

Basel Mission Archives

"Perregaux to Basel"

Title: "Perregaux to Basel"

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Description: Considers that the villages at the foot of the Kwahu scarp are more numerous than they had at first thought, or indeed now know. There are many ways crossing each other, and they have not explored all of them. The catechist placed at Ntawadua has not found it easy to settle into the village because no house could be found for him. Preaching is received well, and involves little difficulty. The Kwahus are easily convinced if they raise an objection during preaching - the Asantes are more inclined to display their knowledge and ability to argue. He is usually easily able to silence them by saying 'You don't need to show us that you are an Asante - everyone knows it. Just keep quiet and listen.' The problem holding people back from conversion is not belief in fetishes, for many of the people say openly that the Christian religion is true, and that the gods are nothing. The real problem is the church law as it applies to polygamy and irregular sexual relations. He offers a description of the household in which he stayed at Patrensa when he went there to install Assistant Catechist Boamma. The chief wife was surrounded by the female slaves, who were plaiting her hair in the form best calculated to show off a silk head scarfs (Perregaux remarks that this is one of the most prized presents a husband can give his wife.). The other wives stood around. The children were playing a game with a fruit stone rather like that of an apricot on a straw mat. Perregaux says it is like billiards and harmless enough except that adults play for money. (He suggests gambling is an important cause of the universal debts). A quarrel was taken up by the children's mothers until Perregaux told them to be quiet (Perregaux inserts some strong words on polygamy in connection with the remark above about its being a chief cause of the peoples' remaining outside Christianity despite the men's feeling that it is a necessary part of their life it in fact leads necessarily to quarrels, greediness and hatred). At the end is a reflective passage about the differences which exist between races, customs, usages etc. and the gifts of God to Europe which it is their responsibility to share with the African races.

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-01.59 - Ghana 1893: D-01.59.VI. - Abetifi

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