bination of circumstances, shall we look for the cause of the sudden death in the case before us? Would the fact of the age of the patient—the nervous system receiving a shock at the time the fracture occurred, from which, in all probability, it never recovered—together with the constant and unaccustomed pressure of the tumor upon the sciatic plexus, caused by the decubitus—afford in any degree a satisfactory solution? If not, who will solve the problem? Again, will the nervous connections of the stomach and uterus, and the great sympathy existing between these organs, account for the suffering of the former, if we consider the extensive disease that in the present case existed in the latter? Once more—is the ground taken by Lisfranc, in his work on diseases of the uterus, tenable, when, among the exciting causes of uterine disease, he mentions "especially a life of chastity"?

In conclusion, I would beg pardon for my prolixity, while I add that the above case is entirely at your disposal. Of course you are at perfect liberty either to transfer it to the pages of your Journal, or write upon it "rejected."

Yours, most truly,

Franklin, N. H., 18th May, 1840.

DANIEL V. FOLTS, M.D.

A NEWLY-INVENTED "PORTABLE BATHING TENT."

BY J. WRIGHT WARREN, M.D., BOSTON.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

THE subject of bathing—a practice of most remote antiquity—is probably sufficiently well understood not to require any direct or explicit explanation. The term, however, even in our own country, and in this enlightened age, seems to have become almost an obsolete phrase, excepting, perhaps, during a few weeks of the excessively warm weather, in summer, when the sultry heat of a vertical sun compels men to quit their avocations and regale themselves in Nature's grand restorative—the cool bath. It seems very singular that a practice like this, from whence the ancients derived so much benefit, and which was so constantly used by them, both as a preventive and curative measure, should thus, comparatively, have sunk into oblivion.

With regard to the utility of general and constant bathing, as a means of preserving health, or as a prophylactic against diseases, it would seem that there could be no question: its very name should carry with it *prima facie* evidence of its excellence as a luxury, and its indispensable advantages as a promoter of health.

There are numerous diseases, also, in the curation of which some one of the various baths are peculiarly applicable, and in many absolutely indispensable. But the grand desideratum, which interests alike the whole family of mankind, is the *prevention* of disease, and for this purpose we would strongly recommend it. Nothing can be more conducive to health, when vigorous, or more salutary when it is impaired, than a constant attention to the exhalations—to the state of the skin—keeping the pores

open and the surface clean and healthy : and nothing can so effectually accomplish this important object, as frequent bathing and friction.

The skin must not be regarded as a mere covering of the body, but as an organ, the healthy condition of which, is of vast importance to the well being of the whole frame, but especially to the stomach and lungs, with which it has the closest sympathy. The stomach is exquisitely sensitive ; it sympathises with every function. If the skin is neglected in its cleanliness—if the clothing is too tight over the organs of digestion—if the body be kept too warm or too cold—if an impure air be constantly breathed—it is obvious enough that the organs of life cannot go on performing their duties in a healthy manner.

Insensible perspiration, as it is called, goes on at the rate of at least 24 ounces given off from the surface of the body every day ; thus, it will readily be conceived that if this load be suddenly thrown upon the internal organs, as the lungs, &c., by checking its natural egress through the skin, in any manner, derangement of function must necessarily follow. Therefore we should beware of obliging the lungs to work for the skin ; for among the innumerable diseases of a very formidable character which are the necessary concomitants of obstructed perspiration, no one is of greater moment than that which arises from this source.

It cannot be denied that *consumption*, that master of diseases, whose insidious hand sweeps off its thousands annually, and which has so effectually signalised itself as the scourge of our climate, almost universally takes its origin from this great cause. Yea, *always*, with perhaps the single exception of cases of hereditary taint, and even then it is usually the immediate exciting cause or prompter of the lurking evil to action. In fact, the least obstruction to the exhalations of the body of such an individual, cannot be tolerated without incurring a risk proportioned to the extent of obstruction, and the constitutional liabilities of the system.

On the other hand, the mind sympathises in the most delicate and powerful manner with the nerves of organic life, in all their general affections and conditions. When they are well regulated the thoughts flow with greater ease and increased energy—the imagination becomes more vivid and vigorous—and the memory more clear and active. This delightful sympathy between the nervous system of organic life and the mind may be preserved through life ; and were all the laws of constitution and relation, which our benevolent Creator has established in our nature, properly obeyed, it would be so.

To approximate as near as possible to this desirable condition of things, requires a constant attention to our rule of life, as above premised—to our habits, diet and regimen, dress, and though last, not least, *personal cleanliness*. By such a course the blood is made to circulate with more freedom, the whole body acquires a suppleness and lightness, and the spirits gain a vivacity and flow which cannot be experienced in an equal degree by any other means.

Medicinally considered, bathing ranks among the most efficacious means by which diseases are prevented or cured. It was duly appreciated by the ancients, and with several of the most powerful and robust

nations of the present day, is almost the only remedy used. In Russia, it forms so essential a part of the system of living, that it is used by people of every age and in all circumstances, and, as a nation, they are certainly amongst the longest-lived people on the face of the earth. Mr. Tooke, in his "View of the Russian Empire," says, "Without doubt the Russians owe their longevity, their robust state of health, their little disposition to certain mortal diseases, and their happy and cheerful tempers, mostly to their baths." The ancient Greeks, Romans and Germans, as well as the Persians, Turks, and especially the modern Egyptians, also enjoy the comforts and luxuries procured by bathing, in a degree of which we can scarcely form an adequate conception. Their bagnios, or baths, are fitted up in a style and elegance, of which those who have not seen them must form a very faint idea. At Rome, during the reign of the emperors, there were not less than 870 public baths, which were all opened at the sound of a bell, and at the same hour. The Emperor Adrian found it necessary to lay a restraint upon the immoderate humor of bathing, by public edict, prohibiting all persons from bathing before the 8th hour.

