

despite the personnel turnover of some 6,000 employees per year in the State's service. Many new employees voluntarily join up and support the OSEA aims. Every employee would be a member if he realized the full value of the Association and its ability to represent him through its self-governing organization. In 1947, the Civil Service Act and Retirement Act were strengthened by legislative action and new defenders for them were found. Our friends and our enemies were becoming better known and the public was becoming aware of our existence and of our purpose to improve public service through increased efficiency, economical administration and a true appreciation of the worth of the individual employee.

The State's highest officials, elective and otherwise, began to better appreciate the value of employee consideration and the increased efficiency that proper personnel relations inevitably bring. Administrative policies now consider personal factors that were previously ignored. Administrators are now thought of by their employees as being at least tinged with humanitarian interests. A mutual regard and fellowship is being created in the service, a spirit of good-will and appreciation is being fostered. The morale of the employee is being lifted and efficiency is being increased.

Employees Services Better Rewarded

Since 1943 there has been a steady betterment in the wage scales of State employees. The OSEA recognized in 1943 what is now a widely accepted fact; namely, that it is not possible to hold efficient employees in State service at rates of pay materially below the value of the service expected. As an employer, the State has many competitors and a parity wage is therefore essential to gain new employees and to keep trained people in service. The State's minimum wage is now \$150 per month (including the present \$20 temporary increase), which of course is much better than its previous rates of \$85 to \$100 or less. Even though this minimum shows considerable increase yet it is a small amount, after taxes and other compulsory deductions with

which to support a single person; let alone one who has dependents.

We have gained uniformity of vacation and sick leave benefits, and although they are not as liberal as many private industries provide, yet they are better than in times past. We have a fair chance, now, of receiving retirement benefits from State funds contributed to partially match our own. True, the retirement pensions do not compare with the liberality of industrial plans, California's plan nor many others; but what little is now provided under our Retirement Act is more than was even dreamed of prior to 1943.

Some improvement has been made in the last five years in employee's working conditions, in fact more progress than in the preceding 20 years. These include the abolishing of the 72-hour and more work week in our institutions, the recognition of the principle of overtime pay, the obligation to provide decent working conditions of proper light, air, sanitation and safety. Of course, everyone knows the State is still burdened with crowded quarters, improper office lighting, poor ventilation and inadequate facilities and equipment; but conditions are better than they were and promise is held out of continued improvements. It is questionable as to how many of our present improved practices would have been realized if there had been no employees organization!

The OSEA has been active in helping improve State service by calling attention to conditions which hold back efficiency. Their aims have not been selfish. To build properly, one starts with a good foundation; and the foundation of good public service is a well-trained, faithful, loyal and properly respected employee in every State job. Everyone has known how to build that kind of service, but until lately there did not seem to be very many who were willing to cooperate with the employee in bringing this desirable condition into existence.

What of the Future?

Now that the State, as an employer and as a provider of service to its people, is awake to its responsibilities,