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The Lithuanians of Cleveland

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CLEVELAND AMERICANIZATION COMMITTEE
CLEVELAND, 1920

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CLEVELAND AMERICANIZATION COMMITTEE
Cleveland, Ohio

Introduction

At a hotel banquet held recently in Cleveland by a group of representative Lithuanians in honor of delegates from the new republic, one of the Lithuanian visitors, after looking the group over, turned to me and said in surprise, "These are almost all Americans, aren't they?" As a matter of fact, nearly everyone of the hundred or more present was born in Lithuania and had come to America at a comparatively recent date. This comment from a fellow countryman was significant. How often is the distinction between "foreigners" and "Americans" overemphasized and exaggerated, and how often the fact that fundamentally all are pretty normal human beings lost sight of.

Few native Americans have better appreciation of the worth of American institutions, representative government, liberty of thought and speech than do these new citizens, whose mother country is struggling for Democracy. Nothing could have been more inspiring, more likely to renew one's faith in the old ideals of America than to hear the constant references, in this meeting for Lithuanian independence, to America's institutions as models to be followed in the new republic struggling into existence. May we always be worthy of such faith!

Lithuanians are forming a valuable element in our country, intellectual, eager for the education that has been denied them in the past, self-respecting, industrious and ambitious, they are helping to form that ideal American who is enriched by the treasures each nationality has brought to our shores.

The following pages will tell what Lithuanians are contributing to the community life of Cleveland.

ALICE P. GANNETT
Head Resident
Goodrich Social Settlement.



Lithuanian Girls in National Costume

The Lithuanians of Cleveland

The territory included under the term Lithuania depends upon the time of which one speaks. In the fifteenth century the kingdom extended from the Baltic Sea at Polangen and the mouth of the Niemen river to the Black Sea, and from the Bug river on the west to the Oka on the east. Gradually the political unit was reduced in size until today without recognized political entity we can speak only of the territory in which live those who use the Lithuanian language. In this sense it now includes the entire province of Kovno, Vilna, the part of Grodno north of the Niemen, Suvalki, Courland and the north-eastern part of eastern Prussia. Closely akin and usually classified with them are the Letts, a people living in Courland, Livonia, Vitebsk, and a remnant of the old Prussians living east of the mouth of the Vistula.

The Lithuanians are a branch of the Indo-European race quite distinct from the Scandinavians, Slavs or Germans by whom they are surrounded. Their language shows a marked similarity to the Sanskrit. From a careful comparison of the pre-historic skulls unearthed in this region with the Lithuanians of today, it would seem that they had been in Western Europe many centuries before the Slavs or Germans migrated from their Asiatic homes. Six hundred years ago the southern Lithuanians came under Prussian domination. In 1569 by the Convention of Lublin the fortunes of the kingdom were inextricably merged with those of Poland. The dual monarchy ostensibly at least, became entirely Polish and Lithuania seemed to have disappeared. It was a bloodless political conquest, but it did not essentially change the genius or aspirations of this freedom-loving people. At the close of the eighteenth century, with the third partition of Poland by its avaricious neighbors, Lithuania passed into the hands of Russia, and to Europeans and Americans became nothing more than a memory. Her government down to the pettiest officers was Russian. Her statutes were abolished; the size of the leasehold of her people was limited to one hundred and sixty acres; lectures and meetings were prohibited; even the language itself was barred and the Russian characters substituted for the Latin. Lithuanian commerce was discouraged and great tracts of country were sold to Russian colonists. The hardest blow of all was the suppression of the press in 1864, so that the people had to rely on what literature could be smuggled in from Germany and America. But such literature did come in, as evidenced by the fact that the Lithuanian provinces have shown a smaller percentage of illiteracy than any other section of the late Russian Empire. It was none the less a tragedy for Lithuania that her youths with literary ambition, the potential leaders of her people, should have to go beyond her boundaries for their education, and afterward, in too many cases, to write in a tongue which their own people could not read.

Every smaller town as well as the larger centres of population, in addition to its Russian garrison, had its Russian Greek Orthodox Church, al-



Map of Lithuania

though the Lithuanians were Roman Catholic. For more than a century (1795—1915) this Russification was systematically carried on, yet in 1919 these people think in terms of the ancient Lithuanian legal codes and retain their language in its purity. Secretly they have preserved a large and various literature and remain consistently Roman Catholic. Pan Slavism, as far as Lithuania is concerned, has failed.

But two social classes have existed in Lithuania, the large land holders and the peasants. The former have ever betrayed the latter, first to Poland, then to Russia, somewhat in later years to Germany. The anxiety of the nobles to protect their vested interests made them careful to mold their attitude to accord with the prevailing winds of political fortune. The peasants who bore the weight of the support of the local and the Russian government, whose children could not be sent to outside schools for education, felt most the burden of Russian oppression and strangely enough remained most characteristically Lithuanian. The national consciousness for four centuries was but smouldering in the breast of her peasant people.

In the light of these facts it is not strange that the stream of Lithuanian emigration has grown steadily in volume. We find them in Poland, the Ukraine, in Great Britain, South Africa, and New Zealand. The Canadian Northwest has many colonies of them. But the Mecca of this oppressed people has been the American Republic. It symbolized all they did not have. Strangely enough, the earliest recorded immigrants from Lithuania came with Kosciuszko in 1777 to fight for America's independence, purchasing for America what they could not have at home.

