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# XXIV.22 How dangerous it is for religion to inspire horror for things that are indifferent

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

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## **XXIV.22 How dangerous it is for religion to inspire horror for things that are indifferent**

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A certain honor which religious prejudices establish in the Indies makes the various castes view each other with horror. That honor is based solely on religion : these family distinctions do not constitute civil distinctions. The Indian exists who would think himself dishonored if he ate with his king.

These sorts of distinctions are tied to a certain aversion for other men, very different from the sentiments which the differences of ranks are supposed to inspire, which to us include love for inferiors.

The laws of religion will avoid inspiring contempt for anything but vice, and above all avoid turning men away from love and pity for men.

The Mohammedan and the Indian religions encompass an infinite number of peoples. The Indians hate the Mohammedans because they eat cattle ; the Mohammedans detest the Indians because they eat pigs.