



## Community Chests

*Poster by Jessie Willcox Smith for the Welfare Federation of Philadelphia*

When the war chests were laid away with the drums ten years ago, there remained fourteen community chests to carry on for social welfare in fourteen cities. In the United States and Canada today there are 296, raising a yearly total of \$64,000,000 from two and one-half million contributors. A strong chest raises as much as \$4.75 for each person in the city. Its givers number one in eight— even one in five— of the population.

The chest has spread over the nation. It has become an instrument of tremendous power, resting chiefly on its ability to raise in one swift campaign the budgets of all the social agencies and institutions of a city. It constantly faces new problems. It must work out its own relation to the taxing power. It must meet the need for more funds with the growing complexities of modern city

life, the ebb and flow of employment and sickness, the opportunity to open new doors to the good life to which we are increasingly committed for all Americans. It holds vast disciplinary power in its ability to grant or withhold funds; and both vigilance and tolerance will be needed in conserving the initiative of social agencies, especially where controversial issues and local interests are at stake.

Still under fire from sturdy individualists in the field of social welfare, the community chest has only recently got its head above the waters of controversy as to whether or not it can justify itself by its works. It turns now to consider its future and measure its enduring values. In the pages following some of its ablest spokesmen set forth a rough balance sheet together with at least some inklings of prophecy.



# Putting an Ideal to Work

By GEORGE E. VINCENT

**D**URING all history the city or the city-state has been the conspicuous example of the community. It was so in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile, and in ancient Greece and Rome. It was only with the growth of cities that modern Europe began to emerge from the dark ages. Even during the period in which nationalism has played so great a part, capitals and industrial cities have held a leading place as centers of influence and as nurseries of the community spirit. Plato makes Socrates say that the city is only the small-print of the individual spelled in capital letters. By which he meant to say that the larger life in common enables the citizen more easily and fully to realize his own possibilities.

What are these individual desires and needs which are spelled large in the city life and its institutions? A social philosopher has reduced these to six groups and has labeled each with a single word. Here are the six key terms: health, wealth, sociability, knowledge, beauty, rightness.

Every man and woman by nature tries: 1, at least to avoid pain if not to attain vigorous physical well-being; 2, to gain material power to command what money can buy and to avoid anxiety about the future; 3, to enjoy social intercourse; 4, to satisfy curiosity about nature and man; 5, to gratify a craving for the beautiful; 6, to have a sense of right and satisfying relationship with the unseen forces of the universe and with his fellow men.

It is the city at its best which offers the citizen largest opportunities to realize these desires. Cleveland through its municipal government, its industries and commerce, its social and recreational organizations, its schools, colleges, university, libraries, press and pulpits, its parks, monuments, public and private buildings, art collections, its churches, its public standards of conduct expressed in collective praise and condemnation, is putting into large and glowing capital letters the leading aspirations of the average citizen for a wider, fuller personal life.

But however gratifying the result as a whole, there are certain failures with respect to each of these six aims. People still fall ill, or into poverty and dependence; many fail to meet their fellows in wholesome recreation and social contact. Still others are deprived of education, and starved in their aesthetic lives. Worse still, large numbers fail to attain right ethical relations with the community. Breakdowns like these have called into being a

great number of agencies official and voluntary: dispensaries, hospitals, nursing services, sanatoria, homes for children, summer camps, charity societies, settlements, night schools, associations for education and recreation and for ethical and religious influence.

Indispensable as such institutions are, it was only to be expected that they would grow up without a full appreciation of the problem as a whole and the part of each in a well-considered community program. Each went its own way, and appealed independently for public support. Out of this situation has grown the Community Chest with its study of community needs, its careful preparation of the year's budget, its annual week of educating the public by a vivid, concrete presentation, its well-organized plan of extra-governmental, self-imposed voluntary taxation, and its business-like and convincing reports.

Arnold Toynbee once said, "Enthusiasm can only be aroused by two things: first, an ideal which takes the imagination by storm, and second, a definite, intelligible plan for carrying that ideal out into practise." How perfectly this applies to your Community Chest! The ideal of a Cleveland which seeks to make life more healthful, interesting, wholesome and happy for every citizen surely takes the imagination by storm! And for helping to realize this in larger measure for the less fortunate among you what plans could be more definite and intelligible?

You, who are members of the team, are not being whipped to the discharge of a distasteful duty; you are being set free for a fine adventure; you are going as teammates into a stirring game. How thrilling a thing it is to play a noble game with trusted, high-spirited companions! The team lines up; the signal is given; each player has instantly in his mind a picture of the play as a whole and sees his own individual part in its relations. He knows that each team-mate will do his share loyally and that all will fit together into a splendidly united effort. For the coming campaign you have leaders to give the signal; the plays have been worked out in every detail; you have only to get into the game for all you have in you.

The already wavering line of apathy, indifference, selfishness cannot hold you. You will sweep on to another victory for that great team which commands and calls upon your love and pride and loyalty, your city of Cleveland.

*THE president of the Rockefeller Foundation gave the signal for the start of the last campaign of the Cleveland Community Fund, striking a note of high purpose which found its roots in ancient cities which were nurseries of the community spirit, and its modern application in social work which seeks to open a door to men's aspirations.*