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PREFACE

This essay is the result of investigations carried out at Nsakyé on the subject Child Training. My first visit which was of a fortnight duration took place during the Christmas holidays, and the second one of ten days' duration was the Easter Holidays.

During both visits I had ample opportunity to observe the inhabitants of the village and to have discussions with the parents, the herbalists, the native midwives, the priestess and the headmaster of the village. Our talks centred mainly round child training, also I spoke to and observed a cross section of the children of both school going and non-school going groups of ages ranging from infancy to adolescence.

The inhabitants of the village who are mainly descendants of people from Aburi and are mostly illiterates. The sort of training which they give to their children therefore is typical of what obtains in a typical Akan Society. It was quite obvious however to see the effects of Western contacts on the mode of life of these villagers.

To help the reader to gain an insight into the culture of the people of the village, I have given in the introduction to this essay brief historical, political, geographical and economic backgrounds of the village.

I am deeply indebted to Opanyin Opare who gave me the history and culture of the people. Also I am thankful to Mr. A. A. Opoku, with whom I discussed and checked most of the information I obtained. To conclude I should also like to thank my Tutor Dr. M.M. Lusty through whose guidance and suggestions I have been able to write this essay.

May 1956

ACHIMOTA.

HILDA C. AGYAKO.

GOLD COAST

NSAKYE



lation, but the future depends on the children. For this reason, we have to train our children well, physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially, so that when they grow, they might be able to take their places in the society as useful citizens. For this reason, I have investigated scrupulously the culture and environment of the inhabitants of the village of Nsakyé in order to know the importance they attach to child training, so that the children fit well into the society.

GOLD COAST

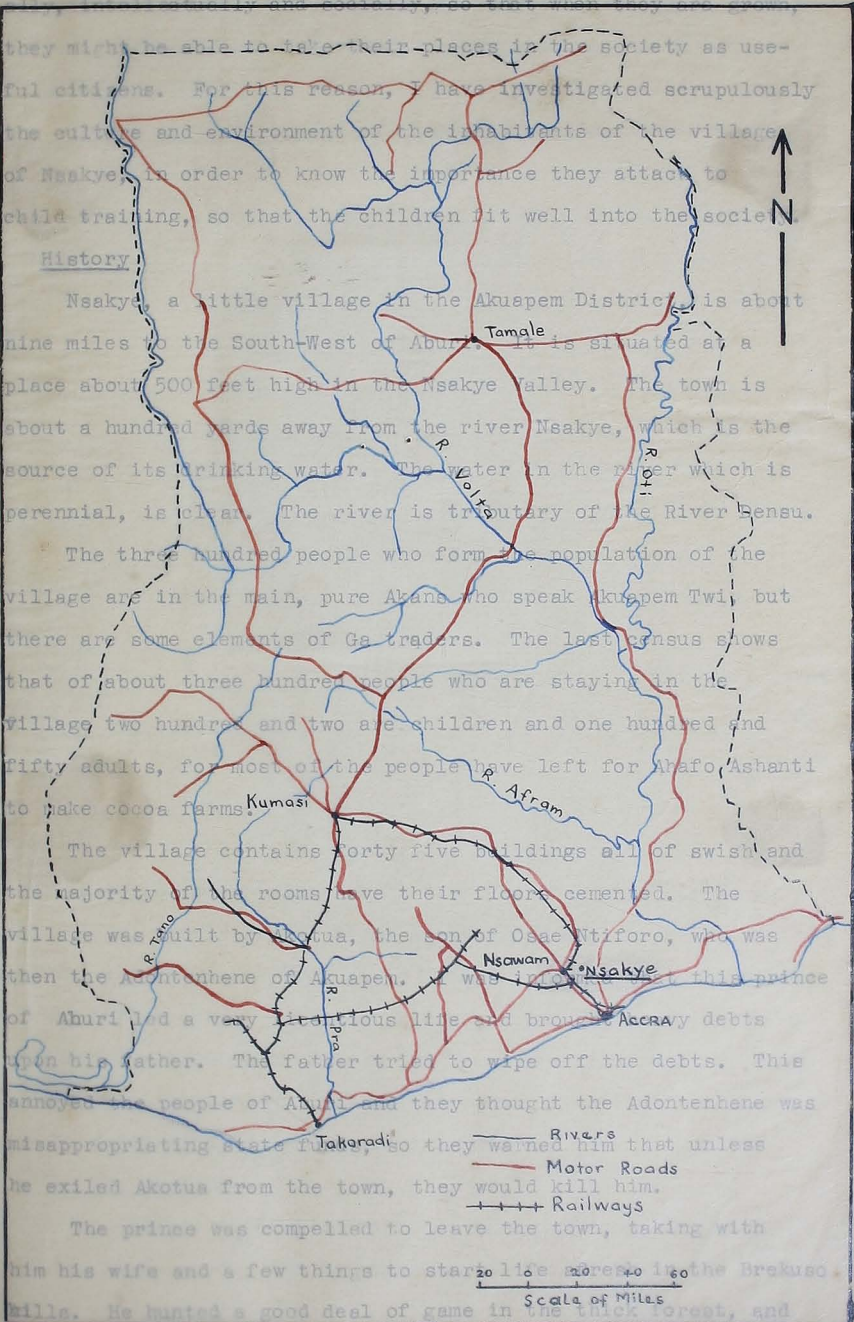
History

Nsakyé, a little village in the Akwapem District, is about nine miles to the South-West of Aburi. It is situated at a place about 500 feet high in the Nsakyé Valley. The town is about a hundred yards away from the river Nsakyé, which is the source of its drinking water. The water in the river which is perennial, is clear. The river is tributary of the River Benu.

The three hundred people who form the population of the village are in the main, pure Akans who speak Akwapem Twi, but there are some elements of Ga traders. The last census shows that of about three hundred people who are staying in the village two hundred and two are children and one hundred and fifty adults, for most of the people have left for Ahafo, Ashanti to make cocoa farms.

The village contains forty five buildings all of which and the majority of the rooms have their floors cemented. The village was built by Akotua, the son of Osei Ntitoro, who was then the Adontenhene of Akwapem. It was here that this prince of Aburi led a very dissipated life and brought Accra debts upon his father. The father tried to wipe off the debts. This annoyed the people of Aburi and they thought the Adontenhene was misappropriating state funds, so they warned him that unless he exiled Akotua from the town, they would kill him.

The prince was compelled to leave the town, taking with him his wife and a few things to start life in the Brakusa hills. He hunted a good deal of game in the thick forest, and



CHILD TRAINING IN NSAKYE VILLAGE, A VILLAGE IN AKUAPEM DISTRICT

Child training is of paramount importance to every country. The present welfare of every country depends on the adult population, but the future depends on the children. For this reason, we have to train our children well, physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially, so that when they are grown, they might be able to take their places in the society as useful citizens. For this reason, I have investigated scrupulously the culture and environment of the inhabitants of the village of Nsakyé, in order to know the importance they attach to child training, so that the children fit well into the society.

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In the middle of the picture is Opanyin Opane, the chief herbalist, who gave me the history and culture of the People of Nsakyé. Standing by him are his two apprentices who also gave me the causes of and cure of sterility

during the dry season, he found that all the animals fed near a river in the valley, so he descended to the river and found that it was full of mud fish. He caught a lot with his hands, took some to his father and told him that he caught the fish with his hand. So they named the river "Nsakye". He discovered too that the land near the river was very fertile, so he built a small village there and named it Nsakye after the river.

A Hunting Ground

Later on he shot a lot of elephants in the thick forest. This was made known to the father, and he asked a lot of people to come to Nsakye to stay together with Akotua. They killed a lot of elephants and sold their tusks to the Danes. I was informed by an old man in the village that before Akotua died, he was able to kill ninety-nine elephants.

Akotua made a lot of money for his father so he was made the keeper of the royal stools of Aburi. He kept these at Nsakye. Up to the present day and during the Odwira festivals they are purified and taken to Aburi for the ceremony. Also when the Adontehenes of Aburi die, they are buried at Nsakye.

Some years later, there was a dispute over the ownership of a piece of land between Akotua and his cousins. This resulted in a division among the people and most of them migrated to Sakyikrom, Asuboe and Nsawam, but the rest remained.

Clans

At the moment Nsakye which was at one time, one of the big towns in Akuapem has shrunk into a small village with an area of 40,000 sq. yards. We find people of six of the seven Akan clans, namely Asona, Oyoko Asakyiri, Bretu, Asini and Abrade, the only exception being Ekoana. The royal house belongs to the Abrade clan. During my investigation there was no Odikro in the village the previous one had been destooled and the Queen mother was then acting. All matters concerning land, marriages and domestic affairs are taken to Aburi.

The Two Wards

The village is divided into two wards. The Christian ward and the Pagan ward. The buildings in the Christian ward, though

made of Swish, are tolerably good. It is at the northern side of the ward that the old church building and the school are situated. As I visited many of the houses, I noticed that the court yards were scrupulously clean, especially those belonging to the head master and the Presbyters. The buildings of the Pagan ward are thatched with grass or roofed with corrugated iron sheets which bore signs of age. The rooms and courtyards of most of the houses in this ward were untidy and dirty. Most of the rooms have small windows.

Co-operation

Socially the villagers live together in families. A father and his family live together in one house. Where the marriage is polygamous, all the wives live together with their husband in one house. There is a sound co-operation between the families too. This is displayed during the harvest time. During the cocoa season when somebody wants to harvest his cocoa, many children and adults are invited to assist in the work. When it comes to the turn of the next family the same kind of help is given. During funerals, marriages or naming of children members of other families visit the families concerned to mourn or rejoice with them as the case may be.

Communal Work

The villagers organize into groups to do any communal work, I was fortunate to see them at work during my first visit which took place just before the Christmas. They had by the help of the Assistant Mass Education Officer planned to build a market place. Early in the morning a gong-gong was beaten to assemble the inhabitants in front of the Queen Mother's house. Very soon, all the adults were gathered together and the work was allotted to them. The women carried gravels and sand while the men dug the foundation. They continued this work for three days and rested during the Christmas week. It was planned that they would continue after the New Year, and finish within the shortest possible time.

Ownership of Land

During the 1860's the chief occupation in the village was

hunting, then from 1890 they became chiefly producers of oil palm. Every farmer has a big farm from which he feeds his family. Most of the farms are inherited from uncles, others are bought from other people. In the case of the farms purchased a custom called 'guaha' is performed in the following way. Two people are selected, one for the seller and one for the purchaser. A blade of leaf or a piece of string is procured and each of the two people holds one end. They each obtain a cowry and press it to the leaf. They then stoop down and rest on their haunches and each party passes his right hand under the knuckles of thigh between the leg and thigh and then the leaf is torn into two, and each party retaining one half. They resume natural position standing erect and the two parties exchange their portions of leaf and cowry. These are kept for future reference. Having then obtained full ownership of the land, the land is cultivated.

Peasant Farming

Here the farmer and his family clear the bush, they plant in it. This is done in the dry season which is from January to February. If the farm is very big he employs labourers to weed for him. When the rainy season begins that is from the month of March, he starts planting crops such as yam, cocoyam, plantain, and vegetables such as pepper, tomatoes, and onions, in most cases, the crops are interspersed. When the farmer has worked on the land for a long while, and the soil becomes poor owing to loss of fertility he shifts to a new place and leaves the land to regain its fertility. Some of the food crops harvested from the farms are taken to Nsawam for sale.

Swollen Shoot

During the 1920's the village was surrounded by a lot of cocoa farms, but now most of the farms have been damaged by the Swollen Shoot disease.

