

Letter to Edmund Gabriel, 7 October 1858

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[0001]

R Kongone; Steamer Ma Robert,
8 7 Oct^r 1858

My Very Dear Friend,

I cannot forgive
you because I was never
offended having recieved from
M^r Brand the assurances
you expected him to give
and even though I had not
a poor friendship that
vanishes at a far - The Lynx
came into the Kongone river
and sent up for me. I came
down at once and during
the time they have been
making some repairs I
have been writing long official
letters about our friend

You ought to make old Jose Laurengo Marques
the Governor of Angola - Write care of Admiral Grey
no excuse now you know

[0002]

Bedingfeld - I gave him the appointment
Lord Clarendon having put all into
my power chiefly from what I
saw of him at your house and
his offering to go and "be delighted
to serve under my command
I made his salary equal to double
commander's full pay £600 -
and felt that I had an able
coadjutor But he quarreled with
the commander of the Pearl and
on public altercation N^o 4 taking
place I said - (Having previously

remonstrated in private) C. B. I must have no more of these public altercations - He resigned that night and accused me of slighting him injuring his professional reputation by consulting the other Captain more than him &c &c. I explained and assured him it was an entire mistake and allowed him to withdraw the letter. But he wou[...][ld] quarrel again - gave in a second

[0003]

resignation from an idea that we could not move a mule without him - and then commenced a series of slanders, carping, complainings, and raising objections, which the medical officer & I looked upon as the effects of irritable bladder & bowels on the mind but it became so absolutely unbearable especially from the untruthfulness which I am sorry to say he indulged in that I at last accepted his 2^d resignation and sent him off to Kilimane to wait for a passage to England - You will I have no doubt find it difficult to credit it of him and I would not wonder in the least but he recieved ~~it~~ this letter containing my acceptance of his resignation with dancing and singing - And when I took charge of the steamer myself and came back

I believe I forgot to tell you that I visited M^r Horsfall at Bellamon Hall near Rugeley Staff^d & saw a scheer t~~er~~stimonial which is to be given to M^{rs} Gabriel when you get her! He desired me to say so - Hope who ever she is she may be a good one

[0004]

after making a quicker passage with a heavier load than he even did - I never once touched the ground & he did perpetually - this brought him to his senses - He

tried various dodges to regain
his position but I had borne
to the utmost limits of endurance
and declined his services - All
my companions heartily approve
the step I took and as we never
had a single touch of ill nature except
from him we go on comfortably
He tries now to make himself out
a poor persecuted individual and
I can declare most solemnly that
I never entertained the idea of thwarting
him - and at the very time he was
asserting that I slighted him, and wished
to get rid of him by persecution, I was
writing highly of him to Lord Malmesbury
and Sir George Grey, and the latter
published my letter. This subject
has occupied my time of late
and is the most disagreeable I ever attempted -

Well I tried to come in to Loanda
but could not honestly do it - as
you will have heard from
Sierra Leone I have got the
enclosure from the Bishop
all right -

[0005]

We got into the Zambesi by a new
mouth named Kongone, and being obliged
to send off the Pearl which brought us
out we have been slowly working
our luggage up river by this Launch
I have been to Tette and found my
men waiting in anxious expectation
of my return but small pox had
cut off thirty of them and six had
been killed by a neighbouring rebel
chief - Poor Sekneeben's death
was a sad blow and though they
recieved me with screams of joy
and grasping me convulsively
The team came whether I would or
not. Some time will be required
to bring up all our 25 tons of
luggage - for poor Bedingfeld's
untruthfulness began in England
We got a steamer called the Ban drawing
only three feet which would have

sailed on the river the whole year, but
when B. heard he was to navigate
her out he wished me to apply for a
second master and on my declining
though he had been well pleased with the Ban
he now condemned her enough because

Kind regards to Schut & all my acquaintances

[0006]

he knew what we learned afterwards
that he could not from seasickness
navigate her out - He reported to me
also that this was an admirable vessel
and required very little fuel - We spend
half our time woodcutting - It is with
great grief I tell you these things for
I know your good opinion of him as you
remarked to me on his leaving Loanda
"he is A. I." & that induced me to appoint him -

We get a ton and a half of coals
at Tette the first even taken out of
the ground in this country and it is
very good coal too more like the Welsh
than any other though what we got had
been exposed to the floods of the
Muatize for ages - With abundance of
iron ore and coal surely the
Great Architect designed & will
work out something better for
Africa that that she should always
be a slave market - the Portuguese have
been as kind as ever and especially
Major Secard - they were fighting when
we came but we went from one park
to the other without molestation by either
simply because we were English - but
the war is now over for a few weeks
I suppo[se]

[0007]

My missionary friends are rather
grumpy with me for leaving them
and they snarl considerably since my
departure for Africa because I have
turned consul - Kebra-basa is said
to be rocks jutting out of the stream
and rendering the deep channel tortuous

and dangerous but if half a years
slashing will make an open way
for a steamer then what will
they say if I turn quarryman too.

You recommended the
German D^e but they are not
in much favour as home on
account of their greediness - Two
of them got away instruments
value two thousand pounds and
though paid by England published
the results in Germany & kept
the instruments - But if you befriend
them you will win the Prince
Consorts heart - From what I have
seen and heard I am become so
bigotted that I prefer an Englishman
out & out to any one of the Wel

[0008]

I think England ought to buy Angola
on this side but the Villa da Flor
was sent out to survey the Luabo
and build a fort & custom house
but they did not know where it
was and the Government of
Mosambique cannot pay its
own officers though it costs the
mother country 240 thousand ambreis
per annum -

We have had no fever properly
so called though we have had illness
The Zambesi maybe called a sand
river and not a muddy one like
those in the West - We have lots of
lignum vital & ebony on its banks
but full reports will be made by
my companions - My wife met
her father & mother at Cape town
and went with them to be confined
at Kuruman - When we left
England we expected to come here
together - Three of our children are at
school & one with his Mamma. My
brother is with me He was offered £800
a year if he would take the situation
Monteiro got Thornton is with me as