condition would have become much improved; for it is a notorious fact that ill fed, half starved recruits rapidly improve in condition and stamina by regular duty, a substantial mess, and habits of cleanliness. The reduction in the army at present going on will doubtless free the ranks of numbers who, except from the emergency of the war, could never have gained admission. The Guards are now sending their undersized men back to their homes; and the Act for limited enlistment (for two years) causes a further reduction.

It has often been the fashion to sneer at and ridicule the physical appearance of a manufacturing population like that of the West Riding; but, after seeing some of the metropolitan and southern regiments of militia, I will undertake to show as fine a body of soldiers in the Yorkshire regiments as any in the kingdom, and in a state of discipline surpassed by none.

In my next paper, I propose to speak of the prevalent diseases of militiamen, as furnished by the returns from my own regiment; and on other matters.

[To be continued.]

CASE OF TUMOUR OF THE BRAIN.

By G. E. TANGER, ESQ., Consulting Surgeon to the Dispensary, Nottingham.

[Read before the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society, Oct. 24th, 1856.]

THIS case had been under treatment about eighteen months. The patient was a middle aged man, about 45, of temperate habits and good constitution. His first symptom was an uneasy sensation in the head, without any other indication of ill health. After a time, this symptom gradually disappeared, and dimness of sight was complained of; this went on in a short time to complete amaurosis. On examination with the ophthalmoscope, slight effusion was observed in front of the retina, with some extravasation of blood and a congested state of the blood-vessels. The progress of this case was not marked by any decided cerebral symptoms for some months, but afterwards it was noticed that the patient became peevish and irritable; that frequent attacks of stupor occurred, in which he would continue in a semicomatose state for several days. His faculties gradually became impaired; the power of articulation was evidently interfered with; and there was slight paralysis of both eyelids, and of the right arm and leg. There was no convulsion at any time.

The body was examined forty hours after death. The veins of the dura mater were much engorged, and the glandulæ Pacchioni were unusually large and prominent; near to them, a bulging of the dura mater was observed, which felt soft and elastic. One of the glandulæ Pacchioni corresponded with a depression in the cranial bone, where it was of the thinness of paper. The dura mater was adherent to the pia mater, covering the upper convolutions of the left anterior lobe; the adherent spot being deeply congested, and presenting marks of recent inflammatory effusion. Similar adhesions and effusions existed in the corresponding part of the falx cerebri, and on the convolutions of the left hemisphere looking into the longitudinal fissure. These convolutions were prominent upwards and towards the falx, which was pushed well over to the left side. On cutting through this prominent part, a firm tumour, of the size of a moderately large orange, was discovered imbedded in the substance of the anterior and middle lobes of the brain, and pressing against the opposite hemisphere, in which was a corresponding depression. The tumour was well defined, and readily turned out of its bed, which consisted of condensed cerebral substance. The tumour lay above the lateral ventricle, which was compressed by it, but not otherwise implicated. The corpus striatum and portion of the optic thalamus of that side were much pressed upon. On examining the base of the brain from below, there was no decided appearance of disease, except a general condensation, which was also evident in all other parts of the brain. Some who were present thought that

the optic tracts were atrophied, but this was by no means certain.

Dr. Ransom examined the tumour microscopically. The surface was smooth, well defined, with a sheath of cellular tissue, in which were numerous large vessels. Its form was nearly round; the section, to the naked eye, was very vascular; its colour was white, with an indistinct areolation, suggestive of a mammary gland. The consistence was friable. On scraping the surface, a thick granular pulp (the contents of the loculi formed by the fibrous stroma) was obtained. Examined by powers of from 300 to 500 diameters, this was found to consist of immature fibro-cellular tissue, identical with the fibro-plastic elements of Lebert. The younger cells formed the centre of small spherical masses, round which the more developed cells were arranged. The stroma consisted of more highly developed cells of a similar character, with here and there some perfect fibrous tissue. The vessels were numerous; their walls healthy. Scattered through the substance were some minute cream-yellow spots, due to fatty degeneration of its elements. No cellular bodies or brain-sand were discovered in any part of the brain.

FATAL CASE OF POISONING BY ESSENCE OF ALMONDS.

By T. R. HEYWOOD-THOMSON, M.D., Aigburth, Liverpool.

