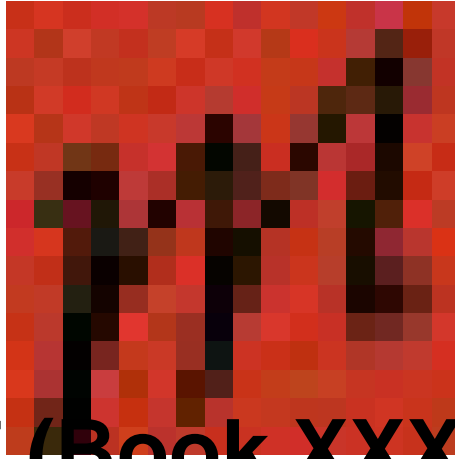


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Annex 27 (Book XXXI, chapter 21)

- The Spirit of Law - Annexes to the edition of 1758 -

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Continuation of the same subject

But what particularly weakened the monarchy was that this prince squandered its domains. [1] It is here that Nithard, one of the most judicious historians we have, Nithard the grandson of Charlemagne, who was attached to the party of Louis the Debonaire, and who wrote history by order of Charles the Bald, must be heard :

He says that "a certain Adelhard had for a time exercised such influence over the emperor's mind that the prince did his will in all things ; at this favorite's instigation he had given fiscal goods [2] to anyone who had wanted them, and thereby had wiped out the republic." Thus he did throughout the empire what I have said he did in Aquitaine [3] : something which Charlemagne repaired, and which no one repaired again.

The state was reduced to the exhaustion where Charles Martel found it when he came into the mayoralty ; and they were in such circumstances that a bold action could no longer suffice to restore it.

The treasury was so poor that under Charles the Bald they maintained no one in honors, [4] they offered security to none except for pay ; when they could destroy the Normans, they let them escape for money [5] ; and Hincmarus's first piece of advice for Louis the Stammerer was to request in an assembly the means of sustaining the expenses of his household.

[1] *Villa regias, quæ erant sui et avi et tritavi, fidelibus suis traditit eas in possessiones sempiternas : fecit enim hoc diù tempore* (Tegan, *de gestis Ludovici pii*).

[2] *Hinc libertates, hinc publica in propriis usibus distribuere suasit* (Nithard, book IV, at the end).

[3] See book XXX, ch. xiii.

[4] Hincmarus, first letter to Louis le Stammerer.

[5] See the fragment of the chronicle of the monastery of St. Serge of Angers, in Duchesne, vol. II, p. 401.