

CHILD TRAINING

IN

AMPABAME NOI.

ASHANTI

BY

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This essay, the outcome of investigations carried out at Ampabame No. 1, a village about six miles south-west of Kumasi, Ashanti, attempts to present to the reader some of the popular views held and methods used in the training of the children of the locality.

Though the essay does not claim to cover every aspect of the subject, all the important facts have been included and an accurate picture of child-training as it obtains has been painted.

For purposes of convenience, where both sexes are involved, the masculine gender "he" has been used, but where necessary a distinction has been made and "he" or "she" accordingly used.

All the pictures and illustrations except one (Fig. 1.) have been obtained expressly for this work.

The author has pleasure in placing on record the assistance given by Birenpan Kwarko Kuma, chief of Ampabame, the men, women and children who were interviewed and Dr. M. M. Lusty of the Institute of Education, University College of the Gold Coast who read the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions for its improvement.

Achimota
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Jacob Banful.

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INTRODUCTION

THE VILLAGE

The materials of the foregoing essay were mainly obtained at Ampabame NO.1, a typical Ashanti village about six miles south East of Kumasi. Ampabame is a village with a population of about three hundred. It is bounded on the north by Ampayo village, on the south by the River Aboabo, on the west by Adumasa and on the east, the River Oda.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Ampabame NO.1 is a small village, it still occupies a very enviable position in Ashanti, its chief bearing the title "Birempon" (the equivalent of a Paramount chief) after its first chief Nana Mketia Birempon in about 1698. When a chief swears the oath of Allegiance to the Asantehene, he holds the Mponponsuo sword in the same way as any Omanhene.

It is said that King Olini Yeboa of Ashanti while a prince indulged in trading and at one time settled at Domanteng in Akin. When the ruling King of Ashanti Nana Oti Akenten died, Nana Olini Yeboa was sent for and as a sign of goodwill and affection, the throne of Domanteng, Nana Mketia Birempon came down with him. Not very long after Nana Olini Yeboa's ascension war broke out between his people and Domaa. Nana Yeboa appealed to Nana Birempon not to desert him. After Nana Yeboa's death, Nana Birempon, then ill, was given land on which to settle with his followers. In choosing a name for his newly founded town he said, "I am a royalist who has seen enough of royalty, I therefore will no longer tolerate any boasting from royalty." Thus the town came to be called "Ampabame". It was placed within the Kyidom clan of Ashanti and its

chief given a high rank. The present occupant of the stool is the Asantehene's chief Historian.

Ampabame grew to be what in those days was a large town containing about 350 buildings. Subsequent warfare, commerce, ^{and trade} and inter-marriage ^{with "foreigners"} reduced the town to the small village it is today with only 50 houses.

Until about 25 years ago when the people moved to the present site, it had been little influenced from outside; very few strangers went to live there and those sons and daughters who left did not return to stay there permanently. The result was that indigenous customs and traditions - its folklore, religion, music and dancing remained unsophisticated. What one may term superstitious beliefs obtained in every thing that the villagers did and they attributed each happening - rainfall and lightning, birth and death to the work of fetiches, spirits and witches.

The people remained highly religious. In addition to the National Fetish Dops and Kune, each family had its own fetish. Ancestor worship was strictly kept and libations were poured during each ceremony. If you gave some one from Ampabame water to drink, he would first pour a little down to be drunk by his ancestors before he put the cup to his lips.

The general pattern of chieftaincy in Ashant has been here followed - the chief who is head of the village has subchiefs and elders and with them he 'rules' the people. The chief-in-council used to be the final authority in all matters affecting the welfare of the people. The people who entooled a chief had the power to destool him. From the first chief, Nana Mketia Birempon, to the present occupant Ibirempon Kwarko, fifteen chiefs in all, within a period of about 258 years (1698-1956) only two chiefs have suffered destoolment. This demonstrates the contented nature of the people.

OCCUPATIONS

The climate is the wet, ^{alternating} dry type with heavy rainfall and high temperatures. The rains occur from March to mid November reaching their peaks in June and September or October.

The land used to be covered with thick forest but owing to the shifting cultivation practised by the people, it is now reduced to a scrubland with isolated forests. The rivers Aboabo and Oda which run through the land keep it fertile.

The only occupation for the people in the old days was farming. Not very long ago the people played a large part in supplying Kumasi with most of its food. Later a few youngmen became interested in palm wine tapping and this has also been carried on. With the dwindling of the forest, farming as a full time occupation for everybody has completely died out.

The men are now mostly engaged as employees of trading companies and firms; some learn a trade such as carpentry, masonry and driving.

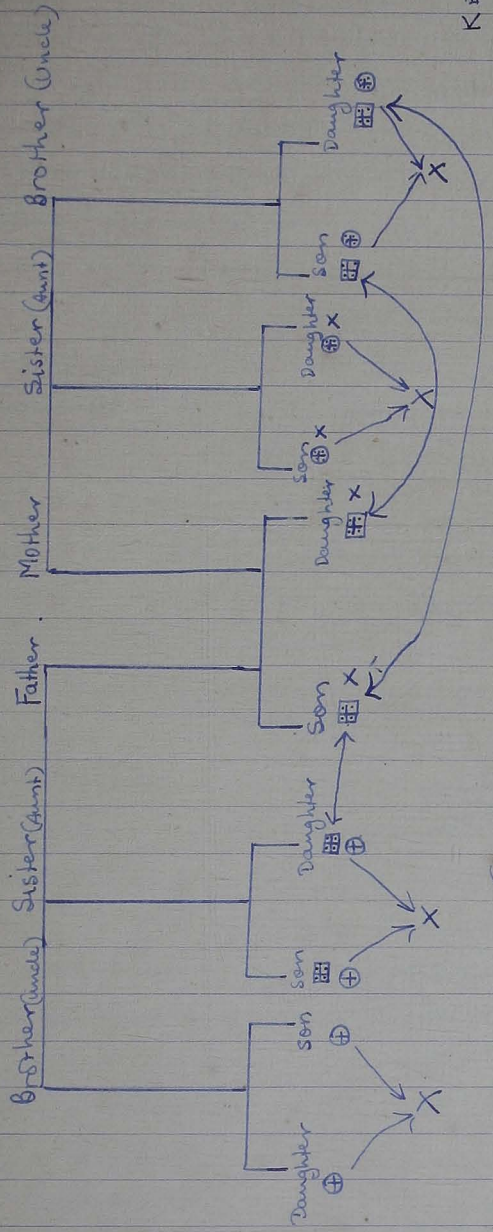
Women now carry on the farming just to feed the household. Food such as plantain, cassava, cocoyam and vegetables are the only crops grown.

Farming goes on almost all the year round. The land is cleared and prepared for sowing and planting between January and March. Owing to the heavy rainfall, the undergrowth comes up quickly and therefore is always being cleared. The women, whose duty it is to keep the farm going, work on the farm continually.



MARRIAGE

Long, long ago marriage outside the village of Anyahame was not allowed. This practice has changed, perhaps owing to lack of suitable partners. In spite

COUSIN - MARRIAGE



KEY.

MARRIAGE ALLOWED  

MARRIAGE NOT ALLOWED X

Summary of Diagram

A man may marry:

- ① His Father's Sister's Daughter
- ② His Mother's Brother's Daughter

A man must not marry:

- ① His Father's Brother's Daughter
- ② His Mother's Sister's Daughter
- ③ Any relative of his wife (if the wife is alive)

of the territorial limitation very close relatives of the maternal line - aunts' children ^(consins) ^{considered} could not by any means marry. It was ^{considered} incestuous for all maternal consins were called by one name "nua" (brother or sister). A boy could however marry his uncle's daughter or a girl her uncle's son, but never of the 'aunt line'.

The marriage of uncle's ^{children to} aunt's children is still very much encouraged. The reason is that the family property will ^{then} always remain in the family. A less important reason is that not much money goes into marriage expenses. Several uncles give their daughters to their nephews to marry, especially those nephews who are likely to inherit the men's property after their death.

When two people marry, each continues to live in the family house. The woman cooks and does everything in her family house but sleeps in the husband's house; and so do their children.

A youngman is qualified to marry as soon as he gets a room and a means of livelihood; as soon as he is able to fend for himself. This can be seen by the changes of cloths he has, the dresses he puts on and the furnishing of his room.

The suggestion for ~~the~~ choice of a wife is any body's concern; the father, the mother, the uncle or the youngman himself can make it, but the final word rests with the father. Nobody, for instance could remember any youngman who married against the wishes or ruling of his father.

A father considers several things before he approves or disapproves the suggestion put forward by either his son or anyone entitled to do so. He satisfies himself that the girl's family is free from all "disgraceful diseases" like Leprosy,

epilepsy and consumption; that his son is not entering a quarrelsome and litigious family. Having considered the background influencing the girl, he then scrutinizes the girl's own life. The girl must be industrious, respectful and honest. Nowadays the Christians may not marry non-Christians.

Christian marriage at Anpohame takes two forms: the customary rite for marriage are performed and in addition the church, in this case Roman Catholic, also blesses it. So far all church blessings of marriages have been received in Kumasi by the Priest-in-charge of the area.

CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE PROCEDURE.

When a youngman sees a girl he loves, he makes his intentions known to her and if she accepts the proposal, the man starts giving her gifts of money. The proposal and the gifts are all carried out in secret. The man makes three gifts, at different dates, of £1 1s. each; these are followed by three gifts of 10s 6d each and finally three gifts of 7s each. These gifts are known as "mpinades" (a concubine's gifts).

The youngman then informs his father, through his mother, of his intention. When the father agrees to it, the girl's mother is told and she in turn informs her husband. The man has the right either to refuse or to accept the request. It is his prerogative. If he agrees, the girl is asked to express her opinion. This procedure is merely a matter of formality. The girl's father is then given a gift of £1 1s and her mother 10s 6d. This money is known as the "yes drink".

The girl at this juncture makes an official present to the man. The present comprises: Yams, plantain, pepper, cocoyam, garden eggs, onions, tomatoes, table salt, fowls or a sheep, sponge, firewood and chew stick. These

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are arranged in basins and carried in a straight line to the man's house by women and children each carrying one item.

The girl's father then 'directs' the man's father to her relatives. The man takes a bottle of whisky and soda, £2 2s for the men of the family and £1 1s for the women (headman), 13s for the brothers-in-law and 7s for the sisters-in-law. The payment of these sums of money and the drinking of the whisky and soda complete the marriage rites.

The girl appoints a day and prepares her first meal known as "Aduane Kesel" (Big meal). This is partaken of by the man, his relatives and his friends. The man then gives the girl a trunk and any number of cloths he can buy and in addition he gives the wife £4. to buy cooking utensils. Nowadays those who can afford add a sewing machine, but it is not compulsory.

Briefly speaking this is the sort of background into which the child is born.

There have been no significant changes in the marriage procedure except that where as in the days before the whiteman, the "concubine's gifts" were in kind, for example, meat (occasionally in gold dust), such gifts are now in the form of money.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HAVING CHILDREN

CHILDREN AND THE STATUS OF THE PARENTS

In Ampabame, like any Ashanti town or village, the chief is highly revered because he is the link between the living and the dead, the caretaker of all things spiritual - anything that has to do with our ancestors; the richman is respected, because in times of financial difficulties he is the person to approach for help; as touching honour, it is the person who has children that is honoured.

REASONS FOR DESIRING CHILDREN

The question of inheritance is very vital in the social set up and the coming of children into the family goes a long way to solving it (family is here used in the Ashanti sense - that is all relatives of the woman come into this group, whilst the man is regarded as ^{not} being of the family). The children are the heirs to the property of the woman's brothers; it is, therefore, imperative that for the property to remain in the family, the woman should have children.

It is the desire of every member of the family to see that it does not die out. For this reason girls are preferred to boys although it is necessary to get boys who will in future manage the affairs of the family and also fight, if need be, for the family. It is the woman's children who are going to "multiply and still increase" to perpetuate the family. For the woman her own child and for the man the nephew are a source of pride - a guarantee that the man and his sister are not labouring in vain.

The parents of the children also rejoice because then they know that within a few years they will get 'companions' to consult with in times of stress, they will get people to make the home a happy place, they will get helpers in industry and trade and they have something to keep them always together. Where there are children of the marriage, it is not easy to win a divorce case. The arbitrators will always find ways and means of patching up the difference, and in nine

out of ten cases there is peaceful settlement. children are regarded as "wonderful gifts from God." Very often women are known to have been saying "I am entreating God to give me helpers."

CHANGING VIEWS AS TO THE SIZE OF THE FAMILY

While some people maintain that there can be nothing disadvantageous in having children, others think that whilst it is by all means good to have them yet there are some disadvantages attached. This latter view has developed in recent years, especially during the last decade. Those who subscribe to this view - only two out of thirty interviewed were past middle age - argue that in the old days when it was comparatively easy to obtain food and clothing, it was clear there was no disadvantage in having children, and the greater the number the better it was for the good of the family, but now things have changed, every thing is difficult to obtain and education which is costly, has become the vogue of the day. There was a time, they argue, when clothing was limited to adults and adolescents but now even the newborn baby must be clothed and the cost of one piece of cloth has more than quadrupled. The ancient 'kyenkyen' (bark cloth) can no longer be worn - it is primitive

Food is now a problem and where as farms gave good harvests a couple of decades ago now food has sometimes to be imported from Kumasi. According to some old people, I interviewed, two large cocoyam farms could last a family of twelve a whole year; three such farms now cannot maintain them for nine months. The land is gradually becoming barren and cocoa cannot now be grown there. The people are slowly becoming poor.

When I wanted to know why cocoa could no longer be grown an old man replied: "The witches have turned the forest into grassland and the few cocoa trees

that were left they have turned up-side-down." Continuing he said, "When I was young that was not the case, we could obtain several loads of cocoa. Now, if you want a cocoa farm you have to go to Ahafo (Western Ashanti, over fifty miles from the village) but look, people like myself cannot leave the little ones here and go to Ahafo to make a farm. Even our food farms are bad, they do not yield much." Another asked, "How could I have looked after my twenty-seven children? I had a double-barrelled gun, snares for trapping animals and some farms. The only thing I supplied in the form of food was meat but even that I obtained, mostly, from the forest around. Now we are like people of the grassland. What makes child-bearing almost a problem is your education you talk of. If you do not do as your friends are doing, they will blame you but then where is the money to educate all these children?"

These points upon which some base their argument are imperceptibly affecting the size of the family. The average size of the offspring of one marriage was about eight as recently as seven years ago. In fact before the abolition of fees in the Primary School and when it was customary for children to follow the trade or industry of the parents, there was no talk about limiting the size of the family. In fact the more children one had the more honoured, as has been said, one became. Most women wished to reach the enviable mark of a tenth child. From then onwards she was styled "Dwoduo" - mother of ten. Some women have been heard in a quarrel to have said, "I am not young as you see me, I have brought forth ten children!"

Custom allowed of polygyny and some of the men took advantage of this 'freedom' to marry as many women as they could afford with the

result that they had many children. Most of the men crossed the twenty line. Everybody delighted in peopling the earth. Some people (a few instances were cited) when they wanted land free of charge for a farm would go to the chief and plead for land in the name of their children who "would die of starvation unless I get some land on which to farm but I have no money now to purchase one."

There are some proverbs which tell us how they liked large families; one of such proverbs is "Nsamanfo n'po se yepe ye dodo' na etese teasefo?" (Even the dead desire to be many, how much more the living?)

The young men of today say the times have changed and therefore "we have also to change"; they say it is not advisable to have a large family. Almost all the young men have turned away from farming and have either learnt a trade or are working for some employers (some work in a stone quarry about two miles away from the village) and the money they get from their jobs is not enough to support a large family. However, they are not in favour of having a very small family. A family of three is too small for them; the preferred size is six. They say that if the relatives of the children would help they could educate the children well.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CHILDLESS WOMAN

A woman's greatest curse is to be childless. She could have all the wealth she wanted, she could even be the wealthiest person in the village, but if she has no child, she is of little standing in the eyes of the community. For such a woman life is not worth living because she is constantly the object of ridicule and scorn, worst of all she is sometimes regarded as the "Satan" of the family, especially if

children in the family become prone to illness and die in quick succession.

children also have their own way of reminding the woman of her barrenness. Their opportunities arrive when either the woman abuses or beats one of them and then she is openly questioned by the child. Usually it takes this form, "Have you ever brought forth? If you had you wouldn't have beaten me like that." If she does not become kind to them in treatment and liberal as regards gifts, she may not get any child to run errands for her.

