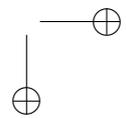
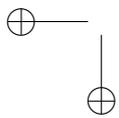
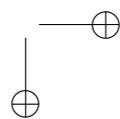
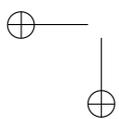
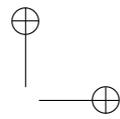
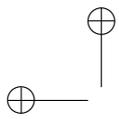
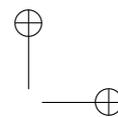
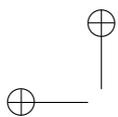


Letters from
Albert Jay Nock
1924–1945



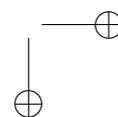
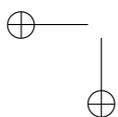


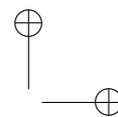
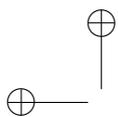


Letters from
Albert Jay Nock
1924–1945

To
EDMUND C. EVANS
MRS. EDMUND C. EVANS
and
ELLEN WINSOR

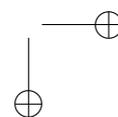
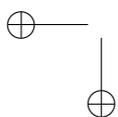
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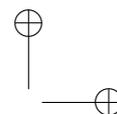
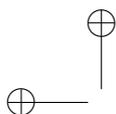




2022
First Published in 1949

Typeset by Isaac Waisberg

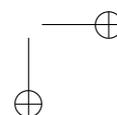
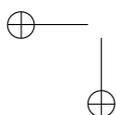


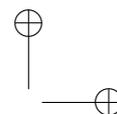
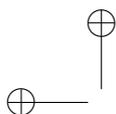


Preface

Our friendship with Albert Jay Nock came through *The Freeman* of which he was the editor. For four years we revelled in its brilliant pages; but during this period we did not meet Mr. Nock in person. Then came the appalling news that *The Freeman* was to cease publication. We hastened to New York to help in any way we could to save it. That meeting is indelibly printed on our minds. There sat A.J.N. – his superb head, the head of an aristocrat and a scholar, outlined against a window. His blue eyes were like steel. They pierced us through and through and found out all their owner wished to know. From that date our friendship began, and ended only when his death brought it to a close. It was a friendship combining personal affection and intellectual companionship. No shadow ever crossed it. He was our Counsellor, our Guide, our Friend.

Some have referred to him as cantankerous and caustic, but those who really knew A.J.N. found him tender, sympathetic and kindness itself. And what a marvellous companion he was! – “of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.” His learning and memory were astounding. A



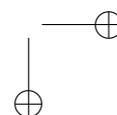
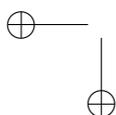


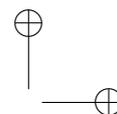
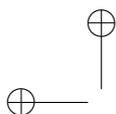
member of *The Freeman* staff reported that when no dictionary or encyclopaedia gave the sought-for information, “Ask Mr. Nock,” always brought the correct answer. He was steeped in the classics; they were part and parcel of his inner life. He was also a profound exponent of the science of political economy as set forth by the French economists and Henry George.

From him we learned of Marcus Aurelius, Rabelais, Herbert Spencer, the Physiocrats, of the origin of the State and the power that binds all men to its chariot-wheels, robbing them and ruining their lives.

His delight was to encourage writers – especially young writers – who had anything to say and who knew how to say it; and he had no jealousy of his contemporaries. He viewed his work with extreme modesty, seeking criticism of his manuscripts and weighing it with a fair and open mind. He wrote: “I have really done so little of anything and almost nothing of what I am best fitted to do; and by reason of our living at this particular time, what I have tried to do would be at least relatively ineffectual, even if I had succeeded in doing it better than I have. I simply content myself as well as I can with the thought that no one who does his best ever knows what he actually accomplishes and I have always done my best. Nevertheless I have no very high opinion of myself, or can have.”

A.J.N. was an individualist of the most pronounced type. Among his favorite quotations was the motto over the entrance to the Abbey of Thélème: “Fais que tu voudra”; and the saying of Thomas Jefferson: “If I could not go to Heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all.” In *A Journal of These Days*, he wrote: “Probably

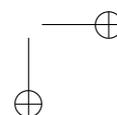
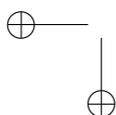


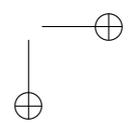
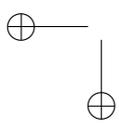
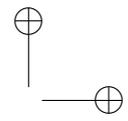
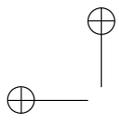


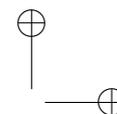
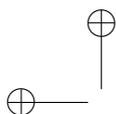
it is my instinctive dread of organization that has kept me out of the literary world, and out of the other forms of social and political organizations that I have now and then touched. Every person of any character, I think, wants above all to keep the integrity of his personality intact, and under the idea of organization that prevails in this country, that seems impossible unless one steps out pretty resolutely.”

Somewhere in the world beyond this planet, we like to think of Albert Jay Nock and Francis Rabelais sitting comfortably together, A.J.N. with a Stein of Kulmbacher beer, and Rabelais “eating a bushel of trotter-pies,” never interrupting each other, and exchanging an endless flow of wise saws and profound observations on the antics, caprices and aspirations of their fellow-human beings left below. One can imagine Rabelais saying: “By my soul, I have seen the time that I could play the devil in arguing, but now I am much failed; and henceforward want nothing but good wine, a good bed, my back to the fire, my belly to the table, and a good deep dish.” The conversation would be rounded out by A.J.N. expressing his appreciation of Rabelais’s creed of freedom and of his ability to look on life serenely and with humor.

In a letter, Mr. Nock says: “Rabelais was one of the world’s great libertarians – he has been a stay and support to my spirit for thirty years, and I could not possibly have got through without him.” As Francis Rabelais forever gives inspiration to the mind and spirit of man, so Albert Jay Nock, through his sound economic philosophy, shows the path leading to justice and freedom.



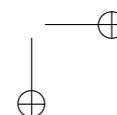
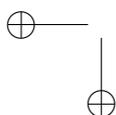


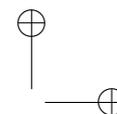
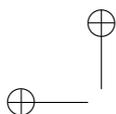


Introduction

The tradition of freedom, a dominant theme in Mr. Nock's writings, stemmed from the French economists of the 18th century among whom Turgot's name is the most illustrious. Of their followers, Cobden, Herbert Spencer and Henry George helped to develop and clarify their ideas and win adherence to an Individualism that is the core of interest in Mr. Nock's *Jefferson* (1926), *Our Enemy the State* (1935), *Henry George* (1939), and the edition of Spencer's essays published under the title, *The Man vs. the State* (1940). Even his edition of *Rabelais* was a tribute to a potent lover of freedom, an attempt "to do something affirmative, which would help the spirit of man to see life steadily and whole, and to take fresh hold on the things that actually count."

The North American Review, *Harper's Weekly*, and the *Mercury* were in turn considered as possible vehicles for continuing the work of *The Freeman*, but it can now be seen how ineffectual would have been such an attempt to check the Socialist revolution. Rather than seek to change existing prejudices, Mr. Nock concluded that it would be wiser to produce solid work that might be read

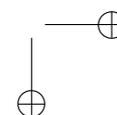
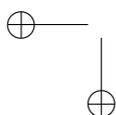


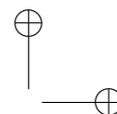


later, a belief shared by the Belgian economist Henri Lambert, author of *Pax Economica*. Books make a more lasting impression than magazine articles and in the end reach a wider audience.

For a moment in 1930 Mr. Nock thought he saw signs of hope for lovers of liberty, but he was soon disenchanted. Three years later, in conversation with Brand Whitlock at Cannes, they agreed that the actual social and political disintegration was a direct result of past actions. “And yet,” he adds, “I am sure that, even as late as 1900, if our capitalists had accepted the economic system of Henry George, they would not only have saved their skins, but there would be no Marxism, Leninism – and no Fascism.” It is an old story; the threat of revolution might be removed by the repeal of privileges, but governments – so well adapted to group favouritism – never regard repeal as within the realm of practical politics. Even the business men who talk so much about private initiative, Mr. Nock declared, “do not want a government that will let business alone,” but one that they can control; “offer them one made on Spencer’s model, and they would see the country blow up before they would accept it.”

It was Mr. Nock’s belief that if the aggressive power of the State to interfere with the social and economic life of the citizen were curtailed, the nature of government would be changed; it would be necessary to rely upon custom and agreement rather than upon conquest and confiscation. Accepting the Henry George thesis, he advocated “a political organization in which the ultimate power . . . shall reside in the smallest unit instead of the largest.” The rent of land, collected by the towns, would replace all taxes. The dedication of *Our Enemy the State*

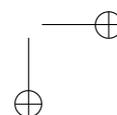
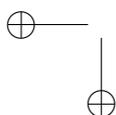


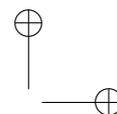


to one who “saw no legitimate objects of governmental action except the safeguarding of freedom and security to the individual” suggests the proper limits of federal concern. It is needless to add that by security neither Mr. Evans nor Mr. Nock would infer that it is within the power of any government to provide immunity from want and fear, or from the natural consequences of one’s actions.

The impatience with Liberals, reflected in some of the letters, was due to their recourse to government interference with the private affairs of the citizen. “I never knew one,” he writes, “who was not strong for accumulating power in the State and cutting down individual liberty.” He held aloof from organized effort, maintaining even toward Single Taxers an attitude of “sympathetic detachment.” When, however, the Henry George School shifted the emphasis of its teaching from fiscal considerations to the philosophy of freedom, he was willing to take part in their educational program. As a good democrat, he believed that people should have what they want, not what he considered good for them. The Individualist, if he is consistent, must decline the luxury of law-making and confine himself to persuasion.

The climax of Mr. Nock’s literary achievement, *The Memoirs of a Superfluous Man* (1943), appealed not only to students of political theory but to a wider public as well; indeed, it enjoyed a popularity that astonished the author. One reader said, “Your book lost me a night’s sleep, has made me neglect my wife and my business, and made me forget to change trains at Jamaica.” Although he never aspired to writing “any but plain idiomatic English,” he commanded a style that is distinguished,



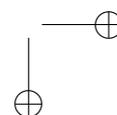
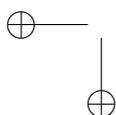


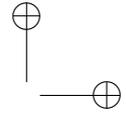
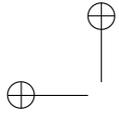
humorous and incisive. The reminiscences provide a fitting memorial of a highly original literary career.

The reader of the Memoirs perceives that the confessional type of autobiography is not to the author's taste. Jefferson, not Rousseau, was his model, and he notices that Jefferson, who was always ready to speak out in matters of opinion, principle or public policy, remained silent where matters of affection and feeling were concerned. His criticism of the attempt to discover the intimate history of Thoreau reveals his attitude; Thoreau, he said, "is the one man *about* whom we need to know least, and *whom* we need to know most." Of his own book he writes in one of the letters that it is "an autobiography of a mind, and all that I leave out of it is the kind of thing which does not bear on my literary and philosophical development – and there is very little of that, and what there is is very trivial."

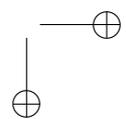
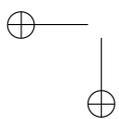
As a man of letters Mr. Nock liked to think that he possessed "something of accessibility, friendliness, and (for lack of a better word) amiable demeanour, civility," and contributors to *The Freeman* would find it easy to agree that he was in fact endowed with the traits he valued. He was true to the great tradition of freedom; he had a profound respect for Jefferson because of his insistence on liberty and his ability to act like a democrat while practicing the manners of a highly civilized being. It may seem a far cry from Jefferson to Rabelais, but Mr. Nock observed in the author of the Declaration and in the creator of Pantagruel a kinship based on a common devotion to the secular struggle against tyranny.

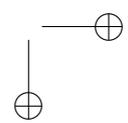
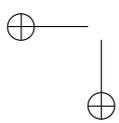
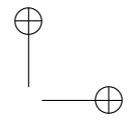
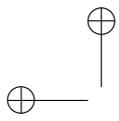
FRANK W. GARRISON

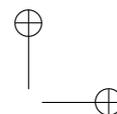




Letters from
Albert Jay Nock
1924–1945







To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

The Players
16 Gramercy Park, 19 Dec. 1924

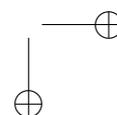
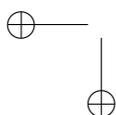
My dear Mrs. Evans, – I wish you a most happy Christmas, indeed. Your note was more than kind, but I have not finished with you yet by any means. When I get my hooks in a person and have an idea of setting him to work on something, I never let go: and I have the idea of that work on the relation of land-values to housing, city planning and the practise of architecture. You will hear more of this if I live; if not it will haunt you until it gets done.

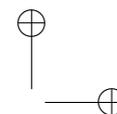
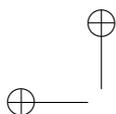
My best wishes to all of you. I shall see you soon, I hope, with news of the monthly. Yours faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

29 Dec. 1924

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I wish you all a happy New Year, hoping that before it is over parents will be abolished and housekeeping brought down to purely normal terms. Your little note has made me think of Artemus Ward's conversation with Professor Peck at Oberlin College. I see that you have a highly practical mind, and while I regret that you are devoid of sentiments, I shall let you off on being a collaborator if you will show proper enthusiasm about keeping your sister's nose to the grindstone, and E.C.E.'s. I shall be going to Washington early in January, and I shall stop off and see you about this.





Seriously, though, such work as I contemplate would be of great value and interest, and I am convinced that as far as popular acceptance is concerned, it is a choice between doing that and doing nothing. There is simply no use in talking about a change in our economic system at this time – no one has the faintest desire for it or interest in it. There is, however, a deep curiosity about our history, and almost anything dealing with America's past will get itself read. It seems to me, then, that this is our chance to lay a foundation for the benefit of those who come after us at a time when circumstances shall be compelling people to think about changes in their system. Yours faithfully,

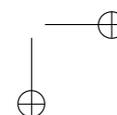
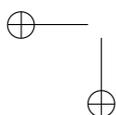
ALBERT JAY NOCK

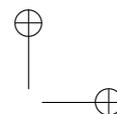
Branchville, N. J., 17 Dec. 1925

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for your note. The Memorial Edition of Thomas J. will go to you shortly after Christmas. I regret to say it will have to be rebound, not by reason of misuse, but because the original binding was a shoddy job. The paper and press work are so good, however, that it will bind superbly.

I shall get down myself as soon as I can, with my white gloves. At present, I am lying rather low, recuperating from some attentions that the doctors have been giving me, whereby I am supposed to be as good as ever.

Harpers have offered me a very good arrangement to go abroad, contribute to their magazine and write a book for them on Bavaria. I rather like the idea. The





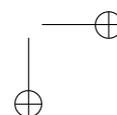
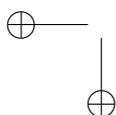
New York *World* has suggested a job for me over there also. I am more or less thinking these things over as employment for an intercalary year of grace. Harpers are very keen to have me do for them that history of civilization in the U.S. that has been in my mind so long. If I undertake it, it will probably occupy me the rest of my days, and that is a sobering prospect. However, we shall see. All this is more or less – not strictly – in the family, as I know so well your kind interest in what I do. The Jefferson will be a good book, I am quite sure; I am much better pleased with it than I expected to be. Miss LaFollette's book is also better than I expected. It is now down to the last chapter, and will come out at least no later than mine, and perhaps before. I read it through not long ago, and was greatly pleased with it. Well, among us all, I think we are showing that the old *Freeman* isn't dead yet, by a good deal.

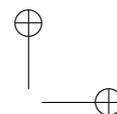
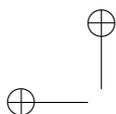
Please give my love to Mr. Evans and your family. I hope that Hell's Half-Acre is purified, finally, of the scourge of tenants. Yours most faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
16 Gramercy Park, 12 Jan. 1926

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I am able to be about more or less, as you see, and most grateful for your affectionate wishes. I don't see why I might not struggle down to Philadelphia over night some day impromptu, in the week. The end of the week – Saturday – is a little hard for me



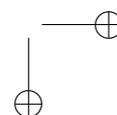
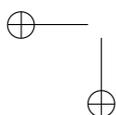


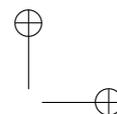
to manage usually. Then you shall see how decorously I can behave when I visit my aristocratic friends.

I did not recollect the promise to do the little book on the State. But, promise or no promise, I find it impossible to refuse you anything in my power – more than that, I find it impossible to dispose myself to do so. Therefore I am now making arrangements for its publication, and shall set to work on it as soon as Thomas is safely launched. One or two publishing concerns spoke to me about it, but I didn't see my duty until your wish was expressed.

Miss LaFollette's desire to have her book bear your name and your sister's was quite natural, I think. While it is true that you did not, as you say, do anything directly for her, but only for a general cause, – which she would understand as well as we do – I don't see how she could help indulging the cordiality that comes of an immediate common interest. Besides, it is really a dreadful thing to have a great desire to do something particularly good, and feel oneself capable of doing it, and not to be able to command the leisure to carry it through. Your cooperation enabled her to accomplish what she has done, and I think it would be unnatural and impossible not to give whatever voice one could to the very warm sensibility that this would create.

I have seen so much of that economic repression that if I were rich I should dispose of my money in no other way. Nothing else brings one such returns. You will have the satisfaction of seeing this book work in just the way the *Freeman* worked – quietly and persistently undermining the strongholds of superstition, and as Burke said, “disposing people to a better sense of their condition.”





I am enormously impressed almost daily with the fact that the *Freeman* never died – and it never will. At the outset nobody but myself saw how it was going to work, and it worked exactly as I foresaw and intended. I think my Jefferson will work in the same way, very quietly and for a long time, and with an effect entirely disproportionate to the amount of fuss made over it. I think this is the natural way for an influence to work, and it is the way that Miss LaFollette's two books will work. Such influence is precisely "as if a man should cast seed in the ground and sleep and rise night and day, and the seed shooteth and springeth up, *he knoweth not how.*" There is good authority for that sort of thing, and experience bears it out.

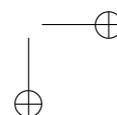
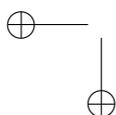
Well, I shall see you shortly, I hope. Please remember me affectionately to Mr. Evans and to your mother and sister. Yours faithfully,

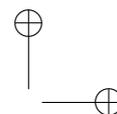
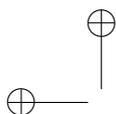
ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Saturday, 6 Feb. 1926

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I won't be able to get down this coming week – the week beginning tomorrow – but any day the week following will suit me, so please make it at your convenience. I shall be glad to hear Mr. Evan's idea, as you know.

I never questioned the positive value of a new periodical or of the kind of work that Mr. Graham Peace is

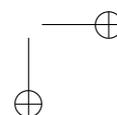
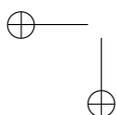


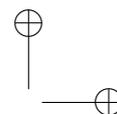


doing, I only question their relative value. The matter always shapes itself this way in my mind: Given the command of a certain amount of resources, – ability, time, money, etc. – is it better to employ them in one way or in another, both being positively good? By “better” I mean, better *in the long run* for the cause they are employed in.

In answering this question, one has to do some close measuring. Take my own case, for example, I could do the kind of work that Mr. Graham Peace is doing, and do it very well; but I can do another kind of work for the same cause that he could not do, and perhaps no one could do as well as I; and it is a kind of work that will be found more effective in the long run. I think therefore it would be a mistake for me to go in with him or pick up a line of work similar to his; for then the more effective work would go by the board. I say this merely to make it clear that I don’t disparage Mr. Graham Peace’s work; though I am bound to say that I think its value is very disproportionate to the outlay of energy that goes into it.

It may strike you as strange for me to say that in my judgment the men who have done the most for the Cause of Freedom in America in our time – since Henry George, that is – are three whom perhaps you never heard of; unconnected with any movement, unconcerned with any program, party or political policy, and practically unknown as publicists. They are Mr. Turner, Mr. C. A. Beard and Mr. Becker. But we will talk about all this when I see you. I am about to write something for Harpers in the way of a personal story of my anarchist philosophy and its development, and in that I shall have a pretty full discussion of propaganda and its methods.





I hope you will do me the honour of reading it when it comes out.

My most affectionate regards to all of you, and in the hope of seeing you very soon. Yours faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

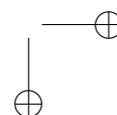
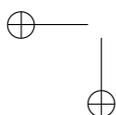
To Rebecca Winsor Evans

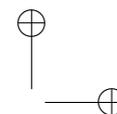
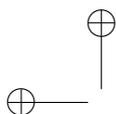
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park

My dear friend, – Thank you for your kind letter. I understand perfectly. What threw me off, I think, was your saying that you are one of the masses, which is of course so preposterous that it sounds like a paltry affectation of Marxism, until one understands the thought behind it. You are indeed right about the Remnant sometimes being very tough babies to live with – especially when they get taken with the missionary or crusading fever, like the great Tolstoy, for instance. His wife must have had an awful time – nor was Henry George always so easy to get on with, by reason of his absent-minded reliance on other people to keep the small things of life in order, and more or less to clean up after him.

There is no chance of my being able to leave New York. I should enjoy getting away for a while, if I can, but I must stay here. I am sorry you do not sail from here, where I could see you off, but you carry all my most ardent good wishes with you, as you know.

Your suggestion of talking over Rabelais is most kind, but I doubt I shall live long enough to carry that job





through. But it is always great fun to talk about things that one is quite reconciled to believing must end in talk, so we will do that.

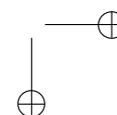
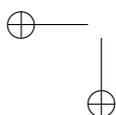
The crabbed little manuscript, written in Portugal, goes by this mail. It has no value. That essay, though, will be included in the volume that the *Atlantic* is publishing, so you will have it again in printed form.

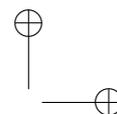
Please give my best love to Miss Winsor, with every hope and wish for a splendid happy holiday for you both. I can imagine how you suffered in the recent heat, and how glad you will be to breathe the air of the ocean. I am always affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Sunday

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I am truly glad to hear that you are better, and more pleased to hear that you were not ill enough to lose your power of self-assertion in the matter of surgery and vegetarian diet. I am all for self-determination. In my view the sex of a surgeon is unimportant; the important thing is that surgery should be good, by whomsoever done, and whoever did it best should have my *corpus vile* for whatever pruning was appropriate. As to the vegetarian diet, those who find it sustaining and agreeable should have it, long may they wave! I am now approaching that diet very closely myself, in fact, because my appetite turns more and more that way. Such is the fact, but in doctrine I remain individualist and catholic, ready to acknowledge without

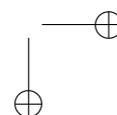
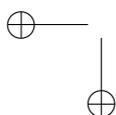


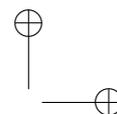
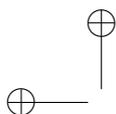


prejudice that for those who like bull-steak, such is about the sort of thing they like, and if they can get further on it than I can on spinach, joy go with them. I suppose my individualism is hopelessly rooted; and because it is so you have my joyous applause in your tenacity for a she-surgeon and greens.

In the article you spoke of, I thought I indicated what was necessary – i.e., – a population aware of its rights and wholly disposed to have them. Our present population demands but little, and in consideration of that little will cheerfully barter off its major rights. Give the American comfort, a little profit and a little play of a very elemental type, and there is no ignominy that he will dream of resenting. For my part I think it is a bargain that savages, with all their love of glass beads and tin mirrors, would think twice about accepting. Moreover, I think the American's acquiescence will rot down his civilization in very short order. Nor have I ever made any secret of these opinions or modified their expression. But since my countrymen don't agree with me and have every confidence in facing both the present and the future, I must remain as good an individualist and democrat as the Lord is, who never turned prohibitionist. He puts us down in the midst of life and lets us find our way through it by the method of trial and error, which is a leisurely sort of method, but I can not imagine a better.

You are very kind to suggest my coming down. I could manage it very nicely on the 14th or 15th, if that would suit you, and I should love to see you again after all these months. I know I should see you in good spirits and I hope also in good health. Please give my best wishes for





the season to Mr. Evans and Miss Winsor. I think of you all often and with great affection. Yours faithfully,

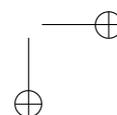
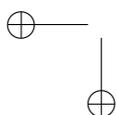
ALBERT JAY NOCK

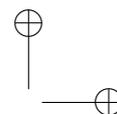
The Players, Saturday
Sixteen Gramercy Park

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you ever so cordially for your hospitality. I enjoyed my day with you incalculably, and wish I might be there tomorrow. Like the little girl in the story, I want to play the day after I have played. Please tell your sister how sorry I am to have missed her, and that I hope the show was a good one. Most of them, I hear, are not. Last night I ran across something of Mr. Jefferson's, in almost the last letter he ever wrote, which made me think of our conversation about Mr. Graham Peace and his parliamentary plan, so I pass it on to you:

“A good cause is often injured more by ill-timed efforts of its friends than by the arguments of its enemies. Persuasion, perseverance and patience are the best advocates on questions depending on the will of others. The revolution in public opinion which this cause requires is not to be expected in a day, or perhaps in an age; but time, which outlives all things, will outlive this evil also.”

I can't help remembering the men who made their first appearance on the political stage in England with a copy of *Progress and Poverty* in their hand. Sir E. Grey was one of them; Mr. Asquith was another. I also recall the programme of the old-line liberals in 1910. I have also seen the Labour Party in action under J. Ramsay



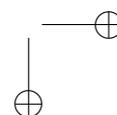
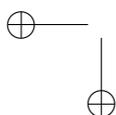


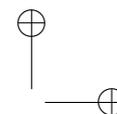
Macdonald, J. H. Thomas and Bro. Clynes. The injection of the question of land-values into English politics will result inevitably, as John Adams said, in “a change of imposters” – in a new lot of slippery fellows getting in on the strength of it, great exultation on your part and mine, and a new set of careers like the foregoing, with no more happening than has come from them, and for the same reasons. Mr. Jefferson said that when a man gets his eye “on public office “a rottenness begins in his conduct,” just as I feel sure it would in mine. I have twice been asked to go to Congress under conditions that made election certain, and it was on these grounds alone that I refused to think of it.

I told Mr. Evans that I was not sure I should have spoken so plainly about the land-values movement in England. But you have seen enough of those who put their trust in political action, I judge, not to want to incur any further disappointment. Nothing will happen in England until the English resume the short and sharp way they once had of dealing with their public servants who did not toe the mark; and they will not come to that until they have undergone a deal more hardship than they are undergoing.

I shall get down again before long, I hope, when my work is done. I shall feel entitled, then, to a good leisurely rest in your best room with my white gloves on. Faithfully yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





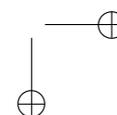
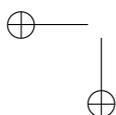
The Players, Tuesday
16 Gramercy Park

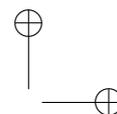
My dear Mrs. Evans, – Your cordial letter cheered me through some agitated moments. I am scrambling for a steamer. I hope I may catch the Volendam at the end of the week – I don't know. But the first one I can catch shall be caught, be it a cattle-boat or an oil-tanker, for I am at the limit of endurance.

I talked to Amos Pinchot the other day about joining me in my work on the Adamses and on the history of civilization here. He was hesitant – I fear he would be reluctant. I wonder whether people fail to see in the idea what I see. Perhaps I exaggerate its importance. Perhaps the thought of working with me is not as attractive as people used to think it was. I don't know. But I can go ahead and try the thing out on my own. It won't be as well or as quickly done as it might be, but I can get on with it. In the days of the *Freeman* I was regarded as a most desirable person to work with.

I shall remember you all while abroad, and write to you. It is an ungracious thing to say to good and true friends, but you won't misunderstand my feeling of immense emancipation when my ship pulls out. You must look at *Harper's* once in a while for an article that reads somewhat as if I wrote it.

Miss LaFollette is down with her people, and will stop, she said, and see you on her way through Philadelphia. Keep an eye on her, for she is of great value, and I know you care a great deal for one another. Please remember me kindly to Mr. Evans and your sister. We shall meet before long, I hope. I wish you all every happiness and





I know you will find some avenue of usefulness in the great tradition. My Jefferson will be sent you as soon as it is printed. I am always, my dear friend, yours most truly and affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

10, rue Alexandre-Guilmant
Meudon, S/O, Saturday

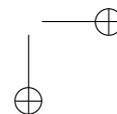
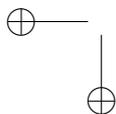
My dear Mr. Evans, – Thank you cordially for your letter. I am afraid something happened to your previous communication, as I called at the Am. Exp. Co., and got another letter, but not yours.

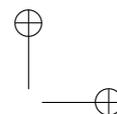
If you return through Belgium about the time you say (19-20 Sept.) I shall be there, as I shall have finished up here by that time. Send me a line here two or three days ahead, saying when you will arrive in Brussels, and I shall meet you there.

With regard to that book, I am able to say that Harpers will give you an agreement for it at any time you wish to sign one. I took care of that just before I left. So I am more than ever desirous to see you. When that story begins to unfold before your eyes, I promise you will be unable to think of anything else.

You might like the *Hotel de Cologne* at Luxembourg. The proprietor would remember my name.

The most delightful panorama I ever saw was in walking between Heiderscheid and Bourscheid, through Fevlen. I took a train to Michelau, climbed up to Bourscheid





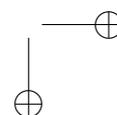
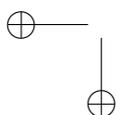
Castle, and then went on to Heiderscheid, – and walked back, too, all the way to Ettelbruch. This might be more than you would wish to do, but you can easily manage.

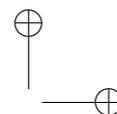
Go up and stay a couple of days at Diekirch, to walk through the neighborhood. Take the narrow-gauge railway to Vianden one morning, and spend the day walking around there. Luxembourg is a place for walking, not motoring. The railway will take you anywhere you want to start from and bring you back at night, even if you are headquartering in Luxembourg. That city, by the way, is the most beautiful *practicable* city I ever saw.

You should look at Clervaux, probably, and Esch-s-Sure. You can do that satisfactorily in a rubberneck wagon from Diekirch. Don't bother about Mullerthal and the Petite Suisse – You can beat all that by going over to Dingman's Ferry when you get home.

I am very homesick for a sight of the Grand Duchy with you. This place does well for my present purpose, but I am not at home here by any means.

The Sacco-Vanzetti case ought, I think, to prove to you the correctness of my contention that all direct effort after a change of thought or régime at this time is futile. On the other hand, we can do a solid work that will count hereafter. Our country has set itself stolidly against even the most conservative public opinion of the whole world. My club is as hidebound as the Union League, yet they express themselves as shocked and horrified at an execution after seven years delay, guilty or innocent. One Belgian officer, after questioning me, said that I must permit him to observe in all personal friendliness, that we had a cruel and vindictive régime.





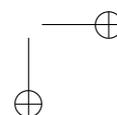
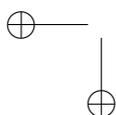
So I feel reinforced in my opinion of the course open to us, if we wish to do anything at all, and I hope you see the situation in the same way. Besides, the things I propose doing are the things we are best able to do, and that very few others would be able to do at all. My best love to Mrs. Evans, and I hope that Luxembourg is at its best for you. I am a little anxious about the weather. Affectionately yours,

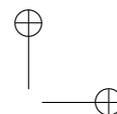
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Grand Hotel Continental
Luxembourg-Ville
20 August 1926

My dear friend, – I am deeply grieved to hear that you had bad news from home and were obliged to cut your stay in Europe short. I hope everything will go for the best. Please thank Mrs. Evans for her remembrance of me with Goethe's verses. I am working with a friend in the hope of getting him to translate Goethe's conversations. All the real man is in them, and if one knows those, one does not need to read the rest of his works. If the plan goes through, I shall see that you are advised of the book.

And so you are on your way back. I cannot possibly feel otherwise than sorry. It is a great pity that you have not been in Luxembourg. I think I never saw anything equal to the country, and the city of Luxembourg is by far the most beautiful practicable city, i.e., one that is





not a mere shell of antiquity, like Bruges, that I was ever in.

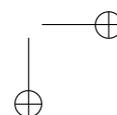
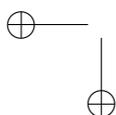
But the great thing is to be where people are uniformly prosperous, contented, happy, and not nervously chasing after anything they think they want. Luxembourg escaped any effect of the war. They have no taxes worth speaking of, a standing army of two hundred and fifty volunteers and seven officers, about as much of a civil establishment as you need to run your house, and nothing to worry them. Think of the capital of a country without a movie house! I didn't believe such a thing was possible.

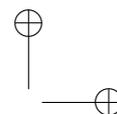
I shall be here more and more as time goes on. It rests the spirit and makes one feel young and gay again. Americans seem to know nothing of Luxembourg, and I fervently trust none of them will ever come here, except yourselves.

The Copenhagen affair seems to have turned out about as such things usually do. I question their value for people like us. Some instinct always kept me away from them.

Please tell Mrs. Evans that I am making good progress with the little thing she wished me to write, and it is coming out very well. I am nearly half through, and rather like it. Harpers will publish it in their magazine, and it will afterwards be incorporated into a little book that I hope to have ready early next year.

If things go well with me, I expect to remain over here some time. I have not told anyone what my expectations are, because there is always uncertainty; but as matters look now, I do not think I shall have to go back soon. I have no desire whatever to go, which, I suppose is a sorry confession, but as the Irishman pointedly asked,





“What’s the world to a man when his wife’s a widdy?”
Yes I can hardly understand my not feeling the faintest sense of loss in the prospect in being indefinitely away from my native land or even my native tongue – and it is long since I have heard a word of that. But so it is.

Now that you are out of your regular employment, I hope you will find another more to your mind. I am terribly lazy too, but I can only enjoy being lazy when I have something to do; and I daresay you will find that you are like that yourself. There is little pleasure in being unoccupied. Children hate it, and I think we should imitate them in finding something that suits us and insisting on doing it. My best love to you, one and all. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

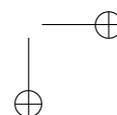
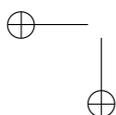
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

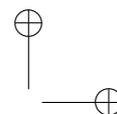
Brussels, 5 Oct. 1926

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for your kind letter. Miss LaFollette book is indeed superb, and I shall do all I can to get it in everyone’s hands.

I am pleased to tell you that my piece on the State is done, and on its way to New York. *Harper’s* want it, and say that they will publish it in their magazine: and it will later form part of a book. Since it was done so largely at your instance, I trust you will like it.

The longer I remain here, the less I wish to go back; and I have enough work to keep me busy in Europe for a long time; so, indeed, I may never return for more than



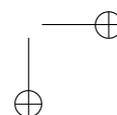
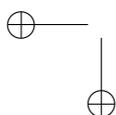


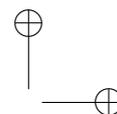
a business visit, now and then, as brief as I can make it. But we can not let another year go by, as we did this, without meeting. When you are here next summer, I must find you.

I remember you and your husband and sister with singular affection, and think of you often. You are one of the very few ties of permanent interest that still bind me there. I hope that the illness in Mr. Evans's family has mended happily, and that you will have an untroubled and delightful winter.

I am pleased, and much astonished, to hear that my Jefferson is so well received. I did not think it would attract so much notice, and so much of it favourable. Perhaps under the surface, things are not so bad. I hope not. My work in *Harper's* also is much read, as I know from the fact (between ourselves) that publishers are getting after me in a much more lively way than heretofore; so I must be getting a hearing. I hope I shall be able yet to put in a few more strokes for the great tradition of human freedom. Affectionately, always,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





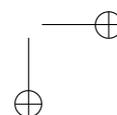
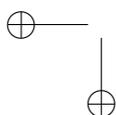
To Ellen Winsor

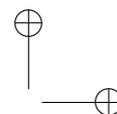
Cercle Gaulois
12a. Avenue Louise, Bruxelles

My dear Miss Winsor, – The *Saturday Review* has just sent me a copy of Miss LaFollette's book, the first one I have seen. I read a good deal of the book in manuscript, but not all of it, and so much time has passed since then, and so many events intervened, that seeing the entire work in print is quite like seeing it afresh. I knew it would be a good book, but I assure you it is so far beyond all my expectations that I can not say enough in praise of it. If I am any judge, it is a truly great book. When one finishes it, there is simply nothing more to say on the subject, as far as I can see.

I only wish to remark that in making it possible for this book to be produced, I think that you and your sister have done the finest possible service to the cause of freedom. Some day it will be recognized as standing side by side with the like service that Tom Johnson did in enabling Henry George to publish his books. Work like this is never lost. It is true, as Miss LaFollette says, that no one is much interested in freedom just now, but they will be. That interest moves in cycles, and each turn brings the race nearer; and at every turn throughout the future, until freedom is attained, this book will be dug up and drawn upon, like Mary Wollstonecraft's, but more effectively, as saying really the final thing.

In writing this to you, and expressing my deepest gratitude, I hope you will forget that I am a friend of yours or the author's, and accept what I say as coming





only from a friend of freedom. I regard my obligation to you and your sister only as what one friend of freedom owes to another who has done the common cause of freedom an enormous and distinguished service.

I had a letter from Miss LaFollette the other day. It appears she is somewhere in France, but she did not say where. I wrote her, and I hope I shall see her before she returns. At that time I had not seen her book, but now that I have done so, I shall write again. She gave me a banker's address.

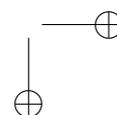
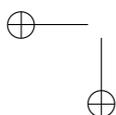
Please remember me most affectionately to your sister and all your family. I miss you all greatly. I hope next summer will bring me the good fortune that I missed last summer. We really owe it to one another, I think, to make it so if we can. Affectionately yours,

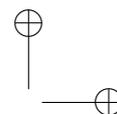
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

Cercle Gaulois
12a. Avenue Louise, Bruxelles

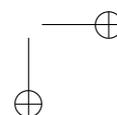
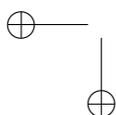
My dear Mr. Evans, – I was delighted with your charming letter, and thank you for it. Let me first discuss your proposal. I think that twenty thousand dollars would carry your plan easily. What I suggest is that you get Miss LaFollette to discuss the whole practical side of the affair with Henry Mencken and perhaps subsequently with Knopf. Some way might be devised whereby Knopf would take it on. I should think it would be a good venture for him, since it would not take away readers





from the *Mercury*. At all events, Mencken would be thoroughly interested, and would give you proper advice. See him first, and let the conversation lead up to the matter of bringing in Knopf. I should think the form of the magazine should be something in the way of a review, with a large section devoted to editorial observations on the events of the month.

Concerning the editorship, I will speak frankly. If I were living in America and quite unoccupied, I would not for one moment stand in competition with Miss LaFollette for it. She is young, well trained, immensely able, and has the best editorial mind I ever saw. She richly deserves the satisfaction of having an enterprise like this entirely in her own control, and I simply could not reconcile myself to the idea of taking it away from her, or of occupying any position on the publication which would make it appear that she might be still somewhat under my wing. She suffered unduly from this appearance when we were together on *The Freeman*. I do not think it was my fault. I was always very sorry that she did not get the credit and reputation that she deserved. Her book, which you so justly praise, shows precisely what she is and what she can do. Aside from all this, consideration of the paper's interest would bring me to the same conclusion, for I would never be a better editor than I am now, while now I think she is just as good an editor as I am, and even a shade better (if you will look back over *The Freeman* you will see that when she had it, she produced a trifle better paper than I did) and in another five years will be much better than I could ever be. I know her well and am a good judge of ability, and am very sure of all I say.



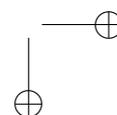
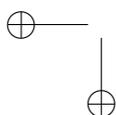


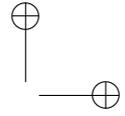
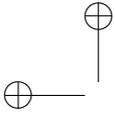
So far as this project goes, it really makes no difference whether I ever come back to the U.S. or not. No doubt I shall before long, but I would be just as indisposed towards the editorship (purely on these grounds) in the one case as in the other.

But you may be assured that I shall gladly do anything possible that you wish me to do. I will write for you, and advise with you in any way you desire, all freely, without pay. I should welcome the opportunity to work under Miss LaFollette's editorship, and I can promise her the same loyalty that she displayed when working under mine.

So that is that. Your letter made me wish you might be as pleasantly situated as I am. Being here is most conducive to work, and I have all I can do, at the moment, which makes for an agreeable life in itself. We have really most magnificent music of all kinds, at so little cost; and all our recreations are so simple, delightful and cheap. I am charmed with this club. It is one of the most interesting on the Continent, and gives me a circle of most agreeable acquaintances. I hope you will be able to get over earlier next season, and stop here a while to look the situation over.

