

MRS. HANNAH W. SUMNER.

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MARCH 10, 1876.—Committed to a Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. GOLDSMITH W. HEWITT, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 2271.]

*The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred House bill No. 2271, have had the same under consideration, and submit the following report:*

The bill increases the pension of Mrs. Hannah W. Sumner, widow of Maj. Gen. Edwin V. Sumner, from thirty dollars per month to fifty dollars. This increase is asked on account of the long, arduous, and distinguished services of her late husband in the Army of the United States, and that such increase is necessary for a decent support of the said Mrs. Hannah W. Sumner for the few years she may be permitted by a kind Providence to remain on earth with her children.

The widow is over seventy years of age, and can survive but for a short time. General Edwin V. Sumner entered the service in 1819 as second lieutenant. He served in 1832 in the Black Hawk war with much credit. In 1833 he was commissioned by General Jackson as captain, and assigned to duty on the western frontier, where he continued on active duty until war was declared against Mexico, in 1846. The First Dragoons were ordered to New Mexico, and Edwin V. Sumner was assigned to the command of the same. During this campaign he was appointed major of the Second Dragoons, then near Vera Cruz. While on his way thither, at New Orleans, he received an order from General Scott appointing him to the command of a new regiment just then raised. He commanded this regiment at the battle of Cerro Gordo, where he was severely wounded. He was, soon after his recovery from the wound, assigned to the command of the Second Dragoons, then about to leave Puebla for Mexico. He was engaged in the action at Cherubusco, and led his regiment in a gallant charge upon the enemy. On the 8th of September he commanded the dragoons at the battle of Molino del Rey, the bloodiest of all the battles of Mexico, and General Worth in his report of the battle speaks in the highest terms of the courage of Sumner. For his services at Cerro Gordo and Molino del Rey he was brevetted. After the close of the war he was (in the fall of 1848) assigned to the command at Jefferson Barracks. In the spring of 1849 he was ordered to Leavenworth, where he continued in command until the spring of 1851, when he took command of the Department of New Mexico. He was in several different commands up to the

breaking out of the late war, when he was appointed a brigadier-general in place of General Trigg, who had been dismissed from the service because he was suspected of disloyalty. In April, 1861, he was ordered to repair to San Francisco, and to assume command of that department and to relieve Col. Sidney Johnston. His administration in that department was highly successful.

In November, 1861, he was placed in command of one of the divisions of the Army of the Potomac, in the command of which he continued until the battle of Fredericksburgh. He took an active and prominent part in the battle of Williamsburgh, and an honorable part in the battles of Fair Oaks, Seven days around Richmond, and Fredericksburgh. On the 5th day of July, 1862, he received General George B. McClellan's recommendation for promotion, in which he says: "I have the honor to recommend and request that the gallant veteran, Brig. Gen. E. V. Sumner, United States Army, may be appointed a major-general in the Army, or, if there is no vacancy, be brevetted as such. The extreme gallantry evinced by this noble and honest soldier on many a hard-fought field during this campaign; his uniform cheerfulness under the most trying circumstances; the judgment and energy he displayed in saving the day at the battle of Fair Oaks—these and other causes render it eminently just that he should receive the reward I ask for him." This was indeed a high compliment, coming as it did from one of the most distinguished officers of the Army.

There being no vacancy, Sumner was brevetted in accordance with this recommendation. Soon after the battle of Fredericksburgh, General Sumner, at his own request, was relieved from duty in the Army of the Potomac, and in the month of March following he was assigned to the command of the Western Department. While on his way thither he was attacked by disease, which proved fatal on the 21st day of March, 1863. This brave and honest soldier, after forty-four years of arduous and brilliant service, fell at his post of duty, "leaving no blot upon his name;" and his gallant deeds should be enshrined in every American heart; and the country which he served so long, faithfully, and well, and for which he gave his life, ought to support decently and comfortably his aged widow. It is the sacred duty of the Government to support the widows of our soldiers who have given their lives for its preservation.

The committee report back said bill, and recommend that it do pass