

THE NEW YORK STATE HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST.

THE WINNING ESSAYS.

The New York State Single Tax League a few months ago, in order to stimulate the interest of young people throughout the State in the Single Tax, offered the following prizes to New York State High School pupils for the best essays on "The Philosophy of Henry George:" First prize, \$50; second prize, \$30; third prize, \$20.; five prizes of ten dollars, and ten prizes of five dollars.

Scores of essays were submitted. They were examined by a number of professional readers, and from them were selected eight essays to be submitted to the following judges:

Amelia E. Barr, Novelist; Dr. Frederick C. Howe, Director of Peoples Institute, Investigator of the Committee on School Inquiry, N. Y., Author, "Privilege and Democracy in America"—"The City, the Hope of Democracy," etc.; Henry M. Leipziger, Ph.D., Supervisor of lectures, Board of Education, N. Y.; Dr. Walter Mendelson, Alumni Trustee, Columbia University; Hon. John J. Murphy, Commissioner, Tenement House Department, New York City, Author of "Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin"; Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Poet and Essayist.

When the judges rendered their decisions there was no unanimity of agreement, nor anything approaching it. The difficulty of their task was indicated by Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who wrote the committee: "All these essays are remarkably good. It is extremely hard to make a selection of the three best."

Thus it was necessary for the committee to strike a balance, and this was done by adding the favorable points in the decisions rendered to the credit of each contestant, with the result that the award now stands finally as follows: First prize, Malcolm F. Orton, Elmhurst, L. I., N. Y. Second prize, Eleanor E. Dunn, Ward's Lane, Albany, N. Y. Third prize, Francis Thornton Kimball, Brooklyn, N. Y. Prizes of ten dollars each were awarded to the following contestants: Weber App, Cleveland, N. Y.; Samuel S. Rabinowitz, N. Y. City; Mazzini S. Lapolla, N. Y. City; Edward O'Toole, Jr., Ossining, N. Y.; and Miss Marion McNeil Knowles, Lockport, N. Y.

Prizes of five dollars each were awarded to the following contestants: W. Stull Holt, Boys High school, Brooklyn, N. Y., Principal, Dr. James S. Sullivan; Lloyd Ring Coleman, State Normal School, Brockport, N. Y., Principal, Alfred C. Thompson; Ruth Paterson, High School, Schenectady, N. Y., Principal, E. R. Whitney; Helen E. Bullard, Schuylerville High School, Schuylerville, N. Y., Principal, W. G. Cruikshank; Allen L. Gillett, Shortsville High School, Shortsville, N. Y., Principal, Harry M. Fisher; Dorothy

F. Dodez, Richmond Hill High School, Richmond Hill, N. Y., Principal, Isaac N. Taylor; Channing H. Morrill, Richmond Hill High School, Richmond Hill, N. Y., Principal, Isaac N. Taylor.

It was impossible to select from the remaining essays three that stood out in order of merit for the three prizes of five dollars that were left of the ten offered, so it was agreed that the great number of unsuccessful contestants should receive a cloth bound copy of "Progress and Poverty" as a slight recognition of effort on the part of the pupils.

The eight winning essays follow. Our readers shall judge of their merit. To us they seem remarkable juvenile compositions. All would do credit to maturer minds. What is chiefly noticeable is the grasp of the moral principles involved. The essay of Miss Dunn is conspicuous by reason of its fine simplicity and restraint. Edward O'Toole, Jr., falls into an error which may have influenced the judges in refusing him a place among the first three. The error is contained in the sentence which says: "The remedy proposed by Henry George is government ownership of land." This error is partly atoned for by the perfectly accurate reasoning that follows.

All these youthful contestants assert that they have received no aid in the preparation of these essays beyond the reading of books recommended by their teachers.

One of the best and most original essays submitted, that of W. Stull Holt, does not figure among the first eight because its author has not confined himself to the subject, which is "The Philosophy of Henry George."

It should be said that the order of the five essays winning ten dollars each as they are printed here is no indication of their order of merit as decided by the judges. Some of the latter confess that the last printed might just as appropriately have led the list.

These youthful minds whose bright faces look out at us from the pages of the frontispiece of this issue, have reason to be proud of their work. They are more fortunate than the boys and girls who have not had the blessed privilege of being introduced to the shining truth that clarifies thought and gives new breadth and meaning to life. One of the contestants, Mazzini Savino Lapolla, has expressed this in a letter which is as good as his essay, excellent as that is, and which is well worth printing here. Young Mr. Lapolla says.

"Allow me to offer my thanks to the committee, or rather to the League, for the enjoyable time I spent this summer reading through Henry George's works. Not only has the reading opened my eyes more to the condition of affairs surrounding us and the problems that are facing the world, but it has broadened my mind and made me to a great extent a lover of economic subjects. There is one thing I will preserve all my life: though I may not be materially rewarded by participating in this contest, yet I feel that the ideas that are so passionately embodied in "Progress and Poverty" will never leave me. And though there should come no other reward than this, I consider it the greatest of all."