

Government's aversion to interfere with hill tribes occupying the main catchment areas. Some catchments are in native States, under a varying intensity of political control In view of the damage done to some estates by silt deposition from others, it is felt that a strong case could be made for the legal enforcement of erosion control in the interest of the whole community.... The desirability of some form of legal control, particularly in catchment areas which are of vital importance to the whole community, is

illustrated by the conditions in the Uhl valley (Kangra District, Punjab), the 150 square mile catchment of a large hydro-electric project."

This very cheap but well-produced book is an essential for all those connected with any form of land use, be it live-stock, farm crops, or plantations, and should be in the hands of all who pride themselves on taking a broad interest in their country's welfare.

R. MACLAGAN GORRIE.

ASTRONOMICAL NOTES.

Planets during August 1938.—Venus will continue to be conspicuously visible in the western sky in the early part of the night. On August 28, the planet will be very close to the Moon and on August 31 it will approach the bright star Spica (α Viriginis mag. 1.2) to an angular distance of only half a degree. Mercury also can be seen as an evening star for a part of the month, before it reaches inferior conjunction with the sun on August 28. Mars rises only a little before the sun and will still be too close to it to be easily visible.

The two major planets Jupiter and Saturn will be in favourable positions for observation during the month. The former will be in opposition to the Sun on August 21 and is practically visible throughout the night. Saturn, after passing one of the stationary points of its orbit on August 1, will move in a retrograde direction in the constellation Pisces. The ring ellipse can be seen considerably widened, the major and minor axes being 43" and 8" respectively. Uranus is visible in the early hours of the morning near the meridian; it is situated in the constellation Aries about three degrees to the south-west of the fourth magnitude star δ Arietis. The occultation of ψ Virginis (magnitude 4.9) by the Moon on

August 28 will be visible in India; the age of the Moon being only 4 days at the time, the phenomenon can be observed even without optical aid.

Gale's Comet.—The ephemeris computed for the comet indicated that the object would be getting brighter after its discovery on May 1; but contrary to expectation, subsequent observations show that the comet has become distinctly fainter, on May 9 the estimated brightness was of mag. 11 and by May 31 it had declined to mag. 13. Its period is found to be 11 years and 4 days.

A Star Cluster in Sculptoris.—In *Harvard Bulletin*, No. 908, Dr. H. Shapley gives a description of a peculiar star cluster that was photographed at the Boyden station of the Harvard Observatory. The cluster is about half a degree in diameter, of the globular type without central condensation, and is situated about 2° south of σ Sculptoris, a fifth magnitude star. From a detailed study of counts of stars in the region as well as other available data, the object appears to be a supercluster of somewhat remarkable characteristics. The dimensions are comparable to those of the galaxy and the cluster probably represents a stellar system of a new type in intergalactic space.

T. P. B.

The Austrian "Anschluss" and Science in India.

THE recent change in sovereignty in Austria has necessitated the immediate emigration of a substantial number of prominent scientists, which include two Nobel Laureates, Professors Hess and Lœwi. These migrations afford an opportunity for other countries, endowed with vision and foresight, to extend their hospitality to these men and enrich the country's scientific talent by "transfusion of new blood". England, with its high traditions

for intellectual freedom, has always been the first to take advantage of such situations and we know that the best of the Jewish scientists who had to leave Germany 5 years ago were quickly absorbed by Britain. America too has been equally generous and farsighted; but India at that time lost a great opportunity. Now that a similar situation has arisen, it is suggested that India should take advantage of it.

M. S.