

## Letter to Edmund Gabriel, 27 June 1856

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[0001]

Quilimane 27<sup>th</sup> June  
7 1856

My Dear M<sup>r</sup> Gabriel,

Having by the Divine goodness reached this on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May last I felt very greatly disappointed in not finding a single line from you the box & parcel of which I heard of at Tete contained a dozen of wine from Commodore Trotter and some quinine letters & newspapers. I could scarcely believe my eyes when turning everything over & over again not a scrap appeared from Loanda. I had many fears imagining you had become ill and had gone home. and a mournful event which happened a few days before my arrival gave a sombre cast to my musings - H. M Brg<sup>e</sup> Dart came to Quilimane to pick me up and the commander tried to come ashore when it was very rough - Unfortunately the

Dont forget the champagne Particularly if any of my old acquaintances are with you at the time

[0002]

boat was upset on the bar and the commander - with a fine young man Lieut<sup>t</sup> Woodruff & 5 sailors were lost. This sad event embittered all my joy on reaching Quilimane I would have died for them rather than that they should have lost their lives on my account.

After having imagined a sufficient number of dismal things I was delighted by the sight of your palisade

like hand writing on your letter of  
15<sup>th</sup> June 1855 a few days more  
than a year having elapsed since  
you wrote it, But it was none the  
less welcome for its tedious journey  
I have been gorging on the papers  
for the last week and still have  
the times & some spectators as  
provender for a week to come.  
I did not receive the letter sent after

[0003]

me to Cabango and not having gone to  
Matiamwo I suppose it must have  
been returned to Loanda. I suppose  
you received the map from Cassange  
and letter with sketch from Cabango too  
I wrote also from the Barotse and  
from Sekeletu's town. Also from Tete  
as soon as I came there. Writing to  
to you is somewhat different from  
addressing many others. It feels as  
if it were talking for I believe you  
will not cavil at defects & have  
an interest in the enterprise I have  
undertaken. I sometimes fear I will  
tire you with my yarns. As friend  
Arsenio did. It seems I have got  
the Queens gold medal from the R. G.  
Soc. and an honorary degree from  
our old Alma mater Glasgow. The London  
Missionary Society was last year £13,000  
in debt. The income having fallen to  
about £54,000, and I am told ^by Dr Tidman that

[0004]

it is not likely they can afford to begin  
a new mission in an unknown field  
but wish much to confer with me on  
the subject. I think they may propose  
to send me to China as this proposal was  
once entertained since my arrival in  
Africa, And I see they cannot get  
suitable men for that inviting field.  
The practice of medicine & surgery ^ in China was  
my own idea of the best way of  
spending my life, and led to my

connection with the L.M. Soc. but the Chinese ^ opium war prevented my being sent there. Knowing (afterwards) my wish my destination was nearly removed from Africa to China - but I have now no desire to leave this land. And if I cannot work for the good of this nation in connection with the same society I shall leave it and God will provide for my wants otherwise.

[0005]

The Commodore said if the Dart returned to the Cape without me he would send another vessel to Quilimane. The Governor of Mosambique offers me a small vessel called Zambesi but it would be improper to accept of it and reject that of the Commodore so I remain and hope to get away in a week or ten days.

The gentleman to whom you addressed the parcel met me up this river some distance and gave me his own boat to come down in. An act of which I had much need as I had a furious Tertian on me, got as soon as I reached the Delta. The Portuguese have all been remarkably kind to me and my men. The latter are working at Tete only a few came down here. There being a famine at Quilimane

[0006]

They cannot remain except at Tete where provisions are abundant some are employed as boatmen some as carriers & some bring wood for wages which please them well. I take one with me to England. The others remain till I return. This is a wretched port. small vessels can enter & depart but twice a month The Governor asked my opinion in writing about the salubrity of Senna. I pointed out a mountain

called Morumbala close by as likely  
to be more salubrious but its entire  
decay from want of trade cannot  
be revived by this. If the village  
were put to one of the real mouths  
of the Zambesi (Catrina) the people  
would do good to both themselves  
and the country. This opinion seems  
to please & is to be forwarded to the proper

[0007]

quarter. But the state of the country is  
from various causes most miserable  
There are not 50 Portuguese in the country  
and the natives lord it over them, making  
them pay tribute in some instances  
in the most disgraceful manner  
If our cruizers have done nothing  
else they have conferred a good name  
on the English. I was astonished  
to observe how far this had spread  
they (natives) say "these English love the black  
people much." This is so far in our  
favour in endeavouring to propag-  
-ate our blessed Christianity - I feel  
convinced that God has gracious  
designs towards the Africans they  
are an imperishable race, neither  
slavery nor war nor white men's  
diseases can decimate the main  
body of the negro family. Then as  
our Burns has it.

[0008]

"Then let us pray that come it may  
For come it will for a'that -  
When man and man the world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a'that."  
I have looked over the letter enclosed  
in this and felt inclined to destroy it  
but you will make allowances for  
my unburdening my feelings. I send  
the letter for Gov<sup>r</sup> Amaral to the Gov<sup>r</sup>  
General of Mosambique though I once  
thought of enclosing it to you. There  
is one too for Mr Schutmosambique - A Captain  
Bobsein of Hamburgh is here and knows

M<sup>r</sup> Schut - He lost his ship on the Bar  
I send this to Mosambique because a  
french vessel is there which will tour  
at Loanda. They seem to be reviving  
a sort of slave trade between this coast  
and the Isle of Bourbon. Accept my  
heartiest salutations and the heart's  
love of your ever affectionate  
David Livingston

Remember me to Captain Neves. please.