Sources of Firewood

There is a big forest on the outskirts of the village, which supplies the inhabitants with a lot of firewood, most of which is taken to Nsawam for sale. Some of the people are engaged in charcoal burning.

Religion

There are two religious groups in the village, the fetish worshippers and the Christians. Akotua and his people worshipped a tributary of the river Nsakyé, called Onyaa Wonsú. I was informed that in the olden days, the god of this river was very powerful and was able to do a lot of powerful things. People travelled from distant towns to the river to make their request known to the god. Though its fame has faded away yet there are still some believers among the inhabitants.

During my first visit, I saw the priestess and her followers going to offer a sheep to the river to keep the believers safe through out the year.

Christianity goes to Nsakyé

Kofi Agyei was the founder of Christian Church at Nsakyé. The story goes that he himself was a fetish priest who lost faith in Onyaa Wonsú, owing to the sudden death of his sister which he thought the god ought to have revealed to him beforehand. He made up his mind to go to Aburi to be baptized and on the way he came across a mighty snake which he fought and killed. He thought he had conquered satan, and having been baptized, he urged the minister of Aburi to send a Catechist to Nsakyé. The first teacher, Owusu soon arrived and taught the Christians to read the Bible at the Sunday School and Night School.



Here ^{are} a woman and
her three children
The woman has her
arm at her bosom
demonstrating how
proud she is of her
three children.

CHAPTER 2

Marriage

There are two kinds of marriages which exist in this Society, they are the polygamous and monogamous marriages. The former is chiefly found among the heathen society. Upon asking the men I met at Nsakye why they indulge in Polygamous marriage, they told me that they do it so as to have a lot of children to build large families to work on their farms.

Success of marriage rests on issues

I asked some women about their ideas of having children, and from much of the information they gave me, I concluded that when a young girl got married, libation was poured on her behalf to invoke the blessings of the Gods and to pray that she might have many children. When an old man or an old woman died libation was poured asking his soul to bring many children into the family. When a young girl got married and for two years or so there was no sign of pregnancy her Uncles could at once ask for the dissolution of the marriage to enable the child to try her luck some where else. All those who have no children, I was informed, look forward to their old age with great fear because they would have no one to look after them and also when they die they would not be given a glorious burial.

Concerning the advantages and disadvantages of having children, all my informants told me that there is nothing like disadvantages in having children. Every body wanted to bring forth as many ~~as~~ children^{as} he could. Many people count their wealth in children and say "Oba ye kyen sika mpemmpem" Meaning a child is worth more than thousands of pounds. In many cases I saw women who had brought forth about eight or nine children and who were still breeding.

An old man in the village informed me that in the olden days, when a father was indebted, he could take some of his children to money lenders to pawn them for the amount of money required to pay the debt. The child served till the father was able to repay the debt. Sometimes instead of pawning in this way, a girl was given in marriage and a heavy amount of money was

collected from the bridegroom to repay the family debt.

A story also goes that there was a woman in the village who was suffering from paralysis. She was unable to work and consequently unable to do anything, so she hired a nurse to attend her. A girl of sixteen was employed at great cost to attend her. The girl had the means and bought all the things she required but she was not satisfied. One day the girl's mother was very ill and despite the fact that this girl was paid, she left this woman to attend her own mother. Had she been the daughter of the paralytic she would not have left her.

There was another story of an elderly man in the village who was very often laughed at because he couldn't afford expensive dressing. During the Christmas holidays when his children came home he would present them to those who had always laughed at him and asked the children to greet them. His motive was to make those people see what he used his money for.

However, I was informed that there were a few exceptions of people who had more children than they could bring up properly. Some of these children turned to be delinquent citizens. The behaviour and end of such children haunt their parents so much so that some pine away, some suffer from poverty as they always have to pay debts, and some suffer from mental disorders especially in cases where parents lose all their children through death. These are some instances when parents say "Oh had I known I wouldn't have brought forth children."

As far as the preferred size of the family is concerned I was told upon enquiry, that the number ranges from fifteen to one, all depending upon the number of children given to one by God.

Childlessness is regarded as a very unfortunate affair among married people. It is always responsible for unhappy and broken marriages. It is a belief amongst the people that sometimes the souls of the married people don't match or their bloods don't mix well. In the case of a polygamous marriage, there is every likelihood of frequent quarrels between the childless wife and her fortunate rivals who have children.

She becomes jealous of them and they in turn tease and mock her. A woman coted to me an instance where a childless woman made an attempt to kill a daughter of her rival by giving her poisoned food. In the case of a monogamous marriage sometimes the married couple approach a herbalist or a fetish to find a cure for their childlessness. Generally speaking those people in the village who are not fertile are always mocked. Men who are impotent usually have a very unpleasant time.

Sterility

I visited a herbalist to ask him the number of cases of sterility he had treated and what he did to cure them. He told me that he had about ten men in the village who were receiving treatment from him and about six who had already gone through the treatment successfully. He gave me too, some reasons for barrenness and sterility. He said a lot of women have got their wombs spoiled through abortions caused through drinking concoctions prepared from dangerous herbs. Piles could also cause sterility in men and barrenness in women, for it could make them anaemic. Women who went after men when they were young could suffer from this too. Rape could also cause barrenness. Venereal diseases for example, syphilis, are another major cause of sterility in both men and women. I asked two men and two other women about the causes of barrenness and sterility and they gave me the same catalogue but in addition they said that witches, wizards and ghosts could also bring about this condition.

Two herbalists informed me that the medicine they give to people who suffer from this are the leaves of a plant called "Ahunanyankwa" which is chewed with tiger nuts by them. The roots of 'Sesadu' when chewed with tiger nuts is also effective. For men again, the roots of Mnofra Brode ground together with pepper and 'sesaa' pushed through the rectum into the pelvis is also good. For women the roots of "Abobadwe" and the roots of "Agyama" put into schnapps and drunk is also effective.

Fetishes give Children

I was informed that some women go to the fetish priestess to pray for children. They are asked to bring fowls and money

to be used in buying things for making them medicine. A man who has been sterile for ages and has gone through all these treatments in vain was pointed to me. I was informed that this man was very rich and therefore had married more than six wives. He had done all that lay within his power to make these women happy. He had made them big cocoa farms, yet because these women could not bring forth with him they always committed adultery and were divorced and thus became free to marry some other men.

Birth Control.

I interviewed a lot of people about this question of limiting the family. I was informed that many people don't want to do it, ^{Those who do it,} and they take wine to the fetish priestess who pours down libation for them. After this the woman is seated on the envil of a black smith. Also during the last birth given by the woman the placenta is buried upside down. There is no special training for illegitimate children. They are recognized as members of the family and are cared for by the mothers, uncles, aunts and grand mothers and fathers. It is when the children reach school age that their education becomes a problem to the mothers, but even then, they are helped by their uncles.

Orphans

Equal care if not more is given to the orphans. When the mother dies after birth the child is given to a nursing mother to be fed and nursed. During this stage there is no milk in the nursing mother's breast, so the baby is fed on a kind of food called 'Besua' prepared from ripe plantain and palmnuts. The plantain is not skinned but boiled together with palm nuts. They are beaten, strained, cooked and seasoned, and the baby is fed with it. Some times some herbs are ground and used to besmear the breasts and soon they become full with milk.

I was informed that to prevent the baby from being taken away by the mother, as the ghost comes near always, it is vaccinated by a fetish priest or by a herbalist and black powder is put into a talisman and placed on a string worn round the waist of the baby. I was told of a case where an old grand mother refused to give an orphan to the aunt of the orphan to

be nursed. She too had no means to nurse the child satisfactorily and very soon it died. I was informed that it was because the mother was dissatisfied with the treatment given to her daughter, that she came for her.

Two orphans who had grown up nicely were shown to me. One of them lost his mother, after she had given birth to him, and since then he had been cared for by a young aunt. The child is now seven years old, but he knows nothing about the death of his mother. I was informed that orphans are very difficult to bring up, so everything is done to satisfy them. They are petted and they become lazy and spoiled.

There is nothing like adopting a child who is not a relative into the family. What always happens is when a woman is childless, a child of her sister or brother is given to her, to stay with her to make her happy. I was taken to a woman who had been staying with her sister's daughter. The child is now six years old and she was given to the aunt when she was two years old. The foster mother told me that even when the child is taken to her mother she refuses her company and she always clings to her. A priestess in the neighbourhood informed me that when the adopted children reach adolescence the secret of their mothers' death is revealed to them by some inquisitive persons.



A pregnant mother in her sixth month.

CHAPTER 3

The Pregnant Mother

On the question of pregnancy, three experienced midwives herbalists, and several pregnant mothers were interviewed, and a lot of information was collected. My informants agreed that the first sign of pregnancy is the stoppage of menstruation after sexual intercourse with a man, ^{When sexual intercourse has not taken place} and this happens then it is a sign of illness, in most cases anaemia, and the woman has to seek medical attention. The stoppage of menstruation is no sign of illness when it occurs in old age.

The chief of all the herbalists in the town informed me that sometimes some women deceive their husbands and tell them that they are pregnant whilst they are not. He claims he could detect pregnancy in the early stages. He would ask the woman to come to his house early in the morning before she has had the chance to speak to any person. He puts his ear on the stomach and if the woman is pregnant he could hear the movement of the baby in the stomach. Also early in the morning the woman would have high temperature round the navel, in the armpit, round the nipple and below the breast. The veins near the temples too become hot. A pregnant woman has a high temperature always. When the temperature falls it is an indication that the child is unhealthy and the woman should be given medicine to cure it. Signs of pregnancy are generally detected at the end of the third month; women who have fair complexion become very pale in colour. Some women pine away, others rather put on weight. They suffer from overtiredness, weakness, excitement, chill, morning sickness and always vomit till about the end of the fourth month. In some cases, they even vomit till the day of birth. The breasts always become heavy and prickling. I happened to be at the herbalist's place when some pregnant women came for treatment. I put a lot of questions to them, amongst which was how they feel during pregnancy. They said they always felt drowsy and sleepy especially in the afternoon. Each confirmed the fact that these changes depended upon the sex of the unborn baby. In the case of boys the feelings were intensive,

and again one always felt their strong kicking in the stomach, the feelings experienced in the case of girls were mild.

Early stage of Pregnancy

For the first three months, the pregnant mother is not bothered to take any medicine. From the third month onwards medicine is given to assist the development of the child. The herbalist who was the chief source of my information told me that the embryo starts to develop into parts, such as the fingers, legs, head and so forth at the end of the fourth month. During the fifth month, the baby starts to make movements in the womb.

When a woman is pregnant, the inside of the eye lids are examined. When they are red it means the baby is healthy. When the colour is a bit dark, it means the baby is unhealthy and the pregnant mother should be given herbs usually the leaves of 'Nyaa' silk cotton, okro leaves, 'Odwenwena'. These leaves are used in palm nut soup, and the pregnant mother drinks a lot of it along with her fufu. This medicine is called 'abeduru'. It purges the pregnant mother and heals the sores in the womb. There is a different kind of 'abeduru' for each month.

Miscarriages

I was informed that miscarriages were very rare and when they happened they were usually due to piles, 'Asena' or they may result from fights or falls on a hard knock or serious complaints in the stomach. An experienced pregnant mother informed me that in some cases they might result from sexual intercourse. Also during the initial stages too much hard work may cause miscarriage.

Feeding

In connection with diet, some women told me that when they were pregnant they always wanted to eat all sorts of queer foods such as soup made with snail with a lot of pepper in it, and also kenkey with hot pepper. A pregnant woman informed me that her mouth watered whenever she saw people eating delicious food such as rice and stew, fried plantain, sweets like toffee and fruits.

