BOOK REVIEWS


Hugh Henry Brackenridge left Philadelphia for Pittsburgh in 1781 and lived in Pittsburgh until 1801, when he removed to Carlisle. During the twenty years he spent on the frontier the impact of the environment on the man produced the novel *Modern Chivalry.* Frontier life and frontier politics afforded rich material for the exercise of Brackenridge's bent toward satire and realism. Volumes 1 to 3 of the novel were published in 1792 and 1793; volume 4 appeared in 1797 and part 2 in 1804–05. The first collected edition of *Modern Chivalry* was published in 1815, the year before Brackenridge's death. Since that time several reprints have appeared and the book has been recognized as an American classic. The present edition includes, for the first time, all the material published in the first editions of the various parts and is edited with an introduction by the writer of a recent biography of Brackenridge. Students of American literature and specialists in the period of American history involved will find it useful, and the general reader with a taste for Cervantes and Smollett will find it entertaining. In estimating Brackenridge's importance in politics the editor has perhaps been less critical than in his other evaluations. On page xviii he says that in 1798 "Brackenridge became the founder and leader of the Republican party in western Pennsylvania" and notes as his authority a reminiscent work by the son, Henry Marie Brackenridge. Students of the politics of the region will question this statement; Albert Gallatin was distinctly more important than Brackenridge both in founding and in leading the party in the western section of the state.

Samples of Brackenridge's political verse are to be found in the aptly entitled book, *Our Rude Forefathers*, a perusal of which will amply justify the adjective. An introductory chapter deals with some of the better-known writ-
ers of satiric political verse, including—besides Brackenridge—Freneau and the "Hartford Wits." The other chapters group the poems treated according to subject matter—foreign affairs, the Tories, the Society of the Cincinnati, the Constitution, and so forth. Many of the poems discussed are anonymous contributions to the news-press of the day. Few of the poems are printed in full, but probably few deserve to be. Material of interest for western Pennsylvania is to be found in chapter 6, "The Nation's Purse," and in chapter 8, "The Fabrick of Freedom." In portions of these chapters the Brackenridge-Findley feud is discussed in connection with the Pennsylvania charter of the Bank of North America and with the ratification of the Constitution. Though this book will probably not be of great interest to the general reader, it represents much sound and solid research and contains new material copiously confirming and illuminating the historian's interpretations of sectional reactions to the problems confronting the American people from 1783 to 1788. More careful editing of the manuscript might have avoided such inconsistencies as the spellings "defence" (pp. 160, 180, 196) and "defense" (pp. 213, 233); "Bladensburg" (pp. 121, 263) and "Bladensburgh" (pp. 201, 226, 249). An error, possibly typographical, is the spelling "Windam" County, Connecticut (p. 162).

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DR. ANTOINE-FRANÇOIS SAUGRAIN DE VIGNI was a French physician and scientist who settled at St. Louis in 1800 and spent most of his life in America. Henry Marie Brackenridge lived with the Saugrain family for a year at Gallipolis, and he has left an account of the doctor in his Recollections of Persons and Places in the West (Philadelphia, 1868). Dr. Saugrain was a methodical man, and some of his journals and notes survive and have been translated into English. Several decades after the translations were printed, this work, containing an introductory life of Dr. Saugrain and the original reading of the notes and journals, appears in attractive format.