

school lots, \$13,095; school buildings, \$32,905; school furniture, \$11,169.

We have not made the progress that we think ought to have been made, but we have had many obstacles to contend against, and upon the whole feel that we have no right to be despondent, for our advancement has been continuous, if very gradual.

Pursue Business Methods.--We have been doing our best to run our schools on strict business methods and will continue on these lines to the end, hoping to realize our brightest expectations in advancing the schools of Escambia county to the front rank.

A Tax System Suggested.--If we could get our Legislature to frame a revenue bill on business principles, that is, offer an inducement for prompt payment of taxes, just as any business man would do to encourage a prompt (sic) payment of a debt, we would be able to meet the pay-rolls for our teachers promptly, and this would encourage them to do more and better work in our schools.

This could be done without a hardship on any tax-payer in the State. Make the taxes as now, due on November 1st, give a discount of 2 per cent on all taxes paid in November, 1 per cent on all paid in December, January pay full taxes, February add $\frac{1}{2}$ of one per cent. interest, and $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent additional for every month until June, when the year's work should be closed.

This would be business, and would bring money into the county treasury in a steady stream, and you would no more hear of teachers having to wait for their pay, or any other of the creditors of our county.

Respectfully,

N. B. COOK,

County Supt. Public Instruction for Escambia County.

HAMILTON COUNTY

The schools in this county for the years ending June 30, 1895, and June 30, 1896, were better in many respects than those of preceding years. This was due to a better class of teachers, an improvement in methods of instruction, and more systematic work.

Teachers Encouraged to Read.--I endeavored to aid my teachers by encouraging them to read good school journals and works on teaching, and by an interchange of thoughts and ideas as to their plans and methods of work. As a consequence, there was a livelier interest taken in teaching, and more accomplished, with better results.

School Attendance.--The average attendance was not as good as I wished, but there was a considerable increase over that of the year before. The attendance for this year has been better still. Pupils, too, have been better classed in their work. Most of the schools have been taught. Others are now running.

School Buildings.--Better houses have been built within the past two years for many of the schools. Where it has not been done by the School Board, the patrons have built them with private means.