

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 2, 1846.

Submitted, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. DICKINSON made the following

REPORT :

[To accompany bill S. No. 101.]

*The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the "petition of Mary Williams, praying indemnity for property destroyed in consequence of its military occupation by the United States in the Seminole war of 1836," have had the same under consideration, and report :*

It appears from the evidence in this case, that, although the destruction of the greater portion of the property in question did not take place while it was occupied by the troops, there can be no doubt it was caused by the fact of its having been held as a military station, from which scouting parties had been sent in pursuit of the savages, or to protect the people of the surrounding country from their attacks. Your committee are moreover of opinion that the occupation referred to was unsolicited, and to insure general and not individual exemption from outrage, and consequently the claim comes fairly under the principles heretofore recognised by Congress, and set forth more at large in the report made at the present session to the Senate in the case of the executor of John J. Bulow, jr., by Mr. J. M. Clayton. With regard to the extent of the indemnification, and the manner in which it shall be ascertained, your committee think that while it is the duty of the government to compensate American citizens for losses caused by its own acts, it is only just and proper that its liability shall not be graduated by *ex parte* testimony, but defined in such manner and under such conditions as shall prevent, as far as practicable, any unnecessary or lavish expenditure of the public money. With these views, the committee report a bill for the relief of the petitioner.

Ritchie & Heiss, printers.