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Report : Mr. Doolittle

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

APRIL 16, 1858.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. DOOLITTLE made the following

REPORT

[To accompany Bill S. 181.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was recommitted the "Bill (S. 181) for the relief of Anson Dart," late superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, respectfully report:

That Mr. Dart was appointed such superintendent in the year A. D. 1850, and served in that capacity for the term of nearly three years; that during the period of his service he had under his superintendence the Indian affairs of all the country now included within the Territories of Oregon and Washington; that he was a faithful officer, and discharged his duties in a manner highly satisfactory to the government; and that during the whole of his superintendency peace and quiet were maintained amongst all the Indian tribes under his care, and also between them and their white neighbors; that at the time of his appointment the salary affixed to the office was twenty-five hundred dollars per annum; but he was assured by the Indian Bureau, and by the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate, that a bill, which was soon to be reported, establishing the office of superintendent of Indian affairs in California, should be made to include the superintendent of Indian affairs of Oregon; and that such provision had the sanction and approval of the Indian Bureau, but, by accident or oversight, the bill was not so reported as to provide for it, and the bill passed fixing the salary of the superintendent in California at four thousand dollars, without changing that of Oregon.

The evidence before your committee shows that Mr. Dart would not have accepted of this office had it not been for assurances, that were entirely satisfactory to him, that he should receive the same compensation for his services in Oregon that should be given to the same grade of office in California; and there are other and peculiar reasons, in the opinion of your committee, why the pay of Mr. Dart should be increased. He was a pioneer in that business on the Pacific, and there was but little known as to the cost of living in that region of country until after his arrival there; and it appears to your committee that the cost of living there was almost as great as it was in California, during the time of Mr. Dart's service in Oregon.

The service of Mr. Dart having been rendered to the government in an almost unknown country, he should be fully paid, and not be permitted to be the sufferer, as he undoubtedly is, under the pay he has received for his service.

In ordinary cases your committee would deem it impolitic to increase the salaries of officers subsequent to the expiration of their term; but your committee would respectfully suggest that the case of Mr. Dart should, under all the circumstances, be an exception to the general rule, for the foregoing reason.

Your committee would further report that, from an examination of the facts, they are satisfied that Mr. Dart has a just and equitable claim against the United States for monies paid and expenses incurred for the board of interpreters and hire of clerks employed by him as such superintendent, and are of the opinion that the proper accounting officers of the Treasury Department should be authorized to settle with him upon principles of equity, so as to indemnify him for all monies expended and expenses reasonably incurred on that account.

The committee therefore report a bill for his relief.