

Basel Mission Archives

"Annual Report from Anum for 1867, written by J. Müller"

Title: "Annual Report from Anum for 1867, written by J. Müller"

Ref. number: D-01.19b.IX..14

Date: Proper date: 09.01.1868

Description: According to the statistics, either there had been no new building, or only a catechist's house had been put up during the year. Klaus and Müller are listed as missionary residents: Obuobisa the catechist was absent at the time of writing. Members of the community are listed as 5 (there had been 6 in previous year), 2 communicants, plus 4 from other communities, 11 pupils in the school. Reports a major change in that over the last quarter of 1867 there was a much more active interest in the school. Previously fetish prohibitions had been feared by most parents, also they could not see any usefulness in education. (He says he cannot explain the change, though they have God to thank for it. He then goes on to describe what had happened in the last quarter without saying explicitly that the explanation lay in what had occurred) - in September the harmonium had arrived, and this increased attendance at services - there was something new to look at and hear. Also since there was no catechist, Müller got the few scholars who had been at school for some time, and could read, to read the bible before he preached at the open air services. This, and the pupils' singing, astounded the people, and aroused their interest. Many boys have said that they would attend school but have not yet got their parents' permission. 'Obviously some of the people feel nearer to us now, they feel we are not so strange, they have almost become confident in us and when people don't trust each other the work of salvation cannot be carried on'. Of course, the pupils are not yet catechumen, but Müller hopes that in time this will happen at least in some cases. It is an unfortunate fact that, as elsewhere, they have to pay the pupils for coming to school. Each one receives 1 head cowries each month (Müller gives the equivalent 2 franks 25 centimes), and the necessary clothes. The mothers usually cook the boys food - and tend to feel that the money payments are supposed to be enough for the food. But Müller has explained to them that they are just gifts, and he cannot raise them - as would be necessary if they were supposed to cover the cost of food. They do not believe this. Everything needs presents here, and indeed, many boys do not know their father, and their mothers are poor and have to look after themselves. So it is necessary to find a way to help the children. There are few properly organised families here. Their relations with the Anum people have been good: the only problem is that they are pestered for presents by the chief and elders. There are, however, many Ga people, mostly individuals who are escaping from debt or the results of some crime, and have lost all reputation and respectability in their own country. They live by theft and trade, do not farm for themselves, but try to find someone else to provide them with food. They mislead the Anum people into theft and lying, and the Anum people regard them as their teachers, for in the worldly skills of carpentry and building they are, in fact, ahead of them. Of the 4 Christians in the Anum community, all of them had lived 5 hours away, all

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but one has now moved to quarters at the mission. A child was born during the year to Christian parents: there are no catechumen. In talking about the slight effect of street-preaching, he remarks that really very few of the Anums understand Twi. For the last month the Bator road has been open, though not completely safe. There are two subscripts from Mader .The second concerns the language problem in Anum. He had visited the town, and conversed with people of both sexes in Twi. Muller's problem is that he does not yet Speak Twi properly. There is also a subscript from Schrenk which sees the Mission soon facing financial problems because of the rapid spontaneous expansion around Abokobi, and in that context regrets that Müller has adopted this expensive way of running a school — it will be almost impossible to withdraw from making these payments. He too feels Müller should learn the language.

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