Monestier that night. We accordingly retraced our steps to the col, and after descending a short steep slope reached the névé of the Monestier glacier. Leaving on our left the ridge of rocks which crops out from the glacier we descended rapidly, and soon had a wearisome step-cutting job down the steep icefall for some hundreds of feet, reaching the level glacier below, and so the left moraine, in the gloaming Descending the stony slopes, at 8.30 P.M. we reached a spot where it was decided to bivouac, as the guides were of opinion that it was undesirable to attempt to cross by night a certain stream over which lay our way. I have never passed a more uncomfortable night. We lay as close together as possible on snow and rock, partly under an overhanging boulder and close to a glacier stream. We suffered considerably from the cold—indeed, far more so than when, nine days before, we had been benighted on the Pic Central. At dawn next morning we continued our descent, and at once found that we might easily have proceeded the night before. After traversing moraine slopes pleasant walking down the left side of the Tabuc glen brought us to the chalets of Grangettes, where we halted for a breakfast of milk and bread, and a gradual descent amid pleasing scenery led us in about 2 hrs.' actual walking from our sleeping place to Monestier and a temperature worthy of the Italian plain. From here we took the diligence over the Col du Lautaret, deriving pleasure from the contemplation of the Agneaux and Meije, and so to La Grave, where we bade farewell to the Dauphiné Alps, leaving the same afternoon *en route* for Chamonix.

We had been favoured by weather above the average, and indeed during our last week it had been almost perfect.

The Cuillin Hills.

By the EDITOR.

WHEN we are on the point of celebrating the Jubilee of the Alpine Club it would seem that 'the true mountaineering centre of the British Isles' deserves at least a brief recognition, seeing that it is more than twenty years since Mr. Charles Pilkington expounded to the Alpine Club what excellent ascents there were to be made in the 'Black Coolins,' and how he himself and his party had made many of the best of them; while it is more than sixteen years since Mr. Dent in that delightful style of his sang the praises of the 'Rocky Mountains of Skye' in these pages. Since then

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the Cuillin Hills have charmed hosts of climbers, and our colleagues of the Scottish Mountaineering Club have explored most of the ridges and corries and many of the faces of the more noteworthy peaks. They have also laid the mountaineering brotherhood under no small obligation by publishing in the last number of the 'S.M.C. Journal' (with a map) a guide to the mountains of Skye by Mr. Douglas, the editor of that journal. The work has been excellently done, and the popularity of the district is shown by the fact that the number is already out of print.

Dr. Tempest Anderson and I arrived in Skye—to be exact, at Broadford—on August 22, 1907. Just as the visitant to Chamonix may stop a day at Geneva, we had spent a day in Aberdeen in examining its garden city developments. We had embarked on the 'Fusileer'—name well deserved by its state and ancientry'—at Kyle of Loch Alsh, and I at least was not long in discovering how climbers who go to Skye are of necessity

