

1884

Building operations continued to go forward. The five lumber mills kept working and their output for the year amounted to \$500,000. Two brick yards produced \$73,000; 14 cigar factories, \$200,000; two wagon establishments, \$40,000. Two new street carlines were contemplated. The J. T. & K. W. Ry. was completed to Palatka. A large increase in the wholesale trade was noted during the year.

The turmoil about the Sunday closing law quieted somewhat as local politics drifted more especially toward the coming presidential and gubernatorial elections. When Cleveland was nominated for President a great Democratic mass-meeting was held at the Park theatre July 15, to support the nomination. According to the Times-Union it was the largest and most enthusiastic gathering of patriotic men and women ever held in this city and perhaps in the State of Florida. At 7 p. m. the booming of a cannon on Astor's wharf notified the citizens that all the preliminary arrangements for the great demonstration had been perfected. Bonfires were kindled in front of the theatre and the immense room was soon packed to overflowing, while hundreds congregated outside unable to gain entrance. The principal speakers were Governor Bloxham, Milton H. Mabry, Charles Dougherty, and John E. Hartridge. The Cleveland-Perry Democratic Club was organized and the political pot kept boiling, until on November 8 the club celebrated Cleveland's election as President and Perry's as Governor in a final grand jubilee the like of which Jacksonville had never seen before.

The Republicans also held meetings during the summer, but their old-time enthusiasm seemed to have waned. The negro politicians held rallies, too; they were a farce and usually terminated in a free-for-all row.

1885

January 19-20, and February 24: Blind Tom, the celebrated negro pianist, performed to large audiences at Library Hall. Blind Tom had been here before, December 9 and 10, 1881, when he was heard by immense audiences in Metropolitan Hall.