

**President of the Neurological Society of India,1966.**

I, Darab K. Dastur, was born in Bombay in 1924 to parents who were well-educated and belonged to upper middle class. My paternal grand-father (Dr. Jamshedji Dastur) was a medical doctor in Bharuch, and even as a general practitioner he had the desire and capacity for medical investigation. He developed a medicine (ague-mixture) containing quinine, used mainly for malaria which was then rampant. Toward his later days, after end of First world war, it was patented and sold as "Anti-tap" all over Gujarat and in Bombay. During my medical undergraduate years (in the 40s) even I used the equipment to make the "anti-tap" medicine under my father's guidance when I went to Bharuch. Hence the spirit of research was engraved in me from my father.

My maternal grandfather (Dorabji Nariman) came from Navsari where he was a school teacher and headmaster. My eldest maternal granduncle (Khanbhadur Manekji Nariman) distinguished himself as senior administrator of the Bombay State (then called province) in 1899, when he was appointed Asst. secretary, Famine Department. In 1903 he reached the position of Deputy secretary; and in view of his work on the great famine the title Khanbhadur was conferred on him in 1905.

My second maternal grand-uncle (Dr. Sorabji Nariman) was more successful, being in the first batch of 4 MDS in Medicine of the Bombay University in 1887. Then he spent 9 years in London, in postgraduate medical work in different fields and was awarded certificates of honour; and first rank in a competitive examination in Hygiene & public Health in 1893. On his return to Bombay city he was presented awards at the hands of Sir Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy, who had established the J. J. Hospitals in Bombay in 1843. Dr. Nariman also drew up a scheme for the Parsi General Hospital. My family happens to possess a written genealogy of the ancestry on my father's side, of the last 500 years; and on my mother's side of over 700 years.

My father (Kersasp Dastur) and my mother (Jerbanu) had progressive ideas for their time and sent me (in 1930) and later my younger sister (Manek) to the newly opened nationalist minded school- The New Era School, which coincided with the Indian freedom struggle under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. M. T. Vyas, the founder-principal of this school was our neighbour at Tayabji House, next to Wilson College at Chowpatty, the sands of which were the site of series of lectures by our early national leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and his contemporaries.

I had my early science education (B. Sc. with Zoology & Botany under excellent teachers) at the Wilson College, where one of the outstanding members of the staff was R. D. Choksi, who was not only the Senior Professor of English but a superb teacher who made even mundane text-books come alive with questions and answers, so that the English language was made appealing to us even in the Intermediate Science class. Years later, in the 1950's, Prof. Choksi became a trustee and then Chairman of the Lady Tata Memorial Trust. He collaborated with Prof. V. R. Khanolkar when he was developing the Indian Cancer Research Centre out of the Department of Laboratories of the Tata Memorial Hospital, which I had just joined (in September 1950) as an Asstt. Research Officer of the ICMR.

I did my Medical Degree (M. B.B. S.) in 1949 from Grant Medical College & J. J. Group of Hospitals. I obtained my M. D. Degree in Medicine of the Bombay University in 1952, even while I was doing neuropathological work and research under the guidance of that pioneer of medical research in India, viz. Dr. V. R. Khanolkar, at the laboratories of the Tata Memorial Hospital. It was Dr. Khanolkar who kindled my research interest and assigned to me a project on "Cutaneous Nerves in Leprosy: Correlation of Cutaneous Sensibility with Histopathological changes in Nerves in Skin Biopsies", the work which got me my M. Sc. degree by thesis in 1953. This subject was also partly suggested by Dr. A. G. M. Weddell, Associate Professor of Anatomy at the Oxford University, who had further recommended the use of "intra-vital staining" for the nerves in the thin skin biopsies, a method which I used in all of the over 200 skin biopsies of leprosy patients with different degrees of sensory loss. I sent my completed thesis to Prof. Weddell and he was enthused enough to come to Bombay to see me and my preparations for over a week.

In 1956 while engaged in the field of Neuropathology at the Tata Memorial Hospital, in collaboration with my very supportive senior Research Officer, Dr. C. G. S. Iyer, I was awarded the Fellowship of the Rockefeller Foundation to work at

the National Institute of Mental Health of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda' USA, -where I worked in Brain Circulation and Metabolism in normal and pathological aging in man, under the guidance of chief of Laboratories of Neurological Sciences - Dr. Seymour Kety and the Chief of the Section on Brain Metabolism - Dr. Louis Sokoloff. The most significant finding was that cerebral blood flow and oxygen consumption were not reduced even in actively functioning normal aged people of mean age 70 years, when compared to a control group of young people with mean age 21 years' After 2 ½ years of very productive work here, at my send off party, I called NIH, „The Mecca of Medical Research", which it still is with over a dozen Institutes on different subjects.

