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Assignee of P. G. Hambaugh.

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ASSIGNEE OF P. G. HAMBAUGH.

FEBRUARY 17, 1846.

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. GORDON, from the Committee of Claims, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the petition of James B. Watson, assignee of P. G. Hambaugh, report :

That the trading establishment referred to in the petition of P. G. Hambaugh, and which it is alleged was destroyed by the Indians, was a private concern, at the risk of the owners, and not insured by the United States. No doubt Mr. Hambaugh sought the appointment of trader for said Seminole and Micasukie Indians, and accepted it voluntarily, without compulsion ; that there were various competitors for the appointment, and that he anticipated large profits from the enterprise. But however that may have been, the adventure was at his own risk, without any guarantee, express or implied, on the part of the government. The government was not a guarantor or insurer against the hazards to which the adventurer was liable from the treachery of these savages, among whom this trading establishment was located ; nor were the United States bound to Mr. Hambaugh to furnish any amount of military force to protect the establishment, whatever responsibility the officers in command in Florida, at the time, may have been under to the government for the skilful and faithful discharge of their duty. Mr. Hambaugh and his associates took on themselves all the damages to which they were exposed ; and if, as it turned out to be, it was a ruinous business, they must alone bear the loss. The petition of Mr. Watson and the petition of Mr. Hambaugh, and the papers accompanying the same, and referred to the committee, are appended to this report, and made part of it. The committee are of opinion that neither Mr. Watson, Mr. Hambaugh, nor any one else, is entitled to relief ; and they offer the following resolution :

Resolved, That the claim be rejected.