

Basel Mission Archives

"Annual Report for 1879 Written by Ramseyer"

Title: "Annual Report for 1879 Written by Ramseyer"

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Date: Proper date: 23.02.1880

Description: Statistics for the year: Missionaries - the Ramseyers only. Catechist - Stephen Sakyi (married) Teacher - Emm. Dako (married) Reports a difficult year, at the beginning of which the station did not have a graveyard, while now there is a graveyard (one hundred paces on the path to the water, on the left side) with the graves of two missionaries - Werner and Lodholz. The Ramseyers themselves had serious illnesses in the last quarter of the year, with a touch of yellow fever. They decided they must have a change of air and went to Begoro. They had a year of mixed progress in the Christian community also. Three days after Werner's death youths were baptised. But the reception of these was not without its anxieties, since while in several you could see the beginnings of conversion, and the beginning of the work of God -in their hearts in three there was a troublesome superficiality, although since they had zealously attended Baptismal instruction and showed a great desire for baptism. Ramseyer had not felt he could put them off. However it transpired that one of them had committed theft actually while being instructed for baptism, and a little later one of them had to be excluded for adultery, and there seems to be little hope of his being re-accepted since although he himself told the missionaries of his 'fall' despite their warnings he has lived far away from the station since. The other had been a servant of Werner's, and had learned to read and write. Since his 'fall' Ramseyer has taken him as his own servant and has been satisfied with his conduct. One of the newly baptized whom it gave Ramseyer great satisfaction to bring into the community was one James Boaman, He had announced himself among the first candidates for baptism, but since he served the chief as stool-bearer strong pressure was put on him to give up this plan. He was made to swear the king's oath that he would not give up his duties, so he gave up his Christian instructions, since he said his oath had made it impossible for him to become holy (the last phrase Ramseyer implies was a quote). When it became known that there was a second group of baptismal candidates this same man came and asked Ramseyer to intercede with the king on his behalf in order to get the king to 'give' him his oath so that he could become a Christian. The chief's answer was very shortly 'No' - although Ramseyer said to him that he was making a quarrel not with him but with God. And a few days later the man came and said he had been released from his oath and at the same time the chief had said that he would have no member of this family serving him in future. (NB the chief's original reason for refusing to allow Boaman to be baptised was that he feared the angry spirits if this happened). The Christian community goes forward on the whole in the usual way - a few months before four of its members had to build their houses on station land, and they attend the Sunday services and the bible study and Thursday prayer meeting regularly. However the missionaries need to care for the new members very carefully the more since they often leave Abetifi

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for several weeks on journeys. Ramseyer is very satisfied with the progress of the school - 10 of the boys have been baptised on 1st Feb 1880 - Ramseyer never had a baptismal instruction class which gave him so much joy. 4 of the boys are 16-17 years old, the rest younger. Two young men from the town have joined them (one is an Asante) and one the first of three woman of Abetifi to come forward for baptism - she is aged about 50. Because of the death of Werner and his own sickness Ramseyer has travelled little in Kwahu, although Sakyi has preached widely. One of the most visited towns has been Mpraeso, and Ramseyer looks forward to the day when there will be an outstation here so that southern Kwahu can be visited more regularly.

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