

Letter to General Edward Sabine, 17 January 1861

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[0001]

Kongone 17th January 1861.

My Dear General Sabine

We were gratified

by receiving two notes containing the reductions
of the magnetical observations by D^r Chambers
on our return from a trip up the
river of some 600 miles. We left Tette
before I observed that the exact mean
time was required for those taken at
Expedition Island, and as I believe
we have data whereby that may be
ascertained, and the observations
sent are not the only ones taken
at these stations it may be well
for you to keep what you have
by you till we can give you
the whole.

We are now down here waiting
for the arrival of our new vessel
[0002]

I wish the instruments which were quite
spoiled by M^r Lairds wretched launch
had been reserved for the new one - you
may be disposed to blame us but
I can assure you that our utmost
endeavours could not keep our own
beds dry. the partitions pumped in
water perpetually. Our bedding was all
rotten and we lost a great deal of
both public & private property. It was
only in our last trip when we
suddenly filled that the instruments were
injured. the wet in this hot climate
had an almost instantaneous effect
on the glue and on the steel.

I am very glad to hear of the
formation of the Oxford & Cambridge
mission of which I observe you are
on the committee. I have been applied
to for information and I have not

[0003]

failed to hint at the desirableness of
bearing in mind meteorological and
magnetical observations for the time of
comparative leizure which will follow
the first hard work of the foundation.
It might be well for you to follow
up what I have suggested by a reference
to what was done in Algeria by
the missionaries under Bishop Dupuch
It is mentioned in "Blakesley's Algeria"
M^r Dupuch established 47 churches & chapels
40 almonries & hospitals orphan asylums
and a house of Trappists! which distinguishes
itself by an extensive series of meteorological
observations. In a climate so little
known as this, similar observations
are surely as necessary, and for a
mercantile country such as ours
magnetical observations are of no less
importance. The well educated young
[0004]

men who will follow the bishop would
no doubt cheerfully undertake any work
tending to advance the interests of either
science or civilisation. This is merely
a hint the value of which you are best
qualified to judge. from the high position
you occupy your personal influence
would be sufficient.

With very kind greetings to M^{rs} Sabine

I am Faithfully Yours

David Livingstone

The glass tube and riding spirit level
came safely. they belong to a much
larger instrument than ours. you
will have seen our application
for any set of instruments that
may have been returned uninjured
from other Expeditions