

crees were ever made in a general diet of mankind, but they exist in the invariable relations of things: nor do they destroy the advantages, which are supposed to be produced by the class of nobles, but prevent the inconveniences; and they make the laws respectable by destroying all hopes of impunity.

IT may be objected, that the same punishment inflicted on a nobleman and a plebeian, becomes really different from the difference of their education, and from the infamy it reflects on an illustrious family; but I answer, that punishments are to be estimated, not by the sensibility of the criminal, but by the injury done to society; which injury is augmented by the high rank of the offender. The precise equality of a punishment can never be more than external, as it is in proportion to the degree of sensibility, which differs in every individual. The infamy of an innocent family may be easily obliterated by some public demonstration of favour from the sovereign;
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