

# *The Fellowship of Mankind:*

## *OSEA Member Lives Internationally*

By Elizabeth Dotson

Hello again, OSEA members. I thought often of the Association while I was in New York City last winter. Frequent newspaper clippings from my friends and family kept me well posted on the Association and Oregon legislative activities. News I read about Governor Dewey's budget struggle with the N.Y. legislature had a familiar ring. I worked part time for several months in one of the Bronx branches of the New York Public Library. Again I heard familiar talk of budgets and wages. And you may be sure I let people know what the OSEA is doing for Oregon State Employees.

Living in New York City, with its infinite variations on the human theme, was to me an exciting and stimulating experience. I loved the city . . . touched by the cultures of people from all over the world, offering me years of new experiences, and surprising me with unexpected beauty. And there is great beauty in New York City . . . the greater, perhaps, by its contrast with the crowded subways and the coal soot and the hurry and the poverty.

A student usually lives much apart from the real life of a city. That is why I was glad to be able to work in the branch library. I had a chance to struggle with the buses, and the bus drivers, on my way to the Bronx just like a "native" going to work. I had an opportunity to meet a cross section of adults and children who called at the library for books. I especially enjoyed working in the Children's Room, where the Murphys and the Flannigans tried to help orient the Spanish-speaking Gonzales from Puerto Rico. They were eager children, all tugging at your elbows at once saying, "Miss! Miss, what's a good book about horses?" "Miss, our teacher told us to look up about bees."

When I try to write about New

York, I am instantly confronted with a rush of thoughts I wish to express. I want to say something about the green meadows of Central Park among the towering apartment houses. I want to mention the luxurious beauty of Fifth Avenue at Christmas time. I can hardly bear not to include the fairy-land appearance of lower Manhattan skyscrapers from the Staten Island ferry on a hazy evening . . . or the tremendously impressive dinosaurs in the Natural History Museum . . . or the treasures of ancient Egypt at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. And it's hard to overlook the Sunday church music in the courtyard of the medieval monastery in Fort Tryon Park.

Rose colored glasses? Well, maybe, but I don't think so. If you have your eyes open, and your mind, you can't fail to see the plight of the men and women who lean far out of their tenement windows straining to get a little fresh air and sunlight . . . or a cool breeze in summer. You can't overlook the sadness of children who play on the sidewalks and dig in the garbage cans (on the front sidewalks) for amusement. It is not surprising to me that many children from New York's crowded areas become warped. But it is surprising and encouraging to observe how many of them develop into honest and kindly individuals.

On the positive side of human relations you find new housing projects to replace the horror and ugliness of tenements. I saw no "White trade only" signs in restaurants outside of Harlem. We worked in the library beside Negro librarians without objection from the staff or complaint from the public we served. I do not mean that there is no prejudice. There is much prejudice that is cruel and heartless. But there is also cooperation and understanding that is expressed in daily living.

But most of all, I'd like to tell you