

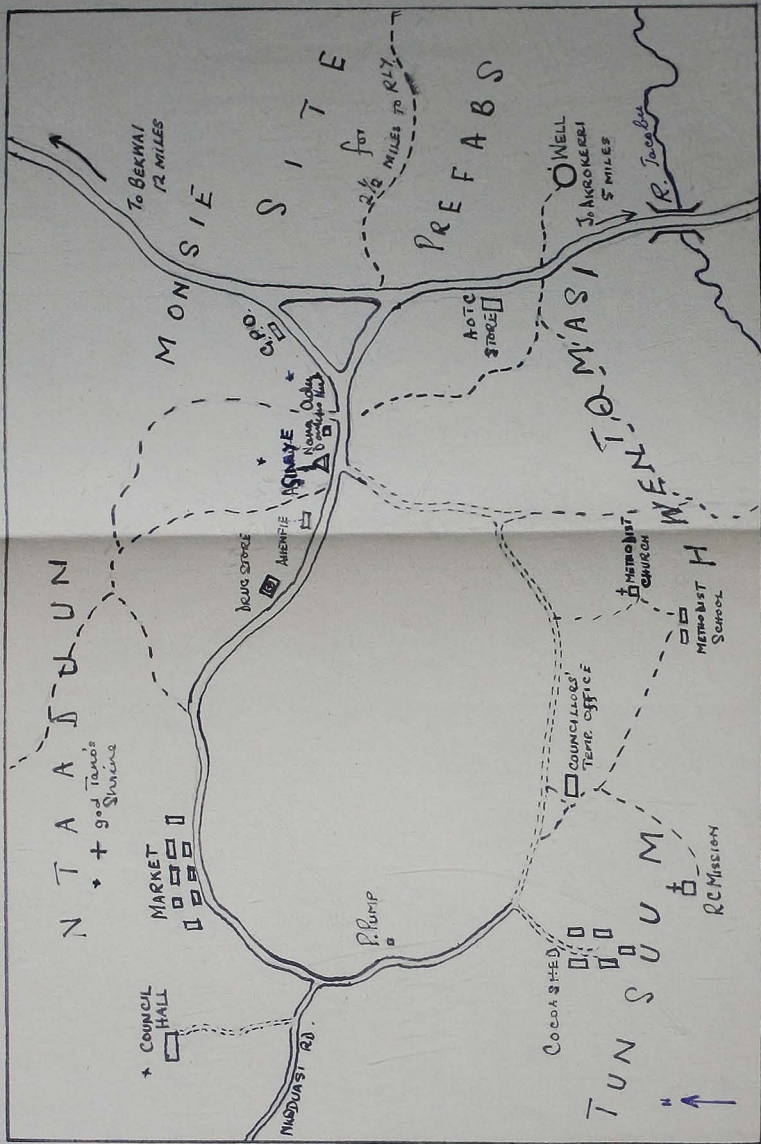
THE TRAINING OF THE CHILD

IN

J A C O B U

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MAP OF JACOB U



Scale: 1cm to 220 yds

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

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The following pages contain the results of my research on Child Training in my own village, JACOBU. It is a research I have enjoyed and found most useful, as it brought me into closer touch with many of my own people and enabled me to know and understand and interpret many things about my own people of which I was hitherto ignorant. And now I feel sure that the results of this research will enable me to give better and more useful service to my people.

I am indebted to my grandparents and relatives living in Jacobu who were too willing to offer such help as I had asked for and had let me so freely into some of the most secret aspects of our culture. I am most grateful to my father, Mr F.E. Kwofie, who kindly gave me detailed information regarding my subject, when my relatives and kinsmen found it difficult to give me.

To my Tutor, Mr J.G. Oddoye, I have the honour to tender my sincere thanks for his valuable criticisms and for devoting much of his time in correcting the manuscript. Lastly, I have to thank Mr Taylor who gave me the opportunity to <sup>do</sup> this useful work. I would have enjoyed no other piece of work better than this on Child Training.

Beatrice Kwofie.

## J A C O B U.

Jacobu is one of the subordinate villages in the Bekwai District, Ashanti. Bekwai is twenty-six miles from Kumasi on the Kumasi-Sekondi/Takoradi railroad, and Jacobu is twelve miles from Bekwai and five miles from Akrokeri, another town on the same railroad. It is situated on a hill to the north-west of Bekwai, and it covers an area of about three-quarters of a square mile with a population of about two thousand inhabitants.

HISTORY. The village is said to have been founded by one Nana Adu Daako, a hunter who came from Bekwai some hundreds of years ago. Nana Adu, after founding a village called Brekobi (three miles from Jacobu), decided to quit the place and find an isolated place to settle with his family. He happened to come across a stream called Jacobu, and here he pitched his camp and settled with his family in the hut which he built on the slope of a hill near the stream. The remains of Nana Daako's hut<sup>(1)</sup> are still to be found at Jacobu.

Traders from Bekwai passed to and fro by Nana Adu's hut to Akrokeri and it became the resting place for the traders. It is said that there were a number of sterile women among the traders and as they each drank from the stream Jacobu they became pregnant. This incident attracted many a sterile woman to dwell near the stream in order to drink from its waters.

The incomers built huts near Nana Daako's. More and more people were attracted to the small village.

(1) See map on page 1

as the result of the wonders the river worked and gradually the village grew and extended and was named after the wonder-working river. The expression "Jacobu ye baatan" (river Jacobu is a kind mother) is often used to this day by the inhabitants to express their appreciation and the great debt they owe to the river.

"Fofie" (every first Friday after 40 days) was the forbidden day to go near the river, and a bundle of firewood was not to be carried into a hut. These taboos and a good many others were broken by the people, and as the result of this negligence the river Jacobu caused all the people of the village to suffer from diarrhoea and cough. The diseases prevailed until sacrifices were offered to the river to spare their lives, and all the people were requested to swear never to break a single taboo, but to observe all taboos connected with the river Jacobu.

Then later another god called Tano(1) was discovered on the village "gyadua"(tree) and a shrine was built for it. I visited the shrine near the market-place. The fetish priest told me that at present three gods are responsible for the welfare of the village, - Jacobu, Tano, and Dehyire, the last being the youngest and the least powerful of the three. There is also the village "gyinaye", a swish platform on which sacrifices are offered to the gods should any of the village taboos be broken.

The original plan was for the railway to pass through Jacobu, but the idea was finally discarded, and the railroad constructed through Akrokeri because of its

(1) See map on page 1

goldmines. However there is a possibility of Jacobu extending to meet the railroad because it is only two and a half miles from it.

EDUCATION AND RELIGION. Though most of the people of Jacobu are pagans there are however two Christian Churches, namely the Catholic and Methodist. The two schools in Jacobu are Mission Schools. The Methodist School goes up to Middle Form I but has only one certificated teacher and about two hundred pupils on roll. The Catholic School which goes up to Primary Class VI has about one hundred and fifty pupils and not a single certificated teacher. There are about fifty girls in both schools. Middle School education is generally continued elsewhere, at Bekwai, Kumasi, Akrokeri, or Obuasi. A good number of the boys from Jacobu have finished their education at the elementary level, but there are only two girls who have completed their education at this level. Some of the boys are working at Jacobu as pupil teachers and postal agents. Most of them however are working in the neighbouring towns and villages. Two boys are in a Teacher Training College, one girl is a police woman, and another girl is a pupil teacher at Jacobu. Most of the girls are unable to complete their elementary school education mainly because of early pregnancy. This is one of the serious problems that the village is facing, but no steps appear to have been taken yet to solve it.

OCCUPATION. The inhabitants are mostly farmers and they bring foodstuffs to the market once a week on Tuesdays to be sold. These foodstuffs are plentiful

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(1) See map on page 2

and very cheap, but meat<sup>is</sup> scarce and therefore expensive. There are also petty traders, goldsmiths, tailors, carpenters, maizons, drivers, and women bakers in the village.

PROGRESS The Bekwai Local Council Office was established at Jacobu on 16th May, 1952. There are eighteen members, twelve of whom are elected and six nominated traditional members from the Bekwai Traditional Authority. As Jacobu is the headquarters of the Council, a new and attractive Council Hall<sup>(1)</sup> is being put up on a site, which is about a quarter of a mile from the market-place.

A midwife has been stationed at Jacobu and she is using a temporary building for a clinic. But there is the hope of a proper clinic being built in the near future. The State has, besides, made provision for the building of a Native Court, a Police Station, and street drainage system during the latter part of this year.

There was a dispute between the people of Jacobu and Bekwai in 1951 in connection with the destoolment of ex-Bekwaihene, Gyamfi by name. A battle between the police and the people of Jacobu resulted from the controversy, and the police chased the inhabitants out of the village leaving some men in the neighbourhood who fought the police with guns. The village was deserted until the ringleaders of Jacobu had been tried six months later.

The men came back to find broken houses with their property looted. As a result of this loss, the government has planned to erect prefabricated houses for the homeless citizens. A site<sup>(2)</sup> opposite the main Bekwai-Akrokeri road of Jacobu is under survey for this

(1) and (2) See map on page 5

purpose, and according to information received there is the likelihood that the buildings will be started later this year. As the site is nearer the Bekwai-Akrokeri road, which is two and half miles away, there is the possibility that Jacobu village will be extended towards it in the future.

## THE AKAN SYSTEM OF INHERITANCE

It is the belief of the Ashantis that there are two great elements in every man<sup>and</sup>woman. The first element is "Bogya" or blood for which the general term is the "Abusua" or clan. The second one is "Ntoro" which may be translated by spirit. The "abusua" or blood is passed on by and through the female and cannot be transmitted by the male. In an exactly similar manner, the "ntoro" is transmitted by and through the male and cannot be transmitted by the female.

The Ashantis further believe that it is the male-transmitted "ntoro", mingling with the blood of the female, which accounts for the physiological mysteries of conception. The "ntoro" is used at times synonymously with "sunsun". "Sunsun" is termed the spiritual element in a man or woman upon which depend their force, personal magnetism, character, personality, power, soul; upon which depend health, wealth, worldly power, success in any venture, in fact everything that makes life worth living.

The law decrees that a union with the mother's sister's daughter or the father's brother's daughter is incest. In the former case such a union would entail the breaking of the law that two persons of like blood, i.e. clan, must never wed. In the latter example such a union would infringe the rule that like ntoro must not mate.

These facts explain many of the taboos or restrictive measures imposed during the period of gestation and some of the rites practised at the naming of an infant. A child observes his father's "ntoro" taboos

and not his mother's. As soon as a woman is married she generally observes her husband's particular ntoro taboos. Sometimes, however, these observances do not begin until she is pregnant.

Having now understood how the Akan System of Inheritance works, we may examine the training of the child, starting with attitudes towards having children.

### I. ATTITUDE TOWARDS HAVING CHILDREN.

We know that according to the Akan System of Inheritance, in the clan or "abusua" (which is synonymous with blood or "bogya") a woman alone can transmit blood to descendants, male or female. Under no conceivable circumstances whatsoever can a male transmit his blood which he derived from his mother. The male parent transmits to his children his "ntoro" which is his spirit only, but he can never transmit his blood to his offspring. It is the "abusua", i.e. clan or blood, in all cases which decides the succession to stools and inheritance of property. "Oba na owo barima", literally, it is a woman who gives birth to a man, and she alone can transmit the blood to a king. If all the women in an "abusua" die, their clan becomes extinct. The clan also becomes extinct when there are no offspring from the women folk. In Jacobu no woman stands alone, for behind the woman stand a united family bound by the tie of blood, which has power.

The more children a mother has the more powerful the "abusua" becomes. In this respect it is men in particular who are expected and looked upon to protect the

the "abusua". Having plenty of children affords the mother and other members of the family protection and status that are more than an adequate safe-guard against the ill-treatment by male or a group of males from outside. The position of a woman in Jacobu is one of great importance.

This explains the reason why parents of large families and mothers of twins or triplets are held in especial esteem in Jacobu. On the contrary childless married couples are subject to derision; the man is called by the vulgar "wax penis" (kote kraWa), and the woman "bonini", i.e. barren woman.

Sterility, apart from impotence, may be attributed to misbehaviour during and after puberty, and the evil influence of witches.

A sterile husband is not half as much subjected to ridicule as a sterile woman. The important role of a man in a family and society at large is to earn money and to be able to look after and protect the family. So once the man is sufficiently well off and plays his part he is alright and is esteemed in the "abusua". On the other hand if he bears plenty of children and has no means of livelihood but has to depend on other members of the family, he is regarded as "okwasea", i.e. a fool, and is subject to mockery in the family. His children are of no value to his "abusua": they belong to the wife's "abusua".

On the contrary the place of the woman in the "abusua", as it has already been stated, is important. Her duty is to bear as many children as possible. A woman in Jacobu would rather prefer to be poor and have children to possessing wealth and living without children. She prefers children to wealth. The brother is there to look after the children and so it does not really matter if she is poor.

A sterile woman therefore is looked upon as a good-for-nothing creature. She feels very unhappy in the family and in the community at large. Abuses and criticisms are often levelled upon her, if she happens to pick up a quarrel with her neighbour. She is called a witch and she is supposed to have eaten the babies in her womb. Little children disrespect her and tell her in the face that she has never begotten children and so she has no right to criticise or correct or even to ask them to do something for her.

When she is sick there is no one to care for her. She is neglected. When she dies her burial is poor because there are no children to mourn or weep for her. There is often a dispute in the "abusus" as to who should inherit her wealth. As a result of such treatment a sterile woman tends to grow bitter and envious of her sisters who have children and she is often unkind and unsympathetic towards her sisters' children.

Sterility is a good ground for divorce. If there is no offspring a few years after marriage, the elder of the "abusus" has the right to give the girl to another man in marriage. This practice continues until the woman marries someone with whom she can bear children. Consequently a husband becomes anxious and asks the wife to consult a juju man if some months after the marriage there are no signs of pregnancy. If the juju man, as he generally does, attributes the cause of the wife's sterility to a witch, sacrifices are offered to pacify the witch, who is supposed to have locked the wife's womb, and she is entreated by the juju man to open the womb for the wife.

On the other hand, the man may marry a second wife to prove that he is not impotent. Should the second wife bear children, the first wife must be prepared for

ridicule and abuse any time she picks up a quarrel with her "kora" (co-wife). Owing to such treatment a childless woman is even willing to give up all her wealth to seek for a single child.

In some "abusua" a childless woman may be given one or two children by her sister to stay with her and she must treat the children as her own. If she treats the children as she ought to do, they remain with her for the rest of their life and the sister will not claim her children. This is practised to console the childless woman who is helpful and kind in an "abusue".

Many Jacobu girls take care not to misbehave during puberty as it may cause sterility. It is believed that if a girl stays long after the first menstruation before she marries, she may find it extremely difficult to bear a child and if unlucky she may become sterile. That is the reason why Jacobu girls marry at an early age - between thirteen and eighteen years. However, many girls are of the opinion that due to economic reasons it is better to have a few children, about four to six only, in order to be able to look after them well enough and fit them for modern conditions. Fathers are not particularly anxious about the training of their children. And since not all mothers have brothers to look after their children, several mothers have to work hard in order to give their children the necessary education. Most mothers are anxious to send all their children to school, but owing to the high cost of living, some of the children only, especially the boys, are sent to school and the rest, particularly the girls, are left to be illiterates.

Most of the girls who say that they want to limit the size of their families do not know just how it could be done. A few are bold enough to say that the

only possible means is to resort to abortion. The means employed would be the drinking of medicine in the form of concoction of the leaves of a plant called "Abanibara" mixed with salt, or the taking of strong doses of mixture of Epsom Salts and laundry blue. The practice is strongly disapproved of by society and the two methods appear not to be commonly used. As a rule there is no means of limiting the size of the family.

Children must remain in their "abusua" and must not leave to join somebody else's "abusua". A sister may send some of her children to stay with her childless sister but not to someone outside her "abusua". But nowadays owing to the introduction of formal education some school boys and girls are permitted to leave the "abusua" and stay with their parents' friends in another town or village in order to attend school. But even then the parents are still responsible for their children. The guardians are not obliged to buy clothing for them unless they choose to do so. In the real sense, therefore, there is no adoption in Jacobu society.

