

# Letter to Roderick I. Murchison

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Linyanti, on the River  
Chobe, 16<sup>th</sup> October,  
1855.

~~To Sir Roderick Impey Murchison~~

Sir,

By a note dated  
Cabongo in August last, I endeavoured  
to convey an idea of the country between  
Cassangé and that point, and if the rough tracing enclosed reached its  
destination, you will have remarked  
that there was little absolutely new to  
communicate. The path followed  
is that usually trodden by native  
Portuguese, ~~who are~~ <sup>[[^]]</sup> <sup>[[^]]</sup> [who are] employed by the Angolese  
merchants to trade with Matiamvo -  
(<sup>[[^]]</sup> [the] Muata-yamvo<sup>[[^]]</sup> of some) - the paramount  
chief of the negro tribes called Londa  
(Lunda) or Balonda. There is another  
and straighter course situated a little

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farther North, and I suppose it is there the  
scarcity of water mentioned by others is experienced.  
We never found it necessary to carry a supply, and almost always spent the night at villages  
situated on streams or rivulets. A Portuguese  
merchant and planter, Senhor Graça of  
Monte Allegre, whose acquaintance I had  
the pleasure of making, was once a visitor  
of Matiamvo, and his notes having been  
published in the Government Gazette or  
"Boletim" of Loanda, might, I, still  
be found in Lisbon. ~~RGS vol xxvi pages 124-128~~ [ *\*See R.G.S. Journal*  
*Vol. xxvi, pages*  
*123, 128. Ed.] ] A severe and*  
long continued attack of fever, soon after  
crossing the Quango, made me so very feeble  
and deaf, <sup>[[^]]</sup> [that] I was glad to avail myself  
of the company and friendly aid of  
three native Portuguese, whose employer,  
Senhor Neves of Cassangé, very politely

enjoined them by letter to forward my plans by every means in their power. he virtue of the Cheboqué (Cheebokwé) was thereby not exposed to temptation to take advantage of my weakness, - a temptation which often proves rather too powerful for the goodness of more enlightened specimens of humanity. The most then I could effect

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in the circumstances, was to put down the rivers with greater precision than any of my predecessors, who have uniformly been unfurnished with instruments[.]~~could accomplish~~ .

The rate of travelling of such traders may be interesting to those who examine their accounts of journies to [^][otherwise] unknown regions. I found the average between a great number of regular sleeping stations to be seven geographical miles. he average time required was three and a half hours, and the speed two geographical mile an hour. The stoppages from all causes[,] amounted to 20 days monthly[:]- so that a month's journey means actually one of ten days, or seventy miles. The carriers are very unwilling to help each other[:] hence the sickness of one man often stops the march of the whole party. When we parted with them, our own rate was ten and a half geographical miles per day. his required an average of five hours march at the rate of two geog[^][raphical] miles an hour and we travelled twenty days each month. The negro step was quicker than ours[,] but we generally overtook them [^][while] resting

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and arrived in equal times. If we kept going for six successive days, both men and oxen shewed symptoms of knocking up, ~~and this~~[al] though they were a most willing company and all [were] anxious to get home. It was therefore necessary to give another day weekly for rest, besides Sunday. The starchy nature of the food had[,] I believe[,] considerable influence on the rate of progress. In winding through forest[,] I could not make any approach to a reckoning of distance an observation was always necessary. he zigzag could not be much under twenty miles in these cases.

I had indulged the hope of proceeding  
to the headquarters of Matiamvo[,] who  
~~would~~ seems to be located nineteen days  
E.N.E. of Cabongo, or on Lat. 9° 20' South  
Long. 22° 32' East; (~~This is differently put in the sketch sent from Angola, but the latest is~~  
~~supposed to be the most correct,~~)ut the  
long delay had now made such an inroad  
into our stock of goods, [that] we saw clearly ~~that~~ by the  
time of our arrival there, we should be unable  
either to give a suitable present to the prince,  
or pay our way afterwards to the South. his  
alone would not have proved a barrier, for a branch of the Leeambye[ai] or Zambesi is

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<sup>d</sup> Sheet is reported to flow southwards from a  
part a few days East of his town  
(23° or 24° E.L.?) and it would have  
been of great importance to [^][have] discovered  
water conveyance all the way down  
to the country of Makololo. But  
it is universally [asserted][& ] believed ~~^and asserted~~ that Matiamvo  
will on no account [^][permit] any white man[,]  
or even native trader, to pass him in  
that direction. It is his own principal  
resort for ivory. he tribes living there  
kill many elephants and bring the ivory  
to him as tribute. (hey are called Kanyika and Kanyoka or Banyika & Banyoka) .  
Having but slender acquaintance  
with the Londa dialect[,], we felt that  
neither pay not persuasion could  
be effectively employed to secure permission  
to follow our object; so we decided, on  
leaving Cabongo to proceed South East  
to our friend Katema and thence down  
the Leeba.

