

Basel Mission Archives

"Zimmermann's Quarter Report"

Title: "Zimmermann's Quarter Report"

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Date: Proper date: July 1852

Description: Comments on the celebrations when British rule was consolidated - a gathering of the important chiefs in Christiansborg. The King from Kibi was the most noble of them, and the richest the King of Akim (this and other material from Zimmermann on the new regime and its relation to the traditional states is to be found in Heidenbote 1853, pp 43ff.). His detachment marched into Osu in good order with their flags...preceded by drummers, followed by a man striking a hollow iron cup, followed by a detachment of soldiers, then a number of people carrying chests, footstools etc., then followed a high official in a palanquin ahead by an umbrella, then came the centre of the procession - surrounded by soldiers, the kings servants, among whom were the crier, the official who drove away the flies; with his horse-hair [...] an adjutant carrying a curved sword with a golden hilt and at last the king himself high in his palanquin, shaded by two umbrellas, and the stool before him, with two great bells hanging from it. Behind him came huge 5' drums, hung with skulls (though these were covered up with cloth). All very well turned out, the drummers varying their tone between strong and weak strokes a great deal. They marched to the Fort, saluted the Governor with a volley in which they must have spent 16-20 pounds of powder. The men responsible for each part of the King of Akim's retinue each rode on another man, so that they could see well, and in the crowd it looked as if they were on horse backs. The king of Akim has strict control over his people....In state he sits on his stool, with two lines in front of him made up of his slaves, his weapon-carriers, and his small sons - anyone approaching him has to walk between these lines. Around him in the open air was drumming and dancing. The missionaries visit him, and gave him presents of an English bible with gold letters on the binding, an English spade and a hatchet. He received them in a friendly way, and attended a service once, when he was surprised to find the chapel packed full, and the service is carried on in two vernaculars. His attendants often came to services also, and other Akim people in Christiansborg. He had been to a Wesleyan school himself, and is very keen to have his sons (with Süß) learn English. He is still pressing for a mission station in his territory and Zimmermann comments that while missionaries retained his favour they would be very well protected, since he maintains discipline and order and is loved and respected by his people. NB: The Akim contingent at the ceremony was outnumbered by that from Akwapim, all the wing chiefs came from that state with their escorts, and altogether cannot have numbered less than 4500. In reporting on farming and gardening, he says that the missionaries have much enthusiasm for this....

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