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XVI.14 On the government of the household in the Orient

- The Spirit of Law - Book XVI. How the laws of domestic slavery relate to the nature of the climate -

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XVI.14 On the government of the household in the Orient

A man changes wives so often in the Orient that they cannot be in charge of the household. It is therefore the eunuchs who do that : they are given all the keys, and they have the disposition of the household business. In Persia, says Mr. Chardin, women are given their clothing, as children would be. [1] Thus this duty that seems to suit them so well, this duty which everywhere else is the first of their duties, is no concern of theirs.

[1] [In the original there are quotation marks here, but it is in fact a paraphrase, as these exact words are not found in Chardin's text.]