

**REGARDING THE INSTITUTE.**

By M. L. Matterson.

Editor Ranch: This discussion on the Agricultural College is becoming interesting. At present I shall not express my views on the college at all, but I do want a word about the Farmers' Institutes. I have just read with interest the article by H. L. Blanchard. He says: "In institute matters we are, without a doubt, right up to date." No doubt we are up to date as much as many of the older states, but I think in this state, as well as in many of the older ones, there is room for improvement. Now, I am not finding fault with those who conduct the institutes. They are doing as well as they can under existing circumstances, but I do think the state is at fault in that the circumstances are not what they should be. Excuse me for referring to the state of Minnesota, but having lived in that state many years, and being personally acquainted with her institute workers, I feel that I am justified in so doing. I think that Minnesota has the right plan for the work. The board of regents appoint a superintendent of farmers institutes. He is paid a salary out of a fund appropriated by the state legislature, the balance of which is placed in the hands of the superintendent to be used in the work. He then hires lecturers, makes dates, and conducts the institutes with great success. An advance agent is sent out to secure a hall, advertise the institute, and make all arrangements. And now after about fourteen years work not much advertising is needed to get out a crowd of intelligent farmers and their families. Mr. O. C. Gregg is and always has been the popular superintendent.

The state of Wisconsin having discovered how successfully the Minnesota plan worked, arranged for a similar plan, and put Mr. Geo. McKerrow up for superintendent. Mr. McKerrow had for some time been lecturing in Minnesota on the sheep industry, and is following very closely and successfully the methods pursued by Supt. Gregg.

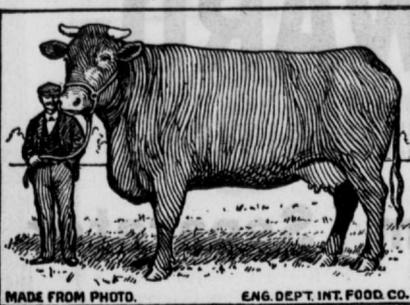
This state should put up money enough so that our institute workers could follow out a similar plan, and it would be but a short time till we would hear no more growling about empty benches at the farmers' institutes; and the men who go out to lecture would be welcomed by large crowds of enthusiastic farmers—not hayseeds.

**OUR INSECT ENEMIES.**

By J. M. Harrison, Skagit County. Nearly all of our crops are infested with insects and often to such an extent that our efforts to secure a satisfactory reward for our labor are often very discouraging. Now that we are through another season it is well to look back and see by what means we have overcome the hosts of insect enemies that seem to be always ready and wide awake when the crop is in a condition to suit them.

Nearly every farmer can give you a sure remedy for some or perhaps all of these pests, but somehow we always have them and every year we get the same old racket through the agricultural press about our insect enemies. I believe Prof. H. S. Packard of Massachusetts is authority for the statement that two hundred millions of dollars are annually lost to agriculture from insects alone. I only intend to speak of one remedy and it is one that

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applies to our orchards and all of our crops. It is not one of the sure remedies, but I can assure you that it is one of the best ways to combat all the hordes of creeping, climbing and flying insects known to man. There's "millions in it," and all the insecticides in creation are not half so effective. Of course if a man had insects on him he would want an insecticide. The same is true of his crop. My experience has taught me that we want the soil in the best possible condition for the growth of the crop. The right preparation and fertilization of the ground and the right application of good seed at the right time and in the right quantity are worth more than a standing army of insect destroyers with poisons and pumps, to say nothing of the loathsome job. It is true that insects come at times on certain crops in numbers beyond all our foresight, but this is the exception and not the rule—the rule being that a crop properly put in and attended is a certainty; but without these necessary conditions the crop is uncertain, let the insects be fought as they may. I know of orchards where the trees are in a condition of semi-starvation and these trees are the breeding places for insects, and spraying is useless unless the soil is put in such a condition that the trees or the crop may grow beyond the ability of its enemies to destroy. The great reliance should be on the fertility of the soil and the thrift of the plant or tree. This is the one great remedy for every variety of enemy.

Fletcher M. Bird, who until recently has been a resident of Wenatchee valley, has established a commission house at 2017 First avenue, Seattle. He says that he is here to stay, to grow with the town and the country, and that he proposes to build up his business by honest dealing and fair treatment. He solicits consignments from farmers throughout the state. His advertisement appears in this issue.

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