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P R E F A C E.

The material in this essay was the result of an investigation into "CHILD TRAINING AT BANKO".

This investigation was made during the months of December, 1954, and January, 1955. The investigator had lived at Banko from childhood and was familiar with the old men, old women, parents, native midwives, fetish priests, school teachers, children and adolescents - both in school and at home.

It was through several interviews and friendly conversations with these different classes of people, and from a few reminiscences and personal observation of children at home and in school that these facts were collected.

This is an objective description of the beliefs and thoughts underlying the practices, taboos and methods used in 'CHILD TRAINING AT BANKO'.

My thanks are due to my tutors, Mrs. M. Brook and Dr. F.H. Hilliard who helped me to arrange these facts into a coherent whole: but its imperfections are my sole responsibility.

J. E. OPOKU.

ACHIMOTA,
APRIL, 1955.

INTRODUCTION:

BANKO - THE PLACE OF THE RESEARCH:

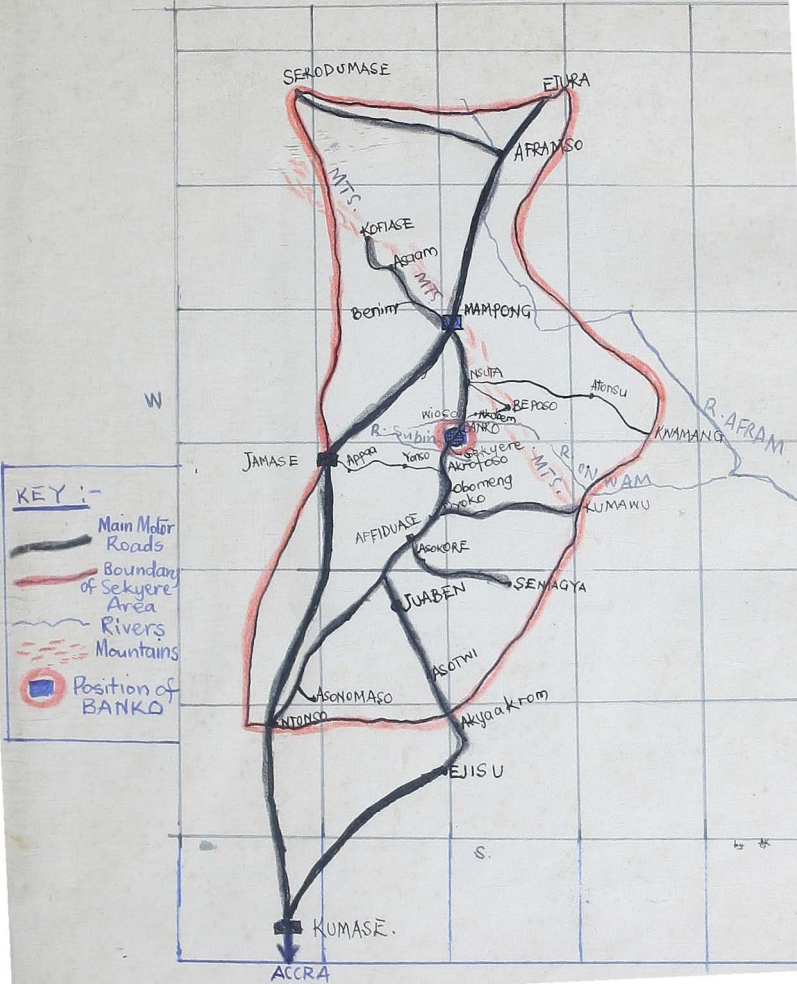
Geographical Aspects: Banko, the place of this research is a small village situated in a low-lying region of the Sekyere-Mampong area of Ashanti. This village lies between Nsuta Ashanti and Afiduse, either of which larger village is about 8 miles from Banko. The distance between Kumase and Banko is exactly 31-1/2 miles. For administrative purposes, the Sekyere/Mampong Local Council which has its offices at Sekyere, another small village, 1-1/4 miles away from Banko, holds the reins of government in this area. The other villages which are within the jurisdiction of the Sekyere Mampong Local Council are Sekyere, Ovoko and Dadiase. Of the 16 Councillors who form this local Council, 4 members are elected from Banko to represent the interests of the people of Banko. Two of these four Councillors are completely illiterate, the other two can read and write the vernacular and sign their names, but it is very doubtful whether they can read any simple English with the smallest facility. The Sekyere-Mampong Local Council has one representative councillor on the Sekyere-Mampong District Council which has its headquarters at Mampong Ashanti, the largest town in the area and also the seat of the Government Agent and other government departments and offices.

To the North and East of Banko, there are scarps which are part of the Koforidua-Kintampo Mountain Range which jots out very prominently and presents very interesting views to the visitor to Banko. Each of these rock-projecting mountains is held in great reverence and thought of as sacred and the abode of the different gods which the villagers worship. Of these mountain-gods, the more important ones are ATWEABOO, GYANSA-BOO, KRUI-BOO and OBO-NSAA. The word 'BO' means literally rock, and to the place-names, this word 'BO' is attached to indicate the place where a particular god resides. It is believed, however, that some of these rock-dwelling gods are males and females, so they marry and have smaller 'son' or 'daughter' gods. I was told by one fetish priest that at some time in the year, a male god may visit his wife, and so people may be told that the god is on a journey whenever they come to ask the oracle or to give sacrifices. Thus, ATWEABOO which is near KRUIBOO is supposed to be the wife of KRUIBOO which is regarded as female rock-god. Comparatively, Banko lies in the lowest place of all the villages in the Sekyere-Mampong area. The place is therefore very warm throughout the year. In the harmattan, the nights and the early mornings become very cold but after 10 a.m. the sun shines very brightly and makes the place unbearably warm. This season is regarded as very unfortunate, because of the dryness which affects the farms of the inhabitants: it sometimes happens that in this season, some farmers get their farms accidentally burnt as a result of the extreme dryness. The wet season is welcome as it helps the farmers to plant their crops upon which most of them live.








THE OLDEST TYPE OF BUILDING AT BANKO.

MAP OF SEKYERE-MAMPONG AREA.



KEY :-

-  Main Motor Roads
-  Boundary of Sekyere Area
-  Rivers
-  Mountains
-  Position of BANKO

As all the surrounding places are on a higher altitude than Banko, there are numerous brooks, streams and rivulets which flow near it. All the smaller brooks and streams empty their waters into the main River called ONWAM, which the people of Banko regard as a mother-river god. It is therefore called 'ONWAM Yaa BANKONI', which literally means ONWAM Yaa, a citizen of Banko. The word 'Yaa' is the name given to girls who are born on Thursday, and so 'ONWAM Yaa' is supposed to have been born on a Thursday. Being a mother-god, the ONWAM River is regarded to be too good as to allow people to drown in it. None of my informants could cite an instance of drowning in this river. In the dry season, women may go fishing in it with baskets and calabashes. The catch is usually made up of crabs and very small fish of the sardine type. Most of the men also use a special fish-trap for catching crabs in the river all the year round. The ONWAM River flows in a meandering fashion past most of the villages near Banko and continues to Kwamang and Kumawu where it joins the Afram River. There is another stream called SUBIN. This SUBIN should not be confused with the SUBIN at Kumase. This stream is said to be a male river, and dangerous too, because water fetched from this river on Tuesdays is thought to be able to scald one who drinks it. The villagers who are pagans do not fetch water here on Tuesdays for fear of being hurt by drinking such dangerous water. This river is a great terror for the pagans at Banko: six years ago, the Banko market place was about 220 yards from this river. When many people happened to die at this time, the ATWELBO priest told the then chief that the deaths were caused by the SUBIN river which saw the people at the market place and wondered why there should be so many people at Banko. For this reason, a new market place was found in the centre of the village and used, away from the view of the river SUBIN. There is a tradition that Banko has 77 streams or places where the inhabitants can draw water for drinking or washing: for this reason the inhabitants of Banko have never entertained the smallest anxiety in regard to water shortage.

The land is well watered on all sides, and on the banks of most of the streams there are marshy places full of mud. These marshy places contain very good quality sand which in recent years the inhabitants are beginning to use in building and plastering their houses.

On every side of the village, one can see nothing but trees, cocoa trees, forest trees and fruit trees. The forests have been cut and cocoa planted on the sites, but there are sufficient trees left standing on the cocoa farms, presenting views which reflect the one-time dense virgin forests before they were destroyed. A foreigner in a distance of say 200 yards - can hardly tell whether the 'bush' is real virgin forests or cultivated plots of cocoa and food crops. Few places are more than 40-50 yards from cocoa trees. Five years ago, when land was required for the building of a middle school for the village, somebody's farm had to be demolished before land was made available for the work.

Some places near the numerous streams are very damp so cocoa will not thrive well there: these places serve favourably for growing the vegetables which form part of the local diet. Banko, lying in the centre of what used to be a really thick rain-forest belt gets an annual rainfall of between 60-80 inches. Harmattan dry winds and the Easter wet winds are very strong at Banko. In 1954, over 15 houses had the roofs removed in a storm. At this time, the wind-god, Mframa - literally "wind" had to be appeased for the wrongs the people had done to him. The Chief sacrificed a sheep to propitiate him.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The royal family at Banko hail from the Kumase Akyempem Stool, whose owners they were prior to their settlement at Banko. The Omanhene of Nsuta Ashanti was the father of the Banko and so he gave his son the land to settle on. Because the Nsutahene and the Asantehene are near maternal relations, Bankohene used to be the occupant of the "Ahenemma GUA" ("the princes' stool") of the Asantehene in the earliest times. For this reason, the oath of the Bankohene is called Oheneba Kwasiada" - (The Sunday oath of the prince of Ashanti) This oath was made in remembrance of a calamity which befell an earlier occupant of the 'Ahenemma GUA', one Sunday. This story is not broached to people at all, but an old man and a grandfather of mine told me that that prince lost his way in the bush and no one knew later the manner of death that took him away. The first prince who came from Kumase to stay on the land given him by his father, the Nsutahene settled at the mouth of a small stream, called Banko, and this gave the village its present name. This first site was exactly one mile from the nearest village, Sekyere. At the time of the Yaa Asantewaa war of 1900, the Sekyere-Wampong area people fought against the Ashantis, so they removed far to the north and stayed at Atebubu. The prince of Ashanti curiously enough was on the side of his father's enemies so the Banko people too left for Atebubu. When peace was restored later, the Bankohene and his people returned south, but this time, they chose a new site, a quarter of a mile away from the former site, but they called the new village Banko still. They found this new site drier and wider than the first one - also the then foot path connecting Ejusu and Nsuta passed through this place. For having rebelled against the Golden Stool, the Bankohene was reduced from his post as the senior prince in Ashanti, so his half-brother from Akyempem, Kumase was put in his place. Since then, the Bankohene became subordinate to the Akyempem Stool, through whom he could make himself heard before the Asantehene. The Bankohene therefore cannot go straight to the Asantehene without passing through his Superior brother - chief, the Akyempemhene of Kumase.

THE INHABITANTS: Ethnically the inhabitants of Banko are mostly Ashantis or of Ashanti descent. According to the 1948 Census there were 1,050 inhabitants excluding children, who were below the age of 10 years. Of this total, no fewer than 600 adults are away all the year round working on their new sites of cocoa farms at Goaso, Mim, Tetem, Pakvi and other forest areas. At mile 49 on Kumase - Goaso road, a new village is growing up - called New Banko, the inhabitants of which are emigrants from Banko farming in that area. There are two Nigerian families, over 100 N.T. elements and no greater than 8-10 persons from the Colony Proper, one of whom is the Headteacher of the Middle School. There are two carpenters who are Ewes from the British Togoland.

OCCUPATIONS: As a rule, every Banko citizen does some farming of a sort. He may grow cocoa or food crops or both. It is the wealthy and larger families which can do this work, because it involves great expense and labour. This is part of the motive for polygamous marriages at Banko, because the wives become a labour asset to the man who grows cocoa. Every farmer grows enough food for his family, and sometimes has a little to spare for sale to strangers. The food crops grown are plantains, cocoyam, yam, pepper, garden eggs and other vegetables. Pawpaw, oranges, pear and guava tree, are also planted at random. The palm tree has an important place on the farms - being jealously reared and later tapped for its wine. Trades like smithing, tailoring, sewing, wood-sawing are off-farming season occupations. Some people are beginning to sell School books, drugs and petty-traders sell small European goods. Of the few people who left school recently, some are pupil-teachers, Local Council rates & levy collectors, and clerks working outside Banko. Of the growing number of N.T. elements, most are labourers on the political roads, labourers of the Local Council Sanitary Section and the rest work on farms for daily wages. The two Nigerians are petty traders and in the cocoa season, they buy cocoa. From December to late February, the women hunt for cola-nuts which sometimes fetch them a considerable income. There are no cocoa factors who buy the farmers' cocoa as middle men, besides the two Nigerians. But they are not usually given the best grade cocoa which in all cases, the farmers sell directly to the local Cocoa Purchasing Company or the Co-operative Society. Two years ago, Mr. K. Apan, a member of the Sekyere-Mampong Local Council, started a small pig farm on his own, another man, Kwaku Forkuo also has started a poultry farm near his house which is less than 20 feet from the nearest cocoa tree. The agriculture officer at the Mampong Experimental Farms is supervising these private projects. Sheep and goats are not permitted to be reared at Banko, but pets like dogs and cats are reared. Fowls - ducks, turkeys and cock are also reared as a hobby. Pottery and wood-carving used to be popular occupations, but now those doing them regard them as leisure time occupations. During the cocoa season, the making of cocoa mats and raffia cords give boys of the ages 8-12 some lucrative jobs as these things become very much in demand. Very lately, a native boy of 18 years has started 'doing people's hair with a black-liquid' for them, costing 3d, 6d or even a shilling, depending on how much of the "black-liquid" you buy. The same boy is a barber as well. The charge for cutting the hair is one shilling flat for all. A few of the women sell food to School children daily, and also some trade in fish and cured meat which they buy from Kumase, Nsuta & Mampong and retail.

SOCIAL LIFE AT BANKO: In every case, the people of Banko live in families embracing the relations of the mother's line. Thus in a house, we meet the mother, sons, daughters, uncles and sisters. The wives of the men live with their own maternal relatives. It happens therefore that the children of a marriage live the better part of their lives in their mother's house. They pay visits to the father daily and the father too returns their visits.

It is the strangers - the people of the colony, the N.T. elements and the Nigerians who stay together - wife, husband and children in one house or room.



THE MOST MODERN BUILDING AT BANKO.

The houses are planned out in barrack-fashion in straight lines with straight streets and lanes between them. The walls of the houses are nearly all made of swish, and later plastered with sand and cement. Some of the houses are still unplastered for lack of means. The roofs are all of iron sheets. Few rich farmers have begun to build new houses with cement block. The middle school building was also made of cement blocks. The compounds of houses are enclosed by the walls, with a main gate or entrance. Ventilation is therefore a big problem in the houses, - Some of whose windows are deliberately closed up with swish for fear of thieves at night. On the average, there are about 2 - 3 men in a house, 3 - 4 women and about 10 - 12 children in the same house, sleeping at night is therefore done in overcrowding. There is an old court house which used to house the now defunct Area Native Court. It was made of swish and roofed with shingles made by the late chief himself. The new chief and his people are trying to build a public house which some of the villagers call "a Community Centre", others "a hospital" and still others "a post office". This house is being built of landcrete blocks. The people are doing this project with help from the Department of Social Welfare. The citizens give their communal labour, and government is supplying them materials. It is very interesting to note that at present, the new chief has no house of his own, and the old palace is in ruins, so that the Stools of the chief are kept elsewhere with one of the elders of the town. Nevertheless, the people are contented, and state meetings are held in this dilapidated palace. There are two buildings which are great contrasts to the visitor to Banko - the new storey - house situated at one end of the town towards Kumase, and another Storey-house at the other end towards Mampong. The former reflects modernity in building, the latter antiquity.

The chief fault about the sanitation at Banko is that there is bush all round the town. There are two or three houses on whose roofs leaves of cocoa trees overhang. Because of the nearness of bush to houses, whenever any of the few pit latrines goes out of use, the bush serves an alternative place for the people - particularly women & children. Sweeping of the inside compounds of houses is a routine which no housewife neglects, but the sweeping of the grounds behind houses is a 'show-piece' which the women present to the local council sanitary overseer whenever they have wind of his visit. The women have associated his visits with the object of trapping them to/ fined in order to get funds for the local council. It is therefore not uncommon to see ~~faeces~~ of children and dogs or cats and other rubbish behind houses whenever the officer is on trek to other villages.

Drinking water is drawn from any of the streams near Banko - especially ONWAM whose water is considered good for easy delivery and sometimes SUBIN whose water is very clean because it does not pass through any village before it comes to Banko.

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Water is plentiful all the year round, - in the rainy season the people prefer to drink rain water as the river water invariably becomes dirty and coloured red because of flood water. The people do washing and bathing at the same places drinking water is drawn. There are burial grounds scattered round Banko, so it is not unlikely that some of the brooks may be contaminated.

Every family is expected to grow enough food for themselves. Some of the farmers bring plantains and cocoyams from their new farms at Ahafo, some of this may be sold to cover transport expenses. The non-natives - the N.T. elements and the other tribes buy some of this food and others go to Nsuta market to buy some. Owing to its central position on the lorry road, Banko enjoys easy facilities in transporting goods from villages round about it. Two people own lorries which cart people and goods to and fro. The lorries from Efiduase, Nsuta, Sekyere and Mampong also increase this facility in transport. The supply of meat and fish is the greatest headache to the housewife at Banko. Four or five herrings sell for a shilling, and meat, which is usually beef is very dear. The cattle route passes through Banko, but the poverty of the few N.T. butchers prevents them from doing the trade to any high degree. Richer butchers from Efiduase Zongo bring pieces of meat to sell sometimes. At present tinned fish and meat is becoming common, as an alternative for cured fish or meat. Tuesday is the market day, and food, fish, cured meat or beef may be brought from the nearby villages for sale.

There is very little recreative activity for people at Banko. Funerals are the main occasions on which relatives and friends meet together. The old women may gather together on special funeral nights or the New Years Day or Christmas evening and sing songs. The men sometimes meet at the old court-house and converse in the evenings, some playing draughts. Very lately, owing to the few people who leave the middle school, night dances with brassbands and ladies are becoming popular. Football matches are also held between Banko and the neighbouring villages from time to time. The new chief who is half-educated is a staunch patron of these football matches. Besides football matches and dances, the only source of entertaining company for the youth of Banko is the Singing Band, a religious club belonging to the local Presbyterian Church. Boy - girl romances are the chief motives of most members of the Singing Band. Married women as a rule are not allowed by their husbands to join, for fear that they may be seduced, because their meetings last very far into the night. The married women and their children leave their maternal relative's houses in the evening and go to pass the night with their husbands, - in their houses. Children below 8 or 9 years may sleep in the same room with parents who may copulate in the night. An average of 2 adults and 3 children sleep in one room.

The N.T. elements also meet in the evenings and play their guitars and beat their calabash drums and dance to the music. Children of pre-school age and those of school age enjoy alike with adults the occasional Mobile Cinema which gives them some films to see.

well over 80% of the Ashanti people of Banko are pagans, they may marry as many wives as they can so polygamy is rife. Though there are festivals for the Ashantis to observe, there is a great disinclination to do so: there are clan gods among whom may be mentioned the Tano, Taatoa, Taa Yaa and Gyeme. The national gods - ATWABO, GYANSABO OBO NSAA have all lost or nearly lost any grip on the people, particularly the young men and women. Most of these young people will neither become Muslims nor Christians. During my investigation, a young man who comes from the Tano clan told me that he is the next heir to the post of "carrier of the god. But he continued that, though he would remain a pagan, he will never accept that office. He argued that if the present 'carrier', his uncle, will give him #100 to trade with, then he will condescend to hold the office for the good of the clan. But as the uncle is not in a position to give this sum, he has told him to excuse him, and to give the post to another nephew.

According to the Chronicle of the Banko Presbyterian Church, the first Catechist came to Banko in September, 1916. He began a school and a church which extended greatly until the 1930s when the School work was abandoned, but the church persisted. The then chief thought that people who went to school began to challenge him, and refuse his orders, so he and his elders refused to help to pay the teachers or to provide school houses, so the work died for sometime. It was late in 1939, that the school was resumed, and carried on till it reached the Middle School Stage in 1950.

The Presbyterian Primary has 197 pupils ?? (Jan. 1955) and the Middle School has 150 ?? (Jan. 1955) The primary School has now 3 Certificate B Teachers, one of whom is the headteacher. The Middle School also has 3 Certificate 'A' teachers and a pupil teacher. The schools organise annual sports at which the parents and the general public attend and amuse themselves. The Middle School has a band which is the envy of most middle schools in the area. There are three other Christian Churches at Banko viz, the Methodist Church, the First Century Gospel and the Gold Coast apostolic Church. All the Christians of the different churches are expected to be monogamous or at least they should appear to be so. But most of them lapse and keep mistresses and in the apostolic Church polygamy may be allowed if the convert had 2-3 wives prior to his conversion. The Presbyterian Church is the largest church among the four. But two years ago, when the apostolic Church came, they began to attract some members from the existing old churches to it.

Subscribing to either Islam or the Apostolic faith is believed to cure drunkenness which is on a great scale among the men and women. These two faiths are therefore attracting addicted drunkards who are hoping to be cured. Most of the N.T. elements are non-Muslims, but the few among them have joined hands with the Ashanti people who have been converted to the faith of Islam. There are no less than 20 Ashanti Muslims who with their N.T. brothers worship on a flat piece of ground specially set aside for the purpose. The chief N.T. Muslim is their leader who calls them to worship. During Islamic festivals like the Ramadan, the Muslims attend Services regularly. The wives of the Ashanti Muslim automatically become Muslims, but they don't join their husbands at worship. None of their children is attending a Koranic School - or getting lessons at home. Their main incentive to joining the Muslim faith seems to be to wield power and protection for themselves and their families against witchcraft.

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT BANKO - 1948

EDUCATED PERSONS		HOUSES	ROOMS	PERSONS	
STD 3-6 INCLUSIVE	STD 7 OR HIGHER			PER HOUSE	PER ROOM
48	23	100	494	15.1	3.1

CHAPTER ONE

ATTITUDE TOWARDS HAVING CHILDREN.

The advantages of having children. Like any other Akan people elsewhere, having children is a great blessing and is held in high esteem by the people of Banko. It is good to have children, because without that, the Oman will get extinct. Bearing children ensures the perpetuation of the family life or 'abusua'. At Banko, children are of economic value to the parents whether they are boys or girls. An old man told me that his house he lives in now was built by his son for him after he had trained him up to become a clerk of the old 'District Commissioner's office at Goaso. Another old man said that his daughters and sons-in-law have given him financial support all the time he was too old to work. Other informants told me that it is customary in Ashanti for bridegrooms to pay 'ti nsa' (head-rum) for their wives, the greater part of which goes to the successful parent of girls. There is also a social significance in having children. The couple that has many children is highly respected and given titles like "Owo du" one who has 10 children - 'Owo nta' one who has had twins. To call an elderly person by such a name other than his or her own name is a sign of great respect. Ability to have children early confers the title 'Nana' on the lucky parents sooner or later. This too is an envied social status at Banko. Formerly people who had had several sons and daughters or twins were exempted from communal labour as a recognition of their numerous children. A person who gets several children is regarded as holy and free from the possession of devils as it is believed such people cannot be wizards or witches whose chief joy is the causing of barrenness or sterility. It is considered fortunate to have children who will cry and weep and wail for the parents when they die. Having children has the peculiar benefit of continuing one's name after one's death, because when you meet a child you will ask: "whose son or daughter are you?" If a chief cannot have children, he is regarded as a curse and warrants immediate destoolment, because his kind will be reflected on the other couples who are subjects to the stool. If a chief cannot have children, it is believed that his bottom touched the black stool when he was first being enstooled. Even in the olden days, before a man could stand as a candidate for a stool, one of the conditions was that he had to assemble his real children - both boys and girls for the inspection by the subchiefs and elders of state and the queen-mother, so that they might ascertain, whether in their opinion the new chief's reign will be one during which the wombs of women will be open for prolific child-bearing. Many old women whom I interviewed emphasized their priority choice they would make if they were given two, - children and riches or money. It is believed that you cannot send your 'money' or riches, but however poor you are, you can send your grandson or granddaughter. After all, they concluded, God sent us to the world to produce children; whoever gets them, is the one whom the gods really love. A popular folk-song has the words "Mekce aware na manwo ba, matwa kwansin hunu kwa - literally - Marriage without children is a fruitless journey.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF HAVING CHILDREN.

Of the six or seven informants, I discovered that none of them readily recognised any real disadvantages of having children. All that they agreed upon was the fact that having children brings one a great deal of anxiety about the proper upbringing of the children; two mothers remarked vehemently however, that if they re-incarnate, they would choose to be men-parents rather than women because of the sleepless nights they have endured during periods when their babies were ill or being weaned. Two men regarded having children as an expensive enterprise, because their expenditures trebled when after two years children began to appear. At any rate, the consensus of opinion about having children is that despite these seeming disadvantages, it was a necessary evil to have children. They maintained that everyone who gets children and rears them properly carries a big burden of responsibilities, but there usually comes a much greater reward when the children become adults. In the words of one father, "the money and trouble which I expended on my children are as small as a pin, compared with the blessings that have come to me through my own children. It was pointed out strongly that to a woman, having children shortens her life.

SIZE OF THE FAMILY

The queen-mother and the two native midwives who were my chief informants agreed that to limit the size of the family was like working against, not with nature. They maintained, quoting a Twi proverb - Nsamanfo mpo se wo pe dodo" literally - Even the dead want to be many - if that is so, then they who were living needed more numbers for the family. It was pointed out however, that if a woman got as many as 9 or 10 children, it was considered enough if it was her personal wish to discontinue having children. On the other hand, she could continue having children to any number. There is a legendary tradition of *.AMDA AWISI, a very kind mother,* who had 30 children, and besides, went and adopted somebody's child to rear. Such a motherly disposition is a necessary quality in every girl who becomes a wife. A strong note was however, sounded to me to the effect that it is the custom for the brothers of a mother whose labour is difficult to use devices that will stop child-bearing; of course, a husband cannot by himself give his wife such a medicine without the consent of his brothers-in-law because it is to them that the children of the union belong. My own mother told me how she had her tenth child - a boy, and just after 40 days, my uncle, who had had some school education came and saw a native doctor and fetish priest, Nana Komfo Berkye of wawase for some medicine with which her child-bearing was arrested. She said a black powder was shaken into a tumbler, about 4 ounces of gin was added, mixed together and she drank it. For the next two years, she abstained from sexual intercourse and so successfully freed herself from getting more children. When I asked for the reason why my uncle wished her to stop bearing children,

my mother replied that my uncle said he was alone, and he could not meet squarely the hard responsibility of looking after the 10 children my mother had got. He wanted my mother to stop bearing children so that she may be strong to assist him in educating my brothers and sisters. Further questions brought to light that my mother had the ambition to have about 15 children just as her own aunt, Nana Benewaa, after whom she was named, had got in her life time. Both the younger literate and illiterate wives and husbands prefer to have 3 - 5 children at most, provided that at least there are boys and girls together. The men argue that nowadays, every child wants to go to school, and so if the family became too large, it would be beyond their ability to care for/well. In any case, any attempt to limit the family is not welcome, but is regarded with suspicion and contempt; often it is considered dangerous, in case all the living children die accidentally or through the machinations of devils.

them

CHILDLESSNESS

The old men and women at Banko agreed that childlessness is not a natural thing but the work of evil men and women in one's own family circle. These agents who are supposed to cause barrenness in women and sterility in men are wizards and witches who are super-natural agents who do their havoc in the night. These are called 'Bayi' - literally "Taking away child" - that is taking child away from the womb to nullify any possibility of reproduction. Others of my informants claimed that some barrenness is caused by the evil deeds of the barren woman or the sterile man. This may have been disobedience to mother or father's will or failing to observe the necessary funeral rites of a dead father. Nana Yaa Minka told me that an old chief of Banko cursed his son who refused to marry a niece of the former, and as a result that son has never had children. Also a woman who refused to cut her hair and wail for her dead mother is still barren, and it is assumed that until the dead mother has been pacified, the woman cannot have children. When I interviewed the Asante Muslim Chief about the question of barrenness, he asked me whether I was still ignorant of the plan of God for every person - man or woman. He explained that God knew that some women or men would be bad mothers or fathers and so gave them no children. A pagan informant told me that Childlessness may be the predetermined wish or fate of the barren woman. The Barren woman is called 'Bonini' - literally "woman - man". The man who cannot have children is called 'Okrawa' -. The word 'Okrawa' is the name of a species of monkey which grows to an old age before it gets a mate. An analogy is therefore drawn between it and an elderly man who cannot have children by his wives. Sometimes barrenness is accepted as a necessary evil. My informants told me that some people decided in the spirit world to have an only child, so that they may die immediately the child was born or old enough to look after itself. Because of this belief some barren women accept their fate with resignation. The childless woman in a plural marriage set-up has a very unpleasant life to live. Her rival wives sing songs in proverbial language to tease her. The husband usually tries to *make* such wives a little comfortable by giving them special consideration - e.g. giving the barren woman a sewing machine,

good and costly cloths; choicest meat and food? It is the common attitude of the men at Banko that if a man fails to have children with his wife; she cannot remain faithful to him. Husbands of most barren women here are therefore jealous and always suspicious of their wives' movements after sundown.

