

Basel Mission Archives

"Ramseyer to Basel"

Title: "Ramseyer to Basel"

Ref. number: D-01.32.XV..159

Date: Proper date: 19.06.1880

Description: Information about the Okomfo Anokye affair in Kumasi, and a translation of part of a letter from Owusu Ansah about it. At the end of Nov 1879 two emissaries came to Abene from Agogo, and created sensation in Kwahu and Akim. They claimed to be from Okomfo Anokye who had returned to Asante (a recently seen meteor was supposed to have brought him). He had with him all the traditional leading followers, Okomfo Odomangkama, Okomfo Dabe, Okomfo Owu, Okomfo Kyerekye, and he was going to set upright again the tall tree which had fallen down. The messengers greeted the Kwahus on behalf of this group, passed on the message about the tree, and informed them that Okomfo Anokye intended to visit Kwahu. If they wished him to visit them, he would come in twenty days. If they doubted the reality of this story they should consult Atieyan and Buruku, the two chief fetishes of Kwahu. Another sign that they were speaking the truth was that they had met a black ape with golden sandals and sitting on a king's stool, who had given them messages for Okomfo Anokye. Although this created a sensation, there was some scepticism, especially on the part of the Abetifi chief, who thought it was a stratagem to cover the re-establishment of the Asante overlordship. Ramseyer, despite his rule not to meddle in politics, allowed himself to send in the advice that whatever they intended to do in relation to Asante should be done in a straightforward and public way. Atieyan was asked for an opinion, which went that if Okomfo Anokye was coming he would come, and if he didn't come, then it did not signify anything. And after this the Kwahu chiefs simply sent the messengers back to Agogo. Ramseyer wrote to Owusu Ansah asking for information about the back ground to all this, and received in reply a letter which said: - In 1879 (presumably) a new fetish sect arose called 'domangkama', and the high priest claimed that he was the resurrected Okomfo Anokye. He gave his followers the names of the dead kings of Asante - Osee Tutu, Kwaku Dua etc. - He won the confidence of many Asantes, was much feared and became rich with many presents. - He (Ansah) has just heard from Asebi Antwi and Bosomuru Dwira, currently emissaries from the Asantehehe to the governor, that one morning they (the new Okomfo Anokye and his followers) forced their way into the palace, and took all arts of liberties, until suddenly one of them shot at the Asantehehe. As a result, many of them have been put into irons. - It is said that the number of followers of the Okomfo Anokye was 1000 at its peak. - Owusu Ansah himself had warned the king about putting too much confidence in this movement - since the attempted assassination he has received a message from the King and his counsellors that his advice was good. At the end of the letter is a note that they had just taken a six fingered girl child onto the station compound at Abetifi.

Subject: [Archives catalogue]: Guides / Finding aids: Archives: D - Ghana: D-01 -

Basel Mission Archives

Incoming correspondence from Ghana up to the outbreak of the First World War: D-01.32 - Ghana 1880: D-01.32.XV. - Abetifi

- 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.