

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS AND NATIVE-LAND TENURE:

INTERIM REPORT OF NATIVE LAND COMMISSION, ON NATIVE LANDS IN THE COUNTY OF
TAURANGA.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Native Land Commission, Rotorua, 11th June, 1908.

To His Excellency the Governor.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We have the honour to submit a further report on Native lands in the Tauranga County. The Maoris in this county are divided into three parties—those residing in the southern part of the county, whose lands have already been dealt with by us in an interim report dated the 28th March, 1908; those in the central part; and those in the northern part. This report deals with the lands of the Maoris in the central part. The area we propose to deal with in this report is 42,970 acres 3 roods 28 poles. The land in the northern part of the county will be reported on when we have met the Maoris interested, who are connected with the Ngatihaua Maoris resident in or near Waharoa.

The bulk of the lands in the Tauranga County (central portion) were confiscated, and the lands now owned by the Maoris were handed back to them for their sustenance and support. There are 2,040 Maoris in the county, and 1,999 Europeans. When the lands in the northern part are dealt with it will be found that the area of land left to the Maoris for their own occupation, and leased to Europeans, will not amount to 90,000 acres, or less than 45 acres each. The area possessed by Europeans per head will be at least three times as great as that left to the Maoris. The Maoris on the whole seem active and energetic. Most of the county work and of the farm labour of the Europeans is done by the Maoris, and but for this supply of Maori labour it would be impossible to carry on farming. The Maoris are also employed in agriculture for themselves, and produce maize, wheat, oats, and root-crops. They have been successful also in dairying, and have on one block of land four hundred milking-cows. There is, however, little attempt to carry on farming on individualistic lines, and the incorporation system has not yet been tried. They have, however, come to amicable arrangements amongst themselves, so that there is some security of title to the occupants. This, however, is a county in which there is need of guidance by some agricultural expert, so that the undeniable advantages of climate and soil might be better utilised. A small experimental fruit-farm has been started by the Agricultural Department of the Government on 60 acres of land two miles from the Borough of Tauranga. It has not yet been two years in operation, but already the results are surprising. Lemons, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, apples,