CHAPTER 3

1858–64: Narrative of an Expedition

David Livingstone received two honorary degrees and the freedom of various cities. He became a fellow of the Royal Society. His speech at Senate House in Cambridge was an unequivocal success: the ‘established church’ took on the organization of the Universities’ Mission to Central Africa. For him priorities had changed: ‘I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity’. Sir Roderick Murchison had managed to persuade the government to arrange an expedition to the eastern Zambezi under Livingstone’s leadership. It was to take two years, and a steamship with shallow draught was specially built. Provisioning was in the hands of the Royal Navy, with the patrol vessels used for combatting the slave trade. Livingstone could choose the members of the expedition. He terminated his years of service with the LMS on 27 October 1857, after further discussions about establishing a mission station among the Kololo. He would also become consul in Mozambique.

One might be surprised at the Portuguese government’s permission for an expedition on its colonial territory, considering its past experience with the British. During and after the Napoleonic wars up till 1820, the Portuguese were under pressure from British interventions. The British government had supported the struggle for the independence of Brazil to their own trade advantage and the detriment of Portugal. England had abolished slavery, followed by Portugal which had struggled to adapt, seeing itself and its colonies become increasingly impoverished. When, in 1855, on the insistence of the British government, the governor of Mozambique had a ship with ‘free labour emigrants’ (arguably slaves) bound for the plantations of Réunion seized, a French punitive expedition came sailing up the River Tagus. Whitehall avoided the conflict

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1 DL did not belong to the Anglican Church, and as ‘dissenter’ he could not study in Cambridge (or Oxford). Yet it was there he advocated the founding of a mission; this church was the most important and powerful. Elston (1973), 61–85.

2 ‘In their annual Report… the Directors included a Resolution said to have been adopted at a special meeting of Town and Country Directors on 10 February’ (a meeting at which Livingstone was present, and with whose recommendations ‘he expressed his entire concurrence’). The opening words of the resolution are: ‘That two new Mission Stations should be opened—the one among the Makololo, north of the Zambese, under the charge of Dr. Livingston, assisted by another missionary’ (Report, 1857, 29; Chronicle, June 1857, 141) (emphasis by I. Schapera in LMC, xxiii).
and the Portuguese were ordered to allow ‘free immigration’. It is understandable in this context that the arrival of Livingstone was cause for concern. They knew that he accused them publicly of slave trading and that he was critical of their colonial rule. To minimize further trouble, the district under his jurisdiction as consul was limited to Quelimane.

Exploration of Rivers and Lakes; Return to Linyanti with the Kololo. A Paraphrase of Various Aspects of the Second Book

The record of the Zambezi expedition, written, according to the title page, by David and Charles Livingstone, appeared in 1865. There is no indication in the text as to who made which contribution. On the first page of the introduction there is mention of ‘my Missionary Travels’ and ‘my second essay of authorship’; only at the end does it note: ‘For the sake of the freshness which usually attaches to first impressions, the Journal of Charles Livingstone has been incorporated in the narrative.’

In a ‘Postscript to Preface’ the author expressed his objections to the Portuguese: their ‘extreme ignorance displayed of the geography of the country’; their ‘pretense to power which has been the only obstacle to the establishment of lawful commerce’; ‘their ignorance of what takes place in their colony Mozambique and their unwillingness to suppress the slave-trade effectively’. And in the introduction he wrote that Africa had to be opened up for ‘European enterprise’, with favourable results for the people, ‘now sunk in barbarism or debased by slavery’ and above all in the hope of ‘the introduction of the blessings of the Gospel.’ Although the Portuguese and their missionary posts had been settled there for centuries, only one man (David Livingstone) had ever traversed the continent.

3 Officially till 1864 (Price [1955], 140–41; Martelli [1970], 44). Réunion Island in the Indian Ocean.
4 Blaikie (1882), 230; ‘Consul at Quelimane for the Eastern Coast and the independent districts in the interior’; LTJ, 193.
5 DNB XI, 1263; Charles Livingstone (1821–73). Labourer in the textile industry, then a Sunday-school teacher; emigrated to the Western States of America, after a training for missionary (Oberlin College, Ohio) he entered in 1847 the Union Theological College, New York. Clergyman at Plympton, near Boston, Mass., where he married. Leave in England in 1857. His brother induced him to join the Zambezi expedition. Since 1864 he was HM consul at Fernando Po.
6 LNZ, vii–x; 2. LNZ is the American edition; LNZM the English, mentioned if the page numbers differ.