

Letter to Roderick I. Murchison, 23 May, 26 August 1856

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Quillimane, East Africa.

23^d May 1856

Sir Roderick I. Murchison

A packet of letters

sent to the care of M^r Maclear contained some information addressed to you respecting this noble Zambesi in the regions beyond. As I remained six weeks with the excellent commandante, Major T. A. J. A. Secard, who generously advised me thus to avoid the Delta at Quillimane, untill the commencement of the healthy season in April, I had an opportunity of gleaning some knowledge of the adjacent country, while recovering from the effects of my march on foot. and I mean in this to give the most trustworthy of my gleanings concerning the Eastern or lower portion of the same river. Strangers are so liable to be unintentionally misled

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by the careless answers of uninterested inhabitants, I would fain have subjected every important point to the test of personal examination, but except in the cases of gold, coal, iron, and a hot fountain which did not involve any additional fatigue, I had to rely on the information of others alone. The difference of climate must account for the disproportionate exhaustion experienced by myself and companions by marches of a dozen miles, compared with that produced in our naval officers by those prodigious strides we read of having been performed in the Artic circle. Indeed I was pretty well "knocked up" by not much more than a month on foot. the climate on the river felt hot and steamy, water never cool, clothes always damp from profuse perspiration. and as the country is generally covered

with long grass, bushes and trees, the

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abundance of well rounded shingle everywhere renders it necessary to keep the eyes continually on the ground. Pedestrianism under such circumstances might be all very well for those whose obesity calls for the process of Pressneitz; but for one who had become as lean as a lathe, the only discernible good was that it enabled an honest sort of man to gain a vivid idea of the meaning of the phrase "a month on the Treadmill."

Looking down the Zambesi from those remarkable falls which I think ought to be named after our Queen "the smoke sounding falls of Victoria" we see the river fringed on both sides by ranges of hills, of from eight hundred to a thousand feet in height, on the right or southern bank, they cease at Lupata but on the left they run along to Senna, terminating in the fine

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high mountain Morumbala, with a hot sulphureous fountain on its northern summit. A very large number of conical shaped hills ornament the ranges and as all are covered to their tops with fine leafy trees with patches of lighter green grass between, the scenery is always pleasing. It was particularly so in my voyage down from Tette, for being the beginning of winter the foliage had changed into the most varied hues before falling off. Some were inky black, others copper coloured, and others of so bright an orange I have turned aside to them, in the belief that they were masses of flowers. Then here the stimulus of cold, acts like that of heat on birds in our climate. "the time of the singing of birds had come."

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It is far from true that the birds of at least this portion of the Tropics are un-

musical; they have wanted poets only to bring them into notice as ours have had since the times of Aristophanes downwards. the river itself is a magnificent one until spoiled by spreading out in this sickly delta. Measured at the fort of Tette, it was found to be five hundred fathoms or a thousand yards broad, and that is a narrow part. Below Lupata, it spreads out among large, reedy islands from one to two or more miles broad. It has been in flood ever since we struck it in December last, and it looks as if it would remain high for more than a month to come. These five months of high water shew that the statement that it is navigable for considerable

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sized launches for half the year to be substantially correct. Three and occasionally four freshets occur annually at Tete. The flood of Northern waters, which inundates the Barotse and Sesheké valleys, comes into the Makololo country in February. The flood of the Chobé is always a month later, on account of the impediment which extreme tortuosity of the river's bed, presents to its flow. It is often heard of as spreading over the lands thirty or forty miles above Linyanti a fortnight before it floods that place. In the case of the river of Libébé - Teoughe , Zóortzó and Tamunakle, the flood descends sometimes in April, at other times much later; but it is not capable of making an inundation except in the country near Libébé; as it

