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XXI.3 That the needs of southern peoples are different from those of northern peoples

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXI. On laws in the relation they have to commerce, considered in the transformations it has seen in the world -

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XXI.3 That the needs of southern peoples are different from those of northern peoples

In Europe there is a sort of balancing between nations of the south and of the north. The former have all sorts of conveniences for life, and few needs ; the latter have many needs, and few of the conveniences for life. To the first nations nature has given much, and they demand but little of her ; to the others nature gives little, and they demand much of her. The equilibrium is maintained by the indolence which she has dealt to the nations of the south, and the industry and activity which she has dealt to those of the north. These are obliged to work hard, else they would want for everything and become barbaric. That is what has naturalized servitude among peoples of the south : as they can easily do without wealth, they can even more easily do without liberty. But the peoples of the north need liberty, which better enables them to satisfy all the needs which nature has apportioned to them. The northern peoples are therefore in a forced state, unless they are either free or barbarian ; almost all of the southern peoples are in some way in a violent state, if indeed they are not slaves.