

SILOMA DECK.

FEBRUARY 11, 1874.—Committed to a Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT :

[To accompany bill H. R. 980.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 980 for the relief of Siloma Deck, having considered the same, make the following report :

The claimant is the widow of Philip H. Deck, late a citizen of Meeker County, Minnesota, who was killed by the Sioux Indians in the massacre of 1862. At the time of the Indian outbreak she was living with her husband and family at Mananah, Minn., who were possessed of a farm, dwelling-house, furniture, and farm products. On account of the outbreak the family were compelled to remove suddenly to Forest City, and in attempting to return to their home, to save the property, the husband was killed and the property was taken and destroyed by the Sioux Indians.

The claimant was then aided to go to the State of New York, whence she returned to her home in Minnesota in 1865. In the mean time commissioners had been appointed and appropriations made by the General Government to audit and settle claims of citizens of Minnesota on account of Indian depredations in that massacre, and the accounts were closed. The claimant being of German birth and education, and not conversant with the English tongue, was wholly ignorant of the necessity for presenting her claim, and was therefore left unprovided for.

As to the amount, ownership, and loss of the property by the claimant, under these circumstances, the facts have been attested by various witnesses, the immediate neighbors of the claimant, whose credibility is vouched for by the county officers of Meeker County, the receiver and register of the land-office, and the representative in the State legislature, as also by a member of the committee.

A similar bill to the present was considered by the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate, and reported favorably (No. 1246) in the Forty-second Congress, recommending an appropriation of \$1,095.37 for the relief of the claimant. The committee have concurred in the propriety of recommending that sum, though the claimant has presented her evidence under oath that her losses amounted to \$1,927.40. The main facts and the merits of the case are not doubted. It is admitted to be one of extreme hardship, and the claimant altogether worthy of relief. Since her return to her home she has kept her premises by her personal toil, but has been unable to make improvements, while others have received indemnity from the Government. It does not seem, therefore, to be injudicious or wasteful to recommend the limited relief provided for in this bill.

The committee report it back and recommend its passage.

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