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SOUTH AFRICAN DESPATCHES.

War Office, February 8, 1901.

THE following Despatches and Enclosures have been received from Lord Roberts, K.G., V.C., Commander-in-Chief, South Africa:—

No. 1.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
MY LORD, Cape Town, 6th February, 1900.

NOW that I have been nearly a month in South Africa, and will shortly be leaving Cape Town for the operations which I propose to carry out for the relief of Kimberley and in the Orange Free State, it seems desirable that I should submit for the information of Her Majesty's Government a concise account of the state of affairs in this country as I found them on my arrival on the 10th January.

The force which was despatched from England between the 20th October and the early part of December had been greatly scattered. The Army Corps organization had been broken up, and even the formation of the Divisions and Brigades materially differed from what had been originally contemplated. On assuming the chief command, the first step which Sir Redvers Buller undertook was to despatch Lord Methuen with the Brigade of Guards, the 3rd, or Highland Brigade, and a third Brigade, improvised from three and a half battalions on the Lines of Communication which were immediately available, for the relief of Kimberley. As your Lordship is aware, this force succeeded in crossing the Modder River; but the subsequent attack on the Boer position at Magersfontein having been repulsed, Lord Methuen fell back on the river, where he has formed an entrenchment facing that thrown up by the enemy.

The original intention was that, simultaneously with Lord Methuen's advance, Lieutenant-General Clery, with the Second Division, should operate from Port Elizabeth by the Midland line of railway through Naauwpoort on Colesberg, and that Lieutenant-General Gatacre should similarly move from East London by the Eastern line of railway on Stormberg and Burghersdorp. This plan for occupying the Northern frontier of the Colony had to be abandoned owing to the urgent demands for assistance from Natal. In the middle of November, Lieutenant-General Clery was sent to Durban

with the 2nd, 4th, and 6th Brigades, being followed shortly afterwards by Sir Redvers Buller himself. On the 1st December, the 5th Brigade was ordered from Cape Town to Natal. With these reinforcements, and the force previously available, an attempt was made on the 15th December to effect the passage of the Tugela River in the vicinity of Colenso, but this having failed, Sir Redvers Buller was obliged to withdraw his troops to Chieveley. Meanwhile, the 5th Division had arrived at Cape Town, and after the action of the Tugela, Sir Redvers Buller directed its commander, Sir Charles Warren, with half of the 10th Brigade and the whole of the 11th Brigade, to proceed to Natal. Towards the end of November, the 1st Royal Dragoons and the 13th Hussars were also transferred to Natal, followed shortly afterwards by two squadrons of the 14th Hussars.

On arrival here on the 10th January, I found the state of affairs to be as follows:—On the west of the Cape Colony, Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen was occupying the position already described. Lieutenant-General French, with three Cavalry regiments and one and a half battalions of Infantry, was holding the line from Naauwpoort to Rensburg. Lieutenant-General Sir W. F. Gatacre, who had two batteries of Artillery and four and a half battalions under his orders, having been defeated in his attack on Stormberg, was occupying Sterkstroom and the country in its vicinity. In Natal, Sir Redvers Buller, having found himself unable to advance by the direct route to the relief of Ladysmith, had fallen back on Chieveley to await reinforcement by the 5th Division under Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren.

In view of the distance of my head-quarters from Natal, and of the fact that on the date of my arrival Sir Redvers Buller had made his dispositions for the second attempt to relieve Ladysmith, I thought it best to leave him a perfectly free hand, and not to interfere with his operations.

In the Cape Colony a serious feeling of unrest prevailed. The withdrawal of so large a portion of the Army Corps had encouraged the disloyal among the inhabitants, and I found that His Excellency the High Commissioner was extremely anxious as to whether it would be possible to preserve peace and order throughout the province. After consulting Sir Alfred Milner, I decided that it would be best to remain on the defensive until a sufficient force was

available to enable an advance to be made into the Orange Free State. I hoped that the effect of such an advance, if adequately supported, would be to relieve the hostile pressure at Ladysmith, and between Ladysmith and the Tugela, and also between the Modder River and Kimberley. In pursuance of this policy, and with a view to facilitating offensive action as soon as the strength and organization of the troops at my disposal would admit of it, I directed Lieutenant-Generals Lord Methuen and Gatacre to remain strictly on the defensive. Lieutenant-General French, with his headquarters at Rensburg, was instructed to patrol the country round Colesberg, and to keep the enemy, into whose hands that place had fallen, from moving further to the south. Shortly after my arrival, the troops of the 6th Division, under Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny, reached Cape Town, and were despatched to Naauwpoort, one of the brigades being temporarily detached for employment under Lieutenant-General French. The duty assigned to Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny was to allay unrest and check disaffection among the Colonial population, and to open up the railway line as far as possible from Middleburg in the direction of Stormberg.

A subject which from the first attracted my special attention was the development and organization of the Colonial forces, of which I was inclined to think that sufficient use had not been made. I therefore arranged for one mounted corps to be raised by Colonel Brabant, to whom, with the approval of the High Commissioner, the rank of Brigadier-General has been given. Inclusive of this corps, it is intended to place a body of Colonial mounted troops, about 3,000 strong, under Brigadier-General Brabant's command, on Lieutenant-General Gatacre's right flank, for the purpose of guarding the eastern portion of the Colony and pushing back the enemy from the neighbourhood of Stormberg. The headquarters of this Colonial force will be at Dordrecht, where it will be in readiness to operate northward towards Jamestown. Two other regiments, designated at the particular request of the members "Roberts's" and "Kitchener's Horse," have also been formed, chiefly from men who have found their way to South Africa from various parts of the world. Additional corps are being raised by influential gentlemen in the Colony, and every encouragement and assistance are being given to the men who desire to enlist.

Shortly after my arrival the question of reinforcements had to be dealt with. I was reluctant to indent on the home Army for an 8th Infantry Division and an additional Cavalry Brigade, and I expressed the opinion that it would suffice to order out two more Line battalions (one from Malta and the other from Egypt), two companies of Mounted Infantry from Burma, and 13 Militia battalions from England for duty on the Lines of Communication. The failure of the second attempt to relieve Ladysmith may possibly necessitate the despatch of the larger reinforcement, which I was at first prepared to dispense with.

Since I have been here I have taken no steps to render active assistance to General Sir Redvers Buller, as he had a force at his disposal which seemed sufficient for the relief of Ladysmith, and, after being reinforced by the 5th Division, he had informed me that his task would not be rendered easier by a further addition to the number of his troops. More-

over, I had no troops to spare. The frontier of the Cape Colony was weakly held, and the attitude of a portion of the Colonists bordering the Orange Free State was in some cases doubtful, and in others disloyal. The conclusion I arrived at was that no sensible improvement in the military situation could be hoped for until we were prepared to carry the war into the enemy's country, and all my efforts have accordingly been exerted in that direction.

This plan was, however, attended with considerable difficulties. The two main roads leading from Cape Colony to the Orange Free State were held in force by the Boers at the points where those roads crossed the Orange River, and it seemed certain that the bridges over that river would be destroyed, if the enemy could be forced to retire to the northern bank. Moreover, I could not overlook the fact that, even if either of these routes could be utilized, the movement of an army solely by means of a line of railway is most tedious, if not practically impossible. The advantage is all on the side of the enemy, who can destroy the line and occupy defensible positions when and where they please. In a hilly, enclosed country, or where any large river has to be crossed, they can block the line altogether, as was proved in the case of Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen on the Modder River, of Lieutenant-General French on the Orange River, and of General Sir Redvers Buller on the Tugela.

A railway is of the greatest assistance, it is indeed essential to an army for the conveyance of stores and supplies from the base, and it is a most valuable adjunct if it runs in the direction of the objective, but, even then, a certain proportion of the troops must be equipped with wheel or pack transport to enable supplies to be collected, and to render the force sufficiently mobile to deal with many tactical difficulties which have to be surmounted owing to the greatly increased range and power of modern projectiles.

No organized transport corps existed when I arrived in South Africa. Some thousands of mules have been collected and a number of ox and mule wagons had been purchased, but what is known as the regimental system had been adopted, which consists in providing each unit with sufficient transport for its ammunition, baggage, and two or three days' supplies. Such a system may answer well enough for peace manoeuvres where the troops march short distances daily for a week or ten days, and where depôts are established in advance from which the regimental supplies can be replenished. But this system is quite unsuitable for extensive operations in a district where no food, and scarcely any forage can be procured, where advance depôts cannot be formed, and where all the necessities required by an army in the field have to be carried for a considerable distance. It is, moreover, a very extravagant system, for during a campaign every corps is not required to be continually on the move. A certain number have to garrison important points and guard lines of communication, and for these transport is not needed. On the regimental system, the transport attached to such corps would remain with them, and would therefore not be available for general purposes, or, in the event of its being taken away from them, no one would be specially responsible for its supervision.

Major-General Lord Kitchener's experience

in this important matter coincided with my own, and we decided that the first thing to be done was to form a properly organized Transport Department.

On the 26th January I received intelligence of Sir Redvers Buller's withdrawal from Spion Kop to Potgieter's Drift. The second attempt to relieve Ladysmith having failed, it has become imperatively necessary to give early effect to the policy indicated above. With this object I am collecting as large a force as possible to the north of the Orange River Railway Station, with a view of joining the troops under Lord Methuen's command, and proceeding, in the first instance, to relieve Kimberley. The Column, including Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, will number 35,000 men, with about 100 guns. On the relief of Kimberley being accomplished, I propose to leave a moderate garrison at that place, and with the remainder of the force, to move eastward for the purpose of threatening Bloemfontein and seizing some point on the railway between that place and Springfontein. This operation will, I trust, cause the Boers to reduce the force which they have concentrated round Ladysmith, and enable our garrison there to be relieved before the end of February.

In order to carry out the concentration north of the Orange River, I shall have to make use of the whole of the 6th and 7th Divisions, and am obliged to postpone the reinforcement of Lieutenant-General Gatacre's force, although it is barely sufficient effectively to control a civil population which contains many disturbing elements, or to regain possession of the territory which the enemy has invaded. I am compelled also to withdraw the greater part of the force under Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny from Naauwpoort and its neighbourhood, in spite of the importance of restoring railway communication between Middleburg and Stormberg. The arrival of 15 additional battalions* of the Line and Militia will place matters on a better footing, but in view of the possibility that the third attempt to relieve Ladysmith may fail, the deadlock in Natal which will follow, and its probable effect on the South African population, I have reluctantly arrived at the conclusion that more troops are needed for the active prosecution of the war.

On the 28th January I applied for another Infantry Division and Cavalry Brigade from home. The Cavalry Brigade has been placed under orders for field service, but the despatch of the Infantry Division has I am informed been suspended for the present. If, as I hope, the relief of Ladysmith can be effected, at any rate as soon as the enemy's attention has been distracted by offensive operations on our part in the Orange Free State, the transfer of an Infantry Division from Natal to Cape Colony may perhaps become feasible. On this point, however, I shall be better able to offer an opinion when the result of the further operations in Natal is known.

It might appear at first sight that the force in this country is equal to the military requirements of the situation, but the difficulties of carrying on war in South Africa do not appear to be sufficiently appreciated by the British public. In an enemy's country, we should know exactly how we stood; but out here, we have not only to defeat the enemy on the northern frontier, but to maintain law and order within the Colonial limits. Ostensibly,

* The Line battalions will not arrive until the middle of March.

the Dependency is loyal, and no doubt a large number of its inhabitants are sincerely attached to the British rule and strongly opposed to Boer domination. On the other hand, a considerable section would prefer a Republican form of government, and influenced by ties of blood and association, side with the Orange Free State and Transvaal. Even the public service at the Cape is not free from men whose sympathies with the enemy may lead them to divulge secrets and give valuable assistance to the Boer leaders in other ways.

I append tabular statements showing the strength of the troops in the Cape Colony and Natal respectively on the 31st January, 1900. The numbers as regards Natal are only approximate, as no recent returns are available.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

Enclosure 1.

Effective Fighting Strength of Force in Natal on 31st January, 1900. (Approximate only.)

At Ladysmith.

Cavalry—4 regiments; total 1,200.

Artillery—6 batteries Royal Field Artillery, 36 guns; total 36 guns and 1,080 men.

Infantry—11 battalions, total 7,500*.

Between the Tugela River and Durban.

Cavalry—2½ regiments, total 1,100.

Artillery—

1 battery, Royal Horse Artillery, 6 guns,
7½ batteries, Royal Field Artillery, 44 guns,
1 mounted battery, 6 guns,
1 howitzer battery, 6 guns; total 62 guns,
1,800 men.

Infantry—

5½ brigades, 16,500,

Other than above, 800; total 17,300.

Colonial troops—

Field Artillery, 22 guns; total 22 guns,
550 men.

Mounted, 1,500,

Dismounted, 800; total 2,300.

Infantry Volunteers, 2,000.

Grand total, 34,830 men and 120 guns.

To above may be added—

Royal Engineers, 1,100.

Army Service and other departmental corps, 1,472.

Sick.—Number unknown.

Men at depôts, and otherwise employed.—

Number unknown.

Effective Fighting Strength of Force in Cape Colony on 31st January, 1900.

Cavalry—8½ regiments; total 4,196.

Artillery—

8 batteries, Royal Horse Artillery, 48 guns.

12 batteries, Royal Field Artillery, 72 guns.

2 howitzer batteries, 12 guns.

2 siege companies, 12 guns.†

1 siege company, 6 guns.‡

Total 150 guns and 4,500 men.

Mounted Infantry; total 3,050.

Infantry—

1st Brigade, 3,754.

3rd „ 3,121.

9th „ 2,754.

13th „ 2,885.

14th „ 3,322.

15th „ 3,601.

Other than above, 14,372.§

* Including 7th and 8th Brigades.

† 8—6-inch howitzers; 4—4.7-inch guns.

‡ 5-inch B.L. guns.

§ Including Royal Canadian Regiment, 925 strong.

Total 33,809.

Colonial troops—

Cape Colony, mounted, 2,000.

Over sea, mounted, 1,385.

Total 3,385.

Cape Colony, Infantry Volunteers, 2,960.

Grand total 51,900 men and 150 guns.

To above may be added—

Royal Engineers, 2,000.

Army Service and other departmental corps, 4,278.

Sick, 2,118.

Grand total, including above, 60,296 men and 150 guns.

No. 2.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
Camp Jacobsdal,

My Lord, 16th February, 1900.

IN continuation of my letter No. 1, dated 6th February, 1900, I have the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that I left Cape Town for the Modder River on the evening of that date, arriving at Lord Methuen's camp on the morning of the 8th. Before quitting the seat of Government I received a memorandum from the High Commissioner, in which Sir Alfred Milner reviewed the political and military situation, and laid stress on the possibility of a general rising among the disaffected Dutch population, should the Cape Colony be denuded of troops for the purpose of carrying on offensive operations in the Orange Free State. In reply I expressed the opinion that the military requirements of the case demanded an early advance into the enemy's country; that such an advance, if successful, would lessen the hostile pressure both on the northern frontier of the Colony and in Natal, that the relief of Kimberley had to be effected before the end of February,* and would set free most of the troops encamped on the Modder River, and that the arrival of considerable reinforcements from home, especially of Field Artillery, by the 19th February, would enable those points along the frontier which were weakly held to be materially strengthened. I trusted, therefore, that his Excellency's apprehensions would prove groundless. No doubt a certain amount of risk had to be run, but protracted inaction seemed to me to involve more serious dangers than the bolder course which I have decided to adopt.

Since the date of my former letter important events have occurred in Natal. As your Lordship is aware, Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed on the 29th January to the effect that he had discovered a new drift to the east of the Spion Kop, and that in view of the objections to further delay in relieving Ladysmith he proposed to make a fresh attempt by that route as soon as a battery of Horse Artillery had reached him from India, without waiting to see what effect my intended operations in the Orange Free State might produce on the force opposed to him.

On the 6th February I received a telegram from Sir Redvers Buller reporting that he had pierced the enemy's line, and could hold the hill which divided their position, but that to drive back the enemy on either flank, and thus give his own artillery access to the Ladysmith plain, 10 miles from Sir George White's position,

* I had enquired by heliograph and been informed by Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich that Kimberley could not hold out longer than the end of February.

would cost him from 2,000 to 3,000 men, and success was doubtful. General Buller enquired if I thought that the chance of relieving Ladysmith was worth such a risk. On the same day I replied that Ladysmith must be relieved even at the cost anticipated. I urged Sir Redvers Buller to persevere, and desired him to point out to his troops that the honour of the Empire was in their hands, and to assure them that I had no doubt whatever of their being successful.

On the 9th February General Buller reported that he found himself not strong enough to relieve Ladysmith without reinforcements, and that, with the force at his disposal, he regarded the operation upon which he was engaged as impracticable.

As Sir Charles Warren confirms the views of Sir Redvers Buller, I have informed the latter that, though I have no wish to interfere with his dispositions, or to stop his harassing the Boers as much as possible, my original instructions must hold good.

I received reports on the 2nd February that parties of the enemy had been observed some 8 miles to the west of the railway between the Orange and Modder Rivers, their object apparently being either to injure the line or to get grazing for their horses and oxen. I therefore gave orders on the 3rd February for Major-General MacDonald with the Highland Brigade, two squadrons of the 9th Lancers, the 62nd Field Battery and No. 7 Field Company, Royal Engineers, to move from the Modder camp down the left bank of the Modder River and make a show of constructing a small field redoubt commanding the Koodoosberg Drift, distant about 17 miles from the camp. The object I had in view was to threaten the enemy's line of communication from the west of the railway to their position at Magersfontein, and also to lead the Boers to believe that I intended to turn their entrenchments from the left of the Modder River camp.

The troops marched early on the 4th, bivouacked for the night at Fraser's Drift, and reached Koodoosberg Drift at 2 p.m. on the 5th, the enemy's scouts being met with as soon as the cavalry approached the drift. The position was reconnoitred that afternoon, and on the morning of the 6th February work was begun on the redoubt, a site for which was chosen on the north or right bank of the stream in close proximity to the drift. The enemy, however, had now occupied in some strength a kopje to the north of the drift, whence the site of the redoubt was within artillery range, and it became necessary to dislodge them. After some desultory fighting the southern portion of the kopje was occupied by the Highland Brigade, and fighting continued throughout the day, both on the summit of the hill and between it and the river. As the number of the enemy was manifestly increasing, Major-General MacDonald thought it desirable to ask for the reinforcement which had been held in readiness to support him. This, consisting of two batteries of Horse Artillery and a Brigade of Cavalry, under Major-General Babington, marched from the camp at Modder to Koodoosberg along the northern bank of the river, and arrived at about 3 p.m. on the 7th. The fight which had recommenced at daybreak continued until nightfall, the enemy gradually falling back, and being followed up by the Horse Artillery and Cavalry.

It being evident that permanently to hold the Koodoosberg Drift would require a larger

force than could be spared, and the troops employed there being by this time required elsewhere, the Cavalry and Infantry Brigades were ordered to return to the Modder River camp, which they did on the 8th without molestation, the Boers having previously fallen back from the position.

I will now briefly describe the operations for the relief of Kimberley, the troops selected for this purpose being detailed in the annexed return.

On the 11th February the Cavalry Division, under Lieutenant-General French, with seven batteries of Horse Artillery and three Field batteries, proceeded from Modder River camp direct to Ramdam, the 7th Infantry Division, under Lieutenant-General Tucker, proceeding to the same point from the railway stations of Enslin and Graspan. On the 12th February I moved to Ramdam; the Cavalry Division marched to the Riet River, occupied with slight opposition the Dekiel and Waterval Drifts, and reconnoitred across the river; the 7th Division proceeded to the Dekiel Drift; and the 6th Division, under Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny, which had moved by rail to Enslin and Graspan, replaced the 7th at Ramdam. On the 13th February the Cavalry Division advanced to the Modder River, seizing the Ronddavel and Klip Drifts, while the 6th Division moved from Ramdam to the Waterval Drift on the Riet River. The 9th Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Colville, proceeded on this day to Ramdam, while the 7th Division was occupied in getting supply wagons across the Dekiel Drift, where I established my head-quarters. On the 14th February the Cavalry Division reconnoitred to the north of the Modder River; the 6th Division moved down the Riet River from the Waterval to the Wegdraai Drift; the 7th Division from the Dekiel Drift to the Waterval Drift, and the 9th Division from Ramdam to the Waterval Drift. My head-quarters were at the Waterval Drift.

For some time previous to this, I had been moving troops to the east of the Orange River station, in order to attract the enemy's attention to that quarter, and, if possible to give rise to the idea that my intention was to make for Bloemfontein, *viâ* Fauresmith.

A considerable force of Cavalry and Mounted Infantry was collected at Zoutpan's Drift, under the command of Colonel Hannay, and that Officer was ordered to proceed on the 11th February towards the Riet River, to act in conjunction with the Cavalry Division. Near Wolve Kraal Colonel Hannay came in contact with the Boers, who held the hills on his right flank. He handled his troops with ability, and while he contained the enemy with a portion of his force, he pushed his baggage and main body through to Ramdam.

Late in the evening of the 14th February, the 6th Division marched to Ronddavel Drift, on the Modder, and the 7th Division to the Wegdraai Drift, on the Riet. On this date troops from the 6th Division entered Jacobsdal, and found it deserted by the enemy, though the houses were still occupied by their women and children. The troops were fired on when returning to camp, and a further encounter took place on a stronger detachment being sent out to drive off the Boers. This detachment fell back before nightfall with the loss of eight killed and wounded. On the 15th February I proceeded from the Waterval Drift to Wegdraai, accompanied by the 9th Division.

During the day of the 14th I informed Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny how essential it was that he should join hands with Lieutenant-General French, in order to free the Cavalry for a further advance, and notwithstanding the long and fatiguing march of the previous day, the 6th Division pushed on that night across the veldt, and reached Klip Drift before day break on the 15th February.

Being thus free to act, Lieutenant-General French at 9.30 A.M. proceeded on his journey towards Kimberley. The enemy's suspicions had by this time been aroused, and they had been able to occupy two lines of kopjes, a few miles north of the Modder River, and through which the road to Kimberley *viâ* Abons Dam and Olifantsfontein runs. Bringing a fire to bear upon these kopjes by the Brigade Divisions of Horse Artillery, under command of Lieutenant-Colonels Eustace and Rochfort, and escorted by the 1st Cavalry Brigade under Colonel Porter, Lieutenant-General French, with the 2nd and 3rd Brigades under Brigadier-Generals Broadwood and Gordon, and the Brigade Division Horse Artillery under Colonel Davidson, galloped through the defile in extended order until he reached some low hills from which he was able to cover the advance of the rear troops. Casualties—1 Officer (Lieutenant A. E. Hesketh, 16th Lancers) killed, and 20 of all ranks wounded.

At Kimberley, the inhabitants were found to be in good health and spirits. On the 16th the 6th Division marched to Klip Drift and was opposed by the enemy, who were driven off with loss. The 9th Division joined the 7th at Wegdraai, 200 Mounted Infantry under Colonel Ridley being left behind at Waterval to escort a supply column of ox wagons thence to Wegdraai. Shortly after the departure of the 9th Division from Waterval, a Boer force with several guns, which must have come up during the night, attacked Colonel Ridley's detachment, and did a good deal of injury to the oxen and wagons of the supply column. On hearing of this, I sent back a reinforcement, consisting of one Field battery, one battalion, and 300 Mounted Infantry at 10 A.M., and subsequently despatched a second battery and battalion, on the arrival of which the enemy disappeared.

The native ox drivers had, however, taken to flight, so that it was impossible to inspan the ox teams. The wagons contained a quantity of supplies of groceries for the troops and of grain for animals, and I felt that to abandon them meant a considerable loss to the stores on which we had to depend. In view, however, of the absolute necessity of pushing on the advance, and realising, as I did, that to leave troops at Waterval Drift until such time as the convoy could again be set in motion would weaken my force and probably cause it to be delayed, I decided to abandon the supplies, wagons, and oxen, and to order the troops to withdraw to Wegdraai Drift during the night, which operation was carried out unmolested by the enemy.

At 11 A.M. on this day, I directed Major-General Wavell's Brigade, of the 7th Division, to occupy Jacobsdal, which was done with very slight opposition. The officers and men who had been wounded and taken prisoners the previous day were found in the hospital at this place, as well as several other wounded men, both British and Boer. All had been taken the greatest care of by the German Ambulance.

On the 16th February I moved my head-

quarters to Jacobsdal, replenished my supplies from Honey Nest Kloof and the Modder camp, and established telegraphic communication between the latter place and Jacobsdal. The Cavalry Division has been following up the enemy to the north of Kimberley, and the 6th Division, which has marched to the east of Klip Drift, has been similarly occupied. By midday I received information from Lord Methuen that the Magersfontein entrenchments had been abandoned, and the latest reports point to a general retreat of the Boers in the direction of Bloemfontein. It is my intention to follow them up as rapidly as possible, and by taking full advantage of the shock which they have sustained, to break up their organization as a fighting force. Lord Methuen has been ordered to proceed to Kimberley, after restoring the railway line, for the purpose of putting affairs into order, arranging for the military control of the town and district, and taking steps to re-open communication with Mafeking.

In conclusion I may mention a few matters of minor importance which have been dealt with during the last 10 days.

On my way from Cape Town to the Modder

River I inspected the field hospitals at De Aar and Orange River, and finding the accommodation inadequate gave orders for its being enlarged, and for more nurses' quarters being provided. I also arranged that additional nurses should be posted to these hospitals.

To meet medical requirements I have applied to your Lordship for the personnel needed to establish another general hospital in the vicinity of Cape Town.

One of the most pressing needs in South African warfare is the supply of a sufficient quantity of drinking water to the troops when marching, especially in the daytime, the climate being an extremely dry one and the sun's heat very trying. The number of water-carts at present available is inadequate. Moreover, these carts cannot follow the troops over stony or broken ground, and I have, therefore, asked for 2,000 bheesties, with a due proportion of mussels and pakhals to be sent here from India.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

	1st Division. Lieut.-General Lord Methuen.		6th Division. Lieut.-General T. Kelly- Kenny, C.B.		7th Division. Lieut.-General C. Tucker, C.B.		9th Division. Lieut.-General Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B.		Artillery.			
	Major-General Pole- Carew, C.B.		Major-General F. C. E. Knox.		Major-General Sir H. Chermside, K.C.M.G.		Major-General A. J. MacDonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C.			Guns.	Batts.	Ammn. Cols., &c.
Divisional Staff.	1st Brigade		13th Brigade		14th Brigade		3rd Brigade		R.H.A.—			
1st Brigade Staff.	3rd Bn. Grenadier Gds.	215	2nd Bn. E. Kent Regt.	786	2nd Bn. Norfolk Regt.	814	2nd Bn. Black Watch.	649	"P," "G" ..	12	371	66
1st Bn.	1st Bn. Coldstream Gds.	965	2nd Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment	785	2nd Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment	858	1st Bn. Highland L.L.	950	"Q," "T," "U" ..	18	551	107
2nd Bn.	2nd Bn. Coldstream Gds.	921	1st Bn. W. Riding Regt.	750	2nd Bn. Hampshire Regt.	700	2nd Bn. Seaforth Highrs.	703	"Q," "R" ..	12	371	Cav. Div. 142
3rd Bn.	1st Bn. Scots Gds.	953	1st Bn. Oxfordshire L.L.	614	1st Bn. K.O.S.B.	950	1st Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highrs.	819	R.F.A.—			No. 1, special. 123
4th Bn.	No. 18 Co.		No. 7 Co.		14th Brigade		Cape Vol. M.S.C.		18th, 62nd, 75th ..	18	523	C.T.(1, 5), } 83
Bearer Co.	No. 18 Co.		No. 18 Co.		14th Brigade		No. 3 Co.		76th, 81st, 82nd ..	18	523	
Field Hospital.	Colonel C. Douglas, A.D.C.		Brigadier-General T. E. Stephenson.		Major-General A. G. Wavell.		Major-General H. Smith- Dorrien, D.S.O.		20th, 38th ..	12	353	
Brigade Staff	9th Brigade		18th Brigade		15th Brigade		19th Brigade		Howitzers—			97
1st Bn.	1st Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers	617	2nd Bn. Royal Warwick- shire Regiment	850	2nd Bn. Cheshire Regt.	830	1st Bn. Gordon Highrs.	900	37th, 65th ..	10	403	
2nd Bn.	1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment	447	1st Bn. Yorkshire Regt.	936	1st Bn. East Lancashire Regiment	910	2nd Bn. Duke of Corn- wall's L.I.	836	Squadron, 14th Hussars	164		
3rd Bn.	2nd Bn. Northampton- shire Regiment	850	1st Bn. Essex Regt.	787	2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers	961	2nd Bn. Shropshire L.I.	886				
4th Bn.	2nd Bn. K.O. Yorkshire L.L.	840	1st Bn. Welsh Regt.	970	2nd Bn. North Stafford- shire Regiment	900	Royal Canadian Regt...	925				
Bearer Co.	No. 1 Co.		6th Div. Field Hospital		15th Brigade		7th Div. Field Hospital		Colonials.			
Field Hospital.	No. 19 Co.		No. 3 Section, Cape Field Hospital		15th Brigade		No. 1 Section, Cape Field Hospital		Cape—			
Royal Engineer Staff.	17th Field Co.	194	38th Field Co.	190	9th Field Co.	194			Bailey ..	250		
Field Co.	1st Division		6th Division		7th Division				Rimington's Guides ..	150		
„ Hospital.									Roberts's Horse ..	550		
									Kitchener's Horse ..	400		
CAVALRY.												
Lieut.-General J. D. P. French.												
	1st Brigade. Colonel T. O. Porter.		2nd Brigade. Brigadier-General R. Broadwood.		Mounted Infantry. 1st Brigade. Colonel O. C. Hannay.		Mounted Infantry. 2nd Brigade. Colonel C. P. Ridley.		Over sea—			
Divisional Staff									N.S.W. Lancers ..	150		
1st Brigade Staff									N.Z. Mounted Rifles..	204		
1st Regiment	9th Lancers	418	Household Cavalry	625	1st Regiment	418	2nd Regiment	440	Queensland Mtd. Inf.	275		
2nd Regiment	12th Lancers	500	Scots Greys	438	3rd Regiment	460	4th Regiment	450	N.S.W. Ambulance ..			
3rd Regiment	16th Lancers	540	Inniskillings	596	5th Regiment	480	6th Regiment	460				
4th Regiment	Carabineers	464	10th Hussars	458	7th Regiment	450	8th Regiment	430				
Bearer Co.	No. 9 Co.		No. 12 Co.									
Field Hospital.	No. 9 Co.		No. 6 Co.									

AVERAGES.

Infantry—			
1st Brigade	..	938.5	
9th "	..	786.8 (3½ battalions)	
13th "	..	721.25	
18th "	..	885.75	
14th "	..	830.5	
15th "	..	900.25	
3rd "	..	780.25	
19th "	..	886.75	
Average per regiment 841.2			
Cavalry—			
1st Brigade, 1st Division..		480.5	
2nd "	..	529.25	
1st "	..	438.25	
2nd "	..	445	
Average per regiment.. 473.25			
TOTALS.			
Infantry	..	26,527	
Cavalry	..	7,572*	
Colonials (mounted)	..	1,979	
Guns	..	100	

No. 3.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
Camp Paardeberg,

My Lord, 28th February, 1900.

IN my letter No. 2, dated the 16th February, 1900, the narrative of the operations in the Orange Free State was carried up to the occupation of Jacobsdal, and the pursuit of the enemy in an easterly direction to Klip Drift, on the Modder River. On the above date 78 ox wagons loaded with stores, and two wagons containing Mauser rifles, explosives, and ammunition, were captured at Klip Drift, by the 6th Division. On the evening of that day I ordered the 9th Division, consisting of the 3rd and 19th Brigades under Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Colville, to Klip Kraal Drift. Early the next morning Lieutenant-General Tucker, commanding the 7th Division, with the 14th Brigade, marched from Wegdraai Drift to Jacobsdal which the other brigade of the division, the 15th, under Major-General Wavell, had occupied since the 15th February.

On the 17th February arrangements were made for the military administration of Kimberley, and the protection of the railway line between that place and the Orange River. The command was entrusted to Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, who was directed to move his head-quarters to Kimberley as soon as the railway had been repaired. The following troops were placed at his disposal:—

1,000 Imperial Yeomanry.

20th and 38th Batteries, Royal Field Artillery.

2 Canadian Field Batteries.

1 New South Wales Field Battery.

The 9th Infantry Brigade, consisting of—

1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.

1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

2nd Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment.

2nd Battalion Yorkshire Light Infantry.

A second Infantry Brigade consisting of—

1st Battalion Highland Light Infantry.

3 Militia Battalions, leaving England on the 15th February, and due at Cape Town about the 10th March.

* Not including squadron 14th Hussars.

On the arrival of the Militia Battalions, the 2nd Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment is to join the 18th Brigade, and the 1st Battalion Munster Fusiliers the 19th Brigade.

The 1st or Guards Brigade was thus set free to join the force operating in the Orange Free State.

While leaving it to Lord Methuen to employ the troops under his command as he might think best, I impressed on him the desirability of holding the Modder Railway Bridge with a battalion of Infantry in an entrenched position, and of guarding other important points along the line. I also desired him gradually to break up the Field Hospital at Modder River by the transfer of the sick and wounded to Cape Town.

On the 17th and 18th February my headquarters remained at Jacobsdal with the 7th Division. On the former date the pursuing troops came into contact with the enemy under Cronje below Paardeberg Drift. Throughout the day a series of rear-guard actions took place, the enemy skilfully seizing one defensible position after another and delaying our advance. The Boers continued their retreat, and on the morning of the 18th were found to be holding a position in the bed and on the north bank of the Modder, 3 miles above Paardeberg Drift, where the river makes a curve to the north. In this position they had begun to entrench themselves during the previous night. As soon as our troops came up, the 6th Division occupied the ground to the south of the stream opposite the Boer laager, with Mounted Infantry in its front to the east. The Highland Brigade was also on the south side of the Modder, while the 19th Brigade of the same Division, under Major-General Smith-Dorrien, advanced along the north side, on which also two Brigades of Cavalry under Lieutenant-General French were converging from the direction of Kimberley. Early in the afternoon it seemed likely that the laager would be captured, but the Boers held their ground so obstinately, and it was so difficult to force a passage through the trees and undergrowth fringing the river on both banks, that the troops had to be drawn off. Heavy loss was inflicted on the enemy, while our own loss was hardly less serious, the casualties being as follows:—

Officers (Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.—

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Aldworth, D.S.O.;

Captain E. B. Wardlaw; Captain B. A.

Newbury. Seaforth Highlanders.—2nd

Lieutenant R. H. McClure. Argyll and

Sutherland Highlanders.—Lieutenant G.

E. Courtenay. West Riding Regiment.—

Lieutenant F. J. Siordet. 1st Battalion

Yorkshire Regiment.—2nd Lieutenant A.

C. Neave. Oxfordshire Light Infantry.—

Lieutenant A. R. Bright; 2nd Lieutenant

V. A. Ball-Aston. King's Royal Rifles.—

Captain J. Dewar; Lieutenant E. Percival.

Norfolk Regiment.—Lieutenant J. C.

Hylton-Joliffe. Seaforth Highlanders.—

2nd Lieutenant D. P. Monypenny. Mounted

Infantry Staff.—Colonel O. O. Hannay.

Welsh Regiment.—Lieutenant Angell)

killed, 15; wounded, 54; missing, 8;

prisoners, 3.

Men—killed, 183; wounded, 851; missing,

88; prisoners, 9.

The Officers and men shown as missing must, I am afraid, have been killed, as the enemy could not have sent prisoners to the rear, while only the numbers shown above as prisoners

have been released by the eventual capture of the laager.

A kopje to the south-east of the position, commanding the Boer entrenchments, and the whole course of the stream from the Paardeberg Drift upwards, was captured during the afternoon of the 18th, but retaken by the enemy after nightfall, owing to the Mounted Infantry who held it having gone down to the river to water their horses.

On the evening of this day I directed the Brigade of Guards to march from their camp at Modder along the north bank of the river to Klip Drift. I also ordered the 14th Brigade of the 7th Division, under Major-General Sir Herbert Chermiside, to proceed from Jacobsdal to the Paardeberg camp, distant about 30 miles, which was reached on the evening of the 19th.

Leaving Jacobsdal at 4 A.M. on the 19th, I reached Paardeberg at 10 A.M. When I arrived on the scene I learnt that an armistice of 24 hours had been granted to General Cronje, who had asked for it on the plea that he desired to bury his dead. This armistice I immediately revoked, and ordered a vigorous bombardment of the enemy's position. General Cronje knew, as we knew, that considerable reinforcements were hastening to his assistance from Natal and from the south, and his request was obviously only an expedient to gain time.

I found the troops in camp were much exhausted by their previous marching and fighting, and I therefore decided not to make a second assault on the laager, the capture of which by a "coup-de-main" would have entailed a further loss of life, which did not appear to me to be warranted by the military exigencies of the situation. During the morning of the 20th February the kopje on the south-east, which I have already mentioned, was recaptured, the enemy abandoning their defences on being threatened in rear by the Cavalry and Mounted Infantry. In the afternoon the Boer laager and the entrenchments surrounding it were bombarded for several hours with Naval guns, 5-inch howitzers and field guns, much damage being done to the enemy's wagons, trek oxen, and horses. On the 21st and 22nd the bombardment was continued, and trenches were gradually pushed forward on both flanks of the river, but chiefly on the north, in view of an eventual assault, should such an alternative be forced upon me.

After his force had been surrounded, Cronje contrived to open heliographic communication with Bloemfontein, and doubtless asked for assistance, as reinforcements began to come up in scattered parties of varying strength from the east and south-east. Each commando was composed of men belonging to different districts, some of them having been withdrawn from Ladysmith and others from the northern frontier of the Cape Colony. On the morning of the 23rd February the 1st Battalion Yorkshire Regiment engaged one of these parties, about 2,000 strong, at the eastern end of the position south of the river, and drove off the enemy with heavy loss, losing themselves 3 Officers and 17 men wounded. Later in the day the 2nd Battalion of the Buffs, which had come up in support of the Yorkshire Regiment, captured 80 Boer prisoners. Similar parties of the enemy appeared in other directions, but were beaten back without difficulty by our troops. After being repulsed the Boers seem in most cases to have dispersed, whether to their homes or to join other commandoes—it is impossible to say.

No. 27282.

B

On this day a balloon reconnaissance was made of the Boer laager and entrenchments, which showed that much injury had been done to the enemy's wagons and stores by shell fire. On the 24th February 40 more prisoners were taken and a considerable number of Natives came in from the enemy's camp both on this day and on the previous days, having managed to escape during the night time. The services of these Kaffir refugees are being utilised to look after trek oxen and slaughter cattle, about 800 of which were captured in the vicinity of the Boer laager. Our casualties from the 19th to the 24th February inclusive, were as follows:—

Officers—wounded, 12.

Men—killed, 9; wounded, 102; missing, 8

Nothing calling for special notice occurred on the 25th February, except that heavy rain caused the Modder River to rise over 3 feet, and thus delayed the movement of convoys from and to the advanced base at the Modder Station as well as from and to Kimberley, where a supplementary Commissariat Depot had been established. I may here mention that the railway to Kimberley was re-opened on the 18th, and that Lord Methuen established his headquarters there on the same day.

Early on the 26th four 6-inch howitzers arrived at this camp from Modder, and the Boer laager was again shelled during the afternoon.

At 3 A.M. on the 27th the Royal Canadian Regiment, and No. 7 Company, Royal Engineers, commanded respectively by Lieutenant-Colonel W. D. Otter and Lieutenant-Colonel W. F. Kincaid, supported by the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, advanced under a heavy rifle fire to within 80 yards of the enemy's defences, and succeeded in entrenching themselves, with the loss of 2 Officers wounded, 7 men killed, and 27 wounded. A gallant deed, creditable to all who took part in it.

At 6 A.M. I received a letter from General P. A. Cronje, making an unconditional surrender, and throwing himself and his troops on Her Majesty's clemency. The following is a translation:—

"Head-quarter Laager,

"Modder River,

"27th February, 1900.

"Honoured Sir.

"Herewith I have the honour to inform you that the Council of War, which was held here last evening, resolved to surrender unconditionally with the forces here, being compelled to do so under existing circumstances. They therefore throw themselves on the clemency of Her Britannic Majesty.

"As a sign of surrender a white flag will be hoisted from 6 A.M. to-day. The Council of War requests that you will give immediate orders for all further hostilities to be stopped, in order that more loss of life may be prevented.

"I have, &c.,

"(Signed) P. A. CRONJE,

"General.

"To Field Marshal Lord Roberts.

"P.S.—Messrs. G. R. Keizer, my secretary, and H. C. Penzhorn, are authorized to arrange all details with your Lordship."

Cronje was received by me in camp at 8 A.M., and he with the other prisoners, numbering 3,919 men, exclusive of 150 wounded, were despatched in the afternoon to Cape Town.

In addition to the prisoners' rifles and a large quantity of Mauser ammunition, three 7.5

centimetre Krupp field guns, one old pattern 12-pr. quick-firing gun, and one Vickers-Maxim automatic 3·7 centimetre quick-firing gun have been taken, as well as many ox and mule wagons.

A very large area has to be occupied in a country like this, consisting of flat plains with isolated hills or kopjes, to prevent the enemy from seizing one or more of the latter, and thence by long-range gun and rifle fire rendering the interior of the position untenable. The perimeter of the Paardeberg encampment surrounding the Boer laager was about 24 miles, and the distances from one point to another added greatly to the labours of the troops.

I enclose a list of prisoners taken on 27th February.

I am sanguine enough to hope that the complete defeat and surrender of Cronje will materially improve the prospects of the campaign. For over two months he held us in check at Magersfontein, and his following included many influential men both from the Orange Free State and from the South African Republic. The despatch of these men, with nearly 4,000 other prisoners, to Cape Town, cannot fail to encourage the loyal inhabitants of the Cape Colony and Natal, and to dishearten the disaffected, while the capture of one of their ablest and most determined commanders must inflict a severe blow on the Boer cause.

It is my present intention to halt here for about a week longer, in order to get the Cavalry and Artillery horses into better condition, replenish my supplies of food and ammunition, and prepare my transport train for a further advance. On reaching Bloemfontein I propose to reopen railway communication between that place and the Midland railway line, and to transfer my advanced base from the Modder River Station and Kimberley to Colesberg or Naauwpoort. In anticipation of this transfer, and to relieve the congested state of the docks at Cape Town, I have directed a number of vessels carrying stores and supplies to proceed to East London.

Since I last addressed your Lordship the situation on the frontier north of Naauwpoort has remained virtually unchanged. On the enemy at Colesberg being reinforced, Major-General Clements found it necessary to withdraw from Rensburg to Arundel, where he experienced no difficulty in maintaining his position. A portion of the Boer force has now retired for the purpose of covering Bloemfontein, and on the 27th February Rensburg was re-occupied by our troops.

On the eastern frontier Brigadier-General Brabant moved forward on the evening of the 16th February, and, after continuous fighting on the 17th, stormed the Boer position near Dordrecht.

On the 23rd February Lieutenant-General Gatacre made a reconnaissance in the direction of Stormberg, which showed that the hostile garrison had been reduced in men and guns. Our casualties on this occasion amounted to 2 killed, 2 wounded, and 6 missing, among the last being included Captain the Hon. R. de Montmorency, V.C., 21st Lancers, and Major P. R. Hockin, 2nd Devonshire Volunteer Artillery, two very promising Officers.

On the 24th February Lieutenant-General Sir W. Gatacre provided a garrison for Dordrecht by moving to that place from Bird River 2 guns, 2 companies of infantry, 50 signallers, and 50 mounted police. The garrison was

directed to entrench and occupy a commanding position to the south of the town.

As regards Natal, the reports received from General Sir Redvers Buller are to the following effect. On the 14th February he attacked strong positions held by the enemy on the right bank of the Tugela immediately to the east of Colenso. These positions on the Cingolo and Monte Cristo heights covered the left flank of the Boers. Cingolo was gradually occupied by our troops, and on the 18th February the 4th and 6th Brigades assaulted the entrenchments on Monte Cristo, the enemy falling back after having offered but slight resistance, and being driven across the Tugela with the loss of their camps and supplies. Sir Redvers Buller has brought to special notice the work done by the 2nd Battalion The Queen's, 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers, Rifle Brigade, and Irregular Cavalry; but all the troops are reported to have behaved admirably, and the Royal Artillery and Naval gun detachments to have rendered great assistance.

On the 21st February Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed that commandoes from the Bethlehem, Heilbron, and Senekal Districts had returned by train the previous week from Spion Kop to the Orange Free State. On the same date he reported that the 5th Division had that day crossed the Tugela by a pontoon bridge, driving back the enemy's rear guard.

Subsequent telegrams show that on the 22nd the 11th Brigade forced the passage of the Onderbrook Spruit and seized the Landrat heights which command it, while on the 23rd the 5th Brigade crossed the Langawacht Spruit and similarly occupied the adjacent heights. On the 25th the force had not advanced far enough to the north to keep down the enemy's long-range Artillery and Infantry fire, and the country is stated to be extremely difficult, but Sir Redvers Buller is endeavouring to turn the Boer position to the east, and hopes to succeed in outflanking the enemy and reaching Ladysmith.

Apart from the progress of the war, there are two matters affecting the force under my command, to which a brief reference seems desirable. On the 25th February, I telegraphed to your Lordship requesting that 100,000 khaki warm coats of the Indian pattern might be sent to the Cape Colony and Natal from India. These coats proved very serviceable during the expeditions on the North-west frontier in 1897-98, and will greatly conduce to the health and comfort of the troops in South Africa as soon as the cold season sets in. On the 26th February, in reply to a telegram from your Lordship, I asked for the 8th Infantry Division to be despatched to South Africa as quickly as possible, more troops being needed in my opinion to enable me to operate in sufficient strength in the Orange Free State and Transvaal.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

Prisoners taken at Paardeberg, 27th February, 1900.

Orange Free State Artillery, under	} 3 Krupps, 7·5-cm.* 1 M.H. Maxim.*
Major Albrechts:—	
Officers—V. Dewitz.	
V. Heister.	
Angenstein.	
45 men.	

* The guns taken are 3—7·5-cm., Krupp's; old pattern Q.F., about 12-pr.; 1—3·7-cm. Vickers-Maxim automatic gun.

Orange Free State.

Commando, Kroonstadt; Commandant, J. V. Meantges; Field Cornet, F. Nell; men, 134.

Commando, Ladybrand; Commandant, R. J. Sneyman; men, 134.

Commando, Ficksburg; Commandant, De Villiers; men, 44.

Commando, Wynberg (1); Commandant, J. W. Kok; men, 60.

Commando, Wynberg (2); Field Cornet, Oosthuizen; men, 133.

Commando, Hoopstadt; Commandant, J. Greyling; Field Cornets, T. Nieuwoudt, S. V. Zeyl; men, 373.

Commando, Bloemfontein, Town; Field Cornet, W. Akermann; men, 31.

Commando, Bloemfontein, De Wetsdorp; Commandant, Fouri; men, 104.

Commando, Bloemfontein, Mid., Mud River; Field Cornet, J. J. Boshof; men, 67.

Commando, Jacobsdal; Commandant, A. Smit; men, 16.

Commando, Boshof; Field Cornet, J. W. Grünwald; men, 112.

Commando, Petrusburg and Fauresmith; men, 66.

Commando, Vryburg; men, 1.

Commando, Natives; men, 7.

Total, 1,327 men.

Transvaal.

Commando, Potchefstroom; Commandant, Roos; Field Cornets, Lemmer, with 300 men, and Hatting, with 315; men, 615.

Commando, Potchefstroom; Commandant, Wolmarans; Field Cornets, Du Plessis, 100, De Velleres, 61; men, 161.

Commando, Potchefstroom (Schoenspruit); Commandant, Wolmarans; Field Cornets, Venter, 275, Naude, 210; men, 485.

Commando, Gatsrand; Commandant, Maartens; Field Cornets, Oosthuizen, 349, Alberts, 37, Naude, 60; men, 446.

Commando, Scandinaviaus; Field Cornet, Früs, 49; men, 49.

Commando, Bowyk; Field Cornet, Terblanch, 318; men, 318.

Commando, Bloemhof; Commandant, Woeste; Field Cornets, Badenhorst, 107, Sneyman, 171, Bosman, 240; men, 518. Total, 2,592.

Grand total (besides about 150 wounded, &c.), 3,919.

No. 4.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Government House, Bloemfontein,

MY LORD, 15th March, 1900.

IN my letter No. 3, dated the 28th February, 1900, I continued my narrative of the operations in the Orange Free State and elsewhere up to the end of the month.

On the 1st March I proceeded to Kimberley, from my camp at Paardeberg, for the purpose of discussing with Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen the measures to be taken for the relief of Mafeking. I returned the next day to Osfontein, about 5 miles east of Paardeberg, where I established my head-quarters.

The troops at Paardeberg marched to Osfontein on the 1st, on which day the following movements were ordered:—

The Mounted Infantry at the Modder Camp to leave on the 4th March, and arrive at Osfontein in three marches; the three batteries of Field Artillery at Jacobsdal, under Lieutenant-Colonel Flint, to proceed to Osfontein,

arriving there on the 6th; the 1st, or Guards Brigade, at Klip Drift and Klip Kraal, similarly to arrive at Osfontein on the 6th; and the 15th Brigade, at Jacobsdal, under Major-General Wavell, to accompany the last convoy from the Modder Camp, and to reach Osfontein on the 7th. On these movements being completed I directed the line of communication with the Modder Camp to be abandoned, that with Kimberley being maintained for a few days longer until I was ready to advance on Bloemfontein.

As there had been considerable additions to the strength of the Mounted Infantry, I redistributed this branch of the Service into the following commands:—

1st Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. H. Alderson, Commanding.

1st Regiment Mounted Infantry.

3rd " " "

Roberts's Horse.

New Zealand Mounted Infantry.

Rimington's Guides.

2nd Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel P. W. J. Le Gallais, Commanding.

6th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

8th " " "

City Imperial Volunteers.

Kitchener's Horse.

Nesbitt's Horse.

New South Wales Mounted Infantry.

3rd Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel C. G. Martyr, Commanding.

2nd Regiment Mounted Infantry.

4th " " "

2nd Battalion Durham Mounted Infantry.

2nd Battalion Essex Mounted Infantry.

2nd Battalion West Riding Mounted Infantry.

1st Queensland Mounted Infantry.

2nd " " "

4th Brigade.

Colonel C. P. Ridley, Commanding.

5th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

7th " " "

1st City of Grahamstown Volunteers.

Ceylon Mounted Infantry.

Heavy rain fell daily up to the 6th, greatly impeding the march of the troops, and delaying the convoys of provisions and stores, the drifts across the Modder River becoming almost unfordable.

It had been my original intention to move towards Bloemfontein as soon as the enemy's force under Cronje had been obliged to surrender, but the Cavalry and Artillery horses were so exhausted by their rapid march to Kimberley and back, and so weakened by the scarcity of forage, that I found it absolutely necessary to give them a week's rest.

Meanwhile, reports came in that the enemy were collecting in considerable strength to the east of Osfontein, and were entrenching themselves along a line of kopjes, running north and south, about 8 miles distant from the camp at Osfontein. The northernmost or Leeuw Kopje was to the north of, and 2 miles distant from, the river; and the southernmost cluster of kopjes, to which the name of "The Seven Kopjes" was given, was 8 miles to the south of the river. The front of the Boer position extended, therefore, for 10½ miles.

It was noticed that several gun emplacements were being constructed on the summit of a flat-topped kopje (called "Table Moun-

tain") which formed a salient in the centre of the alignment and guns were also mounted on the Leeuw Kopje at the northern end, and on "The Seven Kopjes" at the southern end.

On the 6th March I gave orders for an attack on the enemy's position early the following morning. The Cavalry Division, with Alderson's and Ridley's Brigades of Mounted Infantry and seven batteries of Horse Artillery, was directed to march at 2 A.M., its object being to circle round the left flank of the Boers, to take their line of entrenchments in reverse, and moving eventually to the river near Poplar Grove to cut off their line of retreat. The 6th Division under Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny, with its Brigade Division of Field Artillery, one howitzer battery, and Martyr's Mounted Infantry, was to follow the route taken by the Cavalry until reaching a point south-east of "The Seven Kopjes." It was then to drive the enemy from these kopjes, and afterwards move to the north in the direction of "Table Mountain."

In the attack on "Table Mountain" the 6th Division was to be assisted by Flint's Brigade Division of Field Artillery, four 4.7-inch naval guns, Le Gallais' Brigade of Mounted Infantry, and the Guards Brigade. This latter force was to concentrate at daybreak near a small kopje and farm distant 2 miles to the east of Ofontein Farm, where my head-quarters had been established. "Table Mountain" being the key of the enemy's position, I anticipated that the Boers would retire to the river as soon as it was occupied by our troops.

The 14th Brigade of the 7th Division, with its Brigade Division of Field Artillery, Nesbitt's Horse, and the New South Wales and Queensland Mounted Infantry, was ordered to march eastward along the south bank of the river for the purpose of threatening the enemy, distracting attention from the main attack on "Table Mountain," and assisting the Cavalry in preventing the Boers from crossing the river at the Poplar Grove Drift. The 9th Division, with three Naval 12-pounders, and Mounted Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonels De Lisle and Henry, was instructed to act in a similar manner on the north bank of the river, and to drive the enemy from the Leeuw Kopje, which formed the northern extremity of their defensive position.

On the 7th March the operations were carried out in accordance with the above scheme, but the 6th Division made too wide a detour to the south, the result being that, before it approached "The Seven Kopjes," the Boers had been dislodged by the Horse Artillery fire in reverse, coupled with the well-aimed shell-fire of the 4.7-inch Naval guns in front, while the turning movement of the Cavalry and Horse Artillery, in conjunction with the advance of the 9th Division and 1st and 14th Brigades, caused the enemy to evacuate "Table Mountain" and the Leeuw Kopje without offering any serious opposition. Long distances had, however, to be traversed by the troops, the ground was heavy owing to the recent rain, and the Cavalry and Artillery horses were in very poor condition. Moreover, the Boers displayed such skill in delaying the pursuit of the Cavalry Division, that they succeeded in taking away with them almost all their guns and wagons, and it was not until the evening that the main body of the force reached Poplar Grove, to which I had ordered the baggage to be transferred as soon as I perceived that the enemy were in full retreat.

Had the Cavalry, Horse Artillery, and Mounted Infantry been able to move more rapidly, they would undoubtedly have intercepted the enemy's line of retreat, and I should have had the satisfaction of capturing their guns, wagons, and supplies, as well as a large number of prisoners. The failure to effect this object was the more mortifying when I learnt the next day on good authority that the Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic had been present during the engagement, and had strongly urged the Boers to continue their resistance. Their appeals to the burghers were, however, unavailing, as the Boer forces were quite broken, and refused to fight any longer.

In the course of the afternoon the Russian and Dutch Military Attachés with the Transvaal Government, Lieutenant-Colonel Gourko and Lieutenant Thomson, who were accompanying the enemy, claimed our protection, the horses in the cart in which they were travelling having been killed by shell fire.

One Krupp gun and six ox wagons were captured during the day, and a large quantity of rifle ammunition was afterwards found in the deserted trenches. The casualties during the day were not heavy, and were confined almost entirely to the Cavalry Division. They consisted of 2 Officers (Lieutenant Keswick, 12th Lancers; Lieutenant Frieslich, 1st Grahamstown Volunteers) and 2 men killed, 3 Officers and 46 men wounded, and one man missing.

On the 8th and 9th of March the force halted at Poplar Grove, but on the latter date the 1st Cavalry Brigade and the 6th Infantry Division moved 8 miles eastward to Waaihoek, on the road to Abraham's Kraal.

On the 9th I issued orders for the advance of the force in three columns on Bloemfontein. The left column, under Lieutenant-General French, consisted of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, Alderson's Mounted Infantry, and the 6th Division. The centre column, which I accompanied, comprised the 9th Division, the Brigade of Guards, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, Martyr's and Le Gallais' Mounted Infantry, the 65th Howitzer Battery, four 6-inch howitzers, the Naval Brigade, the ammunition reserve, the Supply Park, and the 7th Field Company, Royal Engineers. The right column, under Lieutenant-General Tucker, included the 7th Division, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and Ridley's Brigade of Mounted Infantry. The left column was to march by the northern road, through Baberspan, Doornboom, and Venter's Vlei, to Leeuwborg; on the railway line, about 15 miles south of Bloemfontein; the centre by the middle road through Driefontein, Assvogel Kop, and Venter's Vlei to Leeuwborg; and the right column through Petrusburg, Driekop, and Panfontein or Weltevradé to Venter's Vlei, the distance being, in each case, covered in four marches, with halts at the places mentioned.

It should here be explained that my reason for not proposing to use the northern and most direct road beyond Baberspan was, that I had good reason to believe that the enemy expected us to advance by that road, and were ready to oppose us in a strong entrenched position which they had prepared in the vicinity of Bainsvlei.

On the 10th the movement was begun as ordered, and the right column occupied Petrusburg without opposition. The left column found the enemy holding several kopjes behind Abraham's Kraal, and endeavoured to turn their left flank by moving to the south. The Boers,

however, anticipated this manœuvre by a rapid march southward, and took up a fresh position on a ridge about 4 miles long, running north and south across the road 2 miles east of Driefontein. Lieutenant-General French followed up the enemy with the 1st Cavalry Brigade and the 6th Division, and came into contact with them at 11 A.M.

Meanwhile the 2nd Cavalry Brigade had reached Driefontein, and endeavoured, in conjunction with the 1st Cavalry Brigade, to turn the rear of the Boers by operating in the plain behind the ridge which they were holding. The enemy's guns, however, had a longer range than our field guns, which were the only ones immediately available, and some time elapsed before the former could be silenced, especially a Creusot gun, which had been placed in a commanding position on an isolated kopje, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of the northern end of the ridge. The Infantry of the 6th Division reached this end of the ridge about 2 P.M., having been under the enemy's shell fire, which did but little damage, for more than an hour. The Boers were gradually pushed back towards the centre of the ridge, where they made an obstinate stand.

The 9th Division came up at 5 P.M., and I at once ordered the Guards Brigade and the 19th Brigade to the assistance of the 6th Division; but before these reinforcements could reach the ridge, the enemy's position was stormed in the most gallant manner by the 1st Battalions of the Essex and Welsh Regiments, supported by the 2nd Battalion of the Buffs. The bodies of 102 Boers were afterwards found along the ridge, mainly in the position which they held to the last. Many of their horses were killed.

I regret to say that our casualties were heavy, aggregating 4 Officers (The Buffs—Captain Eustace. Welsh Regiment—Captain Lomax. Essex Regiment—Lieutenant F. N. Parsons, 2nd Lieutenant A. B. Coddington) killed, and 20 wounded, and 60 men killed, 314 wounded, and 16 missing. The Cavalry, Artillery, and Mounted Infantry suffered comparatively slight loss, 1 Officer (Mr. McCartie, a retired Indian civilian) being killed and 4 wounded, and 4 men killed, 25 wounded, and 2 missing.

A flagrant breach of the recognised usages of war was the cause of most of the casualties in the Infantry. The enemy held up their hands and hoisted a white flag in sign of surrender, but when our troops approached they were fired on at close quarters by a number of Boers posted under cover in rear of their front line and had to retire until reinforced, when the position was carried at the point of the bayonet. The holding up of their hands on the part of the Boers was observed by me and by several Officers of my Staff through telescopes, and it, as well as the persistent use by the enemy of flat-nosed expanding bullets, has been brought to the notice of the Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic in a telegram, dated 11th March, a copy of which was forwarded for your Lordship's information, with a request that its contents might be communicated to the neutral Powers.

On the evening of the 10th the left and centre columns bivouacked together in the vicinity of Driefontein. On this date I directed Lieutenant-General Tucker to halt the 7th Division and 3rd Cavalry Brigade at Driekop, until he was joined by the second battalions of the Hampshire and Warwickshire Regiments.

These corps had been left behind, together with Lieutenant-Colonels De Lisle and Henry's battalions of Mounted Infantry, at Osfontein and Poplar Grove respectively, for the purpose of keeping open communication with Kimberley, until certain convoys which were being despatched from that place had arrived, and until the sick and wounded who were being sent back from Poplar Grove and Osfontein had crossed the Modder River.

I may here mention that the Russian and Dutch Military Attachés who had given themselves up on the 7th March at Poplar Grove were sent to Kimberley *en route* to Cape Town with this convoy of sick and wounded.

On the 11th March the combined left and centre columns marched to Aasvogel Kop, no opposition being met with. This day I ordered the 3rd Cavalry Brigade with two batteries of Horse Artillery to proceed from Driekop to Venter's Vlei. On 12th March my headquarters, together with the 6th and 9th Divisions, moved to Venter's Vlei, while the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Brigades under Lieutenant-General French pushed on to Brand Dam Kop, 7 miles to the south-west of Bloemfontein. I diverted the Cavalry from Leeuwberg, which was their original objective, to a point much nearer Bloemfontein for two reasons:—

First, it was reported that reinforcements from the north were hourly expected at Bloemfontein, and it thus became imperatively necessary to forestall the enemy's movements. This report has subsequently been substantiated by a telegram from President Kruger to General Jonbert, which has fallen into my hands.

Secondly, if any delay occurred, the Boers would have had time to remove the locomotives and rolling stock, which I understood to be still in the railway station at Bloemfontein.

Some slight resistance was met with by the Cavalry, but no serious fighting took place, and the only casualties that occurred were on the side of the Boers.

Early the next morning I proceeded to Brand Dam Kop, accompanied by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and found that the hills commanding the town had already been occupied by the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Brigades. At noon several of the leading citizens of Bloemfontein, including Mr. Frazer, drove out to the kopje which I had just reached, about a mile from the town, and tendered its submission to the British Government. I entered Bloemfontein at 1 P.M., meeting with a cordial reception from the inhabitants, a number of whom accompanied the troops singing "God save the Queen," "Rule Britannia," &c. I established my headquarters in the official residence of the State President, which Mr. Steyn had vacated at 6 o'clock on the previous evening. The 1st Infantry Brigade marched this day from Venter's Vlei to Bloemfontein, and the 6th and 9th Divisions from the same place to Brand Dam Kop. On the morning of the 14th, the 6th Division advanced to Bloemfontein, being joined there in the course of the day by the 9th Division. As soon as the troops occupied the town I appointed Major-General G. T. Pretymann, C.B., to be Military Governor of Bloemfontein, granting him, subject to your Lordship's approval, the rank and pay of a Major-General on the Staff while so employed.

It may here be noted that under my orders the railway north and south of Bloemfontein was broken up for a sufficient distance on the evening of the 12th by Major Hunter-Weston, R.E., attached to the Cavalry Division, and this

enterprising officer also succeeded in cutting the enemy's telegraph and telephone wires in both directions. Eleven locomotives, 20 carriages, and 140 trucks were captured at the Bloemfontein Railway Station, the Boers not having had time to remove them. The acquisition of this amount of rolling stock will greatly facilitate the reopening of railway communication with Cape Colony, in spite of the fact that the bridges at Norval's Pont and Bethulie were blown up by the enemy when they withdrew to the north side of the Orange River.

