

**A STUDY  
OF  
CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH  
AT  
WINNEBA.**

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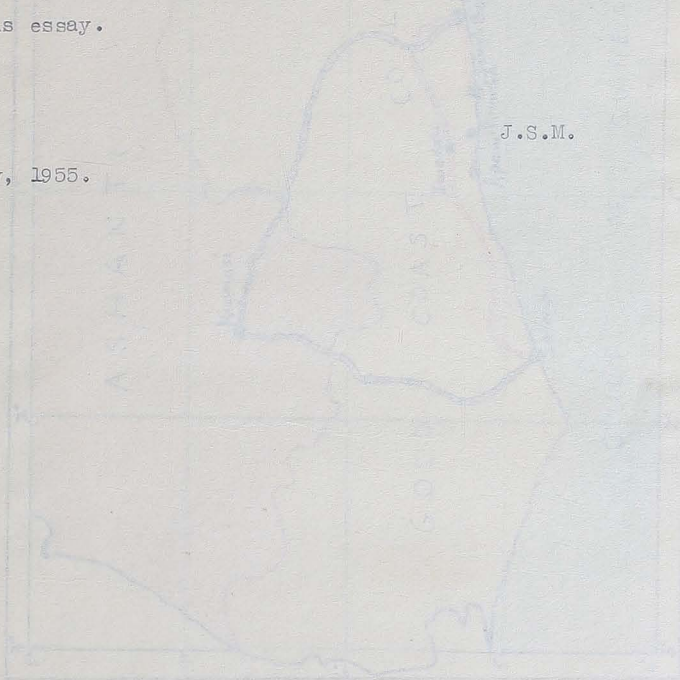
who prepared the questionnaire on which the essay was based, to Dr. M.M. Lusty (Lecturer in Social Studies) for her valuable criticisms and suggestions and, lastly, to the late J.G. Oddoye, M.A. (Lecturer in Science Method) who saw the drafts of the first two chapters and would have given all the help he could but for his accidental death on 3rd February, 1955, just about a month after the work had been started.

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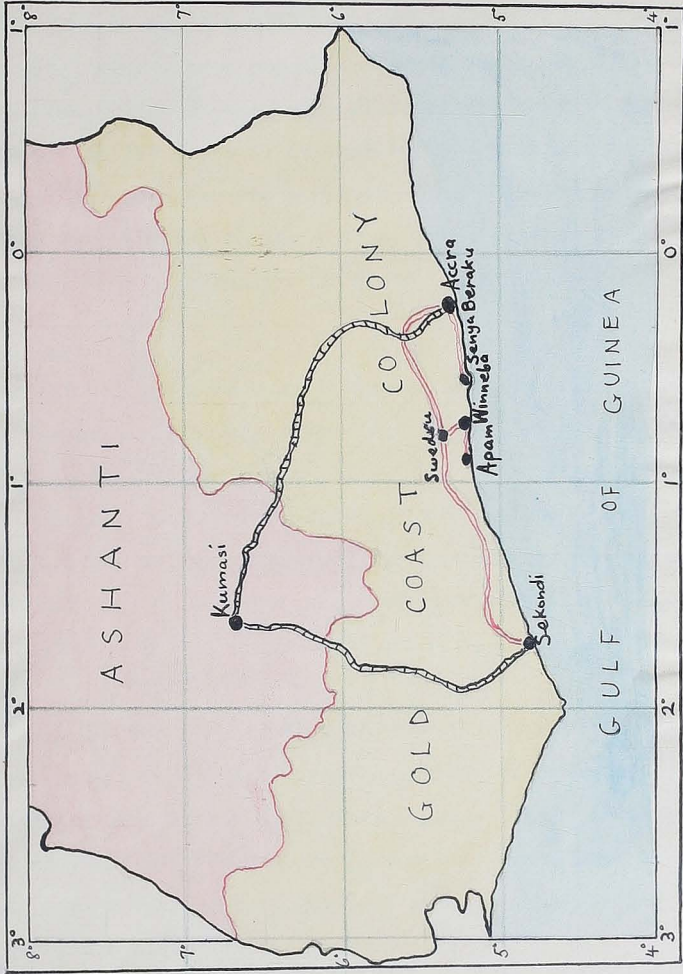
J.S.M.

May, 1955.



Map showing Position of WINNEBA and ...



Map showing Position of WINNEBA and neighbouring Towns.



J.S.M.

 Railway  
 Motorable Road

## INTRODUCTION

Winneba, with an area of about 4 sq. miles and a population of 15,110, is the headquarters of the Effutu State which consists mainly of Esuekyir, Gyahadze, Senya Beraku and Awutu Beraku. It is one of the four well-established ports of the Gold Coast, viz. Takoradi, Accra, Cape Coast and Winneba.

On the north it is bounded by Agona Swedru, a commercial town 15 miles away with a population of 10,913 through which the rich cocoa beans of the Agona District are sent to Winneba for export. On the south it is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean; on the east by Senya Beraku, a fishing town 11 miles away with a population of 7,507 and on the west by Apam, another fishing town 9 miles away with a population of 3,943 (Vide Census, 1948).

### History:

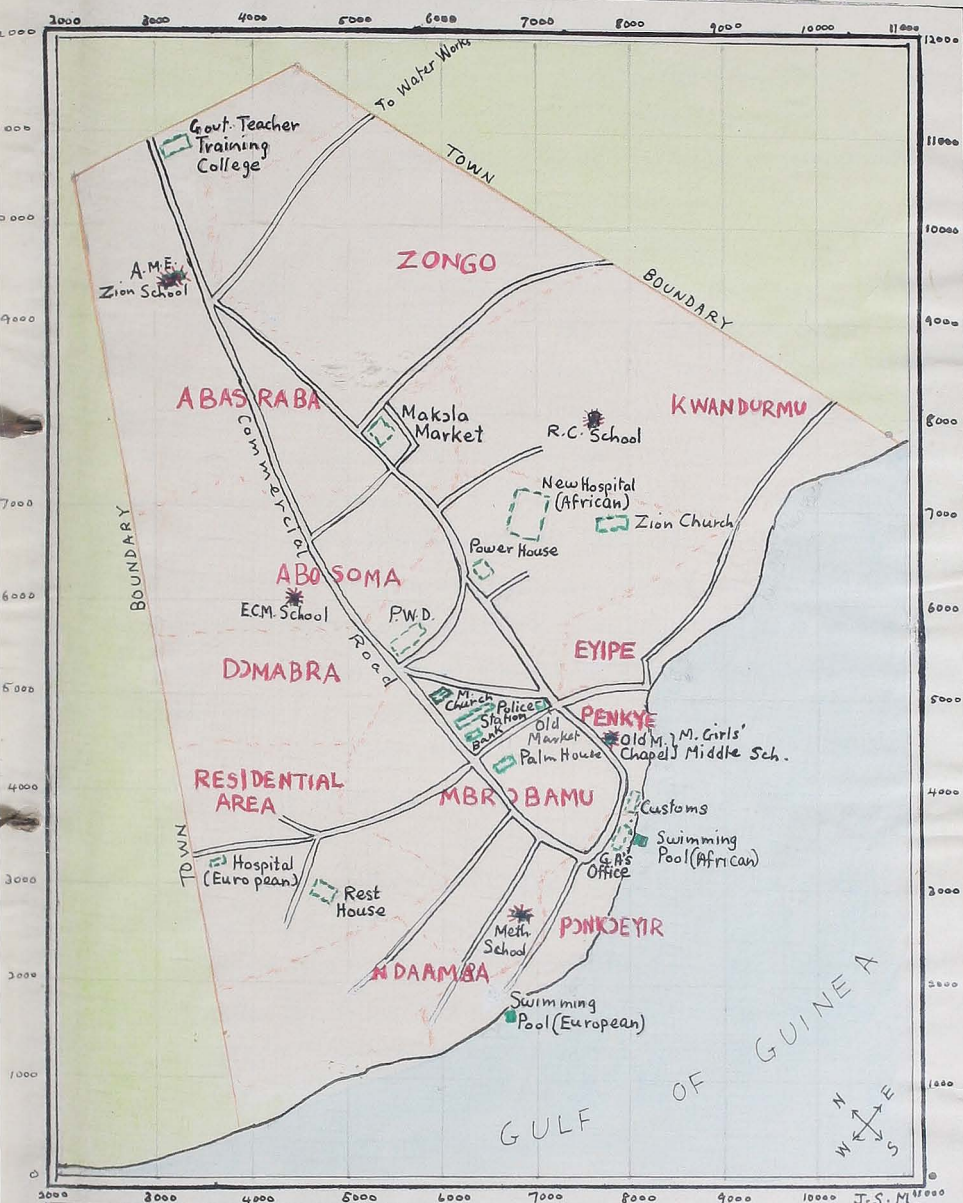
The natives are generally bilingual and speak Effutu (or Awutu), the native language of the people and Fante, a popular medium of communication in general and of instruction in the Primary Schools. Not much is known of the origins of the Effutus but similarities in language structure, vocabulary and intonation between their native language and that of the Iartehs of Akwapim and of the Guans of the Trans-Volta point to a possible common origin.




Winneba is the home of King Ghartey IV who was the first President of the Fante Confederation (1868), of Ayirebi Acquah III, who ruled for ~~XXXX~~ twenty-five years (1919 - 1944) and was one of the two most influential members of the Gold Coast Legislative Council, and of the present Ghartey V who also, eleven years ago, was a popular Minister of the Gospel.

### Pattern of Settlement:

(a) Penkye and Ayipe which lie along the beach are the home of the fisherfolk and appear to be the most populous part of the town. Here the fishermen have their canoes on the beach and spend their time in going to sea. During most of the day the fisherboys and some of the girls are found on the beach playing or bathing, in the sea, and the women's chief occupation is to go to the beach

# WINNEBA: PATTERN of SETTLEMENT



**RED CAPITALS** = Areas of Settlement  
 Main Roads  
 Important Places incl. Churches  
 School  
 Swimming Pool

Reproduced from Survey Department's Winneba Town Plan Reference No. X1145 of Scale 1:6250 or 520.83 Feet to One inch to  $\frac{3}{8}$  size.

whenever the fishermen return from the sea, and take the fish to the market to sell. Some of the fish are smoked or fried and taken to the markets of the Agona and other districts of the hinterland.

(b) Ponkoekyir and Ndaamba (lying west on a slightly raised ground) are also inhabited chiefly by fishermen but are less ~~populated~~ populous. The coastline here is rocky and the children tend to fish between the rocks with the hook and line. Here we have the swimming pools for both Africans and Europeans where bathing or swimming is a favourite recreation.

(c) Mbrobanu is the busy central part of the town and includes such important places as the Royal Cemetery, the European Cemetery, the Methodist Mission House, Palm House which, in the pre-pipe-borne water days, supplied a greater part of the town with water from its never-failing well which still continues to be useful to a good number of the inhabitants, the Barclays' Bank and the E.B.W.A., the Police Station, the Methodist Chapel and the Old Market which is always thickly peopled. The name Mbrobanu literally means 'among the educated class' and was originally the abode of the intellectuals.

(d) Domabra (i.e. come, if you love me) in the ~~south~~ north-west is occupied chiefly by people of Apam descent. In the early stages of settlement the young men in this vicinity were members of Apam football teams and, therefore, encouraged the youth to form strong football teams. This had a strong influence on the training of the children which permeated the entire life of the community particularly in the 1920's and 30's, and the spirit of sportsmanship is still dominant in all the sections of the community.

(e) Abosoma and Abasraba form the northern settlements of the town and are composed almost entirely of strangers. As a result, the native Effutu language is rarely spoken there. A number of football teams also grew up among the youth there and until recently they held the ~~first~~ ~~in~~ field in sports. The organisation of the Yamoah's Brass Band and Orchestra at Abosoma from very early times has developed a taste for music and rhythm among the whole community and still continues to influence the habits and attitudes of the children.

(f) The Zongo is predominantly the abode of the Moslem elements, e.g. Hausas and Dagombas, and lies in the north-east over quite an extensive area and is also very close to the new Makola Market. They live a life characteristically different from that of the Akan population owing to the strong influence of their Arab culture.

(g) Kwondurmu (further east) is about the latest settlement. It is inhabited chiefly by fishermen who want a more quiet life than can be found at Penkye or Ayipe. Along the northern borders of this area can be found the imposing Offices and Mission House of the Roman Catholic Fathers, and close to it is a site where the foundations of a cathedral are being laid.

Religion:

In the past paganism was predominant. With the worship of the river ~~god~~ gods, Ayensu and Mbonyi, and of the chief local deity, Penkye Otu, there arose a hierarchy of fetish priests and priestesses who taught that the destiny of the people was in the hands of Penkye Otu to whom yearly human sacrifices and periodical ceremonies were to be made. With the advent of Christianity conditions began to change. Nevertheless, the bulk of the illiterate community, and Churches became firmly established, especially the fisherfolk, could not be dissuaded from believing in Penkye Otu and the other gods. There is, of course, a smaller number of fetish ~~priests~~ priests and priestesses to-day than before and gradually more and more heathens are finding their way into the Churches, the chief ones being as follows :-

- i The Methodist Mission
- ii The Anglican Mission
- iii The A.M.E. Zion Church
- iv The Presbyterian Mission
- v The Roman Catholic Mission
- vi The Faith Tabernacle
- vii The Apostolic Mission

In fact, the Churches, acting as voluntary agencies right from the middle of the 19th century, have contributed much towards the ~~education~~ education and spiritual well-being of the children. The Methodist Mission was the first to open a school at Winneba. Then followed the A.M.E. Zion Mission, The Anglican Mission, The Presbyterian Mission and the Roman Catholic Mission. Recently (1950) The Winneba Government Training College has been established, followed by the Ghana College and a Commercial College.

The following tables give the enrolments of school children (boys and girls respectively) of the Primary and Middle schools at Winnemba up to March ending, 1955.

Methodist Primary

A	<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>	B	<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
	1	25	21	46		1	24	22	46
	2	24	22	46		2	26	20	46
	3	26	20	46		3	20	26	46
	4	28	18	46		4	26	20	46
	5	32	14	46		5	25	20	45
	6	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>35</u>		6	<u>33</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>45</u>
		<u>157</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>265</u>			<u>154</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>274</u>

Grand Total 539 boys, 311 girls

E.C.M. Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	24	22	46
2	29	17	46
3	21	18	39
4	25	11	36
5	22	17	39
6	<u>28</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>39</u>
	<u>149</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>245</u>

A.M.E. Zion Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	34	12	46
2	27	19	46
3	39	7	46
4A	40	6	46
4B	29	13	42
5	30	16	46
6	<u>34</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>44</u>
	<u>233</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>316</u>

1X

Roman Catholic Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1A	33	13	46
1B	33	13	46
2	37	9	46
3	28	18	46
4	27	19	46
5	29	9	38
6	<u>33</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>44</u>
	<u>220</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>312</u>

Presbyterian Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	29	17	46
2	29	17	46
3	22	12	34
4	20	6	26
5	15	6	21
6	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>22</u>
	<u>133</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>195</u>

Urban Council Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	26	20	46
2	32	14	46
3	23	17	40
4	<u>32</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>46</u>
	<u>113</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>178</u>

Unapproved Primary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	8	9	17
2	6	3	9
3	1	4	5
4	3	2	5
5	4	3	7
6	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>
	<u>29</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>51</u>

## METHODIST GIRLS' MIDDLE

## Class

1	46
2	41
3	43
4	<u>34</u>
	<u>164</u>

METHODIST BOYS' MIDDLE

<u>Class</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	43	42	85
2	45	46	91
3	37	39	76
4	37	40	77
	<u>162</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>329</u>

## A.M.E. ZION MIDDLE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	33	13	46
2	36	10	46
3	33	13	46
4	41	5	46
	<u>143</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>184</u>

## E.C.M. MIDDLE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	36	10	46
2	33	13	46
3	33	6	39
4	24	6	30
	<u>126</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>161</u>

## ROMAN CATHOLIC MIDDLE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	37	9	46
2	38	6	44
3	32	14	46
4	36	8	44
	<u>143</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>180</u>

PERMITTED 1ST. CENTURY MIDDLE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	-	3	3
2	1	3	4
3	2	1	3
4	-	1	1
	3	8	11

~~Grand Totals for Primary School: 1188 boys, 648 girls~~  
 (1836) <sup>meaning</sup>

Amenities: Winneba has a fair standard of civilization.

That is, as much as any Urban town in the Gold Coast can acquire within possible limits. The one thing that is lacking is the full advantages of a brisk commercial town. Satisfactory sanitary conditions coupled with a mild, breezy, equable climate makes Winneba quite a healthy place to live in. It stands the chance of becoming a health resort in the near future, for most people whose health appears to fail find Winneba a good recuperative ground. There have been in the town for several years such amenities as a pipe-borne water supply, electric lights for both home and street consumption, good motorable roads, suitable markets, medical and sanitary facilities in a well-equipped hospital, swimming pools for both the African and European sections of the community and, above all, an Urban Council status of Government.

Economic advantages: There are a good number of stores which cater for the needs of the people and, besides, all kinds of commodities available in Accra find an easy route to Winneba whenever the slightest effort is made by those who want them. And also the big commercial towns at Agona Swedru make it still more easy for the people of Winneba to obtain their needs.

Foodstuffs and fish are almost always available, and the latter which is caught regularly by the fishermen whose special job it is to fish find a ready market in the towns and villages of the hinterland. Two mineral factories continue to operate at Winneba at the present time. These make it possible for children to collect empty bottles and sell them for small sums of money.

Social Groups: Societies such as "Honesty", "Hope", "The Christian Endeavour", "The Christ Little Band" and "The Good Shepherd" help to crystallize Christian teaching and encourage co-operation and fellow feeling, while the Boys' Scout Movement, The Girls' Guide and the Red Cross link also help to improve the social welfare of the community. And furthermore literacy campaigns etc. undertaken by the Mass Education Officers are also well under way.

Festivals: There are two festivals at Winneba, viz. The Akomase and the Deer Hunt. The former is celebrated usually in August and is enjoyed chiefly by the fisherfolk who indulge in merriment and parade the town in their best clothes. The occasion is regarded as a kind of Christmas festivity. A special kind of food called "Mponpo" is prepared for use by each household, libations are often poured to the ~~spirits~~ spirits of the dead, and children dress themselves and go about in the afternoon to receive gifts from their relatives and older friends.

The Deer Hunt is a more popular festival and comes on every year about the middle of April. Its celebration is looked forward to with great interest and enthusiasm by all the sections of the community, by natives working abroad and by interested men and women all over the country. The festival arose out of an attempt to propitiate the chief god of Winneba, Penkye Otu, who is supposed to rule the affairs of the natives, giving them plenty of food and fish and rain. Originally, human sacrifices were made but with the passage of time the difficulty of continuing with this method of pleasing a ~~divine~~ deity was reported to the chief fetish priest who suggested the offering of a tiger <sup>in place of</sup> in place of a human being. Again, it became difficult to get a tiger every year. And, lastly, it was decided to organize deer hunts for the purpose. This became a serious "Asafo" competition between the two Companies, No.1 (Tuafo) and No.2 (Dentsefo).

Every year when the festival is due keen preparations are made by all the sections of each Asafo Company in dress, equipment, etc. and it is for the Omanene and his elders to see to it that no disputes or intense rivalries are allowed to crop up. And early in morning of the appointed Hunting Day all the groups of the Asafo companies including women and children's sections march gallantly and spiritedly with their heart-stirring Asafo songs to their respective fields for the hunt. This is highly competitive and the Company who ~~catches~~ catches a deer first wins the day. After the 'Hunt' spectacular displays of military dancing and gymnastics are indulged in for long hours to keep the town awake. There is no doubt that it is a unique festival, and people all over the country come to witness

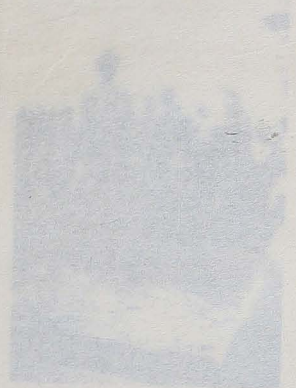
it or take part. On the ~~stage~~ ~~scenery~~ pages will be found some snapshots showing certain ~~an~~ aspects of this year's celebration held on April 23rd.



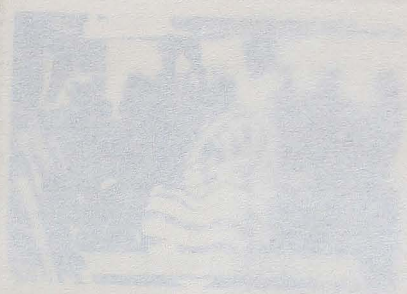
1. The way to the field



2. Spectators watch the deer hunt



3. The Smasher & Elders in the open field



4. Enthusiastic spectators follow the hunters



5. British priests & missionaries & attendants take their place near the platform

6. A deer is caught. A mad rush ensues



# The Story of the Deer Hunt



1. On the way to the field



2. Spectators watching the Deer Hunt



3. Enthusiastic spectators follow the 'hunters'



4. The Imanhens & Elders seated on a platform in the open field.



5. Fetish priests & priestesses & attendants take their place near the platform.



6. A deer is caught. A mad rush ensues.



7. Bringing the deer before the Imanhens in triumph.



8. Another deer is caught. A policeman directs the crowd.



9. A third deer is brought before Imanhen by No. 2 Company.



10. A Sub-captain of No. 1 Company on shoulders



11. A group of No. 2 Captains being congratulated by the Imanhen through the linguist.



12. No. 1 Company marching home after the hunt.



13. No. 1 Female Group with their Captain.



14. A special No. 1 Group in smart fashionable uniform.



15. Representatives of another Group.



16(a) The Commercial Street crowded after the hunt. Spectators in the balcony watch the 'Victory Dance' with deep interest.



16(b)



17. The little boy belongs to No. 1 Company.



18. The Fetish Group: taken a few minutes before the chase of the hunt.

## CHAPTER I

### ATTITUDE TOWARDS HAVING CHILDREN:

To be "fruitful and multiply" is a precept which every one at Winneba accepts without question. It is, in fact, the key-note of all marital relationships. Each family is aware of the enormous benefits which can be obtained when it is able to have children, and hails with delight the arrival of a new-born child.

Marriage is regarded as an opportunity for increasing the size of the family. This, first of all, ensures the continued existence of the family and, secondly, creates more hands which tend to lighten the burden of domestic and other work. Also in times of prolonged illness or in old age one counts most on one's own children for all the service and care which one may need. Thus the idea of procreating is so dominant especially among the fisherfolk that any man who fails to prove or even delays in proving his reproductive ability is liable to lose his help-meet after three or more years of childless married life. "Eku's husband is sterile", the wife's family would say, "let us go for our daughter whose precious blood may be contaminated before it is too late."

Generally speaking, barren couples are looked upon as ne'er-do-wells, and it was the practice some time ago in illiterate superstitious homes to inject a lump of moist ground pepper about the size of a duck's egg into the rectum of a dead victim of sterility. The belief was that by so doing the demon of sterility was killed and, consequently, it was prevented from re-incarnating in any other member of the family. On the other hand, great respect was shown to those who succeeded in bringing forth children. Indeed, so great was the respect given them that at funerals and other family meetings which required the pouring of libation such successful men were served with full glasses of wine or ale while the less fortunate ones were served half-full, the purpose being to incite them to try to get children also.

Naturally, everyone desires to have children of his own and to create a home peopled with children all blithe and happy, singing and dancing, playing and laughing, crying or shouting. All that helps to keep the house going and makes domestic life really worthwhile. There are some parents or elderly folk who enjoy the fights and quarrels of children at home. These, according to them, help to dispel loneliness or melancholy, and it indicates that the

Moreover, the presence of children in a home enhances the corporate life of the family. Parents have a special pride in having children of their own, and regard them as their wealth. In a discussion with elderly people it was revealed that, on the whole, it is better to have children and be poor than to command vast sums of money and be childless. The argument is that a human being is, in the last resort, the crown of creation and has a brain which excels all things. He has freedom of movement and can render all sorts of services: cleaning plates, washing clothes, scrubbing floors, cooking, communicating ideas with other human beings, discovering and inventing and so on.

In fact the desire to beget children presents so fundamental a problem that rich men and women who find themselves unable to reproduce would go all lengths to have themselves medically treated to enable them to have children. Everyone of them wishes to enjoy a full married life and also to free himself or herself from that undesirable social stigma - sterility.

A few years ago Madam X lived at Winneba. She ~~dealt with~~ dealt in cloths and other commodities and was well-to-do, but she had no child. She had a lot of maid-servants who kept her home and rendered every possible service. Of course, one could imagine that she was happy but really she was not. Within her inner self there were bitter wars and strifes. She wanted a child. How could she get it? For over ten years she had not spared herself to consult medical doctors and native physicians. She realized bitterly that she had spent a lot of money in vain. Then to enrich her blood she married a number of young men one after the other in the hope that their rich youthful blood might help her. Again there was no success. Next she married a dispenser who gave her much attention but unfortunately he died after three years and now, all hope being lost, she resigned herself to fate. "It's enough", she said, "at fifty there is no more hope for me. I'd better not think of child-bearing any more".

There is also the case of Mr. K, aged 45, who has married four women in succession but has had no issue as yet. As a man of society he often comes into contact with different classes of men and women who tend to snub him at odd times. Now one bright afternoon in 1944 there was an exciting football match on the Winneba Association Football Ground. A young man who had asked his son to carry a chair to the football field came and found his chair being occupied by Mr. K. In a fit of anger Mr. D. sputtered: "You bloke aren't ashamed to sit on my chair. If you had a child of your own you would know how a seat is sent to the field and sat on". Mr. K was stung to

the quick. Later on, it was reported that he was attempting to take his life by poison and, but for the intervention of some of his relatives, would have killed himself.

A third incident occurred among the fisherfolk a few months after. A young woman who had lived with her husband for over three years without issue looked upon the man as the guilty partner and began to nurse feelings of separation. One morning, in answer to certain demands made by her husband she burst out: "Oh, don't worry me. Aren't both of us the same sex? My equals who married are all bearing children. What have you done for me? I'm fed up with foolish work." Silence reigned; tears followed, the rest was suicide. The husband was so profoundly hurt that he decided at once to end his life. So the next morning, he washed himself, combed and brushed his hair, powdered his face and neck and ampits and dressed up gorgeously in his Asafo uniform. Then he fetched a strong fishing line and hanged himself round the neck inside his own room.

To be childless is certainly not a joking matter. Therefore many young folk prefer to mate with their prospective wives and try to test whether the marriage is likely to yield children before coming forward to marry in the official and customary way. Some parents object to their daughters becoming pregnant before the actual marriage because they consider it a stain on their reputation and warn them against it. With other parents, when such cases happen, a little pacification say, a bottle of whisky, easily settles the matter. In other cases, the young man is asked to pay extra money for showing disrespect to the girl's parents. This rather informal fee is called "Do mu na fa" which implies that she has been taken without formal consent.

A certain old man with whom I had the opportunity of discussing some points a few weeks ago explained that the question of marriage and child-birth is best likened to a small bush animal called Santrofi which has within itself potentialities both for good and evil. This odd creature is rare and if, by chance, a wanderer comes across it he is faced with the problem of either bringing it home, in which case he brings in an insidious creature to wreck the entire household or he may decide to leave it alone and then lose all possible chances of fortune for ever. The explanation is that married people without children cry bitterly to get children, while those who have them also meet such reverses that they are forced to regret

having got them. "Some of the difficulties," the old man went on "are that some people are poor and cannot afford to maintain their children ~~imb~~ or to care for their schooling. In some cases, too, the children imbibe evil tendencies and behave in ways which bring headaches to their parents. Apart from these it is perfectly good and dignifying to bring forth children especially when we consider their service to us in old age or in illness - times when ~~nobody~~ else may be prepared to give us the help we need.

