LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Herpes simplex keratitis in renal transplant patients

SIR,—I read with interest the paper by Kremer *et al.*¹ In particular I was intrigued by their observation that the epithelial herpetic lesions in these patients were located mainly in the periphery of the cornea and responded poorly to routine therapy. Additionally there was no stromal involvement in this small group of patients.

We recently reported² several cases of herpetic epithelial keratitis in patients with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Similarly in this group of patients there was a preponderance of peripheral corneal involvement. Additionally these lesions were somewhat recalcitrant to routine antiviral therapy. Furthermore we have not observed any AIDS patients with herpetic stromal keratitis.

It was of great interest that the clinical courses of patients with herpetic keratitis who also happen to have either AIDS or immunosuppression following renal transplantation is so strikingly similar. It is particularly intriguing that in both groups of patients there appears to be a lack of stromal involvement, perhaps indicating a role for cellular immunity in the development of stromal herpetic keratitis. The potential role of cellular immunity in the pathogenesis and treatment of epithelial herpetic keratitis is much less clear, but certainly the similar clinical appearances in these two groups of patients is suggestive.

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1 Kremer I, Wagner A, Shmuel D, *et al.* Herpes simplex keratitis in renal transplant patients. *Br J Ophthalmol* 1991; 75: 94–6.

2 Young T, Robin JB, Holland GN, *et al.* Herpes simplex keratitis in patients with AIDS. *Ophthalmology* 1989; 96: 1476–9.

SIR,—In reply to the letter of Dr Jeffrey B Robin the similarity between the clinical picture of our renal transplant patients and that of the AIDS patients described by Young *et al.*¹ and by Dr Robin is very interesting. In my opinion it is an important contribution to the understanding of the immunopathology of herpetic corneal disease. More attention should be directed to herpetic keratitis in these immunosuppressed patients and the rarity of stromal disease should be reinforced by long term follow up studies.

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1 Young T, Robin JB, Holland GN, *et al.* Herpes simplex keratitis in patients with AIDS. *Ophthalmology* 1989; 96: 1476–9.

OBITUARY

E G ATKINSON, MBChB, MSc,
MRCP

Edmund Atkinson had just resumed his clinical training in ophthalmology, after three years in research, when he died in a paragliding accident in France in June 1990. He had been an invaluable and enthusiastic member of the retinal vasculitis research group at St Thomas's Hospital, and presented his work both at the OSUK and ARVO. He qualified in medicine at Bristol University in 1982, and obtained his MRCP after working in local hospitals. He then moved to London to start his career in ophthalmology at St Bartholomew's Hospital. As he wished to develop his research interests as soon as possible he moved to St Thomas's Hospital, where in 1986 he became an MRC Training Fellow. He developed two new animal models of uveitis, and extended earlier work on its pharmacological modulation. Later he worked with the pharmacology department to develop FITC-dextran angiography as a method for investigating permeability changes in human uveitis. At the time of his death, he was continuing his studies on cloning vitreous T-cells from uveitis patients. He was always a potent source of ideas, support, and enthusiasm and always wished to stretch his many talents to the full. It was tragic that his latest enthusiasm should also be the cause of his early death.

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BOOK REVIEW

Ophthalmologische Ultraschall diagnostik; mit Atlas, Standardisierung und Einordnung in den augenärztlichen Untersuchungsgang. Eds Herausgegeben von W Buschmann, H G Trier. Pp 494. DM 240.00. Springer: Heidelberg, 1989.

This comprehensive and definitive textbook on ultrasound diagnosis covers the subject in great depth and detail. The editors have commissioned contributions from 30 authors, most of whom have international reputations in the field of ultrasonography and its allied techniques. The result is a beautifully produced and well illustrated book but unfortunately one that will be heavy going for the average clinician and a non-starter for those who do not speak German, since there are sadly no English translations or summaries. It is a book therefore for the experts, and even they may be disappointed, because it is expensive, and in a rapidly expanding subject such as ultrasonography they are entitled to expect the references to be more up to date.

T J FFYTCH

* * * All titles reviewed here are available from the BMJ Bookshop, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9TE. Prices include postage in the UK and for members of the British Forces Overseas, but overseas customers should add £2 per item for postage and packing. Payment can be

made by cheque in sterling drawn on a UK bank, or by credit card (MASTERCARD, VISA or AMERICAN EXPRESS), stating card number, expiry date and your full name.

NOTES

Hong Kong Ophthalmological Society

The Annual Scientific Meeting of the Hong Kong Ophthalmological Society will be held from 30 November to 1 December 1991 in Hong Kong. The main topic will be 'The eye and systemic diseases'. Further details from: The Secretariat, Annual Scientific Meeting 1991, Hong Kong Ophthalmological Society, c/o The Hong Kong Medical Association, 5/F Duke of Windsor Building, 15 Hennessy Road, Hong Kong. (Tel: (852) 5278285 (4 lines). Fax: (852) 8650943.)

Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute

The Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions will sponsor the following continuing education programmes.

Management of Diabetic Retinopathy: Application of Guidelines from 1991 ETDRS Publications on 15 November 1991 at the Thomas B. Turner Building, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Baltimore, Maryland.

4th Annual Current Concepts in Ophthalmology plus Hands-On Excimer Laser and Phacoemulsification Wet Labs on 12–14 December 1991 at the Thomas B. Turner Building, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Baltimore, Maryland.

Recent Advances in the Management of Age-Related Macular Degeneration: Guidelines from Recent Clinical Trials on 25 January 1992 at the Thomas B. Turner Building, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Baltimore, Maryland.

14th Annual Current Concepts in Ophthalmology plus Hands-On Phacoemulsification Wet Lab on 9–16 February 1992 at the Hyatt Regency Cerromar Beach Hotel, Dorado, Puerto Rico.

9th Annual Current Concepts in Ophthalmology plus Hands-On Phacoemulsification Wet Lab on 14–21 March 1992 at the Manor Vail Lodge, Vail Colorado.

Laser Technology in Retinal Diseases – Current Concepts on May 16, 1992 at the Thomas B. Turner Building, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Baltimore, Maryland.

Retinal Pigment Epithelium in Health and Macular Degeneration: A Symposium for Clinicians and Basic Scientists on 5–6 June 1992 at Stouffer Harborplace Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland.

Further information: Program Coordinator, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, 720 Rutland Avenue, Turner 20, Baltimore, Maryland 21205–2195, USA. (Tel: (301) 955–2959.)