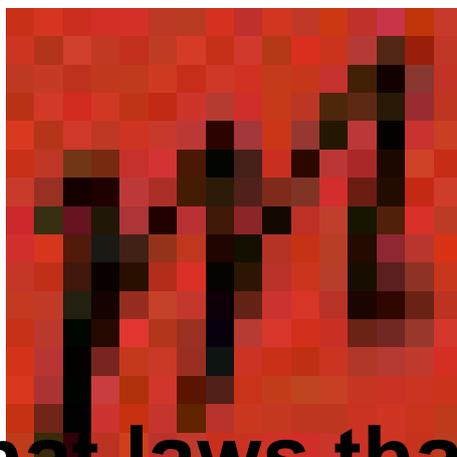


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XXIX.3 That laws that seem to deviate from the views of the legislator are often in agreement with them

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXIX. On the manner of composing laws -
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XXIX.3 That laws that seem to deviate from the views of the legislator are often in agreement with them

The law of Solon that declared disgraceful all those who took no side in a sedition, appeared quite extraordinary : but one must take note of the circumstances in which Greece found herself then. She was divided into very small states ; it was to be feared that in a republic worn by civil strife, the most prudent men would take cover, and that things would thereby be carried to the extreme.

In the seditions that occur in those small states, the bulk of the state entered into the quarrel, or created it. In our large monarchies, the parties are made up of few persons, and the people would rather take no action. In this case, it is natural to reabsorb the seditious into the mass of the citizens, not the mass of the citizens into the seditious ; in the other, you need for the small number of docile and tranquil persons to join the seditious : that is how the fermentation of a liquor can be stopped by a single drop of another one.