

Letter to Thomas Maclear, 3 February 1858

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[0001]

50 Albemarle St

3 February 1858

My Dear Friend

We are at last to sail in the "Pearl" a vessel bought by the Ceylon government and chartered by the Foreign Office to take us into the Zambesi and as far up the river as 9 ft draught will allow. We expect to sail on the 15th or a few days later. She is a screw vessel about 300 tons burthen and carries a small steam launch in three pieces on her deck. this will draw about 18 inches water and is to be our house when we quit the "Pearl" She is ten horse power only. the Government have done all

[0002]

this handsomely and would have done better had a suitable vessel been in their possession. We are rather hurried at last and as we hope to see you soon there is not much use in making a long story on paper I am extremely obliged by the liberality of my friends at the Cape and if it should be thought desirable would give them a general idea of my journies at a meeting at which the money they so generously contribute might be handed over for the benefit of my wife and family. If

I had any voice in it I
would like it invested in
some safe Colonial undertaking
I am fully convinced of the
thriving nature of the colony
[0003]
and will be only too proud to have
a stake in it. It must however
be borne in mind that my book
forestalls my speeches. It has taken
the wind out of them entirely.
It has you may have heard sold
marvellously well exceeding all my
most sanguine expectation. the
book of Williams the missionary
took four years to mount up to
16,000. mine in three months
30,000. I dont expect your
praise in the matter of the map
you will say I have given
Arrowsmith too much licence
but I had no time to watch
him. the writing of the book
had been all engrossing &
it is only now I can peep
at it. I shall bring all my
observations to you and if
verified by fresh which I hope
to make they will be published
at a future time.
[0004]

M^{rs} L. and one child goes with us
I have a practical mining geologist
and an economic botanist to tell
us more of the mineral & vegetable
wealth of the new country than
I could do when alone. A naval
officer Commander Bedingfeld
an artist and an assistant
who can do a little in magnetism
and Photography (my brother) I am
ashamed to say I have not been
able to run down and see your
daughter as I understand she is
with Admiral Smythe - I am
consul with a roving commission
& can go anywhere. It gives
me status. the expedition is the
fruit of Parliament giving £5000
I shall of course find my way

out to you as soon as I can
get ashore. Dayman says you
have a telescope which I hope
to get an order for which
will be useful in occultations

Kindest regards to all

David Livingstone