

Direct Echoes

(AIDAI)

FRANCES H. SADOWSKAS, 6028 South Albany Avenue, Chicago, Ill.
Phone Republic 0420
Number 9 VOLUME I, Nov. 7, 1930.

LITHUANIA EVERYWHERE

The story of Lithuania is being spread and received with interest in almost every part of the United States. There is no need to mention the Lithuanian celebrities bringing fame to our nationality, but now by means of the radio the whole romantic and spectacular history of Lithuania is being told numerous radio stations both in Lithuanian and English.

Following is a talk given over Station WOR in New York on the YMCA Program, September 25, 1930 by Dr. George Albert Simons:—

THE BOYS OF THE BALTIC STATES, LITHUANIA

Radio talk by Dr. George Albert Simons over Station WOR on YMCA program, September 25, 1930.

Today I am to give the third in a series of four radio talks on the Boys of the Baltic States. The first was devoted to the Latvian boys, the second to the Estonian boys, and in today's talk I shall say a few things about the boys of Lithuania.

While the boys of these Baltic countries naturally have much in common, it was thought advisable to treat each nation separately and thus bring out certain facts and features peculiar to each country and their boys. Of course, some statements will bear repeating.

Inasmuch as the expression "The Baltic States" is frequently confused with "The Balkan States" it may not be amiss to give a brief geographical explanation. The so-called Baltic States are situated in northeastern Europe, while the Balkan States are located in southeastern Europe, or speaking more precisely, in the section that takes in the peninsula south or the Danube lying between the Adriatic, Aegean and Black Seas. The Baltic States or Republics take their name from the Baltic Sea in northern Europe, said group comprising Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and to these one might properly add Finland which is often mentioned in connection with the projected "Baltic Union." Prior to the Russian revolutions of 1917 and the ensuing Baltic wars of independence in 1917 and 1918, these four countries still belonged to the Russian Empire.

About five centuries ago the Lithuanian kings and knights held sway over a territory about three times the size of Poland. Their political and cultural influence was felt in that day. But, alas, wars of conquest destroyed the glory and power of the early Lithuanian rulers. The Lithuanian people passed through many very humiliating vicissitudes, but a rich heritage of traditions and historic heirlooms have served to keep the racial and national consciousness of Lithuania alive. Their beautiful, classic language, something like the

Latvian tongue is said to be one of the oldest survivals of the Sanscrit. Their state emblem of the Knight "Vytytis" dates back to the fourteenth century. Their noble State motto breathes hope and faith: "Be wath ay,

Lithuanians will always stay!"

When one speaks with such men as Doctor Jonas Sliupas and Martynas Jankus, outstanding figures in the Lithuanian movement for independence, one is deeply impressed with the indomitable spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism. Dr. Sliupas was the first editor of the first Lithuanian newspaper published many years ago in Tilsit, Germany, when the Lithuanian language was still prohibited in Russia. Dr. Sliupas spent 35 years in the United States but is now back again in his native land. Mr. Jankus is a Lithuanian patriot from the Klaipėda or Memel district where he has been very active in liberating that part of Lithuania from foreign occupation.

The Republic of Lithuania or Lietuva has an area of 21,804 square miles, its size corresponding approximately to that of West Virginia. Of course, if the disputed Vilna territory were added, then Lithuania's area would be a third larger. Lithuania's population numbers 2,316,615 but including the inhabitants of the Vilna section it would be fully 3,560,000. The population is 80% Lithuanian, 7% Jews, 4% Germans, 3.4% White Russian and Russians, 3% Poles, 2.6% Letts and Tartars. The country is predominantly Roman Catholic, i. e. 80%, ten percent being Protestants and seven percent Jews.

