

Letter to John Washington, 28 November 1860

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

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[0001]

Tette 28 Nov^r 1860

Dear Captain Washington

On treating myself to a
reperusal of your kind notes I find that
I have to give you some information
about the country south of the Zambesi
Speaking in a general way all the region
south of Tette Senna & Shupanga is under
true caffre or Zulu rule. the paramount
chief Manikuse, lately deceased, lived
somewhere inland from Sofala and
he had war with the people of that fort
lately. These caffres named Landeens
by the Portuguese are quite friendly to
the English - we meet them occasionally
at Shupanga where they come to
take tribute of the Portuguese whom
they conquered. We had thoughts of
going in that direction and to visit
an [ancient] Jesuit establishment at Gorongozo
about 60 miles west of Senna, but
we have the difficulty that the Portuguese
still claim the whole country, and
any thing we should do would be
opening the country which at present
they dare not enter, for their advantage:
Large sections of a very fine mountainous
country called Shiringoma were ceded
[0002]

by the natives to Portuguese who had
intermarried with their chiefs - they were
expelled by the Zulus aforementioned,
and now that they dare not set a
foot in it their home Government
made a decree that the lands were to be
be more equally divided, and the family
that got it by intermarriage should
only have seven leagues of it - they
fled lately from Shupanga even
because the rent was excessive,

400 dollars to their own Government,
& 600 to the Zulus.

then whenever we go the Portuguese
try to pick up information in a
sneaking way, and assert that they
knew all about it long ago. "It is
all in our archives in Lisbon"
It is not the low characters out here
that do so but Portuguese ministers
even, as in the case of two slaves
having come from Cassange
in Angola to Tette. they said in
a dispatch to our Government that
these were Portuguese who "went to
Mosambique." there is an old woman
still living at Tette who remembers
their coming, and she is positive that
they were quite black, and did not
[0003]
go further than Tette.

They claim Delgoa Bay too and all
the sea board - so we should procure no
advantage for our own country by
opening up friendly relations with
the tribes inland of their claims. We
feel more interest in parts beyond
their claims - and the Rovuma is
said to be navigated in large
canoes as far at least as the
Longitude of the Lake Nyassa

Between Mosilikatze and
the Banyai there is a large
friendly tribe called Bazizulus
(Portuguese Mosusurus) they have
cattle and are in an interesting gold
country - stone walls & caves
are said to be common. We
shall make a trip to them in our
way up after we have been to the
Rovuma.

Many thanks for the ale &
books. We have a good chronometer
belonging to the Government and
my own private one as a standard
We have a third but it is small
and not very good. Two pocket
chronometers were sent home

[0004]

with M^r Rae - for cleaning &c. If you have an opportunity we shall be glad to get them again.

I trouble you again about the vaccine Virus as you will be able to get it sent direct. Perhaps two supplies by different mails might secure it fresh. I wish it in capillary tubes - I cannot conceive where our letters stick fast - they come in gushes

I thank you most heartily for all the trouble you have taken about the vessel and I am very glad that you have lent us Skead. He is a first rate fellow, and I hope that you have not been so carefully in marking the exact point beyond which he is not to go. I think Duncan would do well, if you have the same confidence in him that we have you will accept the offer I understand he has made

I am &c

David Livingstone

We found that Rowe had managed by dint of plastering & shoreing to keep the vessel afloat - the Pinnacle is as bad - bottom all worm eaten as she was old when we got her - both make much water - having no other resource we mean to try both and abandon that which sinks first the steel does not go totally as Iron would but is as if worm eaten all over. 20 Dec^r tried to take her down to Senna in order to save the engine but so many leaks broke out daily we had to allow two compartments to stand always full. When within one day of Senna the current carried us on a shoal & we could not move her. She filled & we abandoned her - the engine is worth £20 or £30.

D.L.

[0005]

A Note on Fever for D^r MacWilliam transmitted by favour of Captain Washington

In the typical cases given in D^r MacWilliam's Medical History of the Great Niger Expedition the gall bladder was found distended with black bile,

and if my memory does not deceive
me most of the cases treated with quinine
at an early period of the disease either
recovered or were subjected to the
milder or intermittent form of Fever.

