

# Duluth Jeweler, Home From Trip Abroad, Describes Trade Status

## Lithuanian Conditions Indescribable, Julius Garon Says.

Business and labor conditions in Germany are at a high peak as compared to the conditions in England and France, according to Julius Garon, Duluth jeweler, who has just returned from a three months' trip to European countries. Mr. Garon visited cities in France, Switzerland, Germany, England and Lithuania. Conditions in Lithuania are indescribable, Mr. Garon said.

American business men who order goods from German manufacturers cannot depend upon obtaining the goods at the price ordered, he stated. The goods are often subject to advance in prices of 100 per cent. Mr. Garon placed a small order for goods in Germany and when the goods arrived in New York he was notified of an increase of more than 100 per cent over the original price. This is due, Mr. Garon explained, because of the large amount of orders placed with German manufacturers.

### Housing Conditions Poor.

While housing conditions in Germany are poor, Mr. Garon said, the government regulates the rent allowing only 50 to 60 per cent increase over prewar rents.

"Americans in Germany are welcomed while the French people seem to be after the American's money only," Mr. Garon declared. "Americans residing in Germany are able to live comfortably for less than half of the cost of living in the United States."

Strikes and lockouts have seriously affected the labor condition in Sheffield, England. Purchasing is at a low ebb and prices of foodstuffs are high in the territory which contains the largest mills in the country. Mr. Garon declared. Prices throughout the European countries visited by Mr. Garon are on the same average as those in America with the exception of Germany, Mr. Garon added.

The French populace in general has no respect for the American visitors, Mr. Garon continued. The French have a "want to get even attitude." Several persons declared to Mr. Garon that America entered the war to gain financially.

### Passport Destroyed.

Drunkenness and bribery prevail in Lithuania. Mr. Garon declared he was forced to wait five days before he was able to procure a passport to Sirvintal, a village between Lithuania and Poland, where his parents lived. Mr. Garon's father died five days before Mr. Garon reached his destination. Citizens who wish to do right are at a disadvantage in Lithuania. Three days before leaving Sirvintal for Lithuania a drunken military officer destroyed Mr. Garon's passport.

After Mr. Garon obtained a duplicate passport the military officer refused to countersign it. He was forced to pay 1,200 marks to obtain the signature. Not content with having forced him to pay for the signa-



JULIUS GARON.

ture, the officer detailed a soldier to accompany Mr. Garon and his mother to the boundary line, Mr. Garon said. Mr. Garon's mother, who is 70 years old, arrived here with him.

### Whisky as Bribe.

A bribe of a bottle of whisky enabled Mr. Garon to reach the post-office which was located past the boundary line of Lithuania. The soldier on guard refused to allow Mr. Garon to re-enter the country without the payment of more whisky, but Mr. Garon threatened to inform the American consul of the affair. While traveling a distance of 50 miles in Lithuania the party was stopped six times and asked for their passports.

The party found no difficulty in gaining entrance to the United States but Mr. Garon was forced to spend three days to obtain a certified copy of his mother's birth record.

Merchants in Lithuania are given food once each month to distribute to their customers. The merchants are required to fill an order blank, Mr. Garon explained, but if any discrepancies are discovered the food is confiscated by the military authorities. The confiscated food is not given to the populace but is used by the military authorities, he added.