

Accounts of officers, &c., of the Congress and other vessels to be settled equitably.

Post, p. 818.

Certain sailors, &c., to receive not over \$60 each for loss of clothing, &c.

of the Treasury be, and they hereby are, authorized and directed to settle, upon the principles of justice and equity, the accounts of the officers, sailors, marines, and crews of the United States frigate Congress, the sloop Cumberland, and of any other vessel or vessels-of-war, the books of which were lost or destroyed in consequence of the naval engagements at Hampton Roads on the eighth and ninth of March, anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Navy be, and he is hereby, authorized to furnish to the sailors, marines, and crews of any of the vessels engaged in the naval actions in the foregoing section mentioned, whose bedding, clothing, or other property was lost or destroyed therein, with an amount sufficient to cover their losses, and not exceeding sixty dollars to each man, to be paid in kind or in money, at the discretion of the flag officer of the North Atlantic Squadron.

APPROVED, April 2, 1862.

April 2, 1862.

CHAP. LIII. — *An Act to prohibit the Allowance or Payment of Pensions to the Children of Officers and Soldiers of the War of the Revolution.*

Claims for certain pensions to children, &c., of persons serving during the Revolution prohibited.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That from and after the passage of this act no claim for a pension, or for an increase of pension, shall be allowed in favor of the children or other descendants of any person who served in the war of the Revolution, or of the widow of such person, when such person or his widow died without having established a claim to a pension.

APPROVED, April 2, 1862.

April 16, 1862.

CHAP. LIV. — *An Act for the Release of certain Persons held to Service or Labor in the District of Columbia.*

1862, ch. 155.

Post, p. 538.

Slavery in the District of Columbia abolished.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That all persons held to service or labor within the District of Columbia by reason of African descent are hereby discharged and freed of and from all claim to such service or labor; and from and after the passage of this act neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, whereof the party shall be duly convicted, shall hereafter exist in said District.

Loyal persons may petition commissioners for remuneration, &c.

Petitions to set forth, &c.,

to be under oath.

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Oath not to be evidence, &c.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That all persons loyal to the United States, holding claims to service or labor against persons discharged therefrom by this act, may, within ninety days from the passage thereof, but not thereafter, present to the commissioners hereinafter mentioned their respective statements or petitions in writing, verified by oath or affirmation, setting forth the names, ages, and personal description of such persons, the manner in which said petitioners acquired such claim, and any facts touching the value thereof, and declaring his allegiance to the Government of the United States, and that he has not borne arms against the United States during the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid or comfort thereto: *Provided*, That the oath of the party to the petition shall not be evidence of the facts therein stated.

Three commissioners to be appointed.

Their powers and duties.

Apportionment not to exceed what.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the President of the United States, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint three commissioners, residents of the District of Columbia, any two of whom shall have power to act, who shall receive the petitions above mentioned, and who shall investigate and determine the validity and value of the claims therein presented, as aforesaid, and appraise and apportion, under the proviso hereto annexed, the value in money of the several claims by them found to be valid: *Provided, however*, That the entire sum so appraised and apportioned shall not exceed in the aggregate an amount equal to