

Basel Mission Archives

"Kwabi to the Local Committee"

Title: "Kwabi to the Local Committee"

Ref. number: D-01.37.VI..88

Date: Proper date: 21.05.1883

Description: A report on the Mpraeso station, and his work. His 'history' of Mpraeso is that at first he had 7 catechumens, none of whom came to baptism in the end. Then there were a group of 4 who were baptised, and there are four more awaiting baptism now. His Sunday programme: 6-7a.m, family prayers with the Christians, 10-11a.m, Divine Service. 3-4 p.m. Sunday School for Christians and catechumens. 4p.m. street preaching. 6-7p.m.family prayers. Sometimes they preach at Oboneng or Atibie instead of Mpraeso. He describes general welcome in the villages where he goes to preach. Sometimes the chiefs come to his preaching - they usually take his side in a dispute, the real enemy are the fetish priests. As explanations for the lack of actual movement into the church, he offers the respect for the old men, and the expectation that the mission would pay people's debts; as they had in a few cases, mistakenly; as far as he was concerned. Obo he names as a place which he hopes will become the Larteh of Kwahu - but not yet, the three catechumens he trained last year have all lapsed. In travelling about Kwahu they usually pay for their lodging by giving tobacco and salt to the father and mother of the house. He remarks that the villages are cleaner than in Akim and the people especially the wives. more industrious. They tend to live beyond their means, however. There are serious water shortages in the dry season. Discussing Asante Akim (where he went on the first visit with Dilger) Kwabi summarises the chief's statements about their request for a teacher in this way: 'First we called you to help us from the Asantes. Secondly to establish a school or station among us so that in our triyble we shall apply to the teacher who will be amongst us to write us a letter to the Governor on the coast. At first we did apply to Mr. Ramseyer who wrote to the Governor of our state in that time .in the last year, .but we received no proper answer, for the Governor did write to the King of Kumasi. Now he - the the Asantehene - had sent to us to say that the Governor wished that we might return to him, and had sent his ambassadors with fetish to make a covenant of peace with us to serve him, but we have refused to do so. We now beg you to write to the Governor for us. The reply to this was that the missionaries have nothing to do with political affairs, and the establishing of the station was not in their power - they would have to contact their elders about it in Europe if they were to send. Someone back to Abetifi with them, however, they would write again to the Governor on their behalf.' They then visited 10 villages - they were warmly welcomed 'for all this time the ambassadors of the King of Kumasi were present among them. We ourselves saw them in some of their villages named Dworansa and Kyekyebuase where we were; as protectors to them'. 'They were not so much for the word of peace for their soul, but more for the- outward protection from their old master the King of Kumasi'. A second visit to Asante Akim with Ramseyer is reported (January 1882); less zeal there than before. The fetish priest from

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Obogu had fled to Jeoase 'one of the villages of the east of Asante Akim'. He is still sending men secretly to come and poison people in Obogu. The Obogu chief appealed for help in this connection, but they told him that they were only able to admonish people to live at peace with those around them. Kwabi ends with the hope that they may awake to the danger to their soul. (Ramseyer comments that he thinks that it is not only in Kwahu that people hope to 'live upon the mission' - i.e. get their debts paid on baptism. Müller comments that the report is of little value.)

- Subject:** [Archives catalogue]: Guides / Finding aids: Archives: D - Ghana: D-01 - Incoming correspondence from Ghana up to the outbreak of the First World War: D-01.37 - Ghana 1883: D-01.37.VI. - Abetifi
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