

Title: Livingstone's Letter from Bambarre (Letter to Horace Waller, 5 February 1871)

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Transcription Note: This PDF file (which builds on our original XML transcription) presents the text of Livingstone's Letter from Bambarre as edited by the Livingstone Spectral Imaging Project team in 2010-2011.

Bambarre = Manyema 5 Feb 1871

My Dear Waller – I yesterday recieved gladly your 3 letters of Oct^r Nov^r Dec^r 1869 You repeat the dose which is like to break my heart – You "gave Kirk all the news and he would impart them to me" but he had other matters to attend to and as usual I have to whistle for news – I am the man with too many friends – Oh says Muff N^o 1 such a nice book has come out – I would send it but you have so many friends I am sure that someone must have sent it already – N2 says I would have given you the news but you have so many friends &c &c – N^o 3 says our large national educational establishment in which I have the honour to free a chair ought to help if not take on them the education of your children – I would do it myself but you have so many friends &c – The upshot is I recieve nothing

Two great friends removed my three boys at my expense and against my wish from a healthy school in England to an abominable "Do the boys Hall" in Scotland & they were all home sick three months afterwards – ! I am glad of all you told me when you forgot the idea of others telling me and wrote naturally as a married man ought to do I did not know of Youngs trip up after me nor of Musas lies till now – The successful laying of the Atlantic cable I Enferred from my Canadian brother saying "last cable news told us you were alive & we put off our mourning" I infer that a new Government or ministry is in power because you speak of John Bright & Duke Argyll as ministers – Well I am off in a few days to finish with the help of the Almighty new explorations – Ten men here come from Kirk who like the good fellow that he is worked unweariedly to get them & goods off in the midst of disease and death – one gang of porters died quite off and five of my men perished by cholera – We get that from Mecca – letters preceded it thence saying it was coming – We do nothing to stop its hatching in Mecca Medina & Judda which annually become vast cesspools of abomination because the new political economy says let everything alone Formerly it went along shore now it comes inland – In our small camp here we lost 30 & how many Manyema no one knows – All the able bodied all off ivory collecting – if it had continued three instead of two months the camp would have been desolate – Fowls & goats fell first then cattle shivered

and died & then men. I quite expect to hear that it went to the Cape – I got the copy of the Standard you sent – I have not seen the "Times" for an age – I differ from you for I am proud of our great Paper and only sorry when it admits the babble of the clubs – Jupiter must be nodding when he admits Cooleys ill natured twaddle as "geography". I would not answer him why he boldly challenged me to argue the point whether the great Zambesi above the falls were a river – He maintained that it was "an undeveloped river" that went under the ground of the Kalahari and was lost, and in what he called a map put it down as ending in a pothook – doubtless meaning if the "learned" the "erudite" Cooley could be so low as use a hieroglyphic to say "here it hooks it" – that shut me up from answering for ever – My work leads me down Lualaba in canoes till it touches the head of the Nile probably near the Eastern arm followed down by Speke Grant & Baker then double back up the Western line of drainage to the fountains on the Watershead – on return I shall not go down the Western arm of the loop formed by the end of Bakers water and it – the Northern part of which again [word missing] Eithe[r] Bak[e]r i[s] a liar o[r] I am – This is

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still unknown in fact it is Cooleography & not to be made public – I propose to go up the lower Tanganyika or Uerere or ~~lower Tanganyika~~ Albert Nyanza and on to Ujiji & Zanzibar I do not know Bakers plan and in my ignorance fear that conquering the small headmen all along the Nile is doing on a large scale what slavetraders now do on small one – commit many murders to punish a few robbers and make the whole population Turkish slaves – I know of no large chief in all this region Every village is independent and no glory can arise from enslaving these in detail but I dont know the Egyptian expeditions under the French were as bloody as if conducted by Manyema –

My packet of 40 letters is I fear destroyed The

governor the alleged
culprit complains
that he conducted the
expedition of Burton
from Zanzibar
to Ujiji & thence
to Uvira and back to Zanzibar
endured a great
deal of wrangling
and was left un-
-paid till the Indian
Government or
that of Bombay sent
him a 1000 dollars
He was soured at
all Englishmen –
placed my goods
under his man
Musa bin Salim
who stopped the
porters ten days
while he plundered
& went off to Karagwe
to buy ivory for
his master – He
wished that no
evidence should
go to the coast –
my packet con-
tained evidence &
I conjectured it was
destroyed – His agent at Ujiji sent back the
packet after [I] had paid for it because "he did
not know the contents" I regret the loss of copies
of all my astronomicⁿ observations and [a]
Despatch supplementary to that from Bangw[eolo]

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but I have copies at Ujiji – The gross carelessness of
the council in allowing Arrowsmith to take away my
imperfect sketches made solely to oblige them by the earliest
information while my work went to the Cape and then my
good friend Arrowsmith glorifying himself by sending the
errors easily detected to Germany & India made me
resolve to take care of them myself and at the risk of losing

them altogether – My kind love to your wife I am glad she has taken you
[previous line continues:] & under her wing
and my blessing on you both David Livingstone

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The Governor's statement may be untrue for he is
an ill conditioned Arab and lying is no sin to such
A. then charged M^r Murray & me £300 with the reason
for the overcharge had to alter all his work on
receiving later information which later
information was the only thing we employed
him upon – He employed himself on Kirk's
and my imperfect sketches He ought to
refund or leave the council

