

Basel Mission Archives

"Binder to Mader"

Title: "Binder to Mader"

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Description: A reply based on information received from 'different' people, and concerning the position in the Ada area. What practical effects have the Emancipation had? From almost every master some slaves have gone, from one of the chief merchants e.g. 12, from the Ada chief 7, from others 4, 3, 2 and 1. This has happened with no cause other than the Emancipation proclamation. In part these people have left wives and children behind, and have gone into Ga, Fante and Krobo to find themselves land. Others have joined the police corps. The slaves remaining are treated as members of the family, receiving from their master no wages, only food, clothes and permission every now and again to earn something for themselves. The trusted emancipated slaves are even conducting business for their masters still. Emancipated slaves can find work at any time they want, but Binder is of the opinion that many have run away not to enjoy working for themselves, but to give freer rein to their laziness. It is true that since the post-war expansion of trade robbers have come to Ada among whom are emancipated slaves, but most firms (including the Basel Mission Factories) employ Krooboys as house servants, and these have to be watched, as to the canoe crews from Prampram and Sierra Leone. The Krooboys have been brought in especially because of the lack of people prepared to work regularly - everyone here, old and young, are traders themselves. The land question does not arise in that the slaves are given land to cultivate and for a house by their masters, in return for a certain part of the produce. If the government did decide to distribute land it would be easy - much cultivable land remains uncultivated. As for the attitude of slaves and slave-owners to the government: though the latter, especially those whose main wealth consists of their slaves, are in a difficult position, they have accepted the law without much grief, and hope that it may be rescinded. The emancipated slaves, judging by trustworthy reports, show themselves unbiddable and will cause masters who still have slave's problems which they can only solve by thoughtfulness and consideration. One point is that in the Ada farming villages the Proclamation is not so well known that one can be sure that no livelihood will probably thus know that it is that he can at any slaves are no longer being bought and sold. To be sure on this point the regime needs to send another official to the area to replace the Commandant who died in January.

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