

Basel Mission Archives

"Dilger to Basel"

Title: "Dilger to Basel"

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Description: Discussing his life so far on the Gold Coast, Dilger says that he has never been so happy in his life before as he is in Abetifi, despite fevers etc, and the death of the little Ramseyer child which affected him deeply. The six-fingered child was already by the writing of this letter baptised Martha. The bulk of the letter is taken up with an account of a preaching journey he did with Sakyi through 6 Kwahu towns. No date is given. In Aduammoa almost the whole population was in the bush collecting snails, so that only 10-12 people gathered for the preaching. In Obo now the missionaries are normally staying with a man who owns a compound, and who had been once a scholar at the Kibi school. So they stayed in a room with some European furniture - a bedstead, with mattress and pillows, a small table and a stool, a mirror, a lantern, and some pictures, including portraits of the German princes Wilhelm and Heinrich, and a portrait of the greatest of German doctors in his study - Dr. Frerichs. Both in Aduammoa and Obo he discusses preaching in terms of texts which came into his mind at the sight of the place and the people gathered. Here he preached on the words 'I have many people in this town who know neither right nor left', having seen what a large crowd had gathered for the preaching. In Obo people were eager to hear, in Kyendumase a few minutes away they chattered and played during the preaching of Sakyi, and then he himself preached on the text 'Behold I make all things new'. In Obomeng he preached on the texts 5 Moses c33v3, and 'God so loved the world'. Mpraeso he describes as the place in Kwahu where they have made most impact. There was a large crowd, as still as the congregatien in a church at home. He preached on Isaiah 45vv22-3. On the way to Nkwatia the words came into his mind 'Lord, I wait for thy salvation', and he preached on the holiness of Abraham and the obligation of people in the time of fulfilment to achieve at least Abraham's level. Since this journey he has been on two more, especially devoted to the little villages, where you get 20-40 hearers. In such places preaching takes on the character of a friendly and homely chat. The people in such villages are simpler and more childlike than those in the towns. He has been especially impressed by the attentive hearing they got in two neat and clean villages Nteso and Sadae. His missionary life is not simply one of preaching, however. He is constantly being approached to intervene in various types of situation. When he was in Abene the King called him into a council to advise on the punishment of a man from Obo who had murdered a 10 year old boy. They were inhibited from executing him according to their law, because this might give them a bad reputation with the English government. And in the same place with his medical knowledge he was able to help a girl with an injured foot.

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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

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