

The Story of *The Freeman**

By FRANCIS NEILSON

SUMMARY: I: MY FIRST MEETING WITH ALBERT JAY NOCK. II: THE PUBLICATION OF "HOW DIPLOMATS MAKE WAR." III: HELEN SWIFT, FOUNDER OF *The Freeman*. IV: NOCK AND *The Nation*. V: PLANS FOR *The Freeman*. VI: THE POLICY OF THE NEW WEEKLY PAPER. VII: THE STAFF. VIII: THE THIRD YEAR. IX: NOCK'S LITERARY STYLE. X: THE CULTURAL DISTINCTION OF *The Freeman*. XI: THE END OF *The Freeman*. XII: NOCK'S EDITORIAL APPRENTICESHIP ON *The Freeman*.

IT IS TWENTY-TWO YEARS since the short career of *The Freeman* came to an end, and strangely enough, the memory of it will not down.¹ It must have been a singularly attractive journal to many of its readers because I am reminded so frequently of its existence and the present need for a weekly of its like. A short time ago a woman who remembers it pleaded with me to tell the story, for, she said, she knew several people who were laboring under strange delusions about how it came to be, how it was edited, and why it suddenly came to an end.

For more than a decade after the last number was published, I received letters from subscribers asking if certain reports concerning the management and editorship were true. I paid little heed to the fantastic stories that were woven around its life and those of its staff and management. Legends, like ivy, cling to strange edifices, but some of those that have grown up about *The Freeman* have not the substance of an old wall or ruined tower for support.

Now that Mrs. Neilson, the founder of the weekly, has passed away, perhaps it would be better for her memory's sake to commit to paper the story of its inception and extraordinary career. There is an interesting narrative behind its be-

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¹ It was my intention to deal with the story of the launching and publication of *The Freeman* in the second part of my "Reminiscences," but of late the requests from my friends to deal with it now have increased, and they urge that I should not wait until my "Reminiscences" see the light of day.

ginning and, as this touches upon some historical matter, I think it should be told.

I

My First Meeting with Albert Jay Nock

IF I HAD NOT KNOWN Brand Whitlock, *The Freeman* might never have seen the light of day. This may seem peculiar to those who have so often asked me how and why Mrs. Neilson decided to spend so much money on a weekly which, because of its "old-fashioned notions," had very little chance of paying its way. Yet it is true, for it was through Brand Whitlock that I became acquainted with Albert Jay Nock.

Crossing the Atlantic on the "Lusitania" in the autumn of 1912, I was accosted on deck by a man who asked me if I were Frank Neilson. The person was Whitlock. We had known about each other for many years, and of all such acquaintanceships this was the only one I can remember when not even a letter had passed between the parties. Whitlock and I had many friends in common, and after we knew each other, we often remarked how peculiar it was that we had never exchanged a line or ever met. Brand spent some time in England, and I took him to the House of Commons and made him known to my friends. After he was appointed Minister to Belgium, he exacted a promise from me to visit him at Brussels. There I went and spent the Easter holidays of 1914 with him at the embassy.

One day at lunch, after we had been golfing at Ravenstein, outside Brussels, he showed me a letter he had received from Nock. From it I gathered they were very old friends and that they had much in common. After the war broke out, I kept in close touch with Whitlock, and we corresponded frequently. He was deeply interested in the book that I was writing upon diplomacy and urged me to keep him informed of its progress.

"How Diplomats Make War" was finished the day before Christmas, 1914, and my daughter, Marion, typed every word of it. Those friends who read it in manuscript urged me to find a publisher at once. I sent it to two English houses; both rejected it as an unpatriotic document. Then I tried the London branch of my old publishers, J. B. Lippincott Company. The letter that I received from them denouncing the work could not be called courteous. After these rebuffs, such men as Ramsay MacDonald, Dr. Stanley Mellor (who held Martineau's pulpit in Liverpool), and three or four members of Parliament who did not see eye to eye with the government thought it better to wait until the readers at publishing houses had sobered up. For everybody expected the war to be a short one and, as Lord Esher said, those who were in charge of it believed, to a man, that it would be over by Christmas, 1914.

I had been very ill during the autumn, and my doctor advised me to get away from London. However, it was difficult to know where to go. As the war progressed, I began to feel the economic pressure, as so many others did, and, to reduce the outlay, determined to double up with my parents in Liverpool. They were feeling the pinch and, as they had a large house, there was plenty of room for my wife and two children. The arrangement of combining the two families under one roof lessened considerably the expense and was a great relief to my parents and to me.

Shortly after I finished "How Diplomats Make War," I had another bout of sickness, and the doctor advised me to seek a place across the river on the Wirral Peninsula, there to enjoy the sun and air. I was fortunate in finding one the first day of my search. Captain Pritchard, who formerly commanded the "Mauretania," had retired and lived at Meols. The war hit him severely, and he was obliged to get rid of his house.

It was roomy enough for us, and late in the spring we moved across the Mersey.

We were scarcely settled in our new abode when I received a letter, written at Oxford, from Albert Jay Nock. He had a note of introduction from Brand Whitlock and asked if he could come to visit me in June [1915] and stay for some time. It afterwards turned out that he was to sail back to America from Liverpool, but the day of the ship's departure had not been fixed.

When I greeted him at Lime Street Station, I saw not the man that I had pictured from the description given me by Whitlock, but a medium-sized, thin person who seemed to be suffering from some nasal complaint and an eruption upon his face. I thought he looked rather ill, and I hoped we were not to have a sick patient on our hands. We were able to put him up with some degree of comfort, and he said he was glad to be with us. For the first day or two he volunteered little information about his trip, but I gathered from remarks he made that he had seen Robert Dell in France, Ramsay MacDonald in London, and Gilbert Murray at Oxford. It did not take long, however, for me to discover that my visitor was more interested in looking for information than in giving any particulars about himself.

One night when my people had retired, he and I sat up far into the morning, and in that chat I learned he had been sent on a mission to England by Bryan, who was then Secretary of State. Brand Whitlock, so Nock said, had informed someone at the State Department that I knew "what the trouble was all about." He referred several times to the strange situation in Washington in which emissaries of the President were entering into negotiations with the British Foreign Office about which the State Department was not informed. He left it to me to guess who the persons were and how difficult

it had been for him to get any definite information concerning the work they were carrying on. In this long conversation with him I realized that he was withholding from me the true purpose of his visit, and before we parted that night I said, "You can be quite frank with me, Mr. Nock. I have to harbor more secrets of the kind in which you're interested than they'll ever know about at the State Department at Washington."

Then I told him that if it would help him at all I would let him have the manuscript of "How Diplomats Make War" to read—but only to read. Before he left to return to America, he had persuaded me to let him take the work to New York and find a publisher for it.

There seemed to be a hitch somewhere, however. I had told him of my meeting with B. W. Huebsch in London at the time of the outbreak of the war and that, as I had mentioned to him my intention of gathering my notes together and writing a book on diplomacy, perhaps the work should be offered first to Huebsch. The idea did not seem to strike Nock as a good one, and he thought it would be better for me to leave it to him because he had "great influence" with certain men in the publishing business. Taking the manuscript, he left Liverpool on the "Baltic."

II

The Publication of "How Diplomats Make War"

HE WROTE TO ME occasionally during the following months but never mentioned anything about finding a publisher for "How Diplomats Make War." Nor was there a word in any of his communications about his mission to Europe or what work he was then engaged upon.

As the summer of 1915 wore on, I lost weight, and the neurasthenic pains in my arms and neck increased. My first wife and girls—all three born in America—were out and out

pacifists and urged me to take them back to the States. I spoke to my doctor about this, and he said that he thought the trip would be a good thing for me. With this purpose in mind, I went to London to consult my lawyer and to ask the advice of friends. When I put the matter before Sir Thomas Lipton, he strongly urged me to take the voyage, and Lord Furness was good enough to find accommodations for me on the "Rotterdam." After I was sure of my passports, and that the passage was booked, I wrote to Nock and told him I hoped to see him within a few weeks. He met us at the dock and took us to a small hotel where he had engaged rooms for us. He and other of my friends in America had imagined that the lecture agencies would find plenty of work for me.

A day or two after we were settled, I asked Nock if he had done anything about finding a publisher for "How Diplomats Make War." "No," he said, "but I gave the copy to Ben [B. W. Huebsch]." When he noticed my disappointment, he looked a little guilty and suggested that we might go to Huebsch and find out what he thought about it. Ben greeted me warmly and said he would give the book his attention and let me know his opinion in a few days.

Nock had not touched the manuscript. When it was submitted to Huebsch, it was in just the same state as it had been when I wrote the last line at Christmas time, 1914—six months before I met Nock. Both Huebsch and I asked him if he would prepare it for the printer. He readily consented to this, and it was fortunate he did so because I was offered some speaking engagements in and about Boston during the period when the work on the galleys was done.

He wrote an introduction to the book, which I did not see until it was published anonymously as the work of "A British Statesman." The reason why the volume did not appear under my name was that I was still a member of Parliament

and had not yet received from the Prime Minister notice of the acceptance of my resignation.

In his introduction to the first edition of "How Diplomats Make War," Nock says:

I met the author in England last June, when I was looking into the political aspects and antecedents of her situation. He was reticent at first, but circumstances favoured his confidence, because I already knew a great deal of what he had to tell me. Finally, he mentioned having the manuscript of this book, and said that he had intended publishing it about the time the war broke out; in fact, his preliminary arrangements had been made. The year had yielded new material, however, which he had put down in the form of dictated notes. He gave me all the manuscript, telling me to edit it as I saw fit and use my own judgment about publishing it in the United States.