Men too have their own estimation of her. Often she is considered a source of trouble and a carrier of venereal disease. She may even be regarded as a drain on men's pockets and sometimes as a harlot. The name for a barren woman is "Bonini".

Such a woman never lives a long married life. The society is by tradition polygynous and if she happens to be 'one of the wives' of a man and if the other woman has children, it is common practice that the "bonini" finds ways and means of leaving the marriage, and very often she succeeds in doing so. Instances were cited where men divorced their wives because they were "of no use" meaning they could not reproduce. If the woman continues to stay there she may be married to a stranger but only for a short time for if he gets to know that she is such, divorce is the only outcome.

In quarrels she is often openly told of her barrenness. Such a reference is capable of making her lose 'control of herself' to such an extent that she may cause any amount of physical injury to the other either by fighting or by wounding. An old woman told me that once there was a quarrel between two women and during a very hot

attencation, one was heard to have said, "It is because of your wickedness that one does not find children's faeces when one visits your house." The allegation was considered so serious that it ended before the chief and his elders.

In sickness she may find it hard to get people to attend her as much as she desires. She may at times even be neglected. When she dies a ceremony is performed (it is now dying out) before laying her in state: An incision is made from the vagina to the anus. They say it is not good to go to the other world with no sign of child bearing and therefore they make the cut to correspond to a tear in child-birth. While performing this act a libation is poured; and her "condition" is reported to the spirits of her ancestors. She is then warned to return next time as a woman worthy of the name. This ceremony is not performed in public and the only people present are the close relatives. Child bearing, therefore becomes the greatest aim of any woman.

If a woman does not see any signs of pregnancy about two years after marriage, she becomes worried. The first step in such a case is to find out the causes of her barrenness. The person to consult is the fetish-priest but when the person is a Christian, the practice has been to see a medicineman - he is different from either the fetish-priest or the juju-man; he does not deal with gods although he may deal with ("mimoatia") dwarfs. The interviews usually reveal that the fault is either the woman's or her relatives or sometimes it is the man's family that is causing the trouble. By all means some one is culpable. I was privileged once to be present when a relative took his wife to a medicineman

for consultation. After tasting three courses and repeating some incantations - sometimes muttering to himself and sometimes looking at the woman - the man said, "There are some people in your family who have realised that if you bring forth you will bequeath all your property to your children only. They have, therefore, removed your 'child bearing organs' and thrown them into the River Aboabo, but if you obey the instructions I give you, I shall appease them and win back those things so that you may bring forth". He demanded some calico, two fowls eggs and three pennies. We departed.

When next time the man and his wife went to see him, he, the medicine man, gave her two types of medicine, one to mix in any soup that she took and the other to syringe herself with. He then made three blade cuts at each joint of her body and rubbed in a black powder. The black powder was for protection from evil eyes.

Nowadays some barren women undergo a medical operation at the hospital. One woman told me she was so bent on having children that she had had the operation twice.

It is believed that the fetish can give children and so the priest is approached and a request is made for a child from the fetish and very often shortly after the necessary rites and treatment have been performed, the woman becomes pregnant. The child when born is regarded as the child of the fetish.

General opinion holds that a man can never be sterile - he can be impotent but not sterile and any time a man is suspected of being sterile, his wife is taken away from him by her family. Normally the first person to blame

when there is any difficulty of child bearing in the woman, and it is she who undergoes treatment. It is even considered that a man never ceases to be potent. Occasionally, a man may be found to be impotent. Impotence is attributed to the action of the physician or witches. If a woman is divorced by a man she loses passion only for, apparently, no fault of hers. She may pay a physician to render him impotent so as to make it impossible for him to marry again.

Examples were cited of men who experienced the first symptoms of impotence a few days after they had put away their wives. How impotence in a man is even more ridiculed than barrenness in a woman. When the women get to know that a certain man is incapable of satisfying his sexual urge, they sometimes openly challenge him to a bed and the man is not wanting to make a disgrace of himself accepts the challenge only to give excuses later. One man was quoted as always saying, "It is because I am drunk." Such jeers and jokes are sometimes enough to cause a man to remove from the village to another place. To go back to our man who found they were growing impatient, two of them found means and were reconciled to their wives and soon they became normal again; the third man, a stranger, left the village and never returned.

As stated elsewhere there is no limit to the size of the family and the more the procreation the family becomes. Occasionally, however, some women may decide to stop child bearing. This practice is rare. If it becomes necessary that child bearing should be stopped, there are several recognized ways of doing so and any method aside from these is condemned and disdained. Abortion as such is

more or less unknown - at least no mother will permit her daughter to abort because the husband has agreed that she, the daughter, should have no more children; or that the girl was not properly married to the man. In fact no excuse is strong enough to justify an abortion.

The only methods accepted are these: The woman may approach a medicine man who will prepare some drug for her to drink. These preparations have been tested and found to be efficacious. If the woman believes in jujin, she will consult a jujin man who will give her a specially prepared jujin. That jujin, the woman will tie round her leg just below the knee. It is believed that so long as the woman wears it so long will she not be pregnant even though she will cohabit every day, but as soon as she removes it, one sexual intercourse with a man is certain to make her pregnant. Contraceptives are entirely unknown.

Sometimes a woman becomes so desperate that attempts to prevent her from wearing "anti-child-bearing jujin" ends in a dissolution of marriage. A case occurred which resulted in a divorce, for the woman decided to stop bearing children but the man thought otherwise. A great quarrel ensued and abusive words crossed lips. The man was so offended that he divorced the wife, an arbitration having failed.

The question as to whether a man can support his children has little place in this society; in point of fact it is not considered at all. The important thing for every woman is to get children, sometimes he means does not even matter.

THE POSITION OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

The system of inheritance coupled with the desire

to keep the family living by procreation, does not make the 'illegitimate child' possible. There is not such a child, neither is there a bastard child. The child belongs to the maternal family in all respects. When a woman conceives and the man responsible is not known through one reason or other (sometimes the women refuse to make the man known to her people, no matter how they question her or sometimes more than one man is involved and therefore the father is not known) the woman's maternal uncles look after her - clothing and feeding her and paying the medicineman or the Shesuto to take care of her until the child is born. The ceremonies for naming the child are all performed and the child given a name by her family.

The child is not in anyway socially handicapped. He does not lose his social status because he has no father. He is given the same attention and care as the other children in the family.

If a child becomes an orphan through the death of one or both parents, his mother's relatives take the child to live with them and he looked after. His education and his whole life will be their responsibility. Usually he becomes a pet child of either one of the aunts or one of the uncles; he is given everything that will make him forget his misfortune. If the father (if he is still alive) or his people offer the child any gift, it is accepted with thanks. The man may take the child to stay with him but still the child belongs to his mother's family.

Custom allows of sororate as well as levirate forms of marriage and when a woman dies leaving small children, her family, because they want some one to care for the children, replace the

dead wife with another woman from the family. Quarrels over the treatment of orphans are known to have ended marriages.

Since every child has a family which is responsible for his upbringing, adoption is not known to exist. A couple, however, who want a baby and have been labouring to get one may ask a friend or relative to allow his child to stay with them. It is believed that if the couple are able to give a good treatment to the child, to love and cherish him, "the children in the other world may be attracted to them" and they may thus get a baby.

THE CONDITION OF THE PREGNANT WOMAN.

A pregnant woman is looked upon as a sick person; in the early stages she may often be sick, especially in the mornings and when in the presence of any strong smell, for example, of kerosene or soap; she also tends to become easily annoyed, and as this is due to her condition, it is expected that others will be patient with her. Her appetite is apt to be capricious, so that even the favourite food often does not appeal. There are complaints of general weakness and often giddiness.

Women in reporting these symptoms, often attributed the giddiness to lack of food. Midwives, however, consider it due to anaemia and accordingly prescribe blood giving tonics such as Brio-Haemoglobin, Deschre's Blood Tonic and the like.

A feeling of general weakness is experienced by all, so my informants told me.

The woman in the state of pregnancy, often loses her appetite and may not eat for some hours. Sometimes the favourite food does not make an appeal. Some come to dislike "fufu", the Ashanti staple food, others cannot bear the odour from cooked meat and, therefore, take only fish or eat the food with only salt sprinkled on it. The diet is thus rendered very poor. Three women said the soup they used during that stage consisted of water, pepper and salt and sometimes they added stink-fish or an egg. The soup would be so hot with pepper that no other person would like to eat it!

There is no attempt to improve the diet; rather, the quality decreases; food tends to be dry such as boiled or toasted plantain or cocoyam without meat or stew. Suggestions for improvements come from Government Midwives but these are lightly

treated and sometimes not adopted at all.

It is a common experience that there comes a time when a particular food makes a great appeal to the woman and she will not rest until she has got it. During such a period she acts as if she were under an enchantment - she will not listen to any suggestions about the food and she may even not engage in conversation with another person.

It is common place that when a pregnant woman comes upon some food she has developed a liking for for she will ask to be allowed to partake.

This behaviour, normally considered a sign of bad breeding, is perfectly in order for pregnant women.

One woman said something which all I have interviewed have confessed to have experienced.

She said that once, when she had almost finished preparing supper (fufu and palm soup), she suddenly developed a dislike for it and so after she had served the husband and the children, she cooked cocoyam, mashed it (etc) and poured on oil. She added that it tasted palatable than most foods that she has eaten.

Another told me, what she termed a true story:

She said she had had a great liking for chicken soup but she had no money. In her state of sorrow and disappointment, she paid a visit to a friend and, God being good, the friend had just finished preparing her lunch - fufu and chicken soup! My informant said that she invited herself and ate to her heart's content. But she never washed her hand. She saw to it that not a drop of water touched her hand and she went back home. She had a short sleep and after that to wash herself. The first precaution was to make sure that the right hand would

not touch water - she wanted to inhale the scent, she ~~ties~~ a piece of cloth round the hand and used only the left hand to bath with. she went to bed immediately after placing the right hand, uncovered of its wrapping close to the nose - and that served as her dinner that day!

MARITAL INTERCOURSE:

As long as the woman is strong there is no limit to marital intercourse. Some people have it till labour pain's start; some stop at about the seventh month. There was a case when a child was born about six hours after the parents had cohabited. It is not bad, they say.

The older people say intercourse during pregnancy is good as it expedites labour and makes delivery easy by enlarging the vaginal passage. A young woman is always advised to have intercourse with her husband for the same reason. A man who refuses to do so is regarded as not wishing the woman well. If this is brought to notice by the woman, an arbitration, made up of the 'in-laws' and some friends, may sit to settle any quarrels or disputes that may have caused the husband to refuse intercourse.

WORK DURING PREGNANCY

During the period of conception (Athanfarebere) the woman is advised not to do heavy work for fear of meeting a miscarriage. She, however, is expected to do the ordinary house duties, such as sweeping, cooking, fetching water. This privilege is mostly enjoyed by young women who are making a 'debut' in child bearing and long-barren women who are blessed with children.

After this period when the woman is really pregnant all forms of 'a woman's duties' are performed -

Farm work, splitting firewood, laundering, cooking etc. These are believed to keep the woman strong and healthy. Refusal to work is looked upon as laziness and illness during pregnancy is attributed to failure to work. A woman of that type is not well spoken of.

Sleep is allowed to pregnant women especially in the afternoon when they are not on the farm, but it becomes a topic for gossip if sleep is often and especially if it is taken in the mornings when the woman is expected to be doing something else. She must work hard so that the child may be strong.

TABOOS

Many children die before one year; in fact the greatest incidence of infant mortality occurs within two months of birth. This has been thought to be the result of evil spirits or *juji* affecting the baby. To prevent this, several taboos are prescribed for the expectant mother; anti-*juji* treatment is also given. The greatest menace at the moment is "*Asaram*" - a disease that attacks babies before they are born. It is able to deform the head or any part of the body, and when the baby is born it cannot eat as it should, it cries a lot and pines away and if treatment is not given it may die before a month old.

The woman is warned not to cross her legs when she sits, that is she should not place one leg on top of the other. The reason is that if the child is wicked, it will cross its legs during delivery and that is dangerous for the woman. The practice of collecting pepper and carrying it in the cloth close to the stomach is abhorred as it makes the

baby develops six fingers. When the woman sits, she must be so close to the wall, in fact the back touching the wall, that no one can pass behind her; when she sleeps with the husband she must not be the first to get up from bed; if she does, the husband will be too lazy to do anything that day. When she sits and stretches the legs, she must see that nobody jumps over the legs. she must neither squat nor stoop to eat. if she does it is considered that the baby, when born, will always vomit through the nose.

As soon as conception starts, a medicinemian is approached for preventive measures against asram and other diseases that may affect either the mother or the baby. The prevention for asram is as follows: The woman is given three blade-cuts at each joint of the body and around the waist. Into these cuts a black powder is rubbed; some of the powder is mixed with any alcoholic drink and given the woman to drink. She is given a small gūjin to tie in the girdle and always worn. She is asked not to eat certain foods such as pap-paw, Okro, bread, kenkey, sugar-cane. Some medicinemian may allow the eating of kenkey, but it must never be carried on the head. Powdering the face or wearing any material that contains blue colour is also forbidden.

The woman is then given some herbs, roots or bark of trees to be ground, mixed with pepper, ginger, white clay and water and used to syringe. The herbs, roots, bark of trees are changed as the months go by and new ones are substituted.

The other members of the family are not expected to take any precautions, except that a taboored food may not be prepared for general use.

These precautions hold good until after the baby has been born and given direct precautions by the medicinemian.

BIRTH.

PREPARING FOR DELIVERY

The scientific way of calculating the day of delivery is quite unknown to the people of Singapore but that is not to say labour takes the expectant mother by surprise. They have their own method of computing it. All the women I interviewed, old as well as young gave explanations which were summarised by a well-known midwife of the village. She said, "The moon is our guide and every woman knows when she is to menstruate so if that week passes without the normal flow, then you know you have conceived. From that time on you count the appearance of the moon and as soon as the ninth one appears, then you know your time is near." The woman will then be preparing "to go to battle". She tries to settle all disputes with husband, relatives and others. It is the popular belief even among men that unsettled disputes are able to induce the witches to prevent the child from coming.

Acute abdominal pains are considered a sign of labour. As soon as the woman experiences these, she informs the elderly women in the house if she has no mother but if the mother is available the report first goes to her. If the mother or any of the women has an idea of midwifery, the pregnant woman is asked to describe the pains. This is to find out if the pains are real labour-pains. When they are satisfied, preparations are made for delivery. First the "ward" is swept and then rags or "baba" (the stem of a banana plant beaten up and dried) are got ready. Now the ward is usually one of the unoccupied rooms of the house, in fact more often than not, it is one of the unfinished rooms - not roofed, not cemented. If no such room is available, the operation takes place at the back of the house where

many people are not likely to see. The midwife can be an elderly woman in the family or a medicine man or the skumfos. In serious cases all three may be present.

Delivery is not expected to take a long time though a delay of one day is not considered abnormal but if it extends to two days then suspicions begin to arise. If the baby is not born the second day of labour the woman very often is accused of misconduct. She is then asked to confess any sin she has committed. These include abusing the husband, planning divorce, practising or intending to practise witchcraft on the husband, stealing the husband's property and adultery.

I was informed that adultery is the commonest 'sin'. The woman is asked to name all the men involved; after this sacrifices are made with fowls and eggs and a libation is poured. This ceremony is conducted by the skumfos aided by the Ibosomfos. I was given examples to prove that immediately after the libation the children were born without much trouble. To commit adultery while pregnant is looked upon as wicked and shameful. If 'the sin' is a quarrel with the husband, he is called in (normally he is not present at birth) and the woman is made to apologise. The man is given liquor or water to pour a libation to the child's spirit, in other words the man tells the unborn child that he has been pacified. The following is an example of the text used: "Whoever you are whether 'Bosampra' (girl) or 'Bosammuru' (boy), you are mine, therefore come out for your mother has confessed everything and if there is anything to be done, it will be done by you and me later." If it is a quarrel with other people, it

is settled amicably before the midwife continues her work. The people believe strongly that these are the causes of delayed delivery.

