

Going South In The Winter

By AMMON HENNACY

Fairhope Single Tax Colony

Here where the KKK tried to run me out in 1924 when I taught at the progressive Organic School because I had AMERICA for my history classes, along with the DAILY WORKER, the ARMY and NAVY JOURNAL, the WALL STREET JOURNAL, the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, the NATION, the Milwaukee LEADER, and FREEDOM the anarchist paper, I stayed at the home of Cornie Gaston, secretary of the Single Tax Corporation and son of the founder. The Organic School has fallen upon evil days with the death of the founder and is not much better than ordinary schools. Here it was in 1934 when my daughter Sharon at the age of 5 in kindergarten stood aside with folded arms and refused to march with broomsticks with the other children. "Are you sick, little girl?" the teacher asked. "I'm Science, I don't get sick," was Sharon's reply. "Then why don't you play that game?" the teacher queried. "'Cause it's a gun game." "We don't have any guns," said the teacher. "That's 'cause you can't find them. If you could find them you would have them; you have broom sticks instead," Sharon answered. She did not pout but played the next game.

This community was founded in 1894 and along with Arden, Del., which I plan to visit in June these two Single Tax colonies have outlived scores of dissident radical colonies. From their leaflet, I quote: "Under the Single Tax the government, not the land holder, is entitled to that portion that is now paid to the so-called 'owners' of land, as rent. Ownership is a term that can be properly applied only to those things that come into existence as a result of man's labor applied to land. Land, by its nature, and by reason of man's necessity to use it must be treated as common property so far as rent is concerned, if justice is to prevail . . . Since much of that which results from man's labor on the land cannot be separated from the land upon which it is produced, it follows, that to have for himself the full ownership, of that which he has produced he must have exclusive title to the land involved in the production. To prevent such exclusive title from constituting a denial of the equal rights of all others the single tax requires the holder of such title to pay into a common fund, for the equal benefit of all, an annual rent (single tax) equal to the value of the special privilege of exclusive title to the land. This value . . . is measured by the market value set by those who want land to use at its fullest productive capacity. This makes it unprofitable to hold land out of use or for inferior uses."

While Tolstoy and many anarchists think well of Henry George, the founder of Single Tax, and many Single Taxers are cordial to anarchists, it remains that Single Taxers believe in government. Neither of us are conquering the world but we can get cordial while trying to do so.

I had a visit with Reuben Rockwell and wife, Quakers, who had been to a colony in Costa Rica. Their son is down there now. I also met Alexis Ferm, age 90, whom my wife and I met at the anarchist Stelton school in New Jersey in 1920. If I am as hearty and clear of skin at his age I will be happy. He has written some of the clearest thoughts on education ever written.

I am now on my way to speak to colleges in Mississippi and Louisiana, across Texas to New Mexico to see my daughter Carmen and the good Medical Sisters in Santa Fe, and then the good Hopi.