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XX.3 On the poverty of peoples

- The Spirit of Law - Book XX. On laws in their relationship with commerce, considered in its nature and its distinctions -

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XX.3 On the poverty of peoples

There are two kinds of poor peoples : those who have been made poor by the harshness of the government, and these are incapable of almost any virtue, because their poverty is a part of their servitude ; the others are poor only because they have eschewed, or because they have not known, the conveniences of life, and these can do great things, because that poverty is a part of their freedom.