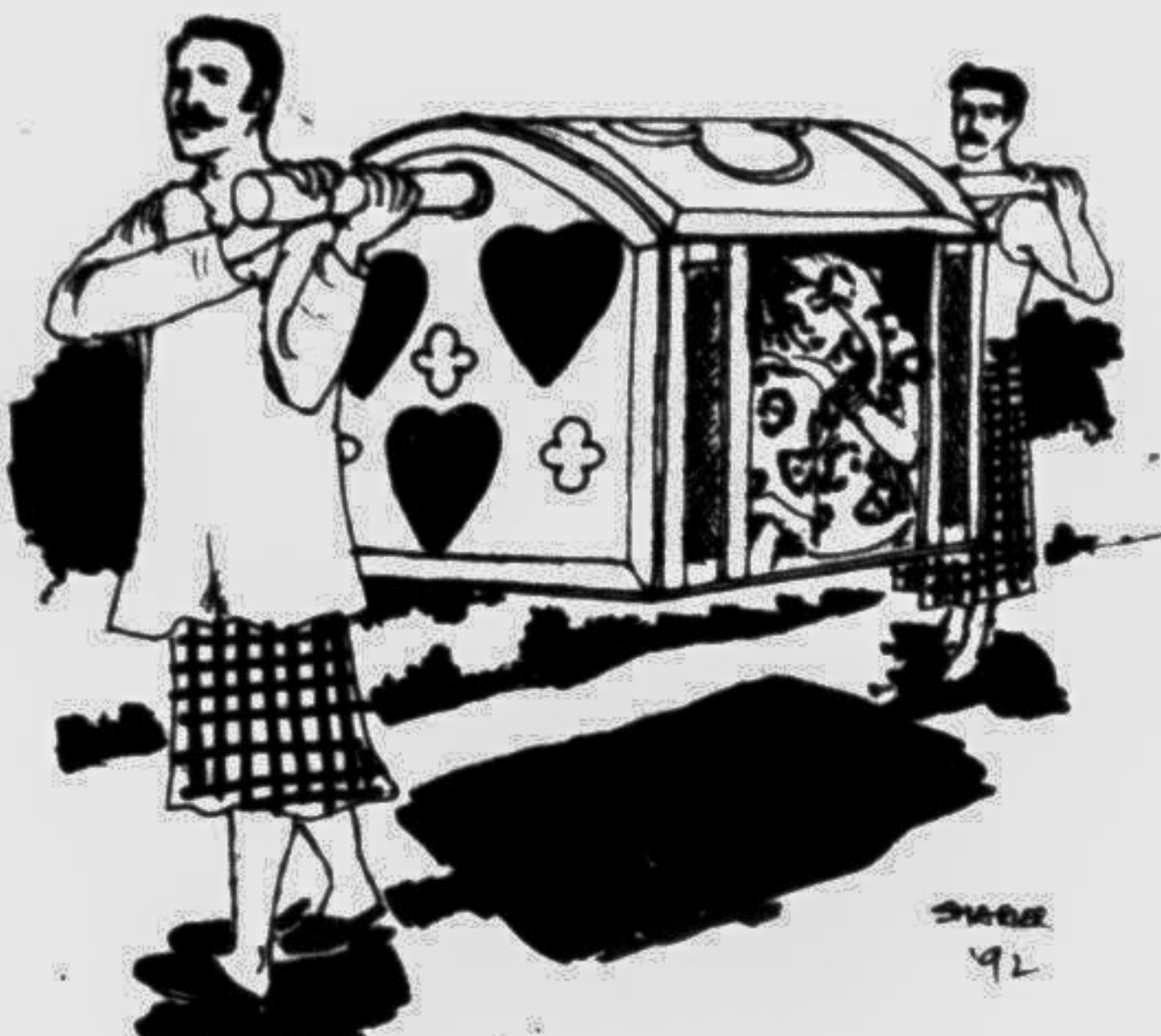


# LIVING

## The Marriage Scenario

by Parveen Anam

**While marriage means joy to some it means woe to others. The "others" in this case, of course, are the parents of the blushing bride who must hunt down the adequate groom. Although nobody approves of the various practices that go with marriage since time immemorial, yet they are prevalent.**



THE winter months, fast turn into months or "winter of our discontent". And when I say this, I do not only mean the political scenario turning "hot" (marvellous how the politicians always seem to prefer the winter months for smashing those cars on the streets and setting fire to the office of their opponents). Since the rift-rall can hardly afford to put their offspring into expensive boarding schools abroad, this is usually the time when the children are also trying to prepare for their final examinations. All the processions and 'hartaals' are great distractions, in case the mighty power's do not seem to realize.