Please give my most affectionate wishes for the season to Mrs. Evans and her family, and accept them for yourself. Indeed you are right about Miss LaFollette's book. I had great hopes of it, but it is far better than I looked for. I am not worried about its selling or not selling, at the moment. The thing is that it is one of the books that is definitive, it has finality, and so it will be dug up from generation to generation, and keep doing its work indefinitely. There seems to be nothing she has





not covered, no objection or criticism that she has not anticipated – and how it rejoices one's soul to read such English!

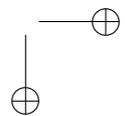
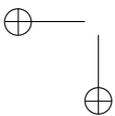
Again I wish you were here, all of you. But since you are not, I send this letter with all the weight of affection and esteem that it can carry. Affectionately yours,

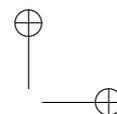
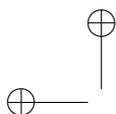
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Guaranty Trust Co., rue Royale,
Brussels, 24 July

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I owe you two letters, and if that were all my obligation I could easily dispose of it, but your cordial and affectionate words mean a weight of debt more hopeless than the war put on these poor people over here. Perhaps I had better frankly repudiate and not say anything about it, as they should do: for you know, I think, by intuition already how deeply I appreciate all you say about my book and my work in the world. I can assure you, too, that I am a man of my word, for I am just now putting down on paper the things you asked me to do, and they will come out both in Harper's magazine and in book form later. Writing travel-notes, as I have been doing lately, put it into my head to use that form in working up a rambling sort of book in which I am giving my philosophy of life, a good many experiences and a good deal of observation.





I expect to have it done by the end of the year and I think you will be quite well satisfied with it and, I hope, pleased. Harper's ran a bit of it in their July issue, and they will run three or four more; so if you come across an issue of the magazine you might look at the index to see if any of it is there.

Mr. Evans's letter gives me some hope that you may be coming this way, and that I may see you. I shall be delighted if it happens so. If you do not know the east of Belgium and the Duchy of Luxembourg, you would find these very pleasant. Since Mr. Evans has given up his profession, as he tells me, I trust you will be taking a deeper root over here, as I shall do. What service you and I can render America can be better done from here, I am convinced.

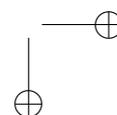
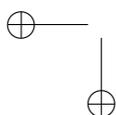
Yes, I know one place in Brussels where one can get fine Munich beer: and as soon as I have acknowledged Miss Winsor's delightful note, I shall sidle thither and lift in three large hookers of it in honour of your party. Do let me know, approximately when you will be coming this way. Faithfully yours,

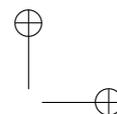
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

6 Sept. 1927

My dear Friend, – Yes, certainly we must meet and talk the prospects of that book into shape. Beard's book, followed by Parrington's (which you should read) shows the opportunity and the necessity for it; and as

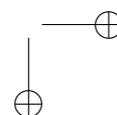
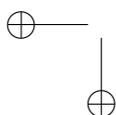


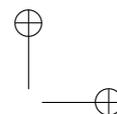
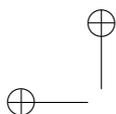


I said, the very first dip you make into the history of land-speculation will take your breath away.

This subject is an ideal one for beginners in book making, because the essential features of the story are so simple, so uncomplicated that the exercise of editorial judgment is reduced to a minimum. But we will go into this thoroughly when I see you. I shall certainly come over to Brussels by the 17th, and it will suit my convenience entirely to do so. You are most considerate. I thought of telegraphing you that I would come up to Antwerp now, but I hesitate to do that, not knowing whether your immediate plans would permit such an arrangement. It occurs to me however, that if you are taking a steamer from any Channel port, as from Rotterdam or Antwerp, you can get it *via* Brussels without difficulty. So we will leave it as you say. Only, if on receipt of this you would find it easier that I should come up to Brussels or Antwerp now, telegraph me and I will run over at once.

In deciding the question of what one need best try to do, I think it is wise to take natural aptitude into account, as well as to take a measure of the demands of the times. A good many people waste energy in trying to do things they are not fitted for. I believe you will find that the kind of revolutionary work that you three, working together, are best fitted for, is the kind I propose. Another thing to consider is the number of persons available for a given piece of work that ought to be done. I don't know any other persons qualified with all four elements of ability, interest, diligence and leisure, to take on this job. Beard, who knows everybody, told me that he had time and again gone over the entire list





in his mind, for someone to do the right kind of history of American Letters, and could hit on no one but me: and I rather think he is right. Hence I feel it is pretty much up to me to tackle that job, as I intend to do. I think you may take the same objective point of view. The practical side of the matter also remains, that publishers are eager for these books, because they see a market for them; and in fact, odd as it may be, revolutionary doctrine approached from the historical side is read and accepted.

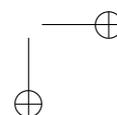
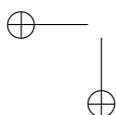
Well, when we meet, we shall see. Please give Mrs. Evans my best love and thank her for the card she sent me. It will be a great joy to see you. Faithfully yours,

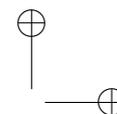
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Le Cercle Gaulois
Bruxelles, 10 Oct. 1927

My dear Mr. Evans, – I have only time to write a word or two in reply to your most welcome letter of the fourth. It was so great a pleasure to have you here that I can not reconcile myself to your expressions of gratitude, but rather am disposed to resent them. All the favours of the occasion were conferred by you.

Harpers wrote, asking if I had seen you, and what about it. You might see fit to send a line to Mr. Eugene F. Lawton, saying you are looking the situation over and intend to do something, and will drop in when you get around to it. That is, if you do not prefer some other publisher to Harpers. Don't suggest any difficulties about





it, for there really are none. The work will be hard and steady, but all plain sailing. All you will have to do is straightforward grubbing, which is the best kind of training for the production of a first book.

I was much shocked by the news of Walter Fuller's death, of which I had already heard. It is a very sad thing that after going through so much success he should have had so little time to enjoy his success, which I understand was conspicuous.

Please let me hear how things go with you. Remember that nothing that concerns any of you is unimportant to me. Get going on the book as soon as you can; first, by getting all your acquaintances busy lining up all possible sources of help and direction. That is the first thing: to get at the men who can tell you where the stuff is and how to put your hands on it.

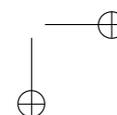
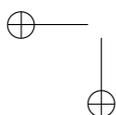
My best love to Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor, and my thanks for the Brueghel. I can't share your liking for London, but there is no doubt about the National Gallery. Faithfully yours,

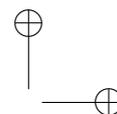
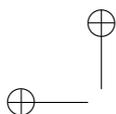
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Poitiers
29 Sept. 1929

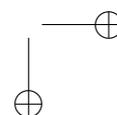
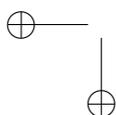
My dear Mrs. Evans, – I was most delighted yesterday when your postcard came along as a testimony that you had not quite forgotten me. I have every sympathy with your dreadful experience – for it must have been

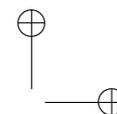




dreadful – in spending the summer at one of our fine shore resorts. My summer has been better in some respects. It was passed in France, where I have been migrating around the Touraine and the Poitou, mostly in very small out-of-the way places, on the trail of my old friend Francis Rabelais, who spent most of his youth and middle years in these parts. Last winter I wrote an essay on him in collaboration with a young Oxford M.A., which Harpers ought to have on the market by this time, though I have heard nothing of it. I thought I would spend the summer looking over the ground he walked on, and finding material to work up in rather a lighter vein, which I have done. I hope you will read my essay, for it was a labour of love and gratitude. Rabelais was one of the world's great libertarians, and if I can do anything for him with American readers of the more thoughtful kind, I shall be truly happy: he has been a stay and support to my spirit for thirty years, and I could not possibly have got through without him, especially during the war. What I am really aiming to do is to publish about a year from now an annotated and illustrated edition of the great Urquhart and Motteux translation of Rabelais. It is well on its way now, and would have been done long ago but that, like all such work, it is a great strain on one's resources. But if I can only keep alive and healthy another year, I can count on its being done, I think – and then I don't care if I never do anything more.

Harper's Magazine still publishes an article of mine occasionally. They have two which will interest you. One is on Lawlessness, and is pretty hot because I was pretty hot when I wrote it – much hotter than I should have been. The other is On the Practice of Smoking in





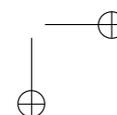
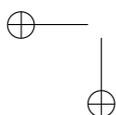
Church, I don't know when they will be printed – they never write me, and at this distance I know nothing. I can't resist a dig at our civilization, once in a while, though as a good democrat I think people should have what they want, and I believe there is no denying that most of our people want just about what they have got, and would be pretty miserable on what would please you and me.

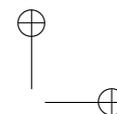
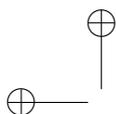
So now you have a good account of myself and my little trivial pursuits. I am coming over some time this winter, and shall hope to see you. I fear that work on land-speculation has gone by the board, and I am sorry, for it should be done and the combined resources of your family could do it if you were not so beset by domestic trials which I know are very real and pressing. Give my best love to your husband and sister: you were most kind to write. Affectionately,

A.J.N.

Taverne Royale
Bruxelles, 9 Oct. 1929

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Prof. Chinard's *Jefferson* has just come to my hand, and I very much hope you will get hold of it and read it. I think very highly of it, and so will you. I particularly want you to note the suggestion that he makes in his introduction, of a definitive edition of Mr. Jefferson's writings. If the work on land-speculation has gone by the board, there is nothing to which you and your allied forces could turn your hands that would be more



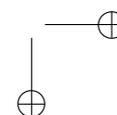
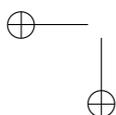


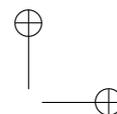
worth doing. Nor could anything be easier – in a sense – for it involves nothing but the mechanical labour of looking up manuscripts and getting a competent copyist to work on them; very little more than this. Please understand that I don't urge this on you, but merely bring it to your attention as a possibility, in case you three are still out of any interesting occupation and are looking for something to do. Frankly, I doubt that it would be what you would like, as it is only a drudging task; but the thought occurred to me, and I therefore mention it, I hope without presumption.

I dislike asking people to read what I write, and never do it, but I do want to take the freedom of an old friend in behalf of an essay on Rabelais in which I had a hand, and which Harpers, I believe, are soon bringing out. My colleague furnished most of the scholarship, did the research and architected (if there be such a word) the book, and I furnished the literary criticism and did the writing. I should like to know whether you think it gives a competent residual impression of freedom and "the good life," for Rabelais was a great exponent of both. I hope next year to get out a splendid issue of his works, annotated and illustrated, so as to make him easily readable.

There is none such now. I don't know that I shall be able to do this, but I am going ahead with it just the same. Best love to all of you. Yours aff'ately,

A.J.N.





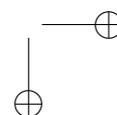
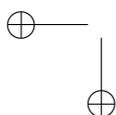
19 Oct. 1929

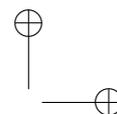
My dear friend, – If the work on the Jefferson MS. looks too big and too drudging – and as I said, it is sheer hard stupid labour, which I should not wish to undertake, nor do I think you would – you would find a very interesting and easy job in getting out the famous Adams-Jefferson correspondence complete. This has never been done, and it is a disgrace that it never has. It would make up into a small volume. Of course all the fun would be in writing the introduction, which I should recommend making good and long. You would have two great Characters to write about, and in an aspect that would be just to your taste.

I think the whole correspondence is in the Memorial Edition, which you have, but a note to the Congressional Library would inform you without further trouble. So you can see there would be nothing to it but getting the text typed and writing the introduction, which last would be great sport for you three.

In behalf of this, I tell you as a great secret that I shall be over on my annual visit about the middle of November. So if you are interested in this, I think I can find you a good publisher. Therefore write me at the Players Club, 16 Gramercy Park.

But do not tell a soul I am coming over, for I have to deny myself the pleasure of my acquaintances, shut myself up and work – with very little expectation, even so, of getting my work to a satisfactory conclusion. So unless I lie very low, like a fugitive from justice, I have no chance. But if you think this idea worth a talk with





me, I should be delighted, for it is something that needs doing and that would interest you. Aff'ctely,

A.J.N.

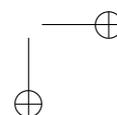
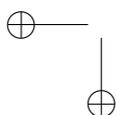
To Edmund C. Evans

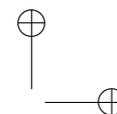
Columbia University
Department of History and Political Science
Saint Stephen's College
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

My dear friend, – Thank you cordially for your Christmas greeting. I wish I could see you. I have been busy as a boy spearing eels, and where I am coming out, I don't see. I am seeing a large and complicated book through the press, and the proofreading of it is an awful burden. Then I am delivering the Page-Barbour lectures at the University of Virginia in six weeks, and they are not yet written. Also I lecture here an hour daily; and in my odd moments I try to do something for Suzanne's Paper. Too much for an old man.

My experiment here has been interesting and instructive; but there is too much of it to write about: we must talk. One thing you may be sure of; whatever the case with others, or in the past, academic freedom is free as air in this University, as far as I am concerned. I have done nothing but hand out the Word with the bark on it; and it has been accepted and applauded.

Give my best love to all your family: and some day get Mrs. Evans to write me a line – for I know you write with difficulty – telling me how you all are and what you





are doing. It is too long since I saw you and too long since I have heard. Affec'ately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

I refrain from comment on the state of public affairs. If our economic system lasts ten years, it will do well.

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Friday

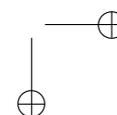
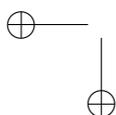
My dear Mr. Evans, – Thank you for your friendly compliance in the matter of W. K. Thomas. I don't think I shall requisition your good offices, but if I need them I shall.

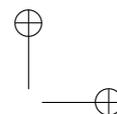
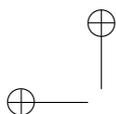
I mean to come down and see you some time next month, and we will have a good talk. It is a pleasure to know that you think the Rabelais is a success. It was done under a good many difficulties, as you may imagine, but I believe it was worth doing, and I think the old man and his translators would approve.

The ethical sense is certainly absent from every consideration of public affairs. It never had much place there. What I most wonder at is that the capitalist, properly so called, has so little idea who his real friends are. But that is just standard Bourbonism. . .

My best love to Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor. I hope to see both of them when I come down. Yours faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





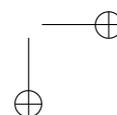
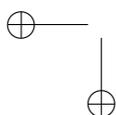
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

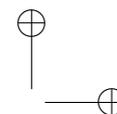
20 Nov. 1929

My dear friend, – I am very much shocked and grieved by the news which I have of you today on returning to these shores. You should have told me sooner of your misfortune. Even now you do not say how you are getting on, except by an indirect suggestion of improvement. By all means let me hear again a little more explicitly.

No more did I know that Mr. Evans had been ill, what about him? I think you forget that I have been far away and quite out of communication with any source of competent knowledge of how things have gone with you. This sounds like scolding, and perhaps it is, a little. Now that I am here, we must do better by each other; so when I hear again from you I shall lay plans for coming down. . .

Harper's have a paper of mine in the December issue that will please you. My collaborated essay on Rabelais is just out. An old college friend says that it is not about Rabelais at all primarily, but about freedom. He does not know Rabelais. I shall have another little literary-travel book out some time next year, dealing with Rabelais's various places of abode. The thing I most want to see done, however – a reissue of the English text of Rabelais's own work in proper form, that is, annotated and illustrated so that the English-speaking reader will really know what he is reading – this I fear I can not see my way to do, and it disappoints me vastly. But some one will do it some day, though not so well as I would.





I wish you would let me know what you think of my Rabelais essay – you see, I speak to you without any false reticence, as an old and good friend... My best love to all of you and my best wishes for your recovery. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

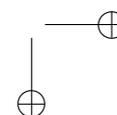
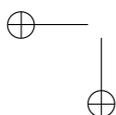
To Edmund C. Evans

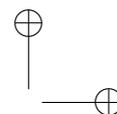
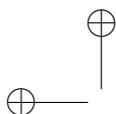
6 11 1930

My dear Mr. Evans, – I had such a delightful evening with you. I hope Mrs. Evans is recovering properly; please tell her so, with my affectionate good wishes, and be sure to bear down on the fact that some other razor than mine had cut the towel in my bathroom, by thunder, and that I didn't smoke any cigarettes in bed.

Maybe I'll have the chance to see you again some day, after all, for I may not sail so soon, on account of this Columbia business. They have made me the handsomest offer in the world, accomodating themselves to me in every way. Four months residence; title of Visiting Professor; membership with seat and *vote* in the Faculty of Literature; anybody I may choose to assist me. They even leave it to me to suggest my salary.

I expect to take up with it, as it is a great chance to induce some straight thinking in Politics and Economics. I won't take a salary, as I told you, for I want to be dead free, and in looking over my affairs I find I can manage it easily. My income will be plenty for it, only, on account of the way it comes in, I'll have to borrow a





bit this spring and summer, but I don't think I'll have any trouble doing that.

Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor ought to take this as good news. They always found fault with me for my indifference to various forms of propaganda, and now that I have found one that will really show results worth the labour and time involved, they will see me push it prettily.

But doesn't it seem odd that Columbia should put a professed anarchist, individualist and single-taxer in its Faculty of Literature to teach politics and history – on his own terms? What is the world coming to?

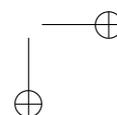
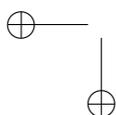
All this is in the family, you understand. I'll be in the city next week, and shall drop in on Suzanne, to see how she gets on with that fool paper. Affectionately,

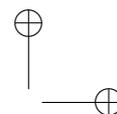
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Friday
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park

My dear Mrs. Evans, – It was characteristically kind of you to write me about the book. I am delighted that you find it satisfactory for its purpose. If you compare a few pages of its text with my other edition of the U-M translation, you will get an idea of the amount and kind of work that went into it. I undertook it only in fulfillment of a lifetime of obligation to Rabelais's memory, expecting nothing whatever from it. The book





will be well received in France, England and the Low Countries, but the most I can hope for here is that it will fall into the hands of a very few people like yourself who are Rabelais's "Christian friends" and will be helped by it to a better understanding of Pantagruelism. Thank you cordially for your kind words.

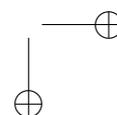
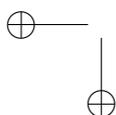
Harper's wrote me today that a manuscript on land-speculation in this country had come to them out of a clear sky. I shall go in on Tuesday to see it. Wouldn't it be extraordinary if it should turn out to be really competent? I shall write you further about it.

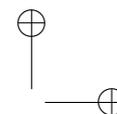
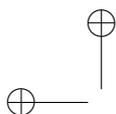
I greatly wish to see you all, and shall do so when I can. I have another piece of work in mind that would interest you, and I am trying to arrange matters so that I can do it. I can't promise to come down very soon, but I shall come.

As you say, the times are very trying, as they were in France in Rabelais's latter days, so we have to count heavily on him to help us through them. You speak of bankruptcy. Did you ever see a more complete bankruptcy of intelligence than our Best Minds have been declaring these two years?

My best love to you both, and to your sister. I think of you always. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



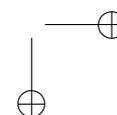
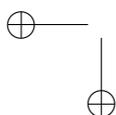


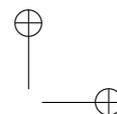
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
8 Jan., 1933

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for the kind message you sent me at Christmas. You all are often in my mind, and I am glad to believe you are living in greater contentment than would be possible for you here. The difficulty of the times in this country is greatly exaggerated by the bad spirit prevailing – timidity, ignorance, and avoidance of responsibility, and a great deal of essential dishonesty into the bargain. Anyone who was in Germany in 1924 and in France in 1928 – as I was – can have very little respect for the way our people have taken things these three years. But you are as well aware of all this as I am, so I say no more about it.

I am doing very little. I have published a few magazine-pieces, but nothing more. There are one or two books that I should like to get out, but I am unable to do so. They would cost something to prepare, and while publishers would be glad to take them if they were ready, no publisher will risk enough of an advance on them to get them written. So I have rather given up the idea of doing anything more, which is perhaps just as well.

Thus, as far as my own concerns go, I have hardly anything to report. I am very glad to say that Harpers have brought out quite a good book on the history of land-speculation in America. It is not by any means exhaustive, but it is a good beginning. It is by a Professor Sokolski; you would find it interesting. The country, however, is in a state of complete intellectual paralysis, as one would know it must be from the kind of education





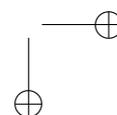
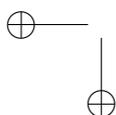
it has had and the kind of thing it has fed its mind on. Consequently it is much at the mercy of charlatans, and intelligence is at a greater discount than ever. The myth of our immeasurable superiority to all foreigners has pretty well disappeared, I think, and so has the egregious cult of the American Business Man. They have merely left a vacuum, however, and will no doubt reappear; for I think we can count on nothing but a recrudescence of our old attitude towards "prosperity" when it returns, as it may presently do. My belief is that we shall have learned nothing because we are incapable of learning anything.

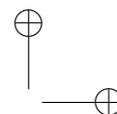
I have not seen anything of our old acquaintances, for I am almost never in New York, where they are; nor have I heard anything of them. So you see I am a most unsatisfactory correspondent, but in spirit a very devoted one. Please give my best love to Mr. Evans and Miss Winsor, and believe me, with all good wishes, Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
16 Gramercy Park
10 February 1933

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I have your welcome letter from Cannes. I wish I had known you were going there, particularly on account of an old friend and a very dear one, Brand Whitlock, who would be most happy to see you and whom you would be greatly pleased with. He lives at Cannes, in the Hotel des Anglais. If by any



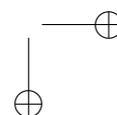
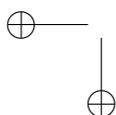


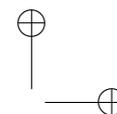
chance you are still there, do go see him; tell him I sent you.

Also I am sorry, for I shall be at Cannes myself in about a month, and we might have hit off a visit at the same time. This is really an aggravation. It is a matter of business that takes me down that way, and the way the sailings run, Cannes is the nearest port to where I am bound. Wherever you are, you might send me a line there, Care Thos. Cook, to reach me, say, 1 March. I put it this way, because I can not see you satisfied to remain at Cannes very long. It is an odious place, except for the climate, which is good; the moral atmosphere is snuffy and debilitating, and I don't think you will put up with it a great while.

Concerning the Hamilton book, you spoke of it very warmly when I was last at your house, and I have never lost sight of your desire to have it. Since I could not manage it myself, I first got a publisher interested in it, and then took the matter up with Broadus Mitchell, Professor of Economics at Johns Hopkins. He is the only fundamental Economist I know who is in such a position, except Brown, of the University of Missouri; and also an extremely good writer. His situation in Baltimore gives him an easy access to all the material available. So, if no accident happens, you see you are likely to have your book in a year or so. I meant to mention this before, but it escaped me. . . I am doing nothing now but keep a sort of Journal – thoughts and reflections, largely on current affairs – which will make a book in the course of the summer. . .

I am glad that you and your nephew enjoy my articles in *Harper's*. I have one in the January issue, raising a





question that will bear a great deal of serious thought. Also I have one in the February *Mercury* on a less interesting subject, but perhaps worth reading.

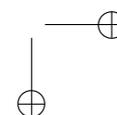
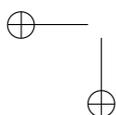
Writing for our public is a very discouraging business. I would say, if I were asked, that I was wholly ineffectual. Yet when the publisher Knopf sent out a questionnaire to most of the public libraries in the country, the librarians said I had a good and increasing following among thoughtful people. It may be so – I don't know, and it is best never to think of it.

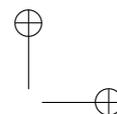
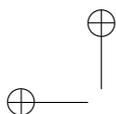
I am trying to get someone to bring out a good biography of Henry George, in the light of our own times. There is none. With my best love to all of you, I am always your affectionate

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Hotel Victoria
Cannes, 6 March [1933]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – . . . Quite aside from my sense of the interest which you have in a new book on Hamilton, the turn that affairs at home have taken recently has made me see a much more positive value to such a book than I had set on it before, and I am really very glad. . . that I shall have the chance to do the work myself. I should look forward to about the same size and style of book as my Jefferson – say about 90,000 words, rather a study of the man and his policies than a strict biography. Of course, a projected book is always more or less like the dress that the little girl started to make for her doll,

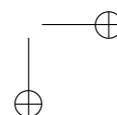
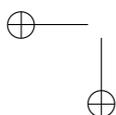


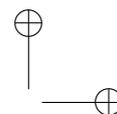


and it turned out to be a pair of pants – no one can say absolutely. My Jefferson was like that. I think, however, that I know the subject well enough to be quite sure of the way it can be developed.

Brand Whitlock and I had two long talks, yesterday and today. At my suggestion, when he finished his LaFayette, he went to work on a full-length biography of Thomas Jefferson, which I am sure will hold the field, for curiously, there has been none since Randall's, about a century ago. If his health holds out, he ought to get it done in a year and a half, or two years. We talked over the times and circumstances, and the political principles of the two men, and our views fundamentally coincided, especially on the point that, given such a start, the conditions which now exist were bound to ensue. Yet I am sure that, even as late as 1900, if our capitalists had accepted the economic system of Henry George, they would not only have saved their own skins, but there would be no Marxism, Lenninism – and no Fascism, no Dawes, no Mitchell, no R.F.C.

... What differentiates our country is not that there are no decent folk in it – there are, and they are to my knowledge the very best in the world. But they are ineffectual – swamped – and in no other country are they so ineffectual. I very much want you to get hold of José y Gasset's book called the *Revolt of the Masses*, and read it with prayerful care, for it is extraordinarily illuminating. For my own part, I see precious little light ahead. What I venture to predict is that in twelve months we shall be at war with Japan, another artificial boom ensuing, another run of speculation, and a repetition of what we have been through.



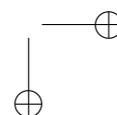
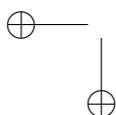


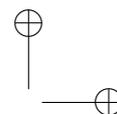
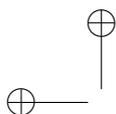
Give my kindest regards to all – or I should say both – your fellow-travellers. I am now going over to the islands of Hyères, beloved by Rabelais, and as deserted now as when he visited them – in fact, I think more so. They are the loveliest place that one can imagine, where one can take one's work and be absolutely sequestered, even from mail and newspapers. I shall have part of the Hamiltonian bibliography with me, borrowed from Whitlock, and shall stay there until I have gone through it. Meanwhile, the best address I can give for letters is Cook, at Cannes, and I shall see what I can do about forwarding when I reach the Islands. Yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Hyères, March – 12 [1933]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I was talking with the chap in Cook's at Cannes about the best way of getting remittances while I am so far away from my base of supplies. If it makes no actual difference to you when you send me that amount. I suggest that you deposit it with Cook for payment at his Cannes office some time before the first of April. Then he can convert it into traveler's checks, which are good anywhere. If I were in Brussels, the matter would be simple enough, but dealing with a French or Portuguese bank is a formidable business, as you probably know. But if that inconveniences you at all, we will get at it some other way which suits you better, and meanwhile send me a line Care Cook at Cannes, to await my re-entrance into the world of men and affairs.





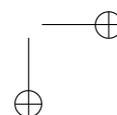
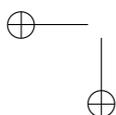
I expect these few days on the Islands of Hyères will pick me up greatly. I have been in none too good condition of late, and need something of the kind. It is remarkable that the French have let these marvellous islands lie wild for centuries. I went over to see them two years ago, and understood at once why Rabelais seems to have fallen in love with them. The French never visit them, and they are safe from tourists of other nations, because there is nothing for them to do there. I have a good deal to say about these islands in my little travel-book that Harcourt is publishing, and I hope that some day you will be moved to have a look at them when you are in these parts, if only out of a sentimental Rabelaisian spirit. They lie five or six miles off the coast and one reaches them by a sort of converted fishing boat which makes a rather tedious crossing to Port-Cros. Porquerolles, the largest of the group, is easier reached, but Port-Cros is the most lovely. . . Yours affectionately,

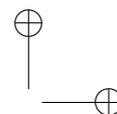
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

Thos. Cook & Son
Lisbon, 22 June, 1933

My dear Mr. Evans, – I am very glad indeed to have your summary of what you have in mind to write. I have thought it over carefully, and approve of it heartily. There is nothing that I would suggest changing. My impression is, however, that you will find your subject expanding to a much greater length than you seem to

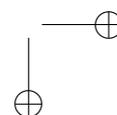
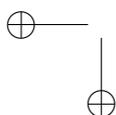


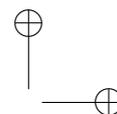
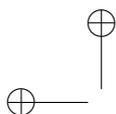


suspect; and this is all to the good. I venture to hope that you will aim at a volume instead of a series of papers that can be put together. You will find it much easier to write a book and then let an editor pick pieces out of it than to write deliberately for serialization. In the one case, after you get under weigh, the sustained work will carry you along; while in the other, if you have the limitations of space constantly in mind, you will have to carry it. The one makes for freedom in writing, and the other tends to continual compression, expansion, arbitrary arrangement, and all sorts of trouble.

I have written about 10,000 words for Scribner's – a view of George and his work that no one has yet taken, and I think the true one. It makes me wish that somebody would look it over, and if he thought it were right, expand it into a full-length biography. I don't think it is for me to do, but I am much in earnest about it, and I know three publishers who are simply waiting for such a work and can think of no one to do it. What can be done about this? George ought to be rehabilitated, and it could be done in such a way as to help his cause more than anything has ever helped it, and to restore him in popular notice as the really great figure that he essentially was. But who the devil could we trust to do it? My 10,000 words give a line that anyone ought to be able to follow if he thought it was a true one – well, we'll talk about that when I see you, and many other things as well.

I am going back to Brussels in a few days. I ought to be there by the middle of July at the latest. I think I shall keep to Thos. Cook as an address there, for convenience; so when anything is on your mind, let me hear from you





at Lisbon or Brussels or both, and if you are moved to go over via Dover-Ostende, don't resist the intimations of the spirit.

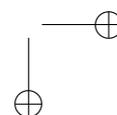
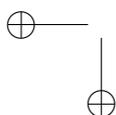
One more thing I want to say. Don't think you can't do what you wish to do. No one knows what he can do. Remember, "the spirit breathes where it will," and one seems to have very little conscious share in the best things one does – they seem to come out of one's *Unbewusstsein*, to a great extent, and who can tell what is there? So go at it with an easy mind in confidence and reasonable patience, and no misgivings. If you fail, it won't take long, and you will have had the fun and the discipline of trying – as Panurge said in the storm, "We can but perish, and that's soon done."

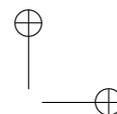
Forgive the strong Grandma flavour of this letter, and believe me, with my best love to your wife and Miss Winsor, always affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Thos. Cook & Son
Bruxelles, 20 July 1933

My dear Friend, – I came up from Portugal on a Dutch ship four days ago, and I do assure you it seems monstrous good to be among the suffering Belgians once more. Your letter is here. I rather doubt there being any serious inflation, so don't start home before the last gun is fired, for I don't think it will be necessary. I agree with you, however, that F.D.R. and those fool advisors of his are in for a skinning. What a grand job-lot of





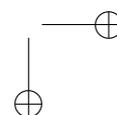
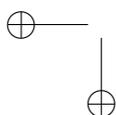
human skulch that was, which he sent over to London to go against the best assorted scoundrels of all Europe! Temporarily, I think the worst of it is over for us, though of course as you and I well know, it is only a reprieve – we shall bust, finally, and so we should; but before that we shall have a few more ups and downs.

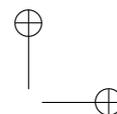
Would you not do better and be happier in some quiet place over here, on the seashore, if you like, say at Zoute, or one in the Ardennes? I think so; and I am sure your money would go further and get you more.

About the books. I have gone a considerable way with Alexander, but he would keep perfectly, as you suggest. I shall talk it over with some publishers. I know that Harcourt, Knopf and Morrow are all frightfully keen on a life of H. G., if they could get one. Maybe, since you express such kind confidence in me, we might arrange for you to do it with me more or less at your elbow. We will see about it, anyway, when we meet. I'll keep on with Alexander until then, and if we decide to make a shift, we will put him in cold storage a while, which will do just as well.

I hope you will migrate this way, since you refuse to think of the Islands of Hyères. England seems such a desperate venture, really. My best love to all of you. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



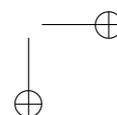
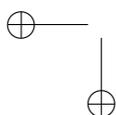


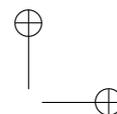
Brussels
16 Sept., 1933

My dear Friend, – I shall be sailing on the 22nd, and should land on 1 or 2 October. Henry Mencken says I should arrive about in time to see the greatest show since the War. I don't take it that way. Roosevelt's policy is Stateism, pure and simple; it has been an old story for generations over here, and has never worked. I suspended judgment a long time, but now believe firmly that Roosevelt never had from the outset any but an electioneering interest in the situation; to my mind, the redistribution of wealth that he contemplates, and his method of redistribution, both prove it. Nobody was ever more strongly against the existing economic order than I am, but I believe with Lincoln that nothing is ever settled until it is settled right, and I have never yet heard of an injustice being satisfactorily corrected by another injustice equally serious in principle.

I think I told you that *Scribner's* say they are printing my piece on Henry George in the November issue. I hope you will look at it, notwithstanding it is quite dull. I have sent something to the *Atlantic* – reflections suggested by Portugal – but it is so subversive that I have no notion that Sedgwick will print it; however, some one will. I hope to see you very soon. I want to talk over a number of interesting matters. Everything is going well. I am sorry you left this side so soon, and I hope for your sake it will not be for long. My best love to all of you. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



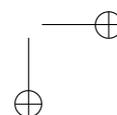
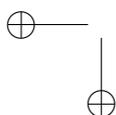


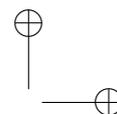
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

The Players
16 Gramercy Park
16 Oct., 1933

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Returning from a week out of town, I find your letter, enclosing your check and Miss Winsor's, for all of which I thank you very much. I came back from Europe the first week in October, and can report some good news which I think will please you; for the present, let us call it confidential. I find myself, for the first time in my life, somewhat in demand. My publishers say that in the present disposition of the public mind, they feel sure that what I write will be much better received than heretofore. Consequently I have signed up for the Hamilton, and also for that book on the State which you may remember wishing I would do long ago, and which I demurred at doing because no one would read it. You may depend upon its being a very good book. In my absence this Spring my publisher arranged with Heinemann for simultaneous publication of these books in England. Also, he is quietly making some inquiries with a view to buying the *North American Review* for me to edit; and if that is not available, he thinks of starting a new one.

The *Atlantic* will shortly print a rather interesting paper of mine – some thoughts suggested by Portugal. I have just read proof of it, but do not know when it is coming out.





It would be very strange, don't you think, if in my old age my writings would really count for something? It looks as if they might.

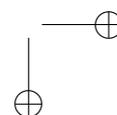
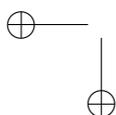
I hope to see you before too long. It is a pleasure to know that in Maine the climate, at least, did well by you. I have never been there, but after what you have said, I hope I may. My best love to you all. I send this to Bryn Mawr, being uncertain of where you are at the moment. Let me know when you are settled. Yours affectionately,

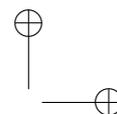
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
25 Oct., 1933

My dear Mr. Evans, – I am very glad to have your letter from West Point. I have lately addressed Mrs. Evans at Bryn Mawr, on the hypothesis that letters would catch up with you on your wanderings if they took Bryn Mawr as a starting-point. I agree with your diagnosis of the times. Franklin has assembled the most extraordinary aggregation of quacks ever seen in this Country since the death of P. T. Barnum; and paying the bill they are running up will be a sorry business for the already overtaxed citizenry. I never dreamed of such colossal charlatanism and mountebankery as I now see. There seems to be no opposition of a political character, and no serious criticism worth speaking of. If this docility can hold out for a couple of years, and some





rather brisk improvement go with it, the Democrats may easily get the second term that they are after; but a revulsion can set in meanwhile, and I think it is likely to do so. I am reminded always of Madison's words in 1794, which I may have quoted to you already, about "the old trick of turning every contingency into a resource for accumulating force in the government" and of Mr. Jefferson on the government's aim "to waste the labours of the people under the pretence of taking care of them."

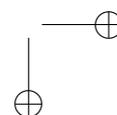
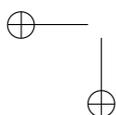
However, now is the time to get together what ammunition we have, and polish our weapons; I am convinced that the chance will soon come to use it with more effect than heretofore.

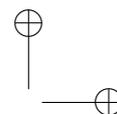
Geiger has put out a book on the philosophy of Henry George, which I hear is good; I have not yet seen it. Macmillans do the publishing. My own piece on him is out, in *Scribner's* current number. I think H. G. will yet be heard from in many quarters.

If only the country were not so rich – if we could but keep on going to pot for two years more! But I fear the little specious improvement we have shown will be almost too much for your purposes and mine.

I am in the country, hard at work. I hope to see you before too long. Meanwhile, with my best love to Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor, I am always your affectionate friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

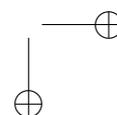
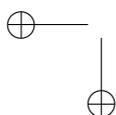
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Monday [Nov. or Dec. 1933]

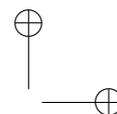
My dear Friend, – I am ever so jubilant. The book on Henry George which we have so long wanted, is out at last, from a most unexpected quarter – North Dakota – and it is a *grand* book. “The Philosophy of Henry George”, by George B. Geiger. . . That is a great joy and relief to me, and I know you will rejoice with me. At last H. G. is in his place.

But O my dear friend, what on earth am I to say to this gentle idiot whose letter I enclose? I don’t know. What queer destinies govern mankind! Marcus Aurelius had Commodus for a son: H. G. had this for a daughter! Is it the pre-natal influence of poverty? Yet Marcus Aurelius was not poor. Who can tell? But what do you think one should say to this critter? Don’t send her letter back, for I have a note of the address.

N.B. I hope the lady is not one of your domestic idols.

Your letter was ever so welcome, though I am sorry to hear of your settling again here instead of on Port-Cros – it would be but little more work to move your books and silver-ware that far. I shall come down and see you when I can. I am working hard at the moment in the good cause. I marvel at the number of demands made on me now, after a long life of neglect. One hardly knows what to make of it. I think Alexander will be quite a book; and the one on the State will be far better. Even the Brooklyn *Eagle* asked me the other day for 3,000 words





on Jeffersonianism – making it clear that they meant freedom in T. J.’s sense. But I can’t let that sort of thing interfere with my regular work, so I said no.

My best love to you all. Be sure to get Geiger’s book, and Sokolski’s book on land-speculation. Yours affectionately,

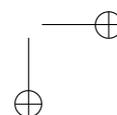
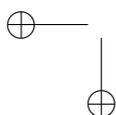
ALBERT JAY NOCK

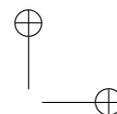
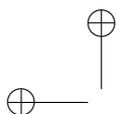
To Ellen Winsor

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
2 April 1934

My dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you so much for your kind note. I am glad you liked the book. It was published by accident, really, and I can’t say I thought a great deal of it, but it seems to have stirred up some interest. A book that I wrote two years ago is coming out in September, however, and I believe you will really like it – I do myself, and don’t mind saying so, as shouldn’t – and I’ll send it to you as soon as it is off the press.

As to Henry George, I would like to do something about it, and perhaps I can, if I live and keep my wits. I now have ahead of me the two books that your sister set me going on – a treatise on A. Hamilton, and a treatise on the State. I have been at work on these for a year, and they are doing well. I hope I can have one of them completed by the late autumn, and the other soon after. Their publication is arranged for. The Hamilton ought to be, I should say, about as good as my Jefferson – I





hope so – but the other one will be, I am sure, a very good book indeed, especially because it brings out some matters that have not yet been treated, and that are quite important. One of these books, tell your sister, should be out in the Spring, and if I can get the other ready in time, it will be out in the Fall.

You are very good to offer so kindly to help me out with the publishing, and I thank you with all my heart. That, however, is not the trouble. I can find no end of publishers to take anything I write “sight unseen”; in fact, they are always after me for something. My only trouble is to keep going while I write my books, and that makes my work much slower, as I have to interrupt it often. But I never have any difficulty about publishing.