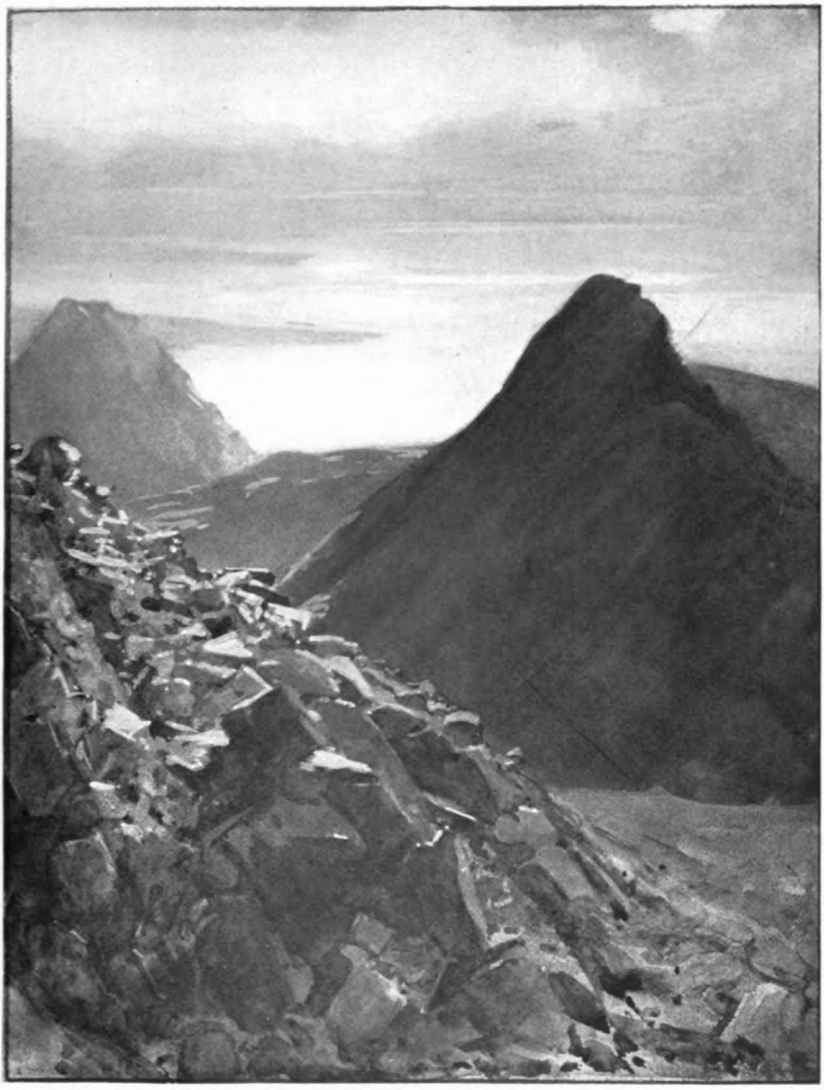
Servile to all the Skiey influences;

for, sitting on a chance-found chair under a nondescript tarpaulin, I received full in the face such stinging rain as made me glad to shut my eyes. The voyage, I need not add, was rich in beautiful sights. Anderson showed, I thought afterwards, excellent judgment in choosing this method of approach to the 'Black Coolins,' for the drive from Broadford to Sligachan has a picturesqueness to which the road thither from Portree can advance no claim.

I must say at the outset that I have no new climbs to describe, for the weather could not be called favourable; indeed, 'to speak wi'oot prejudice there was some watter.' But I had one capital expedition with Donald Mackenzie to Sgurr na h-Uamha. (The spelling is correct, but, as Mr. Dent says, 'gives no clue whatever to the right method of pronunciation.') The peak was first climbed by Mr. Charles Pilkington's party in 1881.

The S.M.C. guide marks the route we followed, with a query as to whether it should be labelled 'easy' or 'moderately difficult.' I regret that I cannot solve the question in the manner more honourable to the mountain, though in such weather as we encountered some would very possibly be inclined to do so. We followed the path for Coruisk up the Sligachan glen to about the foot of Marsco, and then turning to the right crossed the big burn and went up to the gap to the right of the first peak in the ridge S. of Sgurr nan Gillean. In the

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Drawn by A. D. McCormick, from a Photograph by Dr. Tempest Anderson. Swan Electric Engraving Co. Ltd.

SGURR NA H'UAMHA,
FROM SOUTH RIDGE OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN.

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mist and rain every crag assumed a grandeur of a good deal of which no doubt bright sunshine would have robbed him. We then traversed the flank of Sgurr Beag, on the Lota Corrie side, to the depression at the N. foot of Sgurr na h-Uamha.

With a wind fresh from the Atlantic now roaring his war cry, now shrieking with furious laughter, now whirling the tortured mist in savage glee, even an easy mountain grows impressive. We waited a few minutes to see if the wind would lessen its fury, whilst our view, if not perfect, was at any rate a study in mountain gloom. We then tackled our peak. Donald said that never in the summer had his hands been so cold, and seldom had the wind been higher. In fact it was thought advisable to put on the rope.