Yesterday I issued an Army Order* thanking the troops under my command for their conduct during the operations which resulted in the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith, the surrender of Cronje, the capture of a large number of prisoners, and the occupation of Bloemfontein. A copy of this Order is appended, and I trust that your Lordship will agree with me in thinking that by their spirit and endurance the soldiers and sailors serving in South Africa have worthily upheld the traditions of Her Majesty's forces.

In Natal events of the highest importance have occurred since I last addressed your Lordship. On 28th February I received a telegram from General Sir Redvers Buller informing me that Major-General Hart was not strong enough on 24th February to take the entrenchments commanding the passage of the Langerwachte Spruit. Sir Redvers Buller had therefore determined to make use of another passage which had been discovered below the Falls.

* Army Orders, South Africa.

Bloemfontein, 14th March, 1900.

It affords the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the greatest pleasure in congratulating the Army in South Africa on the various events that have occurred during the past few weeks, and he would specially offer his sincere thanks to that portion of the Army which, under his immediate command, have taken part in the operations resulting yesterday in the capture of Bloemfontein.

On the 12th February this force crossed the boundary which divided the Orange Free State from British territory. Three days later Kimberley was relieved. On the 15th day the bulk of the Boer Army in this State, under one of their most trusted Generals, were made prisoners. On the 17th day the news of the relief of Ladysmith was received, and on the 18th March, 29 days from the commencement of the operations, the capital of the Orange Free State was occupied.

This is a record of which any Army may well be proud—a record which could not have been achieved except by earnest, well-disciplined men, determined to do their duty and to surmount whatever difficulties or dangers might be encountered.

Exposed to extreme heat by day, bivouacking under heavy rain, marching long distances (not infrequently with reduced rations), the endurance, cheerfulness, and gallantry displayed by all ranks are beyond praise, and Lord Roberts feels sure that neither Her Majesty the Queen nor the British Nation will be unmindful of the efforts made by this force to uphold the honour of their country.

The Field Marshal desires especially to refer to the fortitude and heroic spirit with which the wounded have borne their sufferings. Owing to the great extent of country over which modern battles have to be fought it is not always possible to afford immediate aid to those who are struck down; many hours have, indeed, at times elapsed before some of the wounded could be attended to, but not a word of murmur or complaint has been uttered; the anxiety of all, when succour came, was that their comrades should be cared for first.

In assuring every Officer and man how much he appreciates their efforts in the past Lord Roberts is confident that, in the future, they will continue to show the same resolution and soldierly qualities, and to lay down their lives if need be (as so many brave men have already done) in order to ensure that the war in South Africa may be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

By Order,

W. F. KELLY, Major-General,
Deputy-Adjutant-General, for Chief of the Staff.

Finding that he could make a practicable approach to this passage, he recrossed men and guns and took up the pontoon bridge which he caused to be relaid at the new site. The troops meanwhile bivouacked behind hastily constructed shelter trenches, where they were harassed by the enemy's rifle and artillery fire.

On the 27th February Major-General Barton, with two battalions of the 6th Brigade and the 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers, crept $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the river bank, and ascending an almost precipitous cliff, 500 feet high, assaulted and occupied the top of Pieter's Hill. This to some extent turned the enemy's left, and enabled Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren, with the 4th Brigade under Colonel Norcott and the 11th Brigade under Colonel Kitchener, to assail the main position, which was carried by the 1st Battalion South Lancashire Regiment, 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment, and 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade about sunset. Sixty prisoners were captured, and the enemy scattered in all directions.

On the evening of the 28th February Major-General Lord Dundonald with the Natal Carbineers and a composite Cavalry Regiment entered Ladysmith, the country between that place and Pieter's Hill being found to be clear of the enemy. The next day Sir Redvers Buller moved his head-quarters to Nelthorpe.

On 2nd March 73 wagon loads of supplies entered Ladysmith, the first seven containing hospital comforts. On the same date Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to the effect that there was no prospect of the enemy making any further stand up to Laing's Nek, as the whole district was clear of them except at the top of Van Reenen's Pass, where a few wagons were visible. The last train load of Boers had left Modderspruit at noon on 1st March and the bridge had afterwards been blown up. They had abandoned vast quantities of ammunition and stores of every description, including tools, tents, and individual necessities.

The troops employed in the relief of Ladysmith wanted a week's rest, as well as new clothes and boots; those forming the Ladysmith garrison required a fortnight's rest, food, and exercise.

As it was most desirable to strengthen the force in Cape Colony operating by the eastern railway line in the direction of Stormberg, especially in view of my advance on Bloemfontein, I requested Sir Redvers Buller to despatch one infantry division from Durban to East London, with its brigade division of field artillery, should it be possible to spare the latter, and with any mounted troops that he could dispense with.

On the 5th March Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed that he was prepared to send me the 5th Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren, and two squadrons of the 14th Hussars, the third squadron being already with the force in the Orange Free State. He remarked that the Ladysmith garrison would take some time to regain its fitness for field service. He proposed to reoccupy Dundee and Newcastle. The railway from Ladysmith to Van Reenen's Pass was practically complete as far as the Reversing Station, but above that point considerably damaged. The pass itself was held by a small party of the enemy who had entrenched themselves. The other passes were not entrenched, and it was doubtful whether they were occupied. The only organized body of the enemy to be heard of in Natal was about

7,000 strong. This body was at "One Tree Hill," in the Biggarsberg Range, and it was moving towards Laing's Nek.

On the 9th March Sir Redvers Buller informed me that 800 Boers with 2 guns were occupying the Tintwa Pass, and the Harrismith and Kroonstad Commandoes with 3 guns were posted at Van Reenen's Pass. The other passes were being held by small bodies of the enemy. On the Biggarsberg about 9,000 Boers were entrenched from Water Kloof, past "One Tree Hill" and Hlatikulu, to Glencoe Junction. These included the Johannesburg, Rustenburg, Middleburg, and Vryheid Commandoes, with 10 guns. Dundee was occupied by the enemy. If he were to remain quiet, Sir Redvers Buller was of opinion that the Boers would begin raiding, and he proposed therefore to repair the railway to Elandslaagte and thence to strike at Dundee through Beith. He would thus turn the enemy's position and probably save the line to Newcastle. To do this, and simultaneously to threaten the Drakensberg Passes, Sir Redvers Buller considered that he needed all the troops at his disposal, though, if I desired it, he would still send me the 5th Division.

In reply, on the 10th March, I agreed that the despatch of the 5th Division should be postponed until I reached Bloemfontein and was able to judge of the situation as it might then present itself. I added that I had no objection to active operations being undertaken in Natal, but that no attempt should be made to force the passes of the Drakensberg until I was in readiness to co-operate from the west of that range.

Turning now to the northern frontier of Cape Colony, I heard on 28th February from Major-General Clements that he had that morning marched from Rensburg to Arundel, and on arrival there had ascertained that Colesberg had been evacuated by the enemy. He accordingly sent a force to occupy Colesberg Railway Junction and himself with other troops entered the town of Colesberg, where he was accorded an enthusiastic reception by the loyalists.

On the 3rd March I received news that a further advance had been made to Achteertang Station, and that the line towards Norval's Pont was being repaired.

On the 5th March the enemy were reported to be holding a position 3 miles to the south-west of Norval's Pont, the bridge being still intact, but during the evening of the same day they crossed to the north side of the river.

On the 9th Norval's Pont Station and the adjacent drifts on the south side were occupied by Major-General Clements, who proposes to cross the river as soon as the Pontoon Train arrived, and to begin repairs to the railway line and bridge, the latter as well as the road bridge having been blown up by the enemy. I have this morning sent by train a force consisting of the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards and the 1st Battalion Scots Guards, with four guns, from Bloemfontein to Springfontein Junction. I anticipate that their presence will lead to the withdrawal of any Boer troops which may still remain to the north of Norval's Pont, and will thus enable railway communication across the Orange River to be restored with all possible speed.

As regards the eastern line of advance, Lieutenant-General Sir W. Gatacre reported on the 3rd March that the number of the enemy at Stormberg had been much reduced. News was also received from Cape Town that the Boers were retreating towards Burghersdorp.

On the 5th March Lieutenant-General Gatacre telegraphed that he had that day occupied Stormberg with one battalion of Infantry, four companies of Mounted Infantry, two field batteries, and some Cape Police. The enemy had evacuated the town during the night of the 4th. Repairs to the railway line were being begun. On the 7th March Brigadier-General Brabant reported that the enemy had retired from their position in front of Jamestown, and that the road to that place was now open.

On the same date Lieutenant-General Gatacre intimated that the repairs to the railway line towards Stormberg and Steynsburg were being pushed on, and that he intended that day to occupy Burghersdorp. His intention was carried out, and the British troops were cordially welcomed by the inhabitants. Many rebels in the vicinity were stated to be anxious to lay down their arms, if their lives would be spared.

Brabant's force from Dordrecht reached Jamestown on the 8th March without opposition. Information was received from Ladygrey that the rebels were handing in their arms and ammunition to the Field Cornet of Herschel, 55 rifles and 70,000 rounds having already been surrendered. The local civil authorities were proceeding to Ladygrey to resume control over the district.

On the 11th March Lieutenant-General Gatacre telegraphed from Burghersdorp that he had reconnoitred to within a mile of the Bethulie railway bridge, and had found it blown up, though the piers were standing. The enemy were still holding the north bank of the river. The road bridge at Bethulie was uninjured, though the piers had been mined. It would appear that the charges had failed to explode, and the Boers had no time to attach fresh fuzes. The railway as far as Knapdaar was open on the afternoon of the 11th.

In the Prieska, Britstown, and Carnarvon districts of Cape Colony, west of the railway between De Aar and Orange River, I regret to report that signs of organized disaffection have been apparent during the past fortnight.

At the end of February I ordered a force to be held in readiness for operations in this direction. One column from De Aar was directed to concentrate at Britstown under Lieutenant-Colonel Adye's command, consisting of 3 companies of Mounted Infantry, 1 Field Battery, and 400 City Imperial Volunteers. Another column under Major-General Settle was to assemble at Hopetown, consisting of Orpen's Horse about 60 strong, one company of Mounted Infantry, one field battery, and half a battalion of infantry from the Orange River Station. This left for the defence of the Orange River and Zoutpan's Drift two 15-pounders, two Maxims, four howitzers, 3 companies of Infantry, and 700 City Imperial Volunteers. A third column consisting of 3 companies of New Zealand Mounted Infantry and 1 company of West Australian Mounted Infantry, with a Canadian Field Battery, was ordered to march on Carnarvon from Victoria West-road Station, and afterwards to occupy Otterpan to the north.

On the 3rd March I was informed that Lieutenant-Colonel Adye had reached Britstown, and had been instructed to drive the rebels out of Houwwater. Major-General Settle had left for Hopetown and Omdraai Vlei and intended to co-operate with Lieutenant-Colonel Adye in an advance on Prieska. The latter officer appears to have reconnoitred on 6th

March towards Houwwater in insufficient strength. The enemy were reinforced and brought up several guns, the result being that our troops were obliged to retire to Britstown with the loss of 1 officer and 4 men of the Warwickshire Mounted Infantry wounded, and 3 missing, and of 7 men of the City Imperial Volunteers wounded, and 6 missing. To ensure the operations being vigorously conducted in the western districts, I desired Major-General Lord Kitchener to proceed to De Aar on 8th March with the object of collecting reinforcements, and of taking such steps as might be necessary to punish the rebels and prevent the spread of disaffection.

The only other event to be recorded is the occupation of Boshof, about 30 miles to the north-east of Kimberley, which was effected on the 12th March by Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, without any opposition being met with.

I am at present halting for a few days at Bloemfontein in order to give the troops, horses, and transport animals a much-needed rest, to bring up remounts and fresh mules and oxen, to repair wagons which have broken down, to replace worn-out boots and clothing, and to collect supplies and ammunition for a further advance.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding in Chief,
South Africa.

No. 5.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.

SIR, War Office, 31 March, 1900.

IN the foregoing despatches, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, dated respectively 6th February, 16th February, 28th February, and 15th March, 1900, I have drawn attention to the conduct of the troops during the operations therein described.

I would here like to mention the distinguished part played by the Royal Canadian Regiment in its advance on the enemy's trenches on 27th February, and referred to by me in my despatch No. 3 of 28th February, 1900.

No account of the recent operations would, however, be complete, were I to omit to draw special attention to the good services performed by the splendid and highly efficient body of troops from other parts of Her Majesty's Empire which have, while serving under my orders, borne a distinguished share in the advance into the Orange Free State. The various contingents from Australia, from New Zealand, and from Ceylon, the several corps which have been formed locally in the Cape Colony, and the City of London Imperial Volunteers have vied one with the other in the performance of their duty. They have shared with the regular troops of Her Majesty's Army the hardships and dangers of the campaign in a manner which have gained for them the respect and admiration of all who have been associated with them. I trust that your Lordship will concur with me in considering that by their valour and endurance the soldiers and sailors serving in the force which is under my immediate command have worthily upheld the best traditions of Her Majesty's Army and Navy.

It is now my pleasing duty to bring to your Lordship's notice the names of the following Officers, non-commissioned officers and men, on account of the services they have rendered during the recent operations:—

Major-General H. H. Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., R.E., has filled the important post of Chief of the Staff, and I am greatly indebted to him for his counsel and cordial support on all occasions.

I consider he has rendered invaluable service to the State in his onerous and responsible position.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. V. Cowan, R.A., has filled the post of Military Secretary. In that important position he has done most excellent work. He is able, painstaking and methodical, and is possessed of sound judgment. I could not wish for a more useful Military Secretary.

Colonel N. F. Fitz G. Chamberlain, Indian Staff Corps, Private Secretary, gives me entire satisfaction. His work is constant and he carries it on with zeal and intelligence. I cannot speak too highly of the assistance afforded me by Colonel Chamberlain.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. J. Byron, Royal Australian Artillery, Aide-de-Camp.

Major S. Denison, The Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry, Aide-de-Camp.

Captain H. Watermeyer, Cape Town Highlanders, Aide-de-Camp.

Colonel H. R. Viscount Downe, C.I.E., was deputed to accompany the Military Attachés representing Foreign Powers, and has discharged his duties with tact and discretion.

Major-General G. T. Pretymann, C.B., R.A., acted as Head-quarters Commandant to my entire satisfaction. I selected him to take charge of General Cronjé on the journey to Cape Town, and on my arrival here I appointed him to the responsible post of Military Governor of Bloemfontein.

Lieutenant-Colonel (local Colonel) G. F. R. Henderson, York and Lancaster Regiment, Director of Military Intelligence, reorganised the Intelligence Department, and gave me valuable and reliable information regarding the physical features of the country and the dispositions of the enemy.

Captain (Brevet Major and local Lieutenant-Colonel) C. J. Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's). On Colonel Henderson being invalided he was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Mackenzie, who afforded me material assistance by the accurate and valuable reports he submitted. Lieutenant-Colonel Mackenzie has drawn special attention to the good service rendered in the Intelligence Branch by Major C. V. Hume, Royal Artillery.

Major-General W. F. Kelly, C.B., Deputy Adjutant-General, has afforded me very great assistance in the responsible position he has filled, and the vigilance and energy he has shown in the performance of his duties have been most marked.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) H. I. W. Hamilton, D.S.O., Deputy Assistant-Adjutant-General.

Captain (Brevet-Major) R. M. Poore, 7th Hussars, Provost-Marshal, has exercised his responsible duties, whether as regards the care of prisoners, or in maintaining order in camp and on the line of march, in a most satisfactory manner.

Colonel (local Major-General) G. H. Marshall, Royal Artillery, Commanding Royal Artillery, has been untiring in his supervision

of the large force of Artillery in this country, and I would specially refer to the value of the service he rendered during the bombardment of the enemy's entrenchments from the 19th to the 27th February, 1900. Major-General Marshall mentions the able and unceasing assistance he has received from Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) H. C. Selater, Assistant Adjutant-General, Royal Artillery.

Colonel (local Major-General) E. Wood, C.B., Royal Engineers, Chief Engineer, supervised the arrangements for pushing forward trenches towards the enemy's laager at Paardeberg, and the successful result attained there is due in a large measure to that Officer's efforts.

Colonel (local Major-General) Sir W. G. Nicholson, K.C.B., Royal Engineers, undertook, at my request, the organisation of a Transport Department in the limited time available. He performed this duty with conspicuous ability, and his services in this connection have contributed materially to the success of the recent operations.

Colonel W. Richardson, C.B., Army Service Corps, Deputy Adjutant-General, Director of Supplies, has successfully overcome the many difficulties connected with arranging for the supplies of the Army in a district where scarcely any forage, and no rations, except fresh meat, are procurable.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. L. Hippisley, R.E., Director of Telegraphs, was indefatigable in endeavouring to ensure that I should be in communication with the whole of my force. That such a result was on most occasions attained, despite the distance which had to be traversed in an enemy's country, is most creditable to Lieutenant-Colonel Hippisley, as well as to Captain E. G. Godfrey-Faussett, R.E., who was in immediate command of the Telegraph Division during the march to Bloemfontein.

Captain (Brevet-Major and Local Lieutenant-Colonel) E. P. C. Girouard, D.S.O., R.E., Director of Railways, has carried out his duties in a highly creditable manner. The concentration of troops prior to my advance was carried out by him without a hitch, and he has recently performed valuable service in restoring through railway communication between the Orange Free State and Cape Colony.

Surgeon-General W. D. Wilson, M.B., has had responsible and important duties to perform. The arrangements necessary to provide for the wants of the many sick and wounded in South Africa, have required unremitting care and forethought, and the successful way in which they have been carried out reflects the greatest credit on him.

Colonel W. F. Stevenson, M.B., R.A.M.C., has been Principal Medical Officer with the Force, and I desire to draw attention not only to the efficient manner in which he has supervised the working of the Corps, but also to the assistance I have received from him at all times.

I cannot speak too highly of the care and devotion shown by the Medical Officers to the sick and wounded, or the gallant way in which many of them have exposed themselves when performing their duties on the field of battle.

Mr. Watson Cheyne, M.B., F.R.S., and Mr. No. 27282. C

Kendal Franks, M.B., F.R.C.S.I., Consulting Surgeons, who have accompanied the Army, have rendered invaluable service by their advice and assistance to the Medical Officers. They have been unwearied in their work among the wounded and sick, and, humanly speaking, many a valuable life has been saved by their skill.

Major J. H. Fiaschi, New South Wales Medical Staff Corps, is deserving of special mention on account of the assistance which he rendered to the sick and wounded, as well as upon the efficient condition in which he has kept the ambulance under his command, the services of which, ever since its arrival, have been most valuable.

Honorary Colonel E. G. V. Lord Stanley, 2nd Volunteer Battalion The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, has carried out the difficult duties of Press Censor with tact and discretion.

The following Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men have distinguished themselves during the recent operations:—

Army Service Corps.

Brevet-Colonel F. F. Johnson, Staff Officer to Director of Supplies.

Captain R. Ford.

Lieutenant P. G. P. Lea.

Transport Department.

Captain W. T. Furse, Royal Artillery, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General.

Major S. S. Long, Army Service Corps.

Major J. T. Johnson, Royal Artillery.

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel F. I. Maxse, D.S.O., Coldstream Guards.

Army Veterinary Department.

Veterinary-Captain L. J. Blenkinsop, D.S.O.

Veterinary-Lieutenant H. T. Sawyer.

Staff of the Line of Communications.

Lieutenant-General Sir F. W. E. F. Forester-Walker, K.C.B., C.M.G., Commanding the Lines of Communication, has had heavy and responsible work, not only in questions relating to the disembarkation of troops and military stores, but especially in despatching them to the front. He has carried out these duties with credit to himself and with advantage to the public service.

Captain Sir Edward Chichester, Bart., Royal Navy, has been Chief Naval Transport Officer during the whole campaign, and has carried out his arduous duties with an ability and tact which have ensured the smooth and successful working of all his arrangements.

Royal Navy.

Captain J. Bearcroft, Royal Navy, Commanding the Royal Naval Brigade. My thanks are due to this officer for the assistance he has at all times afforded me. The Naval Brigade, under his orders, has performed valuable service, and has fully maintained the traditions of Her Majesty's Navy, not only in action, but also in overcoming the many difficulties attending the march of heavy ordnance over a country devoid of roads.

Commander W. L. Grant, Royal Navy, H.M. Ship "Doris."

Commander Spencer de Horsey, Royal Navy, H.M. Ship "Doris."

Lieutenant F. D. Deans, Royal Navy, H.M. Ship "Monarch."

Major A. G. B. Winston, Royal Marine Light Infantry, H.M. Ship "Powerful."

Cavalry Division.

Major-General (local Lieutenant-General) J.

D. P. French, Commanding the Cavalry Division, carried out to my entire satisfaction the arduous and important duties entrusted to his charge. By his rapid movement from Dekiel's drift to Kimberley he relieved that beleaguered town on the 15th February, 1900. After engaging the enemy the following day, he made a forced march to Konedoesrand drift and cut off the line of retreat of the enemy's force. He bore a distinguished share in the engagements of the 7th, 10th, and 13th of March, on which latter date he dislodged the enemy from the vicinity of Bloemfontein.
Cavalry Divisional Staff and Troops.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. R. Donovan, Royal Army Medical Corps, Principal Medical Officer.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) Douglas Haig, 7th Hussars, Assistant Adjutant-General.

Major The Honourable H. Lawrence, 17th Lancers, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence.

Major The Honourable C. E. Bingham, 1st Life Guards, Aide-de-Camp.

Cavalry Divisional Staff and Troops.
French's Scouts.

Sergeant A. E. Green.

Private W. S. Penny.

Civil Guide.

Mr. Hogg.

Army Service Corps.

4831 Staff Sergeant-Major T. Sinfield.

Royal Horse Artillery.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. L. Davidson.

Lieutenant-Colonel F. J. W. Eustace.

Lieutenant-Colonel A. N. Rochfort.

Major B. Burton.

Major Sir J. H. Jervis-White-Jervis, Bart.

79959 Corporal G. Hearn.

79243 Gunner F. Wallace.

20392 Trumpeter R. Hanna.

1st Cavalry Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel and Brevet-Colonel T. C. Porter. Commanded the 1st Cavalry Brigade, and handled his troops with ability during the operations of the 12th and 13th March, 1900.

Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. W. Alexander, Royal Scots Greys, Commanded the 1st Cavalry Brigade at the actions of the Riet and Modder rivers in Colonel Porter's absence with most satisfactory results.

6th Dragoon Guards (Carabineers).

Major A. Sprot.

2nd Lieutenant W. J. S. Rundle.

2587 Sergeant W. J. Bowman.

2758 Sergeant A. Crawshaw.

3211 Corporal A. Blackman.

3450 Private G. Bunn.

3726 Private J. Buckenham.

3764 Private H. Cowley.

2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys).

Major H. J. Scobell.

Lieutenant A. G. Seymour.

4172 Sergeant A. J. Pott.

3800 Private A. Elliott.

6th Dragoons.

Major E. H. H. Allenby.

2nd Cavalry Brigade.

Major and Brevet Colonel (Brigadier-General) R. G. Broadwood, Commanded the 2nd Cavalry Brigade with exceptional ability and dash throughout the operations.

Household Cavalry Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel A. D. Neeld, 2nd Life Guards.

Lieutenant Hon. R. Ward, Royal Horse Guards.

Lieutenant Hon. A. V. Meade, Royal Horse Guards.

Corporal-Major C. Patman, 1st Life Guards.

Corporal-Major W. Silwood, 2nd Life Guards.

Corporal of Horse T. Taylor, Royal Horse Guards.

10th (Prince of Wales's Own Royal) Hussars.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. W. Fisher.

2578 Sergeant S. Sanders.

2585 Pioneer Sergeant E. Engleheart.

2882 Lance-Sergeant P. Thwaites.

3855 Lance-Corporal A. Nugent.

3815 Private M. Johnson.

12th (Prince of Wales's Own Royal) Lancers.

Lieutenant-Colonel D. S. W. The Earl of Airlie.

Lieutenant C. Fane.

3rd Cavalry Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel (Brigadier-General) J. R. P. Gordon, Commanded with distinction the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and his services in leading the advance Brigade of the Cavalry Division during the advance on Kimberley are specially worthy of mention.

9th (Queen's Royal) Lancers.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) M. O. Little.

Lieutenant Lord F. T. Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood.

2nd Lieutenant L. W. De V. Sadleir-Jackson.

3810 Corporal C. Wilson.

3988 Corporal C. Green.

4223 Corporal T. Mitchell.

4309 Private C. Stamford.

3697 Private T. Holman.

16th (Queen's) Lancers.

Major S. Frewen.

Lieutenant Hon. C. M. Evans-Freke.

3702 Lance-Corporal F. Nash.

3994 Private G. Chanlish.

3528 Private E. Daniel.

4389 Private F. Moseley.

Royal Engineers.

Captain and Brevet Major A. G. Hunter Weston.

Lieutenant J. E. R. Charles.

26810 Corporal F. Kirby.

26249 Lance-Corporal S. Edwards.

1204 Sapper J. Redding.

1165 Sapper J. Webb.

22907 Sapper J. Parsons.

Mounted Infantry with Cavalry Division.

1st Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. H. Alderson, Royal West Kent Regiment, Commanding 1st Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Robert's Horse.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. L. Dawson, 9th Bengal Lancers.

Captain A. W. Pack Beresford, Royal Artillery.

2479 Trooper L. Chadwick.

2500 Trooper C. H. Worrod.

New Zealand Mounted Infantry.

Major A. W. Robin.

Rimington's Guides.

Major M. F. Rimington, 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons.

Lieutenant R. C. Master, King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Lieutenant W. F. Murray.

Corporal W. Kirtou.

Guide E. Christian.

Guide H. E. Jackson.

2nd Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel P. W. J. Le Gallais, 8th Hussars, Commanding 2nd Mounted Infantry Brigade.

6th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

Captain (local Lieutenant-Colonel) H. de B. de Lisle, D.S.O., Durham Light Infantry.

Captain R. Fanshawe, Oxfordshire Light Infantry.

Captain W. V. Pennefather, Welsh Regiment.

Lieutenant B. Anley, Essex Regiment.

3140 Sergeant F. McKay, Gordon Highlanders.

2885 Private W. Taylor, Gordon Highlanders.

8th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) W. C. Ross, Durham Light Infantry.

City of London Imperial Volunteers Mounted Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel and Honorary Colonel H. O. Cholmondeley, London Rifle Brigade.

Kitchener's Horse.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) N. Legge, D.S.O., 20th Hussars.

Captain W. N. Congreve, V.C., Rifle Brigade.

Captain H. J. M. MacAndrew, 5th Bengal Cavalry.

Captain and Adjutant C. H. M. Ritchie.

Lieutenant J. E. Jackson.

3167 Squadron Quarter-Master Sergeant D. P. Bree.

3236 Trooper T. Maldrett.

3638 Trooper T. Huckle.

3248 Trooper A. Miller.

3644 Trooper A. Lewis.

Nesbitt's Horse.

Major Currie.

New South Wales Mounted Infantry.

Captain J. M. Antill.

Corporal English.

3rd Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel C. G. Martyr, D.S.O., Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, Commanding 3rd Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Queensland Mounted Infantry.

Captain D. E. Reid.

Captain R. S. Browne.

4th Mounted Infantry Brigade.

Colonel C. P. Ridley, Commanding 4th Brigade Mounted Infantry, performed conspicuous service when the enemy attacked the convoy under his charge on the 15th February, and on other occasions subsequently.

5th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel E. G. T. Bainbridge, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

7th Regiment Mounted Infantry.

Captain W. D. Holland, the Worcestershire Regiment.

The Guards Brigade.

Colonel (local Major-General) R. Pole-Carew, C.B., has commanded the Guards Brigade in a highly efficient manner.

Although the troops under his command have had no opportunity of engaging the enemy during the period under review, they have performed excellent service throughout.

6th Infantry Division.

Major-General (local Lieutenant-General) T. Kelly-Kenny, C.B., Commanding 6th

Division, conducted with conspicuous ability the operations which resulted in the force under General Cronje being surrounded by our troops at Paardeberg. He also performed distinguished service in command of his Division in the actions of the 7th and 10th March at Poplar Grove and Driefontein.

Divisional Staff and Troops.

Major C. C. Monro, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General.

Captain and Brevet-Major C. F. S. Vandeleur, D.S.O., Scots Guards.

Captain W. H. Booth, The Buffs, Aide-de-Camp.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. L. Gubbins, M.B., Royal Army Medical Corps.

Major W. W. Pike, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Captain E. C. Anderson, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Lieutenant J. G. Berne, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Reverend J. Blackbourne, Chaplain.

Major R. A. G. Harrison, Royal Field Artillery.

Major W. H. Connolly, Royal Field Artillery.

Captain C. F. Stevens, Royal Field Artillery.

Captain J. A. Hobson, Royal Field Artillery.

Lieutenant A. H. N. Devenish, Royal Field Artillery.

R.A./3759 Corporal C. Bowles, 82nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

29492 Gunner C. H. Fox, 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

13th Infantry Brigade.

Colonel (local Major-General) C. E. Knox, Commanding 13th Brigade, performed distinguished services on several occasions, notably during the rear-guard action of 16th February, and the action of 18th February, on which occasion he was wounded.

2nd Battalion The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Lieutenant-Colonel and Brevet-Colonel R. A. Hickson.

Captain R. McDouall.

Lieutenant L. H. Hickson, The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), attached.

1600 Sergeant W. R. Stainforth.

2682 Private G. White.

2nd Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. F. Lindsell.

Captain C. Moss.

Lieutenant and Adjutant E. D. A. le Mottée.

1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment).

Lieutenant-Colonel C. E. Lloyd, D.S.O.

Major B. St. J. Le Marchant.

Captain O. Harris.

Lieutenant and Adjutant W. E. M. Tyndall.

2953 Lance-Corporal T. Hinchcliffe.

4742 Private C. Horsley.

1st Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. A. E. Dulzell.

Captain E. A. E. Lechbridge.

Captain F. J. Henley.

18th Infantry Brigade.

Colonel (Brigadier-General) T. E. Stephenson, Commanding 18th Brigade, rendered valuable service in command of his brigade on the 18th February at Paardeberg, and again at Abraham's Kraal on 10th March, 1900.

1st Battalion The Princess of Wales' Own
(Yorkshire Regiment).

Lieutenant-Colonel H. Bowles.

Major J. E. Fearon.

Captain M. Ferrar.

3549 Sergeant B. Richardson.

5684 Lance-Corporal A. P. Hatton.

1st Battalion The Welsh Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. J. F. Bamfield.

Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel W. C.
Gifford.

Captain C. B. Morland.

Lieutenant C. R. Berkeley.

2nd Lieutenant H. C. L. Lloyd.

5166 Sergeant F. Bristowe.

2917 Private J. Foulny.

2572 Private G. Argent.

5361 Private J. Williams.

1st Battalion The Essex Regiment.

Major H. H. W. Nason.

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel R. J. Tudway.

Captain W. K. Legge.

Captain O. G. Godfrey-Faussett.

Lieutenant and Adjutant A. G. Pratt.

2119 Colour-Sergeant F. Howlett.

1931 Colour-Sergeant A. Brandon.

1470 Sergeant J. Francis.

3093 Sergeant H. W. Crabb.

3102 Sergeant P. Long.

2466 Lance-Sergeant H. B. Offen.

2682 Corporal F. Fenner.

3721 Private C. Shanks.

2586 Private S. Copplestone.

3262 Private W. Campbell.

7th Infantry Division.

Major-General (local Lieutenant-General)

C. Tucker, C.B., Commanding 7th Division, was in personal command of the force which returned to Waterval drift on the 15th February. He subsequently rendered valuable services at Paardeberg, and during the action at Poplar Grove on the 7th March, 1900.

Divisional Staff and Troops.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. C. Maxwell, R.E.

14th Infantry Brigade.

Major-General Sir H. Chermide, K.C.M.G., Commanding the 14th Infantry Brigade, came specially to my notice by the good service he rendered in assisting to prevent the escape of General Cronje's force eastwards at Paardeberg, and for the efficient condition of his brigade.

2nd Battalion The Norfolk Regiment.

Captain J. Marriott.

3237 Corporal R. Chilvers.

2nd Battalion The Lincolnshire Regiment.

Captain J. J. Howley.

1st Battalion The King's Own Scottish
Borderers.

Captain J. B. T. Pratt.

Lieutenant E. M. Young.

2255 Colour-Sergeant G. Armstrong.

1343 Sergeant J. P. Larkin.

3724 Private C. Peebles.

15th Infantry Brigade.

Major-General A. G. Wavell, Commanding the 15th Infantry Brigade, carried out his duties most satisfactorily during the march to Boemfontein, and dislodged the enemy from Jacobsdal on the 15th February.

9th Infantry Division.

Major-General (local Lieutenant-General)

Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B., Commanding 9th Division, contributed materially to the success of the operations which took place between the 16th and 27th February, and commanded his Division

with distinction in the engagement at Poplar Grove on the 7th March, 1900.

Divisional Staff and Troops.

Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel J. S. Ewart, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, Assistant Adjutant-General.

Captain H. G. Ruggles-Brise, Grenadier Guards, Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General.

Major A. E. W. Count Gleichen, C.M.G., Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence.

The Rev. J. Robertson, Chaplain to the Forces.

5647 Staff Sergeant-Major W. G. Nash, Army Service Corps.

Royal Engineers.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. F. H. S. Kincaid.

Captain F. R. F. Boileau.

Lieutenant E. E. B. Wilson.

Lieutenant H. Musgrave.

The Highland (3rd Infantry) Brigade.

Colonel (local Major-General) H. A. MacDonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., Commanding the Highland (3rd) Brigade, whose services on the 7th February, in the engagement at Koodoesberg have already been brought to notice, led his brigade with distinguished personal gallantry at Paardeberg on the 18th February 1900, until wounded.

2nd Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders).

Lieutenant-Colonel A. M. Carthew-Yorston.

Major N. W. Cuthbertson.

Lieutenant J. G. H. Hamilton.

Second Lieutenant C. C. West.

1313 Pioneer Sergeant T. Howden.

6269 Piper Donald Cameron.

117 Private J. Hastie.

5657 Private J. R. MacGregor.

6745 Private W. Forrest.

2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire
Buffs, The Duke of Albany's).

Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Hughes-Hallett.

This Officer led the Highland Brigade out of action on the 18th February, and commanded it subsequently in an efficient manner.

Captain E. A. Cowans.

5627 Lance-Corporal C. McKenzie.

2466 Private E. Steele.

3054 Private H. Christian.

5384 Private J. Hunter.

4099 Private T. Birch.

3158 Private T. Rollie.

1st Battalion Princess Louise's (Argyll and
Sutherland Highlanders).

Lieutenant-Colonel A. Wilson.

5714 Corporal Ferrier.

6442 Private A. Luke.

3852 Private C. McLaren.

6403 Private J. McDonald.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

1119 Corporal W. Glasgow.

Cape Medical Bearer Company.

Captain J. J. Brownlee.

Sergeant A. Bettington.

19th Infantry Brigade.

Lieutenant-Colonel and Brevet-Colonel (local Major-General) H. L. Smith-Dorrien, D.S.O., Commanding 19th Brigade, rendered valuable and distinguished service on each occasion on which his brigade was engaged.

2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

Major G. A. Ashby.

Captain F. M. J. D. Rhodes.
 Captain G. B. M. Rawlinson.
 Captain J. M. Mander.
 1178 Colour-Sergeant D. Owen.
 2135 Colour-Sergeant H. F. Smith.
 1095 Sergeant F. J. Symons.
 3058 Corporal H. Cooper.
 3186 Corporal A. Bedford.
 2840 Bugler C. Best.
 2562 Private J. Thompson.
 2757 Private B. Cole.
 3630 Private Retallick.
 5591 Private C. Haythorpe.
 2nd Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. Spens.
 Captain C. P. Higginson.
 2214 Colour-Sergeant S. Bertram.
 3041 Colour-Sergeant Lea.
 3266 Sergeant W. Henshaw.
 2749 Private E. Bawden.
 4246 Private R. Meredith.

1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders.

Lieutenant-Colonel F. Macbean.
 Captain W. E. Gordon.
 Lieutenant D. R. Younger.
 3697 Sergeant A. Austin.
 3131 Sergeant J. Saunders.
 2979 Sergeant J. Wills.
 3191 Lance-Corporal R. Edmonstone.

The Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.
 Lieutenant-Colonel W. D. Otter, Canadian Staff, Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor-General of Canada.

Major L. Buchan, Lieutenant-Colonel Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.

Major O. C. C. Pelletier, Lieutenant-Colonel Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.

Captain H. B. Stairs, Captain 66th Princess Louise's Fusiliers.

Lieutenant and Adjutant A. H. Macdonnell, Captain, Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.

6559 Sergeant Utton.
 8110 Private J. Kennedy.
 7017 Private H. Andrews.
 7040 Private J. H. Dickson.
 7043 Private C. W. Duncafe.
 7376 Private F. C. Page.

Bearer Company, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Major R. H. S. Sawyer.
 Captain P. J. Probyn.
 4691 Sergeant-Major F. Crookes.
 10999 Corporal A. C. Ralfe.
 10734 Private F. A. Farrell.

I confidently recommend those I have named to the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

The following Officers, who have been killed in action or have died from the effects of wounds, rendered conspicuously valuable services. Had they survived, I should have brought their names prominently to your Lordship's notice.

Colonel O. C. Hannay, Commanding 1st Brigade Mounted Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Aldworth, D.S.O., Commanding 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel C. E. Umphelby, Royal Australian Artillery.

Captain and Adjutant D. A. N. Lomax, 1st Battalion The Welsh Regiment.

Lieutenant F. N. Parsons, 1st Battalion The Essex Regiment.

Lieutenant G. J. Grieve, New South Wales Forces, attached 2nd Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders).

2nd Lieutenant R. H. McClure, 2nd Battalion the Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, Duke of Albany's).

2nd Lieutenant D. B. Monypenny, 2nd Battalion the Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, Duke of Albany's).

Returns of Casualties and of Transport are attached.

I have, &c.,
 ROBERTS, Field Marshal.

Casualties from 28th February to 13th March, 1900, inclusive:—

Paardeberg, 28th February.—Wounded, non-commissioned officers and men, 1.

Osfontein, 1st—6th March.—Killed, non-commissioned officers and men, 1; wounded, Officers, 1, non-commissioned officers and men, 7; missing, non-commissioned officers and men, 1.

Poplar Grove, 7th March.—Killed, Officers, 2; non-commissioned officers and men, 2; wounded, Officers, 3; non-commissioned officers and men, 41; missing, non-commissioned officers and men, 1.

Dreifontein, 10th March.—Killed, 4 Officers, 58 non-commissioned officers and men; wounded, 20 Officers, 342 non-commissioned officers and men; missing, 14 non-commissioned officers and men.

Total.—Killed, 6 Officers, 61 non-commissioned officers and men; wounded, 24 Officers, 391 non-commissioned officers and men; missing, 16 non-commissioned officers and men.

Ox and Mule Transport.

Return of mule and ox transport on march from Modder River to Bloemfontein.

Mule Transport:—18 Transport Companies.

—864 buck wagons, 72 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 18 water carts, 9,360 mules,

Regimental Transport:—Cavalry.—9 water carts, 54 mules.

Mounted Infantry.—72 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 18 water carts, 612 mules.

Royal Engineers.—32 R.E. technical wagons, 4 water carts, 296 mules.

Infantry.—104 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 52 water carts, 1,040 mules.

Ox Transport:—Naval Brigade.—19 ox wagons, 428 oxen.

Royal Artillery.—106 ox wagons, 1,760 oxen.

Supply Park.—475 ox wagons, 7,600 oxen.

Total at commencement of movement—32 R.E. technical wagons, 864 buck wagons, 248 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 101 water carts, 600 ox wagons, 11,362 mules, 9,788 oxen.

Casualties during march—46 buck wagons, 3 water carts, 186 ox wagons, 796 mules, 3,500 oxen.

Balance—32 R.E. technical wagons, 818 buck wagons, 248 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 98 water carts, 414 ox wagons, 10,566 mules, 6,288 oxen.

Replacements during march—184 ox wagons, 2,680 oxen.

Totals on arriving at Bloemfontein—32 R.E. technical wagons, 818 buck wagons, 248 S.A.A. and Scotch carts, 98 water carts, 598 ox wagons, 10,566 mules, 8,968 oxen.

No. 6.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.
Head-quarters of the Army in South Africa,
Kroonstad, 21st May, 1900.

MY LORD,

MY despatch of the 15th March, 1900, ended with a description of the entry of the Head-quarters of the Army in South Africa into Bloemfontein.

In the present letter I propose to give a brief account of events from that time up to the 12th May, on which date the force under my immediate command occupied Kroonstad, which had been made the temporary head-quarters of the Orange Free State Government.

2. Our rapid advance from the most western portion of the Orange Free State and the seizure of their capital had greatly dispirited the Boers, and the forces which fell back in front of our main army retired towards Kroonstad, while those which were in the northern districts of Cape Colony crossed the Orange River, and retreated in a northerly direction along the Basutoland border and the fertile district of Ladybrand.

3. As these forces cleared off, the southern portion of the State appeared to be settling down. Many Burghers surrendered their arms and horses, and took an oath to abstain from further hostilities against the British Government. Had I then been able to follow the enemy up and take advantage of this condition of affairs, the task of bringing the Orange Free State to terms would have been a comparatively easy one.

4. I found, however, it was impossible to do so. Cape Town, our main depôt for supplies, is 750 miles distant from Bloemfontein, with which it is connected by a single line of railway, and communication with Cape Colony had been interrupted by the destruction by the enemy of both the bridges over the Orange River.

From the country itself we were able to get scarcely anything in the shape of food except meat, and every mile we advanced took us further away from the only place where a sufficiency of supplies was obtainable. Moreover, the army needed rest after the unusual exertions it had been called upon to make, and by which its mobility had been greatly impaired.

5. The enemy knew exactly how we were situated. They had accurate information as to the condition of our supplies, our transport, and our artillery and cavalry horses; they regained courage by our prolonged and enforced halt at Bloemfontein, and their retrograde movement was arrested. They showed considerable strategical skill by reoccupying Ladybrand, and by concentrating a large force between Brandfort and Thabanchu. This gave them free access to the south-eastern districts of the Orange Free State, and prevented me from moving until they had been forced back north of the Thabanchu-Ladybrand line.

6. I may here mention that, as soon as railway communication with Cape Colony had been restored, the 3rd Division, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir W. Gatacre, was directed to move up along the railway from Pethulie, via Springfontein, towards Bloemfontein, while the column under Major-General Clements, which had previously dislodged the enemy from Colesberg and Norval's Pont, marched through Fauresmith and Petrusburg, joining my head-quarters on 2nd April. Mean-

while I had occupied Glen Station and Karee Siding, and on the 29th March a force under Lieutenant-General Tucker as detailed in the margin,* attacked the enemy and drove them back to Brandfort, afterwards holding and entrenching a position which effectually protected the siding and the railway bridge under reconstruction at Glen.

7. On the following day, in consequence of a report that a large hostile force had collected near Thabanchu, I found it necessary to withdraw the Cavalry outpost at that town towards Bloemfontein. During its retirement to the Waterworks, 21 miles east of Bloemfontein, the Boers rapidly followed it up, and, by means of a cunningly laid ambush near Sannah's Post, to which I shall refer in a separate despatch, succeeded in capturing seven 12-pr. guns, with the entire personnel of a Horse Artillery battery and many other prisoners, besides inflicting heavy loss on the troops engaged, and seizing a convoy which accompanied them. Encouraged by this success, the Boer commanders moved southward and came in contact with a weak detachment which had been sent to Dewetsdorp by Lieutenant-General Sir W. Gatacre, and was being withdrawn by my orders. The enemy surrounded the detachment, and, before assistance could arrive, it had surrendered to superior numbers, and the Officers and men composing it had been removed, as prisoners of war, to Kroonstad.

8. The enemy then occupied Dewetsdorp, while a considerable force attacked Wepener, where a column of Colonial troops, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety had arrived a few days previously.

Retiring from the town to a defensible position 3 miles to the west, which commanded an important bridge over the Caledon River, Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety entrenched his force, and for 16 days he succeeded in keeping the Boers in check, despite the fact that they far outnumbered the small body of about 1,600 men under his command, and had also a considerable superiority in artillery, under pressure from the south and west caused them to withdraw northward along the Basutoland border.

9. While these events were taking place, the state of my mounted troops prevented me from attempting any operation which demanded rapidity of movement. I was determined, moreover, to adhere, if possible, to my plan of campaign, and not to be led into diverting from it, for operations of subsidiary importance, the troops which I required to attain my main objective, namely, to advance in adequate strength through the northern portion of the Orange Free State on Johannesburg and Pretoria. I had to content myself, therefore, with carefully guarding the line of railway, and with collecting a force strong enough to drive the enemy north of the Brandfort-Thabanchu line. For this purpose I brought the 3rd Division up to its full strength by the addition of some Militia battalions, and concentrated it, as well as the newly arrived 8th Division, at Edenburg. I had previously, on the 5th April, requested General Sir Rodvers Buller to transfer the 10th Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Hunter, together with the Imperial Light Horse, to Cape Colony, additional troops being urgently required to effect the relief of Mafeking, the state of affairs in Natal justifying some reduction in the force quartered there. I utilized

* 7th Division, 3rd Cavalry Brigade, Le Gallais' Mounted Infantry.

Major-General Hart's Brigade of this division for the relief of Wepener, in conjunction with the main body of the Colonial troops under Brigadier-General Brabant, the remainder of Sir Archibald Hunter's Division proceeding to Kimberley. I increased and re-organized the Mounted Infantry, supplementing it by several battalions of Imperial Yeomanry, and these troops, together with the 4th Cavalry Brigade, which had recently arrived from England, I collected in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein.

10. My dispositions for protecting the railway and expelling the enemy from the south-eastern districts of the Orange Free State had the desired effect, and on the 24th April Wepener was relieved and Dewetsdorp occupied by a body of troops under the command of Lieutenant-General French. The enemy finding themselves thwarted in the south-east portion of the Orange Free State, took up a position between Thabanchu and Ladybrand, from which they were gradually pushed back by the 8th division under Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Rundle, Brigadier-General Brabant's Colonial Division, and a force under the command of Major-General Ian Hamilton.*

11. On the 28th and 29th April our troops were engaged with the enemy in the neighbourhood of Thabanchu, and on the 1st May the enemy was signally defeated at Houtnek with comparatively small loss on our side, thanks to the admirable dispositions made by Major-General Ian Hamilton. It would doubtless have been more satisfactory had the troops employed at Dewetsdorp and Wepener been able to cut off the enemy's retreat and capture their guns; but, as I have already explained, they were limited in number, and during the recent operations the Boers moved with hardly any baggage, each fighting man carrying his blankets and food on a led horse. Being intimately acquainted with the resources of the country, and where grain and cattle were abundant, the enemy were not obliged to take their supplies with them, and could march at a pace which our troops could not hope to equal. It followed, therefore, that they were able to escape without suffering any other loss than that inflicted by our troops when dislodging them from the various positions they occupied.

12. By the beginning of May I had all the strategical points in the south-eastern districts securely held, and I was no longer anxious for the safety of the railway. The condition of the Cavalry, Artillery, and Mounted Infantry had materially improved, and a considerable number of remounts had arrived; sufficient supplies had been collected at Bloemfontein, and the arrangements for the transport had been completed. Under these circumstances I felt justified in ordering a forward movement towards Kroonstad. I left Bloemfontein by train for Karee Siding; to this point I had previously despatched the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division. The 1st (Hutton's) Brigade of Mounted Infantry had moved to Brakpan, 10 miles to the west, while Lieutenant-General Tucker with the 15th (Wavell's) Brigade of the 7th Division was

2 miles to the east of the siding; the 14th (Maxwell's) Brigade was at Vlakfontein, 5 miles further east. On the morning of this day, Major-General Ian Hamilton's force was at Isabellafontein.

13. Brandfort was occupied the same afternoon, the Boer forces under General Delarey making but a feeble resistance as soon as their right flank had been turned by Hutton's Mounted Infantry.

14. The following day the 7th and 11th Divisions with the 1st Brigade of Mounted Infantry remained in the vicinity of Brandfort, while Major-General Ian Hamilton engaged and drove back the enemy's rear guard at Welkom about 15 miles south of Winburg. On this occasion the junction of the two Boer Forces was frustrated by a well-executed movement of the Household Cavalry, the 12th Lancers, and Kitchener's Horse, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel the Earl of Airlie. The enemy fled after the encounter, leaving their dead and wounded on the field.

15. On the 5th May the force which I was accompanying marched to within 3 miles of the Vet River, the north bank of which was held by the enemy in considerable force. For three hours the action was chiefly confined to artillery on both sides, our Field and Naval guns making excellent practice, but just before dark the Mounted Infantry executed a turning movement, crossing the river 6 miles west of the railway bridge, which, like other bridges over the rivers along our line of advance, had been previously destroyed by the enemy. In this affair the Canadian, New South Wales, New Zealand Mounted Infantry, and the Queensland Mounted Rifles, vied with each other in their efforts to close with the enemy. We captured one Maxim gun and 26 prisoners, our losses being slight.

16. On this day Major-General Ian Hamilton captured Winburg after an engagement at Bobiansberg in which the 2nd Battalion Black Watch under Lieutenant-Colonel Carthew-Yorston greatly distinguished themselves.

17. During the night the enemy retired northwards to the Zand River, and on the 6th May the main force crossed the Vet River unopposed and occupied Smaldeel Junction. The drifts in the river bed were so bad that considerable delay occurred in getting the baggage and supply convoy across the Vet, and I was consequently obliged to halt at Smaldeel for two days. The Mounted Infantry, however, pushed on to Welgelegen, and Major-General Ian Hamilton's force moved some 10 miles north of Winburg, its place there having been taken by the Highland Brigade.

18. I was joined on the 8th May by Lieutenant-General French with the 1st (Porter's), 3rd (Gordon's), and the 4th (Dickson's) Brigades of Cavalry, and the following day the whole force marched to Welgelegen, the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades and the Mounted Infantry moving on to the south bank of the Zand, opposite Dupree's Laager. That evening a squadron of the Scots Greys succeeded in crossing the river near Verneulen's Kraal and holding the drift at that point. The 7th Division bivouacked near Merriesfontein, and Major-General Ian Hamilton marched to Bloemplaats, and pushed on the 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment to Junction Drift.

19. On the morning of the 10th May the enemy could be seen holding the north bank of the Zand in considerable strength. At day-break Lieutenant-General French with two

* This consisted of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade under Brigadier-General Broadwood, the 2nd Brigade of Mounted Infantry under Brigadier-General Ridley, Brigadier-General Smith-Morrien's Brigade of the 9th Division, and a newly-formed brigade (31st) composed of 1st Battalion Sussex, 1st Battalion Derbyshires, the 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders and the City Imperial Volunteer Battalion, under the command of Major-General Bruce Hamilton.

Cavalry brigades crossed the river and made a wide turning movement past the diamond mine at Dirksburg, supported by the 1st Mounted Infantry Brigade under Major-General Hutton. I directed Ross' and Henry's Mounted Infantry battalions to seize the drift near the railway bridge. This they succeeded in doing by 7 A.M., and were followed across the river by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade and the 11th Division. The 7th Division crossed by Junction Drift. Major-General Ian Hamilton pushed forward the Cavalry Brigade across the same drift followed by the 21st Brigade under Major-General Bruce Hamilton, and the 19th Brigade under Major-General Smith-Dorrien. The enemy on his flank, as well as in front of Lieutenant-General French, offered a stubborn resistance, but by 11.30 A.M. they were driven from the positions they had taken up, and withdrew towards Kroonstad, blowing up the railway bridges and culverts as they fell back.

20. My head-quarters with the 11th Division pressed on that day to Riet Spruit, 8 miles north of the river. The 7th Division bivouacked at Deelfontein Noord, and Major-General Ian Hamilton's column halted about 4 miles east of that place. During the afternoon Lieutenant-General French with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades, and Hutton's Brigade of Mounted Infantry, reached a point 4 miles west of Ventersburg Road Station.

21. On the 11th May I marched with the 11th Division some 20 miles to Geneva Siding, 14 miles from Kroonstad, and 8 miles from Boschrand, where the Boers were holding an entrenched position to cover the town. Gordon's Cavalry Brigade advanced to within touch of the enemy, supported, on the left, by Hutton's Mounted Infantry. Lieutenant-General French, with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades, marched to the Valsch River Drift, 10 miles northwards of Kroonstad, with instructions to cut the railway line. The 7th Division halted a short distance south-east of Geneva Siding, with Major-General Ian Hamilton's column a little further to the east.

22. During the night the enemy evacuated their entrenchments at Boschrand and retreated northwards, and on the 12th May I entered Kroonstad, with the 11th Division, without encountering any opposition.

President Steyn had left the town on the evening of the 11th May, after having previously proclaimed Lindley to be the seat of the Orange Free State Government. Commandant-General Botha and Commandant De Wet accompanied the Transvaalers in their retreat northwards.

23. Turning now to the operations in other directions, I may remark that during the period dealt with in this letter nothing calling for special notice occurred in Natal. The Boers continued to entrench themselves on the Biggarsberg, and held the Drakensberg Passes, but they attempted no offensive action. Sir Redvers Buller remained at Ladysmith, and beyond keeping the enemy under observation did not risk any serious engagement. In this he was acting in accordance with my wishes, for, as he did not feel himself strong enough to force the Drakensberg Passes, he could not afford me any material assistance until I was in possession of Kroonstad and prepared to advance on the Transvaal.

24. In the vicinity of Kimberley the course of events has been as follows:—On the 16th March, Lord Methuen reconnoitred as far as Fourteen Streams, returning the same evening

to Warrenton. He subsequently visited Barkly West, and repaired the railway line between Kimberley and Warrenton. On the 3rd April he proceeded to Boshof with the force marginally named.* On the 5th April, with the Imperial Yeomanry, Kimberley Mounted Corps, and 4th Field Battery, he surrounded a small Boer commando near Boshof. Colonel de Villebois Mareuil and seven of the enemy were killed, eight were wounded, and the remainder, numbering 54 Boers, Frenchmen, and Germans, were taken prisoners.

25. On this day, a message, dated 17th March, was received from Colonel Baden-Powell to the effect that the enemy were still besieging Mafeking, though in somewhat reduced numbers. A reinforcement under Colonel Plumer was approaching from the north, but it seemed doubtful whether it could break through the Boer lines. I had previously enquired from him how he stood as regard supplies, and he informed me in reply that they would, in all probability, only last until the 18th May.

26. On the 17th April, I gave orders for the formation of a flying column of mounted troops about 1,100 strong, with mule transport, for the relief of Mafeking. I placed Colonel B. T. Mahon, 8th Hussars, in command of this force, which consisted of 900 mounted men, including the Imperial Light Horse, four Horse Artillery guns with 100 men, 100 picked infantry soldiers to guard the wagons, 52 wagons with 10 mules each, and nearly 1,200 horses. The column was to take with it rations for 16 days and forage for 12 days. Medicines and medical comforts for the Mafeking garrison were also to be taken. Food and other stores for Colonel Baden-Powell's force were to be sent on by railway as soon as the line could be repaired. The flying column was ordered to start not later than the 4th May.

27. On the 24th April I instructed Lieutenant-General Hunter to have everything in readiness for an immediate advance, and to co-operate with Lord Methuen in distracting the enemy's attention until the flying column had crossed the Vaal and had obtained a good start. On the 29th April, Lieutenant-General Hunter reported that he hoped to force the passage of the Vaal on the 2nd May, and to send on the flying column on the 4th May. It started on the day specified, and while penning these words the gratifying news reaches me that Mafeking was relieved on the 18th May after an heroic defence of over 200 days.

28. On the 5th May, Major-General Barton's Brigade engaged the enemy 2,000 strong, 2 miles north of Rooidam, and inflicted considerable loss on the Boers, who retired northward. On the 7th May, Lieutenant-General Hunter occupied Fourteen Streams without opposition, the enemy retreating in great disorder, and abandoning their ammunition, clothing, and personal effects. This result was in a great measure due to the able dispositions of Major-General Paget, who brought a powerful artillery fire to bear on the Boer position.

29. The repair of the railway bridge at Fourteen Streams was at once taken in hand, and a strong entrenched post to be held by one battalion was constructed. The force under Sir A. Hunter occupied Christiana, and is now moving along the railway line towards Mafeking, while that under Lord Methuen is marching from Hoopstad to join me.

* Three field batteries, a section of a Howitzer battery, seven companies of Imperial Yeomanry, Kimberley Mounted Corps, 600 strong, the 9th Infantry Brigade, and two battalions of the 20th Brigade

30. It only remains to say that, since our entry into Bloemfontein on the 13th March, the pacification of the Prieska district has been completed. The arrangements for this were initiated by Major-General Lord Kitchener with his characteristic energy, and carried out by Brigadier-General Settle, Colonel Sir C. Parsons, and Lieutenant-Colonel Adye.

31. Tranquillity has been restored in the northern districts of Cape Colony, where a large number of rebels had joined the Boers.

32. Progress has also been made in organizing a provisional administration in that portion of the Orange Free State which is occupied by the British troops; District Commissioners, under the control of the Military Governor of Bloemfontein, having been appointed, and a police force being in course of formation.

33. I enclose a list of casualties. ;

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal.

List of Casualties which occurred in the Force serving in the Orange Free State, South Africa, between the 13th March and the 20th May, 1900.

Operations near the Glen and Karee Siding.—

Killed, 2 Officers, 19 other ranks; wounded, 14 Officers, 165 other ranks; missing, 11 other ranks; prisoners, 5 other ranks.

At Sannah's Post.—Killed, 3 Officers, 12 other ranks; wounded, 15 Officers, 108 other ranks; missing, 17 Officers, 413 other ranks.

Reddersburg.—Killed, 2 Officers, 8 other ranks; wounded, 2 Officers, 33 other ranks; prisoners, 8 Officers, 538 other ranks.

Siege of Wepener.—Killed, 3 Officers, 25 other ranks; wounded, 11 Officers, 130 other ranks.

To east of the line of railway.—Killed, 4 Officers, 29 other ranks; wounded, 32 Officers, 224 other ranks; missing, 3 Officers, 69 other ranks; prisoners, 1 Officer, 6 other ranks.

To west of the line of railway.—Killed, 3 Officers, 9 other ranks; wounded, 4 Officers, 67 other ranks; missing, 6 other ranks; prisoners, 11 other ranks.

Advance on Kroonstad.—Killed, 3 Officers, 29 other ranks; wounded, 13 Officers, 149 other ranks; missing, 2 Officers, 35 other ranks; prisoners, 3 Officers, 8 other ranks.

Total.—Killed, 20 Officers, 131 other ranks; wounded, 91 Officers, 876 other ranks; missing, 22 Officers, 534 other ranks; prisoners, 12 Officers, 568 other ranks.

No. 7.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.
Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
Pretoria,

MY LORD, 14th August, 1900.

IN my last despatch dated the 21st May, 1900, I brought my narrative of the war in South Africa up to the occupation of Kroonstad on the 12th May. I shall now endeavour to describe the course of events after that date which led to the seizure of Pretoria and to give an account of the several military operations which have been carried out in South Africa up to the 13th June.

2. Before going into details, a brief reference may be made to the general attitude of the enemy during the period under review. A portion of the Boer commandoes, especially those raised in the

Orange River Colony, on being driven back by our advance, during which we occupied Thabanchu and Ladybrand, collected in the north-eastern part of the Colony, whence it seemed probable that they would endeavour to cut our line of communication by rail, as soon as the main force under my immediate command had crossed the Vaal River. These commandoes blocked the passes of the Drakensberg Range and were likely to oppose any attempt on the part of the Natal force to co-operate with me through Laing's Nek. A considerable number of the enemy were also disposed along the line of railway for the purpose of holding the several defensive positions and river crossings between Kroonstad and Pretoria. The southern and western districts of the Orange River Colony were settling down, and I had good reason to hope that no important concentration of the enemy was to be anticipated in the western portion of the Transvaal, as the possession of the railway junctions at Johannesburg and Pretoria and the restoration of the line from Kimberley to Mafeking, would render any such concentration unlikely, if not impossible.

3. My object then was to push forward with the utmost rapidity, while providing as far as my resources would admit for the safety of the main line of communication by occupying strategical points to the east of the railway at Winburg, Senekal, Lindley, and Heilbron. I calculated that, as soon as Mafeking had been relieved, a large proportion of the troops under the command of Lord Methuen and Sir Archibald Hunter would be available to co-operate on my left flank and I hoped Sir Redvers Buller would be able to assist by an advance westward to Vrede, or north-westward in the Standerton direction. But whether these anticipations could be realized or not, I felt that the enormous advantage to be gained, by striking at the enemy's capital before he had time to recover from the defeats he had already sustained, would more than counter-balance the risk of having our line of communication interfered with—a risk which had to be taken into consideration.

4. I had to halt at Kroonstad from the 12th to the 22nd May for the repair of the railway upon which I was dependent for my supplies.

5. On the 14th May I directed Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's column to march from Kroonstad to Lindley and on the 17th that town surrendered to Brigadier-General Broadwood.

6. Lord Methuen, whom I had ordered to move on the 14th May from Boshof to Hoopstad and there await further instructions, reached Hoopstad on the 17th May. I had thought of his force taking part in the Transvaal operations, but with regard to the probability of disturbances on the line of railway I determined to place it in the neighbourhood of Kroonstad, to which place it was accordingly directed to proceed.

7. On the 20th May, Lieutenant-General French with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades marched from Jordan Siding, north of Kroonstad, to the north-east of Rhenoster Kop, while Major-General Hutton with the 1st Brigade of Mounted Infantry (exclusive of the 4th and 8th Corps, which under Colonel Henry were attached to Army Head-Quarters) advanced to the south of the same place and Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's column started from Lindley on the road to Heilbron.

8. On the 22nd of May my head-quarters with the 7th and 11th Divisions left Kroonstad and advanced to Honing Spruit Siding, while General Ian Hamilton's column reached and occupied Heilbron. The enemy disputed his passage of the Rhenoster and our loss might have been heavy had

not Major-General Smith-Dorrien, Commanding one of Hamilton's brigades (the 19th), been moved on the previous day to a position from which he was able to deliver at the right moment an unexpected attack upon the Boer flank.

9. On the 23rd May I marched past Roodeval Station to the Rhenoster River with the 7th and 11th Divisions, Colonel Henry with the two corps of Mounted Infantry being in advance on the east of the railway. No opposition was met with, although the hills north of the river furnished a strong defensive position and all preparations had been made by the enemy to give us a warm reception. It must be concluded that they felt their line of retreat was threatened from the east by General Hamilton's column at Heilbron and from the west by the Cavalry and Mounted Infantry under Generals French and Hutton, which had effected a crossing lower down the stream.

10. On the 24th May I marched with the 11th Division to Vredefort Road Station. The 7th Division bivouacked near Prospect on the west of the railway, four miles in rear, and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade four miles east of the station. The troops under Generals French and Hutton moved to the north-west, the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades crossing the Vaal at Parys and Versailles. General Ian Hamilton's column halted at Eerstegehek, seven miles north of Vredefort Road Station and to the east of the railway.