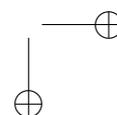
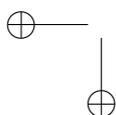
I am sorry not to have seen you when I was in Philadelphia the other day. I had a most pleasant few minutes with Mr. Evans. He tells me however, that you are coming up next week or thereabouts, and that I might hope to see you then. Please remember me kindly to your family, and believe me always, with my love and my best thanks, Yours faithfully,

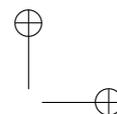
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Edmund C. Evans

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Tuesday, [May 1934]

My dear Friend, – I am sorry to hear you say you have little energy. Look here, that won't do. You must settle





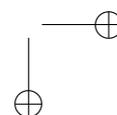
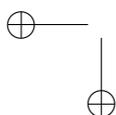
somewhere and make a business of getting on your feet. I want to hear about it, for I am quite capable of coming down there and leading you into the dry dock by your ear. Seriously, get after it at once, and do it now. There are none too many of your sort hanging about, and we need those few in good shape.

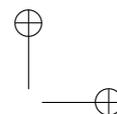
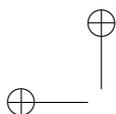
Never mind about Bryn Mawr, or me, or anything or anybody else. You are good as gold to have tried to help my missionary enterprise, but you have done your share. I want you to eat about a pound of bull-steak every day, rare, with pepper-sass, and also invest all that Uncle Sam has left you in Burgundy wine – Richebourg, if you can get it – and put yourself outside a bottle per diem; and get Mead’s brewer’s yeast tablets: one at night and one in the morning.

Take notice, this is *datum Camberiaci*, given at Cham-béry. (See Rabelais, Book IV, last chapter). Don’t bother about a house until Fall. Go some where up the coast, and board sumptuously where they make a specialty of bull beef – spare-ribs and sauerkraut – hog and hominy – fruit – and fiddle gingerly around the golf-course until you find yourself looming up every morning like a giant refreshed.

That is the best you can do for yourself, and hence for me and for all hands. So now go to it, and stick to it. Best love to all of you, Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
26 June [1934]

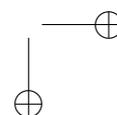
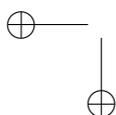
My dear Mr. Evans, – Delighted to hear from you. If you take up a permanent residence in this country, the Narragansett region has advantages that I should be glad to have you look over. As for Europe, something depends on the part of Europe that you pick out; but really I should have no apprehension about living there. However, let us talk about all that when we meet.

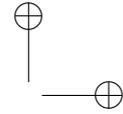
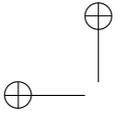
I was struck by your observations on the extent of unoccupied country. Rhode Island is the most thickly-populated State in the Union, and I can take you through it on a magnificent State highway without giving you a sight of a human habitation. Well, there you are!

I got a cordial letter from Bryn Mawr College, which I enclose. I shall not want it, so do not return it.

It is a great satisfaction to hear you are getting your strength back. Perhaps the summer in Yarmouth will do the trick. I hope so. . . I am still racking along, doing a fair amount of work. The *Atlantic* surprised me by asking for a paper on Artemus Ward. I have just sent it to them – a hot one. I hope their courage holds out to print it.

A few months will show that our public affairs are in a worse mess than ever. I think, though, that invested capital has been hit as hard as it is going to be for some time. I also see signs of reaction against the nonsense that has been going on. I think Roosevelt's distribution of money will give him another term, but his policies will have enough of a jolt to make him watch his steps.





So I am not worried about the immediate future. My best love to all of you. Affectionately yours,

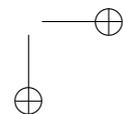
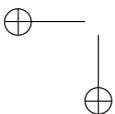
ALBERT JAY NOCK

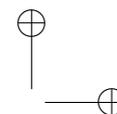
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Sunday [Sept. 1934]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I am ever so grateful for the cheque, and even more for your kindness to my little book, which I rather thought you might regard as *infra dig*. I wrote it purely for the fun of the thing, a couple of years ago. I am especially pleased by your compliment to my dedicatory letter. When I look over anything I have written in French, I always say it sounds like pretty good English; I can not view it with anything like a native sense of the idiom. I wish the book would move you to go over the ground again with a copy of Rabelais in your hand, and I wish I might be with you when you do it.

I suppose by this time you are looking over Connecticut for prospects of a home. You must let me hear how you come out. I rather expect to go down to Philadelphia next month to see some friends on their return from Europe, and if I do, I shall give you notice, on the chance of being able to see you, and hear what luck you have had. My belief has long been that the South County of Rhode Island is the only place in the United States that is fit for a dog to live in; but I confess my knowledge of Connecticut is slight. Historically, the





Connecticut people are pretty fearful; maybe they have changed, but I doubt it. Old Thomas Robinson Hazard in the *Jonnycake Papers* speaks of “the cussed godly Puritans of Massachusetts, and their hell-bound allies, the Presbyterians of Connecticut,” as in league to rob and exterminate the Indians; and I imagine that is about their size.

I hope Mr. Evans is getting on, and picking up his strength. I have been for some time anxious about him, as I know you also have been. Please give him my most affectionate regards, and believe me always faithfully yours,

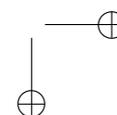
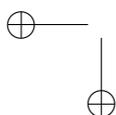
ALBERT JAY NOCK

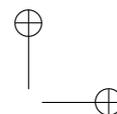
To Edmund C. Evans

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Tuesday, [Sept. 1934]

My dear Mr. Evans, – Thank you cordially for your letter, and for your hospitality to my frivolous little book. I hope so earnestly that the summer has put you on your feet again; if it has, take every possible measure to keep yourself on them. . .

Please tell Mrs. Evans that she did me a great favour by citing that quotation from Emerson, for it gave me what I think is an excellent title for my new book on the State – “The Chancellors of God.” It came along just in time, too, for the “front matter” of the book is going into type this month. I shall use the full quotation from





Emerson as a motto, and under it print the great saying of Bishop Butler as a second motto: "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be; why, then, should we desire to be deceived?"

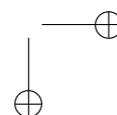
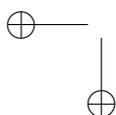
I rather think I may be down your way before long, and if I do, I shall not lose the occasion to see you. My friends the Rothschilds want me to stop with them, and I am also due for a day or so in Baltimore. Even if you are in the throes of moving, we will sit around on the packing-boxes for an hour's talk. My best love to all of you. Yours faithfully,

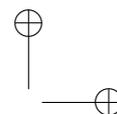
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
14 Sept. 1934

My dear Miss Winsor, – Why, how unexpectedly good you are to my little book! I was more than half afraid you would turn up your aristocratic beak, and say you would suppose a serious scholar ought to be in better business. But at the time I had no better business to be in – not that I looked very hard for any, because I like the idea of finishing off my debt to Rabelais, as far as I could do so – which was not very far – by doing a little something in the vein of foolery which he used so well. Indeed I am glad you got some amusement out of





it. I hope it may move you some day to follow along the grand old fellow's trail.

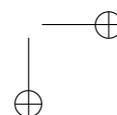
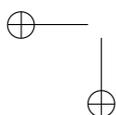
The illustrations, now – that is another matter. Did you ever see better? I never did. They were done by a friend, a star pupil of old Pop Hale, up in Boston, than whom no better teacher ever lived. It is a great grief to me that he did not live to see these drawings, for he would have been immensely proud of them, though no power on earth could make him say so. . .

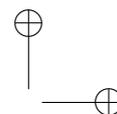
But am I not to see you here in the course of your wild whirling tour of home-hunting? The way from Connecticut down would bring you this way, would it not? – or do you cross the Poughkeepsie Bridge? I wanted to see you all concerning an interesting departure of the funny old *Atlantic Monthly*. But I shall be in Philadelphia a little later; I have promised to go there and see an old friend as soon as he returns from Europe.

You must labour with your sister to have me out to lunch. Tell her I shall not stay over night, so she need not agonize over any suppositious holes burned in her blankets, and as for lunch, my soul pants for a diet of burnt turnips even as the hart panteth for the water-brooks. That ought to fetch her.

Thank you again, dear Miss Winsor, for being pleased with my little book. I appreciate it sincerely, and so I know does the shade of old F. R. My best love to all of you. Yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





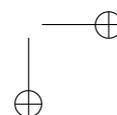
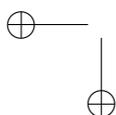
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

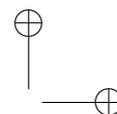
“Edgewood Farm”
Box 68 Wakefield, Rhode Island
Sunday [8 Dec. 1934]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I looked at a newspaper this morning, which I seldom do, and by this sheer chance I saw Mr. Evans’s name. I telegraphed you at once, which seemed all there was in my power to do; if there had been more, I would have done it; and now – or hereafter – if I can be of any service to you, even the slightest, it would be a privilege that I should welcome and cherish. In the face of your greater sorrow, I shall not speak of my own, but I may say, I think, that my association with Mr. Evans was one of the most encouraging and hope-inspiring experiences of my life. He was a truly noble man, who loved the ideal of liberty and justice, and served it faithfully all the days of his life. Moreover, he was a real individual, such as are especially rare in these times; the few we have can never be replaced, and he was one of them. He had all my affection from the first day I knew him, and better than that, all my respect and esteem.

Please give my loving sympathy to your sister, and remember that in all circumstances, my dear Mrs. Evans, I am always your affectionate friend,

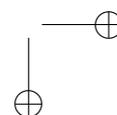
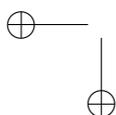
ALBERT JAY NOCK

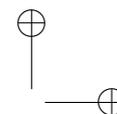




The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
February 1935

My dear Mrs. Evans, – You already know how grateful I am for your assistance, but I acknowledge it once more, with the deepest sentiment. Yes, I often think sadly of the possibilities that lay in Mr. Evans's mind. He was a sound economist, and had a clear understanding of the world's situation, and of the reason why it is so bad – and why it seems at the moment so unlikely to improve. I have always had a strong belief that some personalities survive death, though I do not expect my own to do so. I have had Harpers send you a little article on the subject, which I published anonymously some time ago. The best treatment of the matter that I know of is in a very small book called *Immortality*, by Dr. S. D. McConnell, published by the Macmillan Co. If there be such a thing as the survival of personality, I think it is a very wise provision of nature that our limitation of knowledge about it is just what it is. If survival were proved positively, most of us would feel little incentive to put a proper valuation on our present life, or to make a proper use of it. If non-survival were proved, on the other hand, the temptation to make a very bad use of our present life would be too hard for most of us to resist. As it is, our intimations of survival are strong enough to affect our attitude and keep us interested, but not strong enough to lead us to any positive knowledge either way: and this seems to me the best arrangement conceivable, if conscious survival be a fact.





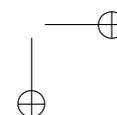
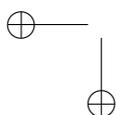
The quotation from Thomas Jefferson that you sent me, is superb. How clearly the old man saw what was coming! I am trying (this is confidential) to get the *Atlantic* to print some of my work on the State. They want to do it, but I don't know whether their courage will hold out. Believe me always, with all the gratitude in the world, yours affectionately,

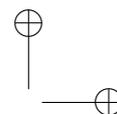
ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
25 Feb. 1935

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for your thoughtful suggestion about a life of Henry George. I can not say anything about that project until I get a little further along with what I have now on hand, but as soon as I can make a fair forecast, I shall tell you. I have no idea that anything will come of the *North American Review*, but I think I should follow the matter up, because if I had a free hand with the review, I could make a most useful thing of it. I still expect, somewhat indefinitely, that this will take me to Philadelphia, and we can speak about all these matters then.

I have a little article in the current *Scribner's* which will interest you; I wrote it some time ago, and *Scribner's* very wisely held it up until just the right moment; and, as I told you, I have another article in next month's *Atlantic*. The *Atlantic* is worrying dreadfully about publishing some parts of my book on the State. I don't think they





will, but it is barely possible. Sedgwick told me dolefully that I will lose him his last subscriber, but that he was still sticking to me. My love to your sister and yourself. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

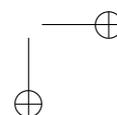
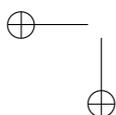
[Rhode Island]
11 March [1935]

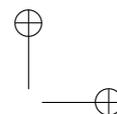
My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for your letter. You might have kept the book indefinitely, and I intended that you keep the copy of Harper’s to do with what you pleased.

Cram thinks the mass-man, to which you refer, has value only as the raw material out of which, by some process as yet unknown, but which is certainly not progressive – evolutionary, the occasional human being is produced. His thesis is very interesting. I recommend your looking it up. I am commenting on it in the next issue of the *Atlantic*, which will be out in ten days.

The names in my article were taken at random, a few out of many. I fully agree with you that Bach is the greatest musician who ever lived. He is incomparable and unapproachable. I wish that you might have been with me to hear how he is dealt with in Brussels, where they really know how to render his work.

I humbly hope you are taking to heart all that I proposed in my last letter, concerning a summer in the South County. You really owe that much to the memory of R. Williams, and to the interesting survivals of his





libertarian spirit – quite as libertarian as T. J.’s – in the people here. This is the only atmosphere in America that I have found fit to breathe. At least, it deserves a look, so give it that, and I will say no more. . . . Really, while I hate officiousness, I hate worse the thought of your putting in another summer in such uncongenial circumstances as you were in last year, when, as far as I can see, you might live here so satisfactorily. So gather up Miss Winsor some time next month, and give the region the benefit of a three days look-over.

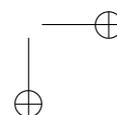
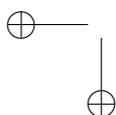
Reading Laski’s book on the State certainly encourages me to know how much better mine is. He comes to a sound conclusion, but by the way of bad logic, bad theory, and bad history – a curious book. I am reviewing it for the *Atlantic*. My love to your sister. Believe me always, dear friend, most affectionately yours,

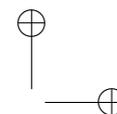
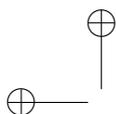
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Thursday, [March 1935]

My dear Miss Winsor, – I have been thinking of you and your sister a great deal of late, and your letter was uncommonly welcome; I am so glad to have news of you, and hear how you are getting on. The only thing possible is, as you say, to resume one’s normal life with fortitude and determination, which I know your sister has. I realize how difficult it is to do that, nevertheless,



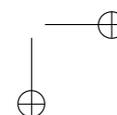
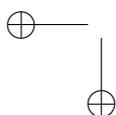


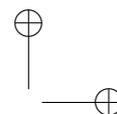
for death has made such inroads into my acquaintance this last year, that I find myself almost alone – in this country, that is. My friends in Europe, curiously, seem to have been spared and only those here taken.

... I think I have constructed a work on the State which is interesting and readable, and at the same time thoroughly sound. Mr. Evans would approve of it, for it is his own doctrine, and I shall offer it to his memory. He saw no legitimate objects of governmental action except the safeguarding of freedom and security to the individual – the doctrine of the Declaration of Independence. I have had him constantly in mind while I was composing this little work, and I believe he would find it as satisfactory as anything I have done. . .

The Pro Arte Quartette is said to be the best in Europe, technically. I believe the London Quartette exists no longer. The Pro Arte people made a great specialty of ultra-modern music, and filled up their programmes with it; and as this is unintelligible to me, I found it uninteresting. This was several years ago, however, and their ways may have changed. I hope you and your sister will accept the assurance of my lasting affection, and believe me always faithfully yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park
Friday, [June 1935]

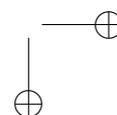
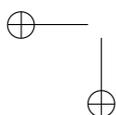
My dear Mrs. Evans, – Thank you for your letter. I don't think the Romans had as much trouble about moving as we have, so probably M. A. could remain philosophical without tempting Faustina to take the mop-handle to him.

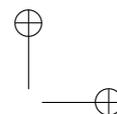
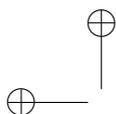
I doubt your finding it very warm up there. If you get a hot day, drive down to Point Judith, where you will need a wrap. But I think nudism is good in most any weather, for I detest wearing clothes.

That is an excellent and exact definition of slavery, but I can't place the authorship of it. If it were not for the clause about labour-products, it might be Spencer, but he does not use that term, to my knowledge, so that is unlikely. I don't know.

My book will go to press the first week in July. It occurs to me that you might like to have the printer's MS, as a matter of sentiment, so I shall have it kept for you. My publishers admire the book with great enthusiasm, saying it is the best work I have ever done, and I think it is. This pleases me especially because your husband's name is associated with it, and if you also regard it as my best work, I know you also will be pleased on that account. Please give my best love to Miss Winsor, and believe me always your affectionate friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





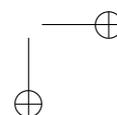
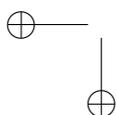
The Players
16 Gramercy Park, 24 June 1935

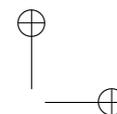
My dear Mrs. Evans, – That was a very low trick. – I think perhaps the definition ought to read “appropriated without compensation,” for the sake of clearness, but otherwise I would say it is all right. I hope you are getting on well, and that you like the country. I do not believe you will find it too warm. I may be up that way for a day or two, and if I come, I will look you over and hear how you are doing – first giving you due notice, of course.

At present I am occupied with seeing my book safely into the press. It will be printed next month, and you shall have the first copy at once, and also the printer’s MS. I have written this line of dedication, which I should like to submit to you before printing.

In Memoriam
Edmund Cadwalader Evans
A sound economist, one
of the few who understood
the nature of the State.

I thought this expressed satisfactorily his public character, thus establishing his relation to the book, and that it might be very well left at that, without adverting to the character he bore in other relations which are none of the reading public’s concern. How do you feel about that? If you can suggest anything otherwise, please do so. I am at the end of my string with this book, and I still hope you may change your mind and confiscate that Henry George fund to blow in on having a good time.





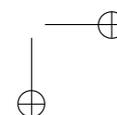
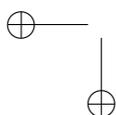
As I told you, I think you ought to do that. If you don't, however, it might as well go to Henry George as any other good cause – perhaps better – so I will take it for that. His anniversary comes four years hence. – Please give my love to Miss Winsor. I hope you are reasonably satisfied with your surroundings in the South County, and that it soon warms up at least enough to let you swim comfortably. The season for that is very short at Narragansett. Affectionately yours,

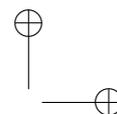
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Look at my bit on Utopias, in the current *Atlantic*. It will amuse you.

The Players
16 Gramercy Park, Sunday, [June 1935]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – That is a very generous arrangement which you propose about the George book. I am ready to go ahead with it now, so if it is convenient, you may consider it begun “as of July, first.” The Hamilton book is not dead or even sleeping. It is in such shape that it could be put together in a very short time. It is not a book to be brought out, however; nobody would look at it. The time of a book is very important. My book on the State, for instance, will come out at exactly the right moment. If it had come out six months ago, or even before the Supreme Court's decision, on the N.R.A., it would not have got half the attention that it will get this autumn. All this is especially true now that the book-trade is so very dead. So we had better





let Alexander bide his time, rather than have him come out and get nowhere.

I am glad that you find the dedication satisfactory. The book is so much the kind of thing that Mr. Evans would agree to and approve of that I regret above everything that he is not living to see it. Please give my love to your sister. It is near time when the swimming will be good, and I hope you will enjoy it and be as brown as a chestnut when I see you. Yours affectionately,

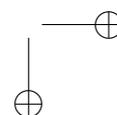
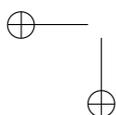
ALBERT JAY NOCK

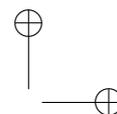
To Ellen Winsor

The Players
16 Gramercy Park
Independence Day [1935]

My dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you cordially for your letter, with its enclosures, which came yesterday. I suppose two years, or two-and-a-half, would see the work through, which would be in plenty of time for publication at the outset of the anniversary year. I already took the first step towards the book, by way of getting a line of direction on people who knew George. There are fewer of these alive now than one would suppose. He has been a living figure in my mind so long that it is hard to realize how far into the past he actually runs. . .

Your references to home-making and house-keeping distressed me. What a terrible business it is! I often think, as Abe Potash said about partnerships, that the man who invented the family was an enemy of the human race.





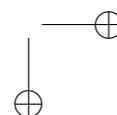
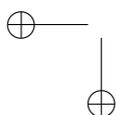
I can very well imagine your turning nomad, going to an agreeable climate, and living like the desert-haunting Beduins. After all, it has its attractions – perhaps you will yet take to it.

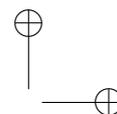
I shall telephone you before I make any move to invade your premises. I know you would like to read about Alexander, and so would I, but all public interest is solidly away from him as a personality, for the time being – but it will return. The general state of the book-trade, which was never so bad, makes it necessary to recognize this. Publishers are all in the doldrums, and book-sellers are flocking out of business – even Womraths' big chain of stores is bankrupt. I am the luckiest man in the world to have a publisher who has been lucky enough himself to carry him over this slump, if it does not last too long. Give my best love to your sister. I shall be ever so happy to see you – I hope in a very few days. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Brussels, 31 August [1935]

My dear Miss Winsor, – . . . The Queen's death has made the town very quiet; otherwise it is quite unchanged. There is no excitement over Mussolini's proposed raid upon Ethiopia, but a great deal in England. It is felt here that he is making a ruinous venture, however it turns out, which I believe is true. My opinion is based on the fact that the Italian State is now absorbing fifty per cent of the national income; and when that figure is reached, it means serious dissatisfaction. A week ago

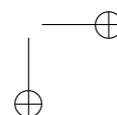
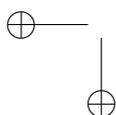


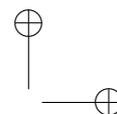


I would have said Mussolini's idea was to get as many men as possible under military law, and that he intended no more than a demonstration. I am not so sure now; he may be obliged to carry through, like the man who took the bull by the horns. In either case, I think we shall have seen the last of him. Perhaps there is a silver lining to this cloud of modern dictatorships, after all, if one can be patient enough to wait for a sight of it.

By the looks of things, my book on the State will be out at about the right time; and I am putting a couple of articles in the *Atlantic* this fall that ought to get a little notice. I do not expect anything from any of it, except as regards the Remnant. You remember that when the Lord ordered Isaiah off on his preaching expedition, he told him that it would not amount to anything, nobody would pay any attention but would go his own way, and finally everything would go to pot. Then when Isaiah asked what was the use of preaching, the Lord said that there was a Remnant there whom nobody knew anything about, and that when the system had all gone to the devil and there had to be a new start made, they were the ones who would do it. Meanwhile Isaiah's job was to take care of the Remnant. Maybe it is a good job. I like to think of the story once in a while, anyway. My best love to you both. I shall be nearly if not quite on my way back in another month, and it will be good to see you soon after that, as I hope to do. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



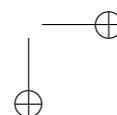
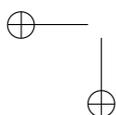


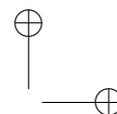
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Cercle Gaulois
Bruxelles, 24 Sept. [1935]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I am back in Brussels now for a day or two before sailing, and I have your letter with its enclosures, for all of which I thank you cordially. I shall write you from New York, in the hope that we may meet as soon as may be, and look one another over. I think you will see some improvement in me, and I hope to see a great deal in you. I am glad that the book is on its way to you, and I trust you will be pleased with it. There is no need of keeping the author's proof since you have the MS – I merely thought you might like to look at it out of curiosity or interest. The book is coming out at a very good time, and while I imagine it will be largely ignored by reviewers, it will make its way nevertheless. Events here seem to be bearing out my conclusions pretty closely. I do not think there will be any actual war worth speaking of – not this year, at least – the internal conditions of all these countries are extremely unsound and dangerous, and it is in those that I look for the more immediate trouble. Still, one can never be as sure as one would like to be, for with things as they stand, almost any outcome is possible.

I am interested in what you say about my public, and I think you are right. I have taken as much pains to avoid publicity as many writers take to get it, but I find nevertheless that I am extremely well known, even in quarters where I would not expect to be, and my reputation appears to be of a very substantial kind,





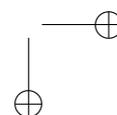
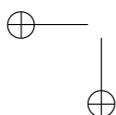
which is quite satisfactory. [Nicholas Murray] Butler's speech, which you sent me, is characteristic. He is a strange man, more or less like Balaam, I think. He sees many things clearly and speaks of them plainly and forcibly, but he seldom follows through. I confess I don't know whether to call him a conscious fraud or not. I rather doubt it, for the human power of self-persuasion is so great.

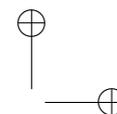
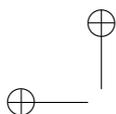
Probably in about a month you will begin to get dividends from your gamble on the South County's climate. That is the usual way. If everything turns out as it should, and you have a good winter, perhaps you will be in shape to try Gastein next summer. But next summer is a long way off, and Europe may be as depressing then as it is now, so there is no use thinking about it yet. Please give my love to your sister, and believe me always your most affectionate friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Wakefield, 2 Jan. 1936

My dear friend, – Your kind note, with the two cheques, arrived duly. With my utmost gratitude, I sincerely hope the money will turn out to be no very bad investment. I presume the reviews will follow in due course, and I shall return them promptly. A poor one appeared in the N.Y. *Herald Tribune* last Sunday. I am astonished to find that reviewers are apparently unable to get through their heads the idea of a political organization in which the ultimate power (including the taxing power) shall reside





in the smallest unit instead of the largest; and in which taxation shall be met exclusively by a *local* confiscation of rent. I have a long footnote on this in my book, and a long quotation from Mr. Jefferson, as explicit as human speech can make it, but reviewers seem to miss the point of them entirely.

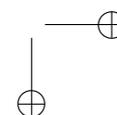
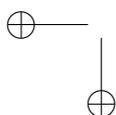
I am glad your nephew is so favourably impressed with the book. It seems to be making its way, and I fancy it will take some sort of place, more or less permanent. . . My love, always, to your sister and yourself. Yours faithfully,

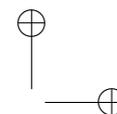
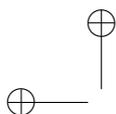
ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park Sunday [1936]

My dear lady, – Don't think I have any notion of giving up work. I shall never do that until I must, and even then I shall have to be "shown" like a good Missourian. I am doing four times as much now as when I was young, and expect to keep right on doing more. You may bet on that. My Mother said once, when she was about eighty, that she supposed some day the Lord would call her, but meanwhile she was not going to sit around and wait for Him to do it. Neither did she. She lived seven years after that, and up to two days before her death she was busy as a boy spearing eels.

I hope you get through the summer comfortably. Things abroad are in a miserable state, and I fancy that a closer view won't make you happy, exactly, but I still do not





expect a general rumpus to break out this year. If you stay through October you will at least miss the campaign which will no doubt be more disgusting than battle and murder abroad, if not so deadly. Henry Adams wrote Godkin that he was setting out for the Fijii Islands “where the natives eat one another, and perhaps may eat me, but where they do not have any Presidential elections.” My best love to both of you, and my best wishes. Many thanks for your European address. Affectionately yours,

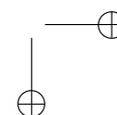
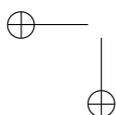
ALBERT JAY NOCK

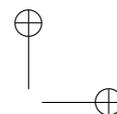
To Ellen Winsor

Sixteen Gramercy Park, New York City
Sunday, 2 June 1936

My dear Miss Winsor, – Your mention of Salzburg has made me a little thoughtful. I have long believed, and still do, that there will be no war for the next two years. This business of restoring the Austrian monarchy, however, if it comes to anything, is a dark cloud. We ought to be able to judge in a month’s time, what it amounts to. If Bro. Otto is put back, there is every chance in the world that the other Danube States, Roumania, Jugoslovakia (*sic*) and Czechoslovakia will immediately get into action, and I think it will be very difficult indeed to keep the mess localized – especially now since it seems certain that England will not concern itself with anything that takes place down there.

It might be advisable to keep an eye on this situation. Unfortunately the censorship on news is so strict that



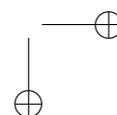
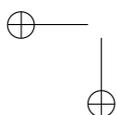


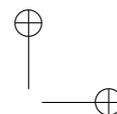
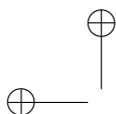
we know little of what is going on even at the moment, anywhere in Europe. I am rather sorry you are not headed for Finland, especially as I have a great distaste for the *Festspiel* – one of my friends used to call them *Pestspiels*. However, take my suggestion for what it is worth – no harm to look things over pretty carefully, for there is no point to taking chances on a beastly row.

So glad you like old Isaiah. I hear a great deal about what I am doing nowadays, but naturally not much from the Remnant. No doubt they get hold of it, however. I am reading Edward FitzGerald's Letters – two volumes, Macmillan. You must do so. You will like his enthusiasm over vegetarianism, and will find him in other respects worth knowing. When do you sail, and by what way? Don't fail to give me the pleasure of seeing you here, for I shall not be down your way again. This week your city will be wholly given over to idolatry, as St. Paul found Athens of old. I am still watching Palestine closely – some day I shall suddenly pick up and go there to see it. I can make nothing out of it at this distance. I am writing another piece for the *Atlantic*, about the nonsense surrounding the term *conservative*.

I imagine Landon has no great chance, but to you or me it means little either way, as you know, so there is nothing to be stirred up about beyond the very human wish to see Hopkins, Tugwell, Frankfurter, et al. run violently down a steep place into the sea. My best love to you, dear lady, and to your sister, now and always. Yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





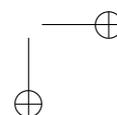
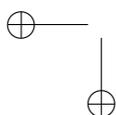
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

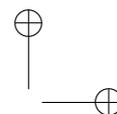
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park, Sunday, [July 1936]

My dear friend, Thank you for your letter and its enclosures, I hope something good will come back to you out of all this bread that you have been casting on the waters. My work generally is meeting with a considerable response, and I believe it is perhaps worth doing. I get some rather remarkable and interesting reverbations from it that I hope to speak of when we meet – in particular, the little book on the State whose fate would naturally interest you the most.

I don't think you will need your gas-masks in Austria, for the project of restoring the monarchy seems to be hanging fire, I am glad to say, for I was rather nervous about that. You did not say when you would be sailing, but I shall be here all the month except for the week-end of the 17th, so I hope I may see you.

I am greatly depressed by your observations on Isaiah. Certainly all the Remnant I know are doing their full share of the world's menial work, and some of them much more. I know one here in this city who cleans offices, and if she is not one of the Remnant there simply isn't any Remnant. She is at any rate as far from being one of the masses as any one can be. I wonder if by any chance you overlooked my definition of the masses and the Remnant. Do read again the first two paragraphs of Section II of my Isaiah. I thought they were clear, and it is a very sad thing if I express myself so poorly that a good friend who knows me well and whom I love does not get my





drift at once. Do read those paragraphs again and say what is obscure about them, if anything.

I am sending you the funny little manuscript of an article I wrote in Portugal on Henry George. Scribner's sent it to me the other day, thinking I might like to have it, but I never keep anything of the kind, and I was on the point of throwing it away, when it occurred to me that you might care to look at it. Put it in the waste-basket if you do not wish to keep it.

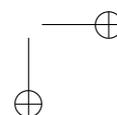
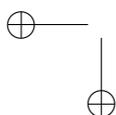
I am delighted that your project at Paoli is coming off. When the plaster is dry I shall remind you of your offer to let me look at it. Please give my love to Miss Winsor, and my best thanks for her share in our joint undertaking; and believe me always affectionately yours,

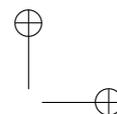
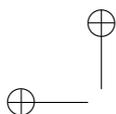
ALBERT JAY NOCK

6 Nov. [1936]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – The picture by your gifted friend is extraordinarily good. If the colour equals the rest of the execution, I would think it might take rank with the sculpture of Van Hove and Constantine Meunier as a matter of expression in that order. Thank you for sending me the copy, and also for the encouraging bit from Mr. Garrison's letter.

The Doc has put his foot down on my leaving his neighborhood before 1 Dec., so I expect to sail on the 4th. He says they have not begun to manufacture the season's crop of rum down in the West Indies yet, so I might better hold off a while. . .



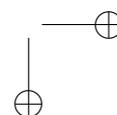
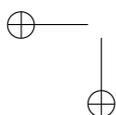


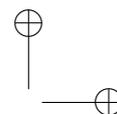
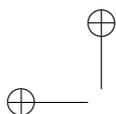
The only place down there that seems at all interesting is Haiti, so I think I shall camp there and look it over, until I feel able to resume business as usual. . . , which I am confident will be in a very short time. . . For a long time my mail has been a curious study. All sorts and conditions of men, and a few women, not many, write me from the ends of the earth sometimes, and again from right under my nose. I am surprised at the increasing number that come from men in business, like the one I am enclosing for you to look at and then throw away; it has been answered. Only last week a man in Honolulu wrote me most praisefully, and sent me an enormous parcel of Hawaiian products – jam, marmalade, tea, nuts, &c. – most extraordinary! I have often wondered what would happen if I set out to find some of these people and see what they are like.

I would like to go down and visit with you before I leave, but I am afraid there is no chance of that. When I get back in harness again, however, I shall come down, full of enterprise and Haitian rum, and we will have a high old time.

Some of the Single-Taxers have become friendly and agreeable, which is nice. I see that Bro. Hennessy, one of their high command, is dead. I had a pleasant note from him only a week before, sending me some single-tax pamphlets. My best love to both of you, as always. Yours faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



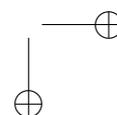
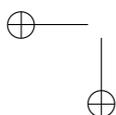


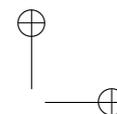
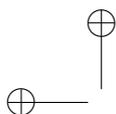
16 Gramercy Park, New York City Sunday [1936]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – Your affectionate and cordial concern with the way the old machine is running is very kind, and I appreciate it deeply. I think there is very little wrong with it except a little decrepitude due in part to its having been perhaps somewhat overdriven on rough roads lately, and in part to its being rather a back number model. You remember, in the Pantagruelian Prognostication, Rabelais says that “old age will be incurable this year, on account of the years past,” and no doubt there is something in that.

I agree with you, however, that there is some mileage left in the engine yet, and maybe a little speed. I also agree that we had better run it under cover for a while, and so does the Doc. I am thinking I shall try the West Indies for a month, and see what happens. You ought to approve of that, for it means a month of vegetarianism. One takes a great dislike to meat down there. In Jamaica years ago, I subsisted entirely on the fruits of the earth for a couple of months, – couldn’t think of swallowing anything else. So I expect confidently your apostolic blessing in the name of St. Guadegrin who was martyred by means of fried potatoes (I don’t know how), and I look for your encouragement to go the limit.

I am glad you think so well of my work in the *Mercury*. I enjoy it because it is so exactly what I used to do in the *Freeman*. They think it is valuable, and so I keep on with it, since it is so easy and takes no time. You will see some observations on henpecking in the January *Atlantic*, which I shall probably hear about if you read them. You should read my article in the October *Atlantic*, and I





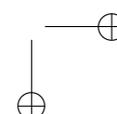
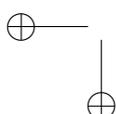
hope my review in the November issue will cause you to read Huizinga's great book. Thank you, dear friend, for your solicitude, and with my love to your sister, believe me always affectionately yours,

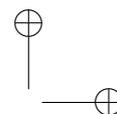
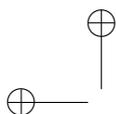
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Wednesday [1936]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – It was so good of you to write me. Yes, I shall be pulling out day after tomorrow on a hulking Dutch freighter, expecting to return in fine condition some time in January. Meanwhile I shall be beyond reach of newspapers, letters, motor-cars, radios, and the other peculiar and intolerable nuisances of our civilization, consorting with nobody and nothing to remind me of whence I came. Indeed I remember Miss Winsor's quotation from T. J. It is in the tourist-guide that he got up for Edward Shippen. The good old man certainly knew how to speak out when he felt like it. I suppose you recall his opinion of the allied sovereigns who were in league against Napoleon. It is rich; also it is the exact truth.

I wish I could think I deserve anything like the opinion of me that you hold. I have really done so little of anything, and almost nothing of what I am best fitted to do; and by reason of our living at this particular time, what I have tried to do would be at least relatively ineffectual, even if I had succeeded in doing it better than I have. I simply content myself as well as I can with the thought that no one who does his best ever knows





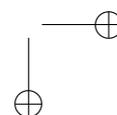
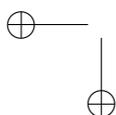
what he actually accomplishes; and I have always done my best. Nevertheless I have no very high opinion of myself, or can have; and your having so high an opinion of me, which I thank you for, comes almost in the nature of a reproof – and I thank you also for that.

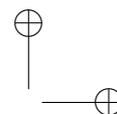
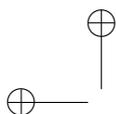
The president of Haverford has written me to come down on 24 February, and talk about Rabelais. I can't help wondering whether you put him up to it. Of course I shall be glad to go; not so much for the occasion as that it will give me the chance to come out and see you, and (perhaps) see you in your new quarters at Paoli. . . My love to your sister and your dear self. I'll muster courage to send you a postcard or so from somewhere; and wherever I go, I am always affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Trinidad, B.W.I. 22 Dec. [1936]

Dear Lady, – I hope you have a very pleasant Christmas, and that you will give a thought to the erstwhile decrepit wanderer who is now growing gay and sassy on a vegetarian diet as he sits here on top of the equator. Ruskin says that all travel becomes dull in exact proportion to its rapidity, so I took his word for it and have been daddling around the Caribbean on a Dutch Cargo-boat, looking at the Venezuelan coast at half a dozen ports, and also at various assorted batches of Venezuelans, and finding them all exceeding scurvy. I ended up here, and after a stay of four days, I transfer to another cargo-boat for a stay in Haiti, where I shall find many things that





will interest you as well as myself. I shall be back in New York at the end of January, and if I keep on improving at the present rate, I shall be someone whom you won't be ashamed to have around.

Don't come here. These regions are very fine for a convalescent, but nothing at all for a healthy person. Just as I told you, however, the food would make a vegetarian out of a Bengal tiger. Nebuchadnezzar and you would be right at home. I have devoured such quantities of vegetable matter that I am becoming bovine in appearance and in character. The mirror reminds me daily of what Mr. Dooley said of vegetarians – that most of them looked enough like their food to be classed as cannibals. Nevertheless it tastes good, and we can't eat anything more reputable – so that is that.

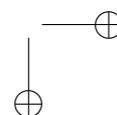
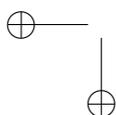
I hope I shall some day see your nephew again. I was much attracted to him. Please give him my cordial regards, and my best love to your sister; and believe me always, dear lady, most affectionately yours,

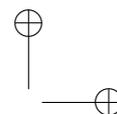
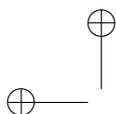
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

The Players
16 Gramercy Park Jan 28 1937

My dear friend, – I returned two days ago, having been out of reach of mail for as many months; and I found myself buried under ten feet of letters, papers, circulars &c., which had lain here during that time. Amidst it was your sister's greeting, and yours, and two checks in behalf



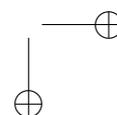
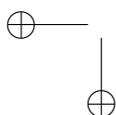


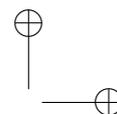
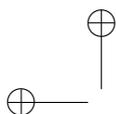
of Henry George, for all of which I am most grateful. I have come back much better than when I went away, and I believe I shall go through the rest of the winter under full steam, with flying colours. Haiti is the most interesting place on this hemisphere to one who knows anything about fundamental economics. It must have escaped Mr. Evans's notice completely, as it did mine – for it was only a chance remark of an acquaintance who had been there that made me suspect a possible story, and sure enough I found one – a good one – which I shall certainly some day write about, and shall tell you when I see you. It is simply how, by pure accident, they have been able to protect from exploitation a country that has no end of exploitable resources. We tried our best to break down its defences, and could not do it; and for that reason only we gave up a long occupation two years ago, and got out.

Tell your sister that I did indeed have the vegetarian Christmas that she hoped for, and weeks of the same ignoble and depressing régime in addition. If she could read some references that I have made to it in a recent letter to a carnivorous friend, she would be jumping three feet high. Some day perhaps she will read them, if I get my courage up.

As I wrote you, I shall be going down to Haverford on the 24th, to speak about Rabelais. I shall hope to see you then. How is the new home in Paoli progressing? Are you there, or still in Bryn Mawr?

You must tell me what your plans are for the summer. Europe, I hope, for there will be no outbreak this year, I am sure, but next year I am equally sure there will be – at all events within eighteen months – so it would





be well for you to go while the going is good. Have you read Allen Nevin's book on the Grant Administration – nominally a biography of Hamilton Fish? It is worth having. I have been reading Otto Julius Bierbaum's *Irrgarten der Liebe*, written mostly between 1885 and 1900, and I think it is the very finest modern poetry that I have read in any language.

