

Basel Mission Archives

"Annual Report for the Year 1885 for the Station of Abetifi Written by Dilger"

Title: "Annual Report for the Year 1885 for the Station of Abetifi Written by Dilger"

Ref. number: D-01.43.V..135-136

Date: Proper date: 14.01.1886

Description: During the year the station was strengthened by the arrival of Missionary Tschopp and Missionary Sitzler. The year was bad from the health angle. Tschopp almost died of a fever, Mrs Dilger was badly ill with rheumatism, and towards the end of the year the two oldest Dilger children were badly ill with fever. Catechist Afwireng had to return to Akwapim because of bad health, and in his place Kofi Eliezer was set to Kwahu and stationed in Bepong. Catechist Mensah refused to be transferred to Agogo. Catechist Kwabi was instructed over the course of the last year to concentrate more on Mpraeso. Evangelist Otieko leaves much to be desired in his work in the Abitifi town school, in terms of his both zeal and tact. Evangelist Beko works well, and through him the outstations in Nkwatia and Bepong have been brought to life. The Abetifi community gave the missionaries a lot of trouble. During the year Dilger managed to get all the Christians to move onto the mission land - several had begun houses and managed to complete them for this, others built themselves 3 large temporary huts to use till they had built their proper houses. Though some of them finished their houses, several went travelling when their houses were only partly finished, and the uncovered walls fell down. Several Christians had to be excluded because of coarseness and intentional sin. On the whole the Christians were moved by a bad spirit that broke our hearts. God persued them and punished them, but they took no notice. The smallpox epidemic resulted in a large number of deaths, and 2 adult and two child Christians died. The missionaries hoped this would drive the Christians to a greater earnestness but it only made a deep impression on a few of them. Mpraeso on the other hand gave the missionaries such joy. The Christians there are good, zealous, and serious. A few excluded Christians were re-accepted, and several people baptised. There are a number of baptismal candidates awaiting baptism in 1886. Bepong, having no resident teacher in the first part of the year has no new Christians, although since a teacher was posted there several people have come forward into the catechumenate, including two old men. In Nkwatia 4 young married men have been baptised, and there are 4 catechumens. The missionaries have found themselves involved in two palavers during the course of the year. (i) The Abetifi chief and one of his elders had a dispute and the elder swore the Kwahuhene's oath against the Abetifi chief. The Abetifi chief, however, refused to go the Kwahuhene's court since this was in itself an act of humility towards the elder. The elder's supporters got together and urged the Abetifi chief to go the Kwahuhene's court. The Christians appealed to Dilger to intervene because they feared strife and the ruin of the town, and Dilger willingly did this on behalf of the mission work as well. They appealed to the Kwahu king to go to Abetifi to settle the dispute - he refused their request, but nevertheless followed back to Abetifi 2 hours later, informed the missionaries of his arrival, and settled the dispute. (ii)

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King Atta at Kibi had his fingers in another problem which threatened to blow up into serious strife, but Dilger dealt with this by writing to him asking if he were going to withdraw his messengers or not. After a few days this was done.

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