11. In view of the probability of opposition at the crossing of the Vaal River and of the advantages which a turning movement to the west appeared to afford, I directed Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton to move his column across the railway on the morning of the 25th May, and to march in the afternoon to Wonderheuval and thence to the Vaal at Wonderwater Drift. By this move the enemy were completely deceived. They had expected Hamilton's column to cross the Vaal at Engelbrecht's Drift, east of the railway, and collected there in some force to oppose him. My head-quarters with the 11th Division advanced this day to Grootvlei and the 7th Division to Wittlepoort. The 4th and 8th Corps of Mounted Infantry proceeded to Steepan on the railway, 10 miles north of Grootvlei, and 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Welterseden to guard our right flank. Generals French and Hutton moved up the Vaal to a drift near Lindaque.

12. On the 26th May I marched with the 7th and 11th Divisions to Taalibosch Spruit, while Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry reached the Vaal at Viljoen's Drift and, after occupying the coal mines and railway station on the south bank, crossed the river and held the drift and bridge, one span of the latter having been blown up by the Boers. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade continued to guard my right and General Ian Hamilton's Column my left at Wonderwater Drift, which was crossed this day by Brigadier-General Broadwood's Cavalry Brigade. Generals French and Hutton advanced across the Riet Spruit encountering but slight opposition and the Highland Brigade, with the head-quarters of the 5th Division, was ordered from Lindley to Heilbron.

13. On the 27th May I crossed the Vaal with the 7th and 11th Divisions and 3rd Cavalry Brigade and bivouacked at Vereeniging. Generals French and Hutton moved to Rietfontein and General Ian Hamilton to Riekuil.

14. On the 28th May my head-quarters, with the 11th Division, proceeded to Klip River Station; the 7th Division to Witkop, south of the station; the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to the east,

and Colonel Henry's Corps of Mounted Infantry to the north. The troops under Generals French and Hutton, strengthened by the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, advanced to the north-west of Johannesburg, and those under Ian Hamilton to Syperfontein 15 miles to the south-west of that town.

15. On the 29th May, I continued my march to Johannesburg, arriving opposite the Germiston Railway Junction at 3.30 P.M. The 11th Division, with the 7th Division on its left, moved along the railway and occupied Germiston after some slight resistance. Colonel Henry, whose Mounted Infantry preceded the main body, met with opposition at Natal Spruit Junction early in the day and later on at Boksburg. Forcing the enemy back, he moved round by his left to the north of Germiston, supported on the right by Gordon's Cavalry Brigade. General Ian Hamilton, who was advancing to a point about 12 miles west of Johannesburg, found his way blocked at 2 P.M. by a considerable force of the enemy at Doornkop. They had with them two heavy guns and several field guns and pompoms, and were holding a strong position on a long ridge running east and west. Hamilton decided to engage with the enemy at once. The right attack was led by the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, who captured the eastern end of the ridge and, wheeling round, worked along it until after dark. The City Imperial Volunteers led on the left flank and behaved with great gallantry; but the chief share of the action and casualties fell to the Gordon Highlanders, who lost 1 Officer killed and had 9 Officers wounded. The enemy, who had fought obstinately, retired during the night. Our casualties in this engagement were 2 Officers and 24 men killed and 9 Officers and 106 men wounded. General French also was opposed throughout his march on the 28th and 29th May, but he had succeeded by dark on the latter day in working round the very extended right flank of the enemy, thereby facilitating the progress of Ian Hamilton's column. French's losses were slight, 2 Officers being wounded and 2 men killed and 17 wounded.

16. The next morning I halted to the south of Germiston, the force being distributed as follows:—

The 11th Division, with the heavy guns, near my head-quarters.

The 7th Division, 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry on the heights to the north of Johannesburg.

Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's Column at Florida, three miles west of the town.

The troops under Generals French and Hutton a few miles north-east of Florida.

On this day I had an interview with Dr. Krause who had been left in temporary charge of Johannesburg and who agreed to surrender the town to me the next morning. In the course of the day the Queensland Mounted Rifles captured a Creusot field gun, a gun wagon, 11 wagons loaded with military stores and ammunition and 23 prisoners.

17. Meanwhile, on the 29th May, I had received information that the Highland Brigade was being hard pressed by the enemy at Roodepoort, 18 miles south of Heilbron. The Irish Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry had been ordered to proceed from Ventersburg-road Station to join this brigade at Lindley. It had, however, failed to reach that place before the Highlanders left for Heilbron and Lieutenant-General Sir H. Colville, in command of the troops, had started without it. This was very unfortunate, as Colville was much in need of mounted troops.

On this news reaching me, I directed Lord Methuen to despatch Douglas's Brigade from Kroonstad to Colville's assistance. This order had scarcely been issued when I heard from Lieutenant-General Rundle, at Senekal, that the Irish Yeomanry, which had arrived at Lindley only a few hours after the departure of the Highland Brigade, had found that place in the hands of the enemy. Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, who commanded the Yeomanry, accordingly halted 3 miles west of the town, and sent messengers to Colville and Rundle apprising them of his dangerous position, which was aggravated by his having only one day's provisions in hand. Spragge was at first opposed by only a small force, but, on his defenceless position becoming known to the Boers, their numbers rapidly increased. General Rundle could not go to Spragge's relief, as he had been called upon to support Brigadier-General Brabant in the direction of Hammonia, nor could he leave Senekal until the arrival of Major-General Clements, who, with a portion of his brigade, was proceeding to that place from Winburg. Under the impression, however, that he might indirectly relieve the hostile pressure on Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge's detachment, General Rundle, with a force of six companies of Yeomanry, two Field Batteries, Major-General Campbell's Brigade, and the 2nd Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment, moved out four miles on the Bethlehem road and encountered the enemy, who were in considerable strength at Kuring Kraus. After an engagement, which had no decisive result, General Rundle fell back on Senekal, his casualties amounting to 30 killed and 150 wounded.

18. General Colville, with the head-quarters of the 9th Division and the Highland Brigade, reached Heilbron on the 29th May. During the latter part of the march the brigade was but slightly troubled by the enemy, the greater part of whom had turned their attention to the Imperial Yeomanry.

On this day Lord Methuen left Kroonstad in obedience to my instructions to assist the Highland Brigade. On the third march out he received a message from Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, dated the 29th May, reporting that he was heavily pressed by the enemy and was short of food and ammunition, but hoped that he would be able to hold out until the 2nd June. This message Lord Methuen repeated to me by telegraph and I at once ordered him to push on to Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge's assistance, and on the 1st June, half an hour after the receipt of my reply, he started off with his mounted troops, Imperial Yeomanry, a Field battery, one section of pom-poms, and reached Lindley at 10 o'clock the following morning, having covered 44 miles in 25 hours. Unfortunately he was too late, as Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge had found it necessary to surrender two days before. Methuen, on nearing Lindley, attacked the Boer force, which had increased from 300 to 3,000 strong, and, after a running fight which lasted five hours, completely defeated them and occupied the town. I then directed him to leave one of his Infantry brigades (Paget's) and to march with the other (Douglas's) to Heilbron with supplies for Sir H. Colville's force.

19. To return to the operations at Johannesburg. I received the formal surrender of the town early on the 31st May and entered it at noon with the 7th and 11th Divisions, the Union Jack being hoisted with the usual salute in the main square. After the ceremony, I established my head-quarters at Orange Grove, three miles

north of Johannesburg on the Pretoria road, the 11th Division bivouacking four miles further north and the 14th Brigade of the 7th Division a short distance to the west. The 15th (Wavell's) Brigade was detailed to garrison the town and Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, was appointed Military Governor.

20. On the 1st and 2nd June my head-quarters remained at Orange Grove, while Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's column moved from Florida to Bramfontein, four miles west of Orange Grove, and the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Cavalry Brigades, with Hutton's Mounted Infantry, were distributed ten miles to the north of the same place.

21. During these two days, disquieting news continued to reach me regarding the activity and numbers of the enemy who had opposed us in the Orange River Colony and who were now closing in behind us, threatening the single line of railway leading to Cape Colony, upon which I was dependent for provisioning the army. This information was the more disconcerting, as, owing to our rapid advance and the extensive damage done to the railway, we had practically been living from hand to mouth and, at times, had not even one day's rations to the good. It was, therefore, suggested to me that it might be prudent to halt at Johannesburg until the Orange River Colony should be thoroughly subdued and the railway from Natal opened. But, while fully recognizing the danger attending a further advance, I considered the advantages of following up without delay the successes we had achieved, and not giving the enemy time to recover from their several defeats, or to remove the British prisoners from Pretoria quite justified the risk being run. Accordingly I advanced on the 3rd June with Pole-Carew's division and the head-quarters and Maxwell's Brigade of the 7th Division to Leuwkop, a distance of 12 miles, Colonel Henry, with his corps of Mounted Infantry, moving to a point 4 miles to the north, Brigadier-General Gordon, with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, 6 miles to the east, Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton with his column to Diepsloot, 15 miles south of Pretoria, and the troops under Generals French and Hutton to Rooikrans, 13 miles south-west of Pretoria.

22. On the 4th June I marched with Henry's Mounted Infantry, four Companies Imperial Yeomanry, Pole-Carew's Division, Maxwell's Brigade and the naval and siege guns to Six Mile Spruit, both banks of which were occupied by the enemy. The Boers were quickly dislodged from the south bank by the Mounted Infantry and Imperial Yeomanry, and pursued for nearly a mile, when our troops came under artillery fire. The heavy guns were at once pushed to the front, supported by Stephenson's Brigade of the 11th Division, and the enemy's fire was soon silenced. They then moved to the south along a series of ridges parallel to our main line of advance with the object of turning our left flank, but in this they were checked by the Mounted Infantry and Imperial Yeomanry, supported by Maxwell's Brigade. As, however, the Boers continued to press on our left flank and thus threatened our rear, I ordered Ian Hamilton, who was moving three miles to our left, to incline to his right and close the gap between the two columns. As soon as Ian Hamilton's troops came up, and De Lisle's Mounted Infantry pushed well round the enemy's right flank, they fell back on Pretoria. It was now dusk, and the troops had to bivouac in the positions which they were occupying, the Guards Brigade near the most

southern of the forts defending Pretoria, and within four miles of the town, Stephenson's next to the Guards on the west, and Ian Hamilton's column still further to the west, French with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades and Hutton's Mounted Infantry towards the north of the town, Broadwood's Cavalry between French and Ian Hamilton, and Gordon's Cavalry to the east, near the Irene Railway Station.

23. Shortly before dusk Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle, whose Mounted Infantry had followed up the enemy to within 2,000 yards of Pretoria, sent an officer under a flag of truce to demand in my name the surrender of the town. To this no reply was given, but about 10 P.M. Mr. Sandberg, Military Secretary to Commandant-General Botha, with a General of the Boer Army, brought in a letter from the Commandant-General proposing an armistice for the purpose of arranging the terms under which Pretoria would be handed over to the British force. I replied that the surrender must be unconditional and requested an answer before 5 o'clock the following morning, as my troops had been ordered to advance at daybreak. At the time named on the 5th June I received the reply from Commandant-General Botha to the effect that he was not prepared further to defend the place and that he entrusted the woman, children, and property to my protection. I, therefore, ordered Pole-Carew's Division with Henry's Mounted Infantry to move within a mile of the town and at 9 A.M. I proceeded myself to the railway station. At 2 P.M. I made a ceremonious entry, the British flag being hoisted on the Raadsaal, and Pole-Carew's Division and Ian Hamilton's Column marching past. That evening I established my head-quarters at the British Agency. The 14th Brigade was detailed to garrison Pretoria and Major-General J. G. Maxwell was appointed Military Governor.

24. The prisoners found here on our arrival numbered 158 Officers and 3,029 men, but about 900 men had been removed by train the previous day in the direction of Middleburg.

25. It may be here mentioned that the forts surrounding the town were undefended, and that their armament had been dismounted and carried off. The place was quiet and the population orderly; and, though most of the gold in the banks, and all the public treasure had been taken away, no damage had been done to private property. The wives of President Kruger and Commandant-General Botha remained in Pretoria when their husbands left and are still here.

26. The enemy had retired during the night of the 4th June in an easterly direction, but not to any great distance, and as the presence of a considerable Boer force (calculated at 12,000) was having a very disquieting effect on the town, I determined to drive them further away. The position they were holding was a strong one along a range of hills at Pienaars Poort, 15 miles from Pretoria; the attack commenced early on the 11th June, Pole-Carew's Division, with the naval and siege guns, moving to Christinen Hall, opposite the Poort, with Ian Hamilton's column on the right and Broadwood's and Gordon's Cavalry Brigades still further to the right in touch with each other and with Hamilton's column. Henry's corps of Mounted Infantry was directed to close the gap in the hills at Frankpoort, to the north of Eerstefabriken Railway Station; while French, with Porter's and Dickson's Cavalry Brigades and Hutton's Mounted Infantry, was to work round to the north-east of the enemy's position. The centre of the Boer alignment at Pienaar's Poort was so strong naturally, that to have

assaulted it by direct attack would have involved a useless loss of life. I, therefore, determined to develop flanking operations, knowing by experience that the enemy would retire as soon as their rear was seriously threatened; but the long distances to be traversed, and the defensive advantages which the nature of the ground afforded the Boers impeded our advance. Moreover, as I have since learnt, the Boer leaders had intended to follow our tactics and try and outflank us; consequently, their centre was but lightly held, whilst the wings of their army were so strong that French and Hutton on our left, and Broadwood and Gordon on our right, informed me by signal that they were only just able to hold their own. Broadwood was indeed, at one time, hardly pressed, being under a heavy artillery fire from his front and left, whilst he was simultaneously attacked on his right rear by a commando from Heidelberg. The enemy came on with great boldness and, being intimately acquainted with the ground, were able to advance unseen so close to "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, that it was with some difficulty they were kept off, while at the same time another body made a separate attack on Broadwood's right flank. To help the guns and drive off this second body, Broadwood ordered the 12th Lancers and Household Cavalry to charge. Both charges were successful, inasmuch as they relieved the immediate pressure on the guns and Broadwood's right flank, and caused the enemy to revert to artillery and long-range rifle fire; but I regret to say that these results were obtained at the cost of some 20 casualties, amongst them being Lieutenant-Colonel the gallant Earl of Airlie, who fell at the head of his regiment, the 12th Lancers. Meanwhile, Ian Hamilton's Infantry was pressing on as fast as it could to the assistance of the Cavalry, and as each battalion came up, it deployed for attack and very soon became hotly engaged. From my own position I could clearly see (though Ian Hamilton could not) a large number of Boers galloping away in great confusion from a long low ridge some $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in front of his Infantry, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile short of Diamond Hill near Rhenosterfontein. Diamond Hill appeared to me to be the key of the formidable position taken up by the Boers on this flank and I saw there was every probability of our troops shortly capturing the subsidiary ridge and thereby gaining certain facilities for a further advance on the morrow against Diamond Hill itself. I, therefore, determined to press the attack home at this point next day, and ordering all the troops along our 25 miles of battle front to bivouac on the ground they held, I made arrangements to reinforce Ian Hamilton by the Guards Brigade under Major-General Inigo Jones and two naval 12-prs. under Captain Bearcroft, Royal Navy.

27. On the morning of the 12th June, I directed Ian Hamilton to continue his advance on Diamond Hill and then to move towards the railway at Elands River Station, with a view to his threatening the enemy's line of retreat should they continue to oppose us.

Hamilton told off Gordon's Cavalry Brigade with one Infantry battalion to guard his right rear and Broadwood's Brigade with a party of Mounted Infantry to contain the enemy on his right, whilst he attacked Diamond Hill with the 82nd Field Battery, the 1st Battalions of the Sussex and Derbyshire Regiments and City Imperial Volunteer Battalion. The troops advanced under Artillery fire from both flanks, as well as heavy Infantry fire from the hill itself. The steadiness with which the long lines moved

forward, neither faltering nor hurrying, although dust from bullets and smoke from bursting shells hung thick about them, satisfied me that nothing could withstand their assault.

The position was carried at 2 p.m., by the troops above named, the Guards Brigade being in close support. Fighting continued until dusk, the Boers having rapidly taken up a fresh position near the railway.

28. On the morning of the 13th June it was found that the enemy had withdrawn during the night towards Middleburg and Jan Hamilton at once took up the pursuit, his Infantry moving to Elands River Station, while his mounted troops pushed on towards Bronkhorst Spruit Station. Generals French and Hutton moved east to Doornkraal, but finding that the enemy had disappeared returned to Kameelfontein. The enemy having been dispersed, our troops returned the next day to the neighbourhood of Pretoria, the mounted corps requiring a large number of remounts to restore their efficiency.

29. While the force under my immediate command was thus occupied near Pretoria, the enemy in the Orange River Colony under Commandant Christian De Wet continued their attacks on our lines of communication south of the Vaal. On the 2nd of June a convoy of 50 ox-wagons left the Rhenoster River Station for Heilbron with an escort of details proceeding to join the Highland Brigade. The following afternoon the convoy was surrounded by the Boers in greatly superior numbers, but was obliged to surrender before reinforcements from the Vredefort Road Station could reach it.

Early on the morning of the 7th June the enemy attacked the post on the Rhenoster railway bridge held by the 4th Battalion Derbyshire Regiment, 70 men of the Railway Pioneer Regiment, and a few men belonging to the Imperial Yeomanry. Pickets had been posted on the kopjes commanding the railway bridge and camp, but these were driven in by the heavy artillery and rifle fire brought to bear on them from the more distant hills. The engagement continued up to 11 a.m., by which hour 5 Officers and 32 men had been killed and 100 men wounded out of a total strength of 700. The Boers having six guns, to which the defenders of the post could not reply, and outnumbering the latter in the proportion of six to one, the garrison had to surrender, as further resistance would have been useless.

30. The possibility of such mishaps had been clearly foreseen by me when I determined to advance on Pretoria, for I knew I was not sufficiently strong in numbers to make the railway line absolutely secure and at the same time have a force at my disposal powerful enough to cope with the main army of the Transvaal supported by forts and guns of position. Now, however, that I was in possession of the Capital and the majority of our prisoners had been recovered, I took immediate steps to strengthen the posts along the railway. The liberated prisoners were armed and equipped and despatched to Vereeniging and other stations south of the Vaal, and as soon as more troops could be spared, they were distributed along the line between Pretoria and Kroonstad. I deputed Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen to superintend these arrangements and on the 11th June he attacked and defeated the commando under Christian de Wet at the Rhenoster River. The Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital, which had fallen into the hands of the Boers when the Derbyshire Militia surrendered a few days previously, was recovered, together with the Officers

and men who had been wounded on that occasion. Other desultory attacks were subsequently made on the railway line and the trains employed for reconstruction purposes, but the enemy were on each occasion repulsed without serious loss on our side and in the course of a few days railway and telegraphic communication were restored.

31. Turning now to the western side of operations, I have the satisfaction to record that Mafeking was relieved by the flying column under Colonel Mahon's command on the 17th May. Hearing no doubt of the approach of this column, the Boers made a daring attempt to capture the place on the 12th May. Before dawn on that morning a storming party 250 strong, led by Commandant Eloff, rushed the pickets on the west and got into the Staat and Protectorate camp, a severe musketry demonstration being simultaneously made against the eastern part of the defences. The western pickets closed in and prevented the enemy's supports from following up, thus cutting off Eloff's line of retreat, while the town guard stopped his further advance. Fighting went on all day and in the evening two parties surrendered, while the third was driven out of the Staat camp under heavy fire. Ten of the enemy were killed, 19 of their wounded were left behind, and 108 prisoners were taken, including among the latter Eloff and 9 Officers, 17 Frenchmen and a good many Germans. Our casualties amounted to six men killed and 2 Officers and nine men wounded.

32. On the 15th May Mahon joined hands with Colonel Plumer's column at Jan Massibis, 30 miles west of Mafeking, and moving north the next day to the Noloopo he was stubbornly opposed by the local Boer Force augmented by a commando from Klerksdorp under General Delarey, which had taken up a strong position nine miles from the town. The Canadian Field Battery from Buluwayo joined Colonel Mahon early that morning, having pressed on by forced marches, and rendered valuable assistance. The enemy were defeated and the combined column entered Mafeking at 4 a.m. on the 17th May. Being there reinforced by the garrison, they marched out after a short rest and attacked the enemy's main laager, capturing one gun and a quantity of stores and ammunition. The Boers retreated into the Transvaal, most of them dispersing to their farms.

Steps were at once taken to restore railway communication with Mafeking from the north and south. The line from Buluwayo was completed on the 26th May and that from Kimberley was nearly finished on the 6th June. On the 20th May Zeerust was occupied without opposition by a flying column under Colonel Plumer, and a few days afterwards troops were quartered in Ottoshoop and Polfontein.

33. Lieutenant-General Hunter moved from Fourteen Streams into the Transvaal on the 15th May, and the next morning entered Christiana unopposed, the Boers 3,000 strong under Du Toit having retired to Klerksdorp. Hunter then returned to Fourteen Streams and marched up the railway line, reaching Vryburg on the 24th May. On the 26th I directed him to form an advance base at Doornbult Siding and to concentrate at Holfontein, marching thence to Lichtenburg.

The force at his disposal consisted of Mahon's Flying Column, less the Kimberley Mounted Corps which I left with Major-General Baden-Powell, the Scottish Imperial Yeomanry, a brigade-division of field artillery, and six battalions of infantry. Hunter's advanced troops occupied Lichtenburg on the 1st June and his whole force

was collected there on the 7th June. On the 8th he started via Ventersdorp for Potchefstroom, in order to get into railway communication with Klerksdorp and Johannesburg.

34. In the western districts of Cape Colony Lieutenant-General Warren and Colonel Adye have operated against the rebels with considerable success. On the 21st May Warren surprised the enemy at Douglas, capturing their wagons, tents, and cattle. The Boers retreated northwards. On the 30th May Adye had an engagement near Khees in the Prieska district, our casualties being 1 Officer and 3 men killed and 4 Officers and 16 men wounded. On this occasion over 5,800 head of cattle and sheep were captured with large number of wagons and tents and much personal property. On the 3rd June Warren advanced against the enemy at Campbell and dispersed them. He reported the Herbert district to be then clear of rebels and that he proposed shortly to occupy Griquatown.

35. In the Orange River Colony bands of marauders were reported by the Military Governor to be raiding the country in the vicinity of Abraham's Kraal, and on the 13th May I despatched Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny to despatch three companies of Imperial Yeomanry from Bloemfontein with the object of dispersing them, and at the same time of repairing the telegraph line between Bloemfontein and Boshof. This duty was satisfactorily performed, the Yeomanry detachment returning to Bloemfontein on the 22nd May, after having quieted the disturbed district and collected nearly 100 rifles and 2,000 rounds of ammunition. Up to the 24th May 400 Burghers had surrendered to the Officer Commanding at Boshof, including Commandant Duplessis and Field-Cornets Botha and H. J. Duplessis.

36. During the period dealt with in this letter an important advance has been made by the troops in Natal. Between the 10th and 13th May the force under General Sir Redvers Buller's command moved by Sunday's River Drift to Waschbank Station, the enemy retiring to the nek in front of Helpmakaar. On the night of the 13th, Helpmakaar was evacuated, and on the 15th our troops occupied Glencoe and Dundee, the Boers falling back on Laing's Nek. The Cavalry reached Newcastle on the 17th and Sir Redvers Buller with the 3rd Division entered the town the next day. The railway was found to be much damaged and it was necessary to repair it before attempting to cross the Drakensberg. The delay thus caused enabled the enemy to concentrate in greater strength at Laing's Nek and in front of the Botha and other passes, and local commandoes were reported to be threatening the railway line from the east. Sir Redvers Buller decided first to clear his right flank and on the 27th May he despatched a column to Utrecht. On the 29th, Utrecht surrendered to Lieutenant-General Hildyard, while Lieutenant-General the Honourable Neville Lyttelton was marching on Vryheid, which also surrendered a couple of days later. Railway communication was restored to Newcastle on the 29th May. On the 4th June Sir Redvers Buller reported that he would be ready to force Laing's Nek by a turning movement on the 6th and that the enemy, though probably 4,000 to 5,000 strong with a considerable number of guns, were much disheartened.

37. While deprecating a direct attack which might entail heavy loss of life, I suggested that enough men should be left to occupy the enemy's attention at Laing's Nek and that with the rest of his force Sir Redvers Buller should

move rapidly through Botha's or some neighbouring pass, thus obliging the enemy to withdraw from their strong position at the Nek. On the 8th June Sir Redvers Buller attacked and defeated the Boers at Botha's Pass, and moving northwards again came in touch with them on the 10th at Gansvlei. The enemy were driven back along the ridge, which they held till dusk. During the night they withdrew to a range of hills six miles north-east of Gansvlei, through which the Volksrust road passes at a point called Allemann's Nek. On the 11th June Sir Redvers Buller advanced against this position, and, after some severe fighting, the brunt of which fell on the 2nd Battalion Dorsetshire Regiment, seized Allemann's Nek and occupied the crest of the hills, the Boers retreating all along the line. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade was also heavily engaged on the right flank. Our casualties amounted altogether to 142 killed and wounded. The same night the Boers evacuated Laing's Nek and Majuba, Sir Redvers Buller establishing his head-quarters at Joubert's Farm, four miles north of Volksrust.

37. To the north of the Transvaal some delay has occurred in concentrating General Carrington's force owing to the small carrying capacity of the railway from Beira to Marandellas; but the congestion of traffic has lately been relieved and the greater part of the troops have reached Mafeking, where their co-operation will be very valuable.

38. In conclusion, I desire to record my high opinion of the conduct and endurance of the troops during the operations summarized in this letter. Their powers of marching and their gallantry when engaged with the enemy were equally admirable; and it is particularly gratifying to me to bring to notice the services rendered by the Colonial Corps, the Imperial Yeomanry and the City Imperial and other Volunteers, who have proved themselves most efficient soldiers. My acknowledgments are also due to the Militia Battalions, which have done excellent work in the Orange River Colony, in the western districts of Cape Colony, and on the lines of communication.

I have, &c.

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal.
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

No. 8.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters in South Africa;

Pretoria, 10th October, 1900.

MY LORD,

IN continuation of despatch, dated 14th August, 1900, I have the honour to submit for your Lordship's information an account of the military operations in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal from the 14th June up to the present date.

2. Subsequent to the occupation of Johannesburg and Pretoria the organized forces of the enemy were materially reduced in number, many of the burghers in arms against us returning to their farms, surrendering their rifles, and voluntarily taking the oath of neutrality. But the submission only proved real when the burghers were protected from outside interference by the actual presence of our troops. Whenever a Boer Commando has traversed a district the inhabitants of which had ostensibly resumed their peaceful avocations, a considerable part of the male population has again joined the enemy and engaged in active hostilities. In some cases it has been reported that arms have been taken up with alacrity. In most instances, however, hostilities were only

resumed with reluctance, and after some pressure had been placed upon them by the Boer Commandants or Field-cornets concerned.

3. During the period dealt with in this despatch the first objective in urgency and importance was to provide for the security of the railway south of the Vaal, and to capture or disperse the enemy's forces to the east of that line and in the north-east angle of the Orange River Colony. The second objective was to push eastward from Pretoria towards Komati Poort, defeating and dispersing the troops under Commandant-General Botha, and releasing the British prisoners confined at Nootgedacht. But at the same time that portion of the Transvaal which lies west of Johannesburg and Pretoria had to be kept under control; the railway line from Johannesburg through Krugersdorp to Potchefstroom could not be left unguarded; and, in view of the presence of the enemy north of the Delagoa Bay railway, it would have involved undue risk to attempt an advance against the Boer headquarters at Machadodorp until sufficient troops were available, not only for the forward movement, but to secure the line of communication between Pretoria and the field force operating eastward. To obtain these troops I had to wait until the railway from Natal to Johannesburg had been restored and proper arrangements made for its protection, and until the action which was being taken in the north-east of the Orange River Colony had been so far successful as to admit of the transfer to the Transvaal of a considerable portion of the troops engaged in that direction.

4. In further explanation of the delay which has occurred in dealing with the Boer force under Commandant-General Botha, it may be mentioned that, though the inhabitants of the Lichtenburg, Potchefstroom, and Rustenburg districts seemed at first disposed to submit quietly to the British authorities, a large proportion of them subsequently joined General Delarey's Commando and assisted him in attacking the garrisons which were posted at the principal towns and in intercepting convoys of supplies. It consequently became necessary either to withdraw or reinforce these garrisons, as well as organize flying columns for the pursuit of the enemy.

The vast area of the country in which the operations are being conducted has also to be remembered. The troops have had to march long distances, and, though existing railways have been utilized to the fullest extent, the limited capacity of single lines—especially of that between Pretoria and Bloemfontein—coupled with the scarcity of rolling-stock, has rendered it difficult to move and concentrate rapidly according to the European standard of what should be possible in war.

5. To deal with the organized forces of the enemy was a comparatively easy matter; but in South Africa the problem has been complicated, and the settlement of the country retarded, by the determination of some of the Boer leaders to pursue a guerilla warfare after their troops had been defeated in the field. Owing to the non-compliance of the Boers with the recognized custom of war which compels combatants to wear a distinctive uniform, they have found it easy to pose as peaceful agriculturists one day and to take part in active hostilities on the next. Their leaders have also usually found means by threats or by persuasions to induce them to disregard their oath of neutrality, although this was voluntarily taken by men who at the time professed them-

selves anxious to submit to the British Government. To their honour be it said, a few of the burghers have suffered imprisonment or loss of property sooner than thus break their faith, but their number was not sufficient to enable them to exercise any influence on the general situation.

Recent events have convinced me that the permanent tranquillity of the Orange River Colony and Transvaal is dependent on the complete disarmament of the inhabitants; and, though the extent of country to be visited, and the ease with which guns, rifles, and ammunition can be hidden, will render the task a difficult one, its accomplishment is only a matter of time and patience.

6. My last despatch ended with the defeat of the Boers under Louis Botha at Diamond Hill on the 12th June and their retreat the next day towards Middleburg. I then issued orders for the formation at Pretoria of a strong column* under Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton, which would move through Heidelberg on Frankfort, and thence co-operate with Lieutenant-General Rundle and Major-Generals Clements and Paget with a view to driving the Commando under C. De Wet eastwards towards Bethlehem and surrounding it, as well as the other Boer forces which were still occupying the north-east angle of the Orange River Colony. On reaching Heidelberg the column was to be joined by the 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, from the line of communication and by two companies of Imperial Yeomanry from Major-General Hart's Brigade. Hart, with a portion of his Brigade† was to garrison Heidelberg. On reaching Frankfort Ian Hamilton's column was to be further strengthened.‡ The force thus rendered available for operations beyond Frankfort amounted to two Cavalry Brigades, some 3,000 Mounted Infantry, Imperial Yeomanry, and other mounted corps, seven Infantry battalions, three Horse and three Field batteries, two 5-inch guns, 5 pompoms, and twenty-one machine guns.

To protect the railway between Kroonstad and the Vaal River, and to prevent De Wet from breaking out westward, Lord Methuen's force§ was directed to take up a position in the neighbourhood of Paardekraal, 10 miles south-west of Heilbron on the Kroonstad road.

Heilbron, which would be Ian Hamilton's base of supply on reaching Frankfort, and operating thence towards Bethlehem, was to be garrisoned by 50 Mounted Infantry and one battalion from the 9th Brigade, with two 4·7-inch naval guns.

The force at and near Lindley under Paget||

* The 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Brigades, the 2nd, 5th, 6th, and 7th Corps of Mounted Infantry, the 21st Infantry brigade, under Major-General Bruce Hamilton, three batteries of Horse and Field Artillery, and two 5-inch guns.

† One company of Imperial Yeomanry, 1½ battalions of Infantry, and 1 Field battery.

‡ The 5th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; Cavalry and Mounted Infantry details, numbering 350; two companies of Imperial Yeomanry, Lovat's Scouts, Eastern Provinces Horse, and three battalions of the Highland Brigade, under Macdonald.

§ Four battalions of Imperial Yeomanry, about 1,000 strong; two field batteries, two 5-inch howitzers, two Infantry battalions from the 8th Brigade, a provisional battalion of Infantry details, two pompoms, and 10 machine guns.

|| 400 mounted men from Kroonstad, two companies of Imperial Yeomanry, four field guns, 1st Bn. Royal Munster Fusiliers, 2nd Bn. King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, 4th Bn. South Staffordshire Regiment, and a wing of the 4th Bn. Scottish Rifles.

was to act in the direction of Bethlehem in conjunction with the troops under Clements. Clements, whose head-quarters were at Senekal, was to be reinforced* and to proceed to Bethlehem, being joined on the march by Paget's column. The combined movement from Lindley and Senekal was to begin on 28th July.

Lieutenant-General Sir L. Rundle was instructed to occupy the line from Winburg through Trommel to Ficksburg with 1,000 mounted troops. As soon as the combined force under Clements had arrived north of Bethlehem he was to garrison that place and subsequently to operate against Harrismith. The force at Rundle's disposal consisted of the balance of the Colonial Division—namely, about 1,200 mounted men, two battalions of Imperial Yeomanry, three Field batteries, and seven Infantry battalions.

7. Leaving Pretoria on the 19th June, Ian Hamilton's column occupied Heidelberg on the 23rd. The enemy vacated the town, and were pursued for some distance by our Cavalry. The Boksburg Commando was completely broken up, 60 Boers laying down their arms and the remainder dispersing in different directions. During the Cavalry pursuit, Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton unfortunately broke his collarbone and had to return to Pretoria. I accordingly placed Lieutenant-General Sir A. Hunter in command of the column, which he joined on the 25th June. On the 27th, the column left Heidelberg, and crossing the Vaal at Villiersdorp, reached Frankfort on the 1st July. Two days later Hunter was joined there by the troops from Heilbron under Macdonald. On the 4th July, the force marched south towards Reitz, from which place, on the approach of the British troops, 800 prisoners belonging to the Irish Battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry and the 4th Battalion Derbyshire Regiment were despatched by the Boers across the Natal frontier, and proceeded to Ladysmith. The Officers, however, were not liberated, but sent to Nooitgedacht, on the Delagoa Bay railway. Bruce Hamilton was left at Reitz with the 21st Brigade, two Field Batteries, and the 7th Corps of Mounted Infantry, with orders to send back a convoy of empty wagons to bring on fresh supplies from Heilbron under escort of one battery and one battalion. Hunter reached Bethlehem on the 10th July, where he received orders placing Rundle's Division and Clements's column under his command. On the 11th July, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade was sent back to Heilbron, via Reitz, the country south of Bethlehem being so hilly that the presence of two Cavalry Brigades seemed unnecessary; and, on the 14th, Bruce Hamilton's Brigade rejoined Hunter at Bethlehem.

8. On reaching Bethlehem, Hunter found that it had been occupied on 7th July, after two days' fighting, by the force under Clements and Paget. The combined movements of troops under the latter Officers, and under Rundle, had been carried out as directed. On the 26th June, Clements ordered his mounted troops, with two field guns, to attack a Boer laager at Rietfontein, 7 miles north of Senekal. The enemy were dispersed and the laager destroyed, our casualties being three killed and 23 wounded. The same day Paget engaged the enemy near Lindley, while they were endeavouring to in-

tercept a convoy of supplies. The Boers were driven off with a loss on our side of 10 men killed and four Officers and 50 men wounded. On 2nd July, Clements and Paget joined hands and began their advance on Bethlehem, the enemy, under C. De Wet, falling back in a south-easterly direction. On the 3rd July, Paget drove the Boers from a strong position which they were holding across his line of march, and bivouacked 15 miles north-west of Bethlehem. On approaching the town on the evening of the 5th July, Clements, who, as senior Officer, was in command of the two columns, found C. De Wet occupying the hills to the south. The next morning Bethlehem was summoned to surrender, and, on this demand being refused, Paget moved to the north-west with the object of turning the enemy's left, while Clements's troops operated on their right flank. On the morning of the 7th, a general assault was made, and by noon the place was in our hands and the Boers were in full retreat to the north-east. On this occasion, the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment specially distinguished itself, capturing a gun of the 77th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, which had been lost at Stormberg. The good service rendered by the 38th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, and the City Imperial Volunteers Battery has also been brought to notice by Major-General Paget.

9. On being driven from Bethlehem, the enemy—estimated at about 7,000 strong, with 20 guns—retired through the hills into the Brandwater Basin, around which they occupied positions of great natural strength at Naauwpoort, Retief's, and Slabbert's Neks, Witnek and Commando Nek. These, at the time, were believed to be the only points of ingress into, or egress from, the Basin; but it was afterwards found that there was another route available through Golden Gate in Harrismith direction. The disposition of the investing force, on the 11th July, was as follows:—The 8th and Colonial Divisions, under Rundle, were echeloned along the line from Ficksburg to Biddulphsberg, their duty being to watch Witnek and Commando Nek, and to prevent the enemy from breaking out to the south-west. Clements's Brigade, awaiting supplies from Senekal, was at Biddulphsberg; while at, or near Bethlehem were the 2nd Cavalry Brigade under Broadwood, the 2nd Brigade of Mounted Infantry under Ridley, the Highland Brigade under Macdonald, the 20th Brigade under Paget, and the 21st Brigade under Bruce Hamilton. On the 15th July, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade and the 20th Infantry Brigade were sent out along the road to Senekal, with the object of heading back the enemy if they should attempt to break out in that direction, but during the night a Boer force under C. De Wet, consisting of about 1,500 men and six guns, and accompanied by Mr. Steyn, succeeded in escaping through Slabbert's Nek, and rapidly moved off towards Lindley. On the 16th Broadwood's Cavalry, with 800 Mounted Infantry under Ridley, were ordered to pursue De Wet, and Clements was directed to relieve Rundle's troops in front of Witnek. On the 20th and 21st, Bruce Hamilton, with the Cameron Highlanders, a corps of Mounted Infantry, and the 82nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, attacked the enemy holding Spitzkop, a hill 9 miles south-east of Bethlehem, and succeeded in occupying it. Drawing his cordon tighter, Hunter, on 22nd July, moved the Highland Brigade, the 5th and 76th Batteries, Royal Field Artillery, Lovat's Scouts, and Rimington's

* 1,000 mounted men from the 8th and Colonial Divisions, 400 mounted men from Bloemfontein, one Field battery, two 5-inch guns, 2nd Bn. Bedfordshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Royal Irish Regiment, 2nd Bn. Worcestershire Regiment, and 2nd Bn. Wiltshire Regiment.

Guides, in front of Retief's Nek, this force being joined the next morning by the 1st Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and the 31st Battery, Royal Field Artillery. On the 23rd, the heights commanding the nek were seized by the Black Watch and Highland Light Infantry, our casualties being one Officer and 11 men killed, and six Officers and 68 men wounded. The same day Clements effected a junction between his own troops and those under Paget 2 miles north of Slabbert's Nek. Holding the enemy in front with the 1st Battalion Munster Fusiliers, he gained a footing on the high ground to the right of the nek by a turning movement executed by the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, and Brabant's Horse. Early on the 24th, the Boers vacated Retief's Nek, and Hunter pushed through the pass into the valley beyond, while Clements occupied Slabbert's Nek and sent his mounted troops and artillery in pursuit of the retreating enemy. Rundle was now directed to move towards Fouriesburg, and, on the 25th, Macdonald and Bruce Hamilton's blocked the exits from the Brandwater Basin at Naauwpoort Nek and Golden Gate. The same day, Hunter advanced, with Clements's and Paget's troops, in the direction of Fouriesburg, on which place the enemy had retired. On entering the town, on the 26th July, he found it already occupied by a portion of Rundle's Division, headed by Driscoll's Scouts, who had made a forced march of 25 miles from Commando Nek. Macdonald, in the meantime, had blocked Naauwpoort Nek and Golden Gate, towards which the Boers had fallen back, and, on the 28th, Hunter followed the enemy with Clements's and Paget's Brigades, and the available troops of the 8th Division. On the 29th, General Prinsloo asked for a four days' armistice, and, this request being refused, agreed to surrender unconditionally the following morning. On the 30th July, Prinsloo and Crowther, with the Ficksburg and Ladybrand Commandoes, 879 strong, surrendered, other commandoes coming in later. General Olivier, with his commando, managed, however, to escape during the night through Golden Gate, though he and his men had been included by Commandant-General Prinsloo in the unconditional surrender of the Boer force. The total number of prisoners taken was 4,140, with three guns, two of which belonged to "U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery. Over 4,000 horses and ponies, a large number of rifles, and over a million rounds of small-arm ammunition also fell into our hands.

10. On the surrender of Prinsloo's force, Hunter directed Macdonald to march on the 1st August to Harrismith in pursuit of Olivier with 700 mounted troops, four battalions, two 5-inch guns, and 16 field guns. He reached Harrismith unopposed on the 4th August, and the next day was joined there by two squadrons of the 5th Lancers from Besters and one of the 13th Hussars from Ladysmith. Railway communication was opened between Harrismith and Natal, the line having only been slightly damaged. As it had been ascertained that Olivier had moved northwards through Vrede, and Macdonald's troops were wanted elsewhere, I ordered them to be relieved by nine companies of Imperial Yeomanry, Driscoll's Scouts, seven battalions, and 14 field guns from the 8th Division, under Rundle, who also provided garrisons for Senekal, Bethlehem, Fouriesburg, Ladybrand, and Thabanchu. Rundle reached Harrismith on the 6th August, Macdonald leaving on

the same day to rejoin Hunter at Bethlehem. Meanwhile, Paget's and Bruce Hamilton's Brigades had marched as escort of the Boer prisoners to Winburg, and Clements's Brigade had been ordered to Kroonstad.

11. I have already mentioned that C. De Wet's commando, which was accompanied by ex-President Steyn, had managed to break through Hunter's cordon during the night of the 15th July, and had been followed up by a mounted force 2,300 strong, with two batteries of Horse Artillery, under Broadwood, in the direction of Lindley. To protect his baggage, Broadwood took the 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment and two field guns from the escort of a convoy which he met on the road between Lindley and Bethlehem. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade had reached Heilbron on the 15th July. There Brigadier-General Gordon, who commanded it, was ordered to Pretoria to replace Colonel Porter, who had broken his collar-bone, in command of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, and was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel Little. On the 16th, the brigade left Heilbron for Kroonstad, and the next day I ordered it to march as rapidly as possible towards Lindley and join Broadwood's column. On the morning of the 19th, Little came into touch with a portion of De Wet's commando near Lindley, and in the afternoon Broadwood attacked the enemy's rearguard, the action continuing until dusk. The commando then broke up into two parties, both of which, owing to the superior mobility of the Boers, contrived to get away during the night. One of these parties reached the railway on the night of the 21st July, and captured a supply train 20 miles north of Kroonstad. The commando afterwards reunited to the west of Roodeval Station. Broadwood, after joining hands with Little on the 21st July, crossed the railway in pursuit, and three days later found De Wet holding a strong position in the hills east of Reitzburg. Not strong enough to attack the enemy, he held on to Vredefort and awaited the arrival of infantry reinforcements.

12. While the operations described above were taking place in the Orange River Colony, the Boers had been displaying considerable activity north of the Vaal, and along the railway in the vicinity of Kroonstad. Botha's force retreated towards Middelburg on the 13th June, and Baden-Powell from Zeerust occupied Rustenburg on the 14th, a small column being sent the following day from Pretoria to meet him and repair the telegraph line between the two places. On the 14th June, our post on the railway at Zand River was attacked by 800 Boers with three guns, but Major-General Knox, Commanding at Kroonstad, promptly sent out reinforcements, and the enemy were driven off with some loss. On the 18th June, Hunter, who had been advancing eastward through Potchefstroom, reoccupied Krugersdorp with his mounted troops under Mahon, and one battery of Horse Artillery, being joined the next day by Hart's Infantry Brigade and a Field Battery. On the 21st June, Baden-Powell reported that 3,000 rifles had been handed in at Rustenburg, and that the district was quiet, a small commando, under Field-Cornet Dupleissis, having retired north-eastward. The same day Hunter was ordered to proceed from Krugersdorp to Heideberg with troops under Hart and Mahon, Barton's Brigade, which was then holding Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom, moving on to Krugersdorp. A Field battery and two battalions of the latter brigade, the 2nd Battalion

Royal Scots Fusiliers and the 1st Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers remained as garrison of Krugersdorp, under Barton, the remaining two, the 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers and the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers, being railed to Pretoria. In Hart's Brigade a wing of the 2nd Battalion Somersetshire Light Infantry had remained at Vryburg, while the other wing with the 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers and one Field battery, formed the garrison of Heidelberg, under Hart; the 1st Battalion Border Regiment and the 1st Battalion Connaught Rangers marching to Irene Station. Mahon's mounted troops, with the Imperial Light Horse and one battery of Horse Artillery, were also moved to Irene.

13. On the 22nd June, a Boer commando 700 strong, with three guns, attacked the post on the railway at Honingspruit, north of Kroonstad. The enemy were driven off by a force from Kroonstad, after having destroyed three culverts and broken up the line. Lord Methuen was ordered to move his column from Heilbron towards Honingspruit, and after clearing off the enemy to take up a central position near Paardekraal, so as to cover the railway from the east.

14. On the 25th June, a large convoy under Colonel Brookfield, Commandant 14th Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry, left Kroonstad for Lindley.* This column was engaged with the enemy, 1,500 strong with two guns, throughout the 26th and 27th, but Colonel Brookfield succeeded in bringing the convoy safely into Lindley on the evening of the latter day. The casualties were two men killed, two Officers and fourteen men wounded, and five men missing.

15. On the 27th June, the post on the railway near Roodeval Station was attacked, but the enemy were repulsed by a detachment of the Shropshire Light Infantry and the West Australian Mounted Infantry, with the aid of a 15-pounder gun on an armoured train.

16. On the 20th June, Lord Methuen reported from Paardekraal that he had captured 8,000 sheep and 800 head of cattle, and that the enemy had withdrawn eastward; and 2nd July he arrested at Welgelegen Andries Wessels, a prominent Boer member of the Afrikaner Bond. The next day he captured 6,000 sheep and 500 oxen, the property of the enemy, near Paardekraal. On the 8th July, Mr. Blignaut, State Secretary of the Orange Free State; Mr. Dickson, Attorney-General; and Mr. van Tonder, member of the Council, surrendered at Heilbron.

17. Early in July a force consisting of Mounted Infantry details, about 1,200 strong, under the command of Colonel T. E. Hickman, D.S.O., was organised at Kroonstad, to assist Lord Methuen in protecting the railway. The enemy having been pushed back by the combined movement of the troops under Hunter, Clements, and Paget, Hickman's force was no longer required south of the Vaal, and on the 11th and 12th July, it was railed from Kroonstad to Pretoria. For the same reason on the 12th July, I directed Lord Methuen's column, which had moved to Lindley, to march to Kroonstad, and thence proceed by rail to Krugersdorp.

18. By 20th June, 4,000 rifles had been collected by Baden-Powell from the Boers in the

Rustenburg district, but shortly afterwards signs of unrest were apparent north of the Magaliesberg, and in the country between Rustenburg and Mafeking. At first only a few scattered parties of the enemy were reported to be in the field, and in order to break them up Baden-Powell was directed to leave a small garrison at Rustenburg, under Major the Honourable A. H. C. Hanbury-Tracy, and to march eastward with the remainder of his troops to Commando Nek. Orders were also given for Carrington's force to concentrate at Mafeking, detachments being left to guard the principal drifts across the Crocodile River, namely, Baines, Rhodes, and Victoria Drifts. On the 5th July, definite information reached me that a commando under Delarey, 2,000 strong, with four guns, was threatening Rustenburg from the north-east, and that Oliphant's Nek, 10 miles south of that town, had been occupied by the Boers. Baden-Powell was then holding Commando and Uitval Neks, with his headquarters at Rietfontein, south of the Magaliesberg and between the two neks. His force consisted of 450 mounted men, a Canadian Field battery, and two Mountain guns. Lieutenant-Colonel C. O. Hore was at Elands River, 40 miles west of Rustenburg, with 400 Imperial Bushmen, two Field guns, and one Maxim. Having arranged to relieve the detachments at Commando Nek and Uitval Nek by troops from Pretoria, I ordered Baden-Powell to return to Rustenburg. On the 7th July the Boers attacked that place, but were beaten off, Hore's column making a rapid march and reinforcing the garrison towards the end of the engagement. Baden-Powell reached Rustenburg the next day, but a large commando remained in position 6 miles to the south, which he was not strong enough to deal with.

19. Meanwhile, at the beginning of July, the enemy assumed an aggressive attitude towards the east of Pretoria, and the following dispositions were made to prevent them from getting round our right flank and interrupting railway communication with the south. Mahon's troops, with the Imperial Light Horse, one battery of Horse Artillery, and two battalions from Hart's Brigade (the Border Regiment and Connaught Rangers) were ordered to Rietfontein, 6 miles east of Irene. The column was strengthened by Hutton,* who assumed the command. On the 8th July it was further reinforced from Krugersdorp,† Hutton advancing on that date with his mounted troops to Rietvlei. On the 9th July French was sent from Kameeldrift to the south of the Delagoa Bay railway,‡ and on the 11th, in co-operation with Hutton, he engaged the enemy and pushed them back to the east of Bronkhorst Spruit. The next day French was directed to return to Pretoria with three battalions and two 5-inch guns, while the 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry was moved from Irene to Derdepoort, and the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment from Irene to Tigerpoort.

20. When Baden-Powell left Rietfontein for Rustenburg, Commando and Uitval Neks were occupied by the Scots Greys with a battery of Horse Artillery, and the Waterval post north of Pretoria was held by the 7th Dragoon Guards. The Scots Greys were subsequently reinforced by the 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment,

* 800 men of the Imperial Yeomanry and Colonial Corps, a wing of the 2nd Bn. King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and the 3rd Bn. the Buffs, with four guns of the City Imperial Volunteers, and two of the 17th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

* 1st Brigade of Mounted Infantry.

† Royal Fusiliers and Royal Irish Fusiliers, one Field battery, and two 5-inch guns.

‡ Carabineers, Inniskilling Dragoons, and 8th Hussars.

under Colonel H. R. Roberts. On the 11th July, the Boers simultaneously attacked Uitval Nek and Waterval. At the former place, owing mainly to the defective dispositions of the Commanding Officer, the enemy gained possession of the pass and captured two guns, almost an entire squadron of the Scots Greys, and 90 Officers and men of the Lincolnshire Regiment, including Colonel Roberts who had been wounded early in the day. The 1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers, under Lieutenant-Colonel Godfrey, were despatched from Pretoria to strengthen the post, but arrived too late to extricate the garrison. At Waterval the 7th Dragoons were well handled, and our loss would have been trifling had not one troop mistaken the Boers for their own comrades. The regiment was supported in the early morning by one squadron of the 14th Hussars, one company of the 2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment, and two Field guns, but owing to the numerical superiority of the enemy, it had to fall back to Derdepoort, which was strongly held.

21. On the 10th July, Smith-Dorrien, whose brigade had been employed in guarding the railway between Pretoria and the Vaal, was ordered to proceed by rail to Krugersdorp with the 2nd Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry, and 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders. On the 11th, he marched towards Heckpoort with these battalions, one company of Imperial Yeomanry, and two guns of the 70th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, his object being to collect supplies which the inhabitants were anxious to sell to us before the Boers from Oliphant's Nek could get hold of them. On reaching Zeekoe-hoek, 10 miles from Krugersdorp on the road to Heckpoort, he found the enemy holding a strong position across his line of advance, and an engagement, which lasted 6 hours, resulted in his withdrawal to Krugersdorp, with the loss of one Officer killed and two Officers and 35 men wounded. It had been my intention that the Scots Greys with two guns from Commando Nek should join Smith-Dorrien on his march towards Heckpoort, but this combination could not be effected, owing to the enemy's attack on the Uitval Nek.

22. As previously mentioned, Lord Methuen was ordered to Krugersdorp from Lindley on the 13th July, his force consisting of 1,200 mounted troops, 2,400 infantry, 12 field guns, two 5-inch howitzers, two pompoms, and nine machine guns. The movement was completed by the 16th, on which day I arranged for the column, in combination with the troops under Smith-Dorrien, to clear the road to Rustenburg and relieve the garrison there under Baden-Powell. Leaving Krugersdorp on the 18th July, Lord Methuen reached Heckpoort unopposed on the 19th, Baden-Powell advancing at the same time to Oliphant's Nek with 400 mounted men and six guns. Oliphant's Nek was occupied on the 21st after a short engagement, the enemy retreating hastily eastward along the Magaliesberg range. On the 20th the Boers under General Delarey destroyed the railway line near Bank Station, between Krugersdorp and Potchefstroom. I therefore directed Lord Methuen to leave a sufficient garrison in Rustenburg under Baden-Powell, and to return in the direction of Krugersdorp. The 1st Battalion North Lancashire Regiment, from Methuen's column, with two guns and 50 mounted men from Baden-Powell's force, was left to hold Oliphant's Nek, while 450 Imperial Bushmen under Colonel Airey were despatched to repair the

telegraph line and clear the road between Rustenburg and Zeerust. On the 22nd July this party came into contact with a Boer commando, 1,000 strong, a few miles west of the Magato Pass, and after a protracted engagement succeeded in dispersing the enemy, with the loss on our side of one Officer and five men killed and 19 men wounded. On the 26th July Lord Methuen's force had reached Bank Station, and the same day Baden-Powell reported that several Boer commandoes, aggregating 3,000 men with eight guns, were concentrating on Rustenburg. Meanwhile a large convoy of supplies, escorted by Lieutenant-Colonel Hore, had left Mafeking for Elands River en route to Rustenburg, and Carrington with four companies of Imperial Yeomanry under Lord Erroll, and four squadrons of Paget's Horse, was ordered to proceed in the same direction with a view to reinforcing Baden-Powell.

23. At this time C. de Wet was still holding the hills near Reitzburg, and as it seemed likely that he would attempt to cross the Vaal and effect a junction with Commandant-General Botha to the east of Pretoria, I directed Lord Methuen to move on Potchefstroom, and thence take a position from which he could observe the drift across the river near Ventersdorp. On the 28th July Lord Methuen engaged the enemy at Frederickstad, and the next day reached Potchefstroom. Smith-Dorrien was left at Frederickstad, where on the 31st he was attacked, but repulsed the enemy who retired on Ventersdorp.

24. While these operations were going on, Hutton, whose outposts were holding the Tigerpoort-Witpoort ridge east of Irene, was attacked by 2,000 Boers with eight guns at daybreak on the 16th July. On this occasion the detachment at Witpoort under Major Muun, 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, consisting of three companies of that regiment and 60 men of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles with two pompoms, greatly distinguished themselves. By 3 p.m. the enemy fell back, and at dusk they were in full retreat eastward.

25. The time had now arrived when it was necessary to make a further move to the eastward along the Delagoa Bay Railway, but before this could be effected, it was necessary to clear the country to the north and east of Pretoria, where the Boers had been increasing in strength and boldness. A strong column* was, therefore, organized and placed under Ian Hamilton's command. This column left Pretoria on the 16th July, and on the 18th had reached Hammanskraal, 25 miles north of Pretoria on the Pietersburg Railway. A second column† under Mahon was concentrated on the latter date at Kameeldrift, 12 miles north-east of Pretoria. The head-quarters of the 11th Division were at Eerste Fabrieken, east of Pretoria, with the Guards Brigade 10 miles further east at Rhenosterfontein. French's force‡ was distributed near Witpoort and Rietvlei, 30 miles south-east of Pretoria, Hutton's troops being on

* An Infantry Brigade, under Brigadier-General G. G. Cunningham, D.S.O., consisting of the 1st Bn. King's Own Scottish Borderers, 1st Bn. Border Regiment, 2nd Bn. Berkshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Hickman's Mounted Infantry, the Canadian and Elswick Batteries, two 6-inch howitzers, and 5-inch guns.

† 1,000 Mounted Infantry, 2nd Bn. Royal Fusiliers, 1st Bn. Connaught Rangers, a battery of Horse Artillery, two 4·7 inch guns.

‡ 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades, Hutton's Mounted Infantry, 1st Bn. Suffolk Regiment, 2nd Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers, three batteries of Horse Artillery, one battery of Field Artillery, two 5-inch guns.

the left next the Guards Brigade and the Cavalry on the right. Ian Hamilton was ordered to move on Bronkhorst Spruit, *via* Doornkraal; Mahon joining him on the 21st July at the latter place, where the two columns were united under Hamilton's command. From Doornkraal Hickman's Mounted Infantry returned to Pretoria, escorting an empty convoy. Ian Hamilton's force reached Rustfontein 7 miles north of Bronkhorst Spruit on the 22nd July. The enemy, whose line of retreat was then threatened, abandoned the strong positions which they were holding in front of the 11th Division, and Stephenson's Brigade advanced unopposed on the 23rd to Eland's River Station, our right flank being protected by the Mounted Infantry and Cavalry under Hutton and French. The same day French crossed to the east of the Wilge River. On the 24th July I proceeded from Pretoria by rail to Van der Merwe Station, marching thence to Bronkhorst Spruit, which was occupied in the course of the day by the 11th Division and Ian Hamilton's column. The enemy opposed Hutton and French 6 miles south of Balmoral. Colonel Alderson attacked their right, while the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades made a wide turning movement round their left. The Boers fell back towards Middelburg. On the 25th Balmoral was occupied by Ian Hamilton's troops, and the 11th Division reached Wilge River. French and Hutton crossed Olifant's River at Naauwpoort, and bivouacked on high ground whence the enemy could be seen retreating in great disorder through Middelburg. The next day French and Hutton occupied Middelburg, and a line of outposts was established so as to cut off communication between Botha's force and the Boer commandoes to the west and south of Pretoria. Finding that it would take some time to repair the railway bridges which had been destroyed between Pretoria and Middelburg, and to collect supplies at the latter place, and being of opinion that a considerably larger force than what was then available would be needed to operate towards Machado'sorp, I returned to Pretoria on the 26th July. Ian Hamilton's column was also brought back to Pretoria, two battalions under Colonel Brooke, with the Canadian battery, being left at Pienaar's Poort. The 11th Division, under Pole-Carew, was distributed along the line from Balmoral to Middelburg; French being in command at Middelburg with his two Cavalry Brigades and Hutton's Mounted Infantry. On the 30th July, Ian Hamilton reached Pretoria with Mahon's Mounted troops, Cunningham's Infantry Brigade, a battery of Horse Artillery, the Elswick Battery, and two 5-inch and two 4.7-inch guns.

26. I have already mentioned that on the 26th July, Baden-Powell reported that a strong Boer force was again threatening Rustenburg. As it was impossible at that time to find sufficient troops not only for holding the isolated posts at Rustenburg and Lichtenburg, but for keeping open communication with those places, I determined to withdraw the Rustenburg garrison to Commando Nek and the Lichtenburg garrison to Zeerust. To effect the first withdrawal I directed Ian Hamilton to march to Rustenburg and bring back with him Baden-Powell's force. Carrington, who was then at Mafeking, was ordered to proceed with his mounted troops to Elands River, to which place Lieutenant-Colonel Hore, with 140 Bushmen, 80 men of the Rhodesian Regiment, and 80 Rhodesian Volunteers, had escorted a

large convoy of supplies for the Rustenburg garrison. After accompanying this convoy into Rustenburg, Carrington was to fall back on Zeerust simultaneously with the withdrawal of Baden-Powell's force. Ian Hamilton's column left Pretoria on the 1st August, his Infantry marching to the south and his mounted troops to the north of the Megaliesberg towards Uitval Nek. The next day, on approaching the nek, he found it strongly held by the enemy, whom he engaged in front with a portion of Cunningham's Brigade, while two companies of the Berkshire Regiment gallantly escalated the steep cliff overlooking the pass on the east. As soon as the Boers found that their position was under fire from above they fled, abandoning their wagons and horses. Our losses amounted to 40 killed and wounded. The mounted troops under Mahon on the north side of the Megaliesberg were delayed, and did not come up in time to take part in the engagement; otherwise but few of the enemy could have escaped. On the 4th August the column reached Kroondal, 5 miles south-east of Rustenburg, and the same day it was reported that a Boer commando, with four field guns and two pompons, had surrounded Lieutenant-Colonel Hore's camp at Eland's River. Carrington had marched from Zeerust on the 3rd August with 800 Imperial Yeomanry and Bushmen and a 15-pr. battery manned by New Zealanders. Two days later he was at Marico River, whence he made a reconnaissance to within 2 miles of the post at Eland's River. As a result of this, he reported that the enemy were in such great strength that he was unable to open communication with Hore, and he therefore fell back on Marico River. On the 6th August, Baden-Powell reconnoitred in the same direction from Rustenburg; but though firing was going on its sound became more distant, and, concluding that Lieutenant-Colonel Hore's force had been either captured by the enemy or relieved by Carrington, he returned to Rustenburg. The Rustenburg garrison was not rationed beyond the 9th August, while Ian Hamilton had only sufficient food and forage for the return march to Commando Nek. I was therefore obliged to recall Ian Hamilton and Baden-Powell, and as I was unable to reinforce Carrington from the Rustenburg direction, he fell back on Zeerust. In view of the enemy's numbers and activity, Carrington retired thence to Mafeking, taking with him the Zeerust and Ottoshoop garrisons. Leaving Rustenburg on the 7th August, the troops under Ian Hamilton and Baden-Powell reached Commando Nek on the 9th, accompanied by the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, which Lord Methuen had left at Olifant's Nek.

27. I must now turn to the operations of the Natal force under Sir Redvers Buller, who had occupied Laing's Nek on the 12th June, and had to halt there until the 18th, in order to bring up supplies and rest his transport animals. Marching on the latter date, he reached Zandspruit on the 20th, and Kathosch Spruit on the 22nd, Dundonald's Cavalry Brigade entering Standerton unopposed the same day. 18 locomotives and 150 railway carriages and trucks were secured at Standerton. The force concentrated there during the next few days consisted of the 2nd Infantry Division, three battalions of the 11th Brigade, four 5-inch and two 4.7-inch guns, two howitzer batteries, and Dundonald's Cavalry Brigade. On the 25th June, Sir Redvers Buller reported that the enemy, in considerable strength, were

threatening the railway line, that the railway bridge at Standerton had been blown up, and would take 10 days to repair, and that he must collect supplies before advancing further. On the 30th June, Clery, with the 4th Brigade, left Standerton for Greylingstad, and, after meeting with some opposition, occupied that place on the 2nd July. On the 4th July, he reached Vlakkfontein and met Hart at Zuikerbosch Spruit, relieving the detachment from the Heidelberg garrison which was guarding the railway at that point. This day the line from Natal was opened up to Greylingstad. On the 10th July, the Boers destroyed a railway bridge at Grootspuit, 6 miles east of Greylingstad, and broke up the line. Clery was, therefore, recalled from Vlakkfontein, and Hart reoccupied Zuikerbosch Spruit. On the 12th, the South African Light Horse drove off a Boer commando moving upon Vlakklaagte Station, while Clery moved to Witpoort. Dundonald, scouting 5 miles north of Clery, captured the camp of the party which had injured the Grootspuit Bridge. Clery returned to Vaal Station for supplies on the 15th July, and thence marched to Leeuwspruit, 10 miles north of Standerton, with the intention of visiting Bethel. In view, however, of the possibility that C. De Wet, with the commando which had broken through Hunter's cordon, might endeavour to cross the Vaal opposite Heilbron, and thus effect a junction with Botha's forces, I directed the column to return to Greylingstad. Clery reached Greylingstad on the 24th July. The same and the following days Hildyard engaged the Lydenburg Commando near Amersfort, on which occasion the 13th and 69th Batteries, Royal Field Artillery, the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps, and the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders, distinguished themselves, especially the Volunteer Company of the latter battalion. The enemy retired northward, having suffered considerable loss.