I brought the book home with me and put it together with practically no editing; perhaps four pages would cover my excisions. We were then in the midst of the trade-controversy with England and the submarine-controversy with Germany. Feelings were high, and I thought on that account that the real purport and value of the book might be obscured if published then. But that has subsided now; and intimations reach me from abroad which seem to show that many of our opinions may shortly undergo revision, and that we may shortly get a better and saner view of the belligerents' policies, and also of the policy they indicate for us. So the time seems right to publish. . . .²

In this statement there are one or two details that should be corrected. The manuscript Nock took to America was the finished work, and the book was published as it was written, with the exception of a paragraph of seven lines which appeared to him to be an anticlimax. When he pointed it out to me, I readily consented to deleting it. There was no "putting the book together." It was complete. The editing that he performed in his excellent way was concerned with spellings, certain terms that were somewhat foreign to the average American reader, and page headings. The mistake that he makes in saying that neither Ramsay MacDonald nor

² First ed., New York, B. W. Huebsch, November, 1915, pp. ix-x.

his associates in the Union of Democratic Control ever "saw this book or heard of it or knows anything about it"³ is a natural one, for I did not tell him who had seen the work. MacDonald read it in March, 1915, but I presume that, when Nock saw him later in the year, it never occurred to Ramsay to mention that I had written a book on diplomacy.

There is much more that could be said about the publication of "How Diplomats Make War," but the story, as I have set it down, should be sufficient to satisfy those who for so long have bitterly complained about rumors of the alleged co-authorship of Nock in the work. Never in my hearing did he give the slightest hint of pretending to share its authorship with me, and for years I refused to listen to the stories that were circulated about his claim.

It was not long before I realized that it would be no easy matter for me to make both ends meet in the United States, if I had to depend upon the fees paid to forum speakers. After six weeks I saw my funds depleted and little chance of replenishment. The plays which had been so successful a few years before were no longer given, and one day I told Nock that I would have to turn in some other direction to make money for the larder. He asked if I had a piece to submit to managers. Luckily I had brought with me my dramatization of Charles Sheldon's novel,⁴ and though it seemed utterly improbable that a play of that type would interest people during a war, the Edison Company bought the picture rights of it. The sum they paid enabled me to keep out of debt. Then I had a few more engagements to speak at small fees.

Anxiety about the future of my wife and children was like a millstone round my neck, and the doctors I had to consult told me it was an obstacle to the improvement of my health. For the first time in my life I found it an effort to speak for

³ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

⁴ "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong."

an hour. Friends and physicians repeatedly said, "Rest!" but I knew that if I submitted to their advice, in all probability I would be put to bed. There was nothing for it but work.

I was in the midst of writing "A Strong Man's House" when a lecture agency in Chicago offered me more than a dozen speaking engagements, if I could leave New York at once. It was then nearly Christmas time.

III

Helen Swift, Founder of *The Freeman*

NOW THERE MUST BE an interlude—not a digression—in which I must deal with my acquaintanceship with Helen Swift Morris, the founder of *The Freeman*. I met her at a large dinner party given by Sir Henry Dalziel and Lloyd George in the House of Commons, in 1911, when my play, "The Butterfly on the Wheel," was the success of the London season. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Morris were the chief guests at this party. Dalziel placed me next to Mrs. Morris and, when, after dinner, we repaired to the terrace of the House, I spent an hour telling her the history of the institution.⁵ A friendship sprang up which ripened rapidly during her stay in London. Soon my first wife and my children were visitors at the Morris apartment at the Ritz Hotel.

In 1912 business about my plays took me to America, and I visited Chicago where the Morrises entertained me. I little thought at that time that Edward Morris' days were numbered, and I was deeply shocked the next year when I learned of his death. We wrote letters of sympathy to Mrs. Morris, and she responded with friendly warmth. Then in 1914, just before the war broke out, she visited England, and when we saw her off at Waterloo Station she suggested to my wife that we should all return to the United States.

⁵ At her death, singularly, she was preparing a paper on the subject. See AM. JOUR. ECON. SOCIO., Vol. 4, No. 4 (July, 1945), p. 511.

The call to lecture in and about Chicago, in 1915, was perhaps the most extraordinary event that could have happened. It was quite unforeseen—utterly unexpected. As soon as the arrangements with the lecture agency were completed, I telegraphed to Mrs. Morris and received in reply an invitation to stay at her house. She came to the station to meet me, and I was amazed to see the shocked expression on her face when she looked at me.

“You’re ill,” she said. I did not know I had changed so much. Perhaps I could not have lived through that awful winter, traveling here and there in heavy snowstorms, had it not been for her care and the wonderful refuge of her palatial house.

Soon I had more offers of engagements than I had the strength to fulfill, and I was obliged to lay my novel aside because I have never been able to write while traveling on a train. How I got through the season I do not know, for it was a prolonged fight against physical weakness and pain.

I was obliged to lay up again early in the spring of 1916, and this respite from traveling and lecturing gave me the chance to finish “A Strong Man’s House.” I sent the manuscript to Nock because I had promised, after “How Diplomats Make War” was issued, to let him have whatever I wrote so that he could immediately get in touch with the publishers. He returned the novel saying it was a good yarn but that he did not know anyone in New York who would take the trouble to read it at that time. I had fulfilled my promise and felt free to send it to Hewitt Hanson Howland, of the Bobbs-Merrill Company. He accepted it at once, and the book was published the following autumn.

Nock admitted he had been mistaken about it and that he was surprised at the extraordinary reception it got from the reviewers. There was talk of dramatizing it and movie com-

panies bidding for the rights, but the entrance of this country into the war the following spring put an end to all that, and it died prematurely.

For more than eighteen months after I left for the west, I saw little or nothing of Nock. He wrote occasionally but gave me no information of what he was doing. I gathered from his letters that he was hard up. At odd moments I had worked upon a piece called "Barriers." But as the theme developed, the United States approached the dreaded participation in the European war. Realizing this, I knew how futile it was to think of submitting this play to any manager. It served a useful purpose, however, for I read it to several church gatherings on Sunday evenings, and its effect upon the audience was overwhelming.

Most of my speaking engagements during 1916 took me away from New York, and my family became impatient at my long absences. They liked war-bent America less than belligerent Britain, and my wife and children made up their minds to return to England when the strife was over. As I had given some of the best years of my life to the reform movements of Great Britain and saw all the efforts swept away by the war, I determined to remain in this country. Then my wife and I decided we should be free to do as we desired, and we agreed to separate. We were divorced in 1917, and shortly after the decree was given, Mrs. Morris and I were married.

Within a week or two I was alarmed to find how many new friends I had made in this world. Lecture agencies, interviewers of the leading newspapers, theater managers, actors, and many in other pursuits had extraordinary plans for my future. The fact was that I was already pretty well booked up for meetings far into the spring of 1918 and had offers enough for three robust lecturers to fill.

IV

Nock and *The Nation*

AFTER A FEW WEEKS in New York, when Helen met Nock for the first time, we went to Pass Christian; but it was a long time before I began to regain my strength. There was still hanging over me my engagements for the ensuing winter, and these I determined to keep. My wife tried to persuade me to cancel them, but as I regained a little strength, I felt I had no right to do so. The itinerary took me far out west—to Portland, Seattle, and many towns in the Prairie States. When I returned to Chicago from this tour, there were only two remaining engagements to fulfill, and Helen decided to come with me.

I succeeded painfully in getting through the first of them, but at the second I failed completely in the middle of my address, and she took me home. After a long and wearisome convalescence, Nock came to see me. I believe he was down and out. He stayed with us for over a week, and during that time he interested himself in going through bundles of my manuscripts (which were chiefly speeches and lectures that I had given to literary and debating societies) and also through plays I had written but never thought worth while showing to Frohman, for whom I had been stage director in London.

When Helen put to me the matter of Nock's desire to look over these literary relics, she told me her chief idea was to get them into some order and catalogued. During this time, she and Nock had many conversations about what I should do for the future, when my strength returned. Some time after he left, I learned from Helen that he had given her the idea that *The Nation* was a paper which might be bought and made into a completely new vehicle for my ideas.

This seemed to me to be an extravagant notion. I knew

Oswald Garrison Villard slightly, and I never imagined he had the remotest intention of withdrawing his interest from *The Nation*. We often discussed the paper, Nock and I, and both found it wanting in a definite economic policy and in a severely critical attitude toward the State and politicians. In other respects we readily granted that it was every bit as good as the London weeklies.

When Nock put that idea into Helen's head about *The Nation*, he was certainly looking to the future. I would not do him an injustice, but it must be understood that he was in touch with a very rich woman and a man who, he thought, would enable him to obtain a position which he undoubtedly believed he was capable of filling. It seems to me now that the place I held at that time was absurd, for it was not until after *The Freeman* had been issued for two years that I learned from my wife the inwardness of the story I am now setting forth.

Nock's visits to Chicago and to Helen's farm in Wisconsin became frequent. I was always glad to see him and to defray the expenses of his trips. At the farm he lived a life of complete leisure. He neither golfed nor fished, and, as I was getting stronger, I indulged in these sports as often as the doctor permitted.

About this time Oswald Garrison Villard paid us a visit. After long discussions, it was arranged with Mrs. Neilson that Nock should join the staff of *The Nation* and that she should be responsible for his salary. When we returned to Chicago in the autumn, Nock came to see me about the new job he had undertaken.

