

LIEUTENANT ISAAC M'KEEVER.

APRIL 3, 1826.

Mr BARTLETT, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, to which was referred the petition of Isaac M'Keever, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Lieutenant Isaac M'Keever, report :

That the petitioner represents, that, on the 18th day of June, 1818, he was commanding the United States ketch Surprise, and on that day he captured, off Pensacola, the schooners named Merino and Louisa, with their cargoes, having on board twenty-five slaves, and conducted them to the port of Mobile, for prosecution for a violation of the laws of the United States. That the said vessels and cargoes were accordingly afterwards prosecuted, in the District Court of the United States, for the District of Alabama, and at the end of five years, litigation, a decree of condemnation was pronounced against them, and one half of the proceeds awarded to the United States, which decree has since been affirmed, on appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The petitioner further states, that the proceeds of the sale of the prizes amounted to \$8,850 50, one half of which, to wit: \$4,415 25, has been distributed amongst the captors, which by the rule of law, gave to your petitioner for his share \$419 45. The petitioner states, that the other moiety of the proceeds of the sale, is not yet paid into the Treasury of the United States, but that bond is given for its payment. The petitioner further states, that, from the uncommon duration of the legal controversy to effect the condemnation of said vessels, and the frequent journeys he was compelled to make himself and by his agents to the different courts, he had expended the sum of \$3000 more than was allowed to him, and he now asks, in consideration of his services and liabilities in relation to said capture, in consideration of the expenses that he has incurred in the condemnation of said vessels, and that the rule of distribution has so operated, as to give him no more of the prize money, than other officers under his command, who incurred no responsibility, that the United States will relinquish to him their interest in the bond, securing to them the half of the proceeds of said prizes. While the services of Lieutenant M'Keever have been most active and zealous, and have resulted in important benefits to his country, they have not been of a character to carry with

them pecuniary reward, and as the committee believe that the amount now asked, after defraying the charges incurred, would not give to the petitioner a share of the prize money disproportioned to the responsibility and trouble which devolved upon him; and as the Committee find the principle recognized, in the "Act for the relief of David Porter and his officers and crew," passed April 13, 1814, they deem the prayer of the petitioner reasonable, and accordingly report a bill.