

Indian Journal of Dermatology and Venereology

(Incorporating Indian Journal of Venereal Diseases & Dermatology)

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Inaugural Addresses: 4th All India Conference

The 4th All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists, was held on 23rd, 24th and 25th February 1962 at Cowasji Jahangir Hall, in Bombay. The Conference was attended by majority of the Dermato-venereologists of India. Besides, the guests of International repute from abroad also graced the occasion and participated in the celebrations of the Conference.

Introduction and Welcome: By Dr. S. C. Desai, Bombay.

Distinguished Guests and Friends:

As the Secretary of the Indian Association of Dermatologists and Venereologists, it is my proud privilege to introduce the distinguished personages present today. I am privileged to introduce His Excellency Shri Sri Prakasa, the Governor of Maharashtra, particularly to those from outside Bombay. The Greeks had a saying that if philosophers were kings or kings were philosophers, the world would be a better place. In the days of democracy, we do not have kings but we have a philosopher in the person of H. E. Shri Sri prakasa who is the first citizen of the first city of the premier state of Maharashtra. He was also a renowned politician who lead the Congress Legislative Party in the pre-independence Central Legislature. I am equally privileged to introduce Dr. V. R. Khanolkar, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay, who is a world renowned scientist and respected teacher in pathology of many of us present today. Dr. R. V. Sathe, the President of the Indian Medical Association, is the genial, guiding spirit of many men of the younger generation. We, the members of the Western India Branch, are particularly proud today, because we are meeting in the City of Bombay, proudly named by our City Corporation 100 years ago, as the Urbs Prima In Indies. Medically speaking, we have no hesitation in saying that we have lived up to this description specially today. We have as members of our Conference Committee, Dr. C. S. Patel, the President of the Indian Medical Council. Additionally we have the President of the All-India Federation of the Obstetrical and Gynecological Societies, the President of the Indian Association of Surgeons, the President of the Indian Association of Radiologists, the President and the Chairman of the Association of Pediatricians of India, the President of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Bombay and the Presidents of the Territorial Branches of the Indian Medical Association. It is a unique coincidence, that all of our colleagues ... distinguished in their own specialities ... also hapen to be the Presidents of their respective Specialist Organizations in this same year.

We are also proud that the Indian Association of Dermatologists which was born in the year 1947 in Bombay is now reaching a state of youthful vigour today at the very place of its birth.

We are privileged that our distinguished foreign guests—the leaders of our speciality—have come all the way from the far corners of the world to be amongst us. Dr. Rebello will introduce them in his welcome speech. Besides we have colleagues from Pakistan viz., Dr. Nusrat Ali Sheikh, Dr. Aleem and Dr. Mrs. Fazelbhoy who are members of our Association and whose co-operation is an invaluable asset to us. We have also a colleague, Dr. DeSilva from Ceylon who came at a very short notice for this very memorable occasion. They will help us and be partners at this unique occasion of establishing our speciality on an international platform by the inauguration of the Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology. We are again privileged to welcome, for the first time in the history of dermato-venerology in India, the delegates from Colombo in the South to Amritsar in the North, and from Karachi in the West to Calcutta in the East. They are our esteemed guests. We have amongst us today 75 per cent of all the skin specialists in the Indian sub-continent and they are from every important teaching department.

With these words, now I request Dr. Rebello to extend an official welcome on behalf of the Reception Committee.



A section of the delegates attending the conference.

Messages

The following inspiring messages, received on this memorable occasion were read by **Dr. T. K. Mehta** :

I am very happy to learn that the Fourth All-India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists is being held at Bombay from the 23rd to 25th February. I wish the Conference all success.—**Rajendra Prasad**, President of India.

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"I wish the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists success."—**S. Radhakrishnan**, Vice-President of India.

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"I am happy to learn that the 4th All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists is being held on February 23rd, 1962 and following days. Skin, Venereal Diseases and Leprosy take a heavy toll of the national working days and the problem requires a careful and expeditious handling. I am quite sure that the Conference thus being held under the auspices of your distinguished Association will add greatly to the knowledge of the layman and experts alike. I send you my best wishes for a successful Conference."—**D. P. Karmarkar**, Minister for Health, Government of India.

