

Basel Mission Archives

"Mohr's Report to Basel"

Title: "Mohr's Report to Basel"

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Date: Proper date: 17.02.1887

Description: He returned to Begoro from Acora with a military escort on 16th February. Previously after much effort Simonds had persuaded Ata to leave for Accra on January 8th, a few days previously Bosompem and the two other accused had been taken to the coast under military escort, though Ata complained that they would be influenced in their evidence if the case was heard in Accra. All the Kibi Christians went under police escort to Mampong, where they waited until Ata was at Obom before going down to the coast. Mohr himself received instructions to go to the coast on 18th January, arrived there on 24th, but the case was never investigated because Ata fell ill almost immediately. The Governor had intended to have a political investigation of relations between Ata and the Christians over the whole period from 1874. Its members had been named as Quaty Jones, Att. General, president, Mr Cleland as representing the Ata, and Sunter as the Mission's representative. This has however collapsed now, Ata is dead. The missionaries could not let things rest, of course and eventually got Bosompem free on £150 bail. They also had to press for a decision as to Bosompem's innocence, the extorted money and compensation paid for the plundered farms. With the death of the Okyehene things took on a serious aspect. Unfortunately the Governor allowed the body to be taken straight back to Kibi, and in view of the fact that strife between Christians and heathens was likely during the excesses of the custom for him, all Kibi Christians were forbidden from returning to Kibi. In the streets of Osu this was turned into the belief that the Governor had given countenance to all Christians leaving Akim. Mohr had submitted two documents to the Governor, one on 10th February on what he believed was currently happening in Akim, and one signed by the Osu missionaries rehearsing the events of 17-26 December 1886 and asking if the missionaries and the Akim Christians could on the whole reckon on being under English protection. This resulted in a Council being held, and the sending of an officer with 60 troops: obviously at present the Government is doing something. On the morning of 12th February Mohr travelled alone to Aburi, but was not allowed to go further except in the convoy of soldiers and notifying the officer of his movement: In Aburi they met a special messenger who reported that the Apapam and Tete people especially had been causing damage - windows were broken in in the Kibi mission house, furniture and the stations' library looted, the shutters taken off and taken away. In the church the harmonium, altar and pulpit had been burned, Christian houses were demolished, boxes etc. found were looted. It was said that the Akims were especially angry with Mohr for having caused the death of the King and bringing an evil destiny onto Akim through his report to the Governor. It was even said that the Tafo and Osiem people were prepared to shoot him, though in fact the arrival of the troops caused a healthy shock in Akim and there was no trouble when he

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went through these two settlements en route for Begoro. In Begoro he found no Christians - on Ata's death the order had come from Kibi to chase Christians and missionaries away, but Sitzler had persuaded the Begoro people - on the whole well-disposed to them- to give him and Mrs Mohr time to call porters from Akwapim. A few days later 50 Koforidua people arrived, demanding 5-10/- a day. They were sent away again. Their situation is currently uncertain. Some people believe that there will be war, since the Kibis know that they will not go unpunished. Others think it will not come to this - the missionaries pray daily that no war may come about since that would involve their leaving Akim for a time. The Station presents a stirring spectacle, with the soldiers drilling morning and evening, and living in the Christian village. Captain Lethbridge is so far, thank God, well. Mohr presents a comprehensive and gloomy picture of the situation in Akim, with the services being held only in one instead of 25 places, chapels damaged, Christians robbed, sheep and shepherds wandering to Kwahu, Akwapim and the coast. He is uncertain even whether the community in Kibi would return if there was an English officer stationed there. In a final paragraph on the activities of the local agents he remarks that Anoff in Apapam had the courage to stay at his post, and to go to the local chief and tell him that he held him responsible for the safety of mission property. Ntom and Kukurantumi and Tete in Asiakwa also stayed at their posts.

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