

beginning in 1900, the plant, year by year, has shown an increase in profit. It is the most valuable financial asset of the City, and yet it furnishes light and power at a rate among the lowest in the United States.

### Paving the Streets

The first paving project in Jacksonville and Duval County was in the 1850's, when a company of enterprising citizens was formed to construct a plank road from Jacksonville to Alligator Town (Lake City), following the route of the western branch of the old Kings Road. Eight miles of the plank road were completed, when the railroad (Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central) became assured, whereupon the plank road construction was abandoned, leaving the stockholders of the enterprise responsible for debts that resulted in numerous lawsuits. The route of the plank road was from Bay and Newnan Streets north on Newnan to Duval; west on Duval, crossing what is now Main Street over low wet land near a pond, to Laura; north on Laura to Church; thence west to "Cracker Swamp", a farm owned by I. D. Hart. Remnants of the plank road were still in existence after the War Between the States.

In 1882, the Jacksonville Daily Times, in a long editorial describing Bay Street as a chain of lakes and mud-holes, started the question of paving the streets of Jacksonville. The Board of Trade, after its organization in 1884, took it up, and the matter was frequently before the City Council; but beyond an extended discussion of the subject, wherein every phase of the situation was gone over again and again, nothing was done toward getting down to actual work, until 1886. The citizens were divided as to the kind of paving to use. The Wyckoff cypress blocks, laid on 1-inch planks, were selected. The contract was let, but considerable further delay was experienced in starting the work, as the street railway company refused to share its proportionate part of the expense. The F. R. & N. Ry. at first agreed to pay for its part of the paving in front of its property on the south side of Bay Street, from Hogan west to about the middle of the block, but at the last moment refused to do so. However, the work was started, and Bay Street was leveled and rolled from Market to Julia, and laying the blocks commenced March 18, 1886. The question had been agitated so long that