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"I am glad to know that the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists will be held at Bombay on the 23rd, 24th and 25th February and it will be attended by eminent doctors and specialists in various skin diseases from all over the world. I wish the Conference all success."—**Y. B. Chavan**, Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

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"I am happy to learn that the Fourth All-India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists is being held at Bombay this month. The importance of such conferences needs no emphasis. It helps to focus the attention of people as well as of professional men on the importance of the subject for which it is held.

I am glad to note that the Association of Dermatologists and Venereologists has been trying to do its best in the promotion of training, research and service to humanity in this branch of medicine. Skin diseases fail to attract attention because many of them are neither so acute nor dramatic in their onset and cure. Nevertheless, the mental anguish caused by sufferings of these diseases is no less than any others. Your Conference is bound to further the progress in research, treatment and training towards amelioration in the venereal and skin diseases.

At present these specialities do not attract enough number of promising young men. I wish, as a result of the deliberations of Your Conference, a way will be devised to attract young graduates to this speciality.

It is heartening to learn that you have been able to initiate the ASIAN CHAPTER of the INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL DERMATOLOGY and are being aided in tackling the problems arising from skin and venereal diseases by various international delegates.

Wishing the Conference every success in carrying out the objects for which it is convened."...**Jivraj N. Mehta**, Chief Minister, Gujarat.

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"Your idea of having an Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology seems to me a most excellent one and I am writing to the Secretary General, Professor Frederick Reiss, giving my cordial approval.

"You have my very best wishes and I have no doubt that the chapter will be most useful and successful in furthering the progress of dermatology in general, and of tropical dermatology in all its aspects."—**Dr. Aldo Castellani**, President, International Society for Tropical Dermatology.

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"I wish to extend most cordial official and personal greetings to the Fourth All India Congress of Dermatologists and Venerologists, with every wish for a successful and rewarding meeting. It is a source of regret that, because of other responsibilities, I am unable to accept your invitation to attend the Congress. This would have been a great pleasure both personally and professionally.

I realize the necessity of having an Asian Chapter.

I have no doubt that this will contribute significantly to the knowledge on tropical dermatoses.—**Donald M. Pillsbury, M. D.**, President, XII International Society of Dermatology 1962.

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"My heartiest congratulations to you and your associates who have organized the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venerologists. Skin, Venereal Diseases and Leprosy are still among the foremost causes of morbidity all over the world. In my new position as Technical Director of Research of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, it has been forcibly impressed upon me that as a threat to military operations, enteric diseases and skin diseases are more important than all other as causes of military ineffectiveness in the far reaches of the world.

You and your associates who have been devoting your lives to the study and control of these diseases deserve the thanks and the recognition not only of your colleagues in the profession but of all mankind.

I wish I could be with you in person at your All India Conference, but my obligations here prevent me from making the trip at this time.

However I am with you in my thoughts and in my wishes that your meeting may be crowned with success and that your efforts will lead to greater opportunities for research, for teaching and for the management of dermatologic diseases throughout Asia."—**Marion B. Sulzberge, M.D.**, President, The Interna-

tional Dermatological Committee of the International League of Dermatological Societies, Technical Director of Research U.S., Army Medical Research and Development Command, U.S.A

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“I am in full agreement with the objectives of starting the Asian Chapter of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology. I shall deem it an honour to serve the Chapter.”—**K. Kitamura**, Tokyo Medical College Hospital, Japan.

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“I was very interested to know about your plans to set the beginning for a future Asian Dermatological meeting and it is necessary to say that such a great undertaking would be certainly worthwhile. I extend my warm support and hearty congratulations.”—**professor Felix Sagher, M.D.**, Professor of Department of Dermatology & Venereology, Hadassah Medical Organization, Jerusalem, Israel.

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“I was glad to know that the Indian Association of Dermatologists and Venereologists is holding the Fourth All India Conference. It is a source of personal satisfaction to me that the Association has been progressing and you are starting the Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology. I wish all success for both the above ventures.”—**Col. Jelal M. Shah**, F.R.C.S. (Eng.) F.I.C.S. (Hon), I.M.S. (R) J. P. Karachi, Pakistan.

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“Your suggestion of organising a Chapter of Asian Dermatologists under the aegis of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology is an excellent one. It is proposed to inform our members of this in a routine circular and they will be asked to communicate directly with you.”—**Eric H. Taft**, Honorary Secretary, The Dermatological Association of Australia (British Medical Association.)

