

administered, it could not be shown that the death of Mrs. Hooper was due to this cause; and this alone, and so long as what may be termed a working possibility of death from natural causes could not be excluded, so long was it impossible to obtain a death sentence.

It is evident, therefore, that the fate of Hooper depended upon the medical evidence that could be brought forward; that this evidence made the case. If the Crown could not establish the act of administration of the poison, the culpability of the accused could only be determined absolutely by a study of the symptoms presented by the dying woman, by the conditions revealed at the autopsy and by the results of chemical analysis. And here comes in the most remarkable state of affairs. For three months the crown had been in possession of all the facts bearing upon the medical side of the case. Since the beginning of October, it had possession of the depositions of those who saw the death of the woman; it had the report of the physicians who made the autopsy, and the report of the able chemist to whom was given the analysis of the stomach and other organs. It had, in fact, been in full possession of all the material upon which medical judgment could be given, and having all this, it determined to indict Hooper on the charge of murder. Yet when the case came into court, it was the evidence of the crown experts that showed conclusively that the charge could not be sustained; proved it so conclusively that the defence did not bring forward a single expert to testify concerning either the interpretation of the symptoms, or of the post-mortem appearances. The solitary piece of professional evidence adduced by the defence was the fact, proved by experiment, that small but fatal doses of prussic acid are capable of being detected in the stomach and other organs of large dogs after an interval of a fortnight.

If Dr. Stewart could state freely in the witness box that other forms of death might be accompanied by similar symptoms; if Dr. Douglass, who performed the autopsy, could admit that the examination of certain organs had not been complete and did not exclude the possibility of lesions, capable of leading to