From 1868, however, they began to come in numbers, settling in the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania. Large colonies are still found in the vicinity of Pottsville, Shenandoah, Hazleton, Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. From these centres they have found their way in increasing numbers to all the larger eastern and middle western cities. Only a few have penetrated to the far west or to the south.

In Chicago alone there are 80,000 in ten large parishes; in greater New York half that number, and many in Pittsburg, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore and Detroit, where they are workers in factories of all sorts, tailors and merchants, with a few professional men.

The Bureau of Immigration has classified Lithuanians separately only since 1899. Before this time they were designated as Russians or Poles, so that it is hard to determine their numbers. In the four years following the separate classification we know that 252,594 Lithuanians had landed in America and only 19,171 had departed; so that the estimate of three quarters of a million which was made before the Lithuanian Convention in New York in 1918, is probably conservative.

Distribution in Cleveland.

The earliest Lithuanian settler in Cleveland came in 1871 direct from Lithuania. Mr. F. Freimonas was by necessity an industrial worker, but a decade later bought his farm and left the city to work upon it. By 1900 there were perhaps one thousand of his countrymen in the city, the majority of whom were recruited from the mining sections of New York and Pennsylvania. Rapidly they distributed themselves through Cleveland's varied industries, and although sixty-seven per cent were male, and only thirty-

three per cent female, the bankers and loan agents estimate that the names of from eighteen to twenty per cent are on the city's tax duplicate as property owners.

Between 1904 and 1915 many young men came to escape military service in the Russian army. Passports were difficult to obtain, and the emigrant was forced to the expedient of stealing away.

In 1915 a careful parochial survey discovered the presence in Cleveland of more than 10,000 Lithuanians. Since then, owing to the immigration from Pittston, DuBois, and the suburbs of Pittsburg, Penna., their numbers have increased to over 12,000.

Until 1912 there was but one colony, centering about East 21st street and Oregon Ave. During the past seven years, however with increasing prosperity they have scattered thinly over the entire territory between East 17th and 71st streets from Lakeside Ave. to Payne Ave. Small groups of families are found also on Jefferson and Starkweather Aves. and a few in Lindale and Collinwood.

Occupation.

The large majority of the people are factory workers, employed for the most part by the Otis Steel Co., Parish and Bingham Co., Hydraulic Pressed Steel, Cleveland Twist Drill, the Cuyahoga Branch of the American Steel and Wire Mills, the White Motor, and in the repair shops of the Lake Shore Railroad. The Lithuanian workmen on the whole are skilled mechanics, with a large proportion in the molders, machinist, and carpentering trades. Like the Finns, many of the men are tailoring craftsmen, both for the customs trade in such shops as Tidd, the tailor's, and as operatives in the Printz-Biederman, H. Black, Korach's, the Clothcraft shops and other garment factories.

Not a few have developed creditable businesses. Mr. T. Neura, a Lithuanian carpenter who started in a small way as a grocer in Cleveland twelve years ago, now has a wholesale meat and grocery at Hamilton Ave. and 20th street, and a chain of five retail grocery stores in various sections of the city. The R. D. Zitkus dry goods store, 2012 St. Clair Ave., which does a \$25,000 business, was established six years ago; that of Mr. K. Varakojis on Professor Ave. at about the same time. Mr. Decker has been conducting a furniture and hardware business of creditable proportions at St. Clair Ave. and 24th street, and in the past two years A. Simkunas has built up a large dry goods business at 1001 East 79th street. Mr. M. Povilauskas four years ago bought and has since operated the Cedar Theatre on Cedar Ave. and East 71st street, besides which there are six confectioneries and other smaller places of business, conducted by Lithuanians.

In banking interests Mr. A. B. Bartoszewicz is the recognized leader. In 1895 Mr. Bartoszewicz opened a barber shop in the colony. Eight years later he became a saloon keeper and in 1904 began a foreign exchange, brokerage and steamship agency. The latter was the beginning of the St. Clair Ave. Savings and Loan Company at 2006 St. Clair Ave. which incorporated in 1914. For the past two years the constituency of his business has been exceedingly Polish and Hungarian. Keen to the eastward movement of the Lithuanian population, Mr. Bartoszewicz this year opened a branch bank on Superior Ave. and 79th street. He was also the prime mover in the Cleveland



A Float in the Lithuanian Patriotic Celebration, 1914

Lithuanian Building and Loan Association—a joint stock company incorporated for \$100,000, which under the management of Mr. S. Zaborskis had been doing a \$300,000 banking business at St. Clair Ave and 20th Street. One year ago this Association also moved its office to the new centre of Lithuanian population at 68th street and Superior Ave. It loans at the minimum percentage mainly to Lithuanians who are desirous of buying real estate or building homes.

There are three co-operative business enterprises recently entered upon by the Lithuanians of Cleveland. The first is known as local branch No. 12 of the Lithuanian Development Corporation, a national organization with headquarters in New York City which was incorporated in 1916 for \$1,000,000 for the purpose of building up industries in America and Lithuania and establishing better trade relations between the two countries. Each member of the local organization is a stockholder in the company, and each local is an agency for foreign exchange, and the sale of steamship tickets, as well as the importation and export of goods.

