

price paid for it. Of course the prices of lands are governed in a great measure by the amount of improvements they contain and their proximity to towns and conveniences of railroad facilities. With six lines of railroad running through the county there is very little land in it that is not conveniently accessible by means of railroad communication and transportation.

The present value of farming and pasture lands range from \$5 to \$30, according to location and improvements, and there can be no safer or more remunerative investment made in Texas than in Hill county lands. While purchasers can now realize most liberal profits in rents, the greatest advantage consists of the continual and certain appreciation of values. A fair indication of the values of land and other property is shown by the comptroller's report of taxable values. This is the best evidence, for while the tax rolls of a county fail to show the full value of the property, owing to the disposition of people to render at the lowest figures that will be received, yet as a comparison of the relative values in different sections, the official assessments can be depended upon as a test, the tendency to render at the lowest permissible figures prevailing to no greater extent in one section than in another. The following comparative statement of the assessed values for the past six years will give a better idea of this county's growth.

Year.	Total Valuation.
1885.....	\$4,615,620
1886.....	6,662,350
1887.....	7,044,130

1888.....	7,305,050
1889.....	7,572,820
1890.....	7,938,370

The increase within six years as thus shown amounts to nearly three and a half millions in taxable values.

### RAILROADS.

Six lines of railroads traverse the county, three of which are trunk lines. These three are the Missouri, Kansas & Texas, St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas (better known as the Cotton Belt) and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fé. The first named traverses the center of the county in nearly a north and south direction. The main line of the Cotton Belt route passes through the southeast corner of the county, its direction being from northeast to southwest. The Corsicana and Hillsboro road is a branch of the Cotton Belt, and doubtless will eventually be extended further west. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fé from Galveston to St. Louis and other northern points, passes through the northwestern corner of the county; and the Dallas and Hillsboro branch of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas is completed.

This may become the main line of that road. The Texas Central, which is the principal branch of the Houston & Texas Central, connects with the latter line at Bfemond, thence extending north west to Albany, Texas, and passing through the southwestern portion of the county.

All of the above named lines of railroad are actively in operation, giving the county a total railroad mileage of 901.5 miles, valued

on the tax rolls, a very low standard of valuation, at \$882,150.

The first railroad which the citizens of Hill county aimed to have built was an extension of the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas railroad, which eventually turned out to be the present "Cotton Belt" road. At a railroad meeting held in Hillsboro March 18, 1877, \$20,000 was raised for the purpose of proceeding with the construction of this branch, thus "insuring" the building of the road, John D. Warren leading, both in making the most enthusiastic speech of his life and in heading the subscription list with \$2,000. The citizens of Woodbury co-operated in this move. But we notice nothing more in the papers concerning this enterprise, and conclude that the effort died down.

During May and June, 1886, several quite railroad meetings were held in Hillsboro, in order to devise ways for building a railroad from Dallas to this place. At the first meeting a committee consisting of C. E. Phillips, J. R. Patty and S. C. Upshaw was appointed to visit Dallas and consult with some of the Missouri Pacific officials then in that city. The latter agreed to have their engineer run a line within the next few weeks. While the officials disclaimed any thought of building a road to Hillsboro, they seemed to be better posted as to the route and distances than even the committee itself, which fact indicated that they really had investigated the subject.

During the summer the Missouri Pacific Company proposed to build a road from Dallas to Hillsboro, if the people of this county would raise an amount equal to \$1,000 a mile

within the county. At a mass-meeting of the citizens a committee was appointed to raise subscriptions, consisting of E. B. Stroud, P. F. Fox, A. J. Jasper, O. M. Wellborn and J. W. Golledge. July 17, that summer, the committee, then consisting of O. M. Wellborn, John D. Warren, C. D. Phillips, S. C. Upshaw and C. M. Dunham, had an interview with the Dallas committee, with the result that Hillsboro, Waxahachie, Milford and Lancaster agreed to give the right of way and depot grounds, while Dallas agreed to furnish whatever bonus might be necessary to secure the extension of the road. At the same time J. R. Thompson and E. B. Stroud were successful in soliciting subscriptions for the extension.

