Living the Great Illusion
Sir Norman Angell, 1872–1967

MARTIN CEADEL
LIVING THE GREAT ILLUSION
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MARTIN CEADEL
For Dickon
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Preface

To an unusual extent this book is an exercise in self-criticism. That I am here my own whipping boy, a representative of discredited orthodoxy to my own revisionist, is a predicament I owe to my late friend Colin Matthew, who invited me to write on Sir Norman Angell for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. I became aware while distilling the received wisdom on Angell’s life into my entry that much of it rested on shaky foundations, and so covered myself with the warning: ‘A comprehensively researched biography is still much needed.’ I did not then expect to undertake this myself, but on subsequently doing so discovered that my entry had been much wider of the mark than I had feared.

Embarrassment was mitigated, however, by enjoyment. Angell’s public and private existences turned out to be more intriguing, and therefore more fun to investigate, than the standard accounts had indicated. Biography proved, moreover, to be a singularly pleasurable format. In particular, having in much of my previous work dealt with the multiple and complexly interacting lives that collectively comprise peace movements, I found it restful to have but one personal narrative in which to immerse myself.

It helped too that I came to like and admire my subject so much, even while having to expose him as a frequent source of misinformation and muddle. Despite Angell’s high intelligence and good intentions, his over-exuberance and under-education produced both an impatience with fact-checking and a propensity to combine incompatible opinions. Because certain resulting aberrations were so fundamental, because they help to explain my title, and because they may constitute the book’s most important revelations to a reader interested in Angell as an international theorist, I meet them all head-on in the introductory chapter. Although this fully acknowledges his considerable strengths too, it may come across as a litany of lapses, so a reader interested in Angell as a human being, who would prefer to be introduced to his foibles gradually and in context (as responses to the problems and challenges of a stressful career), may prefer to read the narrative set out in Chapters 2 to 8 before turning back to the introduction.

When starting research in autumn 2004, I feared a paucity of evidence; and there are indeed predictable gaps in the record that prevent a biographer knowing, for example, why Angell’s marriage was childless, what his relations with certain women were, or what caused many of his health collapses. But overall there turned out to be a profusion of personal papers: indeed, Angell himself had regarded ‘the quantity of materials which remained’ even after some of these were damaged by German bombing in 1940 as one of his ‘main difficulties’ in producing an autobiography. It was their fragmentary or obscure quality, as will be explained in the introduction, that had previously prevented the writing of a full biography. The Angell collections could be used to put flesh onto bones, but only after a
skeleton had been painstakingly reconstructed using sources extending well beyond them. To change metaphor: a gigantic jigsaw had to be almost completed, at great effort, before mysterious pieces could be recognized for what they were. Thus it was not until I had acquired sufficient context to establish the provenance of a number of heartfelt but undated letters that I made the dramatic transition from ignorance even of where Angell was at certain times to knowledge of not only his whereabouts but his innermost thoughts.

This exacting research benefited from numerous lucky breaks. My good friend Christine Ferdinand hails from, and still has hospitable relatives in, Bakersfield, California, where Angell once attempted to make a youthful fortune. She checked some archives there with me and others for me, and also read my text: without her expertise and sharpness I could neither have disentangled Angell’s American land deals nor made sense of several other areas of his life, so her assistance has been invaluable. No less serendipitously, my retired colleague Frances Henderson happened to know the purchaser of Angell’s retirement cottage in Haslemere, Ann Jordan, who described the conditions in which he lived out his last decade and a half. She was also able to put me in touch with his god-daughter and great-niece, Alice Angell Everard: she gave me access to family papers, granted permission to reproduce family photographs, and, with her husband George Everard and sister Judith Angell Gregory, shared her memories of Angell in a remarkably helpful way. My doctoral supervisor three decades ago, Sir Martin Gilbert, edited the collection of essays in which Angell’s final publication appeared: he not only supplied the correspondence relating to it but discussed the episode with me. While under Gilbert’s supervision, I had interviewed the late F.M. Hardie, who had first encountered Angell in 1933 and went on to produce his original entry, which I read for him in draft, for the Dictionary of National Biography: my memories of, and jottings from, our conversations in the 1970s proved unexpectedly useful for this biography. My former student Thomas Richard Davies was able to track down material for me during his own conveniently placed research trips, particularly to Geneva and Stanford. And a chance approach from G. Peter Winnington, a Lausanne-based scholar currently working on the Fuller family, produced invaluable information on its multifarious contacts with Angell.

My topic also caught the imagination of family and colleagues. David, Graham, and Deborah Ceadel applied their lawyerly exactitude to my manuscript to its considerable benefit; and the last mentioned also established who owned the house in which Angell lived for most of his retirement. In our weekly sessions in Blackwell’s coffee shop Ross McKibbin found himself discussing Angell as much as his own Ford Lectures, with which admittedly there was a good chronological fit, and, once these were delivered, kindly vetted my text. And, having helpfully got her teeth into some of my knottier bibliographical problems, Wilma Minty used her library contacts and foreign visits to explore a number of avenues of inquiry and to consult material: in addition to this significant contribution to evidence-gathering, she read the entire draft with an extraordinarily acute eye not only for what the general reader might find obscure but for how the text could be streamlined: I am extremely grateful for her intellectual contribution.
In the course of my work I incurred debts to archival and library staff at the following institutions: the hall of records and the public library in Bakersfield, California; the library of Balliol College, Oxford; the Bodleian and Social Science libraries in the University of Oxford (especially David Busby, Colin Harris, and Helen Langley); the Bracken Library at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana (especially John B. Straw and Andrea Childers); the British Library at St Pancras and its newspaper depository at Colindale; the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics; the Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull; the Butler Library at Columbia University, New York (especially Jennifer B. Lee); the library at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario (especially Carl Spadoni; who supplied and gave permission to reproduce certain photographs); the modern records centre at Churchill College, Cambridge; Friends’ House Library at Euston (especially Josef Keith); Newcastle University Library; Norwich Record Office; the Oxford Probate Registry; the Public Record Office at Kew; the library of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House (especially Mary Bone); and the library of Worcester College, Oxford (especially Joanna Parker).

I am also grateful to the Hon. Laura Ponsonby for showing me the transcript of Arthur Ponsonby’s diary at Shulbrede Priory, and to Conrad Dehn, QC, and Monica Cynthia Wilson for permission to quote from their late aunt Rosalinde Fuller’s unpublished memoir. For assistance with particular points I am grateful to Andy Bone, Matt Brack, Patricia Clavin, Mark Curtoys, Barry Dackombe, Martin Ferdinand, A.D. Harvey, Geoffrey Martin, Barbara Moran, the late Tony Nuttall, Ian Patterson, Dawnn Pellin, Nancy Pressman Levy, William Poole, Huw Richards, Keith Robbins, Michael Rowntree, Dominique Anne Torrione-Vouilloz, and Jo Vellacott.

For sabbatical leave in 2004/5 and other support I thank my employers, the Department of Politics and International Relations in the University of Oxford, and New College. Eugene Ludwig’s generosity to the Fellows of the latter institution helped to fund research trips at key moments.

My youngest child Dickon has queued patiently behind his siblings Jack and Jemima for a book dedication, which now comes with apologies for the wait and for much else besides.

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NOTES

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Abbreviations

AA  After All
ACIQ  Advisory Committee on International Questions (Labour Party)
BL  British Library, London
BLPES  British Library of Political and Economic Science
BCU  Butler Library, Columbia University
BSU  Ball State University
DM  Daily Messenger (Paris)
CEIP I&E  Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Intercourse and Education Division
FAS  Foreign Affairs Supplement
HC  House of Commons
HO  Home Office
ILP  Independent Labour Party
LSE  London School of Economics
LNU  League of Nations Union
McM  McMaster University Library
MP  Member of Parliament
NEC  National Executive Committee (Labour Party)
NYT  New York Times
PLP  Parliamentary Labour Party
PRO  Public Record Office (National Archives)
RIIA  Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House)
T&T  Time & Tide
TLS  Times Literary Supplement
TT  The Times (London)
UDC  Union of Democratic Control
WCO  Worcester College Oxford Library
W&P  War & Peace
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1

Introduction: Living the Great Illusion

Sir Norman Angell – author of the international best-seller The Great Illusion and forty other books, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Member of Parliament, and activist in the principal peace associations of his time – was one of the twentieth century’s leading internationalists. He was also one of the earliest exponents of international relations as a subject of study in its own right, who in particular made an important contribution to the theory of interdependence, or globalization as it is now more usually known. And he was one of Britain’s best loved progressive intellectuals, with many admirers across the Atlantic too. That his was a ‘remarkable personality’ was appreciated by Leonard Woolf, a fellow internationalist who got to know him well during the First World War. That he could be ‘rather fun’ was later acknowledged by Woolf’s wife Virginia, a distinguished novelist. That he was ‘highly intelligent, widely informed, and very fine’ was immediately recognized by William Allen White, a popular American newspaperman and author, on encountering him in December 1918. That he was ‘one of the best debaters and one of the best psychologists of our time, always a master of his subject and himself’ was the mature judgement of G.P. Gooch, an eminent editor, international pundit, and historian. And that he was both wise and inspirational was insisted upon by F.M. Hardie, a thoughtful graduate student who, as president of the Oxford Union at the time of its world-famous ‘King and Country’ debate of February 1933, was pitched into an unexpected public controversy and needed help in clarifying his opinions and focusing his activities. Yet this first biography must immediately acknowledge that his indisputable achievements and qualities were accompanied to a remarkable degree by confusions and errors. Only a man of obvious merit, sincerity, and charm could have got away with quite so many of these.

‘Living the Great Illusion’ characterizes Sir Norman Angell in three ways. First and most obviously, it indicates that his ‘life job’, as he came to call it, was founded upon and defined by The Great Illusion, a book that contained a highly perceptive central argument yet also other, less felicitous, material from whose contradictions he had the greatest difficulty extricating himself. Second, it suggests that his best work derived, to an extent unusual for a public intellectual, from his own lived experience: his ideas arose from his personal circumstances, and changed as he met new challenges; whereas when he attempted to chart an intellectual course for himself or think abstractly, he faltered. Third and most remarkably, it draws attention to his capacity to foster many an enduring illusion
about his life by at various times giving wrongly his age, name, nationality, marital status, key career dates, and core beliefs.

Although Angell proved to be much more than a one-hit wonder, he was catapulted to celebrity by a book that first appeared in shortened form as *Europe’s Optical Illusion* during November 1909, was reissued with additional material as *The Great Illusion* twelve months later, and subsequently ran through several editions, the last appearing less than a year before the Second World War. Its core idea proved both credible and enduring: that in view of the financial interdependence created by the modern economic division of labour, advanced states could no longer profit from even militarily successful aggression, because in attempting to seize assets they would damage the international credit system and so incur offsetting losses.

However, this book was the work of a newspaperman in his thirties who for all his cleverness had left school at fourteen; and it possessed flaws that were to dog its newly famous author for decades. Its principal idea, that any European conflict could cause considerable financial damage, was expressed in such loose and alarmist language as to create a widespread belief ‘that the bankers would stop it, or that the money would run out’. In consequence, the misapprehension developed that the ‘illusion’ in question was not the economic rationality of great-power war in the twentieth century but its likelihood or even its possibility. Angell had never intended to imply this, and had to issue irritable corrections almost to the end of his life, though they did not prevent the misinterpretation persisting to this day. In addition, his book offered another, much less successful, big idea: that political control over territory brought no economic benefits. As well as being implausible, this had non-resisting or appeasing implications: if surrender of territory is thus costless, yet defence is itself costly, why fight? But Angell also opposed cutting the armaments budget, in part to distance himself from the ‘old pacifism’, but also because, though he could not quite explain why until the Second World War broke out, he genuinely believed in self-defence. He therefore spent thirty years torn between pro-defence instincts and an intellectual commitment to a non-resisting proposition.

In the short term, of course, these overstatements increased the shock value of his book, which appeared just as the Anglo-German naval race had begun to worry even those normally uninterested in, or complacent about, external policy. It was therefore taken up by conservative, business, and charitable circles, as well as by the left. In particular, many in the British establishment hoped that their German counterparts would heed Angell’s message that aggression was counterproductive and confiscation catastrophic. *The Great Illusion* was widely hailed as a work of social science rather than of progressive ideology. A special organization, the Garton Foundation, was created in London to support university and other groups as they studied what Angell called ‘the science of international politics’ or ‘international polity’ – arguably the first investment in international relations as a self-consciously distinct discipline.

In his burgeoning writings on this new subject over the next couple of decades Angell used arguments (such as that ‘complete interdependence means the
complete stultification of force”6 and concepts (including ‘complex financial interdependence’, ‘international anarchy’, ‘the “realist” view’, ‘transnational’ as distinct from ‘international’, and “the annihilation of space”), which academics were later to reinvent. Having thus helped to give the discipline a distinctively liberal baptism, he became a principal target of E.H. Carr’s seminal realist polemic, The Twenty Years’ Crisis, which claimed in 1939 to offer a ‘necessary corrective’ to an intellectual project that was stuck at its ‘utopian stage of development’;8 and during realism’s long ensuing hegemony Angell was duly neglected. As liberalism recovered somewhat within academic international relations during the 1970s, his analysis of interdependence began to receive some recognition; and the first book-length study of his thinking appeared.9 In the late 1980s the perceptive Cornelia Navari, describing him as ‘a theorist of whom everyone has heard and few take seriously’, identified it as ‘a vital shift in the tradition of liberal internationalism: the shift from its old natural law to its modern sociological form; from timeless principle to structural functionalism’.10 She saw that Angell had rooted internationalism not in moral intuitions about the irenic effects of trade, as the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pioneers of liberal thought had done, but in empirical observation of how economic specialization had made advanced countries mutually dependent and therefore less able to fight each other without financial and commercial disruption. During the 1990s, the influential American theorists of interdependence Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye belatedly acknowledged Angell’s ‘insightful’ anticipation of some of their themes.11 And in the twenty-first century journalists and academics alike acknowledged his early recognition of globalization, which is why his magnum opus still features on reading lists set to university students as its 100th anniversary approaches.12

The long life of the author of The Great Illusion was one of unexpected twists and turns. Under his original name, Ralph Lane, he had been a schoolboy in France, a jobbing journalist in four countries, a cowboy, land-speculator, and gold-prospector in California, and the production manager of the continental edition of the Daily Mail, the right-wing popular paper owned by Alfred Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe. Under his pen name, Norman Angell, by which he will be known throughout this biography, he was to be variously an educator, a propagandist, a progressive politician, a reporter, an author, an editor, a pig farmer, and an entrepreneur.

After his attempt to promote the study of international polity was interrupted by European conflict in the summer of 1914, he faced a tension not only between his anti-war and pro-defence impulses but also between his educational and political goals. Disliking war and aspiring to become a leader of British progressivism, he opposed British military intervention, and, only days after his energetic neutrality campaign failed, co-founded the Union of Democratic Control (UDC), an association critical of British foreign policy. During 1915–17 he astounded his public by two further contradictory moves. Apparently yielding to pro-defence sentiments, he found a niche on the outer fringe of President Woodrow Wilson’s political circle, and furnished it with arguments for taking the United States into the European conflict. Yet he also contemplated leading a non-resistance
campaign in Britain, where he was still perceived as anti-war; and on his return there, probably with the intention of refusing to be conscripted, he boldly embraced socialism. Although temperamentally too cautious wholly to turn his back on mainstream opinion, he spent the post-war decade in British Labour politics, writing articles for left-wing papers, sitting on party committees, fighting general elections, becoming an MP in 1929, and being rewarded with a knighthood from the first Labour prime minister, Ramsay MacDonald.

As British opinion became successively disillusioned with the post-war settlement and the First World War itself, Angell’s own reputation with a general audience was to some extent restored. He was able, in parallel with his political activities, partially to rebuild his career as a pundit, albeit one increasingly exasperated both by the educational failings of the public he was seeking to reach and by his own inability to specify a remedy for them. Always able to combine idealism with income-generating aspirations, he in 1928 marketed a card game designed to inculcate the basic principles of monetary economics as well as to replenish his finances: called *The Money Game*, it was an intellectually more challenging forerunner of *Monopoly*, but, despite various revisions, proved much less lucrative. In 1930 he began supporting the Zionist movement, thereby gaining an additional audience, particularly in the United States.

After he retired from parliament as a result of Britain’s 1931 political crisis he developed over the ensuing decade into a leading campaigner for what from mid-decade became known as ‘collective security’, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 1933, working energetically on behalf of the League of Nations Union (LNU), Britain’s most respectable and substantial internationalist association, and becoming sufficiently close to Winston Churchill to be able to boast that a burnmark on one of his jackets came from the great man’s cigar. In 1940, by then in his late sixties, Angell went to the United States as an unofficial yet authorized propagandist for British war aims, and in 1943 published a second best-seller there, *Let the People Know*. During the early part of the Cold War he was an active and alarmist commentator on the communist threat, both ideological and military. In 1951, by which time he had moved significantly to the right, he returned to his native country and published a well-received though misleading autobiography, *After All*. In 1956, though by then worried that Zionism had become conventionally nationalist, he supported the Suez invasion. Two years later he issued his forty-first and, as it turned out, final book, but with irrepressible optimism embarked upon another, which he never abandoned. In 1966, the penultimate year of his life, he travelled to collect his first degree, an honorary doctorate from an American university, and also published his last essay, seventy-seven years after his first item as a professional journalist had appeared. Though physically slight, and afflicted by a remarkable range of often indeterminate illnesses that made him a dedicated valetudinarian from his late teens, he lived to be almost ninety-five. Yet, despite activities of such diversity over so many decades, and despite the fact that his ‘illusion’ thesis constituted a declining aspect of his propaganda after 1914 and was effectively dropped from it after 1939, he never wholly escaped identification with the book that had made his
name – literally, since he had adopted his sobriquet as his everyday identity after it caught on. In that sense, for more than five and a half decades he was living The Great Illusion.

Angell also ‘lived’ The Great Illusion, and almost all his other works, by arriving at their themes inductively and experientially more than through academic cerebration or a priori inference. In this respect, he differed significantly from two of his longest-lived colleagues: Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), an ally during the First World War and an adversary thereafter, adopted a self-consciously utilitarian and consequentialist approach to politics; and Gilbert Murray (1866–1957), an adversary during the First World War and an ally thereafter, deduced his policy preferences from his Liberal ideology.14 Although Angell was influenced by ideas – in particular, the liberal theories of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, and Russell’s arguments of 1915 in support of non-resistance as a tactic – he liked short cuts, such as reading reviews instead of books, and preferred the press to other kinds of literature. His analysis of politics and international relations was primarily the result of his own unmediated reactions to circumstances.

Angell’s ‘illusion’ thesis was the cumulative product of four experiences. The first was of being raised by an evangelical mother, which predisposed him to view religion as a false system of thought. The second was of being exposed, on emigrating to the United States in 1891, to Anglophobia, which he considered no less dogmatic than religion and even more damaging materially: he found that California’s farmers, whose ranks he unsuccessfully joined at a time of serious agricultural depression, tended to vilify Britain even though it was their best customer. The third was of realizing, on his return to Europe, that hostility to the supposed traitor Dreyfus in France and support for the Boer War in Britain were the counterparts of Anglophobia in the United States: all were manifestations of the dogma that became the subject of his first book, Patriotism under Three Flags, published in 1903. The fourth and final experience was of observing Germany’s naval challenge and the Northcliffe circle’s response to it, which introduced him to a form of irrationality related to patriotism: the belief that economic advantage could be derived from military strength. These experiences were, of course, all supplemented by purely intellectual activities such as reading and discussion; yet The Great Illusion was lived more than it was researched or deduced.

The twists and turns in his subsequent intellectual odyssey were largely the result of his susceptibility to life’s opportunities and pressures. Shortly before the First World War, when his ‘illusion’ message had lost some of its novelty and he needed to put bottoms on seats during a lecture tour of the United States, he cast around for a way of demonstrating that country’s centrality to world developments. In consequence, despite previously disparaging ‘mechanical’ reforms such as the creation of an international federation, he suddenly took up the idea that America could and should give political substance to an incipient world state. He also argued that by applying economic sanctions a world organization of this kind might help the United States discipline its then troublesome neighbour, Mexico. This commercially canny line of argument turned Angell into a pioneering
advocate of liberal internationalism as an ideology and of collective security as a policy.

Before he could develop this insight, however, the unexpected outbreak of European war in July 1914 created a dramatically new situation, to which he reacted very differently. Despite his recent internationalism, Angell set off impetuously in the opposite intellectual direction for some months as, largely out of political ambition, he controversially took up the radical-isolationist cause. But his neutralist efforts failed; Britain’s entry into the conflict without major financial crisis made his ‘illusion’ thesis seem at best irrelevant in the short term; and the UDC provoked unexpected hostility. By the end of the year, having reflected upon recent events and present policy needs, he returned to the advocacy of collective security as a deterrent to aggression, in the hope that the war might be used to create an international organization able to facilitate such a policy. Even so, he felt unable to disown the embattled UDC, attempting, often ingeniously, to reconcile its radical isolationism with his new liberal internationalism; and he also thought hard about proclaiming himself a pacifist.

His startling emergence as an advocate of American military intervention was an improvised reaction to the transatlantic debate into which he became drawn by the need to earn a living in the United States during 1915/16. His no less surprising left-turn in respect of domestic politics can largely be explained by three events: his unexpected sacking by the Garton Foundation in August 1915; his chance encounter two months later with a charismatic group of socialists in New York; and his return home to confront the military-service acts of the following spring, which exposed him to the moral failure, as he saw it, of British Liberalism. Although for the next few years he tried to fit a socialist template, he never found its critique of international relations convincing, and from the end of 1920 responded pragmatically once more to whatever life threw at him. Thus the remedy for Britain’s economic ills that he offered to the Labour government in 1930, a home marketing board, was derived from lessons learned while observing economic conditions in the United States, where for financial reasons he made frequent lecture tours during the 1920s, and while simultaneously trying to make a go of pig farming on the tidal island he had somewhat extravagantly bought in Essex.

By contrast, where he tried to set his own intellectual agenda and generate his own conceptual framework out of books and first principles, he ran into a brick wall. Wishing to explain the irrationality, as he saw it, of the 1919 peace settlement, he began searching for a psychological cause and an educational antidote. This took him beyond his intellectual limits, causing his writing to lose focus with immediate effect, and frustrating him deeply in the long run. What kept him functioning as an effective public figure was his capacity to identify a practical solution to a deteriorating world situation, even though he could never work out why so many of his fellow citizens did not identify it too. Thus, although unable to produce the psycho-educational diagnosis he craved, he could crank out policy-relevant propaganda with great facility. And he could do so despite the declining applicability of his original message – that military victory cannot be
cashed in – as public irrationality changed its character. In the aftermath of the First World War it had manifested itself as vindictiveness towards the vanquished. But during the 1930s it took the form of spinelessness in the face of Japanese, German, and Italian challenges to international order. Now the public needed to be told that even if war was economically unprofitable, it had sometimes to be risked. Finally turning his back on the dwindling UDC, as on the Parliamentary Labour Party, Angell devoted himself almost full-time to the LNU, which allowed him a leadership role. In doing so, as he entered his sixties, he finally put almost all his eggs in the basket of liberal internationalism, to which he subordinated his ‘illusion’ thesis as well as the radical and socialist ideas with which he had been experimenting. When the confrontation with fascism gave way after 1945 to the Cold War, financially welcome commissions from American editors ensured that he continued to advocate ‘the collective defence of the democracies’,15 his propaganda making a seamless transition from Genevan to free-world values. Even so, he maintained his unavailing struggle to uncover the psychological roots of the public irrationality that, as he drifted to the right in old age, he increasingly found not only in communism but also in the emergent nationalisms of the Third World and the gullible response to them of western liberals.