On Saturday last, at twenty-five minutes to 2 P.M., I was summoned to the residence of one of our most respectable merchants, about two-thirds of a mile distant, by a verbal message "to come quickly, and bring a stomach-pump, as the cook had become suddenly ill, and there was a suspicion of poisoning." Taking a little sulphate of zinc, tartarised antimony, and a stomach-pump, I reached the house at a quarter to 2 P.M., and found the cook (age not known, but apparently about forty-six years) lying on a bed in the servant's room, in a state of perfect insensibility. Her face was swollen, pale, and covered with perspiration; the eyes not quite closed, and, on separating the lids, staring fixedly, as if in terror; the pupils at first a little contracted, but soon afterwards dilated. The lips were semi-closed and livid, and a frothy mucus was running from the mouth. The lower jaw was rigidly closed, so much so, that one of the teeth had to be forced out before getting the stomach-tube introduced. The muscles of the neck were quite flaccid, so that I could move the head about freely; the muscles of the lower and upper extremities were in the same state, except the fingers, which were slightly but stiffly contracted, in a half-prehensile form. Respiration was slow and heavy, about 10 in the minute; the pulse was feeble, between 30 and 40. Smelling the breath, I found a powerful odour of bitter almonds; and, at once convinced of the nature of the case before me, I ordered the coldest water to be brought, and dashed over the head and neck; this was done by a fellow-servant, while I introduced the stomach-pump, and threw in, and again abstracted, hot water, hot coffee, and spirits of ammonia, to remove as quickly as possible the poisonous essence; the odour of the almonds being powerfully perceptible in all that was withdrawn. In a short time, finding the respiration gone, a vein in the arm was opened, and then the radial artery (not that I expected any result, but experimentally); a few drops of thickish, exceedingly dark, choleraic sort of blood, came away from the vein. Artificial respiration, blowing into the larynx, and Dr. Marshall Hall's rotatory method, were followed up, but in vain; soon after 2 P.M., she breathed her last, no appearance of resuscitation having rewarded our anxious endeavours.

On inquiring into the particulars, which were afterwards confirmed at the inquest, it seems the woman had either given or received notice to leave, having been in a state of more or less intoxication for the greater part of a week, during the absence of the family. She was seen a few

minutes before 1 P.M. to enter the back kitchen with a cup in her hand, and was soon after found leaning against the door, from which she slid down on the floor, as if in a fainting fit. A convulsion was described to me as having taken place, but this was not properly substantiated. The fellow-servant, who saw her fall, immediately inquired if she felt sick, to which no reply was made; and others coming in, she was carried up stairs to the bed where I found her. The strong odour directed the servants to examine the bottle of almond essence kept by the cook in the kitchen cupboard for culinary purposes, when it was discovered that this, known to have been previously full, was then almost empty; and a cup was afterwards found in the scullery, immersed in water, smelling of the almonds. On examining the bottle at my house, I found it would contain six drachms. There was no vendor's name—no warning label of "poison" on it—simply "essence of almonds", stating that "a few drops" (not how many) to be used to flavour puddings and custards. Seventy minims remained in the bottle.

As the case was so clear, no *post mortem* examination was demanded; but, on testing the contents of the stomach as drawn off by the pump, there was a powerful odour of the essence of almonds, confirmed by vapour-tests—placing thin glass, damped with solution of nitrate of silver, over a bottle of the fluid, with the temperature slightly raised, when the characteristic white film appeared; green, and subsequently blue, on the potassa sulphate of iron, and dilute vitriol. The white precipitate on the addition of solution of nitrate of silver, was dissolved out by heated strong nitric acid; the acid while cold having apparently no effect upon it. I mention this to confirm the observation of some toxicologists. The cup, which was brought to me some hours afterwards, had a less odour of almonds, having been some time in water in the sink; on one side covered with a whitish coating, which the family supposed might be arsenic. There was, however, only proof of the essence of almonds—not a trace of any mineral poisoning, on using sulphuretted hydrogen; while the white powdery stuff on the outside was found, under the microscope, to be starch-granules, from some amylaceous mixture with sugar, and displaying the characteristic tint on adding dilute tincture of iodine.

My other occupations not admitting of my ascertaining the actual quantity of prussic acid contained in this precious "almond essence", I tried the more expeditious mode of administering ten drops to a full-grown male rabbit; in less than a minute, the poor creature gave a piercing scream, such as I never heard from rabbit or hare in my sporting days; was then slightly convulsed, dropped slowly on its side, and, after a few heavy respirations and a little frothing from the mouth, expired; the pupils continuing widely dilated, and the muscles flaccid, even those of the lower jaw.

