

# Basel Mission Archives

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"Correspondence from Mischlich and Martin"

**Title:** "Correspondence from Mischlich and Martin"

**Ref. number:** D-01.67.VIII..200-201

**Date:** Date late: 18.12.1897  
Proper date: 30.11.1897-18.12.1897

**Description:** Correspondence about difficulties into which Mischlich had fallen in his relations with the merchant community in Adele. Müller's letter contains two points: Firstly they had heard rumours about Mischlich's activities and character from Krobo, and secondly that he (Müller) accepts that Mischlich had sinned and thus damaged himself but also the whole mission. Exactly what the sin is is not so clear from Mischlich's letter. This, too, is apologetic in tone, but puts whatever happened in the context of the severe damage he felt the liquor trade was inflicting in Adele - there was so much drunkenness he felt that there was no hope of mission advance unless it was somehow checked. It was at this stage that he bought a part-filled tin of spirits for 12/- and publicly poured it out on the ground - the merchants, behind his back, took this very amiss and 'I see myself now that I would have done better not to do this.' Then he got involved with the attempts of the regime to regulate trade. He translated the new rubber law when Lt. Plehn came to proclaim it, and the latter told the merchants that they must obey it even when he was gone - Mischlich would keep an eye on them and point out to him the transgressors when he returned. He gave them one month to fetch permits to trade in rubber from the coast, and when after three months people were still trading with no permits, Mischlich ordered the workers on the mission station to bring a humber of loads of cloth to him. He intended to report the matter to Krakye, but did not do so, and gave the merchants their cloth back, when they returned. Several then said that bales of cloth were missing. Mischlich writes that no bale was opened on the station, and if any were missing then it was because the merchants' subordinates or their relatives had taken them, or not given a proper account of their sales which certainly went on in their absence. Mischlich writes that he thought he was doing the regime a service - it had after all allowed them to use Bismarckburg - but now sees he was very foolish. Then Graf von Zech had a law regulated that no gum goods were to be sold to the locals on credit - if they were sold on credit then the regime would do nothing to help if the debtors defaulted. The merchants claimed that this was Mischlich's idea, and since then have done everything to damage his reputation by rumours about him taking things from them, or striking them, or damaging them in some other way. The merchants' current behaviour in Katsenke is to travel a day's journey away if a white man comes to the town (They take no notice of him. any longer). This is because they oppress the Adeles in all sorts of ways - settling cases for them, for example, and charging up to £5 or this. He sees now he should have left the affairs of the regime alone.

**Subject:** [Archives catalogue]: Guides / Finding aids: Archives: D - Ghana: D-01 - Incoming correspondence from Ghana up to the outbreak of the First World

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