

ence and length of service; hours, wages and working conditions on a parity with industry and other states and equality between departments; equal pay for equal work; a 5-day, 40-hour work week; pay for overtime; standardization of holidays and rest periods; better protection of employees subject to traffic hazards; regular dates for pay checks; more liberal vacation and sick leave allowance; adjustment of wages on a cost of living basis; paycheck deduction records; more delegates to the Council; hiring of extra help for headquarters office; selection of an emblem; provide for group life insurance; extend hospital coverage to families; increase salaries of appointive and elective officials; two pay days a month for all; credit for all prior service under Retirement Act; amend 48-hour law to make it equal for all employees; retirement after 30 years service even before reaching 65 years of age; top salary in pay schedule after five years of service; 30 percent pay increase. Probably there were a few others which might have been inadvertently omitted.

The above list appears to be a considerable number of aims and objectives for a specific program. It reads like a big job for a *young* association which even now does not claim 50 percent of state employees in its membership. As individuals, we would feel lost if we tried to get even *one* of those aims put into effect!

#### What Happened in 1945?

The OSEA started out in 1943 with a few hundred members and \$272 to tackle a big job! How did they do? To quote a now-famous expression, "Let's look at the record!"

In 1943, *before* the OSEA, the two first objectives, Civil Service and the Retirement Act, were defeated in the legislature. During 1943 and 1944, we increased our membership by the diligent efforts of a few. We cooperated actively with the League of Oregon Cities and the Oregon League of Women Voters. We hired a legal council

and an executive secretary and obtained cooperation from the Budget Director, state officials and members of the legislature. Then, in 1945 *both* bills became laws. That is a remarkable accomplishment and speaks well for unity of purpose and the judgment of our OSEA administrators. The OSEA, though young and small in membership had won its first two highly important objectives. We had fashioned the tools by which most of our other expressed aims can be realized.

#### Oregon Civil Service Act

One hears some criticism of the Oregon Civil Service Act, from some administrative officials, from the public and (almost unbelievably) from some state employees. Just a few comments may help us to better understand its merits and what it promises to each person under its coverage. The purpose of the Act is "to establish a merit system of personnel administration . . ." Everything in the Act and everything in its administration is to be pointed up in the expression "a *merit* system." Surely, no one can take serious exception to that basic idea! The Oregon Civil Service Act is recognized as one of the best such laws by those who know personnel administration. It is a good tool, capable of performing a service to all.

We all know there are some existing faults in our present system of personnel administration. Many of us have real grievances. We also know that some department heads are not fully cooperative in making the Act as effective as it should be. While recognizing present evils, lack of interest and severe criticism, I want to impress upon every reader this thought: A GOOD TOOL MERITS A SKILLED USER. To me that means (1) the Civil Service Act has a good purpose; (2) if properly administered and supported it can be of value to *all*; (3) the administrators and participants must have faith in its ultimate value; (4) *all* should appreciate their individual responsibilities to encourage those things which