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is discharged into the Lake, till that is full - the surplus finding its way down the Zouga to Kumadou and a little way beyond. the water in these floods is in all cases perfectly clear. This peculiarity enabled me to distinguish the water of the valley inundations in a large rise

of the river which took place at Tette in the beginning of March. To the inhabitants it seemed the third freshet of that year but the water being comparatively limpid, enabled me to connect it with the overflowing at Sesheke in February. the two previous floods produced by rains falling East of the Eastern ridge, imparted a deep reddish brown tinge of the Zambesi, this was but a partial discoloration effected by the numerous feeders of the Zambesi continuing to pour in some muddy

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water untill the winter set in in April, and as they are very numerous above Tette we percieve the reason why the remarkable floods of the clear water of the great Interior valley have not been noticed farther down.

I am aware of no obstruction to navigation from the bottom of the Eastern ridge of the Delta except one named Kebrabasa, about 20 miles above Tette. there a number of jagged rocks jut out of the stream across the river forming in high water a dangerous rapid, and at low water the flow is so zigzag the canoes must be taken ashore and hauled along the bank. It is near the district called Chicovai; but being on foot when we came near that point we were obliged to leave the river to avoid crossing the troublesome rivulets

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which the Zambesi in its rise had filled, and we did not know till we arrived at Tette, that we had thereby missed the opportunity of examining the only impediment we are likely to meet with in our returning upward course.

Above Lupata which is about forty miles below Tete the river is kept rather narrow by the hills and rocks on its banks. It may be

said to be from one thousand to twelve hundred yards broad. the current is 3 3/4 miles per hour: the gorge of Lupata is about 200 or 300 yards wide, twelve miles in length and rather winding, but so deep close to its rocky, perpendicular banks a large steam ship could pass through at full speed. Below Lupata the river becomes very broad and full of large reedy islands which

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prevent one from seeing the banks. I conjectured the breadth from occasional glimpses of dark low lying woodland on the South and the ranges of Manganja hills on the North. A sailing vessel would have more room to tack in here, than in the Clyde below Greenock. I however saw it only when the river was full. In the dry season it presents a very different appearance, but it is never without a very large volume of water flowing in a somewhat winding channel. But though both channel and islands change their positions from time to time according to the swing and force of the full flood, free passage is always afforded for launches and large canoes and the river is never fordable. Minute investigation leads me to believe that a steamer of light draught could ply on the Zambesi during

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the greatest part of the year. but the opinion of a seaman might be very different.

Our surveyors however and visitors to Quilimane have had but little opportunity of knowing the capabilities of the river for that which is called the river of Quilimane no more deserves the name of Zambesi, than does the Serpentine that of the Thames. It's proper name is " Mutu" and the point of departure from the main stream " Mazaro" "mouth of Mutu". Mazaro may thus be considered the beginning of the Quilimane [delta], as the Mutu, though small,

is the first branch which leaves the
Zambesi for the sea. Its claims may
be understood when I mention that
even now, when the water is at its
greatest height the upper part of the
Mutu is only three or four yards broad.
It is also very winding and so full
of reeds and water plants, together
with over hanging branches of trees

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[that] a small canoe even can with difficulty
pass along. And during a great part
of the year it is dry, rendering it necessary
to employ land carriage for twelve or
fifteen miles in the case of all commerce
to and from Quilimane and the interior.
Beyond the part which annually
stands dry, the Muturecieves two rivers
from the North called Pingazi and
Luala (Pingazi, Luaia) which
make it navigable. Another farther
down named Likwareé and the
tides contribute to form the River of
Quilimane. The Bar at its entrance
is very dangerous, as it admits small
vessels as schooners only twice
a month and it is a common
remark that but few of these can go
both in and out unscathed. this
untoward bar embittered all the joy
I might otherwise have felt on

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gaining the Eastern coast for on approach-
ing Quilimane the sad news was
communicated that eight of my
countrymen in coming from H.
M. Brigantine Dart to offer me
a passage homewards had unfortunately
lost their lives. It caused me the
most poignant sorrow and made
me feel as if it would have been
easier for me to have died for
them than to bear the thought of
so many being cut off from all the joys
of life in generously endeavouring
to render me a service.