Being thus pushed and pulled by changing circumstances, Angell kept changing his analysis of international relations. In respect of the causes of war, he at various times singled out for special blame the herd instinct, conceptual confusion, ideological blinkers, élite selfishness, state power-drives, and the anarchical structure of the international system, only rarely showing any awareness of the inconsistency involved. In consequence, his ‘illusion’ thesis (which blamed conceptual confusion) ebbed and flowed within his overall thinking: it monopolized it during 1909–12, dominated it despite some competition during 1913/14, faded during the First World War, revived significantly during the 1920s, took a back seat during the 1930s, and thereafter virtually disappeared. In respect of the British Empire, his judgement oscillated between contradictory perspectives according to the needs of the moment. When defending his ‘illusion’ thesis against its critics, he celebrated the autonomy achieved by important former colonies – by which he meant the Dominions of Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand, whose full sovereignty was eventually enshrined in the 1931 Statute of Westminster – because it demonstrated that conquering or surrendering territory did not affect a country’s wealth. This endorsement of ‘de-imperialization’, as he came to call it, was reinforced during his socialist and Zionist phases by a general anti-colonialism and a particular dislike of aspects of Britain’s Palestine policy. Yet he always believed that British imperial rule was more benign than that of many post-colonial regimes, particularly in Latin America. And on becoming alarmed at power-political challenges first from the Kaiser, then from Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito, and finally from a Soviet bloc supported by ex-colonies manifesting the worst features of European chauvinism, Angell emphasized the importance of the residual British empire for international order, and warned of the dangers of dismantling it. It is in order to show how successive contexts produced these varying messages that this biography has been...
organized chronologically throughout, and not thematically in large part, as has been done very interestingly in respect of intellectuals of a more self-propelling kind. Its analytical needs have been met by starting each chapter with an overview of the factors impacting upon Angell during the period in question and of the viewpoints that, consciously or otherwise, he was then trying to reconcile.

Angell’s life was all the more intriguing for being seldom quite as he presented it. He did not set out to create a great illusion about himself, but for several reasons caused a range of misunderstandings to arise. He was to an unusual degree ignorant of, or self-deceiving about, basic personal details, and forgot important facts and dates. In addition, he was secretive about private matters, indulged in some intellectual sleight of hand for propaganda reasons, and generated three accounts of his life with some discrepancies among them.

A biography must at an early stage explain his confusion for much of his life about when he had been born and whether Angell was part of his baptismal name. Perhaps because it was memorable to have been born on Boxing Day, his birthday was never in dispute, even though the major published study of his work post-dated it by three days to 29 December. However, his birth year was long a matter of uncertainty. When he became famous and entered Who’s Who on both sides of the Atlantic he gave it as 1874. But this was inconsistent with some of his previous claims about his age; and after developing doubts he gave his year of birth as 1873 in several documents, though he did not as yet change his Who’s Who entries. In 1959 he belatedly located his birth certificate, and discovered he had in fact been born in 1872, telling a journalist: ‘I have known for some time that there was an error but I didn’t realise it was so large.’

He entered the right year in Who’s Who thereafter, and promptly forgot about his long-time error, so that in 1964, admittedly with the excuse that he was by then in his nineties, his reply to an inquiry as to why other reference sources gave a different date was: ‘How my birth came to be given as 1874 in the books you mention I simply do not know’.

Why had he been so wrong for so long? One suggestion has been that he made a two-year subtraction in order to meet an upper limit for ambulance duties in the autumn of 1914 and forgot to restore it later. Yet his fortnight at the front was an informal arrangement that was probably not subject to official restrictions; and in any case he had been underestimating his age by two years since at least 1912. It is likely that his uncertainty originated with his parents, Thomas Angell Lane and Mary Ann Lane (née Brittain): in the 1881 census, when he was eight years old, they entered him as being only seven. This was probably the age he then appeared, being short and slender: he reached only around five feet when fully grown, and was frequently described as slight or frail. At the same time the brother just senior to him, who was ten, was entered as aged nine: he too may have appeared younger than he was because he was retarded in some way. The Lanes can be forgiven for forgetting precisely how old some of their infants were: they had by then produced nine children; they were also raising a boy from the mother’s previous marriage; they had two relatives staying with them; and their
resident staff included both domestic servants and business employees. They thus had twenty-three people whose details had to be supplied to the census-takers. It must be emphasized, however, that they were only one year out in their estimate, not two; and even if they sowed the seeds of doubt in their son’s mind about his age, he alone was responsible for the casual inconsistency of the claims he made about it during most of his adulthood. As will be seen, he was often out by two years, sometimes by one, and at other times – perhaps most puzzlingly – spot on.

The mistake about his precise name was entirely his fault. After he became famous, he consistently claimed that his ‘baptismal name’ was ‘Ralph Norman Angell Lane’; and those publishing about him, the present author included, have hitherto accepted this. In fact, his birth certificate proves that his parents had christened him Ralph Norman Lane – without a second middle name. Admittedly, ‘Angell’ had a pedigree in the Lane family that dated back to 1771, when Groom Lane, the great-grandfather of The Great Illusion’s author, had married Priscilla Angell at North Walsham, in north-eastern Norfolk. Sixty years later their son, also called Groom, commemorated his mother by naming a child of his second marriage Thomas Angell Lane. Since the second Groom Lane already had twelve children by Sarah Jackson, and this was the third of five he was to have by Harriet Caroline Leadell, Thomas Angell was the fifteenth child he had to baptize. Angell’s fifty-year-old grandfather must by then have been casting around for new names. When it was Thomas Angell Lane’s time to christen his own offspring, he gave each of his seven surviving siblings a single middle name, which was ‘Angell’ for two of them (Harry and John) but not the other five (Caroline, Thomas, Alexander, Arthur, and – of significance for present purposes – Ralph). Until his mid-thirties, moreover, Angell claimed only one middle name, Norman: when first visiting the United States in the 1890s he appeared on the passenger list and in all legal documents as Ralph N. Lane; at his wedding at the end of that decade Ralph Norman Lane was inscribed on his marriage certificate; and it was under this identity that he took out life assurance in 1906.

He adopted Angell for the first time in 1909 as part of the pen name, ‘Norman Angell’, under which he issued Europe’s Optical Illusion: he was by then working for Lord Northcliffe and did not wish either to embarrass, or to be embarrassed by, an employer of notably different views. When The Great Illusion became a success, people understandably inquired about his choice of sobriquet; and, apparently taken by surprise, Angell found it easiest to reply that he had arrived at it simply by dropping his first and last names. He therefore started claiming to have been baptized Ralph Norman Angell Lane: this was how he described himself in 1911 when he submitted his first Who’s Who entry. He went even further that year in promotional material produced for the American market, and was thus widely quoted in the press as claiming: “Norman Angell”...is something more than a nom-de-plume: it is part of my name, the whole part of it being Ralph Norman Angell Lane; a part of our family being known as Angell-Lane.” When he was asked for ‘documentary proof’ that his name was indeed Angell by the anti-semitic journalist and poet Hilaire Belloc, who accused him of having adopted it in order to mask a ‘lineage and tradition’ that was ‘alien’ (in
other words, to conceal a Jewish surname), he became even more insistent that it had ‘been in my family for three centuries, perhaps for longer’ before being passed on to him.23 He did so, it seems, because it made his life easier. It particularly simplified matters after he decided in 1912 to live full-time as Norman Angell, revising his Who’s Who entry to that end with effect from its second appearance. He somehow felt less dishonest using Angell on a day-to-day basis if it was not just a common name within his family but appeared on his own birth certificate, and consequently deceived himself that this was indeed the case. He spent eight years as Ralph Norman Angell Lane for official purposes: this was, for example, the name he gave upon entering the United States for a lecture tour in February 1914.24 On the eve of becoming a parliamentary candidate, however, he felt it prudent to put his legal identity beyond question: on 24 February 1920, therefore, he dropped his original surname and entrenched his supposed second middle name by deed poll, so as in law to become ‘Ralph Norman Angell’.25 Yet his certainty that Angell had been one of the names with which he had been baptized hardened over time: when reinstated in Who’s Who in America with effect from the 1942/3 edition after going
to live in the United States during the Second World War, he for the first time entered his parents as having the surname ‘Angell-Lane’. When he found his birth certificate in 1959 he had the opportunity to correct his name as well as his age, but did not take it, and indeed persisted in his error.\textsuperscript{26}

Angell’s ignorance and self-deception were reinforced by forgetfulness and sloppiness. He misremembered the year in which crucial events occurred. He regularly antedated his career-changing Europe’s Optical Illusion by two years, and occasionally by more,\textsuperscript{27} even though the correct information could have been found simply by going to his own bookshelves. He allowed conflicting information to appear simultaneously in the British and American versions of Who’s Who; and his first such entries gave the wrong year for his marriage a mere dozen years before. He had an almost pathological capacity for post-dating events to which he needed frequently to refer, putting Germany’s 1871 annexation of Alsace-Lorraine into 1872, Cleveland’s 1895 note to Salisbury over the Venezuelan frontier into 1896, and the 1923 French occupation of the Ruhr into 1924.\textsuperscript{28} That ‘my dates are a bit hazy’\textsuperscript{29} was thus one of the truest phrases he ever uttered. His memory played tricks on him in other respects too. In a book written in 1931 he claimed not only that ‘most of’ The Great Illusion had been ‘written while a war was raging’, which can only be a confusion with Patriotism under Three Flags, which had been begun in the final year of the Boer War, but also that its title had been ‘suggested by a line of Milton’s about “this mighty illusion of the benefits of conquest”’, though neither scholarly experts upon, nor concordances to, his poetry and prose can identify anything remotely resembling this.\textsuperscript{30}

Angell’s fallible memory helps to explain why, on discarding a viewpoint, he could deny having held it. His views about war-prevention constitute the starkest illustration of this. By the time he composed his memoirs, Hitler and Stalin had finally taught him that he was no pacifist in the non-resisting sense, but was what, following A.J.P. Taylor’s usage,\textsuperscript{31} will here be called a pacifist – someone who is pacifist in virtue of a conviction that war can be abolished by reforming either the international system or the states composing it, but who in the meanwhile accepts that military force is legitimate, unless used in an aggressive or a reactionary way. Furthermore, although pacifists come in several varieties, according to their preferred political path to the abolition of war, Angell had by then, after a period of uncertainty, decided which kind he was. He had never much liked the socialist variety, which claimed that lasting peace could be achieved solely by eradicating capitalism: only at the peak of his leftist enthusiasm, around the end of the First World War, did he pay lip-service to it, and even then in a diluted form. For many years he hesitated between, and attempted to combine, radical and liberal pacifism. The former, whose underlying assumptions were isolationist as well as populist, accused élites (such as the secretive caste of diplomats) and vested interests (such as the avaricious ring of arms traders) of dragging their country into conflicts for their own self-serving ends, and insisted that making them democratically accountable was the only way to abolish war. (As its name implied, the UDC promoted radical pacifism.) The latter, which took an internationalist and legal-institutionalist approach, blamed international anarchy, as
filtered through patriotism of the my-country-right-or-wrong type, and identified international organization and procedures for collective security as the principal cures. (The LNU was Britain’s principal exponent of liberal pacifism.) Having finally plumped for liberal pacifism and the LNU and then endorsed the western stance during the Cold War, as already noted, Angell implied in his memoirs that he had always been in favour of collective defence, and stated categorically that he ‘had never been pacifist’.32

Yet, as will here be demonstrated, this claim was simply untrue: between 1915 and 1939 he frequently expressed support for pacifism. Admittedly, he did so in a less than resounding way, which was unsurprising given that he more commonly argued the pro-defence case during those same years. His half-hearted and discontinuous pacifism was prompted by three different motives that reveal the convolution of his thought processes. First, non-resistance was implied by an overstated claim in The Great Illusion, as already noted. Although he normally tried to deny this, he knew otherwise in his heart of hearts, and sometimes admitted it. Second, as he began to lurch leftwards in 1915, he wondered if pacifism would not only rally a war-weary working class but also, as Russell then began arguing, wrong-foot an adversary more effectively than an armed response. Angell therefore discussed with his supporters the idea of leading a non-resistance campaign and declaring himself a conscientious objector, although in the event caution prevailed; and in any case he found himself too old for conscription in 1916. However, Germany’s successful passive resistance to France’s occupation of the Ruhr in 1923 seemed to confirm that Russell’s argument and his own hunch of 1915/16 had been correct. So during the late 1920s and the 1930s, as the public mood became more anti-war, Angell started making statements such as: ‘I have always held that the risks of unilateral disarmament are immeasurably less than popular fears would seem to indicate.’33 But because he increasingly appreciated the case for collective security too, as promoted by the LNU, he developed a third and paradoxical motive for declaring himself a pacifist – as a strategy of ingratiating. He announced his belief in non-resistance in order to curry favour with pacifists. His next rhetorical move was to point out to them that the overwhelming majority of British citizens, though anti-war, would never be won over to so extreme a policy. In practice, therefore, all pacifists, himself included, had to fall back on their next-best policy, which was obviously collective security through the League rather than the national free-for-all in defence that had triggered so many wars in the past. This strategy of ingratiating was, of course, deeply ambivalent: it caused him to exaggerate his sympathy for pacifism – which had never been whole-hearted – in order to subvert it. In reality, as the fascist threat developed and he became increasingly Churchillian, his professed personal preference for non-resistance became disingenuous. When in 1936/7 a sudden pacifist upsurge called his bluff about endorsing collective security only because his own preferred policy could not achieve mass support, he was thrown into such intellectual confusion that he had to abandon the book on pacifism he was contracted to write. It was therefore understandable that, having finally and decisively rejected non-resistance at the
outbreak of the Second World War, he later chose to deny having ever supported it. In reality, he had often done so, although always tentatively and from a complex mixture of logical, tactical, and propagandist considerations rather than out of clear moral conviction. But because this was far too complicated a truth to get straight even in his own mind, he could not explain it publicly. Instead, utilizing his convenient capacity to forget, he rewrote his intellectual history, excising twenty-four years of intermittent and hesitant pacifism from his record.

Angell was capable of tinkering with the truth to help his propaganda. As a young author he was cavalier, to put it mildly, in his use of sources, failing to acknowledge quotations and even altering them to suit his purposes. During 1911–15 he tried to pass himself off in the United States as an American national so as to improve his appeal to readers there; and when critics in England later picked him up on this, he was not wholly straightforward about what he had done. He could blur fact and fiction, most notably in the account his memoirs gave of his first American visit, which will here be revealed as a literary confection in which disjointed memories were rationalized into a plausible yet imaginary sequence.

More understandably, he was opaque in respect of sensitive personal matters. After his marriage turned sour he concealed it from all but his closest friends. When he needed to explain the financial burden of supporting an estranged wife, he referred merely to a dependant. Most acquaintances, like interviewers and obituarists, took it for granted that he was a bachelor. A few, aware of his interest in the boy-scout movement and his closeness to the young men who worked for the Garton Foundation, assumed that he was homosexual, though, as another scholar has already insisted, there has never been ‘a scintilla of evidence’ for this. In his memoirs, though otherwise guarded about intimate detail, Angell not only insisted that his youthful self ‘had never found the strict Puritanical code of his upbringing hard to bear’, but went out of his way both to condemn permissiveness in literature and to warn against ‘the New Sexual Morality’. Given the austere image he thus projected of his private life, the intensity of some of his female friendships – particularly with Florence Schofield, Rosalind (later Rosalinde) Fuller, Joan Callon, Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, and Marion (‘Sunny’) Lozier – comes as a surprise.

Misunderstanding has also arisen from the fact that Angell transmitted three different versions of his life: he left a published memoir, a substantial oral-history transcript, and a stock of well-worn anecdotes that lingered in the memory of his interlocutors. He began writing an autobiography at the end of the Second World War, but found it a frustrating experience: his papers were hard to put into any sort of order; an appropriate literary format proved elusive; and after he submitted what he hoped was his final version in 1950, he was instructed to make major revisions and excisions. After All eventually appeared in November 1951, its reviewers generously overlooking its limitations as a source of hard facts: for all the publisher’s attempts to strengthen its narrative drive, it all too often broke off from telling a story in order to make a general observation, only to return at a slightly different chronological point, thereby producing either a gap in the chain of events or repetition with different and sometimes inconsistent information.
While he was reworking this autobiography, he gave a series of interviews to Wendell H. Link of Columbia University’s Oral History Research Office, the resulting 278-page transcript being made available to researchers in 1954 as ‘Reminiscences of Sir Norman Angell’. They contained much detail not found elsewhere, partly because on his admission the interviewee found himself offering ‘a more candid statement of experience’ than when producing ‘imperishable print’, and partly because Link’s promptings, regrettably omitted from the transcript, took Angell outside his normal anecdotal routine. Yet they suffered from the rawness and disorganization inherent in oral testimony – ‘smoking-room carelessness’, as he put it. In places, even after Angell had revised it, the transcript was self-contradictory: Thus in dealing with the response to Europe’s Optical Illusion of the man who did most to ensure its success, Viscount Esher, the ‘Reminiscences’ stated in one breath that he contacted Angell ‘after the book began to be reviewed’ and in the next that he did so ‘before the reviewers had begun to discuss it’.

Throughout his life Angell loved to recount key episodes of his life to journalists, audiences, acquaintances, young family members, and in retirement even his postman. Many of these tales – for example, much of what he said to the journalist Bernard Falk in November 1936 – were repeated in his memoirs almost verbatim, even though they had been devised more for their value as entertainment than for their soundness as a historical record. But others lived on only through the recollections of his nieces and nephews and their own children, who got to know them by heart. This must have been particularly true of Barbara Hayes (1910–86), to whom he granted the courtesy title of ‘niece’ though she was two generations removed from him and not a blood relative, being in fact the niece of his sister’s son-in-law. A troubled woman who remained single and had difficulty in finding her vocation in life, she not only acted as Angell’s secretary for many years but shared his home for a time, and so must have heard every one of them. Her recollections were incorporated into an unpublished typescript, ‘Sir Norman Angell and the Last Illusion’, completed in 1989 by W.H. Willson of Vancouver, Canada. A retired naval commander who had first read one of his works, no other book being to hand, while on active service in 1944, Willson became, in Angell’s words, ‘a fanatical fan of mine, though he has never made very clear why’. He had talked to his hero in old age; and in the course of his subsequent research he not only heard the stories of other relations who have since died but apparently enjoyed access to some family records that can no longer be traced.

Because there are thus three versions of Angell’s personal history, the following short-hand has here been adopted: ‘autobiography’ means After All, including its numerous drafts; ‘reminiscences’ denote the Columbia transcript; ‘memoirs’ encompass both of those; and ‘family tradition’ is used for information that is not found in the public domain but may be presumed to emanate from his storytelling and lost family documents.

Though illusions about Angell have persisted in the absence of a proper biography, much valuable work has already been done. The worthiest effort, though also the most flawed, is Commander Willson’s typescript, especially its original version before, presumably in an effort to find a publisher, it was cut by a
third. It draws not only upon family tradition but also upon material retrieved from Rosalinde Fuller and her sisters. (An established scholar, G. Peter Winnington, is now revisiting and greatly augmenting this for a biography of the Fuller family.) Even so, Willson did not cite his sources in a verifiable fashion, and made a large number of errors. First and foremost among published studies is Albert Marrin’s *Sir Norman Angell* (1979), which contains previously unknown information about its subject’s life, yet is in its author’s words ‘not primarily a biography’, being instead a meditation on the limitations of ‘secular liberal internationalism’ that treats Angell as an exemplar of ‘error’, albeit of a ‘creative’ and even ‘magnificent’ kind. L.R. Bisceglia’s *Norman Angell and Liberal Internationalism in Britain 1931–1935* (1982) is scholarly and lively, though it covers only a short phase of its subject’s life, and like Marrin’s book wrongly suggests that he was sympathetic towards appeasement. J.D.B. Miller’s *Norman Angell and the Futility of War: Peace and the Public Mind* (1986) includes a sound survey of the biographical evidence available at that time, yet is a work of international-relations theory, and for all its intellectual elegance does not dig deep. Lucian Ashworth’s study, *Creating International Studies: Angell, Mitrany and the Liberal Tradition* (1999), is a shrewd theoretical study, though Angell constitutes only part of its agenda. There have been a number of unpublished doctoral dissertations on aspects of Angell career; but their biographical value has been limited.

The framework of Angell’s life has been reconstructed here from a multiplicity of primary sources, new and old. Electronic databases have identified previously elusive key dates, such as his first arrival in the United States and his marriage, and have also facilitated access to some of his more obscure journalism. The legendary internet search engine Google has found many a needle in a haystack, including his wife’s date of birth and family information about a lady-friend from Angell’s Paris days. Yet long-available sources have proved almost as valuable: indeed, research for this book has shown how much can be gleaned from even the best-thumbed of these by bringing a different tunnel vision to bear. Thus, although C.P. Trevelyan’s papers have been heavily used by other scholars, they contain much of value about Angell’s contribution to the neutrality campaign of late July and early August 1914 that has never been cited. Likewise Angell’s own writings contain nuggets of biographical gold – such as an allusion to having been in close proximity to the German military advance into northern France during late August and early September 1914 – buried in their illustrative material. The principal methodological lesson of this biography has been that there is no substitute for immersion in the sources. Only by acquiring a thorough familiarity with the tales Angell liked to tell in print as a young journalist, for example, has it been possible to identify exactly when he was working on certain newspapers.

Considerable effort has been necessary to extract meaning from Angell’s papers, which have defeated previous would-be biographers. His letters were often dated incompletely and sometimes incorrectly, thereby misleading even the most expert of archivists. When sorting them and having some of them typed in preparation for his autobiography, he or his amanuensis – among various errors of transcription – occasionally added the wrong month or year.
Where the original survives, such mistakes can be proved; but where it does not they have to be inferred from incompatibility with more reliable sources. The papers are, moreover, dispersed across five locations. They mostly found their way to Ball State University at Muncie, Indiana, which bought them from Angell under agreements made in 1961 and 1966 and later acquired additional items, notably Willson’s typescript and notes, and some material that Barbara Hayes had passed on to him. An admirable catalogue of the collection as a whole was eventually completed in the summer of 2005 – ideal timing for the present project. A second, much smaller, collection, consisting mainly of discarded drafts of *After All*, was donated in 1969 to Columbia University in New York by a historian, Mary Klachko, who had acquired them from Angell while writing a student paper on his career. A third and more important cache was purchased by McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, through Sotheby’s in 1986 when Barbara Hayes died. A fourth tranche of papers, including a useful collection of press cuttings and publications, was donated to Worcester College, Oxford, in 1996 by the Jacoby branch of Angell’s extended family. Finally, a number of important items remain in the possession of Mrs Alice Angell Everard, in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, passed down from her grandfather, Angell’s brother Thomas, through her father, Eric Lane, who died in 2003.

