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Léo Taxil
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1880

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No More Cockroaches!

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1880

It's an acknowledged fact that France is invaded by cockroaches.

Wherever you might go, in no matter what region you travel, you will see nothing but convents, churches, and monasteries everywhere.

Cloistered or non-cloistered, the cockroaches swarm.

This race of insects is everywhere. It's slowly pursuing its labor of absorption of the soil. If we don't watch out, if we don't decide to use a special insecticide against them they will soon be the masters of France.

Universal suffrage would then rise up in indignation in vain. It will be too late. The right to vote will be crushed by the right to property.

Beware of this progressive invasion and take the appropriate measures.

In the first place, instruct the people, teach them to know their enemy. For if the Jesuits and the other rascals are able to dominate the members of the upper classes, they don't neglect the working class.

The poor man's sou extorted by them and ceaselessly multiplied ends up producing millions.

It is the duty of every man capable of holding a pen to found a newspaper, however modest it might be, in order to propagate the republican truth among the disinherited of our society.

And whoever has the least gift for elocution must make heard the honest voice of liberalism and preach hatred of the priestly caste.

The priest is the principal obstacle to the development of the republic. This obstacle must be smashed. The clergy must be suppressed or else the republic will perish.

It is indispensable that the objective of national policy be the eradication of clericalism.

There's no need to employ violent methods to arrive at this result.

While there is still time we must use the weapon Ledru-Rollin gave us and which consists of a little piece of paper.

At the next elections in October 1881 we will vote for anti-clerical candidates in preference to all others. We will have this watchword: "No more cockroaches!"

No more cockroaches! That is: separation of church and state.

No more cockroaches! That is: abolition of all the privileges accorded to ecclesiastics by the preceding regimes.

No more cockroaches! That is, application of common law to the monks of both sexes and of all robes and orders.

No more cockroaches! That is: promulgation of new laws issued with the goal of preventing the return of the abuses committed by the clergy to the detriment of individuals and the nation!

These three words, "No more cockroaches," constitute an entire program.

If we really want it, they will be the battle cry that will lead us to victory.

The most important and at the same time the most urgent of social questions will be resolved the day when the priest, forced to rely on his own means, disappears from French soil.

For this is the secret of the tactic to be adopted: reduce the clergy to its own resources.

The cockroach being the worst of parasites, we will be rid of it the moment we cut off its provisions.

By suppressing the religious budget on one hand and making the regular and secular clergy strictly subject to common law on the other and by making the congregations cough up their ill-gotten riches, we will annihilate clericalism.

No more cockroaches! No more cockroaches!