As to sterility there is widespread belief that all men are born with full procreative powers and that it is the misuse of the sex organs in the early years that eventually determines a man's doom. Other people believe that sterility, especially in its chronic forms, is the work of evil spirits or witch doctors or fetish priests, or of old men and women in one's own family who are supposed to possess powers of witch craft. In this respect, it is believed that no amount of medical treatment can save the situation, the only way out being to seek the aid of a native physician who can undertake spiritual intercessions on one's behalf and offer expiatory gifts in order that one <sup>may</sup> recover one's reproductive powers. When the physician succeeds in effecting a cure he says that the gods have been placated; when he fails, he explains that 'the workers of iniquity' refuse to be pacified, and stronger measures must be tried which involve bigger sacrifices and heavier expenses. But under ordinary circumstances a barren ~~woman~~ woman attends the hospital for blood purifiers or simple uterine operations or she may go to a native physician for herbal treatment. In addition, some women ask for charms and amulets which they wear round their waist in strips of cloth. Others too resort to anti-witchcraft vaccination in order to protect their reproductive organs from being attacked by evil spirits. In most educated homes however, sterility is overcome by proper nutrition. The diet must be well-balanced and must also be sufficient enough to nourish the body and encourage a proper all-round development. Lastly, chastity or continence especially in the young girls is of fundamental importance.

There is no hard and fast rule regarding the number of children a married couple should have. Much depends upon individual desires and circumstances of life. Nevertheless, one striking fact is that more children are born by illiterate parents than by the literate. These illiterates who form the bulk of the population consists of fishermen, carpenters, masons labourers, washermen and palm-wine sellers. They have apparently no fears at all about the growing ~~number~~ size of their families. They are happy to think that nature has been kind to endow them with the ability to reproduce and believe therefore that it is the proper thing for them to reproduce as many children as possible. In fact, the minimum number of children for these illiterates or sometimes semi-literates is six. The more they get, the happier they become for they say that 'if some go, some will remain.' Until recent years, almost all the children were taught their fathers' trade and when they grew up they helped them in their work. Nowadays most children of these illiterate parents are taken to school, and although the parents are not as free and irresponsible as they were in the past, the idea of getting as many children as possible is still prevalent among most sections of the community. The educated class and especially those in the higher ranks have, on the other hand, an average maximum of six children. They are alive to the grave responsibilities that follow in the wake of unrestrained child-bearing and find it necessary to limit the size of the family. Assuming the average maximum of six, most parents prefer three of each sex or four boys and two girls.

In the whole of the Winneba-Effutu State and generally among all the Akans, there is no such thing as illegitimate children. So much value is placed upon the birth of a child and upon his being the image of his parents that it is considered sacrilegious to regard one's own blood as illegitimate. Every child is the pride of his father who undertakes full responsibility for his upbringing.

Occasionally, the mother may, for certain reasons, be repudiated but the child continues to be his own, and to be cared for by him. But at times it happens that as a result of concubinage a child is conceived. Normally, the man who caused it is called upon by the girl's family to perform the necessary rites to marry the girl and own the child. In the event of the man being a misfit the parents become disappointed and refuse to allow their daughter to marry him, and he may even be denied all rights of ownership to the child. When later on the mother becomes properly married to another man, her new husband may adopt the child. Otherwise, he will have to stay with his grandmother who undertakes the responsibility of training him. The child's uncles and aunts may also help in his upbringing.

Illegitimacy may prevail among matrimonial couples where a man who has lawfully married a woman in the Christian way marries a second woman. All children born by this latter marriage are by law classified as illegitimate and have therefore no direct claim to their father's property unless provision is made for them in a will. All the same, as long as he is alive he endeavours to give them all the privileges of a son or daughter. He scarcely if ever exercises discrimination between them and the children of the Christian marriage.

Normally, children are adopted when adults who have no children of their own arrange to keep other people's children with them and care for them as their own. Such children are generally so fathered or mothered that they sometimes forget all about their own parents. In other cases, the adopted child assumes the role of a Cinderella and is made to drudge or work at all sorts of unpleasant tasks, so that he has little or no time for any rest or recreation. When that happens, his real parents may come to take him away or he may run away himself. Under favourable circumstances, the adopted child is regarded as a beloved child and is carefully brought up. If a boy, a good job is found for him after he has left school. If a girl, a similar course of action may be taken. At puberty all the necessary rites are undertaken by her guardians who co-operate with her parents in giving her in marriage, assisting her with clothing,

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footwear, ornaments and so on.

Orphans belong to a slightly different category. When a man dies his property passes into the hands of his eldest living brother (in some cases, his nephew) who may undertake to marry his widow and father the orphans. Even if the brother or nephew refuses to accept the deceased brother's wife, he will be obliged to care for the children. Ill-treatment of the orphans is regarded as a violation of sacred rights and is said to be punishable by the ghost of their deceased father with death or insanity. Consequently, most orphans are ~~properly~~ properly cared for. If, on the other hand, a woman dies, her eldest living sister takes charge of her belongings as well as her children. She is, of course, assisted by her brothers, if any. Maltreatment of the orphans is again a dangerous affair. As a matter of fact, anyone who is entrusted with the care of orphans takes permanent ownership of them till his or her death, when they may be transferred to other reliable members of the family. It is to be noted, however, that orphans are to be trained and disciplined as much as other children are, and that deliberate transgressions committed by them should not be condoned but must be prevented from becoming ingrained habits by any possible means.

Prenatal Period:

"A child's pre-natal life", said a midwife whom I consulted, "begins when one of the male cells of reproduction meets and joins up with a female reproductive cells in the womb. When this happens the two cells (both so small that they can only be seen through a microscope) become one, and begin to develop. At the end of the first month, the tiny germ formed by the union of the two cells, is about half an inch long, and looks like a miniature curled-up fish. At the end of the second month it will be more than an inch long, though still rather formless. Gradually arms, legs and head will begin to take shape, and the baby will continue to grow in weight and length till the end of the ninth month when it is born."

These changes that go on in a woman's womb during pregnancy give rise to a number of feelings. At the initial stages, however, women are happy and grateful that they have been favoured with the opportunity to expect a child of their own. That ~~xxx~~ proves their fertility and it also helps the married couple to realize one of their chief aims of coming together. But a month or two after, the woman begins to feel uneasy. Sometimes she feels physically weak; at other times she gets a feeling of nausea and vomiting usually in the morning. Also she often acquires a desire to eat all kinds of things including those which under normal conditions she would not think of eating. Then also there appears to be a marked rise in body temperature which makes pregnant women feel unusually hot even in cool weather. Next is the tendency to irascibility, which gives them a feeling of dissatisfaction, makes them complain a lot, argue and pick quarrels with all who offend them in the slightest way. And also there is the tendency to cool down quickly and feel remorseful after a quarrel.

The following individual characteristics of pregnant women are also worth noting. Some women say that when they are pregnant they do not feel hungry and therefore do not bother about food but rather they have a strong tendency to drink mineral waters such as ~~xxxx~~ ginger ale, ice cream soda and lemonade as well as weak tea with evaporated milk and a little sugar in it. Others too take a light

mixture of cankey and water with a little sugar or salt in it. Some women, on the other hand, say that during the ~~rapid~~ rapid growth of the child they wish to eat a lot at meals, but soon after they have eaten they feel that all the food has evaporated and they begin to wish for more food. Although in the early stages some women feel less disposed to work, yet others continue to work vigorously because they have the impression that if that is not done they would become lazy, and this bad condition might affect their new-born children also. This as some widwives explain to them is dangerous, for it often upsets the biological changes in the womb and may even result in a miscarriage. Heavy work such as pounding fufu and lifting up heavy things as well as vigorous running are therefore minimized. Those who are lazy are also encouraged to be up and doing. Other feelings are prompted by the quickening of the baby which begins after the 16th week and has a marked psychological effect upon the mother. She is pleased to recognize that her baby becomes a person and no longer an impersonal tumour. There is thus a definite shift in her mental activities. For the moment she ceases to think about herself and health and thinks in terms of the baby's well-being. But there is a general fear of labour pains particularly in the case of young inexperienced women. It was encouraging ~~however~~ to hear however that this fear is being combated through the help of midwives.

Diet, during pregnancy, tends to be more ~~fluid~~ fluid than usual, although the principal items continue to be fufu and palm-soup, soft cankey and stew or fish. Now-a-days, and especially among the educated groups, pregnant women are encouraged to take plenty of milk, ripe fruit and vegetables, butter, cheese, eggs and codliver oil. Plenty of water is also recommended in order to keep the bowels free and healthy everyday.

Attitude to marital intercourse depends upon the desires, feelings and whims of different individuals. Three distinct groups are noticeable. The moderates (chiefly women) state that during the first four months of pregnancy desire for marital intercourse is more keen and frequent than before. During the 5th

and 6th months the desire diminishes considerably, and thence-forward coitus ceases almost entirely in order to give mother and growing child the opportunity to maintain the best of health. This, it is firmly believed, leads to a safe and quiet delivery. The second group who may be called Idealists profess that once the ovum has been fertilized and has started to develop there is no need to interfere with its progress by indulging in further intercourse. So their arrangement for marital intercourse is once a fortnight for the first two or three months and then total abstention till some six or more months after child-birth. In the third group are the extremists (certainly a minority) who are impelled by inordinate desires to have intercourse as frequently as possible even up to the time of childbirth. Such practices have bad effects and had better be checked. It is hoped that Mass Education Officers will give this subject a place in their programmes as they have established a centre in the town and are disseminating sound ideas of healthy-living and community development. One fact however was stressed by most elderly and experienced women that, to a great extent, intercourse is necessary because it helps to nourish the foetus and improves its growth, while if practised in excess it has a demoralizing effect on the child. Cases are cited where first-born children are supposed to be dull and slow-witted owing to the excessive intercourse which often characterizes the first few months of married life when love is greatest. Medical midwives urge that marital intercourse should cease during the last three months of pregnancy, for there is reason to believe that "dangerously virulent organisms that might cause puërperal sepsis may be introduced into the vagina, and if there is a tendency to abortion it should be prohibited throughout the entire pregnancy".

Taboos and prescriptions for insuring the safety of the unborn child depend largely on individual beliefs and practices. An intelligent middle-aged woman whom the writer came across belongs to the Faith Tabernacle Church. She explained that their religion lays down no canons for medical treatment of any sort; that they work by faith, and that she was proud to say that all the eight

children she had had were born without the aid of a single herb or any kind of magical protection. By simply trusting in God and praying regularly she had nothing to worry her about pregnancy or childbirth or about the health of her children after childbirth. But apart from this zealous Faith member there are a lot of other Christians who behave differently. They have some belief in the destructive power of the evil one, the witch, and take all possible steps to give their unborn children requisite protection. Their pregnant wives are taken to native physicians for amulets which are worn round the waist or for some other kind of preventive treatment. In some cases a number of selected herbs are placed in a new earthen pot or pail and filled half-full or three-quarter-full with water. Then an egg is added to it, and after the necessary ceremony has been performed involving the pouring of libation the physician gives the following directions: "Let your wife wash herself sparingly with this medicine at 4 a.m. everyday for seven days." Of course the number of days varies. Sometimes it is nine days or fourteen days. And, on the whole, it is expected that protection for both expectant mother and unborn child is assured. The fee charged is in most cases moderate. Among the fisherfolk and other heathens similar precautions are taken. But there are a lot others, Christians and non-Christian alike, who care less about evil spirits or physicians and live a simple plain carefree life.

Whatever line of action is followed it is clear that parents have the well-being of their children at heart and will go to any length to safeguard their security. As to taboos the chief one is that the pregnant wife should under no circumstances yield to any illegal sexual practices. Popular belief especially among illiterate communities is that the unborn child may be killed by spiritual forces as a penalty for the mother's misconduct, or if the developing foetus is allowed to attain full growth at all, parturition would be difficult unless the expectant mother is bold enough to confess her sins. And even then she might have undergone severe labour pains as a lesson for future good behaviour. In the light of the fact that pre-natal experiences are no joke

and that one has got to be pure in thought and action in order to secure one's life this taboo is, to a high degree, observed to the letter.

A second taboo is that pregnant women should not expose their abdomen for "evil men" to see, for they may use magic or juju to effect a miscarriage. Also pregnant women should take care not to mock or jeer at people with deformed bodies lest their children take after them. Again they are not expected to attend funerals owing to the strong emotional reactions which may play havoc with the growth of the child. Other taboos are based on the individual whims of their husbands. Either out of mere aversion or on grounds of psychic development or for some other reason certain items of food such as pork, codfish, onions may be eschewed by the husband who may also desire that the wife observes the same taboos. In many cases failure to comply with such orders eventually brings about a divorce. That is, when the child dies shortly after birth. As a rule, the father or other members of the family seldom or never take any precautions except in the case of a pregnant woman who has no husband to care for her.

CHAPTER III

BIRTH:

The attitude of the mother, father or others toward labour pains depends upon the attitude of the expectant mother herself. In normal cases of labour pains she is sympathized with and encouraged to make a bold attempt to overcome the pains by an effort of the will or by a strong determination not to humiliate herself by crying. In this frame of mind the ordeal soon passes away, and wife and husband, mother and father and other relatives all become happy for the birth of the new-born child who has come to increase the size of the family and to help to maintain its prestige in the future. In serious cases the situation is viewed with alarm and uneasiness by all concerned. All hope and confidence are consequently placed in the midwife who attends the woman and tries to help her deliver safely or to avert any disaster that may crop up. As a rule, no anaesthetics are used except in the hospital where major operations are resorted to. However, to encourage easy delivery midwives often administer a dose of castor oil a few hours before labour. This cleanses the system of impurities and prepares the way for the oncoming child. Native physicians and old midwives also recommend the use of slimy herbs which are ground smoothly and mixed with water and a little pepper and applied as enemas at convenient intervals, of four or five days a few weeks before childbirth. The arrival of the baby is thus facilitated and the mother is freed from the clutches of prolonged suffering or agony.

The persons generally present at birth are the midwife and her assistant (if any), mother and her sister (i.e. the woman's aunt) who may be ready to render all sorts of services in the interest of her niece. And of course childbirth usually takes place in the woman's family ~~XXXXXX~~ house, where a midwife is called as soon as labour signs are seen. At other times, the midwife may be too old to turn up, and it becomes therefore necessary for the parturient to be taken to the midwife's home accordingly. But some women, too, go to have their confinement at the hospital. Though tolerably safe, most expectant mothers

do not appreciate delivery at the hospital because, they say, there are so many people about who may afterward seize the chance to mock at them for poor performance.

In the hospital a woman under confinement is asked to lie on her back while the midwife conducts delivery, giving her necessary instructions accordingly. In the case of the native orthodox midwife the expectant mother sits on a low seat while she also either squats or sits on a similar seat in front of her. When the baby's head begins to appear and the mother appears exhausted the attendant lends a hand by holding her back and ribs with her hands to enable her to relax and summon fresh energy for carrying out a timely and safe delivery, and within a few minutes or seconds the baby is born. The mother gets a wonderful sense of relief. All others in the house become radiant and say "Well done" and "Welcome" to mother and child. As soon as a child is born he is placed on a mat a few yards away from his mother. The midwife cuts the cord up to his knee where it had been tied with a string, leaving about an inch over. Then the baby is washed with tepid water and soap, care being taken that the rough skin remains (vernix caseosa) are thoroughly cleansed. Sometimes kerosene is used to clean the child's body before water and soap are applied. After bathing, he is toileted and dressed in a soft white linen and laid snugly on a bed to rest. At the same time the mother also receives attention. The attendant soaks a soft towel in water and cleans the lower parts of her body which have been soiled with blood. A large strip of cloth is sometimes tied round her abdomen to keep it down and also to encourage the flow of more impure blood from her womb. For the same purpose the mother may be asked to sit comfortably on a pot containing some warm water (after 12 - 15 hours of childbirth) when her body has been thoroughly massaged and she has had her bath. It is a common practice in many homes to administer small doses of ardent spirits such as brandy and schnapps in order to get rid of more impure blood from her system. Mother's first meal after delivery is usually fufu and palm soup. This diet is known to contain sufficient nourishment for her exhausted physique. Soon

a feeling of drowsiness sets in and she goes to bed, only soon to be transported into that dream-land of ecstasy and tranquility which only mothers know.

As a means of ensuring the safety of the new-born child care is taken that outsiders are not allowed to have sight of him till necessary steps have been taken to vaccinate him against witchcraft and other evil spirits. On the 8th day the mother is allowed to bring her child outside. By this time it is believed that the child's tender body has become strong enough to stand weather conditions. Then the customary 8th day ceremony of naming the child is performed. The child's father informs his family and that of his wife in good time so that they may turn up punctually in the morning of the 8th day. The child's name is given by his father. When the elders of the families have met the wife's mother and relatives examine the various articles - soap, towels, comb, brush, powder, basin, lamp, kerosene, dresses, etc. - which the father has provided to welcome his new-born child. The ceremony then begins. The man's family head sits on a low seat and holds the child on his lap. Then he pours libation, calling upon the spirits of their departed fathers to accept the child and give him protection, long life and prosperity. After that he announces the child's name, dips his right forefinger in wine or gin and touches the child's tongue three times, saying after each one: "You are fully welcome into our household. We want uprightness of character, not lying or hypocrisy. That is, let your yes be yes". Similarly water is poured into a glass and used, followed by the words "let your no be no". The rest of the wine or water in the glass is poured by the family head ~~slowly~~ slowly on to the floor in front of him in a vertical manner. Finally, all the people present are served with wine or gin, and the ceremony is brought to an end.

As a rule, men prefer a male child as first-born so that they may have a boy to give them active service at home and also that they may get the right person to undertake the requisite filial rites when they are dead. Women also prefer a female child as

first-born because she is more useful to them in the kitchen than a boy. Besides, she is more likely to care for her younger brothers and sisters whenever mother is away from home.

FEEDING:

(a) Nursing: A baby is not fed immediately after birth. He is bathed and put to sleep. Feeding ~~commences~~ commences when he awakes (say, after four or five hours) and begins to cry. As the mother's breasts are at the moment rather ill-conditioned for suckling, the child is spoon- or bottle-fed with water seasoned with milk or bread or sugar or entirely with coco-nut milk. Breast-feeding begins on the second or ~~third~~ third day. Mother places her baby on her lap with his head in a semi-upright position and resting in her left arm, and she comfortably feels him by giving him the left breast and pressing it gently with her right hand for him to suck. Later on, he may be fed from either breast as desired.

With regard to time of feeding there are two methods. The first is to feed the child when he is hungry. This is practised chiefly by the illiterate parents, and they maintain that it is not necessary to feed the child when he is <sup>not</sup> hungry, because nature has its own methods of doing things, and therefore it is better to allow the child to respond to inward stimuli before it is fed. The second method is the scientific way of feeding a child at regular intervals for the simple reason that regular habits promote good digestion and quiet sleep. Most parents of the second group therefore adopt a 2-hourly feeding interval up to the second month and then 4-hourly up to the ninth month. Others who feed their children at regular intervals have slight variations in time to suit individual conveniences of both parents and children.

Occasionally, babies are disinclined to eat. This may be due to absence of hunger or to illness or exhaustion as a result of prolonged crying. In each case mother becomes baffled or worried and tries to find the cause of her ~~babys~~ baby's refusal to feed. If his body is found to be ~~feverish~~ feverish a mild purgative such as a teaspoonful of castor oil or misalba may be administered; or a light solution of "mpatoansoer" leaves thoroughly ground on stone and milily

seasoned with pepper may be used as enema once or twice.

Usually after medical treatment the child is ~~xxxxx~~ washed and fed accordingly. If the child's refusal to eat is <sup>not</sup> due to ~~lack of~~ hunger the child may suck for a minute or two and then stop.

When mother examines his stomach and finds that there is nothing wrong she leaves him to play or rest. After a prolonged cry mother would try to please baby by giving him a feed. In the event of baby refusing to eat, some pressure may be brought to bear on him. But if resistance continues he may be left alone for the meantime.

All mothers take delight in suckling their babies. In the first place they realize that it is their responsibility to feed their babies and get them to grow strong healthy bodies and secondly, they have to see that their heavily-charged breasts are drained through regular feeding, otherwise they will become so distended as to cause illness or unnecessary pain. On the other hand, a woman who has too little milk is regarded as ~~wxwx~~ unfortunate. Some women in this category, however, entertain little or no anxiety about the inadequate supply of milk in their breasts and would give them to their children and force them to squeeze all they can out of them. The result is under-nourishment and it is no wonder that the children concerned show a low resistance to the onset of illness. If the mother's milk happens to be diseased the children become infected also, and it is a pity to see how little innocent children suffer owing to poor feeding content. Of course, in a good home a woman who has too little milk is not encouraged to give it to her child. Baby may either be entrusted to a more healthy relative to feed him or he may be bottle-fed. But bottle feeding has to be carefully done. One midwife explained that there is a technique which most of the women she had come across at Winneba ~~xx~~ are ignorant of. "During the Feed", she said, "it is proper to take the bottle out of baby's mouth from time to time, and when this is done the bottle must be given a good shake in order to redistribute the milk, the cream of which is likely to collect somewhere, and unless this technique is applied children don't get the full nourishment



Fig. 19. A mother happily feeding her 2-month-old baby.

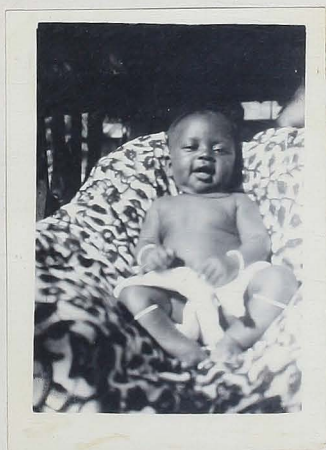


Fig. 20. Baby resting comfortably after a feed.

they need for building up their bodies."

It is evident that most of the children in the town have quite good health. An interview with a number of parents brought out the fact that they are given orange juice right from the second or third month. Although this does not apply very much to the fisherfolk, yet it was interesting to discuss the subject with a qualified midwife who brought out the following ideas: "Whether the baby is breast-fed or bottle-fed he must be given orange juice every day after the first month. The dose is one teaspoonful of orange juice in an equal amount of water. This provides a wholesome vitamin food for baby's health and also assists the action of the bowels." In conclusion she said, "That is the proper way to keep baby healthy, and I am sure that all my patients are having the best time with their babies."

Generally speaking, marital intercourse is prohibited till after the third month of childbirth. Even then it is dependent upon the health of the woman. Also as long as the child is young and is not weaned it is considered unwise to get a new child. So self-control is exercised by many to a great extent. Early adventurers who defy the lesson of experience in such sex matters are likely ere long to rue their fate. For when in these early stages pregnancy occurs, troubles also begin. As usual, the changes which go on inside the womb increase the temperature of the body and this consequently affects the health of the few month's old child. Here there are two ways out: either the foetus must be destroyed through abortion or the young child must needs be adopted. Otherwise, he will suffer from "asono," a disease which weakens the child with perpetual fevers and may cause his death if it is not effectively treated. Most parents are therefore careful not to lose their balance in their attempt to satisfy the strong urges of the marital instinct.

(b) Weaning: Children are generally weaned from their ninth month. Conditions of weaning vary in different homes. Usually when a child is learning how to walk his parents consider it fit to stop him from breast-feeding. Other children too are weaned when they have had a good number of teeth and are beginning to try them

In the case of women traders who cannot afford to stay long at home after childbirth, the children are often forced to stop breast-feeding by being left at home in the care of maid-servants who wean them first with the bottle and then with liquid foods such as porridge, oats, and tea with soft bread. In some cases immediate steps are taken to wean a child when mother finds that his little sharp teeth are causing unnecessary pains to her nipples. Also it is considered improper for a new child to be conceived when the old one is still very young. However, when this occurs the child is weaned accordingly.

There are three methods of ~~weaning~~ weaning a child. The first obtains chiefly among the fisherfolk and other illiterates. Weaning is effected when the child is practically a year or over. That is, when he has started to walk. But in some cases it takes place quite late. When the parents have decided to wean their child mother stops to give him the breast and puts him straightway on "koko" (porridge) and rice water. Very soon he is taught to eat bread, cankey and fish. The child often finds it a trying experience to have to go without mother's breast and cries strongly for it, but it is not given to him, not by ~~any~~ means. This hard training goes on for about ten days and then the ordeal is over. The child becomes adjusted to his new way of life, and looks upon the mother's milk with disgust.

The second ~~method~~ method is practised by the majority of parents, both literate and illiterate. The child feeds on the mother's breast for the first five months, then he is introduced to the feeding-bottle which he enjoys at specified times. At nine months or over when the child is beginning to walk, supplementary feeding is provided in the form of "koko" or ~~porridge~~ porridge or any other kind of liquid or soft food. During the day when baby cries for breast milk he is not heeded.

Also a definite attempt is made to discourage him by smearing the nipples with bitter herbs and mixtures. But at certain times in the night he may be allowed to enjoy a little breast-feeding in order to get him to stop crying and go to sleep. After a time breast-feeding ceases altogether.

The third method is recommended by the certificated midwives. Weaning is begun much earlier, say, by the second or third month when breast-feeding is wisely alternated with bottle-feeding during each day. This accustoms baby to a change which is particularly helpful whenever mother happens to be away from home. By the end of the fifth or sixth month baby is introduced to "koko" or oats or "Farex", one only at a time, care being taken to see that these supplementary foods are quite digestible and contain sufficient nourishment to help build up baby's body. Gradually, attempts are made to minimize breast-feeding so that by the end of the ninth month baby is fully weaned. This last method is practised by only a few and has not made much headway.

It is clear from the drastic measures adopted in weaning children by most parents as well as the great delay involved that the vital psychological facts are not known and have to be liberally inculcated. Weaning requires a good deal of tact, patience and gentleness in order to help maintain affectionate relationship between children and parents all through. Moreover, delaying till the child is a year or over is undesirable as it tends to keep him in an emotionally infantile state, and is likely to make him over-dependent on his mother. The authors Powdermaker and Grimes on page 40 of "The Intelligent Parents' Manual" throw further light on the subject as follows: "Since the act of nursing and the feeling of being loved are so inseparable in a baby's mind, his mother's abrupt refusal to nurse him becomes tantamount to a withdrawal of her love. Perhaps the most important factor in weaning is to make the child feel that though he is now given a cup instead of the breast or bottle, he has just as much of his mother's attention and time, without which he feels uncertain and often frightened."

Children love to suck things such as hard biscuits, rubber, pieces of wood or cloth at odd times but particularly during the teething period when dental irritations are keen. Thumb-sucking is equally a habit with children. They take to it quite naturally at any time of the day but chiefly when they are alone in bed. Parents attribute the habit more to instinct than to hunger or teething which are also regarded as causes. For instance, they are able to explain that some children who have not reached the teething period are guilty of the practice, while children who are regularly well-fed have also the tendency to ~~indulge~~ indulge in it. As a rule, parents do not show much anxiety or fuss about thumb-sucking but rather, whenever possible, they try to provide children with toys and other attractive things for a diversion.

(c) Solid Food: Solid food is introduced to children normally after weaning, and most parents take the trouble to make the food soft and suitable enough for the newly-weaned child. Those who serve ~~too much~~ children with hard food or soups and stews with too much pepper in them either choke them or prevent them from enjoying a good meal. The most enjoyable foods for children after weaning are tea or cocoa or ovaltine plus bread, oats plus bread, soft fufu and palm soup, soft cankey and stew. Mothers feed their children by dipping small pieces of bread in the beverage and putting them in their mouth. Then they give them the actual beverage by spoon. Parents who cannot afford to provide tea or cocoa or ovaltine feed their children on "koko" and bread. Also mothers dip small bits of fufu in palm nut soup and put them in their children's mouth, giving them soup by spoon. Great care is taken when feeding children with cankey and stew. A suitable bolus of cankey is mixed with stew, making sure that there is no fish-bone before it is given to the child to eat. Children eat a lot when meals are attractive and after a short time they tend to eat by themselves near their mothers, using their hand mainly, and a spoon only when necessary. Generally speaking, no attempt is made to pre-chew the food for the child except in the case of hard biscuits where he himself

expresses a desire to be helped for that matter.

Very young children of one to two years are usually fed alone by their mothers or nurse-maids either in the kitchen or on the verandah or in the hall or in the open space in front of the kitchen. Older children of three or four years usually desire to sit alone in their own corners for their meals. But care is taken that in case of choking or when pepper has touched their eyes immediate help is given. Very often when they have been alone for some time they get up with their plates or bowls and come to join older children or adults who may be having their meals at the same time. But they have often got to keep an eye on the children in order to prevent them from scattering food about to soil their clothes or from over-turning the food bowl.

