



The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1863.

War Office, October 22, 1863.

THE Secretary of State for War has received three Despatches with their Enclosures, addressed to him by Lieutenant-General Cameron, C.B., Commanding the Troops in New Zealand, of which the following are copies :

*Head Quarters, Queen's Redoubt,
Auckland, New Zealand,*

MY LORD,

July 20, 1863.

ON the 17th instant, at 10 A.M., a large number of Natives were observed entrenching themselves on the heights of the Koheroa, in front of the Camp of the 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment, apparently with the intention of obstructing our further advance up the Waikato.

Lieutenant-Colonel Austen, who was commanding on the spot, immediately called in all his working parties, got his battalion under arms, and moved in skirmishing order against the enemy, followed by the detachments of the 12th and 70th, which were at the time arriving at the Camp as a reinforcement. The strength and composition of the force are shewn in the margin.*

Lieutenant-Colonel Gamble, Deputy Quarter-master-General, who happened to be on the Koheroa superintending the encampment of the 12th and 70th, having sent me a report of what was going on, I at once hastened across the Mungatawhiri, and overtook the troops during their advance.

When we came within musket shot of the enemy, he opened a sharp fire upon us, to which our skirmishers replied which such effect that he was soon compelled to retire. This he did slowly, and without any precipitation.

The ground over which he retired was most favourable for defence, as the only road by which we could advance against him led for about five miles over very narrow and tortuous fern ridges, the sides of which were too precipitous to admit of our turning his position by a flank movement, and at several well selected points completely commanding the narrow necks over which we were

* Detachment 1st Battalion 12th Foot—2 Captains, 3 Subalterns, 8 Serjeants, 3 Drummers, 135 Rank and File; 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment—1 Field Officer, 3 Captains, 8 Subalterns, 2 Staff, 11 Serjeants, 7 Drummers, 266 Rank and File; Detachment 70th Foot—1 Field Officer, 1 Captain, 6 Serjeants, 3 Drummers, 93 Rank and File. Total—2 Field Officers, 6 Captains, 11 Subalterns, 2 Staff, 25 Serjeants, 13 Drummers, 494 Rank and File.

compelled to move to the attack, he had constructed lines of rifle-pits.

These he defended with great obstinacy, and as we had no artillery in the field, we could only dislodge him from them with the bayonet, which was done with great gallantry by the young soldiers of the 14th, led by their commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Austen, who, I regret to say, received a wound in the arm during the action. After we had driven them from the second line of rifle-pits, where they made their most determined stand, a large number of them left the ridge, and turning to the right, retreated down a narrow and steep gully where they were exposed for a long time to a close and destructive fire from our men on the heights above, by which many of them were killed. The rest were driven before us until they reached the Maramarna (a small tributary of the Waikato), which they crossed precipitately, some in canoes, and others by swimming.

Having no means of effecting the passage of the river, we were obliged to discontinue the pursuit, and I accordingly ordered the troops back to camp.

I enclose a list of our casualties, which were few considering the time the engagement lasted (from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.), and the strength of some of the enemy's positions.

I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of all the officers and men engaged, or of the able manner in which the troops were led by their commanding officers, viz., Lieutenant-Colonel Austen, 14th; Major Ryan, 70th; and Major Miller, 12th.

Among the officers who had the good fortune to have the opportunity of distinguishing themselves by conspicuous forwardness in the attack, were Captain Strange, 14th, who did good service with the advanced skirmishers; Captain Phelps, who led his company to the charge; Lieutenants Armstrong and Glancy, and Ensign Green, 14th.

Surgeon-Major Carte, M.B., 2nd Battalion, 14th, the Senior Medical Officer in the field, rendered prompt assistance to the wounded, many of whom he attended under fire.

Colonel Mould, C.B., Commanding Royal Engineer, was also present, and ready to afford his valuable assistance, if required.

Lieut.-Colonel Gamble, the Deputy Quarter-master-General, Major M'Neill, Aide-de-Camp, and my extra Aide-de-Camp, Lieut. St. Hill, the