

REPORT.

It was my intention to have completed, in time for presentation to the General Assembly during the present Session, the Final Report of the Settlement of the Land Claims. I have been prevented from carrying out my intention, partly because I have not had time to put together in a readable shape and within convenient limits the large amount of curious information that I have collected in connexion with these claims, and partly because it seemed premature to present a "Final Report" upon a matter the principal points of which it had been agreed to discuss over again this year.

The object I now have in view, therefore, is not so much to offer the full account of the general subject which I yet hope to give, as to place at the disposal of the Government a Summary of sufficiently complete information on all the points which ought to be considered in any proposed measure this Session. Details are accordingly appended under the following heads :—

- I.—THE STATE OF SETTLEMENT OF THE CLAIMS, including
 - 1. The Extent of Land Claimed, Surveyed, and Awarded or Granted, and
 - 2. The Amount of Scrip, Money, or Debentures issued instead of Grants.
- II.—THE SURPLUS LAND REVERTING TO THE CROWN.
- III.—THE SPECIAL CASES REMAINING UNSETTLED, reserved for consideration, or in which I propose action should be taken.
- IV.—THE GENERAL QUESTION as to whether further relief should be extended to all claimants alike.

I.—STATE OF SETTLEMENT OF THE CLAIMS.

In order to show what has been done in the adjustment of every land claim that has been before the Government, I append a Return giving in detail the following information :—

- 1. The Total Number of Claims.
- 2. The Claimants' Names.
- 3. The Locality and Extent Claimed.
- 4. The Year in which the Land was bought.
- 5. The Payments given to the Natives.
- 6. The Area Surveyed in each case.
- 7. The Way in which each Claim was disposed of.
- 8. The Quantity of Land awarded or granted.
- 9. The Amount of Scrip, Money, or Debentures issued.

At various times Returns of a similar character, but necessarily incomplete, have been prepared for the Government or the Legislature. The most valuable of these were compiled by Mr. Gisborne in 1849, 1854, and 1856; but this is the first time when it has been possible to bring the whole of the claims of all classes into one Return.