DEVICES TO OVERCOME CHILDESSNESS.

It is the duty of every husband to do his best in order to make it possible for his wife to have children. When a couple have been married for a year or two and children are not forthcoming, the woman - and especially her mother begins to suspect the man of sterility. First of all, the mother consults the oracle of the fetish priest to see what is the cause of the delay of children. Sometimes the medicine-man may simply say some devil is troubling their coming forth? in this case; a fowl, gin, 7 cowries and other things are collected from the man to pacify the devil or whatever agent, that is in the way of the reproduction. At times, it may be due to the presence of a disease - commonly called "Anidane". This disease is very common, and the medicine-man at Banko professes to have its cure. Three women have told me that they were treated by this man, (San Kwaku) and they are still bearing children. A childless woman is supposed to have some, if she gets the placenta of another mother and buries it herself.

It is believed that a particular woman may have come to this world determined not to have children. They explained that such a woman might have had a very bad time with the bringing up of her children in her first incarnation and as a result, decides not to have any children in this present one. How that is accepted as the true explanation of the woman's barrenness is hard to understand, because the woman herself will be weeping and pleading with the medicine-man to do something about her fate, so that she may have children. But they maintained that it is the woman's 'soul' or the 'Kba' who predetermines whether she should have children or not, independent of the woman's conscious wish.

Others told me that if a woman could have no children of her own, she could go to a goddess and pray to her to lend her one or two of her surplus children. If such an appeal is made to a goddess, many a time, it is answered favourably by the birth of a child. Certain conditions are given and taboos prescribed for the man and woman who want to have children. They may not eat fufu on Sundays because if the woman pounds fufu on Sunday, the festival day of the goddess, all the "seeds of children" to be born would be pressed and spoilt in the mortar. Also the sperms in the man's scrotum will be destroyed by the same process. In the case of a woman who predetermined to have no children, she has to perform some special rites in conjunction with her husband. In the absence of the husband, a brother or a near male relative can deputise for him, except that the real husband is expected to come and pass the first night with the wife after the ceremony and the rite had been completed.

HYEBERE-DANE AND AKONNO KRA RITES:

After consulting the fetish priests, if the husband is told that it is the "hyebere" literally the fate - that his wife would not like to have children, the man would beg the fetish priest to "change" this fate for her.

This is called "Hyebere Dane" - changing of one's fate. A similar rite is that in which the girl fears the onerous duty of motherhood, and as such predetermined - that is her "soul" or 'Kra' decided to beget no children. This rite is called 'Akonno Kra'. This and the one mentioned before are similar in all respects and so I describe below what is done for both.

The husband provides a white sheep, nsomme - a kind of water-plant, Nyamedua fork-stick, a brass pan and a fowl. These things may be carried to the outskirts of the town at a junction of paths. This spot is chosen, so that the "evil" or mmusu" for which this rite is being held may be distributed easily and carried away by passers-by on the paths.

The sheep is slaughtered, the fowl let loose to roam the immediate bush, and part of the meat of the sheep and blood besmeared on the fork-stick and the brass pan. The woman's hair is cut down, and she is clothed in white and allowed to remain indoors for a week. She eats no meat besides that of the sacrificial sheep during the week, after which she lives her normal life. Two women whom I know to be still bearing children performed this rite in the early years of their marital life.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

All my informants have pointed out strikingly that at Banko, "the term "illegitimate" children has practically no significance to them. The queen mother who gave me a lot of information for this research asked me whether she could make the so-called 'illegitimate child' run errands for her, she emphasized that to them, whether a child was born inside or outside marriage did not matter: what mattered was the fact that a real human being has been born and added to increase the family. I was also told that many young women have great pride even in getting children out of wedlock -; the explanation is that usually such a marriage might not be approved by the parents - but when a child is so born, they automatically marry and feel victorious over the decision of parents. Thus the girls sing a song like this "Me ne Ayi ba bewo Mpena ba", literally - "I and the son of so-and-so will have a romantic child "Many times, such children are exposed to very great psychological tensions, as a result of the fact that there may not be peace between the boy and the girl's parents. If the would-be husband fails to come forward to claim his "romantic child", the child is taken care of by the maternal uncles. The father will consequently forfeit the right of giving the child a name, and it devolves on the uncle to name the child as he likes. During the course of this investigation, I came across an interesting case in "illegitimate children's problems in this community at Banko. I was informed that Kwadwo Kyere, the most senior presbyter of the local Presbyterian Church conceived a woman when he was still a pagan at the age of 18 or 20. Because he was afraid, he refused flatly knowledge of having had anything to do with the woman. He refused ownership of the child, because in his time, he would be considered bad to marry at so tender an age. Now this man is about 80 years, blind and hardly walks with any ease. According to his own story, he went to a minister of his church and confessed to him that this untruth has been on his mind all the time and he begged for forgiveness. Accordingly, he appealed to the minister of religion to apologise to his daughter - now a woman of about 40 or 45.

Before the daughter accepted the apology, the old man had to give her the customary presents which he ought to have given her when she was born an infant. Because she is too old to be given the customary infant bed, pillow, drinking cup, she was given £3 instead. Despite the fact that the man was all the time hiding behind the screen, the daughter told me that she had been told that that man was her father but she was instructed not to call him so until recently when she was duly claimed. She said if she did so before, she would die. She added further that when she reached the age at which her puberty rites were to be performed, her 'hidden' father was not informed but her maternal uncle, her brother, played the role of her father to perform the rites. At Banko, it is the priority of the father to say which suitor of the daughter shall have the girl to marry. Thus, when the intending husband, through his parents or friends come to ask for the hand of a girl in marriage from the girl's mother and maternal relatives, the man is directed first to go and plead with the girl's father first, because as the traditional proverb says 'Ose na oma aware' literally it is the father who gives away the girl in marriage. This is the only occasion or place where an illegitimate girl may be distinguished from the one born within wedlock. Whereas in the case of a legitimate girl, the father has the final say in respect of who should have the girl, on the other hand, the mother or maternal uncle of the girl can by himself finalise all arrangements about the marriage and give the girl away. Secondly, at Banko, a child adopts the response which is accorded to his father's clan or relatives, but in the case of an illegitimate child - either boy or girl, the maternal relatives' response should be given him or her. Basically, at Banko, today, there are two forms of marriage, the native customary marriage, and the Christian marriage. At all events, the native customary marriage is the greater force. Among the pagans, the native customary law of marriage operates generally; but there are substantial marriages which are not governed by either of the two systems of marriage. This is the concubinage form of marriage - 'Mpra aware'. In this case, the husband has no legal rights over the entire movement of the woman: their union is kept up as long as romance lasts. The Christian form is the same as the native customary one, with the addition of blessing and the giving of a ring at the particular church. Amongst the few new Muslims, the necessary native customs of marriage are sufficient. The NT. elements, especially the rich, give a show of their wealth by organising a form of public wedding.

Because marriage or the condition of bearing children at Banko robs both the father and the mother the services of maidens, these girls are jealously guarded prior to the puberty rites. Among the Christians, illegitimacy is held in great contempt, because when the time comes for the child to be baptised and the real father cannot come forward as usual to the altar, it is considered a great stigma on the girl and her family in general.

ORPHANS

When a child loses its mother or father, the maternal relatives take charge of it. If it is an infant, the child is given to a suckling woman in the family to nurse it. In the absence of such a mother, the nurse may ask another woman who has milk to feed the child. While the child is very young, the father, if living, may give money to the nurse of his child to buy meat for food so that she may get more milk for his child. If the father is dead too, his brothers or sisters will do this duty to their brother's child. When I was here in 1952 a woman died after the birth of

CHAPTER IIPREGNANCY: THEORY OF EMBRYOLOGY OF THE FOETUS:

At Banko, it is believed that the father's spirit originates the child in the mother's womb and this is possible only when the father's blood agrees with the mother's. Conception is dated from the last day of the cessation of the normal menses. Among the old women, it is believed that the blood which ought to pass out at menses clots in the womb and thus makes it possible for the child to develop. It is therefore feared that if suddenly a woman who has been pregnant for a month or two bleeds, it means the child will be disturbed in its proper formation. Contraception is never practised or encouraged among the older people, but in these days, the young men and girls are beginning to use them. Women become upset if the menopause comes rather too soon when they expect to bear more children still.

CHAPTER II

As soon as the woman discovers that there has been a cessation of her usual monthly menstrual flow, she informs the husband of her condition. If she is not legally married according to the customary law in practice at Banko, she may keep the fact secret. But this secrecy, cannot be long - for in no time, the old ladies in the family discover it and question the woman to name her man. She may or may not do so. If she names him, they approach him and give the woman to him to take charge of her until the birth; but if she fails to name her lover, the uncles or brothers or any relative may look after the pregnant woman; in such circumstances, she cannot be scolded or abused for it is believed that by so doing, you cause the soul of the new-baby to be sad and as a result there may be miscarriage of difficult labour.

TYPICAL FEELINGS OF PREGNANT WOMEN.

Every one of my informants emphasized the fact that a pregnant woman suddenly gets into a mood of quick-temperedness, and so all relatives and friends and especially the husband are expected to take the words of pregnant women lightly and not seriously, because they are spoken without strict consciousness. A pregnant woman is often regarded as sick and weak and so called "aberewa" - literally old woman. I was told that all the time, a pregnant woman is thinking whether she will die or live when it comes to her labour time. She is therefore very irritable and angry with the rest of the people who are not sharing her sad fate. As she thinks of her own delivery and the fear of death, it is considered bad for the pregnant to go near another who is in the process of child birth. If she witnesses such a scene, her fears will be greatly accentuated for her own delivery and possibly endanger her life. The pregnant woman has doubts and misgivings. She is all the time asking herself: shall I have a normal healthy baby? Thus, just after birth, she wants to know if baby is alive, normal, boy or girl.

CHANGES IN THE MODE OF LIFE OF PREGNANT WOMEN:

Clothing: Every attempt must be made by the pregnant woman to keep herself covered especially the region between the chest down to the knees. If a pregnant woman exposes the breasts and evil medicine-man see them, they can bewitch her so that at her delivery there will be little or no milk for the little baby to drink. If her abdomen is exposed to such people, they will bewitch the child with a disease called "Asenam" which is supposed to kill most children who are still-born.

The pregnant woman has to be selective in her choice of foods. If she eats a kind of food, and she feels uncomfortable later or she vomits, it means the baby does not like that kind of food and she ought to abstain from it. Ripe-plantain, bananas, orange, sugar-cane and most fruits should not be eaten at all if she can help, because the two native midwives told me that these foods make labour pains protracted and consequently cause more bleeding, because these foods cause blood to flow easily. Ordinary salt may not be eaten all alone. It is the idiosyncrasy of most pregnant women to eat strange foods. It is believed that new babies come from different sources. For example, a pregnant woman who eats dust from walls is supposed to be carrying a baby whose origin is the 'sheep' or goat, because sheep sometimes eat dust from swish walls.

If a pregnant woman drinks water all the time and does not get her thirst quenched quickly, it is believed that the child is from the sea or river - probably a fish. My informants assured me that I could watch some cases and compare the characteristics of children born later, and that I could see in the babies close resemblances to sheep or fish as the case may be. They explained, the 'sheep' child would be very stupid or slow in his actions, and the 'fish' child would have his mouth and lips always covered with water and wet. Pregnant women are expected to eat as much as they can. It is believed that some of the food is taken directly by the newborn baby; so if she does not take enough, she will have to go hungry after the baby has drawn her share of the food she has eaten.

Marital intercourse ought to continue in the early stages of conception so that the child may be fully-formed. From the early stages until the 9th month, intercourse can take place, so that the birth canal may be opened as a result of the distending muscles during the action. This is especially necessary in the case of a young girl who is going to have her first baby. Without the help of such marital intercourse after conception, it is feared that the birth passage will be rather narrow and the woman will suffer great labour pains and laceration in the vaginal passage as the child passes through in birth. On the other hand, great care must be taken by the husband during intercourse in the 9th month, because if care were not taken, the head of the baby would be hit or hammered by the penis and cause harm to the baby, because it was the time when babies usually put their heads downwards ready to be born. One of the native midwives told me that if a man other than the husband of the pregnant woman had sexual intercourse with her, the child would be miscarried in the early stages as a result of mixing of two spirits - because the child cannot identify his real father. This is the case if conception is less than 3 months old. After that, the child is already for the first man. Only the mother suffers labour pains for unfaithfulness to her husband.

In relation to work, pregnant women at Banko are expected to be busy despite the fact that they are considered as sick and weak. The pregnant woman must do all her usual domestic tasks - sweeping the compound early in the morning, going for water from the streams, cooking meals, going to farm, etc. If the pregnant woman goes to the water hole before any one else happens to be there, it is deemed fortunate, because it means early on the morning of her delivery, she will have got her baby before the first person comes from the water-hole. So also if the pregnant woman catches the early morning dew-drops on the plants along the side of the bush-paths, it is believed to have medicinal effect on her and the future child - making both strong and hardy for hard and difficult work. Hard work is considered a good tonic for both the pregnant woman and her child. If a pregnant woman does not work hard, e.g. because of illness or sheer laziness, it is believed that her child will be very weak and most probably will be still-born at birth. Pounding fufu is the best type of hard work or exercise which every pregnant woman must have in order to ensure that she and the baby get enough exercise. Thus, it is not uncommon to see a pregnant woman volunteering to pound another woman's fufu for her.

By pounding fufu, it is assumed that the child is made to push downwards to the proper place prior to birth. This is most important to ensure quick delivery.

In an interview, I asked an old woman what things are taboos to the pregnant woman. My informant in chief, Nana Yaa Menka, told me that the first and most important thing that a pregnant woman "hates" as taboo is beating or corporal punishment of any sort. She explained that if a pregnant woman is beaten she may miscarry at once or she may leave scars on the skin of the baby at birth, or if the beating is severe, the child may die at birth or be maimed permanently after birth. In the olden days, she continued, if a husband beat a pregnant wife, the penalty was death.

As soon as a woman knows that she is pregnant she informs her husband of the fact. To insure that devils and evil men do not cause any harm to the unborn child, the man takes the wife to the fetish - Tano and reports the condition of the wife to it and puts her in its charge for spiritual protection. The priest makes 3 cuts on the forehead, shoulders, chest and the chief joints of the body and around the waist with a razor blade. Black-powder is then besmeared on the bleeding cuts so that the medicine enters the blood-stream to give effective protection to both the unborn baby and the mother. Some of the powder is put in whisky for both the man and wife to drink. For a girl to be made pregnant before the official rites of initiation into womanhood, there is a customary rite of purification. This is described in the Chp. on Adolescence.

My Muslim midwife told me that if the woman frequently miscarried in the past, then she is given a waist-band of leather and medicine to ward off evil spirits which trouble her. Whenever she is going to sleep with her husband, the waist-band must be divested. This Muslim midwife told me that it is in pregnancy that a woman becomes most holy and able to approach Allah in prayer at the Mosque - because of the cessation of the unclean menses.

If a woman is known to have very difficult labour, the fetish priest makes her a fetish called 'Nyinsen Suman' - pregnancy fetish". This fetish is made of the raffia palm fibres and kola nuts and some other stuff and black powder. She may wear the fetish around the waist, on the wrist or on the calf. When her labour begins, the fetish is taken off and placed in a calabash of water. The case with which the fetish is taken off will be the same as that of the woman's labour. There is supposed to be a disease called 'Asram' which attacks newly born babies or unborn ones. It is unsafe for a pregnant woman to ask another woman at the water-hole to help her to put the pot of water on her head, because if that is done, it is believed that this disease will be transferred on to the unborn baby. Another taboo for the pregnant woman is the wooden or iron bed.

~~sleep~~

A pregnant woman must ~~sleep~~ on the floor not high on a bed, because a bed is the place for a dead person laid in state. If a pregnant woman sleeps on such a bed, she is paving the way to her death-bed. A chair is not the proper seat for a pregnant woman. When a pregnant woman died while labouring, she was laid in state on a chair - not on a bed. Therefore, if a pregnant woman sits on a chair, she is cursing herself to die at her delivery. For the same reason, a pregnant woman should not put on sandals or shoes, or gorgeous clothes and cloths or gold ornaments like rings, earrings, and pins. If a pregnant woman makes herself appear so beautiful and well-dressed, her ghost father and mother will get very pleased with her appearance and therefore come and take her to the ghost-land - which means death to her when she is delivering her child.

Eating in public of any sort is another taboo for the pregnant woman. If a pregnant woman wants to eat, she must hide herself from the view of other people. That must be so, because it is believed that some people possess demons and when they see her eating their demon's appetite is aroused, and consequently they fall on the unborn baby as the victim of their nefarious meal. Of my Xtian informants, I gathered that the only safe measure was to send the pregnant woman to a midwife regularly. Tano priest told me that there are some old men and women who are witches and of course, most of these old people have lost several of their teeth. He explained therefore that the toothless witches and wizards prefer the soft bodies of unborn babies which they can munch with great ease. Because of this, most pregnant women are afraid to live with the very old women in their family. Here is a case in point. A half-sister of mine told me that on three consecutive occasions, her daughter has miscarried, and whenever she went to consult medicine men, they pointed to her own aged-blind-mother as the agent of the miscarriage. Some herbalists too at Banko had this explanation to give. They said that some women may suffer from a disease locally called 'Afabo' or 'Anidane' - a disease which attacks parts of the womb and causes miscarriage between the second and the third month of conception. They claimed that their herbal drug, mixed with ice cream soda was very efficacious in removing this condition and ensuring smooth pregnancy. At Banko, miscarriage in any month other than the 8th is considered fairly harmless. It is believed that the child who comes in the 8th month has the sole purpose of coming to endanger the mother's life. In all cases, fetishes are consulted to fight future occurrences of miscarriage.

At Banko, pregnancy is the time when a woman is styled "Ohemaa" (queen) and the pregnant woman may be given several favours which normally she may be refused. The husband especially is expected to be very indulgent to her, to make her feel happy and companionful in her "sickness". The severest sort of penalty will be given to a man or even another woman who beats a pregnant woman. My informants explained to me that if a pregnant woman is not pampered at this time of her life, the worst of evils which they dread will befall her. This is miscarriage. There were several other explanations which they give as the causes of miscarriage. It is the general belief that if a woman offends her husband very badly - e.g. if she calls the man 'a fool' or if she cohabits with another man during pregnancy she may miscarry.

Miscarriage may sometimes be attributed to the pregnant woman contravening some of the taboos listed above. Also it is believed that 'medicine men' who have 'evil' eyes can cause women to miscarry if they happen to gaze on the bare abdomen of pregnant women. Amongst the pagans and the Muslims at Banko another explanation is that wizards and witches may also 'eat the unborn baby.



THE FIRST MONTH OF BABY'S LIFE - SLEEP OCCUPIES MOST OF ITS TIME

BIRTH AND BIRTH RITES.

Tiger-nuts are considered by the people of Banko as a great delicacy. So when a birth occurs in a family one hears the old woman sing like this - Enne mate de nne - Atadwe, Enne mate de nne Atadwe". This means literally that the event of birth is as pleasant as the juice of the tiger-nuts. Birth is therefore a great occasion for the family to be cheerful and happy.

When a woman is in travail, she may sometimes cry in pain and curse. Most women become frightened because they believe that there are two things for them - either death or survival. All the time, the mother resigns herself to undergo the pains in labour, knowing that if she goes through successfully, she will have the joy of possessing a new baby; both the father and others in the family live in an atmosphere of suspense and fear. If the husband is not a brave man, he may drink some liquor to ease his anxiety over the safety of the wife. If the husband is a pagan, he pours libation to his soul or Kra and the 'Asamanfo' to help his wife to deliver safely and take her baby safely too.

Whenever the birth is protracted for an unusually long time, e.g. 24 hrs. or more, the midwives begin to suspect some hidden unfaithfulness on the part of the woman. Because of this, at every birth, the sisters of the husband or any of his female relatives are allowed at the place of birth so that if such confessions are made, they report to the husband for him to take the necessary action in the matter. When the midwives have given the woman sufficient help and medicine and the child fails to come, they allow the mother of the woman to go and consult a Muslim oracle or a fetish priest, usual answer is that the woman must confess some sin committed against the husband or the marital vow in general. An old woman told me that for having only embraced another man at a funeral dance prior to her conception of her second child, she suffered great labour pains. She could not give birth to the child, until she "recollected" that about 2 years before, a man had embraced her in a dance in the daylight at a funeral. As soon as she said this, the child appeared. This belief is held strongly; I was informed that even the mere handling of a woman's beads can hold up her delivery if she failed to report the matter to her husband at the time of the incident. Chastity on the part of the woman is therefore regarded as the panacea for easy birth. The midwives told me that the medicines they use are not anaesthetics, but those that can hasten or force the baby out quickly to shorten labour pains. Sometimes I was told, a delayed birth is believed to be a sign that the unborn child wants a present from its father. Therefore the father gets a new piece of cloth and money - about 13/- and the midwife puts these presents on the woman's abdomen and tells the child to come out and take them. It is believed that this done, it is often likely to have the child coming out early. There is no one spot which is put aside as the birth place for children in the home.

Every convenient spot - e.g. the bathroom, the open paitoo, the verandah or at night, the open yard may serve as well. When birth is taking place, the children are sent out of the house. The mother's youngest child may even be sucking whilst she is labouring, if the child is a troublesome one who would not stay away by herself. Besides the midwives the mother of the woman, the relatives of the husband and any other interested persons may come there. But some women are shy, and pray that no other persons apart from the midwives be allowed to come to the birth place.

As soon as the child is born, it is given to one elderly woman to take care of. She stops the anus with the small finger to prevent air going into its body. She gets a sharp razor and cuts the cord and ties it well, and then washes the baby. After the baby's first bath, it is given whisky or illicit gin diluted in water to drink so as to open its throat for sucking. Whilst the child is being washed, the woman attending it scrutinises all its parts to see if there is some deformity somewhere. If there is one - the absence of fingers -, or say six-fingeredness, the child may be destroyed privately at once. When a child is born and it dies at the birth place, it is considered unfortunate. There is a belief that such a child was sent by its ghost parents to come and collect property for them,

In order to prevent this, such a dead child is maltreated and put in a pot and buried in a contemptible manner. It is assumed that the shame of such a burial will repel the same child coming to the couple again. Sometimes boiling water is added to the pot to make the ghost child suffer more torture.

It is a great calamity for a woman to die without being able to deliver the unborn child. When this happens, the corpse cannot be buried until the unborn child has been taken out of the mother. There are professional medicine men who operate on such dead pregnant women to remove the baby. The man who performs this operation receives one new razor blade, one bottle gin, and a piece of calico from the father of the woman. When the corpse is taken to the grave, two or more relatives of the dead woman accompany the surgeon who opens the womb in their presence and shows the child to them - saying whether it was male or female. After the operation, the woman is buried in her grave as any other person; but the child is thrown away into the bush or into the radius of a near palm tree so that he may be pricked by the thorns in it. By going through such torture, the unfortunate child will build an attitude of dislike for the couple and will not dare to come to their relatives in the next re-incarnation. The woman who gives birth to a child and dies soon after, is also considered very unfortunate and so she is not laid in state on a bed - but seated on a chair only, prior to the usual burial. When a child born is found to be free from all abnormality, it is bathed, given a bed near the mother soon after she has recovered from the labour. If she is unwell, a mother elsewhere will be found to nurse the baby.

In order to ensure the safety of the new baby, the father calls in the herbalist who cuts the baby's cheek and rubs in some black powder. This 'vaccination' is believed to ward off attacks of the "sky" disease literally called 'Osoro' the real disease being convulsions.

Most of the infants' mortality in this village is attributed to convulsions, and so it is no wonder that parents fear it very well.

On the eighth day ^{after} of the child-birth, it is the custom ~~here~~ for the father of the new baby to send his sisters with gifts - like mat, pillow, soap, ^{three} or more baby's dresses, washing tub, a towel, a drinking cup and spoon and a few cloths, to the baby and its mother. The cloth is called "navel" cloth - that is, the cloth or bandage for covering the sore navel. It is ~~a shame~~ ^{shameful} for a person to pass through babyhood without having this cloth. If that happens, it means the baby was the child of a "thief" - literally meaning a man who stole to conceive the baby's mother. When these gifts are being presented to the child by its father's sisters, they add their ^{own} present, usually in money. At the same time, the father tells them the name of the new born child. Usually it is named after the man's own father or his father's near relatives or it may be named after the father's maternal relations. It is a great honour for the person after whom the child is named. After the presentation of the baby's gifts and its name, ^{the} the mother and father inform ^{the} person after whom the child has been named. He ~~also~~ ^{then} fixes a day on which the parents take the child out of doors to go and greet his grandparent. The parents take a pot of palm wine with them, so that the grandparent may use some for pouring libation on behalf of the baby and its parents. After the libation, the grandparent spits into the baby's mouth. This has a great significance. The spit is believed to contain the soul and characteristics of the grandparent. Thus, he imparts some of his own nature to the baby so that he may resemble him in his actions, thinking and conduct when he grows up to be a man. After this ceremony, the grandparent gives some ~~present~~ in money to the ~~built~~ ^{child}. If the ^{child} resembles the grandparent, it is the common practice ^{to} to give him a ring as a token of their close resemblance. ^{the} ~~ring~~ ^{is} Sekoa. It is a simple ceremony in which the grandparent pours libation to his ancestral gods to bless the grandson whom they have so nearly made like himself, so that it may live and perpetuate his good name.

Six weeks after the birth, it is considered a long enough time for the mother to resume her marital duties to her husband. This can take place provided the midwives are agreed that the sores in the birth canal are fully healed. She therefore appoints a day and notifies the husband of her intention to cook for him. This is called "Aduan Kese" - Big dish - literally. Soon after a birth, it is not considered good enough for a man to eat the meals prepared by the mother who is supposed to be somewhat unclean. Women from the mother's own family and also her friends assist in cooking several dishes for the husband. The foods may comprise fufu, ampesi, rice and stew and boiled eggs. When the dishes are brought to the husband, she asks his mother or sister to share them for relatives and friends who live near by. After this 'Aduan Kese', the woman continues to cook for the husband as usual, having rested for about forty days following her delivery. Usually when a baby is born, it is considered unsafe for the outsiders who are not rear relations of the family to come and see the baby. Therefore for the first week, the mother tries to hide the baby from visitors who call in to congratulate them. When such a friend comes, he or she says "So and so, well done - Mo ne yo. Then she enquires the sex of the baby. When the enquirer is told that it is a baby-boy, he says, oh, well it is not bad. But if the child happens to be a girl, he says, we thank God - To all intents and purposes, in Banko and the Akan world in general, the female child is more welcome to the family - especially those members on the maternal line.

It is due to the fact that inheritance is on this side, so if a girl is born, it becomes an asset to the family. The girl will in due time grow, marry and bear children and increase the family. But on the other hand, when the boy grows and marries and gets children, they don't belong to him: they belong to their mother's line. Thus, the boy will be a double loss to the maternal line - his children will not be his - his wealth too will be given away to another man's family. For these reasons, parents of boys at Banko object to their marrying girls outside Banko village. They argue that it is better if they take girls in Banko - otherwise all their wealth will be drained into another village if they marry girls elsewhere. By marrying girls at Banko, even though the family will lose some wealth, it will have the comfort of seeing it used in their own locality rather than far away from it. But it is not uncommon to come across an old lady who is all the time praying to the gods for her daughters to get boys or other of the sexes predominate in the children born into the family. This is believed to be unfortunate, and medicine men are consulted to remedy the position for them.

About two months after the birth of a child, if the mother and baby are doing well, the grandmother of the girl finds it the right time to go and thank the son-in-law. This she does by getting a pot of palm wine and asking some friends to accompany her and the daughter to the son-in-law's house. Before their arrival, the son-in-law also calls his friends and waits for the mother-in-law and her company which is made up of women only. When they arrive at the husband's house, all of them shake hands with the husband and his friends thanking them. Later they sit and are served with some wine. Soon after they produce the pot of wine and make known their mission - thanksgiving - to the husband. Then the wine is served to all present at the house. The mother-in-law takes this great trouble to come and say 'thank you' to the son-in-law, because she believes that the child has been born for her and not for him. After the wine has been drunk, the company takes leave of the husband and go out. But that is not the end of the matter. The wife and her mother and the whole company of friends go to every benefactor who by word of mouth or some form of present helped the woman who has delivered, to give them thanks. Even if one did not make a gift to her, she ought to thank one, because if she died at her delivery, it would have involved everyone at Banko.

If a mother's baby dies after the first week or so, or at any other time before it reaches adolescence; this event is believed to be calamitous and should be prevented from recurring. Thus, a custom - called 'Fea' or Soro is observed. When a baby dies or a child dies, the parents are not allowed to weep and do what they would normally do in the event of the death of an adult. If this convention is not respected and broken, the old women say that it will cause these parents to lose more children in like manner.

