

## Letter to Edmund Gabriel, 27 June 1856

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[0001]

Quilimane 27<sup>th</sup> June  
1856

My Dear M<sup>r</sup> Gabriel,

Having by the Divine  
goodness reached this on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May  
last I felt very greatly disappointed  
in not finding a single line from you  
the box & parcel of which I heard of at  
Tete contained a dozen of wine from  
Commodore Trotter and some quinine  
letters & newspapers. I could scarcely  
believe my eyes when turning everything  
over & over again not a scrap appeared  
from Loanda. I had many fears  
imagining you had become ill and  
had gone home, and a mournful  
event which happened after days  
before my arrival gave a sombre cast  
to my musings - H. M Brge Dart came  
to Quilimane to pick me up and the  
commander tried to come ashore when  
it was very rough - Unfortunately the

Don't forget the champagne Particularly if  
any of my old acquaintances are with you at the time  
[0002]

boat was upset on the bar and the  
commander - with a fine young man  
Lieut <sup>t</sup> Woodruff & 5 sailors were  
lost. This sad event embittered all  
my joy on reaching Quilimane  
I would have died for them rather  
than that they should have lost  
their lives on my account.

After having imagined a sufficient  
number of dismal things I was  
delighted by the sight of your palisade  
like hand writing on your letter of  
15<sup>th</sup> June 1855 a few days more  
than a year having elapsed since

you wrote it, but it was none the  
less welcome for its tedious journey  
I have been gorging on the papers  
for the last week and still have  
the times & some spectators as  
provender for a week to come.

I did not receive the letter sent after  
[0003]

me to Cabango and not having gone to  
Matamvo I suppose it must have  
been returned to Loanda. I suppose  
you received the map from Cassange  
and letter with sketch from Cabango too

I wrote also from the Barotse and  
from Sekeletu's town. Also from Lete  
as soon as I came there. Writing to  
to you is somewhat different from  
addressing many others. It feels as  
if it were talking for I believe you  
will not cavil at defects & have  
an interest in the enterprise I have  
undertaken. I sometimes fear I will  
tire you with my yarns. As friend  
Arsenis did. It seems I have S of  
the Queens gold medal from the R G.  
Soc. and an honorary degree from  
our old Alma mater Glasgow. The London  
Missionary Society was last year £13,000  
in debt. The income having fallen to  
about £54,000, and I am told [^] [by Dr Tidman] that  
[0004]

it is not likely they can afford to begin  
a new mission in an unknown field  
but wish much to confer with me on  
the subject. I think they may propose  
to send me to China as this proposal was  
once entertained since my arrival in  
Africa, and I see they cannot get  
suitable men for that inviting field.  
The practice of medicine & surgery [^] [in China] was  
my own idea of the best way of  
spending my life and led to my  
connection with the L.M. Soc. but  
the Chinese [^] [opium] war prevented my being  
sent there. Knowing (afterwards) my  
wish my destination was nearly  
removed from Africa to China - but  
I have now no desire to leave this  
land. And if I cannot work for  
the good of this nation in connection  
with the same society I shall leave

it and God will provide for my  
wants otherwise.

[0005]

The commodore said if the Dart  
returned to the Cape without me he would  
send another vessel to Quilimane. The  
governor of Mosambique offers  
me a small vessel called Zambesi  
but it would be improper to accept  
of it and reject that of the commodore  
so I remain and hope to get away  
in a week or ten days.

The gentleman to whom you  
addressed the parcel met me up this  
river some distance and gave  
me his own boat to come down  
in. An act of which I had much  
need as I had a furious Tertian  
on me, got as soon as I reached  
the Delta. The Portuguese have  
all been remarkably kind to me  
and my men. The latter are working  
at Tete only a few came down  
here. There being a famine at Quilimane

[0006]

they cannot remain except at Tete  
where provisions are abundant  
some are employed as boatmen some  
as carriers & some bring wood for  
wages which please them well. I take  
one with me to England. The others  
remain till I return. This is a  
wretched port. small vessels can  
enter & depart but twice a month  
The Governor asked my opinion  
in writing about the salubrity of  
Senna. I pointed out a mountain  
called Morumbala close by as likely  
to be more salubrious but its entire  
decay from want of trade cannot  
be revived by this. If the village  
were put to one of the real mouths  
of the Zambesi (Catrina) the people  
would do good to both themselves  
and the country. This opinion seems  
to please & is to be forwarded to the proper  
[0007]

quarter. But the state of the country is  
from various causes most miserable

There are not 50 Portuguese in the country  
and the natives lord it over them, making  
them pay tribute in some instances  
in the most disgraceful manner  
if our cruizers have done nothing  
else they have conferred a good name  
on the English. I was astonished  
to observe how far this had spread  
they [(natives)] say "these English love the black  
people much." This is so far in our  
favour in endeavouring to propag-  
-ate our blessed Christianity - I feel  
convinced that God has gracious  
designs towards the Africans they  
are an imperishable race, neither  
slavery nor war nor white men's  
diseases can decimate the main  
body of the negro family. Then as  
our Burns has it.  
[0008]  
"

Then let us pray that come it may  
For come it will for a'that-  
When man and man the world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a'that.  
"

I have looked over the letter enclosed  
in this and felt inclined to destroy it  
but you will make allowances for  
my unburdening my feelings. I send  
the letter for Gov<sup>r</sup> Amaral to the Gov<sup>r</sup>  
General of Mosambique though I once  
thought of enclosing it to you. There  
is one too for [ Mr Sehut]-~~Mosambique~~ - a Captain  
Bobsein of Hamburgh is here and knows  
M<sup>r</sup> Sehut - He lost his ship on the Bar  
I send this to Mosambique because a  
French vessel is there which will tour  
at Loanda. They seem to be reviving  
a sort of slave trade between this coast  
and the Isle of Bourbon.

Accept my  
heartiest salutations and the heart's  
love of your ever affectionate

David Livingston

Remember me to Captain Need. please.