No anaesthetics are used to ease labour pains. Although a woman is not hushed for crying when labouring it is considered a sign of weakness. If she cries beyond a certain limit, the medicianman may be called to give medicine that may expedite delivery. The medicine differs: certain herbs may be collected into a calabash and filled with water; the preparation may be left for five minutes. The mixture is used in washing the abdomen of the woman and she is also given some to drink. Sometimes a 'dufa' (herbs ground and rolled into a small ball) is dissolved in lime juice and given to the woman to drink. It is believed that if there is nothing with holding the baby is born immediately after she has drunk it." Labour pains stop only when the child has been born.

The persons delivering the baby, the mother and female members of the family have a right to be present. The husband and children are not expected to be there. During delivery tobacco is not smoked in the house. The smoke is believed to irritate with her who may aggravate conditions. So is the churning of Koda. Popular belief holds that the person who enters the scene churning Koda wishes the woman to die. Koda churning is only relevant during a period of mourning. Such a person is, therefore, sharply reprimanded.

THE BABY IS BORN

After the baby and the placenta are out, the midwife bathes the baby while the relatives attend to the woman meanwhile others will be preparing a bed for mother and child. The mother first lies down and the baby is placed near her on the same bed.

Even after birth, precautionary measures are taken to ensure the well-being of the baby. The

medicinemans or the shosansos give the treatment. The baby is given three blade cuts at each joint and a black powder is rubbed in. Some people syringe the baby with a preparation of herbs and a small piece of red pepper. It is their belief that once the first faeces are out nobody can transmit "asrai" through any medium to the baby.

Women rejoice more when the new born baby is a girl. The first question that is asked the mother of a new baby is "What child (meaning of what sex) is that?" and if the answer is "a boy", the remark is "We thank God", but if a girl then the follow-up is "Good, you have done well," then to the baby, "Come and stay".

This attitude towards girls springs from the family systems of inheritance. When girls grow up into women and bring forth their progeny become the property of their families. Girls increase and perpetuate the family but boys when they become men "replenish other peoples families". The simile used for a girl is, "a girl is like a hen for she lays eggs at home", and for a boy, "a boy is like a quinea fowl who lays eggs haphazardly in the bush". If, however, a woman brings forth three girls in succession and if she already has no boy she becomes anxious to get a boy because she sees that in future there would be no one to protect the girls or even for her to bring money, in to look after her grandchildren. The same feeling of anxiety enters a woman who has no girl but three boys. She sees that in future there will be no one to replace her and her name will be lost for ever. What is desirable is a combination of boys and girls.

This mixture of boys and girls must take

a certain form. For instance, a girl who follows two boys is called Koutoh, so is a boy who comes after two girls. Koutoh is generally disliked and if people had their way, they would all avoid one. It is held that Koutoh is a source of misfortune - nothing will prosper in the family. The parents may be rendered poor or one of them may be 'killed' by the spirit of the Koutoh.

While most families merely dislike Koutoh others abhor it. If unfortunately such a family gets one, the skomfo is consulted and the necessary rites are performed to avert all misfortunes and calamities. Sheep or fowls may be slaughtered and the child's spirit is called to feast and a libation is poured imploring the spirit to bring good luck, health and prosperity into the family.

The third son in succession (Mensah) or the third daughter in succession (Mansah) as well as the seventh ninth and tenth in order of birth must all be given "abamo" (a miniature fetish) and failure to procure this may mean evil consequences as in the case of Koutoh.

It is an honour to give birth to twins - straight way the mother earns a title by which she is called the rest of her life - "Dwonta" (mother of twins). Despite this honour, most women, especially the young fear to be 'Dwonta' because of conditions attached. Twins are believed by the people to be possessed of natural powers to make or mar people's wellbeing. Twins, more than everybody else, must be given 'abamo'; failure means worse trouble than Koutoh and others. The parents may never get any profit from their work and one or both of them may die in a short

poverty; examples were cited to confirm the belief. In one case I was told the father had become very poor but as soon as he managed to perform the sacrifice, he became employed and quickly became well-off. One important, the mother of twins, said because she was a Christian she feared to keep "abamu" but to prevent possible woe, she gives the twins money each Friday. Fridays are the days for twins who are also thought to be natural fetish priests - "Atta Kurufie bosombo Kyiri Fiada to (Atta Kurufie the Fetish priest throws mashed yam on Friday).

THE BABY IS NAMED

Each child as soon as it is born at Anyabame gets a name. In fact it comes with a name - the day name (Appendix 1A). The child is called by this day-name for the first seven days.

On the eighth day the child first sees sunshine for on that day it is taken from the room where it had been the previous seven days. That day the child is formally named. It is a day of rejoicing.

The man in council with his family chooses a name from that family. It must be the name of someone, living or dead, whose life is worthy of emulation. It is believed that names influence children through, what is held as a fact, the presence of the dead person's spirit living in the child. Other articles that accompany the name are dresses, a ring, a mat and pillow, a lamp and kerosen and a large basin.

The ceremony takes place in the mother's home. A senior member of the father's family takes the child into her lap and wishing the child happiness, long life and prosperity, announces the name and places the ring on the child's finger. A libation is poured invoking the spirit of the

ancestors of both families to be with the child and to help him to lead a good life, as good as, if not better than, the person whose name he bears. Then rum is served, the naming ceremony, presents are displayed and those present offer monetary gifts to the child.

FEEDING.

BY WHOM AND WHEN IS THE BABY FED?

A few minutes after birth, any healthy relative can give suck to the baby; but she must be someone who has not taken an 'anti-asram' treatment otherwise the baby will develop asram a few days later. Feeding is by the breast. The baby is placed in the lap and one hand supports the head whilst the other holds the breast the nipple of which she places in the baby's mouth. The breast is pressed at regular intervals to aid the baby to suck.

This "another person" feeding goes on until the mother's milk begins to flow, which normally occurs during the third day after birth. If that child is a firstborn, the mother is taught the correct way of holding the child during feeding and when that happens the older women in the house supervises the baby's feeding for the next few days. During nursing, and especially during the first three months, the mother is given nourishing food so as to get plenty of milk for the baby. Such foods include greens, palm-soup, groundnut soup and a great deal of meat and fish.

Time feeding is very much disliked and any woman who practises it is regarded as "a bad and wicked mother". A few women who attend ante-natal clinics in Kumasi practise it for a short time when they are advised by Government Midwives. Even when such women want to adhere to the instructions, other relatives in anger will feed the baby. The traditional practice is to feed the baby any time it cries; it is considered that there is no question of overfeeding.

The baby is given water to drink more frequently than it is fed. Women experienced in handling babies told me that it was very

risky to wait a long while before giving water to a baby, especially if it is very young. They said that if the throat was not frequently watered, it would run dry and cause the baby to cough with unfavourable consequences. To prevent any possible trouble there is always some one nearby, to give water to the baby. Where and when available dessert or tea spoons are used in giving the water, but in very poor homes or when out on the farm, the fingers are used by dipping them in the water. Nowadays, young women store the water in small bottles from which the water is poured into the babies' mouths.

Crying is not encouraged by either old and young. They say when the baby cries it develops a sore throat which is capable of killing babies, therefore the least noise it makes sends the mother hurrying to pick it up. I was informed that when baby cries, it means one of two things is wrong: either it is hungry or it is ill. The more experienced women are able to know from the pitch of the cry whether the cause is hunger or illness. As stated earlier on, the first move when a baby cries is to give it the breast and if it is accepted then it will be allowed to suck until it either sleeps or stops to play. When that happens it is put down and left to play or sleep as the case may be. The more often it feeds the healthier it is believed to be.

Crying babies cannot always be pacified with the breast; sometimes they refuse to eat. To this also two causes are attributed when the baby is sometimes left alone to cry for a long time, as happens occasionally, the

mother considers it to be annoyed; the other cause of crying is illness.

The older women gave me the impression that the young women are careless and lazy and do not care very much about the welfare of their babies. One old woman said, "My daughter has only two small children but when I advise her especially in connection with the breast to the baby, she retorts, 'if he hadn't cried I wouldn't have picked him up,' which means that if the baby had not cried when it was born, it would have been thought a stillborn and buried."

A BABY'S ILLNESS

The main cause of babies' illness, according to the mothers, is extreme constipation. It is thought a good thing for baby to be constipated as that helps to make it fat, but when constipation becomes extreme, then stomach ache sets in. When the baby breaks wind, it is considered a sign that the baby will grow fat but when the wind gives a bad smell that is a sign of excessive constipation.

When a baby vomits often it is looked upon as a sign of growing fat. Vomitting, however, has the mouth for its channel but some babies vomit through the nose. This is not considered either dangerous or abnormal. The only cause, they say, is that while the mother was pregnant she often stooped down to eat her meals.

There is only one way of treating a baby's constipation; that is by syringing. The medicine used differs. In some cases herbs—"afenna" or "mfo too" (goat weed) — are ground together with a fraction of red pepper and mixed with water. Some people wash the seat under the soap-pot and add a little pepper. Nowadays some women

give laxatives such as Lime Water or Wind cure.

Nursing is regarded as a woman's duty because "the baby is too immature to do anything by itself. For instance, it cannot eat "fufuo" or "apesie"; it can only suck at the breast and if the mother will not give that too then what sort of a woman is she?" No one will like to be classed a 'helpless' mother; each wants to show that she so loves the child that she is not anxious to wean it. Old women, especially, hate to see a woman who has weaned a one year old child. The child at twelve months is called "azuku nama" (a helpless creature).

The tendency has, therefore, been to breast feed a child up to about two years. There are isolated cases where the children still suck at the age of about three. Some of these children use the breast as dessert, that is to say after they have eaten "fufuo" or "apesie", they go to suck and the mothers even encourage such children.

Until quite recently, artificial feeding was unknown. Even now only a few people can afford it. Of the eleven women who were nursing children between one and twelve months, only one was using "Cow and Gate Milk Food." From conversations with them, I gathered that there will not be money for a second tin.

Every woman is expected to have milk sufficient to nurse a child but sometimes cases of "too little milk" occur. In such cases attempts are made to get back the milk. This malady is regarded an effect of 'assam.' During this 'lean period', the baby is fed by any member of the family who is nursing a child older than the baby. They specify this because they say if the woman is nursing a younger baby, her milk will make

The older baby ill. The second nurse is not a particular person. Any relative who has milk and who is not nursing a younger baby can give that baby breast. When that becomes necessary, the woman removes from her home and sleeps with the baby and the mother. This is important because baby feeding can happen at any time it wakes up and begins to wriggle. The mother then sits up in bed and feeds it and she will only sleep when the baby has had a fill and gone to sleep.

Maternal intercourse is not restricted, but local convention has it that until the mother has stayed for eighty days (Hadeusiwstwe) after delivery, intercourse may not be indulged in. That period is supposed to be the minimum time taken by the woman to recover. Occasionally some people disagree. This convention and custom about a month after delivery. In such cases, almost invariably, the woman becomes very ill. I was told that intercourse at this time causes some bruises in the vagina. The woman who becomes ill as a result of this is looked upon with contempt.

THE EIGHTY-DAY PERIOD AND AFTER

From the day of delivery to eighty days, the woman stays in her family house and does not render any of her normal services such as cooking and washing. She is given every chance to rest to allow her to recuperate as early as possible. At the end of the eightieth day, the woman in the company of relatives and friends she has gathered for the purpose go to the husband to thank him for giving them a child. The man also calls some relatives and friends and the two groups entertain each other to drinks.

The 'Thanksgiving' usually takes place on Sunday unless every body is at home. The Christian women, as a rule, attend church services in

The morning gorgeously dressed and wearing gold necklaces and rings. From the service they go to the husbands' houses. The woman, by that custom, informs the man that she is very well and can resume her wifely duties. That same night she sleeps in the man's house.

Sexual intercourse may commence according as the man desires. There is no limit to it. During my investigations, I came across two women who had been pregnant again four and six months respectively after delivery. Nobody dislikes it; but a child disease known as 'asona' may attack and even kill the child. A child who has an attack of "asona" grows lean but develops a big belly; it eats very often and in great quantities and is likely to deposit faeces anywhere and at any time. It is a serious infant disease.

WEANING.

Under normal circumstances no definite attempt is made to wean a child. He can suck as long as three years. If unfortunately for the child the mother becomes pregnant within this three-year period, attempts may be made to wean him. A woman told me she became pregnant when nursing a boy, but she was not allowed by her mother to wean him although he knew how to eat "fufuo" and "apezie" until two weeks after she had given birth to her second child.

When it becomes necessary to wean a child, several devices are employed. A bitter-tasting fruit, "mamadika" is besmeared on the nipple and when the child attempts to suck the taste drives him away and he may thus be weaned. Some people administer native nasal drops and the medicine may make the child detest suckling. A woman said she frightened her son with kapok any time he approached her to suck and after a few

attempts, she succeeded in weaning the boy. In all the methods used, weaning is made abrupt, but the child is not affected because by the time an attempt is made he is capable of eating all adult food.

Babies are allowed to suck the finger but not the thumb. It is believed that thumbsucking is a sign that the child will not live long. A thumbsucker is treated in different ways: the thumb may be tied across the palm of the hand and in some cases knife cuts are made on the thumb.

Finger sucking is allowed to babies but when a two year or three year child does so the parents become very worried, in fact so worried that the fetishist may be consulted to know the cause.

SOLID FOOD

Solid foods are introduced before weaning. The introduction of solid foods rests entirely with the mother, there is no agreed period for all women in the community. A few women do so immediately after the "adaduwstwe".

In all cases soup is the first to be given; the soup is not specially prepared; it is the same as the other members of the household take, but it is slightly diluted with water. This is given any time the household sets to eat; ^{after} a few days, no water is added. The child cries when the soup is given but the mother continues to give it until the child is able to eat peppery food without crying.

When the baby is able to sit without supports (see motor development), he is given "mpampa" pap which is porridge made from corn flour. In the old days when spoons were not cheap to buy, parts of plantain skin were used to feed the baby; nowadays tea or dessert spoons may be used.

Fufu ~~which~~ is a more solid food may be

quies at this early stage. A mother of twins had this to say, "Soon after the eighth day, I noticed that any time I was pounding fufu with the elder Atta in my lap, he attempted to reach for the food in the mortar. Of course I prevented him. One day a friend warned me that if I refused him the food he would return to where he came from, because he came purposely to eat. I made a small ball of mashed plantain for him and he ate it all, I added a little water and he slept. From that time onwards I always gave him fufu. Although he is seven months now, he can eat fufu well.

When feeding the baby, the mother sits on a low chair "adam-adwa" and places the baby, lying on his back with his head supported by the mother's left hand, on her lap. In this position, the mother feeds him. No sugar is added until the baby is able to crawl. The seating when eating fufu is slightly different: instead of the child lying, he is seated on the mother's left thigh. When the child is about two years, he sits on the ground by the mother and is fed with the hand. In the same way, the child is fed on "apesie" (boiled plantain, cocoyam or yam) or "Eto" (mashed plantain cocoyam or yam).

Later at about three or four years, the child moves to the father's table - a low, small table known as "didiporo". The child stands by it and eats from the father's dish. The father sometimes makes small morsels which the child picks. When he starts eating with the left hand he is corrected by putting the right hand into the dish.

Finally when he is about six years, he joins the other children who are of the same age group. It is necessary to put him into the right group so as to be sure he can cope with the speed of



children eating



Feeding a young restless child

the Others. If it is fufuo, the meat (or fish) is shared for all by an elderly person before eating commences. When this is neglected the children usually struggle or fight over the meat. If there is no Other child in the house, the child eats alone. The child, whether he eats in the company of Others or alone is supervised by an elder who has his "didipano" close by. A child is considered illbred if he has had table manners.