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“I am in full agreement with the objectives of establishing an active Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology. It should rightly be in the Tropics. My congratulations to you and your colleagues who will shoulder the responsibility. I wish the occasion a great success.”—**Tilam Poerwohesodo, M.D.**, Djakarta (Indonesia).

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“The proposition for starting the Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology seems a most worthwhile project, and we do welcome it and pledge it our support. Please keep us informed as to its progress, next meeting etc.”—**Professor K. Kurban, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Dermatology), American University Hospital, Beirut.

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“I was glad to know that the Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology will be established—I regret my inability to attend

and wish it success.”—**Dr. C. Singhanet**, M.D., Director, Chiengmai Leprosy Hospital, Thailand.

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“I am in agreement with the objectives mentioned in your letter but regret that it will not be possible for me to come.”—**Professor Robert Kirk**, Professor of Pathology, University of Hong Kong, Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong.

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“Thank you very much for your kind invitation to the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists and to the meeting to initiate the Asian Chapter for Tropical Dermatology.

With every best wish for the success of your congress and the inauguration of the Asian Chapter.”—**Dr. C. S. Ratnatunga**, L.M.S. (Ceylon) M.R.C.P. (Edin) Central V. D. Clinic, General Hospital Colombo Ceylon.

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“I see that this is to be a very special occasion in which all Asian Countries will take part.

I personally wish that I could be present but all that I am able to do is to congratulate your Colleagues on their achievements so far and to offer cordial greetings and good wishes for the present Conference.”—**Dr. G. B. Dowling**, London.

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“I was very happy indeed to hear of the Inauguration of the Asian Chapter of the International Society for Tropical Dermatology.

A Society of this kind has been a longfelt need. All are aware that Dermatology in the Tropics has its own peculiar problems, which are vastly different from those in the colder countries. An Organisation, therefore, that would enable all those specially interested in the subject to meet, discuss and exchange ideas is of vital importance and would ensure rapid advances in the knowledge of the subject. I was therefore, delighted to hear of the Inauguration of this Society.

I much regret that I am not able to be present on this occasion. However, I extend my best wishes for the future and I am certain that with the cooperation of so many eminent Dermatologists the Society would be a great success.”—**T. Chelarajah**, M.R.C.P. Dermatogist, General Hospital, Colombo, Ceylon.

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Welcome Speech : By Dr. A. C. Rebello

Your Excellency, Honoured Guests, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, The planets met and dispersed peacefully a fortnight ago.

It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to this the 4th All-India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists, sponsored by the Indian Association of Dermatologists and Venereologists. The babe was born in 1947 and has now attained healthy puberty.

We welcome our very popular Governor, His Excellency Shri Sri Prakasa, a scholar, a national leader and the Chancellor of our University. He will inaugurate this conference with his usual wit and humour. We welcome each of our honoured guests;—Dr. V. R. Khanolkar, who inaugurates our Scientific session. He is one of the leading world Pathologists and is well known to you all for his work on Cancer, Leprosy and allied subjects. He is the Director of the Cancer Research Institute and the Vice-Chancellor of our University. Dr. R. V. Sathe, who will inaugurate the Exhibition on Skin, in Health and Disease is one of our leading Physicians and the President of the Indian Medical Association. Prof. Alfred Marchiononi the Director of the Department of Dermatology of the University of Munich, and one of the leading Dermatologists whose Department is responsible for research in all fields of Dermatology. He is a Foreign member of the French National Academy of Medicine. The First German to be thus honoured since 1914.

Professor Fredrick Reiss, a Dermatological Consultant to many Hospitals in New York and a Mycologist. He is the Secretary General of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology.

Professor R. Schuppli, the Head of the Dermatology and Allergy Clinics of the University of Basle.

Professor H. Schreus, the Head of the Dermatology Section of Medicine in Dusseldorf. He is the President and Founder of the German Society of Aesthetic Medicine.

Professor L. J. A. Loewenthal, of the South African Institute of Medical Research. He is well known for his work on the sweat apparatus.

Professor Abdel el Mofty is one of the Egyptian team who standardised the Psoralens derived from the Egyptian plant Ammi Majus used so much in sun tanning and in vitiligo.

