

Letter to William Thompson, 17, 18 September 1856

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[0001]

Claremont Mauritius
17th Sept^r 1856

My dear M^r Thompson

I have as you will see by the date remained here considerably longer than I intended, but having arrived here with a severe affection of the spleen a consequence of the Fever in the Quilimane delta and finding that this climate ^ was proving curative I have delayed my departure till the present time. I have been most kindly and hospitably entertained by Major General Hay and as his house is situated about five miles from Port Luis and on an elevated spot with a cool climate it has answered the end of completely curing me. I had but two returns

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of tertian and the pain in the spleen is quite gone. I am ready to go back to Africa again. Thanks to the Author of all our mercies, not forgetting the good kindhearted man with whom I am living

I have had another object in view besides health viz. a wish to see the Commodore and thank him for his kindness. I wished also to talk to him about Africa as I intend to work still in that poor trodden down country even without the aid of our Society if I can only get back again I got a letter at Quilimane. The only one since I saw you last and I am

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informed that "the Directors are restricted in their power of aiding plans connected only remotely with the spread of the gospel" And also that even "though certain obstacles (as fever, Tsetse &c) should prove surmountable the financial circumstances of the Society are not such as to warrant the hope that it would be in a position within any definite period to undertake untried remote and difficult fields of labour" As these statements are embalmed in some flattering sentences of approbation respecting my late efforts in opening up the continent to the sympathies of the friends of christianity I suppose that it is intended to send me to some of the tried, neat, and easy fields where I may wax fat and kick like Jeshurun

[0004]

As the proposition to leave the untried remote and difficult fields of labour as they have been ever since our saviour died for the poor sinners who inhabit them involves my certain severance from the L.M.S. and the attempt to support myself and return in the best way I can I have given a certificate to George Fleming for the money viz. 500 Spanish dollars and fifty sovereigns which you sent and which I told you in another letter I meant to retain for the homeward voyage I go "overland" because I have a hope of a free passage part of the way. If I am not successful in obtaining that then there will be but little over

[0005]

2^d

I leave a waggon and about 18 oxen at Linyanti, another at Cape Town

which does not seem to have been repaired according to promise & will not sell for much. I managed to get through all my clothing &c &c. before I got to Quilimane but have a sextant chronometer watch and double barrell'd gun and about £50 of debts of honour to black men so am not exactly in the position of the prodigal returning to his father but am poorer considerably than when I landed in Africa some sixteen years ago. Yet I shall leave you without abuse of any sort. the Directors have always treated me well and I shall always remember you all with affection

[0006]

I am sorry Fleming was engaged so firmly as in the agreement - I cannot get rid of it. He was entered as Captain's servant at Quilimane and receives about 1/6 [^][about £2 per month] a day for that but says "that is nothing, he is engaged at £10. per month till he gets to the Cape" and will insist on the fulfillment of the written agreement I wished to make an arrangement with a Captain going to the Cape whereby his services would be taken as part of his passage money but he objects to this because "they would make him do everything" i.e. in working the ship. I proposed to stipulate for personal service alone to the Captain but he said to let the passage be paid and

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no terms made respecting his service the agreement specifies services to Captain Peyton and that he is to be under my controul but he sticks to the £10 per month as the part most agreeable to his ideas of the proper fulfillment of his duties. I would

have sent him off at once on
our arrival here but the com-
modore was expected daily and
Captain Peyton wished to take
him to the Cape free of expense.
It is unfortunate that Fleming was
engaged at all as he is a most
unlikely person to go anywhere in
the face of danger but this you
could not know, and I should
probably ^ have been as much mislead in
respect to his travelling abilities as
you but for my intercourse with him

[0008]

in the way to Linyanti. He requires one
on whom he can lean - deprived of
that he has no self reliance whatever.
I am sorry too that my statements
respecting going to England were not
more specific thereby causing you
much anxiety on my account
I thank you most heartily and
sincerely for all the trouble you
put yourself to and pray that
God may abundantly reward you

Affectionaly yours

David Livingston

I enclose a certificate in the way of
business. The lists are left at Quilimane
I took a part of the articles for
immediate use[.]

28th Put George Fleming on board the
Irene today & paid £10 for his passage

[0009]

Claremont Mauritius

17th Sept^r 1856

I do hereby certify that I recieved
from the Rev^d William Thompson
as agent for the London Missionary
Society the sum of five hundred
(500) Spanish dollars and fifty (50)
sovereigns, while I was at the
village of Quilimane. And also
goods as clothing for myself -
beads, writing materials &c. to the

value of - (as per accounts left at
Quilimane)

(signed)

David Livingston

I have paid £10. for his ^ Fleming's passage to
the Cape - DL.