

## Letter to Roderick I. Murchison, 23 May, 26 August 1856

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[0001]

Quillimane, East Africa.

23<sup>d</sup> May 1856

Sir Roderick I. Murchison

Sir,— A packet of letters sent ^ from Tette to the care of M<sup>r</sup> Maclear contained some information addressed to you respecting this noble Zambesi in the regions beyond. As I remained six weeks with the excellent commandante, Major T. A. J. A. Secard, who generously advised me thus to avoid the Delta at Quilimane, untill the commencement of the healthy season in April, I had an opportunity of gleaning some knowledge of the adjacent country, while recovering from the effects of my march on foot. and I mean in this to give the most trustworthy of my gleanings concerning the Eastern or lower portion of the same river. Strangers are so liable to be unintentionally misled

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by the careless answers of uninterested inhabitants, I would fain have subjected every important point to the test of personal examination, but except in the cases of gold, coal, iron, and a hot fountain which did not involve any additional fatigue, I had to rely on the information of others alone. The difference of climate must account for the disproportionate exhaustion experienced by myself and companions by marches of a dozen miles, compared with that produced in our naval officers by those prodigious strides we read of having been performed in the Artic circle. Indeed I was pretty well "knocked up" by not

much more than a month on foot.  
the climate on the river felt hot and  
steamy, water never cool, clothes  
always damp from profuse perspiration.  
and as the country is generally covered  
with long grass, bushes and trees, the

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abundance of well rounded shingle everywhere  
renders it necessary to keep the eyes continually  
on the ground. Pedestrianism under  
such circumstances might be all very  
well for those whose obesity  
calls for the process of Pressneitz; but for  
one who had become as lean as a  
lathe, the only discernible good was  
that it enabled an honest sort of man to  
gain a vivid idea of the meaning of  
the phrase "a month on the Treadmill."

Looking down the Zambesi from  
those remarkable falls which I think  
ought to be named after our Queen  
"the smoke sounding falls of Victoria"  
we see the river fringed on both sides  
by ranges of hills, of from eight hundred  
to a thousand feet in height, on the  
right or southern bank, they cease at  
Lupata but on the left they run along  
to Senna, terminating in the fine

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high mountain Morumbala, with a  
hot sulphureous fountain on its  
northern summit. A very large number  
of conical shaped hills ornament  
the ranges and as all are covered to  
their tops with fine leafy trees with  
patches of lighter green grass between,  
the scenery is always pleasing. It  
was particularly so in my voyage  
down from Tette, for being the beginning  
of winter the foliage had changed  
into the most varied hues before  
falling off. Some were inky black,  
others copper coloured, and others  
of so bright an orange I have turned  
aside to them, in the belief that they

were masses of flowers. Then here  
the stimulus of cold, acts like that  
of heat on birds in our climate.  
"the time of the singing of birds had come."

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It is far from true that the birds of at  
least this portion of the Tropics are un-  
musical; they have wanted poets only  
to bring them into notice as ours have  
had since the times of Aristophanes  
downwards. the river itself is a  
magnificent one until spoiled by  
spreading out in this sickly delta.  
Measured at the fort of Tette, it was  
found to be five hundred fathoms  
or a thousand yards broad, and  
that is a narrow part. Below  
Lupata, it spreads out among large,  
reedy islands from one to two or  
more miles broad. It has been in  
flood ever since we struck it in  
December last, and it looks as if it  
would remain high for more than  
a month to come. These five months  
of high water shew that the statement  
that it is navigable for considerable

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sized launches for half the year to  
be substantially correct. Three and  
occasionally four freshets occur  
annually at Tete. The flood of  
Northern waters, which inundates  
the Barotse and Sesheké valleys,  
comes into the Makololo country  
in February. The flood of the Chobé  
is always a month later, on account  
of the impediment which extreme  
tortuosity of the river's bed, presents to  
its flow. It is often heard of as spreading  
over the lands thirty or forty miles  
above Linyanti a fortnight before  
it floods that place. In the case of  
the river of Libébé - Teoughe , Zóortzó  
and Tamunakle, the flood descends

sometimes in April, at other times much later; but it is not capable of making an inundation except in the country near Libébé; as it

