

Letter to Thomas Maclear, 8 July 1868

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Near Lake Bangweolo 8 July 1868

My Dear Friends

The enclosed copy of my letter to Lord Clarendon will explain itself shewing that unless I adopted the expedient of lending you my copy I could not give you the information I desired. I have no more paper & borrowed till I was ashamed. This is a leaf out of a notebook. I have mentioned your names I hope not unwisely. It was impossible to bear longer with Arrowsmith after Galton & he wrote "Instructions" for me and demanded all my private notes - "copies if not the originals." - because they "had voted the large sum of £500." I was to "make a survey entering it in successive pages of my journal" "take Latitudes every night" and "ascertain the hydrography of the Interior". This big word to others means the survey of coasts & inland waters having a navigable communication with the ocean. To the busy bodies of the council it means rainfall. I was 40 days at Cazembe's & only got the Latitude by awaking one morning between two & three & found a star in the North - I had the evening before sat in the shivering dew till I got Achernar - I was set right on the spot poor Lacerda died and never saw a star. For months together we never saw a star - rarely did we see the moon till past the first quarter. I thought that I had mentioned the cloudiness of the weather & dense forest in my first volume but the "Instructions" shew beastly ignorance I put them in my pocket and followed the late Sir Francis Beaufort's advice to the Arctic explorers "Gentlemen remember that you are going for discovery and not for survey" that is never measure if you can explore. My private notes

are demanded in order that the busy
bodies who lounge about the Rooms
[0002]

in White Hall Gardens may pry into them
and Arrowsmith get bearings or distances or anything else to reduce Astronomical
positions to the level of his own fancyography

I sent him the two volumes of observations
from the Zambesi. he could make nothing
of them, so if can help it neither observation
nor sketch nor note shall go to the Geographical
till after publication. Fancy Baines is one
of the loungers a fellow who three several
times confessed to me that he had given
away the Government stores and he
would pay for them - only let him stop
with the Expedition without any salary!

He made the same confession to my brother
& M^r Rae & Major Sicard acknowledged to
me that he had been a recipient. I kept
him still till he got a hold of the store book
and forged entries of issue of twelve months
provisions for six persons
in three months to three persons.

this
was such a barefaced impudent forgery
after his three confessions to myself
that I could bear no longer with him
I took him before all the members & tried
his forgeries by the men themselves. Did
you consume one & three quarter pounds
loaf sugar per day - they laughed & the idea
& Baines still held on to it that his issues
were correct. They were not in the book
when I examined it at Tette. O he had
them in a note book. the story that I was
led my brother took among geographers
as it did at the Cape. I must really
appear to others to be a very soft easily
led no character fellow. It is a wonder
that I was fixed on to do this work on
being fixed on that I did anything. I
am sorry to offend Sir Roderick but
I bore with the desecration of my
positions till it was intolerable. the
Cape Papers believing from Baines
that I was soft tried their utmost
[0003]

got vituperation and elicited nothing more
from me than if the worthy Editors had
gone about Cape Town blowing Penny

trumpets.

I have many observations copied out for M^r Mann but all at a distance: I will send them from Ujiji with a sketch map. I give no sketch map to the Geographical because it was from these confessedly imperfect positions that Arrowsmiths chief batteries were supplied. I think that he has no idea of the correction to be applied to Commodore Owens survey because I thought that my single & the only independent Longitude at Pearl Island added the 5' of Commodore Owen's error. Sir Bartle Frere told me that Arrowsmith wrote to him that "I made the continent broader than it is". I think but have no map to consult that Commodore Owen made it 36° 7' and I 36° 12'. A note on the back of all the charts says add 5' 9" to correct the error of the survey and thus if I am not mistaken my Longitude calculated by you did.

In the letter sent to Lord Clarendon I add that four rivers flow into Liemba - one of these has eleven burns to form it, a fifth must be added as one line of drainage Chambezerecieves 4 burns as large as the Isis at Oxford or Avon at Hamilton It then enters Bangweolo to recieve 2 good sized streams - then as Luapula it goes into Moero and recieves five streams of which one is 80 yards broad and always requires canoes. Then as Lualalea it recieves two rivers and is itself taken up by the Lufira a large river which by five streams drains the Western side of the valley - these three lines of drainage recieve the sources of the Nile. Now suppose I am

[0004]

mistaken in one or two which I did not see or in two streams running into one we have still some twenty sources from 30 to 50 yards wide - I do not count a multitude of burns from five to fifteen yards wide and perennial. I also add a few words about a large tribe of troglodites in Rua where burrows in the rocks extend in one place 30 miles with a stream of water running along it. If you think proper

you may give a little of the information
to the Cape folks but I dont like them now
no sooner is my back turned than I am
a sabbath breaker - a tyrant everything
that is bad. couldnt they help poor Baines
up to the Victoria Falls without obliging him
to tell lies to excite their sympathy. If
anything is published M^r Moffat will see
it. I cannot write to him.

I wrote you from near Lake
Liemba - the fever without medicine
produced serious symptoms. I am
thankful to say that since then I have
had pretty good health on this highland
After looking a little while at this Lake
I go North for Ujiji - the islands here
are very large. I shall not attempt to
follow any river in canoes. We
did this on the Zambesi. It was insanity
four times our lives were in imminent
danger. I shall not be guilty of this
madness again especially as here
we have none of those good fellows the Makololo. I have only one chronometer
going - one stopped at Mandapala - 3
changed their rates entirely by an earthquake
and one stopped altogether after it. I
could percieve no other cause. Love
to all at the observatory from Yours

Affectionately David Livingstone