

## IN MEMORIAM

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SIR KEDARNATH DAS

1867—1936

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**S**IR KEDARNATH DAS, C.I.E., M.D., F.C.O.G. of Calcutta, India, an honorary fellow of this Society since 1923, died on March 13, 1936, of cardiac disease.

Sir Kedarnath was born in Calcutta on February 24, 1867, the son of the late Jadavkrishna Das who was a teacher in Hindu School, Calcutta. After passing the premedical examination in the General Assembly Institution, he entered the Medical College of Bengal, and during his period of study as a medical undergraduate, he won numerous prizes and scholarships as follows: Eight Gold Medals (obtaining full marks in midwifery), ten certificates of honor, the Duke of Edinburgh prize in surgery, prize in clinical surgery, Prosectors' prize in anatomy, and the following scholarships: College scholarships (during the whole period), Durga Charan Law Scholarship (First in first M.B.), Abdul Gunny Scholarship (best student of the year), and the Goodeve Scholarship (in midwifery).

After such unusual success as an undergraduate, it was not strange that his subsequent career was a brilliant one.

After graduating first in his class with the degree M.B. in 1892 and taking the honors in Midwifery, the University Gold Medal, and the McLeod Medal in surgery, he received the M.D. degree from the University of Madras in 1895. He was teacher in Midwifery and Obstetrician and Gynecologist to the Campbell Medical School and Hospital 1899-1919, and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Obstetrician and Gynecologist to the Carmichael Medical College and Hospitals from 1919 until his death. He was the Principal of Carmichael Medical College, Calcutta, from 1922.

Among his many other honors, he received the Coates Medal from Calcutta University in 1929, and he was made a companion of the most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire in 1918.

In 1933 King George V conferred Knighthood upon him for his distinguished services in medicine in India, where for forty years he had striven to reduce maternal and infantile mortality in his native land.

He belonged to numerous scientific societies, being Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and President of the Board of Studies in Medicine, Calcutta University, President of the Calcutta Branch of the British

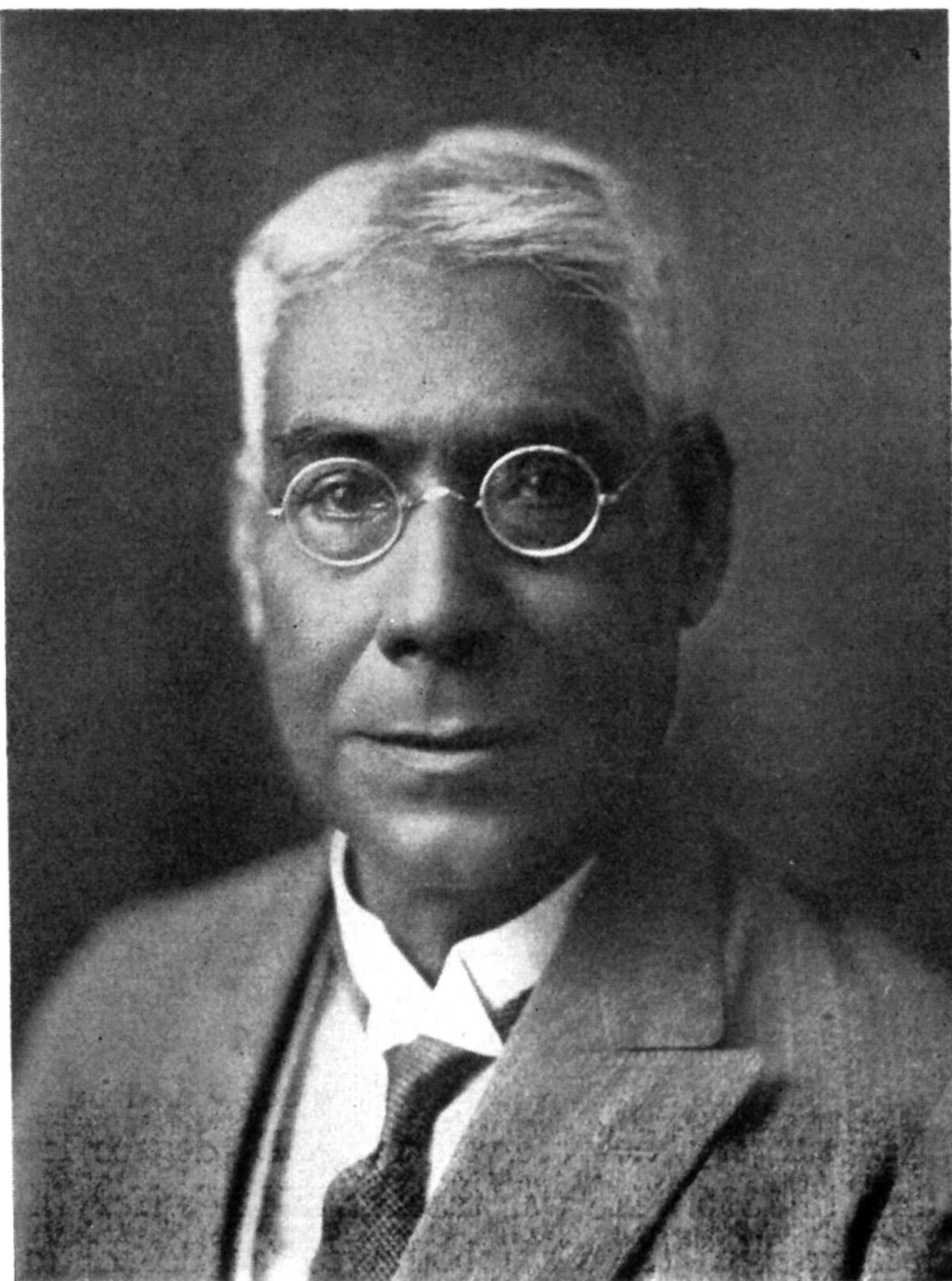
Medical Association, and was First President of the Indian Provincial Medical Services Association, besides many other learned bodies.