The second has been called the Biruta Bakers Cooperative Company. It was incorporated in 1917 for \$15,000 through the efforts of Mr. A. Krauskas among Lithuanians only, for the purpose of making all kinds of breads and fancy pastry. A lot was purchased at East 17th street and Superior Ave. where a building is in process of construction.

The third is the Lithuanian Society Hall Company, capitalized at \$65,000, a corporation in which each of the many Lithuanian organizations has stock. This company has bought a site for the hall at East 60th street and Superior Ave. on which they purpose erecting a building commodious enough to house all the Lithuanian societies as well as provide facilities for entertainments, dances and mass meetings. This project has been pending since 1911 and had to be deferred on account of the war, but ground is being broken for its immediate construction.

Beyond the two cigar makers who function only in connection with the two local stores operated by them, there are no Lithuanians in the manufacturing business for themselves.

Despite the short time this people has lived in the city, a creditable number of those engaged in professional and semi-professional activities have emerged.

The art of photography has Lithuanian representatives in A. D. Zitkus, at 2105 St. Clair Ave., J. D. Zitkus, at 7033 Superior Ave. and A. Bartkus, on 65th Street and Broadway; the apothecary art in C. Pakeltis, who started in the drug business at East 20th Street and St. Clair Ave., and established branch stores in Newburgh and Collinwood, and Mr. J. Zwalskis, a versatile linguist who managed the International pharmacy at St. Clair Ave. and East 45th Street.

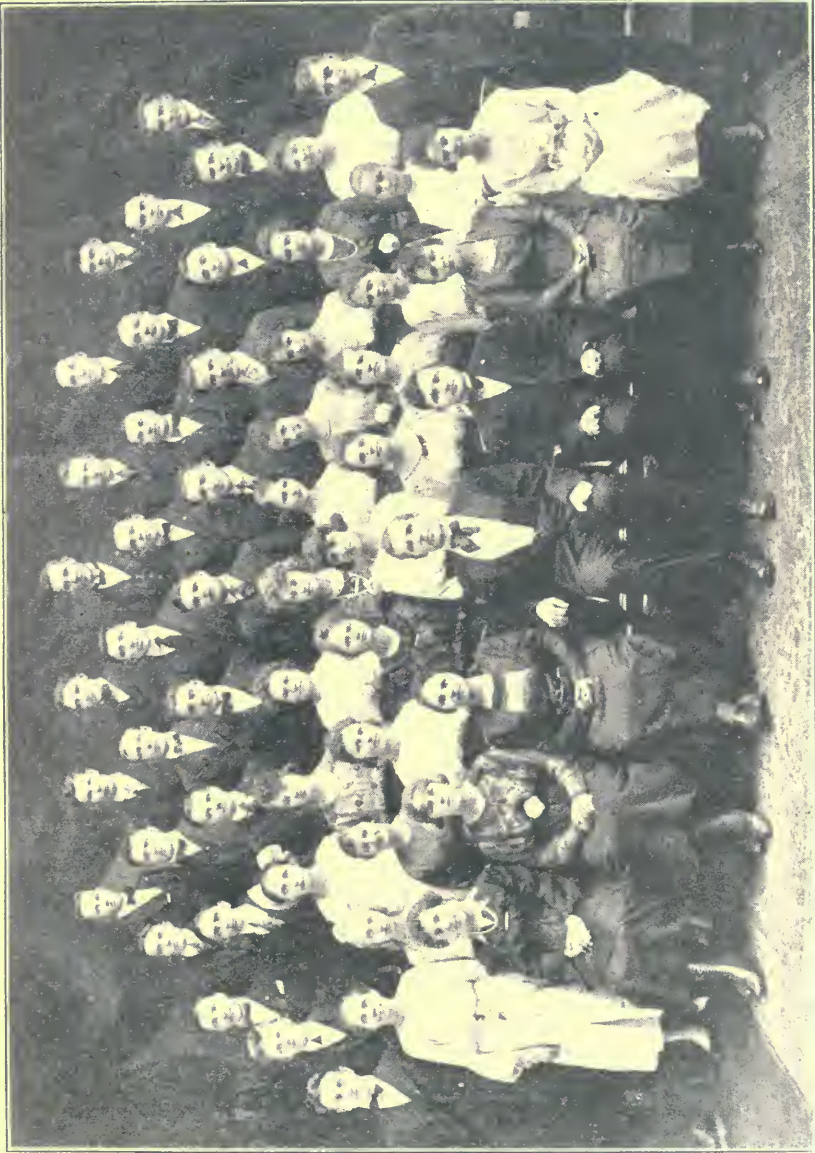
Dr. J. Semolunas, the optometrist at 8115 St. Clair Ave. is the sole and much specialized Lithuanian representative of the medical profession in the city. Dr. Semolunas came to Cleveland from Valparaiso, Ind. two years ago, was chairman of the National Lithuanian Relief Society, and is a recognized leader among the Lithuanian people of this city.

Of dental surgeons and attorneys there are none. Two are in training for the legal profession in the Cleveland Law School.

Education.