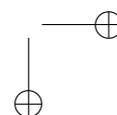
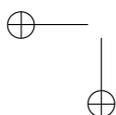
My best love and best thanks to your sister, and tell her I'm not so much interested in vegetarianism as I was two weeks ago, and that I hope to see you both quite soon, and tell you all about it. Affectionately yours,

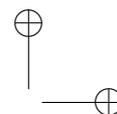
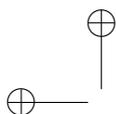
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

St. Botolph Club
4 Newbury Street, Boston
12 March [1937]

My dear friend, – How exceedingly odd! I have known chipmunks intimately for years, and never heard of one behaving like that. I would have said it was impossible, for they are normally vegetarians. Of course you are right; when one runs down our diet to the elements and sources, one sees that it is villainously repulsive – true of vegetables as of a carnivorous diet, but I really think the vegetables have a shade the best of it. What it all comes to, I think, is that both you and I will be pretty glad when we can say goodbye to all consideration of any physical necessities and pursue our real interests in complete disregard of them. While they exist, we have



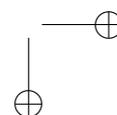
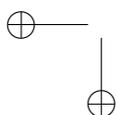


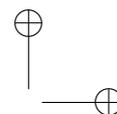
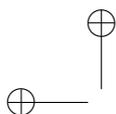
to do the best we can to keep their assertions within reasonable bounds, but they are a darned unqualified nuisance, and it will be a great day when we are free of them.

It interests me that you have hit on an idea which I have had for some time. Paine's *Agrarian Justice* is very rare and hard to find and when I ran across (for the first time) a copy of it last year, I thought it would be an excellent thing to republish. As soon as I return to New York I shall take up the idea and see if I can interest a publisher in bringing it out.

As to the Rabelais, I think it would be no harm if we talked it over. I have thought up a plan for it which might not be impracticable. Perhaps a good way would be for you to let me know when you are returning to Bryn Mawr, and when you would find it convenient for me to come down and see what could be done. Meanwhile I will make a note or two of my ideas for it, which would be a sort of basis for discussion.

Your citation of Lawrence runs even with Cram's thesis, but Cram arrived at his idea independently, I am sure. It is one of those discoveries which are in the air at certain periods, and are made by several persons at once – many of them not fully aware of what they really are, and unable to follow out their implications. This is the case with Cram. He has sent me a proof of his forthcoming book, for which he wanted me to write an introduction. I had the instinct to beg off from that, and I am glad I did, for it is disappointing. If he could only make it CLEAR he would have a great book, but in order to do that he would have to see his subject clearly; and it is going to be a tough job to tell him so.





My best love to your sister and yourself. You will be more interested in my second Letter from the Tropics, which will follow the first one, and is about the qualities and conditions of Haiti. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

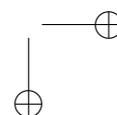
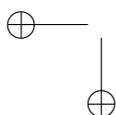
To Ellen Winsor

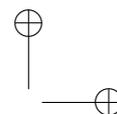
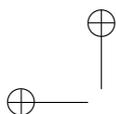
22 June [1937]

My dear friend, – Thank you both most cordially, for everything that your kind letter contained. The review in *Unity* is a good deal more generous than I should have expected, for I never stood very high with those brethren – nor indeed deserve to do so, since they are of the Liberal persuasion and I aint nothin' like that. In fact, as you know, I am agin Liberals, and think they are the most dangerous element in society; so I can't expect much good-will from them, and I am surprised when they treat me as decently as they sometimes do.

Yes, ma'am, I have sampled Mr. Janssen's high-class garbage, and am ready to recommend it to all and sundry, without reservation. We had a spell of filthy weather when I was passing that way, and having no appetite for anything like real food, I approached the trough and found his layout of green-goods really very decent from a vegetarian's point of view, so I thought I should pass the word along at once. I believe you would be quite well satisfied; anyway it is worth a try.

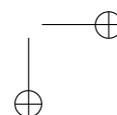
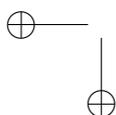
Please don't send back the FitzGerald – keep it by you, and let your sister dip into it at leisure. A strange

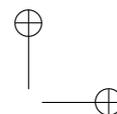
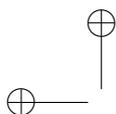




character, not at all interesting in the conventional sense, yet his faculty for friendship is so highly developed that he somehow does interest you. As for Goethe, you would be helped by remembering that the real Goethe is only in the *Conversations*. Keep those by you constantly – they are invaluable – and let all the rest go into the discard forever. I would not read *Faust*, *Wahrheit und Dichtung* or *Wilhelm Meister* for any money, and as for the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, Niebuhr called it a menagerie of tame animals. You ought to look at it some time merely to see what awful stuff a really great man can produce when he steps out of his line. His poetry shows that he had a very fine lyric sense, but as far as I can judge, that is its only interest. But there is no discount on the *Conversations*; they put him right up in the front rank of critics with Sainte-Beuve and Matthew Arnold, and even perhaps a step or two ahead of them. Probably Goethe was the greatest of critics, but even so, his general criticism has not half the force and penetration that you find in his obiter dicta scattered through the *Conversations*.

Have you re-read *War and Peace* in connection with the recently discovered *Memoirs* of Coulaincourt? You should do so, to see how completely Coulaincourt bears out the old man's theory of the Campaign of 1812, as against all the historians, both French and Russian. It is tremendously interesting. I have often thought that if Napoleon had any imagination, the most humiliating thing he would have on his mind was that he had been put out of business forever by a man who, although a great soldier, actually did nothing but sleep through





staff-meetings, read French novels, and hold his troops back from fighting.

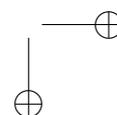
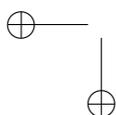
Give my love to your sister. I hope the Great Estate at Paoli is being polished off satisfactorily, and that you will somehow escape the horrors of the heated term. Yours affectionately,

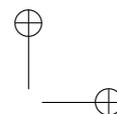
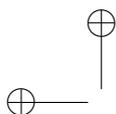
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Wednesday [1937]

My dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you for the FitzGerald books. I hope you kept them full as long as they could be of service to you. I should have acknowledged them promptly, and am very apologetic about not having done so, but the truth is that the vicious hot spell left me no conscience whatever about anything. Yet I suppose it was even worse where you are. I wish you were well on your way to the highlands of Bavaria – and that I were well on the way with you. By George, I do. But then things wouldn't get done, would they? – and one rather likes to get them done. The proof of my book of essays came in the other day, and I was really quite encouraged by the way the things hold together. I think beyond doubt they show a consistent point of view. There are sixteen of them, which makes a pretty sizable volume, and the press work is extremely good. It will be some time yet before any advance copies come out, but you shall have the first one I can lay my hands on.

The *Henry George* turns out very satisfactorily, not in the least like anything ever written about him. It is





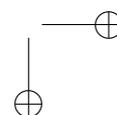
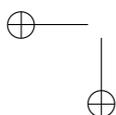
really an essay, answering questions about him that have never been raised, and are very important. I think it will be a first rate contribution to his anniversary, and I hope you will be satisfied with it.

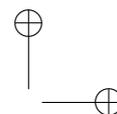
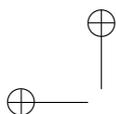
Please give my love to your sister, and do let go all hold and sail for Garmisch. There will be no war, I am sure. I imagine that Franklin has gone to the dogs... A miserable fellow, whom I believe the country has at last turned on, as it did on Woodrow; which is all to the good, even though the country has no doubt learned nothing by the experience. Believe me always, dear lady, yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Wakefield, R. I., 6 Oct. [1937]

Dear Ellen Winsor, – I thank you both for your kind words about my book and for the Rabelaisian checks. I am so happy to hear that you are satisfied with your new estate. I wish I might see it – and you – but unfortunately there is no chance of it. I have been so loaded up with work of one sort or another which I must finish before I sail that I had no choice but to retire into the country and pull the country in after me. So I am here with my nose being well polished on the grindstone of daily labour, until 2 Nov., when I go back to New York to sail on 6 Nov., on the Dutch Ship Volendam. If you are tempted to come to New York at that time for Janssen's health salad, I can help out the temptation by telling you that he also has genuine *Culmbacher* black beer, which





is positively too good for the likes of us to drink, but Janssen is a man without prejudices, and would make us welcome to it.

You remember, I gave your sister the printers' copy of my book on the State. Well, in pawing over some odds and ends the other day, I turned up the original MS., which I did not know I had. It is in excellent condition, and as I am sure your sister would rather have it than the printers' copy, I shall send it to her, and she can throw the typewritten version away.

While I am in these parts I shall go up to Boston for a day, to push the matter of those reprints, I have heard nothing about them since I last wrote you, and I don't want to lose track of them. Publishers are curious animals, and need watching. It is disgraceful that in these times above all others there should be no copy of Spencer's Essays available in this country. I did not know that was the case until your sister told me.

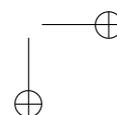
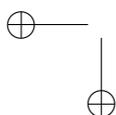
With my love and gratitude to you both, I am always most faithfully yours,

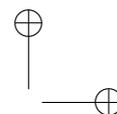
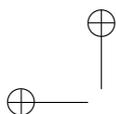
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

R.L., 10 Oct. 1937

My dear friend, – I am sorry. You know my pernicious habit, when work gets pressing, of retiring into an inaccessible place, out of reach of mail, telegraph, telephone and temptation. So for ten days I was buried in the wilds of Pennsylvania, on the blank countryside



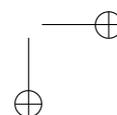
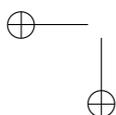


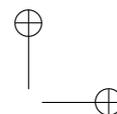
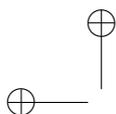
in a little shack belonging to an acquaintance who hunts a good deal, and who offered me a refuge there. So for most of that time your letter lay in New York with many others; but yours was the first to which I replied, via Miss Winsor. Now I am down in Rhode Island, amidst hideous weather, until 2 Nov., when I go to New York again; and I shall be there the 3rd, 4th and 5th, sailing on the 6th, at 11 A.M.

I wish I might come down and luxuriate on your new estate before I sail, but I can't even think of it with my hands as full as they are. If I can clear off my obligations in what is left of this month, I shall be lucky indeed, and tired indeed, as well. What I do for the *Mercury* is so pleasant. . . I have just now finished an editorial on Franklin's Chicago speech, in the good old *Freeman* vein – it made me think back on those days very happily. I am glad you liked the book; by a pure coincidence it is being published on my birthday, next Wednesday. I shall send you the manuscript of the State very shortly; and before I go I shall give you a report on those reprints. My old friend Hendrik Willem van Loon has just now published a most superb book on the Arts. I think highly of it, very highly.

Please be sure that no distraction can ever for a moment dislodge you from my most affectionate. . . remembrances. Your confidence is the greatest encouragement I have, and has long been so. With my love to your sister, I am always affectionately yours

ALBERT JAY NOCK

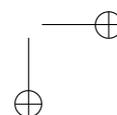
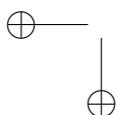


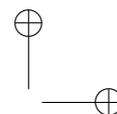
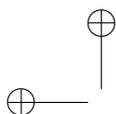


Sunday, [November 1937]

My dear lady, – Your letter came yesterday and made me very happy. I wish I might feel that your confidence and praise are less undeserved; but it is good of you to give them, and I shall try to be more deserving. I am sorry I forgot I had the manuscript and let it lie so long; but you have it now for whatever the affectionate and respectful memory of Mr. Evans, which steadied my pen and kept it going, may be worth. My hangovers of work are done now, and I go to the city tomorrow for three wretched dishevelling days, which I really dread. They are completely taken up with errands and with the hopeless business of “seeing people,” all of whom, or nearly all, want to see me about matters in which I have no interest. The peculiarities of my own position have lately taught me a good deal about human nature – nothing very encouraging. People who would not look at me but a few years ago, make themselves most agreeable, evidently on account of my opposition to the New Deal. I am not responsive, saying frankly that my only interest is in freedom and justice, and if they profit by it, the profit is incidental, and they have nothing to reconsider concerning me, for I am a radical single-taxer, as I was thirty years ago. I have four or five such folk to see next week – Wall Streeters, oil magnates and a steel baron – and the depressing prospect has prompted this outburst, which I hope you will overlook.

I shall have ten days on the water, in which to get myself furbished up, though even there I hope to be fairly busy. It distresses me that I can not see you in all the glory of your Great Estate before I go, but there is





no possible way of my managing it. Thank you again for your letter. It did a great deal to smooth down the feathers ruffled by my prospect of three days spent in intolerantly bad company. I wish I were going to find you and your sister in Brussels. Please give her my best love, and believe me always, dear lady, your most obliged and obedient servant,

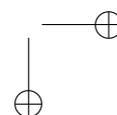
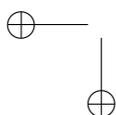
ALBERT JAY NOCK

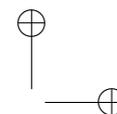
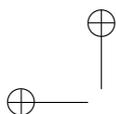
How the language of diplomacy has changed. Formerly, when a Foreign Minister ended a note with *Veillez agréer l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus profonds et les plus distingués*, you knew a declaration of war was just around the corner. Now they call one another liars, pirates and horse-thieves, and nothing happens.

To Ellen Winsor

Brussels, 28 Dec. [1937]

My dear Miss Winsor, – Your Christmas greeting, which was most welcome, reached me today. I had seen the picture before, and studied it. I think it is extremely impressive – painfully so, I may say. Breughel's peasants' faces, the twenty five or thirty types which he sketched, all show about what might be expected from centuries of feudalism. But Mr. Grant Wood's couple are not even the outcome of economic feudalism. They have been to school, they are Methodists or Baptists by free choice, they would call themselves free people – and there they

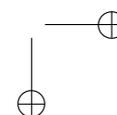
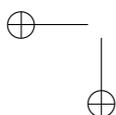


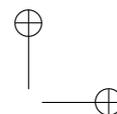
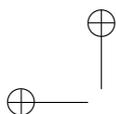


are, faces, expressions, posture and all; and they are real people. Considering everything, was there ever anything on earth like it?

Well, you were very good to send it; a useful reminder to keep down pride, and walk in the ways of humility, which I shall make greater efforts to do. Getting it by relay through the Players Club reminds me also to give you an address here – the American Express Co., Brussels. That is best, because I shall be moving around a bit, and can be sure of having my mail follow me promptly.

I hope the new house is proving good winter-quarters as the bitter weather sets in. The climate here breeds a hardy race. So far, there is not so much music as usual at this time, but I heard a wonderfully fine *Fidelio* last night, and a most beautiful *Serva Padrona* (Pergolese) down at the Conservatory a week ago. I can't discern the least apprehension of war anywhere, but the people are anxious and preoccupied by economic troubles, for which there seems to be no help. Lately I have thought that we pacifists were barking up the wrong tree in laying so much stress on the horrors of war. I am coming to be much less interested in what war does to people at the time, and much more in what it does to them after it is over. I notice that my old friend Newton Baker is reported dead; rather a solemn reflection. We were quite intimate in earlier times, but he dropped me when he took his job at Washington, and never picked me up again. Old Ramsay MacDonald, for whom I never had a whole lot of respect – some day I'll tell you why – has also dropped off. Some time I think I'll write an essay on the thesis that the main trouble with the Liberal is his constitutional inability to say NO at the right time.





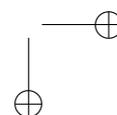
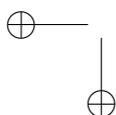
I am doing very well here in every way except that it is not always so easy to keep one's spirits up; yet with the help of my books I manage to do that quite decently. The time slips by, and I shall probably be folding my tents to come back to the Republic almost before I know it. When I do, I shall go down to Malvern, wherever that is, and lavish my dwindling strength on a vegetable diet. Please give my love to your sister. I hope you both have every imaginable happiness in the ensuing year. Affectionately yours,

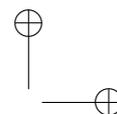
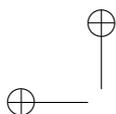
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Brussels, 16 January 1938

My dear friend, – I am very grateful to you for your New Year's message. I think the *Times* reviewer gave me rather too much credit, as I never aspired to writing any but plain idiomatic English – but even that, I admit, is not by any means the rule among us, judging by what I read. But the reviewer did seem to know and be more or less appreciative of what I have always been driving at, so I feel very kindly towards him. I hope the papers will be as well disposed towards my Henry George as they were towards my essays this year. I am doing very well here, although the people are so preoccupied with thoughts of various kinds of trouble that they are not very cheerful. It is not the same country that I used to know, and every once in a while I can't help being rather sad about it. France is no better off; they

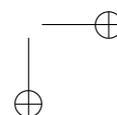
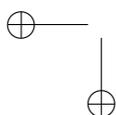


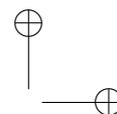
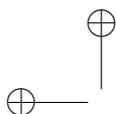


are having a hard time of it over there. The worst is, here as elsewhere, that there seems so little chance of improvement – none in my time, nor in yours. I do not look for any considerable outbreaks of violence anywhere here before summer, however – perhaps not then, and I hope not, but I am none too sure of it. Since there is nothing I can do in any case, though, I shall attend quietly to my own work, and go quietly back to America when it is done.

We are so far north here that after Christmas has gone by, the day's length increases rapidly which is a great joy. The last three months of the year are the really bad ones in these parts; and now we are getting an occasional bit of quite fair weather. My health is good; somehow I thrive better here, apparently, than I do in the Republic. I hear from there so seldom that I really know nothing of what is going on, except public affairs, which seem to be about as bad as one could expect; at any rate, they are too bad to talk about with a decent person like yourself. I hope the new house is proving itself out most satisfactorily this winter – which, I hear, has been severe. I must see it when I return; I can imagine you hibernating in the recesses of the rural districts, and it is rather a charming thought – much more so than the reminder I had of you the other day, when I saw the advertisement of a movie-film got up by Mr. Stokowski. I have forgotten the exact title now, but I recollect that it did not sound attractive.

I have so little in the way of music to report that it is not worth mentioning. Think of my being here all this time and having gone to the opera only twice. There is uncommonly little music going on, and hardly anything



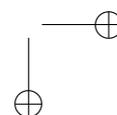
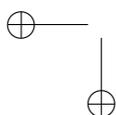


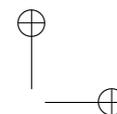
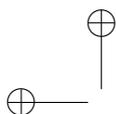
I would care to hear. I find myself thinking often of the old days when Brussels was Brussels and everything was wrong, precious little plumbing and few gadgets, but the people seemed to be pretty happy, which now they do not. M. Mauclair was saying here the other day when he asked a revolutionist if the ideal of the new dispensation was to make everybody happy, and the man said, "Not at all; what we want is to make those who are happy, unhappy"; which is all very well, but I can't make out who the happy ones are, for here at least the proletarian classes look and act as unhappy as anybody.

About that balance of subsidy that you are good enough to lavish on my monument, you said I might have it on the first of March. If that is no longer practicable or convenient – for I hear things are very tight there now – I hope you will let me know. But if the arrangement holds, could it be so managed that I might have it on this side of the ocean by approximately the first? The point is, you see, that Brussels is the only place where I can do anything with a check except turn it in for collection, which takes a long time, the mails being pretty slow; and I want to go over to Paris as early in March as possible, to do the work in the National Library there, which I can not do here.

I suppose you see me still in the *Mercury*. It is a great pleasure to go back to the good old *Freeman* style again. I wish I could do more of it, though my work in the *Mercury* seems to go a long way and get a very satisfactory response. Please give my love to your sister, and believe me always, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

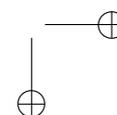
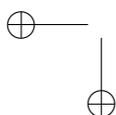


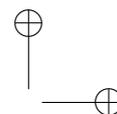
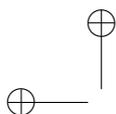


Brussels, 15 February 1938

My dear friend, – I have so many sins which you could justly lay to my charge that it distresses me to find you inventing new ones whereof I am really not guilty. “Charlatan” – certainly, but not *all* Charlatan, nor yet Charlatan all the time. Far from it. Victor Hugo was a great Charlatan; no one could deny it; but he was also a great genius. In *Ninety Three* he was genius all the time: in *The Man Who Laughs*, almost all the time; in *Les Miserables*, about half the time; and in most of his poems and *The History of a Crime*, he was solid, 100% Charlatan. I think I agree with all you say about Mr. S. I am not quite sure about the one point of his having done the most of any one for music in America – I rather doubt that – but the rest I would agree with. Nevertheless, when I heard him with his own orchestra in New York in 1923, he was solid Charlatan from beginning to end. I did not hold it against him, because that was a particularly bad year for music, and in a period when general taste was at an especially low level. It is unfortunately true that far better musicians than Mr. S. have been worse Charlatans on occasion – think of Offenbach, Jullien, Max Muretzek. So the thing is to recognize their genius, and be glad of it, and let the rest go.

So too about the radio, I am not against it. I wish I had one here. I am against the bad programmes which come over it, and think they do a vast deal of harm, so much that I could wish the thing had not been invented. The programmes here, however, are in large part good, and perhaps they have improved enough in the Republic to render my criticism null and void. I hope so, and if

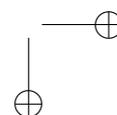
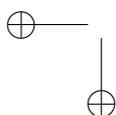


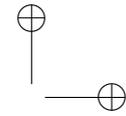
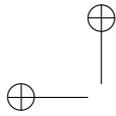


they have, you will find me as great a devotee of the radio as I am of the phonograph. So now, after this effort to clear myself from undeserved suspicion, let me thank you and Miss Winsor with all my heart for your thoughtful kindness in the matter of those cheques. I am all right now and able to get on swimmingly.

I expect my work on this side of the ocean to be done quite soon, after a short but rather dreadful siege in the National Library at Paris. I may have to return to the Republic by way of England, which I dread equally – in order to look up a few points on the early history of the Urquhart-Motteux translation – but possibly not. At all events I should think about six weeks more should see me through on the European end of my job.

As for the Paine pamphlet, I should say that if Mr. Gimbel has any interest, it would be worth cultivating. Any one's would – not altogether as a matter of money, either, for it would be valuable if no money were needed. The mischief of all such things in America is finding some one to do the work on them. Mr. Weeks of the *Atlantic* just sent me a letter saying that R. A. Cram was still dillydallying over the Adams-Jefferson correspondence, and he had no notion but it would have to wait until I came back: and that is the way it goes. There seem to be so few people to take on anything of the kind. It is the same with Spencer's *Man Versus the State*. I first suggested Lowell of Harvard to do the Adams-Jefferson book, but he is too old and weak to do even the little work involved. I then took it up with Cram, who was immensely interested and could do a fine thing – he is some kin of the Adamses – but he too is old and perhaps can't quite get himself up to the point of actually getting





at it. But as soon as I go back I shall find out exactly how the land lies, and let you know. It is exasperating, to see a good thing – three good things – lying right at hand, and nothing needed but the right person to set to work at them.

I hope the White Elephant is proving to be a harmless and domestic creature. I must see it. And now, don't go on vainly imagining that I do not fully appreciate Mr. S. and the possibilities of the radio: but that almost comes under the law of libel: and with my best love to you both, and my most sincere gratitude, believe me always, dear lady, affectionately yours,

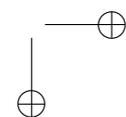
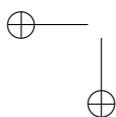
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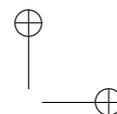
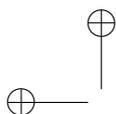
P.S. I was hooked in to do a little speech-making here in Brussels, on the state of things in the Republic. I got away with it well enough to be asked for more, even to give a sort of course, but I haven't time for that, naturally. So I seem to have picked up a better reputation as a *conférencier*, as they call it, than as a writer, which is amusing.

To Ellen Winsor

Paris, 24 March [1938]

My dear Miss Winsor, – I am here longer than I thought to be, because I was set back a bit by a curious sort of barking cold, which seems to be going the rounds. I was amused yesterday in the course of my labours, while reading a journal kept by a bourgeois of Paris in the time

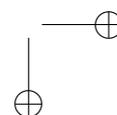
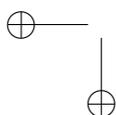


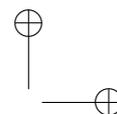
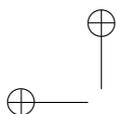


of Joan of Arc. One entry said that by the will of God an evil and corrupted atmosphere had covered the earth, causing people to cough so hard that they practically bust themselves wide open. I said at once, that's me. However, the weather has been extraordinarily fine, and the affliction left me last night as suddenly as it came on; so now I seem to be as good as ever. At work in the National Library by day, and not daring to go out après sundown, I have seen nothing and heard nothing pleasurable; and now tomorrow I go to England for a look at some odds and ends that are available only in the Bodleian Library; and I shall very soon be getting ready to sail, probably late next month.

I suppose there have been all kinds of reports about public affairs here, but I am very confident that the summer will pass without incident. Nobody wants to fight for the iniquitous Versailles treaty, I am glad to say, nor for the arbitrary frontiers of the Succession States; so I think Germany may make some more hay in Bohemia and Danzig while the sun is shining. I hear that the prospects for European tourist traffic are pretty bad, yet I am not at all sure that one would not do very well to come over this season. I am always a great believer in doing things when nobody else is doing them, and I have found it a very good policy. So if you and your sister are inclined this way, I think there would be nothing against it, unless the currents change greatly beyond my expectations.

Meanwhile apparently things are not looking up much at home, according to the brief reports I read here. I see that Franklin is playing what is usually the jobholder's last card – "National defence." I imagine it will work,





for the time being – long enough, probably to tide over the election. But watching the swindling tactics of Jobholders is a dull business, and I am glad to have been spared it for these few months. Reading the literature of the sixteenth century makes one wonder why we should expect the affairs of our day to go any better than they do; and for my part I don't. The inestimable benefit conferred by writers like Rabelais is the attitude which they enable one to take towards the men and events of one's own time; so don't ever let him get far away from you.

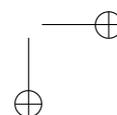
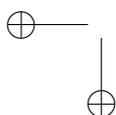
Please give my best love to your sister; and please don't take on the burden of answering this. It is merely a reminder of my humble existence and humbler doings, and that I am always most affectionately yours,

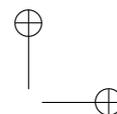
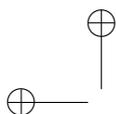
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

28 May [1938]

My dear Friend, – I am ever so happy to hear from you again. Also I am strong for Laish. Perhaps the best we can do is to make our own Laish and carry it around inside ourselves. I hope, however, that you can hit on some pleasant prospect for the summer, which will get you out of the appalling heat of Eastern Pennsylvania. You might do well to go up among the Skowhegians in Norway and Denmark – but there, I won't suggest anything.





My new scheme for Spencer is to have a publisher try to get some big industrial concern to buy an edition – I don't know yet how large it should be – and distribute it among the principal business men of the country, *with a letter*. I think that might be possible – anyway, worth trying. You see, I am much more anxious about distribution than I am about publication. It isn't hard to get a thing published, but to get it into the hands of the right people is a fearful job. Well, we shall see.

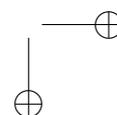
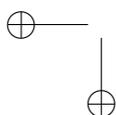
Thank you for your wish to have me come down. I shall do it some time around the middle of June, or a little before; first, of course, writing you to set a time at your convenience and pleasure. I hope to find you well and lively, and I am sure I shall. My love to you both. Affectionately,

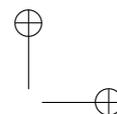
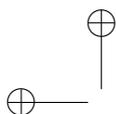
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

22 August 1938

My dear friend, – I am ever so grateful for your letter. . . Which has just come in. I suppose this reply will hardly be forwarded to you so late, but it will at all events be on hand to welcome you home, which is perhaps better. I was interested in what you say about Finland; I was never there, nor even in Sweden, but only in Norway and Denmark. Oslo was Christiania when I was there in 1916. I liked greatly everything I saw of Norway, though all that interested me in Bergen was the Old Hansa houses and the grave of Ole Bull. If it were not

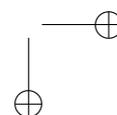
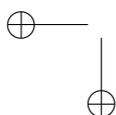


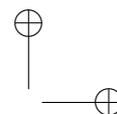
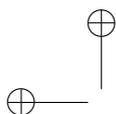


for Brussels and the habits of the northern sun, I should pick Copenhagen for my dwelling-place. It had good music when I was there – good opera. It seemed odd to hear the Barber and the Dumb Girl of Partier sung in Danish, for I don't know a blessed word of any of those Skowhegian tongues; but I heard their great tenor Herold, said to have studied under Edmond Clement, a fine dramatic soprano, Frederiksen, and a stunning little soubrette called Rosa Ajorth. I suppose they are all gone now – yet it seems such a little while ago – but it isn't.

Yes, indeed, I shall go down to the White Elephant when the thunderstorm season is over. Your region does so well in that line that I have respect for it. Narragansett seldom has them, but one got off the track and came down on us one night last week, bombarding us from 10.30 to 2.30 without a moment's intermission and by St. Barbecue of Limoges, I never saw anything like it. Lightning struck four times within 500 yards of me, hit five houses and blew out every telephone in the whole circuit – over 400 instruments, the company says. I don't want to be in another such, ever.

I have no news but two disagreeable items, I am sorry to say. It has been a most beastly summer – that is one – and the other is that I do not believe I can do a thing with Spencer or Paine. I am forced to the conclusion that no business man would read or pay any attention to them. I have done my best in the matter, and can get nowhere. The simple truth is that our business men do not want a government that will let business alone. They want a government that they can use. Offer them one made on Spencer's model, and they would see the country blow up before they would accept it. This is my first



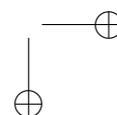
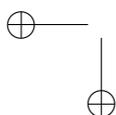


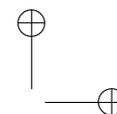
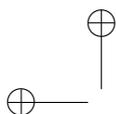
experience with genuine dyed-in-the-wool Bourbonism, and it has filled me with such utter disgust that I never want another. I think the only thing we can do is to let the Republic go its gait straight on to 1789, and all that follows thereafter, meanwhile making ourselves as safe as we can. I should like to discuss this view with you when you come back, for I don't think I am unreasonably discouraged, and if you think I am, I want to hear all about it.

I heard a performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Utopia, Limited*, last week – the one that is seldom given, and is prohibited in England. The performance was dreadfully bad, but I did not care, for the libretto is Gilbert's very best, and it is glorious. Other than that I have heard and seen nothing, not even a movie or a radio concert. Your former director, Mr. Stokowski, is back in the Republic after a long holiday in Europe, but what he has in mind to do, I don't know. The New York Philharmonic is being knocked about from one director to another, which is very bad. Deems Taylor has written an excellent little book called *Men and Music*, full of a great deal of very sound sense. I can recommend it to you.

Please give my love to your sister. I shall be happy to hear that you are again at home and settled, and happier when I can see you. Thank you ever so cordially for writing. Amidst the ruck of useless correspondence, a letter from you is doubly refreshing and delightful. I am always affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





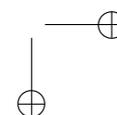
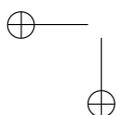
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

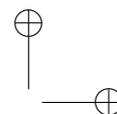
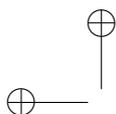
2 December [1938]

My dear Friend, – Your report of your condition made me sad indeed. I had hoped that when you had got safely out of the hands of the quacks you would have a quick convalescence, but I suppose it takes longer to recover from the shock of your tumble. Perhaps you will soon be well enough to go somewhere away from the winter and into the sunshine. I hope you can do that, for the weather lies heavy on the strongest spirits at this time. It would be a satisfaction to see you and look you over, but in default of that you must see that your sister issues me a bulletin regularly. My instinct is to take the next train down, roll you in a blanket regardless of protests and carry you off to still-vest Bermoothes, Estarie, or some such place, and set you down in the sun to recuperate – best of all, at Mandeville on Jamaica – but that would be no way for one good Spencerian individualist to treat another.

The book came, but I am returning it with thanks, for as I explained to Miss Winsor, when I asked for it I had no idea that it had any associations which would give it value, as I see it has. I am advertising for one, and should succeed in turning one up in a reasonable time.

A good life of Paine has lately appeared, and I am sure the market would not stand another. A much better thing would be for me to write a prefatory essay on *Agrarian Justice*, because in that I could discuss only the special points of Paine's philosophy which need to be dwelt on, and could stick to those without giving the



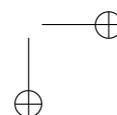
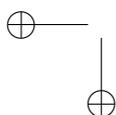


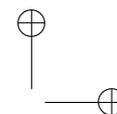
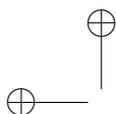
reader any extraneous matter to think about. I have little doubt now that we can get that pamphlet republished as soon as the Spencer is off the hooks, and I am mightily pleased at the prospect.

I am very grateful for all you say about my work. Perhaps it will be found – some of it – to have some sort of place. It is a great satisfaction to me that probably the best of it is associated with your husband's memory. As for my own reputation, I might have had a wider one if I had been interested enough to seek it by way of a little judicious compromising, but I wasn't. I notice that the single-taxers are taking me up – asking me to speak, &c. They got out my *Scribners* article lately, in quite a handsome brochure. I am trying to keep a middle ground with them, to avoid being ungracious and unappreciative on the one hand, and on the other to avoid mixing in too much on what is, after all, a job for the younger generation. It is rather a game of walking a tight rope, but so far I have done it successfully.

As ever, I am most grateful for the cheque you enclosed, but I'm afraid I must trouble you to put the rest of your name on it, because the bank-tellers are real autograph fiends, as you probably know. My love to your sister; and believe me always, dear lady, your most affectionate and sympathetic friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





Narragansett, 10 December [1938]

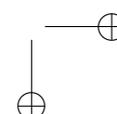
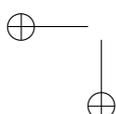
My dear lady, – I am here for four days, then back to Canaan. Your letter with its encouraging assortment of postscripts came duly. . . I shall study carefully what Spencer says about resistance. My impression is that he accepted the idea of meeting aggression with force, but not employing force in other circumstances.

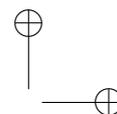
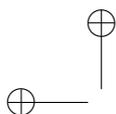
How would you feel about going to Hawaii to recuperate? Some friends who have tried Honolulu for that purpose can't say enough for it, so it might be worth thinking about; and you could get a Canadian steamer from Vancouver if you did not care to take the U.S.A. or Japanese line.

I could not write a novel to save my life; my gifts do not lie that way. I think I can manage a good introduction to *Agrarian Justice*, which will say what should be said about Paine.

Indeed, I have every sympathy with your sister as well as yourself; but now that you are on your way back to health, her cares will lighten. When you are in shape to see your friends I will come down to whatever meeting-place you may think best. I have advertised for a copy of the Beale Spencer, so you shall have yours returned intact; and when the advertisement bears fruit, I shall go at once to get the printer's copy ready for the press. A happy Christmas to you both. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



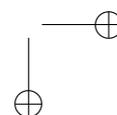
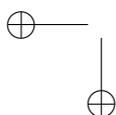


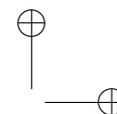
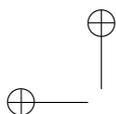
To Ellen Winsor

Sunday, February [1939]

Dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you with all my heart, and joy go with you to Arizona. I don't begreach it to you at all. Henry George will be published on his 100th birthday, but if you are in a hurry to see it, I can send you some sheets of it long before that. The Spencer should be out early this summer, for the copy will be ready to send off in another week or ten days. I am leaving out the essay on Specialized Administration – I don't see why Beale put it in, unless he had some purpose, different from ours. He dug those four additional essays out of Spencer's other writings.

I had an evening with the teachers of the H. G. School; they made a good impression on me. I like the shift of emphasis they made from a mere fiscal measure to the philosophy of freedom, and I told them so. They have sixty-eight teachers and an enrollment of some 2,000. The director is the right man in the right place. When I go to town again I shall spend three or four evenings with classes, and see how the actual teaching goes. I have no idea what the schools in other cities amount to, but I look for considerable good out of the one in New York. I was dumb with amazement at Anna George deM. I had never seen her before, but I had a good deal of time with her that evening. She is a sweet, affectionate little thing, without a brain in her head, utterly unpretentious, and lovable as she can be. From all I heard I expected quite the reverse of this, but I saw at once that she had been dragooned into a false position. She was unaffected





and at home with the teachers, and seemed to enjoy being her unpretentious self – the school does not put her on a pedestal, but quite treats her like folks, with great affection (which she deserves) but with no hifalutin nonsense as a prophet’s offspring. I can tell you more about the actual work of the school later on.

It is a great joy to me to hear that your sister is better. When you have returned and I can get my nose off the grindstone, I shall come down into the thunderstorm belt and see you. Please give my love to Mrs. Evans, and believe me always most affectionately yours,

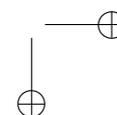
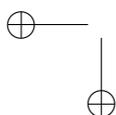
ALBERT JAY NOCK

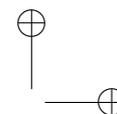
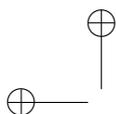
I hope I live long enough to write a book on the Pantagrueline Philosophy – sort of gathering up the odds and ends of a lifetime. Maybe it would be a dud, but I’m not sure it would. I’ll bet a hat you will like the George. I do; I think it is darned good – so there, now!

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan, Conn., 25 March [1939]

My dear Mrs. Evans, – I am so glad to have your letter. It would be a great pleasure to come down to lunch with you next Tuesday, but I am still in harness here over my work for the *Mercury* which is due so soon that I can’t spare a day from it. You were ever so good to ask me, and as I said in my telegram, which I hope you got, next time should bring me better luck.





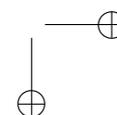
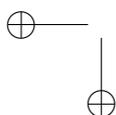
The publishers write me that the George book arrived, and I shall hear what they think of it later. I don't know of anything you could do for the Spencer, but if I think of something I shall tell you.

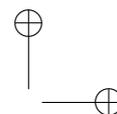
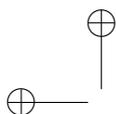
As for your question about England, I see no reason why she should not drop back as Holland did, into a prosperous and peaceable third-class power. She might then import a few characteristic Dutch virtues, and practice them profitably. I hope that will happen, and I look for it. I see no more prospect of war now than at any time lately, though I shall be a little less anxious when next November is over. With the election coming on, it would be a great temptation to the Administration to gamble on a war to keep itself in power four years longer. I am but little concerned about this, for I don't think Europe will provide a pretext, but as I say, I shall be quite a little easier when the election has gone by. Charles Beard has a magnificent piece in the April *Mercury*, which I hope you will read carefully. With my love to Miss Winsor, I am always yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park 17 April [1939]

My dear friend, – I thank you cordially for your invitation, which I shall accept as soon as I get some odds and ends of work off my hands; but when I come it will be to hear no flutist and see no pictures, but to see you and your sister and to hear your speech – nothing else. I





should be through my work by the end of May, perhaps a little before.

You won't wait until September to read H. G. There will be some advance copies out long before that, and you shall have one in strict confidence.

A bit of good news (also strictly between ourselves) . The H. G. school in N.Y. is managing somehow to get Max Hirsch's *Democracy vs. Socialism* republished – they mean to use it as a graduate text-book. This is a great thing.

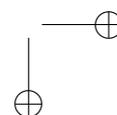
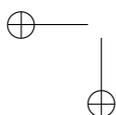
I am going to speak at the School's graduation exercises on 6 June. That school has hold of things by the right end, and [is] doing them in the right way. It is the first enterprize in the line of the Georgian discipleship which I have thought has any sense in it or any future before it.

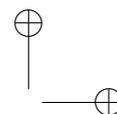
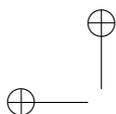
Our last dig for the woodchuck is that Paine pamphlet, and I expect to get it. The Spencer will be out in the spring.

I am tremendously het up over that book of Max Hirsch. That is surely a streak of luck. For my part, I want to live long enough and keep my wits, to write just one more book, and then I'll be willing to call it a day.

The *Mercury* wants me to keep on writing for them, so I suppose I shall. I think it is worth while. My love and best wishes to you both. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





15 May [1939]

My dear friend, – Might I try again, for Sunday, 4 June, arriving some time fairly early in the afternoon? If you say yes, I will look up the trains and give an exact hour. It will be my last chance before I leave these parts for the summer, and I should dislike immensely the idea of not seeing you until the autumn.

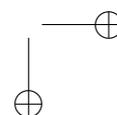
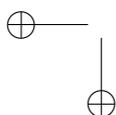
I am now in the midst of having my eyes reset: and also trying to clear up trouble with a frontal sinus without going into the hands of the quacks. I can do it too, by getting off this Atlantic Seaboard, so I am pretty eager to start. But I still have something to do for the *Mercury* and two speeches to make, one for the Georgeites, and one for a school out in Ohio.

