

Read Lithuanian Struggles

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The
Lithuanian
Booster

THOMAS SHAMIS, Editor

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ABOUT LITHUANIA AND LITHUANIANS

Thomas Shamis, Editor

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A NATION

WHO IN this world can deny freedom
to the defender of Civilization?

Land of Tolerance.

Land of Heroic People.

Land of Kosciusko.

Land of Mickiewicz.

Land of My Fathers.

LITHUANIA will receive her just due—
Liberty and Justice.

THOMAS SHAMIS.

LITHUANIANS PLANT LIFE

by
THE EDITOR

OLDEN Lithuania was covered with deep forests, and was the abode of many wild animals. Forests were kept in high esteem by the ancient Lithuanian; because they gave him food, and they were his protector, on mountains, the Lithuanian could see far away and detect his foe as he was approaching. The forests gave to the Lithuanian the crude elements for the making of wooden spoons, wooden dishes. etc., also wood for fuel and wood for burning to produce light.

Lithuanians knew the worth of the forest and did not destroy the trees. Foreigners coming into Lithuania, Carried on the work of devastating Lithuanian forests. At the present they seem to be at their ruthless work. Lithuanian large landowners, gener-

ally had large portions of forests who stood as a barrier against the foe in the ancient days gone by. These large landowners would sell the forest to the commercial men who would cut them down. These forests where the ancient Lithuanian found a hiding place for a better attack upon the foe or wild animal now found our landowners taking money for them and rushing over the border to join the spendthrift class. This practice did not bring any benefit to Lithuania, as it brought harm on the whole Lithuania, because Lithuanian forests made the climate more mild, held more moisture, and were the source of many rivers.

At the present, according to statistics Lithuania has about one-fourth of its forests. The cutting work from now on would cause harm to Lithuania, because many of the timbers have been removed, the land has turned sandy-like, and this sand is sometimes blown onto a good soil, thus ruining it. And a further cutting of the woods, dries the climate, stops the source of the rivers and spoils the land. In some

parts they are reclaiming the land by planting forests.

In Lithuania the oak takes the first place. The oak being very hard for this reason is very valuable, and its bark is used in tanning. Acorns are used to fatten swine, and in some parts they cure and pulverize them and drink as coffee with milk. Oaks grow very high and live to an old age, in some places in Lithuania there are oaks as old as a thousand years. There are a few of these giants, our forbearers worshipped them. It would be an injustice to the oak of Lithuania not to mention, Baublys, the giant oak of Lithuania. It grew on Vysniu mountain, on the plantation of Barzdziuose about three miles from Raseiniu, where lived the wellknown Lithuanian writer D. Poska.

This giant oak has seen the days of Gediminas, he had 700 rings minus the many that were rotted, and it can be estimated that this giant oak had 1,000 years. When this giant oak fell in 1811 there lived at this time D. Poska who made from the second log a miniature

museum, where he placed old Lithuanian warriors armament and other Lithuanian relics. This log of the Baublys was about 58 ft. in circumference. The log was cut about twenty feet from the ground and it held a door, and windows, beside one of the window there was a bench upon which could set four people, and it also held a little table; about fifteen people could get into this Baublys.

The second place is taken by the ash, this wood is rather hard and is much used in wagonmaking. There are also many maples in Lithuania these being used in making rakes, handles, etc. In the springtime it is a delight as it yields sap. The beech thrives in many low places, and the birch likes the clay soil, and it is sometimes found on sandy soils. The Lithuanian farmer finds many uses for the beech as it is hard.

Linden tree as the oak can live very long. On Niemen's shores we can find many forests totally of Linden. Here we find many bees gathering honey from the Linden trees and the Lithuanian has named

this honey "lipcius" for its flavor and fragrance. This honey has a wide fame and is known outside of Lithuanian border.

The willow will be found in Lithuania along the roadsides there also be found the plane tree. The planting of trees for shade is also carried on in Lithuania.

There are also many pines, whose growth is high and even and is used in building. In the forest there also can be found many berries as; blueberry, strawberry, cowberry, raspberry, and many varieties of mushrooms. In Lithuanian forest there will also be found many a tree of hemlock, standing here and there, as the pine, the hemlock is used in making buildings.