Eighty-five percent of Lithuania's youths originate in villages and are therefore innately healthy, both morally and physically. They are anxious to study and the schools are so overcrowded that the government is hardly able to build new schools fast enough. Throughout almost all of Lithuania it is compulsory to attend government schools. Besides these government schools there are many private schools. Comparing the present situation with that which existed before the war when Lithuania was under the rule of Russia we find quite a contrast: There were very few schools at that time and those were half-filled because the Lithuanians did not favor the Russian schools and studied at home secretly. The mothers were the real "school masters" of the Lithuanian youths during the reign of the Russian Czar. Paragraph 81 of the Lithuanian Constitution reads: "Religious instruction is obligatory in all schools, except those schools which were established for the children whose parents do not belong to any religious organization. The pupils are obliged to receive religious instruction in accordance with the religion to which they belong."

Lithuanian youths are interested in social problems, and this is especially true of the students of the State University of Kaunas which numbers about 4000 students. The Students' Council at the university is elected by the student body and is composed of 40 delegates, 27 of whom are Lithuanians and 13 representing other nationalities as well as the Jews.

The Lithuanian youths are intensely patriotic, their ideals finding expression in their stirring hymns, especially in the Lithuanian National Anthem, the words and music of which are composed by the great Lithuanian poet, composer and patriot, Dr. V. Kudirkas. He wrote this hymn in 1898. He spent much time in Russian prisons for the cause of his country and people. In one of those horrible dungeons he succumbed to consumption, and after much cruel treatment and suffering Kudirkas died in 1899. The Lithuanian National Anthem was his swan song. Here is the literal translation of it:

"Lithuania, our country, the land of the great!
In thy glorious past may thy sons seek strength,
May thy children walk only in the paths of righteousness,
May they work for thy good and people's welfare,
May the sun of light dispel the darkness
And the light and righteousness guide our steps.
May the love for Lithuania burn in our hearts:
For the Sake of that Lithuania, may unity blossom!"

Athletics gained popularity only after Lithuania had finally achieved its independence. Hence the athletic organizations, which already number over a hundred, with a membership of 15,000 are yet in their infancy. In spite of this fact, a number of Lithuanian athletes have won distinction in international contests. Their names are familiar. BULOTA, the ice-skater, and VINČA, the boxer, who is now visiting in America. Of the various forms of athletics English soccer football is the most popular in Lithuania. Great popular favor is also enjoyed by American baseball and basketball. Sports, rare in Europe, hockey and skating, are in much evidence during the winter season.

Besides the Boy Scout Movement, whose motto is: "For God and Country" there are various other youth organizations of a decidedly patriotic character, e. g., "Šauliai" (Riflemen's Association) which has a membership of 50,000 and whose motto is: "For Independence." Another youth association bears the name "Ateitininkai" and has the motto: "Renovate everything according to the teaching of Christ."

The Lithuanian boys of the present generation have been close enough to the World War and the Baltic Wars of independence to realize the exorbitant price a small nation has to pay for liberty. Soon after Lithuania had established its seat of government in the old Lithuanian city of Vilna, a dastardly blow was struck by its large neighbor Poland. That occurred October 9, 1920. I happened to be there a few days before. Again and again Lithuania, deprived of its capital and a large piece of territory, has

earnestly appealed to the League of Nations but seemingly the latter has been quite powerless to settle the Vilna question! And out of this very trying situation there has come a kind of "Vilna Day agitation" having a patriotic passion and deep religious glow and making a strong appeal to the youth of that young republic. On October 9 of each year "Vilna Day" is observed as a national day of mourning, and that day for one minute everything throughout the land stands still. A prayer for the return of Vilna has been prepared by one of the church dignitaries and is widely used in places of worship and schools. Wherever I have gone in Lithuania I have found so-called "Vilna Trees" planted in front of schools and churches on public squares, usually with an iron fence around them, and it is generally believed that these trees will help keep the memory of Lithuanians for ever capital green in the patriotic heart of the generation.

In closing let me quote a

passage from a letter written by my Lithuanian friend, Prof. A. Petraitis, an educational leader who was trained in America and who is now endeavoring to give Lithuania's boys the best he has received here:

"I must not forget to express my thanks to the United States of America. My 18 years in your country developed standards which I should like to see in Lithuania and every country. I know the U. S. A.! Having been a skilled laborer, a college and university student, lecturer, labor organizer, banker, social worker as well as a successful real estate broker, I gained an insight into your powerful country. —The new spirit will bring us in Lithuania many another blessing: temperance, morality, tolerance brotherly love and prosperity."