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PS. to Waller – It is not worth while noticing anything fr[om]
Burton any more than from Cooley – they make statements only [to]
lug themselves forward to the public – For your private information
I tell you that my party consisted of fifteen Muhamadans
six pagan Hindoos six christians & four Heathen – the Moslems
were by far the worst in every respect – The christians had the mis
fortune to have been born slaves in their own tribes & had received the
worst training in the world from Moslem slavetraders but behaved
better than the Moslems till we came into close contact with Moslems
again – the Heathen had been in the Portuguese service and were
infinitely inferior to heathen Makololo in consequence – I have
heard gentlemen from India speak of native christians with
contempt because they had never seen any save the vile
scum that hangs about camps which may be called moral
cess pools – I have seen the native christians in India which
these silly gentlemen pretend to describe and they are as different
from the "Masters caste" men who say "I drink brandy" as one
can conceive – I have travelled with all sorts of Africans
and I can without hesitation assert that the native Christians
are out of sight better than either Moslems or heathen – only
let them understand thoroughly that they are servants and
must work as hard as slaves – They are not gentlemen and
you will have trustworthy & generally truthful attendants –
The trouble you will have with them is just what all have with
English servants and every other – I am to be judged by the work done

I am truly thankful that there is some prospect of the
suppression of the East African slave trade as carried on

by the Sultans subjects – I have heard but little of the details but I believe a great deal is owing to the exertions of our friend Kirk on whom for his share may Heavens rich blessing descend – the sights I have in this journey seen of slaving make my blood run cold and I am not easily moved or very Sentimental – I cannot call the Arabs [text inserted:] it is the trade that is cruel and certainly is vil[e] cruel – but ^ few are like those wretches the Kilwa traders or the atrocious Portuguese of Tette whose murder and arson you witnessed – But it is an awful traffic and can be congenial only to the Devil and his angels – If our statesmen stop the frightful waste of human life in this region and mitigate the vast amount of human woe that accompanies it they will do good on the large scale and cause joy in Heaven – The whole horrible system North of Rovuma & Cape Delgado is to support the Sultan of Zanzibar who is said to be by no means very greedy of money save to uphold his little court & attendants – ["]The system South of a point South of Cape Delgado for [text inserted:] Arabs that is the boundary claimed by the ^ Portuguese is kept up not to injure the rights of the crown of Portugal" ~~so said one not supposed capable of abetting an atrocity~~ and the Governors D'Almrida destroyed our work & people unchecked – The most startling disease I have seen among slaves is not earth or clay eating which too is a disease per se but what really seems to be brokenheartedness It does not attack those who have been slaves in their own land but those who have been free – I saw a party taken across Lualaba by a slaver and when they saw this mighty river roll between them and home they seemed to lose all heart – Twenty one who were then considered safe were unchained all scuttled off to the mountains but eight still in the chain and in good health died in three days

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[W]hen asked why they did not eat but lay pictures of abject misery they pointed to the heart as the seat of pain – they point to that organ correctly though many think that the heart is under the upper part of the sternum or breastbone – I saw many others die – some were kindly carried and on expiring were laid down on the side of the path – The masters wondering why they died and had plenty to eat – I once saw a party in the slave yoke singing merrily & thought my

these fellows have taken to it kindly – they must belong
to the class to whom
slavery is the
natural state
for which they
were born – I
asked the cause
of their mirth &
was told that
they laughed at
the idea "of coming
back after death
and haunting &
killing those who
had sold them"
Some of the words
I had to enquire
the meaning of the
word to "haunt and
kill by spirit power"

[T]hen it was "oh you
sent me off to
Manga but the
yoke is off when
I die and back
I shall come to
haunt and to kill
you" Then all
joined in the
chorus which was
the name of each
vendor as if it
were "oh Johnny
Smith Oh Johnny Smith Oh Oh"
It told not of fun but of the bitterness and tears
[text inserted:] and on the site of the oppression there was power
of such as were oppressed ^ and they had
no comforter – "There be higher than they."

I am terribly knocked
up but this is for your own eye only
in my second childhood a dreadful
old fogie – doubtful if I live to see you
again – I stick to my work in spite of
everything because most of my friends

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will say as my good daughter does – "much as I wish to have
you home I would rather that you finish your work to your
own satisfaction than come merely to gratify me" there's a good
brave girl I guess – a chip off the old block and no
mistake David Livingstone

News came lately to Ujiji that a large body of Turks (Egyptians?)
came and attacked Sunna – They were repulsed and fled in disorder
Sunna is Spekes Muza with his fathers name – can this be Sam Baker
[previous line continues:] or De Bono?

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Baker does not seem to be aware how
often the Portuguese have tried the conquering
plan and always failed – more signally
in the West perhaps than the East but it may
be different with him and though I dont
know his plan I hope he may do good
on the Zambesi the natives to a man were
most friendly – the Portuguese instructed from
Lisbon were civil but hated us & to the expedition
with Baker the Turks will be as friendly as the
Zambesi natives to us – but I fear that the
common people will be like our Portuguese
But for cannon Sunna could conquer Egypt
far more easily than 3000 troops could injure
him – 100 000 warriors though an exaggeration means something great

Page 2v, lower right corner, upside down, undertext

uncorrected
Revise Nov 23/69
for Dr Livingstone Interior of Africa