#### Illegitimate children and orphans:

The payment and acceptance of "Aseda" is all that is necessary to constitute a strictly legal marriage in Jacobu. The "aseda", i.e. the thank-offering or the bride price, is paid by the father of the man to the father of the girl. The father of the girl gives a part of the money to the "abusua" of the bride, including her uncle, who takes half of the amount given. The rest is then shared among the males of the "abusua". The "aseda" may never be paid directly to the bride's mother; it must always be given to her father who in turn gives a portion of it to the "abusuafo".

The non-payment or non-acceptance however of an "aseda" while rendering a union, in a sense, irregular, does not necessarily seem to brand a couple who live to-

gether openly as a man and wife with the same stigma which in western civilised countries would attach to a couple living together out of wedlock. The cause of this is twofold. First, considerations of immorality simply do not enter into the question any more than they are in the cases, which we term "adultery". Secondly, owing to the incident that clan descent is traced through the female children of such a woman, upon whom the western culture confers no legal status, are in Ashanti not penalised or deemed illegitimate. The question, therefore, of illegitimate children does not arise in Jacobu at all. All children are recognised as legitimate.

"Mpena Awadie". This type of marriage means the mating of lovers, and it constitutes more or less a recognised form of union. Such a marriage consists of the open and permanent living together of a man and a woman without the prior payment of the "aseda". The children of such a union are legitimate and have equal right of succession or inheritance with those born from a strictly regular union. A woman in such a union has even certain advantages over her legally wedded sister. For example, she could leave her husband if he ill-treated her without her clan incurring any expenses. In such a marriage the husband cannot claim damages from any other man who may commit adultery with his wife, and the husband does not become liable for his wife's debts.

"Kuna Awadie". This term means literally marriage to a widow, and generally implies the inheritance of a widow or widows by the heir of their deceased husband. When a man dies and leaves a wife and children, it is considered proper for his heir to take his widow(or widows). Refusal to do so constitutes "musuo" (taboo) and the "saman"(ghost) of the late husband would be expected to take revenge. And public opinion would indeed be quick to condemn the man who shirked this responsibility. Should a woman refuse to

marry her late husband's surviving brother or heir, she is not compelled to do so; the "saman" is left to deal with her. But the "aseda" and all presents have to be returned to the heir unless there are children, in which case the mother may give these things to them. The widow and the children of the late husband remain in the house which they always occupied when he was living, and they are maintained by the heir. "The one who takes the gun of the deceased husband also takes his widow" is our proverb.

## II.

### PRE-NATAL PERIOD.

Typical Feelings of Pregnant Women. From investigation I found the following as the typical feelings of pregnant women in Jacobu:

From the first to the fourth month most pregnant women complain of morning sickness. Pregnancy is also characterized by a heavy state of drowsiness, nausea, vomiting and spitting, and loss of appetite. I watched pregnant women sleeping a lot in the afternoon and drinking plenty of water. Almost all the women I interviewed said they tend to have increased appetite for certain kinds of dishes which they do not ordinarily like, and tend to reject their favourites. For example, a woman who likes fufu and soup when in her normal state, may hate the taste of it when pregnant for the first three to four months, or sometimes throughout the period of pregnancy. The same woman who ordinarily does not like soup prepared from "nsusue", a kind of bitter garden eggs, may have excessive appetite for it when she is pregnant. Pregnant women become easily irritated and tend to lose weight. During the first two or three months some pregnant women refrain from sexual intercourse to avoid miscarriage. Most of them, however, feel very much for marital intercourse from the second to the fifth month and indulge in it excessively.

From the fourth to the sixth month there is an increase in appetite. Most women tend to eat too much as their appetite increases. The common dishes prepared are "nkantomere" (prepared cocoyam leaves) and plantain or yam or cocoyam; fish or meat soup and fufu; oranges and other fruits. They begin of course to put on weight. One of the women I interviewed complained of constipation after marital intercourse; she added that she did not enjoy marital intercourse due to pains in the vagina, and quarreled with the husband when he asked for it. The general tendency however is to have an excessive feeling for marital intercourse during the first five months. After the fifth month the women tend to have pains in the vagina and waist. Water begins to flow from the vagina which makes sexual intercourse rather unpleasant or painful at times.

From the sixth to the ninth month there is the tendency to further increase in appetite. Pains develop in the waist and lower abdomen and in joints of limbs, especially in the knee joints. The baby in the womb begins to move and the mother grows weaker and weaker. Pregnant women, though they feel easily tired to go about their usual work, seem to have the desire to work harder than before. This is partly due to the general belief that the harder a pregnant woman works the less difficulty she experiences at childbirth; and partly because they have no one to work for them. Pregnant women take care not to scratch themselves with any sharp instrument because it is believed that any sore or wound on a pregnant woman does not heal till after childbirth.

Taboos and Precautions. The following are some of the special taboos and precautions which a pregnant woman must observe:

It is the general belief that no one may say to a pregnant woman in the face that she is pregnant. Should anyone say so and a miscarriage follows later, that person is held to have been responsible and will consequently be fined. Special amulets are worn by the woman, during this period, around her waist to protect her and the un-

born child against witchcraft, to the influence of which both seem particularly susceptible at this stage.

Another way of ensuring the well-being of the mother and the child is by vaccination, and it is the responsibility of the mother of the pregnant woman to see to the precaution. The vaccination is done by the "Odunsifo" (native doctor), who also takes care and prescribes medicines for the pregnant woman until such time that she delivers. With a sharp knife or razor the "odunsifo" makes three small cuts on the forehead between the eyebrows. He makes similar cuts on the chest, at the joints of the shoulders and arms and feet, and finally at the back of the neck and the waist. This accounts for the small cicatrices seen on many Jacobu women which should not be confused with tattoo marks. After the cuts, a black powder prepared out of herbs and other substances is vigorously rubbed into the bleeding cuts. The medicine usually stops the bleeding, and this vaccination is considered to render the mother immune to any evil influences. A little of the black powder is dropped into a small bit of an alcoholic drink and given to the pregnant woman to drink after the "odunsifo" has, as is usual, tasted the medicine as a mark of good faith and to show and ensure that it is not poisonous. He then prescribes special herbs to be used in preparing palm-nut soup and fufu every other day, preferably in the morning, for the pregnant woman to partake. This medicine is known as "Abemuduro" (literally, medicine prepared from palm-nut), and it is supposed to give strength and vitality to both the pregnant woman and the unborn child.

The woman is then strictly warned by her native doctor not to eat in public, especially in the market place, because a witch may be attracted to partake of the food spiritually. The evil influence of the witch would,

it is believed, result in miscarriage. Foods which attract witches are palm-nut soup and foods prepared with palm oil.

The pregnant woman is again strictly warned by her parent (mother) not to commit adultery lest miscarriage and difficulty in childbirth may ensue. This is in any case a serious offence against the husband. When the time comes for her delivery the pregnant woman has to confess the names of her lovers; she should then on her knees ask pardon from the husband and pacify him with either fowls or a sheep according to the seriousness of the offence.

The husband of the pregnant woman is warned not to eat any of the foods which are forbidden by his "ntoro". For example, if he worships "Busumpra Ntoro" (a river rising in Ashanti and flowing into the sea near Shama), his "ntoro", forbids him to eat any of the following: a white fowl, a species of yam called "afase", bush buck, "tamiri" (large edible snail), and tortoise. Difficulty in childbirth may be attributed to the failure on the part of the husband to observe the "ntoro" taboos. The wife too must avoid breaking any of her own taboos, and she must also avoid abusing any "obosom" (god).

A pregnant woman should not look at a monkey or at any deformed being, not even a badly carved wooden figure, lest she should give birth to a child like it. She may, however, carry an "Akua ba" (1), a black Ashanti doll, because its long-shaped neck and beautiful head will help her to bear a child like it.

To ensure the well-being of the unborn baby the pregnant woman should strictly avoid splitting firewood, lest the baby may be born with a "gap in the head", a condition which is known as "mpamu"; she should always sit on a stool and not squat to eat, lest the baby be born with perpetual cold in the head.

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(1) See diagram on page 100

A pregnant woman should not buy any laundry blue or handle one or use it in washing clothes. It is believed that the baby would be born with its skin blue in colour. If a pregnant woman keeps articles which had been bought, e.g. kenky, vegetables of any kind, etc. under her abdomen, it is believed that the child will eventually become a thief. When the woman carries firewood or kenky or anything bought from the market on her head the baby's skin may become lumpy. She is not supposed to nurse a sore or wound on any one; the wound would become worse and take a long time to heal. When a pregnant woman eats too many snails, it is believed that the slimy substance may affect the baby and make its mouth water with slime when it is born.

I observed black patches on a newly born baby; after inquiring for the cause, I was told that it was the result of the mother who fried many foods during pregnancy. A pregnant woman should therefore not fry in hot oil.

When a woman in under pregnancy she is not supposed to harbour any ill-feeling against anyone, particularly her husband. All disputes between the husband and herself must be settled. If she refuses to be at peace with her husband, it is believed she will have difficulty in childbirth. In the morning the man should always get up before the woman. Should the woman get up and step across the man, the man will, it is supposed, feel drowsy and weak through out the day.

A previous coition with another woman by the husband, before sexual intercourse with the wife on the same day, is supposed to bring ill luck to the pregnant woman.

A pot full of soup should never be carried behind the pregnant woman. neither should it be lifted from its original place in the presence of the pregnant woman when she is eating. To avoid miscarriage and ill luck, when such a thing occurs the woman should stop eating at once.

A pregnant woman should neither lie on her back nor on her face; she should always lie on her side to avoid miscarriage. Lying on her back indicates death. Should a child lie on its face in her presence she must be slapped on the back by her in order to avoid ill luck.

No one should either walk across or stumble over the legs of the pregnant woman. She must shake hands with the offender immediately to avoid ill luck.

There should be no washing of clothes, no travelling, no fighting, no lifting of heavy things during the first three months lest miscarriage should result.

The above mentioned taboos and precautions however vary with the individual. They largely depend upon the kind of preventative medicine prescribed to the pregnant woman by her native doctor. They are strictly observed by those who have had continuous miscarriages or those who have to go to a native doctor or "obosomfo" (fetish priest) to help them to bear children.

With regards to work, it is commonly believed that the more a pregnant woman works the healthier and stronger her baby will become when it is born, and the easier it will be for the mother during the birth of her baby. It is claimed that constant work loosens the pelvis and ensures easy child-birth.

### III

#### BIRTH.

About the eighth month during pregnancy the woman goes home to the village of her own clan (abusua) to her mother's house to await confinement. The reason stated for this custom is the always present dread that she might be going to bring forth some monstrosity. Among her own clanfolk this would be kept a secret, and so ri-

dicule and other consequences to her husband's people would be avoided. There are traditional stories of women having brought forth half-human and half-monkeys, half-fish and half-man, children with three or more breasts, six or more toes, etc. All such would, of course, be destroyed as also hermaphrodites immediately after birth. My grandmother told me of an old woman still alive in Jacobu, who gave birth to a child whose intestines were placed outside his stomach. She strictly forbade me to let any word bearing on it slip from my tongue. "It was a well guarded secret", she remarked.

The actual act of parturition takes place in the room in the compound set aside for washing. The simple reason assigned for this is to avoid staining the bedroom with fluid from the vagina. No previous preparation is made for the coming baby, and no anaesthetics are used during child-birth. Some experienced mothers bring forth<sup>n</sup> their own without any help, others while they are at work on the farm, from where the baby is carried home to be washed.

Males are not permitted to be present in the labour room during labour. The mother, the midwife and one or two close relatives are generally in attendance. But the fewer the attendants the better because some people in the "abusua" are suspected of witchcraft.

Old clean cloths are strewn upon the floor and upon this the woman sits with her back to the wall, while she is further supported by one of the midwives, who stands behind her, placing her arms under the arm-pits of the recumbent woman and placing her hands against her breasts. Two other women each holding an arm. Another person sits in front with her left foot under the patient's buttocks and with her toe pressed against her anus. As soon as the child begins to make its appearance, the old

women coax the mother saying : "Mia wani kyem!", literally press your eyes, i.e. strain). The woman squatting in front also assists in drawing forth the child. As soon as it is born, all the women shout: "Ye-da Nyame ase" ("Thanks be to God"). The child is at once named after that day of the week on which it is born. For instance, if a female child is born on Sunday she will be called "Akosua". This name and day are called "kra din" and kra da" (i.e. the spirit name and day) respectively. To the child's natal day name a patronymic name is added later on.

The umbilical cord is cut against a piece of wood with a sharp knife. The end of the cord still attached to the child's body is coiled up on its abdomen. The after-birth is wrapped in a piece of cloth and buried deep in a corner somewhere in the house, or thrown into the village, "sumenase" (midden). A still baby is treated in a similar way.

Should the baby fail to cry immediately it has been born, it is slapped to induce it to cry. If it looks too weak and fails to cry after the slap, she is suspected of hunger. She is then given very soft mashed banana and water to drink to revive it. The excreta of the infant are called "kra bin" (ghosts' excreta) and are rubbed on the wall of the room and the following is said: "Dan gye me ba" (lit. Wall take my child). The child is supposed to be looked after by the wall when left alone in the room.

The infant is then washed with cold water and soap three times to ensure perfect cleansing. It is said that the child develops an offensive odour on the body if it is not properly washed at birth. The baby is then wrapped in a soft cloth and put on soft cloths and placed beside the mother.

The father and the relatives are then allowed to see the new born baby. The child is hailed and greeted

thus: "Waba a, tena ase" (lit. if you've come, stay with us). Then the mother is greeted and congratulated: "Wotir nkwa" and "Yeda Nyame ase" (lit. Life is on your head and Thanks be to God). The husband too is similarly greeted. During this time, there is great joy in the house and the husband feels proud and very happy.

Then the infant's throat is moistened with the juice from lime fruit or sometimes with a little rum. The finger is dipped in the liquid and the back of the baby's throat is touched with it. When neither rum or juice from lime fruit is available a very small quantity of ground pepper is mixed in water and a drop is given to the baby to gulp.

The "odunsifo" (native doctor) is informed as soon as possible. He comes to congratulate the mother and to vaccinate" the baby. He first lifts up the new baby by the hands supporting the baby's head with the left hand. He examines the baby and vaccinates it in a similar way to how he vaccinated the mother when she was pregnant. The vaccination is performed to protect the baby against "bad eyes" or evil influences and, what is more important, against convulsions. Visitors are not allowed to visit the new born baby until after the eighth day. This is done to keep away any people who may be witches and who may bring ill luck to the baby and its mother. Those people who are suspected of evil influences are just not allowed to visit the child at any time.

The mother undergoes careful medical treatment to enable her to regain her normal weight and strength. She "sits on" a pot of hot water three times daily during the first week to allow the warm vapour affect her anus and the vagina. Ground ginger and pepper mixed with other medicines are pused up the anus and the vagina. Some of the medicine is smeared all over the lower abdomen, waist, and thighs. She is also told to walk straight and never

to sit loosely, i.e. with legs apart. It is supposed that anything the woman does during the first week is sure to become a fixed habit. For instance, if she does not walk straight, she should walk crooked for the rest of her life. If she refuses to undergo the prescribed treatment, it is held that she would grow lean and bony and remain so for the rest of her life. The mother is regularly fed on fufu and palm-nut soup prepared with certain herbs called "abemuduro".

The infant is not fed on the mother's breast for the first two or three days if there is no milk in the breast. The baby is usually given to a foster mother to be fed. The age of the foster mother's child is not considered. She will continue to feed the baby until there is sufficient milk in the mother's breast.

It is believed that when a child is born into this world, a ghost-mother mourns the loss of her child in the "samandow" (the spirit world). During the first week no one is very certain whether the infant is going to turn out a human child or prove, by dying before this period has elapsed, that it was never anything more than some wandering ghost. It is not addressed in any endearing terms, and it is given any old rag to lie upon. Both the mother and the child remain indoors during these eight days, and the mother is considered unclean.

"Ntetea" Ceremony on the Eighth Day. On the eighth day the infant's father brings gifts to the mother and the child, which generally include the following. For the mother a cloth, fish and meat, and chop money. For the child, he brings a metal spoon, two aluminium bowls, a new mat, a pillow, a comb, a quantity of kerosene, a lamp, soap, a baby's gold ring, and a small cloth known as the "funuma ntama" (lit. Umbilical cloth).

