

A Newspaper in all that the Word Implies and Devoted to the Best Interests of the People it Subverses.

VOL. III, NO. 43.

GAFFNEY CITY, S. C., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1896.

\$1.00 A YEAR.

THE NEW COUNTY LAW.

QUESTIONS THAT HAVE ARISEN PASSED UPON.

The Attorney General Gives Some Opinions Construing the Act. Only One Box Necessary.

The matter of the elections for the formation of the new counties involves many issues which are being constantly presented in one form or another. Every time the people proceed with one of these elections certain questions as to the construction of the act governing the formation of new counties arise and the Attorney General is called upon to construe the law.

Here, for instance, are a number of legal questions propounded to the Attorney General yesterday by Mr. L. Baker, the chairman of a Limestone county committee. They are given together with the answers and will be of special interest to all concerned in the formation of new counties:

Will it be legal for persons living within the boundaries of the proposed new Limestone county to register December 7, it being one of the three days in each month required by law?

Yes.

Will they by so doing be legally qualified to cast their votes for or against the new county; the election having been ordered for December 8?

Yes.

Will it be legal to open the registration books on any day previous to the first Monday in each month?

No.

Will a voter so registering be entitled to vote in the new county elections?

No.

Can a person be registered at the county seat by another person if he will make oath that the person, or persons, he represents has all other legal qualifications?

No.

Is it necessary to have three boxes at each polling precinct? The law having required a two-thirds majority will it require a two-third majority as to name and place?

No, one box; second, two-thirds on all questions.

Would a failure of a two-third majority as to name or place invalidate the whole election?

No.

AN IMPORTANT OPINION.

The attorney general has also rendered the following opinion which will likewise be of special interest to new county people:

Messrs. M. M. Tate and others, Managers of the New County Election, Gaffney, S. C.

Your telegram was received just as I was leaving Columbia and I delayed answering until I could investigate the question. I wired you my conclusion and now give you the reasons upon which it was based.

Section 3 of the act of regulating the formation of the new counties provides that all persons entitled to vote under the Constitution and laws of this State at general elections shall be entitled to vote at such elections. (See acts 1896.)

It is evident that persons registered on December 7 are entitled to vote at general elections and that qualified them to vote at a new county election. It is true that section 7 of the registration act provides that the registration books shall be closed 30 days before a special election. (See act 1896 page 381.)

But do not consider a new county election a special election within the meaning of that act. I understand the term "special election" as used in this act, to mean a special election for officers or something of that sort, while a new county election is a regular election pursuant to law. The general assembly could hardly have contemplated closing the registration books in any county when a new county election is to be held 30 days before such election. Such a course might seriously interfere with the registration of electors for the general election following. But the registration act and the new county act, being new, may not thoroughly harmonize; but I take the view that under them a person registered on December 7th and otherwise qualified to vote is entitled to vote in a new county election held December 8th.

There is another and more serious question that might arise and which I merely call to your attention without expressing any opinion. You will observe that section 7 of the registration books act requires the registration books to be opened on

the first Monday in December, 1896, at the court house and kept open for three successive days. This will include the very day on which your election has been ordered and may complicate matters.

Yours very truly,
WILLIAM A. BARBER,
Attorney General.

Have both your registration ticket and your 1895 tax receipt when you go to vote next Tuesday for the New County.

He Used Foolish Argument. (Correspondence of The Ledger.)

GRASSY POND, Nov. 30.—EDITOR LEDGER: I have seen so much written for and against the new county that it does seem that the question has been sufficiently ventilated so that any one might see it to his personal advantage to support the proposed new county.

The Headlight uses the most foolish argument in his "three brothers" example that I ever saw in print. Mr. Gantt seems to think or tries to make us believe that we would be deprived of our homes, stock, etc., should we determine to establish Limestone county.

He must remember that all we would lose of our own improvements would be the residence, which would be the court house and jail and other public buildings. As to the parish, or county poorhouse, I see from the presentment of the grand jury that Spartanburg county has forty inmates of that institution and there is only one from the cut-off that I know of personally. Then again, why will we have to issue bonds to meet debts? What debts? I should like to know.