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is discharged into the Lake, till that is full - the surplus finding its way down the Zouga to Kumadou and a little way beyond. the water in these floods is in all cases perfectly clear. This peculiarity enabled me to distinguish the water of the valley inundations in a large rise of the river which took place at Tette in the beginning of March. To the inhabitants it seemed the third freshet of that year but the water being comparatively limpid, enabled me to connect it with the overflowing at Sesheke in February. the two previous floods produced by rains falling East of the Eastern ridge, imparted a deep reddish brown tinge of the Zambesi, this was but a partial discoloration effected by the numerous feeders of the Zambesi continuing to pour in some muddy

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water untill the winter set in in April, and as they are very numerous above Tette we percieve the reason why the remarkable floods of the clear water of the great Interior valley have not been noticed farther down.

I am aware of no obstruction to navigation from the bottom of the Eastern ridge of the Delta except one named Kebrabasa, about 20 miles above Tette. there a number of jagged rocks jut out of the stream across the river forming in high water a dangerous rapid, and at low water the flow is so zigzag the canoes must be taken ashore and hauled along the bank. It is near the district called Chicovai; but being on foot when

we came near that point we were obliged to leave the river to avoid crossing the troublesome rivulets

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3<sup>d</sup> Sheet

which the Zambesi in its rise had filled, and we did not know till we arrived at Tette, that we had thereby missed the opportunity of examining the only impediment we are likely to meet with in our returning upward course.

Above Lupata which is about forty miles below Tete the river is kept rather narrow by the hills and rocks on its banks. It may be said to be from one thousand to twelve hundred yards broad. the current is  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles per hour: the gorge of Lupata is about 200 or 300 yards wide, twelve miles in length and rather winding, but so deep close to its rocky, perpendicular banks a large steam ship could pass through at full speed. Below Lupata the river becomes very broad and full of large reedy islands which

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prevent one from seeing the banks. I conjectured the breadth from occasional glimpses of dark low lying woodland on the South and the ranges of Manganja hills on the North. A sailing vessel would have more room to tack in here, than in the Clyde below Greenock. I however saw it only when the river was full. In the dry season it presents a very different appearance, but it is never without a very large volume of water flowing in a somewhat winding channel. But though both channel and islands change their positions from time to time according to the swing and force of the full flood, free passage is always afforded

for launches and large canoes and the river is never fordable. Minute investigation leads me to believe that a steamer of light draught could ply on the Zambesi during

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the greatest part of the year. but the opinion of a seaman might be very different.

Our surveyors however and visitors to Quilimane have had but little opportunity of knowing the capabilities of the river for that which is called the river of Quilimane no more deserves the name of Zambesi, than does the Serpentine that of the Thames. It's proper name is "Mutu" and the point of departure from the main stream "Mazaro" "mouth of Mutu". Mazaro may thus be considered the beginning of the Quilimane delta, as the Mutu, though small, is the first branch which leaves the Zambesi for the sea. Its claims may be understood when I mention that even now, when the water is at its greatest height the upper part of the Mutu is only three or four yards broad. It is also very winding and so full of reeds and water plants, together with over hanging branches of trees

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that a small canoe even can with difficulty pass along. And during a great part of the year it is dry, rendering it necessary to employ land carriage for twelve or fifteen miles in the case of all commerce to and from Quilimane and the interior. Beyond the part which annually stands dry, the Muturecieves two rivers from the North called Pingazi and Luala (Pingazi, Luala) which make it navigable. Another farther down named Likwareé and the tides contribute to form the River of Quilimane. The Bar at its entrance is very dangerous, as it admits small

vessels as schooners only twice  
a month and it is a common  
remark that but few of these can go  
both in and out unscathed. this  
untoward bar embittered all the joy  
I might otherwise have felt on

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gaining the Eastern coast for on approach-  
ing Quilimane the sad news was  
communicated that eight of my  
countrymen in coming from H.  
M. Brigantine Dart to offer me  
a passage homewards had unfortunately  
lost their lives. It caused me the  
most poignant sorrow and made  
me feel as if it would have been  
easier for me to have died for  
them than to bear the thought of  
so many being cut off from all the joys  
of life in generously endeavouring  
to render me a service.