When young children are hungry they either ask or cry for food. Even in homes where meals are provided at regular intervals children often appeal to mothers for something they desire to eat and may cry when they are denied. In most homes, children are put on three regular meals a day. That is, breakfast at 7 or 8, lunch at 11.30 or 12 and dinner at 3.30 or 7. The health of children is a matter of great concern to parents. They therefore see to it that they are well fed, and ~~xx~~ even in poor homes the best is done for them. So parents are not pleased when children refuse to eat. If their disinclination is due to ill-health, they are not forced to eat. Rather parents seek to remove the cause, after which some appetising liquid food such as porridge or plain soup is prepared for them. On the other hand, if a child refuses to eat because of anger mother tries to coax him to eat, and if he continues to look indifferent, he is left alone. At other times, a child refuses to eat because he simply does not feel like it. In some homes he is allowed to have his way because it is felt that that will not harm him. But in other homes a change of diet is recommended to help him regain his appetite. Overeating is of course deprecated by almost all parents. As long as children are fed by their mothers or nurse-maids they are given just what is sufficient for them to eat. The tendency to overeat is usually acquired when the child of three or over is allowed to eat in the

company of elderly people. When these elders have had their fill, they get up and go, leaving the young child to please himself with all the remainder. Thus he is allowed to carry on till he can no more bear it. Another way of acquiring a greedy habit is through the influence of kindly people around the child's home. Whenever they are at meals and the child visits them each tries to give him food, and he consequently keeps on eating without any thought of moderation.

A child who eats too much disturbs his parents by crying at night owing to inadequate digestion. Sometimes, too, he may worry the parents at night by asking them to take him to the stool, or even without notice he may soil the room or his bedding with nasty bowel products. When that happens parents often become sorry and angry and speak harshly to him. To check over-eating therefore parents see to it that children eat just what is sufficient for them, and that they do not go out to eat in other people's homes.

Children are trained to take adult food shortly after weaning. Foods considered specially good for children can be grouped into three classes. The first comprises foods which do not require much chewing. These are "koko" with or without bread, cooked rice mixed with butter or margarine or any kind of good delicious oil, mashed cassava with butter, and cankey mixed with palm-nut soup. The second group consists of actual adult foods such as fufu and palm-nut soup, "obenku" (cankey specially prepared with corn dough) and "nkyekye" (stewed palm-nut soup), ordinary cankey and stew or fried fish, cankey or fufu and plain soup. The last group comprises such fruit as pine apples, bananas, mangoes.

The foods which are considered bad are garri and cassava or green plantain 'ampesi'. Garri causes constipation when eaten with little water. When soaked in water, too, it tends to bloat the child's stomach and often causes illness or uneasiness. Ampesi is too hard for children to masticate properly and therefore causes constipation. Moreover, children find the chewing of cassava or plantain unpleasant. Among the most palatable foods are fish, cooked rice mixed with butter, fowl soup plus soft fufu;

and of the unpalatable ones are cankey without stew and ampesi. In the case of cankey which is considered good but unpalatable children are often coaxed to eat it by being promised rewards of toffee or other kinds of confectionery. Children who misbehave at home or fail to prove serviceable are punished by being offered cankey without fish or, in serious cases, by being given nothing at all. For good behaviour or performance on the other hand children are given the food they like best with promptness and, in addition, some sweet things as toffee, lozenges, chocolate, mangoes.

Children at this stage take almost the same diet as adults. But they are expected to be careful with all types of fish which have dangerous bones in them. A child normally begins to feed himself with confidence at eighteen months. At two years he is supposed to have gained sufficient experience to be able to handle a spoon to feed himself.

Children are not taught table manners in any formal way. But they are corrected when they behave ill at meals. For instance, most children have the tendency to eat with their left hands. Some are told quietly not to do so; that they should use their right hand, for that is proper. Others too have to be ~~harshly~~ hushed not to. Some children have the awkward habit of emptying out their plates or bowls on to the floor and squatting down to feed themselves in a careless way. Here too immediate steps are taken to correct them. Then also when certain children have had their fill at a meal they often throw the remains about or even cast them at their friends. These are either rebuked or punished. Again, some children do not feel inclined to wash their hands or mouths after meals, and may even go the length of soiling their clothes and those of their parents. In a polite and persuasive way parents manage to get these children to learn correct habits. Later on, say, from three years onwards, children are found to make unpleasant noises with their lips while eating. Again, they are taught how to control their lips at meals and to avoid eating like savages. On the whole, much depends upon the culture of the children's

own home. Good well-bred parents know when their children go wrong and correct them. In other cases, parents know too little of table manners themselves to be of any practical help to their children at home.

ELIMINATION:

Except in special cases where children have been carefully trained to behave conformably all children who have been weaned have generally very little control over bowel actions. Elimination of faeces can happen at any time without much warning. It can take place while they are on their mother's lap or while in bed or at play. A child's satisfaction lies in the freedom and happy feeling which follows evacuation of bowel contents.

At about the age of eighteen months children are trained to behave properly. Whenever they feel like emptying their bowels they are set on chamber pots and, in time, they get into the habit of looking for pots themselves. When they cannot get any at hand they rush out to squat near the home latrine or bathroom or behind the nearest wall to ease themselves. Cleaning the anus with rags or toilet paper is however beyond their skill and is therefore done for them by their mothers or brothers or sisters. But as time goes on they learn how to manage that themselves.

Mothers dislike dirty eliminatory habits; so whenever children (i.e. weanings, toddlers and older ones) show good performance they become pleased and praise them for it. In some cases they may even be offered little gifts like dolls biscuits, bread or toffee. Children also become pleased with these gifts and, consequently, endeavour to behave decently always. Greedy children generally cause a lot of annoyance to their mothers by being unscrupulous as to deposit faeces about for them to sweep away and tidy up the rooms or compound. Of course, babies are not blamed for such naughtiness. Older children are scolded for soiling or wetting. They may also be hooted at or punished. In serious cases of bed-wetting a child of eight or more years is, in some homes, stripped naked, smeared with mud or ashes and exposed to public hooting by a number of children. Sometimes he may even forgo his breakfast,

and it is believed that by such measures he will be forced to get over his bad habit.

Toilet training continues till about the age of two or three when the child is then able to fetch a pot for himself and carry on with little or no dependence on his parents. Attendance at public latrines occurs when a child attains the age of five or six. There is not much difference between bowel and bladder training. In the former case toddlers or older children are asked to sit on a pot and discharge "kookoo", which is the fante word for the smell of faeces, used in this way for the actual matter itself. And in the latter he is asked to squat down or to sit on a pot and pass out "soo-soo", which word also represents the sound of urine, and is accordingly used to stand for it. Later on children who have latrines in their homes may acquire the habit of using them for both bowel and bladder functions.

Bowel and bladder contents are generally not examined except when illness is suspected, in which case parents take the trouble to examine them closely and try to find out what is wrong and treat it accordingly, if they can, or otherwise seek the aid of a medical doctor or native physician. Also mothers do not insist on promptness in elimination. The general policy is "Go slow", for what they are actually after is to be sure that their children keep their bowels free by regular and comfortable movements. No special regard is paid to age differences in this respect. But concerning urination it is noticed that whereas as young children both boys and girls are taught to use pots, as they grow older they tend rather to stand upright against walls or trees to discharge urine, and girls have a special astride position for the purpose.

Constipation is not regarded by parents as a serious ~~disease~~ disease. When children are constipated they feel disinclined to eat, and they inform their mothers that they have a stomach-ache. If the complaint is made early in the morning the child may be given a dose of castor oil or misalba to clear his alimentary system. If in the evening, the usual treatment is enema, using either "mpotoansoe" leaves or "mbofraboroize" leaves thoroughly ground on



Fig. 21. A 16-month-old baby-girl who is able to fetch a pot for herself.

stone and mixed with two or three cups of water and a little ground pepper. Evacuation immediately follows and the child gets relief. Diarrhoea is more serious and is given immediate attention lest it develops into dysentery, which is one of the most dreadful of infant diseases. The treatment for diarrhoea is about the same as that for constipation. A dose of ~~castor~~ castor oil is usually an effective remedy. In other cases an enema is preferred. The medicine used is prepared as follows: a handful of guava leaves are ground smoothly on a flat stone and mixed with two or three cups of water. Then a little ground pepper and some white clay called "hyirew" are added. The application of this enema mixture checks the flow and registers immediate relief. An alternative native treatment is to prepare small balls of ground "nunum" leaves mixed with a little ginger and one or two "hintsia" seeds. Two or one of these balls are forced into the rectum of the patient and are allowed to remain there for some time.

Young <sup>children</sup> ~~children~~ incapable of articulate speech are taught toilet language in a simple figurative way. That is, the symbol is used for the real word. To evacuate the bowels children are instructed as follows: ye kookoo (literally, make "kookoo", which word stands for the smell of faeces); ye pr-r-r-r, pr-r-r-r, this time imitating the sound which is made as one forces down the faeces out of the bowels. "Ye soo-soo" is another toilet expression for asking a child to urinate, again making the sound stand for the act. Older children with a fair command of the mother tongue, on the other hand, speak the plain conventional language of the uneducated adult. They use such toilet language as "Moroko tsiafi nu" (I am going to the latrine); ~~while~~ "Manye ewia" (I have finished discharging faeces); while still older children of say six years and over who live with cultured parents would use such idiomatic or refined language as "Moroko dua do" (literally, I am going to the top of a tree) and "Moroko opanyin fie" (literally, I am going to a big man's house) both of which mean "I am visiting the stool". And again, for the expression "I have ~~evacuated~~ evacuated the bowels" they

would say "Meyya manan ewie" (literally, I have finished leaving my leg) or "Maye mo ho yie ewie" (literally, I have finished preparing myself well).

Parents by no means find it difficult to know when their children are about to attend the stool. Young children who cannot verbalize their feelings simply roll up their garments or cloth to indicate their desire to ease nature and, accordingly, they are placed on pots. When children have no dress on, mothers get the impression by simply noticing their stiff shiny abdomen; and, in the case of baby-boys, by means of the sudden erections of their penes.

Strictly speaking, children are not taught to carry out elimination privately. As they grow older and older and reach the ages of six or seven they tend to evacuate their bowels privately. Experience gradually teaches them that it is improper to expose themselves for such private actions. Moreover, as they come nearer to adolescence they find it both disgusting and unbecoming to engage in faecal discussions, especially during meal times. So also is it considered a breach of propriety for adults to perform eliminatory functions in front of children. Apart from its being merely indecent, such a practice would also be a means of creating situations for infantile gossips.

Wind-breaking in babies is supposed to be the result of suckling too quickly. Mothers do not normally find it serious and do nothing about it. But when it becomes excessive they attempt to clear the system by giving baby a few drops of castor oil. In older children wind-breaking is known to be caused by indigestion and the treatment is a mild purgative or enema. Hiccoughs occur frequently among young children of one to six months. A child may be attacked while lying awake in bed or while taking his feed on his mother's breast. One treatment is to give the child some water to drink. A second treatment which appears automatic in its application is for mother to blow with her lips gentle puffs of air on to the delicate middle part of the child's head. Another method which is said to be effective but held by some

people as superstitious is to place a shred of old cloth or a very short piece of broom-stick (about 1" long) or a little bit of feather in the centre of the child's hair. This arrests the trouble in a few minutes.

Belching, on the other hand, is not very common, and almost nothing is done by way of treatment.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT:

Children are given simple neatly-made clothes right from the moment of birth. These are generally short and do not restrain movement. When a baby <sup>is</sup> asleep he is placed comfortably in his bed in a room or hall or verandah. Usually when awake in bed he begins to play and stretches his legs, hands and neck. He struggles this way and that and also appears to be struggling with his bedding. These exercises are invaluable and constitute the child's earliest attempts at muscular co-ordination and motor development. At times while baby is struggling he may get wound up in his bed-clothes and thereupon he begins to cry. Then mother hurries to pick him up and expresses sympathy for his having become suffocated for some moments. The use of swaddling clothes is unknown.

In many homes babies are not provided with any furniture. When mother wants to put baby to bed a mat is laid on the floor, one or two blankets and a soft cloth are spread on it, and he is put on. In educated or well-to-do homes a cot is provided for baby to sleep in, and very rarely a "pram" for carrying him about. At the toddling stage a walking-wheel is often provided to help children to walk and maintain proper balance.

During the first three months babies are not ~~xxx~~ carried about. They lie in bed most of the time. One reason is that they are too delicate to be moved about. Another is that the umbilical cord takes time to heal and proper care should be taken to see that the sore is not bruised or made to bleed. ~~xx~~ A third reason is the inevitable long sleeping period of babyhood ~~x~~ which aid muscular growth and development. In their waking hours then children may be carried on the lap or in the arms against the breast. After the third month when outdoorling has taken place children are carried securely on the back or against the shoulders by mother and other relatives. Care is taken that the little boys and girls of the household do not assume

unnecessary responsibility in this respect. At about five months when baby is found to make efforts to sit firmly on the floor, suitable aids are offered. He may be seated comfortably on a mat or on the bare floor with or without cushions round him, or he may be placed between the legs of an older boy or girl who helps him to play with some toys and prevents him from falling over at any moment.

To a great extent children's, movements are conditioned by their clothing. All through babyhood or infancy baby continues to wear his linen garment, and plays about or crawls along in it. In some homes as baby grows older and begins to toddle he is provided with rompers which he finds smart and attractive. These dresses whether used by boys or girls do not ~~hinder~~ ~~they~~ prevent movement, and are immediately changed whenever they are soiled or wet. At about four to five years children of educated parents continue to wear garments which ~~come down~~ come down to the knee or to the middle of the legs, or they are given shorts and shirts neither of which restrict movement. Other boys are given sufficient pieces of cloth which they wear by casting the ends on their shoulders, ~~they~~ one on top of the other, or by tying them round their necks. These clothes, of course, do not encourage smartness or free movement as they are apt to slip down at any moment, especially when children are running. The girls of educated parents often wear their garments which are down to the knee and make them smart and good-looking. The alternative and more common dress for all girls is the typical up-down adult fashion. In most cases this restrains movement in children. That is, when sufficient space is not allowed between the legs for walking or running.

During the crawling stage (about the age of six or eight months) baby begins to show untiring capacity for moving about. A lot of space is required to enable him to engage in free movements, exercises and adventures, so baby is often placed in a large hall or verandah or in the open space in front of the

Care is exercised to make sure that there are no dangerous things within reach such as fire, household nuisances, contaminated water, knives, pieces of broken bottles. Some mothers are very watchful over the movements of their children at this stage while others too apparently ignore them till they find them injured and begin to cry. Neglect of children at this period of their life is responsible for the many illnesses that afflict them.

Coupled with crawling is the frequent attempts children make to grasp standing objects such as tables, chairs, door-posts, bedsteads and other things in the open compound which help them to get up and practise walking. Children's initial attempts to walk are looked upon with great interest by ~~adults~~ adults who try to give them every possible encouragement. For instance, when an adult is seated and a child crawls to him and holds his knees or ~~thighs~~ thighs in order to practise standing on his feet or walking, the adult usually lends a hand and encourages the child to walk along. A good deal of amusement is noticed when children come to grips with light standing objects such as small chairs and tables. Owing to impatience more or less these objects are overbalanced and children fall over with them. But the daring ones get up immediately and grasp them again, and sometimes even drag them along as walking-supports.

It is to be noted that baby is not taught to crawl. He takes to it naturally as a bird takes to flight. But encouragement is given by mother and others by standing a few yards in front of baby and asking him to crawl to them while they clap their hands to encourage baby to move on confidently. Sometimes, instead of clapping their hands adults use a rattle to keep children's attention in the direction where they are and wish ~~them~~ children to crawl to. To encourage children to have sufficient practice in crawling, adults and maid-servants adopt other devices. They throw a tennis ball or an attractive doll or a toy that makes a pleasant noise some yards in front of baby and instruct him both by word and signs to go for it. Very often as baby comes near the object it is kicked or thrown

yet farther for baby to continue chasing it. When baby appears fairly tired (owing to a good sound exercise) he is taken up and brought to a basin of water to be washed. After washing, he is dressed up and fed and then allowed to go quietly to sleep.

Children's competence in walking depends largely on individual physiques and abilities and sufficiency of practice. Some children begin to walk at nine months, others at twelve, and some unlucky few at eighteen months or over. In fact, all parents consider walking as a fundamental landmark in child development, and children who exhibit a good performance are congratulated and offered boiled eggs to eat in accordance with custom, accompanied by the words: "Dzi na fa hyira wo kra" (literally, eat and bless your soul with it). Gifts of dolls dresses or money may also be given and the child receives every encouragement to get on progressively. It is easy to recall the misfortune of some children who are unable to walk even after the third year. When it is realized (rather too late) that such children may not be able to walk at all, the parents take them to the hospital. So when a child begins to walk the parents feel grateful indeed. Moreover, parents are aware that regular practice results in thoroughness or greater skill and so they take every possible step to see that baby does some steady walking every morning and evening. Young children are chiefly assisted to walk in these early stages by their older brothers and sisters who take their hands and walk along with them step by step. Sometimes too they provide a stick about the length of a yard and give one end of it to the younger child to hold while they also take the other end and then lead him on step by step.

Mothers often become anxious when their children of twelve months or more fail to show any sign of getting up to walk. Here the usual device is to wake the child from bed early in the morning (before sunrise), bring him to the door-step and rub his feet saying, "May it please the Almighty to give you the ability to walk". Of course, some parents realize that it is not the early morning exercise or the prayerful repetition of words

that helps baby to walk but that it depends on baby's own rate of growth or muscular development and therefore they do not worry him, nor make any attempt to force him to walk. Children have their crawling and walking exercises first in their mothers' rooms which are often too small for their ~~free~~ and untiring explorations, then in the common halls and on the verandahs (if any), and in the open compound immediately in front of the house. In the latter case, care is taken that they do not stray beyond the boundaries of the family house, lest they fall down and hurt themselves or meet some other accident. Particular care is taken also that they do not make their way into the streets where lorries and other dangerous vehicles are passing up and down. At home when crawlers are coming near danger such as stoves, fireplaces or a pile of things which is likely to fall upon their heads mother or other relatives nearby hurry to their rescue. Warning shouts are often raised but these really mean very little to them, for a few moments after they will be found going in the same direction again. Perpetual vigilance on the part of parents is therefore the only safe rule, for children at this stage are very troublesome, and reckless of danger, and there are many cases where neglect on mother's part has resulted in serious burns and scalds of poor innocent children. Toddlers, on the other hand, are not quite as troublesome. But at certain times, in their zeal to explore their surroundings, they may get lost and, for a while, expose their parents to much anxiety and perturbation.

Children between three and five years who tend to wander outside the home environment are frightened with bogey stories. In some cases much good results from a little effective spanking or by denying them the use of some cherished possessions such as a beautiful hat or an attractive Sunday dress. In more serious cases and especially with slightly older children regular attempts to go away from home or to visit street crossings are checked by shutting such children up in a room for some time or by the application of moist ground pepper to their genitals.

The stories that are told to frighten children are generally ~~invented~~, ~~made~~ invented and some of them are as follows:-

(i) There are certain bad spirits in the universe who go about looking for children who don't stay at home, and whenever they come across them they mark them in a certain way. Then at night when all is dark and everybody is asleep they come stealthily home and take them away without their mothers seeing them. And far away in their dark horrible homes they keep them for ever as servants. (ii) A wicked old man called Sasabonsam (the devil) has a very big stick, and with this big stick which can break everything into pieces he knocks off the heads of all young children who stray from their homes. (iii) Some fearful men with big knife marks all over their faces go about morning and evening with old coag bags and when they see any bad boy or girl who roams about in the streets or gives too much trouble to his parents, they throw him or her into their bag, and carry him or her off to be killed for their food. (iv) If a child does not pay heed to his mother's words and he walks about in the town, he may get lost for ever and will never ~~again~~ see his mother and ~~father~~ father and sister and brother again. (v) Children who don't stay quietly at home with their parents ultimately lose their naves and cease to be human.

Generally speaking, parents do not force their children to sit still, for they want them to be free and happy. But a busy mother who finds that her child's presence at home is a disturbance to her may seek to get rid of him by asking his elder brother or sister to take him away for play. Normally, a child may sit still when he is indisposed. He may then sit quietly for hours on end or may even prefer to go to bed. In other circumstances, when a child has committed an offence which requires punishment, he is made to sit still under the father's nose for an hour or two. This is meant to be both corrective and deterrent.

Children delight in play and in all other activities which afford sufficient scope for construction, co-operation and initiative. Consequently, they have a tendency to resent adult intrusions on their liberty. Among the earliest and most enjoyable motor plays of crawlers is bathing. Mother provides a tub nearly half-full of water and places her child in to play or bathe. For a long

while the child stays in the water and beats or splashes it with both hands, laughing or shouting and looking quite merry. Sometimes in his frenzy of enjoyment the tub may be overbalanced and he will fall on one side while all the water runs out. The child may then cry out for mother to come to his help. But although frightened, there is often the desire to go to it again. Children at this stage as well as toddlers like to stand very close to mother and play with her by jumping and slapping mother's thighs several times, laughing and feeling highly elated.

Children of three to five years love to play in the company of other children. Motor activities which they enjoy and are also encouraged by parents are football which affords an all-round muscular development, mud-pies which give sufficient exercise and flexibility to the fingers, and the building of miniature clay stoves and ovens chiefly by the girls, which also give much training in constructive or manipulative skill. Another useful game for children is daylight hide and seek. This helps children to do a lot of running in their attempt to explore various corners and nooks of the entire house for their hidden friends. It is an exciting game which makes children shout and laugh joyously as they chase one another up and down. Children of this age group also love to sit in packing-cases or 'box vehicles' as they are usually called to be pulled up and down by their elder brothers and sisters. In some cases these packing-cases are provided with wheels and a steering-wheel from which they obtain almost endless enjoyment. Horse-riding is another interesting game which is brisk enough to exercise the whole body when properly done. This play is more suitable to older children. Here children assume the posture of a horse with their hands and kneew on the floor while others sit on their backs as riders and are carried round and round the hall or verandah. lastly come drumming and dancing which children love very much. Whenever possible they meet under trees or in special children's rendezvous with drums or empty boxes and bottles to play and dance. They often become so engrossed that they would not feel like going home during meal times. Children often



Fig. 22. Children at play with empty tins, stones and pieces of stick.



Fig. 23 Two young sisters delighted in handling cooking pots containing water. [aged 6+7]



Fig. 24 A typical play vehicle drawn by two young boys, aged 7+7½.

enjoy being together. They thus learn to co-operate and  
to develop powers of leadership, initiative and confidence.



Fig. 25 A boy of 10 (Kodwo) climbing a coconut tree.

(A) SLEEP:

Great differences exist in the sleeping habits of babies. Some sleep soundly for long hours and others only intermittently. In most homes the importance of regulating a child's sleep is overlooked. Consequently, it is often difficult to put him to bed or make him sleep at certain times of the day.

Whether at night or during the day if a child does not want to go to sleep he is first washed and made neat and comfortable with powder and pomade, dressed in clean soft clothes and then put to bed. In most cases he goes to sleep in a few minutes. Mothers generally have the idea that if a child refuses to sleep then it is because he is not sufficiently clean. If a child is quietly put to bed and he begins to cry after some time mother goes to examine him. If he is found to be uncomfortable owing to wetting he is cleaned with a neat towel soaked in water and wrung; then his bedding is changed and he is put to bed again.

Sometimes a child may be expected to go to sleep when he is least disposed to simply because mother is very busy and wants to be free of him. But he may resist all efforts to force him to sleep and will cry violently. Mother will then either leave him alone or let a maid-servant carry him on her back and stroll up and down with him, cooing or singing a soft beautiful song to lull him to sleep. There are times too when children who appear sleepy and are put to bed wake up immediately and begin to cry. Here the ~~xxx~~ usual thing done is for mother to sit or lie down by him and console or fan him to sleep or in some cases to give him a little breast-milk.

Serious cases occur usually ~~xxx~~ during the night when for long hours a child cries loudly and cannot at all be persuaded to sleep. Well, mother first examines him. If he is out of sorts, some quinine or meperidine may be given. Among the fisherfolk and others the usual treatment is either a friction bath with a wet wrung towel or enema, after which he is washed and fed and put

quietly to sleep. If, on the other hand, it is found that his crying is merely 'foolish crying' then threats and stories of bogey men who may come to carry him off and kill him may be resorted to.

As a rule, children sleep in the same room with their parents till they are old enough to live in a separate room by themselves. Owing to inadequate accommodation in most homes the older children generally sleep in the halls in groups of three or four or more, for children are afraid of sleeping singly. Their belief is that ghosts visit their homes at night when they are asleep, and any child who sleeps alone may have the misfortune of being handled or dragged along by them. Also that some ghosts are cruel to the extent of sitting on the heads of children who are found lying alone by themselves and find amusement in suffocating them. Most parents who sleep with their children have a similar idea, and they would not allow them to sleep apart lest evil spirits come to play havoc with them.

Young children between two and five usually sleep together in rooms or halls indiscriminately. But older ones tend to be conscious of sex distinctions and therefore sleep in separate sex groups. This grouping is however not rigid where brothers and sisters or very close relations are concerned. Also children who sleep in groups either spread a number of mats together and lie on with ~~xx~~ very narrow spaces between them or each one occupies his own mat or bed. The latter principle becomes emphatic where bed-wetting and other bad sleeping habits frequently occur.

(B) HEALTH: Children's ailments are many and varied. Except the most enlightened and sceptical, all the people seem to believe that a child must perforce get ill a number of times during infancy. This, they say, gives him tolerable immunity against the attack of more serious illnesses in later years. Another belief is that when a child is crawling he must be allowed to eat as much dust or earth as possible, for that helps him to grow strong. This is a theory of the old mothers which is accepted by a greater part of the community. It is horrifying to the modern educated man to see a child being allowed to feed complacently on mud or earth that is

mixed up with fowl or sheep excrement which he comes across while crawling. Dirt eaten in this way constitutes the chief danger to the health of the growing child. It is encouraging, however, to note that as more and more girls are passing out of the schools from year to year and are ~~becoming~~ becoming mothers child-welfare is receiving better attention and the old ideas about eating dust or dirt in order to be immune or grow stronger is slowly but firmly being combated, and it is hoped that health conditions will be much better in the near future than they have ever been. Other sources of ill-health are cold, wetness, over-eating, malnutrition, and insect bites.

Dirt as a danger to health takes different forms. When children eat dust or earth or any contaminated food or drink bad water they take in harmful bacteria which prey on their health and expose them to different kinds of fevers, headaches and other illnesses which retard their growth. Cold is caught when children are exposed unduly to cold weather or are inadequately clothed or are allowed to remain too long in their bath or play too long in the rain or again are allowed to keep wet clothes on their bodies for hours. If necessary precautions are taken to guard against the above irregularities children will be prevented from becoming helpless victims to cold. The ~~most~~ usual treatment is to rub the child's body with a towel soaked in warm water and wrung, and then apply some mentholatum and keep him warm in bed. Sometimes an enema is used.

Wetness may be a cause of ill-health when due attention is not given to the child's bedding or daily clothes. Immediately after each wetting, the child must be neatly washed and clothed, and the bed-clothes too washed and dried in the sun. Otherwise, skin diseases are contracted which disturb the comfort of the child and check his freedom of movement and bodily growth.

Over-eating results in indigestion and constipation, and is the most fruitful source of infantile bowel weaknesses and a host of other physical troubles. Convulsion is regarded by many people as due to constipation. This is a very dreadful disease of infancy which requires immediate medical attendance. At the onset the patient is suddenly gripped by a sort of fit which makes him scream and then throws him into unconsciousness. In the hands of a competent doctor the child may be saved.

Different views are held by native physicians on the cause and prevention of convulsions. They aver that it is due to over-accumulation of mucus in the chest ~~which~~ which chokes the child and throws him into a fit, and that, on the whole, it is engineered by evil men or ~~evil~~ spirits. A typical native treatment for convulsion is to lay the patient bare on the ground and apply some strong odoriferous herbs to his nostrils to recall him to consciousness. If this fails then water mixed with some powerful herbs is thrown upon a low roof of corrugated sheets usually in the early morning, while the child is suspended directly below the roof for the medicine to drop on him. This has the effect of waking him up with a start. Then formal treatment with herbs may be given by drinking mixtures or by means of an enema, in order to help drain all the slimy mucus from his chest. Finally, as a preventive measure a cut is made on his left cheek by the native doctor and filled in with anti-convulsion powder.

