

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and the 1st Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, under Brigadier-General Cunningham, these troops having been withdrawn from the Delagoa Bay line.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 MacDonal'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 Macdonal'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