The Portuguese in extenuation

of the apparent stupidity of building the "Capital of the rivers of Senna" - (Quilimane) where it possesses such slender connection with the Zambesi alledge that the Mutu in former

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times was large but is now filled up with a fluvial deposit. the bar too was safer then than it is now. To a stranger it looks remarkable that the mainstream of the Zambesi sometimes called Cuama and Luaba which is at least three quarters of a mile broad at the mouth of the Mutu should be left to roll on to the ocean unused. It divides it is true below that into six or seven branches but two of these named near the sea Melambe and Catrina present comparatively safe harbours at their mouths, and free passage for large launches during the entire year into the interior. these harbours are not more insalubrious than Quilimane and Senna. Indeed with respect to the former one could scarcely by search get a better man-killing spot than it. The village is placed

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on a large mudbank so moist water is found by digging two feet down and it is surrounded by Mango bushes and marsh. the walls of the houses too sink gradually so as to jam the doors. That the subject of securing a better harbour for the commerce of the magnificent country, drained by the Zambesi merits the attention of the Portuguese Government as interested in its prosperity, a glance at the articles which might be exploited to a great amount will sufficiently shew.

If we again fancy ourselves looking down the Zambesi, from its confluence with the river Loangua, we find that a soft grey sandstone rock with many silicified trees & palms for the surface forms, to use an ungeological expression, the flooring of the country all the way

to Lupata. This space [a trapezoid in form] 3° of Long^e.
and 2° or more of Latitude & is if I am
not mistaken a field of coal; for

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the rock is in many places cut through
and dislocated by dykes of greenstone
and basalt. There are also broad bands
of gneiss & Porphyry, with hills of baked
clay and ~~other~~ igneous rocks containing
much silica and mica. The disturbances
effected by the eruptive rocks in the
grey sandstone have brought many
seams of coal to the surface. There
are no fewer than nine of these in
the country adjacent to Tette and I
came upon two before reaching that
point. One seam in the rivulet
Muatize is fifty-eight inches in
diameter. Another is exposed in the
Morongoze which as well as the
Muatize falls into the Revubue and
that forms the Zambesi from the
North about two miles below Tette.
the Revubue is navigable for canoes
during the whole year and but for
a small cataract in it near the points

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of junction with the rivulets canoes
might be loaded at the seams themselves.
Some of the rocks have been ejected
since the deposition of the coal for it is
seen converted [in some spots] converted into coke, and about
ten miles above Teté there is a hot
fountain emitting abundance of acrid
steam, the water at the point of
emergence is 158° Fah^t and when the
thermometer is held in it half a minute
it shews steadily 160°. When frogs
or fish leap into it from the
rivulet in which it is situated they
become cooked and the surrounding stones
were [much] too hot for the bare feet
of my companions.

the remarks about the absence of
any tradition of earthquakes in my
last letter must be understood in
reference to the country between the

ridges alone, for I find that shocks

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have frequently been felt in the country of the Maravi and also at Mosam^{que} but all have been of short durations and appeared to pass from East West.

In addition to coal we have iron of excellent quality in many parts of the country. It seems to have been well roasted in the operations of nature for it occurs in tears ~~and~~ [or] rounded masses admitting of easy excavation with pointed sticks, and it shews veins of the pure metal in its substance. When smelted it closely resembles the best Swedish iron in colour and toughness. I have seen assegais of it, strike the crania of hippopotami and curl up - instead of breaking; the owner afterwards preparing it for farther use by straightening it cold with two stones.