On the 22nd July, the Boers made a determined attack on the post at Zuikerbosch Spruit, 13 miles east of Heidelberg. This post was held by two companies of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 110 men of the Royal Engineers, and 10 men of the Imperial Yeomanry, under Major English of the first-named regiment. Hart proceeded at once with reinforcements from Heidelberg, but before he arrived the enemy had been beaten off, great credit for the achievement being due to Major English and his small party.

On the 26th July, the railway to Heidelberg was open, communication between Johannesburg and Natal being thus restored; and, on the 28th, Major-General Cooper, with the 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps and the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade, took over the command at Heidelberg from Major-General Hart, the latter proceeding by rail to Rhenoster with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and a wing of the Somersetshire Light Infantry. Sir Redvers Buller was then ordered to concentrate a Cavalry brigade, 1,000 Mounted Infantry, and an Infantry Division, at Standerton, and to move as early as possible on Amersfort, and thence through Ermelo to Carolina, with a view to his co-operating with the advance from Middelburg along the Delagoa Bay Railway. He moved to Paardekop on the 2nd August, and reached Amersfort on the 7th, meeting with some slight opposition on the march. He crossed the Riet Spruit on the Ermelo Road on the 9th, and occupied Ermelo unopposed two days later, the enemy having retreated to

Lake Chrissie. On the 12th, Clery reported that a Field-Cornet and 182 burghers had surrendered at Waterval Bridge and handed in their arms. On the 14th, Buller's mounted troops entered Carolina and Twyfelaar, his Infantry being at Kraspan, 10 miles south of Carolina, and the Boers having fallen back on the Komati River. The next day Sir Redvers Buller established his head-quarters at Twyfelaar, where he awaited the arrival of supplies and the completion of the arrangements for an eastward advance.

28. And here I will ask your Lordship to revert to the operations against De Wet, whose commando towards the end of July was occupying the hills in the neighbourhood of Reitzburg. The enemy's position was being watched by the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Brigades and Ridley's Mounted Infantry, but it was too strong to be attacked by mounted troops alone. Hart, with one and a half battalions, arrived at Rhenoster on the 30th July, and proceeded to Kopje Alleen, 25 miles north of Kroonstad, where he was joined on the 3rd August by Major-General C. E. Knox* from Kroonstad. Broadwood, who was holding the line from Wilgebosch Drift through Wonderheuvel and Leeuwspruit to Vredefort, had with him the 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment and Hart's Infantry force, and was subsequently strengthened by the 2nd Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers from Bloemfontein, and the Canadian Regiment from Springs. The Colonial Division was also transferred from Rundle's command on the 27th July, and, marching through Kroonstad, proceeded on the 5th August to Winkledrift on the Rhenoster with orders to watch the principal drifts down stream. Lord Kitchener left Pretoria on the 4th August in order to assume command of the troops surrounding De Wet south of the Vaal, and arrived the next day at Wonderheuvel. At this date the military situation was as follows:—De Wet was hemmed in on the south by the Cavalry Brigades, the Colonial Division, Ridley's Mounted Infantry, and two Infantry columns under Hart and Knox. North of the Vaal Lord Methuen was in position near Potchefstroom to head De Wet back if he crossed the river, with Smith-Dorrien in support at Frederickstad. Methuen's force consisted of 750 Imperial Yeomanry, the 2nd Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment, and 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, with one Field battery, two howitzers, and two pompoms. Smith-Dorrien had under his command 250 Mounted Infantry, the 2nd Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry, the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, the City Imperial Volunteers, and one Field battery. I had hoped with so strong a force, distributed in the manner which I have indicated, De Wet would have found escape impossible. But the country round Reitzburg is extremely difficult, and the hills on both sides of the river furnish an effective screen to the movements of a mobile column. On the 7th August, it was reported that De Wet had succeeded in crossing the Vaal during the preceding night by De Wet's Drift, and that he was marching rapidly northward. On the 8th and 9th, Methuen engaged his rearguard, having been joined on the latter day by the Colonial Division, which had crossed by Scandinaavia Drift. The 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Brigades were at Lindeque Drift on the 9th, with Ridley's Mounted Infantry on the north

* 1st Bn. Oxfordshire Light Infantry, 3rd Bn. Royal Scots, one Field battery, two pompoms, and 250 Infantry.

bank of the river, and Hart's column at Kromellenburg Spruit. Lord Kitchener's advanced troops co-operated with Lord Methuen's force in the attack on De Wet's rearguard, while Smith-Dorrien moved from Frederickstad to Welverdiend and Bank Stations, the Shropshire Light Infantry marching 43 miles in 32 hours, and the rest of his troops 30 miles in 17 hours. As soon as I had ascertained that De Wet had entered the Transvaal, I ordered Ian Hamilton to march with his column from Commando Nek to Heckpoort, leaving Baden-Powell at the former place with his mounted troops and the 1st Battalion Border Regiment. On the 10th August, Lord Methuen reached Taaibosch Spruit, Lord Kitchener's force occupied the Gatsrand Range, south of the Potchefstroom—Krugersdorp railway, and Smith-Dorrien headed back a portion of the Boer commando which attempted to cross the railway near Welverdiend Station. Hearing that the enemy had turned westward, Kitchener changed direction accordingly and moved towards Tafel Kop, the two Cavalry Brigades and Ridley's Mounted Infantry crossing the railway at Welverdiend on the 11th August. Hart followed the next day, while Knox remained south of the Vaal to watch the drifts in case of any of De Wet's men breaking back into the Orange River Colony. On the 12th, Methuen again engaged the Boer rearguard a few miles east of Ventersdorp, and captured a gun. Lord Kitchener, with his mounted troops and two Infantry battalions under Smith-Dorrien, was at Rietvlei, 10 miles east of Lord Methuen, followed by Hart's column from Welverdiend. On this date, one British Officer and 60 men, who had been taken prisoners by De Wet when he seized a train north of Kroonstad, escaped from the enemy's laager. On the 13th Lord Kitchener was at Schoolplaats, 8 miles east of Ventersdorp, and Ian Hamilton had reached Blaauwbank, 18 miles west of Krugersdorp. On the 15th, Ian Hamilton reached Vlakfontein, 15 miles south-west of Olifant's Nek; Lord Methuen, with 1,200 mounted troops, was at Buffelshoek, 6 miles south of the Magato Pass, his Infantry and baggage following him in rear. Lord Kitchener was at Leeuwfontein, 10 miles north-east of Tafel Kop, and Broadwood at Tweefontein, 8 miles further west. During the preceding night, however, De Wet had moved unobserved to the north of Hamilton's column, and, crossing Olifant's Nek, he made for Rustenburg.

29. On the 14th August, information had reached me that Lieutenant-Colonel Hore was still defending the post at Elands River, where he had been attacked 10 days before. Difficulties with regard to supplies rendered it impossible to continue the pursuit of De Wet in a northerly direction, and I, therefore, desired Lord Kitchener to proceed to Elands River with the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, Ridley's Mounted Infantry, and Smith-Dorrien's Infantry, and after relieving Hore to return to Pretoria, via Boschhoek, Rustenburg, and Commando Nek. Lord Methuen's column, with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, was ordered to Zeerust, and thence to Mafeking. Hart moved to Krugersdorp, and Ian Hamilton was instructed to cross Olifant's Nek and march back north of Megaliesberg to Commando Nek. On the 16th August, the Elands River garrison was relieved by Lord Kitchener, its casualties being five men killed, seven men died of wounds, and 36 men wounded. The gallant defence of this post was most

creditable to Colonel Hore and the troops under his command.

30. After visiting Rustenburg, De Wet moved eastward to the north of the Megaliesberg Range. On the 17th August, he reached Wolhuter's Kop, 15 miles west of Commando Nek, and thence sent a messenger to Baden-Powell summoning him to surrender. On the 18th, Ian Hamilton attacked from the south the detachment which De Wet had left at Olifant's Nek, and carried the position with very slight loss. Mahon's mounted troops then pushed on in pursuit towards Roode Kopjes, while a force under Paget, reinforced by Baden-Powell from Commando Nek, was ordered to march north from Waterval along the Pietersberg Railway. On the 19th, Mahon was engaged with the enemy's rearguard near Roode Kopjes, and the next day Ian Hamilton crossed the Crocodile River and pressed on in a north-easterly direction. Paget and Baden-Powell, who were advancing north of Hamman's Kraal, were opposed by Grobler's commando on the 19th and 20th, but on the latter date they occupied Pienaar's River Station, the enemy falling back to Warm Baths Station. Lord Kitchener, with Ridley's Mounted Infantry and Smith-Dorrien's Brigade, reached Wolhuter's Kop on the 20th August, and Commando Nek on the 22nd, Lord Kitchener himself returning to Pretoria that afternoon. Three days later Ridley marched into Pretoria, being followed on the 27th August by Smith-Dorrien. Broadwood's Cavalry Brigade went to Bank Station from Eland's River to obtain supplies, and thence proceeded to Pretoria, where it arrived on the 30th August. On the 22nd August, Baden-Powell occupied Warm Baths Station, near which he engaged the enemy, rescuing 100 British prisoners and capturing 25 Boers. He was followed by Ian Hamilton, who, passing through Zwaartbooi's Location, 10 miles west of the railway, between Hamman's Kraal and Pienaar's River Station, reached Warm Baths Station on the 24th. On the way he captured 13 Boers and a large number of cattle and sheep. Paget also reached Warm Baths during the night of the 24th. On this date, the enemy broke up into several small parties in the neighbourhood of Nylstroom, which was occupied by Baden-Powell by a flank march on the 26th August. As it appeared that De Wet, with a few of his followers, had left the commando which he had brought northward across the Vaal, and was returning to the Orange River Colony through the Potchefstroom district, and as the forces under Paget and Baden-Powell were strong enough to deal with the Boers opposed to them on the Pietersburg Railway, I directed Ian Hamilton and Mahon to march back to Pretoria, their troops being needed on the Delagoa Bay line of operations. I also withdrew that portion of Clements's Brigade which had been supporting Paget at Hamman's Kraal, as I intended this brigade, with Ridley's Mounted Infantry, to act as a flying column for the purpose of clearing the country between Commando Nek and Krugersdorp.

31. Seeing no advantage in a further advance towards Pietersburg, I desired Paget, on the 27th August, to withdraw Baden-Powell's troops to Warm Baths Station. Two days later Commandant Grobler sent in to Paget the remaining prisoners in his hands, 34 in all. On the 31st, Plumer left Pienaar's River Station with a small flying column to clear the country to the east, and the next day he engaged the

enemy, capturing 26 prisoners, 31 wagons, and 90 rifles. On the 1st September, he attacked the Boers near Rooikop, 25 miles east of Pienaar's River Station, securing seven prisoners, 100 rifles, 40,000 rounds of ammunition, 350 cattle, and three wagons containing supplies. On the 2nd September, he again came into contact with a party of the enemy near Warm Baths Station, seizing a number of cattle and sheep and a large amount of supplies. On reaching Warm Baths Station, Plumer assumed command of Baden-Powell's troops, the latter Officer having proceeded on leave. On the 3rd September, during an attack which the Boers made on a kopje held by our troops near Warm Baths Station, Commandant Piet Cronje was killed and the enemy driven off with heavy loss. On the 7th September, Paget fell back with his whole force to Pienaar's River Station, and thence marched in the direction of Hebron, 16 miles north-west of Pretoria. He arrived there on the 14th, having captured on the way 10 prisoners and 2,000 head of cattle.

32. In paragraphs 7 to 10, I described Hunter's operations in the Orange River Colony up to the 6th August. On the 10th August, Hunter* left Bethlehem for Kroonstad. He reached Lindley the following day, and was then directed to move on Heilbron, so as to guard against any attempt on the part of General Olivier, who was then in the vicinity of Frankfort, to effect a junction with De Wet's commando at Reitzburg. Sending into Kroonstad his sick and the cattle and sheep which had been captured in Brandwater Basin, Hunter marched north and reached the Rhenoster River on the 13th. On crossing the river next morning, he found the enemy, 1,800 with six guns, under Generals Frohnemann and Olivier, holding a strong position across the road at Witpoort, 12 miles south of Heilbron. After an engagement, which lasted from 11 A.M. until 5 P.M., the position was occupied by our troops, the enemy retiring to the north-east. Our casualties amounted to one Officer and three men killed, and one Officer and 40 men wounded. On the 15th August, Hunter entered Heilbron unopposed, and, on the 20th, Bruce Hamilton's Brigade arrived at Kroonstad.

33. As soon as the troops engaged in the pursuit of De Wet became available for operations elsewhere, I redistributed the field army with the object, first, of advancing along the Delagoa Bay Railway to Komati Poort, and, secondly, of forming flying columns to pursue and disperse the scattered Boer commandoes which were carrying on a guerilla warfare both in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. As regards the first objective, the military situation was as follows:—On 15th August, Sir Redvers Buller's force† reached Twyfelaar. French‡ was in command at Middelburg. On the 18th August, the Mounted Infantry were holding the line stretching from Wonderfontein to Doornkop, 12 miles north of Middelburg, and French's Cavalry was distributed between Wonderfontein and Twyfelaar. On that date French rejoined his two Cavalry brigades. On the 21st, Buller marched to Van Wyk's Vlei, 15 miles south-east of Belfast, and two

days later the 11th Division, under Pole-Carew, was concentrated at Wonderfontein. Buller met with some opposition on the 23rd in the neighbourhood of Van Wyk's Vlei, and towards evening two companies of the 1st Battalion Liverpool Regiment entered by mistake a hollow, out of sight of the main body, where they came under a heavy fire, losing 10 men killed, and one Officer and 45 men wounded. The other casualties on this occasion were one man killed, and three Officers and four men wounded. On the 24th August, I left Pretoria for Wonderfontein, and on the 25th proceeded to Belfast, which had been occupied the previous day by the 11th Division. Some opposition was encountered, our casualties amounting to one man killed, and one Officer and 14 men wounded. As soon as I arrived, it became apparent to me that we were already in touch with a part of the Boer main position. This position, as far as could be ascertained, extended from the neighbourhood of Swartz Kopjes on the north to Dalmanutha on the south, a distance of some 20 miles. It was furnished with a numerous artillery, including two 6-inch guns, and was entrenched at various points of importance. My first idea was to hold the enemy in front with the 11th Division, whilst Buller and French turned their left from the south. On consultation, however, with General Buller, it seemed that the ground was not favourable to a turning movement from this quarter, and I therefore decided to contain the enemy's front by the 18th Brigade and turn his right flank with the Guards Brigade, assisted by General French and Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry. With this object French moved, on the 26th, from Geluk, 12 miles south of Belfast, and passing to the west of the town reached Lakenvlei, 6 miles to its north on the evening of this day. Pole-Carew, with the 11th Division, endeavoured to advance along the Lydenburg road in his support, but came under so heavy a shell and rifle fire that he made but little progress. Buller, whose Artillery was engaged throughout the day, pushed back the Boers, who were holding a series of strong positions to the south-east of Belfast, to within 4 miles of the railway between that town and Dalmanutha. Our casualties on this date amounted to five men killed, and two Officers and 56 men wounded. On the 27th, French advanced 8 miles further north, and drove the enemy from Swartz Kopjes. From this position he threatened the enemy's line of retreat, although he could hardly yet be said to have turned their right flank. Meanwhile, however, General Buller was able to take more decisive action at the other extremity of the Boer line of defence. At Bergendal, 3 miles south-east of Belfast, the Boers had established a very strong position on a low rocky kopje, and in some farm buildings and plantations, which formed the key to that portion of the main position. The kopje was heavily entrenched, and was garrisoned by the Z.A.R. Police with a pompom. The ground, which sloped gently away in all directions, afforded no cover. Buller attacked this post early in the day, and after some hard fighting it was carried very gallantly by the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, supported by the 1st Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. The brunt of the action fell to the former battalion, which lost heavily, our casualties being one Officer and 13 men killed, and seven Officers and 57 men wounded. 19 Boers were taken prisoners; 20 of their dead

* Three battalions of the Highland Brigade, a wing of the 2nd Bn. Bedfordshire Regiment, two companies of the Imperial Yeomanry, Lovat's Scouts, one 6-inch gun, and 14 field guns.

† Lyttelton's Division, and two Cavalry Brigades, under Brocklehurst and Dundonald.

‡ 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades, Hutton's Mounted Infantry, and the 11th Division.

were found on the kopje, and their pompom was captured. The success of this attack was decisive. It was carried out in view of the main Boer position, and the effect of it was such that the enemy gave way at all points, flying in confusion to the north and east. Next morning Buller was able to occupy Machadodorp almost without opposition. On this day, the 28th, Dundonald's Cavalry pushed on to Helvetia, where they came into touch with the enemy's rearguard. French's Cavalry and the 11th Division moved due east to Elandsfontein, 8 miles west of Helvetia. On the 29th August, leaving garrisons at Dalmanutha and Machadodorp, Buller marched to Helvetia and occupied Waterval Boven with his advanced troops. Pole-Carew sent on three battalions to support French, remaining himself with the rest of the 11th Division near Helvetia. On the 30th, French, supported by the Guards Brigade, occupied Waterval Onder, while Buller reported from Weltevreden that Nooitgedacht had been vacated by the Boers, and that the British prisoners confined there were to be seen moving along the road to Waterval Onder. By nightfall the prisoners, numbering 1,800, and including seven Officers, reached our camp at Waterval Onder, and were subsequently sent by rail to Pretoria. The remainder of the officers had been removed to Barberton. The prisoners stated that President Kruger, ex-President Steyn, and Commandant-General Botha had left for Nelspruit on the 29th August. On the 31st August, Buller fell back to Helvetia, preparatory to marching on Lydenburg, Pole-Carew, with the 11th Division holding Waterval Onder, and Henry's corps of Mounted Infantry occupying Waterval Boven. French returned with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades to Machadodorp, whence I directed him to move, v.a. Carolina, on Barberton, there being no practicable road to the latter place, from the railway east of Machadodorp.

In the meantime reinforcements had been moving up from the west. A brigade, under Smith-Dorrien,* had been railed to Belfast between the 26th and 29th August. Mahon† marched from Pretoria on the 30th August. He was followed the next day by Cunningham's Brigade.‡

34. On the 1st September, I issued a proclamation annexing the Transvaal under the orders of Her Majesty's Government. On this day Buller moved from Helvetia to Elandspruit on the Crocodile River. Next morning his advance was opposed by the enemy, who were holding a strong position at Badfontein, and had with them three 6-inch guns. Buller described the position as resembling Laing's Nek, and I agreed with him that it would be wiser to defer his attack until I could send him assistance. Accordingly, on the 3rd September, I despatched Ian Hamilton from Belfast§ to turn the right flank of Boer force in front of

Buller. Ian Hamilton reached Swartkopjes, on the Dullstroom road, meeting with but slight opposition. On the 4th, he entered Dullstroom—the enemy, with two guns, fighting a rearguard action, and disputing every yard of the way—and on the same day continued his march to Palmietfontein. During his march he was joined by Brocklehurst's Cavalry Brigade from Buller's column. On the same day, French occupied the bridge over the Komati River between Machadodorp and Carolina, while Mahon's mounted troops reached Wonderfontein, and Cunningham's Brigade reached Balmoral. At Wonderfontein, the 76th Battery Royal Field Artillery and the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment were placed under Mahon's orders, and he was directed to join French at Carolina on 6th September. On the 5th September, Ian Hamilton advanced about 12 miles to Wemershoek, whence, by a night march, he occupied Zwagershoek with the Royal Scots, thus securing the debouchment through the defile into the Lydenburg Valley, and threatening the right rear of the Boer position at Badfontein. The same day Buller demonstrated strongly against the enemy's left flank, the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps dragging the guns of a Field battery up a steep hill, whence a heavy fire was brought to bear on the Boers.

35. On the 6th, owing to the right flank of their position having been turned, and to the pressure on their left flank, the Boers evacuated their stronghold at Badfontein, and fell back through Lydenburg, some going to Kruger's Post, but the majority with two 6-inch guns, taking up another formidable position at Paardeplaats on the mountains overlooking the town, and 7 miles to the east of it. On the same day, Dundonald's mounted brigade and the Cavalry attached to Ian Hamilton's force occupied Lydenburg, Buller's and Hamilton's Infantry halting 5 miles in rear. French reached Carolina on this date, and he was joined there by Mahon's column, and the 2nd Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry. Cunningham's Brigade arrived at Pan Station, and Hutton began to concentrate Alderson's Corps of Mounted Infantry from the line of communication preparatory to marching from Machadodorp along the heights south of the railway towards Tafelkop. On the 6th September, Buller attacked the enemy at Paardeplaats, whence, with their 6-inch guns, they were firing into the camp and town of Lydenburg. The Boers held a precipitous ridge, 1,800 feet above the valley, horse shoe in shape and only easily approachable by paths which were completely commanded from the crest. One great feature of the attack was the skill with which the guns were pushed forward from point to point until they reached positions from which they silenced the enemy's artillery, and greatly subdued the rifle fire. Another was the dash with which the Infantry pressed forward over rocks and across ravines, and other apparently impracticable ground until they carried the ridge. A third was the simultaneous arrival of the right, left, and centre of the attack, namely, the Royal Scots, the Royal Irish, and the 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment in the enemy's position. The Boers lost considerably, but their retreat was concealed by heavy mist. Our casualties amounted to 13 killed and 25 wounded, three of the former and 16 of the latter belonging to the Volunteer Company of the Gordon Highlanders, which came under

* 20th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; Mounted Infantry of the City Imperial Volunteers; 2nd Bn. West Yorkshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Royal Scots, 1st Bn. Royal Irish Regiment, and 1st Bn. Gordon Highlanders.

† "M" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; 3rd Corps of Mounted Infantry, Queensland Mounted Infantry, and New Zealand Mounted Rifles, 79th Company of Imperial Yeomanry, Imperial Light Horse, and Lumsden's Horse.

‡ "D" Field Battery, Canadian Artillery; Elswick Battery, 1st Bn. King's Own Scottish Borderers, 2nd Bn. Berkshire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Shropshire Light Infantry, and 1st Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

§ 10 Field guns, Royal Scots, Royal Irish, and Gordon Highlanders.

shrapnel fire at a distance of nearly 7 miles from the enemy's guns. In this action Buller reported that Ian Hamilton rendered valuable assistance, and praised the excellent leading of Major-General Smith-Dorrien and Brigadier-General F. W. Kitchener. The next day Buller occupied Manchberg, the enemy being dislodged by the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps, supported by Artillery fire.

36. On the 10th September, French crossed the Komati River at Hlomohlom unopposed, and made for the high ground near Deerdokop, which he reached after some fighting the next day. Hutton was on the hills south of the railway, protecting the right of the 11th Division at Nooitgedacht. Buller occupied the junction of the roads from the east and south near Spitzkop on the 11th September, the enemy retiring, some to Nelspruit and some to the north across the Sabie River. 300,000 lbs. of Boer supplies, mainly rice, sugar, flour, and coffee, and 300 boxes of small-arm ammunition were captured by Buller at Spitzkop. Ian Hamilton's column, after leaving Buller, returned to Helvetia on the 12th, and moved the next day to Waterval Onder, where it replaced the 11th Division, which advanced unopposed to Godwaan. The enemy had been holding a strong position commanding Godwaan for some days, but they fell back to Nelspruit as soon as they found their line of retreat threatened by Hutton's occupation of Kaapsche Hoop. On the 12th September, the news reached me that, after resigning the Presidency to Mr. Schalk Burger, Mr. Kruger had left the Transvaal and arrived at Lourenço Marques the previous evening, and that Commandant-General L. Botha had been obliged on account of illness to hand over his command to General Viljoen. On the 13th September, French entered Barberton with his Cavalry, which he took across the mountains, thus completely surprising the enemy. 82 British prisoners, including 23 Officers, who had been removed to Barberton from Nooitgedacht, were released, and 43 locomotives, with a considerable amount of rolling stock, were found in the railway station. Over 100 Boers were made prisoners. In the town French secured three weeks' food and one week's forage for his column, and he seized many Mauser rifles and a quantity of ammunition, 50 wagons, and a large number of sheep and cattle. General Schoemann was found in the Barberton Jail, having been imprisoned by the Boers on account of his refusal to break his parole. Owing to the difficulty of getting his transport through the pass leading into the valley, the remainder of French's force did not reach Barberton until the 14th September.

37. On this day, the 11th Division marched to Kaapsche Hoop, and Ian Hamilton's column to Nooitgedacht. On the 15th September, Pole-Carew, with the Guards Brigade and Colonel Henry's Corps of Mounted Infantry, moved towards Kaapmuiden, and the 18th Brigade, under Colonel Stephenson, towards Nelspruit. Ian Hamilton's column reached Godwaan Station, to which place Hutton's Mounted Infantry had returned for supplies. Nelspruit was occupied by Stephenson's Brigade on the 17th, while French's advance Cavalry captured 50 locomotives at Avoca Station, Ian Hamilton's column being one march in the rear. On the 19th, Henry's Mounted Infantry and the Guards Brigade entered Kaapmuiden, where 19 locomotives were found in the railway station, all of them in a damaged condition, 114 trucks

containing supplies were also captured. The bridges at this point and at Poort City Station had been blown up by the enemy, but steps were at once taken to repair them. Ian Hamilton's column followed in support of Pole-Carew's force.

38. The Boers, who retreated to Komati Poort as we advanced from Machadodorp, were about 3,000 strong, and out of this number it was ascertained that 700 had crossed the Portuguese frontier; others dispersed in various directions, and the balance were reported to be occupying spurs of the Lebombo Mountain, south of the railway between Portuguese territory and the bridge over the Komati River. On the 21st September I returned from Nelspruit to Pretoria. The same day 80 Burghers surrendered to Sir Redvers Buller at Spitzkop, while a detachment of the Imperial Light Horse proceeding from French Bob to Kaapmuiden captured 20 prisoners and 200 rifles, with a quantity of the enemy's ammunition. On the 26th September Buller occupied the Mac-Mac River and eastern side of Burgher's Pass. The latter is a very awkward defile, but the opposition was slight. On the 27th September he entered Pilgrim's Rest without any casualties. On the 28th, by a well-executed night march, a force under Colonel Byng obliged the enemy to retire hurriedly from Pilgrim's Hill. The 29th was spent in getting the transport up this exceedingly difficult ascent, which for a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles has an average gradient of 10 degrees. The troops worked admirably, and dragged up the guns and wagons by hand. On the 30th Kruger's Post was reached, and touch regained with the Lydenburg garrison. The Boers who had been holding Kruger's Post withdrew to the Waterval Valley, and so evaded our troops. On the 2nd October Buller returned to Lydenburg. The results of this march were that the enemy were divided into three columns, the largest of which went north to the Limpopo. The intention of concentrating at Spitzkop was also frustrated. During the march 109 Burghers surrendered or were taken prisoners, 600 head of cattle, 4,000 sheep, and 150 wagon loads of supplies were captured, and large quantities of ammunition fell into our hands.

On the 24th September Pole-Carew, with the Guards Brigade and Henry's Mounted Infantry, entered Komati Poort, where he found the railway bridge uninjured. Nearly 1,500 trucks, as well as 30 locomotives, including two cog-wheel engines, were recovered on the main line and Selati branch line, while a considerable amount of rolling stock and of food supplies had been burnt. South of the railway bridge the Boers had left several truck-loads of gun and rifle ammunition, as well as a 6-inch Creusot gun, which had, however, been destroyed. On this date, Ian Hamilton's column reached Hector-spruit. In the Crocodile River were discovered a number of Field guns, which had been destroyed with dynamite, among them two 12-pounders belonging to "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery. On the 26th, Ian Hamilton joined Pole-Carew at Komati Poort, between which place and Pretoria railway communication was this day restored. The line to Lourenço Marques was also open, supplies of food being sent up therefrom. On the 28th September, the Guards Brigade began to return by rail to Pretoria, where the whole brigade was concentrated on the 4th October. It was followed by two 5-inch guns, two naval 12-pounders, the 85th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; Colonel

Henry's Corps of Mounted Infantry, and the West Australian Mounted Infantry.

39. I have already mentioned that, concurrently with the advance along the Delagoa Bay railway, I organized flying columns for the purpose of pursuing and dispersing the enemy's commandoes which were carrying on a desultory warfare north and south of the Vaal. In addition to the force operating north of Pretoria, under Paget, whose march to Warm Baths Station and thence to Hebron, has been described in paragraphs 30 and 31, a column under Clements* was formed at Commando Nek. The duty assigned to this column was to bring under control the Rustenburg and Heckpoort districts, and to clear the country of marauders between Krugersdorp and Johannesburg. Another column under Hart was concentrated at Krugersdorp.† The area allotted to this force stretched from the Vaal to Krugersdorp, including Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom, and Ventersdorp. A third column under Lord Methuen had its head-quarters at Mafeking.‡ Its sphere of action was the Lichtenburg district as far east as Tafel Kop and Rustenburg, and thence up to the left bank of Crocodile River below its junction with Elands River.

In the north-east angle of the Orange River Colony, Rundle in command of the 8th Division formed two columns, one under Boyes§ based on Vrede, and the other under Campbell|| based on Harrismith. In the centre of the colony, and east of the railway, Hunter had under his orders Macdonald's column¶ based on Heilbron, and Bruce Hamilton's** column based on Kroonstad. A third column†† under Major-General C. E. Knox was also based on Kroonstad for operations between that town and the Vaal.

40. As regards the operations of the columns in the Transvaal, there is not much that calls for special mention. Clements moved west from Commando Nek into the Heckpoort district and encountered the enemy under Delarey on the 9th September at Hartebeestfontein, his Mounted Infantry clearing the Witwatersberg Range. The next day he again engaged the Boer commando, which suffered considerable

loss, our own casualties being two men killed and 14 wounded. On the 12th September Delarey fell back on Rustenburg through Oliphant's Nek.

On the 29th August, Lieutenant-Colonel Bradley, Commanding the 2nd Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment, attacked and dispersed a body of the enemy at Modderfontein, 25 miles south of Krugersdorp, and two days later Hart drove off a Boer detachment which was attempting to destroy the main of the Johannesburg waterworks, 10 miles south-west of the town. From the 4th September to the 7th September, he pursued small parties of the enemy to the south-west of Krugersdorp, Commandant Theron being among the killed in one of the skirmishes which took place. On the 11th September, Hart occupied Potchefstroom by a forced march, his mounted troops having covered 45 miles, and his Infantry 35 miles, without halting for more than a few hours. The Boers were completely taken by surprise and suffered heavy loss, our only casualty being one Officer killed. On the 30th September, after an absence of 33 days, General Hart returned to Krugersdorp. During that time he had marched 310 miles, and had been almost constantly in touch with the enemy. The Boers suffered considerably in the succession of skirmishes. 96 prisoners were taken, and his column captured 2,720 head of cattle, 3,281 sheep, 129 horses, ponies, and mules; 67 wagons and carts, and large quantities of supplies. Our casualties were not heavy, namely, three killed, 24 wounded, and three missing.

41. To the west of the Transvaal, Carrington engaged the Lichtenburg Commando near Ottoshoop on the 20th and 21st August. Lord Methuen reached Zeerust on the 22nd and Ottoshoop on the 25th. Thence he marched with his own and Carrington's columns to Mafeking, arriving there on the 28th. On the latter date, as Carrington's services were required in Rhodesia, I directed him to proceed with his staff to Salisbury, and placed Major-General C. W. H. Douglas in command of Mafeking and the adjacent district. Lord Methuen's flying column was in readiness to move on the 7th September. He proposed first to clear the country round Jacobsdal and Zeerust, and afterwards to march south towards Schweizer-Reneke, on Hart's River, the garrison at that place being threatened by a local rising of the inhabitants of the Bloemhof district. A second small column was placed at Douglas's disposal for operations in the Lichtenburg district, and a garrison was detailed for Mafeking consisting of 400 mounted troops and 800 Infantry with four Field guns. On the 9th September, Lord Methuen moved on a laager under Commandant Vermaas at Melopo Oog, 10 miles south-east of Ottoshoop, and completely dispersed the Boers, taking 30 of them prisoners and seizing 22 wagons and 40,000 rounds of rifle ammunition. On the 11th September, Douglas was attacked on the road from Ottoshoop to Lichtenburg, but drove off the enemy, capturing a large quantity of grain and other stores. He was again engaged the following day, when 39 prisoners, 10 wagons, and a considerable number of sheep and oxen fell into his hands.

On the morning of the 19th, Lord Methuen, while marching from Jachskraal towards Schweizer-Reneke, heard of a Boer convoy moving in his vicinity. He pursued and dispersed it, capturing a 15-pr. gun which had

* The 8th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; 2nd Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers, 2nd Bn. Worcestershire Regiment, 1st Bn. Border Regiment, 2nd Bn. Yorkshire Light Infantry, and 900 mounted troops, under Brigadier-General Ridley.

† The 28th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers, 2nd Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers, a wing of the 2nd Bn. Somersetshire Light Infantry, 400 Yeomanry, and one 4-7-inch naval gun.

‡ The 4th Battery Royal Field Artillery; four guns of the 88th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; a section of the 37th Howitzer Battery, New Zealand Battery, six pompoms, four battalions of Imperial Yeomanry, under Lord Chesham; Australian Bushmen, 1st Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, and 2nd Bn. Northamptonshire Regiment.

§ The 11th Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry, 1st Bn. South Staffordshire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Royal West Kent Regiment, 2nd Bn. Manchester Regiment, and seven Field guns.

|| Three companies of Imperial Yeomanry, Driscoll's Scouts, 2nd Bn. Grenadier Guards, 2nd Bn. Scots Guards, 1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment, with six Field guns and one 5-inch gun.

¶ The 2nd Bn. Black Watch, 2nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders, 1st Bn. Highland Light Infantry, with 900 men and 12 Field guns, one 5-inch gun, and one pom-pom.

** The 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; 2nd Bn. Bedfordshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Royal Sussex Regiment, 1st Bn. Cameron Highlanders, with 700 mounted men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Ross.

†† The 17th Battery Royal Field Artillery; 300 Imperial Yeomanry, and Mounted Infantry, 1st Bn. Oxfordshire Light Infantry, and 3rd Bn. Royal Scots.

been lost at Colenso by the 14th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, 28 prisoners, 26 wagons, 8,000 cattle, 4,000 sheep, some rifles, and 20,000 rounds of ammunition. Next day he continued his march and reached Rietpan, 45 miles north-east of Vryburg Railway Station, where 634 cattle and 3,000 sheep fell into his hands. On the 28th September, Methuen was twice engaged with Lemmer's force, consisting of 500 men, one gun and one pompon. The Boers had seven killed and 14 of them taken prisoners. Our casualties were two killed and three wounded. On the 22nd, Brigadier-General Settle, with a column from Vryburg, entered Schweizer-Reneke unopposed, and Lord Methuen began to move north with a view to clearing the Rustenburg district from the west. On the 23rd September, General Broadwood, with the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, and a battalion composed of Infantry details from Johannesburg, under Lieutenant-Colonel C. E. Bradley, North Staffordshire Regiment, left Pretoria for Commando Nek, to be followed later on by the 75th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, a section of Elswick Battery, the 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, and the 1st Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, under Brigadier-General Cunningham, these troops having been withdrawn from the Delagoa Bay line. The above force, in conjunction with Clements's column was intended to operate in the Rustenburg district from the east. Broadwood also arrived at Rustenburg on the 26th, having on the way met with slight opposition from a Boer force consisting of 300 men, one pompon, and two Maxims under Steenkamp. He had no casualties, and captured two wagons. Cunningham reached Elandsdraal, half-way between Commando Nek and Rustenburg on the 28th. Between this date and the 4th October, Broadwood, Clements, and Ridley were engaged in clearing the country in the neighbourhood of Rustenburg, while Cunningham occupied the town. They captured 29 wagons, some rifles, and 10,000 rounds of small-arm ammunition. No casualties.

42. The force under Paget, as mentioned in paragraphs 30 and 31, arrived at Hebron on the 14th September. Thence it moved east to Waterval in order to disperse a commando under Erasmus, which was advancing towards Pretoria from Nylstroom direction. On the 23rd September a party of Boers from this commando attacked Elands River Station on the Delagoa Bay Railway and did some slight damage, but was driven off by the garrison. Meanwhile Erasmus's camp was surprised by Paget, who during the preceding night had made a forced march with the 1st Battalion West Riding Regiment, two companies of the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, two companies of the 1st Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers, the City Imperial Volunteer Battery, and two 5-inch guns. The camp was captured, together with 12 prisoners, 2,500 cattle, 6,000 sheep, 50 horses, and some rifles and ammunition. The commando was simultaneously engaged by Plumer's Bushmen, who took 11 prisoners, 750 cattle, and 1,600 sheep. Four days later the portion of Paget's force at Pienaar's River Station, under the command of Colonel L. Chapman, was attacked on two sides, the enemy being able to come up close, under cover of the thick bush. They were beaten off after three hours' fighting, and were followed up by the Bushmen. Our casualties were one Bushman killed and one wounded, also three Munster Fusiliers taken prisoners.

43. South of the Vaal the enemy showed

activity in several directions, but their attempts failed, owing to the promptitude with which troops were concentrated at the points of attack. On the 22nd August Rundle reported that the Imperial Yeomanry patrols which he had sent to Brandwater Basin had brought in 17 rifles, 140,000 rounds of Mauser ammunition, 12 shells, and 200 lbs. of dynamite; while nearly 700 Boers had surrendered in the Harrismith and Vrede districts. On the 24th August it was reported from Winburg that Lieutenant-Colonel H. M. Ridley, Imperial Yeomanry, while reconnoitring 9 miles north-east of that place with 250 mounted troops and a few infantry, had been surrounded by a Boer commando, 1,000 strong with two guns. I therefore directed Hunter to despatch by rail 200 Mounted Infantry, one and a half battalions of Infantry, and eight Field guns under Bruce Hamilton, to Winburg, and a half battalion with 4 guns to Ventersburg Road Station, to co-operate thence with a small column under Lieutenant-Colonel W. L. White, R.A., which Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny had sent to Ventersburg. Ridley's party was relieved and the enemy driven off on the 25th August, the casualties on our side amounting to one man killed, one Officer wounded, and five men missing. On the 27th a Boer force 1,400 strong, under Olivier, attacked Winburg. It was repulsed by Bruce Hamilton, 29 prisoners being taken, including Olivier and his three sons, who were captured by a small detachment of the Queenstown Rifle Volunteers. The enemy then moved south-east with a view to attacking Ladybrand and Thabanchu. Kelly-Kenny accordingly railed Lieutenant-Colonel White's column from Ventersburg Road Station to Bloemfontein on the 28th August, and sent it thence to the Waterworks on the Modder River. Bruce Hamilton's Brigade, with Le Gallais' Mounted Infantry, was also railed during the three following days to Bloemfontein from Kroonstad and Winburg, while MacDonald's column proceeded from Heilbron to Winburg. The Ladybrand garrison, consisting of 43 men of the Wiltshire Imperial Yeomanry, and one company of the 1st Battalion Worcestershire Regiment, under the command of Major F. White, R.M.L.I., District Commissioner, was surrounded on the 2nd September by a Boer force 3,000 strong, with nine field guns and two machine guns. Lieutenant-Colonel White, R.A., occupied Thabanchu on the 1st September, and the next day he was joined by Bruce Hamilton with a column of 2,000 men, supported by Le Gallais with his mounted troops and the 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles from the Bloemfontein garrison. Ladybrand was relieved by Bruce Hamilton on the morning of the 5th; and although the Boers had brought a heavy artillery fire to bear on the entrenchments, our casualties were only one Officer and four men wounded. The enemy had withdrawn north-westward the previous night in the Allandale direction. Bruce Hamilton's Infantry marched 80 miles in 4½ days to effect this relief. Meanwhile, Rundle, with Boyes' column was marching towards Bethlehem, which he reached on the 11th September, and Campbell's column passed through Ficksburg on its way to Trommel on the 7th September. On the latter date Bruce Hamilton was ordered to move to the Leenw River Mills, taking with him the Ladybrand garrison, and MacDonald's column arrived at Winburg. The object of these movements was to defeat and disperse the Commandoes which had retired to the hills near Korannaberg and Doornberg. On the

12th September a party of Boers belonging to the Commando which had attacked Ladybrand appeared near Brandfort, with their intention of damaging the railway. Kelly-Kenny reinforced the posts between Bloemfontein and Smaldeel, and communicated with MacDonald, who the next morning crossed to the south of the Vet River on the road from Winburg to Bloemfontein, and engaged the enemy 8 miles west of Tafel Kop, driving them across the river and pursuing them to the north of the Winburg-Smaldeel railway. The Boers retired in great confusion, seven prisoners, 31 wagons, 270 trek oxen, and a large quantity of supplies, ammunition and dynamite falling into our hands. Lovat's Scouts especially distinguished themselves during the pursuit.

On the 18th September, Rundle attacked a party of Boers near Bronkhorstspuit, 20 miles west of Senekal, capturing one gun and 30 wagons, while C. Knox successfully engaged the enemy at Klompie Doorns between Senekal and Kroonstad.

44. It may be here mentioned that, in view of De Wet's return from the Transvaal to the district between Heilbron and Reitzburg, and the possibility of his collecting a fresh commando in that direction, I thought it desirable to concentrate a strong mounted force at Kroonstad and on the Rhenoster River. The Colonial Division, which had been attached to Lord Methuen's column during the pursuit of De Wet, was accordingly ordered to march from Zeerust to Elandsfontein, via Krugersdorp. It left Zeerust on the 25th August, being joined by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade under Colonel Little. The same day Colonel Little was wounded near Jacobsdal, and the command of the combined force devolved on Colonel Dalgely. Between Zeerust and Krugersdorp considerable opposition was met with, the casualties in the Colonial Division being 10 men killed and five Officers and 20 men wounded; and in the 3rd Cavalry Brigade one man killed, and one Officer and six men wounded. On reaching Elandsfontein, the Colonial Division proceeded on the 14th September to Rhenoster, a portion of it through Heidelberg, and the remainder along the railway. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade, under Colonel Porter, who by this time had replaced Colonel Little, was railed to Kroonstad; while De Lisle's Corps of Mounted Infantry was withdrawn from Clements's column and moved by rail on the 17th September to Rhenoster, where it was joined by 250 men of Kitchener's Horse from Kroonstad.

45. The Boers broke up in small parties from the hills near Doornberg without giving our troops any further chance of attacking them, and as it seemed likely that they would reassemble in the Heilbron and Frankfort districts, Hunter made a fresh disposition of the four columns under his command. On the 22nd September he ordered the force under MacDonald to march to Kaalfontein, on the Valsch River. Bruce Hamilton and Boyes were to converge on Lindley from Senekal and Bethlehem; and Campbell, who had returned to the latter place, was directed to proceed to the vicinity of Reitz. These movements were completed by the 25th September.

46. On the 29th September, the quietude of the Orange River Colony was disturbed by a small party of Boers, probably numbering less than 200, and without guns, who moved upon Wepener. About 30 or 40 of the enemy entered the town at 6 A.M. upon that date, and caused a considerable amount of panic amongst

the inhabitants. Major Wright, the District commissioner, was also forced to withdraw together with his police into Basutoland. The Boers are reported to have treated the residents with civility, but they helped themselves liberally to money from the bank, and also commandeered clothing and supplies to a considerable extent. The occurrence was unfortunate, but it has not hitherto been found possible to garrison every place which it might be advantageous to occupy, with troops. As soon as I heard of this raid I issued orders for Ladybrand, Wepener, and Dewetsdorp to be occupied by detachments from the Highland Brigade, which had been sent down by rail from Kroonstad to Bloemfontein.

47. On the 30th September, Hildyard held Wakkerstroom and Utrecht, 150 of the commando from the latter place having surrendered.

I am, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal.

No. 9.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-quarters of the Army in South Africa,
Johannesburg, 15th November, 1900.
(Despatched 3rd January, 1901.)

SIR,

In continuation of my despatch, dated 10th October, 1900, I have the honour to submit, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, an account of the military operations in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, from the 4th October to the present date.

2. With the occupation of Komati Poort, and the dispersal of Commandant General Louis Botha's army, the organised resistance of the two Republics may be said to have ceased, but there still remained much for the Army in South Africa to do before the country could be said to be completely conquered. Certain Boer leaders, notably De Wet, Delarey, and others of lesser importance had, and have still to be dealt with, and the guerilla warfare carried on by them put a stop to.

3. To meet this state of affairs the Army had to be broken up into smaller columns than had hitherto been found advantageous, and the mobility of each column had to be increased. Great difficulty was, however, experienced in carrying out these necessary changes, owing to the time having arrived for the withdrawal of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, the Royal Canadian Regiment, the three batteries of Canadian Artillery, and the greater part of the first contingents furnished by Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania, and allowing the members of the several South African corps to return to their homes and employments after having been embodied for twelve months.

It was impossible to disregard the urgent reasons given by our Colonial comrades for not being able to remain longer at the seat of war. They had done admirable service and shown themselves well fitted to take their places by the side of Her Majesty's Regular troops, and I witnessed their departure with deep regret, not only on account of their many soldierly qualities, but because it materially impaired the mobility and efficiency of the Army in South Africa for the time being, a very critical time, too, until indeed a fresh body of Mounted Infantry could be formed from the nearest available Line battalions, and the several South African local corps could be again recruited up to their original strength.

4. At this particular period the scattered bodies of Boers became more than usually active. Commandant-General Botha, who had relinquished his command, ostensibly on account of ill-health, after his burghers were defeated at Bergendal, resumed his position, and was joined by Ex-President Steyn, who has been indefatigable in his efforts to encourage his countrymen and the Transvaalers to maintain the struggle by deceiving them with false accounts of success on their part, and defeat on ours.

5. The presence of Botha and Steyn in the Waterberg District necessitated our taking action in that direction, and during the first two weeks of October, Major-General Paget's mobile columns* were employed clearing the country from the Pretoria—Bronkhurst Spruit railway, as far north as a line joining Pienaar's Railway Station with the junction of the Wilge and Olifants rivers. This was accomplished with very little fighting. Paget's troops captured 150 prisoners, 200 rifles, 50 wagons, and 12,000 sheep, and the Boers retired into the bush veldt to the north-east.

During the latter half of the month Paget's columns† traversed the country to the west of Pretoria—Petersburg line, with the two-fold object of clearing the country of scattered bands of the enemy, and of preventing Louis Botha from moving west of the Megaliesberg and Pilandsberg. In these operations Paget, in conjunction with the troops in the Rustenburg valley, was successful, Louis Botha's force did not get beyond Ramakok's Kraal (307), just west of the junction of the Apies and Crocodile rivers, though he himself was reported to have accompanied Steyn in his journey south as far as Steenbokfontein (570), about 45 miles west of Rustenburg. Our efforts were then directed towards preventing ex-President Steyn from returning south to rejoin De Wet, but in this we were not successful. He evaded our columns with a small following, and succeeded in joining De Wet, being present, as mentioned later, at the commencement of the engagement near Bothaville on the 6th November.

Paget's force reached Rustenburg on the 31st October, and on the 1st November he had an engagement to the south-west of Magato Pass, when Plumer's mounted troops drove the Boers from two strong positions over some difficult country. The Yorkshire and Warwickshire Yeomanry, under Colonel Howard, carried one position by assault, and the 3rd Imperial Bushmen, under Major Vials, turned another position, which caused the enemy to retreat precipitately. Unfortunately rain had made the roads too heavy for the infantry and heavy guns to arrive in time to take part in the engagement. Our casualties were one man killed and two wounded. The enemy's losses are unknown, but six prisoners were left in our hands.

6. In the Western Transvaal the mobile columns, under Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, performed good work, clearing the country between Rustenburg and Zeerust. Leaving Rustenburg in two columns on the 9th and 10th October, Methuen reached Zeerust on the 20th after a very trying march through broken country covered with dense bush, and having captured on the way a large number of wagons and

prisoners. Delarey was on his flank during the whole march, but refused to fight. On the 16th October Methuen surprised Lemmer, who retired with some casualties, leaving two dead Boers on the ground. Methuen's casualties during this march were six men killed and ten wounded.

7. On the 24th October, Methuen's column from Buffelshoek (284) was joined by Douglas's Brigade from Zeerust and engaged the Boer commandos, about 600 strong, under Lemmer, near Kaffir Kraal (214). These commandos were dispersed, leaving six dead and four wounded on the field, while many wounded Boers were seen to be carried off. The Yeomanry, under Lord Erroll, on this occasion showed great dash, and we succeeded in capturing 28 prisoners, 180,000 rounds of ammunition, 21 wagons with supplies, and a quantity of live stock. Our casualties were six men severely wounded, two slightly, and one man missing.

8. Large as the force appears to be in South Africa, it has proved all too small for the duties it has been required to perform, and I have not found it practicable to occupy in sufficient strength the many places it would have been advantageous to have held. Every garrison thus isolated not only reduces the power and mobility of the several columns in the field, but necessitates the withdrawal of these columns from other important duties to periodically escort convoys of supplies for its use. Lately, however, since it has not been necessary to have such large columns in the field, I have been able to do more in this way, and, on the 26th October, I arranged for the permanent occupation of Zeerust, much to the satisfaction of the majority of the inhabitants of the Marica district, whose sympathies are more British than Dutch. Methuen was accordingly directed to leave at Zeerust four companies of Infantry, 100 mounted men, and two guns, the whole to be securely entrenched and provisioned for 60 days; and to place himself with the remainder of his force (except Douglas's Brigade) west of Ottoshoop to prevent Botha from moving to the west of the Mafeking-Kimberley railway, as there were very persistent rumours that his intention was to invade the Kenhardt district in the hope of obtaining recruits, supplies, and horses from the disloyal inhabitants of Cape Colony. I ordered Douglas's Brigade* to Klerksdorp, partly in view of reoccupying that place, and partly to assist in some operations I had directed Lieut.-General French to undertake in the valley of the Vaal. Douglas marched to Mababstad on the 1st November, and on the 11th he reached Ventersdorp after a 27 miles' march across a waterless desert from Tafelkop, arriving at Klerksdorp on the 16th. After leaving Zeerust, Douglas was frequently engaged. His own casualties were few, while he succeeded in capturing 29 prisoners, 4,700 head of cattle, 11,200 sheep, 90 horses and mules, 133 wagons and carts, and large quantities of supplies.

9. Further to the south and west, in the country extending from Modder River to Vryburg and Schweizer Reneke, the operations were entrusted to Major-General Settle, who left Christiana on the 13th October with 600 mounted men, 10 guns, and 1,350 Infantry. He occupied Bloemhof on the 14th, having captured 1,000 head of cattle, 12,000 sheep, and 80 horses

* Paget's Command.—Plumer's force, 1st Bn. West Riding Regiment, two companies 1st Bn. Royal Munster Fusiliers, two 5-inch guns, City Imperial Volunteers Battery.

† Paget's command.—Plumer's force, the Scots Guards, four companies 1st Bn. Royal Munster Fusiliers, two 5-inch guns, 7th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; section 38th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

* It consisted of Grey's Mounted Brigade (strength—68 Officers, 704 other ranks), two sections 88th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; four pom-poms, head-quarters and two companies 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Northamptonshire Regiment.

belonging to burghers who had violated their oaths of neutrality, and he secured 50 prisoners. On arriving at Hoopstad on the 17th October, I instructed him to co-operate with Hunter by marching on Bothaville. Hunter, who was then near Kopje Alleen, about 14 miles north-west of Ventersburg Road Station, had received information that 1,600 Boers were moving from the south-east on Bothaville, and was following them up with half the 1st Bn. Sussex Regiment and half of the 1st Bn. Cameron Highlanders, of Bruce Hamilton's Brigade, Rimington's and Le Gallais' mounted troops, and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade (Porter's). Hunter reached Bothaville on the 20th October, and sent the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Commando Drift to reconnoitre that crossing of the Vaal and to communicate with Settle.

10. Meanwhile Settle was attacked on the night of the 19th October at Elizabeth's Rust. After a sharp little engagement, lasting 45 minutes, the Boers retreated to the north bank of the Vaal. Our casualties were one Officer and 15 men wounded. On the 21st October, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade met Settle's advanced troops under Colonel Sir Charles Parsons, as neither force had seen anything of the Boers, Settle retraced his steps on the 22nd to Hoopstad, and Hunter reached Kroonstad on the 26th October. On the 23rd October, whilst on his way to Hoopstad, Settle was closely engaged by a Boer force, numbering about 650 men from the commandos under Potgeiters, De Villiers, and Wolmaranstad, which had probably crossed the Vaal from the north. The Cape Police and Cape Mounted Rifles bore the brunt of the fighting, covering the baggage of the column (78 wagons), and were heavily engaged for two hours before the Boers were driven off. The Cape Police were forced to abandon their two Maxims (having first rendered them useless), owing to the horses being shot and darkness setting in. Our casualties were seven men killed, 12 men wounded, and 17 missing. Settle arrived at Boshof on the 30th October, and from there made arrangements to send Sir Charles Parsons to Honeynest Kloof to relieve Koffyfontein, he himself following in support.

11. On the 26th October, Hunter reached Kroonstad and reported that the Boers, with some guns, were in position to the east of the railway between Ventersburg town and the railway station. As it was necessary that this gathering should be dispersed and the whole of that neighbourhood cleared of the enemy to prevent further attack on the railway in that vicinity, I ordered Hunter to sweep the district, using for that purpose Bruce Hamilton's troops and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade.*

In pursuance of these instructions, Hunter, after some opposition, occupied Ventersburg before daylight on the morning of the 30th October. The 3rd Bn. of The Buffs was hotly engaged and behaved with conspicuous steadiness. The enemy retired north, leaving three of their dead on the field. In this engagement, I regret to say, Major Hanwell, Commanding 39th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, was mortally, and 10 men severely wounded.

Having completed the work in this neighbourhood, Hunter proceeded to Bloemfontein and took over Kelly-Kenny's command, and Bruce Hamilton moved with a convoy to Lindley and Frankfort.

* Half Cameron Highlanders, half Sussex Regiment, three 15-pr. guns, Royal Field Artillery; Rimington's Scouts, 120; Imperial Yeomanry, 70; Mounted Infantry, 40. Additional sent by Gen. Knox—3rd Bn. The Buffs, 300; one 5-inch gun.

12. Meanwhile, De Lisle's Mounted Infantry, with the remnant of the Colonial Division, had been watching De Wet in the neighbourhood of Reitzburg, and after three days' fighting had driven him north of the Vaal near Venterskroon, but De Lisle's little column was not strong enough to follow him up, and as it seemed likely that he would make an attempt again to damage the Krugersdorp-Potchefstroom railway, I directed Barton to proceed on the 9th October to the pass over the Gatsrand at Buffelsdoorns (578). Barton reached Banks Station on the 11th, and Wolverdriend on the 13th October, and on the 15th he came in contact with De Wet's force, said to consist of four guns and 1,800 men, all well mounted, every man having two, and some three, horses. A fight took place at Buffelsdoorns, where the Scottish Yeomanry, under Sir James Miller, and the 1st Bn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers, behaved with great gallantry. Six dead Boers were left on the ground, and a large quantity of small-arm ammunition was captured. On the 18th October, Lieut.-Colonel Wools Sampson, with the Imperial Light Horse, joined Barton at Frederikstad, and on the 20th the camp was attacked and an engagement ensued. The 2nd Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers had one Officer and one man killed, and the Imperial Light Horse 12 men wounded.

On the 22nd October, I ordered the 1st Bn. Essex Regiment and some 550 mounted men to join Barton, and the same day instructed Charles Knox, then at Heilbron, to take command of a column consisting of the Colonial Division and De Lisle's and Le Gallais' forces, and to move across the Vaal against the Boers opposed to Barton, who was more or less invested at Frederikstad until the 25th October, when he attacked the enemy with half the 1st Bn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers and three companies of the 2nd Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers, supported by his guns and mounted troops, and scattered them in all directions. The Boers suffered heavily, leaving 24 dead and 19 wounded on the ground, while 26 were taken prisoners. Our own casualties were severe, one Officer and 12 men killed, and 25 men wounded. On the 28th October, Barton moved to Potchefstroom and established a permanent garrison there with three months' supplies.

13. De Wet, notwithstanding the severe treatment met with on the 25th October, endeavoured to recross the Vaal, but finding the drifts blocked, he moved along the north bank of the river in the direction of Lindeque, Charles Knox pushing on rapidly from Potchefstroom, caught him at Rensburg Drift halfway between Venterskroon and Parys. The Boers tried to escape south-east, but being headed by Le Gallais' mounted troops, which Knox had sent from Venterskroon towards Vredesfort, they made for Parys. They lost considerably in this engagement leaving behind seven killed, while nine prisoners, two guns, and three wagons were captured, and an ammunition wagon was blown up by a shot from "U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery. Darkness and a heavy storm stopped pursuit. Our only casualties were two men wounded. De Lisle handled his troops with great skill over very difficult country, and Le Gallais' ready co-operation merits much praise.

14. On the 3rd November Le Gallais was again in touch with De Wet's scouts east of Bothaville, and on the night of the 5th surprised the Boer force three miles south of that place, and was heavily engaged for five hours when he was reinforced by Charles Knox with De Lisle's Mounted Infantry. The enemy was completely defeated. This was a most successful engagement, reflecting great credit on Major-General

Charles Knox and all serving with him, especially on the Australian and other mounted troops under Colonel Le Gallais and Lieut.-Colonel De Lisle, who must have felt themselves amply rewarded for the perseverance and energy they had displayed during the preceding weeks which had been most harassing for all concerned. One 12-pr. of "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, and one 15-pr. of the 14th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, were recaptured. Four Krupp guns, one pom-pom, one Maxim, all the enemy's ammunition and wagons, and 100 prisoners were taken, and 25 dead and 30 wounded Boers were left on the field. Amongst the wounded was De Villiers, Steyn's secretary, and amongst the dead a Boer doctor, with the red cross on his arm, a rifle in his hand, and a bandolier half emptied. Ex-President Steyn and De Wet were both present at the beginning of the engagement, but made a hurried retreat early in the day. Our casualties were three Officers and seven men killed, and seven Officers and 27 men wounded.

Amongst the killed, I deeply regret to say, was Colonel Le Gallais, 8th Hussars, a most gallant and capable leader, whose place it will be very difficult to fill; and amongst the wounded Lieut.-Colonel W. Ross, Durham Light Infantry, who had done extremely good work throughout the campaign with the Mounted Infantry.

The advanced troops of Charles Knox's column under De Lisle reached Kroonstad on the 8th November to refit and obtain supplies, and were followed in the course of a day or two by the rest of the force.

15. From information which had reached me from various sources, I had for some time been aware that there was likely to be a recrudescence of Boer activity in the southern part of the Orange River Colony. Their stock of ammunition was running short, their numbers were considerably reduced, supplies were not over plentiful, and they hoped that if they could only show themselves south of the Orange River, they would be able to induce many of the disloyal inhabitants of Cape Colony to join their ranks and also replenish their stores.

The news that the Boers intended to move to the south caused a general feeling of unrest throughout Cape Colony, and the prisoners of war at Cape Town were firmly convinced that the time of their captivity was drawing to an end.

16. Up to the middle of October, Steyn and De Wet had been loath to leave the valley of the Vaal, trusting that some fortunate combination of circumstances would admit of their acting in communication with Botha and Delarey, and making a successful attack on Johannesburg or Pretoria.

The decisive victory of Charles Knox crushed these hopes; so soon as they could collect their scattered forces, they hurried south to join Harsbruk and Hertzog, who had already given us considerable trouble on the line of railway between Bloemfontein and the Orange River, and amongst the small towns lying to the west of that line.

17. So many troops had been required for the extended operations in the Transvaal that the southern part of the Orange River Colony had to be very lightly held, and it was not easy, on account of the great distances to be traversed, to increase the strength of Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny's command on short notice. As mentioned, however, in my last despatch, the Highland Brigade had already been sent to Bloemfontein on receipt of the news that Wepener had been temporarily occupied by the Boers, and was followed by a few companies of Volunteers which had been withdrawn from their battalions

in the hope that it would be possible to let them return to England at an early date.

On the 27th and 29th October, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade left Kroonstad for the south, and at the same time the 3rd Bn. Grenadier Guards were despatched from Pretoria, and the 1st Bn. Coldstream Guards from Heidelberg, followed on the 7th November by the 1st Bn. Scots Guards.

18. Meanwhile Kelly-Kenny had recalled Lieut.-Colonel White's column* from the Smithfield direction, and formed a second column,† under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Barker, R.A.

Before, however, these troops could be available the south-west of the Orange River Colony became the scene of renewed hostilities. Jagersfontein was attacked by the Boers on the 16th October. The garrison was under the command of Major King-Hall, and consisted of two companies of the 2nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders, two guns, and 100 Town Guard and Police. This force was divided into two parties, one holding two forts to the south of the town, the other a range of kopjes to the north, with a reserve in the town. At daybreak the Boers opened fire from the north-east of the town, and almost simultaneously the reserves in the town were subjected to a heavy fire from the houses. About 25 Boers under cover of the night, and aided by the treachery of the inhabitants, had managed to evade the picquets and gain entrance to the town, and at daylight, reinforced by sympathisers, both men and women, were in position to open fire in perfect security from the houses. The garrison, under these trying circumstances, were ably handled and behaved very well. After two hours' fighting they drove the Boers from the town and its vicinity, but not, unfortunately, until they had succeeded in releasing the prisoners confined in the gaol. The Boer loss was heavy, including Commandant Visser and about 27 men being killed. Our casualties were nine men killed, and one Officer and 11 men wounded.

19. Fauresmith, in the same neighbourhood, was attacked on the 19th October. The garrison was under the command of Captain Stewart, 2nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders, and consisting of one Officer and 20 men of the 30th Company, Imperial Yeomanry, a company of the 2nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders (117 strong), and a small Town Guard composed of 17 civilians. The configuration of the ground made the place not an easy one to hold against the enemy, but a satisfactory scheme of defence was arranged by holding the large and very rough kopje to the south-east of the town with the Seaforth Highlanders, the Imperial Yeomanry being placed on a low ridge on the northern side, and the Town Guard occupying two houses to the west of the town. About 4.15 a.m. a determined assault on the defences was made by some 400 Boers, who first pushed forward against the kopje held by the Seaforths, where some of the enemy were killed within 10 yards of the picquets. By 6.30 a.m. the Seaforths had cleared this kopje, and by 8.30 a.m. the enemy had been repulsed on all sides, and had retired in a southerly direction. Our casualties were three men killed, and an Officer and 5 men wounded.

20. Between the 18th and 24th October, Phillipolis was almost daily attacked by the Boers, and gallantly defended by the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Gostling, who had organized a

* Two Field guns, one pom-pom, four companies of Yeomanry, two companies Royal Irish Rifles.

† Two Field guns, one pom-pom, two companies Irish Yeomanry, one company Mounted Infantry, two companies Seaforth Highlanders.

small local force consisting of 18 British residents and 11 police. This force was skilfully entrenched on a kopje having access to a spring. The first attack on the 18th was made by about 60 Boers, who kept up a heavy fire for 8 hours before they drew off. The same party resumed the attack on the 21st October and kept it up the whole day. On the following day the Boers were reinforced by a commando about 600 strong, under Commandant Schippers. Mr. Gostling's small garrison augmented to 41 by the enrolment of a few Afrikanders, continued the fight against these heavy odds during the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th October, being subjected the whole time to a heavy fire from all quarters.

