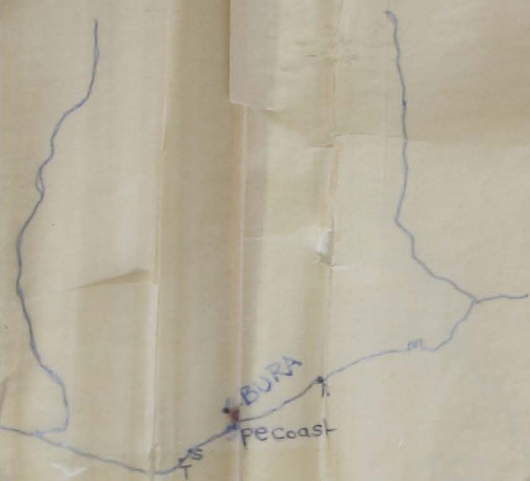


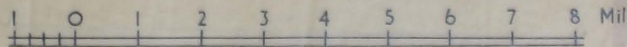
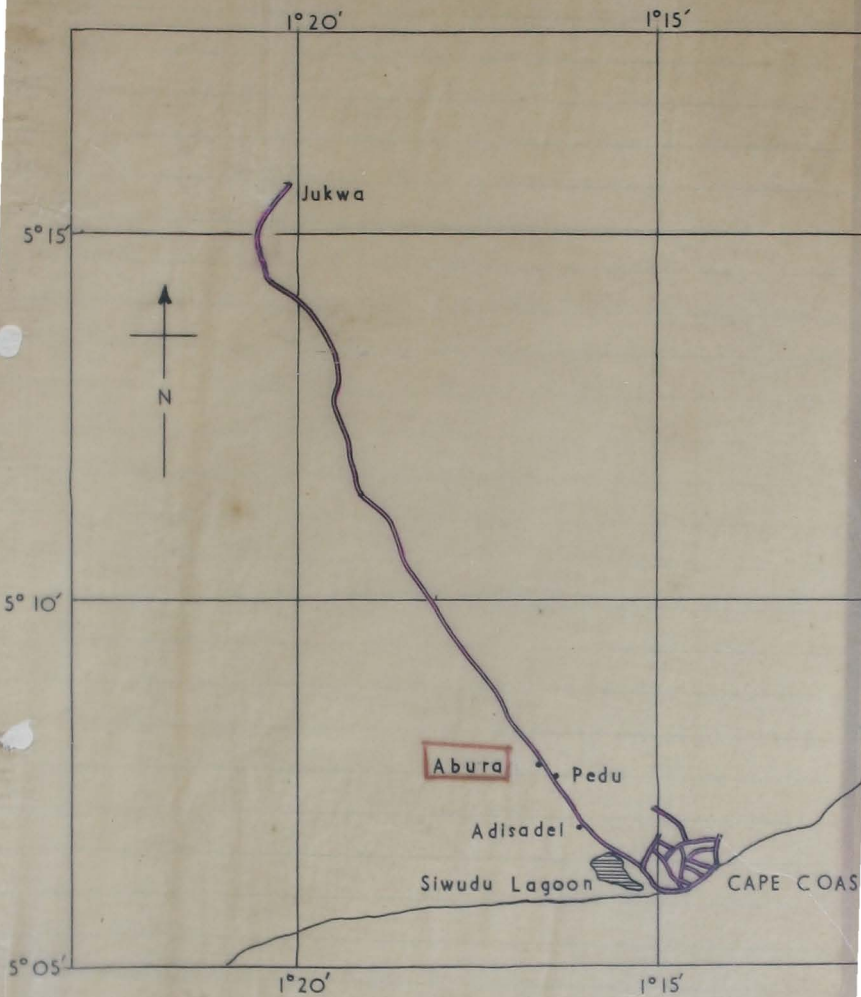
CHILD TRAINING
AT THE VILLAGE
OF
ABURA WŌWŌASO.

0 20 40 60 miles

Position of Abura in the Gold Coast.



Roads Leading to Abura.



SCALE 1:125,000 or $\frac{1}{2}$ " to a Mile.

P R E F A C E

This Essay is the result of a personal research work made under the study of Educational Psychology at the Institute of Education of the Gold Coast.

The aim of this Institution in demanding this work is to find out exactly how children are trained in different parts of the Gold Coast. In general, child training in this country is almost similar but with few differences to help identification.

This Essay deals with the Child Training of the village of Abura. My findings recorded were obtained through observation and interviews of some men, women and children of the village. My chief informants are the chief and some of his elders, an old native midwife, some mothers and some adolescent boys and girls and a few children. To all the above mentioned, I tender my sincerest thanks for their co-operation.

I wish also to thank Mr Taylor whose questionnaire has been of a great help and Professor T. L. Lewis, my tutor, who read through my work and made the necessary corrections.

VICTORIA WOOD.

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INTRODUCTION

The village of Abura Wowsaso, often referred to simply as Abura, lies about three miles to the North-West of Cape Coast in the Gold Coast Colony. Separated from Cape Coast town by three smaller villages of Siwudu, Adisadel and Pedu, it lies along the Cape Coast Tokuwa Road, on an attractive little spot. It is surrounded on all sides by coconut palms which provide shade during the hot day. The area of the village is small even by local standards being some two hundred and fifty yards wide. The ground is level except towards the eastern side where it rises. On this high ground stands the village Catholic Church towering above the coconut palms, thus being visible from every point in the surrounding countryside.

About a couple of hundred years ago, the village was founded by Burompon Kodwo, the third Paramount Chief of Cape Coast; it is the place where the Royal Stool of Cape Coast is kept. The Custodian of the stool lies there, and it is of interest to note that the present custodian is an old man 102 years of age. According to Tradition the founder named the village, "Bofo Kurowmu" that is "Hunters Ground" on account of the teeming game in the vicinity. The change of name Bofo Kurowmu to Abura was in gratitude to the Chief of Abura Denkyera who saved the founder from disgrace and possible war.

It happened that a stool was brought from Ashanti to Cape Coast, and as was customary in those unenlightened days, it had to be purified with

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human blood. A man was accordingly sacrificed. The victim was not a native of Cape Coast but a stranger. It turned out that soon after the grim ceremony, one Tom Ewusi, an elder from Anomabu, who had come to Cape Coast in search of a missing member of the Royal House of Anomabu went to the court of the Chief of Cape Coast.

Just before he entered he saw marks of blood at the gates, and suspected that this was human blood. He then concluded that this might be the blood of the missing person he was in search of. Acting on this suspicion, he accused the chief of Cape Coast of murdering a royal from Anomabu and called upon the latter to prove his innocence. The chief of Cape Coast took a serious view of the accusation. It soon developed into a feud which could be settled only by the Great Council of all the chiefs of Fantiland. The chief of Cape Coast was later indicted before this council composed of all but one of the seventy-seven chiefs of Fantiland. After hearing both sides of the case, the chiefs withdrew to consider their verdict. At this juncture the absent chief, the chief of Abura Denkyera, arrived and asked to be acquainted with the proceedings.

Having heard the story of the plaintiff, he asked whether the plaintiff could distinguish the blood of a human being from that of a sheep or goat. The plaintiff replied in the negative. Or what ground, he asked, did he then accuse the defendant? No answer was forthcoming. The chief then withdrew to decide the verdict. The chief of Cape Coast was acquitted of the charge. He

thought he could show his gratitude and admiration of the wisdom of the chief of Abura Denkyera in no better way than to name a village after him.

He accordingly changed the name of Bofu Kurowmu to Abura Wowsaso which name means 'The people of Abura have ears to judge cases'.

A visitor to this village is impressed by the neatly arranged buildings and well-kept surroundings. Through the centre of the village from west to east runs a tidy passage, the only street lined on both sides by rows of carefully constructed mud houses roofed with plaited grass, corrugated iron sheets or bamboo sticks. The chief's house figures prominently, it being the only one built with cement blocks. It is arranged in the form of a square with a large central courtyard where the elders meet to try cases or take decisions on matters affecting the village generally.

Except on Tuesdays and Sundays, during the short dry period following the harvest season, on rainy days and on the festival days, the village is deserted by the adult population in the mornings. The men go to their farms and the women either go with kerr or leave for the town to sell their crops especially coconut. These fruits are carried in large baskets on their heads instead of conveying same by lorries or buses which now ply the area.

The stranger who chooses the morning for a visit to Abura will see only children playing about and a few old men conversing by their doors. Some of these children — a small proportion of them — will be at school, but a majority of them

appear to have no need of the formal education given in the school. Unlike most children in other villages, the children of Abura ~~are~~ neither look sickly nor are they infected with sores and yaws. This is perhaps due to the usage of piped water and the maintenance of tidy surroundings.

In the evenings, the youth round off the day with games and romantic folk songs in the street. On moonlight nights these activities extend far into the night.

Small though it is, Abura can boast with three religious denominations, namely the Catholic, the Methodist Ahmadiyya Moslems. There are, of course the pagans who worship the lesser gods. Although the gods are said to be seventy-seven in number, it seems all but six have had their day.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL BACKGROUND.

The chief occupation of the people of Abura is agriculture; they are engaged in manual farming not mechanised farming and simple tools such as the hoe and the cutlass are used in cultivating the land. This type of farming requires more hands if the farms harvest enough crops. One way of providing free labour on the farm is to have many wives and as many children as possible. This is one economic reason for the practice of polygamy. But apart altogether from this economic consideration the birth of children is regarded as one of the highest blessings without which a man or woman loses social esteem.

Without a child, it is difficult for a married man or woman to exercise control over other children but he or she is reminded of the fact that he or she is childless. He cannot for instance easily send or punish a neighbour's child. Should a barren person punish a child who misconducts himself or shows disrespect for his elders the parents of the child especially the mother will in anger insult such a person so as to make him feel that life is not worth living without one's own child. Among the Akan when a man dies custom binds his children to bathe, clothe and provide a coffin for his corpse. That is exclusive duty of children who are also a replica of himself. Without a child he cannot perpetuate his kind or particular family or clan. That is the more important reason why childlessness, instead of being pitied, is on the contrary ridiculed. A member of a family who is incapable of having children is looked upon as a 'waste pipe'. This is perhaps more noticeable in the case of women than in that of men since

the Akan succession is matrilineal. The attitude towards having children is brought out by an actual illustration which is very typical. This incident occurred on Christmas Day 1954. A woman visited some relatives on Christmas and took in some drinks, perhaps a little too much. I was going to take some photographs of some children making merry at the time when I was near the compound of one of my informants. With tears in her eyes she said to me, "perfect stranger though I was to her: "MAYE GYAN" i.e. "I am useless" I did not want to embarrass her by asking what was the matter with her. Luckily a friend of hers came on the scene and enquired from her the cause of her tears. She replied sorrowfully: "I feel that without a child I am altogether useless in the world. Look at Adwowa Eason, Esi Dohah and their contemporaries, they all have children. Esi has three. I have none to sing the funeral dirge when I die, none to succeed me nothing to leave behind by which the world would remember me. Absolutely nothing! All my toil thro' life is fruitless; it would be better to die" This certainly is an individual case but it is very characteristic of the general attitude towards having children.

Due to the great importance attached to the having of children, sterility, particularly in women is regarded as the worst of evils. It is attributed to the influence of evil spirits including witches. They consult a medicine man under whose directions the afflicted undergo purificatory rites. Sometimes the woman bathes with water specially prepared with herbs for several days; at other times a fowl or sheep slaughtered, the meat treated in a magical sort of way and then special dish prepared for the woman or for the married couple. The people of Abura have a strong

belief that if the cause is spiritual, the couple will later be blessed with children. It least occurs to them that physiological conditions may make it impossible for the couple to have children. If the treatment turns out to be unsuccessful the woman's family will normally seek for a divorce.

It is known, however, that sterility may be due to syphilis. A girl who is morally weak and goes from man to man may easily contract this disease. Formerly this disease was treated by the local medicine man or herbalist but now, people prefer hospital treatment.

It is no wonder then that the people of Akura do not practice birth control. In the culture of the Akan people there is no such thing as an "illegitimate child". Far from being subjected to social ostracism such children are generally regarded as a gift of Providence as witnessed by the name they are usually given, to wit, "Nyamekye". The reason is that the family or the clan of the mother gets a member on whose behalf they will not be called upon to perform certain duties such as burial rites of the fathers of such children. Even when there are more children than there is accommodation it is always easy to send some of them to other members of the family.

As there is no social discrimination against children born of parents who are not married any more than there is social disapproval against polygamy, mothers, married or single, are respected. An unmarried mother has, other things being equal, good prospects of being married. Unfortunately, however, foster-children soon discover sooner or later that they are not the children of their mother's husband. This discrimination works both ways. A husband who

marries after the death of a wife with whom he had issue soon finds that the step-mother is not keen on the children of the man by a previous marriage. It is not unusual that orphans, especially the very young ones, die through unhappiness in the home. The belief prevails that the deceased mother, unable to bear the cruel treatment given to her child on earth, has taken away her child to join her in "Samsadze" i.e. the "Underworld". So if the man does not want to marry again he sends the children to their aunts and uncles on the maternal side while he provides for their maintenance. This however does not solve the problem of the children's unhappiness, for soon afterwards they come up against the same sort of discrimination. The aunts and uncles, in spite of their family connections with the half orphans, will normally give preferential treatment to their own children and the unhappy mental conflict of the orphans is revived.

To sum up, we see that although there is no social disrepute for the unmarried mother yet in marriage she is at a great disadvantage, since she has got to put up with discrimination in favour and against her own children and not only that; she may be made aware that she is putting an undue burden on her husband. In the local parlance she is said to have "come 'with a trailer'". Although the attitude to children is not one of hostility but of fondness yet this is unhappily restricted to one's own children. Fortunately however other factors such as the industry of the children, their readiness to undertake little jobs in the home, respect for elders, etc win for them the love and consideration that is usually given to children.

CHAPTER II

CHILD BEARING

As previously stated, the Aburas are very keen on having children, so just after marriage, the relatives of both the man and the woman look out for pregnancy. The cessation of the menstrual flow is a sure indication that a woman is pregnant. This is the chief sign of pregnancy, but apart from it, there are many other symptoms which will, ^{be} mentioned later on in the chapter.

When the woman becomes pregnant, the fact is treated as a secret between her and her husband during the first month. During the second month their parents are informed. Some people are so good at detecting pregnancy, that even if it is two weeks old, they are able to find out. Such people are known to possess 'bad eyes' which is the literal translation of the vernacular 'Wows enjwa'. It is believed at Abura that such people 'with eyes' are able through spiritual ^{or} evil means to destroy the child in the womb. For this reason, at the early stages of pregnancy, the pregnant women do not often go to the market or to public places. Charms and amulets are worn to ward off evil spirits which, in addition to death, are most feared.

The wife is taken to a native doctor who treats her with special herbs, roots, and bark of trees. For fear that they may loose their trade these native doctors never tell what sort of leaves, roots, and bark they use to make up their mixture.

The herbs are put into an earthenware pot, boiled and some of the liquid drunk as

medicine. Some of it also ^{is} administered by means of the syringe for two months. The pot is heated every morning and evening to prevent the growth of mould. At the end of each week the contents of the pot are replaced with fresh herbs. After every two months a different mixture is given to be used in the same way.

She is advised to use the medicine regularly and be industrious to ensure the well-being of the unborn child. She vomits in the mornings, and ^{at} times, in the evenings - which is normal; but if unfortunately she falls ill, the husband takes her to the native doctor for extra treatment.

During the first six months of pregnancy the woman is not allowed to eat certain things, such as sweet or overripped plantain, lest the baby should become feeble; pigs-feet, otherwise the baby will be born with a hard skin; snails, or the baby when born will always water the mouth. Groundnuts should not be taken too much, otherwise the baby will grow too fat in the womb. No alcoholic drink should be taken or else it will cause miscarriage.

The pregnant mothers indulge in sexual intercourse till ~~the~~ after the fourth month; then they perform it gently till the eighth month, when they stop entirely. This is what they generally do but ^{the} desire varies with some individuals. There are some women whose passion for sex increases tremendously throughout pregnancy, therefore they always compel their husbands to have the sex act with them. These husbands grow tired and weak and ^{may} become unable to get on well with their

manual work. Some of them consider this unhealthy on the theory that babies born of such excesses are scarcely strong.

Adultery is a taboo, and failure to keep this principle especially during pregnancy will cause miscarriage. Kneeling, lifting heavy objects, fighting and bending for a long time are also forbidden during this period.

In the course of the period of pregnancy, her husband buys some alcoholic drink and takes it to his father's 'Akor' where libation is poured to the god of his father and to the departed souls so that his wife might have a safe delivery.

'Akor' is a circular hole six inches in diameter, made in front of the houses of the heads of the families, where libation is poured annually, and in times of difficulties, to seek the aid of the gods and the dead.

Throughout the nine months, the pregnant woman often sleeps in the afternoons. Generally, they become quick-tempered and quarrelsome. They put on old clothes because it is believed that the bodily heat of a pregnant woman destroys clothes easily.

The skin, especially face, hands, and feet becomes pale; the feet of some of them swell up; some grow thin others become fat; the nipples become very dark and the temperature of the body mounts up considerably. Some clear their throats and spit in almost every other minute whilst others have not got this symptom.

In the mornings they get up from bed after their husbands. They should never cross the beds in

order to get up earlier. This is said to be bad luck and when done the husbands become sick. For this reason some mothers leave their husbands' house to live with their own families till long after delivery.

Apart from the general symptoms of pregnancy, individuals have their special peculiarities which they attribute to the behaviour of the unborn babies. For example some expectant mothers long to eat anything they see and tend to be beggars; they enjoy meals prepared by others more than their own; therefore the neighbours in Abura are very kind to their pregnant mothers.

