

Basel Mission Archives

"Süss to Basel"

Title: "Süss to Basel"

Ref. number: D-01.04a.44

Date: Proper date: 03.02.1852

Description: First Journey to Akim Taken alone because Widmann unable to travel, and Dieterle sick. Project first seriously considered after Stanger had informed them that the Wesleyans had plans for entering Akim(in mid. 1851). Four days march from the last Akropong farms to Gyadam, most of the time along a broad valley. Approx. every two hours passing a hamlet in a clearing with farms, but the path seems little used, pushing through bushes etc. Gyadam a large town with many people in it, the king has a real palace (cf .Akropong where he does not). First shown into an open room behind a collonade, then taken to the King who sat on a large stool, smoking a long pipe, the gold scales at his feet. Given accomodation in the house of an elder, and given a hen and a week's supply of yams. The king visited them in the later and gave S. 3 thaler and his followers 40 'Streng' in gold. A long conversation followed in the evening; by the time of S.'s departure, he had promised to send two boys to the school in Akropong within two weeks. Gyadam is described as being in a large plantation, with stone (available for building presumably) nearby, and good clay for earthenware and bricks. From Gyadam he went to Kibi, where his followers wanted him only to stay the night, staying in a certain house, because they particularly did not want to see the King. However, they were received on the outskirts of the town by two men and conducted to the king's house, where S. seems to have been impreseed by the pomp. He mentions horns blowing,& drums on several occasions. On each occasion of conversation the king came to visit S., who was again lodged with an elder. The King was keen to detain S. longer than his intended 24 hours stay, and used the discussions concerning the sending of two of his sons to the school in Akropong as a means to delay him. The King's reception was very friendly, affable, genial. Asking S. about his travels, and his diet. The King pressed for a teacher to be sent to Kibi and S. pointed out that the King'a sons would be taught to be teachers. (The King expressed a strong desire to be taught to read by S. himself). Other substantive topics of conversation were S.'s advice to eschew rum, and the question why S. had come. 'Because I love you black people, and I had heard in my country that you were an unhappy people, with no peace, and knowing nothing about eternal life, and then I thought I would come to tell you about eternal life (das ewige Leben verkünden) so that you may receive it (empfangen) and become holy (selig) in time and eternity'. On the journey back to Akropong, S. mentions that the Akim villages supplied him with food - this is not stated as happening on the outward journey, though he left Akropong unsure whether he would be spending one or two days travelling through the Akropong farms or be going en to Akim. The journey began on Jan 19th, he left Gyadam on 24th Jan - he doesn't give a date for his return to Akropong. (Most of this letter is printed in Heidenbote 1852 No 7, p. 53ff) In an unpublished passage at the end of the letter S. makes several points in

Basel Mission Archives

favour of the establishment of a station of the BM at Gyadam rather than Kibi. (i) the town and the surrounding cultivable lands are far better watered. (ii) in conjunction with its suburb of Esubuya it is not much smaller than Kibi (iii) their message would have wider currency in this important commercial centre (iv) if handled cleverly the King of Gyadam would be favourable to the missionaries He also argues that they should establish the station as soon as possible. One point he makes in this connection is that Akim is three or four times bigger than Akwapim. Also it is flat country where they speak a 'zart' (soft) twi compared with the rough twi of the Akwapim mountains. Asante twi is presumably soft flat country twi too. Furthermore the Akwapims abominate (verabscheuen), the twi of the Asantes and Akims. Therefore there would be advantages in going to Gyadam and doing his language study there.

- 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-01.04a - Ghana 1851-1853
- Type:** Text
- Ordering:** Please contact us by email info@bmarchives.org
- Contact details:** Basel Mission Archives/ mission 21, Missionstrasse 21, 4003 Basel, tel. (+41 61 260 2232), fax: (+41 61 260 2268), info@bmarchives.org
- Rights:** All the images (photographic and non- photographic) made available in this collection are the property of the Basel Mission / mission 21. The Basel Mission claims copyright on the images in their possession and requires those - both individuals and organisations - publishing any of the images, to pay a users fee.