On hearing of the investment of Phillipolis the Commandant of Colesberg despatched, at 11 p.m. on the 20th October, Lieutenant Hauna and 34 men of Nesbitt's Horse, with instructions to relieve the beleaguered garrison. Lieutenant Hanna reached Phillipolis on the 21st and posted picquets guarding the waterworks and covering the road from Springfontein, but he was ignorant of the overwhelming number of the enemy in the neighbourhood. Early on the 22nd his picquets were heavily attacked and forced to surrender, but Lieutenant Hanna himself and six men succeeded in joining the defending force. In the meantime arrangements were made by Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny for the despatch of two columns to relieve Phillipolis, Lieut.-Colonel White's column moving from Bethulie, and Lieut.-Colonel Barker's from Jagersfontein.

Lieut.-Colonel White's column moved from Bethulie to Prior's Siding, where they arrived early on the 24th October, the Infantry and supplies by rail, and the mounted troops and transport wagons by road. Without any delay the force started at 10 a.m., and reached Ofontein, 8 miles east of Phillipolis about 5 p.m., after a march of 16 miles through a very difficult and rough country. The gun and transport teams were much exhausted. At Ofontein the sound of Lieut.-Colonel Barker's guns were audible, so Lieut.-Colonel White sent forward the Yeomanry under Lieut.-Colonel Wentworth-Forbes. This force, which had left Bethulie at 6.30 p.m. on the 23rd October, reached Phillipolis at 6.15 p.m. on the 24th, a remarkable performance as the horses thus covered 50 miles in 26 hours. Lieut.-Colonel Forbes found the actual town in occupation of the enemy who retired on his approach. Meanwhile, Lieut.-Colonel Barker left Jagersfontein with his column at 5.15 a.m. on the 24th October, and arrived, without opposition, about 2 miles north of Phillipolis about 5 p.m.; he succeeded in dislodging the enemy, and the town was entered by the combined forces the following morning. The casualties amongst the garrison and Nesbitt's Horse amounted to three men killed and 12 men wounded. There were no casualties in the relieving columns.

21. Again, at Jacobsdal, on the 25th October, the treacherous part played by some of the inhabitants in admitting the Boers into their houses during the night led to the temporary occupation of that town. The Boers opened fire at daybreak on the garrison, and 14 men were killed and 13 wounded, nearly all belonging to the Cape Town Highlanders and Cape Artillery. On the news reaching the Modder River post, troops were at once detached to Jacobsdal and drove the Boers off. The houses of the treacherous inhabitants were destroyed; in three of them were found large stores of soft-nosed bullets. In this engagement the Boer Commandant Bosman was killed.

22. On the 26th October, Koffyfontein, an

important mining centre, was attacked and gallantly defended by Captain Robertson,* who had organized a defence chiefly from town guards of British mining people and the police. Sir Charles Parsons from Honeynest Kloof, with Settle's mounted troops, relieved the town, on the 3rd November, without opposition.

23. Anticipating that more mounted troops would be required in the Orange River Colony, and anxious that our Cavalry should not be exposed longer than necessary to the horse sickness, which usually rages in the eastern parts of the Transvaal in the summer months, I had issued orders, at the end of September, for Lieut.-General French to make the command at Barberton over to Major-General Stephenson, and to proceed himself with all available troops *via* Carolina, Ermelo, and Bethel to Heidelberg. French accordingly left Barberton on the 2nd and 3rd October for Machadodorp, where he remained until the 13th, when he moved off in the direction of Carolina, having started off Mahon's Brigade the day before.

By the evening of the same day French had crossed the Komati River, and occupied the high ground six miles north of Carolina. Mahon, who had been specially charged to direct his march so as to guard the right flank of the division, became heavily engaged near Geluk (143) with a body of 1,100 men (including the Carolina and Ermelo commandos) with four guns. Although hardly pressed, Mahon succeeded in holding his own until French came to his assistance, when the Boers were driven back in three bodies in a south-easterly direction, having sustained some loss.

Marching by moonlight, on the early morning of the 14th, French occupied Carolina without opposition, the Carabiniers capturing a convoy of the enemy on the way.

24. French left Carolina on the 16th October, and, moving by Ermelo, reached Bethel on the 20th October. The enemy offered a stubborn resistance throughout the march, at times attacking the column from all sides. They were especially bold round Ermelo, but the opposition diminished as our troops approached Bethel. The Ermelo, Standerton, Bethel, and part of the Middelburg commandos were engaged in these operations. Heidelberg was reached on the 26th October.

All the Cavalry regiments in turn, and on different occasions, got to close quarters with the Boers during this march, and it is beyond doubt that the latter suffered heavily from our shell and pom-pom fire. Over 60 prisoners fell into French's hands, and throughout the march very large quantities of cattle, forage, and ammunition were captured.

French reported that it had been established on reliable authority that the Boers, in many cases, fought in our uniforms, and that armed Kaffirs were to be seen in their ranks, while on occasions our wounded were killed by the enemy. Our casualties between the 13th and 26th

* Assistant Resident Magistrate, and late of the Kimberley Light Horse.

† French's force consisted of—

Gordon's Brigade—The Carabiniers, Royal Scots Greys, Inniskilling Dragoons, "T" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; and section Field Troop, Royal Engineers.

Mahon's Brigade—8th Hussars, 14th Hussars, "M" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; and section Field Troop, Royal Engineers.

Dickson's Brigade—7th Dragoon Guards, Lumaden's Horse, Imperial Guides, "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; and section Field Troop, Royal Engineers.

Infantry—half 1st Bn. Suffolk Regiment.

October were: killed, four Officers and 18 men; wounded, seven Officers and 67 men; missing, one man.

On the 30th October, French left Heidelberg for Pretoria, moving *via* Springs.

25. The departure of French's troops encouraged the enemy to again threaten the railway between Belfast and Machadodorp, and towards the end of October a considerable number of them were reported to be south of Van Wyk's Vlei (96), consequently Major-General Smith-Dorrien, Commanding at Belfast, started off on the evening of the 1st November with the object of attacking the Boers at Van Wyk's Vlei and at Witkloof, where a second laager was reported. Smith-Dorrien's force moved in two columns, one commanded by himself, the other by Lieut.-Colonel Spens, The King's Shropshire Light Infantry. Not far from Belfast a violent storm with a cold driving rain set in, but as the columns were operating in support of each other, and moving several miles apart neither could turn back. By 7 a.m. both columns had reached Van Wyk's Vlei, and there, owing to the continued inclemency of the weather and exhaustion of the troops, Smith-Dorrien wisely decided to abandon the attack on Witkloof, and to retrace his steps to Belfast. As soon as the retirement was begun the Boers followed up the column with most unusual boldness, in fact one Boer was killed within 50 yards of our Infantry. A steady rearguard action had to be fought the whole way back to Belfast, which was reached at 3 p.m. The Infantry had covered 28 miles in 20 hours under the most trying conditions. Our casualties were: killed, one Officer and one man; wounded, two Officers and 12 men; missing, one man.

26. On the 6th November, Smith-Dorrien decided to make another attempt to carry out his original project. Leaving Belfast at 3.30 a.m., he marched towards Witkloof and Lelienfontein, at both of which places the Boers were known to have camps. By 7.40 a.m., he was in touch with the Boers at Eersteling, and steadily forced them back across Van Wyk's Vlei. The enemy then took up a strong position along the Komati River, extending from Witkloof to Lelienfontein. Here they made a determined stand, and it was not till 4 p.m. that a wide turning movement brought the 1st Bn. Suffolk Regiment and the Royal Canadian Dragoons on the Boers' flank and forced them to withdraw across the river towards Carolina. Smith-Dorrien camped for the night at Lelienfontein. His casualties for this day were six men killed and 20 wounded, mostly belonging to the Shropshire Light Infantry, whose conduct was much praised.

27. On the following day Smith-Dorrien started to march in an easterly direction. Observing this, several hundred Boers at once galloped back to seize their position of the previous day, but were forestalled by Lieut.-Colonel Evans and the Royal Canadian Dragoons, with a section of the 84th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, who by going at full speed for two miles succeeded in seizing the key of the position, and in holding about 300 of the enemy in the bed of the river, while the 5-inch guns did good execution among masses of the Boers in the open. As it now became evident that the enemy had received large reinforcements after the engagement of the previous day, Smith-Dorrien directed Lieut.-Colonel Spens, Commanding the Advanced Guard, to secure the high ground near Van Wyk's Vlei, which was done by the 5th Lancers. Colonel Lessard, with the Royal Canadian Dragoons and a section

of the Royal Canadian Artillery, under Lieutenant Morrison, with great gallantry covered the rear of the force against the enemy's close attack. About 2 p.m. some 200 Boers suddenly charged our rearguard, and, without dismounting, fired wildly, coming to within 70 yards of the dismounted Dragoons. Not succeeding in this attempt on our rear-guard, the Boers then threatened us on both flanks in large numbers; our guns, however, were so ably handled that they prevented their coming to close quarters and caused them to retire. Our casualties in this engagement were two killed and 12 wounded. The Boers suffered very heavy losses, amongst the killed being Commandant H. Prinsloo and General Fourie, and amongst the wounded General John Grobelaar. Smith-Dorrien halted for the night at Blyvooruitzicht, and returned to Belfast on the morning of the 8th of November.

28. On the 31st October, Major-General Walter Kitchener, Commanding at Lydenburg, moved out columns from that place and from Witklip (26) and after capturing Commandant Shoeman's laager in the Steenkampsberg at dawn, pushed on and shelled Schalk Burgher's laager at Rooikrantz. The difficult nature of the country, however, made further advance in that direction impracticable, and the columns returned to Lydenburg. Our casualties were five men wounded. The enemy is known to have had five men killed, and some rifles and a quantity of ammunition, with one prisoner, fell into our hands. Kitchener, hearing that Van de Beer's commando operating to the east of Lydenburg had been reinforced, decided to disperse this body of the enemy. On the night of the 7th November, he proceeded against it with a mounted column under Captain Chetwode, 19th Hussars, which succeeded in passing through the Boer outposts. Then, while the Mounted Infantry of the 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment engaged three of the picquets, the Cavalry charged and sabred many of the enemy as they fled in the moonlight.

Kitchener specially mentions the excellent manner in which the Mounted Infantry engaged the Boers, who opened fire upon the Hussars from no less than three directions while they were charging over exceedingly difficult ground.

At daylight on the 8th November the second column, consisting of Infantry and Artillery, under Major Callwell, Royal Garrison Artillery, joined the mounted troops. The whole force then continued the pursuit, and drove the enemy from ridge to ridge, until the summit of the Berg was reached. Our casualties were only one man killed and two wounded. The Boers lost heavily and fled, evidently panic-stricken.

29. While these various movements were being carried out in the Transvaal, Lieut.-General Sir Leslie Rundle was busy in the north-east corner of the Orange River Colony, and, on the 12th October, he moved from Vrede with 300 mounted men, five guns, and two battalions of Infantry, and engaged a small force of the enemy which had collected in that neighbourhood. He drove them back for about 10 miles, with a loss to us of seven wounded.

30. Leaving 100 Imperial Yeomanry, a section of Artillery, and the 1st Bn. Leinster Regiment to hold Vrede, Rundle moved on to Reitz, arriving there on the 19th October. Placing a garrison at Reitz of similar strength to that left at Vrede, he, on the 20th October, proceeded to Bethlehem, which he entered the next day. On our approach Bethlehem was evacuated by the Boers who, under Commandant Prinsloo, had re-occupied the town on the 1st October; our

sick and wounded who had been left there had not been in any way disturbed. On the afternoon of the 24th October, Rundle, in an interview he had with Prinsloo and some other representatives of the Bethlehem commando, told them of ex-President Kruger's flight, and generally explained the situation. Commandant Prinsloo, however, decided that hostilities must go on, and that he was bound to do his part in maintaining the struggle.

31. Rundle left the 1st Bn. Worcestershire Regiment, a section of the 79th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, and the 62nd (Middlesex) Company, Imperial Yeomanry, under Lieut.-Colonel Bakes of the Worcestershire Regiment, to garrison Bethlehem, and on the 26th October he marched with the rest of his force on Harrismith.

About three miles out of Bethlehem, Rundle found the Boers strongly posted across the road, and on both flanks; an engagement ensued, and it was only after fighting all day that Lieut.-Colonel Golightly, with the Hampshire and Gloucestershire Companies of Imperial Yeomanry, and two companies of the Grenadier Guards, succeeded in driving the enemy from the kopjes they were holding to the north of the road. As soon as this was accomplished, Major-General Campbell, with half a battalion of the Grenadier Guards and half a battalion of the Scots Guards, covered by the fire of our guns, attacked the very strong position held by the enemy to the south of the road. The attack eventually proved successful in spite of a very stubborn resistance by the Boers. Our casualties were three killed and 17 wounded.

Harrismith was reached on the 30th October, and, with this place as his head-quarters, Rundle has been doing good work clearing the district with a small mobile column, and at the same time provisioning the garrisons of Vrede, Reitz, and Bethlehem.

32. From this, my final despatch, I have been obliged, on account of its great length, most reluctantly to omit many interesting incidents, and to leave unrecorded many gallant deeds. As it is, I feel an apology is due for the almost inordinate proportions which this, as well as my former despatches, have assumed, owing to the vastness of the country over which operations had to be carried out, the length of time to which they have extended, and consequently the great number of events, going on in different places simultaneously, which have had to be described.

33. The magnitude of the task which Her Majesty's Imperial troops have been called upon to perform will perhaps be better realised if I give the actual number of miles of the several lines of communication, each one of which has had to be carefully guarded, and compare with the well-known countries of Europe, the enormous extent of the theatre of war from one end of which to the other troops have had to be frequently moved.

The areas included in the theatre of war are as follows:—

	Square miles.
Cape Colony ..	277,151
Orange River Colony ..	48,326
Transvaal ..	113,640
Natal ..	18,913
Total ..	458,030
Rhodesia..	750,000

And the distances troops have had to travel are:—

By land—

	Miles.
Cape Town to Pretoria ..	1,040
Pretoria to Komati Poort	260
Cape Town to Kimberley	647
Kimberley to Mafeking ..	223
Mafeking to Pretoria ..	160
Mafeking to Beira..	1,135
Durban to Pretoria ..	511

From these tables it will be seen that, after having been brought by sea 6,000 miles and more from their base in the United Kingdom, the Army in South Africa had to be distributed over an area of greater extent than France (204,146 square miles) and Germany (211,168 square miles) put together, and if we include that part of Rhodesia with which we had to do, larger than the combined areas of France, Germany and Austria (261,649 square miles).

And it should be remembered that over these great distances we were dependent on single lines of railway for the food-supply, guns, ammunition, horses, transport animals, and hospital equipment, in fact, all the requirements of an army in the field, and that, along these lines, bridges and culverts had been destroyed in many places, and rails were being constantly torn up.

35. As stated in my Farewell Order*, "the service which the South African Force has performed is, I venture to think, unique in the annals of war, inasmuch as it has been absolutely incessant for a whole year, in some cases more than a year. There has been no rest, no days off to recruit, no going into winter quarters as in other campaigns which have extended over a long period." In illustration of this I may mention that Lord Methuen's column marched 1,036 miles between the 14th May and the 2nd September, covering, on one occasion, 125 miles in 115 hours. The 2nd Cavalry Brigade (Broadwood's) marched 1,200 miles between the 29th April and the 28th August. The City Imperial Volunteers marched on 75 days, between the 16th April and the 23rd August, the total distance traversed being 1,018 miles, and the average length of march 13½ miles. The Brigade of Guards at the commencement of the war formed part of Methuen's force destined for the relief of Kimberley. In February it joined the Head-quarters of the Army and took part in the march to Bloemfontein and Pretoria. In September, it was at Komati Poort, and now, November 1900, it is guarding the drifts over the Orange River, close to where it was a year previously; having meanwhile marched from the most western part of the Orange River Colony to the most eastern part of the Transvaal.

The Imperial Light Horse, the Border Regiment, the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the Connaught Rangers, and the Brigade Division of Artillery attached to Hart's command, after taking part in all Sir Redvers Buller's battles on the Tugela and the relief of Ladysmith, were brought round to Kimberley to aid in the relief of Mafeking. Since then they have been over the greater part of the Transvaal, and part of them (the Connaught Rangers) are now on the Orange River engaged in frustrating the Boers in their attempt to invade Cape Colony.

36. These instances, out of many which might be brought forward, show how severely the troops have been taxed, and how admirably they have responded to the call made upon them. Nor has their discipline, or their conduct when engaged with the enemy, been less praiseworthy

than their feats of marching. The Army in South Africa has included many branches of Her Majesty's Service: the contingent furnished by the Royal Navy, the Regular Forces, with the Volunteer companies of the Infantry battalions, the Militia, the Imperial Yeomanry, the City of London Imperial Volunteers, and the Colonial corps raised in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, South Africa, India, and Ceylon. No finer force than that which I have had the honour and privilege to command has ever taken the field under the British flag, and I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to record my acknowledgments to Her Majesty's soldiers of all ranks, whether drawn from the United Kingdom or from the great Colonies and Dependencies of the Empire, whose exertions and fighting qualities

have enabled me to bring this long and arduous campaign to what I hope will ere long prove a successful conclusion.

37. As the strength of the troops engaged at the occupation of Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and also in the final advance of the Army towards Komati Poort, is not shown in my former despatches, I annex statements giving this information, which I think may prove useful and interesting.

38. My recommendations on behalf of individual Officers and men will be submitted in a separate letter.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief.

Strength of the force which entered Bloemfontein, 13th March 1900. This return omits Officers and men of the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Naval Brigade, Staff, Army Service Corps, Transport and Medical Departments.

Brigade, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers and men.	Horses.	Guns.								
				9-45-inch howitzers.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7-inch guns.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	Pompons.	Machine Guns.
1st Cavalry Brigade..	61	999	935	..	..	..	..	..	18	..	..	2
2nd " ..	68	965	971	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	1
3rd " ..	45	770	684	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	3
Alderson's Mounted Infantry	80	1,114	1,220	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Le Gallais' "	95	1,816	1,480	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Martyr's "	66	1,414	1,441	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ridley's "	47	955	878	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6th Division ..	120	5,071	..	..	..	..	6	..	18	..	..	5
7th " ..	157	5,811	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	..	3	8
9th " ..	122	4,564	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	..	..	8
Guards Brigade ..	86	3,200	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Naval and Corps Artillery ..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	4	..	3	..	..
	947	26,679	7,609	..	4	..	6	4	96	3	3	36
				113								

Strength of the force which entered Pretoria, 5th June, 1900. This return omits Officers and men of Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Naval Brigade, Staff, Army Service Corps, Transport and Medical Departments.

Brigade, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	Guns.								
				9-45-inch howitzers.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7-inch guns.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	Pomoms.	Machine guns.
1st Cavalry Brigade ..	60	550	550	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	2	4
2nd " ..	60	660	600	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	2	3
3rd " ..	60	1,040	400	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	2	5
4th " ..	50	350	350	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	1	3
Mounted Infantry Division..	299	4,242	3,743	..	..	2	..	..	24	..	6	20
Yeomanry	24	391	338	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
11th Division.. ..	199	6,353	107	..	..	2	..	..	18	..	..	8
14th Brigade.. ..	87	2,599	67	..	..	..	..	..	18	..	..	7
21st " ..	100	3,160	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	4
19th , ..	136	4,330	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	4
Corps Artillery ..	..	..	..	2	4	..	..	2	6	2	..	..
	1,075	23,675	6,155	2	4	4	..	2	102	2	15	60
				116								

Strength of the forces which took part in the final advance of the Army towards Komati Poort at end of August 1900. (Officers, men of Staff, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and Departmental Corps, omitted.)

Arm.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	Guns,								
				9-45-inch howitzers.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7-inch guns.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	Pompons.	Machine guns.

General Buller's Column.

Cavalry	39	750	750	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Colonial and Mounted Infantry.	52	1,050	1,050	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	2	6	2	24	4	4	..
Infantry	160	6,600	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
	251	7,800	1,800	..	..	2	6	2	24	4	4	14

General French's Column.

Cavalry	120	2,110	1,690	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	4	..
Infantry	40	1,560	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	160	3,670	1,690	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	4	8

General Pole-Carew's Column.

Mounted Infantry	50	900	900	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Naval and other Artillery ..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	18	..	2	..
Infantry	160	6,400	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
	210	7,300	900	..	..	2	..	2	18	..	2	12

General Ian Hamilton's Column.

Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	10	..	2	..
Infantry	60	2,300	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Mounted Infantry	10	80	80	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	70	2,380	80	..	..	2	..	..	10	..	2	3

Total Strength.

Cavalry	159	2,860	2,440	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Colonial and Regular Mounted Infantry	112	2,080	2,080	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	6	6	4	62	4	12	..
Infantry	420	16,260	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
	691	21,150	4,470	..	..	6	6	4	62	4	12	37

Fighting strength of other forces at the time of the occupation of Pretoria on 5th June 1900.
(Officers and men of Staff, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Naval Brigade and Departmental Corps;
omitted.)

Force, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	Guns.											
				6-inch guns.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7 inch naval.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	12½ pr.	7-pr.	2½-inch guns.	Pompons.	Machine guns.

General Hunter's Force (Lichtenberg District).

Colonial mounted corps	52	777	976	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Yeomanry	31	562	627	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Artillery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24	..	..	..	..	4	..
5th Brigade	81	2,954	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
6th "	97	2,275	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
	261	7,268	1,603	..	..	..	..	..	24	..	..	..	..	4	16

General Baden-Powell's Force (Mafeking—Rustenburg road).

Colonial mounted troops	50	1,200	1,200	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Colonial Artillery ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	1	1	2	..	..
	50	1,200	1,200	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	1	1	2	..	5

Lord Methuen's Force (Paardekraal).

Yeomanry	97	1,665	1,600	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	16	..	..	..	..	2	11
Infantry	144	5,483	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	241	7,148	1,600	..	..	2	..	..	16	..	..	..	..	2	11

General Colville's Force (Heilbron).

Colonial mounted troops	8	183	177	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Naval and Field Artillery	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Infantry	88	3,327	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
	96	3,510	177	..	..	..	2	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	4

General Clements' Force (Senekal).

Mounted Infantry ..	3	61	66	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..
Infantry	54	2,549	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
	57	2,610	66	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	4

Force, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	6-inch guns.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7-inch naval.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -pr.	7-pr.	2-5-inch guns.	Pompoms.	Machine guns.
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Generals Rundle and Brabant's Forces (Hammonia, Ficksburg, &c.).

Colonial Division	102	1,297	1,424	7	4
Yeomanry	23	316	339		1
Artillery				18	
Infantry	135	4,822			6
	260	6,435	1,763	25	10

Summary.

Mounted troops	366	6,061	6,409										17
Artillery						2	2	83		1	1	2	6
Infantry	599	22,110											83
	965	28,171	6,409			2	2	83		1	1	2	50

Fighting strengths of communications, &c., forces on the occupation of Pretoria on 5th June 1900. (Officers and men of Staff, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Naval Brigade, and Departmental Corps, omitted.)

Forces, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers and men.	Horses.	6-inch guns.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4-7-inch naval.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	12½-pr.	2-6-inch guns.	Pompons.	Machine guns.
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Communications, Pretoria to Kroonstadt, inclusive of latter.

Mounted Infantry	40	1,076	909	1
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	4
Infantry and details. . . .	181	4,304	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	171	5,380	909	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	5

Johannesburg Garrison.

[illegible]

Force, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	Guns.									
				8-inch guns.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4·7-inch naval.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	12½-pr.	2·5-inch guns.	Pompons.	Machine guns.

Communications, Kroonstadt to Bloemfontein (exclusive of both).

Yeomanry	7	182	192	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mounted Infantry ..	11	345	360	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	6	..	2	..
Infantry and details ..	75	2,583	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	93	3,110	552	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	6	..	2	2

Winburg Garrison.

Yeomanry	5	120	120	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..
Infantry and details ..	20	1,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	25	1,120	120	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	1

Bloemfontein Garrison and Outposts.

Yeomanry and Mounted Infantry	15	260	260	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	1	4	..	18	2	17	..	..	..	..	..
Infantry and details ..	110	4,380	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
	125	4,590	260	1	4	..	18	2	17	..	..	..	..	3

Communications, Ladybrand to Thabanchu District, &c.

Colonial Mounted Infantry	50	800	500	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Yeomanry	25	600	500	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Infantry	20	800	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	95	2,200	1,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7

Communications, Bloemfontein to Orange River.

Mounted Infantry ..	10	250	250	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Infantry	84	2,541	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	94	2,791	250	..	..	..	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	..

Force, &c.	Officers.	Warrant, non-commissioned officers, and men.	Horses.	Guns.							
				6-inch guns.	6-inch howitzers.	5-inch guns.	5-inch howitzers.	4.7-inch naval.	15-pr. and 12-pr.	12-pr. naval.	12½-pr.

Eastern Garrisons, Dewetsdorp, Wepener, and Smithfield.

Yeomanry	10	120	125	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mounted Infantry	5	135	143	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..
Infantry	30	1,765	268	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	45	1,820	268	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	1

Western Garrisons, Jagersfontein, Hoopstad, and Boshof.

Yeomanry	4	180	180	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Infantry and details	40	1,119	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
	44	1,299	180	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..

Summary.

Mounted troops	189	4,248	3,719	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Artillery .. ..	..	..	..	1	4	4	18	2	39	..	6	2
Infantry and details	570	20,146	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
	759	24,894	3,719	1	4	4	18	2	39	..	6	2

No. 10.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Government House, Bloemfontein,

MY LORD, 12th April, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your Lordship's information, a despatch, dated 6th April, 1900, from Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, describing an engagement which took place the preceding day near Tweefontein, 5 miles south of Boshof, and which resulted in the surrender of the Boer force after its Commander, Colonel de Villebois, had been killed by a shell.

2. That the affair was comparatively a small one does not detract from the credit due to Lord Methuen for his promptness in following up and surrounding the enemy, and for the careful dispositions which he made for attacking them. The troops seemed to have behaved admirably, and it is satisfactory to notice that the Imperial Yeomanry rendered valuable service on this occasion.

3. I concur with the General Officer Commanding in his favourable mention of Brigadier-General Lord Chesham, Lieutenant-Colonel Peakman, and Major Butcher.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

No. 27282.

H

From Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, Commanding 1st Division, to the Military Secretary, Head-quarters, Bloemfontein.

Boshof,

SIR, 6th April, 1900.

NEWS arrived at 10.30 A.M. yesterday that a Boer commando, 300 strong, had passed through Tweefontein, south of Boshof, and about 5 miles off. They had again saddled up and made for a ridge about 2½ miles north of Tweefontein, and again off-saddled. This commando was there at 9 A.M. when the natives left.

2. My horses were grazing when the information came, and some distance away.

I ordered the Imperial Yeomanry, 500 strong, under Brigadier-General Lord Chesham, the Kimberley Mounted Corps, 250 strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Peakman, and the 4th Field Artillery Battery under Major Butcher, to saddle up at once.

3. At 11.50 A.M. the force marched, the Kimberley Mounted Corps under Lieutenant-Colonel Peakman leading, and followed by the Imperial Yeomanry under Brigadier-General Lord Chesham. No. 4 Battery under Major Butcher, with one company of Imperial Yeomanry as escort, brought up the rear.

4. The natives, who knew the position of the enemy, led the column in a south-south-easterly direction, keeping the column concealed until it reached a knoll, when the position was reconnoitred, but with no result.

5. A native stated that they still occupied a kopje 2,500 yards in front.

6. The Kimberley Mounted Corps pushed on to the right flank and front, followed by the Imperial Yeomanry and the battery. One company of the Imperial Yeomanry moved to the left front with the object of cutting off the enemy should they attempt to escape in that direction.

7. Two Colonial scouts attached to the Imperial Yeomanry brought back the first reliable information regarding the enemy's position. The column reached some small kopjes in front, and a few of the enemy were located occupying some low kopjes about 1,200 yards distant. Firing now commenced.

8. The position taken up by the enemy was composed of a few small low kopjes in the centre of a large flat plain.

9. I completely surrounded the kopjes before I took any further action.

10. The guns were kept under shelter, having no target.

11. I ordered the Imperial Yeomanry and the Kimberley Mounted Corps to attack the kopje from the east, supporting the attack from the south-east and north.

The order was intelligently carried out, care being taken to advance very slowly, taking all advantage of the fine cover given by the bushes and boulders.

12. The enemy made a fine resistance from 2 P.M. to nearly 6 P.M., not surrendering until our troops, with bayonets fixed, were 15 yards from them. They sent to my Aide-de-Camp to say they intended to fight to the end, and they only changed their minds when General Villebois de Mareuil was killed by a shell.

13. The guns found difficulty in firing without endangering our men's lives, but at last the battery, firing three shells, helped materially towards closing the defence.

14. The enemy had 7 killed, 11 wounded, and 51 prisoners. I regret the loss of Lieutenant C. Boyle, Imperial Yeomanry, and of Lieutenant A. C. Williams, Imperial Yeomanry; 10 men wounded.

15. Lieutenant A. C. Williams was killed deliberately, after the white flag was held up. The man who fired was at once shot by my order.

16. This was the first time the Imperial Yeomanry and the Kimberley Mounted Corps have been engaged with the enemy, and I was much struck by the intelligent manner in which they carried out the attack, and made use of cover. Had they not done so, the list of casualties would have been far greater.

17. I draw attention to the careful manner in which Brigadier-General Lord Chesham, Lieutenant-Colonel Peakman, and Major Butcher executed my orders.

I am, &c.,

METHUEN,

Lieutenant-General,

Commanding 1st Division.

No. 11.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters,

Camp Smaldeel,

South Africa,

8th May, 1900.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's information a report, dated 29th April, 1900, from Lieutenant-Colonel E. H. Dalgety, Commanding Cape Mounted Rifles, describing

the operations in the vicinity of Wepener, between 2nd April and 25th April, during which period the force under his command, numbering some 1,600 men with six guns, two 15-prs., two 12-prs. Naval, two 7-prs., and one Hotchkiss, was attacked by a Boer force estimated at about 6,000 men with 10 guns.

2. The report is somewhat incomplete, and to render it more intelligible I may mention that Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety's force entered Wepener on 4th April from the south. The Caledon River runs from the north-east to the south-west, about 3 miles west of the town; the Zammersberg bridge, 200 yards in length, crossing the river nearly west of Wepener. The enemy advanced from the north and occupied the town, another Boer commando also advancing from the direction of Smithfield. The position taken up by Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety on 5th April consisted of an oval line of kopjes to the west of and commanding the bridge, enclosing a basin about 6 miles in circumference. The enemy's attack began at 6.30 A.M. on the 9th, and most of the casualties occurred on that and the following day, the defences of the position not having been completed until the morning of the 11th. The investment lasted up to the night of the 24th, the Boers retiring northward early on the morning of the 25th. The relief of the force was effected by the movement on Wepener from Aliwal North of the 5th Brigade under Major-General A. FitzHugh Hart, and a column of Colonial troops under Brigadier-General Brabant, and by the advance of the 8th Division under Lieutenant-General Sir H. M. L. Rundle from Edenburg to Dewetsdorp, supported by the 3rd Division under Major-General Sir H. O. Chermiside. Brigadier-General Brabant with his mounted troops entered Wepener at 4 P.M. on 25th April.

3. The ammunition expended during the investment was as follows:—In possession, per rifle, 500 rounds; expended, 250 rounds. In possession, per 15-pounder, 850 rounds; expended, 750 rounds. In possession, per 12-pounder, 250 rounds; expended, 200 rounds. In possession, per 7-pounder, 250 rounds; expended, 100 rounds. In possession, per Hotchkiss, 350 rounds; expended, 342 rounds.

The strength and composition of the force under Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety's orders are detailed below—

Royal Engineers.—1 officer, 10 non-commissioned officers and men.

Royal Scots, Mounted Infantry.—3 officers, 78 non-commissioned officers and men.

Cape Mounted Rifles.—18 officers, 409 non-commissioned officers and men.

1st Brabant's Horse.—25 officers, 320 non-commissioned officers and men.

2nd Brabant's Horse.—29 officers, 430 non-commissioned officers and men.

Kaffrarian Rifles.—23 officers, 370 non-commissioned officers and men.

Driscoll's Scouts.—3 officers, 53 non-commissioned officers and men.

Colonial Artillery (C.M.R. Artillery).—3 officers, 90 non-commissioned officers and men.

Royal Army Medical Corps.—6 officers, 27 non-commissioned officers and men.

4. I am of opinion that the utmost credit is due to Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety and the troops under his command for the stubborn and successful resistance which they offered to an enemy greatly outnumbering them. The hardships of the investment were increased by

heavy rain, and by the impossibility of relieving the men holding the line of entrenchments for a period of 16 days, owing to the large perimeter which had to be guarded, and the small force available for the purpose.

5. I cordially support Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgety's recommendations on behalf of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men whose services he has brought to special notice.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

From Lieutenant-Colonel E. H. Dalgety, Commanding Cape Mounted Rifles, to the General Officer Commanding, Colonial Division.

Jammersberg Bridge,
29th April, 1900.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in accordance with instructions received from you, I left Aliwal North on the morning of the 2nd April, to take command of the Column consisting of the Cape Mounted Rifles, 2nd Brabant's Horse, and a detachment of Kaffrarian Rifles, and Artillery, which had been ordered to proceed to Wepener and hold the bridge over the Caledon River, at the Jammersberg Drift. I arrived at Wepener on the night of the 4th, and early on the morning of the 5th I moved on beyond the bridge to take up the position which had been selected by Major Maxwell, R.E., and from whom I took over command.

The troops under my command then consisted of one company of Royal Scots Mounted Infantry, part of the Cape Mounted Rifles, 1st and 2nd Brabant's Horse, the Kaffrarian Rifles, and a few of Driscoll's Scouts, in all about 1,600 men; there were also about a dozen Royal Engineers, and the Artillery Troop of the Cape Mounted Rifles, with two 15-pounders, two naval guns, two 2.5-inch guns, and one Hotchkiss gun.

The position I occupied was on the north bank of the Caledon River, and formed a sort of circle, being 6 miles in circumference, with a diameter of about 3 miles. When selecting the position it was not supposed that the rear of the position would be likely to be attacked, and this was, therefore, the weakest portion.

On the evening of the 6th, I received telegrams informing me that the Garrison at Smithfield had fallen back on Rouxville, and then that the Rouxville Garrison were falling back on Aliwal North, so I then knew that my line of communication with Aliwal North had been cut off, and that I must also be prepared to have the rear of my position attacked. Major Maxwell had already sent into Wepener to commandeer supplies, and, in addition, I found a considerable amount of meal stored in Robertson's Mill.

The 7th and 8th were spent in erecting schanzen all along the position, but as, in most instances, there was barely a foot of soil, we had to depend, in a great measure, on stone schanzen.

About 6.30 A.M., on the morning of Monday the 9th, the enemy commenced shelling the position, which was occupied by the troops as follows, viz., the right front by the 2nd Brabant's Horse, left front by 1st Brabant's Horse, and part of Kaffrarian Rifles; the left rear by Royal Scots, Cape Mounted Rifles and

Driscoll's Scouts, and the right rear by the Kaffrarian Rifles, while the guns were moved about as it was found necessary. The weakest part of the position was on the extreme left rear, which was held by the Cape Mounted Rifles, and it was here that the heaviest casualties took place, the Cape Mounted Rifles losing 21 killed and 75 wounded out of a total of 33 killed and 133 wounded.

The attack on the 9th was made in force, and lasted the whole day, while again, on the night of the 10th, another determined attack was made on the position occupied by the Cape Mounted Rifles, the enemy coming up to within 40 yards of the schanzen, and working round and firing into the rear of them. In both of these attacks we lost heavily. Another attack was made on the front face on the night of the 12th, which was also repulsed, and the enemy then contented themselves with shelling the position more or less heavily, while the snipers harassed our men in the schanzen both by day and night, as they pushed forward, killing and wounding a considerable number.

It was found to be impossible to contract our lines or to give up any portion of the position held, so that I had no reserve available for relief and, consequently, for 16 days and nights the whole force was constantly in the trenches, and in the case of the Royal Scots, Cape Mounted Rifles and Scouts, they had nothing but cold food and water during the whole 16 days, while for 3 days the trenches were flooded by rain.

The ammunition, both gun and rifle, was husbanded with the greatest care, and the rifle fire was always kept well under control, while Captain Lukin, who commanded the Artillery, towards the end was only firing about once every $\frac{1}{4}$ hour, while the enemy were firing, on an average, from 200 to 300 shells a day.

I cannot speak too highly of the behaviour of the whole force during this time; all did their work cheerfully and well, although the continued strain was telling on all ranks.

I would wish to bring to your notice the names of Sergeant Roberts, Privates Rawlings and Robarts, and Trumpeter Washington of the Cape Mounted Rifles, Private Thorn of the Royal Scots, and Private Anderson of 2nd Brabant's Horse, who all performed acts of bravery in bringing in wounded comrades under a very heavy fire.

All Officers Commanding corps rendered me most valuable assistance, and I would particularly beg to mention the names of Lieutenant-Colonel Grenfell, Commanding 2nd Brabant's Horse, my second in command; Major Maxwell, R.E., who selected the position and assisted me in every way; Captain Lukin, Cape Mounted Rifles, who commanded the Artillery and did most excellent work, putting one of the enemy's guns out of action; Captain Cantwell, Cape Mounted Rifles, who, after Major Sprenger was killed and Major Waring was wounded, on the 9th and 11th respectively, commanded the Cape Mounted Rifles in the advanced schanzen; Captain Phillips, the Quarter-Master of the Cape Mounted Rifles, who, when two Officers of the Cape Mounted Rifles were killed and five wounded, took command of 50 men and held a most important position; and Captain Grant, Cape Mounted Rifles, Field-Adjutant, who did the work of half-a-dozen men; while Captain Farrar of the Kaffrarian Rifles was invaluable in obtaining supplies from Wepener on the 6th, 7th, and 8th.

The Medical Staff under Major Faskally, although heavily taxed, worked splendidly.

I have, &c.,

E. H. DALGETY, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Cape Mounted Riflemen.
Assistant Adjutant-General, 3rd Division,
Dewetsdorp, Forwarded.

E. G. BRABANT, Brigadier-General,
Colonial Division.
Jammersberg Drift,
29th April, 1900.

No. 12.

From Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.
Army Head-quarters, Pretoria,
19th June, 1900.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's information a report, dated 20th April, 1900, from Brigadier-General R. G. Broadwood, Commanding 2nd Cavalry Brigade, describing his withdrawal from Thabanchu and the engagement at Sannah's Post on the 30th and 31st March, 1900.

2. The reverse which occurred on the latter date, resulting in heavy casualties as well as the capture by the enemy of seven 12-pounder guns, the personnel of an entire battery of Royal Horse Artillery, and the convoy of the baggage and supplies accompanying Brigadier-General Broadwood's column, was most unfortunate, and it seems necessary to examine and weigh carefully the reasons to which it may be attributed.

It will be observed that when Brigadier-General Broadwood found his position at Thabanchu seriously threatened he directed his baggage to proceed to Sannah's Post, a distance of some 24 miles, and after successfully warding off the attack of the enemy on the Nek, he withdrew his troops from their positions and reached Sannah's Post at 3.30 A.M. During the night a party of Boers succeeded in establishing themselves, undetected, in a dry watercourse called the Koorra Spruit, some 2,000 yards west of Sannah's Post, at a point where the road to Bloemfontein crosses the watercourse. It was at this point that the disaster occurred.

3. I have thought it desirable to call on Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher, commanding the 3rd Mounted Infantry Corps, who escorted the baggage from Thabanchu to Sannah's Post, to report what steps he took for the security of his bivouac on his arrival in camp. This Officer's report is appended, and I consider that, in view of the fact of his finding a body of our troops, equal in strength to the force under his own command, already in occupation of the Waterworks, he was not called upon to make special arrangements for the security of his camp, other than those which he might reasonably expect to find in existence on his arrival there. In addition to the guard on the camp, an Officer's patrol left camp before daylight, and proceeded some 10 miles to the east, towards Thabanchu. Two small patrols were despatched at the same time north and south of the camp, while a patrol of four men left the Waterworks about sunset for Boesman's Kop, a hill some distance from Sannah's Post on the Bloemfontein road, where a party of Mounted Infantry were stationed with orders to return between 3 A.M. and 5 A.M. the following day. On the morning of the 31st March this patrol was unable to reach Sannah's Post, owing to the Boers having occupied the Koorra Spruit watercourse during the night and it does not appear that the men composing

it made any attempt to give the alarm by firing their rifles or by any other means, on discovering the presence of the Boers in ambush.

4. After fighting for 10 hours on the previous day, and after a trying night march of 24 miles and a rest of only 2½ hours, Brigadier-General Broadwood found himself at daylight on the 31st March under the fire of the enemy's guns from the hills to the east of Sannah's Post, at a range to which his Horse Artillery guns could not reply. He thereupon, very judiciously, arranged to withdraw his force out of fire. Theoretically speaking, he should unquestionably have detained his transport until he had detailed a suitable advance guard, or thrown out scouts in front and on the flanks of the column, but my experience leads me to believe that it was impossible for him to restrain the followers and baggage from streaming away to the rear when they unexpectedly found themselves exposed to a heavy shell fire.

This is precisely what occurred. The fugitives and the leading wagons pressed on so rapidly that they outstripped the scouts of the advanced guard, and they had entered the watercourse, and had been permitted by the Boers to cross to the other side of the Koorra Spruit, before the Mounted Infantry had been able to get in front of the column and take its proper place.

5. In my telegram No. 363, dated 31st March, 1900, I stated that the Boers had concealed themselves so well in the spruit that our leading scouts passed over the drift without discovering them. Subsequent investigation has proved, however, that such was not the case, but that the sequence of events was as indicated as above.

6. As regards the point raised in paragraph 9 of the accompanying report, I consider that Lieutenant-General Sir H. Colville would have done better if, on his arrival with the 9th Division at Boesman's Kop, he had proceeded at once to the scene of the engagement, and ascertained personally how matters stood, before deciding on the flank movement towards Water-val Drift.

7. After a very careful consideration of the circumstances, I am of opinion that the disaster is mainly due to the failure of the patrol from Boesman's Kop to warn their comrades of the ambush which had been prepared during the night, and that no specific blame can be attributed to the General Officer Commanding the force.

I am further of opinion that Brigadier-General Broadwood displayed presence of mind and gallantry in his endeavours to retrieve the disaster and extricate his troops. In the example he set to his comrades under peculiarly trying circumstances he acted up to the high reputation he had already gained in the Sudan, and in command of a Cavalry Brigade in South Africa, and that reputation has been added to by the distinguished and admirable manner in which he has subsequently exercised his command during the advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria.

8. The submission of this despatch has been considerably delayed, but the delay has been an unavoidable one, as I considered it undesirable to submit it until I had had an opportunity of personally enquiring into the case from the principal actors in it. Owing to the manner in which the Cavalry has been employed on detached duties this has not been possible till the Army reached Pretoria.

9. In conclusion I am glad to say that on

this, as on other occasions, the troops behaved in a most gallant manner, and I cordially support Brigadier-General Broadwood's recommendations on behalf of the Officers, non-commissioned officers and men whose names he has brought to notice.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

From Brigadier-General Broadwood to the
Military Secretary to the Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

Bloemspruit,

SIR,

20th April, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report for the information of the Field-Marshal upon the withdrawal from Thabanchu and action at Sannah's Post on the 30th and 31st March, 1900:—

1. At 11 A.M. on 30th March, 1900, while camped at Thabanchu in command of the force marginally noted,* I received a report from the outposts that a large force of Boers was moving rapidly on the town along the road from Ladybrand. I reinforced the outposts in that direction by one squadron of Cavalry and 300 Mounted Infantry; immediately afterwards reports were brought in by natives that another hostile force was working round my left or north flank. I occupied a position in that direction with three squadrons, and wired to the Chief of the Staff that, if the latter report was confirmed, I should be compelled to retire on Sannah's Post, where I should be in open country and within supporting distance of Bloemfontein. I told the Officer Commanding the two companies of Mounted Infantry at Sannah's Post that I should probably retire on him, and that I wished him specially to reconnoitre to his north.

2. At 3 P.M. the enemy attacked the nek, 6 miles east of the town. I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Alderson to send an escort with my baggage to Israel's Poort some 3 miles distant, where I intended to bivouac. Soon afterwards I received corroborative intelligence of a movement round my left. I then sent an order that the retirement was to be continued to Sannah's Post, a distance of about 24 miles from where my outposts were engaged. I wired to the Chief of the Staff that I was retiring on Sannah's Post.

3. At dark the enemy withdrew from the attack on the nek, and by 9 P.M. I had withdrawn my troops from their positions, and was retiring on Sannah's Post, which we reached at 3.30 A.M., the baggage having arrived there at 11 P.M. My intention was to await orders or reinforcements at that point, as it commanded the Waterworks.

4. Soon after daylight on the 31st March, the Officer Commanding Sannah's Post detachment reported that his patrol towards Waterval Drift reported that my north flank was clear, but that his patrols were being fired on from the kopjes east of the Modder River. Almost immediately afterwards a heavy shell fire from the latter direction was opened on the bivouac at a range to which my Horse Batteries could not reply. At the same time it was reported to me that about 300 Boers

could be seen galloping on the north bank of the river in the direction of Boesman's Kop, a steep hill on the road by which reinforcements would arrive from Bloemfontein, and on which a detachment of Mounted Infantry was stationed. I ordered the force to retire out of shell fire, and directed Roberts's Horse and "U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, to reinforce the post at Boesman's Kop, on which point I proposed to withdraw my force.

One regiment of Mounted Infantry I detailed to act as rear-guard, and one company of Mounted Infantry to reinforce the patrol sent out by the Officer Commanding at Sannah's Post towards Waterval Drift.

5. The regiment of Mounted Infantry (Roberts's Horse), ordered to Boesman's Kop, and the Battery ("U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery), moved off on opposite sides of the baggage column, which was clearing rapidly out of the shell fire, and, before they had cleared, the column came on to a deep spruit, about 2,000 yards west of the bivouac. This spruit was occupied by about 600 of the enemy, who seized five guns of the battery and the convoy, and opened a heavy fire on Roberts's Horse and on the main body of Cavalry which was following; these retired out of fire. "Q" Battery, owing to its losses in the retirement, was compelled to come into action within 1,200 yards of the spruit, and the Durham Light Infantry Company of Mounted Infantry, which was acting as right flank guard to the retirement, promptly occupied a position on the right and left flank of the battery; this checked any intention the enemy had of advancing from the spruit.

6. I had remained with the rear-guard, thinking it the most threatened point. Proceeding to the scene of the disaster, I found that the enemy were extending up the spruit and over the ridge west of it. I ordered the Household Cavalry Regiment to occupy a point higher up the spruit, and to work down it, one company Mounted Infantry to work along the ridge on the Household Cavalry's left, and the 10th Hussars to swing round the left of this company and operate against the rear of the enemy in the spruit. As soon as the movement was under weigh I relieved the Household Cavalry by two companies of the Burma Mounted Infantry, and ordered the former to join in the movement of the 10th Hussars.

7. I did not consider it possible for Major Hornby to move his battery under the heavy fire, but ordered him to retire as soon as the turning movement should have had the effect of checking this fire, and to then move round the pivot formed by the Mounted Infantry in the spruit, on Boesman's Kop. I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Alderson with the remainder of his brigade to hold the enemy, who were pressing vigorously across the river, sufficiently long to cover the retirement of the battery, and to follow its retirement. The whole of this operation was carried out with perfect steadiness by all concerned, the action of "Q" Battery, the company of Durham Light Infantry, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher's regiment of Mounted Infantry being specially worthy of notice. By 11.15 A.M. the force was clear, with the loss of seven guns, and of the whole of the convoy, two guns of "Q" Battery having to be abandoned owing to the loss of horses.

8. Lieutenant-Colonel Martyr's Brigade of Mounted Infantry had meanwhile arrived at Boesman's Kop, one regiment, Lieutenant-

* "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; "U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; Household Cavalry, 160 sabres; 10th Hussars, 160 sabres; Alderson's Mounted Infantry, 800 rifles.

Colonel Henry's, had moved on Waterval Drift, where it extricated the company of Mounted Infantry which had been pushed out in that direction earlier in the day. Another regiment, Major Dobell's, I ordered forward on to the ridge west of the spruit to see what possibility there was of recovering any of the lost guns or convoy. He came under a heavy fire, and reported that the enemy in the spruit had been reinforced to some 1,500 rifles.

9. About noon a Staff Officer arrived from General Officer Commanding 9th Division to say he had reached Boesman's Kop. I suggested that a direct advance on the spruit offered the best chance of assisting. About 2 p.m. I was informed that the 9th Division had moved towards Waterval Drift, so seeing any hope of recapturing the guns at an end, I began sending the units to their camps, as, owing to the loss of the baggage, it was inadvisable to bivouac where we were.

10. That the reverse was not more serious is, in a great measure, due to the skilful handling of his brigade, during the 31st, by Lieutenant-Colonel Alderson. Conspicuous gallantry was shown by the whole of "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, and by the following Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men who assisted to withdraw the guns under heavy fire:—

Lieutenant Maxwell, D.S.O., 18th Bengal Lancers, attached to Roberts's Horse.

Lieutenant Stirling, 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment.

Lieutenant Ainsworth, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

Lieutenant Way, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

Lieutenant Ashburner, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

Lieutenant Grover, 1st Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry (killed).

4127 Private Parry, 2nd Battalion West Riding Regiment.

3840 Private Bright, 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment.

5908 Private Pickford, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

5708 Private Horton, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

4423 Lance-Corporal Steel, 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

The following Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men risked their lives to save comrades under heavy fire:—

Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher, Northumberland Fusiliers.

Captain Gore Anley, Essex Regiment.

4103 Corporal Lincoln, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.

4831 Private Evans, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.

Sergeant J. C. Collins, Roberts' Horse.

Private T. Murphy, Roberts' Horse.

Private V. D. Todd, Roberts' Horse.

I am forwarding detailed evidence in the case of such of the above as seem worthy of the special consideration of the Commander-in-Chief.

I have, &c.,

R. G. BROADWOOD, Brigadier-General,
Commanding 2nd Cavalry Brigade.

Statement by Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher, Commanding 3rd Mounted Infantry Corps, regarding escorting baggage, &c., on 30th March.

Pretoria,

17th June, 1900.

1. At about noon on 30th March, at Thabanchu, Lieutenant-Colonel Alderson ordered me, as Officer Commanding 3rd Mounted Infantry Regiment, to form an escort for the baggage on that day. This was the only order that he gave me, except that he told me that we should probably halt at the pass about 3 miles to the west of where we were in bivouac. Before reaching this pass I received information that the force was to proceed across the Modder River. As long as daylight lasted I took up successive positions guarding the right flank of our retirement, and also reconnoitred to the north, but saw nothing of the enemy, except what might have been a few scouts. After sunset I proceeded along the road. All the baggage was parked on the far side (the west side) of the Modder, and my regiment had settled down in bivouac before midnight.

2. I had received no orders to provide for the safety of the bivouac, but nevertheless, posted five groups round it, at a distance of about 500 yards, on the side of the river to which we had crossed. There was no moon, and this was all I could do in the dark, besides having a small post at the drift. The whole of the force was following the baggage, and was several miles east of the drift when I arrived, besides which, three companies of Mounted Infantry, with a strength equal to my regiment, were occupying the Waterworks, and had presumably taken precautions for safety to the west of the river.

3. As I have previously stated, I received no orders whatever about finding outposts, and the precautions I took were simply for the protection of my bivouac until the remainder of the force arrived.

T. W. PILCHER, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Commanding 3rd Corps, Mounted Infantry.

No. 13.

From Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,

MY LORD. Pretoria, 21st June, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's consideration a despatch, dated 18th May, 1900, with annexures and a letter dated 6th June, 1900, from Major-General R. S. S. Baden-Powell, describing the siege of Mafeking which lasted from the 13th October, 1899, to the 17th May, 1900, and bringing to notice the Officers and men, as well as the civilians and ladies, who rendered good service during the above period.

2. I feel assured that Her Majesty's Government will agree with me in thinking that the utmost credit is due to Major-General Baden-Powell for his promptness in raising two regiments of Mounted Infantry in Rhodesia, and for the resolution, judgment, and resource which he displayed throughout the long and trying investment of Mafeking by the Boer forces. The distinction which Major-General Baden-Powell has earned must be shared by his gallant soldiers. No episode in the present war seems more praiseworthy than the prolonged defence of this town by a British garrison, consisting almost entirely of Her Majesty's Colonial forces, inferior in numbers and greatly inferior in artil.

lery to the enemy, cut off from communication with Cape Colony, and with the hope of relief repeatedly deferred until the supplies of food were nearly exhausted.

3. Inspired by their Commander's example, the defenders of Mafeking maintained a never-failing confidence and cheerfulness, which conduced most materially to the successful issue; they made light of the hardships to which they were exposed; and they withstood the enemy's attacks with an audacity which so disheartened their opponents that, except on one occasion, namely, on 12th May, no serious attempt was made to capture the place by assault. This attempt was repulsed in a manner which showed that the determination and fighting qualities of the garrison remained unimpaired to the last.

4. In recording my high appreciation of the conduct of all ranks during this memorable siege, I desire cordially to support Major-General Baden-Powell's recommendations on behalf of those serving under his orders, and the civilians and others who co-operated with him in the maintenance of order, and in the care of the sick and wounded.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

From Major-General Baden-Powell, Commanding at Mafeking, to the Chief Staff Officer to Lord Roberts.

MY LORD,

Mafeking,
18th May, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the siege of Mafeking by the Boers, from 13th October, 1899, to 17th May, 1900, for the information of his Excellency the Field-Marshal Commanding in South Africa.

I have, &c.

R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL,
Major-General.

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Part I.—Narrative of the siege.

Part II.—Minor points connected with the siege.

Part III.—Engagements with enemy

Part IV.—Recommendation of Officers and others.

I.—Résumé of Report on the Siege of Mafeking.

I arrived in the beginning of August in Rhodesia, with orders—

1. To raise two regiments of Mounted Infantry.

2. In the event of war, to organize the defence of the Rhodesia and Bechuanaland frontiers.

3. As far as possible, to keep forces of the enemy occupied in this direction away from their own main forces.

I had the two regiments raised, equipped, supplied, and ready for service by the end of September.

As war became imminent, I saw that my force would be too weak to effect much if scattered along the whole border (500 miles), unless it were reinforced with some men and good guns. I reported this, but as none were available I decided to concentrate my two columns at Tuli and Mafeking respectively, as being the desirable points to hold.

Of the two, Mafeking seemed the more important for many reasons, strategical and political—

1. Because it is the outpost for Kimberley and Cape Colony.

2. Also, equally, for the Protectorate and Rhodesia.

3. It threatens the weak flank of the Transvaal.

4. It is the head-centre of the large native districts of the north-west, with their 200,000 inhabitants.

5. It contains important railway stocks and shops.

6. Also large food and forage supplies.

Therefore I left the northern column in charge of Colonel Plumer, and went myself to Mafeking, and organized its defence.

Mafeking.

Mafeking is an open town, 1,000 yards square, in open undulating country, on the north bank of the Molopo stream. Eight miles from the Transvaal border. White population about 1,000.

The native Stadt lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-west, and contains 6,000 inhabitants.

Defence Force.

700 whites, of whom 20 were Imperial Army, remainder Protectorate Regiment, British South Africa Police, Cape Police, and Bechuanaland Rifles (Volunteers). These were used to man the forts and outworks.

300 able-bodied townsmen enrolled as town guard. Employed to garrison the town itself.

300 natives enrolled as cattle guards, watchmen, police, &c.

Half the defenders were armed with L.M., half with M.H. rifles, with 600 rounds per rifle.

Total Numbers.

White men, 1,074; white women, 229; white children, 405; natives, 7,500.

Our armament consisted of—

Four 7-pounder M.L. guns, one 1-pounder Hotchkiss, one 2-inch Nordenfolt—all old. Seven 303 Maxims.

To this armament we afterwards added—

One 6-pounder M.L. old ship's gun, one 16-pounder M.L. howitzer (made in our own shops).

I had two armoured engines promised from Kimberley. I had armoured trucks made at Bulawayo and Mafeking. One engine arrived, the other was cut off en route by the enemy and captured at Kraaipan.

The Siege.

On the 13th October the siege began.

General Cronje with an army of 8,000 Boers and 10 guns, most of them of modern pattern and power, surrounded the place.

On the approach of the enemy we sallied out and, in a sharp little engagement, dealt them a severe blow, by which they lost 53 killed and many more wounded, and which had a lasting moral effect.

During the first phase of the siege, October and November, General Cronje made various attempts to take the place. These attacks we beat off without difficulty in every case, and responded by sorties, varying their nature every time as far as possible, and making them so sudden and so quickly withdrawn as not to give the enemy's supports time to come up and overpower us. Of these "kicks" we delivered half-a-dozen, on 14th, 17th, 20th, 25th, 27th, 31st October, and 7th November (the Boers quote 14, but they include demonstrations and shelling of dummy forts, guns, and armoured trucks, &c., which we put up to draw their fire).

The enemy's losses in this period were very heavy as compared with ours—

Boers' losses—287 killed, 800 wounded.*

Our losses—35 killed, 101 wounded, 27 missing.

Cronje having lost a month of valuable time at Mafeking, now gave up the idea of taking the place by storm, and moved off south for Kimberley with 4,000 men and 6 guns (leaving General Snyman with the remainder, viz., 3,000 to 4,000 men and six guns, including a 94-pounder siege gun) to invest us.

Seeing then that we could not be relieved for many weeks, if not months, I took over into our own management all details such as hospital, municipality, police, treasury, post and telegraph, railway, native affairs, water supply, ordnance shops, &c.

I also took over all food, forage, liquor stores, and native supplies, &c., and put everybody on rations.

I had disposed my garrison over what some of my Officers considered a rather extended perimeter (about 5 or 6 miles), but everything was arranged for drawing in our horns if necessary. However, in the event we were able to maintain our original position, and even further to extend it as became necessary.

The next phase lasted 3 months, November to January, during which Snyman pushed his works and trenches nearer to the place.

He also drew a cordon of natives around the whole.

His artillery kept up a continual bombardment on the town.

On our part, during January, February, and March, we pushed out counter-works, and gradually gained point after point of ground till we obtained grazing for our live stock, and finally (after a hard tussel in the "Brickfields," in trenching and counter-trenching up to within 70 yards of the enemy's works), we drove them back at all points out of range for rifle fire of the town.

During this period, owing to the careful and systematic sharp-shooting of our men, the enemy's losses continued to be largely in excess of ours. 40 per month killed was admitted by the Boer medical officer.

In April the enemy withdrew the siege gun, and contented themselves with investing us at a distance, and shelling our cattle in the hope of starving us into submission.

On the 12th May the enemy made a bold night attack on the place, and succeeded in getting into the Stadt with their storming party, but we beat back their supports and surrounded the remainder, inflicting on them a loss of 70 killed and wounded, and 108 prisoners, including Eloff their commandant (grandson of President Kruger).

In the meantime, Colonel Plumer had near Tuli prevented a force of Boers from invading Matabeleland from the south. After their retreat the rising of the river made the border comparatively safe, and I called him down to defend the railway and the Protectorate border (which were already being held by a small force organized from Bulawayo by Colonel Nicholson).

Colonel Plumer accordingly pushed down the line, repairing it to within 40 miles of Mafeking, and pushing back the enemy who had been holding it. He then established himself in a good position 35 miles north-west of us, where he was in touch by means of runners and pigeons, was able to afford refuge to our na-

tives escaping out, and he was also able to put a stop to enemy's depredations and to give security to the natives throughout the Protectorate, his force being too small to effect more till reinforced. His presence enabled us to get rid of nearly 2,000 native women and children, which materially relieved the strain on our food supply.

Early in May, he was reinforced by Canadian Artillery and Queensland Infantry, &c., and on 15th he joined hands with a relief column from the south under Colonel Mahon.

And, on the 17th May, the relief of Mafeking was successfully effected by the combined columns, after a siege of 218 days.

One of the most noticeable features of the long and trying siege has been the loyalty, patience, and good feeling which have prevailed throughout the community, civil, military, and native. The steadiness and gallantry of the troops in action, and their cheerful acceptance of hardships, are beyond praise.

The ladies, and especially those who acted as nurses in the hospitals, displayed the greatest patience and fortitude.

Résumé of Points gained by the Rhodesian Frontier Force.

(October, 1899, to May, 1900).

1.—At Mafeking.

1. A force of 8,000 Boers and 10 guns was contained at the first outbreak of war, and prevented from either combining with the Tuli column, and invading Rhodesia, or joining the forces against Kimberley. Cronje's commando was thus held here for a month.

2. From 2,000 to 3,000 Boers and eight guns (including a 94-pounder) were kept employed here for over 6 months.

3. The enemy expended considerably over 100 tons of ammunition, and lost over 1,000 men killed and wounded, and had four guns disabled and one captured.

4. Large stores of food and forage, and general stocks, were prevented from falling into the enemy's hands.

5. Valuable railway plant, including 18 locomotives, rolling stock, shops, coal, &c., were saved.

6. Refuge was given to a large number of British from the Transvaal.

7. Most of the local neighbouring tribes, and all those of the protectorate and South Matabeleland, remained loyal, which they could not have continued to do had Mafeking fallen and they been at the mercy of the Boers.

8. Loss of prestige to Cronje's force, who had apparently expected to take possession at once on first arrival, and had had proclamation printed annexing the district to the South African Republic.

9. Eloff and 108 Boers and foreigners made prisoners of war.

II.—The Rhodesian Column.

During the same period the northern portion of my force under Colonel Plumer (in spite of its small numbers and the exceptionally difficult country and trying climate in which it was operating) succeeded—

1. In holding and sending back the enemy in their attempt to invade Rhodesia, via Tuli.

2. In holding the Bulawayo railway for some 200 miles south of the Rhodesian border.

3. In giving direct support and protection to the natives in Khama's and Linchwe's domains, and Bathoen's and the Protectorate generally when threatened by the enemy.

4. In pushing down and repairing the railway in the face of the enemy to within 40 miles

* These numbers are quoted from Transvaal newspapers, but must, I think, be exaggerated. I think that about 600 killed and wounded would be nearer the mark.

of Mafeking, and there establishing a place of security for our natives escaping from Mafeking, and collecting supplies ready to effect our relief of Mafeking on arrival of reinforcements.

III.—The Palapye Column.

A small column organized by Colonel Nicholson, from Bulawayo, with armoured trains, &c., held Mangwe, Palapye, Mochudi, &c., on the railway until Plumer's column was available for the duty.

The whole of the frontier force, north and south columns combined, numbered under 1,700, while the Boers during the early part of the campaign had between 9,000 and 10,000 out on their northern and north-western border. Country operated over, between Mafeking and Tuli, 450 miles in length.

II.—Minor Points connected with the Siege. (Alphabetically arranged.)

Ammunition.
Artillery.
Casualties.
Communications.
Civil administration.
Compensation.
Correspondents.
Defence accounts.
Defence works.
Enemy's artillery—fighting, treachery, field work.
Finance.
Food supply.
Fuel.
Garrison.
Hospital.
Natives.
Railway.
Relief Committee.
Specialities.
Staff.
Spies.
Transport.
Women's laager.