The Portuguese in extenuation  
of the apparent stupidity of building  
the "Capital of the rivers of Senna" -  
(Quilimane) where it possesses such  
slender connection with the Zambesi  
alledge that the Mutu in former

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times was large but is now filled  
up with a fluvial deposit. the bar too  
was safer then than it is now. To a  
stranger it looks remarkable that the  
mainstream of the Zambesi sometimes  
called Cuama and Luaba which  
is at least three quarters of a mile  
broad at the mouth of the Mutu  
should be left to roll on to the ocean  
unused. It divides it is true below  
that into six or seven branches  
but two of these named near the  
sea Melambe and Catrina present  
comparatively safe harbours at  
their mouths, and free passage for

large launches during the entire year into the interior. these harbours are not more insalubrious than Quilimane and Senna. Indeed with respect to the former one could scarcely by search get a better man-killing spot than it. The village is placed

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on a large mudbank so moist water is found by digging two feet down and it is surrounded by Mango bushes and marsh. the walls of the houses too sink gradually so as to jam the doors. That the subject of securing a better harbour for the commerce of the magnificent country, drained by the Zambesi merits the attention of the Portuguese Government as interested in its prosperity, a glance at the articles which might be exploited to a great amount will sufficiently shew.

If we again fancy ourselves looking down the Zambesi, from its confluence with the river Loangua, we find that a soft grey sandstone rock with many silicified trees & palms for the surface forms, to use an ungeological expression, the flooring of the country all the way to Lupata. This space a trapezoid in form  $3^{\circ}$  of Long<sup>e</sup>. and  $2^{\circ}$  or more of Latitude & is if I am not mistaken a field of coal; for

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the rock is in many places cut through and dislocated by dykes of greenstone and basalt. There are also broad bands of gneiss & Porphyry, with hills of baked clay and ~~other~~ igneous rocks containing much silica and mica. The disturbances effected by the eruptive rocks in the grey sandstone have brought many seams of coal to the surface. There are no fewer than nine of these in the country adjacent to Tette and I came upon two before reaching that point. One seam in the rivulet Muatize is fifty-eight inches in

diameter. Another is exposed in the Morongoze which as well as the Muatize falls into the Revubue and that forms the Zambesi from the North about two miles below Tette. the Revubue is navigable for canoes during the whole year and but for a small cataract in it near the points

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5<sup>th</sup> Sheet

of junction with the rivulets canoes might be loaded at the seams themselves. Some of the rocks have been ejected since the deposition of the coal for it is seen converted in some spots converted into coke, and about ten miles above Teté there is a hot fountain emitting abundance of acrid steam, the water at the point of emergence is  $158^{\circ}$  Fah<sup>t</sup> and when the thermometer is held in it half a minute it shews steadily  $160^{\circ}$ . When frogs or fish leap into it from the rivulet in which it is situated they become cooked and the surrounding stones were much too hot for the bare feet of my companions.

the remarks about the absence of any tradition of earthquakes in my last letter must be understood in reference to the country between the ridges alone, for I find that shocks

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have frequently been felt in the country of the Maravi and also at Mosam<sup>que</sup> but all have been of short durations and appeared to pass from East West.

In addition to coal we have iron of excellent quality in many parts of the country. It seems to have been well roasted in the operations of nature for it occurs in tears ~~and~~ or rounded masses admitting of easy excavation with pointed sticks, and it shews

veins of the pure metal in its substance.  
When smelted it closely resembles the  
best Swedish iron in colour and  
toughness. I have seen assegais of  
it, strike the crania of hippopotami  
and curl up  
instead of  
breaking; the owner afterwards  
preparing it for farther use by straighten-  
ing it cold with two stones.

