To Catlin's description Mr. Stevens¹ makes the following approving eriticism:

What Catlin has said with regard to a rebounding blow is perfectly true; it is impossible to flake flint with a dull, heavy, smashing blow; it is the measured and rebounding blow—a shock rather than a blow—which, given with jndgment, enables the numerial to take its own line of cleavage, and produces what is so well known as the conchoidal fracture, resulting from human skill, that distinguishes the mero splinter of flint from the flint flake; and it is the repetition of this operation twenty or thirty times around the edges of those flint implements found in the drift that stamps them as proofs of human hundiwork.

Admiral Sir E. Belcher² gives an account of the manufacture of flint arrowpoints by the western Eskimo tribes at and north of Icy Cape, as follows:

But to the process which they pursue in effecting the fine, regular, serrated edges of their flint arrowheads.

Possibly, had I not witnessed the operation and had been at the time one of the first Europeans with whom they ever had communication, the idea would have remained undisputed that they owed their formation to the stroke of the hammer. Being a working amateur mechanic myself, and having practiced in a very similar manner on glass with a penny piece in 1815, I was not at all surprised at witnessing the modus operandi. Selecting a log of wood in which a spoon-shaped eavity was cut, they placed the splinter to be worked over it, and by pressing gently along the margin vertically, first on one side and then on the other, as one would set a saw, they splintered off alternate fragments until the object thus properly onlined presented the spear or arrowhead form, with two cutting seriated edges.

But let us revert to this instrument for the use of which the untaught would never imagine a purpose, and which, I suspect, was not witnessed or deemed worthy of notice by any other individual of the expedition.

First, this instrument has a graceful outline. The handle is of fine fossil ivory. That would be too soft to deal with the flint or chert in the manner required. But they discovered that the point of the deer horn is harder and also more stabborn; therefore, in a slit, like lead in our pencils, they introduced a slip of this substance and secured it by a strong thong, put on wet, but which on drying became very rigid. Here we can not fail to trace ingenuity, ability, and a view to ornament. It is the point of the deer horn which, refining to yield, drives off the fine conchoidal splinters from the chert. [See figs. 68-74].

I can not here omit remarking that the very same process is pursued by the Indians of Mexican origin in California with the obsidian points for their arrows; and also in the North and South Pacific—at Sandwich Islands (21° north), and Tahiti (18 south)—39 degrees or 2,340 miles asunder—similar indentations or chippings are carried out in forming their axes from basaltic lava, but probably performed in the latter instances with stone hammers. I myself witnessed at the convent of Montercy the captured Indians forming their arrowheads out of obsidian similarly to the mode practiced by the Eskimos.

Schoolcraft³ thus describes the mode of making flint arrowpoints by the North American Indians:

The skill displayed in this art, as it is by the tribes of the entire continent, has excited admiration. The material employed is generally some form of hornstone, son min is g bro var the has man T thig a su into vers

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¹ Flint Chips, pp. 83, 84.

²Transactions of the American Ethnological Society, new ser., 1, Pt. 2, 1861, p. 138. ³North American Indian Tribes, III, p. 467.