common diseases and pitfalls in treatment.

In spite of these criticisms this is a good postgraduate dermatology textbook. It is concise, readable and yet contains a wealth of information. It is also excellent value for money.

A.E. Myatt
Bradford Royal Infirmary,
Duckworth Lane,
Bradford,
W. Yorks BD9 6RJ.

Recent Advances in Diabetes. No. 2, edited by Malcolm Nattrass. Pp. xi + 213, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £35.00.

This volume will be of great value to those with a special interest in diabetes. It contains sixteen review articles; approximately half are 'scientific' and half clinical; all will be, I believe, of interest to clinicians. The scientific articles include 'The aetiology of Type 2 diabetes', 'The human insulin gene and diabetes', 'Lipoprotein metabolism' and 'Neutrophil function in diabetes'; and on the clinical side 'The Somogyi effect', 'Microalbuminuria', 'Management of diabetic renal failure' and 'The heart in diabetes': these are the ones which I found of most interest.

Recent Advances in Diabetes is well produced and is an excellent source of reference and of references. My only complaint is that most of the articles are poorly written and rather difficult to read. I would have wished the editor to edit more. Recent advances in medicine should almost by definition be exciting and the reader should feel involved and excited. Style matters as well as content. Writing well is not easy and those journals that maintain a high standard (*Scientific American*, *Science*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*) are heavily edited and have a recognizable style. Read 'The Somogyi effect'; it is well written and it makes you want to read Somogyi's original paper. That said there is a lot in this volume; definitely recommended.

A.B. Kurtz
Middlesex Hospital Medical School,
London W1P 7PN.

Recent Advances in Paediatrics. No. 8, edited by Roy Meadow. Pp. vi + 284, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £28.00.

Recent Advances in Paediatrics has for many years been indispensable reading for busy paediatricians. Its topical and authoritative articles reflect considerable effort with one chapter alone having 178 references. Fifteen chapters by nineteen authors cover a wide spectrum from intensive care to child sexual abuse where in an excellent but lengthy chapter a psychiatrist and psychologist provide valuable insights into this the most underdiagnosed aspect of child abuse. The long term effects with low self esteem, depression, high dependency and cycle of abuse in future generations are highlighted. We are well reminded not to encourage a child's

disclosure without being ready to handle the medical, psychological and legal consequences. All paediatricians and school doctors will have to learn the skills to recognize and manage the emotional and medico-legal problems.

A timely article on AIDS and other immune deficiencies fails to bring us quite up to date, the most contemporary references being 1985 in an area of rapidly expanding knowledge where the rate of development of AIDS amongst those who are HIV sero-positive is constantly being revised upwards with the passage of time and it maybe six times the 5–10% given by the authors.

The chapter, 'The Changing Epidemiology of Childhood Infections' is older terrain revisited and we are warned against complacency and reminded that even in England and Wales, if congenital disorders and perinatal conditions are excluded, infectious diseases amount for 10% of childhood deaths. A generation of parents is growing up more influenced by adverse publicity about immunization, than the consequences of the wild disease. The Asian community has particular problems with tuberculosis, and following the habit of taking the new baby back to show the grandparents in the New Commonwealth before immunization has commenced, may reintroduce poliomyelitis and even diphtheria into this country.

'Doppler Echocardiography' and 'Modern Diagnostic Imaging' were given a chapter each and we learn that information now being obtained by non-invasive methods is of sufficient accuracy to make major management decisions without cardiac catheterization. Two excellent chapters on 'Hypoxia and the Neonatal Brain' and 'Modern Intensive Care' outline the new techniques for monitoring and controlling intra-cranial pressure and minimizing the damage from cerebral oedema with its resultant secondary intra-cranial injury. Most paediatricians would probably be surprised to learn that 43% of children with Reyes' syndrome can survive undamaged if evacuated to neurointensive care units quickly enough.

All the authors were selected for their expertise and clarity by the editor Professor Roy Meadow. Not all were equally lucid or succinct however and if there is a criticism of this admirable book it would be that more and shorter chapters would be preferable. Some of the best chapters are the most economical and the sort most likely to be read for understanding and enjoyment by paediatricians as the editor hopes.

A.P. Cole
Worcester Royal Infirmary,
Castle Street Branch,
Worcester WR1 3AS.

Self-Assessment for Paediatric Examinations, David Isaacs and Christopher D. Mitchell. Pp. iv + 165, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £8.95.

Doctors wishing to specialise in paediatrics face the hurdle of the M.R.C.P. in which most take the paediatric option; others settle for the D.C.H. Whatever higher professional diploma the candidate faces there is a need for adequate preparation in exam technique. Finally, the aspirant will be judged by performance on the day and it is plainly inap-