THE
SYRIAN LAW OF INHERITANCE.

R. MOOTHOOKRISTNA NAIDOO
T A H S I L D A R O F C O T T A Y A M.

Printed at the Church Mission Press, Cottayam
1870.
THE
SYRIAN LAW OF INHERITANCE.

BY
R. MOOTHOOKRISTNA NAIDOO,
TAHSILDAR OF COTTAYAM.

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PREFACE.

The want of a guide on the Syrian Law of Inheritance is greatly felt by the Syrians themselves, the law practitioners, and the public at large; and at no period perhaps has it been more felt than at the present time. The extensive facilities afforded to the professional reader by those excellent manuals on Hindu and Mahomedan Laws made respectively by T. L. Strange, Esquire, and Shadagopacharloo, have induced me to make on a similar plan the following epitome of the general principles of the Syrian Law.

The frequent opportunities I have had of studying the Syrian manners and customs, the discussions on various important points with learned Cattanars and others, and the occasional references made to the Syriac canon, have led me to undertake this compilation in Malayalam, from a belief that it would form a somewhat useful hand book. But I regret to say, that I laboured under great disadvantage from the want of access to any public library or collection of such works as would enable me to give more authentic information to the public on the subject. Moreover, the usage and precedents of the Syrians have been allowed largely so as to invade the written law; or in other words personal convenience has often been taken as Law, because the only existing law-book is the Syriac Canon, which, though it contains a vast quantity of miscellaneous matters on religion, marriage, &c, hides its precepts in an unknown tongue so as to render them accessible to but few.
I hope, however, I shall be able to get more materials hereafter, which will serve to enlarge the work, should a second edition be ever called for.

I gladly take this opportunity of expressing my thankfulness to the Most Reverend Mar Athanasius, the Syrian Metropolitan, for correcting and revising the manuscript and approving of its general usefulness, as well as to the Rev. Henry Baker, the Senior Missionary of the Church Missionary Society, who is known as a true friend of the Syrians and well acquainted with their manners and customs, and who, after a careful perusal of the manuscript, kindly took the trouble of forwarding it to the Metropolitan and suggested to me its early publication; my best acknowledgements are also due to the Right Rev'd. Mar Coorilose for kindly sending me the Syriac Canon, and to his brother, Mr. M. Gabriel, for translating several parts of it to me.

Cottayam,
24th. March, 1870.

R. M. N.
Cottayam, 7th March, 1870.

To

R. MOOTHOOKRISHNA NAIDOO, ESQRE.

Tahsildar of Cottayam.

Sir,

I have received your letter and its accompaniment, a manuscript on the Syrian Law of Inheritance, drawn up by you from various sources.

It is very gratifying to me that such useful an idea has occurred to you.

I have carefully looked into the manuscript and have corrected and revised some of those obsolete laws, chiefly in matters connected with marriage and affiliation, as well as those parts which were irrelevant and inapplicable to the Syrians of Malabar.

I have no doubt that this compilation will prove a useful guide to the public and to the Courts of Judicature in general in the disposal of cases connected with the Syrian Law of Inheritance.

This work may be enlarged and more matters may be added in a subsequent edition if it be deemed necessary.

I have the honor to be,

Yours very faithfully.

(Signed) ATHANASIOUS MALABAR.

Metropolitan.