Besides the forest tree there also can found in Lithuania many fruit bearing trees. The Lithuanians love the trees and are great planters, it is a common sight to see all the outbuildings of the Lithuanian farmer covered with trees. In the Lithuanian

orchard will be found: apple, pear, cherry, plum, and many others. The Lithuanian farmer is learning the planting of fruit trees for the growing of fruit for market. Orchard planting is gaining ground the last few years before the war. The province of Kaunas exported about four thousand tons of apples in 1897. The village of Dukstus sold about twelve hundred tons of apples. The little town of Jonavas, Kaunas province sends to Petrograd about three hundred tons of apples. Here and there will be found canneries where the work of making the fruit into cukerkas, preserves, marmalade, etc. Lithuanian farmer raises different grains, as, rye, wheat, barley, oats, peas buckwheat and some corn. Many acres of potatoes are planted each year.

As we see the woodlands fast disappearing and there places taken by productive fields, producing useful food for man. Lithuanian forest once cut down cannot be very easily replaced and this mistake cannot be easily remedied.

NEVER

Lithuania cannot and will not unite with Poland can be rested in the public minds that the kingdom of Poland of the Past found on democracy and five hundred years to place the ideas have come to nought. Will the Lithuanians unite? NO, NEVER.

NEVER

Kownoer Zeitung has printed a book on Lithuania in the German language. The book writes about the Lithuanians, their customs, etc. All looks good but Germany seems to be not lacking the annexing habit.

Rev. J. J. Jakaitis, of Worcester, Mass. has been reelected president of the Lithuanian National Fund. Worcester holds the first place in the list of the largest contributions to the fund for the relief of the war sufferers of Lithuania.

The sixth son of the kaiser is Prince Joachim, proclaimed candidate for the Lithuanian King.

The president of the Russian council said that the Russian democracy was founded on the same principles as that of the United States and that Russia would continue to fight until the aims of the two democracies are achieved.

The duma and the congress of workmen's and soldiers' councils are fighting. Both claim to be the legal representative of the people.

A LETTER

by the
Lithuanian Information Bureau
Washington, D. C.

To His Highness, Ferdinand di Savoja,
Prince of Udine, Head of the Commission
of the Italian Government
to the United States:

THE Lithuanian nation is amongst those that have suffered most from the terrible war now raging in Europe. Towns and villages have been devastated, and virtually the whole country is laid waste. The male population, the bread-winners, have been forcibly enrolled in the two opposing armies. The women

and children, many of them now widows and orphans, have been left without shelter to face death by hunger.

Such a fate has met a nation which, lying between the two races, Slav and Teuton, with which she has nothing in common, has been continually attacked and finally overwhelmed and deprived of her freedom, although her people have yet maintained their spirit of national individuality in spite of their political bondage. From the closing part of the eighteenth century up to the present war Lithuania has been under the domination of two governments which did not grant her the right of national existence, and under their control the riches of the Lithuanian nation have lain dormant.

History shows that in the time of her political strength, in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, Lithuania played a great part in the work of European civilization. With her own breast she protected the culture of Europe from the overflow of the Tartar hordes. During the centuries of her political independence she showed her skill in developing

the largest European state of its time. Shall the civilized world let perish the nation which has in her past such services and such accomplishments to augur what she might do in the future?

We strongly believe that, at this time, when the spirit of liberty predominates over the world, every powerful and progressive country will lend aid that each nation with the spark of life shall be permitted to regain and to develop that national life in the home land. The proclamation of the Allied Powers at the beginning of the present war, in behalf of the principle of liberty for all nations, confirms in us this belief.

Disasters overwhelm us, but we do not despair. Our concern is with the future. The sun of the sacrifices which we have borne upon the altar of the Allied Cause has exhausted our modest resources. Yet we bear up under the misfortunes which we have suffered during this war, and glory in the blood shed by our young men who have been and who still remain in the ranks of the Allied Armies. For all the injustices brought down upon our country we ask

no other recompense than our own freedom. For we desire only that we may have the opportunity to carry on the work of civilization in our native land and to contribute thereby to the world's cultural work and to the assurance of lasting peace, as a nation enslaved and oppressed could not do.

We should hope. Your Royal Highness, that our desires may be, by your kindness, submitted to the high consideration of the Government of the Kingdom of Italy. We believe that the freedom-loving Italian Nation will support and assist us to attain our aim. The strong voice of Italy at the future peace conference would be of power in obtaining for Lithuania the political independence which she seeks.



