Throughout the book there are numerous Latin quotations, sometimes taken from manuscripts, sometimes from printed books. In a high proportion of these there is at least one mistake in transcription. Some of these are due, presumably, to faulty proof-reading; but others are serious and make nonsense of the passage quoted. On p. 29, for instance, in recording a question of Petrus Hispanus on the *De Urinis* of Ysaac, we get the following words: *Tertia noctis estibilitatis*. . . . The correct reading should be: *Tertia vero digestibilitas*. On p. 41 the phrase *horum alieno emulantes laboravi* is meaningless: it should be *quidam horum alieno emulantes labori*, whilst the reference on the same page to the Viaticum of Constantine should read, *pre parvitate sui*, not *pre pravitate sui*. There are many others which could be mentioned. The worst of all is the passage at the bottom of p. 51, beginning *Rerum principio*, which utterly defies translation.

It would be ungracious to end on this note of criticism, for the book as a whole will be of the greatest use to students, but in the interests of accuracy it would be better if such blemishes could be eliminated from the future studies which, we feel sure, Dr. Schipperges will produce for our enlightenment.

C. H. TALBOT

The Royal Malady, by CHARLES CHENEVIX TRENCH, London, Longmans, 1964, pp. x, 245, 30*s*.

This book covers similar ground to J. W. Derry's *The Regency Crisis and the Whigs 1788–9*, reviewed in these columns 1964, **8**, 195–6. It has the additional attraction for medical readers that the author pays more regard to clinical details and has adduced material from the diaries of two of the physicians in attendance on George III: Sir George Baker's, preserved in the family archives, and Dr. John Willis's in the British Museum. Unfortunately Mr. Chenevix Trench's knowledge of medicine and more particularly of psychiatry are not sufficient to allow him to make the best use of the facts. Such statements as of the first and least documented illness of 1765 that 'It was either a nervous breakdown, or an early attack of insanity' jar painfully.

But it is the second illness of 1788–9 and its political repercussions which are the book's main theme, and here there is ample information in contemporary diaries, correspondence, newspapers, parliamentary reports, and party squibs and scandal sheets. So much material and so much of it biased or gossipy or plain invention, interspersed with clinical observation couched in the language and theory of a bygone age, would intimidate even the expert patho-biographer. Mr. Chenevix Trench, however, soldiers on fearlessly, fording the rapids of medical doubt and controversy along the path mapped out by Dr. Manfred S. Guttmacher in *America's Last King* (New York, Scribner, 1941). This leads him to repeat uncritically and unquestioningly that hoary myth of twentieth-century medical historiography that 'the King's disorder was undoubtedly . . . of a manic-depressive type . . . caused by an underlying conflict exacerbated by violent frustrations'. Yet the evidence is as plain as a pikestaff that, as Mr. Chenevix Trench himself writes, 'Unquestionable [*sic*—one of the few misprints in the book] the King was, physically, a very ill man.' In fact, he was so long before psychiatric symptoms appeared, and this was well recognized by contemporaries but later ignored when his mental incapacity rather than his general health became the urgent concern of Government and country alike. And who, reading what his doctors did to him, can doubt but that he would have recovered his health and his senses much sooner had he not been purged and vomited, bled and blistered, isolated and intimidated.

The undoubted hero of the piece emerges as George III himself. Beside him, the royal physicians all seem small men. Francis Willis, known as the 'duplicate doctor' because of his double qualification in divinity and medicine, got the credit for the cure because he and his son Dr. John were in residence when nature triumphed over art and spontaneous recovery restored the patient. Another son, the sinister Reverend Thomas Willis, also somehow managed to insinuate himself into the Royal family's confidence. Sir George Baker represented eighteenth-century medical practice at its dull, respectable and solid best, while Dr. Richard Warren's clinical acumen was blunted by his allegiance to the party of the Prince of Wales, whose physician he also was, as well as by his squabbles with the Lincolnshire mad-doctors and their methods.

But it is easy to be critical of the actors in that great drama of human, psychiatric and national history, in which confusion extended far beyond the mind of the patient. Yet Warren's pronouncement in the jargon of the time, that the King was suffering from 'seizures upon his brain'—that is a physical, not a mental illness—seems to fit the clinical features far better than the diagnosis of pathological mood change due to frustration, inhibition and conflict which we are offered here.

RICHARD HUNTER

Das Viererschema in der antiken Humoralpathologie, by ERICH SCHÖNER with introduction by ROBERT HERRLINGER, Wiesbaden, F. Steiner, 1964, (*Arch. Gesch. Med.*, Suppl. 4), pp. x, 114, 1 folding plate. DM.24

We all too easily identify ancient medicine as a whole and in all its strata with humoralism and in particular with the idea that four humours correspond to four elements and four qualities. In the book under notice a convincing case is made against this 'vulgar error', under the aegis of a medical historian (Herrlinger) and a classical scholar (Fridolf Kudlien). The genesis of the four-humour theory has really a complicated history up to its final development by Galen. Though recognizable in the Hippocratic Corpus, notably the treatise *On the Nature of Man*, it is by no means binding, let alone pre-eminent, even in Hippocratic medicine and a similar position emerges with regard to Aristotle, although it is the latter who is responsible for the first deliberate coordination of the four qualities with the four—Empedoclean—elements. Even Galen who came closest to a full development of the fourfold scheme of humoral pathology does not give it in a strictly systematic form; it still remained flexible. Only in the Middle Ages and through invasion by Astrology was the rigidity accomplished which has often been wrongly associated with the ancient Greek tradition. Nevertheless the scheme remains an essential, though not all powerful, component of ancient medicine. This is well shown in the material given in the present book, mostly in the form of tables which increase still further its great value. Perhaps more could have been said and made of the Pythagorean *Tetraktys* and its probable influence on the first creation of the scheme—but this is a wide field into which, we hope, the author will extend his researches at the proper time.

WALTER PAGEL

Schiller. Sein Leben und die Medizin im 18. Jahrhundert, by WILHELM THEOPOLD, Stuttgart, Gustav Fischer Verlag, (Reihe Medizin in Geschichte und Kultur, Band 6), 1964, pp. 251, DM. 24.90 boards, DM. 21.50 paper back.

Medicine played a part in several departments of Friedrich Schiller's life. His father was an army surgeon who was ordered to have his son educated at the local cadet school where the son was compelled, against his will, to take up the study of medicine.