Though it does not approach the detail in which Michael Holroyd recreated Lytton Strachey’s life in the two-volume masterpiece that four decades ago set modern standards for biography, this is admittedly a big book to devote to someone who, for all his undoubted historical importance, ‘was not an original thinker or one of the first rank’, in Marrin’s words. But, because Angell was so idiosyncratic, his career is hard to treat summarily. His pre-fame career has previously been so obscure that every fragment of evidence needs to be garnered. His take-off as an author and campaigner, his mixed roles in the First World War, his uneasy venture into Labour politics, and his subsequent ideological reorientation deserve to be set out accurately for the first time. His prolific writing merits an indication of its scope, strengths, and weaknesses; and his extensive journalism, lecturing, and committee work also need to be acknowledged in order to reveal the quotidian pressures he was under.

Angell was ‘a considerate and modest man’, who on the occasion of his knighthood was informed by a long-standing supporter that ‘very few men who have been so prominent in public work have attracted so much goodwill, and, if I may say it, affection from their associates’. His plain-living intensity, self-contained charm, and delicacy of appearance made an almost invariably favourable impression on contemporaries, male and female alike, whose descriptions of him are remarkably convergent. ‘A frail-looking man of small build, who from his lean ascetic features might easily be mistaken for a lawyer or a physician, Norman Angell surprises his friends by the extraordinary vehemence which he develops when propounding his views’ was how he came across to Bernard Falk. ‘Spartan in personal habits, solitary, rather shy, this frail looking man, with his sharp-cut, fawn-like face, dominated by its large, light, wide-apart, all-seeing eyes, is the servant of a single controlling imperative’ was how he was characterized by Mary Agnes
Hamilton, a colleague in both the UDC and the Labour Party. Angell’s good nature has also shone through posthumously to scholars. Albert Marrin volunteered the comment: ‘In working with his private papers, I found him fascinating and personally appealing – someone whom it was easy to like.’\textsuperscript{52} And while producing this account the present writer has enjoyed a no less positive experience. Someone capable as Angell was, while in his eighty-eighth year and on a transatlantic visit to Chicago, of making a special trip to Pittsburgh to call on a great-niece and her husband and of keeping them up into the small hours conversing about international affairs and telling stories, his cheeks developing pink spots as he warmed to his theme,\textsuperscript{53} was evidently committed to, rather than cashing in on, his ‘life job’. His cutting of corners in the way he presented information was the result of impatience, reticence, and an inadequate education, not of charlatanism. Given the ambition of the questions he posed, his untrained mind, and his need to live by his pen over such a long period, it is remarkable how much of his output was cogent and enduring. To follow him through his long and unusual life is to forgive him his contradictions and failings.

NOTES


2. The title of Part 2 of AA.

3. AA, 150.


8. E.H. Carr, \textit{The Twenty Years’ Crisis} (1939), 12, 14, 17–18, 24, 35–6, 41, 56, 147.


Information from Mrs Ann Jordan.


AA, x.

For example, by Hermione Lee: see her *Virginia Woolf* (1996) and *Edith Wharton* (2007).

It is twice given as 29 December in Marrin, *Sir Norman Angell*, 13, 17.


A to D. Elkins, 11 June 1964: BSU box 41.

W.H. Willson, ‘Sir Norman Angell and the Last Illusion’ (draft), 69: BSU.


*Springfield Republican*, 16 June 1911; *Buffalo Courier*, 9 July 1911: cuttings in WCO, box 3.


Ellis Island Passenger Arrivals, 13 Feb. 1914, on the *Oceanic*: www.ellisisland.org


In 1963 he once again gave his original name as ‘Ralph Norman Angell Lane’ in *Norman Angell by His Contemporaries*, 2n.

For example, he once referred to *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, written and published in 1909, as ‘a little booklet written about 1905 and published a year or two later’: see N. Angell, *Preface to Peace: A Guide for the Plain Man* (1935), 191. On several other occasions he gave its year of publication as 1907: see, for example, his interview of November 1936 with Bernard Falk, published in Falk, *Five Years Dead*, 262.


AA, 243: see also 188, 266.

34. ‘Reminiscences’, 150.
37. AA, 5, 30–1.
40. Ibid., 106.
41. Information from Mrs Ann Jordan.
42. Falk, *Five Years Dead*, 261–9.
43. Family tree in the possession of Mrs Alice Angell Everard.
44. A to B. Hayes, 23 Feb. 1963: BSU.
47. For example, the British Library’s file of Angell–Northcliffe correspondence begins with a letter to Lord Northcliffe clearly dated 19 Jan. 1904. That the year should have read 1906 is apparent from the date when Harmsworth received that title (Dec. 1905) and from the timing of Angell’s move to the address over-stamped on the letter. Presumably Angell or his secretary hit the wrong typewriter key; and any subsequent correction faded. See Northcliffe papers, BL Add MSS 62216 fos. 1, 8, 11–13.
53. Information from Alice Angell Everard.
Conforming, Rebelling: December 1872 – December 1891

Angell was born Ralph Norman Lane on 26 December 1872 into the large family of Thomas Angell Lane. Unusual in both his small size and large intelligence, he had a comfortable upbringing in Holbeach, Lincolnshire – his home being large enough to become a hotel early in the twenty-first century – though he was sent away from this quiet fenland town for some of his schooling. Like almost all children, he at first took for granted the values of his parents, a self-made, Tory-voting retailer, and a conventional, pious housewife, and was conformed into the Church of England. But, even more than most teenagers, he later reacted against them, particularly against his mother’s Christianity, becoming ‘a tremendous heretic and agnostic, and everything else that was rebellious’, and proclaiming that his life’s work would be to crusade against the doctrine of the afterlife. Yet, despite flirting with revolutionary political ideas, he never repudiated the business values of his admired father, finding work on newspapers rather than pursuing further education, and aspiring to make a fortune in California. The hybrid temperament of an illusion-bashing idealist who also sought entrepreneurial success was thus apparent before Angell’s emigration to the United States a few days in advance of his nineteenth birthday.

* * * * *

Thomas Angell Lane is revealed by a family photograph to have been a balding, bearded man of serene countenance, and by a handful of surviving letters to have been a man of some shrewdness: indeed, his daughter recognized that he was ‘a much more brainy and intellectual man than most people knew’. He had been born on 5 June 1831 and christened twenty-three days later at the Independent Church in the Norfolk village of Bradfield, though by the time of the 1841 census his family was living a few miles south in the Market Place at North Walsham. According to his son, he had ‘started out in life quite penniless’, and received only a modest education, at Sir John Paston’s Grammar School in that town, famous only for having been once attended by the naval hero Horatio Nelson, though he somehow learned enough French to read classic literature in that language for pleasure. He went to work as an apprentice in a large store in Norwich, where on 23 May 1857, at St Lawrence’s Church, he married a widow of his own age, Mary Ann Abbott, née Brittain, who was a native of that city. She provided
him with a five-year-old stepson, and then bore him nine children: a girl followed by eight boys. His daughter was born in October 1858 at Hickling, a village in the Norfolk Broads, suggesting he may have worked there for a time. Soon afterwards, however, he returned to the Market Place, North Walsham, where he kept a draper’s shop: by the April 1861 census his household included a niece employed as a shop assistant and an apprentice, as well as a domestic servant. There his first four sons were born between January 1860 and June 1867, though the first and last died in infancy.

Around 1868 he moved forty miles west to Holbeach, making his home on the High Street in an ‘attractive Queen Anne house . . . one of the best in the little Lincolnshire town and known as the Mansion House’, where his four remaining sons, including Angell, arrived between April 1869 and December 1874. Next door he established what by 1889 was listed in Kelly’s county directory as ‘Lane and Son . . . grocers, drapers, and general warehousemen’. It is clear from his occasional recourse to the county court, as well as from his son’s memoirs, that he developed his business ‘into chain stores in a small way’, and acquired agricultural land which his eldest son was eventually to farm.

By 1890 Angell’s father was, according to his famous son’s contemporary estimation, ‘at low water’. In that year, according to an obituary in a local paper, but probably a couple of years later in view of the fact that he still appeared
as a ‘draper and grocer’ with resident drapery assistants in the 1891 census, he decided to hand over his business. He used his early retirement ‘as an opportunity for devoting himself with increased energy to local government and educational affairs’. It was a sign of the respect in which he was held that, after the Local Government Act of 1894 created district councils, he was chosen to be the first chairman of Holbeach Urban Council even though his party, the Conservatives, had won only four of the nine council seats. He also became a magistrate, noted for his humour. According to a local paper, when a drunkard who had previously pledged never to come up before the bench again failed to answer his summons for a repeat offence: ‘Mr Lane wittily said he was keeping his promise!’ His role as a ‘public man’ made him the occasional butt of satirical comments: he was once labelled ‘the dilatory chairman of the drowsy urban council of a dirty town’. His civic influence reached a peak in 1897 when he played a prominent role in the royal-jubilee celebrations and in the building of a public hall for Holbeach. However, at the April 1898 elections he lost his seat on the Urban Council when the Liberals made gains, and, though able the following month to visit Paris (where Angell was then working), became ill later in the year. He recovered in 1899, but remained susceptible to bronchitis, and died on 4 April 1900, a couple of months short of his sixty-ninth birthday. His funeral in Holbeach was ‘largely
attended’, his widow Mary Ann being gratified that ‘all the shops closed and such a number of people were at the cemetery gates and followed us with flower wreaths’. She survived him by seven years, dying in the Mansion House on 8 June 1907.

The Lanes’ unexpectedly famous son was, as already noted, either forgetful, confused, or secretive about many aspects of his life. He even so retained a sharp sense of his childhood and of its effect on his personality, and was forthcoming about these in his memoirs. Admittedly, he had little to say about Holbeach as a place, presumably because it was so quiet: it resembled Bakersfield – the Californian town near which he was to be a cowboy and settler and of which he left vivid accounts – only in having a population of about 2,000, serving an agricultural area, and experiencing the occasional runaway horse and cart. Nevertheless he gave a clear picture of the Mansion House, with ‘its enormous cellars, with great stone flags, each a yard or two square’. And he recalled the petit bourgeois quality of his early life. He knew that ‘he had wanted for nothing, and the family, as families went, was tolerant and united’, and that although ‘not rich, the household was well-to-do, and each of the children had been given a good start’. On an income after his father’s retirement of ‘four or five hundred pounds a year’, it kept ‘a horse and carriage, and several servants’, namely ‘a groom-coachman-handyman, a cook, two maid-servants’. The 1871 census revealed two resident domestic servants; that of 1881 three, plus a nursemaid. However, despite enjoying ‘plenty and comfort’, the Lanes exhibited ‘little pretension’: for example, they sat down to the ‘high teas of the English middle-class fashion’ rather than to the ‘late dinners’ of smart society.

Despite its stability, ease, and modesty, Angell was in some ways critical of his family, branding it ‘typically middle-class, conventional, Victorian’, as exemplified by its adhesion to Anglicanism, its ‘religious attendance at church every Sunday’, and its insistence that this day was ‘to be passed in reading “good” books, which meant religious books’, while ‘sports or games or skating’ and ‘anything like cards or amusements on Sunday were banned’. He mainly blamed this conformist behaviour on his mother, the ‘more conventional’ of his parents and the one for whom he felt the less ‘intimate regard’. She was also both the more religious, having a ‘very “literal” acceptance . . . of certain aspects of the Christian mythology’, and the less relaxed, having a tendency when her ‘nerves were taut’ to ‘say lacerating and searing things’. Though ‘a good mother in the sense of looking after the material welfare of the children and the household’, she was ‘less sensitive’ to Angell’s emotional needs. In particular, he thought her ‘very conscious of social distinctions, with not much regard for intellectual attainments unless they could be translated into material and social advantage’. However, by the time he produced his memoirs he had evidently forgotten her capacity to rise to the occasion. For example, in 1897, on the ship back from his first visit to the United States, Angell made the acquaintance of a distinguished African-American minister, the Revd Alex Crummell, who was travelling to Europe with his wife. His mother invited the couple to Holbeach, even though Angell himself could not be there to help entertain them. ‘I thought it a rather bold notion of the mater’s to
have them. A negro is something of a departure in visitors’, Angell admitted to his father. Mary Ann Lane ensured, what is more, that the Crummells greatly enjoyed their stay.17

By contrast, Angell was uncritical of his father. He thus ignored Thomas Angell Lane’s upwardly mobile transfer of denominational allegiance from Congregationalism (which can be inferred from his place of baptism) to the Church of England, and made no comment about the orthodoxy of his politics. And he interpreted his lack of regard for certain social niceties – such as his ‘occasionally telling a Rabelaisian story’ to his sons, or his regular refusal to stand up in church for the Athanasian creed because he disliked its damnation clauses – as evidence that he was ‘libertarian in every sense of the word’. Angell even gave his father’s silences the benefit of the doubt. For example, when his wife reproved their ‘children for offences to which the “pater”, as we called him, attached no importance’, he would not ‘defend the children actively’ but ‘would just walk out of the room’, a gesture which Angell nonetheless regarded as an indication that he was their ‘champion’.18 He was also impressed by his father’s high local standing, despite the social stigma that then attached to being ‘in trade’, crediting him with ‘some secret by which, without wealth or brilliance, he became quite the most respected (which is so different from being the most respectable) man in that small country town’.19 He also remembered with pleasure that he ‘always for the summer hired a yacht and took us for a fortnight or so sailing and cruising on the inland lakes of the county of Norfolk, known as the Broads’20 – evidently the source of Angell’s long-standing love for yachting. Significantly, he did not blame his father for any of the episodes which caused him unhappiness in his childhood.

His memoirs mentioned six of his seven surviving siblings, albeit with different degrees of informativeness and engagement. He painted the fullest portrait of his half-brother William Abbott (‘Will’), who was twenty years older and ‘curiously different from the other members of the family’, being ‘a smart-aleck in the business world’.21 This ‘quick-witted, engaging scallywag’, had ‘engaged in a company-promoting scheme which netted him a profit of something in the order of ten thousand pounds’, and for a time was ‘doing so well with his land agency and auctioneering that he had taken offices in London and would soon take a house there’. Kelly’s Lincolnshire directory for 1889 shows that he also had a home in Holbeach, Serpentine House, and a business partnership, Hackworth and Abbott, in nearby Spalding. Will described himself as a ‘chartered accountant, land agent, valuer, auctioneer, and deputy registrar of births and deaths’. Running subsequently into financial difficulties, however, he was to end up as a long-term burden on his siblings before his death some time during the Second World War.22

Angell’s memoirs were most effusive about his sister Caroline Eliza Lane (‘Carrie’), ‘fifteen years older than myself and a very beautiful girl’, who acted as a supplementary mother. Though Carrie ‘was not a rebel in any sense, and didn’t let me get away with anything in conduct that was not considered proper by my mother . . . she showed me great affection’. In April 1882, when he was nine,
she ‘married the schoolmaster fellow’, John Sheehan-Dare, and moved away. Thereafter he saw relatively little of her, though she lived until 1943.23

He was more guarded about his eldest brother, Thomas Wright Lane (‘Tom’), who helped with his father’s business and then became a successful farmer and seed-merchant in his own right, because ‘he went along with my mother’s orthodox views’. Even so he admired Tom’s excellence at amateur dramatics, as did reviewers in the local paper,24 respected his worldly success, and became particularly fond of his children. Despite their early tensions they had become close long before Tom passed away in 1932.

He had little to say about his next brother in order of seniority, Alexander Reuben Lane (‘Alec’ or ‘Lic’), except that he started as an engineer and then briefly and disastrously attempted farming with him in California. Alexander seems to have been the hapless child who was nonetheless the apple of his mother’s eye: in 1890 Angell reported the twenty-three-year-old ‘Lic’ as being ‘at his wits’ end for a livelihood’; and eight years later his mother admitted that ‘poor Alec’ was ‘generally unfortunate’.25 His ill luck culminated in premature death in 1919.

Carrie Sheehan-Dare (sister) (reproduced by permission of Alice Angell Everard).

26 Living the Great Illusion
Angell was somewhat more forthcoming about Harry Angell Lane, whom he understood to feel ‘the same sort of restrictiveness’ about life in Holbeach that he did and a similar desire ‘to get away from the family atmosphere’.

Having qualified as a barrister, Harry retrained as a doctor; and his consequent ability to sustain an informed discussion with Angell about the latter’s physical ailments, as well as about his psychological moods, was a further reason why they were always on the most intimate of terms. They corresponded intensively until Harry died in 1955.

At first sight it is surprising, given Angell’s depiction of ‘a close family tie with all my brothers’ during their upbringing and of their having ‘engaged in childhood games together’, that his memoirs failed to name the two, both unmarried, who were closest to him in age. They made no reference at all to Arthur Frederick Lane, probably because he was handicapped, perhaps by Down’s Syndrome. Arthur was described merely as a ‘draper’s son’ in the 1891 census although he was nineteen, an age at which his brother Tom had been a ‘draper’s assistant’.
In February 1898 Will Abbott was to warn Angell: ‘Poor old Arthur seems to be drawing “his sad life” to a close. Father and Mother both write that he gets gradually worse.’ Less than a month afterwards, on 4 March, Arthur died in the Mansion House, aged twenty-seven. And Angell mentioned John Angell Lane (‘Jack’) only as the ‘baby brother’ whose death in adolescence gave rise to ‘a depth of sorrow never since experienced’. This bereavement occurred in July 1891.

Angell dwelt at length on his own youthful character and attitudes, and did so with some asperity, indicating his detachment from his younger self by adopting the third person for the opening part of After All. ‘The boy’ started life with the opinions to be expected of his ‘Conservative, English-Tory circle’: thus, having on a visit to London with his father heard an orator at Hyde Park Corner describe Queen Victoria as ‘a bloody German whore’, he ‘was shocked to the depths of his eleven-year-old soul’. Shortly afterwards he ‘caught the then fashionable republicanism’, yet retained conventional religious attitudes for a while: ‘the boy’ was thus on one occasion disconcerted to have it pointed out to him that in heaven even a republican would ‘be subject to the King of Kings’; and he was confirmed as a member of the Church of England. By his mid-teens, however, he had rejected orthodoxy in religion as well as in politics. His memoirs claim that, although this developing rebelliousness originated in a simple desire to get
back at his mother for the ‘senseless restrictions’ she imposed, it had been nurtured by four significant experiences.

The first occurred at the ‘preparatory school’ where he was sent for his first dose of institutional education. Angell did not name it, but it was Dagmar House in Hatfield, a boarding school belonging to the family of Carrie’s husband. After he had been attending it for some time,

there had blazed up some scandal concerning one of the masters and a matron. The child was too young to understand what it was all about, or why it should be important. But he had been accused of falsehood in some connection with it, and the Head, as punishment, had forbidden any other boy in the school to speak to him for a whole month.

For ‘a child of nine or ten’ this was a ‘ferocious punishment’, particularly since it was undeserved. He interpreted it as ‘his crucifixion’, and for several years privately commemorated the anniversary of its imposition. The experience, which he identified in his autobiography as one of the ‘roots’ of his eventual radicalism, not only made him aware of ‘the cruelty and injustice of my fellows as a whole’ but also ‘set up a certain liking for solitude’. He therefore ‘didn’t have many young intimate friends’ during his boyhood, and ‘invented a private alphabet . . . for the purpose of keeping a secret diary’. The ‘sending of the boy to Coventry’ may have exacerbated a sense of apartness which he already felt on account of his diminutive stature: he admitted always having ‘rather feared the young ruffians who made up a normal school’ and having ‘kept away from them’; moreover, he acknowledged a long-standing avoidance of sports, other than skating and sailing. His mistreatment at Dagmar House caused his father to withdraw him, over the objections of his mother ‘who argued that the boy had not been “hurt”; the Head had not even thrashed him’ – a further sign, to Angell, of his parents’ different levels of emotional intelligence. Soon afterwards, according to family tradition, the offending headmaster left the school, being succeeded by John Sheehan-Dare himself, who considerably improved it. After achieving fame, Angell was happy to return for an old boys’ reunion.

On coming back to Holbeach, Angell continued his education at the local grammar school, which was run from 1877 to 1891 by an able headmaster, the Revd Ralph Ram. Remembered by Angell as ‘a man of sensitiveness, culture, and understanding’, Ram prolonged his commitment to the established church by exemplifying the ‘civilising influence’ of which it was capable. No account survives of Angell’s schooling there, unless he was the ‘Lane ma.’ (i.e. ‘Lane major’, the senior sibling in the school at that time) whose performance in a scene from Richard II at speech day in the summer of 1883 was praised in the local paper for its ‘taste and feeling’. Angell certainly caught his family’s acting bug around this time: when two decades later Ram, by then Rector of Mepal, Ely, realized that the famous author Norman Angell was his former pupil Ralph Lane, he reminded him of his portrayal of Bottom in an outdoor performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Angell replied to Ram’s nostalgic letter with great warmth.
The second experience to which Angell later attributed his rebelliousness was having a shoe factory close to his home and being able to eavesdrop on its dozen or so workers as they discussed politics. According to his autobiography, all were republicans and radicals, one moreover ‘a great reader of Carlyle’; and their ‘talk, quite early, helped to indoctrinate him [‘the boy’] with political radicalism.’ On returning to Holbeach after his period at Dagmar House, Angell became ‘quite close friends for a time (much to his mother’s distress)’ with one of them, ‘a dark, black-haired gipsy-like character, extremely voluble and very revolutionary in his ideas’.

The third experience was that Angell claimed to have been radicalized by the general political climate in which he grew to maturity during the 1880s: ‘Men were beginning to find out the industrial revolution; to discover that steam and electricity had not really liberated England, but rather had filled it with slums and perhaps worse oppression and poverty, and were looking for salvation to new political ideas’. This was ‘the time when George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells were just beginning to come into prominence. It was the time of the Fabian Society; of all the fermentation of socialism and what not’; and the experience turned him into ‘a socialist, an agnostic, a republican’. These causes were not only exciting in their own right: they did not yet have to compete with ‘football, football betting, movies, and social entertainment generally’ for the attention of young people. ‘In the early eighties politics was the main entertainment – politics and theology’, Angell recalled, with the result that he ‘found himself caught up in’ debates about ‘dogma and doctrine’.

