

Basel Mission Archives

"Mohr's Report for the Year 1886"

Title: "Mohr's Report for the Year 1886"

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Date: Proper date: March 1887

Description: Details of property: 20 Christian houses in the Begoro Christian village (homesteads). In Begoro the classrooms and housefather's lodging for the middle school had been built, the eating and sleeping rooms were in process of being built. In Tete land had been purchased in 1886. He glosses Apedwa as meaning Krobo and Wirekyireng only. In Asiakwa there are only few houses on the Mission's land. In Anyinasing mission land was bought in 1886, the same in Mmase, and Akim Akropong. The Begoro middle school staff consisted of D. Asong as housefather and Cat. Agyei at the end of 1886. In Klbi, out of 190 children of Christian parents 30 were attending the community school. In Asiakwa work on a more solid house for the catechist ceased firstly because the communities were not united in working on the house, secondly because so few of them have their own houses on mission land, thirdly because the existing house seemed adequate. In Kukurantumi the building of a school house had fallen through on the same grounds - so many of the Christians are still living in the town. In Tafo the project to build a house for the evangelist had not been started, though the people had promised to start as early as 1885. There are no houses for local agents in Anyinasing, Asafo, Tete or Akropong or Banso, either. In Banso and Wirekyireng they are still involved in the negotiations leading to the purchase of a house. In discussing the mission land in Begoro Mohr writes that they could increase the earning by encouraging people to sell palm wine, but as missionaries they can scarcely do that. They obtain a small income from palms sold in order to draw palm wine - the current cost is 6d per tree (it is clear from the full text that the trees were being cut down). He raises the question what would happen if a man had prepared a coffee plantation on Mission land and was then excluded? And what does one do when a man is excluded after building a solid house in a Christian village? After the death of the Huppenbauers Sitzler was transferred to Begoro. In the first part of the year illness and death prevented anyone from trekking around the district for four months. Mullings and Ntow had been switched in the course of the year, and so were Tete of the Middle School and Asong, catechist at Asiakma. Ch. Agyei, the second teacher in the Middle School was from Aburi, newly graduated from the teachers' seminary; Teacher Ofe was posted from Asiakwa to Banso, Ewi was transferred to Abomосу. He was replaced after an interval by Boaboa. Monitor Obroni is now teacher in Kukurantumi, replacing teacher Oforidee who left the Mission to serve the Okyenhene. In his list of agents not transferred during the year Mohr names Evang. Odoto as working in Akropong. Boakye has left Akim, and is working under Bohner among some Twi-speaking villages on the coast. Evang. Apeakese, having been refused admittance in Kade, has been marked for Nkwatanan. The problem in Kade is not straightforward enmity, but a wish to see what will become of the Asuum case before the British court. A recent

