conveyances or pretended conveyances, leases or pretended leases, agreements, or other titles, either mediately or immediately from the chiefs or other individuals of the aboriginal tribes, *were absolutely null and void:*" when in the same Ordinance certain conditions were laid down upon which alone confirmatory grants would be made: it is there we must look for the express interpretation of the Royal promise of 1839. To argue that the Land Claims Ordinance did not carry out the real intention of the Queen's Government, at a time when Governors were ruled from Downing-street and Official Legislatures obeyed Governors, would be mere folly even if there were no other evidence than the Royal Assent to show that the Ordinance did carry out that intention. There is, however, plenty of proof that Sir George Gipps' Proclamation and Ordinance of 1840, and Governor Hobson's Ordinance of 1841, really represented the mind of the Imperial Government at the time, and were considered to extend a reasonable liberality to the land claimants. The only wonder is that any student of the Blue Books should for a moment advance the contrary assertion.

But if it were otherwise; if it were possible for the Queen to have broken a solemn promise voluntarily made to Her subjects in New Zealand; if the land claimants thought they had been tricked and deceived; they should have refrained from bringing their titles under the Ordinance at all. When Mr. Wentworth for instance, after endeavouring without success to obtain better terms from Sir George Gipps, sent in schedules of all his claims, and requested that they might be referred to the Commissioners appointed under the Ordinance, he knew the conditions under which they would be referred, and he admitted the validity of the law. He knew that the Ordinance declared his titles to be null and void, and that his reservation that they must be referred to the Commission "without prejudice to his right to all he had bought" was of no use or effect whatever. I have never supposed that the claimants deliberately purposed such an act of bad faith as to accept the Ordinance for what good it gave them, with a private mental reservation to repudiate it for anything else. I have never supposed that they took advantage of the opportunity to get a favourable investigation and report upon their claims, only to deny afterwards the very foundation of the authority to which they pretended to submit; or that when the law required them to do a certain thing they would announce that the law was illegal and void, while when they required a certain thing to be done they would plead the same law as their protection and right. No one who has read the records of the Land Claims Commission can doubt for a moment that when the Government came down here in 1840 the great body of the claimants accepted the Ordinance in perfect good faith, and that they were content to abide by its limitations, in consideration of the exchange it gave them of an English title for a precarious occupation under the law of the strong arm.

The claimants knew very well when they sent in their claims that they could only obtain in ordinary cases a *maximum* award of 2,560 acres; but they knew also that the law provided that in special cases the Governor in Council might authorise the extension of that award, and that there was no limit to the exercise of such authority. Many of them accordingly availed themselves of this when Governor FitzRoy came to the country, and got their awards extended. Now wherever this was done, I hold that in all fairness the claimants were bound by the limit of the Governor's award as to quantity. If they meant that he should grant them the whole of the land they had bought, whatever its quantity might turn out, they should have said so. They should have told Governor FitzRoy when he was awarding 5,000 acres that they meant to keep 10,000, and so forth. They should resolutely have rejected all grants which said that specific quantities were granted within certain boundaries described as being those of the "entire quantity claimed." A few of them fell, in fact, into the common but fatal snare of wishing to eat their cake and have it. They wished to get all the security which a Crown Grant gave, and to be subject to none of the limitations which the Ordinance imposed. The Judgment of the Privy Council, however, repealing the grant issued to Mr. G. Clarke for 4,000 acres, finally disposed of any doubts there might be on the subject; and had the Quieting Titles Ordinance not passed, every other grant of the same kind would infallibly have been repealed in the same way. Even then, it is not quite clear what the Ordinance did. Take this particular grant as an instance. The grant itself was declared void by the Privy Council. If it afterwards had any force at all, it certainly had none beyond the four corners of the Quieting Titles Ordinance; and the question is, what was the effect of that Ordinance upon it? In reference to this a curious incident may be mentioned. An hon. member, who desired that whatever advantage or security was given by the Quieting Titles Ordinance should remain with the claimants when their grants were examined under the Land Claims Settlement Act, obtained the insertion of a few words declaring that the Commissioners should in deciding upon the validity of a grant "give effect" to the Ordinance. The result was just the reverse of what was expected. Instead of operating so