It is only since the Russian revolution of 1905 that the Lithuanians have been permitted openly to obtain an education. Russia resolutely undertook to replace the Lithuanian characters in the schools by Russian. These proud and intelligent people had to teach their language in secret. A Lithuanian with an irrespressible instinct for expression had to emigrate to Poland or some other part of Europe and write in a foreign language, so that many of the poets, the literary leaders, the radical thinkers, though born in Lithuania are classified as Polish. The Polish patriot Kosciuszko, and the poet Adam Mickiewicz were born in Lithuania, and Immanuel Kant's parents were Lithuanian, although the philosopher himself was born in Germany. The fact that her sons had to expatriate themselves to obtain a higher education was a sad blow to Lithuanian literary pride and a tragedy for her educational system.

Naturally the early years of the immigrants in this country were given over to the economic struggle, and the children as they reached working age were expected to help out the family exchequer. The earliest Lithuanian high school students were found in the Commercial High Schools, St. John's Cathedral School, Dyke's and the Ohio Business College. It was a short cut to necessary lucrative employment. But the character of Lithuanian intelligence is seen in the competitive parochial examinations held in 1919



Chorus of Cleveland Knights of Lithuania Branch 25

THE LITHUANIANS OF CLEVELAND

for the entire city, in which every Lithuanian student received the grade of "A" on a scale of grades from "A" to "F". This may have been partly due to the fact that the parochial school teaches its quota of the seven hundred Lithuanian children of the parish almost exclusively in English, but was due in no small measure to their native aptitude and the increasing value placed on education by their parents. Moreover, the value of developing leaders is evidenced in the voluntary pledge of each Lithuanian society to help one promising and ambitious boy to secure a higher education—in this way assuring themselves an adequate future leadership.

While there are no grade or high school teachers, serious literary efforts are not wanting. A local Lithuanian Literary Society has been compiling a racial history, has worked out a Lithuanian encyclopedia for the help of the more recent immigrants. One member of this society when only sixteen years of age translated the play *East Lynne* in order that her group might present it to a Lithuanian audience in their own language—a translation which was afterwards published and distributed throughout the United States by one of the national organizations. Two business men, Mr. V. A. Greicius and Mr. W. Sadauskas, have given up evening after evening for the past two years, that they might teach English to their countrymen, in the Waring public school.

Religion.

The majority of the Lithuanians are devout Roman Catholics, and the remainder nominally so. The church bulks largely in the life of men and women of the parish, as the majority of their social organizations are connected with it. In Cleveland there is but one church. Services have been held in the present building situated at East 21st street and Oregon Ave. since 1905. More than seventy per cent of the Cleveland Lithuanians are included in its parish and no others than Lithuanians come. Rev. V. G. Wilkutaitis conducts the masses in Latin. He has had associated with him Prof. V. Greicius, organist and translator, who has directed the choral music and taught the young in an art which they readily acquire. Connected with the church is a parochial school in which 250 students receive academic and religious training under four teachers. Here also it is worthy of notice that the teaching is almost exclusively in English. The remainder of the Lithuanian children are attendants at the public schools.

Twenty-four Lithuanian societies are found either within or connected with the church. Owing to inadequate facilities many of these organizations have had to meet elsewhere. The church, however, is now in process of building a commodious structure at a cost of \$118,000, with school and spacious parish hall on a two-acre lot, at the corner of East 67th st. and Superior Ave. The building project has been pending almost since the war began. However many societies lay claim upon his time, the Lithuanian's loyal and unselfish devotion to the most significant one joining the old home to the new.

Societies.

Even now, there is greater national sentiment for some organization than the Lithuanian. For years the war that has been progressed by Russia, U. S. America and Great Britain, has aroused and stimulated spontaneously. There is an



St. George's Church and Rectory, East 21st Street and Oregon Avenue

organization for almost every purpose, and always a remarkable manifestation of facility for team work between societies as well as between individuals.

The Lithuanian Bureau of Information maintained at Washington, D. C. lists the following nineteen national societies with 1405 branches in various parts of the country, and a combined membership of 473, 630:

- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Federation of America.
- The National Fund.
- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Alliance of America.
- The Lithuanian Federation of Labor.
- The Knights of Lithuania.
- The Lithuanian Total Abstinence Union.
- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Women's Alliance of America
- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Students Association.
- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Press Association.
- Motinele.
- The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Priests Association.
- Lithuanian Charities.
- Order of Romuvo.
- The Lithuanian Alliance of America.
- Lithuanian Patriots Association.
- The Lithuanian National League of America
- The Lithuanian Relief Fund.
- The Socialist Federation.
- Lithuanian Women's Progressive Alliance.



Choir of St. George's Church

Many belong to several of these societies. On the other hand some of the national organizations are quite young and hence only in process of development. Every year the number grows. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the above list does not include a vast number of local organizations in the 125 Lithuanian parishes in the United States. None of the seventy-three listed local Democratic and Republican clubs which operate independently of parishes are mentioned, nor the local co-operative societies and literary organizations. Seventy-five per cent of the organizations in this city, and they are by no means the least significant, are local and have no national connection. So that the organizational proclivities of these people are remarkable. A few of the more typical of these will evidence their character.

The Cleveland Lithuanian Theatrical Choral Society was organized in 1909 and has uninterruptedly held meetings throughout the decade, first in the church school house, later once a week in a hall at East 25th street and St. Clair Ave. It is distinctly an entertainment society with 140 members who spend their spare time in the preparation of musical concert numbers, recitations and dramas. The latter are repeated again and again in the same or successive winters. East Lynne, Genovaitė or St. Genevieve, Rutvile, the story of the Lithuanian Joan d'Arc, are among the more popular of them.

