

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

MAP OF THE GOLD COAST-

SHOWING THE POSITION OF APAAH

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at work

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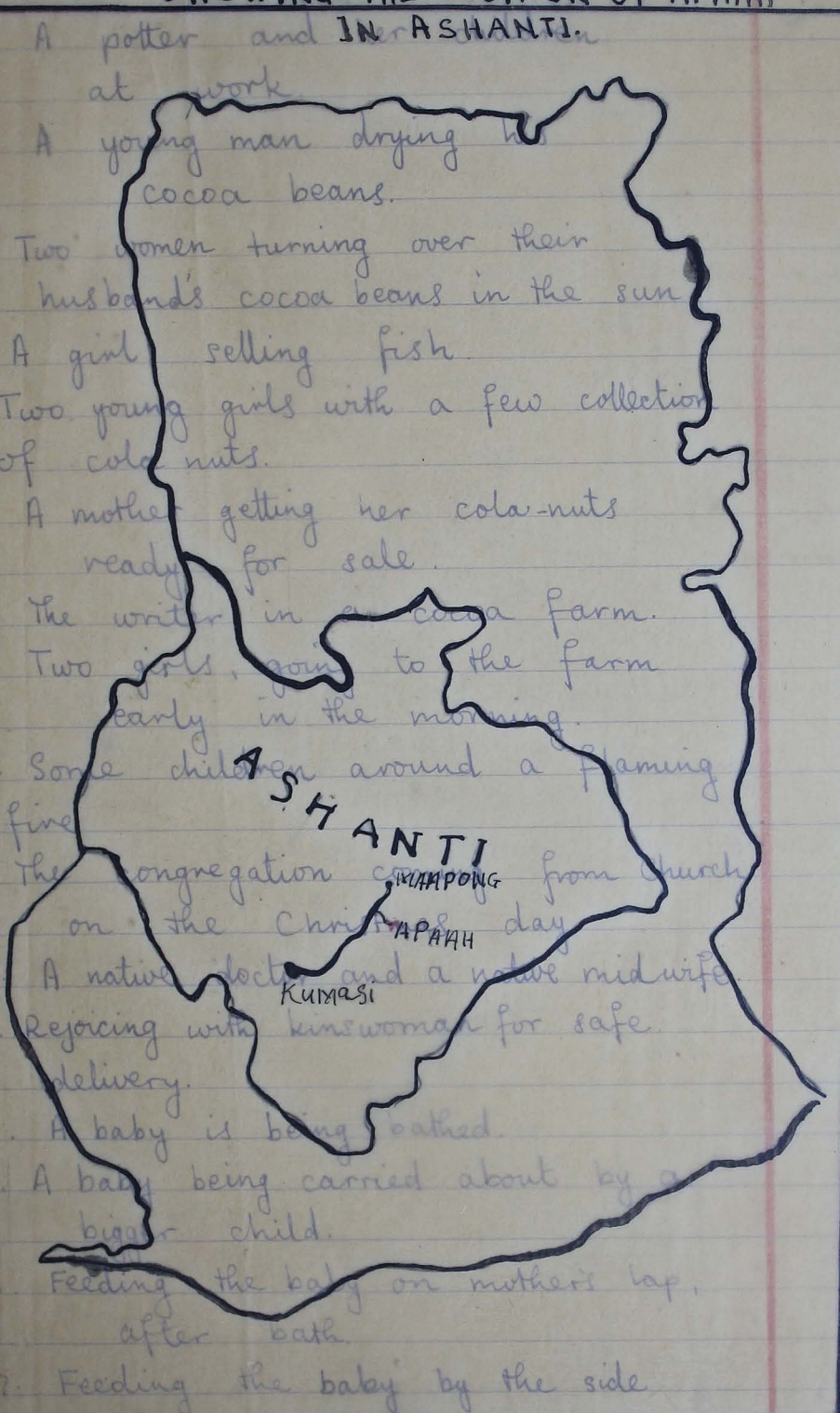
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## TRIBUTE TO MY HELPERS.

This investigation about child training in Apaah has been successfully carried out through the personal interviews I had with many informants of various ages. Nearly all my informants were people who matter in the community in which they live so far as their culture and tradition are concerned, by the virtue of their age, position and experience. They were all interested and never got tired of my many questions I threw to them.

Many people were consulted about each topic and the information, which rarely seemed varied was generalised.

The chief of the village, Opanying Asare and his elders were interviewed about the customs, Historical background and the social life of the village. Some youngmen too were pleased to give me information about the age of adolescence and the different occupations.

Concerning the up-bringing of children and ceremonies, many women of various ages, including some skilled natives midwives like Nana Akua Sewa and Ama Osua were interviewed. Young women and children of various ages also informed me of the various trades, games, songs and riddles.

The catechist and some of the teachers too helped me with their professional knowledge about the children of Apaah.

To all the above mentioned people and those I could not mention I tender my sincere thanks. Another professional man to whom I owe a multitude of thanks is Mr. J. H. Nketia of the University College (Sociology Department) who also helped me a lot in prescribing useful books to supplement my knowledge.

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# INTRODUCTION.

## THE HISTORY OF APAAH.

Apaaah is a small village in the Sekyere East area, the capital of which is Mampong Ashanti. The following account shows how Apaaah came into being and why Mampong is the capital town of the area.

The original home of the people of Apaaah was Adanse Behenase, where they were supposed to have come out of the ground.

The population increased so much so that they found the area of Behenase too small for all of them to occupy. A group of them, therefore, moved to find a new settlement under the leadership of one Bafo Baa. This group, which moved for a new settlement were the ancestors of the present inhabitants of Sekyere East which comprises the following towns and villages: Apaaah, Ninting, Kyekyewere, Affidnase, Juaben Boposo, Agona, Jamasi, Asamang, Msuta Benin and many others.

This group under the leadership of Bafo Baa, fought and conquered many people including the Anyinasuhene until they occupied this big area. They settled down at 'Nkwantanang' which had seventy-seven (77) streets. Some parts of this big town are now separate villages on their own such as Kyekyewere and Ninting. (This is the reason why one now finds the villages quite close to each other.)

Amongst the company was a woman called Obinfa Kese (a sister of Bafo Baa) who had twins called Ataa Afi and Ataa Alwan. Again, after the war, they found themselves facing the same problem of insufficient accomodation. So Bafo Baa asked a section of the group to move to Mampong-Akurofoso

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With the elder twin Ataa Afi his nephew as chief; and those that remained at 'Nkwantanang' had Ataa Akwan the younger twin as their first chief.

As time went on, Ataa Afi the elder twin asked his brother to move forward again because he still found the area was becoming small for their ever-increasing population; and the two areas - Nkwantanang and Mampong Akrofoso, were too close to each other. So they moved to the present place called Apaah - the reason for calling the village by that name meaning literally - "We are just resting here".

All this time the people of Ninting and Kyekyewere were still parts of the company at Apaah; but some time after they had to depart because the Apaah-hene fell into a big debt, and left them to go and stay with the Kumasi-hene, who was his son. This is how the debt occurred: The Apaah-hene married the seven queen mothers of Kumasi, Nsuta, Kumawu, Boposo, Dwaben, Agona, and Aaamang. Anytime any of his wives became pregnant, he had to present to her a person to serve her and after her delivery he had to present to her very many gifts such as beads, gold and brass-ware. Such was the custom. Furthermore, the Apaah-hene ate nothing but eggs so that when he had no money to buy eggs with, he gave away a person in exchange for eggs. At one time the Apaah-hene was playing cards with his own son whose mother was the queen mother of Dwabeng. Though this was only a game the wife encouraged her son to forfeit seven

of the streets as compensation for his victory. The Aapaah-hene tried but in vain to explain to his wife that he was only joking with his son. The queen mother reported this to his brother, the Dwabeng-hene and in reality, the seven streets were forfeited as the chief had arranged with his own son before they started the game.

The total misfortunes reduced the power and wealth of the Aapaah-hene and so he went to Kumasi to report this situation to his son the Kumasi-hene, who was then very rich. His son took the responsibility upon himself to pay all his father's debt by instalment and he asked his father to stay with him.

The chief's departure and his stay at Kumasi worried his subjects and groups of them, who felt they could not live without a leader, left Aapaah for new settlements. One group stayed at a place about three quarters of a mile from Aapaah and called it 'Kyekyewere' - meaning literally 'Comfort yourselves'. Mampong became the capital of this area because the first chief was the elder twin brother of the first Aapaah-hene called Ataa-Akwaa. They all had the same stools but Ataa-Akwaa only gave respect to his elder brother. For this reason a man from the stool-house at Aapaah can be selected to be a chief at Mampong, whenever the stool is vacant. Also the Mampong stool got lost in a war and that of Aapaah being the same was put in its place to prevent the the disgrace and save the situation. This secret fact also justifies the reason why somebody from

Apaah can be selected as a chief of Mampong.

It has been necessary to account for the historical back ground of the child of Apaah today, in order to help the reader to know exactly the ancestors of the child I am going to talk of. Their connections with the neighbouring villages and towns like Mampong will be shown in the subsequent chapters.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SOCIAL BACK GROUND OF THE CHILD OF APAAH.

The community in which the child is brought-up, as well as the natural factors of the child's environment have a great influence on the child's training.

Apaah is in the forest belt of Ashanti, in the South Eastern part of Mampong as shown on the map on the front page.

The village occupies a small area less than four hundred and forty (440) square yards, having less than a hundred houses. This small community is made up of seven clans namely the Asona, Aduana, Binetuo, Ekosna, Asene, Ayoko and Agona clans.

People of this community are not interested in travelling. There are some, who still have never paid a visit to Kumasi, even though it is only thirty-five miles away. For that reason they do not practise inter-marriage with other tribes of the country. They marry within that community but never out-side it.

However, a couple from the same clan is not allowed to marry. For instance a couple from the 'Ayoko' clan may not marry; but a man from the 'Ayoko' clan may marry a woman from the 'Aduana' clan. It is because they believe that clan means blood and that a couple with the same blood cannot bring forth a child. There are three types of marriage systems in this community. There is the

commonest one which is proposed by the man himself; in other words the man makes his own choice and asks for the consent of the fathers, uncles and relatives of both sides. There is another form of marriage which a man's father suggests a girl for his son to marry because of some qualities he has

observed in her. Then there is another form where a woman gives her daughter to a young man because of some kindness or favour done her by the man or a member of his family. In most of cases of the last type, the marriage is arranged even when the child is in the mother's womb unborn or very young if it has been born. If the child is unborn, the woman tells the man that the unborn baby will be his future wife, should it be a girl. The customs and rights performed for all these kinds of marriages are the same. As a first step, the boy tells his father about his choice or if the father is dead he tells his paternal aunt or uncle who succeeded the father. Investigations are made about the girl's family as to whether there is no deadly disease in the family, whether the family is quarrelsome or not; and whether the girl is respectful, hard-working and above all whether her morals are satisfactory or not. Having satisfied themselves with their findings on these matters, the father sends his sister being the young-man's aunt to ask for the girl's hand in marriage from her mother by paying seven shillings. That is what they term the "knocking fee". The mother asks her daughter privately in order to find out her feelings about the man before accepting the fee. When the fee is accepted it means the girl is in favour; so the man sees the girl's father through her aunt or sister by paying two guineas and a bottle of wine (formerly palmwine was offered but now european drinks as whisky and dry gin are sometimes offered)

If the girl is from the royal family, the man

pays four guineas. This is presented to the girl's maternal uncles for their consent.

After receiving the drink they keep the man in suspense for the reply within a period of time whilst they also go to make investigations about the youngman.

If they are satisfied with their findings, they even go to the extent of persuading the girl to accept the man even when she refuses him. If the girl accepts the man, a formal engagement is proclaimed by the offer of drink and of money to the girl's uncle. The money and the wine is distributed to the girl's relatives as a sign of recognition of the marriage, so that in case of a quarrel or any trouble they may be responsible for her life and well-being. A man who fails to perform these customs has no claim of justice on another man having secret dealings with his wife. If on the other hand an unborn child is given to a young man as a future wife, he looks after the mother till her delivery and cares for the child till she reaches the age of adolescence. This method known to this community as 'asiwa' is not often practised these days.

When all customs about the marriage have been performed, a day is fixed by the young man as to when he wants his wife.

'Ohyia no nna' He meets her to sleep for the first time. The girl gets prepared and before that day she is taught about marriage life by her mother and grandmother or grandaunts as the case may be. The man sends people to the girl with money to buy her needs. This amount varies a great deal with individuals. The girl also fixes a day

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"Aduane kese" 'the big meal' All her relatives help her to prepare this meal which is often 'fufu' served with groundnut soup or palmtree soup. Sometimes both kinds of soups are prepared and often a sheep is slaughtered too. The food is dished up in beautiful earthen-ware dishes and arranged in bigger basins, covered with beautiful towels and they are sent to the man's house. Part of the food is distributed to almost every house in the village; because all the relatives must taste of this meal; and the village being small as it is, either the girl has a member of her family in one of the houses or the boy has.

On that same evening, the woman goes to sleep at the man's house for the first time. In the evening she has her bath and her grandmother teaches her how to toilet herself well with lime. She is also given new and costly beads which she wears around her waist. She puts on her fine clothes and sandals and an elderly woman, preferably her aunt escorts her to her husband and introduces her to him formally.

Polygamy is practised in this locality because the men do not spend any money on their wives. The more wives a man has the richer he is. It is the women, rather, who care for their husbands. The highest amount a man spends a day on feeding the family is one shilling (1<sup>s</sup>) regardless of the size of the family. For that reason, the women work more than the men. During my two weeks' stay in the village, I realised that there was never a day a woman stayed at home apart from Christmas Day. Even on that day, some of the women went to the farm.



Pottery is one of  
the women's  
occupation



A Young farmer drying his cocoa-beans.



I remember I could not get some of them in their homes to exchange the usual Christmas greetings with them. I was told they had gone to the bush to collect cola. On their arrival in the evening, I met them in their homes and asked one of them why she could not spare just that day to spend it at home. This is the answer she gave me "Buoo, na menye den, Awuraa, meltra fie na me ne me mma bedi deen? 'Oh, my lady, what else can I do? What shall I eat with my children if I stay home?'"

A woman does not go to farm only when she is seriously ill or when she is nursing a baby of less than a week old. After a week, a mother can go to farm to fetch food and not to work if the mother has not got any relative to do so. Infact, this is rare. In such cases, the baby is apparently left behind and the mother does not keep long at all. A woman stays at home also when she has other business at home like pottery (which is also one of the women's chief occupations in that village.) or to prepare native soup from dried plantain peels. They also stay at home on feast days like 'Fodwo' and 'Fofie' when they are not to enter certain parts of the forest. Otherwise the women, and not the men, go to the farms everyday, to cultivate their farms for food stuff, vegetables and firewood. When the men accompany them they do not carry anything apart from, probably, their cutlasses or guns. They only carry something home during the cocoa harvesting time when the fermented seeds are being carried home to be dried. Otherwise, the women carry all the loads with their babies on their backs too.



Two women, turning over their husband's  
cocoa-beans.

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This is one <sup>of the</sup> reasons why babies are often left behind to enable the women to carry much loads. Having reached home from farm, the women fetch water, the husbands have their baths and go to sit on "Nkwankwaa' nnua", that is, 'public seats' found on the streets where the men often spend their time in conversing and playing games like the marbles and chess.

In urban areas the Community centres are the equivalents of "Nkwankwaa nnua so." Whilst the men are resting at this place, the women prepare food which is carried to them in their houses.

If there are about seven men in a house, they eat seven different dishes at table because all the men eat together from one big basin. Whilst the women eat together and the children in the house from the age of six upwards often eat together. The infants eat separately to avoid quarrels over meat and cheating.

The relationships of the folks of this village is very cordial and strong because when one dies then everyone is mourning. Similarly when a woman is rejoicing after safe delivery, they all rejoice with her. No matter whether they are relatives or not.

They share their joys and sorrows with each other. When the women finish their evening 'fufu' they often distribute parts to their neighbours and relatives in other houses. So that in the evening an on-looker on the streets may see small girls carrying pans or earthenware dishes from one house to the other.

The men also carry on with their cocoa farming. They get their wives' help during harvest time. Some of the men who have guns take them along when going to the farm. Most of the young men who have got guns of their own sometimes collect themselves and go to the bush in

in the afternoon with their guns to hunt together. This they call "Atweyee" It is dangerous because they sometimes shoot themselves through carelessness. In this locality, children are taught to fit into the pattern of living through participation in the customs and activities of the village.

They learn cooking, farming, pottery, child nursing all through observation, imitation and participation.

The girls are of great help and importance to their mothers and to their community at large.

For they help in having the domestic duties done and help in the sanitation of the village.

The girls from the age of nine to fourteen years are responsible for the cleaning of the latrines.

They divide themselves into groups and appoint leaders of them. Each group is responsible for one of the latrines including those for the men.

Early in the morning before dawn, one of the leaders goes from one street to the other and calls out "YEE - - - - ko - - - - pra ooo - - - -!"

"We are going to sweep" It is the bounden duty of the girls to get up at once and take their brooms as soon as they hear the call. When they meet, they go to sweep the latrines and reswish them nicely and burn down the pieces of used cloth and rags in the basket on the latrines. Nobody pays them for this job; but it has been the practice in that village for quite a long time now. If any girl belonging to this group fails to come to sweep without any good reason or permission from the leader, she is fined three pence. If anybody is found soiling the latrine she is fined a penny. The amount collected is kept by the leader who buys salt with it at the end of the month. The salt is shared amongst the group.

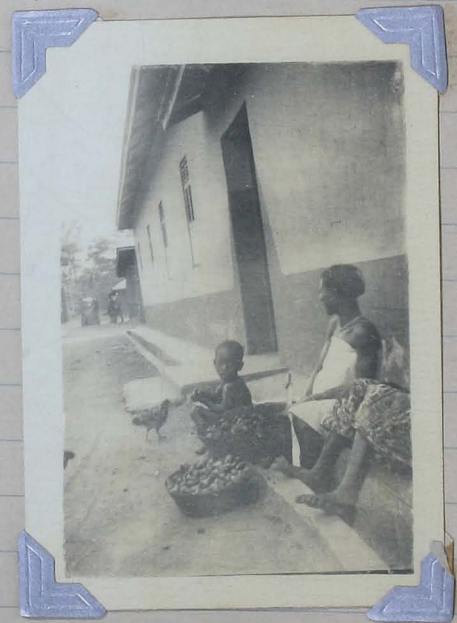
The girls help their mothers in their trade or



A small girl selling fish



Two small girls with a few collection of cola-nuts.



Getting the cola-nuts ready for sale.



The writer is seen in a cocoa-farm.

occupation. There is no market place in this village so the traders who retail things like fish and salt carry them through the streets as hawkers. The suitable time to do this kind of selling is in the afternoon, when most women have started their cooking.

Even the child at the age of six is taught how to sell. The picture opposite this page shows a small girl I met in the street selling her mother's fish. When somebody starts to trade in something, she continues for quite a long time without changing to something else; so that she becomes known in the village for those particular goods.

Anyone wanting to buy, goes to that particular woman for the particular thing.

Apaah being in the forest belt has cola as one of the commonest plants found in the forest. During the cola season, which lasts from November to December, mothers and their daughters are very busy.

"It is time for money" they say. They get up very early in the morning before dawn; and without bathing, without cleaning the compound and without eating, they go to the bush to collect the cola nuts which have dropped down during the night. They are very anxious to go very early; otherwise some people may over-take them to collect the nuts before they get there. One woman gave me an account of a bitter experience she had with her friend one day. She went to the bush one day with her friend to collect cola nuts. They went early in the morning, as she thought; but they soon realised that it was getting dark again; so having found out that they had come out rather too early they took



Going to their farms early  
in the morning.



Warming themselves before setting off  
to the bush to collect cola-nuts.

refuge under a big tree and slept there till it was clear before they started off again. Another reason why they go early is to enable them to do two or more trips a day. The girls also take part in this business. They are able to buy their personal needs like cloth, powder, pomade and beads by means of that work. Early in the morning on one of those days I spent at Apaah I went out to contact a farmer who had promised to take me to his farm to see how the day was spent in the farm. On my way there, I came across children with baskets sitting around a flaming fire. I interviewed them and I was told that they wanted to go to the bush to collect cola-nuts but they were warming themselves before setting off.

Though the weather was foggy that morning I managed to get their photograph. The writer is seen carrying a baby called Adwoa. She was cold and the mother had left her behind for the bush. Because of this training of making the children responsible for their own personal effects, they grow to realise that the mothers are of little use to them.

Judging by the way I noticed some children answering their mothers back when given orders and instructions. The mothers do not receive the necessary respect due to them.

Few of the girls are allowed to attend school. And the few who do <sup>are not</sup> allowed to not finish the middle school. They are often forced to stop going to school owing to financial difficulty in sponsoring them. The mothers often stop their girls from going to school, to get their help in domestic duties; and also to get them to marry early in order to have children early. They



The congregation from Church  
on the Christmas Day.

They believe that if a girl goes to school she often becomes barren. This is to them a tangible reason why there are no educated women in that locality. The boys are allowed to finish the primary and middle school but the majority of them do not go on to higher education. There is no secondary scholar in this community. A few, who continue, do go to the training colleges. The school boys also help their parents by contributing to their educational expenses.

The people of Apash believe in life after death in another world. They also believe in spirits and devils. There is a Presbyterian Church in the town. It has the majority of the population as members now. But there is not a vast difference between the Christians and the pagans. Because the influence of the pagans is very strong. There is a god in the village called 'Abuasu'. It is supposed to be the guider of the village and its inhabitants. On feast days, a meal is prepared and taken to the God to bless it. All children including school children go with their pans to the god's house for their shares. The god has a priestess who once was a school girl when she was taken by it.

Their belief in the second world is revealed in the performance of certain customs and rights, festivals and activities too. For instance there is a belief that if a knife is used for stirring when roasting groundnuts the person who does this spoils his hands and nothing puts in the soil will germinate; and even if it does, it may not grow healthily.

'Look at the appendix for more examples of their beliefs.

A child sowing corn must not be hungry; otherwise there will be few corn-seeds on the corn-sticks when they ripe.

They believe that a new born child comes from another world and that it has another mother there. In the same way, they believe that when a person dies, he goes to that second world and he becomes a help to the family he belongs to by revealing secrets to them and prescribing certain medicines to cure certain diseases in the family, through dreams. They believe that most of the medicines they know were got in that way and have been passed from one generation to the other. This is the reason why much money and time is spent in mourning for the dead. When weeping at funerals, there are such words accompanying the cry as "Agya ee, woko a, maa me oo!" "Father dear, send me some money when you get to the next world." They are very particular about funerals and the belongings of the dead. They believe that if the properties of a dead person are given to the wrong person, the dead man's ghost will worry that person till he dies too. On the other hand, if he is properly mourned for, he may 'come back' that is he may be born again.

Formerly, instead of rejoicing on Christmas Days they used to mourn for all the dead so that during Christmas, one hears of nothing but funeral dirges in the streets as a sign of remembrance for the dead in the family. But at one time, this behaviour was stopped by some stringent laws from the chief.

