

Payn in *London News*: It is in a great part due to the influence of club life, Lord Salisbury tells us, that the custom of drinking has almost disappeared among the upper classes. Something of this is perhaps owing to the influence of opinion, for even a toper who thought nothing of getting drunk in congenial company and among bacchanalian friends, might hesitate to do so among strangers, but the chief cause of the improvement is undoubtedly the introduction of the after-dinner cigar.

Tobacco was frowned upon at home before our womankind began to appreciate its soothing effect upon us, and the smokers naturally took refuge in their clubs. Then it very soon did away with the snuff-box, and more gradually, but quite as surely, with the magnum of claret after dinner. A few old gentlemen still stickle for a glass or so—which two generations ago would have been a bottle—but the minds of most men who have dined will turn, like a flower to the sun, to the smoking room.

The speeches which follow our public dinners would now be quite intolerable to the young and middle-aged but for the mitigation of tobacco. The ignorance of the anti-everythingians about social matters is proverbial, but it is never so clearly demonstrated as in those who denounce tobacco on the ground that it leads men to drink; it does lead them to drink coffee. It may be said, if it pleases the opponents of the fragrant weed, that it is only one bad habit driving out another, as the gout expels a fever, but the fever is, at all events, far the more dangerous of the two.

THE SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS OF ANTIQUITY.—Dr. Deneffe, of Antwerp, after twelve years of labor in collecting material has published a most interesting treatise on ancient surgery. He has obtained between six and seven hundred specimens, including copies. Among them, says a writer in *The Medical Magazine*, are uterine and anal specula, knives, lancets, forceps or volsellæ, scissors, spatulæ, all kinds of sounds, scarificators, rugines or raspatories, probes, cauteries, caustic-holders, cannulæ, needles, curettes, hooks for the extraction of the fetus in difficult labors, saws, ointment tubes, a needle for couching (cataract), tooth-forceps, urethral sounds (male and female), besides many others we have not space to mention.

With the exception of the trivalve and quadri-valve uterine specula, which can compare with the finest modern work, the instruments of those days were simple in the extreme. To carry out their ideas the early surgeons had to rely on intelligent locksmiths, who, it must be said, faithfully followed instructions, and in some cases produced instruments of exquisite finish. Usually they served a double purpose, one end of the instrument being used as a curette, the other end

as a spatula, and so on. Sometimes knives, curettes, or elevators of different sizes formed the two extremities. The various kinds of forceps were generally only used for one purpose; some, however, are supplied with an aural curette, a probe, etc., the object being to simplify and to make the surgeon's case more portable.

Most of the instruments of antiquity are bronze, which chemical analysis has shown to be composed of copper and tin, sometimes lead, and more rarely, zinc being added; in exceptional cases gold and silver have also been found. Some of them are made entirely of copper, as the ancients knew how to temper this metal by heating it to redness and then rapidly plunging it into cold water. Silver instruments are rare, but silver was used in some instances to damascene those made of bronze. Fragments only of iron instruments have come down to us. According to Lepsius, the Egyptians employed iron 4,000, and the Greeks 1,450 years before Christ. Dr. Deneffe points out, too, that Homer frequently refers to this metal. There are some specimens of knives with iron blades and bronze handles; also an iron hook in a bronze handle for extracting the fetus from the womb. As iron is perishable it cannot be stated positively to what extent it was used.

According to the author, the instruments found at Herculaneum and Pompeii (first century) lack the finish of those discovered in France, Belgium, and near the Rhine, and which date from the second and third centuries. He does not think, however, that the latter were made in the countries where they were found. It is probable they were imported into these Roman colonies by surgeons, who supplied themselves in Italy before starting.

A remarkable thing about all these instruments is that they are made entirely of metal; wood, ivory, or shell never being used.—*Med. Rec.*

GONORRHOEA AT THE AGE OF ONE HUNDRED AND THREE.—The interest that may attach to the case presented herewith will be by reason of the advanced age of the patient. It is exceptional enough to meet a man who has passed his one hundredth year, but to find a man at that age suffering from an acute attack of gonorrhœa or chancroids is still more exceptional.

Some doubts may be entertained as to the correctness of the age given, but his general appearance, his open frankness in giving all particulars, and the absence of any apparent motive for falsification, go to confirm it, and a severe cross-examination failed to alter any of his statements.

Although no special time is given for the decadence of the sexual functions in the male, the general impression seems to be that the sexual desire is on the wane and disappears long before the allotted "threescore years and ten." Yet