God bless Lithuania, and may her prayers for the return of Vilna some day be answered — and without bloodshed!
I thank you.

INTER-CLUB NEWS

AGAIN THE RUTA GAY GIRLS

And they are gay!

Last Sunday they drew a capacity crowd to the Sandara Hall when they staged "Fudge and the Burglar" in Lithuanian as part of the entertainment for their Halloween party. The play was charmingly staged and well acted, and we hope that Mr. Jurgelsonis, who is responsible in this instance, will continue to be their dramatic instructor and produce more of these pleasant entertainments.

With Aldona as a very determined and realistic burglar and Eugenia and Ella as typical boarding house govern-

esses, the play was thrilling. The two Nellies, Betty and Freda were th enaughty school girls.

The girls, with a little ingenuity, produced a truly appropriate scene for this little boarding school play. If they keep on working so hard, their fame as budding actresses is bound to spread.

After the play, games were played and tea and cake served. Of course, the little ones were not forgotten and Halloween candy and peanuts were on hand. Be it known, too, that we never gather in Sandara without dancing.

If you weren't there, you missed something! I was.

CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS

The night office of the Daily Illini was half-filled with acrid and biting blue smoke. Don Alden, sophomore on the sports staff, was sitting back in his chair with his heels up on the desk, head half erect, chewing tobacco, and reading proof. At too frequent intervals he straightened up, laid the proof on the desk, and marked some hieroglyphic on it in blue pencil. And at other intervals he straightened up to expectorate in the general direction of the waste-basket.

Several of the freshmen were already a little green around the gills from the tobacco they were chewing and Don chuckled to himself. This night, when all the Junior News Editors were at the Axe-Grinders Ball, the sophomores and freshmen had been left to put the paper to bed. Don had sent a freshman out to buy some chewing tobacco and then had passed it out liberally among the rest. And as one freshman after another left the room for the cool outdoors, Don chuckled friendly.

One of the disgruntled and disillusioned freshmen began a tirade of profanity when suddenly he stopped with mouth half open as the front door opened and a beautiful painted and bedecked

girl and a dirty and ragged brick-layer stepped into the office.

Nobody questioned their presence as these two were only a couple of the Axe-Grinders, resplendent in the glory of their fancy dress. It was Jay, Don's room-mate, but the girl Don had never seen before. "Or was she strangely familiar? While he was puzzling over who the girl could be, Jay came over to the desk, pulled Don's feet off it, and sat down on the desk.

"Don," Jay began, "I want you to meet Louise Brainerd, all decked out as a street-walker."

Don began to mumble the usual, "Glad ta meetcha," but suddenly stopped short. Louise Brainerd. Of course he knew her. Headn't they been — well — sweet hearts when they were about fourteen or so. But this girl was so much more beautiful than Louise had been. She smiled at him rather strangely. Mockingly.

Jay left them alone as he went over to see how the page was making out. Don started his "Remember when's" and soon they were lost in a flood of reminiscences. It was Louise Brainerd, way down deep it was the same Louise. But now she was every bit of what

Don had only dreamed her to be six years ago. She was absolutely gorgeous. But Jay came back before had said all he wanted to say. They left and the place seemed empty again to Don. But he knew she was Zeta Zeta.

Gee, her eyes had been so big and brown. Just as they had been such a long time ago, but they seemed deeper, softer... And her brown hair... rich... glistening... brown... soft... She didn't giggle the way she used to. But her mouth seemed to have a secret locked up behind it, a funny secret, and the corner of her lips were always quivering in expectation of a smile. When she smiled... but why should he start to rhapsodize about Louise when he was supposed to be in love with Ann Gaynor back home. Ann was a blonde. A blonde with a touch of soft light brown. But she was more serious, more ambitious. Maybe not more ambitious but a hard-worker. A girl that could work all day and then go to night-school three times a week was ambitious. How ashamed he felt at times when he thought of how she worked her way through school while he needed help. Ann was the kind of girl a fellow married after he got his degree. Huh? What was this?

