

THE DREYFUS STORY

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The Dreyfus Story by Richard W. Hale

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RICHARD W. HALE

**THE
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DREYFUS STORY

BY
RICHARD W. HALE.
OF THE BOSTON BAR

"Report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied!"
HAMLET, V : 2



BOSTON
SMALL, MAYNARD & COMPANY
1899

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INTRODUCTION.

There must be many who do not understand just what Dreyfus did and what was done to him, and why there has been such an excitement about the whole business. To these this little book is offered. It is not meant for the enthusiast or for the student of the case. For such the facts and discussions are in French books, which are already numerous enough to create a bibliography. I only hope here to state the general facts, so that he who runs may read.

Dreyfus was tried in secret for treason, convicted, and sentenced. To justify the conviction, when it was later doubted, the evidence was allowed to leak out, with a result opposite to that expected. The leakage helped the prisoner, and directed suspicion on Esterhazy as probably guilty of the offence of which Dreyfus had been convicted. Esterhazy was sent to a mock trial by the government, and acquitted. His trial was such a travesty of justice that Zola felt it to be a moral duty to force the issue, and wrote an open letter, addressed to President Faure, of such a character that the government was forced to prosecute him for libel. His first

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trial lasted three weeks, with much publicity and heat of passion, and went off abortively on technical points. His second and third trials were likewise abortive, and everybody expected a lull when the most important personage in the Secret Service Department first confessed that he had forged documents to clinch the case against Dreyfus, and then died of a cut throat. The story is that he committed suicide. This dramatic circumstance so far turned the scales that proceedings were begun to secure a revision of the Dreyfus conviction in the Court of Cassation. And those proceedings are now pending.

As the issues are framed, the Honor of the Army and the Safety of the Government are supposed to be staked against the rights of the individual to a full trial at all costs; and the question is which of these forces will prevail. It is complicated with tremendous race prejudice against Dreyfus as a Jew. In the pages which follow, a lawyer has tried to state with some legal accuracy, but without technical language, just what the general facts are. No one can follow the case into its ramifications without being a bore. I may omit things which seem to some important; but, if I succeed in making a statement

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which will enable the gentle reader to lay my book down and say, "I think I understand now what it is all about," I shall have done at least as much as I dare to hope.

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which will enable the gentle reader to lay
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