The fourth experience invoked by Angell as an explanation of his political attitudes came at the age of ‘about twelve’ when he ‘was taken away from an English school and chucked into a French lycée’ at St Omer, in the Pas de Calais. According to family tradition, this was the Lycée Alexandre Ribot, which Harry had already attended and to which Jack would later be sent. It was housed in a building that had begun as a Jesuit seminary with an English as well as a French section. Another fenlander, G.G. Coulton, had attended it in 1866, before the establishment of the Third Republic, at a time when that part of northern France had attracted a ‘little colony’ of English settlers ‘escaping high prices at home and perhaps sometimes from creditors’, and remembered there being ‘always an average of twenty or thirty English pupils’ in the school. Later, having become a formidable medieval scholar at Cambridge, Coulton set himself up as Angell’s leading bugbear: his claim to ‘know very well how astonishingly little learning of any kind the majority of English pupils picked up’ at St Omer was one of his digs at the author of The Great Illusion, whose slovenly way of presenting evidence he had grown to despise. However, in 1881 St Omer had laicized its public education, with the result that a number of private schools had been created for Catholics. Perhaps as a result of this upheaval, the lycée for a while lost its English contingent. Angell, who ‘arrived with nothing but schoolboy French’ and had travelled ‘quite by himself’ from London, at first found himself ‘the only English boy in a school of two hundred’. If his parents had sent him abroad to remove him from radicalizing influences, their plan misfired. His early days at the
lycée proved, at least with hindsight, an intellectual turning point. Given ‘a tough piece of French chocolate’ by the matron as a snack after his long journey, he placed it on his knee and tried to cut it with his penknife, but managed to drive the knife into his leg. Recuperating in the sanatorium for a fortnight, cared for by medical attendants who did not speak English, he wrote a note requesting a book in his native language, and was given the only one available, John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* (1859). As he later recognized, without ‘the loneliness, the isolation, the strange surroundings, the absence of all other distraction, the English obligation in the midst of it all to keep a stiff upper lip’, he would not have persevered with this unexpected offering. By doing so, however, he ‘entered a new world of thought’, with beneficial consequences for ‘most of my subsequent intellectual life’. In particular, having previously been ‘taught . . . that I should never listen to anything which might endanger my faith’, Angell now learned ‘that the only way to sift truth from error was to listen patiently to what could be said against an alleged truth’. It is likely that this account exaggerated the impact upon him of reading Mill: as we have seen, he also claimed that the shoemakers of Holbeach and the British intellectual climate of the 1880s had already exposed him to radical ideas. But the discipline of reading a substantial work of political theory may have crystallized previously inchoate thinking. Having discovered Mill and recovered from his wound, Angell settled into the regimented life of the lycée. He slept alongside twenty to thirty other boys in a dormitory supervised by a maître who occupied a bed on a raised platform, and washed properly only once a month ‘when the boys were marched en crocodile to the public baths in town’. Expected to learn facts by rote, he preferred to read the naturalists Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley, the social theorist Herbert Spencer, ‘and indeed all the heretics I could find’, and to argue about their views with his teacher.

In addition to giving him an opportunity to read, think, and debate, St Omer taught him self-reliance. On Thursdays and Sundays he, and two English boys who had arrived at the lycée after him, were allowed the run of the town. However, Angell grew to loathe his compatriots; and, to escape from them one free weekend, he walked forty miles on his own to Dunkirk, where he stayed overnight at an inn, discovering in his own room there ‘what he had been desiring for much of his young life spent with five intrusive brothers or in dormitories shared with scores of others – privacy and solitude’. Moreover, one Easter, instead of returning to Holbeach he visited Paris for a few days in order to see an exhibition: that his father not only allowed but encouraged this solitary excursion astonished his French headmaster. Angell was befriended by an elderly French officer, who initially mistook his lycée uniform for that of a military academy and invited him to dine with his family; but, as *After All* characteristically made clear, he ‘yielded to none of the much advertised temptations’ of the French capital. Angell left no estimate of the period of time he spent at St Omer, though his linguistic proficiency provides some clue. He claimed, after a slow start, to have ‘learned French relatively well’, eventually speaking it fluently enough to argue with his classmates and teacher on the basis of his ‘heretical’ reading. And even at an early stage in a long period spent as a journalist in Paris a decade later, he was
able to dictate news items in French, though, despite the further advantage of a year in Geneva later in his teens, he was never ‘a master of literary French’, relying on a native speaker to check his grammar and spelling for publication. All in all it is likely that he was at St Omer for the school years 1884/5, 1885/6, and 1886/7 – from the age of rising twelve to that of rising fifteen.

He remembered returning to Holbeach as a politicized teenager who liked to quote passages from Mill, Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer to his family, ‘all designed to show what hopeless unsophisticated boobs they were’. Eventually, Tom complained about constantly being told: ‘Our ideas are all wrong. We must give up our religion, our church, our party, our property. Nobody is right but you. You are infallible’. He insisted that this was particularly hurtful to their mother: ‘You try to show that what she has believed all her life is all nonsense: you put nothing in its place and cause the best mother in the world great misery.’ So he threatened his younger brother: ‘One more quotation from John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer or Darwin and in the interests of family peace I’m going to give you a first-class hiding.’ In his reminiscences, Angell recalled being brought ‘near to tears’, partly because ‘this onslaught contained ‘so much truth’, but also because it revealed ‘so much failure to understand what had moved this young heretic and reformer and made him such a turbulent rebel’. And in a private letter to his god-daughter he later acknowledged ‘regret’ at ‘the pain’ his ‘cocksure aggressiveness’ had inflicted upon his mother.

Perhaps it was to propitiate her, after having been made to feel guilty by Tom’s reproof, that Angell agreed to personal tuition, probably during the 1887/8 academic year, ‘vaguely with the idea of going to Cambridge University’, though this would have been at least a couple of years away. He studied with his admired former headmaster, Ram, himself a Cambridge graduate, who found him ‘to the manner born in putting your thoughts into good readable English’ and taught him sufficient Greek, Latin, and church history to add a scholarly veneer to some of the articles Angell was later to write, though far from enough to satisfy G.G. Coulton. However, he stubbornly refused to make similar progress in the piano lessons which, apparently at the same time, his mother also insisted he take: after ‘six months of painful learning’ he still could not ‘tell one note from another’.

His uncertain educational future was resolved, in the short term at least, by his father, who told his intelligent but directionless and awkward son:

You know some French. But there are certain defects in your education. I’m going to send you for a year to a commercial school in London where you will learn to become a really competent shorthand writer, learn things like accounts and business management, and where you can attend one of the colleges of London University for any other subjects which may take your fancy.

That Angell uncomplainingly travelled a hundred miles south to London and knuckled down to business studies showed both his respect for his father and his interest in the world of enterprise. From an allusion in a subsequent letter, it is likely that he attended the Metropolitan School at 27 Chancery Lane, which advertised a wide range of commercial and shorthand courses at this time.
He probably did so for the 1888/9 academic year, passing his sixteenth birthday during that time. He recalled lodging in the ‘chambers’ rented by Will Abbott for the London side of his auction business: commercial directories show that these were at 59/60 Chancery Lane – conveniently close to the Metropolitan School. He also remembered that his half-brother ‘gave me odd jobs to do in his London office to see how I have been getting along in business training’. However, he had already developed a capacity for combining practical entrepreneurship with idealistic politics. During his year in the capital city, which began in the aftermath of the strike of Bryant and May’s match girls and ended with the no less famous stoppage by London’s dockers, he ‘was caught up with all the revolutionary slogans, and echoed them all’, and found progressive causes ‘more exciting than any type of dissipation which London may have offered’. He ‘saw a good deal’ of Harry Lane ‘who was a medical student’ at the London Hospital and with whom he ‘talked much high-falutin’ philosophy’. Both felt themselves ‘to be rebels’ who rejoiced that they ‘were free of the family’, though Angell later concluded that Harry ‘was very much less of a heretic than I was’.57

Despite this rebellious politicking and philosophizing, Angell did not avail himself of the facilities of London University, as his father had supposedly suggested, and at the end of the year resolved ‘to become part of the workaday world’ rather than to continue his education. His choice of employment may have determined by the proficiency he had just acquired in shorthand: he ‘took a job on a country weekly paper’ in Weymouth, a coastal town a hundred and twenty miles south-west of London, where he worked ‘hard and successfully for six months’.58 The paper was the Southern Star, which had been launched in April 1888 to provide holidaymakers and local residents with ‘a fuller record of the life of the district than can be given by papers published at a distance’ whilst also being ‘a faithful and consistent advocate of healthy liberalism in matters social, religious and political’.59 It came under new management at the beginning of October 1889; and this must have been when Angell joined the ‘staff of reporters’ of which it then began to boast.60 He was thus able to tell the annual dinner of the Institute of Journalists sixty-seven years later that ‘the very first piece of journalism for which I was paid dates from the year 1889, which is the year the Institute was founded in its present form’. His commercial-school training ‘came in very useful because the members of the local council always liked to see their speeches reported in full, and I was the only man on the paper who could give full verbatim reports’. But the other skills involved in being ‘reporter, copy-reader, proof-reader, make-up man, and nearly everything else’ were acquired by trial and error over the autumn and winter of 1889/90. ‘There was no one on the paper who was a good journalist to teach me normal newspaper work. I just picked it up myself, seeing what had to be done’, he later recalled.61 That he was essentially self-taught helps to explain the breezy casualness that was so often to mark his output as a writer.

The strange combination of social diffidence and intellectual confidence with which he began his working life was revealed in a letter written on 18 February 1890 from his lodgings at 9 Dorset Place, Chapelhay, Weymouth, to his brother
Harry. He admitted having become unsociable through seeing ‘so few people’, partly because he never allowed ‘anyone an opportunity of snubbing me’, though he intended to rectify this by joining an amateur dramatic society. He reminisced about having gone with Harry to see Mrs Annie Besant – formerly a prominent secularist but at that time moving towards Theosophy under the influence of the charismatic mystic Madame H.P. Blavatsky – spend a day in court. This can only refer to Mrs Besant’s libel action against the Revd Edwin Hoskyn for claiming that her birth-control literature promoted promiscuity: it came to trial on Friday 15 November 1889 and was lost because of the judge’s evident bias against her. Angell must have travelled up to London for the occasion, which he would have been free to do given that the Southern Star went to press on Thursday evenings; and he was probably responsible for the reprinting in its next issue of strictures against Hoskyn and the judge that had first appeared the Pall Mall Gazette. Above all Angell used his communication with Harry to ‘let off steam’ on the subject of Christianity, which he considered to have ‘been disproved’. He confessed that

iconoclasm becomes somewhat a passion; I find a morbid excitement in reducing to absurdities what I previously held as sacred truths. . . . I cannot understand the position of some people, who admitting their disbelief in christianity still make a profession of adhering to it. I must be either a churchman or an anti-churchman – and I am not a churchman.

He did not yet complain about his health, observing instead that his ‘cold bath every morning’ suited his constitution. He was also planning to sail to Cherbourg with a colleague on the Southern Star.

The letter to his brother further revealed that he was looking overseas for a better job, having already applied unsuccessfully for one on the New York Herald. Soon afterwards he obtained a position in Switzerland, where his experience of catering journalistically for tourists, as well as his knowledge of French, must have helped his application to edit a new paper targeted at English-speaking émigrés and visitors. This was the Geneva Telegraph, of which a trial edition had appeared on 20 January 1890, billed as ‘An English newspaper under the patronage of the “Association des Interets de Geneve” and organ of the English and Americans in Switzerland’. Run from 3 rue Lévrier by a Scotsman with the surname Gordon, it began regular publication on 17 April 1890, appearing twice a week until 8 October, the end of the tourist season, after which it became a weekly. Angell seems to have gone out to Geneva around the beginning of April, and was to spend ‘a year or a little more’ in that city. He quickly discovered that Gordon was a hard taskmaster and that producing a paper in English using compositors ignorant of that language made proof-reading very onerous. However, his boss ‘held out the prospect of ultimate partnership’ if he did well; and during his periodic absences Angell enjoyed ‘a little liberty’, as he put it to Harry.

The seventeen-year-old journalist found much more than an exacting new job in Geneva during the spring of 1890. He discovered two foreign communities that in their different ways intrigued him, if only because their female members were
more spirited than the women he had previously encountered. The first, centred on the English and American churches, comprised Anglophone émigrés brought together by a need for recreation. It was within this community that, as After All noted, Angell ‘took part in amateur theatricals as actor, manager, producer’, and that, as his contemporary letters attested, he enjoyed formative emotional experiences. The second, centred on the university, comprised continental intellectuals, students, and exiles linked mainly by political interests. This was the community upon which Angell’s memoirs dwelled, albeit somewhat inconsistently. According to his autobiography, he had accepted a job in Geneva ‘because it would enable him to attend lectures and classes at the University and consort with Russian and other revolutionaries who foregathered there’. Yet according to his reminiscences, he ‘discovered that there was a university’ in that city only after he arrived. Either way, Geneva’s foreign students extended his horizons. Although regarding himself as something of a rebel, he had in fact come to Switzerland as a Victorian secular radical of a conventional and somewhat prim kind. Mixing with socialist and anarchist bohemians, and joining an intellectual club, the Cercle des Sociologistes et des Amis de la Science Contemporaine, exposed him to new ideas and lifestyles. No wonder he was to make so much of this brief and tenuous academic connection – for example, claiming to have ‘run away from the University of Geneva in order to become a cowboy’, and mentioning it in all his Who’s Who entries – though he was never officially registered there as a student.

These new influences were apparent in articles in the Geneva Telegraph that, though unsigned, were clearly Angell’s work. For example, in the issue of 20 April 1890 the paper’s stock-in-trade accounts of royal visits and of the local cricket-and-lawn-tennis club’s activities were incongruously followed by an item headed ‘Swiss Socialism’, which reported that ‘the Genevese socialists are arranging for a monster demonstration, which is to take place on the 1st May, when they also intend to visit the tomb of Lassalle on the French frontier’. And a week later considerable attention was accorded to a labour demonstration in Hyde Park, London. Similarly, the changing role of women was the subject of an article on 4 May: it noted approvingly that ‘a large number of women in Switzerland are employed in occupations, which in England are regarded as belonging exclusively to the sterner sex’, and observed that the closure of St Petersburg’s female medical school had driven Russian women aspiring to become doctors to study in Geneva instead.

Political items became less common in the late spring and early summer of 1890, presumably as a result of pressure from his boss, which tempted Angell to resign, though in the event, as he informed Harry on 5 June, he could not ‘bring myself to the point’. But after Gordon went on an extended holiday Angell slipped his leash. Having on 11 August paid warm tribute to Herbert Spencer on his seventieth birthday, he from mid-September regularly devoted space to ‘The Revolution in Tessin’, a political struggle of liberals against clericals in the Swiss canton of Ticino. Consequently, when his boss returned to work in the autumn, Angell was urged to ‘keep my views out of the columns of his paper’, an injunction that he considered ‘restrictive of journalistic freedom’. In October, he
exasperatedly gave Gordon three months’ notice of his departure. Though he had not found another position, he at that stage intended to leave in mid-January, come what may, as he reported to Harry in November with an injunction not to inform their parents.74

It is evident that Angell’s options already included making a speculative land investment in California: he later recalled being impressed by ‘some magazine article’s description of life in the then developing west’; and a letter about such a scheme written later in the year mentioned a Geneva-based friend as a possible partner.75 But he also sought to improve his journalistic prospects by extending his literary credentials. ‘The club at the University to which I belong has asked me to do a pamphlet and I think I will’, he reported to his father.76 The resulting work was called The Dulness of Life, its argument, as summarized to Harry, being ‘that life to a great many is shockingly dull; that with all our progress in learning we have not learned better how to enjoy life; that with all our material progress we have made little intellectual progress, and it is intellectual life which is the essence of human life.’77 He sent it to William Stewart Ross, a London-based secularist who under the pseudonym Saladin published the Agnostic Journal. In his weekly column ‘To Correspondents’ on 1 November 1890 Ross inserted a complimentary note: ‘Ralph Lane – Your pamphlet, “The Dulness of Life,” is more to our liking than any essay we have read for a long time back. It evinces literary facility and that independent and individualist vision that penetrates through life’s conventional decorum into its real hollowness and inanity.’ Angell was thrilled by this comment, and by a local request for permission to translate it into French.78 Although the English original cannot now be traced, a French translation by J. Luti appeared soon afterwards, and must be the ‘appalling piece’, published in Geneva, dated 1891, and written in French, which Angell was to rediscover among his papers more than sixty years later.79 Triste Vie! Plaidoyer en faveur de la libre individualité, libre pensée et libre éducation by ‘Ralph Lane, Correspondent de divers journaux anglais, Membre du Cercle des Sociologistes et des Amis de la Science contemporaine de Genève, etc.’ survives in a reprint of 1892. Angell had pegged his fifteen-page pamphlet on a silly-season article in which the Daily Telegraph had asked whether life was worth living. His reply was that the great majority even of well-off people were bored because their depressing religion and fact-grubbing education had served only to ‘deflower the virginity’ of their spirit, a fate escaped however by American women, who were conspicuously more charming than their English sisters. He concluded with a call for the foundation of ‘une Ligue de Droit commun pour la défense des libertés et des droits de l’individu’.80 Thus even during Angell’s phase of adolescent rebellion, the revolution he sought was intellectual and political rather than economic: he did not criticize capitalism, and indeed had entrepreneurial enthusiasm, as his Californian scheme showed. His emphasis on the need for attitudinal more than structural change contained a very early germ of his ‘illusion’ thesis, just as his reference to education anticipated his later preoccupation with that subject. Yet essentially he was still making a teenager’s protest against his mother’s social and religious respectability.
Despite complaining about boredom, during this autumn of 1890 he actively participated in the social activities of the Anglo-American community. Echoing his pamphlet, he informed Harry of his discovery that women from the United States were ‘a great improvement’ on their English counterparts, having ‘freed themselves from the yoke of social orthodoxy’ whilst remaining ‘nonetheless proper’.\(^8\) A sign of their spontaneity was that ‘the American minister’s family proposed giving a sort of drawing room charade’, and allowed itself to be persuaded by Angell to perform a farce instead. In mid-November Angell was still unsure whether this would be a private or a public show. In the event it seems to have been given privately late in that month, with Angell, in what may have been his first flirtation, reaching what he later called ‘the jolly-drunk-love stage’ with the American girl who played the female lead.\(^8\)

Perhaps this new susceptibility to feminine allure explains the passage about sexual scandals overtaking European politicians which appeared in his ‘Retrospect’ of 1890 for the \textit{Geneva Telegraph}:

How often has woman played the ware-wolf [sic] in the lives of political men. Not even the passionate efforts of a whole nation could save Mr Parnell from the seductive and fatal grasp of Mrs O’Shea. Sir Charles Dilke handed over his seat at Chelsea. General Boulanger sacrificed the Boulangists to Madame X. Don Carlos preferred an orgy to the crown of Spain, and Skobeleff blighted the hopes of the Slavonic world by a suicide of debauchery.\(^8\)

His apprehensions about the female sex were increased when ‘toward the end of his stay in Geneva’, according to \textit{After All}, he was ‘sickened and terrified’ by the ‘amorous advances’ of a ‘raddled old woman of sixty or thereabouts, who had been associated in some way with Madame Blavatsky and was full of dubious oriental mysticism’. She proposed that Angell help her establish a sort of cult in Cairo, promising that it would offer ‘lots of fun and lots of money’.\(^8\) Just conceivably this was an embellished account of an encounter with Julia Purucker, the eccentric wife of the pastor of the local American church, who, as just noted, had helped to instigate the amateur dramatics. Her demeanour certainly alarmed Angell, who was to inform Harry shortly after returning to England: ‘You know I thought I had left that dreadful old woman Mrs Purucker in the Sahara desert, and now she turns up at Liverpool, and talks about coming down here. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!’\(^8\) She also had mystical tendencies: Some years later, by which time her husband, whom Angell came to regard as ‘a downright bad ’un’,\(^8\) was back in the United States looking for work, she was to send Angell ‘a Confidential letter’ from Geneva explaining that she was in urgent need of money, boasting that she had become ‘a truly wonderful Sybil’, and asking him to advertise these clairvoyant skills in an English-language society paper in Paris, where Angell was then working.\(^8\) Moreover, she was connected with the cult founded by Madame Blavatsky, herself at one time resident in Cairo: indeed, Mrs Purucker’s strait-laced and serious son, Hobart, was thirty-eight years later to become head of the Theosophical Society, by then styling himself Dr Gottfried de Purucker.\(^8\) Since Hobart was to attempt homesteading in California at the same
time as Angell, and even to lodge with him during that time, he must have been
the Geneva-based friend with whom Angell had been planning land speculation.

As he worked out his notice in this eccentric social environment, Angell’s
contributions to the Geneva Telegraph remained political. For example, his
‘Retrospect’ for 1890 went out of its way to claim epochal significance for the
industrial action taken by London dockers the previous year:

Twelve months ago the commercial world was only just recovering from a blow that had
shaken it to its foundations. That blow was the London Dock Strike. It has been the most
remarkable instance of the rise and process of democratic power as exemplified in labour
organisations that the world has ever seen . . . [and] has dispersed from the minds of those
in political authority the last vestige of hope that it was possible to be secure and to ignore
the demands of the working classes.

And on 14 January 1891, frustrated with the repressiveness of the Tsarist regime,
he came close to advocating revolutionary violence, admitting himself ‘tempted
to wish with Mark Twain that “if dynamite is the only means of getting rid of
such a government – then thank God for dynamite!”’. However, by the time he
composed his memoirs Angell had come to realize how inappropriate it had been
for ‘an agnostic, a heretic, a revolutionary’ like himself ‘to preach his heretical
and revolutionary doctrines’ to a readership that was not only ‘bourgeois’ but
‘churchy’.

His behaviour at Geneva was characteristic of his youthful persona as
he later came to understand it: ‘a dreadfully serious – awfully serious – young
man’, even a ‘tiresome young prig’, albeit one who at least did not seek his ‘escape
in cynicism or dissipation, in indulgence of the senses, in the trivia of sport’.

Even so, Angell’s last months in Geneva were also marked by an intoxicating act
of escapism. On 19 January 1891, just three weeks after his eighteenth birthday,
he produced and took the male lead in two playlets performed publicly in
the local Salle des Amis de l’Instruction with the proceeds going to the
Geneva Branch of the Girls’ Friendly Society. He publicized his show in
the Geneva Telegraph, announcing: ‘Tickets can be obtained from the manager,
Mr R. Lane, 3 rue Lévrier’. The following week he printed a review, which accused
him of exhibiting ‘a little too much movement and energy’ in the first piece – a
blemish which Angell attributed to half a bottle of champagne beforehand to
calm his nerves – but thought him ‘in much better form’ in the second. Despite
complaining that the long interval between the playlets had tried the patience
of the nearly two-hundred-strong audience, the reviewer allowed that this ‘may
be excused’ in view of the fact that ‘the manager’ had to superintend ‘a complete
change of scene’, as well as to transform his own physical appearance, between
the two. The reviewer also acknowledged the important contribution made by
the amateur actresses, including Dorothy, one of Mrs Purucker’s daughters.