Gaffney will build the court house and jail. If Mr. Gantt calls a bond a promise I would like to know what he calls a promise.

Mr. Editor, why is it that we build more churches and school houses? Is it not for the benefit and convenience of our children and our neighbors? Surely it is; then why should we not have our courts and records more convenient?

If we can see it to be to our advantage, I think the Headlight ought to be content to let us alone, as the other papers of the county do.

If our taxes were to be higher would we not be benefitted in other ways in return? Yes, in many other ways.

Now, Mr. Editor, this is the first article I have ever written for your paper, Publish it, if it will do the new county any good.

BILL DOOLEY.

Have both your registration ticket and your 1895 tax receipt when you go to vote next Tuesday for the New County.

Draytonville Dots. (Correspondence of The Ledger.)

DRAYTONVILLE, S. C., Dec. 1.—MR. EDITOR:—The news in our part of the moral vineyard is all about the new county. We have got such a new county fever on us that the first thing we say when we meet our neighbors is how is the new county getting along and then we go on and ask him about the health of his family. We have been doing this way and arguing with each other until it now looks like old Union county is going to roll up a larger majority than either of the other two old counties in the cut-off for the new county, but there are some few who are still opposing, some for one thing and some for another. Some are sincere in their convictions, others I fear are letting their blinded prejudices run before their better judgment. It is a fact, a lamentable fact, that some of them say they do not want to see any of the new county literature nor do they want to hear any argument in favor of the new county. This ought not to be so. It does look like that a man ought to be willing to look at both sides and consider which way is the best for himself and the largest number of people concerned.

The health of our section of county generally good.

Very respectfully yours,
RAMBLER.

As an emergency medicine, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral takes the lead of all other remedies. For the relief and cure of croup, whooping cough, sore throat, and the dangerous pulmonary troubles to which the young are so liable, it is invaluable, being prompt to act, sure to cure.

HAS HE PROVEN A TRAITOR?

LARA SAYS THE HEADLIGHT IS FALSE.

The 8th of December Will Be a Momentous Day for Old Spartanburg, Union and York Counties.

(Correspondence of The Ledger.)

MR. EDITOR—The 8th day of December is almost here, and I feel that it is a momentous day for this section of Spartanburg county—yes, for the entire county, and more yet for South Carolina. We are then to vote Yes or No on the question of establishing a new county out of the counties of Spartanburg, Union and York. I say it is momentous to the people within the proposed cut-off, for it will be a change for the better or worse. Let us reason and see if it will be to our disadvantage or against our interest. No, stop, those Gaffney people are bigoty and voted 11 votes for McKinley out of about 267 for Bryan, and I intend to resent any such an insult to Democracy by voting against a new county. But you forget my proposition to let's reason and see if it will do us any good or harm to have a new county. Ah, but I don't like some treatment I have received at the hands of some party in Gaffney, and I can't cast my ballot in a manner that is calculated to do him any good. How about us—we and you, my friend—will it help us any, not the man in Gaffney?

But I like old Spartanburg. I have lived within her boundaries all my life and I want to die there. Yes, that sentiment is good and patriotic, but it is only sentiment and does not affect our material prosperity in the least, my friend, does it? No, of course not, but Spartanburg is now very rich and a new county would commence very poor and our tax levy would be increased. Why so? Does Gaffney not propose to build the public buildings if the county seat is established there? and has not the comptroller-general said that the tax levy in the new counties, without an exception, is less than in the old counties from which the new ones were formed? That Gaffney bond, is it any good and collectible? Of course it is good and unquestionably valid and legal. It was drawn by one of the best lawyers in South Carolina—Mr. Hardin, of Blacksburg—and it is now on record in Spartanburg, subject to the criticisms of the world, and is it not reasonable to believe that if it were defective in any particular somebody would have found it out before now? We are an integral part of Spartanburg, but I assure you we carry our own load now—just what we would do if we should form a new county. To illustrate, every brick in a building sustains its own weight, and no more, and it makes no difference whether it be the bottom one or the last one on the topmost pinnacle.