"What am I to write about?" he asked. Night after night for a fortnight, we discussed what we considered to be the essential matters for a so-called "liberal" weekly to deal with. List after list of subjects was made, and notes taken of the

material upon which to build the articles. One night Nock said to me, "Some months ago you spoke to me about an essay and a lot of notes that you had written upon the State. You might let me have a look at them."

Then he asked, "What turned you on to that subject?"

"Nietzsche," I said. "I read 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' in 1900. About a year later I read Spencer's 'Man Versus the State' while journeying to Munich and Vienna. After that trip I returned to London with a lot of notes on the problem, and for years after, I read many volumes that dealt with it."

When we retired, he took the notes with him to his bedroom, and I have never seen them since. Frequently I asked him to return them, but the excuse always was that he had left them at his mother's house "over in Jersey."

When Nock began his term with Oswald Garrison Villard, his first articles appeared in *The Evening Post*,⁶ and they were based upon my notes on the State. After he started to write regularly for *The Nation*, I felt obliged to criticize some of his work. Several times he had asked me to be quite candid and examine his writings, for he said he was "a bit rusty, and apt to skim the surface of things." He was quite conscious of his defects and failings, but his contempt for "the literary gents" and "the uninformed intelligentsia" was so deeply ingrained in him that he did not think it worth "the grind" to "brush up" on the source material he merely referred to in his work. I insisted it was necessary for him to go over the background of English and American history if the class of work he had planned for *The Nation* was to be of value as an educative influence.

Then began the long process of giving him the Radical tradition, which all through the centuries had been the basic force of the campaigns for fundamental reform.⁷ He knew

⁶ "Democracy Here and Abroad," Jan. 30, 1918.

⁷ The later dedication of *The Freeman* to the Radical tradition created something of a

scarcely anything of the English essayists, and I doubt to this day whether at that time he knew much about the part the London Radicals and Paine had played in the Revolutionary War. Indeed, I was surprised very often at his wonderment at certain hackneyed expressions that I used—"grievance before supply," "the King shall act on the advice of his ministers," and so forth—expressions which were upon the tongue of most of the men who had fought against the Hanoverian governments and campaigned later with Cobden and Bright.

These chats upon the history of English Radicalism were the cause of my making, for his benefit, the notes which afterwards appeared in the little volume, "The Old Freedom."⁸ I wrote the chapters of it for his information, with no idea of ever putting it into book form. When it was in about the state in which it now appears, he urged that it should be published, and at his suggestion I sent it to Huebsch. It met with immediate success.

Nock had been on the staff of *The Nation* but a few months when I gathered from him that he did not like his job. I received letters from him every week, asking for "an idea or two." Those that I sent to him were seldom used, and I often wondered whether they were of too critical an order for the editorial policy of *The Nation*. At any rate, Nock's dissatisfaction was evident, and now and then I heard from Mrs. Neilson that he had written saying he was not getting on at all.

Villard came to see me recently,⁹ and in chatting about the days when Nock joined *The Nation*, he told me that he understood from him that Mrs. Neilson and I were disap-

stir in American literary circles and had no little influence on political thought here. For an account of my own introduction to English Radicalism, see my forthcoming "Reminiscences" and "The Decay of Liberalism," *AM. JOUR. ECON. SOCIO.*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (April, 1945), pp. 281-310.

⁸ New York, B. W. Huebsch, 1919.

⁹ May, 1946.

pointed with the paper and suggested that Nock should withdraw from the staff. There was no truth in this. Neither my wife nor I changed our opinion about the quality of *The Nation* during Nock's term of service. In a letter, written in July, 1919, in which he refers to his association with Villard, Nock mentions that he was

pushing the secret treaties. The public is in the mood for that now and it is extremely effective. I don't know what our outcome is going to be and have ceased thinking about it. It is a certainty that the thing [*The Nation*] will never have a fixed direction unless he decides to sell and no one knows whether he will do that or not.

For some time he had written to Mrs. Neilson about his dissatisfaction with the policy of the paper and the editorial ability of Villard. It was Nock, indeed, who paved the way for his release from *The Nation*. I have letters in which he refers to the plans for *The Freeman* as early as September, 1919, while he was still engaged with Villard. I do not like to accuse him of double dealing, but from what I have heard from Villard himself, he took one course with us and quite a different one with his colleague.

Here is a letter that shows clearly what was in his mind and what his attitude was toward *The Nation*:

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
14-XI-1919

Dear F.N.:

I received your letter enclosing Villard's, about my return to *The Nation* fold. He had already written me, most handsomely proposing the same thing. I do not see what earthly service I could render the public in that capacity. True, *The Nation* has grown greatly these past months, and is now well over 50,000. But it is not the kind of thing I have any interest in producing, nor is there any prospect of its becoming such. It is incomprehensible to me how any set of men could have gone through this experience with trade-unionism without learning one single thing about the fundamental economics of their situation. It was an opportunity to put

the paper is a commanding position, and they fumbled it shockingly. It is simply incredible that they should have written what they did without adding a paragraph to show that while the socialization of industry may be ever so proper a thing, it nevertheless gets nowhere as an economic adjustment, because economic rent will devour socialized industry just as it devours capitalist industry. Socializing industry means nothing but increasing the number of your shareholders. It does not change the economic basis of industry a single iota.

Think what a strong leader on this theme would have meant, just at the time that the paper socialized its own industry. *The Nation* has had opportunity after opportunity of this kind and flunked them all, for no reason but impenetrable stupidity. I can't be interested in that sort of thing, because I can't see that it points the way to any solution of the industrial problem. I like them all, and they are kind and friendly, but there is no more chance now than there ever was for anything but a "liberal" paper, and one can't waste energy on that. If I were you, I should write Villard simply to that effect. Why should you help maintain something that you do not believe in? . . .

Yours aff'ct'ely,
A.J.N.

V

Plans for *The Freeman*

ONE DAY in the autumn of 1919 Helen told me that she had heard from Nock and that he wished to come to the farm to see us. I little dreamed it was to be a momentous visit. Each day I went out bass fishing as the season was at its height. In my absence Helen introduced Nock to what she called "woodsing," her favorite recreation in the country—that of gathering wild orchids and other rare plants for her wild-flower garden. I could not picture Albert enjoying the horticultural delights Helen loved so much. After Nock had been with us for a week, one night at the dinner table Mrs. Neilson said, "We have a great surprise for you. We're going to start a paper of our own."

The first scheme was that we should have a weekly and I should be the editor, free to come and go, and Nock should be

"the chore man." I am afraid I put a damper on their ardor by asking many questions that had not been considered. The first was how I was to be editor of a paper and go to Europe year after year, according to the plans she was making for the future. It was her desire to go with me to see the Continent as I knew it.

Another difficulty was that of finding a staff competent to undertake such an enterprise. I presumed the weeklies then published had the best people obtainable for the work. Although my questions were difficult to answer, both Mrs. Neilson and Nock insisted the attempt was worth making. He returned to New York determined to see what could be done.

We took an apartment at the Ritz-Carlton and spent most of the winter of 1919 in New York. Sometimes I saw Nock every day in the week and, as the work of getting the staff together developed, I discovered new tasks I would have to undertake, which neither Nock nor my wife had considered. These became so formidable as the winter wore on that many times I quailed at the thought of them and how they affected the fate of the enterprise. I must say frankly that Nock admitted we had taken on a difficult job, and I feel sure that he realized he had led me astray in imagining I was to have any freedom at all.

In our chats about the editorial policy and the class of contributed articles we should seek, I found that he was not intellectually equipped for the task. The impression that he had given to Helen and me about his general knowledge was that he was a well-versed man. But when it came to the test, he failed to meet it.

One night we were discussing the work to which Matthew Arnold set his hand in trying to teach the British Philistines there was something more than sheer materialism worth striving for; and that culture, from his point of view, could not

be overlooked by the smug and self-satisfied people who were concerned with the education of the masses. In this chat Nock revealed to me that he did know "Friendship's Garland," but was only slightly acquainted with "Culture and Anarchy," "God and the Bible," and "Literature and Dogma." He admitted he had to "brush up," for he had had no chance to do much reading in recent years. Later, in perusing Nock's articles published in *The Freeman*, I realized that he must have been familiar with "Passages from the Prose Writings,"¹⁰ for frequently there are whole sentences taken from these excerpts.

We then turned to the poems, and Helen was thunderstruck when she learned that he did not know Arnold's sonnet on Butler's Sermons, because he so often quoted a line or two from "The Analogy of Religion." Indeed, that work was the one he referred to in his dissertations more than any other. He did not know Arnold's famous Essay on Tragedy, and when one day later we touched on the matter of publishing poetry in *The Freeman*, I found him sadly deficient in his knowledge of the great British poets.

Mrs. Neilson put me up to a dodge to test him. She was a Browning scholar and had for years studied in the Browning class conducted by Jenkin Lloyd Jones at Lincoln Centre, in Chicago. She thought a man who was so great an admirer of Butler's "Analogy of Religion" should know Matthew Arnold's famous sonnet on Butler's Sermons. When the opportunity presented itself, I asked Nock if he was familiar with *Browning's* sonnet on Butler's Sermons. "No, I can't say I've read much of Browning. I'd like to see it."

Helen went to her boudoir and came back with Browning's poems and handed the book to Nock. He took it with him when he retired for the night. The next day we waited in

¹⁰ London, Smith, Elder, & Co., 1880.

vain for him to say something about his quest; but not a word did he utter. It was about this time that he began to suspect Mrs. Neilson was not deeply impressed by his show of learning. He became very wary in her presence.

