought and intention on the part of the fabricators as shown in the definiteness which distinguishes the various forms, by the adoption of the same model and mode of producing them.

Now when, as will be seen, these results are noticeable in specimens obtained in different localities, in a definite direction, we are justified, I think, in assuming, not only that they indicate a peculiar industry, whatever the purposes may have been for which they were fabricated, but in suggesting that an industry so distinctive in character, probably represents the work of a particular race, or wave of population which has migrated westward in the direction in which they have been found.

These interesting instruments were, I believe, originally discovered by Mr. A. C. Carlyle, late of the Archæological Survey of India, in the wild country of the Vindhya Hills, Central India, and he subsequently found them in other localities. A very

interesting collection of these objects with others of Palæolithic and Neolithic age, and early Buddhist relics was exhibited by him last year at the Royal Albert Hall,—the result of twenty-five years of exploration and hard service.

Mr. A. C. Carlyle found all the varieties of these small implements by hundreds in caves and rock shelters in places very difficult of access to the ordinary traveller, also below the northern scarps of the Vindhya in Bundelkhand, Mirzapur District, and Riwa. He met with similar forms (crescents and others) rather larger and much more coarsely worked south of Kalinjar, in the nullas of the Paisani River, Naro Hill, and Patar Kachâr, and also on the low ground of the Banda District, from which latter locality Mr. J. H. Rivett-Carnac also obtained them. The small instruments are described by him and figured in a paper entitled, "Stone implements from the North-West Provinces of India," Calcutta, 1883.

The most perfect specimens, according to Mr. Carlyle, were found in the caves and rock shelters alluded to, where they occurred in abundance associated with larger chipped implements, flakes, and small cores of agate, &c., and under such conditions as to indicate that these sites had been inhabited for a long period, and that they had been occupied as working places for the manufacture of these small instruments and others. It is worthy of note that polished or ground implements were never found associated with them.

I may here mention that the late Colonel Ryder found a large number of small spoke-shaves (fig. 8) with small knives, cores, &c., of a similar character on the southern slopes of the hills overlooking the Narbudda, near Jabbalpur,¹ of which examples are in my collection; it is noticeable that these objects were found on the southern slopes of the hills, which are often composed of alluvium, the northern flanks being now preferred by the people on account of the heat. It has been conjectured that these small cores when worked up to a point were used when fitted into bamboos, and secured with gum or other substance, as spears.

More interest, however, is attached to the caves and rock shelters at Marahna Pahâr (Vindhya) from the fact that very rude pottery, roughly and simply ornamented by strokes, perhaps produced with small flakes, rubbed down pieces of "Geru," or red hæmatite from the laterite deposits, and also rounded stones for pounding this mineral into a pigment, were found associated with the instruments.

¹ See "Some discoveries of worked flints near Jubbalpur in Central India," By Dr. J. Evans, "Proc. Soc. of Antiq.," 2nd Series, Vol. III.

This fact is curious as it suggests the employment of some of the small sharp knifelets for tattooing, and that the paint made from the hæmatite may have been used to colour the punctures and incisions.

Mr. Carlyle informs me that some few of the rudest aboriginal tribes of the wildest central parts of India still practise a modified and partial sort of tattooing, but only with deep blue or other dark or grey colour but never with red. Hindus use red and white, and sometimes yellow colours superficially without incisions which will wash off, as religious sectarial caste marks on their foreheads; these are the only instances, as far as I can learn, where such pigments are used either for embellishment or religious symbols in India now.

On the walls of some of the caves at Marahna Pahâr were rude drawings of men and animals painted in red, which were copied by Mr. Carlyle. These representations are of the usual child-like character which is seen in similar pictographs of savage races; they may be, judging from their appearance, the earliest efforts of these cave dwellers to write their thoughts.

The upper stratum of the caves contained the crescents, trapezoids, triangular forms, and thin delicate knifelets, but beneath it, separated distinctly by a line of stratification, were much older implements, and of much larger size, formed of indurated sandstone, quartzite, and chert.

Small crescent and other implements of exactly the same types were found by Mr. Carlyle in some grave mounds excavated by him, showing that probably the same people raised them who made the rude uncouth red paintings or pictographs in the caves and rock shelters.

These peculiar instruments are different in shape and make from the usual objects of Neolithic work. They have been described in an article by M. Adrien de Mortillet ("L'Homme," 1884, p. 145), who says that the crescent instrument, the most marked form, has been found at Tunis by M. G. Belluci, and that the French soldiers obtained a quantity of them at Gabes. Mr. Haynes found them and some of the other varieties in Egypt, in fact they have been met with in all the north of Africa.

