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# XXIV.15 How civil laws sometimes correct false religions

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXIV. On laws in their relation with religion, considered in its doctrines and in itself -

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Respect for things ancient, simplicity, or superstition, have sometimes established mysteries or ceremonies which could shock modesty, and examples of this have not been rare in the world. Aristotle says that in this case the law allows fathers to go to the temple to celebrate these mysteries for their wives and for their children. [1] What an admirable civil law, which protects morality against religion !

Augustus forbade the youth of both sexes to attend any nocturnal ceremony unless they were accompanied by an older relative [2] ; and when he revived the Lupercalian festivities, [3] he did not allow the young men to run naked.

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[1] *Politics*, book VII, ch. xvii.

[2] Suetonius, in *Augustus*, ch. xxxi.

[3] *Ibid.*