Malnutrition is another evil which robs the child of robust health. Children's diet in most cases is poor. Parents give their children (i.e. those aged three years and over) either sufficient quantities of only one type of food or in some cases not enough to eat. This is responsible for ~~lowering~~ lowering the resistance of the body and makes it susceptible to certain kinds of diseases such as rickets. This disease is due to inadequate calcium content in the blood and can be remedied by putting the patient on a diet containing more milk and cod-liver oil. Also some amount of sun-bathing is essential. The midwife I consulted during the Michaelmas holidays (1954) explained that she considered

the health of her patients' children the most important thing and made it a point to visit them regularly to advise them about how to care for their children generally as well as how to ~~care for them~~ treat them in illness. She said that mothers felt grateful when she suggested precautions to help them against rickets but often they complained that cod-liver oil was unpleasant and the children did not like taking it. Then she would reply, "Well, that is the best thing to do. If you want to save your children, force them to take it."

Insect bites are common at certain times of the year. The presence of mosquitoes is a menace to the health of children of all grades and the usual precaution against malaria or yellow fever is the administering of small doses of quinine or mepacrine at regular times. Also where possible mosquito nets are provided.

Two other dreadful diseases of infancy are "Etutuenyiwa" (cholera) and "Ediepu" (Whites or Leuchoria). It is generally believed that the hospitals cannot treat these diseases effectively and so parents often resort to native treatment. Etutuenyiwa takes after dysentery to a great extent, and besides the serious bowel motions which frequently occur, the disease also affects the eyes of the patients so deeply that the pupils ultimately tend to disappear, while the head is at the same time thrown back in a helpless and uncontrollable manner. The most reliable native treatment is a mixture of guava leaves smoothly ground with a little white clay and some pepper and drunk at regular intervals, followed by enema with the same mixture in a more concentrated form. Other kinds of effective herbs are provided by native physicians. Ediepu kills both children and adults, especially young girls. It affects the genitals, and all who are attacked are rarely bold enough to say it for mothers to give it immediate treatment. A number of herbal mixtures for drinking and enema are available. And it is comparatively easy to kill it in the early stages by squeezing the liquid out of moist roughly ground ginger into the genitals, particularly the vagina.

Teething also brings about a train of fevers and boils

ailments which prey on children's health. Prevention is obtained through the use of teething powder which is dissolved in water and drunk or through the use effective native herbs.

Parents are very sympathetic towards their sick children. Even with older children of six years and over a comfortable bed is prepared for them in the parents' own bedrooms and great care is taken that they are given adequate medical treatment by mother. In serious cases the patient is either taken to the hospital or to a competent native physician. Treatment, of course, depends upon the kind of illness itself and, under all circumstances, is very promptly carried out. That is, as far as mother is concerned.

In the case of minor ailments such as a fever or general debility, <sup>a dose</sup> of castor oil or misalba is given to purge the system. Then he is washed or massaged with warm water, after which mentholatum is applied effectively to all the parts of the body. Sometimes instead of ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~is thoroughly~~ mentholatum "nunum leaves or the bark of "samanobi" is thoroughly ground and used in smearing the whole body. This treatment is given regularly twice a day (morning and evening) till the child recovers. Particular attention is also paid to his diet, and meal times are very regular. The special diet normally given to sick children is a light warm "koko" with or without bread for breakfast, fufu and plain soup for lunch, and cankey and stew followed by a cup of tea or cocoa or ovaltine in some homes for dinner.

A child's illness, especially in serious cases, is a matter of great concern to the entire household. Unnecessary noises are not allowed, and the house is kept as quiet and peaceful as possible till the patient recovers. It is encouraging to note how during the treatment mother or other members of the family may hold the child's hand and say sympathetically, "Efua (or Kwesi), rest assured; you will be well again very soon. God will give you recovery." Every possible attempt is made to keep the child happy, comfortable and hopeful and also to provide everything which he may find pleasant to eat.

(A) PHYSICAL CONTACTS, MASTURBATION, SEX PLAY.

The child's early contacts take place at home with his mother and father and the other members of the household. Great interest is taken in him right from the time he is able to recognize human faces and familiar objects and is capable of uttering a few intelligible though disjointed words and phrases. Everyone desires his company and starts some baby conversation with him. The things he says are a source of interest and amusement to all older companions.

Children between five and twelve months are kissed chiefly by their mothers who find it both a privilege and a pleasure to do so, but rarely by their fathers. Other members of the household including older children and friends of the children's parents also kiss them. This is done as a sign of love or as an affectionate response to the children's lovely smiles and happy attitudes. For the same reasons they are stroked and embraced at odd times of the day. Children of two years or over are not usually kissed, but are rather stroked and embraced by adults who delight in playing with them. In fact, at times these adults become so enamoured of them that they throw them up into the air and catch them several times. This, of course, is not a safe thing to do, and mothers often protest when they see their children being handled in this way.

Children are prevented from coming to their parents or other older people only when these adults are up to the eyes in work and do not want to be disturbed. Also when children have shown naughtiness by soiling themselves or their clothes with faeces or mud or palm oil parents would not like them to come nearer in order to touch and soil them also, especially when they have dressed up neatly and are ready to go out. On such occasions they ask maid-servants or other relatives to wash and clothe them. Children of all ages do not make deliberate efforts to kiss their parents or other people. When, however, adults play with them and bring them to their lips for a kiss, they may respond. Some children, of course, do not appreciate it and often shake their heads in

disapproval. It is to be noted also that children are neither encouraged nor required to kiss others. The practice is regarded as unhygienic and is accordingly decried. Only the unenlightened parents who are least aware of the possibilities of infection which kissing involves allow their babies or young children to be unnecessarily kissed by others. The practice is, in fact, objectionable, since the innocent children are not just kissed fondly on the cheeks but in that uncrupulous way <sup>in which the adults concerned place their tongues</sup> in the children's mouths and exchange saliva with them.

Great attention is paid to the personal cleanliness of children. The very young ones are usually bathed three times a day, and also at any time they are feeling too warm and uneasy or when they have soiled themselves. Other children are washed chiefly in the morning and evening. Bathing children requires skill, and care is taken that they are not suffocated. There are three methods of bathing children. Very young children are placed on the mother's thighs in an oblique posture with their heads towards the mother's right arm. After washing the hair, the face, the trunk, the upper and lower limbs, the child's legs are set apart, especially in the case of the female children, thereby exposing clearly the folds of the genitals which are bathed clean. Sometimes warm water is used in washing the folds of the vagina to make sure that they are free from sores or any kind of infection. Then the whole body including the genitals is thoroughly wiped with a soft towel and smoothly powdered. Male children also receive sufficient attention, but they are generally less open to infection.

The second method of bathing children, chiefly crawlers, is to seat them in a large tub and wash them with soap and sponge by pouring cupfuls of water on them at reasonable intervals. After a while they are taken out of the tub and wiped with a towel. Then follows the use of pomade and powder, combing and brushing of hair, and dressing.

The third method is for older children who are able to walk. Mothers stand them on pieces of board or on the bare floor and wash them with soap and sponge, starting generally

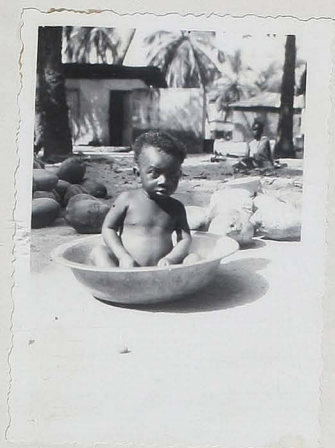


Fig 26 A Todler enjoying a bath by himself.

from the head downwards. This the children shortly learn to do by themselves, so that later on mothers cease to worry about washing them unless it is discovered that they are not doing it to satisfaction.

Children are quite innocent creatures and have no notions of the essential functions of the genital functions. Also they have no special names for them. But after three years or so when they have acquired a reasonable vocabulary and are becoming curious or conscious of the whys and wherefores of simple practical facts about themselves and what they see at home they come to know the names of the sex organs exactly as adults call them. They pick up these words chiefly from their grandmothers, and grand-aunts. For instance, when children misbehave or cause unnecessary disturbances in the ~~home~~ house or when they handle their genitals purposelessly they are usually frightened with the words: "Stop that, you naughty child. If I see you like that again, I'll put pepper into your penis (or vagina)." Striking names are thus picked up, and when children are at play they rehearse them with freedom and childish innocence. Such is the way they act that even in the presence of visitors they repeat the names of the "private parts" without fear.

Masturbation occurs among children of all age levels but particularly among those between two and six years. It is said to be an emotional strain imposed upon the genital organs by virtue of their sensitivity. It is actually natural and harmless but parents, as a rule, consider the practice a bad one, and do all they can to discourage it. Whenever a child is caught in the act he is either shouted at or reprimanded. Further offences are checked by beating or by rubbing pepper on the genital organs. It is significant to note that even among educated people masturbation is regarded as an abominable practice, and a child who is found twice or thrice in the act tends to be taken for 'a spoilt child'. In fact, hardly any attempt ~~is~~ is made to find out the emotional factors or urges involved. Nor do mothers and other people concerned realize that by stroking

or fondling the sensitive tissues of a child's body they generate an interplay of sex emotions which must seek an outlet in the very practice which they condemn. Dr. R.G. Gordon in an essay entitled "Mind and Body" prescribes a remedy as follows: "The proper treatment of masturbation at any age is a wholesome indifference to it on the part of the adult and a diversion of the child's interests by toys and games and, at an older age, to intellectual pursuits and sport. At the same time a straightforward explanation should be given of the reasons why masturbation is indulged in and why it is undesirable to establish it as an uncontrolled and even uncontrollable habit. Above all, there should be no threats, no bogey stories, which only fix the child's attention on the habit and fill his mind with fears and conflicts accompanied by anxiety." Another writer emphasizes that the best thing to do is "to remove the strains and provide for the child's needs by giving him the affection and understanding that he craves and the kind of play material, occupations and companionship suitable to his age." This knowledge, woefully lacking, will do a world of good if it can be disseminated among the entire community.

Very young children do not play games in separate sex groups. They mix up freely and enjoy games and other activities in common. At a later stage, however, girls and boys engage in partnership games. Girls line up horizontally on one side, and boys on the other. Then a girl dances along with a handkerchief to her partner  
 xxx in the opposite line, gives him the handkerchief and takes his place while he also dances along to the female line and gives it to any one of the girls there and takes her place also. Thus the game "Odo hanketse" is played with much interest and enjoyment to both parties.

Doctor games are common especially among female children.

When they are at play, the older ones assume the role of mothers or doctors and attempt to treat the younger ones as if they were patients. They seat them on their thighs, massage their bodies and apply mentholatum saying, "Oh, don't cry. Your fever will soon leave you and your body will not feel hot again".

When, on the other hand, the younger ones pretend to be constipated patients they are laid on their thighs face downwards, and enema is practised. The pseudo-patient is then bathed, and given food, and dressed. Children take great delight in imitation and make-believe games like these and would stay away from their mothers for long hours until impelled by strong hunger to come home for their meals. Another popular activity for young girls is childish cooking popularly known as "mfeba" or nkorobo". Here children take the trouble to make miniature clay stoves either under a tree or beside a wall.

Then they put in coal or firewood and make a fire, and set on cigarette tins or other pans to cook their food. Children usually make use of their mothers' plantains, cassava, pepper, garden eggs, okroes, tomatoes, onions and fish for their cooking, and it is remarkable how the older ones act as mothers and the younger ones as maid-servants to assist or perform all sorts of menial jobs in their so-called kitchen. All this activity is undertaken primarily for amusement and fun, and potentially for practice and skill in cooking. Of course, the food cooked is often not eaten unless it has actually been well done by much older children. At any rate, parents do not encourage the eating of such food, for fear of consequent attacks if illness due to imperfect cooking.

(B) CLOTHING AND SELF-EXPOSURE: Self-exposure is discouraged by parents and other adult relatives about the age of five. In some homes and especially among the highly educated, children are not allowed to play or walk about completely naked. They are trained to have on at least an article of underwear all the time. But among the fisherfolk and other illiterate sections ~~for~~ of the community older boys of six or seven may be found going about with no ~~xxxxx~~ ~~xxx~~ article of clothing at all on them. There appears to



Fig. 27. A group of young girls practising cooking (i.e. mfɛba)



Fig. 28 A typical doctor game: 'A constipated child' being given an enema treatment.



Fig. 29. A group of young girls (between 4 and 7) imitating a bridal group.

be no strict home training to make them feel bashful to go about naked, and very often when these children are found in the street by older people they are either driven away to go for their cloth or clothes, or threatened with possibilities of being arrested by the police. Girls, of course, rarely appear naked even in their own homes except the very young ones, or in the case of six or seven year-olds where bathing in their domestic compounds is concerned.

Apart from the fisherfolk and other illiterates, parents are generally serious about the training of children and lapses in respect of self-exposure are accordingly checked. That is, either by rebuke or by whipping. Generally speaking, children feel ashamed to appear naked before strangers, high-ranking officials, ministers of the Gospel, teachers and policemen. They seem to be aware of the acknowledged authority of these people in one way or the other and do not wish to offend them by appearing naked.

Dressing and undressing can be attempted independently by children of both sexes at the age of four or five. Actually, no deliberate attempt is made by parents to teach children how to dress. The children themselves learn to do so through observation and imitation. While they are quite young they watch as mother dresses them after bating them or on Sundays when they are dressed for chapel. Then as they grow older they try to do it by themselves without help. Later on, however, mothers give assistance when they find that their attempt requires necessary adjustments, especially in the case of young girls who put on cloth below and cover-shoulder above. To be able to walk freely and naturally both feet have to be fairly widely kept apart while the cloth below is being adjusted round the waist. Then the cover-shoulder is put on to complete the dressing. Male children have little or no difficulty about dressing at the age of four or five owing to the simple nature of their clothes.

Parents do not feel ashamed to undress before very young children, the chief reason being that they are innocent and harmless and incapable of communicating anything they may see about them.



Fig. 30

A young girl, aged 6, and her brothers both under 4 looking neat and smart in their dresses.



Fig. 31 Three girls and two boys (all under 4) in typical infant dresses.



Fig. 32 Children at play all wearing clothes; no exposure.

Besides, exposure to such very young children is not considered a breach of moral discipline. With older children, on the other hand, it is quite different. Exposure is both indecent, unbecoming and not worth-while on moral grounds. But such moral attitudes are not rigid among the fisherfolk as well as other illiterates. Moreover, the situation becomes still more important when it is viewed from the point of ~~xxx~~ view of the opposite sexes. Thus among even the less-enlightened people it is difficult for a father to appear naked before his daughter of three or four years or for a mother to act likewise to her son of the same age.

When children are born they are dressed in simple white linen clothes. After a month or two different colours of dress may be used, the style being, of course, the same. Rompers are not commonly used at Winneba. Toddlers wear them in a few homes and they look quite smart and fashionable in them. Baby boys and baby girls of one month to two months wear the same loose linen baby dress with no discrimination. From three months onward slight differences occur in the style. The boys' dress remains practically the same but in the case of the girls garments of a similar shape are made which have two distinct but inseparable parts - the top and the bottom - which are noticeable all round the seam. They are of no 'blouse and skirt' style and can be easily recognized as 'high waist' or 'low waist' according as the seam is above the waist or below it. A further distinction often occurs in the sleeves of girls' dresses. They are cut in a special style, and are usually shorter than those of boys. As these girls grow they are introduced to more elaborate styles. The dresses are made longer and the sleeves are shaped into another style known popularly as "Puff".

Girls of two years and over are generally clothed in the conventional female native dress of cloth down with a strip of cloth for a belt called "taman" and a cover-shoulder up. The alternative which is worn chiefly by school girls is the "knock about" frock for daily use and the 'special frock' for occasional wear. The common dress for all boys is the simple single cloth of



Fig. 33 Some fisherboys playing on the beach.



Fig. 34 More fisherboys bathing, almost all without drawers.



Fig. 35 Fisherboys chatting leisurely on a canoe.

a double yard or more according to size. This is worn by draping oneself with it, placing the two top ends on the left or right shoulder according to personal inclinations. Also these two top ends may be tucked firmly round the neck for greater smartness as is usual with very young boys. Drawers and singlets and jumpers are also used often by boys especially when they are at play. So also shorts and shirts for school attendance and all practical purposes.

(C) Sex Distinctions:

Sex groupings for games and other practical activities begin at about seven years. Boys meet together on play-grounds for such games as football, running and jumping, marbles, spotting the hidden thread from the sand called "tori" and somersaulting during the day, while in the evening they have hide and seek. Girls also take up "ampe", "seraku-dende" and "Adwowa Maame, What's Matter" ? during the day and "hide and seek" in the evening. Occasionally, however, young boys and girls may mix up for "hide and seek" in the evening. At about the same age boys and girls tend to fight among themselves either against members of the same sex or of the opposite sex. But, on the whole, girls are weaker and are often beaten in their fights with boys.

A boy who behaves girlishly is called "Banyin-basia" (boy-girl or masculine woman) and a girl who behaves boyishly is called "Basia-banyin" (girl-boy or feminine man). Parents who have such children regard themselves as unfortunate and treat them with sympathy. But they endeavour to improve their condition by training them to do what becomes their proper sex. It is a pity, however, that at play these children are made fun of by their neighbours who keep constantly referring to them by the vernacular equivalents of "sissy" and "tomboy".

Normally, girls love to engage in joint activities with boys whether at home or in school or in informal meetings provided no attempt is made to under-rate their intelligence, ability or sex. But as they advance towards adolescence they become more and more conscious of their sex and may appear rather lukewarm or standoffish in their attitude towards the opposite sex. Further light is thrown on this point by Powdermaker and Grimes on page 269 of "The Intelligent Parents Manual" as follows:-

" Adolescents may have a deep or a passing interest in the opposite sex which they often repress because of their fear of being rejected or laughed at, or just because of their own awareness of their lack of experience".

Moreover, intimate contact between boys and girls is generally discouraged at puberty. And again owing to menstrual disturbances girls are often debarred from participating in any kind of physical activity with the opposite sex.

Parents generally prefer female children because they tend to be more serviceable than male children. Mothers in particular are happy when they have female ~~with~~ children with them in their kitchen, because they are willing and ready to go to the market to buy the necessary things for the day's meal and they render invaluable assistance in the kitchen by grinding the pepper, garden eggs, and other vegetables for the soup or stew. They are prepared to cook the cassava and plantains and pound the fufu as required, and are even willing to take over the entire cooking from mother when she is busy with other things or when she happens to be away from home. Boys, on the other hand, have the impression that they are not born for culinary activities and grudge giving the required help. Most of them even dislike being sent to the market to buy things for themselves. Often when meals are being prepared and they find that their services may be required in one way or the other they quickly leave the house for the play-field and return home only when food is ready. Some boys are admittedly as good as the most helpful girls, but these are few and far between, and naturally they tend to be held in high estimation by their parents.

When and in what manner, it may be asked, do fathers show a preference for female children? That, of course, depends upon how reliable and helpful they are. No father prefers a boy who shirks duty and spends most of his time on the play-ground to a girl who is always serving at home. And, in most cases, female children are regarded as "second wives" by their fathers. They cook and wash clothes and tidy up the house whenever mother is ill or away from home. They also take charge of their little brothers and sisters, and all that helps to endear them to their fathers. However, all ~~thing~~ things being equal at home for both male and female children, it is found that most fathers tend to ~~prefer~~ prefer male children first because they are male as they themselves are, secondly because they stand a better chance of working in order to maintain the house when

their fathers are old and, thirdly, they are more capable of performing the necessary filial rites when their fathers are dead.

Almost all children have greater love for, and show closer attachment to, their mothers than their fathers. Because, in the first place, fathers are supposed to be hard disciplinarians who would not allow children to do what they like. That is, to keep continually being silly or naughty at home. They are stern when children act wrongly, and punish them whenever necessary. In the second place, mothers play the role of nurses right from the moment of ~~birth~~ birth and are at home with the children every time to care for them, give them food and supply other needs. Thirdly, they tend to show greater affection for their children than fathers generally do.

Some answers given by children interviewed to the question "Why do you prefer your mother?" are as follows :-

- i Eni dze mepe me maame n'asem; me papa dze oboro me dodow (literally, As for me I love my mother; as for my father, he beats me too much).
- ii Mepe me maame n'asem kyen me papa, osiande ono na oma me edziban ma midzi (Girl aged 6. Literally, I love my mother more than my father because she gives me food to eat)
- iii Eni dze me maame na mepe n'asem; ommboro me kese. (Girl aged about 6, literally, As for me, it is my mother I love, she doesn't beat me much)
- iv Mepe me papa n'asem kakra, na mepe me maame n'asem kese. Onye me tsena fie dabiara, ohwe me. Ogura me, ohye me atar, oma me edziban so. (Boy aged 8 literally, I love my father a little but I love my mother more. She stays at home with me every day, she cares for me. She washes me, dresses me, gives me food also).
- v Mepe me maame n'asem kese, ono na owoo me. (Boy aged 5½, literally, I love my mother more; she bore me)
- vi Mepe me maame n'asem kyen me papa osiande me papa, se me yar a, nna oakefa edur aba. Se mannam a nna oroboro me (Girl aged 7, literally, I love my mother more than my

my father because when I am ill, then he has brought a medicine. If I don't drink it, then he beats me)

Answers from older children between ten and sixteen showing preference for Mother revealed the common fact that mother 'always' stays at home and makes them happy and comfortable in all the ways she can. On the whole, she is regarded as being more sympathetic and kind than father. A number of adults between twenty and thirty too were consulted. Most of them also showed preference for mother stating that it was mother who carried them in her womb during the nine months of pregnancy and suffered all the troubles and uneasiness involved, that it was she who took a greater share in their care and upbringing, and finally that her maternal feeling was much stronger than that of 'daddy'. The words of one particular woman are worth quoting: "I love both my father and my mother. I love my mother more because she bore me and gave me part of herself. That is, her blood." John Masefield, a modern poet, reiterates a similar idea in the following words :-

In the dark womb where I began  
 My mother's life made me a man.  
 Through all the months of human birth  
 Her beauty fed my common earth.  
 I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,  
 But through the death of some of her.

Certainly one has got to be grateful to one's mother, and there is sufficient justification for the pride of place accorded her in family life. Nevertheless, it has to be remembered that there are motners and mothers just as there are fathers and fathers.

Children's relationship with their parents, on the whole, depends upon how the father or mother treats his or her child. Children want a free, easy and happy life without oppression, rebuke or punishment, and also to have their needs supplied as readily as possible. Whichever of the parents is able to give them greater satisfaction in this respect consequently tends to be more loved. During the recent research at Winneba the writer came across a schoolmaster whose children aged three, five, seven and ten years approximately were almost all the time clinging to him, playing with him and asking him

questions. Often when he was even reading he found it difficult to convince them to go away in order to allow him a quiet time. Obviously the children (two boys and two girls) were more fond of their father than their mother, simply because he had the kindness and patience to tolerate their conduct and encouraged them to be happy with him, whereas although the mother was quite good and took no delight in punishing them rather tended to rebuke them when they showed naughtiness and drove them away saying, "Oh, I don't want that; get away from me; go to dad."

Relations with Brothers and Sisters.

Children are not told anything when a new baby is about to be born. Most parents say that there is no need for it, while others, too, explain that telling them is likely to upset their emotional balance and give them unnecessary anxieties. Yet others who are superstitious say that when they are told their spirits within them which would not like to be supplanted in the affections of their parents may sorrow and die. So they had better not tell them anything at all.

Again parents often find it difficult to tell inquisitive children between two and five the truth about where baby comes from or how he is born. With regard to the former question a relative who wishes to satisfy a child's curiosity may venture a straightforward answer such as "This new baby is your brother (or sister). He (or she) came from mother's belly." But the latter question is advisedly ignored.

Actually, it is not a general habit of children to be asking questions about the mysteries of childbirth. Only a few very curious ones do so, and mothers explain that such questions are asked not with any conscious effort to obtain information but merely out of curiosity. It is consequently interesting to note the variety of answers that are often supplied. During the recent interviews with parents one woman said that when her child of four and half asked where her new baby came from she answered that she mixed garri and sugar with plenty of water and drank it, and baby came. Another woman when asked in her seventh month of pregnancy why she had such a big stomach replied: "I ate very big fufu." But the child (aged 5) asked again: "I also eat big fufu. Why is my belly not like yours?" Mother's next reply was: "When you grow older and you eat big fufu your belly will be like mine." At another time, a gris girl of five having seen her elder sister bring forth a new baby asked her mother how her sister came by that new-child. Mother replied: "A woman brings forth when she is old and when you also become old you will get a child." Another woman also said that a few days after she had brought forth, her young

son of about five years asked where the baby came from. Her answer was "Daddy and I visited a certain village and when we were returning the old chief there gave us this baby." The boy asked no further question, he felt rather pleased and said "It's a fine boy, I'll play with him."

When a child is about to be born the older children are not allowed to be present in the room where the birth is taking place. As a rule, they are not sent out of the house but are left alone to play on the compound. Occasionally, however, some inquisitive older children may wish to see what is actually going on, and these may be driven out accordingly. The youngest child of the mother usually cries for having been separated from his mother, but he is given bread or cankey and fish and carried away on the back by a maidservant who sings to and plays with him in order to keep him cheerful till the mother's labour is over. Again, when this last child is brought back and sees his mother with a new baby on her lap or lying by her he bursts into a violent cry, having got the impression that mother has got a new child on whom she may lavish all her love and attention which before had been solely his own.

When another child is born the older one is usually taken care of by the grandmother or aunt. She tries to keep him happy and comfortable and supplies him with food and other needs. He is washed by her and clothed and entertained in every possible way, and also given every opportunity to come to mother and the new child. It is to be noted that in the first week or two the older child is generally washed with the same water in the tub which has been used in bathing the new baby. This is done, it is believed, to arm him against the attack of troublesome ailments such as fevers, headaches and general debility which disturb the health of the child at this period of his life.

The attitude of children to a new-born child depends upon their individual feelings and impressions. Most of them welcome the new-comer with delight, for his arrival means to them more avenues for free play and companionship and the special privilege of having a younger brother or sister whom they can love or be

interested in. So they would often come to his bed, take his hand and ask mother: "Whose brother (or sister) is that ? Mine ?" When mother replies "Yes" they become elated and begin to jump about saying, "He is my brother" or "She is my sister". If mother replies "No" they become sorry and may protest saying, "He is MY brother" or "She is MY sister". In fact, so great is the interest that at times they sit by him or her for a long while, playing with him or her while mother is busy in the kitchen. ~~And~~ And as soon as they see that baby is crying they get up and run to the kitchen to tell mother. Really, the presence of the new child brings quite a change into his life and he tends to show a renewed love or interest in mother and father as well. Also he would keep continually watching over him and telling them about his movements. Sometimes it happens that an elderly relative comes to take baby away. The older child, seeing it, might think that baby is being stolen away and will cry or shout for mother.

But the attitude may be positively adverse in some children. To them the presence of a new child means usurpation of their rights and they consequently become jealous and hostile. They seem to be troubled by a feeling of insecurity and they would keep on crying whenever they see baby in mother's arms or being fed on her breast. Often they would attempt to pull baby away from her or hit him or ask mother to go to throw him away. Bitterness becomes intense when mother apparently ignores him and centres all her time and attention on baby. But sometimes mother becomes aware of her shortcomings and reverses her attitude and then creates in him love for his younger brother or sister.

Older children above four years have absorbing interest in babies and often seek the opportunity to take them from mother in order to stroll about with them or to play with them. Some of them even express a desire to be allowed to bathe them, but this is not allowed or encouraged owing to the risks involved.

Parents have a natural tendency to treat all their children equally or to give them equal advantages as much as possible, and furthermore they seek to get them united into a well-knit harmony or family relationship whenever they can.

This is manifest in the way they give the children food, clothing, medical care and educational facilities. But individual children have their own characteristic ways of behaviour and conduct themselves in a manner which gain the parents' approval or disapproval.

