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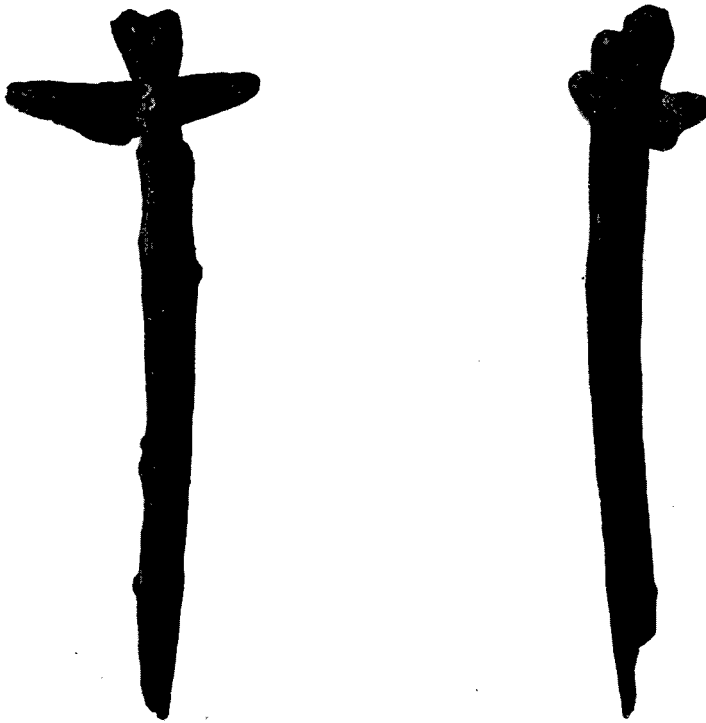
NOTE ON A PRIMITIVE WEAPON OR TOOL, FASHIONED BY FIXING A STONE IN A WOODEN SHAFT, FOUND IN A MOSS AT BOGAN- CLOCH, PARISH OF RHYNIE, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY JAMES CURLLE, CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM.

In October last Mr John Smith, Sanitary Inspector for the County of Roxburgh, told me that when visiting his son, Mr James Smith, Sub-Factor at Drummond Castle, he had been shown a curious stone weapon with its wooden handle in the possession of Mr John Milton, one of the estate employees there. Mr Smith was fully alive to the importance of securing the object, and readily undertook to communicate with his son, through whom it was arranged that Mr Milton should dispose of his find in order that it might find a place in the National Collection.

The object, two views of which are shown in figs. 1 and 2, was discovered in the year 1906 while cutting peat in a peat moss at Bogancloch, which is situated between Rhynie and the Cabrach in the county of Aberdeen, not very far from the boundary of Banffshire. It was embedded in the peat, but particulars as to the depth at which it lay have not been preserved. It forms a rude weapon or tool, fashioned by inserting a pointed stone into a wooden haft.

The stone shows no signs that it has been wrought by human agency. It measures $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches long and $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch at its greatest width. It has a bulbous projection at one side, which serves as a natural stop-ridge to retain it in position. At both extremities it is pointed. The haft into which it has been inserted measures $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; it is evident

that it was originally somewhat longer. The average diameter is from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch. At one end the haft thickens, attaining a diameter of $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and here a hole has been made, through which the stone has been inserted. The haft itself has been identified as probably of gean or wild cherry by Mr H. F. Tagg of the Royal Botanic Garden, to whom I am much indebted for the appended report. It appears to be



Figs. 1 and 2. Stone Weapon or Tool in Wooden Shaft from Bogancloch, Aberdeenshire. ($\frac{1}{3}$.)

part of a young growth torn from the root, and, except for the hole bored for the reception of the stone, it shows no trace of handicraft.

It is probable that in its original state the stone was fixed more firmly in position by strips of hide or some coarse woven substance and resin; without some such lashing it could hardly have been kept in its place.

The purpose it served, or the age to which it belongs, are alike uncertain. On the whole, it suggests a weapon rather than a tool. In

the hands of the hunter it might be used to give the *coup de grâce* to a trapped animal, or it might be employed effectively in tribal warfare. As a find it is unique in this country, but, except for the fact of its preservation, it does not surprise us. Our Museums can exhibit countless examples of the axe-heads of primitive times in stone or in bronze, all of which must have been fitted to hafts which have long since disappeared. In England, at least, two stone axes still fixed in their wooden hafts have come to light. One was found in Solway Moss, and the original haft, now broken and distorted, is preserved in the British Museum. Another was found at Ehenside Tarn in Cumberland. In both of these the method of fixing is the same as in the Bogancloch find. The haft is perforated at one end, and the stone head thrust through it, but in both of these we have examples of carefully fashioned neolithic axes, objects which, if they cannot be dated, can, at least, be referred to a definite period.

In the Bogancloch find we have the stone axe in its most primitive form. Possibly weapons of this type were in use long before mankind had attained to the production of the polished stone axe, but we cannot, on the ground of its form, assign it with certainty to early or indeed to neolithic times. The primitive deer-horn pick, the tool of the early miner, has been found side by side with the iron tools of the Roman period. A type of weapon so simple in its construction as the Bogancloch find might continue in use over a long period, and while we may, I think, safely assign this object to a remote prehistoric time, we cannot in the present state of our knowledge go further.

REPORT ON WOOD OF THE HAFT.

By Mr HARRY F. TAGG.

Microscopic preparations of a small piece of the wood of the haft prove the wood to be that of a species of *Prunus*. The characters of the wood elements suggest that the wood is that of the Gean, *Prunus Avium*, Linn., but specific identification in a genus of closely allied species on wood characters only is naturally given with reservation. I find no other European species of the genus with wood so like the wood in question as *Prunus Avium*.