

A.
To the Chief of the Staff,
Head Quarters, Fort Alexandra,
November 28, 1879.

SIR,

THE Transvaal Field Force having been concentrated upon the night of the 27th instant, opposite to the eastern and western faces of the spier of the Zulu mountains, upon which Sekukuni's town is situated, I have the honour to report that, in accordance with your orders, I attacked the town this morning.

The troops, as per return marked "A" attached, were employed.

The following plan of operations was carried out:—

- (1.) An attack against the town itself from the western side, subdivided into a right, central, and left attack.
- (2.) An attack against the eastern face of the mountains, with the object of crowning the heights overlooking the town, moving down the ridges, and acting in combination with the western force.

With reference to (1), the right attack was led by Commandant Ferreira. The troops placed at his disposal consisted of his own corps, Mapoch's Native Contingent, and two Companies Rustenberg Contingent.

Commandant Ferreira experienced the usual difficulties that are to be anticipated in the employment of native levies in this country, Mapoch's Contingent failing to render him any assistance. Regardless of this, he led his men to the assault, and, his volunteers promptly responding, he succeeded, without a check, in carrying out the object I had intimated to him, namely, the seizure of Sekukuni's kraal and the heights bordering the south of the town.

The central force was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, 94th Regiment, and was composed of—

Detachment Royal Engineers.
2nd Battalion 21st Regiment Royal Scots Fusiliers.
Detachment 80th Regiment.
94th Regiment.
Transvaal Artillery and Small Arm Ammunition Reserve.

The object to be held in view was the attack and seizure of the "Fighting Koppie," an isolated mass of irregular boulder rocks, intersected with caves, and strongly defended with stone walls, opposite to the centre of the town.

It was manifest, that if the right and left attacks were successful, the defenders of this position would be cut off. Consequently Lieutenant-Colonel Murray was directed to carry on a delaying action until the progress made on the right and left could be ascertained.

This was done with great steadiness, skirmishers having been thrown out to hold the enemy's fire in check, whilst the artillery at the same time prepared the way for the final assault.

Major Carrington, 24th Regiment, commanding the left attack, was ordered to move with the Mounted Infantry, Border Horse, Transvaal Mounted Rifles, Rustenberg Contingent, and Zoutspansberg Contingent against a point of the town some 800 yards to the north of the "Fighting Koppie," and to seize the defensive positions to the north of Sekukuni's kraal. This attack, successful in its outset, was somewhat checked by the retreat of Zoutspansberg Contingent. These men were, however, speedily rallied and the orders issued to Major Carrington successfully accomplished.

With regard to the eastern attack Major Bushman, 9th Lancers, commanded the entire

force moving against the hill upon that side. Shortly after 6 A.M. this force, after considerable opposition, gained the top of the ridge.

This being done, the ridge was held by the European Infantry, and the Swazies, benefitting by the previous success of the right and left attacks, pushed down the hill and through the town. By the above operations the "Fighting Koppie" had become completely surrounded.

At 10 A.M., a general assault was made against this position.

After an obstinate defence, the Koppie succumbed, and thus the town, the surrounding country, and a large number of prisoners were in our hands.

A return of the casualties amongst the European troops is attached, marked "B" showing 2 officers killed and 6 wounded, and 5 non-commissioned officers, rank and file killed, and 41 wounded.

The approximate loss of native allies was 200 killed and wounded, but it is difficult to estimate this exactly, owing to their reluctance to bring forward their wounded, but all troops received the same medical attention.

The enemy's loss in killed and wounded and prisoners was very heavy, the latter including amongst others the whole garrison of the "Fighting Koppie," of which some 500 have already appeared, and others are still coming out of their caves.

I am much indebted to all ranks, both of the Regular and Colonial forces, nothing could exceed their gallantry and steadiness.

I would venture to bring to your notice the names of the following Officers, all of whom rendered me most valuable assistance:—

Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, 94th Regiment, commanding the central column, rendered me the greatest aid, and showed a power of commanding men that was most marked.

Commandant Ferreira, commanding the right column of attack upon the town, exhibited an energy and determination in leading men that I cannot too highly praise.

Major Carrington, 24th Regiment, commanding the left column of attack, who maintained his position against large numbers of the enemy with the greatest coolness, when his native allies fell back.

Major Carrington speaks in the highest terms of the assistance he received from his Staff Officer, Captain Maurice, Royal Artillery.

Major Bushman, 9th Lancers, commanding the eastern column of attack, who though much hampered by the dilatory unpunctuality of the Swazie Contingent under his command, yet topped the mountain in good time, and did excellent service.

Lieutenant Macgregor, commanding Royal Engineers.

Captain Knox, Royal Artillery, commanding Transvaal Artillery, who handled his guns, manned by troops trained to this branch of the service comparatively but a short time, with a skill that was as creditable to himself as to his men.

Major Hazlerigg, commanding 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers.

Major Anstruther, commanding 94th Regiment.

The medical arrangements were excellent, and I am deeply grateful to Surgeon-Major Kerr, Principal Medical Officer, as also to Surgeon-Major Hector, in charge of Bearer Company, and Surgeon-Major Johnston in charge of first dressing station, for the great celerity with which all wounded were removed, and for the care bestowed on them on arrival.