However these months with its allure of 'pithas' and warm fires, is also the time when the weddings normally take place. This means joy to some and woe to others. The 'others' in this case, are of course the parents of the blushing bride. As the parent of every daughter of marriageable age knows, the 'proposals' for the hand of their daughter from prospective suitors, know no end. All those 'foreign' returned lads beat the trodden path to the front door. Respectable families, wealthy parents, all they are interested in is the girl. It does not really matter if she is not the face that launched a thousand ships. It can be a marriage of convenience. But once the 'engagement' takes place, the true story starts to unfold. "Discreet" enquiries about the amount of presents the bride is expected to receive from her family begin to arrive from the groom's house. The furniture in the new abode of the bride, most of course be provided by the bride's parents. Jewellery must include a certain minimum number of gold bangles, chains, etc. How else is the family of the groom supposed to hold up their heads in society? The entire outfit of the groom, must be provided by the bride's family — this plus gifts, expensive ones, for the groom's countless female relatives. The list is endless. Yet the word 'dowry' is never used. That is a nasty word, meant only for the me-

nials. Then, the actual expense of the 'proceedings' must most certainly be borne by the unfortunate parents of the bride. Starting from the day the groom's family descends on the bride's house, to 'discuss' things to the engagement to the ceremonies prior to the wedding, to the wedding itself, it is noted that the major expense of all ceremonies, is borne by the bride's family. Nobody ever stops to think why, though. It is an accepted custom. No one questions it. Least of all the bride's parents. They are hardly in a position to, unfortunately, its all they can do to make both ends meet. If the father of the bride happens to be a salaried person, he has to resort to other 'means' to meet the demands. And of course if he is a wealthy man with unlimited resources, it's marvelous for the groom's family. Unfortunately, the

means of most families is limited in a country like ours. It is always remarkable how although nobody ever approves of these practices, they have now been happily prevalent since time immemorial with no end in sight. The chilling stories of how brides are burnt to death or beaten to death, regularly feature as news items in the dailies with no follow-ups and no report of the guilty party actually being tried and punished. The merriment of marriages somehow begin to sound and seem hollow, when the threat of 'dowry' hangs like the sword of Democles over our heads all the time. The failure is society. If no measures are taken to protect the hapless bride and her even more hapless parents, the marvellous authorities can apparently do little except make the appropriate sounds, cluck importantly, rush to the 'victim's' house to

console the distraught parents with hollow words and equally hollow promises and forget all about it. Until the next election, somehow these issues never seem to feature in the "bye elections". One often wonders why. The electorate must seem like a whole bunch of nincompoops conveniently to be drawn upon and again thrown away when the purpose is served. Brings to the mind little fairy tales, the promises of the mighty, with no happy endings and "they lived happily ever after". Certainly not for the bride. She does not seem to live beyond the age of 21, thanks to the 'dowry mania'.

But again it's all very well for us to sit back and yell ourselves hoarse at the appalling circumstances surrounding most marriages. If we sweep it under the carpet and pretend it does not exist, that's all very well. Except that it will be there. Deep rooted social vices take longer than that to go away. And the effort to make it disappear has to be a concerted one, involving the joint effort of all our resources individual and government.

Weddings still do manage to bring tidings of joy and merry making. A reasonable exchange of gifts and jewellery is most certainly not amiss. But the entire point is missed if the groom's family expects the entire burden of the marriage, to fall upon the shoulders of the bride's family. The concept of 'share and share alike' might seem distant and obsolete to the mighty grooms well wishers, but is still a proposition which should be enforced upon all. The burden of marriage can then be truly lessened and the entire affair made enjoyable one for the families involved in it. The nightmare of getting an "eligible" daughter married 'off' should no longer cause sleepless nights to the worried parents. We should all join in and give the institution of marriage its dignity. And the bride the joy and pride of being just a "simple" bride accepted for what she is worth as a human, and not what she is carrying in tow in terms of that horrible 'dowry'.

## Modern Children and Discipline

Fouzia Haque

DISCIPLINE is a moral quality in its broad sense. It includes obedience to any system of rules for orderly conduct. And home exerts a great influence on children's character. Children quickly imbibes the manner, behaviour, disposition, good or bad traits of those who are constantly around him. But now-a-days one can easily find the difference in the way of living, style of dressing, thinking etc. between one generation and the next. Quite often we notice children behaving strangely, rudely and sometimes making demands unjustifiably from their parents.

they wish for and allowing them too much of freedom and when the time comes to impose some sort of restriction on this freedom, they find to their horror and surprise that it is too late. Some parents do not lead exemplary lives themselves. They marry, divorce and remarry. A bad home ruins character. So the children of a broken family are bound to be problem child. They lack genuine parental love and affection and shuttle from one home to another, living with the father for a few months and then with the mother for another few months and this may not be conducive to a happy upbringing of the children. These



A mother supervising her family of two children

If the demands are not fulfilled properly by the parents, there is a possibility that their children will leave home and get mixed up with bad elements. They very easily suffer from frustration. That is what the parents fear most. So the parents often yield to their demands, however unjustified that may be and to pacify themselves, forgive their children on grounds of existing generation gap.

