

Basel Mission Archives

"Haasis' Report on the boarding School in Abetifi for the Year 1892"

Title: "Haasis' Report on the boarding School in Abetifi for the Year 1892"

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Description: During the year they had a case of a boy whose heathen mother was married to a Christian father and lived in the Abetifi Salem. When he was due to be promoted from the small-children's school to the Boarding School his heathen relatives would not hear of it, and it transpired they planned to pawn him to cover a debt in the family. The missionaries having tried to dissuade them they appealed to the Abetifi chief to intervene, which he did, and the pawning plan dropped (The boy was called Xwaku Mensa, he unfortunately died soon after). This death, and that of a girl pupil's, were both rather sudden, giving rise to sermons about the uncertainty of life. The mother committed adultery and was excluded from the station. He has been having discipline problems, partly over small things like washing before morning prayers and keeping their gardening tools accounted for and tidy. There was a more serious incident when during the yam festival in Abetifi the whole school went to the town without permission and could not be got back before evening. They were punished in this case by the refusal of permission to go the next day when the town feast took place. On the whole the older classes set a bad example to the younger. They have had a case of two boys who really wanted to come to school, and actually came back from the Christmas holidays early - Kofi Asante and Abrokwa, from-Nkwatia. Hassis says this is the first time he has seen this, so acutely - Asante had cried when some days after he had originally arrived his mother sent for him to go back to her, and the missionaries said he must come in person, which he never did. They are about 7 years old. There was a lady assistant teacher in the school. The numbers of pupils at the end of the year were 47 boarding pupils; 8 day boys and 17 girls. Quite large numbers all told were coming from the outstations (9). Heathen pressures are still brought to bear on the question of school attendance - e.g. an old lady took away her nephews son because the fetish was threatening her with death if this did not occur. Also there was a father who removed himself from the station and his children from the school on account of his opposition to school. The parents are not interested in what the children do in school. 6 boys from the upper part of the school were baptised. They are pleased with the way many boys who have attended the school for some time settle in the Salem, saying they do not like it in the town. (Salem is my short translation of the word 'Christian village').

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