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XXIX.1 On the spirit of the legislator

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXIX. On the manner of composing laws -

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XXIX.1 On the spirit of the legislator

This I declare, and it feels as if I have written this book solely to prove it : the legislator's spirit must be one of moderation ; the political good like the moral good is always between two boundaries. Here is an example :

The formalities of justice are necessary to liberty ; but their number could be so great that it would clash with the goal of the very laws that would have established them : disputes would have no end ; the possession of property would remain uncertain ; one party would be given the property of the other without examination, or both would be ruined by dint of examination.

Citizens would lose their liberty and their security ; the accusers would no longer have the means of persuading, nor the accused the means of justifying themselves.