She would even go to the extent of begging for some or sending people to buy her some. Some even eat earth scrapped from walls.

Sexual intercourse during Pregnancy

Concerning sexual intercourse, I was given diverse opinions I contacted a father of a family of six and he told me that from his own experience he always stopped having intercourse with his wife, three months before birth. He gave me his reason for this, namely that his wife always vomited in the morning after the intercourse. Some people also suggested that intercourse carried on till the last month widens the hips as well as the birth cavity. Some people hold that there were lots of women who craved for this even during the last period, and always insisted on sleeping with the men. In the case of polygamous marriage the husband would no doubt refuse to sleep with a pregnant wife, during this stage and would rather prefer to sleep with other wives. Some pregnant mothers were content to cover themselves with the cloth of their husband at night or choose to eat the remains of food eaten by their husbands.

Pregnant women and daily Chores

I was informed by an experienced nursing mother that pregnant women always continue to do their daily work like going for water sweeping, going to market, cooking and even doing all the house work till the day of confinement. It is just the young pregnant mothers who are always haunted by the pains of labour and always become lazy, chilly and sleepy all the time. However, during the first three months, hard work should be avoided as it could cause miscarriages as I have already said.

Taboos

There are a lot of taboos or prescriptions to ensure the well being of the unborn baby. For instance when a young girl is in her eighth month of pregnancy a custom called 'Mfuakoko' is performed to ensure a safe delivery. A goat or a sheep is slaughtered and the four legs are put inside the mouth of the goat. Some beads are threaded on fibres got from pine apple leaves and the young pregnant mother puts them round her neck and wrist. The head and legs of the sheep are thrown at a younger

sister's chest. She is hurt and cries. The throwing of the goat head at her means it is her turn now. This custom is performed in the house of the woman's husband. From here she goes to her father's house, where a hen is killed for her. Libation is pouted asking the gods to protect the life of the young pregnant mother from harm and to vouchsafe her safe delivery. She then besmears her skin with shea butter and sits on a goat's skin for some time.

All pregnant mothers are told not to chop fire wood, nor are they to hold kenkey, a big basin or tomatoes in the public. It is believed that if you hold tomatoes in the public you will see some outgrowths on the baby's body. These will eventually kill the baby. The pregnant mothers are not to stand in front of dead bodies or to pass by a cemetery for fear that ghosts of evil men and bad spirits will do them harm. They are never to help those who are labouring or there will be miscarriage at once, or the unborn babies will die in their stomach. They try not to appear frequently in public and not to put on new dresses. They are advised not to eat ripe plantain, groundnuts, sugar cane, as these could have ill effect on the unborn baby. They are never to put on light coloured clothes which have been blued deeply.

Precautions

In order to safeguard all these, all pregnant women are inoculated and black powder is rubbed in the cut. Some pregnant women go to herbalists who give them herbs to be put into water for bathing, others are given medicine to besmear the whole body at night just before they go to bed. Others put the herbs in hot water, sit over it and cover themselves and the water with cloth or thick blankets and inhale the vapour to warm themselves. Others are given some medicines to be put in their girāles. I was informed by the mothers in the village that in most cases they go to the fetish priestess of the river Onyaa Wonsu and they are given 'dehoa' or medicine to be worn round the wrists on the ankles.

I was fortunate enough to see a woman with a baby of about three months old. There were some patches on the baby's leg, and upon enquiry I was informed that during pregnancy the woman used a new cooking pot to cook food, a taboo which always brought about those patches on the baby's skin. Two women who were unfortunate in losing their babies informed me that it is a belief that when you are pregnant you are not to make any preparations or make new dresses in anticipation of the happy days of early motherhood, but they did not heed this but made a lot of dresses and preparations. They planned how they could dress up and visit people and go round to thank all their well wishers. They were unable to do any of these for their babies did not survive after birth.

Other children are affected by mother's pregnancy

During pregnancy the child after whom the mother is expecting the new baby becomes weak and looks sickly, sometimes it becomes pale and the cheeks get swollen up. If the baby has not been weaned, the mother should wean it at once, or else it will result in the death of the new baby. Children who are found in such a condition are given enema with some special herbs. Sometimes they are removed from their mothers and they stay with their grand mothers and aunts.

Father becomes restive

All the men I spoke to admitted that they were never happy during the period their wives were in confinement. Some even went to the extent of pining away. During this stage they know their wives are standing between life and death. On the day the wife delivers in safety many a husband would get very drunk.

During the eighth month the pregnant mother is given purgative made from the leaves of 'Nwatinwati' to clean the child and to prepare the placenta for an easy opening when the time comes.

CHAPTER 4

Ante-natal Pains

I questioned a lot of women about the attitude towards birth each replied: "Ese se obea biara wo, na ohu senea awo ye yaw fa". Meaning every woman should bring forth in order to experience the pains of childbirth. Herbalists, women who have passed their productive span and pregnant women informed me that the pains experienced are an individual's affair. Some have it a week before the time, and others three or four days preceding labour or even some few hours before the time. The pregnant mothers and the experienced mothers say they always feel tremendous pains in the belly, round the waist, all due to the movement of the baby to find its way. Some vomit a lot. I was informed that the pains are so unbearable that they always result in cries, shouts, calling of husbands names and cursing of one's self. In the case of married women who have miscondacted themselves with other men they always have difficult delivery and unless they confess and mention the names of the men involved they die during the course of labour.

Difficult Labour

A herbalist who is an expert in helping the women in labour told me that the approach of white sticky water is a sign that the time is due. When this warning is given he gives the women 'abeduru' made from palmnuts and silk cotton leaves. During cases when the birth is detained he has got some black powder made from some root, herbs, and skin of chameleon burnt and ground, mixed with water and given to the woman to drink. Very soon the baby pushes its head out of the vagina. The woman then kneels with the buttocks turned upwards and she is given leaves to chew to enable her to push the child out. There are many positions for the delivery. Sometimes the pregnant mother has to kneel and hold a stick, sometimes she sits down and is held at the back by some people. In some cases she has got to lie down and lift up the legs, till the child comes down. At times the child comes together with the placenta, but this may follow, some few minutes after the arrival of the child.

The mother or aunts of the woman are the people who together with the midwife may be present. All the members of the family, the husband, the father, the sisters and brothers become frustrated and worried until they are relieved by the happy news of the arrival of the baby. Some husbands pour libation to ask their gods to help their wives to deliver safely. Others pace to and fro not knowing what to do.

The arrival of the child is always announced by its cry and the spreading of the fingers. These signs show that it is normal. After the arrival of the baby it is lifted and examined to see whether it is normal, and it is wrapped in a piece of cloth. When the placenta arrives the mother is treated. Some mothers bleed a lot and some herbs called "Adedenkruma" which are leaves of castor oil plant are ground, mixed with water and given to the women to drink.

Freaks and abnormal babies

Children who don't cry at birth are besmeared all over the body with ground pepper and onions to cause them to cry. If they still don't show any signs of crying they are considered dead. They are put in pots covered with leaves and buried in an old incenerator. In the olden days children who were said to be abnormal or their freaks having resemblance of animals, or having six fingers were killed immediately after birth, and buried in the same way, but Christianity has eradicated this practice.

Post-natal Treatment

After birth the navel is cut. This is done by the midwife or the herbalist who helped the woman to deliver. They always charge a penny for this. The cord is measured to the length of the babies knee and cut there. Then the rest of the navel cord and the placenta are buried in the courtyard with the surface turned upwards. This is always done by a woman who is barren and it is believed that in most cases she would be blessed and given a child after this act.

The Baby's first Bath

The first bath of the baby is always done by the grandmother

or an elderly woman. The baby is given a thorough bath with sponge, soap, and warm water. All the joints of the body are washed to get rid of any dirt or blood. It is a strong belief that if this bath is not done well there remains always a bad odour on the skin of the child even when he grows up. The baby is then besmeared all over the body with shea butter and then with 'krobo' or hyirew a kind of white earth, to help it to put on weight. It is said that if this continues, at the end of three months, the baby becomes plump and healthy. Nowadays owing to contact with Western Civilization, many people use toilet powder in addition to the 'krobo'. The navel cord is tied with string and treated with kernel oil till it is healed up.

The midwife is given money after having helped to deliver the baby safely. In cases where no money is charged she is given some eggs, a hen and rum. She puts a drop of this rum into the baby's mouth, and it vomits out some substance from the mouth. It is said that if this substance does not come out from the mouth, the baby will not be able to speak clearly.

Precautions against the 'evil eye'

Immediately after the bath and clearing of the throat the baby is inoculated to ensure that no evil befalls it. It is never taken outside nor are people allowed to come and see it, until it is a week old. When the parents have lost their children for two or more consecutive times, then after child birth some marks are made on the cheeks of the child. It is a belief that the same children have been recurring, and if they are disfigured in that way they will not like to go back. These children are called 'Okobae'. They have gone and come back. They are usually given queer names as 'Donko' Slave and Moshie, Fatima, Dakarti, etc.

When the navel is healed and the cord drops, it is put in a hole and inside that hole is planted a young coconut tree or a young orange tree for the child. It is believed that if the navel is simply thrown away, the child when he grows will become a vagabond and will scarcely be at home to be of some use to the parents.

First loss of a child

When a married couple loses a child for the first time a custom called 'fea' is performed for them, as protection against subsequent deaths of their children. They are never allowed to cry nor to receive donations from friends. The woman is forced to put on a white dress. Mashed yam and eggs called 'Oto' is prepared for the couple to eat. They are not to come out but to stay indoors for a while.

Akan Mothers prefer Daughters

Every Akan woman is very proud of her daughters. Some even don't count their male issues among their children. So whenever a woman brings forth a female she becomes happy for she is assured of descendants. They say the men bring forth with other women and as we inherit maternally, these children go and increase some families. The men also are happy when their wives bring forth males for they know they have got some people to help them to make their farms.

Twins

When a woman is blessed and she brings forth twins they are put in a brass bowl and covered with calico on the third day after birth. Abam drums are beaten and the parents dance. The words indicated by the drums are "Oposaw Anyankom kotokyi twa so ewo ho". The brothers in law present a sheep to the father of the twins for helping them to increase their family. When a woman brings forth a lot of children, sheep's slaughtered for the eight and ninth children respectively by their uncles. It is a belief that if this is not done, the children will grow up to be troublesome.

Circumcision a taboo amongst Akans

The Akans never circumcise the male babies. When the babies are females, three days after birth holes are made in their ears.

Naming and outdooring of the Baby

The first ceremony which the young babies experiences in life is when it is named. That is done seven days after it is born. Early in the morning the husband invites his relatives

and friends and those of his wife to his house for the purpose of naming the child. When all is ready the child who has all the time been kept indoors, and has been brought out for the first time in its life previously about two hours before the people assemble, that is very early in the morning, is brought out again by an aunt or any elder female member of the family. This person is supposed to be of good character. Presents consisting mostly of six dresses, a gold ring and gold ear-rings and neck laces in the case of a female baby, comb, brush a tin of powder, some pomades, one bar of soap a bucket, a tin of kerosene, a lantern and a packet of matches. In addition to this an amount of six pounds is presented. All these are given by the father of the child to the mother, as things to be used on the child. Friends and relatives will also offer presents. Money or edible articles such as yams, plantain, coco-yams are given. The person to name the child is usually an aunt of the child. Libation with palm wine or an important drink will be poured, calling upon the souls of the departed relations to take the wine and drink and bring life into the assembly and particularly the newly born child. Another libation will be poured to the particular god worshipped by the father. Then a few drops of wine ~~are~~ put on the tongue of the baby by the officiating person who says "Your name is Kwadwo Addo" or so and so. The name is selected by the father from his family names. "Woaba a betra ase, mme kyere few na nko". You have come to stay do not show yourself fancifully and go away. If the person after whom the child is named is present he carries the child on the arms and gives him a present for the honour done him. Fowls and in some cases sheep are killed, and the occasion ends with feasting. The same custom is performed in the case of twins. Natal names are given to children according to ^{the} day of the week on which they were born. Below is the table of natal names with their appellations.