Similar in organization and in function is the Knights of Lithuania (Lietuvos Vyciai) originating in 1914 as a local branch of the national society with headquarters at Chicago, where a newspaper "Vytis" (The Knight) is printed and sent to every member of the society. The local has 350 members and meets Wednesday evenings for dramatic work, and Friday evenings for singing. The dramatic section prepared, adapted and acted the historic tragedy Zivile, a difficult nationalistic play which was given on the stage of the Prospect Theatre in 1917.

Mr. V. A. Greicius has been its singing director and in many cases translator into Lithuanian. The Knights maintain the largest distinctly Lithuanian library in the city. The society is trying to unite the Lithuanians in America into one great body with homogeneity of opinion and unity of political aim with reference to the independence of Lithuania. To this end the characteristic Lithuanian prose and poetry has been revived and popularized. Although there are no benefit features, it favors and partially supports promising students in obtaining an education, keeps its membership informed with reference to ideas, interests, plans and achievements of the various widely separated groups in America, as well as with what is taking place politically in Europe. It maintains athletic classes for both men and women. Cleveland was the meeting place of its last annual convention. A large gold sword is being molded for presentation by this society to the gallant Lithuanian general Silvester Zukauskas, who so stalwartly supported Premier Valdemaras in his presentation of the claims of Lithuania for autonomy at the Peace Conference in Paris. The sword is to be reduced to Lithuanian currency after the ceremony of presentation.

The three following organizations also function as agents for entertainment: "Varpas," or The Bell, a group of twenty men loosely connected with the National League meets at Goodrich House periodically under Director L. Kramp for rehearsal, and entertains at the meetings of the League. The Cleveland Lithuanian National Band of 25 pieces was organized in 1909 and meets once a week at Goodrich House. The band is under the direction of



The Play "Mirza" Presented in 1918

J. Narovic and plays at various concerts, dances, and in parades. The Lithuanian Sons Band of 15 pieces organized in 1916 is in process of amalgamating with the former for reasons of expediency. Both the latter participate in concerts and entertain between acts of dramas given by other societies. St. George's Church Choir also gives a high class concert once a year, the proceeds from which go toward the installation of the organ in the new church.

It ought to be observed that all other societies, when they wish to give a dance, a home concert, or meet in any formal way call upon one or more of these Lithuanian clubs for assistance. It is a division of activity which is mutually recognized.

There are ten distinct benevolent societies, the majority of which are under the immediate supervision of the diocese, or loosely connected with it, and some of which are unaffiliated benevolent. Each has its unique features.

St. George's Society is the oldest. Organized in 1887 by the earliest Lithuanian settler, Mr. F. Prusmanas, it has experienced a constant growth. The society now comprises 400 members. It has met each month throughout the year in the "Pleasant Hill" at 5309 Superior Ave. It is entirely local and devoted to the education and spiritual benefit and betterment of the Lithuanian children. Numerous donations of the members for the colony's welfare have been made.

Next to the oldest is the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Alliance of American

a local organization of the national society with headquarters in Brooklyn, N. Y. where a newspaper "Garsas" is published weekly and sent to all its members. The national society has 208 branches with a membership of 14,000 in the country. The local meets one Sunday afternoon each month at St. Clair Ave and East 60th street. It is primarily provident and beneficial, with death benefits running from \$50 to \$5000, and is so closely affiliated with the church that laxness in church duties means ejection from the society and a forfeiting of any claim for indemnification. In the two branches of this society in Cleveland, both of which meet at Goodrich House, there are nearly 700 members. In connection with it also is a children's branch modeled after the parent organization and providing for benefits in case of death.

The Lithuanian Alliance of America with headquarters in New York City also has two local branches, one of which meets once a month in Grdina Hall at 6205 St. Clair Ave. and the other at Goodrich House. The national organization which claims 300 branches with a total membership of 12,000 in America is purely beneficial in purpose. The fraternity is primarily for mutual protection in illness, disability or death. It publishes a liberal newspaper Teyne (Native Land) weekly for distribution to all the members, and is not in any way connected with the church. The local branches have been in existence for fourteen and four years respectively, and have a combined membership of 400.

The Lithuanian Knights of St. Casimir is similar to the Alliance in aim, but is entirely without national affiliation. It dates its inception from 1896, permits only men to join, meets once a month at East 25th street and St Clair Ave., collects dues of 25c to 50c monthly, and pays indemnities in case of sickness or death.

In 1906 a chapter of the parent organization was formed under the leadership of John Rakauskas which continues to hold its meetings separately, although all members of the latter must be members of the former. On occasions of parade or celebration the latter wear a striking blue and white uniform. In connection with the order also a Boy Scout Branch is conducted, that the youth may be prepared for participation in the Knights' society on reaching maturity. This is one of the strongest purely local societies as it numbers 700 members.

St. Joseph's Society is also local and is composed of the oldest settlers in the city. It was organized in 1906 by Monseigneur V. Paukstis to provide against the possible distress of Lithuanians in the parish. It collects dues and pays indemnities in case of need. The mother tongue is the only language heard at any of its meetings. Its ninety members meet monthly in Columbia Hall. Like St. George's and St. Casimir's it is closely connected with the church.

