

## Letter to Frank Vardon, 30 January 1861

*Livingstone, David, 1813-1873*

Published by Livingstone Online ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org))

[0001]

Kongone mouth of Zambesi  
30 January 1861.

For Major Vardon  
to be forwarded

My Dear Vardon

I have written to you twice  
since I came out but having recieved no  
answer I fear the letters may have mis-  
carried. I shall therefore try to reach you  
by way of your brother in London.

We are down here waiting the arrival of  
our new steamer which we understand  
is to be a real one and made not merely  
to draw grist to the mill of some greedy  
contractor. We have about a hundred  
miles of swamp in our rear, and eight  
of these the deadly mangrove marsh.  
Our neighbours are six black "rogers"  
sent by the Portuguese to assert their  
sovereignty over a flag staff, and a port  
which we discovered - and plenty of  
waterbucks, oryxes & bush bucks.  
So you may be sure we often send a wistful  
[0002]  
[glance] across the watery waste in front.

We lately went up to Linyanti on foot.  
the only points of importance we ascertained,  
were the presence of very fine cotton in the  
central parts of the country, and the extension  
of the coal field up to near Victoria Falls.  
These same falls too after a second visit  
we feel inclined to pronounce the most  
wonderful in the world. We could see clearly  
to the bottom of one half of the Falls - the water  
being lower at the time than we ever saw it.  
And the depth is not 100 feet as I conjectured,  
but 310 feet, or nearly twice the depth of

Niagara. Then the breadth is not 1000 yards  
as formerly stated, but nearly 2000 yards  
we say 1860 by way of assisting the ~~memory~~ memory. Though this is a little more. then

[diagram of a river]

to allow one to see them with the  
utmost advantage the crack into which  
the river rolls is prolonged in a zigzag  
manner and the promontories made  
by the wavy line allow one to walk  
[0003]

along in N<sup>o</sup> 1. facing the falls, or in N<sup>o</sup> 2 with  
the river on each side, and some 300 or 400  
feet below jammed in the bottom of the  
crack in 20 or 30 yards - the promontories  
are lower & have perpendicular sides, and  
are of the same height as the bed of the river  
above the falls. the base of No 1 is only 400  
paces of N<sup>o</sup> 2 - 150 D<sup>o</sup> so you can by a few  
steps see the river running in opposite ways.

We returned by buying canoes below  
the falls, and sailing down to Chicova -Thence  
we marched again on foot to Tette. From  
Kafue to the falls there are more large animals  
than in any part of Africa we have seen.  
the numbers of elephants, buffaloes &  
hippopotomi were really prodigious. they  
were obliged to come to the water for it  
was the dry season. We saw a pure  
white hippopotomus & several piebald  
ones. Two half caste Portuguese traders with  
about 400 slaves had got 40,000 lbs of  
ivory by shooting and trading in a few months  
this market we have opened yet our own  
[0004]

countrymen are prevented from reaping any  
of the benefits by that stupid treaty of Sir George  
Cathcart with the Boers.

I am very much delighted with the prospect  
of a mission from the English Universities.  
It is going on briskly, and I expect that  
it will soon make a beginning in  
some part of this coast. the work before  
it is nothing less than the final extermin  
ation of the slave trade by the introduction  
of commerce and the gospel into the  
slave market. And I trust that soon, that  
great body the church of England may  
feel itself committed to this great &

noble enterprise. I have great faith in that church if it only sets to work.

You may hear of a very untoward commencement made by the London missionaries at Linyanti. by some inadvertence, it is supposed, we were not made aware of their movements till we reached Victoria falls, and then we heard that they had arrived, and six out [0005] of nine Europeans, and four native attendants, had perished of fever - this happened at the very time we were on our way up and curing the disease so quickly that a severe case, in a European even, rarely detained us more than a day or two though our march was on foot. the remedy was found to be effectual first in my own children and in a party of English at Lake Ngami in 1850, and I have never failed in a single case since. It is referred to in the "Missionary Travels" but I deeply regret that I had not an opportunity of pressing it on the attention of these good people in time. One of them M<sup>r</sup> Helmore you probably saw - he was a personal friend and an excellent missionary. This threw a damp on our visit to the Makalolo.

You will be pleased to hear that Sechele is doing well. He has nine tribes under him. And has a Hanoverian Missionary [0006] a M<sup>r</sup> Schroeder, who succeeds well. Old Mosilikatze has John Moffat as his missionary - (and another)- He is still the same old rogue yet is unable to walk from something the matter with his knees, and I fear will be Mosilikatze to the end of the chapter. We met some of his people down at ~~Mosilik~~ Senna lately. they fled on seeing my Makololo. they had come to buy guns. Laws here dreadfully stringent against selling guns to natives, but neither Governors nor governed mind the laws on that subject.

Please present my very kind greetings to M<sup>rs</sup> V. My wife is in England & not very sweet because

I stay so long away. We shall get  
to work at last when our vessel comes.  
We believe it will be a good one, as  
everything we have got from the Admiralty  
has been of first rate quality. Let me  
hear from you David Livingstone  
[0007]

M<sup>r</sup> Frank Vardon

15 Waterloo Crescent

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