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~~there~~Gold.- If we consider Tette as occupying a somewhat central position in the coal field and extend the leg of the compasses about $2^{\circ}1/2$, the semi circle which may then be described from N.E. round by West to S.E. touches or includes all the district as yet known to yield the precious metal. We have five well known gold washings from N.E. to N.W. Menisetbutna not now known, but it must have been in the West or South West - probably on the flank of the Eastern ridge. then the country of the Bazizula or Mashona on the South and Manica on the South East. the rivers Mazoe, Luia and Luenya in the South and several rivulets in the North bring gold into the coal field with their sands but from much trituration it is generally in such minute scales as would render amalgamation with mercury necessary to give it

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weight in the sand and render the washing

profitable. the metal in some parts in North is found in [red] clay slate which is soft enough to allow the women to pound it in wooden mortars previous to washing. At Mashinga it occurs in white quartz some of the specimens of gold which I have seen from Manica and the country of Bazizula (Mosusurus!) was as large as grains of wheat and those from rivers nearer Tette were extremely minute dust only. I was thus led to conclude that the latter was affected by transport and the former shewed the true gold field as indicated by the semicircle. Was the Eastern ridge the source of the gold seeing it now found not far from it Eastern Flank?. ~~However this may have been~~ We have at present a coal field surrounded by a gold one with abundance of wood, water and provisions - a combination of advantage

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6th Sheet

met with neither in Australia nor California. In former times the Portuguese traders went to the washings accompanied by great numbers of slaves and continued there untill their goods were expended in purchasing food for the washers. the chief in whose lands they laboured, expected a small present, one Pounds worth of cloth perhaps for the privilege. But the goods spent in purchasing food from the tribe was also considered so advantageous for the general good all were eager for these visits. It is so now in some quarters but the witchery of slavetrading led to the withdrawal of industry from both gold washing and every other source of wealth; and from 130 or 140 pounds weight annually the produce has dwindled down to 8 or 10 lbs only. This comes from independent natives who wash for their own convenience

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and for their own profit. A curious superstition tends to diminish the

quantity which might be realized. No native will dig deeper than his chin from a dread of the earth falling in and killing him. And on finding a piece of gold it is buried again from an idea that without this "seed" the washing would afterwards prove unproductive. I could not for sometime credit this in people who know right well the value of the metal, but it is universally asserted by the Portuguese who are intimately acquainted with their language and modes of thought. It may have been the sly invention of some rogue among them who wished to baulk the chiefs of their perquisites for in more remote times these pieces were all claimed by them.

the soil formed by the disintegration of igneous rocks is amazingly fertile

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and the people are all fond of agriculture. I have seen ~~wheat~~ [maize] of nearly the same size of grain as that sold by the Americans for seed in Cape Town. Wheat for which one entertains such a friendly feeling grows admirably near Tete in parts which have been flooded by the Zambesi and it doubles the size of the grain at Zumbo. When the water retires the sowing commences. A hole is made with a small hoe, a few grains dropped in and the earth pushed back with the foot, this simple process represents all our draining, lining, subsoil plowing, &c &c for with one weeding a fine crop is ready for the sickle in four months afterwards. Wheat, sugar, rice, oil and indigo were once exported in considerable quantities from Tette. Cotton is still cultivated but only for native manufacture Indigo of a very large ~~growth~~ grows wild all over the country. there are forests of the Cinchona tree near Senna

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Does this not shew the Divine care over us, where fever prevails the remedy abounds. We have also salsaparilla calumba root and senna leaves

in abundance; the last I believe the same as is exported from Egypt.

It may not be out of place here to call attention to native medicines as worthy the investigation of travellers. I have always had to regret the want of time to examine which were efficaceous and which not and whether there are any superior to our own. It is worthy of note that the bark which yields the Quinine, has been known as a potent febrifuge by the natives from time immemorial. Our knowledge of its virtues is comparatively recent. Some may think we have more medicines in the Pharmacopoea than we know well how to use but the fact of well educated persons resorting to Homoeopathy,