In eating fufuo, all the fingers must not be used, the thumb, the forefinger as well as the middle finger are the ones to employ, the rest lie in the palm. When putting away a bone or something unwanted from the mouth, the head must be turned away and the object must be deposited without spitting on the Others. Chewing must be silent and slow; after a morsel, a little time must elapse before the next one. Children must not talk during meals and must not rest the Other hand on the ground.

"woedidi na asase" (you are eating for the earth). All these are taught the children by keeping an eye on them during meals. Anybody who breaks a rule is shouted down and sometimes reprimanded but at Other times he is praised and commended.

From birth to about later childhood (10-13 years) the child is fed anytime he is hungry, except late at night. In the very early years hunger is expressed by crying; when he is able to talk he appeals to his elders by word of mouth. He is allowed to eat anywhere, even outside the house.

REFUSAL TO EAT

If the child's refusal to eat is due to illness, he is treated at once. The main treatment is to syringe him with a preparation of herbs or if it is considered too sunny a day to syringe, a small ball made up of pepper, ginger and guinea-

grains ground together is pushed with the left fore-finger up the child's rectum. If it is a cold, a mixture of guinea-grains and water may be besmeared all over the body in addition to one of those mentioned above. He is then petted and coaxed until he eats.

If a young child refuses to eat out of anger, he is pacified and coaxed with more meat (or fish) sometimes frightful stories are told, such as "One day a child refused to eat and while he was weeping a giant-ghost came stealthily, and carried him away and ate him so that he could not see his mother and father again. If you will not eat, it is up to you!" At other times he may be told to eat quickly so that he "can join his brothers and sisters who, because they had eaten, were attending a dance at the chief's house."

When an Old child, about eight years, refuses food because he has been annoyed, the parents may at once be harsh with him and beat him or he may be sent out of the house or threatened with starvation. A child's wilful refusal to eat is regarded as "mmusuu" (bad anger).

The child is encouraged to finish off all the food given by the mother. The reason given by a woman was "If you do not give your child enough to eat he will go to other people and beg for food ("ahua"). Such practice is greatly deprecated. If you allow your child to behave like that you render yourself to public ridicule." A child who eats a lot is considered very healthy.

CHILDREN'S FOOD

Mothers feed their babies and children with liquid and soft foods because, they say, babies have weak intestines but with older children no special care is taken to grade their food.

A child of five years is considered "Odwan dada a zue bers" (a grown up sheep which chews palm leaves), meaning the child is old enough to be able to eat all adult food.

Some foods, however, are considered specially liked by a child, these include rice, fufuo, mashed yams, eggs, meat, liver, sweets of all kinds, fruits, biscuits, beverages and mpampa. Rotten fruits (unripe) alcoholic drinks, rotten or spoiled food are regarded bad for him.

A child may be rewarded with food when he behaves in a good manner or if the parent desires the other children to emulate his example. Such rewards are usually in the form of meat but toffee, biscuits etc. may be given if they are available. Conversely he may be punished by denying him meat or a sweet that has been given to the rest.

THE PLACE FOR TOILET.

There is no real training given in the use of the toilet until the child is about two years old. Before the second year the child can urinate or deposit faeces anywhere and at any time - in the chamber, on the mat, in the kitchen, when sleeping, during meals or when playing.

After the second year, he is shown a particular place (anywhere at the back of the house) where he can 'ease' himself. Chamber pots are not used - those available are for adults - and as the villagers use deep pit latrines, the child is not allowed to go near lest he should fall into it. The child is asked to inform his mother (or father) any time he feels the need to ease himself. Any time he reports, he is shown "that place".

When he is about five years old, he is taken to the public latrine first in the company of either mother or father, sex does not matter. There he is trained gradually to use it. When he first goes there he is asked to squat near the parent not on it but on the ground. When he has done this for a time, he is one day placed, by the hand, on the 'stands'. When he has done this for some time, he is allowed to go with other children; finally, he may go alone.

If he falls ill during the period of training, he is permitted to stool in the house - in the 'old place'.

If the child soils his bed after the sixth year he is abused by the parents, ridiculed by his friends glibed at and sometimes beaten. But wetting does not cause concern until he is about seven. At this stage efforts are made to stop him: He may be flogged each morning or may be abused; sterner parents may cut down the child's food in the evening and prohibit the drinking of soups during supper. He may frequently be syringed with an antedote to uncontrolled urination. A common practice is to give him the breast-plate of a crab during

meals to eat; this is supposed to be able to control the bladder.

TREATMENT FOR CHRONIC WETTING

In certain cases the child does not stop wetting even at about the age of nine. Treatment at this time lies in exposing him to public ridicule by performing what is known as "dwoonsokrobo" (Umie pot). The following describes the ceremony: Early in the morning his mat is inspected by the parents. If they are satisfied that he has not stopped, they collect together worn-out mats, very irritating leaves, "nsansono", red clay and a rope. At about six in the morning, the children in the vicinity are gathered together. The 'victim' is painted all over with a solution of the red clay and the mats are wrapped round him from chest to knee, held with the rope; the leaves are woven like a garland and hung round his neck. The other children then take over and push him here and there, pull him by the rope into the street and sing and hoot. The words of the song used are: "dwoonsokrobo huan na skum wo?" (Umie pot, who killed you?) Parents who have used this method say it is very effective even against very 'chronic wetting'. Some people think otherwise, especially two men all of middle age. One of them said he had seen a girl of about nine fall ill and die a day after a "dwoonsokrobo" turn out. These displays are not often, the average is about two in a year.

CONSTIPATION AND DIARRHOEA

Unless a child has frequent stools, nobody takes the trouble either to examine his faeces or question him about the regularity and promptness of his stools. It is always taken for granted that he has normal stools.

There is no difference in the ease with which boys and girls are trained, but girls are known

to have been more affected by reprimand in connection with toilet training than boys.

Since the mother does not check her child's faeces, the only time she learns of his constipation is when he reports stomach-ache. If the report is made in the afternoon and if the pains are acute the mother collects some root from the kitchen, mixes it with water and adds a little salt to taste. The child is made to drink the preparation and asked to lie down on the stomach, preferably on the cool bare floor. If after some time the pains persist, the mother collects some herbs and grinds them together with a little ginger and red pepper, a little water is added and he is syringed. Syringing is believed to be the best and quickest cure for constipation.

When a baby has diarrhoea, the roots and leaves of the guava plant are ground together and made into a mixture. This is all the water the baby drinks, in addition to this, he may be syringed with a preparation comprising cotton leaves, pepper and ginger. An older child may be given ("Eto") mashed plantain to which a black powder has been added to eat.

Nowadays in severe cases of diarrhoea, the patient may be taken to the hospital or a dispensary for treatment.

There is no special toilet language for children. The same terms are used by all classes of people. The child uses the terms any where and any time he feels the need: in the farm as in the chief's house, a child can approach his parent and tell her "Mame, mene" (mother, I will secrete). Before the age of five, a child may accompany either his mother or father to the public latrine and both may ease themselves side by side simultaneously. There is no privacy about it, but after that age

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privacy is observed. A boy is forbidden to enter women's latrine and vice versa a girl is not allowed on men's latrine. Privacy relaxes when it comes to urination; it is done almost anywhere. Women, however, are expected to be a bit more secretive for instance a woman is not expected to urinate openly when there are men about. This secrecy does not take into account the presence of one's own small boy; indeed a nine or ten year old may be present when his mother is urinating.

When a child breaks wind among adults he is considered to have constipated and he is treated as such. Among adults wind breaking is regarded so base and disgraceful that "a young man who unfortunately broke wind in the presence of his mother-in-law was seen hanging dead on a tree shortly afterwards." As soon as children smell a foul wind, a query is at once made almost in a chorus, "who has broken wind?" If the culprit owns up he is chased out of the group for the meantime but if he is not found, they quickly adopt one of several methods. They may cast WDS: strips from corn leaves are made; one of these is knotted at one end and the eldest child holds them in his hand; the rest pull one after the other, whoever pulls the one with the knot is the culprit. When they cannot use the method just described, they sit in a circle and plant a broomstick in the centre. Fire is placed all around the stick and the person in whose direction the stick falls is the culprit. He may be teased or driven out. Sometimes the children smell one another's anus. When the children are in a happy mood, one may sing and while singing point to the rest in turns; the child at

whose funn the song ends is the culprit.

When a baby or a small child hiccoughs, he is given water in small doses while the performer counts 1, 2, 3, 4 --- 10, at the mention of ten, he says "Eduo fa no ko" (Ten carry it away) and a large quantity is swallowed. Older children are usually asked to drink water. No meaning is attached to hiccoughing.

Belching is not considered bad manners. It is taken to mean that the child is fully satisfied with the food he ate, if it happens after meals which is mostly the case. Even among adults, belching is not frowned upon, it does not even evoke surprise from people about.



A woman carries her baby while working



A Typical way of carrying the child

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

CLOTHING

At no time are clothes allowed to restrain movement. The first time a child is clothed is when he is eight days old; until then he lies naked and heavily besmeared with shea-butter. Even after this eighth day period, very little clothing is used in the early mornings and at night. For most part of the day the child is naked. Parents of average means provide about three changes of dress for the baby; some fathers can provide one or two.

Very few items of furniture are possessed by the "average" man. In most cases, one or two white stools ("asesedwa"), one table chair, a small dining table and, nowadays, a wooden (or iron) bedstead. No furniture is specially provided for the child at the very early stage when he is learning to crawl.

CARRYING

The child has little freedom of activity, that is to say, he is seldom left alone to indulge in his 'play activity'. For the most part of his life, the baby is carried and when he is alone then he is asleep. When the mother gets up in the morning, she takes him whether sleeping or awake and places him astride on her back; she then ties him to her back before leaving her bedroom using the cloth she is wearing. He is only taken down when being fed or being bathed. When the mother goes to fetch water, he is at her back; when she goes to the farm, he is there and even when she stoops (with her head in the dust and her back to the sun) to weed, he is still there, sometimes when the noon day heat becomes almost unbearable - as it does during the dry season - he is taken from



A man carrying his baby



Girls keep their mothers in looking after the child

the back and put in the shade of a tree to sleep. As soon as the day's work is done or when he starts to cry, back he goes to 'his place'. It is a commonplace to meet women returning from the farm carrying heavy loads with their children almost loosely tied to their backs and heavily asleep.

This method of carrying children is only used by women and girls, but they are not the only people who carry the young ones. Men and boys also carry them but in a different way. They bear the children on one arm and keep them close to their chests or shoulders. At certain times, a reversal in to the 'woman type' is made: One evening I came upon two men who had their children in the 'woman type'. I became interested and interviewed them, and I was told "When there is a long journey to do and a heavy load to carry and especially when the day is fading towards evening, there is no harm in carrying the child that way"; in fact, one became smarter, I was told.

The child is carried by any one who is capable of doing so, in other words children of about the same age group and very old people are not allowed simply because they cannot. On the whole it is the child's mother who does most of the carrying as already mentioned. If she has an older daughter, she may be helped in her duty. Occasionally the father may carry him when the mother is busy cooking. Relatives or friends may also carry the child. A friend may ask to be allowed to stay at home with a child, while the mother is away to fetch firewood. Very young babies have seen with such "friends of the family," during the time he is with the "friend,"

she may carry him if he cries or if she desires it. NOT much free mobility is allowed before a child has learnt to crawl. He is either being fed, bathed or treated when ill or asleep. He is almost always with the mother or someone capable of carrying him.

When he learns to sit or crawl, he is under the care and protection of an older brother or sister.

SITTING

About the fourth month, the child is formally 'sat' on the floor by the father if he is in the village or by the mother. His buttocks are placed three times on the floor while the spirits of his ancestors are evoked to help him not to remain perpetually on the floor i.e. not to become a cripple but to get up and walk as early as possible.

As a rule, the child is not introduced to sitting earlier than the fourth month because before that time his neck muscles are too weak to let the head stand erect, also his body cannot sit straight and therefore more harm than good may be done; the child, they say, may be a hunchback. On the other hand the introduction to sitting must not be overdelayed otherwise the child develops 'round' buttocks with the result that he cannot sit when placed on the floor.

When the child is first placed on the floor, his mother sits on the floor behind him to support him so that he does not fall down. The first practice takes a very short time and he is picked up by his mother. The reason given for not leaving the child long sitting is that "he has not developed a strong body". This practice goes on for some time until he becomes used to sitting, then after pillows are placed round him so that when he falls, he may not injure him self.

If there are older children in the house they

joyfully sit behind him and so leave the mother free to go about her household duties.

It is a taboo to sit a child on a mat and if you do, "He will become a cripple."

CRAWLING

The child is expected to be able to move himself (first steps in crawling) round about the eighth month. He is encouraged to crawl; the older people sit or stand at a distance and wave objects that are either gay in colour or can make noise, such as rattles. Sometimes if he succeeds in reaching for the object he is, as a reward, carried and tossed up and down accompanied by congratulations. Each day he is afforded an opportunity to practise until he becomes proficient at it.

Mothers agree that the child at that stage becomes so active and 'troublesome' that the greatest care and supervision must be exercised. He moves all over the place: He chases the animals in the house - the cat, the fowls or sheep - he may climb into the fufu mortar; he may enter the kitchen and try to play with the burning fire; he may even enter the cess-pool and drink the dirty water or climb chairs, bundles of wood, stones etc. Any thing that he comes across he puts into his mouth.

When he resists being removed to a safer place, he is tied to the mother's back and there left to cry and invariably, to fall asleep.

After he has proved his ability in crawling, the child is then 'taught' by the parents to stand. This is done by holding him up by the hand; later he is left to stand alone without a support but the parent stands by with outstretched arms ready to catch him in case he falls. He is allowed to use supports if he so desires. Before any object

can qualify as a support it must be accepted as not dangerous to a child's touch. The objects usually allowed are chairs, beds, doors, walls, any item of furniture which can support, water drums and kins, plants if he can reach them and human beings.

WALKING
A child's ability to stand without supports is an indication that he is about ready to walk. If after a child's eighteenth month he is unable to walk, the parents become worried and they begin to seek for causes. The fetish may once again be consulted.

A man cited an example within his experience. He said, when he consulted a fetish, he was told to pacify the child's soul ("Skra") with a sheep and rum. He said that not long after (about one month) his son was able to walk. He was convinced that it was the child's soul that had prevented him from walking. Sometimes the fetish may declare that he is capable of walking and that "there is nothing holding him." In such a case, other methods are employed.

The child is syringed with a special preparation from the bark of the "Nkrangyedua" plant in addition to ginger and pepper. Another treatment is to grind certain roots and herbs and roll the preparation into small balls, and about two of these are pushed, with the forefinger into the child's anus. This is done every day until the child is able to walk. Parents are convinced that the latter method is very efficacious. A third treatment is like this: Before the mother sleeps at night, she keeps a few dried cornleaves under her pillow and at the first cockerow, she gets up and rubs the child's knees with the leaves moving her hands in an updown manner. The mother must not talk to anybody either just before or during the

treatment. She repeats the process at the first cockcrow each morning until the child begins to walk. I was informed that the treatment strengthens the knee muscles.

While giving one or more of the above-mentioned treatments, the child is still subjected to daily practice at walking. He is helped to stand and then the 'trainer' stands a few feet away and with outstretched arms beckons the child to him and saying "taa, taa sun, taa nauto begye eto di" (Taa, taa, taa sun walk and come for mashed yam). When he is able to move the left foot and then the right without falling down, he is considered to have started walking. Usually to fulfil the promise, the parents reward him with mashed yam and eggs.

This offering is made in a formal way. The Parents, having seen that their child has started walking, choose a day for the 'festival'. Convention has established Sunday as the day. When it arrives yam is boiled and mashed; a few eggs are also boiled. The child is given some to eat and the mother thanks the spirits of the ancestors and the child's 'soul' and invites them to the feast. He is then given an egg to eat. The other members present - father, brothers and sisters and the children in the house - are also served. Some of the food is distributed to friends and members of the family informing them of the child's stage of growth. These friends and members of the family may later give gifts of eggs or money to the child.

Parents who can afford procure a wooden tricycle for the child to help him walk. First he is placed near and made to hold it. The trainer pushes it while he holds it. When he has become competent at it as a result of several day's



A girl helps her brother to walk



Young children love to climb

practised, he is left to it without supervision. Parents who have used the tricycle say that it helps the children to walk quicker than normally he would do.