As the time of delivery draws near, the husband does not go out often if the wife happens to be staying with him. If she is living in her family house, the husband often visits her and sees that she is always in good health. No preparation is made towards the end of pregnancy for confinement. It is believed that if dresses, under-wear, napkins and such things are prepared the child is likely to die soon after birth. She stores up food, ~~also~~ ^{also} such as ~~or~~ vegetables, corn, and firewood.

At the time of delivery, the woman's mother and a few relatives appear on the spot to help. All the children in the house are sent out to some relatives. When the labour pains start, the pregnant woman becomes very restless, goes up and down the room, talks as though crazy and finally removes her clothing without any feeling of shame.

One sad mistake is that most of the

young women are not told anything about labour pains before they give birth to their first born child ; so when they start to experience the labour pains, they feel them so much that many a time they vow never to have intercourse with their husbands again.

A midwife is sent for and she comes along with some herbs which the pregnant woman mixes and drinks to help her to deliver quickly. When the delivery delays, a certain herb is ground and mixed with water; this looks thick and slimy. In the past this was the only medicine given for quick delivery. These days castor oil is used by many of them. The midwives at Abura are old women, who though not qualified in mid-wifery have had much practice in it.

Sometimes the women bring forth even before the mid-wife arrives but at other times they find it very difficult to deliver even after taking the medicine brought by the midwife. It is believed that inability to bring forth means that the woman has had intercourse with another man apart from her husband. The husband is therefore immediately sent for and when he comes, he is made to spit on to the head of his wife and clean it off with the sole of his left foot. As the husband does this, the wife confesses all that she had done unfaithfully against her husband since they married; this is known as the cleansing period.

As soon as a baby is born, the mother becomes very anxious and asks whether the infant is a boy or a girl. The mother becomes more pleased when a girl is born especially

when about two or three previous children are all boys.

The mid-wife cuts the cord by stretching it down as far as the knee and cutting in between. The navel is dressed up and the placenta is buried near the house. If the baby is a girl holes are pierced in the ears for wearing ear-rings.

The first thing a child does when born is to cry because of its exposure to the cold atmosphere unlike the warmth in the mother's stomach. If it fails to cry then either it is dead or dumb. In this situation, the mid-wife tries to help it to cry slapping the thigh, holding it up by the feet, rubbing the face, and finally, by applying powdered herbs to the nose to let it sneeze and cry. If all these prove unsuccessful then the baby is dead.

When it utters some cries to prove its existence it is rubbed all over with palm kernel oil. This is supposed to remove some slimy matter from the baby's skin. The Aburas are very particular about this cleaning because if not properly done, a bad scent is sure to stay on the baby's body forever. It is then bathed by the mid-wife or a grandmother on either the maternal or paternal side, wrapped up in a white cloth, and laid on a mat to sleep.

The kinsmen are informed and they go to welcome the new baby and congratulate the mother. Everybody becomes very glad, especially if it is the first born of the parents.

The husband buys three or four changes of clothing, headties, powder, pomade, comb, brush and lavender and sends them as a present to the

wife and baby. The amount of two pounds ten shillings is also added so that the wife could buy the rest of her needs.

The native doctor is also consulted.

He visits the woman and applies some powdered medicine prepared from the bark of trees into the cuts made chest and temples to drive away evil spirits.

Both the baby and the mother are cared for by their family. The mother is given porridge prepared with pepper and palm-oil in the mornings and eats a lot of palm-nut soup and fufu. Much palm-oil and palm-nut soup are taken so that sufficient milk may accumulate in the breast. She also eats much pepper to heal the sore in her stomach. Every morning and evening she sits in a basin of hot water which helps to heal the sore in the vagina.

The baby is bathed thrice daily: in the morning, afternoon and evening. Before each bath hot water is used, hot water is used to massage the hands, legs, head and the trunk by means of a towel. This is done to make the bones strong and keep them in form. Tepid water is always used for bathing it after which it is powdered, dressed and put to the feed.

During the first seven days the child and mother are visited by their relatives only. On the eighth day relatives and neighbours are invited to the naming ceremony which usually takes place at the woman's house. On this eighth day most of the male babies are circumcised but few parents do not enforce it and therefore leave it till sometime later on.

It is on the eighth day the parents are sure that the child will live with them; therefore, on that day, they give it a name.

Every child gets two names. The first one is derived from the day of the week on which the child is born. The second is, in first-born children, the name of its grandfather on the paternal side.

This is a table showing the days of the week and the names made from them.

<u>English</u>	<u>Vernacular</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Sunday	Kwesida	Kwesti	Esi
Monday	Dwowa	Kodwo	Adwowa
Tuesday	Benada	Kobena	Abena
Wednesday	Wukuda	Kweku	Ekuwa
Thursday	Yawda	Kwaw	Aba
Friday	Fida	Kofi	Efiwa
Saturday	Memenda	Kwamena	Araba

On the eve of the seventh day, the name decided upon for the child is announced to the head of the family and the relatives are reminded of the naming ceremony. The house is cleaned and some sweets and drinks are bought for the celebration.

Early in the morning of the eighth day the baby and mother dressed up in white clothes; she puts on white ear-rings, necklace and bracelets. A black bead necklace is added to that of the child. This is to help the child to develop a firm neck. Two special different kinds of waist beads — 'Nkoko' and 'Black beads' are put around the

baby's waist. The former, yellowish in colour derives its name from the baby's stool which looks just like the beads. The latter, it is believed, helps the child to develop a good waist and prevent it from getting waist-diseases. The male and female babies are dressed alike save that the male ones wear no ear rings.

Those invited attend in their white native attire with their presents. By seven o'clock, almost all those invited gather in the woman's house. The head of the family who is to perform the ceremony announces the aim of their meeting. The baby is laid in his lap and a table on which is placed two drinking glasses and a bottle of Champagne or Rum is placed near him. He fills one of the glasses with water and pours some of the rum or champagne into the other.

With the left hand supporting the child he dips the fore-finger of the right hand into the glass of water and as he lets a drop fall on the baby's tongue he repeat some words. For example if the boy was born on Sunday and the grand-father's name to be given was Nuapa, he would say "Kwesi Nuapa, se ese nsu a nna nsu a". He dips the finger into the glass of water three times and repeats the same words. He then dips the finger thrice into the glass of rum or champagne and repeats the action. This time the words change a bit and he says, "Kwesi Nuapa, se ese nsa a nna nsa". These words mean "Kwesi Nuapa if you say a thing is water it must be water and if you say a thing is drink, it must be drink". By this ceremony, the baby is commanded to grow up in truth; it should not call water

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drink and vice versa.

The celebrant then says to the gathering "Kwesi Nuapa se Akyedze a negya dze ama no yi dedzi no sor, na n'ase no oko a oko hom nsam" meaning "Kwesi Nuapa says he has taken the upper part of the present his father has given to him so you may enjoy the rest".

The sweets and drinks are served and while they drink, the celebrant tells the life story of the person after whom the baby is named. He offers his present to the baby and tells him to lead a good life and follow the foot steps of his grand father. If the grand-father is alive, the baby is laid on his lap and he offers it a present. The others sendⁱⁿ their presents, shake hands with it and welcome it into the family.

It is their custom that every man should name three children after his father so that if anyone of them dies, there will still be others bearing the name. The fourth and subsequent children are named after people the father likes. He can name^{them} after his dear friends or any good person of the family.

If the first, second and third children are all boys, the third boy is called Mensah. But if the first two babies are boys and the next one is a girl, she gets the name Twents. The tenth born, if a boy is called 'Badu' but if a girl, 'Baduwa', meaning tenth born. The first syllable 'Ba' means child and 'Du' means ten; that is how the name is arrived at. In the same way the seventh born gets a name from the number seven which is esuon and are called 'Esuon'.

Twins are named 'Ata Panjin' and 'Ata Kalera' meaning first and second twins. The next child after them is named Tawia and the next is Nyankomabo.

When a mother always loses a child she consults the native doctor and ceremonies are performed. When the mother brings forth again, cuts are made on the child's face on the temples and chest and some black powdered medicine rubbed in. The baby is known as 'Kosamba' meaning he continually comes to life and dies after a short period. These children are given funny names such as 'Ama Pretsepan' meaning 'Ama Empty Plate', 'Wangar' which is a Hausa word, 'Esi Pinanko' meaning 'Esi who when pushed does not move', 'Kodiwo Nwurabanwuraba' which means 'Kodiwo Litter' and many others.

Children born on feast days and on special occasions get special names; for example, a girl born on Christmas day which falls on Friday may be called 'Efuwa Burenya' meaning 'Efuwa Christmas'. There is a woman in the village by name 'Adwowa Krataa', meaning 'Adwowa Paper'. This woman was born at the time when the paper currency was first introduced.

When a woman's husband dies at a time she is pregnant, the child when born is called 'Antobam' he has lost paternal love.

Names are also given according to individual behaviour in the community, and here are some examples with their meanings.

<u>Fanti</u>	<u>English</u>
Kweku Nsembron	Kweku the wrong doer.
Ama Brefo	Ama the meek.

Kofi Katakwi

Ankonam

Dabi na mebeka

Kofi the brave .

The only child

I will say it in future.

After the customary naming, the Christian parents at the village choose a day for baptizing the baby. They are mostly named after saints and by that they get English Christian names.



A woman with large breasts.



Breast Feeding.

CHAPTER III

BABYHOOD

Feeding Nursing & Weaning

Babyhood starts from the time the baby is born to the time it is able to walk and speak. A mother has three main tasks during this period and these are good feeding, careful nursing and weaning. The mothers at Abura, unlike those in town have a less attractive way of going about these tasks.

For the first two or three days after birth when the mother's milk is not ready, the child feeds only on cool boiled water to which some sugar has been added. Twenty percent of the mothers make use of teaspoons when feeding their babies. The rest use their fingers by dipping two fingers of the right hand in the water and putting the drops into the baby's mouth.

Breast feeding starts on the fourth day after birth. There are no fixed times for feeding. It is fed after each bath and also whenever it cries. When put to the breast, the child is not sufficiently fed. It sucks for only ten minutes and is put away. As a result, the baby cries for more food shortly after each feed and thus the feeding times are made more frequent.

Breast feeding is done everywhere save in the lavatory and the mother either stands or sits down. On the way to the farm or town the mother gives suck to her baby whilst walking. In the town or farm he stands by the road or sits under a tree, and at home she sits on a stool in the kitchen or on a stone under a tree near the

not prove successful, the babies are given to other relatives or friends who are also nursing babies and have milk in their breasts.

There are some mothers who have large breasts and the milk keeps on dripping throughout the day, thus soiling their clothing. In order to avoid this as well as choking the babies they squeeze the milk into chamber pots from time to time and throw it away. All the mothers enjoy to feed and nurse their babies. They are proud of it and are always pleased to carry it about to show people that they have a baby.

For the first three months after birth the mothers devote their whole attention to the babies and as a rule do not have any sexual intercourse with their husbands because the sore in the womb and vagina is not healed and will be bruised. The first time they do it after delivery is called 'Yi moko' meaning 'picking pepper'. It is so called because the pains experienced, they say, is just like putting pepper into the vulva. Despite this some mothers do it even after six weeks.

NURSING.

At Abura, the mothers themselves nurse their babies. It is only when the mother is dead or seriously sick that the baby is nursed either by the grandmother or any volunteer among her family.

The mother makes a collection of old materials which they call 'nkonaba' meaning 'rags' and tears them into required sizes for napkins. The ends of the napkins are firmly fixed into the

baby's waist beads so that one end hangs just below the spine and the other one under the navel. In this way a pad is made between the thighs for collecting the urine and faeces.

The first stool passed by the baby is, in a few cases, hard and black. With others, it is a bit soft but not watery. This is what has previously been referred to as 'nkakoa'.

Most of the babies cry whenever they soil their napkin and their mothers change it for them. Some mothers do not mind when they hear the cries of their babies and therefore are not quick at changing the napkins. Other babies do not cry when they soil their napkin and when the mothers find out and change them for them, they cry for being deprived the pleasure of the warm napkin. Each napkin is used up three or four times ^{before it is washed}. When the soil is discovered the baby is cleaned with a part of the rag and folded over so that a clean dry portion of the same napkin is made available for use again.

Formerly, soap was not used in washing babies' napkins for fear that the soda in the soap will irritate the baby. Nowadays, they appreciate the use of soap.

The baby's stool is never said to be nasty or have a bad odour otherwise the baby's spirit is supposed to be angry, feel disgraced and consequently die. It is believed that every baby, before it is able to speak, always has a spirit near it with whom it speaks by using signs. They say that these are the spirits who sent the babies to the world and therefore they stay near and keep watch over them till they



A baby in mother's arms.

are able to communicate with the society into which they are born. It is also believed that if the baby is disgraced in anyway or it is not properly cared for, the spirits take away its life so that it goes back to live with them.

For this reason, the parents are very careful in treating the babies. If for example the baby is carried without a napkin and passes its stool so that accidentally some of it drops into food being prepared or into a basin of food being eaten, the mother does not throw away the food. She removes just that part where it dropped and eats the rest.

It is partly due to these frequent stools that the baby is bathed thrice a day. After bath, myrrh is mixed with water and smeared on its body.

When the baby is born, it is carried about in the arms till the navel sore is healed. If the baby is carried at the back before that time the sore will be bruised.

The baby is carried about at the back by the mother and any of the relatives to everywhere except near the dead and to the cemetery. When the child is two weeks old it finds it difficult to carry its head erect hence it is always supported by the hand whenever it is being lifted up from its mat or when it sits on its mothers laps or rests in her arms. It is not trusted to children, not even adolescent girls. Only adults can handle it well. When put at the back, it is bound up well with cloth up to the neck with both hands covered up. When control is gained over the neck, say after three months, the baby is bound at the back up to the

bust so that the hands are taken out. At this stage it can be handled by others other than adults, but not children under eight years of age. "It is observed said one of my informants, "that female babies achieve muscular control earlier than the male ones

In the early morning and at night when the mother wishes to attend a wake-keeping or to go to somewhere, a headtie is tied around the baby's head to keep off the dew. If this is not done, the baby is sure to discharge frequent watery stools the next and the subsequent days.

Whenever the mother wants to drink water, she first offers the calabash to the baby to have a sip before she drinks the rest. If the baby is unable to eat the hard food given it during the the mother gets and eats it, although it may be covered with the baby's slimy saliva.

For the first few weeks of a baby's life it sleeps most of the time and wakes up only during bathing and feeding times. As it sleeps a branch of mint called 'Eme' is always put near the baby to keep off evil spirits. The scent of this mint is believed to be very disagreeable to evil spirits. When a mother is leaving a baby alone in a room for a long time she puts a bundle of broom near the baby to serve the same purpose as the mint.

When a baby suffers from hiccup, gentle beats are made on the chest with the hand by the person holding it, and at the same time some heavy noise is made from the throat. This sound is the same as that made when a mother forces a baby out during delivery and also when lifting heavy objects. When it yawns, the sound made by the mother is just like the clucking of a hen.



Side Feeding.

house, in a room sitting on a mat or while standing and conversing with a friend.

During feeding, the mother places the child in her arms or on her laps with its head in the crook of her left elbow. She uses the right hand to hold and squeeze out the milk from the left breast into the baby's mouth. After a few minutes the baby is put to the right side of the breast and the left hand used for squeezing out the milk.

When the milk flows rapidly some of it gets into the wind pipe and the baby suffers from belching. Air is blown vigorously by mouth over its head, and as the belching cools down feeding continues.

The breast milk is nauseating and has the power of wearing out clothes, so during feeding the mother takes off her covershoulder in order not to soil it.

The babies do not put on clothes, they only have on their napkins and are always covered by the mother's cover-cloth.

When the baby is sick or satisfied it refuses to suck. The commonest way of curing stomach troubles at Abura is by syringing. If the mother discovers that the baby is sick, the herb 'mpatowa nooe' and a little pepper are ground, mixed and used for syringing it.

Some mothers have very little breasts others have enough but without milk. The former type are believed to be those who during early girlhood, allowed men to have sexual connexions with them, thus pressing down the breasts and retarding their growth. Both of them are given some mixture of herbs to drink and if it does



A child learning to sit.



Crawling.

At times the babies do not stop crying at all, especially when they are having a cold. It is difficult for the baby to remove the phlegm from the nose so the mother sucks it with the mouth and throws it away.

At the age of three months the baby begins to show signs when it feels like passing its stool. It does this by imitating the sound made by the mother in stopping hiccough. On hearing this sound the mother sits down on a stool and places the feet sideways so that so that the soles face each other and the heels and toes of both feet are joined and a hole made in the instep. The baby is held by the mother under the arm pits and made to sit directly over the instep with its legs thrown forward in between the mothers legs. In this position the baby is held till it finishes. The stool is then collected and thrown away into the nearby bushes. At this time the faeces is always examined for the teething symptom.

When the baby is three months old it is out-dowered. It is dressed in new ~~size~~ clothes and trinkets. The father if he is alive presents it with a golden ring. Girls under fifteen years of age are usually asked to take the baby round to see its relatives. Welcome presents are given to the baby and the girl collects and takes them home to its mother. The next day, the child's hair and nails are cut for the first time by the father. If the father is dead or away from the village, any man on the paternal side is fit to do it.

In addition to the father's ring, twins get the beads of the gods. This is expensive. The father buys a goat, eggs, raffia, white calico and some alcoholic drink for libation just before

the out-dooring ceremony.