Angell followed this social success by contentedly ‘counting over the English and
American girls I know here and they tot up to nearly 50’.

Fatefully, high excitement soon gave way to ill-health of a kind that thereafter
became a life-long accompaniment to emotional or intellectual challenge. Apart
from some indigestion, his physical condition had not previously been a matter
for concern. Indeed, in his early months in Switzerland he had enthused about the invigorating effects of walking up its mountains and swimming in its lakes, just as he had extolled the benefits of a daily cold bath at Weymouth. However, on 10 February 1891 he sent Harry the first of many letters of valetudinarian anxiety:

Immediately after those theatricals I felt my nervous system begin to run down. I had neuralgia most maddeningly (a thing I have never had before) and felt generally exhausted. I thought it would pass, but it has not done. I am eternally ‘lasse’, weary, lacking vitality; that which was formerly a pleasure is now a bore . . . . As soon as possible I shall go home and rest on my oars a bit. I have had dyspepsia severely (also a thing that never troubled me much before) and I’ll coach myself into good health for a new effort in a new field.

That ‘new field’, itself a probable contributor to his neuralgia and dyspepsia, was, he informed his brother, a commitment to expose ‘The Great Fraud’ of life after death:

My mission is to seek what’s true. I will not sacrifice that which appears to me true, for the most beautiful fable the ingenuity of man ever devised. For my reward here I expect kicks . . . . Yet I am quite content that the curse of this generation and the blessing of a future [one] shall be my only reward.

At just eighteen he was thus already a would-be slayer of a great illusion.

By the time Angell had portentously announced his mission in life, he had ceased to write the Geneva Telegraph’s leading articles: from 4 February to 13 May 1891 these, previously and subsequently anonymous, appeared over the initials ‘H.A.G.’, suggesting that Gordon had taken them over, perhaps until he could recruit a new editor. However, Angell had extended his deadline for leaving Geneva, probably because of his improving social life, and still contributed to the paper. He wrote the critical notice of a rival theatrical group that appeared on 25 February, for example, as he mentioned the following day in a letter to Harry that also announced his intention to leave Switzerland ‘about the middle of April’. This time Angell seems to have adhered to his self-imposed timetable, since, although he was not back in time for the English census taken on 5 April, he was to write from Holbeach to Harry on 25 May. His subsequent reference to having left Mrs Purucker in the Sahara desert may simply have meant that, when last heard of, she was heading in that direction; but it may alternatively indicate that before returning home he fitted in a spring break in north Africa with some of his Genevan acquaintances. In any case, on his way home he stopped off at his old school in St Omer to visit his cheery sixteen-year-old brother Jack.

Having reached Lincolnshire by the last week in May 1891, Angell ‘was for some months at a loose end being again in the family circle’. As on his return from St Omer four years previously, tension with his mother soon developed: his letter of 25 May to Harry complained of her attempting to modify his ‘theological opinions by reading me extracts from that commonplace little gospel-monger Spurgeon’ – a reference to Charles Haddon Spurgeon, purveyor of evangelical sermons of a particularly sentimental kind. He also resented having ‘to relinquish
the pursuit of that which really gives me the greatest happiness, in order, for the Mater’s sake, to acquire a fair share of what is vulgarly known as success’, though he was self-aware enough to liken his desire to embark on a secularist crusade to a religious ‘conversion’.99 Discussions about whether he should go to Cambridge supposedly restarted, though a year in commercial school and eighteen months in journalism would have been unusual preparations for this. His own thoughts, as revealed in a letter to Harry, were increasingly focused on investing £150 in the development of land in California, the money being either put up by Hobart Purucker, as already noted, or borrowed commercially, with the aim of realizing a sufficient capital gain within seven or eight years to return home.100 While Angell’s future was thus under discussion, tragedy struck the Lane household: Jack suddenly contracted ‘blood poisoning in the Lycée’ and, ‘within a few days of reaching home’, died on 13 July.101 It must have been during this uncertain and painful spring and early summer that, as mentioned no fewer than three times in his autobiography, Angell ‘lay under the trees near his Lincolnshire home, reading, once more, John Stuart Mill’s Essay on Liberty; and eating chocolate creams’ while ‘taking stock of his life, its disillusions and disenchantments’ and weighing ‘the pros and cons of emigration’.102 However, a decision was postponed for three months because, as he reported to Harry: ‘The sub-editorship of an Ipswich evening journal has been offered to me, which I shall probably accept at least pro. tem., at a screw of £120.’103 The offer was from the Star of the East, a four-page half-penny paper that consisted of ‘Sporting Twinkles’, racing results, reports of accidents, and a few political items. He took the job, still grieving deeply for his younger brother. ‘Jack’s death still tortures me in solitude’, Angell reported to Harry from Ipswich, admitting that it had for a while tempted him to reconsider his denial of an afterlife, before he arrived at the conclusion: ‘He who looks to the next world for consolation runs the risk of never restoring his equilibrium in this.’104

Angell left Holbeach in the second week of August 1891, never to live there for any length of time again. A Star of the East editorial on 15 August that bemoaned the gloom of the English Sunday – a dig at the maternal sabbatarianism to which residence in Holbeach had again subjected him – was the earliest attributable to him. It was followed three days later by another bearing his secularist hallmark: in reaction against evangelically inspired reports that two convicted murderers, Sadler and Turner, had gone to their executions ‘in a most pious frame of mind’, the editorial complained that by the logic of such ‘moralists’ it was ‘far better for our chances hereafter to be a Sadler or a Turner than a Bradlaugh, or a Darwin, or a Herbert Spencer’. An anti-Tsarist item that appeared on 4 September was definitely Angell’s since it contained Mark Twain’s ‘thank God for dynamite!’ aphorism, which he had used in a similar context in the Geneva Telegraph eight months previously. Angell’s hand can also be detected in political comments that began appearing in the Star of the East, such as: ‘Compare with the colossal sum we spend on war the paltry sum we spend on education, and then ask whether we are not afflicted with insanity.’105 It was unsurprising therefore that he ‘repeated his Geneva experience’ in Ipswich: into a paper that ‘sold mainly on
the basis of the racing and football news’, as he later admitted, he inserted inappropriate leaders, particularly ones that the paper’s manager, a Methodist, considered impious. Of the two After All mentioned as having caused particular offence, the first, accusing General Booth of the Salvation Army, at that time touring South Africa, of travelling like a prince, can be found in the issue for 5 October. However, it appeared without the ending he claimed to have given it (‘Christ rode into Jerusalem on an ass. Mr Booth drove into Kimberley in a carriage and four white horses. The first S.A. did not pay as well as the second.’), which suggests that he had been required to cut this. The second editorial to cause offence, on ‘The Mistakes of Moses’ – influenced by one of Angell’s heroes, the American secularist Robert Ingersoll, who had written a book with that title – has not been located, and was probably censored in its entirety. But the paper appeared with numerous items calculated to entertain the writer more than the reader: one gratuitously criticized a prominent British Methodist minister, Hugh Price Hughes, dubbing him ‘the Rev. What Price Hughes’; a second summarized a learned English Historical Review article on the Swiss use of the referendum, a subject that presumably interested Angell, as a recent resident of Geneva, more than the average sports-fan in Ipswich; and a third defended a worthy but obscure international gathering of pacifists and pacifists, the Universal Peace Congress at Rome. After predictable rows with the manager, Angell again resigned, ‘on the ground of editorial dignity and journalistic probity’, as he later self-mockingly put it.

According to his autobiography, this setback, which probably occurred in the second week of November 1891, revived the long-running family debate about whether he should go to Cambridge: his ‘mother had set her heart’ on this, whereas he was merely ‘indifferent’. This outcome was less likely than ever, given that he was by then almost nineteen and had been working for more than two years. In any event, he would have lost as well as gained from a university education. His reasoning and use of evidence would have become more disciplined, enabling him to deal better with both the cross-pressures in his thinking and the psycho-educational book that ultimately remained unwritten. But the working experiences that were to provide him with vital raw material would probably have passed a Cambridge graduate by; and the cognitive grit from which he was to generate the pearl of his ‘illusion’ thesis might well have been smoothed out of him by a college tutor.

Now, in the final weeks of 1891, Angell resolved to emigrate, at least for a few years. His motives were characteristically mixed: he wished to improve his health, according to a contemporary letter; he desired ‘to be a manual worker’ in line with the principles he had acquired in Geneva, according to his reminiscences; and he hoped that ‘in the new western world he might make one of the fortunes which seemed so common’ and thereby render himself ‘independent of newspaper proprietors who put “profit before reform”’, according to his autobiography. Perhaps, although there is no corroborating evidence, his need for personal success was increased by the recent progress of several of his brothers. Tom, a pillar of the local Church of England Temperance Society and still living at home,
had that summer added a grocery firm to his business interests in Holbeach, and was beginning to prosper.\textsuperscript{111} Harry had been admitted to the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in August.\textsuperscript{112} And even Alexander, living at Burgess Hill in Sussex, was not only in business as an engineer but getting married in Tottenham, north London, on 11 November.\textsuperscript{113}

Angell ‘knew he could not trust himself to discuss the matter calmly with his mother’, and so after leaving Ipswich accepted an invitation to stay a day or two with ‘a friend’ in London – possibly in connection with Alexander’s wedding. From there he put his emigration proposal to his parents by letter. His mother was upset at Angell’s transatlantic ambitions; but his father understood them, and sent his son £50 for travelling and living expenses until he found work. Given his frugal lifestyle and residence at home between his jobs in Geneva and Ipswich, Angell must also have had savings of his own after two years in gainful employment. He booked a passage on the Cunard liner \textit{Etruria}, and ‘within a few weeks’, on or around 14 December 1891, set out from Liverpool for New York. He had as yet taken only a small preliminary step – discovering the human propensity to indulge in the illusion, as he saw it, of religion – towards the thesis that was to make him famous, though he had acquired all the necessary pugnacity. Hitherto a youth with too many opinions, he was about to become, in \textit{After All}’s words, ‘a man of too much action, desiring to do too many things at once’.\textsuperscript{114}

\textbf{NOTES}

5. See T.A. Lane’s obituary in the \textit{Spalding Guardian}, 7 Apr. 1900.
7. Ibid., 6–9, 296.
8. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890: BSU.
11. Ibid. 8 May 1897, 8; 12 Feb. 1898, 8.
12. Ibid. 9 Apr. 1898, 8; 4 June 1898, 8; 4 Feb. 1899, 8; 14 Apr. 1900, 5. M.A. Lane to children, 10 Apr. 1900 (typescript copy): BSU.
15. ‘Reminiscences’, 1–2.
18. ‘Reminiscences’, 1, 3, 5.
Conforming, Rebelling: December 1872 – December 1891

21. Ibid., 8–9.
22. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890: BSU. AA, 5, 28. Will Abbott was still alive in early 1939: see A to H.A. Lane, 6 Feb. 1939: BSU.
23. ‘Reminiscences’, 6, 8. The date of Caroline’s marriage can be inferred from that of her golden-wedding celebration: see TT, 11 Jan. 1932, 1. AA, 5.
25. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890; Mother to A, 9 Oct. [1898] (typescript copy, misdated 1896): BSU.
27. Ibid., 8.
30. AA, 11n.
31. Ibid., 13, 16. See also ‘Reminiscences’, 4, where he remembered being ten.
35. AA, 8–9. ‘Reminiscences’, 2, 9, 15, 17–18. A list of Angell’s engagements for January 1914 includes a Dagmar House Old Boys’ Dinner: BSU.
38. Spalding Guardian, 4 Aug. 1883, 4. It is likely both that his elder brothers had left the school (the school report for Harry that survives in the Everard papers was for the previous year), and that his youngest brother Jack was also a pupil. However, it is possible that there were other Lanes in the town, to whom this was a reference.
40. AA, 26.
42. ‘Reminiscences’, 9.
43. Willson, ‘Sir Norman Angell and the Last Illusion’ (draft), 18: BSU.
44. A. Derville et al., Histoire de Saint Omer (Lille, 1981), 249.
47. Derville et al., Histoire, 182.
49. AA, 18–19.
52. A to A. Lane, 13 June 1956: Everard papers.
53. R.A. Ram to A, 31 Mar. [1914]: BSU.
55. Ibid., 15.
56. There was a reference to ‘a Met. Sch. shorthand’, presumably a teacher of shorthand at the Metropolitan School, in A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890: BSU.
60. The publisher until 27 Sept. 1889 was Charles John Phillips; from 4 Oct. 1889 it was Sherren and Son.
62. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890: BSU.
64. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Feb. 1890: BSU.
65. Willson, ‘Sir Norman Angell and the Last Illusion’, 42–4. This describes Gordon as the proprietor, though he was probably the manager, given that contemporary press guides give the owner as Maurice Richter.
66. AA, 2.
67. A to H.A. Lane, 8 May 1890 (typescript copy) and 5 (and 10) June 1890: BSU.
68. AA, 2.
70. B. Falk, Five Years Dead, 1937, 263.
71. I am grateful to the archivist Dominique Anne Torrione-Vouilloz for confirming that Ralph Lane does not appear in the University of Geneva’s records.
72. A to H.A. Lane, 5 June 1890 (typed copy): BSU.
73. ‘Reminiscences’, 21.
74. A to H.A. Lane, 14 Nov. 1890: BSU.
76. Cited in discarded draft, AA: BSU box 57.
77. A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [probably late 1890] (typescript copy): BSU.
78. Ibid., 14 Nov. 1890: BSU.
80. R. Lane, Triste Vie!: Plaidoyer en faveur de la libre individualité, libre pensée et libre éducation, traduit de l’anglais par J. Luti, sociologiste (Geneva: Imprimerie Charles Pfeffer, 1892), 6–7, 8, 12–13, 15. Copy kindly supplied by the Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.
81. A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [c. Oct./Nov. 1890] [transcript copy]: BSU.
82. A to H.A. Lane, ‘Times Ips[wich] Saturday Evening’ [late 1891] (typescript copy): BSU. It refers to a letter of Harry’s written on 2 Dec. 1890 which was a reply to one Angell had written ‘just after the theatricals’ in Nov. 1890.
84. AA, 23.
85. A to H.A. Lane, ‘Times, Ips., Saturday Evening’ (typescript copy): BSU. The transcript garbled the name Purucker, giving it first as Packer and then Parker, and also gave an inaccurate provenance: there was no Ipswich Times; Angell wrote it while working on the Star of the East.
86. A to H.A. Lane, 20 Jan. 1893: BSU.
87. J. Purucker to A., 4 Apr. [1899] (the year can be inferred from the mention of Hobart/ Gottfried Purucker being then on his way back to Europe); See also G. de Purucker to A, 25 June 1931: BSU.
89. ‘Reminiscences’, 21.
92. A to H.A. Lane, 26 Feb. 1891: BSU.
93. Ibid., 5 June 1890 (typed copy): BSU.
94. Ibid., 10 Feb. [1891] (typed copy, misdated 1890): BSU.
95. Ibid., 26 Feb. 1891: BSU.
96. Discarded draft, AA: BSU.
99. A to H.A. Lane, ‘Holbeach, Sunday’ (typescript copy): BSU.
100. A to H.A. Lane, ‘1891’ (typescript copy): BSU.
102. AA, 1, 14, 33.
103. A to H.A. Lane, ‘Holbeach, Sunday’ (typescript copy): BSU.
104. Ibid., ‘1891’ (typescript copy): BSU.
105. Star of the East, 4 Sept. 1891.
106. AA, 2.
108. Ibid., 3.
109. Ibid., 24.
111. Spalding Guardian, 6 and 20 June 1891.
113. Ibid., 17 Nov. 1891, 1.
Experiencing Misfortune, Diagnosing Patriotism: December 1891 – July 1904

The dozen years after Angell’s decision to emigrate were unfortunate in worldly and personal terms: his attempt to find prosperity and fulfilment in the United States, whilst very exciting, went badly awry; and although on returning to Europe he discovered a more comfortable existence as a journalist in Paris, a disastrous marriage and the failure of his attempt to rescue an ailing newspaper plunged him into depression. This was, however, a time of significant development in intellectual terms: discarding adolescent revolutionism, though not his appetite for argument, Angell began to think for himself about how the real needs of the three large democracies in which he had lived related to the populist nostrums that excited their electorates; and as a result he became especially irritated by what he saw as the irrational phenomenon of patriotism. While making it the subject of his ‘first book proper’, he was belatedly made aware that his instinctively liberal approach differed from that of a radical such as J.A. Hobson, who blamed international conflict on economic interests rather than, as Angell did, on nationalist passions. This was Angell’s first exposure to a developing debate among progressives about the causes of war, which, in conjunction with changing international circumstances, was to pull him in several different ideological directions over the next quarter of a century.

* * * * *

The first of Angell’s fifty-two Atlantic crossings took seven days, on six of which he was sea-sick and on the seventh had ‘an exciting flirtation with an extremely pretty American girl’, as he was to boast to his brother Harry. He arrived in New York on 21 December 1891, the Etruria’s passenger list claiming that Ralph N. Lane was twenty years of age, although he was five days short of his nineteenth birthday as he walked off the ship. Angell remembered having paid a fare of only about three pounds, and needing no passport or other form of identification to enter the United States. The customs officer did not inspect his baggage, but inquired what was in his hip-pocket, and on being told: ‘A six-shooter’, merely replied: ‘Keep it there.’ Although Angell claimed that he did not replace this ‘cheap Belgian contraption’ when he lost it a few months afterwards and that even while ‘out West’ he carried a gun only when given one by his boss on a trip into Mexico, he also cited a subsequent letter informing Harry that he kept watch
'with a revolver' while at a camp in eastern California populated by particularly tough-looking sheepshearers.4

Angell then made the mistake of taking ‘a hack’ into the city without having haggled in advance over the price: ‘It cost me almost as much to get myself and baggage a few hundred yards from the ship to a hotel as it did to get them across the Atlantic.’5 That evening, he made his way to the Fifth Avenue house of his secularist hero, Robert Ingersoll, who was very welcoming, showing his young admirer around his ‘somewhat gorgeous house’, and gently pulling his leg. According to Angell’s autobiography: ‘I was admiring a huge vase of true Ali Baba dimensions, and he remarked, “On festival occasions we fill it with whisky and everybody can come and help themselves.” Whether this was a joke or he actually did fill a vase as tall as a man with whisky I could not decide.’6

After the shortest of stays in New York in late December 1891 Angell journeyed south by railroad, stopping initially for a few days at Edenton, North Carolina, before moving on to Louisiana in the new year because he thought that ‘it would be rather interesting to get a job on a plantation where I could see something of the life of the South and where perhaps my French would come in’.7 The experience proved to be less romantic than he had hoped. He initially stayed in a ‘a third-rate hotel in New Orleans, occupied mainly by a fifth-rate theatrical troupe performing at some vaudeville theatre in the city, and occupied also by multitudes upon multitudes of bed-bugs’. He soon obtained ‘a job on a farm in the bayou territory’ but was disappointed to discover that he was ‘expected to be . . . a sort of tutor to children’, though he also worked ‘as a foreman’. He was soon informing his sister that he ‘could never live in this southern country’ because the harsh treatment of its ex-slave population ‘would get so much on my nerves that I should end by going off my head’. He was particularly struck by the harmful economic effect of racial discrimination: ‘the negro worker must not be educated because he must be kept in his place; the white who had some education fought shy of anything like manual labour because it was a thing associated with negroes’.8 It must have been during this stay in Louisiana that he ‘was the helpless witness of the beginnings of a lynching’, an upsetting experience that he was still recalling seventy-three years later.9

From the time, apparently around the end of January 1892, that he decided to move on from New Orleans to California, until his eventual departure from the United States nearly five and half years later, Angell’s memoirs blurred fact and fiction to such a degree as to present a major biographical challenge. As will shortly be seen, they claimed that it took him several months to reach California, because on the way he met a ranch foreman called Covert, ‘a lanky six-footer who might have stepped out of the pages of Bret Harte (of whom I was an enchanted reader)’,10 and went off with him to work for substantial periods on two separate properties. Yet records of Angell’s land dealings in the San Joaquin valley suggest that he was in Bakersfield by the second week of February 1892, in which case he must have travelled directly and done his ranching with Covert later. Angell’s recollections of this first sojourn in the United States were avowedly sketchy. In After All he admitted having forgotten ‘the precise sequence of events’, such as
'just when it was I filed my homestead claims', though he remembered ‘a multitude of isolated incidents’. Taking the characteristic view that ‘the precise sequence does not matter’, he invented one. Thus, despite the fact that a very early draft of his autobiography had acknowledged uncertainty as to when and where he had met Covert, the published version came up with a confident account of their first encounter.11 And, although W.O. Covert verifiably became a good friend,12 his role in Angell’s western adventures was given a spurious specificity and centrality in After All, which accorded him almost all the characteristics of ‘John Pavey’, the embodiment of cowboy commonsense to whom Angell had devoted an earlier magazine article entitled ‘The Man Who Taught Me Most’.13 Revealingly, a draft of Angell’s autobiography had described the ‘Pavey’ of that article as a ‘composite character’,14 which implied that the Covert of After All was the same.

Angell’s memoirs passed over the fact that, as early as 28 January 1892, he bought some land near Bakersfield. He presumably did so while still in Louisiana: such property was widely marketed outside California; and Angell’s plot may have been chosen for him by the American friend from Geneva, Hobart Purucker, with whom he had long been planning land speculation in California, and who had travelled there around the time of his eighteenth birthday in January 1892.15 On the 29th of that month, Angell’s purchase the previous day of some 80 freehold acres a dozen miles south-east of Bakersfield was registered on his behalf in that town by a local agent, H.P. Bender, who was to act for him over the next five years.16 Had Angell been in Bakersfield at that time, he would presumably have signed the document himself, as his vendors did. Since his purchase was near what is now the town of Arvin, it will henceforward be referred to by that name. Angell paid $1,200 (roughly £240), a high price, in the expectation that his Arvin investment would increase in value as the local economy developed.

It is likely that, having made this purchase, Angell headed straight for Bakersfield, for on 12 February 1892 he made a homestead claim there,17 which would have been hard to do other than in person, even if Hobart Purucker had made the preliminary arrangements, as presumably he did. The 1862 Homestead Act allowed settlers who already were, or who pledged to become, American citizens to occupy 160 acres of federal-government land, which would become theirs after five years if they could show that they had improved and occupied it, but would otherwise be forfeited. Angell’s 160 acres were at the short-lived settlement of Toolwass: two months later a local post office of that name was to open a mile to the west; but it lasted for only seven years.18 By mid-February 1892, therefore, Angell owned or claimed 240 Californian acres, 80 at Arvin and 160 at Toolwass.

