

Up to a few years ago this tract of country was practically virgin to settlement, although from its position there was no area so suitable for small grazing-runs or so well favoured, with the Whanganui River as a large waterway to the west, the North Island Main Trunk Railway to the east, and many possible, if unformed, roadways from west to east.

The lands in this group may be further arranged as follows :—

(a.) Title not ascertained—	Acres.
Ngatipare and Te Poutahi ... ..	3,626
(b.) Vested in the Aotea Maori Land Board—	
1. By deeds of trust—Waharangi 1 to 5, Morikau 2, Ohotu 1, 2, 3, and 8... ..	89,009
2. By Parliament—Tauakira 2, part ... ..	11,661
3. By Order in Council under section 4, "Maori Land Settlement Act Amendment Act, 1906"—Morikau 1 ... ..	7,200
	<hr/> 107,870
(c.) Leased—	
Tauakira 2, parts ... ..	3,239
Mairekura A ... ..	584
	<hr/> 3,823
(d.) Balance, which are not subject to any dealings .. ..	19,334
	<hr/> 134,653

It may be assumed that the lands vested in the Board are, if not already disposed of by way of lease, immediately available for general settlement. We give below some details of the work of the Aotea Maori Land Board, under which we deal with Morikau No. 1, one of the blocks specially investigated by the Commission.

With regard to Ranana and Ngarakauwhakarara, the leading chiefs desired to lease both blocks to Europeans after making papakainga reserves of 500 acres on the Ranana Block. We were informed that negotiations were already under way for such leases, and that the intending lessees were persons who had secured or were in negotiation for leases of considerable areas of Native lands in other parts of the district. The Maoris have sheep grazing on Ranana; the land is of first-class quality, partly open and partly covered with light bush; and from its position relative to the adjoining Morikau 1 Block, vested in the Board for Maori occupation and farming, and relative to the large settlements of Hiruharana and Ranana, we thought that this land should be dealt with in the same manner as Morikau. Ngarakauwhakarara, lying to the south of Ranana, is overrun with blackberries. The Maoris have no desire that any papakainga reserves be made on this block, and are willing that the whole should be leased. We think that the Native Minister should exercise the power given him by section 3 of "The Maori Land Settlement Act Amendment Act, 1906," and vest this land in the Board to be dealt with as land infested with noxious weeds.

The owners of Paekaka (Waharangi 7) and Te Autumutu (Waharangi 6) desired that these blocks should be retained for their use and occupation. Some of the owners have cleared a little bush. We see no reason why the wishes of the Maoris with regard to these blocks should not be acceded to.

It is recommended that the Native Minister should apply to the Court to have the titles to the Ngatipare and Poutahi Blocks ascertained as soon as possible, as until the title is ascertained they cannot be dealt with.

The Commission did not investigate Ngaporo, Tupapanui, and Mairekura, but propose to do so if possible before Parliament meets.

II. To the west of the Whanganui River, commencing to the north-west of the first group, and intermixed with large areas acquired by the Crown down to the Paetawa Block, opposite Parikino, is another group owned in varying