When the child dies, a medicine man comes and makes a cut on the face or hand. This is done so that when the child returns to its mother in the other world, it will be changed, and the mother cannot recognise him? Thus the ghost-mother will say "This will ensure the child's staying when it is reborn later on." It is explained that that is why a baby is soon born to couples who lose their children. After the burial, the hair of both mother and father is cut down with razor. At present such parents who are Christians or Muslims may not cut their hair down, but they observe and go through the rites. After the shaving, they go for a bath and



4 YEAR OLD AKOSUA - BAGYINA CHILD-NOTICE PLAITED HAIR

later put on white cloths that are spotlessly clean. They wear the cloth for whole weeks. The purpose of this ceremony is to cleanse the couple of the ill-luck that befell them. This time is regarded most likely for conception of children. During this week of purification, they do not fast, but eat their usual meals. Even on the very day of the child's death, at say 12 noon or 1 p.m. the oldest woman in the family prepares a dish called OTO with plantain and eggs. Some of the food is offered to the gods and the rest is eaten by the couple. It is a common sight to see a man and woman observing this custom, eating and weeping simultaneously. Both pagans and Christians believe that the performance of this rite is a necessity for ensuring the safety of the rest of the children in the family. The Muslims here also are allowed to observe it. I learnt from my informants that of the 4 Christian communities at Banko, only the members of the Apostolic Church have unwillingly to perform these rites which they undervalue and ridicule as useless.

But it sometimes happens, particularly to pagan people that children born to a particular woman or women usually die before they are 5, 7 or 9 years old. When this becomes the rule rather than an exception, the mother and the father go and consult a fetish. The fetish is asked to control the forces - spiritual or otherwise, that are working against the survival of their offspring. This is what is called Bagyina.

The Bagyina is a fetish or 'suman' which is made by a fetish priest for a couple who continuously lose their babies after birth before they are 5 - 9 years old. The magical powers which the 'Bagyina' suman is supposed to possess guard and help the new baby so that it may not die.

This is how the fetish priest constructs the 'Bagyina Fetish': he collects an earthen pot, or a brass one, some eggs, a hen, some herbs and their leaves and places them all in the pot to make a concoction which is later placed in the bedroom of the couple. The hen is killed and some blood is poured on the things in the pot. On every festive day - Da bone - the couple have to give some eggs or a hen to the fetish. If the woman becomes pregnant later, then it means the god has listened to their prayers favourably. From that time on, the mother cannot eat yams or sheep or goat or beans until the 'annual yam eating rite' of the god has been concluded. She has to observe the taboos of the 'father-god' of the un-born baby on its behalf. When the 'Bagyina' baby is born, it is regarded as holy and a special child. No razor can cut its hair: it is treated as a Nazarite - and the hair grows in long strips as illustrated in the picture of the little 'Bagyina' girl - Akosua Donko at Banko. She is 3 years old. The 'Bagyina' child is given special treatment and favour and it may be over-indulged. They therefore occupy no small position in the family. The baby who comes after the 'Bagyina' is to say the god has been kind, to add another child to the 'Bagyina child' and thus ascertained its power indeed.

When the 'Bagyina' child reaches the age of 5 or up to 7, the parents may, with the permission of the fetish priest have its 'Nazarite' hair cut down,

for cutting the hair, the parents must provide a new razor, a yard of calico and a hen. The fetish priest kills the fowl and pours some blood on the 'Bagyina' suman and propitiates it so that the spirit in the hair may not run away and leave the child defenceless. The hair that is cut is gathered and placed on the 'Bagyina' suman for the same reason. The fact that the hair of the 'Bagyina' child has been cut down does not free it from its responsibility to its god-father, the fetish. Every year, this child, throughout its life, should observe all the taboos of the fetish: also the person will not eat fresh yams of the current year until the festival for yam eating by the fetish has been concluded. A christian 'Bagyina woman' informed me that she does not observe any of these rules, but all has been well with her and her own children. But the fetish priest believes that that woman will be punished in due course by the 'Bagyina' suman" in one way or the other.

An interesting thing about all Bagyina children is the manner in which they are named. Whereas the Akan custom requires that the father names his children after members of his mother's family or his father's family, these 'Bagyina children' are given neither of these, but instead very curious names. Thus we come across 'Bagyina children' called 'Donko' 'Sumina', Sim-ne, Pepe etc. Donko literally means 'slave', 'Sumina' - the rubbish dump • Sim-ne - Go back today; Pepe - Man of the North. The idea behind these "nasty" names is that by calling these children such ill fitting names, they will be disguised so much so that their ghost - parents from whom the fetish borrowed them cannot recognise and take them back to the ghost-land and this is the reason why every 'Bagyina' child is supposed to survive. Investigations have shown me that some 5 or 6 'Bagyina' children have died since 1948 at Banko. Almost all the children died of convulsions - 'Soro yare' - 'sky disease' which is attributed to devils. My fetish priest informant told me that these children died, because the parents failed to fulfil the rules laid down for them in the proper way of bringing these children up with respect to their special status as 'Bagyina' children. This may have been true, for instance, if the children were not trained to abstain from the particular taboo foods and also if the yearly propitiation of the gods were taken lightly and neglected. Similar in point of status to the 'Bagyina' child, are Twin Children. They are regarded as 'gods' and so well respected and their whims quickly acceded to. It is however thought unlucky for a woman to get twins if that is her first delivery. The reason for regarding getting twins at the very start of bearing children is firstly economic. Twins are more costly to bring up, so if a woman gets them and she has no helper - e.g. a rich mother or uncle, she will not get ^{enough} ~~enough~~ to care for both children and herself properly. Secondly, a woman who begins with twins may lose her life at child birth, because the labour pains are longer and severer. Great honour is due to every woman who gets twins. Her title is 'Owo Nta' - mother of two. She is exempt from paying stool-levy. If twins are girls, they are legally the wives of the chief. If they refuse to marry the chief, the headman of the family pays some compensation to the chief to free them. If one or other of girl twins marries first, the parents must pacify the other girl twin-sister by offering a hen to the Abammo fetish, which is constructed much the same as the 'Bagyina' fetish.



THE 8 YEAR OLD BAGYINA - KOFI SIMNE WITH HIS CLASSMATES
"BAGYINA" CHILD IN CENTRE.

The only difference is that if they are girl-twins, two hens are required; if boys two cocks; if boy and girl, a hen and a cock are required unlike the 'Bagyina fetish'. A woman, who has herself had twins is the person who constructs the 'Abammo' fetish. In all cases, the Abammo fetish is constructed on a Friday - because every twin is supposed to come into the world on Friday. Like the 'Bagyina' children twins abstain from eating yam until the 'Abammo' has been ceremonially ~~been~~ given some. Every Friday, the twins wash themselves and powder themselves with white clay and put on white cloths. This is meant to sanctify them from all evils they have come in contact with - e.g. their taboos. The main taboos of twins are 'Owea'; kisie - rat and the body of a dead person. Twins are not to go into a house where a corpse is lying in state. But when a member of the family dies, they stay in the house, and after the funeral obsequies, the 'Abammo' fetish is given two hens or cocks as the case may be in order to purify the twins. In outdooing twins, the parents fix a time - usually a Friday. All men and women at Banko are given notice the previous evening about the outdooing ceremony. Early in the morning that Friday, the parents take the twins to the Onwam river and get them bathed. When they come home, the babies are covered with white clay and dressed in white. Both parents also put on white cloths and put white clay on their shoulders and forehead.

Soon after, the mother prepares a cradle and puts the twins in it side by side. A woman who has had twins carries the children in the cradle, through the streets. First the company with the twins, parents and relatives and friends go to the chief and the queen-mother who give them their first present. In every case, a person cannot present a gift to one twin-sister or brother only. If you give one a penny - the other must be given a penny. If you give one a pin, the other must be given the same thing. As they go from house to house, they sing songs like these (1) Yepe eko, yepe eko, yepe eko, yepe eko. (We want one, we have had two) (2) Enne mate de nne - Atadwe; enne mate de nne - Atadwe. (Today I have had 'sweet' news like tiger-nuts.)

At Banko, a woman who successfully gets 9 or 10 or more children, whether within one marriage or several marriages occupies a venerable position in the community. In view of her long experience in marital affairs and in the caring of children in particular, all female members of the group and to some extent some males too, give her a great honour and give her the title - Nana - that is grand - mother. In all questions about marriage, divorce, birth, pregnancy, she is consulted, and her advice is heeded.

As a sign of the recognition of her great service done to her family by way of bearing 9 or 10 or more children for the family, the headman, Abusua panin, puts her on top of his 'honours list! This he does by making financial provisions which will make it possible for the woman to celebrate publicly the rites in connection with having had 9 or 10 children. This custom is called 'Badu - dwan' - 'sheep feast in honour of the mother of ten. The headman of the family provides one big white sheep, a bottle of gin, one piece of calico, gold dust, 10 precious beads like Bota or Nkakoa; the mother of ten finds some fresh finewood, a new fire place, 10 palm nuts, and the leaves of Bamha and Nsomme.

On this occasion, all the important gods in the area are informed of the celebration. Each fetish priest is served with gin and the priest also sends some donation to the woman and her ninth and 10th children. Early in the morning, the woman and her 9th & 10th children wash themselves and put on cloths made from the calico. The leaves of the herbs - Bamha and Nsomme are assembled with other things - 10 palm nuts, 10 beads; hair of each child, finger nails, the brass pot and a hen. Another woman who has herself had 9 or 10 children performs the rites of Badu-dwan and constructs the necessary fetish called 'Eduo' the 'Ten children's suman'. The gold-dust, 10 bead, palm nuts, the leaves of herb are all placed in the brass pot together with the hair and nails cut from the children. These are supposed to contain the 'soul' or spirit of the children. Later the fowl is killed, its body cut in half, and placed on the fetish. In the evening, the fowl may be removed and eaten by the boys.

In the day, when all the invitees have taken their places, the fetish priest slaughters the sheep and divides it into special parts - each bit goes to particular persons. A good deal of the meat is left for the woman and the 9th & 10th children. For the next seven days, they are to eat no other meat besides the sheep. No first-born child can eat of this sheep, so if there are such people in the house - young or old, they are not allowed to eat part of it. If this taboo is broken, the first born concerned may die or a serious mishap may befall him or her in due season. The whole week is a festive week for the family, so choicest meals are prepared for the rest of the members. Those who do not eat part of the sheep are given fowls to cook and eat.

None of the meat of the slaughtered sheep should be left beyond the 7th day. So on this day, the head and legs with other parts intentionally left go into the making of the soup. Some of the food, usually 'fufu' is given to friends and children of their neighbours. In due course, other mothers who perform the same custom will bring them like presents. On the 8th day, the fortunate mother and her two children - the 9th & 10th, - put on their best cloths, ornaments and go out to thank friends, relatives and particularly the father of the children and well-wishers. In each case, there is shaking of hands.

Like the 'Bagyina' or Twin children, the 9th & 10th children, 'Nkroma' and 'Badu' are regarded as specially lucky children and so they are overindulged in many homes. This often excites the anger and jealousy of the older sons and daughters of the family to whom less attention is given. Thus, it is not unusual for the parents to make special gifts to them whilst the other children are given nothing. It is believed by parents at Banko that these children - 'Nkroma & Badu' hold the spiritual power of preventing death or dangbat to all the children of the marriage. The death of any of them is therefore regarded as particularly very unfortunate, and the death is believed to affect the other children who may easily die next on occasion of the smallest illness. Also the 9th & 10 children (Nkroma & Badu) are supposed to have a very quick temper so the parents are willing to make allowances for them if they act foolishly or cruelly in a quarrel or anger.

The parents of the special children of the marriage, or even illegitimate status, - that is to say mothers of the 'Bagyina children, the twin and the 9th & 10th children - (Nkroma & Badu) take great pains and see that their respective fetishes are respected, rites are performed on suitable occasions, and the necessary taboos avoided. It is believed by the mothers at Banko that those parents who neglect these fetishes or go contrary to their taboos are punished in one way or the other - this may be sickness on the part of the parent- usually blindness in old women is attributed to this cause. But in cases, the illness may attack the children and more often than not, some may die. Here is a typical example of this belief. A man who is a pastor of the Apostolic Church at Banko tried to convert his own sister who had had ten children to the Christian faith. At first the woman agreed - and her fetish for the 9th and 10th children (the Badue fetish) was surrendered by her to be burnt by members of the Church at Banko. A few months after the incident cited above, the woman began to be upset and worried over what she had done. As luck would have it, her first daughter's child fell ill at Bibiani where the woman was staying with her husband. In no time, a message came to say that the child had died. The old woman began to show signs of some sort of insanity - talking to the open street, giving unintelligent orders to no one. When her husband consulted the clan god, the reply was that she was causing the troubles in her house, because she had thrown away that fetish, and as a result, the spirits of Badu and Nkroma were punishing her.



MOTHER SUCKLING BABY TO SLEEP.

CHAPTER IV

INFANCY (0 - 3 years)

NURSING: The mother of a new baby is supposed to have great pleasure and enthusiasm in nursing it. At Banko, when the old men are pouring libation to their gods and ancestral spirits, they say something like this: ("Ma oman yim mmaa ntumi nya nufu a nkwadaa nom ano".) that is to say, "we pray you to make the women's breasts able to suckle babies". The fact that a woman has delivered a normal baby who can suck her milk is therefore a great achievement to be proud of. I was informed by Nana Amma Ohu, the chief native midwife that on the first or second day of a child's birth, the mother's own milk is not sufficiently "ripe" (Engonoe) or thick to feed the baby. For this reason, as soon as the new-comer has been washed, (and this is done with the greatest care so that no bad scent will be noticed on him) a bed is made for him near his mother. Soon, another nursing mother, usually related to the child's mother, is called in to suckle the new baby. The first cry of the baby is interpreted to mean a demand to be fed, because it is the belief at Banko that babies journey a long way from (ASAMAADO) 'Ghost Land', and as a result of the long travel, the child gets very hungry on his arrival. I was informed also that sometimes it happens that a baby refuses to suck milk during the first two or three days. When this happens, the old women do not worry at all about it, because one explanation is that the baby thinks that milk is a strange food, different from what he used to eat in his old world. Still another explanation says that in the case of women whose labour takes a long time, the babies get too tired and weak, and so they lose their appetite for food. However, at other times, the refusal of the baby to suck milk is attributed to a common disease of very young babies called "ASRAM". This disease is supposed to be caused by the fetish of medicine men who saw the woman naked prior to birth. The sign of this disease is the immobility of the baby's jaws. It is believed that the throbbing movement on the baby's head is caused partly by this disease. The juice from kola nuts is besmeared on the head so as to close up the "rift" which causes this throbbing movement.

HOW TO SUCKLE BABY:

As soon as a mother gets her first baby, the old women teach her the proper way to hold a baby to suckle it. She is told that if the baby is mis-handled while it is being suckled, she may unknowingly cause the backbone to twist, and this may result in many ailments for the baby sooner or later. This is how the baby should be held while sucking milk. The baby is held by both hands of the mother, resting it on the lap, with its head slightly raised and pointing upwards and the body and legs of baby sloping crosswise on the mother's lap. This posture may be varied as the baby's body grows & hardens.

At times when mother wants to put the baby to sleep, she lies with the nipple in baby's mouth. As it sucks, it falls asleep very soon and lets go mother's breast. This is illustrated at page 30. When baby can sit up, she may do so on mother's lap and then take the nipple and suck.

TIMES OF FEEDING

According to all the mothers and the native or traditional midwives interviewed, I had the impression that the question of times of feeding babies does not arise and no more importance is attached to it than it is recognised at all. It is therefore an accepted principle that a mother should devise or evolve by her own intuition and common-sense the times and frequency of the baby's feeding. But the usual signal which tells the mother that baby wants a feed is the cry. But sometimes the baby does not stop crying after a good feed or just after a small interval than usual. In such a case, mother begins to suspect that it may be suffering from some ailment - e.g. stomachache or some other trouble. Upon such a suspicion, the mother washes the soot from a cooking pot or makes some mixture from the leaves of "Mfofo" and gives it a syringe to help cure the condition. At present, some mothers prefer to take such ill babies to the weighing Centre at Efiduase to consult the Nursing Sister there for advice and some medicine. But the majority of mothers will try this 'home' treatment first, and later go to the Centre after their attempts have proved fruitless. There are some babies who do not cry very much; in spite of this, the mother looks at the abdomen and if she sees that it has sunk lower than before, it is an indication that baby needs a feed, even though it may not be crying. At times when baby has eliminated much by way of faeces or urine, it tells the mother that more empty space is now made in the baby's stomach and so another feed should be given.

Thus, common-sense, right judgment and close observation of baby's face and actions are the sole pointers to times of feeding. Some mothers feed babies rather too often, because the duration of feeding may be barely five minutes. But if a mother knows that she will not be about the house for an hour or so, she gives baby more time at the feed. She may even force baby to suck more than usual. Vomiting is regarded as a sign of over-feeding the baby. The more enlightened mothers have told me that vomiting may be caused by an unhealthy condition of the baby's digestive system. For the first year, the mothers at Banko consider that mother's milk alone should be baby's food. Artificial feeds - like Klim milk and Nestles Milk are not encouraged at all, because they think that it is a sign of laziness on the part of mothers who give such feeds to their children instead of their breasts. Babies are fed throughout the night in the same manner as during the day. In the first three or four months, a baby may get three or more feeds in the night according to its needs. The same pointers to times for feeding, crying, urination, faeces are adhered to. Mothers take particular care to satisfy babies to prevent them from crying in the night, especially between midnight and cock crow. The explanation is that these are the times in which the wizards and witches wake up and go about doing havoc to people. If the child disturbs their peace with its constant cries, they may come and do it some harm and make it ill the following morning.

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WEANED BABY BEGINS TO EAT MASHED YAM FROM MOTHER'S HAND.

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It is also believed that that is why most sick Children die at night.

WEANING:

Most mothers have informed me - and I was convinced that most of them enjoy their duty in nursing their babies. There is only one mother who told me frankly that to her, nursing was a convenience or rather a great necessary evil. (~~The disease is called mastitis or Mastodynia~~). She said that every time she had a baby to suckle, sores formed at the nipple, and so it was a trying time for her. Because of this her children were trained to stop sucking as early as five or six months. She succeeded in weaning her children so early by giving them orange juice and introducing them to new foods - like porridge and 'akasa' or ripe plantain which is boiled and mashed. After the first year, most mothers begin to think of reducing the milk feeds of their babies. It is at this time that some of them begin to fear that they may spoil their figure if babies continue to suck too much milk. The mothers who have little milk become worried about their condition. They eat plenty of ground nuts - especially fresh undried ones, so that the milk content of their breasts may be increased. It is believed that having too little milk in mother's breast is a diseased condition of the breasts. A common ailment of mother's breast is a swelling of the teats. This may affect one or both. When this happens, the baby is fed on another mother's breast. I saw three cases of this swelling of mother's breasts. In the first case, I discovered that the sick mother's child was coughing, and so when its baby had sucked a healthy mother's breast for a week and a half, the strong baby contracted the cough and began to cough badly. The mothers are not aware of this: they told me that every child is bound to cough before it passes from babyhood to proper childhood.

The mother is expected to be prompt in suckling the baby. It is regarded as harmful and unnatural for an infant to cry with hunger for more than a short period. Many mothers therefore will stop everything they are doing in order to give their babies feeds at once. Neglecting to feed baby at the proper instant is a just cause for the husband to beat the wife, because this may make the baby ill, and the hospital expenses will be paid by him. Marital intercourse may take place during nursing provided the mother has passed the 40th day after the birth and she is quite well. Mothers at Banko regard weaning as something unnatural, and so they think that children may be allowed to suck when they are well over two years. Few mothers will attempt to wean children before they are two years old or at least 18 months old. Thus, there is no fixed period for weaning children. There are determining factors for weaning a child.

TEETHING:

When a baby cuts its first teeth, it is a sign that sooner or later, he will want to use them. A simple ceremony or rite is observed by the mother. It is prohibited to mention that the child has teeth until this 'outdooing' rite for the teeth has been completed. This, the mother does by boiling one or two eggs. She breaks one end of the boiled egg and strikes it against the baby's teeth, saying, "so and so, today you have cut your teeth, and I am giving you this egg so that you may eat, and grow to enjoy more other foods".

If the baby likes, the mother may give it some of the 'red' part of the egg to eat. The penalty for making mention of babies teeth before this rite has been performed is that the contravener should give eggs or money to the baby, and evidently this goes to its mother. Another sign for meaning is that of conception of the mother. When another baby is expected, the mother becomes aware that soon the new baby will take the place of the old one, and so she should see that the 'old' baby reverts to another diet. Also I was told that a pregnant woman's milk becomes sour and so, sometimes some baby's own reactions to this condition of the mother's milk makes weaning necessary. At other times, the mother's convenience necessitates that the baby should be weaned - e.g. when the mother is sick or when she thinks that nursing is spoiling her figure. A mother can tell when her figure is being spoiled by nursing when she finds that her collar-bone is losing the fleshy covering and her general health is bad. Most children begin to bite the nipple when they are sucking after teething. When this becomes too frequent, the mother begins to suspect that baby needs a feed in which biting may be done, and so weaning must be resorted to. Some wise mothers begin to wean their children gradually. This they do by giving babies, in addition to milk feeds, some foods like 'akasa', 'koko' and porridge. Some kind of solid food - e.g. boiled yam or ripe plantain may be given babies who are between 12 and 18 months old. But there are many more mothers who wean their babies very suddenly when the child has not been accustomed to the new food. Thus, no pacifiers or comforters are given. It is believed that babies will suck as long as mother allows them to do so. Therefore, to wean children, some deterrents should be used. It is therefore common to see a mother put some medicine in babies nostrils so that it may stop sucking milk. My chief informant, Nana Yaa Minka has told me that she has one such medicine that can stop a child from sucking milk at once. Some mothers disgust babies by applying bitter-tasting herbs and fruit on the nipple. When the baby finds that the 'sweet' milk has turned sour or bitter, it will refuse it. I have been told also that despite all these cruel devices for weaning children, there are some children who will not take to the new food: thus they cry it out until the mother becomes fearful and allows it to suck. Many mothers regard prolonged nursing as a sign of good-motherliness. For this reason, usually the 9th and 10th children, who generally are the last children, are given this favour. I have thus met a child nearly 4 years old still sucking his mothers milk, and at the same time enjoying a heavy meal with the other little boys who have been weaned a year or more ago. There is a common belief that such prolonged nursing causes children's teeth to become discoloured and consequently crack or break and become blackish as I found among some children between the ages of 2½-4 years. At any rate, members of the family regard the child whose nursing period is prolonged as childish or weak and usually call him names like "babyish" or effeminate. I have noticed that such children are entirely dependent on the mother and so they do not venture to go in the company of the father or other children. Most often, such a child becomes unsociable with other children.

The grandmothers and grandfathers of babies do not entertain weaning at all. Everyone of them regards weaning of any sort premature and discourages it. They maintain that children should be allowed to outgrow sucking themselves and not forced to do so before they are ready for it. Some mothers believe that the bad effects of weaning are weeping which is thought to make children grow lean and weak and nervous. Running down of the bowel or weaning-brash is regarded as both harmful and unnatural. I was informed that many children die between 2 and 3 years of their lives due to weaning resulting in this diarrhoea. Mothers at Banko attribute delayed motor development in crawling or walking to a hasty weaning of the child. In any case, a mother who successfully weans her child regards it fortunate and a great lessening of her trouble, because at this time, she can leave the baby at home in charge of other older children, and thus save herself the trouble of carrying baby on her back as she goes to farm or does her domestic work. At this time, when baby has been given some mashed yam or plantain, it can be left by itself to eat and play. See page 32.

THUMB -SUCKING

Babies are not left free to suck their thumbs. If they need suck at all, it is thought preferable that the first and second fingers should be sucked instead. If a baby sucks the thumb, it may bring death to the mother or father. In no way is thumb-sucking regarded as an indication of desire on the part of baby to be fed.

SOLID-FOOD

The baby's introduction to solid food comes simultaneously with its first sitting down. This usually begins shortly before the mother thinks of weaning. As mother and others sit at meals, baby watches them. Sometimes a mother exclaims that baby is wanting to eat. Thus, first she offers just a little ~~but~~ of say, yam or ripe plantain to it. She feeds the baby in this way by the hand. I am told that most recently, mothers have been advised to start giving baby 'akasa' or porridge first, but two or three mothers have assured me that the former works better with children. They told me that babies fed on porridge and such like foods find it hard to revert to more solid food. Whether a child is given ~~porridge~~ or yam, mothers think that it is better to give it by hand, because the spoon feels cold on baby's lips and may act as a deterrent to its liking food, very often babies associate spoons with unpleasant medicines. Between 12 months and 20 months, the baby entirely depends on the mother or her substitute, usually the grandmother or sister for her feeding. It is regarded as not ready to feed itself. If it does it, it may soil its body and clothes with the food, much to mother's annoyance. In many cases, babies are encouraged to chew their own food in order to learn the art of biting and chewing food. But if babies are eating roasted ground-nuts, or plantains, it may be pre-chewed and inserted in baby's mouth to complete the process of eating. Mothers know that such small and hard nuts or crusty plantains may be swallowed by the children and cause some stomach disease, and that is why food is prechewed up for the baby. Little children between 2-3 years are very serious and jealous about their food, so usually mothers give each child's food to him separately. Children of 2 or 3 years have their quarrels mostly centred about food. Later on, when they are a little older, they learn to join others at the common meal.

If there are one or two children, they may eat together with the women in the family. When there are 3 or more children, then it is considered proper for them to share a separate dish by themselves. Children are given food at the adults' regular meal times - that is at breakfast, lunch and dinner, but children may be fed between these meal times whenever they cry or demands for food.

CHANGING APPETITES OF CHILDREN

The child who refuses to eat is a headache to its mother. If the child does not eat at all, ~~and~~ she takes the necessary steps to get some medicine for it. If the child does not eat, or eats very little, the mother becomes worried, fearing that the child will grow lean, and people will ridicule her as being lazy and unable to cook for her child. A child who refuses to eat may also catch diseases easily and die. In order to entice such children to eat, the mother gives them promises of new dresses or toys or sweets like sugar or toffee. At other times, the mother gives such a child very choicest meat and delicacies to make him eat and eat enough. On the other hand, a child who overeats is regarded unfortunate or selfish. Overeating is believed to make a child corpulent, slow and weak in his movements. Nursing mothers have told me that the chief cause of vomiting by suckling babies is overeating. In the case of children between 3-4 years, who have been weaned, overeating is even more dangerous. Overeating in such children is believed to make children bed-wetters and also give them stomach-aches. Some mothers think that overeating has a bad effect on the intellect of children. If a child indulges in too much eating, it is thought that he will develop his physical side more quickly than his mental. Consequently, such children may have the physical bodies of children of 5 or 7, whilst their mental age may be 3 or 4 and their actual chronological age may be two or three years. As stated above, most parents and their children stay in Ahafo where they are farming. At these places food abounds plentifully, and so children who are brought up in Ahafo generally get better developed bodies than those at Banko where food is much less plentiful. Because of this, it has become a proverb among the community here - that a person is growing like an Ahafo child - showing that plentiful supply of food for children enhances their quick physical growth.

The weaned child of 2-3 years, is expected to eat kenkey and porridge and bits of boiled or roasted yam or plantain only. These foods are considered specially good for such children, because they can easily be digested by the "worms" in the stomach. My informants strongly believed that there are 'worms' which assist digestion in the stomach. They told me that meat and eggs are particularly bad for children, because these cannot be digested easily, and they cause belching and wind breaking in the stomach.