The glimpses we got from time to time of Lota Corrie, and of the great slabs (such slabs are now known as boiler plates by up to date conversationalists) of dark rock on the other side of it, streaming with rain, were worth all the discomfort; and I must own that to me the appearance of the sea, albeit furtive and fitful, in the distance beyond Coruisk helped to remind me of the volcanic origin of the hills, for occasionally, though not on the day we were on Sgurr na h-Uamha, it shone with a splendour of colouring which recalled the days I spent with Anderson on Lipari and Vulcano and Stromboli. And if the grim rocks and gaunt cliffs were reminiscent of Vulcan it would have been hardly a shock to have seen towards evening his smiling consort rise from the golden stillness of the evening sea

The sea, indeed, had a way of suddenly appearing in narrow gulfs, or wide expanses between islands, and gave an air of distinction even to such walks as the traverse of the Red Hill or the dome of Glamaig.

We soon returned to the foot of the final peak, ate our lunch in what was by comparison fine weather, and then varied our route by descending towards Glen Sligachan by the gap at the N. foot of Sgurr na h-Uamha. We kept on the left side of the Sligachan main stream and so reached the Struan road.

The next day, with G. T. Glover, I went to Loch Coruisk. My companion knows the Cuillin Hills thoroughly, and consequently our walk was most enjoyable, notwithstanding the persistent attacks of the rain. He pointed out to me many of the best climbs—not only among the Cuillin Hills, but on Blaven and Clach Glas—most of which he had made himself—from the top of Druim nan Ramh (1,622 ft.), on which we found several little bits of enjoyable rock-work.

Sgurr na h-Uamha as we returned to Sligachan showed

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finely at one time like a miniature Eiger, at another like an Aiguille Rouge in shape, though dark in colour. The ridge of Sgurr na h-Uamha, which came down towards us, has not, I fancy, been climbed, and we did not think that it was probable that it would prove at all easy, to put it mildly. Two places at least looked likely to demand all the skill that good climbers can command. We passed the Bloody Stone, which Glover showed me how to climb. If the 'red rain' from Macleods and Macdonalds had not made the harvest grow it had apparently done something to develop the ferns, which were abundant.

The weather was for much of our time in Skye rainy, misty, windy, chilly; but the rain raised the burns to the dignity of rivers, the mist clothed the mountains with raiment that enhanced their splendour, the wind with a matchless skill lifted or wrapt close the flowing folds of drapery that clothed the mountains. The chill of the storm lent appreciation to the sunshine, when it came, and the wind and the chill between them dispersed the midges; for midges there were many, minute but maddening. Somehow—I don't know how—bad weather in Skye did not affect me in the same way as it generally does elsewhere. A philosophy (possibly endemic in Skye), whence derived I know not, always acquiesced in the work of the storm.

What is decreed must be, and be this so.

'And pray, sir, how did you spend your wet days?' I hear an interrogator cry. Why, in the rain I walked along first one and then another of the three roads that meet at the Sligachan Inn. If I went towards Struan there was always a possibility that the curtain might lift and disclose the grandeur of Sgurr nan Gillean; if I went towards Portree I was pretty certain as I returned to see Glamaig, or Beinn Dearg Mhòr (*hoc prætexit nomine collem*, as Calverley might have said, for it only means 'Red Hill'), in some new and fascinating aspect, which made me forget that they were but easy walks; and if I wandered Broadfordwards there was Sligachan Loch below me, with sea fowl at their fishing avocations or engaged in choir practice, or sheep fording a river channel with a judgment which gave the lie to their character for stupidity, or other sheep hunted by collies from the recesses of Glamaig at the bidding of a shepherd who loomed far larger than human on the misty mountain ridge.