I met an old lady pouring a libation in the yard in front of old dark stools. I stood there quietly watching her and listening to the words she was

saying. She was asking the ghosts of the dead in the family to take care of those remaining in the family after thanking them for all the good gifts bestowed on them during the past year. This was done in the morning of the New Year. She also asked for plenty of children to be born in the family and for good crops for the year.

## CHAPTER II THE POSITION OF THE CHILD.

As Apaah is a typical village of Ashanti the system of clan (Abusua) by which the individual is identified or remembered is very important. It is because of the need to keep the line of clan going that every woman wants to have children. Also a woman who has children gains social prestige. Some delight in boasting of the number of children they have. It is very common to hear people wishing married couples, among other things, 'abaduasa' - thirty children - that is plenty of children.

In this community, sterility arouses unfavourable comments. Impotency is disgraceful and may be one of the reasons for destooling a chief.

A barren woman has no respect in the village of Apaah. She is looked down upon by both young and old. This fact is very true because in children's make-belief stories they keep on talking about barren women. One can judge the exact opinion children form about barren women from the following story: "A woman had no child and one day she went to the river side to collect crabs and fish. When she was collecting them, a lobster - a big and an attractive one appeared on the surface of the water. The lobster told Adwoa (such was the name of the childless woman) to take it home but not to kill it. Adwoa obeyed and kept the lobster in a big pot as required of her. The next day, Adwoa was going to another pot to drink water when she heard a baby crying. She was amazed and the crying baby told her that she had come out of the lobster because she pitied Adwoa for her childlessness which had made all children look down upon her. So Adwoa should take her as her own child; but she should

never insult her by using the words 'lobster-baby' otherwise she would return to the river where she had come from. Adwoa was very happy and took her new baby, not knowing that a child passing-by had over-heard the talk. Adwoa never took her new baby to the farm. One day, as she left her for the farm, the child who knew the secret of the way Adwoa happened to get the baby went to Adwoa's child to play with her. During the game the other child used the very words "a lobster baby" to insult the child and so she returned to the river and Adwoa mourned for the whole of her life because she had no child again."

Children have a lot of such stories and they reveal their opinion about barren women. Not only in story telling alone do they mention childless women but in other games too. They even have songs composed about barren women. Furthermore for the sake of future security on the part of the parents, everyone wants to have children. There is no limitations in having children because there is the common saying that "Obi nni na nea obehwe me daakye" 'No one knows who is going to secure my living in future'. Because of the above reasons, child bearing is never considered disadvantageous or unfavourable. Most of the people are very poor; but they prefer having many children with little or no money to care for them to having much money with no children.

In a village like Apsah where polygamy is allowed, the bearing of many children with no limit is not a strange thing because every woman would like to have as many children as possible, especially girls, to keep her family going. More over, Apsah quite unlike other places in the

matter of a husband's responsibility; (as I have already mentioned in the previous chapter,) it is the wife who cares for the husband and not the vice versa. The husbands take no responsibility for the children so far as finance goes.

The food they eat and all the domestic affairs are the responsibilities of the wife. The wives and children help the husband or father to cultivate his farms; so the more children and wives a man has the better. For that matter the husbands always prefer having male-children to having female-children whilst it goes the contrary way with the wives who want female children in order to keep the lineage of descendants going.

In the village of Apaah, a childless marriage is a wretched one. Many a marriage has broken down and that is one of the fundamental reasons why polygamy is practised in that village. The husbands always blame the wives for childlessness in marriages. The fault is never theirs. The people of this locality are very superstitious. They have a belief that sterility is caused by either of the following: there is a witch in the family who has taken away the womb of the woman, the wife has offended the gods, or the woman during her menstruation period has gone to the chief's house - an act which is forbidden at Apaah. In such a case, the best thing a couple can do to rectify the situation is the consultation of a native doctor, who first of all advises them to make some sacrifices to pacify the gods before treatment is undertaken. It must be remembered that because of the 'abusua' system the expenses of this treatment are often borne by the uncle of the woman. The husband believes that the

the children belong to another clan (abusua). In fact, in these days some of the men are beginning to understand their positions and duties as husbands and so they give some sort of financial assistance in such cases. In such cases where the man wants to marry another woman just because of having children, he tries stratagem on the woman by asking her to go and visit her mother on any other relative living somewhere. This gives him the chance to court another woman who eventually becomes his wife by the time the wife returns home from her visit. The conditions in her home with the new wife may create an atmosphere which often ends in a dispute. The husband, during this state of affairs in the house tells the (barren) wife either to go or keep quiet. And very often such situations have ended in divorce. But where a couple decide to overcome the sterility, the next thing that is done after performing the sacrifice is the undertaking of the treatment, during which the couple should not indulge in sexual intercourse. The husband should not have sexual dealings with any other wife or woman either. They are given a course of treatment for a period of three months. The medicines are often made from herbs, roots, bark of trees and some seeds too. The woman is given some black powder to use for the vaccination of all the joints. Every morning she bathes with the water strained from soaked bark and leaves. Every morning or at least twice each week, she prepares some palmnut soup (a light one) mixed with some herbs. Very often, no meat but fish is added to the soup. In order to bring forth a sensible child. Furthermore, there

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are some myths that fish are child-producers.) Then she is given leaves and roots to boil and drink. The final treatment is a kind of medicine prepared from roots and the bark of trees and made into small balls about the size of hazel nuts. These balls are pushed down the entrance of the womb every evening and taken out the next evening for a fresh ball to be put in. The same treatment is given to the women who want to over-come sterility.

The variation lies in the materials used in the preparation of the medicine. I was told that if the regulations are strictly observed, they become successful. Illegitimacy is recognised but not to the same degree as in other societies. Because of the 'Abusua' (clan) system to one of which the child belongs. He still has a protection and status under the mother's right. <sup>1</sup> The child belongs to its mother and not its father. There is the belief that the child is part of its mother's blood.

A woman who gets a child with another man before she is properly married is free to take her child to her new home. It is the husband's bounden duty to give equal love to the 'strange' child in as much as he gives to his own. But strangely enough, he is not to punish the child; otherwise the woman takes that as an offence. To save the situation such children as may be called illegitimate in other societies are kept back in his 'abusua' under the care and protection of the grandmother, aunts and uncles.

In the same way, a man may bring to his home a child he has had with another woman to his wife to be adopted if the child's clan does not raise any objection to that idea.

<sup>1</sup> For reference to these clans and their importance to the child see: Danguah - Akan Laws and Customs. Rattany - Ashanti.

An orphan in this locality loses nothing apart from perhaps the parental love. He has his 'Abusua' for his back-bone. So he can enjoy himself in all spheres of life. If he is to have education, an uncle can take up the responsibility of paying the school fees whilst one aunt buys his clothes and another cares for his books and other things. For this reason I asked one of my informants why there is a proverb that "Nsaman pon mu soduro, wux ni wu a, woabusua asa"

"You have no family when your mother dies"

Then she answered that that proverb rather lays emphasis on the usefulness of a clan to which any one belongs by means of his mother's blood.

Owing to the importance of the lineage group which has brought about the custom that

"the nephew and not the son should inherit"

the paternal side of the child's relatives are not obliged to care for the child after his father's death. Those who give the child a share of his father's property do it out of sheer kindness.

The concept of the clan system particularly in Ashanti, of which the village of Apaah is typically a good example, has done much to prevent the idea of illegitimacy and adoption. A child is only given to a childless aunt or elder sister to stay with and not with the sense of a strict adoption but with the idea of helping the childless relatives in the performance of her daily duties. Also, there is a belief behind this idea that the presence of the child will call for her childless aunt's own babies from her womb if the child is given good treatment. The child has the liberty to visit her own parents any time she feels she wants to; but children in that position rarely leave for their parents because special care,

attention and love given to them by the barren women (who want to have children of their own) exceed those of their own parents.

## CHAPTER III

### CHILD BEARING.

As soon as any union is blessed with the expectation of a baby, the couple involved rejoice; especially the woman who feels she has been victorious over the world of mockery and ridicule. She feels secure and the husband too feels sure that he is going to get someone who will bury him when he dies; (for it is the custom in Apaah as it is in all other Ashanti towns that children are responsible for their father's burial) and for many other reasons I have already mentioned in the previous chapter.

It must be remembered that the child will be born to two families namely his father's and mother's. Therefore the child is made up of two things which are the father's 'Ntro' spirit and the mother's blood. The 'Ntro' relationship with the child is very important as this determines the kind of taboos and customs the woman observes at the state of pregnancy and in naming the child as we shall find out later on from this chapter.

At the village of Apaah, it has been the common practice for married couples to stay in different homes. The woman lives in her 'Abusua Fie' 'mother's house' and the husband does the same. In the evening, after the woman has finished her daily work, she goes to sleep at her husband's house. It is only in one out of ten cases that one finds a couple living together.

As soon as a woman observes that she is expecting a baby (by the cessation of the menstrual flow) she informs her mother and husband. But this is kept secret for the mean time from the rest of the relatives till they discover the situation themselves at a later date. On the third or fourth month when they are sure of the conception



The native 'doctor' and a 'midwife'

they start the taboos. Of course before this time the woman takes precautions against 'evil eyes'. The first custom observed is the woman's presentation of yams and a fowl to her husband's 'ntro'.<sup>1</sup> The colour of the fowl depends upon the husband's 'Ntro'. Food is prepared from the yam and the fowl. This they call 'Akra dwaree'—meaning 'purification of the spirit'. The man eats the prepared food which is usually 'nto' mashed yam, and prays his spirit to take good care of the child in the wife's womb and also to afford them safe delivery of the child. From this time, the woman starts to undergo some treatment. There is no hospital in Apaah. So only one percent of the expectant mothers travel to Mampong (which is eleven miles from there) for medical attention. The few who go, even seek the advice of the native doctor. They still believe they must undergo the traditional treatment to ensure the well-being of the child. So apart from the foreign doctor, she goes to a native doctor, who for instance gives her some black powder to vaccinate all her joints with to keep off the 'evil eyes' she is also given advice as to how to take care of herself, what to eat and not to eat. The meat not to be eaten is determined by the husband's 'Ntro'. For instance \*'Bosomburu' should not eat the meat of a monkey, or a cow. \*'Adomakodee' should not eat the duck's or parrot's flesh and 'Bosomptra' should not eat white fowls and water yams.

Infant, all pregnant women are not allowed to eat monkey or rabbit meat lest the child should resemble the monkey and lest its ears should be as large as the rabbit's.

I see: Rattray:—Ashanti chp. 2.

\*'Adomakodee' and 'Bosomptra' Some of the various names for the Spirit of the husbands.

A pregnant woman is advised to play with somebody's baby - one who is beautiful and healthy in order that by looking at the baby often, her baby in the womb too may resemble the one she is nursing. If the expectant mother wants to have a girl she must play with a baby-girl, if a boy, with a baby-boy.

A pregnant woman is not to help anybody in carrying her pot of water at the river side. She is not to go half naked with the upper part of her body showing. She is not to eat ripe plantation lest she may get a miscarriage. Owing to the great importance attached to the well-being of the child in the mother's womb, the life of <sup>an</sup> expectant mother also becomes of great value, not only to her mother and husband but to the whole family.

To avoid the miscarriage, every member of the family helps the pregnant woman in a way, either by advising her or being careful not to provoke her anger. Miscarriage is associated with many reasons.

Here are some of them:

1. She has committed adultery
2. She has offended her husband's spirit - 'Ntro'
3. Her rival has bewitched her.
4. The influence of 'evil eyes' or of a bad spirit.
5. The sight of blood.

Expectant mothers are always hot tempered, weak, suffering from the morning sickness in some cases, and feeling lazy; but the latter fact does not apply to the women of Apaah because they are very hard working; and even when they are pregnant very unlike some women, they go about normally. One finds no difference in the capability in the performance of their daily work. Some women happen to dislike some of their normal foods and tend to like useless foods instead.

For instance, I was told that some expectant women would find the white clay very appetising whilst others admire the scent of the hot air that arises from the surface of the grounds after rainfall.

The indulgence in marital intercourse during pregnancy varied with every couple I interviewed. Some said they continued to the last day, others said for the first six months only whilst another told me he could continue to the eighth month. Of course, they all told me, the woman's health only could determine for how long they could indulge in marital intercourse.

If a woman stays in the same house with her husband, as it happens in a few cases, she leaves for her 'abusua fie' family house, in the seventh month to get ready for her confinement. She collects old pieces of cloth from the mother and other members of the family too and washes them and gets them ready for the arrival of the baby. The reason why<sup>an</sup> expectant mother would like to go to her own home for delivery is, to save her and family from scandals and ridicule, should she bring forth any monstrous or abnormal thing. For instance, a baby with one ear, twelve fingers, a queer shape or anything abnormal. If such a thing happens, the baby is destroyed at once, at birth and buried at once to save the whole family from a disgrace. For this same reason many people are not allowed in the room at birth.

All children and men are turned out of the room. An expert old lady skilled in midwifery from the woman's family - may be her own mother or grand-mother as is often the situation, plus a sister or<sup>an</sup> aunt who may be needed to go on errands are the only people allowed in the room.

When a woman finds difficulty in bringing forth the child, some superstitions are attached to the labour pains. Very often they believe either the woman has two husbands or she has offended the husband's spirit (utro) which takes care of the child in the womb. The woman is therefore forced to confess all her sins and at once different names of suspected men are suggested to her. If the difficulty continues for a long time and the woman refuses to take the suggestions, a native doctor is called in to verify the situation. If he finds the woman innocent different medicines and talisman are tried to call for the child. The native doctor, for instance goes behind the window of the room and calls for the child thus: "sz woye busummuru Asimasi ba a, fini bra" 'If you are a real child of Asimasi Busummuru, come out'. The spirit name of the husband is used in calling the baby out after administering certain drugs. Sometimes a tonic is prepared from the roots of pawpaw by boiling it and adding some pepper and salt to taste and a calabashful of it is given to the woman to soothe the pains and strengthen her to bring forth her baby.

If the woman is lucky, she and her baby survive but, if unfortunately fate takes the upper hand, she dies and such a woman is described as 'Opusuefo'. Such a situation is considered in this locality a great disgrace to the family concerned. There is no formal funeral celebration for the dead body. The woman is cut open and the baby is taken out and buried separately; otherwise, <sup>some</sup> great misfortune befalls the whole nation at large.

<sup>I</sup> All the pregnant women in the village go and cut a budding plantain leaf and go to the

<sup>1</sup> The compound where the body is lying and point the shoots at the corpse saying "Fa wo musuo ko woantumi anko, woantumi anko, wako ats" "Begone! with your bad luck, you have been ~~able~~ unable to fight, you have fought only to die" This is done with the idea that the rest of them may be victorious in the battle which their neighbour could not fight successfully.

Now, let us see the other side of birth where the mother lives but the child dies before the eighth day. Such a child is buried in a pot. It is described as 'Kukuba' 'pot child'. Before burying the baby, it suffers from insults. It is also whipped and all sorts of cruelty is done to the body of the dead baby, with the idea that it may not return again. Sometimes to be sure that that particular baby does not come again to only to deceive its parents, one of its fingers or toes is cut off to mark it before it is buried. The parents have their hair shaved off and they put on white clothes and have a jolly meal. They are made to appear rather cheerful. It is forbidden to mourn, lest the baby's mother in the other universe rejoices and sends it to the earth again where she has no intention it should remain. The wife's grandmother prepares mashed plantain (ets) and eggs and takes the woman to cross roads and leaves it there after saying these words<sup>2</sup> "Ena a wo wo asamando wei aba yesse wo se ma jofors mmra. Goye ets ne nkesua yi di." "The mother in the universe, receive this food. We thank you for giving this child and beg you for a new baby"

\* I + 2

See: Religion and Art by Rattray Page 61.



Rejoicing with a young woman  
for a safe delivery.

For all these difficulties already mentioned, concerning pregnancy and birth, a pregnant woman is described as having reached the cross roads of death and life. She may either die or live. Therefore if any pregnant woman is talking about any scheme she proposes carrying out after her delivery, the term she uses is "Se Anyame boa me na me fini mu fi a ----" "If by the Grace of God I come out of this battle safely ----"

A safe delivery therefore is a great joy for the woman and her relations and to the whole community too. And some Christians among this community go to church <sup>on a</sup> special day as 'thanks giving service' for their safe delivery.

As soon as the baby comes out safely from its mother's womb, it is taken away and congratulations are bestowed on both the mother and the child, who is at once named according to the day of the week on which it is born.

<u>Days</u>	<u>Days - (Ashanti.)</u>	<u>Boys' names</u>	<u>Girls' names</u>
Sunday	Kwasiada	Kwasi	Akosua
Monday	Dwoada	Kwadwo	Aduwa
Tuesday	Bennada	Kwabena	Abena
Wednesday	Wuknada	Kwaku	Akuu
Thursday	Yawoada	Yaw	Yaa
Friday	Eiada	Kofi	Afua
Saturday	Memneda	Kwame	Ama

These names are used till the eighth day, during the out-dooring ceremony when proper names are added to them.

As soon as the child comes out, it is taken away and the navel is dressed by the old lady using palm oil or sheer-butter. The child's face is washed with cold water to clear off the liquid from the mother's womb, which they believe can



The baby is being bathed  
by an old lady. (Note it's position)

cause blindness. If the baby is not breathing or crying, it is given a slap on the buttocks and some powder with strong scent is put in the nostrils till it sneezes and cries. (If these fail then the baby is dead.) The baby then has its first bath and again shear-butter is smeared on the child to make it grow fat and to anoint it with the idea that it will live long in the new world. When this is finished the child's (paternal) relations and other people are informed of this good news. They inturn come to give the mother "afiri mu" "well done" and the baby "aba a tra ase" "live long". The old lady who nurses the child as to bathing and dressing should have no sexual dealings within the first two weeks of the child's life. They believe a baby must be kept holy within the first fortnight; otherwise it will return to the world from where it had come. The child is given back to its mother to be fed immediately after it's first bath, even if the mother has got no breast milk at the moment. In such a situation the new baby is fed by a relative who already has a baby, until such time that through using various herbs for palm soup, the mother obtains breast milk for her baby. Roasted groundnuts too are said to be of great help in bringing milk into mother's breast when she eats them. No superstition or ridicule is attached to a woman with milkless breasts. In these days, some use the artificial feeding bottles where the couple can afford buying the milk and ~~and~~ the bottles. But often they find difficulty in the preparation of the milk. Anytime the baby cries, it's cries are associated with hunger. But if it continues to cry loudly for a long time after feeding then the mother gets the fear that the child is sick and begins to feel

it or suspect that there is something wrong with its bed or clothing. If it is found out the child is sick, the mother upon the experience of older people or the native doctor treats it. (In the next chapter I shall deal <sup>with</sup> children's ailments and their treatment.)

If the baby is a girl, the tips of the ears are broken through with a needle to make the wearing of ear-rings possible. That is done within the first week so that it heals up together with the navel. Nothing is done to the baby-boys in that respect. In the first week, the child's elimination is collected and thrown away on the dawn of the eighth day just before the out-dooring ceremony. The old lady says the following words as she throws off the collection at the farther end of the village "Kofi ni a wote asamaado, asa, onni wo bio, one wo nni hwee ye" "Kofi's mother in the other universe, you have got nothing to do with him again."

Before the eighth day, the baby is never taken out. It is kept indoors. It is on this eighth day that the baby is brought out to sunshine and fresh air for the first time. It is on this day that the baby is formally accepted in its place in the clan and in the society.

Early in the morning, the child is bathed and the mother too has her bath. The baby is smeared with shea-butter and its nose bridge is lined with white clay. The eye-brows are darkened with charcoal. This is done with the idea of changing or disguising the baby from what its 'ghost mother' knew it to be to a different one. Now, white beads are threaded and worn around the baby's neck, wrist and waist. All these are signs of victory and triumph over death. The baby is then put on its mat on the 'pamma':-

(a kind of platform in the houses used for this purpose and also <sup>for</sup> laying the dead in state)  
 The mother also smears her neck, arms and breasts with the white clay and hangs round her neck, and wrists with threaded white beads just like the baby's. She puts on her white cloth and bends over the baby and in whispers, thanks it for not killing her. The father of the baby also puts on white cloth, and one of his relations either his mother, aunt or sister does the naming. The baby is named after any relative in the father's family. Of course, it is always named after a relative of importance and with up-right character with the hope that the baby may grow to resemble the person in his deeds and his personality. The person naming the baby also does the presentation of gifts to the mother and her baby on behalf of the father.

To the wife, the husband presents the following things (which are the standard one; but may differ in quality and quantity according to the social status of the husband) an amount of eight (8) pounds, cloth, head kerchiefs, a fowl and yams or any other food stuff. To the baby, the father presents also, a bucket, a towel, a comb, a mat, a pillow, a spoon, a piece of the father's old sponge and cloth "funumatema" "Umbilical cloth". The last two things namely the cloth and the sponge are a sure sign on the father's part that the baby belongs to him. It is a true child of his; and that they share one spirit. The cloth is later on used for covering the baby; and the sponge, for it's bath.

If the person after whom the baby is named is still alive, arrangements are made and the baby is taken to show him. The baby is carried in the

person's arms whilst saying the following "Me asumasi na yede wo ato me. Wo din de Kwaku Abirika. Nyin na beto me na ma me biribi ni"

"You have been named after me, 'asumasi', your name is Kwaku Abirika, grow up to live long and resemble me in thought and in deed, in order to take care of me". A speck of spittle is put into the baby's mouth as he says this, with the idea that the baby's speech, personality health and everything may resemble his own. Then the old man offers the baby a golden ring as a sign of their relationship.

1 Different customs are performed according to the numerical order of birth and for twins too. The mother of twins "Iwonta" as they are called have a social prestige in this community. It is considered a good luck to be a twins mother. Should any twin-mother see a woman carrying two babies at her sides at the same time, the person is to pay an amount of half a guinea to the twin mother. As soon as a woman brings forth twins, the chief is informed of it as twins are said to be of good luck to the community they belong.

In the same way a sheep is slaughtered and its meat distributed to the people when a woman brings forth a tenth born.

Now, within the first two weeks after the child's birth, the old lady who is responsible for the baby's bath and nursing is also responsible for the treatment of the mothers sore-womb after birth. The womb is bathed with very warm water each morning within the first fortnight and hot peppery medicines are pushed down the womb to

1 Nketia: Article on Birth, Puberty, Death in Christianity and Africa Culture.



A young girl carrying the baby about,  
while mother is busy at home.

heal the sore. They know the - is healed when the womb closes up to its normal size. Marital intercourse becomes out of place within the first three months after child birth.

After the first fortnight the old lady puts an end to her work and the mother continues but the ~~the~~ old lady's advice is sought from time to time when necessary. The navel is healed up by this time and so the baby is no more carried in the hands but at the back of its mother. Within the first two months, no child is allowed to carry the baby, not even the adolescents. In the third month, the baby could be carried about by children when necessary, such as, when the mother is busy with her pottery or in other domestic work.

Very often the babies in this locality are carried about nakedly. A piece of old cloth is only used as a napkin so that it can collect all its elimination. The piece of cloth is changed for a new one whenever it is soiled. In case the baby's faeces drop into the mother's soup or fufu whilst eating, the mother should continue eating and never to stop otherwise, it is believed can cause the death of the baby.