Professor K. Ito, the Proff. of Deramatology Gifu Medical College. He has had a long and varied experience in experimental Mycology.

We are grateful to all our foreign guests who have come to this Conference to help us in our deliberation at a considerable sacrifice.

We welcome the delegates from the neighbouring countries, and from the different States in our Country, and Colleagues from far near and all the guests who have come to encourage us.

I miss many of my Colleagues from West Bengal who were so hospitable to me, when I presided at the second Conference held at Calcutta. We hope they will soon join us. In the coming three days we will be deliberating on the Skin that wonderful organ to which I was attracted more than forty years ago. I have lectured forty years on its attributes. It is an organ which is our defence. It is assailed by various factors in our environment, by all kinds of parasites visible and not visible, by internal disorders and even the very cells in the skin revolt and may become anarchic. It is often the cause of our frustrations, many young people wailing about their pimples and dimples about hair falling, hair greying and hair growing. About a black patch here and a white patch there, and a red patch somewhere. In our frustrations we try to seek relief by scratching the skin here, there, anywhere and everywhere, depending on the cause of the frustration. So many come into the world with some defect or the other which may appear soon or later. Here is an open invitation to many to join our fraternity. There is plenty of work to do. I wish you all very fruitful and happy days during your short stay in Bombay the gateway of India, the Metropolis of the East.



His Excellency the Governor Shri Sri Prakasa delivering the Inaugural Address.

Inaugural Address: By Shri Sri Prakasa, the Governor of Maharashtra.

On the occasion of the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists, I offer a warm welcome to all those participating in the same. There is no doubt that the diseases of the skin pose a major problem of public health for the land, and it is good that specialists should meet from time to time to study the causes of and propose the remedies for a widespread and painful malady.

There are also various Venereal Diseases that cause suffering to innocent men and women, and bring shame and illrepute to them, while these should be allotted to others who have caused them and who may have themselves escaped social censor. All those who are in-charge of the health of the race, have also the great duty placed upon them of becoming voluntary teachers of the public, and have themselves to study very carefully the means of the different classes of the people and the conditions in which they live, so that proper advice could be given to them within their financial and other resources. Our doctors have also the additional duty cast on them of inducing the general public to co-operate with them in the common task of eliminating disease and spreading health and happiness all around.

The Indian Association of Dermatologists and Venereologists under whose auspices the Conference is being held, have already to their credit much good work, and their anxiety to prevent these deadly diseases by intense training and further research in this branch of medical science, deserves every assistance and support on the part of the general public. I greet all the delegates from our own country and abroad that are attending the Conference, and wish them and their deliberations every success." Now I declare the conference and Asian Chapter open.

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Presentation of the Asian Chapter: By Dr. Frederick Reiss.

Your Excellency, Dr. Khanolkar, Dr. Fernandez, Members of the Indian Association of Dermatologists, Distinguished Guests:

I feel greatly privileged and honoured to participate in a unique event. Today marks a milestone in the history of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology, which despite its short existence of scarcely two years, has exerted an appreciable influence all over our globe. The Society has over 1,500 members and embraces 80 nations. From the very beginning, dermatologists and scientists working in the field of tropical dermatology, whether they live in the Tropics or Temperate Zone or even the Arctic region, realized the importance and necessity of this organization. It serves as a world forum, not only to give impetus to the study of the causes and treatment of tropical skin diseases, but also to exchange scientific data of cosmopolitan skin diseases that occur in tropical and non-tropical countries as well. Thus it offers a practical--may be the only organized platform for the study of geographical ecology of skin diseases. The scope and idealism of this organization was soon appreciated by numerous leading scientists all over the world, you should realize that this body is making it possible for all members around the world to reach data which otherwise would be difficult to obtain. The response to our appeal to dermatologists and scientists of India and other countries of the Asian continent was most enthusiastic and encouraging. One of the leaders of Indian Dermatologists and an officer of this organization, is Dr. Sharat Desai, whose unceasing vigor and untiring--I should say dynamic energy--is responsible for this historic event. It is indeed inspiring and gratifying that India has taken the initiative in this important task. During my 19 years in China, I kept close contact with India. While I gradually absorbed the culture of that great nation, I could not refrain from casting my inquiring eyes to the not too distant neighbour, India. Your great country always captured my imagination for its ancient culture; whether it is in the domain of art, science, poetry, philosophy, religion or medicine, India excelled in almost every department of human endeavour for many centuries. Ayurvedic medicine, which comprises one of the most ancient systems of medicine, will under modern scientific guidance remain for many years to come the source of valuable information for the Western trained physician as well.

