

Kisuludini, Sept. 15, 1853

Rev'd & dear Sir!

When in our last communications we felt our very existence as Missionaries in East Africa to be put in question for the future, & when soon after we had despatched our letters to Europe we heard the war-horn sounding near our quiet abode in consequence of some disturbance which had taken place between the Rabbai people & the neighbouring Wakamba – the tidings we have to give you after the elapse of another half year will bear the usual character of outward – at least apparent – security with an exceedingly slow & almost imperceptible development of the order of things. Nothing further has become known to us of the Imam's mind towards us & while I firmly believe that His Highness will never forget what must constitute a great offence in his eyes committed against him by the Missionaries – still nothing of an open hostility has shown itself & though my dear fellow labourer Dr. Krapf has been refused some days ago by the Tusuma-people to pass through their country on his road to Kadiaro & thus experienced what may be termed an hostility – the cause of it is such as has nothing at all to do with the Imam & his people & which might have been easily prevented by Dr. Krapf if he had acted more according to circumstances – the whole uproar being traceable to an influential man belonging to that tribe, who had been disappointed in not being employed as bearer & guide. It is the same man who accompanied me twice to Jagga & Dr. Krapf twice to Ukambani & by his means we were always allowed to pass through his tribe in peace. Mr. Erhardt a month ago passed through the same tribe without any molestation, simply because he had some men among his bearers belonging to it.

But to continue my comparison between our position of six months ago & that of the present, we have also learnt nothing more of the French Fleet which was expected from the North – nor has, as yet, any step been taken toward the establishment of mercantile houses at Mombas, Lambo & the Pangani – nor, & this would be the most important of all – towards the French Mission in our neighbourhood – tidings which were communicated to us by Major Hamerton in a letter dated Zanzibar, July 28, about which I need not tell you that our line of conduct with regard to them will be neither pro nor contra. It may perhaps be of some interest to you to hear how H.B.M's Consul expresses himself about the request I had made to him of procuring for me a written document from the Imam in reference to the building of a chapel. I will copy here his own words: " I regret to be obliged to state- that under existing circumstances I would not at present ask His Highness to grant such a document. There is too much talk & excitement amongst the people here about the Missionaries & their intentions, but all which, if left to itself will in time subside & be forgotten but it is necessary to allow matters to settle down & all will come to a proper level – please God -."

This was indeed quite the answer I suspected I should after a long delay get from him. Nothing therefore has been done in the course of this half year. We

must wait for better times, i.e. the Lord's time. He will make it clear - & while we may be refused the workmen for raising a visible temple, we ourselves are not refused gathering living stones for His spiritual temple, which is of infinitely more value.

Our dear Abbe Gunja is now living with his family on our ground. I have lent to him a room in one of the cottages, which have been originally constructed for our servants & a few animals, until he will have built one himself. Thus an opportunity is given me of imparting to him a more thorough, because regular instruction. Another middle-aged man, one of his neighbours, when in consequence of the alarm of April last was comparatively left alone with Abbe Gunja, was induced to join him in his prayers & spending the Lord's days with us, but without having truly left the service of sin & Satan - facts being soon disclosed which proved that he was still living in adultery, for which the punishment usual among the heathens - the paying of a cow - was awarded him. Both Dr. Krapf & myself went after him, if possibly we might turn a sinner from the errors of his ways. But all that I can say is that he at least suffered himself to be spoken to & that in a degree he felt ashamed. From a mere heathen, entirely untouched by the word of God, you cannot even expect so much - the sin being so common among them as lying & drunkenness. They tell you into your face that there is nothing "bad" in fornication & adultery as long as you are not discovered & then it becomes "vi" (bad) only because they must pay for it. To the idea that the "Mulungu" hates it, they seem to be perfect strangers. Oh into what filthy darkness the Holy Spirit must stoop

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take her to the Rabbai-Mpia cottage in the "Kaja" while he in the mean time would take care of our house (Mr. Erhardt being absent at the time). He however had presence of mind enough not to be frightened by appearances, rightly concluding that when the women & children of both contending parties took refuge with us, nobody could mean to injure us. Actual fighting there was very little - of the one party two were wounded, of the other (the Wakamba) two were killed by guns. Want of food compelled both parties to abstain from protracting the hostilities - & so the Wakamba, being afraid of the Rabbai, retreated farther into the Interior & the Rabbais - dreading a sudden attack from the Wakamba, took refuge in this "Kaja" (Rabbai-Mpia). For several months we had no more any visitors from the Wakamba, but now the whole affair has been peaceably settled by one of the Wakamba, who had not fallen in the attack, but had been killed in rather an arbitrary way, having been paid for in two young slaves. The cause of all this disturbance was a somewhat influential Suaheli-man, called Jagga (or Chagga), who, in demanding an old debt in cattle from an Wakamba, engaged the assistance of the Rabbais. It is usual in those wretched countries, that the first step taken in demanding a considerable debt is "Ka funga", to bind * (*put in fetters) any man belonging to the tribe of the debtor. The same means Chagga had recourse to, the Rabbais had the "business of binding". Soon some innocent individuals were secured, but no sooner had their

relations heard of it than they came to their release, & on this being refused bound two Rabbai-men. When this miserable work had been carried on for some time, the Rabbais at last urged Chagga to engage a number of soldiers in order to frighten the Wakambas. Chagga with his men was stationed scarcely a mile from here & when he at last knew that the Wakamba who had originally been put in fetters in his behalf, had made their escape, he determined to catch others in an open attack, when the Wakamba took to their arrows & the engagement ensued with the results mentioned above.

The case was reported by the Mombas-Government to Said-Said, who, seeing the ivory-trade with the Wakamba in the Interior endangered (& indeed there was no ivory brought this year by the Wakamba, which however is partly ascribed to a famine in Ukambani tropes) is said to have given himself the slaves in restitution of one of the Wakamba who were killed on the occasion, in order to preserve peace between the coast & the interior, without which his ivory-trade would materially suffer. Oh how much these countries want the protection of an effective and righteous Government.

Mr. Erhardt left here for Usambara on the 9th of August & we have since had the pleasure of hearing of his safe arrival. Most of his bearers came back on Sunday last with a letter dated Aug. 31 in which he tells us of the highly favourable reception he met with by the King. Mount T'ongué having been taken permission of by Said-Said, the King named to him two other districts which he might choose for his abode. In Fuga itself, Mr. Erhardt says, a Missionary could not live without having some friend on the coast. He will therefore no doubt choose a district nearer to the coast.

It has been my conviction ever since I returned from my last unfortunate journey to Jagga, that Usambara is the country from which your Missionaries must start, if they are to explore more of the interior. From here we have gone as far as the Natives themselves are in the habit of going for the purpose of trade, & farther we have seen we cannot force our way. But it is from the countries opposite of Zanzibar, that the roads into the Interior branch out & reach farthest. Usambara is therefore the country to which the eyes of the Committee ought to be specially directed now that a footing has been gained in that country. The first labourers you can obtain, ought to be sent there. If we only have faith & patience & neither can before nor remain behind the footsteps of Providence, great things will still be accomplished in these dark regions in the time which He has appointed, who has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth & hath determined the times before appointed & the Grounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him. Acts 17, 26, 27.

P.S. Sept 20. While writing the above Dr. Krapf made his mind up for returning to Europe. The reason for so doing he will explain to you himself.

I also inclose a letter to Mr. Jomard, which I have left open for your perusal.

Mrs Rebmann who, thanks be to God, has during this half year almost uninterrupted good health, unites with me in kind remembrances, & commending ourselves to your Christian sympathy & prayers,

Believe me to remain

Yours respectfully

J. REbmann