

Basel Mission Archives

"Müller to Basel"

Title: "Müller to Basel"

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Description: More detailed information on the journey of exploration to Salaga. He describes the Anum-Boso district as containing 6-7,000 inhabitants - perhaps 10,000 if you include the Ewe speaking villages in the Boao valley, Parema, To and Tonko. While in the late 1860s cotton was the main article of trade, now cotton plantations are rarely to be seen, and palm-oil has taken over its place in commerce. On the journey David Asante was very well looked after by an ex-fetish priest of Boso, now baptised. 'The Boso community has deep roots in the district. They heard a lot about slave-holding in this district, but slave owners suffer there from the proximity of the Protectorate to which slaves can flee, just as Kwahu slave-holders suffer from the proximity of Anyinam. Nkonya and Buem he thinks, will soon be involved in the palm-oil trade, judging by the fact that they have oil-palms, and the fact that the palm-oil merchants have a settlement not many hours from Kpandu, Nkami. Krakye he reports as very thinly peopled - they reckoned there were only about 25 villages, though there was the difficulty that the people were very withdrawn. Whenever they began a conversation which had to get down to details someone came up and spoke to the Krakye man involved, and after that very little information was to be obtained. In Krakye they were received with a great demonstration of drumming and piping, by the armed men. Krakye itself is not a large village with about 250 round huts and 50 compounds. People say that only notables have huts in Krakye - to possess one is an honour. They grow rice, yams, and a sort of millet. All hens belong to Dente. No cattle. Cowries are worth double what they are on the coast, though English money is also acceptable. The merchants take the opportunity to change money here. The salt trade was not flourishing, since the slave trade was not active, but there was no lack of salt. Everywhere you found groups of sacks full of salt. The Krakye chief would not send boys to the mission to be brought up. They have no trouble preaching in the streets, nor were any attempts made to enforce fetish prohibitions on them. He describes Salaga as 30 minutes long, but for much of the way nothing but a rubbish-heap. The trade was mostly in cloth, most of that of European origin. By the cloth market was a big food market. There were many donkeys, about 30 horses, oxen and sheep on sale. They could only with difficulty get even one drink of milk each day, the butter was inedible. They greeted the chief in a hut with two fine horses on one side. (There is in this report an account of the interior geography as ascertained in Salaga by Müller.) He remarks that the slave family which they were dashed in Krakye on the return journey were Grusis, and they were terrified most of the return journey that they were about to be killed. In Akwapim they found many people of their tribe, and they lost some of their fear when they found their own countrymen in the Christian village at Abokobi.

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