

Biotechnologists: Their Marriages and Future

by Asoke K Bagchi

THE purpose of this article about marriage is, like the purpose I see in many highly technical careers, to deal with a state that has some measures of hope and viability. There are these states of being that possess potential, actual and future existence. All else is mere hope and history.

Apparently there are probably more reasons today for not marrying. Some of these reasons are the fast changing style of living together, having fewer children and much less of a small unit family, less restrictive life styles and premarital sex experiences. Yet, most people marry at least once.

In view of the ideology of love as the motivating factor for marriage, less than half marry for love. The most frequent reasons are companionship and having a homelife with hot meals. Perhaps this is so because other traditional functions of married life have been eroded by the ever changing world. The family is no longer a unit of economic productivity, the sole source of education, care and upbringing of children. Reproduction is no longer the dominant factor in a married life.

Human expectations are often based on the behaviour of the successful and faithful partner in courtship, which is no predictor of marriage. Twenty per cent of those who marry state family pressure as their motivating factor to marry. The security of marriage does not equate with the contentment.

The current mounting divorce rate seems to show that

marriage is an artificial bond of the society. Marriage also seems to impede the liberty of the man as well as subjugate him. Marriage appears to be an instinct as it is seen in every culture, civilisation and group of men. The system of moral codes and traditions, often equated with godliness appears to be another motive for marrying. Love and companionship cannot be defined. One can categorise 3 distinct types of loveable objects: (1) Those whom we seek for pleasure, (2) those who are useful to us, and (3) those whom we admire and perceive as good and virtuous. In a relationship based on utility, each complements the other. Unlike the amorous relationship, utilitarian relationship are seldom permanent. Such relationship do not find pleasure because they are more interested in some profits than in the person. Most relationship begins with a feeling of pleasure. However, unless there is time for the development of familiarity with the other person, marriage fails. True companionship or comradeship, the genuine regard for one another as friends and equals, takes long time to develop. Most of the successful marriage partners ultimately exchange their ideas for a more mature form of love or companionship.

People of change psychologically, married or unmarried but, how does one view the changing status of each individual after marriage? The personalities entering into marriage often see themselves

as considerate and affectionate. High income-earners often emphasise on the word "affectionate" more often than the less fortunate. Husbands who are mature enough to admit they are short tempered seem to have shown competent enough to select wives whose personalities compliment their own. To compliment is to express appreciation or praise.

In the context of going through changes, it is absurd to have the optimism of those who expect marriage to effect a profound ennobling of the human soul through the exchange to textual vows and rituals. Majority of persons report that marriage changes them for the better. The most common change is that of maturity which appears not unlike technical training to occur through increasing the amount of responsibility. But responsibility in marriage, unlike technical training which demands a course of prescribed duties, is a state of readiness to respond to the need of another person. It is the much less vital yet the predictable routine of technologist at work. The truly wise person feels inadequate to meet great responsibility. Lesser equipped and more self lessened persons are those who seek to overpower others. About a third of those who marry feel that they have become more considerate. Similarly a quarter of women attribute greater self confidence to marriage.

Is conflict inevitable in a marriage? Well, one does very seldom encounter couples who never fight. These couples are characterised by personalities which will relent on any point of contention because they cannot bear displays of aggression or any threat of loss of affection. Others may be absolute tyrants in the office or the place of work because they dare not oppose a dominant and aggressive wife. But, what people fight about is not as important as how they fight and how they make peace.

The principal cause of conflict is money, far above any other reason. Money and careers are inseparable. The most common complaint the wives have about a technologist's career is that it takes up too much time. The hazards of the occupation, not always measured in strenuous physical acts, also play a role. The most frequent psychic dangers cited by technologists' wives, are the admiring and nearly adorable attitudes of women working with a technologist-husband. Lack of communication with relatives, social activities also add to the frequency of arguments. Not surprisingly, parental matters engender more opportunity for arguing. This is especially true in high income families where arguments may be less related to money than to the upbringing of children. Adding a child necessitates change, yet, the change appears to be one of the greater burdens placed upon the mothers in adjusting their lives to the addition of another child. The marriage also becomes increasingly focussed on instrumental functions and less on emotional functions. Mothers who stress on positive aspects of their marriage are better able to look beyond the negative marital effects that invariably accompany the transition to parenthood. For husbands, change occurs from romance to reality. Yet, disagreements about children are handled with greater acceptance, than other familial problems.