Very early that morning, before dawn the mother

rises from bed and washes herself. She then dresses in her best attire with her shoulder, breasts, and arms smeared with white clay, and she wears white beads around her neck and wrists. The baby is washed and armlets and anklets and "leglets" of particular kinds of beads are bound round its limbs. These beads are interspersed with charms and little gold nuggets. She wears her ring; her eyebrows are made to appear thick and bushy by painting them with powdered charcoal, and her body is rubbed with sheabutter. The new mat and new pillow are laid in the sun and upon this the infant is placed and covered with his new cloth. This is the first occasion on which the infant has been allowed out of doors into daylight. It is allowed to undergo the sun bath which is supposed to take the cold air of the spirit world, from whence it is deemed to have come. After being thus exposed for some little time, the child is removed and again carried indoors. The mother is accompanied by a few relatives to give thanks to the household, the midwife, and other relatives.

The Naming of a Child: On the eighth day the child is given its personal name. The only individual, who can bestow this name upon it, is one of the child's own "ntoro" division, i. e. someone belonging to that spiritual body to which the infant's father belongs. This may be the infant's father, its paternal grandfather, its father's brother, its father's brother's son, its father's brother's daughter, its father's sister and so on.

A male child is named after his paternal grandfather, never after his male ancestors on the mother's side. In the case of a girl even we would not find her named after her maternal grandmother. The father's "ntoro" plays an important part in the naming ceremony. If the paternal grandfather is alive, the parents will probably take the child to him to be named after him, if it is a boy, and to be

named after a female relative on the paternal side, if the child is a girl.

The mother will place the infant on the grandparent's knees; (he) then spits into the infant's mouth to strengthen the spirit which is already there and which, of course, is his own "ntoro" passed through his son. He will say at the same time: "Agya bosom Bosomtwe, me ba asumasi na wawo ha, na ode no abere me, na me de no to me ho asumasi; nyini, be to me be ma me biribi minni" (lit. Father and god Bosomtwe or whatever particular "ntoro" division to which he and the infant belong, my child so and so has begotten a child and he has brought him to me, and I now call him after myself, naming him so and so; grant that he grow up and meet me and let him give me food to eat).

He makes the infant such a gift as he can afford. Other members of the family give gifts to the infant in the form of money, powder or pomade or dresses. The child when he grows up is entitled to say: "Asumasi na oto ntasuo gu m'anom" (lit. so and so put spittle into my mouth). It is believed that in most cases the infant develops certain outstanding characteristics of the person he or she is named after.

The naming ceremony does not always take place on the same day as the "ntetea" custom. If the person whose duty it is to name the infant is absent, this part of the rites may be delayed..

After the "ntetea" celebration, the child may for the first time be carried on the mother's back. It may then be taken out by day for the first time and be properly dressed also for the first time.

It is believed that if the first born of a new mother is a female, it is an indication of easy and less difficult life. On the other hand if the first born is a male, it is a sign of hardships throughout her life. Meanwhile the

baby is washed twice daily and in the evening it is smeared all over the body with sheabutter to ensure sound and peaceful sleep. No one is supposed to share the baby's toilet with it otherwise he will deprive her of the possibility of growing fat.

¶ Forty days after birth the infant is placed in a sitting posture. The mother sits it down, saying: "Supreme Being, we thank you that forty days have fallen upon the child, and we now take the child's buttocks and set them on the ground!" Eighty days after the birth of the child the mother is again dressed in her best white cloth, and adorned with bangles and earrings. The child is beautifully dressed and adorned with gold, and she is carried on the back of her sister or a near female relative. The child's mother walks behind with a feeling of triumph over death. She is greeted: "Wotiri nkwa'" or "Afirimu" (lit. out of the arms of death). Some relatives accompany her. They go from house to house to greet and thank other friends, well wishers and relatives, particularly those who came to congratulate her after the birth of her child. Gifts in the form of money are given to the mother to buy powder or dresses for the baby; or to the mother to buy some eggs to eat and thank her soul for being saved from death. Some Christian mothers attend a thanksgiving service before they go out to greet people. A photograph of the child may be taken for the first time.

After eighty days are over the mother is permitted to go back to her husband's house.

Some Beliefs connected with Child-Birth. The birth of the third, sixth, and ninth children are considered the lucky ones in the family. The fifth is supposed to be specially unlucky. To give a person of Jacobu five of anything deliberately would be regarded as an intentional attempt to bring the recipient ill fortune. The number three is as

lucky as the number five is the reverse.

When the previous issue of a union have all died young, such losses are looked upon as caused by malignant spiritual influences. To counter these the parents resort to various devices. One of these is to suffix the name "donko" (slave) to the natal name of the next baby. So that Kojo, for instance, becomes Kojo Donko. The same idea gives us "Moshi" added to the ordinary name. The Moshi are one of the tribes in the North from which the Ashantis formerly drew many slaves. The infant may be given the tribal marks of one of the slave class (the Ashantis never tattoo themselves). Again, children may be dedicated to a particular "obosom" (god), who is then expected to protect them. The hair of the children in such cases is allowed to grow long and to the strands is fastened every conceivable kind of charm. All such children are known as "Begyina Mma" (lit. come and stay children).

Twins are not killed, but they are considered to bring ill luck to the parents if they are the first born. A woman bearing triplets is greatly honoured.

Should the woman have difficulty in bringing forth, steps have to be taken, according to the supposed cause, to combat the obstructing agents. The reason may be ascribed to one or other of several causes. One of them may be that her husband's "ntoro" is cruel or hard. The antidote for this is the application of or <sup>the</sup> taking of certain medical plants. On the other hand the woman may be suspected of adultery. She is then bade to disclose the name of the man subsequent to her having become pregnant. At the same time she is warned that should she be obdurate she would certainly die in the child-birth. This threat usually gets the desired result.

#### IV. FEEDING.

##### L. NURSING.

The new born baby is generally not fed during the first twenty four hours or more. It is allowed to sleep throughout without any disturbance. Only water is given to it. During this period the mother cleans her nipples, and rubs a mixture of shea-butter and common salt on her breasts to hasten the flow of the breast milk.

The baby is then fed when it cries for food. The mother lifts up the baby's hands with her right hand and supports the baby's head with her left hand, and lays it on her lap, nearly parallel to her breast. She then holds up the left breast in her right palm and raises the breast a little, allowing the baby to suckle. The baby's head is supported with a soft headkerchief placed in the left palm. The headkerchief is used to protect the baby's delicate head from any scratches. The baby is fed until it refuses to take in any more milk; when it so refuses to suckle it is not forced to take in more. There is an Ashanti proverb which runs thus: "Addie ne nda de yenkor " (lit. there is no need to coax a child to eat or sleep). In other words, it will do so by itself when it feels like it. On the other hand, if the baby refuses to eat and this is suspected as being due to illness, the mother becomes worried and examines the parts of the baby's body to find out exactly the matter is with him. Sometimes it is due to stomach ache, and the experienced mother can easily detect that from the child's actions. The child is then given the appropriate treatment: then it is rubbed all over with sheabutter or mentholatum and allowed to rest.

The baby is fed any time she cries for food. It is even during the late hours of the night when both the mother and the child are in bed, the child sleeping

with the breast in its mouth. In the case of a very young child this kind of feeding is not approved of because it often results in a cold in the baby's head. The mother has to get up and feed the baby properly each time she cries for food even in the night. This, I was told, is one of the difficulties in nursing as the child deprives the mother of her sleep.

The Mother with Little Milk. The mother with little milk invites a foster mother to feed her baby. The foster mother feeds her own child who may be one or two years older as well as the infant. Some mothers disapprove of the idea as the child easily contracts diseases such as coughs from the older child. They therefore prefer to give artificial feeding instead, provided they can afford to buy powdered milk.

The mother who has too little milk is however advised to take plenty of palm-nut soup and roasted groundnuts in order to get sufficient milk. She constantly rubs shea-butter mixed with salt on her breasts for the same reason. A mother with too little milk is sympathised with.

Marital Intercourse is permitted during nursing. Some mothers resume marital intercourse forty days after child-birth: others not before three months are over, and still others refrain from it till after the sixth month. So that it all depends upon individual's tastes and desires, although it appears that for the majority of women the average period for the resumption of sexual intercourse is three months after child-birth.

General. The baby is carried and fondled by the elder sisters and brothers. They usually give their tongues to the baby to suck. The baby is caressed or tickled, and lullabies are sung to it when it cries.

The baby's face is wiped regularly with cold wet piece of towel to ensure beautiful clear features. The

head is moulded into shape - the typical Ashanti flat head - with a wet towel, and the nose is pulled into shape between the thumb and the index finger after having touched a slightly heated object, usually a stone.

When a baby has hiccoughs a piece of thread from an old rag or cloth is twisted and placed on its head and then water is given to the child to sip or drink. The twisted thread is supposed to stop the hiccoughs. I watched this treatment several times but could not be convinced that it had any effect whatsoever on the hiccoughs. When I asked the reason why this is practised, a mother told me that it is just the general and accepted practice. When a baby breaks wind, a song is sung while it is fondled, and this indicates that she breaks wind in order to grow fat. Such an expression is used - "Tado" (lit. break wind and grow fat), and the following sung:

"Yaa kutukuru gyasie!

Oka ne ho a tuu!

Oka ne ho a paa!

Kutukuru gyasiee!"

Attitude towards Nursing. Most of the young mothers of Jacobu told me that though it is burdensome and irritating to bear children yet they enjoy nursing their babies tremendously. Nursing becomes a burden when the husbands neglect their older children and the mothers have to work hard to maintain them. Mothers of large families are held in special esteem and so women of Jacobu will pay anything to have children. They do not mind losing their figure as a result of bringing forth because the honour and esteem they enjoy are worthwhile.

An elderly woman was of the opinion that girls of today are not as affectionate as women used to be in times past towards their children. They seem not to care when their children cry. When she was a young mother, nothing

pleased her more than when she was asked to hurry with her bath and come to feed her baby. She felt very proud and motherly towards the baby and she never allowed the baby to continue crying for a long time without attending it. The baby gets sick when she cries, and what is more, she concluded: "Awooya" (childbirth is a difficult and responsible job), and so the baby should be properly cared for.

## 2. WEANING.

It is believed in Jacabu that children get seriously ill and sometimes die when they are weaned too early, i.e. between the ages of one and two. The children are allowed to suckle up to the age of three or four. I observed children between the ages of two and three sucking their pregnant mothers' breasts. I was informed some mothers even allow older children to suckle the same breast with a new baby.

Some mothers however begin to wean their older children as soon as they realise that they are pregnant. Such mothers are of the opinion that when they allow their children to suckle while they are pregnant, the children become sickly and susceptible to diseases, especially diarrhoea. Various methods are, therefore, employed in effecting weaning, the following being some of them.

The child to be weaned is not allowed to sleep with the mother; she sleeps on a separate bed with the father. The mother rubs bitter herbs on the tips of the breasts to make the milk taste bitter. Sometimes the mother sucks a little milk from the breast and then spews it out with a very wry face, saying, "Koo! bon, bon!" (Bah! it smells). She does this to convince the child that it really smells, and that the milk has become poisoned. Sometimes the mother pastes something the child is afraid of unto the breast. For example, a feather is pasted there in order to frighten the child away. At other times too when the child wants to

suckle, she is given something it likes best, for example, her favourite food, to distract her attention.

The weaning of children is gradual and the minimum period is four to eight days. I was told that some children stop sucking within two days, and the weaning is completed once and for all. Other stubborn children stop sucking for sometime and then start all over again.

Some mothers wean their children at their own convenience without any relation to the birth of the next child. Others believe that they are deprived of any possibility of growing fat when children are allowed to suck for a long period.

### 3. SOLID FOOD.

Solid food is introduced before weaning. It is believed that when a baby crawls and picks up solid food, say a piece of cooked cassava from the ground, it should not be taken away from it. The baby must be allowed to eat it. Should the mother prevent it from eating the food it is believed the child may become ill as a result. The conception is that the child came into this world to eat and grow - "akodaa baa addi" is an Ashanti proverb - and so it should not be prevented from eating. It is also believed that a child grows healthier and quicker when it eats food picked from the ground.

Solid food is <sup>therefore</sup> introduced when the child is between four and six months old. Fufu is seldom introduced before a child is six months old. The mothers told me that the child becomes sickly when fufu is introduced early.

At three months old the child is given "akasa" in addition to breast milk. The "akasa" is given by spoon. Instead of using sugar the sweet water from boiled ripe plantain is mixed with the "akasa". Plain soup and other foods such as boiled rice, yam, cassava, are given to the child.

Oranges, bananas, pawpaw are given to the child when it wants them. Fruit is not given to the child regularly, since it is believed to cause stomach ache. Eggs are considered not to be good enough for children; they are believed to cause stomach ache as well.

The mother ties around the child's wrist an ivory or wooden pacifier for the child to suck to prevent it from sucking its fingers. Some mothers told me that thumb sucking indicates hunger, but they believe also that it is a taboo, which promotes the early death of parents. And so the children are not allowed to suck their fingers.

The child is fed when it cries so there is no regularity about the feeding of babies. Older children are fed at any time of the day, and especially when they complain of hunger. Some mothers pre-chew the food before giving it to their children between three and four months old. Others however are against the idea of pre-chewing food; they prefer giving a fairly big solid piece of starchy food to a child to prevent the child from swallowing bits of the food when they are not well chewed.

At twenty-four months old the child<sup>\*</sup> is supposed to be able to feed herself. The lazy child is still fed by the mother even at the age of two. From now up to about six years the child feeds alone, while her older brothers and sisters share one common plate. At this stage the child is taught to use her right hand but she is not given any specific instruction in table manners.

However, as the child grows older, she is taught to eat properly. The following are some of the table manners taught her.

The child must not put all her five fingers in her mouth when eating fufu. She must use two fingers - the middle and the index fingers - plus the thumb in cutting a morsel of fufu. The index finger must not touch the nose,

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\* From now on for convenience sake the child will be considered as a female, and the pronoun "she" will be used.

while a morsel of fufu is being put into her mouth. If such a thing happens it is believed the mother of the child will not live long. The child is also taught neither to eat hurriedly nor to make a mess with the fufu in the soup. The child must be checked if she puts back chewed bones into the soup or spits into the soup. As a rule, children are not supposed to talk while eating.

When a child belches at table it is not regarded as bad manners, but rather as a sign of having taken <sup>in</sup> enough.

The eldest of the children takes her share of the meat and gives the rest to the next eldest, who in turn takes her share and passes the rest on, until it reaches the youngest of the family. There is often a good deal of discontentment with regard to the sharing of meat. To avoid this ~~the~~ wise mother shares the meat among the children before they start to eat. The child who takes the last morsel is supposed to have swallowed her mother and she has to wash the basin.

When a child refuses to eat, she is examined closely to find out whether she is ill. If she is suspected of any illness, she is given treatment. She may be given some medicine to drink or "Syringed" with some solution according to the nature of the illness. On the other hand, if the child is not sick, but is merely annoyed with somebody, no one minds her after she has been asked three times or so to partake of the food. The sympathetic mother leaves some of the food in a pot in the kitchen without the knowledge of the child. When the child is hungry and goes to the kitchen in search of food, she comes upon it but takes care not to let anyone hear her or else she will be teased. After she has had her fill, she plays all sorts of tricks to give the impression to others that she had not touched any food. For instance, she would eat the inside of the fufu, making a hollow in it; then she would turn the rest upside down. At a first glance one would

think that the fufu has not been touched at all.

Breakfast usually consists of either roasted or boiled plantain or cocoyam served with "nkontomere" (ground and prepared cocoyam leaves). In the afternoon, when the mother is away working in the farm, the 'older sibling' boils some plantain or cocoyam or yam for the children to eat. The big meal of the day is prepared in the evening after the arrival of the father and mother from the farm. The children are encouraged to eat until they can hardly take in any more. The contention is that the baby or child will stop eating on her own, when she cannot take in any more food. And so to the Jacobu mother the question of over-feeding does not arise. It is common in Jacobu to find children with protruding bellies, while the mothers do not realise anything wrong with it. Should a child vomit after eating, she is supposed to be ill. In the case of a baby, it is a sign of getting fat. Rarely do mothers attribute illness to over-eating. In special cases where a mother has been watching a child eating almost every hour, she may attribute the child's sickness during the day to over-eating.