Two leaves of the 'Edwen tree' are put into a brass bowl and covered with water. The raffia is spread in front of it and the twins laid beside it. Libation is then poured to the gods and the goat is then killed. The raffia is dipped into the blood and the eggs are knocked against each other over it. This is collected into a bag and hung in the corner of a room. It is supposed to speak annually predicting to them about their future life. They also ask favours from it when they are in trouble. The water in the brass bowl is used for their bath after which are dressed for the out-dooring with their ceremonial beads on their wrists. The beads are red, white, black, blue and a piece of gold.

When the baby is six months old it is taught how to sit. The mother sits it on the ground and holds it from falling. As time goes on she leaves the baby for few seconds, gradually increasing the number of seconds so that after some time the child is able to sit and move its body about. This develops into crawling. During the twelfth month, the child makes more effort to hold on to things and stand up. Later on it takes a few jerky steps and its his parents provide him with a wooden wheel, which it wheels round the compound with some one behind to hold it from falling. All the members of the household become happy and are more interested in the baby. Sometimes when the baby is sitting its father would go and let it stand up; then with a toy or a brightly coloured object in his hand, the father would stand

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Learning to walk with wheels

at about one yard away from the baby and stretching forth the object would ask the baby to come for it. The baby stands there and taking some jerky steps goes forward for it. Some times the father moves further back as the baby approaches him and sometimes the baby becomes annoyed and sits down to cry. After four or five months practice, he is able to walk. Another difficult task for the baby is the acquisition of speech. The baby learns to speak by saying the most simple words as 'Mama' for mother, 'Ba' meaning come as well as other meaningless sounds. Gradually, as it hears people speak in the house it picks up names of objects such as 'nsu' meaning 'water'. Most of these words are mispronounced for example 'nhyu' for 'nsu', But through careful imitation and practice they correct themselves.

The above observation differs with individual babies. Some are able to speak when one year old, whilst others are cannot speak but are able to walk. There are some who walk at the age of two years and others who speak when twenty one months old. There are some are unable to walk even after two and a half years of age. Such babies are put in front of the house very early in the morning for three consecutive weeks. The fear of darkness and cold are said to help it to walk. Parents become very happy and give it eggs to eat. Not until the time the baby is able to walk it never eats eggs.

In most cases, both the bladder and bowel training during the day are completed between one and a half to two years. Just before then, the

baby is introduced to the chamber pot and by using it often, it is trained to be tidy.

Up to this time, babies are not clothed. The beads are taken off the waists of the boys and the girls are given a piece of red cloth to be worn through the beads between the thighs. This prevents them from getting a certain kind of vagina disease known as 'whites' which is called in Fanti 'Egyaepuu'.

SPEECH

From the time the baby is born between the fifth and sixth months he cannot speak. Whether it is hungry, sick, bitten by an insect, tired of sleeping in one position or unhappy in any way, he expresses himself by crying. Sometimes his cries are loud and at other times shrill. These cries have their meaning. When it is loud then it is hungry or tired of lying in one position, but when it is shrill then it is suffering from the stomach, head or some parts of its body. The ignorant mother tries in different ways to keep it quiet. She feeds it and lays it down, but when it continues to cry then it may be sick so medicine is given. Whilst crying, the baby makes gestures which also guides the mother to know the particular place it is suffering. For example, if it is bitten by an insect, it may try to touch that part and the mother finds out that the place is swollen up. She scratches it or applies some mentholatum.

From five months onwards the child starts to learn some vocabularies. It listens to the people around him speak. At times they even speak to it but unfortunately, it does not understand them. It listens anxiously and as the time goes on it

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understands them, but cannot answer to their questions. Instead it nods the head. The commonest words familiar to it and it ^{tries} says them for example 'ma' meaning 'give', 'ba' meaning 'come' 'ko' meaning 'go' and many others. Gradually it endeavours to say these words correctly by listening attentively when people speak around it.

Between the eighth and eleventh months it tries to say such simple sentences as 'Me da wo ase' meaning 'thank you' which it says at first 'Daase'; 'Mab-nom nnu' meaning 'I will drink water' which it says at first 'Manu nhyu'; 'Mama aki' meaning 'Mother is gone'. He says bye-bye which he at it says at first 'Maa maa'. It says this to people when they are leaving it.

By the fifteenth month he can say all these sentences better and it is also able to say a few more words. Gradually, it learns a lot and all the people in the house are amused especially when it mispronounces its words. Sometimes the call it by some of its mispronounced words which serve him as nick-names. By the time the baby is two years it is able to make good sentences in expressing itself.

WEANING

The mothers at Abura start weaning their children very early and end it at a later date. The baby is given food as soon as it stretches forth its hand and demands for it.

At the age of three months, the baby is given such foods as mashed boiled plantain, akasa, cassava, kenkey and cooked palm-nuts.

At first these are made soft. The palm-nut for example is chewed by the mother and the paste given to the baby, or after it has been pounded for making soup some of the paste is reserved for the baby.

At this time the baby always looks dirty because its muscles are not developed at all and it finds it difficult in putting food straight into its mouth. It makes a mess of the food given it by throwing it away in bits. It makes its fingers face and chest dirty. Very little or nothing gets into the stomach when it eats.

After six months fufu is introduced.

At this time the baby is able to eat some of the fufu. It sucks as regular as before and when the mother is eating anything she puts some into its hand. Only fruits especially mangoes are not given to the baby till after teething. They believe that such fruits when taken before teething prevents the teeth from coming out. Avocada pear and bananas are given to it. Boiled ripe plantain and kenkey are the commonest types of solid foods given to the baby at this time. Ripened plantain is not given in the evening because it is hard to digest and often causes stomach troubles when eaten at night.

Soup is given to the babies but normally they do not like the taste because of the pepper so their parents promise to give them meat and fish if they take it. If they still refuse to take it, they are beaten. Somehow, the mother manages that the baby takes in some of the soup. She makes sure of this when she sees water coming down the baby's nose.

Two round small balls with holes bolted in them are made of wood. The mother threads these and ties ^{them} around the wrist of the baby. The baby is always conscious of them and plays with them by sucking. This is a practice to help the babies to be right-handed, to know the way to the mouth and stop thumb-sucking.

Between the fourth and the sixth months the baby gives off frequent watery stools. This is a sign of teething. After sometime she notices that the baby's gum is swollen up. The baby then feels very uneasy and cries a lot. It finds it difficult to eat. The mother gives it more solid food which presses the gums down and exposes the teeth. If the food is hot, the mother crushes it up with her fingers and tries to cool it off by fanning it with the mouth. She swings the hand to and fro and sings 'Dwo, dwo, dwo ma Abena ntsi' meaning 'cool, cool cool for Abena to eat'. She repeats this till it cools off and gives it to the baby.

The middle teeth below appear first, then the two middle upper ones. Should the upper one appear first, they are considered a bad luck. The native doctor is informed who demands money, eggs, calico and a fowl. These are offered to the baby's god in order that it might cast away evils which mean to harm the baby and the family.

During teething, the baby's temperature often rises; it is called 'Nowura akra no ho' meaning literally 'the baby's master has moved within it'. A mixture of herbs is ground and smeared all over the body and face. Some give the baby quinine. Some babies are not completely weaned



A baby eating



A mother coaxing a baby to walk

until enough teeth come out which they use ~~for use~~ for biting the mothers' breasts. Other reasons for weaning are lack of breast milk and death of mother.

In the village of Abura some babies are breast fed even after two years. At this time there is very little milk in the breast and the baby who sucks sees the raw milk in its faeces.

For the last few weeks of weaning, the mother uses bitter medicine such as quinine and herbs such as 'Ewen' and 'Ekukramba' to drive away the baby. She grinds the herbs and cunningly gets the baby to taste it. Finding that it to be bitter, it cries as it sees the mother applying it to the nipples. It runs away and cries but the mother pays no attention to it.

After some weeks the baby gets used to eating food without any breast milk. It eats alone near the mother in a small bowl and is given enough fish and meat to eat in order to make the change attractive. Almost all of them used the right hand for eating except a few. The mothers discourage these few who use the left hand by holding this hand when they are eating or by bandaging the fingers together to remind the child not to use it. Some babies put big mouthfuls of food into their mouths, others talk or sing and some put the palm of the left hand on the ground when eating. All these are bad habits in eating and the mothers correct them so that at the age of five or six years, the babies are used to the best manners when eating.

They always have some water near them while eating. This is given to the babies when

they choked.

Relations to Parents.

The first person the ^{baby} child grows to know very well is the mother because from birth right up to the time the child starts to see, the mother is the most intimate being it has. If it is an orphan, the aunt or whosoever takes care of it wins the love meant for the mother. The father also often visits them at the mother's house and takes the baby in his arms and plays with it. When the mother is very busy about her housework and there is one to carry it, the baby, tired of lying down, cries in order to be lifted up. The father gets it and holds it against its shoulder, pats its back gently so that it may fall back to sleep. With the child thus carried he paces up and down in the room, or if it is warm he goes outside for some fresh air. Sometimes, in the early morning the father goes for the baby and takes it out for a walk.

Relations to other Relatives.

Apart from the parents the next person best known to the child is the grandmother who bathes it and often carries it when the mother is busy. Old women in general are very particular about grandchildren and always wish their children to marry and bring forth children so that they could pay their respect to them before they depart from this world. They are always said to spoil grand children because they always try to please them and do not want them to be punished. They always know a lot of useful herbs so whenever the baby is sick they take over to nurse it. She handles the baby so gently that it at times take her to be her mother.

From the grandmother we go on to the

other members in the house. The baby sees them everyday so whenever they carry it it does not cry. There are some babies who are so good that if even you do not know them, they will not show any unfamiliarity when they carry it. But a majority of the babies at Abura are not like that. If you do not frequent to the house they and you happen to get them, they will cry until you have given them back to a member of the household. The reason is that the baby feels insecure, in that most people know that it is just proper to see and carry a baby for few minutes when they visit the parents pretend to be pleased to carry the baby in their arm; although they are in a hurry to go away and discharge her home duties. In their anxiety to go away but thinking it improper to tell the mother to get the baby, pinch it so that it cries and struggles to go away. thus they get the chance of going away. The babies unable to express themselves in words, do not feel secured in the company of strangers, however pleased they may be pleased to carry it.

Babies, as said by one of my informants have the power of knowing who is a witch or wizard so that should such a person approach them they scream. The baby is therefore best known to the parents, grandmothers, people of the household and relatives

POSSESSIONS

Babies as they walk and talk have very little possessions. Their parents give them only one cloth. The size of that given to the male babies is about half a yard and the female also have the same piece plus a cover shoulder. These

clothings are kept by their mothers till they need them. When these are first put on them, they find it very difficult to take them off. They like to go out in it and show it to their friends. Their parents strongly objects to this for the simple reason of getting them dirty and filthy.

Most of them are given native stools on which they sit when eating. Some are given wooden babies. They get so fond of the wooden babies that they sleep with them at night. They keep the native stools and the wooden babies very near to them. They hide these in the corners of the compound and become extremely hungry when they are not found. They make collections of pictures labels of tins, empty cigarette and powder tins, pieces of cloth, shells stones and empty bottles. The parents are never in favour of the empty bottles because there is the likelihood that the baby will accidentally break the bottle and hurt itself. They often pick out the empty bottles and throw them away although the babies get annoyed and cry. Some of them keep their things in empty boxes and biscuit tins. They become very selfish and hate to see people touch their belongings. Should anyone handle or sit on their stool they find possible means of getting it back although they may have no need of it at that moment.

On the other hand babies are in the habit of collecting things belonging to others and when the owner comes along either to convince them to let the other party to play with it for sometime thus giving the thing back to its owner, providing them with immediate substitution and hiding the

other one to its owner. At this time the baby is hushed to put away things that does not belong to it and told not to be a thief. Very often when they take precious things belonging to others, they destroy it so that the owners cannot help but beat them and report them to their parents.

CHAPTER IV

INFANCY

During babyhood, the baby is the closest and ^{most} constant associate of the parents especially the mother. She always carries it about at her back or in her arms. It is only when the baby is asleep that it may be laid on a mat. Occasionally, when the mother is too busy having her bath or cooking near some fierce ~~to~~ ^{blazing} fire, the baby is carried by the father or a relative. It is always the aim of the mother to hurry up with her work and attend to the baby. Therefore for a greater part of the waking hours, and all through the night, the baby stays near the mother.

After this time comes the period of infancy. This period extends between the ages of two and seven years. In the course of this period everything gradually changes for the child. It is a period of great physical activity. The infant can speak and walk and he becomes interested in the world around him.

HEALTH

An infant enjoys taking his bath. He just rubs soap very hard on a piece of sponge, dips it into a bucket of water so that all the lather disappears and draws the sponge out. Each time the sponge is removed from the water, it is put on the head and the water drips down the baby.

Some mothers are not worried about this because it is the first attempt of self re-
ing) for the infant. Through much practice and observation the infants after a few months get used to retaining the soapy lather in the sponge and

washing certain parts of the body. Apart from this most of the mothers bathe their infants in the evenings to make sure that they are clean before they go to bed at night.

Some parents beat their infants when they first handle soap and sponge because much soap is wasted. This is not wise because such a punishment ~~causes~~ induces fear in the infant and discourages him from carrying on with such-like experiments.

If a child plays in water for a long time or walks about in the rain, he is likely to catch cold. For this reason the mothers wipe them dry ^{immediately} after they have seen them play in water. When it rains they advise the infants to keep themselves dry. Some naughty children enjoy disobeying and they play about naked in the rain. The parents get annoyed and check them by the usual corporal punishment, which is beating.

Almost all the infants at Abura wear no clothes when they are at home. They all go about naked; the female ones with the red cloth tied ^{up} in their waist beads. It is only when they are going to church or town that the male put on dresses sewn just like gowns and the female put on the native cloth. Because they are not used to wearing them, they are always dressed by their mothers. The girls look very smart and attractive in theirs but at first they can hardly walk in them. They are able to put it on and walk well in them by the end of the period of their infancy.

In the mornings after their mothers have cleaned their teeth, the soft chewing sponge is

used in cleaning theirs. At the age of four onwards they chew their own chewing sponge to clean their teeth.

They eat ^{at} anytime and everywhere. They eat the same food as the adults such as kenkey and fish, fufu and soup and boiled cassava and plantain with groundnut or garden-egg stew. They eat by themselves with their hands at other times they eat with their brothers and sisters or friends in the same bowl. They are told not to eat rotten fruits or beg for food from other people. Their mothers frown ^{on} and wink at them when they see them taking food from other people.

Food.

Food is very essential to man; it nourishes and helps with his growth; therefore the mothers always try and provide their children with sufficient food. Should an infant refuse to eat, or loose appetite, the mother becomes worried and tries to find out the cause. It may be that the child does not like that particular food, or is sick or is depressed somehow. The mother becomes upset especially when the child continues to refuse her food for a whole day or two. She asks the child what is wrong with him. If he is sick the mother will be able to detect that for herself, from his eyes and temperature. The infant is begged to make his own choice of food and the mother at such a time is too willing to prepare that dish for him. When it is prepared she coaxes him and begs him to eat. They think that if the child does not eat he may die and this is the cause of their worry. Some mothers pay little attention to the children when they act like this. But as

soon as they see them getting lean they rush them to a medicine man for cure. They then give them attention, prepare them what they choose and help them to eat by sitting them on their lap and using a teaspoon to feed them.

The healthy infants are given food in their own small tins and they go outside the house to eat. They eat with their friends so that they in turn may eat with them when they get their food. As time goes on children go from house to house to eat. Their mothers always try to discourage them because they consider it a bad habit. They check them by either beating or keeping them indoors without food. Sometimes the children when thus treated go and tell the grandmothers and aunts that their mothers are not in favour of their eating from them and that they are punished if they do so. Naturally, these relatives get offended and go to question the mothers about those children. These relatives get offended because they feel they are suspected that they could put poison into the food for the children to eat. They therefore treat the matter as a serious one and the mothers concerned become very embarrassed.

The infants at this stage take pleasure in holding their genital organs. In the case of boys parents threaten to cut off the penis and make them girls. The boys become frightened and cry a lot when the parents get hold of a knife and start to sharpen it. With regard to the girls they threaten to put ^{ground} ginger ^{or} pepper into the vulva. The children act thus in an attempt to ^{learn} the irritation caused by lack of proper bath. Some mothers know it and clean those parts well for them; others attribute it to curiosity.

After meals in the evening, between six and seven, the children sit together in front of their houses and tell stories. The younger ones listen to the enthralling stories of the older ones and try to tell theirs when it comes to their turn but they make a muddle of it and the story loses its meaning completely.

Here are some examples of their stories.

1.

An old man was smoking. As he lighted the pipe, the flame caught his bushy beard. He then started a song. "O fire!, leave my beard".

2.

A man was going to his coconut farm, as he walked through the grove, a large fruit dropped from above and killed him.

3.

There was once a woman. She was going to the market and on her way she found a kite. Then he asked, "Whose is this?" Then Ananse replied "It belongs to the prince of devils" (Sasabonsam). Then she said: "Thank you Mr. Ananse. Meanwhile Ananse started singing: -

d, d m s - dt l ll t ss s
Sa-sa bon sam nena ewu skye kye nkoko mba,
d, d m s - fm r rr m dd d
Sa sa bon sam nena ewu skye kye nkoko mba.

The meaning of this song is: - Sasabonsam's mother is dead so it catches chickens.

After telling a story, infants find it difficult to repeat it with ~~without~~ same exactness. This is because

their minds are not well developed. Sometimes the younger ones leave the older children and go to bed.

SLEEP.

