

consummated." But, as in the case with previous Acts, Congress had incorporated into the Homestead Act provisions which almost negated the original intent of the Act and opened the way for abuse and fraudulent practices. Speculation was channelled in a new direction. "Town jobbing"—the promotion of town sites—became the most lucrative pastime of the speculator.

Every phase of America's land history is covered: the disposal of the lands of the Louisiana Purchase, land grants to railways and canal companies, stories of those who engineered land deals and of those who fought them. We read of Edwin Burgess, George Evans, and Gerrit Smith, earlier and lesser known representatives in the stream of libertarian radicalism in America which reached full tide with Henry George.

## If Land Could Speak

Miss V. G. PETERSON reports on the Film Script Competition

LESLIE J. HUBBARD of London, is the winner of the first prize of \$250 in the Motion Picture Ideas' Contest announced by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation in the March issue of *Land & Liberty* and in the *Henry George News*. Described by the judges as "a novel and an excellent idea," Mr. Hubbard's "I am an Acre of Ground," tells the story of a piece of land, from its creation to the time it stands as a gaping empty lot in the heart of a teeming city where the earth is "sold by the foot and measured to the very inch."

Mr. Hubbard, a member of the Henry George School, London, and a contributor to the School's monthly magazine, says he has been active in Henry George work since early 1948. At that time a leaflet about the School was handed him as he entered Central Hall, Westminster, to attend a Union mass meeting. He joined Mr. V. H. Blundell's discussion courses and, to use his own words, "was soon convinced of the force and logic of Henry George's proposals."

The second prize of \$100 was awarded to OSCAR B. JOHANNSEN of Roselle Park, New Jersey. In fashioning his script on *Progress and Poverty*, Mr. Johannsen made excellent use of the point so graphically demonstrated by Henry George, that under our present system, individual prosperity is by no means a necessary product of technical advance. The Johannsens, who are jointly active in the School's work in Newark, made the contest a family project, with both Mr. and Mrs. submitting individual entries.

A Dane, PETER USSING OLSEN, of Copenhagen, carried off the third prize of \$50 for his entry titled "The Land for the People." This script had real dramatic values and, as one might suspect, was keyed to the theme of man's dependence on the land. Mr. Olsen, an ardent and active Georgeist, is president of the "Youth for Danmark's Retsforbund" (Young People's Justice Party)

The chapters on disposal of forest and mineral lands seem inadequate, though the material on the oil lease system is good. Sakolski has also dealt with the question of farm tenancy and modern federal farm-credit policies, and given a short history of the rise of urban land values.

The sketchiness of the later chapters is a little disappointing, but an excellent bibliography and frequent notes direct the reader to further sources of information on every point. The shortcomings of the book, such as they are, may be attributed to the fact that Mr. Sakolski died when his manuscript was scarcely completed, and we can be thankful that his record of the American past, with its promise and its mistaken paths, is so complete. There are still countries that have undeveloped frontiers, and for them it is not too late to learn from the American experience.

In the "best single ideas" category, there were five awards, each one for twenty dollars. Cheques have been posted to W. HARTLEY BOLTON, of Dorchester, and VICTOR G. SALDJI, of London, England; HENRY J. FOLEY, of Jamaica, N.Y.; MRS. ADELA K. TOMFOHR, of Kalispell, Montana; and GEORGE WIESNER, of New York City.

Selected for honourable mention, and therefore scheduled to receive a copy of the Foundation's current book, *Land Tenure and Land Taxation in America*, by Aaron M. Sakolski (publication date, October 21, 1957) are: WALTER RYBECK, Dayton, Ohio; EMIL NELSON, Park Forest, Illinois; SIDNEY KASS, Bronx, N.Y.; MABEL L. REES, Brooklyn, N.Y.; and W. H. PITT, of Bayswater, Australia. For these good friends, we prophesy many hours of the most absorbing and profitable reading.

The contest, which was kept open for four months, produced twenty-four scripts and many times that number of valuable and original ideas. It was, as the geographical distribution of prizes showed, an international effort with entries from England, Denmark, Canada, and Australia, as well as many parts of the United States.

The Judges were SIDNEY MAYOR and ANTHONY D'ELIA. These men were admirably qualified to undertake this labour of love, not only as faculty members of the Henry George School in New York, but by virtue of their professional status in the field of 16 mm. documentary films. It was an arduous and time-consuming task, ably and conscientiously performed, and the Foundation was, indeed, fortunate to enlist their voluntary services. To them, a heartfelt vote of thanks.

When the final script for our forthcoming documentary film on Henry George's principles is written, it must, of necessity, be the work of a professional. To such a person, the treasure chest of ideas and materials produced by our Contest, should prove invaluable. So, to those who seek to know whether the effort was worth while, our answer in a resounding "YES!"