On a fine evening there was always the ravine of the White Burn to visit to count the varieties of trees and shrubs that

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Photo by Dr. Tempest Anderson. *Swan Electric Engraving Co. Ltd.*

VIEW LOOKING NORTH, TAKEN ON THE WAY UP SGURR SGUMAIN. SGURR DEARG IS SEEN ON THE EXTREME LEFT.

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clothed its sides; to mark down the honeysuckle in flower, though it seemed a shame to gather it when a wade up to the knees would have been the necessary preliminary to its acquisition; to delight in the heavy scent of the hay fern, which grew there in abundance. I hunted out the leaves of the primroses which earlier in the year had made it a delightful garden. I watched the dogs, which generally followed me from the inn, jump from stone to stone, pausing now and again to summon up resolution till they had crossed to the other side. To the midges, which seemed to enjoy the beauties of the spot as much as I did, though that did not prevent them from biting their very best, I of necessity devoted considerable though unwilling attention. They must, as a deftly bitten visitor remarked, have been teetotallers, for they dined early and dined often.

Even on days when rain was pitiless and persistent we had our excitements; for when all the mountain-sides were striped with waving lines of white, and the torrents were as full of passion for the watery renown of the Sligachan river as Lancelot's kith and kin for the name of Lancelot, one of the side streams grew so swollen with pride and spate as to submerge his bridge and cut off a lingering fisherman. And so, instead of a rescue party being gathered for some poor storm-bound climber, volunteers were whipt up for a flood-foundered fisherman. But let me not be thought to be a flouter of the rod and the skilful wielders of it, who so unstintedly produced trout for breakfast and dinner. No—the memory of 'chamois,' as the menu spelt it, so regularly supplied in old days at certain mountaineering centres, is wholly eclipsed by the trout of Sligachan—trout which provided a double satisfaction, for, regularly exhibited as they were in the entrance hall, they gave at once a gentle stimulus to the pride of the angler and to the appetite of the general public.

On September 3, Glover having left us, much to our regret, Anderson and I, with Archie Mackenzie, went up Sgurr nan Gillean by the easy south ridge. We saw Highland stirks as you might see chamois in Val Ciamosoretto and deer (eighteen) as you might bouquetin in Val Savaranche in the Graians, and I found *Arabis petræa* and *Silene cucubalus* in flower.

The weather for once was all that could be wished, and though I dismiss our pleasure in a brief paragraph you must not think that I wish to belittle it, for we returned from our mountain with memories of the glories of the Cuillin Hills which will long remain with us.

On September 9 a large party of us drove to Glen Brittle.

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It took three hours. We were very late both in leaving Sligachan and in starting from Glen Brittle, for nobody could be found to carry Anderson's camera, till at last our driver was magnanimous enough to undertake the task.

Our party consisted of Dr. D. W. Inglis and Messrs. G. M. Lloyd and E. T. A. Phillips, our two selves, and Archie Mackenzie. We made across the moors for Sgurr Sgumain, enjoying very fine views, both mountainwards and seawards, on the way, the day being all that could be desired; for if the weather in Skye when bad is horrid, at any rate when it is good it is very, very good. Once on the top we examined the great chimneys on the Corrie Labain side, and Anderson took photographs. The panorama from the top impressed us much, especially the north side of Sgurr Alasdair, the head of Corrie Labain, and Corrie Ghrunnda. Our original intention had been to go on to Sgurr Alasdair from Sgurr Sgumain, and the younger members of the party were, I fear, a little disappointed when a council of war behaved as such councils proverbially do and decided not to fight.

The time left us was in fact so short, owing to our late starts both from Sligachan and Glen Brittle, that we should have been benighted if we had persisted in our original plan. As it was we did not get back to Sligachan till half-past ten. Yes, we enjoyed Sgumain, 'but for Alisander—alas! you see how 'tis—a little o'erparted.'

We had a pleasant walk back to Glen Brittle, a pleasant call on Dr. Norman Collie and Mr. Colin Philip, who were in residence at Glen Brittle House, and a pleasant drive back to our quarters at Sligachan.

