Mr. COCKRELL, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 326.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 326) for the relief of Henry F. Lines, have carefully examined the same and submit the following report:

Your committee find that Henry F. Lines was mustered into the service as a private in Company B, First Illinois Artillery, April 29, 1862, at Chicago, Ill., for three years, and was honorably mustered out September 18, 1865, to date from July 10, 1865; that his company was mustered out of the service July 10, 1865, and that although he was actually doing duty on detached service from his company up to September 18, 1865, yet, under the rules and regulations, his muster-out had to date from the muster-out of his company, and that the United States military railroad and telegraph corps was created under the authority conferred by the act approved January 31, 1862, entitled "An act to authorize the President of the United States, in certain cases, to take possession of railroad and telegraph lines, and for other purposes" (Statutes at Large, Thirty-seventh Congress, second session, chapter 15), and was operated generally by civilian employees.

On October 30, 1863, the War Department, finding that the supply of competent telegraph operators was inadequate to the demand, gave authority to detach competent soldiers from the ranks to perform such service. Such soldiers were furloughed without pay or allowances until further orders, to engage in the military telegraph service, and at the expiration of such service, or when such services were no longer needed, they were to be returned to their proper companies and regiments for duty or discharge. This course was pursued to keep them permanently in the service as long as needed under military regulations and discipline. These detailed operators were paid by the Quartermaster's Department upon vouchers, and by officers of that department in whose jurisdiction they were performing services.

In the department where Mr. Lines served the usual pay was $100 per month. Mr. Lines was, on November 19, 1864, by special order No. 407, issued from the War Department, furloughed without pay or emoluments until further orders, to enable him to enter the United States military telegraph corps, his name to be borne upon his company rolls as on furlough without pay or emoluments, and he was ordered to report for duty by telegraph to Capt. J. C. Van Duzer, assistant quartermaster United States Volunteers, Nashville, Tenn. He accordingly reported for duty
and was made a cipher clerk of the War Department, and served as such cipher clerk and military telegraph operator until September 11, 1865, when he was ordered to report for muster-out at Springfield, Ill., where he arrived and was mustered out, as before stated, September 18, 1865. From November 19, 1864, to September 18, 1865, he received no pay or allowances as a soldier, but was paid by the Quartermaster's Department at the rate of $100 per month up to May 31, 1865, and received no pay whatever for the months of June, July, August, and the eighteen days in September, 1865; for these services during said time he is justly entitled to the sum of $360. During these months he was employed and did service as cipher clerk and military telegraph operator under Gen. J. H. Wilson, but was not paid for these services, owing to a disagreement between him and the quartermaster, and the refusal of the quartermaster's clerk to make any settlement further than to deliver him his orders to report to Springfield for muster-out.

Immediately after his muster-out he returned to Alabama, and there engaged in the telegraph business and remained for a number of years in delicate health. In 1877 he presented to the Treasury Department the following account, to wit:

The United States to Henry F. Lines, Dr., for services as operator United States military telegraph corps, from June 1 to September 18, 1865, inclusive, 3 months 18 days, at $100 per month, $360.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 29, 1877.

Mr. Lines is the only person who has presented such a claim to the Treasury Department, and his claim is the only one ever considered there. Under the rules and regulations of the Treasury Department they could not allow him other than a soldier's pay. In that department they have stated an account with Mr. Lines bringing him in debt to the government by reason of crediting him from November 19, 1864, with only a soldier's pay, and charging him with the excess received from that date to May 31, 1865, as a military telegraph operator at the rate of $100 per month.

Your committee referred the bill to the Secretary of War and received from him voluminous reports, and also referred the bill to the Secretary of the Treasury and received through him full reports. The papers are very voluminous, and your committee have given them all due consideration. The statements hereinbefore made are true, and in addition your committee find that this is purely an exceptional case not provided for by any general law as construed by the accounting officers of the Treasury Department, and the only mode of relief is by special Congressional legislation, and that so far as can be ascertained Mr. Lines is the only one of the military telegraph operators detailed under said orders who has not been paid in full. Your committee report back the bill with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and recommend its passage.