

## Letter to John Kirk, 25 March 1871

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[0001]

Webbs Lualaba or Lacustrine River 25 March 1871 across  
another great bend to the West of about 100'  
My Dear Kirk

I very thankfully recieved your letter of 28<sup>th</sup> Feb/69 sent by Sheikh bin Nassib at Mamohela about 7 days N.W. of Bam[-] barre containing a welcome one from Agnes to you. By it I first learned that you had taken unto yourself a wife who has presented you with a daughter - Blessings on them both - R.C. people think each has an angel - I only know that the little ones are angels themselves and come as ministering spirits of peace and love - I have but one regret in looking back to my stationary missionary life and that is that I did not play more with my children but I worked so hard physically & mentally that in the evenings there was seldom any fun left in me - I thankfully accept your invitation to lodge with you at Zanzibar but I feel so woefully far away and am going still further in order to make a complete work of the exploration of the sources of the Nile - I have been sorely let [...] hindered in Manyema and reaction against the bloody Ujijian slaving having set in I [...]went off not without apprehension and until I get beyond the region of bloodshed I cannot feel safe - It is not slave trade it is slaking thirst for blood and catching free people very many of whom die before reaching the coast - I shall give you an episode which happened about a fortnight ago close by the spot where I write - My spirits are beyond measure depressed in writing on such matters for the public and I can only give half statements for fear of letting heartless dawdlers drawl from their club sofas "exaggeration" "overdrawing" &c - The restrained exposure of the vile Portuguese deeds on the Shire in my last book made me oblivious to every thing else - My own & family interests were unheeded - Lord Palmerston sent a Queen's counsel to ask me "what he could do to aid me as he was most anxious to serve me" I could only think of the work in Africa & asked the East African ports to be opened to lawful commerce ^ for all nations - It never occurred to me that he meant aught for myself or children till I was out here and Lord Palmerston dead - The episode I mention was by Muhamad Bogharib's people, and he being the best man of all who have come to trade in Manyema you may if you can imagine the conduct of the people of the worst - Bon Hassani - Bon embegu & Bin Omar the heads of the party sent to trade gave the Manyema near Moene Lualaba 25 copper bracelets worth at Ujiji about 2 ½ dollars. This was the trap - Then went down the river & sold all the rest of their copper for ivory - coming back they demanded ivory for the 25 rings & began

to shoot the men in cold blood, and capture women & children & grass cloth - goats & fowls - they continued the murdering for three days in a densely peopled district and carried off an immense number of women & children because Muhamad does not intend to trade here again - With all his goodness I have no doubt but he knew the plan & will receive his full share of the captives They will come into Zanzibar as traders, and the people as bought slaves but there is not one slave among them and to make the matter the more atrocious the very men who murdered & captured repeatedly declared to me that the people now victimized were remarkably civil and kind - thousands come over to the river every ^ market day to hold markets at various points for flour cassava beans groundnuts fish salt oil bananas plantains sweet potatoes sugar cane grass cloth earthen ware = iron ware as knives spears needles fowls sheep goats pigs slaves ivory &c and it was particularly noticed that when the men of two districts were engaged in actual hostilities the women go from market to market with their wares unmolested - Women were never touched until now by these Muhamadans - as a rule not a slave is sold in Manyema except by the ruffian strangers - It would be only Justice if the Sultan would set free all captives from Manyema as soon as they arrive - They were not traded for but murdered for - In talking with these Ujijians I always protest against shedding human blood - they think that rhyming over "God is great" &c all sin is forgiven - a slave of Thani bin Suellim of Ujiji named Yahood boasted in my hearing of having with his comrades killed one kindred people & burned 9 villages - all for a single string of red beads which a Manyema man tried in vain to steal - I said to him "you were sent to trade not to murder" He replied "we are sent to kill people, that is our work" one of my people was killed I suppose in blind revenge - a man was pinned to the ground with a spear near the 9 villages and I was sleeping in another close by - three were killed at another village and we dont know who are friends & who have first cause to seek revenge of all strangers - I find great difficulty in getting a canoe after the Bogharib feat of arms - all flee from us your men seem as eager for blood as others - all long to be able to brag of blood shed = That Shereef Boshier has put me to great inconvenience by refusing to send me my own beads and other things while he stops to feast at my expense He thinks that he and his three slaves are earning salary - I have sent orders to take the goods & give them to Moenyeghere a trustworthy man - Awathe the Had it at Zanzibar and onwards other headman has enlarged scrotum - I feel extremely thankful for all says now it pains him!! wants pay without work I fear you did for me in the most trying circumstances a man could be placed in - I send a cheque for Rs 4000 by Muhamad Bogharib - Lualaba becomes smaller down here than stated in my despatch - "2 to 4 miles" - but it is still a mighty river ^ from 1 ½ to 2 miles = Please to detain the Despatch & letters if you hear of my being on the way down and near I should like to rewrite