This does not concern the mother only but all those eating from the same pot with the mother. If a mother often gets her clothes soiled with the baby's urine while carrying her, it is believed that the mother will bring forth many children, so mothers delight in having clothes soiled with their babies' urine.

During this time the mother watches closely all the physical changes in her baby. The mother delights in nursing her baby by sometimes changing the beads worn by the baby periodically, and cutting its finger nails.

Sometimes when the mother wants to do some washing or any domestic work, she gives the baby to a child to carry it at her back and walk about so that the baby may sleep or the child sits besides the baby and on its mat and plays with it or sing to it so that the baby may feel the presence of a person. At times, the mother carries it herself and plays with it by throwing it in the air and catching the baby again. Here are two of those songs.

1. "Te akompe oreyeyere ba.

Te akompe oreyeyere ba,

Mfa mma o, iderebeba

Mfa mma o, iderebeba".

2. Asase ketekete, asase kakrabi,

Obene Yaa Sabas panyin

Midi anana dee Kwabena Kwakwa

Magoro yi pe nsem bo no no mmom

Sebire betim, sebire betim, Bo mue, Bo mue.

From <sup>the</sup> time the baby sleeps the mother keeps an eye on it from time to time and inspects whether the sheets are wet or not and whether the baby is lying down in the correct posture. The baby is supposed to lie flat at its back and not to turn sideways; otherwise it will have an ugly shape of the head. People of this village are very particular about the shape of the child's head. It is supposed to be flat at the back and not long. That is why, within the first month of a baby's life, warm water is used to massage the head in to shape by means of a towel.

While the baby is asleep all the facial expressions are observed by the mother. If it smiles the mother says "one ne mpenafos ewewe" "It is smiling to its friends it has left behind" If it frowns or shows

any sign of fear or cries out unconsciously the mother says "Bo ne bi" "hit him back" It is believed some other babies from the other universe are fighting the baby.

THE EARLY UP-BRINGING OF THE CHILD.

In this chapter we shall find out how much the education of the child at Apaah is retarded or developed by the fact that most mothers have to leave their children home to go to their daily work in the bush in order to earn their living. In some ways we shall find that the child lacks proper training and motherly devotion. In other ways too, we shall realise that the child learns to live by himself without depending much on other people for service.

I shall divide, therefore, the child's early life into three stages: the child from birth to two years will be called a baby; from two to five years it will be described as an infant; and from seven to thirteen a 'child'.

I shall also refer to the various groups in general as children.

The up-bringing of the children in this locality is very poor; and one major factor is the daily struggle of the parents, especially the mothers, for their living. The children receive little or no attention because the mother comes home late in the afternoon when, though very tired, she has to be very busy in the kitchen preparing the supper and so has no time to listen to any complaint from the children whom she left behind at home. This sort of handicap affects the children's feeding, health, habits and personalities too. The mother sees very little of what the children eat, nor knows how they drink and sleep during the day. When a mother is going to <sup>the</sup> farm, the children are given food to cook and eat when they are hungry. It is very interesting to note that an infant of this locality knows how to prepare



Feeding the baby after bath



A baby is fed even when the mother is walking.  
(Note it's position under the left arm.)

at least "Ampezi". A mother uses the very little time she spends at home on Sundays, great feasts, and during funeral celebration, to educate the children. The training starts during baby-hood.

For instance the mother produces a hissing sound like s- - - - s- - - - s- - - - to tell the baby that it is allowed to urinate. The baby is held away from the mother's clothes by holding the two thighs asunder with the rest of the body and head resting on one of the mother's arms. Any time the baby is held in that way accompanied by the familiar sound it urinates if it feels it wants to do so. In the same way, the baby is put at the feet of the mother or on the pot to release its bowels. The pot is used by only a few of the mothers. If the baby does not feel inclined to eliminate, it tells the mother so by kicking its legs about and crying. This is the only way in which a baby communicates with its mother and relations. Mothers can understand their babies better than anybody else. They know when the baby wants to sleep, when it is hungry and when it is sick or feeling uncomfortable in its position just through its cry. This is how the baby corresponds with its mother during the first nine months of its life.

The baby is fed anytime it cries. Even when the mother is carrying heavy loads from the river side or the farm, she manages her baby at her side under one arm and feeds it with the other arm as seen in the picture on the opposite page. If she is sitting, the baby is put on the lap with the head resting on one arm while the other arm helps the baby in squeezing the breast for milk. There is no grading in the amount of milk a baby sucks. It sucks till it is tired and can no longer continue, then the mother knows

that the baby is all right. There is no specified time for weaning babies. The baby continues to feed on the breast until the mother is expecting another baby. Most of the ignorant mothers even allow their babies to suck during pregnancy. When mothers are expecting new babies, those they are nursing often become sickly and weak. Sometimes the babies wonder about the new physical changes (that is the enlarging size of the mothers' abdomen.) Often they are deceived with such stories that, the mothers have eaten too much food, or the mothers have hidden pillows or cloth in their abdomen. Only a few of the mothers and other relations give correct answers to such questions from their babies. When the new babies arrive, the infants continue asking questions to find out where the new babies have come from, whose babies they are and such questions; but the mothers fail to give the correct answers again, and tell their infants that the new babies were given to them from God whilst others say they bought the babies from the store.

One woman told me that her baby, one day threw a bone at her newly born baby and cried pathetically; because the baby was jealous when it saw the new baby being fed by the breast milk. I asked how she managed to pacify the baby and she said she only carried it at her back, and gave her to somebody to carry it, at anytime she was feeding the new baby.

Solid foods like porridge, "akasa", mashed yam and kenkey are introduced to babies as early as four months old in order to enable their mothers

to leave them behind when going to the farm. Infact, the baby is given a piece of any food, be it Kenkey or 'ampesi' or 'fufu', the mother is eating. At first the baby may play with it because it cannot find it's mouth and soil it's clothes and mouth with the food given to it.

Porridge and soup are given by the mothers themselves on spoons to the babies. Meat is given to the baby when it starts cutting teeth. Soup is given to the child at a later date but babies cry very much when it is given them because of it's peppery taste. The babies cry a lot both at night and during the day when they are being weaned. They are never satisfied with any food which is substituted for breast milk.

Some bitter leaves such as those of the nim-tree are ground into a paste which is smeared on the nipples so that the baby will dislike sucking because of the bitter taste. Sometimes a baby is frightened by the cries of such animals as the sheep and cows to dissuade it from sucking.

"MEE na oba no, wonom a obekye wo" "The mee will catch you if you suck" (MEE being the cry of a sheep and 'muu--' that of a cow)

Babies at this stage have acquired some understanding of speech though they cannot speak. They make sounds like 'gu-gu-' and 'baa-baa.' They learn to repeat a few words that are commonly used in their immediate environment. Having heard their sisters and brothers calling 'mama' frequently, they also start to say 'mama' meaning mother. This is one of the first words a baby learns to say.

A baby speaks what it hears and also the useful words that enable it to get it's needs. At the house of one of my informants, I found her baby crying and calling out "Kwaa name ee,

edi adu, kwaa mame ee, edi adu". The mother who was then very busy in the kitchen took no notice of the baby's claim; so I called a girl to come for the baby and the girl tried to pick him from the ground where he was sitting crying, but he refused to be comforted by her. I asked the girl why the baby was crying and she told me that the baby (who was called Kwabena) was calling for their mother to give him banana. I asked the girl to tell me how they had been calling their mother and she replied "Kwabena mame" meaning "Kwabena's mother". Because other people had been using such a name, the baby too was copying them though he is the very Kwabena referred to. At this juncture, the mother came in to explain the baby's behaviour. Instead of saying 'Kwabena' he was saying 'Kwaa' and 'edi' instead of 'medi' and 'adu' for 'Kwadu'. Though the speech of babies is not very clear to start with yet it is quite interesting and serves the purpose for which it is used.

We can find that the first words the baby learns to say are names of the parents—'mama' 'papa' and those that it often hears and then the names of some food it likes best or that is often given to it.

Speech develops and vocabulary increases as the baby cuts more and more teeth. The two canine teeth in the lower jaw come out first. The age for cutting teeth varies with each baby. However, it ranges from six to twelve months. During this same period the baby goes through the process of acquiring various skills and of overcoming difficulties. It is the period for the development of the skills of crawling and walking.



Children's imaginative play  
with empty tins as utensils  
and sand as their ingredients  
(Note also the dressing of the man  
and his wife in the back ground.)  
And how the baby is tied down at  
the mother's back.

It is often accompanied by illness and therefore it is also a period of much anxiety, care and attention on the part of the mother. For the baby is no longer lying down still and kicking its limbs in the air but it is ready to move about. When the baby starts to cut teeth, it often feels warm and feverish and gets running bowels. It is forbidden to speak of the baby's teeth. Instead of the word 'se' for teeth, the first teeth of the baby are described as 'ne wura' 'its master' 'ne bo' 'its pebbles'. The proper word is used after the ceremony attached to the cutting of teeth has been performed. That takes place when the baby has got four sets of teeth—two in the upper jaw, and two in the lower. Then the baby is given a hard boiled egg to eat for the first time. After this ceremony comes the freedom of talking about the baby's teeth. It is during this same period that the baby in spite of constant fever through cutting teeth, acquires certain skills such as sitting and crawling.

Again the age for acquiring the skills differs with the individual babies. Though babies in this locality are tied in cloth at their mothers back some, spending greater part of the day in the bush yet they acquire these skills normally. Within the first three months the baby moves and kicks the limbs about in the air and tries to turn round on one arm to lie down on its belly. Having acquired this skill, the baby is taught how to sit in the third or fourth month, by being placed on the ground and surrounded with pillows while the supporting hand is withdrawn from time to time. Sometimes, it is supported behind by a child who sits to hold the baby. The most comfortable way is to put the baby in a box or a stool turned up with cloth and pillows all around it.



Crawling in the  
proper way.



Learning to sit in  
a box.



A twin, crawling in  
the wrong way.  
Mother is therefore tying  
big round beads around  
the knees. This, she has  
started, with the younger  
twin on her lap.

Gradually, through practice, the baby acquires this skill and goes on to the next one. It tries to lift the buttocks from the ground when sitting and stretches the hand forward to reach objects it sees around it. Then the next stage is to move the legs forward. Mothers encourage their babies by standing objects in their way for them to fetch.

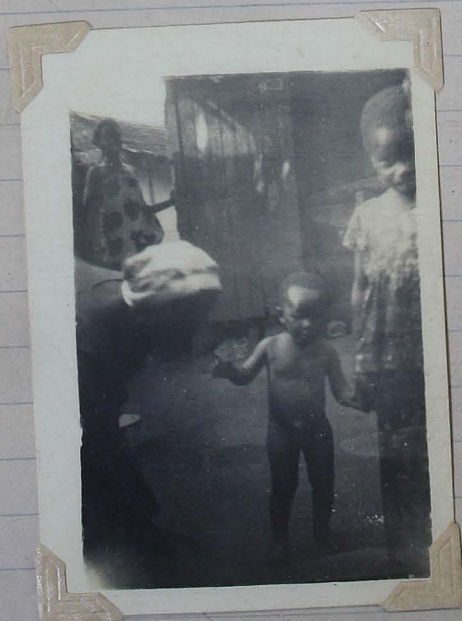
Sometimes, when the baby is crying, the mother takes no notice of it but rather goes to stand some yards in front of it, to call it; and the baby in its anxious state to reach the mother tries to move to reach her. As the baby moves forwards the mother moves backwards to get the baby to have ample chance for practice.

At the beginning of the crawling stage the babies only shuffle the whole of their bodies on one of their legs, supporting themselves on one arm. But I have been made to understand that that is not the proper way of learning crawling. The proper way of crawling is said to be done on all four—feet and hands. In order to get babies to do it correctly, big round beads are tied around the baby's knee so that it may feel pain when it crawls in the wrong way by shuffling the leg along. I was told that children who start crawling at once in the proper way take shorter time comparatively in acquiring the walking skill.

Mothers become happy but worried during this time when the baby is crawling. Happy because the baby is developing physically; but worried because the baby becomes a nuisance in the house. No water must be left standing in the baby's way else it will be upset. Mother must be on her guard as she goes about her daily routine in the house or on the farm lest the baby gets near fire, puts its hand in hot water or chews some dangerous herbs



Still making use of the wheels  
he loves so much.



Encouraging the baby to walk.

un-noticed. When a mother takes her baby to the farm at this stage, it means either it must remain at the mother's back all the time as she goes through thorns and strings to get her farm cultivated or she must weed a spot, cover it with plantain leaves and asks a child to watch the baby and play with it whilst she comes from time to time to feed it.

The next stage after crawling is getting up to stand beside objects and people. Then having become perfect in this skill, the baby one day stands shakingly without the support of anything. This performance is appreciated very much by all on-lookers, especially the children of the house, who encourage the baby with a song of congratulations accompanied by hand clapping thus: "Wajjina oo, ken, ken, wajjina oo, ken, ken." It is interesting to note how babies, upon this simple song become very enthusiastic and are spurred on to further efforts; and are therefore happy to stand for a long time so that they may be cheered with the singing and clapping. Within that same month (which normally is the eighth) it tries to move one leg forward after being able to stand up right by itself. I was told that the girls move the left leg first whilst the baby boys, on the whole move the right first. Babies are helped to develop the walking skill quickly by being provided with wooden wheels; and with somebody behind to save them from falling down and to help them push the wheels.

The baby enjoys practising this skill. Some delight in using this kind of wheel so much so that even after being perfect in walking they still have interest in their wheels and will not allow any other baby making use of the wheel.

Some babies learn to walk without the wheels but by the help of their sisters or other people who give them support on their two hands saying "Taa taa, nante begye to di" "Taa taa" represents the flapping noise made by the feet of the babies when learning to walk. "Nante begye to di" "Walk up here for marshed yam." In

In as much as babies who are quick in developing the various motor skills are encouraged and cheered, so also are those babies who are slow in motor development induced to perform them and to be corrected in their performance. Often, a baby who cannot walk is said to have weak joints and so to strengthen the joints some herbs known to the mothers as 'tuantin' and some pepper and a piece of ginger, are ground. These are made into small balls and two are pushed down the baby's rectum every morning. If this weakness continues, the parents take the baby to a fetish priest to find out the cause. The fetish priest after consulting the god very often tells the parents concerned that probably the child belongs to the dwarfs or to a certain river god in the locality and many other such stories. The parents are made to perform some sacrifices such as giving the god a piece of white calico, some cola, a fowl and eggs. In return the parents are given some black powder known to the natives as "mmoto" to be used in vaccinating the joints of the baby. If the baby is able to walk, then it is alright for him but if on the other hand he turns into a cripple then he is looked upon as I have already mentioned. I was told that such children often belong to barren women who go to fetish priests for babies.

To help the baby to move freely during motor development, simple clothes like the 'pieto' or pants are put on the children. But very often the children of this locality are seen naked.

As babies develop physically, they develop mentally too. They become very happy about the walking skill they have acquired and walk all round the yard falling down and picking up pieces of food lying about to eat. This makes them sick and often suffer common ailments as worms, constipation, diarrhoea, coughs, measles, mumps and convulsions. Mothers detect that their babies are sick by their constant cry even during feeding and after feeding, hotness of the mouth during feeding, rise in temperature, the colour and texture of the faeces. In almost all the cases herbs, bark, roots and seeds of plants are used in preparing medicine for curing the baby. Mothers have got the idea that the underlying causes of their babies' ill-health are stomach disorders in most cases. They know also that remaining in wet clothes and in the sun for a long time can cause children's ill-health. They have two main ways of washing the bowels, which are by syringing the baby and by giving it a native tonic. For the treatment of constipation the roots of a plant known to the mothers as 'Aforos' are boiled with some pepper and salt to taste and given to the baby to wash its bowels. Also, the yellow flowers of a shrub called 'Nkwadaa bodee' as well as another called 'Nkaseenkasee' are ground, some pepper and ginger added, mixed with enough water to provide two syringing are administered to wash out the bowels. The same process with different ingredients is used in curing diarrhoea. For the treatment of coughs a little kernel oil is added

to warm water and given to the baby. Convulsions are what mothers fear most among all the baby ailments. They have many terms for this illness. Some call it "Ne wura" "He master" and others call it "Esoro" meaning 'the heavens' (Probably the later name is given to the illness owing to the fact that the baby's head falls back to look upwards when it is attacked.) The mothers think there are two types of convulsion 'Onini' - 'male' and 'beres' - 'female'. It is difficult to detect an attack by the female convulsion, because the baby does not scream and does not become stiff as with the other kind and that is why it is dangerous. The baby only becomes cold and grows weaker and weaker and becomes unconscious until the mother realises that the baby is dead. The other kind, described as the male convulsion, makes the baby unconscious; raises the temperature and makes the joints become stiff while the head drops backward, thus looking up. Comparatively, this type is less frightful because it can be noticed and cured before it is too late. Apart from being given the herbs for the stomach wash, the baby is also vaccinated in this at all its joints with some 'mmoto' which is supposed to be able to drive away evil spirits. For the people of Apaah have the belief that such illness give the devils and evil spirits the opportunity to cause harm and destruction. "Yaanom de us ho aggem" "Yaanom" applies to the devils. This is a common saying meaning that "The devils have joined in to finish the baby". Another kind of "mmoto" is given to the mother to be sprinkled on a few pieces of burning charcoal to produce a sort of smoke to fumigate



A mother coaxing the sick child to eat.

the room where the baby sleeps. It never occurs to most of the mothers that carelessness about their children's feeding can cause much illness. Whenever a child cries it is given food to eat.

A baby is fed by the mother but an infant has his own pan and eats from it. But an infant is fed by his mother when he is sick or when the child does not feel inclined to eat, so that the mother will be sure that the infant has taken sufficient. At the age of six years onwards the child joins the elders of his or her own sex in the family, to eat from the same pot. There is a proverb that "Abofra hu ne nsa hohorow a one mpanyimfo didi" "The child joins the elders at table when he knows how to wash his hands well". At meals the child is taught table manners. The child who eats with the elders should not get up and leave them to clear the table and wash the pot after meals. It is considered as bad manners on the part of the child who does this. There is another proverb which goes that "Epanyin a wamms ne bra jie na odidi a oyi ayowa ho." Which means that "A useless adult is the one who remains at table to remove the pot."

Most of these manners are hidden in certain beliefs, proverbs and stories. The child is advised not to sing or speak whilst eating lest his parents die. He is not to support himself on one hand on the ground whilst eating else 'mother earth' receives the food he swallows and he will always be hungry. He is not to put all his fingers at once into the mouth while taking soup lest the thumb touches his nose and again the parents die. Behind these irrational beliefs, there are scientific facts hidden explaining why the children should not behave in certain ways.



Some young tailors at table.

at meals; but parents, knowing how much their existence means to their children use superstitions as means of making children acquire some hygienic habits.

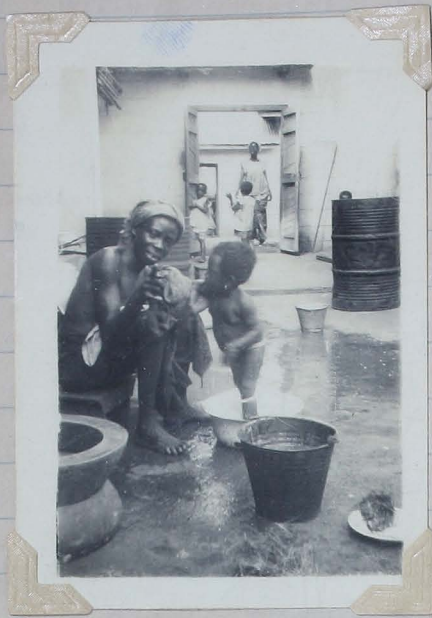
In fact the feeding of the children varies from family to family. In some families the children continue to eat alone from a separate pot until they reach the adolescent age when he or she joins the father or mother according to the sex. If a child refuses his meal, it means he is feverish and so red pepper and ginger are ground and pushed down the rectum to make the child warm and to promote an appetite. This medicine is very hot and painful and so children try to avoid it as much as possible by eating whatever given them. At times they are promised that they will be given large pieces of meat or fish if they eat what is given to them.

Sometimes when children are interested in a particular food they tend to eat very much only to make them sick later. When a mother detects that a child has over-fed himself the previous day, his food for the day is reduced.

Over-feeding is detected by either of the following symptoms: - running bowels, dullness in activity and bed wetting. Parents are not worried about babies and infants wetting their beds; but drastic measures are taken with the child who wets his bed. Again red pepper is pushed down the child's rectum. Parents resort to this painful treatment as a means of punishing the child who misbehaves. They believe that if a child is beaten very often for wrong doing there may be some injury or harm done to him but when such a medicine (as described already) is used the child loses nothing but gains.

Another way of punishing the child who wets his bed is, early in the morning to wrap the child's wet mat around him like a cloth and to hang irritating herbs around his face, arms and neck. Red clay is smeared on him and cold water is poured on the child. Then the other children in the vicinity follow the 'dwonss krobo' child, beating a pan and singing a song to tease him. "Dwonss krobo, anwee, nwee, dwonss krobo anwee, nwee" One child sings "Dwonss krobo" and the rest repeat the chorus "anwee nwee". This song has not got any special meaning. 'Dwonss krobo' means a bed-wetter. I was told that children who wet their bed at night are treated in that manner in order that, during the night the child may dream about it and during the dream, will remember to get up to go to the chamber pot. Such children are also deprived of their supper. They are not allowed to eat after 6 pm.

The infants from the age of a year to four years old are allowed to eliminate faeces just behind the houses. I was told, because the adults are using pit latrines and if children are allowed to use them, they may fall in and die<sup>as</sup> in some cases which they sighted. Where there are about six mothers in a house, it is difficult to tell the heap of waste matter belonging to each child. Early in the morning, before leaving the house for their farms, the yard and compound are swept and this is the time that the children are questioned about their faeces. For instance, "Kofi, who eliminated this greenish faeces? were you not well?" When a mother detects from the elimination that the child is unhealthy, she tells her mother as well as the husband; especially when the situation is serious and medical



Babies are bathed by mothers, who pay special attention to the babies' genital parts, and by so doing teach them how to do so by themselves.



A baby, eliminating at mother's feet while mother is conversing



As children at this age are bathing, the little ones, wanting to play in the water disturb them.

herbs are used to cure the child. There are a few special toilet language or sounds for the children. For the very young infants, the hissing sound symbolises urine; but the raw word 'ebini' is used for faeces. When they want the child to release his bowels, they say 'ne'. But there are special words used by mothers when talking about the children's genital parts. During bath, special attention is given to the children's genital parts. The special words used for the girls genital parts are 'wanaamu' 'wase' 'woto' for the boys they say 'woho' 'wobcema'. From babyhood to infancy, the child is taught how to wash the genital parts during bathing, as the mothers do <sup>so</sup> for them. The child washes his genital parts, <sup>himself</sup> from the age of six years onwards. Sometimes a hole is made at the bottom of a cigarette tin with a nail and this is used by the mothers during children's bath, for straining very warm water through the hole to the children's genital parts - both boys and girls.