I have also kept close contact with the modern trends in medicine and in dermatology of India and followed with deep admiration the dynamic speed and progress made in the last few decades and the many valuable contributions made by colleagues in India. India, as well as other countries in Asia, Ceylon, China, Burma, Indonesia, Japan, Malaya, Pakistan, the Philippine Republic and Thailand, are bound to make in time advance the scientific aspects of tropical dermatology.

The remarkable progress in India was only possible in a country with a culture heritage of almost 4000 years and was due to the extraordinary likeness of ideals, social and spiritual, despite diversity of religions, languages and customs. The secret of the splendid civilization of India was the penetrating knowledge and the widespread influence among all the nations that man is a spiritual being. It was in this marvelous country that a scholarly minded and dedicated person such as Dr. Sharat Desai and his devoted colleagues

who conceived and developed the idea to organize, with the co-operation of leading dermatologists of Asia, the first Chapter of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology.

The Board of Directors unanimously granted the Charter. I personally believe that there is hardly any other continent better qualified to carry the torch of the advancement of Tropical Dermatology. It gives me great personal pleasure to place in the trust of Dr. Desai the Charter of the Asian Chapter with the President's and my good wishes for boundless success.

Clinical session after the conference was over.



Search — Research

Inauguration of the Scientific Session: By Dr. V. R. Khanolkar.

I should at the beginning like to say how happy I am to be associated with the Fourth All-India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists. Affections of the skin are many and varied in tropical countries. Unfortunately, their scientific study has remained a relatively neglected subject. Recently, however, the importance of dermatology in clinical practice is being increasingly appreciated. Today, we have an active and enthusiastic group of dermatologists who are engaged not only in a study of the clinical aspects of diseases of the skin but have started to explore the causation, pathogenesis, histopathology and prevention of skin disorders. At this conference there are seminars on venereal disease and mycology and discussions on the prevalence, prevention and treatment of skin infections. A symposium on allergic disorders of the skin deals with the nature and type of allergic response, evaluation of histamine liberation tests, steroid control and evaluation of conventional therapeutic measures. The short papers reflect the widespread use of biochemical procedures, histochemistry and electron microscopy in investigations of dermatological problems. All this demonstrates clearly, that we in India are also alive to the recent trends in researches in this field of study. In my own field, as a person interested in the pathology of leprosy, we have been progressing steadily towards a better understanding of the lepra bacillus and its relation to its host. The techniques of classical histology, the comparatively recent methods of tissue culture and electron microscopy—have all of them enlarged the scope of our knowledge of pathogenesis of leprosy and the morphology, mode of invasion and transport along the nerves of the mycobacterium besides the molecular patterns of tissue response to injury by a metabolically slow but chronically infective process. I am glad that the organisers of this conference have met with a good response from all parts of India and from colleagues abroad. I wish the conference all success. I am sure that our guests from abroad and the delegates from the different parts of the country will return to their clinics, consulting rooms or laboratories stimulated to further work after imbibing many new ideas at this conference. I am particularly glad that there will be a distinct Scientific Session of the Conference which I have great pleasure now in inaugurating.

