

Letter to John Arundel, 27 January 1841

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At Sea, off Rio De Janeiro, 27th Jan^y

1840

Dear Sir

The sudden & unexpected departure of our Pilot at midnight rendered it impossible for us to write you from the Downs. But as we shall have an opportunity tomorrow of transmitting letters to England, you will have the kindness to take this instead.

We expect to reach Rio D' Janeiro tomorrow to which Port we are compelled to put in, in consequence of our foremast having been split by the wind a few days ago. We had only 30 days water on board when the accident happened and had we proceeded on our course to the Cape, the probability is that the first gale we encountered, taking the mast right away, should have so disabled the vessel as prevent her gaining land for perhaps double that time. As a prudential measure therefore the Captain puts in at the above named Port to get a new mast or the old one repaired & a supply of water. These objects we hope to get accomplished

[0002]

in a few days

We should have preferred proceeding direct to our destination without delay. But as circumstances have so happened, we feel pleased with the prospect of visiting that harbour. And as the Tract Society kindly furnished us with a good supply tracts for distribution we purpose supplying our countrymen connected with the British shipping with what we have left over the supply of our own vessel And if there is an hospital for seamen, by leaving some there, we hope that some of these little messengers of mercy may impart consolation & hope to some who in health never listened to the invitations of the gospel, and if so our short visit wont be in vain

We had cold stormy weather for 10 days after leaving Gravesend, but having then reached the latitude of Lisbon we experienced a pleasant change & ever since we have been favoured

with a most delightful Atmosphere. We have frequently thought of you & wished that the enjoyment of these climates & the discharge of the important duties of your office were compatible. you now suffer severely from the cold fogs of London, while we enjoy weather much more genial than even summer in England. We hope however you are able with some degree of comfort, still to

[0003]

discharge your very arduous duties

We have held Divine Service as often as the weather permitted. But no change for the better is apparent. We feel that much wisdom is requisite in dealing with sailors. May this be imparted to us so that our sojourn with them may be for the glory of our Redeemer.

Our accommodation is much better than we expected. Indeed we have great reason to be grateful to the Giver of all good & to the Directors as his instruments for the very many comforts we enjoy. We hope our mercies may [...] be lost upon us, but that we may be stimulated by them to greater devotedness in the cause of Him who leads us with his benefits. & At the same time honours us to go forth to the heathen with the good news of mercy through Christ.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel

David Livingston[e]

[0004]

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