Peter R. Anstey presents a thorough and innovative study of John Locke's views on the method and content of natural philosophy. Focusing on Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, but also drawing extensively from his other writings and manuscript remains, Anstey argues that Locke was an advocate of the Experimental Philosophy: the new approach to natural philosophy championed by Robert Boyle and the early Royal Society who were opposed to speculative philosophy.

On the question of method, Anstey shows how Locke's pessimism about the prospects for a demonstrative science of nature led him, in the *Essay*, to promote Francis Bacon's method of natural history, and to downplay the value of hypotheses and analogical reasoning in science. But, according to Anstey, Locke never abandoned the ideal of a demonstrative natural philosophy, for he believed that if we could discover the primary qualities of the tiny corpuscles that constitute material bodies, we could then establish a kind of corpuscular metric that would allow us a genuine science of nature. It was only after the publication of the *Essay*, however, that Locke came to realize that Newton's *Principia* provided a model for the role of demonstrative reasoning in science based on principles established upon observation, and this led him to make significant revisions to his views in the 1690s.

On the content of Locke's natural philosophy, it is argued that even though Locke adhered to the Experimental Philosophy, he was not averse to speculation about the corpuscular nature of matter. Anstey takes us into new terrain and new interpretations of Locke's thought, by exploring his mercurialist transmutational chymistry, his theory of generation by seminal principles, and his conventionalism about species.

Jacket illustration: the 'Science and Philosophy' window of the Great Hall at the University of Sydney picturing (from left to right) Robert Boyle, Sir Isaac Newton, and John Locke. The window was executed by Clayton and Bell and photographed by Raymond de Berquelle on behalf of the University of Sydney. Reproduced with permission of the University of Sydney Archives.