

Letter to William Sunley, 18th November 1861

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River Shire 18th Nov^r 1861

Private
My Dear Sunley,

We went up to Lake Nyasa by carrying a boat past the cataracts of this river intending to find out more about the Rovuma from above than we could from below, but we were unsuccessful - We were on the Lake during the Equinoctial gales and like all narrow seas surrounded with mountains tremendous seas get up in a quarter of an hour or twenty mintues - We went up the Western shore and the frequency of storms in which no open boat could live prevented our crossing & finding out all about Rovuma Reports were rife enough from the positive assertion that we could sail from the Lake into the River to the

Do you know where a place called by the Arabs Shamo is?

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equally positive statement that we must carry it a month - We found the Lake to be very deep - no bottom at 116 fathoms a mile out - and generally a ship must be near shore to find anchorage - Width from 20 to 50 or 60 miles - Length over 200 Its northern end is Lat 10^o South - - An Arab dhow has lately been built on it to supply, we suppose, the trade at Iboe. It fled from us twice and we could not cross to the East side to look at it.

We heard that Ben Habib the Arab who
abducted 95 Makololo had gone back
in a great hurry, we suspect stirred
up by Col Rigby - He has had them
away seven years - Your Johanna
men have turned out very well -
they are better than the Kroomen we
formaly had - they have been most
of their time at the foot of the cataracts
where rice is not to be had, but meal
seems to go down with them - I did
not take them up to Nyasa as

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they were required to guard the ship -
If you can engage twelve or fourteen
I could do better with them than with some
of the whites who are frequently ill - If I
I cannot come to Johanna I shall send
these by man of war - At present they
are all well, and do not express any
anxiety about returning -

I met two Zanzibar Arabs who
had come down from Katanga in the
far interior to buy cloth at Nyasa
they had been some 14 years up there!
Their names were Juma bin Saide
and Amar bein Saleme -

Slaving is the only trade on Nyasa
at present - population prodigious -
the bishop is in the heart of the slavery
when I went up to the highlands with
him I met Tette people coming with
84 captives - they fled & left these
and many others in my hand so
I gave them over to the mission &
may get into a scrape for it. The

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Portuguese had employed a tribe called
Ajawa to hunt slaves for them - as all
the bishop's people were fleeing I went to
try and induce the Ajawa to give it up.
They got but 2 fathoms for a man & 1 for
a woman - but we came as they were
in the act of burning three villages and
attacked us as if they meant to make

slaves of us. We had to drive them off -
The bishop has been at them since fighting
and intending to fight like a brick - I
dont know how this will go down
at home - I am in for a share of the
blame - We found no difficulty in collec[-]
-ing cotton at a cheap rate though it was
not the season but our ship [...]is much
too long and deep so our operations
have been confined to a few miles
if we get out little steamer on the Lake
the area will be increased -

We hear from M^s Burrup who arrived
on 13th that May had remained with you
till lately - you must make out a bill
against the Expedition and I shall get it
paid - I am &c David Livingstone