

houses. Financial embarrassment has prevented the purchase of improved furniture. We intend to supply all schools with patend desks in the near future.

Uniform Examinations.--Uniform examinations have greatly improved the class of teachers, and opposition to them has changed generally to commendation. They have been conducted in this county with absolute fairness and results have been quite satisfactory, except in regard to negro (sic) teachers. Our negro (sic) population has suffered on account of failures of negro (sic) teachers to pass. The special examination clause of the new law has not been put in operation, a sufficient necessity not having arisen.

Free-Book System.--The free school-book system has prevailed here for several years, and grows constantly in the affections of the people. We do not see how a regular course of study, uniform text-books and uninterrupted advancement of pupils can be maintained without it. The failure to purchase text-books at the right time, caused by the caprice or poverty of parents never occurs to check the onward progress of pupils. It has also proven to be the cheapest method of furnishing school books.

Teachers' Institutes.--Our teachers' institute meets monthly for eight months in the year, and is an element of great power. In fact, it is the heart of our system--by its active pulsations keeping alive the educational interest and progress of the county. Under the influence of the institute our teachers are constantly improving. Every teacher attends and prepares essays. These essays are preserved by the Secretary, to be condensed and published as the work of the Institute.

Summer Schools.--Interest in Summer Normals has greatly increased. Last year, for the first time, we seriously recommended attendance upon them, and several of our teachers attended and were greatly benefited. This year the Teachers' Institute has endorsed them and passed strong resolutions urging our School Board to take all necessary steps, including an appropriation, to secure the holding of one of them at Brooksville. Don't forget us in this matter.

Developed Home Teachers.--During the past three years Hernando county has developed more home-reared teachers than ever before in the same length of time in the history of the county. Any graduate of our system can take, with credit-able averages, the State uniform examinations. Only one of our graduates has ever failed.

Owing to our uniform system of graded schools for the entire county, our home teachers have generally given the best staisfaction. The only difficulties we have experienced in operating our system have been with imported and old-time teachers, who could not or would not conform to our system. We have old teachers that are up to date, and imported teachers that are fully alive to our methods. These have been of great help to us and to our schools, and with them we have had no difficulty. Hernando county, in my opinion, has a splendid corps of teachers.

Summary of Present Status.--The condition of our school affairs can be summarized about as follows:

1. Improved condition of finances.
2. Interest in education constantly on the increase.
3. Well supplied with houses--increase of three.