

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS RELATIVE TO DEFENCE.

### No. 1.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS.  
Colonial Secretary's Office,

(No. 899.)

Wellington, 29th November, 1869.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to enclose a Memorandum from the Commissioner of Armed Constabulary on the supply of Small Arms and certain other articles required for the use of that Force.

It appears that the 2,000 Sniders which have been supplied to the Colony by the Imperial Government are too long for service in the bush, and that 1,000 short Sniders, as recommended by the Small Arms Select Committee of the House of Representatives in last Session, should be obtained. The best arrangement, if practicable, will be to exchange 1,000 long Sniders with the Imperial Government for the same number of short Sniders.

With respect to the Steel Gun Batteries, I believe that the Imperial Government will, if applied to by you, be willing to give or at least to lend such batteries to the Colony. The General Assembly has not appropriated any funds for the purchase of such batteries, and I cannot authorize you to incur any expenditure for that purpose.

The ammunition and the minor supplies you will no doubt be able to purchase from Imperial stores at contract prices.

The Hon. F. D. Bell and Hon. I. E. Featherston, M.D.

I have, &c.,  
W. GISBORNE.

### Enclosure in No. 1.

The COMMISSIONER, ARMED CONSTABULARY, to Hon. W. GISBORNE.  
Colonial Defence Office,  
Wellington, 29th November, 1869.

*Memorandum for Commissioners on the subject of Arms, Ammunition, and Equipment for the use of the Colony.*

DURING last Session of the General Assembly a Select Committee was appointed to report upon "the best description of Small Arms for use in New Zealand."

On the 1st of September the Report of the Committee was brought up, and upon the Hon. Mr. McLean promising that "every possible care would be taken in sending to England, to see that the views expressed by the Committee should be adhered to, and that the arms imported should be of the best description and most recent improvement, and suited for New Zealand warfare," the motion, by leave of the Chairman, was withdrawn. (*Vide* "Hansard," pp. 887, 888, September 1st.)

Since then, however, the Imperial Government have sent from England on loan, and for the use of the Colony, 1,832 converted Sniders, and have also handed over from Imperial stores in Auckland 163 more, making a total of 2,000, all excepting 100 being of the long Enfield pattern, and therefore unfitted for bush warfare; the 100, being sword-rifle pattern (short), may be considered suitable, and are now being issued to the Armed Constabulary.

There are also 500 medium rifles converted to Snider shortly expected by the "Melita." These, however, being longer than the sword-rifle referred to above, are not suitable, but they will be temporarily issued to the Armed Constabulary until weapons better adapted for the requirements of the Colony are received.

I would therefore recommend that 1,000 Snider Cavalry Carbines, the same pattern as those now in use by the Imperial Cavalry, fitted with the knife-bayonet with saw back, as nearly as possible per pattern, be ordered, as the most serviceable weapon for the Colony (*vide* printed Report of Small Arms Committee, attached); 200 revolvers, medium size, Colt's latest improvement, for using metallic central fire cartridges, fitted with leather sheath, so as to be worn on the waist belt; 500,000 rounds of ammunition for the Snider cavalry carbines, and 50,000 rounds of metallic centre fire cartridges for the Colt's revolvers; 50 officers light-cavalry swords; 100 privates ditto—these swords ought not to be too long or too heavy; 50 officers shoulder pouch belts, fitted with pouch of brown leather for revolver ammunition, the ornament V.R. and crown on pouch; 100 privates do. do., to carry say 30 rounds of breech-loading ammunition; 50 officers sword belts, brown leather, cordovan; 100 privates do., made of bridle leather; 500 sets of accoutrements for foot constables, to consist of waist belt fitted with pouch to contain 40 rounds, slightly curved, so as to fit close into the small of the back, ball bag of ordinary size, and frog,—all of brown bridle leather; 50 latest Manuals for Manual and Platoon Exercise for the Snider Breech-loading Artillery Carbines, revised edition, price 2d., Horse Guards, January 1868, or later edition, if published; 20 latest Instructions for Musketry Instruction of the Army, revised edition, price 1s. 6d., 1868, or later, if published; 12 Sapper's Manual, by Captain Frankland, R.E. These books may be obtained at W. Clowes and Sons, 14 Charing Cross, Five thousand buttons of the size known as "shoulder buttons" or "shell jacket," to be made of white metal (not copper-gilt), with raised crown in centre, and "N.Z. Armed Constabulary" encircling crown.