

SUPREME COURT YEARLY DIGEST, 1994 BY SURENDRA MALIK [Eastern Book Company, Lucknow, 1995. 946 pp + ccxxiv of Index, Tables of Cases digested, overruled, reversed followed, *etc* and lists of Acts cited and articles, books and treatises cited.]

THE Supreme Court Yearly Digest for 1994 constitutes a comprehensive reference work recording the decisions of the Indian Supreme Court for the year. The bulk of the volume comprises 946 pages in which the reported cases are digested. The notes are arranged according to a comprehensive, and detailed, subject list. Some major subject headings, for example, "Interpretation of Statutes" are usefully subdivided and where this is not done, for example, with the subject "Evidence", the cases are arranged according to the sequential order of the sections of the relevant Act. The reader may thus readily find those cases of relevance to the topic being researched.

Obviously the nature of an annual digest is such that it is intended primarily as an aid to research, whether by a practitioner, a scholar or a student. Digests are not really intended for browsing. Yet, because the notes in this Digest contain, in many instances, extracts from judgments, browsing is not without its rewards. There is a collection of "Notable Excerpts". They, together with the longer extracts found in the individual digest notes, provide a rich treasury of vivid quotations for those who wish to add a dash of panache to a submission in court or to a piece of legal writing – or indeed to ordinary conversation; which reader will resist, when the occasion arises, the chance to speak of "a man with no more moral back-bone than a chocolate éclair"?

The legal and social concerns that have commanded the attention of the Supreme Court are well revealed as are the aspirations and values of its judges. They are acutely aware of the difficult task they have in weighing the demands of one set of values against those of another set. They are also, quite clearly, equally aware of their responsibilities to do their utmost to strike the right balance. In the words of one member of the Court, he and his fellow judges are "sentinels on the *qui vive* and guardians of human rights." There is plenty of evidence of that in this Digest.

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