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Fannie Kelly

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 15, 1870.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BUCKINGHAM made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany bill S. No. 666.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Fannie Kelly, praying for compensation for services rendered to immigrants, traders, and United States troops during the time she was held a captive by the Indians, report:

In the summer of 1864 Mrs. Fannie Kelly left Kansas with her husband and ten or twelve others for Montana Territory. With a view of entering into trade Mr. and Mrs. Kelly took merchandise and other property with them valued at six thousand and five hundred dollars. About two months after they left home, while in camp, three days' journey west of Fort Laramie, a mixed party of Indians, consisting principally of the Blackfeet band of the Sioux Indians, came into their camp, appeared friendly, and asked for supper. While the party was preparing supper the Indians fired upon the men, killed three, dangerously wounded two, and took Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Larrimer, and two children captives. Mrs. Larrimer and the two children soon escaped in the night, but Mrs. Kelly was held a captive nearly five months, and during that time was treated by the Indians only as savages could treat a woman. During her captivity she learned something of their language, by which she understood their designs toward the whites.

In the month of September in that year, the Indians in whose hands she was a captive attacked and corralled a train of one hundred wagons in charge of Captain James L. Fisk, of the United States army, prior to which they had made an attack, captured two wagons, and killed thirteen of his men. While thus corralled they compelled her to write to Captain Fisk and tell him to go on, as they would not hurt him; but she interposed a few words telling him that she was a white woman, and begging him to release her, to which he replied that he would give three wagon-loads of goods for her release. The Indians directed her to request Captain Fisk to send the wagons to the hill. Mrs. Kelly, while seeming to do as directed, wrote to Captain Fisk and begged him not to break up his train, as it was their intention to capture it and murder his men. This warning induced Captain Fisk to keep his train in contact, and according to his verbal statement saved it from capture.

In the latter part of November Mrs. Kelly became convinced that they were near a town, and bribed an Indian to carry a letter to the place, which proved to be Fort Sully, by which she gave warning to Major House, commanding, by stating that the Indians, upon the pretext of delivering her up, contemplated an attack upon the place, and told him to be guarded, as they were making all kinds of threats; upon which

orders were given to put the fort in order to resist an attack. A few days after this, Indians to the number of ten or twelve hundred appeared, only ten or twelve of whom were permitted to enter the fort with Mrs. Kelly. The others were kept at a distance, while Mrs. Kelly was delivered up to Major House.

Officers of the 6th Iowa cavalry, who were rendezvoused at Fort Sully, depose and say "that they believe it was the intention of the Indians to attack the fort, and they were only prevented from doing so by the preparations which the letter of warning from Mrs. Kelly had induced the commanding officer to make; and that they verily believe that if the attack had been made without such preparation, it would have resulted in the capture of the fort and the massacre of its inmates."

It further appears that the Indians who committed these outrages were at the time receiving annuities under a treaty concluded with them in 1851. That these annuities were succeeded by others, stipulated to be paid them by a treaty concluded October 20, 1865, and by a treaty of April 29, 1868, but under these treaties no appropriations for the payment of annuities the present year have been made by Congress.

The committee recommend the passage of the accompanying bill.