

children keep their earnings and pay board; they usually all work and live together, and then at marriage each child receives a portion, or after the death of the parents all is equally divided among the children. The Bohemian women are clean and thrifty, economical housekeepers, and very good cooks. They know the art of making a little go far; and this enables them to feed large families with comparatively meagre sums.

The Illinois State factory inspector has said that of all the children who come to her for medical examination, the Bohemian and Jewish children are the best fed; although these "best-fed" children who work in the factories are usually from the poorest families, where frequently as many as six are fed on less than five dollars a week.

It is not the general custom for the mothers and wives of Bohemians to go out working; but more and younger children go out to work here than in any other Bohemian community. The reason for this is that there is a greater demand for child-labor in Chicago, the supply for which is recruited from the ranks of the needy families of all nationalities. It is a great temptation to all foreigners to sacrifice their children; for the little ones can often get work when grown people, slow to learn a new language, are forced to be idle. The Bohemian press is doing all in its power to discourage this objectionable child-labor, and urges compulsory educational laws.

#### RELIGION.

It is estimated that the larger half of the Bohemian population in Chicago is Catholic, while the rest are non-church-goers. The Catholic Bohemians have in Chicago eight parishes, with fine church edifices, of

which that of St. Prokopius, corner of Allport and Eighteenth Streets, is the largest and most costly. With the school-buildings, convent, church, and rich farms, it has property the value of which exceeds a million dollars. In every parish there is a Bohemian school, where a half-day is devoted to teaching the English branches, and the afternoon to teaching the Bohemian language, grammar, and catechism. The pupils in these number not less than two thousand seven hundred.

The Bohemian order of Benedictines of St. Prokopius parish has founded a Bohemian College, which is equivalent to the common high school, offering the same curriculum; and it has also a business course, all in the Bohemian language. In each parish there are organizations of men and women, many being benevolent, others more purely social and religious. There are four Catholic Bohemian newspapers published in Chicago, — one daily, one children's paper, the other two weeklies. The Catholics have their own halls, theatres, schools, and cemetery.

The Protestants have two Bohemian churches: one the Congregational "Bethlehem," and the other the "John Huss" Methodist Episcopal church, and two Methodist Episcopal missions. They publish two papers: one the *Pravda*, Congregational; and the other the *Krestanski Posel*, published by the Bohemian Methodist pastors. These churches have about fifteen hundred members.

One of the many reasons why the Protestant movement has not gained a stronger hold on the Bohemians is that it was initiated by strangers or foreigners; but now that the native Bohemians are taking hold of the work themselves, they are naturally more successful,

and their fellow-countrymen are more willing to listen to the message uttered in their own tongue by their own people.

There is a secular society known as the "Svobodna Olbec," which has its speaker, and is pronounced in its agnostic philosophy. One of its chief objects is to publish agnostic literature and arrange anti-religious lectures. This society numbers about one hundred members.

The remainder of the Bohemian people are simply non-church-goers, and call themselves "freethinkers," most of them having no definite philosophy, only cherishing antagonism against church institutions. Of these, the greater part merely imitate and repeat the sayings of the newspapers, many of which are edited by agnostics. These people have suffered so much in Bohemia from the state and the clergy, that when they once feel themselves relieved from the "yoke of bondage," they are not afraid to voice their sentiments, and are very bitter in their hatred. They have learned to associate the Roman Catholic Church with the Austrian house of Hapsburg; and the oppressions of these two powers have been the chief reason why so many intelligent people in Bohemia, especially the "Young Czechs," are hostile to the church, and have accepted so readily the materialism of Western Europe.

The freethinkers have four Bohemian-English schools, where both Bohemian and English are taught. They are devoted to the public school, and have the Bohemian schools only as an offset to the parochial schools. The children usually go for a year or two to the Bohemian school, where they learn to read and write in

Bohemian, and then enter the public schools. They have separate halls, theatres, and societies. When the priests refused to baptize, marry, or bury the members of these societies, they separated entirely, and now even have their own cemetery. There are one hundred and sixty societies, all of which have some benevolent object, such as paying death-benefits, supporting schools, etc.

Besides these, there are eleven singing and dramatic clubs. The latter clubs give several plays during the season, and the money made is donated to some good cause. There is a great deal of rivalry between these amateur actors, and they do not hesitate to try their abilities on the best of Shakespeare's or Sardou's dramas.

The freethinkers publish three daily newspapers and seven weeklies, so that the Bohemians publish in all sixteen newspapers in Chicago.

#### CITIZENSHIP.

In 1860 several of the Bohemian-Slavonian young men organized a Lincoln Rifle Company, and this was the first regiment that went from Chicago to fight for the Union; and to-day the best monument in the Bohemian cemetery speaks of the patriotism of those early immigrants, who had already learned to love their adopted country so well as to be ready to lay down their lives for its preservation. Year after year their fellow-countrymen gather about this monument, and with flowers and addresses honor the memory of their fallen brethren.

In political life almost all the old settlers, before and