Between 3 and 4 years upwards, the child is supposed to be ready to eat adult food. At this age, children must have already got accustomed to eating fufu and 'apesie', the chief dishes. At any rate, children of these ages - 3-4 or 5 upwards may not overeat fufu, because they may get stomachache or other disorders. The most palatable food for children at these ages is ripe plantain which is boiled into 'apesie'. Owing to the sugar in it, most children eat it very voraciously. Yam or plantain which is mashed - called "ETO", is another food which every child of this age enjoys well. Pepper, salt, onions and sometimes fish are added to the boiled

yam or cocoyam or plantain which is then mashed together into a soft mass. Later palm oil may be added to complete its deliciousness. 'Apesie' with broth prepared from cocoyam leaves and pepper with salt and palmoil forms another palatable food for children. Adults also enjoy this dish.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDE TO SOME FOODS

Children who begin to eat food other than the mother's milk dislike too much pepper (according to children's standards) in their food. To children, this is the most unpalatable food, owing to its hot-tasting nature. Children who begin to eat fufu find it unpalatable at first, but as the days roll by, they get quite used to it and then enjoy it very well. At Banko, curiously enough, I have seen that most children before school going age do not like to eat banana or pawpaw. Parents seem to discourage children below 7 or 8 years from eating these fruits, because they say these fruits give children a disease called 'ASONO', "Kwashiorkor" - in which the affected child becomes inactive and very dull or quiet. Other unpalatable foods for children are okros, put in soup, and the Accra or Fanti type of kenkey, in which the husks of the maize have not been removed. Because of the presence of the husks and fermentation, children do not enjoy its taste as they do the Asante kind of kenkey which contains sugar. An old woman told me that a few years ago, cassava was disliked by all children and most adults at Banko. But just after the Second World War when food became very scarce, children changed their attitude to the eating of cassava, and to-day every child at Banko enjoys cassava fufu or 'Apesie' as much as yam or cocoyam fufu. If a child tries a dish which he normally dislikes to eat, he may be rewarded with a larger share of the bits of meat for the family. I saw two children, a boy and a girl who did not like to eat fufu. The parents are very much upset by this attitude of the children to fufu, and so each time, they are enticed with big pieces of meat, so that they may eat fufu. One of these parents has told me that each time she succeeded in making her child eat the fufu, the next day, it fell ill. As a result, she has now stopped forcing fufu on the child. Very recently when I visited this woman at home, I saw that the little boy was now learning on his own to eat fufu. The other child, the older girl still refuses to eat fufu despite her mother's repeated attempts at forcing her to eat it. When children have two or three or more dishes ready for them to eat, the mothers usually give the palm soup or the groundnut soup last, so that the children clear all the dishes. This "choice" dish may not be given to them until the plain soup and the others have been eaten. The mothers know that if children were given the palm or ground nut soup first, they would not eat all the dishes. Many mothers use food as rewards for children who behave well, particularly when the child is at the beck and call of the mother and runs errands for her. The child who is always with the mother gets the best and largest part of the food prepared for the family. A proverb says (Akoko a obeh oni na owe abebe sre). "The chick near the hen always enjoys the thigh of a grasshopper!" The absent child may have nothing left for him, this is to teach him that it pays to stay at home near mother if one wants to be well-fed.

Sometimes a child who misbehaves - e.g. the child who refuses to accompany mother or father to farm may be starved all the time his parents may be away on the farm. If a child is regarded as dutiful and helpful to his parents, he is never made to go hungry. Of course there were four or five radical mothers, aged between 40 and 50 who assured me that however badly their children misbehaved, they could not eat and leave them to go hungry. One asked - "If I do not feed my child, who is to do so? I shall feel pain in my bowels if I am filled and my child goes hungry". Between the time of weaning and the ages 2-3 children eat food which is slightly different from that of adults. Much meat, pepper and soup are the chief differences. The mothers believe that too much flesh or soup is not good for these young people. The explanation is that the former will cause indigestion and the latter will make children wet their beds at night. As children have not got accustomed to the hot taste of pepper at this age, usually some children weep because of the sensation they experience in the mouth and on the lips. When this happens, children are encouraged to drink plenty of water in order to minimise the pain. In other cases, an ember may be placed near the lips by the mother. This is supposed to remove the hot sensation caused by pepper. If the child is very young, an additional piece of meat may bribe him to keep quiet. An interesting point was made to me by Nana Yaa Menka as to why children are given little or no flesh to eat at meals. She said that children do not contribute or pay for the purchase of meat, so they should be given little or none. Secondly, she maintained that if a little child is given a big piece of meat from the start, he will expect to have still bigger bits as he grows, but as the society does not approve of such a behaviour, it is better to give him little or no meat at first when he is a little child. As he grows, meat may be given him gradually, and in increasing quantities as he grows until finally he reaches the adult stage when he can pay for meat and so be entitled to the adult's share. This same principle applies when adults and little children are eating 'apesie' with eggs. The lion's share is taken by the adults and the children are given very little. At Banko the people are not aware of the fact that children require more foods that contain protein than adults do. Another point she made is that if an adult eats fufu and he does not eat meat or fish together with it, he may become deaf.

From the first time children begin to eat solid food, they are fed by their mothers or sisters or other relatives. At the age of 2 years, when the child can sit or crawl he may hold its own food to eat, with a little help from mother or her substitute. By the age of 3 or 4 or latest 5, every child is expected to feed itself without any help at all. Little teaching about table manners is done at this time. The most parents do now is to see that children don't soil themselves and that they wash their hands after meal.

At Banko, mothers think that it is premature to give children toilet training until the fourth or even the sixth month. Thus, it is expected that the infant from the day of birth to about the sixth month may ease itself anytime, any where with little or no notice. At any rate, after a good feed, the child is expected to defecate or when he is kicking and throwing his feet and arms. From the fourth or sixth month when mother suspects that baby wants to ease itself, she holds it in her arms with the buttocks pointing to the ground.



BABY ENJOYS COLD BATH IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY.

In order to induce the child to urinate, mother makes a hissing sound "ssss" to baby, shaking it and telling it to perform. Usually baby answers the order and urinates. If it is to defecate, the mother holds the baby in her two hands and seats it between her two feet on the ground. This serves as a stool for baby to sit on: the open space remains the place for the faeces to fall down onto. This method of making or helping baby to defecate is called "Bo abofra trase".- literally making baby sit to attend stool. This method applies to babies of 6 or more months old, who are able to sit with some facility. From the sixth month up to the time of crawling or even walking (2nd Birth day) babies are trained in this way to defecate. But I have noticed in more than three homes here that some mothers are beginning to give chamber-pots to children to sit on for the same purpose. I noticed that one child did not seem to like sitting on the pot; this made her defecation rather an unpleasant business for her. But whenever she was seated on her mother's feet, she defecated much more quickly and willingly.

When the child is 2 years old or more, the mother selects or shows him a spot, usually outside the house as the place to visit for defecation. But it is not uncommon to see in several houses selected places in the yard used by children for this purpose. Two or more children may share such a place. This method of training children in toilet is the bone of contention between the mothers at Banko and the Sanitary-Overseer who does not tolerate this method. Mothers do not recognise the danger of leaving children's faeces open, unswept off for hours - not to mention the flies that visit the faeces and later settle on food in the houses. The sanitary-overseer is therefore very strict on mothers who persist in this insanitary practice. By the 4th or 5th year, the child is expected to go to the pit latrine for toilet purposes. Mothers give toilet material - old pieces of torn cloth, paper or other material and show children how to dry their anus after defecation. Boys go to the men's latrine, and girls go to the women's latrine. When a child can sit on the pit-latrine, it is considered that he has completed his toilet training. It is at this stage that children are allowed to eat together with adults from the same dish. I have been told that though bowel training may end by the 4th or 5th year, yet there are lapses in some children, especially at night when children may be asleep.

When a child goes to stool, the mother may praise the child when the performance is good. Before the child is weaned, that is up to two years or more, mothers expect babies to defecate at least once daily. If this does not happen smoothly, mothers get upset and troubled about the condition. Nana Menka informed me that if a very young child cannot go to stool, then it means it is going to grow very fat. This happens between the second month and the sixth month. But if this constipation continues longer than three days or more, something must be done to remove the trouble. Syringing is the commonest remedy for such a condition; also the bark of a tree called "Nyameremoo" when put in babies' water enables babies to defecate very easily. The mother praises baby whenever baby has good performance at defecation and so makes the child suckle the more.

From the age of 3 years upwards, mothers take the trouble to inspect children's stool to see if all is well with it. If the stool is watery or shiny, mother knows that the child must be ill, so she gives it some medicine. Many mothers have told me that their babies who are 2 or 3 years old suffering from diarrhoea became better when these babies were given treatment at Efiduase Clinic. They have assured me that the native medicines are no longer good enough to cure children of the trouble. Though mothers praise children for good performance at defecation, if children's visits to the stool become too frequent, they begin to suspect that the children are ill. Under no circumstances do mothers scold or punish babies who are under 2 years for soiling or wetting. Most of the mothers interviewed told me that very often, a careful mother can see the signal when baby wants to urinate or defecate. But if mother is not watchful but neglects the child, then it serves her right to be soiled or wetted by the baby. But when the child begins to talk, and can make his intention known - but refuses to do so and wets or soils himself or the mother, she may scold him or even beat him. When a child is 4 or 5, he is expected not to soil the house or the compound, but he is to keep to the portion given to him for the purpose. Usually children's bowel training completes earlier than bladder training.

ENURESIS

It is believed that a child who is over 4 or 5 years, who wets himself at night has a diseased bladder - that is, it is believed that there are holes in the child's bladder and that is why the urine cannot be controlled. Mothers do not show any sign of disgust or anger over the very young child's dirtiness. If a mother does this in the presence of the child, it is thought dangerous, because *intentional* the very young child's act, and as a result, he may become ill. If mother wants to say anything at all, all that she can say is that the baby has "killed" her. - Literally "he has done something to kill her patience - "Eyi de, woakum me". The baby who is about 2 years old is expected to have faeces that are fluid and thick but not stiff or stony. When the child is over 2 years and is eating solid foods that adults eat, he is expected to have faeces that are somewhat solid but soft and elastic. Faeces that easily fall in particles or bits - or those that are slimy or watery are looked upon with fear that the child is ill. At any rate, the quantity of children's faeces is expected to be considerable, the greater, the better pleased is the mother.

Promptness in elimination is a thing on which mothers place great importance. If a baby is prompt at elimination, it means that all is well with his digestive system. On the other hand, a child who spends a very long time at elimination is supposed to be ill or abnormal. To induce a baby to eliminate quickly, the old lady who usually washes the baby pours some warm water into the baby's rectum before it is washed. This is done to babies up to 18 months. After this age, promptness in elimination may be induced by the mother putting some powdered ginger into the rectum. Because of the pain which the ginger gives to baby, he will go to stool at once so that he may get rid of the ginger which is giving him pain. I have noticed some mothers who got upset and worried about their babies who could defecate quickly, and thus taking up some of their time which they could profitably employ at the kitchen or elsewhere about their work in house.



GIRLS LEARN TO DRESS LIKE THEIR MOTHERS EARLY.

Many mothers gave their opinion that there is practically no difference between boys' and girls' training with respect to the ease in bowel & bladder training of either of them. Children's ability to learn and complete bowel and bladder training depends far more on individual differences than on sex. Thus, in my investigation at Banko into the ability of Children in mastering toilet training, I found that in three families, the 5 boys have the same ability in completing this training between ages 4-7 just as the 6 girls have. In two other families, I saw that all the six children, two aged 4, and the rest aged 5 had not mastered the training. There were 3 boys and 3 girls - but none of them had mastered bladder control. Further investigation and comparison of these two groups of families showed that the first groups of children came from families who had a higher standard of living than the second group. Environment and the standard of living of children's homes therefore may be a great contributory factor in the ease with which children master bladder & toilet training.

Two mothers informed me that after the first month of a baby's life, constipation does not matter at all. The reason is that by being constipated, the child gets fatter and fatter. It is believed therefore that from the first to the third month, a child must be constipated if he is to grow fat and big. But during the first two or three weeks of the baby's life, constipation is very bad or even dangerous. If it is not attended to quickly, the child may fall ill, and if the condition is not removed early, it may die. The explanation is that the baby's intestines are very delicate and so if the faeces are retained too long, they may become 'hot' and so 'boil' the entire digestive track and bring death. Mothers therefore worry greatly over constipation in their babies. Very young babies may be given a syringe; purgatives - whether native or European are considered harmful for babies under 2 years. When a new baby has constipation, the bark of a tree - called 'Nyameremoo' is put in his cup of drinking water, so as to act as a laxative for the baby. There were three new babies who were given this medicine and the result seemed very beneficial. Between ages 2-5 years or more, when children are constipated the syringe is the most commonly used remedy. But some mothers told me that some European purgatives - e.g. castor oil or epsom salts may be given to purge. Mothers believe that constipation in children between 9 months and 2 years old is caused by children eating dust as they sit on the ground. Therefore if a child of this category is all the time constipated, the mother sees to it that the baby does not have access to the dust on the ground. Overeating in the child of 2 years and over is also thought to be another cause of constipation, therefore mothers do not allow such children to overeat. Mothers are not aware of the fact that irregular meals and unsuitable food or incorrect chewing may also contribute to the constipated condition of the children's bowels. Mothers dislike constipation because it causes children to break wind which is very offensive to the public or other members of the family present with the child.

Comparatively, mothers fear and believe more in the fatality of diarrhoea than in constipation. Every mother knows that if proper medicine or quick attention is not given to the baby who has diarrhoea he may die in seven days or less.

The mothers of children at Banko are very uncertain as to the real cause of diarrhoea in their children. Some mothers believe that when a mother is pregnant, her milk can give diarrhoea to her baby who continues to be suckled at the time. In babies under two years, mothers believe that teething brings them diarrhoea. This they explain that children may very soon change over from liquid food - milk, to a solid one, and so nature tries to purge the baby prior to weaning. On the other hand, the child who is 2 years old or more should not have diarrhoea, because already he has started with solid food which should naturally make his faeces solid: so if diarrhoea sets in, it means that something is wrong. Diarrhoea in such children is supposed to be caused by wizards and witches who want to kill the child indirectly so as to avoid being detected. Because diarrhoea makes children grow thin and weak, mothers are very much afraid of it. At Banko, there is an old woman who has a native cure for it. She squeezes the liquid in the leaves of a herb into a handkerchief, then pours this liquid into the eyes of the child who has diarrhoea. This is supposed to cure the condition.

Five mothers testified to me concerning the efficacy of this treatment of diarrhoea. The old lady told me that when she puts the liquid-medicine into the child's eyes, the eyes "open" and so see those devilish persons who are troubling the child. If the child is 3 years or more and has some language, he may call out names of some people, usually names of members of the child's own family during the fit of the diarrhoea. When this happens, it means that it is those people who are troubling the child with diarrhoea. Common dust may be purposely given to a little baby with diarrhoea so that his stomach may 'become hard', because mothers at Banko believe that dust-eating will cause a constipated condition. Mothers who know that their children get diarrhoea or constipation very frequently get an earthen-ware and gather the bark of a tree called OFENA and its leaves, put them in the pot, add water and boil to make a concoction which is given to the children the first thing every morning. Usually salt is added to flavour it: at times very young children, 2 or 3 years old may be allowed to eat their roasted plantain or cocoyam and yam together as they drink this concoction, just in the same way as we eat bread and drink tea or coffee along with it. It is believed that the drinking of this concoction has the power of correcting and preventing any disorders of the stomach. At present, many mothers are beginning to doubt the efficacy of the treatment of stomach troubles by the native doctors with their herbal medicines. It has become the practice that whenever babies and children have these bowel ailments, their mothers rush them to the Clinic at Efiduase. It is the younger generation of mothers who are gaining confidence in the treatment given at the clinic. A small section of mothers who belongs to the First Century Faith do not give any medicine at all to children who get constipation or diarrhoea. During an interview with three mothers in this church, I was told that children get stomach troubles because their parents have sinned or perhaps the children themselves had sinned. The only cure was confession and the laying on of hands by the elders of their church for the sick child. Of the small Muslim community at Banko, mothers take their children who have any sickness or trouble to the medicine man or the clinic; they are not restricted as to the sort of treatment they give to their children when they are ill. At any rate, if the illness of a child is very serious, the mother may take it to the Imam at Banko. There was once a case like this; the Imam wrote something on his board with his black ink in Arabic, washed it all over into a drinking cup and gave it to the child to drink to cure the stomach trouble.



SOMETIMES BABY'S BATH CALLS FOR MUCH CRYING.

The act of elimination and things connected with it are regarded improper to talk about openly. As early as children have mastered a little language, they are taught to use polite words to express these ideas or wants. The word for elimination or defecation is 'ne', but children are not allowed to say this when they want to go to stool. Very young children, between 2 and 3 years or 4 may say it, but as soon as children pass this stage, they are old enough to avoid these words or expressions. If a child wants to defecate, he may say "I want to go to the back of the yard or house". "Going to the back of the house" where children defecate is a polite way of saying or expressing the same idea. Another way of saying this is - literally, 'I am going to prepare myself'. This expression is commonly used in the primary school, when children want to go to latrine or to urinate. At the middle school stage, children may say "I am going somewhere" literally - when they want to go to latrine or to urinate. The mere mention of faeces or urine is thought of as impolite on the lips of children, and so they must not say them. It is a sign of low breeding to talk about these eliminatory things in the language we use for them. 'Bush' or 'village' children, however can express themselves openly this way.

There are special times and places where the use of toilet language is particularly called for. For instance, when a child is in a gathering of his adults or playmates, he should not say or refer to things about toilet openly. It is more so when the children are eating. Talking or referring to the toilet at meals is a great breach of decency. The reason is that toilet is regarded as dirty and undesirable, and the mere mention of it when others are eating heartily has the power to spoil their appetite. It is therefore improper for a mother to expose or allow her child to perform eliminatory functions in the presence of people who are eating. This convention is applicable in the case of children who over 2 years old, because the faeces of such children give more offence than children under that, age. As stated above, when a young child defecates and some of the faeces happen to fall into mothers food which she is eating, on no account should she throw the food away or stop eating. All the participants at the meal may stop eating, but the mother of the baby must eat the entire meal. If she refuses to eat the meal so spoiled by her babies faeces, it is believed that the baby may fall ill or even die. Every mother believes this, but I saw that mothers took great care that this did not happen at all. Moreover, whenever a mother was ready to eat her meal, she saw that her baby had been first suckled and put in its bed before she sat to take her own meal. But sometimes it happens that a mother must carry baby on her lap. Other mothers assured me that they would not eat such food spoiled by baby - they did not believe that that would kill the baby. By the seventh or eighth year, the child knows what to say or not to say about toilet things. Mothers are able to 'coin' words of their own for the names of things about toilet. In one family, the word for faeces is 'kankan' that is literally 'smelling matter.' In another family, they call wind-breaking "spoiling the air". When children talk like this about toilet, they are regarded polite.

Children who are 2-4 years may perform eliminatory functions without any sense of shame or fear. The only objection to this practice is that the child does not eliminate in the house, while others are eating, provided that they go to the particular 'spot' set aside for the purpose.

they

At six or seven years of age, children are encouraged to do eliminatory functions in private. It is at this time that boys or girls are made to eliminate outside the house on a spot given for the purpose. Those children whose motor development is advanced may begin to attend stool at the public latrine, girls going to women's latrine, and the boys going to men's latrine. Some parents perform eliminatory functions in front of children. But they take care to cover their private parts so that children may not see them. There are a good many mothers or fathers who will not allow their children to stand in front of them while they are performing eliminatory functions. When they and the children go to the pit-latrine, they allow the children to finish elimination first before they too go to attend. These parents told me that if children between ages 7 and 9 see the private parts of parents, they will discuss them in public. Here is a case in point. At Banko, a woman with a girl who is 7 or 8 years old married a second man when the former marriage dissolved a year or so ago. The foster-father who is the new husband was urinating when this eight-year-old girl happened to pass by. She noticed the foster-father's penis and exclaimed "Look, papa 'A' has a long penis like my father's". For the same reason, some adults will not perform eliminatory functions in the presence of children whether they are their own sons and daughters or not. They also say that some children are 'bad' or make jokes when they see adults break-wind loudly at the pit-latrine. It is therefore the common practice of adults at Banko to drive away the small boys or girls who happen to be at the pit-latrine so that they may also go to ease themselves.

When babies of a month or more break-wind, or when children between two years and seven break wind, they are praised for the act. The explanation is that by breaking wind, these babies or children are literally spoken of as "curing themselves of some disease of some sort". It is therefore encouraged by parents. Whenever a baby breaks wind, the mother takes it as a signal that the baby wants to eliminate and therefore gets it in the proper position to do so. As the child grows - say from 2 years upwards, the child's wind-breaking is frowned upon by the mother. This is particularly so, when the action is done by the child in the presence of other adults. The reason is that the mother fears that her friends may mistake and assume that she did the wind-breaking which is regarded as disgraceful for an adult to do in public. Wind-breaking is regarded as a twin sister of defecation, so children who are 5 or more years old are scolded or punished if they do it when others are nearby. It sometimes happens that in order to avoid scolding, some clever boys or girls break wind noiselessly while sitting with adults or other children. But sooner or later, the child will be found out. Mothers have an interesting way of detecting who 'did' it when it was done among many children. The mother says "I am going to bind the stomach of whoever did it, so the one who did it should confess it, otherwise by tomorrow morning, that person's stomach will have got rotten". Usually this threat puts fear into the so-called wrongdoer and so he gives himself up. The penalty for such a child is hooting by the mother and the rest of the children. At times the threat may be unsuccessful. Then the mother may go round the children "on smelling" inspection of each child's cloth or clothes. The child in whose cloth or clothes the mother "smells" a really offensive odour is singled out as the culprit and hooted as usual. Mothers believe that constant wind-breaking is caused in children by children eating too much meat or fish or other animal matter.



THE FATHER TOO ENJOYS CARRYING HIS BABY IN HIS ARMS.

Maize and groundnuts that are fresh are also regarded as another cause of wind in the stomach. When a child is sitting among adults or with his parents, it is thought uncouth for the child to say aloud that some one has broken wind. Wind-breaking in the presence of adults by other adults is also held in great contempt. Wind-breaking in girls of 8 or 9 years and in women in general is thought to be unhealthy and as a symptom of some illness that will soon come to light. People who are frequently breaking wind therefore have to prepare some enema with ginger and apply it so as to cure it. Little boys and girls are given ginger balls in the rectum to cure wind in the stomach. When a child has hiccoughs, he is given water to drink to relieve it. But the baby who is two or three months old is supposed to get hiccoughs very often because it is with hiccoughs that such babies grow and get fatter and fatter until they begin to sit down. Hiccoughs in children who are between 2 and 4 months are therefore practically regarded as natural and beneficial to the child just as constipation in this period is regarded as able to make the child grow fat and big. When children are 2 years or more, hiccoughs are said to be unnatural and harmful to them if they are neglected when they occur. Hiccoughs may cause choking and perhaps death in the end. Older children's hiccoughs are supposed to be caused by their failing to drink water at proper times e.g. when the child has eaten a meal or when the child tries to swallow larger morsels of food than he can swallow without effort. Whenever a child has hiccoughs, he is given water to drink in order to remove it. Adults at Banko fear hiccoughs in themselves very much. It is called "Saman yare" - (disease of ghosts). Whenever an adult is ill and hiccoughs set in, the people at Banko say the sick person will surely die. Hiccoughs are associated with diseases of the heart. Adults who frequently get hiccoughs fear that they may have a heart disease and so they set out to get medicines from a herbalist at Banko, noted for his medicines for curing heartache.

Belching is regarded as the most unnatural and undesirable eliminatory function among the people at Banko. It is thought impolite to belch in public. A child who is all the time belching is suspected of indigestion and given syringes. Mothers here think that belching and vomiting go together, and so they say that when a child belches and vomits very often, it means that his stomach has become sore. The syringe or the "Ofena medicine" is the cure for this trouble.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

It is the belief of the mothers at Banko that children are naturally restless, from the day of their birth, or even during pregnancy. It is common to hear a pregnant woman saying that the unborn baby she is carrying will be a troublesome child because she experiences some movements of the child in her womb some times. When the child is moving like this, the woman says that it has stood up on its legs stretching its full length to see light. This is a sign of maturity for the birth.

As soon as the new baby comes, it is therefore expected to move its limbs and wriggle its body and perhaps cry: but if the baby rests quiet without moving, it is thought to be too tired: so cold water is thrown on him to wake him up: sometimes this makes the baby move and cry, at other times it fails to do so, and it may be taken for granted as stillborn.



. SIX MONTH OLD KWAME SITS WITHOUT SUPPORTS.

During the first few days and say the first three weeks of a baby's life, young mothers who have had their first child are instructed to be extra careful in handling the baby. To give her daughter practical lessons in this, the young mother's grandmother takes care of the new baby, washes it, holds it for the real mother to watch and imitate later on. At the early stages, the new baby is held by the two arms together with the adults arm under the length of the spine in order to prevent it from twisting and hurting the child. If a child is taken up by one hand only, it is said that in future he will get earache. Until the umbilical cord heals, the child is not carried on the back of the mother or her assistant. At this stage, the baby is expected to lie in his bed on his back kicking and throwing the arms. The baby lies always on its back, and does not practically move any where, except that some times its head falls off the pillow on which he is sleeping and the mother or any adult near by corrects it.

CARRYING OF BABY ON MOTHER'S BACK

When the umbilical cord heals, the baby may be carried on its mothers back or on the back of the nurse who is usually the grandmother or aunt or other female relations. In the first two months, the baby has not learnt to control its neck, so great care is taken so that when it is carried on its mother's back, the neck does not make its head hang down from the back. The cover-cloth is so pressed against the neck, that it can hardly move. This is considered a safety measure to prevent the baby's neck from being broken or hurt. The two arms are also covered, so that if you meet a mother carrying her baby at dusk, you may suppose that she is carrying a ball on the back owing to the rounded shape of the baby. I noticed that some babies refused to be so tied with cloth at the back: such babies were supposed to develop earlier than others. Babies of 2 months are supposed to be able to recognise their mother when she stands near, or at least the baby can follow her with its eyes wherever she moves, without turning the head or neck. Between the 5th and 6th month, the baby begins to move its head. When mother is carrying baby at this time, she may not tie the cloth too high towards the neck, because now the baby has control over the neck and carries the head in position with little or no trouble.

BABY'S FIRST SITTING

It is at this time that adventurous mothers begin to make their children sit on the ground. For the first time when baby is made to sit, the mother puts pillow or stools or any such thing that will prevent the child from falling down. When the baby sits down, his arms are stretched forward and the hands rested on the floor to act as an additional support to balance him. Often an older child, usually a brother or sister of the baby is made to sit behind the baby so that if it happens to fall, it may be caught in this child's arms. This first straight posture in sitting may take a month or two before the next stage of the child's motor training is attempted.

Some babies are made to sit rather too soon, before they are ready, because the mother sees that her baby, born at the same time as another who sits easily, does not sit or intend to sit at all. Force is sometimes used to make the baby sit, and perhaps after many days, the child gives in and sits, to the mother's pleasure. A little bit of motor co-ordination begins at this stage. The baby who has mastered sitting down by itself sees his feet and toes in front of him, and repeating its thumb-sucking habit begins to suck the toe. When a mother sees this act in her baby, she takes it with great pride and pleasure and informs her friends or husband "K. rebisa ne nan da a obewa ana wanante" (K. is asking his leg the time he is

to crawl and finally to walk.) When the child sits cross-legged, he is remonstrated and told not to sit so: if he repeats it, he may be beaten. Sitting cross-legged is thought unlucky and may bring the death of one's parents - "Wo tra wo na ne wo se tiri so" You sit on your father's and mother's heads".

CRAWLING.

At Banko, some mothers expect their children to crawl as soon as they can sit erect by themselves. Between 9-12 months, the child is encouraged to lean forward, stretching its body so as to reach something placed before it. Mothers therefore deliberately place a toy or bit of yam or other thing a foot or so from the child and so entice him to reach out for it. Usually in its first few attempts, the child may fall and so be discouraged. But this is repeated day after day, and so the child learns the art of reaching out with its hand while it tries to stoop. At Banko, I noticed that a baby, K. almost 18 months old had failed to crawl. Whenever the mother put some toy or a bit of food in front of the baby, he moved all at once from the buttocks-without coordinating the arms and the feet in crawling. The baby's mother is very much worried over this boy's inability to crawl; she thinks that the baby is going to be what they call "Bafan" - "groundchild". After two or three weeks, I noticed that this same boy was beginning to use his hands and buttocks when he wanted to reach something far away. It is believed that the baby who crawls quickly like a monkey, is the one who will be very quick in learning to walk. Three mothers informed me that their children were late in crawling this time (the first two women have had four children each, and the third, eight). They explained that these children were retarded in their motor development because when they were very young, they had measles and fever and diarrhoeah respectively. All the time that the child has not learnt to walk, the mother carries him on his back while she is going to farm, to the water hole, cooking or washing. She may be relieved of this duty when the child is asleep or when a friend or a neighbour helps with the carrying or when the child chooses to sit and play near her. As soon as the child has thoroughly mastered his crawling activity, he is expected to stand up erect.

STANDING UP ERECT

When the child wants to be taken up by the mother, the child is encouraged to get up on his feet before the mother takes him. This the child sometimes achieves by holding the lowest end of the mothers dress and then with a little effort he climbs up erect, standing up. This gives the mother pleasure, and so she tries or encourages the child to repeat the act. Sometimes the child may be placed in a standing posture near the mother who claps her hands and sings a baby's song like this "Tenten wagyina o, K wagyina o," literally means "Look, K is standing up", see how K is standing up". Some children get great amusement from this, and so it acts as an incentive for them to learn to stand. The father or the brothers and sisters of the baby may also play this simple game with the child who unconsciously learns very quickly to stand erect without any help. After the Standing position ~~walking~~ has been achieved by the child, the next step is that the mother encourages the baby to move a step forward and gradually begin to walk. In the same way as crawling, mother gives encouragement to baby to move step by step.