Possibly this is partly the fault of the parents too. They pamper their children from infancy, giving them whatever

children can hardly be expected to lead a disciplined life later on.

Most teenagers of the affluent society of our country are gradually becoming used to foreign customs and manners. They love to be considered and treated as special and sophisticated. They like to follow and imitate all what their western brothers and sisters do. Now-a-days it is common to see long-haired youths, dressed in ultra fashionable clothes and addicted to western vices. Their favourite haunts are the discotheques, video clubs, mu-

## Cookery

### Sheek Kabab

- |  |     |  |
|--|-----|--|
| 500g (1 lb) beef                       | 2   | teaspoons salt                             |
| 2 Cardamoms                            | 1   | tablespoon ground papaya (meat tenderiser) |
| 2.5 cm/1 — in piece cinnamon, 2 sticks | 2   | tablespoons flour                          |
| 2 teaspoons ground coriander           | 2   | teaspoons ground mustard                   |
| 2 teaspoons ground cumin               | 1   | tablespoon vinegar                         |
| 1/2 teaspoon chili powder              | 1/2 | cup cooking oil                            |
|  | 1   | teaspoon sugar                             |

sic parlours and dance halls. Sooner or later they are bound to realise that these sort of habits can only lead them to life of miseries and disgrace.

A home becomes hell when it is only a seat of vice and troubles. From the youth's point of view there is a generation gap and it exists as the parents cannot understand them. According to them the parents always look upon their children as an infant and are unaware of the fact that the

1. Make slices of meat. Wash and drain water. Add all ingredients, mix well. Marinate for 8 hours.
2. Thread the marinated meat slices on the metal skewers. Cook under a medium hot grill (broiler), turning frequently or broil the kababs over charcoal heat until the meat is browned and tender.
3. Serve sheek kabab with salad and bread. Makes 4 serving.

### Shami Kabab

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | kg (2 lbs) ground meat                       |
| 1/4 | cup split bengal gram cardamoms              |
| 4   | cm/1 — in piece cinnamon, 2 sticks           |
| 2   | cloves                                       |
| 2   | red chillies (optional)                      |
| 1   | teaspoon ground ginger                       |
| 1   | teaspoon black pepper                        |
| 1   | bay leaf                                     |
| 2   | teaspoons cumin seed                         |
| 2   | teaspoons coriander seed                     |
| 1   | teaspoon salt                                |
| 2   | tablespoons cooking oil                      |
| 2   | teaspoons sugar                              |
| 1   | egg  |
| 2   | tablespoons chopped mint or coriander leaves |
| 2   | tablespoons chopped raisins                  |
| 2   | tablespoons grated cheese                    |
| 2   | tablespoons chopped onion oil for frying     |

1. In a saucepan put in ingredients from ground meat to 2 tablespoons oil. Add 1 cup of water, cover and cook over a low heat for 25-30 minutes. Stir meat and cook till all the water has been taken up. Fry meat for 2-3 minutes.
2. Removing bay leaf grind meat again. Add sugar, egg, 1/2 teaspoon lemon rind, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and mix well. Make 20 balls.



3. Mix together mint leaves, raisins, cheese and onion. Put 1 teaspoon of this mixture into the meat ball. To make the ball flat press it with your palms in such a manner that it becomes somewhat thinner around the edges than in the centre. Fry in deepfat.
4. Serve with porota or pullao.
5. Makes 10 servings.

## Beauty and the Bath

AT the end of a long day, what could be nicer than a lovely luxurious soak in the bath? But your bath can pick you up as well as wind you down — all you need to know is the right ingredients to add. Cleopatra poured ass's milk into hers; Liza Minnelli confesses she does "everything" from her teeth to her hair and face, under hers; and Helen Reddy can't imagine greater luxury than munching chocolates in hers.

These are just a few of the startling revelations you are likely to encounter when you

you can close, you're in business. Of course, extra touches are welcome — a jungle of greenery surrounding your tub, piped-in music, and perhaps deep pile carpets all around — but these are all props that can be dispensed with, without affecting the quality of your bath.

