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GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON TAX MEASURES

PUTS IN STRENUOUS WEEK OF CONSIDERATION

House Has Passed Most of the Measures Over to Senate—Adjourned Friday to Monday

(By Jno. K. Aull)

Columbia, Jan. 30.—The general assembly has made remarkable progress during the three weeks of its session, and, if only the old-time customary forty days are to be consumed, then the legislature is half way through with the session. However, in the past several years, the session has gone beyond the forty days, and it may go beyond that this year, though both senate and house have been working hard both at day and night sessions.

The principal matters so far considered, of state-wide importance, are the new tax revenue bills, and most of them are on a fair way to passage. It is understood that the ways and means committee of the house, which prepares the appropriation bill to be introduced in the house, is somewhat indisposed to take any definite action on various matters until it knows what the final disposition of the new tax-raising bills will be. If they should fail, the appropriation proposal, as introduced by the committee, might be cut more than it otherwise would. The idea seems to be to reduce the state levy in one manner or another, in response to the popular demand for a decrease of taxes. As matter of fact, anybody who has studied the tax situation in South Carolina, knows that the main taxation is by the municipal corporations and the counties, and that a reduction in the state levy would not amount to very much, anyway, but the people are demanding a reduced levy from the legislature in the state appropriation bill. For instance, to reduce the salaries of state officials would amount to practically nothing, comparatively, when taken into consideration with other appropriations. The ways and means committee is composed of men who have been studying the situation, and they will reach a decision which seems to them right and proper. Then it will be up to the house first, and the senate next, to go over the bill, and make such changes as either body sees fit. The measure will go on the gridiron of the house, and after being passed by that body, with such amendments as it sees fit to make, it will go to the finance committee of the senate, and from the finance committee of the senate back to the house and then to a free conference committee of both houses, who will at last be the final arbiters.

Revenue-Raising Measures
The house has passed, almost without debate, all the proposed measures looking towards new sources of revenue, except the luxury tax measure, and these measures are now up to the senate. It has been contended that with the passage of these new revenue bills the state's levy on property as at present assessed could be reduced by about one-half.

Both houses have passed the inheritance tax measure. The senate put in some amendments, and the two houses will likely get together. The house has passed the measure for a tax on gasoline, the income tax bill, tax on water powers, and, as stated, both houses have passed the inheritance tax bill, though they will have to get together on the amendments adopted by the senate. In other words, all of the new revenue-raising bills, with the exception of the luxury tax bill, are now up to the senate.

For Extension of Tax Payments
The senate has finally agreed on the measure introduced by Senator Wells of Edgefield, providing for the extension of the time for the payment of state and county taxes. The bill as it passed the senate, and as it will now go to the house, would extend the time for the payment of taxes until June 1, with a penalty of 1 per cent for January, two per cent for February, three per cent for March, four per cent for April, five per cent for May, and a seven per cent penalty thereafter, the penalties not being cumulative. After June 1 the executions are to be issued against the property on which taxes have not

been paid, but are not to be executed until the first day of September.

The senate also provided in the bill that any one paying taxes during the period mentioned should not be debarred from voting in general elections. As the law now stands, one must have paid his taxes before December 31, in order to vote in any general election within six months thereafter.

Three-Mill School Tax
The resolution of Mr. Sapp of Richland county, providing for the submission to the people of a constitutional amendment doing away with the three-mill school tax, was given a favorable report by the ways and means committee of the house, as was also his resolution providing an amendment to the constitution "to establish a just and equitable system of raising public revenues." The idea of Mr. Sapp is that the legislature should be empowered to provide the funds needed by the schools, as these needs may appear each year.

Reapportionment in House
Under the census of 1910, it is held that there must be a reapportionment of the representation of counties in the house. The house is composed of 124 members, to be apportioned according to the population of the counties, as shown by the census. Under a bill which has been introduced, after careful figuring by mathematicians on the census report, Bamberg is reduced from two members to one, Florence increased from three members to four, Marlboro decreased from three members to two members, and Richland increased from five members to six members.

Take Short Recess
Both houses of the general assembly, after a strenuous week's work, adjourned on Friday afternoon until Monday night. This general assembly has been working perhaps as steadily as any general assembly in recent years. There is a lot of work yet to be done, however, in view of the new taxation program which has been undertaken, and it is problematical whether the session will be concluded within the next three weeks.

