



Letter to the missionaries at the Tabora mission (24th March 1883)

So please be informed that starting from the day you receive this letter, with the payments it contains for this current year 1883, no other promissory notes will be paid by us and you will have to suffer the consequences if you make them. Before placing your orders, calculate what they will cost to buy and to transport. Do not allow yourselves to spend wastefully and cause scandal. I have in my hand a letter in which a superior is asking Father Jamet for enough tea, coffee and preserves that would keep the whole Congregation in these items for a year. Such extravagance in wasting the funds of the mission and of the poor is blameworthy and distressing, since it shows, as I mentioned before, how much the apostolic spirit is lacking in some of you and is being replaced by material concerns.

I come now to one or two particular points to deal with in your last letters and in all that follows I direct my words especially to Father Hauttecoeur.

1) I do not understand how, in spite of all my previous recommendations, you have set up the mission station at Tabora and maintain it in an unhealthy place. I really don't believe this. I order you expressly, as soon as you receive this letter, to look for another location where there is no risk of catching fever, that is one which is situated in a raised position far from any marshes. Whether this is close by or at some distance, it does not matter. What is important is that you are all in good health; without this, you can do nothing. I trust this to your conscience and that of your confreres.

2) For the moment, the Council does not think it can authorise your dividing the community in two as you suggest. It has even felt it necessary to give up the idea of creating a new mission post at Mda-bourou. But, as I said in the preceding article, nothing is stopping you all from moving, along with your children, either to the place you had in mind for the second mission post or to any other healthy spot.

3) Your two auxiliaries must join the three Fathers who are going to Tanganyka because we have projects there for which they will be needed, whereas at Tabora where Saïd Bargach's operations are proving effective, you have no need of armed protection. You must therefore tell these two brothers to leave. Under no circumstances do I authorise you to keep them.

4) Father Coulbois will leave with you some of the Fathers he is bringing, so your mission station will be made up of Fathers Blanc, Giraud, Faure, Brother Marie and yourself. But Fathers Blanc and Giraud will have to go to Kaduma and wait there for Father Girault whom Father Livinhac will send from Uganda, so as to establish, with him as superior, a mission post between the lake and Tabora, quite near to Tabora. So, until further notice, according to the Council's decisions which I am tasked to transmit to you, you will remain with Father Faure and Brother Marie.

That, my dear Son, is all I wish to tell you for today. Father Coulbois and your other confreres will give you more detailed news about the mission and about me. In conclusion, it remains for me to make a fervent wish for you. It is to be truly an apostle and get some sense knocked into your head. I think your heart is in the right place, but, for a superior, the head is just as important as the heart.

I should like to write to each one of you individually, but you know that my duties will not allow this. I content myself with blessing you from far with my fatherly affection.