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7th Sheet

Holloways's ointment, Morrison's pills and other nostrums may indicate an actual want to be supplied by something more potent than either raillery or argument. Few such I imagine would in cool blood prefer Parr's life pills to Quinine in intermittent fever; and if we had a remedy for cholera only half as efficaceous as Quinine in Quilimane fever it would be esteemed a universal blessing. Many native remedies are valueless, perhaps the majority are so; but they can cure wounds inflicted by poisoned arrows. In Inhambane and Delagoa Bay a kind of croup prevails. It is probably the Laringismus stridulus which cut off General Washington as it attacked and proved very fatal to adults singularly enough it was unknown till the first visit of Potgeiter's Boers to Delagoa Bay. They brought it from parts to the South West where it prevails

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and left it there though none of them were suffering from it at the time. It is still unknown here. This case is analogous to ships leaving diseases at the South Sea Islands. After many had perished

a native doctor pointed out a root which when used in time effects a speedy cure. The Portuguese now know the remedy and value it highly. I am not disposed to believe everything marvellous but from excoriations having been made by means of the root on the tongue of the patient and abstraction of blood so near the seat of the disease having never been practised in England in this very intractable disease I think the black doctor deserves credit. The fact too that certain plants are known by widely separated tribes all over the country as medicinal is an addition reason for recommending those who have nothing but travel and discovery on hand to pick up whatever fragments of aboriginal

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medical knowledge may come in their way.

In addition to the articles of commerce mentioned above I saw specimens of gum copal, orchilla weed, caoutchouc and other gums. there are two plants the fibres of which yield very strong thread and ropes. Bees abound beyond Tette but the people eat the honey and throw the wax away. there are several varieties of trees which attain large dimensions yielding timber of superior quality for durability in ship building. I saw pure negroes at Senna cutting down such in the forest and building boats on the European model without the superintendence of a master. Other articles of trade are mentioned by writers but I refer to those only which come under my personal observation. I feel fully persuaded that were a stimulus given to the commerce of the Zambesi by

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a small mercantile company proceeding cautiously to develop the resources of this rich and fertile country it would certainly lead to a most lucrative trade. The drawbacks to anything of this sort must however be explicitly stated and though anxious to promote the welfare of the teeming population of the

Interior by means of commercial
prosperity and intercourse of the coasts
I should greatly regret any undue expectations from unconsciously giving a
too high colouring to my descriptions.
I shall therefore try to explain the causes
of the miserable state of stagnation and
decay in which I found the Portuguese
possessions. I have alreday stated
that the slave trade acted by withdrawing
labour from every other source of
wealth in this country and transferring
it to the plantations of Cuba and
Brazil. The masters soon followed
the slaves, hence this part of Africa

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8th Sheet

contains scarcely any Europeans possessing
capital and intelligence or commercial
enterprise. Of those who engaged in the
slave-trade in both Eastern and Western
Africa it is really astonishing to observe
how few have been permanently
enriched by it. there seems a sort of
fatality attending these unlawful gains,
for you again and again hear the
remark, - "He was rich in the time of the
slave trade." Beyond all question it
has impoverished both the colonists and
the country. And when our cruizers by
their indomitable energy rendered the
traffic much more perilous than
any other form of gambling for money,
they conferred a double benefit. the slave
was prevented from being torn from
his home and country and the master
was compelled to turn to more stable
sources of income and wealth. But
when this took place it was found that

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the strong arms which washed for
gold and cultivated coffee, cotton, wheat
indigo, sugar, earthnuts for oil were
across the Atlantic and a civil war
breaking out completed the disorder.
On the South bank of the Zambesi Nyande
a man of Portuguese and Asiatic extraction
rebelled and collected a band of every

shade of bad character in the country.
Building a stockade at the confluence of
Luenya and Zambesi below Tette
he could rob every vessel that came up the
river for the Luenya rushes with great
force into the Zambesi and in order to
avoid being carried to the opposite rocky
bank by the current it is necessary to
ascend the Luenya first and cross it at
a point which will ensure the boat being
carried not more than half way accross
the river into which it rushes. In doing
so the vessel comes right to the stockade
of Nyande. this rebel burned nearly
all the houses of Tette. On the Northern