Sleep is very important for the growth of children; therefore the infants at Abura go to bed not later than 8 p.m. and they also sleep in the afternoons. In the morning, they have no fixed time for getting up. Usually they wake up at anytime between 6:30 a.m. and 8 a.m. They wake up by themselves but if after 8 o'clock they are still asleep, they are awakened by their parents who keep on pushing them on their mats till they get up.

Infants who attend school are always awakened by their mothers between 7 and 7:30 a.m.

Some common diseases during this period are measles, fever and eye- and tooth-troubles. They treat measles by smearing the body twice a day with a mixture of palm kernel-oil and the juice from palm kernel. The patients are not bathed at all till the spots on the body have disappeared.

With the eye trouble, the eyes become red in colour and discharge yellowish, dirty substance every few minutes. It is cured by frequently bathing the eye with the juice of palm-kernel. They apply it by means of a piece of cloth.

Those who suffer from fever are given quinine and at times smeared all over with ground mim tree leaves and certain tiny seeds called 'sasema'.

In order that the infant may develop a

sound mind, the juice of 'Egyaegwami' herbs is dropped into the nose fortnightly. The infants sneeze a lot when this treatment is given.

ELIMINATION.

Some of these infants wet their mats at night. They are not punished because to their parents, it is a normal thing, since they say the infants are still young. However, they help them to stop by always reminding them to visit the lavatory just before they go to bed; or they may ~~wake them up~~ wake them up in the middle of the night and offer them the chamber pot. Despite all the pains taken by the mothers, some infants wet their mats as late in their sleep as 6 a.m.

In the village they have two public pit latrines. At night the infants pass their stools in chamber pots which are emptied into the public latrines early in the morning. During the day, they pass their stools in the nearby bushes. They urinate anywhere outside the rooms and are not ashamed whether adults are near or not.

SPEECH.

During infancy, the vocabulary is increased but infants often refuse to speak out to unfamiliar people because they feel shy. One general mistake they make during the early dance of infancy is that they have no idea of time. For example they always say 'yesterday' when talking of something which had happened about a week or two ago. Even if it is over a month, they describe the incident as having happened yesterday.



Children at play at night.



Children playing during the day.

PLAY

Infants like play and it is very good for them. In play we include every spontaneous activity and occupation for which we are not paid. It takes the form of experiment where experience is gained.

Karl Groos, the psychologist, regarded play as a preparation for life and serious work. I agree with him, after having watched the way in which the infants of Abura play about. They imitate adults over the whole range of their activities; for example, buying and selling, driving competition at sports, playing at families where a boy acts as a father, a girl as a mother and hugs the baby at her back. They live in a world of make-believe which is the natural means of learning. They listen to stories and conversations of older people and see them behave in different ways. Through imitation they satisfy their curiosity by collecting bits of materials and working on them to produce satisfactory results, for example making ^{miniature} lorries and ^{other} toys.

Infants have very little idea of counting and this is developed through play; for example, when they gather to race one of them says, "Ready one, two, three!" and they all race on. There are other games in which some sort of counting is necessary for example 'Kokrokoo'. In this play they count from (one to ten) (1-10) in the vernacular. Thus, by the end of the period of infancy they must have acquired some knowledge of numbers.

Apart from this type of play there are simple games for infants such as 'Adow Kytyeriky', 'Kwakwa', 'Adwongo Bodamba' and 'Ampe'. In their

early infancy, they find it difficult to play; therefore they stand by and watch the older ones play near their houses. During the fourth and fifth years, they catch up and by the end of the period, they are able to play very well.

With 'Adow Kyskye pye', all the children collect stones and crouch down in a circle and sing while the stones are continuously shifted round from person to person with a rhythm. When infants ^{makes a} first _L start ^{at} _L playing this game, they often hurt their fingers with the stones and cry, yet they do not give it up.

In playing ^{at} _L Kwakwaa, one person serves as the catcher and aims at catching ^{hold of} any of the rest. The 'catcher' starts with the rest in an open space and asks these questions while the rest answer.

<u>Fanti Questions</u>	<u>Answer</u>	<u>English Questions</u>	<u>Answer</u>
Kwaa Kwaa	Yooyee	Life, life	Yes, yes,
Alatampuwa	Yenyim dzi	Nigeria banana	We can eat
Mani maningo	Maningo	Mani Maningo	Maningo
Meba o! de!	Ba o! de!	I am coming, oh	We hear
Meba mebkye	Ebkye du.	hear	
ahen?		When I come how	You will catch
Opanyin o!		many will I catch?	ten.
Abafraba o!		Old or young,	
Mensa ka no a		When I get him	
Mebkye no		I will catch him	

In answering these questions, they all run away and hide. When the last sentence is said they all run to the starting point avoiding the catcher on the way. He who is caught serves as

a catcher and the game starts ^{over} again. In this game the infants at first take many falls owing to lack of muscular co-ordination and balance-control.

They play ^{at} Adwongo Kodambo' by standing in a circle and singing for individuals to enter the circle in turns and show by action anything he or she had done that morning. In this game there is no danger of hurting the infants but they at first fail to enter the circle in accordance with the fast rhythm of the song. The rest laugh at them; but however, as they grow, they are able to do it correctly.

'Ampe' is a game solely for the girls. In it the players stand in a semi-circle and one person faces them and plays with the rest in turns. Each time she faces one person, both of them clap their own hands together, jump up and place one foot forward. If both feet face each other twice, they exchange places. If the feet cross, then the player in the middle goes on playing with the next person and counts one. It is the anxiety of each of them to get to the middle and start counting because you are supposed to be in debt so long as you have no count. Some people play it with songs and here are two examples: -

1.

Fanti

Ekaw nye manko me kaw bi a,
Ekaw menye me Papa Kaw a.

The above is repeated
word 'father' now and then changed
sister, friend etc.

English

This 'debt' is not mine alone
It is mine as well as my father's
several times with the
to mother, brother,

Wamma Jentsekew
Na kaw ye yaw

Let us pay by instalments
For debt is sorrow.

In this game of Ampe, the infants increase their knowledge in arithmetic by counting. Their vocabulary too is improved by the use of the words of the songs which are composed from day to day for playing games.

PLAYTHINGS

Parents at Abura do not buy toys for their infant children to play with, as most parents in Cape Coast do. The infants themselves invent through experiments, for example, by using an empty sardine tin as a lorry with four fairly large seed attached to the corners as wheels. A stick is used in pushing it along as they walk behind it and serve as the drivers. They blow their horns by mouth and call out names of villages, and stop for those who have 'arrived' at their destination to come down. When watched carefully, such a play is amusing in itself, yet it is very educative.

The girls take stools and sticks as babies and carry them at their backs. Sometimes after chewing one end of the sugar-cane stick into a fibrous mass, they use black thread in 'planting' it and give it a name. All these things help greatly in developing their skills, for example, the skill of 'hair do'.

They also play with domestic animals such as dogs, cats, goats and hens. They also use people as their objects of play. For example they

play at climbing coconut trees, something which they often see. They climb on the backs of older boys and girls and by imitation, they use the edge of their palms as cutlasses, pretend to break the head of the person they have climbed into two and pretend to drink from a coconut fruit. The older children support the younger children to prevent them from falling.

CAUSES OF INFANTS' CRY.

Infants get angry when their desire for doing something is thwarted, for example when their play-things are taken away from them. The same thing happens when they are interrupted for example when their sleep is disturbed. When thus angry, they cry aloud, stamp the ground with their feet or even lie down on the ground and wriggle themselves from anyone who touched them. They also cry when they are hungry or left alone in a dark room and also when they fall down.

Sometimes the parents do not take notice of them but often they frighten them into keeping quiet. In their early infancy parents promise to call in a police man, a mad man or a certain fat man in the village of whom they are afraid. At times they keep quiet but if they still continue; someone hides behind a door or a window and produces some frightful noise as though made by the fat man. On hearing this they stop immediately. Getting to the later part of infancy, the child discovers these tricks and does not respond to them any longer.

Their acquisition instinct also develops and if not directed along the right channel, they

CAUSES OF INFANTS CRV.



Boys and girls going to school .

51
The punishment given differs from mother to mother. Some beat them others suffer them to miss a meal.

WORK

The infants do very little work. Occasionally they visit the farms with their parents. They do nothing but gather fruits and sit down to rest and wait for their parents. At home they help in fetching water with small tins. They help in cooking by sending cups of water to their mothers when they are required to do so.

MANNERS

They are taught such simple manners as 'thank you', 'please', and how to curtsy in greeting. They are told to have respect for people in using their names and call them Maame Esi or Papa if they are adults and Nana So. and so if they are older than their parents.

These are very necessary especially the use of 'thank you'. If an infant is given something and he thanks the giver, more of it is given at times just to encourage the child. On forgetting the child is reminded; if he refuses to say it, he is given nothing at all.

SCHOOLING

There is only one Catholic school in the village and this is only up to class six. It is staffed with male and female teachers. Two of them are certificated and the rest are pupil teachers.

At the age of six or seven, some of the infants go to this school. At the moment about twenty five percent of the infant boys are school children plus only five percent of the infant girls. Education in this village was started only fourteen

years ago, hence all the adolescents from fifteen years of age and upwards are illiterates.

For the first few days children put on their native cloth. Later on they buy and put on uniforms. The boys wear khaki shirt and shorts and the girls put on green uniforms with blue trimmings. They like the change very much and often like ^{to} wear them frequently.

Now that some of ^{the} adults are aware of the use of education, they are pleased in sending their children to school. Some of the fortunate children refuse to go to school for fear of the cane. Some parents do not force it on them but others inflict all sorts of punishments to make the children go to school.

The school is co-educational. There is a great difference between life in the school and that at home. In the school the infants behave differently because they have unfriendly teachers who punish them for the least mistake made. Even walking about and talking in the class-room are disliked by the teachers. They believe that the best education can be given through rigidity ^{of discipline}. As a result of this training most of the children are obedient in school, but, at home they are less helpful, and ^{often} disobedient.

At school, they learn the three R's. Poor performance in school is reported at home. Most of the parents do not punish the infants for fear that they will stop going to school. Rather, they buy them nice things and ask them to learn, otherwise these nice things would be taken away from them.

The parents frequent the school to find out from the teachers whether certain demands

of their children are genuine. This shows lack of confidence in the children and it is a waste of time for both the parents and the teachers. On the other hand it discourages children from telling lies to obtain money from their parents.

The children have favourite friends in their own class as well as in the top classes. They usually play and eat together.

During infancy, mothers usually become pregnant again. This often happens from the time the child is one year old and upwards. The infants are neglected and when the new baby arrives, the infant is happy but he feels very jealous. If there are other older children, the infant does ^{not} feel the change very much because they are always at play together.

RELATIONS TO PARENTS.

At the age of two years when the child is able to walk the father enjoys walking with him especially if he is a boy. At this age, if the father stays in the village, the relationship between him and the infant becomes more intimate. At this same time also the mother no longer lives in her own house, she stays with the man; this gives him more opportunity of seeing the infant. But should she go away to deliver again, the infant either stays with the father or goes with her. The discipline of the child is more of the mother's concern. The infant whether a boy or a girl goes with her to the farm. The small boys go with their mother because they do not go to the more bushy parts of the forest where they could hurt themselves. Also the work the mother does require less energy: thus the child can join in his own playful way. When at home the

infant is near the mother or just in front of the house playing with some friends. In this way the mother's eye is always on the child for chastisement. She chastises the infant when he uses profane words heard from friends; beats him when she hears him insulting his elders; reports him to father when he refuses to run her errands, scolds, and refuses to give him food when he offends or beats somebody's child; she ignores him when he becomes unnecessarily angry, praises him when he renders good services to either the parents or anybody around, threatens to cut ^{off} his fingers when he steals, hushes him ^{up} when he takes to swearing and using God's name or any of the names of deity unnecessarily, and reproaches him when he breaks an earthenware pot or spoils something accidentally. One funny thing is that if a child is sent and he grumbles and the mother undertakes to do it herself the infant usually cries. This is a case which happened during one of my visits to Abura.

One fine evening, the only boy of a certain mother was playing with his friends under some coconut trees. The boy was about six years of age. The mother was short of water so she called the boy to go and fetch her some water. The boy was so much absorbed in his play that he did not pay heed to the mother's call. The mother stood at an angle in front of the house where she could see the child and started to shout in calling him. Some of the passers-by also called out to him and even one of them was about to run and catch him home. When the boy saw him he ran quickly home. He was very

quick in fetching the pail of water so that he could join the play again, but on his return, he was asked to fetch another one after he had poured the water into a drum. The boy then became angry and began to point out that the place was too far away and he was too tired, and that if the mother had informed him that there was no water in the drum he could have poured half of the water into it and had given her the rest instead of giving her all. He then started collecting some of the water from the drum and in order to fill the pot with it but the mother rushed towards him and he ran away. Instead of going back for the tin to fetch the water, he stood there pouting and would neither go to play nor go near the mother. At last the mother finished peeling her cassava, put it on the fire, took a kerosene tin, went for the child's tin as well and off she went to fetch water. As soon as the child saw the mother going near his tin, he started to shout; he no longer wanted the mother to fetch the water, he wanted to go then, but he was not watchful and therefore did not see the moment the mother started to collect the tins. If he had seen it in good time, he would have ran for his tin and gone before the mother. Now, since his mistake was too late, ^{to} amend he walked behind the mother crying. She did not mind him but said she would report him to his father. The infant then dared not go near the mother. He stood at a stone's throw from the house and watched the reactions of the mother. Instantly, he saw his father approaching from a distance. His heart must have throbbed within him for one could see from his face that he was planning to flee from punishment.

As the father drew near, he turned and walked away from the house. He called him, but the infant thinking that he had heard of his misbehaviour started to run off. It was then that the mother let the cat out of the bag. For over forty five minutes the boy would not respond to his father's call, for he knew that ^{though} his father was very good and understanding, when annoyed he was very cruel and punished mercilessly. He wove some turne into a cane and sent some boys to catch him his son. Putting the child's fault aside, he was very much annoyed that the child did not answer to his call and as soon as he started to whip the child, the mother came along, begging and trying to take the cane from the father. Failing to get it she lifted ^{up} the boy and ran away with him.

From this we see how discipline is maintained in a home at Abura and how sympathetic the mothers are although they themselves report their children. Most of the children at Abura are afraid of their fathers because they inflict severer punishment than ~~than~~ the mothers. Nevertheless, they are very friendly and playful with them. In the evenings when the meal is not ready in a house where both parents are staying together, the father goes to visit his friends with the child. This is something most of the infants like very much because usually their fathers buy them sweets and bread, and food are offered them by their fathers' friends. Also they enjoy to meet and play with children in other houses instead of staying at home and being sent by the mother. Even between the ages of five and seven they still like to go about

with their fathers. Should the parents be staying apart, the infant is afforded a better opportunity of often bolting away to stay with the father especially on Tuesdays and Sundays when he does not go to the farm. When their hair is bushy their fathers cut it for them. They also provide them with cloth and the school children with their educational needs.

RELATIONSHIP TO ADULTS OTHER THAN PARENTS

Throughout infancy relatives on visiting the children's parents always ask after the children's health and sometimes give them pennies, some bread or some toffee. The infants are sometimes sent there by their parents or they go there themselves to play. Some even stay with their relatives by the permission of their parents, yet they still exercise their discipline over them as parents and help to provide for them. Some of the infants are so happy and jovial that their relatives always miss them when they are absent. Although the parents dislike the them to be out for too long a time, if an infant is sent by a relative as a result of which the child does not come home in time, the parents do not get offended because they know that they would aid them in times of trouble. For example if an infant offends a driver by crossing in front a lorry in motion and the driver resolves to take him to the police station, any adult and especially any relative who gets to the spot pleads for his release. Apart from this, other adults in the community correct the young be they relatives or sons and daughters of their neighbours. If they see any child misbehaving they correct him. They insist that the child stops but if he becomes stubborn, some meagre punishment is inflicted. When the parents are

known, the child is reported afterwards. Thus the whole community helps with the training of her future generations.

RELATION

During the very early part of infancy, mothers normally conceive a second child. As the foetus develops, the infant notices it and as his instinct of curiosity is aroused, he asks the mother what is wrong with her stomach. The infants usually ask this question when they see the naked stomachs of their mothers butting out. This opportunity usually arises when the mother is bathing with the infant near by, when she toilets in a room where the infant is present or when at times she feels very warm in the afternoon, perspires, and consequently takes off her cover-shoulder while the infant is around. As soon as the infant becomes aware of the mother's nakedness, he asks the mother why the stomach is getting big. The mothers at Abura never tell their infants anything about this partly because they are young and partly because the question put to them is very embarrassing. The commonest answer given is that the mother has eaten too much and that has caused the stomach to become big. Some also inform them that they are sick in the stomach. The infants grow more curious when they see that the size of their mothers stomachs have greatly increased and go about asking relatives such as their aunts to tell them the reason why their mothers stomachs have developed to that big size. Sometimes these aunts too do not mind them. They hush them up and tell them they are children and are not supposed to know anything about it.

However, the mothers bring forth and

these children become extremely jealous. They dislike their mothers' leaving them and carrying the babies about, to having them often in their arms and giving them suck, to sleeping nearest to them and to attend to them whenever they cry and going as far as to give their toys to the babies when they are about eight months old. At times they go as far as to beat the babies when no one is near and the mothers too at times threaten to give away the baby babies as a gift so that the infant may not have anyone to play with in future. Thus the mother explains to the infant that the baby is his own brother or sister and that he will be a companion as well as a playmate to him when he is able to walk and speak, therefore he should be fond of him and not treat him as a stranger. Throughout the baby's course of life, the mother continually explains this to the infant, so that by the time the baby is able to walk and speak the infant, now grown into a child, grows to love his brother and is ^{not} jealous of him. However, from time to time they quarrel and fight over division of sweets and food and also when the younger one abuses the elder.