Another local, the Dr. V. Kudirkos Society, is named in honor of the noted Lithuanian political writer and poet. The society dates back to 1909 and owes its inception to the literary aspirations of some of the Alliance members. Later, benefit features were added, a monthly schedule of dues was adopted and the amount of the benefits arranged, but it has never lost its primary literary and educative purpose. All men between the ages of 18 and 45 are eligible. The number of members has reached the 250 mark. Its president, Mr. J. Kudirkos, curiously enough bears the same name as the honored literary patriarch.

The Knights of St. Vitautis is another local beneficial organization

consisting of 100 men, named in honor of the beloved Lithuanian prince of the 12th century. It was initiated by Mr. K. Saimonas in 1914 as a military and political as well as a benefit insurance society. The organization seems to have been a by-product of the war. The hope of a free Lithuania was revived in the early stages of the war in the breasts of American as well as European Lithuanians. One branch of this organization has formed an infantry and a cavalry unit which meets every week at Goodrich Settlement House for military drill. This society was proudly in evidence in our various Liberty Loan parades.

A branch of the Lithuanian Federation of Labor, a workingmen's organization, was formed one year ago. This national society with a membership of 7000 has its headquarters in Boston, where a tri-weekly paper, *The Darbininkas*, or *Workingman*, is published to keep the members of the various locals in touch with each other as well as informed about national movements. The local organization has 100 members, meets monthly at Goodrich House, and is both educational and beneficiary.

Cleveland has two benefit organizations for women only, one with national affiliation, the other local. The Cleveland branch of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Women's Alliance of America is one of fifty branches already established. It has been in operation locally for three years, includes 70 ladies of all ages and meets at Goodrich House monthly for educational and executive purposes. Although its purpose is primarily life insurance, it is one of the most progressive and versatile racial clubs in the city. It stages dramatics, gives suppers and dances, does Red Cross work, and has interested itself in woman suffrage. Instruction is provided in cooking, home-making and physical culture. It is the only Lithuanian member of the Cleveland Federation of Women's Clubs. The members receive a monthly magazine, the *Moteru Dirva*, or *Woman's Field*, which is published at the headquarters of the society in Chicago, Ill. Delegates from all the societies convene in some central American city once a year to determine any change in the policy of the organization.

The Catholic Women's Society, *Motinos Dievo*, on the hand, is a local beneficial organization and includes married ladies only. It was organized in 1906 through the efforts of Monseigneur V. Paukstis, and has continued to meet once a month in Columbia Hall at East 25th street and St. Clair Ave. It is closely identified with the church, has 125 members and under its president, Mrs. Elizabeth Revelt, arranges for occasional entertainments in which one or more of the musical or dramatic clubs participate.

Two national political societies also have representative local branches. They are without benefit features but are educational, fraternal, and nationalistic. The T. M. D., as it is familiarly called (*Tevynes Myletoju Draugyste*) or *Lovers of Lithuania* had two branches in the city, one organized in 1907, the other in 1908. The national headquarters are in Chicago, from which books and pamphlets calculated to increase the appreciation of their native literature are issued gratis to all members. They meet once a month for social and informational purposes.

The other is the Lithuanian National League of America, a liberal organization with headquarters in Boston and fifty branches throughout the country. The local branch was organized in 1916. Its members are kept informed of national and international movements and relations through a weekly new paper, the "*Sandara*," or *League*, published at the headquarters



Cast of "Zivele," presented 1917

of the society. It has a membership of about forty. It is with this society that the above-mentioned Varpas Club is connected.

Four national relief associations have been organized to provide help for the Lithuanian refugees, many of whom, if not despoiled of their property by the retreating Russian army, suffered loss and expatriation at the hands of the German army of invasion which devastated the rich, flat country and shipped its portable wealth to Germany.

The first of these, the Lithuanian National Fund Society, was organized in 1914 within the Roman Catholic Church. On St. Casimir's and other holidays the settlement was canvassed for donations and concerts were given to swell the contributions to this worthy cause.

The Lithuanian Relief Fund was organized the same year for the same purpose, but among the non-Catholic elements. Later it merged into and became part of the Lithuanian Central War Relief Committee, a nationalistic executive of the socialist group - the local Red Cross work of which has been under the capable direction of Dr. Semolunas. Its methods were similar and its donations forwarded through the headquarters in Brooklyn. Also the Lithuanian Autonomy Fund Society, now called the Lithuanian Independence Fund Society, composed of both radical and conservative elements was organized in 1915 in order to finance a systematic agitation for the possible independence of Lithuania.

The gifts through these societies were not haphazard, but pledges were taken and weekly payments made. A stamp device somewhat similar to war Savings Stamps was used to systematize these gifts. All three surviving societies support the Washington Bureau of Information which is agitating for a free Lithuania.

The fourth is the Lithuanian Commerce and Trade Association, capitalized at \$1,000,000, a Roman Catholic organization which is fostering better trade relations with the embryonic nation, and has gathered food, clothing and money for the relief of their needy compatriots.