SPATIAL LIMITS

From the day of birth to the time of crawling, the child's activities are limited to people's backs, or laps or in bed. He is not given any chance to engage in any motor activity. When he begins to crawl, the bedroom floor or the compound of the house or the kitchen is allowed to him. Later when he has learnt to walk he is permitted to move about in and out of the house and he is only called back if he attempts (when he is about two or three years old) to go to the bush or any place considered dangerous for his age, such as the latrine or the riverside.

The first time a child is seen near a dangerous object inside the house eg. going near a burning fire, he is in the first instance shouted at not to go near telling him what would happen if he goes near. To make the situation real to the child the mother may pretend to put her hand into the fire and then with a sudden withdrawal of the hand screams "Agya ee! agya ee!" and tries to screw up her face and wrings her hand. After the demonstration she removes the child saying, "Egya luye" (fire is bad).

When a child is seen wandering away from the house, he is warned that if he does not stay at home but goes to the bush "pimotha" (dwarfs) will carry him away. The parents also tell stories of giant ghosts known as "Samanterten" and what they did to a child who would not stay at home. The fall being is a sample story: "Once upon a time, a child would not stay at home, despite warnings from his parents. One day as soon as he stepped

into the bush, a grimy ghost standing on one leg and having red eyes burning like fire and overgrown nails also sharp and protruding teeth came stealthily behind and carried him off. The "Samanterten" cut the boy's legs and hands and boiled him alive. He cried in pain and anguish but there was no one to save him. He never saw his mother and father and brothers and sisters again."

Mothers actually believe that if their children wander off they will be carried away by dwarfs who will not return them or if later they are returned, they will come as fetish priests and medicinemen. Instances were cited to prove this belief.

Generally speaking, the child is not expected to sit still all day long. Before the age of four, the child is expected to be in or about the house playing either alone or with other children. After the age of four he is expected to be in the farm with his parents and to work or play. There^{he} is gradually introduced to the art of farming and learning of plant names and how to grow some foodstuffs, such as yam, cassava, cocoyam, plantain, pepper, tomatoes and so on. He is allowed "a small spot of ground" for this purpose.

Back at home, he is often seen playing with his mates and unless he is going near danger nobody interferes. However, when he is eating, he is expected to sit still and neither to talk nor sing. Sometimes when a visitor calls to see the father the child is admitted and told to sit still. Otherwise he is ordered out of the room to go and play.

Although children are allowed to engage in any play they choose, adults try to discourage them from indulging in games that are likely to cause injury, such as throwing stones at each other.

climbing trees, wrestling and racing.

Girls are expected to play less vigorous games as "Aso". (The players stand in a semi-circle and one stands a few feet off. Dancing and whirling herself, she falls backwards on the others who catch her and throw her back into the air and down again she lands. This game is played amidst singing. Each member of the group takes a turn) and "Anpe" (Two or more girls facing each other clap their hands and jump and throw one leg in the direction of the opponent as they land from the jump. If the thrown-out legs are all rights or lefts one player has won and if the legs are right and left, then the other player has won. An agreement is reached to that effect before the game commences).

Boys are expected to play 'soldiers on a battle field, football or marbles, jumping and hopping competitions are held, 'houses' are built and demolished, imaginary animals are hunted, 'lorries' are driven.

Boys and girls may play hide-and-seek on moonlight nights or "antokayine" (The players squat in a circle and one runs round holding a small folded cloth. He drops the cloth quietly behind one of the players and if the fellow does not pick it up before the runner has gone another round, he or she is fallen upon and beaten. The beating stops as soon as the 'culprit' shouts "asase e, gye me" (earth save me).

THE CARE OF THE BODY

SLEEP

Parents consider a child's sleep to be very essential if he is to grow fat and strong, and so right from babyhood, he is lulled to sleep with songs and with tying at the back.

All through childhood, he is induced to sleep if he stays up to about eight at night. First he is asked to go to bed and if he refuses, fearful stories of bogey men are told. The mother may even threaten to drive him out of the house where he will find ghosts and hobgoblins with red-hot mouths opened wide to eat him up. A child who appears so unmoved by these stories may make the parents so annoyed with his obstinacy that corporal punishment may be administered or ground ginger may be pushed up his anus. The parents will coerce him to sleep.

Apart from the chief and a few others, every married man shares a single room with his wife and children. Those who can afford screen their beds from the rest of the room, otherwise there is no privacy about the parents sleeping place. All the children sleep in the same room. That is why, according to one man, he sees that all the children go to sleep before he does.

Babies sleep on the same mats with their mothers but the fathers sleep on the wooden or iron-bedsteads. This mother-and-baby sleeping together afford the baby easy access to the mother's breasts when he wakes up during the night. When he is weaned, he joins the other children and she joins the husband. When a new baby arrives, the last but one may sleep with the father. The father reserves the right to choose between sleeping with or not sleeping with the child.

When the child is about nine or ten years old, he is given a separate mat, he may, however share it with another boy. The boys at this stage sleep separately in one corner of the room and the girls do likewise. If a mother cannot provide a separate mat for her daughter, the girl joins her on her mat, and to make the mat large enough to accommodate two people rags and other less useful cloths are added to the mat when it is spread on the floor at night.

Except on moonlight nights, when everybody "enjoys himself" and the children play for into the night, children sleep between 7.30 and 8.00 in the evening. The greatest factors that have more or less established this time of sleeping are rain and darkness. When these two coincide it is not uncommon that the whole village sleeps before eight o'clock. Occasionally when strangers and others arrive to celebrate a funeral, the children are sometimes forced to sit up late or left to doze outside until someone happens to find them lying outside and carries them in. On the whole the children are early sleepers.

HEALTH

The need to increase to perpetuate the family (Chapter One) compels parents to take active interest in the health of their children. This interest is shared by other friends of the parents who always inquire after the children's health: "Efi te sen, na nkwadara no nsoe?" [(How is home and how are the children?) which means "Is everything well at home and are the children also well?"] The reply is "Onyame adom" [By the grace of God (All is well)] It is generally admitted that children are

more susceptible to illness and therefore anything that is suspected of contributing to the child's ill-health is removed. Thus excessive cold is removed by asking the child to sit by the fire during cold mornings or when it is raining, he is prevented from ~~in it~~ as most children love to do. When he is being bathed in the mornings and evenings warm water is used and when he sleeps at night he is snugly wrapped in heavy clothing to keep warm. Nowadays, those parents who can afford provide their children with sweaters and 'windcheaters'.

A child's wet clothes are removed immediately to prevent him from catching cold and when he is bathed, a towel is used to dry his body at once. He is then clothed and placed on a chair near the fire. A very young child is bathed twice a day; when he is between two and three, it may be once a day and there after, if he is able to bath himself, no one seems to bother to know as to whether he has washed himself or not though there may be occasional admonitions. The result is that for about a week the child plays all sorts of games and handles several objects well without having a bath.

Dust and minor dirt are not considered of any importance against the child's health, he is allowed to play freely in them. It is even considered necessary for a child to eat dust if he is to grow quickly, "mfuturo ye ma nkwadaa" (dust is good for children). A child is, however, reprimanded if he is seen playing in the dustbin or the cess pool.

A child who plays with spittle is considered to be dirty and he may lose the right of eating with his father.

The sick child becomes 'mother's favourite'. The mother devotes most of her time in caring for, or attending to, him. He is petted.

When bathing a young child who has diarrhoea, the mother first places him face downwards in her lap and pours hot water into the rectum (and also the vagina, if the child is a girl). This is supposed to "heat the sore which is made by frequent stools."

If he has a headache, some herbs are ground and the liquid that they give is dropped into the nostrils using the fingers. The child sneezes several times and gives out a lot of phlegm. Catarrh and all disease of the head are first treated this way.

An attack of stomach trouble or cold is treated by sygnignig and then ground guinea grains mixed with a little water is smeared all over his body to keep him warm. Now-a-days, quinine and other patent drugs which are brought to the village by drug-peddlers are administered to the sick child.

Every attempt is made to get the child quickly out of illness. Where no medicine is available, he is taken to either a nearby village or to Kumasi where treatment may be obtained. In any case the first medicine applied in the village is native medicine.

The child is often coaxed to eat and, ^{even} when he has had his fill, he is entreated to "eat a little more". If he is able to eat the food first given him, then there is hope of his recovery.

CLOTHING AND SELF-EXPOSURE

The child can go naked from birth till about eight years old without feeling ashamed, in fact he is regarded too young at that age to feel ashamed of his nakedness. After that period, he is taught to cover himself when he goes out or when elders are about. He may be scolded or abused if he is seen



All day long these children go about like this

naked, especially outside the house. The usual remark is "Don't frighten us!"

Girls look out for something to cover their nakedness at an earlier age. It is not decent for a girl of seven to go about naked but what is regarded as real indecent exposure is for a girl to go about without beads around the waist and a loincloth to cover her genitals. Such a girl is nicknamed "Tampata!"

Lapses from modesty are treated with disgust and abuse, but a girl's are more seriously resented because it is said that if she is left to continue she will ultimately grow into a prostitute or a bad girl.

A child's main item of dress after about two years old is a small piece of cloth. The size of the cloth depends upon the child's age and stature. From two to three years he wears one yard of cloth, from three to about seven it is two yards, from eight to about twelve it is three yards, from thirteen to sixteen four yards and thereafter he wears six yards. When the boy marries he wears eight yards but the girl continues to wear six yards.

At about six years of age, a child is expected to be able to put on the cloth in the desired way and according to sex, for example a boy must be able to tie two ends of his cloth behind his neck and the girl to cover herself from the legs to the waist and tie it with a girdle and put on the cover shoulders.

When they go to school, the children are expected to be able to dress and undress by about the age of six.

Parents dress and undress before their children who are between one and five years old.

The mother or father may enter the bathroom with a child (the sex does not matter at this stage) and they may all stand naked together. Usually, after the mother or father has finished bathing, the child is then bathed. Toiletting is freely done before children who are not beyond five years old. After that age, parents are careful not to admit their children in the bath or undress before them.

From birth to about two years the child wears a gauen - any thing he needs to clothe himself. After two years the cloth, as mentioned above, is introduced.

During babyhood, boys and girls wear beads around the waist and the knees as well as the wrists. In addition to these girls have a small hole made in each of the ear-lobes; into these holes earrings go at a later stage of her growth. Until that stage is reached (about three months after birth) the midrib of a feather is inserted in each hole so as not to let it close.

The boy's beads are taken off eighteen to twenty-four months after birth but the girl continues to wear them as a permanent feature of her dress.

Parents on the whole pay more attention to their daughters' dressing than the sons'. The reason as given by a woman is "when a boy gets one cloth he can use it for one year because he does not often need it, but it is not so with girls. It is a disgrace to any parent who haphazardly dresses her daughters, such a woman is disdained by her friends."

PHYSICAL CONTACTS:

A young child may be stroked to stop him crying or lulled to sleep; he may be embraced, when he comes in from outside, by any elderly person but especially visitors accompanied by the words "Awa awaa tuu"; he may be placed on anybody's lap who cares to play with or feed him; he may be tickled or rocked when he is expected either to stop crying or to sleep or just for fun. Any part of the body can be tickled. Kissing of the lips is never done. It is argued that it is bad for the child's health. If a parent or any friend wants to kiss the child, he is at liberty to do so provided the lips are excluded. The forehead, the palm of the hand, the genitals, in fact any other part of the child's body can be kissed.

Children are discouraged if seen kissing, it is immoral for them to do that. They may, however, embrace and tickle one another.

No variations are noticeable in such contacts with adults; children of all sexes are treated the same.

When babies are bathed, warm water is drenched into the penis or the vagina as the case may be. This practice stops after three months, but anytime a girl is bathed her genitals are cleaned with water and the fingers. There are no special children's words for the genitals but children are reprimanded if they say the adult names. Any child can refer to his or her genitals when complaining about them to adults, but boys must not use the female terms and likewise girls must not use male terms.

MASTURBATION

Masturbation is known to be common among children especially between two and five years old. Anytime a child is seen practising it, it is taken to mean that the child has some pain in the genitals and treatment is accordingly given. Girls masturbate

more than boys

Mother's consider masturbation to be bad; they say it tends to become the child's habit if not checked early; they also say the child who masturbates will continue to do so even in public when he grows up.

When a child is found masturbating, ginger is ground and the juice poured into the genitals and some pushed up the anus. He may also be flogged. Threats of further punishment and circumcision are given to both sexes.

SEX PLAY

Children of about four years are known to have played at families; the girls, playing 'wives', cook and care for the 'children' and the boys play 'husbands', and go out to hunt and provide 'money' for the household. This type of play is neither encouraged nor discouraged.

Older children and young adolescents play sex games at night. The following is an example: The girls line up and the boys line up in the opposite direction, leaving a few yards between. They sing and clap their hands. As the singing goes on individuals leave their ranks and enter the other rank and 'make a choice' by throwing the handkerchiefs they are holding round the neck of any loved one. The words ^{to one} of the songs run thus: "I do a handkerchief, I do abegye me handkerchief" (My love has taken my handkerchief). Sometimes these sex games carry the children far into the night with the result that some elders suspect that the children use that opportunity to cohabit. It is therefore not favoured by ^{the} elders.

SEX DISTINCTIONS

Boys and girls are expected to behave in

like manner from birth until after early childhood which lasts from four to five years. It has been observed that after that period, boys tend to play separately from girls. Games that are strenuous or may cause a broken limb, such as climbing or running are not expected of girls who are considered to be 'the weaker vessels' of society. There is the milder and more sedentary forms of games such as cooking, "ampe", marketing or "sware".

Boys at that period of life are more aggressive and become more easily annoyed. Whereas a girl's first reaction to anger is to cry or be abusive, a boy is expected to hit the fellow who annoyed him. A girl who behaves in a way expected of boys is jeered at and nicknamed "shaa karima" (a tomboy). A boy is "Bemua". This title so debases a boy as to make him overcome his weakness. Situations that will let a boy earn this title are: when a boy is always by his mother and will not join his friends in play; or when a boy cries at the slightest blow he receives; or when he makes requests with tears or sobbing; or when he behaves in a cowardly manner as running away when another boy proposes a fight and finally when he always plays with girls at cooking and other girls' games.

A girl who behaves boyishly, that is fights often, plays with boys and engages in activities noted for boys, such as hunting, climbing trees and so on is nicknamed "shaa karima" or tom-boy as has been said.

A boy is expected to use clenched fists and a girl open palms of the hand when fighting. In addition, a girl may bite and scratch but a boy who does so is despised by his mates.

When girls tell stories or when they day-dream



A boy pushes his "lorry" along.



Another boy with his "lorry".

the activities involved are expected to be about housekeeping and mothercraft, whereas a boy's must portray his bravery; stories about killing of either wild beasts or enemies or saving the drowning are desirable for boys

In like manner a girl's toys are those that have connections with family life - the "Akuaba" (a carved human being) is normally a girl's toy. She bathes and 'feeds' and 'nurses' it; she uses it in learning how to carry a baby on the back.

A boy plays with "Lorris" catapults, rubber balls, bows and arrows' and objects that belong to a man's activities.

Until a girl is about nine years old or over she sleeps and at times plays with boys of about the same age. When it comes to bathing, however, all the girls of about six or seven group themselves together and when a boy tries to go near them, he is called names and shanted at. They may even scream to draw adult attention to his behaviour.

In school, the children, boys and girls, are placed together in the same class and are even encouraged not to isolate themselves from the 'other sex'; they sit a boy and a girl at a desk. This encouragement goes on from the first to the sixth year in the school.

There are other activities during which the girls stand separate from the boys. During games, for instance, girls are not expected to play 'tough' games belonging to boys. When once a week there is an inspection of childrens underwear, the headteacher takes the girls to the office and either inspects them himself or he appoints the Curts Prefect to do it, but the boys are inspected by the teachers on the games' field.

Generally, parents are supposed to prefer children of the its same sex. Boys help their fathers

on the farm and girls help their mothers to cook and perform other house duties. Thus girls are more with their mothers and boys with their fathers.