There is no privacy attached to elimination. The babies do it on their mothers lap on a piece of old cloth or on to the ground at the feet of the mothers. And the infants, as mentioned, eliminate behind the houses. And the children from the age of six years onwards use the latrines with the adults who are not ashamed, either, to eliminate their bowels in the presence of their children.

However, the adults of the community, consider wind breaking by the child as an offence as well as a disgrace; especially when it is done in the presence of adults. The child who does so, is driven straightaway to go to the small room.

But wind breaking by the babies is only a fun; as this is a sign for the babies who are healthy and will grow fat.

The reason why wind breaking by children is a serious offence is, if children who do that in the presence of adults are not checked, they may put their parents into a disgrace one day, when the parents are entertaining their visitors.

Among the children themselves, such a thing as wind breaking is an offence. Any child who is accused of such an offence for-goes his meat during meals. The other children forfeit his meat and share it amongst them.

When it is difficult to detect the one who has done it, as it often happens, they call an older child to find out by smelling the buttocks of every child present, to tell who has done the wind-breaking. Or sometimes corn leaves are cut into small strips and a knot is made at the end of one of the strips. The children are made to take one strip each time in turns until somebody pulls the one with the knot then she is supposed to be the one who <sup>has</sup> done the wind breaking. At times an elder child who is called to judge such a case sings a special song as he points to each child; and the child on whom the song ends is supposed to be the one who has done it.

Here goes the song: -

'Kwame ata ee

Ta bitebe,

Yede akatoa ahye ne to;

Wayi awe o o,

Fom !!"

"The wind breaking was done by Kwame. He is fond of doing this. We have put a bottle in the anus to do it in And he has taken it out to eat. 'Fom' !!"

'Fom' - is the sound made in wind-breaking.

In this community, belching is treated as a sign of satisfaction after feeding or eating. Some mothers continue to feed their babies until the babies belch. The adults too belch loudly at meals and it is accepted as a sign of good delight in the food.

Whenever a child suffers from hiccough, it is given water to drink or it is asked to drink a cup of water. It is believed that a person suffers hiccough when his soul is very thirsty. In the children's community, a child who suffers hiccough is said to have eaten the palmtree soup of a ghost. So, the child is to ask <sup>any</sup> child he meets, whether it would like to take palmtree soup. If the ignorant child answers affirmatively, the one suffering from hiccough sings this song: - (whilst touching the throat of his neighbour and his' alternately)

" Ks - tri - ks -  
Ks wo menase.  
Ks - tri - ks -  
Ks wo menase."

" Ks - tri - ks -  
Should go to your throat,  
Ks - tri - ks -  
Should go to your throat."

'Ks tri - ks' is the name of hiccough. Because of the psychological effect, this song is said to be effective. Very often the child really gets rid of the hiccough whilst the other one also gets it as a result of the song sang to him by his friend.



Children at this stage become a nuisance  
in the home. Ama has been turned away  
from the kitchen, where she has turned a  
basin of water upside down.

CHAPTER V  
HABIT TRAINING.

The period of infancy is a stage of manipulation, when the child is very restless, touching and feeling things around him to satisfy his curiosity. This period is very important because it is the time when the children lay the foundation stone on which to build habits which form character, which is destiny.

At this stage the children receive their informal education partly through instructions from mothers (who are mostly concerned with the child's training in this locality) and mostly through observation, imitation and participation in all the events around them; and through their own activities and games where they learn new experiences everyday.

The babies become a nuisance in the house because they have now mastered the major motor skills. They walk about the compound touching things like water and sand; playing with it only to mess up themselves and the compound. They are attracted to almost everything especially the brightly coloured objects; and probably this explains why they are fond of going near fire and light. Mothers use the words like "Kakaa" meaning "a monster" to frighten children and discourage them from going nearer fire. They put everything they come across into their mouths and eat it. This is why one finds a baby chewing charcoal after scribbling on the floor with it; and chewing pepper only to cry to worry the mother.

This reminds me of the baby of the traditional headman of Apaah. When I visited the father for information on Christmas Day, his wife was in the yard removing palmnuts from a basket containing other vegetables. There were other

children sitting around the basket.

As soon as the wife got up to go to the kitchen to poke the fire, her baby who was then walking in the yard became interested in the group around the basket and the work they were doing, namely, removing the nuts from the vegetables.

I think the baby was attracted by the red colour; and going nearer, took a pepper (instead of a nut) unnoticed by the other children. The baby put it in its mouth and by the time the mother came to her seat, it was screaming and sweating and continued to do so the morning through.

From morning till evening the children watch the habits and activities of adults and learn to do the same. They are also taught to acquire some habits and manners found in this community. For instance, the infant is taught to wash his face as soon as he gets up from bed. A child is whipped or given some other form of punishment, if he is seen walking about doing other things with his 'dirty face' unwashed; because parents consider it bad luck for the day, should a child be seen in the house late in the morning with a dirty face. If the father is a trader, he may not make satisfactory sales that day. If he is a hunter he may miss all the game in the bush and come home with empty hands.

After washing the face the child has to clean his teeth. A child is never given food to eat if his teeth have not been cleaned. The mothers use wet towels to wipe the mouth and tongue of the babies or sometimes a piece of cotton wool is heated in <sup>the</sup> flames and used as a tooth-brush for the baby. The children do not know how to

use the chewing sticks and so the heavy stalk of plantain is beaten down into a black fibre by adding charcoal. Then pepper and salt are added. This<sup>is</sup> said to be very good for cleaning the child's teeth, as it is believed that the charcoal whitens the teeth whilst the salt and pepper heal up the sore gums. Early in the morning, the children do this by themselves. The child is also taught to wash his hands before eating. So that before the child comes for his food from his mother his hands are inspected to be sure they are washed.

All these things concerning health education are taught within the short period when the parents are at home. The children are also taught simple manners as getting up and giving seats to elders. In every house of this community, the children are provided with their own native stools; and these are part of the children's own property of which they are always very proud. No child will allow any other child to use his stool. Very often children quarrel over the ownership of stools in the house.

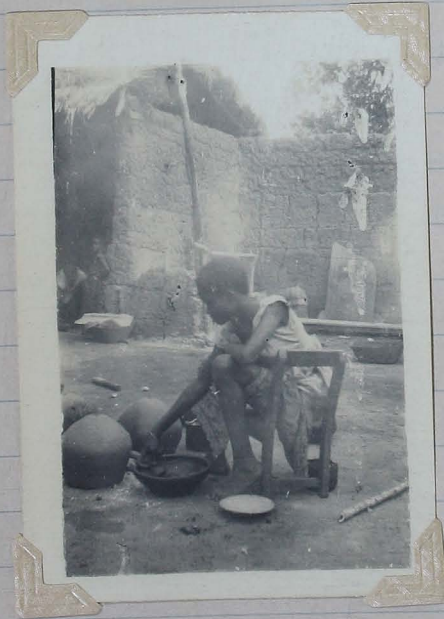
Even in some cases they refuse to offer their seats to an elder. Children are also taught to blow their noses using the left hand.

No handkerchiefs are used; instead, the mothers sometimes use the edge of their cloths as handkerchiefs and so the children also do the same; but at any rate using the left hand.

Not for that purpose only do they use the left hand but for handling any other thing the mothers feel it unclean because the right hand must be clean enough to be used for handling food. Mothers are very particular about the use of children's hands, especially the girls who are taught to participate in the preparation of meals.



Learning by doing :- The child is washing the utensils to get them ready for meals.



Konadu is learning to mash.

(Note the type of self made stoves made by the potters in the locality.)

in order to learn how to cook. During the preparation of meals, the child does the peeling of the food stuffs, the sweeping of the compound and the washing of the utensils in which the meals are dished. At the age of six to seven years the child is taught how to pound 'fufu' or turn 'fufu' up in the mortar and how to mash and grind things well.

The rest of the day, after preparation of meals, is spent by the child in playing and going on errands from one relative to the other, and fetching things from the room and taking them to his mother in the yard. This helps the child to develop his vocabulary and speech.

At first there is no division between the duties of boys and girls. However, they attach themselves more and more to the roles of their own sexes, as they grow; so that by the age of puberty, they are almost ready to fit in their places as men and women of their community.

The child is never allowed to give anything in his left hand to his elder. The child who does this is reprimanded or given a lash because in this society, such a behaviour is considered as an insult and bad manners.

The left hand is not valued in this community. Filling drinking pots with water and carrying away the rubbish are some of the child's duties in the house. Sometimes when children are asked to fetch water from the river side or go on errands, they tend to play on the way and are away for a very long time. For this reason there is a practice in this community that when the child is sent on an errand, the mother drops a speck of spittle on the ground and tells the child that if the spittle dries before he arrives, his navel will rot and he will die consequently.

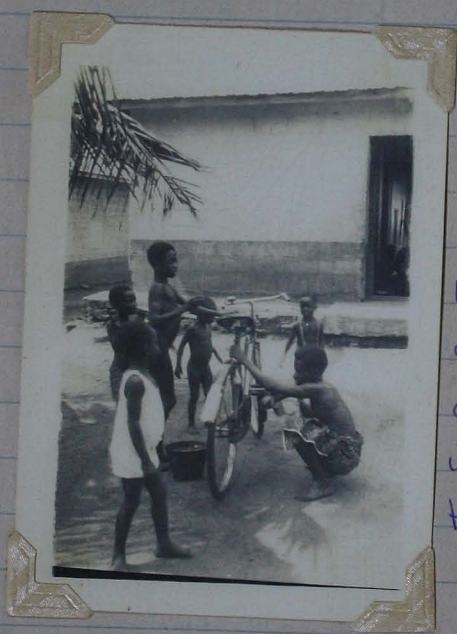
Sometimes children are rewarded with much meat or fish during meals. Children who refuse to obey their mothers or to participate in the house work as required of them are either given corporal punishment or denied their share in any appetising food, which the mother eats. For instance if a mother is chewing sugar cane or taking coconuts or groundnuts (which are the common things children find appetising) the mother calls the child's attention and tells him that she is not going to give him his share because he has refused to behave acceptably. Such punishments are often very effective with the child. Mothers have a proverb which illustrates the situation and it runs thus: "Akoko a obo ni na odi abebe sro"

"The chicken which is nearer its mother, eats the thigh of the grass-hopper" (which is its best part.) This means that a child who is near the mother and works hard becomes automatically her favourite and therefore gets every good thing from the mother. Mothers discipline their children by telling them make-belief stories in the evenings. The following is an example.

"Once upon a time, there lived a woman and her child called Fena. The girl was very rude and obstinate and did not care for her mother's instructions. She was of no help at all to her mother in the house. One day, before the mother started off for her farm as usual, she instructed her daughter Fena, who was left behind, to fill the pots with water. The girl took no notice of her mother's instructions and played till it was dark. When the mother returned from the farm she was tired and thirsty and asked the girl to give her a cup of water to drink; but to her sorrow there was not a drop of water in the drinking



Playing marbles in a lane.



All the boys are anxious to finish cleaning the bicycle in order to have a turn, each, in riding



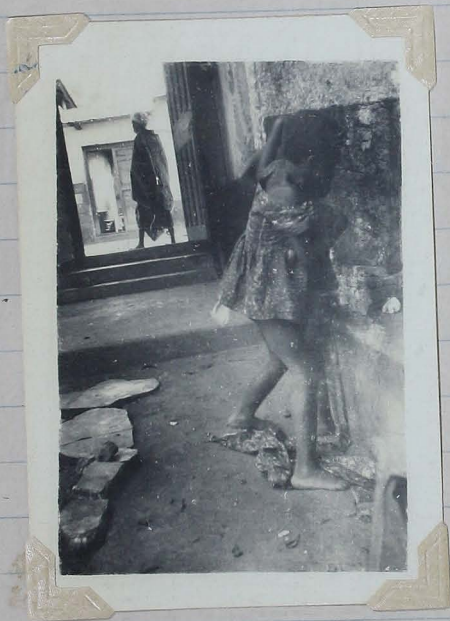
Kofi is very happy about his self-made car

pot. The mother therefore scolded Fena and gave her a lash on her back; she screamed and ran out of the house. All the inmates of the house shouted for her to come back to the house because it was dark but Fena did not take any notice of them at all. She remained out of doors and the mother thinking the girl had come back to the house, forgot all about her and went to sleep. At night Fena was kidnapped by the dwarfs, and that was the end of her. \*So that is why it is better for every child to obey its parents for if it does not, it is sure to get into great trouble as Fena did\*.

There is another proverb which mothers use often to warn their children to behave well and that is, "woante, ante a, woko ante ade" 'An obstinate child always goes to 'ante-ade.' 'Ante-ade,' being an imaginary place of torture for bad children. There are many such stories through which the mothers train their children to form good habits, and morals.

Children of Apach spend much of the day playing when all adults have gone to their farms. They play all sorts of games such as hide and seek, marbles, riding bicycles, going to the river side, running through the bushes around the houses and dramatising incidents in everyday life. In the next chapter, I shall deal thoroughly with the description of these games. One meets the children scattered all over in all corners of the village during the day. If an adult or a sensible child finds any child playing with the genital parts or practising

\*I have concluded the story in the same popular way, using the same expressions to show the snag in the story as mothers expect their children to learn from the experience of these imaginary children they talk of.



Two girls are fighting over  
the ownership of a plaything.

masturbation, the child is reported to the mother on her arrival from the farm. Such reports are dealt with seriously. The child is either whipped or red pepper is ground and put in the vagina and with the boys, it is smeared on their genital parts. Sometimes they are threatened that their genital parts will be cut off with a knife if they are seen in that manner. Mothers are very strict on their children and teach them to speak truth from babyhood. Such bad conducts as stealing and telling lies are not tolerated in this community. Children who have that habit are never happy. They are whipped or locked up in a room for sometime. At times their hands are tied up and they are teased by their neighbours.

Since every woman lives in the 'family house', corporate living is the common pattern in this locality. A child therefore grows up in a household of other children who may be his brothers sisters cousins and children of other relatives. The child therefore is taught how to live in a community by eating and playing together and sometimes sleeping together even on the same mat in the same room.

Every child hates a person who interferes with his play things; but on the contrary children want to use other people's things. Such habits are not encouraged at all in this community because children's quarrels can very often develop a hatred between relatives, families and neighbours. This often happens because the parents do not provide their children with any toys to play with. The children collect such things as empty powder tins, empty packets and bottles and play with them.

Children's quarrels are sometimes, <sup>also</sup> due to some of the following causes. Very often children of the opposite sex in the family quarrel over the ownership of play things, property, and other trifle things. And the boys also delight in teasing the girls in various ways. The smaller boys are often bullied and cheated in games and at meals by the bigger boys. Any of these conflicts may end in a quarrel and sometimes even a fight. Parents sometimes take no notice of such situations; but very often the bigger child is reprimanded or beaten by the mother, in order to keep the the smaller child who may be crying quiet. At times, the crying child is coaxed by the mother or the grandmother, by picking him up and carrying him on her back, or giving him some food to eat to make the other child jealous. The smaller children are always the favourites of the family. At the same time, seniority allowance and privileges are given to the bigger child, when sharing anything amongst them and in the assignment of house duties too. The smaller child washes the pan after meals, and gets smaller share of the meat at meals. He also empties the chamber-pot in the morning.

In this society, where the child belongs to the lineage group, and where husbands and wives rarely live in the same house, the discipline of the children is mostly the concern of the mother and her relatives and not the father. Sometimes, for a whole week, the father may not visit the wife's house where he has his children. The fact that the father is responsible for the discipline of his children is only theoretical to most of the fathers, who only help their wives to increase

their lineage groups. Apart from mothers and uncles (who play a prominent part in the training of the children) the aunts, grandmothers and grandaunts are also responsible for the training of the children in their family. They play a prominent role in the lives of the children, to some extent.

Learning through experience.



Imaginative play:-  
making clothes for  
their 'babies'.



Two boys  
Making a car from  
pieces of wood and  
cotton reels.



Enjoying a swing on a  
mango branch.



Very proud of their  
self made cars.

It is interesting to note that children tend to imitate their own sex. For instance, the girls carry powder tins at their backs as babies. They sometimes use plantain too as a baby, and nurse it by bathing it, beating it and talking to it. If one observes closely, one finds that the sort of treatment received by the child from her mother is demonstrated on the powder tin or plantain. Where there are two or more children in the house they do some acting about the scenes they see around them, such as, a mother and her child in the kitchen preparing meals using empty tins as their utensils and sand as their ingredients. Sometimes they collect real vegetables from their mothers' kitchen and prepare some stew <sup>or</sup> soup which no one eats. They also act <sup>scenes like</sup> buying and selling in the market and the minister and the congregation at church, as well as a fetish priest dancing.

The boys have a special interest in wrestling with each other, running about, kicking things about, climbing chairs and trees like the mango trees on the compound. The boys make lorries of their own from the piassava and palm branches. They sometimes use native kitchen stools (to the annoyance of their mothers) as lorries by sitting on them and dragging them along. The boys also roam about in corners and in bushes shooting birds and stoning lizards on walls. I agree with Coates Terzild the Psychologist that "Real or imagined threats to a child's relations with objects of his affection may produce jealousy of a severe order"

When children reach this stage of manipulation they tend to become a nuisance to their mothers in the house, because the rubbish that has been swept to the dustbin is taken out by the children

as their property. Leaves and peels are collected from the dust-bin and cut into pieces again and displayed as materials on sale in a shop, probably after the mother has swept the yard. Should anyone be so daring as to check the children or take the rubbish back to the dust-bin, she will straightway become their enemy. The child in such a case throws himself on the ground and cries. Sometimes other things may be given to the child to substitute what is being taken away from him but often it does not pacify him. There are other causes for children's crying apart from this. The child cries when he is hungry, when he is whipped, when he is being scolded and teased, when he is sick, when he is sleepy but there is no light in the room or when the mother has not made the mat ready, when he cannot find his property, when he knocks his foot against a stone, when he is being bullied by a stronger child and when the mother or an elder sister he loves is cunningly leaving him behind to go somewhere. Children are always anxious to accompany a bigger child who is going on an errand or at any rate going out of the compound either for a visit, to play or to watch any scene. They are often discouraged from going by means of funny stories like "Kaakose te kwan no so ho obekye wo" "Kaakose is on the way to catch small children" Kaakose is a term used by the mothers to describe an imaginary man who steals children away. Or sometimes two people pretend to make a dialogue of this type "Ama did you see that fat man with a long beard sitting on the road the other day?" 2<sup>nd</sup> Speaker: "Yes, I have heard

that he has come today too to catch small children who pass that way" Then the first speaker would call the child's attention to the statement of the second speaker about the fat man. And such statements dissuade the children from going and they resort to crying. Very often, the mothers take no notice of their children's cries. Sometimes, the child is called back and pacified by being flattered with such words as "Do not worry I shall soon dress you nicely and go out with you. I won't allow any child to accompany us" Such tantalising speeches are given to the child in such circumstances to keep him quiet. At times he is threatened with the coming of animals to catch him or with the mother going out of the house to die if the crying continues. This method is more effective on the babies and infants rather than on the child.

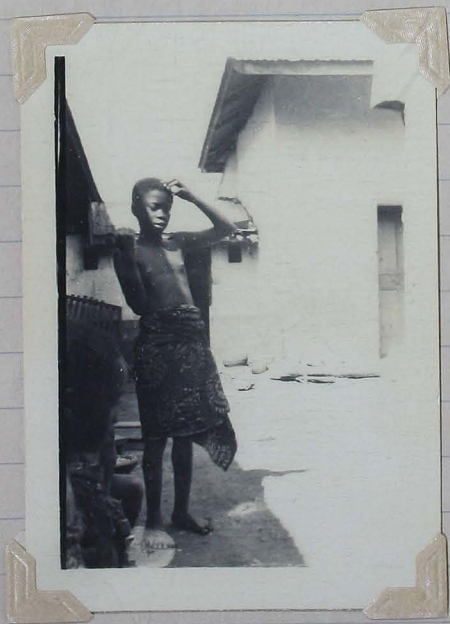
One can find that the girls like their fathers better than their mothers whilst the boys are also fond of their mothers. The reason for this cross-love in the family is that, in this locality mothers are responsible for the up-bringing of the girls. If a girl is found lazy and unable to cook well and perform her domestic duties during marriage, then it is the fault of the mother, and it disgraces her and the whole family. In the same way, the father is expected to be responsible for the moral up-bringing of his son whilst he lives.

If the child incurs debt for breach of law or is guilty of misbehaviour, then the father is disgraced.

The daughter is educated by her mother in the kitchen through out the day, going along to the farm with her to learn through participation. Often there are conflicts of ideas between the girl and her mother. Unsatisfactory services on



The boy is now having bath, after  
being chased by his father.



Seiwah, coming out of the kitchen  
in tears, is annoyed with the  
mother for giving her a knock in  
her head.

the part of of the girl, failure to carry out some instructions and orders demand the mother's correction which she gives by means of a knock in the head or sometimes by even beating her daughter. Sometimes when the beating goes too far, the father steps in to adjust the situation and such circumstances bring the father nearer to the heart of the girl whilst the mother is looked upon as troublesome. The mothers know that such are the only ways of training the child; but they lose control over their daughters as the girls start to provide for themselves with their personal effects, which they begin to do at puberty stage.

In the same way the fathers are very strict with their sons. When a boy misbehaves, he is reported by the the mother to the father to be punished by him, because the boys think lightly of their mothers' punishment.

The following is an account of an event I observed in one of the houses during my investigation. I came across a boy sitting with a bucket and sponge, beside a group of boys playing marbles. After a while the boy's mother came out and threw away some dirty water. The woman, upon entering the house called her son's attention to hurry up with his sponge and bucket because the father was coming. The boy argued that the mother was not in earnest, whilst the mother was right. Soon, the father appeared and the mother winked at her son who hurriedly ran out of the house whilst the father was running after him. The mother begged for the child with a false excuse that it was her fault because just at the time the boy was going to have his bath, she asked him to go and buy her salt.

From such a scene as accounted, one can conclude why fathers are liked by the girls and the mothers by the boys.



The children collect themselves  
to walk back to their villages.



The school building which was built  
through communal labour.



The school has assembled.  
Few of the children are girls.  
And nearly all the girls come  
from the neighbouring villages.

## CHAPTER VI

### SCHOOLING.

The only school at Apaah which caters for the neighbouring villages, is Presbyterian school.

The Presbyterian church at Apaah was started with a handful of Christians during the beginning of the twentieth century.

The handful of Christians with which the church was founded decided to open a school which would encourage the people to enrol as members of the church. It was very difficult to get pupils for the school. And so the sons of the foundation members of the church formed the pioneers of the school in 1930.

Among the pupils, there were no girls and no members of the royal family. The building was put up by the members of the church with the help of the Mission. It was at first used as a chapel and when the school was opened it had to serve a dual purpose namely as a school building and at the same time as a chapel.

At first people were unwilling to send their children to school because the parents thought that by taking their children away to school there would be no one to go on errands nor to accompany them to the farm. Owing to the maternal inheritance no father could send his son to school without consulting his brothers-in-law; for the cost of his own son's education had to be borne by him and his brothers-in-law. However, this procedure is gradually dying out. There are still some pupils, the cost of whose schooling is equally shared between the fathers and uncles. Even in some cases the whole responsibility is on the uncle.