One of Nock's favorite authors was Rabelais, and for years I had heard him refer to the bawdy passages with an unctuous zest that amused me immensely. Once when he asked me for a subject that would do for a contributed article, I told him that he might take passages from Rabelais on education and write an interesting essay. Gargantua's letter to his son, Pantagruel, is undoubtedly one of the finest records of parental advice. It might very well be contrasted with the work that Macaulay did in India, as set forth in Sir George Otto Trevelyan's "Life." Nock did not remember it, and Mrs. Neilson wondered if the obscene passages were of more interest to him than those that were becomingly serious, and of course among those of true cultural value.

I took down a copy of Rabelais and turned to chapter VIII of the second book and passed it to Nock. He did not read it but just glanced at it and said, handing the volume back to me, "Oh, yes, I had forgotten about that."

Tiring of this subject, he then asked for my lecture on Socrates and from it he put together an editorial that was read with great interest. Nock had not seen or referred to this lecture since he and Mrs. Neilson had decided to catalogue my manuscripts two years previously. This is an example of his tenacious memory, when he wished to exercise it.

One of the most remarkable things about my association with Nock was that at no time did he discuss with us the Greek or the Latin classics. Mrs. Neilson asked me one night, after I had been talking to him about the prose versions of "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey," if I thought that he had read them. My reply was that after so many opportunities to

speaking about them, I could not imagine a man who knew his Homer keeping silent when the conversation was about the poet. It was the same with the dramatists. I feel sure he had only a very slight acquaintance with Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The only occasion upon which he referred to the great tragedy was after reading something in an essay of Freud which touched upon "Oedipus Rex." He admitted one night that Mrs. Neilson was much better read than he. She undoubtedly knew Homer and the dramatic poets.

Perhaps there was some congenital reason why he avoided any real exhibition of his knowledge. It was one of the most unaccountable things I ever came across in a man who quoted so much. The only examples of his own work that I knew after I met him were an article on the Single Tax in a magazine and an essay or two on the same subject in a pamphlet.

In my notes upon the State, from which he shaped his first two articles for *The Evening Post*, there were references to Sir Henry Maine. Some time afterwards he asked me to explain to him the position that Maine took and where he could find a summary of his views upon the ancient civilizations. I had incorporated these in a lecture that I used for literary and debating societies in England, and I let him have it. Then he remembered that Henry George referred to Maine. I urged him to get Maine's works and study them carefully because they were indispensable for a true understanding of conditions before the State—through conquest—was imposed upon communities.

It does seem inexplicable that he had missed so much, and, yet, there is this to be considered—his early reading had not registered firmly in his mind. Was he conscious of this when discussion began, and did he fear to commit himself? I have met men who condemned him—hastily, I think—as something of a faker or, should I say, a mind vampire. From these

charges I have defended him many times because I have frequently met people who give an entirely false impression of their intellectual worth, owing to a diffidence to enter debate. Therefore, it is possible that Nock knew far more than he gave utterance to. Nevertheless, there remains the impression he made on certain other people that he was not nearly so well versed as some of his friends imagined.

VI

The Policy of the New Weekly Paper

WHEN THE IDEA was brought forth of starting a new weekly based editorially upon the physiocratic principle of fundamental economics, I never thought of looking for an editor with a knowledge of the things above referred to. It was Nock himself, in his conversations, who brought about the questionings and the doubts that followed as to the depth of his learning. It was Nock who set me off inquiring into the cultural caliber of my colleague. Before the first issue of the paper appeared I was convinced that he was something of a sciolist and, at the same time, I was aware that with a few smatterings from here and there he could carry on a brilliant discussion which impressed many who heard it.

I told him I had been brought up in a school that would never tolerate an assumption of learning where learning did not reside. My masters thrived on challenge. They were undoubtedly priggish in this, but no one I knew could pass muster in the circles that schooled me by merely reciting the names of well-known authors and one or two quotations from their works.

This peculiar business so fascinated Mrs. Neilson that she urged me to put him to further tests. In my father's house, Butler's "Analogy of Religion" was a gospel. When I was about sixteen, often on Sunday nights at the Bible lesson I had

to read a page or two from "The Analogy." To satisfy Helen's curiosity, I started a debate on what I called (provocatively) "The anarchical principles laid down by Butler."

Nock soon became tired of the discussion and shifted the subject to precise definitions of economic terms, such as "property," "wealth," and "capital." I had marked more than a dozen copies of the weeklies in which there were articles that revealed to me that their authors did not understand the meaning of these terms. I wrote out what I considered to be the definitions that should be kept faithfully by the editors of the paper.

The late autumn and winter of 1919 were given up very largely to Nock. The matter of selecting the staff was entirely in his hands, but all questions concerning the paper's policy and the subjects of the articles were left for me to decide.

I chose the name, *The Freeman*, because I wished it implied in the title that the editorial policy was based upon a theory of economic emancipation. Nock jumped at the idea and he was as keen as I was to avoid anything that smacked of latter-day liberalism or mere political democracy. It was to be a Radical paper (in the old English sense of the term) opposed to all the nostrums of Socialism and bureaucratic paternalism.

Nock would sit with us for hours, taking notes while Helen and I talked about the things we objected to in other journals. From the first I held out for a simple Saxon style, the sparing use of Latinisms, as few "ologies" and "isms" as possible, and clear-cut definitions of simple economic terms. He made pages of notes and seemed rather to enjoy the idea of refuting in the columns of the new paper the blunders made by some other editors. For example, I protested against the use to which some authors put the term "laissez-faire." When I

pointed out to him that there had never been such a system and that it was an ideal of the Physiocrats, he made a special note of it. Again, "competition" was not a system invented by the devil to catch the slothful, nor was "individualism" a dodge resorted to by crooks to make money quickly. He chuckled when I asked him to be careful with such words as "esoteric," "oriented," "frame of reference," "reaction," etc.

Oddly enough, one would have thought that a student of "Progress and Poverty" ought to have been conscious of most of the objections that I brought against the misuse of economic terms by writers in other journals. But Nock never once reminded me that Henry George had dealt with all this. Still, I knew that great men often nod, and so I concluded that the famous Georgist who lived to become the editor of *The Freeman* was too busy with the immediate task of starting the paper to bring to mind the never-bettered analysis of economic terms and phrases that Henry George has given us in "Progress and Poverty." Later on I was forced to agree with some members of the staff that it was sheer indolence on the part of Nock that caused so many misunderstandings.

A month or two after *The Freeman* started, he spent a long weekend with us in Chicago, and during that time I did not find a book in his room, and I doubt whether he wrote a line. I looked in each day to see that everything was as it should be for his comfort, and I marvelled at his neglect of Helen's wonderful library which he admired so much. I spoke frankly to him about his indolence, and he said that, when he was tired, he could get along very well without work.

"I believe," he remarked, "that people look down far too many pages and read too little."

I agreed. But for a man in his position I knew he could not afford to waste any time. Perhaps I made a great mistake when I consented to supply him with ideas. I have often been

reproached for it, but I have the consolation of knowing that *The Freeman* surmounted all the difficulties encountered in that winter of 1919-20 and came forth with flying colors.

VII

The Staff

MRS. NELSON was discouraged when she came to realize Nock's limitations, but it was too late to withdraw from the venture. He, however, undeterred, went on like a Spartan with the work, and when the first few numbers were published, my wife admitted that her fears had been quite unnecessary and that he had shown he was equal to the task to which he had put his hand. He really did perform a miracle, and it does not in any way diminish the glory to which he is entitled when I say that never in my experience was there a staff that worked together so harmoniously and effectively as the one he gathered about him.

Van Wyck Brooks, chief of the literary department, Suzanne LaFollette at an editorial desk, and Walter Fuller for the rewrite work gave a professional stamp to the first issues—one the paper never lost. Geroid Tanquary Robinson contributed editorials and notes full of the most interesting information, set in clear English sentences. He was a staunch aide and a thorough workman. So much may be said of Harold Kellock who joined us later. Huebsch wrote as good a line as anyone, and he produced much of great value.

I have recently been looking at some of the letters that Nock wrote about his difficulties in getting a staff together. He surmounted every one and performed what I considered an extraordinary task. When the first issue appeared in March, 1920, I had not the faintest idea how it had been done. I had engaged with Nock to let him have, week after week, notes for Current Comment and editorials. In looking over

the first number, I find a third of the paragraphs in Current Comment based upon the matter I had sent in and three of the four first editorials written by me.

In the second number, five of the paragraphs of Current Comment are printed as I sent them in, and in this issue three of the editorials are by Mr. Robinson, one by Miss LaFollette, and one by me.

In examining the bound, marked copies preserved by Mrs. Neilson, I find the names of the persons who contributed the unsigned articles. In the arrangement made before the first issue appeared, it was clearly understood that all Nock wanted from me was my ideas, notes, and particulars for the editorial section of the paper. I promised to supply him but made it clear that he was not to expect any finished work from me, for I was far too busy with other affairs to give the time to the editorial polish that I had exacted as a paramount requisite of the work.

Every week during the first year I sent Nock enough material to fill half the pages of the first section. In glancing at the marked copy of the authors of unsigned Current Comment, editorials, and Miscellany for the first time in twenty years, I can understand how so many of its readers have protested against the gossip that *Nock was The Freeman*. However, the part I took in it really does not matter, for I had no professional experience and did not pretend to be an editorial writer. What I object to is that Nock should neglect to mention Suzanne LaFollette, Geroid Robinson, and Ben Huebsch, who contributed mightily to the columns of the first section.