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bank another of Portuguese extraction
rebelled and burned all the rich villas to
which the merchants were wont to retire for
ease and pleasure. these rebels though not
in alliance [with each other] kept the loyal inhabitants of
Tette shut up in their fort ~~at Tette~~ for
two whole years: and so strict was the
blockade they were unable to get goods from
the coast for trade scarcely enough for
the purchase of food even. They had
also to endure the usual lot of adversity.
Friends not only became cool but often
turned enemies. A neighbouring chief
of no great power whose predecessor
rejoiced in the name of the " Emperor
Monompotapa" was one of the latter.
Real Caffres or Zulus here named
Landeems overran many districts
of the country. they attacked Senna,
and more than once since have compelled
the inhabitants to pay tribute. the rebels
have not been punished. In coming

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down the river I passed the stockade of
Nyande and in consequence of a note
from Major Secard I was kindly recieved
by his son in-law, who entertained me
to dinner and breakfast and added
some goats as provisions for the voyage.
It speaks well for this worthy com-
mandante that the natives hold him
in so much respect his simple presence
has put a stop to hostilities four times.

His generous hospitality to my self and large party demands my lasting gratitude. these notices of the war are not intended to inculcate either party, a passing stranger can scarcely form a correct judgement, especially if he espouses either side. they are given in order that the stagnation of trade may be understood.

When the influence of the white man was at its lowest ebb among the natives, we happened to come down the river. The people possess more of the Caffre

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9th Sheet

than Bechuana character. An Italian has ascended the river with about fifty followers armed with guns some months before our visit, and committed great havoc on some defenceless villages. On returning a number of tribes united and destroyed both him and his force. We were in some danger from a foolish chief spreading the report in our front that we had committed similar deeds of those to the Italian; and many bands of armed men were observed collecting to award us a like treatment. A young man who had come with his regiment for the same purpose thought he would speak to us first. Our explanations were considered satisfactory. Indeed when we could get a palaver they were never unreasonable untill we come close to Tette. But it was unpleasant to be everywhere suspected, the men belonging to some chiefs on the Zambesi never came near us unless fully armed.

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others would not sit down, nor enter into any conversation, but after gazing at us for some time with a sort of horror went off to tell the chief and great men what they had seen. I guess we appeared an uncouth band, for the bits of skins, alias fig leaves, had in many cases

disappeared, and my poor fellows

could not move about without
shocking the feelings of the well clothed
Zambesians. the Babisa traders (Muizas)
bring large quantities of cotton cloth from
the coast to the tribes beyond Zumbo.
Both Moors and Babbisa had lately been
plundered too. they could not have taken
much from us for the reason contained
in the native proverb "you cannot
catch a humble cow by the horns." *

* Synonymous with the Scotch proverb. "you can't take the
breeches off a Highlander"

We
often expected bad treatment, but
various circumstances conspired to
turn them from their purposes. It is
impossible to enumerate all the incidents
which through the influence of our

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Divine protector on the hearts of the heathen,
led to our parting in friendship with those
whom we met with very different sentiments,
but I must not omit the fact that if
our cruizers had accomplished nothing
else they have managed to confer a
a good name on our country. I was quite
astonished to find how far the prestige
had spread into the continent. And in
my case they had ocular demonstration
of more than a hundred evidently very
poor men going with one of "that white
tribe" without either whip or chain.
My headman speaks the language
perfectly and being an intelligent person
contributed much by sensible explanations
to lull suspicion. We had besides no
shields with us. this was often spoken
of and taken as evidence of friendly
intentions. And for those who perversely
insisted that we were spies we had
forty or fifty gallant young elephant
hunters and the extraordinary bravery

