can be recommended to all with an interest in this subject.

Malcolm I.V. Jayson, M.D., F.R.C.P., *Rheumatic Diseases Centre, Hope Hospital, Salford M6 8HD*

Primer of Medicine, Fifth edition, M.H. Pappworth. Pp. v + 378, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1984. £19.50.

This is an expanded edition of Dr Pappworth's original book, a superb account of bedside diagnosis by clinical examination. Of particular value are the chapters dealing with the chest, heart, abdomen and nervous system, the kernel of the book. There are undoubtedly errors, such as the statement that bacterial endocarditis is nearly always associated with polymorph leucocytosis. In parts also the book is outdated, as when retrograde pyelography is advocated for the diagnosis polycystic disease in the presence of renal failure, and ultrasound is not mentioned. These problems mainly arise where the author departs from his central theme, the elicitation and interpretation of physical signs. Candidates for MRCP part II, who will form the main readership, should have no difficulty in separating what is valuable from what is doubtful.

This edition has been enlarged in three ways. Extra clinical material, generally quite good, has been added. Secondly, there are many clinical photographs. It was a happy thought to save costs by reproducing them in black and white and to increase interest by printing the captions upside down on the same page. The selection of photographs is generally good, although seven pages on myxoedema seem excessive. Thirdly, an irritating feature of this edition is the extra space devoted to the author's personal and polemical views on subjects ranging from the correct length of a ward round to the diagnosis of brain death. These are not relevant to the real purpose of the book. Despite this I believe all MRCP candidates and more senior doctors who have not read an earlier edition would greatly benefit from reading the appropriate sections.

A.B. Shaw, *Bradford Royal Infirmary, Bradford, W. Yorks BD9 6RJ*

Vindicatio. A Defence of the Experimental Method, Richard Lower, Facsimile edition, limited to 250 numbered and signed copies, edited by Kenneth Dewhurst. Pp. xxxiv + 314. Sandford Publications, Oxford, 1983. £25.00.

Lower's *Vindicatio* was a scathing reply to O'Meara's *Examen* which, in defending classical concepts against the ideas of the chemists and physiologists, had attacked Willis on fevers and Harvey, Glisson and Pecquet on the experimental method. In language inconceivable to the twentieth century mind, Lower provides a robust example of the interplay between seventeenth century prejudice, politics, dogma and religion and the intellectual insights of the natural philosophers interpreted through the media of observation, mathematics and measurement.

It is always a pleasure to read Kenneth Dewhurst's elegant prose and nobody is better equipped to edit this limited facsimile edition of a now rare book. For it, he provides an informative introduction to medical personalities and their thinking in an age of reason. The Latin of the original is followed by L. Halford-Stevens' eminently readable English translation with the editor's footnotes and epilogue which illuminate the text with a wealth of classical scholarship.

In the epilogue, the editor discusses the reaction *Vindicatio* aroused. Malpighi and Capucci turned a discrete blind eye to Lower's invective and innuendo, while applauding his intellectual insights. O'Meara, on the other hand, launched a vigorous counter-attack through Cashin, a somewhat shadowy figure, to castigate both Lower and his mentor, Willis, the Sedlian Professor at Oxford. Since there seems to be no conclusive proof that Cashin actually existed, the suspicion remains that he was the subtle invention of O'Meara to rally orthodoxy to a losing cause.

The book is beautifully produced and will be an invaluable addition to any library.

Sir James Watt, *Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE*

Lecture Notes on the Infectious Diseases, Fourth edition, Bibhat K. Mandal and Richard T. Mayon-White. Pp. viii + 272, illustrated. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Boston, Melbourne, 1984. £6.50.

The Fourth Edition of *Lecture Notes on the Infectious Diseases* has been brought up-to-date by an Infectious