People came to understand education



School children help their  
parents, to carry sand  
for building, after school hours.

gradually; especially when they realised that the school children were healthier and neater than the children who did not go to school.

The need for a Middle school came about when they found that their children found it difficult to get admission for continuation of their education elsewhere. Furthermore, it was realised that the children could neither work on the farm, nor were they able to find employment when they completed the Primary School. The progress of the school came to a stand-still for some time.

They built a Middle School by means of communal labour in 1953 as I have already mentioned in the chapter dealing with the social background.

The number on roll of the Middle school is not encouraging for the following reasons. Most of the pupils look after themselves out of their own pockets. On week-ends and during holidays the boys earn money by undertaking contracts and doing odd jobs. They weave baskets and sell them. Some carve mortars and pestles, and others weed the cocoa farms for farmers and charge them for their labour. There are some others too, <sup>who</sup> own fruit trees like orange trees which also produce fruits for sale.

The ages of the pupils in the Middle School are fairly old compared with those of pupils in the urban areas. Also, owing to much time spent in private work to pay for their education, they do not get time to do any studies.

A child may be already tired by the time he has returned from the bush and has finished pounding fufu for the evening meal.

As I have already said, the school at Apeah



Both boys and girls take keen interest  
in the farming lesson.

caters for the villages around like Hinting, Boposo, and Kyekyewere. Most of these children are staying with some people; but the accommodation as well as the environment has no scholastic atmosphere about it.

Still worse, some of the children live on their own. On Saturdays, they go back to their villages and bring bags of food stuff on which they feed for the week. Others too stay in their villages and attend school at Apaah, and walk back after school. The children enjoy this sort of life and do not feel tired at all.

Mashed plantain known as 'eto' is the commonest food taken along with them; because it is heavy and it takes a long time too to go bad.

During the rainy seasons, the school attendance is very poor, as the pupils who have to walk from their villages to the school and back again simply cannot walk through the rain.

It is very difficult for the people of Apaah to value girls education. This, I have already said much about. To them, it is a sheer waste of time and money to send their daughters to school. They feel that since the aim of a woman is to marry and bring forth children, it is of no use sending a girl to school to be lazy. Mothers often complain that girls who do not attend school are better in housecraft than those who do go. "Awuraa a onim mmukase daakye na wobehu" "A lady who does not know the kitchen, (you) will suffer in future." This is the commonest remarks mothers make to their daughters when they have failed to prepare a dish as expected from them.

There is a cordial relationship between

parents and teachers. The parents do not worry about the punishment given to their children at school. They sometimes ask teachers to punish their children who have misbehaved at home. The boys respect the teachers and the parents also look to the teachers as their leaders and take all their suggestions seriously.



Playing with a self made toy - (Akates)



Playing 'Iware'

## CHAPTER VII

### CHILD EDUCATION THROUGH GAMES, SONGS AND PROVERBS.

The children's make-belief world is full of fantastic ideas. However, through their stories, games and songs, they learn about their environment. All their stories are about children, men, women, animals and plants.

They get much education through stories which have passed down to them from one generation to the other. They learn much about their own culture and traditions through story-telling and games. They learn the consequence of bad conduct and the rewards of good behaviour through the experience of the imaginary children about whom they hear everyday; and they learn the various uses of trees and herbs too.

Some of the games are played at night and others are played during day-time. Most of them are played by two or more children. Some are considered as games for girls; especially those with songs such as 'Aso' and 'Nteewa'. There are others, too, played by both sexes such as 'Ahtsakyire', 'Fansa to me koom', 'Hyehye ba', 'Ahinta-ahinta', 'Asoroba', 'ods hankiti' and 'sware'.

Most of these games are accompanied by clapping of hands and jumping about. In such games the children do body exercises, learn rhythm, number work, language and general knowledge.

In this chapter, examples of a few such games are given.

At night, not all children go out of the house to play. Some children delight in sitting round by the fire side to listen to exciting stories told them by their sisters,

brothers and other relatives. All those who are taking part form a circle round the fire and the story-telling goes on in turns.

Every age group of children has some particular stories they like.

Owing to speech difficulty, the infants are interested in short stories which are often told about other children and animals.

When the elders are telling their long stories the children sit down and listen to them attentively, and learn the use of vocabulary so that they also may tell the same stories in future.

The following are some examples of stories often told by children whose ages range between six and nine.

1. "There once lived a woman and her daughter called Fena. The mother died; and having no other relative with whom she could stay, Fena was given to an old, old lady who had twin-grand-daughters called 'Konkon Ketewa' and 'Konkon Panyin.' These two children did no work in the house. All the manual labour was done by Fena. But whenever food was prepared, the old witch divided the food into three and sang a song which meant that one part of the food was for 'Konkon-Panyin' another for 'Konkon Ketewa' and the other for herself. This continued for quite a long time. Anytime food was prepared the old lady sang that song: "Konkon Ketewa wo dee ni; Konkon Panyin wo dee ni, me ara aberewa me dee ni; Fena achuane wo anso wo so." Then Fena would cry and hide herself in a corner or do some work.

One day as Fena was crying on her way to the river side to fetch water, she met her

mother's ghost who asked her what the matter was and she told her the kind of treatment the old lady was giving her. The next day when food was prepared as usual, the old lady was about to sing her song to tell the poor child that she should go and fetch water when all at once the ghost of Fena's mother appeared with a long stick in her hand and touched the old lady and her twin grand daughters as she sang the old lady's tune using different words.

"Konkon Panying wo wuo ni, Konkon ketewa wo wuo ni, woara Aberewa wo wuo ni, Fena Ouros no anso wo so." It means 'Here is your death Konkon Panyin, here is your death Konkon Ketewa, and you, the old lady, here is your death too!'

They all dropped down and died as the song of the ghost ended; and Fena ate all the food.

So the bad old woman died. That is why orphans are to be treated kindly.

The stories end with the following words "se manausesem a metoo ye yi se eye de o, enye de o, mo mma bi nks na bi mmra." And the response is "hee --- ee ---"

"Whether my story is interesting or not, let it go so that another one comes."

So saying, some body else begins another story with the following words

"Yense se, nse se oo ---"

Response "Yoo ---" Then the story continues:

2. "There lived a woman who went to her farm with her daughter one day. As they came across a big fallen tree, the child asked her mother "Memfa he? Memfa soro ana se asee?" The mother replied "Fa asee"

The mother advised the girl to pass under the tree and so she became 'afasee' - water-yam.

31 One day, a boy went to the farm with his father and as they reached a fallen tree, the boy asked his father whether he should pass over or under the tree and the father advised his son to jump over it. As the child was doing so, he turned into a mushroom.

During the telling of the story some songs called 'mmoguo' are sung in between, when the story is becoming boring. Here are some of them.

" Soy. se abrobe,  
 Idehyee  
 Son se abrobe  
 Idehyee  
 Son se abrobe"

" Looking as gay as  
 the pine-apple,  
 A princess, like  
 the pine-apple."

b) " Nea mmaa pe ne aputonsu  
 Kooko aben nkamfo aben  
 Nea mma pe ne aputonsu"

" That is all women  
 can do!

To get mashed pepper  
 ready,

c) " Soogya no  
 Kyentye ku ee,  
 Soogya no  
 Atase wo ho yi  
 Soo gya no  
 Se epae abaye a,  
 Soo gya no,  
 Ene dieben?  
 Soogya no  
 Ene bonka

When the food is ready"

In this particular song a lot of riddles and analogies are learnt about the earth.

For instance "when the earth has panted his hair, it is the gutter.

When the earth is afflicted with a hunch back: it is the hill.

When the earth has got bad teeth: it is the mosses."

The following are examples of stories often told by children whose ages range between nine and twelve. Their stories are often about plants and animals. How and why certain things happen in certain ways. For instance, about how the palmtree came into the world; how the crab got marrow in its body. Why the lizard knocks its head and why the goat which once lived in the bush is now a domestic animal, and many such stories. Though most of these stories are fantastic, yet they help the children to understand the nature of animals to certain extent.

Here are some examples:

"There once lived a woman whose children died as soon as they were born. One day, she decided to hide her last child she had in the bush. She built a hut and hid the child in it and carried food to her everyday. Any time she went, she sang a song and the girl opened. All the animals watched this and decided to catch the child. They therefore learnt the song and went to sing it behind the girl's door. But the girl who could detect the deep voices of the elephant and the tiger refused to open the door. They therefore asked the tortoise who had a beautiful voice to sing and it was able to sing like the girl's mother so the girl opened at last and all the animals jumped upon her and killed her. The skull of the girl was thrown up onto the palm tree and it

became the nuts. This is how palmmut came into the world.

2. How the crab got some marrow in its body.

"Formerly, the crab had no stiff back. It walked about with all its intestines showing. The crab was given its back cover by a child as a token of her gratitude owing to some help the crab gave to the girl.

Once upon a time there lived an old lady and her grand child. Any time they prepared food the old woman asked the girl to mention her name before she could get her share. The girl who could never find out her name had to fore-go her meals for many days. One day, she was going to the river side to fetch water and on her way met the crab who told her the old woman's name after listening to her complaint. The girl went back to the house and told the old lady her name and she was given food for the first time. The girl (in thanking the crab) covered the crab's back with a piece of a broken calabash filled with her phlegm. The girl's phlegm is therefore the crab's marrow and the calabash its back cover."

The children at the age of thirteen to eighteen often tell stories about obstinate children, marriage, wealth and barren women.

The procedure of telling the story is just the same. Except that with the grown-up children, there is always a language flow but the infants often have language difficulty, so that their stories are often rather boring; that is the reason why some interludes are often given. However, as days go by, the children learn to develop their speech and improve their expressions and vocabulary by listening to the grown-ups.

Apart from story-telling, children have

other forms of entertainment at night. There are some games which are played according to sex and others are played by both sexes. For instance, hide and seek - 'Ahinta-ahinta' is played by both sexes. The children collect themselves and divide themselves into two groups. They choose a spot which they are to run-up to, to be secured in case they are found out by the other group. One group goes away to find hiding places while the other group stands at that chosen spot and calls out "Kwaa Kwaa". Then the other group responds "Yenkoo ye oo" - 'We haven't gone yet.' As soon as there is no response coming, then it means they are gone; so the other group starts to find them out. If they are caught, they change over.

There is another game too called 'hyehye ba'. This can be played during the day too but it is mostly played at night. The children collect themselves; and two of them stand out. One of the two stands with his back to the others or goes away from there, whilst the other with a nut in her hand gives it to one of the children sitting, by pretending to give it to all of them, one after the other. The other child standing is called back to guess who has the nut. If she guesses correctly, she gets the nut from her partner and does the same thing. But if she fails it means that the girl who had the nut has been conceived by the one giving the nut; until it happens a second time to the same girl, when it is said that the one who gave her the nut has given birth to her. But if the opponent finds her out in her final attempt, then it means she has suffered a miscarriage. This happens until all the children have had their turn because when one is born she gets up and sits

aside. When they have all had their turn, they line up about six yards away from their mother and she calls them one by one as follows:

"Han na odi ho oo don?" "Whose turn is it?"

Child: "Me aa o don." "I am!"

Mother: Wo de sen? "What is your name?"

Child: Sika nnonno. "Golden drums." (The child says whatever she or he likes; but in most cases, things made of gold.)

Mother: Sika nnonno bo mu e!! Sika nnonno bo mu e!! San ko wakiji na waba, San ko wakiji na waba. "Beat your golden drum then, beat your golden drum, child, Go back, and hop backwards before you come."

(As the mother sings this, the child hops on one leg from where she stands to her mother.) All her children do likewise in turns. The other child also does the same if she were lucky to have children; otherwise they get hold of the other child who could not beat anyone of them and sing "Bonini anwo ba Bonini twaa." "A barren woman cannot bring forth a dry barren woman". If she gets one, this song is not sung. In this game, the children gain three things, namely: - They learn something about birth or reproduction, about the customs like naming of the child; and they also do some exercises by hopping on one leg. And thirdly, they gain some pleasure.

There is another game called "Antoakylie" The children (of any number) sit in a circle whilst one runs round the circle and sings:

"Antoakylie, antoakylie" runner sings.

Chorus: 'Yee - - Yee - - -' "Yes' - - 'Yes - - -'

Runner: Obiba! - "Sombodji's child"

Chorus: 'Yee - - - Yee - - -' 'Yes - - - Yes - - -'

Runner: Obewu - - - ! "He is going to die"



Boys playing 'Sds hankiti'

Chorus: 'Yee! --- Yee ---!'      'Yes ---! Yes ---'

Runner: 'I bene ---!'      "He will get soiled with his own faeces."

Chorus: 'Yee --- Yee ---!'      'Yes --- Yes'

As the child sings this running, he puts a folded piece of cloth behind one of the children unnoticed. If the child notices it, he also gets up and runs with it to meet the first runner singing the same words. The first runner comes to sit in the place of the second one and he also puts the cloth behind somebody else and the game goes on. If the child does not notice the cloth and fails to run away with it, and the runner reaches him the second time, all the children rush on him to beat him until he gets the chance to run away to touch a wall.

Another game children of both sexes enjoy playing is the one known as 'Ido hankiti' - "a lover's handkerchief."

The children who are taking part form a ring and sing whilst somebody dances with a handkerchief in hand. It is given to somebody of the opposite sex, apparently some one the person likes, as the song goes: -

"Ido ee hankiti oo, Ido abegye me hankiti oo"

"A lover's handkerchief, my lover may come for this handkerchief."

The one who is given the handkerchief also gives it to someone else whilst she dances to the song and the clapping of hands of the other children. Children of the ages nine to twelve like this game very much.

There is a similar one played by the two sexes. An equal number of boys and girls line up in pairs. As they sing and clap their hands, one of the boys marches to the

girls and hooks any one he likes by the arm and takes her down to the boys' line to hook another boy. The first boy comes to his place whilst the other boy also goes with the girl to her line to find another girl and she goes to her place. The game goes on in this way until everyone gets a turn.

In such games the children learn and enjoy different rhythms from various songs and also they learn not to be timid and shy.

"Ass" and 'Ampe' are all games for girls. Any number of girls more than two can play them. Songs are sang in 'Ass' but in 'Ampe' counting of scores is done by the girl playing. The girls playing form a straight line and one of them starts playing. If the two jumping move the opposite legs forward, they jump again. If this happens again, the girl who started it goes to the end of the line and her successful opponent goes to the front. They choose a goal maximum and each tries to defeat the winning girl in order to get the chance of reaching the maximum. The last girl tries to catch one of them after they have knocked her back with their knees one girl after the other, counting up to ten. When they touch a chosen wall as their goal, she stops chasing them.

This game trains the infants how to count; they get pleasure also from playing and exercise their bodies as well. There is another game which trains the infants in counting. They line up as many pebbles or kernel nuts as possible on the floor. They count the nuts on the floor in turns without breathing in between the counting.

First, the child breathes in deeply and starts  
 "Kro kro koo - - - ko, no, sa, nan, num - - - na."

Language learning



Repeating rhymes  
'Esono amena mu'

kro kro kro - - - - - (Cock crow) one, two, three - - - etc

If a child is able to hold the breath while counting up to the last nut, she is allowed to take one of the pebbles or nuts - the last one.

This game can be played by two or more children and in the end they find out who wins most of the pebbles when they have all finished. This game is played by infants of the ages between four and six years. It is played by both sexes during the day.

Some of the children's games teach language and general knowledge too, apart from number work.

For instance, any number of children respond to one boy who says this :- 'Kron'

"Esono amena mu" — In an elephant's hole  
Response - "kron" — 'Kron'

"Esono amena mu" — In an elephant's hole  
Response - "kron" — 'Kron'

"Esono kese amena mu" — In a big elephants hole

Response — — — — —

Any child who responds to the last sentence with 'Kron' is beaten by the other children.

Because, in the Twi literature, it is out of place to say "Esono kese" - a big elephant; because obviously all elephants are known to be fat ones. "Esono kese" therefore is tautological.

Here is another one. One child starts, others respond:-

"Eno nkatee abo" My mother has ripe groundnuts

Response: "Ye esa" Resp: "We are harvesting"

"Eno nkatee abo" My mother has ripe groundnuts

Response: "Ye esa" Resp: We are harvesting

"Kosa nkate mono" I have got unripe groundnuts

Response: — — — — —

The child who does not realise the difference

between the last sentence and the rest and who therefore responds to it, is beaten by the rest. There are other games which also train a retentive memory. For instance 'aniwo mu' and 'enne Dwo bredwo'

The game of 'aniwo mu' is about food. If a child gets food or meat, he should remember to say to the others 'Obiara ani nim' meaning 'no one should find it appetite' as quickly as possible. If he forgets to say this sentence, all the children in the house shout 'Ma ni wo mu' which means 'it is appetizing' and the owner of the food is bound to share the food among them. The other game trains children to know the names of the days. Every child is named after one of the seven days of the week, according to the day on which the child was born. Early on a Sunday morning the children born on a Sunday in the house should say 'Enne Kwasi bre dwo' "Today a Sunday should come in peace". This must be said three times a day - in the morning, afternoon and in the evening. If they forget, they are beaten by the other children until they say it.

The same happens to the other children when it is their turn.

There is another way of learning language apart from story-telling. Through hearing riddles from other people and through competitions in saying proverbs, children gain knowledge about their environment.

Here are some examples of riddles:-

In tui, riddles are called "Agya rekro" - 'when Father was leaving'

a) 'Agya rekro omaa me adee bi wosoma no a enko no woreko a, na odi woakyi.'

'ene sumsum'

b) When father was leaving, he gave me a child, who won't go on any errand but as soon as I am going, he follows me: - My shadow.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho enye de nso eka wo nsa pe na woatafeve - egya.

b) My father left me something which is not sweet though, yet, as soon as my hand touches it I lick the hand: - It is fire.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho, yeama mu soromante na ewo ani mmeensa. - Kube.

b) My father left something which is cemented and has got three eyes too: - It is the coconut.

a) Agya maa me adee bi se minura so nso mintia so. Enso meye, yee a, mintia so: - ene asaase.

b) My father left me something to be covered and asked me never to walk on it while doing so; but no matter how much I try, I cannot help walking on it: - It is the earth.

a) Agya wo nsrafoo bi a wshye ntaade koro ne ekye koro: - Mankyese.

b) My father left me some soldiers who are in the same uniform: - It is matches (match sticks)

a) Agya rekro omaa me adee bi se mintwa mu nso obae ye na mintumi ntwa mu: - nsuo.

My father left me something to cut into two but I haven't been able to do so: - It is a river.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho se one ne mfefoo nyinaa nam a, na enam kwankyen: - Poma.

My father left me something which walks by the roadside only when walking by other people: - It is a walking stick.

a) Agya maa me adee bi se mentena so obae no na mintumi ntenaa so :- nkasee.

b) My father left me something to sit on; but I haven't been able to sit on it :- Thorns.

a) Agya sofoo bi wo ho, ohye atade tumm bo kora fitaa - adenne.

b) My father knows a priest who puts on black suits always with a white collar :- It is the crow.

a) Agya totea no tam kesee :- panee.

b) A small man in a big napkin :- It is the needle.

a) Agya maa me aprosifoo pii a won belt baako.

b) My father gave me many soldiers using one belt :- a broom.

a) Agya rekro omaa me adee bi se menka ntawere bo obae na mintumi nyee :- bamma.

b) My father gave me something to turn it upside down against the wall but I cannot do it :- It is a platform.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho se eba foforo a na efura ntama nso se enyini a, na apa ntama no agu: ahwee

b) My father knows something which puts on cloth when it starts growing but goes about naked as it grows :- It is the sugar cane.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho se worebequare no a, gyeese wutu nensono ansa :- Sunnye.

My father has got something whose intestines are taken out whenever it is going to be bathed :- It is a pillow.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho eda nsuo mu daa uso empoto da.

My father has something which is never rotten, even though it is always in water: The tongue.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho, se ofidi kootia a, na naboggesse gu fie :- wusie.

b) My father knows a man whose beard is seen in the house when it reaches the farther end of the town :- The smoke.

a) Agya tades bi a ewo ho se ahaban te to mu a na ayini :- aniwaa.

My father knows a lake which becomes flooded when a leaf falls into it :- 'The eye.'

a) Agya adee bi wo ho se wode to nsuo mu a na eka borsofo :- toa.

b) My father has something which begins to speak English when it is put in water :- a bottle.

a) Agya adee bi wo ho se efi soro reba a fitaa nso se ehwe fam a na aye koo :- 'Kosua'

b) My father has something which looks white when coming down from the sky but as soon as it drops down, it becomes red :- 'It is an egg.'

Riddles of this type are often given by children of 9-12 years.

Apart from riddles, there are other things such as proverbs which also teach children the code of discipline expected of them. As done in other societies, there is great concern about the habits and manners of children. Certain form of behaviour are therefore expected of them. Courtesy and respect to adults are often enforced by a number of restrictions and precepts.

And through proverbs, children are taught traditional beliefs, good morals and knowledge about nature.

Here are a few examples which parents use for character training of their children.

1) A child cracks the shell of a snail and not that of the tortoise.

"Abofra bo nwa na omms akyekyerere".

This means that the child is expected to behave as a child and not as an elderly person.

2. "Se abofra hu ne nsa ho hohorow a one mpanyimfo. didi"

When a child learns to wash his hands, he is allowed to eat from the same dish as adults.

Children do not eat from the same dish as adults except they have reached the age of adolescence, nor are they expected to join in the conversation of adults unless they are definitely brought in. But a child who behaves well is often given the privilege to do so.

3. "Se abofra de mmusuo nkron ba fie a ofa mu nnum"

If the child brings nine evils into the house he takes five of them.

4. "Sekan tia gye ne ho abofra nsamu"

If a child insists on getting hold of a knife, allow him to do so for he will throw it away when it cuts him:- If a child does not obey his parents, leave him alone for he will bear the consequence.

5. "Esono kakra, nso adba ne panyin"

Even though the elephant is very huge yet the duker is the elder.

The children themselves collect proverbs and compete in speaking them. They say them alternately to see who wins by telling more than the rest. This is often done by boys (not girls) of the ages between thirteen and sixteen; and ten to thirteen.

The following are examples of proverbs collected from children at the age of ten to thirteen.

1. "Akoko hwelee se one amankani enya aka da".  
The bush fowl says it will never be on bad terms with the cocoyam.
2. "Esie ne kagya nni aseda".  
The fame of the hill depends on the mushroom.
3. "Akoko mmerantuwa na sralee nni no mu".  
A proud hen will never become fat.
4. "Ata ne ata ya aka nso wodi nnoboa".  
Though on bad terms, two twins help each other on their farms.
5. "Brofre a eye de na abaa da asee".  
There is always a stick under a good pawpaw tree.
6. "Koto rewea, ne ba rewea, na henci na zbegyegye ne yonko taataa".  
As mother crab and baby crab are both crawling who will help the other to walk?
7. "Okontomponi se one wo beforo dua, ma oni kan".  
If you and a hair wish to climb a tree let him go first.
8. "Abofra bone na obisa ne maame akoko nam".  
Only a bad child expects chicken soup from its mother.
9. "Se wope obi tiri atwa a, twa wo dee".  
If you want to harm anybody, harm yourself.
10. "Abube ne atebe fra a, ntskwa mpa da".  
Two philosophers never agree.
11. "Hu mani so ma me nti na atwe abien nam".  
Only a monkey can relieve a monkey's distress.

