

## AFRICAN BOYS—THEIR PLAY AND THEIR PLAY-THINGS.

LETTER FROM REV. J. A. BAIN TO A SABBATH-SCHOOL SCHOLAR IN SCOTLAND.

The little black boys and girls in Africa have their romps and games just as you have, though of course very different. They have their games at ball, which consists in choosing sides, and the ball is thrown up, while the one side try to keep it from the other as long as they can. Then they have popguns, something like those at home, only made of bark from a tree, or of reeds; and they spin tops. They don't have dolls, for they have not often themselves as much cloth as would cover a doll, if they knew how to make one. But they make little clay figures which are meant to look like cows, though the only parts of the figures like a cow are the great big hump on the back, and the tapering horns. Little black boys and girls are really very good tempered; they rarely fight, and if you give one of them a pinch of salt, no matter how many there may be, every one gets a little.

You think children are happy when they have nice big, airy houses with lots of nice things in them. The little African only goes into his house if it rains, or if he is going to bed; and if he is tall, then he must stoop to get in, and then, once in, it is all dark, unless there be a fire which will likely smoke badly, as no houses have chimneys. The houses are just like so many bee-hives, and if you begin to build, you will probably finish your house in two or three days at the most. A little blackie knows nothing of breakfast, lunch, dinner or tea. His mother gives him a little basket of cooked maize made into a *brose*, and some beans or leaves boiled, which are eaten with the *brose*. This in the morning and at night is quite sufficient to feed any child.

Often war comes on a peaceful village, and children are torn from their friends and their village, which they may never see again. They grow up as the slaves of those who capture them, and they in turn

will no doubt do the same to other villages, and perhaps even to their own old home of long ago. All this is very sad, because it is very true; and the only way in which the horror of war, with its bloodshed and cruelty, will cease will be to tell these poor people of that God who is the friend of young and old, rich and poor alike.

Just near us lives a poor woman whose nose, ears, lips, and hands have been cut off by the Awemba, who, when they carried others off, did not think her worth taking. Another poor man near us only three weeks ago suffered the same, though death mercifully ended his sufferings. One village five miles from here had thirty or forty women and children carried away by the Awemba, who came down on them when they were all happy in the joy of gathering in their harvest home. A poor little baby was found sleeping, all unconscious that its mother was already miles away, hurried by the cruel captors, her neck tightly pressed in a slave-stick.

My dear——, neither you nor I can change the hearts of these cruel and blood-thirsty people; but we can pray to God to change them, and He who knows their sorrows and sufferings will hear and send relief to their distress. Poor, dark Africa groans with the injustice of centuries.—*The Little Missionary.*

## New Hebrides.

Our young readers remember that Mr. Annand was settled about a year ago on the island of Santo in the New Hebrides. We will hear Mr. Annand tell of what he is doing there.

"In Feb'y we built a nice comfortable school house 26 feet long and 19 feet wide. Quite a number of the natives helped at it, making thatch from a palm leaf. It cost us nearly if not altogether \$75. but this we paid in mission goods.

Shortly after completing the house we began school in it at 7 o'clock in the morning, but our pupils are a very uncertain quantity. Some days I have about twenty, then five and other days