To the Editorial Committee of

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

DEAR SIRS,—Messrs. Klein and Miller are to be congratulated on their interesting and informative paper (B. J. O. October, 1949), drawing attention to the value of urea in the treatment of dendritic keratitis. They are not quite correct, however, in saying that urea "has not been employed in ophthalmology." Urea was introduced to the Portsmouth Eye and Ear Hospital by Mr. W. Hedley Summerskill over two years ago, for the treatment not only of herpetic keratitis but of other ocular infections of an assumed virus origin. The rationale for its employment, given by him, was that the virus molecule disintegrates in the presence of urea throwing off its SH groups and becoming inactive. The urea has been used as 50 per cent. drops 3-hourly in sterile aqueous solution (i.e., a saturated solution). Such a solution is stable, compatible with atropine sulphate and has proved non-irritant to the eye. For intra-ocular infections 200 grains have been given by mouth daily.

It is gratifying to have had the value of urea treatment confirmed and published by Messrs. Klein and Miller. Results at this hospital have been encouraging and satisfactory in view of the obstinate cases in which it has been employed. As an adequately controlled comparison with other treatments had not been undertaken, one was hesitant in assessing its value.

Yours faithfully,

PORTSMOUTH, October 21, 1949.

REX PARISH.

OBITUARY

SIR HERBERT LIGHTFOOT EASON, C.B., C.M.G.

HERBERT EASON will be best remembered by Guy's men of 1920 and after as Superintendent, and by an earlier generation as Dean. Though all knew him as one of the ophthalmic surgeons to Guy's everyone realized that "eyes" played a relatively small part in his activities. Nevertheless he had the reputation of being an outstandingly good lecturer and a most skilled operator. Eason himself would have been the first to admit that his ophthalmic work, hospital and particularly private practice, took second place to his administrative responsibilities.

To the profession as a whole Eason was best known as President of the General Medical Council, while in academic circles he was remarkable as having held successively the posts of Vice-Chancellor and Principal Officer of London University. In his public life Herbert Eason was punctilious to a degree, every letter was answered