12. "Kwaye a agye woo no yemfre no kwaye wa"  
Do not despise the first forest where you first had your food stuff.
13. "Aserewa su agyenkuku su a, ne to pae"  
If a little bird talks like a big bird, it may burst itself with the sound of its own voice.
14. "Mtontom ne whane a yeyi ne sre mu namkum"  
Don't expect the impossible.
15. "Abofra te fufu a, ste nea ebeko nianum".  
Do not bite off more than you can chew.
16. Kuru nya ntem koka kyere esen se ne ho tumm.  
The kettle should not call the pot black.
17. "Se ekaa maa ne akyekyeree nko a, anka otuo rento wura mu da".  
A hunter does not need a gun to kill the snail and the tortoise.
18. "Dua koro gye mframa a ebu".  
Unity is strength.
19. "Dua bata boz twa ye twa na"  
It is difficult to cut down a tree which is standing beside a stone.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHILD AS AN INCIPIENT ADULT.

As it has been said already in the former chapters, child training in this locality is mainly through participation. The father is responsible for the son, the mother for the daughter. At about the age of four, a boy who moves with the other sex is nick-named 'Obaa ba' 'a woman's child' which really means he ought to move with men to be 'the child of man'.

From the age of four a boy accompanies his father to the bush. At times when the boy is very tired of walking for a fairly long distance, the father has to carry his child on his shoulders. In the bush the father teaches him how to look for the fresh foot prints of animals on their paths in order that traps may be set for them. At a later stage a boy who does not attend school receives a varied sort of education in the home and in the bush. The father teaches the child how to till the land for good crops. Early in the morning, he is taught how to sharpen his own cutlass; and at times those of the father. The father tests the sharp edges of the cutlasses to see if they are really sharp before they set off for the farm. If the cutlasses are not well sharpened the father sharpens them again while the boy stands by watching carefully.

The father and son sometimes set off for the farm early in the morning before they are followed by the wife and daughters. In the farm, the first thing the father asks the child to do is to gather some dry twigs to light a fire. In helping the child the father teaches him how to make a fire.

A child of less than seven years just sits



Going to the farm.



The farmer's son and the writer  
in the cocoa-farm.  
(The boy was watching a trap he had set on  
the previous day.)

by the fire and sees to the food on the fire while the father weeds some yards away from him. A child who is more than seven years is taught how to weed, so that on the farm he does not sit idle but works with the father. The child is taught how to fell trees by first examining carefully where they are likely to fall over when they are cut down. He is taught how to watch the direction of the wind before he sets fire to burn the land for new farms. The most busy time of a farmer's child is during the rainy season when early in the morning the child accompanies his father to transplant cocoa seedlings or to sow some seeds on the farm.

On the food farm, too, he is taught how to make yam mounds and how to put in yams, when helping the mother. He is taught how to distinguish one kind of yam from another.

During the cocoa season, he is taught how to pluck cocoa so that the bark of the tree is not injured.

Owing to the training that a father gives to his son, a boy of seventeen or even less may own a farm himself. At times too the father gives him a portion for himself; if the son has been very helpful the father sees to it that the son manages the farm well. He occasionally visits the child on his farm. It is during the time the father goes about in the forest that much education is given to the child. He is taught the names of trees. He teaches the child about those to be used for chewing sticks. A father may ask his child to go to the bush to cut a stick of "Afena" for cleaning his teeth. If by mistake the child cuts a different tree he is taught the name of the one he has cut; and he also describes vividly the 'afena' tree

to him. The child learns how to erect hut by helping the father. He is taught how to <sup>child</sup> make ropes from climbers in the bush. The father and son fence the village erect sheds on which cocoa beans are spread out to dry. The actual drying of the beans is taught. The child turns the beans over and over after every hour. He is taught to pick out flat beans from the other beans.

The child is taught how to give first aid with herbs. At times one of them is hurt by either a cutlass or a snake-bite. The child is taught the right type of leaves which can be used in stopping a considerable flow of blood and in preventing blood poisoning.

Through this and many other ways the child learns the useful leaves, roots and bark of trees from the father.

If the father is fortunate enough to shoot or trap an animal during hunting, the son helps in cutting the body of the animal into desired pieces. During this time, the names of different animals and their various parts are taught to the child. In other words, the child learns the anatomy of animals.

Similarly, mothers teach their daughters the names of the herbs whenever one of the children is ill. The daughter accompanies the mother to the bush to collect the leaves, roots, seeds or bark of the trees which may be required for the preparation of the medicine needed at that time for curing the child.

Another skill which girls learn from their mothers is the many ways of tying or doing the hair. It is not an unusual thing to see a mother sitting under the shade of a tree in the heat of the sun, and her daughter standing behind her and helping to dress the hair. The mother teaches her how it is

done so that by the age of adolescence the child may be able to do hers perfectly by herself. A girl who does not want to take the mother's orders and advice is sometimes warned with these words "Daakye na wabehu na wo kunu beye wo" Literally they mean "in future you will have to suffer from your husband because lazy girls find marriage very difficult." The girl learns laundry from her mother by helping the mother in doing the family washing. She also helps in preparing meals and there-by learns the correct methods. The mother feels that the success of the child's future marriage depends upon her so that she teaches her all things pertaining to married life. On the farm she is taught how to take cocoyam from the soil properly so that the pointed edge of the cutlass does not damage the tubers. She is taught how to look for the better kinds of fire-wood which can burn well to make quick cooking possible. Before coming home from the farm in the evening, the child ties her firewood and puts some collected pepper wrapped in cocoyam leaves on it. She imitates her mother in all she does on the farm. Sometimes, she carries the cocoyam in a basket while the mother carries the bundle of fire wood. Just as a boy may own a farm at the age of seventeen, similarly, a girl of fourteen may as well own a farm in which she cultivates food crops. Sometimes she collects some of the products of her farm and sells them to buy her personal effects from the proceeds.

Almost every girl follows the trade, or knows something about the trade of her mother, in the same way as a boy follows in the foot steps of the father, it is common to see for instance, a pouter moulding pots and dishes while her daughter is also doing the same work as the mother. From time to time, the mother instructs

her how to go about it and sometimes helps her with the shaping of difficult parts while the daughter observes her. There are few people who know anything about the preparation of bread in this community. And their children learn from them.

A baker needs not teach her daughter how to make loaves of bread. She just picks up the art when lending a helping hand each time. A mother who prepares kenkey goes into the bush to collect the leaves with the daughter and does everything with her so that the child may know the process.

In customs too the child of either sex receives his education through participation in them. In the house when a libation is poured to the ancestors of the family, the boy of even five, rolls his cloth down to the waist and takes up the pot of palm wine, swings it here and there to make the yeast mix up and then pours it into the calabash. He then stands aside and listens attentively to the head of the family or to the one who pours the libation saying "Nana Asimasi, gye nsa nom, Ibenten Kwaku Yeboa, gye nsa nom. Munyina yen akiji ma nea yeye biara nsi yen yie." Literally, it means, grandfather Asiamasi take this and drink, Ibenten Kwaku Yeboa drink this and help us so that we may be successful in our work and also, destroy our enemies." The child hears these words whenever a libation is poured; so that at the age of fourteen or even less, he can repeat the same words.

In the stool house he accompanies the father and pours a libation to each of the past ancestors whose stools have been blackened in the room. After sometime, the child is able to name the stools of the ancestors. When there are visitors in the house and the house-hold

is exchanging greetings with them by shaking hands, the custom is that the hand-shaking is done from right to left. If a child makes a mistake and starts from the wrong direction, he is corrected at once.

Much of the child's education in customs is given during festivals like 'Akwasi-dai'. At about dawn of the day of the festival, youngmen whose relatives are drummers of the state go to the chief's house and start drumming and dancing till day-break. In this way, the young men pick up the skill of drumming. Early in the morning, the children wash the stools which are to be carried during the festival's procession to the chief's house and to the place where a libation is poured to the spirits of the departed chiefs.

In the procession some of the children carry pairs of sandals on their shoulders and others carry stools. Children of the ages ranging from four and upwards take part in the procession. Those who serve in the chief's house carry hides of animals like the tiger's whilst others carry fans. The rest of the children just run up and down the procession holding a kind of fan called "Mmena" and shouting "neba oo asase wuru, nam breoo". "He is coming, the lord of the land. He comes majestically" Others just enjoy themselves watching and imitating the adults who dance to the tune of the native drums. It is during festivals that the child is taught to serve the state and pay homage to the chief.

On occasions like this, the Apanh-hene, the queen mother and elders go to Mampong to celebrate the festival. This does not

happen every time, except that the paramount chief wants to observe it. Many adults accompany them to serve them there and they take along their children too.

While the boys help their fathers, the girls too do the same during the festival. There is a time when the women have to prepare mashed yam and sprinkle it on a spot or put it in bowls in the stool houses.

Sometimes a sheep is slaughtered and its blood is collected in a bowl and "Ekyim" is prepared from the blood and taken to the stool house.

The girls help a great deal in the preparation; and they are taught not to add pepper and salt to the food as ghosts are supposed not to take salt and pepper.

The climax of the festival is when the chief is seated and both young and old dance to the rhythm of the native drums. The children learn from the dancers on such occasions, how gestures are used to speak to either a partner in the dance, the chief or the whole gathering. Parents who attend this ceremony usually interpret the gestures made by the dancers to their children who either sit in front or stand near them. The actual dancing is later on imitated by the children.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of the day of the 'Akwasidae' festival, the chief sits in state in front of his house. It is at this time that the 'Nhenkwaa' (young attendants of the chief whose ages range from 6 years to 25 years) speak in proverbs in paying tribute to the chief. This part of the festival is very important and the 'Nhenkwaa' who perform this art with the state swords are trained in the correct way of holding the swords when speaking to the

chief.

The children learn a great deal about their state during festivals. They learn their duty to the adults and the chief and to the state at large. They learn the History of the state when pouring a libation. They hear of the names of the dead ancestors and the part they have played in the history of their village and their state. They learn the culture of the people during festivals.

Apart from festivals, there are some customs which are performed at different times of the year. The children take part and learn from them. For instance, when the death rate is increasing and illness and diseases are making the village an unhappy place to stay, the women in the town go into the bush and uproot a kind of plant called 'Nsomme'. They wave these plants in the air and sing through all the lanes and end at the main road which leads to the village. Here, they halt and sing the last song and leave the 'Nsomme' in the middle of the street. By running through the lanes of the town; waving the leaves, the women are supposed to sweep away the diseases that have been troubling the inhabitants of the village. Young girls of more than seven years take part and learn the songs and the actual performance by watching the adults.

Young girls are taught by the old ladies how to sing funeral dirges, about people in their family. They learn this from their mothers and relatives during funeral celebrations. Sometimes they learn this while working on the farm or at the river side doing the family washing. The words in the song are always about the dead person. The girl is taught her relationship with the dead and why she

has to use those particular words.

The following is an example

"Mother dear, I call for you

Turn back and look at your child.

Mother dear, your children are calling

you to turn back.

It is evening time.

And what will your children eat

Akyaa Adwoa, the good mother,

Remember to send your children some  
good gifts when you reach."

I "Your grandmother is Amoa Awisi,

The woman who had many children

But reared those of others as well

It is Amoa that hails from Hwere Akwasiasse

Awisi's grandchild hails from Aritibanso,

Where skulls are used in the Apirede dance."

Formerly, there was something like a  
children's club in this village which they called  
'Ahene-ahene'. The age of the children who took  
part in it ranged from six to fourteen. That  
is from the age of entering school to the  
age of leaving. This is how they did it.  
Every boy had a 'wife' within the club. They  
should be of the same age or the boy should  
be a little older than the girl. They would  
meet in the chief's house and with the consent  
and guidance of the chief and his elders  
also select their chief, the queen mother, the  
linguist and all the important elders that  
are needed in a village. The 'men' also  
married the 'women' in the same manner, going  
through the customs as it is done in the adult  
community. But the amount of money paid was

not the same. They only performed the marriage customs but very often nothing was paid. The mothers provided their daughters with small sizes of the cooking utensils; and swish stoves were built in the corners of the houses for the girls. Every 'man' and his 'wife' cultivated a small farm in the bushes near the houses, where they sowed all vegetables. From time to time, their mothers or elder sisters would visit the farm to see how the farm was getting on and to advise them. The 'women' did not cook food for their 'husbands' everyday; but always, a day was fixed when all the 'women' were asked by their 'chief' to cook for their husbands. Mothers prepared their daughters well for that 'cooking day' by supplying them with all the necessary ingredients for the preparation of the meal. All the dishes were carried to their chief who tasted to find out the most palatable meal. When there was a case between any 'woman' and her husband or anybody else, it was tried at court by the 'chief' and his elders using the same procedure and techniques, as the adults. During festivals, the children's community copied the adults' community in everything the adults did. They also had a gon-gon, drums and stools as the adults did.

These things no longer happen these days owing to school-going. Formerly that was how the children of Apaah used to learn their culture.

\* The words 'men' and 'women' and others in quotation marks refer to the children's community.

## CHAPTER IX PUBERTY AND ADOLESCENCE.

Between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, there are physical changes in children especially in girls, such as the enlargement of the breast and the growth of hair on the private parts and in the arm pits. The boys break their voices and have deep voices. They also have hair on their genital parts as well as their arm pits.

At this age, the children feel shy to expose themselves naked. As soon as any mother sees the physical changes in her daughter, she calls her and advises her privately to take care of herself, and not to misbehave in morals. This kind of advice is often given by the girl's grandmother; and we shall find why, they should feel so anxious about the girl's morals now.

She also tells the child to report to her as soon as she passes her first menstruation. In the olden days the girls obeyed such instructions and advice from their grandmothers but girls of today overlook them and pay no heed to their grandmothers. They keep their menstruation secret until the mother or any member of the family finds this out one day. The matter is kept secret between the parents and the grandmother until the time when the mother is ready for the ceremony attached to the coming of age. The girl's moral character is very strictly watched over from this time to the day on which the fact becomes no longer a secret - that is when the puberty ceremony is performed. To place the mother on the safe side, the queen mother is informed of the girl's menstruation as early as possible, before the girl's parents <sup>are</sup> ready for the ceremony. In order that, if the girl conceives before her ceremony is performed, she may not ~~be~~

be considered as 'Kyinbra' — "anti-puberty" and also, that she may be dealt with leniently.

The ceremony of puberty is very often performed during Christmas tide, when people have got money from their cocoa and cola harvest. It is sometimes performed hurriedly in the Easter tide when the girl's mother is not very sure of her daughter's morals. Otherwise the mothers allow about two years to elapse after the first announcement, so that the mother will have ample time to prepare properly for the ceremony by buying many eggs, fowls, food stuff, salt all kinds of meat, palm oil, a white native stool, gold tinkets and clothes including 'Kente'.

A sheep is sometimes bought when the parents can afford it. Of course, the quantity of these things mentioned above can vary according to the wealth of the child's mother and uncles.

The day for the ceremony which by all means should be a Thursday during the Christmas week is fixed. It is considered a bad luck to choose a Wednesday for the ceremony. Hence the popular saying that "Abofra a inte oni kasaa ne okyima Kuidapaa kuo," meaning that "only an obstinate child will have a Wednesday chosen for her coming of age ceremony".

Now, on the Wednesday prior to the ceremonial day, the mother informs the relatives, especially the women as many as related to the girl both maternally and paternally, as well as the women drummers. The friends of the girl are also informed. The girls at Apash have a term 'ebo' which means a friend or companion.

At dawn on that Thursday, the drummers sing songs while they dance and beat 'nonno'. (Some kind of drums often beaten by women under their armpits.) They continue singing

and dancing till morning about nine o'clock and disperse to their houses for their bath, their daily work and their breakfast; and come back to continue the drumming. While some are dancing then others are beating drums and the rest singing. Here are some examples of their songs:-

1. "Hini me o, obos hini me o,  
Hini me o, obos hini me o,  
Osiburekete a ste Bantama kootia hini me,  
Agya nana, hini me, sese na mere ba oo!"

Translation:

"Open the gate for me 'Obos';  
'Obos', open the gate for me,  
'Osiburekete' that sits at the farther  
end of Bantama,  
Open the gate, I beg, for I am now coming.

2. "Meso kenteen hunu na wohwehwe mu  
Ohia a, wunhun bi da  
Meso kenten hunu na wohwehwe mu

Translation:

"I am carrying an empty basket  
So please do not search me and tease me  
You must understand poverty;  
Don't search my empty basket"

3. Na meresre sre mo oo,  
Obi nni daama ni akyi ee  
Na mere sre sre mo oo,  
Awisia daama nni ba.

Translation:

"I pray you all not to mind this modern  
girl;  
I pray you all, she is a modern orphan"

4. Atadwe! nne mate de nne,  
 Atadwe nne mate de nne  
 "Today I have heard good news,  
 As sweet as the tiger nuts."

Most of these songs are sung about the girl. The first one means that, the gate must be opened for the girl who is going to enter the adults group. The second song is often sung when the girl comes from a poor home. That is why a line in that verse says that 'one must understand poverty'

The third song is also sung when the girl is an orphan. In most cases, the girl weeps as soon as that particular song is sung. It is purposely sung so that the girl may remember her mother on such an occasion when a mother is needed.

During the time when the women are going to get their house work done, the girl's friends fill all the drinking pots with water, sweep the house, reswirl the stoves and do all the house work in the girl's home. They continue to serve the girl in that manner for a whole week. Fowls are killed for meals and the young girls prepare the food under the supervision of their friend's mother. The food is shared amongst the girls and the drummers. The women go to stay their houses after beating the drums that day and pay visits to the girl occasionally; but the girls stay there for the whole week. A room in the girl's house is given to them and they stay in that room with their friend, eat together, sleep together, and keep her company, to make her happy.

Early in the morning on the ceremonial day, the girl sits on a white native stool in an open space, preferably near the street



The queen mother  
examines the girl  
to be sure she  
is not expecting a baby.  
Then the girl is carried  
to the stream.



Coming of age ceremony.  
(Note the amount of sheer butter  
smeared on the girl's breast.)  
The girl is between her friends.

where every passer-by may see her. The presents from her relatives and friends are displayed on a mat laid in front of her. If the girl has been engaged already by somebody, the gifts from her fiancé are displayed on another mat. The girl's hair is shaved off and she is smeared with shea-butter, which according to their belief, makes the girl fat and look fresh within the seven days she spends in-doors.

In the afternoon, after showing her to the queen mother, who verifies that the girl is a virgin, beautiful beads are put around the waist of the girl by an old lady, obviously the girl's own grand mother or grand aunt. She performs the most sacred part of the ceremony. The girl, with her shaved head covered with white cloth is carried on somebody's back to a small stream called "Mpaadaa". There she is presented to the stream by the old lady with the following words "Wo nna ni oo, nana Mpaada, enne na yeka nano. Yesse wo se yeka nano ama wakye, awo adre kuro yi" "Nana Mpaada, we are performing the ceremony for your sister, we pray thee to bestow thy blessing on her to live long and reproduce children to increase our population." Having finished the prayer, three eggs and three white colour nuts are thrown into the stream as sacrifice to the god. The girl then bathes in the stream and the sponge soap and towel she uses are also left behind. The girl is carried on somebody's back again to the house. Shea-butter is smeared on her again with plenty of it smeared on the breasts which are left uncovered to prove to public that she is a virgin.

Then follows the eating of 'eto' or marshed yam



The girl is ready to go round the village to thank well wishers.

(Note her dressing and the chewing stick, prepared for the purpose.)

and boiled eggs by the girl during which the old lady says something to the girl's soul again. This part of the ceremony is performed in a room with no other person apart from the two.

The old lady whispers this: "Kra adwoa, meka woano ne; menka se meka ama woawuru na mmom woakye" "The soul of Adwoa, this ceremony does not mean your death but to live long." Having said this, she touches the girl's lips with three eggs alternately and the last one is put into the girl's mouth wholly to be sucked till the whole egg is finished.

The egg is never to be chewed. It is believed that any girl who chews such an egg on that occasion makes herself sterile. After that many eggs are put on the mashed yam and many children of both sexes are invited to eat with the girl. As they are eating, they are asked to snatch up the eggs on the mashed yam they are eating and to run away with them. Then the girl with closed eyes tries to catch one of the children as they try to escape after snatching away with the eggs.

If she gets hold of a boy, then her first born will be a boy; and a girl, should she get hold of a girl. From this day for two weeks, the girl does nothing except to bathe and eat all kinds of delicious dishes that "ebonom" prepare. On the eighth day, the girl ends the ceremony by going round the whole village from house to house to thank all and sundry for their good wishes; especially those who presented her gifts. The girl dresses with one cloth under, tied round the waist and a covering one (as seen in the photograph at the opposite page.) a pair of sandals and a long chewing stick prepared for that purpose.

As they go from house to house, anyone who wishes to offer something does so.

This going out indicates to the young men that the girl is ready for marriage.

Much importance is attached to this ceremony and mothers think it a triumph and an honour. Any girl who becomes pregnant without the performance of this ceremony brings misfortunes and disgrace to herself and no less to her family. That is why mothers become very strict with their daughters as they approach the stage of puberty. A special ceremony is performed for the 'Kyirikra' - 'anti-puberty', that is a girl who does not have the puberty ceremony owing to pregnancy.

This is how the couple - the boy and the girl involved suffer a punishment. They are taken to the paramount chief at Mampong and with his consent and approval, as well as that of the queen mother and their elders, the couple are stripped almost naked; and rags and broken pots are tied on their backs. The girl's mother offers a sheep as a compensation to the silver stool of Mampong, for being unable to educate her child to have good morals. The sheep is slaughtered. Its blood is poured on the couple and two small chickens of about three weeks old are hung in the mouths of this (unfortunate but obstinate) couple by their beaks. A crowd gathers behind them with drumming and singing of a sorrowful song composed with sorrowful and disheartening words. Here is one of the songs for the celebration of 'anti-puberty'

" Yempe mo ha ee abusuefos ee,

Monks dee obi unhu mo, dee obi nte mo nka

Mo ne abusuefos ni nkra

Wa ni kae na woantie

Wo se kae na woantie,

Due, oo, due oo, damminifua  
 Yekae na woante o,  
 Woante a woko ante ade oo"

"We do not want you here blasphemers  
 Go to where nobody will see you  
 Go to where no one will hear of you  
 Say farewell to your parents and depart,  
 Your mother told you and you paid no heed  
 Woe! woe! unto you; have my sympathy;  
 You do not pay heed to your parents  
 And this is what should happen."

With such a song, they are paraded in the main street. They are never to turn and look back before they reach the outskirts of Mampong town. The reason why this ceremony is performed in Mampong, though the girl I was told about had come from Apsah, is due to the Historical facts that made Mampong the capital town. I was told that there was a case of 'Kyiribra' two years ago at Apsah and the couple involved were driven away. I was told that they took shelter in a certain cottage in somebody's farm till the girl gave birth to a baby which unfortunately did not survive either.

