

Letter to [Joseph B. Braithwaite], 10 May 1858

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[0001]

Screw Steamer Pearl

10th May 1858

My Dear Friend

We are now in sight of land near Delgoa Bay and have the prospect [^] [of being] off the Luabo by the 14th so I begin to write a little now in order not to be behind hand with my letters when we dismiss the Pearl to pursue her way to Ceylon. We have been remarkably favoured in the weather ever since we left Liverpool and made rather a crack passage to Sierra Leone. thence to the Cape was rather more tedious but it was only 21 days. During the whole of this part of our voyage M^L had continued sickness and it greatly reduced her and compelled us to alter our plans. The non appearance of Ma Robert will be a great disappointment to the Makololo. Their enemies the Matebele of Mosilikatze lately commenced to make canoes at a part of the of the river below the falls of Victoria and as the Leeambye or Zambesi all along both above and below [0002]

that, is the Makololo line of defence they endeavoured to put a stop to canoe making on the southern bank but were repulsed by the Matebele with loss. There was great mourning at Linyanti in consequence and I fear I shall have to lament the loss of some of my friends there. This bit of information I got from M^r and M^{rs} Moffat of Kuruman who to our most agreeable surprise we found had come down about 700 miles partly to see us, but chiefly to recieve and assist those young missionaries who were so liberally subscribed for and who

ought to have been ere this at their fields of labour. M^r Moffat went to Mosilikatze to prepare the way for them and everything is in readiness. but this is only what I declared eighteen months ago in relation to both Matebele and Makololo.

On his visit M^r Moffat learned that my late companions had not yet returned to the Makololo country. Hence we may infer that they are still waiting my return at Tete. We may also conclude that the Portuguese officials there have kindly fulfilled the generous wishes of their young and noble minded king when he ordered them to be supported at the public expense of the Province of Mosambique [0003]

We hear also that the Makololo at Linyanti had concluded that I was dead. Their Diviners had made me out to be defunct long before my return from Loanda, but though all joined in the hearty laugh against them when we reappeared, they recieve credit again. When one realizes the dreariness and isolation in which they dwell with respect to the rest of the world, he can appreciate in some degree the value of literature and thank Providence that his lot has been cast in England. Just fancy the "Times" with the latest news from parts thousands of miles distant on the daily breakfast table, in contrast with diviners dice and vagaries which might could would or should happen or not - the Makololo at Tete a few hundred miles from home in all probability have heard absolutely nothing of their friends at Linyanti. It is no wonder that with our means of communication & locomotion people who are accustomed to look neither before nor behind them nor even round about them, should sometimes ask if the African intellect is capable of development. There is a mighty gulph between us at present, [0004] certainly, But though we may not very vividly realize the length of the process

which has ended in the elevation of
many. We see pretty large masses of
the still unchiseled rock among us. It
is not so very long since we burned
witches and even now some folks
pay "wise ones" for their divination just
as do the Makololo and some of the
cleverest among us believed in second
sight and do put faith in table
turning and clairvoyance. We dont
however ask if their intellects are capable
of further development.

You know we visited Sierra
Leone. This has not turned out all that
its founders anticipated. but with all
its failings I believe it will in the
eyes of posterity [^] [be considered] a noble monument
of the English philanthropic spirit
Philanthropists have been greatly at
fault in several of their schemes.
In this case the site of the settlement
was and [^] [is] to all appearance unexceptionable
but Krootown was worse than
a swamp and the settlement became
the grave of Europeans from its
contiguity. It was clearly a duty to
see to the proper drainage of
[...]
[0005]

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