

LOCHS OF THE MELFORT BASIN.

THE area draining into Loch Melfort includes a complex series of lochs, eight of which were sounded by the Lake Survey, viz. Lochs Tralaig, Dubh-mòr, a' Chaoruinn, a' Phearsain, nan Druimnean, an Losgainn Mòr, and Kilchoan (upper and lower). Loch Tralaig, the most important one in the basin, drains by the river Oude into Fearnach bay, the north-eastern offshoot at the head of Loch Melfort, while Lochs Dubh-mòr, a' Chaoruinn, a' Phearsain, nan Druimnean, and an Losgainn Mòr drain into Loch na Cille, the south-eastern offshoot at the head of Loch Melfort; the two Kilchoan lochs drain into Kilchoan bay on the northern shore of Loch Melfort near its mouth. These lochs are fairly deep, all but one exceeding 40 feet, and two of them exceeding 100 feet, in depth. The scenery of the district is very fine, and the trout fishing in the lochs is good, some of them having been stocked with Loch Leven trout.

Loch Tralaig (see Plate XXXI).—Loch Tralaig is situated about 3 miles north-east of Kilmelfort, and little more than 2 miles north-west of Loch Avich in the Etive basin. It trends almost east and west, and exceeds a mile in length, with a maximum breadth of one-third of a mile. The loch covers an area of about 149 acres, or nearly a quarter of a square mile, and receives the drainage from an area of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ square miles. The principal inflow is at the eastern end, while several minor streams enter on the southern side; the river Oude flows out at the west end. The volume of water is estimated at 267 millions of cubic feet, and the mean depth at 41 feet. The conformation is rather complex, the loch being divided into two basins, the larger and deeper one in the eastern portion of the loch, separated by a narrow channel from the smaller and shallower one at the west end. The maximum depth of 117 feet was observed in the centre of the eastern basin, while the deepest sounding taken in the western basin was 53 feet, the depth on the intervening barrier being 13 to 23 feet. Within the eastern basin there is in deep water a slight shoaling covered by 74 feet, with deeper water both to the west and to the east. The following table gives the approximate areas between the contour-lines, and the percentages to the total area:—