There do not appear to be any foods which are considered specially good for children. The children eat the same foods as adults and like the adults have their own particular tastes. Some like fufu, others do not: but soon, however, they enjoy picking berries and fruits which attract them. These fruits and berries which adults do not like may be termed "children's special food".

Generally speaking, children are not forced to eat foods they dislike. They are rewarded with foods they like for being good in the house or taking their medicine without grumbling. Some mothers punish their children by taking their food away from them when they misbehave. Others push ground ginger or pepper up the anus as a punishment instead of starving their children.

## V. ELIMINATION.

When the child is three months old, the mother puts her on a chamber pot every morning before she gives her her bath. The chamber pot is placed between the mother's thighs and the child is held over it. During the day, when the child shows the desire for elimination, the mother attends her promptly. A child who does not soil herself readily is regarded a clean child; and she is encouraged by the mother, who readily praises her good performance.

Should a child under four months eliminate into the mother's food while the mother is eating, she is not supposed to throw the food away. She has merely to remove the faeces from the soup and continue to eat. There is a general belief that if the food is thrown away, the child will become seriously ~~ill~~<sup>ill</sup> and may die in the end. However, when a child of above four months eliminates into her mother's food, she has only to taste the food, but she is at liberty to throw it away without causing any disaster for the child.

From about eight to twelve months old, the mother begins to train the child to use the pot herself when she wants to ease herself; but the child is supposed to urinate any where on the compound during the day time\*. The common practice, however, is that children are shown a corner of the compound where they can ease themselves. The faeces are left lying about until the mother is less busy; then only will she clean them up with a leaf or a rag.

The mother does not show anger or disgust over a child's dirtiness; but other adults who are not mothers express disgust over the child's dirtiness. When a child soils the clothes of an adult carrying her, it is regarded as good luck for the adult. And, moreover, if the adult is childless, this occurrence is believed to be a sign that she

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\* Insert: At night he is taught to use a pot when she wishes to urinate.

will bear a child in the near future. An adult who becomes disgusted with a child's dirtiness is also regarded as one lacking affection for children.

At twenty-four months, the child continues to use the corner of the compound as latrine. From time to time, however, the mother teaches her how to use the public latrine by taking her to the latrine and performing eliminatory functions in front of her.

At these different stages, the mother examines and criticises the quantity and quality of the child's faeces. If a baby's stool is green and full of slime, the mother knows that the child is suffering from "Asabere" ( a very high fever, which sometimes results in convulsions). If the stool is watery, it is a symptom of diarrhoea. If there is blood in the stool, it is a sign that the child is suffering from dysentery. And, lastly, if the baby's stool is hard and irregular, it is an indication of constipation.

The mother uses certain herbs called "nkodea nkodea bodeg" to cure "asabere". She grinds the herbs, mixes them with water and a small <sup>quantity of</sup> ground pepper and ginger, and syringes the child with the mixture. Certain herbs called "afona nkoom" are also ground and mixed with "hyere" (white clay) and water, and the mixture is used in the same way in cases of diarrhoea. When it is a case of dysentery, a mixture of ground and dried pawpaw leaves, a small quantity of ground pepper, and water is used.

When a child under two months old suffers from constipation, the bark of a certain tree called "afona" is put in the child's drinking water to purge her. An older child is given a purgative, for example, a dose of castor oil.

There is no special toilet language for children, and they are allowed to speak about elimination at any time, except at meals.

If an old child breaks wind nothing is said about it. But if it occurs continually she may be suspected of stomach

ache. Should the child break wind at meals, the pot of fufu is placed on her head while the rest of the children partake of the food. After the meal, she is supposed to wash the dish. On the other hand, if she breaks wind intentionally in the presence of adults, ground pepper is pushed up the anus to punish her.

Children above two years are not supposed to wet their beds at night. The child may be beaten for bed-wetting. Sometimes the mother syringes the child with prepared medicine from a native doctor called "twodo beaduro" (medicine for bed-wetting). Other times instead of beating the child, ground pepper is pushed up the anus.

Should a child of above six years wet the sleeping mat regularly at night, the parents do not flog her, but call in small boys and girls of the child's age, and order them to make their child perform the "bosua bono" dance. The child is tied up in his bed-mat and red clay is smeared all over the body. She is led into the nearest grove, after she has been adorned with "nsanso" ( a kind of nettle which irritates the skin), and water is thrown over her. After this performance, the boys and girls follow her up and down the village street, singing the following song:

"Twodo bi a e! wosi woket anadwo!  
Twodo bi a e! wosi wo ntama anadwo!  
Yene wo ronngoro Twodo!  
Ababaawa tworodo ebianan wo dwenso!  
Yene wo ronngoroo! Twodo ee!"

(Lit. You wash your cloth in the night!  
You wash your sleeping mat in the night!  
We won't play with you, Tworodo!)

Then the child is taken to an elder of the family and made to swear the oath: "Meka wo nan se menndwens anadwo bio!" (Lit. "I swear by your leg that I will not wet my mat in the night again.) She is then led to the village "gyadua" (the tree under whose shade the village folk sit in the evenings) and bade to say aloud: "Nana Gyadua! meka wo nan se menndwens anadwo bio!" (lit. Grandfather Gyadua! I swear

by your leg that I will not wet my mat again at night.) At last she is set free to wash herself clean.

It is believed that after such a disgraceful treatment, when the child feels like wetting her bed in the night she remembers the performance and gets up to ease herself in a chamber pot. This public ridicule is said to be a very effective means of checking bed-wetting at night.

Toilet training is supposed to be completed between the ages of three and four.

## VI. MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

A new baby is not carried on the back until she is about one week old. The baby's head and hands are supported when she is being handled. For some time the baby's body, including her arms, is tied under the cloth with which she is being carried at the back. At the age of three months, the mother begins to leave one hand of the baby untied when she carries on the back, to allow the hand free movement. As the baby learns to control her head and trunk well enough, both hands are left untied when she is being carried on the back.

The baby wears a hat made of cotton or rayon to protect her head from the heat of the sun, when the mother takes her out of doors. Sometimes, instead of a hat, the mother covers her head with her own upper cloth. The mother continues to carry the baby on her ~~back~~ until the baby is about one year old. Even then the mother continues to carry her from time to time until she is about <sup>two</sup> years old. Some mothers carry their babies until they <sup>are</sup> about four to five years old, or when they bear new babies. A baby may <sup>also</sup> be carried by a sibling relative or friend.

The baby at the age of three or four months can control the head and trunk well enough to sit upright with safety if supported with cushions or cloths. Usually a sibling is

asked to sit behind the child to support her and prevent her from falling over, and until she is able to sit without any support. The child is not taught to crawl, but she is encouraged when she shows signs of doing so.

At about six to eight months old, the baby begins to push herself along on her stomach or back. She then begins to crawl, and soon afterwards to creep. I watched some children creep without first crawling and others sitting on one lap and using both hands and the opposite foot as propellers to creep.

Next the child begins to side-step. At this stage, she begins to pull herself upright by holding on to the legs of adults or tables. She gets every assistance and encouragement. Adults play with her and encourage her to repeat her efforts by singing to her and clapping their hands. The child enjoys the songs and attempts, sometimes, to dance during the brief time she tries to stand upright.

Some mothers provide their children with wooden wheels\* to push about and assist them to walk. The mother or sibling watches that she does not fall down during her practices. To encourage her the sibling or the mother sometimes holds her hands and gently draws her forward towards herself. Boiled eggs and small presents in the form of money are given to the child on her first attempt to walk in order to congratulate and encourage her.

As a rule, walking is not forced on the child. She is allowed to creep until she is ready for walking. It is said that the legs may become **crooked** if she walks too early. A child is only forced to walk when walking has been delayed for over two years. In this case she may be suspected of becoming an "obafan" (cripple). The child's legs are tied with pounded herbs against a flat piece of wood, and she is stood against a wall. This practice is rare. The commonest treatment for inability to walk as early as is expected is by pushing up the anus some prepared herbs.

\* See diagram on page 101

This treatment, I was told, is very effective, and I was shown two children who, it was claimed, were forced to walk by that method.

At the crawling stage, the child becomes troublesome. It picks and eats anything she finds on the ground. She may even crawl to the fireplace. The mother, however, takes great care and watches that the baby does not hurt herself. Should the baby burn or cut herself, the mother is compelled by custom to pacify her husband by giving him yams, eggs, and fowls. The husband may even demand a sheep if the accident is very serious. This is practised to check the negligence of certain mothers.

As soon as the child begins to walk with some degree of steadiness, she is seldom carried on its mother's back. She is by this time generally too heavy to be carried about, and she may be carried only when the mother goes on long distances on foot. Usually the child is left at home in charge of older siblings while the mother goes to work on the farm.

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After ".....when she wants to!" please add the following paragraph:

Jacobi children enjoy playing outside with their playmates and so when a child sits still, she is suspected of illness. It is said that a child does not think and worry herself and so it is not natural for a child to sit still unless she is sick. If on the other hand she is annoyed with somebody and refuses to play or talk, no one minds her.

have her meal and then go to bed when she wants to.

asked to sit behind the child to support her and prevent her from falling over, and until she is able to sit without any support. The child is not taught to crawl, but she is encouraged when she shows signs of doing so.

At about six to eight months old, the baby begins to push herself along on her stomach or back. She then begins to crawl, and soon afterwards to creep. I watched some children creep without first crawling and others sitting on one leg and using both hands and the opposite foot as propellers to creep.

Next the child begins to side-step. At this stage, she begins to pull herself upright by holding on to the legs of adults or tables. She gets every assistance and encouragement. Adults play with her and encourage her to repeat her efforts by singing to her and clapping their hands. The child enjoys the songs and attempts, sometimes, to dance during the brief time she tries to stand upright.

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Between the ages of two and five the child is not allowed to play often outside the house for fear of her getting lost. She is warned not to play in the streets or go too far away from the house. She is often threatened with the "nantwee" (cow) and "atete konone" (men who cut off hearts), when she tries to wander off or play in the streets. Sometimes the mother punishes the child by pushing pepper up the anus if she continues to wander off. The mother shows alarm if the child stays too long outside in the evening. As a rule boys and not girls usually wander off into the streets. When the child is over six years, she is allowed to move freely outside the house playing with her playmates; but in the evenings she has to come home to have her meal and then go to bed when she wants to.

## VII. SLEEP.

I observed that the children in Jacobu are neither taught regular sleeping habits nor are they forced by any means to go to bed. What happens is that, when parents go to bed, they only ask the children to get inside the room so that they may lock the door. But whether they sleep or not when they get inside the house is no concern of the parents. Only babies are coaxed and petted to sleep. The older children are left to themselves. There is a well-known saying which runs: "Nda ne adidie dea yennkoro" (eating and sleeping are never forced on a child). The conception is that a child will fall asleep when she feels to; there is no need to ask or force her to when she does not feel to. On this account children are allowed to play inside the house and go to bed at any time.

It is a common practice to see children playing outside in the street during moonlit nights. Some stay at home to listen to folk tales and go to bed between 10 p.m. and twelve midnight. Those who go out to play stay late and come home between the hours of ten and eleven. It is common to see mothers go out with their lamps in search of their children in the night. Parents do not bother about those who remain and play indoors, but about those who stay too long outside. Such children are beaten or smacked when the parents have to go to look for them. Some children fall asleep when they listen to Ananse folk tales, and these are carried into the bedroom if they are young, or pinched or slapped to wake up if they are older.

Few children have separate mats of their own; two or three children share a mat together. In several of the homes parents and children sleep together in a room. The mothers usually leave the older girls and other relatives to sleep in the home while they go to sleep in their husbands' houses. Older boys have usually a common and separate room, and older girls always sleep with the children in the

mother's bedroom. Overcrowding is common in Jacobu not because of lack of accommodation, but sleeping together in a room tightens the thread of kinship in a family. Apart from this, children between one and ten years and babies sleep with parents or relatives in order to be more quickly attended if anything happens to them during the night.

Where the parents live together, they also share a common room with all the children except older boys of adolescent age. And the latter are not allowed to sleep in the same room with girls of the same age. A sick child is always transferred to her mother's bed. While adults use bedsteads - either iron or wooden - all children use mats.

Although children do not appear to go to bed early, especially during moonlit nights, they get sufficient sleep because when they fall asleep in the afternoons they are not disturbed. Older girls of ten to twenty years are taught to wake up at 5 a.m. in order to go to fetch water from the village well or stream, and to do their housework. A girl who does not wake up early is regarded an "okwadwofo" (lazy), and is considered unlikely to get a good husband, because men do not want to marry lazy girls. Much emphasis is placed on girls getting up early and doing their housework in time, because, in the first place, they have to walk for about a mile sometimes to get some water, and, secondly, it is considered that if she does not bring home water in time, her housework will be delayed. Some girls get their water ready for the next day in the evening, and this procedure too makes some girls go to bed late in the evening.

### VIII. HEALTH.

The main precautions which are taken to safeguard health are that babies and older children are syringed with an infusion from selected herbs once in a while. At other times pepper and ground ginger is pushed up the anus of the older children to safeguard their health. In addition to this "dudo" (boiled herbs) is given to older children to drink once in a while. Normally children are not given medicine to take unless they are ill. Nevertheless simple and ordinary health practices are carried out.

Children are taught to clean their teeth every morning before breakfast. They use either a chewing stick or crushed charcoal and the stem of plantain. They take their bath at least once a day. No adolescent is allowed to take their breakfast without having first cleaned their teeth and had their bath. Should an adolescent, especially the female, neglect <sup>to do</sup> this simple practice, she is subjected to ridicule and told in the face that she is an "opete" (i.e. as dirty as a vulture).

When I asked an old woman why great emphasis is laid on this practice, she told me that it originated from the common practice that a woman upon having had a sexual intercourse with her husband at night was regarded as unclean, and dared not to prepare her husband's food without first having washed herself. This became automatically the common practice of all older girls and adults. Old women in particular observe this custom strictly, but modern girls do not lay much emphasis on this practice.

Young children whose parents do not know much about cleanliness go about without a bath for two or more days. Some parents on the other hand are particular about the cleanliness of their children and see that at least they

are washed in the evening before they go to bed.

A sick child is tenderly cared for; she is carefully washed and massaged with warm water. Then either mentholatum or thermogene is gently but firmly applied on the body, especially on the affected parts. She is given medicine to drink and ground ginger is pushed up the anus. The heat from the ginger is supposed to give warmth and health. If the illness becomes fairly serious a native doctor is sent for to give treatment to the child. Should he fail to cure the child, she is sent to the hospital. I found that the so-called dispensers, who go about selling patent medicines, charge far too heavily for their drugs, e.g. one tablet of Vikelp is supposed to do wonders, and it may cost anything between one and two shillings. Parents are not encouraged to send their children to the hospital when these tablets fail to work their miraculous cure. The sick child is kept in bed, petted, and encouraged to eat anything she likes and asks for.

Parents do not allow their children to play or run about in the rain because they consider wetness to be very dangerous to health. On the other hand, most children are seen to move about without a cloth on warm days. Except on very cold mornings when mothers see that they wear their cloths and are seated around a fire to warm themselves, the common practice <sup>is</sup> for children to go about stark naked. Cold is sometimes considered dangerous to health, but no one is particularly bothered about it, since the children themselves love to go about without any cloth even on very cold mornings. This is partly due to custom or tradition, and it is adhered to because it allows the children much freedom of movement. However, children are <sup>now</sup> given small pants to wear.

Dirt is not considered dangerous to the health of the child, because even babies are encouraged to pick and eat from the ground, the general belief being that foods picked from the ground promote growth. Overeating is common among and does not seem to be dangerous to the health of the

children. Moreover, children suffering from crawler's scratch themselves without being heeded to, in the belief that this disease happens once in a life time.

#### IX. SEX DISTINCTIONS.

Generally speaking, the training of a boy should be done by a man and that of a girl by a woman. A boy who has been brought up by a woman is called "obaaba" (a woman-child), and he is laughed at if he attaches himself too much to the mother. If a boy exclaims: "ena e!" (Oh! mother!) that is when something bites him or something falls out of his hands, instead of saying: "agya e!" (Oh! father!), he is laughed at and called "obaaba" throughout all his life. On the other hand, if a girl exclaims: "Egya e!" instead of "Ena e!" she is considered to be brave and daring, and she is called "ba barima" (a woman-boy).