Again, the Gaffney cotton mill have a capital of about \$10,000,000. Quite a rich concern you say. Suppose you have \$1,000 cash and you invest it in this mill, are you worth any more because you are a stockholder in a million-dollar cotton mill? No, you are worth just the same thousand dollars, and have only the one one-hundred thousandth control of it that you had before you invested it there. You have just one vote in one hundred thousand. But suppose you put your thousand dollars in a mill with a capital of fifty thousand dollars, you would still only have a thousand dollars, but you would have far more control of it, for you would have one vote out of every fifty. Just so in this rich old county you spoke of. You have so small an interest your voice is not heard. So is it not clearly to our interest to cast our lot and invest our money in that institution and locality where we can and will be recognized, where our voice is heard and listened to in matters which are ours? Yes, your reasoning is good, and I shall think more about it than I have yet, but I am a Reformer, and always have been, and have felt it a duty that I owe myself and my party to listen in a measure to our organ, the Piedmont Headlight, and it strongly opposes a new county.

I, likewise, am a Reformer of the Old School, and have regarded Mr. Gantt my friend, but I now absolve myself from him forever. I have had occasion several times heretofore to doubt his sincerity, but never till now was it so evident that he is unreliable and treacherous to his followers. In this new county matter he is meddling where he has no business. I think we have blindly followed his lead long enough. He was once the mouthpiece of the people, but he is now endeavoring to assert himself dictator. His only sharp is the "unsophisticated farmer." Is there no other class of human beings "unsophisticated" but us? What does he intend for us to understand by the expression "unsophisticated farmer?" The meaning is, as I infer from his writings: "You farmers are a class of idiots and don't know it, but I do, and I am your guardian, help yourself if you can, you darn fools you." Every issue of his paper on the new county subject is an insult to our class. In no instance does he appeal to us as creatures endowed with equal faculties of reasoning with ourselves and with other classes of men as to what is best for us, but as if he knew our inferior capabilities, he appeals to prejudice alone. Is this not a fact? Where can you find one single sensible argument against the new county advanced by Mr. Gantt in any of his papers? In the Headlight of last week (to say nothing of the previous ones) what reasons does he offer us for opposing the new county? Not one thing except to call our attention to the fact that some of the Gaffneyites wore white caps to Spartanburg six years ago to a political speaking. I denounced that act then and do now, but show me the common sense in recalling these unpleasanties at this time in such a case as he does. Have we no reason to which our editor can appeal, or is it that he has nothing to offer us but prejudice? He sneeringly mentions that Senator Tillman will speak on the 5th instant to us concerning smaller counties. He has a right to speak and be listened to, for from him we shall expect to have good, sound counsel, not founded on prejudice, but common sense. We expect him to address us as human beings, capable of reasoning ourselves and listening and heeding to reason.

Last week Mr. Gantt said: "Smaller counties breed nothing but lawyers and higher taxes, and I can prove this to any man who will take the pains to find it out." Why don't he take some pains in this matter, as he appears to desire to nestle us so fondly under his wing? He has had two months to prove to us that our taxes would be increased, and yet he has not shown it to be a fact in a single case.

Mr. Gantt would have us believe that all the new counties that show a reduction in taxes were formed before the last constitutional convention, and that there is quite a change in the law now. He again attempts to deceive us by simply misstating facts. Very well does he know that there was no change in the constitutional law as to the formation of counties except as to area, wealth and population; area being the principal change. We will start the new county (if at all) with no burden save what we are now carrying, and which we will continue to carry if we remain in Spartanburg. Then what are we forced to conclude as to Mr. Gantt's position in this matter? Is it not clear that some motive other than the interests of his "unsophisticated farmer" is moving him? Is it not evident he is working against us and for the moneyed interest of others than his supporters?

Let us drop him, traitor that he is.
LARA.

Have both your registration ticket and your 1895 tax receipt when you go to vote on Tuesday for the New County.

Clifton Chronicles. (Correspondence of The Ledger.)