As for the signed articles, many of them came from sources about which Nock knew little or nothing. Huebsch did more than he in finding writers for the paper. But where Nock triumphed was in getting that staff together, and it was a stroke of genius on his part to find Walter Fuller, the finest

rewrite man I have met in all my long experience. He had a cultural background that was rare, and I have known some of the best English writers of my day. I was familiar with many of those who gathered round Alfred Orage when he published *The New Age*, and Orage was my literary god for this work before I went into English politics.

I have seen Walter Fuller take an article containing one or two good ideas and reshape it so that its writer would swell with pride when he saw it in print. The toil and patience he devoted to slipshod manuscripts were worthy of the highest commendation. Indeed, he was the essential cog in the wheel of that machine.

Walter Fuller had instructions from me to use the material I sent in as he thought best. Nock was present when Fuller asked me several pertinent questions about how far he was empowered to rewrite the notes, the editorials, the miscellany, and special articles contributed by the staff. Nock agreed with my suggestion that Fuller should consult him when important changes were necessary, but for all the usual procedure of editorial correction, he was to be held responsible. There was never any trouble about this matter, and Nock is quite right in saying in his account of the work done at the office:

I feel free to speak thus frankly of the paper's quality because I had far less to do with forming or maintaining it than people think I had. . . .

I never gave any directions or orders; sometimes a suggestion but only as the other staff-members made suggestions, provisionally, and under correction from any one who had anything better to offer. I did not assign subjects for editorial treatment. Each of us picked his own, and we all discussed them together, once a week. I did a good deal of writing for the paper at one time and another, but the managing editor treated my copy like any one else's; it was in no way sacrosanct.¹¹

¹¹ "Memoirs of a Superfluous Man," 2nd ed., New York and London, Harper and Brothers, 1943, pp. 168-70 *passim*.

If ever there was another co-operative effort performed by a literary staff, free to exercise initiative and resource equal to that of *The Freeman*, I never heard of it. As for my part, I did not regard myself as more than a feeder of ideas. Anyone was welcome to take the material I sent in and make the best use of it for the paper. The specials I wrote from time to time, such as those on Manship's bust of Rockefeller and the sketch of Bonington¹² (both reprinted in other papers), added to the variety of subjects and perhaps lent some color to other sections of the paper.

It is rather amusing for me now to find special articles and long miscellanies that I sent to Nock in the first year appearing in the third and fourth years of the paper. When Mrs. Neilson had her copies of *The Freeman* marked so that she would know who contributed the unsigned matter, she told me, in reviewing the volumes, that she had frequently to cross out the name that had been given to the item because she remembered that I had either discussed the subject with her or had read the note to her before posting it off to Nock.

The first inkling I had that there was a small rift in the relations of the staff, which on the surface seemed so happy, came when the dinner was given in celebration of the first year. When this was planned, it was understood by all of us that it would be an intimate affair and that only one or two outsiders should be invited. A week before it took place, Nock came to me and said that his friend, Charles Nagel, who had been Secretary of Commerce in Taft's cabinet, should be asked to attend because he was such a good friend of *The Freeman*. The gentleman came, and when the time arrived for the speeches, his name was the first on the list. He spoke unduly long and told the gathering about all the wonderful things Albert Jay Nock had performed. This started the rumor that *Nock was The Freeman*.

¹² "Paul Manship's Vision," Vol. I, No. 6 (April 21, 1920), p. 138; and "Richard Parkes Bonington," Vol. I, No. 3 (March 31, 1920), pp. 66-7.

When I rose, I told the gentleman that all the staff, including Mr. Huebsch, were editors and that no one person connected with the paper should be singled out as deserving the only laurel wreath.

After the dinner was over, two or three came to me and protested against the speech Nagel had made. One friend, not connected with the staff, was so incensed by it that I took Nock aside and told him he had made a blunder in asking Nagel to speak. Of course, the impression that was made was that Nock had been a party to the indiscretion. From that day on Mrs. Neilson lost faith in Albert Nock, for she had received letter after letter from him in which he told her he could not carry on without the work I was doing for the paper.

The reason for Nock's statements in his letters to Mrs. Neilson about my contributions is now plain to me. When he learned that we intended to spend the summer in Europe, he was alarmed and feared he would run short of copy for the paper. He had not prepared for such an event. Yet he knew it was settled that we should leave America as soon as I received my naturalization papers. When I told him the plans were made for the trip, he wilted. He said, "You don't mean to say you're to be gone for six months and you won't have leisure to do any writing?" I told him that was my intention, for it seemed to me the paper was well launched and it was time now for the staff to get along without me.

"Surely you will send me stuff from abroad, because you will be at the very center of affairs in European capitals and hear what is really going on."

I promised to keep him informed. He then gave me an address to which I should send the communications. Where he lived, how he lived, I do not know to this day. His frequent trips to see his mother "over in Jersey" were all I heard

about his wanderings, and often enough it seemed to me that this was merely an excuse. It was none of my business how he spent his time away from *The Freeman*. And whenever anyone came to me with rumors about him, I laughed them off and, not infrequently, told the gossip to mind his own business.

VIII

The Third Year

SO THAT NOCK might have an abundance of fresh material to deal with in my absence, I gave him the articles on new revelations of secret diplomatic dealings which I had written for *Unity*. These afterwards appeared in a book called "Duty to Civilization."¹³ I told him he would find there quite sufficient for a couple of dozen interesting editorials. Moreover, I let him have my copy of Edmund Morel's "Truth and the War."¹⁴ When he looked over the material, he must have decided that he could put it to better use. Perhaps he did. However, that is a matter for the judgment of those who have read "The Myth of a Guilty Nation,"¹⁵ which was based upon the material I left with him.

When these articles appeared in *The Freeman*, he signed a pen name, "Historicus," but after the last installment he made the following announcement:

I have published these articles anonymously because they are a mere compilation and transcription of fact, *containing not a shred of opinion or of any original matter*. The reader can go through them from beginning to end and check the accuracy of each statement and quotation for himself. Such work, it seemed to me, should be judged strictly as it stands, without any regard whatever to the personal authority, or lack of authority, which the compiler might happen to possess. Now that the series is at an end, however, there is no reason why I should not acknowledge myself as its compiler, and I hereby do so.

¹³ New York, B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1923.

¹⁴ First ed., London, The National Labour Press Ltd., 1916.

¹⁵ New York, B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1922.

The best effect that this series could possibly produce would be to cause its readers to study the works of my friends Mr. E. D. Morel and Mr. Francis Neilson. I can not place too high an estimate upon their importance to a student of British and Continental diplomacy. They are so thorough, so exhaustive and so authoritative that I wonder at their being so little known in the United States. Mr. Morel's works, "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," "Truth and the War," and "Diplomacy Revealed," are simply indispensable to a student of the subject. I shall be more than rewarded for my work in compiling this series if it induces a demand for these volumes. Mr. Neilson's book "How Diplomats Make War," is not an easy book to read; no more are Mr. Morel's; but without having read it no serious student can possibly do full justice to the subject.¹⁶ (italics mine)

From London, Paris, and Berlin I sent to the address Nock had given me enough material for editorials, Current Comment, and Miscellany to supply his needs week by week. Very few of these contributions ever reached the columns. When we returned from Europe I found everything going smoothly with *The Freeman*. The editorial staff had been enlarged by the addition of a new member, Harold Kellock, who contributed excellent work. Nock's fears that my absence would be felt were not justified.

All through the second year I had to work just as hard as I had done during the first year. It was in the summer of 1922 when Nock began to show the signs of wear and tear. He was frequently under the weather, and members of the staff were seriously disturbed at his condition. Shortly after I returned from Europe I discovered that Nock was passing through a very delicate period of his life, one in which some men suffer agonizing phases, and have to be watched constantly. His mind was sometimes like that of an oversexed youngster, inclined to take satisfaction freely wherever it was to be found. This caused me no end of uneasiness, and when I learned from Mrs. Neilson that she had heard the gossip

¹⁶ Vol. IV, No. 89 (Nov. 23, 1921), p. 253.

about his condition I spoke to his colleagues of it. They seemed to realize how difficult it was for me to do anything of positive worth in the matter, for he was a peculiar person in many ways and the last one to take anyone into his confidence.

Weeks went by before I summoned enough courage to broach the matter. He took my presumption in good part, but the result was nil. My questions as to his condition and my advice were met by stubborn silence. I felt sure, however, that he did not think his failing affected the future of the paper. Probably it did not occur to him that I had cause for anxiety.

I was then convinced that the ship was running on an uneven keel, and I urged the skipper to find another man to help him on the bridge. I had been warned by members of the staff that if something were not done about Nock's ill health he would break down. Medical attention and rest were necessary, so I was told, and I was asked again to speak seriously to him about it. I did, but I never got anywhere with him. It seemed like banging my head against a stone wall every time I tried to get anything out of him.

"I'm all right. Don't you worry about me. Perhaps it's only my blood pressure."

Someone then had the silly notion of sending him to a psychoanalyst, and I believe that he consented to the ordeal. Since that time I have had a modicum of sympathy for the practitioner who tried his arts upon Albert Nock.

This explanation is necessary because of the rumors that were constantly coming to me, for they were responsible for the anxiety about his health felt by everyone connected with the paper. They and I knew that it would be impossible to carry on without him. We searched for a man to take some of the burdens from his shoulders, but we were not successful in finding the right one.