But, as is always characteristic of pioneer railroad enterprises, the heavy undertaking seemed to drag its slow length along, deferring hope until the public heart is made sick. The following paragraph from the *Reflector* of August 19, 1886, is quite illustrative of the results of interviews with railroad men at such times: "There has not much been done during the past week in the way of pushing Missouri railway matters; from the fact that nothing could be effected until Mr. Dowland had accomplished the duty assigned him,—that of going over the road and reporting to headquarters the result thereof. He was in the city on Monday last, having come through from Dallas by way of Lancaster, Waxahachie, Italy and Milford. We met him at the office of Colonel John D. Warren, and found him to be a very clever gentleman, but we elicited nothing definite from him in re-

gard to the road other than he was pleased and delighted with the route. He however said that his instructions were to do the best he could and report."

"Pleased with the route and will endeavor to do something," was generally the result of all interviews with railway officials.

During the next week the above company agreed to reduce the subsidy of \$1,000 a mile to "\$40,000 on the Hillsboro and Dallas proposition;" this amounted to a fall of \$20,000 from their original proposition, which was \$1,000 a mile and the right of way. Colonel John D. Warren then led a subscription list with \$2,000, followed by Adam Files, \$1,000, the Hillsboro delegation at Dallas, \$5,000, etc., other points coming in until the amount reached \$37,000, within a few moments. Dallas agreed to raise \$30,000, but was slow in that movement, and finally failed altogether. When one or several places do their duty, it seems hard that they should be made to suffer on account of the dereliction of other places, especially when a promise is broken in so doing.

Immediately after the above failure, the question of building the "Southwestern extension" was revived.

During the following January, (1887), the "Hillsboro, Dawson, Southeast & Northwest Railroad Company" was chartered, Colonel Warren at the head, and in a few hours \$30,000 was pledged. The incorporators were J. D. Warren, A. H. Files, O. M. Welborn, O. T. Lyon, C. E. Phillips, B. D. Tarlton, of Hillsboro; and W. F. Osborne, G. W. Younger and J. J. Stausell, of Dawson.

Officers,—J. D. Warren, president; G. W. Younger, First vice-president; M. D. Knox, second vice-president; W. F. Osborne, secretary; and J. R. Thompson, treasurer. Mr. Welborn was appointed to raise Hillsboro's share, \$21,000, which he soon accomplished; and Mr. Osborn saw that Dawson raised her share. Authorized capital stock, \$700,000.

March 11, it was determined by various committees at Dallas to complete the southwestern extension, and chartered their company as the "Dallas, Granite and Gulf Railway." Their line was to come to Hillsboro and go on further west.

December 9 following, the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas company completed their line to Hillsboro, and started regular passenger trains February 2, 1888.

The railroad from Dallas to Hillsboro was completed early in January, 1891, connecting with the Missouri, Kansas & Texas. The trains commenced running during the latter part of the month.

May 18, 1891, the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas railroad passed out of the hands of receivers and the name changed to St. Louis & Southwestern railway, and for short is called the "Cotton Belt." Their new depot in Hillsboro cost about \$8,000. It is a fine building, 80 x 36 feet in dimensions, with two waiting-rooms, each 22 x 24 feet. It is located in the western part of the city, just southwest of the "Katy" (Missouri, Kansas & Texas) depot.

But long before the "Cotton Belt" line was built, the Missouri, Kansas & Texas rushed their line from north to south through

the county, through Hillsboro and on to Waco, opening for passenger business on Sunday, April 26, 1881, with four daily trains and a through sleeper to Chicago.

Altogether, the citizens of Hill county raised about \$200,000 for railroads, including right of way and depot grounds. For the Cotton Belt they raised \$15,000, the right of way and depot grounds, and other bonus, the total equaling about \$60,000. For the Dallas branch, the right of way from Milford and depot grounds. For the Missouri, Kansas & Texas, the right of way and depot grounds. The Texas Central, running through Whitney and Aquilla, obtained some local aid; but the branch running through Hubbard, none from the citizens of this county; nor did the Santa Fé, running through the northwestern corner of the county.

January 20, 1887, a ripple of excitement was raised in Hillsboro by a few minutes' visit from the noted Jay Gould, who stepped off the train here, asked many questions regarding railroad matters and some political points, but answered but very few questions.