The first time when the child makes his initial walking trials, the mother or the father holds him by each hand and walks backward (the child walking forward) saying to the child "Tataa - Tutuu". This is the child's word for making or taking steps one by one. Other adult members of the family get interested and sometimes assist the child in this way to make it learn how to walk. If a child does not seem to like to learn how to walk, the father makes him semi-tricycle out of wood. The child is put behind this to push it and follow it so as to make him walk. Sometimes because this wheeled tricycle goes too fast for the child, he falls down and if it recurs very frequently, he may get afraid of using it at all again. I saw in my own house my nephew Kwame aged over 2 years. This child could crawl very fast and stand round a table, holding its edges all the time. My sister, his mother, told me that Kwame feared the wooden tricycle and that was why his walking activity had been retarded. She said that all her previous five children used that contrivance with ease and pleasure. I noticed that whenever the older children were using the wooden tricycle, Kwame crawled to them, put his hand near it and followed after them slowly. But as soon as all the children left off their hands for him to try it alone, he sat down and would not make further attempts at all. The old woman in the house gave Kwame's mother some hot-tasting roots to put in his rectum to make him want to walk. I spent nearly four weeks with them, and this painful treatment was given to the boy every other day, and yet I did not notice any improvement in Kwame's attitude towards walking. Her mother was all the time comparing him with children of other mothers, born at the same time and who were already walking and even running.

Between the time the child crawls and the time he understands language so as to be able to go away from dangerous things - fire, glass, or knives, the child is not given any elbow room for free mobility. At this stage, the child is considered to be very troublesome and destructive. This is the time when children can easily burn or scald their hands or bodies with fire or soup at the kitchen when the mothers let them loose to roam about the house without supervision. Mothers are punished or even fined by their husbands for allowing their babies to be burnt or scalded. A baby girl, Afua Takyiwa 18 months old put her hand into a pot of hot soup and poured it out, thus scalding her left hand and the left buttock where the child was sitting. The father of the child, a driver, came from Kumase later and when he learnt this, he asked the mother to pay two fowls, 12 eggs to pacify his 'soul' for scalding his baby. It is believed that the payment of this fine will hasten the healing of the scalds. At this stage 2-3 years, knives, cutlasses and such weapons as are likely to hurt the child should not be placed within his reach. When the child is 5 years or more, he may be allowed to handle a knife of some sort. But when mother thinks he will hurt himself with it, she may take it away. Some children may refuse to give the knife up - so there is a proverb like this "Sekan fua gye ne ho abofra nsam". "If a knife cuts a child, he throws it down." This means that if a child of 6 years or more will not give or hand over a knife upon advice of his parent, he will do so when he is cut by the knife in due course.

FREE MOBILITY

When the child has learnt to crawl, he may crawl over any space within the courtyard, provided that there are no obstacles and things like fire or cutting edges in his way. The Kitchen or fire-place is the only place children of this age may not crawl to. Whenever they are there, the mother is always alert, so that the child does not hurt himself. In the case of some children retarded in motor development, the child may be allowed to crawl outside the house. A case in point is that of Kwame, 2 years old; he crawls past the gate of the house, sits near an old taxi cab and calls "Car" as the older children pretend to be driving the car in which they sit and steer. The child who crawls may not be left alone in the bedroom or any room alone. The reason is that as children of this age are very active, they may meddle with articles or property in the rooms and perhaps spoil them through handling and play. The child who has mastered walking can go out with others freely when they are playing. Wandering far away from home is discouraged and even punished. Mothers think that if their child wanders from house to house, and eats there, their neighbours in whose houses the children are wandering will consider them lazy and unable to feed their children. The child who wanders like this is expected to grow lean, because as the mothers say he eats food which is given reluctantly to him - "Bo anwo aduan". Mothers believe that children may contract whooping coughs and similar children's diseases if they wander all the time in the company of other people's children. At Banko, there does not seem to be any fear for children getting lost; but it is common to hear mothers warning their children that if they go out when she is away on the farm, the "murderer who eats children's hearts" - "Atete Nkrona" "Heart cutter," will catch them and take their hearts. This threat is meant to make children of 5-7 years old stay at home with other still younger children while the mothers have left for their farms. Some children may be frightened with sheep, dogs, oxen or other animals, to keep them in the house, and away from rambling far off. In the house, children are warned away from fire and fireplaces long before they have any language. The mother takes a brand of fire and shows it to the baby who may be crawling toward the fireplace or fire. She points it to baby's hand or foot, a little distance away to avoid burning, and makes a hissing sound like "sh - sh -" to mean that it will burn him if he touches it. The heat which emanates from the brand gives the child the idea of burning, and so he retreats and learns the lesson. If the child has some language, he is told the danger of fires: he may be told that if he comes near fire, he will be burnt, and consequently he will die and lose dear mama and father. This serves to drive the child away. In each case, the mother puts fear into the child so as to warn him from any dangerous thing. Outside the house, children are warned away from cars and the road. The children at Banko are fond of cars, so they usually come out of the houses as soon as one sounds a horn. Mothers therefore show great alarm when they see their children playing near the street or motor road. Some mothers tell their children that if they play on the road side, the "whiteman" will catch them and carry them away. This is enough to frighten children and drive them from playing on the motor road through the village. Akua, a girl aged 3½ years went to Mampong with her aunt, but next day, she was brought back to Banko, because the aunt feared that she would be run over by a car, because this little girl liked cars, and whenever one passed near, she went out to see and wave her hand to it.

CHILDREN'S SITTING STILL

Adults - especially children's own parents expect them to sit down quietly or still. One hears a mother saying "Oh K. wo ho ye hene" - Oh, K. you are too restless." Mothers believe that the child who cannot sit still will not grow big or fat. This is particularly so when the child has just eaten a meal and he wants to continue his activities. He is told to sit down, so that the "pepper" he ate may cool down its hotness." "Tra ase ma mako nto wo ho". This is meant to make the child reduce his active life and be still. Mothers attribute accidents which children sometimes meet - e.g. falling down, stabbing the toe against a stone, burning or scalding to over-activity or inability to sit still. Children who are 2 or 3 years old are expected to sit still as those of 5 years or more. They are to sit still, not for short spells of time, but as long as the mother and the adults' convenience will require the children sitting still. Usually the child who cannot sit still as required is regarded very disobedient and unruly child. A strict adult may insist on stillness and enforce it on children, failure to comply with these instructions may result in beating or other forms of cruel treatment.

EARLY MOTOR PLAY

As the child gains more and more control over his muscles after learning to sit, crawl and at last to walk, so also very soon the child of 18 months or two years begins to run a little. The mothers of these children are always afraid that ~~such~~ they may trip and fall and probably hurt themselves. These children are therefore not encouraged to run. The mother's warning is "Gu mu ara'na wobehwe ase". 'Take your time - that is go slowly or you fall and hurt yourself". Little motor play takes place in children's activities before they are 4 years or more: this play may take the form of one child chasing those who pretend to be thieves trying to escape.

CLOTHING & SELF-EXPOSURE

On the eighth day when the father brings the new baby's presents to him, a piece of cotton print, usually two yards or more is included. This is what is called "Funuma Toma - Umbilical cloth - or the cloth to cover the navel in order to drive away troublesome flies. At Banko, a child who does not get this cloth must be poor indeed: this may be the case of an illegitimate child: but as much as possible, the maternal uncle or other relatives try to give one to the child in order to cover the reproach on the mother and her child. From the day a child is born until he gets near adolescence, the primary use of clothing is either to keep the child warm or to protect him from sand flies and other insects. On festive occasions, children may be dressed just to appear nice and decent. The question of clothing a child as a means of removing self-exposure does not arise at all, until the child is nearing puberty. Thus, in the heat of the day, parents require their children to divest themselves of all clothing, both girls and boys.

SEX DISTINCTIONS: SEX PLAY: INTEREST IN SEX.

Whenever children are given clothes to wear, their sexes are taken into account. From the very early months, the girl is dressed in female fashion, and the boy in men's fashion. This distinction in dress begins when children are about 24 months old. It is at this stage that the children begin to play sex games. Usually the girls like to cook or wash "baby" and carry baby as mother does.

Boys too begin to play their own game - usually pretending to drive a car. The car is made from an old sardine tin to which is attached a long line of rope which is drawn by the driver. It is very common to meet four or more 3 year old boys very busy driving their cars. I saw that mothers and fathers at Banko encouraged children in their play in this way - several mothers saw children's play as a great convenience: it took children away from the kitchen and so gave mother less talking or answering children's endless questions. Mothers show great alarm when children finger their genitals or ask questions about the origin of babies and why Mary has no penis but Kofi has. It is at this time that children want to use the little language they have.

POSSESSIONS & SPEECH

Also their game gives them opportunities of learning new names of things to play with. From the very early months, the child's vocalisation is encouraged and even imitated by the mother to make the child talk more of it. This 'baby talk' amuses the parents very much. Children learn their first words from the mother - usually in single words "mama" and "papa" and later increase into sentences. Between 2-3 years, children have very few possessions. The chief possessions are their clothes. Some kind parents may give their children simple toys made of wood - dolls for girls and seeds of bush plants for the boys to play with. Few parents are beginning to give their children European toys like rubber balls, animal forms and some metal toy-cars or aeroplanes. As the children quickly destroy such toys in no time, most parents keep the toys away, but give them back to the children when they cry so as to bribe them to stop crying. Boys are supposed to be able to control themselves and not cry. The mother's advice usually to the crying little boy is "Obarima nsu, gyae". "Man should not give way to tears". Of course, girls have the right to cry as much as they like. It is considered good preparation for a woman's life to be able to cry and weep at funerals, so if a little girl cries, the mother does not heed her, provided that the little girl is not ill or hungry.

RELATIONSHIPS & PHYSICAL CONTACTS

Some mothers at Banko told me that when they expect new babies, they donot tell their old ones about this fact. But a few mothers also told me that they told their children when new babies were expected. One mother said that when she said this to her child, the baby asked to know where the new one would come from. But she did not tell him: she sent the boy to go and ask his father and that was the end of it. The mother of this boy told me that when her new baby was born, the old one wanted to be carried and nursed as before. But she told him that he had been "destooled" by the new baby. She continued that because of this, the older child beat the very little baby and would even get it off from the mother's side so that he occupies his former place.

Other mothers told me that their children received the news of a new baby with pleasure. This woman said that her old baby wanted to give part of his food to his young sibling every time he was eating. Parents at Banko told me that it is a great blessing for a baby to be born in a family where there are older ones already.



CHILDREN PLAYING AT COOKING.

Whenever mother is bathing or away, the very young child is looked after by the older children who take a delight in sitting by their brother. Even some older children try to give water to the very young baby when they have seen mother do so. Siblings who are boys and girls are not separated because of their sex. They may eat together, go to the spot for elimination at the same time and even sleep on the same mat. It is after the 7th or 8th year, that children begin to be separated according to sex in the house.

In the very early days of a child's life, the mother is the person who is all the time in baby's company. When mother is ill or busy, other female relatives help in looking after the baby. When I interviewed some 3 fathers, about their part in looking after the new baby., I was told that that is the work of women. One father also told me that when baby is very young, it is not proper for a man to handle him, as he is not skilful in doing so, and may hurt the baby if he tries to do so. When a baby is two or 3 months old, then his father may safely take him and carry him too. This he may do by putting baby on his lap or in his arms. When the child is under 4 years, he lives in his mother's world more than that of the father, so children of this age have preferences for their mother. At this stage, the mother's authority rules over the children in the home. When other adults e.g. aunts, uncles and other relatives live with the children and their parents, they too help in taking and carrying the new baby. Sometimes it is the grandmother's prerogative to have her grandchild to carry after the child has been washed and fed. Before a baby is 6 months or more old, mothers are reluctant in allowing them to be carried by adults other than very near relations. The reason is that there are some bad people who may wickedly mishandle a very new and soft baby and hurt his spine. I noticed that when children of 2-3 years visited their aunts or grandmothers, they were over-indulged more than at their own mothers' house. The old women say "Nea onni ho ha na wogyegye". (We should take more care of babies whose parents are absent). This principle applies especially to orphans or children who have been adopted. Parents agree that their little boys and girls show respect to adults with whom they come into contact. The children of 2-3 years are taught to call every man 'papa' and every woman 'mama'.

PHYSICAL CONTACTS & MASTURBATION

When mother and baby are alone in the house, mother tries to entertain herself by playing with baby. She may do this by kissing baby on the cheeks, chest or even on the genitals. I noticed also that some mothers and nurses stroke little babies' penises and make them stiff and laugh at the boys. But I was told by the same mothers that they would not allow their little boys or girls to handle their genitals. At any rate, I saw on more than four occasions when little boys were pulling their penises as if they wanted to tear them off. Whenever the boys did this, the mothers scolded them and removed their hands from the place. One woman told me that because of this habit in her little twin boys who were all the time pulling each other's penis, she gave them shorts to wear when they repeated the act. Masturbation in little children is supposed to make them 'bad' when they grow: also it is believed that constant handling of the genitals will make them sore and swell up.



THE SICK CHILD - YAW GYALFI - "SUMAN" ON HIS NECK.

When children of 1-12 months are being washed, the mother holds the tip of the child's penis and pours into it warm water so as to clean it and heal any sore in it. The same treatment is given to little baby-girls when they are being washed. In their case, the mother dips a towel into warm water and then puts the warm towel on the vagina. It seemed that both the little boys and girls enjoyed this treatment; in the process of washing them, it is usual to see them cry; but when this treatment is given, they lie quietly and enjoy it. When a baby has been washed, it is not thought proper for a farmer who has just returned from the field to get him into his arms. The fear is that the child's soft skin will be affected by the farmer's dirty hands and the roughness left on his body through roaming in the thickets. Because of this, as soon as a mother and her baby return from farm, the mother takes her bath first before she washes the baby so that the baby may not get her washed skin contaminated again. In hot weather, babies are encouraged to sleep on their beds rather than to be carried on the mother's backs. Tying of the baby at the back in the heat of the day makes baby perspire very much - this is said to give children fever.

WASHING SLEEP & HEALTH

As a rule, it is thought very necessary to wash the baby who is under three years at least two times in a day - preferably early in the morning and late in the afternoon. The proverb says "Aguare ye aduro" 'washing is like medicine to the body'. After baby's bath, powder may be besmeared all over his body and later his hair is combed for him. Mothers are very careful with baby's skin and hair nowadays, and they go to the extent of buying special oils for dyeing the hair of their babies. Every mother cuts the nails of her baby's fingers so as to prevent him from tearing his face with them. According to my observation at Banko, I saw that in general mothers take greater care of their offspring when they are newly born until they are 3 years. It is after this time that they begin to neglect the child, because usually by that time a rival of the 'old' baby has come. I saw on several occasions mothers who put their babies of 2-3 years on the verandah early in the morning and left the poor things there in the cold. At Banko, there is a curious notion that children do not feel cold as adults do. Mothers at Banko told me that the first three years of a baby's life are the most trying years - and they said categorically that once your baby has passed that age, he has become death-proof "Watwa wuo" - The chief illnesses which parents said their children had before they grew up to 4 years were malaria fever, "Asabra or Doko", (eboro) itches, convulsions ("soro yare") and several forms of stomach troubles. In order to prevent these, charms "suman" are put round baby's neck to ward off evil spirits and devils who bring the diseases. A practical aid to prevent stomach troubles in children is the traditional medicine - the bark & leaves of "ofena" boiled and given to children the first thing in the morning.

It is acknowledged that a baby has to do two things; to eat and sleep. Children of 2-3 years on the other hand have three things to do - eating; playing and sleeping. But when a baby is ill e.g. when he has fever or headache, it is thought inadvisable to make the child sleep too much: this will render him weaker still. It is a common sight at Banko to see babies of 2-3 years asleep on mother's lap or father's lap when the adults are enjoying a nice gossip at the fireside or when they are telling Ananse Stories to the older children.

EARLY CHILDHOOD - (3-7 YEARS)

FEEDING : By the age of 3, every child at Banko is expected to have changed completely from eating baby's food to adult food. A few children however, sometimes have no liking for fufu which is the main adult food. Instead of fufu, such children are given 'apesie' or 'eto' (mashed yam or cocoyam) together with soup. As before, children have no regulated times for their meals. Any time food is available and children feel hungry, they are allowed to eat it. I noticed that children between 3-4 years complained of hunger very early in the morning, before the mother has had time to make fire and cook; It was therefore the custom of mothers to keep a little of the dinner for the 3-4 year olds to eat when they woke up. Children ate too much of starchy foods at this stage and too little meat and protein foods. Before the ages 4-5, children at Banko look healthy and plump, but from years upwards, they grow lean and sickly. Often children of this age refuse the food they are given: when this happens, mother takes them up and promises them presents of new toys and clothes to make them eat. When children do not eat enough, parents get uneasy about it. At this time, it is common to see children with very big bellies which they carry about with great difficulty. They are allowed to eat as much as they can in order to grow fast. Children of 3 years upwards are expected to feed themselves. But when a child is ill, the mother takes the trouble to feed it by the hand herself. She uses persuasive words and encourages him to eat a little so that he may get better again. Whereas in ordinary circumstances children of this age are not given large pieces of meat, such sick children are treated kindly and given meat in order to induce them to eat.

At meals, children are told to drink as little as possible. This is especially so in the case of boys and girls of 3-7 years, who suffer from bladder trouble - (enuresis) Even soup may not be taken in large quantities by those children, for fear that they will wet their beds all the more if they drink much soup.

At this stage of children's development, it is thought necessary that children should eat any kind of adult food that may be given to them. But children of this age have special liking for some foods and not others. Favourite foods are palm-nut soup and fufu and groundnut soup and fufu. Yam, cocoyam and boiled ripe plantains feature in children's breakfasts and lunches. Some children like to eat fruits such as oranges, pears, pawpaws and banana. But some mothers discourage their children from eating say, bananas, pawpaws and oranges; they say that they make children go to stool too frequently and as a result give them bowel troubles. The few women whose husbands have had some school education on the other hand make it a point to give some of these fruits to their children whenever they can find them or even get them to buy.

TABLE MANNERS

Good table manners are taught to children as soon as they begin to eat adult food. As stated before, between 3 and 4 years of age, children sometimes sit together with adults to eat. Both girls and boys of these ages are allowed to eat with adult women who are their teachers in table manners. Before a boy sits at table with grown up men, he should know most of the table manners.

There is a proverb - 'If a boy knows how to wash his hands, then he can sit at table with men to eat'. - 'Abofra hu ne nsa hohoro a, one mpanin didi'. Thus, cleanliness in a child entitles him to eat with men. In any case, I have noticed that only adolescent boys are allowed to eat with men. But I saw one family in which a man was eating with a child of six or seven in the same dish. Upon investigation later through conversation, the father told me that he had no brother or son or any other male relative, but he did not enjoy his meals if he ate alone, so in the circumstances, he preferred to share his meals with the small son, even though he knew perfectly that local convention did not approve of his condescension. Men refuse to eat with children below the adolescent age because, I was told, such under-age children do not know how to keep themselves at the toilet and also they often like to play with the hands in the sand near the house. This child's play is considered a means of making children's hands dirty and unfit to join adults at the same meal.

The first lesson which children learn as part of their training in table manners is the proper way to chew or bite one's food. A child is told to bite his food in small bits according to the size of his mouth. It is considered improper and as a sign of low breeding if a child puts too big a morsel of food or even meat into its mouth at any one time. Such a child is called names 'gormand' and so checked in his unwanted habits at once. In the same way, a child who eats hurriedly is told to slow down so that he may share the food fairly with his brothers or friends at the meal. In order to stop a child from eating too hurriedly, he is given his share on a different plate from the rest of the children, so that if he does away with his share too soon, he will have to sit down and see his friends still eating. Such a situation is believed to act as a check on overspeeding in eating one's meal. This happens usually in the case of children between the ages 4-7 and over. Children under four years eat their food usually sitting alone but in this case too some 'lonely eaters' also hurry up. To check this bad habit, the food is dealt out in little bits to the child one at a time giving him a small bit each time. The impression I gathered from my informants suggests that mothers insist on children eating slowly, not so much as to chew the food thoroughly but to check the child from being 'selfish' and trying to eat the lion's share of the group's meal.

Another feature of children's table manners lessons is in connection with making noise with the lips while chewing one's food. Children are encouraged to make as little noise as possible in this act. It is thought rustic and uncouth to make the same noise which a pig makes when it is eating its food - usually dung. Parents therefore tell children that they will be called 'pigs' if they eat as pigs.

In eating, children are advised to open the mouth as little as possible. If a child opens its mouth too wide, he is called greedy, because it is assumed that he wants to swallow the whole meal in a gulp. When eating fufu, it is thought good manners to use the thumb and the first and second fingers only for cutting the fufu. If all the five digits are covered with soup, it is regarded as very bad manners.



CHILDREN PRETENDING "TO EAT SAND THEY'VE COOKED".

After the food has been prepared and placed at the dining porch, it is the duty of the more grown child to go and call his father or uncle and his ^{friends} to come and share the meal together. Before he goes out to call these people, he ought to assemble chairs or stools for the different adults who will be called. When the chairs or stools are ready, he goes to the drinking pot and pours out some cold water into a jug or cup for the men to drink and wash their hands. If the children are under age, (below 8 or 9 years,) they are given their share separately ~~in~~ groups according to sex. But sometimes if the children are very intimate - the sexes may eat a joint meal and still enjoy it. The oldest child shares the meat or fish for all the children, taking for himself a fairly big share, and reducing the size given to each other child in accordance with its age. If children and adults sit together to eat, the child has not the right to rise up and go away even when he ~~has~~ ^{is} with the food. He ought to wait for his father or uncle who is eating with him to leave, so that he may remove the dish and the table and the cup or jug. A child who breaks this convention is regarded as naughty and ill-mannered. But when the adult knows that some business needs attending to - e.g. if it is time to go to school or do any other duty, he himself tells the child to go away and so frees him from the responsibility. Every child, from 3 years on, is taught that washing the hand before and after the meal is important. By 7 years children can manage this by themselves. Children are discouraged from eating food when they and their parents are on a visit to friends or distant relatives. The reason is that parents fear that their children may commit some blunders in table manners at these strange places and give them away, ~~to~~ ^{be} ridiculed. Children may however join the children of the friends they are visiting, because children being children, cannot so easily detect flaws in the table manners of their visitors. Very young children, e.g. 2-3 years may not eat together with the parents, because if they did, they would not agree to be separated for meals on occasions when there are adult visitors, when it is thought proper, for the father or mother to eat the same dish with the visitor. If a child interferes with a meal at which a visitor is present, it is regarded as a disgrace to the parents.

There are a few interesting taboos which children are told to observe when they are eating. While at meals, children may not mention faeces or things connected with excretion. If they did, the soup or the whole food may change into faecal matter.

Noisy conversation is not permitted at meals. If a child talks too much at meals, he will not get satisfied with the food. This rule must be particularly adhered to when children are eating palm-nut soup or any oily soup or dish. The explanation is that if children talk while eating oily food, they may get choked and taken to Konongo - thus playing a pun on the word 'ngo' - oil. When eating oranges or other fruits, children are warned to be careful not to swallow any of the pips. If they swallowed any pips, they would germinate into trees and eventually choke and kill them.

Many adults have told me how much they lived in fear of having an orange growing in their bodies whenever they happened to swallow some pips. Because of this, many old people have told me that they did not like to eat fruit very much when they were young. A strange thing which children at Banko, curiously enough, believe is that when there is a cut on the hands, or leg or any part of the body, the food they eat will come out through the cut. If it is a fresh cut and the child weeps, then this may happen. On the other hand, if the child does not cry, the food will not come out the cut.

Another teaching in connection with food is that when a child is eating and a bit of food falls to the ground, he must take it and eat whether there is dust on it or not. The child is advised to eat such bits of fallen morsels, because it is maintained that if a child eats food on the ground, he grows much more quickly - 'Abofra didi fam a na onyini ntem'. Some children are not allowed to eat groundnuts or plantain roasted in their husks. If children do eat them like that, they will have snake bites - especially those whose parents have fetishes or 'asuman'. If a parent is eating and his/her baby urinates or passes stool into the dish, he/she must go on eating the meal or the baby will die. This is strongly believed and practised.

ELIMINATION AND BLADDER CONTROL: At 3 years, children at Banko have almost got used to adult food; their mothers therefore show disgust at the child's dirtiness if he soils himself with his faeces which give offensive smells at this time. In order to prevent children making a nuisance with their faeces to the other members of the house, the mother shows the children of 3 years upwards a particular spot inside or outside the house where they may go to stool. It does not matter if the children do their eliminatory functions whilst others look on: the only requirement is that they do not mess the whole compound. Towards the 5th year, some children begin to go to the public latrine for defecation. I saw also that a few mothers gave their 3 year olds pots in which to go to stool.

Mothers demand prompt elimination from their children, and so whenever their children get constipation, the syringe, castor oil or epsom salts are to correct the condition. All this time, children are taught little bits of expressions when they want to talk of defecation. It is considered a sign of bad upbringing for children to talk of defecation while they are in the presence of adults or strangers and at meals. Mothers of children between 3-7 years get amused when the child breakwind in their presence. Later on after 7 years they are warned not to do so in public as it degrades them in the estimation of their friends.

ENURESIS. Many mothers told me that most of their children get used to controlling the bladder between 3-4 years. These are the children mothers described as "clean fellows". But the majority of boys and girls do not achieve this until 7 years or later. A few of them may still persist in bed-wetting even up to 10 years or later. Mothers told me that such children have some disease of the bladder that causes bed wetting. When I talked with a boy who was a notorious bed-wetter, he confided to me that whenever he slept, he dreamed that he was on the grass or perhaps he was sitting on a pot, but as soon as he had finished urinating, he saw the truth and became sorry for wetting his bed. Most of the bed-wetters are ill-treated, abused and scorned by their mates. It is believed that a bed-wetter may cure his trouble by eating a special part of a crab. Sometimes



COMFORT CARRYING HER DOLL ON THE BACK

a rite, called "Bonsuabono" - "The wetting fountain" is performed to cure bedwetters. This rite is nothing less than a sort of punishment - given to the children so that the fear of it may stop them from wetting their beds again. The big boys get some bush creeping plant, "NSANSONO" which gives irritation on the skin and bind the poor soul with the creeper and its leaves. Then water is thrown on him and he is made to suffer the cold and the irritation on the skin without complaining. Some children weep when they are so treated. The other children stand by and laugh at the victims, or call them names. This rite takes place on cold mornings so as to be effective in stopping the children from wetting the bed.

SLEEP, REST & HEALTHY LIVING.

At Banko, when a child is between 3-7 years, it is considered proper that he continues to sleep in the same room with his parents. The parents told me that sometimes children suddenly get fits of fever and other illness, so it is only wise that they are near to be attended to whenever such attacks came. This is particularly so during the night when the wizards and witches are supposed to awake and go about on their destructive activities of killing people. Sometimes the children are made to go to bed as early as 7 p.m. and to wake up as late as 7 or 8 am. But some women told me that some of their children between 3-7 years would not go to sleep unless they saw mother beside them. So the mother pretends to sleep with the child and when the child falls asleep, she gets off the mat carefully so that the child does not notice it. Sometimes a mother may frighten the children saying that if they did not sleep, a bogey would come from the darkness around the house and take them away. This quiets them into sleep. Whenever a child is very ill, the mother and the father sleep with him together, with the child between them, so that at any one time one of the parents may be aware of the sick child's needs when the other may have ^{slopt.} played and eaten enough, they are allowed to sleep and rest. Mothers see that the children do not sleep too long in the day, because if they did so, they would not sleep soundly in the night. As stated before, mothers at Banko do not take great care of their children after they have reached 3 years and upwards. There is a common saying at Banko ("Oba twa nufu a, na wade ne ho") which means that when a child is weaned, he becomes more or less independent - (of his mother). The mother's attention is now directed to the new baby if she has had one. Usually, the little children's small ailments like cuts or sores, headaches, coughs are neglected until the mother begins to notice that the illness is becoming worse and worse.

CHIEF DISEASES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The chief diseases which attack children of 3-7 years are whooping cough, measles, Kwashiorkor diarrhoea, itches ringworm favus yaws and fevers with colds.

WHOOPING COUGH

Whooping cough is dreaded by mothers at Banko. It is believed to be caused by witches who want to kill the child. The child who has whooping cough is told not to run or take part in his brother's games as this brings on the coughing. Palm soup and other oily foods are not given to the child. The mother of the child suffering from this disease gets very anxious about her child - every time the fit of coughing comes, the child vomits all the food he has eaten.

Mothers give the sick child native medicines prepared from roots to drink. Nasal drops are also given to help cure the child. When other mothers get information about the incidence of whooping cough, in a neighbour's house, they warn their children not to drink or eat with the children in that house when they go there. But very often the children do not obey this advice and go and contract the disease sooner or later.

MEABLES is another dreaded illness which attack young children. The women at Banko have called it "Otwan to" - that is "he who makes buttocks flatten". When children get measles, they grow thin, and there is a marked flattening of their buttock, hence the name. Children who have measles are not washed, but they are given very dry sand with which they may scratch the irritating parts of the skin. At the early stage of the disease, the mother gives the child some purgative to drink. When the rashes appear, the mother puts tinctures of illicit gin (akpeteshi) on them to heal them. Although mothers know that contact with the disease may transfer it to the healthy children, no attempt is made to isolate the sick child. It is believed that measles, when it comes into a house, it does not go out until all the children have had it. It is therefore no use trying to prevent it.