He was a prolific writer contributing many articles in obstetrics and gynecology to the medical journals, and he published two textbooks on obstetrics, one in 1914 and the other in 1920. In 1928 he published *The Obstetric Forceps, Its History and Evolution*, a notable work, and in the obituary notice in the *Lancet* it was stated that it was "the only masterpiece in this subject that has been published in the English language." Sir Kedarnath spent twelve years in compiling this monumental work. He also devised an obstetrical forceps, "The Bengal Forceps," popularly known as the Das's Forceps which is widely used in India. He had a remarkable library and a unique collection of obstetrical instruments which he had gathered from all over the world.

He was considered the Doyen of the medical profession in Calcutta for many years, and was much beloved by his professional colleagues for his integrity, loyalty and personal merit.

In May, 1922, he came from Calcutta especially to attend the meeting of our Society which was held in Washington, D. C., and he delivered a most interesting address on "Midwifery in India" from ancient times to the present. Sir Kedarnath was made an honorary Fellow of our Society the following year. With his death India has lost her greatest obstetrician.

*George Gray Ward.*



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BY WALTER B. MOUNT, MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY

**S**IR KEDARNATH N. DAS, the son of a Hindu teacher, was born in Calcutta, India, on February 24, 1867. As a medical undergraduate he won numerous prizes and scholarships. In 1892 he received his M.B. from the Medical College of Bengal in Calcutta, and in 1895 graduated with M.D. from the University of Madras Medical College. He became House Surgeon to the Eden Hospital, where he was the first Goodeve Scholar.

From 1899 to 1918 he was teacher in midwifery and obstetrician and gynecologist to the Campbell Medical School and Hospital, Calcutta. From 1919 until his death he was Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Carmichael Medical College and Hospitals. In 1922 he became Principal of Carmichael Medical College. He was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Calcutta University, and a member for twenty years of the Bengal Council of Medical Registration. He was the first President of the Indian Provincial Medical Services Association. In 1901 he joined the British Medical Association, and for five years was Vice President and President (1931-1933) of its Calcutta Branch. He was a Foundation Member of the Calcutta Medical Club. In 1918 he was made Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. He was a Foundation Fellow of the British College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. In 1933 he was knighted by King George V for his notable services to Indian obstetrics.

In 1914 he was elected an Honorary Fellow of this Association. In 1922 he read a paper on "Midwifery in India" before the American Gynecological Society in Washington and the next year was made an Honorary Fellow of that body.

His publications over a period of thirty-nine years include twenty-two papers and three books, two text books on obstetrics and his masterpiece, "Obstetric Forceps: Its History and Evolution," published in 1929. On this volume he had spent twelve years of hard effort. It is the only work in English on this subject. The Das forceps, a modified instrument for Bengali women, was used widely in India.

In 1933 Sir Kedarnath had a very serious attack of facial erysipelas. In December, 1935, he had broncho-pneumonia which left him with a severe cardiac condition to which he succumbed on March 13, 1936.

Sir Kedarnath was the greatest of Indian obstetricians. Impressive in appearance, over six feet tall, he seemed even stern but had many friends. One of his hobbies was his large and unique collection of forceps and other obstetric instruments, which he had presented to the Carmichael Medical Museum. He was a great reader and a lover of books and of first editions. Much of his work was done under conditions of weather that would tend to stultify endeavor; and much of his correspondence was done in his own handwriting, without benefit of stenographers.

Sir Kedarnath Das was brilliant, inspired, earnest and hard working, and had done Indian obstetrics much good. One of his two sons is a physician.