

of immigration at once set in, the original occupants were exposed to much trouble, and in some cases to ruinous losses, by squatters settling upon their lands. This was not the case in New Mexico, owing to the fact that until recent years there was little or no immigration, and no influx of land speculators to stir up controversies. Nevertheless, the legality of titles presented difficulties with regard to proof, owing to the greater number of grants, to a complication of transfers and subdivisions, rendered still more difficult of solution through the necessary documents having been issued by different national, provincial, and local officials, and lastly, to the incompleteness of archives. In the absence of immigration, which precluded any conflict of interests, the government at Washington was slow in causing a survey to be made of the public lands in New Mexico. By a congressional act of July 22, 1854, the operation of the land laws was extended over the territory, and every citizen residing therein before 1853, or settling there before 1858, became entitled to 160 acres after four years' occupation. The act also provided for the appointment of a surveyor-general, and in April 1855 the survey was commenced, though down to 1863 only a very few donation claims had been patented, while the total area surveyed was no more than 2,293,142 acres out of the 77,568,640 acres forming the area of the territory.

Equally dilatory and even more reprehensible was the action of the government in settling private and Indian claims. In 1854 the surveyor-general was instructed to investigate town and private claims, and report them to congress, but was left with clerical assistance and appropriations, entirely inadequate to the task, considering their number and complicated condition. He repeatedly represented his inability to perform the work satisfactorily, and urged that a commission should be appointed, but nothing was done to facilitate matters. One of the difficulties