

4-15-1886

Repealing Revised Statutes

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REPEALING REVISED STATUTES.

APRIL 15, 1886.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. OATES, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 7882.]

The Committee on the Judiciary, to whom was referred House bill 3184, having had the same under consideration, report thereon as follows:

The measure herewith reported is intended to dispense with proof of loyalty in behalf of a few old men in the Southern States of two classes and in two respects, to wit: Those who, for service in the Army of the United States or active militia, are entitled to bounty land, but who cannot obtain the same under section 3480 of the Revised Statutes except by proof of outspoken loyalty to the Union during the late war. Hence, a man resident in a Southern State whose sympathies were with the Union, but who remained inactive and silent, cannot make the proof required.

The other class is composed of those invalid pensioners who were dropped from the roll for disloyalty, and those old soldiers who received wounds or other disability in the Mexican or Indian wars and who never received any pension, but who are entitled under the law, but cannot prove their loyalty by loyal witnesses, as required by the practice of the Pension Office under section 4716 of the Revised Statutes. Some of those men when disabled were men of fortune or means sufficient to enable them to live in comfort, and hence never applied to the Government for pensions. But now that they are old and poor they request the Government, in whose service their disability was incurred, to remove the only bar which excludes them from receiving its bounty, which it so generously provides for all of its faithful servants.

Very few, if any, of these old men were ever in the Confederate service, but they had sons or other relatives who were, and, as a matter of course, sympathized with them and gave some aid and comfort, which precludes them as honest men from proving loyalty to the Union during that period.

Your committee are of the opinion that the time has come when the requirement of proof of loyalty upon the part of the classes of men in this report referred to should be dispensed with, and hence report herewith a substitute for said bill, and recommend its passage.