The foregoing is necessarily a brief sketch of a long career, and although fragmentary, it at least serves its main purpose, namely, to give credit to the principal capitalists who did their duty in bringing railroads into the county.

#### EDUCATIONAL.

The first school in Hill county was taught near Peoria, about 1854, by Judge H. W. Young, now of Hillsboro. During the second session of his school he had about 100 stu-

dents, many of them coming from a distance. But it is interesting to contrast the school facilities of those primitive times with those of the present. In this respect how the times have changed, both in the demands of the age and in the methods of supplying them!

In the first record of an order for a school fund in this county we find the following minute of a proceeding of the county court held in December, 1856: "Ordered that the treasurer of the State of Texas be authorized to pay the treasurer of Hill county or his order, the sum of \$29.92, amount due Hill county under the twelfth and thirteenth sections of the act of January 31, 1854." This appears like a small beginning for so great an institution as the public school system of a county; but there are three very important elements to consider in such connection, viz.: the sparsity of the population, the little appreciation of a scholastic education always held by pioneers in any section of the country, and the great struggle they always have to undergo for a bare living, under precarious circumstances which entail much anxiety over the question whether they can eke out a living at all.

Of course it would be altogether too tedious to mention all the details of educational progress from year to year from the first to date, and we therefore pass to the year 1883, and glance at the statistics of that year:

No. of free school communities organized, white	77
" " " " colored	5
No. of scholastic population	white 3,820
" " " " colored	231
No. of free schools maintained	white 75
" " " " colored	4

Average school term.....days	90
Number of students taught in the different branches:	
Orthography.....	3,075
Reading.....	3,000
Pennmanship.....	1,150
Arithmetic.....	3,450
Geography.....	1,325
Number of teachers who have received certificates of competency:	
1st grade, white male..	20
2d grade, white male..	45
3d grade, white male..	5
Average salary per month, white male.....	\$40.00
" " " white female.....	35.00
" " " colored male.....	45.00
Total amount of school fund expended.....	\$20,643.00

Now look on this picture: According to the last report (1889-90), there were in the county, outside of Hillsboro, Hubbard and Whitney,—which control their own schools independently of the county—ninety-six school districts; 100 white schools were taught and eight colored; eight schools were graded; one is a high school; number of seats (or "sittings") for children—white, 5,855; colored, 160; average school term in months—white, 5; colored, 3.9; number of pupils of scholastic age, white, 4,822; colored, 169; number under scholastic age (under eight years of age) actually enrolled, white, 511; colored, 11; number over scholastic age (sixteen years), white, 698; colored, 1; average daily attendance—white, 2,850; colored, 115; number of pupils of school age who could not read when they entered school—white, 969; colored, 46; number who could not read when they left school—white, 202; colored, 5; number who could not write when they entered—white, 1,545; colored, 81; when they left—white, 447; colored, 30; number who did not under-

stand the four fundamental rules of arithmetic when they entered school—white, 3,292; colored, 120; number who did not when they left—white, 1,947; colored, 86. Number of pupils instructed in geometry, 32; natural philosophy, 88; physiology, 45; civil government, 22; Latin, 6; bookkeeping, 8.

Number of schools visited during the year by the superintendent—white, 90; colored, 6,—one visit to each school. There were ten teachers' institutes held during the year, with an average attendance of twenty teachers.

Number of male teachers holding first-grade certificates, 31, all white; second-grade, 35 white and 4 colored; third-grade, three white; female, first-grade, eleven, white; second grade, 22 white and 2 colored; third-grade, four white and one colored. Number of teachers holding diplomas from colleges, 8; and 2 held diplomas or certificates from Texas normal schools.

During the school year closing August 31, 1891, there were 4 new schoolhouses built, at a total cost of \$1,970; 65 schoolhouses are frame, 1 brick and 1 stone; 67 are for the education of white children and 2 for colored; 60 schoolhouses are reported as in good condition, 5 fair and 2 bad. Total value of public schoolhouses and grounds in the county, white, \$31,470; colored, \$400; value of school furniture and apparatus, \$1,166 white, and \$20 colored. In this regard there has been great improvement.

Total amount paid teachers from the public-school fund, \$27,343.50 for white, and

