

## Letter to Heinrich Barth, 18 February 1862

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H.M. Exploring Ship Pioneer

R. Zambesi 18<sup>th</sup> Feby 1862

My Dear Dr. Barth

your very welcome letter of July 1861 reached me at the same that a steamer for Lake Nyassa did, and as we are carrying it towards its destination I snatch a few moments to acknowledge kind remembrance of a fellow explorer. We shall be engaged at twelve months in carrying the piece of the steamer past the ca- they extend over 35 miles of latitude, and the descent of river in that space amounts to 1200 feet. But we must disembark we reach them and on land carriage will not be less than 70 80 miles - the Shire above the cataracts is all smooth and deep -. carried a boat up in August last and when we launched her above uppermost cataract were virtuelly upon the Lake for we sailed into Nyassa on the 2<sup>d</sup> september. It is a very deep Lake and surrounded on all sides by mountains & highlands it is subject sudden and dangerous storms - our sounding line was only 35 on 210 feet. That seldom reached the bottom 2 miles from the , and in the North we could feel no bottom with a fishing line 690 feet. We coasted along the western shore and found the length be over 200 miles long. It begins in Lat. 14° 25' S. and retends to southern borders of the tenth degree of south Lat. The shape is like the boot shape of Italy but the toe [from] which shire flows the other way: The ankle is the narrowest part = 18 or 20 but in the North it is 50 or 60. We did not succeed in the ob-we set out to accomplish namely, to ascertain about the river

Rovuma - if it can be a pathway out. It was mortifying but we returned

[0002] as wise as we went. One man would declare that we might sail of the Lake into the river another that we must carry the boat few yards - another, fifty miles or a month; and we dared not cross to ascertain for ourselves, for three [out] of the four storms we wit-would have swamped our little boat. We might have gone round Northern end as the people told us that they did, but war had de-the country North of Lat. 11° 40' and no food could be ob-. We were forced back by hunger, and slinging our boat to a of a lofty and shady tree above the uppermost cataract reached ship after three months absence.

The Lake has several small round rocky islands in it. All are of inhabitants except one - It rises and falls with the and dry seasons about 3 feet. The water is fresh & cool - it in fish and a ~~layer~~[larger] population, than I have seen anywhere , lives on its shores. Slaving is the only trade known, and an dhow(?) has lately been built on its shores to carry slaves . It fled from us twice. About 19,000 slaves pass annually the custom house of Zanzibar, and the greater part of these from the Nyassa and the valley of the Shire. I earnestly hope I may live to do something to stop this gigantic evil. When on lake with our steamer "Lady Nyassa" or as i like to call her, "Lady of the Lake", we shall have easy access to over 300 miles cotton producing country. A minister of the Free church of Scot-is now with us with a view to obtaining information for the of a christian Mission on the lake or adjacent highlands

[0003] have recommended him to go up with us and see for himself. The peo seemed to us to be civil, no fines were levied nor dues de-and I have no doubt but in the course of a number of years and labourious missionaries will see fruits of their labours.

You will have heard that we have a church of England Mission on Manganja highlands

East Murchisons cataracts. I went up with the to introduce him to the people and shew him a healthy locality found that the Portuguese had set up an extensive system of slave . The first party we met had (84) eightyfour women children together. While making enquiries among these poor people the fled into the forest, and left the whole on my hands - so thought the best thing I could do with them was to hand over that and some others to the bishop to begin school with. The slave had employed another tribe called Ajwa to attack the Man-villages, kill the men sell the women and children to them. seeing the spot selected for the mission we went to try to in-the Ajawa to cease the shedding of blood - came to them when the act of burning three villages and were attacked with muskets & arrows. This was my first hostile encounter in Africa. often on the point of it - I am sorry that it took place - drove them off but had I in the least anticipated aught of the I would have made [use of] presents and fair words before going near . We acted in self-defensive[defence] alone but while we were in Nyassa bishop and missionaries took the offensive and drove away a tribe [these]Ajawa. I am extremely sorry that they did this for though defen-

[0004] sive war may be lawful, offensive war cannot be right on the party a bishop. It is the first time that this party has engaged in work. You may know that they are called "High Church" I heartily of their coming out here and still I think that they will be useful and still I think they will be useful, for Churchism can only flourish in seclusion, and when good people in active benevolence bigotry of the closet and cloister vanih. The bishop is a very good man and so are most of his . We may therefore hope that despite this false step may attend their efforts.

What a hard hearted man you are - I publish another book - No, No  
- one book in a man's life is quite enough. How you got through volumes is more than I can tell. Sir Roderick Murchison set me write once, and I did not like to be beaten, but he may as well me to stand on my head as write another. You will excuse the few notes as all I can give at present. My wife is here so a word to any one till the steamer is on the Lake.

Yours most truly  
David Livingstone