MARIA HILLS.

MARCH 3, 1851.
Ordered to be printed.

Mr. Waldo, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Maria Hills, of Chautauque county, in the State of New York, respectfully report:

The petitioner represents that one Isaac Ostertrout enlisted into the army of the United States in the revolutionary war near its commencement, and served until its close; that he was subsequently placed upon the pension list, and received a pension until his decease; that she was lawfully united in marriage with the said Ostertrout in the year 1785, and lived with him as his lawful wife until his decease, a period of nearly forty years; that since his decease, she has again married a man by the name of Oliver Hills, with whom she is still living; that she is now eighty years of age, and is feeble and decrepit, and she desires to be placed upon the pension list of the United States.

Accompanying this application, and in aid of the same, is a petition numerously signed by the citizens of the county of Chautauque, aforesaid, verifying the facts above stated, but the petitioner offers no other evidence in support of her claim. Admitting these facts to be true, the question presented is, ought Congress to grant a pension to a woman on account of services rendered by one husband while she is the wife of another? The committee think not. Our laws, in great humanity, have made provision for the widows of those who have been engaged in the perilous services of their country; but when those widows have ceased to be such by their own voluntary act, the duty of the government to provide for their necessities also ceases. Believing that our pension laws are already sufficiently liberal in this respect, and inasmuch as the petitioner does not make her case an exception to a numerous class to which it belongs, the committee recommend that the prayer of her petition be denied.