

terminated in the capture of the whole party of the enemy. Further to the south an endeavour to penetrate General Elliot's screen, near Deelfontein (282), was promptly and gallantly repulsed by the 7th Dragoon Guards, who drove back the burghers with a loss of four men and 28 horses killed, and five men and 16 horses captured.

A few of the enemy who did succeed in escaping from the encircling cordon were hotly pursued in the direction of Reitz by the 18th Hussars, who picked up 54 exhausted horses abandoned by the Boers in their flight.

At the conclusion of this operation the whole of General Hamilton's columns turned about, and in conjunction with the troops of General Elliot and Colonel Barker on their right swept back north again to a line Kopjes Station—Heilbron—Frankfort, a movement which resulted in the capture of 22 prisoners. From this line General Hamilton with the columns under Brigadier-General Spens, Colonel Mackenzie, Colonel Allenby, Lieutenant-Colonel Duff, and Lieutenant-Colonel Lawley passed on to the Greylingstad—Heidelberg railway, where they arrived on the 15th May.

After their arrival on the Kopjes—Frankfort line, Major-General Elliot, Colonel Barker, Colonel Rimington, Colonel Nixon, and Colonel Garratt were employed for some days in clearing away growing crops from an area marked by Heilbron—Frankfort—Major's Drift—Lindley, and, on the 15th May, their troops were ordered in to Frankfort, Heilbron, and the railway line.

7. Nothing whatever of importance has happened during the past month on the Natal frontier, where Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. Mills has assumed command of the column hitherto under charge of Colonel Colville. This force has, since the middle of April, remained in observation of the local Boers who are still frequenting the Utrecht district. Six prisoners and some horses and stock were taken by Colonel Mills at Holkrantz (123) on the 3rd May, as the result of a night march through the mountains to the east of Utrecht.

On the 6th May, a party of guides and local farmers, supported by a detachment of Imperial Yeomanry, made a successful night expedition from Muller's Pass to Wagenmaker's Vlei, across the Orange River Colony boundary, which led to the capture of Field-Cornet Meintjes, two Free State Artillery men, and two other burghers.

8. In the north-eastern area of Cape Colony, our troops have continued during the past month to press the scattered stragglers of Bezuideniout's commando, which became more and more reduced by captures and surrenders.

The districts between the East London and Cape Town—De Aar railways remained clear of the enemy's bands, with the exception of a party of some 200 men under Fouché, Malan, and Van Heerden, who, in spite of the unremitting activity of the columns under Lieutenant-Colonels W. Doran, B. Doran, and Baillie, still clung to the mountains about Murraysburg and Richmond.

On the night of the 18th May, Commandant Van Heerden, who had momentarily disengaged himself from the pursuit of our troops, attempted to enter the village of Aberdeen with 100 followers. The attempt, however, was completely repulsed by the little garrison under Captain Studd, Oldstream Guards, who drove back the Boers with a loss of three killed, including Commandant Van Heerden himself.

On the 20th May, Commandants Fouché and Malan turned eastward, having probably learned that General French was concentrating a large number of troops against them. They crossed

the Graaf Reinet railway near Aberdeen Road in the first instance, a direction which brought them into contact with the columns under Majors Follett and Lord Lovat, the latter of whom came up with Fouché at dawn on the 21st, and captured his entire laager, together with four prisoners and 85 horses.

A week later Commandant Malan fell into the hands of our troops, having been left behind at a farm, near Sheldon Station, suffering from a dangerous wound received in an engagement with Major Follett's men.

To the west of the Cape Town—De Aar railway, General Stephenson's troops drove the commandoes, under Smit, Pypers, and Conroy, well to the north of the Victoria West—Williston blockhouse line, the main force of the enemy in this part of the Colony gradually withdrawing towards the Orange River. One attempt was made towards the end of April to send reinforcements to Fouché, in the central districts, but it was completely frustrated, the party which sought to break across the railway being repulsed at all points.

A small column, organized recently at Matjesfontein by Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence, has been very usefully employed of late in expelling local rebels from the country round Sutherland and Fraserburg.

In the far west of the Colony, Colonel Haig's troops have secured complete command of the country to the south of the line Clanwilliam—Calvinia—De Drift, where large quantities of hidden grain and foodstuffs have been discovered.

On the 21st April, Lieutenant-Colonel Kavanagh was detached with a strong column to cover the passage of a convoy from Clanwilliam to Lieutenant-Colonel White's force, then operating near Garies, and on completion of this duty he returned, on 4th May, to Van Rhynsdorp.

The position of affairs in Namaqualand, at the beginning of April, had necessitated the despatch of reinforcements to Port Nolloth to afford support to Colonel White's column at Garies, which was threatened by the enemy, and to effect the relief of a garrison, under Lieutenant-Colonel Shelton (Commandant of Namaqualand), which was reported to be surrounded at Ookiep.

Lieutenant-Colonel Callwell's column from Matjesfontein, the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers from Rosmead, and the 4th Battalion East Surrey Regiment were accordingly railed to Cape Town, and then moved thence by sea to Port Nolloth, where Colonel Cooper (Base Commandant at Cape Town) assumed temporary command. Some delay occurred owing to the difficulties of disembarkation at Port Nolloth, but by the 28th April Colonel Cooper had driven the enemy from Steinkopf, the last position held to dispute his advance to the relief of the Ookiep garrison. In this engagement the Boers were reported to have lost seven men killed, and several wounded, including Commandant Bouwers.

On the 4th May Colonel Cooper reached Ookiep, after some slight further opposition, and the investment of the little garrison, which had lasted for a month, then terminated. No details of the defence of the town have as yet been received, but General French is of opinion that Colonel Shelton and his men offered a gallant and determined resistance to the many unsuccessful attempts made to capture their position.

9. In continuance of paragraph 1 of this despatch, it remains to be stated that on the 15th May the 60 Boer delegates elected by the different commandoes assembled at Vereëning. A short