Normally a child is expected to be obedient and helpful in order to win and maintain the affection of his parents. But it happens that some children refuse to be trained in the way they should go and ~~consequently~~ consequently fall from grace. Parents then become more interested in those children who obey and serve and seek to enhance the prestige of the family than those who act otherwise. During the recent investigation a number of parents brought up cases of children who had got out of hand and were going about with friends who delighted in folly and foul practices. They regretted that these children could not be persuaded to desert their gangs, and wished strongly that it might be possible for them to be sent into an Industrial School for rigid training and discipline. Parents therefore say that children become favourites who act in accordance with their wishes and non-favourites who go their own way.

There appears also to be a general impression that first-born and last-born children are the parents' favourites. The reasons given are that the first-born children were the first to receive their parents' love, and that love tends to grow in intensity as the years roll on. Moreover, being the eldest of the children, parents are obliged to give them special love and care so that in their absence they might adequately take charge of the younger ones. The last-born children also tend to be favourites because they are the youngest and must be given the best care and attention. It is said also that being the last to come they automatically stand the chance of receiving all the vast store of the love that continues to remain in the parents' heart. But in spite of the fact that the above arguments have much to justify them it has to be noted that on that score every other child has in turn been a ~~xx~~ favourite child because while a baby he received the greatest love and care of the parents. In a discussion in which a number of parents participated it became clear that mothers tend, on the whole, to show the greatest love or favour to the baby of the family and, in the case of the older

children, to those who obey their parents and prove most obedient and helpful.

With regard to the typing of children according to age and status there are five categories :-

1. That which indicates age in a general sense has such names as Numfuanoba (breast-feeder), Abofra or Abofraba (a child, in a general sense), Abodomaba (a tiny inexperienced child), Abanyimbasiaba (a boy in his teens), Ababaawa (a girl in her teens), Akataasia (a girl in her teens), and Aberentse ( a boy on the verge of puberty).
2. That which indicates age in an ordinal sequence has Abakan (the first-born child), Badu (the tenth child), and Okaa-ekyir (the last-born child).
3. That which refers to twins has Ata-panyin (the first of the twins), Ata-kakra (the second or younger of the twins), and Tawiah (the next child after the twins).
4. That referring to sex patterns has Ansa or Mansa (male and female for the third of three brothers or three sisters successively), Annan and Maanan (male and female for the fourth of four brothers or four sisters successively), and Twinto (a female child born after two male children or a male child born after two female children).
5. The Kwasama (the fourth child who survives after the successive deaths of three children of the same mother). Such a child is marked out by three deep knife cuts on the left and right sides of the mouth as well as on the cheeks.

The presence of children at home has great advantages, for they have a part to play in the life of the family. Normally, those under twelve or fourteen months who lack the ability to walk owing to immaturity may be considered as non-productive - in the sense that they make no substantial contribution to the upkeep of the home. But a little reflection reveals the essential ~~passive~~ fact that their presence at home is active rather than passive. The delicate and chubby nature of their bodies; their loveliness, their "stretches",

~~the~~ smiles and even their ~~cries~~ cries fill the home with sweetness and love, hope and joy. These little children have qualities that attract people into the house, for often a neighbour might say "What about Madam X and her baby-girl? I'd better visit them to-day." Another neighbour might say, "Mr. P's child is going to be baptized on next Sunday. I'm expected to attend the ~~ceremony~~ ceremony." Thus it is clear that the presence of young children, apart from enlivening the atmosphere of the home, is also a fundamental means of strengthening the social ties or relationships of the family and other members of the community.

The disadvantages of having these young ones at home are that they impose a good deal of strain on their parents for they have to devote much time and attention to their supervision so that they might not suffer careless injuries. Moreover, when they are ill the parents become much worried, for their inability to talk makes it very difficult for parents to know exactly the nature of the illness and the requisite treatment for it. Again, their constant cries at night is a great disturbance to quiet sleep.

The advantages of having older children at home are that they render all kinds of domestic service and help to lighten the burden of the mother's responsibilities. They undertake all kinds of errands, from the very simple ones of the two- or three-year old of fetching a broom for mother, of driving away troublesome fowls from the kitchen to the more elaborate duties of those considerably older, such as, sweeping the rooms or the compound, washing plates, running errands and undertaking diverse jobs in the kitchen or doing other necessary things that may be required. The disadvantages are chiefly the lack of funds in certain homes for maintaining them and the worries some give to their parents by their truant and delinquent tendencies.

Normally, children between two and five years do not show tendencies of co-operation solely to those of their own sex. A general attitude of promiscuity prevails and boys and girls can come together at anytime for various infant activities. The tendency to enjoy play or other activities in separate sex groups becomes

manifest in older children, but even there there is no restraint on children's liberty to come together to ~~be~~ organize practical activities or share common interests.

Young children, especially those of school-going age, pick quarrels readily and fight fearlessly. These quarrels are usually started by the younger children. When Kofi, aged 6, is playing with a doll or any attractive thing, Esi, aged 4, may come along and, seeing it, will start crying for it, saying that it is hers. If it is not given to her she will take hold of Kofi's clothes and attempt to take the thing by force. Kofi too may not agree to give it up and there results a struggle or fight. Esi cries loudly and mother quickly comes up to tell Kofi to give the doll or whatever it is to her in order to play with it for a while. In some cases Kofi agrees and surrenders the object. In other cases he may refuse to yield. If, however, Esi continues to cry and worry her she may also be forced to take it from Kofi and give it to her. And more often than not he also bursts out crying, but mother may either leave him or try to console him by giving him something to eat or something else for him also to play with.

Generally speaking, parents go to the side of the younger child whenever there is a quarrel. Also where a quarrel is between a son and a daughter the latter is usually supported by mother unless she is much older. In children's quarrels there is, in most cases, no time for mother to find out who is right or who is wrong. Verdict is given immediately in favour of the younger child, until it is discovered later on that the older child is right and then, of course, he or she may be comforted or pacified with some sweets or any attractive plaything.



Fig. 36 The baby-girl is crying. She beats her elder sister who also pretends to cry, while another, aged 7, is playing tricks in front of them.

Relations to Parents and other adults:

The mother is chiefly responsible for the early care of the child. It is her duty to feed, bathe and dress him, to supervise his movements and activities so that he does not expose himself to injuries, to nurse him in illness and to undertake his upbringing in every possible way. In this task she is assisted by her husband and close relatives. And generally in her absence, the child's aunt or grandmother takes charge of him. Much also depends upon the circumstance under which the child comes to be cared for by the aunt or grandmother. In case the mother is dead the child is usually taken charge of by either an aunt (maternal or paternal but more often by the former) or the grandmother (maternal or paternal). In most cases an aunt who has no child of her own stands the chance of adopting the child and giving him all the care she possibly can. If, on the other hand, the mother happens to be temporarily away from home, the child is either taken along with her or is left in charge of the aunt or grandmother till she returns.

The family life at Winneba is of two main types. The first involves the literates and some illiterate artisans, and finds both man and wife sharing a common home with their children in either the man's family house or in rooms rented by them. Here there is close contact between the father and his children, for he is at home with them almost every day. During business hours he is away and the wife cares for the young children at home. When he returns home after business he also gives due attention to the children. He may sit together with them ~~in~~ in the hall or on the verandah and play or chat with them or he may be busy with some leisure occupation while the children are given the freedom to play and amuse themselves on the compound or in front of the kitchen. But frequently the young children will come to him and attempt to play with him or they may ask for bread or biscuits or

some fanciful plaything. At times, too, the man may be tired and will turn in for some rest. Then the children may come jumping upon the bed to disturb his sleep, and to get rid of them he may give them some bread or biscuits and ask them to go to mother in the kitchen.

The second type of family life involves chiefly the fisherfolk and other illiterates. Here the wives stay in their family homes with their children and carry out cooking and other duties. Food is sent to the husband chiefly at noon and in the evening, and the wives go to their husbands' homes in the evening with the children and pass the night there. The next morning finds them back again in their family homes. The children's contact with their fathers is thus not as close as in the former type of ~~family~~ family life. All the same, the children are pleased everytime they go to their father's house and he plays or chats with them accordingly. In both types of family life the baby is carried in the arms or against the shoulders by the father who often strolls with him up and down the verandah or compound early in the morning or in the evening or in the case of the fisherfolk who live close to the sea-shore, particularly in the very early morning, when the breeze is supposed to have an exceptionally healthful influence on the baby.

The father is usually the chief authority in disciplining the child ~~for~~ while the mother is the main agent. It is natural for the mother to be the main agent in that she happens to keep the house while the father is away on duty, and it automatically becomes her responsibility to care for or control the children. Certainly children are troublesome and are up to all sorts of mischief both at home with their mothers or at play with their friends. Now when they have done wrong or misbehaved mother often says, "What a silly thing you have done. When father comes, I'll tell him to punish you." Sometimes, this is said only to frighten the child and to deter him from further wrongdoing but at other times mother takes a serious view of the offence and reports to father who either admonishes the child or punishes him. Really, it is the father who is responsible for punishing a child but at times when he is absent

from home for a long time mother may be forced to take his place and administer punishment when she considers the offence a grave one.

A child's training is the mutual concern of both parents. So mother and father frequently discuss the behaviour of their children, especially when they happen to be problem children, and they try to find out how to improve them. In certain cases when a child causes an offence and is to be punished the mother may not like it and will try to shield him from blame or punishment. In some cases this may lead to a quarrel between the man and his wife which eventually ends in marital disharmony. Under normal conditions, however, parents behave pleasantly towards each other, before their children. This makes the children feel quite happy at home and inspires them with love and goodwill towards the family as a whole. And, in fact, most children get the foundations of their good training and culture from the mutual cordial relationship between father and mother in their every-day life at home.

A parent's responsibility to his child is considered by some as a duty for which no reward or gratitude is expected. But it offers a good deal of encouragement when children are able to appreciate the time and trouble which parents take over their care. Other parents, too, especially the women, hold the view that they have to spend as much as they can to bring up or educate their children so that in their old age when the flesh is weak and is unable to work their children who may then be in good jobs may also care for them. And there were several women who complained that their children who are earning good salaries abroad seldom or never send home remittances to help them to care for their younger brothers and sisters who are in school. On the whole, parents are sorry when they find that their children are inclined to lead reckless lives, and do not bother to save for the future.

Parental ambitions towards their children vary considerably. Fishermen generally want their children to become fishermen also. So they tend to train them in their own trade with the hope that when they grow old their children might take their places. Some carpenters and other artisans also hold similar views.

But with the present rapid development of education in the Country both literate and illiterate parents are becoming more and more aware of the importance of literacy and are consequently sending as many of their children as possible to school. Well-to-do parents encourage their children to pursue secondary and University studies so that they might get better-paid jobs or that they might be able to hold key posts in different departments of work. This, they say, will make them more respected for having produced 'high quality' children and also that such children will help to build up their families and make them more stable in the future.

Children who have good training do not quarrel with their parents. Also children who love their parents blush to exchange hot words with them. But there are certain homes where quarrels crop up frequently between parents and their children. In fact, such quarrels chiefly occur between mothers and their children. The causes are many and varied. First of all, some parents set a bad example by quarrelling often before their children. The result is that the children imbibe similar tendencies and become unruly. In August last year, a mother abused an illiterate daughter (aged 11) for not giving her the necessary assistance in the kitchen. The latter unhesitatingly paid her back in her own coin. The mother got more angry and said, "Thank you for behaving saucily to me. You must prepare to feed and clothe yourself henceforth." The girl replied, "That is nothing to me. Does it hurt to be spoken harshly to? Remember that is what you often do ~~xx~~ when you quarrel with daddy."

Most quarrels between mothers and their children take place in homes where discipline is lax. At the kitchen mother may want her daughter to grind the pepper for making the soup or stew or she may be asked to go for water or be simply charged with an errand. The child may shrug her shoulders and refuse to go. Mother consequently becomes angry and begins to hail invectives on her. But often the daughter in such a bad home does not take it coolly and raises a quarrel. At other times the daughter may leave the

house to go to play with her friends while mother is busy at home. When at last she returns home she expects to be given ~~the daughter~~ food to eat. When mother refuses to provide it the daughter becomes displeased and immediately begins a quarrel. And, in fact, in all such quarrels an attempt is made by mother to go after the daughter with a cane, while the latter runs away shouting or crying.

Quarrels between a father and his son or daughter are rather infrequent. In most cases, they arise when a father supports mother in her efforts to check a disobedient or unruly child. When a quarrel arises between a daughter and her mother, the father certainly becomes displeased with the daughter's behaviour and may seek to punish her. In the case of older girls of fifteen or over they are often discouraged to find that father, too, is against them and may direct the quarrel against him too. As a rule, a lot of noisy words are uttered but deliberate poignant invectives are seldom or never used even among the fisherfolk. Whatever the circumstance, there is always a reserved store of respect for one's parents whom it is more or less a curse for one to villify.

Quarrels between parents and children are mostly informal and do not require arbitration. But in those serious and rare cases where a daughter or son is bold enough to abuse her or his father it becomes often difficult for the father to forgive unless one or two elders of the mother's family undertake to redress grievances and bring the child to kneel before the father and apologise. And in some cases it becomes even necessary to kill a sheep to pacify him. On the other hand, when a father also offends his child almost nothing is done, for no one expects him to apologise. A little gesture of affection displayed by the father in calling his child and telling ~~the child happy~~ him not to be sorry for what has happened or by merely calling him and sending him settles the matter and makes the child happy again. But at times a father's offence against his child may become so serious as to offend the elders of the mother's family. This, of course, may result in some arbitration where the father may find it necessary to apologise to the elders or by pacifying them with a bottle or two of Whisky or Schnapps or some

Parental authority over one's child has no definite limits. As long as a child is cared for by his parents they have every right to exercise supervision or control over him. But when a son comes of age and gets a job the father generally ceases to bring pressure to bear on him. He leaves him to plan out his own career and advises him to be careful in order to make headway. Parental interference only becomes necessary when the son is found to behave recklessly or is likely to stultify his opportunities. Moreover, when a son has carried on very well in his job and is about to get married, the parents do all they can to assist him to choose a suitable helpmeet and to see that the proposal and all the necessary marriage rites are adequately performed. Then also he is advised to think of home wherever he is. Even as a married man whenever he is at home he recognizes the strong family ties or relationship with his parents and gives them due respect or even endeavours to assist them to maintain the house whenever necessary.

A daughter ceases to be under the direct control of her parents when she gets married. But she may often continue to look up to them for every possible assistance in satisfying her needs. Owing to the strong family ties a married woman who is abroad with her husband often feels like getting permission from her husband in order to visit her parents at home for some days. And often when there is a quarrel there is the tendency with most young wives to say, "If you are not prepared to make me happy, let me go back to my parents." But these are often regarded as empty words to which little or no attention is given by the husband. In fact, parental interference becomes necessary only when marital relationships appear to be seriously out of gear. Then the parents of the man or woman may come up to advise them to redress their grievances in order to carry on harmoniously again. And in case of serious disputes arbitrations may be held to effect amicable settlement.

Other adults who play a prominent role in the early care of the child are the wife's mother and sisters or the man's mother

and sisters. Among the fisherfolk and in all other cases where the wife stays in her family house apart from her husband and comes to sleep in his house in the evenings, the wife's mother, sisters and aunts assist greatly in the care of the child right from the time of his birth. Whenever mother is busy they take him in their arms or place him on their lap and play with him or sing to him. When baby is crying they do all they can to comfort him by strolling with him or singing to him. Frequently even in the mother's presence they take it upon themselves to bathe and dress him and give him breast or bottle feeding. When baby begins to crawl and becomes troublesome they help the mother to exercise supervision over his movements in order to prevent him from harm. When baby is about to walk they encourage him to get up by holding his hand and stepping along with him. When he is ill, they help mother to give him all the care and attention required. They also encourage him to speak by talking or repeating simple words and ~~sentences~~ sentences to him, and when he is grown much older (say from five years onwards) and happens to misbehave they help to check or correct him. The ~~child's~~ child's life is practically woven into that of the mother's family and all along he is expected to recognize his relationship with and dependence upon them. So at anytime, whether mother is present or not, he feels he is well entitled to appeal to his direct relatives for food or other necessary needs. These relatives are always in the family house with him except where marriage or other engagements happens to separate them from him.

Specifically, it is the maid-servant or nurse-~~or~~ ~~the~~ maid who chiefly carries baby about and plays with him whenever mother is busy or is away from home, and also practises walking with him any time he attempts to. It is the grandmother who chiefly bathes him and sings to him when he is crying, and nurses him when he is ill, while the aunts exercise care and supervision over him in a general way as much as the mother herself does.

The child's relations with these adults, however, undergo modifications as the environment changes. That is, if the mother stays with the husband in his family house as is the case with most literates, then after birth in the wife's family house she moves

to her husband's home after three to six months where the child goes to meet his paternal relations who also get on with him and help to bring him up as best as they can. Here the man's mother, sisters and aunts become the chief agents of the child's care besides the mother. But from time to time he may be taken to his maternal home to greet his relatives there. Or whenever possible they themselves will send one to go for him.

Of the other adults the grandmothers are usually more sympathetic and indulgent than the parents. They would not have anybody bully or maltreat the children, and whenever they see them crying they would try to find out the offender and rebuke or punish him. Also they are ever ready to provide food, clothing, sweets or any other thing that can help to make the children happy. At the same time, as the children grow older they are admonished or punished by them when they exhibit obstinate or vicious tendencies. Aunts are generally strict disciplinarians. They want tidiness and systematic behaviour in the house. So when children are growing up they exercise great care over their training, and do not easily tolerate silliness displayed by them. They are, nevertheless, affectionate and often like to dress young children and go out with them on their backs. Maid-servants normally have very happy relations with children. They spend much time with them and help to train them in several ways. But at times they get fed up or out of hand and become rather stern to their little innocent playmates. When a child is ill-treated by them he screams for mother's help.

All children, especially the older ones, are required to be polite to their elderly relatives. Usually when these relatives visit the parents the children are not excluded. They ask for them and inquire ~~on~~ after their health. Very often too when the parents visit their relatives they take the children, especially the youngest one, along with them. This is done chiefly by mothers who go to sit down and enjoy the company of their relatives for long hours. Really, it is not a rule to take the children with them on all visits and, whenever it happens, they say there is no

special reason for doing so except that it is proper. Older children are encouraged to visit both their paternal and maternal relatives whenever possible. This helps the children to know them and respect them and the relatives also to take interest in them. Often when children visit their relatives they serve them by sweeping their rooms, fetching water for their bath, washing their plates and dishes and running errands. And, at times, when they are going back they are given all kinds of presents.

Friends, too, are generally interested in each other's children, and always seek to preserve cordial relations with them. Very often when mother's friends visit her they inquire after the children and take them up and play with or fondle them. They also often kiss them on the cheeks. And from time to time little gifts of biscuits, confectionery, dolls, money or even dresses are given to the children. Sometimes, the friends take the children to their homes to wash and feed them and bring them back after a time. Consequently, the children become greatly interested in them and often ask their parents to allow them to visit them. Some even do so without previously informing their parents. The father's friends also show interest in his children in a similar way. Usually on their visits they look for the children and inquire after their health. Then they might shake hands with them or take them up in their arms and go with them to the hall or sitting room. And often when they are going back to their homes they make them little gifts of money. The children again grow to love them and often they would ask: "Daddy, where is Uncle so and so? This time we don't see him. Therefore we want to visit him." But this friendship or cordial relationship between the children and their parents' friends is not circumscribed within the four walls of each other's home but manifests itself wherever they happen to meet. The children are often very quick to recognize them even at a great distance and shout or wave hands to them in a most familiar and affectionate manner. It has to be noted, however, that among the fisherfolk gifts of fish, hooks and lines are more common than those of money, biscuits or confectionery.



Fig. 37. These young girls (aged  $4\frac{1}{2}$  +  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ) are paying a visit to their grandmother.

Possessions:

All parents are aware that stealing is not an honourable practice and they try to discourage their children from taking things belonging to others at a very early age. Children of two to three years take things belonging to their parents and other members of their household without any conscious effort to steal. All the same, they are deterred from acquiring the habit by being shouted at or by being frightened with these words: "Don't do that again. If you do, a policeman or a ghost or a big animal from the bush will come and take you away." Sometimes, to make the threat more effective the mother or aunt takes hold of the child's hand and pulls him along saying, "I am taking him to the policeman. I want him to be slapped and locked up in a cell." The child then cries violently and begs to be forgiven. Accordingly he is pardoned and warned not to do so again.

With older children of four years and over more drastic steps are taken. Whenever ~~if~~ they are found pilfering they are immediately thrashed in order to discourage the habit at once. In some homes they are punished by being denied food for some hours, and in others, especially when the offence is serious, attempts are made to tie the child's hands together for about one half-hour. Where a child goes out to take something belonging to someone else the parent will take the thing from him and give it back to the owner and also beg him or her to pardon the offence, while the child himself is either thrashed or hooted at.

Lack of vigilance on the part of some mothers has caused much suffering to their innocent crawlers and toddlers. During the recent inquiries the writer came into contact with a parent whose daughter, aged fifteen months, had sustained serious scalds all over her right ribs and thigh about a fortnight previously. Mother had run to buy some vegetables from the market about two hundred yards away, and had left the child to play in front of the kitchen. On her return, she found the soup pot on the coalpot tilted over and the contents only half full, while the child kept on crying as first aid was being given.

Apparently she had tampered with the pot in her mother's absence. Another child, a crawler of eight months, happened to play with a beer bottle on the compound while mother was busy cooking. Suddenly he started to cry, and when mother ~~was busy cooking~~ came she found he had sustained serious injuries in the plan, while the bottle lay broken in front of some stones.

Most mothers, however, are more careful and vigilant. They do not leave their young children to go about without due supervision especially when there are dangerous things about. They go along with them anytime they happen to leave the house or leave them behind in the care of maid-servants or some other person. And that, to a considerable degree, ensures the children's safety. Whenever baby is coming near a dangerous thing such as a fire, hot water or soups, broken bottles, knives or needles the mother shouts for baby to ~~halt~~ halt and then she quickly goes to pick him up or to clear away the dangerous object where possible. When, however, children show obstinacy and want to have their own way they are given a little punishment to teach them to be obedient and cautious.

Children who come near fragile objects such as cups, plates, bowls, glass or mirrors are treated in a similar way. Often they are persuaded to get away from these objects by such words as, "Don't touch it (or Don't come near it) again. It belongs to So and So. He will come and beat you whenever he sees you holding it." Older children sometimes ask "Is it true?" and mother replies "Yes". Sometimes, too, mother says, "If you touch this cup or plate it will break and cut your finger." But as much as possible attempts are made by parents and other members of the household to keep these fragile objects in meat-safes away from children's reach. The fisherfolk, on the whole, have only a few bowls ~~which~~ which are ~~usually~~ usually kept in the man's house quite away from the children. The greatest precaution ~~adopted~~ adopted in most homes, literate and illiterate, is the use of enamel or tin plates, bowls and cups which do not break. A method which is used effectively by one woman to keep her young child of two years away from knives and

borken bottles is explained by her as follows: "When I have taken the knife or bottle from him I pretend to cut my left hand with it and begin to cry. Sometimes I smear my ~~xxx~~ hand with red ink and ask the child to look at the blood, while I pretend to cry more to convince him of the intensity of the injury, and lastly frighten him to get away from the dangerous object and not come near it again".

A child's possessions in literate and semi-literate homes usually consist of clothes, toys, shoes and hats and some necklaces, ear-rings and beads, in the case of girls. These are kept either in mother's box to be brought out when needed or in small boxes and baskets belonging to the children themselves. Some children are so interested in their clothes that they would frequently go to mother's room and attempt to open the boxes ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxxx~~ in order to take them out. Where the children's boxes or baskets are accessible and are not locked up, they easily open them, take out their clothes and other possessions and scatter them on the floor in order to amuse themselves with them. When mother comes in and finds such a mess she takes the troublesome child out and sets the things in order again. But these clothes are easily given out whenever children need them ~~xx~~ for going to church, for going out or for daily wear. Toys, including dolls, are freely used by the youngest children in ~~xxxx~~ play.

Among the fisherfolk most children have rarely any possessions besides clothes, dolls, ear-rings and beads. And these are kept in mother's box till needed.

Young children are generally regarded as innocent creatures who may destroy valuable things without knowing exactly what harm they are causing. In fact, in almost every home, there are examples of such behaviour of children between one and three years dropping their fathers' fountain pens and wrist watches in boiling kettles and soups, steeping their mothers' new headkerchiefs or 'cover-shoulders' or satin cloths into puddles and all sorts of oils, dropping a stone upon a number of plates and breaking them all in a moment, throwing a knife or stone at fowls and other young

children and causing a lot of anxiety and so on. Older children do not cause so much havoc, for they are aware that punishment follows a misdeed and to avoid it they have to act well.

As to the younger children there is no systematic way of teaching them not to destroy things. Again, vigilance or careful supervision is the rule. Parents have to keep ~~an~~ an eye on the children and prevent them whenever they are about to destroy things. In most homes these children are frightened with being taken to the police or with other punishments. In some cases when children have actually caused serious harm they are spanked and made to be afraid to cause further damage. Then also when children deliberately destroy their own possessions mother gets angry and tells them that they will not be given any good thing again. Then again, she turns to the other children in the house and says, "You are good children; you are not destructive, I shall therefore give you more and more things to keep in your boxes". The offender consequently becomes ashamed and may resolve not to destroy things again.

Children handle most things which have a play value to them. Those between six and twelve months are usually interested in toys which ~~make~~ make pleasant or ringing sounds. They also love to handle pieces of wood, small stones and kitchen pans. Those between one and three years delight in handling such things as sticks (for walking or for striking objects here and there or for ~~in~~ pounding clay), small chairs and tables which they sit on or pull along while at play, big dolls, toy ~~vehicle~~ vehicles, enamel cups, spoons, toy balloons, tennis balls and all sorts of empty tins. Older children ~~manipulate~~ manipulate mostly tennis balls, ~~px~~ footballs, hoops and cooking pots. They are greatly interested in play and food and tend to handle things connected with them.

Speech:

The child's first speech practice begins with crying. It is the first speech he makes immediately after birth in order to announce his arrival. Thence-forward it becomes a regular instrument for expressing his emotions of hunger, fear and pain. The first nine months are usually regarded by parents as the child's silent period, during which he is incapable of articulate speech even though adults and older children make frequent efforts to speak to him. This period can also be labelled as the period of passive absorption because it is believed that the child all the time listens to and learns the sounds and rhythms of the mother tongue, thus retaining numerous impressions for active expression later on. That is, when he is about the age of two years.

Children begin to say mama or "maame", dada or papa and "auntie" when they are about twelve months old. Later on, short simple utterances in the imperative mood are made such as ko (go), bra (come), dzi (eat), da (sleep), gye (receive). From eighteen months a child can use phrases and very simple sentences to express emotions of hunger, pain, rage and pleasure. When children are hungry they are given food so that they may not cry. When in pain, adults comfort them by raising them up and wiping off their tears. Expressions used in response to a child's emotional moods are a number of "don'ts", eg. "don't be angry", "don't mind him/her", "don't go near the fire", and some positive expressions or promises such as "I'll give you bread," "I'll give you toffee," "I'll give you a fine dress," "I'll make you a fine present." Then also simpler questions requiring the answer, "yes" or "no" may be asked, e.g. "Will you go to mama?" or "May I take you to mama?" "Will you go to papa?" or "May I take you to papa?" "May I take it for you?" "May I wash it for you?"

Crying appears to be the young child's chief weapon of security, and he takes to it as freely as an older child takes to football or some other games. But adults do not want them to cry because it

disturbs the peace of the home and, more important, it affects the health of the children themselves when done in excess or too frequently. So parents endeavour to stop them from crying whenever the occasion arises. But there are some parents too who think that it is a good thing for children to cry a little at times, for they say, it exercises the vocal chords and helps to keep the tone vigorous and clear.

Children between one and six months are given every possible care or comfort when they cry. Whether they are hungry or not, the first thing most mothers do to keep them quiet is to give them the breast. Where children refuse to suck they are cuddled and comforted in every possible way. Sometimes mothers put them on their backs and stroll about the compound with them singing a soothing song such as "Oba yi woana oba a ? Egya Akwasi oba a ....." (Whose child is this ? Mr. Akwasi's child .....). If, on the other hand, baby's crying ~~here~~ is due to pain or illness or some other cause, then it becomes necessary to give him treatment accordingly.