(a) <u>English</u>	Monday	Male	Female	By name	Appellation
Twi	Dwoda	Kwadwo	Adwoa	Okoto	Adwo
(b) <u>English</u>	Tuesday				
Twi	Benada	Kwabena	Abena	Ogyam	Abraw

(c) English Wednesday

Twi	Wukuda	Kwaku	Akua	Atobi	Aku
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(d) English Thursday

Twi	Yawda	Yaw	Yaa	Preko	Awo
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(e) English Friday

Twi	Fida	Kofi	Afua	Kyini	Afi
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(f) English Saturday

Twi	Mememmeda	Kwame	Amma	Atoapoma	Amen
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(g) English Sunday

Twi	Kwasida	Kwasi	Akosua	Bodua	Awusi
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Sacred Names

Children born on sacred days such as "Adae" and "Dapaa" are surnamed after these days. A male child born on Sunday Adae is called Kwasi Adae, and a female Akosua Adae. Children are called Abenaa Dapaa and Kwaku Adae respectively. The name given to female twins is Ataa and for the male Ata. A child who comes after twins is called Tawia, and the one who comes after Tawia is called Nyankomago.

CHAPTER FIVE

PHYSICAL ASPECT OF CHILD TRAINING IN INFANCY, FROM BIRTH TO INFANCY

Feeding breast milk and other substitutes

Having watched a lot of mothers during feeding and nursing, I was able to make up my mind about care given by mothers on this. For the first two days of a baby's life, it is not fed on breast milk, rather clean water mixed with a little sugar is given to it, but it is allowed to suck the mother's breast until milk comes into it. In cases where there is no milk, 'behu' which is already described as food prepared from palmnuts and riped plantain is given. Sometimes the baby is fed on milk from coconuts. In cases where the mother still suffers from lack of milk, special food is prepared from palmnuts and leaves of 'adadeduru', 'dubona', and 'fofood' and the mother eats it together with fufu, until she gets sufficient milk in her breast. I was informed by some mothers that sometimes a leaf called 'nimako' are ground and mixed with the blood of a hen and used to besmear the nipples of the mother, and very soon milk is obtained.

When the mother feeds the baby, it is put on the left arm of the mother with the face showing upwards. The breast is put in the mouth and the right hand supports the chin in case the child would be tired. The position may be alternate, that is when the baby has been fed on the right breast for a while, it is given the left one. In the case of twins, they are fed at the same time. Each feeding on one breast at a time.

No regular hours of Feeding

Mothers have no special time for the feeding of their babies. Feeding takes place any time mother hears the baby crying. When she feels the baby is hungry or after the baby's bath. The baby is allowed to suck the breast till it gets tired, and drops it. When the baby refused to suck breast, it is taken as a sign of illness and it is examined to see what is wrong with it. Sometimes it is given water to drink. At times this loss of appetite is considered a sign of constipation and the baby is given an enema with soapy water.



A nursing mother bathing her baby



A nursing mother
Singing a lullaby to her
baby so as to lull him
to sleep.



A father strolling
with his baby.

Baby's Baths

Mother's regard the nursing of children as their natural duty and they do it with pleasure. Baby's napkins are carefully washed each time after they are soiled and are carefully folded. The grandmother washes the baby until the time when the young mother has had long enough time to watch and be able to do it herself. In the case of experienced nursing mothers they do it themselves. Each time before the baby is bathed, the head is carefully massaged with towel dipped into warm water to shape it. The same thing is done to the joints, the buttocks and the laps, before the actual birth is given. The head is bathed first, carefully with soft sponge and soap, and is carefully bathed, special care being given to the joints. The baby is dried with a towel, then a kind of soft sponge is dipped into powder, to powder the whole body and particularly the joints. The baby is then dressed up and carried at the back till it sleeps. Sometimes the mother carries it on the arm or it is given to a sister to carry. Lullabies are sung for the child to lull it to sleep.

I heard the mothers singing the following lullabies to their children. When fathers are free, they sometimes choose to carry their babies on their shoulders, or put them on their laps and play with them.

Lullabies

Meaning

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Osu to, Owia fi | Rain falls and the sun shines |
| Aboa bi kotow dan k yen ngee | There is an animal at the corner of |
| Otomu gyae su o ngee | the house crying ngee, |
| Abofra gyae su ngee | Owomu cease crying ngee |
| | O child cease crying ngee. |
| 2. Mmofra Mmofra nana | Grandmother of children |
| Na woreye den. | What are you doing |
| Akerenkerehene | Akerenkerehene |
| Bosu nana yaaba | Bosu's grandmother we have come. |
| Akerenkerehene | |

Baby's Bed

When the baby is fast asleep, a small bed is made for it on the mother's bed or on a mat on the floor and the baby is put on. The mother leaves the baby to perform other work, but at night she sleeps by her baby. When the baby cries during the night,

the mother wakes up to attend it. If the cry is due to hunger the baby is fed, if it is due to fever, the whole body is besmeared with shea butter and it is covered with thick cloth.

Teething

Teething begins round about the fifth month. During this stage the child always has hot temperature and frequent bowels. The gum becomes swollen up, the mouth is frequently watery and the child cries a great deal. Honey is put on the swollen gum to relieve pains until the teeth appear. It is a belief that if you mention the name 'teeth' in the presence of the child, it becomes ill, so we always say 'Orebepue abo'. He is going to show stones.

Weaning

There is no hard and fast rule about weaning and teething. Some mothers depend on the teething to wean their children, but others do not. The mothers in the village informed me that some children stop sucking the milk as early as the age of four months. Others will continue till they are a year old or even when they are walking. A woman told me that she always weaned her babies when their first teeth appeared. For during that time the babies begin to bite her breast. Some babies too, stop feeding on the breast naturally, in some cases, the mothers stop feeding the babies on the breast immediately they find that they are pregnant. Children who are old enough to be weaned and are not weaned are never healthy, owing to the fact that they are too old for the milk upon which they feed and need to feed on something solid. Weaning is a gradual process; the child is made to dislike breast by being told of some men who will come from the forest to catch him; if he still sucks it. In some cases the leaves of nim tree of 'Onyame dua' are rubbed on the nipples of the breast. These leaves are very sour and make the children detest sucking the breast when they experience the bitter taste. During the time of weaning, children are given pulpy foods in the form of 'akasa' porridge and soft foods like boiled plantain or yam, 'mpotompoto' a kind of Irish stew with no pepper or meat and at times they are given mashed yams.

Thumbing sucking

During this stage, there are no pacifiers, or comforters given to babies to suck. I was informed that in some cases the mothers give to their babies certain chicken bones to suck, for example the bone in the leg or the thigh bone, but ^{they are} ~~is~~ rather dangerous as the babies may swallow them. Some babies when they are hungry, suck their fingers for a long time and become satisfied. It is one of the superstitions in the village that thumb sucking among children is very bad and may bring bad luck upon the parents. To check this habit, the thumb is vaccinated or covered with sour medicine. The rest of the fingers are allowed to be sucked.

Introduction of Adult Diet

Gradually, during the weaning, the baby is introduced to the food taken by his family. The food is in most cases given by the hand, but sometimes a spoon may be used. Often the baby is allowed to chew the food by itself; but before the baby learns to do this, the mother may pre-chew for it. There is no special place for feeding the child, he is fed in a small plate, and sits together with the rest of the family when they are eating, but may eat at other time when he is hungry. There are times when the baby refuses to eat or just eats a little. In such cases the parents become worried and coax the child to eat, for they fear he will grow lean or be sick. The baby is always examined and if he is suffering from stomach trouble or 'odepuu' that is whites in the case of female, syringing with ginger and onunum ground and mixed with water, heated on the fire, and given to the child to drink. Sometimes the juice from ginger is squeezed into the vagina.

Sitting

When the child is three months old, he is seated on the floor. During the early stages when this ^{is} tried, the child fails to balance himself and tumbles down, therefore pillows and cloths are put round him for support. Sometimes an old brother or sister sits behind the baby to support it. As the baby sits down, shaking or falling down at times, it ^{tries} ~~is~~ to balance



A young baby of 6 1/2 months at the crawling stage.

itself, and gradually when it is mature enough for this, it controls itself and is even able to sit down to play. When the baby has sat for a considerable time, the mother lifts it up and carries it at the back.

Crawling

I was informed by a lot of nursing mothers that crawling takes place at different ages, the time depending on internal development of the individual. Some children start crawling as early as five months of age. The average age, ranges from six to seven months. Children have different methods of crawling. Some children will just lie on their stomach and move gradually.

One of my informants told me that one of her children was two years old, but was unable to walk, so he was taken to a herbalist, who massaged his waist and syringed him with medicine prepared from some herbs. Again he was told to take the child outside, early in the morning every day for about a fortnight, and support him to stand on grass covered with dew drops. This she did, but when a month went by and she found no change, she stopped. Then one day she was very much surprised to find her son taking a few steps. The woman told me that from this she has known that children are able to walk only when they are ready for it, and no amount of training can help in this.

Baby's Bed

I was informed by the chief herbalist who was the main source of my information that the first time a baby uses its speech organs, is when it gives its first cry, immediately it is born. As I have already said the first cry of the baby is a natural sign that it is normal. The herbalist interpreted the cry of a baby as an expression of sorrow and disgust to have come to a new place full of temptations and troubles.

Another herbalist, though an illiterate, was able to tell me that when children make noises, they are expressing their ideas. There is a superstition that when there are no teeth, they talk to the sheep and the hens, but after teething they don't understand the noises made by these animals. I was informed that little babies are very wonderful for they hear all

that we say to them, only the can't talk. The noises the children make are imitations of the speech of their mothers and fathers who speak to them. A mother said that at the end of two months when she smiled to her children they always responded with smiles, and when they were talking, they unconsciously said 'mmm' which later developed to 'mama'. Another nursing mother informed me that at the end of six months, when she called her baby's name it always turned its head and looked at her, which showed it knew it was called Kofi.

Normally at the end of eighteen months, children are able to hear all that we say. A little girl just about this age was sent to call her father. She ran to him and said; 'Papa, mama afeeo', meaning 'Papa mama calls you'. From this period onwards children make up their own songs and sing when they are playing or they imitate the songs sung by the parents. From two years onwards they are able to say simple sentences as "medi fufuu", I will eat fufu, 'mpe nkwan', I want soup. Sometimes where they can't say the word they point to the thing.

Cries of Babies

All the mothers in the village I came in contact with informed me that they were able to distinguish the cries of their children from those of other children. Again they said that all the cries made by their children were meaningful to them. They said that hunger cry was always accompanied with restless and jerky movements by the child. The cry is in the form of little outbursts punctuated at intervals by quiet movements. The pain cry is much louder and more continuous. Mothers respond to the cries of the children, by lifting them to relieve them from pain or discomfort or by giving them breast feed.

