

WHITE HOUSE, *February 25, 1903.*

*To the House of Representatives:*

I return herewith, without approval, House bill No. 10095, entitled "An act for the relief of Levi L. Reed."

The beneficiary of this bill was enlisted July 24, 1861, at Reading, Pa., and was discharged from Battery H, Fifth United States Artillery, July 24, 1864, at Nashville, Tenn., by expiration of service, a sergeant. He re-enlisted July 26, 1864, for three years, in Troop H., Fifth United States Cavalry, deserted therefrom July 31, 1865, while a corporal, at Cumberland, Md., and never returned to his command. Through his attorney he was furnished a "deserter's release" on June 2, 1892, in view of the act of Congress, approved April 11, 1890, amending the one hundred and third article of war, so as to prescribe a limitation as to prosecution of the offense of desertion.

This action is regarded as releasing the soldier from service as well as protecting him from liability to apprehension and trial, so that, being no longer in the service, he can not be discharged therefrom. Finally, as he deserted from the military service while holding the rank of corporal, I do not regard him as deserving an honorable discharge.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.