Children between seven and eighteen months who cry are treated in a similar way as those younger ones but there is a greater tendency for mothers to put them on their backs and comfort them than give them the breast. Also they are often given attractive toys especially those that make rattling noises to engage their attention and stop them from crying. In some cases too they are given bread or biscuits or something else to eat.

Older children between two and five years are those who cry most. Parents first of all try to find out what is wrong with them in order to give them the required satisfaction. But some cry for nothing; they just want to behave as spoiled children. And for such children parents have to use threats and punishments in ~~order~~ order to discourage unnecessary crying.

The things which remain longest as legitimate occasions for crying are hunger, pain, illness, fear and mother's absence. The last named is of fundamental importance, because ~~with mother~~ all the undesirable strains and stresses which more or less thwart the child's hopes or happiness are comfortably solved when mother is

present. When babies awake from sleep they first look round for mother in order to have a feed. Her presence affords relief, and feeding beings immediately. On the other hand, if they cannot find her, they start crying at once. Older children between one and three years place even greater importance on mother's presence which apparently means all the world to them. No matter how full a child's stomach may be or how elated he may be with a gift or even when at games. The sight of mother moving outward sfrom the house immediately ~~fx~~ pulls him up like magnet. Then he jumps on to his feet and starts crying after her. In some cases, he would not even mind his cloth which may slip off in his anxiety to pursue or catch up mother. If she halts in order to go along with him, then there is no trouble. If not, terrible crying ensues, and it will continue for over an hour until she returns.

Children are very susceptible to pain. When injured they can hardly refrain from crying. So also when they are ill. But whatever ordeal they happen to pass through, mother's presence is always a source of comfort and security. It often makes them stop crying. Then also children are ruled by fear in several ways which evoke crying. And again, whatever the kind, be it the fear of loud noises or of falling, the fear of big or wild animals, the fear of bogey men or of the dark or of deliberate attempts by older people to make them unhappy and miserable, the parents do a lot to stop them from crying by giving them support and assurances as well as by training them to adapt themselves to the various emotional strains brought to bear on them. And, of course, the attitudes assumed by parents in regard to the help or training they give to their children in these matters are, on the whole, not differentiated according to sex.

Parents and other grown-ups are very pleased when children begin to learn to speak, and they do encourage them. They do so by frequently calling them and telling them to come to them or to go to mother or father or to do this or that. The older children in the house also encourage them to pick up words rapidly by playing with them and telling them a lot of simple things which the children often repeat. A woman recently consulted narrated how she encouraged her

child to pronounce words correctly. Her daughter of eighteen months had a doll which the older children in the house called Baby. But she imitated them by saying "Biby". To correct her, mother took the doll from her and said "Hwe wo "Baby" three times. That is, "look at your baby." The daughter also tried to imitate her by saying "Baby" correctly. Mother then clapped her hands in appreciation of her progress. From that time she always said "Baby" not "Biby". From time to time, other simple objects of the home were introduced and the child learnt to pronounce them correctly.

Normally, children pick up the names of new objects by observation and imitation, and they say them in a funny way which adults enjoy hearing. For instance, instead of Kodwo, (name of a male child born on Monday), Oloto (a kind of bean stew) and paanoo (bread) they say "Dzodzo," ~~xxxxxx when the xx xx children~~ "o-o-to" and "paam." Adults and older children are greatly amused when they hear children pronounce the words in such an imperfect way. As a rule, they do not discourage them by laughing at them. Neither do they make any attempt to correct them, because they seek effort and amusement rather than perfection.

The mother is the child's principal teacher in speech. She and the father speak regularly to him, play with him, and share common experiences with him. During all this period a lot of unconscious learning goes on. And, of course, the older children in the house contribute no little part to help them. There are three periods for the child's language study: The bathing period, the feeding period and the play period. Mother teaches in all the three periods and is the most important factor in the child's early speech training.

At any time a baby is being washed or fed mother attempts to speak to him, either to encourage him to enjoy bathing or feeding or to tell him not to behave in a silly manner. Some expressions used while bathing baby are as follows :-

Eguaree ye dew ae ! (How sweet is bathing), Nom nsu yi bi  
(Drink some of this water), W'entuhu yi ye few ae !  
(How beautiful is your towel !), Ma mampapa wo ho yie  
(Let me wipe your skin properly), Dan wo ho (Turn yourself  
this way; or that),

Kotow daadze (Squat down), Ma mensere wo tsir (Let me comb your hair), Seradze yi ye huam ae ! (How fragrant is this pomade !), Ye foo ma menhye wo atar (Keep still while I dress you), Wo ho aye few ae ! (You are looking very attractive).

Some expressions used by mother when feeding her child are as follows :-

Womfa n'edziban no mbra (Bring his food), Edziban yi ye dew ae ! (This food is very delicious), Gye (Receive it), Dzi (Eat it), Dzi ne nyina (Eat the whole of it), Bue wano yie (Open your mouth properly), Mma nsee wo nsa ho (Don't soil your hands), Nom nsu (Drink water), Hohor you nsa ho (Wash your hands), Amee a ? (Have you eaten to your fill ?), Wo yafun aye kese papa.

(Your stomach has been greatly filled). Toddlers just beginning to learn the mother tongue speak by repeating the words singly or by phrases at odd times of the day, and as time goes on their vocabulary enlarges.

Father also chats with baby whenever he is free and introduces all sorts of familiar words or expressions. Then during the play period older children and other relatives also come on the scene. Baby hears a lot of words describing different simple and familiar situations most of which he imbibes. So by the time he is two or three years he will have acquired a vocabulary good enough for his practical needs. But baby is talked to more in connection with petting than scolding, which takes place only occasionally when the child has annoyed his parents by not ~~being~~ behaving properly.

Children are generally not taught to modulate their voices. But when they are shouting too much they are ordered to lower their voices in order to allow the older folk to have a quiet time. This in time teaches them the art of modulation, so that when at anytime they are talking noisily and father or any other elderly person comes in they soften their voices to show their respect. Also when they are singing at the top of their voices they are often advised to modulate them in order to make the singing more enjoyable.

Children usually speak the language of their parents and other relatives, and although their speech may be imperfect in the early stages, parents do not worry them. Progress in construction or idiom proceeds gradually as the child grows older. But at times the child happens to get mixed up with other children of low moral standards who may introduce into his language a number of vulgar and ill-used words. This unexpected infiltration is, in good or well-educated homes, strongly deprecated, and the child is encouraged to use the correct and wholesome language of the parents or other well-educated people. But among the fisherfolk and other illiterate sections of the community little or no attention is paid to grammatical correctness or high standards of diction.

Another aspect of speech training is noticed when older children group together for conversation or story-telling in the evenings. Here a lot of funny and imaginative stories are told with vividness and expression by individual children. During the day generally most parents do not bother to listen to children's talks chiefly because they have not got much time for that. But in the story-telling evenings most adults love to sit and enjoy their amusing stories which are often punctuated by short beautiful songs and choruses. This story-telling also affords much scope for fluency and coherence and helps greatly to develop the children's powers of narration.

Factual exactitude is not very strictly enforced, especially when children are at play or are holding their own private conversations. But on other occasions when they are found to misrepresent necessary or fundamental information they are immediately corrected. This happens in all wide-awake homes. In others, however, the only way of making a correction is to say "Is that true?" "Who told you?" "you must know the truth before you say it."

Distinctions between fact and fantasy, truth and lying are made by children at about the age of ten although a number of adults expect them to be made earlier. Upon investigation it was found that some children of thirteen and fourteen knew which state-

ments made by the investigator about certain objects were true and which were untrue yet when asked "What is truth ? or what makes a thing true ?" and "What is untruth or what makes a thing untrue ?" they answered that they didn't know. But a girl of ten was able to give these answers: 'Truth is what is not false, Untruth is what is not true'.

Truthfulness in children is considered to be of paramount importance, and due regard is paid to inculcating the habit in them both at home and at school. Young children under six are generally not punished when they tell lies because it is understood that they do not know what it really means to tell the truth or a lie. Moreover, most children of six and over tell lies because of the fear of punishment. In some homes, of course, children are encouraged to tell the truth by being dealt with sympathetically, in others they are pounced upon without mercy and may even forgo their meals. The results are obvious. In one case the child endeavours to be good by telling the truth. In the other he dare not in order to save his skin.

A number of school pupils interviewed were asked to tell why it is good to speak the truth, and the following were some of the answers given:

- i It is good to speak the truth because Teacher has told us to speak the truth (By a girl of P 3 aged 9).
- ii It is good to speak the truth because Jesus wants us to speak the truth (By a boy of P 4 aged 10).
- iii It is good to tell the truth always because if we speak the truth we shall go to God when we die (By a boy of P 4 aged 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ).
- iv It is good to tell the truth because truth is good (By a girl of P 5 aged 11).
- v It is good to speak the truth because if that is done it makes us free in mind and happy too (By a boy of P 6 aged 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ).
- vi If we don't speak the truth then we are sinning (By a girl of P 6 aged 12).
- vii If we speak the truth God will have mercy on us and we shall  
(By a boy of P 6 aged 13).

A few answers from illiterate children between ten and fourteen years are also worth noting.

- i It is good to tell the truth because if we tell lies our parents will punish us. ii If we don't tell the truth it is not good.
- iii If we speak the truth, then when anything is lost we shall know who took it.
- iv If we don't tell the truth, then we are cursing ourselves
- v It is good to speak the truth for if we do so our parents are happy and they say that we are good children.
- vi To speak the truth is good because when we go to church we are told to tell the truth.

In fact, it is difficult for most children to speak the truth when they themselves have committed an offence. But if they know anyone who has caused it they readily expose him. The moral virtues of truthfulness are inculcated in schools where religious instruction is taken but, apart from that, most homes also play their part. A woman told how she was able to convince her children at home about the evils of untruthfulness by narrating the following story:-

"One day, one of the three sisters in a certain home took her mother's necklace and sold it to a friend. When mother discovered the loss, she gathered them all in her bedroom and asked them to confess if they knew anything about the necklace. But each one swore and pleaded innocence. Again and again she appealed to them to be honest and tell the truth, and again each of them denied having seen it or taken it. So in the end she was forced to take all three to a river-side not very far away and asked each to address the river god as follows :- 'O Great God of this river, you know the truth of all things and have the power also to punish. Have no mercy. If it was I who took mother's necklace let me be doomed to-day and forever'. Each sister was given the chance to repeat the words three times. Then suddenly the guilty one fell headlong into the

swift gurgling river and was carried away without mercy or pity."

Having told this story, the woman impressed it upon her children that it is very bad to refuse to tell the truth, and that if they wanted to suffer a painful death they might follow the example of the untruthful sister.

Schooling:

Schooling begins informally at about the age of five, and it varies with the environment in general as well as from home to home. Among the fisherfolk, schooling chiefly takes the form of playing with or counting fish either at home or on the beach. As the children grow older they take to examining different kinds of nets and learning how to make or mend them, imitating canoe designs or decorations, swimming, playing football on the beach or carrying little parcels of fish home after the fishermen have arrived from fishing. At a later stage, say at the age of ten or twelve, they begin to practise advanced swimming techniques, make all kinds of fishing nets and go with their parents to sea in order to get acquainted with the art of fishing. When they come back from fishing they help to count the fish and then carry the nets home to dry them.

In the case of the children of illiterate or semi-literate artisans they are either left alone to go about in the house and pick up what learning they can or they are taught a few things such as sweeping and collecting pieces of boards from the carpenter's shop and using them for counting or building walls with them. They also go on kitchen errands. Where there are school children in their homes they are sometimes taught how to count in a systematic way and also they develop the love for looking at pictures and interesting objects in books and newspapers.

Children of educated parents are of two kinds. There are those of the ordinary middle class who do not take particular care about the early schooling of their children but leave them to play about or go on kitchen errands. Apart from learning to sweep certain parts of the compound, they also learn how to count from their elder brothers and sisters who attend school. Looking at pictures from books or newspapers is done out of interest or curiosity but a lot of things are unconsciously learnt. Children of the higher educated class, on the other hand, have greater schooling facilities. Picture books, toys, slates and counters are often supplied to help them to start



Fig. 38 A fisherboy, aged 11, is weaving a net.



Fig. 39. Young fisherboys interested in canoe designs.

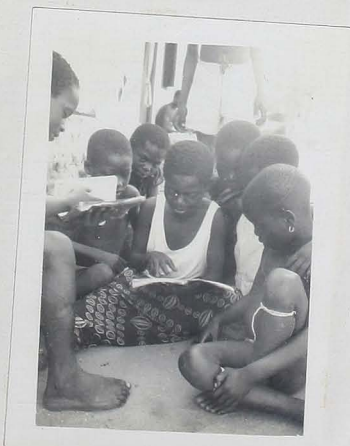


Fig. 40 A Primary School boy is reading a story from a Fante Reader to non-school children at "Eyipe" and showing them the pictures.

learning at home. In a play way they are taught names of familiar objects and simple, short sentences in English such as dog, cat, sheep, goat, hen, table, chair, water, spoon, knife, look here, sit down, stand up, be quiet, shake hands, it's all right, how are you ?, where is Mama ?, where is papa? bye-bye. Great care is, of course, taken to see that the mother tongue is well spoken. In some cases, these children of five years or under are taken to the local Day Nursery School where they are trained in regular sanitary habits, games and the elements of reading, writing and number which give them the necessary foundation for Primary School work.

Parents of all grades are becoming more and more aware of the value of early schooling. That, they say, gives the children a good start in life, and whether their children go to school or not they see to it that they are taught how to behave well as well as to do simple household duties efficiently. Almost all parents wish to have clever and intelligent children, and at the higher levels much is done to give children every facility for full intellectual growth. It remains, however, for children themselves to make the best use of their opportunities.

Generally speaking, children are trained according to the demands of their sex. Girls are trained to know how to cook and keep the house. Whenever mothers are cooking the girls stay with them and help by grinding the pepper, garden eggs, okro and tomatoes for the soup or stew. They are usually sent to the market to buy the things needed for cooking, and after cooking they are taught to sweep the kitchen and wash the bowls and other things. From about the age of seven or eight when girls are able to give substantial help to their mothers, this training goes on till about the age of eighteen when they are supposed to have become competent both in cooking and household management. Older boys of seven or eight and over also sweep their fathers' rooms, wash plates, lay the table, polish shoes, scrub the floor and render other kinds of services required of them. It has to be noted, ~~however~~ however, that in the absence of boys, girls are often obliged to take over their jobs with equal skill and competence.



Fig. 41 Young boys and girls cracking their share of the coconuts which they helped in gathering together.



Fig. 42. A School Girl of Primary 4 grinding pepper to help ~~help~~ her mother in the kitchen.

Formal schooling begins at six or seven years. In the past the school staff were almost all men. But now conditions are rapidly changing and girls are becoming more and more interested in teaching, the present ratio of female teachers to men in all the twelve Primary and Middle Schools being 20:46 (March ending, 1955). This includes the four female teachers who are in the Methodist Girls' Middle School where there are no male teachers at all.

Some years ago, teachers were regarded as people who had the first say in all matters concerning school pupils. Consequently, they were so regarded or 'feared' that no pupil, however old, could afford to misbehave wherever a teacher was near-by. Even when a wrong act was being done by a school child and an elder passing along happened to halt and said, "Why are you doing this? I'll report it to your teacher" the child became terribly afraid and begged to be pardoned because he was sure of 'smelling the birch-rod' whenever he allowed the report to be made. Parents, on the other hand, knew that the teacher was the sole disciplinary agent and they brought all their complaints about their children to him for investigations and necessary action which often resulted in corporal punishment. But to-day the old order appears almost completely changed, and teachers are no more feared as in 'the good old days'. Modern regulations forbid the use of corporal and other kinds of drastic punishment by the teacher and children are now more difficult to control. As a result, there is said to be a lowering of educational standards in Primary and Middle Schools all over the country because there is no more fear of the rod which in the past was a potent incentive to hard studies and good conduct.

A teacher's authority is nearly always felt by his pupils. He is presumably no longer feared as it was in the past. But he is admired or highly regarded by all children who are studious and are eager or willing to learn. Most children are proud to say, "Mr. So and So is my teacher" and they speak well of him wherever they are. And only the few stubborn and troublesome ones may speak disparagingly of him.



Fig. 43 Older children enjoying sea-bathing.

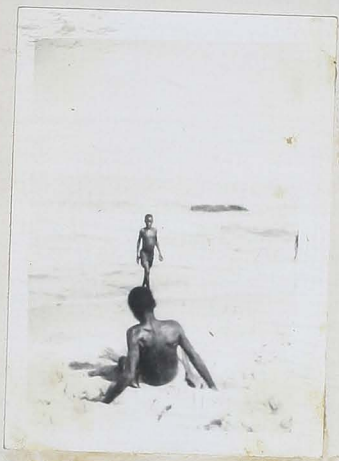


Fig. 44 Resting in the sand after a somersault.



Fig. 45 After bathing, he carries his flat swimming board home.

They often take advantage of the rule that they are not to be punished and resent any little punishment which he may bring to bear on them in his efforts to keep them under control.

There is not much difference between school and home discipline. At school children are required to attend punctually in order to have ample time to sweep the classroom and the compound, to dust and arrange their desks and tables and to carry out other monitorial or sectional duties before the assembly bell goes. Offenders are punished only by the Headmaster, and in most cases punishments are not very severe. The children are also expected to carry out orders as well as possible, and a good school is noted for its high standard of discipline.

Home discipline is either lax or mild or rigid. In some homes children are given the freedom to do what they like. As a result, they grudge performing simple domestic duties such as sweeping and washing plates or clothes in the case of boys, and cooking or washing kitchen utensils or clothes in the case of girls. Parents here are in most cases afraid to control their children and tend to regard them as their lords and mistresses. This is especially so in illiterate homes where the parents are particularly grateful for having got girls who are attending school to become educated "ladies" in the very near future. In the second case the children have daily tasks to perform in the home, and for negligence of duty or any kind of misbehaviour they are either rebuked or punished. When, however, they find that there is too much work in the house to be done they often leave the house to go to play and come back at any time they like. Thirdly, in certain homes discipline is fairly rigid and each child is expected to perform his duties regularly and systematically. The parents see to it that the children behave well and carry on their work conscientiously as well as have enough of play time too. Their home studies are supervised and every encouragement is given to help them to improve their work. And in case of serious blunders or misconduct due punishment may be given.

The main relation between school and home discipline is that the school builds upon the training that is received at home,

and the success of a teacher's work depends upon the sort or quality of training which the child gets at home. When discipline is lax at home, the teacher too finds it difficult to get full control over his pupils. When it is mild the difficulty is normal, and when home discipline is rigid the teacher finds it easy to maintain a high standard of discipline.

School discipline now-a-days is not as severe as it was in the past. The head teacher is the sole agent and generally his punishments are less severe than in certain homes where parents are particular and adopt stern measures to stamp out delinquent practices in their children. Mothers especially when exasperated are often ruthless in their punishment.

Children are usually not punished at home for poor performance in school. But they may be reprimanded and, in serious cases, they may forfeit their meals. Some too are hooted at by members of their household and are thus incited to do better. In some homes nothing is done to discourage the child but the parents rather resolve to supervise his studies at home and to see that sufficient progress is made.

Parents are not in the habit of disputing school decisions. At times, however, they grumble when they find that arbitrary rules are made by individual teachers to bring unnecessary pressure to bear on them. For instance, children sometimes come from school to tell them that their teachers want them to contribute three-pences or six-pences for class photographs, school entertainments, etc. These demands, if not official, are often resented by parents, although to satisfy their children they may do their best to conform. Another thing which disturbs parents is for children to be detained in school after school hours, for they may be required to proceed home immediately after school to attend to urgent domestic duties.

Dutiful and conformable behaviour in school is always admired at home by parents. The children concerned are paid handsome compliments, and sometimes they are given presents to encourage them.

Relations among schoolmates are fairly cordial. But usually children in lower classes do not mix freely with those in the

higher except those who are really friends or belong to a private gang or the same football club or team. Classmates are generally cheerful and agreeable to one another; the children of higher classes also tend to move about with an air of confidence and superiority, while the intrepid juniors often approach them and tell them not to be too boastful. A few children, of course, happen to be reserved, and these are either temperamentally so or are backward in their studies. But even for such children the playground offers opportunities for healthy recreation.

Children in the infant classes exhibit a good deal of pugnacity and keep on fighting or boxing each other even in the presence of their teachers but, really, they do not harbour hostility, for a few minutes after a fight the combatants may be seen together again at play. A good deal of spontaneous play also goes on among children of the same age group during the recreation period or after school. At such times too children who have been offended by their neighbours seek the chance to vent their grievances in fighting. During such fights friends of the combatants usually come round either to take sides or to part them. Others may act as policemen and take the combatants to the headmaster's office.

The most common competitions among school boys are held on the play-ground and comprise such events as football, races, boxing, high jump, whilst the girls also hold competitions chiefly in "ampe" games. Informal competitions are usually carried out in a friendly spirit. But formal ones which are conducted among sections or schools on special occasions are regarded as serious and children sometimes engage in quarrels when they are mocked at by their victors.

Gangs are formed chiefly by boys of about the same age group, and especially by those between ten and fifteen years. These gangs may be either entirely composed of school children or non-school children or of both. They are home gangs and their activities include football, riverside or seaside fishing, crab-hunting and cycling. Such activities are practised chiefly on Saturdays, and out of these gangs may crop up intense friendships.

Friendships among school children are usually made as soon as children have started school (i.e. at 6 or 7 years), and they may be continued all through school life and even, in some cases, after school life. These friendships are made chiefly between members of the same sex in the Primary School. But in the Middle School mixed friendships too may be carried on where boys and girls get the privilege of helping each other in their studies. The friends meet either at school or at home to learn or to discuss their lessons. But in some cases these friendships turn more into chatting than study groups. Of course, whether of the same or of the opposite sex, <sup>friends often become</sup> ~~greatly~~ ~~is~~ interested in each other and pay regular or occasional visits ~~in~~ to them in their homes.

Parents generally do not encourage their children to give too much attention to their friends because they say it deprives them of much valuable time for studies and domestic service, time which is only spent in chatting or gadding about. Similar friendships prevail among illiterate boys and girls which may also last for years. Girls who are friends go to the bush for firewood together, sell together and play together whilst boys also go crab-hunting together, visit the riverside or seaside together either to bathe or fish and often walk or play together. Some children make friendships valuable by rendering mutual aid to each other in various ways but others too indulge in vicious practices which corrupt them or bring disgrace to their parents.

Intense friendships between older boys and girls are not encouraged by parents as they are likely to prove dangerous, but under normal conditions boys and girls whether at school or at home are nice to each other, and play or chat or joke together whenever possible. Also on fine evenings when girls are selling bread, cankey,

kerosene, etc. by the sides of the streets boys visit them and chat or crack jokes with them. This, in the case of school children, is, of course, discouraged by their teachers.

Games, Songs, Stories:

Children are greatly interested in games and they have a wide variety of them. Children between two and six usually indulge in running games, simple daylight 'hide and seek' and in playing with tennis balls and toys of all kinds. They delight also in being pulled along in empty packing cases with or without wheels under them by their older brothers and sisters. Boys and girls of seven to ten or eleven often come together to enjoy common open air games such as Abonoo, Atowson, Swing, Skipping, Hide and Seek and dancing, and indoor games such as Owar, Ludo, Snakes and Ladders and Guessing. Games played exclusively by ~~xx~~ boys of about the same age in the open air are Football, Marbels, Skittles, Tori, Male-Ampe and such sports as swimming and bicycle riding. Those played by girls exclusively are Female -Ampe, Akrodo, Saa-saaku-denedede and Dancing in Circles. Below are brief descriptions of the most popular games:-

Abonoo: A boy or girl who has food such as fried corn and groundnuts, bread, biscuits and epitsi (baked dough containing ripe plantains and pepper) which he desires to share with others will gather them in front of him or her and repeat the word "Abonoo" several times for the others to respond "OO" while he throws up the food in bits for all to struggle or scramble for them. This game entails a good deal of pushing one another here and there in order to get the chance to catch as much of the food thrown up as possible. And whatever any one is able to get becomes his or her own. This struggling goes on till all the food is disposed of.

Atowson is played usually by two children one standing opposite the other with a distance of about fifteen yards between them. A tennis ball or an orange is thrown across by each player to his partner alternately to be caught and thrown back. The rule is not to miss a catch, and the player who loses less catches wins.

Asonon-mba: Two or three players may sit down on the floor with five or six or seven groups of palm kernels



Fig. 46 A happy group of young girls and toddlers at play.



Fig. 47 Young boys enjoying an Osibir game.



Fig. 48 Young boys playing marbles.

arranged quite close to each in an ascending order of magnitude. The first player throws up an extra kernel and while it is coming down he or she tries to gather up the groups of palm kernels one after the other. Failure to pick up all the kernels in each group after each throw disqualifies the player who gives the second player the chance to have his turn. The player who successfully throws up the extra kernel and gathers up all the groups without a hitch wins. •

Owar: is usually played by two or three persons. Six pairs of opposite "rooms" of about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter are made on the ground or in a flat piece of wool. Four counters are placed in each room, and in a practical and tactical way of reckoning and playing by turns to secure groups of two or three counters from the other players' rooms on each round a player keeps his or her ~~own~~ scored counters till the end of the game when all counters have been won or only a few illusive ones remain. The player who is unable to get sufficient counters to fill his or her rooms loses by the number of counters short.

Guessing involves two players. One of them holds in his or her palm a small seed or stone or palm kernel, shows it first to his or her partner, then takes both hands behind him or her in order to hide the "counter" in either of the palms. Then clenching both palms tightly he or she brings them out and asks his or her partner to point to the first that has the counter in it. If successful, the partner scores a point, and then he or she also takes a turn to hide the counter as described above, for the other to indicate which palm contains it. The game goes on like that for a number of times as agreed upon by both players. Finally, the player with the greater score wins.

Tori is played in the sand by two or more children.

A piece of cotton thread of about 3 or 4 inches diameter is stretched by one of the players with the right forefinger and the left thumb in a pitch or bed of sand between the players in order to hide it in the sand for the other player or players to thread it with a piece of broomstick about three inches long. A successful player scores a point, and then takes his turn to hide the thread in the sand also for the other player or players to thread it. If nobody succeeds, he gets another point. At the end of the game the player who scores more points than the other or others wins.

Akrodo is a group game for girls which entails a lot of excitement and fun. As many girls as possible hold their hands in a large circle and dance round and round several times singing cheerful and enjoyable songs. At times they stop holding hands and instead clap them joyfully while dancing round.

Saa-saaku-dendende is another very enjoyable game for girls which can be played by two or more. One girl stands in front of the others with her back towards them. They sing a lively highly rhythmical song while the player in front falls back at regular intervals to be caught immediately by the others in their palms and thrown back upon her feet again. To enjoy the game very well she has to throw herself back without the slightest fear while those behind her too have to be very watchful and pick her up with confidence and throw her upon her feet again without making her fall to sustain injuries. After about ten minutes, other players take their turn at the front accordingly.

Older children of eleven to sixteen years play games in separate sex groups. The girls' chief game both at school and at home is Ampe which they play either in single pairs or in groups. At school girls

play rounders and other running games. Boys, on the other hand, play football, marbles, male-ampe, draughts and engage in such sports as wrestling, somersaulting and swimming during the day and play Osibir and "Saa-saa-sa Sankowee" in the evening. Popular indoor games which older boys and girls sit down to play together are Owar, Ludo, Snakes and Ladders.

Osibir is a vigorous game played chiefly by older boys. A group of ten to twenty or more players stand in a circle and sing songs of strong regular rhythm and clap their hands. One or two players are placed inside the circle, and as they dance round they ~~walk~~ seek the opportunity to jump up and charge anyone in the circle who immediately comes inside the circle to replace them. Singing and dancing and charging go on vigorously and cheerfully for some hours and when almost all the players have had the chance to play their part inside the circle and are fairly tired the game is brought to a close.

Saa-saa-sa Sankowee: Usually a large group of players put on shorts or drawers and twist their cloths into fat whips. Then a member leads in a recital some parts of which are to be repeated by the others jumping and dancing round. Then suddenly in the course of the recital certain words are used by the leader which no one should repeat. Thus as many as break the rule are chased by the other members all round the play-ground and beaten with their 'whips'. After each chase the members come back again. It is a brisk and interesting game but the players have to be careful not to injure themselves while running away to avoid being beaten.

