

Letter to John Washington

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Kongone Harbour

1st May 1861

Dear Captain Washington

M^r informs me
that the brasses or bushes of
the paddle shafts are cracked
by a strain put on them
when aground in the Rovuma.
He thinks that they were too
thin originally - some sand
has got in and worn them
a good deal thinner. As
M^r Penn has the patterns
we think it well to send
for new ones and as soon

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as we have an opportunity M^r H. will make a drawing of
them with buttresses on them
from which M^r Penn will
be able to send us thicker
and stronger ones.

18 May Shamo in R. Shire.

After spending some days in
woodcutting & going round by the
Pearl's canal to the mouth of
Parker's Luabo we steamed up
on the 7th & 8th to Mazaro taking
just 16 hours from the sea to
that point. the last time we
came over the same ground in
the famous "Despatch boat" it took
us ten days. We did not touch
the ground once - though the channel
is a little altered by the late very
high flood. At Shupanga

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we went over to the shoal side of the river in order to get young mango trees & pineapple plants for the mission and unfortunately drifted on a shoal and had as at Rovuma the engines filled with sand. They are splendid engines and a credit to their maker but there is a defect which few would think of, the pipe which draws in the water is placed so as to draw in sand whenever we come into shoal water - there seems to

be no rose to them as pebbles the size of marbles were taken into the bottom of the air pump. If in addition to those [pipes] already in we had others as marked by the dotted lines & a cock to shut off each set one could be used

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in a sea way the others in the river - a few yards of copper piping & cocks would not cost much and M^r Penn would no doubt take the trouble to fit them according to his model . If the roses of the new pipes were 3 1/2 feet from the bottom no harm would ever come to the engines either by sand or weeds. As it is now the time when we need the engines most they are of the least use as our bilges are so shallow we cannot draw water from them.

We spent some days repairing and are now waiting for our cart and cotton gins from Senna, the Shire is all deep except one or two small spots. We have a good deal of fever yet. We are very much crowded - 52 souls aboard and a large deck cargo - but for wood cutting

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we should be at Murchison's cataracts in
2 days from this. We came from Johanna

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in eight days & waited one night only for a
smooth bar .

I am &c David Livingstone