After completing 11 years of my work in Bombay in Neuropathology und Neurometabolism, I was instrumental in expanding the Neuropathology Unit at the Grant Medical College & J. J. Group of Hospitals , where I was called Officer-in-Charge of the Neuropathology Unit till 1964; when the State Government took over and I was appointed Professor of Neuropathology from 1964- 1981. Here I had the privilege to work and collaborate with various Neurologists, Neurosurgeons, Paediatricians and Plastic Surgeons, on all possible aspects of Neuropathology of central and peripheral Nervous System'

My colleagues in clinical neurology were Dr. N. H. Wadia and Dr. B. S. Singhal at the J. J. Hospital and Dr. E. P. Bharucha at the KEM Hospital. Among the various topics we collaborated on, were tuberculosis of the brain and spinal cord, especially tuberculous meningoencephalitis. With my senior paediatric colleague, Dr. P. M. Udani, our research work included tuberculous encephalopathy. With the same clinicians and paediatricians, another item of national importance was malnutrition affecting the CNS and the PNS; especially peripheral nerves and muscle in protein calorie malnutrition, and the effect of deficiency of the B- vitamins. In the latter study, several of my M. Sc. and Ph. D. students helped in estimating the various B-vitamins in the blood and CSF, together with the histopathology of nerve and muscle.

With several neurosurgeons of all hospitals in Bombay, especially of the J. J. and Bombay Hospitals, the main study has been of the whole spectrum of the pathology of brain tumours, often correlated with the findings at neurosurgery. Dr. R. G. Ginde, Dr. Gajendra Sinh at the J. J. Hospitals; Dr. S. N. Bhagwati at the J. J. & Bombay Hospitals; and to a lesser degree Dr. H. M. Dastur at the KEM and Jaslok Hospitals. My own neuropathological colleagues, over a period of more than 3 decades, have been Dr. V. S. Lalitha, my associate professor at the J. J. Hospital and Dr. Daya K. Manghani my research officer at the J. J. Hospital, and now Deputy Director of my Department of Neuropathology & Applied Biology at Bombay Hospital. With the latter I have just been reviewing nearly 6000 ICSOL, intended for a consolidated publication. In the 2nd

Edition of the Text-Book of Neurosurgery, by our distinguished Indian Neurosurgeon Prof. B. Ramamurthy, along with my earlier colleague Dr. V. S. Lalitha, I have a Chapter on the Pathology of Brain Tumours. With my recent colleagues - Dr. D. K. Manghani, Dr. P. S. Gaitonde and Dr. S. N. Bhagwati, I have a second Chapter on Pathology of Pituitary Adenomas.

With my several paediatric surgical colleagues, starting with Dr. Arthur D'Sa of the KEM Hospital; for the longest period and most productively Dr. Vasant Talwalkar, and to a lesser degree Dr. Irani and Dr. J. Kirtane, all of the J. J. Hospitals, the subjects investigated for about 3 decades were all forms of meningoceles and meningomyeloceles; as also various types and stages of Hirschsprung's disease, through multiple rectal and colonic biopsies.

With my colleagues at the Ackworth Leprosy Hospital (Drs. Figueredo, Desai & Shah) and the J. J. Group of Hospitals, and under the primary stimulus from the late Dr. V. R. Khanolkar, and of that Pioneer in leprosy work throughout the world Dr. Robert Cochrane of England and India, my most important item of study has been on the pathology, histochemistry and electronmicroscopy of nerves in leprosy of various types and stages. My main collaborators on this research scheme supported by research grants from the U. S. Department of Public Health and American Leprosy Mission Inc., were Dr. N. H. Antia, Chief of Plastic Surgery at the J. J. Hospitals and his colleagues Dr. Keshwani and Dr. Shubha Pandya, the latter contributing mainly to electromyography.

My other major items of investigation were also in collaboration with one or more of my excellent post-graduate students, 12 of whom got their Ph. D. and 10 their M. Sc, in Applied Biology of the Bombay University during 1959-1998. These were metabolic studies in human hepatic coma, Wilson's disease; Experimental studies on Toxicity due to Lathyrus sativus, Cycas circinalis (from Guam) and Manganese Toxicity; Fine Structure of Negri bodies in rabies, and other viral

encephalitides; and fine structure of myocardium and its intervention in congenital and rheumatic heart disease (in collaboration with cardiac surgeon - Dr. Nemish Shah).