Organized sports by the schools also play a fundamental part in the lives of the children. These are practised from time to time and include both tract and field events such as 100 yards race, 200 yards race, 440 yards race, 880 yards race, the mile relay race,

Obstacle race, Egg and Spoon race, Thread and Needle Race, Bucket race, High Jump and Long Jump, Keen sectional and inter-schools sports competitions are held terminally and annually respectively, and athletic skill is greatly valued by all children, the most enthusiastic of whom aspire to become professional footballers, international boxers and olympic athletes.

Children love to sing and dance, and they have special children's songs which are sung either individually or in a group when they are at play. The most popular play songs are the Akrodo songs for girls and the Osibir songs for boys. ~~They~~ There are many other songs also for special occasions such as Christmas, the Akomase and the Annual Deer Hunt festivals. The Christmas and Akomase songs are for merry-making but the Deer-hunt songs are serious war-like Asafo songs which stir the blood. Also children enjoy a lot of story songs which are short, simple and are full of feeling.

Whenever two or more children come together they sing and drum and dance. They enjoy singing all sorts of songs including picnic, gramophone, orchestral and school songs. They also love to stage informal concerts for their own entertainment which exhibit a good deal of their appreciation for singing and drama and the use of percussion as well as flute and other instruments improvised by themselves.

Story-telling also occupies a fundamental place in the lives of children. They love to hear and tell stories of all kinds except those that have a strong element of cruelty and grossness. Most of the stories children hear or read are local stories about the crafty spider called Kweku Ananse. These contain a good deal of humour, cunning and ingenuity which children appreciate greatly. One of children's favourite stories is "How Ananse the Spider came to occupy the Ceiling of Houses" and it runs thus :-

' One day, there was a great famine in Kweku Ananse's village. So he set out to find food for his wife

and children. Soon he came to a certain village where he met a man with a very big nose. Ananse had never seen such a nose before and became greatly afraid. Before long Big Nose inquired what brought him there and Ananse told him the story of the famine. Then Big Nose in a welcome address told Kweku to stay with him for a few days and he would fetch him plenty of food. Kweku Ananse agreed, and in a few minutes chop was ready. Kweku ate so heavily that he could not move about and was forced to go to sleep. The next day Big Nose asked Kweku to go with him to hunt for game. On the way, Kweku Ananse asked, "Please, where is your gun?" Big Nose replied, "I don't hunt with a gun; you just go along with me" In a short while they came upon a group of fat monkeys, and straightway Big Nose told Ananse to abuse them. The monkeys got offended but simply said, "Thank your stars that you are in the Company of Big Nose or we should have come to blow you to pieces" But Big Nose insisted that they should not forgive him, for he was saucy and that they should deal with him as he deserved. So as they drew near to lay hands on him Big Nose breathed upon them and immediately they all died. Ananse was greatly astonished and with great delight he helped Big Nose to drag home the game.

" The following day Ananse asked permission to return to his family with his portion of the game. Big Nose asked him to stay a little longer but he refused. So he got his things ready and

bundled off. Immediately he arrived home he told his wife that he had learnt a very simple way of killing game and that she and her son Kweku Tsen should get some soft clay ready for an important experiment. The clay being ready, Kweku Ananse dubbed it upon his nose till it was as big as that of Big Nose. Then he began to dry it over a fire. When it burned he started to cry and withdrew from the fire for a while. Later on, the clay became firmly stuck to his nose. Early the next morning Ananse asked his son Kweku Tsen to go with him to hunt for game. On the way Kweku Tsen asked, "Father Ananse, where is your gun?" Ananse answered: "Don't worry about a gun. Let's go along and you'll see." In a few minutes, they came across a group of fat monkeys, and Ananse told his son to abuse them. The monkeys got offended and said, "If you were not in the company of Big Nose, we should have come to blow you to pieces". But Ananse immediately replied, "Oh, don't mind Big Nose. This ~~xxxx~~ chap is very rude, deal with him as he deserves". So they rushed upon Kweku Tsen and started to give him blows. Ananse breathed upon them as Big Nose had done previously, but his clay nose broke off and there was no effect on the monkeys. Ananse breathed again and again upon them as they continued to maltreat his son but it was all in vain. At last, Kweku Tsen had to run to the elephant for shelter and the monkeys then turned their attention on Ananse himself. He also took to his heels, and when suddenly he came across a hut, he dodged his pursuers and

flew on to the ceiling where he remained ever ~~after~~ afterwards.'

Another Ananse story greatly enjoyed by children is as follows: How Ananse was outwitted by his wife and Children.

" Some years ago, Kweku Ananse asked his wife and children to help him to make a farm. They cleared a large piece of land and planted plenty of yams and vegetables. The rains came down sufficiently and the crops grew up very well. When the crops were ready for use Ananse said to his wife, "I have not been feeling well for some days. The illness appears to grow worse and worse, and it's unlikely that I shall continue to live any longer. So whenever I die, I should wish to be buried in my farm. Take great care that my ~~my~~ coffin is not nailed and the grave ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ is also not covered with earth. I have heard that some people wake up again when they die, and I pray that it may be so with me'.

"Well, after a short time, Ananse pretended to be dead and was buried in his farm accordingly with cooking pots and other kitchen utensils. That very night Ananse got up, made a fire and cooked yam fufu and soup. Having had his meal, he roamed the length and breadth of the farm till the approach of dawn when he got back quietly into his coffin. Every night for over a week he cooked and had a good feast. In the mornings when his wife and children visited the farm they found signs of pillage and robbery and wondered who had been doing that. Then after working for some hours, they would return home. In some cases, they abused and cursed the thieves who had been stealing the yams and vegetables.

At times also they poured down libation to the spirit of Ananse in order to stir him to keep watch and kill all who disturbed the crops. But for some ~~weeks running~~ weeks running the practice went on. So one day, utterly bewildered, Okonor the wife called her children together and decided to take steps. Kweku Tsan immediately hit upon an idea. "Yes, mother", he said, "let us make a rubber man and stand him in the farm to scare away all who may come there to steal. But it must be very sticky so that any transgressor who touches him might be held fast for us to come to see him". This was hailed as a pretty good idea and somebody was employed to make the rubber man after which it was taken to the farm and stood firmly in one corner.

"That night the moon shone brightly and when Ananse got up to cook he was startled to see someone standing in his farm. He got near and interrogated him, but the rubber man made no answer. So Ananse got angry and slapped him. Immediately he did that his right hand got stuck and could not be withdrawn. Then he became frightened and struggled to free himself. His attempts failing, he slapped the rubber man with his left hand, and immediately that too got stuck. In this plight he became frantic and said, "Look here, man, if you don't want trouble, release me at once and let me go peacefully, or you will have yourself to blame afterwards." Again there was no response. So he kicked the image first with one foot and then with the other. And both of them also got firmly stuck. Then as he made his last effort to extricate himself his abdomen also got stuck. This time he could not move at all but stood pitifully and shamefully like a bound slave against a pillar. The next morning Ananse's wife and children came to the farm. They beheld the robber and were greatly ashamed. Then after some moments of silence, Okonor spoke "Oh, Kweku Ananse my husband, why have you acted so shamefully like this? We helped you to make this farm, and if you didn't

want us to take part in the eating you should have told us, and there would have been no shame about it. But now your trick has found you out. Well, for God's sake we shall free you and take you home to tell your own story". Ananse never uttered a word while his wife and children used water to detach his limbs from the rubber man. When he became free he sought for a crevice and slipped in. Ever since Ananse has lived in exile, a poor wretched soul".

Children are greatly interested also in stories about animals, and the following is one of their favourites :-

How the Dormouse got scratches on her Back.

" In the olden days, all animals were able to speak like men. They lived in a united community under the rule of their great king Mr. Tiger, assisted by a number of sub-chiefs. One day, King Tiger assembled all his subjects and asked them to work on his farm. Unfortunately, he had no meat to be cooked for them, so he announced that each animal should provide a portion of his own flesh to be used in preparing food for them. This was done and by a unanimous vote Madam Dormouse was elected as cook. She was greatly afraid to take up the responsibility, and refused the appointment. She explained that she had no skill for cooking and, besides, her children were too troublesome to make it possible for her to discharge her obligations confidently. But with one united voice all the animals said the die had been cast and there was no way out. So she humbly <sup>earnest.</sup> King Tiger was pleased to spare her his submitted and soon began work in <sup>the</sup> biggest cooking pot for the purpose. Soon cooking <sup>was</sup> in progress and Madam Dormouse was indeed equal to her task. After sometime, King Tiger sent Ahwia his messenger to go to see how far the cooking was going on, and having been greeted by delicious stew odours a few yards from the kitchen, he returned to king Tiger with encouraging news about the cooking abilities of Madam Dormouse. Then some time after, she sent to inform King Tiger to get his subjects

ready for meals. But while they were on their way home, Madam Dormouse kept stirring the stew when suddenly the pot broke and all the stew dropped down into the fire. Greatly confused and not knowing what to do, she burst out crying as follows :-

Makeka, makeka mbowa nyina

Hon seralze emuntum,

Senkyire !

Osu a murusu'e,

Senkyire !

Oye me awerehow,

Senkyire !

Osebo ye banyin,

Senkyire !

By that she meant that she had got great trouble by wasting the precious oil of all the animals; that she was crying because she was sad and, besides, the Tiger was a man.

While she was thus crying the animals came home, and listened in astonishment. On the arrival of King Tiger himself, she cried more and more in order that he might take pity on her. But instead he got so enraged that he made a wild rush to seize her and gobble her up. But she was too quick to be easily captured. And although she got off safely the Tiger's attempt to seize her left such scratches on her back that even to this day they still remain to remind all animals of her bitter experiences of by-gone days".

Most adults have rather hazy recollections of their favourite childhood stories. A few stories could, however, be remembered by some adults and the following vividly recalled by a woman aged 35 is one of them :

The Debtor Parrot in a cage:

" One day, a hungry parrot went to the Great God Kwame for a loan. For ~~many~~ a very long time he could not be found to redeem the debt.

The Great God sent a bearer after him time and again but each time the bearer went to the parrot's home he found the family so large that he could not make out the particular parrot which owed the Great God. The Great God was greatly upset and wondered who could come to his assistance. Thenafter a short time Kweku Ananse came. He told the Great God not to worry, for that was too simple a job for him. So the next morning, he got ready a little parcel of sugar-cane and tiger-nuts and set out for the parrots' home. He found it was a very large family and each one looked like the other in almost every respect. Kweku went round ~~and~~ greeted ~~them~~ each parrot with smiles and good cheer. Consequently he was heartily welcomed. Shortly after, dinner was ready and Kweku ate to his fill. Then they gave him some cracked palm kernels to eat and a chewing stick to clean his teeth. Kweku Ananse was not satisfied. So he asked for his own parcel and shared his tiger-nuts and sugar cane among them. They found these so pleasant that they all proposed to go back with him in order to collect more from him. Kweku agreed but first of all he wanted to know which of them was owing the Great God Kwame. Immediately the debtor came forward, and having taken all necessary particulars, Kweku allowed them to go with him for their tiger-nuts and sugar cane. On their way, he gave the debtor a big red hat to wear and appeared very friendly towards him. When at last they reached his home he invited the Great God to come to greet his friends but cleverly gave him a sign that his debtor was the parrot with the big red hat on. So as the Great God shook hands with the parrots one by one and came to the debtor, he took hold of him. Immediately the other parrots became terrified and flew away. Straightway the Great God imprisoned the debtor in a cage. And being companionless the parrot sought the opportunity to address or chat with all who passed by. This explains how the parrot came to be in a cage and its ability to ~~xxxx~~ speak

Generally speaking, adults do not read stories to children except at school and in a few homes. But children who are interested in stories often come together to read stories from their readers for their own pleasure or enjoyment. Even among the illiterates one often sees a school boy or girl reading to a group of interested children who listen enthusiastically and look at the pictures which illustrate them.

Children do not usually bother about adult literature until they are in the top classes of the Middle School. Books that interest children most are story books such as "Grimm's Fairy Tales", "The Tanglewood Tales", "Folk Tales and Fables", "The Three Northern Romances" and books of Adventure or Exploration about such men as Christopher Columbus, Mungo Park, Captain Scott, Shackleton, Odysseus. The children are also interested in reading the Supplementaries of the New Method Readers: "Treasure Island", "The Court of Monte Christo", "King Solomon's Island," "Silas Marner", "Westward HO", "The Mill on the Floss", etc. Biographies also have a great appeal for the children but, on the whole, there is a great lack of reading facilities, and the children would love to read more and more if there were well-furnished libraries either at school or in their homes.

XXXXXXXXXX

Work:

In a previous ~~chap~~ chapter it has been shown how helpful boys and girls are at home right from the age of five or six. They help to keep the house clean by sweeping the rooms and the compound; they wash the plates and the kitchen utensils, scrub the floor, help in the kitchen work, wash ~~xxx~~ and iron simple articles of clothing and go on all sorts of errands. And, of course, much depends upon the training they are given while quite young. That is, unless a child is trained to perform little ~~xxxxxx~~ domestic duties at an early age he tends in later years to become idle and less useful.

In certain homes the children, though quite old enough to render needed services, are unwilling to work or to run errands. They appear obstinate and the parents cannot get them to undertake any domestic tasks. Such children are a liability rather than an asset. In other homes every child has a definite portion of the housework to perform and sets about it as soon as he gets out ~~to~~ of bed in the early morning. In one house it was noticed that a ~~girl~~ girl of eighteen months was being taught to serve. Mother asked her to bring a broom which was lying a few yards away. Immediately she walked up to it and brought it to her. A few minutes ~~she~~ after, she said to her, "fa kyense yi kasaw nsu wo bokitsi no mu bra". (i.e. "Take this pan and bring me some water from that bucket", pointing to it). Again, the order was carried out. Consequently, mother made this significant remark "Onyimpa anye adze, ~~amkaye de~~ ogan", implying that even the youngest child is capable of rendering a service which no sheep can.

The second phase of a child's work is his training for a future career. This normally begins at about the age of six or seven for school pupils and a year or two later for those who decide to follow a trade without formal schooling. Winneba is one of the few towns with "key" schools where instructions in handicrafts for boys and housecraft for girls are given to the pupils by specialist teachers in addition to the usual literary subjects of the curriculum such as arithmetic, English, Vernacular, music, religious instructions and



Fig. 49. Children fetching water from a street tap.



Fig. 50 A Middle School <sup>girl,</sup> aged 15, prepares her father's fufu.

general subjects. Those children ~~who~~ who take to learning a trade have to serve a period of apprenticeship, the time limit depending upon the age, efficiency or progress of individual children ~~themselves~~ themselves as well as upon the kind of trade chosen, e.g. masonry, carpentry, smithy (gold or black), fitting, driving, fishing, tailoring, photography. ~~Now~~ Carpentry appears lucrative even after a short period of apprenticeship, for the boys are able to make simple kitchen stools with packing cases which can fetch them small amounts of money for pocket money. This means that even at an early age the apprentices can learn to save little sums of money at the Post Office for their future use. Unfortunately, however, most of these apprentices regard their leisure time-jobs as merely a hand to mouth ~~affair~~ affair. Photographic apprentices ~~may~~ have similar facilities where they are allowed to develop and print films for themselves during off-duty hours.

After a successful period of apprenticeship the boys also become 'masters' or competent workmen, and either prepare to start business ~~of~~ on their own or (as sometimes happens) may choose to carry on partnership or co-operative work with their masters. This gets on tolerably well where there is no attempt on the part of the older master to superimpose on the rights of the younger, or of the younger to show unhealthy signs of rivalry. Another aspect of work outside the home consists in performing a number of informal jobs for small wages at ~~next~~ odd times. Most children who have no permanent work to occupy them serve as labourers by carrying water or stones or blocks for masons or other people who are building houses. This 'labouring group' may include both boys and girls.

During fishing spells ~~older~~ boys who are unoccupied with any special kind of work go to the sea-side to help to drag the net from the sea. These are paid by the day, and apart from their wages they may also get enough fish for their use. Some girls also go to the sea-side either to buy and come to sell at the market or they may go to sell different kinds of food to the busy fishermen. These are usually cankey and fried fish, fried plantains, or coco-yam, bread, 'kakro' and 'boodo' (baked unfermented dough).

Selling of different kinds of things during the day at the

at the market or at the sides of the streets or under shady trees or by going up and down the town is the chief occupation of most older girls of ten years and over. This selling continues in the evenings at the night market or at the sides of the streets, and the chief things sold are kerosene, bread, cankey and fish, tobacco and cigarettes.

No principle has been laid down by which children are rewarded for ~~earn~~ conscientious service at home. But parents feel highly grateful when they find their children discharging regularly and faithfully their portion of domestic work. Such children are always sure of their parents' love, care and protection and their needs are supplied without effort, where-as the hopeless lot who continually shirk work tend to be neglected or subjected to fit punishments whenever possible. A well-known Tante proverb says "Abofra a nye somako odzi obodwe-dze". That is, "A helpful child has all privileges ~~at~~ within his reach." And the corollary is just as true: "Abofra kwadwefo dze, obere nye ne kyepen": "as for a lazy child, hardship is his lot."

There are no ~~well-established~~ well-established jobs for children at Wimeba. Older children who want employment as office messengers succeed when they have the necessary knowledge for the job. Children who have had no schooling and are not ready to learn any trade undertake temporary jobs as bottle-washers at the two local Mineral Factories or as Golf boys or as drag-net fishing assistants or labourers at the sea-side. The attitude of both children and parents towards child employment is a favourable one, inasmuch as by so doing the children get occupied sufficiently to keep them from aimless wandering and vicious tendencies, and also helps them to earn something to enable them to satisfy needs which would otherwise be a ~~big~~ burden on their parents.

Working hours for children do not follow ~~any~~ any rigid pattern. Golf boys attend business after 4 p.m. for about a couple of hours. Messengers are engaged from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and from 3 p.m. to 4 or 5 p.m., while the fishing assistants or labourers work from about 7 or 8 a.m. and close at 2 or 3 p.m. as fishing conditions may allow.

Adolescence:

Adolescence is said to cover roughly the ages of twelve to eighteen, and is a stage when a boy is slowly turning into a man, and a girl into a woman. Recent investigations by the writer prove that it is not a uniform process in all individuals, for sometimes it seems to come upon a boy or girl suddenly and sometimes gradually. It is characterised by physical and emotional changes which develop in boys much later, say, by one or two years, than in girls.

The change from pre-puberty to ~~puberty~~ puberty is marked by an increase in the rate of the bodily growth both in height and weight, by a rapid maturing of the sex glands and the appearance of hairy growths in certain parts of the body including the upper lip and the chin in the case of boys, and the armpits and the genitals in the case of both boys and girls; by a consciousness of personal comeliness which makes it necessary for regular attentions to be paid to bodily ~~cleanliness~~ cleanliness and careful dressing, by a sudden breaking of the voice and by the desire to indulge in sports and physical exercises more freely by the boys than before.

In girls the first onset of menstruation accentuates the fact that they have reached a stage when they also can be mothers by getting married. Puberty rites for girls are conducted at this stage as a sort of initiation into adulthood. The custom is that the girl's mother cooks yams and mashes them with palm oil and provides a number of boiled eggs with the crust removed. Then she serves the girl with a full bowl of the food and asks her to invite one or two friends to come to eat with her. When they are ready to eat, the mother takes a little of the food and touches the girl's lips with it and speaks as follows: "Now you are old enough to be regarded as a woman. Be very careful so that you may get a good husband, and when you get married you have to be honest, hardworking and well-behaved to your husband. Never backbite nor lead an immoral life." Then she places a full egg in the girl's mouth to eat. After that she sits down to eat with her friends. Later on, preparations are made to dress her in gorgeous clothes and with some ornaments, and she goes out with her ~~fix~~ friends to greet relations, friends and other adults in order to demonstrate her coming of age. Girls at such periods tend to

be ostentatious. They become specially important in a world of their own with all the hope and promise of a ~~successful~~ successful future only 'a few inches' ahead of them.

The full rites of puberty are unfortunately not followed by all sections of the community. In almost all educated homes apparently nothing is done in the meaningful traditional way. In some cases a meal is prepared which includes yams and boiled eggs for the girl to eat with her friends. Then on the Sunday following she may ~~attend~~ attend church in a white dress accompanied by one or two friends. There is said to be no need to go out to greet relatives, friends or other adults. And it appears that as people become more and more educated or civilized they tend to discard traditional rites which they feel ashamed to conform to.

During the Lent holidays (1955) the writer was in his family house at Winneba when a gorgeously dressed maiden from an illiterate home who was observing puberty rites came there to greet, accompanied by a few friends. The writer soon after inquired why children of literate parents do not behave in a similar way. The reply given by the old relatives was that it was partly due to the influence of Christianity which had killed the interest of the people and substituted for it Church marriage with its own ceremonies. Other educated people consulted on the matter explained that apart from the attitude of the Churches which do not encourage traditional practices which are zealously followed by heathens, the schools also have played no part in helping to encourage or establish sound traditional beliefs and ~~practices~~ practices, so that generations of scholars have passed out of them with little or no idea about the cultural heritage of their ancestors.

Among the ~~fisherfolk~~ fisherfolk it is held that puberty rites have both traditional and moral values. In the first place, it is believed that such rites which have come down to them from their 'good old fathers' must be preserved because they have a practical value. They help them to know what to do when their children have reached an important transitional period of their lives, and, secondly, they have moral implications which make their preservation worthwhile, for a girl must have the necessary puberty rites performed before she can consider herself fit to marry. Otherwise, she stands the chance of being

~~ritiquis~~ ridiculed by ~~her~~ her friends for having been improperly married. Consequently, no girl dare indulge in illegal sexual practices without first satisfying the demands of custom. And this, in effect, helps to improve the moral standard of the children. It is interesting to note that among the Sefwis of Anhwiaso (Western Province North, Gold Coast) where the writer taught for five years up to September, 1954, similar views obtain. Puberty rites are inexorable, although the method of approach be different. There a girl at puberty has all her hair smoothly shaved. Then she is made to sit in the sun with the top half of her body, from the head to the navel, exposed and thoroughly anointed with palm oil. And as she continues seated in the sun for some hours, her friends make merry in front of her family house while her mother and others are also engaged in cooking for her friends. The custom appears rather 'primitive' but the essential fact is clear that until it has been performed no girl is considered fit for proper marriage.

Girls who attain puberty are given special attention by their parents. They are expected to behave properly so that they might get the right type of men to marry them. As a result, they are warned against unwholesome friendships with young men and young ~~women~~ women who are likely to lead them astray. Particular care is also exercised to see ~~that~~ that they revise their knowledge of cooking, laundry, child-care and housekeeping so that their husbands might find them both capable and confident for their office. But really not all of them benefit by the advice given. Some do not pay heed and they suffer in the end, for by associating with the wrong type of people they ~~may~~ tend to lose their chances of getting good husbands. The result is frustration on the part of their parents and other adult relatives of the family. There are at present a number of maidens who wish they could have abided by their parents' early warnings. But it is too late, and the more's the pity.

Girls at this stage are often inclined to have exalted notions of their own importance. They delight in keeping themselves tidy and as well-dressed as possible either to attract attention in a general way or to invite suitors. Consequently, they are ready to make friendships and to enter all sorts of societies which appeal to

them. They also get a strong desire to attend dances, concerts and films. They get a new outlook, and frequently dream of castles in the air till they get married. But the educated ones who take up professions often defer marriage to a much later date. They are content to earn their livelihood for some time and to experiment with the advantages and disadvantages of independent living.

Early puberty is not characterized by any noticeable change in dress. But later on, educated maidens adopt full-size dresses in elaborate adult style while cloth-wearers, literate or illiterate, use larger pieces of cloth including the upper covering called "Akata" in order to give them a more noble or dignified appearance.

As hinted in the first paragraph of this chapter boys become adults at a slower rate than girls. Besides, there are no standardized puberty rites. It may even be better to state that there are none at all. Apparently, no custom is performed when boys arrive at puberty at the ages of fourteen to sixteen. But if, incidentally, they happen to complete their Primary schooling at the puberty age some parents may decide to honour them by seeing that a special meal is prepared for them to eat with their friends or brothers. This practice which was common a couple <sup>of</sup> decades ago is rapidly dying out. And although it happens at times to synchronize with the children's school-learning age it was by no means a puberty rite.

Although boys are also warned against sexual misconduct, when they seem to have tendencies in that direction, they cannot be said to have the ~~same~~ care and attention that is often extended to girls. On the question of menstruation, however, it appears that most mothers are shy of telling their daughters the important facts about how to observe personal hygiene, and leave it to the grand-mothers and aunts to give all possible assistance to their inexperienced daughters. These girls are therefore taught not to be afraid or to regard their condition as unnatural. They are taught also how to use a pad or an absorbent or any other suitable material and the necessity of washing it regularly as well as of cleansing the external genitals thoroughly several times daily during the menstrual flow. Lastly, they are advised not to engage

in vigorous physical activities in order to avoid undue bodily fatigue or other ill effects. But it is to be noted that it is not in all homes that all the necessary facts are taught, for certain young mothers who were interviewed said that they acquired some of these facts by themselves from practical experience.

As in the case of girls, boys too do not get their sex knowledge from their parents owing to shyness. ~~Consequently~~ Consequently, a good number of them are totally ignorant of the vital functions of the sex organs as well as the pitfalls connected with their abuse, and the little knowledge possessed by the ambitious or inquiring few has been collected either from their elderly friends or through reading "Alliance of Honour" booklets which they have been lucky enough to come across.

Parents, and, particularly, aged grandmothers, place much value on chastity. They require boys and girls to be sexually pure (i.e. in thought, word and act). So whenever possible they discourage children who want to be bad. They often refer to 'the good old days' and explain that sexual immorality, especially in young girls, was utterly unknown, for girls grew to a good marriageable age before they became engaged. And even then they dared not pay informal ~~marx~~ visits to their fiancées until they were actually married, when the test of chastity came confidently to the fore. The first ~~next~~ night the bride was taken to her husband he was required by custom to testify to her chastity. So early the next morning the girl's parents would send a bearer to go for the news, and the truth was always told. If he found the wife chaste he would say "Motoo no" (literally, 'I met her') and that meant much credit to them for the careful training of their daughter. But if he said "Mannto no" (literally, "I did not meet her") it meant that her chastity could not be guaranteed, and her parents became ashamed. Consequently, the man had to be pacified if the marriage was to be successful. But it is said that adverse testimonies were rare, for girls were afraid of being exposed and, consequently, behaved very well.

At present, that custom no longer obtains and in their so-called

value to the Gold Coast in the very near future. Another boy of about the same age also told his friends at one time that he saw no virtue in working for years and years before one could get sufficient money to build a good modern well-equipped house, and that he only believed in filling an Irish £50,000 Lottery Form and hearing within the next couple of months that he had won it. Then he would take time to plan out what to do next.

Friendships are quite common at the adolescent stage between boys and girls of the same sex and age. There are tendencies, too, for adolescent children to go to older people of their sex in whom they are interested. This is more common among boys whose keen activities in football and other sports often draw them to their older friends. Owing to shyness and parental fear mixed or boy-girl friendships are not given much thought although boys and girls may be interested in each other. A few older boys, however, may make attempts at friendship with the opposite sex irrespective of their parents' admonitions. But their friendships, on the whole, do not last. So are even friendships among school boys themselves, because after leaving school individuals soon get separated from each other either to go back to their towns and villages or to travel to other places to seek employment, thus occasioning the breakdown of ~~fixed~~ friendships perhaps for ever. Fishermen and other illiterates, on the other hand, have less mobility in this respect and, therefore, more permanent friendships.

Adolescence appears to be the most trying period of a child's life. In the pre-school period, the child learns to adjust himself to his family; in the middle years of childhood, he learns to adjust to his school, whilst in adolescence he learns to adjust to society, apparently the most difficult adjustment of all.

It is to be noted also that at this stage a child's life is characterized by three kinds of developments - intellectual, physical and emotional. Illiterate adolescents have little or no intellectual difficulties, for they learn their lessons straight from practical life and need only to be physically fit to be able to go about their daily ~~tasks~~ tasks without trouble. The fisherboy, for instance, gets early ~~xx~~ acquainted with his fishing apparatus and

and begins to learn the art of fishing so that by the age of fifteen or sixteen he has mastered almost all the techniques of his trade. Other illiterate boys make similar progress in their trades. But the school child is apt to meet difficulties in his studies ~~especially~~ especially when he is a retarded child in a class of children much his juniors in age. The difficulty of coping with his younger fellows may often subject him to ridicule both by his mates and by his household when it is known that he is not pulling his weight. In the end, being much frustrated, he may be compelled to terminate his schooling, which course of action may affect his future career in no little degree. But the most determined may not give in, and despite learning difficulties, taunts, punishments and ridicule may carry on to a successful end.

