

*Riddell: Botanic Family Physician.*

and also the next day. The patient was now in great distress, and when the doctor asked him how far down the medicine had got, and he replied down to the breast. the doctor assured him that it would soon get down and unscrew his navel. The following day the patient became delirious and violent, but the doctor got one or two doses of lobelia down his throat, telling the patient's father that his son had got the "hyps like the devil," but that his medicines would fetch him down. The next morning the regular physicians were called in, but could do nothing for the unfortunate who died shortly afterward. Thomson was indicted for murder, and tried on December 20 at Boston, before Chief Justice Parsons and Justices Sewall and Parker, and a jury. It was proved that the death was due to the treatment which Lovett had received, and the prosecuting counsel stated that the prisoner had administered like medicines to others who had died in his hands. The only witness, however, who appeared, swore that he had taken the emetic medicines as the prisoner's patient several times in two or three days, and was relieved permanently of his complaint, "an oppression at his stomach"; and there was no evidence that in the course of his very novel practice the prisoner had experienced any fatal accident among his patients. He was accordingly acquitted. The curious will find a fairly full account of the case in No. 6. Massachusetts Reports, p 134. The followers of Thomson boast that he was acquitted without being called on for his defence. The fact, however, is that he owed his safety to the charge of the chief justice, that if the medicine was administered with an honest intention to cure, however ignorant the prisoner might be of medical science, he should not be found guilty.

Thomson continued to practise in Massachusetts for many years, and died in 1843. I cannot find that he ever came in person to Canada.

There is no trace in this volume of some extraordinary views attributed to him by some medical