

Copy of a letter, written

To Major Hamerton

H.B.M.'s Consul

At Zanzibar

Kisuludini, den 29. März 1853

Dear Sir!

Your last letter which was brought by Mr. Erhardt on Saturday last, touches on a matter, which, since the return of the Imam from Mascat, has been a cause of much uneasiness to both Mr. Erhardt & myself, namely Dr. Krapf's answering some of a set of questions sent to him by Mr. Kuhlmann* (*Mr. Kuhlmann is Secretary to the French Consul at Zanzibar). As to myself I indeed saw the questions but never thought it worth while even to read them, while Dr. Krapf on the pretense of their being meant for a scientific body in France – in all simplicity – as he tells me answered some of them – to what extent I do not know as no opportunity was ever given to us of reading his answers. You will, I am sure, most unhesitatingly believe me in saying that we, Mr. Erhardt & myself, most thoroughly disapprove of the whole affair & fully sympathize with you in your just feelings of indignation against any one who is guilty of thus meddling in things which in no wise belong to his calling & especially if the perpetrator is a Missionary who ought always to remember that he is in the service of a King who himself has declared: My Kingdom is not of this world. But as with any one who is at all acquainted with Dr. Krapf, there cannot be the slightest doubt as to his most perfect innocency of intention in answering those questions, we, his colleagues, cannot blame him with any thing more than imprudence, while we are well aware, that the eyes of a Politician & the offended ruler himself may look upon it as a kind of treachery.

We greatly urged Dr. Krapf to go to Zanzibar & openly & honestly acknowledge before you & his Highness that he indeed acted a most imprudent part in answering those questions – but that the pretence with which they were made as well as the known innocency of his intentions might excuse him – but he appears unwilling to go to Zanzibar now.

We are indeed well aware that H.H. the Imam might make this unfortunate affair the just reason of withdrawing his permission for our future stay in his dominions but we hope that the acquaintance of H.H. with Dr. Krapf which is almost of 10 years standing & your own knowledge of his general character will not make it impossible to excuse & pardon the imprudence of which our Colleague is evidently guilty.

It is owing to this interruption of the Imam's wonted favour & friendship towards us, that we feel ourselves obliged to make the request to you of asking

permission from H.H. as to the continuation of the erection of our Chapel. We have dismissed our workmen & are determined to do nothing more towards its erection, until we know, whether you, H.B.M.'s Consul, & as such our only true & real protector as regards our stay in East Africa, & H.H. the Imam, will further be friendly disposed towards us, notwithstanding the offence given by one of our members, & it will be necessary, that the Imam's permission be contained in a letter to us, which, in case of necessity, we can show to the Governor & chiefs of Mombas. We therefore would most humbly beg you to put this request to His Highness & to let us know as soon as you can his mind towards us. We know it is in your power to make this affair the "Death blow of our mission" (*An expression used by the Major in his oral communication to Mr. Erhardt) but also at the same time to avert the blow. But in either case we are prepared to look up to Him, who ever ordereth all things for the best.

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