MY DREAM

by
ANDRIUKAS

I Remember I was asleep. I was in a wood. Here close by me stood a knight arrayed in the armor of war. His countenance was resolute, with the tightly closed lips and strong piercing eyes. For a brief moment he stood silent. A soft breeze shook the foliage. The laurels were in full bloom, and busy little workers entered each white blossom chamber together its gifts of honey. A lazy butterfly fluttered and rested upon a dry twig. 'Twas spring. Everything awakened, inspired with a noble desire to do, to accomplish something great. The small blades of grass thru their extended hands into the soil drew a nourishment dear, and they bent before the soft, gentle breeze. Violets would not be outdone, they bloomed to prove their thrift and industry. Small birds

uttered short, cheerful notes amongst the blossoming trees.

He stood here, a giant of ancient days so it seemed to me, his cheeks seemingly to be afresh with a longing, with a madness to begin and do noble deeds.

In long commanding notes he began:

"Arise, son of a noble ancestry. Lithuania needs you. A member of the great family never slept, or rested while dangers beset the country and enemies were at hand.

"Fate had bought your parents across the deep to liberties habitat. To this home of freedom that hands of Lithuania thru her noble son, Kosciusko helped build. Always ready to do their share, they never forgot their mother country, Lithuania. So, noble sire, American by birth, remember your duty to your suffering mother, Arise, go to her assistance. Your veins carry the blood that never feared to be spilled in freedom's cause, whether it was to demolish the Tartars, or liberating western Europe from the

yoke of the Crusaders."

My heart took fire. I had been ashamed for several years to acknowledge my descent. I had thought Lithuania had not figured in the world's history.

"Sleep not longer," he continued. "But arise take your armor and put on your suit of mail. Your enemies are entering their tombs, hasten so they should never come forth from there again. Rise, son of noble ancestry, and go to Lithuania's assistance."

My dream ended. He vanished. My memory cherished the beautiful command. From this day on I shall render my strength and energies in up-building and nursing to life and happiness my dear mother LITHUANIA.



LITHUANIAN STRUGGLES

THE Pittsburgh Telegraph, April 26th. gives an account of the struggles of the Lithuanian people to maintain a literature of their own in their native land in spite of Russia's decree to the contrary.

Rev. John Sutkaitis, who twenty years ago came to America, that the information is divulged to the American public. He tells of secret activities of the students to distribute books, periodicals, newspapers among the masses. These publications came from abroad and were smuggled into the country thru Germany. He also tells of his own experiences and the hazardous position he found himself by taking part in the work. At that time, according to Father Sutkaitis, the Czar commanded his officers to enforce an old edict of 1864, forbidding the Lithuanians to use any books, newspapers or publications of any kind unless these were printed in the Russian type. Even Bibles and prayer books were subject to this ban.

As the Lithuanians are of Sanskrit origin, their language was altogether different from the Russian, which is of the Slavic root, but herein, lay the motive of the Czar—the Lithuanians would be compelled to learn the language of the Romanoffs, or grope in illiteracy for want of enlightenment.

Such oppression, however, was not to be borne passively, the priest said, especially by a race whose hardy ancestors had checked the charging Tartars and routed them forever. Instead of humbling the Lithuanians, it aroused the national spirit of the people and united them into a stubborn and defiant commonwealth.

Periodicals and books of all kinds were printed in Germany and imported. Then the literature was distributed among all classes of the people, inflaming them with a revolutionary spirit. The distribution was carried on under cover.

One of the ruses employed was to circulate almanacs as prizes: in an apparent lottery, the buyer pay-

ing for the ticket, which was in reality a receipt for his subscription. This scheme was used by the students at the seminary, of which Rev. Sutkaitis was one. His version of the consequences follows:

“Just when our activities were in full swing, some one ‘tipped off’ the Russian officials. All the workings of our secret societies were laid bare. Knowing that discovery meant Siberia or other grave punishment, we hastened to destroy all possible evidences of our conspiracy.

“Before we had completed our task, the school was invaded by a corps of officers who searched every nook and corner of the building. I felt quite safe, having cleared all incriminating material out of my room, but one inquisitive searcher found in one of my books a forgotten page of a Lithuanian newspaper.

