

## Letter to George Grey, 30 July 1859

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[0001]

Kongone Harbour

30 July 1859

Nº 7

Dear Sir George

We are now about to deliver our letters to H.M.S. Persian and though I know that she has one on board for you of May last I add a few words to that as we are sending some Buaze seeds and living plants of the Motsikiri. D<sup>r</sup> Kirk will write M<sup>r</sup> MacGibbon as to how they are to be disposed and I have now to beg your good offices for speedy transmission to their destination - The I wonder why our Cape Merchants dont push their merchandise higher up the coast - The Tette traders have been compelled to wait four months at Quilimane for calicoes or till an American ship came They are yard wide coarse unbleached calico & dearer than the English. Gentoos from India give higher prices for ivory in English calico than the Americans can afford

[0002]

Buaze will do well in Natal in localities where other cultivation is impossible - should it grow no care is required for an annual crop - (a comfortable fact for all Hottentots English Dutch & African) for it is simply pollarded when the fibre is mature in the thinner branches - the seeds yield a paint or drying oil - some are for India & others for Natal. and we shall send more when we can - there are plants

too of Motsikiri, a tree the seed  
of which yields a fat & an oil  
valuable in commerce - It  
is exported from Inhambane.

We have sent home a  
Report the joint production  
of D<sup>r</sup> Kirk and myself on the  
African fever, and we think  
our experience of it has rendered  
it a less formidable disease

[0003]

than heretofore. This will probably be  
published -

We have been able to furnish a  
report on the navigation of the  
Zambesi after seeing all the changes  
to which it is annually liable - From  
what we have observed in an  
unusually dry year a vessel drawing  
two feet such as they are obliged  
to use on the Mississippi could  
ply the whole of ordinary years.  
During four or five months  
each year large vessels could  
ascend to Tette - There the river  
is 964 yards from bank to bank  
about three times the width of Thames at London Bridge  
at the broadest parts it is  
about 3 miles, and divided  
into five or six channels - A  
Tide Pole put up at my suggestion  
by Major Secard shewed a  
gradual rise above low  
water mark of eight feet - then  
a variation from 8 to fifteen feet  
during some months - The  
then a gradual decrease to 3½

[0004]

low water mark adopted was  $\hat{=}$  the surface of that  
in which from 18 inches to 24 inches,  
were found in certain crossings  
from one channel to another.  
The channels then contained reaches  
of miles in length of 8 or 10 feet -  
but in the crossings we had

much difficulty - the vessel of 31-3 inches  
being of what is called the the "Niger  
canoe or potbellied shape" & so  
weak an engine as to be unable  
to help us in the difficulty - She was  
only 1/16 of an inch thick in the  
beginning and is now like an  
old copper kettle full of holes  
at one part - We are about to  
try Nyinyesi from the Shire,  
if she will only stick together so  
long. The Shire is more easily navigated  
from the Zambesi as we have 2 or 3  
fathoms constantly & can steam by  
night. We are in hopes, after surmounting  
a thirty mile difficulty of getting on the  
Lakes of Eastern Africa - and then  
we go to the Makololo country either  
afloat or afoot David Livingstone