

then continued their withdrawal still further north into a most difficult and inaccessible country the pursuit was abandoned, and Colonel Kekewich marched south upon Wolhuter's Kop, whilst Colonel Allenby moved west of the Hex River towards Rustenburg.

On 31st August Colonel Kekewich left Wolhuter's Kop for Rustenburg and Magato Nek to participate in some combined operations against General Kemp's commando on the western side of the Magaliesberg. Colonel Allenby preceded him with the same object, moving to Bashoek (1922), at the northern extremity of the Magaliesberg range.

#### Brigadier-General Gilbert Hamilton's Operations in the Ventersdorp District

10. On 8th August, as he approached Ventersdorp from the south, Brigadier-General Gilbert Hamilton was instructed to clear the country east of Lichtenburg as far as Tafel Kop. In this district he soon came into contact with Liebenberg's commando, but, despite every effort to overtake it, and repeated forced marches by day and night, General Hamilton was never able to bring the enemy to a serious action, and had to rest content with the capture of a few prisoners and cattle. He returned to Ventersdorp on 11th August, and then moved rapidly north to co-operate with the Carabineers (detached under Major Butler from Colonel Allenby's column) in a simultaneous attack upon Koperfontein (560) and Basfontein (923). This attack was successfully delivered on the morning of the 14th, and resulted in the capture of 10 prisoners, 27 wagons, and 100 cattle. Three Boers were killed; our own casualties being 1 officer and 1 man killed and 5 men wounded. Major Butler with the Carabineers then rejoined Colonel Allenby at Damhoek.

On 15th August General Hamilton again reconnoitred towards Tafel Kop, capturing 3 Boers and 1 wagon, and on the 19th he returned to Ventersdorp. His subsequent movements in connection with the combined operations against General Kemp are alluded to later.

#### Operations of Lord Methuen and Major-General Fetherstonhaugh in South-Western Transvaal.

11. At the conclusion of their work in the Marokani range and the valley of the Hart's River near Taungs, Lord Methuen and Major-General Fetherstonhaugh were directed to march back by parallel routes to Klerksdorp. Major-General Fetherstonhaugh, whose force had reached Taungs on 8th August, started for this return movement on the 9th. He marched in two columns along the right bank of the Vaal, searching the kloofs for hidden parties of the enemy and destroying a considerable quantity of supplies. Lieut.-Colonel Hickie was unfortunate in failing to meet with any large number of Boers, but on the 19th, when near Wolmaranstad, Lieut.-Colonel E. Williams obtained information that a convoy, under Commandant Vermaas, was to the north of him, near Katdoornplaats (23). He accordingly sent his wagons, under escort, towards Leeuwfontein (71) to give the appearance of a continuance of the march in that direction, and then with his Australians (New South Wales Mounted Rifles and Bushmen) made a rapid night march upon Katdoornplaats, which he reached at 6.15 a.m. on the following morning. Their wheel tracks showed Colonel Williams the direction taken by the Boers, and, after a gallop of 12 miles, he was able to ride down and capture the whole convoy, with 18 prisoners, 65 ox-wagons, 14 other vehicles, and 1,500 cattle. Amongst the

prisoners were the late Landrost of Bloemhof, and Du Toit, a telegraphist, with complete tapping apparatus. During this very successful enterprise the Australians covered 60 miles in 27 hours, and brought away with them every one of the captured vehicles.

General Fetherstonhaugh's two columns reached Klerksdorp on the 22nd and 23rd of August.

Lord Methuen left Taungs on 11th August, and moved towards Klerksdorp, on General Fetherstonhaugh's left. He was engaged during his march with commandos under General Delarey and Commandant Vermaas, and was able to bring into Klerksdorp on 22nd August 13 prisoners of war, 23 voluntary surrenders, 400 trek oxen, 1,848 other cattle, 43 wagons, 19 carts, 76 horses, and 8 mules. Several Boers were killed and wounded in the fighting which took place, Lord Methuen's casualties being 1 man killed, 1 Officer and 8 men wounded.

An effort was now made to encircle General Kemp, who, with 800 men, was reported to be in the hills south-west of Olifant's Nek. The columns employed in this attempt were those of Colonels Allenby and Kekewich, which were moving, as already shown, towards Bashoek (1022) and Magato's Nek. Brigadier-General Gilbert Hamilton's troops, which had marched from Ventersdorp to Naauwpoort (214), and the forces which had just arrived at Klerksdorp, under Lord Methuen and Major-General Fetherstonhaugh.

At noon on 1st September the situation was as follows:—Lord Methuen, who had left Klerksdorp on 27th August, at Brakfontein (278); Lieut.-Colonel Hickie (of Major-General Fetherstonhaugh's command) at Bankdrift (549); General Fetherstonhaugh at Leeuwfontein (339); Lieut.-Colonel Williams between Rietfontein (911) and Syferwater; Brigadier-General Gilbert Hamilton holding the ground between Zandfontein (256) and Vlikfontein (584); Colonel Kekewich at Magato's Nek; and Colonel Allenby at Bashoek (1022) extending his right towards Lord Methuen's left. General Kemp on this date was apparently within the encircling cordon, but a necessary movement of Lord Methuen's troops, who were covering a good deal of ground to block a reported attempt at escape towards Lindley's Poort, enabled the Boer leader to turn sharp to the west and break out through the increased interval between Lord Methuen and Colonel Hickie. His escape, however, was only partial, for, though his mounted men got through, a large body of dismounted Boers, wagons, carts, ammunition, and stores were left behind secreted in the kloofs of this rugged country. At least 169 prisoners are already in our hands, and Major-General Fetherstonhaugh continues to search for others who may still be hiding. 14,000 rounds of ammunition, and a large quantity of supplies have also been captured.

At the conclusion of this operation which may be said to have terminated on 3rd September, Lord Methuen returned to Zeerust, and Brigadier-General Hamilton was directed to march on Kaffir's Kraal (135), 15 miles north-west of Klerksdorp. Colonel Kekewich remained upon the ground for a day or two, to assist General Fetherstonhaugh in his search for any stragglers of Kemp's force, and on 7th September moved to Middelfontein (622) on his way back to Naauwpoort (214).

Colonel Allenby was recalled, by Rustenburg, to Commando Nek, which he will reach on 9th September. His return march has been marked by a well-managed surprise of a Boer