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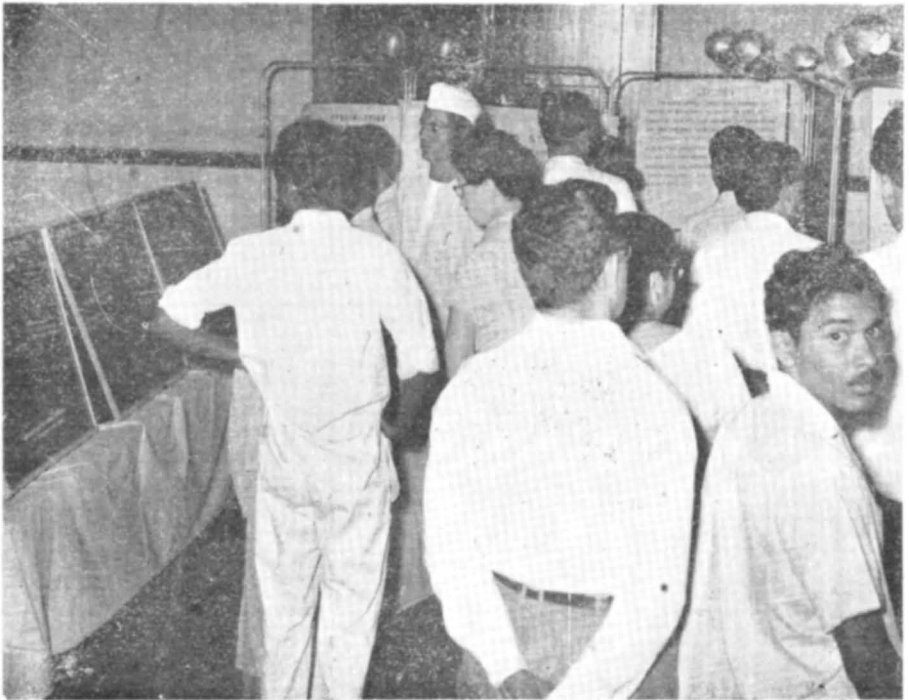
Inauguration of the Exhibition: By Dr. R. V. Sathe.

Dr. R. V. Sathe, President of the Indian Medical Association and Director, Post-graduate teaching at the Grant Medical College, Bombay inaugurated the Scientific Exhibition. He said that the exhibition at such conferences also had a role to play towards the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the various sections of the community. He had personally seen the exhibits for this conference exhibition and felt that they would prove very useful towards education of the general public and also to some extent of a section of medical practitioners who were not specialists in skin diseases. The exhibition also served to give prominence to the role played by several Pharmaceutical concerns, which contribute by research in drugs towards treatment of these ailments.

The Press also had given a wide publicity to the Exhibition which it deserved so well.

Dr. Sathe inaugurated the Exhibition with the hope that it would serve its purpose very well.

Scientific Exhibition



Curiosity of the Public

Presidential Address : By Dr. Joseph Fernandes.

Your Excellency, Dr. Khanolkar, Dr. Sathe, Distinguished Foreign Visitors, Guests and Colleagues :

It is a privilege for me to address you this morning on the unique occasion of the inauguration of the Fourth All India Conference of Dermatologists and Venereologists and of the Asian Chapter of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology. I am particularly grateful for this privilege to the members of the Association who deemed it fit to elect me as the President this year. I am sure I shall be voicing the feelings of my associates and colleagues in India when I say that we are all very thankful to Your Excellency and the Distinguished Guests who have agreed to inaugurate the various parts of the Conference in spite of their preoccupations. We are also thankful to the Foreign Guests who have come from across the seas at considerable inconvenience and expense to give us the benefit of their scientific knowledge and the moral support of their distinguished presence.

I wish to present this august gathering with some idea of the morbidity caused by skin and venereal diseases and leprosy and at the same time to give you some perspectives of the scientific disciplines of this speciality requiring urgent solutions. How far we succeed in solving these problems will ultimately depend on the work of each one of us here today, on public enlightenment for the prevention and early treatment of these conditions, on the quality of specialists we will produce in future and the financial support which should come forth for organizing the needs of this speciality.

It has been shown by Dr. Sharat Desai elsewhere in this Souvenir, that the attendance at the skin and venereal diseases departments accounts for the third highest number of cases seeking medical relief and comes next only to the major specialities of medicine and surgery.

The nature of cutaneous morbidity in a tropical climate is of phenomenal proportions because of the circumstances which give rise to the genesis of these diseases. Desai has brought out in his analysis of the skin disease problems in India that fully 50 per cent of the attendance at the skin and venereal departments can be accounted for by about a dozen of the well-known infectious dermatoses such as scabies, pyoderma, fungous infections, leprosy and some of the venereal diseases. No doubt the high proportion of these diseases is related to the poor economic conditions of the population resulting in poor hygiene and malnutrition. The loss of working days due to absenteeism from work in industry and the lack of efficiency resulting from workers continuing to attend to their jobs with these ailments, result in tremendous financial loss and expenses which have yet to be computed in India.

