



1887: Lavigerie is slandered in a newspaper for being a multimillionaire. Someone wrote in defence of Lavigerie.

Speech to the Missionaries to announce his application for resignation (1st January 1877)

My Sons,

I doubt if my conscience would allow me to leave you to soldier on alone in such a perilous arena. You already have martyrs among you. I sent them far on to the battlefield. I am called to select those who will succeed them. I cannot do it, I must not do it, without from now on marching with them. You have left everything, homeland, and family, to come here at my call; I have left nothing. I am still attached to my Archiepiscopal See. This thought tortures me: what is an army chief who does not march at its head or a shepherd who seems to flee the ferocity of the wolves? I have therefore consulted God in prayer. My failing strength seems to be a sign of his will for me. I have just written to the Sovereign Pontiff to ask him permission to resign my Archiepiscopal See, to take your habit, your Rule and to share your life; and if required, your death.

Letter to the Board of the Propagation of the Faith (beginning of January 1883)

Gentlemen,

"When nothing is done people moan, and when something is done people shout". This was the maxim a great priest from Nancy used to often repeat to me at the start of my episcopate; I have only too often had the opportunity to prove to myself since then the truth of this saying.

As our activities have increased, it seems that the anger of some and the envy of others have similarly increased and are causing you all kinds of troubles. Saint Paul foresees many of these for the apostolate and among them he mentions the danger of thieves and the peril of false brothers.

The whole world has seen how the French Chamber refused to keep to commitments made to the Holy See and to me and eventually has had deducted from me in future the meagre grant owed to me for Tunisia.

The false brothers have not been any kinder. They benefitted from this occasion to tell people that the grants offered by you for the Missions of Algiers were for me personally. It is to this last point that I would kindly draw your attention and make a request to you. I would be very grateful, Gentlemen, if, in order to avoid the possibility of these unfortunate attacks occurring again, henceforth you enter into your accounts the work of the Society of the Missionaries of Algiers under a heading like the ones used for other congregations. Instead of putting "To His Eminence Cardinal Lavigerie, for Saint Anne's in Jerusalem", I should like you to put "Saint Anne's in Jerusalem, mission of the Society of the Missionaries of Algiers". And similarly for the others: provinces of Nyanza, Tanganyka, Northern Upper-Congo, Southern Upper-Congo, Kabylia, Sudan.

For Algiers, so long as the situation remains as it is, you should put: "To Archbishop Dusserre, Archbishop of Damascus, Diocesan Administrator". It would only be for Tunisia that my name should be kept in this form: "To His Eminence Cardinal Lavigerie, Apostolic Administrator".

In this way, we would be stating things as they truly are and removing from the hands of treachery, unfortunately all too much in evidence even in our own ranks, an opportunity to harm not only our mission work but also religion itself.

