

Basel Mission Archives

"Riis, Mürdter and Stanger to Inspector Blumhardt"

Title: "Riis, Mürdter and Stanger to Inspector Blumhardt"

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Description: The full account of the palaver between Riis and the governor in the light of Riis, but with full translation of the Governor's letters and the minutes of the council and the accusations of the Governor, who tried to get witnesses that Riis had persuaded Ado Dankwa not to go to Christiansborg when they met at Aburi. Riis maintains that he had no secret meeting with Ado Dankwa and the governor is "morally convinced" that he is guilty. Riis seems to be innocent of this: 2) That at Akropong he had spoken against the Danes and for the English. 3) That he had told the Akwapims not be afraid of the Danish Governor. 4) That he had sold gunpowder (Riis: Yes, I did, but only little and that because the Danish officer gave me some instead of cowries in order to buy food; a common practice to give goods instead of money). Riis can prove that he got but little supply - the Governor's witness, a Mulatto interpreter of Riis who ran away from Riis has been brought to witness against Riis by threats. Other witnesses the Governor even did beat, when they did not say what he wanted -he had two servants of Riis brought secretly before him (never confronting them with Riis, but in vain, they remained firm). A criminal however spoke that he had seen Riis selling gunpowder and speaking to Ado Dankwa where only he (the criminal) had been a witness. The governor can find no witnesses against Riis during the time Riis was at Christiansborg or when the brethren were with him at Akropong. 5) That he had spoken behind closed doors to his negro servants and sent them to Ado Dankwa. A witness can only say that he spoke behind closed doors - not what he spoke and that he sent to Ado Dankwa. 6) That he had bought goods from the British in Accra to be paid for in London, this proves that he is anti-Danish. Riis: True that he bought goods there, but only because they were unobtainable at Christiansborg - it was only few things. 7) That he had uttered the opinion that he would rather teach English than Danish in the planned school at Akwapim. Riis: True that Africans easier learn English and that it is a greater advantage to then in trade to know English than Danish. The Governor himself agrees to this, since even Danish confirmed boys go to the English school to learn English. However, he would teach neither English nor Danish, but the mother-tongue of the people. 8) That the whole behaviour of Riis towards the Governor had been curious, and that he therefore was morally convinced of his guilt (This morally being convinced of the Governor is always Mörcks last word when Riis defends himself). Also in this letter: Palaver concerning the marriage with Rev. Torsleff, the colonial chaplain - and account of the daily life at Akropong.

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