Although boys stay longer with their fathers they (the boys) are more free with their mothers.

Almost all requests are addressed to the mother and if there is a complaint against any person or if a report needs making in regard to sickness it is the mother who is approached. The father punishes the child while the mother dotes on him.

This attitude is more or less permanent for even when adolescent requests or reports (perhaps now things of a different nature such as conception with a girl) continue to go, in the first instance, to the mother.

THE COMING OF A NEW BABY

It is regard had manners for a mother to explain how a child is born. If a mother does that then "she wants to spoil her child. She is a bad mother who treats her children like that." When, for instance, a child desires to know, "what is in your belly that has caused it to be so big?" He is told, "It is nothing, I overate pufu!"

A child's questions regarding where babies come from are neatly avoided but sometimes the child is hushed and told "you are inquisitive."

When a baby is being born, the child is not allowed to be present (chapter three). The father takes care of him in his (father's) own house because the child must not hear his mother yell or scream.

When the baby arrives, the child is looked after by his aunts for the first few days, before he is returned to his mother. In the evenings he goes to his father's house where he sleeps. He is expected to receive the new one with love and affection and to play with it. Older children have been observed to spend several minutes trying to soothe a new one when crying. A woman told me that once she was in the kitchen when she heard her two-month-old baby screaming. She rushed into the room and saw her three-year-old boy trying to feed the new one with cassava. Some children have also been detected to be pinching their new ones.

Sometimes the older child is provoked into jealousy by the parents and others who call to see the new one. They tell the old one "Enno dee, yeatu wo adee so" (Today you have been destooled). When he begins to cry a kind aunt or friend may carry him on her back. On some occasions, he is threatened with punishment if he continues to cry.

Parents try to treat their children equally, but

when one does a 'good turn', he is openly commended and rewarded with meat when food is ready. A bad child is often discarded and forsaken, especially by the father. Even if the mother discards him, she tries to make amends and to win him back, by using kind words and entreaties.

Several women I interviewed told me that although it may be shown openly, every mother has her favourite child. The causes that bring about the discrimination vary. A child may be 'mother's favourite' because of the person after whom he was named; he may be a favourite because during the period of pregnancy or delivery the mother nearly lost her life; or simply because he is attractive. A father's favourite is any of his children who helps him with willingness and a 'bright' face.

Although other adults may be able to make out the distinction, it is not likely that a child of about ten can ever discern it.

ADVANTAGES OF OLDER AND YOUNGER CHILDREN

The first born, "Piesie" (opener of the womb) has the advantage of being heir to the family property. He is petted and in some cases spoiled. He is considered not very wise, in fact the most foolish of the lot. When another child arrives the attention, by no means the affection, decreases. The really spoiled child is the "Kaakyire" (the last born). More often than not, he is the father's, the mother's, the grand mother's, indeed every adult's pet. Apart from what his parents do for him, his elder brothers and sisters who may have been old enough to earn a living also make him gifts and provide his wants. He is often called "shaa ha" (a woman's son).

While girls are expected to play together as against mixing with boys, they are more at peace in boys' companies. Generally speaking, girls quarrel more among themselves and conspire more amongst themselves. Such quarrels are caused by disagreements as to how or by whom something should be done or one's absolute control of 'common property' - a toy or food or cheating in the sharing of meat when eating. Laziness is another causative point. Sometimes a complaint is lodged against one member with the father or mother, the 'defendant' may quickly refute it and strongly object to it; she may start abusing the complainant.

The parents often back the younger one and call the older one a bully, a cheat and a 'quarrel-monger', especially when they fight. He is rebuked and asked to make a report next time the younger one misbehaves to him. If the father is less busy he may go into the case and the guilty one is punished accordingly.

RELATIONS TO PARENTS

The mother is the one responsible for the early care of the child; she feeds, nurses, bathes and plays with him. The father may occasionally play with him. As a rule the child's first real contacts with the father are in connection with discipline. He is both the chief authority in and the agent of discipline. The mother may on occasions decide and carry out punishments such as putting ginger drops into the girl's vagina or pushing ground ginger into a boy's anus, when the father is away otherwise the father dictates the form the punishment should take.

If the offence is not grave, the mother may not

inform the father of the child's misbehaviour when he returns from the farm. Some mothers are their children's allies in concealing the fact from the fathers. When a father gets to know of it a quarrel may ensue and the wife as a result may be beaten even before the child.

If a mother objects to a father's punishment for a child, as it sometimes does, the consequences may be a violent quarrel leading to a fight.

Parents feel that it is their responsibility to provide for the children. Before school education was introduced in Ampabame village, the men who were mostly farmers, desired their sons to be good farmers and the wives trained their daughters to be good wives.

Parents' and children's quarrels are rare but when they do occur, they can be very violent. It is a taboo to abuse or beat one's parents; it is bad manners to quarrel with one's parents. Most of the parent/child quarrels are the results of the child's disobedience. A child may either refuse openly or omit to go to the farm and malingering with the others or use the father's stored grains in gambling; any of these causes can start a quarrel. In the case of an adolescent if the father refuses to give a portion of the farms they have made or to give him a portion of land on which to make his own farm.

Children of the same sex as their parents quarrel more, especially, girls and their mothers. Girl/mother quarrels arise when a mother tries to check a daughter's bad behaviour or her attachment to a company of girls whose characters are questionable. Almost all quarrels occur during adolescence.

When there is a dispute between parent and child, the child's maternal uncles meet to settle

it. According to Akem customs, the child is always the guilty one no matter how rightly he behaved. He is made to pacify the parent - if the offence is serious - with a sheep. The normal demands for pacification are fowls and eggs.

Parental authority lasts throughout one's life. In marriage, for instance, a parent can force his son or daughter to divorce the other partner simply because he, the father, is at loggerheads with the other partner's relatives. If the man fails to give gifts to his parents, his wife is blamed for it. When one's father dies, the successor assumes the role of father. It is the father or his successor who in the first place consents to a marriage between his son or daughter and another person. When quarrels arise in the marriage, it is his responsibility to settle them and when a baby arrives, he is consulted when choosing a name. Finally when there is an impending dissolution of marriage, he must back the son or daughter before a divorce can be valid. When he dies his children buy him a coffin and provide the "azie dee" (things needed for burial).

RELATIONS TO OTHER ADULTS

It is a common saying that when a baby is not yet born, it remains the property of the mother, but as soon as it comes into the world, its welfare is everybody's concern. This is the general attitude towards a new baby. Apart from members of the man and the woman's families, friends also come to see the baby and to wish it "come and stay." They come in day in and day out for several weeks. Although they may not stay in the same house, the baby's grandmothers

(father's mother and mother's mother) spend a greater part of their leisure hours tending the baby especially before he is three months old. When they are not able to call they send for the baby.

As already mentioned, other relatives or friends may carry the child. These are more indulgent than the parents; they are therefore regarded as the main cause of many children being spoilt. As a result many young men dislike the idea of their children spending several hours with their grand parents. As regards the children, they prefer to be with their grandparents who make them "happy and fulfil all their wishes". Although children are freer with their grand-parents, they are expected to be polite when they go to them. They are expected, for example, to give up their chairs when the grand parents or visitors arrive or to get some chairs if there is not one nearby.

When grand parents or friends pay a visit, their first question is concerned with the child's health. They may ask to see him. He must answer all questions they put to him with respect and humility and he should thank them for any presents.

OTHER PEOPLES POSSESSIONS

The child is taught in divers ways not to take things belonging to other people without first consulting them. In the first place he is advised in a loving atmosphere and told to return it. If after repeated efforts to get him return it he still persists in keeping it, he is scolded or even beaten.

When he grasps the thing belonging to a younger child, he is hooded at and called "ipanyin toto" (a cheat and a bully; the school children nowadays call him "Kwado mpo" - an allusion to a big boy in a story who always bullied small children but ran away when people of his own age approached - a term of reproach and contempt). If the grabbing makes the child cry, the bully is forced, sometimes by corporal punishment, to return the object. The other children may be advised not to play with him.

Sometimes mothers side their children when it comes to quarrelling over the ownership of an object. Two sisters entered into a fearful quarrel in which curses were exchanged and which resulted in the slaughtering of sheep and the pouring of a libation because their children struggled over the ownership of three marbles. The monetary cost of that quarrel was £4. 16s. Four pounds sixteen shillings plus, of course, strained relationships.

Patrilocal marriages are becoming common because of such causes of children's quarrels.

If a small child takes something belonging to an older person, the child is coaxed with promises of getting him a better one or he may be told "that thing contains jujie and if you do not give it up you will die." Sometimes the parent will ask to examine it and as soon as she gets hold of it, she proclaims it to be bad

and if it is unbreakable, she gives it back to him to be thrown away.

He is told not to covet or cry for or take, unasked for, anything belonging to another person, "It is the bad child that does that."

The child is not allowed to touch objects that are fragile such as looking-glass, soup or water pots. If he happens to touch one, it is quickly taken from him or if no one is near, he is shouted at to put it down - it is a taboo. As much as possible things that easily break are removed from his way and hung up on nails driven into the walls in the kitchen. It is not uncommon to find native syringes and soup pots thus preserved.

The same things may be said for sharp objects like knives, cutlasses, broken bottles or animal traps. Mothers are often heard to tell their children, "If you hold that it will cut you and when you eat, the food will come through the cut."

Mothers are careful in keeping their children away from fires and hot things that may burn the hands because when a child is burnt that way the mother has to pacify the husband with a fowl and eggs before the husband consents to treat the child. Anytime a mother finds it difficult to keep her child away from fires, she ties him on her back - she carries him.

THE CHILD'S POSSESSIONS

The child has a very few things of his own. These include one or two dresses, a wooden "borry", a catapult and some marbles (if a boy), a cloth and perhaps a mat, beads, earrings and "cooking utensils," (if a girl). Except with the things he has made, the child has very little freedom with his possessions. He or she can

handle the catapult or marbles or the "lorry" or the "cooking pots" as he or she likes but the rest - the earnings or dresses - must be handled carefully. If he is not careful and his cloth gets worn out as a result of a game before "next christmas," he may go naked or in rags.

A child is generally regarded as destructive and therefore adult treatment in the case of his possessions is harsh. An old man when asked for his views said "the child of today is bad and destructive and so if you do not become severe at times, he will spoil everything you give him". The author showed a toy piano to another man and asked him how he would like to have one for his son. His reply was "you have got money. How can I get fifteen shillings to buy a thing which will be spoilt only the next day?"

Children are taught, however, to respect things that belong to other people and to handle them with care. The usual admonition is, "If you treat this thing well, I shall buy you many fine things, but if not, you will never get anything from me." School children are asked to take good care of their uniforms and books. The child may be flogged if he often destroys things at home.

When a child starts to toddle, he is given a wooden "tricycle", later he discards it for the wooden "lorry" which, like the tricycle, he pushes along. At about the age of six or seven, he may start playing marbles and may hunt birds with the catapult. The wooden lorry and the catapult can each be dismantled and reassembled. He learns to do this. When he constructs about three or four years old, one with the help of others a "plantain-skin-lorry"

with cocoyam slices as wheels.

SPEECH

The old women who are well versed in the art of child rearing can distinguish a child's cry of pain from hunger or weariness. But even these and the rest of the others pick up their children when the first signs of crying are heard. Whatever a woman may be doing will come to an end and her first movement will be towards the child.

Most women can guess when their babies are hungry, they say the breasts become heavy with milk which sometimes begins to flow. When this happens, the woman who is out in the bush collecting firewood will say, "Ah, my child is hungry".

At about the age of three, the child is told not to cry especially when making a request. If he wants food or if he wants his mat spread, he must do so in a calm way. He is allowed to cry when he meets danger or when he is hit by an object. A child who cries often is always ignored even when he needs attention. Instead of the mother going to him, she will shout, "What is the matter with you, come home and stop crying".

As the child grows older, he is expected not to cry often. Girls, however, are allowed to cry a little longer than boys. When it becomes necessary for a boy to cry, he must not wail and yell like a girl. Two girls can fight and during the fighting one may cry, she is perfectly in order but a boy must hit back without crying. In a nutshell, a boy is expected to be tough.

Every parent's prayer is for her baby to grow into a complete human being without

blemishes and defects of any kind. As a result, a baby's first vocalizations are accepted as a guarantee that he will not become dumb. The parents and those who have the child's welfare at heart rejoice.

They help the child to make the sounds and even when he stops, they start and 'invite' him to join. Baby talk is encouraged by some adults. A parent or an elder brother or sister may talk to him in babytalk and no one will speak against it. He is regarded a loving parent who talks to his child in babytalk.

The parents talk to the baby more in connection with petting, but as he grows older the father's talks are more in connection with commands scolding and punishment but the mother's continue to be more confined to petting and play.

The child who learns to talk has the freedom to talk anyhow to anybody, of course using decent language, but as he grows older, that is from about four years onwards, he is told when to talk loudly, and when to talk softly. For instance, when the person being addressed is near, the child is expected to talk softly or he is told not to talk as if he were on top of a tree; or if he talks too softly to be heard, he is told not to talk like a ghost. A child who talks rapidly to adults is regarded as insolent and disrespectful.

When children talk, they are not held to high standards of grammatical correctness; on the whole, their errors are not corrected. Parents during their leisure request their children to tell them stories or to narrate their activities during the day. Children's questions are not very much encouraged and a child who is inquisitive is told to "get away" and not to be troublesome.

Children are taught to be factual in their statements and to be terse and epigrammatic when answering questions. It is said, "Inokurokuro tawa ne ho adaji" (The garrulous person reveals his own secrets). Talkativeness is not desirable.

At the age of five or six, children are expected to tell the truth. It is a hallmark of good breeding if a child always tells the truth. Parents as such adopt every conceivable method to get their children to tell the truth. A child who is known to be lying is beaten to get the truth out of him. Sometimes rewards are given to children who tell the truth as an eye opener to the rest.

SCHOOLING

ATTITUDES TOWARDS BOYS' AND GIRLS' EDUCATION

In conformity with the general regulations for admitting children to school, the child enters school during his sixth year. There are a few children who enter the school at about the age of seven or eight, but that is rare these days.

Before the introduction of the Free Primary Education, a small number were admitted each year, the average being about fifteen, with ages ranging from five to nine. The reason for keeping the children at home till they were about nine as put forward by the parents was that the older the child, the more easily he learnt his lessons.

The school started in 1944 and in 1948 there were three classes. The result was that those who completed the first three years had to travel to another village, Sokoban, about two miles away

when travelling to the school, each child carried some provisions for his lunch which were mainly made up of raw cocoyam or plantain. During the mid-day break the child made a fire and roasted the food and ate without stew or soup. When they had the opportunity, they cooked the food in some one's house and sprinkled salt on it. The situation as described continued for three years before some elders of Ampabame decided to expand the local school. Negotiations were made and the local Roman Catholic chapel was used to house the additional classes. The school then had three teachers.

Middle school education is still not available in the village and the children who leave home for other places where they can gain admission to Middle Schools. A few of the children who leave home go to another village

not very far away where a Central Middle School is supposed to cater for all children in the area. The rest travel to different places to "seek their fortune"; but if they fail to obtain vacancies then they return home, and that ends their school education.

Apart from the hope of his son obtaining a good job after completing his school education, the parent wants his son to become "Krakye," (a 'Scholar'), so that he (the son) can read and write the family letters. It is also contended that no outsider can enter a family which boasts of a "Krakye" and thus either bully or cheat them. Some people add that they send their children to gain knowledge and wisdom so as to be able to run the family in the near future.

These and other considerations have so coloured their thinking that the education of girls is considered by some, especially the grown up men, to be a waste of money. They argue that "It is a man who rules a family and if you want some one to prepare for that why not send a boy to school? A woman's duties are two fold, to serve man and to rear children; 'a woman's office is the home, her pulpit the kitchen!'"

In a discussion with some men, a suggestion came up which was endorsed by almost every one present. It was a young man who brought it up; he said, "It is the woman who makes the food farm - the cocoyam and plantain - and if you send them to school what do you expect to eat?" They added that illiterate wives were less expensive to keep. On the whole the women themselves accept this situation without a challenge, in truth they concur with the men. These are the

words of a woman, "No matter a woman's position, she is always under the control of a man", and another, "can a woman be wiser than a man?" The people have come to regard a girl's education as inferior to a boy's even though they are in the same class.