Artillery.

Our so-called artillery should of course have been entirely outclassed by the modern high-velocity guns of the enemy, but in practice they managed to hold their own in spite of their using powder, shells, and fuzes all made in our own shops.

The artillery and also the ordnance shops were under Major Panzera, assisted by Lieutenant Daniell, British South Africa Police.

Casualties.

I.—Combatants.

Whites—

Officers.—6 killed and died of wounds; 15 wounded; 1 missing; total 22.
Non-commissioned officers and men.—61 killed and died of wounds; 103 wounded; 26 missing; 16 died; 5 accidents; total 211.

Total—

Whites.—67 killed and died of wounds; 118 wounded; 27 missing; 16 died; 5 accidents; total 233.

Coloured.—25 killed and died of wounds; 68 wounded; total 83.

Total combatants, 316.

II.—Non-combatants.

Whites.—4 killed and died of wounds; 5 wounded; 32 died; total 41.

Natives.—65 killed and died of wounds; 117 wounded; total 182.

Baralonga.—264 killed and died of wounds; total 264.

No. 27282.

I

Total non-combatants, 487.

Total all casualties during siege, 803.

Out of 44 officers, 21 were killed, wounded, or missing.

Out of 975 men, 190 were killed, wounded, or missing.

Communications.

Local.

Telephone.—All outlying forts and look-out posts were connected up with head-quarters, under management of Mr. Howat, postmaster, and his staff. I was thus able to receive reports and issue orders for all parts of the defence instantaneously.

Postal.—To cover the heavy expenses of runners, and for the convenience of the public, postage was established at: 1d. for town, 3d. for outlying forts, 1s. for up country.

Signalling.—Heliograph, lamp, and flag signalling was established for defence purposes by brigade signallers, under Major Panzera and Serjeant-Major Moffat.

Megaphones were also made and used in outlying trenches and posts.

Phonophores were also used on the armoured train, attached to ordinary telegraph lines.

Distant.

Runners.—Native runners were employed twice weekly, or oftener when necessary, to take despatches, letters, &c., to our northern column. They had to be highly paid, as the risk of capture and death was very great.

I was thus practically in touch with my force on the railway, and through them with Colonel Nicholson at the base, and Colonel Plumer's column at Tuli.

Civil Administration.

I established, for the trial of all cases not directly amenable to military law, a Court of Summary Jurisdiction—

Members:

Resident Commissioner.
Resident Magistrate.
Town Commandant.
Officer Commanding Protectorate Regiment.
Chief Staff Officer.

At first it was a little difficult to make the civilians appreciate the restrictions of martial law, and, as times grew more critical, there came a tendency to spread rumours and to grumble, this had to be stopped.

I also published some explanatory remarks and advice on the working of martial law, &c., and these steps had a most marked effect, obedience to orders and a good spirit thenceforward prevailed in the garrison.

Compensation.

From the commencement of the siege careful record was kept of all shell-fire damage to property, and claims of owners considered and assessed. Total assessed, 16,462l. 10s. 2d. No promise was held out that Government would grant compensation, the proceedings were merely intended to assist the commission should one afterwards be assembled, and to protect Government against exorbitant claims.

A record was also made of losses suffered by refugees, in property, livestock, &c.

All livestock killed or wounded by shell fire was bought at a fair price and utilized for food, so that the owners have no claims on this head, at the same time the value of the animals is in many cases not represented by cash, and it would be far more satisfactory to the owners if they could be repaid in kind. This is a point which I venture to suggest be taken into consideration when dealing with the Boers after the war; a substantial fine in cattle would

touch them heavily without leaving them destitute, and the bestowal of such cattle on deserving and looted loyalists would give great satisfaction and be far more acceptable to them, and less expensive to Government, than grants of money.

Correspondents.

(Under Lieutenant to Hon. A. Hanbury-Tracy as Press Censor).

These gentlemen gave a certain amount of trouble at first, as for the most part they were more reporters than correspondents. Further reforms in the matter of correspondents in the field are very desirable. The enemy derived a great deal of information as to our circumstances from the newspapers, not only the local ones, but also from the Colonial and English papers, in spite of a strict censorship on our part.

Defence Accounts.

(Under Captain Greener, British South Africa Police).

Expenditure during the siege.

To labour, 13,024*l*.
 To pay, local corps and trench allowance 20,777*l*.
 To pay, clerical and civil staff, 3,543*l*.
 To foodstuffs, grain, rations, &c., 36,076*l*.
 To material, clothing, equipment, &c., 10,801*l*.
 To hospital staff, comforts, &c., 5,411*l*.
 To local transport, 890*l*.
 Total, 90,522*l*.
 To payments other than defence, viz., frontier forces, special pay, &c., 32,729*l*.
 Total, 123,251*l*.

Receipts.

By foodstuffs, and grain sales, 5,184*l*.
 By soup kitchens, 3,242*l*.
 By sales of Government property, 442*l*.
 By local post office, 238*l*.
 By dog tax, 67*l*.
 By fines, 127*l*.
 Total, 9,300*l*.
 Weekly average expenditure in pay, 1,550*l*.
 Average receipts for rations, 625*l*.
 Soup, 600*l*.
 Total, 1,225*l*.

Defence Works.

(Under direction of Major Vyvyan, for town and East Front; Major Godley, West Front.)

Scheme.—General scheme at first was to secure the town and Stadt by clearing front, laying mines, fortifying outskirts, &c.

Then to push out advanced trenches to drive back those of the enemy, and finally to establish a girdle of outlying forts.

The scheme included the provision of bomb-proofs and extensive covered ways, gun emplacements, drainage, &c.

In all some 60 works were made, and about 6½ miles of trenches.

The perimeter of the works at first was approximately 7 miles, latterly it extended to a little over 10 miles.

Nature.—Generally semicircular redans, but no two works were similar in trace, they varied according to position, ground, &c. At first dug out and kept very low, latterly, owing to difficulties of drainage, long grass, inaccuracy of enemy's shell fire, &c., they were made more upstanding. Head cover was found to be essential. When trenches were near, steel loopholes had to be used, the ordinary sandbag and wooden ones being too good a target to the enemy.

Huts.—A good form of portable iron and

wood hut was devised, and used for housing the garrisons of the forts.

Enemy's Artillery—Fighting, Treachery, Field Works.

Artillery.—Guns employed—

1—94-pr. Crenset, 15-cm., 20-lb. charge.
 2—7-pr. (Jameson's).
 2—5-pr. Armstrong's B.L.
 1—12-pr. B.L.
 1—9-pr. Krupp, B.L.
 2 Q.F. 14-prs., high velocity.
 2—1-pr. Maxims.

Total, 11 guns.

The 94-pr. fired 1,497 rounds, and the artillery altogether fired 2,000 rounds during the siege.

The damage done was very small, partly owing to the open nature of the town and lowness of our forts, but more especially on account of the want of intelligent directing of the fire.

Fighting.—The enemy's attacks invariably failed from want of discipline and pluck on the part of the men.

In the attack on Cannon Kopje they got within 400 yards, and even started digging shelter trenches, but when the men began to fall the rest retreated promptly.

The night attack on the Stadt, on 12th May, was boldly led by Elloff and a number of foreigners, and had their supports come on with equal pluck, we should have had a hard task to drive them out, but as it was the supports were easily beaten off and the storming party surrounded.

Treachery.—The enemy fired on numerous occasions on our hospital, convent, and women's laager, although these were conspicuously marked with Red Cross flags, stood in isolated positions, and had been fully pointed out by me to the Boer Generals.

The women's laager was deliberately shelled in particular on 24th and 30th October, 27th January, and 11th April.

The Red Cross flag was used to cover artillery taking up position on 24th, 30th, and 31st October.

Convent deliberately shelled, 16th October, 3rd and 8th November.

Our white flag, returning from a conference with the enemy, was deliberately volleyed, 17th January.

Field works.—The enemy's trenches were of a very good design, and made in well-selected positions. The typical trench or fort consisted of a chain of small chambers 10 feet square, partly excavated, partly built up with sandbags, having stout walls, loopholed to front and rear, the whole roofed in with corrugated iron and railway rails. Command, about 3 feet.

Finance.

(Under Captain Greener, as Chief Paymaster.)

I ordered all Government accounts to be kept settled up to date, so as to leave as little as possible for subsequent settlement; much work and confusion has thereby been saved.

The accounts were well kept by Captain Greener and his staff. An examiner of accounts was appointed to check accounts before payment, and also an auditor for the larger amounts.

Cash in bank amounted to 12,000*l*., of which only 650*l*. was in silver. Cash soon became scarce, because the public, especially the natives and Indian traders, concealed all the cash they could get, in anticipation of the place being taken by the enemy.

Paper money thus became necessary, and I

issued coupons for 1s., 2s., and 3s. Ultimately gold also became scarce, and 1l. notes were printed in cyanotype and issued; but they never got into real circulation, as people kept them as curios to the extent of 700l. 10s. coupons were issued with satisfactory result.

For the convenience of the men, and to get cash from the public, a "Garrison Savings Bank" was opened. Deposits amounted to 8,800l.

Total Government expenditure to end of May, 142,660l.

Total Government receipts to end of May, 11,828l.

Food Supply.

(Under Captain Ryan.)

Early in the siege, I took over all merchant stocks and put everybody on rations.

Beginning on the usual scale, I gradually reduced it to the lowest that would allow of the men being fit for duty. During the latter part of the siege no extras of any kind were obtainable. All lived strictly on the following scale:—

Meat, at first, 1 lb.; latterly, $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 lb.

Bread, at first, 1 lb.; latterly, 5 oz.

Vegetables, at first, 1 lb.; latterly, 6 oz.

Coffee, at first, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; latterly, $\frac{1}{3}$ oz.

Salt, at first, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; latterly, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Sugar, at first, 2 oz.

Tea, at first, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Sowens, latterly, 1 quart.

We had a large stock of meat, both live and tinned.

For livestock, we had to open up wide extent of grazing ground. We ate the fresh meat first in order to avoid loss from enemy's fire, failure of grass and water, lung sickness, &c.

The tinned meat we stored in bomproof chambers, and kept as reserve.

During the last two months we were on horseflesh three days a week.

Our stocks of meal were comparatively small, but we had a large supply of forage oats. These we ground into flour, and fermented the residue into sowens (a form of porridge) and the remaining husks went as forage to the horses.

Fresh vegetables were largely grown within the defences, and for a greater part of the siege formed a regular portion of the ration.

The cost of feeding the troops was 1s. 3d. per ration, or, with fresh vegetables, 1s. 6d.; about 3d. below the contract price in peace. Civilians paid 2s., and women in the laager 1s. 2d.

All liquor was taken over and issued in "tots" to the troops on wet nights, and I think saved much sickness.

Natives.—For the natives, we established four soup kitchens at which horse stew was sold daily, and five sowen kitchens. Natives were all registered, to prevent fraud, and bought rations at 1 quart per adult, and 1 pint per child, at 3d. per pint.

Defence watchmen, workmen, police, &c., and certified destitute persons were given free rations. The kitchens so managed paid their own expenses.

They were under Captain Wilson, A.D.C., with Mr. Myers as cash taken and inspector.

Fuel.

Coal.—300 tons available at railway store, was used for armoured train, ordnance foundry, pumping station, flour mills, forage factory, forges, &c.

Wood.—25,000 lb. weekly for bakery, soup, and oat-sowen kitchens, cooking, &c. Procured from roofs of huts in the Stadt, old wagons, lopped trees, fencing, &c.

Petroleum.—Asbestos stove made, but was not a success.

Patent fuel.—Cow dung and coal dust, mixed in equal parts and baked, produced 20 tons good fuel.

Hospital.

(Victoria Hospital—70 beds. Base hospital.)

Major Anderson, Royal Army Medical Corps, Principal Medical Officer.

Dr. W. Hayes (acted as Principal Medical Officer during first part of the siege).

Surgeon-Major Holmden, British South Africa Police.

Dr. T. Hayes, District Surgeon.

Dr. Elmes.

Garrison.

Protectorate Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hore, Commander.—21 Officers, 448 men.

British South Africa Police.

Lieutenant-Colonel Walford, Commander.—10 Officers, 81 men.

Cape Police, Division 1.

Inspector Marsh, Commander.—2 Officers, 45 men.

Cape Police, Division 2.

Inspector Browne, Commander.—2 Officers, 54 men.

Bechuanaland Rifles.

Captain Cowan, Commander.—4 Officers, 77 men.

Deduct missing at Lobatsi.—1 Officer, 26 men.

Total drilled men.—38 Officers, 679 men.

Town Guard, 296 men (untrained).

Total garrison—44 Officers, 975 men.

From the above Town Guard was formed the Railway Division, 2 Officers, 20 men, under (local) Captain More.

The following commanded sections of the defence:—

Western defences, Major Godley.

Stadt and south-western forts, Captain Marsh.

Cannon Kopje and south front, Colonel Walford.

South-eastern works (brickfields), Inspector Marsh, at first, Inspector Browne, latterly.

North-east works, Captain Cowan.

Town, Colonel Vyvyan, at first, Major Goold-Adams, latterly.

Head-quarters Staff—

Chief Staff Officer—Lord E. Cecil.

Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B)—Captain Ryan.

Intelligence Officer—Lieutenant Hon. Hanbury-Tracy.

Aide-de-Camp—Captain Wilson.

Commanding Royal Artillery—Major Panzera.

Commanding Royal Engineer—Colonel Vyvyan.

Hospital.

(Under Major Anderson, Royal Army Medical Corps, as Principal Medical Officer.)

Staff—

Dr. W. Hayes (acted as Principal Medical Officer during the first part of the siege).

Surgeon-Major Holmden, British South Africa Police.

Dr. T. Hayes, District Surgeon.

Dr. Elmes.

Victoria Hospital (base hospital).—Nursing Staff: Miss Hill (Matron) and three nurses, assisted by four volunteer nurses; also by Mother Teresa and six sisters.

Convalescent hospital.—At convent, Lady Sarah Wilson.

Women and children's hospital.—Miss Craufurd.

On outbreak of war I took over the town hospital, but at first the administration was not satisfactory, on account of want of supervision over expenses of stores, and sanitation. I therefore appointed an issuer and storekeeper, and a sanitary inspector. To existing accommodation I added a native ward, nurses' quarters, a ward for Colonial Contingent, and a boarded marquee for shell wounds, &c.

Both doctors and nurses did excellent work, always short-handed, and frequently under fire. (All the hospital buildings were struck by shells and bullets, and the first convalescent hospital was wrecked, and the second damaged by 94-pounder shells).

Natives.

(Under Mr. Bell, Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner.)

Natives in Mafeking, during the siege, were—

Baralongs, 5,000.

Fingoes, Shangans, and district Baralongs, 2,000.

Total, between 7,000 and 8,000.

The Shangans were refugees from the Johannesburg mines, and were sent into Mafeking by the Boers on the outbreak of war. Being accustomed to digging, they proved useful for working gangs on the defences.

The district Baralongs, Fingoes, and Cape Boys, came into Mafeking when their villages were burnt and their cattle looted by the Boers. From among them we got about 300 men to act as armed cattle guards, watchmen, police, &c.

The local Baralongs living in the Stadt displayed their loyalty, and did some good service (especially after I had deposed their Chief Wessels for want of energy), and supplied good despatch runners, spies, cattle runners, &c.

Of the natives living in the district, Saani remained particularly loyal, and although a prisoner in the hands of the Boers, he managed to send us information from time to time. Bathoen was loyal, but too timid to be of use. Copane, a subject of the Boers, although forced to supply them with men, offered us his allegiance. Hatsiokomo and Matuba (British subjects), joined the enemy, and the latter and his men fought with them.

Railway.

(Under Captain More.)

132 men, 46 women, 86 children.

Eighteen locomotives, only one of which was damaged by shell fire, as they were moved round to the "lee" side of the railway buildings with every move of the enemy's big gun.

Also a large amount of rolling stock.

Value of railway plant, 120,000*l*.

A defence railway, 1½ miles long, was laid round the north-east front.

We made three armoured trucks, walls of steel rails, iron lookout tower, acetylene search light, speaking tubes, electric bells, water, medicine chests, stretchers, &c.

200 tons of rails were used in construction of bombproofs.

The armoured trains did much good service.

Specialities.

Ammunition.—Mr. Fodisch, our gunsmith, reloaded Martini Henry cartridges, using ordinary gun caps fixed with plaster of Paris for detonators. Powder and bullets were home made.

Armoured train.—We armoured ordinary long-hogey trucks with steel rails (iron ones not being bullet-proof) to a height of 5 feet, with loopholes and gun ports. I had three prepared at Mafeking under the able direction of Mr. More, Resident Engineer, Bechuanaland Railway, also three at Bulawayo by Mr. Wallis, Resident Engineer.

Brawn was made from ox and horse hides and feet, and was much appreciated as meat.

Bombs.—Dynamite bombs were made up in small potted meat and milk tins for use as hand grenades, with slow match fuzes, with complete success, by Lieutenant Feltham. Sergeant Page, champion bait thrower of Port Elizabeth, by using a whip stick and short line, was able to throw these with accuracy over a distance of 100 yards.

Fuel.—When coal and wood began to run low, a very satisfactory fuel was made up of coal dust and cowdung mixed.

Fuzes.—A simple and useful percussion fuze was invented by Lieutenant Daniell, British South Africa Police, in which the butt end of a Lee-Netford cartridge was used as detonator. This fuze was in regular use with our locally-made shells.

Howitzer.—A 6-inch howitzer was made in our workshops, under the orders of Major Panzera, by Mr. Conolly. The bore was a tube of steel, with iron rings shrunk on in two tiers. The breech was a block of cast bronze. The trunnions and ring were a similar solid casting. The gun threw a 18-lb. ball (shell), and reached a distance of 4,000 yards.

Lookout poles.—Telescopic look-out poles were made of lengths of iron piping, and set up with steel wire stays, with a pulley and slung seat to hoist the man to the masthead. Height, about 18 feet.

Oat bread.—Mr. Ellitson, our master baker, made up our forage oats into a good form of bread. The oats were winnowed, cleaned, kiln-dried, ground, steam sieved (twice), and made into bread in the usual way, with a small admixture of Boer meal.

Search light.—Mr. Walker, agent for the Acetylene Gas Company, under Captain More's direction, made a very effective and portable acetylene search light with an engine head-light and a theodolite stand. These we had stationed in the principal forts and on the armoured train.

Signalling lamp.—Sergeant-Major Moffat and Mr. Walker devised a very effective and portable acetylene signalling lamp, which is reckoned to be readable at 15 miles. We had two in work.

Sowens.—This is a form of porridge, made from the fermented bran of oats after the flour had been extracted for making bread. 100 lb. of bran in 37 gallons of water give 33 gallons of sowens. On this food we fed both natives and whites. We had five sowen kitchens, each capable of producing 800 gallons daily. It was sold at 6*d*. per quart to those not entitled to it as a ration.

Sausages.—The horses which we used for meat were, as a rule, so poor in condition that we found it best to cut off the flesh from the bones and mince it for issue as ration. The remainder of the carcass then went to the soup kitchen. The mince was then mixed with spice and saltpetre, and made up into sausages, the intestines of the same animal being used for sausage skins. The meat thus treated lasted longer, and was more palatable.

Steel loopholes.—Finding that the enemy

shot through ordinary loopholes at short distances, especially in trench work, I devised a form of steel loophole with two plates of $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch steel bolted together at an angle of 45 degrees, with a hole 2 inches square in the middle of the joint, the shield being 2 feet high and 2 feet wide.

Steel sap roller.—I also had a sapping shield made of two sheets of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch steel, each 4 feet square, bolted together at an angle and mounted on wheels, to be pushed in front of a party pushing a sap under fire.

Relief Committee.

Numbers of the refugees and some of the townspeople, being without means during the siege, I formed a relief committee, consisting of the Mayor, the Base Commandant, the Chaplain, and other representative men, with myself as president, for disbursing funds for purchase of clothing and necessaries, &c., and for the issue of rations to deserving cases.

Sums received from England, from the various relief funds, were thus carefully and advantageously administered and accounted for, and there was no real suffering among the white population.

Staff.

Head-quarters—

Colonel Commanding—Colonel Baden-Powell.

Chief Staff Officer—Major Lord E. Cecil, D.S.O.

Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B)—Captain Ryan, Army Service Corps.

Aide-de-Camp—Captain G. Wilson, Royal Horse Guards.

Intelligence Officer—Lieutenant Hon. A. Hanbury-Tracy, Royal Horse Guards.

Local—

Commanding Artillery and Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General—Major Panzera, British South Africa Police.

Base Commandant and Commanding Engineer—Major C. B. Vyvyan, "Buffs."

Principal Medical Officer—Dr. W. Haycs (at first), Major Anderson, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Chief Paymaster—Captain Greener, British South Africa Police.

Town Commandant and Protectorate, Natives—Major Goold-Adams, C.B., C.M.G.

Local Natives—Mr. C. G. H. Bell, Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner.

Women and children—Mr. F. Whiteley, Mayor.

Transport—Lieutenant McKenzie.

Post and Telegraphs—Mr. Howat, Postmaster.

Chaplains—Rev. W. H. Weekes (Church of England), Rev. Father Ogle (Roman Catholic).

Spies.

The enemy were well informed of all that went on in Mafeking during the siege. We had over 30 suspects in the gaol for the greater part of the time, but it was almost impossible to get proofs against them. The stationmaster had undoubtedly been in communication with an ex-Fenian, Whelan, a prominent member of the Irish Land League. This man we arrested on the outbreak of war, and kept in gaol. He had among his papers a code for messages.

The natives acted as spies for the enemy; we caught two and tried them, and shot them.

More than half the families in the women's laager were Dutch, and of pro-Boer sympathies.

Four of our men deserted to the enemy at different times.

Transport.

(Under Lieutenant McKenzie).

This department was very ably managed, and, though at first much hired transport was employed, Lieutenant McKenzie gradually arranged so that the whole of the Army Service Corps, Royal Engineers, sanitary, &c., duties (as well as the regimental work) were carried out by the Government transport available, viz.—

11 wagons.

6 Scotch carts.

2 trollies.

3 ambulances.

188 mules.

12 oxen.

The mules kept their condition wonderfully well, considering the absence of forage and the amount of work.

Water Supply.

(Under Major Vyvyan and Major Hepworth.)

The enemy cut off our water supply from the waterworks during the first few days of the siege. Fortunately the season was unusually wet, and consequently the Molopo stream did not run dry, and house tanks kept fairly filled. But to make sure against contingencies, and to ensure a supply of wholesome water, we cleaned out various wells and dug a new one of great capacity.

The water from these was issued to the town and garrison by means of tank wagons, filled nightly and posted at convenient points during the day.

Women's Laager.

(Under Mr. F. Whiteley, the Mayor.)

Formed at Mr. Rowland's house, where everything was placed at the disposal of the refugees in a most kindly way by Mr. Rowlands.

Number of whites—10 men, 188 women, 315 children; also about 150 native servant girls.

Health fairly good considering the circumstances. Diphtheria made its appearance, but after four cases was stopped by isolation. Deaths, 24.

A large bombproof, 180 yards by 5 feet, was made for the accommodation of the whole of the inhabitants of the laager, with protected ways, latrines, &c.

The women and children were rationed, the supply and distribution being efficiently carried out by Mr. Whiteley, without any kind of remuneration to himself.

This gentleman carried out the entire management of the laager with conspicuous success, and was very ably assisted by Rev. W. H. Weekes and Mr. Rowlands.

The following were the cases dealt with by the Court of Summary Jurisdiction:—

Charges.

House-breaking, 14.

Treason, 35.

Theft, 197.

Minor offences, 184.

Total, 430.

Punishments.

Death, 5.

Corporal punishment, 115.

Detention in gaol, 23.

Fines, 57.

Imprisonment with hard labour, 91.

Total 291.

Total fines, 140*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

III.—Engagements during the Siege.

Action of 14th October.

Six miles north of Mafeking on railway.

Early in the morning of the 14th October

our reconnoitring patrols exchanged shots with a strong party of the enemy, who were advancing along the railway 3 miles north of the town.

I ordered out the armoured train, under Captain Williams, British South Africa Police, to endeavour to rush the Boers and pour a heavy fire into them, as I wanted to make the first blow felt by them to be a really hard one. The train carried a 1-pounder Hotchkiss and a 303-inch Maxim, and 15 men, British South Africa Police.

I sent out, in support of the train, a squadron of the Protectorate Regiment, under Captain FitzClarence.

On coming up with the train he found it heavily engaged with the Boers, who had been strongly reinforced from their laager, some 7 miles north; they had also brought up a 7-pounder Krupp and a 1-pounder Maxim.

Captain FitzClarence, dismounting his men, advanced to attack with his left protected by the train.

For a quarter of an hour he was held by the enemy under a very hot fire, and then, pressing forward, well backed up by the train, he drove the enemy back and successfully beat off their several attempts to encircle his flank. Meantime, I sent up an additional troop under Lord Charles Bentinck, and also a 7-pr. These also became hotly engaged and did good work. The fire from the armoured train put the enemy's gun out of action before it had fired a shot, and eventually also drove the 1-pr. Maxim from the field.

The engagement lasted about 4 hours, and the enemy largely outnumbered our men, but Captain FitzClarence made up for this deficiency by the able handling of his men. Moreover, he kept his orders in mind, and when he saw the opportunity he got his wounded on to the train, and after driving the enemy back he withdrew his command quietly on Mafeking, covered by the train, without any attempt on the part of the enemy to follow him up.

In this, their first engagement, the Protectorate Regiment showed a spirit and dash worthy of highly-trained troops, and were most ably led by Captain FitzClarence and Lord C. Bentinck.

This smartly fought little engagement had a great and lasting moral effect on the enemy.

Their losses were afterwards found to amount to 53 killed (including four field cornets) and a large number wounded. They also lost a number of horses.

Our casualties were—

2 killed.

16 wounded (including two Officers).

1 missing (cyclist).

4 horses killed.

12 wounded.

Enemy's Attack on the Stadt,
25th October, 1899.

Enemy commenced shelling at 6.30 A.M. till midday from the east and south with 7 guns. At noon they commenced a general advance against the town from the south-west, east, and north-east; the south-west being the main attack directed against the Stadt. Their number about 3,000. The enemy commenced firing at extreme range, to which we made no reply, reserving our fire for close distances. So soon as our volleys and Maxims commenced the enemy stopped their advance, and soon began to withdraw at all points. Casualties on our side were one man wounded, and two horses and eight mules wounded; the Boers' losses

unknown, but probably considerable, as their ambulances were on the field picking up for over an hour after the engagement.

It was afterwards (10th December) ascertained that the attack on the Stadt was intended as a feint, while the main attack should come off to northward, on our western face. The Boers had expected the Baralongs not to fire on them, and so advanced more openly than they would otherwise have done; nor had they expected to find white men defending the Stadt. Their loss was, therefore, pretty heavy, and, surprised at their rebuff, they fell back altogether.

At one period of the action, a small mounted troop of Boers advanced at a gallop towards the western position, and came under fire of the Cape Police Maxim, which dropped five of them; the remainder rapidly dispersed.

During the afternoon some of our scouts near the Brickfields were moving, under fire, when one of them fell with his horse and lay stunned. Two Cape Police troopers in the works ran out and placed the injured man on his horse, and brought him in under heavy fire from the enemy: names, Troopers George Collins and W. F. Green.

Night Attack on Boer Trenches.

27th October, 1899.

During past two days enemy had moved their advanced trenches closer into the east face. I determined to make an attack on their main advanced trench with the bayonet, in order to discourage their advancing further.

A night attack was therefore organized with Captain FitzClarence's squadron, Protectorate Regiment, supported by a party of Cape Police. Guiding lights were hoisted, by which Captain FitzClarence was able to lead his party past the flank of the main trench.

The attacking force moved off 9.30 P.M. in silence, with magazines charged, but no cartridges in the chamber, the order being to use the bayonet only. The men wore white armlets and used "FitzClarence" as their pass word. The night was dark, but still. The squadron attained its position on the left rear of enemy's trench without being challenged or fired at. Captain FitzClarence then wheeled up his men, and with a cheer charged into the main and a subsidiary trench, and cleared both with the bayonet.

The enemy's rearward trenches opened a heavy fire, to which the Cape Police replied from a flank, in order to draw the fire on to themselves, and so to allow Captain FitzClarence's squadron to return unmolested.

The whole operation was carried out exactly in accordance with instructions, and was a complete success; the more so as the enemy, being taken by surprise, were in much confusion, and, as we afterwards discovered, fired into each other. Their casualties, we heard on reliable authority, amounted to 40 killed and wounded with the bayonet, 60 killed and wounded by rifle fire. Our casualties were six killed, nine wounded, two missing.

Killed.

4323 Corporal Burt, 17th Lancers.

442 Trooper Josiah Soundy, Protectorate Regiment.

443 Trooper Charles Mayfield Middleditch, Protectorate Regiment.

171 Trooper Thomas Fraser.

202 Robert Ryves MacDonald.

222 Alexander Henry Turner.

Wounded.

Captain FitzClarence, slightly.

Lieutenant Swinburne, slightly.
 Corporal Bernard Johnson.
 Corporal Clement Adkins.
 Trooper Arthur Bodill, severely.
 Trooper Charles Donovan.
 Trooper A. H. Hodgkinson.
 Trooper H. A. Dawson.
 Trooper F. W. Hooper.

Missing.

Trooper Thomas Powell.
 Trooper Franz Aurel.

The missing men were captured by the enemy.

Action at Cannon Kopje. 31st October, 1899.

The enemy opened a heavy, concentrated shell fire from the south-eastern heights, from the racecourse (east), and from Jackal's Tree (south-west), directed against Cannon Kopje. The fire was well aimed, and the racecourse gun took the work in reverse. For a time little harm was done beyond knocking down parts of the parapet and smashing the iron supports of the lookout tower: most of the garrison were lying in the trenches some 80 yards in rear of the fort. The gun and two Maxims in the work had been previously dismounted and stowed away for safety during shell fire, to which, of course, they were powerless to reply. The telephone wire was cut away early in the proceedings. After half an hour's steady and accurate artillery fire, the enemy, who had been gradually massing on the high ground south and south-east of the fort, began to advance in line of skirmishers from three sides at once; they were backed up by other parties in support. A large force also collected in the Molopo Valley, south-east of the town, and were formed evidently with the idea of storming the town after Cannon Kopje had been captured.

As the enemy began to get within range of the fort, the garrison moved up from their trench and manned the parapets and Maxims. It was then that we suffered some casualties from shell fire. As the enemy continued their advance, I sent to Captain Goodyear's Colonial Contingent to advance a party on to a ridge above them, and so to take enemy's attacking line in flank, but they could not be got to move.

One Maxim at Ellis's Corner now jammed, and I had to replace it by one from the reserve.

Meantime, I had a 7-pounder run out under cover of houses near south corner of the town. This opened, under direction of Lieutenant Marchison, on the flank of the enemy's line as it began to get near the fort. The gun made excellent practice, every shell going in among them, and effectually stopped the further advance of the Boers.

These now hesitated and began to draw off, and as they did so their guns reopened on Cannon Kopje to cover their retirement. The fire then died down, and enemy sent out ambulances under Red Cross flags to recover their dead and wounded. We lost six killed and five wounded.

Killed.

Captain the Hon. Douglas Marsham.
 Captain Charles A. K. Pechell.
 2391 Troop Sergeant-Major William Henry Connihan.
 Troop Sergeant-Major Hugh Bagot Upton.
 2566 Trooper Arthur John Martyn.
 2517 Frank St. Clair Traill Burroughes.

Wounded.

Quarter-Master-Serjeant E. O. Butler.
 Corporal A. J. Cook.
 Corporal F. C. Newton.
 Trooper C. W. Nicholas.
 Trooper F. R. Lloyd.

(The two latter died the following day.)

During this fight the Boers sent out a Red Cross flag on to a commanding point and then brought their guns up into position there. I visited Cannon Kopje after the fight and congratulated Colonel Walford and his men on the gallant and determined stand made by them in the face of a very hot shell fire.

The intention of the enemy had been to storm Cannon Kopje, and thence to bombard the south-eastern portion of the town, and to carry it with the large forces they had collected in the Molopo Valley. Their whole scheme was defeated by the gallant resistance made by the garrison, and by the telling fire it brought to bear on them. We afterwards learnt that the attack was designed and directed by young Cronje. The enemy's loss was not known, but ambulances were seen about the field picking up for a considerable time, and native spies reported there was much mourning in the laagers, and that several cart loads of dead had been brought in and buried.

Surprise on Enemy's Western Laager.

7th November, 1899.

At 2.30 A.M. Major Godley paraded his force, in accordance with a plan I had arranged, to attack the western camp of the enemy with a heavy fire at daylight, and then to retire again before enemy's guns and reinforcements arrived on the scene. The force in enemy's camp was reckoned at 200 to 250. Our force consisted of—

Two 7-pounders.

One 1-pounder Hotchkiss, under Major Panzera.

One squadron of 60 men, Protectorate Regiment, dismounted, under Captain Vernon.

One troop of 30 men, Bechuanaland Rifles mounted, under Captain Cowan.

The force moved out along the heights to about 1,500 yards in advance of Major Godley's position; Captain Vernon's squadron leading in attack order, with the guns on his left rear, and Bechuanaland Rifles covering his right rear.

At 4.15 A.M., our guns opened on enemy at 1,800 yards, and the squadron fired volleys by alternate troops into the enemy's camp, over which they had full command from the heights they were on. The surprise was complete, the enemy bolting in all directions to take cover. Their 1-pounder Maxim and 7-pounder Krupp in the Beacons Fort in a short time responded with a heavy and well-directed fire. Large bodies of reinforcements very soon began to come down from the main south-west laager. Major Godley thereupon commenced withdrawing his forces, artillery retiring first; the Bechuanaland Rifles occupying Fort Ayr to cover the retirement, which they did very effectively against a wing of mounted Boers who had worked round to our right flank. The enemy brought a very heavy musketry fire to bear on our force, but the retirement was carried out with the greatest steadiness. Enemy's strength about 800 or 1,000. Our retirement was further covered by 7-pounder at the west end of the Stadt, and the Cape Police Maxim and escort. In the course of the retirement our 1-pounder Hotchkiss upset and broke the limber hook; her crew, Gunners R. Cowan and H. Godson, very pluckily stood up and repaired

damage with rope, &c., and got the gun away safely under heavy fire from enemy's 1-pounder Maxim and 7-pounder Krupp and rifle fire.

Three of enemy's ambulances were seen picking up their casualties after the action, and we afterwards learnt that they had lost a considerable number. On our side we had five men wounded, five horses killed, five wounded, and 36 cattle in the refugee laager killed and wounded by bullets.

Names of Wounded.

Major Godley, slightly.

Trooper Hodgkinson, Protectorate Regiment.

Trooper J. G. Thompson, Protectorate Regiment.

Trooper P. J. Westdyk, Bechuanaland Rifles.

Corporal R. B. Christie, Cape Police.

On this day a commando of the Boers made a demonstration against Khama's men on the Limpopo, and opened fire upon them, but shortly after retired across the border.

Action at Game Tree.

26th December, 1899.

The Boers' work at Game Tree, 2,500 yards north of town, had checked our grazing in that direction, and it commanded our line of communication northward. Some shells thrown into it a few days previously had caused enemy temporarily to vacate it, showing it to be a weak open work; this had been confirmed by reconnaissance by our scouts, but as the enemy had been seen strengthening it during the past few days, I determined to attack before they should make it impregnable. Accordingly, two squadrons Protectorate Regiment, supported by armoured train and Bechuanaland Rifles, were ordered to attack from the left flank of the work, under direction of Major Godley, while three guns and Maxim prepared the way from the right front of the work. This scheme was carried out at dawn on the 26th, the guns making good practice, and the two squadrons advancing in attack formation exactly as required. But on pressing home the attack a heavy fire killed or wounded most of the Officers and the leading troops. These succeeded in gaining the parapet, but the work was found to have been strongly roofed in and so closed as to be impregnable.

The attack fell back upon the eastern face, and pushed forward again on the southern face, but eventually had to retire with a loss of—

Captain Vernon,

Captain Sandford,

Lieutenant Paton, and 21 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and,

Captain FitzClarence and 22 men wounded.

Three missing.

If blame for this reverse falls on anyone it should fall on myself, as everybody concerned did their part of the work thoroughly well, and exactly in accordance with the orders I had issued. Both Officers and men worked with splendid courage and spirit.

Boers' Attack.

12th May, 1900.

At about 4 A.M. on 12th May a very heavy long-range musketry fire was opened on the town from east, north-east, and south-east. I sounded the alarm, and the garrison stood to arms. The fire continued for half-an-hour. I thereupon wired to the south-west outposts to be on the look-out.

At about 4.30, 300 Boers made a rush through the western outposts and got into the Stadt; this they then set fire to. I ordered the western defenders to close in so as to prevent any supports from coming in after the leading body, and sent

the reserve squadron there to assist. They succeeded in driving off an attack of about 500 without difficulty and returned to round up their station. In the meantime the Boers in the Stadt had rushed the British South African Police fort and made prisoners the men in it, viz., three Officers and 16 men, staff of the Protectorate Regiment.

In the darkness the attackers had got divided up into three parties, and as it got light we were able to further separate these from each other, and to surround and attack them in detail. The first party surrendered, the second were driven out with loss by three squadrons Protectorate Regiment, under Major Godfrey*, and the third, in the British South African Police fort, after a vain attempt to break out in the evening, surrendered. During the whole of the day, while the struggle was going on in the Stadt, the enemy outside made demonstrations as if about to attack, and kept up a hot shell fire on the place, but without palpable effect.

We captured this day 108 prisoners, among whom was Commandant Eloff, Kruger's grandson. We also found 10 killed and 19 wounded Boers, and their ambulance picked up 30 more killed and wounded. Our losses were four killed, 10 wounded.

Our men, although weak with want of food and exercise, worked with splendid pluck and energy for the 14 hours of fighting, and instances of gallantry in action were very numerous.

Relief of Mafeking.

16th—17th May, 1900.

When relief became imminent, I formed a small force of 180 men and two guns, under Colonel Walford, capable of taking the field should it be desirable to make a diversion or counter-attack during the probable encounter between the investing force and the relieving column.

On the evening of the 16th May, the enemy contested the advance of the relief column 6 miles west of the place. Colonel Walford's party moved out and demonstrated as if to attack the Boers in rear. This caused them to withdraw a 1-pr. Maxim which had been posted on the probable line of advance of the column, and also a number of men with it. This move left the road open for Colonel Mahon's force to come into Mafeking, which it did during the night without the knowledge of the Boers.

Early next morning, seeing that the enemy were beginning to move wagons from the laager, I pushed forward Colonel Walford's force at once to attack, ordering the relief force to join in as soon as possible. This had a good effect, as our guns opened on their advanced trenches and prevented them from getting their 5-pounder away, and our men from the Brickfields, moving up the river, took the trench in rear and cleared it, killing five Boers and taking their flag and gun. Meanwhile, Colonel Mahon and Colonel Plumer's guns came into action and shelled the enemy's laager with great effect, the Boers going off in full flight, abandoning several wagons, camp equipment, hospital, &c. Colonel Walford's men, who had been working up through the bush, quickly took possession and drove off the enemy's rear guard without difficulty.

The operations connected with the relief of the place have, I assume, been reported on by Colonel Mahon, but I would add that his clever move near Maritzani, when he shifted his line of advance suddenly from one road to another, quite unexpected by the Boers, entirely puzzled

* ? Godley.

them, and disconcerted their plans. And again, after the fight outside Mafeking, when he bivouacked his column at nightfall, the Boers were prepared to renew the attack in the morning only to find that he had slipped into the place during the night, and was through the town and shelling their laager on the other side.

The whole operation of the two relief columns was exceedingly well conceived and carried out.

IV.—Recommendation of Officers and Others.

1. Staff.
2. Regimental.
3. Civil.
4. Warrant and non-commissioned officers and men.

1. Staff—Military.

Major Lord Edward Cecil, D.S.O., as Chief Staff Officer, was of the greatest assistance to me. He stuck pluckily to his work, although much hampered by sickness during the first part of the siege. He did a great amount of hard work in the first organization of the frontier force, and at Mafeking, his tact and unruffled temperament enabled our staff dealings with the Colonial civilians to be carried on with the least possible friction.

✓ Captain Ryan, Army Service Corps, as Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B), proved an exceptionally capable and energetic Supply Officer. On his shoulders fell the whole work of feeding the entire community, garrison, non-combatants, and native, a duty which he carried out with conspicuous success (practically unassisted), as we took the food supply out of the hands of contractors and merchants; and he lost the services of his two chief assistants, Captain Girdwood, killed, and Sergeant-Major Loney, convicted of theft of Government stores. Captain Ryan's work has been invaluable, and has mainly contributed to the successful issue of the siege.

Lieutenant Honourable A. Hanbury-Tracy, Royal Horse Guards, as Intelligence Officer and Press Censor, has worked hard and successfully, and with tact and firmness in his dealings with the Press correspondents.

Captain G. Wilson, Royal Horse Guards, as my Aide-de-Camp, in addition to his other duties, had charge of the soup and sowens kitchens, and did most useful work.

To both the above Officers I am much indebted for their willing work and personal assistance to myself.

Honorary Lieutenant McKenzie as Transport Officer did excellent work in the organisation of his departments, and in the purchase of mules and material, &c. In addition to his other duties, he acted as extra Aide-de-Camp to me, and was an exceptionally energetic and useful Staff Officer.

Major Panzera, British South Africa Police, as Commanding Artillery, showed himself a smart and practical gunner, endowed with the greatest zeal, coupled with personal gallantry in action. The great success gained by our little guns, even when opposed to the modern armament of the enemy, was largely due to Panzera's organization and handling of them.

In addition to these duties, he acted as my Brigade-Major, and proved himself a most reliable and useful Staff Officer.

Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) C. B. Vyvyan, the Buffs, was Base Commandant, Commanding Engineer, and (for 3 months) Town Commandant during the siege. As such, he organized the Town Guard and defences in

the first instance. To his untiring zeal and ability the successful defence of the town is largely due. He carried out a very heavy amount of work, practically single-handed, and with conspicuous success.

Major Anderson, Royal Army Medical Corps, throughout the siege showed untiring zeal, coupled with coolness and gallantry, in attending the wounded under fire in action, in addition to his eminent professional ability. Latterly, as Principal Medical Officer, his unfailing tact and administrative capabilities rendered his services of greatest value. The strain of his devotion to his duty told heavily on his health.

Medical Staff.—Dr. W. Hayes, Surgeon-Major Holmden, British South Africa Police, and Dr. T. Hayes, all worked with conspicuous zeal and skill under a never-ending strain of work; all of them very frequently under fire in carrying out their duties, even in their own hospital.

Nursing Staff.—The work done by the lady nurses was beyond all praise.

Miss Hill, the Matron of the Victoria Hospital, was assisted by a number of lady volunteers, in addition to her regular staff, consisting of Mrs. Parmister and Miss Gamble.

Mother Superior Teresa and eight Sisters of Mercy also worked in the hospital.

Lady Sarah Wilson, assisted by other ladies, managed the Convalescent Hospital.

Miss Craufurd managed the Women and Children's Hospital.

The above ladies worked with the greatest zeal and self devotion throughout the siege. The protracted strain of heavy work, frequently carried out under fire (Lady Sarah Wilson was wounded), told on most of them, Miss Hill being at one time prostrated by overwork. It was largely due to their unremitting devotion and skill that the wounded, in so many cases, made marvellous recoveries, and the health of the garrison remained so good.

Captain Greener, Paymaster, British South Africa Police, as Chief Paymaster, rendered most efficient and valuable service throughout the siege. He kept account of all Government expenditures and receipts connected with defence, feeding population, &c., in addition to his ordinary police and administrative accounts. By his care and zeal I am convinced that the Government were saved much expense.

2. Regimental.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hore, Staffordshire Regiment, raised, organized, and commanded the Protectorate Regiment, which did invaluable service in the siege.

Major Godley, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, as Adjutant of the Protectorate Regiment, had much to do with the successful organisation of the corps when it was first raised. As commander of the western defences of Mafeking throughout the siege his services were of the highest value. His coolness, readiness of resource, and tactfulness in dealing with the Colonials made him an ideal Officer for such command in action.

He was my right hand in the defence. I cannot speak too highly of his good work.

Colonel Walford, British South Africa Police, commanded the southern defences, with his detachment of British South Africa Police, throughout the siege with conspicuous success. Always cool and quick to see what was wanted, his services were most valuable.

Inspector Browne, Cape Police, commanded the detachment of Division 2, Cape Police. He and the splendid lot of men under his command did excellent work throughout the siege, especially in the occupation of the trenches in the

Brickfields, where for over a month they were within close range of the enemy's works, and constantly on the alert and under fire.

Inspector Marsh, Cape Police, Division 1, commanded the detachment of Division 1 throughout the siege, and carried out his duties most efficiently and zealously.

Captain Cowan, commanding the Bechuanaland Rifles (Volunteers), had his corps in such a condition of efficiency as enabled me to employ them in all respects as regular troops. He was at all times ready and zealous in the performance of any duty assigned to him.

(Local) Captain More, Resident Railway Engineer, organized most effectively the railway employes into a paid division for the armoured train, and a division for the Town Guard. He managed their rationing, hospital, defence works, protection for their women and children, &c., in a most practical manner. His energy and resourcefulness were conspicuous throughout the siege. The armoured trains, defence railway, search light, &c., were made under his supervision.

Captain Marsh, Royal West Kent Regiment, commanded a squadron of the Protectorate Regiment, with very good results. He also had charge of the defence of the native Stadt, and displayed great tact and patience in his successful management of the natives.

Captain Vernon, King's Royal Rifle Corps, was a most successful Officer in command of a squadron, and displayed the greatest gallantry in action. He was killed in action on 26th December.

Captain FitzClarence, Royal Fusiliers, commanded a squadron in the Protectorate Regiment. He distinguished himself on numerous occasions during the siege by his personal gallantry and exceptional soldierly qualities. He was twice wounded. I have reported more specially on his good work in a separate letter.

Lieutenant (local Captain) Lord C. Bentinck, 9th Lancers, commanded a squadron of the Protectorate Regiment, with very good results. He did good service by his zeal and readiness in action.

The following Officers also did much good and useful work:—

Captain A. Williams, British South Africa Police.

Captain Scholfield, British South Africa Police.

Lieutenant Daniells, British South Africa Police.

Lieutenant Holden, Protectorate Regiment.

Lieutenant Greenfield, Protectorate Regiment.

Lieutenant Feltham, Protectorate Regiment.

Corporal (local Lieutenant) Currie, City Police, did exceptionally good service in command of the Colonial Contingent, to which he succeeded when Captain Goodyear (who originally raised the corps) was severely wounded while gallantly leading his men.

The following organised and commanded, with most satisfactory results, the native cattle guards, watchmen, &c.:

(Local) Captain McKenzie, Zulus, &c.

Mr. D. Webster, Fingoes.

Corporal (local Serjeant) Abrams, Cape Police Baralongs.

These detachments all did most useful and loyal work at different times during the siege in spite of their privations.

Town Guard

Major Goold-Adams, C.B., C.M.G., Resident

Commissioner of the Protectorate, commanded the Town Guard during the last half of the siege. His extensive knowledge of the country and people (both native and white) was of the greatest value, and his advice was always most willingly at my disposal. I am greatly indebted for the great assistance he at all times afforded me. The fact that the natives of the Protectorate remained loyal to us at a very critical time is due in a great measure to his advice and great personal influence over them.

3. Civil.

Mr. C. G. H. Bell, Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner, had entire charge of native affairs, and he managed the chiefs with great tact, and very successfully, at a critical time, when they were inclined to sit on the fence and see which was going to win, and were being tempted with offers from the Boers. As magistrate he also rendered me great assistance during the siege.

Mr. F. Whiteley, Mayor of Makeing. This gentlemen's services were invaluable during the siege. In a most public-spirited manner he took up, at my request, the difficult task of arranging for the feeding and housing of all the women and children, and carried out their management with marked success throughout the siege, devoting himself to the task without any return whatever.

He was much assisted by Mr. Rowlands, who gave up his house, garden, water supply, &c., to be used by the laager, similarly without drawing any kind of compensation or return.

The Rev. Mr. W. H. Weekes also rendered valuable service in assisting in the management of the women's laager, &c.

Mr. Howat, Post and Telegraph Master, with his staff, namely—

Messrs. Campbell, Simpson, and McLeod did invaluable work in connecting up, and in keeping in communication with head-quarters the whole of the defence works by telephone. Their duties were unceasing, by night as well as by day, and were frequently carried out under heavy fire and at great personal risk. The zeal, energy, and willingness displayed by these officers was most conspicuous throughout the siege, and their work had a large share in bringing about the successful issue of the siege.

Mr. Heal, the jailer, carried out most arduous and difficult duties most loyally and efficiently. In addition to ordinary prisoners, he had in his charge military offenders, and also a large number of Dutch suspects, spies, and Irish traitors.

He was unfortunately killed by a shell, 12th May, at his post in the jail.

Serjeant Stewart, Cape Police, rendered valuable service as head of the civil police during the siege.

Mr. Millar, head of the refugees' laager, displayed much zeal and did excellent work in the management of the refugees' laager and defences, &c.

4. Non-commissioned Officers and Men.

Trooper (local Serjeant-Major) Hodgson, Cape Police, acted as Serjeant-Major to the Army Service Corps, and was of the greatest help to Captain Ryan. He proved himself to be a most thoroughly reliable, sober, and upright man, clever at his work, and particularly active and zealous in its performance.

Serjeant Cook, Bechuanaland Rifles, specially recommended for clever and plucky scouting, and for gallantry in action (*vide* separate letter).

Serjeant-Major Moffat, Signalling Staff, for

gallantry in action, in bringing a serjeant out of action under heavy fire. Also for good work as a signaller (*vide* separate letter).

Serjeant-Major Taylor, Colonial Contingent, for gallantry and general good work in the Brickfields, scouting, blowing up a kiln occupied by the enemy, &c.

This non-commissioned officer was killed in action.

Conclusion.

I should like to add that the conduct of the rank and file of the garrisons throughout the 31 weeks' siege, was beyond all praise. In all the long strain of privations, due to short rations and to the entire absence of all luxuries, as well as to living in the trenches month after month, there was no complaining, and the men took their hardships smiling. When there was fighting to be done they showed unexceptionable pluck and steadiness.

The Town Guard, formed of all the civilians capable of bearing arms, took to their duties as soldiers, and submitted themselves to military discipline with most praiseworthy readiness and success.

The self-devotion and good work of the ladies who acted as nurses in the hospitals, have already been alluded to, but the bravery and patience of all the women and elder children, under all the cruel dangers, anxieties, and privations to which they were exposed, were most exemplary.

The natives took their share in the defence of their Stadt, and showed great patience under their trials.

The notable feature of the siege was that the whole community was pervaded by a spirit of loyal endurance and cheery good feeling, under which all the usual local and private differences were sunk in the one great idea of maintaining Her Majesty's supremacy to the end. With such spirit to work on, the task of conducting the defence was an easy one.

R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL.

From Major-General Baden-Powell, Commanding North-West Frontier Forces, to the Chief Staff Officer to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C.

SIR, Ottoshoop, 6th June, 1900.

WITH reference to the recommendations of Officers for good service in the siege of Mafeking, as submitted in my report on the operations, I venture to recommend for special recognition the following from among those Officers:—

Major Godley.

Major Vyvyan.

Captain Ryan.

Major Lord E. Cecil.

Lieutenant-Colonel Walford.

Major Panzera.

All of whom did exceptionally good service.

Captain FitzClarence, for personal gallantry, recommended for the V.C.

Captain Marsh, good service in action.

Captain Ashley-Williams, good service in action.

Lieutenant Lord C. Bentinck, good service in action.

Major Anderson, medical services.

Major Gould-Adams, civil and political services.

Mr. C. C. H. Bell, civil and political services.

Mr. F. Whiteley (Mayor of Mafeking), eminent civil services. His reward would be highly appreciated by the townspeople, as recognition of their share in the defence.

In addition to the above, the following ladies for hospital services, viz.:—

Miss Hill.

Mother Teresa.

Lady Sarah Wilson.

Miss Craufurd.

The latter also for attending wounded Boers under fire on the 12th May.

I have, &c.,

R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL,
Major-General.

No. 14.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,

My LORD, Pretoria, 5th July, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for your Lordship's information, a letter, dated 19th June, 1900, from Lieutenant-General T. Kelly-Kenny, C.B., commanding Line of Communication from the Orange River to Kroonstad, submitting a report on the action at the Zand River on the 14th idem.

2. The troops engaged behaved in a very creditable manner, and I desire to bring to your Lordship's favourable notice the services rendered on this occasion by Lieutenant-Colonel J. E. Capper, R.E., commanding Railway Pioneer Regiment, who was senior Officer, and Lieutenant W. Mitchell, Railway Pioneer Regiment, who showed conspicuous coolness and gallantry.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieutenant-General T. Kelly-Kenny, C.B., Commanding Line of Communication from the Orange River to Kroonstad, to the Commander-in-Chief, South Africa.

Bloemfontein,

My LORD, 19th June, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to transmit Lieutenant-Colonel Capper's report of the action at Zand River on the 14th instant.

I hope your Lordship will agree with me in considering the behaviour of the troops engaged very creditable, and that the conduct of Lieutenant W. Mitchell, Railway Pioneer Regiment, deserves special recognition.

I have only to add to the report that, previous to the attack on the post, during the action, and since, Lieutenant-Colonel Capper, Royal Engineers, commanding Railway Pioneer Regiment, has been untiring in his duties.

I have, &c.,

T. KELLY-KENNY,
Lieutenant-General.

MILITARY SECRETARY,

REFERRING to my forwarding minute on Lieutenant-Colonel Capper's report of the action at Zand River on the 13th instant, and in support of the recommendation I made on behalf of Lieutenant Mitchell, Royal Engineers, I send the following extract from a note written to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Capper:—

Lieutenant Mitchell, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

"No veteran could have been steadier, and no one pluckier; he never let on to his men he was wounded for fear of discouraging them, but sat there as cheery as possible for six hours."

T. KELLY-KENNY,

25th June, 1900.

Lieutenant-General.

From Major-General C. E. Knox, Commanding Kroonstad, to Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny, Commanding Lines of Communication.

SIR, 16th June, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to forward report from the Officer Commanding detachment of troops stationed at Zand River, describing an attack made on his post yesterday.

I am glad to say that owing to the careful arrangements made for defence of the post by Lieutenant-Colonel Capper, commanding Railway Pioneers, and Colonel North, commanding 3rd Battalion Royal Lancaster Regiment, the attack failed.

I beg to bring both these Officers to your favourable notice.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES E. KNOX, Major-General,
Commanding Kroonstad.

Virginia, 15th June, 1900.

To General Knox,

WE were attacked at daybreak yesterday by Muller and Boerman's commandoes, said to be 800 men with one or two pompoms, one Maxim, and, I think, one field gun, but this is uncertain. We had to hold rather an extended position, our left being in trenches on very broken ground, and in thick scrub, which there was no time to clear. The enemy got in this scrub, and gave some trouble by sniping. The garrison consisted of four companies 3rd Battalion Royal Lancasters, under Colonel North (about 250 fit for duty), and four companies Railway Pioneer Regiment, under Major Seymour (about 300 fit for duty), together with 25 men, Royal Irish Regiment (Mounted Infantry), under Lieutenant Davenport (16 fit for duty). The attack was most pressed and determined on our left, and was held most steadily by No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment, under Lieutenant W. Mitchell, Railway Pioneer Regiment. Fighting was continued on all sides until about 11 A.M., when it quieted down, and the enemy had practically retired by the time a body of 170 Yeomanry, under Lieutenant Crane, arrived from the south at about noon. We had no opportunity of making a counter-attack, being practically surrounded in a very extended position, and I did not consider it advisable to attempt to follow up the enemy with the Yeomanry alone. The troops behaved very well and steadily. The Railway Pioneer Regiment in the advanced trenches on the left especially were most cool and collected, engaging the enemy at very close quarters. They were for part of the morning surrounded by the enemy in the scrub, but never lost their heads, and the enemy were ultimately driven out of the scrub by an advance through it of a line of reserve, Railway Pioneer Regiment, aided by half company of Militia.

I regret to report that our losses were—

Killed.

Major Seymour, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

250 Lance-Corporal A. E. Smith, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

56 Private A. Miller, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

366 Lance-Corporal A. Matthew, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

632 Private H. Dant, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

386 Private T. B. Varker, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

Dangerously Wounded.

Lieutenant J. Clement, No. 2 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment (since dead).

Company Sergeant-Major H. Pitt, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

6845 Sergeant Gray, 3rd Battalion Royal Lancaster Regiment.

Seriously Wounded.

Lieutenant W. Mitchell, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

639 Private Ross, No. 3 Company, Railway Pioneer Regiment.

4738 Lance-Corporal Jackson, 3rd Battalion Royal Lancaster Regiment.

1898 Private Montgomery, Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry.

1632 Private Ruddy, Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry.

Missing.

(Prisoners, believed to be uninjured.)

731 Private Bourne, Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry.

5420 Private Driscoll, Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry.

I cannot speak too highly of Lieutenant W. Mitchell, a young Officer, who was wounded in both thighs about 6 A.M., in going from one trench to another to encourage the men, and remaining throughout the day in the most exposed trench, keeping his men (22 in number, scattered among several small trenches) calm, and cheering them up, ordering them not to waste ammunition, &c. I attribute to his example, and the very steady conduct of the men of his Company in the advanced trenches, who suffered severely (one holding three men had one killed, and one holding five men had two killed), the fact that our losses were so comparatively small.

I especially deplore the death of Major Seymour, whose loss will not only be felt by us as a regiment, but by the whole of South Africa. He was killed while advancing with the extended line through the bush, to clear out the snipers. Four dead Boers were found in a donga, within 40 yards of No. 3 Company's advanced trenches, and two were found on our right outside the Militia trenches.

The enemy's loss is known to be these six, and it is probable that some more were hit. We took nine prisoners, of whom one was wounded. I sent off a son of the wounded man with a letter to Commandant Boerman, asking him and advising him to give up his arms. It is thought that the commando is retiring on Senekal. I sent an engine down last evening to try and open communication with the south, but up to the present, 7.30 A.M., have not heard of it. The telegraph wires were broken. I am sending to Doornspruit this morning to ascertain if the party there are all right. I regret to report that most of my men were killed with explosive and soft-nosed bullets, and I have in my possession a number of explosive and soft-nosed bullets taken from the dead, and from the bandoliers of prisoners who have surrendered.

I have the honour to inquire if the prisoners in whose possession they were found should be shot, as I am unaware of the orders of the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief on the subject.

J. E. CAPPER, Lieut.-Colonel,
Officer Commanding Troops, Virginia.

No. 15.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,

MR LORD, Pretoria, 9th July, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's information a report, dated 23rd May, 1900, from Brigadier-General B. T. Mahon, D.S.O., describing the march of the Flying

Column under his command from Barkly West to Mafeking, and the relief of the latter place, in conjunction with the force under Colonel Plumer.

2. The operation entrusted to Brigadier-General Mahon was conducted by him with conspicuous ability and energy, and I would draw special attention to the skill which he displayed in evading the enemy, who had arranged to dispute his advance along the main road, by deflecting his line of march to the west. Credit is also due to Brigadier-General Mahon for the dispositions which resulted in the defeat of the Boers on 13th and 16th May, and opened the way into Mafeking.

The admirable behaviour of the troops during the march and in action contributed most materially to the successful issue.

I would especially bring Colonel Plumer's name to your notice. His hearty co-operation at the right moment was of immense value to Colonel Mahon.

I am also informed that Mrs. Abrams, an Englishwoman living at Taungs, rendered valuable assistance by giving information to Lieutenant-General Hunter and Colonel Mahon, and I would add that the native chief Molala of Taungs did excellent work by supplying horses and runners during the siege of Mafeking.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Colonel B. Mahon to Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B., Commanding 10th Division.

IN accordance with orders received from you I left Barkly West on 4th May, 1900, in command of Flying Column for relief of Mafeking. We reached Spitz Kop on 5th May and from the top of a hill there I could see your engagement to the east near Rooidam, a party of the Boers you were engaged with seemed to be moving north-west in the direction of our road, I moved the Imperial Light Horse and Royal Horse Artillery so as to intercept them, but they turned east and we did not come in contact.

I despatched Captain Rickman with one squadron Kimberley Mounted Corps to join you.

The next Boers we came across were at Taungs, where a patrol of ours chased them as they were leaving, and picked up a portfolio, which one of them dropped, with their latest telegrams, one of which stated that Young Cronje with his commando was moving north to intercept us at Pudimoe.

From Pudimoe there was a Boer commando marching parallel to us on our right flank.

In the Pudimoe district we arrested several rebels and seized a number of rifles, also sheep, cattle, and some horses; between Pudimoe and Vryburg no Boers were seen, but we made some more prisoners and seized several rifles and some stock.

At Vryburg I left Mr. C. St. Quintin in charge and gave him powers of acting magistrate, and Mr. P. Gethin as his assistant. I left our sick at Vryburg under charge of Dr. Nugent.

I also left the live stock we had captured and our sick horses and mules under charge of Mr. P. Gethin. No Boers were encountered until the 13th May between Brodie's and Wright's Farms, north-west of Koodo's Rand; the Boers here had an ambush in thick scrub, which was strongly supported from Koodo's Rand (at Koodo's Rand Nek they had several guns in position); they made a determined attack, but

we beat them off after 45 minutes' fighting; all troops behaved excellently.

From what I have since heard there were 900 Boers there with four guns, viz., 500 who had marched up parallel to us, and 400 which had come from Mafeking to intercept us; the two forces joined on the 12th.

We crossed the Marotzani at Dr. Smart's Farm and had difficulty in watering, as we had to dig in the dry bed of the river for it; but, although it took 8 hours to water the force, we managed it all right; we marched from Marotzani direct to Jan Masibi on the night of the 14th and reached the Molopo (lots of running water) at Jan Masibi at 5.30 A.M. on the 15th, and there met Colonel Plumer's column, which had also just arrived after a night march.

We all rested on the 15th, as both men and animals required it.

I formed the force into two brigades, 1st Brigade under Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer, 2nd Brigade under Lieutenant-Colonel Edwardes.

We advanced at 6.30 A.M. towards Mafeking, along the north or right bank of the Molopo, in two parallel columns at half a mile interval, the convoy in the centre and slightly in rear.

Plumer's brigade on the right and Edwardes' on the left. At Sani's Post, about 12.30 P.M., firing was heard on the left front, and I advanced Edwardes' brigade; Plumer's at the same time advancing along the river; the convoy following on the road in rear of and between the two brigades. As we advanced I found that the Boers had taken up positions all around us, and had five guns and two pompoms in positions in different places.

