

The following Communications were read :—

I.

NOTICE OF AN ARTIFICIAL ISLAND IN LOCH KIELZIEBAR, IN A LETTER TO MR STUART, SECRETARY. BY THE REV. R. J. MAPLETON, CORR. MEM. S. A. SCOT., KILMARTEN.

In Loch Kielziebar, which lies about one and a half mile above Bellanoch, on the Crinan Canal, I felt certain of the existence of a Crannog there. Through the kindness of Mr Fyfe, the engineer of the canal, I am now able to say that my suspicions were correct. He accompanied me, with a diving apparatus, and a staff of men, by whose most willing labour we were able to examine the structure. The loch lies almost east and west, and is about one and a half mile long, and one and a quarter mile wide. At the south-west corner an extensive and muddy bay is attached to the loch, being partly separated from it by two long narrow headlands. The distance between these is about 450 feet. Situated between these, and at about 60 feet from the western point, is the "Cairn," a favourite spot of the fly-fisher. The loch was low when we examined the cairn: there was not more than one foot of water above the top of it. We rowed very carefully over the structure before the divers went down, and ascertained without doubt that it was artificial. The Crannog is constructed entirely of natural rock and very well made walling. The inside is composed of smaller stones (angular and boulders) so as to form a level platform, nearly circular, about 25 feet in diameter. The water around in some places is very deep, especially on the north side, *i.e.*, the side next to the open loch; in one spot it is 10 or 12 fathoms. The rock is of the same character as most of our rocks are, *viz.*, ice-worn—smooth and sloping on one side, but abrupt on the other. It rises up in four different parts of the Crannog to a level with the platform. The spaces between the rocks are filled with very beautiful and carefully-laid walling, varying in height from 4 to 8 feet, and slightly rounded in outline, to suit the circular form of the platform. This walling is far stronger and better made than any dyke that I have ever seen; not one stone appears to have been laid by chance or at random.

The divers could not discover the slightest appearance of timber in the construction of the island, though they felt very carefully all round; nor, indeed, could timber be necessary. Upon extending their examination to a greater distance from the Crannog, the men came to a great depth of mud in the east side, so deep that they could proceed no further. The first article that they found was the lower end of the radius of a deer (about 4 inches long), which was lying in the mud, just at the foot of a sloping rock on the south side of the island. It had been chopped or cut off, the marks of the tool being quite distinct; and I think also that it had been partially scorched: it has since fallen to pieces. The man afterwards found another larger portion on the west side, but it literally "melted" in his hand. The rocks project, under water, both from the island and the nearest point of land, so as to form a foundation for a causeway. A few large stones were lying upon these; and between the rocks is a very deep channel, of about 15 feet in width. This was very muddy, and buried in the mud was a great quantity of small wood, but so decayed that the divers could not bring it up. It might have been the remains of faggots, used as a bridge, or it might be of more recent origin. Our two divers differed on this matter.

But from under about 6 feet of mud the man brought up what appears to me to be a paddle, made of wood—I think "oak." When found it had a handle of about 4 feet long. This, however, got broken off and lost, except one small portion of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, which seems to have been the end, as the fracture on one end is not new. The paddle is very well, even elegantly made, like a barbed arrow—rather convex on one side, and concave on the other. The dimensions of the blade (as it stands with the point broken off, in bringing up) are $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, 8 inches wide at the widest part, 2 inches wide at the point, and 2 inches thick. In the portion of the handle, which is 2 inches in diameter, are two small holes, about a quarter of an inch diameter, not going quite through the wood, as if pegs had been inserted. They are 3 inches apart.

On the east side (or that opposite to the most distant headland) the rock slopes away under the water to a distance of 30 feet; and lying on the bottom of this, among the mud, was a great deal of split timber, some beams being about 8 or 10 feet long, 8 or 9 inches wide, and 3 inches thick. These could not be brought up whole, but portions of them were

brought up, and in four of these were round holes bored, of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch diameter. The men reported that there was a great deal of timber, of various sizes, but so decayed that they could not hold them. No timbers appeared to be running through the cairn, nor to be fixed in the ground, at least the divers could feel none in the mud; but from the situation in which they were found, viz., leaning against the rock, they seemed to have slipt down the sloping rock, and, most probably, had formed a rampart or dwelling on the cairn itself.

Some logs were found also on the south side in the mud. One was a portion of a large piece, 7 inches square, near the top of which, in the side, was a hollow scooped out, about 7 inches long and 4 inches deep. Another, of about 4 inches diameter, had a similar hollow, 7 inches long and 2 deep, such as would have admitted another log to rest in it. All the wood that I saw seemed to have been split, and not sawn. Some is oak, but I cannot speak for all of it. The very great depth of mud prevented the men from discovering any other implements.

Altogether, I think that it is evident that the Crannog was entirely composed of rock and walling, with the middle part filled up with smaller stones; that there existed considerable works of wood on the east, south, and west sides, at least, but whether a rampart outside or a building on the structure itself, is not quite clear; that there was a partial causeway, now under water, and the interval either filled in with brushwood, or passed over in a canoe.