

THE SHAHS

by Mrs Habeeb

Two very busy people are Dr Shah, Eye specialist and Professor of Ophthalmology, Dow Medical College and Civil Hospital, and his wife Dr Mubarika who is also at the Dow Medical College and at Civil Hospital as Associate Physician and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics. She is a specialist in children's diseases. Each of them have their own practice, his clinic is in town and hers at home. But have still been able to give the right kind of attention to their children.

In today's quickened pace of life, one has to regulate one's life so as to fit in all ones duties . . . duty to ones family, to ones profession, to society and to oneself. Mubarika Shah and her husband seem to have been able to do all this correctly. Living in their cosy house with its sprawling garden, a perfect setting to retreat with ones family.

The Shahs' three daughters, Nilofer, Yasmin and Sumbalina, are any parents dream. No rebellion, no frothy ultra modern ideas, no artifice. This, of course, cannot be labelled under sheer good luck. This is the sum total of the Shahs' values and principles. It is the result of leading a life which include the children. As Mubarika Shah explains it, she says that the children do not mind the time their parents spend away from them, while they are at work, but it is when the parents tend to spend all their leisure hours, in activities which do not include the children, that the children feel unhappy, which leads to other contemporary complaints.

Dr Shah said that we feel we can go and spend time at the club, when we retire, a time when our kids will be on their own. He thinks that when the husband and wife are sharing a happy marriage, this attachment in the home is what sets an example to the children, seeing their parents before them has a stabilising effect on them. Dr Shah added that you cannot pretend to have this attachment and consideration for each other, as the kids can always see through pretence.

Every Friday and Sunday are days off for the two doctors, when they spend their time on family activities. For doctors it is most important to get away from it all annually, says Mrs Shah. That is exactly what they do every year for six weeks, their annual holiday is spent on a quiet country side or hill side away from the maddening crowds. There the whole family love doing things on the spur of the moment, which include long trecks and hikes.

Dr Shah said that it is of immense importance to expose children to the beauties and serenity of nature. The children must learn that there are other means of enjoying life than being on a constant round of social parties, movie going, etc.

The Shahs also feel that having firm religious principles is necessary both from medical and social reasons. Explaining what he meant by medical reason, he said that very often in our work we feel that it is most important to have faith in something higher than oneself. In todays Modern life one has to fend for oneself, life being so frustrating, that having a firm conviction in a Supreme Being is a great help in overcoming difficulties, or to bear things.

Mubarika Shah was born in Sargodha, and completed her Medical studies at King Edward Medical College in Lahore, finishing her M.B.B.S. in 1938. The following year she was married to Dr Shah who is born and brought up in Lahore, and also from King Edward Medical College. Though he was a few years her senior and knew her at college, the Shahs said that theirs was not a love marriage.



Dr Shah and Dr Mubarika Shah photographed with their children.

Mubarika had her two babies soon after her marriage and so was kept busy till in 1945 she took her first job after marriage as assistant to her husband. She would advise all women to have their babies one after the other suitably spaced and stay home till such time as they are ready for school. After they are at school, it is time to use your education and talent and do something intellectually stimulating

Dr Shah agreed with his wife, but added that he wished that we could have a system whereby women could utilize their education, engaged in part time work. Here in Pakistan part time jobs are available, with the result that women either have to neglect their homes and families, doing a full time job, or cannot get the satisfaction of utilisation of their education, specially medical education. He feels strongly that part time work should be available for women, but whether women need to work or not, they must be highly educated and thereby be in a position to be economically independent.

Discussing the question of marriage for their daughters both the parents feel, that they certainly do not believe in the modern trend of having dates and going steady, the girls finding their own life mate. For this western way has not improved the westerners lives in any way so why should we adopt them. They do believe in trusting fully, their daughters decisions, opinions and understanding when the question of suitors arises, and have been making their own decisions to their girls' wishes. Their oldest, Nilofer, is happily married and has an endearing little three year old daughter and a brand new baby boy. Nilofer was married after having completed her studies in Home Economics. Their second daughter Yasmin, has been bitten by the Medical Bug and is following in her parents footsteps, also keeping up the record of doctors in the paternal line of the family. One of the top students (Continued on page 49)

The Shahs

(Continued from page 31)

in her fourth year medical, she enjoys her experience as a medical student. Her hobby is writing, she is also good at that. One day we may even get to read her great Novel which is being written. Their youngest Sumbalina, in her pre-teens, is studying in Murree. She has the disadvantage of having a considerable difference of age between herself and her sisters. But with the shining example of her two sisters before her, she will be as successful as them.

The Shah's celebrated their silver wedding anniversary a few years back, and also went on a world tour. The tour was mostly holiday, except for visiting Dr Shah's old university Havard and observing the modern techniques of Eye Surgeon in Vienna. Dr and his wife Mubarika both enjoyed the sightseeing, the people and the food everywhere. I am sure all the friends they made on their trip must have enjoyed meeting this sporting, adventurous, thinking couple, as much as I did.