The convoy rather impeded my movements, as it was under shell fire, and the Boers were trying to attack it from both flanks and also from the rear, so I had to strengthen both my flank and rear guards, at the same time I continued my advance on Mafeking; the Boers retiring from our front and keeping up with us on the flanks. Our Artillery, especially the Royal Horse Artillery, were making very good practice. At 4.40 P.M. I ordered Colonel Edwardes to bring up his left and turn the Boer right flank, this movement was entirely successful. At 4.40 P.M. I had a message from Colonel Plumer to say his advance was checked on the right by a gun and pompom fire from the White Horse (Israel's Farm). I ordered the Royal Horse Artillery to shell the house. They soon silenced the gun, but not the pompom. I then sent Captain Carr with the Infantry to take the house, which they did, and captured one wagon and a lot of pompom ammunition. It was by this time getting dark, or I think they would have got the pompom.

At 5.45 P.M. all firing, except stray shots of the rear guard, had ceased, and the Boers had retired from all parts. I advanced two miles nearer Mafeking, and formed up the force, with the exception of infantry, which I reinforced with 50 New Zealand Infantry, and left holding the White House. The Boer fire was very heavy at times, and their guns very accurately laid. I attributed the smallness of our casualties to our very wide front and loose formation, and to the excellent way in which our Artillery was served, especially the Royal Horse Artillery, as they never gave the Boers an opportunity of getting fixed tenure in any positions which allowed them a close range fire, and partly to the defectiveness of the Boer shells, very few of which burst.

At 11 P.M., after first ascertaining by patrol that the road was open, I ordered an advance on Mafeking. We started at 12.30 A.M., and

marched seven miles to Mafeking, which place we entered at 3.30 A.M. on the 17th of May, 1900. Shortly after daylight it was reported that the Boers were clearing out of all their laagers on the east of the town. At 8 A.M. Colonel Baden-Powell ordered out the troops, and we shelled and pressed for a short way, but the horses were too beat to do much. However, we captured one gun and a large quantity of ammunition and other stores, and by 11 A.M. there was not a Boer near Mafeking.

I cannot say what the Boer losses were in either engagement, but from what I have since heard I believe they were fairly heavy. I saw one man at Kraaipan who assisted in burying 22 Boers on the 14th May.

I estimate the number of Boers engaged against us on the 17th of May at about 2,000.

I cannot speak too highly of the behaviour of all ranks, more especially the Royal Horse Artillery and Imperial Light Horse, both during the march, which was long and tiring, and during both engagements. The march was rendered the more fatiguing by having an active enemy on our flank always looking for an opportunity to delay and harass us, and thus rendering scouting more necessary, and extra work on men and horses.

The following farmers were very useful to us and rendered us every assistance, viz., Mr. Keely, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Brodie, and Mr. Wright. The latter had our wounded (25) from the engagements on the 13th May, 1900, in his house, and was most kind in many ways to them. All the above live in the Marotzani district.

I brought into Mafeking five wagon loads of provisions and hospital stores, equalling 10,500 lbs.; also 17 bags of flour and 81 head of cattle (these latter, viz., flour and cattle, were captured on the march), and handed them over to Ordnance Corps Stores, Mafeking. I at the same time sent for 200 more cattle and 1,000 sheep to Vryburg: they duly arrived, and I handed them over about the 23rd May.

B. MAHON, Colonel,
Commanding Mafeking Relief Column.
Mafeking, 23rd May, 1900.

No. 16.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the
Secretary of State for War.
Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
Pretoria, 1st August, 1900.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to forward, for your Lordship's information, a despatch, dated 29th June, 1900, from Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren, describing the operations in the vicinity of Faber's Put on 30th May.

2. I consider that the force under Lieutenant-General Warren's command was ably handled, and that the troops displayed great steadiness and gallantry when attacked by the Boers.

3. I support Sir Charles Warren's recommendations on behalf of the Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men whose names he has brought to special notice.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren,
Military Governor of Cape Colony, North of
Orange River, to Chief of Staff, Head-Quarters,
Pretoria.

Attack on Faber's Put.

SIR, Bickfontein, 29th June, 1900.

1. AFTER having occupied Douglas, on 21st May, I found that the whole country west of Vaal River was occupied by rebels, encamped in a great number of laagers, and frequently shifting from place to place, so that it was difficult to obtain any clear estimate of their numbers, the estimate of the Intelligence Branch varying from 700 to 2,000 within a 50-mile radius, it has since been apparent that the numbers are not less than 1,000.

2. Our objectives were the townships of Campbell and Griquatown, which stand on a raised plateau, about 400 or 500 feet above the level of the Vaal River; this plateau is terminated on the east by a steep ridge, about 400 feet high, running 50 or 60 miles north-east and south-west, at a distance of about 10 to 12 miles from the Vaal River. Roads pass up from the river on to the high lands through various deep kloofs, which a few resolute men could defend against a considerable number, and the only point where I considered we could attack without a very heavy loss was at Tweefontein, where the position could be turned by a flank movement; but this position was very difficult of access on account of the thick thorn bush covering its front, as well as the dense bush on the plateau between it and Campbell. The whole country for miles round is covered with bush, more or less thick, with kopjes every here and there presenting excellent positions for defence and ambushade.

3. The only good position that could be selected as a base for an attack on Tweefontein was that of Faber's Put, where there was plenty of water, and a hollow surrounded by hills where horses could be kept more or less secure from musketry at long ranges.

4. I began to concentrate my force at this place on the 27th May, about 10 miles east of Tweefontein, and was unable to move forward owing to delay in transport of food which did not arrive until the night of 29th of May, accompanied by an escort of 50 Infantry. This convoy must have arrived shortly before the enemy, on their way to attack us at Faber's Put, passed across the road.

5. Ridges encircle Faber's Put to the north-east and west, while a shallow valley runs from the water through the garden to the south. The north and north-west is the front of the position, and the south is the rear, facing on the Vaal River. There are two farm houses about 800 yards apart at north-east and north-west, and the Infantry picquets occupied the whole of this front, the Infantry being bivouacked near the north-east farm house, where were also my head-quarters; the men of the Intelligence Branch and Warren's Scouts and some Infantry were at the north-west farm house, while the Yeomanry and Artillery were in the hollow occupying the kraals around the water and northern portion of the garden, providing the picquets on the ridges south-east and south-west.

Daylight was at this time at 6 A.M., reveillé being at 5.30 A.M.

6. On the night of the 29th the rebels collected at Campbell from several points, and arranged for an early morning attack on Faber's Put, in three parties, under De Villiers, Ventner, and Forster. One party, under Forster, to attack the Infantry camp and head-quarters farm house, composed of men from the northern part of Ha

and Barkly West districts; the second party of crack shots, under Commandant-General De Villiers, from the country about Campbell and Griquatown, to steal into the garden and attack the Yeomanry and Artillery; and a third party, under Ventner, composed of men from the country about Postmasberg, who were to take possession of the western ridge and fire into the kraals and Artillery.

7. Their scheme, so far as I can ascertain, was as follows:—

No. 1 party was to go direct upon the Infantry and take possession of the farm house where I and my Staff were, and the firing of No. 1 party was to be the signal for a simultaneous attack on the Yeomanry from the gardens, and on the kraals and Artillery from No. 3 party, the rebels being quite satisfied that the attack would be successful. No. 3 party took possession of some old diamond diggings on the crest of the hill, about 200 yards from our picquet, where they could fire upon the kraals and upon our Infantry at a range of about 1,700 yards.

8. I was up that morning at reveillé, making up a good fire, as the thermometer was below freezing; and some minutes before 6 A.M., heavy firing commenced from the east upon our headquarters and the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles' camp. The Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles were all on the alert, and at once moved out two companies in the direction of the firing. I stopped one company to act as reserve, and the fourth company went off to hold our front and north. Some of the enemy crept up through the bush to within 250 yards of my head-quarters, which could not be prevented in this very thick bush by any number of picquets, and were driven back by the Maxim Gun Detachment and the two companies, under Captain Twycross, moving out to meet them. These two companies drove the enemy right back to the eastern ridge and thence, in an easterly direction, right away over the bushy plain. This took about half an hour, and the fire from this quarter was over about 6.30 A.M., but while it lasted it was exceedingly heavy and well directed, the equipment of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles being smashed to pieces by the bullets in all directions. A portion of this party, some of the rebels have informed me, were stationed at long ranges with instructions simply to fire into the kraals and camp.

9. After placing a company of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles in readiness in reserve, I mounted and went across with my Staff close to the main farmhouse to see that the Yeomanry were on the alert and the Artillery were getting ready to come into action whenever it was necessary, for it was still dark and it was impossible to conjecture the exact point where the fire was coming from. Major F. Heath, C.S.O., and my two Aides-de-Camp were with me, and in returning across the open space when it was almost daylight we were subjected to an exceedingly heavy fire, which was directed with such precision that I came to the conclusion that it must be at very short ranges; it proved to be less than 400 yards. Both Major Kelly, A.D.C., and Lieutenant Paton, A.D.C., were wounded, and Major Heath had his horse shot under him.

10. It was now daylight, and I dismounted to direct the fire of the reserve company, Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles, who were now under a very hot fire from the south-west, and, just as I arrived, Colonel Spence, who had sat up to give a direction, was mortally wounded.

I now saw some of our troops moving out to the south-west hill to support their picquets, and being sure that part of the fire came from the continuation of the ridge to their left, I directed the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles to fire at the ridge at 2,000 yards so as to keep down the enemy's fire and support our advance.

11. I had felt certain on coming across the open that it would be quite impossible we could be followed with such accuracy by bullets, if the range was more than 500 yards, and now I found with the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles, that whenever any movement was made by a superior Officer, there were at once a shower of bullets all round him, making me feel certain that the hot fire upon us for the most part must be from the gardens at about 600 yards. Several men of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles also told me that they saw flashes of firing from the garden, and although I knew that we had men in the garden, and had seen some of the south-east picquets retiring into the garden, I made sure that it must be occupied by a large number of Boers, and directed the reserve company to fire on to it at a range of 500 yards, and I then went on to a kraal near the head-quarters where the Maxim gun was, and ordered the fire of all the Infantry there and of the Maxim gun to be directed on it, and to be distributed along the nearer edges of it. After about ten minutes I collected half of Captain Simkin's company together and directed him to charge the gardens by a route I pointed out, but while doing so the enemy were seen to be running away from the gardens. The Artillery came into action beyond the gardens, and in a few minutes the whole attack was over. Throughout this part of the action the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles acted with all the steadiness of well-seasoned troops.

12. No. 2 party, who went to the garden, appear to have arrived there in the early morning, and their numbers, as given to me by a considerable number of Boers from different parts, was 56, out of which they say only four returned unwounded. Many of these were known to be among the noted shots of Griqualand West, many of whom were killed; they were under Commandant De Villiers, who is stated to have threatened that he would shoot any man who attempted to retire from the gardens; they were mostly men who knew the farm intimately, which alone accounts for their being able to occupy and line the edge of the garden without being seen, as men of the Yeomanry were constantly in and out of the garden during the night, where there was a latrine, and a Yeomanry guard in the kraal, and a sentry walking between the garden and the blockhouse at the northern end of the garden. It seems probable that they effected the entry of the garden unheard during the noise made by the convoy coming in.

13. They appear to have commenced their fire from this garden at about 6 A.M.; they commenced their fire upon a kraal where the Colt gun was with a party of Yeomanry, and upon some of Paget's Horse who were exposed on the left. Two or three of their men got into the blockhouse, but the Artillery and a great part of the Yeomanry were quite secure in their bivouacs from fire from the garden; subsequently they fired on a party of the Yeomanry under Colonel Crawley moving out to the ridge towards the west to support the picquet at that point, while another party in the gardens fired on anybody moving on the open space between the gardens and upon the reserve company of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles in position near their camp.

14. When the firing commenced, Colonel Crawley, commanding 8th Battalion of Yeomanry (not knowing that the enemy were in the garden close to him), finding firing from four different directions and having seen his horses stampeded, judged the best defence would be to make an offensive movement, south-west to reinforce his picquet on the ridge, and from there direct a fire into the garden, or on to the enemy further along on the ridge. He took 30 men with him, and 80 followed shortly afterwards; it was during this advance across the open that nine men of the Yeomanry were killed. This detachment under Colonel Crawley reinforced the picquet, and forced No. 3 party, under Ventner, to retire from the diamond diggings on the ridge.

While Colonel Crawley was making this advance, Lieutenant Huntingdon, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry, whose bivouac was close to the garden, covered his left flank by firing at close range into the garden while under a heavy fire. This, no doubt, saved Colonel Crawley from suffering heavier loss.

15. This rebel party under Ventner had the duty of occupying the diamond diggings so as to fire at long ranges into our camp, and some of the more daring of the men were directed to occupy a stone cemetery about 600 yards from the large kraal and to go right down to the kraal itself, fire into it, and stampede the English horses of the Yeomanry which Colonel Crawley had placed there and which he had omitted to ring. It is not certain whether two or more rebels got so far as the kraal, but it is certain they fired into the kraal in the dark, and that the English horses at once surged up against the wall of the kraal, pushed it over, and stampeded in all directions.

16. Lieutenant-Colonel Hughes, who was at main farm house with the scouts, on hearing the firing and seeing the horses stampede, got together a few of his men and rushed into the kraal, opening a brisk fire on the ridge where the Boers were in the diamond washings, until they were obliged to cease fire, by the Yeomanry advancing out in front of them. At the same time Captain Parkin and a troop of 23rd Yeomanry took possession of the south end of the same kraal, and acted under the orders of Colonel Hughes. By holding this kraal they prevented the rebels getting hold of it from the direction of the cemetery. At this time the rebels began to run away from the south side of the garden, and were, in doing so, exposed to our fire, but Colonel Hughes, supposing them to be our own men, ordered Captain Parkin and party to cease fire, and they thus escaped. Colonel Hughes then decided to outflank the enemy, and with some of the Yeomanry and some good shots of various corps, he drove the enemy up beyond the direction of the cemetery, thus getting in line with Colonel Crawley and bringing his right shoulder up he took Ventner's men on their flank and drove them away to the south.

17. The picquet on the hill which Colonel Crawley went to reinforce under Corporal Wilson, 23rd Company, gallantly held its own against a superior force until relieved. A section of Yeomanry, with two Colt guns under Lieutenant Brooklebank, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry, in the kraal near the garden, were under a heavy fire for a considerable time, and the shields to the guns were smashed to pieces; they were joined by a party of Yeomanry under Sergeant Fawkes and made a most gallant defence at close range.

18. The whole attack did not take more than an hour, and as soon as the enemy cleared off I pushed out the available mounted men, two guns, and two companies of Infantry across the

veldt to the north to endeavour to intercept the enemy, but there were not sufficient horses left to do more than scouting, and though some shells were fired very close to the retreating enemy, both east and west, I was unable to intercept them. I then proceeded to collect together the stampeded horses, but some of them stampeded for over 20 miles, and they have not yet been all got together.

Several acts of gallantry occurred during the attack, mostly in cases where the firing was at very short ranges, which I will bring forward.

Since the action of Faber's Put, the rebels in all directions have continued to surrender in increasing numbers, and with one consent the whole of the rebels say that the repulse at Faber's Put and great loss they sustained there caused a sudden collapse of the rebellion.

19. I consider that this attack was a very fortunate occurrence, as with the very splendid shooting of so many of the rebels in this part of the country it would have been impossible to have attacked and taken the position about Campbell and Griquatown without a far greater loss than was sustained at Faber's Put, and with our small force we could not have hoped to have killed so many of the enemy in any attack we could make, as their mobility is so immeasurably superior to ours. It was fortunate that our troops were not taken by surprise in this attack as otherwise the loss would have been far greater. The whole of the troops behaved with remarkable steadiness and carried out their movements under fire with the greatest coolness.

I have not been able to estimate the number that attacked us, but from general information they cannot have been less than five to six hundred.

20. The troops engaged were:—

Duke of Lancaster Yeomanry, 23rd Company.

Westmoreland and Cumberland Yeomanry, 24th Company.

Paget's Horse, small detachment.

4 guns "E" Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery.

4½ Companies Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Regiment.

Warren's Scouts.

21. The main farm house was rapidly cleared out and turned into a hospital under the directions of the Senior Medical Officer. All the medical arrangements were most satisfactory, the following Officers having done very excellent work, not only in the hospital, but also in the field dressing the wounds under heavy fire, viz.:—

Major McLaughlin, Senior Medical Officer.

Major Cox, Officer Commanding Cape Field Hospital.

Major Worthington, attached Canadian Artillery.

Captain C. Smith, attached 8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

22. An attack of this kind in South Africa is almost unprecedented, and would test to the utmost the vigilance and arrangements of well-seasoned troops; but the whole of the troops were equal to the occasion and stood their ground in a most magnificent manner.

23. Although the Officers and men were acting in a most gallant way all over the field, there are a few special instances which I would more specially particularize, viz.:—

The bringing in of Lieutenant Lethbridge, Paget's Horse, and Trooper Park, both severely wounded, under a very heavy fire, by—

Lieutenant Claude Lowther, 24th Company, 8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

Trooper Hurst, 24th Company, 8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

Trooper Elce, 23rd Company, 8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

Trooper Mather, Paget's Horse.

Trooper Looker, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry, who was seriously wounded in the groin, refused to be taken to the ambulance, but continued to fire into the garden until the enemy retired.

The determination and courage of Lieutenant Brocklebank, Commanding Colt Gun Section, 8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, and his gun party, assisted by Sergeant Fawkes, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry, with 17 men, in holding kraal and fighting his Colt guns, is beyond all praise.

These guns were within 100 yards of the enemy's firing line, and one of the shields was shattered to pieces.

I have to name the following Officers and men as being particularly worthy of mention for the excellent services they performed in their respective spheres during the day :—

Personal Staff.

Major Kelly, R.A., A.D.C., severely wounded.

Lieutenant Paton, A.D.C., wounded.

Staff.

Major F. C. Heath, A.A.G., horse shot under him.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hughes, Intelligence Officer.

"E" Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery, Major Ogilvie.

8th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

Colonel Crawley, Commanding, Imperial Yeomanry.

Captain Kemp, Commanding, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Captain Parkin, Commanding, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Lieutenant Huntington, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry (wounded).

Lieutenant Williams, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry (wounded).

Lieutenant J. Brocklebank, Officer Commanding Gun Section, Imperial Yeomanry.

Lieutenant C. Lowther, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Sergeant Fawkes, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Corporal Wilson, 24th Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Trooper Looker, 23rd Company, Imperial Yeomanry.

Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Regiment.

Colonel Spence (killed in action).

Major T. Lewis (who commanded the regiment on death of Colonel Spence).

Captain G. Twycross.

Captain W. Simkins.

Lieutenant W. Prince.

Lieutenant B. H. Thorne.

Sergeant-Major Pearson, in charge of Maxim gun.

Warren's Scouts.

Captain Mackie, Royal Canadian Artillery.

I regret very much the loss of Colonel Spence, Commanding Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles, a most gallant and efficient Commanding Officer.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES WARREN,

Lieutenant-General, Military Governor of Cape Colony, North of Orange River.

No. 17.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa, to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, Pretoria,

My LORD, 25th September, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to forward for your Lordship's information a report, dated 4th August, 1:00, with enclosure and plans of engagements, from Lieutenant-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., describing the operations carried out under his command from the 25th June to the 1st August, 1900, which resulted in the unconditional surrender of Generals Prinsloo and Crowther with 4,140 of their men and three guns, besides many horses and rifles and a large quantity of ammunition.

2. I am of opinion that the operations under reference were conducted by Lieutenant-General Hunter with marked ability and judgment, and that the behaviour of the troops both on the march and when engaged with the enemy, merits high commendation.

3. While it is to be regretted that the commandos under Generals C. de Wet and Olivier contrived to break through the British force surrounding the Brandwater Basin, it must be remembered that the country was extremely difficult, and that owing to their intimate knowledge of the ground the Boer leaders could move at night along routes which our own Officers were at the time imperfectly acquainted with, and which, therefore, were not blocked in sufficient strength to preclude the escape of a portion of the enemy from the invested area.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieutenant-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., Commanding Operations in the Eastern Districts of the Orange River Colony, to the Chief of the Staff, South Africa.

Fouriesburg,

Sir, 4th August, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to report that on 25th June, in accordance with your orders, I assumed command of Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's force at Heidelberg.

2. The force consisted at the time of the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Brigades, the 2nd Mounted Infantry Brigade, the 21st Infantry Brigade, Rimington's Guides, and Divisional Artillery, whilst two squadrons of Scottish Yeomanry were also added to it from the 10th Division, making a total effective strength of 416 Officers, 7,312 men, 3,942 horses, and 30 guns.

3. Leaving Heidelberg on 27th June, I marched, preceded by the Cavalry under Brigadier-General Broadwood, by Villiersdorp, Frankfort, and Reitz to Bethlehem, which place I reached on 9th July.

I cleared the country I marched through of all horses and supplies.

4. At Frankfort, on 3rd July, I was joined from Heilbron by Major-General MacDonald with the following troops: three battalions Highland Brigade, 12th Company, Imperial Yeomanry, Eastern Province Horse, Lovat's Scouts, and the 5th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, a total strength of 4,008 men, 1,801 horses, and six guns.

5. At Reitz I left Major-General Bruce Hamilton with the 21st Brigade, two batteries, Royal Field Artillery, and the 7th Mounted Infantry, with orders to send a convoy of all empty wagons, with escort of one battery and a battalion, to Heilbron to fetch further supplies.

Major-General Bruce Hamilton rejoined me at Bethlehem on 11th July with the remainder of his troops.

6. I found that Bethlehem had been occupied on 7th July, after two days' fighting, by the troops under command of Major-Generals Clements and Paget.

Major-General Clements' Brigade left again for Senekal on 9th July to bring up supplies.

7. On 11th July I detached the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Heilbron, via Reitz, and the same day received your instructions placing the troops of Lieutenant-General Sir L. Rundle and Major-General Clements under my orders.

8. The enemy, whose strength was estimated at 6,000 to 8,000 men with 20 guns, had retired through the mountains to the south of Bethlehem into the basin of the Brandwater, and were holding positions of great natural strength at Naauwport, Retief's and Slabbert's Nek, Witnek, and Commando Nek, positions which appeared to mark the only possible points of ingress and egress into and from the mountainous district which lay before me. I subsequently learnt that, in addition to several bridle paths over the hills, there was yet another exit available for the enemy in the pass of Golden Gate, which lies at the north-eastern extremity of the basin in the direction of Harrismith.

9. The task imposed upon me by the instructions of the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief was to block the enemy into the enclosed district into which he had retired, to prevent his escape, bring him to action, and if possible force him to surrender.

10. At the date of the assumption by me of command of the whole of the troops in the eastern districts of the Orange River Colony, the disposition of the investing line was as follows:—

The 8th and Colonial Divisions, under Lieutenant-General Sir L. Rundle, distributed upon a general line Ficksburg—Biddulphsberg, were charged with watching Witnek, Rooikranz, Moolman's Kloof, and Commando Nek, and preventing any outbreak of the enemy in a south-easterly direction.

Major-General Clements' 12th Brigade, awaiting supplies from Senekal, was at Biddulphsberg, whilst at Bethlehem were Brigadier-General Broadwood's 2nd Cavalry Brigade; Brigadier-General Ridley's 2nd Mounted Infantry Brigade; the Highland Brigade, under Major-General MacDonald; the 21st Brigade, under Major-General Bruce Hamilton; and the 20th Brigade, under Major-General Paget.

11. On 13th July, fighting occurred between a party of Mounted Infantry and some Boers entrenched at Meyer's Kop, 10 miles to the west of Bethlehem, which resulted in Lieutenant Robbins (Imperial Yeomanry) and 11 men being wounded, and on the following day I despatched Brigadier-General Ridley with 1,300 Mounted Infantry; the 5th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; two sections, "R" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; and the 1st Battalion, Highland Light Infantry to the scene of the skirmish. Brigadier-General Ridley found Meyer's Kop now unoccupied, and at 4 p.m. he returned to Bethlehem.

12. As the southern portion of the investing line now seemed to me to be the weakest, and constant rumours reached me of an intention on the part of the enemy to break out in that direction, I detached Brigadier-General Broadwood on 15th July with the 2nd Cavalry Brigade along the Bethlehem—Senekal road, and Major-General Paget, 20th Brigade, with eight guns, and the 14th

and 15th Companies, Imperial Yeomanry, also proceeded the same day in that direction.

13. During that night, as I learnt later, a force consisting of from 1,500 to 2,000 Boers, with four guns and 100 wagons under General C. De Wet, and accompanied by ex-President Steyn, broke out from Slabbert's Nek, and was engaged throughout the 16th with the troops of Generals Paget and Broadwood towards Klipscheur and Bulfontein.

In the afternoon of the 16th the enemy's wagons were seen moving in the direction of Witklip towards Lindley, and his main body, followed as it moved to the north by Brigadier-General Broadwood, arrived at Sterkfontein at 3 a.m. on 17th July.

14. At 3 p.m. on 16th of July, the wires being cut, on receiving news of this outbreak of the enemy, I despatched Brigadier-General Ridley with 800 Mounted Infantry to reinforce General Broadwood, and sent Lieutenant-Colonel Donne with the 1st Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, to occupy Meyer's Kop. I also directed Major-General Clements to relieve Sir Leslie Rundle's troops at Witnek with a portion of his force.

I failed, therefore, in giving effect to the first part of the Commander-in-Chief's instructions.

15. On 19th July I was joined by the convoy under Lieutenant-Colonel Ewart from Heilbron, for which I had waited at Bethlehem.

16. On 20th July I detached Major-General Bruce Hamilton with the 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders, Lieutenant-Colonel Bainbridge's Mounted Infantry, and the 82nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, to occupy Spitzkop, 9 miles south-east of Bethlehem, a kopje said to overlook and command the approaches to Naauwport Nek.

Major-General Hamilton was engaged throughout the day with a force of the enemy, estimated at 400 men, and succeeded in establishing himself on two headlands $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles short of Spitzkop. He reported casualties to the number of two Officers and seven men wounded. His operations were resumed the following morning and resulted in the occupation of Spitzkop, in which three men were killed, three Officers, and 16 men wounded.

17. On 20th July, Major-General Clements reported to me that Colonel Hacket Pain, with a battalion and a half and two guns, had occupied Witnek, relieving Major-General Campbell, who now commanded the troops of Lieutenant-General Sir L. Rundle's Division at Rooikranz.

18. On 22nd July, having ordered a concentration of the troops of Major-Generals Clements and Paget, with a view to a simultaneous assault on 23rd July upon Slabbert's Nek, and a demonstration by Sir Leslie Rundle's forces along their whole front, I left Bethlehem at 11 a.m. with the intention of attacking Retief's Nek, taking with me the Highland Brigade under Major-General MacDonald, two 5-in. guns, the 5th and 76th Batteries, Royal Field Artillery, Lovat's Scouts, and Rimington's Guides. At the same time I directed Lieutenant-Colonel Donne to join me the next morning from Meyer's Kop with the 1st Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery. With the idea of deceiving the enemy, my force started, in the first instance, as if going to Naauwport Nek, but changing direction, it moved to Boshof's Farm under Vaal Kranz, about 3 miles to the north of Retief's Nek, where it bivouacked. My mounted troops were engaged towards the close of the day with some 200 Boers who retired into the nek as dusk fell.

19. Major-General Bruce Hamilton was again engaged with the enemy on the 22nd near Spitz-

kop, the casualties incurred being one man killed and three wounded.

20. The following morning, 23rd July, soon after daybreak my force moved out of its bivouacs, the 2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders being left to furnish an outpost line round Boshof's Farm to protect the convoy.

At 8 A.M. my artillery opened fire shelling the nek and the kopjes on either side of it, and at 9 A.M., the 2nd Battalion Black Watch (under Lieutenant-Colonel Carthew-Yorston) moved forward to occupy a prominent hill to our left front, which seemed to be a starting point from which the enemy's position might be turned. My direct advance, however, upon the nek was delayed until 1.40 P.M., awaiting the arrival of Colonel Donne's troops from Meyer's Kop, but at that hour the 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, opened fire to the west of the road leading up into the nek, the Sussex Regiment advanced towards a high conical hill overlooking the right side of the nek, whilst the Highland Light Infantry moved forward to try and gain the precipitous height commanding the nek to our left.

These hills, and an intervening shelter trench connecting the two within the nek itself, were heavily bombarded by my field batteries and the two 5-inch guns. At dusk the Sussex Regiment, unable to gain ground, was compelled to fall back on the 81st Field Battery, Royal Field Artillery, the Highland Light Infantry had gained a footing, albeit not a very firm one, on the lower spurs and kloofs of the rocky height to our left of the nek, whilst the Black Watch, who had been heavily fired at throughout the day, and whom I supported with two guns of the 5th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, had not only obtained possession of the conical hill already alluded to, but a further crest which practically turned the enemy's position in the nek, and gave access to the wide valley lying beyond and within the mountains.

21. My casualties during the day were 1 Officer and 11 men killed; 6 Officers and 68 men wounded.

22. During the night a portion of the Highland Light Infantry, guided by several men of Lovat's Scouts, succeeded in gaining possession of the highest peak of the hill on the east of the pass, a point of vantage whence a successful occupation of the whole height was made the next day.

23. At daybreak on the 24th July, I pressed the success already achieved overnight. Bringing the Sussex Regiment and 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, back to Boshof's Farm to act as escort to the convoy, I ordered Major-General MacDonald to bring up the Seaforth Highlanders in a wide-turning movement to my left, and beyond the Black Watch, who had come at daybreak under fire of a Boer gun at the foot of the hills beyond Bamboehoeck Farm. This turning movement was completely successful, the Seaforth Highlanders, supported by the 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, advancing with quiet gallantry and seizing the edge of the kloof which runs down by Bamboehoeck, whence a heavy fire was poured upon the retiring Boers. The seizure of this point at 11.40 A.M. enabled the Black Watch and Seaforth Highlanders to descend into the valley beyond, thus completely turning the enemy's position already compromised by the footing gained by the Highland Light Infantry on the height overlooking the nek.

I then, at 1.10 P.M., directed the whole of my artillery and baggage to move upon the now evacuated nek, and, by 3 P.M., bivouacked at

Retief's Nek Farm, about a mile beyond the position previously held by the enemy.

24. There I learnt the complete success of the simultaneous attack which I had ordered upon Slabbert's Nek by the force under Major-General Clements, whose troops also bivouacked in the valley, four miles beyond my own head-quarters.

25. Major-General Clements having marched himself from Bester's Kop, had effected a junction between his own troops and those of Major-General Paget, about two and a half miles north of Slabbert's Nek at 10 A.M. on 23rd July.

He at once proceeded to secure a position for his artillery, whence the enemy's trenches within the nek were bombarded and his guns silenced. Then, whilst he held the enemy in front with the Royal Munster Fusiliers, he directed Lieutenant-Colonel Grenfell with Brabant's Horse (2nd Regiment) to seize a ridge which ran down from the high ground to his right of the nek. Lieutenant-Colonel Grenfell was unable to make much progress, but wider turning movements still more to the right by portions of the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment (Lieutenant-Colonel Carter) and the Royal Irish Regiment (under Lieutenant-Colonel Guinness) gave a footing on the high ground which paved the way for success next day.

26. Major-General Clements directed his troops to bivouac on the night of the 23rd in the positions they had gained, and at 4.30 A.M. on the 24th, Lieutenant-Colonel Guinness with four companies Royal Irish Regiment and two companies 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, favoured by some clouds which obscured the crest, was able to gain a ridge to the west of, and overlooking the enemy's position. This ridge had previously been reconnoitred and occupied by a portion of 2nd Regiment, Brabant's Horse, under Captain Cholmondeley, who found it unoccupied by the enemy. Having gained this commanding ground, Lieutenant-Colonel Guinness was directed by Major-General Clements to clear the intervening space between it and the nek, which was evacuated by the enemy when he saw that his position was turned.

27. At 11 A.M., Major-General Clements ordered a general advance into the now vacated nek, sending the mounted troops and artillery of Major-General Paget's force, under Lieutenant-Colonel Burn, in pursuit of the retiring Boers.

28. Major-General Clements reports that the position occupied by the Boers, who brought several guns and pompoms into action, was one of great strength, and the fact that his turning movement was directed over ground from 1,500 to 2,000 feet high is sufficient to explain the arduous nature of the operation. His casualties during the two days' fighting amounted to one Officer and seven men killed, and three officers and 39 rank and file wounded.

29. On the evening of 24th July, having apprised Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Rundle of the success of these operations and directed him to push on and effect a junction with me towards Fouriesburg, and having detailed Lieutenant-Colonel Donne with the 1st Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment and six guns to remain in occupation of the captured neks, I ordered Major-General MacDonald to start at daybreak next morning, with the Highland Brigade, two 5-inch guns, Lovat's Scouts, and the 5th Battery Royal Field Artillery, and join Major-General Bruce Hamilton now at Heilbron Farm, assigning to him the important task of occupying or blocking the enemy's possible exits at Naauwport Nek and Golden Gate. Major-General MacDonald bivouacked on the night of the 25th at Mid-

delvlei. I also ordered Colonel Hacket Pain with the garrison of Witnek to Slabbert's and Retief's Nek.

30. At 7 A.M. on the 25th July, taking with me the 81st Battery Royal Field Artillery and Rimington's Guides, and effecting a junction with the troops under Major-Generals Clements and Paget beyond Slabbert's Nek, I pushed on with them for 9 miles in the direction of Fouriesburg, upon which place the Boers had retired on the previous day, executing a reconnaissance with my mounted troops to within 3 miles of the town.

I was not anxious to press too closely on the enemy's rear, so as not to drive him out towards Naauwport Nek and Golden Gate till General MacDonald had blocked those exits.

31. The following day, the 26th, I entered Fouriesburg with my mounted troops and found that the town had already been occupied by a portion of Sir Leslie Rundle's Division, headed by Driscoll's Scouts, after a forced march from Commando Nek of 25 miles.

The enemy had retired from the town in the direction of Naauwport Nek and Golden Gate, where I trusted that they would be anticipated by Major-Generals MacDonald and Bruce Hamilton, whose casualties on this day in an action fought outside the former place amounted to one man killed, two officers and ten men wounded.

To strengthen the force at his disposal, I now ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Donne, on being relieved by Lieutenant-Colonel Pain's troops (the Worcestershire Regiment, half Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, four guns), now set free from Witnek by our occupation of Fouriesburg, to push on with his two battalions and guns from Retief's Nek, and effect a junction with the Highland Brigade towards Naauwport Nek; I also strengthened Donne by two squadrons Scottish Yeomanry under Lieutenant-Colonel Burn from Fouriesburg.

This he did, and on the 27th Major-General MacDonald informed me that having left Lieutenant-Colonel Hughes Hallett with the Seaforth Highlanders, 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment, and one 5-inch gun opposite to Naauwport, he was moving on with the remainder of his force to establish Major-General Bruce Hamilton, towards Golden Gate.

32. On the morning of the 28th July, I followed up the enemy beyond Fouriesburg with the troops now at the disposal of Lieutenant-General Sir L. Rundle and Major-Generals Paget and Clements; the latter Officer commanding my advanced guard, being soon engaged with the Boers, who fought a tenacious rear guard action throughout the day in the vicinity of Slaapkrantz Ridge, which was only occupied by the Scots Guards under Major Romilly, D.S.O., after midnight.

33. Our casualties during the day amounted to 4 men killed, 3 Officers and 27 men wounded.

34. I established my head-quarters for the night at Schoonzicht Farm, where at 7.15 A.M. on the morning of the 29th, I received a written request from General Prinsloo for a four days' armistice. This request I refused to accede to, demanding unconditional surrender, a demand which, backed as it was by a further advance towards the enemy during the day, led at 4.30 P.M., to a promise of compliance for the following morning.

35. During the 29th Major-General Bruce Hamilton was engaged with the enemy in the vicinity of Stephanus Draai's Farm (Erste Geluk),

his casualties being one officer killed, one officer and 22 men wounded.

36. At 9 A.M. on 30th July, Generals Prinsloo and Crowther surrendered personally, their surrender being followed during the day by that of the Ficksburg and Ladybrand Commandos; 879 men with one 9-pr. Krupp gun, under Commandants De Villiers and Ferreira.

37. On 31st July, the Senekal and Winburg Commandos (Commandants Van der Merwe and Rautenbach) with a total strength of 354 came in to Slaapkrantz, and the same day Major-General Bruce Hamilton reported that 1,298 men with one Armstrong gun (under Commandants Crowder, Duploy, Potgieter, and Joubert) had surrendered to him near Erste Geluk.

On 1st August I ordered General MacDonald to pursue General Olivier in the direction of Loskop, and he occupied Harrismith on 4th August. Since then he has been recalled to Bethlehem, Sir Leslie Rundle being instructed to move on Harrismith as directed by the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief.

38. Although the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief has kindly expressed his satisfaction at the final result gained by Hunter's force, which it truthfully deserves and highly appreciates, I, as its commander, am sensible that in two points I have failed to carry out my orders, in that, firstly General C. De Wet, accompanied by Mr. Steyn, formerly President of the Orange Free State, and a force of men and guns, escaped on 15th July from Brandwater Basin, and secondly, General Olivier from outside Golden Gate on 30th July, with a force of men and guns, escaped towards Vrede. As regards this second case I regard it as a dishonourable breach of faith on the part of General Olivier, for which I hold General Olivier personally responsible. He admitted that he knew that Commandant-General Prinsloo had included him in the unconditional surrender.

39. My operations extended over a vast area. The country is a perfect network of mountains and precipices. I had no information from local forces, except from Basutoland. As I neared Fouriesburg this information proved very valuable, but so long as I was outside the Brandwater Basin I could learn practically nothing to point to the dispositions and numbers of the enemy or their plans.

Our maps are worse than useless; they are a positive danger and delusion. The constant cutting of our telegraph wires upset communication with my distant Generals. The feeding a large force away from the railway, and protecting convoys to and fro constituted an ever present anxiety, and depleted the fighting strength of the investing troops. Cloudy weather and grass fires limited the use of heliographs.

These were my difficulties. I do not claim that they furnish a sufficient excuse for the failure to block the whole hostile force inside the Wittebergen.

40. As I have enlarged on my difficulties I also gratefully acknowledge that to meet them the Commander-in-Chief gave me command of as fine a fighting force as ever stood to arms. I had a good staff and was backed up throughout by all ranks of the force. In spite of hardships there was no crime; no grumbling. Officers and men are stout-hearted, cheerful, and full of fight. I have only one fault to find and that is the callous indifference of many Officers and men to the danger of grass fires, and the necessity of at once putting them out.

41. As regards the tactical employment of the

various arms under me, I submit a few remarks with some general observations on Boer warfare:—

Cavalry Brigade, General Broadwood commanding.—On the march to concentrate outside the perimeter of the Brandwater Basin and Wittebergen District, across the open rolling downs both sides of the Vaal, on the line Heidelberg—Villiersdorp—Frankfort—Reitz—Bethlehem the Cavalry brigades were properly employed to scout for and guard my column. At Bethlehem and towards the theatre of subsequent operations the topography changes and is unsuited to the action of Cavalry. I, therefore, detached the 3rd Cavalry Brigade (Brigadier-General Gordon) to Heilbron.

On 15th July, I sent the 2nd Cavalry Brigade and 5th Corps, Mounted Infantry under Brigadier-General Broadwood towards Senekal, and, when General C. De Wet broke out on 15th July, reinforced him with Mounted Infantry, 800 strong, under Brigadier-General Ridley, to assist in the pursuit. No more Cavalry were now left with me. I assume General Broadwood will report on his action direct to you.

Yeomanry and Mounted Infantry.—The excellent work by this arm is so fully understood that I will confine myself to discussing certain corps which I saw at work.

The Yeomanry is daily gaining experience in actual warfare, which is all they ask for and all they require to make them rank with the best. This they now do.

Rimington's Guides, Major Rimington commanding.—Major Rimington has gathered a body of men whose virtues are like his own. They can ride, see, fight, and shoot straight. They are in the forefront when there is danger. They have never disappointed me, let alone failed me.

Lovat's Scouts, Major Honourable A. D. Murray, Cameron Highlanders, commanding, Captain Lord Lovat second in command.—I paused at Bethlehem from 9th July to 22nd July, to regulate the supply question and gain news. The mountain range in my front acted as a screen, behind which I could not penetrate, and it concealed forces whose numbers and whereabouts were a mystery. It possessed ins and outs, paths, and shepherd tracks, even occasional cart roads; none marked on maps but known to local experts who were dumb so far as I was concerned. To get news Lovat's Scouts were used. The idea was General MacDonald's instigated by Lord Lovat. In ones, twos, and threes, these men crept, climbed, and spied; were absent for

days at a time, but always came safely back with the truth discovered. Major the Honourable A. D. Murray who commands them, Captain Lord Lovat who raised them, each Officer and man in the corps is a specialist and picked man. As scouts, spies, guides, on foot or pony, as individual marksmen or as a collective body in the fighting line, they are a splendid band of Scotchmen, which is the highest compliment I can pay them.

Artillery.—Our gunners are not at fault, but our guns.

Boers seldom offer a target within the limited range of British Field Artillery. When they do the accuracy of our fire leaves nothing to be desired as a rule.

The quality of the 5-inch guns is well known.

General Paget speaks in high praise of the range and shooting of the City Imperial Volunteers' 12½-prs.

Infantry.—Everybody knows how Napoleon appraised British Infantry. Since then they have not changed except to improve.

Generals, Regimental Officers, and men have learnt how to minimize losses against magazine rifles and smokeless powder in defensive positions; now they threaten flanks and turn positions.

General remarks.—Boer artillery fire is accurate in aim but contemptible in effect.

Some Boers are crack shots; man for man their shooting is not so good as ours. Their mobility is the main point where they excel us. By reason of superior mobility they can hold on till turned when instead of being beaten they take up a fresh position or reinforce their flank, and so convert our flank attack into a frontal one with all its drawbacks to us. Their local knowledge and power of getting over the country, their being masters of three languages in use here to our one, their sources of news from all men and women, their not wearing uniform, and so posing one moment as a peaceful farm dweller and the next proving an active enemy, their secret supplies of arms, ammunition, and food, their hardihood and physical training, their expert and universal skill with horses and transport, with every resource of the country in their favour and denied to us; these are some of the advantages to the Boers in this warfare.

I have, &c.,

ARCHIBALD HUNTER,
Lieutenant-General.

SECTION II.—NATAL FIELD ARMY.

No. 1.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the
Secretary of State for War.

(Through the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-
Chief, Cape Town.)

Spearman's Hill Camp,

Sir,

2nd February, 1900.

I have the honour to forward a despatch from Lieut.-General Sir George White, which I have only just received by runner. It is in continuation of his despatch of the 2nd November, 1899,* and it will be seen by paragraph 12 that it deals only with his operations up to 30th October, 1899.

It may, therefore, I think, be inferred that the services of the Officers, non-commissioned officers and men which he brings to notice were rendered by them prior to that date.

I have, &c.,

REDVERS BULLER, General.

Jacobsdal,

18th February, 1900.

Secretary of State for War.

Forwarded.

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,

Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieut.-General Sir George White, V.C.,
G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Commanding the
British Forces in Natal, to the Secretary of
State for War.

(Through the General Officer Commanding in
South Africa.)

Ladysmith, Natal, 2nd December, 1899.

Sir,

In continuation of my despatch of 2nd November, 1899, I have now the honour to report the occurrences of 24th October, referred to briefly in the last paragraph of my above-mentioned despatch. On that date I marched out of Ladysmith at dawn with the 5th Lancers, 19th Hussars, Imperial Light Horse, Natal Mounted Volunteers, 42nd and 53rd Batteries, Royal Field Artillery; No. 10 Mountain Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery; 1st Bn. Liverpool Regiment, 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment, and 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps. The mounted troops were sent on in advance, and, after going about 6 miles along the Newcastle Road, came under rifle fire from the hills on their left on Rietfontein Farm. The 19th Hussars pushed on over the Modder Spruit and seized and held a ridge about 2 miles beyond that stream by dismounted fire, while watching the country to the front and flanks with patrols. The 5th Lancers similarly seized and held ridges south of the Modder Spruit, as also did the Imperial Light Horse. By this disposition of the mounted troops my right flank was entirely protected during the subsequent action.

2. At 8 a.m. I arrived at Rietfontein at the head of the main body. At this moment the enemy opened artillery fire on my advanced Cavalry from a point high up on the Intintanyone Mountain, and about 5,000 yards to the west of the main road, at which he had apparently posted four guns. My artillery was at once ordered to wheel off the road and come into action against these guns, which opened fire on them, but were quickly silenced. Leaving the 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps with the baggage waggons, I moved the remainder of

the Infantry under the shelter of a high ridge, parallel to the road, and facing the Intintanyone Mountain. The 1st Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment on the left, and the 1st Bn. Liverpool Regiment on the right were then advanced to the crest of this ridge, the Artillery also advancing and coming into action on the crest line between these two regiments. The position thus attained was one most suitable to my purpose, which was to prevent the enemy moving to the east, across the Newcastle Road, and attacking Brigadier-General Yule's force during its retirement from Dundee.

3. Our Artillery was entirely successful in preventing the enemy from making any further use of his guns, but a severe fire fight gradually developed between my troops and the enemy's infantry, and it became necessary to push the 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment also to the crest of the ridge, half the 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps being brought up from the wagons to take their place in reserve. In this Infantry fight our Artillery rendered great assistance, searching out the crest line and reverse slopes of the opposing ridges most effectively, and thus keeping down the enemy's rifle fire. Meanwhile the Natal Mounted Volunteers, who had been with the Cavalry, had been recalled, and, as the enemy showed some disposition to work round my left flank, as if to cut me from Ladysmith, I sent this force, under Colonel Royston, to work round the Boer right and cover my left flank, a movement which was most successfully performed. It was no part of my plan to deliver an attack on the enemy, posted as he was in ground exceptionally well suited to his tactics, and especially difficult for our troops; I contented myself, therefore, with maintaining the position I had gained. The Boers, on the other hand, were unwilling to attack us except by fire at long ranges, and, as they could not approach Brigadier-General Yule's force without doing so, they gradually withdrew to the westward. By 2 p.m. firing had ceased, and as time had now been afforded for the Dundee column to pass the point of danger I returned with my troops to Ladysmith. Our casualties consisted of one Officer and 11 non-commissioned officers and men killed, six Officers and 97 non-commissioned officers and men wounded, and two non-commissioned officers and men missing. The enemy's loss was heavy, particularly from artillery fire.

4. On 25th October I sent out a force, under Lieut.-Colonel Coxhead, R.A., to meet and, if necessary, to assist Brigadier-General Yule. This force got touch with the Dundee column that afternoon, and, as already reported, both columns reached Ladysmith next morning (26th October) without any interference from the enemy.

5. On 27th, 28th and 29th October the enemy gradually approached Ladysmith from the west, north, and north-east. These days were spent by us in reconnaissances with a view to finding a favourable opportunity to strike a blow at him. On 29th October our Cavalry located a considerable Boer force, with artillery on Long Hill, north-east of Ladysmith, and well within striking distance. I accordingly issued orders for an attack next day, which resulted in the action of Lombard's Kop.

6. My object was, in the first instance, to carry Long Hill, and, in the event of success, to similarly carry Pepworth's Hill, sending, at the

* Already published.

same time, a considerable mounted force round over Nicholson's Nek to cut the enemy's line of retreat and endeavour to capture his laagers. To gain these objects I employed the entire force assembled at Ladysmith. 200 Natal Mounted Volunteers were sent out the evening before to hold Lombard's Kop and Bulwana Mountain. The 5th Lancers, 19th Hussars, and the remainder of the Natal Mounted Volunteers were ordered to move out, under Major-General French, at 3 a.m. on 30th October, cross Lombard's Nek and the Modder Spruit and cover my right flank during the operations. A Brigade Division of Royal Field Artillery, the Natal Field Battery, 1st and 2nd Bns. King's Royal Rifle Corps, 1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment, 1st Bn. Liverpool Regiment, and 2nd Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the whole under Colonel Grimwood, King's Royal Rifle Corps, were detailed for the attack on Long Hill (moving at night so as to be ready to commence the attack at dawn. An Infantry Brigade, under Colonel Ian Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., consisting of 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment, 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, and 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade, together with the Divisional Troops, consisting of a Brigade Division, Royal Artillery, 5th Dragoon Guards, 18th Hussars, Imperial Light Horse, and two companies, Mounted Infantry, were directed to rendezvous at the railway crossing on the Newcastle Road, and proceed to take up a position under cover of Limit Hill. This latter Brigade Division was directed, in the first instance, to assist in shelling Long Hill, the Infantry being intended for the attack on Pepworth's Hill. To cover my left flank and open a way for the action of the Cavalry after the position had been carried, No. 10 Mountain Battery, the 1st Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers, and the 1st Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment, the whole under Lieut.-Colonel F. Carleton, Royal Irish Fusiliers, with Major W. Adye, D.A.A.G., for Intelligence, as Staff Officer and Guide, were directed to fall in at 11 p.m., on 29th October, and make a night march up Bell's Spruit to seize as strong a position as could be obtained towards Nicholson's Nek; if possible, the Nek itself.

7. The troops moved out in accordance with these instructions. The mounted troops, under General French, passed between Lombard's Kop and Bulwana Mountain, but failed to penetrate further than the line of kopjes north-east of the Nek, where at daybreak they came under the fire of the enemy's guns and rifles. They held the enemy in check here but could not advance further. The Infantry Brigade, under Colonel Grimwood, reached their appointed position, and the Artillery opened on Long Hill, which, however, was found to have been evacuated by the enemy during the night. At this moment Colonel Grimwood's force was attacked by guns and mounted infantry in large numbers from beyond the Modder Spruit, and had to change front to the right to meet this development, as the Cavalry, having been unable to get beyond the kopjes north-east of Lombard's Nek, were not in a position to cover that flank. Gradually the enemy's numbers increased, and made continual efforts to turn both flanks of the position occupied by Colonel Grimwood's force, necessitating a constant prolongation of his fighting line, and thus using up his supports and reserves, which, by 10 a.m., had all been absorbed in the firing line. Meanwhile artillery fire had been opened by the enemy from Pepworth Hill, one of the guns employed being a

15-cm. gun, throwing a shell of about 100lbs. weight, which commenced firing on the town of Ladysmith at a range of 8,000 yards. These guns were silenced by our Field Artillery, which also drove the enemy from the crest of Pepworth Hill. It was now about 8 a.m. At this period Major-General French reported that he was holding his position with difficulty against superior forces of the enemy, and I detached the 5th Dragoon Guards and 18th Hussars, under Brigadier-General Brocklehurst, to his assistance; the 69th and 21st Field Batteries being also moved to his support, and with this assistance he easily held his own till the end of the action. Of the remaining batteries, the 13th and 53rd were engaged in supporting Colonel Grimwood's force, while the 42nd and 67th were still firing on Pepworth Hill, from which the enemy had reopened fire, while he had also brought fresh guns on to Long Hill.

8. About 10 a.m. I withdrew the Manchester Regiment from Colonel Hamilton's force, and placed it in a position to support Colonel Grimwood. The fight now became stationary, our troops holding their positions without any great difficulty, but being unable to advance. The Boers on the other hand, were unable to make any headway. This condition of affairs continued until 11.30 a.m., when, finding that there was little prospect of bringing the engagement to a decisive issue, I determined to withdraw my troops. I accordingly moved the 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders from my left to a strong position on Flag Hill, and sent Major-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., my Chief of Staff, to arrange a retirement in echelon from the left, covered by the fire of our Artillery. This was most successfully carried out, the Artillery advancing in the most gallant manner, and covering the Infantry movement with the greatest skill and coolness.

9. Meanwhile the Naval Brigade landed from H.M.S. "Powerful," which had reached Ladysmith that morning, under Captain Hon. H. Lambton, R.N., had moved out with their long 12-pr. guns on improvised field mountings, drawn by oxen, and had engaged the enemy's artillery on Pepworth Hill, directing their special attention to the heavy gun mounted there, which they temporarily silenced. The enemy did not follow up our retirement, and the whole force employed on this side returned to camp at 1.30 p.m.

10. Turning now to this force, consisting of No. 10 Mountain Battery, Royal Irish Fusiliers, and the Gloucestershire Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel F. Carleton, Royal Irish Fusiliers, which proceeded by a night march up Bell's Spruit towards Nicholson's Nek to cover my left flank, I regret that, owing to the circumstances about to be related, I have no official report of their movements. My information has been obtained from subordinate Officers, who, being severely wounded, were sent into my camp here by General Joubert. From this information it appears that the force moved off, as ordered, at 11 p.m. on 29th October, and proceeded for some distance without seeing signs of the enemy. When passing along the foot of a steep hill, known as Cainguba, stones were suddenly rolled down on them and some shots were fired. The Infantry at once fixed bayonets and carried the hill without difficulty, but unfortunately both the Mountain Battery mules and those carrying the Infantry ammunition took fright and stampeded. Mules carrying two guns eventually returned to camp, one was retained with the

force, but no trace has been found of the other three, which presumably fell into the enemy's hands.

The force took up a position on Cainguba, which they strengthened with breastworks to some slight extent, and remained unmolested till daybreak. It was then found that the position was too large for them to adequately occupy, and that only the most pronounced salients could be held. The Boers appear to have gradually surrounded the hill, and after a fight extending over several hours, our men's ammunition began to fail owing to the ammunition mules having stampeded, as already described. The advanced parties holding the salients were driven back on the main body in the centre of the plateau, and the Boers gained the crest line of the hill, whence they brought a converging fire to bear from all sides on our men crowded together in the centre, causing much loss. Eventually it was seen that this position was hopelessly untenable, and our force hoisted a white flag and surrendered about 12.30 p.m.

11. Including under the head of "missing" those thus taken prisoners, our losses this day amounted to six Officers and 63 non-commissioned officers and men killed, 10 Officers and 239 non-commissioned officers and men wounded, and 37 Officers and 917 non-commissioned officers and men missing.

12. Next day, 31st October, General Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., &c., arrived at Cape Town, and assumed the command in the whole of South Africa. My independent command in Natal consequently came to an end, and I therefore close this Despatch with the events of 30th October. Subsequent events will be reported to the General Officer Commanding in South Africa in the ordinary course.

13. I desire to place on record my gratitude to the Government of Natal and to all departments under the Government, for the most willing and hearty assistance which they have afforded me in every matter in which their co-operation was required.

14. I desire to bring the following Officers very specially to your notice as eminently deserving of reward for the services rendered by them:—

The late Lieut.-General Sir W. Penn Symons, K.C.B.—I cannot too strongly record my opinion of the energy and courage shown by this distinguished General Officer in the exercise of his command, until he was mortally wounded in the action on the Talana Hill, near Dundee, on the 20th October last. In him the country has lost an Officer of high ability and a leader of exceptional valour.

Major-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Staff.—The services of this Officer have been of the very highest value to the State. His zeal is indefatigable, and he has carried out the business of the force under my command so as to relieve me of all anxiety. He is equally good in the field, and has the gift of carrying with him all with whom he is brought in contact. I have every confidence in recommending this Officer for advancement as one fitted for the highest commands.

Major-General J. D. P. French, commanding the Cavalry, rendered me most valuable assistance. He commanded the troops engaged at Elands-laagte, where his dispositions resulted in the most decisive victory. I consider his services have merited very special recognition.

Brigadier-General J. H. Yule succeeded to the

command of the Dundee force when Major-General Sir W. Penn Symons was wounded, and had a difficult duty to carry out. He conducted the retirement of the force from Dundee to Ladysmith with marked success.

Brigadier-General J. Wolfe Murray, commanding Lines of Communication, is an Officer of great administrative ability, and has done his work excellently well. He has been specially selected for this most important post from the confidence felt in him, and, as it is one that entails hard work and is not as popular as employment in the front, I think the value of the service should be exceptionally recognised.

Colonel Ian Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., has acted as Brigadier-General in command of a brigade since my head-quarters have been established at Ladysmith. I have made a special recommendation in favour of this Officer for the manner in which he led the Infantry at the action of Elands-laagte on the 21st October, and consider him an Officer of special ability who is well fitted for higher rank and command.

Colonel B. Duff, C.I.E., Indian Staff Corps, has been my Assistant Military Secretary, and has discharged the duties of the office with marked ability and success. His advancement will be a benefit to the Service, and he is well fitted for the highest staff appointments.

Brevet-Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., A.S.C., A.A.G. (B).—I cannot speak too highly of this Officer. His forethought in collecting supplies in Ladysmith while railway communication was open with the sea at Durban has enabled me to occupy the position here with perfect confidence that the garrison could not be starved out. When the force originally at Dundee was thrown back on Ladysmith, having had to abandon the supply provided for it, Colonel Ward's provision was ample, even for the extra strain thus thrown upon the supply, as well as to meet the necessity of finding rations for the civil population. His power of work and resources are most marked, and he has won the confidence of all. I consider him an Officer of the highest administrative ability, and recommend him most strongly for recognition of his exceptionally valuable service with this force.

Colonel C. M. Downing, R.A., Commanding Royal Artillery, has been my adviser on all artillery matters in my command, and I count myself fortunate in having had the assistance of such an experienced and highly-educated Artillery Officer. I cannot speak in too high terms of the behaviour of the Royal Artillery on all occasions on which I have had to call upon them, or of the value of their services to the State.

Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., Colonel on the Staff, Ladysmith, has, from the appointment he holds, been left in command of Ladysmith on all occasions when the Field Army has gone out. His services have been very valuable.

Colonel W. Royston, Commanding Natal Volunteer Force.—The services which Colonel Royston and the forces under his command have rendered to the State and Colony have been of the very highest value. In him I have found a bold and successful leader, and an adviser whose experience of the Colony and of the enemy has been of great value to me. Employed on arduous duty, from the commencement of the campaign in touch with the enemy, I have found him prompt and ready for every emergency. He and his force reflect the highest credit on the Colony of Natal.

Colonel J. G. Dartnell, C.M.G., Chief Com-

Lieutenant H. N. Field.

Somersetshire Light Infantry.
Captain J. M. Vallentin.

1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment.
Lieutenant B. de W. Weldon.

1st Bn. Scottish Rifles—(attached to 2nd Bn.
King's Royal Rifle Corps.)
Lieutenant N. M. Tod.

1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps.
Lieut.-Colonel R. H. Gunning (killed in
action).

Captain and Adjutant H. R. Blore (killed in
action).

2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps.
Major H. E. Buchanan-Riddell.

1st Bn. Manchester Regiment.
Major J. E. Watson.
Captain A. W. Marden.
Lieutenant H. Fisher.

2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders.
Major W. A. Scott.
Captain C. F. N. Macready.
Captain and Adjutant E. Stretfeild.

2nd Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers.
Major S. G. Bird.
Captain G. A. Weldon (killed in action).
Captain and Adjutant M. Lowndes.

Army Service Corps.
Captain A. Long.

Royal Army Medical Corps.
Lieut.-Colonel P. H. Johnston.
Major H. Martin.
Major M. W. Kerin.
Captain G. S. Walker.

Indian Staff Corps.
Major W. J. R. Wickham.

Imperial Light Horse.
Colonel J. J. Scott-Chisholme (killed in
action.)
Major A. Wools-Sampson.
Major W. Karri Davis.
Captain J. E. Orr.
Captain C. H. Mullins.
Captain J. C. Knapp (killed in action).

Natal Volunteer Force.
Permanent Staff, Natal Volunteer Force.
Major H. T. Bru-de-Wold (Senior Staff
Officer, Natal Volunteer Force).

Volunteer Medical Staff.
Captain H. T. Platt.

Warrant and Non-Commissioned Officers and
Men.

Royal Engineers.
No. 21916, Corporal H. Rawlinson.
No. 28457, Sapper S. Hudson.
No. 27735, Sapper C. Spurling.

1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment.
No. 2034, Colour-Serjeant G. Palmer.

1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps.
Bandmaster F. Tyler.

1st Bn. Manchester Regiment.
No. 2699, Serjeant R. Lloyd.

2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders.
No. 3747, Serjeant H. Shepherd.

Army Service Corps.
No. 4709, 1st Class Staff-Serjeant-Major T.
Curtis.

Royal Army Medical Corps.
No. 7598, Serjeant E. J. Cadogan.

Indian Commissariat—Transport Department.
Conductor H. Young.
Sub-Conductor M. W. Tyler.
I have, &c.,

GEORGE S. WHITE, Lieut.-General,
Commanding Natal Field Force.

No. 2.

From Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secre-
tary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Government House, Bloemfontein,
MY LORD, 28th March, 1900.

In continuation of my Memorandum of
the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to
submit for your Lordship's information a
despatch, dated 23rd March, 1900, from Lieut.-
General Sir George White, V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., describing the defence of
Ladysmith, which was invested by the enemy
from 2nd November, 1899, until 1st March,
1900, and including the operations of the two
days preceding the siege.

2. In the second and third paragraphs of the
despatch, Sir George White gives his reasons
for deciding to remain at Ladysmith, instead of
falling back on the line of the Tugela River. If
the question were regarded from an abstract
point of view, arguments might be advanced in
favour of the latter course; but the existing
state of affairs when Sir George White landed
in Natal, political exigencies, and the estimate
then current of the resources and fighting
strength of the Boers must be taken into con-
sideration. Sir George White arrived at Durban
on the 7th October, 1899, where he was met by
the late Major-General Sir A. P. Symons. He
found most of the troops in Natal already dis-
tributed between Glencoe and Ladysmith, Major-
General Symons being confident that he could
drive back any hostile force which might cross
the frontier. Sir George White proceeded at
once to Maritzburg, and on 10th October dis-
cussed the military and political situation with
the Governor of Natal. At this interview he
expressed disapproval of the forward position
which had been taken up near Glencoe, the force
at his disposal, in his opinion, too weak to
admit of its defence, together with that of Lady-
smith, against superior numbers, and the troops
being liable to be cut off, should the Boers advance
from the Orange Free State through the passes
of the Drakensberg Range. The Governor
depreciated a voluntary withdrawal from the
position, as being almost certain to lead to a
rising among the Dutch, and possibly the native
population, not only in Natal, but in Cape
Colony. In face of this objection, Sir George
White resolved to postpone the concentration of
his force at Ladysmith.

On 11th October Sir George White proceeded
to Ladysmith, Major-General Symons going on
to Dundee. That evening the Boers crossed the
frontier, but beyond a slight affair of outposts
in the direction of the Drakensberg, no fighting
took place until the 20th. The interval was
occupied by Sir George White in organizing his
troops and examining the Ladysmith position.
On 20th October a Boer force, which had
entered Natal from the Vryheid district of the
Transvaal, and crossed the Buffalo River, was
attacked near Glencoe by Sir A. P. Symons.
The General was mortally wounded, and, though
the enemy's advance was checked for a time,
reinforcements came up which necessitated a
retirement. Our troops fell back first in the

direction of Helpmakaar to Beith, and thence to Ladysmith, which was reached on 27th October.

On the 19th October the enemy, advancing from Newcastle, cut the railway line at Elands-laagte; on the 20th the ground was reconnoitred from Ladysmith, and the next day an action was fought in which the Boers were signally defeated. But here again no permanent advantage was gained, as the reported arrival of a strong column of the enemy from the Orange Free State at Bester's Station led to the immediate withdrawal of our troops to Ladysmith. On the 24th Sir George White moved out some 7 miles to the north-east of Ladysmith in order to cover the march of the force returning from Glencoe, under the command of Major-General Yule, and engaged the enemy at Rietfontein, returning to Ladysmith the same evening. He again attacked the Boers on the 30th at Lombard's Kop, the action being without decisive result. By the 2nd November Ladysmith had been invested, and railway communication between it and Colenso interrupted.

