

Fragment of 1870 Field Diary (LXII-LXIX), 22 November-10 December 1870

David Livingstone

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[LXII]

LXII 22nd Nov^r 1870 copied foregoing despatch - It will be delivered by Muhammad Bogharib into the consul's hands at Zanzibar

24th Nov^r Herpes is common at the plantations in Zanzibar but the close crowding of the houses in the town they think prevents it. The lips & mouth are affected & constipation sets in for 3 days - cured by going over to mainland Affections of the lungs are cured by residence at Bariva or Brava and also on mainland
the Safari of Halzani took my letters from Ujiji but person employed I do not know

25th Nov wrote to Tom Agnes - Young - Webb Oswell [D^r Hamilton] Sir Roderick Sir Bartle Frere - Tracey - Stearns of Bombay - Maclear = Bleek Brother John in Canada = Letters to be delivered by Muhammad Bogharib into Col Playfair or D^r Kirk's own hands at Zanzibar - L^t Kinnaird & B Braithwaite

[LXIII]

LXIII 29th Nov^r 1870 Safura is the name of the disease clay or earth eating at Zanzibar = It often affects slaves and the clay is said to have a pleasant odour to the eaters, but it is not confined to slaves nor do slaves eat in order to kill themselves - It is a diseased appetite and sick men who have plenty to eat are often subject to it - The feet swell flesh is lost - and the face looks haggard - The patient can scarcely walk for shortness of breath and weakness and he continues eating till he dies = Here many slaves are now diseased with safura The clay built in walls is preferred and Manyema women when pregnant often eat it. The cure is effected by drastic purges for seven days and nothing of [^] [fish] butter - milk or beef must enter his mouth for ~~three~~[two] years after it - old vinegar or cocoa trees put into a large bason & old slag made red hot cast into it - Then "Mbuye [^] [asfoetida]" 1/2 a rupee in weight - . copperas sulph D^o

a small glass of this fasting morning & evening

[LXIV]

LXIV produces vomiting & purging of black dejections -
This is continued for seven days - no meat eaten but
only old rice or dura & water - a fowl in course of time
no [^] [fish] butter eggs or beef for two years on pain of death
Muhamad's father had skill in the cure and the
above is his prescription - Safura is thus a
disease per se - It is common in Manyema &
makes me in a measure content to wait for
my medicines - from the description inspiss-
ated bile seems to be the agent of blocking up the
gall duct and duodenum and the clay [...] [or] earth
may be nature trying to clean it away - the
clay appears unchanged in the stools and in
large quantity a Banyamwezi carrier who
bore an enormous load of copper is now by Safura
scarcely able to walk - He took it at Lualaba where
food is abundant & he is contented with his lot -
squeeze a fingernail & if no blood appears beneath it
Safura is the cause of the bloodlessness -

[LXV]

LXV a dread of encountering this disease without any
any medicine reconciles me partially to this detention

2 Dec^r 1870 Sokos collect together and make a drumming
noise some say with hollow trees then burst forth
into loud yells well imitated by the natives - If a man
has no spear Sokos goes away satisfied - If
wounded he siezes the wrist lops off ends of the
fingers and spits them out - slaps the cheeks
of his victim and bites without breaking the
skin - draws out a spear but never uses
it - takes some leaves and stuffs them into
his wound to stanch the blood = Does not
wish an encounter with an armed man = He
sees women do him no harm & never molests them
a man without a spear is nearly safe from him
They beat hollow trees as drums with hands
and then scream as music to it. When men
hear them they go to Sokos but Sokos never
goes to men with hostility - Manyema say "Sokos
is a man" "& nothing bad in him" a Sokos was killed
near this with holes in his ears - He had died a man & risen a Soko

[LXVI]

LXVI. opinion and facts - 2 Rhinoceroses scary
chivalry - Helmore found by Baldwin starving no
hunter - no horses no medical man - Sekeletu

blamed though he got not £8000 to place him
on Healthy Highlands and I was accused as
morally guilty of his death though no letter was
sent to me - saying he had come [^] [or gone] to Linyanti

Bishop addressed no teaching - Makololo
followed me and I was blamed because they
vitialed all the teaching - then being none as
2nd Bishop said to me an astounding fact
that people living with them have been taught
absolutely nothing - Idleness was the bane of
that mission and then loitering in the swamps
killed them - I bore the accusations in
silence - I felt that so to do was chivalrous -
Loss of heart or presence of mind - Absalom
Saul -

6th Dec^r 1870 oh for Dugumbe or Syde. !! to come
but this delay may all be for the best.

[LXVII]

LXVII. The Parrots all seize their food & hold it with the
left hand - the Lion too is left handed - He strikes with
his left - so are all animals - left handed save man.

I noticed a very pretty woman come on marriage with Mona
mosimba past this quite jauntily about a month ago
ten goats were given - Her friends came and asked
another goat which being refused she was enticed away
became sick of Rheumatic Fever two days afterward
and died yesterday - not a syllable of regret for the
beautiful young creature but for the goats "Oh"
"our ten goats" they cannot grieve too much - "Our"
ten goats! Oh Oh"!

Basang wail over those who die in bed but not
over those who die in battle = The cattle are a salve
for all sores - women even raise no wailing

Another man killed in a village within [^] [½ miles] sight
of this - They quarrelled and there is virtually no
chief - the man was stabbed and village burned and
people all fled - They are truly a bloody people -

[LXVIII]

LXVIII Sokos live in communities of about ten each having his
own female - an intruder from another camp is beaten off with
their fists and loud yells - If one tries to seize the female of another
he is [...] caught on the ground and all unite in boxing &
biting the offender - a male often carries a child
especially if they are passing from one patch of forest
to another over a grassy space - He then gives it to the
mother

a man died near this Monasimba went to

his wife and after intercourse and washing he
may appear among men - If no widow
can be obtained he must sit naked behind
his house till some one happens to die - all the
lowest of the low - and especially in bloodiness
the man who killed a woman without cause
goes free - He offered his grandmother to be
killed in his stead and after a great deal of talk
nothing was done to him - !

[LXIX]

LXIX8 Dec^r 1870 - Suleiman bin Juma lived on the
mainland [^] [Mosessane] opposite Zanzibar - It is impossible to deny his
power of foresight except by rejecting all evidence - He
frequently foretold the deaths of great men among Arabs
and he was preeminently a good man upright & sincere
”shirti” none like him now for goodness or
skill - He said that two middle sized white
men with straight noses & flowing hair down to
the girdle behind came at times & told him things
to come - He died [^] [12 years ago] lately & left no successors
told his own disease three days beforehand
by cholera

Heresi a ball of hair rolled in stomach of a
lion is a grand charm to the animal & to
Arabs - Muhammad has one

10th Dec^r I am sorely let and hindered in this
Manyema - Rain every day and often at night
I could not travel now even if I had men but
I could make some progress - this is the sorest delay
I ever had - I look above for help & mercy