

## Letter to Roderick I. Murchison, 20 August 1854

*Livingstone, David, 1813-1873*

Published by Livingstone Online ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org))  
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Loanda 20<sup>th</sup> August

1854

Sir Roderick Impey Murchison

Sir

The enclosed  
is a sketch of my route from the town of  
Sekeletu to Loanda viz. down the Chobe and  
up the Zambesi and Leeba in canoes. Then  
through a portion of the Balonda country  
to Cassange the farthest inland station of  
the Portuguese, and thence to this city  
on oxback. It is intended to be supplemental  
to a letter which I lately transmitted through  
Commander Bedingfield. And a mere  
glance will enable you to perceive  
that Loanda is a well watered country.  
To me it appeared remarkably so  
in consequence of passing through it  
during the rainy season. But though  
[0002]

the streams were much swollen I believe  
that all ~~these~~ [the streams] put down in the map  
are perennial, for they were invariably  
furnished with rustic bridges, and the  
water though not extending far beyond  
the banks submerged these structures  
several feet deep. The close proximity,  
(not more than 8 or 10 miles in some  
instances) of streams flowing in totally  
different directions through a level  
country, excited my surprise. [Begin  
Only when] And  
~~not untill~~ we reached the declivity  
which forms the valley of Cassangé  
could I conceive why all [the rivers] that flowed  
North, North East or North West, ran in  
much deeper vallies than those

which followed an opposite course.  
The slopes down to the feeders of the  
Casai and Quango are more than  
500 yards long and pretty steep, while  
the beds of the branches of the Leeba  
are never more than ten yards

[0003]

below the level of the surrounding country.  
The whole valley of Cassange seems to have  
been a work of denudation, for on  
all sides the declivity presents the same  
geological peculiarities, viz. a covering  
of brown haematite, mixed with quartz  
pebbles, lying upon bright-red friable  
clay slate. This, differing only in hard-  
ness and paleness of colour continues  
to the bottom; but towards the centre  
of the valley, it takes the form of  
argillaceous schist. A detached  
mountain, 7 or 8 miles S.S.W. of  
Cassange, called Kasala, and having  
perpendicular sides all round, possesses  
the same structure. I regret much  
having no instruments to measure  
the elevations of these parts, but  
after ascending again at Tala Mungongo,  
we appeared to descend again all  
the way to Ambaca, where we met  
primitive and secondary rocks.

[0004]

the latter containing metals. Fever  
prevented me from doing more in  
that quarter than ascertaining the  
Latitudes of different points along  
the road. they are put down in  
black pencil and if I am successful  
in my observations for the Longitude  
while retracing my steps, I shall  
take the liberty of forwarding [the results] to you  
from Cassangé. the marks in  
red pencil are intended to shew the  
parts noted on the information of  
others who, however, possessed no  
means of ascertaining their true positions

Again apologizing for troubling  
you with my communications

I am, Sir

Your most Faithful

Servant.

David Livingston