

Basel Mission Archives

"Mohr's Annual Report for 1879"

Title: "Mohr's Annual Report for 1879"

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Description: Teacher Adu had to be expelled for adultery, and while catechist Ntow has worked well he has had many difficulties over getting married. His first intended was strongly suspected of having committed adultery with a catechist in Aburi, his second was also suspected of adultery. One problem is that Akwapim people do not like coming to Akim. In Begoro itself the community lost 18 Members. 3 died, 7 moved away, and 8 were excluded. 3 were excluded because of drunkenness, 4 for adultery, and one after getting into debt has disappeared to Salaga. In addition two Christians were excluded from Communion for having taken part in a fetish ceremony. On the other hand 14 people have joined the community (this presumably includes babies, since the total loss to the community in the course of the year was 4). Outside Begoro there has been progress. Together the two catechists travelled for 110 days. In Anyinam there was a demand for a catechist which could not be satisfied. 5 people were baptised there in the course of the year. One of the convert's children died a month after the baptism but had been ailing long before. They travel to Begoro for communion. In Fankyeneko the Christian community has increased from 16 to 24, a result of the baptism of 3 adults and 5 newly born children of the Christians. One person was excluded from Communion on the grounds of having taken part in the 'custom' of a deceased relative, and being in general unpeaceable in his conduct. All the adult Christians but two are married - in Fankyeneko the mission faces comparatively little the marriage difficulty which troubles them so much in Begoro. They have made themselves a service and have started on a swish house for the catechist. In Dwenease there are now 3 Christians. This is a tough bigotted village - compared with Fankyeneko where there are no fetish priests in this town are ten, all zealous in their calling. One of the Christians had been a pawn. His master did not want him to become a Christian, and so Mohr approached the uncle who had pawned him and asked him to pay half the debt (£3). Mohr would advance the other half, and the man would then have to work for him to pay off this advance. In Osino there is no room for the gospel in the excitement of the people at quarrels with Fankyeneko, and the intrigues of a crafty fetish priest. (Obeng from Bankyeneko has been preaching there weekly during the year). Over the whole area of the station there has been an absolute increase in the Christian community from 66 to 77, including a total loss of 20. You can only tell how deeply these people have become Christian by questioning them individually, a good reason for hoping that their numbers do not increase too fast. On the whole like children they have to be led forward - Mohr clearly feels that he has some power in the situation, since he speaks of marriage quarrels of major dimensions which he has been able to settle, also exclusions are not greeted passive by the rest of the community. The heathen too are alive to exclusions - excluded people

Basel Mission Archives

are subject to taunts and jibes every day. The school in Begoro has only 6 pupils in it, the exclusion of teacher Adu creating great difficulties, and people are still being inspired by the fetish priestess not to allow their children to attend school. They equate going to school and being a Christian. There is in the report a discussion of the mission geography of Akim connected with the question whether certain places should be served from Begoro or Kibi. Listing the Begoro outstations he names Fankyeneko with its two nearby hamlets of Dome and Gyampomani; Dwenase and Abompe, ten minutes apart, both the size of Fankyeneko; Osino; Anyinam and nearby Adasawase. There are no other towns in the current area of the Begoro station. (NB: A map has been sent to Basel to which this is a commentary). Mohr asked the General Conference to allow Begoro to work also in the towns of Nsutam and Samang, but this was turned down on the grounds that politically speaking these were Asiakwa towns. This Mohr feels is unsatisfactory since already Anyinam and Adasawase are Kibi towns worked from Begoro, and Anyinasing and Mmaase are Asiakwa towns worked by the mission from Kukurantumi. In any case while before the question of political dependence was important (although even then it was most significant in war-time), now in the colony it is possible for, for example, a Begoro man to go to court in Kukurantumi or Kibi, only if he is a Gymaseni or has some office in the chief's court or in the town is he dependent on the chief.

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