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they sometimes exhibited seemed to say
it would scarcely be wholesome to meddle
with such fellows. the personal
character of some chiefs led at once to
terms of friendship. With others we
spent much time in labouring in

vain to convince them we were not rogues and vagabonds. They were in the minority as the utterly bad are everywhere else. With fair treatment the inhabitants on the Zambesi would I believe act justly. they are not powerful as compared with our Caffres of the Cape. the so called Emperors, as Monomotapa, Cambeze &c are not so powerful as Sandillah and Moshesh. Indeed I believe there can be no great Empire without literature Conquerors have over run large tracts of country but no empire results. Witness Sebitane the father of Sekeletu

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10th Sheet

Some of the Batonga and many of the Maravi women have an ugly custom they pierce the upper lip below the nose and insert a shell or reed so as to widen and draw out the orifice untill it is quite an inch beyond the perpendicular of the nose. Fashion never induced a freak more mad. It looks as if they thought that female beauty of lip had been attained by the ornithorhynchus paradoxus alone. Lower down the river they insert a button only, and they possess much influence. My men thought they used their power very creditably when they said "dance and we shall grind corn for you."

I shall notice but one point more. Lupata is mentioned as forty miles below Tette. the range has a gorge in it through which the Zambesi flows. there is a perpendicular wall and an island on the left of the western

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entrance. this island was called the "island of Mozambique by D^r Lacerda from a belief that it stands on the same latitude with that settlement viz 15° 1' S. I found it to be 16° 34' South. I have no wish to prove that worthy gentleman wrong but all my observations are erroneous if he is right. I found Tette

to be in 16° 8' 48" and an island below
Lupata 17° 0' 30". It is always an
ungracious task to find fault with
others but I am obliged to perform
the duty in the case of this same
Lupata. the word is nearly synonymous
with Litako anglicised into Lattakoo,
(now Kuruman) viz. walls or rather dry
stone dykes, pata or 'mpata is applied
to any defile in hills, particularly if it
has perpendicular or wall like sides.
there is one called Mpata through which
the Zambesi comes near Zumbo. the

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person who first wrote Lupata or "spine of
the world", Tala Mungongo "or castle of
rocks" did not mean I hope that the
underlined sentences were translations
but only more poetic names, for the one
means "walls" and the other "Behold the range",
this range [(Lupata)] was said to be so high snow lay
on it most of the year and of marble of
great value. We slept a night on the
Island of Mozambique at the Western
entrance, where we have a fine view of
the highest part of the whole range viz. the
right wall. It is perpendicular and
scarcely so high as Arthur's Seat when
viewed from Princes St. Edinburgh!
I question if it is more than 700 feet high
from the river at its base though it may
be 800 or 900 ft above the level of the
sea. the island is composed of a light
coloured clay slate which may have
been rent off from the opposite wall
for the strata are all huddled and twisted

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together as if it had been roughly handled
when soft. At the Eastern entrance
there are three conical hills of porphyry
with fine square and rounded chrystals
The northern part of Lupata range
extends into the Maganja country and then
bends round to Senna. the Southern
part of the same range is rather crooked
too for it runs South and South East
ending in Nyamonga and Gorongozo
mountains which may be seen from
the top of a hill [(Baramuana)] behind Senna. When

Lupata is seen from the East it
looks decidedly lower than the Campsie
range as viewed from the vale of Clyde.
And this is the "African Cordillera",
"the spine of the world"! And it is
my hard fate however unwilling
to spoil the poetry of the thing for the
geographers, and increase the
anxieties of the geologists by divulging
the secret that their world has