The modern couple seems to have lost the capacity of a conception of a future and the logical intellect to plan for it. In the acceptance of the dictate of "good living", the modern couple seems to have disavowed traditional norms. They advocate special freedoms and return to a primitive pattern and forsake the security of devotion to an from a single mate. In short, they reject everything that is human and then complain about the inhuman state of marriage. We need to forget about our brief hours of personal glory and involvement. Marriages, like a technological career, may always start with an atmosphere of happiness and optimism. Yet, the passage of time brings error, tribulation and termination. Neither state can protect us from having to confront darker days. Marriages can help us from having to confront them alone.

Crisis will come to each human being. If we expect it and can face it with confidence, we can negotiate each curve including a final point of no return. Our children and others can carry on the legend which we all once shared as parents.

The writer is a consultant neurosurgeon in Calcutta. The article was adjudged as the best published in the Journal of the Indian Medical Association during 1992-93 and is reproduced here by exclusive permission.

Snake

by Shamsul Islam

Latika woke up crying — 'snake, snake'. Suddenly at the dead of night. Amidst a hissing darkness. And no sooner did I switch on the light, Latika was found nowhere. In the dizzled room. Only a naked snake was there. Dancing swifly with all its serpentine slimness; and bright burning eyes.

Translated by Alfaz Tarafdar

Lest We Forget

Abul Kalam Shamsuddin

by Prof M A Ghafur

P RIMARILY known as a journalist late Abul Kalam Shamsuddin was basically a literature of the highest order. He started writing ever since his boyhood and continued his literary pursuits till his death. He was also a great cultural fighter who contributed heavily to the cultural emancipation of the nation. He was a sensitive patriot who never hesitated to go for quite big sacrifices when the cause of the nation and people needed so. Above all Abul Kalam Shamsuddin was a man of liberal disposition and robust heart who could easily endear himself to anybody who came close to him.

Born in a respectable Muslim family in the district of Mymensingh late Abul Kalam Shamsuddin had his primary schooling in the pathasala of his own village. He read up to class IX in Mymensingh Zilla School and passed Entrance Examination from Dhaka College in the year 1917. He developed friendship with the famous writer journalist Abul Mansur Ahmed while in the village pathasala and this continued till his death. He passed the Intermediate examination in 1919 from Dhaka College and got himself admitted to Ripon College, Calcutta. Anti-British non-cooperation movement reached its peak during this period and Abul Kalam Shamsuddin gave up his studies at the call of the movement. Later he took his graduation from the National University established by Desh Bandhu CR Das.

Abul Kalam Shamsuddin inherited the tradition of literary pursuits from his parents both of whom were profoundly religious and at the same time

liberal in their outlook having refined taste for the nation's rich heritage. His family was conspicuous for its cultivation of Arabic and Persian and Punjabi literature. Abul Kalam Shamsuddin's life long interest in literature in general and fiction and Punjabi in particular can be traced to this family tradition.

Abul Kalam Shamsuddin started his literary career while he was student. He had already established himself as an essayist and literary critic during his college days. His essays and writings on literary criticism were published in the literary journals like Saqat, Al-Islam and Bangla Muslim Sahitya Patrika. He took up the profession of journalism in 1921, at the call of eminent literature Mohammad Wazed Ali and joined the Mohammadi founded and edited by Maulana Akram Khan. The father of journalism in Muslim Bengal. He subsequently served in Dainik Sultan and The Musalman. He also served in various capacities in monthly and weekly Saqat. His article Maha Shashan Kabya published in Saqat in 1926 firmly established him as a distinguished literary critic in 1934 BS. He published in Saqat a long serialised article entitled Kaoya Sahitya Bangalee Mussalman which earned him much fame. In his article Abul Kalam Shamsuddin elaborately dwelt on the poetic genius of Nazrul Academy, and its first

Nazrul Islam. It was in this article that Nazrul was for the first time prophesied to be an epoch making poet (Juga Prokortak Kab).