They are not rare according to M. A. de Mortillet in Italy, and the rhomboidal flints of M. de Chierici he believes belong to the same class.

Among the flint implements obtained by Sir Richard Burton from Bethlehem, and figured and described in his paper, "On Anthropological Collections from the Holy Land" ("Proc. Anthro. Inst.," No. 1, 1872) is the exact counterpart of one of the crescent instruments from India, and other places to be mentioned: fig. 16 was found at Bayt Sahhr, a village a short

distance from Bethlehem, associated with worked knife flakes, &c., all of which appeared to be discoloured by exposure or other causes, "on a ledge of chalky limestone with a drop of rock, and a bed of garden stuff to the north, while behind, or southwards, are steps of higher ground over which runs the rugged road to Bethlehem." Dr. J. Evans says of this group of implements, in which opinion I concur, that the same forms are found "among the refuse heaps of the south of France, and unless the associated fauna prove that such cannot be the case, they are doubtless of Neolithic age, and probably of much the same date as the instruments of similar character from Sinai."

It is very remarkable that small flint implements identical in form with the crescents and others have also been found in France (Languedoc and Gascogne). They have been described by M. A. de Mortellet from Hédouville (Seine et Oise) figs. 10 and 15, and also from near Coincy L'Abbaye, Canton de Fère en Tardenois (Aisne), figs. 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, where they were found by M. Emile Tate; these are all figured in "*L'Homme*" (of 25th August and 25th November, 1885).

The series from Coincy L'Abbaye it would be difficult to distinguish from those discovered by Mr. Carlyle in the caves and rock shelters of the Vindhya.

Neatly worked triangular instruments of similar manufacture and others are now in the Musée Broca, collected by M. Fortoul from the dolmen of St. Laurent (Basses Alpes), and M. Cartailac has found in the kjoekkenmoeddings of Portugal small flint implements of trapezoidal form like No. 3.

Lastly, M. Méréjkowski discovered near Kizilkoba in the Crimea a working place, where most of the varieties of these curious small instruments were well represented. (See "*Premières recherches sur l'âge de la pierre en Crimée en Russe*," St. Petersburg, 1880).

It is evident, I think, that these peculiar types of implements are of Neolithic age; the commencement of that period and the conclusion of the Palæolithic shows no definite line of demarcation in India. We shall probably, sooner or later, come to the conclusion that there is really no hiatus between them in Southern Britain: in fact no very good reason has been given why there should be a gap. Recent discoveries show that some of the later Palæolithic forms closely approach earlier Neolithic types, as shown by many of the specimens found at Cissbury, and in the upper deposits of some of the caves; we only require more evidence of the fauna which continued into early Neolithic times in Southern Britain to complete the bridge as Mr. Carlyle believes is the case in India, where, he says, the Palæolithic and Neolithic periods are connected, as far as the types of the

implements go, by certain forms which appear to be intermediate and to which he has applied the term Mesolithic.

In this connection it is worth noticing that two trapezoidal Palæolithic implements, about $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, were found in one of the upper strata of cave earth in Kent's Cavern. They are described, and one of them is engraved, in Dr. John Evans elaborate work ("Ancient Stone Implements," fig. 400). He says, "both the two sloping ends and the short side are worn by use, while the long side is unscathed," and he tells us he is not aware of this form of instrument having as yet been noticed elsewhere.

Although some of the triangular flints may have been used as arrow points, many of them are too small for that purpose, and they differ in many respects from Neolithic arrow-heads. Moreover the less highly finished triangular chipped flakes of larger size, similar to those generally believed to have been used for pointing arrows are associated with them in India and elsewhere.

It is not easy to determine the purpose for which the small crescents, trapezoids, scalene triangular, the similar form rounded at one end (figs. 5 and 13), and the long, thin, delicate knifelets, &c., all which are often beautifully worked with minute secondary chipping, were made.

It has been suggested that some of them may have been employed for tattooing. There must have been other uses, however, to which the other forms were applied, and the large number found in certain localities in India, all worked on the models of the varieties shown in the drawings, points to the general employment of these instruments among the tribes who used them, and of the continuous demand for these objects.

Whatever the purposes for which they were fabricated by the Indian cave dwellers and others, they clearly represent a special kind of industry, and it may ultimately be shown that they are the work of a particular race which, emanating from Central India, migrated and spread out in a north-westerly direction through Syria to the Crimea, along the north and south shores of the Mediterranean to France and Portugal, and is not improbable that they will be found on the surface or in the latest river beds of Britain.