Warrant Against Senator
Mr. August Kohn of the News and Courier, writing to his paper, has the following to say with regard to a prohibition law warrant issued against the senator from Oconee:

The members of the senate are very much interested in the report from Seneca that the assistant chief of police of that city had issued a warrant against Senator Mason of Oconee county. Senator Mason is insistent that there is absolutely nothing in the charge other than that a friend sent a bottle of sperrnong wine to a restaurant for him to get, that he declined the wine and never called for it and that the wine was poured out and that is all he had to do with it. Of course, members of the general assembly are immune to arrest during the session on charges of this character. Senator Mason says he has no idea of claiming immunity, and wants everyone to know that at the earliest possible moment there must be some mistake in the charge, as he has neither directly, nor indirectly, violated the prohibition or any other law, but he is anxious to answer any charges.

Income Tax Bill
The income tax bill which is now before the senate finance committee will probably be reported Tuesday. This is perhaps the most important of the pending bills. It is understood that the finance committee of the senate will probably recommend a 50 per cent reduction in the rates of the pending bill, from the bill as passed by the house. In other words, the present tone of the finance committee is to cut the rates of the house bill exactly one-half, that is, where a tax rate of 2 per cent is provided for in the house bill, to reduce that to 1 per cent, and where 3 per cent is provided to reduce that to 1 1/2 per cent. Of course, it can be appreciated how important this change will be in results.

The county supply bills are going into the house with rapidity. Beaufort reported first on its county budget, then came Aiken and Calhoun.

A Philadelphia banker says, "The consumer is king." And you know what the world has been doing to kings during the past few years.

WHERE JUSTICE IS ONLY GRIM JOKE

JOHN T. RODDEY GIVES SOME UNVARNISHED TRUTHS

If Some Day the Man of the Plow Shall Decide That He Will No Longer Bear the Burdens of Other People, But Instead Will Enjoy the Products of His Own Labor, There Will be Much Embarrassment.

To the Editor of The Herald and News:

Might it not be possible to so impose upon the farming class that they might resent it? While unquestionably the most patient and long suffering of all human beings might there not be a limit? Was not the farmer before the civil war considered a "Country Gentleman," and is he not after the world war approaching Russian peasantry? Is there any other class doing business with him not "soaking" him for the limit? Does not the doctor, the lawyer, the banker, the merchant—in fact every class make him pay them their prices, and does he not have to take anything he can get without any say so?

If he brings a cow to town for sale, does he not get from three cents to five cents per pound, and if he wishes to buy a piece of the same beef, does he not have to pay from 25 cents to 40 cents per pound? If he brings a cow hide he will probably get 75 cents or a dollar for it, but if he wants a pair of shoes, will he not have to pay from \$3 to \$15 for them? If he breaks his wagon and has to have it repaired in town will it not probably cost him a cow? Are not all tools, machinery and his necessities on the same basis, and is not everything he produces practically carried on in the same manner? Taking Rock Hill for a comparison, cannot a man hire a farmer and his family to work from daylight till dark, and later if necessary, for less money than is paid a hotel waiter, a janitor, a 15-year-old clerk, or any employee of any description of a railroad, or any one engaged in any other business?

Have the politicians been worth a nickel to him? Have not most of the schemes, gotten up supposedly for his benefit, been a means for creating a lot of useless jobs? Hasn't most of the speaking and ranting on different things been rather with a view of holding or getting a job either for the speaker or for some of his friends who could so admirably fill the position provided salary was sufficient? Would not the politician telling him about his poor wife and children cooking, milking and working in the fields, be more of a friend, if he were to tell him, they are doing so, but if you were not a fool, they would not be? Is not the advice and persuasion usually given the farmer for the real benefit of the man giving the advice, and is not the farmer the same old "sucker" who falls for it. Is not every other class organized for protection? Is not "equal rights to all special privileges to none" a farce when combinations of every description are allowed against a particular class? Is there not price fixing on almost everything he must buy? Have you heard such a conversation lately between a farmer and fertilizer man: "What are fertilizers worth this year?" "I don't know, the prices haven't been fixed yet." Why allow a professional say in New York or Chicago to sell the labor of every farmer, man, woman and child and force the farmer to take the fictitious prices created? Does the professional know that as a rule the farmer is poor and ignorant and must submit, his nerve, his money and his ambition gone and his family coming on to live the same life of slavery? Has the professional got a "pull" or is he of more benefit to the world? Without these conditions could they play this game? Would it not be broken up if they did not have the farmer to play on? Could they find any other class that would stand for it? Are not the majority of the American people naturally gamblers, wish to take a chance, and the southern people naturally optimistic and hopeful souls, always want to buy? Don't they have to have some one to buy from, who then unless the professional? Who wins in nearly every game of chance, the professional or the amateur sucker? Was not the limit until recently \$5, one hun-

dred bales, can't you play now 50 cents limits, ten bales.