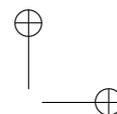
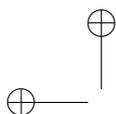
The proof of my George came in. I looked it over as best I could, and still think the book is good.

Do you care for keepsakes (useful ones) or are you and your sister like A. Ward, and haint got any sentiments? I thought of giving you the two pens I have done my work with. They are bully good ones, and I think would just suit your several handwritings. But you would have to give me one to go on with, so maybe it would be no bargain. Anyway I had the thought, which perhaps will do just as well. My best love to you both. Yours ever,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

My writing is shocking bad, because I don't yet see quite straight, but in two or three days my eyes will be as good as new – maybe better.



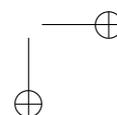
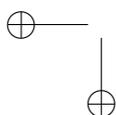


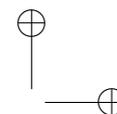
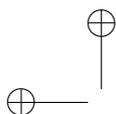
To Ellen Winsor

Canaan, Conn., 19 May [1939]

My dear friend, – Your postcard came in today, much to my surprise. I thought you were at home, and I have been bombarding the White Elephant with messages, all of which you will please disregard. I have heard very good things of Dr. Locke, and I sincerely hope his treatment will give your sister all she needs for a full recovery. By a curious coincidence I shall be up that way before long. The *Atlantic* wants me to do a couple of letters for them on Western Canada. I won't gain by it financially, for my expenses will eat up all they pay me, but I am glad to do it in order to get away from the savage climate of this Atlantic Seaboard, and into one of the most delightful regions in the world. I shall be tottering off on 7 June, and I wish mightily that you both were going too, for the coast of British Columbia is thoroughly lovely.

About coming to see you, my situation is such that I could manage it on Sunday, 4 June, arriving at Paoli 1.33 railway time. . . or, if you are interested, why not, instead of that, you come to New York on the 6th, and look over the Henry George School Commencement that evening? I don't recommend your doing that unless you have some curiosity about the way the school is going on. I have to be there, for I was weak-minded enough to promise I would speak for them, which I should not have done. To tell the truth, I rather like what they do; they have a sound *idea*, anyway, the only one I ever knew the





single-taxers to have, and they are doing a very brisk business.

So you might consider these proposals and let me know. If I go down, I'll have a delightful visit. If you come up, I'll try to arrange with the garbage-disposal people to give me the best they have for food. We'll visit in the daylight hours, and repair to the H. G. School in the evening, and have a high excessive time. My best love to you both. Affectionately yours,

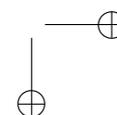
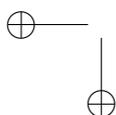
ALBERT JAY NOCK

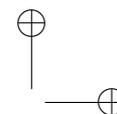
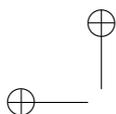
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

1989 Crescent Road, Victoria, B.C.
30 June [1939]

My dear friends, – Morrow has just now sent me word that Henry George's advance copies will come in about 14 July, and that yours will be sent you immediately.

Also that the H. G. School has arranged with them for a special edition bound in paper, to be sold for something like \$1.00. I think this is a good thing, and am pleased to hear it. The School seems to be much impressed by the book, as it strongly backs up their idea that the thing to do is to teach George's fundamental philosophy of freedom, and make it clear that the single tax is merely the way to freedom – which, as you know, was George's own idea, and was dreadfully perverted by the old-line single-taxers who laid all their stress on the way to freedom, rather than on freedom itself.





I am still very well satisfied with my book. I believe it puts George quite in the place that history will assign him, and is on the whole a rather important book. Making it short and at the same time easy to read was a hard job, but I think it is in good proportion.

This place seems perfect. I can't understand why anyone who has to live on this hemisphere would choose to live anywhere but in Victoria, if he had a free choice. If you are already booked up for this summer, as I presume you are, you must count on coming here another year. My best love to you both. Aff'ctely,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

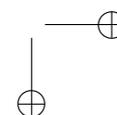
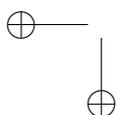
1989 Crescent Road, Victoria, B.C.
7 July [1939]

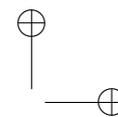
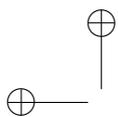
My dear friends, – Writing you the other day, I forgot to mention the most important and impressive piece of information I have to give you.

There is a magnificent large garden on these premises, yielding every manner of vegetable, after its kind, in the greatest abundance.

It is ably administered by a Chinese expert named Hop, who has cultivated it for thirty years.

Hop is fond of cats, as I am told most Chinamen are. He has several, which are sleek and in fine condition; also they are spirited, amiable and playful, excellent specimens of their race in every respect.





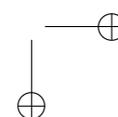
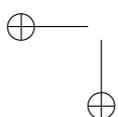
These cats are pure vegetarians, knowing no other food. It appears that Hop weans them on vegetables and never gives them anything else.

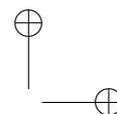
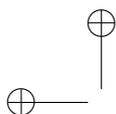
My attention was brought to this by seeing a half-grown kitten busy at a small pile of yellow beans, fresh off the vine, evidently put there for the cats to eat. The kitten shelled the beans as handily as anyone, and devoured them in a most business-like way. I made inquiries about this, and learned the cat family's remarkable dietetic history as above stated.

It seems to me that this is a most extraordinary vindication of your great principle, and that you might make good use of it in spreading the light of grace on the ungodly who sit in darkness. Yours ever, affectionately,

A.J.N.

The proof-sheets of the Spencer are in hand.





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

1989 Crescent Road, Victoria, B.C.
25 July [1939]

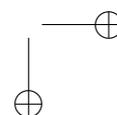
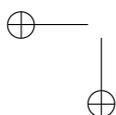
My dear lady, – Charming of you to write me. Many thanks. So you are off for Hawaii – you should have gone by this route and seen Victoria – you would have gone no further. I shan't forgive you.

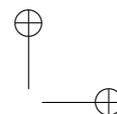
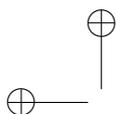
No need of enlisting Hop in the good cause. The meat here is so poor that I don't wonder cats aren't interested, while the vegetables, grists, &c., produced right here on the premises are something beyond belief. So as long as I remain in these parts I am beyond temptation.

I hear Hawaii is very fine, as I know it must be, so I hope you enjoy it. I shall be here through August, and then shall go back by a wandering way, stopping in various regions and at various towns, to see something of what the rest of Canada is like. I don't want to run into superheated weather on the mainland, so I shall not risk leaving here until the first of September; and that should take me to the east again by the first of October. . .

This place and climate are conducive to work, so I am writing steadily, I hope to some purpose. To tell the truth, I was a good bit run down when I came here, and hardly fit for anything. The winter was very trying and difficult. So I have every reason to be glad of the chance to come out here and get myself braced up for another go at the wretched climate of the Atlantic seaboard.

I am going to get out of the American *Mercury*. The change of editorship has taken away all character from it, and my work no longer fits into it at all. I shall





still appear in the *Atlantic* now and then, and perhaps elsewhere, but my real job is on more books and the finishing touches on the Rabelais. I wish there were a respectable review in the country, but there couldn't be, nor should one expect it.

Let me know how Mary, Ellen and Rebecca get on with learning the hula-hula. I have never been reconciled to Anglicizing your name. The Hebrew Rivkah, accent on the first syllable, is much prettier and more interesting – better adopt it. My affectionate regards to Miss Winsor and yourself, and believe me always faithfully yours,

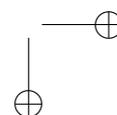
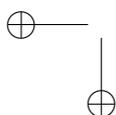
ALBERT JAY NOCK

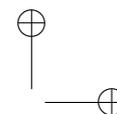
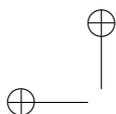
I had something in the *Atlantic* – not very significant.

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Victoria, B. C. [1939]

My dear friends, – I came back here last night from cruising up the coast and around the Queen Charlotte Islands; and I found your charming letter enclosing two cheques – for all of which I am most grateful. I don't need the money until I reach the East, so I am making over the cheques to a friend who has a bank-account in the States, and will put them through for me, and turn the proceeds over to me when I come. I hope Hawaii has done you a great deal of good; the picture shows that it might have done so. I have written up Hop's cats for the *Atlantic*, much to the editor's amusement, but now that there is a "crisis" in Europe, I don't know when anything





so peaceful and diverting can get itself printed. It strikes me that you might about as well hide out in Hawaii and I in Victoria until the wretched business is done with, one way or the other, if it ever is. There certainly is no place for us in the mess of things-as-they-are – nor indeed do we want any place there.

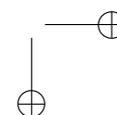
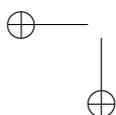
I am very happy that you are well impressed by the George. A friend in New York tells me that it got a tremendous puff in the *N.Y. Times*, and a rather snippy review in the *Herald-Tribune*, evidently written by somebody with Communist leanings, like most of those who do the reviews for that paper. But what the reviewers say amounts to little; I never keep track of it. One does one's best, and lets it go at that.

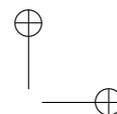
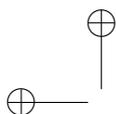
Shortly I shall be pulling out for the East, perhaps more slowly than I expected, to make way for troop-trains. How any one can survey six thousand years of history, and preserve any hope of the human race is quite beyond my understanding. But I don't know that you and I are called upon to do that; even if it were possible. My best love to you both, with all my heart. Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Day We Celebrate
13 October 1939

My dear friends, – How good you are! – and what a charming way – what an egregiously and improperly flattering a way – to signalize a birthday. When the



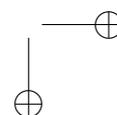
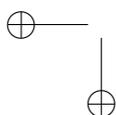


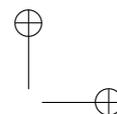
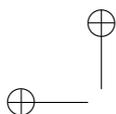
parcel came along I did not know what to make of it; my time for birthday gifts being so long past that the thought of one did not occur to me as a possibility. Then, after digging out a prodigious quantity of tissue paper, I came on the cake in all its gorgeousness and in perfect condition. Later in the day I shall distribute small fragments of it, after the fashion of wedding-cake, among the few here who are friendly enough to take it as a sort of token of hope that I may be on hand through yet another year after so many, and that it may be a useful year after too many that have not been so useful as they might.

Since the good news I gave you of Max Hirsch's great work, I have no news for you except that I am still in the grip of a wretched bronchial cold and cough which hangs on most obstinately and stands in the way of all I should be doing. It seems a common complaint – many have it – and the quacks say the customary term is three weeks, so I should be nearing the turn. My only fear is that I shall carry vestiges of it into the winter, but I am not borrowing trouble. It is a discouraging thing, but my work manages to get on in spite of it. As soon as I can do so without risk, I shall leave the coast and seek higher ground, as I did last winter. I should like to look over the White Elephant before settling down, and shall do so if I may, and can.

Thank you for the distinction which your remembrance has given to a rather commonplace event – or one which would be commonplace but for your choosing to remember it; and believe me always most affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





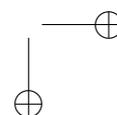
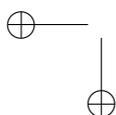
The Players
Sixteen Gramercy Park, 27 November [1939]

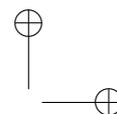
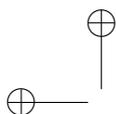
My dear friends, – Thank you with all my heart for your letters, cheques, invitations, *and* the three incomparable old Condurangos lined up in front of G. W.’s portrait. I’m not much on modern art hitherto, but a few more such bits of cartooning will make me strong for it. I am passing it around in quarters where it may do some good. What an appalling institution the D. A. R. is! – as odious in spirit as this artist chap paints them in the flesh.

I went to the Symphony Concert that Saturday night when I was in Philadelphia, and looked over the house for you, but in vain. You did well to miss it. When I saw the programme – Corelli, Mozart, César Franck – I looked forward to a great treat, but was stung, quite as I might have known I would be. All three were nothing but these abominable collaborations called “arrangements” whereby some miserable fellow metagrobolizes a suite set for a dozen instruments into some sort of fandango set for sixty or seventy. I am glad to believe you weren’t there.

The George appears to be about as successful as I had hoped. The H. G. School is doing well with it. The enclosed item shows some praise even from the unregenerate, and I am kept pretty busy answering compliments and complaints – so I dare say it was a good thing to have done. Don’t return the clipping.

I shall come down when I can, but I don’t know when that will be. I seem pretty well dug in for the winter, the approach of which makes me wish I were back in





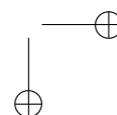
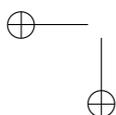
Victoria. I suppose the war goes on, but I don't read any newspapers or get any news of it. What news is there to be got? It is merely another silly attempt to settle something in the wrong way, which can never be settled save in the right way; so one can have no interest in it. I don't think Franklin can get his third term unless he manoeuvres us into hostilities next spring; and whether he can manage that I don't know, but I presume he can. All we can be sure of is that he will do his best. My love to you both. Knowing you is one of the few compensations for living in this highly objectionable world. Affectionately yours,

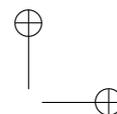
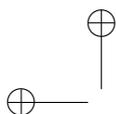
ALBERT JAY NOCK

I am just getting over an attack of neuralgia, such as disposes one to swear dreadful; but I have kept fairly mannerly and decent, and am now almost free of it.

Canaan, Conn., 4 February [1940]

My dear friends, – I think your work (*Land, Labor and Wealth*, Caxton Printers) is first-rate; you can make a very useful thing of it. The only thing I would suggest is that you might make a little more formal and explicit statement that from the point of view of economics, man is a land animal; that he derives his substance wholly from the land; that if he be deprived of access to the land he perishes; and that he is legally thus deprived by rent-monopoly. This economic definition of man is fundamental, and by stating it formally, at first, you make way for the rest of your work to follow logically.





I was quite astonished to see how good are the things you have lifted from the *Freeman*. It seems to have been a better paper than I thought it was, but I always thought it was good. What a pity it did not come out twenty years later – it was very much before its time. Affectionately yours,

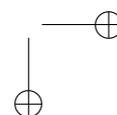
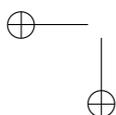
ALBERT JAY NOCK

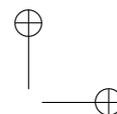
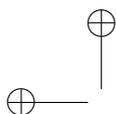
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

20 February [1940]

Dear lady, – Well, Mexico does not seem too bad at the moment, for I have been snow-bound for a week, unable to stir – the effect of two pretty bad north-east storms. I have heard good things of Mexico, especially of a place called Tasco, but I somehow never took to the idea of going there to see. I was once in Loreda, and as Abe Potash said, I seen enough already. But if you are adventurous and feel equal to it, I dare say it will be an experience of one sort or another. I'm a generous feller, so I don't begreech it to you.

My own plans are rather dismantled. I had expected to be down your way about now, but all I know at present is that I shall be there about 16–17 March, in the course of a grand tour taking in Baltimore and Annapolis – an old friend who is President of St. John's College wants me to hold forth for him. So we shall have to leave it that if you are improperly and ingloriously skally-hooling around among the heathen – probably starting

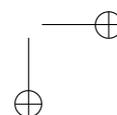
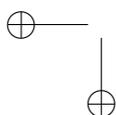


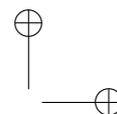
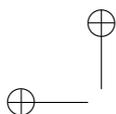


a revolution somewhere – it will be just my loss, and I shall give Philadelphia the go-by.

As for your recent activities, I see no grounds for complaint. If the coloured brother is a good artist, I am for him, however he may have got that way. If he isn't, I'm not – you see, it is just that simple. Steinbeck writes well – exceedingly well – but I can't get through his book – can't even get into it. There is nothing mid-Victorian about my attitude, for I don't like Dickens and Kingsley any better than Steinbeck when they get to mixing up sociology and fiction. On the other hand, I read Carlyle's and Ruskin's essays without difficulty – without the sense of incongruity. However, if you can get anything out of Brother Steinbeck beyond his good writing, you are within your rights and I wouldn't say a word. I wouldn't want to say a word.

I have always been thankful that I fell in with Rabelais so young, and found that it is of the essence of the Pantagruelian philosophy that we should never want to change people. You have noticed that Pantagruel never takes a hand in Panurge's rascalities, but never tries to reform him, never wants to reform him – the not wanting is the great point. The moment one wants to change people, singly or in the mass, one becomes like the prohibitionists, missionaries, single-taxers, – and it does no good to become like that. So I think you need never imagine me as wanting to expostulate with you about Mexico or Steinbeck or whatever else you are drawn towards. In the first place, I couldn't know what you get out of them, and second, it haint my bizness to know.





I am trying to write something about the Pantagruelian philosophy, but I don't know that I can succeed with it, I hope so.

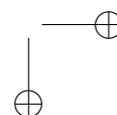
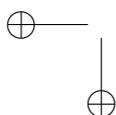
Good luck to you both. I hope you like Mexican food better than I liked it when the Governor of Arizona gave me a Mexican lunch in Laredo. It was fearful. Ever affectionately yours,

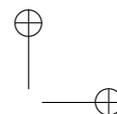
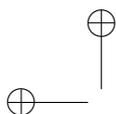
ALBERT JAY NOCK

2 June [1940]

My dear friend, – I am truly grateful to you for your kind letter. My little visit with you meant a great deal to me. I shall renew it soon. Meanwhile I hope you are thinking about getting away to a better climate for the summer. The persistent northeast storm almost ruined me, but it seems to be over now. I wonder how you got on with it – I hope well. I lose patience with myself for being so much a creature of climate and weather, and then I remember that Goethe could hardly keep steam up against a low barometer. I am going to dive even deeper into oblivion than I now am – going up on high ground in Vermont, on the chance of being able to live in rather primitive fashion in a place which one of my friends says is practicable for the purpose. If it is not, I shall come back to Canaan.

There is an excellent life of Clara Schumann recently out, I liked it. We are hardly aware, I think, of how much our music owes that lady. Also there is a first-rate life of Weber – a very good book. These would do very well



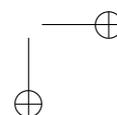
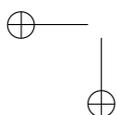


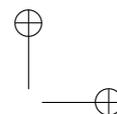
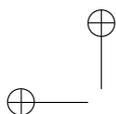
for you to read this summer – I can't think of anything better and if you have not already seen de Madriaga's Christopher Columbus, you might put that with them; it is most interesting, and of course, remarkably well done.

The world's affairs are certainly going on very strictly according to pattern. Looking over my little book on the State I do not see much wrong with it, and I am feeling more than ever satisfied that you permitted me to associate Mr. Evans's name with it. He saw as clearly as I did how things must and would come out. Well, the world had its warnings – Spencer in 1851, followed by many others, all the way down to Spengler, Dawson, Ortega y Gasset – and here we are on schedule, prompt to the minute.

I think of you very often, hoping rather anxiously that you will find your way into a less debilitating climate before the summer heat adds difficulties to the trouble of packing up and moving. Encourage your nephew to keep on with his compositions – not with the idea of publication or performance, but to advance his general understanding of his subject. Nothing will take the place of it or give as good results, so even if he has no actual gift for composition, he should keep at it. Remember me cordially to him, and say how immensely pleased I am that a happy accident brought us together that day. My love to you both, always, Yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





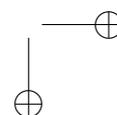
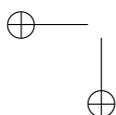
To Ellen Winsor

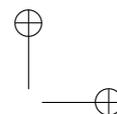
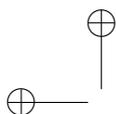
Canaan, Conn., 14 July [1940]

Dear Miss Winsor, – I have just come back from a week in Vermont, visiting my old friend and schoolfellow, Zebe Parsons. We went around a good deal, looking over several places like Dorset, Manchester, Wallingford, &c. Miss Robinson, of Wakefield, is up there for the summer, in a place called Cuttingsville. She went over with us one day to Woodstock, and we both thought right away of you. It seemed a place that would suit you and Mrs. Evans uncommonly well, if you had nothing else in mind for the next two months. Miss R. said she meant to write you about it and has no doubt done so, and I really think the suggestion is a good one – well worth mentioning anyway.

The Schalkenbach people wrote me a very warm letter the other day, saying my paper in the June *Atlantic* had brought in orders for 400 copies of Hirsch's book, mostly from people of standing, as would be natural since the *Atlantic* does not reach very far into the masses. That is not bad. The H. G. School is reprinting my paper and sending it out to a long list – 10,000, they say – of representative people. I see Bro. Willkie says the issue of his campaign will be individualism against Statism. I don't take much stock in that, but I am glad he said it, even if only for electioneering purposes.

Mrs. Evans is right about Spencer's unsoundness on the position she mentions, but the old fellow was sound on so much that I don't feel like quarreling with him. The Schalkenbach people are hesitating about putting



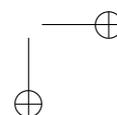
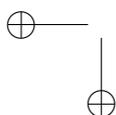


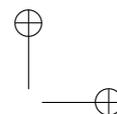
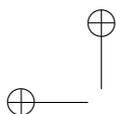
The Man vs. the State on their list, by reason of the statement on page 116. This seems to me the very excess of sectarian Rabbinism, for the thing that Spencer and George both were after, was freedom, and both did too good service to it for the Schalkenbach trustees to cavil at a relatively small dissension which is so easily accounted for, and is now as completely lost sight of as the dissension between St. Peter and St. Paul. It is this doctrinaire, or rather Rabbinical, spirit of the single-taxers which has kept me away from their organized movements, but it has never interfered with my respect for their ardour and devotion, and I am sure never will.

The H. G. School has suggested that I give lectures on the State to a class of their graduates, and if it can be a handpicked bunch I am willing to do it – probably some time in mid-winter. At all events, I'll discuss the idea the next time I am in New York, and see what can be done about it.

I think of you often, hoping you are both well, and that you can successfully isolate yourselves from what is going on in the world of war and politics. I noticed that the Vermonters seem curiously well able to do that, and I respect them for it. For my part, I am utterly inattentive – why be otherwise? My best love to you both. Sometime let me hear how you are doing. A postcard would be enough, if that be all you have time for – or inclination. Affectionately yours,

A.J.N.





Canaan, 16 August [1940]

My dear and kind friend, – You were asking about books. I have just been reading Fabre's life of the Caterpillar, and I believe you would like it. Not that you care so much about Caterpillars, y'understand, – I don't – although I was much interested in the processional type I saw in the south of France, about which he has a great deal to say. What you would like is his attitude towards life, even in its humblest manifestations, his devoted respect for the order of nature, and his showing that it takes a lot more credulity to disbelieve in an intelligent direction of that order than to believe in it! So I found it a fortifying and encouraging book, and maybe you would find it so.

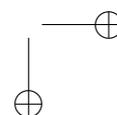
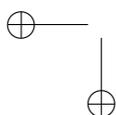
It was ever so kind of you to come over the other day and cheer me up. As Panurge says, the Lord will reward you for it in his great rewarding-place. I hope you have a delightful time in Woodstock, and that something may soon happen to bring us together again. Affectionately always,

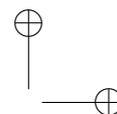
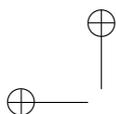
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

31 August [1940]

My dear friend, – I am grateful to you and Miss Winsor, as ever, even more for the unpurchasable gift of spiritual help and encouragement than for any other in your power. I enclose another note from Mr. Montgomery which shows





that your attentions to Bro. Willkie may not have been wasted. If you will return it at your convenience – no hurry – I shall send it on to cheer up Bro. Gipson.

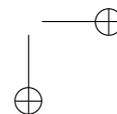
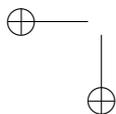
“Cotton” as a verb is fairly common in colloquial usage. I do not know how it came to be. I think it is a New Englandism – I’m not sure – I must take it up with Henry Mencken. *The Man vs. the State* antedated the revision of *Social Statics*. I have no difficulty in believing that H. S. took his estimate of George from hearsay. George was vilified in every possible way by the most influential organs of opinion, and I make no doubt that H. S. accepted what they said without examining George’s work.

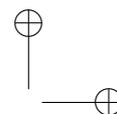
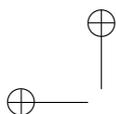
You were asking me what I am doing. I expect to have two books for my publisher by the end of next year, if everything goes reasonably well; and in one of them I expect to take up the points you make against Herbert, as you suggested I should. As for the MS. and the pen, you know they are quite your own to do as you please with. I like the idea of Dartmouth, but I shall be wholly satisfied with any disposition you make of them.

You seem to be skurrying around Vermont despite the weather. What a summer! Today one can hardly get one’s breath, and yesterday was even worse. I am utterly worthless to myself or any one. I shall come to Paoli when the autumn sets in, and see how you are doing. Please give my love and my best thanks to Miss Winsor, and believe me always, Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

2 December [1940]





My dear friend, – I am ever so grateful for your little note with its enclosure but I am grieved to be obliged to tell you I don't believe a word you say. I believe you are putting on this show merely to dodge the nuisance of Christmas festivities, and escape having to be decent to a lot of people you would rather see burned at the stake. I have every sympathy with your feelings in the matter, but as a highly moral man I feel bound to say I can't approve your way of dealing with it – most unscrupulous, in my opinion. I'll bet anything in reason that the minute the holidays are over, you will be up and capering around like a spider on a hot shovel. I don't like it, but we'll have to let it go this time. It is tough luck to love such an unprincipled person, but you know we all do, and would forgive you anything – so that is that, I'm afraid.

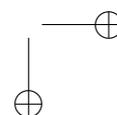
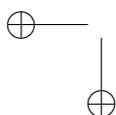
You might as well make the most of your flagitious purposes, and entertain yourself by giving the quacks as much trouble as you can. I hope you will, for I don't like them. I am writing Miss Winsor by the next mail – this note goes in haste to catch the one just out-going. My love to you always, dear friend, unfailingly,

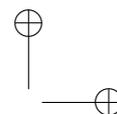
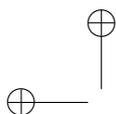
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan 23rd January [1941]

My dear friends, – Thank you cordially for the Jefferson Bible. What a fine piece of work it is. I was so much impressed by it, when I was writing my book. I can't





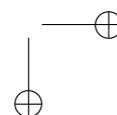
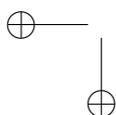
tell you how much encouraged I am to know that you had me in mind.

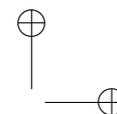
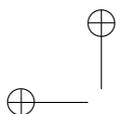
All the more because in New York shortly after New Year's Day I got a touch of influenza, which as you know, runs one's spirits down below zero. I went at once down to Narragansett where there is a hospital and a fairly capable quack, but fortunately I didn't need either one. So I came back to Canaan yesterday, and shall be lively as a squirrel when I pick up a little more energy.

I take it that no news from you is good news, which rejoices me. Knowing that you dislike being questioned, as I do, I have not written. I always thought the three friends of Job were superb old gents. They went and sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights "and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great." Nobody could beat that for decency.

I send with this the printer's copy of my Introduction to the Spencer. Throw it away by all means if you don't want to keep it. Again, my best thanks for all your kindnesses; like the sands of the sea they are innumerable. I do hope I may see you before too long. Yours in all affection,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Ellen Winsor

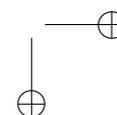
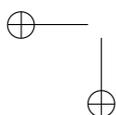
Narragansett, 22nd February [1941]

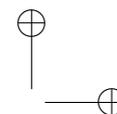
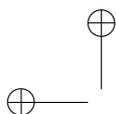
Dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you for your letter, and my congratulations on your skill in picking out suitable pink valentines. . . I am glad in any improvement in Mrs. Evans's condition, but I wish it might be greater and even faster than your report shows. The thing to do, I suppose, is to stay there as long as may be, and come north by slow stages with long stops. The weather here has been so grandfully springlike of late that we may have a bad March and April; and I have noticed that people are set back by coming north too soon.

Willkie is of course a dud of the first water, as I have believed him to be all along. His idea of a foreign policy, like Franklin's is to make England an international WPA project, and put the rest of the world on relief. It is an ambitious plan, but I think a little too grandiose. The worst of it is that Bro. Hitler won't wait long enough to give it a proper chance to mature, and as things look now I am afraid he will clean up before Franklin can get started. But whether so or not, I still rest on my conclusions set forth in my book on the State, and have no more to think or say.

I am over here in Narragansett for three or four days with the dentist, which is a nuisance. I had but little trouble with the flu while it was actually going on, but it left me wretchedly weak and shiftless until quite lately – now, however, I have picked up again.

Three publishers have been urging me to wind up my career with a literary-philosophical sort of autobiography





– somewhat the kind of thing, in principle, that Henry Adams did. What do you think of that notion? Could you read such a book, do you think, without stimulants? If so, I might try it when I finish what I have on hand. My best love to both of you. Yours as ever.

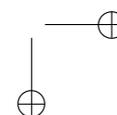
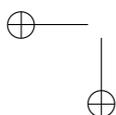
ALBERT JAY NOCK

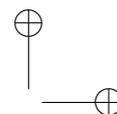
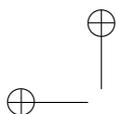
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Narragansett, 28 February 1941

My very dear friend, – . . . The first thing I have to get off my mind is an earnest appeal to you not to head north until you have a reliable report of settled weather, and then come by slow stages with liberal stops. I am sure you will do this. Stop at some good place in Georgia (I don't know any) then in Charleston, or Camden, then in Charlottesville, Va., and wait for authentic word of how the spring has come on in Paoli.

Don't bother about your nieces and nephews. Young persons simply must be got on with. The Lord, in His inscrutable wisdom, seems to have made them that way and nothing can be done about it except to be reasonably civil to them, keep as far away from them as possible, and wait with whatever patience one can muster until experience puts them in a frame of mind to realize what offensive little numbskulls they are. In this connexion do some time remind me to tell you a capital story of my old professor of history and his son Jimmy. I know that what I am telling you is true, because I was young once myself, and I have the most vivid and embarrassing





recollections of that disgraceful period. Yet I was free of bad habits, got into no scrapes, was very decent – nothing, really, the matter with me except that I was a prize ass. I take it that this is the only trouble with your nieces and nephews, and I assure you there is no help for it. Apparently it is God’s will that this should be so, and the stars in their courses fight against anyone who strives by argument, persuasion or cajoling to make them otherwise than what they are. . .

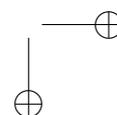
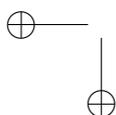
Yes, do let us have another conversation the very moment you are up to it. We really should. Looking forward to the last days, the prophet Malachi said that then those who feared the Lord “spake often one to another.” We must bear that in mind.

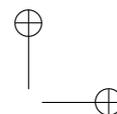
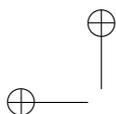
You will find *The Second Empire* a most rewarding book. The only thing I have done that will amuse you is a paper coming out in the April *Atlantic* on your neighbors, the old Amish. I shall have papers in the May and June issues, on the Jewish problem in this country, which is a most serious one, and growing more difficult day by day. My best love to both of you. Keep me informed of your progress – an occasional postcard – and be sure that you are always in my thoughts! Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn., 8 April [1941]

My dear friend, – You are very kind as always, even kinder in what you say than in what you propose to do. No, don’t send me anything at the moment as I



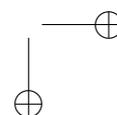
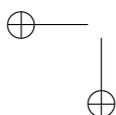


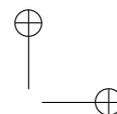
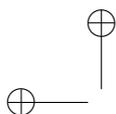
have enough to be going on with. As long as I know the special fund is there, I know how to plan my movements ahead, and can count on it when needed. Perhaps some time in May I shall make a draft on it, but possibly not even then. But I assure you it is a great satisfaction to know that the fund is there and can be got at when occasion requires.

Your correction of the word *litters* is proper, I was influenced by my memories. No other word would describe the raft of youngsters belonging to the Lensenbergs, Tumains and Wittelshofers, there were too many of them.

They were great pals of mine – we were all grubby, sassy, enterprising, but never mischievous, really – something of a nuisance, but very decent brats, on the whole, and I don't recall a single instance of "race prejudice" amongst us – and children are quick, even decent ones, to catch up such things, if they hear anything disparaging in the conversation of their families – so I judge our elders had no anti-Jewish sentiment. I know mine had none, nor did I hear of any in others.

I shall be glad to look up Mr. [F. Matthias] Alexander, and I'll see Amos Pinchot about him when I go to town. I entirely share your opinion of the quacks. My old friend Dr. Wilcox kept me in good condition for many years with advice that proceeded from great knowledge and greater wisdom. He never gave me any medicine. You need not be afraid of my turning myself over to the Faculty. I shall very soon go over to see Hawkins, the oculist, but that is only a matter of new glasses – mine are outgrown. Other than that I shall not have anything to do with doctors, but merely go where I can get myself put on a strict regime, twenty-four hours a





day for as long as need be, as I did twice at Gastein, the last time six or seven years ago. I know just what I need. My constitution is sound, and all my forbears were very long-lived, so with a bit of special care, as my old friend Maurice Francis Egan used to say, "I'll be embalmed to last quite awhile."

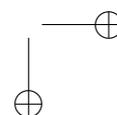
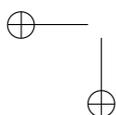
When I get a proof of my second article on the Ebrew Jew, I'll send you one. I appreciate the correction you suggested; it is good. One can't be too careful to guard against any chance of misapprehension. My love to you both, I am always most gratefully your aff'ctn friend,

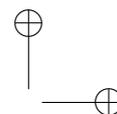
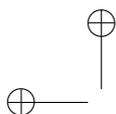
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn., 23 April [1941]

My dear friend, – I returned here last night, and found your kind letter. . . and the book. . . I shall attack the book at once, all the easier because 'Enry 'Awkins – his name is Joseph, but I call him 'Enry after Chevalier's song – gave my eyes a severe overhauling. They were very much strained, but will grow better if I don't overwork them too heavily at first. Hawkins is a first-rate man, and I shall keep within reach of him for the faintest sign of any recurring trouble.

Some time fairly early in May I shall be coming down to Philadelphia. I should like to get a third article, written by a Jew, if I could find the right Jew who would approach the matter from his side as I have done from my side. In this way we could lift the whole question out of the realm of controversy, and put it on a sound





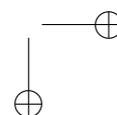
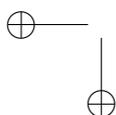
footing of reason. This is what should be done, and what I have done, for I have said nothing that is open either to attack or to question. I have some thought that I might get the kind of thing I want out of Judge Stern – anyhow it is worth trying, so I am coming down. I'll write beforehand in the hope that I may have an hour or two with you on the porch of the White Elephant – if you want me.

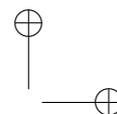
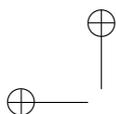
I have the idea that Franklin has overplayed his hand and is stalled for the time being, which interests me considerably. Americans hate to back a loser, and are also great hands to throw mud and bricks at their idols of yesterday. I think three bad defeats for the British have set them wondering whether our foreign policy is as good as it seemed to be a month ago. If so, we may see some very amusing developments. Now I shall stop and give my eyes a rest. My best love and thanks to you both. I hope to see you soon. Affectionately, always,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn., 14 May [1941]

My dear friend, – I stopped over the week-end in New York, and came back to my rural retreat yesterday. My little visit with you was a great delight, especially since I found you so much better in health than I expected. I was glad to see your nephew again. You might suggest to him some time that he will find it easier to break the habit of newspaper-reading if he makes it a matter of self-respect – as it really should be. If I lied to him



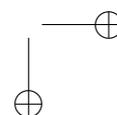
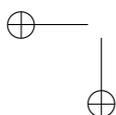


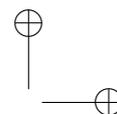
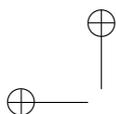
and misled him day after day, it would be only a short time before he would have nothing to do with me. He would feel degraded by the thought of associating with me. Yet if I print my lies and deceits in a newspaper, he not only goes on associating with me, but pays a few cents for the privilege. I did not feel like bringing this inconsistency into our jolly little talk, but the point is sound I think, and that view of it might save him a good deal of dishevelmment. . .

As soon as this month is over, I shall go into retirement, as I told you, at some place like Mt. Clemens, Watkins Glen – I wish it could be Gastein – and bid the world farewell until I am once more galvanized into working order. I shall have to go to Boston next week for a couple of days with the *Atlantic* people; and then to Providence, for another interview with 'Enry 'Awkins, in the matter of eyes. The fact is, my eyes are perfectly healthy, and I have as much vision as I ever had. The trouble seems to be that the coordination and adjustment are so delicate that it takes a deal of fussing to avoid strain.

This is a wretched letter – all about myself, and very little of that is worth telling. I am in so much better a frame of mind now, however, that I feel equal to almost anything. To tell the truth, I have been a bit worried in one way or another, but that is all cleared away, to my great relief.

Franklin is stalled against the hardest of all obstacles to overcome – apathy. The people are not fighting mad, they are not opposing anything – they are simply apathetic, like the people of France two years ago. I rather think they may have been over-propagandized. It is very interesting and really a little amusing. Franklin's





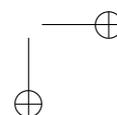
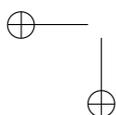
war-chariot dashing against opposing cohorts might look quite impressive, but when it is merely bogged down in the mud, it is rather an ignoble sight. My love to you both. Affectionately,

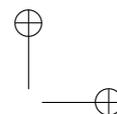
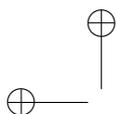
ALBERT JAY NOCK

22 May [1941]

My dear friend, – I am replying to your kind and generous proffer by way of a two-finger exercise on the typewriter for the sake of promptness. I strained my fingers the other day, not at all seriously, but in such a way as to make my handwriting almost illegible – and you know what my handwriting is at best. I dislike the typewriter, and can use it only by picking out the letters one by one; so I hope you will understand that only out of consideration do I use it now.

I was of two minds about that motor, and have decided to let the idea go, though it was a good one. The Jewish societies are doing all they can to steer young Jews away from the cities, and they report that they have settled some fifty or sixty thousand of them on the land, mostly in western New York and the near South. I understand that they are not in colonies or collective enterprises, but in small individual holdings dusted around here and there as they could manage most advantageously to get the land. My notion was that I should like to look into this, and the only practicable way to do it would be by motor. I don't operate a car myself, *Got soll hütten*, and never shall, but a young fellow who likes to work with





me is good at it, and would go along, I am sure, if I asked him. So I thought I would buy a good second-hand motor, taking advantage of the market, run around in it for a couple of months this autumn, and then sell it probably (as things look now) for as much as it cost. With production being cut down as it is, in behalf of "defense," a second-hand motor is likely to be worth considerably more by Thanksgiving than it is now.

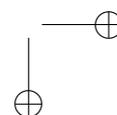
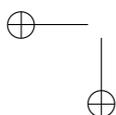
Nevertheless, on thinking it over, I am not sure I want to do all that, although as I say, the idea is a good one; so I shall give it up. I think I can safely take the Jewish authorities' word for enough information so that my book will not lose much on this head.

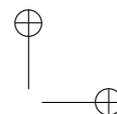
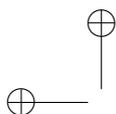
I must have misled you about Bro. Alexander. I fully intended, and do intend, to go and see him; also to talk with Amos Pinchot; not, however, until I have had a summer's go at a regime of care and quieting. If I went to him now, he would have no fair chance, as I am in too unreasonable and cussed a disposition to give him one. Why present him with a gratuitous difficulty which will disappear of itself in a little time?

It pleases me greatly that you are satisfied with my papers on the Jews. It is a hard subject to deal with, and I should be glad to avoid it, but some one must attempt it, and no one else, so far, has come forward.

I thought of passing the *Freeman* on to the Library of Congress; they have no set; but if you have any other suggestion, please make it.

