

CHAPTER X

1850-1855

The first attempt to beautify the town was in 1850, when April Saurez, an old slave, under the direction of Dr. A. S. Baldwin and Gen. Thomas Ledwith planted the oaks that lined the streets of Jacksonville before the fire of 1901. These trees grew to be the pride of the city; most of them were destroyed in the fire of 1901.

In 1850, the first circular sawmill ever built in East Florida was erected at the mouth of Pottsburg Creek and in the following year John Clark built the second circular sawmill, on East Bay Street, near Hogans Creek. Mr. Clark then added a planing mill, the first in East Florida. About 1853-54 there were five or six sawmills at Jacksonville, and as many more in the immediate vicinity. The lumber industry had grown to be the principal one here. A great quantity of live oak timber was exported annually, for use in the construction of vessels.^a Considerable cotton continued to be brought here for shipment also, Jacksonville being the shipping point for quite a large territory tributary to the St. Johns River. These industries put into circulation much money that naturally found its way into all lines of business. Nearly all the merchants were well-to-do, gauged by the standard of that early time. Business was conducted without rancor and with the utmost integrity. Salaries were not what would now be called large, but the cost of living comfortably was within the reach of all—a condition having an important bearing upon the community. Abject poverty was a state unknown and seldom was a door locked or a window closed out of fear of petty thieving.^b

Relation Between Master and Servant

The question of master and slave was seldom referred to. The master considered it his duty to protect those who served him, and the servant felt that he was accountable for his master's social position and other responsibilities. The slaves were treated with a consideration and trust without a parallel at this day. The children loved their colored "mammies", and the mammies felt that they were respon-