If five men were playing cards with \$50 on the table, would they not be arrested if caught, but if five men put up \$50 on the up or down on 10 bales, isn't it perfectly legitimate? Really isn't the only difference, one crowd usually plays at night, the other from 10 to 3 during the day? Do we not read "Local professionals sold the market?" Professional what? Also read, "Wall street and the Waldorf crowd heavy sellers?" What do "local professionals, Wall street and the Waldorf crowd" care whether the producers have clothes or shoes for their wives and children if it should interfere with their getting the money? Is it not one thing to be allowed to live, another to be allowed to exist, and the next thing, well what?

Why so much anxiety and "dope" about the boll weevil? Hadn't the farmers better pray to have him distributed around equally? What difference does it make? Are they not figured at so much per head but in bulk? What is the difference between 15 million bales at nine cents, nine million bales at 15 cents, eight million bales at 17 cents, or 12 million bales at 11 1/4 cents? Isn't the result practically the same, just as though you sold 15 cows at \$10 per head or 10 cows at \$15 per head. Don't say "the mills are obliged to hedge for protection?" Why? If a mill receives an order for goods for forward delivery, can't they buy the actual cotton? Is there any hedge to it? Isn't this the truth, they don't wish to carry the cotton, it costs money. Let the farmer do that, they will get it when necessary and based on the future price, don't care whether it is up or down, if market higher will make it on the future, if lower will lose on the future, but make it on the spot and save carrying charges. Hasn't this "hedge" business been a great excuse for many a man who wished to take a gamble for his mill? and "busted" a lot of them too. Has any one noticed any special gambling on the finished product or is it confined to the raw material the farmers produce? Hasn't this thing, gotten up by some real artists, been going on for over 50 years, about five years after slavery was abolished, and is it not time now to allow legitimate supply and demand fix the price whether it is 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents or \$1 per pound? But how? Could not a law be passed whereby gambling should not be allowed in anything that did not exist or by no possible imagination could exist.

For instance, if 10 million bales of cotton are produced in a year, don't allow 200 million to be gambled in. If a man had a certificate say for 100 bales of actual cotton, allow trading in the actual cotton in existence as often as desired, but allow this 190 million bales of pure imagination to be gambled in it entirely unfair to the producer and fixed his price? Don't allow anything impossible to exist, fix the price of anything actually in existence, simply because lots of people wish to gamble, and it might interfere with present arrangements. Of course, there are millions invested, but there is a lot invested at Monte Carlo and Monte Carlo doesn't play on the welfare and almost life of human beings. Confine the trading to actual existence and then stop, even though some might lose the commissions on more than a hundred million bales of imagination. Have we had actual supply and demand fix the price of cotton except during the world war when it was a thousand points higher than this imagination?

Don't we often hear "the farmer is ignorant, got no sense?" Will grant so much if desired and that all the sense is confined to the towns and cities are we showing it? Isn't the farmer the foundation for practically all of us, our very life, and if we knock and knock till we knock down our foundation, will our house not fall? If the world considers it the correct thing to allow "local professionals" or "operators" or traders or whatever they are, "Wall street and the Waldorf crowd," the privilege of depressing the price of a farmer's product to a point of bare existence by manipulating a purely fictitious and non-existing product, should they not consider it equally the correct thing for the farmer to decide to stop producing the actual product? If we

PROGRESS MADE ON TAX PROGRAM

THREE REVENUE BILLS SENT TO SENATE

Last of Series of Revenue Measures Introduced—To Amend the Constitution

The State, 27.

The house of representatives yesterday moved several important steps nearer the solution of the state's taxation problems, preparing the way for immediate relief of the now apparently overburdened owners of visible taxed property and making a beginning at laying the ground work for final and complete change of the tax system of the state.