“I knew my time had come. To save myself I had to act quickly. First of all I stole from the room and hid from the sight of the officers. Thus I lay until midnight, when I returned to my room,

and taking with me what little clothing I had, I bade farewell forever to my school.

"It was late in December, in the dead of the Russian winter, and a terrific storm was raging. Scant protection against the frigid blast was the light uniform which students must wear, furs being denied to us. Fast as I fled thru the blinding blizzard, my speed could not warm me. At every step I felt my limbs grow stiffer and stiffer with cold. Finally my motion became merely mechanical. At last, trudging thus for twenty-four miles, I staggered into the home of a priest, whom I knew.

"After hearing my story, he inquired that I remain until morning, promising me the protection that lay in his power. He led me to his garret and here I dropped, exhausted, and soon was asleep.

"The police, however, had been hot on my trail. At about daybreak I was awakened by the servant of the house, who informed me that some soldiers were waiting below for me. The priest, he said,

early that morning left to conduct mass in his church. For then once I was 'stumped', but gathering courage, I faced my pursuers.

"I noticed that they were common soldiers. Men of such rank, I knew, were considered inferior to students and dare not question the word of a superior, unless they have positive proof to the contrary. On the strength of this I based my hopes.

"I told them that I had been granted leave to take a trip to Germany and had a passport in my pocket. The men were bound to take me at my word. Furthermore, they could not furnish proof to dispute me, as it was Sunday and the telegraph stations were closed. So I was saved for the time.

"When night came again, I saw my last chance to escape. The priest borrowed a team of horses and carriage from a neighbor and started with me toward the German frontier, knowing that his very presence would shield me. We had driven only a few miles when we reached a river. The surface seemed frozen

over. Across this we urged the horses, but the ice crashed in under the weight and our poor equines were soon floundering in the icy waters and we ourselves grappling for safety. Somehow or other we managed to return to shore.

"In the vicinity lived a farmer whose horses were accustomed to fording the frozen river. To him we went and my friend prevailed upon him to take us across. Three times we plunged into the waters, but each time the farmer turned back, declaring that it was a foolhardy risk of our lives. Finally, when the faint gleam of dawn lent us a little light, we made the hazardous venture. From the further side it was but a few miles to the frontier. I was stopped by the gendarmes, but a bribe overcame this obstacle, for money could buy anything in the power of the Russian officers.

"From Germany I wrote to my parents. They answered, imploring me to return, confident that my father could purchase my freedom, for he was wealthy,

owning a farm of 300 acres. But I refused. I had heard the call of freedom and America. Sixteen days later I was on the shores of this blessed land."

Rev. Sutkaitis is only one of the many who had to seek refuge in another country, to escape the clutches of the vile government, to which Lithuania in early days more than once extended a helping hand. But who can foretell the actual number, and it must be large, some rotted in chains behind the stern prison walls, or passed lonely lives separated from friends and home in the wilds of Siberia.

Even after the memorable uprising of 1905, when Lithuania was granted the freedom of the press and language, many of our talented men had to flee from their country, or be borne away to Siberia, because they worked for Lithuania's righteousness and justice.

Nothing, but these same causes brought our prominent men, our writers and many journalists to the shores of America. Vastly greater in value, would their services have been to mankind and to their coun-

try had they been allowed to go about their honorable activities unmolested.

The czar still nurtured the hope that he could extinguish what from a spark was transgressing into a flame and threatened to help destroy his plans.

The sufferings that Lithuania has borne for Russia thru the present war should prompt Russia not only to make a promise of freedom for the Lithuanian people, but it should bring forth Russia's pledge before the altar of democracy that she let the form of Lithuania's government rest with the Lithuanians. That and nothing else will redress the wrongs the former autocratic government had inflicted on Lithuania.



CAUTION

Polish propogandists are unloading fables on the English press. Their claim is baseless. Dreamers of the God-mother of Warsaw will remain dreamers.

Lithuania has come to stay.

CAUTION

To weigh your words is all right, if they are worth weighing.

Success puts a spring in your step, a glint in your eye, color in your cheeks, and happiness in your heart.

Wealth is not a bank-roll after all.

A stone deaf man is the only man who can afford to believe all he hears.

It is harder to stick at the top of the ladder than to get there.

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X

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Moteris.

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