

PSYCHOLOGY—SOCIOLOGY

# Best Cities Distinguished By Dentists, Not Clergymen

## Communities Differ Enormously in "Goodness of Life"; Church Membership Found in Inverse Proportion

**P**REACHERS and church members are most numerous where "general goodness of life for good people" is at low ebb, it is shown by a three-year survey of American cities conducted by Dr. Edward L. Thorndike, prominent educational psychologist of Teachers College, Columbia University.

Measuring the G of cities (which stands for goodness, not godliness), Dr. Thorndike found that dentists, not clergymen, are characteristic of the best cities. Good cities have an abundance of artists, engineers, musicians, nurses and teachers. They have few lawyers, actors, veterinarians, and domestic servants.

Dr. Thorndike's G ratings of cities are made public in his new book "Your City," (Harcourt, Brace, and Company).

Church membership Dr. Thorndike found to be in inverse relation to this rating of general goodness of life. These impersonal ratings raise challenging questions, he declared.

"What are the churches doing with their prestige and power if they are neither helping the health and education and recreation of a community nor improving the personal qualities of its residents?" is one of these questions.

Communities with the largest percentage of church members, he found, are below average in good reading, home ownership and continuance in school, and have more than their share of illiterates and child labor.

Church membership is, however, antagonistic to homicide, deaths from ve-

neral diseases and illegitimate births.

"Unless the better communities under-report their church membership or the worse communities over-report theirs, we must suspect that the churches are clubs of estimable people and maintainers of traditional rites and ceremonies rather than powerful forces for human betterment," Dr. Thorndike concluded.

Dr. Thorndike's G Rating was based on a very wide variety of facts, including illiteracy and crime statistics, circulation of books from the public library, ownership of automobiles and radios, death rates from appendicitis and syphilis, salaries of policemen and teachers, value of city property in schools, parks, and so on, child labor, cost of living and even the price of permanent waves.

Cities in the United States differ enormously, Dr. Thorndike found. The chance that a baby will die within a year after it is born is four times as great in some of the cities as it is in others. The probability that a little girl of 10 to 14 years old will be working for a wage was over 50 times as great in 1930 in some cities as in others. Some cities spend 40 times as much per person for parks and recreation as do others.

A city can absorb foreign-born immigrants without damage, Dr. Thorndike found. If it attracts the abler and better of them, there will be a notable benefit, he said. But a high percentage of Negro families is a bad sign.

"It is wasteful and dangerous, as well as cruel," declared Dr. Thorndike, "to

maintain Ghettos, black belts, Chinatowns, and the like in space or in thought, as regions of inferiority, hopelessness, and neglect. Social stratification is probably unavoidable, and may be desirable, but it should be related to abilities and interests rather than to the pigment in one's skin or the church to which his parents belonged."

The ways in which people spend their money Dr. Thorndike found to be significant in relation to the goodness of their city. The cities which spend for tobacco are very much better than those which spend for drugs, and in this Dr. Thorndike finds a warning for the Puritanic.

"There is some psychological evidence," he said, "that most human beings must be allowed a certain amount of self-indulgence, and that the normal problem is to gratify it in reasonable and relatively innocent ways. Of the proverbial trio, for example, song would then be recommended."

Good cities, he found, have a slight tendency to buy from chain stores rather than single stores.

Membership in Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs is no index to the best in city life.

"Large membership in them," Dr. Thorndike said, "is a symptom of a community of good people with low incomes, and of average total welfare."

## "G" Ratings For Cities

"G" (goodness of living) ratings for cities over 30,000 population are shown in the following table compiled by Dr. Edward L. Thorndike of Teachers College, Columbia University. The higher the score the better the conditions for the total population. Southern cities would score higher if conditions for the white population only were rated:

62	Pasadena
58	Montclair, Cleveland Heights
57	Berkeley, Brookline
53	Evanston, Oak Park
55	Glendale, Santa Barbara, White Plains
54	Santa Monica
53	Long Beach, Lakewood
52	Alameda, Newton, New Rochelle, East Cleveland
51	Oakland, San Jose, East Orange
50	Los Angeles, Santa Ana, Colorado Springs, Mount Vernon.
49	San Diego, Springfield (Mass.)
48	Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Minneapolis, Plainfield.
47	Fresno, Bloomfield, Rochester, Seattle, Madison.
46	Stockton, Arlington, Medford, Quincy (Mass.), Battle Creek, Highland Park, Duluth.
45	Sacramento, San Francisco, Hartford, Berwyn, Waukegan, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Lincoln, Schenectady, Mansfield, Portland (Ore.), Spokane, Racine.
44	Denver, Rockford, Fort Wayne, Topeka, Boston, Watertown (Mass.), Dearborn, Jackson (Mich.), Muskegon, St. Paul, West New York, Albany, Elmira, Jamestown (N. Y.), Syracuse, Yonkers, Nor-

