

is worth as much or more than yours and they are paying twenty per cent. duty to cross the line and sell mutton in your market at a profit. A question has been asked about grinding peas. I have not fed peas extensively but I think it would pay to grind the pea crop for sheep.

## PROSPECTS FOR PROFIT IN BEEF.

ALEX A. ARNOLD, Galesville, Wis.



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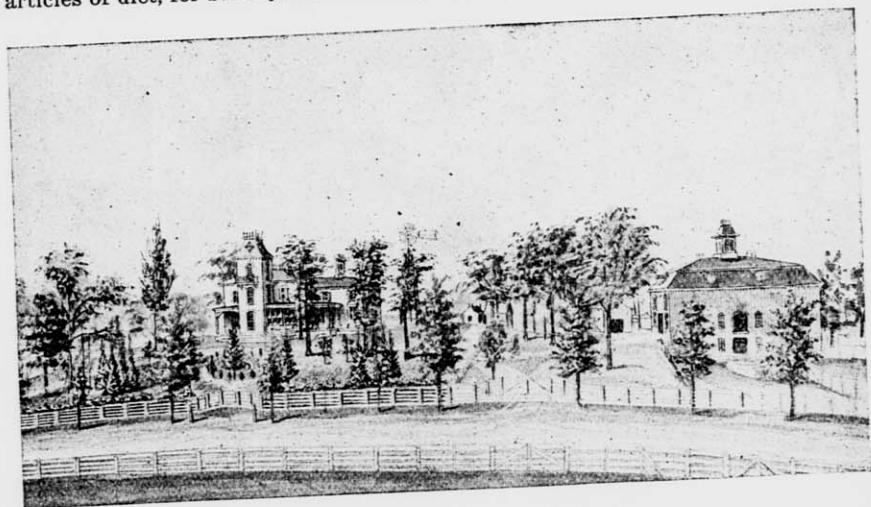
I am limited to "Prospects for Profit in Beef." Experience has proved that "the hind sight is better than the foresight." However there are indications that point to future profits in this branch of farming (to my mind better than in any other), if we wisely avail ourselves of the opportunities.

### Some Important Statistics.

January 1, 1896, there were 16,137,586 cows and 32,086,400 other cattle. January 1, 1897, there were 15,941,717 cows and 30,508,408 other cattle, a decrease in one year of 1,771,860 head, or a decrease of 1.3 per cent. of cows and 4.9 per cent. of other cattle, a heavy decrease of all kinds of cattle, especially so of animals for the block, thus showing that this production is not keeping pace with the consumption. Our population in 1870 was 38,558,371, cattle 25,484,100; in 1880 the population was 50,155,783, cattle 33,258,000; in 1890 the population was 62,622,250, cattle 52,801,907, and in 1897, according to the same rate of increase (about 1,200,000 per year), the population must be about 70,000,000. With an increase yearly in our population of 1,200,000 and a decrease of 1,771,860 of cattle, it is easy to see that the supply is not keeping pace with the demand. Supply decreasing, demand increasing. Were most of these cattle cows the shortage might quickly be supplied, but not as promptly as in the case of the prolific swine. At present there is about one cow for each family of five, and a beef creature (of various ages) for every two persons in our nation, and only cows enough to produce a young animal for every five yearly if all their calves were raised. With a beef ani-

mal for every two of our population, with this number of cattle in our country and plenty of cheap feed, in 1896 and 1897 the yards at the various slaughtering points are comparatively empty and it is easy to see that with a supply of only one beef to every five where we now have one for every two and the population fast increasing, there must from this on indefinitely, be an under supply, therefore beef must run high as compared with other articles of diet, for some years to come.

compared with the cost of production. Prices at retail do not advance in proportion to the advance in the price on foot, in fact the profits in the butcher business seem to be in an inverse ratio,—the cheaper the beef is on foot, the greater the profit; the dearer the beef cattle are the smaller the profit for the money invested, whereas in other lines the retailer expects to make a percentage of profits on the investment proportionate to the wholesale cost. With present inspired confidence



FARM HOME OF A. A. ARNOLD.

There is no reasonable doubt but what there will be the same demand for export as in the past, or that there will be any less demand for beef or veal at home.

**Beef as a Food.**

Beef is recognized as the most healthful and nutritious muscle forming diet, and it is only a matter of financial ability with the people whether there will be an active demand in the future, or not. It is evident now that the only reason why beef is not still higher is that our people are too poor to eat it. Good beef is now worth more than any other product as

I am satisfied that we may safely look forward for better times for the productions of the farm, the mine, and the factory, the prosperity of each tending to the prosperity of all. Therefore we may confidently expect a brisk demand for this most healthful article of food.

There has been a sentiment that the facilities for cattle raising on the range is so great that we cannot much longer make beef at a profit in the states. When we consider that most of the watering places are occupied, and that the croppings on the plains are constantly making them less productive of wild grass, we may not look

for great additions from that quarter, and if a large number of cattle are raised they must come from cultivated farms, that will only increase as more farms are opened. The dairy business must always be safe and generally profitable, and whatever is done in that line is in no way antagonistic to good beef production, but tends to scarcity of the good beef animals, therefore higher prices for the only kind of beef that pays for the making.

#### Breed and Feed for Beef.

To be profitably fed cattle must be intelligently bred. There is little chance for profits from a steer bred from a first class dairy sire and dam. The valuable meats cannot be in the carcass. The tendency to make the butter fat in the milk centralizes in the vitals, and when fattened appears in intestinal and leaf tallow, or in buncy excrescences on the carcass, just the conditions to make them objectionable. The well rounded, fat all over, juicy beef, ripened quickly, having a soft, fluffy touch in the animal, is the kind that pleases the palate of the connoisseur, and there is no use trying to humbug the butcher with any other at long prices.

#### Care of Beef Cattle.

The farmer should seek to build up the frame and muscles of the animal in early life, by exercise, pure air, and

plenty of sunlight, with pure water, proper shelter, and a ration composed largely of protein and minerals. As they grow older more carbonaceous foods may be added, so that at maturity or when finished off they may be fed a wide ration, composed largely of carbonaceous or fat forming elements. For best profits in the future as in the past, the feeder must take advantage of the early life of the animal when it is full of vigor and before the muscles are rigid; this makes the best beef. Finish them off rapidly, and when ripe, market. Profits often come by reason of little expense in the way of labor, food, and shelter, and in this regard the steer feeder has an advantage. The grain fed to a steer is sometimes worth as much as it costs to fertilize the farm. Again the croppings should be left long to insure good fattening grasses, thus keeping the pastures well mulched, nature's best condition to maintain fertility. The farmer who watches both ends of the business,—buys well and sells well,—has gone a long way on the highway to success. With these conditions and considerations future profits may confidently be expected. Buy, breed, feed, care for, and sell well, and a farmer will be happy, and grow to be a broader man, his purse will be wider as the years go by, and when he lets go of his fragment of time, he can leave with no pang of conscience because of giving his brother the dyspepsia.