KWASHIORKOR:

This disease attacks babies who are 2-3 years old. It is believed that it is caused by the weaning of the child and also the mother's pregnancy. The mothers call it 'ASONO'. The child who is suffering from 'ASONO' grows thin and pale and does not eat much. Often diarrhoea sets in. The remedy is the syringe and a few other native medicines which the child drinks. When a mother at Banko took her child with 'ASONO' to the Clinic at Efiduase, she said that the nurse told her to give the baby milk in his 'akasa' or porridge. The mother told me that she could not get money to buy milk to feed the child so she did not go to the Clinic again - because the nurse had no medicine to give her other than mere advice. I was told that few children survive when they are attacked by this disease - 'ASONO'.

DIARRHOEA:

The mothers did not seem to know the real cause of diarrhoea, but they thought devils give it to children. Some also believe that children may get it when they swallow some insect or other harmful matter on the ground. Because diarrhoea makes children lose much weight and get their eyes sunk in, mothers fear it very much. Most mothers at Banko prefer to treat their children at the hospital, but some still give the children native medicines, including a herbal eye-drop which is thought very beneficial.

YAWS:

There is a belief among the mothers at Banko that every child must have yaws before he passes the childhood stage. When a child gets yaws, treatment is delayed: it is said that if the child is treated immediately the yaws appears - some of its weakening effects will remain in its body and make him weak in after years. When the sores come in large numbers and become large, then treatment may be given. This consists of a washing of the sores with soap and water. This gives a lot of pain to the child. Later ground blue stone is applied to the open sores. This is very painful, and the child is often given an egg or some meat so that he may stop weeping.



LITTLE GIRLS TRYING AT CLIMBING A TREE.

ITCHES, RINGWORM AND FAVUS:

These are skin diseases which are supposed to be the lot of children before they pass the ages 3-7 years. Mothers at Banko therefore regard them as normal diseases and do not become anxious about them. Sulphur ointment is used for treating itches. Chrysarobin ointment is becoming popular for ringworm, but formerly the juice from the leaves of a native plant called "Dentenhwee" was the usual cure. For favus, the soot from black cooking pots or the fireplace mixed with shea butter is daubed on the scalp. Some mothers are beginning to use zinc ointment for curing favus this time.

FEVERS AND COLDS:

When children shiver with colds and fevers, they are put to bed and given warm clothes to keep out the cold. Sometimes the mothers take them to the Clinic at Efiduase where they are given liquid quinine to drink. The leaves of Neem tree are also boiled and the vapour from the boiling water inhaled is thought a very good cure for fever. This treatment can be given to children who are over four years only. For those under 4 years, the water in which the neem tree leaves were boiled is used for washing the sick child. This too is believed to be beneficial.

At Banko, children's illness as a rule, should first be treated by native medicine. It is after the native medicine has proved unable to effect a cure, that the parents take the child to the Clinic or hospital.

SELF-EXPOSURE: SEX, FANTASIES AND MOTOR PLAY, POSSESSIONS.

Though at Banko, children of 3 years upwards begin to be clothed according to their sexes, there is little importance attached to clothing them as such. Self-exposure is the rule with children between 3-7 years, except when the children are ill or on occasions such as Sunday service, football matches and other social gatherings. At these places, parents think it proper to dress their children so that they may win the approval of others. The girls wear their waist cloths with the upper garment called "kaba" and the boys wear their shoulder cloth or tie it around the neck. The usual expression is "Bo koola", that is tie your cloth about your neck. This is considered to make the little boys look smart. Of late, the mothers are beginning to dress their little boys and girls with European dresses - gowns or frocks for the girls and trousers, shirts and coats for the boys. Even the wealthier parents give children sandals or shoes to their children to wear on special occasions as a display. It does not matter if parents expose themselves in front of these children 3-7 years old, because they say "Wonnim hwee" they are ignorant - i.e. they don't know much of sex. Boys of this age indulge in exposing their bodies more than their sisters.

In most of the children's play, sex play is the popular with the girls. They usually play the role of mother - cooking, washing the baby, his clothes or carrying him on the back. This play usually requires the girls to put on their loin cloth as well as the waist cloth. As for the boys, they run, jump and compete in races with nude bodies all the time. A popular game of the boys is football which they play on streets and lanes in the village. Sometimes they use a rubber ball, but when they cannot get it, the orange fruit serves the purpose well for them. Nowadays, the little boys play at making a school instead of the old drumming and hunting games.

Usually, the 7-year old brother who has just begun school is the schoolmaster and the rest the pupils. Their games do not last long, they change from one to another with no properly set out plan. Sometimes the group may break up into two over a dispute, each section choosing its own different activity, but sooner or later they come together for a common game.

Parents do not like their children of 3-7 years to wander far from the house or its precincts. They threaten them with beating or frighten them from wandering with the "policeman" or the murderer on the outskirts of the town. As long as these children play where the parents can see them from time to time, they do not interfere at all.

At this stage, the children become very fond of collecting odd things and possessions in order to use them in their play. Old cigarette tins, match boxes, sardine tins, seeds of plants ('NTE) and little pieces of wood or card. Some of the tins are used by the girls as cooking pots or tins for carrying water from the bore-hole in their play. The boys use the pieces of wood for making the frame work of their school building or huts which they make. Sometimes the seeds or stones serve as money for exchange. The mothers sometimes get annoyed at the children's collecting these odds and ends to the house to make a nuisance of the whole place. At present few parents buy some toys like dolls and toy motor car or toy-trains for their children, but most parents regard such purchases as mere waste of money. Whenever mothers get twin fingers, of banana or plantain, they give them to the girls to use as dolls. This often brings quarrels between the little boys and their sisters - because when the banana or plantain doll gets ripe, the boys try to take them by force and eat them.

RELATIONSHIPS - SPEECH, - SONG AND STORIES:

During this period of the children's lives, they see very little of their father who is all the time on the farm. They stay with the mother in the house for the better part of the morning. After she has done her household duties, she cooks some breakfast for the little ones and leaves them in charge of an older child - usually 8 or 9 years old. If there is a grandmother or grandfather or a sick adult in the house, that person stays with the children and looks after them whilst their parents are on the farm.

It is at this time that the children get the most time for their fantasy play. Some of the very young ones fall asleep in the heat of the day. Most children of 3 years upwards get their language built up through their play with their friends. Mothers know this, so when they are leaving the children behind, they warn them not to go and play in a particular house where they know the children use bad language very often. If mothers get to know on their return that their order was not obeyed, they beat the children.

Children of 3-7 years at Banko live in an "Anansem" world. They enjoy these stories whether they tell them or they are told by their parents or older brothers. The mothers say that Ananse stories may not be told in the day time, otherwise those who tell will grow horns like sheep or goats. But if a person says "Nyankoben nko onyina nkon mu" - May the horns go to the silk cotton tree" - then he can safely tell the stories. Usually parents and their children sit by the evening fire and tell stories. Children enjoy most of all stories about Ananse and his clever ways of obtaining good delicious food to eat while others go hungry.



CHILDREN PLAYING AT SELLING THINGS.

Children make Ananse their hero.

In the matter of disciplining children in the house, the mother plays the greatest role. It is she who will give food to the child, so if the child disobeys her order, his food may be refused him. Parents do not mind quarrelling in front of their children. Sometimes the mother puts the child down from the back and fights the father. Some times these little children get angry with their parents and quarrel over food. Whenever two children fight over food or some possession, the parents back the younger child, whether he is right or not. The older child is told to be lenient to his younger brother or sister and not to press for justice. But sometimes some children resent this attitude of their parents. I noticed that as a rule the girls are on more friendly terms with their mother than the father. In the same way, the boys of 6-7 also allied themselves with their father and sometimes disobeyed the mother whom they regarded as troublesome and unfriendly. But I saw that the mothers took equal interest in feeding both their boys & girls. Whenever the boys did something wrong and they feared punishment, they ran away to the father's house and sought refuge there. Other adults also take interest in children at this time. Sometimes their uncles or aunts or parents' friends take them to their houses for an hour or two and bring them back. In this way, the children learn to recognise their relationship to the rest of the people outside their house. The children are taught to regard children of these people as brothers and sisters and to play with them when they can.



IT IS TIME FOR BROTHER AND SISTER TO GO TO SCHOOL.

CHAPTER VI

LATER CHILDHOOD (7-11 YEARS)

Eating habits and Elimination: At Banko, boys and girls become quite used to all forms of adult food and eat them in large quantities whenever they can get them. As before, there is no clearly marked time for eating, but children may expect something to eat in the early morning sometimes in the afternoon and always early in the evening. As most children begin school at 7 they sometimes have to cook their own meals in the afternoon when their parents have left for their farms. The usual meal children eat at this time is boiled yam or cocoyam and some broth, when they can get it. It is not uncommon to see children eating the boiled yam or cocoyam, with table salt sprinkled on it to flavour it. At this time, children learn to eat together in groups - all the girls share a dish - and all the boys share another. When the children eat together in groups like this, the oldest boy or girl of the group shares the pieces of meat for the group, keeping the lion's share for himself always. Sometimes the younger children become jealous of him and quarrels often arise as a result of feeling cheated. When the mother knows that ^{the} oldest child is mean, she shares the meat for the children so as to check any quarrels. This is the time when boys roam about very much, so mothers get angry if the food is ready and two boys or one are absent. Some mothers may even tell those present to consume the whole meal so that when the absentee comes home later he will learn a lesson - to stay in the house all the time. Children in this age group are expected to observe all the table manners that they were taught when they were younger. Sometimes the women purposely eat together with the girls so that they may check up and see if all is well with their table manners. The boy who keeps himself clean, may be called to join his father or uncle in eating a meal. Mothers think that this age is the time when their children eat most and never get satisfied. They always ask those children who delight in eating much, ("wonam mo yam na eko ado"). "Do we go through your stomachs to the farms - that is to say do they know how to grow the food they love eating so much. Though mothers will not give oranges, bananas and other fruits to the children, they get at them themselves on the farm or on the outskirts of the town and eat them. Some mothers beat their boys for eating too many oranges, because they fear that it will give them stomachache and toothache too.

As children have gained fairly good control over the muscles of the hand and feet, they are expected to set the table for their adults to come and eat. While the adults are eating, the child may have to stop his meal to fetch him drinking water from the pot. After the meal, the boys and the girls wash all the utensils used at the meal.

All boys and girls of this age are told to go to the pit-latrine belonging to their own sex - (that is, the boys go to men's latrine, and the girls to the women's latrine). Boys and girls do not want to be seen by the opposite sex while they are defecating. It is considered sufficient if a child visits the latrine once or twice in the day. If a child does not go to latrine for two days, the mother gives him some purgative to clear his bowels.

She may give a syringe if the constipation becomes constant and painful. Adults do not like to meet these little boys or girls at the latrine. But when they cannot help it, they cover themselves very well so that the children cannot see their genitals to discuss them later on. In the house, adults abuse children of this age if they break wind in front of them. Usually, the mother says ("Kofi wo to agono") literally means, "Kofi your bottom is soft". The mother thinks that the child who is all the time breaking wind has some stomach trouble so she puts ginger into his rectum to cure it. If the girls break wind, it is considered even more serious than boys. I was told that at this age if a girl's mother is not careful about her daughter's wind-breaking habits, the girl may die suddenly. Wind-breaking is regarded as a sign of a disease called "Odeepua" that is sore in the vagina. The treatment for this trouble is very painful to the girls. The mother puts warm water in the girl's vagina and later daubs crushed ginger and pepper into it. This makes the girls weep a lot. Most children get complete control of the bladder by this time, but a few of them persist in bed-wetting.

SLEEP & HEALTH:

This is the age when the mother feels that a child can wash and dress himself. Children get healthier at this age, as the incidence of disease is considerably reduced. The only fear of mothers at this age is that their children will grow thin because of overexertion. They say the children are getting disfigured because they do not get time to rest because of their play. Sores become very common with boys, because in their running and jumping games they cut themselves and fear to report to their parents who discover them too late when the cuts have become open sores and septic too. When a child has a sore, usually he grows thin; the fear of the hot water for the dressing of the sore and the painful medicine worry children very much. These days the mothers take children who have very big sores to the dressing station and get them dressed.

The usual time for children to go to bed is between 8 and 9 p.m. This is the age when the children play their group games in the evening. The boys play soldiers, hide and seek and sometimes tell stories when the moon is shining. The girls sing, play "ampe" and "ASO". The girls divide themselves into their group and the 9-11 year olds also play in their group. (In each case, the former group looks to the latter for guidance - so they imitate whatever game the latter plays.)

At 7 years of age, children at Banko may be allowed to sleep with their parents in the same bedroom where the couple may have marital intercourse in the night. But a mother told me that before they had intercourse, they made sure that all the children were fast asleep. When children are between 8 and 11 years, parents suspect that they may wake up in the night and notice them while they are copulating - so these children sometimes sleep in an adjoining room or in the hall. When this is not possible, the children go and sleep with their grandmother or some other adult relative who may be alone in her room.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS - SEX AND WORK:-

seven

It is from the age of 7 upwards that children begin to separate themselves into groups according to their sex. In the house, the girls do not like to share the same dish with the boys - and the boys too prefer to eat with their brothers. At play, girls move in their group separately from boys. If a boy tries to join the girls, his fellow boys laugh at him and call him "Sissy" or "Obaa ba" - that is "woman's child" - a boy who is fond of women's company. In the same way, the girl who is all the time in boys' company is called 'tomboy' by her group - and the boys too call her "Obaa Kokonini" - that is a "cockerel" - which means that she is more of a boy than a girl. All the time, the girls see more of their mothers than their fathers, helping the former in doing most of the household duties. This is the training ground for the girl as a future house-wife. By the end of her eleventh year, every girl at Banko has mastered all the details of house-keeping, cooking, sweeping, and carrying water. Whenever the mother menstruates, it is the little girl who cooks for the father or the uncles who abstain from eating a menstruated woman's food, because it is a taboo to their fetish and "suman" or magic. The boys of 8 years upwards also follow their father to the farm all the time, except when they are in school. But this they do on Saturdays or when the school is on holiday. When the boys and girls go to farm, they come home with logs of wood or foodstuffs on their heads.

By this time, the boys and girls have become quite clear about their sexes and the role each plays in the family life. If a mother tells the boy to sweep the house - he will refuse to do so, saying - "Tweaa, menyee obaa - that is - No, I shall not sweep, because I am a man". Boys know that they should sharpen the cutlass, go to farm, pound fufu and fetch water. Cooking and other household duties belong to the girls and mother. At this age, boys and girls may be sent away to stay with an uncle or a relative who may not have children of their own. In this way the children grow to know their kinsmen from the rest of the people around them. These relatives who adopt the boys or girls stay with them until they reach adolescence when they return to their parents to prepare for their marital career. In some cases, the children can remain with their foster-parents and be given in marriage there. At Banko, it is always the parents wish that their children follow their own occupations: but in recent years since schooling became fashionable, every parent wants his child to become a clerk or a lady " (Krakye ana Awuraa).

Sometimes girls and boys mix up to play games in the evening, but the girls of 9 years upwards are told by their mothers not to do so, because "boys are not good". They do not explain to the girls in what sense 'boys are not good' until a later time when they are about to menstruate.

At this time, the boys are able to manipulate most of the farm implements, - the cutlass, the hoe, the mattock. In the home, the girls have learned to cook the family's meals and sometimes to wash their younger brothers and sisters. Children of this age begin to work on their own so as to get a few pence to buy some articles they like. The girls may collect cola nuts and sell them for little sums of money. The boys also climb the raffia palm and cut its leaves, make them into cords which they sell to the cocoa farmers to make cocoa drying mats. This fetches the boys a handsome income. The more industrious boys learn to make baskets which



GIRLS HELP EARLY AT THE KITCHEN - CARRYING AWAY REFUSE

they sell at the market to women.

The girls' love for playing mother with dolls gives way to helping their mothers and elder sisters who have children, by carrying the babies on their backs. The boys become very restless and are considered very destructive. They learn how to use the catapult and how to trap birds and animals in the bush. I was told by some adults that some boys actually use the domestic fowls for target practice.

Boys and girls at this stage become talkative during the evening. Every one wants to talk, but will not listen to others. The parents therefore drive them out so that they may hear what is happening outside the house - or in order to give them some quiet to converse among themselves. The adults do not like children to listen to their conversations which are full of gossip about other people, - for fear the children would discuss the topics later outside the house. Parents expect their children to tell the truth, and sometimes beat them if they discover that they have been deceived by the boys or girls. But sometimes the parents tell lies to children. If a creditor comes to demand some money from the mother, she tells her children to inform the creditor that she is not in the house, in order to evade him.

SCHOOLING WORK, GAMES: SONGS:-

At 6 or 7 years of age, most children begin school at Banko. Those children of this age, whose parents fail to send them to school stay at home and follow their parents in their daily tasks. The girls learn the proper way of cooking, keeping the house neat, and feeding the little ones, whilst the boys follow their fathers or their uncles to their farms and learn to till the land, and grow crops, to make traps to catch game and sometimes how to build huts and fences.

As soon as the 7 year olds hear that they are about to go to school, they demand their school uniforms. For the girls, the parents buy a blue frock and for the boys a pair of khaki shorts and a shirt. Later on the parents buy these new school pupils small blackboards and pieces of white chalk. Some children whose brothers are already in school begin to learn counting and the writing of numbers and letters long before the schools reopen in January. The little boys and girls feel very proud in their new dresses and walk majestically with their siblings who are already in school to the school. All the little children live at Banko and the school is about two hundred yards from the village. From the very beginning, parents tell children who have just entered school to learn hard so that one day they may grow up to become 'BIG MEN'. They encourage the new scholars to learn from their brothers who know more than they, when they come home in the evening. Since 1950, there have always been at least 5 men and one woman teachers on the staff of the Primary School. In all cases, the women teachers were untrained. In 1954, most of the little boys and girls were frightened of the then headteacher and so most of them refused to go to school. A girl called Adwoa Benewaa, 7½ years old left the school in July 1954. At an interview with this girl I was told that she feared the headteacher whose leg was swollen. (He had elephantiasis). She said further that she had heard that if that teacher happened to trip on any person's foot, that person would get elephantiasis too. Because of this she did not like to go to school. Other children in classes 3 & 4 told me that they liked their teacher very much, but they hated the headteacher. When I asked them why they hated the headteacher, they replied that he was all the time sending them to the bush to cut firewood for his wife. The general impression I gathered from the school children was that they were happy in the school whenever the headteacher was absent. The other teachers seemed to have had cordial relations with their pupils. A popular expression of the children's liking for their teacher was that every afternoon every child made it a point to bring some oranges or bananas as presents to the teacher.

At the middle school stage, I found that the image of the head teacher was quite different. Most of the boys and girls spoke lovingly of all their teachers - particularly the headteacher. Children felt very proud of their teachers and admired them. This was especially true of the Middle Forms 1 & 2 Children.

At the Primary School, children leave home for school at 8 am. with or without breakfast. They come home for lunch at 11 am. Usually the little girls cook the lunch for their brothers. On some days when parents do not go to farm, children go home and see food prepared - and kept for them.



BOYS ENJOY A TENNIS BALL PLAY.

1917

The afternoon classes begin early, at 1 p.m. and at 3.30 p.m. children go home again.

During the short recreation periods at school, the children are encouraged to play several games. The girls sometimes play AMPE or ASO. The boys' popular game is football or netball. At times there are team games in racing, jumping and African circle games - ANTOAKYIRI and AMOTO. In these two games, both boys and girls can take part, but usually the sexes prefer to play separately. All the players sit in a ring with one child holding a bean bag. All the players sitting sing and clap hands, saying AMOTO! PREN! OBI BA! OBEWU! OBETA! (AMOTO, some one's child is going to die or break wind). All this time, the player with the bean bag runs round those sitting in the circle. As soon as he puts the bag behind a player, that player should run after him and touch him with the bag. If he does not see that the bag has been placed behind him and the player runs round the circle and comes back to him again, all the players fall on him and beat him. But as soon as he shouts "BRE DWO" - that is "let the fire cool", they leave him free again. During the interval between 11 am and 1 pm, some of these Primary School children go to the River ONWAM and learn to swim. At times some children get so immersed in swimming that they forget about school and come late to school. Because of this I heard that the teachers have made a rule forbidding children to go to swim at this time. The parents do not like their children to swim, because they say the cold water makes the children ill on many occasions. When the boys reach the 5th or 6th class in the primary school, they learn to ride bicycles. Some parents object to this, for fear that they will fall and hurt themselves. But the children do not obey their parents' advice and make efforts to learn riding. So whenever the boy comes home with bruises on the knee, he hides them from his mother, otherwise there will be beating and cruel dressing of the bruises. Often the bruises develop into big sores. At school the little boys run races and do little high jumps. The girls enjoy skipping. So when they come home in the afternoon, they play these athletic games behind their houses on the lawns.

The little boys get great pleasure from their action songs which the teachers teach them at school. The most popular of the songs are "Dokono ne Nam" - (Fish and Kenkey) (Keteke oso nneama kuntan).
 (The loaded Train!) The words of the more popular songs are in the appendix. All the songs of the primary school children are about food, the home, or the children's activities. Sometime ago, the little boys used to drive two-wheeled lorries with a long pole. This has gone out of fashion. The new car is the old bicycle wheel without the spokes. The child stands behind the wheel with a short stick with which he drives it on and steers it along the road. The boys like to ride this whenever they are running errands for their parents. Sex determines the games these little children play. It seemed that the girls had fewer games than the boys. Love-songs and dances are the outstanding features of the girls' games. At the school, the teachers are teaching the girls to play netball. Children of 6-8 years in the school continue to tell stories with pleasure, but as they reach Class 4 of the primary school, they lose interest in the Ananse stories. They begin to be interested in stories of brave men and women.

When I asked some Class 5 children to tell me some stories, one girl told me that she had forgotten all her 'Ananse stories'. I agreed to hear any story at all - and she gladly told me the story of Mary Slessor. She said that she had read it from the class reading book. A boy in the same class also told me the Story of David Livingstone and seemed to make him his own hero. In each case, these children regarded the Ananse Story childish and did not like to tell it. At the class 4 stage and upwards, the boys and girls begin to take interest in real songs - either from the hymn book or those they hear at home from the gramophone or those adults sing. Among these popular songs were "Tete Quarshie", and most of the children's hymns. The parents do not read to the children at home. But sometimes an interested father or mother may ask the boy or girl to read what he learnt at school to him. The class I or Class II pupils like to read and make a show of their accomplishments - but I was told that Class 4 or 5 children generally refused to do so. Some parents get cross when they hear that their children have failed to go to the next class. Some parents may even punish the child who has failed to make progress. Last January a mother refused to let her daughter, 10 years old, who had failed to go to Class 6 remain in School. She decided to send her to learn sewing at Kumase.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL - DISCIPLINE & WORK:

At Banko, I noticed that some homes had very cordial relationship with the teachers and the school as a whole. These homes are those of the Christians who are members of either the Presbyterian or Methodist Church. Some of these parents visit the School and see for themselves what their children are doing. Sometimes the parents are attracted to the school, to look at the children playing games or running or jumping. The teachers and the Christian parents meet on Sundays at divine worship, with the children present. Some parents discuss the children's progress with the teachers and exchange views about children's behaviour at home and at school. When a boy or girl had done something in the home, it is the custom for the parents to report him to his teacher to have him thrashed. When a child is not working hard or obeying his teachers at school, the teachers may tell to the parents. It happens very often that the good boy at school is sometimes not a good boy at home and vice versa. With the pagan or Muslim parents, the situation is quite different. These parents think that school discipline is too severe for their children. Whenever a child comes home with a bruised hand - saying that the teacher beat him, the parents get angry. The class 3 teacher told me that at one time, a woman came to him and demanded explanation as to why he should beat her daughter instead of teaching her. The teacher said that it was the headteacher who came and settled the matter amicably, otherwise the mother would quarrel very much with him. She even threatened to remove her child to another school at Sekyere - 1/4 miles away if her child was going to be beaten all the time. In the matter of providing children with books and school materials, the headmaster told me that the Christian parents were more co-operative.

Wrong



THE 6-7 YEAR OLDS HELP BY FETCHING WATER.

He said that the parents of the pagan children did care to buy their children's school books and materials for them. So long as their children dress in the school uniforms and come to the school daily, they believe that all is well. These parents think that their children obey their teachers far more than they obey them. When a mother sends a child to run an errand and the child is reluctant to go, she says - "Ah yes, it were your teachers, you would run very quickly". In the same way when the children go to farm and they refuse to carry big loads of firewood, the parents say - "But when your teachers send you to get them firewood you carry greater and heavier loads than these." The parents sometimes dispute the school authority's decisions. At the end of the year, if a child is unsuccessful and made to repeat a class, they think that the headteacher hates him and that was why he failed the particular child. Here is a case in point. A girl 14 years old has been retarded and kept in Class six since 1953. This year when the parents learnt that the girl was too weak in the school subjects - so she should stay in Class six again, the father challenged the headteacher to produce the girl's Examination papers - to show him her marks, to see if really she did not pass in all the subjects of the examination. This matter was reported to the Manager of the school and it was he who came and advised the headteacher to 'push' the girl through, "in view of her ripening age. As a result of the manager's recommendation, the girl was promoted to Middle Form one, and the parents assumed that "they had won the case" and put the headteacher into shame. When the teachers ask the children to collect a few shillings to buy water colour, newsprint or other collective property or material to be used for work in the school, the Christian parents pay the contributions readily, but the pagan parents are suspicious and reluctant to pay - until some force is brought to bear on their children. The children in the Primary classes 1-6 at Banko told me that at school they always compete during games, sports and in class lessons. In games and sports, they work according to sections - Red, Blue, Gold and Green. I saw that each section leader was very anxious to see that his men did not let the section down. I found that the teachers gave marks to sections for neatness of body and dress, coming to school punctually, sweeping the compound well, running or winning races and good performance in class. At the end of each week, the total scores of each section of the whole school was announced and the sections are arranged according to order of merit. The children were so keen that sometimes the section leaders went about calling their members to come to school early or to sweep the plots of absentees for them. If a pupil's plot was not swept he lost marks to his section. In the class competitions I noticed that for the sake of winning more marks for their section, some children cheated - showing answers to their slower friends in the same sections. This led to frequent quarrels among the children. Every Friday, the section that came last was punished wholesale - to fetch water to the garden or to sweep the whole school compound. Most children felt unjustly treated, because they argued that they did well in all the activities. Sometimes teachers made children compete in saying the number tables, spelling etc, in the classroom, and the winner in each hit those who failed to give the correct answer on the head.



THE 6-7 YEAR OLDS HELP BY FETCHING WATER.

This made the clever boys and girls hated by the less gifted children. Some of the pupils complained also that their teachers favoured particular pupils in the classes - and made those children run all the errands for them. In classes 5 and 6, I noticed that the girls began very fast friendships in twos and threes. Every group of friends had to see each other before they walk along together to school. The boys too had their playmates with whom they went to the field to play football after school. They did not admit the younger folk in their companies or gangs. The boys in class six had become interested in sex matters. All of them began to go to the Hausa man at the Zongo to be circumcised. Some did the circumcision privately without their parents' knowledge. If an uncircumcised boy came to their group, they drove him away and shunned him. When they went to the ONWAM River to swim or wash themselves, they drove all the uncircumcised boys of their age downstream - and they swam upstream. They said those people were too unclean to join them at the same spot. The class girls too knew of this, and looked interested. They laughed and jeered at those who feared to go for the circumcision. The children had a very strong sense of duty and they looked well-disciplined. The teachers had delegated some of their powers to the class 6 children, especially the Boys' and Girls' Prefects. Whenever the Teachers were absent or at meeting, these prefects kept order in the classrooms. They were readily obeyed and respected by all the children in the school. When children are working in the garden or on the school field, the teachers do a minimum of supervision. The prefects share the work among the section leaders who later distribute portions to individuals in their section. Those who complete their lots earlier go to help those slow members of their sections so that they may "win" and get more marks for their side. The main work the children do in the garden is weeding, making beds for seeds and sowing the seeds. Whenever the school field is bushy, they cut it down. In the afternoons, the girls fetch water for the teachers and the boys go to the bush and collect firewood for the teachers. This is the work which some children do with a little reluctance, because their parents have told them that it is not part of their lessons at school. But a fair number of them try to carry considerable bundles of firewood, so that they may win many marks for their sections.



HAPPY GANG OF 8-9 YEAR OLD BOYS.

CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE : (11-18 years)

FOOD HABITS AND SLEEP:

At Banko, the child who approaches adolescence is thought fit to take his meals together with his parents, so the adolescent boys share meals with the men, and the girls eat with the women. As before, they have no clearly marked times for meals, but it is usual for the child to expect a breakfast or lunch and as a rule, he never misses the dinner. At this stage, the children are supposed to be used to all kinds of adult food, and may not be given the chance of making their choice. If a child refuses to eat the common meal, he is regarded as naughty and troublesome. Sometimes the mother says to him "If you do not like to eat this food, give me money so that I may prepare you the food you want to eat". This makes the child all the more angry, so he sticks to his decision - and after the family meal has been eaten by the rest of the members, this child goes to the kitchen and cooks for himself. It is the boys who usually have trouble with the mother over their food in this way. Because of the mother's attitude to children's changing appetites, some boys persist in refusing to eat "fufu," the staple food and change to 'apesie' - boiled yam, cocoyam and broth. Some of the children stop eating fufu so that they may be exempted from the duty of pounding the family's fufu. The adolescent boy thinks he has grown up and so hates to do this work. Some fathers insist that the child pounds the fufu whether he eats some or not. In this way the child feels that he is treated unjustly and may revolt against the father's command. At this stage, the boys begin to take interest in drinking palm wine and smoking some cigarettes. This they do during funerals or when they have won a few pence from their own labour. Parents do not countenance this strange habit at all in the boys and check them harshly by abusing and ridiculing them. But the boys do not mind them, and practise these things in secret.

