

Letter to John Washington, 4, 22 December 1863

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Murchison's Cataracts 4 Dec^r
1863

Dear Admiral Washington

The despatch containing our dated 2 February reached me on the 2nd July it was quite impossible to take the Pioneer to the sea. So after sending off all the principal of the Expedition I proceeded to improve intervening time between that & next flood in ¹ by trying to settle the question whether a large flows into the Lake in the North and also the opinion that nearly all the slaves that go to

Zanzibar Quillsa - Iboe - & Mozambique come from Lake district. Very unfortunately we lost a otherwise of no great value when nearly past

the falls so our plan of sailing round the Eastern shore North end had to be given up. and we made away the N.W. on foot intending to go to the Latitude the Lake but west of the Mazite or zulus who depopulated the Northern shores. but a range mountains about 6000 feet above the sea - a barrier by the people declaring that no existed on the other side - (It is the Masari - a high table land called Déza.) - Travelling a beautiful valley at its Eastern base we out at the heel of Lake Nyassa - West N. W till we came to a stockade, attacked by zulus or pretended zulus than those we met in the North, only the day before. saw the dead bodies of the conileatants and to collision went now away N.E. till we to the Lake and went along its shores to . 12° 55' S. where we found a couple of arabs transporting slaves across, and building new dhow to replace one which had been . These men said that they had 1500 souls their village and we saw tens of thousands the vicinity who had fled thither for protection saw the same man on our last visit but then

[0002] had very few people. Every disturbance benefits slave trader. a boy costs one fathom of calico or one shilling - a girl two - at this point all slaves from Mozambique, Iboe, Quillsa Arid Zanzibar cross the Lake. a few traders only down, and for cheapness cross at the outlet of

The Shire. some strike west from that point but here Kutakula bay (12° 55') which is formed by a spit running out & protecting from the East , is the great slave route to each of the places . Curiously enough the slave trade is dependant on that in ivory - the slaves little but their food costs a great deal. they carry the ivory, and that makes the trade profitable. I knew this of old but

Captain Wilson of the Gorgon has lately discovered , and mentions it in his last "slave trade report" was the knowledge that I was working towards ruining the slave trade of Mozambique and Iboe buying up the ivory that made the Portuguese all their destructive power. I trust that in the interior under a more able will not be lost sight of. These will do more stop the slave trade than all the cruisers, and then I see no hope of the Portuguese giving slaving. the sight of the new dhow gave a hint which I may mention. She was 50 feet 12 and five deep. I would never think of more than the engine & boilers past like ours. One could build a hull more . At the port of the lake there are many trees 60 feet without a branch. & 3 feet in diameter -

We now went due West on the great slave route the Babisa. Ka[ta]nga and Cazembe -po-say

90 or 100 miles. Then turned up to the N. N. W. before we had gone far, our time was expired. We had ascertained that the watershed was clearly the West. after crossing the branches of the on the Lake - we had the Loangwa of the Marau which enters Zambese at Zumbo in front

[0003]

We were on a level plateau 3440 feet above the in Lat. 12° 46' S. a rivulet called Motala or flows N.N.W into Lake Bemba which said to be the source of the Loapula. This flows and forms two lakes Moero or Mofue then passes the town of Cazemba and lost in Tanganyika. these were the reports heard and though Bemba was said to be about days distant, I was afraid to speculate on late rise of the river which I now find I should been safe to do. In view of Earl Russells order not to undertake any long journey European food was suspended. Hindrances thrown in our way as we were going to the whence a great deal of ivory is drawn, and came back on us in force. But all agreed that no large river flows into Lake Nyassa.[in the North] Two small ones do - this agrees with general watershed; and the numbers of running whose mouths must be covered with reeds we did not see them from the boat in our first - but had to cross now in our march, had me that a large river was not needed account for the perennial flow of the Shire.

Nearly all the travelled natives and the Arabs that Loapula or Luapula flows Tanganyika. Is there an opening in the of that Lake to discharge its waters by Kasai the Congo East of where I crossed the latter ? We returned and reaching the ship on the

31st Oct^r found to our great joy all well and had enjoyed excellent health without either or doctors! They had generally been and work is the best preventative fever. I took the steward with me because

Meller thought he ought to be invalided, and usual had told him so - the little fellow walked a Briton - had only a touch of fever for one

[0004] came back pretty well knocked up but in health. We were on our metal to be in time for the very earliest rise and went

660 geographical miles in 55 travelling days – an average 12 miles a day.