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~~there~~Gold.- If we consider Tette as occupying  
a somewhat central position in the coal  
field and extend the leg of the compasses  
about  $2^{\circ}1/2$ , the semi circle which may  
then be described from N.E. round by  
West to S.E. touches or includes  
all the district as yet known to yield  
the precious metal. We have five well  
known gold washings from N.E. to N.W.  
Menisetbutna not now known, but  
it must have been in the West or South  
West - probably on the flank of the  
Eastern ridge. then the country of the  
Bazizula or Mashona on the South  
and Manica on the South East. the  
rivers Mazoe, Luia and Luenya in  
the South and several rivulets in the  
North bring gold into the coal field  
with their sands but from much  
trituration it is generally in such minute  
scales as would render amalgamation  
with mercury necessary to give it

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weight in the sand and render the washing  
profitable. the metal in some parts in  
North is found in red clay slate which is  
soft enough to allow the women to pound  
it in wooden mortars previous to washing.  
At Mashinga it occurs in white quartz  
some of the specimens of gold which  
I have seen from Manica and the country  
of Bazizula(Mosusurus!) was as  
large as grains of wheat and those from  
rivers nearer Tette were extremely minute

dust only. I was thus led to conclude that the latter was affected by transport and the former shewed the true gold field as indicated by the semicircle. Was the Eastern ridge the source of the gold seeing it now found not far from it Eastern Flank?. ~~However this may have been~~ We have at present a coal field surrounded by a gold one with abundance of wood, water and provisions - a combination of advantage

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6<sup>th</sup> Sheet

met with neither in Australia nor California. In former times the Portuguese traders went to the washings accompanied by great numbers of slaves and continued there untill their goods were expended in purchasing food for the washers. the chief in whose lands they laboured, expected a small present, one Pounds worth of cloth perhaps for the privilege. But the goods spent in purchasing food from the tribe was also considered so advantageous for the general good all were eager for these visits. It is so now in some quarters but the witchery of slavetrading led to the withdrawal of industry from both gold washing and every other source of wealth; and from 130 or 140 pounds weight annually the produce has dwindled down to 8 or 10 lbs only. This comes from independent natives who wash for their own convenience

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and for their own profit. A curious superstition tends to diminish the quantity which might be realized. No native will dig deeper than his chin from a dread of the earth falling in and killing him. And on finding a piece of gold it is buried again from an idea that without this "seed" the

washing would afterwards prove unproductive. I could not for sometime credit this in people who know right well the value of the metal, but it is universally asserted by the Portuguese who are intimately acquainted with their language and modes of thought. It may have been the sly invention of some rogue among them who wished to baulk the chiefs of their perquisites for in more remote times these pieces were all claimed by them.

the soil formed by the disintegration of igneous rocks is amazingly fertile

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and the people are all fond of agriculture. I have seen ~~wheat~~ maize of nearly the same size of grain as that sold by the Americans for seed in Cape Town. Wheat for which one entertains such a friendly feeling grows admirably near Tete in parts which have been flooded by the Zambesi and it doubles the size of the grain at Zumbo. When the water retires the sowing commences. A hole is made with a small hoe, a few grains dropped in and the earth pushed back with the foot, this simple process represents all our draining, lining, subsoil plowing, &c &c for with one weeding a fine crop is ready for the sickle in four months afterwards. Wheat, sugar, rice, oil and indigo were once exported in considerable quantities from Tette. Cotton is still cultivated but only for native manufacture Indigo of a very large ~~growth~~ grows wild all over the country. there are forests of the Cinchona tree near Senna

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Does this not shew the Divine care over us, where fever prevails the remedy abounds. We have also salsaparilla calumba root and senna leaves in abundance; the last I believe the same as is exported from Egypt.

