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THE LAW OF INHERITANCE  
TO CHIEFSHIPS

AS OBSERVED BY THE SIKHS

PREVIOUS TO THE ANNEXATION.

OF THE PANJAB.

BY

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## PREFACE.

A treatise on the Law of Inheritance to Sikh chiefships, as in force previous to the annexation of the Panjáb, possesses little more than a historical value. But it is difficult to understand the history of the Panjáb, or the growth of the Sikh power, Trans and Cis-Satlej, without a knowledge of the laws and customs which, even in the days of the greatest anarchy and violence, were acknowledged generally by the chiefs, and which, in the majority of cases, were observed by them. A long and uninterrupted peace, the declared wish of Government that the chiefships should be perpetuated, and the protection and security that all enjoy under British rule, has not been without its effect upon the Sikhs, who have abandoned or modified many of their peculiar customs, and have adopted a more uniform system of law. But it will not be the less interesting, to the historical student, to determine the customs observed by the founders of the Sikh power, which, even though they may have lost much of their original force and significance, nevertheless possess an influence which will be felt for many years to come.

The authorities for what has been advanced in this treatise are the family records of the chiefs concerned, and the statements of their confidential agents, the political records of the Dehli Residency and the Ambala Agency from the year 1808 ; and disputed cases decided by many political officers, including Sir David Ochterlony, Sir Charles Melcalfe, Captain Birch, Captain Murray, Sir George Clerk, Captain Ross, Captain Wade, Sir Henry Lawrence, and Major Broadfoot.

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