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- 41 Rock Island, South Bend, Wichita, Pittsfield, Waltham, Kearney, Binghamton, New York, Dayton, Pittsburgh, Williamsport, Tacoma.
- 40 Cicero, Elgin, Haverhill, Flint, Poughkeepsie, Tulsa, New Castle, Everett (Wash.), Sheboygan.
- 39 Bridgeport, New Britain, Waterbury, Bloomington (Ill.), Anderson, Hammond, Terre Haute, Council Bluffs, Portland (Me.), Revere, Somerville, Pontiac, Jersey City, Newark (N. J.), Cincinnati, Newark (O.), Superior.
- 38 Meriden, Chicago, Moline, Dubuque, Sioux City, Brockton, Holyoke, Hamtramck, Kansas City (Mo.), Bayonne, Camden, Clifton, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, Paterson, Union City, Lorain, Springfield (O.), Altoona, Lancaster, Reading, Wilkes-Barre.
- 37 Pueblo, Wilmington (Del.), Peoria, Indianapolis, Saginaw, Butte, Hoboken, Akron, Columbus (O.), Lima, Warren, Bethlehem, Johnstown, York, Wichita Falls, Lacroisse.
- 36 San Bernardino, Decatur, Springfield (Ill.), Gary, Muncie, Fitchburg, Bay City, Passaic, Amsterdam, Hamilton, Steubenville, Scranton, Ogden, Wheeling.
- 35 Phoenix, Danville, Kokomo, Salem, St. Louis, Troy, Marion, McKeesport, Philadelphia, Providence.
- 34 Norwalk, Alton, Lawrence, Joplin, Perth Amboy, Trenton, Utica, Portsmouth (O.), Zanesville, Muskege, Cranston.
- 33 Quincy (Ill.), Evansville, Chelsea, Auburn (N. Y.), Allentown, Norristown, Huntington.
- 32 East Chicago, Cumberland, New Bedford, Taunton, Oklahoma City, Pawtucket, Amarillo, Charleston (W. Va.).
- 31 Tampa, Covington, Baltimore, Fall River, Lowell, Springfield (Mo.), Manchester, Nashua, Asheville, Hazelton, Fort Worth, Roanoke.
- 30 Fort Smith, East St. Louis, Kansas City (Kan.), Rome, Chester, Dallas, Waco.
- 29 Tucson, Louisville, Baton Rouge, Chicopee, St. Joseph, Austin, Houston.
- 27 Woonsocket, Beaumont, Port Arthur, Richmond (Va.).
- 26 Jacksonville, Hagerstown, Greensboro, Nashville, El Paso, San Antonio, Lynchburg, Newport News, Norfolk.
- 25 Birmingham, Atlanta, Lexington (Ky.), Galveston, Portsmouth (Va.).
- 24 Little Rock, Charlotte, Raleigh, Memphis.
- 23 Paducah, Lewiston (Me.), Knoxville.
- 22 Mobile, Pensacola, Shreveport, Chattanooga.
- 21 New Orleans, Wilmington (N. C.), Winston-Salem.
- 20 Montgomery, Macon, Jackson (Miss.), Columbia (S. C.), Laredo.
- 19 Savannah, Durham.
- 17 Augusta, Columbus (Ga.), Meridian, High Point, Charleston (S. C.)

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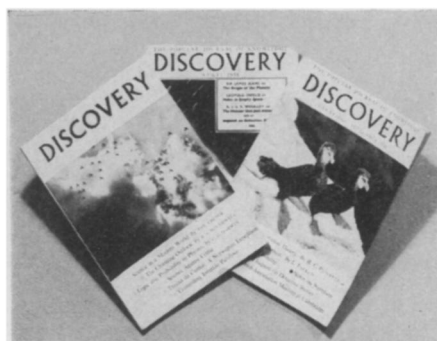
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