

ranks fifth of all Scottish lochs, being exceeded in this respect only by Lochs Awe, Ness, Lomond, and Shiel. It is a fine sheet of water situated amid beautiful scenery, with Ben More Assynt and Coniveall rising to heights exceeding 3200 feet on the west, and Meall an Eoin (3154 feet) on the north-east. It is a good trout loch, containing also *Salmo ferox*, and the islands are much frequented by wildfowl. It trends in a north-west and south-east direction, and the length measured along the centre of the loch is about $17\frac{1}{4}$ miles. The loch is on the whole very narrow, the maximum breadth exceeding 1 mile at the junction with the small arm leading to Loch a' Bhainbh, and also at the position of the delta formation at the mouth of the river Fiodhaig. Elsewhere the breadth is considerably less than a mile, and the upper portion, to the north-west of the entrance of the river Fiodhaig, is all less than half a mile in width. The mean breadth of the entire loch is half a mile, or only 3 per cent. of the length—a percentage smaller than has been observed in any other large loch except Loch Shiel.* The waters of Loch Shin cover an area of about 5570 acres, or nearly $8\frac{3}{4}$ square miles, and the area of land draining into it is over 150 square miles, but as it receives the outflow from Lochs Merkland, a' Ghriama, and Fiodhaig, its total drainage area is over 190 square miles—an area 22 times greater than that of the loch. Over 800 soundings were taken, the maximum depth recorded being 162 feet, about 7 miles from the foot of the loch, opposite the little Loch an Fhreiceadain on the north-eastern shore. The volume of water contained in the loch is estimated at 12,380 millions of cubic feet, and the mean depth at 51 feet, or $31\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the maximum depth. Loch Shin was surveyed on August 25 to September 1, 1902, when the elevation of the lake-surface above the sea was determined, by levelling from bench-mark, as being 270.85 feet; when levelled by the officers of the Ordnance Survey on August 4, 1870, the elevation was found to be 269.7 feet above sea-level. The farmer at Overscaig stated that the water might fall 1 foot below, and rise 6 feet above, the level at the time of the survey

The floor of Loch Shin is very irregular. None of the contour-lines are continuous from end to end of the loch, and the lines themselves are usually of a sinuous character. The 25-foot contour encloses two areas, the 50-foot contour three areas, the 100-foot contour four areas, and the 150-foot contour two areas. The lower 25-foot basin is nearly 10 miles in length, extending from close to the lower end of the loch as far as the alluvial cone at the mouth of the river Fiodhaig. Here for an interval of nearly half a mile the soundings indicate depths less than 20 feet, except for an isolated sounding of 25 feet towards the north-eastern shore. The upper 25-foot basin is nearly 6 miles in length, approaching to within half a mile from the head of the loch.

* See p. 242.