A male child is discouraged from associating too much with his mother and he is told that if he does not refrain from so doing, he will grow up into a fool. Boys of about twelve and over do not, as a rule, play with girls. Should a boy try to take part in girls' games, he is reprimanded and driven away by the girls concerned, who tell him: "Yendi mmama gor" (i.e. we are not playing boys' games). The playing of girls together tends to separate them from boys, but there is no rigid separation. Sometimes boys group together and cause some mischief to girls at play; at other times the boys delight in chasing or bullying the girls in order to bring their games to an end. When the girls allow the boys to take part in their games, a quarrel and informal closing to the game usually ensues.

Though mothers like boys, they do not seem to enjoy bringing them up because they say boys are stubborn and pay no heed to corrections from them. The young boys do not like having much contact with their mothers and hate being asked to do girls' job in the house, because they

fear to be called "obaaba" or "kwasee" (a fool). Some however enjoy doing girls' job, for instance, cooking for themselves, and sometimes helping the mother when there are no girls around. But in such cases immediately the boy sees a sister come into the house, <sup>he</sup> runs out of the house to play without a word to his mother.

As a rule boys ~~do not~~ rub shoulder with their fathers because they are taught to respect and obey and work for them. As a boy grows older, he cultivates sympathy and love for the mother. He has some affection for the father if only the father looks after him properly. Then he will always remember him and show signs of gratitude. But if, on the other hand, the father neglects his children, they only visit him occasionally.

The mother does not show discrimination among her children. Both boys and girls are treated alike. She knows that though the girl will bring forth and increase the number of the "abusua", the boy nevertheless will protect her when she is old and feeble. There is a proverb which runs thus: "Obarima ye na" (lit. man is scarce). This is because it is the man who will build a house for the "abusua" in times of danger, bury the dead, and provide or look after other young members of the "abusua", i.e. the matrilineal nephews and nieces who form the "abusua". Another proverb runs: "Obea twe barima ba fie" (lit. a woman can draw a man home). In other words, when a woman marries, the husband usually looks after his mother-in-law, and, if he is a good man trains the children for the "abusua". Thus, a man is preferred for economic reasons, and a girl for bringing forth. And in this we see how useless a woman is considered if she does not bring forth!

X. SIBLING RELATIONS.

As a rule a young child is never told when a new baby is expected. Should the child ask why the mother's stomach is enlarged, she is told that the enlargement of the stomach is due to overeating. If the child is incredulous and inquisitive, and insists on knowing what is inside the stomach, she is told to keep quiet and <sup>not</sup> to be too inquisitive. But if the child asks where her little brother has come from, she is told that he came from the mother's stomach, and that God put him there.

The child must be satisfied with that, and must not insist on knowing how he came out of the stomach, otherwise she will be told that "odi mpaninsem" (lit. he wants to know what only grown-ups should know), and she is there and then discouraged by any means to stifle any further questionings.

The child is not allowed to be present at the birth of younger children, they are sent away, while the youngest child is given to an adult to be cared for. It is considered "mpaninsem" should the older children want to be present at the birth of a new baby. When another child has been born the next older one is given to her aunt or grandmother to be taken care of.

Naturally the older child grows jealous when a new baby is born, and often demands the attention given to the new baby. I saw a case where the older baby held the breast of the mother and prevented the baby from suckling. In another case the older child filled the new baby's nose, mouth, and eyes, with water when no one was looking on; then she pinched and beat her. Fortunately the mother came on the spot and gave the mischievous child a good beating.

The mother shows greater affection for the new baby and calls her "meba" as if to tell the older baby that is not her child. Generally speaking ~~parents~~, parents have



Sometimes a boy may have a favourite among his sisters, with whom he may play indoor games such as ludu or "ware". This distinction is noticeable in older siblings. ~~Young~~ Young children of opposite sex play, wrestle, and move together, but as they grow older, they begin to realise that they are different and so behave differently. They cease playing and wrestling together.

Boys and older siblings are punished for fighting with girls and younger siblings, because they are supposed to be stronger. Siblings of nearly the same age often fight and quarrel irrespective of sex. Quarrels generally arise out of cheating in the sharing of foods, clothes, housework, and personal articles. Sometimes parents do not punish children for quarrelling or fighting, but try to settle the disputes. At times the stronger sibling is punished for beating the younger siblings. When siblings are fighting, mothers become excited in the event of one of them getting wounded. Quarrels are frequent between siblings of almost the same age irrespective of sex.

I saw a case where an older sibling was prevented from handling and playing with the baby of her aunt, the mother being apparently afraid that the baby might be injured. The older baby was over anxious to carry the new baby and so started pulling the baby's legs, pinching her, and putting things in her mouth. The mother was worried and shouted every now and then at the older child. I advised her to show the older child how to handle the baby and to allow her to practise it. She agreed to the suggestion, and under her supervision the older child delighted in handling the baby. But when the sibling desired to prolong carrying the baby, the mother became too excited and refused flatly to allow her to. The mother's behaviour became quite understandable when she stated that the child was her first born.

## XI. RELATIONS TO PARENTS.

A child in Jacobu passes through two distinct periods her life, viz. childhood and youth, which are spent with her father and mother, to whom she gives obedience and affection. There is no law about sharing children in Jacobu. A man knows from the day he marries the woman that "yenwonna" (lit. we do not beget children to profit by them). This means that the father has no power to pawn or sell his child when he incurs a debt, but has the legal right to pawn his nephew to pay his debt.

When a woman is divorced, she would take the young children away. When the children grow up, they could go to visit the father if they wished. The mother would not prevent them from visiting their father and staying with him for sometime lest the father's "ntoro" should kill them. The father's "sunsum" ( spirit) is believed to have power over them.

Normally most married women live ~~with~~ their mothers and clan relations. A few, however, stay in the same house with their husbands due to poligamy. Wives donot live permanently with their husbands under the same roof, but they follow the system of keeping house by rotation, each period lasting for three months. In cases where mothers stay with their husbands permanently, the children visit the mother's "abusua" because they know they belong to it. In such cases maternal grandmothers adopt one or two of the children permanently. Where the mother lives in the "abusua fie" (family house), the grandparents and the mother's sisters and brothers, have almost the same control over the children as their mother. They all live together and enjoy the same rights and privileges with other children. There is no clear distinction between first cousins, and they give the same respect, obedience, and affection to their maternal aunts as they give to their own mothers.

As a child grows up she is taught by her parents some lessons in etiquette, some of which are the following.

The child is taught not to use chewing stick in the presence of her elders and parents, and never to break wind in public. She is taught to use the left hand always for toilet purposes, and to use the right for eating and gesticulation. She is taught never to use such abusive words "wose" (your father), "woni" (your mother), and "okwasea" (fool), and not to stare at any person's face unless she is actually addressing the person. The child must always wear "etam" or "pieto" under the cloth. The "etam", a strip of red cloth, is worn by girls between the thighs and tucked inside the waist beads in front and behind. The "pieto" are pants worn by boys.

She is taught to say "agoo!" (may I come in?), or knock before she enters anyone's room or house; and she should not enter until the reply "amee!" (come in!) has been given. She is also trained to avoid those things which in later life make her conduct questionable. For instance, she is educated against sexual offences. She is trained to be careful always in her dealings with others, to guard her tongue, to respect other people's property, and she is, lastly, instructed in matter of clan taboos.

Discipline. The discipline of the child falls on both parents as a rule, but generally speaking, the mother tends to leave all severe punishment to be inflicted on the child by the father. For one reason it is traditional for men to inflict corporal punishment, and for another reason the women are too sympathetic. The father has a small pair of "mpere" (whip) made out of an antelope's skin, with which he chastises his children for pilfering or using abusive or offensive language.

It is a grave offence for a child to assault her mother or father. The crime is known as "bo woho dua" (lit. clubbing yourself with a stick). The child is fined a sheep or fowls for which her maternal uncle has to pay. If such propitia-

tion is not forthcoming, the father has the right to order his child not to fast or come to his funeral, and this means that the father's ghost will surely come to chastise the offender, when he dies. A child may not argue or quarrel with her parents, especially the father. Should a child quarrel with her mother and make her weep on her breasts and beat herself, the child is supposed not to have a long life, for they say "woati wonkwa so" (i.e. she has shortened the length of her life).

Quarrels generally arise between parents and children from acts of disobedience on the part of the latter. A child, whenever she has the cause to, has to complain to the eldest of the family, the "openin"; under no circumstances is she to assault her parents. Family disputes, i.e. between a child and mother, are settled in the "abusua". When the parent is wrong, those who settle the case do not reprimand her in the presence of the child, but point out politely to her where she has gone wrong.

The father tends to be too domineering over his children, and so children generally fear to mix freely with their fathers. A mother may tell her son when he misbehaves: "twɛn, wo papa beba" (wait, your father will come home). Sometimes a mother may quarrel with father in the presence of the children when the father is too severe in inflicting corporal punishment. But the father usually disregards these quarrels, since he is responsible for the good behaviour of children and bears the blame for their misdemeanours. Mothers who are sympathetic may be their children's ally in concealing their bad behaviour from their father. When the father, under these circumstances, detects anything and questions the mother a bitter quarrel generally ensues.

The training of Girls. Girls are trained under their mothers' supervision. A mother watches her daughters' health and protects them from the evil influences of the "obayifo" (witch) by giving offerings to the "obosom" (gods)

to protect them from harm. The mother teaches the girl as she grows, how to cook, to wash her cloths, to respect every one, and be polite even to the domestic servant. The girl is taught to be submissive to her husband when she is about to marry, and how to flatter her husband in order to obtain things she may need from him. There is a proverb which runs thus : "Tekyerema bedie efa adie esen ahoodenfo" (i.e. a woman's tongue gets things more easily than a strong man). Above all, she is warned not to call a man "okwasea" (fool). She is instructed in farm-work, so that in later life she can help her husband. The girl is liable to be whipped or confined to the compound for minor offences, e.g. disobedience or refusal to carry out instructions.

Training of a Son as distinct from that of a Girl. When a boy can walk, he begins to follow his father about, and when he is old enough he will go to work in the farm with him. If the father has any "dwumadie" (profession), for example, if he is a hunter or a weaver, he will train his son to follow his calling and money for him. Sometimes the father sends the boy to live with a friend or relative for the purpose of learning a trade.

When the son reaches the adolescent age, the father may give him some capital with which he can promote the trade he has learnt. The father may, instead of giving the son some capital, give him a bit of his land to farm. When a boy is old enough to marry, that is, about the age of eighteen and over, his father pays the "head" money as well as all the marriage expenses for him. This practice, however, is dying out and the present tendency is that the boy himself bears all the expenses without necessarily expecting anything from the father.

An Uncle's Position. Of all the other relatives the uncle has the greatest influence on a child. An uncle can remove his "wafase" (nephew) from his fathers care should the father be too poor to bring up his son properly. He will call his

and convince him to come to stay with him or with another person for the purposes of learning a trade by pointing out to him how poor his father is, and how according to custom he cannot succeed to any possessions of the father when he dies.

On the other hand, an uncle will advise his nephew to stay with his father, if the father is well-to-do. But on the whole, sons remain with their father only if the father loves them. When they grow older, they begin to take an interest in their uncle's property, for they know it may one day become theirs. They become less and less interested in their father's property, which will go to his "abusue" when he dies.

If a father cannot get money to bring up his own children, the uncle may train them in his (the father's) trade, because the son is born with his father's "kra" (spirit). If the father of a child is rich and treats his son well, an uncle does not interfere with his sister's marriage. His sister would take her husband's side whenever the uncle interfered too much with her children. A father has no real (legal) right over his grown-up children. If they wish to go to their "abusue" he cannot prevent them. An uncle can arrange for his nephew and niece to marry his daughter and son respectively when they reach marriageable age, but this practice is now breaking down.

Parents' authority over their children decreases to some extent when the children marry, but they do not cease to exercise control over them entirely. The mother has a say in her daughter's marriage, and often becomes an ally of her daughter when there is a dispute between her and the husband. Some mothers go to the extent of slapping their sons-in-law if they are too severe on their daughters. Fathers generally settle disputes between their children and their partners, and do not often take sides with their children.

Children show their gratitude to their parents by remitting them money, clothing, or foodstuffs. Since it is the motive behind the giving of presents and not their value that counts, grown-up children who neglect their parents entirely are regarded as being ungrateful. If the father refuses to look after his children, these owe him no debt of gratitude, and <sup>they</sup> are not expected to send him any presents or care for him. But the children owe a great debt to their mother which they have to pay as long as she is alive.

## XII. POSSESSIONS.

A child is punished for "krom-kroma", i.e. pilfering, within the family circle. She may be punished for this by ground pepper pushed up her anus. There is a saying which runs: "Agya adie mefa, ena adie mefa, kronoba" (lit. I take something belonging to father, I take something belonging to mother, this is how stealing is learned). An offence committed within the family comes under a different category from one committed outside that circle.

The child is also instructed not to take things belonging to other members of the family for the reason that such small practices usually lead to bigger thefts. For this same reason children are warned not to keep anything belonging to other children in the same house. When a child tries to grab forcibly something which belongs to another and causes the latter to scream or cry, she is scolded or, in serious cases, cuffed severely. An affectionate mother may coax a child having the unlawful possession of another's article to give it back, and will at all costs refrain from beating her, because it is believed that too much beating causes illness. Some mothers would rather prefer to spoil the child to beating her only to invite illness.

On the otherhand, some parents are strong advocates of the 'spare the rod and spoil the child' policy. They give a slap or two for almost every small offence of the child. The mother usually warns the child not to go near a fire, use a knife, or play with empty bottles. If the child disobeys any of these prohibitions, she cuffs her promptly and removes the object from her. As a rule, children are not punished when they have not attained the age of two.

In actual fact children between the ages of two and twelve years have no possessions worthy of mention. On the whole, very little of clothing is provided. A baby may not <sup>have</sup> more than three dresses. A child of two or five may possess not more than three dresses and the same number of cloths. It is believed that children are generally destructive and it is a waste providing them with much clothing. Adults think that children ought to appear naked as they have no cause to be ashamed. Not quite long ago children could appear naked in public until the period of adolescence. Cloth is worn at home only when the child feels cold or when she is going to sleep. The boys usually share their possessions in common, but the girls are very particular about the little they possess. The beads which are worn around their waists and wrists are kept by the mother, and they use their mother's toilet articles.

As I previously stated, no special stationary or movable furniture is specially provided for the children, and just for the same reason given above no expensive toys are given to them. The boys however are interested in making wooden wheels\* which they use for carrying water and light loads. Some boys make miniature cars\* and pull them about, while other make flutes\* from pawpaw branches and spider cocoons. But the catapult\* is the most favourite toy of

\* See diagrams on page 99-100

the adventurous boys. The toy is especially good for hunting birds. Two lengths of the inner tube of a car are tied on to the two ends of a forked piece of wood; the two other ends of strips are connected with a piece of leather. When the boy wishes to kill a bird, he places a pebble in the piece of leather, stretches the strips of inner tube, and releases the pebble, which is aimed at the bird through the space between the two ends of the fork.

Sometimes the mother buys "wasa-wasa"\* for her baby. This is usually used to attract the attention of a baby from anything she is engaged in; for example, when a baby is crying she can easily be silenced by shaking the toy, made like small basket and containing pebbles and jingles. Another common local toy which mothers buy for their baby girls is the "akuaba"\*, but apart from these girls usually make their own toys and dolls - "ahweriba"\* and "brodeba"\* - which they usually use for sex plays.