3. From the foregoing narrative it is apparent that Sir George White was placed in an extremely difficult position in being called upon to decide, immediately after his arrival in Natal, whether he should concentrate his whole force at Ladysmith, and, subsequently, when the enemy had shown their strength, whether he should attempt to withdraw that force behind the Tugela.

As regards the first question, I think that he would have done better had he ignored the political objections which were urged by the Governor of Natal and concentrated at Ladysmith. The retention of a portion of his force at Glencoe at once involved him in military complications which he foresaw and ought to have avoided. Nor, indeed, was the political situation improved by his being eventually compelled to order a retirement which could have been effected without risk or loss before the enemy had arrived within striking distance.

As regards the second question, I am of opinion that under the existing circumstances, and having regard to the information then available, Sir George White's decision to make a stand at Ladysmith was correct. A position on the Tugela would to some extent have been more secure, as the country is more open, and the reinforcement of the troops holding the river alignment would have presented fewer difficulties. But, as Sir George White explains in his despatch, the Tugela, at the time of the year, was not a formidable defensive obstacle, and if Ladysmith had been evacuated, the Boers would have pressed on, enveloped the British force, and cut off its communication by rail with Maritzburg. The same process might have been repeated if Sir George White had fallen back on Maritzburg. Moreover, a withdrawal to the Tugela would have enabled the enemy to over-run a much larger portion of the Colony, and so encouraged the disloyal Dutch population throughout South Africa that a general rising might not improbably have taken place.

Undoubtedly the protracted siege of Ladysmith caused grave anxiety, and the necessity for its relief diverted a large body of troops from Cape Colony, and thus delayed the concentration of a force sufficient to undertake offensive operations in the enemy's country. But for these consequences Sir George White cannot justly be held responsible, his main obligation being to defend Natal against a Boer invasion. They may be ascribed to several

causes. First, the enemy greatly out-numbered the British force available in Natal when Ladysmith was invested. Secondly, the sharp salient angle formed by the frontier line along the north of Natal, and the convergence on Ladysmith of the railways from the Orange Free State and Transvaal, gave the invaders a decided strategic advantage. This advantage was increased by the general configuration of the country, consisting of a series of rocky terraces sloping gradually downwards from the Drakensberg to the sea. Thirdly, although Ladysmith had been selected as our advanced military station and depot of supplies in Northern Natal, its liability to attack does not seem to have been recognised, and no steps had been taken before the war began to construct the works and provide the armament which would have materially facilitated its defence.

The foregoing review of the situation, as it must have presented itself to Sir George White, shows that he had strong grounds for deciding not to withdraw behind the Tugela, his decision was approved by General Sir Redvers Buller, and though the relief of Ladysmith was an arduous operation which cost many lives, the presence of a strong British garrison at this point prevented the enemy from penetrating further south than Estcourt, and protected the capital and southern portion of the Colony.

4. The behaviour of the Ladysmith garrison through the four months during which it was exposed to continual bombardment, as well as to the privations of a protracted siege, reflects the greatest credit on all ranks. I have much pleasure in bringing to the favourable notice of Her Majesty's Government the resolution and resource displayed by the General Officer in Chief Command, and the cheerful spirit which pervaded the troops, in spite of repeated failures to relieve the town from the south; and I cordially support Sir George White's recommendations on behalf of the Officers (naval and military), the Warrant, non-commissioned, and petty officers, and the men, whose names he has brought forward as specially deserving of recognition.

Praise is also due to the civilians and nursing sisters, who rendered valuable assistance.

5. It is gratifying to observe that, in his account of what occurred on 6th January, when the enemy's determined attack on Ladysmith was gallantly repulsed, a Colonial corps, the Imperial Light Horse, has been singled out by Sir George White for special commendation. By their conduct on this and other occasions during the present war our Colonial kinsmen have proved their readiness to share with their comrades in Her Majesty's Regular Forces the honourable duty of upholding the rights and furthering the interests of the British Empire.

I have, &c.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieut.-General Sir George White, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., late Commanding the Ladysmith Garrison, to the Chief of the Staff to the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief in South Africa.

Cape Town,

23rd March, 1900.

Sir,

In my despatch dated 2nd December, 1899, addressed to the Secretary of State for War, and forwarded through you, I brought down the history of events relating to the force under my command to the evening of 30th

October, 1899. On the morning of the following day, General the Right Honourable Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., K.C.M.G., arrived at Cape Town and assumed command of the whole of the forces in South Africa. On the 10th January, 1900, Field-Marshal Lord Roberts took over the chief command. I have now the honour to report, for his Lordship's information, the events which have taken place from that date until the 1st March, 1900, on which day Sir Redvers Buller arrived in Ladysmith, having successfully carried out the relief of this long besieged town.

2. It will be remembered that during October, 1899, the forces of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic had been gradually converging on Ladysmith from west and north, and that, although my troops had successfully encountered portions of the enemy's armies at Talana, Elands-laagte, and Rietfontein, the battle of Lombard's Kop on 30th October had proved that the numbers and mobility of the Boer forces, when once concentrated, were too great to admit of any prospect of victory should I continue with inferior numbers to oppose them in the open field. The task before me was the protection from invasion by the Boers of as large a portion as possible of the Colony of Natal, and especially of Pietermaritzburg, the capital of that Colony and the seat of its Government; and I had now to consider how this could be best insured. On 31st October General Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to me as follows:—
"Can you not entrench and await events, if not at Ladysmith then behind the Tugela at Colenso?" On the same date I replied, stating my intention to hold on to Ladysmith, and on 1st November I received Sir Redvers Buller's approval of this course in a telegram which commenced as follows:—"I agree that you do best to remain at Ladysmith, though Colenso and line of Tugela river look tempting."

3. It may be well to state here shortly the reasons which governed my choice of this position. Ladysmith is the most important town in Northern Natal, and there was reason to believe that the enemy attached very great and perhaps even undue importance to obtaining possession of it. It was suspected then, and the suspicion has since been confirmed that the occupation of that town by the Boer forces had been decided on by the disloyal Dutch in both Colonies as the signal for a general rising; as, in fact, a material guarantee that the power of the combined Republics was really capable of dealing with any force the British Empire was able to place in the field against them. Our withdrawal would, therefore, have brought about an insurrection so widespread as to have very materially increased our difficulties. Strategically the town was important as being the junction of the railways which enter Natal from the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and until the Republics could gain possession of that junction their necessarily divergent lines of supply and communication prevented their enjoying to the full the advantages of combined action. Tactically the place was already partially prepared for defence and offered a natural position of some strength; and although the perimeter which must be occupied was very great for the number of troops available, yet it afforded a possibility of maintaining a protracted defence against superior numbers. On the other hand, the mere fact of a retirement behind the Tugela would have had a moral effect at least equal to a serious defeat, and would have in-

involved the abandonment to the enemy of a large town full of an English population, men, women, and children; and of a mass of stores and munitions of war which had been already collected there before my arrival in South Africa, and had since been increased. The line of the Tugela from the Drakensberg to the Buffalo River is some 80 miles long, and in a dry season, such as last November, can be crossed on foot almost anywhere. Against an enemy with more than double my numbers, and three times my mobility, I could not hope to maintain such a line with my small force, and any attempt to prevent their turning my flanks could only have resulted in such a weakening of my centre as would have led to its being pierced. Once my flank was turned on the line of the river the enemy would have been nearer Maritzburg than I should have been, and a rapid withdrawal by rail for the defence of the capital would have been inevitable. Even there it would have been impossible to make a prolonged defence without leaving it open to the enemy to occupy the important port of Durban, through which alone supplies and reinforcements could arrive, and for the defence of which another retreat would have become eventually essential; thus abandoning to the enemy the whole Colony of Natal from Lang's Nek to the sea. On the other hand, I was confident of holding out at Ladysmith as long as might be necessary, and I saw clearly that so long as I maintained myself there I could occupy the great mass of the Boer armies, and prevent them sending more than small flying columns south of the Tugela, which the British and Colonial forces in my rear, aided by such reinforcements as might be shortly expected, could deal with without much difficulty. Accordingly, I turned my whole attention to preparing Ladysmith to stand a prolonged siege.

4. With this object in view, I employed my troops during 31st October and 1st November in improving and strengthening the defences of the various positions surrounding Ladysmith, which together enclosed the area which I had determined to hold. During these days the Boers gradually pushed round from north and west to the south and east of the town, which underwent a slight bombardment on 1st November. On 31st October, General Koch, of the Army of the South African Republic, who had been wounded and taken prisoner at Elands-laagte, died, and his widow was permitted to remove his body for burial in the Transvaal. Before leaving she expressed her gratitude for the courtesy and kind treatment which both her late husband and herself had received at our hands. On the same date, I despatched the 2nd Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Natal Field Battery by rail to Colenso to assist in the defence of the bridges over the Tugela. During the night of 1st—2nd November, the Boers brought several new guns into position, and although the Naval Brigade, under Captain The Hon. H. Lambton, R.N., opened fire from one of the naval 4.7-inch guns on the morning of 2nd November, the bombardment of the town became much more severe than on the previous days. At about 4 a.m., the 5th Dragoon Guards, 5th Lancers, 18th Hussars, Natal Mounted Volunteers, and 69th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, moved out south into the Long Valley to reconnoitre the enemy and to endeavour to surprise one of his camps in the direction of Onderbrook. Major-General French, who was in command, left Colonel Royston with the Natal Mounted Volunteers and two guns to hold the

Nek between Wagon Hill and Middle Hill, and with the remainder of his force passed round the southern end of End Hill (where he left a squadron of the 5th Lancers to hold a ridge, dismounted), and gaining the plateau pushed on about 3,000 yards and opened an effective fire on the Boer camp. The enemy evacuated their camp and took up a position on a ridge to which they brought up field guns. Major-General French, having fulfilled his mission, withdrew his force, reaching camp by 10 a.m. Our casualties were one man wounded.

As he returned to Ladysmith a telegram was received from General Sir Redvers Buller, desiring that Major-General French and his staff might be sent to the Cape. Communication by wire and rail were still open, and although trains were constantly fired upon, advantage had been taken of the fact to send southward as many of the civil population of Ladysmith as were willing to depart. Major-General French and his staff left by train about noon on 2nd November, and a telegraphic report was received here that, although the train had been heavily fired on near Pieters Station, it had reached Colenso in safety. Immediately afterwards the wires were cut by the enemy, and railway communication was interrupted. Ladysmith was thus isolated from the world outside it, and from this date the siege may be held to have commenced.

5. On 3rd November, four squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, under Major Karri Davis who were reconnoitring to the south, found a body of the enemy, with one gun, on Lancer's Hill, and asked for reinforcements to drive them off. The 5th Dragoon Guards, 18th Hussars, 19th Hussars, and 21st Battery, Royal Field Artillery (the whole under Brigadier General J. F. Brocklehurst, M.V.O.), were accordingly sent down the Long Valley to their assistance. The 19th Hussars seized Rifleman's Ridge and endeavoured to turn the enemy's left, while the 18th Hussars covered the right rear; two companies of Infantry, detached from Cæsar's Camp, occupied Wagon Hill, and a Mounted Infantry company seized Mounted Infantry Hill to protect the left rear; while the 5th Dragoon Guards and 21st Field Battery were moved straight down the Long Valley. Meantime two squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, were holding Middle Hill, while the remaining two squadrons were facing the enemy on Lancer's Hill. The squadrons on Middle Hill were opposed to a considerable body of the enemy, who were moving up from the east. The 21st Field Battery opened fire on Lancer's Hill and quickly silenced the enemy's gun. Believing that the enemy were evacuating the hill the two squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, made a gallant but somewhat ill-advised attempt to occupy it, but though they seized and held a portion of the hill the enemy was in too great strength for further progress. In the meanwhile I had sent out the Natal Mounted Volunteers and the 42nd and 53rd Field Batteries to join Brigadier-General Brocklehurst, and to cover his retirement, if necessary. General Brocklehurst sent the Natal Mounted Volunteers to reinforce the Imperial Light Horse squadrons on Middle Hill, and brought both batteries into action in the Long Valley. Finding, however, that the numbers of the enemy in his front and on both flanks were continually increasing, and that he could not hope to press his reconnaissance further without serious loss, he determined to withdraw. With the assistance of a dismounted squadron,

5th Dragoon Guards, under Major Gore, the squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, on Lancer's Hill were retired under cover of Artillery fire till they reached the main body, when the whole force engaged was gradually withdrawn to camp. Our loss was two Officers and two non-commissioned officers and men killed. Three Officers and 23 non-commissioned officers and men wounded, and one man missing. The enemy's loss is reported to have been considerable, chiefly from our Artillery fire.

In the afternoon the enemy made demonstrations of an attack in force on Devonshire Post, which was reinforced as a measure of precaution, but the attack was not seriously pressed, and was repulsed with ease. The bombardment this day was very heavy, a large number of shells falling into the town, and specially in and around the hospitals, which were in various churches and public buildings near the centre of the town. In the evening a deputation of civilian residents of Ladysmith waited on me with the request that permission might be obtained for them to pass through the enemy's lines and proceed to the south. The Principal Medical Officer of the Force also represented that the effect of the bombardment on the large number of wounded in his hospitals was very bad, and asked that, if possible, an agreement might be arrived at for the hospitals to be placed outside the town. Next morning I sent Major Bateson, R.A.M.C., under flag of truce, with a letter to General Joubert, asking that these requests might be agreed to on grounds of humanity to sick, wounded, and non-combatants. In reply, General Joubert agreed to my hospitals being moved out of Ladysmith to a point on the flats, 4 miles down the railway and close to the Intombi Spruit. He refused to allow the civil inhabitants to go south, but permitted them to accompany the sick and wounded to the Intombi Camp. Food and all other requisites for this camp were to be supplied from Ladysmith, and, for this purpose, one train was to be allowed to run each way daily, and by daylight only, under flag of truce. On this same day General Joubert sent into Ladysmith six Officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 10 Assistant Surgeons, and 98 of our wounded from Dundee; together with a number of Indian hospital attendants. There was a threatening of attack on Cæsar's Camp on this night, 4th November, but it was not pressed. Our first communications by pigeon post to Durban were sent off on this date.

6. 5th November was Sunday. Throughout the siege Sundays have generally been observed by both sides, as far as possible, as days of rest from fighting. There has been no special arrangement on the subject, but a kind of tacit understanding came into existence that neither side would fire unless specially provoked to do so by the construction of fortifications or other signs of movement on the opposite side. 5th November was no exception to this rule, and advantage was taken of the day to send our sick and wounded and all such civilians, men, women, and children, as elected to go, to the Intombi Camp.

7. The defences of Ladysmith were, for the purposes of command, divided into four sections, "A," "B," "C," and "D." "A" section, under Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., commenced at Devonshire Post and extended to the point where the Newcastle Road passes between Junction Hill and Gordon Hill. "B" section included all the defences from Gordon Hill round to Flag-

stone Spruit, and was commanded by Major-General F. Howard, C.B., C.M.G., A.D.C. "C" section, under Colonel Ian Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., comprised the ground from Flagstone Spruit to the eastern extremity of Caesar's Camp. "D" section, under Colonel Royston, Commandant of the Natal Volunteers, included the thorn country north of Caesar's Camp and the Klip River Flats. The troops, which were allotted to these sections, and to the general reserve, and the variations in these arrangements which were, from time to time, found necessary.

8. On 6th November, 2nd Lieutenant R. G. Hooper, 5th Lancers, reached Ladysmith with despatches. Arriving in Natal too late to join his regiment before communication was cut off, he most gallantly made his way through the Boer lines at night, and on foot, accompanied only by a Kaffir guide. All the provisions in the shops and stores in the town were taken over on this date and administered as part of the general stock, all civil residents being placed on rations which were issued free or on payment according to their means.

9. Next day, 7th November, Caesar's Camp was subjected to a heavy fire of shells and long range musketry. Although no actual attack was made, it was found advisable to send the Imperial Light Horse to reinforce this point; while the 42nd Battery Royal Field Artillery, under Major Goulburn, was placed in position on the plateau during the night, the horses returning to the camp. A number of natives of India were sent into Ladysmith by the Boers.

10. On 8th November a 6-inch gun opened fire from the top of the Bulwana Mountain. Throughout the siege this gun has proved most troublesome to the defence. On the same day a number of refugees from Dundee, both English and Indian, were sent into Ladysmith by the Boers, and were located by us in the Intombi Camp.

11. 9th November was ushered in by a very heavy fire at dawn on all sides of our defences from the enemy's artillery, which included several new guns, which now opened for the first time, and whose exact positions it was very hard to locate. This was followed by a general advance of their infantry and the development of a severe musketry action at Caesar's Camp, in the thorn bush north of that ridge, at Devonshire Post and Observation Hill. The steady front shown by our troops prevented the enemy from trying to close, and although on Caesar's Camp, where the 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel A. E. R. Curran, rendered very valuable service, the action lasted until darkness set in, yet elsewhere it had mostly died away at 12 noon. At that hour I proceeded, with my Staff, to the Naval Battery on Gordon Hill, when a salute of 21 shotted guns, in honour of the birthday of the Prince of Wales, was fired at the enemy by Captain the Hon. H. Lambton, R.N., and three cheers were given for His Royal Highness, which were taken up by the troops both in camp and on the defences. A message of congratulation, to be telegraphed to His Royal Highness, was despatched by pigeon post to Durban. Our casualties during the day amounted to 4 men killed, 4 Officers and 23 men wounded. It is difficult to form any accurate estimate of the enemy's losses, but they certainly considerably exceeded our own.

12. From 10th to 13th November, inclusive, very little of importance occurred, the fire both of guns and rifles being much less severe than usual. An Irish deserter from the Boers gave

himself up on the 12th November. From him we learnt that the total force then surrounding us here numbered about 25,000 men, that they were mounting more guns, and expected to be reinforced shortly.

13. On 14th November, I sent Brigadier-General J. F. Brocklehurst, M.V.O., with two regiments of Cavalry, two batteries of Artillery the detachments of the Imperial Light Horse and Natal Volunteers, across the Klip River, to try and work out on one or both sides of Rifleman's Ridge into the more open country beyond, to find out the enemy's strength in that direction, and, if possible, to capture one of their wagon convoys, of which several had recently been seen passing at a distance of some miles. The Natal Mounted Volunteers and Imperial Light Horse seized Star Hill, but after shelling Rifleman's Ridge for some time General Brocklehurst decided that it was too strongly held for him to leave it in his rear, while an attempt to storm it would have been more costly than the occasion would justify. He, therefore, returned to camp. On this night the Boers commenced for the first time to shell the town and camps at night, opening fire from their heavy guns about midnight for a few minutes, a practice which they maintained nightly for about a week, and then discontinued.

14. From this time nothing worth record took place until 19th November, when the Boers sent into Intombi Camp six privates of the 2nd Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers, who had been wounded in the attack on an armoured train near Colenso, on 15th November.

15. 20th November was marked by an unusual number of casualties from shell fire, chiefly among the 18th Hussars and Gordon Highlanders.

16. Next day General S. Burger sent in a letter under a flag of truce, complaining that we had been running trains at night to the Intombi Camp, contrary to our agreement with General Joubert—a complaint for which there was no foundation whatever. He also inquired why a Red Cross flag was flying on the Town Hall although our hospital was at Intombi. I replied, on 22nd November, by giving my personal assurance that trains never had been, and never would be, run to Intombi at night, and explaining that the Red Cross flag was hoisted on the Town Hall because that building was in use as a hospital for ordinary cases of sickness, and for slightly wounded men whom it was not worth while to send to Intombi. Before my answer could reach him the Boer guns were deliberately turned on the Town Hall, which was several times struck.

17. On 23rd November the enemy endeavoured, under flag of truce, to send into Ladysmith 230 Indian coolies. It became evident that the intention was to send in here as many non-combatants as could be collected who would be useless for defence, but would help to consume our supplies. For this reason I refused to receive them, and requested that they might be sent to the Officer commanding our forces south of the Tugela. I understand that this course was eventually adopted. Copies of the correspondence attached as Appendix B. The same evening an attempt was made to wreck the only engine which the enemy possessed on the Harrismith line. With this object an old locomotive was selected from those in the railway yard here and was sent off down the line, at night, with a full head of steam and with the safety valve screwed down. The Boers had, however, provided against such an attempt by destroying a culvert on our side of their tempor-

ary terminus, and here our engine was derailed and upset. The enemy evidently feared that it carried a cargo of explosives, as they did not approach it next morning until they had sent a number of shells into it from their artillery.

18. On the 24th November we had the misfortune to lose 228 oxen, which were captured by the enemy. Owing to lack of rain the grazing within our lines had become insufficient for all our animals, and a number of our cattle had to be grazed outside our defences, wherever a re-entrant gave them some protection from capture. Owing to the carelessness of certain civilian conductors, these oxen were allowed to stray too far out and seeing this the Boers commenced bursting shells on our side of the cattle in order to hasten their movements. In this they were successful, the Kafirs in charge abandoning their animals in order to seek shelter. As soon as the occurrence was noticed, the Mounted Infantry Company of the 1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment, under Captain C. Sherer, was sent out to try and head them back, but it was then too late, and though Captain Sherer did all that was possible and drove back a considerable number, under a heavy musketry fire from the enemy, yet, as already mentioned, the enemy obtained possession of 228 head.

19. Beyond the usual daily bombardment nothing worth recording took place till 27th November, which was marked by the unmasking of a new 6-inch gun on Middle Hill, and a very evident increase in the number of Boers in our immediate vicinity. An attack on our positions seemed likely, and all precautions were taken accordingly, but next day news arrived of Major-General Hildyard's fight at Mooi River, and the consequent withdrawal of the Boers to the north of the Tugela, which fully explained the increased numbers visible from Ladysmith.

20. On the 28th November, two 6.3-inch howitzers were sent to occupy emplacements which had been prepared for them on the reverse slope of Wagon Hill; a naval 12-pr. was also placed on Caesar's camp. From this position they opened fire next day, and proved able to quite keep down the fire from the enemy's 6-inch gun on Middle Hill, which some days afterwards was withdrawn from that position. I arranged an attack on Rifleman's Ridge for the night of 29th November, but was compelled to abandon it, as just at sunset the enemy very strongly reinforced that portion of their line. There can, I think, be no doubt that my plan had been disclosed to them, and indeed throughout the siege I have been much handicapped by the fact that every movement or preparation for movement which has taken place in Ladysmith, has been at once communicated to the Boers. The agents through whom news reached them, I have, unfortunately, failed to discover. I have sent away or locked up every person against whom reasonable grounds of suspicion could be alleged, but without the slightest effect.

21. Two civilians, who had volunteered to blow up the Sunday's River railway bridge, started on their perilous journey on 29th November, and returned here on 1st December. They reached the bridge without mishap, and duly placed the charges, but owing to not fully understanding the use of the fuze, only one out of four charges exploded.

22. On 29th November also we observed flashing signals on the clouds at night from Estcourt and were able to read a portion of a message. At a later period of the siege no difficulty was experienced in reading such

messages, but we were without means of replying in similar fashion.

23. 30th November was a day of very heavy bombardment, a new 6-inch gun opening fire from Gun Hill and doing much damage. One shell in particular entered the Town Hall which we had hitherto used as a hospital, killing and wounding 10 persons. It was found necessary to evacuate the building and place the hospital under canvas in a gorge where the protection from shell fire was better. This severe bombardment continued throughout 1st and 2nd December, but fortunately proved comparatively harmless. On the latter date heliographic communication via. Weenen was restored after having been interrupted for a long period.

24. On 3rd December General Joubert sent me a letter alleging that we had made unfair use of the Intombi Camp, and proposing that it should be broken up. In reply, I dealt in detail with the points raised, none of which had any foundation in fact, and as a result the breaking up of the camp was not pressed.

25. On 5th December, at 1.30 a.m., two companies of the 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade moved out, under Captain J. E. Gough, to surprise Thornhill's Farm which the enemy were in the habit of occupying with a picket at night. The enterprise was very well conducted, but the farm was unfortunately found unoccupied.

26. On the night of 7th December, Major-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., made a sortie for the purpose of destroying the Boer guns on Gun Hill, which had been giving us much annoyance. His force consisted of 500 Natal Volunteers, under Colonel Royston, and 100 men Imperial Light Horse, under Lieut.-Colonel A. H. M. Edwards, with 18 men of the Corps of Guides, under Major D. Henderson, D.A.A.G. for Intelligence, to direct the column, and four men Royal Engineers and 10 men No. 10 Mountain Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, under Captain Fowke and Lieut. Turner, Royal Engineers, with explosives and sledge hammers for the destruction of the guns when captured. Sir A. Hunter's arrangements were excellent throughout, and he was most gallantly supported by all his small force. Gun Hill was taken, a 6-inch Creusot and a 4.7-inch howitzer destroyed, and a Maxim captured and brought into camp. Our loss was only one Officer and seven men wounded. I consider that Major-General Sir A. Hunter deserves the greatest credit for this very valuable service for which he volunteered. He brings to my notice specially the gallant behaviour of Colonel W. Royston, Commanding Volunteers, Natal, Lieut.-Colonel A. H. M. Edwards (5th Dragoon Guards), Commanding Imperial Light Horse, Major D. Henderson, D.A.A.G. for Intelligence (wounded), Major A. J. King, Royal Lancaster Regiment, Major Karri Davis, Imperial Light Horse, Captain G. H. Fowke, R.E., and Lieutenant E. V. Turner, R.E., whose names I have much pleasure in bringing forward for favourable consideration.

27. The same night three companies of the 1st Bn. Liverpool Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel L. S. Mellor, seized Limit Hill, and through the gap in the enemy's outpost line thus created, a squadron 19th Hussars penetrated some 4 miles towards the north, destroying the enemy's telegraph line and burning various kraals and shelters ordinarily occupied by them. No loss was incurred in this enterprise. At the same time five companies 1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel G. D. Carleton, visited Hyde's and McPherson's farms, usually

occupied by the enemy as night outposts, but found them evacuated.

28. The slight opposition met with by these various operations of the night of 7th—8th December made it appear probable that the enemy had unduly weakened his force to the north of us in order to strengthen that opposing Sir Redvers Buller on the Tugela. Recognising that if this proved to be the case there might be an opportunity for my Cavalry to get far enough north to damage the enemy's railway, I ordered Brigadier-General J. F. Brocklehurst, M.V.O., to move out at dawn with 5th Lancers, 5th Dragoon Guards, and 18th Hussars and 53rd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, along the Newcastle Road, to feel for the enemy and discover his strength and dispositions. The reconnaissance was carried out in a very bold and dashing manner by the 5th Lancers and 18th Hussars, the 5th Dragoon Guards being in reserve. The enemy, however, proved to be in considerable strength, and having obtained the information I required I directed Brigadier-General Brocklehurst to withdraw his brigade. The effect of these various enterprises was shortly evident in the return from the line of the Tugela next day of some 2,000 Boers.

29. On the 10th December, Lieut.-Colonel C. T. E. Metcalfe, Commanding 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade, volunteered to carry out a night enterprise against a 4.7-inch howitzer on Surprise Hill. The undertaking was one of very considerable risk, as to reach that hill it was necessary to pass between Thornhill's and Bell's Kopjes, both of which were held by the enemy. Lieut.-Colonel Metcalfe moved off about 10 p.m., with 12 Officers and 488 men of his battalion, together with a destruction party under Lieutenant Digby Jones, R.E., and succeeded in effecting a complete surprise, his advance not being discovered until he was within 4 or 5 yards of the crest line, which was at once carried, and the howitzer destroyed. The retirement, however, proved more difficult, since the enemy from Bell's and Thornhill's Kopjes, consisting apparently of men of various nationalities, closed in from both sides to bar the retreat. Lieut.-Colonel Metcalfe, however, fixed bayonets, and the companies, admirably handled by their captains, fought their way back to the railway line, where a portion of the force had been left in support, and from which point the retirement became easy. A number of the enemy were killed with the bayonet, and his total casualties must have been very considerable. Our own loss amounted to 1 Officer and 16 men killed, 3 Officers and 37 men wounded, and 6 men missing. The affair reflects great credit on Lieut.-Colonel C. T. E. Metcalfe and his battalion, and I have much pleasure in bringing to your notice, in a subsequent portion of this despatch, the names of the Officers who particularly distinguished themselves on this occasion.

30. My attention was now chiefly directed to preparations for moving out a flying column to co-operate with General Sir Redvers Buller. All these preparations, including the movement of a 4.7-inch and a 12-pr. gun, both belonging to the Royal Navy, were completed by 15th December. Meanwhile the enemy had moved his 6-inch gun from Middle Hill to Telegraph Hill, and on 12th December I moved down the 6.3-inch howitzers to near Ration Post to oppose it.

31. The firing of Sir Redvers Buller's guns from the direction of Colenso had been audible for some days, and was especially heavy on 15th December. On 16th, Sir Redvers heliographed

that he had attacked Colenso on the previous day, but without success. Although this news was naturally disappointing to the hopes of immediate relief which they had entertained, yet it was received by both soldiers and civilians without any discouragement, and with a cheerful readiness to wait until the necessary reinforcements should arrive. From this time up to the close of the year few other events of importance occurred, but on Christmas day a telegram was received from Her Majesty and most gratefully appreciated by the garrison of Ladysmith. At this period a few of the many shells daily fired into our camps were especially destructive, one shell, on the 18th December, killed and wounded 10 men and 12 horses of the Natal Volunteers. Another, on 22nd December, killed 8 and wounded 9 of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and, on the same day a single shell wounded 5 Officers and the serjeant-major of the 5th Lancers. On 27th December, again, one shell killed 1 Officer of the Devonshire Regiment and wounded 8 Officers and 1 private of that regiment. During this period, also, fresh complaints regarding the Intombi Camp were made by the enemy; and, by agreement with General S. Burger, Major-General Sir A. Hunter was sent to that camp to hold an inquiry. A few minor irregularities were discovered and corrected, and a copy of Sir A. Hunter's report was sent to General Burger, who was apparently satisfied that the complaints were without serious foundation.

32. At the close of the year my chief source of anxiety lay in the heavy and continuous increase in the number of the sick, which had risen from 475 on 30th November to 874 on 15th December, and to 1,558 on the last day of the year. Enteric fever and dysentery were chiefly responsible for this increase, there being 452 cases of the former, and 376 of the latter under treatment on 31st December.

33. The Boers opened the new year by a fire of heavy guns at midnight, but beyond the daily long-range bombardment, nothing of importance occurred until 5th January, when we shelled, by indirect fire, two Boer camps, one behind Bell's Kopje, and one near Table Hill on the Colenso Plateau. In the latter case the fire probably had little effect, as the range was too great even for the naval gun employed, and the only possible observing station was very inconveniently placed. It was subsequently ascertained from the Boers themselves that the shells falling into the camp behind Bell's Kopje had been very effective, stampeding the horses and compelling the enemy temporarily to vacate the camp and seek shelter elsewhere.

34. On the 6th January the enemy made a most determined but fortunately unsuccessful attempt to carry Ladysmith by storm. Almost every part of my position was more or less heavily assailed, but the brunt of the attack fell upon Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill. On the night of the 5th—6th January, Caesar's Camp was held by its usual garrison, consisting of the 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment; the 42nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery; a detachment of the Royal Navy, with a 12-pr. gun; and a detachment Natal Naval Volunteers. Wagon Hill was held as usual by three companies, 1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps, and a squadron, Imperial Light Horse. A detachment Natal Naval Volunteers, with a 3-pr. Hotchkiss gun, had been sent there on the evening of the 5th January, and two Naval guns, one a 4.7-inch and the other a 12-pr., were in process of transfer to the hill

during the night. These guns were accompanied by naval detachments and a working party of Royal Engineers and Gordon Highlanders, who were consequently on Wagon Hill when the attack commenced at 2.30 a.m. on the morning of 6th January. This attack was first directed on the centre of the southern face of Wagon Hill, whence it spread east and west. It fell directly on the squadron of Imperial Light Horse, under Lieutenant G. M. Mathias, and the Volunteer Hotchkiss Detachment under Lieutenant E. N. W. Walker, who clung most gallantly to their positions, and did invaluable service in holding in check till daylight the Boers who had gained a footing on the hill within a few yards of them. The extreme south-west point of the hill was similarly held by a small mixed party of Bluejackets, Royal Engineers, Gordon Highlanders, and Imperial Light Horse, under Lieutenant Digby Jones, R.E. The remainder of the hill was defended by the companies of 1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps. Shortly after 3 a.m. An attack was developed against the south-east end of Caesar's Camp (which was garrisoned by the 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment), and on the thorn jungle between that hill and the Klip River, which was held by the Natal Mounted Volunteers. As soon as the alarm reached me, I ordered the Imperial Light Horse, under Lieut.-Colonel A. H. M. Edwards, to proceed as rapidly as possible to Wagon Hill, and the Gordon Highlanders to Caesar's Camp. Shortly afterwards, four companies, 1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps, and four companies, 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps, were ordered to march at once on Wagon Hill, and the 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade on Caesar's Camp. This section of my defences was under the command of Colonel Ian Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., who, judging that Wagon Hill was the point most seriously threatened, proceeded there himself, where he arrived about dawn, bringing with him a company of the 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders under Major Miller Wallnutt. Perceiving that the close and deadly nature of the fighting made it impossible for one Officer to adequately command on both hills, I directed Colonel Hamilton to devote his attention to Wagon Hill, while I entrusted the defence of Caesar's Camp to Lieut.-Colonel A. E. R. Curran, 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment, who had been stationed there with his battalion ever since the commencement of the siege, and was specially acquainted with the locality. I ordered Major W. E. Blewitt's battery of Royal Field Artillery, escorted by the 5th Dragoon Guards, to move out by Range Post and endeavour to prevent reinforcements reaching the enemy from the west. Major A. J. Abdy's battery of Royal Field Artillery I sent to Colonel Royston, Commanding Natal Mounted Volunteers, to take up position on the Klip River Flats and shell the south-eastern corner of Caesar's Camp, where the enemy had effected a lodgment.

The Imperial Light Horse reached Wagon Hill at 5.10 a.m., and were at once pushed into action. They pressed forward up to and over the western edge of the flat crest of the hill to within a few yards of the enemy, who held the opposite edge of the crest. They thus afforded a most welcome relief to the small garrison of the hill, but they themselves suffered very severely in occupying and maintaining their position. The company of 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, which arrived with Colonel Hamilton, was sent under cover of the western slopes to reinforce the extreme south-west point of the hill, and to endeavour

to work round so as to outflank the enemy, but were unable to do so owing to the extreme severity of the fire kept up by the Boers from Mounted Infantry Hill and from every available scrap of cover in Bester's Valley, which they occupied in great numbers. At 7 a.m., four companies 1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps and four companies 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps arrived, and about 8 a.m., one of these companies, followed shortly afterwards by another, was sent to reinforce the extreme south-western point of the hill, but although gallantly holding their own under a rain of shells and bullets, no progress could be made either there or on the main ridge. Meanwhile the 21st and 42nd Batteries, Royal Field Artillery, and the naval 12-pr. on Caesar's Camp, were in action against Mounted Infantry Hill and the scrub on either side of it, and were of great assistance in keeping down the violence of the enemy's fire. Colonel Hamilton, seeing plainly that the only way of clearing out those of the enemy's marksmen who were established on the eastern crest of Wagon Hill, within a few yards of our men, was by a sudden rush across the open, directed Major Campbell to tell off a company of the 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps to make the attempt, which however failed, Lieutenant N. M. Tod, who commanded, being killed, and the men falling back to the cover of the rocks from behind which they had started. The fighting continuing stationary and indecisive, at 10 a.m. I sent the 5th Lancers to Caesar's Camp and the 18th Hussars to Wagon Hill, two squadrons 19th Hussars having been previously posted on the ground near Maiden Castle to guard against any attempt of the enemy to turn Wagon Hill from the west.

For some time the fighting slackened considerably, the Boers being gradually driven down below the crest line, except at a single point where they were favoured by excellent cover, with a flat open space in front of it. At 1 p.m., however, a fresh assault was made with great suddenness on the extreme south-west point of the hill, our men giving way for a moment before the sudden outburst of fire and retiring down the opposite slope. Fortunately the Boers did not immediately occupy the crest, and this gave time for Major Miller Wallnutt, 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, Lieutenant Digby Jones, R.E., Lieutenant P. D. Fitzgerald (11th Hussars), Adjutant Imperial Light Horse, Gunner W. Sims, R.N., and several non-commissioned officers, Imperial Light Horse, to rally the men; while Major E. C. Knox, Commanding 18th Hussars brought up a portion of his regiment, which was in reserve at the foot of the hill, to act dismounted.

The top was reoccupied just as the three foremost Boers reached it, the leader being shot by Lieutenant Digby Jones, R.E., and the two others by No. 459 Trooper H. Albrecht, Imperial Light Horse. Had they survived I should have had great pleasure in recommending both Lieutenant Jones and Trooper Albrecht for the distinction of the Victoria Cross. I regret to say that both were killed before the conclusion of the action.

At 3.30 p.m., a storm of wind and rain of extraordinary severity set in and lasted for 3 hours. During its continuance the 5th Dragoon Guards, 5th Lancers, and 1½ squadrons 19th Hussars reinforced Wagon Hill, acting dismounted. About 4.45 p.m., when the storm was at its worst, the portion of our troops holding the extreme south-west point of the hill were again

driven from their position, but were rallied and reoccupied it; 2nd Lieutenant R. E. Reade, 1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps, rendering himself conspicuous by his gallant service at this period.

At 5 p.m., Lieut.-Colonel C. W. Park arrived at Wagon Hill with three companies 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, which I had ordered up as a reinforcement, and was at once directed by Colonel Hamilton to turn the enemy off the ridge with the bayonet. The Devons dashed forward and gained a position under cover within 50 yards of the enemy. Here a fire fight ensued, but the Devons were not to be denied, and, eventually, cheering as they pushed from point to point, they drove the enemy not only off the plateau but cleared every Boer out of the lower slopes and the dongas surrounding the position. Lieut.-Colonel Park went into action with four Officers, but he alone remained untouched at the close. The total loss of the Devons was nearly 28 per cent. of those engaged, and the men fired only 12 rounds per rifle. Captain A. Menzies, 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment, with a few of his men, accompanied the Devons throughout. He also was wounded.

I desire to draw special attention to the gallantry displayed by all ranks of the Imperial Light Horse, some of whom were within 100 yards of the enemy for 15 hours exposed to a deadly fire. Their losses were terribly heavy, but never for one moment did any of them waver or cease to show a fine example of courage and determination to all who came in contact with them.

I have already mentioned that about 3 a.m., the south-east end of Cæsar's Camp was also attacked, as well as the pickets of the Natal Volunteers in the thorn scrub to the north of that hill. During the darkness the enemy succeeded in establishing themselves on part of that end of Cæsar's Camp, but the precise details of what occurred have not been made clear, as nearly all the defenders of this portion have been killed. It is believed, however, that taking advantage of a general similarity of dress to that of the Natal Volunteers and Police, and many of them having a perfect command of the English language, the Boers succeeded in deceiving the pickets as to their identity, and were thus able to effect a surprise. As already stated, I sent the 53rd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, under Major A. J. Abdy, to Colonel Royston, Commanding Natal Volunteers; and these guns, most ably handled, came into action on the Klip River flats, and, though exposed to the fire of several Boer guns (including a 6-inch Creusot gun on Bulwana Mountain), to which they had no means of replying, shelled the south-east portion of Cæsar's Camp with great effect, and inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy. The 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders and 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade were sent to Lieut.-Colonel A. E. R. Curran, who was in command here, and were gradually pushed into the fight, company by company, wherever their services were most required. Gradually the Boers were pushed back over the crest line, but held on most stubbornly to the slopes, being continually reinforced or relieved from the dongas below and from the adjacent hills, whence a fire of very great intensity was kept up, while the whole of the plateau was swept by the Boer long-range guns from distant eminences. At last, after 15 hours of stubborn resistance by our men, and of continual effort on the part of the Boers, the enemy were driven off at all points during the same storm in which Wagon Hill was also

cleared as already described, their retreat being hastened by the heavy fire poured on them as they retired.

Another attack was made before dawn on the 6th January on Observation Hill West, occupied by $\frac{1}{2}$ battalion 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, under Major M. C. Curry. The enemy gained some dead ground near our works during the darkness, and at 9.30 a.m., and again at a later hour, they attempted to storm the works under cover of the fire of these men and of guns and rifles from all the surrounding kopjes. These, however, were repelled with no great difficulty by the wing 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, and the Artillery allotted to this portion of the defence, consisting of Royal Field Artillery and naval guns. The enemy, however, held on to the dead ground originally occupied all day, and only withdrew during the storm in the afternoon. The remainder of Section "B" and the whole of Section "A" of the defences were subjected to a heavy fire of guns and rifles all day, but no other attempt to press home an attack was made on these portions of our line.

Our losses, I regret to say, were very heavy, consisting of 14 Officers and 135 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and 31 Officers and 244 men wounded. I have not been able to ascertain the actual loss to the Boers, but 79 bodies found within our lines were returned to them next day for burial, and native spies report that their total casualties could not be less than 700.

35. On 8th January a thanksgiving service in commemoration of the repulse of the enemy on 6th idem was held by Archdeacon Barker, and very largely attended by such officers and men as could be spared from duty. From this time until the end of the siege, no further effort to carry Ladysmith by assault was made by the Boers, whose attention was fully occupied by the various attacks made by Sir Redvers Buller on the line of the Tugela, though the town and camps were exposed to a daily bombardment from the enemy's guns, and skirmishing between our outposts and those of the Boers went on all day and every day, and caused us small but continuous losses. During this period I shall only refer to a night enterprise undertaken by 2nd Lieutenant H. C. W. Theobald, and 15 non-commissioned officers and men, 1st Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment. The object was to set fire to the abbatis which the enemy had constructed at the foot of Gun Hill, and was carried out in a manner reflecting credit on the young Officer in command, and without loss; while creating a considerable scare among the Boers who fired heavily in the darkness for a considerable time.

36. On 1st March I sent Colonel W. G. Knox, with the 1st Bn. Liverpool Regiment, 1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, 5th Dragoon Guards, and the 53rd and 67th Batteries, Royal Field Artillery, to move out along the Newcastle Road to harass as much as possible the enemy whom we could see retiring before the successful advance of Sir Redvers Buller's force. Colonel Knox carried Long Hill and Pepworth Hill and opened fire with his guns on Modder Spruit Railway Station and the large Boer camp there, which the enemy at once evacuated. Both men and horses were too weak for rapid or prolonged operations, but several of the enemy's camps were captured, and the force returned after having very successfully carried out their object to as great a distance as their weakness permitted them to pur-

sue. Our casualties were 2 Officers and 6 non-commissioned officers and men wounded.

37. Colonel Lord Dundonald with a body of Colonial troops rode into Ladysmith on the evening of 28th February, and on 1st March General Sir Redvers Buller himself arrived, and the siege came to an end.

38. During the period from 6th January to 1st March, our struggle became one against disease and starvation even more than against the enemy. Our worst foes in this respect were enteric fever and dysentery, the former especially committing great ravages among the young soldiers of the garrison. Our deaths by disease from 2nd November, 1899, to 28th February, 1900, amounted to 12 Officers and 529 non-commissioned officers and men. The Officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Army Nursing Sisters, the many ladies who voluntarily offered their services as nurses, and the hospital staffs of all ranks, maintained throughout the siege a brave and protracted struggle against sickness under almost every possible disadvantage, their numbers being most inadequate for the work to be done, and the supplies of drugs and of suitable food for invalids being entirely insufficient for so many patients for so long a period.

39. Even more important was the regulation and augmentation of the food supplies, as will be realized from the simple statement that 21,000 mouths had to be fed for 120 days; and the admirable manner in which all arrangements were made and carried out by the Officers of the Army Service Corps and Indian Commissariat Department under the able and untiring superintendence of Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., my A.A.G. (B), will be evident from the fact that at the date of the relief we still possessed resources capable of maintaining this great number on reduced rations for another 30 days.

At the commencement of the siege, it became necessary to augment as far as possible all food supplies, and, with this view, one mill and subsequently two, were taken over and worked under military supervision and with labour and mechanics obtained from the employees of the Natal Government Railway, who remained voluntarily with the garrison. From these mills we produced during the siege mealie flour, mealie bran and crushed mealies. The mills were worked under the personal supervision of Lieut.-Colonel Stoneman, A.S.C., D.A.A.G., assisted by Major D. M. Thompson, Assistant Commissary-General, Indian Commissariat Transport Department.

When grazing and forage became scarce and the supply of cattle approached within a measurable distance of extinction, it was necessary to utilize for food the horses which would otherwise have died from exhaustion and weakness. From these slaughtered horses very considerable additions to the food supply were made by the establishment of a factory from which were made: (i.) "Chevril," a strong meat soup issued nightly to the troops; (ii.) a condensed form of "Chevril" which took the place in the hospitals of various meat extracts which had been expended; (iii.) a jelly similar to calf-foot jelly for the sick and wounded; (iv.) "Chevril paste" made of boiled meat and jelly and issued as a ration to the men, and which being similar to the potted meats manufactured at home was much appreciated by the troops; and finally (v.) "neats-foot oil," which was used for lubricating the heavy Naval Ordnance. The boiled

meat was given to the soldiers at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per man.

The whole of this factory was under the management of Lieut. C. E. J. MacNalty, A.S.C., whose untiring energy, ingenuity, and intelligence are deserving of high commendation. Captain J. R. Young, R.E., R.S.O., converted a railway locomotive shed into a factory, and displayed very great skill in improvising the various appliances necessary for the manufacture of the different foods.

With the object of still further improving the rations a sausage factory was established which converted the horse-flesh into excellent sausages, issued to the men at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per head. This factory was most efficiently worked under the supervision of Mr. R. Beresford Turner.

As a safeguard against any serious loss of animals by disease or from other causes with a consequent reduction of our power of continuing the defence, a reserve of "biltong" was prepared, under the superintendence of Captain A. Long, A.S.C., who undertook it in addition to his onerous duties of Local Transport Officer.

The very large number of enteric and dysentery patients rendered it necessary to utilise all available sources of milk supply. All milch cows were requisitioned, and a dairy system established which provided milk, on medical certificate, for the sick, both military and civilian.

The feeding of the civil population was carried out by the Army Service Corps, a staff of civilian assistants being organised for distribution, and a large shed specially converted for the purpose. The two foregoing duties were carried out under the direction of Lieut.-Colonel Stoneman, D.A.A.G., and Major Thompson, A.C.G.

40. On the investment of Ladysmith, the main was broken by the enemy, and the water supply for the camp and town became dependent upon the Klip River. A system of filtration by Berkfeld filters was commenced, which answered well so long as the limited supply of alum lasted; as soon as it was expended the muddy condition of the water clogged the filters, and this method became unreliable. Three condensers were then constructed out of improvised materials by Mr. Binnie, Maintenance Manager, Natal Government Railway, under the able direction of Engineer C. C. Sheen, R.N., H.M. Ship "Powerful." As a further means of obtaining pure water, apparatus for clearing water was constructed out of barrack sheeting placed on wooden stands, and having a deposit of wood ashes, through which the water was strained. It thus became possible to use the filters and also to provide all units with clearing arrangements. It was possible, so long as the coal lasted, to supply at least 12,000 gallons of condensed or filtered water daily. The management of the water supply was carried out by Lieutenant H. B. Abadie, 11th Hussars, who performed the duties of Staff Officer for Water Supplies, and whose work is deserving of much praise.

Mr. W. King, District Inspector, Public Works Department, Mr. R. Brooke and the officials of that department, rendered most valuable assistance in every way possible.

41. With the object of reducing the number of orderlies employed in the conveyance of letters, a postal system, which included all the defences and the camp and town, was organised and most efficiently carried out by Captain P. C. J. Scott, A.S.C.

42. In order to supply the deficiency of hay,

a corps of grass-cutters was formed and placed under the charge of Major W. J. R. Wickham, Assistant Commissary-General, Indian Commissariat Transport Department. This corps, which consisted of Indian refugees and Kaffirs, did excellent work, and collected grass under conditions of considerable difficulty.

43. I take this opportunity of publicly expressing my deep sense of the gallantry and patient endurance of hardships displayed by all ranks of all corps under my command.

The Naval Brigade of H.M. Ship "Powerful," under Captain the Honourable Hedworth Lambton, R.N., have rivalled the best of our troops in gallantry and endurance, and their long-range guns, though hampered by a most serious want of sufficient ammunition, have played a most prominent part in the defence, and have been most successful in keeping the enemy from bringing his guns to the ranges at which they would have been most efficient.

The Cavalry have not only performed their regular duties, but when their horses became non-effective have served as infantry, being re-armed with rifle and bayonet, and taking their regular share in holding the fortifications.

The Artillery have displayed their usual skill and gallantry, whether as mobile batteries or when used as guns of positions in fixed emplacements as became increasingly necessary during the latter portion of the investment.

The Royal Engineers, both Officers and men, have sustained the grand traditions of their corps, and whether engaged on the defences, in maintaining telegraphic and telephonic communication between all sections of the defences, in ballooning, or in any other work required of them, have done everything which they were called upon to perform in a manner which has afforded me the highest satisfaction.

The work of the Infantry especially, exposed day and night to all weathers on our lines of defence, almost continually under fire, and living latterly on a ration consisting of little more than a proportion of horse flesh with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per man of inferior and scarcely eatable mealie bread, has been of the most severe and trying nature, and has been carried out without a murmur and with the most cheerful steadfastness.

Of the Imperial Light Horse, specially raised in Natal at the commencement of the war, I have already expressed my opinion. No praise can be too great for the gallantry and determination which all ranks of this corps have invariably displayed in action.

The Natal Volunteers have performed invaluable service. Their knowledge of the country has been of the very greatest use to me, and in every action in which they have been engaged they have shown themselves most forward and daring. The Natal Naval Volunteers have proved themselves worthy comrades of the land forces of the Colony.

44. The civil inhabitants of Ladysmith, of all ages and both sexes, have uncomplainingly borne the privations inseparable from a siege, and have endured the long-continued bombardment to which they have been exposed with a fortitude which does them honour.

45. In conclusion, I trust I may be allowed to give expression to the deep sense of gratitude, felt not only by myself but by every soldier, sailor and civilian who has been through the siege, to General Sir Redvers Buller and his gallant force, who, after such severe fighting, so many hardships, and notwithstanding very

severe losses, have triumphantly carried out the relief of my beleaguered garrison.

46. Finally, I desire to bring prominently to your notice the following Officers, Warrant Officers, non-commissioned officers, sailors, soldiers, volunteers, and civilians, who have rendered specially good service during the four months of the siege.

Major-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., who acted as my Chief of the Staff, is an Officer of well-known reputation. I cannot speak too highly of him, whether for the performance of Staff duties or for bold leading in the field. He is a most loyal and efficient Staff Officer, and I recommend him for advancement with the utmost confidence, being well assured that such a step would be for the good of the State.

Captain the Honourable Hedworth Lambton, R.N., commanding the Naval Brigade, reached Ladysmith in the nick of time, when it became evident that I was not strong enough to meet the enemy in the open field. He brought with him two 4.7-inch and four 12-pr. guns, which proved to be the only ordnance in my possession capable of equalling in range the enemy's heavy guns. Although the ammunition available was very limited, Captain Lambton so economised it that it lasted out to the end of the siege, and under his direction the naval guns succeeded in keeping at a distance the enemy's siege guns, a service which was of the utmost importance. Captain Lambton personally has been the life of the garrison throughout the siege.

Major-General F. Howard, C.B., C.M.G., A.D.C., Commanding the 8th Brigade and in charge of Section B of the defences, has proved himself a careful and able administrator. The works constructed in his section were exceptionally strong and well maintained.

Colonel I. S. M. Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., Commanding 7th Brigade and in charge of Section C of the defences, has, during the whole of the operations of the defence, been in charge of the most exposed and most extended front, including the immense position of Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill, over 4 miles in perimeter. I cannot speak too highly of his indefatigable zeal in organising the defence of his front, and in keeping up the hearts of all under him by his constant and personal supervision. His leadership on 6th January was the most marked factor in the success of the defence.

Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., Colonel on the Staff in charge of Section A of the defences, exercised the command entrusted to him with great zeal and skill. The works constructed on his front were models of semi-permanent entrenchment, laid out from the commencement on a plain which enabled him to strengthen them day by day until they became practically impregnable. He is an Officer of fine nerve and a strong disciplinarian. I trust his services may be adequately rewarded.

Colonel W. Royston, Commanding Natal Volunteer Forces and in charge of Section D of the defences. I can only repeat the high praise which I had the pleasure to bestow on Colonel Royston in my despatch of the 2nd December, 1899. He commanded Section D of the defences in an admirable manner, and with his force, though much reduced in numbers by casualties and disease, continued to the end to perform invaluable service. He is an Officer exceptionally suited to his important position as Commandant of the Natal Volunteer Forces, and I trust that he may receive some suitable reward.

Major-General J. F. Brocklehurst, M.V.O., continued to command the Cavalry Brigade until the horses became useless from starvation. In all Cavalry actions round Ladysmith his personal gallantry was conspicuous.

Colonel C. M. H. Downing, Commanding Royal Artillery, did all that a highly-trained specialist could do to assist me in the defence, both as regards the employment of his batteries as mobile units, and also in their distribution and action when it became necessary to demobilise them, and place the guns in fixed epaulments. He is an Officer in whose knowledge and judgment in artillery matters I have every confidence.

Major S. R. Rice, Commanding Royal Engineers, was indefatigable in his exertions both by day and night, and showed considerable skill in laying out works and in giving to the Commanders of Sections of the defences that advice and assistance in their construction which the trained Officers of the Royal Engineers can so ably afford.

Brevet-Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., Army Service Corps, Assistant-Adjutant-General, for "B" duties. As the siege continued and the supply difficulties constantly increased, Colonel Ward's cheerful ingenuity met every difficulty with ever-fresh expedients. He is unquestionably the very best Supply Officer I have ever met, and to his resource, foresight, and inventiveness the successful defence of Ladysmith for so long a period is very largely due. He is exceptionally deserving of reward, and I trust that he may receive the advancement which his services have merited.

Colonel B. Duff, C.I.E., Indian Staff Corps, Assistant Military Secretary, performed the duties of his office with his characteristic ability and zeal. He also took a prominent part in the general Staff duties of head-quarters, in which his services were equally valuable. This Officer is fitted for the highest posts.

Colonel R. Exham, Royal Army Medical Corps, did all that a Principal Medical Officer could do in organising the medical services under circumstances of exceptional difficulty, and with personnel and materiel both inadequate for a siege of such long duration, accompanied by such a great amount of sickness.

Lieut.-Colonel R. W. Mapleton, Royal Army Medical Corps, in charge of Intombi Hospital Camp, was placed in a most exceptional position, in charge of a neutral camp where the maintenance of discipline in the ordinary way was impossible, but in the face of all difficulties he did everything possible to maintain the sanitation of the camp, and to ensure the well-being of the sick and wounded.

Veterinary Lieut.-Colonel I. Matthews, Army Veterinary Department, Principal Veterinary Officer, did excellent work in maintaining, so far as the want of proper forage would admit, the efficiency of all animals belonging to the Force. He was a very valuable adviser on veterinary matters both to myself and to the General Officer Commanding the Cavalry Brigade.

Brevet Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry S. Rawlinson, Bart., Coldstream Guards, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General, who officiated throughout the siege as Assistant Adjutant-General (A), is a Staff Officer of great ability and activity, with a wonderful eye for the topography of the country. His constant observations of the enemy's positions and movements were of much value to me

in forecasting their intentions. He is an officer well worthy of advancement.

Brevet Lieut.-Colonel H. M. Lawson, R.E., additional Assistant Adjutant-General (A), is a Staff Officer of the highest ability and the soundest judgment, and rendered me most valuable service throughout the siege.

Major E. A. Altham, Royal Scots, Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence, has had to contend with all the difficulties inseparable from intelligence work under the limitations imposed by siege conditions. All that was possible under these conditions he has done, and I consider him an excellent Intelligence Officer in every respect.

Brevet-Major H. Henderson, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence. Towards the latter end of the siege, Major Altham was attacked by enteric fever, and Major Henderson assumed charge of the Field Intelligence Department. He is a bold and accurate reconnoitrer, and the intelligence he brought back was always reliable. Whether as a subordinate or as head of the Field Intelligence Department, he has always afforded me the greatest assistance. I recommend him for reward.

Major C. de C. Hamilton, R.A., Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (A), has done a good deal of most useful work, and has shown himself a Staff Officer of high promise.

Major W. F. Hawkins, R.E., Director of Army Telegraphs, was indefatigable in maintaining electric communication between my headquarters and all portions of the defence. The service thus rendered was of the highest value, and conducted greatly to the successful defence of Ladysmith.

Major G. M. Heath, R.E., in charge of Balloon Section, is a bold and enterprising aeronaut, and rendered useful service during the siege; the constant watch which he kept on the enemy's movements being a source of much disquiet to them.

Major W. C. Savile, R.A., Senior Ordnance Officer, conducted the duties of his department with zeal and ability.

Colonel J. G. Dartnell, C.M.G., Chief Commissioner, Natal Police, possesses an exceptional knowledge of the Colony of Natal and of native character. I am greatly obliged to him for the advice and assistance which he has always been ready to afford me, of which I have availed myself freely, and which I have found of the highest value.

Mr. T. R. Bennett, Resident Magistrate of Ladysmith, was placed by me in charge of the Civil Camp at Intombi, and performed much good service in strictly enforcing the conditions on which I was permitted by Commandant-General Joubert to maintain that camp.

Mr. D. G. Giles acted as Resident Magistrate at Ladysmith during Mr. Bennett's absence, and was of great assistance in maintaining discipline amongst the civil population, both European and Native.

The Reverends E. J. Macpherson, O. S. Watkins, T. Murray and Father Ford, the senior chaplains of the Church of England, Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic denominations respectively, showed the greatest zeal and self-sacrifice in their attention to the sick and wounded, as well as in their ministrations to those in health. I regret that the calls on them for aid and comfort by the dying were only too constant.

My especial thanks are due to the following Commanding Officers of Units:—

Lieut.-Colonel St. J. C. Gore, Commanding
5th Dragoon Guards.

Major E. C. Knox, Commanding 18th Hussars.

Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Coxhead, Commanding
2nd Brigade Division, Royal Field Artillery.

Lieut.-Colonel E. H. Pickwood, Commanding
1st Brigade Division, Royal Field Artillery.

Major J. W. G. Dawkins, Commanding 13th
Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Major W. E. Blewitt, Commanding 21st
Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Major C. E. Goulburn, Commanding 42nd
Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Major A. J. Abdy, Commanding 53rd Battery,
Royal Field Artillery.

Major J. F. Manifold, Commanding 67th
Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Major F. D. V. Wing, Commanding 69th
Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Lieut.-Colonel C. W. Park Commanding 1st
Bn. Devonshire Regiment.

Lieut.-Colonel A. E. R. Curran, Commanding
1st Bn. Manchester Regiment.

Lieut.-Colonel C. T. E. Metcalfe, Commanding
2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade.

Major (local Lieut.-Colonel) A. H. M. Edwards,
5th Dragoon Guards, Commanding Imperial
Light Horse.

47. I also desire to bring to your notice the
following Officers, &c., who have rendered
excellent service:—

Lieutenant A. W. Heneage, R.N.

Lieutenant L. Halsey, R.N.

Lieut.-Colonel J. Stoneman, Army Service
Corps, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General.

Major J. R. Dick, Army Pay Department.

Major F. H. Treherne, Royal Army Medical
Corps.

Major S. C. N. Grant, Royal Engineers.

Major J. F. Bateson, Royal Army Medical
Corps.

Major H. Mullaly, Royal Engineers, Deputy-
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Major A. J. Murray, Royal Inniskilling Fusi-
liers, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General.

Brevet-Major A. J. King, Royal Lancaster
Regiment, A.D.C. to Major-General Sir A.
Hunter.

Major E. R. O. Ludlow, Army Service Corps,
Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (B).

Captain J. R. Young, Royal Engineers, Rail-
way Staff Officer.

Captain F. Lyon, Royal Field Artillery, A.D.C.

Captain F. S. Tatham, Natal Mounted Rifles.

Lieutenant J. D. G. Walker, Royal High-
landers, Divisional Signalling Officer.

Conductor W. C. Ashmore, Indian Unattached
List.

Mr. J. Farquhar, Mayor of Ladysmith.

Mr. A. Henderson, in charge of Native Guide
Establishment.

48. The following Officers, Warrant Officers,
non-commissioned and petty officers and men
have been brought to my notice by General
Officers Commanding, Heads of Departments,
and Officers Commanding Units, and I cordially
endorse their commendations. (The names are
arranged in order of precedence of corps):—

Officers.

Royal Navy.

Lieutenant M. H. Hodges.

Lieutenant E. Stabb, Royal Naval Reserve
(died of enteric fever, 15th January).

Fleet Paymaster W. H. F. Kay.

Engineer C. C. Sheen.

Midshipman Hon. I. F. A. Carnegie.

Cavalry.

4th Dragoon Guards.

Lieutenant B. H. H. Mathew-Lannowe.

5th Dragoon Guards.

Lieutenant and Adjutant W. Q. Winwood.

5th Lancers.

Major A. C. King.

11th Hussars.

Lieutenant P. D. Fitzgerald.

16th Lancers.

Captain G. P. Wyndham, Brigade-Major,
Cavalry Brigade.

18th Hussars.

Major H. T. Laming.

19th Hussars.

Major H. D. Fanshawe.

Lieutenant and Adjutant M. Archer-Shee.

Royal Artillery.

Staff.

Captain A. L. Walker.

Captain E. S. E. W. Russell.

21st Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Lieutenant R. E. Ramsden.

42nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

Lieutenant S. W. Douglas.

1st Brigade Division Ammunition Column.

Major E. S. May.

Captain H. W. A. Christie.

Royal Engineers.

Lieutenant R. J. T. Digby-Jones (killed 6th
January).

23rd Field Company.

2nd Lieutenant G. B. B. Dennis (killed 6th
January).

Infantry.

1st Bn Royal West Surrey Regiment.

Brevet-Major D. Mackworth (killed 6th
January).

1st Bn. the King's (Liverpool Regiment).

Lieut.-Colonel L. S. Mellor.

Lieutenant and Adjutant L. M. Jones.

1st Bn. Devonshire Regiment.

Major M. C. Curry.

Captain W. B. Lafone (killed in action 6th
January).

Captain and Adjutant H. S. L. Ravenshaw.

Lieutenant J. E. I. Masterson.

Lieutenant H. N. Field (killed in action 6th
January).

Somersetshire Light Infantry.

Captain J. M. Vallentin, Brigade-Major, 7th
Infantry Brigade).

Lieutenant C. E. M. Walker (killed in action
6th January).

1st Bn. Leicestershire Regiment.

Major E. R. Scott.

Captain L. C. Sherer.

1st Bn. Scottish Rifles.

Lieutenant N. M. Tod, attached to 2nd Bn.
King's Royal Rifle Corps (killed in action
6th January).

1st Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Lieut.-Colonel W. P. Campbell.

Captain E. Northey.

Captain and Adjutant H. R. Blore.

2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Major H. E. Buchanan-Riddell, Acting Deputy-
Assistant Adjutant-General, Divisional
Troops.

Major H. S. Bowen (killed in action 6th
January).