At the adolescent stage, the boys and girls at Banko are not allowed to sleep in the same room, either with parents or the opposite sex. The girls sleep together in one room and the boys in another. If there are no rooms to be used in this way, either boys or the girls go and sleep with their friends or cousins in other people's houses. When this is the case, the children are free from all parental control, so the adolescent boys and girls roam about the streets in the night for a long time before they go to sleep. This is the time for lovers to meet at dark corners and play romances. The children do not get enough sleep and so they look tired even in the early morning hours. Some of them may wake up as late as 8 am.

SCHOOL AND HOME ACTIVITIES

At Banko, many children go to the Middle School when they approach adolescence. Those children who do not go to school must remain with the parents and follow them in their occupations. The lucky children who go to school are really proud of their position and sometimes look down on their less fortunate brothers and sisters. At the middle school, the children seem to like school life better than home life

The children find their fathers or mothers too critical of their behaviour and movements and too full of restrictions as to who should or should not be the child's friends. On the other hand, the boys and girls of the primary stage find home discipline less severe than that at school. At the middle school stage, parents do not dispute school decision very much. It is payments of extra fees - which the teachers collect for art materials, band, and library that the parents object to and dispute. Some parents said that the teachers should give them a list of those materials and books so that they may buy the things themselves, because they suspected the teachers of unfair dealing. Schoolmates are friendly and seem to co-operate well. Some middle form one boys told me that the middle form four boys bullied them when the school reopened in January, but the headteacher checked them. The girls of the top form protected the little boys and girls who had just come to the middle school from the big bullies. It seemed that form-mates were less friendly with each other; I saw that there was keen competition in all the school activities - classroom lessons, physical training, athletics and agriculture and hand-work. There were 4 section leaders who struggled to have the first place for their sections. But this was done with no ill-feeling towards their opponents. There were competitions in the school games - football, netball and volley. The sections were given marks for good performance at the games. I noticed that the children in the middle school were growing to take games and sports very seriously. Their own teachers are good footballers and ex-athletes of their college houses and they are putting great value on these activities. It was due to their interest (taken in this respect) that weekly football matches became the custom at Banko on each Sunday. Sex is the determining factor as to the kind of game children play. But sometimes, the sports and games master let the wee-wee boys play football or netball with the girls and this was great fun for all the school.

In the middle school, children enjoy factual stories of men and women's lives. There is little or no interest taken in Ananse stories which the children have long regarded as foolish and childish and have discarded. Few boys and girls had begun to take interest in reading local newspapers - the Daily Graphic, the Gold Coast Review and the NKWANTABISA - a vernacular paper. Most parents are illiterate, and the few literates cannot read English with any fluency or understanding. They do not read to their children. I noticed that parents of the First Century Gospel Church made their children read the Bible to them at home if they could not read it in the vernacular (Twi) themselves. I was told by the middle School boys that they were not forbidden to read any books: but their teachers vehemently deplored the children's custom of writing letters to England and America for catalogues and presents from their friends there. Apart from the usual school readers, some children bought locally published booklets like "Eighteen Pence", The Gold Coast Year Book and read for themselves.

friendly

Children have little or no access to adult literature and so cannot read it. At the middle school stage, the children begin to have more interest in English songs and lose interest in Vernacular ones. The few vernacular songs they like to sing are mostly love songs and songs that have come into fashion recently, examples of which are the recorded songs of the native musicians and their bands - e.g. E.K's band, Kwaa Mensa are popular musicians whose songs feature greatly in their singing. At school, children are taught solfa notation and sight singing from which they seem to get much fun. Songs about popular figures like Roy Ankraah in the field of sports and Kwame Nkrumah in politics are also enjoyed.

At this stage, children have intense friendships - both with opposite sexes and their own sexes. The middle school children of 15 years upwards usually move in pairs. Two girls who are fast friends usually take two boys who are also fast friends as their boy-friends. As much as possible these friendships are kept secret both from their teachers and their parents who are all the time ready to check them from becoming friends. It happens that some of these friendships go so far that some of the girls get pregnant and have to be sent away from the school. Their boy-friends are in like manner expelled too. Boys and girls of 11-14 years on the other hand are shy and make friends with their own sexes. But sooner or later, they learn to attach themselves to some of their opposite sex. The boys of the upper forms of the middle school seemed very suspicious of the good intention of their teachers when they checked them from playing with the girls in the evenings. This has made some boys angry and so they have made gangs. The gangs purposely go out in the night to the nearby smaller villages to visit their school-girl-friends whenever the moon is shining. Some of the gangs also sit on the streets at night with the girls who do not go to school just to annoy their teachers who dislike to see their school-boys in the company of young girls. It is the custom of the middle school boys to attend private studies in the classrooms at night, but the girls are excluded for fear that some boys will play love with them after the studies. It seemed that all these restrictions on the boy-girl relations in the middle school had tended to make the adolescent boys and girls more curious and eager to meet whenever their teachers or parents were not in the way.

Although the middle school children are divided into sections - of both girls and boys, there is always the tendency for the boys to separate themselves from their opposite sex in the same section. During school competitions e.g. at sports and games, there seems to be little co-operation between boys and girls of one section - the girls cheer and encourage the boys to run the long races. Both boys and girls who were athletes and competitors for their sections told me in interviews that they put in greater and greater effort so that they would not be beaten in the races while their boy-friend or girl-friend is looking on. I noticed in the middle school that the children enjoyed their practical activities - working in the garden - making pots or baskets during the art and craft periods more than the time they spent in the classroom. Some boys confessed that in the classroom the teachers beat them, but during these out-of-door activities, they were left free by ~~themselves~~ and there was no fear of the stick. ~~themselves~~



THE MIDDLE ^{SCHOOL} BOY WEAVES CAGES FOR KOLA NUTS.

Moreover, the children said the handwork and the craft work they did brought them little sums of money out of which they provided footballs and other equipment for their games and sports. At the middle school stage, parents do not quarrel with teachers for making their boys and girls work hard. They say it is good training for them, because they will have to go out soon into the world and they must be toughened for the harder work in the world. The girls go to the bush and cut faggots for the teachers; sometimes they fetch water and wash their teachers' things for them. The boys may go to the school garden and weed, till the ground or fell big trees or level grounds for playing fields. Sometimes the boys make blocks and bricks for erecting borders for flower beds and gutters. What some parents object to is to find that their children do not get time to come home when school is over. They want their children home, especially the girls - to come and help prepare the family dinner. The boys too should come home early either to fetch water or to pound fufu for the father. Some boys consider themselves grown ups and ~~and~~ so refuse to pound fufu when they reach the top form of the middle school. But there were cases where ^{were} adolescent boys who had left school at Middle 4/ still helping their mother in cooking the family meal. Boys help father on cocoa farms during holidays or on Saturdays. In children who go to school, there is considerable continuity between prepuberty and puberty. Parents recognise that they are growing gradually day by day from childhood into adulthood. All the school boys and girls have to be confirmed when they reach middle form three or four of their course. The confirmation is a sort of "rites de passage" into adulthood. A special Sunday is set aside for parents and the pupils to get ready for the occasion. On that Sunday, the minister of the local Presbyterian church comes and performs the necessary confirmation rites in church. Sometimes the girls have to be examined to see if none of them has conceived. A case happened in 1953 when a girl was found pregnant on the morning of the confirmation day, and so she was excluded. This was a great stigma on the girl in particular and her family as a whole. After the confirmation in church, all the Christian parents entertain their boys and girls together at a feast at which presents are given to the children. On the next Monday following their confirmation, the children are given a holiday - and so they dress up in their best clothes and cloths - usually white - and go about the village thanking all the people they meet. Most of the adults whom they meet give them presents too. Confirmation of christian boys and girls is the sign that these children are no longer boys or girls but men and women or nearly so. Among girls who are not christians or school girls, more elaborate rites are performed when they reach the puberty stage. Whereas the school girls and christian girls are all the time given private admonitions to keep away from boys so that they may not become pregnant and lose their chance of confirmation, the girls who are pagans receive no such advice. In their prepuberty stage, the pagan girls are told that they are growing and so they should always use a cloth-belt to tie their cloths around their waist firmly so that they may not expose themselves, and particularly their breasts should be covered with an upper garment.

When a girl reaches the adolescent stage, she is given adult cloths to wear; if she gets money presents, she is told to buy good and suitable cloths or ornaments which sooner or later she will have to wear as a grown up woman. Girls of this age are given little or no freedom of movement or action. The parents are all the time anxious about their daughter when she goes out for a long time, especially in the evening. Parents - especially mothers and their daughters often quarrel about the latters' intention to go out against the mothers orders. Boys of the adolescent age too fear to come to the house because of the girls' parents - but they usually manage to meet at a secret place and enjoy each other's company. Adolescent boys on the other hand are free to go out in the night as much as they choose. Some parents do not know exactly where or with whom their sons sleep. But the girls are not treated so. - The mothers see that these girls go to bed at the same time as they themselves. Mothers do not instruct the adolescent girls as to what to expect sooner or later by way of menstruation. Whatever knowledge the girls get, they obtain from their older friends and sisters. A woman, now mother of 3 children told me how she became afraid and suspected that she had contracted venereal disease on her first experience of the menstrual flow. She said that she was afraid to tell her mother for fear that she would ask her to "name" the man from whom she contracted the disease. It was from her fellow girls that she learnt the facts of menstruation. Another adolescent girl was told to sleep in her father's room when the father went to sleep with his second wife elsewhere. At night when the girl felt very cold, she went to sleep on the warmer bed of her father. Not knowing, she passed her first menses and soiled the sheets. When she woke up in the morning and saw the bedding soiled with blood, she ran away to her own mother who was at Efiduase and told her that she had been bewitched in the night. She said that her mother knew what had happened, so she was detained at Efiduase and the necessary rites were performed before she came again to stay at Banko with her father. The adolescent boys ~~boys~~ also are given no sex instruction by parents. Those who go to school are given prohibitions or "donts" about their movements with girls. The adolescent boy picks up his knowledge about sex from his older friends or brothers. A boy of 16 told me that he had heard that if he did not have some intercourse with a girl before he married, he might grow stupid or get ill, because too much semen would collect in his system. Another boy said that his friends told him that if he did not mate with a girl, he might have his penis die - that is, it will not be able to erect when he was married. A boy of 13 years had recently been circumcised. When I asked him why he did the circumcision, he replied that his friends told him that nowadays the girls say they do not like uncircumcision, because circumcision gives better pleasure at copulation. The Twi expression is this - "Dua na yepe, yempe kote boto". - that is we like circumcision, we don't like a penis in a bag.

CHASTITY:

Boys and girls in the adolescent age are expected to practise chastity before they become adults and later marry. Boys are encouraged to avoid the company of girls for economic reasons.



ADOLESCENT NON-SCHOOL GIRL AFTER HER RITES DE PASSAGE.

The parents' advice is that if "you bring your case, you will go alone and face it" - that means to say, if a boy makes somebody's daughter pregnant, he will have to be responsible for the expenses involved. The mothers also tell the girls that boys are bad, so they should try and avoid their company. For what reasons boys are bad, the mothers do not say. Mothers are not free to discuss matters of sex with their daughters. All they do is to point out the case of other people's daughters that had happened. One day, in the course of this investigation, I met a mother who was telling her daughter to stop going about with adolescent boys. She said to the girl: "Have you forgotten the cause of the death of Tiwaa recently? The girl she referred to was a school girl who became pregnant and in an attempt to cause abortion died. The mother wanted to show her daughter that all girls who indulged in sexual intercourse with boys before they were married would sooner or later suffer similar fates. Mothers tell their girls also that if they give themselves freely to the boys before marriage, the boys will not respect them. It is said that many girls lose their chances of good marriages - because the would-be husbands learn from their fellow young men what sort of sexual life their would-be wives lived - and if they discovered that they were not chaste, they would abandon the idea. The fear was that girls who were unchaste usually became barren at the time they married, due to constant sexual intercourse or abortions. In order that a girl may be proved chaste and decent in her sexual life prior to marriage, she should be declared, publicly, at the time she has had her first menstruation, put up and shown to the villagers. In recent years, owing to the heavy expenses connected with these rites, some girls may menstruate for 3-6 months before it is formally made known to the queen-mother of Banko; it is she who examines the girl to see if she has already conceived.

RITES DE PASSAGE FOR GIRLS AT BANKO

puberty rites.

puberty rites
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I shall now describe in a little detail. When the adolescent girl sees that she has had a menstrual flow for the first time, she tells her friend or sister who in turn makes the fact known to the girl's mother. It is considered unfortunate to announce this either at night or in the afternoon. It is thought ill-luck to announce the first menstruation on important days like Akwasidae or Wukudae. When the girl menstruates in the afternoon or evening, she does not tell anybody - but keeps it secret. She may tell her boy-friend or sister or other confidant the same day. Early in the morning is the most lucky time to announce this fact to relatives and friends. The mother of the girl wakes up very early and goes to tell the queen-mother first of all, before she tells others. If the queen-mother has any reason to suspect the girl of conception already, she can demand her presence for examination. If she is satisfied that the girl has really "eaten at the back yard", (whenever a woman has her menses, she does not join the rest in the same house or kitchen where the men's food is prepared), she cooks her own food and eats outside the house) - the literal rendering is "wadidi afikyiri" - then the parents can proceed with the rites.

BARA RITES

When the mother of the girl has the queen-mother's sanction to proceed with the 'Bara' rites, she consults her husband and her own sisters and fixes a date for the occasion. If the adolescent girl has been betrothed to a man, the would-be husband is also informed so that he may provide most of the presents and money required for the rites. The man gives money to his own mother or sisters who go to buy cloths, loin cloths, beads, headkerchiefs, stool, powder, looking glass, pomades, sponges and towels and several other presents. They may buy about 80-100 eggs, two or three fowls, yams, cocoyams and other foodstuffs. If the girl's parents have the means, they may also provide some of these things. But when the girl has not been betrothed, whether parents have the means or not, they have to get these things in order to do some honour to their daughter. Parents take great pride in seeing that their daughter's BARA rites are superb and talked of by neighbours as one of the best in the town. Early in the morning, on the day appointed for the performance of the rites, the old women of the girls family and mother's friends wake up and gather on the main street at Banko and sing 'Bara' songs - going from one end of the town to the other. Most 'Bara' songs contain words of thanksgiving to "Nana Nyankopon" - the Deity - for helping the young girl to grow into womanhood without a blemish on her character as regards her sex activities. A typical 'Bara' song goes like this - Osee! Yee! Otweaduanpon ee! Yeda w'ase oo'. Yeda wase Amen oo, Yen na yeni oo! (Ho! Yes! God Almighty! We thank Thee! We thank Thee that here we are with our grown up daughter) The women sing and beat their drum until six o'clock or later, and then disperse to go to their houses for a rest. As soon as the girl who has come of age gets up in the morning, she puts on a white cloth and sits in front of her house on a stool - with one or two old women beside her. As soon as possible the women shave and leave the head quite bare. She does not eat anything until late in the afternoon. She cuts her finger nails and collects these and the hair which she is expected to keep until the eighth day before she throws them away. It is said that the longer the adolescent girl keeps these things, the greater her presents will be during the rites. At 10 or 11 o'clock, the would-be husband or if there is none, the parents, bring the girl's presents to her. All the presents are carried on the head by many girls in an 'Indian file' to the girl's house. Sometimes, an amount of money between £7-£10 is added to the presents according to the ability of the parents or the would-be husband. If the girl was an illegitimate child whose father failed to claim her at birth, her uncles or mother provides these things for the rites. At 12 noon, the old women of the family take the girl with a few friends to the River Onwam to wash her. The old woman who is officiating receives a new sponge, cake of soap and towel from the parents. At the bank of the river, all the party stands and looks on. One old woman and the girl wade through the water to the deeper part. Here, the old woman recites some words purporting to invoke the blessing of the gods on the girl's future career as a wife. After the prayer, the old woman dips her thrice into the water and then she uses the new set of sponge, soap and towel to finish the bath herself. After washing, she throws all things away - none of them should be returned home. It is said that she has used them in washing the bad luck and all the evil things that have ever come in contact with her, so if the things are taken home, the evils will be taken home again.

By the time this party arrives back in the house, the girl's mother and other relatives or friends have prepared very delicious dishes for her and her friends. Some of her friends tell their parents and they are allowed to come and serve their friend for a week. They stay in the house where the rites are being performed for the whole week. This is the time that most adolescent girls pick up their sex knowledge. At Banko, such occasions also give opportunity to young adolescent/boys to meet their lovers easily - because they get the parents permission to go and sleep with their friends - but in reality some of them spend the better part of the night with their boy-friends. Usually, this fact is known to the girl whose 'Bara' rites are being performed, but she connives at it. But when her mother discovers that some of her friends stay out of the house too long into the night - she suspects them - and reports the matter to the girl's mothers so that they may not put the blame on her daughter when something happened later.

L girls

After the girl has changed her cloths for new ones, she is given sandals to wear. In all respects, she must dress as a fully grown woman. When she is ready, the oldest woman or the most experienced grandmother of the family prepares a kind of food called "OTO" - usually made of yam or plantain which has been boiled and mashed. Sometimes palm-oil is added to the OTO. Boiled eggs are also provided with it. The "new" woman sits with little children - boys and girls in the manner in which mothers and their offspring sit to eat the family meal. The old woman takes an egg and breaks it into two. She holds one half of the egg near the initiate's mouth and recites a prayer like this: oh Deity, today my daughter 'X' has come of age, and I am giving her egg and "OTO" to eat. We pray thee to make her the mother of twins and tens of sons and daughters. After the prayer, the old woman throws the two pieces of egg and some mashed yam, "OTO" into the sky or onto the roof for the gods to eat some. At this point all the children are given a signal to eat the eggs and the OTO. While the children are so eagerly struggling for the food, the initiate is told to hold a girl and a boy's hands - each with one hand - so that they cannot take some of the food. This is an interesting sight, for the two children usually struggle to free themselves in order to take part of the food. In no time, the eggs and the 'OTO' are done and the children disperse. After this eating rite, the girl calls the two unfortunate children and gives them more of the eggs and OTO which had been reserved for herself. All this time, the initiate's friends and her mother are busy preparing fufu for her to eat. When the fufu is ready the best portions of it are given to the initiate who eats all alone by herself. The mother and the girl's friends may eat together from the same dish. If the initiate wants some company, she may call a very young girl or boy of 3-4 years to eat with her. This is considered good training for her - to know how to feed her own future little boys and girls. Boys or girls of 5-7 years are not allowed to eat with her. For the seven days, the girl does no work - she gets up early in the morning - and her friends give her warm water for her bath.

After her bath, breakfast is ready for her to eat. Between breakfast and lunch, she may go to sleep. At this time sleep is considered very necessary for the adolescent girl, so that in the 7 days of her rest from all work, she may fatten. When she wakes up in the noon, she eats her lunch. Friends - both boys and girls visit her in the afternoon for conversation. Sometimes her own lover comes to see her. In this case, all her friends, go to the kitchen and give them some privacy for them to make their plans for the future. She is expected to have another bath before sundown - and this takes place usually between 4-5 pm. At 5.30 or 6 pm. she eats her dinner and after a few minutes' rest, many more visitors come and entertain her. If the moon is up, the girls who are staying with her play games like 'Ampe' and "Aso". Sometimes, the initiate joins them to sing love songs in which each girl calls out her lover's name. In the seven days of the initiation ceremony, all her relatives - both males and females bring the initiate presents - generally donations in money. The economic importance of the BARA rites to the girl and her mother needs little comment. In order that girls may get more presents, their initiation ceremonies are made to coincide with the cocoa season when every one has a little money to spend and to spare. Some parents - the mothers, told me that amounts between £30-£50 were realised from the presents which were made to their daughters. From this amount the girl buys some beautiful cloths, kitchen utensils and possibly a sewing machine to prepare for marriage. Some of the poorer mothers make use of the money - e.g. for paying some family debts or trading.

On the seventh day, the initiate and her mother and her friends dress in their best clothes and parade the streets - go from house to house - thanking all the people for their kindness shown to the initiate. After the first week, the girl's friends return to their own houses and the rites are over. From now onwards, the girl is given freedom of movement: she is not restricted in her dealings with men or young men of her own age. But the parents continue to warn her to choose a good husband who may be able to look after and her children in future. Boys and young men are now free to come and see the girl without any fear of her parents. But some young married girls - between 16-17 years told me that when they were first playing romances with their would-be husbands, they kept it secret from their parents for fear the parents might object to the particular men. At this stage of their love affairs, the girls give confidences of their love to their friends of their sex - never to sisters or mothers. Generally when girls at Banko reach the age of 15, they are expected to have their first menstruation. It is delayed too long - up to 17-18 years, the parents become afraid and go about for medicine "to make them menstruate". A case I came across was a girl of 16 or 17 whose contemporaries had all menstruated and gone to their husbands. The father went to a dispenser for a drug to make the girl menstruate early. He said that after 3 months, the girl had her first menstruation.

KYIRI BARA:

A different aspect of girl's initiation rites into womanhood is the custom called KYIRI BARA which is compulsorily performed in respect of a girl who fails to announce her first menstruation and becomes pregnant. I was told by all my informants at Banko that in the very olden days such girls were banished from the village for good.

The affair is a great taboo, and brings calamity - "MMUSU" both to the family of the girl in particular and the villagers in general. Becoming pregnant before one's first menstruation - or KYIRI BARA is considered an evil which desecrates all the stools of the chiefs and all the gods and shrines of the village. In pouring libation therefore, the head of the family always brings a clause into his prayer - that all the girls in his family may gloriously be initiated into womanhood through the BARA custom, so as to avoid all calamity. 'KYIRI BARA' literally means "Hates menstruation" - or one who hates menstruation or hides it. When a girl's menstruation is announced to the queen-mother of Banko, and she has reason to suspect, she calls the girl to her presence and examines her. If she discovers her to be pregnant already, the queen-mother tells the girl's parents that they cannot proceed with the usual custom - because "the girl has caused calamity" already - "wabo mmusu". The queen-mother later sends for the chief linguist and puts the matter before him and he in turn carries the message to the chief. The chief and his elders later confer together and fix a day for the cleansing of the stools and shrines by the girl and her parents.

On the appointed day the girl and the man who made her pregnant are brought to the chief's house. The girl's parents and the man's parents provide schnapps or gin for the linguist to propitiate the ancestral gods of the Banko stool through the pouring of libation. After the libation, a crowd of the citizens gather round the girl and her lover who are stripped of all clothes - except the girl's loin-cloth and the man's pair of shorts which cover their genital organs from the public. At the open place, the girl and her lover sit facing each other. With a sharp razor, the queen-mother cuts the hair of both, and sees that they pick up all their fallen hair. A very young lamb -, usually black, is slaughtered by the linguist and its limbs cut from it. The girl carries two legs of the lamb under her armpits - one under each arm - and the man does the same with the other two legs. A chick is caught and its head cut off. The girl is given the dead chick to carry in her month. The body of the lamb is cut into countless bits and thrown over the streets and corners of Banko for the gods "to eat". To round off the ceremony, the queen-mother holds bottles of palm oil in each hand and pours out the oil onto the head of the girl and her lover simultaneously. As soon as the last drop is out, both lovers rise up with the greatest speed they can muster and run through the crowds straight to the River ONWAM to wash away their calamity. Behind them, the crowd follows with hooting and abuse for their secret pre-puberty sexual intercourse. When parents come home, they point out to their daughters in particular what danger there is for those who do not live a chaste life. It is believed that children conceived and born through 'KYIRI BARA' generally die at birth or they grow and become stupid. I was shown two or three examples of children of this type. In one instance, the boy was attending school - and his teachers agreed that he was very stupid indeed. He had to leave school at primary class V where he repeated thrice without success.

ADOLESCENT SEX ACTIVITIES:

At Banko, adolescent boys and girls are prevented as much as possible from meeting in the evenings ~~in private~~. The mothers are very alert, their girls keeping friends of their own sex only.



ADOLESCENTS - BOY/GIRL FRIENDSHIPS.

(AT SCHOOL)



BETWEEN 15-18, BOY-GIRL ROMANCES
BEGIN - OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS -

Adolescents do not openly make known objects of their love. But it is common for parents to guess the 'private' lovers of their daughters when they sit in the house and overhear their girls singing love songs and calling their friends' names in the songs. Some of the words go like this - "Me ne ena Adwoa Mosi ee, Manware no a mewu oo! - This son of Mother Adwoa - - I shall die if I do not get him to marry". When a parent has heard her daughter mention a boy-friend's name like this in her song, she can tease her later with it to make her seem foolish. With the adolescent boys and girls who go to school, their first love objects are not likely to be of the same age. The few educated men betroth the girls who come out of school even before they leave middle four. Those boys who do not go to school are luckier and able to keep their love longer - and it generally ends with marriage. An interesting sex activity of adolescents, approved by all parents is like this. During parts of the year when farm products have been harvested and the different foodstuffs are plentiful, adolescent boys and girls go to the chief and ask for permission to play a sex game called "Aheneahene" - that is making a chief. If permission is granted to them, all boys and girls who are between the ages "10-11"; and who like to take part come together and choose from their own number a boy for a chief and a girl for a queen-mother. This play is similar to their childhood make-believe play. Elders and heads of families are appointed in the same manner and they are given particular adolescent boys and girls to look after as persons of their clan.

At their meeting, the 'young men' choose wives from the "young women" and from that time they try to imitate the same behaviour they see wives and husbands show in their houses. On a day that children are free from going to farm with their parents, all the adolescent boys and girls join together and do some work for a little money from which they give their little "wives" money for the market. To the couple 6d or a shilling is sufficient for a day's marketing for their meals. The girls' parents take great interest in this sex play, so when they go home with this little sum of money, the mothers add something to it to buy meat, vegetables, foodstuffs to prepare the food for the young "husband". The fathers too approve of the boys' make-believe, and some of them give a few shillings to their sons to give to their young wives to prepare food for them. When the young wife finishes cooking her 'husbands' food, she gets an adult's clothes - sandals, headkerchief, ear-ring etc and dresses as such. Then she puts the food on her head and takes it to her young husband's house. She is expected to greet her "in-laws" in the house just as the adults do. On Sunday or any holiday, the "new chief" and his queen-mother and all the adolescents taking part in the make-believe play go in a procession to visit the real chief and his elders in the town. The children beg for the chief's umbrella, some drums and most of the paraphernalia of a chief and they dress in them. Most adults get interested and go to watch the children as they pass. It is a great pride for a parent to his boy or girl playing her part so well. Some of these make-believe sex plays have grown into real marriages after the BARA rites had been performed later,

No less than 5 couples were pointed out to me as having married in this way. Of recent years, this sex play is becoming less common at Banko. The last which adolescents played was in 1953. I was told that those boys and girls who are not in school have gone to Ahafo with parents to make cocoa farms, and it was these illiterate children who were interested in the play. At their new settlement, they have little or no time to play - because their parents expect them to work on the farm all the time. Owing to the influence of Christianity and schooling at Banko there has grown up another sex activity for adolescent boys and girls. This is a religious club - or what they call a singing band. Boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 18 come together and ask the Catechist of their church to grant them permission to start a singing club. This is generally agreed to, and the boys and girls meet and appoint their own leaders for the band. Their meeting hours are in the evening - between 9 and 10. The club is usually taken charge of by one of the teachers in the primary or middle school. It is he who chooses suitable songs and hymns and teaches them to sing. Sometimes a popular musician may be invited from elsewhere to teach them particular songs. The clubs undertake jobs like weeding cocoa farms and making bricks for sale. I was told that in 1954, the club realised £32 from its jobs done. Some of this amount was used in buying a uniform for the boys and girls in the band. They put this uniform on whenever they went to a church meeting e.g. at an anniversary or Harvest. Many of the boys get the chance of taking girl-friends from the club, - and it is said that some of the men married their wives from the singing bands. The daughters of pagans in the band have trouble with their mothers who suspect that something will go wrong if their girls stay out in the night till 10 pm.

