

THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA: THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS LAWS AND CONSTITUTION, 2nd Ed. By Alan Gledhill, M.A., LL.D. [London: Stevens. 1964. xi + 399 pp. £3. 10s. 0d.]

This is volume 6 in the *British Commonwealth* series published by Stevens under the general editorship of Professor G. W. Keeton. The first edition of this volume appeared in 1951. That was just after the present constitution was adopted in India;

now there are a decade and a half of experience, decisions and amendments. That period of time, in the world's second most populous country, means a mass of legal literature of unruly dimensions. I know of no accurate calculation, but my personal guess is that were a man to set himself the task each month of reading, analysing and criticising that month's decisions reported in the *All-India Reporter* alone, on constitutional issues alone, he would never have time or energy for any other work.

Followers of this series will know something of the variation of tasks set before the different authors and editors. For example, those of us who worked on the volume covering the British Isles had to "do" English law, on which publication is profuse, the law of Northern Ireland (in respect of which English law could be taken for granted), on which publication is scanty, and the Channel Islands (four jurisdictions in one chapter), not to mention Mr. Holland's and Professor Smith's work on the Isle of Man and Scotland respectively. The Malaysian volume was virtually a pioneering effort on the legal systems in general. Specialist works — and few of those — there were, but no up-to-date introductory or general work.

Professor Gledhill, in India, has a jurisdiction whose literature is plentiful but whose scope is not readily susceptible of distillation into a single volume. It is a tribute to Professor Gledhill's breadth of understanding and depth of grasp of Indian law that he handles his material with confidence and persuasiveness. The book is divided into an introductory part, part one (the constitution) and part two (the Indian legal system). This last covers everything. It is a measure of the difficulty of doing this job that much of the text consists of summary of written laws. This is sometimes dreary reading but could be useful as a location of easy reference. Cases and statutes and provisions of the constitution are, indeed, cited with sensitive selection, but articles are not; and the bibliography is meagre.

One does get a clear impression of Indian law on the move. Many nineteenth century Indian legislative inventions are well known, especially the great code of penal laws, copied frequently elsewhere. The period since independence has seen India continuing to make original contributions to the common law, not only in constitutional matters, which cannot be of much practical significance for other countries, but also in other branches of public law and in private law. One interesting statute, among many, the Working Journalists (Conditions of Service) Act, 1955, governs conditions of work in what has been endowed with a sort of professional corpus.

For details of any particular branch of the law of India research may have to begin in one of the books more limited in scope. Even on aspects of the constitution, one might begin on something less comprehensive than the inevitable *Basu*. But for a general view of Indian law, for an impression of its growing points, *Gledhill* is very good.