In 1936 when the oldest daily of Muslim Bengal The Azad was started Abul Kalam Shamsuddin joined its editorial department. He became the Editor of the Azad in 1940 and remained so till 1962. He was connected with the daily Azad for long 26 years since 1936 and this was a historic period in the annals of Muslim Renaissance in Bengal in which the Azad played an outstanding role in guiding the destiny. It goes without saying that Abul Kalam Shamsuddin had his big part in this Renaissance. During the period between 1936 and 1947 The Azad fought for the Muslim cause and the Editor of the Azad had to perform the role of a friend, philosopher and guide in all such activities.

In course of his work for Muslim Renaissance he came in touch with innumerable socio-cultural organisations which he either patronised or assisted. But there were some organisations again like Purba Pakistan Renaissance Society of preparation fame and Raunak (RONAC) of post-partition days in which he had been the central figure. He was also connected with Pakistan Sahitya Majlis, Pakistan Lekhak Sangha, Bangla Academy and he was one of the founders of Nazrul Academy, and its first

president. He had been in journalism for long 50 years from 1921. After he severed connections with The Azad in 1962, he joined another vernacular daily The Jeihad. In 1964 when Press Trust of the then Pakistan brought out Dainik Pakistan (Now Dainik Bangla) he joined as its Editor. He retired from this daily in 1972, then renamed as Dainik Bangla. Although he retired from active journalism in 1972, he retained his active interest in the profession and guidance for the profession till the last days of his life.

