

THE OREGON STATE EMPLOYEE

Oregon State Employee is a new publication so ably edited and so filled with real merit that it may weld opinion of state employees into such an effective pressure on the 1945 legislature that it will succumb to the demand for a state civil service law designed to protect present state employees in what they may deem to be a vested interest. Mistakenly, or perhaps by design not recognized by members having no direct interest in favoring a state employee, League of Women Voters has given its tremendous support to such a bill in past sessions. The League is too fine a body to permit itself to be used as a stooge for a pressure group seeking an unfair advantage. There is so much genuine merit in civil service reform, especially as against the spoils system, that it is easy to rally support for a special interest bill that is anything but a reform. We have been evolving a merit system in practice in state employment in Oregon; the practice on the whole has been excellent and is improving and expanding; its further development could be furthered by the right kind of statute and its administration, but to enact the kind of a bill which has been promoted heretofore would be worse than a step backward; it would be freezing state employment into a pattern from which even a spoils system might be welcomed as relief. Aside from this one possible notivation, may we compliment the editors of *Oregon State Employee* for issuing a first class, helpful, constructive magazine that is worth reading from cover to cover.

—*Oregon Voter*, Sept. 16, 1944

“The success or failure of democracy depends on its administration by human being.”

Money in the Pot

The state tax commission in its computations of a tax discount for next year, which it fixed at 30 per cent on income and corporation excise taxes, had to do some unusual figuring or the discount would have been 40 per cent. This was because it found itself with too much money, a very rare condition in the history of Oregon's treasury. Not only would the commission have had to increase the discount by ten per cent, but the state would have lost the six per cent markup for the current fiscal year, in its tax base.

The device by which the commission avoided making the extra ten per cent discount on income taxes and avoided a stationary tax base for the current year was by invoking the provision of the law (L. 1941, c. 440, sec. 19) which authorizes the commission in preparing its statement for the tax levy to include

when such apportionment is made on the assessment of an even year, such additional amount or amounts as the governor may deem necessary to meet the expenses of the state for the fiscal year.

This is an old provision of the statute, though prior to 1941 the authority was vested in the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. So far as is recalled the provision has never before been used, for the reason that it always took the full six per cent increase to cover the legislative appropriations.

The 1943 legislature appropriated more than enough money to absorb the six per cent increase allowed under the constitution, but two things occurred to throw the accounts off balance. First, the increase in miscellaneous receipts last year, over estimates, which amounted to \$1,133,966.51, mostly in increased collections under the inheritance tax; and second, reversions of un-

(Continued on page 6)