The gigantic extent of the problems of skin diseases in the tropics is being realised by thinking people all the world over and this has resulted in starting the International Society of Tropical Dermatology. This body has been recently established in the United States and more than 1500 charter members have joined from 50 countries of the world. This development has been achieved through the initiative of Dr. Frederick Reiss whom we are proud of and honoured to have in our midst today. The realization of the necessity of tackling these problems on an intensive basis, as well as research

in the prevention and treatment of some of these conditions first originated in the medical services of the United States army. A message from Dr. Sulzberger who is a dermatologist of world renown and is also the Technical Adviser and Director of research to the United States Armed Forces Medical Services states, "In my experience as Technical Director of Research of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, it has been forcibly impressed upon me that as a threat to military operations, enteric diseases and skin diseases are more important than all others as causes of military ineffectiveness in the far reaches of the world."

It is only a logical step that the Asian Chapter of the above Society is being established today in India to carry forward the campaign on the research for prevention and treatment of these diseases. It is a matter of particular pride to us that our Association has been vigilant and has taken the first step towards achieving the objectives of establishing a platform. This is necessary to co-ordinate the many faceted activities of public education, promotion of knowledge of hygiene, research on the genesis of these diseases, epidemiologic investigations and approaches in prevention, and facilities for training in this field. I am also happy to state that enthusiastic responses to this move have been received from many countries in Asia, viz, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Israel, Pakistan, Indonesia, Ceylon, Thailand, Japan and Australia. Today we have already amongst us some of the distinguished specialists from these countries.

With industrialisation will also come the problems of exposure of the human skin to thousands of new chemicals, any one of which may break up an individual skin. The nature of industrial and household sensitising substances will become evident to you at once when you visit the exhibition and see the allergy exhibit. We have gathered the noxious chemicals which have been collected as the agents of potential trouble from the experience of a single clinic. Such data have to be gathered by all of our colleagues handling different industrial populations to get an idea of the nature of these problems of industrial dermatoses in our country. The statistics collected in the western countries show a high proportion of skin diseases in industry, particularly of an allergic and eczematous nature. This in its train has brought up the problems of compensation to the workers who may chance to get these diseases and also consideration of the means to prevent the exposure to dangerous processes. We, in India, have not yet touched the fringe of this problem and it is evident that we have got to make a beginning. Thoughts on the latter problem have induced the authorities in the industrially advanced countries like the United States and some European countries to create special advisory boards of specialists of our disciplines to help the public health authorities and the government in solving some of the problems of prevention of these diseases.

It is hardly realised that this discipline concerns more than 300 different diseases. Besides the immensity of the speciality which I have just mentioned, I would also like to bring out here that this discipline contains many other specialities which an adequately qualified dermato-venereologist has to be aware of. These specialities are allergology, mycology, leprology, dermal pathology and an expert knowledge in x-ray and other physical therapy measures in skin diseases. I am not exaggerating one bit when I mention these specialities as will be evident from the introductory remarks published about our foreign guests who are with us today. Each one of them, besides being a well-known dermatologist has mastered one of these disciplines as a hobby and has made

it his life-work. This will also be evident from the programme of this Congress which will deliberate on these specialities.

Coming to the subject of facilities and training in India, I regret to say that I have to strike a very subdued note. The treatment facilities at most departments of skin and venereal diseases are totally inadequate in personnel, equipment, and financial allocations. This is the result of lack of knowledge of the problems of these specialities on the part of the authorities. I have already touched upon the special disciplines of this field. I have only to add that steps have to be taken to support financially, and by additional personnel, the establishment of a well organised department in each teaching and district hospitals. We, the specialists, have also a duty to perform in taking up at least one such sub-speciality as a life-time hobby, so that together we can pool our specialised knowledge from these fields for the service of the people and of dermatology. Facilities for training and the establishment of proper standards of education for specialists are inevitable corollaries to what I have already said. Unfortunately as a result of the above mentioned deficiencies, there are variations in the standards of training and qualifications in our specialities in the different universities of India, e.g. Madras and Visakhapatnam have a Diploma in Venereology, Calcutta has a Diploma in Dermatology, Bombay has a Diploma in Dermatology and Venereology, all of these requiring only a year of postgraduate training. Amritsar and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Delhi have introduced M. D. with Dermatology requiring two years of post-graduate training. I have brought these facts to your notice, not from the point of view of criticism of these Universities, but in order to show the deficiencies which we have got to remove if we want to have proper standards of proficiency in this important speciality. I am glad to say that our Association has played an important role in achieving this objective. It has established a committee on educational standards which will deliberate upon standards of specialization and the ways and means of achieving uniformity all over the country. Our Association was also ably represented by Dr. Kandhari at the Seminar on Postgraduate Medical Education held by the Indian Medical Council. We had represented the view that taking into account the peculiar circumstances of the still undeveloped economy in our country, we have to provide two grades of specialists. The first grade will be attached to the teaching and academic centres. These specialists should hold M. D. degree, with three years postgraduate training, including at least 6 months in general medicine and 3 months in x-ray and radiation therapy. The second grade may have a Diploma after 1½ years of intensive practical training. They would take care of the needs of the many mofussil centres as well as the needs of the national campaigns for the eradication of leprosy and venereal diseases. By adopting the above suggestions we may be able to fulfil a vast national deficiency of specialists in these disciplines.

