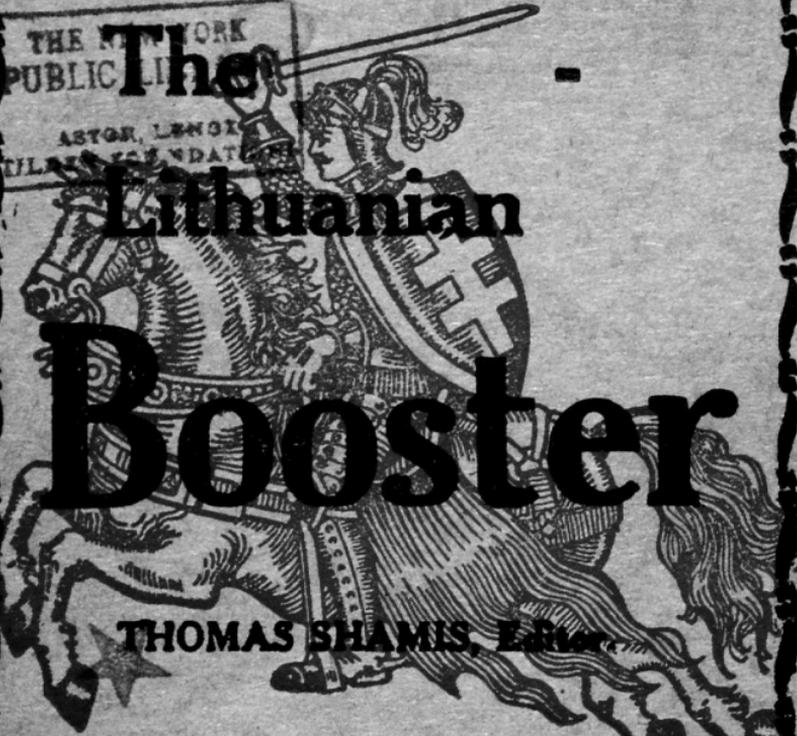


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THOMAS SHAMIS, Editor

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THE LITHUANIAN BOOSTER

ABOUT LITHUANIA AND LITHUANIANS

Thomas Shamis, Editor

Entered at Kingston, Pa., P. O. as Second Class Mail Matter.

Vol. 2

March, 1918

No. 10

THE CALL

LITHUANIANS of America are going together in the Metropolis this month. March is noted for his firey character and predomination. The Lithuanians will not "boil-over" but will take things in a nice quiet way. The gentle characteristics of the Lithuanians will reign supreme. All eyes will be turned to New York on the thirteenth.

THE LITHUANIANS

LITHUANIANS crossed from Asia to Europe about 2,000 B. C. and occupied the swamps and level lands covered with forests extending from the Danube river to the Baltic sea, which was then known as Suevicum Mare. They changed the name from Suevicum to "Baltas" meaning "white" in the Lithuanian language, and now it is known as the Baltic Sea.

According to the study of many prominent philosophers the Lithuanian language is the most beautiful and older than the Greek or Latin. Anthropology has proven that the Lithuanian language differs entirely from the language of the Slavs, as has been heretofore believed, but belongs to the Indo-European group and is nearer the sanskrit than any other language. As anthropology has proven that the Lithuanian language is older than the Greek, Latin and German, then the Lithuanians can say without doubt that theirs is

the oldest language spoken to-day.

Lithuania in early days was noted for its production of amber, precious stones and other minerals. They traded chiefly with the Greeks and the Romans. Greek historians wrote about the second century that the Lithuanians were a quiet race of people and never fought unless attacked. They had battles with the Mongolians, Tartars, Turks, Cossacks, Prussians, Poles and the Teutonic Orders: "Knights of the Cross" and "Sword-Bearers." Among the early rulers of Lithuania who stopped the invasionists were Prutenis, Videvutis, Pelemonas, Kernius, Gimbutas, Erdvilas, Utenis, Ringaudas, Mindaugis, Vytenis, Gediminas, Jaunutis, Algirdas, Keistutis and Vytautas. When Lithuania was in her prime she possessed twenty-two provinces, had a population of twelve million, and was considered a powerful nation. Lithuania extended from the Baltic to the Black sea, from the Vistula to the Bug, the Dvina and Dnieper rivers. Had not Lithuania united with Poland she would undoubtedly

have become one of the great powers of Europe.

The downfall of Lithuania started in the early part of the fourteenth century when Aldona, the daughter of Gediminas, married Casimer, the son of the King of Poland, these feelings were strengthened a little later (1386) by the marriage of Grand Duke Jagello with Hedwig, Queen of Poland, and were crowned in 1569 at Lublin where the Lithuanians joined the Poles, forming the Polish-Lithuanian Republic, and allowed the Polish Jesuits to come into Lithuania. Up to this time all the Lithuanians lived together, but when these joined the Poles the Eastern and the Southern Lithuanians who belonged to the Orthodox Church, revolted and joined the Russians. The Northern Lithuanians, who were pagans, also revolted, and were overcome by the Russians. The remainder, about five million joined the Poles.

