

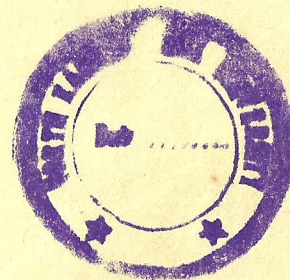
THE BURNING CALDRON
OF
NORTH-EAST INDIA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

- Caste and Race in India*, 1932; (5th edn.) Reprinted 1978
Social Process, 1938
The Scheduled Tribes, 1943; (3rd edn.) 1963
Culture and Society, 1947
Occidental Civilization, 1949
Indian Costume, 1951; (2nd edn.) 1966
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The Burning Caldron of North-East India

G. S. GHURYE



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In memory of

W. H. R. RIVERS
M.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond.), Hon. LL.D. (Glasgow), Hon. D.Sc. (Manchester),
F.R.S.; Royal Medallist

who guided my first steps in
*Social Anthropology at Cambridge from April 1921
till his sudden and premature death in June 1922*

A Word to the Reader

IN 1943, I PUBLISHED a small book under the title "The Aborigines So-Called and Their Future". I had in that book dealt with only tribes which afterwards came to be known as the Scheduled Tribes of only hither India, i.e., excluding tribal north-east. In the second edition of this book which appeared under the title "The Scheduled Tribes of India", I made it clear very specifically that I had left out tribal north-east first because whatever little knowledge I possessed convinced me that that tribal lot was quite different in culture and everything from the tribal groups of hither India.

I had also known to a certain extent the chequered history of their amalgamation with or accretion to India (British India) which had come about fairly recently. They were not with India or with Indians for more than about a hundred years when India acquired Independence. The tribes of hither India on the other hand, it is well known, have been acting and reacting with other Indians of the plains for more than 3000 years.

In the 3rd edition of the book already referred to which appeared in 1963, I had taken due note of some of the most disturbing events that had occurred in that north-east corner.

To my great surprise and unbounded delight, I found about

six years thereafter that quite a number of administrative officers, professional anthropologists and professional sociologists had begun to take great interest, particularly in the tribes of the north-east. The reader will find this statement fully substantiated in the body of the brochure itself.

The report of the most prestigious of the two Symposia or Seminars in which more than about 65 Indian intellectuals had taken part appeared between 1969 and 1972.

As I was expecting the 3rd edition of "The Scheduled Tribes" to go out of print by about 1977, as soon as I completed my earlier commitment, I set myself to the task of preparing the new edition (4th) of my "Scheduled Tribes" and had accordingly made a few changes and incorporations in my old text.

The above-mentioned Seminars, particularly the prestigious one of Simla, had devoted much attention, quite rightly too, to the problems of the tribes of the North-east.

As I had left from the first 3 editions of my book, to a large extent, any treatment of the tribes of the North-east, I decided to write 3 chapters to correct the balance. Accordingly, I completed them and met my Publishers with my manuscript.

My Publishers were glad that I had already made ready for the 4th edition of the book. They were particularly glad to find my 3 new chapters most interesting. However, on the ground of cost, and particularly of carrying the message of the last 3 chapters to a very much wider public than the book entitled "Scheduled Tribes" could have done, they advised me to take out the 3 chapters separately and as they were large enough to form a fair-sized brochure, they advised me its separate publication. I readily agreed with their suggestion and the brochure offered to the public is its consequence.

"Prasaada"
Khar.
April 15, 1980

G. S. GHURYE

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