A pre-adolescent girl

CHAPTER V

CHILDHOOD

Learning to walk and speak are both started and developed gradually during babyhood. As the growth of the baby continues, it normally falls into the category of childhood. There is no sudden switch over to this development; hence specific ages cannot be laid down. But judging from the groups in which people of different ages at Abura get together to play, those considered as children range from the ages of five or six years to eleven years.

Physical Development

Children grow steadily in height and in weight, but a few remain short. A more rapid growth takes place in girls between the ages of ten and eleven, and in boys two years later. The development of the senses of sight and hearing are substantially completed by the eighth year. The voice continues to improve and they sing better during this period than during infancy. They can also march in time to music.

Between the ages of ten and twelve the girls start to grow breasts and pubic hairs appear under the armpit and around the genital organs. They become very curious and often make a show of the breasts.

Elimination

Bladder training at night is supposed to be completed at the beginning of this period. Some children wet their mats even at the age of ten. Their mothers become worried and scold

them. Such children, both boys and girls alike are not given enough food for supper and are asked to drink very little or no water at all during the last two hours before they go to bed. The parents promise to give them some nice things such as bread and cheese or toffee if they succeed in keeping themselves dry for at least a week. If after these promises the child still wets his mat, the most disgraceful method is used. This is what is actually done.

Early in the morning, the mother of such a child gets up at six o'clock, mixes some red clay with water after which she wakes up the child. She besmears the child with this mixture from head to foot. After this act, she scolds and makes the child extremely uncomfortable. She makes the punishment severe enough so that the child on seeing the mother's reactions cries bitterly and begs for pardon. Sometimes, the mothers take such a punishment to be severe and leave them. In most cases, they do not put the child to shame so a severer punishment is considered.

At about seven o'clock a.m. when most children are awake sitting in front of their houses, the unfortunate child is stripped naked and besmeared all over with the mixture of mud. He appears very funny and disfigured because the head, face and body are all bathed in red mud. He is taken outside into the open space where many people can see him. The mother or relative who performs this act beats a kerosene tin; this invites the children in the neighbourhood. Many children come round and sing the song 'Suankyekurobor anweow wee' meaning 'bed-wetter, shame'.



A boy climbing a coconut tree .

As they sing, she pushes the child who is reluctant to move further, so that more of his friends could join in the mocking chorus. The child is thus put to shame. He cries and shouts out to the other mothers to come and beg for him. No one tries to intercede because they all consider it a very bad habit to wet the bed. The child is taken through as many lanes in order that more people could see him and say embarrassing words to him.

Having been disgraced, the child is left anywhere and he runs home for his bath. On that day if he is a school boy, he absents himself from school. This method is very effective for the child stops bed wetting not long after this punishment is given.

During the day, the children visit the public lavatory instead of using chamber pots and afterwards carrying them to the public lavatory. They do not feel shy in performing elimination before people.

When children are constipated 'mpatowa-nsoe' is used for syringing them. When attacked by diarrhoea, the herb 'Nunum' is used as a beverage to cure it. Because of the frequency of stomach troubles the faeces of children are often examined.

A child is taught to use decent language. Instead of saying 'Mere kenye' which is a very crude form of saying 'I am going to stool'. The child from time to time is taught to say 'Moroko dua do' literally meaning 'I am going on to a stick'. This saying originated from the way the ancestors of Abura evacuated their waste matter. They usually

dig a hole and put a heavy trunk of tree across it. They stood on this tree trunk in ~~full~~ a squatting position and attended to nature's call. Thus when going to stool, they say morok = dua do which is more refined.

More of these decent words and sentences are taught, such as 'Murukogu nso' for 'Murukosuankeye' meaning 'I am going to pass water' instead of the refined form 'I am going to urinate'. 'Yi mframa bo' (give bad air) instead of the crude form 'Ta'; 'Egyanan' literally meaning 'leaving a leg' is to be used instead of 'Bin' which literally crudely means 'shit'; 'Ewie' which literally means 'the end' to be used instead of the crude form 'Tun' meaning 'Anus'. 'No hi' literally meaning 'Her skin' to be used instead of 'Wo twe mu' meaning 'vagina' which is very crude.

There is no treatment for wind-breaking but this is how the children themselves go about it. For example if one child breaks the wind in the company of his friends, as soon as the bad air is sniffed, they all make the sound 'Hoo' meaning 'a nasty scent'. One of them bends down and sniffs the anus of all those present. He then calls out the name of the person who did it. At other times one of them is suspected and someone sings a song pointing to the individuals at each note so that the last note intentionally falls on the suspect. In both cases the offender never admits his or her fault and gets very angry. At times this results in a fight but in most cases the suspect cries.

Motor Development.

The child is not very much restricted



A child at a mother's back.



Make-believe plays

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especially between the ages of ten and eleven. He goes out to play without the mothers permission. By the end of this period they would have known every corner of the village, as well as the houses of a number of adults, thus some geography knowledge is acquired. Street crossing is no problem for them because the only street, lies beyond the village.

Playing football is the commonest game for boys. They play on their small compounds in between their houses.

'Ampe' and 'Perparperpar' are the commonest games for girls. Some juvenile games for girls are developed during this stage, for example 'Adwongo' b>damb> and 'Kwaakwaa'. The boys and girls play certain games together, for example 'Kwaakwaa' (hide and seek).

Children's Beliefs

In the children's world of make-belief, they impersonate grown ups and act in diver ways such as father and mother, a nurse at a hospital, a driver, a troop of soldiers, a class teacher and many others.

Some girls taking themselves to be mothers put bundles of cloths on their stomachs and tie them up to indicate the protruding stomachs of pregnant women and nurse babies by bathing them feeding, lulling and breast feeding toys which, they take as their babies.

At one time I saw a little boy called Akwesi with a cane busily beating some stones with a stern face. I thought he had seen some insect or reptile but upon inquiry he told me that the stones were his class pupils and some

of them did not attend service on Sunday, that was why he was beating them. Here, the boy impersonated his teacher.

The boys in imitating the Asafo men a defensive institution of the village, put pieces of sticks on their left shoulders as guns and in a straight line walk briskly in tune with some of the Asafo songs. The simplest and commonest one for them is 'Egya Kwesi dzi ako yie o!', 'E' e' dzi ako yie o!' meaning 'Father Kwesi, fight a good fight', 'E' e' e' fight a good fight'. After walking for some distance they make loud noises to denote the firing of guns.

Health and Sleep.

The main precautions taken to safeguard health at Abura is by juju. I was told that almost everyone of them possesses an evil spirit by which they protect themselves as well as damage one another. All the children are protected by their parents. They are given charms to wear around their waists and neck but are not told anything about them. The reason is that they are young and cannot keep secrets and therefore would tell people about it. To avoid this they do not tell them anything.

They sleep on separate mats in the same room with their parents. This place of sleep is not good because, some of the children perceive their indulgence in the sexual act and as a result some of them start to play with their genital organs. Moreover the children tell their friends of what their parents do at night.

By this time bowel and bladder training both in the day and night are completed in most

of the children. In the night, they get up and urinate if they feel like doing so.

Some of them have night-mares and sleep walk during the night. Like children all over the world they have many dreams, some of which they can remember and tell, and others which they totally forget, by the time they rise up from bed. They have good as well bad dreams and their parents make them to believe very much in them.

This is how they treat bad dreams. If a bad dream is had during the night, early in the morning before the dreamer washes his face and mouth and even before he speaks with anyone, he must go to the incinerator and tell the dream to it. They have a strong belief that if this is not done, the bad dream will come true to life.

They believe also in omens, for example if someone is sick in the house and a crow is seen crowing in the house for a long time it is an omen believed to mean that the patient will never die. For this reason immediately this is experienced, they buy some alcoholic drink and go to the akor to beg the god and spirits of their ancestors, to forgive them anything they had done wrong against them. Either knowingly or unknowingly, and to help the sick person to recover in time. They promise to send certain things to the god as a reward if the person gets better. The usual promises are a goat and are white unevenly feathered fowl called 'dsenkye' which are hard to get and therefore are very expensive.

From the 'akor', they go to the native doctor, who in most cases after hearing peoples

complaints, tell them who is supposed to be causing the illness. A mixture of medicine is given to suit the particular illness. Some of these doctors are popular and are believed to be able to tell the future disease and give medicine against that disease. Others are able to let the person causing the sickness be revenged. In this case witches and wizards names are not mentioned but instructions and no medicine are given as a safe guard. These are used and after sometime a report and payment are demanded.

This is a case when a similar thing happened. A child of nine years was bitten by a reptile which he himself could not recognize. The calf of the leg got swollen up and latter on could not walk. After three weeks, it was getting bigger and bigger till at last their medicine a failure and took the child to a native doctor. When they arrived they were asked to sit on a stools. The doctor spread a mat on the floor, sat on it, spread some pebbles and cowries on the floor and asked the patient to pick out seven for him. This was done and all the rest were put aside. With the seven pebbles and cowries he proceeded to find out the causes of the child's sickness.

He kept on spreading these before him on the floor and said something which had already happened or was about to happen to the child. The whole story deduced from it is this; that the boy was bitten by the mother of his deceased friend. That friend was the only son of his mother and since she was bereaved, she has been very envious of this boy and ^{and} decided to kill him.

Hence through much jealousy, she took the form of a centipede and bit the child. The doctor said that the woman was not satisfied and would come again to bite the poor child, so they should be on the look out to kill and burn it, the ashes of which should be used to rub the child's leg.

The parents of the boy were very much surprised to hear them. In the night of that same day, the boy shouted at seeing a centipede, the mother rushed to the spot with a thick soled slipper and tried to kill it. At night when all were asleep, it came again. This time the father managed to kill it. It was burnt, and on the next day, before they sent the ashes to the doctor, a message was received that one of the women in the neighbouring houses was dead. She was the mother of the sick boy's late friend.

The parents and the boy were astonished. They took the ashes to the doctor who said certain words over it and asked them to use it in massaging the leg. In about a fortnight, the leg greatly decreased in weight and in a month's time it was completely healed. Such happenings are very common at Abura and sometimes they bring about family disputes which often end in the chief's court.

There are other common diseases of children most of which are thought to be the wicked design of some evil spirit. Take boils and crawcraw; very few are aware of the fact that boils are caused by eating dirty food, and crawcraw are caused when one takes his bath carelessly and also when one neglects to wash the hands after meals. Regardless of the above

facts it is believed that everyone becomes he reaches adulthood must get crawcraw and so they are always glad to get it earlier. They treat it by applying the juice of lime unto it after bathing.

From these skin diseases are mumps pneumonia, dysentery, diarrhoea and types of fever. They have different ways of curing them; here are some ways of curing some of them.

Mumps

The flesh by the jaw swells up but no pain is felt. The sufferer is given hard fried corn with which to exercise the jaw. Brown black, white and red spots made with clay are used in making spots on the swollen jaws, and everyone on seeing him sings him this song

Fanti

Tsi o! tsi
Ewuradze e!
Musuro gua o!
Tsi

English

Mumps oh! mumps
O Lord I am
afraid of the public's
Mumps.

Yellow Fever. Nkoonooku

The leaves of nim-tree, lime tree and some lime cut into halves are boiled. The patient is made to sit down naked behind a bucket containing the boiled herbs. He is covered with blankets and told to stir the contents of the bucket to let the vapour rise. The patient gets heated up and sweat streams down his body. After twenty minutes the blankets are removed. The patient is wiped off and massaged with shea-butter. He keeps himself warm by the use of some kuck cloth or go to bed.



A naked child.

Clothing and Cleanliness

During the first year of childhood children walk about naked in the house. They have no sense of shame. At about the age of eight and a half years, the boys learn to put on pitch-knickers. For the rest of their childhood-period they dress like that at home and occasionally they go about naked. During the week, the school boys wear their khaki shirt and knickers to school and on Sundays, they put on their cloth to church.

Most of the girls also go about ^{naked} during the first year, making use of beads around their waists and a piece of ^{reed} cloth through the beads between the thighs. This cloth is called 'amonse'. The old cloths of their mothers are given to them when they are eight years old. Some of them tightly tie these around them when it is cold or when they are sent, and keep naked for the rest of the day. Others use them throughout the day.

Both the male and female children possess only one cloth at a time and by the time they get new ones which is usually on feast days or thereabouts, the old one has already started to wear out. The parents take the materials to the market in the town to be sewn by seamstresses. The service is so quick that a farmer can buy cloth for his wife and children and have them sewn for them in just a day. When their clothes are torn they do not mend them with thread and needle. They just leave them to wear out so that they could get new ones in time. When dirty, the clothes are washed but not ironed. They fold them

up and put them under some weight, especially under pillows till they need them. These clothes are purposely bought for them for church on Sundays and for going to the town.

As infants, children also take their bath once a day and keep a certain standard of cleanliness after the ninth year. It is only when they are very dirty and their mothers would not have them sleep with her in the same room that they take their bath again in the evening.

At the age of eleven both the male and female children feel ashamed to appear completely naked in the public. They are seen naked publicly only when taking their bath in open places. They do not feel ashamed in the least to appear naked before their parents and the household.

Parents also do not mind stripping themselves naked before their children.

For the sake of cleanliness, they cut their hair short. Their fathers, older brothers or cousins cut it for them. Most of them instead of cutting their nails bite it off with their teeth. The toe nails grow very long and collect dirt. Some of them cut it with pocket knives and blades. Any time they get hold of chewing sponge or stick they chew it so that anytime during the day except during the night you see them cleaning their teeth, no matter where they are. Very few of them care to wash their hands before eating and afterwards still very few of them use soap in washing them. They take their own bath both occasionally their mothers clean their baths, arm pits and other folds for them.

Relations with Brothers and Sisters

Children unlike infants are told when a new baby is expected. The normal interval for bringing forth in this village is between one and a half years to two years. Others through a fault which is not theirs bring forth at shorter intervals. If we take the normal one, by the time a first born child is seven years old, the mother must have got two younger children and one under expectation. When this fourth new baby is born, the first child does not feel jealous. He will love and fondle the baby from time to time and often play together with the other two children so that they do not feel as jealous as he was when he was alone. I remember a case when an infant asked the mother to give away her new baby to the grandmother and carry her instead.

This shows us how the first born child feels very jealous of the second child. The reason is that they realize that much attention which was previously given to him now directed to the baby, and he gets no one with whom to place in order to forget the change. The aunt or who-soever takes care of the child often neglects him and does not treat him with half the patience and love as his own mother. As the infant grows into a child he becomes very glad when a new baby is born.

Some of them at this stage know that babies come from the stomach but from which passage they are ignorant because they do not stay to see their mothers deliver. Some curious children through too much contact with older people, get to know of how babies manage to

get into the stomach. In the following incident which took place during my investigation will explain it better.

When I first went to Abura for my investigation, one Maame Abena, a mother of three, was staying the same house with the old woman who was one of my chief sources of information. This woman was expecting a child and one day when I went, the old woman informed me that the woman had delivered at her mother's. At that time the mother of ~~this~~ eight year old first born child, had gone away the previous day to deliver but the child had not heard of the delivery. The child had gone out to play so when she came I informed her about the delivery and this led to the following conversation:

Investigator: Eh! Adwowa, where have you been.

Adwowa: I went out to play.

Investigator: Where is your mother?

Adwowa: She is gone to deliver at my grandmother's.

Investigator: Do you know that she has brought forth?

Adwowa: No, she has not.

Investigator: She has, take it from me, the old lady has just informed me.

Adwowa: Oh! is that so? I never knew. But please is there any blood on the baby's body? (I was shocked at this question)

Investigator: There was blood on it, but everything is now cleaned off. But how did you

manage to know that there is blood in connection with birth ?

Adwowa : I just know it.

Investigator : But do you know from where the baby comes ?

Adwowa : Yes, when the water is passing water it accompanies it. But have you seen my mother's baby.

Investigator : No, I have not been there.

Adwowa : I will steal away to see it and my mother. I am very glad because I have another companion now. But it will not even speak to me till after a time.

So saying, the child departed from me; presumably to see the mother and the new baby; but the old woman called her back and asked her to go along with the other two children to see their mother.

The child surprised me very much because usually children do not know ^{about} all these things. Whenever they ask such questions as "Where does the child come from?" "How did it manage to get into the stomach?" the parents become very angry and beat them. They are told very little about sex, pregnancy and menstruation. Unfortunately, there are some who do not get any information from any other person other than friends.

Most parents have favourites among their children who are treated with special care. The favourites are usually the first born, the most delicate

child, the most serviceable or the last born. They always go about with their favourites and scarcely refuse to grant their wishes. In the long run, in most cases, the beloved ones become spoilt children and when they become adults they find life difficult. In the family where a father or a mother has a favourite, the rest of the children feel it very much and at times plot against that child. They even beat that child when he comes into their company.

In the village of Abura, because of the way the children are trained to work; which we shall deal with later on, all the boys are in the company of their fathers and the girls with their mothers. As a result, the fathers choose their favourites from among the male children and the mothers, from the female children. The fathers usually choose the hard working and obedient children but do not treat them as serious favourites as the mothers do theirs. It is rare to see a father with a daughter as a favourite or vice versa.

Children sleep a little later than infants. They are engaged in telling stories which are longer and more meaningful than those of the infants. Refer to Appendix for the children's stories.



