

of such a nature that the land could be administered in the interests of general settlement, or because the land was already profitably occupied and utilised by Europeans, was as follows :—

	[Area. Acres.
1. Papatupu land	468,752
2. Lands held under special Acts or vested in Maori Land Boards	1,709,871
3. Special trusts and reserves administered by the Public Trustee (other than West Coast Reserves) ..	145,187
4. Lands leased or under negotiation for lease ..	2,350,000
Total	4,673,810 (approximate).

No return has yet been compiled showing correctly the total area of land of all classes owned by the Maori people in the North Island. We have estimated the area at present owned by them at 7,465,000 acres.

There was therefore available for inquiry by the Commission an area of, approximately, 2,791,190 acres.

It appeared to us at the outset that the Wellington and Taranaki Provinces (except Upper Whanganui) and the southern portion of Hawke's Bay were most favourably situated with regard to the settlement of Native lands; that in those districts the most valuable lands were efficiently occupied, and did not present features of such urgency as other parts of the North Island; that there the Native Land Court had been more active (probably because the lands were more accessible, and their richness and value made them more capable of bearing the costs of survey and litigation) in the determination of titles, and the subdivision of lands into family and individual holdings. The most backward districts from the standpoint of both efficient occupation and settlement and the determination of titles were on the east coast between Wairoa and Cape Runaway, in the Bay of Plenty, Upper Whanganui, the King-country, Waikato and Thames, and the North of Auckland. In fact, the most pressing need was in the Auckland Province, and there the Commission has expended most time and labour.

REVIEW OF COMMISSION'S WORK.

It is our duty to review the work that the Commission has done since its appointment, to summarise the areas affected by its recommendations, including those of a character requiring legislation, and to show how far Parliament has given effect or made provision for giving effect to such recommendations.

SITTINGS, AND DISTRICTS VISITED.

Since its appointment the Commission has held sittings at the following places: Wellington, Masterton, Napier, Tangoio, Mohaka, Wairoa, and Nuhaka, in the Hawke's Bay District; Gisborne, Tolaga Bay, Tokomaru, Waipiro Bay, Waiomatatini, and Te Araroa, in the Poverty Bay district; Raukokore, Omaio, Torere, Opotiki, Whakatane, Ruatoki, and Rotorua, in the Bay of Plenty district; Tauranga, Coromandel, Thames, Te Aroha, Morrinsville, Wanganui, Pipiriki, Maraekowhai, Taumarunui, Te Kuiti, Otorohanga, Kihikihi, Huntly, and Auckland, in the Waikato and King-country; and the following places north of Auckland: Helensville, Dargaville, Whangarei, Russell, Kawakawa, Kaikohe, Waima, Kohukohu, Opononi, Pakanae, Ngarongotea, Ahipara, Whangaroa, and Mangonui.

We considered it our duty wherever possible to meet the Maori owners of the lands, and to ascertain from them their wishes with regard to the disposition and settlement thereof. While making ample provision to meet the views of the minority or of individual owners whenever possible, we were guided by the expressed wishes of the majority so far as they were ascertainable in the open sittings of the Commission, and we can say that with very few exceptions the recommendations we have from time to time made in our reports were in accordance with the wishes of the Maori owners of the respective blocks.