

### Book Reviews

*Médecins, libertins et pasquins*, by M. FLORKIN (Médecine et médecins au pays de Liège, III), Liège, Librairie Fernand Gothier, 1964, pp. 198, no price stated.

In this book Professor Florkin has brought together some of his essays on the medical past of Liège. The period is the eighteenth century and the story is one of internecine strife within the profession exacerbated by continuous assaults upon it from quack and layman. The author's research was made mainly in local archives and dialect literature, and if any criticism can be made against him it is that his predilection for facsimiles has broken up an essentially interesting narrative. On the other hand the dialect literature through which the story unfolds is always accompanied by versions in modern French.

The main character is Michel-Procope Couteau, son of a famous Parisian café-owner, doctor, theatre-lover, and satirical writer. One of his best known works is *Art de faire des garçons*. He had the good fortune also to be pilloried in Lesage's novel *Gil Blas*; such fame, when it comes, is to be treasured.

Until M. Florkin's burrowings in local sources we knew no more of the period 1729–33 in Procope's life than that he had been domiciled in Belgium. This book now relates the quarrels in which he was involved, whilst at Liège, with the Baron de Walef and a quack named Delille. The second problem which M. Florkin poses and leaves unsolved, viz. what happened to Procope in London between 1713 and 1725, is one which intrigues the British reader even more. We do know from a letter transcribed in these pages that he 'studied anew under the illustrious doctors who were not too proud to consult with me'.

E. GASKELL

*Bedeutende Gelehrte in Leipzig. Zur 800-Jahr-Feier der Stadt Leipzig*. Edited by MAX STEINMETZ *et al*, Leipzig, Karl-Marx-Universität, 1965, 2 vols., DM. 17.

This well-produced *Festschrift* in honour of the 800th anniversary of the city of Leipzig is divided according to branches of learning. Volume I gives biographies and appraisals of scholars in the humanities, including legal history, and Volume II does the same for the sciences. Starting with Camerarius in the sixteenth century, they are arranged chronologically up to the present day. The 35-page introduction which curiously places Prague and Vienna in Eastern Europe, does not tell us that Leipzig University was founded in 1408 though giving some details on the circumstances of the exodus of students and professors from Prague University to found that of Leipzig. It is mainly concerned with the influence of the city of Leipzig on the University and vice versa. Each scholar merits an article, including a portrait, written by a present-day specialist in his field. The stress is on the life and personality of each scholar and the assessment of his importance for the development of ideas in his field of research. Where questions of philosophy or sociology are involved the point of view is that of dialectical materialism, as for instance in the representation of Hans Driesch or Henry E. Sigerist. The intention is biographical rather than bibliographical, and only the main works are mentioned with occasional references to bibliographies elsewhere. The medical men dealt with are: Hans Driesch (biology, in Volume I because of his preoccupation with philosophy), Carl Reinhold August Wunderlich (pathology), Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig (physiology), Wilhelm His