

S. E. WELCH, JR.

It is almost invariably the case in every community that there is one man who takes the initiative in all matters concerning business progress, and such a one is looked up to as the commercial leader of that community. In Berea this important position is occupied by Mr. S. E. Welch, than whom there is not a more progressive or more enterprising business man in Madison county. Mr. Welch is in every sense of the term a self-made man, and owes the phenomenal success he has achieved to his own indomitable energy, never-failing industry and unwavering perseverance, a combination of sterling qualities that always wins in the race for commercial supremacy. Mr. Welch was born and raised in Scott county, Virginia. When he was fifteen years old, his father died, and since that time he has made his own way in the world, guided solely by his own judgment. He went into the mercantile business at the age of eighteen. Fifteen years ago he moved to Kentucky. Coming to Berea in 1890 he opened a general store in the west end of town in the old Witt store; later he purchased the opposite side and began building nine years ago. He now has a block of six large stores, all exclusively occupied by him, except the Bank, and by close adherence to the rules of strict business integrity he has made an enviable reputation. Mr. Welch occupies a floor space of 1,800 square feet and carries the largest stock of merchandise in Madison county, and enjoys a wonderful patronage; he merits trade by his business methods, always giving the best goods at lowest prices, and to all the same—on such goods as Studobaker wagons, Oliver plows, Ballard's flour and * 5 * shoes he has won his reputation until a competitor can claim no more for his prices than to say, "it is as cheap as you can buy it at Welch's."

In 1896 he erected an elegant residence, which is one of the finest homes in Madison county. Of the six business rooms five are occupied by Mr. Welch. In the first room to the east he has a drug store. After that is the bank, which is the only room in the block not occupied exclusively by Mr. Welch. Then comes a furniture store, warehouse, grocery, and the last large room to the west is occupied by dry goods, shoes and gents' furnishing goods. Mr. Welch is also vice-president of the bank, and owns the electric light plant at Corbin. As he buys in large quantities Mr. Welch is able to set the pace on prices, and enjoys an exceptionally large patronage.