

country. On each of these nights every officer and man, after marching some 20 miles, had to spend the hours usually devoted to rest in entrenching, watching, and occasionally fighting.

In this connection he draws special attention to the spade-work done by the Commonwealth Regiments, 3rd New South Wales Bushmen, and the 8th New Zealand Contingent. Every night while the sweep was in progress these troops dug one redoubt, to hold 20 men, every 100 yards of their front of 6 miles. The redoubts were so solidly constructed that they would have afforded perfect cover from artillery fire, and the intervals between them were closed by wagons linked together with barbed wire.

The commander of each group of columns had his own particular system, and it may be of interest to note that General Walter Kitchener's force held the line assigned to it by similar works constructed to hold seven men each, and placed at intervals of 50 yards apart. The work done by the troops under Colonels Sir Henry Rawlinson, Kokewich, and Rochfort was equally satisfactory, barbed wire and obstacles being freely made use of to close the points at which the enemy would be most likely to break through.

On the 15th May the whole of Sir Ian Hamilton's force started upon its return march to Klerksdorp, and on the same day Colonel Rochfort's column began to move back to Bloemhof.

5. In the first week of April, Colonels Pilcher and Ternan were operating, it will be remembered from Boshof and Bultfontein respectively; but, on the 8th, Colonel Pilcher was ordered to the Kimberley railway line to assist in conveying supplies to some of the outlying garrisons to the west of Kimberley and Hopetown. He has been employed upon this work during the whole of the past month.

Colonel Ternan continued his operations from Bultfontein, and, on the 8th April, detached a party of 200 mounted men, under Major Luard, to clear some farms in the neighbourhood of Hartenbosch. Here this patrol was suddenly attacked by a large party of Boers under Commandant Badenhorst, and, after an engagement which reflected very little credit upon many of our men, the majority of the patrol were captured by the enemy.

Colonel Ternan was then ordered to bring his column into the railway at Eensgevonden, whence it was employed in escorting a convoy up to Hoopstad for Colonel Rochfort's troops. On the completion of this duty he returned to Kroonstad, which was reached on the 26th April. The column was then broken up.

6. At the conclusion of the advance to the Draakensberg, which terminated on the 5th April, the columns under Colonels Rimington, Nixon, and Garratt marched back from Botha's Pass to Greylingstad, where, as already described, they came under the orders of Major-General Bruce Hamilton. Major-General Elliot and Colonel Barker, who formed the right of the advance to the Natal frontier, returned simultaneously to Harrismith, where, on the 9th April, Brigadier-General Little assumed command of the Brigade of General Elliot's Division, hitherto led by Lieut.-Colonel De Lisle, who was transferred to Colonel Thorneycroft's force at Klerksdorp.

On the 11th April, Brigadier-General Little's Brigade marched to Aberfeldy, and Lieutenant-Colonel Fanshawe to Major's Drift, and, between this date and the 21st April, when Major-General Elliot moved into Lindley, the Division continued to operate in the vicinity of Fanny's Home, and Blydschap. It was hoped that the presence of our troops would have the effect of driving any Boers in this district to the

west of Liebenberg Vlei, and more into the line of a sweep of troops to the south from the Heilbron—Frankfort line, which was contemplated for the near future.

With this idea in view, Colonel Barker also moved at the same time from Harrismith upon Reitz, whence he worked up to Frankfort after an engagement on the 12th April, in which Commandant Manie Botha was reported to have been wounded.

From Frankfort, Colonel Barker moved to Heilbron, where he arrived on the 24th April, and, on the 28th, after refitting his column, he returned to Frankfort. Two days later all his mounted troops again left Frankfort upon a night expedition to Bezuidenhout's Drift, on the Wilge River, where reports stated that Commandant Manie Botha was lying wounded. These reports proved true, and, at daylight on the 1st May, Commandant Botha, his Secretary, Adjutant, and ten other Boers were surprised and captured at the farm near the Drift. Colonel Barker then returned to Frankfort, having covered over 70 miles with his mounted troops during a short absence from the town of 24 hours.

Major-General Elliot's Division again left Lindley on 22nd April, and moved, by Bethlehem, to Steenkamp's Kop and Brindisi Drift in the Brandwater Basin, where parties of Boers were causing some trouble to the garrisons of blockhouses. A considerable number of the enemy were found scattered throughout the Wittebergen, and on the night of the 28th Brigadier-General Little crossed the mountains to the west at General's Nek, and engaged a commando under Van Niekerk, to the north of Arcadia Magna. Three wounded Boers were picked up by our ambulances after the desultory fighting which took place in this direction.

Brigadier-General Little then rejoined his division, which was now recalled to Lindley to act as a stop in front of a contemplated sweep of General Bruce Hamilton's columns down from the north to the Kroonstad—Lindley blockhouse line.

This movement was performed in two stages, in the first of which, between the 2nd and 4th May, the columns under Colonels Rimington, Nixon, and Garratt, Brigadier-General Spens, Colonel Mackenzie, and Lieutenant-Colonel Duff (who had temporarily succeeded Lieutenant-Colonel Wing) moved down from a general line Vereeniging—Greylingstad to a position extending from Kopjes Station to Frankfort.

During this period of the operations Colonel Allenby's column at Villiersdorp extended its left flank down towards the Frankfort—Heilbron blockhouse line to close all possible avenues of escape to the east.

In the second stage of the movement, Major-General Hamilton's columns, now reinforced by that under Colonel Allenby from Villiersdorp, pushed straight on south to the Lindley—Kroonstad blockhouse line, which had been prolonged towards Reitz by the troops of Major-General Elliot's Division. Colonel Barker's men, detached meanwhile from Frankfort, watched the line of Liebenberg's Vlei.

The final results of this sweep, which terminated on the 7th May, were most satisfactory, no less than 321 prisoners of war being brought in by our different columns. Nor was it devoid of exciting incident. As Colonel Mackenzie's troops approached Grootdam, (269), a very spirited attempt was made by 150 Boers, under Commandant Mentz, to break through his line to the north, an attempt which was not only successfully frustrated by our mounted men, but