But Angell’s memoirs did not describe a direct journey to a homestead claim near Bakersfield: instead, they offered a colourful account of a leisurely progress westward that began when he went to the New Orleans train station and bought an emigrant’s ticket on the Southern Pacific Railroad either to El Paso or Albuquerque (according to his reminiscences) or to Los Angeles (according to his autobiography). The ensuing ride was supposedly the occasion of two encounters. The first became an anecdote that implied sexual scruple on his part,
albeit of a gauche kind. On the second night out, a French lady travelling to join her husband, who had been pleased to discover someone able to speak her language, volunteered to bunk down with him. Though aware of ‘falling short of what the occasion demanded of a man of the world of seventeen’ – in fact nineteen – Angell ‘made it plain that we had to have separate berths’, and was thereafter snubbed by the offended woman. The second encounter was with Covert, to whom Angell always referred by surname alone. He never explained why Covert was on a train travelling west from New Orleans; and the balance of probability is that, if indeed Angell first came across him on the railroad, he did so later, while exploring southern California. Whenever and wherever he first met him, he ‘liked the look of this stranger’. According to Angell’s memoirs, Covert offered him a job helping to clear ‘a quarter section (160 acres) of desert land and levelling it for irrigated vines and alfalfa’. There would be no pay for two weeks; but thereafter Angell would receive a dollar a day and his food. Angell accepted this deal; and two days later he and Covert ‘got off at a station which consisted of a wooden hut and a man with a flag’ and were taken by ‘buckboard’ first a few miles to a store where Angell bought the blankets essential to frontier life, and then a further twenty miles to Covert’s camp, based on an artesian well. There he shared a bunkhouse with several Portuguese and Mexican workers, and toiled under the instruction of a Bavarian skilled at peach-growing. He soon secured ‘promotion from vine-planting to working one of the scrapers for making the contoured banks in the irrigated fields’. Such practical, open-air tasks acting as a tonic, he ‘slept as I have never slept since’: indeed, physical health was never a problem during this American trip. He remembered spending ‘three months or so’ there, boosting his savings to $200.\(^\text{19}\)

Then, according to After All, Covert was offered another job, standing in for the sick superintendent of ‘the San Luis ranch to the north-west’. He asked Angell to accompany him for ‘thirty-five dollars a month, all found’. Worried that he did not know how to ride western-style, Angell hesitated, but, on being assured by his friend that the ‘horse does the riding; not you’, agreed; so the two men ‘took train to Bakersfield at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley and drove then about forty miles north’\(^\text{20}\). But this part of Angell’s story was particularly implausible. For one thing, it would have been extraordinary if Angell had gone straight to his new workplace without inspecting his Arvin freehold or Toolwass homestead (even assuming that the latter had somehow been acquired outside California), which lay south-east and due south of Bakersfield, respectively. For another, Angell claimed that the San Luis ranch lay ‘at the foothills of the coast range’, which would place it west or north-west of Bakersfield, in the direction of San Luis Obispo County, rather than to the north, and somewhat more than forty miles distant too. Furthermore, there is no record of a San Luis ranch in this area, the one in Merced County being too far north. It may have disappeared without trace: Angell commented that the region was ‘turning from a cattle country into one of small settler farmers’, which indeed was true of the area forty or so miles north of Bakersfield. It may have had another name: Angell’s memory was prone to such confusions. It may even have been in a completely different district: if it was indeed
part of the holdings of Miller and Lux, the legendary San Francisco butchers’, as Angell believed, it could have been in any number of places. As will be seen, he was shortly to claim familiarity not only with Kern County, in which Bakersfield was located, but also with the counties of Tulare and Fresno to the north. Thirty years later the president of Stanford University, David Starr Jordan, was to claim that on arrival in California Angell ‘took charge of the Rose Ranch, an oasis in the desert of the Tehachapi devoted to cattle and turkeys’, though this must have been based on a recollection of what Angell told Jordan in or after 1909, when the two men first met.

Angell’s memoirs implied that he stayed at this ranch in southern California, whatever its name or location, for a significant period, learning human wisdom and practical skills from the astute, though ill-educated, Covert. They related, for example, how Angell failed to notice that his own arrival had upset one of the ranch-hands, a volatile south European named Pedro, whose authority on all things to do with the old world had not previously been questioned yet was now undermined by Angell’s tactless corrections. Covert not only warned Angell that he was riling an unhinged man, but stepped in when a drunken Pedro ‘“dared” me to hold up a book I was reading and let him put a bullet through it’. As Covert later pointed out: ‘A dozen honest witnesses would have testified it was an accident’ – a might-have-been that became more alarming when Pedro later killed two men and was declared insane.

Covert also impressed Angell with his ability to debate ‘abstract matters like politics and morals’. When a ranch-hand called for Great Britain to be punished for past sins such as burning the White House, Covert took the wind out of his sails by pointing out that in reality this was to call for the punishment of Angell and his relatives multiplied ‘a few million times’. Similarly, Covert put down a political candidate who came to the ranch in search of votes and began warning against ‘the British peril’. Covert asked the politician to predict the outcome of next month’s presidential, state, and county elections, and when he could not do so asked him how he could nonetheless ‘tell us exactly what a country on the other side of the world where you have never been is going to do ten years hence’? Moreover, when the candidate switched to advocating the free coinage of silver – a remedy increasingly favoured in the depressed western farming areas, which felt that the prosperous eastern financiers were unduly restricting the money supply – Covert demanded ‘the free coinage of iron’, thereby drawing attention to the inflationary risk ignored by the free-silver lobby. Covert’s ability to make a complex issue comprehensible was one which Angell admired and from which he was to borrow when he became a full-time publicist.

Covert took Angell on a memorable trip to collect cattle from Mexico: After All admitted uncertainty at one point as to whether it happened ‘before the prospecting expedition’ that the two men also undertook, yet went on to present it as a prelude to finding a homestead. On their journey out they spent a night in Bakersfield, purportedly giving Angell his ‘first introduction’ to the place which was to be his regional centre for the next four and a half years. In 1892, as Angell later recalled, it was only
a town of some 2,000 inhabitants, of whom I should judge about five hundred (I did not count them) were prostitutes, living in a segregated quarter, Chinatown, though there were very few Chinese in it. (The town of course, served the needs of the male population of nearly a hundred miles in each direction.) The sidewalks were wooden planks and the roads completely unpaved. (Ed Bailey, the livery stable keeper, would with great public spirit, occasionally throw down manure and waste hay to render the road of axle-deep sand or mud negotiable.)

He and Covert stayed in the town’s second-best hotel, the Cosmopolitan, which lacked sanitation and had some rooms without ventilation despite temperatures up to 120 degrees Fahrenheit in summer, but at least had sheets on its beds. Next morning they rode south over the Tejon Pass, which connects the San Joaquin valley with the Los Angeles area, stopping at its Fort, a former military post near its summit, and meeting the English manager of the Tejon Ranch, R.M. Pogson, a prominent local figure who expressed scepticism about their economic prospects in rural California. Angell’s subsequent foray into Mexico must have been the factual basis, such as it was, of a cautionary tale about the subjectivity of monetary value with which he was to regale the House of Commons four decades later: the gold coins he was carrying were useless because ‘the villagers in the Mexican mountains where I was travelling had never seen one’, so he ‘came near to starving to death’. On their return journey, according to one of the most picturesque scenes in Angell’s autobiography, he and Covert ate their lunch near the Tejon Pass, looking down upon the southern extremity of the San Joaquin valley. They decided that it ‘would be a good place to build a home’, in consequence of which Angell soon acquired a homestead claim there.

Angell’s memoirs thus constructed a lively narrative of a journey west from New Orleans that was interrupted by ranching somewhere en route and was followed on arrival in southern California by a substantial spell of similar work there before a homestead was located. For all its verisimilitude, however, it must be taken with a huge pinch of salt: though presented as a chronicle of consecutive events in his first year in the United States, it was more truly a montage of his various adventures, often with Covert but sometimes with others, over several years as he mixed homesteading at Toolwass with the other work required to earn money not only for living expenses but also for further land acquisitions. In reality he was well established on his homestead claim by 15 June 1892, when he wrote from there to Harry. His letter alluded to earlier adventures in the area, including a four-day trip to ‘some oil wells in the mountains’ on which he had accompanied a ‘young English fellow’ because ‘I knew the “lay” of the land better’ – knowledge that would have been difficult to acquire had Angell stopped off for three months or so before reaching Bakersfield. It also indicated that Angell and a companion had already put in considerable time at Toolwass ‘trying to get my establishment together by degrees’.

His homesteading had thus made a reasonable start well before the summer of 1892. As After All noted, the ‘cultured and civilised’ Jewish owners of the leading Bakersfield store had supplied on credit a wagon and other equipment needed for developing a homestead, though it named them as ‘the Weil brothers’, thereby
conflating Alphonse Weill (c.1853–1947), a French-born merchant whose family business in Bakersfield lasted into the 1960s, with the Dinkelspiel brothers, Emile and Louis, who kept another prominent store in Bakersfield until both died in 1906.30 But by mid-June Angell already faced a couple of difficulties, which he acknowledged to Harry: the need to ‘cart our water from [the] nearest stream (Eight miles. Our well does not go ahead. . . . )’; and the problem of ‘hauling some lumber to make [a] verandah’.31 When he wrote his autobiography he more fully acknowledged the difficulties he faced:

A hundred and sixty acres on a flat plain, with no sign of human habitation in any direction as far as the eye could reach; treeless, featureless, and for nine months of the year herbless, grassless. No fences anywhere; nothing to mark off my bit of private property and land from the limitless miles and miles of land surrounding it. No water – most vital fact of all – no garden, no shrub, no plant visible to the eye. In the distant foothills a few trees could be discerned.32

*After All* also did belated justice to the dangers of digging down 150 feet in a vain attempt to create a well, and to the labour involved in dragging timber from abandoned dwellings miles away in order to construct a home on the cheap.33

Even so, Angell persevered with the building of his house, into which Hobart Purucker moved with him. It is likely that the practical assistance in putting it up, which his memoirs attributed entirely to Covert, was given in large part or even wholly by Purucker, of whom Angell’s memoirs made no mention. Indeed, although they stated that Covert was able to help Angell at Toolwass because he ‘had taken up another claim nearby’,34 official records show that this was true of Purucker, whose homestead claim of April 1892 was only two miles away, but not of Covert, for whom no claim is listed.35

Whether helped by Purucker alone, or by Covert too, Angell took on more land. In the late summer or early autumn of 1892 he reported to Harry that he now possessed ‘400 acres’, having gained the 160 additional to Arvin and Toolwass by contesting a ‘Desert Claim’. Thus:- Under U.S. laws a man can take 160 acres if it is under a canal survey, but he has to do some work on it inside of twelve months. This the holder had failed to do. I served contest on him, but knowing he had no case he threw in the sponge for a ten pound note.

A passing reference in *After All* indicated that this desert claim was ‘in the neighbourhood of Lake Buena Vista’,36 which lies south-west of Bakersfield. By this time Purucker, though ‘at bottom . . . a pretty good fellow’, was proving ‘damnably irritating’, in part because he ‘imagines himself desperately in love’ and in part because ‘he loves to imagine himself the keeper of some deep and mysterious secret’: indeed, in view of the fact that the irrationality of both women and religion were the themes on which Angell most liked to hold forth in his letters to Harry, Purucker’s romantic and religiose tendencies made him more of a foil than a soulmate. Despite this irritation, Angell felt prosperous and confident, expecting to sell his Arvin freehold at a sufficient profit to fund the
development of his ‘government land’ and perhaps also a trip home in the summer of the following year.\(^{37}\)

Angell soon found a fourth property, four and a quarter miles south west of his Toolwass homestead in the direction of the Tejon Pass. On 18 October 1892, he paid Frank E. Valentine, Bakersfield agent for the Santa Fe Railroad Company, $400 for 160 acres in an area now marked on maps as Wheeler Ridge.\(^{38}\) Five years previously Valentine had registered a claim to this land under the Timber Culture Act, whereby 160 acres of land could be acquired by planting trees on 40 of those acres, and was now entitled to sell the freehold.\(^{39}\) On 19 November and 12 December, moreover, Angell filed claims on local water supplies in respect of this Wheeler Ridge property.\(^{40}\) His total acreage was now 560.

Over the winter he speculatively splurged on other land too, although no details have been found. In a perhaps exaggerated letter to Harry at the end of January 1893 he itemized his assets as by then comprising ‘850 acres of land (average £3 an acre), 6 town lots (£20 apiece), 2 streams, four roomed house, barn, chicken-house, horse, cart, saddle, and so forth.’ His wheeling and dealing led him to indulge once more in amateur dramatics: these took place in Rosedale, an arid plain to the west of Bakersfield which since the beginning of the decade had been marketed with some success as a colony for settlers from Britain. Angell’s ‘ulterior business ends’ in taking part in these theatricals were to draw himself to the notice of influential locals. ‘As I act with their wives’, he informed his brother, ‘they can’t afford to overlook me.’ An unintended yet predictable outcome was that, as in Geneva and despite his recent strictures upon Purucker, Angell found himself ‘nearly over head and ears in love’ with his ‘young, vivacious, high strung and sympathetic’ leading lady, causing him to conclude: ‘A girl who can act[,] and does[,] seems to overcome me.’ This time, of course, the amateur actress was a married woman; and, after ‘rehearsing in her rooms alone until midnight’, he declared himself ‘a fool to play tricks with my nervous equilibrium in that way’. He was in any case putting himself under physical strain, the travelling to Rosedale from his homestead contributing to the ‘fully a hundred miles a week’ he was then riding, though to subsidize this he took a job as Toolwass’s official mail carrier. Purucker had just left him, and was shortly to discover Theosophy in San Diego. Angell also mentioned to Harry that their brother Alexander was talking of coming out to California.\(^{41}\)

Angell’s frenetic business activity continued for the rest of the year and the early months of the following one. On 24 March 1893 he took out a mortgage on his Wheeler Ridge land from Fred G.W. Spencer at Kern Valley Bank for $400 at the not inconsiderable interest rate of 10 per cent.\(^{42}\) Approximately two months later – he was unsure of the exact date, having ‘not been into town for a month’ – he reported cheerfully from Toolwass to Harry that he was ‘just getting my house into bully good shape. Sitting room, two bed-rooms, kitchen, verandah &c’, all moreover ‘for 50 dollars’, and enjoying an idyllic rural existence.\(^{43}\) Because on Angell’s later admission such letters gave ‘rosy accounts’\(^{44}\) of life in the San Joaquin valley, Alexander sold his engineering business in order to emigrate with his wife Florence. So, towards the end of 1893, Angell found another 120 freehold
acres, twenty miles north of Bakersfield near what is now Shafter, and close to a projected railroad extension.\textsuperscript{45} On 9 December Alexander Lane granted Angell a power of attorney to facilitate the purchase of this property while he and Florence travelled out from England; and in February 1894 Angell completed the deal and transferred a half-share of the property to his brother, a local paper prosaically reporting: ‘The Lane brothers, who are recent arrivals from England, have purchased 120 acres in section 24, township 28, range 25. The place has recently been sown to alfalfa.’\textsuperscript{46} However, funding this additional commitment proved difficult. On 20 February Angell sold Wheeler Ridge along with its water rights to a William H. Lincoln for $10 plus the taking over of the $400 mortgage. A week later he took out two mortgages jointly with Alexander totalling a remarkable $2,226.65 on their Shafter freehold.\textsuperscript{47}

By the summer of 1894 Angell knew that he had seriously overextended himself, particularly as the local economy had stalled. To add insult to injury, his sister-in-law had taken against life in the San Joaquin valley, and wished to leave. In mid-June, therefore, Angell swallowed his pride and admitted to Harry that during the ‘last six months’ he had ‘been worried and plagued out of my life’:

When I first came here a large district was just commencing to come under canal and railway development. Land was cheap but promised rapidly to become dear. By a variety of means I corralled, i.e. got a cinch on, 800 acres. In a few years, I thought, I can complete title and sell out for at least $25 an acre; investing the money in county bonds at 7 per cent (safe as government ditto), I shall get £280 a year to go home and take up medicine or literature on. But the president of the canal company died, the railway busted, the land market throughout California slumped, and I got left…. However (I argued) if land values are way down, good developed land can be had cheap, and this can always be made to return something. Thus, with very little money a living could be assured for L[ic] if he came out. He came out, against my advice brought Florence and – you know what happened. Florence is persuaded, and has persuaded those at home that the country is in a state of savagery, (notwithstanding the fact that many English women of birth, and originally of fortune, have made it their home) and consequently quite unfit for her to live in.

Angell still hoped that Alexander would find a job further east and that he himself would realize at least some of his assets – a residual optimism that was perhaps a by-product of further amateur dramatics in Rosedale where his current leading lady, Jessie Richardson, was ‘an ever fresh and verdant study’.\textsuperscript{48}

In the event Alexander, having spent some time in San Francisco, returned home with his wife to be fussed over by his mother and bailed out by his father, while over the eighteen months between mid-1894 and the end of the following year Angell’s own situation worsened. He may have lost investments at home: two decades later he was to allude to ‘an incident that occurred when he was in America – the crash of a house down in South America swept away the money he had in England’, and claim that it taught him about economic interdependence.\textsuperscript{49} He declined an offer from the Dinkelspiel brothers to work in their shop and while doing so qualify as a lawyer,\textsuperscript{50} but urgently pursued other ways of making money. He briefly took a job with a candidate for local political office, almost certainly during the campaign for the November 1894 elections, the
evidence for this being an aside in an article he was to write twenty years later amid the surge of patriotism that greeted Britain’s entry into the First World War:

The present writer never realised how blind and evil a thing is Chauvinism until as a youth, acting temporarily as the unhappy secretary of an American politician, he was condemned, during an American election, to listen night after night to tirades of the Western politicians against the tyrannical greed and ambition, the ruthlessness, the wickedness, the villainy, the meanness, the hypocrisy of the British nation.\(^{51}\)

It is probable that much of the full-time ranch work attributed by his memoirs to his initial period out west was carried out at this time in an effort to pay off his debts. Angell later remembered that, to make ends meet while homesteading, he and Covert not only hired themselves out for haymaking, ploughing, and – their most lucrative activity – haulage, but undertook prospecting expeditions, on one of which they ‘skirted the Mojave desert and later parts of Death Valley’ in order to look for gold ‘in the mountains two hundred miles from nowhere’.\(^{52}\)

Doubting his rural future by the end of 1895, Angell took up journalistic work again, for the purpose of which he made a number of visits to San Francisco. His autobiography noted that he ‘happened to have a couple of fugitive articles accepted in a San Francisco magazine; and another by a local paper in Bakersfield’ and, in a second reference, that his writing ‘was published in the more obscure of the Western magazines’.\(^{53}\) His reminiscences merely alluded to ‘a fugitive article or two for the San Francisco papers’.\(^{54}\) Although, as will shortly be explained, one of these essays can be pinpointed, the provenance of the two most important, appearing in January 1896 and January 1897, respectively, remains uncertain. We know about them only because, being stepping stones towards his ‘illusion’ thesis, they were reprinted by Angell in no fewer than three of his books. In the first of these reprints, in 1903, the 6,000-word first essay carried the footnote, ‘Reprinted from the Californian, January 1896, and following numbers’, suggesting that it had been serialized. In the last reprint, in 1926, this first essay was headed ‘San Mateo’, which is both a town on the bay south of San Francisco and a county covering a wider area. By mentioning ‘the Chronicle, Call, and Evening Post of this city’,\(^{55}\) the text made clear that it was written in or near San Francisco and probably published there too. The January 1897 essay, even longer at 10,000 words, began: ‘It is just a year since I dealt in these columns with . . .’, thereby indicating that it appeared in the same source; and at that time Angell was definitely staying in San Francisco. He apparently still retained copies of at least the first of these articles as late as 1934, when he began an article for a British weekly:

Turning over some accumulated rubbish the other day, I came across a number of American newspaper cuttings dating from January, 1896 – the letters of an English boy, then resident in California, addressed to the editor of a paper which had published a leading article stating that Great Britain was ‘plotting the downfall of the United States . . .’ The article was a by-product of President Cleveland’s Venezuelan message. . . .\(^{56}\)
Regrettably, these cuttings are no longer among his surviving papers; and these two ‘Californian essays’, as they will here be called, have not been found in any publication in the Bay area or Bakersfield.

In whatever source they originally appeared, they marked the first awareness on Angell’s part that non-religious thinking could also be irrational. From his arrival in the American south-west, as he remembered in his autobiography, ‘the Anglophobia so current among the people with whom I worked provoked an increasing rage in me’.57 The severity of the problem can be inferred from an anecdote he was to publish a decade and a half later in an attempt to place in context the British government’s recent hypersensitivity to the mistreatment of its subjects in South Africa by the Boers:

I have myself, in one of the Southern counties of California – a county whose population included over a thousand British subjects – seen an inoffensive Englishman shot and killed in cold blood by his American man-servant, and the assailant liberated on a verdict of ‘justifiable manslaughter’ twenty-four hours afterwards. Representations made to the Foreign Office failed to induce that department to . . . make the least move in the affair. How differently the matter would have been treated had the crime been committed under the ‘intolerable government’ of the Boers, we can imagine.58

Presumably this was the killing he witnessed in the Tejon Pass, according to a casual remark in his autobiography.59 Moreover, almost certainly during the November 1894 elections as already noted, he had experienced the systematic exploitation of Anglophobia for political purposes.

