

Basel Mission Archives

"Ramseyer to Basel"

Title: "Ramseyer to Basel"

Ref. number: D-01.51.V..85

Date: Proper date: October 1889

Description: Part of this report is printed as an appendix to the 1890 Annual Report (pp83ff). Additional material: In Mpraeso, where preaching has been like pouring water on the rocks, there were 4 adults and 3 children baptised in June. In the Abetifi baptism service reported in the printed material, 5 adults were from Nkwatia, 3 from Pepease, th rest from Abetifi. In connection with the ex-follower of Bowi who was baptised, (Martin Dako), Ramseyer reports on Bowi and the Atie Yaw cult. In particular he could not find out who exactly it was who impersonated Atie Yaw, though he knows it is not Bowi, since Dako had seen Bowi and Atie Yaw at the same time. Dako had often been sent to a place by Atie Yaw, carrying his cloak (of either dark or light material), his sandals, and his umbrella. This always happened at nightfall, and Dako was told simply to lay them on the road at the point where the forest ended. Bowi would then shout 'Oworoma! Biribe aye me! Oworoma! - at which Atie Yaw would appear. The latter speaks in a way which cannot be understood, and in a half-singing voice, although he also talked now and again in Twi, calling Dako to do something, for example. Ramseyer regards this is confirmation of what the missionaries had always suspected, namely that Atie Yaw was really a man disguised (by his voice and) by his cloak, umbrella held down over his face, and some people say disguised too by a pair of hairy gloves. Ramseyer is apparently visiting Bowi from time to time, though the latter always avoids a heart-to-heart talk over the problems of the heart. He is 70 years old, his feet swollen. He has said to Ramseyer that all his people will become Christians soon. At the time of writing the report he was in a hamlet receiving treatment for his feet - Ramseyer explains the theory of his being isolated in case someone is in fact making him ill by medicine. They have managed to make a beginning with schools in the 6 outstations - the scholars number 7, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15. This is connected with the fact that they are providing a service in translating and writing letters, and the chiefs want to make some return.

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