Also at this stage young people need much opportunity for argument, discussion and debate. So often they come to grips with stern older people who look down upon them and treat them as opponents whenever they can. Consequently, there is sometimes the tendency to be quite reserved and moody.

Physically, all adolescents have the desire to develop muscular fitness and athletic prowess, and seek always to indulge in games and other physical exercises. But certain boys may be kept at home, much too busy with domestic work to have full time for physical activities. This is bound to affect both their health and their outlook. Girls too have their monthly periods which often make them feel ill at ease especially when they happen to participate in vigorous physical activities.

The emotional storms and stresses of adolescence are notably the most significant. In the first place, the desire to look attractive or to show off creates the impression in certain social circles that the adolescents are proud and, in consequence, may be subjected to inhospitable treatment. Secondly, unwise indulgence in sexual activities may bring about premature pregnancies which will disturb the emotional poise of the girls concerned, and ultimately be instrumental in ruining their career. Boys are also likely to become chronic victims of venereal diseases, a condition which might set all their youthful aspirations at naught.

In a number of ways adolescents may come into conflict with their parents and other adults. In their homes a good number of them are inclined to play the role of "boss" by sharing the household work among their younger brothers and sisters and do nothing themselves but dictate. The younger ones may resent their attitude and quarrel with them. But the parents usually side with the younger ones and blame the adolescent. Some, too, will not at all stay at home to render any service, but will go out with their friends and come back any time they please. The parents naturally get offended and may devise every possible means of bringing them under control. Some, of course, may prove recalcitrant and may be the worse for it in the end.

There are also the strains and stresses connected with prolonged ~~adolescence~~ adolescence. In some homes boys and girls of ~~ten~~ twenty or more years are expected to work in order to help to maintain the family or to marry and lead independent lives of their own. But it sometimes happens that adolescents at this ripe age might be unemployed or unmarried and would continue to be dependent upon their parents or other adult relatives for all their needs. In this case, however, they have to be prepared to take an adequate share in domestic work as well as carry out orders. Those who give the required help have no trouble but the obstinate ones frequently come into conflict with ~~the~~ their parent-s and others. Consequently, they tend to attach themselves to friends who roam about with them and, in time, they take to all sorts of vices and corruption. Thus in their attempt to lead care-free independent lives they get into all kinds of troubles.

Children at the adolescent stage sometimes find it difficult to keep their temper under control. A case happened at Tarkwa in the early 1940's when a girl of fourteen resolutely determined to put an end to all her troubles and miseries. Her mother died when she was quite young, and her two elder brothers and sister were working abroad, while she remained at home with her step-mother who dominated her life and added more and to her misery. Now, one morning, she left the house, and for long hours was no where to be found. Then in the late afternoon a young boy of ten came to the

house to inform the step-mother that he met the girl early in the morning and she told him that she could no longer stand the cruel treatment that was being given <sup>her</sup> at home, so she would end her life that very day by throwing herself headlong into an old neglected public well. The boy explained that he knew she couldn't do it, so quite unperturbed he left her in the street and went to play football with his friends. In a frenzy of despair, the household rushed to the well and alas! she was at the bottom, dead.

The question of religion is chiefly a matter of personal taste. Adolescents who are religious continue to be interested in church-going. Some are merely interested in appearing in the church in their attractive dresses, while others, too, feel that they have to be more intense in their faith in God so that they may be blessed to have good partners to help them to enjoy a prosperous married life.

Most adolescents, and especially the fair sex take exceptional pride in their comeliness and new status and behave arrogantly to older people. Rebellion against authority is common among those whose home discipline is lax, and, on the whole, there is the tendency to assume airs of importance and peacockery. No doubt, adolescence is an interesting and exhilarating time. The Fante name for a male adolescent is "Aberentsia" and for a female adolescent is "Akateesia". The latter word is aptly descriptive of this vital romantic stage in the life of a child. Literally, it ~~xxx~~ means 'covered up and kept' and ably conjures up the picture of an accomplished bride being led out after a period of cloistered life to her beloved husband.

A young woman becomes an adult as soon as she gets married. That is, between sixteen and twenty years. And a young man becomes an adult usually at the age of ~~twenty~~ twenty-one.

Early Childhood (up to 2 years)

Adequate preparations must be made in good time before baby arrives. The layette must take shape and the mother herself must also take a serious interest in her own health and well-being. The mistake some young mothers make is to wait till the eleventh hour. This, of course, needs to be avoided. Moreover, the first two years of childhood being the most important, parents are expected to give their children all the love, care and attention which they possibly can. This ensures for them, right from the very beginning, a sense of security, and helps them to inhibit undue emotional reactions which may prevent the growth of a well-adjusted personality.

Most parents at Winneba are ignorant of the fact that personality is made up of physical, intellectual and emotional factors, and that in the training of a child due regard must be paid to all the three. Almost everybody is aware that proper feeding is essential if the child is to develop a strong, muscular, well-built body. But only a few people have correct ideas about food values and how the child must be fed, with the result that physical development hardly succeeds in getting its due.

It is to be noted also that the introduction of the child to the breast should be made gently and tenderly and not in the usual way of pumping milk into his mouth which frequently chokes him and makes feeding unpleasurable. The various methods of weaning, too, have been described in Chapter II, and again it needs be stressed that the third method is the best. It is scientific and shows how breast feeding can be carefully and gradually alternated with supplementary feeding in order to wean the baby altogether by the end of the ninth month without any emotional disturbances or suffering to the child.

The quick.. /

The quick and rather unsympathetic way of weaning practised chiefly by the fisherfolk should be discouraged owing to obvious emotional disadvantages, and the child should always be made to feel happy and secure in the love of a mother whom he regards as the greatest source of his protection. Finally, it has to be remembered that good feeding means good physical health as well as good mental health.

The next point to note is that parents and the other members of the household should try not to bring unnecessary pressure to bear on the child in his initial efforts to walk. Too great an anticipation to see the child walk often causes worry to the parents, and any force used on the child is bound to result badly, since the child's physique may not be matured enough to make it possible for him to bear the strains involved. A useful method of encouraging a child who has actually shown effort to walk is to provide him with a simple walking apparatus which he can drive along in the compound at his own rate and from which he can derive much pleasure. Also later on, older children may be encouraged to help him to walk by taking his hand and leading him along, step by step, up and down the compound.

At two years when children have been found to show sufficient confidence and progress in walking they may be allowed to explore their surroundings, care being taken to see that they do not stray beyond the family compound, nor come across dangerous obstacles which may cause injury. They need also to be supplied with suitable playthings to enable them to acquire first-hand knowledge or experience of concrete or common objects of their immediate environment. This is useful in supplying them with the fundamentals of child education.

At about.../

At about eighteen months language development proceeds rapidly. Really, parents do not make any serious attempt to give children any practical help, but leave them to practise as much baby talk as possible. And often adults are delighted in the funny way <sup>in which</sup> children pronounce their words or express their ideas. It is important to note here that at this stage much valuable help can be given if parents would take the time and trouble to talk to their children, by using simple meaningful words in a clear quiet tone, for it will help to give them a good foundation in speech. Baby words should not be encouraged at this stage. Moreover, it is recommended that whenever possible well-known tuneful songs, nursery rhymes and jingles should be introduced to help the child to improve his speech. Grandmothers often play an appreciable part in this respect but other adults can render similar help to great advantage.

#### The Pre-School Period 2-5 years

This is the period of sound preparation for life. In the majority of cases the pre-school child at Winneba is left to play in the house and to cry for food whenever he is hungry. In cultured homes his elder brothers and sisters may help to give him some simple ideas about counting or adding or to introduce him to reading by means of pictures till he is old enough to start formal schooling. It appears, however, that the importance of the Nursery School at Abasraba (Winneba) has not been adequately realized. It remains therefore for the authorities concerned to educate parents in any way they can on the opportunities that await their children at the Nursery School, if they can only take them there. This school aims at giving children that nurture and training in health habits with the chance to grow up happily, mentally, physically and socially that a good home gives. Life there proceeds according to a fairly ordered plan, and apart from plenty of chances for games and physical activities that foster unhampered growth the Nursery School child is allowed to do anything that he can for himself, to give him confidence. He gets used to doing things for himself and eventually acquires a feeling of self

reliance which helps him to surmount little difficulties without much ado. The Nursery School is also important for its impersonal atmosphere and is a great advantage to a three- or four-year old child to have his family circle widened at quite an early age.

#### Some Fundamental Aspects of Child Behaviour

The parents generally do not worry about the health of their older children until illness comes. Regular inspections of their children's bodies are essential and they would save themselves a lot of trouble and anxiety if they could do that. This will make them know as soon as possible when a child is about to fall ill, so that immediate precautions might be taken. Regular inspection and cleanliness of the body with particular regard to the teeth, eyes, hair, ears, skin and the genitals of the young children, coupled with sufficient outdoor activities, will go a long way to keep them in a tolerably healthy condition and make room for their proper physical and mental development.

The general behaviour of children in a number of homes visited by the writer was unsatisfactory. The children appeared to be under little or no control and therefore did what they liked. Most of them were altogether averse to running errands, and took practically no part in domestic duties such as fetching water for drinking or kitchen use, sweeping the rooms and halls and the compound, and washing plates or clothes. The parents had a lot to complain about them. But when the children became hungry they forced their parents, to give them food, which they did. Child training in such homes is weak, and the parents, no doubt, have themselves to blame for indulging the children and giving them the freedom to do what they please.

It was noticed also that most of these children spoke in a careless way and had also <sup>the</sup> boldness to speak to older people without the slightest show of courtesy. In well-disciplined homes, of course, conditions were different, and quite good performances were witnessed. In fact, it is highly

desirable to train children in polite speech and action, and it is up to the parents to sow the right seeds in children while they are young, and they will be less difficult to manage when they grow up. Moreover, such foundations of proper conduct are bound later on to check or prevent a good deal of truant and delinquent practices which sometimes prevail among older children.

Smoking and drinking habits are not very common among the children. Older children who are serving periods of apprenticeship in fishing, tailoring and other trades practise smoking and drinking on a small scale. The habit is not a healthy one, as even after completing their courses these young people will have more important things to attend to than a mere indulgence in wasteful and dangerous habits.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the parents in general is their utter neglect of sex instruction to their adolescent children. Although most of them, (especially the illiterates) are ignorant of the physiology of the sex organs they can in an unemotional way give sound practical advice on the proper way to behave with regard to sex matters. Adolescent girls, for instance, can be taught vital facts about menstruation as well as about marriage, and certain misconceptions about their implications can be cleared in order to free their minds of much fear and worry connected with them. Boys, on the other hand, can also be given valuable ideas about the abuse of their genital organs and how to keep sexually fit.

#### Education and Health in the Community

There is, on the whole, a rapid rate of literacy among all the sections of the community. Even among the fisherfolk there is a growing awareness of the value of education, and every effort is being made to have a good number of their children educated in schools and in Mass Education classes, where a lot of other illiterates are being given sound foundations in language, arithmetic and social welfare.

Through the influence of the seven Churches listed in the introduction as well as of that of the various social clubs and organizations, the social standard of the community has had much improvement, and even men and women of the poorer classes show a considerable refinement in personal cleanliness, dressing and household sanitation. Moreover, there is far less of juju practices today than it was in the past, say, twenty or thirty years ago, and the bulk of the people are no more as interested in fetish priests and priestesses as before. There is also a good deal of economic security, for individuals tend to realize more and more the value of pulling funds together for capital enterprises such as the buying of bigger and well-built canoes for fishing, of improving old houses or erecting new ones. It is important to remark also that in almost all the homes of the fishermen there are electric lights, and some of them have even taken further step to have radio sets installed in their rooms. All these changes or improvements influence the lives of the children and give them a better perspective of life than they would otherwise have had, and certainly adds greatly to their education, formal or informal.

#### Asafo Activities and their Influence on the Children

The Asafo system has a potent unifying influence over the two major "Companies" of the indigenous community, viz: No.1 or Tsafo and No.2 or Dentsefo. They have their origin in the remote past and they indicate the beginnings of the political structure of the natives. Each Asafo Company had a Chief Captain, and each sub-division of a Company also a sub-captain popularly known as "Safohen". These captains wielded a high degree of native political power and assisted the Omanhen to rule the town and maintain law and order. Every man, woman and child was bound to respect and obey them at all times.

The present method of Local Government has altered much of the old machinery of community control. Nevertheless, the Asafo captains and sub-captains continue to wield influence over their subjects, especially when Asafo affairs are concerned. Right from very early times the Asafo system has been connected with certain heathen rites and practices. A special traditional Asafo dancing procession called "Boadje" which had great influence on children has now almost died out. At periodical times, say once a fortnight or once a month, an Asafo Company would dress up in a typical traditional manner i.e. in long cotton drawers, (which almost reached the ankle) and long-sleeved <sup>thick</sup> singlets and made a double-lined procession along both sides of the "Old Market street" to drum, sing and dance, accompanied by clapping of hands and a display of specially-designed Asafo flags. These processions were joined by all the older children, and it went on for about four hours in the afternoon, closing at about 5 p.m. These processions served to unify the members of each Asafo Company in a healthy spirit of solidarity, and each was so enthusiastically conducted that it held the interest of all the spectators to the very end. Occasionally, however, the spirit of rivalry between the No.1 and the No.2 companies outran its limits and resulted in an uproar which required police assistance to quell it. Quite recently, this lively procession has dropped out of use but the memory of it still lingers.

Another feature of public life which had great influence on both children and adults is the traditional method of welcoming distinguished political visitors, such as, the Governor of the Gold Coast. A few days before the arrival of the visitor the Omanhen ordered a gonggong to be beaten to inform the whole community to get ready for a procession at the northern outskirts of the town on the day specified. The Asafo Companies usually led the procession with their guns and welcomed the visitor with a succession of gun-shots which continued as they escorted him down to the centre of the

town. Younger children were afraid of the terrifying explosions but the older children had the courage to appreciate the display of gallantry and devoted themselves from time to time to practising how to fire a gun. This custom has not dropped out of use but has rather been modified into a simpler, less noisy and more time-saving one than before.

A third feature of interest is the traditional "practice fights" of the "Penkyes" and the "Eyipes", the two most important fishing sections of the community. For many years in the past these fights went on usually in the afternoons between 4 and 6 and started with the young children of Penkye on one side of the beach and the young children of Eyipe on the opposite side. It was really a serious fight and trial of strength between people of about the same age in which injuries were sometimes sustained. The young children having fought for about thirty minutes, older children or adolescents would come to have their turn while the younger ones withdrew from the scene. After about thirty minutes' fight they would also withdraw and give place to their older men. The fight then went on with greater severity for another thirty minutes or more, and sometimes got so furious that police intervention became necessary. The fight was almost entirely a matter of cuffs, blows and fisticuffs and, despite occasional injuries, the people enjoyed it and had it regularly in order to train themselves in the techniques of 'hand to hand' fight. One serious danger about these fights, however, was that they had the tendency of fostering bitter Asafo rivalries and, coupled with other disadvantages, they ceased to be considered worthwhile. But they have not altogether died out. Children at times practise 'Penkye and Eyipe' fights in a very informal way, while the proper traditional well-organised ones are re-staged every year for just a week. That is, a day or two after the Deer Hunt which occurs in April.

Greater Responsibilities of Parents

Generally speaking, literate parents of Winneba do not have their meals at the same table with their children. The children take their meals in their individual bowls, pans or plates or in groups from a common bowl. The latter case applies generally to older children who do not quarrel about who has eaten the greatest portion of the fish or who has eaten the least as younger children often do. Illiterate parents, on the other hand, follow a rather 'communistic' pattern of life. They sit everyday at the same table with their children and eat from the same bowl with them. The women, as a rule, live separately from their husbands in their own family houses where they cook and send the food to their husbands and go to their homes in the evenings to sleep. The women, therefore, eat with their young children in their family houses while the men also eat with their older sons in their own homes. How exactly this attitude of literate and illiterate parents came about is not known. It appears, however, to be purely a difference in culture, and it would have been highly ideal in the case of the fishermen if their children could give as much respect to their parents as can be found in most educated homes.

The question of why the literate fathers do not eat with their sons from the same plate or bowl was put to a number of educated men and below are some of their answers:

- (a) "There is no special reason. I have simply not formed the habit".
- (b) "I wouldn't say there is any special reason. But I find that children are more free when they eat with their mothers."
- (c) "Can there be any reason? My simple opinion is that we have not made it part of our culture. But we can try it if we want to".

- (d) "Children are very fond of fish. If we invite them they will eat all our fish."
- (e) Children have dirty hands. They make food unpleasant and disgusting."

All the answers are interesting, but the last two have a particular significance, for they point to more avenues for a successful child training. Most certainly, children require to be brought up in good habits, and parents have to teach them how to behave and to do the right thing at the right time, fully realizing, of course that

"There are countless influences which help or hinder development, make or mar the personality. There are endless mistakes which can be made. In spite of this, however, the innate good sense of children gives them some secret protection, while their adaptability, their joy in overcoming obstacles and their belief in adults all combine to lead them forward. One thing is certain - they cannot be forced to grow, to love and to have faith. When they are surrounded by those who comfort, cheer and strengthen them, the best that is in them comes to fruition. It is only in an atmosphere of true love and friendship that children can fully thrive."

(D.Mildred Nevill - A Study of Childhood and Youth).

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1. Answers to "What the child would wish for if he were granted one wish".

- (a) Money - (Maria, aged 12)
- (b) Clothes - (~~Kiwaku, aged 11~~) (Efua Akyerpong, aged 12)
- (c) Pen and Ink - (Kweku, aged 11)
- (d) Shoes - (Aba Baama, aged 10)
- (e) One penny - (Kow Willie, aged 8)
- (f) Football - (Koiwo Dom, aged 11)
- (g) Golden ear-rings - (Esi. Baafoa, aged 13)

2. Self-description:

- (a) "I am called Kow Willie. I am a little boy. My skin is black. There is blood in my body. I am a little tall. My eyes look like glass." (Aged 8)
- (b) "I am a young girl, aged 12. I am a little tall. (Interviewer: what is your height?) I am 4' 8". I am little fat. My colour is light brown. I often wear a 'knock-about' frock. My abdomen is small. My head is small. My eyes are pure black and white. I can see very well. There is a sore on my right foot.

3. Life story:

- (a) "I am called Baama. I am 10 years old. My father is called Koiwo Tawiah. He is a driver. My mother is called Abena Anyema. Her work is to sell cankey. She also buys firewood from villages on the Sweiru road and sells it. There are nine adults and nine children in my home.

"I started school in 1951. I am at present in P 4. My teacher is a new man called Mr. Bafo."

(Interviewer: Which school do you attend?)

"I attend the Methodist School. "After my schooling, I shall be a teacher. (Interviewer: Why would you like to be a teacher?) "I ~~would~~ would like to be a teacher because a teacher always wears fine clothes

clothes and shoes, holds her bag and walks with children."

- (b) "My name is Kodwo Dom. I am a native of Winneba. I am 11 years old. I live at Mbeadzi (Palm House). There are plenty of people there. My father is called Kwesi Kakraba. He is tall and dark brown in colour. He has a dark ~~hair~~ beautiful hair. He is a carpenter, but he runs a Palm Wine 'bar' and people come there frequently to buy, drum and dance. My father also owns a drag net for ~~a~~ fishing.

(Interviewer: You have told me the colour of your father's skin, but not yours. What colour is your own skin?)

"I am also dark brown like my father. "My mother is called Aba Sane. She is fat and tall. She sells firewood and corn and sugar-cane. My father and mother are kind people and I love them. They also love me. (Interviewer: Why do they love you?)

"They love me ~~because~~ because I always sweep their rooms and carry the refuse to the dust-bin.

(Interviewer: Have you any brothers and sisters?)

"I have two younger ~~brothers~~ brothers and three sisters. Two of my sisters are older than I..

(Interviewer: Do you attend school?)

"I am a school boy. I attend the Methodist School. My class is P 4. My teacher is called Mr. Robertson. I am a clever boy. "After my schooling, I shall be a ~~a~~ carpenter. (Interviewer: Why would you like to be a carpenter?) "I would like to be a carpenter because my father is a carpenter and I like the work.

(Interviewer: Is that all you will do?)

"No, I shall keep a Palm Wine bar, too."

A Story about a bad boy (told by Kofi aged 11)

"There is a boy. He is still alive. He is about 13 years old. Some years ago, it was his habit to laugh at people who were disabled or deformed. When he laughed at people they got angry and abused him. But he did not mind, and continued to laugh at and tease them more and more.

"Well, several complaints were made to his parents, and they advised him to stop laughing at people. He *did* ~~still~~ not pay heed. Sometimes, he was beaten but still he continued to laugh at people with deformed bodies. Some of these people often told him that they thanked him for laughing at them and that whether it was good or not he too would see his end some day. Again, he did not mind. He often jumped about and made signs with his hand and legs to tease them more and more.

"In fact, his friends warned him to stop it but ~~again~~ he did not stop. Then one day, he was attacked by a boil in the back of his right thigh near the knee. It grew so big that he could not walk and was kept at home, for about a month. The boil became very serious and painful. It attacked the big vein behind the right knee. It took about three months before it started to heal.

"At last, when the sore was healed, the boy could not walk. He became lame and started to limp. The boy is still there. But his leg is also deformed. It is very wonderful. People say that owing to his bad deeds he has been punished by a god.

"The boy has regretted greatly. If he had taken the advice of his parents and friends he would not have suffered.

This story is a true one, and it shows that if you become a bad boy or imitate the suffering of people you get punishment for it in the end."

A Story about a good girl (Told by Esi aged 9)

"The girl is called Ata. She is small like myself, but she is a little taller than I. Her mother's house is at Eyiye. She is a very good girl. Whatever her mother tells her, she does it. So her mother gives her dresses and everything she wants.

One morning, she said that she was going to the latrine near the beach. On her way, she saw something tied up in a piece of cloth lying in a gutter. She took it and brought it to her mother. Her mother opened it, and she saw £2 currency notes and some things made of gold.

Her mother was happy. Later on, she used the money in buying dresses for the girl."

Imaginative Play by two girls about attending a Wedding.

Aba (aged 9½ years) Adwowa, why are you so busy?

Adwowa (aged 10 years) Oh, I'm getting ready to attend a wedding. Don't you know a wedding is coming on this afternoon?

Aba: No, no. I have not heard it.

Adwowa: Well, I am getting ready. You to, go and get ready.

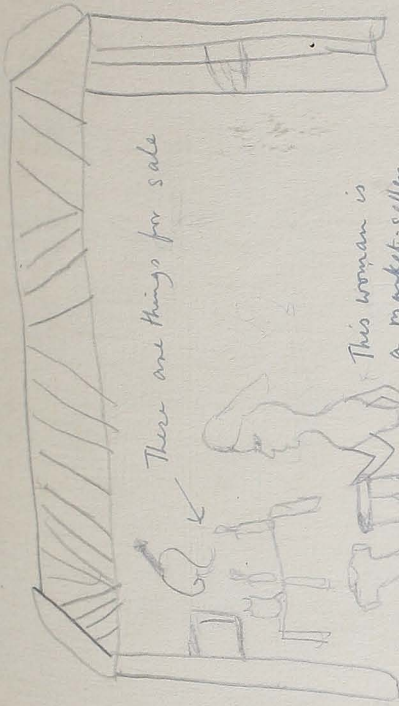
Aba: What dress are you putting on?

Adwowa: I shall put on a dress with plenty of flowers in it.

Aba: All right, I shall go with you. I'm going to get ready. Please come and tell me when you are ready.

Adwowa: All right. We shall be very happy.

A Free Drawing



These are things for sale

This woman is a market-seller.

She is holding a pair of shorts, ready to show it to buyers. It costs 5/6d.



These young men are going to buy articles of clothing, etc. from the market-seller.

A Market (Drawn by Aba Maria aged 11)

woman. (Drawn by  
Kodwo Doan, aged 11).



and



A man

# A Fight—

## How it Came About.

Two friends dressed fashionably and attended a party. Drinks, toffees and cigarettes were served and everybody enjoyed himself very well. Soon the two friends got drunk and began to argue about something. One got angry and hit the other. Immediately he also got offended and they fought.

All the time, a lizard lying on the ground was looking at them and raising its head up and down.



Drawn by Kodwo William, aged 10

Kodwo Willie, aged 10.

A Fight.

(Drawn by Kodwo Willie, aged 10).



Kodwo Willie says: "These are two young boys who want to be professional boxers. Here they are fighting to try their strength."

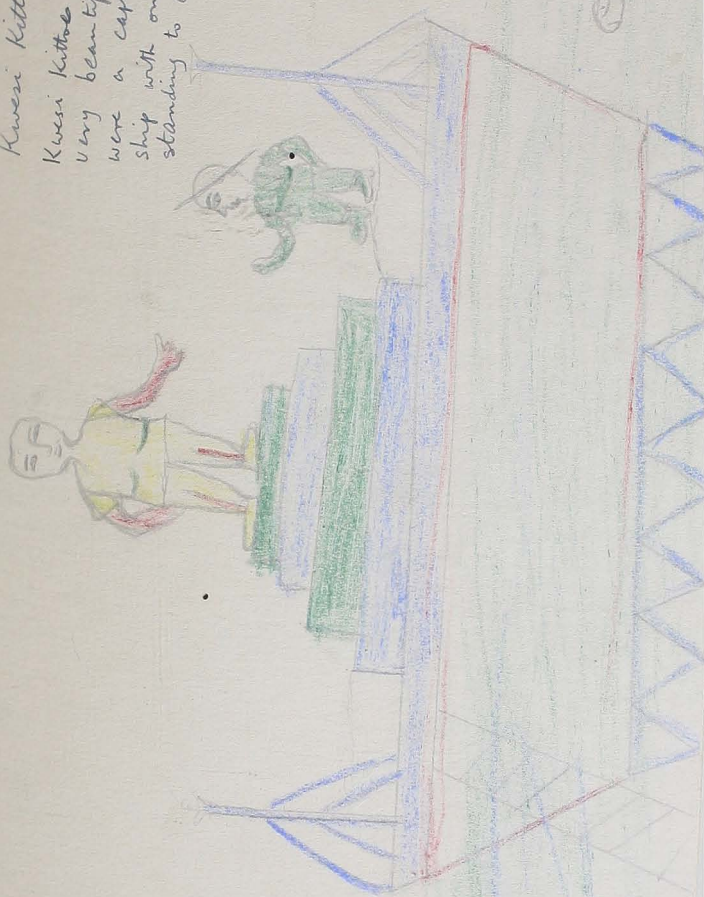
A Fight. (Drawn by Kweku, aged 12)

Kweku says: "These men don't agree. They are enemies and whenever they meet they begin to fight."



8813  
The most pleasant thing the child can think of. (Drawn by  
Kwesi Kittae aged 13.)

Kwesi Kittae: "A ship is a  
very beautiful thing. I wish I  
were a captain controlling a  
ship with one of my officers  
standing to discuss things with me



The most unpleasant thing the  
child can think of. (Drawn by  
Efewa, aged 11).



The Tiger.

Efewa says:

I don't like this animal at all, because it is fearful.  
And, besides, it eats man and never spares him  
when he has got him."

1911. Nupt. Purcell aged 14.2



My Dream.

'One day, a certain woman dressed smartly and paid a visit to her friends. They cooked food and ate and chatted happily. Then in the evening they played gramophone records and danced. When the woman was returning home it was very dark, so a lion chased her. She got very frightened and ran very fast. So she could not be caught.'

Kodwo Doam

A Dream (Drawn by Kodwo Doam, Aged 11)

I dreamt that once there lived a boy who was very bad. He gave no respect to any <sup>of</sup> ~~the~~ one. So his parents told him, when he died he would get no one to bury him in the usual way. Well, after some time he died, and in accordance with his parents' words he was laid in a coffin which was not covered, and <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ carried away in a boat into the middle of the sea?