PARENTS' AND ADULTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS ADOLESCENTS

Because parents at Banko in particular, and adults in general are all the time suspicious about the coming together of adolescent boys and girls, there is always a struggle between the parents and the adolescents who think that they must have freedom to choose their own friends. Adults believe that adolescence is a period of storm and stress in the child's growth. They call adolescents "mmerante" which means "those who cannot be stopped from action" -; this means that adolescents are so obstinate and self-willed that one cannot persuade them to change the line of action they have chosen for themselves. Many adolescent girls and boys rebel against the authority of their parents at home, a few rebel against school authorities, but usually for fear of punishment or expulsion, they tolerate their masters' orders - but harbour grievances in their hearts. In political life, some adolescents at Banko were known to rise against the chief who was all the time demanding communal labour from the boys on days that they should go to their own jobs in order to earn a livelihood. The old men and women of Banko regard adolescence as an unhappy time in a person's life - especially for the parents of the adolescents: because it is possible for a parent's adolescent son or daughter to get involved easily in a case which may end in a fine or disgrace to the family. That is why parents - especially mothers go about the village thanking everybody they meet after their daughters have successfully passed through the necessary BARA

initiation rites. They told me that whether a person made a present to the girl or not, he should be thanked for the mere good luck the girl has had in coming out from adolescence without a blame or blemish on her character. Whenever an adolescent boy or girl offends someone, the parents go to the person offended and apologise to him saying "Gyae fa kye yen, efise mmerante de, aye bone mpa won ho da" - Please pardon him for our sake - for with the adolescent, there is this tendency to offend people". The stage - adolescence is called "mmerantiwa bere" - the age of obstinacy or disobedience. The adolescent boy is called "aberante" - the obstinate person - or one who cannot take counsel. Adolescent girls are also called "Nkataasia". The chief cause of disagreement between parents and adolescent children is the question of the children's love-making. Whenever parents interfere with adolescent boys or girls' love affairs, there is always bound to be a difference between mother and daughter or father and son. When the mother hears of the secret love-making of the girl and she warns her of it, the girl becomes hurt - and refutes it, and this leads to quarrels or strained relations. Adolescents are very careful therefore that their secret love-making never comes to the notice of their parents.

At Banko, a girl is considered to be an adult when she is 15 years old or when she passes her first menses. As soon as she has been initiated, after the announcement, the girl is given some considerable freedom of action. With boys, they are not regarded as adults until the age of 18. But in any case, a boy will not be regarded as an adult until he has the means to keep a wife. It happens that when a girl says that she has conceived with a boy, the parents of the boy calculate and see if their son is about 17-18 years. It is said that a boy below that age will not be able to have children. It is a common saying at Banko that in their physical development into maturity, "girls carry cotton wool, and boys carry stones -; Mmeara so adanta na mmarimaa so obo". It means simply that girls grow into adulthood more quickly than boys.

ADOLESCENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGION

At Banko, religion plays an important part in the lives of adolescent boys and girls. Those adolescent children who go to school become greatly interested in the activities of their church. They go to the morning prayers at 5 o'clock and on Sunday morning, they are proud to be in the church choir or the singing band to sing hymns in church. Every Christian boy or girl between the ages 11-18 aspires to the time when he or she will be eligible for confirmation so that they may go to the Communion service. I saw an adolescent girl, Mary, about 16 years in the Banko Middle School. She was in middle form three. This girl was a member of the First Century Gospel. She had a big sore on the leg, but she held a radical belief that medicine should not be applied to it. Her teacher told me that he tried to convince that it was no sin to use medicine - but this girl held her belief and never allowed the school first aid boy to dress the sore for her.

In the case of boys and girls who do not go to school, their main practice of religion lies in worship of their father's ancestral gods and the fetishes. It is the adolescent boys and girls who sing and drum for ~~fetish~~ ~~priests~~ ~~priests~~ at their dances on festive days. An interesting feature in the religious life of adolescent boys at Banko is in the matter of boy-girl romances in which the boys sometimes take to the use of charms or "suman" in order to win the object of their love. If a boy finds that a girl he loves is not paying proper attention to his advances, he can consult a medicine man for a charm which will switch the girls love towards him in a magical way. This charm or supernatural power for winning girls is called KONYA or Sukusare or Nwanenwa". It consists of a short stick, the size of an ordinary pencil with screw-like cuttings on its sides. Lavender, powder and a twine about a yard long complete the equipment for this "juju". After the medicine man has invoked the magical powers into the "Suman" - it is given to the boy for a little fee - about 5s or 7s. When the boy is ready to use it, he says a prayer like this - "Me Sukusare, Mesre wo se dane Abenaa Nnuro ti, na ommeda me yam anadwo yi ara". - (My great Charm, do please turn Abenaa Nnuro's head or love towards me, and let her come at once to sleep in my bosom.") As the boy repeats this prayer, he ties the string round the stick and pours the powder and lavender onto the stick to make the words take effect. If he has a padlock, he can attach it to the string and lock it, and it is said whenever the girl is, she will proceed at once to the boy's room and make him happy.

After describing in some detail, the methods of Child Training at Banko, I offer a few comments as to what I think of these methods of education of children.

It is interesting to note that at Banko child training is related to the life of the people - boys and girls acquire knowledge of the world around them through their apprenticeship career with their fathers and mothers; girls learn to cook and care for the baby by watching and helping mother do it; boys also learn the arts of farming, trapping game, building houses by following and assisting father in his daily work. And this way of training children 'on the job' is a good thing, as children who do not go to school are better fitted for life in the village.

As there is little or no selection in children's learning, it is very possible that they learn good as well as bad things from their parents who are not aware of this danger: e.g. children learn to tell lies because their parents encourage them to do so - when they want to escape the creditor who inquires for their whereabouts to collect what they owe or when parents quarrel in front of children; also superstitious fears about wizards and witches are learnt from parents' stories meant to frighten naughty children into sleep.

At Banko, there seems to be no proper understanding of the gradual development of children:- as a result of this ignorance, mothers sometimes wean babies abruptly and cruelly, making children uncertain of their mothers' love or if they are no longer wanted. This emotional unbalance may bring about later behaviour problems when children become less dependent. Enuresis, the chief scourge of children at Banko, is often cruelly treated by parents: babies who fail to crawl, or walk at the same time as other born of the same age are sometimes abused or even beaten by their mothers to make them get on quickly. The putting of pepper, ginger and other painful matter in children's rectums hoping to give them power to walk early is sheer savagery. It is very unfortunate that both in school and at home, children at Banko are made to obey through fear and punishments - rather than love and respect. During school term, all boys and girls go to church regularly - but during holidays few children bother about church going or even defy it and go to farm. It is quite wrong for some mothers to make children feel guilt or shame in performing the eliminatory functions - some children perform them with fear instead of relief. Very often, mothers take sides with girls and fathers with boys - and in this way the normal cordial relationship in the family may be strained. It is utterly unsound for parents at Banko to show favour to some children of the family - e.g. the last child, the twins or tenth and ninth babies. This favouritism breeds jealousy among the children. The habit of allowing children over two years old to sleep with father and mother in the same room is not very good: sometimes the child may wake up suddenly and hear small noises made by the parents while copulating - but when he asks for explanation of the curious events - he is hushed down to sleep as though all was well: children do worry about this attitude of parents and suspect something: this may lead to future sex problems in adolescence. I think it is fine to see a mother singing and hugging her baby to sleep with lullaby.

But if this is overdone, the baby grows too dependent on the mother or she makes the other children jealous of the young one.

The fine tradition of the middle school voting by secret ballot to elect their own officers of the school each year is to be commended as it is likely to lay a good foundation for the practice of democracy in children's later life out of school.

At Banko, both teachers and pupils in the middle and primary schools take sports and games very seriously: this is a good thing. But I doubt whether it is a sound principle to give more attention and practice to the schools' representatives at the inter school championships whilst the majority of the children stand and watch.

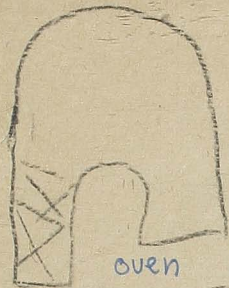
At home, some mothers are fond of interrupting children's play by telling them to run errands for them. This should be avoided if possible. When a child of two or three trips over an object - a bucket, stone or chair, the mother tells him to hit it. It would be better if the mother told the child why he tripped and fell. Mothers carry babies at funerals and children notice wailing and crying without knowing why. Little children find it hard to sit still, but at Banko the child who cannot or does not sit still at the mother's bidding is called naughty. The more indulgent mothers show extreme emotion - fear or disgust when something goes wrong in the house - e.g. when baby gets a bad fall or when he soils himself with mud or faeces. There is too much insistence on children in school "minding their individual work", and so there is little discussion and co-operative work among pupils in the classrooms. In class competitions, children do not try to beat their own record - rather they are encouraged to excel so-and-so, thus setting up envy among classmates.

The greatest aspect of children's training at Banko, which requires the promptest reform and adjustment is sex knowledge. Parents at Banko do not appreciate the physical and mental changes that take place in children during adolescence. Therefore their adolescent children's views on matters are not respected. As a result, the relationship of adolescent children and parents is not cordial. Parents dare not talk about sex matters to their children - saying that they will learn when they are old. The only teaching parents give their children is a code of prohibitions to which no reasons are assigned. Menstruation and emission are not mentioned to children before they occur. Children collect facts about sex matters from irresponsible people or mates who very often lead them into the wrong use of sex. The attitude of some parents to sex makes some children feel that sex is evil, and not worth talking about. It is not a sign of good breeding for a child to name the genital organs in the ordinary way - it is more or less taboo.

At Banko, adolescent boys and girls - both in school and at home have little or no opportunity of meeting each other in groups and sharing each other's company. Some parents and teachers discourage boys or girls who often go in the company of the opposite sex.

As a result, the boys and girls appoint their own private meetings - or whenever parents are absent, the children seize the change and meet and often mate. It would be good if youth movements like the Boy Scouts & Girl Guides were organised in the schools. Parents and teachers ought to encourage their adolescent children to see each other freely and even make friends with their knowledge and consent. In this way, they can give the young people proper guidance sympathetic in these adult activities which children naturally get interested in in adolescence. Finally, it is hoped that as more and more trained teachers go to the schools and villages, they will co-operate with the parents and enable them to understand children's physical, mental and emotional growth so that they may discard most of these bad practices and help to educate their children with a better insight of child nature and development.

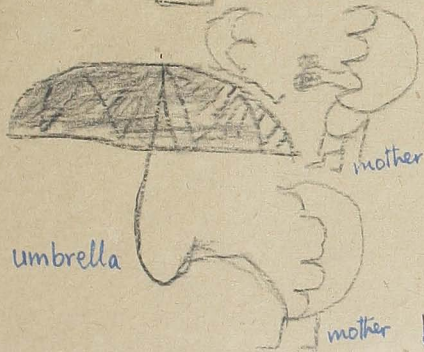
PICTURE Ia



oven



lorry



mother

umbrella

mother



house



cat

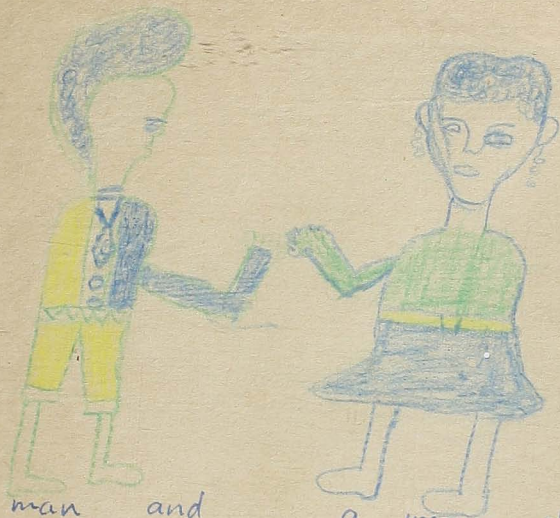
by Boy - Kofi Bona 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ years

PICTURE 1b



by Boy - Kofi Bona 6½ years

Picture II.



A man and a woman shaking hands

by girl - Afua Ataa 7years Class 2.



PICTURE IV

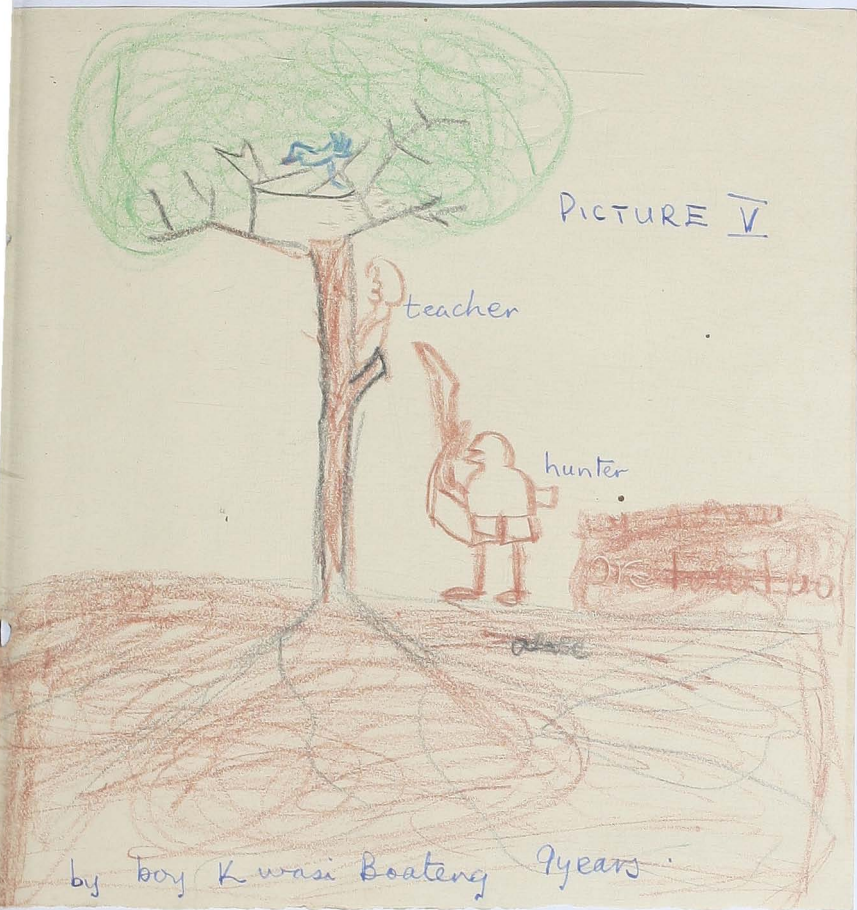


Roy Ankraah

Another boxer

A fight

Sam Amaah Donkor. boy 10 years.



PICTURE V

teacher

hunter

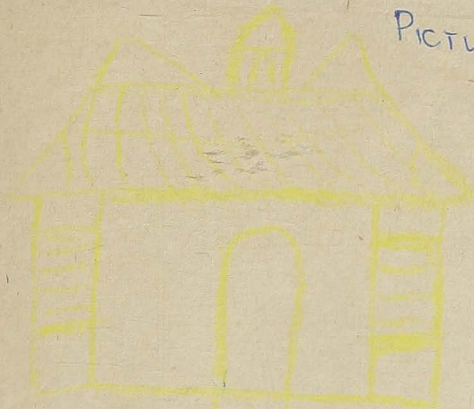
by boy Kwasi Boateng 9 years

PICTURE VI

Toto Gung

11 yrs

SHI



of father
with the
house

in eating
meat

A

APPENDICESAPPENDIX I - CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS:PICTURE 1A AND PICTURE 1B: BY BOY KOFI BONA - 6½ YEARS

Kofi Bona, a boy 6½ years old was staying in the same house with me. Whenever I was in my study, he came to me and asked me to show him some pictures. One morning when he came, he saw me writing and asked me to teach him to write too. The following conversation followed.

Kofi Bona: I want to draw my father's lorry, it is big.

Investigator: Right, I can give you colour and some paper.

Kofi: I will draw my house and my mother's oven and umbrella.

I left him, and soon he finished picture 1a -; he came and showed me the picture pointing to the big lorry, the house, oven and umbrella. When I asked him what was near the oven or umbrella, he said that it was his mother. He added that his cat was in front of the house.

At this point, Kofi said he would draw another object, but the first paper was full. So I gave him the paper with the given rectangle, in picture 1b. After he had finished, he said that it was the picture of his drinking cup.

Kofi Bona is not in school. He said that he will go to school at the next "Christmas" (Jan. 1956)

PICTURE II BY AFUA ATAA 7 YEARS.

Afua Ataa, a girl 7 years old is in Class II. I called her to my house and sent her to buy me some cigarettes. Before she returned, I had laid out books, pencils, rulers, chalks and paper on a table. She was attracted by these objects - and she went to the table to examine them. For a moment I pretended not to notice her. Then later she took a blue colour-pencil and made lines on the table. So I asked her, can you draw some pictures for me to enjoy? She said yes, I can draw a man. Then I asked, can you add a woman to your picture? She said yes, I will draw a man and a woman shaking hands while saying 'good morning' to each other.

PICTURE III BY KOFI FOFIE 6 YEARS.

Two boys, Kofi Fofie and Kwasi Beeko were my friends. They visited me after school. One afternoon Kofi Fofie alone came to see me. When he came, he was weeping. I noticed that his sore was bleeding, so I dressed it and gave it a bandage. When the pain was over, I told him to look at some drawings which some children had done for me. Immediately he said he would draw one for me. I gave him paper and coloured pencils. He drew his picture and then asked "Do you see this? It is a bad animal. It is a duck. I hate it. It bites people - especially their sores. Later he told me how his father's duck had jumped on his sore and let it bleed.

PICTURE IV SAM AMOA DONKOR 10 YEARS.

Samuel Ainoa Donkor is in Class 4. I visited his school one afternoon. Soon we became friends, because he said that he had met me before at Abetifi, my former station. After a short conversation, I asked him if he would draw a picture for me. He said he would.

PICTURE IV SAM AMOA DONKOR 10 YEARS - CONTD.

So we went to an empty classroom when the children were playing on the field, and he drew his picture. He said that he drew Roy Ankrah beating another boxer. I asked him if he had ever seen this famous boxer. He said: yes, of course, I was there when the cinema showed Roy Ankrah fighting with another boxer whom he beat easily.

PICTURE V - KWASI BOATENG 9 YEARS.

Kwasi Boateng is a boy 9 years old. He is in class 3 in his school. Whenever he returns from school, I converse with him, and he tells me some of the interesting stories he heard at school. On this occasion, he happened to tell me the stories of Joseph and his dreams. Later, I asked him if he too ever dreamed at all? He said yes - he dreamed almost every night. Then I asked him to paint one of his dreams for me to see if I would be able to make out the incidents painted. So he drew the picture of his dream. I began to interpret the picture like this. You dreamed that you were climbing a tree and your father came and called you to come down. He said - well - it was near it, but not quite. In my dream, my teacher was climbing a tree to catch a bird, and a hunter too was trying to shoot my teacher, but I woke up and did not see the end. Later when I had a talk with his class teacher, I was told that the boy had been warned against hunting birds and wild animals with his catapult. Perhaps the prohibition was on his mind.

PICTURE VI - AKOSUA KYEREWA 7½ YEARS.

Akosua Kyerewa is in school. She is in class 3. She lives in the same house with Kofi Fofie (See Picture III above). She had heard from Kofi Fofie that he had drawn a picture for me. So she too came to see if she could draw one for me. I said, yes, and gave her materials. She set to work and drew her picture. Later she and I talked about the picture. She said it was about things in her house - the kitchen and her hen eating maize. She pointed to a tree in front of her house, and said she sowed that palm seed from which the seed grew.

APENDIX II - CHILDREN'S STORIES AND FACTUAL REPORTS.1. THE CHILD'S FAVOURITE STORY:(a) BY AMMA DUWAA - UNDER SCHOOL AGE 5½ YEARS

I stayed with the little girl, Amma Duwaa, in the same house during the Easter vacation. As I was all the time in the house, her mother left her in my charge when she went to farm during the day. It was on one afternoon when she and I were alone in my house that she told me her story. I gave her some dolls, sticks and plastic cups to play with. But she said that she would rather tell stories and this was her story.

"Once there was a mother. She went to farm. She saw a ripe papaw. She took a stick to pluck it for her little girl. She brought it home and I ate it"

Investigator: who was that mother?

Amma Duwaa: Oh, it was my mother!

(b) THE CHILD'S FAVOURITE STORY - BY KOFI NTI 6 YEARS.

Kofi Nti went to school last January. When one morning I visited his father, he made friends with me and came with me to my room. I showed him some photographs in my album. When he was about to return home, I asked him to tell me one of his best stories. Then he began:

"Once upon a time, there was a famine. Ananse could not get food for his children, so he went to the bush to hunt. He was lucky, and he killed an antelope. When he opened the stomach of the antelope, he saw fufu, oranges, mangoes and so he gave them to his children."

2. A STORY ABOUT A GOOD GIRL. BY ADWOA AFI 6 YEARS

Adwoa Afi goes to school and is in Class I. She has a baby doll which she washes and nurses all the time. One day when she was playing with the doll, I asked her if her "baby" would go on an errand for me if I sent it. She said, "yes, because my girl is a good one". Then I asked her if she could tell me a special story - a story about a good girl. This was her story:

"There was a mother. She had a little daughter. They went to farm to collect cassava. The girl cooked the cassava. She fetched water for her mother. She swept the house every day. Her mother bought a beautiful dress for her. When she was ill, her mother took her to the doctor and she became well again."

3. WHAT THE CHILD WOULD WISH IF HE WERE GRANTED ONE WISH?

In the privacy of my room, I chatted with some children and asked them what they would wish if they were granted one wish each. These are some of the wishes.

(a) KOFI BANA 6½ YEARS:

At Christmas, I should like father to give me a bicycle.

(b) AKOSUA KYEREWAWA 7½ YEARS:

If father would grant me a wish, I should ask for a new school uniform. (I noticed that her school frock had not been replaced this year.)

(c) KWASI BOATENG - 9 YEARS:

If I were granted one wish, I should ask for a toy gun.

(d) ANANE KWASI - 7 YEARS:

If my mother granted me one wish, I should like to go and see my father (I learned from Anane Kwasi's mother that she never married his father - a Kumase driver who happened to make her pregnant. She said that Kwasi had later heard that his father was in Kumase.)

(e) MARY OBUO - 10 YEARS:

If mother would grant me one wish, I should ask for a shoe or a lady's hat!

4. SELF-DESCRIPTION BY ADWOA KORAN 10 YEARS

Adwoa Koran is in Primary Class 4. I visited her school, and got to know her there. They were playing the "Something Game" - descriptions of objects and persons without naming. When school closed I invited her to my house and asked her to play the "Something game" by describing herself. This was her description -

"I am a girl. I am 10 years old. I have no brother. I have many sisters. My father has a books shop.

We live at Banko. I am a school girl. I am tall. I can run fast but I cannot jump high. I love little boys and girls.

5. LIFE-STORY: BY ISAAC OKO 9 YEARS.

It was difficult for children to tell me their life-story, by themselves in a continuous narrative. Therefore I conversed with them - by question and answer. The following life-story was told by Isaac Oko, who is in Class 4.

Investigator: Where were you born?

Isaac Oko : Banko.

Investigator: Who were your parents?

Isaac Oko: My father

Investigator: Only your father?

Isaac Oko: And my mother too, but she is dead.

Investigator: When were you born?

Isaac Oko: I was born ^{on} Saturday.

Investigator: But why do people call you Kwadwo?

Isaac Oko: Because my grandfather was called Kwadwo too

Investigator: Where were you when you were a baby?

Isaac Oko: I stayed at Goaso.

Investigator: But why did you come to Banko?

Isaac Oko: Because I went to school.

Investigator: When did you go to school?

Isaac Oko: I went to school when I was old.

Investigator: Do you mean you were an old man?

Isaac Oko: No, I mean when I grew big.

Investigator: In which primary class are you?

Isaac Oko: In 1954, I was in Class 3, now I am in Class 4; next year I shall go to class 5.

6. IMAGINATIVE PLAY: BY AMMA DUWAA 5½ YEARS AND AMMA COMFORT 5 YEARS.

When I was going down for the Easter vacation, I bought two dolls, toilet powder, soap and other toys for my little friends in my house - two little girls of nearly the same age.

When one afternoon all the people in the house had gone to their farms, I gave these play things to the girls to experiment with. I pretended to be very busy writing my notes - but all the time I stole a glance at the two girls who began the following play.

AMMA DUWAA: I must have Baby Kwasi, he is big, and you are little.

AMMA COMFORT: All right, give me the little girl-doll. I like girls.

AMMA DUWAA: But what will you call your baby? She is so small!

AMMA COMFORT: Don't worry. She will grow big. Her name is Nana Yaa.

AMMA DUWAA: Comfort, see, Baby Kwasi is crying! He is hungry. I will give him my breast. (She sat down and suckled him).

AMMA COMFORT: My baby is dirty. I will wash her. (She

dipped her doll in a bucket of water and dried it with her cloth)

MADAM AFUA KYEIWAA: Amma Duwaa/Comfort! Where are you?
(Their mother had come back from farm and called for them).
Both girls together (We have got two babies to-day.

APPENDIX III - SOME CHILDREN'S SONGS:

Of children's songs at Banko, I noticed three types - songs for babies or lullabies; songs of children 3-11 years most of which feature in childhood games; songs of adolescent people, usually love-songs. Songs or lullabies for babies are common to both sexes. But other songs differ according to the sex of children.

1. SONGS FOR BABIES (LULLABIES)

(a) TWI
Obaa ba da oni afa.
Obaa ba da oni afa.
Oni rema no dwom yooyoo
Oni rema no dwom yooyoo

LITERAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The child who cannot stay away from mother sleeps beside mother.
The child who cannot stay away from mother sleeps beside mother.
Mother is always singing to him
Mother is always singing to him.

(b) TWI
Kaka you, ka yon. Kaka yon ka yon.
Oni se ompe no. Ose se ompe no.
Medee mepe m'adee oo!

LITERAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hear! Hear! Hear! Hear!
Father does not like him
Mother does not like him
As for me I like him well!!

(c) TWI
Dwoo dwo, dwo ma Kwasi nni.
Dwoo dwo, dwo ma Kwasi nni.

ENGLISH

Cool, yam, cool! Cool for Kwasi to eat!
Cool, yam, cool! Cool for Kwasi to eat!

2. SONGS FOR CHILDHOOD GAMES - BOYS AND GIRLS

(a) TWI
Sansa akoroma wo ni awu oo wo se awu oo,
Sansa akoroma wo ni awu na nkyekye nkoko mma.

ENGLISH

You swift kite, your mother is dead
your father too is dead.
You swift kite, your mother is dead,
But you must not catch chicks.

(b) TWI
Den n'eye de te se olu?
Olu ye de, Kofi
Den na eye de se olu?
Olu ye de.
Momma yenni ahurisi
Momma yenni ahurisi
Olu ye de.

ENGLISH

What is interesting like olu?
Olu is very interesting, Kofi.

LITERAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION - CONTD. 2B.

What is interesting like Olu?
 Olu is very interesting.
 Let us jump up with joy
 Let us jump up with joy
 Olu is very interesting.

3½ SONGS OF ADOLESCENTS:TWI(a) Boys:

Obi ahoma tea ne kon te se adenkum
 Ono ara na mene no bewu.
 Ono ara na me ne no bewu
 Odo, ono ara na me ne no bewu.

ENGLISH

Oh what a slim lass, with a neck like a gourd,
 I shall die with her! Her I shall die with
 Love, I shall die with her, Her I shall die with.

TWI(b) Girls:

Mefiri baŋa gye yaw Ntou kete
 so na meda oo.
 Mmaa monko ne nkyen
 Monko ne nkyen
 Mma n'ani nka!

ENGLISH

After my menstruation (menarche),
 I shall sleep with Yaw Ntou on his bed.
 Ladies, try and visit him meantime,
 Visit him meantime and entertain him for me.

APPENDIX IV- CHILDREN'S GAMES:(a) BOYS: CIRCLE GAME1. NANA ABEREWA FI PATA BEHWEE ASE:

All the boys stoop in a circle each holding a stone. They begin a song with the stones overhead, and drop them gently together. Each child then moves his stone to his right to the next player and so the game continues until the song ends. The child who collects two stones at once is sent out of the game.

2. MERENYA KWAN MASEN:

The boys stand in a circle and join hands. One boy stands in the middle. He comes and puts his hands on the ring of hands and asks: where is the way? Several times. Each time, he tries to separate the two hands of children forming the ring. If he succeeds, he breaks through - and the player whose hold loosened goes to the middle, and starts the game again.

(b) GIRLS GAMES:1. ASOW-DANCE:

This is played usually in the evening when the moon is up. The girls stand in a semi-circle or a whole circle if they are many. They sing a tune and one girl stands in the middle. She dances, stepping forward to the tune of the song and then throws herself backwards for the players to support her. The fun is in the ability with which the players hold and support the dancer as she throws herself backwards, for no player knows when or where the dancer is going to fall next.

2. HWANE KRAMAN NI?

The girls stand in a circle or rows with their palms facing up and down alternately. Each girl taps her neighbour's palm twice or more, and then she reverses her palms. This is repeated several times, moving the palms up and down according to the time of the tune. Some good players combine the hand movements with a nod as an encomium.

3. ME MMA EE! EE NOWAA!

This game is played by very young girls between 3-7 years. The leader stands up in front of the rest and calls out - Me mma ee! Me mma ee! (My children! My children!) All the rest crawl behind her and each time answer her call saying "EE, NOWAA", (Yes, mother). They follow her whenever she goes. If a girl pops up her head, she hits her - to keep her head low as an obedient child.

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