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War Office, August 20, 1901.

THE following Despatch has been received from Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., &c., Commanding-in-Chief in South Africa:—

From Lord Kitchener to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Pretoria, 8th July, 1901.

SIR,
1. In continuation of my despatch, dated 8th of May, 1901, I have the honour to submit an account of the operations carried out by the troops under my command since that date.

It is first necessary to allude to the changes that have recently been taking place in the composition of the Army in South Africa, and to the fact that the period covered by the following narrative of events has for a large portion of the mounted troops been necessarily one of training and preparation.

During the months of April, May, and June the whole of the original force of Imperial Yeomanry and several of the earlier contingents of Australians and New Zealanders were gradually withdrawn from this country, and though they were replaced by a new Imperial Yeomanry, 16,000 strong, other oversea contingents, and the freshly-recruited South African Constabulary, it was not to be expected that these untrained men, however willing, would be able to fill the gap left by the departure of so many seasoned and experienced soldiers.

It was impossible at first to put into the field a large number of new Yeomanry recruits, many of whom were unable either to ride or shoot, and the necessity for their retention at drill and musketry upon the lines of communication unavoidably curtailed for a time the work of the mobile columns. Some few of the men have proved quite unsuitable for the work expected of them, but satisfactory progress has been, and is being made, and they are gradually gaining experience in the field.

The relief of the original Volunteer Service Companies has also been completed, and the despatch of nine lately embodied Militia battalions from England has enabled arrangements to be made for the return from South Africa of a similar number of units.

The South African Constabulary is gradually becoming an effective force. They have also required considerable training. Operating from the vicinity of the railways and occupying fortified posts, enclosing large areas, thus denying the passage of the enemy through certain districts, they have become lately of considerable

value, and have shown commendable spirit and steadiness.

Major-General Bruce Hamilton's operations in Southern Orange River Colony.

2. Early in May, Major-General Bruce Hamilton received information pointing to a concentration of the enemy in the hills south-west of Philippolis. He, therefore, directed Lieut.-Colonel W. Williams to move with three columns from the railway to the western border. Leaving Springfontein on the 10th of May, this force passed through the Philippolis district without much opposition, and reached Ramah on the 19th, having captured 33 prisoners (including Commandant Bothma), 1,000 horses, and much stock.

While operating in the neighbourhood of Ramah, Colonel Williams detached four squadrons of the South African Light Horse, under Major Gogarty, who was instructed to visit Luckhoff by night and endeavour to surprise a party of Boers, who were said to frequent that locality. This enterprise, which was completely successful, resulted in the capture of 31 armed burghers, with their horses.

Colonel Williams then returned to the railway at Prior Siding, leaving Lieut.-Colonel Byng's column to hold Philippolis.

During the progress of these operations, columns under Colonels Hickman, Monro, Maxwell, and White were usefully employed east of the railway in completing the clearing of the Smithfield, Zastron, and Rouxville districts.

In consequence of the increased activity displayed by the enemy in the north of Cape Colony, Colonel Monro, with a strong column, was, on the 19th of May, detached from the Orange River Colony to join the troops operating about Steynsburg, and early in June Lieut.-Colonel White's force was called on to operate from Aliwal North, in the direction of Jamestown and Lady Grey, in connection with Colonel Haig's pursuit of Krutzing's command. Lieut.-Colonel Murray, with a small force, also crossed into Cape Colony.

As already reported by telegram, Lieut.-Colonel C. Maxwell, R.E., who for many months had commanded a column with distinction, succumbed to injuries accidentally received on the 20th May.

In the beginning of June, General Bruce Hamilton arranged for a combined movement to be carried out by a number of columns, which, advancing from the line Kaffir River, Jagersfontein Road, Luckhoff, Koffyfontein,