

## Letter to William Sunley, 18th November 1861

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Published by Livingstone Online ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org)), 2017

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River Shire 18<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1861

Private  
My Dear Sunley,

We went up to Lake Nyasa by carrying a boat past the cataracts of this river intending to find out more about the Rovuma from above than we could from below, but we were unsuccessful - We were on the Lake during the Equinoctial gales and like all narrow seas surrounded with mountains tremendous seas get up in a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes - We went up the Western shore and the frequency of storms in which no open boat could live prevented our crossing & finding out all about Rovuma Reports were rife enough from the positive assertion that we could sail from the Lake into the River to the

Do you know where a place called by the Arabs Shamo is?

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equally positive statement that we must carry it a month - We found the Lake to be very deep - no bottom at 116 fathoms a mile out - and generally a ship must be near shore to find anchorage - Width from 20 to 50 or 60 miles - Length over 200 Its northern end is Lat 10<sup>o</sup> South - - An Arab dhow has lately been built on it to supply, we suppose, the trade at Iboe. It fled from us twice and we could not cross to the East side to look at it.

We heard that Ben Habib the Arab who abducted 95 Makololo had gone back in a great hurry, we suspect stirred up by Col Rigby - He has had them away seven years - Your Johanna men have turned out very well - they are better than the Kroomen we formally had - they have been most of their time at the foot of the cataracts where rice is not to be had, but meal seems to go down with them - I did not take them up to Nyasa as

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they were required to guard the ship - If you can engage twelve or fourteen I could do better with them than with some of the whites who are frequently ill - If I cannot come to Johanna I shall send these by man of war - At present they are all well, and do not express any anxiety about returning -

I met two Zanzibar Arabs who had come down from Katanga in the far interior to buy cloth at Nyasa they had been some 14 years up there! Their names were Juma bin Saide and Amar bein Saleme -

Slaving is the only trade on Nyasa at present - population prodigious - the bishop is in the heart of the slavery when I went up to the highlands with him I met Tette people coming with 84 captives - they fled & left these and many others in my hand so I gave them over to the mission & may get into a scrape for it. The

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Portuguese had employed a tribe called Ajawa to hunt slaves for them - as all the bishop's people were fleeing I went to try and induce the Ajawa to give it up. They got but 2 fathoms for a man & 1 for a woman - but we came as they were in the act of burning three villages and attacked us as if they meant to make

slaves of us. We had to drive them off -  
The bishop has been at them since fighting  
and intending to fight like a brick - I  
dont know how this will go down  
at home - I am in for a share of the  
blame - We found no difficulty in collec[-]  
-ing cotton at a cheap rate though it was  
not the season but our ship [...]is much  
too long and deep so our operations  
have been confined to a few miles  
if we get out little steamer on the Lake  
the area will be increased -

We hear from M<sup>s</sup> Burrup who arrived  
on 13<sup>th</sup> that May had remained with you  
till lately - you must make out a bill  
against the Expedition and I shall get it  
paid - I am &c David Livingstone