It is frightfully hot. I must go to Providence on Monday to give my friend Dr. Bell a lift with a book he is writing,





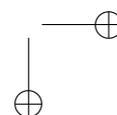
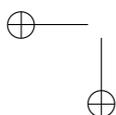
and I dread the heat there; it is almost as bad as in your region. My best love to you both. Affectionately,

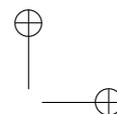
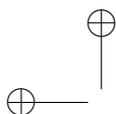
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

14 July [1941]

Dear friend, – I am to be settled now for a few days in a really-truly honest-to-goodness Old Peoples' Home, a funny sort of convalescence-shop on a hill in Vermont, to stay several days, then to go to Saratoga for another spell. I really enjoy it. There are ten persons here, two men beside myself, and seven women; all old, inconceivably old, doddering, more or less imbecile, I think. It is the most amusing place I was ever in. I was sent over here to liven up a little on higher ground, and I wouldn't have missed it for anything. I feel like Mr. Danowitz in Montague Glass's story. Unusual English words like *indigent* were beyond him, and he gave himself out as president of the Bella Hirschkind Home for Indignant Females. I am actually perking up wonderfully, doing all the right things, and convinced that I am on my way. The quacks say I am, and I believe they are right, for a wonder. They also say I was close to a bad old nervous bust-up, which I privately don't believe I was half as close to as they think I was. But however that may be, now that I am in the game I am going to play it out according to the rules, notwithstanding I think there is a lot of nonsense about it, and very expensive nonsense, too. I am here incog., inaccessible, letting the world go hang,





and leading a most irresponsible life – not only leading it but perversely enjoying it. How is that for a confession of wickedness? I work, too, not accomplishing as much per hour as I normally do, but what I do accomplish seems to be of normal quality. I have gone far enough with that autobiographical material to be pretty fairly sure I can do the thing, which I had doubts about, since it was so new and unfamiliar a type of work. I don't know whether the world will feel that it owes you and your sister much for preserving my existence, but however that score may be adjusted, you have certainly done that. If it were not for you, I would not have got through a trying time. I am grateful, whether the world is, or not; and I believe I still can show something at least as good as what I have done hitherto. If so, you may know that you were the means of its getting done.

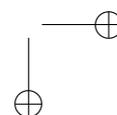
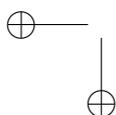
I shall write you again in a few days, and report progress. No reply is expected – please don't bother to do more than look over my communiqués and throw them away. I am doing well, very well, much better than I expected, and by autumn I shall be quite the same as of old. My love to both of you. Affectionately yours,

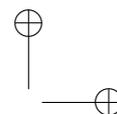
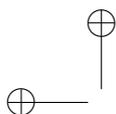
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

25 July [1941]

Dearest of all dear ladies, – Your salty comment on the Berkshire Branch of the Bella Hirschkind Home for Indignant Females made me almost laugh my feeble ribs





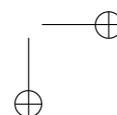
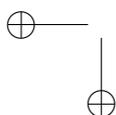
loose. The sense of humour is all we have left to keep us up, and I see that yours is standing by you nobly. As I told you, I am well fed up with this branch of the Home, and am happy that the quacks are ordering me back for inspection. Just in the nick of time, too, for three of the most dilapidated old conduangos you ever saw turned up two days ago, and I just don't think I could stick it. I believe three weeks will be plenty for you, but don't take any chances. When you notice yourself beginning to smell musty and mousy, don't lose any time – let the rest of the music go, and clear out for Nantucket.

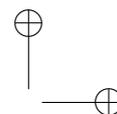
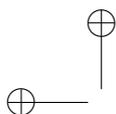
I can't write you more than this little note today, for I got too much interested in my autobiography this morning, and overdid it a little – how is that for egotism? But a couple of lazy hours in bed will straighten that out, and meanwhile one of the help here will mail this somewhere along the route of his errands, probably in Wilmington. My review of Nehru is in the August issue of the *Commentator*. I have not seen it yet, for no current literature enters this wilderness – indeed, no literature at all. It shall have a review of Porter Sargent's book in the September issue. My love to you both, and don't let the fragrance of the Home settle on you and strike in. Affectionately, always,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

15 August [1941]

My dear friend, – At last I am out of the hands of the quacks over in Saratoga. They say I will last quite

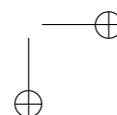
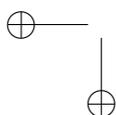


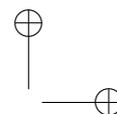
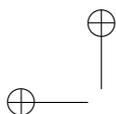


a while if I follow their confounded orders about the regulation of daily life. I dare say they are right, but for a fellow who has never much taken orders from anybody, the idea is irksome. You may trust me, however, to do what they say, as best I can. My only trouble now is with this dilapidated right eye, which has interfered with my work abominably. I am now on my way to take this up with 'Enry 'Awkins, and if he corrects it I shall tell you the good news at once, and go back to Canaan with a light heart. If he does not, as I wrote you, I shall go down to the Johns Hopkins and see what can be done about it there.

For me, this has been “just one of those summers,” with a most uncommon run of hideous bad weather thrown in. I do hope you have fared better. Your days in the Berkshires fortunately were as good as any we had this season, so I suppose the *Pestspiel* went off in first-rate style. You should have been doing pretty well in Nantucket also, for up to today we have had quite a decent spell. Now, however, it is late September – astonishing, how the season has run four to six weeks ahead of schedule all this season! Goldenrod, joepye weed, wild chicory even, and all sorts of unseasonable things beside, have long been flourishing. Outside Saratoga, late in July, I saw two fields of wheat dead-ripe. I do not remember such a season.

The memoirs of A.J.N. have got on rather well, “considering.” So far, I should say they are good. My general plan has unfolded itself easily and naturally as it went along, much more so than I expected it would – quite without any forcing. The only thing is I am unsure whether my account of my early years, family, &c., is





interesting enough to induce any one to read it. When it is typed, I have a notion to send some of it down to you, to try it on the dog. If you and Miss Winsor could get through the first two chapters and still want to keep going, I should feel that the thing is worth risking. So if you are willing to take the chance, I shall do that.

The only service I have tried to do for my benighted country has been to write a book-review each month. They have got so much attention that I shall keep on doing it as long as they are wanted.

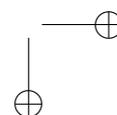
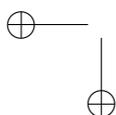
I am impatiently looking ahead to the time when I can come down to see you. I have had too many reminders this summer that those occasions must come oftener than they have been doing heretofore. My best love to you both, always. Affectionately,

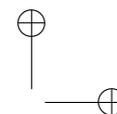
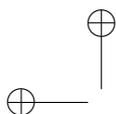
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, 19 September [1941]

My dear friends, – I am sending you the first two chapters of my book; not more than enough to give you a fair idea of what the thing will be. I hate to ask you to wade through it in MS., but I'll be grateful if you will. What I especially want to know is, whether the *substance* of it has promise of anything interesting enough to publish. Would it be the kind of thing you would take a chance on if you did not know who wrote it? Answer me that, and it will be a *big* favour. I shall abide by your judgment, not showing it to anyone but





Bill Briggs *pro forma* since he was the one who urged me to it – he is the head of *Harpers*.

I am much better of this slow recovery – even the eye is slow about remembering its mission in life but decidedly it also is coming on. I go back to 'Enry 'Awkins in a week. So I feel I can face the winter, but coddling myself is a demnition grind, I do it faithfully, however. I want to see you as soon as may be. Do let me know how you have survived the summer. I hope well. Yours ever, affectionately,

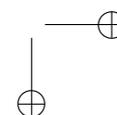
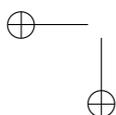
ALBERT JAY NOCK

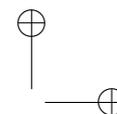
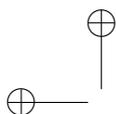
To Ellen Winsor

Canaan, 4 October [1941]

Dear Miss Winsor, – Getting a letter from you is always a great joy to me, which in this case was modified only by its news of the wretched wind-up of your summer. It seems like what Josiah Allen's wife called a pleasure-exertion; now that it is over and done with, one can joke about it. But pneumonia is no joke. It is the one mortal blight that I am particularly and thouroughly afraid of. Tell Mrs. Evans it was a judgment on her for her dissipation in fashionable resorts, like the fop of old –

So this brave wight
In clothing tight
Went forward to the fray.
He danced all night,
But ere the light





He caught pneumoniay – hay – hay,
He caught pneumoniay.

It won't do, so I hope she will take this as a warning,
and keep out of Barrington, Stockbridge, &c.

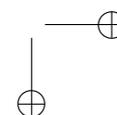
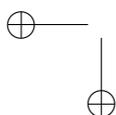
Your kind words about my work are very encouraging.
If it be a good start, as it must be if you say so, all that
remains to be seen is whether I have enough of a story
to be worth telling. Let's hope so.

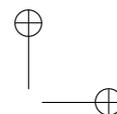
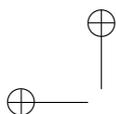
Later on in the autumn, suppose you tell me when
things are likely to be propitious down your way, and
I'll bring my work for you to look at, and come along.
Meanwhile take care of your precious selves. I have
nothing but good to report of my own condition since
I wrote last; the eye is coming around nobly. With my
best love to you both, I am, as ever faithfully yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

The University Club, Boston
8 October [1941]

Dear Miss Winsor, – I am glad to say that the judgment
of the *Atlantic* people agrees with yours. They like the
way my memoirs are shaping up, and they propose to
run them as a serial before they appear in book form.
I came over here yesterday to have a session with the
editors, and found them enthusiastic, even as you might
say desirous, so they are setting forth the matter in their
annual prospectus which is shortly coming out, and now
there is nothing left for me to do but keep at work. I had





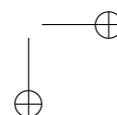
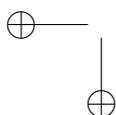
an inspiration for a fine title, which also tickled them immensely – I call it *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*. I don't think you can help seeing how exactly that title fits.

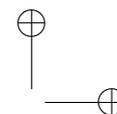
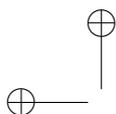
To tell the truth, I am mightily well pleased about all this. It gives me the chance to say exactly what I want to say about a whole devil of a lot of things in the course of expounding a general philosophy of life, and you can bet I am surely going to say them as well as I am able.

I am now going down to Providence for what is a final run-in with 'Enry 'Awkins. That obstinate trouble with my eye seems definitely to have cleared up about a week ago – rather suddenly, too, after showing but a slow and reluctant improvement. But to make a sure thing of it I shall hang around a while – probably spending my 92nd birthday with my friend B. I. Bell, whose 87th occurs on the same day.

We must arrange for a real good pow-wow this autumn. You are so much a part of this job I am on that I must have you pretty closely at my elbow. It is a new game for me, you see, so I have felt powerful uncertain about it, and although I am encouraged, I could still do with quite a lot more confidence than I have – so after I am a little farther along I think I'll have to go in for a few days diet on burnt turnips and alfalfa. My love to you both, best and dearest of friends. Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





Narragansett Saturday [1941]

My dear friend, – I am ever so grateful for your jolly letter with its enclosures. The gravestones of New England's older communities are a great study. I notice two things about them; First, the absence of Continental European names, especially those like Fischlowitz and Permasenzky. Second, the finest lettering ever done in the United States appears on gravestones of about 1820 to 1840 or so, I wonder how this came about. . .

Franklin has a hard row to hoe, the people are balking like mules, and I think there is no prospect whatever that he can whip them into line. The worst of it is – or the best – that every passing day sees the people more sour and Franklin more futile. For which the Lord be praised! My best love to your sister and yourself. Affectionately yours,

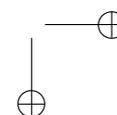
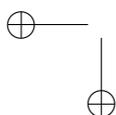
ALBERT JAY NOCK

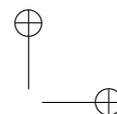
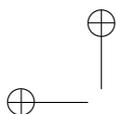
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, 1 November [1941]

My dear friends, – The other day I looked at a book on the care and rearing of cats, and there I saw a picture of a big handsome cat that according to the book had never tasted a scrap of meat in its life. So you see Hop, the Chinaman out in Victoria, knew what he was about. I wish the *Atlantic* had published what I wrote about Hop's cats, but I suppose they won't do anything about any of it until the war is over. . .

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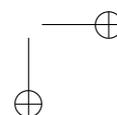
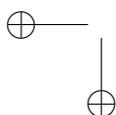


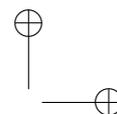
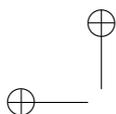


The Memoirs are going steadily on. I am in the midst of my formal education now, and find it rather interesting. I believe the thing will work out well, and while it won't make any sensation or do any good, some readers will see something in it. One can never tell. The other day I got a most polite letter from a functionary in the Tokyo Foreign Office, saying how highly he prized my *Journal of These Days*. He was curiously outspoken, too, in a few words he wrote about public affairs, saying there appeared to be a grave dissention in England threatening a paralysis like that in France. The labourites are all out for the Soviets in Russia and a Popular Front at home; while the conservatives can't swallow the Russian alliance and won't let it go without a contest – and this, he says, may “presage a débâcle.”

I've no idea what there is in this, or what it amounts to, but I have thoughts that England has been curiously inert of late. As for Franklin, I don't see how he can possibly come clear in the next three years, no matter how the war goes or doesn't go. Time is against him, or I miss my guess.

But as A. Ward said, “Politics haint my biznis. I'm in the Show biznis.” I don't think of such matters except as a letter may come along, or something like that, to remind me of them. All I do to save the country is to review a book for Scribners' *Commentator* once a month – and by the way, the book I have just lately reviewed – the one by George S. Kneller – is really good – the only one dealing with National Socialism that is not superficial and paltry. Again I hope all is well at





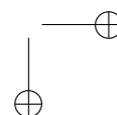
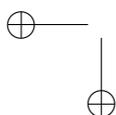
the White Elephant; and with my best love to you I am
always yours affectionately,

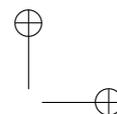
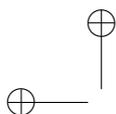
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn., 15 November [1941]

My dear friends, – . . . I shall come back (from Providence) by way of New York, where publishers want to see me about putting the Memoirs in print when I get them done. I should like to take that chance of going down to see you – say some time very shortly after the first of the month. Would something like that be agreeable to you – and practicable? If you think it would, please scratch yes on a postcard and send it to me, and then we'll fix a time. I am really suffering for the sight of people who have some sense. See Proverbs, 15 – verse 17. I dread leaving this solitude for New York or Boston. Bishop Warburton said that the Church of England “like the ark of Noah, is worth saving; not for the sake of the unclean beasts that filled it, and probably made most noise and clamour in it, but for the little corner of rationality, that was as much distressed by the stink within as by the tempest without.” When I hear knaves and imbeciles talk about saving the country I think of that sentence of Warburton's – isn't it good? – and wonder whether the country is worth saving, even if it could be saved. My love to you both, as ever. I continue doing well as one could ask, and better than I thought likely. Yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

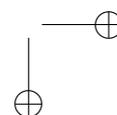
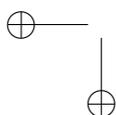
Canaan, Conn., 22 November [1941]

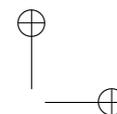
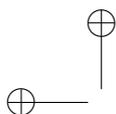
My dear friend, – Ever so good of you. Let us make a date at the 6th, then. As far as I know now I can do it, but if something should turn up to throw me off until the 7th I shall get wind of it in good time to let you know. And if anything should put you off, address me *c/o* Mr. William H. Briggs, 49 East 33rd St., N.Y. He will hold it until I return from a pow-wow with the *Atlantic* people and with 'Enry 'Awkins, which will be in ample time to head me off and turn my footsteps up the Mountain. I am like the gal with three beaux, each sure he ought to be the one – three publishers, each thinking he has the most validest claim to book-rights on the Memoirs. It rather pleases me because there is no chance of a cent of profit for anybody out of such a book – they want it, not as a “publishing proposition” but because they think it will be good.

As for company at the White Elephant, I'll always be delighted to meet any one you wish to have me meet; and if there ain't none such, I shall be equally delighted.

As for II Esdras, IX, 24, I am bitterly ashamed to say I have no copy of the English Apocrypha, or the Septuagint, and my edition of the Vulgate does not carry the extra-canonical books. I must remedy this shocking state of things.

I don't think *respectable* carries any ethical connotation, except in a distinctly secondary and popular use, and there it is not regularly implied, often not. It never implies goodness or acceptability on moral grounds. Mil-





ton's Satan was not good, and you don't like him, but you have to admit that in his chosen line of trade he had a mighty respectable notion of what he was about and how to get on with it. Just as the Nazi educational philosophy may be immoral, repulsive and against God, but nevertheless it is a highly respectable achievement; and getting it accepted strikes me (although I did not say so) as an achievement so respectable that it borders on the superhuman. My best love to you both, as always. Affectionately,

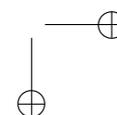
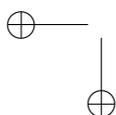
ALBERT JAY NOCK

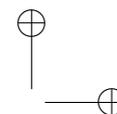
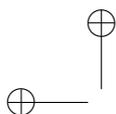
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, Friday, [Nov. or Dec. 1941]

My dear friends, – I was unable to give your nephew a complete reference off-hand, to Besant's little primer on Rabelais. Would you please hand it on to him as follows: *Rabelais* – by Walter Besant, published by W. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh, 1879. I am quite sure he can find this in the public library; he had better try, look it over, and make sure it will answer his purpose, before attempting to find a copy on sale – which would probably be at second-hand only.

My introduction to Rabelais is more complete, and would naturally be more nearly correct, being a later work – but if it is too hefty for what he wants, Besant's little book is the best thing I know in English – in fact, the only thing worth his reading. If he can manage French enough for easy going, I can give him several





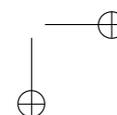
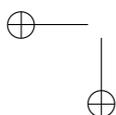
good references, and even lend him the books, if he is as honest as he appears to be. I haven't a copy of Besant's book – never did own one – or I would make him a present of it. Yours ever, affectionately,

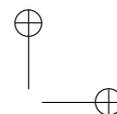
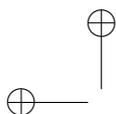
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan, 10 December [1941]

My dear friend, – I am now back on the top of the Mountain, with many memories of my visit with you, all of them most happy. I am sorry to have been a little slack-twisted and shiftless – I hope and believe that another time I shall put a better foot forward to you and your company, and meanwhile I shall go back to my work in good spirits. Now that Franklin has got his war at last, we can be like Beethoven in his garden, sticking to his business, and once in a while cursing Napoleon when a stray cannon-ball rolled his way, but otherwise not paying any attention to it. “We are in the course of re-barbarization,” as Herbert Spencer said half a century ago, and since there is nothing to be done about it, we are doing all that can be expected of us when we simply accept the situation and quietly go on living the good life. We are more fortunate than most people in having the spiritual resources that enable us to do that – so we don't have to listen to the Star-Spangled Banner, and if we are asked whether our blood doesn't bile, we can say, “Not a bile – let 'em clank.”





But we must tell each other how we are getting on. I wish you were in a calmer spot – I find that being sequestered with the chickadees and blue-jays makes things more easy – but even so, you have pretty good facilities for shutting yourselves away from the world whenever you wish to do so. My best thanks and best love are always with you. Yours faithfully,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

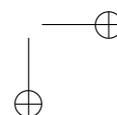
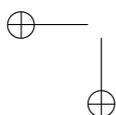
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

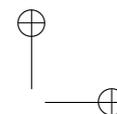
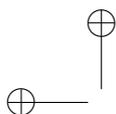
Canaan, Conn New Year's Day [1942]

I will sing of Lydia Pinkham
And her love for the human race;
How she sells her vegetable compound,
And the papers publish her face.

My dear friends, – J. H. Gipson's spring catalogue reached me today, and there I saw R. W. E. looking at me with a swinish expression onto her countenance, and E. W. trying to redress the balance with a quirky smile. It was a truly inspiring spectacle. This work of art is now going up on my desk to confront me whenever I am tempted to swerve from the straight and narrow way.

And so your book is well on its way out. I am delighted to hear of that – and rather surprised, as I had not heard it was actually in the press. I shall write J. H. G. for the first copy put on sale.



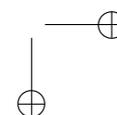
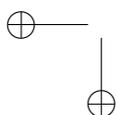


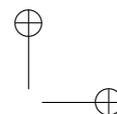
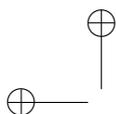
You are wonderful people, you two. You have preserved me alive, you know, and now I see you are preserving some of my words from being forgotten – I don't know why or for what, but hope you get some satisfaction out of my gratitude.

Do read Professor Hayes's new book, *A Generation of Materialism* (Harper's). He not only knows history, but *understands* it, and unlike most professors, he writes admirably.

I am still improving – able now to work a three-hour stretch at my desk – but it is a slow business. My book is something over 1/4 done. If I don't break again or strike a snag, it should be done by summer. It goes well, apparently. Next time I am down your way I shall bring another bit of it with me, for I am just coming to thin ice and would like your opinion on how I get over it – if I do get over it. Why don't we all pack up and settle in New Mexico or somewhere off this seaboard for the next few months? Then you would be right at my elbow to prod me when I grew lazy or addled. But how could we get on without all our books? – and the one you want is never the one you have. You can't have your durned old family – I can't have my books – so there you are, and here I am. I'm afraid that's how it is *bestimmt im Gottes Rath*. Yours ever affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





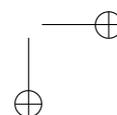
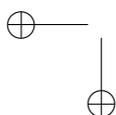
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

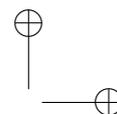
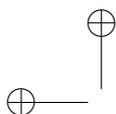
15 January [1942]

My dear friend, – I had just sent off a letter to you about the book when the book itself came in; and the next day I sent you another letter remarking the coincidence. Whatever delay occurred was no doubt due to the great volume of mail during the holidays. A book which was sent me from Boston took ten days to get here; and I have heard of other complaints. But I suppose we can't expect a government to run a war and a postoffice at the same time – it isn't possible to carry on a war-economy and a peace-economy together, as we shall soon see. I imagine that our interventionists will shortly notice that they have let us in for a pretty good-sized job, and will not find the going so agreeable as they expected.

You speak of osteopathy. It is a good thing. I have a friend in New York who is high up in that profession, so I know something about it. They do a great deal with certain types of disorder which can't be reached by medicine. Some of their practitioners claim too much, as medical and surgical practitioners often do, but nevertheless they have a sound principle. I think a good sensible osteopath might do something for you in a general way, but the trouble is to find one who is sensible. Even those who are not sensible seldom do much harm, which is a great merit, and a great deal more than one can say for the M. D.'s.

I hope your nephew got a lot of good out of his meeting with Bro. Churchill. It seems a strange thing for anyone to care for, but as Lincoln said, for those who like that





sort of thing it is probably about the sort of thing they like. It wouldn't suit me particularly, but neither would many other things people like to do.

Somehow I rather had the notion that Bro. Gipson's splurge would raise your feathers. It amused me – I got a good laugh out of it. But he is a thoroughly good fellow and thought he was giving you the best kind of praise, so I know you can't take it to heart.

It may interest you to know I didn't get a taste of those sausages I had in storage at the White Elephant. I turned them over to Paul Palmer as a sample, and that was that – so you and your sister can't shake your gory locks at me. Yours ever, affectionately,

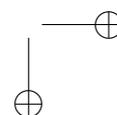
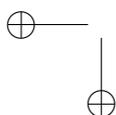
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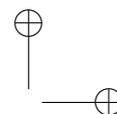
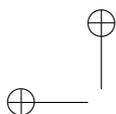
To Ellen Winsor

Canaan 2 March [1942]

My dear friend, – Don't feel the least regret over the matter – think rather of all you have done, and of my unspeakable gratitude and true affection for you. I am so sorry for R. W. E.'s affliction. What are the prospects of it? Don't forget me, I beg of you – let me know now and then what progress she is making. I shall trust you to do that, so don't fail.

I have nothing in the way of news for you, except that my health is much better, and – at last – my wretched eye is as good as it ever was – I am sending you the first five chapters of my book – do please read it and tell me what you think. It is your baby, you know – yours and R.





W. E's – and it is now at the most interesting stage of its growth, so you must have a motherly eye on it as it goes on out of the nursery, and faces American society with a clear eye and a blank mind, ready for any impression. You will do that, I know.

You really must get C. J. H. Hayes's *A Generation of Materialism* – a great work. And Roger Martin du Gard's big hefty novel in two volumes (published by the Viking Press) is the best novel of our time, in my opinion, unless you count in *Father Malachy's Miracle*, which you must have read long ago. Believe me always, my dear friend, most faithfully and affectionately yours,

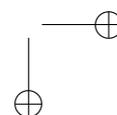
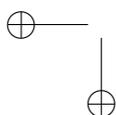
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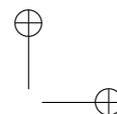
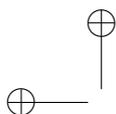
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan Saturday, 28 March [1942]

My dear friend, – I was delighted to have a line from you in your own hand – but not again, until you are once more well and strong. I beg of you not to think of me or my interests at all, but put your whole mind on what is best for you.

I am sending a bit more of my narrative, with a page of preface. I think this chapter and the next will probably interest you more than any. I have been practically housebound up here for several days, because the road up this mountain was washed out and impassable. It is repaired now, roughly, and I have been able to reach the postoffice. I don't mind the seclusion, but it puts me in arrears with my correspondence.





My best love to you both. Please thank Miss Winsor for her letter – and now, my dearest and best of friends, put me out of your mind entirely until “the clouds roll by, Jennie.”

I read Mother Michel’s Cat in a magazine, I think *Scribner’s Monthly*. It was illustrated with silhouettes of the cat, the infamous Lustucru and wretched Faribole. Delightful! Yours ever, affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

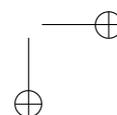
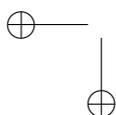
To Ellen Winsor

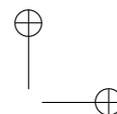
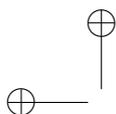
Saturday, March [1942]

Dear Miss Winsor, – . . . Be sure to tell me how R. W. E. gets on. If there is anything I can do to give her any pleasure or happiness, I am trusting you to say so. I imagine the first part of my book, which I sent you, will be less interesting than the part which I have been working on now, the part showing the development of ideas from my first actual contact with the world outside of school and college, I shall send on a copy of each chapter as I get it ready.

. . . I tell you, the Liberal is a hopeless case – they can only flounder and wallow in the most superficial conception of facts; they learn nothing, nor could if they lived to Methuselah’s age.

And speaking of liberals, I see that a crew of them have got together for a complimentary dinner to O. C. Villard on his 70th birthday! I was circularised about it, but shan’t attend – maybe I shall send a letter. What a





career that poor old critter has had – always trying to hit the right nail on the head, and always missing it.

There are many most amusing things taking place in the world – but even a good show gets a little dull if one sees it too often. Give my best love and best wishes to R. W. E., and as for yourself, dear lady, they are always yours, as you know. Affectionately,

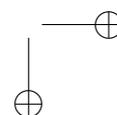
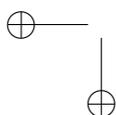
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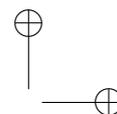
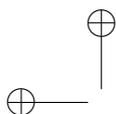
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Wakefield, R. I., 31 May [1942]

My dear friend, – I am delighted to see your handwriting again as firm and bold as ever, for it must mean the recovery of nervous force which we have all been hoping for. Thank you for your letter and all it contained. It will be easy to change the sentence in my MS. regarding dogs. In fact, I must add something to that chapter which will make it so long that I shall have to split it.

My understanding is that the prospect for the Berkshire festival is still open. Your local project for music is very interesting. These are the real thing. When I was a boy I knew several such which were remarkably good. In those days we had to take home-made music or none, and the people who had any gift or skill went into it in earnest. It must be a satisfaction to you that your protégée turned out creditably at the Town Hall. We had an American Negress at the Monnaie a few years ago, a dramatic soprano named Yarborough, who was very capable and a favorite, so much so that they used





to put on negro or culled rôles, especially for her – *Aida*, Meyerbeer’s *Africaine*, Ernest Reger’s *Salambo* – and she was mighty starchy and effective. It would be nice if times were normal, so that your soprano gal could train for an audition there – I could get her one. But there is no use thinking of that. My best love and thanks to you both. Affectionately,

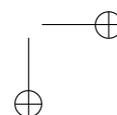
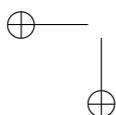
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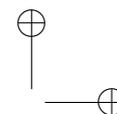
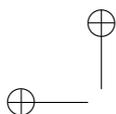
To Ellen Winsor

Narragansett, 2 June [1942]

Dear Miss Winsor, – . . . Your question about breeding and the mass-man just fell in with something I had in mind to do – to make two chapters of the last one I sent you, and add some paragraphs on the idea that Cram’s theory might revolutionize the science of genetics. Without interfering with nature at all, it might be possible to play into her hand intelligently by (1) an intelligent idea of breeding for spiritual quality, corresponding to the idea which has become fairly general, of breeding for physical quality. Then (2) by removing economic, political and social obstructions and disabilities as far as possible. This seems to be something like what was in your mind. It is an interesting notion, and worth talking about.

I am happy to hear that Mrs. Evans is so far improved. What a wretched time she has gone through! I agree with you, that notwithstanding all their progress in science, the quacks have not got far. The best among them are





those who know that their therapy can't be standardized – that there is really no such thing as sickness, but only a sick individual with all kinds of peculiarities which differentiate his case.

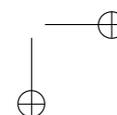
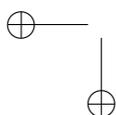
It is chilly and damp here, and one becomes rather low in one's mind, but by keeping clear of newspapers and the radio one manages to rub along. I hope you are doing well and that I may see you some time in the course of the summer. My best love to both of you, always. Affectionately,

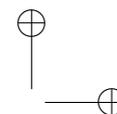
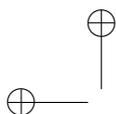
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, 19 June [1942]

Dear Miss Winsor, – I saw yesterday that the Berkshire Festival is definitely done for. Some doings will take place in the music school, but that is all. Probably you already know about this, but I promised to tell you when I got reliable tidings, so I accordingly pass the word to you with great regret, for I know how disappointed you will be.

For my sins I have been spending some days in New York, and thereabouts, helping to push a project for getting out a series of pamphlets like those that the English Individualist publications have put out. I may have wasted my time, but it is the only thing that can be done as things now are, and if properly done it would really amount to something – so I did what I could in an advisory way, and am now picking up my work again. Like other educational institutions the Henry George





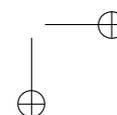
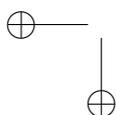
School is pretty much a casualty. It will have to go on three legs until the war is over, and then take a fresh start if anything survives to start with. No chance of getting any students now, you see, and the teaching staff more or less broken up. It is a sad business. One could write an amusing essay on how to recognize the Dark Ages when you are in them, but I don't know who would publish it. I doubt that the average fellow at the end of the fourth century knew he was living in the Dark Ages – probably he thought his circumstances were pretty much the regular thing, and the way he was living was just about the regular way.

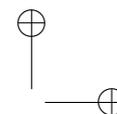
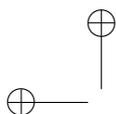
I hope your sister's improvement goes on, and that you can keep reasonably cheerful, for that seems to be the most that anybody can do. I am sorry you must miss the Berkshire Festival, but so it is. My best love to both of you, and my hope that you will always remember me as your most devoted friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan 1 July 1942

My dear friend, – . . . With regard to the pamphlets, I got the idea from what the Individualist Publications in London are doing. I don't know what it would amount to here, but I do know that people's minds are turned towards the question whether autocratic collectivism is here to stay. So I thought the idea was worth exploring. At all events I should be able to let you know in a month or so whether the thing is practicable.

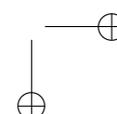
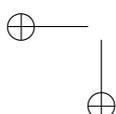


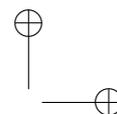
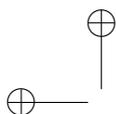


I shall send you another chapter of my book quite shortly, one which bears on my life in Brussels, for the most part. I decided to write my final chapter now (it is nearly done) then go back and write the intervening chapters. The last one deals with my views on some of the mysteries of the psychical world, on religion, religious philosophy, &c. My idea was that this makes a logical ending and in case I am unable to write all I have in mind to precede it, the book can anyway be published with the final chapter put on wherever I have had to stop. So I shall keep that chapter by me, and now pick up the narrative again.

I was not much impressed by Canby's *Thoreau*, for precisely the reason you give. I was sorry he wrote it. Thoreau is the one man *about* whom we need to know least, and *whom* we need to know most. The *Britannica* gives more than we need to know *about* him. I fear many will think they have done their duty by him when they have got through Canby's biography; whereas they have done hardly anything. With my best love to both of you, I am always yours affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

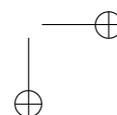
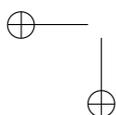
Narragansett 7 August [1942]

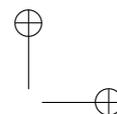
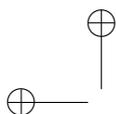
My dear friend, – I am delighted to hear that you are so well situated. Your kind and good letter was forwarded to me over here at Narragansett. The quacks are all being taken over into the war-service, so I thought I had better see what they have to say about me while they are still here.

Yes, I know the Etoile, on the rue des Harengs – a good place and Chautraïne's, next door to it, was very fine – it was in its 301st year when I was last there. The little park you spoke of is called the Sablon – the little figures around it represent the various trades – carpenters, potters, &c. Brussels was always a bourgeois town, full of all kinds of trade and commerce. It is sad, as you say, that we won't see European life again, but what we had of it was good, and we have still got it, and Franklin can't pry it away from us. In that respect we are lucky. We had the chance to civilize ourselves somewhat, and no one now will have that chance for generations to come.

About my book: I thought with the addition of another chapter or two, as I wrote you, I could bring it to an end, and should do so, out of consideration for the publishers, since they might find a book about the length of my Jefferson easiest to handle. But on my way down here I stopped in on Harper's and had a long talk with Bill Briggs at the Century Club at lunch next day.

He said my idea was all nonsense. They wanted me to go on with it and put in everything I have. Bill insists



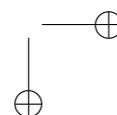
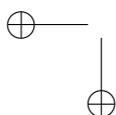


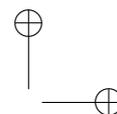
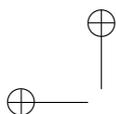
on it. He said the book would be as good at one time as another, there was no hurry about it, and when I left him his last words were, "Now, don't pull any punches. We'll make so many enemies with what's in it already a few more won't count." Since I came here I had a note from Bill giving me his summer address, and he ends by saying, "Don't forget, it's a better book than you think it is."

So I shall probably go on with a good many observations on the post-war period which I intended to leave out – a chapter on education, for instance, based on my short experience at teaching; also some observations on social life, and on public affairs. I am quite astonished at Harper's attitude, as I really did not think the book is interesting enough to run to such length as they insist on having it run.

Indeed I do know Blunt's diaries. He was a good sound man and a good prophet. Your idea for me would be a good one if there were anything about my life that I did not wish to have known, but there actually is not anything, as far as I am aware. The book I am writing is the autobiography of a mind, and all that I leave out of it is the kind of thing which does not bear on my literary and philosophical development – and there is very little of this, and what there is of it is very trivial, nothing at all to make a book of.

The only thing I could do further would be in the way of a correspondence which might perhaps mount up to a very thin volume of letters. But I don't know anyone whom I could engage in such correspondence. I don't believe Mr. Cram would undertake it, and he is the only one I can think of – he is 76, in frail health and almost





blind. No other name occurs to me. I hope to see him this summer, and I will suggest the idea to him, but I should hardly expect him to take up with it.

Also my own time for doing anything is growing short. You are wrong in believing that I shall outlive you. If I get through this coming winter I shall do better than I expect – I can't count on it. This does not distress me at all, for I am not keen on living any further into the Dark Ages, and I am quite willing to let somebody else face the future. I am interested now in my scheme for a series of Individualist Pamphlets, and if I can get that under way and established, I should feel I had done about all that could be expected of me. . .

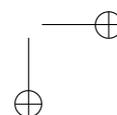
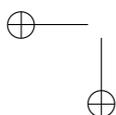
I hope the summer will do wonders for you both. . . Don't go home too soon – I don't trust that enervating miasmatic region wherein you dwell. Stay on the Vineyard until positively the last dog is hung. My best love – my most enduring and grateful affection – is always yours. Faithfully your friend,

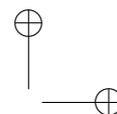
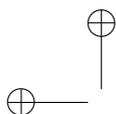
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Prince George Hotel, New York
15 August [1942]

My dear friends, – Why certainly we'll take out the passage your letter refers to. It is only a casual observation, and leaving it out will make no difficulty or damage the paragraph. I set no store whatever by it, I assure you.





You see, nobody but you and the publishers have read my MS. or will read it. That makes it your duty to raise a terrific roar when ever you see any way to improve it, whether by addition, subtraction or alteration. You are good as gold to let me “try it out on the dog” and I am no end grateful – but the dog must bark when something looks suspicious, or there would be no use having any dog. Isn’t that so?

My scheme for pamphlets went on the rocks. I came here yesterday to discuss it, but for all the good that came of it I might as well have stayed away. I am a good bit disappointed, but so it is.

Your letter followed me all around Robin Hood’s barn, and I got it much belated – hence this tardy reply. I am sorry. Yours ever affectionately,

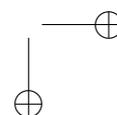
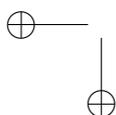
ALBERT JAY NOCK

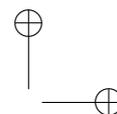
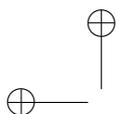
We are stewing today like eels in a pan, hardly wriggling.

Saturday [August 1942]

My dear friends, – No need to send back my MS. What you have is a carbon copy, and I shall make all changes on the one which goes to the printers.

The only trouble with your suggestion of Frank Garrison is that we think so much alike that we would have hardly anything to discuss, and would practically be writing letters to ourselves – especially since we are also much alike in temperament. From the standpoint of publication this would not be very good, you see. What





you have to have is what the dramatists call “collision of character”, as in the Adams-Jefferson correspondence, and also some differences in thought.

My plan for pamphlets is not so dead as I thought it was. Later on something may come of it. You are good to suggest the possibility of financial help, but you are doing enough in that way by keeping my chin above water all this time. Besides, it would be needless – I don’t think that end of the problem would be too difficult – so don’t think of it.

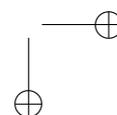
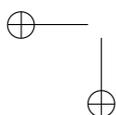
You must always be careful to suggest any improvement that you believe could be made in my MS. Otherwise there would be no point in my sending you the copy. My best love to you always. Affectionately,

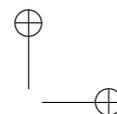
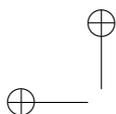
A.J.N.

Canaan, Conn., 9 Nov. [1942]

Dearest of good friends, – I don’t think you could imagine the amount of good that I got from my little sojourn with you. You see, I was a bit down in the mouth – I felt the need of companionship. The autumn is a dismal time with me, as it was with Goethe, and at the moment I felt uncommonly alone and lonesome – for here I see no one – you two are about all I have left. So you did a wonderfully good deed. . .

You were right – my publisher didn’t see anything out of the way in my remark about women as teachers. But your conversation has caused me to carry on my observations on women into another chapter. I gave Bill





Briggs my ideas for one, and he was very keen to have me do it; so I began it at once, and it seems to be coming on extremely well. You shall see it, of course, as soon as it is done, and if I hear loud roars I'll know it has touched the right spot.

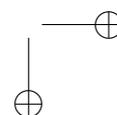
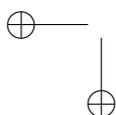
I haven't anything else to report from my journey homeward. Everything here is in statu quo, and I have settled down contentedly, thankful for my visit with you. I hope all goes well on your behalf. You must keep me informed of all that concerns you, especially your state of health; and I shall do the same. My best love to both of you, and once more my heartfelt thanks. My stay with you did more to help me face the winter than all that the quacks have done. When you see your nice girls tell them it will do them good once in a while to leave their highly moral academic atmosphere and hob-nob with a man of sin. Yours ever, affectionately,

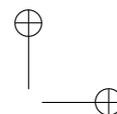
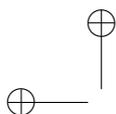
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan, Thursday November 10, 1942

My dear friend, – This from your old friend and fellow-sculcher, G. B. Shaw: “It is always worth while to fly in the face of that survival of witchcraft which calls itself medical science. To recover triumphantly under such circumstances becomes a point of honour.” Hesketh Pearson's new biography of G. B. S. (authorized by him) is well worth reading for the sake of the new material it has. I recommend it.





Also I recommend Angela Thirkell's latest novel, *Marland Hall*, or some such name. If you know the English well, you will get a lot of fun out of it. If you get on with it, you might read her *Northbridge Rectory*, which is almost as good, not quite. Angela is in the fine old tradition of Jane Austen, knows her people, has delicious humour, and writes excellently well.

