

always appeared to me to be of cotton, and I held them to be such at the time of the inquest. Fine linen or shirting impregnated with gum, and buried for some time, may assume the appearance of cotton. The cotton cloths were mixed up well-mixed with the bones. It is possible that the three teeth may have come out at the time of Commander Tetin's inquest, as well as the ribs, but not at the time of the Coroner's inquest. I wrote the notes at Cailler Rouges whilst the inquest was going on. I made an allowance of one or two inches for the soft parts. I took account of the ligaments that exist between the several vertebrae. I took account of the cartilages which are to be found in the joints; also of the soft parts which are to be found at the soles of the feet. In this I followed the regulations and statistics of Orfila and Devergie. The hair and beard are the parts which are longest preserved without their changing their color or their nature in the slightest degree. Beck, Orfila and Devergie make special mention of the hair and of the beard. When decomposition has already commenced in a corpse, and has been arrested by the cold of winter, that decomposition recommences the instant the tissues are entirely thawed.

I cannot say at what time after the disappearance of the snow a corpse may decompose, that depending on the heat, more or less great, of various days. Supposing that decomposition had begun in September, and stopped about the middle of November. It is not true that if the body had been thawed for eight or ten days at the time of its discovery by the Gagnons, the color of the skin would not have been that by them mentioned, especially if some days of great heat had intervened. The color of the skin in such case would necessarily be red or violet—a greater degree of decomposition would have been undergone. The epidermis must necessarily have been gone.

Agapit Gagnon says that he only saw a part of the body that is to say, the left arm, the left side as far as the hip, a part of the chest above the breast, the side of the belly and not the middle. The chest never becomes greenish in the first place, it follows the same rule as the other parts of the body, except the middle part of the belly—the center of the belly. The green color results from the vicinity of the intestines; it is only in the middle that the belly becomes greenish; the other parts red. The skin consists of the epidermis and the dermis. The dermis is the essential part of the skin which never comes away except with the flesh. The epidermis disappears during the first stage of decomposition. (Beck)—According to an author quoted by Beck. I have not made a special study of the subject of decomposition. The red color of decomposition is the color of the flesh; it passes from red to violet. The red color of which mention is made by the Gagnons is not the ordinary red color of the body. The (term) ruddy color made use of by the Gagnons implies that the skin was whole and that the epidermis was not gone. They confounded the dermis with the epidermis. For my part, as a physician the word *ruddy* (*vermeil*) means *red and fresh*. In ordinary language (as applied to the skin and not as applied to color) the word *ruddy* means fresh, red, full of health, when speaking of a person. I do not know Gagnon as a physician.

Question.—Is it not the case that when a man in Gagnon's position makes use of the word *ruddy* (*vermeil*) we should assign to it not the sense that physicians are accustomed to assign to it, but the sense that people of his degree of education and class are in the habit of assigning to it.

Answer.—In ordinary conversation outside of a Court of Justice I would assign to the word *ruddy* (*vermeil*) the same sense in which Gagnon himself would understand it, but after having heard the whole of his evidence, I am satisfied that the meaning of the word *ruddy* (*vermeil*) that he made use of in speaking of the skin signified that the redness was of the epidermis and that he thought that the epidermis had not come away.

Gagnon in his evidence gives it to be understood that the body was not decomposed, he says that the body was *ruddy*; by the word *ruddy* (*vermeil*) he meant, in my opinion that it was not decomposed; and this although by his evidence he reveals signs of decomposition, which are signs to medical men and not to him. The signs which Gagnon did not remark, but which he nevertheless reported, are the removal of the epidermis, the red color of the skin, the gases, and the odor emitted by the body.

Gagnon did not say that the epidermis was removed; had he said so, he would be acquainted with the signs of decomposition. I inferred that the epidermis was removed from the red color alluded to by the two witnesses Gagnons. That color can never exist on the corpse unless the first coat or epidermis has been removed by decomposition.

In stepping upon a undecomposed corpse some sound may be occasioned, but that sound would be much more feeble and could not be heard some paces off as one of the Gagnons says it was. Besides the compressed air of

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