

THE MARITIME MEDICAL NEWS

VOL. XVIII., JANUARY, 1906, No. 1

The Surface Tension of Urine Of late years a number of new physico-chemical methods have added to the accuracy with which we may estimate variations in the urine. The determination of the freezing point has come to be part of the routine work of urinalysis by many careful clinicians. The viscosity, the electrical conductivity and the refractive index of the fluid have also received minute study of late, and will doubtless in time be considered in the practical work of clinical laboratories. Quite recently the question of surface tension of the urine has attracted the attention of several investigators. W. G. Donnan and F. G. Donnan contribute a short article on the subject to the *British Medical Journal* of Dec. 23, 1905, and describe simple apparatus for clinical estimation. In health the surface tension varies considerably, being low in the morning, and being reduced by exercise, etc., a fact which must be taken into account. A high density is not necessarily associated with a low surface tension, although this is commonly the case. In all cases of catarrhal jaundice examined, the surface tension was found to be

abnormally low, and to rise progressively to the normal as the jaundice passed off. Few other morbid conditions were studied, and in such as were investigated no definite or constant results were obtained.



The Danger of Light Fresh air and sunlight have had so great a vogue for some years now, that it is not surprising to find that someone has come forward to show that we have again been following a wrong scent, and that prolonged exposure to sunlight is not only not beneficial but actually injurious. So excellent an authority as Major Charles E. Rutherford, U. S. A., has published a paper in the *Medical Record* of Dec. 23, 1905, in which he asserts that excessive light injures the animal organism, the prejudicial effect being produced by the shorter light waves. Light, he argues, almost invariably hinders growth, while darkness favours it both in plants and animals. The opinions of botanists and geologists are cited in support of his contention. "Zoologists also have shown that animals pass all their time in the dark, or if they must expose themselves to