

DAKOTA CLAIMS FOR STORES AND SUPPLIES TO VOLUNTEERS.

JANUARY 15, 1873.—Ordered to be printed and recommitted to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Mr. COBURN, from the Committee on Military Affairs, made the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 3499.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred House bill No. 296, entitled "A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to refund to the Territory of Dakota the sum of twenty-eight thousand one hundred and thirty-seven dollars and seventeen cents for expenses incurred in protecting the frontier settlements during the Indian rebellion of 1862," have had the same under consideration, and make the following report, with the accompanying bill, and recommend its passage :

The committee find that prior to the 30th of August, 1862, and during the summer of that year, the Sioux Indians in Minnesota and Dakota made war upon the whites, perpetrating many outrages, and threatened the entire border in that State and Territory. Thereupon, the governor of the Territory issued his proclamation to the citizens of Dakota, ordering all male citizens in the Territory, between the ages of eighteen and fifty years, to at once enroll themselves in companies to be formed for home defense in their respective counties, with such arms as they may have had in their possession. The citizens were directed to assemble and elect their military company officers. They held themselves in readiness to march and engage in active service for the remainder of the year 1862.

The citizens, in pursuance of the proclamation of the governor, organized into five companies, in which were enrolled in all 266 men, and assembled and elected their officers and prepared hastily-made fortifications for their defense.

In the absence of United States troops, the calling of the militia by the governor, and their enrollment and service, were, in the imminent danger from hostile Indians, the only defense for the people.

The following extract from the governor's message of December 18, 1862, indicates the pressing necessity of prompt and efficient action, without waiting for or obtaining authority or orders from the War Department.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANNUAL MESSAGE OF GOVERNOR JAYNE TO THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE, DECEMBER 18, 1862.

During the past year our people have suffered from Indian depredations, and the continual fear of being plundered and murdered by the roving bands of lawless savages who have been prowling around our settlements has been a great source of annoyance and alarm to our citizens.

The murder of Judge Amidon and son, at Sioux Falls, occurring immediately upon the receipt of the first news of the terrible massacre of men, women, and children in Minnesota, very justly alarmed the settlers in that portion of the Territory.

Knowing their inability to protect themselves against any considerable force of Indians with the small detachment of Dakota Cavalry I had stationed there, they have wisely concluded to withdraw to the more thickly-settled portions of the Territory, lying upon the Missouri River. After the abandonment of Sioux Falls, the Indians came in and destroyed and burned the town and all the improvements in the surrounding country. Upon the reception of the news of this attack at Sioux Falls, coupled with the news of a great savage war in Minnesota, and the actual presence of hostile bands in the vicinity of our towns, a feeling of general alarm naturally spread throughout the Territory, and many of our citizens removed into Iowa.

As we had but one military company stationed in the whole country between the Big Sioux River and Fort Randall, and as this company was divided into several detachments, and could render only limited aid to our scattered settlements, I issued a proclamation calling for the organization of the entire militia of the Territory. Finding, however, that the feeling of insecurity was likely to depopulate some of our counties, I dispatched Lieutenant Kellam, a special messenger, to General Blunt, commanding the Department of Kansas, with letters and a requisition for arms, ammunition, and additional troops.

As no troops could be sent to us immediately, I thought it necessary to call into active service a part of our militia, which would tend to restore confidence and give us protection until United States troops could be stationed in our midst.

I would recommend that an act be passed authorizing the auditor of the Territory to audit the military accounts of the Territory, and to issue warrants sufficient to defray the expenses connected with subsisting and paying the militia for the time they have been in actual service; and then, when the amount is ascertained, the legislature memorialize Congress for an appropriation sufficient to refund to the Territory all the expenses incurred by her in maintaining the militia force.

It further appears by a report of the Hon. James Tufts, a commissioner appointed January 9, 1863, by the legislature of Dakota to audit the military accounts of the Territory, of date January 9, 1863, the length of service was fixed at four months as that for which pay should be given. The commissioner also took into account the expenses of the recruiting service; the quartermaster's and commissary's department; the expenses for surgeons, hospitals, and incidentals; making a total, for all items mentioned, the sum of \$28,137.17.

The auditor of the Territory issued warrants on the treasurer for the sums making the above aggregate.

The action of the governor in calling out the troops, and of the citizens in responding promptly in the emergency, seemed to be all that could be done and the only thing that could be done for the defense of the people of the Territory, since no troops of the General Government could come in time to the rescue, and it seemed madness to wait till the authorities at Washington could be reached and could furnish military aid.

The accounts seem to have been carefully examined by the commissioner, and to have met the approval of the auditor, and are set out in full with the items. The sum seems to be a reasonable and fair one, and we feel justified in recommending its payment.

The committee, in view of their conclusion, report a bill providing that an inspecting officer of the Army be directed to make report upon the claims aforesaid.