Adolescent girl

CHAPTER VI

EARLY ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence means 'growing up'. Roughly the period covers the teens. In girls, it is two years ahead of the boys hence on the average it starts from the eleventh or twelfth year and ends at the age of eighteen. For the boys it starts from the thirteenth or fourteenth year to the age of twenty. It is at this period that the terms 'a boy' and 'a girl' are correctly used to mark the stage of growth.

THE ADOLESCENT GIRL

In vernacular, a girl is called 'akakeesia' meaning, 'cover it up and keep'. Therefore as the word implies, the girls are always decently dressed in their native clothes; they feel very shy to appear naked. During the first two years of adolescence, they often put on their cloth and leave the cover-shoulder. Early in the morning after their bath, they decorate their busts and arms with red clay. At this time they grow tall and their skins become smooth. They keep themselves very tidy and attractive by wearing earrings, necklaces and wrist beads of different bright colours. and They mend and wash their clothes whenever they are torn or dirty.

They play less with the boys and have a lot of girl friends. These groups of girl friends meet in the evenings and converse. The topics in which they are mostly interested are Romance and sex.

On Romance, they discuss their boy friends and the sort of sex play they experience individually. They say which boys they love and

why they love them. Sometimes may be they are charmed by their dimples, hair, teeth, way of walking, eyes, sociableness or the built of the body. Although they have less play with boys in general, they have their favourites whom they risk to meet occasionally at night. They express how they long to see their boy friends.

One afternoon during my investigation, I happened to wait for a bus under a coconut tree, near which two young girls of about the same age were washing their clothes. The following dialogue was heard from them which will give an idea of the topics discussed by girls.

I did not ask for their names but one is fair and the other is dark. I will therefore use the names Miss Ama and Adwowa.

Ama : Hmm, I do not know what to tell Kofi when we meet. I am growing to hate him because he is getting too big in his shoes these days. Whether he offends me or not I will work it out very tactfully and be at logger-heads with him.

Adwowa : Oh! Ama, do not say that at all. What has he actually done against your will?

Ama : Well, it is nothing detestable but I feel his ways are very barbarous. He is getting worse these days; formerly he was not like that but nowadays I wonder what he has seen. Whenever he sees me he shouts in calling me and often he would run towards me and give me a slap on the hips and run away. When I call him back he would ask me to wait for me but he would never come back. About three days ago he

saw me with groundnuts and asked me to give him some after roasting. We therefore planned to meet late in the evening so that I could give him his share. We did meet and just after five minutes Kweku came to call him. He left me and for a long time I stood there waiting. Finally, I decided to go home and after walking some few yards, I saw him with another girl. The most annoying part is that he had his arms around the girls waist. I called him but he said I should leave him. Now my dear friend Adwowa, what would you do if you were treated thus?

Adwowa: What a pity! He has not been fair at all, but I will not advice you to leave him. If you like I will talk matters over with him tomorrow because I am very free with him.

Ama: No! do not say a word to him, I do not think I can be friends with him again. Doing without him will not kill me. Even John (this one is a school boy) wanted to make friends with me but I did not give in.

Adwowa: Is that so? then you have lost your chance.

Ama: No! my chance is not lost because I did not refuse his friendship, I told him I would think of it and since then he has not seen me for an answer. He may be as gentle in his ways as he is handsome.

Adwowa: I know he is very sober because his elder brother was my friend and I

often visited them in their house. He is is very fond of whistling, I thing I hope you will like of him.

Ama : Exactly ! I also like the way he cuts his hair and her style of walking. Do you know ? I have another remote cause for wishing to leave Kofi. I do not see him in the evenings and if I do see him he caresses me so roughly and presses my breasts so much that on the morrow I feel pains in my breasts. I remember warning him once and he said if that be the case he would not fondle with me again and since then he has kept to his word. All these things make me dislike him.

At this point Adwowa hushed Ama abruptly because of her suspicion of my being interested in their conversation. Both of them looked at my direction and laughed and then started to sing. Shortly afterwards the bus arrived and I left for Cape Coast.

This dialogue tells us how the boys are interested in the boys, what they like and hate of them and how they judge them. They usually set a high esteem on the school boys and often choose those of their age or just a few years older than they. They make them such presents as roasted groundnuts and corn, fried plantain, a loaf of bread, fried sweet potatoes and such sweets as groundnut toffee or coconut toffee. Most of these things are prepared and sold in the town and after helping their mothers to sell in the town the pennies offered them are used in buying these

things for their boy friends at the village. The number are not wrapped into parcels; they hand them over to them when they come near their houses in the evenings. Their parents do not like the idea so they hide this practice from them.

At night, when the girls gather in groups to play, they sing songs in which the description of their boy friends are given. They usually make a circle for almost all their games consist of dances and songs. They do very little running and this distinguishes adolescent games from that of children. Here are the words of some of their dancing songs.

1.

Fanti

Ɔda mpāpā dan mu mpo a
Menye no no beda

Ɔdo ye wu

Ɔda mpāpā dan mu mpo a
Menye no beda e

Ɔdo ntsir a

English

Even if he sleeps in a bamboo hut

I will sleep with him

Love is death

If he sleeps in a bamboo hut

I will sleep with him

Because of love.

2.

Mara no jolly no a

Tunhum fata no no a

Tsentsen fata no no a

Atar fata no no a

Ne nantsew ye few no a

Ne yaw ye few no a

Nenyiwamba efufuw no a

Asepaatser fata no no a

Chorus.

Menyera no gyina wotaw me

Menye no kasa watan me

Menye no nyinsen a wokye me

That my own jolly

His black pigment befits him

His height befits him

Clothes befit him

He walks nicely

He has a nice space in the teeth

He has bright white eyes

The wearing of shoes befit him.

Chorus

When I stand with him I am insulted

When I talk with him I am envied

When I take seed with him I am hated

Menye no wo ba a weekum no When I bring forth with him I am killed

In this song they describe their friends individually so that the rest may know him and then they all join in the chorus and laugh. Sometimes during the game or after it, they steal away to see their boy friends. Mostly they stand or sit under the coconut trees and hide their faces when an adult happens to pass by.

About sex, they discuss about the changes in their physical growth as well as that of the boys. They have private talks on menstruation, pregnancy and birth. Some of them get to know of these things by overhearing from adults when they converse. Concerning birth some of them who happen to be living with relatives who have babies know more about babies; they transfer this knowledge to their friends when they meet. They tell their friends what actually happens. Thus, through private discussions they learn what their parents fail to teach them.

Such group discussions and games are carried on throughout adolescence. Towards the end of this stage of development, the girls put on more flesh. Their ^{skins} look smooth and plumpy. The men and boys praise and admire them; they are mostly attracted by their breasts and hips. Some have large breasts, others have medium or little breasts. They pay great attention to themselves with regards to bathing and toiletting so that they may look more attractive. Most of them feel shy to expose their breasts and therefore make good use of their covershoulders.

On the whole the girls like to have their own way. They tend to be disobedient, obstinate,

troublesome and sensitive. They hate to be disgraced especially before the opposite sex. They grow jealous of their friends and are very quarrelsome at this stage.

WORK

Girls at this period are trained in three main occupations. First, they are trained to work on the farm, secondly, they are trained how to trade and thirdly, and most important, they are trained in housecraft which includes cookery, laundry and housewifery.

Let us turn to the first point - training in farm work. Early in the morning, the girl gets up between five and six a.m. She washes her face, gets some chewing sponge, sweeps the compound and rooms if there are no children to do it, empties the dustbin takes her bath and toilets and gets ready to go to the forest with either of her parents or both. If it is sowing time, she goes with both parents, brothers and sisters if she has any. They take along with them kenkey and fish, and cuttass and some seeds if needed. In the forest they rest their food and clothing under a shade and put on old clothes which are in rags.

The shade is usually an improvised one made in this way. Four fairly straight and thick branches of trees of the same height are cut and fixed into the ground where the bushes are cleared in a square form. Some more sticks are used to cross the top, and branches of coconut or palm trees placed on top. This gives them a very good shade. Using more straight and smooth pieces of sticks, between one to ten seats are made under the shade. It is on these they sit



WORK

Cooking in the farm.

to eat and lie down to rest at mid-day after the hard morning's work in the heat of the sun is completed.

Some of them eat on the way to the forest, others work till ten o'clock before they eat. After ten o'clock the mother or daughter makes fire and boils some cassava, sweet potatoes, plantain or cocoyam which are obtainable in the farm. Between twelve and two o'clock they eat again under the shade, rest and then return to work. Work on the farm differs according to the season; during the planting season they sow, before that they clear away the bushes, cut down trees and burn them; during the rainy season they remove weeds and see to the proper growth of their crops and during the harvest, the crops are harvested and carried home. Some of the crops are sold in the village and town and some for home consumption.

They leave the farm between 4 and 5 p.m. Sometimes, if there is much work on the farm, the father stays with the boys to work till after 6 o'clock. When the girl and mother come home they rest for a few minutes and start with the cooking which in most cases is fufu and palm-nut soup. This brings us to the second part of training which is cookery.

The girl is often found near her mother when cooking and she offers her assistance whereby she gradually acquires the knowledge in cooking. At times the mother entrusts everything to her and corrects her when she goes wrong. European dishes are not prepared at all. Their main dish is fufu with palm-nut soup; the others being ground-nut soup and ampesi (which is boiled upripe



Girls selling coconut fruits.

plantain, cassava or cocoyam) garden egg stew and gari and light soup with ampesi. They use fish bought from the market in the town and the meat of their hunted animals. The rest of the vegetables are obtained in their farm or bought from their neighbours. Under housewifery, they learn to keep their surroundings tidy by sweeping and emptying the litter box.

Under laundry, they learn to wash their dirty articles well. Their mothers always criticise them and tell them that they would still be responsible women so they should take pains in doing their work. They also do some sewing by mending their torn clothes before washing. Their stitches at this time is not good because they lack experience.

By the end of adolescence, the girl is able to go about the house business and be independent. She is also able to trade, make some profit and provide her own needs.

During the harvest season especially the girl often goes to the town to sell things for her mother. She goes to the town about twice or thrice a week. She does not sell the same thing all the time. During the planting season she sells the coal which was burnt before planting and some fruits and vegetables. She also helps her mother to cook kenkey and sell. In this way she always has something to sell for her parents. Towards the middle of this period, she is given things to sell by which she makes up profit for herself. The father also cuts down coconut fruits for the girl to sell. After making some profit she buys such luxuries as bracelet, necklace, ear-rings,

ponade, powder, comb and sometimes cloth. The relationship between her and her parents become wide apart, for then she starts to think and depend upon herself. 1

Most of the girls are engaged at the pre-puberly stage hence their parents get ready to adorn them. There is still a good relationship between them and their younger brothers and sisters. They buy them sweets, wash their dirty clothes for them, send them when cooking and make them feel at home when the parents are away.

The time of menstruation differs in different girls but it happens anytime the ages thirteen and fifteen. Most of the girls are not aware of this change of life. Some know of it through conversation with their friends and through the ceremony performed for those who come to that age.

PUBERTY

On the first day of menstruation the girl informs the mother who also informs the other members of the family. The mother, or if she is dead, the aunt or the person with whom she stays teaches her how to clean herself and how to make herself look tidy. She eats nothing until twelve o'clock when she is given 'Dor and eggs'. Just before eating, libation is poured and she, sitting on a stone with a bowl of food before her. An old man proceeds with this simple ceremony. He takes an egg, beats the mouth of the girl thrice with it then this is put into the mouth to be swallowed. They try to do it but since they cannot, it is broken into pieces in the mouth and swallowed. She then starts to

eat and all the rest also take their share.

They are considered marriageable from this moment of puberty but not till after the adornment therefore the parents especially those of the engaged girls collect and buy the necessary requirements for it. There are two kinds of adornments. One tells the public that the girl is ripe for marriage. (This is celebrated just after puberty). The second one makes it known to the public that a man has proposed to marry the girl. (This is celebrated after the engagement).

To avoid excessive expenses, some parents wait till their daughters are engaged and then they blend both adornments into one. But the able parents have it twice done at the stated times usually the puberty rite precedes the adornment; they consider it as a sort of sanctification.

The father buys eggs, yam, pots of palmwine, sugar-cane, hens, a bottle of gin, about three to five different kinds of cloths with their head-ties plus ten shillings. The mother also packs up 'Eguardze'; these are things used for the bath, for example soaps, powder, pomade, comb, sanitary towels, sponge, towels, a mirror and some powdered puffs made of chewed sponge. These are usually passed in a bowl or tray. The girl also gets ready clothes and all her possessions she has been able to buy since she was left to trade. All these things are packed up in the mother's house.

The Ceremony

A lot of the girl's friends are



Adolescent girl in head-tie and
cover-shoulder

invited to the house. They assemble between eight and nine o'clock a.m. The head of the family takes the bottle of gin to the 'akor' and pours libation, thanking the departed souls and the god of the family, for guiding the child and keeping her away from evil. He asks for health long life and prosperity for the girl.

The gathering then drinks to her health, sing and dance. The few old women present dance and teach the old steps while the young girls introduce the new ones.

At twelve o'clock noon, the girl and her friends choose a quiet spot where water can easily be fetched, and carry the 'eguardze' to that place with songs. All of them use up the eguardze for their bath and dress up nicely. Singing and dancing, they bring home the girl and disperse.

In the afternoon, after they have had their meals, they return with their friends and cousins, this time of both sexes. The bundles of sugar-cane are distributed and they sit in group and chat. Some of the old men and women tell them some funny past incidents and advise them to be friendly and good citizens. It is on such an occasion that the adolescent boys and girls mix up to play freely without their parents' disapproval.

The group bathing of the girls and even entertainments are repeated for seven consecutive days. On the last day, instead of going home after the noon bath, the rest of the girls as well as some young men and boys are detained for lunch. 'Sto', which is mashed



Adornment.

and palm-oil with eggs and other dishes are prepared for them. Before eating, some of the oil is sprinkled around the house and a whole egg swallowed by the girl. A good many of the girl's relatives partake in the meals and enjoy themselves; this being the last day of the celebration. Some of the boys drink palm-wine and get intoxicated. The adornment starts on the eighth day and if she is already engaged the marriage ceremony too follows and then she is sent to the husband.

The adornment

The parents borrow some trinkets and rich clothes such as silks, kente and 'dumase' cloths and add them to what she has already got. She and two of her best friends who are to serve as maids, put on 'tekuwa'. This is a kind of native hair dress which looks like a mitre.

On the eighth day, they put on silk clothes and wear trinkets around their neck, wrists, in their ears and have golden broaches fixed in the 'tekuwa'. They go out to visit very close relatives and familiar neighbours. For the first week, they keep on changing in silks and then in the second week they change in cotton bordered prints. All those visited offer her money ranging from a shilling to five shillings. This money collected, some is used in paying for the borrowed articles and the rest goes to the girl. She is now at liberty to plait her hair in the native way.

Marriage

If the young man has saved enough money, he pays all the marriage fees at once;

The engagement fee, the dowry, the head drum and cloths all amount to nine pounds ten shillings. If he is not ready, he pays it in instalments. First, he pays the 'abow mu bs nsa' (wine on first inquiry or knocking fee) 5/- five shillings then 'ebisansa' (wine received on consenting) one pound, £1 for 'toirnsa' (head wine) one pound one, £1.1^s, for 'tsirsika' (head money) £7.4^s, seven pounds four which includes money for some cloth.

His money being ready, he chooses a girl for wife. In the older days the parents chose girls for their sons, but nowadays that system is almost dead. This time the boy chooses and tell his parents who inquire whether she is industrious and suitable. If the girls life is questionable, the boy is strongly advised to leave her, but if he pays no heed and marries her the parents shun any disagreements that may arise between them.

The woman does not become a wife until the head money is paid. After the payment of this money, the man informs the girl's parents when he would like his wife to be brought to him. The days normally chosen are feast days for example; Christmas Day, Ahobaa festival days or on "Good Friday".

A few days before the girl leaves her parents' house, she washes and packs up all her belongings. The husband too buys some drinks and sweets. In the evening of that day, not long after sunset a procession of the girl's friends carry her things. Her relatives too join in the procession with their presents and

are led by a young girl who carries a lighted lantern on her head to the husband's house.

As they enter with the bride to be, they behold the bridegroom well dressed and enjoying jokes among his invited friends. The bride to be's party join them and are served with drinks and sweets. They have sing-song and dances.

After enjoying themselves for about three hours, the head of the family of the girl, in the person of a man gets up to perform the ceremony.

He sets the girl on the husband's lap three times, saying at each time "Woara wo yer na wodge no abre wo yi, suo no mu dgen" meaning "The girl you chose for yourself is what we give you, hold her fast". The celebrant then touches the forehead of the man with that of the woman and repeats the former words. They stand up and the celebrant pushes them into a room prepared for them. They enter the room with the lights out and the door closed after them. At this moment all those present shout "Wawar o!" "wawar o!" meaning "they are married, oh! they are married". The lights are then put back on and the entertainment continues for some time; then they depart leaving the married couple to rest. They are then considered as fully married. Afterwards the wife either stays with the husband in the house or goes to her house during the day and to the husband's house to retire at night. She is considered as ^{a full} adult and wears two pieces of the same native cloth which married women usually wear.

THE ADOLESCENT BOY.

Puberty is the first stage of this development but it is difficult to judge precisely the onset of



A child accompanying the father
to the farm.

THE ADOLESCENT BOY

puberty in boys at this stage. The main physical changes at this time are the maturing of the sex organs, the breaking of the voice, the appearance of pubic hairs and the experience of secretion of semen at certain times. Their chests become larger and they grow very slender. They become interested in the girls and develop certain ways to attract them. They cut the hair nicely and neatly shave the back of their heads. They often appear tidy with the hair combed and brushed, their faces slightly powdered and their clothes clean.