"Sure, I okayed that head," Don said in haze of why's. "Well, it's lucky I caught it. Look at it again. It counts eighteen and a half." "My mistake, your error." Don came back to earth and became absorbed in his proof-reading. "Say, how do you spell separated?" he yelled.

In the bustle and monotony of his work and the frequent arguments with the linotype men about one thing and another, Don gathered no more wool. And when he got back to his room at three in the morning with Jay still out on the date, he was too tired and the room was too cold for him to think more about the evening's strange coincidence.

Next day was Sunday so Jay and Don slept late. About eleven, Don was aroused by Jay who was waving a Special Delivery letter at him and saying something about Ann. It was a Special from Ann. And of sudden all he had been thinking about the night before flashed back upon his mind again, right where he had left off. Yess... Ann... she was the type one married when one was well established... she was sweet... she was ambitious... but... so was Louise... at least she was six years ago. He'd have to date her some-time soon and find out just what she was like. And he could ask Jay about her. But covertly.

Four weeks later. Just before summer vacation. The spring and numerous dates with Louise had done their worst. Don realized that it had been infatuation and not love that he had left Ann for. At least that was what he told himself. And though someone had told him that absence made the heart grow fonder, they had not revealed of whom it would make one fonder. Why, there was even a song of that name. It was "Absence makes the heart grow fonder of somebody else." It was true. Ann was now only a picture and a Special Delivery letter every Wednesday and Sunday morning. And Louise... she was... she was all that

Ann had been before.

But now he had to go back home. He had too much a sense of honor and consideration to forget all about Ann. What was he to do? Louise lived on the next block. Ann lived all the way miles away. He could see her from there. But with his meagre pecuniary resources he could only see each of them only once a week. And if he didn't see them, he would feel lonely and that was wrong. He would let things take care of themselves until he got back home. He had just got back home yesterday. Ann. She was still here. Even more so than usual. Luckily for Don the evening was a hoot one since it was a Wednesday night and the conversation centered on what had happened at school. On what both of them had done at school. Ann was very absorbed in her work. Already she had two designs accepted by Marshall Field's. All the way home from Ann's, Don pondered as to what he should do. He had always been a little weak on decisive actions. He had always liked to let things ride.

Friday night and another date with Ann. What would Louise think of him? But he would explain it all to her Saturday night. It would be all right if he would tell her the truth about it all. Tonight, Ann seemed detached. She was far away, seemingly in the clouds. Maybe she was happy because he was back. Maybe she was already making plans for something. She couldn't hold him to his silly promises, could she? He'd tell her the truth, too. Right here at the beautiful Via Trano, with the orchestra playing, "Can't we be friends?" But what was that she was saying?

Don. I have something to tell you that is going to be hard for me," she was saying. "It's nobody's fault that I can see except the University's fault for not giving you more vacations this spring. You see while you are away I — it was hard to keep her from being you and it would be an unfair of you to come to me to stay at home this time. We didn't want you to go. We wouldn't want you to go. It was her fault. He couldn't tell her to do that and she wouldn't want you to do that. But what was she saying at?

"Well, Don, I must get somebody of whom I have grown very fond. He and—we're engaged. You'll understand won't you? Can't we be friends anyway? And—"

She was telling him what he had been planning to tell her. Can't we be friends? The orchestra was playing it; dancers were humming it; she was saying it to him. And he was saying, "Sure, I understand." And she was relieved, and he was relieved. And he was asking her to dance this one because he liked the words so well. And the words to the song said, "Can't we be friends?"

R. D. Zimont.

"BIRUTE"

"Birute," whose members had so jolly a party last Saturday, is giving a patriotic concert December 14th in commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the death of Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania.

This concert will be one of the finest of its kind.

