

Letter from Lenoir County

[*The Progressive Farmer*, March 31, 1896]

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer
Kinston, N.C.

I congratulate the National Farmer's Alliance and Industrial Union for adopting *The Progressive Farmer* as their National organ. They could not have made a better selection in the United States. It has always been true to our principles and I hope it will ever be true in the future. Its columns are open for an honest and fair discussion of all questions pertaining to the reform movement—hence no reformer ought to do without it.

Yes, a little over one year ago—Kinston, a beautiful city by the happy Neuse, was nearly destroyed by fire, burning up at least \$250,000 worth of property. Evidence was procured in court to the effect that Democrats had something to do with the burning of the town—for which a Democratic Judge banished them forever from the State of North Carolina, and if either one of them is ever found in this State again they will go to the penitentiary, one for ten years and the others for forty years, hence we will have four Democratic votes less in Lenoir County this year than in 1894.

John Cleveland and Grover Sherman, with others to help them, have destroyed millions upon millions of property and according to Judge Clark, the farmers of the South in cotton alone, have lost \$210,00,000 during the year 1895. Evidence can be produced in the court (if we only had the court) to prove them guilty of crimes against God and their fellow man too great to go unpunished and ought to be banished forever from the United States to St. Helena or some unknown island of the sea, and there die without friends, and with the full satisfaction of knowing that they have committed the greatest crimes of this or any other age.

I see a great deal is being said just now about cooperation or fusion with the Republicans this year. I wish to have my say along this line. We must come together as brethren and not say hard things about Bro. Butler, Bro. Kestler, Bro. Green, Bro. Rowland, or any other brother because they differ from us about this very great and all important question. The way for us to do is to understand each other better, is to express our thoughts freely along the line of cooperation. We must weigh every question looking to fusion and make no mistakes—if we do make mistakes the enemy will have us sure.

I cannot believe brother Butler wants to organize a new party until our party proves false to our cause. Brother Butler says he will vote for no man for president who is not a free silver man—Mr. Democrat and Mr. Republican will you do the same thing? He, knowing at the same time that the National Democratic Convention will put up a gold bug for the presidency and that the People's party will put up a free silver man for the presidency, hence Mr. Butler, like all free silver men in deed and in truth will have to vote the People's party National ticket. This no-partisan talk is all right in its place and it will do good in the way of getting old Republicans and Democrats to take off their partisan coat and put on a little common sense.

Yes, we are willing to fuse if we can fuse on principle, but we will never fuse with a gold bug (knowingly). We fused in 1894 on the county and State tickets, and elected two United States Senators—neither of whom are gold bugs. One hundred and fifty thousand men in North Carolina endorsed the above fusion. So far so good. Now let us fuse on the above endorsed fusion.

Now comes the question about fusion on our electoral ticket. The way for the People's party to do is to put up eleven People's party free silver electors and then ask not only Republicans but Democrats, Prohibitionists, and in fact all men of all political faith to help us elect them. That will make a home for all silver men in the gold bug parties. With such a fusion as the above, Bro. Kestler, and in fact all People's party speakers can face the devil and the gold bug parties on the hustings [sic] with a clear conscience and sword of truth in hand and in November next march up with great victory for our cause. If the gold bug party or wing of the Republican party in North Carolina will not fuse with us as above stated, then let them and the Democrats put up their gold bug electors making three electoral tickets in the field—two gold bug electoral tickets and one silver electoral ticket.

Now, fellow People's party men of North Carolina, in this case the gold bugs will divide their votes and they will have to have two votes to our one to be with us in November, and if they don't have that many then we will elect eleven electors to cast their votes for a free silver man for president of the United States from North Carolina in November, 1896.

Brother Kestler, take back part of your letter and let us fuse for principle and not for office, and we will get there Eli, sure, because there are more silver voters in North Carolina than gold bug voters, therefore we will beat them at least two to one.

Lenoir county will indorse such a fusion as the above, but we will never consent to fuse with a gold bug.

Yours for the fight,
E.P. Hauser.