Anderson and I had proposed a visit to the Quiraing before leaving Skye, but the weather said us nay, so on September 14 in wind and rain we took the steamer from Portree to Oban. We might fitly have bidden good-bye to Skye in the words of Antigonus:

> Farewell;
> The day frowns more and more; thou'rt like to have
> A lullaby too rough: I never saw
> The heavens so dim by day. A savage clamour!
> Well may I get aboard.

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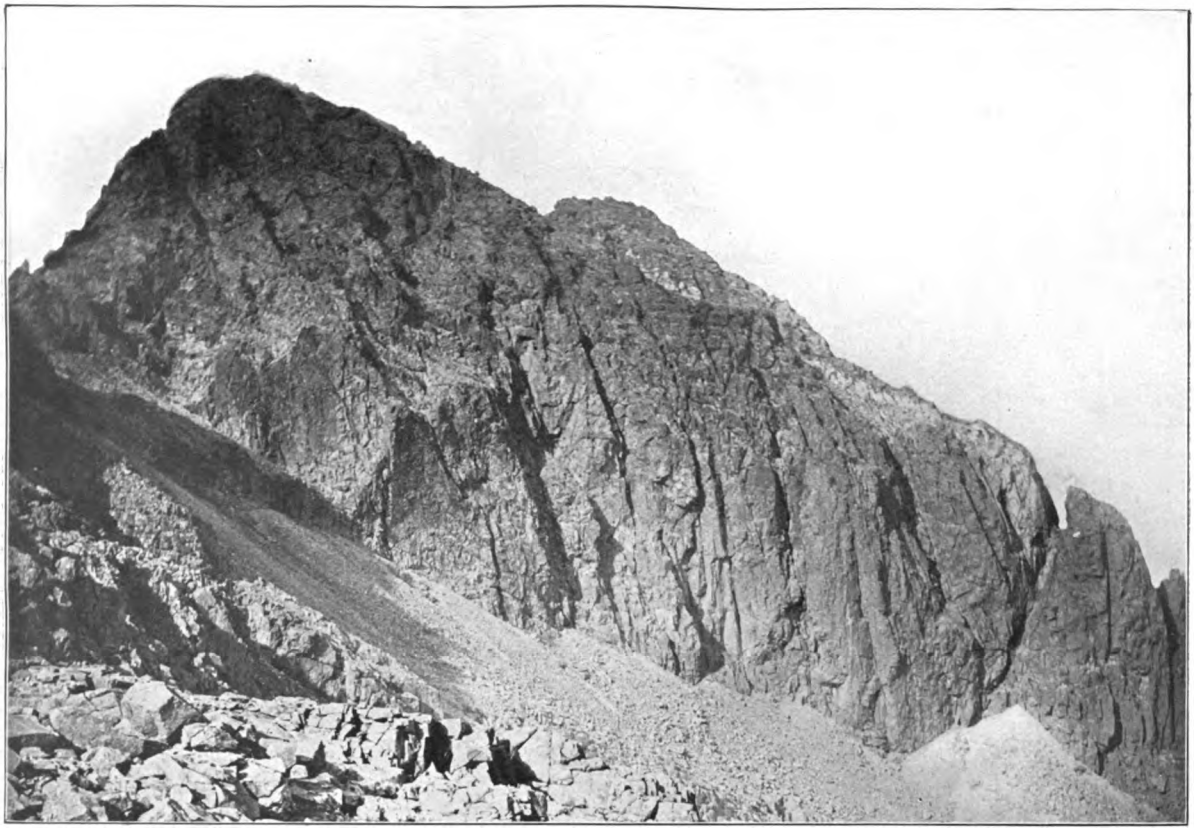


Photo by Dr. Tempest Anderson. *Swan Electric Engraving Co. Ltd.*

SGURR ALASDAIR, FROM THE SHOULDER OF SGURR SGUMAIN.

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