

Matthews N.C Dec 30th 1895

Hon. Elias Carr.

Knowing you to have been a strong Alliance man and deeply interested in every thing pertaining to agriculture & the interest and welfare of the Agricultural Club, more by way of inquiry than any thing else, I venture to drop you a line. I suppose that no class of our people have more keenly felt the depression of the past year or two than the farmers. The amount of crop seems to make but little difference the price is low if a large crop it does not pay cost, if a small one scarcely more than cost. When farmers complain of scarcity of money, political papers tell us to make something to sell & when we do so & get nothing for it they tell us we make too much. mighty poor comfort this

Now I want to know if this sort of
thing is to continue always, there
seems to be no relief so far as the
government is concerned. The signs are
in my judgment for a perpetuation or
rather a worse condition. Trusts &
Combines ride rough shod over us
and there seems to be no power or at
least no disposition to check or stop it.
Now is it true that farmers daily set
the table at which the world eats &
yet the world must eat & pay what it
pleases, in other words the necessities of
the world comes from the farmer. He
furnishes the bread & meat, the milk
& butter, the Eggs & poultry, for the table
and the cotton that keeps the
spindles of the world moving &
yet over the price of these things
has no more control than the
man in the moon

No other class of men act thus.
If a farmer buys anything the price
is fixed if he sells the price is also fixed
but not by him. It seems to me that a
farmer is as much entitled to a profit on
what he has invested as a merchant
or any one else. I know we are told
that supply and demand regulates
every thing, but in my humble opinion
this law cuts but a small figure in
regulating prices to day if it did it seems
to me that cotton being eight or ten cents
to day would be worth that tomorrow
or next week, but certain reports going
out futures drop & down goes spot cotton
regardless of supply & d. Now it seems to
me that farmers to some extent at least
complain if they would repress their
grievances one thing is certain they need
not expect any body else to do it

The Alliance as originally organized I think was a good institution but unfortunately drifted away from the original intent and it seems to me that an organization (purely business) might be perfected that would accomplish the desired end. Something in the nature of a Trust. While I am opposed to Trusts yet we are told that the devil must be fought with fire. I do not advocate a Trust but it seems to me that we might learn something from the various trusts now in operation & I would be very glad to see a meeting of a few farmers from different parts of the State to consider, discuss & discuss the situation and see if any feasible plan can be devised. All this may be merely a dream with me but if so it has been the dream of my life. It may be a mere figment

of imagination but so vivid is it that I can not shake it off. It does seem to me that the very idea of farmers supplying the necessities of the world & in no wise controlling the price is an absurdity to say the least of it. I know not what your Excellency may think of an effort to re-organize on a different basis. I am constrained to think that good might grow out of it. Now Gov. please pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing you this long rambling communication and if you can find the time and consider the matter I have hinted at worthy your attention I assure you I would be very glad to hear from you & have your views. With great respect & esteem.

Yours truly,
J. Sol Reid