

Basel Mission Archives

"Christaller's Report for the First Quarter of 1866"

Title: "Christaller's Report for the First Quarter of 1866"

Ref. number: D-01.18b.VII..4

Date: Proper date: 28.03.1866

Description: Continues with the history of the Asafo-Kukurantumi land case. On 12th October 1865 the Kibi Christians woke the missionaries before dawn to appeal to them to intervene, because there was going to be a battle between Kukurantumi on the one side, and Asafo, Asiakwa and a few other places on the other. Christaller tells it the missionaries did indeed take the initiative, asking the Okyenhene to call his elders, advising him to act energetically (representatives were to be sent to both sides to swear the Okyenhene's oath on them not to fight). Christaller then travelled to Asiakwa and Palmer to Kukurantumi, and while Duedu in Asiakwa set to work to hold back his people, Palmer found the Kukurantumi people about to join up with the Nnyinasin people and checked them till the Okyenhene's emissary arrived (Christaller adds in parenthesis that as an Akwapim the Kukurantumi people dared not do anything to injure him). 17th October Kromer wrote to the Kibi missionaries that the Kukurantumi people were grateful for their intervention. On the same day Eisenschmid went to Kukurantumi via Asafo with the part intention of acting as a mediator if possible. Since then the Okyenhene has done what he should have done all along - paid the Asafo people the sum they last asked for; then got it replaced by Ampaw. Since however the latter's debts are laid on his people he has recently laid 29 1/2 dollars debt on the Christians. He reports the story of the Abomosu woman clubbed to death after being found guilty of killing by witchcraft, and Akuamma the King's slave who was found hanged in the forest. He reported on both in English, to the Gold Coast Prases, so that the government could be informed of the occurrences, including in the report the incidents surrounding Jonathan Asumen (see Eisenschmid's report No. 3 above). On the Akuamma incident he repeats the point made by Eisenschmid that there was good ground for suggesting that it was no suicide - the cloth by which she was hanged was tied in a way a suicide could not possibly have done. He also remarks that such 'suicides' are not uncommon, even among the king's wives. In this case Akuamma had herself been convinced of her guilt. Christaller comments that any death occurring between childhood and the attaining of full years is suspected by the people to be unnatural. He adds that he did not report all this to Accra because he feels they should be active as informants on the doings of the Kibi government, but simply to help to create a situation where it was felt a resident should be placed in Kibi. He cites as parallels the Residents placed at the court of the independent native rulers in India, and the system on the Gold Coast at the time when Freeman was Civil Commandant in Accra, and when mulattos were stationed in some of the important provincial capitals . L. Hesse in Kibi, N. Holm in Akropong, and F. Briandt in Krobo.

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