All this distressed Mrs. Neilson beyond measure, for it meant that I had to keep closely in touch with the paper and redouble the work of supplying material for Nock. Naturally my wife wanted me to be free to go to winter resorts, and, as the summer approached, she saw that I would be unable to go to Europe for a short visit. How we succeeded in turning our third year without a breakdown was a mystery to me, for in the midst of our trouble, Walter Fuller decided to return to England. What we were to do without him seemed to me to be an insuperable difficulty.

The conviction that the days of *The Freeman* were numbered deepened as we passed through the winter of 1923-24. Nock was really ill, mentally and physically. I never knew what the actual trouble was, but this I do know: it was a marvel he was so well at times, for whether sitting or standing, he was the laziest man I ever met. The way he lolled in a chair when he was taking a meal indicated to me that much of his suffering was caused by indigestion. There seemed no possible way for the food to pass in its true course from the throat down the gullet to the stomach, and afterwards into the bowel. Many times I tried to teach him how to sit at the table when he was eating, but it was of no avail. He admitted that he was very sloppy about his manners.

He knew, whenever I criticized him, that I had only one object in view, and that was to keep him fit for the work he had undertaken. He never resented my advice, but he could not follow it. So it was with his reading and study. He had got out of the habit of taking up a book and "plucking the guts out of it." So many, according to his idea, were written by bungling craftsmen that he wearied of the task of informing himself.

"I haven't an idea in my head; do send me something." This became a frequent appeal. Although he had an abun-

dance of notes for articles and editorials, I doubt now whether he took the trouble to glance at a quarter of them. Walter Fuller, afterwards, in London, told me he never remembered Nock distributing any of the material I sent to him for members of the staff. He informed me that occasionally Nock would pass him two or three articles of mine which he found either too long or too overburdened with statistical detail. As for the greater part of the material I sent to him, Fuller said he never saw it.

After my interviews with Walter, I was forced to the conclusion that I did not know half the story of *The Freeman* and its editor. Fuller would tell me something, and then after taking in the surprised expression on my face, he would say, in his timid way, "Didn't you know that?" He referred only to the conduct of the editorial department, the apportionment of work, and the share Nock contributed in comparison with the others on the staff. Walter did not refer to any of the scandals so many people are interested in.

Mrs. Neilson, of course, wished to know the reason for Fuller's visit, and when I told her some of the things I had learned from him, she was very sorry for a moment that she had had anything to do with starting the paper. But, thank goodness, she got over that, and I think that in later years she was glad she had been instrumental in making *The Freeman* possible.

IX

Nock's Literary Style

NOCK HAD NO PITY at all for those who attempted to practice on him the wiles that he used upon others. He would sometimes damn all and sundry who were not, as he thought, fully informed. And, yet, I have known him to take great trouble with a young writer in helping him to better his style. He is perfectly right when he says, in his "Memoirs":

I never yet made the mistake of a hair's breadth on a person's ability, one might almost say sight-unseen. . . . I can smell out ability as quickly and unerringly as a high-bred pointer can smell out a partridge.¹⁷

He never wrote a truer line. I can vouch for this, and during the period of *The Freeman* I met many men who contributed articles, who benefited by their association with the editor. Once when he was roundly denouncing certain authors who wrote for other weeklies, I ventured to suggest that these men might be sincere and earnest and not at all conscious of the mistakes they made. Then from his pocket he drew a clipping from one of the papers and read a few sentences to me. He asked if I could place my hand on my heart and say I was convinced the writer was sincere. He had me there. It was a flagrant piece of buncombe and the author was a well-known man.

This may explain some questions that have arisen about the sameness of the notes that he wrote for *The Freeman*. Many complained, after the paper had been published for a year or more, that there was too much of Potash and Perlmutter, Artemus Ward, Dooley, and Dickens, and that perhaps it would be better to vary the quotations by selecting some from other authors.

Another complaint was that there was no bite, no sting, and scarcely ever a stab in the paragraphs that he wrote. The style was so good that one did not realize why so much space had been used to expose the matter and why, if it was worth consideration at all, it lacked "punch." After examining page after page of the paragraphs that he wrote, I now see what the complainants objected to. I had not noticed it at the time. The only conclusion I can come to is that referred to above: Nock was always afraid to commit himself. He was a slave to what the Scot calls "pawkiness," and he freely admitted that he would much rather treat things whimsically

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

than seriously. I am frank to say, however, that I liked his notes, but Mrs. Neilson found them somewhat monotonous.

Well, whatever the reason was for the way he wrote his paragraphs and articles, it must be said that no editor in America at that time ever succeeded in maintaining so steady a stream of master work as did Nock.

At no time did he give me the slightest idea that he knew French. Indeed, he did not even so much as quote a Latin line to me. I often wondered by what peculiar art he succeeded in not only hiding the profundity of his knowledge from me but also the principles he insisted upon in others as rules for the conduct of life.

He was an enigma to my friends, and when they questioned me about his attainments, there was little that I could say in the way of informing them. My old friend, Dr. Ernest G. Sihler, who had been Professor of Latin at New York University since 1892 and was the well-known author of several volumes, somehow disliked him. One night at a large party I gave in honor of Willem Mengelberg and his wife, my attention was drawn to a group in the corner of the room where, at its center, were Sihler and Nock. When I went over to learn what the acrimonious dispute was about, I heard Nock saying to the venerable doctor, "But you must admit the Romans were great engineers."

Sihler drew himself up to his full height, looked right over the top of Nock's head, and with a gesture of intense disdain, swept his hand through the air and turned away on his heel. I learned afterwards that Sihler had remonstrated with Nock about the Latin quotations interspersed here and there in the unsigned articles of *The Freeman*. He thought it was not good style to parade one's learning and, moreover, some were irrelevant.

When Henry Nevinson came over, we saw him several

times. He did not know what to make of Nock. It was the same with Arthur Ponsonby who could "get nowhere with him." Still, all of these people recognized that Nock was a master craftsman and that he had succeeded in making *The Freeman* a weekly that had to be respected. I wonder how many of them realized that in writing there is no difficulty about giving the impression that one is well versed. It is quite another matter in conversation and debate to sustain such a position. There is no chance for question and rebuttal when one is reading an article or a book, but in conversation questions cannot be avoided. For those who think it worth while to enter into discussion and have the matter out and "argue with it," there is nearly always the desire to get as much information as the controversialists can give. No serious person argues a point unless he is interested in it and its solution. I found in general company very often that Nock had not a word to say. He prided himself on being an "accomplished listener."

When Elena Gerhardt, the great German lieder-singer, came to dine with us, several of the company who were admirers of *The Freeman* were glad to meet Nock. At dinner he talked to the women on each side of him about the opera of the old days. They knew no more about opera than he did, and he got along famously. Indeed, he made a great impression on one who was a subscriber to the Metropolitan and the Philharmonic. After dinner, Henry Goldman and Stevenson Scott buttonholed the famous editor and attempted to discuss an article written by Walter Pach and another that came from the pen of Élie Faure. Nock tried to defend the attitude of Pach toward modern art and also the severe criticism that Faure had levelled at the English portrait painters. It was pitiful to see the way Goldman and Scott exposed the shallowness of poor Albert.

When my mind turns back upon these events, I cannot recall an occasion when Nock seemed to be happy in dispute. A rather laughable incident occurred the night Max Epstein and his wife entertained Albert and Elsa Einstein. Nock thoughtlessly dropped a German phrase, and a lady standing near him sprang at him, saying "Please, do come to Dr. Einstein and explain for me that my husband is a physicist and a friend of Professor Michelson."

Nock's face was a study, but he extricated himself from the dilemma by saying, "Excuse me a moment, there's a friend beckoning to me." And he bowed and left the group.

X

The Cultural Distinction of *The Freeman*

I SHOULD LIKE NOW to refer to one or two points I may have overlooked. When all praise is rendered to the work in the editorial section there is yet something more to be said of the splendid coterie of accomplished writers who contributed a series of signed articles that brought distinction to *The Freeman*.¹⁸

For some years I had studied several of the European weeklies and found that most of them lacked cultural essays on subjects and characters that had been overlooked as time passed and lay neglected in volumes on out of the way shelves of libraries. With the aid of Ben Huebsch, we all went to work to find authors who would furnish us with contributions of a purely literary standard. We decided *The Freeman*

¹⁸ Out of a list of more than a hundred contributors of signed articles I find the following well-known names:

Edwin Muir
Padraic and Mary Colum
Charles A. Beard
Conrad Aiken
Hendrik Willem Van Loon
Lujó Brentano
Stephen Graham
Henry B. Fuller

Henry W. Nevinson
John Butler Yeats
Norman Angell
Arthur Symons
Carl Sandburg
Bertrand Russell
Pitts Sanborn

Lincoln Steffens
St. John Ervine
John Dos Passos
Robert Dell
Walter Pach
George W. Russell ("A.E.")
Henry Longan Stuart
Daniel Gregory Mason

was not to be a weekly of the type that dealt only with the questions of the day, an occasional review of a play, a critique of a concert or a virtuoso, and closed with Letters to the Editor and Book Reviews.

How we succeeded in accomplishing what was said to be a delightful feature of the paper, I can scarcely tell. Looking back, it seems as if the contributors themselves took the matter in hand and wrote the most entertaining short essays to be found in any weekly. The student may turn to the volumes of *The Freeman* and find in the section I am referring to what writers of distinction published over a period of four years—brief articles on a variety of subjects, which were not only charming works of literary art but educative in the best sense of the term. The names of the authors who wrote these widely admired vignettes were all as well known in the world of belles-lettres as the remarkable coterie that Alfred Orage gathered round him in the best days of *The New Age*.