Lord Chancellor Bacon, Dr. Franklin, Sir Humphrey Davy, and other sagacious observers of nature and mankind, have lamented, and certainly not without cause, that the practice of bathing has fallen into such disuse among modern nations.

Fortunately, however, the subject appears again to be engaging the attention of the more thoughtful portion of mankind, and it is ardently to be hoped that the custom will soon be revived with all its pristine health and purity.

To facilitate this desirable object as much as possible, particularly in cities, where it is most needed, and where there are few or no domestic conveniences, the "Portable Bathing Tent" has been constructed, of which the annexed cut presents a superficial view, and which is so arranged as to afford facilities for the administration of any and every kind of bath in the same apparatus, without the least inconvenience and with very little labor. It will not occasion any dampness or other unpleasant consequences from frequent use, and is therefore rendered admissible into any dressing room, sleeping apartment, or sick chamber, as convenience or necessity may require; thereby entirely precluding the necessity of having a room set apart and exclusively devoted to such purposes, which but few, particularly in large cities, can conveniently spare. It was originally designed to supply this deficiency of bathing rooms, so universally felt, by affording every convenience in an apparatus so compact and portable as to be generally approved and adopted; and it is confidently believed that this object has been fully attained in the above arrangement, and that when its peculiar advantages become known, it will be adopted as a necessary adjunct to the dressing rooms of every family who esteem cleanliness a luxury, or health a blessing, worthy of being possessed.

It is proper to begin the practice of bathing in warm weather, and to continue it through every season afterwards; but there can be no serious objection to commencing with the tepid bath at any season of the year;

and by degrees a habit may be formed, all circumstances being favorable, of taking the cold bath advantageously even in winter, in the form of douche or shower bath, &c.

A celebrated medical writer of Europe, remarks, that "Autumn is the most unhealthy quarter of the year; because the particles of perspiration are retained in the body in a state inclining to putrefaction," which, he adds, "is the direct cause of the large number of autumnal fevers." Thus, by timely and seasonable ablution, these impurities, that insidiously lay in us the train to tedious and dangerous diseases, will be removed before they vitiate the blood and the juices; and the natural perspiration, the most important of all excretions, must certainly go on better in a body constantly kept soft by bathing.

Baths, of different degrees of temperature, corresponding to the familiar terms cold, temperate, hot, vapor, &c., are suited to different and opposite states of the body. The manner of using them is also different—the time of immersion or staying in them varying according to the required quantum of impression or effect, as will be particularly noticed in treating of each.

Description, &c.—The above apparatus resembles and occupies the space of a fashionable wardrobe, and may take a corresponding place to the one usually assigned to that article in any dressing room; or may be removed at pleasure, being completely portable—every part belonging thereto being easily packed in the tub, and the top, when annexed, forming a lid, like that of a trunk or chest, as seen in the above engraving. It possesses the greatest advantages when considered as a fixture in any particular room, as in that case the water may be pumped directly into the tub, at a small expense, and readily let off when used, by apparatus

connected with it. When the requisite quantity of water is in the tub for use, a *shower bath* may easily be taken, in connection with or separately from the tub bath, by working the small force-pump at the end of the tub a few moments, until the "alarm pipe" shows the receiving basin to be full; then by dropping the "protecting curtain" and pulling the cord which raises the valve, the operation is completed.

To take a *warm bath*, nothing more is necessary, in addition to what has just been mentioned, than to have a little fire placed in the stove or boiler, with a very small quantity of any combustible material, when, if the pipes are connected, the heating process will immediately commence and be kept up by the circulation between the two vessels, which may be stopped at any moment by shutting either of the stop-cocks attached to the pipes. Thus the water may be heated to any desired temperature, and used either as a tub or shower bath; as the latter being always taken from the tub, may also be warmed, if necessary.

To take a *vapor bath*, it is only necessary to shut the lower pipe, when the water in the boiler, being cut off from the circulation, must necessarily pass off in the form of vapor or steam through the upper pipe into the tent which encloses the bather. For *medicating* the vapor, any oils, essences or tinctures may be placed in the cup near the pump, and by loosing the screw stop in the centre, the contents are made to unite with the vapor as it passes, and—to say no more—affords a very agreeable perfume. There is also an elastic tube or pipe, to be attached, when used, to the end of the upper pipe of the tub, the other end of which is guided by the hand to convey the vapor or steam to any part of the system; and which is found to be both agreeable and useful in a variety of cases.

Finally, the above arrangement is believed to be as nearly perfect as it is possible in the nature of things to make it; and the tent can be made so plain, simple and cheap as to come within the reach of any one—or so rich, as to vie in point of splendor and style with any of the oriental baths.

P. S.—Full and complete directions for the application of each variety of bath, will accompany the "Bathing Tent" when put in use.

Boston, June, 1840.

HEREDITARY INSANITY.

[We embrace the earliest opportunity to copy from the last annual report of Dr. Woodward, of the Massachusetts State Lunatic Hospital, his remarks on hereditary predisposition to insanity. Though differing in some respects from the generally received opinions on the subject, they cannot but commend themselves to the favorable consideration of all.]

In many institutions the term *hereditary* is put down as a cause of insanity independent of any exciting cause. My view of this matter is different. In all diseases that are hereditary, a slighter cause will induce the disease than in constitutions not so predisposed, but still there must