It may not be out of place here to call attention to native medicines as worthy the investigation of travellers. I have always had to regret the want of time to examine which were efficaceous and which not and whether there are any superior to our own. It is worthy of note that the bark which yields the Quinine, has been known as a potent febrifuge by the natives from time immemorial. Our knowledge of its virtues is comparatively recent. Some may think we have more medicines in the Pharmacopoea than we know well how to use but the fact of well educated persons resorting to Homoeopathy,

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7<sup>th</sup> Sheet

Holloways's ointment, Morrison's pills and other nostrums may indicate an actual want to be supplied by something more potent than either raillery or argument. Few such I imagine would in cool blood prefer Parr's life pills to Quinine in intermittent fever; and if we had a remedy for cholera only half as efficaceous as Quinine in Quilimane fever it would be esteemed a universal blessing. Many native remedies are valueless, perhaps the majority are so; but they can cure wounds inflicted by poisoned arrows. In Inhambane and Delagoa Bay a kind of croup prevails. It is probably the Laringismus stridulus which cut off General Washington as it attacked and proved very fatal to adults singularly enough it was unknown till the first visit of Potgeiter's Boers to Delagoa Bay. They brought it from parts to the South West where it prevails

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and left it there though none of them were suffering from it at the time. It is still unknown here. This case is analogous

to ships leaving diseases at the South Sea Islands. After many had perished a native doctor pointed out a root which when used in time effects a speedy cure. The Portuguese now know the remedy and value it highly. I am not disposed to believe everything marvellous but from excoriations having been made by means of the root on the tongue of the patient and abstraction of blood so near the seat of the disease having never been practised in England in this very intractable disease I think the black doctor deserves credit. The fact too that certain plants are known by widely separated tribes all over the country as medicinal is an addition reason for recommending those who have nothing but travel and discovery on hand to pick up whatever fragments of aboriginal

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medical knowledge may come in their way.

In addition to the articles of commerce mentioned above I saw specimens of gum copal, orchilla weed, caoutchouc and other gums. there are two plants the fibres of which yield very strong thread and ropes. Bees abound beyond Tette but the people eat the honey and throw the wax away. there are several varieties of trees which attain large dimensions yielding timber of superior quality for durability in ship building. I saw pure negroes at Senna cutting down such in the forest and building boats on the European model without the superintendence of a master. Other articles of trade are mentioned by writers but I refer to those only which come under my personal observation. I feel fully persuaded that were a stimulus given to the commerce of the Zambesi by

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a small mercantile company proceeding cautiously to develop the resources

of this rich and fertile country it would certainly lead to a most lucrative trade. The drawbacks to anything of this sort must however be explicitly stated and though anxious to promote the welfare of the teeming population of the Interior by means of commercial prosperity and intercourse of the coasts I should greatly regret any undue expectations from unconsciously giving a too high colouring to my descriptions. I shall therefore try to explain the causes of the miserable state of stagnation and decay in which I found the Portuguese possessions. I have already stated that the slave trade acted by withdrawing labour from every other source of wealth in this country and transferring it to the plantations of Cuba and Brazil. The masters soon followed the slaves, hence this part of Africa

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contains scarcely any Europeans possessing capital and intelligence or commercial enterprise. Of those who engaged in the slave-trade in both Eastern and Western Africa it is really astonishing to observe how few have been permanently enriched by it. there seems a sort of fatality attending these unlawful gains, for you again and again hear the remark, - "He was rich in the time of the slave trade." Beyond all question it has impoverished both the colonists and the country. And when our cruizers by their indomitable energy rendered the traffic much more perilous than any other form of gambling for money, they conferred a double benefit. the slave was prevented from being torn from his home and country and the master was compelled to turn to more stable sources of income and wealth. But when this took place it was found that