Baby's faeces are Examined

Right from birth till the age of about two years any time the child passes faeces it is examined to see if there is any sign of disease. When the faeces is greenish in colour, it is known to be a sign of fever and a kind of leaves are put in warm water and the child is bathed with it. Children sometimes suffer

from constipation and diarrhoea. Mothers are seldom worried about this for they have a belief that this is a change of growth. What they always do is to give the child, an enema with a preparation from the leaves of 'Ntunmunum', 'Satadua' or 'Orunum' ground and mixed with water. During the cold weather children are always kept indoors but those who can afford, clothe their children in sweaters. Others wrap them in swaddling cloths or blankets and let them stay in bed always. As already said, during the first year, babies condition of health is mainly detected by its constant cries. At times they cry all through the night and the mothers keep awake and feel them to see what is wrong with them. The mothers always consult the native herbalists, to give them medicines. A herbalist informed me that when a baby suffers from strong fever which is called in Twi 'Asabera' a kind of odour is detected when he smells the armpit.

When a baby breaks wind, it is encouraged for there is a belief that if there is any disease in the stomach it comes out.

Hiccoughing

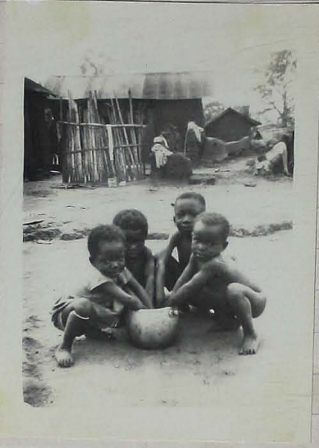
Hiccoughing is said to be an action which widens the ribs of the baby, so parents are not worried about it. They only give the baby water to drink when it hiccoughs. If it is very young, a piece of thread is put in the hair just above the forehead.

Belching

Belching in babies is always followed by vomiting and it is a sign of overfeeding. In this case the mother waits for a while before she feeds the baby again.

Parents dressing before Children

Fathers seldom dress before their children, but mothers are always in the habit of doing this. They remove their cover shoulders in the presence of their children and again after bath they put their cloths round their waist and powder the chest, armpit, round the breast, the stomach and sometimes even go to the extent of asking their daughters to powder their backs for them.



Some little children who are washing their hands
before they take their meats.

CHAPTER 6

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF CHILD TRAINING IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD FROM TWO TO SIX YEARS

Table Manners

As already said in the previous chapter a child who is two years old is able to feed himself. Sometimes he eats with brothers and sisters, or in most cases he will ask for his own which he takes in a small basin. During the early stage of this period, the child does not eat properly and he is taught table manners as occasions demand. For instance before a child eats, he is asked by his mother to wash his hands, for it is a superstition that if a child does not wash his hands before eating his mother will die. Some children when they are eating are very much in haste, not taking their time to chew properly. When parents see them doing this they tell them to eat properly. When a child is eating, especially fufu and palmtree soup and keeps on talking, the mother shouts at him to stop at once but the fact that the food might get into the wind pipes, instead of the food pipe, is not told to him.

When I went to the Queen Mother who was one of my informants, I saw some children sitting round a bowl of fufu eating. The meat and fish in the soup were heaped on top of the fufu. When they were all very busy eating ravenously, the youngest of all took a piece of meat and just when he was about to put it into his mouth, he was caught by his elder brother and the meat was taken back. The elder brother addressed the younger brother saying "Kofi always wait till we distribute the meat and never take it when you have not been ordered". Another boy was caught taking the morsels from on top of the balls of fufu, and was not keeping to his place. He was ordered to keep to his place and not to make the food they were eating untidy.

Sometimes when children eat they have their hands and mouths all soiled with soup or stew. The mothers wipe their mouths and they are told to eat properly. When children are eating and one breaks wind, he is told by the elders not to do that again and again, a child is reprimanded when he throws away phlegm near the food.

Staple Diets

Children of this age group join adults in taking every kind of food. The commonest foods I saw the children eating during the time of my investigation are fufu, kenkey, ampesi and nkontommire or vegetable stew prepared from cocoyam leaves. Cocoyam ampesi and fufu and cassava fufu. Children are only forbidden to eat food which is not well cooked, unripe and rotten fruits and a lot of sugar, for parents fear that this will decay their teeth, also it can cause "odeepu" "Whites". The mothers informed me that during the early stage of this period some children refuse to take fufu which is the chief food of this village, and they are always forced until they can eat it. Others still refuse and take ampesi instead.

Food as reward for service and good behaviour

When a child has been well behaved, being obedient or helping his mother in her work, he is given food for his good service. On the other hand when a child misbehaves, cries a lot and refuses to do something to help the mother, he is punished for awhile, by not being given food to eat.

Children's Speech

Gradually from the age of two, children learn many words and are able to add more to their sentences. After four years, they are able to speak perfectly well. I was told there are two children in the village though they are more than ten years old they cannot speak correctly.

During this period children play a lot with the children in the neighbourhood, and can learn a lot of vulgar words from children from bad homes. An old man in the village with whom I discussed some of the facts, told me that children are great imitators, and they naturally imitate everything they see or hear. Such children from bad homes copy vulgar words said by their parents. When they are playing they say some of these words, and the other children imitate them.

Owing to this most of the mothers are very particular about the choice of friends their children play with. If they don't



A father and his two sons. The younger one is always carefully attended, whilst the elder one is left to roam about naked.

want their children to enter some houses, they warn them not to go there to play or to eat and when they do they are slapped, or pepper is put inside their rectum.

Hours and Places of Sleep

Children of this stage sleep with their elder brothers and sisters on mats on the floor in the same rooms as their parents. Where the rooms are many, they sleep in a different room. At night when they are feeling sleepy they make their own beds and sleep. Sometimes they sleep on the verandah whilst the parents are engaged in conversation. When the parents finish conversation they wake them up to sleep. Children always get up between the hours six and seven. At times they try to help their mothers, busying themselves doing some odd jobs. Sometimes they simply wander about, trying to collect things to continue the play they started in the previous day.

Toilet

The mothers, when they see children have awakened give them chewing stuff or stick to chew. They never bathe them in the morning for they say it is of no use bathing the children in the morning, very soon you will see they have become dirty again. So they allow them to play until in the evening and then bathe them.

Infectious Diseases

When new babies are born, mothers give more attention to them, than they give to the older children. Children are in most cases seen going about naked. As already said they play a lot with other children, and so they easily contract infectious diseases. They play in the sun and sometimes have jiggers on their toes. They drink impure water and eat rotten or unripened fruits and are always suffering from diarrhoea, dysentery and worms, and also during the early part of this stage say at the age of two years, if a child is given a lot of starchy food he may suffer from beriberi. Children who are affected by this disease have frequent movements of the bowels, and general weakness and even if they have already walked become cripples at once, and it is a long time before they are able to walk again. Measles is another common disease which attacks children of this age group.



A mother worried about her baby who is attacked by a strong fever.

A herbalist took me to one small child who was one of his patients, the boy had become very lean, it was just the big head that was seen. The herbalist told me that he used some herbs to make medicine for the child to drink and that he was getting better. He informed me too that he always has a lot of cases of young children suffering from convulsions. In each case he has got different kinds of leaves, to be used for the 'boto' or black medicine for vaccinating them. Another very infectious disease among children is whooping cough, which the children contract through their play especially drinking from a cup used by infectious children. The leaves of a kind of plant called 'Obireku Aniwa' are ground together with pepper, warmed and given to the child to drink. Those who can afford take their children to the hospital at Nsawam for treatment.

I was also informed that when the river Nsakyé becomes flooded, its banks which become swampy breed a lot of mosquitoes. At night children who never sleep in mosquito nets and leave themselves uncovered, are bitten and they suffer from fever. During cold weather too children are never allowed to expose their chest in the cold or to walk in the rain. Mothers always let children sit near the fire with cloth to cover their chests.

A child is never told when a new born baby is expected. Some children being very curious will ask the mothers why their stomachs have become large. Mothers tell them all sorts of fanciful stories. Some being they have got some animals inside which will catch them when they do wrong. Sometimes the mothers tell the young children that they get their babies from the herbalists. Children are never present during birth. The young children are left in the care of the older sisters or aunts.

When a mother gets a new baby the other child becomes very much interested in the baby. He looks at the child and asks a lot of questions. For example he asks "Why is the baby very small? It has got small hands and legs; its eyes are too small. Its hair is silky and its colour is fair just like that of a European."

Children's Jealousy

Later when he becomes aware that the mother is paying more attention to the younger baby, he will prick the baby, give him a blow and run away. Always he will tell the mother to put the baby down and carry him at the back, and will always cry a lot.

During this stage children become very troublesome, and they are always sick. When this happens they are taken to their grandmothers to stay for a while.

Private Elimination

There is no formal teaching of children to eliminate privately. They gradually learn how to do it themselves. Every night before a child goes to bed he is asked to urinate outside in the yard. When he feels like passing faeces, he is given a chamber pot. If he is older say between five and six he is either escorted to the lavatrine, which is always a pit latrine, outside the house, or he is left to do it behind the house and early in the morning it is cleared by the mother. Most of the mothers say their children will never defecate into a chamber pot, so they give them any leaf at all for instance cocoyam leaf, on which they defecate and later on, it is thrown into the lavatrine or nearby farms.

Treatment of Bed-wetting

At this age when a child indulges in wetting the bedding, it is taken to be a sign of laziness or overfeeding. Some mothers said that if it is overfeeding, in the evening they decrease the child's food. In some cases children are given fufu to be eaten in a fufu mortar and there is a belief that this can check the wetting of bedding. I met three mothers who said they always train their children not to be wetters by waking them up in the middle of the night. They seat them on chamber pots and make the sound 'sssss' and very soon the children will urinate. When this has gone on for sometime, gradually children wake up at night themselves and urinate into the chamber pots.

During the beginning of this stage, say round about two and three years, some children come to their mothers to tell them they want to attend nature's call. The mothers give them chamber



A mother bathing a young son of 5 years old.

pots or leaves as already said and when they finish the rectums are wiped. Other children of the same age will not tell their mothers but will do it any where, on the verandahs, in the yards and mostly behind the buildings and it is the mother's business to remove the dirt. This continues until round about the age of five, the child goes into the pit latrine together with his friends or alone, and defecates wipes the rectum well without telling the mother.

Who did it ?

Some boys when they are very busy playing, and feel the need to attend the nature's call will not go at once but breech wind to spoil the air around them. When this happens, somebody is suspected and in order to have a proof, all the playmates will stand in a horse shoe. Then one of them in most cases the eldest of all will recite some words and point from one person to another at the same time, he will do this in such a cunning way that his hand will be pointing to the suspect, when he says the last word. Then he is hooted and mocked till he runs away. The following are the words he says :

'See, see, see, see kotoko

Kwabreno enne ye be nom,

Asee ne asee

Asee berebere tim,

Oti nkoko akyiri

Nkom aborobe

Borebe sisi adaka

Adaka daka soro,

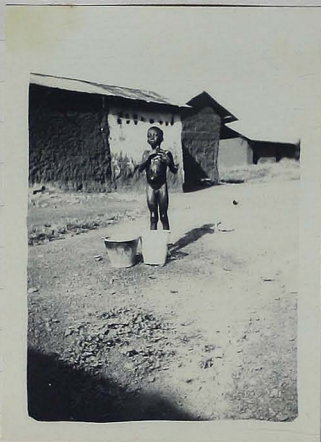
Soro koe akye

Odi kuro bedi abetee saw,

Nkwan nom hwe to.

Toilet for the growing Child

The mothers still continue to bathe their children until they are round about six years old. Children are usually bathed at night before they go to bed. When they are bathed the mothers pay special attention to the head, for because they play in the sand they always have sand in the hair, then behind the ears,



A young boy of six year's old who can bathe without the assistance of his mother.