They choose friends among the girls with whom they romance. They have also intimate boy friends with whom they share their secrets. If for example a boy loves a certain girl, he tells his intimate boy friend to approach the girl for him. If he wants to send anything to the girl or if he wants to meet her somewhere, it is his friend who acts as a go-between and tells the girl. Should they be at logger-heads with each other, the friend settles the case for them. In this way, this boy with the girl friend also acts as a go-between for his intimate friend and his friend. Thus, the two girls and two boys automatically become very good friends and share their secrets together.

The boys are not as strictly supervised by their parents as the girls. They go out any time they like and some even sleep with their friends who own rooms. At times when they want to see their girl friends, they go near their houses and whistle for them. They have special tunes for calling special girls and on hearing this, the girls bolt away to see them. Their mothers scold them when they realize



Working on the farm.

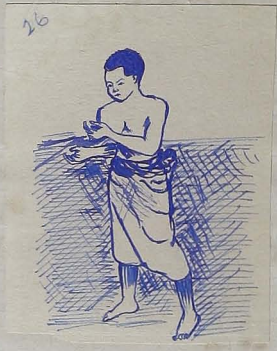
this sort of behaviour by the girls.

When they meet their girl friends at night in corners and dark places, the boys fondle them and sometimes go as far as to have sexual intercourse with them. Some innocent girls shout for help and when people arrive at the spot, they scold both of them and report the boy to the girl's parents who demands some money from the boys parents for 'treading on their tick' which in Fanti reads 'detsia ne pema ho'. I do not think kissing is practised because throughout my investigation I never heard anyone mention anything about it.

Like the girls at puberty time, they are always puzzled when semen is secreted. It is through conversations with their friends that these topics are discussed and knowledge of it gained. They very often grow impatient and like to experiment with the girls because they come into contact with some older boys who tell them their experiences on this act which is looked upon as sinful by their parents.

WORK

Boys are always at work with their fathers on the farm. At pre-puberty, when the skill of working on the farm is acquired, they work strenuously to satisfy their fathers in order that they might be lenient in offering them land on which to work and earn their own living during adolescence. They so trained that they know the seasons of the year and what must be done during each season. They know good soil from bad soil and how each is profitably used. They know different kinds of animals and birds and their cries; different edible fruits and many



A boy in a native cloth

W. S. O. W.

useful herbs. They also know a bit of hunting, the simplest of which is the shooting of birds with slings. They know the dangerous reptiles and insects of the forest and the first aid given when they bite. There is a certain climbing plant just like beans but it is not eaten. It is called 'mbowatsena eduwa' literally meaning 'snakes' beans'. The boys know that such a plant when grown around your residence, drives away the snakes. Therefore in order to prevent snakes from getting into the hens' pen to destroy their eggs, this plant is grown as hedges around the pen.

They work for their fathers up to the stage of puberty. They are then given portions of land on which to work for their living as well as save up money for marriage. They till the land and grow crops especially vegetables. Throughout the week they work on their own farms but they sacrifice one or two days a week to work in their fathers' farms. They know that on Tuesday, the gods in the forest go about naked so on every Tuesday they rest. Some of them cut down coconut on this day and ask their sisters to sell them. The money got from selling these coconuts are shared. One peculiar thing about the adolescent boys at Abura is that they know how to climb trees especially the coconut trees. Sometimes they display on the tree top by seating themselves comfortably on the branches and eating some of the fruits.

When ripe the crops are harvested and sold by their younger sisters. At times some of the village women buy them and they in turn take it to the town for sale. In this way they make

a living. Some of the money got from selling these crops are used in buying tools and seeds. They also spend some in clothing when they are partly independent. They keep the rest of their money and continue to be fed by their parents. They help their mothers by giving them crops from their farms; this is an indirect form of providing chop money. Gradually, they save up money and between the ages of twenty and twenty four they marry when they feel they have sufficient money.

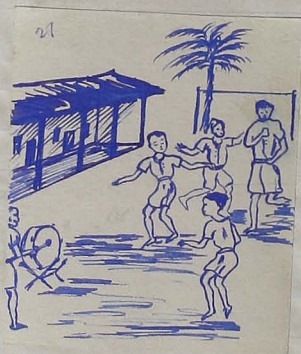
Formerly, the men of Abura were all farmers and hunters, but nowadays some are trained in carpentry, mason work and store keeping.

The parents who do any of the above named jobs train their boys in their trade. Sometimes the boys like to be trained in such trades despite the fact of their fathers being farmers. In this case they are sent to the workshop where they work as apprentices for a number of years. When they are qualified, their parents pay a demanded amount of money and the boys go to work on their own. They then start to save up to buy their necessary needs and to save up for marriage purposes.

There are no puberty rites for the boys to observe so they marry and live with their wives as adults.

SCHOOLING

A minority of the children at Abura attend school. Comparatively, few of them remain in school long enough to complete the course. The school is only a primary school. Those who wish to continue beyond that standard, go to schools in Cape Coast.



School boys at play.

SCHOOL

Formerly they walked all the way to and from the town. But now they are sometimes given pennies with which to join the bus. They do not go home at mid-day so they are either given threepence or kenkey and fish. Some fortunate boys and girls at times get the consent of some benevolent people with whom they live in the town so that they go to the village only during the holidays. In this case their parents are responsible for their clothing, fees, purchase of books and feeding. On the other hand the boy or girl gives a helping hand in the daily house chores and in return are freely fed.

In the school, they meet with rich and poor people. In this way they learn about each others ways. At first they keep to themselves which I attribute to inferiority complex, but after a term or two they move on quite harmoniously together. Life in the town has some effects on them and in the long run their crude ways are changed, for example, they speak more respectfully to adults and elders. They develop an outstanding quality of submissiveness. They are always sober and obedient. They cultivate the quality of respectfulness and always say 'Please' (mepa wo kyew) whenever they speak to their elders. They bend the knee when greeting or thanking which is not practised by the boys and girls in Cape Coast.

The girls make girl friends in the town in the company of whom either good or bad habits are developed. The boys too have boy friends and the same thing applies to them. Some of the boys make friends with the girls in the town and vice versa. They also practise romance but on a lesser degree than what is practised by adolescent boys and girls in

the village. They write funny love letters to themselves and exchange small presents which are wrapped.

They have the opportunities of reading pamphlets about sex, the commonest being the one entitled 'The red light'. In this book, they get acquainted with ways of romance, how women conceive and how to practise birth-control. Surely, obtaining accurate knowledge of the essential facts about this important aspect of life is not wrong. Misuse of the knowledge or perversion of the fact is an evil thing.

During the holidays when the boys and girls visit their parents at the village, a great improvement is seen in their way of life. The girls look plump and pretty and attract most of the boys. One regrettable thing is that some of these aspirants on returning to the village, look down on the people with whom they were once living.

So far, there is no boy or girl at Abura who has finished his or her primary education in the town. This is due to the fact that the school at Abura is a very late institution.



Adolescents courting.

CHAPTER VIII

LATER ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is regarded as a very happy period of transition to adulthood. It is a period of great fun, excitement and great enjoyment. Most of the villagers at Abura marry at the end of this period or just at the beginning of adulthood. Because of this early marriage there is a vast difference between the bodily feature of a married woman at the village and that in the town. Those in the town marry later and do not engage in the same manual work as the villagers.

This affects the village women physically so that even at the age of thirty they look quite old and wrinkled whilst a woman of the same age in the town is then at the prime of her life. It is also due to the unbalanced diet. They eat in the previous and this present stage of adulthood; for example too much boiled unripened plantain or cassava, very little or no fish which they twice a day.

ADULTHOOD

In girls this period starts at the age of nineteen and in boys at twenty one years of age. It is the age of maturity and it lasts through life. When an adult male delays in marrying he is often teased by his friends and they look down on him. His mother often tells him to marry and get someone to cook for him and free her from that trouble. Most of them think that such a man is unable to perform the sex act.

hence he is not liked by any woman. At times this is true and the man is taken to the native doctor who mixes some barks of trees and gives it to him to boil and drink. In most cases this proves futile and he is sent to other villages to try the herbalists there.

The girls are also sometimes left unmarried for a long time. At times it is due to inefficiency in housework or their questionable character. Their parents take the trouble to advise them and do all that is in their power to win them husbands. This time they do not restrict the daughters and as soon as they see that their daughters have made friends with a man the mothers especially give the man presents and ask them to visit them often. These things help in winning husbands for their unmarried daughters. After all these attempts have failed they leave the daughters alone to care for themselves. They do not care how they live now, what they eat or the sort of life they lead. It is then that these grown up girls make a mess of themselves and bring forth illegitimate children. The parents, though not fully satisfied are partly content because their daughters have proved themselves fruitful which at least proves to the members of the community that they have not led immoral lives. Some of them live loose lives and indulge in sexual intercourse with many men hence they frequently become sterile.

As soon as the men and women marry they are considered as adults and take practical part in the ceremonies and institutions of the village because they are the people who must preserve and hand on the tradition to the next generation so

that the life of this social group might continue and be renewed.

CEREMONIES AND INSTITUTIONS

It is an obligation for the adults of Abura, both male and female to know almost all the rites of their ceremonies to make them feel to be citizens of the village. A child who is taken out of the village and lives in another place for years and therefore knows nothing about the ceremonies of the village is considered a stranger and hardly counted as a member of the community. To acquaint themselves therefore with the customary rites, those members of the village ^{who} are away go to the village every year to take part in the festival celebrations in order to keep in touch with their citizens and learn all that is well knowing.

The Aburas have three chief festivals. The first one which is celebrated on the first Friday after the twenty fourth of May is called 'Akobokan'. To them this feast marks the beginning of a new year and they celebrate it just in the same way as how those in Cape Coast celebrate the Christmas. They save up a lot of money towards the celebration and entertain themselves with sweets and drinks.

On that day before dawn the women get up and weep and sing dirges with the names of their departed relatives. At sunrise the adults take their bottles of drinks to their fathers 'Akor' where the heads of the families use them in pouring libation asking their departed souls for protection and special favours. They drink to their health and tell the life stories of the dead to the youth. The old men

and women always prefer the young adults to do this, and they correct them whenever a false account is given. Thus the youths lines of the history of the some of the brave and outstanding men at the village. When they dismiss, the adolescents wrote down to the infants go home dancing and singing on the way, clapping and beating tins. They stop at houses to collect their New Year's presents from the adults. They are given food crops and sometimes money which they divide fairly among themselves. The adults go from house to house wishing themselves a happy New Year and shaking hands with each other.

The following Friday is 'Guapon' from which time they start counting from the next festival. Eight weeks after 'Guapon' comes 'Egnaw>dwe', the celebration dealing mainly with gods. It is the time when the first harvest of yams from the farms are used. Before this feast, they do not taste any fresh yam — they are bought and stored. This is a special request given to the gods to help them harvest good crops during the next season.

No libation is poured but during the day the women prepare 'oto' and hard boiled eggs. This meal is ready by noon and the adults go to sprinkle some to the gods and to request them to help them with their farm work. This is done in groups and the roads and all the corners of the village are sprinkled with oto to give equal share to the seventy seven gods.

Four more Fridays are counted

and on the Monday which follows the 'Ahobokese' takes place. At this time, both the gods and spirits are treated. Libation is poured and the spirits and gods have a bigger feed at noon. Boys and girls become extremely happy and parents display new clothes on their children as well as themselves so that they look richly dressed but in all sorts of gay colours. They gather together in the evening for the native dance and it is at such a time that the young girls learn the graceful styles from the old women.

The young boys have bon-fire around which they sing, dance and chew sugar-cane and enjoy themselves very well to round off the occasion.

There is another time for feeding the gods and that is at any odd time when no rain falls for a long time, when there is some or when the village is somehow in danger. In such cases its and eggs are sprinkled to the special gods for help, for example the god of rain 'Brehompaw' and it happens that they go back home in rain after satisfying this god.

The adults are bound to take part in all these ceremonies and keep up the life of the community.

In Cape Coast there are seven Asafo Companies but at Abura they have only one which is the 'Tuafa Company'. As soon as a young man marries he joins this institution and entertains with drinks to mark the occasion of her marriage. He introduces his wife to them so that none of them make love to her, knowing that from that

time onwards she is married. If this introduction is neglected, no man is to be blamed for having anything to do with the wife because the public does not consider her as a wife until she has been introduced. If after the customary introduction, and any man has intercourse with the wife, he is charged £7.4^s seven pounds four shillings which is known as 'Ayerfar' meaning 'compensation for taking someones wife'. The 'Asafo' also promise to help the couple to settle any future disputes.

All the men are therefore members of the 'Tuafo-Asafo' Company. Their chief aim is to defend the village in times of war. The young men are trained to fire guns and taught the meaning of the talking drums, the songs played for war as well as that for entertainment.

There is another obligation they fulfil and that is to renew the company post fence. This company post is a huge tree planted to the North of the village at a spot where they have one of the goals. This is surrounded by a fence, woven with small sliced pieces of bamboo sticks. This is renewed at midnight of the first Sunday after the 'Nobokese' festival, when all are asleep. They leave a hole in it. On the following Monday they clean the main road and foot paths. Afterward they assemble to charge all those members who did not take part in the work.

The chief offers them drink as a reward whilst drinking, the talking drums are played. Women gather round to dance. After eight days from the celebration, they meet again to play and at this time the money collected from the newly



A girl waiting for a boy friend.

weds is used in buying drinks for entertainment.

Eight days after that they meet again with the chief, and amendments are made in the old bye-laws and new ones inserted. After this they go up to the post fence where the chief dances and weaves to fill in the hole left out in the 'Asafo' Company post fence.

The last work of the 'Asafo' is to play at funerals. From time to time, as the opportunity offers itself, the young adults learn the customs so that by the time they are fairly old they know a lot about such things as death and inheritance, birth and the laws and punishments of the village.

SOCIAL LIFE

The newly married adults work and save money, bear forth children and care for them. Most of them save their money at the Cape Coast Post Office and withdraw when needed. After some years of saving some of them are able to build swish houses for their families. To them, the word family goes a long way. It includes a man, his wife with their cousins and nephews, nieces, sons and daughters and as many relatives as possible. As adults they must be hospitable to their people and guests. I remember the first day I visited there with my father. We visited the chief's house.

As soon as we arrived a boy went to inform the chief who asked him to let us be seated. He sent for his linguist who came and took to seat by us. The chief asked the linguist to interview us. He offered us water to drink after which the following conversation ensued.

Linguist : Ah! father, you are from the distance and may we know which wind blows you to this place (this is the literal meaning) -

My father : It is no bad news. This daughter of mine is doing a course at the University and she is requested to collect some information; knowing you as a friend just near Cape Coast, I thought I would come with her for your help.

Linguist : Chief, that is their mission.

Chief : Ask him the sort of information they are after.

Linguist : Father, you have heard. May we hear you?

My Father : It is all about the training of your children. How and what urges you to marry, sterility, all that appertains to birth here, how the baby is cared, fed, nursed and educated to be a citizen. (The linguist gives the chief the information of the ~~quer~~ request).

Chief : Ah! hen nsempa (It is good news). They then got up and shook hands with us, welcomed us, asked if I would stay or leave. My father responded and said I would leave for the time being but I would return and seek information from time to time. They agreed upon this and I started asking questions.

The above shows us the first step of hospitality that prevails in this village. No matter how unfamiliar you are, you are given a cup of water and asked to

purpose of your visit; they shake warm hands and welcome you. This is practised by all adults. In general, they are very friendly and co-operative and seem to be very friendly towards one another. Many a time an adult to and from the town would stop at each house she passed, greeted and asked ^{for} the health of the inmates.

They have no societies or clubs save the three churches. On Sundays they go to worship God. There are a few pagans who have all their belief rooted in suspicion.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapters I have endeavoured to depict the lives of the villagers of Abura, laying special emphasis on their child training. It has been necessary to deal with other topics for example adulthood, marriage which appear at first sight to be unconnected with child training so as to give a full picture of the social background of the education of the young. For knowledge of the various stages in the life of the individual—infancy, adolescence, adulthood, marriage, death—are necessary if the child is to imbibe all the material which will fit him for life in his particular community.

Throughout this treatise, I have been mainly factual in my approach and kept personal criticisms to the minimum. It is by such an approach that will be possible to sift what is due to the environment and what to heredity in the behaviour of children. Abura being a small village which has until comparatively recently come under external influence and ideas—such as formal education, motor cars, buses, secret ballots to mention only a few—displays all the general characteristics peculiar to backward peoples namely superstitions, belief in magic, witchcraft, sociability, strong ties of kindred and high sense of oneness with the group, adherence to custom, respect for age. The lives of the villagers lose their simplicity if viewed with the eyes of one such as myself, who has been a child of two different cultures, European and African.

In such a community we should expect what to us will appear 'crude' methods of

Education : discipline is through threats, reproaches, praise, punishment and rewards and these methods are not the prerogatives of a specialist in the community, that is the teacher. There everybody is a 'teacher' and the child is thus brought under the pervading influence of the tradition, beliefs and customs, taboos, accepted rules of conduct of the entire community. The child learns not by theory but by the participation in the activity itself. The child's education is one long apprenticeship. And what is specially commendable, it is not just related to the life of the community: it is the life of the community being lived. With all the advancement of education in the big towns for example Cape Coast, this important aspect of education is sadly lacking. At Abura, education is practiced in its true philosophic sense; it is a preparation for life. Although that education is not by the written word, it makes use of the cumulative wisdom and knowledge of the group.