CLIFTON, S. C., Nov. 30, 1896.—At a meeting of the Sloan Literary Society of the No. 2 school last Friday afternoon, the following question was discussed:

Resolved, That the United States should annex Cuba. W. P. Darity, Henry Seay and Miss Zillie Bushes spoke on the affirmative side, while the negative was represented by C. B. Morrow and Miss Alice Prugason. The judges, Misses Ola Allen, Cora McKenny and J. D. Bailey, though evidently Cuban sympathizers, felt constrained to decide in favor of the negative.

In the next debate Thomas Digby, E. B. Willis, and Misses Lola Turner, Ola Allen, Cora McKenny and Belvia Allen will participate, the question being

Resolved, That Columbus deserves more credit for the discovery of America than Washington for the defence of the American colonies.

Mr. E. Bomar has returned from a business trip to the North.

Mr. Sam T. Reid spent last Sunday in Greenwood.

Mr. B. D. Bates, of Gaffney City, was here about a week ago. His friends were pleased to meet him.

Mr. J. C. Putman, of Clifton, has moved to Gaffney.

TEN QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

MR. J. L. SPAKE TO THE PIEDMONT HEADLIGHT.

He Does Not Know that the Answers Will Be Satisfactory but they Give Reasons that Will Influence Farmers.

EDITOR GAFFNEY LEDGER:

I send you a small contribution in answer to the Piedmont Headlight's hard questions. I think I have answered them satisfactorily. Please print and ask Spartanburg papers to please copy for benefit of the country people. Truly, etc.,

J. L. SPAKE,

From The Plains.

EDITOR PIEDMONT HEADLIGHT: In your issue of Nov. 20 you take occasion to score very severely the people who wish for a new county. In the course of your lengthy article you make the assertion that ten propositions which you lay down in the form of questions, cannot be answered, and that, unless satisfactorily answered, would be sound reason for voters refusing to establish the new county.

Now, I propose to answer your questions and show that there is nothing in them, and that, if not dictated by personal selfishness, yet there is a strong presumption that Spartanburg interest is, at any rate, as strong against, as Gaffney interest is for, the new county.

Your first question is: Must you not bear your share of the public debt of the three old counties, and which leaves the cut off sections just as heavily involved as before the new county was created?

Answer: We agree. If we have it to pay by being in the old counties, will we be any worse off by having to pay it in the new? It is evident that we will be in the same fix in either county, so that question is nothing. If the new county makes us pay it, so will the old ones.

Second question: Must you not relinquish your interest in the court houses and jails and public enterprises that you have helped to pay for?

Ans. Yes; but if we do, won't we get others? Ain't we better off by having them nearer home? Who wouldn't swap an old house for a new one, when he gets the new one in a place much more convenient to him and more suitable?

Third question: Will it not be necessary to build a new court house and jail, and do you think that the people of Gaffney will be content with public buildings that will cost less than \$40,000 besides the \$15,000 to be given by Gaffney?

Ans. Just so Gaffney foots the bill what possible difference can it make? Gaffney is to furnish it, and if she has the pride and push and cash to do so, don't you glory in her public spirit? We do and you ought to.

Fourth question: Will you not have to employ three skilled and experienced men for a long series of years to copy those public records, or else come to one or the other of the court houses, whenever a land sale is made, or a case involving the question of title comes up, and will you get any pay for this? Will not this require more trouble than to attend court as witness or juror, and for which you are paid mileage?

Ans. You must surely be objecting for the fun of the thing. What do you have to do in the old counties? Don't you have to go to the old court houses whenever a land sale is made or a question of title comes up, and will you get any pay for it in the old counties? Your fourth question is simply ridiculous. What possible effect can the new county have on these facts? You must surely believe the new county is going to be moved off somewhere out of reach of Spartanburg.

Fifth question: Will you not have to construct several costly bridges over Broad river which can now be dispensed with?

Ans. Is it any objection to the forming of a new county that a public improvement will be set on foot that should have been completed years before? Should not the citizens of the great commonwealth of South Carolina be so connected in their interests that it would be and is a stigma on the fame and honor of York and Spartanburg counties that a watercourse divides people so close in interests of all kinds. And pray why should the bridges be costly, and why wouldn't the ferries do the new county as well as the old?

