

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS AND NATIVE-LAND TENURE:

INTERIM REPORT OF NATIVE LAND COMMISSION, ON NATIVE LANDS IN THE ROHE
POTAE OR KING COUNTRY DISTRICT.

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

Native Land Commission, Morrinsville, 19th June, 1908.

To His Excellency the Governor.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We have the honour to submit for your consideration a revised report on Native lands in the Rohe Potae or King-country District.

We reported on these lands on the 4th July, 1907 (G.—1B, 1907), but in view of the provisions of “The Native Land Settlement Act, 1907,” it was considered necessary to revisit the district, and to revise our recommendations of last year. Sittings were held at Te Kuiti and Otorohanga at the end of February and the beginning of March last. It was found that since July, 1907, an area of nearly 40,000 acres, which we had reported on last year, had been leased or had come under negotiation for lease to Europeans. It was also found that the Crown had acquired interests in various blocks dealt with by us, and it was necessary that these purchases should be wound up, and the interests acquired by the Crown defined. The Court concluded such definition at the end of April. We were supplied with the complete data in May.

Details of the Crown purchases will no doubt be laid before Parliament this session. For the purposes of this report we give the total area of Native lands acquired by the Crown in the King-country since the passing of “The Maori Land Settlement Act, 1905.” The figures supplied by the Lands and Survey Department give the total as 117,000 acres approximately.

In our report to Your Excellency of the 11th March, 1908, on the operation of section 11 of “The Native Land Settlement Act, 1907,” we said, “We have found in the Rohe Potae country that since our report of last year was issued the Crown has bought large areas of land. Some areas that we recommended to be set aside for Maori occupation only have been purchased by the Crown, some areas that we recommended for leasing have been purchased by the Crown, and some areas that we recommended for sale have been purchased by the Crown. The exact area purchased by the Crown we have as yet been unable to ascertain. The Land Department informs us that it cannot at present give us this requisite information. We may ask, how is section 11 to be carried out in the Rohe Potae country? Is the area that was set aside for Maori occupation, or for sale, or for lease, and that has become the Crown’s property, to be deemed a sale under section 11? If not, are the Maoris to be bound to sell still more of their land so that its provisions may prove effective?”