This anti-British feeling reached new heights on 17 December 1895 when President Cleveland backed Venezuela in its long-standing border dispute with British Guiana, invoking the Monroe doctrine, a statement by one of his predecessors to the effect that the United States would oppose interference by the monarchies of Europe in the newly independent republics of Latin America. Astonished by the public support for Cleveland’s provocative stand, Angell immersed himself in ‘a wide range of representative American papers’ in San Francisco’s well-stocked ‘Free Library’, and wrote his first Californian essay. He found the press insisting with one voice

that we must fight England: that the doom has sounded for either the British Empire or the American Republic. The gods, watching this conflict, have turned their thumbs down. The conclusion can no longer be resisted, unless all our honoured guides, our statesmen, our newspapers, our reviews, our preachers, have become quite untrustworthy. For weeks now – ever since 17th December, to be exact, for most of us were in blissful ignorance of this terrible alternative on December 16th – they have all been insisting with one voice that we must make England bite the dust, humble her, and break her power. . . . There can be no doubt about it. To question it, is to write oneself down a traitor to this country, an unclean thing.60

The ‘net result’ of his survey of the arguments put forward by newspapers, by political leaders such as Senator Lodge, and by individuals with whom he had personally conversed, was that there were no fewer than sixteen reasons for fighting England:
because (1) she is a great advocate of the pestilential doctrine of Free Trade; (2) of gold coinage; (3) of a stable and non-elective Civil Service, a subtle device of tyranny; (4) for the advocacy of these heresies she corrupts our free electorate by the lavish expenditure of 'British Gold'; (5) she has more Foreign Trade than we have, and it must be taken from her by stripping her of her Colonies; (6) she is a pirate and land-grabber; (7) her papers speak disrespectfully of the American accent; (8) British tourists are insolent, and wear absurd clothes; (9) she gives rise to Anglomaniacs in America, who turn up their trousers, wear knickers and pyjamas, part their hair in the middle, take 'barths', and are an offence generally to good Americans; (10) she owns too many American securities, which it is time she sacrificed as legitimate spoil of warfare; (11) she corrupts our ambassadors by turning them into 'contemptible flunkeys' and Anglomaniacs (vide Bayard); (12) she still insolently repudiates (she does everything insolently, and I am quoting the Call here) 'the doctrines of 1776. She has never acknowledged the principles of freedom of government, government of the people, by the people for the people. She is ruled at home for the benefit of the land barons, and her Colonies are oppressed to pay tribute. She is a standing domestic source of human freedom'; (13) she favoured the Confederacy (Northern opinion); (14) she did not recognize the Confederacy when she might (Southern opinion); (15) she hates America and is determined to see her humiliated; (16) we must vindicate the Monroe doctrine.61

This last argument gave Angell particular scope for scathing observations about the shallowness and volatility of public judgements:

I believe in the Monroe Doctrine, of course, because I try to be a truly patriotic American. I would lay down my life for it. We all would. The newspaper editors especially are pining to disembowel the Britisher in the name of the Monroe Doctrine. But I must say I wish I knew what it meant.... Until 17th December it is certain that not one American in ten thousand had ever heard of the Monroe Doctrine. It might have been one of the main religious tenets of Mormonism for all they could have told to the contrary on the evening of 16th December 1895. On 17th December, however, our Government was being supported in war preparations to enforce its respect by England 'at any cost whatever. To the last dollar and to the last man!'62

Angell also made clear his view that the inhabitants of the disputed border area were faring better under British rule than they would do if transferred ('We know the sort of “republic” which Venezuela is'), and insisted: ‘To fight a great war with all its infinite and unseen possibility of mischief over such a matter as this South American boundary is to attain the burlesque.’63

In his first Californian essay of January 1896 the twenty-three-year-old Angell had not only shown a gift for polemic but alighted on a central theme of his future propaganda: popular misunderstanding of economics.

What, in reality, is our economic position here in the West with regard to England? I find on inquiry that England buys of us more than all the other countries of the world put together. Now this is a considerable fact. If we follow Senator Lodge’s advice and destroy her as an economic factor in the world her capacity to buy from us vanishes, and since the West, being mainly agricultural, is compelled to sell her products abroad, we should be in a sorry posture if half that market was taken from us. One may say without exaggeration that whole States in the West owe their prosperity to the British market.64
This was because Britain allowed free trade even in respect of her own colonies. In Angell’s words: ‘It is not possible to cite one single instance where Great Britain maintains a monopoly for her people.’ This was a direct challenge to the editorial line of, for example, San Francisco Chronicle, which was then insisting that ‘wherever England gains, somebody loses and in the case of food products, it is the United States which is the principal loser’ because, by accepting the international gold standard, it let ‘the creditor fix not only his own price but his own kind of money’.

Though Angell’s first Californian essay had some impact, it could not slow his financial slide, which continued during 1896. He was reduced to visiting Bakersfield only after dark, so as to avoid creditors.Embarrassment about owning up to his family about his predicament may explain why in June of that year Harry needed to warn him: ‘They are complaining at home they don’t hear from you.’ Perhaps out of guilt Angell sent his sister a photograph of himself as a bearded cowboy on horseback, even though this outdoor phase in his life was coming to an end. He was forced to sell land: on 13 July the power of attorney that Alexander had granted his brother two and a half years previously was registered in the Bakersfield Hall of Records by the Dinkelspiel brothers, who took a stake in at least part of his Shafter property; and five days after this Angell disposed of his original investment at Arvin for a mere $448 – only 37 per cent of what he had paid four years previously.

Failing as an entrepreneur, Angell could fall back on his writing to boost his self-esteem. Later in the summer of 1896 he produced an article whose

Norman Angell c. 1896 (reproduced by permission of Alice Angell Everard).
provenance can be identified: a 17,000-word piece entitled ‘Conscience vs. Clericalism’, it appeared in the September 1896 issue of the A.P.A. Magazine, a short-lived San Francisco journal that supported the American Protective Association, an anti-Catholic body. Though published under the name ‘Frank Lane’, the Christian name being presumably an editorial mistake, it was clearly by Angell. Not only did it exhibit his relentless rationalism by criticizing Protestantism almost as much as Catholicism and endorsing his favourite liberal thinkers: it also contained an anecdote (about a former Venezuelan president having his political opponents publicly executed and their wives and daughters ‘exposed stark naked in cages’) that had appeared in his Californian essay of January 1896. Angell’s article received a favourable mention in the Bakersfield Californian, which described its author as ‘a young Englishman with some reputation as a writer’.71

Perhaps as a result of his contribution to the A.P.A. Magazine, he came to the attention of the editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, who invited him to stop by when he was next in that city. Angell took him up on his offer in the hope of securing work on that paper.73 It was while he was in San Francisco with this objective in view that he wrote his second Californian essay, prompted by the way in which xenophobia was used during the November 1896 election campaign to distract attention from the efforts of the Democratic presidential candidate, the agrarian populist William Jennings Bryan, to get across the grievances of the west and south against economic policies made in the north-east. This time, Britain having long since backed down over Venezuela, the xenophobia was principally directed against Spain, on account of its mistreatment of its Cuban subjects. In this second essay, published in January 1897 as already indicated, Angell reminded readers of his strictures of a year previously on the Venezuelan crisis, in respect of which ‘some critics have handled me pretty roughly. I was “un-American, anti-American;” a man of “timid peace,” who would have this country wedded to a life of “ignoble ease;” one whom the “flag waving in the breeze” altogether failed to inspire.’74 He pointed out that war over Venezuela had been averted only ‘by the extraordinary submission of England… an attitude which no other country would have adopted’ and which Spain would find ‘absolutely impossible’ to imitate75 – an accurate prediction. His low opinion of Latin American politics as compared with European colonial rule led him to warn that the Cubans ‘will, as a republic, be no better than they have been heretofore as a colony of Spain’.76 And he attacked Theodore Roosevelt’s doctrine of the ‘strenuous life’ as a mistaken departure from the ‘idea that the superiority of this country to the Old World lay in our freedom from the burden of militarism, from the mischief of the military ideal’.77

Moreover, this second Californian essay returned to the theme that America’s newly assertive foreign policy made no economic sense, and documented it with his hard-earned knowledge of the travails of the western farmer, supplemented by a recent British magazine article on ‘The American Ranchman’ sent out to him by his father.78 Angell insisted that, although ‘America is supposed to be so rich as to afford any folly, any stupidity’ on account of ‘our boundless wealth’, the last time he had heard such a patriotic boast.
it was from the lips of a gentleman in a country store, who concluded the oration by asking the loan of a dollar and a half in order to get a sack of flour to take home to his wife, the store-keeper declining further credit on an account which was already four and a half years old. I am not romancing; it is absolute fact. The farmer in question had for half an hour been indulging in precisely the sort of bamboozle with which our land companies fill their rose-coloured circulars... Now the facts of this patriot's situation is that his farm is mortgaged to the hilt, as also are his team and wagon; his implements he has never paid for; his grocery account is something over four years old; he can never remember the time when he was out of debt; his wife, at thirty-five, is an old and worn woman; she can never remember the time when she was not overworked, when she had not to get up by daylight, and well before it in winter time, to cook the coarse grub for the family and the occasional hands. The wooden shack in which they live is an oven in summer, a refrigerator in winter. A garden the farmer does not possess; no one would have the time to attend to it. The vegetables are brought from the travelling Chinaman, and the wife and her husband have not even the meagre satisfaction of owning the farm upon which for years they have laboured like convicts. And they will never own it. In a couple of years the bank will foreclose, the ramshackle wagon will be loaded with bedding and a frying-pan, and this worn woman with the tired face will follow her husband to some newer territory, where the process will be started all over again da capo. 'Finest country on God Almighty's earth, sir. A million happy homes, sir, stretchin' from the rock-bound...'

Angell made clear that he wrote ‘as one who has gone through the mill, as one who has worked as a labourer on a score of ranches in California, who has himself ranned, who has passed a goodly period of his life cheek by jowl with farmers and farm hands'. Having taken ‘the counties of California with which I am most familiar: Fresno County, Kern County, and Tulare County’ and examined ‘the public records of these three’, he had discovered, first, that over 97 per cent of farms acquired from the government – in other words as homestead claims – were mortgaged, with many having additional charges on their chattels or crops, and, secondly, that interest rates on those mortgages were high, ranging from 8 to 12 per cent. A farmer struggling with mortgages of this kind was commonly presented as a ‘capitalist, a man whose property is supposed to be worth thousands of dollars’; yet the reality of his life was that each summer he pitches hay with the sun a hundred in the shade. In the winter he puts the frost-crusted harness on to his own shivering beasts, feeds and waters them himself. And after ten or fifteen or twenty years of this he gets sold up, and pulls up stakes, to start on a hundred and sixty areas of government land ‘fenced by a couple o’ yaller dogs,’ but situated happily in ‘the richest country on God Almighty’s earth, sir!’

Angell insisted that military posturing distracted the United States from ‘mere domestic problems’ and from ‘its real interests’, and led it ‘to prefer indulgence in a sentiment of hostility to the furtherance of our interests’. Although Anglophobia was a secondary grievance now that chauvinism was directed mainly against Spain, he noted its continuing irrationality in view of the facts that England was the ‘very best customer for our products that exists in the world, a country that takes more of them than all the rest of the world put together’ and that Anglophobes ‘could not, to save their immortal souls, tell you’ what injury the
English had done to their own interests. And, to support his assertion that this anti-English mentality was ‘not a rational temper’, he noted how it was against the interests of local farmers, who needed additional capital and cheap money, to support the restrictions upon British finance which had been introduced by the California legislature following ‘a patriotic howl about the wickedness of foreigners having liens on land in the State’.82

This led him to consider how unevenly the costs of patriotism fell across the nation’s various economic sectors, an exercise which made him sound like William Jennings Bryan. The higher rate of interest that, as a consequence of excluding British finance, Californian farmers paid on their borrowings benefited ‘the Californian banks, or the Eastern insurance companies who support them’. Yet, though the American economy was thus run in the interests of manufacturers and financiers, the farmers connived in this arrangement: ‘The poorest industry in this country is taxed, taxed to its eye teeth, to feed the richest, and the victim regards it as a fair arrangement, a “patriotic” one.’83 And any attempt by farmers either to question protectionism or to discuss wheat prices at political meetings were defeated by a facile resort to Anglophobia:

I have seen closely and cogently reasoned argument in favour of Free Trade replied to by the remark, ‘Aw yaas! So English, yer know. Is it rainin’ in Lunnnon?’ and the listeners have for the most part regarded this sally as a complete and full answer to everything which could be said in favour of ‘British’ free trade.

However, he did not yet view this exploitation of chauvinistic feelings to divert populations from perceiving their true interests as a general characteristic of mass democracies: he saw it as a particularly American phenomenon. Indeed, he was later to acknowledge that his Californian essays ‘were written with the full conviction that the peculiar patriotism with which they deal – mischievous and irrational, an instrument in the hands of the worst for silencing the best in public life – could have no counterpart in England; perhaps not in Europe. Its existence was put down to causes which were exceptional in their character.’84 To appeal to an American readership he resorted to moralistic, even biblical, language:

When we nurse a desire to humiliate others, to parade, like a savage, our big muscles and our big body, when our pride becomes vainglory, the debauch will not be indulged without penalty. Unless all history has deceived us, unless the story of a hundred nations has been devised for our deception, that ‘Destiny’, so dear to the patriot’s heart, shall exact the full tale for all our passion, our vainglory and unreasonableness. And the innocent shall pay with the guilty – for the guilty it may be – ‘to the third and fourth generation’.85

He thus had yet to develop the self-consciously cool and reasonable tone that was to be his mature stock in trade. This was hardly surprising in view of the acute personal predicament that made the second Californian essay even more impassioned and political than the first.

By the time it appeared in January 1897 Angell had been working for some weeks for the San Francisco Chronicle ‘on a lineage basis’. The paper was in a different league from his three previous ones, issuing fourteen pages every day of
the week and selling nearly 70,000 copies; and ‘not much of what I turned in was printed’. He was never, on his own admission, ‘brilliant as a reporter’, and, after being switched from gathering the local news to writing it up, was told: ‘You give your stories too philosophical a twist. You get into abstractions. Our public is not interested in abstractions – it wants simple facts and a simple story. You’re apt to get away from that.’ Despite trying ‘to avoid anything in the way of a sociological dissertation’, which must have been hard for him given the discursive style and political content of his Californian essays and A.P.A. Magazine article, he found it hard to satisfy the city editor. Looking for work of a more familiar kind on a paper catering for English-speaking émigrés, he inquired of a journalist he knew who had crossed the Pacific to work in Yokohama about a vacancy on the Japan Daily Herald, but received a discouraging reply.

Angell’s memoirs suggested that he was in any case finding life in a fast-developing San Francisco a culture shock. Admittedly, they were again very unreliable for this aspect of his life, running together several visits to that city, and wrongly implying that he worked for the Chronicle after his homestead claim had been rejected. But they described with convincing vividness both his puritanical reaction to a striptease show upon which he claimed inadvertently to have stumbled and, at disproportionate length because of its perceived anecdotal value, his bemusement at being almost duped by a confidence trickster. By contrast, they were silent on another disconcerting aspect of his time in San Francisco: his meeting his future wife, who was working for another newspaper in the Bay area. Beatrice Cuvellier had been born on 26 August 1872, which made her exactly four months older than Angell. A native of New Orleans, she was the daughter of Pierre Charles Cuvellier, who had practised as a notary in that city from 1850 to 1884, and his wife Henriette Emma Caire. An attractive woman, Angell’s bride-to-be was already married: letters from an attorney, addressed to her as Mrs Beatrice C. Kinney at the Oakland Tribune, show that she was to divorce and legally reclaim her maiden name in the summer of 1897 – apparently within a year of meeting Angell. It appears that he knew little about her, yet, as his twenty-fourth birthday approached, regarded her as a prize specimen of the uninhibited and unconventional American woman to whom he had first been attracted in Geneva. Unfortunately, in Beatrice’s case these qualities reflected a psychological instability that was to grow ever more serious.

Despite these various distractions, Angell had not given up on his government land. Although time was running out, he even hoped somehow to develop his desert claim: indeed, the confidence trickster in San Francisco had initially gained his attention by talking to him about a fibrous cactus which might enable him to do just that. Moreover, he had held Toolwass for the statutory five years, and could therefore try to ‘prove up’ on that claim by demonstrating to a tribunal that he had satisfied the conditions for ownership. On 8 January 1897, therefore, Angell wrote from 1419 Clay Street, San Francisco, notifying his Bakersfield agent, H.P. Bender, of his intention of doing so. Apparently leaving Beatrice Cuvellier to her labours on the Oakland Tribune, he returned in early February to Bakersfield, from where he informed Alexander of his plan to sell his homestead
as soon as he had proved up on it, as well as of his recent experiences on the bottom rung of the journalistic ladder at the *Chronicle*. In a belated but consoling reply from London, his brother reassured him:

There is a great deal in getting a start however small and if you could only get free of the land and save enough out of the wreck to help you get along you might in time get on fairly well. . . . I hope your homestead claim may pan out alright, & set off some of the losses.

Alexander, who by then had found job paying £3 a week, was generously prepared to waive his own moral entitlement to compensation: ‘Don’t worry about the money. I don’t want any unless you can well spare it in which case I should not refuse it.’ On 5 February Angell cashed in some $85 worth of gold and silver at the Bakersfield assay office of H. Vincent Wallace, presumably to meet the fees involved. Wallace, a friend remembered with affection in his autobiography, was also helping him with some mining claims in which, characteristically, his half-brother Will was also interested.

The proving-up on Toolwass was attempted at a public hearing in front of the local court commissioner, which began on 27 February 1897 and lasted until 9 March – as shown both by the bill subsequently tendered by H.P. Bender and by the report in a local paper to the effect that a certain Howard E. Putnam of Bakersfield had ‘filed a contest’ of Angell’s claim, and that after ‘ten days’ during which a ‘large number of witnesses were examined on both sides’ the court commissioner was sending ‘two hundred pages of testimony’ to the land office in Los Angeles for a decision.

Angell’s memoirs, which claimed that the hearings had lasted only ‘two or three days’, alleged that he had been a victim of the resentment felt by genuine farmers in the area at the fact that shop assistants in Bakersfield had been exploiting the homestead laws by filing claims in neighbouring areas, putting in the bare minimum of work on them at weekends, and selling them for a profit as soon as they had acquired title. Understandably, these memoirs did not point out that Angell too intended a quick sale of exactly this kind. Instead they further insisted that his fellow settlers ‘resented my education such as it was’, which he admitted that he may unconsciously have paraded, and that his evident Britishness – his local nickname was ‘Britain, or more formally Great Britain suggested by my lack of inches’ – made him a soft target. Given that his absences from his homestead were a key issue, he cannot have been helped by a line which had appeared in a local paper on 9 February: ‘Mr Ralph Lane has returned from San Francisco, where he has been at work several months on the reportorial staff of the *Chronicle*.’ This may therefore have been the ‘somewhat derogatory paragraph’ that, according to his memoirs, led Covert, who firmly believed that Angell had put in the necessary time and effort, to beat up the editor who had inserted it, though possibly the offending item appeared in another Bakersfield paper of which copies have not survived. In late May the Los Angeles land office ruled in favour of Putnam; and, although Angell’s memoirs implied that he did not appeal, Bender took his case not only to the Commissioner of the General Land Office on 25 June but to the Secretary of the Interior two years later, having ascertained that a certain Charles Haberkern was
prepared to retract his former testimony.\textsuperscript{100} Despite Bender’s confidence, nothing came of these appeals, or indeed of Angell’s mining claims; and his desert claim simply lapsed. However, after he had settled in Paris later in the year, the Kern County Bank arranged the sale of 70 of his Shafter acres for $2,000 payable over four years, thereby reducing his losses on one of his Bakersfield investments.\textsuperscript{101}

Even though Angell allowed his homestead claim to be appealed, he did not await the outcome, leaving California within days of the Bakersfield hearing, though perhaps only to find short-term employment. He went initially to St Louis, Missouri, where on the strength of his work in San Francisco he had been offered a job on the \textit{Globe-Democrat}, a sober twelve-page daily of protectionist and conservative views. He recalled holding this ‘only for two or three months’, and probably did so from mid-March to early May 1897. He was given the same duties as in San Francisco: replying on 9 April to a letter from him, his friend Wallace declared himself ‘sorry to learn that you are put on Local Reporting’. On Angell’s own admission, he ‘did not do very well at it’, and disliked being told by his editor that ‘pro-British copy is usually bad copy and anti-British copy is usually good copy’. He may in consequence have been dismissed: on 10 May Wallace was expressing sympathy about ‘the shabby treatment you received at the G[lobe] D[emocrat]’. From England Will advised him that, if he wished to resume prospecting for gold, he should travel to Toronto and explore the Lake of the Woods area. Angell set off in that general direction, getting as far as Chicago, where he visited ‘a miner friend’, perhaps to pick his brains about prospecting in Ontario. In order to pay his way he did ‘a few weeks of fugitive work’ on local newspapers.\textsuperscript{102}

While in the windy city in the late spring of 1897, however, he ‘formed a sudden resolution to return home, and did so’. He later claimed to have been persuaded by ‘letters from home saying my mother was very unhappy and my father not very happy’, particularly in view of the fact the journalism he was now undertaking could be practised closer to home. He also alluded to ‘other family considerations’, but did not specify these.\textsuperscript{103} The adverse judgement of the Los Angeles land court in late May must surely have influenced his decision too: within days of the news reaching Bakersfield rumours were circulating there of Angell’s return to England.\textsuperscript{104} The most likely timing of his departure from Chicago was the first half of June: on the 17th of that month Covert sent a letter from Rosedale offering to remove Angell’s house from Toolwass in the event that his appeal failed, so that the new occupant would not acquire it.\textsuperscript{105} Despite the humiliating failure of Angell’s Californian venture he was, according to family tradition, welcomed warmly on his arrival back at the Mansion House, and enjoyed better relations than formerly with his mother and Tom.\textsuperscript{106}

Angell’s stay in Holbeach, which presumably began towards the end of June 1897, was very short: his memoirs claimed that he moved on ‘within a fortnight’; and he had indeed done so some days before the Crummells, the African-American couple whom, as noted in the introduction, he had met on the boat home, made their successful visit to his parents around 13 July. Angell left abruptly because he had obtained a job in Paris: his proficiency in French, as
well as his relevant journalistic experience, had secured him the assistant editorship of the *Daily Messenger*, a four-page newspaper serving English-speakers in France, especially tourists in transit. Founded in 1814 as *Galignani's Messenger*, a title it had only recently changed, it was the oldest Anglo-American newspaper on the continent. Its editorial offices were at 167 rue St Honoré, very close to the Louvre, although Angell, for whom high culture was never an interest, did not mention this fact. It was printed a seven-minute walk away in ‘an old, dingy, seventeenth-century house’, 21 rue Croix des Petits Champs, just down from the Banque de France (which later expanded over its site) and ‘just opposite the Hotel de l’Univers et du Portugal’ (no longer in existence), which occupied number 10 in that street and was to accommodate Angell during his first year and a half in Paris.

Angell took up his new job during the second week of July 1897, perhaps coincidentally just a few days before Beatrice Cuvellier began divorce proceedings back in California. His duties were wide-ranging: the editor of the *Daily Messenger* for the last three years, William L. Warden, ‘was entirely willing that I should do everything I cared to take on’. Angell therefore wrote opinionated editorials, the earliest that was evidently his appearing on 11 July: it insisted that it was high ‘time to do away with the national disgrace of mob law in the United States’. Lynching horrified him: he had talked about it to Alex Crummell during their Atlantic crossing, was to continue their discussion by letter during the months to come, and was still protesting publicly about the practice a decade and a half later.

On 15 July, having finished his shift at six o’clock in the morning, Angell acknowledged a £3 subvention from his father to tide him over to the end of the month. Two days later, he wrote a leader about America’s and Britain’s current dispute over the Behring Sea that repeated his critique of their previous one over Venezuela: ‘Just as the boundary line of an unstable little South American Republic was not worth going to war about, neither is the killing of a certain number of seals in Arctic regions a sufficiently exciting topic to plunge the two Anglo-Saxon nations into an unnatural war.’ On the 29th he produced another editorial condemning American lynch-law. And on 6 August he rehashed arguments from his Californian essays:

There is no nation, great or small, that has not benefited from England’s liberality. Great and populous communities in the West of America absolutely owe their existence to the free market which England gives to their pork and wheat and beef. And as a result the one card which politicians found safest in those communities during the last campaign was abuse of England…. A Frenchman can trade in India, or any other of the possessions of England, on exactly the same terms that an Englishman can.