On making an examination after it had been allowed to remain in the open air, exposed to frost and snow, for four and a half days, the blood was very dark and thick, though mostly fluid. The lungs were much congested; the ventricles of the heart empty, both auricles gorged with dark clots, beyond which, on the right side, the blood was of the consistence of syrup, and very dark. The stomach was filled with food; and, on opening it, there was a very perceptible odour of almond. The mucous membrane was pale, except a small amount of redness near the cardiac orifice. The liver did not present any unusual appearance. Putting the contents of the stomach through the proper tests, satisfactory evidence was established of the almond essence.

In the case of this cook, there was every reason to believe that at least four drachms must have been taken, but whether by accident or design the jury could not determine, and presuming it to be of the strength usually sold as "almond flavour," i. e., one part of essential oil of almonds to seven or eight of spirit, would be equal to 125 drops of the diluted hydrocyanic acid of the London Pharmacopœia. No blame can well attach to the chemist

—a most respectable person—who sold it—the fault lies with the system of sale. By most of the druggists in Liverpool it is sold in any quantity asked for, as "peach flavour", "almond essence", "ratafia", "pudding flavour", *cum multis aliis*, and they will candidly admit, that if the warning notice, "poison", were put on the bottles, few would be foolhardy enough to drop in puddings or custards any flavour with that ominous syllable before them.

Under the present system of retailing poisons as food, who can tell the amount of mischief done by ignorant and drunken cooks, whose delirium tremored fingers have to apportion out *ad libitum*, in custard or pudding, this subtle poison, under the disguise of a flavour. Our press will continue to teem weekly with such cases, until chemists are obliged to reply, something after the fashion of him of Mantua—

"Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death, to any he that utters them."

Reviews and Notices.

A REVIEW OF THE PRESENT STATE OF UTERINE PATHOLOGY. By JAMES HENRY BENNET, M.D., Physician Accoucheur to the Royal Free Hospital. London: 1856.

WHOEVER undertakes to build a house, much more a "scientific edifice", should by all means count the cost. Perhaps no expression in Dr. BENNET's book points more unmistakeably to the idiosyncrasy of the writer, than this phrase "scientific edifice". There is a deep fund of significance in it. In the first place it is Dr. Bennet's edifice; alone, and "taking arms against a sea of troubles", oppressed by the opposition of grey-headed authority and experience, albeit the "experience of routine", and fighting hand to hand with those who opposed him, partly from scientific prejudices, and partly from less worthy motives, Dr. Bennet accomplished his work, and reared the stately structure of his "scientific edifice." Secondly, we beg to remind our readers that when a building is constructed, it is something altogether new; large edifices don't grow from smaller ones, as the young sapling becomes the lord of the forest. A house is essentially a creation; and an edifice is a very grand creation. It is as uncompromising and intractable a thing as one can deal with, is this same edifice; no amount of watering and sunshine will make it grow; it must be of certain dimensions and qualities *ab origine*. Such as it is, there never was before: it was *not*, until the skilful artificer built it up out of its chaotic elements. Thirdly, a house is something common; any one might build it, and it is a mere makeshift to live in; but an "edifice" is complete, perfect in its adaptations, grand in its proportions, requiring neither addition, subtraction, nor alteration, *totus teres atque rotundus*, and solid enough to last for a whole cycle of ages.

The phrase to which we refer is the first remarkable one we find, and it occurs at page 2. It is doubtless the secret of Dr. Bennet's successes, as well as of his reverses. Of his successes, because it indicates self-relying energy, and a vigorous development of the methodical element; and of his reverses, because it is so self-laudatory as to pique the self-esteem of his collaborateurs in obstetric science. It is hardly to be expected that the compeers of Dr. Bennet will submit to be so quietly ignored, as far as the erection of the "scientific edifice" is concerned; and still less likely that they will suffer themselves to be first trotted out before the public, then pitted against each other like "a fight of cocks", then prophesied about, and finally put on the shelf as individuals who are at present in a state of transition and of little importance, but who will in process of time repent and become useful members of society.

To turn, however, from manner to matter, it may be observed that the work before us is a compressed statement of the author's belief in matters uterine. It is a *resumé* of