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11th Sheet

got the lady's complaint called "a
weak spine", It's my destiny &c &c *

* If read in public leave out the nonsense please
we must not now parody the speeches of our ally
"I must accomplish my mission". &c

the southern end of the range bears
S.W. from the hill Baramuana which
is about half a mile west of Senna.
the intervening country is flat but
well wooded with Cinchona & other trees.
the nearest point of the range is named
Nyamonga - Goronzogo being a little
beyond it. the latter is famed
for its
salubrity and chrystal waters. the Jesuits
once had a station there, and I have observed
they always shewed great judgement
and taste in the selection of sites. they
were rich having been keen traders
as well as laborious teachers and
could allow their bretheren to follow
their laudable tastes. On the top of
Gorongozo there are several large
slabs, or the rocks have been chiseled
so as to appear as such and inscriptions
graven upon them. They are asserted

[0042]

to be in Roman characters. the Portuguese
who have seen them, not knowing the
words I presume they are in Latin
and the work of the Jesuit Fathers the idea
of their being in unknown characters,
perhaps of a primitive language, or
graven by the servants of Solomon the
son of David in their visits to Ophir

made my heart thump against the chest
but after patient enquiry the assertion
that all knew the letters though not
the meaning made me conclude the
inscriptions to be of no great antiquity.
Ophir may be sought for near
Sofala but not on the Zambesi,
for if the delta was of old as unhealthy
as it is now Solomon's servants
would get a larger share of fever than
gold except, at a few points it [(the river)] does
not touch the gold field, and there are
no inscriptions or buildings shewing
antiquity on its banks.

[0043]

With Sofala it is different for between
that fort and Manica we have the finest
gold field in Africa; and at the foundation
of the fort itself articles of wrought gold
have frequently been found. Such also
have been picked up in a stream on the
main land and remnants of walls
of hewn stone have been exposed in
gardens. But the Landeens are ~~the~~
there the Lords of the soil and Ophir
must remain an open question.

David Livingston

Mauritius 26th August. Brought to this
island by H. M. Brig "Frolic" Commander
Peyton on the 12th a service for which
I feel unfeignedly thankful to the Government
of her Majesty. the Frolic was just in
time to save the lives of the crew of a
Hamburgh vessel lost near Quillimane.
Another month of the climate would have

[0044]

been fatal to the whole. I reached Quillimane
labouring under a severe tertian but found
that Captain Nolloth late of the Frolic had
left me some wine and his surgeon
D^r Walsh some quinine which with the
sympathy and encouragement expressed
in letters from my former instructors in
Glasgow University from - Commodore Trotter
and from yourself soon restored me to
my wonted vigour. I was most
hospitably entertained in Quillimane by
Colonel Galdino José Nunes and here by
our countryman the Hon^{ble} Major General Hay.

A short residence in his house enables me to announce the departure of an affection of the spleen which clung to me in spite of the comforts and friendship of the officers the Frolic; and I believe there is still some African service in me. My late companions one hundred and ten in number await my return at Tette (Tett.) I proceed by the overland route to England in

[0045]

September next and hope to return so as to pass the Quillimane [delta] between April and August 1857. the headman of the party accompanied me on board the Frolic to Mauritius and, besides feeling grateful to him for his invaluable services I wished to comply with the desire of Sekeletu and take him to England, believing that a report of wisdom and power of Englishmen from his lips would have a beneficial effect on the minds of his countrymen in relation to Christianity. but the excitement of seeing so many new things seemed to prove too much for his brain and during the night after seeing the steamer towing us into this harbour, he became quite insane and drowned himself. He could swim

[0046]

well, but hauled himself down by the chain cable. I felt unwilling to use constraint because being a gentleman in his own country I feared lest a taint of insanity should remain after our return and that he might prejudice the minds of his countrymen by representing confinement as an act of cruelty, my regret for not using constraint is now unavailing. We lost another headman above Tette by a similar process [cause]. A tribe refused our passage, and made a war dance close to our bivouacment. As they never dance fully armed & dressed except when about to attack and I had no intention to be scared backwards by them this poor man became mad from excitement which was probably aggravated by remembrance of former scenes in which he had figured and ran off by night. We spent three days seeking him

but the country being full of lions
we never found a trace of him
David Livingston