

Basel Mission Archives

"Mohr to Basel"

Title: "Mohr to Basel"

Ref. number: D-01.65.VIII..177

Date: Proper date: 28.10.1896

Description: Confirms that he spent this time in Adele in bed. Having read some of David Asante's reports on the area he considers that the knowledge of Twi must have reduced considerably in the intervening decade. There was an Asante 'Governor' (Statthalter) in Dadease in Atwati. In fact in the whole area of the Anum missionary district, except for Akwamu on both sides of the Volta and a few villages in Buem, the languages most used by far are Guan and Ewe - so much so that young missionaries in the area have no chance to practice speaking pure Twi. To the points raised against teaching German in Letter No. 178 above, he adds - in a rather hostile tone - the point that he does not see why the Basel Mission should rush to teach German when the German Government is doing so little even for the school in Lome. Since, even in the Anum district, so many pupils really need to learn English, why do they not simply wait till the Bremen mission has German-speaking teachers, and then employ some of those? In any case it should be the first duty of the Regime to run schools if it needs certain types of employees. 'To use missionary money for this would be to use it for what it was not intended by the donors. We want to bring the 'Word' to the people, and we simply cannot do that in German, only in the vernacular, and in this case, with these many small tribal groups, that means in Twi which in this situation is far easier to teach them than German'. He repeats arguments for sending Volta region pupils to a middle school in Abetifi or Begoro because that Twi is more current in the Volta region than Akwapim Twi). Another argument which he advances here against a Volta region middle school is that he calculates that they only need 24 local assistants for the whole area up to Adele (it is, he remarks, after all only a narrow strip of land) and a number like that hardly justifies a whole middle school. An evangelist's school perhaps. This letter is marked 'Private' by Mohr - perhaps because of its comments on the teaching of German. It seems so from the fact that he mentions its being private in the same paragraph at the end as a final comment about German-language teaching - and in blue pencil a remark by a Basel recipient as 'very much to be heeded'.

Subject: [Archives catalogue]: Guides / Finding aids: Archives: D - Ghana: D-01 - Incoming correspondence from Ghana up to the outbreak of the First World War: D-01.65 - Ghana 1896: D-01.65.VIII. - Anum

Type: Text

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