

*Studies in Judaica Americana.* By RUDOLF GLANZ. Foreword by JACOB R. MARCUS. (Ktav Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1970. Pp. 407. \$14.95.)

The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision on the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, 195 years after the Declaration of Independence, shortly before the July 4 anniversary, underscores the freedom, power and resilience of the Republic. It bears out again the magnetism of freedom for the immigrant-citizens of the United States over the years — not the least of whom were Europe's persecuted Jews "yearning to be free."

Rudolf Glanz, author of *Studies in Judaica Americana*, brings a keen focus on the role of the Jews of the Germanic states in the upbuilding of America as the land of opportunity in freedom.

Historian Jacob R. Marcus, of the American Jewish Archives, Hebrew Union College, points out in the foreword: "Time and research will reaffirm that the Jews of Central Europe were of paramount importance in the history of American Jewry. Recently we have begun to hear the first croaks of revisionists questioning the significance of the German Jewish contribution to Jewish life on this continent. We are told that American Jewish history in the real sense of the term gets under way only with the East European immigrants in the 1880's. The facts, the bare facts, are otherwise.

"Actually, Central Europeans dominated the American Jewish scene as early as 1720. The Sefardic synagogue rite held sway until well into the 1800's, but the ethnic culture of the Central Europeans — in a variety of forms, of course — prevailed among American Jews for some 200 years."

Not until 1920 was this community's top-drawer status put under challenge — and not fully even then — when the new Americans of Eastern European descent established a provisional American Jewish Congress to dispute the leadership of the American Jewish Committee, whose origins reflected Central Germanic Europe. The American East European challenged the American Central Europeans — as they once challenged the American Sefardim or Mediterranean Europeans.

From the 1720 period through the 1840's large numbers of German Jews came to America. They dominated the synagogue community, laid the foundations of our present Jewish "megalopolitan organizational structure," and "sanctioned and luxuriated in the proliferation of synagogues." "Every man to his tents, O Israel." (In Biblical interpretation, "tents" have always been taken to mean schools

of learning and houses of worship.)

The climate of American freedom loosing pent-up social service energies, the German Jewish community developed "our autonomous mutual-aid and welfare societies, our clubs, our Young Men's Hebrew Associations, our shelters for the aged, our orphan homes, and our hospitals.

"It was they who first federated our charities, who sent chaplains into the armies, established congregations, unions, founded rabbinical seminaries, and created our national civic defense organizations.

"What we are today we owe in large part to them."

Prof. Marcus in his foreword asserts that the historic term "What is past is prologue" is true only in a limited sense.

"Without that past the future rides rudderless on the sea of history."

Author Rudolf Glanz is more than a historian's historian. Historicity to him is much more than the mountain-hopping of catastrophic history, delineating only the explosion of huge events and the crump-crump of the footsteps of the giants of the times. No, instead, human historian Glanz probes the guts of community and common man, the history between the lines of the history. Glanz deals with the "lore of the people," probing what the new American Jew sees in himself, and what the American Gentile sees in his Jewish fellow-citizen. No one has ever taken quite such a focus.

Author of *Jews and Chinese in America* and *The Jews of California from the Discovery of Gold until 1880*, Rudolf Glanz is a research historian at YIVO, the famous Jewish historical archives center, transplanted from the pillage and horror of Hitler's Europe to the shores of freedom.

The Glanz essays will be mined with profit by fellow historians. They will also be read by the descendants of the builders of vital and viable structures in the societal landscape of America. It is the story of the lively lives of "a generation of immigrants who built better than they knew."

And all Americans are the better for their building. Today, we think we see a special restlessness among peoples, especially youth. But Glanz allows us a glance at another generation, and we find that there are few things new under the sun — maybe somewhat different, but not so new.

Impelling factors for emigrating to America were many, but among them "discrimination by officials occupies first place, but the consciousness of fixed legal disabilities served in no less a degree as a

sufficient reason for leaving the homeland. . . . The hopelessness of such a status was felt particularly by the younger generation." Sic!

"Up, and to America" became a cry that many answered; brave ones, sometimes with family, often alone, they took up the wanderer's staff to seek their fate in a new world. The peddler became the store keeper and the store keeper became merchant prince, and the merchant prince became the philanthropist and public benefactor. Their names are legion in America. All of this we saw, in Pittsburgh, as well as in other great cities.

The schools, the free professions, the manual crafts, the arts, the social services, the sciences, higher education, government, the political life, the reforms of cities and society — all felt the impact, the storehouses of human energy and strivings whose doors were opened by freedom.

We are reviewing day by day in the newspapers, and also on TV, the storehouse of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, under the impact of our own contemporary events. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

What storehouses of freedom were opened by those words to immigrant people who could not read them with their eyes — yet — but read them well into their hearts. Our forefathers, all, built better than they knew!

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*Civil War Naval Chronology, 1861-1865.* (Naval History Division, Navy Department, 1971. Pp. 1,090. Illustrations, maps, foreword, appendices, index. \$9.75.)

Rear Admiral Ernest McNeil Eller and Commodore Dudley W. Knox in their introduction to *Civil War Naval Chronology* state that "The story of the Civil War truly cannot be told in any of its important aspects without bringing in the influence of the sea." Naval warfare did, indeed, play a vital part in the Civil War. Every school-child knows of Admiral Farragut and of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* but emphasis has usually been placed on the land battles