

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS AND NATIVE-LAND TENURE:

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

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

Native Land Commission, Rotorua, 8th September, 1908.

To His Excellency the Governor.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We have the honour to forward for your consideration an interim report upon the Native lands in the Coromandel County.

We held a sitting of the Commission at Coromandel on the 4th August, 1908. A considerable number of Maoris from Kennedy's Bay, Manaia, and Ti Kouma attended, but the owners of blocks in Whangapoua, Whitianga, and Moehau were not represented.

The area of land belonging to the Maoris in this county is approximately about 50,000 acres, and for the most part of inferior quality. The last census shows the number of Maoris in this county to be 695.

Up to within a year or two ago the Maoris did very little farming. Those residing at Kennedy's Bay (known to the Maoris as Harataunga) are for the most part Ngatiporou, and are close relatives of the people of the same name in the Waiapu County. A number of the younger people have been residing among their relatives in the Waiapu County, and have been greatly impressed with the success of their sheep-farming.

They have come back to their homes in Coromandel County with the determination to emulate their successful relatives in farming, and as a result they have since 1906 broken in, cleared, and partly grassed about 2,500 acres, and hope to have all their lands under grass about the end of 1909. The stock on the ground comprises sixty head of cattle and 650 sheep. They are aided by their Waiapu relatives, and they hope to become as successful sheep-farmers.

We are of the opinion that it would be a great pity if anything was done to lessen their enthusiasm or damp their hopes.

Farming operations have also been carried on at Ti Kouma and Manaia, and, so far as we could learn, they have been fairly successful.

The land remaining to the Maoris is, as we have said, of inferior and poor quality, and the Maori owners are not, in our opinion, asking for too great an area when they wish for practically the whole of the remnants of their ancestral lands to be reserved for Maori occupation.

Our recommendations are set out in the accompanying schedules.

Several blocks at Whitianga, Whangapoua, and Moehau were not dealt with owing to the Maoris not being present, but we understand that most of the land is under timber licenses or leases, some of which are no doubt informal. We hope to be able to deal with these areas in a later report.