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the strong arms which washed for gold and cultivated coffee, cotton, wheat indigo, sugar, earthnuts for oil were accross the Atlantic and a civil war breaking out completed the disorder. On the South bank of the ZambesiNyande a man of Portuguese and Asiatic extraction rebelled and collected a band of every shade of bad character in the country. Building a stockade at the confluence of Luenya and Zambesi below Tette he could rob every vessel that came up the river for the Luenya rushes with great force into the Zambesi and in order to avoid being carried to the opposite rocky bank by the current it is necessary to ascend the Luenya first and cross it at a point which will ensure the boat being carried not more than half way accross the river into which it rushes. In doing so the vessel comes right to the stockade of Nyande. this rebel burned nearly all the houses of Tette. On the Northern

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bank another of Portuguese extraction rebelled and burned all the rich villas to which the merchants were wont to retire for ease and pleasure. these rebels though not in alliance with each other kept the loyal inhabitants of Tette shut up in their fort at Tette for two whole years: and so strict was the blockade they were unable to get goods from the coast for trade scarcely enough for the purchase of food even. They had also to endure the usual lot of adversity. Friends not only became cool but often turned enemies. A neighbouring chief of no great power whose predecessor rejoiced in the name of the "Emperor Monompotapa" was one of the latter. Real Caffres or Zulus here named Landeems overran many districts of the country. they attacked Senna, and more than once since have compelled the inhabitants to pay tribute. the rebels have not been punished. In coming

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down the river I passed the stockade of Nyande and in consequence of a note from Major Secard I was kindly recieved by his son in-law, who entertained me to dinner and breakfast and added some goats as provisions for the voyage. It speaks well for this worthy commandante that the natives hold him in so much respect his simple presence has put a stop to hostilities four times. His generous hospitality to my self and large party demands my lasting gratitude. these notices of the war are not intended to inculcate either party, a passing stranger can scarcely form a correct judgement, especially if he espouses either side. they are given in order that the stagnation of trade may be understood.

When the influence of the white man was at its lowest ebb among the natives, we happened to come down the river. The people possess more of the Caffre

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than Bechuana character. An Italian has ascended the river with about fifty followers armed with guns some months before our visit, and committed great havoc on some defenceless villages. On returning a number of tribes united and destroyed both him and his force. We were in some danger from a foolish chief spreading the report in our front that we had committed similar deeds of those to the Italian; and many bands of armed men were observed collecting to award us a like treatment. A young man who had come with his regiment for the same purpose thought he would speak to us first. Our explanations were considered satisfactory. Indeed when we could get a palaver they were never

unreasonable untill we come close  
to Tette. But it was unpleasant to  
be everywhere suspected, the men belonging  
to some chiefs on the Zambesi never  
came near us unless fully armed.

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[\* Synonymous with the Scotch proverb. "you can't take the breeches off a Highlander"]

others would not sit down, nor enter  
into any conversation, but after gazing  
at us for some time with a sort of horror  
went off to tell the chief and great men  
what they had seen. I guess we appeared  
an uncouth band, for the bits of skins,  
alias fig leaves, had in many cases  
disappeared, and my poor fellows  
could not move about without  
shocking the feelings of the well clothed  
Zambesians. the Babisa traders (Muizas)  
bring large quantities of cotton cloth from  
the coast to the tribes beyond Zumbo.  
Both Moors and Babbisa had lately been  
plundered too. they could not have taken  
much from us for the reason contained  
in the native proverb "you cannot  
catch a humble cow by the horns." \* We  
often expected bad treatment, but  
various circumstances conspired to  
turn them from their purposes. It is  
impossible to enumerate all the incidents  
which through the influence of our

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Divine protector on the hearts of the heathen,  
led to our parting in friendship with those  
whom we met with very different sentiments,  
but I must not omit the fact that if  
our cruizers had accomplished nothing  
else they have managed to confer a  
a good name on our country. I was quite  
astonished to find how far the prestige  
had spread into the continent. And in  
my case they had occular demonstration  
of more than a hundred evidently very  
poor men going with one of "that white  
tribe" without either whip or chain.  
My headman speaks the language

perfectly and being an intelligent person contributed much by sensible explanations to lull suspicion. We had besides no shields with us. this was often spoken of and taken as evidence of friendly intentions. And for those who perversely insisted that we were spies we had forty or fifty gallant young elephant hunters and the extraordinary bravery