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mission visitor there reported that he was welcomed on a visit, especially by the younger people, Members of the mission travelled a total of 456 days in Akim during the year. Mohr complains about the morale of the bulk of the local agents, especially the younger ones. They have so little feeling of duty in their attitude to their work. The Akwapims all long to return home, though they are more respected in Akim than they would be in Akwspim. A continuing problem is that they go home for vacation, and tend to return late on account of 'illness', and an attempt to enforce on them bringing a medical certificate has not been successful. Their wives stay away from their husbands a lot, remaining in Akwapim. A Christian girl's great ambition is to marry a catechist, but this is because they believe that they will live more comfortably with a man with a secure income. He is worried that their employees say: 'Abrofo aware nko, na abibifio do nko' - a white man's marriage is different from a black man's. There was a complete increase during the year of 326, including 63 baptisms of heathen. The actual increase was only 111, bringing the total Christian community in Akim to 1413. Discussing the political difficulties which faced the Christians, Mohr points the fact that though people from Asuum had twice refused to attend Court in Accra, nothing had been done to force them to, had given many places fresh courage in the struggle against the Christians. Another major problem has been the extent to which the men have been away in the forest for months collecting rubber. The catechists' work in their place or residence has only been half done, and they have not had the heart to go on preaching tours much, because they find so few people. The fact that the literate members of congregations, especially, have been involved in the actual trading process has also harmed the congregations - these men have been using false weights, for example. In Begoro services have been well attended, and there were 6 baptisms of heathen. There are no marriage problems on the whole family life went forward peaceably. There were 11 deaths, two of children and two of Middle School pupils. School attendance is still a cross to be worn by both parents and children. There was no Mission Festival during the year. Begoro is the only alternative to Kibi, and it was not possible in Begoro, because of the lack of places for guests, and at times because so many people were absent from the station: Kibi - the total district (including Apapam, Apedwa, Asafo, Tete and Asiakwa) totalled 807 in the Christian community. Kibi itself experienced an increase of 13 in the course of the year, only three of whom were baptised heathens. An explanation of this was the fact that anyone becoming a Christian had to leave the vicinity of the king (presumably old Kibi) immediately. 17 people were excluded, mostly young married couples who simply refused to marry under the new English law. One serious problem is the number of Christian girls who are already pregnant at marriage. Ofori calculated that only 3 had not been pregnant at marriage in the last 4 years. Bosopem had been advising the Christians living in the 'Christian quarter' (it now appears that this was part of old Kibi) to move to the Salem - he had long ago handed over his insignia of office to the Okyenhene, recognising that they were incompatible with being a presbyter. Now Bosompem and the Christians from the 'Christian quarter' are all back in the Christian village. He repeats the figure of 30 of the 190 possible children attending school. Apapam 2

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they are satisfied with attendance at the school - heathen reaction still pugnacious. 108 in the community. Apedwa - the increase in the year was all at Wirekyireng. Asafo - several have lapsed rather than be involved in the building of a teacher's house - Mohr evidently feels the teacher is at fault. Tete --11 lapsed, but the remainder are staunch, in the face of considerable enmity. 41 in the community. Asiakwa - not an active community, but after several goats were killed when there was small pox in the town, the Christians decided to move onto the mission land. Many of the community are away travelling at any one time. School attendance is poor. Kukurantumd decrease of 17 to 106 in the community. Mmase - 11 Christians who attend services in Kukurantumi. In Tafb-Osiem the Christians number 29, and the services are held in Tafo. Anyinasing g 14 Christians, and a particularly hard working evangelist (Amoa). In the Anyinam district are 100 Christians. In Anyinam itself the community numbered 41 with (before or after these deaths?) 7 deaths, mostly small pox. A problem in this town is that the many Asantes are very indifferent. Also many slaves come out of Kwahu, join themselves to the community but then resettle near Accra when they find their countrymen collected - e.g. in the Abokobi district. They feel safest near the Government, and indeed when troubles break out in Akim it is always these ex-slaves who feel it first. - Fankyeneko is at a stand-still. In Dwenase and Abompe there had been many catechumens but they lapsed at the time of the Kibi troubles. Nevertheless in Fankyenenko there were 2 adult baptisms, and in Dwenase 3. Kwabeng - 9 baptisms, and 12 catechumen. Seth has attracted loyalty among his pupils, and indeed when the troubles broke out they fled with him to Akropong. Tumfa - 23 in the community, several have lapsed. Akropong - 28 in the community. Takyiman - 18, all married, Bansa - 17 Christians Asunafo - 53 in the community, all but one living in the Salem. Abomosu - a community has been re-established there in December 1886. It numbers 61, of whom 35 were children. Most Christians had 'remained true' - 10 had to do public penance after their re-acceptance, and the re-acceptance of 10 was postponed. Nkwatanang - the Christians there consist of Dapeakese and his family, a total of 7. He writes that at present the Anyinam-Asunafo-Abomosu Christians are at Abetifi. He had just received a letter from a member of the Apapam community which asked what was going to happen to those who had submitted - he had submitted, but then went away into the forest where he and some others have been praying and holding Sunday services.

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