

Letter to Charles M. Hay

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

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[0001]

Tette 26th Nov^r 1860.

My Dear General Hay

It was extremely kind in you to remember me, as you have done. I have had good reason to remember you, and though you have no evidence of it again & again and again has it been brought to my recollection how much I owe to you and your delightful home in the Mauritius. Indeed you set me so completely up, that all the tear & wear of a fearful lionizing, though it wearied me sorely, never broke me down, and I have not had one severe attack of fever since my return. Had I gone home at once in 1856 and gone through the terrible ordeal, then come out

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I could not have done the work I do now. We have just finished a march of 1400 miles in six months. We went up the river in order to return the Makololo to their own land keeping along the North bank of the Zambesi till we were in Lat. 17° 18' South and about 28° East Long. then turned away Westward ascending the Highlands near Tabacheu where we saw hoar frost & a little ice then descended Westwards into the great central valley, to our old friends the Makololo. When within 20 miles of the Falls which I named after our Queen we saw the columns of smoke and went down to see this great sight. I have no hesitation now

in saying that there is none equal to
it in strangeness in the world. he breadth is not one but nearly two
thousand yards and it falls sheer
down 310 feet. The river was very
low and we could see everything clearly .
The whole river leaps into a crack & this
crack is prolonged in the most fantastic
manner - the country below or East of
the falls being quite as high as the lip over

[0003]

which the Zambesi rolls - try if you can
understand this scrawl. All these promontories are of the same
level as the bed of the river
above the falls and ~~and~~
over 300 feet sheer down
has the river of a mile wide
jammed into a crack some eighty or
100 feet wide at the bottom. A most
extensive coal field extends from below
Tette to near Victoria Falls. In some places
a steamer could load out of the seam in
the bank of the river. These falls will
be visited and coal worked when we are
no longer here to write & talk about them .
I hail with great satisfaction the
formation of the Oxford & Cambridge
mission, and I shall count it a
privilege to do whatever I can to aid
the Bishop and his clergy. It was the
best news I have heard in Africa
and most heartily do I thank Him
who has put the good purpose into
his servants ' hearts. No where do
people stand more in need of christianity
and civilization than the Africans
and if this mission is carried on
with faith & patience there is no
doubt but good will eventually be
done both to Africa & England.
It seems to me that we ought in all
our plans for the good of others

[0004]

specially remember our own home
poor - our honest poor - This leads me
to think of a small colony as likely to do
immense good. Accompanied as it
will be by this mission with the religious
element I do not apprehend those frightful
scenes which have occurred elsewhere

(except New Zealand). As for the poor Portuguese, I must say nothing, but you "can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear"

We found the chief Sekeletu labouring under a skin disease believed to be leprosy the effect of course of witchcraft & several influential head men had been put to death for the crime. We tried to put him to rights during our short stay and his spirits revived. We found that a missionary party from the London Society had been nearly [all] cut off by fever at Linyanti. I regret this extremely as the very time they were perishing we at a lower & more unhealthy part of the river were curing the disease so quickly that a patient would be stricken down and resume his march on foot a day or at most two after the operation of the remedy. This remedy I found effectual as long ago as 1850 and ever since I have not lost a case but I forbore to puff. I could not be a quack and grieve now that the missionaries did not know it. We publish the composition now. Do drop me a line at your leizure & you will oblige .

yours affectionately David Livingstone