

ELI DARLING.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 262.]

MAY 2, 1850.

Mr. WHITE, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, made the following

REPORT:

*The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Eli Darling, an employee at the navy yard, Brooklyn, New York, having had the same under consideration, report :*

That from the evidence presented to the committee, it appears that Eli Darling was employed at the navy yard as a dock builder at the time of receiving the injury ; that he had been so employed for many years ; that he was a sober, industrious, useful and worthy man. It also appears that while employed in driving piles, a splinter was thrown from the pile by the force of the battering hammer, striking Mr. Darling in the face, most dreadfully lacerating the flesh, destroying both eyes, and disfiguring his person. This calamity occurred on the 7th October, 1834 ; since which time he has been not only totally blind, but otherwise disabled from injuries to other parts of his body, received at the same time and from the same cause by which he lost his eyes ; and while the committee would not advise any change in the general policy of the government in providing a limited and scanty support to those who are injured or disabled in its service, as regularly commissioned officers or enlisted seamen, or marines, they conceive there is no danger in so far departing from that rule in certain meritorious cases, as to preclude from the care of the government all persons in its service who do not happen to be entered upon its rolls for a series of years, according to the laws, rules and regulations of the navy. Cases may occur where a volunteer or laborer may be as richly entitled to the bounty of the government for injuries received in its service, as any individual covered by the mantle of the law ; and such a case is presented by the petitioner, Eli Darling, who was a sober, industrious, worthy mechanic, employed by the government for a series of years prior to the calamity which befel him ; a calamity of such nature and magnitude as to unavoidably excite the commiseration and sympathy of every feeling heart. As all cases of a like character must be brought to the consideration of Congress, and tried and passed upon their intrinsic merits, the committee entertain the opinion that no injurious precedent would be afforded, nor any pretext furnished, for abuse in after times ; and, taking into consideration the fact that in the case of James Jones, an employee as rigger, not enrolled or enlisted as one of those meritorious

cases where the government may and ought to interpose to save from intense suffering, by poverty, one who was made helpless while in the service of his country by an unforeseen and unavoidable accident, that the same parental care may be extended to Darling, and therefore offer a bill for his relief and request its passage.