

Letter to John Washington, 1 May 1861

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Kongone Harbour

1st May 1861

Dear Captain Washington

M^rHardesty informs me
that the brasses or bushes of
the paddle shafts are cracked
by a strain put on them
when aground in the Rovuma.
He thinks that they were too
thin originally - some sand
has got in and worn them
a good deal thinner. As
M^r Penn has the patterns
we think it well to send
for new ones and as soon

[0002]

as we have an opportunity M^r H. will make a drawing of
them with buttresses on them
from which M^r Penn will
be able to send us thicker
and stronger ones.

18 May Shamo in R. Shire.

After spending some days in
woodcutting & going round by the
Pearl's canal to the mouth of
Parkers Luabo we steamed up
on the 7th & 8th to Mazaro taking
just 16 hours from the sea to
that point. the last time we
came over the same ground in
the famous "Despatch boat" it took
us ten days. We did not touch
the ground once - though the channel
is a little altered by the late very
high flood. At Shupanga

[0003]

we went over to the shoal side of the
river in order to get young mango
trees & pineapple plants for the
mission and unfortunately
drifted on a shoal and had as
at Rovuma the engines filled
with sand. They are splendid
engines and a credit to their
maker but there is a defect
which few would think of,
the pipe which draws in the
water is placed so as to draw
in sand whenever we come
into shoal water - there seems to

be no rose to them
as pebbles the size
of marbles were taken
into the bottom of the air pump. If
in addition to those [pipes] already in
we had others as marked by the
dotted lines & a cock to shut off
each set one could be used

[0004]

in a sea way the others in the
river - a few yards of copper
piping & cocks would not cost
much and Mr Penn would
no doubt take the trouble to fit
them according to his model
If the roses of the new pipes
were 3 1/2 feet from the bottom
no harm would ever come
to the engines either by sand or
weeds. As it is now the
time when we need the engines
most they are of the least use
as our bilges are so shallow
we cannot draw water from
them.

We spent some days repairing
and are now waiting for our
cart and cotton gins from Senna,
the Shire is all deep except one or
two small spots. We have a good
deal of fever yet. We are very
much crowded - 52 souls aboard and a
large deck cargo - but for wood cutting

[0005]

we should be at Murchison's cataracts in
2 days from this. We came from Johanna

[0006]

in eight days & waited one night only for a
smooth bar
I am &c David Livingstone