From twelve years onwards the child gets an increase in the number of articles of clothing. She begins to work hard either with the mother (or with the father if he is a boy) or on her own, in order to buy certain clothes and cloths herself. All the children possess in common certain articles like a comb, a small mirror, a brush, a tin or two of face powder, a bottle of hair oil or pomade. The boys may have individually one or two pairs of <sup>shorts</sup> ~~knickers~~, two shirts, a belt, and two cloths, while the girls too may each possess two fashionably sewn native dress for special occasions, two others for use at home, <sup>and</sup> a pair of native sandals. All these they keep in their individual portmanteaus. Most of the boys and girls have wooden boxes to hold their possessions when their parents find portmanteaus too dear to purchase. When a girl or boy works hard to purchase for themselves any clothing, the parents have no control over their use. I remember when my cousin, a school

\* See diagrams on page 100.

girl in Class Six, came from Jacobu to stay with me, she had only one cloth and a tattered school uniform. The uniform was folded and wrapped in an old headkerchief, and she informed me that she had to work in a rice field for a certain man before she could buy the cloth she was wearing. She had been attending school in the same cloth because her father was reluctant to buy her a new school uniform.

### XIII. SPEECH.

The last thing a Jacobu woman would do is to appear indifferent when her baby cries. She instinctively responds at once by approaching the child and asking for the cause of the cry. A woman would rather go hungry than starve her child and so children do not usually cry of hunger when their mother is about. There is an expression which runs: "Akodaa kom aye" (lit. it is painful for a child to go hungry).

Cries of pain are at once heeded to. I observed a case in which mothers took the sides of their children when two children were fighting. The mother of the beaten child first smacked the stronger child for beating her child. Then the mother of the other child came into the scene to quarrel with the other woman for her unmotherly behaviour. Pain remains the legitimate occasions for crying. However, if the child cries after being punished, she is not heeded to; she may, instead, be sometimes given a second thrashing for making unnecessary noise. Sometimes children cry out of sheer tantrums, and it is mostly the spoilt or the youngest child of the family who indulge in them. The mother coaxes and pets the child to stop crying, but when she refuses to she is sometimes carried on the back or given something she likes best. Boys as a rule do not cry unnecessarily unless in great pain, because there is a saying: "Obarimansu" (lit. a man does not weep). Boys usually as-

Some superiority over girls and so they try to convince the girls that they are the stronger sex and try to bear pains without crying. Another reason why boys donot but girls tend to cry too often is that mothers encourage them by petting them unduly. From about the age of one, parents tell their children not to cry unnecessarily.

Parents regard baby talk as amusing but not improper and so they ignore the child's early vocalization. They know that the baby will eventually grow out of. Sometimes children are nicknamed by the mistakes of their early vocalization; i.e. if she says a very funny word, the parents or sibling tend to call her by that name. For example, if she said in her infancy "Pupu" instead of "Poku", she is teased with <sup>the</sup> first even when she grows older.

The mother, adults, and siblings, who carry the baby usually talk to her when they are rocking her. The baby is talked to more in connection with petting than scolding. Adults are very fond of babies and do not scold them however troublesome they may be. Older children of five and six are more often talked to in connection with scolding.

When strangers or visitors are around, children are generally told to modulate their voices. Usually in the afternoons when all is quiet, children are not supposed to shout on top of their voices. Should this happen, they are scolded and sent outside to play. The general expression used in such circumstances is: "Mo mma ya aso nko adidi" (lit. let our ears go to eat). The reason for silencing afternoon noises of children is that adults usually meditate during the afternoon and noises in the house disturb them.

When children speak they are not held to high grammatical correctness; all that is required of them is intelligibility. Adults themselves do not bother about grammatical correctness.

Generally speaking, children are listened to when parents or adults are less busy or doing practically nothing. A few adults however take special interest in children and are fond

of talking and playing with them during their leisure hours. A mother tends to shout at a child when she worries her with her fantasy, especially when the mother is busily working or cooking. The mother will listen to her only when the child is in pain.

Children are not supposed to play or speak freely with adults; they may and do express themselves freely among themselves. Adults are not in favour of children associating too much with them for the reason that "familiarity breeds contempt". They are usually snubbed by adults when they tend to disturb or give them too much trouble. They are required to be still and listen when adults are around, but among themselves they are at liberty to express their views.

Children are not asked to be factually precise in what they say, nor are they required to distinguish fact from fantasy at any age. At the age of six or seven they begin to live in a world of reality; they tend to leave behind fantasy, and begin to see and understand things as they happen in real life. As they grow older become able to distinguish right from wrong they are expected always to tell the truth. Parents and adults punish children for lying, because they believe that lying goes hand in hand with stealing or pilfering. The children then associate punishment with mischief and so most of them refuse to tell the truth when they play any mischief. Sometimes a child may be induced to tell the truth by <sup>a</sup>promise of the parent not to inflict any punishment. Some parents succeed at this, but when they fail to keep their promise, the children lose trust and confidence in them and tend to tell more lies in the future.

#### XIV. GAMES, SONGS, STORIES.

As a result of the influence of western civilisation and way of living, our traditional games and sports are gra-

dually dying out and European games and sport are taking their place. There are however still some traditional games which children in Jacobu play in the evening, especially on moonlit nights. Some of these games are played by girls only, and these are for those of the ages between eight and ten years: "aso", "ampe", "dwonkor", and "asaadua". Boys like to play at hunting in various forms, such as chasing butterflies, catching animals or insects; they seem to enjoy thoroughly fighting in various forms - wrestling, playing at soldiers, and making and using toy weapons for the purpose. They also play at marble spinning, football, swimming, hide and seek, and bicycle rides. Both sexes are interested in playing indoor games, such as ludu and "ware".

There is no value placed on athletic skill and no emphasis is laid on sports, such as swimming or bicycle riding. Girls are certainly not encouraged to swim. All children play games and sports of their own accord and out sheer enjoyment, while adults rarely take part in children's sports.

Swimming is only encouraged in an area where fishing is the means of earning a livelihood, such as the people who live near Lake Bosumtwé. Even in this case, swimming is encouraged from the economic point of view rather than the athletic. Girls as a rule do not swim and are never encouraged to. I remember when I was a child I recieved a really good thrashing for swimming in a river near Kumasi. Parents do not want their children to swim for fear of getting drowned.

There are few games, such as "ware", ludu, "asaadua", which are common to both sexes. Apart from these games, boys never take part in games which belong to girls, because they know they are different, and must not associate themselves unnecessarily with them. For this reason boys cease to play hide and seek with girls at about the age of twelve.

Children are not taught special songs apart from the

ones they learn from adults when they happen to hear them sing. In the evening most children listen to Ananse folk tales which are regarded appropriate for children; and here the children may learn some common songs from the stories. Adults take part in the stories and enjoy themselves as well as the children. Almost all the stories are traditional, and none of them are forbidden to be told to children.

Description of Games:

"AMPE" consists of clapping the hands, jumping, and stepping forward with either foot. Players are arranged in two teams of any even number, and these face themselves. It may be agreed upon that when opposite feet are placed forward or vice versa, the first set or the second wins a point. A certain number is agreed upon before a toss decides what side is to begin.

"ASO" - The players stand in a horse shoe formation clapping their hands as they sing. Each player falls on her back, expecting the rest of the players to support her with their hands. When one song is completed, another player takes her turn and so on and so forth.

"DWONKOR" - The players stand in a circle, clapping their hands, singing in turns while the rest join the chorus. This game is highly romantic, and girls take the opportunity to sing and describe their lovers. It is most interesting to watch how girls are thrilled when they name their lovers or husbands.

"ASAADUA" - This is a kind of native band in which both boys and girls, including adults, join in singing and dancing on moonlit nights.

For some of the popular songs see overleaf.

"AMFE" -

Se menya sika mene barima bedi

Mbaanyi aye o! mbaa nnyi aye koraa!

(lit. When I get money I will spend on a man)

Girls are ungrateful, girls are very ungrateful.)

Gyolee hankitsi, gyolee bagye wo hankitsi!

(lit. Jolly, here's a handkerchief!

Jolly, come for your handkerchief!)

"ASO" -

Ye ne mbaayaa na gor o! mbaama!

Yenne mbaama ngor o! mbaama!

(lit. We play with girls only, you boys!

We don't play with boys, you boys!)

"DWONKOR" -

See bode! se wosuro a ba hye me yamu!

Neti ne bode na yeme fee!

Meara me (lover's name) tir ne bode na ye  
me fee!

2.

Ne nane, ne mpaboa, mehwe a na mewu o!

Meara me (lover's name) mehwe na me wu o!

(lit. The cut of his hair is what attracts me.

My (lover's name) hair is what attracts  
me most.

How he wears his sandals is what kills me  
And makes me crazy about him!

My (lover's name) <sup>hair</sup> is what makes me mad  
And deepens my love!)

XVI. PHYSICAL CONTACTS, MASTURBATION, SEX PLAY.

The time during which a mother usually plays with her baby is just before she gives her a bath. She sits the baby on her lap, tickles her, throws her now and again into the air, kisses her, and does so many things to the baby's pleasure, before she gives her the bath. After the bath she gives her to a sibling either to carry her on the back or to play with her. Any other adult interested in babies is not withheld from embracing or rocking the baby.

Such contacts cease when the child is about two years old. In Jacobu children are not required to kiss their parents because kissing is not an inherent habit. It is even disapproved of by elderly men and women. When a child meets her mother half-way from the farm and embraces her, the mother lifts her, throws her up into the air, catches, and hugs her warmly. What the child says when she runs to meet the mother is: "Awaawas tuu!" (lit. welcome!). Children enjoy this fun very much, and may <sup>want to</sup> repeat it to surfeit.

Special attention is given to the genitals when the mother is ~~bathe~~<sup>bathing</sup> the baby. In the case of a girl, the vagina is treated with hot water from time to time and then some mentholatum or ground ginger is pushed up the vagina. This time the ginger is used as a medicine and not as a punishment. There are no special children's word for the genitals; they use the same words with the adults.

Masturbation in children is common. I found many a child pulling his pennis and girls pushing their fingers into their vagina. Sometimes boys try to practise lying together with girls, and push sticks into the girls' vagina. If the mother does not detect this in time the vagina becomes sore or swollen. Parents punish children severely if they find them practising coition. They rub ground pepper and ginger into the penis and the eyes of the boy,

or in the case of a girl the same preparation is pushed up the vagina. Sometimes the hands of such culprits are tied behind them and they are released only after they have promised never to do that again.

Parents do not mind children playing at doctor or father and mother, provided children donot go beyond that. In their happy moods, parents are found to help children in these games.

#### XVII. CLOTHING AND SELF-EXPOSURE.

From birth to about two years of age, boys and girls wear the same kind of dresses, but after that boys are introduced to plain gowns with perhaps two or four darts on the shoulders and a square or round neck, and girls to stylish frocks with either pleats or gathers, puffed sleeves, and a collar. At about four years the boys are again introduced to knickers and shirts or jumpers, and girls to cloth and "cover shoulders". During all this period and up till about seven years of age the child gets help in dressing and undressing.

Not quite long ago children appeared naked up to the ages of twelve or thirteen, but now one can rarely see a girl of about ten going about naked outside the house. A child of about eight years may be seen naked for short periods inside the house, but will never go outside without covering herself. Boys go about in their shorts and bare chest, while girls put on the "ntama" (the cloth and cover shoulder). A girl of about ten years will feel shy to appear naked before boys and men, and her mother sees to it that she does not intentionally attract men by leaving her breasts uncovered. But a boy can even have his bath during daytime out of doors and with women passing by. Girls are, in fact, more careful about not exposing themselves than boys.

Parents do not mind undressing before their children, and

I have seen cases where boys massaged their naked mother when she was sick. Mothers are wont to leave their drooping breasts uncovered throughout the day, and fathers go about nearly naked wearing only the "pieto" (small pants). But though they do not feel abashed at appearing so, the adolescent girl is sure to be upbraided whenever she left her breasts uncovered.

### XVIII. WORK.

As a rule girls are supposed to, <sup>do</sup> the house-work. This conception is partly traditional and partly due to the fact that boys claim to <sup>be</sup> the stronger and superior sex, and therefore should be the privileged. It is the girl who helps her parent in all aspect of house-work. This is one of the reasons why Jacobu women in general wish to bear girls.

The mother being aware of this fact begins to introduce her girl gradually to various house duties when she is about for to five years old. During this period the girl learns to carry out simple verbal instructions, and to take verbal messages from one person to another. She learns also to do simple jobs, such as emptying the chamber pot. As she grows older she learns to do harder work, such as going for water, sweeping the compound and kitchen, going to market, and helping the mother in cooking.

The girl has to be submissive and learn form her mother the art of cooking and running a home. She knows that if she attempts to shirk her responsibilities, she will be nicknamed "okwadwofo" (lazy). Moreover, she hears from her mother that an "okwadwofo" is likely to become a bad housewife, and on that account cannot either have a good husband, or stay long with her husband.

For this reason a hardworking girl in a house is praised and encouraged and honoured by the members of the

family. The girl at the age of seven or eight accompanies her mother to the farm where she works and carries home some foodstuffs in the evening. When she is between ten and fourteen years of age, she may be given a piece of land by the mother's to farm herself. The profit which comes out of this goes to the girl's pocket, and she may use it to buy new cloths for occasions like Easter and Christmas, and the local festivals. When some money is left over after her purchases, she buys certain things as perfume, face powder, and headkerchiefs, in readiness for 'rite de passage' when she becomes adolescent.

There are no specific working hours for the girl. She cleans the compound, kitchen, and sweeps the rooms. Then she goes for water and prepares the breakfast. After breakfast she may either accompany her mother to the farm or stay at home and look after her younger brothers and sisters. When the mother arrives from the farm in the evening, she helps her to prepare the evening meal. After the meal she washes up the dishes and does the final tidying up of the kitchen. If there is another sister or cousin, she shares the work with her.

While she is busy in the house her brother would be roaming and playing outside. The boy hardly works in the house; to him housework is mean and meant for the weaker sex. From time to time he may kindly help with the pounding of fufu or sweep his father's room on request. His chief job is to accompany the father to the farm, or to the "ahen-fie" (the chief's palace), or to nearby villages on business. Though in the circumstances the mother finds the uselessness of her boy in the house, she is not worried because she knows that it is he, who will look after her when he becomes an adult.

#### XIV. ADOLESCENCE.

Parents tend to treat their children differently according to their sex when they reach adolescence. They exercise more control over the girls than the boys, partly the instinct of obedience is more marked in girls, and partly because parents are anxious to train their girls, and to develop high standards of conduct and behaviour in them so that they may get suitable husbands in future and be able to keep good homes.

I noticed that both sexes in varying degrees strive for independence and hasten to wean themselves from parental care and try to act like responsible adults. They tend to become self-conscious and like to think that they are adults. They also tend to be out-spoken and express readily with less fear than before of being punished. They are more inclined to rebel against parents, when they find that home authority tends to thwart their free movement.

From the observation of the few Christians, I could gather that adolescent boys and girls take active interest in Church activities, such as contributing through manual labour to the building of a new church or school rooms, sweeping and weeding the church-yard, and taking part in choir practices and guild meetings.

I also observed that boys and girls begin to take interest in themselves and have sexual urges. Girls feel shy in the company of boys and so do boys in the company of girls. They start to keep friends of the opposite sex. I also observed that a large proportion of children <sup>during</sup> infancy show interests and behaviours that are sexual in character, so that I believe by the time they reach adolescence a large proportion of the boys and a smaller proportion of the girls had had sexual experiences of one sort or another.

Romantic love for a remote object is not common among

Jacobu girls. Most of them seem to be confident about early love because they marry at an early age, in most cases almost immediately after the "Bara" Ceremony. The reason why they marry early is that bearing children is a pride to both the girl and her "abusua" because an individual's security in life depends largely on the size of her "abusua". Some of the girls get engaged to older boys or men before they reach adolescence.

However some of the girls fall in love with boys who are either of their age or a bit older. When it comes to the question of marriage the Jacobu girl will not marry a boy of her age, much less younger than she is. And her reason for the choice is that since most <sup>girls</sup> marry between fourteen and eighteen years of age, it is impossible for them to marry boys of the same years, who may not be entirely independent and are not able to earn sufficient money for a marriage, and to keep good homes.

On this account courtship is not sanctioned. When boys and girls fall in love, they meet private places: their parents become suspicious when they stay out of doors for too long. During this secret courtship friends of both sexes act as go-betweens, and they keep the relationship as secret as possible from the parents. Adolescence is regarded as a happy time. The girls meet in groups to converse and during these meetings they exchanged confidences and talk on every subject of interest. Girls gain sex knowledge especially from their older friends. Mothers however instruct their girls in sex knowledge only when they are about to marry.

