

Letter to John Washington, 1 May 1861

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

much crowded - 52 souls aboard and a large deck cargo - but for wood cutting

Kongone Harbour

1st May 1861

Dear Captain Washington

M^r Hardesty informs me that the brasses or bushes of the paddle shafts are cracked by a strain put on them when aground in the Rovuma. He thinks that they were too thin originally - some sand has got in and worn them a good deal thinner. As M^r Penn has the patterns we think it well to send for new ones and as soon

[0002]

we should be at Murchison's cataracts in 2 days from this. We came from Johanna

as we have an opportunity M^r H. will make a drawing of them with buttresses on them from which M^r Penn will be able to send us thicker and stronger ones.

18 May Shamo in R. Shire.

After spending some days in woodcutting & going round by the Pearl's canal to the mouth of Parkers Luabo we steamed up on the 7th & 8th to Mazaro taking just 16 hours from the sea to that point. the last time we came over the same ground in the famous "Despatch boat" it took us ten days. We did not touch the ground once - though the channel

is a little altered by the late very
high flood. At Shupanga

[0003]

in eight days & waited one night only for a
smooth bar
I am &c David Livingstone

we went over to the shoal side of the
river in order to get young mango
trees & pineapple plants for the
mission and unfortunately
drifted on a shoal and had as
at Rovuma the engines filled
with sand. They are splendid
engines and a credit to their
maker but there is a defect
which few would think of,
the pipe which draws in the
water is placed so as to draw
in sand whenever we come
into shoal water - there seems to

be no rose to them
as pebbles the size
of marbles were taken
into the bottom of the air pump. If
in addition to those [pipes] already in
we had others as marked by the
dotted lines & a cock to shut off
each set one could be used

[0004]

in a sea way the others in the
river - a few yards of copper
piping & cocks would not cost
much and M^r Penn would
no doubt take the trouble to fit
them according to his model
If the roses of the new pipes
were 3 1/2 feet from the bottom
no harm would ever come
to the engines either by sand or
weeds. As it is now the
time when we need the engines
most they are of the least use
as our bilges are so shallow
we cannot draw water from
them.

We spent some days repairing

and are now waiting for our
cart and cotton gins from Senna,
the Shire is all deep except one or
two small spots. We have a good
deal of fever yet. We are very