A picture of a boy and a girl. The boy wears a pair of knicker and a shirt, whilst the girl has her cloth round her waist

the legs and feet and last but not the least the genital organs. The mothers examine the boys penis and when there are sores in them they syringe them with warm water, mothers wash these parts as well as the buttocks carefully. Equal attention is paid to the girls' vagina. When mothers have finished bathing the children, they let them go down on their knees and use plenty of water to wash their vagina. They examine them always to see whether they are suffering from whites. The girls' napkins are washed carefully by their mothers then later on they are trained to wash themselves. ^{When} The mothers have finished bathing the babies outside in the yard or in the bathrooms, ^{they} take them to the rooms or the verandahs and powder them or besmear the legs and arms with kernel oil. They comb the babies and clothe them in their nice dresses.

From the age of five upwards children start learning how to bathe themselves. They just delight in taking small basins to the river side to fetch water for their baths. When they are bathing, they don't bathe their backs, legs or feet properly and the mothers or elder sisters assist them or bathe them all over again.

Some mothers don't care for their children's bath, they leave them to take their baths themselves, and as they don't do it properly, they have crawleraws in between their fingers and on their legs.

Some young fathers I came across said they always want to bathe their young sons themselves, in order to release their wives a bit from their irksome work at home.

Clothing

There is a distinction between the clothing of boys and girls of this age group. Just around the age of two boys and girls put on rompers. Boys having theirs with knickers on and girls theirs with skirts. From the age of three onwards boys are clothed in long gowns, or they are given small strips of cloth to tie round their necks. When they are going to church or taken to Aburi for the Odwira festival or taken to Nsawam they put on knickers and shirts, mostly made from printed cotton materials.



A girl who has her
cloth on her shoulder
and goes naked



The picture shows two girls
one is naked and the other
one wears a gown but she is
not properly dressed for she
does not wear a pileh, knickers
or drawers

One Child, One cloth

Some mothers were frank enough to tell me that they could not afford always to buy their sons new knickers and shirts so on occasions they give them one of their cloths to wear or tie round their necks. I saw a lot of small boys of this age group who walked about naked. My curiosity led me to ask them why they were going about naked and they informed me that it was because each had just one cloth, which is only worn on occasions, so their mothers tell them not to use them. However nobody tells these children when they are to put on cloths. After the age of six they always feel shy and will never go out with nothing round their waist.

The girls too put on gowns, but they are not as straight as those of the boys, theirs are with seams at the waist. Some put on cover shoulders and cloths. Others had just one cloth on the arm and when I asked an old woman why, she said, so long as they had their napkins on they were not naked, and could move about for they were children.

Early signs of Sex abuse

However I was informed that during the cold weather mothers are very cautious and see that their children don't go out naked to catch chill.

Masturbation in children is not very common. However some mothers told me that some babies are often seen holding their penis or scratching them. A woman cited to me an occasion when he saw his baby of 6 months old very much amused in this way. She said when the baby was seated, he held his penis and wheeled round laughing and was very happy. Some girls are often seen scratching their vagina too. Some even repeat this for a while till they have sores inside them. A mother told me that when somebody holds his son, and plays with his genital organs in order to excite him he gets very much annoyed with this person, for it is a bad training given to the baby. All the mothers said that when they see the children in this age group practising such an act, they become very hard on them. They put pepper round the penis or inside the vagina to check them from this bad act.



This is to illustrate how the game 'Ntosa' is played.

A lot of mothers informed me that when children are not seen, indulging in such practices and so are not checked, it developes into sexual practices among them. Such children when caught are beaten well, and food is refused them for a while.

However my friend the herbalist informed me that sometimes when children are seen holding their vagina or penis, it may be they are having pains in them and when they are examined and there are pains, they are treated.

Spatial limits are given to children of this age so that they may exert themselves in different kinds of play, round about two and three years there is no distinction in sex plays. You see some playmates playing together, holding hands or sometimes very busy indulging in exhaustive plays like cooking, building or running. They always gather round and play in the yard or behind the buildings where the mothers cannot disturb them.

Boys and Girls separate for games at 6 Years

During a later stage say between the ages five and six the boys who take the girls to be feeble and unsociable, detest the idea of having them as playmates so there comes division. Girls stick to their groups and boys to their groups. The boys seem to be always busy gathering pieces of wood to make lorries or making guns from bamboo branches, lining up and singing: "Pee pee, Yensuro obiara Yefi Asante Teato tuo Poo". Meaning : Pee Pee we are not afraid of anybody, We come from Ashanti, we have fired a gun Poo!

Indoor games and Rambles

When they are a little older they delight very much in playing the game 'Oware', marbles, ludo, and racing. Some of the boys go to the river side to bathe and others go to the bush to gather fruits or to shoot birds with stones.

Girls love to play at Cooking

The girls play at cooking a great deal. You will see them gathering stones to represent vegetables to cook. At times they imitate their parents some of them act as fathers giving their wives ~~money~~ money for the marketing You will see that those who imitate their mothers have put on hair ties, and other cloths

round their waists, exactly the same as their mothers do, and become busy pounding fufu or making soup. When they are about six years old they can play 'ampè or àso'.

Tomboys

There are some girls who are very wild and will always choose to do things the boys do and move with them, fight with them as well as playing with them. Such girls are called 'Obaa barima' which means in English Tomboy. Mothers always check these girls and tell them to be mild. When they quarrel with boys they are beaten by their mothers and are warned not to play with them again.

Feminine Boys

When a boy is feeble and shy and his ways are too much of those of a girl, he is even laughed at by his friends. The parents also trouble him to be a bit hardy in his ways. Children at this stage become very adventurous and also stand near the fire places, or dangerous places. When they are seen by their parents, they are slapped at the back and are warned never to do that again. Some children too are very gregarious and will wander from house to house playing and eating with children in the same house. They don't come home in time and the mothers search for them for a long time before they come across them. Such children are warned never to go out or to eat in people's houses. They are told that if they go out, there are some men who wander about and cut out children's hearts. On the other hand when children sit still, it is taken to be a sign of sickness. The mothers then feel the children to see what is wrong with them. If they are sick they are given 'Odudo' or some boiled herbs.

When a child's mother is away at Nsawam, Aburi or any where at all, and the child becomes quiet, it is taken to be a sign of homesickness. The child is petted by the grandmother or by the father. Sometimes he is carried at the back or he is asked to tell the kind of food he likes and it is bought or prepared for him.

Occasionally children are taken to Nsawam during the market days or to Aburi for the Odwira festival. In such occasions children are warned not to move away from their mothers. Whenever they are crossing a road they are warned to stand and look to left and right to see whether a lorry is passing before they should cross. Also they are warned not to stand in the street staring at things.

When children of this age group have younger brothers, they make themselves masters over them. They play together with them, use them as servants and command them to do the donkey jobs in the play. The slightest offences the younger ones make, are penalized with blows. Sometimes they are beaten brutally by their elder brothers and they cry bitterly.

The children play with their elder brothers too. They turn to be their pets with whom they joke and laugh. They send them too, to deliver their messages or to buy them something from the market. Though there are friendly terms between these children and their elder brothers, occasionally they young brothers become naughty and scold or spoil things belonging to their elder brothers. This naughtiness of the younger brothers is revenged with heavy blows by the elder brothers. When mothers see their young ones are being beaten up brutally they are moved and become very much annoyed and scold their elder children for being callous.

CHAPTER 7

PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHILD TRAINING IN LATER CHILDHOOD. FROM SIX TO ELEVEN YEARS.

Treatment for Bed Wetting

Children of this age category are old enough to do a lot of personal things themselves, but all the same it is in this period, that we find a lot of bed-wetters. Such children always bring the bedding outside to dry early in the morning. When this goes on for a long time, it is taken as a sign of laziness and so children are in disgrace before the public. Some friends or other sisters and brothers put round the bed-wetter's waist his mat and then besmear the whole of the body with red clay and ashes. Also a kind of leaves which are very irritating and cause one to scratch oneself a lot are put round the waist, ankles and wrists. This is done early in the morning. Then his playmates walk behind him clapping and singing together "Dwonso Krobo anwe nwee. Dwonso Krobo Anwe nwee". These words mean "You are a bed-wetter". He is taken round all the corners of his ward and then taken to the river side to wash himself.

Some parents informed ^{me} that they had done this disgraceful act to their children for several times but yet they continued to be wetters. So they were convinced that it is caused by illness and not laziness.

Boys and Girls separate for Sleep

At this stage boys and girls no longer sleep together. The boys make up their beds at one corner of the room or in a different room altogether from the girls. Always at six when the mothers get up they wake them up to go for water.

Mastery of Speech

Children of this age speak clearly and intelligibly their mother tongue. One morning I went to the market place, where I saw a young girl of about ten years quarrelling with a woman of about thirty years over a balance of three pence. The little girl poured a lot of abusive words on this woman, the mother of the child came across this, and boiling with anger beat up the child heartlessly, scolded her and warned her not to be uncivil or

impolite to grown ups.

Parents set example for children in choice of Words

During this stage parents are very careful in their ways how they talk to their friends for they know that the chief principle by which they can train their children properly to be good citizens is to set them good examples. They try not to talk in vulgar words, when the children are near. Their marriage matters too are not discussed before the children. Again in the presence of children they are careful not to curse enemies or plot against them, fearing children might learn any bad thing they do or say and might grow up to be nothing but criminals and murderers.

Children copy parents bad language

However an old man in the village informed me that there are particular families in the village whose children are not well bred owing to diverse reasons. The women always quarrel openly with their husbands, exchange a lot of unpolished and filthy words with them. Sometimes the quarrels develop into fights and their own children have to separate them. Children of such parents never give respect to their mothers as the fathers always disgrace them in their presence. They talk to them and answer their questions as if they are their equals and will no doubt not be afraid to fight them. The same things happens when some mothers scold their husbands before their children. The fathers too are not respected. Children will not heed their advice, and will refuse to do them such services like washing their clothes for them, cooking for them and carrying their errands.

They copy from Gossips

I was told there are a lot of women who go to the farms or river sides together with their children. On the way they gossip and plot against some women they hate. Such women are dangerous for they implant in their children the seeds of prejudice against enemies of their mothers, anytime they see them they gossip indirectly against them.

Training in Trading

There are no formal rules laid down for children concerning how to be wise, but children are trained to think correctly as



A girl with a
pot belly

occasions demand. Some mothers let their children start selling vegetables, kenkey and petty things, in order to train them to count in money and also to be wise in negotiating with people. Others send their children to give messages to friends. When they come back they are asked to tell exactly what they went to tell. Mothers do this to train the memory of their children.

Irregular Meals

People in the village have their meals twice in a day. In the morning and in the evening. Yet children eat a lot in between meals. I saw some girls whose stomachs were big and round, and no doubt were filled up with plantain and cocoyam fufu. Because people in the village have plenty of food the children have no rest from eating and are always victims to stomach diseases such as indigestion, over-feeding, and constipation.

Special diet for sick Children

When a child is not well, he is treated with greatest care. He is taken to the herbalist and is given medicine to purge him. He doesn't eat with his sisters and brothers but rather is given special light diet, always in the form of 'Akasa' - Porridge from wheat or Agidi a kind of kenkey and light soup.