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they sometimes exhibited seemed to say it would scarcely be wholesome to meddle with such fellows. the personal character of some chiefs led at once to terms of friendship. With others we spent much time in labouring in vain to convince them we were not rogues and vagabonds. They were in the minority as the utterly bad are everywhere else. With fair treatment the inhabitants on the Zambesi would I believe act justly. they are not powerful as compared with our Caffres of the Cape. the so called Emperors, as Monomotapa, Cambeze &c are not so powerful as Sandillah and Moshesh. Indeed I believe there can be no great Empire without literature Conquerors have over run large tracts of country but no empire results. Witness Sebitane the father of Sekeletu

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10<sup>th</sup> Sheet

Some of the Batonga and many of the Maravi women have an ugly custom they pierce the upper lip below the nose and insert a shell or reed so as to widen and draw out the orifice untill it is quite an inch beyond the perpendicular of the nose. Fashion never induced a freak more mad. It looks as if they thought that female beauty of lip had been attained by the ornithorhynchus paradoxus alone. Lower

down the river they insert a button only, and they possess much influence. My men thought they used their power very creditably when they said "dance and we shall grind corn for you."

I shall notice but one point more. Lupata is mentioned as forty miles below Tette. the range has a gorge in it through which the Zambesi flows. there is a perpendicular wall and an island on the left of the western

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entrance. this island was called the "island of Mozambique by D<sup>r</sup> Lacerda from a belief that it stands on the same latitude with that settlement viz 15° 1 S. I found it to be 16° 34 South. I have no wish to prove that worthy gentleman wrong but all my observations are erroneous if he is right. I found Tette to be in 16° 8 48 and an island below Lupata 17° 0 30 It is always an ungracious task to find fault with others but I am obliged to perform the duty in the case of this same Lupata. the word is nearly synonymous with Litako anglicised into Lattakoo, (now Kuruman) viz. walls or rather dry stone dykes, pata or 'mpata is applied to any defile in hills, particularly if it has perpendicular or wall like sides. there is one called Mpata through which the Zambesi comes near Zumbo. the

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person who first wrote Lupata or "spine of the world", Tala Mungongo "or castle of rocks" did not mean I hope that the underlined sentences were translations but only more poetic names, for the one means "walls" and the other "Behold the range", this range (Lupata) was said to be so high snow lay on it most of the year and of marble of great value. We slept a night on the Island of Mozambique at the Western entrance, where we have a fine view of

the highest part of the whole range viz. the right wall. It is perpendicular and scarcely so high as Arthur's Seat when viewed from Princes St. Edinburgh! I question if it is more than 700 feet high from the river at its base though it may be 800 or 900 ft above the level of the sea. the island is composed of a light coloured clay slate which may have been rent off from the opposite wall for the strata are all huddled and twisted

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together as if it had been roughly handled when soft. At the Eastern entrance there are three conical hills of porphyry with fine square and rounded chrystals The northern part of Lupata range extends into the Maganja country and then bends round to Senna. the Southern part of the same range is rather crooked too for it runs South and South East ending in Nyamonga and Gorongozo mountains which may be seen from the top of a hill (Baramuana) behind Senna. When Lupata is seen from the East it looks decidedly lower than the Campsie range as viewed from the vale of Clyde. And this is the "African Cordillera", "the spine of the world"! And it is my hard fate however unwilling to spoil the poetry of the thing for the geographers, and increase the anxieties of the geologists by divulging the secret that their world has

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[\* If read in public leave out the nonsense please we must not now parody the speeches of our ally "I must accomplish my mission". &c ]

