

EDITORIAL

MAJOR DREYFUS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Dreyfus Case having done its work, and done it well, in tearing down the false pretenses of “military honor” under which the general staff of the French army has strutted, its aftermath is now beginning to perform a vastly more important function—the exhibition of capitalist internationality.

Papers and magazines are now teeming with pictures of Dreyfus and his family, and with biographies of the long-suffering victim. The biographies are interesting. The Dreyfus family is an Elsass family of manufacturers, owning large mills in the industrial center of Muehlhausen in Elsass. There were three brothers. Two attended to business, one, Alfred, took to the army. The Franco-Prussian war broke out and resulted in the annexation of Elsass to the German Empire. Was Alfred to give up his military career? Not necessarily. A way was found to secure his revenues



ALFRED DREYFUS (1859–1935)

from the Muehlhausen mills and at the same time keep his place in the French Army. This was done by himself and one brother remaining French, while the third swore allegiance to Germany, and thus safeguarded the Muehlhausen interests for the family. From these ample revenues, derived from the labor of Germans, the two French brothers, one of them an army officer, lived in affluence, and still continue to draw fat dividends.

This is matter to pause at, and ponder over.

German labor, performed on German territory, and squeezed out of its essence under the protecting wings of the German Eagle, went toward keeping in trim a captain of the French army. Thereupon, when the Gallic conspiracy swooped down upon the devoted head of the French army officer, it still was German labor, performed on German territory, and squeezed out of its essence under the

protecting wings of the German Eagle, that furnished a goodly contingent of the funds needed in order to expose the Gallic conspirators and clip their crest. Finally, the Gallic conspirators being worsted, and Dreyfus vindicated, he is promoted to the rank of Major of Twelfth Artillery, a crack regiment of Paris, in which position,—with muzzles of guns trained upon Germany, as all patriotic French guns must be dutifully trained—it is again German labor, performed on German territory, and squeezed out of its essence under the protecting wings of the German Eagle, that surrounds the present Major Dreyfus with the amenities of life, including Veuve Cliquot champagne, with which to wash down good round military execrations against Germany!

Dreyfus is no exception in this matter. He is the rule. Not Christianity, by breaking through the trammels of tribal gods, but Capitalism has made of the world one nation. It is now for Socialism to perfect the cycle by making of Mankind one Brotherhood.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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