We do not have in India more than 150 specialists out of whom I am glad to say 135 are our members. To give you a comparative idea of our deficiencies I may state that the United States has more than 2000 skin specialists to cater to the needs of one-third the population of India and about one-fifth the hospital attendance for cutaneous morbidity. This thought on the limited number of specialists in India also brings to my mind a subject which has made all of us a little unhappy. Here I am alluding to the recently started Association at Calcutta by a small splinter group which has not seen eye to eye with us on some very minor points. We, from the rest of India, have naturally felt unhappy over the existence of two societies and shall still strain every effort

to bring this group back to our fold so as to prevent the wastage of time and talents in pursuing this futile controversy.

It may not be out of place if I give you a short history of our Association. This Association was started in 1947 after Independence by the late Dr. U. B. Narayan Rao and a few enthusiastic specialists in Bombay. I wish to record here Dr. Rao's outstanding services to the cause of our Association and his sacrifice in handing over the Journal as its official organ. The All-India Association was born with the holding of its First Conference in December 1947. The constitution was adopted at the Second Conference in Calcutta in 1952 and the Third Conference was held in Madras in 1957. As you will see we have been meeting every five years regularly and this is the Fourth Conference. We have reached the interesting age of adolescence when several steps have consolidated our small beginnings. This year we have enrolled 45 newly qualified and qualifying members in a membership drive. A North India branch has been established with the enthusiastic collaboration of Dr. Kandhari and his colleagues. Also a majority of the specialists from the Armed Forces have joined us and several sub-committees have been formed to make the Association active in achieving our objectives of developing our speciality. These committees are those on education, on organization, on venereology, on leprosy, on research and on finance. It is also proposed to form a sub-committee on the peculiar problems of dermato-venereology in the Armed Forces and steps have already been taken towards this end. The Central Council has been broad-based with membership deriving from each of the major cities in India with a medical college. We now have a band of dedicated workers from many parts of India. I have no doubt that all these circumstances are favourable to serve the purpose and achieve the objectives which I have already enumerated.

I think I have given you some idea of the problems of our speciality as they affect the peculiar circumstances in India and I have indicated the direction of progress and the problems which we have yet to tackle as a Body. With these words, may I say, that with the will to serve, and with our shoulder to the wheel, we shall not be found wanting in playing our role in the service of our Association.

CLOSING SESSION : By Dr. S. C. Desai

Colleagues and Guests,

It was a special privilege for me to have been able to organize this conference and offer you a meeting which was memorable to us. This is because, it is the first meeting of its kind in our speciality when so many delegates from almost every important department came, and further the meetings were attended by a large number of medical men in the city. Further we like to believe that this may contribute to the establishment of our speciality on a firm footing.

The main functions of a specialist medical association are (i) provide a platform for the exchange of knowledge and ideas and camaraderie, (ii) serve for extending the knowledge of the general medical profession in the specialized fields, and (iii) serve as an instrument of public education for the purposes of promoting public health and prevention of avoidable suffering. The success of an association in attaining these objectives depends on the contributions of its associates.

Hence I should leave it to you to judge for yourself how far all of us have succeeded. I have no doubt, that whatever success is achieved is entirely due to your participation—I mean, all of you, the workers, the speakers and the learners. Whatever deficiency was there, is due to our limitations and I request you to forgive us for this.

With these words, I now declare the sessions closed—till we meet again—in German—Auf wie der Sein!

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