11<sup>th</sup> Sheet

got the lady's complaint called "a weak spine", It's my destiny &c &c \* the southern end of the range bears S.W. from the hill Baramuana which is about half a mile west of Senna. the intervening country is flat but

well wooded with Cinchona & other trees. the nearest point of the range is named Nyamonga - Goronzogo being a little beyond it. the latter is famed for its salubrity and chrystal waters. the Jesuits once had a station there, and I have observed they always shewed great judgement and taste in the selection of sites. they were rich having been keen traders as well as laborious teachers and could allow their bretheren to follow their laudable tastes. On the top of Gorongozo there are several large slabs, or the rocks have been chiseled so as to appear as such and inscriptions graven upon them. They are asserted

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to be in Roman characters. the Portuguese who have seen them, not knowing the words I presume they are in Latin and the work of the Jesuit Fathers the idea of their being in unknown characters, perhaps of a primitive language, or graven by the servants of Solomon the son of David in their visits to Ophir made my heart thump against the chest but after patient enquiry the assertion that all knew the letters though not the meaning made me conclude the inscriptions to be of no great antiquity. Ophir may be sought for near Sofala but not on the Zambesi, for if the delta was of old as unhealthy as it is now Solomon's servants would get a larger share of fever than gold except, at a few points it (the river) does not touch the gold field, and there are no inscriptions or buildings shewing antiquity on its banks.

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With Sofala it is different for between that fort and Manica we have the finest gold field in Africa; and at the foundation of the fort itself articles of wrought gold have frequently been found. Such also

have been picked up in a stream on the main land and remnants of walls of hewn stone have been exposed in gardens. But the Landeens are ~~the~~ there the Lords of the soil and Ophir must remain an open question.

David Livingston

Mauritius 26<sup>th</sup> August. Brought to this island by H. M. Brig "Frolic" Commander Peyton on the 12<sup>th</sup> a service for which I feel unfeignedly thankful to the Government of her Majesty. the Frolic was just in time to save the lives of the crew of a Hamburgh vessel lost near Quillimane. Another month of the climate would have

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been fatal to the whole. I reached Quillimane labouring under a severe tertian but found that Captain Nolloth late of the Frolic had left me some wine and his surgeon D<sup>r</sup> Walsh some quinine which with the sympathy and encouragement expressed in letters from my former instructors in Glasgow University from - Commodore Trotter and from yourself soon restored me to my wonted vigour. I was most hospitably entertained in Quillimane by Colonel Galdino José Nunes and here by our countryman the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Major General Hay. A short residence in his house enables me to announce the departure of an affection of the spleen which clung to me in spite of the comforts and friendship of the officers the Frolic; and I believe there is still some African service in me. My late companions one hundred and ten in number await my return at Tette(Tett.) I proceed by the overland route to England in

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September next and hope to return so as to pass the Quillimane delta between April and August 1857. the headman of the party accompanied me on board the Frolic to Mauritius and, besides

feeling grateful to him for his invaluable services I wished to comply with the desire of Sekeletu and take him to England, believing that a report of wisdom and power of Englishmen from his lips would have a beneficial effect on the minds of his countrymen in relation to Christianity. but the excitement of seeing so many new things seemed to prove too much for his brain and during the night after seeing the steamer towing us into this harbour, he became quite insane and drowned himself. He could swim

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well, but hauled himself down by the chain cable. I felt unwilling to use constraint because being a gentleman in his own country I feared lest a taint of insanity should remain after our return and that he might prejudice the minds of his countrymen by representing confinement as an act of cruelty, my regret for not using constraint is now unavailing. We lost another headman above Tette by a similar ~~prœess~~ cause. A tribe refused our passage, and made a war dance close to our bivouacment. As they never dance fully armed & dressed except when about to attack and I had no intention to be scared backwards by them this poor man became mad from excitement which was probably aggravated by remembrance of former scenes in which he had figured and ran off by night. We spent three days seeking him but the country being full of lions we never found a trace of him

David Livingston