### The water treatment

The temperature of your water is important. Too-hot water can be taxing to your system, besides encouraging broken capillaries (the fine red lines that appear on cheeks and legs most often).

like silk. Really dry skins require bath oils tossed into the water to soothe and nourish them. Look for oils made from avocados, olives, nuts and the like. They usually leave a thin film on the skin afterwards, and for even more effect, can be towelled into neglected areas like elbows and feet.

Loll in a lemon bath if you are plagued by an oily skin. Anything with a lemon base will help cleanse, tone, clarify and restore natural balance to oily skins.

While you soak in your

Of all the aches in the body, headache heads the list. It is a very common complaint and there is hardly anyone who has not had a headache. Though it is not a serious one, young or old, men or women, no one is spared.

Headache shows considerable variation in its presentation. In some of us the attack

the water. Relax, let all your limbs dangle loosely, empty your mind of every niggling little worry the day has brought. Don't even think of the next hour, let alone tomorrow. Just drift, while the beauty oils and bath preparations do their work.

When you're ready you might want to sit up and take a little notice of the parts of your body that take the most wear and tear — knees, heels, elbows. Use a friction glove or a loofah to stimulate the circulation and slough off 'dead, horny skin while working in emollient-laden bath waters.

### Body Beautifiers

If you're feeling terribly energetic or slightly guilty about your last big meal, try these exercises in your bath, to tone up the torso.

For the upper abdomen, back and waist, sit with your hands on your ribs, fingers kept close together. Keep your back straight and pull in tummy. Now try and get your elbows to touch behind your back. Keep pulling them together with small tugs, about 12 times.

To help your hip line, lean back in the bath, bring your right hip up to your right ribs as far as you can, then lower slowly. You should feel a movement in your hip joint. Repeat with the left hip, bringing it up towards left ribs. You can use the other end of the bath to brace your feet.

(to be continued) GDH

## Headache Heads the List

by Dr Mahbubur Rahman Chowdhury

is frequent and in others seldom. Some headaches are severe and some are mild. The duration of it in some of us is short but in others longer. Some headache runs in the family. The cause of some headaches are known while some are due to unknown factors.

Most headaches seen to occur due to tension. It is naturally called 'tension headache.' It may be precipitated by worry, anxiety, exhaustion, noise, depression, high blood pressure or visual disturbance like short sightness.

Tension headaches are generalised and dull with no vomiting. Patient can continue normal daily activity. In fact it is less noticeable when patient is otherwise occupied.

One of the most known headache is migraine, even though its cause is unknown. 10% of the population seems to suffer from it. It usually commences around puberty and continues till late mid-life. It occurs at intervals of day to months and may last for a few hours on a few days.

The headache, throbbing and severe is due to dilatation of the blood vessels. Along with the headache there is feeling of weakness and nausea and the person may even vomit, even though the name suggests the headache is unilateral. It may be otherwise, some people see zigzag lines on flashing coloured light before an attack.

It runs in families. Even though there is no definite cause there are different precipitating factors which initiate the attack like tension headache, anxiety, exhaustion, insomnia may act as an exciting factor. In some women, it may occur prior to menstruation. Closed air tight rooms, bright shining light, cloudy weather, extremes of temperature, may act as a precipitating factors. Other trestle factors are intake of chocolate and cheese.

Headaches occur be due to

disease of nearby organs diseases of the eye, ear and nose problems cause headache. Tension headache and migraine are the most common headaches but a few may be associated with other serious diseases like tumour or other lesions in the brain.

Like its variant nature headache may be relieved in various ways too. Those of us who suffer from headache have formulated ways of relieving ourselves.

Some find relief by relaxing

in a cool, quiet room while others talk with their beloved to relieve themselves. Taking a stroll in the open air help some while others are helped by listening to their favourite music.

A cup of hot tea helps some while others prefer a cool shower if this measure fails, paracetamol or aspirin may be taken. But if the headache still persists and its nature is severe or if it is of the unusual type it is better to consult a physician.

## Beauty Pageant

WHO is not interested in seeing a beauty contest and the faces and figures of beautiful women? A pretty face alone is soothing. In a beauty contest it is not only the vital statistics of the competitor that matters but also the personality, and sometimes even the I.Q. of the participant that counts.

Here is Miss World '91 on the stage. The contest was held on December 7, '92 at Sun City, South Africa. The second picture shows one of the five finalists of the competition being interviewed. Beauty contests make women aware of the need to look graceful and presentable despite the heavy schedules at home and at the office. It is not that our women do not have a notion about being trim and elegant, but it is the due to the rush of the daily existence that they give more importance to other matters and ignore or forget the need for diet, exercise and general beauty care.



Star TV photos by T.A. Khan.