

THE WAR DAY BY DAY: POSITION OF THE VATICAN.

The Patrol.

Scouts in the Scrub.

(From Capt. C. E. W. BEAN, Official Reporter with the Australian Expeditionary Forces.)

GABA TEPE, Nov. 8.—In these long, dreary intervals of trench fighting we do keep up some semblance of the older sort of warfare. Even where all the rest of the country is shovelled up into trenches and support trenches and communication trenches there still remains one portion of country where war is carried on without any cover, and that is the narrow portion between the trenches. Where the rival lines have come within a few yards, as along several parts of the old Anzac position, of course it is instant death to stir outside the trenches, but where the distance is greater the Turks and we have our occasional patrols, and in the newer parts of the line, or where mountain gullies separate the two lines, there is quite considerable scope for scouting. It is a weird, primitive sort of warfare, not unlike that of the Fenimore Cooper novels. In the early days some of the best scouting was done by the Tasmanians. Some youngsters slept one day in the second week out behind the enemy's lines, looking into him from his own rear. They watched a Turkish camp wake for its breakfast. The low blue cloud across the gully, which is the first grey of morning, they took to be the haze of the valley mist, turned out to be the smoke from a score of camp fires. They watched a big officer come out from a particularly dignified dug-out. One servant came along and brought him his washing basin, while another held his long, heavy grey overcoat and his sword and his whip, and then fetched him his breakfast. They watched this and afterwards went out in the crow's nest of the old Bacchante and showed her where to shell it, and were royally feasted in the ship's canteen.

That all happened six months ago in the early days. You cannot quite do those things now, with the Turkish lines drawn

things now, with the Turkish lines drawn closely all round you; and yet there are open spaces, great mountain gullies, where both the Turks and our men go. The enemy used to send isolated men right up to the parapet of our trenches, to lie up there and listen, and only the other day an officer and a certain scout, having marked down the position of what they believed to be one of these gentlemen, went out from the trenches to bayonet him, but he was off before they reached the place. All they heard of him was the crash as of a heavy animal plunging through the bush as he broke close behind them in the dark.

That same scout and another were leaving our own lines one night recently when they heard a stir in the bushes to one side of them. The scrub is full of such noises, and anyone new to the game is apt to imagine himself surrounded by all sorts of unseen watchers until he comes to recognise the scurry of a lizard or the stir of a grasshopper. These two were old hands, and they went on, when the same sign was repeated. They stopped. Something stirred again. By this time they were fairly certain that they were being tracked. But the chances were they were two to one, so they went on without appearing to heed. All down the gutter along which they went there followed them through the dark the pad, pad of a man's muffled feet. When they stopped, it stopped. When they went on, it went on. Lower down, where the gutter divided, there was a bush growing in the fork of it, and they meant to slip in behind this bush and get him as he went past. They dodged into the bush, and the dark figure of the man came down the gutter within a few yards of them, but instead of passing he lay down behind that bush also, on the other side from the two Australians. There they stayed, not knowing in the least what was in the head

...ing in the least what was in the head of that Turk, and he not knowing what was in theirs, but so close that they could almost hear each other breathing. In the distance on the other side of the bush, was a rustling of leaves. It seemed that the Turks were lying in wait for them. One of our men knew that a patrol of ours would come that way shortly, so they decided to wait till it drove their bird past him, but he never came. When the patrol disturbed him as it neared the place he withdrew quietly along another track and was unknown to our men, and his net was empty.

The Turk never fires a shot on those expeditions if it can possibly be avoided. He is there to get information and not to kill enemies, and if he can get the information

without his presence being discovered so much the better for his job. If there is fighting it is done, as far as possible, with the bayonet. On the day of landing one of our scouts, creeping forward, found a Turk in the bush watching one of our earliest parties. By the time the scout had crept round behind him the Turk was drawing a bead on the young officer who was landing. He had fired one shot, but before he could fire the second the scout's clubbed rifle had descended on the back of his head. That is the scout's training.

A soldier who is found killed beyond the lines can always be identified by the identity disc, which every British and Turkish soldier carries. A man will almost always have his name also written in some little pocket-book, or in his paybook, or on some memento addressed to his family, such as is found on many of our soldiers who are killed in action. During the August fighting a friend of mine had noticed a man of the Fourth Australian Brigade making his way, apparently alone, up towards the head of a valley where Turks were fairly thick. Two Turks in particular were visible there, and a few hours later my friend, in passing the same place, went back to see how that duel had ended. He found the Australian, but he was dead. He had been shot through the head, but in the last few moments of consciousness he had apparently remembered that he had no identity disc upon him. My friend searched for the disc and the paybook, but could find none, but in the dead man's hand was a scrap of paper, and on it was written a Russian name, Slavoff, I think, or something like it. It was the name of a private who enlisted in Mel.

think, or something like it. It was the name of a private who enlisted in Melbourne. His brain had served him to make that record before his senses failed.

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