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he people among whom we now travelled  
being Balonda only, we got on very comfortably  
except in one instance in which a chief named Kawawa who had heard of our  
treatment by the Chibouque on going North,  
presumed on his possessing the fords of  
the Casai, so far as to demand tribute  
from the "white man". Nothing could  
exceed the civilities which passed between  
us on the Sunday of our stay in his  
town. But when we offered to cross the  
river, he mustered all his forces to  
payment of a "gun , an ox,  
a man, a barrel of powder - a black

coat! and a book which would tell him if Matiamvo had any intention of sending to cut off his head" . Unless we had submitted to everything, as the Mambari do, and given a bad precedent for all white men afterwards, we were obliged to part with "daggers drawn". he canoes were all concealed

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among the reeds, but my men were ~~more~~[better] of sailors than ~~they~~[his , ], and having taken the loan of one by night, ~~and~~ in order to shew how scrupulously honest we were, we left it and a few beads on their own side of the river, and thanked them next morning for their kindness, amidst shouts of laughter.

[Read]

The route we ~~now~~ followed to Katema being considerably to the East of that by which we went to Loanda, a curious phenomenon which then escaped our notice[,] was now discovered, viz. - that of the river Lotembwa(~~Lotembwa~~) flowing in two ~~and~~ nearly opposite directions. By the tracing sent from Angola[,] you will see it as if rising in the small Lake Dilolo. Such ~~is~~[seemed] the fact[,] as far as the southern portion of the river is concerned. Our former route having led us to the Casai, at some distance West of the Northern portion, we were not aware of its existence . In returning however, we were surprised

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~~to be~~[at being] obliged to cross the Lotembwa before we reached [^][Lake] Dilolo. It was more than a mile broad, three or four feet deep and full of Arum Egyptiacum, Lotus, papyrus, mat-rushes and other aqueous[atic] plants. Not being then informed of the singular fact that it actually flows N.N.W. into the Casai, I did not observe the current simply concluding it was a prolongation of the Lotembwa beyond the Lake, and that it rose in a [^][long] flat marsh as most of the rivers in this quarter do. But we were positively informed [^][afterwards] that the flow

was to the Casai and not into Dilolo.

I have no reason to doubt the <sup>^</sup>correctness of this information I could not ascertain whether <sup>^</sup>Lake Dilolo gives much water to the Northern Lotembwa, but had there been a current of one fourth the strength of that which flows into the Southern Lotembwa, I must have observed it: that is converged into it by The Northern Lotembwa proceeds from an arm of the Lake, one half <sup>^</sup>a mile broad and at the part where the most of <sup>^</sup>the water flows, it is chin deep. We then crossed the rivers .

[0009]7<sup>th</sup> Sheet

The Makololo wished to put a stop to their visits by force, but a hint to purchase all the ivory with hoes was so promptly responded to <sup>^</sup>that I anticipate small trade for the Mambari in future. If any one among the tribes subject to the Makalolo, sells a child now, it is done in secretly. The trade may thus be said to be pretty well repressed. A great deal more than this however is needed. Commerce is a most important aid to civilization; for it soon breaks up the sullen isolation of heathenism, and makes men feel their mutual dependence. Hopes of this makes one feel gratified at the success, which has attended themy little beginning. But it is our blessed Christianity alone which can touch the centre of the wants of Africa. Tthe Arabs, it is well known, are great in commerce, but not much elevated <sup>^</sup>thereby above the African in principle. thereby. My Arab friend Ben Habib now gone to Loanda,, was received most hospitably by an old female chief called Sebola mokwaia, and she actually gave him ivory enough to set him up as a trader. Yet he went with

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the Makololo against her to revenge some old feud with which he had no connection.

David Livingstone

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Please excuse this wretched Yankee paper from Loanda. Rags are scarce it seems now a days. but the Papyrus plant abounds through all intertropical Africa. Surely our paper manufacturers might equal the compeers of old Janmes and Janbres.

Tette or Nyunghe on Zambesi 3d March 1856

Reached this yesterday morning pretty well tired from marching through a rough, stoney jungle for some time past. I cannot copy the whole of the foregoing as a post goes off to Quillimane tomorrow morning, but perhaps early intelligence will be appreciated

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more than later and better written would be. N<sup>o</sup> III refers chiefly to the people of the Interior. Both it and tracing will be sent in time. he Portuguese are remarkably kind. And I am in good health and spirits.

David Livingston