Treatment for Measles

Children of this age group too are not very particular about the water they drink. When they are going to farms, they drink water they come across, using a leaf as a substitute for a cup. Sometimes they beg people whose houses are near the farm for water and easily contract diseases. ^{Children} Girls of this age normally suffer a lot from measles, mumps and sores eyes. The treatment for measles, mumps and sores eyes. The treatment for measles is to take the children to herbalists and they are given 'Oduo' boiled leaves for drinking. Apart from this sand or ashes are heated and are used for scratching the irritating part on the body. In the case of mumps, dots with charcoal, red clay and ashes are made on the affected cheek and people are warned not to laugh or they will be affected. When a person suffers from sores eyes, he is told to bury a pinch of salt underground for there is a belief that when this is done the patient will have quick recovery.



A boy suffering from scabies on the legs.
We can see how the legs are vntidily
banaged.



A boy who is pushed
in a "lorry", he has
made from wood.



A boy playing with
a toy car.

Skin Diseases

I noticed that many of the boys I saw in the village were suffering from scabies and yaws. Children suffering from scabies used disinfectants and kernel oil to treat the sores. For the yaws they used some herbs ground together with sulphur and put on the sores. In the worst case, the children were taken to hospitals at Nsawam for treatment. I saw also some children round about six years and seven years who were suffering from ringworms. They were treated with the leaves of sempe, or the roots of orange tree were ground together with ginger and used on the sores.

Play

Playing with children in the neighbourhood is also found among the children of this age group. As already said, children are great imitators and so they learn a lot of things from their friends. They copy their speech styles of walking how they put on their dresses and almost everything they see with them. So parents are very particular about the sort of children from the neighbourhood, with whom their children play. They warn them, and never allow them to play with undesirable children.

The boys always went to the riverside in their companies to fish for small fish, to hunt for crabs in holes on the river banks. They went to the bush also to shoot birds. Some were able to catch some beautiful birds like the swallow or the starling alive, made beautiful cages from bamboo for them and reared them as pets.

Still boys were very interested in being great mechanics, and they busied themselves making stronger and bigger lorries than those made when they were young. There was one driver in the lorry at a time, and he was pushed by the others. They sat under shady trees to played the game, 'Owarè', Ludo, and marble whirled on mats. At night they met together and played 'Ahinta Ahinta' or hide and seek. A lot of the boys too had some of these toy guns which they shot at the places where the girls were playing, in order to scare them and to spoil their plays. The



Some girls playing ampe.



In most cases boys dress up like this to church.



A little girl in her shoulder cover and cloth



This is to illustrate how children walk about during ordinary days. The girls here have their cloths tied at their chests. The first boy is in a pair of knickers the second one puts his cloth on with a bit round his shoulder.

school boys among these companies of boys formed foot balls teams, into which they allowed some of their friends who do not go to school. As there were no children playing grounds they always used the school parks for their play.

Girls have less time for Play

The girls were always occupied during the day time, helping their mothers to do the cooking. They only get time to get together to play at night round about the hours seven to eight or nine. They played ampe aso, obo Tete Amako, Otuse, Ahinta ahinta. Manom Kooko, and Ananse stories. Description of some plays will be given in the appendix.

Clothing Habits

A few of children in this age group went about naked, from eight to eleven years old they seemed to be old enough and always put on cloths or dresses. The boys wore their cloth with a bit round their shoulders. Though this made them look graceful, they informed me that it prevented them a lot from many of their actions, and so when they were very busy working especially beating fufu, weeding or playing, they preferred to remove the cloth and wore just their knickers or pilch knickers. On occasions the school boys put on skirts and pairs of knickers, but on ordinary days, they put on their cloths of about two or three yards. The boys who didn't go to school, were always found with their cloth, either tied round the neck or worn ^{with a bit} round the shoulders.

The girls, for house wear and ordinary days, put on cloths and shoulders covers. When they were very busy cooking or working-at home they removed the ~~cover~~ ^{Covers} shoulders and tied their cloths round their chests, and few who had hats wore them. Children of this age group are able to dress up nicely, without the help of their parents, but sometimes when they are unable to put their cloths on properly they are taught the correct way.

Thrift and proper care of things are some of the characteristics of a well bred child. Parents told me, that whether they are poor or rich they try to train their children to be thrifty

in everything they do. They informed me that some parents are careless and don't look after their things properly. These people bring forth careless children who grow to be bad wives and husbands later on. An old woman cited to me three occasions when marriages have been dissolved owing to the fact that the husbands discovered their wives were careless and very expensive and could not help in any way to acquire money to train their children.

Some men with whom I discussed this question of thrift told me that there were some women in the village who were brought up by some of the German missionaries at Aburi. These women were well bred and showed carefulness in anything they did. They trained their children too to be thrifty with their clothes, dresses, money, and with everything at home. So men who married from children of these women deemed it to be a fortune bestowed on them by the Almighty.

Wastes

On the other hand there were a lot of houses in which food was wasted. The women cooked a lot of food they brought from the farms, allowed their children to eat as much as they could but still some was left over. They were even very proud of this and boasted saying "Asiamasi fi ne ha, eha a da biara da yedidi yi aduan gu. ~~Kohwe~~ yen pata so senea aduan rebere kwa". Meaning this is the house of such and such a man. Here is where we eat and throw the surplus food away. Go and see our stores where food is left to be rotten. Children from such houses are never thrifty in whatever they do. It is a bad example set by their parents.

Care of things

At this age children are capable of keeping their own possessions which are dresses and cloths in baskets, chopboxes and trunk boxes. Some of the mothers were very strict on them and saw that their things were not lying about, in the yard or behind tables and boxes. Anytime children's things were dirty, they were given soap and they went to the river Nsakyé to wash them.

There were other women in the village who couldn't train their children to care for their things well. The children's dresses were dirty and were lying about uncared for. I met about one or two men who complained to me the carelessness of their wives. They said they always had to buy new dresses and cloths for their children, for as soon as the old ones got dirty they were left on the ground for a long time and were destroyed by termites. They said they had done all that they could to check this but the wives seemed to be indifferent to their advice. One went even as far as to tell me that he was thinking of divorcing the wife on this charge.

Collecting Instinct

Sometimes boys are gatherers of odd things such as nails, tins, wires, tyres, pieces of wood some nuts, curious stones which they use for their plays. Most of these things are kept together with their cloths in their baskets.

Girls are gatherers of powder tins, queer ear-rings and beads they come across, and bottles of pomades and lavender. They also keep these things in their boxes.

Preference for outside Playmates

There is great distinction between work, play, behaviour and clothes of boys and girls of this age. The boys play with their brothers or choose to play with friends of the same sex in the neighbourhood. Some boys of this age have no time for their sisters at home, and will seldom talk to them, after work they go out to play and come at night to sleep.

Girls differ from boys in this

The girls too cling to their sisters in everything they do, where there are no sisters they choose friends of the same sex from outside. As they always help the mothers to do the cooking while the boys are away playing, they always have them under their thumb, and scolded all call them names. These are always retaliated by the boys who always get boiled with fury and beat their sisters.



Girls carrying water from the Nsakyie
river to home.

Children's fight

Sometimes brothers fight amongst themselves, and the same thing happens with girls. Quarrels often come from playing e.g. when the possession of one of the children is taken or spoiled by another, or when he is teased or scolded. At times when children are engaged in such fights, the parents leave them to fight, until they are tired enough to stop. In most cases they step in, ask to know the cause of the fights and warn them not to fight again, or settle the case between them. If it is over a possession, the object is given to the real owner.

Children help parents in daily chores

Parents start to find the usefulness of their children when they reach this age group. Girls help both parents in helping to cook for them, and doing the domestic duties at home. The boys go for water, beat the fufu and accompany their fathers to the farm. Parents are really interested in those of their children who help them a great deal.

Development of Moral Concepts

Children within this age group are expected to find the difference between facts and lies. When a child tells lies, the parents force him to speak the truth and still if he denies to speak the truth he is whipped well by the father. When the mother has to check him she is whipped and ginger or pepper is pushed inside the rectum. Sometimes when children's lies are not checked they develop and they become great liars and thieves. I saw a small girl of about eight years standing behind a house crying. I asked her mother what had happened and I was informed that she had stolen her three pence. The mother told me she never knew her daughter was a big thief. Always when she put money in the kitchen it vanished, she had been all the time thinking of what was happening. One day she left a pot full of stew in the kitchen and in the morning she found that the stew was spoiled and not good to be eaten for somebody had eaten some with his hands, ^{in the previous night} Little things had been vanishing all the time until that day she intentionally put three pence on the window sill, the girl was in the kitchen. No sooner had the mother gone

than the girl took the money and hid it. The mother came in after some few minutes and searched for the money but did not find it. Then she searched the girl and found the money tied at the end of her cloth. She said she was really astonished for she didn't know her daughter was a thief. She beat her well and sent her to go out until she was ready to swear that she would not steal again.

Preferential treatment for Favourites

Parents always treat their sublings alike the young ones entertain them when they are happy and the older ones help them to work but sometimes when a child is the first born or the youngest in the family, or when a child has a very good character, and is obedient and helpful, always heeding the parents' advice, doing their work, or when a child is the only girl or boy among children of the opposite sex, greater interest is shown in him.

An example of evil results of Petting

Some women told me an interesting story about a woman who after marrying for a long time and having lost all hope of having a child, unexpectedly conceived and brought forth a boy. She petted him, until at last he became spoiled. He did not know how to weed the land, and neither did he learn of any trade when he grew up for the mother was rich enough to provide him always, with something to keep his body and soul together. Later the woman suffered from consumption and she used all the money she had to cure herself. At last she became very poor and when she died she left nothing behind. The boy who had then grown to be a man wandered about aimlessly till he joined a group of thieves at Nsawam. They stole some things from the chiefs' house and were caught and taken to court. Then after the judge had passed his sentence on him, he stood up and told the audience, about the way in which his mother brought him up and cursed her in her grave.

All the mothers believe that children always cling to parents of the opposite sex. The boys are petted more by their mothers and the girls by their fathers.

The mother is chiefly responsible for the early care of the child, as fathers are away during the day time at their farms.

Children sometimes become a problem to the mothers especially the boys who will scarcely take any advice given to them by females. They at times refuse to help the mothers to work and will sit down to watch them, pounding the fufu themselves. The girls too sometimes go astray, quarrel with the mothers, and don't help them in their work. When the father returns from the farm however, the children who misbehave are reported to him and they are flogged or warned not to do that again.

Responsibility of aunts and Franings

When a mother is away, her sisters become chiefly responsible for her children and check them when they do wrong till their mother comes back. Sometimes the grandmother takes charge of the children, but children scarcely listen to the advice of their grandmothers as they know they are not immediately responsible for their clothing and food.

Fathers discipline

The child's early connection with his father is in connection with discipline, the fathers have the chief authority over their children. When children refuse to work or try to quarrel with their mother or elder brothers and sisters they are flogged and caned by the father. During the absence of the father the home seems to have lost its authority. The children rebel against the mother leave their work undone, choose to go out when they like and come in when they please. You will hear the mothers shouting on them and pouring abuses on them to prevent them from misbehaving, but as they are not afraid of them they don't stop.

