

8. WOODWORK FROM CRICHTON CASTLE, MIDLOTHIAN.

Some years ago, when the well at Crichton Castle was cleaned out, some pieces of worked timber were found among the accumulated debris. A recent inspection of this woodwork showed that it is worthy of closer examination and although badly decayed, is still capable of reconstruction (fig. 7).

There are sufficient parts and evidence to build up what is obviously the bottom end of an oak bed. This measures 4 ft. 7 ins. wide and stands 2 ft. 4 ins. high; it probably dates from the late 16th century.

The whole construction is composed of two main posts, one moulded top rail, a bottom rail, three moulded stiles and the remains of four linen-fold panels. The top and bottom rails are tenoned into the posts, likewise the stiles into the rails, with each joint held firm by a single wood dowel. The top terminal of each post is shaped in simple outline, resembling an acorn. Each linen-fold panel measures 17 ins. by 9½ ins., is of simple design and fits into a check cut in the other members. The two posts are also mortised at the back to receive the tenons of the long bed-rails.

History records various owners of a castle or mansion and perhaps incidents in the course of their lives. The structural remains of a castle such as Crichton demonstrate progressive changes in architectural taste and domestic comfort. On the other hand, interior fittings and furnishings have been disposed of or else have perished long ago. It seems appropriate, therefore, that this solitary remnant of furniture, which must have been a luxury in its time, should be placed on record.

W. NORMAN ROBERTSON, *Ministry of Works.*