The hydro-electric tax, the corporation license tax and the foreign corporation tax, three of the series of new revenue measures, were passed on to third reading and sent to the senate, while the luxuries tax bill, the final and from the point of view of the amount of revenue to be produced the most important of the series, was introduced by the ways and means committee. The hydro-electric tax and two coporation tax measures were given their final reading without debate and were agreed to without a single dissenting voice. These measures, it is estimated by the ways and means committee, will bring in revenue totalling \$475,000 annually.

The luxuries tax measure will come up for consideration as an uncontested measure today, unless objection is raised by some member or the point of order is made that the copies of the printed bill have not been on the desks of the members the required 24 hours. The sending of the three new tax bills to the senate yesterday brings the total of these new revenue measures, which are expected to reduce the state tax levy to 5 1/2 mills or less, passed by the house to seven. The gasoline and the inheritance tax measures were received by the senate last session, while the income tax and the motion picture tax bills were passed by the house this session.

The preparing of the way for even more fundamental changes in the state's tax system are carried in two measures introduced in the house by Representative Claud N. Sapp of Columbia yesterday. Both are joint resolutions, calling for the submitting to the people of the state the question of amendments to the state constitution, and were referred to the ways and means committee. One of the resolutions, which is identical with the measure debated so vehemently in the senate Wednesday, would confer upon the general assembly power to establish a just and equitable system of raising public revenue, while the other resolution would strike out of the constitution the provision requiring a levy of annual property tax of three mills and leave the fixing of this levy to the legislature. A duplicate of this second resolution is now also on the senate calendar.

NEWBERRY HIGH DEFEATS AMERICAN LEGION

The Newberry high school defeated the American Legion in a well fought game Friday night at the new high school gym. by a score of 12 to 8.

Tarrant and Renwick featured for the high school and Graham and Vignosky for the Legion.

"bust" the farmer, will it not come very close to putting the best of us out of business? Could the chambers of commerce of the country do a better real work than to try to build anew our foundation on a solid basis? May we not be playing with fire? May not the farmers wake up and realize their power? May they not determine to raise enough of food and clothing for themselves and say to the world, "We can live if you can't." Would it not be a sure enough calamity if the farmers decided to strike? Would it not be a good idea for the American people to stop and think or might there not be the devil to play? Cannot any one of any class be down to the limit and might not the farmer be approaching the limit?

John T. Roddey, Rock Hill, Jan. 21.

SOUTH CAROLINA AND THE FILM

Charleston American.

The value of the motion picture in our American life cannot be estimated.

Long ago the moving picture theater ceased to be merely a place of amusement. The motion picture's value as an education power is now realized by all thinking men and women.

We would be foolish to fail to recognize the opportunities for educational and moral progress which the moving picture offers.

In realization of the tremendous importance of the moving picture industry, Postmaster-General Will H. Hayes recently resigned his high position to work for the betterment of the movies.

The industry is demanding the brains and the energies of the country's progressive men and women.

We in South Carolina should recognize the importance of the movies.

We in South Carolina must be fair to ourselves.

Our state legislature must not forget the moving picture's place in the life of our commonwealth.

A film tax bill has passed the state house of representatives which places a tax of \$5 per thousand feet on motion picture films. The bill is now in the senate, and it should be killed.

This bill is theoretically aimed at the distributors, but because of the fact that there are no distributors in South Carolina the burden of the tax will fall on the theatres in the shape of increased rentals.

The total film rental (income) of 19 distributors serving this state amounts to \$383,933.68 per year, and the proposed tax would amount to \$83,200, or twenty-one per cent of the distributors' income.

The distributors have announced that in the event this bill becomes law they will shift this tax to the theatres by increasing the cost of pictures from twenty to twenty-five per cent.

At the present time there are 155 motion picture theaters operating in South Carolina. Of these theaters, 63 are in towns of 6,000 or less; 24 are in mills and Y. M. C. A. theaters, and 17 are theaters for colored people.

During the past year 50 moving picture theaters have closed their doors in the state because of financial losses. It is stated that 7 theaters ceased operating last week because of financial loss.

The 68 small theaters which are being operated in the small towns cannot bear the burden of increased taxation in this form, and they cannot successfully increase their price of admission 25 per cent.

If this film tax bill is passed by the senate it will in all probability mean the closing of 50 theaters in South Carolina.