Thus I have gained insight through my sustained research work, into various important disorders which are rampant in our country and which afflict millions of people in developing countries, for example, mechanism of brain damage in Neurotubererculosis; pathogenesis of Leprous Neuritis; and Malnutrition in adults and children. On these three and other items of investigation, I have been invited to give guest lectures in all the five continents of the world, most often in England and USA. During the past four decades, about 60 such lectures or talks have been delivered. The first was on request from none other than the father of Neuropathology, Professor J. G. Greenfield, in 1956 when he was visiting Professor at the Department of Neurology of Dr. Milton Shy, a most dynamic neurologist at the National Institute of Neurology of NIFI, the same time I was working there with Drs. Kety and Sokoloff. The talk was again on disordered cutaneous sensibility and dermal nerves, and damage to intramuscular nerves and endings leading to muscular atrophy, in leprosy. The same dual topic was the subject of an informal chat with Prof. Dorothy Russell, the pioneer of Brain Tumour pathology, at her Department in London Hospital, in January 1956, on my way to USA. I contacted Prof. Russell later at her Dept. and even at her residence on problematic brain tumour pathology, in the 1960's, as we were deep in that subject by that time.

Another senior British Neuropathologist and co-author with Greenfield on their Textbook of Neuropathology, Prof. McMenemey, had seen and talked of my published works till 1966. He then suggested that I should present them to the newly formed Royal College of Pathologists of London, for Membership of that College. I submitted them with his recommending letter in 1967 and the same year I was elected M(R) C.Path (Lond). Prof. John Walton, now Lord Walton, an old neurological colleague and himself an authority on neuromuscular disorders, also appreciated our neuropathological studies in this area and invited me to lecture at his Dept. in Newcastle. Prof. Byron Kakulas, Chief of

Neuropathology at the Royal Perth Hospital (in Perth, W Australia) knowing of our work on all aspects of central and peripheral neuropathology, asked me to be a visiting professor at his Department, for over a month in 1980, lecturing to his medical undergraduates and also giving a few guest lectures at his Department, where there were a few other visiting professors also, including Prof. Henry Urich of London. The latter then asked me to lecture at his Department also, and since then we have been communicating frequently. One of Prof. Urich's main interests was also pathology of brain tumours, and he is going to write the Preface for our forthcoming book on the Pathology of Brain Tumours. Prof. Raymond Adams of Harvard University, Boston, was another Senior Neurologist-Neuropathologist, who was keenly aware of my work from the 1950's onwards.

I have published about 190 scientific papers; and have edited one book each on "Leprosy" co-edited with Dr. N. H. Antia; "Tuberculosis of the Nervous System" co-edited with General C. C. Kapila, Dr. Baldev Singh and Dr. Prakash Tandon; and "Neurological Sciences" co-edited with Dr. Manik Shahani and Dr. Eddie Bharucha.

My work has received wide recognition mainly on the basis of published research papers. I was elected Member of the Royal College of Pathologists, London in 1967 and its Fellow in 1975; Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, India, in 1969; and was awarded the Doctor of Science (in Pathology) of the Bombay University in 1971; I was elected Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy, in 1982. I have represented India at the International Society of Neuropathology, as a Member from 1967 to 1987, and served on its Executive Committee during 1988-1990. I am now a member of the WHO Committee on Revised Classification of Brain Tumours.

My scientific contributions have been called landmarks in the field of Neuropathology & Medical Research. I had the honour of being named one of 30 "Neuropathologists of the 20th Century", by world renowned Neuropathologist, Prof. H. M. Zimmerman, at the International Congress of Neuropathology in Japan in 1990. I received the prestigious Rameshwardas Birla Smarak Kosh Award "for Outstanding Medical Research" in 1991.

My only motto through my life's career has been "WORK"; and that "as you sow so shall you reap".

Personal : I got married in 1959 to Miss Hilla M. Motafram, an outstanding elocutionist and debater at St. Xavier's College, with a B. A. in Political Sciences and M. A. in Sociology (in 1955). We have a son (Minoo) aged 37 years and a

daughter (Rashna) aged 33. Throughout my career, both professional and personal, Hilla has been a tower of strength, encouraging and helping me in every activity. My son Minoo is working with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in Bombay and abroad, as a Senior Executive. He was sent to Johannesburg, Africa, to establish a major branch of the TCS, which he did in 3 1/2 years. He married Miss Banoo B. Lentin and has two school going sons, aged 8 1/2 and 4 1/2 years. My daughter Rashna became a lawyer and then 5 years ago specialised as a Solicitor, working in the firm of Federal & Rashmikant in Bombay.

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