In this connection also the active Lithuanian Red Cross Society ought to be mentioned. Organized by Mrs. Skuzinskas in the spring of 1919 it has met every week in Goodrich House to make garments for the needy in Europe. The men cut and make suits for men, the women for girls and women. It is said to include 95% of the Lithuanians in the parish, and followed with its interest, gifts, and work the 280 Lithuanian boys from Cleveland who fought for the independence of Lithuania in contending for the democracy of the world.

The majority of these clubs and societies are united into the Lithuanian Societies Federation, a kind of local executive for all the societies, made up of the president and one representative from each. It was started in 1911 as a Lithuanian social registry whose expenses were assessed to the various organizations in the city. Gradually it has come to be the connecting link between the Lithuanian organizations and civic or national enterprises. It has arranged parades and entertainments given by various Lithuanian societies looked after the programme for St. Casimir's day celebration, fostered the building of the new National Hall, conducted the Liberty Loans among its people, helped to build up the library of books in the native tongue, issued a historical review of the Lithuanians in the city, and co-operates with the Chicago office of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Federation of America, in the task of compiling the Cleveland section of the semi-annual report. The local

societies render assistance gratis when the Federation arranges public demonstrations, entertainments or formal affairs of any kind.

Outside the Federation are five socialist organizations, the first two of which are beneficial in character. The Liberty (Laisve) a branch of the national organization with headquarters in Chicago, dates from 1911, has a membership of 75 and meets once a month in Jaites' Hall at St. Clair Ave. and 61st street.

The Lithuanian Woman's Progressive Alliance also has a local of 50 members meeting in the same place. Each member receives a copy of the "Moteru Balsas" or Woman's Voice, issued monthly from the headquarters in Chicago.

In addition there are two entertainment societies. The Workers Literary Society (Lietuviu Darbininku Literaturos Draugija) with 70 members meeting monthly at Jaites' Hall, was organized for the purpose of publishing and distributing literature, mutually improving its members, and preparing dramas. It is affiliated with the national society with headquarters in Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Myrta Chorus is a singing society with 90 members both male and female, which has been meeting locally for eight years at Jaites' Hall to practice under the direction of J. Butenas.

All are united in the local branch of the Lithuanian Socialist Federation (Lietuviu Socialistu Sajunga), one of the 150 Lithuanian-American branches with headquarters in Chicago. The Federation meets monthly in the same hall. In the fall of 1919 the Communists broke away from this union and have formed a society of their own.

The Press.

Only one Lithuanian paper, a weekly called *Dirva* (Field) is published in Cleveland. It is the output of the Ohio Lithuanian Publishing Company, a commercial press organized by Mr. A. B. Bartoszewicz in 1915. It is independent in policy, and curiously enough has a larger circulation in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Connecticut than in this city. It circulates widely in Detroit and Pittsburg, neither of which cities have a Lithuanian press. Mr. K. S. Karpavicius, its editor, who came here two years ago from New York City, undertakes through its columns to keep the older Lithuanians in touch with national movements and relations. During the past year the *Dirva* moved from its former quarters at 2004 St. Clair Ave. to 7907 Superior Ave.

There are also a large number of papers which have wide circulation in Cleveland, a list of which would include the following:

Darbininkas (Worker) published three times weekly in Boston.

Draugas (Friend) published daily in Chicago, Ill.

Garsas (Sound) published weekly in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Lietuva (Lithuania) published weekly in Chicago.

Vienybe Lietuvninku (Lithuanian Union) published weekly in Brooklyn.

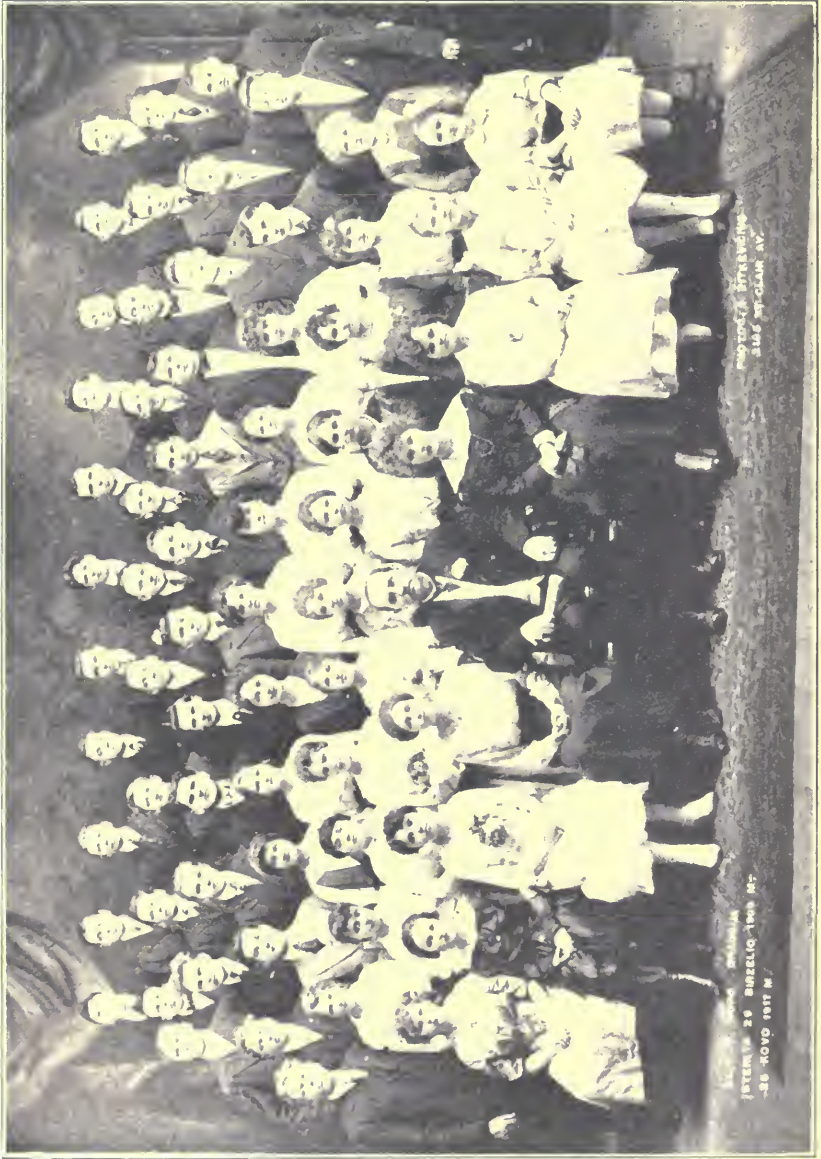
Amerikos Lietuvis (American Lithuanian) published weekly in Worcester, Mass.

