Caste and the Economic Frontier

THIS is the challenging title of a book that is a village study and is yet much more. No village-study escapes being social-anthropological. Nor does this book. And yet it is not merely anthropological. The author has undertaken a study of a village in Orissa with especial regard to its economy and for this he has brought together a knowledge of the history of the region and of the village, of its social system and the interaction of that system with the economics of the village, of the gradual change in rural economy, and of the political adjustments that have followed within the village caste system. Although the focus throughout is on the village, it is studied dynamically as it is affected more and more by the increasing economic and also political integration of the region and of the state as a whole. The "economic frontier" indeed comes in from an even wider area politically as it is affected more and more.

Within the village caste system. Adjustments that have followed the rural economy, and of the political economy and for this the author has formulated his problem into one question, "How does land come into the market?" and in answering this he has covered almost the entire social, economic and political aspects of the village. He has also linked up the village with the outside world. The book is free of social science jargon and, very mercifully, it is also free of local vernacular kinship and other terms which tend to make anthropological studies a little exotic. More important than all this however is the very judicious combination of pure observation and of statistics.

—Savitri Shahani

Heavy Engineering Corporation

A NEW company called the Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd has been set up by Government of India for the administration of the different engineering projects under contemplation. The projects include the Heavy Machine Building and Coal Mining Machinery plants for which assistance has been secured from the Soviet Union, and the Foundry-Forge plant being established with Czech assistance.

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