

ALLOWANCE OF LANDS IN SEVERALTY TO INDIANS.

JANUARY 9, 1885.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. STEVENS, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 48.]

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 48) to provide for the allotment of lands in severalty to Indians on the various reservations, and to extend the protection of the laws of the States and Territories over the Indians, and for other purposes, submit the following report:*

The object and purposes of the legislation proposed by this bill are to improve the condition of the Indians, and to this end patents are to be issued to the various tribes or bands for the lands embraced within the limits of their respective reservations, stipulating that said lands are held by the United States for the sole use and benefit of the tribe or band to which said patent may be issued, thus giving them assurance of permanency in their occupancy. It also further provides for the allotment of lands in severalty to the members of any of said tribes or bands whenever, in the opinion of the President (with the consent of two-thirds of the male members, twenty-one years of age) such allotments in severalty would be for the best interests of said Indians. Patents for the lands allotted are to be issued to the Indians thus taking lands in severalty, which patents provide that the United States does and will hold the lands allotted for the period of twenty-five years, in trust, for the sole use and benefit of the Indian to whom such allotment has been made, and that on the expiration of said period the United States will convey the same by patent to said Indian or his heirs, *in fee*, discharged of said trust, and free of all charge or incumbrance. By these provisions your committee believe the Indian will be stimulated to personal action; the prospect of securing a home that shall eventually be his own will be such an incentive to labor that he will gradually but surely abandon his nomadic habits and settle down to a life of comparative industry. Individual rights, action, and responsibility can only work this change in the condition of the Indian; he must no longer be surrounded by a "Chinese wall." The bill contains other provisions by which the United States may, with consent of Congress, acquire title to all lands not thus allotted in severalty.

Your committee have made sundry amendments to said bill, as follows, viz: In line 12, section 1, strike out the words "for the period of twenty-five years." In line 14 of same section, strike out all after the word "issued." Also (in same section) strike out all of lines 15, 16, 17,

18, 19, 20, and all of 21 except the words "said patents shall." In line 51 of section 6, strike out the word "five," and insert in lieu thereof the word "four." In line 56 of same section, strike out the words, "each of." In line 6 of section 10, strike out the word "required," and insert the word "acquired" in lieu thereof.

As thus amended your committee respectfully recommend its passage.