

laager at Schaapkraal (41), where he captured 22 prisoners, 30 rifles, 10 loaded wagons, 4 carts, 300 cattle, and a lot of ammunition. Two Boers and 2 men of the Scots Greys were killed.

On his way to Zeerust Lord Methuen had some sharp fighting. He marched from Brakfontein (278) to Roodeval (263) on 2nd September, and at Pella, 12 miles further to the north-west, captured Field Cornet van Tonder's convoy after a hard gallop. Six Boers were left dead on the field, and 22 prisoners, 28 wagons, 10 carts, 1,200 cattle, and 7,400 rounds of ammunition were captured. The following day Lord Methuen moved on to Straat's Drift (977), and on the 4th turned south to Rieckert's Dam (203) where he took 9 prisoners and 4 wagons. On 5th September his troops had a long and hard day's fighting in the difficult bush country of the Marico valley, in which he appears to have been opposed on his right front by General Delarey and Field Cornet van Tonder, and on his left front by Commandants D. Botha and Liebenberg, whilst the Marico commando under Commandant Lemmer and Field Cornet Louw engaged his rear guard. The brunt of the action was borne by the 5th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, and Lord Methuen's two Welsh squadrons. 11 Boers were killed, 8 were wounded, and 11 prisoners, with 10 wagons and 5 carts were captured. On the 8th the force marched to Vaalkop on its way to Zeerust.

A column detached from Lord Methuen's command, under Lieut.-Colonel Von Donop also simultaneously made its way from Brakfontein to Zeerust by a more southern route through Quagshoek (243) and the lead mines, during which march 3 prisoners, 39 vehicles, and some cattle were captured. Lord Methuen's casualties between Brakfontein and Zeerust were 1 Officer and 12 men killed, and 2 Officers and 28 men wounded.

Operations on the Pietersburg Line.

12. Lieut.-Colonel Grenfell has continued his operations during the past month against General Beyers, in the districts to the west of the Pietersburg line, but meagre results have been obtained owing to the determination of the enemy to avoid all risk of contact with our troops. 9 Boers have been killed, and Colonel Grenfell has captured 15 prisoners, 23 wagons, and a few horses and oxen.

The district, however, has been the scene of two train-wrecking incidents, which bring discredit I think on the Boer forces. The first of these occurred on 10th August, when a train was derailed by the explosion of a mine near Naboom Spruit Station, and the passengers at once attacked by a party of Boers in ambush. Upon this occasion 1 civilian was killed, and 2 soldiers and 2 refugees (1 of whom was a woman) were wounded. On 31st August this incident was entirely surpassed by the derailment of another train between Waterval and Hamanskraal Stations by means of an observation mine. The spot chosen for this attack was a deep cutting, from the banks of which the inmates of the train were shot down before they had time to recover from the shock of derailment. In this painful affair, out of some 50 persons who were travelling in the train, we had to deplore the loss of 1 Officer, 13 men, 1 civilian, and 2 natives killed, and 4 Officers, 20 men, and 1 woman wounded. Amongst the killed was Lieut.-Colonel Vandeleur, Irish Guards, an Officer universally regretted, who had proved his worth to the Army at a very early age. Although it may be admitted that the mining of railways and the derailment of trains is in no way opposed to the customs of war where any

definite object is in view, it is impossible to regard senseless and meaningless acts of this nature, which have no effect whatever on the general course of operations, as anything better than wanton murder.

To pursue these train wreckers, who retired eastward from Hamanskraal towards Wagen Drift (453), Major-General Barton at once despatched a flying column from the Hekpoort valley by Zilikat's Nek to Waterval. This force consisting of 250 men and two Royal Horse Artillery guns, under Lieut.-Colonel Hacket Thompson, overtook the marauders near Wagen Drift. Four of the latter were killed, and Lieut.-Colonel Hacket Thompson was able to recover a portion of the mails which had been removed from the derailed train. After this engagement the column marched into Eerste Fabriken, and returned thence to Waterval on 8th September.

General Blood's Operations in North-Eastern Transvaal.

13. On 9th August Major-General Walter Kitchener and Colonel Campbell, with their columns, were at Diepkloof (375), 35 miles north of Middelburg, and Colonel Park, who had been operating about the Tantesberg, was at Paardekloof (99). From the mounted troops of these three columns Major-General Kitchener now organised, under his own command, a flying column, consisting of the 18th and 19th Hussars, the 4th Mounted Infantry Battalion, two guns of the 81st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, a pompom, and 60 men of the Devonshire Regiment, who were to be carried in carts. He moved the remainder of the Infantry and wagons, under Colonels Campbell and Park, to Rooikraal (14) and Holnek (481), and then with the flying column left Diepkloof at 4 a.m. on the 10th for Krokodil Drift on the Olifant's River. No Boers were seen in the valley of the Blood River, across which the column passed, and Kafir reports stated that Viljoen and his commando would be found on the banks of the Moos. Leaving one company of Mounted Infantry and the pompom to hold Krokodil Drift, General Kitchener pushed on with the remainder of his force over the Moos stream, where he saw no signs of the enemy, towards the valley of the Eland's River. On arrival upon the low heights overlooking this river, clouds of dust were observed about 7 miles away on the Slagboom-Droukfoutein road, but the impenetrable nature of the bush in that direction defeated all efforts to close with what appeared to be a large convoy. As this convoy seemed to be moving down the left bank of the Eland's River towards Commissie Drift, Major-General Kitchener headed for the same point along the right bank, only to find on arrival there that the Boers had turned back to the south-west. He therefore retraced his steps to Uyskraal (228), and on 16th August the 19th Hussars pushed up the Eland's valley towards Vrieskraal (18), followed at some distance by the remainder of the flying column. At 2.30 p.m. that day a report was received from the Officer Commanding the 19th Hussars to the effect that the Boers were in position to his front, and that he was being hard pressed by parties of the enemy, who sought to surround his regiment in the dense bush. The 18th Hussars and guns were at once pushed forward in support, and upon their arrival the enemy were steadily forced back into some kopjes, which were evacuated altogether during the night. During this engagement we had 5 men killed, and 4 Officers and 19 men of the 19th Hussars, who were at one time surrounded and captured, were released during the progress of the fighting.

Major-General Kitchener then rejoined Colonel