Teyvne (Native Land) published weekly in New York City.

Together with these there are a number of radical papers of general currency:

Naujienos (News) published daily in Chicago.

Keleivis (Traveller) published weekly in Boston.



Cleveland Lithuanian Theatrical Chorus

Laisve (Liberty) published daily in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Kardas (Sword) published monthly in Boston.

Moteru Balsas (Women's Voice) published monthly in Boston.

Besides publications of the various benefit societies indicated above should be mentioned also

Moksleivis (Student) a paper published monthly by the Students National Society which has no local branch but in which the Cleveland Lithuanians maintain a lively interest.

Also the Tautos Rytas (Dawn of Nation) a Brooklyn magazine, the official organ of the Temperance Organization which has been a monthly visitor at many Cleveland homes, and the Saule (Sun) a miner's newspaper published in Mahanoy City, Pa., semi-weekly. Its homely stories and comments reflect the peasant life of their Northern European home.

It is interesting that of the various Lithuanian publications in the United States, all but five radical papers were published in war time without translation.

Within the past two years a Lithuanian Information Bureau has been established in Washington, D. C. to create as intelligent and unified a feeling as possible in favor of an autonomous Lithuania. To this end many pamphlets and monographs have been published and scattered broadcast over the country, so that Lithuania has a richer meaning and her desire for statehood a more rational basis in the minds of Americans today than ever before.

Halls and Settlement.

Beyond the club rooms where lodges meet and the hired halls where entertainments are held, beyond the church, which is a real center of social life, there is one institution which touches intimately the life of the Lithuanians of this city. Goodrich Settlement House on East 31st street is in the midst of the colony. Here the ideals of various ethnic groups are moulded into one, children are taught to play, the boys to produce arcraft, the girls are taught sewing and skill in the more subtle housekeeping arts, the young men and women receive physical instruction and mingle under the most wholesome auspices, and the simple and beautiful national dances are held. Seldom a week in the winter passes without an entertainment being offered by some Lithuanian Society to an audience of three hundred people. Here many national club meetings are held. In a word, it is the community's home, touching the life of the older and younger members of the family alike, and they are unanimous in their appreciation of it. A body of tradition grows up in such an institution. The younger boys remember that the Chip boys, famous athletes, and Billy Papke, the middle weight champion, were like themselves Lithuanian immigrants, and the girls are reminded that Lillian Walker, the movie star, got her early training in a local Lithuanian society.

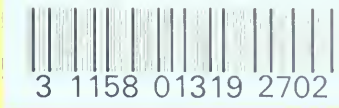
Festivals and Holidays.

Besides the holidays on the American calendar, the saints' days are observed with due rites. On one occasion during the year Lithuanian life breaks into merry-making and characteristic celebration. This is March 4th, St. Casimir's Day, or Lithuanian Day, as it is sometimes called in honor of the great Lithuanian patriot. Parades are held with all patriotic societies participating. A great mass meeting is arranged where, after the speeches,


recitations are heard or a dramatized Lithuanian folk tale is staged, and not infrequently a number of folk dances are given.

There are few more desirable immigrants to America than the Lithuanians. Physically rugged, potentially of high intelligence, readily capable of grasping American ideals, acquiring our language with facility and, like the Scandinavian, soon disappearing into America's heterogeneous life, they have been called "the most illiterate and at the same time the most intelligent of our immigrants." We have heard little about this thrifty Aryan stock. There was nothing conspicuous about them, hence they have been a forgotten people, law-abiding, minding their own business, laboring hard, grateful and content, yet ever mindful of their less fortunate European compatriots. They come to America to stay, bringing their household goods along. Less than three-tenths of one per cent have gone back to Lithuania even to visit their kin. The children are encouraged to learn, in addition to English, the language of their fathers as a duty they owe to the older generation. They are taught that in becoming good Lithuanians they are becoming better Americans. A century of oppression under Russia but fanned the flame of their racial consciousness to white heat, multiplied the native hate and piled up trouble for the much troubled Russia of today. This liberated spirit of freedom finds expression here and makes for the best American life.

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