Basel Mission Archives

"Asante's Report on a Journey to the North and North-East"

Title: "Asante's Report on a Journey to the North and North-East"

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Description: On the journey he was interested to see how few people there were in such a fertile area - people attribute this to the Asante wars, and the many ruins bear this out. Cotton cultivation was general in the area he visited. Iron implements in use were from Apafo. People in Buem and Nkonya have taken newly to exporting palm oil to the merchants' collecting places on the Volta. In a passage about political alignments Asante says that Nkonya having become independent of Asante should belong to the Ewe kingdom, but they declared itself independent. The journey took 25 days. In Botoku the people had not heard the gospel, apart from those who had lived in Akwapim. 2 Christians there had been baptised by Missionary Bohner in Abetifi, but now all alone were living as heathens. Anvoi - one of the biggest towns in the area, and known for its market. The chief asked for a resident catechist - although on Asante's return he found the chief had died of a stroke. Kpandu Asante lodged with a king's brother. A larger and better known town than Anvoi - a 'little Salaga'. Everything on sale - even men. There are almost as many Mohammedans as locals. They have a place for their services, but are not missionising. Praprawasi - the first Nkonya village. Twumuru - they thought he wanted to take their baba fetishes away and being bigotted fetish servers expressed opposition. Tepa and Antamda - small villages, friendly reception to preaching on the homeward journey. Wurupon is not the capital of Nkonya - the king lives in a small village on the West of Twumuru called Betenase. The journey from the last Nkonya village to the first Buem village is very unsafe, owing to the habit of kidnapping people for sacrifice. It takes 8 hours. It was a lonely day except that they met one party of Mohammedan traders taking their 'big and beautiful' cows to Kpandu for slaughter - though they also take them to the coast for sale. The first Buem village was Aku, where they had a good reception. Another early Buem village was Atenko. Guaman/Dwaman - the chief was a fetish priest – his deputy welcomed Asante. Gyasekan - much bigger than Guaman. Borada, where the chief was called Akpanya. There was almost a serious incident here when a group of elders came to investigate him escorted by a group of men armed with clubs. They wanted to know who he thought he was arguing against Dente. He was not allowed to use his left hand to gesture with. Some women also had seen him looking at the sand by their watering place, and Asante’s explanation that he was looking to see if they had sold there was only accepted when his Nkonya guide was actually recognise personally by one of the people present. Some of the heat was taken out of the situation when a youth said that it was the fashion of the Sukuu-foo to attack the fetishes. From Borada he went via Gyasekan and Gunman to the Kong mountain. Characteristic of the whole journey were the questions Who are you? Where do you come from? Who sent you? Where are you going? - And especially in Buem if the chief agreed with his preaching gong-gong was

sounded and the chief was present for it.

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