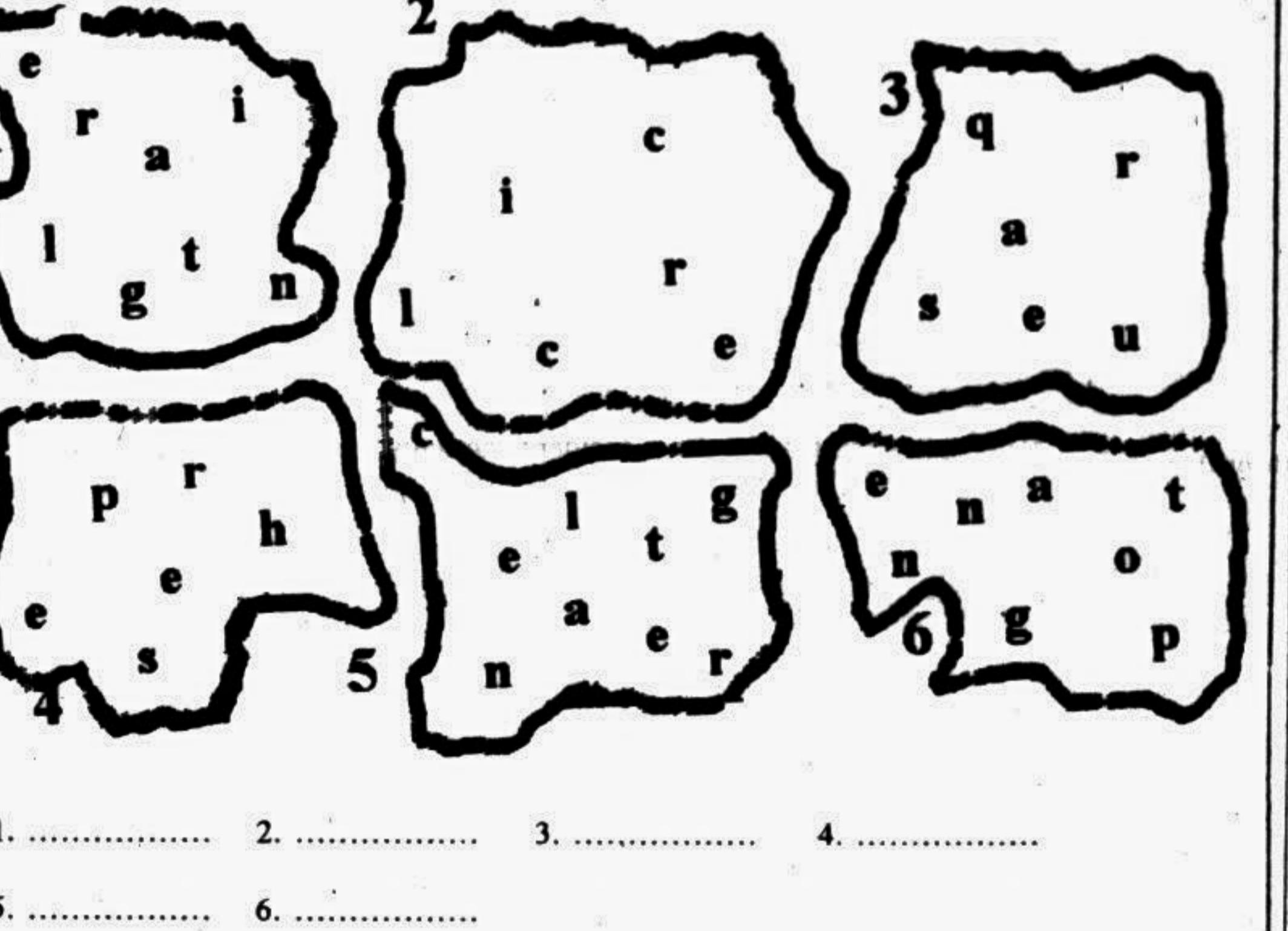
He had a colourful literary career. Like many litterateurs he too started his literary career through poetry. But soon he took to his basic line — the field of essay writing and literary criticism. His style was superb both in fiction and other prose writing. He enriched the Bengali literature by translating three great works of Turgev who was one of his favourite authors. His works of translations and adaptations from Turgev are Anabadi Jami (Virgin Soil), Karataranga (Torments of spring) and Trirota (three currents) a book consisting of three famous stories of Turgev. His writing on literary criticism are many but unfortunately we have so far got only one book on the subject and it is Dristikon (The outlook). Among his other important works are Atti Diner Smriti (Memoirs of bygone days) Palashi Thekey Pakistan, and Natun Chin, Natun Desh all of which have enriched our literature. He also wrote quite a few books on journalism which are both enchanting and educative at the same time.

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Try this word puzzle. In each shape the letters are jumbled up. Put them in the correct order. What do they all have in common? Be careful. Some shapes might have more than one word.

Wobbly Words

1. spaghetti 2. amok 3. barbecue 4. kindergarten 5. pyjamas 6. robot 7. anorak 8. creche a. Persian b. Czech c. German d. French e. Eskimo f. Italian g. Spanish h. Malay



	by	up	in	over	on	off
get	eg ✓					
come	✓					
give	✗					
put						
make						
break						

For example:

(a) - get by has a transparent meaning (*Could you move your chair please? I can't get by.*) - and an opaque meaning (*Since her husband died, she has had to struggle to get by.*) In this second use, the meaning is 'to manage - but with difficulty'. It does not have an object. A one-word verb equivalent is 'survive'. 'Get by' is more informal, but 'survive' is commonly used.

(b) - With get up, the meaning is quite transparent - you get up (out of your bed) in the morning. If there is an object, it goes between the verb and the preposition (eg *Is Kamrul still in bed? Go and get him up now or we'll be late.*) A one-word verb equivalent is 'arise' but it is so formal and so rarely used that you would probably only come across it in poetry or in political slogans.

You can do this exercise with any combination of verbs and prepositions. Make a grid like the one above, with a selection of verbs down the side and prepositions across the top. As before, consider:

- which combinations are acceptable
- note the one-word equivalents, and any restrictions on use
- make a note of the meanings, and whether they're transparent or opaque
- study 'the grammar'.

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Good words

1. language 2. tribe

3. square 4. shapes

5. rectangle 6. patterns

7. copy 8. all

9. answers

10. the British Council, 1994

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