

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW OF INDIA. 6th Edition. By V.D. MAHAJAN.  
[Lucknow: Eastern Book Company. 1984. xxx + 570 pp. Rs.  
45.00]

WE know that in the larger federated countries of the world like the U.S.A., Canada and India Public Law tends to be complex and the books on the subject voluminous. Apart from the constant need to up-date publications to keep pace with new developments there is also a need for concise books presenting a manageable view of the whole field. Certainly students would be keen to have such books.

Dr. Mahajan sets out to fulfill this need. As many of us know, presenting a concise view of a complex area is often as demanding as doing detailed research on it. As the author of several student books on various subjects, Dr. Mahajan proves equal to this task.

The book follows the lay out of the Indian Constitution but with the addition of two chapters on historical introduction and salient features of the Indian Constitution' respectively. Mindful of the need to keep down the size of the book the author perhaps, did not, wish to provide greater details of the many-sided debates on crucial issues. He does however, briefly refer to the views of several writers. But in some of the more important themes such as 'Procedure and Power of Amendment' and 'Protection Against

Arrest and Detention' his evaluation and criticism would have been particularly welcome to readers. It would have been easy for the author, having presented such a creditable summary of these intricate themes, to highlight the state of contemporary law (e.g. the phenomenon of 'Public Interest litigation' that is catching on in India — Dr. Mahajan refers to it briefly at page 267) and to point to the general trends in the thinking of the hard-worked Indian Supreme Court. I think that authors of Public Law books can and should involve students in the broader but related issues relevant to Public Law. In India these would include issues such as poor emoluments paid to the Judges (though administration of Justice turns huge profits to the Government's coffers), the work-load of Indian courts, Legal Aid for the indigent and India's active Legal Profession and its stand on social and political issues. After reading Dr. Mahajan's book, I feel he can point students in these directions. Perhaps, when he comes to his next edition, he may want to consider this matter.

The author has thoughtfully provided a useful bibliography, case index and a subject index.

I do not wish to end this review without drawing attention to the thought-provoking FOREWORD by Justice Hidayatullah (as he then was) which he had contributed to the author's 1963 edition and has been reproduced in this latest edition. In the light of 33 years of Indian constitutional experience, and after many constitutional amendments, one may find the following remarks of the illustrious Judge especially interesting:

The Indian Constitution, like all other constitutions whether written or unwritten, is a bond between the people and Governments chosen by them. It contains within it the means (even without amendment) of adaptation to the needs of a developing society in which every citizen has equal opportunity and in which the welfare of the citizen is the first concern of the State. There is enough and more in it for the right development of the right people in the right direction.