

Mombas, Sept.15, 1860

Reverend & Dear Sir,

It is now upwards of two years since I received the last letter from the Committee (dated Feb 26/58), &, if it was not for the fact that this place affords only two opportunities in the year for direct correspondence with Europe, I should perhaps postpone my writing this time, in the hope of the approaching change of the Monsoon bringing us some longed for token of our being remembered at home – on the other hand I could hardly think myself justified in not availing myself of the present opportunity, because the communication I have to make, though little as to variety, is in fact the crown of Missionary intelligence, it being the baptism not only of Abe Gonja himself, but also of his son, Niondo. – Having got through the most necessary part of repair & building at our Station, & having been warned by the unexpected death of Mua Muamba of the uncertainty of life, I felt, after we had again returned from Mombas to Kisuludini on the 8th of May last, that I could no longer defer the baptism of one, who, as far as his own personal preparation was concerned, might have been baptized years ago. I therefore fixed on the day of Pentecost, which was then near, &, as already intimated, had the great privilege of receiving both father & son into the ark of the Church of Christ. Our faith & hope as to a future Christian Church in Eastern Africa are expressed & represented in the names by which they were baptized, *viz.* Abraham & Isaac – as to the latter, a youth of about 15 or 18 years of age, I could have wished for more previous instruction, but was prevented from imparting it by their living at a distance from the Station. The fact however, that, since about a year, the boy had begun to tread in the footsteps of his father & had learnt to read of his own accord, both the Gospel of St. Luke & his Catechism, was too significant for not admitting him at once with his father to the holy ordinance by which our Saviour has commanded to make disciples of all nations.

As to the four remaining candidates, I can only say that, during this half year, they have been most regular in coming to the Station on every Lord's day, & are willing to be baptized as soon as I shall think them sufficiently prepared. All of them being still younger in years than Abraham, I required them first to make more progress in reading, a small beginning in which they had made even before we returned to them from Zanzibar.

The Affair of Mua Zuia & Lugo, mentioned in my last from April, is not yet ended but has been productive of farther trouble & difficulties & of a nature more aggravated than before. The cruel mother who had declared that she would kill the Wadigo-girl if she was not made the means of rescuing her own daughter from slavery, having been seized, by her son in law, as hostages for his wife's slaves, who, in consequence of ill treatment escaped from him in the night of the 28th of July. This violent Kinika (Gunia by name), is said to have declared at the time he took her, that in the event of her escaping from him, he would indemnify himself by seizing three of her relations, & thus appears to have taken her merely as a trap for gain. The poor men, Mua Zuia the brother, & Lugo the son of the now enslaved woman, in their distress, have at last applied to me for lending them the sum of money (34 dollars), which Gunia, on their account & by way of

redemption, have paid to the Mombasian slave-master, offering to repay the same in manual labour for which there will be demand enough at Kisuludini for years to come. After some time of consideration about the matter, (in which, if time had allowed, I should gladly have availed myself of the advice of the Committee), I agreed to their request, & in order to deepen their sense of obligation I took care to explain to them whose debtor they really were, *viz.* not mine but the Church Missionary Society. They have, however, not yet taken the money, as Gunia, before he is repaid, will be required to restore the girl, who is said to have escaped to Kauma, the most northern tribe of the Wanika, a distance of 2 days journey from Rabai.

Many Wanika have found employment with us in digging a reservoir, a work rendered necessary by the scarcity of water, which, simply from want of proper cisterns, is always experienced very soon after the rains are over, except they have been truly plentiful. After digging only a few feet deep, a quarry of beautiful layers of grey sandstone was discovered, so that we are now bountifully supplied with building materials found on the spot.

My own time was still principally occupied in building, but in the midst of it I have many opportunities of preaching to the heathen by whom the place is frequented. And here it is that a Missionary has to watch over his own spirit lest outward business engross his mind so much as to make him neglect his paramount duty of preaching the gospel. The temptation of going on with this work of his hands when he ought to look round & deliver his testimony, is sometimes not a small one, & here also the denial of man's self is to be exercised. On the other hand, the spiritual work also, in an African wilderness, will never be done, except the Missionary knows to unite with it, in proper time & measure, the secular work of not only building himself a proper house, but also helping his poor converts to do the same, it being in the very nature of Christianity to unfold & represent itself immediately in civilisation. And even a St. Paul, in a civilized part of the world, found time not only for preaching the gospel, but also for making tents, or, as Dr. M. Luther has translated the word, making carpets.

Sept. 20. In a letter received on the 14th inst. from the English Consul at Zanzibar, he tells me of the safe arrival of the Capt.s Speke & Grant, & also communicates to me the melancholy intelligence of the young traveller, Dr. A. Roscher from Hamburg, having been killed on the river Rufuma, & that his two murderers have already been executed at Zanzibar.

The following particulars I learnt from a Mombasian, the captain of a native vessel, which brought me the Consul's letter.

Dr. Roscher had safely reached the lake Niassa & was on his way back within a 7 or 8 days' journey from Kiloa. His bearers, from fatigue & an epidemic disease had all gradually died off, so that he was left alone, & in this helpless condition, the Wakiao, through whose country he was passing, murdered him, as it seems, merely for the sake of robbery. Tidings having reached Zanzibar, the Sultan sent off a number of soldiers to the authorities at Kiloa for apprehending the murderers, & from the ready manner, in which they were delivered up, it would appear, that his death had not been preconcerted by any principal man or chieftain. On the contrary, the Consul mentions two chiefs, Kinkomanga & Makiawa, who, he says, behaved so kindly to poor Roscher, that he is going to send them presents & letters by the Baron von der Decken, a Colonel in the Hannoverian Army, who starts for the Njassa in a few days.

This sad event will, I believe, not retard but rather hasten on the farther exploration of East Africa. The time for its being drawn into contact with the Christian world seems to have fully arrived, & an other large field for Missionary labour is being added to the Lord's vineyard.

Commending ourselves to your Christian sympathy & prayers,

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

J. Rebmann