Up till now no girl from the village has completed the middle school, there is no "Awarua" (Lady) in the village. All girls who have had any formal education either refused to continue at the end of the Primary School or were forced by circumstances to stop. The School has on the whole been filled with men teachers.

THE POSITION OF THE TEACHER

The teacher occupies a very enviable position in the village. He is an administrator, a magistrate, the chief's councillor and the "font of all wisdom and knowledge". He is admired and even worshipped by the children and some adults. He wields a great deal of influence, his authority is indisputable. "Teacher se ---" (Teacher says ---) and what is said is accepted as final.

Girls and some women (spinsters) have been heard quarrelling as to who was the teacher's lover. Although individuals may dislike or even hate the teacher, he is generally accepted by the people.

The children sometimes play tricks on the teachers. They may pretend to be sick when it comes to work; they sometimes nickname teachers or imitate their mannerisms.

Teachers are feared by the School children in this order: the headmaster then the most 'nicked' teacher, that is the teacher who punishes most and finally the class teacher. It is usually the 'nicked' teacher who is despised or even abused (at his back) by the children.

The teachers have created the myth that they are the best disciplinarians and therefore, when a child misbehaves at home the parent, as a rule the father, takes the child to the school and complains about the boys behaviour. He will then ask the teacher to flog the boy, "Teacher hwe no ma me" (Teacher flog him for me) and the teacher, to maintain his 'prestige', whips the boy. The result is that the children are at the best end of their behaviour when in school where there is the flagitator, but back at home they become "the monarch of all I survey" and behave in any way they please. I was in the school once when a man of about forty brought his ten year old son to the school. The man appeared very much annoyed and his complaint was that the child always refused to serve them at home and when any elder reprimanded him, he hurled abuse at the person. The teacher became astounded and said, "But in school he is one of the best-behaved boys that is why he has been made a 'section leader'!" The teacher, however punished the boy with six strokes of the cane.

Unless a child is very much injured as a result of a punishment, such as hitting the eye, the parents never speak against teachers and the treatment they give to the children; it is a "Myansa kyere" (a training in wisdom). When a boy misbehaves at home, the question that is thrown to him is "Has your teacher not taught you to be wise?"

I conversed with a boy who had played truant from school for five days and his reason for staying away was that he was beaten often and without cause, and often disgraced before the whole school.

ATTACHMENTS

Before children enter school, they are mostly friends as they would have played together. The friendships continues roughly throughout the first two years. During the third year, that is when they are about nine years old, they begin to look out for those who are "teacher's friends"- those who are often sent by the teacher. "Teacher's friends" are considered the 'lucky ones' and whereas one or two will continue to move with them, the majority will stand on one side. These two groups may develop hostile attitudes to each other until one day the "smoke bursts into flames" and a fight ensues. Amends are quickly and easily made.

Boy/girl attachments start from about the fourth class until at adolescence they develop into friendships. Some of the boys and girls reach adolescence before year six in the school.

COMPETITIONS

Competitions are common in the school. At the end of each term, class examinations are held and an order of merit drawn; prizes may be awarded on the results of the examinations.

Sectional competitions in athletics, football and other games, are held at the end of each week. Members of the section coming last have an extra work given them; it may be weeding or sweeping the school compound. There are also competitions in personal hygiene; once a week the children's hair teeth nails and dresses are inspected by the teachers and points for or against are awarded to each section.

The children begin to group themselves together into gangs during the third year in school when they are about eight or nine. These gangs are usually for adventures. The gangs go to the bush

to hunt for birds with catapults; they set traps for game, or they make a small farm of their own. Once in a while they beat up the girl who "has abused us."

GAMES

When the children go home from school, they play games with those who do not go to school. There are boys' games, girls' games and games for both boys and girls. By and large, the most popular game for boys is football. In school it is organized, at home it is anything but organized. Any number of children, for example, can take part. The field can be the school field, any large or small space, the street or even the compound of a house. The goal posts can be of stones, clothes or sticks and the ball can be the ordinary football, a tennis ball, a rubber ball, an orange, a grapefruit, a lime or a garden egg.

Boys, as soon as they learn to crawl, start to play with balls or any object that rolls along. Later they learn to throw and when they have sufficiently mastered walking, they kick the ball.

Other games for boys include marbles, playing wresting, hunt the slipper, drawing "berries" and tree climbing.

Girls have their own games, the most popular being "ampe" and "aso" (chapter seven). These games are played mostly in the evenings or during leisure time on Saturday afternoons or Sunday after chapel.

Other games played by both boys and girls together are: Hide and seek, Antaakyie, Kwakwaa (one sings and the others respond while jumping and clapping. As soon as the song ends the singer (chaser) runs after them and the person caught takes up the role of chaser). These are



Boys at a game of 'high jump'



A game of 'Ampe'



Small girls cooking



School children love to play 'Antarkyine'

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normally played during moonlit nights.

Until a child is about five years old, he is not expected to play these games as they involve a lot of running about; he may even be pushed down by others. As much as possible, children of the same age group play together.

As children enter puberty, these games decrease until during adolescence only football and marble-playing are retained by boys and "ampe" and "ass" by girls. Both may add sware and boys only may play draughts.

SONGS

Children who attend school learn children's songs from hymn books and other secular collections. The secular songs are mostly action songs. When they come home their songs, like those who do not go to school, are connected with their games. Otherwise all songs sung by children are adult-songs.

STORIES

There are no special stories for children. When they like, the children can group themselves together and tell stories, these may be daydreams or wishes. During the recognised story-telling period which is at night and in a house, the adults tell and the children listen. An adolescent may be allowed to tell one but a younger child not even a twelve year old will be allowed, "we are not playing children's game."

The only books the children have any access to are their school text books which are selected by the Education Department. There is, therefore, no danger of children reading any books that are disapproved by adults but even if they (the children) did the parents, almost all illiterates, would not know.

EARLY WORK

Children are not bothered with work but are allowed to play always, until they are about three when they are introduced to work.

First a child is told to call the brother or sister. Later when the mother wants to drink water, he is told to "bring it". At about four or five he is sent to take things to people or to collect things from them. During this time he learns to sweep the room and the girl learns to sweep the kitchen.

When he is about five years old, he accompanies his parents to the farm. There he learns to handle the cutlass, he clears a small area and plant his own crops. When a girl of that age goes to the farm, she works with the hoes and helps the mother in collecting pepper and other vegetables. When they return home, she helps the mother to prepare the meal.

A nine or ten year old is solely responsible for sweeping the kitchen and washing the earthen grates with red earth. If the supply of red earth runs short, she in company with others of about the same age, go to the pit to fetch one. Her main work at this time is concerned with cooking and keeping the house neat. She also assists her mother in carrying the child. Laundry becomes part of her week-end activities. When the mother goes to the river side to wash his clothing, the girl goes with her. The first articles she washes are the baby's rags and her own clothes. When the mother is unable to go to the riverside for washing, the children in the house fetch water for her and the washing is done at home.

ADOLESCENTS WORK

When the girl grows into an adolescent, she



Learning by doing - A laundry "lesson."

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whole responsibility of laundering and cooking entirely rests on her. The mother becomes a helper. When she goes to the farm, she works side by side with the mother and when returning home, she collects faggots for use at home.

With the onset of puberty comes the desire to trade. About twice in the week, she collects firewood into a big bundle and carries it to Kumasi where she sells it. With part of the money thus obtained she buys meat, salt, soap or kerosene for home use. When she harvests her crops, she sells some in Kumasi. She may even sell palm-wine on a commission basis. During the mushroom season, she accompanies her friends to the bush to gather some for home consumption.

The boy of nine or ten traps animals (game) which the family uses for food, apart from his active participation in farmwork, when the house needs repair, he helps the father.

At the beginning of each year, the adolescent boy clears the land on which the mother and sister farm.

Most boys at that period of life learn a trade - shoe-making, tailoring, driving, carpentry, masonry or car-repairing. Some work for commercial firms as labourers. For the past ten years some of the boys have been employed in a stone quarry a few miles away.

Most boys before sixteen or seventeen become independent of their families so far as the provision of clothing is concerned. They are given rooms to live in. In short they fend for themselves.

There are punishments and rewards for work. In the early years the punishments are



Girls carrying 'red earth' to clean the kitchen

physical but the rewards are verbal. For example if a child fails to do a piece of work assigned to him or if he refuses it, he may be refused food or flogged. If he does his work well or if he does additional work when not required to do so he is praised congratulated or commended to the others.

Every parent is anxious to see his child employed as early as possible. That in itself is an indication that the child has been well brought up; children also take pride in it because it enables them to contribute to the family's income.

Children who are employed in the village mainly carry water for the builders - "water boys" and they work from 7.30 in the morning to 4.30 in the afternoon with an hour's break at noon. Those who work at the stone quarry near the village, work from 6.30 in the morning to 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They carry quarried stone to the "loading station" where lorries wait to be loaded.

As a rule children who are employed are given light work to do, chiefly involving carrying, it is because they are employed as early as nine or ten years old.

ADOLESCENCE.

PUBERTY

The main outlines of a child's character are laid during childhood and with the exception of a few modifications, he enters adolescence with the same attitudes to life. The only differences are that more experiences are gained which are bound to affect outlook. The adolescent, unlike the child, acts with understanding and therefore he is responsible for his actions.

No break either emotional or social has been known to occur as a child enters puberty, it is all one of continuity from pre puberty.

There are physiological changes as the child enters puberty. The girl develops breasts and the menstrual flow starts; that happens between the fourteenth or fifteenth year. She grows more in stature and appears more attractive; she grows hair in the "private parts".

Like the girl, the boy grows hair in his "private parts". His voice becomes deeper and he grows more in stature. There are no rites de passage for boys; they are not even admonished.

There are marked differences in dress and life generally. He wears cloth that others will admire. He no longer will countenance his mother's cloth as in days gone by.

When there are girls about he works or behaves to please or charm them. He enjoys greater freedom of action, for example he can go out and come to bed any time he pleases; he can befriend whom he chooses.

Puberty for a boy is just like one of those things that happen in the world, nobody bothers about it.

The pleasantest period in the life of a girl is puberty. There are elaborate rites de passage

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performed to mark the start of menstruation.

If a girl becomes pregnant without having gone through the ceremony which officially and publicly admits her to woman hood, she is arrested together with the man responsible for the pregnancy and taken to the chief's house. Later a special court is held to which the Asantehene sends his representative. The two people are asked to show cause why they should not be punished for visiting a curse upon the community and the Ashanti Nation in general. The "Kyirikra" custom is performed; the couple are taken to one end of the village and there two sheep are slaughtered on top of the couple's heads. A libation is then poured asking that the curse should descend upon the two people. They are then led out of the village amidst hooting and curses. In the old days the couple were not allowed to enter any village until the baby had been born. The families built a hut for them in the bush and they were supplied food from home every day. Nowadays as soon as a boy suspects he is in trouble, he escapes from the village to find an asylum some where until long after the baby has been born. In such a case, all the shame and degradation comes upon the girl although, now, she will not be driven away from the village. The cost of the rite is paid by the man's family.

The child of such premature cohabitation has a dark social blot on him and years after fingers will be pointed at him in scorn and derision.

THE COMING OF AGE CEREMONY

Mothers are always on the look out for signs of menstruation in their daughters when the girls begin to develop breasts. They are interviewed

by their mothers any time they are suspected to have menstruated. Most girls tell their mothers as soon as the first flow starts, which occurs between the fourteenth and fifteenth years.

Immediately a mother receives a report to that effect, she asks the girl to refrain from doing all manner of work in the house; the other sisters or the mother herself will do the house duties. Secrecy over the occurrence is preserved between the girl and her parents.

The mother, alone with the girl, gives instructions on the 'hygiene of menstruation'; the girl is warned against sleeping with or cooking for the husband during menstruation; she is advised against sexual intercourse with any man; 'freedom ^{from} work' is conferred on her until the flow stops.

That same day, the mother prepares mashed yam and eggs and gives to the girl to eat. If there are younger brothers and sisters they may partake of the food otherwise it is eaten in private.

The parents then start preparations for outdoorizing her. This may take a short or a long time depending upon the parents financial strength, there is no fixed time for this. After the necessary things have been collected, a date is fixed for the ceremony. The queen mother is accordingly informed and so are their relatives and friends.

In the early hours of the appointed day, a libation is poured to the spirits of their departed relatives and they are asked to help so that no mishap befalls them while performing the ceremony. Soon after the libation, drumming starts; the women dance from one end of the village to the other end singing songs of praise to the girl for

not bringing a curse to herself and the whole village. At about six in the morning, the girl is shaved of all hair on her head and other parts. Now adays, if a girl does not want her hair to be shaved, as is common among christians, she 'buys' it. The money paid for this varies: a royalist pays thirteen shillings and an ordinary girl seven shillings. She is then carried on somebody's back to the riverside where she is bathed by old women of the family. Every body can be present, including men and boys. Before the bathing starts, the queen mother or her representative examines the girl to be sure she is not pregnant.

From the riverside, she is carried back home and besmeared all over with sheabutter. After that she is clothed in a white cloth and sandals and placed on a white stool in the middle of the house, or if it grows very sunny, at any place in the house where she can easily be seen by all. The drummers continue to drum and dance and people flock into the house. All kinds of Ashanti food which had by that time been prepared are brought before her - boiled plantain, cocoyam, yam, mashed yam, cocoyam and plantain, fufu (plantain and cocoyam), and plain, palm nut and groundnut soups.

The oldest woman performing the ceremony, then steps forward and, taking a little of the mashed yam, touches the girl's lips three times. She does the same thing with the other foods. Some of the mashed yam is put in a large tray that is placed near the girl. Two children, a boy and a girl, are then brought near the tray; the old woman holds their right hands and dips both into the food in the tray. All the other children who gather there then start scrambling for the food.

Then comes the time to 'feed' the girl. A boiled egg

is put into the girl's mouth and she is covered with a white cloth. She is advised to eat the egg using only the tongue. She is warned that if she uses her teeth that it means she has broken her 'child-bearing organs'. Immediately she finishes 'eating' the egg, more drumming and jubilation is heard. She is then taken to a room and with her friends eats some of the food.

After meals she is taken out again and placed on her white stool. Before her are placed boxes and large basins containing gifts from her parents and family. Beside these is another basin and into this gifts of money made by people are put; gifts in kind are also placed before her. The drumming, singing and dancing continues. At about six in the evening everybody retires.

The girl and her closest friends stay at home for seven days, playing and eating. On the eighth day, the girl is dressed up in native attire and accompanied by some relatives and friends, she goes from house to house thanking all who helped during the ceremony. Evening comes and the ceremony is over.

The "Bragors" ceremony comes on at a time when the girl is not in her menstrual period.

The girl is now ready to marry and the cycle ready to begin.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I want it to be noted that the coming of the European with his new ways of life, the growth of commerce and industry and the growth of Kumasi have all contributed to the 'delution' of some customs such as the "kyimbira". The effect is that premature intercourse is common.

The introduction of school education, the need to travel to seek employment and the economic dependence upon Kumasi are all playing their parts towards the adaptation of some ways of village life to the rapid socio-economic development that is sweeping over the country. About fifty years ago, nakedness among young adolescents was not regarded with any ill-feeling now a nine year old will hesitate before he leaves his bedroom naked.

Fetishism with its concomitant outlook on life - superstition is gradually giving in as more and more people come to regard hospitals and doctors as 'saviours'. Malaria which not very long ago used to be treated by the fetish-priest is now treated with purgatives and quinine. Better houses and good water are loosening disease's hold on the people.

What is really needed is education. Although Mass Education Teams have done their best in helping the people to become literate in their language and although the Information Services Department has been showing films calculated to improve living conditions, more talks and discussions and the undertaking of development projects will go a long way in helping to stamp out superstition.