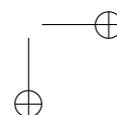
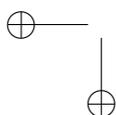
But wait till you read my new chapter on the Care and Feeding of Women, which you and Bill Briggs bedeviled me into writing, and is now about one-third done. If you call me an anti-feminist, believe me you ain't seen nothing yet. I'll teach you and your precious sister not to feed india-rubber doughnuts to the elephant. My best love to you both, as always. Affectionately,

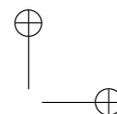
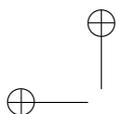
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, Tuesday, [24 Nov. 1942]

My dear friends, - . . . I have really anticipated you pretty well in your wise suggestions, and Franklin has helped a lot. I have done almost nothing with either coffee or cigarettes for a long time, and don't mind at all giving them up; and I virtually never drink anything. I was off on a rousing bender when I was under your roof, so you must not judge by that. There is really no temptation in any of these directions. If I can't have good coffee and cigarettes, I'd rather have none, and as you know, what little coffee exists is mostly chicory - quite harmless, but very vile - and there has been

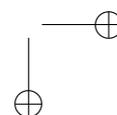
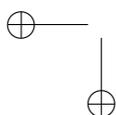


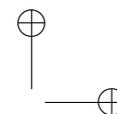
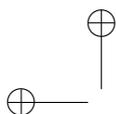


no decent Egyptian tobacco in the country for a long time. As for drinks, I don't taste them ever up here, and seldom elsewhere, for none of them are good. So, I think you may be sure of my living a sober, righteous and uninteresting life, as the Prayer-book says we should. The quacks seem to be satisfied on that score, for they suggest nothing, even in the matter of diet, for I have become much more of a vegetarian lately, and have grown to be quite abstemious in the past three years. If one has always been temperate, as I have, and cultivated no morbid appetites or practices, I think nature pretty well lets one know what to do and when to stop. Once on a 14-day crossing on the Volendam I ate nothing but raw sauerkraut for a week – it was all I wanted – and I most broke the chief steward's heart. So now I'll cheerfully swear off on coffee and cigarettes, even when I come down to your house – they mean really nothing to me, and as I said I have long done hardly anything with either.

The folder you sent me makes a bad showing. I am all in favour of every reform it demands. My position is, as you know, that political action means virtually nothing. I am in favour of the Bill of Rights, but in 1789 I would have known it must be meaningless, as it has turned out to be. The idea that society can be improved by political action is a will-o'-the-wisp – it only diverts attention from better possibilities, perhaps. So I never took stock in it.

Today I finished my chapter on the Care and Feeding of Women. You should have your copy of it by Monday, I think, and I suppose there will be joy in the presence of





the angels when I hear from it. My best love and thanks to you both. Affectionately always,

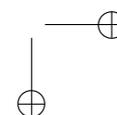
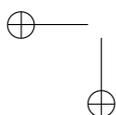
ALBERT JAY NOCK

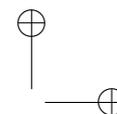
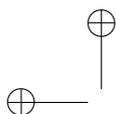
Canaan, Wednesday, [25 Nov. 1942]

My dear friends, – When I wrote you yesterday, I had clean forgotten that the Great Father had appointed tomorrow as Thanksgiving Day, putting it in his message – that everybody is lucky who escapes death. So with a long week-end holiday in prospect I won't be able to get that chapter typed until the festivities are over. But unless the typist gets herself seriously foundered on an overfeed of turkey, you should have the thing some time next week. (You positively must remind me next time I see you, to tell you a story of the illustrious Abernethy.)

Golly, what a day! It sends one's spirits down to zero. I wish you were in Mexico or Arizona or somewhere in a climate that wouldn't kill crows. You have been heavy on my mind all day. What a good time we do have, trying to worry each other into good condition! But you say my mind still seems clear – maybe you won't say so when you read my MS. As long as my mind stays clear, I don't care much about the rest of it – but I'll stay sober and coffee-less and do my best. I'd do lots more than that for your sake, if I had the power.

Bill Briggs aint a mysterious personage at all. He is the head editor of Harper's publications.





Query: How do you treat women like human beings, when most all of them – same as most all men – aint human at all, none whatever?

Query: When a man believes firmly in sex-equality before the law, social equality, divorce on demand, and the single standard of morals, how do you make him out an anti-feminist? You should oughter be ashamed. Yours ever, with love,

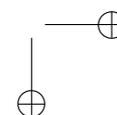
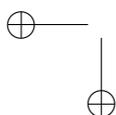
ALBERT JAY NOCK

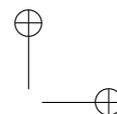
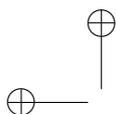
Canaan, 1 Dec. [1942]

Dear Miss Winsor, – Thank you for your note and its enclosures, and for the charming things you say about my visit. I don't want to crowd the mourners, but if it can be managed I would wish more than anything to go down and be with you once again this winter. . .

The diet you sent me corresponds pretty closely to my own. I see it makes no mention of Italian pastes, which I like very much. My verging toward full membership in the Sculcher's Union is a purely natural tendency. . .

I think you will enjoy old Lloyd George's biography. He did a good bit of work in his day – but what a set those English reformers were! So like our own – always disagreeing, brawling with one another, splitting up, wasting endless time and energy on utterly impracticable schemes and fantastic ideas. Webb and his wife must have been dreadful people. It is amusing, but also discouraging to read about all the solemn nonsense they dabbled in.





I hope earnestly that things are going well; you must tell me how you get on. I am in the midst of a chapter on education which has given me some trouble to straighten out and keep free from digression; but I think it is on a clear course now. With my best love, I am always affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

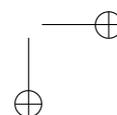
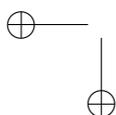
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

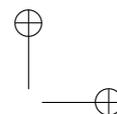
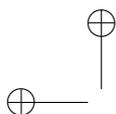
Canaan, 1 Dec. [1942]

My dearest pernickety Lady, – Model of cussedness, you may be right about the evidence of my face and general appearance; but dammit, you know, you can't go before a jury with that. As Mr. Margolius would say, that's my natural face what I got it, and I am not responsible. I can think of a good many improvements on it which I wish could have been made, but they were not, and there is no help possible. But the spirit behind the face is 100% free of anti-feminism – the documentary evidence will be produced in due course.

Thank you heartily for your note and its enclosure. I am more than grateful. I am now looking over my docket of possible sins, and find not so many as one might expect. Let me inform you that the last pig's knuckle I have devoured was in your ever fair company at Mr. Lüchow's. So you see, while the lamp holds out to burn, &c., &c.

Take good care of yourself, and don't buy a house without taking a year's rental of it with an option. Then





you will have a reasonable idea of what you are getting. You may infer from this that I am in favour of trial marriage. Quite so – another point of feminism. I am for it – always a year’s trial with an option, and then don’t take up the option, eh, what? That’s real feminism. My love, ever and always. Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

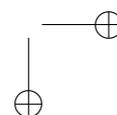
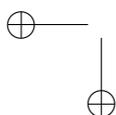
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

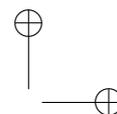
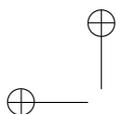
Canaan, 1 January [1943]

My dear friends, – I greet you in the hope that this New Year will be the happiest of your lives, and be followed by many more even happier.

Well, with a busting heart I break the news that I suppose we’ll have to sacrifice that chapter, but the devil bless me if I don’t believe the female feminists are wuss n’er Ebrew Jews. I always had a faint suspicion that they were, and now I’m sure of it. They are all for you as long as you butter them up, but there is no satisfying them short of taking your Alfred David that they never make a mistake and ain’t got a fault in the world. But I suppose that’s the way the Lord made ’em, and we have to stand for it.

There is no use submitting the thing to Ruth Robinson – I wouldn’t wish that on you – for what I say isn’t a circumstance to what she thinks. You see, she had a ring-side seat on the campaign for suffrage, like me, and her views on attempting anything good through political action aren’t fit to repeat. For the fun of the





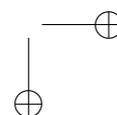
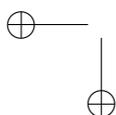
thing, however, I am going to have the chapter read by a woman about thirty, Paul Palmer's wife, who is free from prepossessions, and always on the right side of things. I suggest that just for a flyer you have your little French gal read it. Before you do it, you might ask her off-hand what she understands by the attitude of the *cavalier servent*, and what she thinks of it.

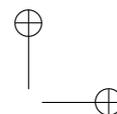
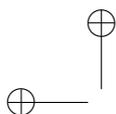
But getting at your questions, I certainly don't believe it will be easier for women to get rid of discriminatory statutes with the power of the vote in their possession – not a bit easier. Understand me, those discriminations get just as deep under my skin as they do under yours. That matter of unequal pay for equal work, especially alas, makes me madder than seventeen devils. But what can be expected under a regime of economism? It is not a matter that can be touched by the repeal of statutes or by making new ones. Even the XIV and XV Amendments never did the Negro a blessed bit of good, as you know; and getting the single-tax into politics was the worst thing that ever happened to it.

About our women's privileged position, my observation is not the same as yours. I have seen a great many who work, and by comparison with those similarly situated in every other country I know, I should say they are privileged: and that has been the opinion of all the foreign observers I have read, so I should not hesitate to call it notorious.

My enthusiasm over Miss Brée's remark was for its calm, unruffled common sense, so typically French – nothing more.

You say I have written that the role of the *cavaliere servente* is the best for men's adoption, &c. I don't

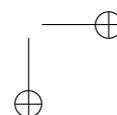
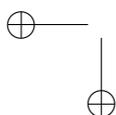


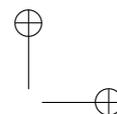
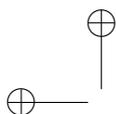


object to that in the least – *in limine* I think it is. But it would be fair to ask just where I wrote that. I can not find it. I do find that I said this about the spirit and attitude of the *cavaliere servente*, which as Abe Potash says, is something else again; and my last paragraph gives an idea of what that spirit and attitude is; and I don't see how better I could express my notion of what true affection and devotion consist in. What is wrong with it? It is a spirit and attitude of pure undemanding disinterestedness, and you are the first I have had who cavilled at it. I'd as soon as not submit the matter to Miss Robinson, but I know what she would say.

I think the Century's definition of the "rôle" and its choice of an example were unfortunate as hinting that the *cavaliere servente* was a kind of cicisbeo or gigolo or paramour. There is no ground for this. Webster does better, I don't know what the Oxford says. But the example given in my preceding chapter, and my references to Thélème and the Courts of Love ought to be enough to carry the point.

I am as sound a feminist as any one can be, on the ground that women are folks, and like Henry George "I am for man." I spoke up for the gals who wanted the vote, because I thought they ought to have it. I'll speak up against their statutory disabilities because I think they should be abolished. But I never believed that the women or anybody else would be one whit better off when these things were done, nor did I ever believe that the effort to bring them about was anything but a sheer waste of very valuable energy; and I have the victory of all such enterprises supporting me in my doubts.





I shall be a feminist as long as women are under any disabilities of a public character but I can't agree that feminism commits me to accept the judgment of any body of women as infallible and above criticism; not even the judgment of the Women's Party. Like Th. Jefferson, if I can't go to heaven but with a party, I won't go at all – so there now.

Cutting out a chapter which you think inadvisable to publish is a small matter to which I don't object in the least – glad to do it – but you haven't yet shown me what exactly is objectionable. However, I'll come down presently, and you can get out the broomstick and rolling-pin and convince me.

I used to have arguments with a high church Episcopalian dignitary, which never got anywhere, and at the end he would say, "Well, isn't it a fine thing that we can both agree to love the Lord?" Yours ever, affectionately,

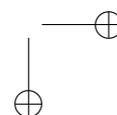
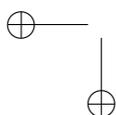
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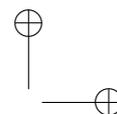
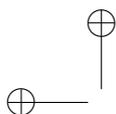
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan Sunday, Jan. [1943]

My dearest lady, – I can't give your question a categorical answer. Moreover, I don't know what you and that French hussy have been cooking up, and I am suspicious. I'll be truthful, however, even though I'd bet you have something up your sleeve to make any answer sound like anti-feminism. Eh, what? But here goes:

In so far as I understand what the spirit of the *cavaliere servente* properly is, I have consistently maintained that





spirit towards you, and shall continue to do so as long as I live, and longer still if there be any post-mortem survival of consciousness.

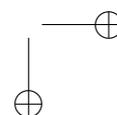
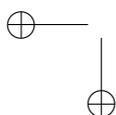
In so far as I understand what the historical attitude of the *cavaliere servente* is, I have always displayed it towards you and always shall, but under two limiting conditions. First, my opportunities have been lamentably few and brief. Second, I have been conscious that you are not the type of person to be interested in the attentions of a *cavaliere servente*, but would find them superfluous, even annoying. American women are largely like that, which is not to their discredit; matters of that order are not in their tradition, and they very understandably regard them as something affected and insubstantial – some thing in the way of mannerisms. I think Mlle. Brée would tell you that Continental women recognize them as being in their tradition, and find them familiar and acceptable. My best love to you both, as ever. Affectionately,

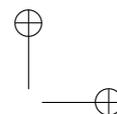
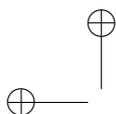
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, 6 April [1943]

My dear friends, – Just a line to express the hope that you are over the worst of your troubles with the new house, and are not too used up by it. I have no great news to report, except that I am up and about again after the touch of flu, and managed to get to New York to fight the battle of life with Bill Briggs about typography,



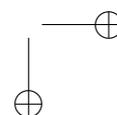
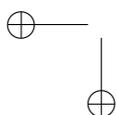


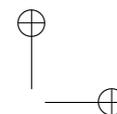
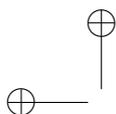
binding, dust-jacket, and all such. On looking over my book I saw it has one shoulder higher than the other – it needs a new chapter to come in between the 12th and 13th – so I am writing it now, and it will be inserted in the galley-proof. You shall have a copy, of course, to complete your set. That will occupy me nicely while I am waiting for this new publisher-proposition to jell. Bill praises the book at a grand rate, so that I am ashamed that it is no better. He thinks it will come out in just about the right time to make itself felt, and I imagine it will. He says it is really a great work – nothing like it since Henry Adams – and that Harper's are all set to put their best foot forward for it. I tell you all this because I know that you both also think better of it than it deserves.

I hope the new publication comes off well, for the time is right for it. I got letters from strangers urging me to come out against collectivism, and I have to tell them that there is no place to publish – for there is none. I believe the publication is well on the way, and I shall keep you informed of all I hear. It is certain that people are finding out what collectivism means, and I am none too sure they enjoy it. Take good care of yourselves, and keep a stiff upper lip. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

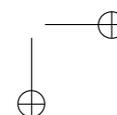
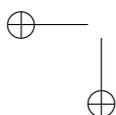
Do you know Offenbach's charming little waltz called *Rebecca*?

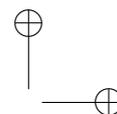
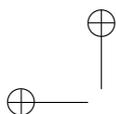




Canaan 10 April [1943]

My dear friends, – I am sorry you had that annoyance, I had a visitation myself some months ago, concerning my relations with a chap named Dennis, on whom the government seems to be trying to pin something. The point was that a couple of years ago I had got Dennis to do a bit of research-work for me on the immigration of Jews into this country, and had paid him for it. At that time I had in mind to write a little book on the post-war problem of the Jewish and Negro minorities, but as things were going, I soon saw that publishing such a book would be likely to do more harm than good at this time, so I put off the idea for consideration later. The F.B.I. had got hold of the draft I sent Dennis and wanted to know what it was for, and what I knew about Dennis in general. The account I gave seemed to be satisfactory, and I heard no more about it. I suppose the suspicion was that I might have been helping Dennis promote Nazism or something of the kind – I know the government had its eye on him for that, but apparently to no purpose. . . . Though I do not know him at all well, I never saw anything out of the way with him and though I never read his books, I believe he is some sort of collectivist, as he has every right to be. He is a very able chap, and the weekly news-letter which he used to get out was remarkably well-informed and accurate – one of my friends gave me a six months subscription to it, and I continued it for a little while afterwards, but was not enough interested to keep it up. I don't know whether the secret service is still after him or not, but he is very poor, has no money and no friends, so he would be an





easy mark for bureaucratic vindictiveness, such as we saw in the days of Palmer and Dougherty. They could shoot him, and no one would do anything about it, or care to do anything. . .

I am writing this hurriedly to catch the first available mail. My love to you both, as always. Affectionately yours,

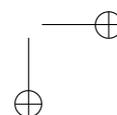
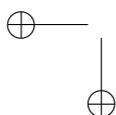
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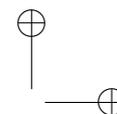
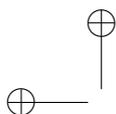
Canaan 30 April [1943]

My dear friends, – I write this line to tell you what I have been up to. First, my book is in press, on its way to galley-proof. The extra chapter is about one-third written. I had to lay it aside for other matters, but shall go on with it next week.

Secondly, I have been holding hands with the National Economic Council, formerly the New York State Economic Council, which now has branched out on a national scale – an association of business men, non-political, against collectivism and against extermination of the middle class. They get out a monthly letter – pretty good, and will be better – and I agreed to furnish them with a review of books. They will soon have a membership of some 30,000 or more. They asked me to become a member and a director, but I declined.

I took the job of reviewing merely to keep my foot in the door. There is hardly any work and no money in it, but I believe it may be opening a way for the distribution of pamphlets before long. As you know,





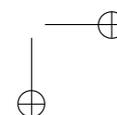
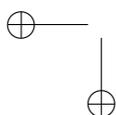
the tough thing about that project is getting circulation. Then besides this I think that behind the scenes I now and then can put in an effective word on policy. Anyway, if my expectations don't come out I can throw the thing over in short order – but as things look now, I think they will.

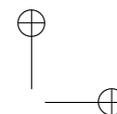
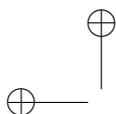
Third, I have the notion that in a few months it would be a good time for me to put out a new issue of my book on the State, revised to bring it up to date. I spoke about this to the publisher the other day, and he agreed with me: and since you have a rather special interest in that book I should like to know how you feel about it. The book is surprisingly well known, and it was published about five years too early; so the chances for a new issue would be good.

As you know, the book is purely historical. It would have been impossible to discuss the economic basis of the State without destroying the book's whole structure. For a new issue I have the idea of working out this subject pretty elaborately and running it as some kind of appendix. I should be glad to have you think about this also. . .

Bill Briggs grows more enthusiastic about my book, instead of less. He thinks we are going to hear about it properly when it comes out. Maybe so, but somehow I feel very indifferent to it. My best love to you both. Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

17 May [1943]

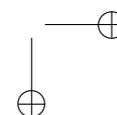
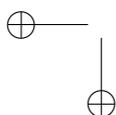
My dearest of all that is lovely and lovable, I am much touched by your letter. You must not be anxious about me – I am taking the best care possible of myself, and really not doing too badly. Don't think of it, I beg of you.

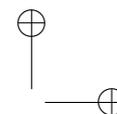
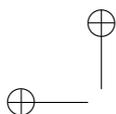
Your upper room would be delightful. I would be as happy there as the prophet, with his bed, table, stool and candlestick (II Kings, IV–8–10) and you would be the kind Shunammite. I shall come and see it.

Harper's is scattering galley-proofs on me like the leaves on Vallambrosa whatever that means, and correcting them is a great bore – but it should not last too long now. I shall keep you supplied with the book reviews. The first one is out – not very good, but the rest will be better. I think by autumn something pretty fine can be made of the idea. If not, I can easily drop it.

I hope greatly that your moving has not worn you out. Don't trouble to write me until you are quite rested. I am glad you approve of bringing out the State again, revised and amplified. I had a note about it from the publisher yesterday. I'll do what I can about a cheap edition. Judging by the galleys, my new book will have a very good appearance. With my most devoted love, I am always your faithful friend,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





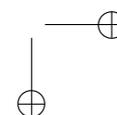
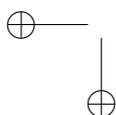
To Ellen Winsor

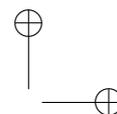
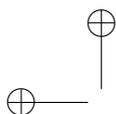
21 May [1943]

Dear Miss Winsor, – Your opinion may not be worth a brace of shakes to you, but it is worth a great deal to me. All these twenty-odd years I have thought you could make an enviable name for yourself in a literary way – writing things somewhat in the Austen tradition, like Angela Thirkell. Mr. Evans and I used to talk about it often. He had the same view – in fact, he first spoke of it to me, and said he had tried hard to get you interested, but never could. I wish you might have tried it. If we had ever been near neighbors I would have sat up nights with you until you were on your way, but we never were. You should have come and camped out for a winter when I was working on the *Freeman* – that would have given you a good start.

All right, I am game for breakfasting on tripe and onions at the hostelry, when I become a bit stronger and more courageous. You would not complain of my diet these days. The winter and spring have been frightfully hard, and naturally one of my years was bound to feel the effects of it. But I hope before long to have them worn away. I am through with my galley-proofs now, and I have just sent you a copy of my new chapter, which is the thirteenth. I think it balances up the book very satisfactorily. Bill Briggs still sticks to his conviction that it is a pretty good book, and certainly Harper's are setting out to do all they can for it.

So there is quite a little off my hands, and I am going to take it very easy for a few days before I tackle the job





of revising the *State*. Thank you for the clipping. John Adams was the most profound student of government we ever produced, and I dare say he was right in saying T. J. learned a lot from him. It is interesting that those letters have come to light. Those relations of yours seem to have been pretty close with them. As a tribe, I never thought much more of the Biddles than your sister does – though I never met but one of them. I didn't cotton to him particularly.

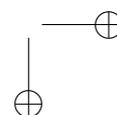
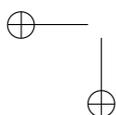
My best love to you both. I'll write you soon again and report progress. I have no Medical Divel to plague me here. Perhaps next month I'll go over to Rhode Island and see one – but since Dr. Wilcox died I have no stock in any. Yours ever devotedly,

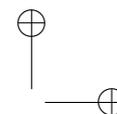
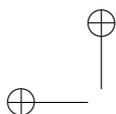
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

30 May [1943]

My dear friend, – I am most grateful for your little note and the cheque, which came yesterday, and I am indeed glad that so many pleasant things came your way this month, despite the weather, – especially your seeing Frank Garrison again. What a superb fine man he is! And now you are off to Edgartown, where you will be freezing your toes if June is like May. I wish you a happy pleasant summer, my dear, and hope you will return full of ozone and beans. I think I shall stay here most of the time, and see what I can do with my book. I have given up that little job of reviewing. The actual





work is not much, but reading the books takes more time than I can afford, and worse than that it takes my poor old single-track mind off its course. The sort of book I am trying to write is a sustained job and needs all the consecutive thought I can give it, and this interruption once a month is bound to slow it down.

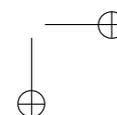
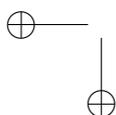
Otherwise, no news. My best love to you always, and my best thanks. Affectionately,

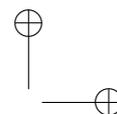
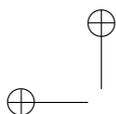
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan 10 June [1943]

My dearest lady, – When you ask me what I would propose as an alternative for universal suffrage, I have to confess I don't know. I know what everybody knows, that universal suffrage is such a colossal and disastrous failure that something should be substituted for it. R. A. Cram in *The End of Democracy* suggests something in the way of a functional system which he thinks might be somewhat better, and I agree. But it would take a revolution, to establish it, and then like all revolutions, it would establish something else. So I can't answer your question.

Of course, as you know, my belief is that a political structure of national size or even county size is beyond the ability of mankind. This seems as plain to me as that an elephant can't climb a tree – and as long as elephants persist in trying to climb trees, it doesn't much matter how they do it. So I imagine that the history of these





attempts hereafter will be pretty much what it has been in the past.

I expect to be in New York next week, and if it is possible – and not too unearthly hot – I will get down to Paoli. As you say we must soon meet, for time goes on fast, and there is so little of it left. I'll telegraph you from New York saying what I can do, and I shall manage as best I can. I expect to be there Sunday night: at the Prince George Hotel. Meanwhile, my best love to both of you. Affectionately always,

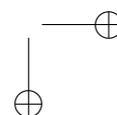
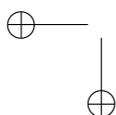
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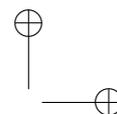
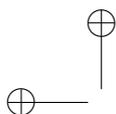
To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

21 June [1943]

My dear friends, – Here I am at last, after three days of trying to recover from two days in New York which were terrific. . . I tried to get through about four days' work in two days, which was stupid enough. However, I seem to be recovering, and a week of idly lying around, which I don't like, will probably straighten me out again.

Really, getting a book through the press in these days is a terrible business – an incessant struggle with proof readers and printers who don't know anything and can't learn anything. The girl in charge of proofs at Harper's is as sweet and willing as she can be, but – would you believe it? – she is not only new at the job – she had been there only a few days – but she is new at *any* job, having never before worked at *anything*. She might as well have come right up from Ellis Island!



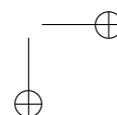
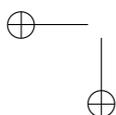


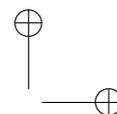
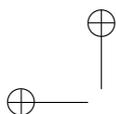
That is what publishing-houses have been reduced to! – and the amount of nerve-racking labour I put in over my page-proofs with that gal was simply incredible. When I thought of the old days of the *Freeman* – and the people I had there – and how easily and quietly everything moved along, and was always right – I tell you, I felt pretty disconsolate.

But we got through somehow – though Heaven knows what the printers will do when they come to making the plates. The thing is now all out of my hands, however, and there is nothing more I can do. Bill says that as far as anybody can see, it will be published 22 September – which means that you ought to get an advance copy about the middle of August. What with the restrictions on paper and the difficulties of production, Bill tells me that Harper's have cut fourteen books out of their fall list, but of course that does not affect mine, as they already have the paper for it.

Here is an amusing thing, and rather interesting. Bill sent a set of proofs to half a dozen people, asking for an opinion. Among the returns were these three which I enclose. The interesting thing is that each one is so completely characteristic of the man who wrote it. Bill is going to print them on the dust-jacket. He is tremendously tickled because he says they have been trying to find a way to connect the book with *The Education of Henry Adams* without sounding like a blurb – and now Van Loon unexpectedly comes along and does it for them, like the scholarly and sensitive Dutchman which he is.

As for your suggestion of Paine, the thing I now must do – if I can – is to revise and reissue *The State*. The





time will be just right for it. Then we shall see what next. Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

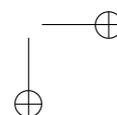
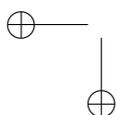
I am sorry my penmanship is worse than usual. I am cocked up awkwardly for writing, and like John Adams, I am bothered by “a quivering of the hands.”

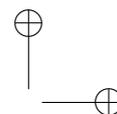
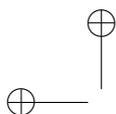
Sunday, [30 June 1943]

My very dearest of friends, – I am delighted to hear of you today, and know that you somehow got through the dreadful heat. Even here it was very bad until yesterday, when we had great storms all around us and the spell was broken. I hope you will be able to get away to the seashore at once, before the heat returns, and that you will have ever such a restful and pleasant summer in your cottage. . .

You must not be affected by what young people do or say – or old people. That is the way they are, and one must take them as they are, as Marcus Aurelius did. As for Miss — being a Fascist, that is only a term of abuse, as “democrat” used to be in Mr. Jefferson’s time – in the mouths of those who use it it means simply nothing.

Perhaps in the autumn I can turn the little leaflet into something of more consequence – if not, I shall probably drop it: though I rather like doing it, and the work is so little, and takes so little time. Bill Briggs sent me up another letter, which I enclose – don’t return it. Leonard Bacon, on his Mother’s side, is one of the Hazards, and he is the grandson of Leonard Bacon, the formidable





Connecticut Presbyterian theologian. He has written a good bit of poetry, and is a good figure in our literary world.

I have no news for you, except that I am feeling better, and have pretty well got over the setback that New York gave me. When I am equal to it I think I shall go up into Northern Vermont for a visit with my old friend of university days, Zebe Parsons. He and I are about the last leaves on the tree, and it would do me good to see him. Wherever you go, and whatever you do, I am always with you in spirit, as you know. My love to you both. Affectionately,

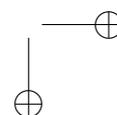
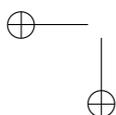
ALBERT JAY NOCK

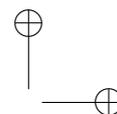
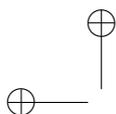
To Mrs. Edmund C. Adams

Canaan, 9 July [1943]

My dear friend, – So you think I am in for trouble with the Woman's Party, eh, what? That's all right – I'm a man who likes to be in the midst of things, and you can sit on the side-lines and watch the fracas. But I rather think you are wrong – more likely they will pass me by as *infra dig*, and let me severely alone.

I see we can agree on thunderstorms, anyway – the surcharged atmosphere always upsets me frightfully. That is why I like to be in Victoria or on the Portuguese Coast in summer – they don't have them. I am astonished by your saying that Edgartown is free of them – I don't see why it should be. I hope you have a good restful summer there, and that you won't be tempted to leave before





October, at the earliest, for the late summer is the most pestilential of all seasons in eastern Pennsylvania.

Yes, I am very proud of being a discovery of you three. I wish I might do you more credit than I have done. If Mr. Evans had lived longer, we might have managed to do something together, he and I. I have often thought of it, as I did the other day when I was looking over the little memorial volume that you got out. I have been rather unfortunate in always having to work alone – in work like mine one does better in association with some one who is going up the same street – but I somehow never fell in with anyone.

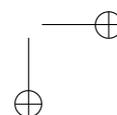
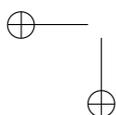
... My best love to you both, and my best wishes for a happy summer. Affectionately yours,

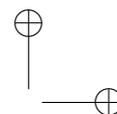
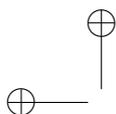
ALBERT JAY NOCK

As of Canaan, Conn., 21 July [1943]

My dear friend, – I got your postcard with some anxiety. If you have reclaimed 64 years in this short space of time, by the end of summer you will be too lively a gal. My youth is distinctly *vorbei* – my days of dancing the Krakoviak *oder* Gavotsky *oder* even the polka – mazurka, are over – and I suppose a lively young thing like your new self won't be content with less – so I shall have to sit back with the chaperones and watch you carry on. I don't know that I approve.

Not that I am doing so badly, myself. If you were here, you would see a couple of sentimental old men tottering around, talking of school-days long past, and





comrades who have gone away *in der Ewigkeit*. Not very cheerful conversation for a sprightly young pair of Ponce de Leon's best assorted to sit in on. But it does me good, and I am really doing very well – not too badly – and I'll soon be ready to go back to the Mountain and get at work revising *The State*.

By all means get hold of Anne Goodwin Winslow's new book, *The Dwelling-Place* (Knopf). She is a lovely soul who used to write poems for the *Freeman*, and I have not heard of her for twenty years, almost. She has done a charming thing in this book, so by all means read it.

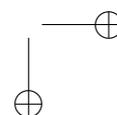
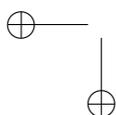
I don't know your street and cottage number, so I must use the old address. Enjoy yourself – youth is the season of enjoyment – and even if E. W. and I have to go into Algebra to determine your age, come October, what of it? I'll love you just as much then as now, which is a vast deal – even though I don't like children, as a rule. Yours ever,

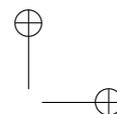
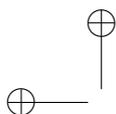
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Montpelier, Vermont
Tuesday [August 1943]

My dear friends, – Just a line to wish you ever so well of your summer residence, and also to keep you on track of me. You ought to be proud feminists. It is interesting that the only intelligible books on the philosophy of individualism that have been written in America this



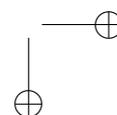
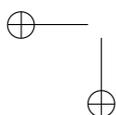


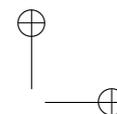
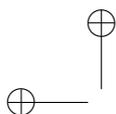
century, have been done by two women – I. M. Paterson and Rose Wilder Lane. You must read *The Discovery of Freedom*. I don't know who Sister Lane is, but she is a credit to the Cause, I assure you. The first thing you know, you ladies will have me heading a movement to fire out all the male jobholders and establish a matriarchy. I'm none too sure it wouldn't be a good idea – at present I think I can say I am definitely for it.

I have had a nice few days with my dear old friend, and now I shall be going back to revise my work on the State. I feel pretty well, but what a nuisance it is to be continually reminded that I have to be careful about foolish little things like walking up-hill – but we won't talk about that. When the hot weather is over, I hope we can meet down in your premises and talk about feminism. Maybe I can convince you that I am on the right side. I hope I can have an advance copy of my book for you by the end of this month, but one can't be sure of anything in the publishing way, these days.

I am pretty tired, and the air is heavy – I think I'll stretch out awhile. My best love to you. Take good care of your dear selves. Affectionately always,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





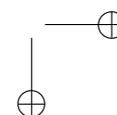
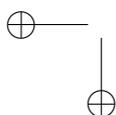
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

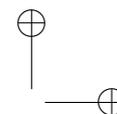
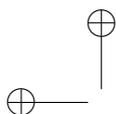
Montpelier, Vermont, 7 August [1943]

My dearest lady, – I am on the point of leaving for Canaan Mountain, having been over-persuaded into staying longer than I meant to stay. I shall be happy to settle down again. Your postcard mentioning mass-murderers and thunderstorms came in this morning. Nothing does matter when one is 64 or at any other time, except what goes on in one's own mind and spirit. You remember Emerson's saying that if the world was coming to an end he thought he could get along without it. You really must read Rose Wilder Lane's *Discovery of Freedom*. It should be called the discovery of H. Spencer, though I don't believe she ever read a line of Spencer in her life.

Her analysis of freedom and of "Society" is really splendid, and equally good is her analysis of Authority and "control." Rose and old Isabel [Paterson] have shown the male world of this period how to think *fundamentally*. They make all of us male writers look like Confederate money. They don't fumble and fiddle around – every shot goes straight to the centre, and hits dam' hard. I'd like to take those two as a text for an essay on feminism, and rock the country with it – I wish they had come out in time to catch my Chapter XII.

A good dose of those two gals will stiffen you amazingly. Bless your heart, you couldn't get Thoreau stirred up if all the mass-murderers in the country had camped around him. Never mind what other people think or don't think, what they do or don't do. If you happen to be a few thousand years ahead of their possibilities, why,





that's that, and neither you nor they can do anything about it, so why think about it?

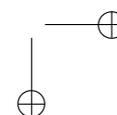
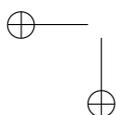
I'll write you from the Mountain. I'll address this to Edgartown, just as a "flyer." I must now bestir myself and pack my few belongings, which seem twice as many and twice as unmanageable as they are, when the time comes to pack them. My love to you both. Affectionately,

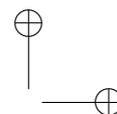
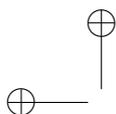
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

31 August [1943]

My dear Miss Winsor, – I am ever so grateful to you both for the two little notes and their enclosures which came along yesterday. Mrs. Evans spoke of having written a letter, which must have gone astray somehow in our rickety postal service, but no doubt it will turn up some day. The editorial was very good. I am amazed at what is taking place, and I don't understand it. Papers right and left are printing rank sedition – the Providence Journal the other day gave Winston fits. Porter Sargent writes me that the U. S. *Infantry Journal* has ordered 50 copies of his last book. What do you suppose that was for? Wriston, president of Brown, who I always took to be a tame cat, has just published his book, *Challenge to Freedom*, which is the most terrific indictment of the Administration you can imagine. I hear that Washington is a worse mess than ever – and by firing Sumner Welles, Franklin has set all the New Dealers by the ears. I can make nothing of this sudden flare-up in the country.





What I suspect is that the Administration is badly scared, but all I am sure of is that this is still one of the most unpopular wars that was ever fought, and can never be made anything else.

Please tell your sister to dry up that silly talk about being old and forgetful – I don't want to hear any more such nonsense. When the dear creature catches up with me – in another ten years or so – I won't mind a little of it now and then, but not before. I'll come down and see you when the weather changes – and by the way public opinion is smartening up and I fancy we shall have a good many amusing things to talk about. My best love to you always. Affectionately,

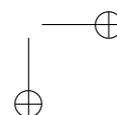
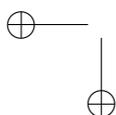
ALBERT JAY NOCK

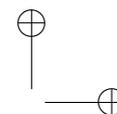
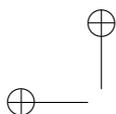
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan 8th Sept., [1943]

Dear lady, – Two men who got trade copies wrote me today. One said, "it is the only truly detached analysis of the vicious circle climaxed by Mr. Churchill's speech of yesterday." This was an editor of a Roman Catholic Journal. Another editor (Readers' Digest) says, "I am up to the very end of the book – that very great book – and I am wondering if there is anything written by an American to put alongside the first part of Chapter 14."

Two men who had trade copies passed along to them by friends also wrote me. One said, "One thing is certain – it will place you on a pedestal alongside Jonathan Swift and Henry Adams." The other, a stockbroker, said, "I





wish you had written it, and I had read it, thirty years ago. I might have saved myself many wasted years and much anguish.” Rather pathetic, that.

Of course, I repeat things like this in confidence. They are not the sort of thing one does repeat at large, but only very exceptionally. I never did it before. Affectionately,

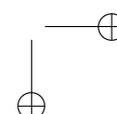
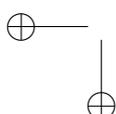
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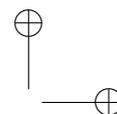
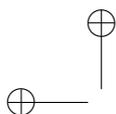
Canaan, Sunday, September [1943]

My dearest lady, – I suppose you are thinking it is time you had a reply to your letter of the 24th, even though you already got a report on its delay. I was delighted to hear that you had let everything go to the winds except swimming, loafing and having a good time. I wonder how long you will be staying – I hope long enough to escape the worst of the dog-days in the pestilential climate you persist in tolerating. You must let me know about this.

I won’t be hearing much about my book until it is published, late this month, but if and when I do, I’ll tell you what I hear. I imagine the general run of reviews will be pretty perfunctory, but one never knows. The regular run of reviewers will probably not understand it very well or know how seriously to take it – but perhaps some of the papers will find somebody who can do something with it. I don’t see the reviews myself, but Harper’s get them, so I can look them over and tell you how they run.

I was at the National Republican Club because one of my friends put me up there as a guest. It wasn’t bad company – ain’t no company there at that time





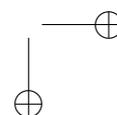
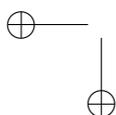
of year. Nobody on the premises – all the crooks and high binders were off at Lake Placid or somewhere, expounding their hellish doctrines to the woodchucks and bears. So I lived alone in all the gorgeousness, looked after by a large and efficient staff of bar-tenders, waiters and housemaids. You couldn't believe how lordly and dignified I can behave, when I put my mind on it.

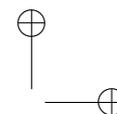
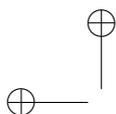
Sometime later on I hope to find you at home and stop at Princeton and New York on my way back. I can't bear the thought of it now, for it is 84° on the top of this mountain, and must be hotter than seventeen devils on the coast. I wish we three might pack up and go to Colombia or Guatemala this winter.

As for writing essays, no publication would like them. The advantages of this reviewing are (1) it takes hardly any time, (2) I have a free hand, (3) I have an audience of 20,000, shortly to be 50,000, (4) it keeps me just enough *au courant* of things, and especially of men – men and women of some consequence, and (5) I expect it may develop into something more important which still would not eat away too much of my time. So with the great change that is coming over public opinion, I think it gives me as good a foothold as I could ask.

I don't remember whether I mentioned Lin Yutang's *Between Tears and Laughter*, but you should read it. My best love, as always, Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

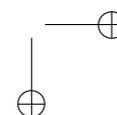
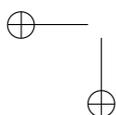
Wakefield [R. I.] 24 September [1943]

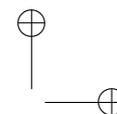
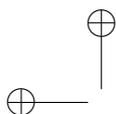
My dear friends, – I am frightfully sorry about your poor little friend's accident that has taken you up to Maine, and I hope it will not set her back as seriously as you fear it may. She has a hard enough road to hoe in making a career, without that. If I were any longer capable of being riled by the behaviour of mass-mankind, I should be worked up by the miserable discrimination practised here against the negro minority – and I was amused to hear this summer that it is practised almost as widely in New York City as anywhere in the Solid South. But that is the way people are, so I can't be angry, though sometimes I wish I could be. –

Bill Briggs is immensely tickled by the violent collisions of opinion over my poor book, for it seems that from the standpoint of sales they are most desirable. One of my hard-boiled friends has just written me to ask how much I had to pay for being hauled over the coals in the *N.Y. Times*.

