

Letter to John Livingstone, 18 February 1858

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org), 2017

[0001]

I was waiting at the Admiralty and found time for this. Write at once to Young

David Livingstone

50 Albemarle St.

London 18th Feby

1858

My Dear Brother

I have been unable until this moment to write you on a very important point to which I am happy to call your attention. A friend of mine M^r James Young who was the assistant to the professor of Chemistry at University College London when I was there made a discovery by which he is able to extract oil from a peculiar kind of coal - this is name Paraffin and it is simply gas in a

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fluid state. By a very simple lamp it burns like gas and is so cheap that one gallon which in London sells at 3/8 gives as much light as 22 lbs of sperma ceti candles. He has made a large fortune by it and being a good man he wishes to do good and is very generous I mentioned you as a suitable agent in Canada and he is willing to employ you and give you such a percentage as will make you anxious to keep Niel at home instead of sending him abroad. He wants you to go into the thing with out

any doubt. It will return you

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an abundant income. He will supply all the materials - lamps oil - vessels &c & you must lay yourself out for an immense sale by advertizing it beforehand for next winter. Write to him James Young Esq.

Sardinia Terrace

Glasgow

and tell him whether you are willing to engage in it. You will be able both to benefit yourself and him by entering into it heartily - Tell him freely all your affairs & what you will or can do Can you devote your entire time to suppose he sends you

[0004]

10,000 lamps and some hundreds of tons of oil. Write at once I shall be off in a week or ten days. I got a letter from our cousin John & will send him a book having the index before I sail. Our launch was tried yesterday & gave from 8 to 10 knots an hour. We sail in the "Pearl" - She puts into the Zambesi then we put our launch together as she goes out in three pieces & go up. I am counsel - £500 only. The Portuguese are favourable. If you still think of Africa for Niel I have not forgot my promise. You will hear from me Charles gave up £750 a year on the west he has £350 now - love to Sarah & all