

Letter to Joseph B. Braithwaite, 24 January 1861

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Kongone 24 January 1860[1]

My Dear Friend

We are waiting for the arrival
of our new steamer which ought to have been
[here] in November. We are surrounded with mangrove
swamps which are believed to be the very hot -
beds of fever yet thank God that disease
so far as we have seen it is not worse
than a common cold. We can cure it quickly
and without loss of strength to the patient.

I tried it [the remedy] first on my own children at Lake
Ngami in 1850 and have never failed in
a single case since. but disliking anything
like "Quackery" I said little about it more
than is mentioned in the "Missionary Travels"
But when we lately arrived at Victoria
Falls we heard for the first time that a party
of London Missionaries had arrived at
and four out of six Europeans perished
at Linyanti: this caused us unfeigned
sorrow. We did not know of their move-
ments except that at the Cape the News-
papers spoke of them as in "connection with
the Zambesi Expedition," and they had gone
inland. With all the vexatious delays we
have experienced we might by straining a
point have been there before them, and rendered
that medical aid which they seem so much to
have needed. It must have been inadvertence
that led to neither Dr Tidman nor my dear
friend Helmore saying a word to me about
a mission in which I feel so deep an interest

[0002]

I have ventured to advise John Moffat in the
event of not being allowed to teach the people of
Mosilikatze freely to go to the Makololo by a straight
course to Victoria Falls. The Makololo are
perishing of fever themselves and would willingly
leave the swamps of Linyanti for the Highland
where in passing we actually saw hoar frost
and a little ice, provided one of Mr Moffat's
family were with them. They look kindly to
Helmore but wished to get acquainted & hence

the delay which proved so fatal. I have also reminded him of your proposal to make the christians at home aware of his efforts and secure a share of their sympathies by the channel which "Evangelical Christendom" affords. Some one sent us copies for March April [May &] June - They are the first I have seen & it appears to be the largest hearted & ablest religious Periodical going. I did not like the Evangelical alliance when its only object seemed to be for Christians to meet & clap each others backs. but it has now great objects and works to do, and I wish it cordially all success

We are very much pleased & thankful to hear of the wonderful Revivals which are taking place in so many parts of our native land. the Lord pour out his spirit on all classes and make his name glorious It is with great delight that I hail the new mission by the English Universities It seems to come up to my idea of what a mission ought to be, and do in Africa

[0003]

I pray our Heavenly Father that he may draw out the Church of England and make that great and rich body feel that it stands committed to the final extermination of the slave trade by the introduction of commerce & the gospel of christ into the centre of the slave market. It is He who has drawn so many into the movement and as it is his own work we have thus a pledge that he will carry it on. I have been applied to for information by the Committees, and have recommended a steamer, and but a small party at the outset. I have not failed to warn them against an irritability produced by the climate possibly by malaria as it often though not always precedes an attack of fever We put down the feeling of being slighted or insulted as one of the symptoms of coming fever. The remedy for fever comes very opportunely for this mission. I am excessively grieved that the London Missionaries did not (probably) know it. Now for the Society of Friends. As soon as the Mission is fairly set agoing I mean to make an appeal to them for cooperation in helping on the lawful trade. What say you to that? I sympathize

with you all in the loss of your dear mother and sister. They are home. O that we could feel that the haven which they have reached really really is our home. I always feel as if I had a work to do here and the heart is not set on things above as it ought. the Lord bless these events to us all. Remember me most kindly and lovingly to your Father, & to your family

[0004]

As we have a daughter more than was expected when the Settlement for the children was made can a clause be added giving her the share her mother was to have. I believe a pension will be given in case of my death. M^{rs} L. will say if she is agreeable to this arrangement.

I am not aware who my injudicious correspondents were who published my letters all of which were marked Private. Hence forth I shall write to but few. I did not feel sweet on being shamefully treated by Macgregor Laird & Bedingfeld. Nor I suppose did Sir John Franklin when he discovered his preserved offal. I have good reason to believe that M^r Laird behaved badly also to the great Niger Expedition. M^r Vogel the botanists cabin was as wet as ours, and the ships were left ashore near Bathurst though the cost was enormous. A seaman in our employ saw that one of them was broken right through the middle! And a gentleman high in the Admiralty said to me "He (Macgregor Laird)" treated us very shabbily" He wont do so to any one else and he would not have treated us so had the officers of the Niger Expedition spoken out boldly. I was unfortunate in having anything to do with the naval officers Bedingfeld & Gordon. Both quarrelled with Captain Duncan of the Pearl and I had orders to see that " Duncan was not interfered with in his command by any naval officer ". On the third public altercation before his crew I interfered by saying [to B] "we must have no more of these public altercations" private remonstrance had failed, and I got Bedingfelds resignation next day and Gordon's spite fifteen months afterwards but I break not my heart for all that & more if it comes Affec^y David Livingstone

[0005]

Bevan Braithwaite Esq,
3 Lincoln's Inn,

London.
D^L