

Literary Look

THE LITHUANIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA

Lithuanians in exile manifest their national culture not only through concerts, art exhibits, Lithuanian Saturday Schools, numerous organizations, lectures, publication of many varied books, magazines, or weekly and daily newspapers, they are doing more than that. Although a small national group they can be proud of one special achievement which no national immigrant group, except the ten times larger Polish group, can claim. Lithuanian scientists, intellectuals, and scholars in Boston, Massachusetts, started to publish the Lithuanian Encyclopedia (Lietuvių Enciklopedija) in 1953 in the Lithuanian language.

The complete Lithuanian Encyclopedia will comprise 20—24 volumes, and is being completed at the rate of 3—4 volumes a year. Five have already been published, up to the letter E. Each volume, bound in a 7x9 inch hard cover, consists of 540 pages. It is well illustrated with black-white and color prints and photographic pictures.

The Lithuanian Encyclopedia is not a reprint of the older one, published in free Lithuania twenty years ago or a translation of any American Encyclopedia; neither does it include only subjects related to Lithuania or Lithuanians. It is a newly edited reliable encyclopedia, discussing topics any encyclopedia includes. Understandably, of course, it focuses more attention on Lithuanian questions, concentrates on her history, literature, biographies of Lithuanian leaders, and is written in the Lithuanian language.

Obviously, in order to be able to produce such a work in exile, without the availability of Lithuanian archives, libraries, museums, etc., the co-operation and support of all Lithuanians were necessary. The subscribers, about 5000 only, have made the encyclopedia financially possible. Those who had any documents of historical value, albums or pictures from Lithuania donated them for the encyclopedia's use. Lithuanian scientists, intellectuals, and scholars have contributed articles and did the research on newest data in their fields, mostly at night, rather than during the day when they work in factories and shops, not in universities, colleges, research institutes or scientific laboratories as they would in their own country.

The editorial staff went through many hardships in organizing the network of contributors from all over the free world. More than ninety per cent of the subscribers live in the U.S.A., about five per cent in Canada and only a few in South America, Australia, Great Britain and Europe.