

1914

Native Conference

Our native brethren and sisters met in Conference at Matopo Mission together with their missionaries Monday, Tuesday, March 2 and 3, 1914. H.P. Steigerwald, Moderator, H.J. Frey, Secretary.

Art. I

In discussing the question of Native beer and kindred subjects it was agreed

(1) That all drinking and selling of beer is wrong.

(2) All should endeavor to have no part in its manufacture; but if the children of heathen parents, and wives of unbelieving husbands are asked to cook beer, they should try by patient entreaty to be excused from doing so. Should they not be successful at first, they should continue thus to strive until our next Council.

(3) When however, husband and wife are both believers, they should refuse to help others in the cooking of beer.

(4) It was agreed that Umhigo, Mahen, and Umkumbe (lighter drinks with little or no alcohol) may be used if taken soon after they are made.

Art. II

Is it right to receive ukulebolo (money value for daughters?) There was a lively discussion on this question, some being in favor, and some against. But the question was not finally settled. It will be taken up at some future time.

Art. III

If a man has taken a wife by Christian rites, is it right to take another by native custom?

Decided ~~by~~ emphatically no.

Art. IV

Question in regard to the time for opening the Outschools.

Since in many of the schools there is considerable slackness of attendance especially during the summer, it was thought best by some to have three or four months' vacation during the rainy season, that the children might help their parents in the gardens. But the question was not finally decided.

Art. V

If a man has put away his wife, is there ever a possibility that it would be right for him to take another?

The members of Conference were divided on the question, and it was not finally settled. The missionaries will give an answer later.

Art. VI

What shall be done to a member who has committed fornication?

Decided to uphold former decision of the missionaries that such a one should return to the class (Enquirers') and remain.

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Art. VI Cont.

there until he proves himself worthy. During this time he will be expected to be diligent in attending the class.

Art. VII

(a) Is it right for a young man to sleep in the hut of the girl to whom he is engaged or a girl to sleep in her young man's hut?

(b) Is it right for girls to sleep at the Compounds in young men's huts?

The above questions which according to native custom would be answered in the affirmative and which therefore give us much trouble were answered with an emphatic no.

(c) It was agreed that it is wrong for Christians to choose a husband or wife from those who are not Christians.

(d) To hold an Intimiti is wrong.

(e) All should be diligent in paying tax to the Government and rent to landowners whenever due.

H. J. Frey, Secretary.

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