22^d Dec^r the flood is very late this year. hear from Bishop Tozer that he has to leave the country as early in the year as possible. He selected the top an uninhabited mountain - Moremibala the mouth of the Shire for his residence is a detached mass. The land all around on the North being flat. all the clouds there and the missionaries have to go into their huts to fires or get wet to the in a few minutes. They knuckle down the Portuguese in everything and are about as a set as can be conceived. the first never attempted to instruct the natives consequence of a conscientious scruple of the

late bishop.the second party never went any population and now run away. five boys whom we liberated & gave to

Bishop Mackenzie were very unwillingly by Bishop Tozer from the remaining of the first party. Without them not native would have been near the mission lately sent six of them up to Chibisa's with instructions to the man in charge "On no to take them to the Pioneer" to which himself was coming, and it is reported the bishop told a Portuguese official if the Portuguese demanded the he would deliver them up. and though he knows that I have volunteered be at the expense of forwarding them to care M^r Waller would not at the Bishop's abandon certain poor women and

[0005] who were attached to the mission by

Bishop Mackenzie - and recieved his from the mission. I had offered arrange with an honorable Portuguese feed them till they should raise a crop, but

the bishop who is a mere nobody in the of Rev D^r Steere (once a lawyer) was much with Waller

for feeding them at expense during my absence. In this incompetent mission there are two, Mess^{rs} Allington & Drayton, who disapprove the Bishops deeds, but Steere's word is . It is the first protestant mission which modern times has been abandoned from sheer cowardice. Not one European where I put them from disease con-there. Burrup was borne thither in dying state from the swamps and others to the swamps in spite of every . Now slaving goes on briskly than ever. Marianno a rebel almost half way down the Shire is and his people are carrying away weekly of those he enslaved. It is now apparantly in bravado. The bishop's cringing policy & our recall to give new life to the slavers.

In reference to a promise to send out instructions to the Portuguese officials render us every assistance, which was in answer to Lord Russells remon-to the authorities at Lisbon, we have a fresh imposition in the shape of a for residence at Quillimane by D^r 's party. It amounted to between £7 & £8 which of course I must pay. The duty 4 pence per pound weight on calico paid Bishop Mackenzie Tozer seems to say

[0006]

We Portuguese mean to seal up the country closely than ever.

I never intended to make use of this river getting the steamer on the Lake. I only as we had discovered this opening ought to make use of it to get up there, then send out ivory by the Rovuma the eight months when it is navigable. regret not being allowed to finish what had begun, but dont wonder at being recalled losing so much time by Hardisty's negligence. the way, Rae took the Pioneer's[air] pump all and found the lower valve all burned. large rent in it explained why she would not they say "take her water." and a stone the of a marble had been in the bottom ever we were up here before[or in Rovuma] after M^r on Roses at the Kongone neither stones sand could enter. the foot valve was put right, and she now works beautifully wearing of the inside of the air pump was mistake in Hardisty's way of measuring . Rae had begun to make an apparatus bore it out afresh, when he could detect no . but the valves were out of repair as mentioned above. Rae suspects that the are a little burned, but Hardisty never anything to me about it. If not the engines are as good as ever they , and I trust she will yet do good service.

The expenses incurred in getting D^r Kirks away have been very considerable. sustanance at Quillimane alone we to pay £30- Meller's expenses too be heavy. Cattle from Quillimane Suppua Senna, and sheep & goats from Tette, rice and grain from the Zambesi, this the most expensive year

[0007] have passed. I shall send all the as soon as I recieve all the . In addition we have a Johanna at the same rate as Kroomen. I sent the Cape for £150 and hear from Col^r ' nephew that this sum was lost Quillimane bar by a boat being [(no lives lost)] but no official notice has reached me. This supply failing , and all my private money being , I thought it well to avoid 25 per cent interest which the Portuguese on debts, and sent by D^r Meller a to colonel Nunes for £150 with the that he would pay off the expenses by D^r Kirk. Meller &c and the of sheep goats cattle & rice. He is of the only two honorable men the country and I knew of some of the being [already]liquidated. "The Bill was 14 July 1863. Amount £150 for - Expenses - at Par. I sent a of advise on 14 July last. the is " Colonel Galdino José of Quillimane." This is an notice in case the other certain letters sent by Meller have been lost in the upsetting a canoe. I have to report myself not murdered according to a report lately industriously . I did see some zulus they gave chase but on my

[0008] back a few paces and asking what wanted they instantly vanished in the in which

we were. The interior tribes have not been in the slave trade are all and cowardly. And I hope you will lose sight of working out the slave by operations inland. They are absoutely to render effective the labours of the cruisers.

The Lady Nyassa is as ready to go as the Pioneer the water should rise. The flood cannot be off now. Rae proposed to take her down September last but changed his mind & remained here. I thank you for the of the Rovuma. and I shall endeavour take soundings, not on the bar, for there none, but opposite the mouth. the thing like a bar is at half ebb & up to the the tide turns. When the water rushing of the river falls from three or four into nineteen fathoms. Thus are supposed to be sideways at . the water tumbling the deep just at mouth forms a which

might swamp boat but no sooner does the flow begin all is smooth. I believe that the Rovuma may be navigable for a vessel light draft eight of nine months a .

I am sorry to have to report the death Abraham Pearce Q.M.^r at Quillimane 4th June last. He had an epileptic fit & insane on going down the Quillimane . Then became calm & another attack at the on the second night ended in coma & death was of little use but we could not get rid of him I am most sincerely yours

David Livingstone