It has been overlooked that Mrs. Neilson herself (under the pen name of Helen Swift) wrote for the paper. Two of her short stories, "The Chicken-Woman and the Hen-Man"¹⁹ and "Zachariah Jones,"²⁰ were selected for O'Brien's Anthology, the former receiving three stars and the latter two. The articles she contributed about nature and country scenes and happenings were welcomed by such men as Charles Montague, Algernon Blackwood, and other English writers of repute. Alas, she received no encouragement from Nock, and when I asked her to write more of the Zachariah Jones stories²¹ she said she thought her work was not up to the standard the paper called for.

¹⁹ Vol. VIII, No. 184 (Sept. 19, 1923), pp. 36-7.

²⁰ Vol. VIII, No. 185 (Sept. 26, 1923), pp. 62-4.

²¹ These were later published as a book, "Zack Jones, Fisherman-Philosopher," Chicago, A. Kroch & Son, 1944.

My friend, Will Lissner, who has been through every issue of *The Freeman*, has asked me to give an idea of the work that I contributed to its columns. This is really impossible, for I have neither the time nor inclination to peruse page after page. But to oblige him I have scanned the columns of the first year, which were marked at Mrs. Neilson's request by Miss Emilie McMillan, who knew the writers of the unsigned paragraphs and editorials. Taking no account whatever of material used by others, I find my writings included 42 marked editorials, 138 paragraphs of miscellany and notes, and 8 special articles, poems, and letters.

I think this is a fair showing for a man who at first agreed to send in only a few ideas because he wanted time to enjoy a life of leisure with his wife. The work which pleased me more than the contributions referred to above was that of meeting authors and suggesting subjects to be dealt with as cultural and unusual literary sketches, which might give a rather unique and individualistic stamp to the paper. I look back now with pleasure upon my chats with Llewelyn Powys, Laurence Housman, Harold Stearns, Geroid Robinson, and many other writers who contributed signed articles of unusual value. What this meant to *The Freeman* cannot be adequately described in mere phrases of praise. Many critics thought it was the chief factor that lent distinction to its columns.

XI

The End of *The Freeman*

IT WAS NOT LONG after *The Freeman* closed down that strange rumors came to my notice about the conduct of the paper and the part that Nock and I had taken in its production. There were a good many people who resented the idea of terminating it so suddenly. From the letters that I received one could have gathered the impression that these

protestants had assisted in maintaining the expense of the venture. One wrote saying that it was a national calamity and that the question of money ought not to be considered. Others advised that subscriptions should be called for to carry it on. It was surprising to find how many people there were suggesting ways of obtaining funds for it and how few offered even a five-dollar bill to start the subscription list going. For four years these enthusiasts had enjoyed the paper and, seemingly, during that period the idea never entered their heads that the whole cost of it came from one purse. But the question of expense had nothing at all to do with the decision to terminate the career of *The Freeman*. Moreover, its founder was the last person in this world to accept financial help for such a venture from anyone.

As early as the autumn of the year it closed I received an anonymous letter from one of the writers who had contributed largely to its columns, saying that a relative of Mrs. Neilson had circulated the report that Mr. Nock withdrew from the paper because every article that I sent into it had to be rewritten from beginning to end by him. Unfortunately Mrs. Neilson saw this letter and asked me what I was going to do about it. "Nothing," I said. "Anyone who would believe such a yarn is not worth bothering about."

But the rumor grew, and then for a long time I was pestered by friends to give it the quietus. Some people went to the extent of inquiring who was responsible for circulating this report, and they were successful in tracing it to its source. Mr. Nock was asked several times to speak out openly about the matter and state frankly what his literary relations had been with me during the career of *The Freeman*, but he never was known to set the matter right, and I have not heard that he acknowledged the receipt of one letter inquiring about the rumor. Mrs. Neilson wrote to him about it, but she never

had a word in reply. She knew better than anyone else my understanding with Nock from the first, but because a friend of hers, it was alleged, started the rumor, she hesitated for family reasons to deal with the matter herself. Indeed, I told her that she was to have nothing to do with it.

I took no more notice of the quarrels that were carried on for years between the friends of Nock and those of *The Freeman*, who protested against the rumors, until late in 1938. Then my attention was called to a review of an essay by Nock, written by Will Lissner. It appeared in the December number of *The Monthly Freeman* (quite another paper) issued by the Henry George School of Social Science. In this review Mr. Lissner stated that Nock was part author of "How Diplomats Make War." I protested against this, and my secretary, Miss Evans, wrote to the editor, giving him the facts of the writing and the publication of the work. In *The Monthly Freeman* of May, 1939, the editor inserted the following apology:

In a recent article we stated that Albert Jay Nock collaborated with Francis Neilson on the famous book, "How Diplomats Make War." Our attention is called by Mrs. Marion Melville, of England, to the fact that Mr. Neilson was the sole author of this book. On a recent visit to our office Mr. Neilson explained that Mr. Nock wrote an introduction for a later edition,²² which accounts for our error. Mrs. Melville is the daughter of Mr. Neilson, and was his secretary at the time he wrote the book.²³

The letter from my daughter was conclusive, and any honorable person would think that Nock would have contradicted the report, particularly as he was on the editorial council of that paper at the time the statement was made. Mrs. Neilson and several other people wrote directly to Mr. Nock,

²² Nock wrote an introduction for the first edition. The second edition was published in May, 1916, and had no introduction; nor did the third printing (January, 1918). Nock contributed another introduction for the fourth printing (November, 1921). For the fifth printing (October, 1940) Dr. John Haynes Holmes wrote the introduction.

²³ Vol. II, No. 7, p. 9.

asking him to deny the statement of co-authorship, but he neither did so nor did he acknowledge the letters.

I was not surprised, for as Nock had let other reports circulate without a denial, I scarcely expected that he would contradict this one. What possessed him to take such an attitude is a mystery. He could have held no grudge against me, for I had done nothing but good for him from the first day I met him until he disappeared from my sight forever. Perhaps the fact that he owed me money was the reason for his extraordinary action. He often said that the best way to get rid of a nuisance was to lend the beggar a sum on the solemn promise of repayment. I never asked him to repay me anything. Indeed, I do not remember that I ever asked anybody to do so and, yet, I never helped a man or a woman with the idea of getting rid of a nuisance.

After Nock passed away on August 19, 1945, further fuel was added to the fire when some obituary notices stated that he was co-author of "How Diplomats Make War." It is, therefore, to satisfy my friends that I have at last determined to give the facts of my association with him. For years they have urged me to do it, and I have ignored their requests, but now I feel the matter should be settled once and for all.

A few days ago I received the following letter from Will Lissner:

April 25, 1946

Dear Francis Neilson:

The Freeman was the fruit of your collaboration with Albert Jay Nock, so I suppose your account will deal adequately with Nock. While you are at it, I hope you will lay at rest the reports which are continually circulated that Nock collaborated with you on "How Diplomats Make War." These reports arose from the publication of the statement in a biographical sketch of Nock in the 1933 edition of "Who's Who in America." The statement was repeated from "Who's Who" in my afterword to Nock's "Henry George: Unorthodox American," and in a condensation of that afterword published in *The Monthly Freeman* in December, 1938. Shortly

afterward, in May, 1939, *The Monthly Freeman* ran a correction, denying Nock's co-authorship.

But despite the correction, the report would not down. *Current Biography*, in May, 1944, p. 42, wrote, "Nock's first book, 'How Diplomats Make War,' was written with Francis Neilson and published in 1916." And when Nock died on August 19, 1945, the same statement was made in *The New York Herald-Tribune*. . . .

Why not settle this once and for all? Why not ask the publisher of the book, your friend, Mr. Ben Huebsch, if, when Nock handed him the ms. in 1915, did Nock claim to be part author? And ask him if, when the book went to press, was it understood that Nock had had any part in its authorship? As the publisher, he should be able to settle the matter. All good wishes,

Sincerely,

Will Lissner

For fifty years I have been familiar with the destructiveness of rumors political, diplomatic, and social. I know, from examining their value and how they arise, that in most cases there is neither smoke nor fire but that a mendacious person is necessary to set the thing going. Ever since this controversy began twenty-two years ago, I have wished to believe that Nock was neither responsible for starting the rumors nor, when he knew of them, gave them his support. I imagine when he heard what was said, that he just shrugged his shoulders and kept silent. That would be characteristic of him. But when I read the biographical note in "Who's Who in America" of 1933,²⁴ Volume 17, I was at last convinced that he had more to do with the circulation of these stories than I had imagined.

For nearly forty years, at various times, I have received from the publishers of "Who's Who" biographical proof to add to or correct in some way or another. I think "Who's

²⁴ Nock says in his book, "A Journal of These Days," June 1932-December 1933 (New York, William Morrow & Company, 1934, p. 40) that he received "a circular from the miserable fellow in Chicago who publishes *Who's Who*, asking me to buy his book, in which I have steadfastly declined to appear." Somehow "the miserable fellow in Chicago" succeeded in overcoming Nock's scruples, for his biography appears in the edition of that very year.

Who in the Theater" was my first experience, and then, of course, when I entered Parliament, there were the English "Who's Who," "Debrett," and other such books. The experience taught me that the person himself whose biography was under consideration was held responsible for the facts to be recorded. When I saw in "Who's Who in America" the biographical note on Nock, in which he claims co-authorship in "How Diplomats Make War," I no longer hesitated about giving my friends the story of our association.

