

probably also for Civil War students and historians, but what about the general reader? He or she may consider the book to be dull, tedious, and difficult to comprehend. Sommers assumes the reader not only has a good grounding in Civil War history but also has some knowledge of small unit tactics and the organization of Civil War armies. There are other difficulties for the general reader. Battle descriptions can be boring with the tedious but necessarily detailed descriptions of unit movements and the nature of the terrain around Petersburg.

A minor style problem was also apparent in *Richmond Redeemed*, specifically, the choice of substitute words and phrases. Obviously, Sommers was trying to keep from boring his readers when he called Grant the Illinoisan, General August V. Kautz the Badener (he was born in Germany), General Butler the Massachusetts man, and so forth. It would have been better to have just kept repeating the names of the men. The substitutes are grating as is the repetitive use of "butternuts" for the Confederate army and "blue coats" for the Union army. But these are really nit-picking comments about a truly well written account of the battles. Military historians and Civil War students will welcome with pleasure this masterful addition to their literature. As for the general reader, he or she has been given fair warning.

Pittsburgh

EDWARD H. HAHN

*Immigrant Women*. Edited by MAXINE SCHWARTZ SELLER. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981. Pp. x, 347. Introduction, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$17.50, hardbound; \$8.95, paper.)

Maxine Seller has made a significant contribution to the literature on American immigrant women with this anthology of forty-five excerpts from autobiographical sources, fiction, scholarly literature, and accounts by contemporary third parties. The editor has organized her material into eight major categories and introduced each with an essay descriptive of the contents and enriched by additional information on each topic. The essays themselves constitute a narrative history of women's immigration arranged under the following headings: "Why They Came," "Surviving in a New Land," "Work,"

"Family," "Community," "Education," "Social Activists," and "Daughters and Granddaughters." The selections excerpted document a wide range of experiences of women who emigrated to the United States between the mid-nineteenth century and the 1970s.

Although twenty-one of the forty-five selections are by or about Scandinavian, Polish, and eastern European Jewish women, the book is diversified by accounts of Japanese, Irish, Syrian, Chinese, German, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and West Indian women as well. While the experience of Hispanic women deserves more extensive coverage, in this book the numbers representing different cultural backgrounds are not of primary importance. This is not meant to be a study in immigrant or ethnic culture; it is a book in women's history. Even though many of the experiences documented deal with specific cultures, the overall emphasis is on the unity of the female experience.

Seller sets out to portray distinctly female experiences written from a feminine perspective. "Only in this way," she writes, "can the bias of traditional history be corrected." The story of Dr. Maria Zakrewska, a Polish-born physician, provides one striking example. Having established a women's clinic, hospital, and nursing school in New York with Doctors Emily and Elizabeth Blackwell in 1857, Zakrewska was in charge of the housekeeping as well as patient care and teaching. She did all the marketing, planned the menus, helped in the kitchen, shopped for drugs and hospital supplies, and spent evenings with colleagues sewing pajamas and linens for hospital needs. Excerpts on childbirth, family, suffrage, and birth control further document the distinctive experience of women.

The editor has deliberately chosen to avoid interpretation and generalized conclusions, preferring to let her materials speak for themselves. Yet, the selections in this anthology do suggest a unifying theme. That theme is "survival," and immigrant women were survivors. From Poland or Japan, in the city of Pittsburgh (represented by the work of the reviewer) or on the Dakota plains, whether a mature and competent physician from Poland or a submissive teen-aged bride from Italy, these immigrant women exhibited a distinctive stoicism and strength. The oral history of *Rosa* recorded by Marie Hall Etts in Chicago and the case histories of immigrant working women in eastern Pennsylvania reported in Caroline Manning's 1930 study for the Federal Women's Bureau demonstrate survival strategy

as dramatically as do the novels of O. E. Rolvaag and Vilhelm Moberg which are also excerpted in this wide-ranging anthology. Accepting reality and doing what had to be done in a direct, matter-of-fact manner were qualities essential to the survivor. The autobiographical materials that demonstrate these qualities were selected from written memoirs, published books, oral histories, letters, diaries, and speeches.

For the concluding section, "Daughters and Granddaughters," the editor selected the work of six second-generation American women. Four of these tell of culture clash, misunderstanding, prejudice, and the pain of marginality experienced by daughters of immigrants "cut off from the culture of parents but not integrated into the mainstream of Anglo-American culture" (p. 280). The other two selections deal directly with relationships between ethnic women, traditional culture, and the women's movement. Although the editor formulated no definitive conclusion or interpretation, her final essay introducing "Daughters and Granddaughters" seems to ask the question, "Are third-generation American women producing a creative synthesis of their ancestral and American heritage?" This and more provocative questions underscore the need for serious studies on the history of immigrant women and their descendants.

Maxine Seller's anthology presents a panoramic view from the feminine side of American pluralism. The book is skillfully edited and includes a selective and thoughtful bibliographical essay. General readers will find *Immigrant Women* informative and interesting; teachers and students will find it a useful source book and a welcome addition to the still sparse literature on immigrant women.

Pittsburgh

CORINNE AZEN KRAUSE

*Electric Traction on the Pennsylvania Railroad, 1895-1968.* By MICHAEL BEZILLA. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980. Pp. 233. Acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, notes, note on sources, appendixes, index. \$16.75.)

Michael Bezilla, historian of the Pennsylvania State University, wrote this with the cooperation and support of the Association of American Railroads and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Therefore much of the practical interest of this ex-