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VI.10 On the old French laws

- The Spirit of Law - Book VI. Consequences of the principles of the various governments with respect to the simplicity of the civil and criminal laws, the form of judgments, and the establishment of punishments -

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In many of the old French laws we find the spirit of the monarchy. In cases involving pecuniary penalties, non-nobles are punished less than nobles. [1] In crimes it is just the opposite [2] : the noble loses honor and his voice in court, whereas the commoner who has no honor is punished corporally.

[1] "If as to cancel a warrant, the non-nobles owe a fine of forty sous, and the nobles of sixty livres" (*Somme rural*, book II, p. 198, Got. ed. of 1512).

[2] See *Le Conseil* by Pierre Desfontaines, ch. xiii, esp. art. 22.