Recently I had a long chat with B. W. Huebsch about the publication of the book. Before he left me he promised to set down in a letter his recollection of what took place, and here is the information that I have received from him:

May 7, 1946

Dear Frank,

It was in August 1914 just after my return to London from Leipzig where I had been more or less marooned during the first weeks of the war that I met you. . . . Then we met [again] . . . at a party at Mrs. F.'s on Cornwall Terrace, Regents Park. There we had a talk in which you told me of the book on which you were working ["How Diplomats Make War"] and you agreed to let me see it for purposes of publication when it was ready.

The sequel to our conversation was the appearance, in my office at 225 Fifth Avenue, of Albert Jay Nock in the Summer of 1915. I doubt if I had met Nock before unless in a most casual way. . . . He had recently returned from England he said and was charged by you to deliver the manuscript referred to above. . . . I have no mental impression of anything other than that he brought me *your* manuscript. There was a discussion about the title page; Nock said that you desired to remain anonymous and we talked about possible pseudonyms, and I believe that there was final agreement on "By a British Statesman" after your arrival in the early Autumn of 1915.

Also there was agreement that Nock should write the introduction. I am not sure now whether he brought the introduction with him or whether it was finished later, perhaps when you were here, but I am inclined to believe that it was the latter. In that conversation, too, he gave

me to understand that he had "gone over" the book, which in the language of this trade would imply checking or revision and even perhaps some cutting. It is an elastic term but by no stretch of the imagination can it be construed as collaboration. I do not assert that he used the words "gone over" or "edited"; I am only trying to reflect the impression which I have carried since that day, namely that he did what an expert assistant sometimes does to the best of manuscripts where statements need to be scrutinized for accuracy, ambiguities, contradictions, for clarity and all that.

Consider my astonishment, then, upon learning that Nock has been variously recorded as the co-author of "How Diplomats Make War," and without any trace of denial by him. Certainly from the day he brought me the manuscript until about ten years later, when our association on *The Freeman* ceased, there was not the slightest intimation from him that he participated in the creation of "How Diplomats Make War."

Yours sincerely,

B. W. Huebsch

Nock's first idea about *The Freeman* was that it should be supported for two years to give it time enough to develop and test the public demand for such an organ. Helen told him to take three years. In his "Memoirs of a Superfluous Man," he says: "I had no illusions about the enterprise, for I knew it had no prospect of ever even beginning to pay for itself, and therefore it could not last long."²⁵

This is not quite correct. The question of paying for itself never arose at any time during the meetings when the plans were advanced. Mrs. Neilson did not dream it would pay for itself for she set her face against taking paid advertisements and she thought of guaranteeing the cost solely from the point of view that it would be a vehicle in which I could freely express my opinions. It was Nock who put the notion into her mind. If Helen had thought for a moment that it was to be a commercial enterprise, I doubt very much whether she would have had anything to do with it. It is true that all of us at first hoped it might in time make both ends meet,

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 167.

but before the end of the second year we indulged no more in such a hope.

In the final volume there is "A Last Word to Our Readers":

. . . Helen Swift Neilson, who, for the first time since the inception of the *Freeman*, permits her name to be used, agreed to support the *Freeman* for three years, during which time it was hoped that a body of readers sufficiently large to justify a continuance would be found. She voluntarily added one year to that gift; and now, as the paper ceases to be, she joins with the editors and the publisher in thanking the friends whose favour and co-operation it has found. . . .²⁶

During the fourth year the contributed material grew in bulk and the costs mounted steadily. Nevertheless we kept on, but after the turn of the new year (1924), Nock asked for another man to be added to the editorial staff. He knew I was dissatisfied with two writers he had employed, but he said he had searched everywhere and had failed to find the men for the job. He admitted again that he was "not up to it" and said he needed a long rest. In this—my final interview with him about the future of *The Freeman*—he charged that it was the administration of it that was to blame for the poor response to the advertising expense incurred the autumn before.

This insinuation was so uncalled for, so false, that I told him I would advise Mrs. Neilson to bring the paper's career to a speedy end. There was nothing else to be done. It was with deep regret that my wife agreed to stop publication at the end of the fourth year. She dealt generously with the staff, particularly with Mr. Nock, but we did not see him again after the last issue appeared.

XII

Nock's Editorial Apprenticeship on *The Freeman*

THIS IS the plain story of how *The Freeman* terminated its career, and all the legends fostered by Nock and his friends

²⁶ Vol. VIII, No. 204 (Feb. 6, 1924), p. 508.

are not worth the breath the gossips use in circulating them. The explanation he makes in his "Memoirs" is not fair, and for him to publish such a report of his association with a staff that made his position secure for four years is utterly unjust. He does not mention one of his colleagues by name nor does he give a word of credit to Geroid Robinson, Van Wyck Brooks, Walter Fuller, Suzanne LaFollette, or the others who worked week in and week out to make *The Freeman* what it was—a great success.

I have read every line of Nock's account of his connection with *The Freeman*, as set down in the "Memoirs of a Superfluous Man." I would point out to those whose quarrels have made it necessary for me to write my version of the history of the journal that Nock himself was conscious he had served an apprenticeship while he sat in the editorial chair. He says:

. . . The best way to make sure of how much one actually knows of a thing, and especially to find out how much one does not know, is to write about it. When one writes from the standpoint of a certain philosophy week by week one is continually thrown back upon one's fundamental principles and positions to reexamine them and satisfy oneself that the logic of one's conclusions from them is water-tight. My experience was diversified and searching, and like virtually all of the weightier experiences which luck has brought my way, it came at precisely the right time for doing me the most good.²⁷

This corroborates remarks he often made to me and also avowals written in letters to Mrs. Neilson that he felt sure "no one had ever enjoyed a more beneficial experience in so wide a scope of essential studies" than he.

A friend has sent me "A Journal of These Days," written by Nock. I have examined some of the passages, and the best I can say of these is that the author's memory failed him.²⁸ A

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 174.

²⁸ As I know of at least three separate persons now engaged in the work of collecting the correspondence of Nock, I would advise them to exercise the greatest care in sifting the statements contained in his letters and be very sure they are not merely the aberrations of a gentleman with a deceptive memory and a distorted imagination. There are so many

perusal of this "Journal" confirms my belief that Nock, even as late as 1934, did not take the trouble to verify his statements. He writes about incidents with which I am familiar. Consider only two examples of many lapses of memory: he refers to a party given by Dr. Beck and says (November 21, 1933): "After dinner one night at Dr. Beck's in Chicago, Einstein and a young violinist, I think a Hollander, and a Dane at the piano, played Bach's double concerto perfectly."²⁹

It was not Bach's double concerto that was performed; it was a trio of Mozart. Nock was staying with us at the time, and we took him to Dr. Beck's.

In another paragraph he says (January 31, 1933):

The Kaiser is said to be publishing his correspondence, showing England's main responsibility for the war. What I never could see was how the German Foreign Office had the wool pulled over its eyes in the matter of England's probable neutrality. England's attitude was determined by the very factors that Prince Lichnowsky counted on to keep her neutral—the movements for Irish, Scotch and Welsh home rule, the land-values campaign and the formidable consolidation of the three great labour-unions. All these came to a head in the early summer of 1914, and their culmination made it certain that England would enter the war. How Prince Lichnowsky could have thought otherwise is inconceivable. Apparently no one has looked up the progress of those three movements in the period August, 1911, to July, 1914, and no one is entitled to an opinion on this question until he has done so. I was in England during this period, and followed the matter from the inside, and I know whereof I speak.³⁰

When I met Nock in June, 1915, he knew next to nothing about international affairs, and he told me that it was his first visit to England. After he had read the manuscript of "How Diplomats Make War," he frankly admitted that no one in Washington was informed about the history of the causes of the war, and he termed my book "a priceless document" and

blunders in this "Journal" of his that I feel sure his friends, after examining them closely, will admit that in "The Story of *The Freeman*" I have treated him leniently.

²⁹ "A Journal," p. 276.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

"a corker." It is evident from the paragraph quoted above that, ten years after *The Freeman* ceased publication, Nock had not cured himself of his sloppiness in dealing with facts. The events he refers to were covered in my book "How Diplomats Make War." Moreover, many other volumes dealing with these matters were published by American, British, French, and Italian authors years before he wrote the above paragraph.

Those who came across Nock during the thirties and fell under his sway met an entirely different person. That Nock I did not know, and that one did not exist in the days of *The Freeman*. Some of my friends could not make out what had happened to bring about a change so remarkable. I knew of no volume that he had written before he published "The Myth of a Guilty Nation."

When he burst into full literary bloom with book after book, I received letters from old subscribers of *The Freeman* asking how he had been able to perform such feats. The problem, however, presented no difficulty to me. Although I must confess that I have read none of his later volumes, save those referred to above, I am free to admit that Nock had in him all that was necessary for the writing of interesting books. Once he abandoned the indolent course, there was no reason, so far as I could see, for his finding any hazard in treating many subjects in a masterly way. He had all the accomplishments that were necessary for winning half the battle. He knew how to write and how to use material effectively. He was paid off generously by Mrs. Neilson, and I presume he had the good sense to spend it wisely and secure a rest for his mind and reflect upon the concerns that would make an enjoyable future for himself.

Some day his efforts will be reviewed by those who will put the cold searchlight of impartial investigation upon his work.

When this is done, I firmly believe that it will be found that Albert Jay Nock's great triumph was in carrying *The Freeman* through four remarkable years and in making it a paper of world renown.

New York