A girl reaches age of puberty between the ages of twelve and sixteen. There are various idioms and euphemisms in the Ashanti language to denote the advent of the state of puberty. The most common one used especially to designate the passing of the first menses is "wobo no bara" (lit. the

bara'state has stricken her); there is also a verb "kyima" (to menstruate), and various circumlocutions, such as "nsa ko nakyi" (lit. The hand has gone behind her), "wabu nsa" (lit. she has turned her hand), and "wakum asono" (lit. she has killed an elephant).

My grandmother told me that in the olden days, it was considered very unlucky for a girl to menstruate for the first in the daytime. Girls were warned that if they were disobedient they would menstruate for the first time in the day time and so suffer ill-luck. People do not seem to care much nowadays for this belief. In any case it is the tendency of most girls these days not to tell their mothers of their first menses until the parents themselves find out. Most of the girls feel shy to tell their mothers about it, especially when they feel they have menstruated too early.

Some girls disclose the fact after their third or fourth menstruation. But such a trick is rather risky. When a girl conceives without having first disclosed the fact that she has passed her first menses, a very severe penalty is inflicted upon both herself and the man she cohabited with. This is known as "kyerebra" and it is a 'red' taboo, for the offence is regarded as an offence against the whole community which may suffer for it.

I was again informed that in the olden days if a man had sexual intercourse with a young girl prior to the appearance of her first period, it was considered as an offence for which the whole community must suffer for. Any laxity of morals prior to reaching puberty was commonly punished by death or by expulsion from the clan of both guilty parties. At the present time the offence is punished either by imprisonment or a fine imposed on the man. The girl, on the other hand is considered faultless, for as she had not reached the age of puberty the offence is regarded as rape.

If, however, the girl has already menstruated for the first time and conceives without first informing her parents about the fact, both the guilty parties are expelled from their clan and village for good. I was informed of a recent expulsion. The guilty parties, I was told, were forced to sacrifice a sheep each to pacify the Jacobu "bosom" (god), before they proceeded to go into exile. Should they refuse to sacrifice the sheep, it is believed the parties would be killed by the "bosom" while in exile, and this would eventually bring disaster upon their clans. During the sacrifice, the blood of the sheep is poured over their heads and certain words are recited to the god to beseech it to save lives of the parties and their clans. After the ceremony the couple I was told of were led half way to their exile by some of their members of "abusua". They were then ordered to pitch their camp far in the bush where no one could possibly see them and stay there until the girl delivered. The girl is allowed to return to Jacobu three months after delivery, and the husband was also free to return to Jacobu. Owing to the severity of this penalty parents especially mothers are on the alert to know from their girls whether they have menstruated for the first time.

When hairs begin to grow in her armpits and around her private parts, and the breasts begin to develop steadily, the girl is suspected of having started to menstruate. At this stage the girl takes particular care of herself; she is always neatly dressed in cloth and cover shoulders. The hair head is allowed to grow bushy and it is neatly plaited.

The mother herself takes the trouble to ask the girl whether she has menstruated; if she fails to inform her herself. As soon as the mother becomes aware of this fact, she informs the members of the family at once. She then prepares "ojo" (boiled and mashed yam mixed with palm oil and taken with boiled eggs) for the girl to eat to mark the stage of puberty. This is the minor ceremony; the major or full cere-

mony is postponed until such time that the parents are ready. Once the members of the clan have been informed of the girl's first menstruation, the girl will not be subject to any expulsion if she happened to conceive before the full celebration of the ceremony.

Usually when the parents have completed the necessary preparation for the "Bará goro" (the ceremony to signalise that a girl has reached the stage of puberty), they appoint a day, usually a Saturday when most of the people will be free to attend the function. The mother and her relatives go round informing other members of the village of the occasion and asking for their help. She borrows drums, kente cloths, gold ornaments, and other necessary articles from her neighbours. All the friends of the girl are also informed; and they bring such things as firewood, plantain, and water to the "barafo" the day before the ceremony. Some of her intimate friends may stay with her for the night, and some of these stay with her until the ceremony is completely over.

Early in the morning of the appointed day, the "barafo" is seated on a white stool placed on a beautifully woven mat; and her head is covered with white kente cloth, and her face exposed. Her mother now takes some wine and pours a libation, saying the following words:

"Nyankupon Tweduampon Nyame gye nsa nom!

Asase Yaa gye nsa nom!

Nsamanfo, mongye nsa nom!

Obaa yi a Nyankupon de ama me yi nne na wabo  
no bra!

Onni a owo Samandow ommefano!

Onye bara nwu!

(Lit. Supreme God of the Sky, who alone is great, upon Whom men lean and do not fall, receive this wine and drink! O Goddess of Earth, whose day of worship is Thursday, receive this wine and drink! O Spirits of our Ancestors, receive this wine and drink! The girl whom God has given me has today passed her first menses. O Mother, who dwells in the land of the dead, do not come to take her away, and do not permit her to menstruate only to die!).

All this time the girl is seated, bands of young girls and women parade through the streets, waving white flags and singing "bara" songs of which the following is an

example: "Wa yo! wa yo! ye nua ayo!  
Yema no mo ne yo!"  
Chorus: "Aye! ye nua ayo e! e!"

(Lit. She has done it, she has done it; it's our sister who has done it. Well done!)

When daylight comes the girl's hair (on the head) is cut and preserved in a hole in the wall of the hut, a sign made to mark the place of concealment. Should the girl later in life die far from home, the funeral rites are performed over the place of concealment. She is then decked in her best attire and adorned with many gold ornaments.

At about 2 p.m. the girl is carried on the back - to indicate that she is newly born into adulthood and therefore unable to walk like a new baby - to the riverside. She is then disrobed and taken round the waist by her grandmother and immersed in the river three times, to the accompaniment of these words: "Yedum bara gya ano" (lit. we quench the "bara" fire at its source). The "etam" (loin cloth) which tucked into the waist girdle beads before and behind, is removed.

As the girl sits in the water she is sponged down by three old women and the juice from lime-fruit is rubbed on the head while they sing, "Anka koko eye wo dee!" (lit. a ripe lime-fruit is good for you). Next the loin cloth, sponge with which she had been bathed and an egg, are placed in the stream and the following words are addressed to the river: "Gye tam ne sapow, ne desua yi ma skodaa yi nye bra nwu!" (lit. receive this loin cloth and sponge, and eggs, and do not let this infant come to the stage of puberty only to die.

The girl is then carried back to the mother's house and seated on a stool with her head covered, while the women dance around her to the accompaniment of "dono" drums and songs. A repast is prepared consisting of "kɔtɔ" and "apatre" (fish) from Lake Busuntwe.

The grandmother takes a little of each of the food and puts them on a plate; she then makes the pretence of feeding the "bara" three times, at same time repeating: "Ama, meka wano, ennye bara gye!" (lit. Ama, (the girl's name) I touch your mouth; do not let misfortune follow the coming of your puberty). The girl does not swallow the food, which is allowed to fall on the ground. Taking another morsel, the grandmother continues:

"Yegoro ama wo akye!  
Ama wo awo badu.  
Bone biara ntowo.  
Ne Gykobufoo wo nkwaso!  
Aye begoro wo ne mpanimfoo nkwaso!  
Wo nkorofonyina wo nkwaso!"

(lit. We play and dance for you that you may remain with us. That you may bear ten children. That no evil come upon you. Life to the people of Jacobu! Long life to all your folk and elders who are playing and celebrating this festival for you.)

Next she is given water to drink and this is followed by three boiled eggs which she eats this time. Some "oto" is now placed in a wooden vessel called "kuduo" and placed on the ground before her. Her head is now completely covered in a white cloth, and as young children come and scramble for the food in the dish she **snatches** at their hands. It is believed, her first born would be a boy or girl according to whether it was a boy's or a girl's hand which she catches.

While the ceremony is going on the "barafo" receives gifts and congratulations from friends and relatives. The presents include silk cloths, perfumes, waist beads, pomades, yams, soap, and money. The ceremony comes to a close in the evening.

The girl remains in the "bara" state for a week, at the expiration of which she is dressed up in her best attire and goes all round the village accompanied by a

few friends to render thanks to all the members of the village, especially those who attended the ceremony.

If a girl is not already betrothed she is expected to become so after this ceremony. If she is already engaged her husband is immediately informed and he brings presents in the form of either money or clothing to his young wife. A girl does not change her name upon reaching the age of puberty, but from that date children call her "mame" (mother) which is in recognition of her having reached adulthood.

The girl now realising that she is no longer a child, leaves behind her childish behaviour, and starts to grow more sensible and behaves herself especially in the company of boys. She ceases moving freely or playing with young men in the house. If she is always seen in the company of men, people begin to suspect that she is a bad girl and so she learns to become a bit reserved in order that she may be respected.

She buys more clothes out of the money presented to her at the "bara" ceremony and begins to wear sandals, and a second cloth, which may be velvet and not of the same material as the under cloth. She is very particular about her appearance and baths twice daily. She leaves her hair long, ready for plaiting, and begins to plait her hair when she can afford to buy headkerchief to tie the head with. After tying her head for sometime she begins to wear an upper cloth "akataso" of the same material as the under cloth; and this is a sign that she has reached complete adulthood.

The parents still exercise control over the girl and she has no freedom of action; she is readily suspected of having been fooling around with young men, if she stays too long outside. She is not instructed in sexual matters until such time that she is ready to marry. However she is instructed to maintain her chastity in order to get a good husband and bear children. The members of the family watch

her movements closely; and if she is suspected of extra marital affairs she is severely warned that she will not get a good husband with that sort of life. The girl on no account should stay too long before she marries. Should she remain too long unmarried, it is believed that she is unlikely to bear children after her marriage. This is one of the reasons why most school girls are persuaded by their mothers to leave school and get married.

A girl who is newly married is taught to bath and keep herself clean as adults do before going to sleep for the first time with her husband. She is taught how to clean the vagina in order keep it in good form always. The following are the methods of cleaning the vagina taught by Jacobu women to their daughters.

The vagina is first washed thoroughly with cold water and soap and then juice from lime-fruit is used in giving it a second cleansing, followed by a final cleansing with cold water. Cold water, it is said, has the effect of contracting the walls of the vagina. Lime juice cleanses as well as tightens the walls. Juice from kola nut is also used and it has a similar effect on the vagina as the juice from lime-fruit.

The use of certain herbs is another method. The leaves are ground, and rolled into small balls about one inch in diameter. Two or three of these balls are pushed with a finger right into the vagina during daytime. This method is known as "kweha". When the girl comes to bath in the evening she removes the medicine from the vagina and washes the vagina thoroughly with soap and water. This medicine is said to have the effect of healing any possible sore in the vagina as well as cleansing and tightening it. The girls are also instructed in the technique of giving satisfaction to their husbands during coition, which mainly consists of waist shaking. They also learn from their mothers how to keep themselves clean during menstruation. And, lastly, they

learn that when menses cease to flow at one particular menstrual period, they should know that they are pregnant and they should start to take the necessary safeguards.

The men in Jacobu do not circumcise themselves because there is no tribal initiation. This concept originated from the custom that no circumcised person may become a chief. Nowadays many boys on their own initiative go to private places to be circumcised. Parents do not resent the idea, so long as one is not connected with a stool, but they do not usually encourage it.

Until recent years, women in Jacobu remained more or less virgins or chaste until they<sup>or</sup> married. A man was very proud if upon having sexual connection for the first time with his wife, he finds that he is the first person to break her virginity. The man made this fact known to the relatives of the girl by presenting them with a piece of calico cloth and some amount of money. The girl felt proud and the relatives and other people congratulated her. This was a great incentive to girls for the maintenance of their virginity. Nowadays, however, things have so changed that there are practically no virgins among adolescent girls.

CONCLUSION

From the data collected for this piece of research, one sees that the training of the Jacobu child is based mainly upon certain ideas, mostly incorrect and beliefs which are mostly superstitious, so that the level of life which it is possible to achieve is generally low. Fortunately the introduction of christianity and formal education into the community has had influence on the community at large. Some of the people are now leaving behind some of the superstitious practices and are beginning to train the child along scientific lines. For instance, nowadays instead of the Jacobu mother sending her sick child to a fetish priest, she prefers to send her to the new midwife and to take her advice as regards child care and nutrition.

Most of the people now are beginning to understand the part played by cleanliness healthy surroundings and good food in the maintenance of general bodily health; and the contribution of these factors to full enjoyment of life. Again, the people are beginning to realise the importance of sending their children to school in order to equip them to meet the changing need of the society. With the spread of both formal and informal education the people of Jacobu will gradually feel the need of effective training of their children in order to produce intelligent useful citizens able to think constructively and clearly about the problems of their own society.

APPENDIX.

The Child's Favourite Story.

At Home with one child called Nana Yaa. Age 4<sup>3</sup> years.

"Once upon a time, a bird called Kofi Nyamekye had its feet cut as it perched on a roof top. From here it flew to a silk cotton tree where it had a prick from its thorns. Thence it flew to relate the sorrowful story to a frog, which not knowing what to do bit it. To make matters worse, it flew and alighted on a pepper tree and there got pepper into the wound. In pain it sang the following song: "

Come, my brother, for I am in pain,  
I'll give you eggs and yams,  
Kofi Nyamekye e!kyeekye,  
Pepper has got into my wound, kyeekye.  
A frog has bitten me, kyeekye!

A Story about a Bad Girl.

"Yaa Menka is the name of the bad girl I know of; she is a stubborn girl indeed and very disobedient. She would never obey her parents and this is very bad of her. She is very bad as matter of fact. Besides, she answers back her mother and beats her mother in return when her mother slaps her.

"One day Yaa's mother threw a snail at her as a result of her disobedience and stubborn Yaa threw the snail back and hit her mother's breast. As for Yaa she doesn't respect her elders and she never tells the truth. This is too bad. As for me I am not like that, I am a good girl.

"I know of another bad girl called Yaaba. She is also disobedient and unruly. Every child in the house knows that she is a bad girl indeed. She is just like Yaa Menka in her behaviour."

### A Story about a Bad Boy.

"There are however some children who when their sisters arrive from somewhere and tell them to do something obey immediately. Such children are very good children.

"Yes, I know of a good boy called Kweku. When he gets up in the morning, he buys food to eat and does his house work well and orderly. He does the washing up and sweeps the room of his father. He then prays to God to save him from hell and to take him to heaven. He goes to Church every day and washes his mother's clothes together with his. Then he polishes his mother's sandals.

"Good children do not listen to grown ups when they are conversing."

### One Wish.

"My wish will be to draw the Virgin Mary just because she brought me into this world." I would wish also for a pair of shoes, a dress, and a hat."

### Self-Description.

Theresa is my name; she is a baby girl; the name is just like mine. I have small head. I am short. I have a **long** narrow neck. People say that my head is like my father and that it is not pretty but I like it like that. I have my bath everyday then I have my breakfast. I don't like rice and stew and eggs. I play very much with my friends, they are all girls. I don't play with boys because they are bullies. I go for water for my mama. I usually go on errands for my mother. When my mama leaves for town I don't cry. I stay home quietly for her return. I don't fight without a good cause. I fight only when provoked by my friends.

Life Story.

I am four years of age. I was a wee little baby at birth and I was looked after by Anti Bee. I sucked my mother's breast and slept with her. I always wept. I was brought up by my grandmother. I began to laugh when I started growing. I was sent to Wench to be cured of an illness. There I started crawling and attempted to walk by holding people's clothes. Mama gave me an egg and mashed yam when I was able to walk. It was Jacobu where I started to walk. I was first carried at my Mama's back but later this practice was discontinued.

Later Anti Bee bought me some shoes, hat and beautiful dresses. I now have two pairs of shoes, nine dresses, and two hats. Anti Bee then took me to Accra where I met Anti Bee's brothers, Nana Gyanfi, Yaw Boakye, Agyekum, Anti Comfort, and Grandpa who gave me some toffee and biscuits. Anti Comfort taught me a song entitled:

"Oh how do you do?

I'm vely glad to see you.

I tank you i'm bery well today.

Tralalalal alalale lala tralala.

