

52. No doubt there are suspicions and suspicions, that is to say, there are suspicions which carry conviction in favor of violence; and there are suspicions based upon such circumstances that the mind can scarcely entertain them.

But, however faint they may be, suspicions are suspicions.

From the moment there is doubt, or lack of certitude, the way is clear for all hypothesis, and suspicion has the right of way as well as any other.

If suspicion has a right to exist by the mere fact of incertitude as to the cause of the death in itself, it is because this very incertitude constitutes a circumstance of a nature to cause suspicion of violence.

What indeed is suspicion? I do not mean unwarrantable suspicion characteristic of weak minds. I speak of the reasonable suspicion which is aroused in all well-balanced minds.

It is doubt, incertitude with regard to a fact; incertitude regarding the actuality or the features of a thing.

When we do not know of a certainty, whether a particular thing is black or white, it is as permissible to suspect it to be black as it is to suppose it to be white, and when we have no certain knowledge of whether a particular death is natural or violent, it is fully as permissible to suspect it to be violent as it is to suppose it to be natural.

An ill-meaning is generally attached to the idea of suspicion; one says, generally, "I suspect a crime", or "I suspect that such a one has committed a theft", while one would say, "I doubt its being a good action"; "I am inclined to believe that my friend has acted wisely".

Nevertheless, in each and all of these phrases a doubt, an incertitude, exists. Suspicion may exist which is ill-meaning in one sense, and well-meaning in the other.

It is perfectly true that we may say in all languages, "I suspect such a one of being the author of my good fortune". Here the suspicion is plainly expressed and it is far from being ill-meaning.

In face of a death which we cannot with certainty classify either among natural or unnatural deaths, we are perfectly justified in suspecting that it is natural rather than violent;