Uncles and Friends of parents may help

Sometimes when an uncle of the child or a friend of the father comes across these misbehaviours of the boys they are checked at once. The child is scolded, beaten or slapped on the cheeks and when the father returns, the person who checked the boy reports him or her and the punishment he administered. Often the mothers don't agree to the check their husbands give to their children. They step in at once and quarrel with their husbands for being too cruel to the children. The following is a

story to illustrate what happened between a woman and her husband after the latter had checked their daughter on her bad conduct. A young girl of about eight years scolded her aunt, the father's sister. This was reported to the father and he filled with fury, flogged the girl brutally until she had nose bleeding. The mother was away to the market when this happened. When she came to find her daughter with her dress very soiled with spots of blood she was moved with sympathy and her voice changed at once. "What has happened", she asked? "My father flogged me", the girl answered. The mother rushed with the girl to the husband, and she, panting for breath asked for the reason for beating the child brutally. The husband tried to explain but his wife had no patience to listen to what he was saying. She poured much abuses on the husband. She told him angrily that he didn't love the child and that he was a murderer. She swore she was not going to marry the man again, and when she was leaving the room she kicked his gramophone on the floor and broke six records. This annoyed the husband very much, and he revenged by beating the woman, until an old man stepped in and separated them. In the evening the case was judged by this old man. The man was guilty and was asked to pacify the woman with a guinea.

Preferential treatment for children of favourite wife

Sometimes when the marriage is polygamous and the father happens to be unable to look after his children properly there is also trouble. A man who is a polygamist gives special preference to one of his wives. She is always called 'Yeyere' meaning beloved wife. If you don't happen to be the beloved wife, less interest is shown to you as well as your children, who are not looked after properly by the father as regards finance. When such children are beaten callously by their fathers, the mothers intervene at once and scold their husbands harshly.

Usually the mothers seem to be more responsible for the training of their daughters and the husbands take the whole responsibility for the training of their sons. All the women agreed that training of a boy by a woman always tends to be too

soft, for the boys take their own ways and become spoiled.

Grand parents spoil children

Sometimes some mothers allow some of their children to stay with the grandmothers or grandfathers and help them to work. I was informed that children who stay with their grandmothers become spoiled as the weak discipline of these grandmothers and fathers lead them to have their own ways. Such children grow up to become fools and thieves. Sometimes children stay with their aunts or friends of their mothers. I came across a little boy who was staying with his aunt, and I asked him when he was going to his mother, he said he will never go. When I asked him the reason why he told me that his mother always beat him, but his aunt was kind to him and so he preferred staying with the aunt ^{to} staying with his mother who would beat him always.

Harsh Treatment meted towards

On the other hand I saw a girl of about twelve years old who was complaining to some women of the harsh treatment given to her by her mother's friend with whom she stayed. When she was complaining two streams of tears rolled down on her cheeks. She said she was always given little food to eat but more work to do. The children of this woman did not do any work, she alone got up early in the morning filled the barrel to the brim with water, swept the compound, and did the cooking. Despite all these, she said the woman was never satisfied and always scolded her for being lazy. Moreover her cloths were all torn. She said finally that she was not going to be a slave again but would run away one day.

Orphans and next-of-kins

Children of this age group who are orphans are, cared for by the person who inherits from their mother or father. They stay together with that person and they are given food, clothing as well as education. Friends of the mothers of the orphans, express their sympathy towards these children by giving them money or sometimes the women cook food and send it to the children to eat. Children always are grateful to these people who are benevolent towards them, and they in return show to them their

respect. They greet them whenever they see them in the streets. Children whose mothers are alive also become very familiar with friends of their mothers. The mothers always send them there to deliver messages, to help them to work in their farms or to render them petty helps when they are in need.

On Visits

When mothers visit friends they sometimes take with them the young children. When the children are taken there they are expected to be well behaved. They join the children in that house to play in the court-yard or behind the house whilst the mothers are engaged in their conversation. When the mother and child are leaving, they are seen off by her friend.

Girls learn through Let's Pretend Games

Girls, when they are young cook vegetables, and make queer kinds of soup when they are playing. So by the age of six they have got some notion of how food is prepared. It is the parents job then to train their children well so that they become industrious, as this is one of the passports to marriage. The mothers train the girls to help her at home and the boys also help at home as well as accompanying their fathers to their farms. Mothers make small brooms for their daughters. Early in the morning they wake them up to help them to sweep the kitchens, the yards and around their buildings. The boys too do the sweeping of the rooms. The dirt and rubbish are collected into old kerosene tins and are emptied into the incenerator by both the girls and the boys. The girls are taught how to mud the stove, light the fire and put water on it. After this the mother piles up the dirty pots, plates, knives, pestle and mortar and she is assisted by her daughter the little apprentice, to wash them. After this the girl is sent to buy vegetables and meat or fish from the market. When she returns, she helps the mother to cook the food. She is taught how to skin the plantain, cocoyam and the other root vegetables. After this she is given the boiled pepper, garden eggs or cocoyam leaves to grind. The



A farmer-hunter and his son on the way to farm.

mother makes the stew, as the little girl watches and helps where necessary. When the food is ready it is her work to gather the plates into which they will distribute the food for the various members of the family. By and by the child learns more, the method of preparing food and at the age of twelve years, she is able to cook the food of the whole family even during the absence of her mother.

Boys accompany fathers

When the little boy reaches the age of six or seven and is strong enough for farm work, the father buys for him a small cutlass, from a blacksmith. The boy then accompanies the father to the farm and is given a small portion of the farm to weed. At the age of eight the boy is given a different cutlass which is bigger than the first one and he weeds side by side with the father, and helps him to do the planting. During the cocoa season boys who are over twelve years, help their fathers to do the plucking. Early in the morning the father gets up together with his son. If the farm is very big he asks a help from his friends and their children. They then go to the farm and gather the cocoa pods. After the mothers and daughters have finished with their duty at home, and have gone for water, they go to the farm and prepare food for those occupied with the gathering of the cocoa pods. Then the mother and all the girls, break the pods, remove the seeds and heap them in baskets. The seeds are then emptied into some pits made in the farm, covered with leaves and are allowed to ferment for about a fortnight till they are removed and brought home to dry on mats. The mothers and daughters always come home before sun set and prepare the evening meal which is always fufu. When the boys come home it is their work to beat the fufu while the girls turn the fufu in a mortar.

Children learn to farm by apprenticeship

The children are given this kind of apprentice training in crop farming as well. The boys with their fathers do the weeding and planting of cassava, cocoyam, yam and corn and the mother

and her daughters interest themselves with the making of vegetable farms. The farmers keep visiting their farms and cutting down the weeds until the harvest time. The father cuts down the plantain and digs up the root vegetables and the mother and her children carry them home. Some are sold and the rest kept for household use. When fathers see that their children are very much interested in the farming work, they are given small portions on which to make their own farms. The plants in such baby farms are vegetables such as okroes, tomatoes, onions and food such as plantain, and cocoyam. Children keep their eyes on their own farms. During the harvest time they delight in bringing crops from their own farms, and probably sell some to buy their clothing, and leave the rest to be used for the household purpose.

Oil palm Industry

Though the oil palm industry which was the chief occupation in the 1890's has declined, yet still there are some farmers who own big oil palm farms from which they get palm oil for their household use as well as for sale. Here too the farmers are accompanied by their children to the farms and by way of doing are helped to know the native techniques of farming. There are two methods of making the oil palm plantations. After the farmer and his family have cleared the farms, they throw palm kernels into the farms. The farms are left until the palm kernels germinate and grow. Others throw the palm kernels into the farms which have not been weeded. They leave the farms for over a year, before they do the weeding and burn the weeds. During the rainy season they transplant the young plants, and then starting weeding. The farmers visit the farm always. When the weeds are grown they are helped by the children to clear them. This continues for a long time until at the end of seven years the fruits are ripe. The farmers are always helped by the nephews, their own children and friends to gather the bunches of palm nuts, whilst the wife and the girls are engaged in cooking food, and cutting the bunches into bits to collect the

nuts which are gathered and put into big holes and are covered with about six kerosene-tin-fuls of water. The nuts are covered with leaves and are left for three days when they are fermented. They are removed, put into another hole at the bottom of which there are gravels and are pounded. Then after three days the fibres are mixed with water which is always fetched from the river side by the young children and the adults do the kneading and skin off the oil which comes on the surface of the mixture. The oil is boiled for a while and when cool sieved and put into big pots which are fixed inside holes in the ground. Some of the oil is sold to traders, and the rest kept for household purpose.

Training in culture starts before school age

Always before a child goes to school, a lot of training is given to him informally, and by and by he knows something about his culture. From the age of ten onwards the parents give them much advice as occasions require. Sometimes in the evening the grandmother gathers the children round and teaches them to know and understand a lot of proverbs. The following are some of the proverbs I gathered from the grown ups.

1. Vernacular: Obi nkere abofra Nyame.
English: Nobody teaches a child to know God.
2. Vernacular: Anomaa sere nea nagya sere.
English: A bird laughs where its father laughs.
3. Vernacular: Wuwu a wunnim nea obedi wade a, hwε wakonta.
English: If after your death you don't know the one who will inherit you, look at your son-in-law.
4. Vernacular: Oba se ose nanso owo abusua
English: A child resembles his father but he has his relatives.
5. Vernacular: Abofra anni anso opanyin a ofre mpopa se haha
English: If a child does not give respect to his elders he calls the name 'Mpopa' like haha.



School Children going to School.

6. Vernacular: Abofra bo nwaw na ommo akyekyere
English: A child cracks a snail but not a tortoise.
7. Vernacular: Abofra hu ne nsa hohorow a one npanyin didi.
English: When a child learns how to wash his hands carefully he eats with grown ups.
8. Vernacular: Opanyin ani anso abofra a, abofra nso ani nso no.
English: If an adult does not respect a child, the child too does not respect him.
9. Vernacular: Obi nkyere Otomfo ba otono
English: Nobody teaches the son of a blacksmith smelting.
10. Vernacular: Abofra a obeye okabofo no ote anopa gya ho a na orebo brodi bosea.
English: A child who will always be a bankrupt borrows plantain in the morning when he sits near a fire.

The village school

I have already stated in my introduction that informal teaching in the form of teaching adults to read the Bible was started by Mr. Owusu in the 1890's. Some few years later a swish school building was erected by the Presbyterian Church and parents started bringing their children to school. As classes increased till they came up to primary six more teachers were added. The school is still up to primary six, and the number on roll is one twenty six. The ratio of boys and girls in the school is seven to one. Of the six untrained teachers who form the staff of the school, four are males and two are females.

Children at school compared with those outside

I asked the headmaster the reason why of about 330 children who are in the village only 126 are school children and I was given various reasons for this. He said some parents take advantage of the introduction of fee free education and bring their children to school always when they are round about six

and seven years old. These parents say they cannot help being envious when at Christmas they see their friends have all their children at home with them. Most of these children who come to pay their due respect to their parents at this time are store-keepers, policemen, clerks and typists. They are always seen dressed up walking by their parents who take them to relatives and friends, to greet them. They say this gives them incentive in a way, and they feel they should send their children to school. Again they always find it difficult to get people to write their letters for them, and they feel it's their natural duty to train their children, so that when they finish school they can get people to write their letters for them, or when these children travel to work, at least they would send them a few coins at the end of each month.

Education of Females

A man has two daughters who do not go to school. I asked him to tell me of his ideas about female education. He said he had sworn an oath on his honour that none of his daughters will ever go to school. He planned to work very hard to get money to educate his first born who is a girl. His idea then was that when a girl is well educated, she gets a good husband to marry. So Great was his plans for his daughter who made him very much disappointed by having a child by a lorry driver when she was at primary six. He said if he had used that money which was spent on that child to buy a cocoa farm, he would have got a lot of money to build a house.

Those who don't send their children to school, came to the conclusion, that education is very costly nowadays, for even if they don't pay fees they have to buy books and dresses and they feel the expenses especially as the children could have remained at home to help them to make bigger farms. They said education makes children become proud and extravagant. However, they are trained morally and intelligently to fit well into their culture. There are forty nine children who are holders of school leaving