Later I was sent to Achimota. At Accra I saw a train and an airplane. I also saw Koforidua. Then I went to Tepa where I saw Papa Kwaku Dapaa who gave me Christmas present (biscuits). Then we came back to Kumasi. Then to Berekum. When I was eight years. At Berekum I met Irene, Akua, Henry, Byrone Prengo, Misses Safoah, Ctoo, DWine, and Morris.

At Berekum, before I go out to play, I clean my teeth, have some chop. It was at Berekum where I started visiting the classroom. My teacher was one Anti Mary who had not plaited her hair. At school I learnt 1,2,3. I was in Class 3. Besides learning 1,2,3, I knew so many recitations. The following are some of them:

" I saw a sheep assiling!

Asailin on the shea.

An oh! 'twas all raden

"Wid pritty tings for meet!"

Hwe dee metir ye! hwem hwem hwem!  
Hwe dee menan ye! sim sim sim!  
Hwe dee mensa ye! bra bra bra!  
Eye me nono, Eye me nono, Eye me so da!

I learnt also the names of other things in English, like, This is a chalk; this is a chair; this is a table, etc. I am walking, I am dancing, I am standing.

I will be attending school next year. At the moment I am helping Mama at home. When I was a child I always cried but now I have stopped. I don't wet my bed at night.

Imaginative Play.

I gave a doll to Nana Yaa aged 4 $\frac{3}{4}$  years and watched her play at mother. Nana Yaa was delighted to possess a doll, and, fortunately enough, the girl's aunt had then given birth to a baby girl and so clever Yaa watched her aunt and her baby closely and treated her baby almost in the same way that her aunt treated her baby.

She first went for water, collected some powder, rags, sponge, and soap. Then she began to wash and dry her baby. After washing the baby, she powdered her and put on its new dress and pants. I thought she was going to put her on her back, but to my surprise, she laid the doll quietly beside her aunt's baby on some rags and covered her with a piece of cloth, at the same <sup>time</sup> whispering to the doll to sleep peacefully. She then went outside to tidy up the sponge and bucket she used for bathing the doll.

In a moment, she came back and thought she found the doll crying. Then she shouted: "Wope su dodo! Aaen na wo-teetee me sei yie, medee som!" (You naughty baby you are fond of crying. Why should you give me such worries? Take my breast!) She pretended to feed the doll on her breast. After feeding her she asked her grandmother to tie the doll on to her back. She put on a second cloth as grown ups do and pretended to be a mother.

She was thrilled when I called her a mother and asked her to show me her new born baby, and when her grandmother congratulated her for bringing forth she felt on top of the world. Then the idea came into her mind that she should go about thanking people as it is the custom to do when one brings forth. She collected the children in the house together and asked them to accompany her to give thanks to people. They were all greatly thrilled at the fun. Then another child suggested that they should play at father and mother. One child carried the baby while the rest pretended to cook for the father of the doll, <sup>she</sup> was imagined to live somewhere near the compound.

While they were cooking, the girl carrying the baby reported that the doll was crying. Yaa's attention switched on to the child. She pretended to be fed up with the crying of the child and started to beat her saying: "You are a bad baby. Stop crying, you fat-headed child; you are fond of crying. Wait until I send you to your father to punish you. Why should you give me such worries? I will push pepper up your anus if you don't stop crying instantly, you naughty baby." She threw it on the floor ~~saying~~ that it could continue to cry until it was tired of crying. Another child went for it and started playing with it only to tear it.

Yaa was much grieved and started crying and complaining. I promised her another doll. Two of the children were called by their mother and <sup>that</sup> was the end of the play.

In the evening she laid the doll beside her and covered it with a piece of her cloth. The following morning found Yaa beating and abusing the doll for wetting the sleeping mat, while in reality it was she who <sup>had</sup> wet the mat. And that was the end of the poor doll.

DRAWING

Name - Nana Boakye. A boy.

Age 7 years Class -Primary Class II.

Drawing made at home with one child present

a) Free drawing on a given Rectangle. No. 1

Child: Shall I draw any

I said Yes

Child "I want something round to draw a circle,  
a saucer will do I think."

I gave him a saucer and he drew a circle round it and  
coloured it.

Child: "Shall I write apple underneath?"

I asked the kind of apple he drew and he said it was a  
sweet apple.

Child - "How do you spell 'sweet?'"

I taught him how to spell it.

Something the child is afraid of. No. 2

The child mentioned three things he was afraid of, namely  
an elephant, a snake and a horse. Of the three he said  
the snake was the one he feared most.

Child: "What colour shall I use in drawing?"

I said any colour at all he liked.

Child: "Shall I write 'snake' in vernacular or in English?"

I said in English.

Child: "What is the spelling?"

I dictated the spelling for him.

Child: "I should be frightened to see a snake, it is a dreadful animal".

The Unpleasantest thing the child can think of. No. 3.

Child: "I hate being beaten by my teacher, I hate the sight of a cane; I will draw a teacher beating a boy."

So he drew a teacher beating a boy.

The Pleasantest thing the child can think of. No. 4.

Child: "I like a car, I love to ride in it"

"I'll draw a car, shall I draw the tyres as well?"

I pointed to where he could draw the tyres.

Child: "I can't draw the inside of the car."

I asked him to make an attempt. He managed to draw a man driving, with some difficulty. He was more interested in the colours and he selected green, red and blue which he said were the colours of C.P.P.

A Fight. No. 5.

Child: "I want to draw Roy Ankrah but I should like to have a look at his picture first."

He picked up a newspaper containing pictures of two boxers and copied from it.

Child: "I will learn to box in future like Roy Ankrah."

He wrote Roy Ankraah underneath one picture and copied Ray Famechon from the newspaper.

Nana Gyemfi Age: 8 years. Class: Primary Class III.

Drawing made at home with his brother.

A man and a woman No. 1.

Child:- "I want to draw from a picture". Draw a man for me to see. "I can only draw the head". He saw the picture of a man and he copied it, but chose his own colours.

Child - "Shall I draw a woman with a headkerchief tied round her head?"

I asked her to draw any woman he could think of. This time he drew without looking at a picture.

Child:- "Shall I write man at the bottom of the picture of the man so as to differenciate it from that of the woman"? "The woman is wearing earrings and she is going to market"

Dream No. 2

Child:- "I dreamt of two Mass Servers serving a priest at Holy Mass". "I like going to Holy Mass. I will one day become a Mass Server, if only daddy would not object to my staying at the Mission. I once suggested that to him but, he seemed not to like the idea of my staying away from him."

He drew an Altar, and candle sticks, a priest and two servers and then lastly the chalice.

Child:- The priest was saying "Dominus Vobiscum".

(God be with you)



Nana Syamfie



no1

Man and woman.

HOLY MASS



Father

chalice candle



ALTER

no2



server



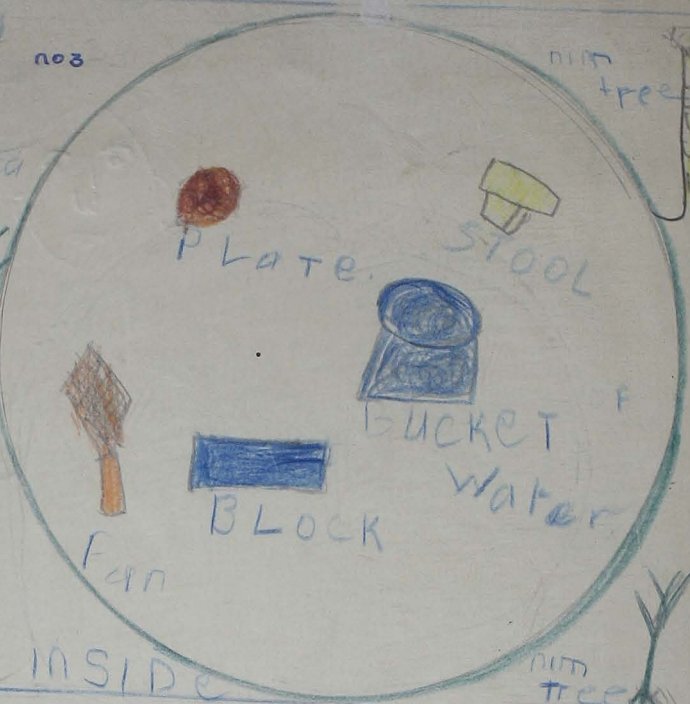
server

Father and Mass server

no3

nim tree

Fla



Fan

PLATE

STOOL

BUCKET

water

BLOCK

INSIDE

nim tree

COOCCSL



NANA BOAKYE

7 years

97



Sweet  
A.P.P.le

no 1

(a)

Nana Boakye



SNAKE

no 2

no 4



no 3

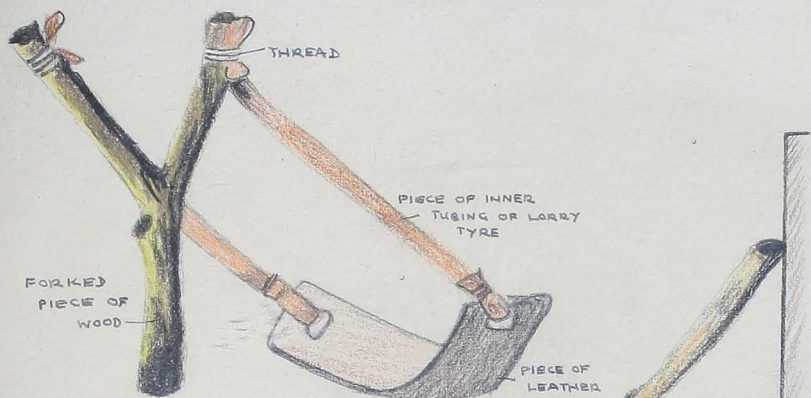


no 5

ROY ANKATH



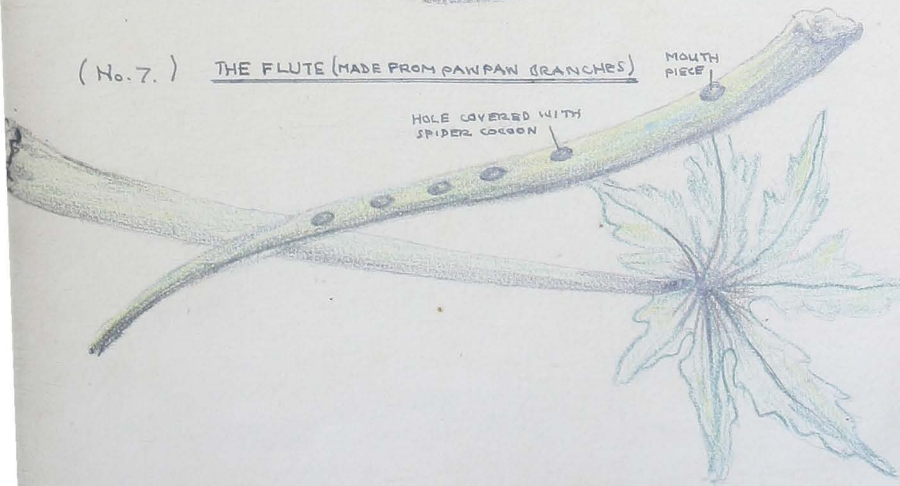
FIG H T Roy Falmeschan

THE CATAPULT (No. 2)

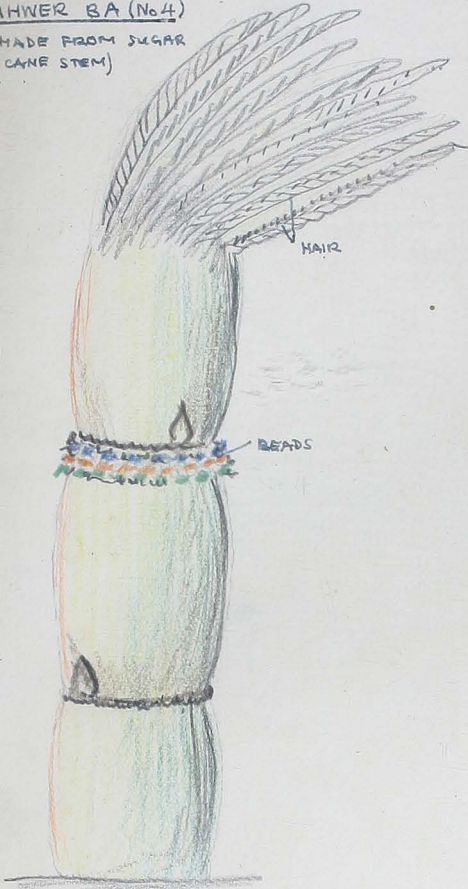
A WOODEN WHEEL (No. 6)  
 (FOR CARRYING WATER)



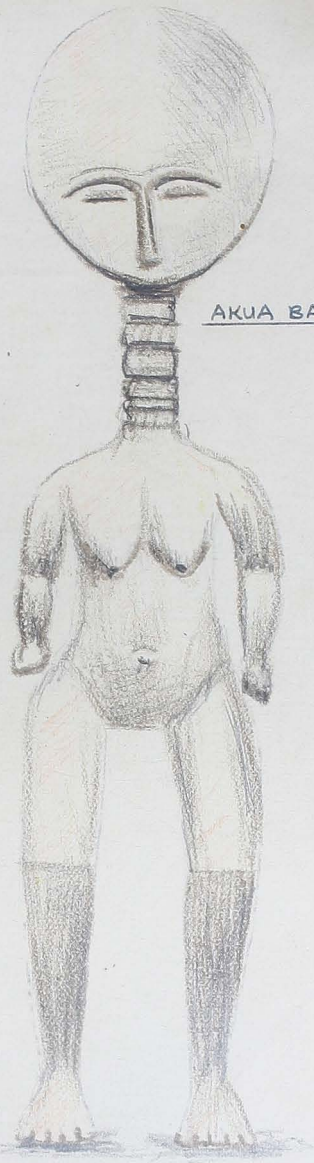
(No. 7.) THE FLUTE (MADE FROM PAWPAW BRANCHES)



AHWER BA (No.4)  
(MADE FROM SUGAR  
CANE STEM)



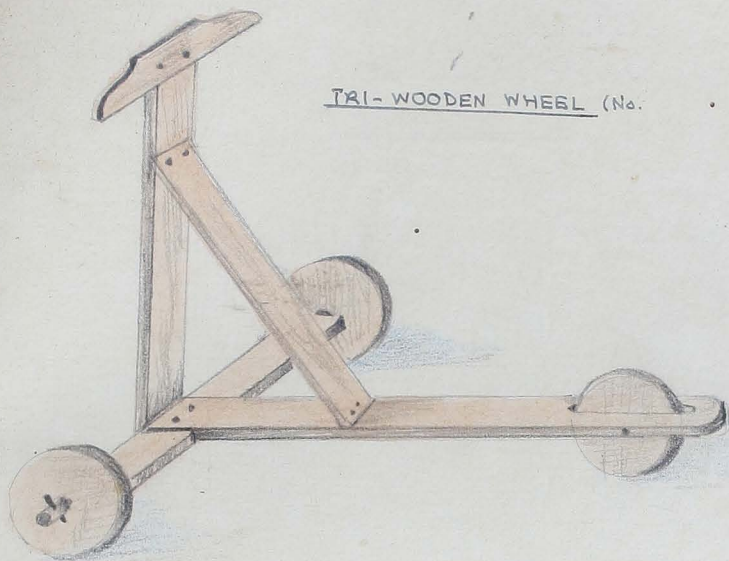
AKUA BA (No.5)



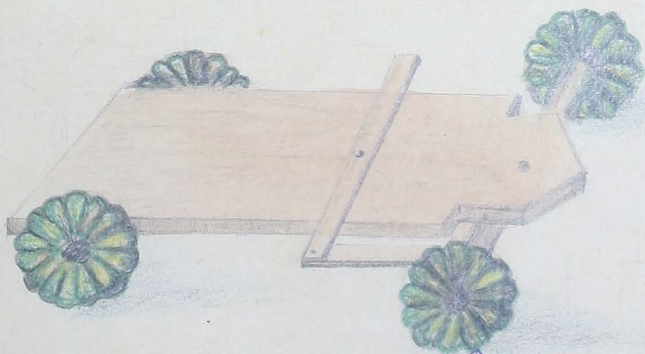
WASAWASA (No.3)



TRI-WOODEN WHEEL (No.



MINIATURE 'CAR'



FRUIT OF THE SAND BOX