To point these out is not to see the short-comings of child training at Abura. The first short coming is that education — using the term broadly — is based on common sense and popular prejudices and not on scientific knowledge of the child. Secondly, the type of training appears to work so long as the community retains its present size. The growth of population, the change of occupation will render the training if not unsuitable at least inadequate. Thirdly, there is the tendency to treat children as immature beings who have basically not the adults' feelings and curiosity. The result of this attitude is the

lack of sympathy to the children's questions about adult life, for example sex. There is the tendency of to regard children as belonging to a pattern: the good child is the docile, serviceable, respectful type. The curious, inquisitive, playful ones being lumped together as bad. There is thus no attempt to suit the environment of the home or the town to the children; the adults have the privilege of remaining immobile. It is the children who have to adapt themselves to the adults. Rules of conduct are taught through the medium of 'Anansesem' that is folk tales. Sometimes the story tellers dramatize the stories when the villagers gather round a harmattan fire in the middle of the town.

A word need to be said about the people's idea of causation. This is bound up with their belief in super human agencies such as witches and spirits. Among them there is a rule that nothing happens without a cause "Se bibi ankaka ~~kiri~~ mpapa a nkye mpapa anye kredo". But instead of looking for a physical cause, the tendency is to look out for a spiritual or magical one. If for instance a snake bites a person, the people will not be satisfied with the presence of the snake as the cause of the snake bite. They will be more interested in why the snake bit the particular person in the particular place at a particular time. The idea of coincidence itself requires an explanation. It is the super-human causation that attempts to explain why something happened to a particular person in a particular manner at a given time in a given place.

It is often and truly said that civilization is full of inhibitions and repressions. That accounts

for the large percentage of child delinquents, psychoses and neuroses in advanced communities. In simple communities such as Abura, such abnormalities are practically absent. The simple explanation I venture to give is that feelings are dramatized. The death of a relative calls for loud lamentation giving an outlet to the grief; the ritual performed release all fears. With all such outlets inhibitions and repressions have little chance of developing into great abnormalities of mind.

Abura is now coming under the influence of formal education and other external influence. Before it has been swept off its feet by Rese it is hoped that educators would sift what is good in the old order and add to the good in the new to enrich the lives of the people. If the present study helps in some way the synthesis, the author will ~~not~~ think her efforts amply rewarded.

THE END.

APPENDICES

Children's Stories and Factual Reports.

1

The child's favourite story by Aba Atta aged 6½

One day, a thirsty fox went out in search of water. On its way it saw some fruits on a tree. It was tempted to steal so it drew near and jumped up (here the child jumped up with the right hand outstretched as though she was plucking from a tree). But it could not reach it.

It made an effort to but still could not get hold of the fruits. Then in disgust it turned away saying, "after all I will not bother myself again for the fruits are sour". So saying the child walked away with a frowed face with a pretentious air as though she were the fox, and suddenly burst into laughter a minute later.

2.

A story about a good boy by John Cudjoe - 8 yrs.

Once upon a time a good boy was walking in a street when he saw a stone against which people are likely to knock their feet.

He tried to kick it gently aside it was too heavy. Instead of going his way, he gathered all his strength and lifted it up. To his surprise he saw a small bag containing money underneath it so he threw away the stone and ran home and showed the money to his mother and his mother was very much pleased and praised him and gave him an egg and he ate it.

3.

A story about a bad boy by John Ewusi - 5 yrs.

A bad boy was staying with his grandmother. He was a lazy boy. Everyday he just sit and sit and sit doing no work. He ~~stole~~ steals his mothers pennies behind the native stove where she keeps it and runs very fast to his grandmother's house. He always beats his little sister and the grandmother says to him "You are a bad boy".

4.

A story about a good girl told by Adwowa Emisaaba aged 4 yrs.

There is a girl called Ekuwa who lives with her parents at in^o village. The girl is very smart. Her mother sends her everyday and she always goes. She is loved by her parents and her brother. They give her sweets such as toffee bread and coconut. She is a good girl because she is fat and good. (The child makes gestures all through while telling the story).

5.

A story about a bad girl by Esi Mansa aged 10 yrs.

Once there was a girl who was very very proud. She always abused people and did not help her mother at home. Everybody did not like her at home save the father. Everyday people from different places came to marry her but she always said sa No! One day a very handsome

went and married her. When she was going to stay with the man her mother put some charms in her things but she threw them away. She took all her belongings and many maid-servants and went away with the man. On the way the man ate all the food and people and said he wanted to eat the girl. The girl was given a few minutes to pray and at that time, she searched and called her mother's charm to come and help her. The charm appeared and told her to put it under her skin. As soon as she did it she turned into a crow with white feathers on the neck and it flew away calling the name of the charm - Baawa Baawa. This is why the crow always calls the charm's name while crying.

Children's Wishes

It was just before Christmas when these children were interviewed so I preferred to ask them what they would like to have for Christmas from their parents or guardians:

1. Elizabeth Nsiah aged 3 years
I would ask for a doll, the kind which sleeps and eat.
2. Mary Arthur aged 9 years (a school girl)
I would ask for a new dress and a pair of new shoes.
3. Kodwo Badu aged 5 years
I would ask for corned-beef, bread and tea.

Children's Self-description.

1. Grace Asafua aged 6 years

Interviewer : Grace, can you tell me something about yourself

Grace : - My name? Is that what you want?

Interviewer : Yes; and any other thing you can tell me

Grace : My name is Esi Twents

Interviewer : What about your English name?

Grace : It is Grace Asafua. My father is Egya Ata and my mother is Mena Ekwana.

Interviewer : Where do you live?

Grace : I live near the Catholic Chapel. My father and my mother are staying there. I help my mother in cooking, I sweep, go out to fetch water and at times I go to the town with her. She likes me very much and I also like her.

2. Kwamena Ata aged 5 years

Interviewer : Tell me about yourself my dear boy. Anything at all will do, you hear?

Kwame Ata : I am a boy, I like sweet as well as fine things. That is all.

Interviewer : Do you go to school?

Kwamena : No! I am afraid of the cane so I will never go to school. I prefer to go to the farm with my father. There I am sure to get many fruits and play with some friends.

A Child's life Story.

Ama Asafua aged $9\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Interviewer: Come Ama, have a seat by me. Can you tell me of your life story? I mean where you were born when it was, and any experience you have had in life.

Ama: You know my parents don't you?

Interviewer: I know them but I do not know their names.

Ama: My mother is Mame Ekuwa and my father is Eyya Kofi Damtsi. I was born here at Abura and I will always be here because my parents are always here.

Interviewer: When were you born?

Ama: I was born on Wednesday.

Interviewer: What is your age?

Ama: I do not know, but my father can tell you. There he sit; may I go and ask him.

Interviewer: All right, go now do not keep long.

Ama: (She goes and runs back) He says I am not more than $9\frac{1}{2}$ years and not less than ~~9~~ 9 years.

Interviewer: Where is your mother?

Ama: She is gone to the native doctor Aban to get some medicine for my younger only sister who is sick in bed. She has just vomitted; she must be suffering from fever. so

Oh! here comes my mother, she is calling me so bye-bye and good luck to you.

Imaginative Play

Akosua Wangar aged 5 years and her brother Kodwo Bafa aged 8 years and their friend Mary Saigoe aged 9 years.

The following was conducted near a neighbouring house by mine in Cape Coast. The children are familiar to me. One fine afternoon, I saw that Kodwo Bafa, a school boy, and Wangar, an illiterate, were trying to construct a swish oven with sand. I went up to them with the following collection: - a small doll, some pieces of ~~old~~ material, a pair of scissors, some peppers and some empty powder and sardine tins. These were put into a basket and covered cloth. As I went near them I saw Akosua laughing. She said

Akosua: We are making swish ovens, they will look like what you see yonder (she points out to a swish oven at a distance)

Interviewer: (Puts basket on the ground) Who can guess what I have in this basket?

Kodwo: It contains food. (Interviewer shakes her head) Clothes.

Interviewer: No! try again.

Akosua: Kintey (she stretches her neck to look into a tiny hole in the basket) Oh! books.

Interviewer: Uncovers it and all gaze into it and call out the names of the objects I would like you to play very care-

fully with these things. They rush to take them out. A friend of theirs, Mary Saigae comes along, hears them make noise and comes near them. She is also told to join in the play. Kodwo and Akosua fight over the doll but Mary cools down Kodwo, takes the doll from him. Akosua gets and ties the baby to her back while Mary is engaged in the pieces of cloths and starts to sew.

Interviewer: Mary what are you doing?

Mary: I am cutting a dress for my doll. She starts to sew.

Interviewer: From where did you get the thread and needle?

Mary: I had the needle in my covershoulder and I asked Akosua to get me hair thread.

Interviewer: But Mary do you know how to sew?

Mary: Oh! yes, my mother is a seamstress and I always see her cut dresses. I have a doll, I often sew dresses for it.

Interviewer: All right, take care you do not prick your fingers with the needle.

Kodwo: Pee! pee! Akosua will you not give me me way? (He had made a lorry toy with an empty sardine tin and was saying pee! pee! to show that it was passing so they should give him way.) I am going to Sekondi!

Mary: I want to go to Accra not Sekondi

Kodwo: Let us go, I will drop you on the way.

Interviewer : smiles at the child's ignorance while Mary starts screaming.

Mary : Kodwo, so you do not know that Accra is not on the Sekondi road?

Interviewer : What about the empty powder tins, will you not play with them?

Mary : I like the red one; it resembles my mother's.

Akosua : (she sings and hugs the doll to sleep.

Interviewer : What is the name of your doll?

Akosua : She is Abena Foriwa.

Interviewer : How old is she?

Akosua : Seven years

Interviewer : Oh! so it is older than you?
How old are you?

Akosua : I am 20 years old

Mary : Mewu o! She does not know. She is a liar.

Interviewer : Now listen children, I am going away but as I see you interested, I shall leave you some things to play with. Let me have the pair of scissors and the basket and when you finish you could bring over the rest.

Interviewer bids them bye-bye and goes away.

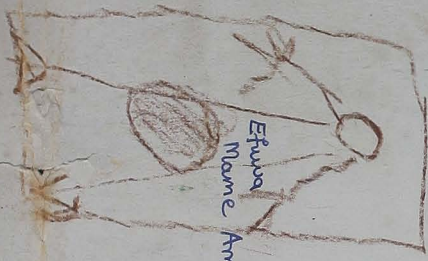


A cat

Stool - case



A house



Efuwa
Mama Ama's daughter.



Mama Ama
from the market.

Imaginative Drawing



Two Cats



Two Kittens

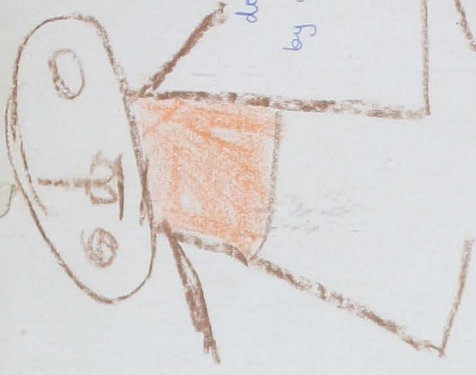
A hen

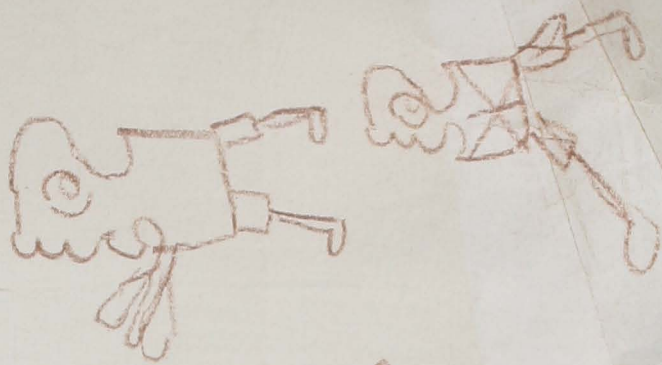


A goat



A man, feeding his domestic animals drawn by a girl aged 5½ years





Kutu Engua



Kofi



MAN

WOMAN



Light



Chair



Sea



Dress



Staircase

A man and a woman with an umbrella; by a girl aged 9 years.

Gentle man



Cow boy



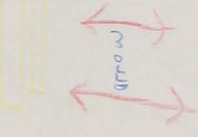
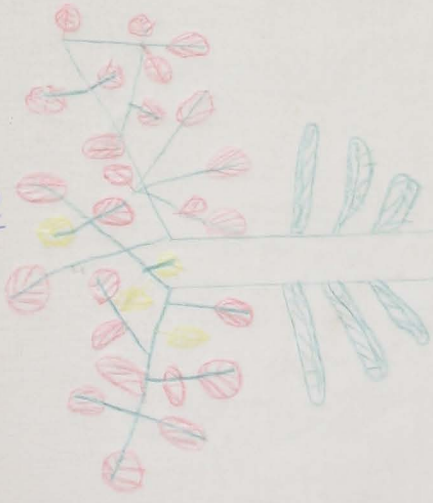
The child informed me that the
 cowboy took off the gentleman's hat in the
 street and this caused the fight.

A fight between a gentleman and a cowboy boy by John Tisboe aged 10 years

Their father's house

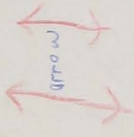


Duo Tree



Bow

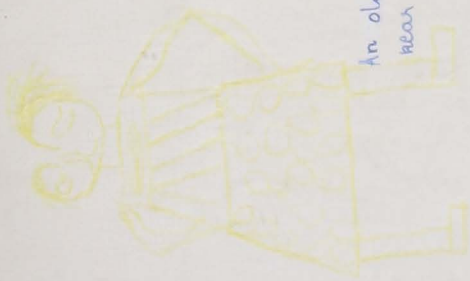
Bow



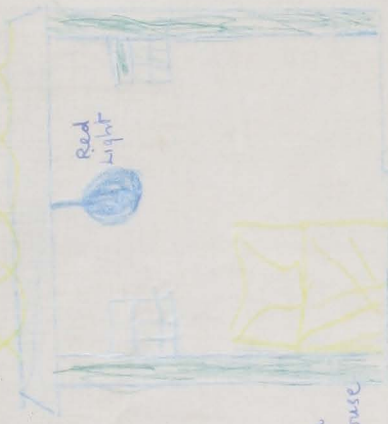
Duo

The pleasant thing Mary Saker aged 7 years could think of
 Two children playing near their father's house in a cottage.

The house of a witch



An old witch
near her house



Red
light

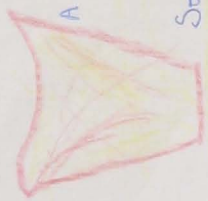
Staircase



An egg



A Bucket



A cup

Something that is not nice by Sasako aged 7 years

lion



Wangar

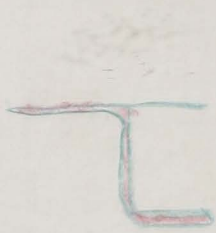
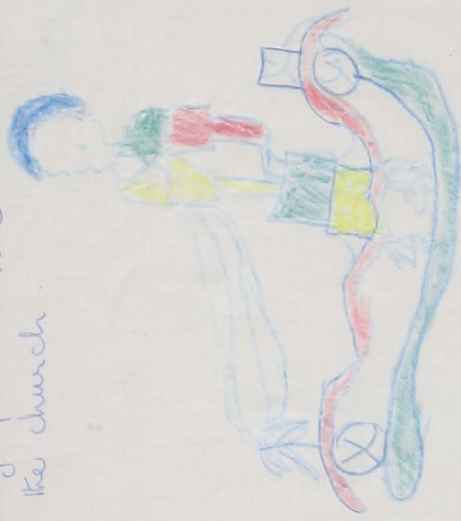


Snake

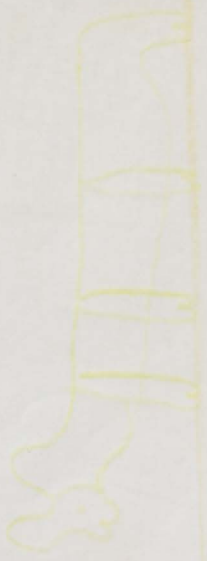


What a child ^{aged} 9 years is afraid of . . .

A woman going for a dance and a man driving to the church



A woman from 1



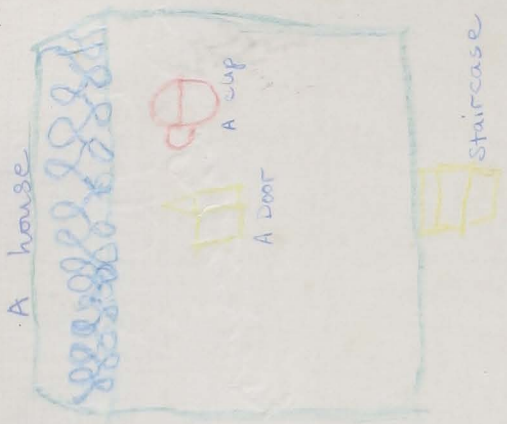
A child's dream by a child aged 8 1/2 years



A boy on a byside



A branch

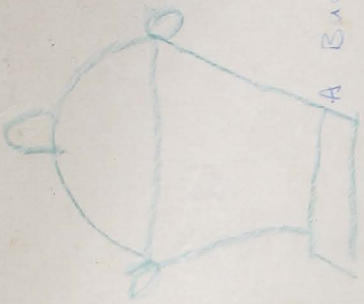


A house

A Door

A cup

Staircase



A Bucket

A child's house by Ana aged 6 1/2 years