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Allies in Serbia Fighting in the Clouds; Regard the Intense Cold as Their Worst Foe

SALONIKI, Dec. 4, (via Paris, Dec. 8.)—In the last two days I have been permitted to skirt the fourteen miles of French and about twelve miles of the English front. In a visit so brief it is possibly only to receive an impression of limitless snow-clad mountains, not in ranges but confused and interlocking, each apparently concealing a battery of artillery and each enfilading the other. It is a Winter war, a war in the clouds, a war waged in the form of skylines, the horizons of which are faintly outlined and in which only artillery combats are possible.

Starting from the English base, I circled, crossing in a northeasterly direction into Serbia. The sides of the hills are dug in, like open-faced workings of mines, not against shells but the cold, the officers and men said., Though the warmest clothing is issued to them, it is no protection against this kind of cold, which is damp and penetrating. In the hospital tents and ambulances I saw a few wounded.

Leaving the western end of the English front, I entered Bulgarian territory, and from a trench position saw fifty miles of mountains with no signs of human occupation. The slopes were barren of trees. They were covered only by snow, low bushes of scrub pine, mistletoe, and rocks, and their peaks were hidden in the clouds, through which, like lightning, came the flashes of guns. At the time of my visit the French positions were being so accurately shelled that our hosts made us withdraw.

The next morning the artillery duel we saw begun ended in favor of the French, who occupied the Bulgarian position. During the last three weeks in this sector the French have been advancing, all counterattacks being repulsed.

The spirit of all the allied troops is splendid. They complain only of the cold, which is increase by lack of firewood on the hills, which are barren of woods. In spite of the condition of the roads the transport service of both forces in supplying ammunition is admirably efficient.