In 1850 I adopted the plan of giving
quinine mixed with a purgative as
the first step of the treatment - and was
successful in the cases of two of my
own children and an English party whom
we found at Lake Ngami, and of whom
one had died before our arrival - I have
lost the notes of my reasons for
adopting the practice, but I have been
successful in every case I have met
with since. The prescription employed
is of Resin of Jalap and Calomel [of each] eight
grains - Quinine and ~~and~~ Rhubarb
of each four grains. Mix well together
and when required make into pills
with Spirit of Cardamoms. Dose from
Ten to Twenty grains. The violent
headache - pains in the back &c &c are all
relieved in from four to six hours

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and with the operation of the medicine there is
an enormous discharge of black bile - the
patient frequently calls it blood. If the operation
is delayed a dessert spoonful of salts promotes
the action. Quinine is then given till the
ears ring &c. We have tried to substitute
other purgatives instead of the Resin of Jalap
and Calomel but our experiments have
only produced the conviction that aught else
is mere trifling. No strength is lost.
In our march up the river of 600 miles
on foot - a European would be stricken
down one day and the next after the
operation of the remedy would resume
his march on foot. In some very
severe attacks a donkey was used but
never more than two days - he would
prefer to tramp it.

We tried Warburg's Tincture
which has a great reputation in
India, but it causes profuse sweating
and does not cure the disease -
the strength is also impaired. We
had a good supply, by the kindness

of one of our Nobility, but I am
compelled to say that it did not
answer our expectations. the daily
use of Quinine is no preventative
we have seen many cases occur
when the person was on the verge of
cinchonism.
[0007]

I employed the foregoing remedy with success
on the west coast, but made no fuss about
it more than make a general statement
in the "Missionary Travels." I was not quite
sure that our fever was identical with
that D^r MacWilliam encountered in the Niger but the melancholy fate of a party
of missionaries at Linyanti where six
out of nine Europeans, and four native
attendants perished in the short space of three
months makes me fear that it is the same
complaint as that which destroyed the officers
of Commodore Owen in Zambesi - those
of Captain Tuckey in the Congo, and the
crews of the Great Niger Expedition in
that River. My companions, D^r Kirk
and M^r C. Livingstone entertain the same
opinion of the value of our Pills that I do.
We wrote a paper for one of the medical
journals. But the above sad case
makes us anxious that the remedy
should become more extensively known
than it has been - and I do not know
a better plan for effecting this than
by communicating it to D^r MacWilliam.
No secret has ever been made of it
but I felt as if saying more than
I did would be Quackish - those
who may try it will do well to
remember that the above doses are
for great He creatures whom [...] [they] turn
so effectually inside out that
[0008]
we have termed them "Rousers".

I cured myself and native companions
in this way during my long journeys between
1852 and 1856 and that the remedy has
no bad effect on the system may be
inferred from the fact that I have had
no regular attack of fever since my
return. I have had little illnesses
probably from exposure to malaria

in its most intense forms, but nothing like what I formerly experienced. And I am of the opinion that, what we were all taught, not to give quinine till we had used the preliminary measure of relieving the bowels, was a mistake Query. Might the [remedy] not be applied to some of the fevers at home that arise in unhealthy localities. Around every village in this country, there is a very large collection of human ordure during the dry season - this is swept into the rivers by the heavy rains & you may guess the effect from hundreds of Thousands of villages. The natives here dont drink it, as the natives do on the banks of the Thames, but make holes in the sand to draw from. Possibly this has as much to do with the origin of fever as it has at home.

David Livingstone

1860 Tette 28th Nov^r

I give a specimen of the difference between Dry & Wet Bulb - Victoria Falls 24 Sept^r 1860

In shade - 9 A.M. Air = 87° Wet Bulb 59° Difference 28°

12. Air 96.5 Wet B. 63 Diff 33°5

3 P M Air 96 W.B.60 Diff. 36

Once the diff was 40°

[0009]

the greatest difference to D^r MacWilliam observed was I believe 16° generally it was 6° or 7°