

Letter to Roderick I. Murchison, 26 November 1860

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[0001]

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II.

My dear Sir Roderick

We unfortunately missed the opportunity sending overland by the Elephant hunters I open the letter written at Sesheke to insert further particulars. river was so we could easily see to the bottom of one half the Fizzure which forms Victoria Falls. And people could wade from the North bank my garden island to form a stockade for seeds. The depth is not 100 feet but 310 , probably a few feet more as the weight to the line rested on a slope near the . The breadth from bank to bank is one thousand yards as I conjectured in 1855 but between one statute and one mile. We say 1860 yards to the memory, but it is a little more not quite 2000 yards. the lips of the crack Garden island may be more than 80 feet we could not throw a stone across, but sextant gave that. Now come to the or [South] Eastern side of the crack and the which from the upper bed looks like letter is prolonged in a

most remarkably manner. the water after leaping sheer 310 feet is collected from both ends the upright part of the letter as the escape then flows away in the zigzag part

[0002]

the promontories formed thereby are flat at the top and of the same level the bed of the river

above the Falls base of the first on the right is only

400 paces from the Fall Fizzure and on the left about 150. their sides as perpendicular as the Fall and can walk along among the trees by a few steps see the river some 300 or 400 below jammed in a space of some 20 or

30 yards and of a deep green colour. As a whole Victoria Falls are the most wonderful in world. Even now at extreme low water when it is 2 feet lower than we ever saw there are eight hundred feet of water falling the right of garden island. And the two of vapour with the glorious rain-are a sight worth seeing. A fall called

Momba or Moamba, below this is interesting because you look down to it from height [of] some 500 feet. It is really nothing Mosioatunya.

We visited the river twice on our way to Sinamames & found it in a very deep . the boiling point gives 1600 feet of descent the falls to Sinamanes M^r Moffat informs me that all the rivers in Mosilikatze's run N.W. or N.N. West. they enter Zambesi above Sinamanes and above remarkable mountain, which possibly the dam that shut in the waters of the ancient before Mosioatunya was made. They therefore not where from oral information have been put in the map. A conjecture

[0003] whole country below and around the falls been the scene of comparatively recent volcanic & some parts look as recent as . some are of frothy lava and all present burnt appearance like m [Catacaumaena] in

Greece - (I fear my Greek is at fault) A conjecture the [calcareous] tufa of Sesheke valley was emitted a volcano like that which covered the Pompei and Herculaneum does not for the roots

of reeds therein over bidental sauvans of the ancient Lakes I question if a volcano ever threw mud 200 miles square as this lake has done. we have had igneous action in country we have had large quantities tufa bearing water after it. I cannot for the enormous quantity of and shingle below the Falls. the of the river and country generally covered with it to considerable depths is none above the falls and none Chicova

We purchased canoes and dropped down in order to examine all at low water
Kansalois no difficulty - Kariba a few below is a basaltic dyke stretched the stream, but it has a wide in it dangerous for canoes gunwales of which were only 6 inches the water. A [at] Mburumas there is rapid of about 100 yards in length which at six knots an hour. this is the rapid part we have seen in the whole . We measured the most rapid part

[0004] Chicova on our way up and found to be under four knots. but a fall of 15 feet before our return developed dangerous rapids & even cataracts were quite smooth when we passed

Chicova seemed [from the shore] a trap dyke across the like Kariba but it had two openings. passed through either the one or the other observing the dyke - but we saw a seam of fine coal in the bank. there is in the bank at Manyerire hill and seeing fragments of the mineral in rivulets on both banks we verified existence of the coal field north of Zumbo as I formerly pointed out [but] to nearly to Sinamanes below Victoria Falls. The real difficulty in the river is Morumbua that could be passed in full flood for rise of eighty feet must smooth it over.

On arriving here two days ago we had travelled Linyanti & back some 1400 miles the part on foot. We have thus kept faith the Makololo though we have done nothing . ~~Of Sekweba, Sekelutu said "He was my child and died for me" I wished ten and sixteen came but most fear the fate of Sekwebu & of those who died of smallpox.~~ We were swamped , but the men behaved admirably, leaping and swimming alongside till we got smooth water. In another place one canoe upset and property lost. We then abandoned canoes and came home on foot thankful say all well.