public schools.[1] The very name seemed to carry some reproach with it. In fact, until comparatively recent times, the boast of attending a "pay school" was thought to carry with it a mark of certain personal distinction.

For the year 1870-71 a reference to the free schools of the city is made in a letter to the commissioners of New Hanover County by James H. Chadbourn, William T. Carr, and William A. French. They say: "In the first communication you were informed that there were no schoolhouses within the limits of the township belonging to the State or county.

"The committee subsequently, with the approval of the board and the superintendent of public instruction, purchased the Hemenway schoolhouse of Miss Amy M. Bradley for $3,000, with the promise on her part that the money she received from it should be expended in continuing her two schools, then in successful operation.

"The cost of sustaining the Hemenway and Union Schools for the last two years has been $10,850.40—$1,266.70 from the State, $2,500 from the Peabody Fund, $3,000 from the sale of the Hemenway schoolhouse, and the balance, $4,083.70, from the friends of Miss Bradley and her work.

"It seems to the committee that the beneficial influence of these schools for the young of the city can not be overestimated."

The *Wilmington Post* of April 11, 1872, gives an account of a visit at that time of the State superintendent of public instruction, Alexander McIver, to the city of Wilmington. It says: "Mr. McIver comes to the work of educating the masses and the establishment of free schools throughout the State of North Carolina. His desire now is to interest the public in the work. He desires that united effort be made at once, so as to secure some complete system for the successful establishment of free schools in the city of Wilmington, by the city, as provided in its charter amended in 1868."

DECADE OF 1880-1890—ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WILMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

This sketch would not be complete without a reference to the campaign of enlightenment carried on under the direction of the Legislature by Dr. E. A. Alderman and C. D. McIver.

[1]While the public-school system was maintained during the War between the States, because of the results of the war the public schools were closed in 1865-66. In 1867 there was Reconstruction, and there were no public schools until 1872.

They met the teachers in every county in the State and taught them how to teach. They held public meetings and educational rallies. They made eloquent speeches. They urged the people to vote taxes to support schools. Since this notable campaign, educational progress in North Carolina has been easier.

Information with regard to the two free public schools, Union and Hemenway, between 1872 and 1882, is comparatively vague and indefinite. The year 1882, however, marked the beginning of an effective organization with an executive head, whose office was that of superintendent of city public schools, and the system then began to assume a different aspect as a factor in the educational life of the city.

The situation is described by the superintendent himself, Mr. M. C. S. Noble, who was elected to this responsible office in the summer of 1882. Previous to this the authority over the two white and colored districts was vested in the county superintendent. It does not take a vivid imagination to see the situation as it appeared to him at that time. In referring to his first visit to the schools, he says: "I pictured to myself large, imposing buildings, situated in well-kept grounds, when our buggy stopped in deep sand out in front of the old Union School on Sixth Street between Nun and Church, and just in the rear of Fifth Street Methodist Church. It contained three rooms, and had a seating capacity of one hundred and twenty-five pupils. There were three teachers, and the average attendance was one hundred. Lastly, we went to the Hemenway, then situated on the lot directly south of St. Andrew's Church, on Fourth Street. It was a little cottage-looking affair, with four rooms, a seating capacity of about one hundred and fifty pupils, and an average attendance of about one hundred and twenty-five."

The growth of the enterprise is noted by a comparison of this early report with that made by the superintendent of schools for the year 1886: "Number of children in school, white, 2,051; colored, 3,209: total, 5,260. Average monthly enrollment, white, 444; colored, 757: total, 1,201. Average daily attendance, white, 363; colored, 550: total, 913." This report also states that there were at this time 575 white children enrolled in the Tileston Normal School.

The school committees consisted of the following: District No. 1, Donald MacRae, chairman, William M. Parker, Joseph E. Sampson; District No. 2, James H. Chadbourn, chairman, Walker Meares, John G. Norwood.