

CHAPTER XXIV.

REPORT ON THE LARGER STONE IMPLEMENTS OF THE KURGANS AT ANAU.

Of the larger stone implements found in the northern kurgan at Anau and not treated of by Dr. Schmidt in his report, there are few types, and those are roughly made, common utensils.

Commonest and most important of all are the flat or gently curved mealing-stones on which the household supply of flour was evidently ground. These occur at intervals all through the culture-strata, and are sometimes accompanied by the muller, a more or less smooth, cylindrical kind of stone, which was rolled or rubbed over the flat surface of the larger ones. All the mealing-stones found in this kurgan—and they were many—were composed of a fine-grained quartzite conglomerate. In form they were the exact counterparts of the "metates" used to-day by many Indians of Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico, to grind their wokus and parched corn. It is probable that these were made by cracking apart a small quartzite boulder and rubbing the two new surfaces together till they became flat. Then, if the mealing-stone would not stand true, it was either chocked up with pebbles under the curve, or in some cases chipped flatter with a few blows of a stone maul. I am convinced that when first made, these "metates" were perfectly flat, and took on the shallow curve we found in so many only after a considerable amount of use; and also that the muller was held fast in the hand, and not rolled, for the only two I found, one of which lay on its mealing-stone, showed worn facets running longitudinally, which intersected the original curve of the cylinder (see fig. 496).

There were in this kurgan no true mortars for grinding grain or roots, although in the southern hill we found almost as many of them as of the flat mealing-stones. The single possible exception to this was a barrel-shaped stone 9 inches high, with a round depression in one end 2.5 inches deep and 4 inches in diameter (see No. 4, fig. 497). My reason for not classing this utensil with the flour mortars of the South Kurgan is that, unlike them, the inner edge is sharp and delicate and would not allow for the gyroscopic wobbling motion of the pestle which gives the grinding crunch so necessary with kernels. It may have been used to powder earths or charcoal for colors, or even for ceremonial uses as a mere receptacle. This stone was also grooved longitudinally, perhaps for after-use as a weight. In this respect it is obviously to be classed with No. 43, fig. 498, found in the South Kurgan.

Figs. 499 to 504 represent a number of small quartzite dishes or saucers of indeterminable use. For the most part they were fairly well finished both inside and out, and suggest ceremonial intention. It is hardly possible that the oval form would be used for crushing anything, so they must be classed as receptacles.