not increased in point of rapidity; but, as regards efficiency, I say Yes. It stands to reason that the smaller the area to be adjudicated upon, the more stubbornly will the claimants fight. In the old days, as it were, every dog had a bone in his mouth. Now it is different. I should say that in 1876 or 1877 it began to get difficult. Now everything is obstinately contested. Very often in some cases probably more expense would be incurred in the conduct of the case than the land in dispute was worth.

930. Would it be possible to make the Natives reduce their evidence to writing, and send it to the Courts, in order to be cross-examined upon it afterwards?—I do not think it would. That would be with the view of shortening the proceedings, of course?

931. Yes?—No; I do not see that that would work at all. It is quite possible that in such cases some important point might have been omitted in the written statement, and the unfortunate witness would then not have the opportunity of putting it forward. I do not see any way of shortening the proceedings at all without giving good cause for a rehearing.

932. Is there any other suggestion you would think of making?—No. I may say that I had not expected you gentlemen. Of course, I knew yesterday that you were coming, but the whole matter has come suddenly upon me, and I have not had time to think it over.

933. *Mr. Rees.*] Mr. Mackay suggests to me that if, in thinking the matter over, any other suggestion in connection with the matter should occur to your mind, we would be very glad to have it; because we are anxious to get as many lights and shades of opinion thrown upon this subject as we can?—Yes. Thank you.

JOHN GWYNNETH sworn and examined.

934. *Mr. Rees.*] What are you?—A civil engineer and authorised surveyor.

935. How long have you been resident in New Zealand?—Twenty-eight years.

936. How long have you been conversant in any way with Native-land matters—surveys as well as agencies, or anything of that sort?—I made a survey of some Native land in the Whangarei district in 1865.

937. During how many years have you been intimately connected with Native-land surveys and matters?—About eleven years.

938. In this district?—Yes.

939. Have you been personally engaged during the last ten or eleven years in surveying Native land?—I have.

940. As regards these surveys, the Commissioners understand that surveyors experience a good deal of difficulty in recovering moneys due to them?—That is so. I myself have had very great difficulty. In one survey at Rotorua that I made about 1881, my account amounted to £400.

941. Have you got paid for it yet?—No. I got a judgment of the Supreme Court for the amount. The charging-order was served upon Judge Gill and Mr. Gilbert Mair, but, notwithstanding the charging-order, and the fact that they had money to pay the Natives, they paid it over to them without satisfying the charging-order, and my solicitor said it was not worth while following them up. Then, again, in 1884 I did some surveys for this Court of the Maungatautari Block, my account for which amounted to about £600.

942. That is in the King-country?—It is between here and Kihikihi, but it is outside the old confiscated boundary.

943. That is the King-country?—In that case there had been a general survey already made of the outside boundaries of the block, for which the Government had paid £409 12s. 6d. to Mr. Tole, the surveyor, and the Government were supposed to hold a lien over the land for the amount. I think that the amount of that lien should have been collected before the subdivisions took place. However, I was authorised by the Government and the Native Land Court to make the subdivisions according to the finding of the Court sitting in this hall, and I did so.

944. How many subdivisions?—There would be about thirty.

945. Hapus?—No; not hapus. There were three or four different hapus. They were subdivisions for certain numbers of individuals that agreed to have their lands cut out. I went and completed these surveys, and I then applied to the Natives for payment, but I could not get it. I then applied to the Government, but could not get it. I next applied to the Court, and was referred to the Surveyor-General. My counsel spoke to him, and, after keeping us waiting for nearly twelve months, he appointed his assistant to go through the accounts—Mr. Kensington, I think—and he certified for the Surveyor-General, Mr. Percy Smith being away at the time. When he came back he said he had no power to delegate his authority to Mr. Kensington, and that the accounts would have to be passed by him again. They were therefore sent back to him again, and after another six months or so he certified for a very much smaller amount than Mr. Kensington had certified for, and I refused to accept it, and asked on what ground he had made these deductions, but he could not tell me. There was no rule; just what he thought would be enough. I put the matter in the hands of Mr. Cotter, my solicitor, and a case was stated for the Solicitor-General, who was asked to say what course the Surveyor-General ought to follow in certifying for these amounts. That case was submitted by Mr. Percy Smith and myself, and approved by Mr. Cotter, and we got a reply from the Solicitor-General, which practically ruled that the Surveyor-General might certify for any amount he thought fit, leaving us the right, if we saw proper, to apply to the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus to compel him to certify for more; stating also that if we did get a writ of mandamus it was not likely that the Supreme Court would award costs against him (the Assistant Surveyor-General). So that I would have to pay the costs of the action even if I proved successful. But that was not all. The case was referred to the Surveyor-General, and he certified for a larger amount—that is to say, in some cases for a little over the amount of my own claim, and in other cases for a little under my claim. I then brought the matter once more before the Native Land Court, under the Act of 1886 and the Amendment Act of 1888. The Court sat here. It was in January, 1888, that the Court sat here, and the Amendment Act had