The moving picture men in South Carolina have made the following interesting statement:

"The tax as proposed against the distributors cannot be equitably prorated among the theaters because only 6 of the 19 distributors hold contracts with as many as 30 to 55 theaters.

Three serve 25 theaters; two serve 15; two serve 10; three serve 8; and the remaining three exchanges serve 6, 5 and 3 theaters each. But the tax on a picture which plays in 5 theaters will be the same as the tax which plays in 55 theaters. This means that not only the small theaters served by these exchanges must close, but the 12 to 15 small distributors must stay out of South Carolina. Thus a virtual monopoly is established by law.

The tax cannot but result in poorer pictures, since the theater which used to pay \$10 for a program cannot afford to pay \$10 plus 25 per cent, but must seek cheaper pictures. The average film rental in South Carolina is \$8.25 to \$10 per program. The proposed tax on original (new) prints alone, excepting duplicates, would amount to 20 per cent of this cost price."

Senators of South Carolina do your duty and kill this bill!

Pass the inheritance tax bill!

Pass all the good bills which propose just taxes for the things which should be taxed but do not vote for a tax which would be a blow to one of the most important educational factors of the day—the moving picture film!

DAY OF BUSINESS IN LOWER HOUSE

HEAVY VOLUME OF WORK TRANSACTED THURSDAY

Bill to Abolish State Highway Commission Introduced—To Ban Carnivals

The State, 27.

The mills of the general assembly oftentimes grind exceeding fine and upon occasions grind exceeding fast. Such was the case of the house yesterday, an immense volume of work being accomplished at the single session during the morning, the only hesitation in the "unperturbed pace" of the consideration of bills, new and old, coming in the debate of the food label measure of Representative B. P. Carey of Charleston and on the joint resolution of Representative J. O. Sheppard of Edgefield to reduce the numbers of jurors required to reach verdicts in civil cases. Measures of state-wide and bills of local importance—among them the three new revenue bills—were taken up and passed or killed with "deliberate speed" and little if any debate.

The Richland delegation bill, preventing public service corporations from denying service to a patron in case of a dispute over charges demanded and providing for the investigation of the true charge, was also among the number of measures agreed to on third reading without debate and sent to the senate. This bill, which was thoroughly discussed in the house on second reading Wednesday, provides that in the event any dispute should arise between an individual consumer and any public service corporation or company over the amount of a bill for gas, water or electricity the consumer may appeal to the courts. The measure would also require the public service company to continue its service uninterrupted to the consumer during the investigation of the charge.

Jury Bill Killed

The day's most extensive debate came on the bill to require the agreement of only three-fourths of grand and petit jurors in the trial of civil cases in the state, the bill being defeated by a vote of 48 to 33. The measure was taken up as a special order, debate on the question having been adjourned from Wednesday's session. As practically all speakers heard at the session Wednesday were in favor of the measure so the debate yesterday was the negative's day, the successful attack on the measure being led by D. B. Peurifoy of Walterboro. Other representatives, speaking in opposition to the bill were: W. R. Bradford of York, A. G. Kennedy of Union and W. J. Gibson of Spartanburg. J. O. Sheppard of Edgefield the author of the bill, was the only speaker heard in favor of the measure. The bill was killed on the motion of J. W. Hanahan of Winnsboro to strike out the enacting words.

Considerable argument was also occasioned over the bill to require all persons, firms or corporations engaged in business of canning, packing, picking, preserving, boxing or in any way preparing any food for sale and shipment to stamp, brand and label the package, "South Carolina Product." The bill, of which Representative B. P. Carey of Charleston is the author, would also order the food inspector to regularly inspect these foodstuffs to guarantee the enforcement of the measure.

Still a Few of 'Em Left.

A thin, sickly little man entered one of the stores in one of our small towns recently and quietly seated himself on a convenient chair. One of the clerks approached and asked if he wished to purchase anything. "Oh no," said the man. "I just dropped in for a few minutes." After half an hour had passed the manager of the store becoming curious, approached him and asked what could be done for him. "Why nothing that I know of," said the man. "You see I have nervous prostration, and the doctor told me to stay in a quiet place. Noticing that you do not advertise I thought this would be about the quietest place I could find."—Ex.

Some men will tackle anything. Prohibition officers, for instance, are trying to make Chicago dry.