

Letter to John Livingstone, 18 February 1858

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

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[0001]

50 Albemarle St.

London 18th Feby

1858

My Dear Brother

I have been unable
until this moment to write you
on a very important point to
which I am happy to call your
attention. A friend of mine M^r
James Young who was the assistant
to the professor of Chemistry at
University College London when
I was there made a discovery
by which he is able to extract
oil from a peculiar kind of
coal - this is name Paraffin
and it is simply gas in a
[0002]

fluid state. By a very simple
lamp it burns like gas and
is so cheap that one gallon
which in London sells at 3/8
gives as much light as 22 lbs
of sperma ceti candles. He has
made a large fortune by it and
being a good man he wishes
to do good and is very generous
I mentioned you as a suitable
agent in Canada and he is
willing to employ you and
give you such a percentage
as will make you anxious
to keep Niel at home instead
of sending him abroad. He wants
you to go into the thing with out
any doubt. It will return you
[0003]

an abundant income. He will
supply all the materials - lamps

oil - vessels &c & you must lay
yourself out for an immense
sale by advertizing it beforehand
for next winter. Write to
him

James Young Esq.

Sardinia Terrace
Glasgow

and tell him whether you are
willing to engage in it. You
will be able both to benefit
yourself and him by entering
into it heartily - Tell him
freely all your affairs &
what you will or can do
Can you devote your entire
time to suppose he sends you
[0004]
10,000 lamps and some hundreds
of tons of oil. Write at once
I shall be off in a week or
ten days. I got a letter from our
cousin John & will send him
a book having the index before
I sail. Our launch was tried yesterday & gave from 8 to 10
knots an hour. We sail in
the "Pearl" - She puts into the
Zambesi then we put our
launch together as she goes out
in three pieces & go up. I am
counsel - £500 only. The Portuguese
are favourable. If you still
think of Africa for Niel I have
not forgot my promise. You
will hear from me Charles gave
up £750 a year on the west he has
£350 now. Love to Sarah & all
I was waiting at the Admiralty and
found time for this. Write at once to Young

David Livingstone