

Letter to John Washington, 10 October 1859

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

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(I)

Murchison's Cataract

10th Oct^r 1859

My Dear Captain Washington

we have traced this river up to its point of departure from Lake Nyinyesi or as we heard it called there Nyassa and found that there are only thirty miles [(say 33)] of cataract and the river is placid up to 14° 25' S. where Nyassa begins. We abandoned our intention of going up the Ruo when we found that M^r Laird's precious Punt was in a sinking state: Funnel, Furnace, Deck & Bottom went shaky simultaneously so it would have been unadvisable to be encamped near the border tribes about Ruo. We came on to Chibisa's taking nearly a month to do what an ordinary steamer would have done & what we can do (with the current) in three days. We proceeded over land to Zomba & then descended

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into the Shire valley & followed the river up to the Nyassa. It was the hottest season of the year - the "smokes" from the burning of thousands of acres of tall grass = a broiling hot London fog if you can imagine such a thing. We were 37 in all D^r Kirk M^r C. Livingstone, M^r Rae & 33 Makololo all were delighted with the country & no wonder for it is mountainous &

every few miles we had streams of delicious cool water. It was Londa again. A great deal of cotton is cultivated and indeed the Lake region opens up the finest cotton & sugar country in the world. Remember please when I say so that I invariably discouraged the formation of any company or other speculation, but the time has come when with calm deliberation I can say there is a glorious prospect for both Africa and England. No matter what you have done there is now an opportunity for you doing more than ever, for, the two Lakes Shirwa (which means simply - (Great water) or Tamandua and Nyinyesi or Nyassa lie parallel to the East coast and all the slave trade of Anghozia & Mosambique

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from the Interior crosses these Lakes or rather crosses Shire and then goes along the partition between them - Tamandua extreme length is about 90 miles Nyinyesi no one could tell more than after months to the North it turned round into the sea. We met a large slaving party from Cazembes country & bought fine specimens of Malachite from them. When they knew we were English they evaporated by night They had a great many slaves and elephants tusks. Now lawful commerce would eat out that traffic ere long, but it must be untrammelled by Portuguese restrictions and I now give you the points about which you will probably be consulted.

The Kongone or as it is sometimes called Nyangalüe was quite unknown to the Portuguese and lately when we went down to meet the "Persian" slaves were sent to follow & report on where we had found a navigable bar. This though we had given plans of it they knew Melambe six miles west of it but not Kongone

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Then, the Governor General of Mosambique sent for a half cast called Paul Mariano a few months ago to ask him if the Zambesi really entered the sea at the Luabo! & shewed him my map. And again a slave from Senna our interpreter in last journey was sent for to Mosambique to be pumped by His Excellency as to where we had been. The Shire being wholly unknown to them except 3 miles at its mouth. All is English discovery exactly as in the Niger and all the right or Southern bank which at Shupanga they farm is paid tribute for by the Portuguese to the Natives. From Kongone up to this is all English discovery & ought to be free for the Portuguese line of discovery ran from Sofala to Senna and then across the country to Quilimane

M^r Candido denied to D^r Kirk that he had told me of his having been to Nyanja. then reasserted to me that he had been there & pointed to it, N. N. W. of Tette. That he punted 36 hours under cabbage palms - quite soft. If he had seen a Lake at all it was Not Nyassa for it is deep & has no cabbages & it is N. E. instead of N. N. W. of Tette

We found the southern edge of Zomba 6600 - a peak 8 or 10 miles off must be eight thousand. Air delightfully cool, water delicious & plenty of it D^r Kirk botanized up a peach a mile from our camp 500 ft. more (or 7000 say)

We must have a steamer capable of being unscrewed here & carried 30 miles. No more Macgregor Laird shams please.

We hope to send off Thornton - disease, laziness, Baines - theft He has stolen a great deal & given away to Portuguese ticket of leave men public property & provisions

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I stopped Baines pay on 30 July, but think anything on hand of his ought to be stopped till he accounts for stolen goods

Not a line from you yet I am &c Ever Yours David Livingstone