Together with the Poles they fought against the Tartars, Turks, Teutons and Russians until 1795, when at great odds, they had to submit to Germany and

Russia. All the land that is now called East Prussia was taken by Germany; what was known as North Poland or as the Baltic provinces, but ought to be known as Lithuania, went to Russia. The Lithuanians were greatly oppressed by Germany and Russia. All their works were destroyed or hidden. Thereafter Lithuania was wiped off the map. At that time there were five Lithuanian provinces Vilna, Kovno, Grodno, Minsk and Mogilevo. The Russian czar of 1840 forbid the name Lithuania to be put on the map, and further forced the Lithuanians to speak the Russian and Polish languages.

In 1776 there came to America Thaddeus Kosciuszko to help the colonies in their fight for independence. By his wonderful skill and ability he soon gained the personal confidence of General Washington, who counted him a friend. He was a great Lithuanian warrior, not a Pole as some claim. A great many of the leaders who led Poland to victory in her battles were Lithuanians, but Poland would never give Lithua-

nia any honor.

The Russian revolution, 1904-5, gave the Lithuanians the opportunity to shake off the oppression and resulted in the freedom of the Lithuanian press, they have established schools, etc. Being totally oppressed for nearly four centuries still the Lithuanian Nation, succeeded in maintaining its language and its beautiful customs.



GETTING TOGETHER

SLOWLY, but with a steadiness that points only to eventual accomplishment, Lithuanians are beginning to feel the need of closer union—more thorough organization. Their power, when united, is beginning to be felt, and their impotency when acting as units certainly has been demonstrated. Some of the loose movements of old show this much if nothing else. The fake "unions" or even the sending of telegrams from Lithuania under the name of Poland, never would have been sent had the Lithuanians solidly opposed. The Lithuanian movement also has been muddled and befuddled by a more or less divided opinion. Every Lithuanian is for Free Lithuania, but when the fight is on, there is rather a sharp division of opinion as to how the goal be brought about. The result has been continued extortion at the hands

of the Polish propagandists, and this threatens to continue unless the Lithuanians get ready to resist this onslaught, and it will require the solid backing of the Lithuanians to bring about action that will bring success. This in a measure, will be a test case. It will demonstrate just how the Lithuanians believe in a common cause.

Lithuanians must act as a body if they are to be effective in combating movements inimical to their interests. Issues constantly arise in which Lithuanians are effected as a whole, and now and then the movement is confronted by a situation which jeopardizes the whole. When these emergencies arise, the Lithuanian movement should be such that a call to arms can be sounded and the forces of the Lithuanian movement be found to be more than a mere bubble.

Nothing would be lost to Lithuania by such a union. Organizations would not lose their identity. Nor need they sacrifice anything of their interest. Time will come, of course, when the Lithuanians, as

such, will unite as a whole, and when it does it will not matter very much what some approve or disapprove if the question of Lithuania be involved. The Lithuanians will be in a position then to enforce right, to demand and get fair play.



FRIENDS?

Lithuania uniting with Poland. NEVER, not after the past experiences the Lithuanians had with these unfriendly, slandering and malign friends. Lithuania will be free and the Poles will have enough to look after in their own Poland.

FRIENDS?

THE FIELD

THE whole tendency of the Lithuanian movement of to day is in the direction of Free and Independent Lithuania. What has been accomplished by the Lithuanian movement of the past is but a beginning. The field is a constantly widening one, and it presents opportunities not only to the Lithuanian of to-day, but to the Lithuanians of the future the aim being always to keep the Lithuanian movement intact.

What has been accomplished within the past few years is but a short prelude to what may be accomplished in the next year in the way of bringing of a free state—Lithuania.

The Lithuanian movement now in a high state of working will be used as heretofore, and will be put to further uses. The Lithuanian movement yet to come will extend the work already advanced, having for its purpose the enrollment of every true Lithuanian, with the result of rendering the Lithuanian movement

more effective.

In the field to-day there has been found two classes of patriots; namely: the statesmen and the politicians.

There is a well defined distinction between a statesman and a politician. The former seeks to serve the people, and incidently, but not primarily, to serve himself. The latter serves his party, often regardless of the interest or welfare of the people, but he always aims to serve himself first, last and all the time. When his policy, pursued by himself and others, who have control of the party machinery, brings on a political crisis, and his party is forced out of power. the statesman is called upon to restore it to popular favor. Sometimes this proves to be more than the best statesman in the party can accomplish, and the party remains out of power until the politicians in the other party find themselves on the losing side of a vital campaign. This a routine that has marked the political history of every representative country and every movement yet these repeated political upheavals

that have occurred have not taught the men who play politics, when dealing with the national issue, that there is always a day of reckoning and that the only way to retain the confidence of the people is to serve the interests of the people. When the wise man said: "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time," uttered a truth that is just as pertinent now as it was in his day.

The field is an open and inviting one, not only to the Lithuanian in professional life, but to the bright and thinking Lithuanian in other walks of life, who, in their daily life, are brought face to face with problems that have for their outcome the complete understanding of the Lithuanian in the world.

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MAGAZINE FOR BOOSTERS

Edited by THOMAS SHAMIS

Five Cents the Copy - Fifty Cents the Year

Published Monthly by THOMAS SHAMIS

27 Short Street

Kingston, Pa.

