

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 Deerdekop, 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 Nootgedacht. 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 Nootgedacht, 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 Nootgedacht. 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