

**WHITHER? OR THE BRITISH
DREYFUS CASE: A HUMAN
FRAGMENT OF CONTEMPORARY
HISTORY (1906-1919)**

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Whither? or The British Dreyfus case: a human fragment of contemporary history (1906-1919)
by W. A. Adam

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W. A. ADAM

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A Human Fragment of Contemporary History
(1906-1919)

BY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPT. I - - The National Danger - -	I
CHAPT. II - - Looking Backward - -	14
CHAPT. III - - The Storm Brewing - -	27
CHAPT. IV - - The Storm Bursts - -	37
CHAPT. V - - Pro Fratribus, Pro Patriâ - -	66
CHAPT. VI - - The Re-opened Wound - -	92
CHAPT. VII - - <i>Adam v. Ward</i> - -	115
CHAPT. VIII - - The World-War - -	139
CHAPT. IX - - Resurgam - -	171
CHAPT. X - - Looking Forward - -	177
APPENDIX I - - Abolition of Trial by Jury -	179
APPENDIX II - - The Political Result of the Case -	187
APPENDIX III - - Who's Who - -	190

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THE BRITISH DREYFUS CASE

CHAPTER I

THE NATIONAL DANGER

"It seems the rule must hold, do what we can,—
Man makes the system, system mars the man."

WAR has been defined as the extension of diplomacy. Taking an even more comprehensive view, we might say that war is merely a phase in the progress of civilization, a short cut to those higher conditions of life which without it we should only be able to obtain by a more circuitous route.

To say that the great World War will bring vast changes in its train is a platitude which any one, unconsciously harking back to the imitative characteristics of his reputed ancestors, may repeat without much fear of contradiction. It is not given to everyone, however to realize that the roots of many of these prognosticated changes had taken firm hold in the soil of society long before the War was begun.

We must turn to the best account the tendencies which we note in the body politic, and it is in order to help the citizens of the British Empire to read

aright the lessons of the War, and to realize the necessity of making certain changes in their legal and political system of administration, that this book has been written.

Ever since the outburst of the French Revolution in 1789, the tide of Democracy has been slowly but steadily rising. Sometimes it has overflowed the barriers of human toleration, and thus brought upon itself the inevitable remedy of tyrannical repression. Always, phoenix-like, Democracy has risen again from the ashes of reaction. On the whole, the democratic tendency has made for good, though thinking men of all classes of the community are agreed that its virtue is not without alloy. In order to prevent democratic liberty from developing into arbitrary licence, a more efficient system of checks and counter-checks is needed for the increasingly complicated extension of the administrative machine.

Men still fear the majesty of the law, but where the law has no jurisdiction, there is no standard of honour strong enough to compel those whom democracy has foisted into high positions to obey the unwritten law which they have never read, which indeed they have had no opportunity of reading. For many of them the motto of *Noblesse oblige* has no meaning. It is well if they can grasp the significance of the lower standard of commercial honesty. Sometimes they cannot even do that. This statement is applicable alike to the workman who is promoted to be a foreman, the member of the middle class who is placed in control of a Government Department, and the plutocrat who reclines upon the red benches of the House of Lords.

The first step towards curing a disease is the recognition of its existence, the second is its