Sixth question: Most of the cotton mill property being located in incorporated towns, where is your road tax to come from, except out of the pockets of the farmer, must not the farmer put his

hand in his pocket to make up for the taxes relinquished when he cuts himself loose from those cotton mills?

Ans. The same old story. As if the farmer didn't know he paid for everything anyhow. Oh, no, Mr. Headlight, the farmer knows he has to pay and he always had to pay, and now Gaffney, a city, wants to pay, and the farmer for once, is going to let the town pay. The farmer knows your question is all lumbag, for Union and York don't get any of the cotton mill money, so you see the farmer is thinking for himself, and he knows it is lots better to have a court house only ten miles away instead of twenty-five.

Seventh question: How in the name of common sense and reason can you keep down an increased tax levy when you have just as heavy a public debt as before the new county was created, and must then go to work from the ground up and incur a heavy bonded debt before a case can be tried or a prisoner confined?

Ans. You must suppose that a prisoner can only be confined in a \$20,000 jail. We know that it won't cost any more to confine a prisoner and try him in a new county than in an old one; and we further know it is state law that governs this; our tax levy need only be for the actual needs of the county, and being a newly wedded party, we won't set out as expensive as you "old, want-to-show-off married folks." We will try "an economical government economically carried on" plan, and so keep down our tax levy.

Eighth question: How can the establishment of a court house at Gaffney possibly help the farmer and land owner in the new county? Can you not to-day buy farm land around Spartanburg just as cheap as you can around Gaffney, Greer's or Woodruff?

Ans. Don't know and don't care whether we can or not buy land as cheap one place as another. The question is: Is it not more convenient to have your court house where you can go and get back every day, and not have to foot a hotel bill every time you go to court? We think Spartanburg has a peculiar interest in the farmer's pocketbook, and it don't seem that it is altogether an interest that would tend to keep the farmer's money in the farmer's pocketbook. Maybe if the long and expensive trips the farmer has to make to Spartanburg did not benefit Spartanburg so much that city would not care whether the farmer got his new county or not. So on you cry out at Gaffney remember, "folks who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

Ninth question: How much will the towns of Gaffney and Blacksburg contribute toward keeping up the public highways? Will not this burden fall upon the country people?

Ans. They have not said, but if Blacksburg is as liberal as Gaffney the farmer won't have to pay anything. Anyhow, the new county will keep up its roads. You need not fear. Gaffney has gumption enough to not lose any trade for lack of good roads, and you know all roads lead to the court house.

Tenth question: Why, in running their last line, did they leave out every town, cotton mill and thickly settled community from which taxes could be collected to help support the new county? Was not this purposely done so that the town vote of Gaffney and the influence exerted by the persevering and clever people of that place should overbalance the country vote, and, should the new county be created, will not this town still overbalance the rural vote, as was the case in Edgefield, and make of the countryman a nonentity when it comes to politics?

Ans. Green eyed jealousy. Your tactics are silly. We all know towns strive to rule, and will have town rings. But if we had in the old counties one dozen towns with all the ring influences, all at work against the poor farmer, isn't it very evident that Gaffney is doing us a favor to give us only two to work against us? Why, you are actually making Gaffney a friend to the country people. These two towns have only one-fourth of the votes in the new county, and if the other three-fourths can't manage that, why, let her go. As for expenses, the new county had only three criminal cases in last court, and she wants to get out from so expensive a county as Spartanburg, anyhow. Look at her criminal docket. Spartanburg is too costly a county for us peaceable citizens. Further, we want you to understand, we want the new county for the reason we want every other improvement of modern times. The same cause that induces us to dig a well close to our houses prompts us to have our court house nearer to us, to save time and labor; the one word, "convenience," tells you why.

Now your questions are answered, whether satisfactorily to you or not. They give the reasons that will influence the rural population to have a new and more convenient county created after Dec. 8, next.

J. L. SPAKE.