



**1885:** Departure of the 5th caravan from Marseille for Equatorial Africa.

**1891:** Foundation of the “flying mission” in Kagwe. It lasted until mid-October 1891.

### **Letter to Father Deniaud and the missionaries of Lake Tanganyika (8th April 1881)**

In recent days, we have found ourselves in very serious trouble with the Office of the Propaganda of the Faith, following some unbelievable indiscretions committed by one or two Fathers who, writing to their friends in France, give details, and often deplorable details, concerning the mission. Following a letter from Father Lévesque, written to his brother and published by him, a letter made to put off all our benefactors, the Office of the Propaganda of the Faith has reduced its grant to our missions by two thirds. We have had to intervene and appeal so as to obtain a little more; but the harm is done, and it can never be put right. These are such grave consequences that I find myself obliged to forbid anyone to give details of the mission, in letters addressed to anyone other than myself or Father Superior General. Furthermore, I order all missionaries and auxiliaries to strictly forbid their correspondents in Europe to publish anything they may write in the press. It is your own direct interest that is at stake. If you do not wish to die of hunger, you must not make it impossible for us to collect funding which is vital to you by acts of carelessness of this kind.

In spite of saying earlier that your main preoccupation should be the apostolate and that I even congratulated Father Livinhac for the baptisms celebrated at the Nyanza mission, I still maintain the rules that I have given you previously concerning the institution of a formal catechumenate similar to that which existed in the early Church. You must therefore refer to my previous instructions about this. I would only add here that, in order to impress the catechumens and give them a sign of your satisfaction, they might be presented with some visible religious symbol, like a cross or a medal to be worn around their neck on the day of their solemn reception. From this time onwards, they can take the name Christian and they must be called as such, but not Faithful, which has always been reserved only for baptised Christians. You must not fail to point out that, as Christians, they are on the way to salvation and will go heaven, as long as, before they die, they make an act of desire for baptism and an act of charity.

I am always horrified at the ease with which I see missionaries incur enormous expenses, especially for travel and for useless presents. I can understand these latter, when they are used for winning the favour of chiefs; I do not understand, however, when they are of no use and are the result of wild extravagance. You must keep in mind, on the one hand, that the money you are spending like this has been saved with enormous effort often by poor working women or servants in Europe and, on the other, that events now looming could come and suddenly deprive you of all your resources. Then, what would you do? So, save as much as possible. Although I have not yet received the details I asked of you so as to be able to draw up a normal budget, I can tell you that, until you hear differently, I have arranged that from January 1st, 1881, there shall be made available to you each year the sum of thirty thousand francs for Tanganyika, thirty thousand francs for Nyanza and twenty thousand francs for the intermediary station at Mdabourou. The same amount will be granted to the mission at Kabébé when it is founded. So, without any further authorisation, you may place orders up to this amount, through drafts placed with Mr Greffulhe, and avail yourselves of them either by means of the Arabs or by any other means you may find more profitable.

The Tanganyika mission is invited, if possible, to found the mission at Kabébé. Nevertheless, if the Fathers of that mission find out that there is an easier, less costly route towards the Atlantic Ocean in the company of the Portuguese, they should inform us immediately and not travel any further on into Manyéma. The diaries sent by the missionaries are generally lacking in interest, because they do not go into detail. It is the detail which is of sole interest. The Holy Childhood is pestering us for details of the orphans. It seems to me that it would be easy to have each child tell his story and then write them up later in the diary. I have also asked several times for a kind of minutely detailed inquiry to be made into the historical and mythical traditions of the Negroes of the Interior before they have built up any lasting relations with Europeans, because then it will not be possible to distinguish what is truly of African origin and what is European. I come back to this point, asking the Fathers to kindly do what I have requested and what I desire for very serious motives.