The Governor is very li[...][b]eral with presents of foolscap paper London makers name Millington 1867 same as yours - Sus-  
picious  
I got a  
sheet of  
my own  
paper

[0002]

all the hearsay written only in apprehension of never coming  
out - Not a single line from Sir Paraffin Young since I left England  
and I have written him by every opportunity - the money I sent for was to  
be lifted from £1000 in Coutts['] hands - mine not his - letters may be in the  
box which Muhamad bin Saleh had my note to open and take out medicines  
and letters but M<sup>r</sup> Shereef refused to allow him - If you write to Seward  
remember me kindly to him and his wife - Take good care of your  
better half & child  
move about as  
often as you can  
Good people are  
scarce - I am  
thankful to hear  
you say that  
my words have  
had some little  
effect at home -  
I have often  
said with a sore  
heart, I have laboured in  
vain & spent  
my strength for  
nought & in  
vain, yet surely  
my work is  
with the Lord  
and my judg-  
-ment with my  
god - the cheering  
prospect of  
stopping the  
East Coast  
slave trade belongs  
to you, and  
therein I do greatly  
rejoice - The  
Sultan must  
get troops who  
will scorn the  
mainland &  
catch the bloody  
thieves inland  
By the counsel  
of an old man  
near him he is  
said to have  
parted with his  
Belooches to save

expense - He  
must not trust  
to Arabs they are  
such liars -  
their prophet  
lied to reform  
his countrymen who now lie because it is  
ingrained in their constitutions -

In the event of detaining the despatch & letters  
you might give the substance of my letter to you  
to the Government = I am rather anxious to  
give but little to the public - Four spurious pub-  
-lications = were concocted from my letters on my  
journey across the continent - one a five shilling  
book was sold in America & all over the world  
extensively as "The book" It was by a schoolmaster  
named Adams - Routledge sold a shilling book as  
mine at all the railways in England & America  
and offered me £20 to hold my peace about it -  
a secretary of the London Missionary Society issued  
a pamphlet = D<sup>r</sup> L's life & travels "with a map"  
"by the author" and again advertised it with "revised by himself" another secretary  
performed a like piece  
of villainy but palmed it off as from the "Society" knowing that I would not injure a great  
Institution doing  
work of priceless value in the world = Another secretary of the same society indulged on a  
tirade ^ in a London church against me as  
"morally guilty of the death of M<sup>r</sup> Helmore" Cooley regularly proved me all wrong in the  
Athenæum as soon  
as my letters reached home - The Liambai which we found to be a mile broad was "an  
undeveloped river" that  
ran under the Kalahari desert and was lost "and I was a fool to say that it was a river at all["]  
- Give Waller a hint  
not to answer him by name - It is the breath of life to him to be named - When I was silent he  
entreated me to  
argue the point of the Liambai with him and Athenæum shu[...][t] out his letters when I only  
joked at him without naming  
him - "the great apostle of hearsay geography"- Waller does not seem to know James Russell  
Lowell[']s poems  
He is a Northerner and lashed the slaveocracy of the South when they uttered the same trash  
as the Anthropologists  
till they were red hot with rage - "The mass ought to labour and we lie on sofas" &c &c  
A friend at Mamohela gave me a young Soko or gorilla lately - she sits 18 inches high and is  
the most  
intelligent and least mischievous of all the monkeys I have seen - I could not take her with me  
as  
I am mobbed enough already - two sokos she & I would not get a breath of air - she is to be  
kept for me at  
Ujiji - she walks on the backs of four fingers the space between the first joint & second touching  
the ground -  
the nails & thumbs do not touch it = It is like the daft minister you knew the legs are hitched

forward as if the arms were crutches

Moosa Kamaals was detain[...]ed many months & even sent back to Ujiji He hid his letter as his wages depended on it -

The 40 letters went off same day as Moosa Kamaals I suspect the Governor is guilty not to allow evidence of the plunder of my goods by his man Musa bin Salum going to the coast - Giving off my goods to his own creature who stopped the porters ten days while he plundered was villainy - the porters needed no one they had come so far honestly - and then Salum went off to buy ivory in Karagwe - I fear my two guns are abstracted from the box which Shereef nurses - You packed it and it is now repacked with I suspect Shereefs connivance but I may be mistaken - It is suspicious that Shereef persisted in keeping it close in spite of my written order to Muhamad bin Saleh to open it or sent it entire - the men came without loads - a party went from us to Ujiji told Shereef that I was near and waiting for him - invited him to come with them so he is inexcusable