After the coming-of-age ceremony has been performed, the child is received into the adult community. And the gate for suitors is then opened. Though the mother wants her daughter to marry quickly to bear children, yet she sees to it that the girl does not get a bad reputation through bad company. The girl is expected now to get ready to enter the new group by working hard to obtain some money to buy her personal clothes and some utensils. She finds something to sell, a farm to



A adolescent girl  
(Note the way of dressing now.)

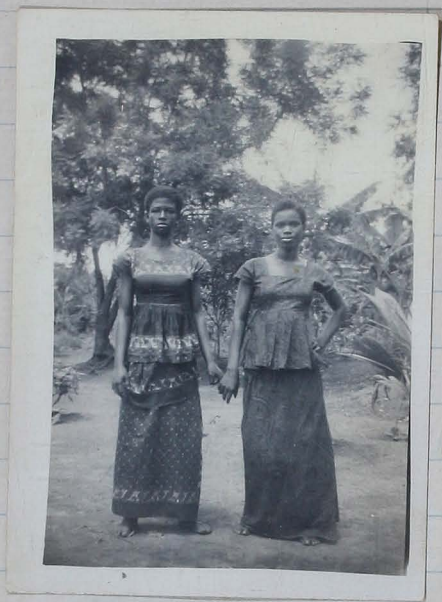
to make, and she becomes keen in the collection of cola nuts when it is in season; in order that she may get money. Part of the family land is cleared for her and she cultivates food-stuffs and vegetables under the supervision of her mother. She works in the farm with her frequently until she finishes the initial stages. The girl also helps the mother on her own farm too to learn how to care for farm in advanced stages.

Later, when the girl reaches the adolescent stage, she always wants to look very neat and beautiful to attract the opposite sex. Whenever she comes from the farm, at this stage, unlike the mother who starts cooking at once, an adolescent girl, will want to have her bath, comb the hair nicely and powder the face before any house work is started.

An adolescent girl does not want people, especially of the opposite sex to see her dirty. She takes particular interest in her personal tidiness at this stage, and much of her money is spent in buying luxuries as beads and rings as well as toilets. Before going on an errand or leaving the compound to go out, she looks at herself in the mirror to be sure she is looking nice.

It is a period of happiness, self interest and much fun to all especially the girls.

An adolescent girl has many girl friends with whom she moves about and discusses things and enjoys life. These friends learn a lot from their conversation with one another. They learn much about their physical changes, menstruation, pregnancy - its symptoms and changes it causes in the body, child-birth and nursing. They also learn the use of some herbs for common



At this stage, the girls would like to walk in pairs, and exchange ideas.

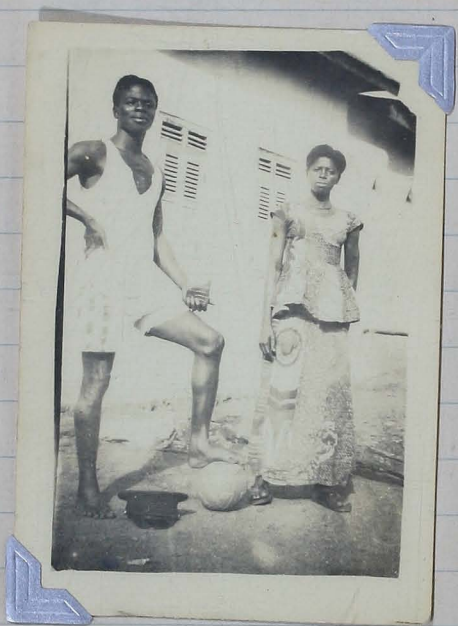


An adolescent girl in her neat clothes, is waiting for her boy-friend here.

treatment of common ailments. Another way of gaining knowledge for that matter, is by over-hearing the conversation of adults and observing their ways too. The women of this community have no secrets for they talk openly about their private matters in the presence of their children, either in the house or on the way to the river side, and even on the public latrines as well as on their way to the farms.

During all this time that their daughters accompany them, they listen attentively to their mother's conversation but they dare not ask questions about what interests or puzzles them. They keep the facts in their heads and discuss them later, when they get the opportunity to meet. That is one reason why the girls always want to move in groups at this stage. The best chances for them to talk about new ideas are when going down to the river side to fetch water and also on their way to the bush to fetch cola. There, they get a fine chance to exchange ideas and learn what the mothers do not teach them. At times, in the evenings, the adolescent girls collect themselves at a place just to converse; for at this time their curiosity centers around themselves. When they are about to meet an elder woman, they change the topic of the conversation at once.

There is often a complete change in the girls' conduct at the age of adolescence. They very often, want to have their own way; and so become obstinate, disobedient, disrespectful impatient and have less regard for their elders, including even their parents. They hate anyone who makes himself a handicap in their ways by trying to interfere with their way of dressing or by preventing them from going out with their friends.



A boy and his girl-friend.  
(This picture was personally given  
to me by the boy when  
I interviewed him)

They are easily annoyed and quarrelsome too; of course not all of them but most.

Most of them continue to be industrious and go about their daily house work. They tend to have some increasing love for the little ones in the homes. They bathe them, tidy them, give them the food they like best; and delight in going out with them wherever they go. But children who are able to speak and can tell their parents whatever they see or come across, are left behind; for fear that they may report all events innocently to their people when they come back home from their visit.

Such children are the antagonists of the adolescent girls whilst they are the favourites of the parents.

The girls have boy friends too to whom they give presents, mostly food; such as roasted groundnuts, kenkey, sugar cane and coconuts.

In the evenings the girls collect themselves and go to the street for 'ass' which is a kind of game for girls. All the songs they sing in their games at this stage are mostly about their boy friends. The following is an example:-

"Broo, bro, bro, Adu Brobe ee,  
Adu Brobe Anyansafo nim adee yse,  
Adu Brobe, bra, bra ma menka asem nkyerewo."

Translation:

"Come, come, come, Adu Brobe,  
Adu Brobe the wise, who knows how to work  
Adu Brobe, come and let me tell you something"  
(Look at the appendix for more examples)

They sing songs of this nature using the names of their boy friends to show their admiration. Of course, when then they are playing in public places, they use such names as 'Yaw Kofi, Kwaku' and others which are only common. As they sing and dance their boy friends also look on

and walk up and down the street. When there is moonlight, the girls and the boys go to bed very late when all adults have retired to bed. They continue the games till late in the evening.

As soon as the girls' hands are asked in marriage, their attitudes change. They forget about their former splendour. Those who can afford change their clothing to show that they are of age by adding a third cloth to cover them. They plait their hair also and put on headkerchiefs. Others also remain in their maiden clothes till they are married.

Before marriage the girl is given sex education by her mother and her grandmother. She is taught how to sleep with her husband; and when she goes to the bathroom, she is taught how to wash her genital parts with lime. Sometimes, the old lady gives her some medicine which she inserts to the womb after her bath. The girl is prepared in such ways in order to fit her into the new group, namely, the adult community so that she may not disgrace herself and her clan.

The boys do not undergo pronounced physical changes as the girls when they reach the puberty stage (as I have already said), except their voices which become deeper and hair that grows on their genital parts. There is no ceremony for the boys, who also become keen on the neatness of their clothes. Like the girls of their age, they pay attention to the opposite sex. They will not expose themselves naked in their presence, neither will they submit to insults or any other form of disgrace in the presence of the girls.

The boys also own farms of considerable size

given them by their fathers or uncles in order to get money and save it for the future.

Apart from farming they do some odd jobs like basket weaving, making of palm wine, farm weeding, carving mortars and pestles and setting traps to catch some game to sell. Those who attend school find time to attend to their farms during the holidays and on week ends.

Comparatively, the boys behave better at this stage and are not as rude and quarrelsome as the girls are.

The boys also move in groups and discuss with each other matters of their own interest.

They learn new ideas from the conversation of the older boys too. From the experience of the older boys, the younger ones sometimes become very restless and want to try out what they hear from others. The flow of the first semen is the most wonderful event to them and it has puzzled many an ignorant boy. They make friends with the girls, too, but secretly.

Sometimes, two pairs become very close friends so that if one of the boys wants to send a message to his girl friend he gives it through his girl's own girl friend. And it goes the other way round too with the girls. In the evenings they go to call their girl friends by standing behind the girls' houses to whistle a tune, which is known to the girls. Some throw a pebble or make other signs known to the girls. Others too have a rendezvous where they meet at scheduled times. Girls who still have some domestic duties to perform when it is time to go and meet their boy friends become very annoyed with the work and put on frowns. Careful and observant parents detect their daughters easily by the haphazard way in which they

finish off their work.

In the evenings, the boys are found making love with their girl friends at the corners of lanes.

The boys rarely give presents in the form of money to the girls. The boys are not as strictly supervised as the girls are. Most of them do not sleep in their own homes but they sleep with their boy friends who have rooms to themselves. I over heard a dialogue which went on between two adolescent girls one day, during a visit I paid to an old lady who was ill.

I sat very quiet in the corner of the room and the two young girls did not know there was anybody in there. One of the girls called Afua Manu was in the yard cooking whilst the other Durowaa came in from outside.

"Ah, Durowaa, where have you been all the time, 'Nana' has been asking of you?" Asked Afua.

"Ha! but should I not go out?" Asked Durowaa who also continued, "I know why she wants me. She told me yesterday to wash her cloth for her but I am now going to do it. I have some clothes to wash for myself"

Afua: "But why have you not done it since morning; do you think the sun is waiting for you?"

Durowaa: "Don't you see my hair is beautiful now?"

Afua: "Who did it? It is well cut indeed."

Durowaa: "That is very good; 'He' did it for me."

Afua: "Who is that 'He' so can't you mention Kwaku's name now, Durowaa?"

Durowaa: "But you know it. Why then do want me to call out his name again?"

Afua: "And so for this long time that you have been out, you were having just your hair cut only?"

(Just at this juncture, I came out of the old ladies room to the yard and they stopped

talking at once. From their looks, I could see that they were very surprised to find me there, knowing the kind of conversation that had gone on.

I have tried as far as possible to give a translation of their conversation. I asked them why they had not gone to the farm that day and I was told that their grandmother was not well so they had to stay and look after her.

The accounts given above show how much the girls delight in the company of their boy friends and how the boys too are proud of their girl friends. Sometimes, some of the friendships continue and develop into marriage.

## CONCLUSION.

In these few chapters, I have managed to put all the required materials together to show how the children are trained in the village of Apaah.

Anybody having the influence of Western training will find a lot of criticisms; but on the contrary, I tried not to be too critical.

The contents have shown the position of the child in this village and the great need of the inhabitants to reproduce children even though they are not able to maintain them. Their desire is emphasised in the performance of certain ceremonies. To mention a few, like that of the coming-of-age ceremony, when the child, is asked to eat some eggs in a particular way in order that she may be fruitful; and, also during festivals, in the pouring of a libation when the dead are called to help the living to reproduce many children.

Some of the customs like the 'anti-puberty' (Kyimbira) ceremony, though very drastic, yet have a very good effect in the way they safe guard the girls from immorality. Unlike most of the girls from the urban areas, the adolescent girls at Apaah may be virgins up to the time they are married.

The way the children are taught to be hard working and to be independent, is good but should not be too severe as this tends to make them less mindful of the needs of the adult community.

Throughout childhood, they receive some training which later on makes them superstitious and endows them with fantastic beliefs in witch-craft, dwarfs and other super-natural-beings.

Hence, a few of the expectant mothers who visit the clinics for treatment are still not

sure of their lives as well as of those of their babies unless they are vaccinated with some black powder from the native doctor. And a sick child is also vaccinated because according to their common saying "biribiara nye kwa da" "Nothing happens by chance". To them, it is difficult to understand why out of a group of children one child only should suffer a particular disease or accident at a particular time and place.

As it obtains in other societies, there is some concern about the habits and manners of children in this community. Rules of conduct are therefore enforced through story telling, proverbs, beliefs and precepts.

Discipline is also ensured through threats, reproaches, punishments, rewards and restrictions. And new skills and knowledge are gained through observation, imitation and participation.

The mothers' attitude to their daughters in particular, in the way of "little children must be seen and not heard" is doing them more harm than good; because the children are brought up in ignorance. They are given no formal education; and satisfactory explanations about things that perplex them in nature are denied them. Some of the social aspects of the children's community, like the "Ahen-ahene" children's club' which existed some years ago, was the best form of 'school' (if I should call it so) that a village could have. The children learnt everything directly from the adults group. They learnt customs about chieftancy, marriage, festivals and domestic life too. They learnt to manage themselves in their group by establishing their own laws and trying their own cases. There existed a very cordial relationship among

them which extended to their parents too.

There could not be any better form of school than the 'children's club' which is the only means of fitting them perfectly into their places as adults of their own community.

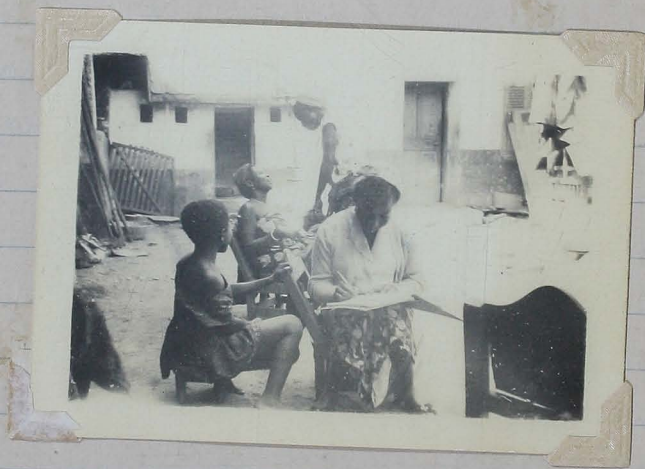
According to my informants, it was stopped as a result of the introduction of religion and formal education in the village by the Basel Missionaries. Now, parents are not encouraged to send their children to school because the few of them who go through Middle schools, do not succeed in gaining employment and they also fail to fit in with the farming activity of their community.

The way the girls marry early and work hard afterwards to maintain the family is not good, because shortly after their marriage one finds them looking worn out and older than their husbands.

On the whole, the relationships of the people of this community are very cordial, judging by the way they sincerely share their sorrows and happiness with one another.

They are always ready to receive new ideas and knowledge. Through the propaganda and leadership of Mass Education officers, the village is now under new construction and the sanitation has been improved.

It has been necessary to mention some of the customs and activities of the adult community because, the child of Apach today, is expected, and therefore taught, to do the same as the adults when he takes the place in future.



Akyere is telling her favourite  
story to the writer.

## APPENDIX I

### STORIES AND FACTUAL REPORTS.

The favourite story of a child called Ama Kyere aged  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years.

The girl was familiar with me because I was visiting her mother frequently for information.

I always called her my little sister because I told her she resembled a sister of mine. For that reason she was free with me. The writer is seen writing and the girl sitting beside her in a photograph opposite this page. It was taken as the girl was telling me her story. When I entered the house the mother had then returned from the bush for the first time and was returning for the second trip for the collection of cola.

Interviewer: "Agoo!" (as I entered and saw the children in the 'pato') Good afternoon my sister where is your mother?"

The mother over-heard it from where she was storing her cola and answered in a loud voice "Awura, I am here"

Interviewer: You are welcome. How is your bu

Informant: Well, not very bad. Today I collected quite a lot of cola because I went rather early. I presume you have come to see me?"

Interviewer: Oh, well, I just want my little sister to chat with her. Where is she?"

(she peeped from behind a pillar where she was, and I called her and asked her to sit by me.)

Interviewer: (to the small girl) Now, tell me, because I have been calling you 'my sister' all the while I have forgotten your name. What is your name?"

The child: I am Ama Kyere.

(I wrote it down.)

Ama: Are you writing my name?

Interviewer: 'Yes, it is because you are very good and I like you so much, I do not want to forget it again'

Ama: And what about you? What is your name?

Interviewer: I am also called Ama.

Ama: Oh, this is untrue. I know you are called 'Auntie'

Interviewer: All right, you can call me by that too. But, you know, I want you to give me one of your best stories. I have heard that you have so many good stories.

Ama: Who told you?

Interviewer: I heard it from somebody.

Ama: Do you want one with a song in it?

Interviewer: Oh, yes.

Ama: Oh, look Auntie, (as she saw another child coming) that girl has many stories.

Interviewer: Yes, I know. But finish yours too.

(She started in the popular manner beginning)

'Yense-se-nse-se' There was a bird which went and stood on a stick of sugar cane and one of the leaves cut it. From there, the bird flew to a pepper plant and it got the pepper in its wound so it began to cry like this:

'Kye kye Kofi ne Ama

Kye kye mmako ko me kuru mu.

Kye kye, Kofi ne Ama,

Kye kye mmako ko me kuru mu."

'Kye kye' is the imitation of sound or cry made by the bird. The song literally means

'Kye kye' Kofi and Ama,

I have got pepper in my wound.

Ama: I have finished

Interviewer: Very good, well done. Tomorrow, I shall come for another one. Good bye.

A story about a bad boy by Osei Kwame  
aged 8.

Interviewer: Osei, why were you crying yesterday evening?

Osei: Yaa Maaboa beat me.

Interviewer: Why? What was the reason?

Osei: She said because I misused her pomade. But all the children used it. It was not I alone.

Interviewer: Then, perhaps you have not been good to her that is why she beat you alone and left the rest free? "All right, I continued tomorrow where will you go?"

Osei: "I shall go to the farm"

Interviewer: So it means I shall not see you tomorrow. Well, I thought I could get you at home to tell me one of your stories. You are the one who was telling stories yesterday evening weren't you? I have heard you have many stories."

Osei: I am not doing anything now. Let me tell you one.

Interviewer: Do you know which I like best? Tell me about a bad boy who did something bad.

He stood quiet for sometime and sat down and said "Ah, yes, I have remembered one, may I tell you?"

Interviewer: "Yes, do, please."

He started "There lived a hunter and his boy. The hunter kept all the heads of animals that he had killed in a small room. He had those of the antelope, monkeys, bush-cow, the elephant, tiger, leopard, wolf and many others.

Formerly, the boy always accompanied his father to the bush; but as soon as he joined some bad boys' company, he refused to accompany his father as usual. Whenever, his father was leaving him

for the bush, his final instructions given to the boy was "Do not open the door of the small room." The naughty boy wondered and started to think seriously about his father's word.

One day, he collected his friends and told them about it so they decided to open that store to find out if any treasure was hidden there. As soon as they forced the door open, all the heads of the animals there-in, jumped on the children and ate them because they did not know that they had to repeat certain words before opening it. The father returned home only to find the bones of his boy and of others in front of the store"

Interviewer: Well done, Osei, I shall give you a penny tomorrow. You have given me an interesting story.

Osei: Do you want another one? There is a song in that one.

Interviewer: Oh, this is all right, Osei. Thank you.

A story about a good girl. by Ama Baner  
aged about 10 years.

This girl was amongst many children who had gathered around the fire to tell stories, in the house where I lodged to conduct the investigation. I joined their company, and after listening to some of their interesting stories asked them if any one of them could tell me a story about a very good girl. After some giggling, one of them started the following story.

"There lived a certain good girl with her mother in a lonely cottage. The mother was very poor so she worked very hard. The girl always helped her.

One day, they went to the farm and on their

way back home, the mother realised that she had left one of their cutlasses behind so she asked the child to go back and fetch it.

On her arrival to the farm, she could not find the cutlass so she was going to return without it, when a certain bird told her to ask the palm tree for it. She did. And the palm tree also asked her to go to the oak tree for it; and the oak tree also asked her to ask the wind for it; and the wind in turn asked her to go to God's servants who also sent the child to God himself for her mother's cutlass.

God ordered his servant to bring all the cutlasses. Many beautiful and sharp cutlasses including the child's own blunt and nasty cutlass were shown to the small girl, and she chose her own nasty cutlass out of the better ones.

God asked her whether she would dine with him or with the servants and she begged to be allowed to dine with the servants.

After dinner many big boxes full of clothes were brought before the child and she was asked to take any of the clothes she liked and she chose a very small piece of cloth among the lot of good rich clothes.

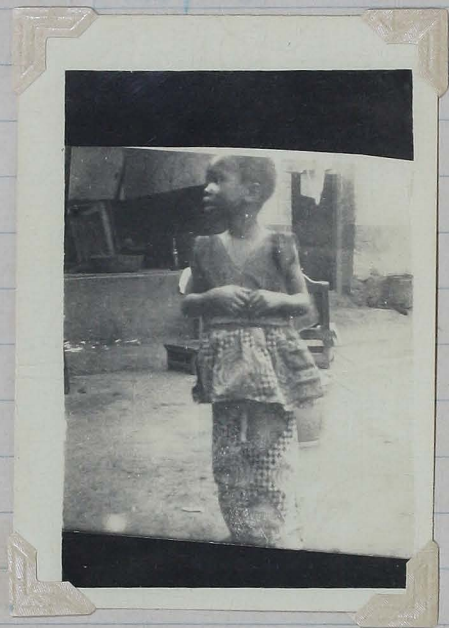
Then God said it was time she left; but she should go to swim in a clear glistening river but the girl chose to swim in the servants' dirty small meandering brook and swallowed plenty of the dirty water. She was then allowed to return home to her mother.

The mother who was very happy to see her only child again, gave her some food to eat, after listening anxiously to all her adventures. As the child was talking she coughed and vomited all the dirty water which had then turned to gold.

out. The mother in her puzzled state of mind collected the gold into a <sup>big</sup> pot and the girl continued vomiting it out, until all the utensils in their home were filled with gold; and from that day onwards, the good girl and her mother never tasted poverty."

Interviewer: Very good, Baner, this is the best of all the stories I have heard. Remind me tomorrow to give you a penny.

(To all the children) All right, good night children.



Akosua Asantewa  
(Taken after I have asked  
her to put on her cloth)

## A CHILD'S SELF-DESCRIPTION.

BY AKOSUA ASANTEWA - 6½ YEARS OLD.

Interviewer: Hello, my friend, how do you do?

(as I met her at the main entrance of the house)

Akosua: (No answer)

Interviewer: Where are you going now. And why are you naked? Let us go for your cloth.

Akosua: I am not going to any place.

Interviewer: Well, I have come to converse with you so let us go into the house. Do you go to school?

Akosua: Yes.

Interviewer: Very good. When did you?

Akosua: Yesterday

Interviewer: Oh! just yesterday.

Here another girl interrupted "She is telling lies. She is in class one now and she is going to be in class two when the school re-opens."

Interviewer: (To Akosua) All right, how many sisters and brothers have you?

Akosua: I have five of them. I have two brothers and three sisters.

Interviewer: Are you all attending school?

Akosua: NO! As for Kwabena and Afua my mother says they are too young to go to school.

Interviewer: Where is your father?

Akosua: My father lives at Agona

(Agona is another village which is four miles from Apaah)

Interviewer: Is Agona far from here?

Akosua: Oh! no! Even Kwabena can walk the distance to there. We go there every Sunday.

Interviewer: Do you walk?

Akosua: Oh, no, but one one day we were walking and after a while joined a lorry which was going there.

Interviewer: What work does your father do there?

Akosua: My father has a store there.

Interviewer: Why don't you go to school at Agona? Don't you like the place?

Akosua: NO, my mother says I should attend school here. But when will you go to your town?

Interviewer: Do you know where I come from?

Akosua: Yes, you either come from Kumasi or Accra.

Interviewer: Supposing I came from Accra would you like to go there with me? You won't see your mother nor your sisters and brothers any more.

