

LOCHS OF THE AILORT BASIN.

LOCH EILT is the only loch to be dealt with here; the few very small hill lochs within the basin were not surveyed.

Loch Eilt (see Plate LV).—Loch Eilt lies about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the east of the head of Loch Ailort (into which its outflow is carried by the river Ailort), and about 4 miles to the west of Glenfinnan. The hills around it rise steeply up to a height of over 1500 feet, the highest points exceeding 2000 feet. It was formerly considered a good loch for salmon and sea-trout; but Mr. Harvie-Brown believes that the blasting operations during the construction of the Mallaig extension of the West Highland railway resulted in the destruction of a large amount of spawn and fry, and that now the fish are greatly disturbed by the passage of the trains across the bays on the south shore.

Loch Eilt trends east and west, and is $3\frac{1}{3}$ miles in length, with a maximum breadth of half a mile, the mean breadth being one-fifth of a mile. Its waters cover an area of about 424 acres, or two-thirds of a square mile, and it drains an area of 12 square miles. Over 250 soundings were taken, the maximum depth recorded being 119 feet. The volume of water contained in the loch is estimated at 686 million cubic feet, and the mean depth at 37 feet. The loch was surveyed on July 9 and 10, 1902; the elevation of the lake-surface was found, by levelling from bench-marks, to be 96.4 feet above the sea. The keeper stated that the water might rise about 3 feet above, and fall about 9 inches below, this level. During the night of July 9 and 10, 1902, the water rose nearly 10 inches.

Loch Eilt is naturally divided into three portions by two narrow constrictions in its outline, the western portion being by far the largest and deepest, covering an area of about 360 acres, while the area of the central and eastern portions is in each case about 32 acres. The western portion is connected with the central portion by a channel 6 feet in depth, with a rocky islet in the centre, the sides of the channel being also of rock *in situ*, thus dividing the loch into two rock-basins; the central portion is separated from the eastern portion by detritus brought down by the Allt a' Choire Bhuidhe, the channel