The School which is still a Primary school

needs to be extended and women employed. One of the greatest problems is the place of the woman in the home. At the moment the two fold duties of any woman there are, firstly to procreate and secondly to serve man's needs. Until these attitudes are re-orientated, the social progress of the woman is difficult to conjecture. And to this I suggest that the remedy lies in the education of both boys and girls.

The impact of Christianity on our culture is, in some respects, causing conflicts. Although the church teaches that there should be no premarriage relationships (marital intercourse) the young man who wants to marry still clings to the traditional way of giving "concupine's gifts" which in most cases implies sexual intercourse. The church has a great deal of work to do in educating her members to live up to the Christian standards and thus save them the embarrassment of living simultaneously in two worlds - the world of Christianity and the world of Paganism.

DAY OF BIRTH AND CORRESPONDING NAME

BOYS

GIRL

Monday	Kwadwo	A dwoa
Tuesday	Kwabena	Ahena
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akua
Thursday	Yaw	Yaa
Friday	Kofi	Afia
Saturday	Kwame	Amma
Sunday	Akwasi	Akosua

APPENDIX 1B

ORDER OF BIRTH AND CORRESPONDING NAME

First born	Abakan or Opiesie	^{GIRL}
Second "	Mamu	Mamu
Third "	Mensah	Mensah
Fourth "	Anane	Anane
Fifth "	Nunu	Nunu
Sixth "	Nsiah	Nsiah
Seventh "	Nsawah	Nsawah
Eighth "	Mustwe	Mustwe
Ninth "	Nkromah	Nkromah
Tenth "	Badu	Badu
Eleventh "	Duku	Duku

APPENDIX 1C

OCCURRENCE OF KONIDIT

GIRL

First child	- Boy	Abakan or Opiesie
Second "	- Boy	Mamu
Third "	- Girl	KONTOH
Fourth "	- Girl	Mamu

BOY

First child	- Girl	Abakan or Opiesie
Second "	- Girl	Mamu
Third "	- Boy	KONTOH.

NAMES OF TWINS AND OTHERS RELATED TO THEM

- Twins - Ntaa [Single Atta (boy), Attaa (girl)]
Next child - Tawia
Third child - Myankonago
Fourth child - Tuakosen
Fifth child - Danusaa.

Children's stories

Age of child: 6 years.

class in School: 1

Once there was an old woman who lived with
One day they went to the farm and collected pineapples
also some. When they set out for home, the old woman
overturned and everything in it — pineapples, pepper,
got spread all over the place. The boy collect all back
the basket and carried it.

They were very hungry when they arrived so
old woman made a quick fire and she cooked the
they ate it all and ate the pine apple also.

Age 6 years

class in School: Nil.

An old woman once went to the farm and
a tortoise. she place the tortoise under a fig tree
the tortoise sang: "I was in my house when you
me and put me here. I don't want to be here."

Age 9 years.

class in School: Three

One day a woman and her son was
farm. The woman went to fell a tree and the
fell on her and she died. The boy went home and
he was ~~told~~ asked to tell what happened he so
"Nuono mause wo se mna euko dum fskye
na dumfskyee beken wo anigynia." they went
woman and buried her.

BAD BOYS AND BAD GIRLS

A story about a bad boy told by a girl. 6 years old
 A ^{boy} went to school, soon he was declared a bad boy because he always wept and abused the other boys. He was removed to a Boys Remand Home. The Parents went for him but he became bad again and he was taken back to the Remand Home. He wept and wept and wept but he was not allowed to be taken back.

About A Bad Girl By A Girl. 7 years old.

A girl used to steal money from her mother but any time she was questioned she denied knowledge of it.

One day her mother took her to a home reserved for bad girls. Every morning she was cut all over with broken bottles. One day the mother ordered that the girl should be killed because she was a bad girl. All the children beat her up until she died and she was thrown into a deep ravine and animals went and ate her flesh.

About a bad boy told by a boy 6 years old.

Any time elders met to converse a small boy took his chair and went there. One day his father caught him and beat him.

Children's Wishes

A boy 7 years old.

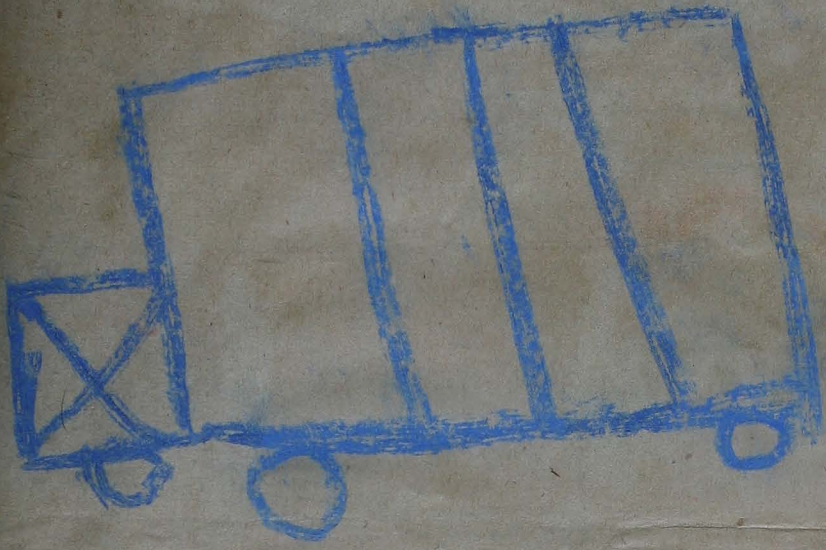
If I were granted one wish, I would ask for a lorry so that I could carry passengers to and from Kumasi. If I did that I should get a lot of money.

A girl 7 years old

If I were granted one wish I would like to have dresses so that anytime I want I should put on a new dress.

A boy 8 years old

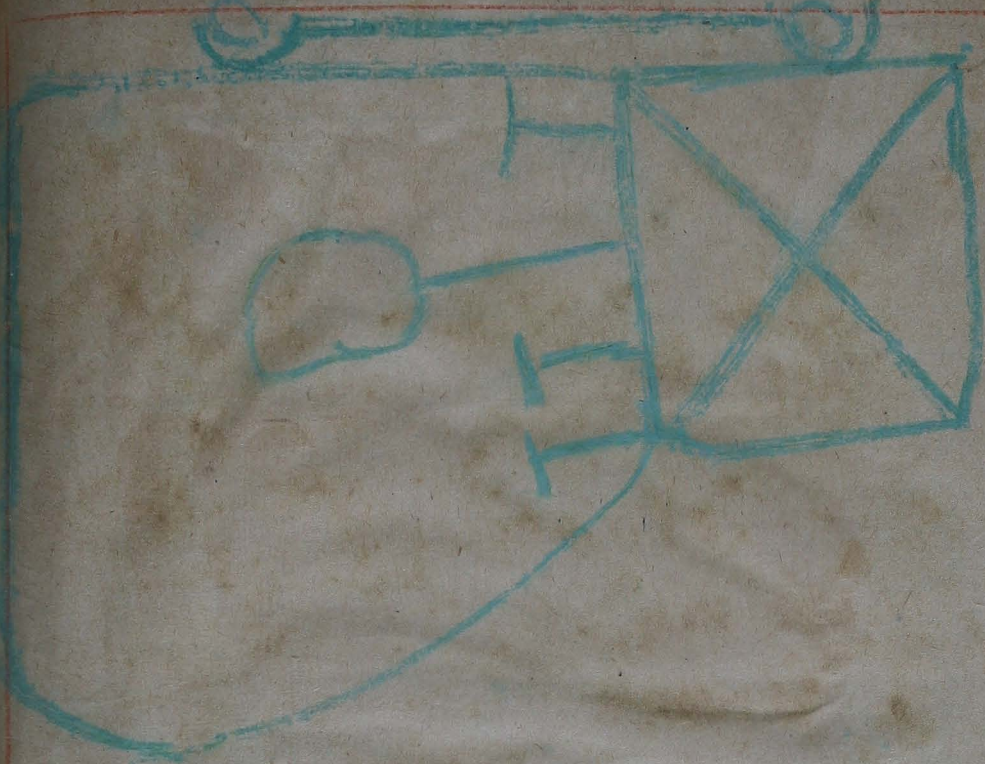
I would wish for money. I should use it in building a house. I should buy clothes and a car.



The most unpleasant thing - A trolley accident

Age 7.

An important thing - A lesson in design

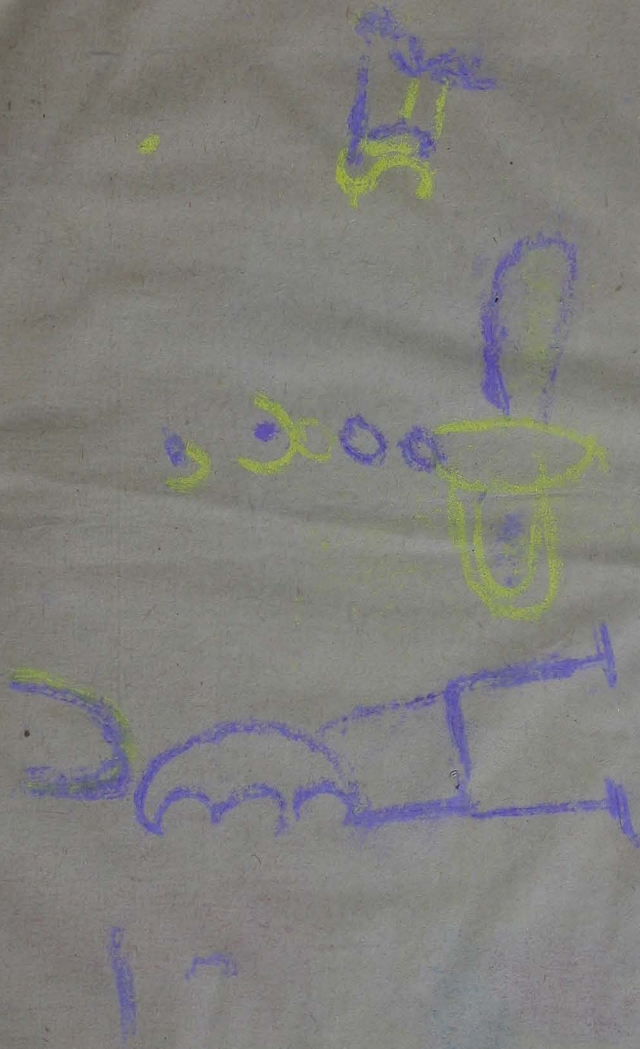


Age 10.



Free drawing

Age 77rs.



A dream



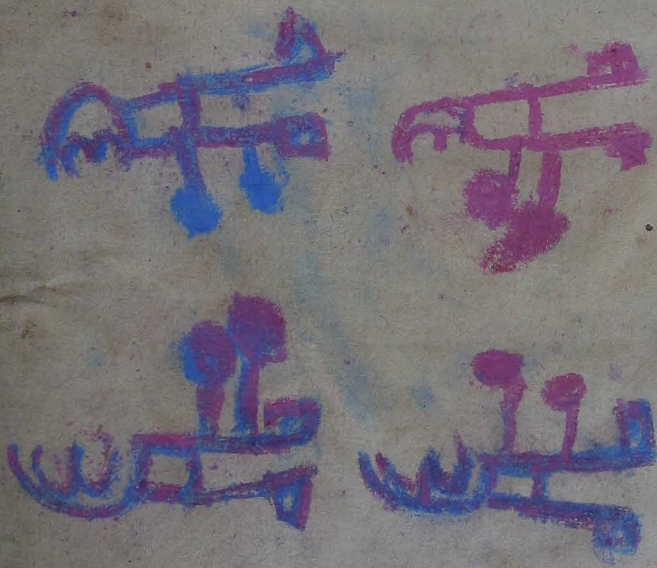
Free Drawing - Two lorries

7 yrs



Age 8 yrs
Age 8 yrs.

Age: 8



Age: 9 yrs.

People Fighting

Age: 10 years.

A pleasant thing



"the inside of my house"

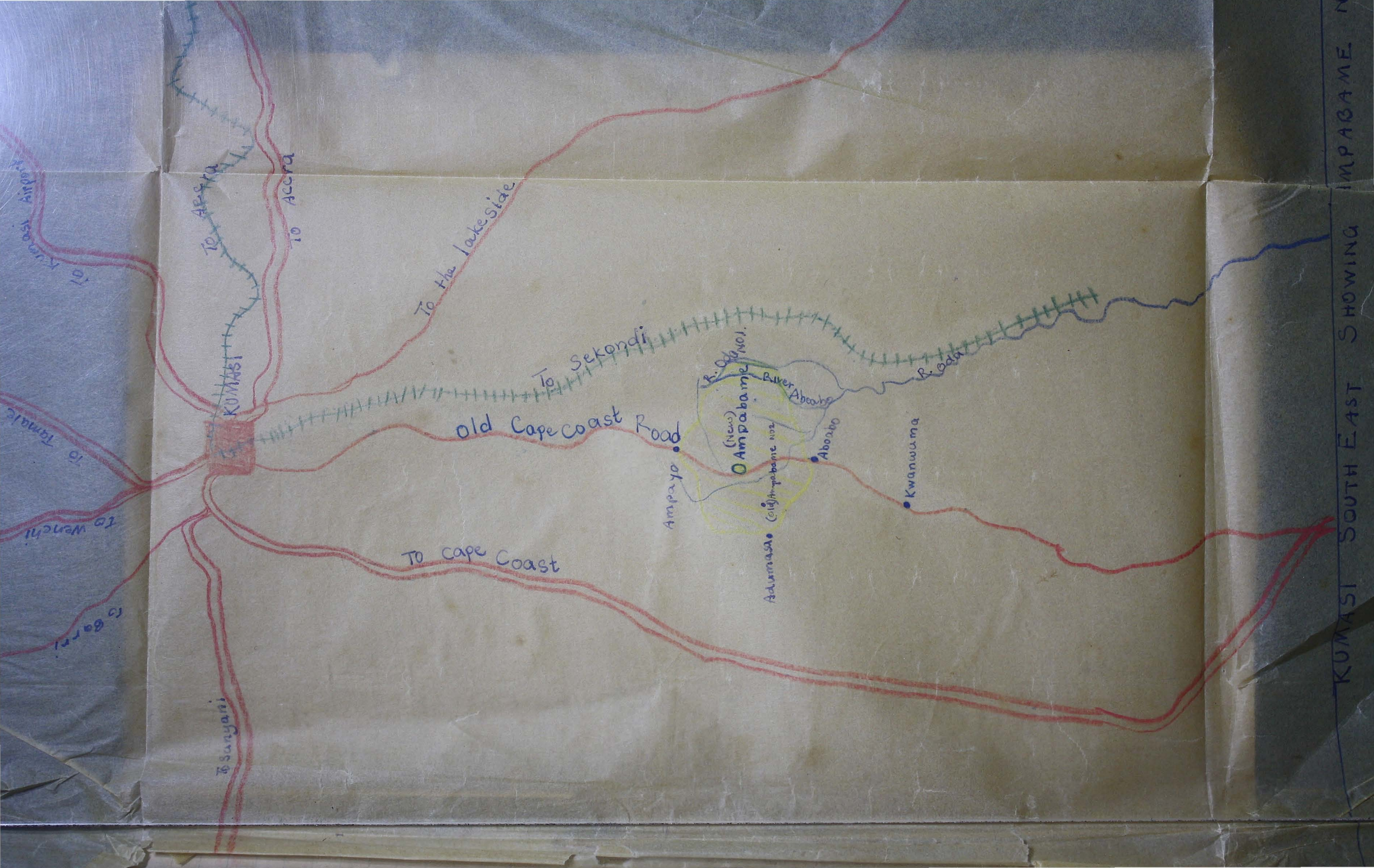


"the inside of my house"

the inside of my house



A pleasant thing - A football match A boy aged 8.



KUMASI

old Cape Coast Road

(New) Ampabame No. 1

To Cape Coast

To Sekondi

To the Lake Side

To Akyra
To Accra

To Kumasi Ainsah

To Tsmale
To Wenchil

To Barpi

To Sanyani

Ampayo

Aboah

Kwanwuma

R. Oda No. 1

River Aboah

R. Oda

KUMASI SOUTH EAST SHOWING IMPAGAME