I shall certainly manage to see you very soon, by some hook or crook. Meanwhile as always, my best love. Affectionately yours,

A. J. N., cav. serv.





To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Wakefield, R. I.
Wednesday, [October 1943]

My dearest ladies, – One of my friends writes: Your views of women charm me. They are the views of a highly-refined sentimentalism at which the ladies will have many a quiet chuckle. My wife says, “Where women are concerned, Dr. Nock is always an adolescent.”

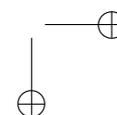
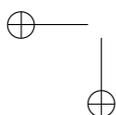
That’s all very well, but you see they don’t know the literature of the subject, and I do. So far from being an adolescent, I am about 700 years old, for I represent the tradition of the Provence in the XII Century... Ever yours affectionately,

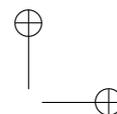
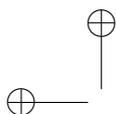
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

Wakefield, 11 October [1943]

Dear Miss Winsor, – I go back to Canaan tomorrow. I wanted to go on the 2nd, but the Shamans and faith-healers “demonstrated” over the idea and decided that it was a figment of mortal mind brought on by malicious animal magnetism. So instead they sent me to bed and kept me there – while an unearthly avalanche of correspondence piled up, and all my affairs went at sixes and sevens. All there was to it, really, was that I had been overdoing things a bit...

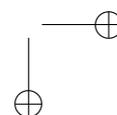
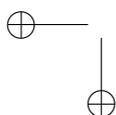


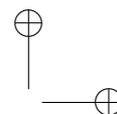
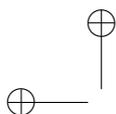


What I most want is a day with you. I shall try to come out on an early train on the 21st from New York, and go back in the afternoon. If not then, as soon as possible afterwards. I shall let you know. My book has opened the way for an idea your sister gave me some time ago, which did not seem practicable then, but is now. This is what I want to talk about with you. It is a good idea.

My book seems to have stirred up the animals, but people take it surprisingly well – quite in the right way, on the whole. I have not been able to deal with the letters and clippings I get, so I have not sent you any. Some are amusing. One man out on Long Island says, “Your book lost me a night’s sleep, has made me neglect my wife and my business, and made me forget to change trains at Jamaica.” A reviewer for the Los Angeles *Times* ended by saying, “I hope the author lives a thousand years and then chokes on some of his opinions.” Tell your sister that the Amazons have not got into action yet – not one of them. I was sure they wouldn’t. My best love to you both, and I hope to see you very soon. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Monday, [Oct. 1943]

My dear friends, – I hear from Harper’s today that they are printing a third edition of my book. Three editions in the first month must be almost a record for a work of that kind. It appears also that I have climbed into the best-seller list, whatever that amounts to. All this makes me doubt whether something isn’t wrong with the book. . . . My best love to you both. Yours ever, aff’ctnly,

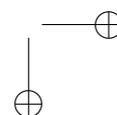
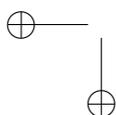
ALBERT JAY NOCK

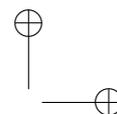
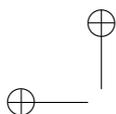
23 November [1943]

My dear friends, You have been constantly on my mind. I do hope that Miss Winsor has not suffered from shock, and that the worst is a matter of patience, which would be hard enough. I know that in good time you will let me hear how she is and what her prospects are, so I will say no more about it.

My new project is simply this: Some time ago you suggested that I might express myself more fully on a number of matters which were, for one reason or another, rather beyond the scope of my Memoirs. I liked the idea, but did not see just how to do it to the best advantage.

Presently it occurred to me that I already had a rather large and interesting correspondence, and that the obvious way to do what you suggested is by letters. I spoke





to my publishers about it, and they are strongly in favour of it as being just the thing. In the first place, people like to read letters; and then furthermore the Memoirs have stirred up enough curiosity so that my letters would stand a very good chance indeed.

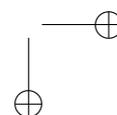
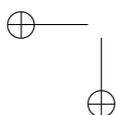
So I am getting together a bunch of correspondence in which I express myself freely and fully to a number of people. When I see you I shall bring a little of it with me, so that you can get an idea of how it goes. You will be pleased with it, even more than with the Memoirs. If I can get through this and my revision of *The State*, I shall feel that I have done a little something, anyway, in behalf of a sound individualist philosophy.

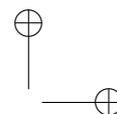
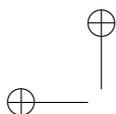
The Memoirs still go on. After three printings Harper's said last week they are 1500 copies behind their orders, and more coming in every day. I still get no end of letters, and I notice two interesting things about them. First, except for three or four female friends I have had only one letter from a woman. Second, I have had only two letters from cranks, crack-pots, whereas I expected a good many. Otherwise, all I have heard from were serious persons.

I should have mentioned that I don't mean to publish letters that I have received from other people, but only my own.

– this régime of cussed incessant carefulness – is turning me into a demnition old hypochondriac. – If I did not have interesting work ahead, I would go off on one helluva grand rousing bender, and then telephone the undertaker to come up and do his damndest.

Is it really worthwhile? Just think of it! Last Wednesday night Henry Mencken and I sat over a most meagre





meal in Paul Palmer's apartment – mere spectres, the shattered remains of three superb old rips – eating almost nothing – Henry drinking a glass of water with 1/4 inch of whiskey in it – Paul, nothing – I, nothing. Wasn't it what Carlyle would call an unco sad sight? I think so.

Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue. Que la volonté de Dieu soit faite. One would gladly chuck it, but the ancestry's dumb stupid tenacity makes one hang on as long as there is a job on foot.

My best love, Affectionately,

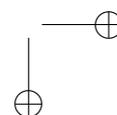
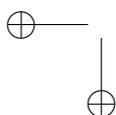
ALBERT JAY NOCK

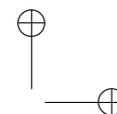
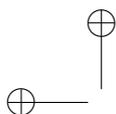
To Ellen Winsor

18 January [1944]

My dear friend, – Your delightful letter, and your sister's, equally delightful, came to me by the same mail and gave me a vast amount of pleasure, brightening a couple of stormy depressing days and making them most happily worth living through. . .

Tell your sister that she is wrong in supposing I don't like Beethoven's Quartettes. I do, and I admire them even more. I simply don't get the satisfaction out of them that I do out of quartettes by various others, Mozart, Dittersdorf, Cherubini, Grétry, &c., and above all, Haydn. The reason is that I feel all the time that the Beethoven Quartettes ought to be expanded into symphonies, – that the composer was trying to get more out of four strings than there is in them. I don't set stars by this opinion,





however, so you may turn up your patrician noses at it all you like.

I am glad you got pleasure out of reading my letters. Some additions to the pile are accumulating and will follow. I may go down your way fairly early in February, but whether so or not, I count on seeing you very soon. Meanwhile my best love abides with you. Yours faithfully,

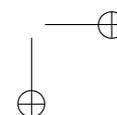
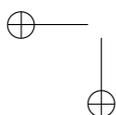
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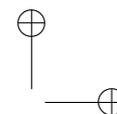
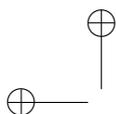
To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Canaan, 19 Jan. [1944]

My dearest of friends, - . . . Some years ago I had a vision, much as you did, in a room on the top floor of the Players Club. I woke up and saw John Phillips in a long white robe beside my bed, bending over me; I spoke, and then reached out to touch the figure; my hand passed through it, and then the figure faded away, but gradually and quite slowly. The fact was that John Phillips was sleeping in the room beneath mine at the time. If he had not been living, and if I had been a more highly imaginative person, I could easily have persuaded myself that I had seen his ghost. I imagine that most of the stories of apparitions rest on some such foundation. Whether or not they all do, of course no one knows.

I know of no authority whatever for the statement about Mr. Jefferson - I never heard of it. I presume it was a yarn got up for political effect - those two campaigns were peculiarly scurrilous. Several candidates suffered in the same way, as you probably know - Jackson,



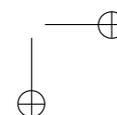
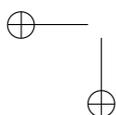


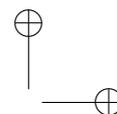
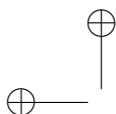
Garfield, Wilson, Harding, Willkie – it seems a favourite line of traducement.

Concerning freedom of migration, you would be perfectly right if we had a free economy both for migrants to come from and go to. It is like freedom of trade, which as Henry George showed, is practically only between free economies. Unless you have freedom of production, freedom of trade is merely building a roaring fire under a boiler with a weighted safety-valve. Exactly so with freedom of migration.

Henry George certainly did destroy Malthus's myth of anything like a general over-population. Oppenheimer worked out the mathematics of it. But there can be local over-population, obviously, where resources are limited and production is not free – as will be the case in post-war Europe. Up to 1800 Europe's top figure was 180 million; in the century following it rose to 460 million. After the war, with its natural resources so nearly exhausted and its capital stock destroyed, I am [not] sure that even under a free economy, Europe could produce enough exchange-value to supply the needs of anything like so large a population – and as we know, there will be no free economy.

There is no way out of it – George was right. You have to start with freedom of production; if you don't, you get nothing but the ruin and devastation which have plagued the world from the beginning – and freedom of production is farther off from us than ever, so we can think of it only as something to come – sometime – somehow – perhaps – but certainly, not in your day or mine.





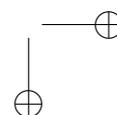
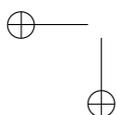
My love and devotion are yours always. I hope we can meet soon. Things may look brighter – in fact, they do. There is a sharp notch in the hills west of us, and the setting sun rests in that notch for two or three evenings at the solstice; then it climbs out and starts on its return trip to make the days grow longer. Everyone up here watches for that to happen, and when the sun moves out of the notch we take courage again. Yours ever, dear lady,

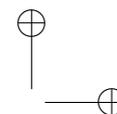
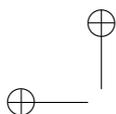
ALBERT JAY NOCK

National Republican Club, New York
13 March 1944

No, my dearest lady, you will never make me believe you would do anything like that. Nor would I understand it if you did, as you think I should. If you look at the last page of my Memoirs you will see what I have to say on the subject, and I stand by that. Suicide just because one can't take it simply isn't done. No real true-blue lady or gent ever could do it, and if ever there was a real true-blue lady, you are. If it were not for this consideration I would as lieve as not drop off any time. But your ancestors and mine always stood up against the iron, and it is not for me to break the record, so let's call that settled. . .

I had to come down here for a couple of days, and as you see, Edward Epstean has parked me out among the men of sin, which is more comfortable by far than a hotel, even if one could get in a hotel on short notice,





which is practically impossible in New York. But I shall be glad to go away again.

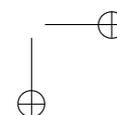
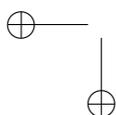
Frank Garrison wrote me a most delightful letter the other day. You are wholly right in all you say about the draft of my manifesto – no question about that. But it is the old story of not being able to do quite as one wants, as you see by experiencing T. J.'s draft of the Declaration, – the original draft, before the associates on the Committee went to work on it. Such a manifesto as you and I would want, simply wouldn't get any signers, or so few as not to count. You see, you and I are pretty far ahead of our fellow-citizens, and when we put out documents of our own we say all that is in our minds, and say it as forcibly as we like. So did T. J., as you know. But a composite document like the Declaration is another matter – T. J. was only one of several who were responsible for the thing. I was quite surprised, in fact, that my draft of the manifesto came off as well as it did. . . My best love to you always. Affectionately,

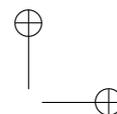
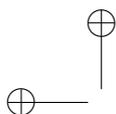
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan 21 March [1944]

My dear lady, – Yes, I know John Flynn quite well. He is a good fellow, a fighting Irishman, afraid of nothing on earth. His pamphlet on Pearl Harbour is a fine effective piece of work. The National Economic Council has distributed thousands of them.

Of course Dr. Goebbels is right. You have to become exactly like the National Socialists in order to beat them.



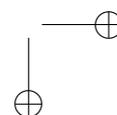
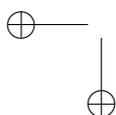


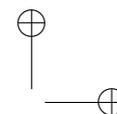
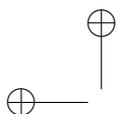
What is the ground of choice between one military despotism and another? We haven't liberated anybody, merely changed masters. In "liberating" France, Poland, Persia, the Danube States, we have merely made your uncle Joseph a present of 3/4 of Europe. By conquering Japan we shall make him a free gift of as much of China as he wants. The thing simply can't be done. If you have read de Gaulle's programme for a "liberated" France, would you not say Goebbels might have written it and Hitler signed it without changing a word? ... Affectionately always,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

2 April [1944]

My dearest of all dear friends, – I am glad and relieved that the little pros and cons of suicide are happily academic, and we can put the matter under the head of "deferred business," – forever, as I hope and believe. With regard to Mrs. Evans's Four Points, they are 'most as flimsy as Mr. Wilson's Fourteen, but not quite. You have a true bill on the first one. I think that Mr. S., like Mr. Toscanini, is a much over-rated *Kapellmeister*, and I have no great respect for him as a musician, especially as regards his taste. So that count goes to you, but that's all. As for my views of women, so many unimpeachable character-witnesses have been coming forward lately – and not one single dissenting voice raised – that when the case comes to trial you won't stand a chance.

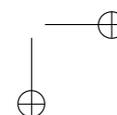
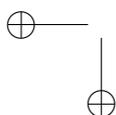


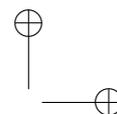
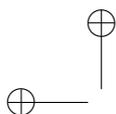


The really serious count is the last one, and that is due to a misapprehension. My point is that if the State were limited to the purely *negative* interventions which I enumerated, and had no oversize power beyond that, then it wouldn't be the State any more. It would then be *government* only, – government as contemplated by Mr. Jefferson in the Declaration, by Paine, by Franklin, and by the 18th Century British Whigs and Liberals. That's all.

Now, you can criticise the idea of *Government*, and conclude with Prud'homme, Kropotkin, &c., that it ought to be abolished altogether. Or with Paine, that it is evil, but “at best, a necessary one.” Mr. Jefferson, as you recall from his letter to Madison, was uncertain about it, but inclined to Paine's view. But all that is another matter. The point is only that when society deprives the State of power to make positive interventions on the individual, – power to exercise positive coercion on him at any point in his economic and social life – then at once the State goes out of existence, and what remains is government.

I shall soon be on my way to see you. I intend to bust the Lord's 'oly Sawbath all to the devil – Easter-day, at that, – by going to New York on the 9th, where I shall be kept some days, and in that time I'll come down for the afternoon. No lunch, no tea, no nothing, you understand, but only the sight of your dear faces. We will arrange all that later, probably by telephone or letter. I'll be stopping at the Prince George Hotel in N. Y., Madison Ave., and 28th St.





My reference to a happy life was of course general. I have had my full share of such sorrows as you speak of, and this past year has brought me a great many.

No need to warn me agin pig's knuckles. Bless your darling eyes, my dear, I ain't even *seen* a pig's knuckle since long before I last saw you. I eat very little, these days, and care about it even less, which is all right, I dare say, but rather a come-down. My devoted love always, Affectionately,

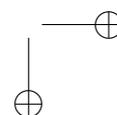
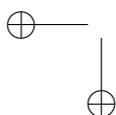
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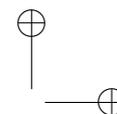
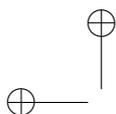
To Ellen Winsor

6 April [1944]

My dear Miss Winsor, — . . . As for what I wrote, I tried to explain that *the State* and government are two entirely different institutions; different in origin and in purpose. The State originates in conquest and confiscation; government, in agreement and customs. The State is an institution forced upon a defeated group by a victorious group, and its purpose is the maintenance of economic exploitation of one class by another; and its coercive powers extend to positive as well as negative interventions upon the individual. Government is not an agency of economic exploitation, and it has no power to make positive interventions of any kind upon the individual, but only certain sharply-defined negative interventions which I enumerated in my review.

These two institutions were never differentiated by name until very lately, nor were their functional differ-

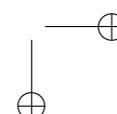
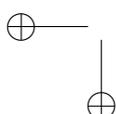


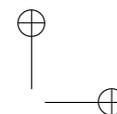
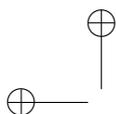


entiations clearly marked off; but if you look through the British XVIII Century Liberals, the Whigs, and in this country Mr. Jefferson – notably in the Declaration – and Thomas Paine, you see that in a sort of groping fashion it was understood. You see that in their vague indefinite ideal of “as little government as possible,” what they were actually after was the establishment of these functional differentiations, for all their practical ideas and efforts tended straight that way. Analysing these efforts, you find that they all tended against any civil control of the community’s economic life, and against any but a very few, very sharply defined, and purely negative interventions on its social life.

Paine, you know, thought that any form of civil control was an evil, and that the best you could make of it is “a necessary one,” and you remember Mr. Jefferson’s writing to Madison that he wasn’t sure but what the Indians’ Civil system of control by mere custom and consent is not the best one. It is in his letter of 30 January, 1787. You can also see the general directions of his mind by the structure of the system he advocated in his letter of 2 February, 1816, to Cabell.

If I were addressing a public now, I should say exactly what in substance Paine and Mr. Jefferson said. I should say, “I’m not much for any known system of civil control. I don’t feel sure you mightn’t get on better in the long run without any. Maybe not, maybe so, – I don’t know. But however that may be, if you think you have to have one, take government. Don’t take *the State*. Don’t set up an agency of economic exploitation to maintain itself by force and fraud. It will defile, debauch and finally devour your society, as it has done with every society





where it existed. Government may be bad, but it can't be *that* bad, so take government; and above all things, keep it *local* so that you can always know what your public agents are up to, and can take the leg of the chair to them, right on the spot, when they are up to mischief. Never let the larger political units do a single hand's turn that the smaller ones can do, even if it means trouble and inconvenience."

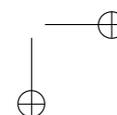
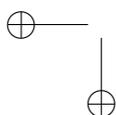
You were most thoughtful, as you always are, to remember my little distresses even in the midst of your own, which were greater; and I do indeed feel van Loon's absence keenly. But all that is in the order of nature. The ties of interest that bind us to existence loosen and fall away, one by one, as the years go on; and so, more and more, as the Apostle says, "our conversation is in heaven." This is right and as it should be. Affectionately yours,

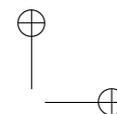
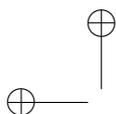
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, 15 May [1944]

My dear friends, – A nice note from your nephew the other day. – He wanted me to give him a note to the Atlantic, which I should be glad to do, for his paper is very good, but I had to tell him that anything from me would be useless, even prejudicial, because the Atlantic and I have been on no good terms ever since it turned itself into a sounding-board for British propaganda. Nothing outspoken, of course. They know what I think of them,





and I know what they think of me, so we tacitly behave like real gents and hold no communication with each other. I couldn't quite explain this in detail to C. W. without indirectly reflecting on his own position; but you will easily understand it. I didn't refuse him the letter, nor would I; I merely told him that it would do him no good, – quite the contrary, – because the A. and I had been “out” on various matters of policy for a long time.

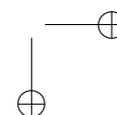
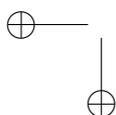
– But what a dreadful winter this has been for all of us! – the worst I ever weathered through, and doubtless the most trying for you. But we have weathered it. My losses by death have been so great as to draw me closer to you than ever, and perhaps your anxieties have drawn you closer to me. It should be so, and I hope it is so. My love to you always, Affectionately yours,

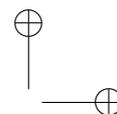
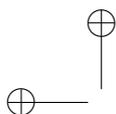
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

Prince George Hotel, New York
2 June [1944]

My dearest beloved lady, – Your letter lay at Canaan for some days, held for the return I expected to make, and was then finally forwarded to me here. I am most grateful for it and for all it contained, especially for the words of affection and endearment which it bestowed upon me, and of which I feel far from worthy. What an abominable performance that was at Martha's Vineyard; the paper gave a perfect picture of the military mentality. But there will be more and more of such doings, of which

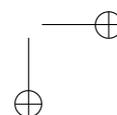
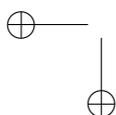


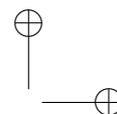
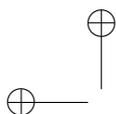


we shall probably hear but little. The army men are now talking of a prospective casualty-list of 500,000 when the invasion comes off, as it should do before long now, to be timed right for the Democratic Convention – unless it be held off to be in time for the election in November, which is possible, though I think not likely. A filthy, despicable business, which we should keep as much out of mind as possible, since we can do nothing to stop it.

Oswald's showing up of Franklin's perfidy and perjury, in the *Christian Century*, was highly commendable. Thank you for showing it to me. I wish it had been put more directly and forcibly. Oswald's writing was always a bit hamstrung; it lacked force and ginger, and still does. But then, so does Oswald himself. He should have been trained by Dana on the *Sun* instead of by Godkin on the *Evening Post*.

No, don't you remember my making it clear to you that there is no place for the *cavaliere servente* in the American Woman's (and Men's) tradition? The lady wouldn't know what on earth to do with him, would be puzzled and bothered, and after a week or so she would tell him he was fine and she thought the world of him and all that, but his attentions were getting to be a dam' nuisance, so he must take a furlough and give her a chance to see daylight again. So I won't try to be your *Chevalier Servant*; it's a more forlorn hope than trying to get any good out of the New Deal. But I am a cultural internationalist, and can fully appreciate the sound merits of love and unbounded devotion American-style, which is quite as solid and substantial as the other, and is more manageable. I am at home in both traditions, so the earnest love, respect, devoted and sincere affection





which I have put at your disposal ever since I knew you is as staunchly in the good old American tradition as bull-steak and coffee for breakfast, – or when we think of John Adams and Abigail, let's say codfish-balls and pie. Do you accept it? I know you do.

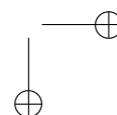
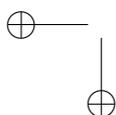
I am glad your music occupies you in these dispiriting times. Let me recommend Weinstock's *Tschaikowsky* (published by Knopf). It is really excellent and most interesting. I think you would like to have it by you and return to it now and then after a first reading, – like Kracauer's *Offenbach*, – especially if you think as well of his music as I do. You would be interested, too, to see what a sound critic he was – apparently as sound in his instinct for literature as for music and musicians. My love to you both, always affectionately yours,

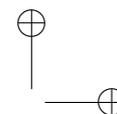
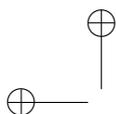
ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn., 24 July [1944]

My dear friend, – Yes, I remember those old-style bathing suits perfectly, and they were not of so long ago as they seem. On the score of comfort there has been some progress in this degenerate age, both for men and women. When I think of the close-fitting balbriggan summer underwear of my earlier years, golly, what a thought! ...

You had better make a long stay of it this summer, and miss as much of the campaign as you can, because it will be very filthy; the amount of dirt that will be dug up out of this Administration will poison the air. Arthur

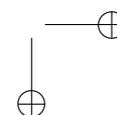
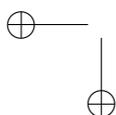


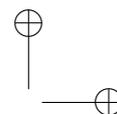
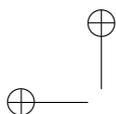


Krock's column which you sent me is only a mild sample. There seems to be no doubt, however, that Roosevelt's crowd will stay where they are. The patronage-vote alone (counting four to a jobholder, which is reasonable) comes to 12 million, enough to offset the normal Republican majority; and then the Jews, Negroes and CIOs will give enough to put them far over on the safe side. I have a notion that Franklin himself won't stick through the four years; he will stick long enough to win the election and as much longer as things go quietly, but you may be sure that at the first sign of real trouble the quacks will certify him out from under, and leave the Vice-President to take the gaff.

... I quite agree with you that like Sir J. Falstaff, it is time for me to quit fighting by day and foining o' nights, and begin to patch up my old body for Heaven. There is Shakespeare for you, by the way, since you speak of it, and doesn't that same Falstaff's "Ebrew Jew" often fall trippingly from my tongue? There are three quotations all in two sentences, and you say I don't quote any from Shakespeare, bah! But on this matter of age, remember that you have a good nine or ten years yet to run before even you catch up with me, so you will see more of the New Deal than I shall. The privilege is yours, dear lady. I don't begreech it to you, none whatever. You are welcome to it as mocking-birds, I could assure you.

As for me, I seem to be a bit picked up. My few days at the seashore on Long Island, as I wrote you, did not pan out, and I was glad to be up on the Mountain again. Long Island seems like a total washout; I can't imagine why any one ever settled there in the first instance, and still less why the princes of privilege ever built there. I saw



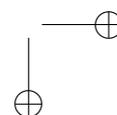
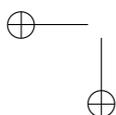


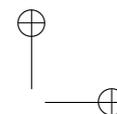
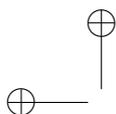
some of the beauty and chivalry disporting themselves on the sands, and the sight of them hath not much bettered me; they looked exceeding ornery. But probably the break in my routine did me some good; something did, any way, I am happy to say. I still have thoughts of going up to Montpelier to look up my old schoolmate, Zebe Parsons, but I am doing so well at the moment that my inclination is to put it off, so we shall see.

“Only individuals exist, and in the individual nothing but the individual.” Isn’t that a sound truth well put? It is old Victor Cousin speaking; I happened on it only the other day.

... But what shall you do when your conscience begins to trouble you about bilin’ up innocent peas and beans and putting your teeth through living lettuce, &c.? Horrible, I calls it. I’m afraid you will have to come to living on synthetic products, get the du Ponts at work on plastic hash. This thought saddens me; I leave you to it. My love, however, remains unaltered; you may not believe it, and I can hardly believe it myself, but it does. In spite of the agony, you are spreading amongst the sweetest and most exquisite forms of life, I still remain yours devotedly forever,

ALBERT JAY NOCK





To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Canaan, Sunday, [Sept. 1944]

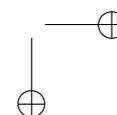
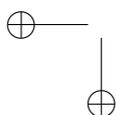
My dear friends, – Here I am, with my desk almost cleared up, ready to give you all the items of news about myself that I can think of. First, I seem to be in better health and spirits than I have been for a long time; I don't know why, for I certainly have done nothing about it but apply patient neglect, which apparently answers the purpose as well as any other course of treatment.

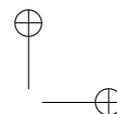
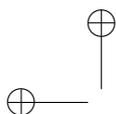
My letters already come to a fair-sized volume. I think I shall go on adding to them for some months yet, and if the bulk becomes overgrown they can be weeded. They seem quite good. I also have a number of essays which came out in the *Atlantic*, and on looking them over I think they might stand being republished at some time or other, though I am not sure about it, we shall see.

The project for pamphlets did not come out, but I have an idea of doing a series all my own. I shall take this up with the N. E. Council this week, and see what can be done with it. I'll let you know forthwith.

This is about all I have to report. I am interested in your project of going to Duxbury. Perhaps things might work out so that I could go over there for a day or so, if the place is not too inaccessible. We might consider this. It would be quite something, to put up at the Winsor Tavern. Let's think about it.

Oh, – yes, one more little matter. I'll have a surprise for you in a few weeks. There is a very good little monthly magazine of reprints, called *Encore*. The editor took a sickly streak and asked me to pinch-hit for him





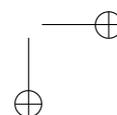
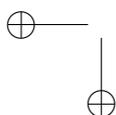
on his November issue; which I did, and had some good fun out of it.

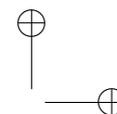
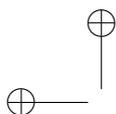
And so you have got down strictly to vegetation! For you, the cows may go un milked and the hens stop laying, while you subsist, I suppose, on turnip-tops and a little birdseed on Wednesdays and Fridays. Well, I don't begreech it to you, and I shall firmly stand up for your right in the matter. But I may turn near Pythagorean and lecture you about the sufferings of vegetables when plucked and stewed to gratify your murderous appetite. You may hear the "shrieks, like mandrake torn out of the earth," which Shakespeare speaks of. I may wean you from water, for the sake of the myriads of minute organic life sacrificed every time you take a drink, – and so forth following. Me, I have had no pig's knuckles, not here. I am a mass of virtue, and claim credit for it.

Day after tomorrow I go back to the Mountain, but on the 13th I must be here again, which I dread. Don't think of coming here; the city is utterly vile, filthy, as A. Ward said, a 2nd Soddum and Gomorrer. Nothing good can exist, let alone prosper and be fruitful. –

Take good care of yourself, and eat plenty of steamed clams and horse-mackerel. Professor Huxley says there is nothing like broiled horse-mackerel to make you gay and full of pizen, like a rattlesnake in August. With love, yours ever,

ALBERT JAY NOCK



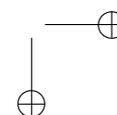
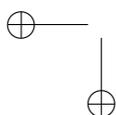


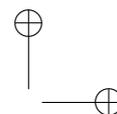
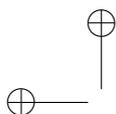
Canaan 16 Sept. [1944]

My dear friends, – I hope the big wind passed you by. We got no news of any account until yesterday, and what we got then seemed to show that the Cape got the worst of it and that your regions were let off pretty easy. I hope this is so. Hurricanes don't go up mountains, so we did not lose a twig off a tree, but there was considerable damage done around us, especially down Danbury way. Communications were cut off in all directions, of course, and power-lines down. These outbreaks of nature's forces are becoming too numerous for comfort.

Alas, my half-formed project of going over to Duxbury is knocked in the head, not by the hurricane, but by the Nat'l. Economic Council which has pitched on that period for reorganizing its publications, and wants my editorial advice; so that is that.

Knowing your interest in the welfare of American Negroes, I hope you will read Ralph Korngold's book, *Citizen Toussaint*. It is really excellent. I particularly call your attention to the statement made at the end of section 4 of the Preface (page XIII). Korngold is exactly right, and it seems to me that the fact (which hardly any one knows or has thought of) should be brought to the notice of influential persons, (Negro and white) who are concerned with promoting the Negro's legitimate aspirations. I am writing Villard about this and have written Korngold suggesting that his publishers make a point of it in their publicity. My best love always, and





don't hurry home to Paoli. That climate is not to be trusted. Affectionately yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

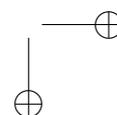
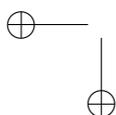
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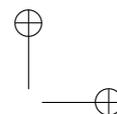
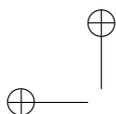
My dear friends, – I am sorry you must leave the Vineyard so soon, and that we can't see Duxbury together. Later on I shall have business down your way, and I'll go over for a day to Paoli.

Thank you for the quotations. George was strongly against the Chinese when he was in California, so his attitude which the Russians noticed was consistent. Like an honest biographer, Harry George does not cover up his father's antipathy towards the Chinese, he brings it out.

Your friend has every right to any opinions he may choose to form of me and of the Nat'l Econ. Council. I also am within my rights in being indifferent to it. There is not, however, a word of truth in what he says, not that I suspect him of lying, but of manifest ignorance. I may observe in consequence, that a person who speaks so forcibly against an institution of which he knows nothing conducts himself most disreputably.

I am not a member of the Council because I dislike joining any organization; I am not, in fact, a member of any. . . . The Council has asked me twice to go on its board of directors, and I have declined to do so. I review books for it with a perfectly free hand, and that is all. I have, however, in all my relations with the Council





never heard one word or seen one act which was not fully consistent with the convictions and principles that I have maintained both in public and in private for forty years.

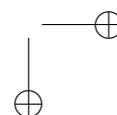
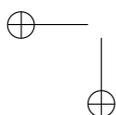
Politically, the Council is most strictly non-partisan; so am I. It is uncompromisingly against any approach to any form of collectivist Statism; so am I. Its views of the State's positive intervention upon the individual are those of Mr. Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Herbert Spencer, Emerson, Thoreau; so are mine. It stands squarely on the Bill of Rights; so do I. It is strong for the restoration of constitutional government throughout the United States; so am I. It is against centralization of political power; so am I.

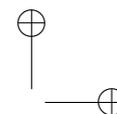
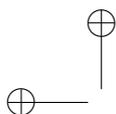
With regard to isolationism, I have always been, and am, precisely as much of an isolationist as Washington, John Adams and Mr. Jefferson, no more, no less. The Council takes no position on the question, none whatever. I have talked with members who agreed with me, and with others who hold contrary views just as firmly. As far as I know, the formulation of anything like a general policy on this matter has never been seriously thought of, still less discussed.

I say all this purely for your own information, though of course you may make any use of it you wish. I repeat I am not interested in what your friend may say or think. He is evidently a hollow person, prone to idle gossip. There are many such in the world, and one looks at them and passes by. My best love, as ever, Yours,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

I'll send you the *Encore*, of course.





To Mrs. Edmund C. Evans

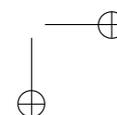
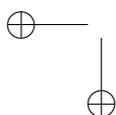
1 December [1944]

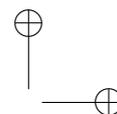
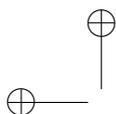
My dear friend, – Thank you a thousand times for your love, blessing, cheque and letter, all of which descended on my wayward head today. I wish I were worthy of any of them.

I was entertained royally in Wilmington by Mr. George P. Bissell and a score of his friends. I had never seen him, but we have kept up a long correspondence. His firm has a branch in Philadelphia, where he often goes, and he told me that he had heard a great deal about me from his old friend Jim Winsor. From what he said I judged the reports he got in this way were more or less favourable, which rather surprised me, since I had somehow got the notion that his old friend regarded me as a man of sin. I said I knew Jim's son quite well, and *doch* a couple of sisters, and met a brother by the name of Henry, but that so far Jim was sight unseen. The whole Bissell tribe are charming people, and their friends, whom I met are equally so.

My dear lady, I don't care two straws what a C. S. was supposed to be in the Italy or England of Byron's time, or what Byron said or thought he was. I am concerned only with his original status in the Province, in the XI Century.

In that status it was strictly against the rules for either party to ask anything of the other or to expect anything of the other. It simply wasn't done. What either party got had to come by unsolicited free offer.





By this arrangement, you see, neither party had any bargaining-power, it was shut off tight at the source.

You couldn't expect Byron to get anything like this through his head, for he was in the English tradition entirely, which was excessive low, and still is. Next time I go to the Norfolk library I'll look up the term C. S. in the Oxford dictionary and see what is said about it.

In a few days, as soon as I have copy-read my Letters, I'll send you the printer's copy and keep the carbons. Then you can read them and see if you think they would be worth publishing, and whether or not they ever saw the light you would anyway have them. One of my friends has volunteered to furnish a sort of Introduction for them, when he gets around to it.

I can't promise you a word about Paine, my dear, or about anybody else just now, until I find out whether the quacks are going to turn me over to the schochets, which is my generic name for surgeons. A schochet is the functionary who kills cattle and chickens according to the Jewish ritual. Don't you think it is a good name for surgeons?

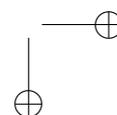
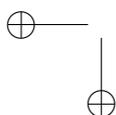
... Affectionately yours,

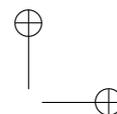
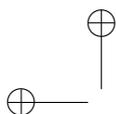
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Ellen Winsor

1 December [1944]

My dear friend, – I was happy to see Frank Garrison, – I am pleased to know that you think so well of Korngold's book. So does Oswald Villard, to whom I





recommended it. I had a long letter from Oswald the other day; poor fellow, he was down with a sudden heart attack in Washington, and the quacks have sentenced him to four months of inactivity. His letter was very blue and pathetic. I have every sympathy with him and shall go to see him when I can. He is a noble fellow and has always done his duty as he saw it, and always saw as straight as he could; and what more could be said for any of us?

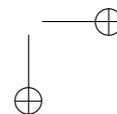
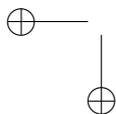
– I daresay I am a barbarian, but Eustace Miles and I just don't hitch, and its no use talking to me about G. B. Shaw, for who wants to live to 88 if he has to live on such dreadful stuff as old George does? – Them's my sentiments. Nevertheless, even though you are an erring sister, you are within your rights and I shall uphold you in them to the bitter end; and you are best-beloved of my good friends, you and your rambunctious sister; and I am yours, ever and always.

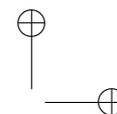
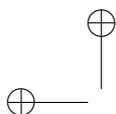
ALBERT JAY NOCK

8 December [1944]

My dear friend, – The Oxford Dictionary says that the *Cavaliere Servente* is a man who devoted himself wholly to attendance on a lady, either for love or gratitude.

That is a pretty good definition, good enough to dispose of the view of him which you cite from Byron. According to the rules and regulations prevailing in the Province in the eleventh century the lady must be a married lady, which the Oxford does not specify.





Lord Byron was notably a low life, yet I doubt you could have found many English men and women of his day capable of understanding that such a relation could be maintained without debasement of some kind, still less capable of maintaining it themselves. I doubt you would find a baker's dozen now, either in England or here. We have no tradition remotely resembling anything of the kind. The French still understand it, as you no doubt saw Mlle. Brée did. When we were speaking about something of the kind, or some one, I have forgotten just how, at all events in a perfectly honourable connexion – she said to me in an undertone, "*C'est ça, le chevalier servant.*"

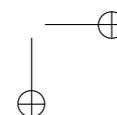
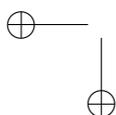
Well, anyway you can see that the Oxford doesn't back up Byron's idea very staunchly, which is all I set out to show. His idea is degenerate, as in the absence of any tradition to the contrary, ours would be. But as originally conceived and carried on in practice, I think you would find that the idea had merit and is worthy of all respect. Affectionately always,

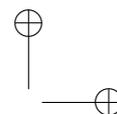
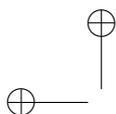
ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

Christmas Day [1944]

My dear friends, – This is a wretchedly dismal day, rain and fog, – but not cold, so we should be thankful for that. I am in good condition apparently, but the weather makes me low in my mind, as such weather always does. I have no news of any consequence, except that I am





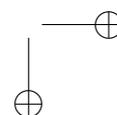
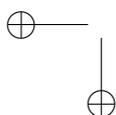
reading *Siren Land*, by Norman Douglas, and find it much worth while. I never did much with Kipling even when he was all the fashion, years ago, but the other day I was looking through his *Day's Work*, finding it a very poor book, but one story in it, *Bread Cast Upon The Waters* I think is superb. You might look at it some time.

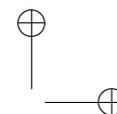
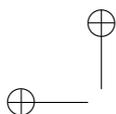
When next I go to town I'll be sending you the MS. of my letters. It is printer's copy, all in order. I'll keep adding to it from time to time, probably. When you look the letters over you must remember that they are picked out of a very voluminous correspondence. I really don't know whether they are worth publishing, and I shall not care at all if they are never published. The friend who suggested it thinks they show me pretty much as I am, and therefore they might be. His judgment is good, but may perhaps be a little affected by friendship. Anyway, whether they are published or not, you will be interested in looking through them.

What a day! – the very top notch of dismalness. Yours ever, with my best love,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

On an unsigned postcard, addressed to Mrs. Evans, and dated Mar. 9, 1945, Mr. Nock wrote, "I forgot to tell you that I knew Mr. Yeats quite well. Several times I sat in at the Petitpas' restaurant where a group used to gather at his table almost every night and listen to his delightful discourse. He was one of the most charming men in the world, and his culture most substantial. His great foible was pride in his son, who (between you and





me) I always regarded as pretty much a washout, and a mean fellow, – selfish, too. But the old man thought he was wonderful.”

To Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor

2nd April [1945]

My dear friends, – I am very much wanting to have a glimpse of you, so let’s see what we can do about it. I must be going to New York on the 9th. If you like, I can push on to Paoli when I get my errands done, say on the 11th. Or, if there is any music or anything going on in New York around that time that would bring you up there, we might have a nice lunch on one of Lüchow’s smoked eels, which are something you wouldn’t believe at all, they are so fine. What do you say? We really ought to do some celebrating because Franklin’s demise is the biggest public improvement that America has experienced since the passage of the Bill of Rights.

You might drop me a postcard about this. No hurry, of course. There are 10,000 things to talk about, with the way matters are moving now. I hope you are well. For my part, I am much as usual, – still on my feet, but gradually petering out, as is to be expected in a case of the incurable disease called Anno Domini. My love to you as ever, Affectionately,

ALBERT JAY NOCK