Akosua: Yes! will you give me a doll and some beautiful clothes?

Interviewer: Well, if you will promise to go to school and study hard.

Akosua: Oh, but I go to school everyday. You can ask my mother about it.

(At this juncture another girl jumped into the conversation and shouted "You lie! You do not go to school everyday" So Akosua was very much annoyed and stopped the conversation after arguing with the other child. I coaxed her and tried to bring her back to the conversation but she would not.)

## A child's life story.

I was sitting on a platform in a house and a child came in carrying a pan with 'fufu' for one of her aunts. She was stealing glances at me and smiling as she approached.

I called her, after she had placed the pan by the fire.

Interviewer: Hullo, friend! Come this way. I like your beautiful beads. Who gave them to you?

The child: My mother.

Interviewer: Oh lovely. What is your name?

The child: My name is Yaa Nehia

Interviewer: Well, I want you to become my friend. Will you tell me something about yourself? Where do you stay?

Yaa: I live at the Mission.

Interviewer: With whom?

Yaa: With my mother.

Interviewer: To whom did you bring the food? Do you bring food here everyday?

Yaa: Yes, I bring food here everyday, to my aunt.

Interviewer: Do you go to school?

Yaa: No!

Interviewer: Why? Don't you like it?

Yaa: I like but my mother says I should stay at home in order to help her in her pottery work.

Interviewer: And what about your father?

Yaa: My father has died a long time ago.

Interviewer: Very sorry. And who is your uncle? Can't he help you?

Yaa: My uncle's name is Opanying Bekyere. But he says we are many and therefore he can not send all of us to school, so I should stay at home and help my mother in her work.

Interviewer: Can you make a complete pot by yourself.

Yaa: Yes, but when I have finished my mother too straightens the neck for me

Interviewer: How old are you?

Yaa: Please, I don't know.

Interviewer: All right, when you get home ask your mother about it and come and tell me tomorrow. (Here her aunt came into the conversation and was trying to guess how old the girl would be.)

Interviewer: Have you taken your meals already?

Yaa: No, I am now going to do so.

Interviewer: Oh, I am sorry then. Your mother, I think, will be wondering why you have been so long. Hurry up then. When you are free come and see me.

Yaa: All right, (And she shouted good night to her aunt and went away.)

## CHILDREN'S WISHES.

All the children in the house in which I stayed were called together. I told them that I was leaving to go where I had come from so each of them must tell me what he or she wished for so that I might bring back their wishes to them on my next visit.

Afua Penne aged 8 years wished for money (£1) cloth and corned beef.

Abena Agyeiwah aged  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years wished for rice, cloth and shoes.

Margaret Kusi aged 3 years - wished to have a dress (like the kind I was wearing) and money (1<sup>d</sup>).

Kwaku Mensah aged  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years wished for a car, a ball and some doughnuts.

In each case whenever the child asked for money I asked him or her to tell the amount. I also asked them to ask just one thing but it seems they could not help asking for more than one. Nevertheless, I have written the wishes in the right order in which they were asked.

## Childrens common ailments, at Apaah.

There are some ailments which are common to a particular age group of children.

The underlying causes being the food they eat and various places <sup>where</sup> they choose to play at different stages.

For instance, the children who are learning how to crawl and those at the manipulation stage often suffer from worms; owing to constant playing and sitting in the sand with their naked bodies which enables eggs of worms to gain admission to the body where they hatch.

At another stage, the children often get fever or pneumonia because they remain very long in the sun and play in water.

However, stomach disorders are the common trouble with the children in this locality, owing to malnutrition and carelessness on the part of the mothers about feeding their babies.

Most of the babies continue to feed at the breast for a long time, even when the mothers are expecting babies. Furthermore, they are fed at any time and they are introduced to solid foods rather too early.

The infants and the children are always fed with the same type of food, namely 'fufu' for almost all their lives without much variation. The children prepare their own food when they are left at home.

I have already explained in one of the chapters that these ailments are cured by such things as herbs, bark, seeds, roots and some parts of animals or insects. Often childrens illnesses are associated with 'evil eyes' 'wicked spirits' and witchcraft.

The western patent drugs are rarely used in this community. A child's head cold, for instance is cured with the green chlorophyll of certain

herbs mixed with ground onions and head of the house fly. This causes the child to sneeze to get out the stuffy matter from the head.

### Ailments common to certain age groups.

Babies from birth to four years old suffer from:-  
Head and chest colds, convulsions, diarrhoea, constipation, fever, measles, sore-mouth, inflamed-eyes.

Children from the age of five to eight years suffer from :- stomach disorders, boils, measles, mumps, fever, worms, sore tongue and gums, inflamed eyes and coughs.

Children from the age of nine to twelve years often suffer headaches, fevers, constipation, diarrhoea, pneumonia, coughs, worms, measles and inflamed eyes.

## More examples of beliefs in the locality.

1. Do not cut your finger nails at night, or you will die at an early age.
2. Do not pretend to pound fufu in the mortar when there is nothing in it or else your mother's breast gets swollen.
3. The more you kill spiders the more you break your father's plates.
4. If you leave the pestle in the mortar without cleaning it after beating 'fufu' with it, you will develop a stiff back.
4. Do not tell stories during the day; otherwise you will develop elephantiasis.
5. If you sing or talk at meals, your father will die.
6. Cover the navel while the corpse is being taken to the cemetery; else your navel will decay.
7. If you catch flies, you will suffer from a stomach ache.
8. If you are kind enough to share a delicious meal with a friend, you <sup>will</sup> become rich in future.
9. If you collect the rubbish with your hands after sweeping, you will always remain poor.

If you lean on one of your arms on the ground while eating, 'mother earth' will receive all your morsels and you will never get satisfaction from your food.

These are examples of beliefs which have influence on the child's training, in this locality.

The mother instead of educating her child to put on clothes and not to walk about naked, especially when many people have gathered, such as at funerals, tells the child that the corpse, seeing the navel will cause him harm.

Instead of explaining to the child the need to clean mortars and pestles after using them, the mother rather frightens him that he will suffer from a stiff back if he is lazy about cleaning the cooking utensils.

During the <sup>day</sup> children waste time by telling stories when, perhaps, they are expected to do some house work. They are therefore prevented from doing so by being made to believe that they will develop elephantiasis, if they continue story-telling during the day. And, of course, no child would like to suffer from such a dreadful disease.

This is how the beliefs of the people in this locality influence the child's training. The child therefore grows to be a victim of fear and superstition.



## More examples of songs of the adolescent girls.

### Vernacular (Twi)

### English

ɔɔ beba na maye ketekete"  
 ɔɔ beba na maye ketekete  
 ɔɔ yewu e, se woamma  
 merewu oo, ɔɔ ee,  
 ɔɔ beba na maye ketekete.

"My lover will come  
 and find me lean  
 I shall die if he keeps long  
 My lover will come and  
 find me lean".

2. Meks kogya ɔɔ kwan buo,  
 Lore no atu a, nisuo aguare  
 me,  
 Nisuo, aworo me ee,  
 Lore no atu a,  
 Nisuo aguare me."

(2)

"I went to see my lover off.  
 Alas! tears ran down  
 my cheeks as the  
 lorry moved on".

3. Ei Abayewa, Ei, abayewa  
 Na meretete wo  
 Na meretete wo  
 Odum si ho na  
 Sanku hama sa ho  
 Na meretete wo  
 Adaa mess wo mu oo,  
 Woara wabehu, ei abayewa."

(3)

"You girl, I am keeping  
 an eye on your movements.  
 Why should a creeping  
 plant compare itself with  
 the oak tree?  
 Let me catch you and  
 I will feed fat the ancient  
 grudge I bear you".

4. "Akwagyaa nana ee,  
 Merenware nea ɔwo nɔwo,  
 Nea ɔwo ni beka ama  
 ne ba ee, ayee!"

(4)

"Poor me, I shall not  
 marry a man whose  
 mother is still living;  
 lest the mother becomes  
 my rival".

4  
 "Nti minko wu  
 Minni bregyeggefɔs ee  
 Bu oo, maye sapfunu ee  
 Nti menkɔwu."

(5)

"Should I die  
 because I am friendless?  
 Am I to be treated as  
 an old sponge, to be  
 used only in times of need?"

Apparently, the contents of the few examples of songs often sang by the adolescent girls, reveal the mood in which they are sang. Most of them are sang as a result of jealousy about their lovers; and others are sang in admiration of their boyfriends. The boys rarely sing songs in admiration of their lovers.

### More examples of cradle bed songs.

1. "Kofi stay at home  
Beat the drum  
That the fowls may dance.  
Drum, drum, drum  
That the fowls may dance."
2. "I have given birth to a beautiful baby.  
I have no leisure to play with it.  
Show your face; show the back of your head"
3. "Stop crying, there is a piece of yam  
in the fire for you.  
Stop, that we may get it ready for you.  
Stop, that we may get it ready for you!"
4. "Little child, come for a feed.  
If you divorce me,  
You cannot take away my child  
Little child come for a feed."

5 " Kofi , stop crying  
I will give you marshed yam if you  
stop crying.

Marshes yam is good for the digestion

What would you have?

Would you rather eat 'abefes'?

I do not like plain soup,

Not a bit!"

6. "Some one would like to have you  
for her child.

But you are my own  
Some one wished she had you to nurse  
you on a good mat

She would put you on a camel blanket  
But I have you to rear you on a torn mat."

7 "Who took away my child?

Is the one who took away my child

A woman or a man?

If a woman she would know  
what it means to deliver a baby  
Kwaky's child,

I am anxious and troubled"

Kwaky's child I am anxious and troubled."

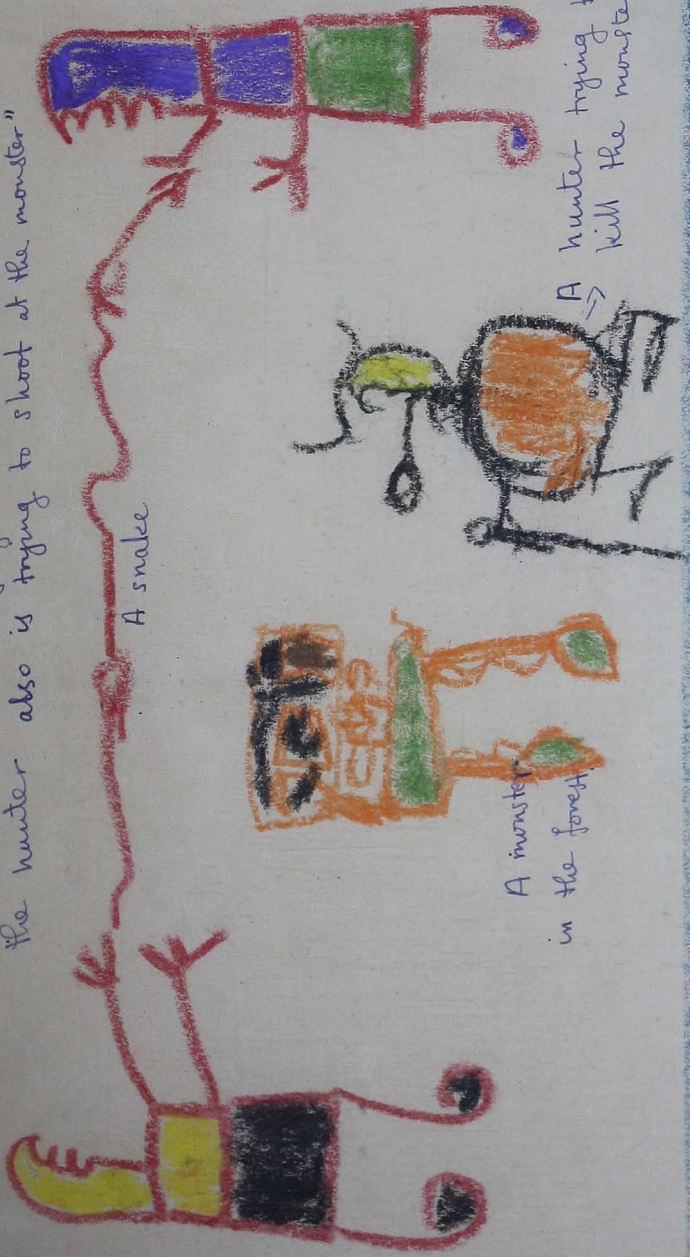
These songs are sung to the crying baby to keep it  
quiet. Sometimes a baby is carried on the back of  
a bigger sister, when the mother is busy with some  
domestic duty or on the farm too.

Or, at times the mother herself sings such songs  
to her baby during her leisure hours, while  
playing with the baby by throwing it in the  
air and catching it again to amuse the baby  
and herself. Some of the contents of the songs  
are indirectly speaking to a father who wants  
to divorce a wife, or to a barren rival, who is  
suspected of being jealous of her fruitful opponent.

Age: 7½ years old

A thing the child is afraid of.

Kofi Mannu is afraid of a snake and a monster.  
"The two men are trying to kill the snake while  
the hunter also is trying to shoot at the monster"



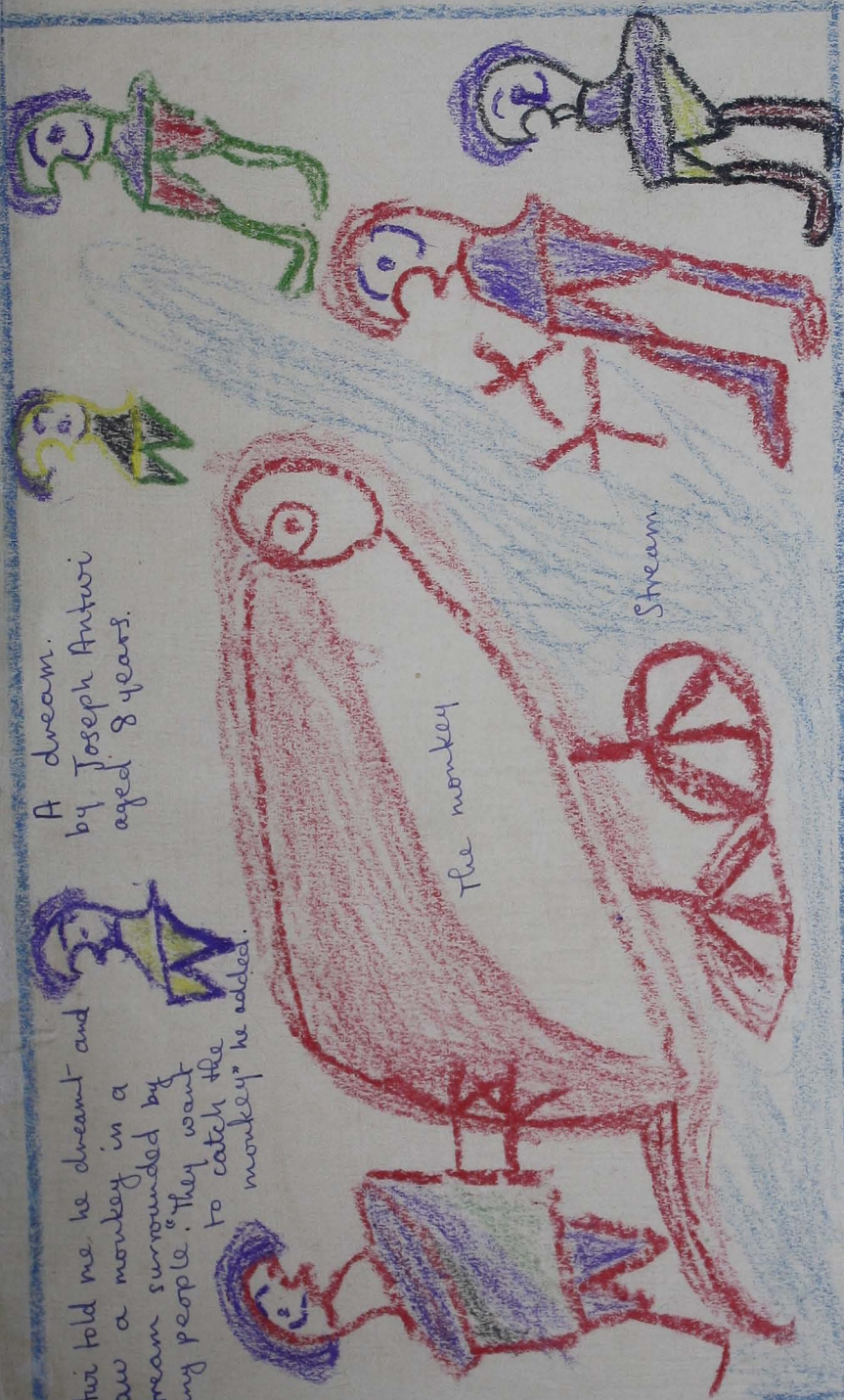
A snake

A monster  
in the forest

A hunter trying to  
kill the monster

Antwi told me he dreamt and saw a monkey in a stream surrounded by many people. They want to catch the monkey" he added.

A dream.  
by Joseph Antwi  
aged 8 years.

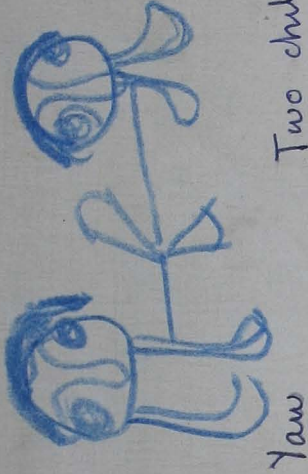


The monkey

Stream.

da b i me s d a k e b i

A fight.

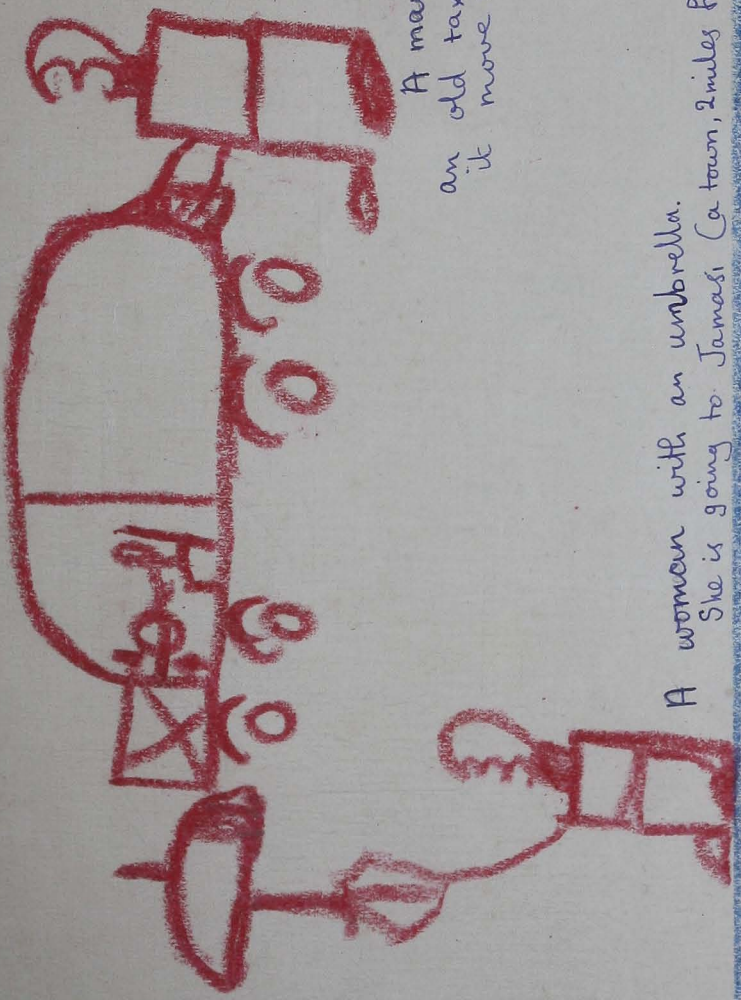


Two children are fighting over a meat.

Yaw wants to beat Kuma (the younger brother) for eating

his meat.  
By Adwaa Awura  
aged 6 years.

A man and a woman by a boy - Kwame Mensah aged 8 years.



A man pushing  
an old taxi to make  
it move on.

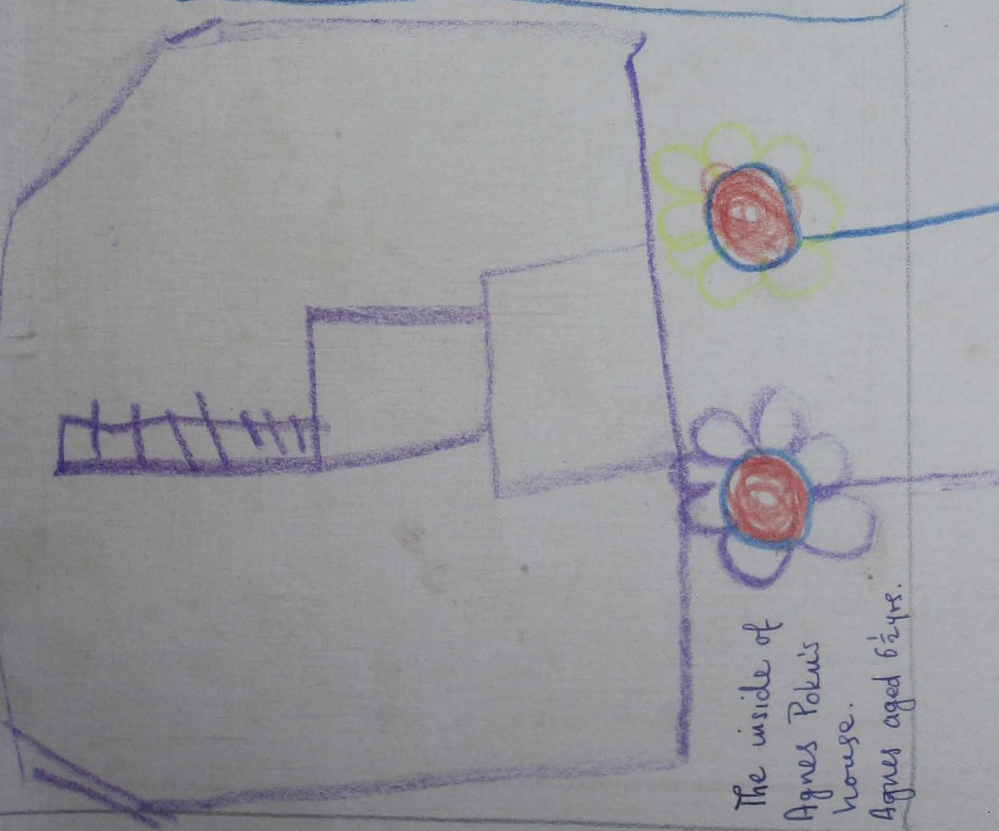
A woman with an umbrella.  
She is going to Tamasi (a town, 2 miles from Apeahy)

Free drawing. By Afua Nyamekye -  
a girl aged 6 years.



“ A room with a  
bed on which a  
baby is asleep.  
The mother is going  
to watch her baby.”

Handwritten Korean text in a box, likely a title or label for the drawing.



The inside of  
Agnes Poku's  
house.  
Agnes aged 6 1/2 yrs.