

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS AND NATIVE-LAND TENURE:

(FINAL REPORT OF NATIVE LAND COMMISSION).

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

Native Land Commission, Wellington, 21st December, 1908.

To His Excellency the Governor.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We have the honour to present our final report, which, according to the terms of Your Excellency's Commission dated the 21st day of January, 1907, we were required to transmit not later than the 1st day of January, 1909, or such extended date as Your Excellency might name after the said 21st day of January, 1907. By section 52 of "The Native Land Settlement Act, 1907," it was provided that the powers and functions vested in us as a Commission by the instrument of our appointment or by the said Act should, unless sooner determined by Your Excellency, cease and determine on the 1st day of January, 1909.

Before proceeding to review the work accomplished by the Commission we deem it necessary to state approximately the position of Native lands in the North Island, and the limitation imposed upon the scope of our inquiries by the terms of Your Excellency's Commission and by the Legislature.

It was manifest that the inquiry contemplated by paragraph 3 of the Commission could not be made in respect of "papatupu" lands—i.e., lands the titles to which have not been ascertained by a competent tribunal. The definition of "Native land" in "The Native Land Settlement Act, 1907," excluded "papatupu" land from the jurisdiction of the Commission, inasmuch as its recommendations in respect of such land could not be carried into effect under the Act. The area of "papatupu" land in the North Island is as follows (showing also the distribution of such lands):—

County.	Acres.
Waiapu	149,285
Opotiki	140,000
Rotorua	6,716
Kawhia	45,170
North Auckland	127,581

468,752

From information available, this area comprises some of the best virgin lands in the North Island. The area in the Kawhia County consists of the valuable Moe-