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Report : Petition of E. Chirouse

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 16, 1883.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 2287.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2287) for the relief of E. C. Chirouse, have considered the same, and recommend that the said bill be passed. The following letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, which is made a part of this report, explains the facts on which the claim for relief is based.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, June 14, 1882.

SIR: In reply to your communication of 9th instant, and that of Hon. Joseph H. Slater, of same date, received by reference of the honorable Secretary of the Interior, under date of 12th instant, in which information is requested relative to the accounts of Rev. E. C. Chirouse, late United States Indian agent, and that any suggestions by this department be submitted which may seem called for in view of the petition of Agent Chirouse, now before the above committee for relief for certain suspensions against him in the examination of his accounts as such agent by the accounting officers of the Treasury, you are informed that a copy of the final statement of this man's accounts, as prepared by the Treasury, and over which this department would have only administrative power, is not available for its reference at present, so that the items it contains cannot be referred to in detail. The books here show a few small disallowances against Agent Chirouse, to correct clerical errors of his, which, of course, must stand, and are not now under consideration. The suspensions against him still remaining on said books are almost entirely of a technical character, as his troubles arose mainly from his failure to comprehend his duties, and action was frequently taken by him without having first consulted the department.

Although Agent Chirouse's manner of disbursing and accounting for public funds has been irregular and in some cases contrary to the statutes, this department does not believe that any taint of fraud attaches to his official actions as Indian agent, but that the use (if Mr. Chirouse quotes the Treasury statement of his accounts correctly) of \$8,066.58 miscellaneous funds for the benefit of the Indians under his charge, in place of depositing the same to the credit of the United States; the expending of \$493 13 in trying to suppress liquor traffic with his Indians, contrary to the statute, which provides for the payment of legal expenses in a different manner; and using \$393.80 to pay contingent expenses and for transportation of Indian supplies, when he had no funds in his hands applicable to these purposes, though contrary to law, are believed to have been in each case of great benefit to the Indians, and in the end the government suffered no loss thereby.

In view of the foregoing, late Agent Chirouse's prayer for a modification of the law so as to permit the Treasury Department to adjust and settle his accounts, as affected by the three sums above mentioned, upon principles of equity and justice, and to give him credit for all or such a part thereof as may be properly sustained by

vouchers, and such as he can prove to have been disbursed in good faith, and as is believed to have inured to the benefit of the Indians and the government, is favorably looked upon by this department.

Herewith inclosed the petition of late Agent Chirouse is returned.

Very respectfully,

H. PRICE,
Commissioner.

Hon. H. L. DAWES,
Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate.

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