Angell’s leaders stood out on account of their contrast with their precursors, which, as composed by Warden, had been as complacent and conservative as could be expected of a future editor of the London *Daily Mail*. Thus in respect of British politics they had praised the royal jubilee, naval reviews, and the empire; and in respect of American politics they had supported McKinley, argued for military intervention in support of the Cubans, and had condemned ‘calamity
howlers’ – a much used phrase in its columns – ‘who try to make the American people try to believe they are badly off’, insisting instead that ‘the American farmer of to-day receives a sound price for his produce’. After Angell’s arrival, depending on whether he or Warden was writing them that day, the Daily Messenger’s editorials oscillated in style, policy, and preoccupation. For example, Warden went on attacking both ‘calamity howlers’ and supporters of William Jennings Bryan, and celebrating the prosperity of the United States, its farmers included, while Angell continued to criticize Venezuela and Anglophobia, and also threw out left-wing remarks such as: ‘Everything which goes by the name socialism is far from being wrong.’ Yet, unlike at Geneva or Ipswich, Angell escaped a showdown with his boss, who seemingly cared too little about the content of a paper in steep decline to challenge his assistant’s differing viewpoint. The Daily Messenger was being passed from hand to hand. It had adopted its current name as recently as January of the previous year in an attempt at a makeover by a new proprietor; and its ownership changed again both the September after Angell arrived and the following April. Yet it had not modernized its production methods: Angell regarded as ‘astonishing’ the techniques used by its motley collection of English and French printers, whereby ‘stickfuls of the old worn type would be tied together on the stone with bits of string, wetted with a sponge and the proof taken by smacking the galley so made up with a brush’.

Despite the limitations of his paper, the life of a Parisian assistant editor was from the outset both easier and more secure than the one he had only recently left behind in California:

My salary at the start was two hundred and fifty francs a month, (i.e. £10 gold) out of which I paid fifty a month for a room at the Univers across the street; gave the garçon five francs a month for bringing me a jug of water for the flat tin bath kept under the bed; and dined for 1 franc 15 centimes at the prix fixe restaurant next door. The one franc fifteen included, if you please, soup, hors d’oeuvre, meat, vegetables, sweet, wine; and a napkin as large as a table cloth. It was evident that I could live on the two fifty a month. When after a month or so my salary was raised to three hundred a month . . . I knew that I had attained opulence. Compared with the nagging anxiety of the ranch, with its drought, crop failures, diseases among the stock, unpaid bills at the store, the humiliation of debt, mortgages . . . this job in the dingy street of Paris was peace security, and prosperity. Here was the real simple life, not in the nerve-trying hazards of agriculture in the ‘wide open spaces’.

The work came naturally: ‘Having realized that I could do the job at the Messenger on my head, to say nothing of being able to introduce a few obviously necessary reforms, I was in fact happier than I had been for a time.’

For a time even Angell’s private life seemed to go well. Needing female company on his arrival, he had surprised Dorothy Purucker by contacting her almost immediately; and she travelled from Geneva to visit him in Paris at the end of the summer of 1897. Admittedly, this relationship did not blossom; and early the following February Angell’s ‘bachelor life loneliness’ was still something about which his married half-brother felt called upon to express sympathy.
very soon afterwards Beatrice Cuvellier made an appearance in the French capital. That she arrived around late February can be inferred from the fact that she and Angell had already been together long enough to need a break from each other’s company while it was ‘rather too cold to sit in the park yet’. During this pre-spring break Angell visited London on business while Beatrice went to Bayeux for a week or so in the ‘earnest conviction that you need rest from me as much as you do from the office’, as she put it to him, but also in an attempt to relieve her own psychological stress. ‘Bayeux has done me ever so much good – my nerves are all set up and right again’, she was soon over-optimistically to report. In her letters at this time – two of only three from her which survive even in part – she conveyed a flirtatious self-confidence by describing with some relish how a Bayeux shopkeeper had taken an interest in her. They also mentioned ‘my turning up at the Messenger office for my pay’, suggesting that she had come to work on the same paper as he, and indicated that she too had checked into the Hôtel de l’Univers et de Portugal.\textsuperscript{122} The year of her arrival in Paris must have been 1898, because Angell was still only assistant editor: Beatrice was merely hopeful that he would before long become ‘editor-in-chief’ and therefore able to leave the paper in the charge of a sub-editor at 2 a.m. and come home ‘to find me ready to chat until you are ready to go to bed: or if too tired to talk you can just crawl in beside me and snuggle up and be comfy while I love you’.\textsuperscript{123} They were being secretive about their affair, if only because Beatrice was ‘mighty scared’ of losing her job.\textsuperscript{124} Angell’s father visited Paris in the late spring of that year,\textsuperscript{125} as already noted, but apparently did not meet her, though this may have been because Beatrice had returned to the United States for a while.

In Angell’s professional life too ‘things began to happen. William L. Warden was offered the Paris correspondentship of the old London Standard. . . . Automatically, I fell into Warden’s job, or jobs.’\textsuperscript{126} Indeed around November 1898 his boss moved to work for the Standard and also for the European edition of the New York Herald.\textsuperscript{127} Angell succeeded him, his brother Tom’s Christmas greetings for that year being addressed to ‘Don Basilio Ralph, Lord High Editor etc. etc,’ and containing congratulations on his ‘well merited promotion’.\textsuperscript{128} Angell also inherited Warden’s contract to supply items of English news to the Éclair, a right-wing French daily: Angell developed these into ‘a sort of review of the English press’: because of his time in St Omer and Geneva, his French was good enough for him to be able to dictate this, though he depended on a member of staff to check his grammar.\textsuperscript{129} Helped by mounting international interest in a French scandal – the Dreyfus affair, shortly to be discussed – Angell also ‘did correspondence for a small group of American newspapers, of which the old Philadelphia Record was the chief’. This combination of jobs required a routine that was more demanding than Beatrice had anticipated of an editor: he rang London at two o’clock each morning to find out the contents of the British press for his column in the Éclair, and was usually up until breakfast time, when he would start the new day by reading the French papers. On retiring to bed in the bustling Paris morning, he found it hard to sleep, a problem that stayed with him: within a couple of years his father was inquiring about his ‘old running insomnia’; and
almost half a century later Angell himself informed Harry: ‘I must have upset my sleep apparatus badly in the years in Paris when my work was at night and I never went to bed before seven in the morning.’

But his employment had both long- and short-term benefits. Through constant practice he learned to turn out articles quickly, a facility that was to pay dividends when he became a full-time author and campaigner. More immediately, his various jobs paid well, lifting his total monthly income to what he considered a ‘fabulous, fantastic’ level. He even bought himself a yacht, which he kept at Meulan-Hadrucourt to sail along the river Seine and on which he occasionally slept, thereby acquiring a reputation for eccentricity among the locals, who on one occasion had him arrested for suspicious behaviour.

He must at this time have been an unusual sight – a tiny Englishman who, as a fellow journalist remembered and photographs confirm, sported a ‘big, fan-shaped orange-tawny beard’ grown in the United States.

His economic success may have contributed to his fateful decision to tie the knot. Beatrice returned to Paris in the autumn of 1898, apparently with her mother. At this time Angell, perhaps for reasons of discretion, moved out of his hotel: his new accommodation, about which his own mother was inquiring by
mid-November, must have been the ‘little apartment . . . in the Palais Royal’ – located, though his autobiography did not mention this fact, midway between the Daily Messenger’s editorial offices and its printing works – where his sleep was particularly disturbed because, as he went to bed in the early morning, the local ‘housewives would hang rugs and carpets on to the balconies outside their windows and beat them with an instrument that made a noise like a cannon’. Within months Beatrice was arousing the interest of his male acquaintances, who began inquiring after ‘Miss Cuveillier’ and conveying their respects. Angell seemingly felt obliged to make an honest woman of her: half a century later he was to admit to a very old friend, Evelyn Wrench, that he had ‘married for what seems to me now a completely absurd scruple’.

Beatrice notified their engagement to her friends and family early in 1899; but Angell did so only in the spring, a mere two and a half months before the wedding. Dorothy Purucker promptly sent her congratulations, as a ‘most sincere friend’. Her brother Hobart, back in Geneva and shortly to be employed on the Daily Messenger, complained of never having been shown a photograph of ‘the future Mrs Lane’. Thomas Angell Lane offered a measured but warm reaction: ‘Much to be deplored as the California venture was financially, if it has been the means of finding you a good wife one may regard it as a subject of congratulation.’ Angell’s mother, though unable to conceal her ‘surprise’ at the news (‘unlike most young men you rarely talked about girls’), expressed pleasure at the prospect of meeting Beatrice when he took her to meet his parents on 6 July. The ceremony took place exactly a fortnight later at Stepney Parish Church in the east end of London, rather than at a registry office or in either Paris or Holbeach. Angell gave correctly on the marriage certificate not only his marital status (bachelor) and profession (journalist) but also his name (Ralph Norman Lane) and age (twenty-six). In contrast, Beatrice declared herself a spinster, claimed no profession, and put down her age as twenty-three even though only thirty-seven days short of her twenty-seventh birthday. She and Angell both gave their address as 252 Mile End Road, which was where Harry lived, ‘about ten minutes from his beloved Alma Mater, the London Hospital’, as Thomas Angell Lane had put it. The Anglican rector of Stepney, the Revd Arthur E. Dalton, officiated; and the marriage was witnessed by Harry and also by a William Jacob Tozer, whose performing of this function may indicate that no other family member was present.

The newly-weds returned to Paris, where Angell’s working conditions had just improved. The previous month the Daily Messenger had acquired a new proprietor who with effect from July 1899 allowed Angell to move production ‘from the old building in the rue Croix des Petits Champs to take quarters in the Éclair building which was modern, with electric light (in the old house we had gas) and good mechanical equipment’. The Daily Messenger was to use the Éclair’s printers for its five remaining years. These were in the modern press district, at 10 rue du Faubourg Montmartre, a twenty-minute walk from the editorial offices in the rue St Honoré; but Angell recalled that the change ‘made my work for the Éclair
easier, and caused me to expand my contribution to that paper’. His income increased too, as he later recalled: ‘Even before the Northcliffe days I was earning a thousand francs a month and felt like a millionaire’.139

This improvement in his professional life was not matched on the domestic front. A friend, Lamar Middleton, to whom he had paid a substantial sum for furniture, so ‘that I might provide my wife with a home’, failed for several months either to deliver the goods or to refund his money.140 (Half a century later Angell was to encounter Middleton’s son, also called Lamar, working for various New York publishers.) Angell also discovered that Beatrice had more serious mental problems than he had realized. As he was to inform his niece Mary Lane many years later: ‘I found my wife had once, at least, been examined for insanity. There were constant violent rages, accusations against friends who had insulted her, servants who had stolen.’141 Perhaps, too, there were flirtations with other men: he later came to the view, which he eventually confided to Wrench, that he ‘should have divorced [Beatrice] as soon as I discovered the nature of her previous life and the character formed by it’. However, for various reasons, ‘among them the assurance by doctors that she would shortly be certified insane’, he failed to do so.142 In later life Angell exaggerated the speed with which his marriage failed: he informed Mary Lane that it took only ‘a year or two’; but in reality he and his wife were together, after a fashion, for a dozen years, though there is no evidence that they ever contemplated having children.

A mere six months into their married life, after an extended bout of illness, his wife went on a recuperative visit to his family home. Angell stayed behind in Paris with his mother-in-law, who apparently knew little English. ‘Improve your chance to talk French with the Mater to its utmost, it is good practice and you know when I am home you don’t get a chance to get a word in edgeways’, Beatrice advised him from Holbeach in her third surviving letter, which also inquired: ‘What news of the Middleton money? Have you had time to look into the matter?’ Having made a partial recovery, she touchingly acknowledged her psychological problems: ‘Now that I can see how different I am I can realize how very ill I was, mentally as well as physically, and that both had been going on a very long time, until they had become part of my nature and it took a great upheaval to uproot the ills.’ She also admitted ‘thoughtless’ behaviour towards his father: by taking a Sunday stroll too quickly, she caused him to overexert himself to such an extent that on their return ‘he looked as if he had been hoeing potatoes’.143 Thomas Angell Lane was by then on his last legs: his subsequent report on 29 January 1900 that Beatrice had ‘left a mysterious looking weapon’ behind in the Mansion House when she returned to Paris was probably his last letter to his son,144 for he died little over a month later, on 5 April. Angell was unable to attend the funeral, though he indicated to his mother that he and Beatrice would visit her soon; and she expressed the hope that they would do so when the garden was at its best.145

There is no record of where, once Beatrice had partially recovered and Angell had solved his furniture problem, the two of them set up home. Correspondence
bearing Angell’s domestic address survives only from 1910, by which time he was no longer in the Palais Royal but at 8 rue Weber. Since this genteel, suburban location near the Bois de Boulogne was so remote from and so unlike the bustling central districts in which he had lived as a bachelor and to which he was to return for his final year and a half in Paris, it was probably Beatrice’s choice, and may have been their marital abode from the outset.

Nor is much known about Angell’s work during the first decade of the twentieth century, though he evidently sought both managerial and authorial advancement, before being frustrated on both fronts. On 17 February 1901 the Daily Messenger was taken over yet again, this time by a British magazine, the Gentlewoman, whose proprietor, Alexander H. Warden, may well have been a relation of Angell’s precursor as editor, William L. Warden, since the latter not only shared his surname but belonged to a newspaper-owning family. The new owner made a determined attempt to develop the Daily Messenger, particularly for a female market: in July 1901, for example, it introduced a ‘special illustrated supplement’ on Sundays, though this lasted only fifteen months, indicating continued circulation problems. Angell was increasingly of the opinion that the paper could not survive without linotype machines: he had written admiringly about this new technology soon after arriving in Paris; but the proprietor’s local agent had been too prudent or too pessimistic even to hire them from the Éclair’s printers. ‘To overcome this I suggested that I myself would compose the paper on contract, for a sum considerably less than that being then expended’, he later recalled. His suggestion having eventually been accepted, he rented the linotype machines personally and ‘at great cost’, as he noted when announcing that they would be in operation with effect from 1 March 1903. In consequence, the Daily Messenger ‘improved enormously in appearance; and I worked the machines two shifts: in the day-time doing composition for the considerable number of printers or publishers in Paris who were producing English material of one kind or another.’ He mentioned in his autobiography that his clients included ‘a weekly paper run by “Count” Hamon’: indeed, in December 1902 this fashionable exponent of palmistry, in reality an Irishman born William John Warner whose professional aliases also included ‘Cheiro’, had acquired the American Register, and in late February 1903 relaunched it with the subtitle ‘Anglo-American and Colonial News’, using the linotype machines that Angell had hired. Since the Daily Messenger came out seven days a week and was aimed at the same market, Angell was thus setting the type for a competitor.

Meanwhile, Angell was further distracting himself from private troubles by writing a book. In June 1903, soon after becoming a contract compositor, he published Patriotism under Three Flags: A Plea for Rationalism in Politics. It was an organic outgrowth of his varied journalism during his first six years in Paris — the items of French news that he had been telegraphing to the United States, the digests of the English press that he had been supplying to the Éclair, and the opinionated editorials that he had been churning out for the Daily Messenger — and to a lesser extent of his reading at that time. His change of continents in mid-1897 had come at an interesting time for someone with his recently developed
interest in xenophobia and intolerance. The United States soon fought Spain over Cuba, from April to June 1898, and thereafter, despite its own anti-colonial beliefs, found itself not only ruling the Philippines but for several years savagely repressing an insurrection that broke out there in February 1899. Britain was also experiencing an upsurge of chauvinism, and in October 1899 became involved with the Boers in South Africa in a messy imperial war that was to last until May 1902.

Above all, as already mentioned, the Paris in which Angell had come to live had been transfixed since the autumn of 1897 by the Dreyfus affair. Three years previously Alfred Dreyfus, a French army officer, had been convicted and sent to Devil’s Island for allegedly selling military secrets. As a Jew born in Alsace, a border province that had become German as a result of the Franco-Prussian war, Dreyfus was doubly an object of suspicion for a French right that was both anti-semitic and xenophobic. However, the head of counter-intelligence, Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, subsequently discovered that the memorandum that had incriminated Dreyfus had been written not by him but by a Major Esterhazy. A fundamental conflict of political values was thereby exposed between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards. The former were mainly republicans and anti-clericals who believed that the civil rights of an individual, even an Alsatian Jew, were paramount. The latter were mainly monarchists and Catholics who believed that the prestige of the army, as an embodiment of national identity, should take priority. For a while the anti-Dreyfusards seemed to have prevailed. Esterhazy was cleared and Picquart arrested. Angell even claimed in an editorial of 13 January 1898 that ‘the Dreyfus–Esterhazy incident is closed – or at least the curtain rung down upon act one’, thereby exciting the derision of his senior printer, who pulled out of his pocket the provocatively Dreyfusard letter by the novelist Emile Zola in that day’s L’Aurore. Although Zola was convicted of libel the following month and imprisoned, the tide began to turn, albeit slowly, soon afterwards. In August, Major Henry, the officer who had initially discovered the forged memorandum, committed suicide, thereby undermining the anti-Dreyfusard case. International criticism of France mounted at the same time as its imperial probe into the Sudan brought it close to war with Britain in the Fashoda crisis of December. Dreyfus was brought back from Devil’s Island in June 1899 for a retrial at Rennes, and, although re-convicted, was pardoned by the President of France. Even so, it took a further seven years before he was officially exonerated, and allowed quietly to resume his army career. Angell, though contributing to the anti-Dreyfusard Éclair, himself took the opposite side. But what particularly interested him was the way the controversy polarized the country: he witnessed fights between his printers over it, and later met a surgeon whose career in a French hospital had suffered on account of his support for Dreyfus.\(^{150}\)

As well as responding journalistically to these dramatic events, Angell read Gustav Le Bon’s *Psychologie des foules*, an early exemplar of a growing interest among social psychologists and political observers in the mass mind that had supposedly been generated by urbanization and the popular press. This
sowed the seeds of his lifelong conviction that the excesses of nationalism had a psychological cause, and ultimately condemned him to an unending search for a psycho-educational corrective.

These experiences – his observation, indirect or direct, of the emotions generated by the Spanish–American and Anglo–Boer Wars and the Dreyfus Affair, and his selective reading of popular psychology – caused him to generalize what he had once seen as an American peculiarity. He now regarded the United States’s Anglophobia and support for a crusade against Spain as instances of a generic aberration to which all mass democracies were vulnerable, namely ‘patriotism’. He had begun working this out in his editorials only a couple of months after arriving in Paris. As early as 22 September 1897 he had written angrily:

Continental Europe in these days, as in all her history, is animated by a sentiment of ‘patriotism’ which at bottom is founded on political ambition and aggression; the desire for aggrandisement; the keeping alive of international hostilities; and satisfaction of those hostilities by means of war. These primitive instincts of aggression and pillage, which are a survival from ruder times of savagery,…have by no means, as Mr Herbert Spencer has shown us, been altogether eliminated by our comparatively short regime of industrialism.…. There seems to be something in human nature which makes a people, on the plea of ‘patriotism’, like to be sent as food for powder and shot, and robbed and fleeced and starved at home, in order that monarchs may play at soldiers and diplomatists may concoct alliances.

Denouncing continental nationalism, like recounting the follies of the Dreyfus case or criticizing American foreign policy, came easily to a British journalist; but opposing his own country’s war in South Africa, as Angell resolutely did from October 1899 onwards, required more courage. It led, as he was soon having to acknowledge, to accusations of being ‘pro-Boer’, though these merely reminded him of the ‘constant practice’ of the anti-Dreyfusards in France ‘to deny the sentiment of patriotism to all who did not think as they did’.151 A debate in the British House of Commons about compulsory militia service offended his libertarian beliefs and caused him to make a protest that he would repeat in the First World War: ‘Has England no journalist left to protest against modern slavery – the worst of all slaveries, since men are forced against their will to kill other men in a cause they may deem unjust?’152 Also indicative of the way his thought was going was his protest at the fatalism engendered by poor Anglo-French relations: he accused ‘the war mongers on either side’ of concluding that ‘war between the two countries is becoming “inevitable”’ and of therefore beginning ‘to distort the facts to bring it about’.153

Thus although Angell’s interest in patriotism arose primarily from its distorting effect on domestic politics, it drew him into a debate among the various strands of pacificism: liberal, radical, and even socialist. The celebrated free-trade publicist and liberal politician Richard Cobden (1804–65) had done much to convince Victorian progressives that whereas aristocratic landowners, who were the principal beneficiaries of military expenditure, were warlike, manufacturers,
traders, and financiers, who generated economic interdependence between countries, were always a force for peace. But late-nineteenth-century imperialism convinced many of those on the radical wing of the Liberal Party that in some circumstances financial interests might favour a warlike policy. The outbreak of the Boer War, attributed by radical pacifists such as J.A. Hobson to the machinations of investors in the mines of the Rand, stimulated the argument that Randlords could be as warlike an élite as landlords. In addition, the socialist movement that began emerging in Britain in the 1880s was, albeit tentatively, developing its own critique, which identified capitalism as the true cause of conflict.

Although Angell was later to be tempted by radical and to a lesser extent socialist ideas, at this time his thinking fell squarely into the Cobdenite or liberal tradition: he tacitly assumed that wars were caused not by economic interests but by patriotic delusions. But there is no evidence that Angell knew much about the debate to which he was implicitly contributing. Indeed, he was notably detached from British progressive circles. For one thing, he was living abroad. For another, perhaps because his father had been a loyal Conservative, he lacked any commitment to the Liberal Party, admitting in his reminiscences: 'I had no party affiliations at that time, but I called myself a Conservative if anything.'

It was not until he had nearly completed *Patriotism under Three Flags* that he realized that he had to rewrite it in order to contend with Hobson’s very different approach. Angell had evidently spent most of 1902 composing what turned out to be only a first draft: at one point he mentioned that a score of obituaries of Cecil Rhodes, who had died on 26 March, ‘lie before me as I write’; at another he quoted from the *Evening Post* for 11 October; and later he alluded to an article in *Nineteenth Century and After* that can be traced to the December issue. His book had been ‘almost ready for the press’ when around the end of the year he came across the conflicting analysis presented by Hobson’s important book *Imperialism: A Study*, which had been published in the early autumn. This dissented from ‘the merely sentimental diagnosis which explains wars or other national errors by outbursts of patriotic animosity or errors of statecraft’, and argued that, although war was irrational ‘from the standpoint of the whole nation’, it was ‘rational enough from the standpoint of certain classes in the nation’. Hobson believed that the insufficient purchasing power of an inadequately paid British working class reduced economic activity at home and so drove financiers first to invest abroad and then to demand that their government protect these investments militarily. Hobson’s rejection of the liberal assumption that economic forces were always peaceful was welcomed by socialists, who believed that his analysis could be taken beyond a criticism of the imperialist tendencies of British finance capital under particular political conditions and developed into an indictment of capitalism as inevitably imperialist; and most famously Lenin in 1916 was to make this case in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. However, Hobson was not a socialist
but a radical, and so believed that the answer lay not in the abolition of capitalism but in democratic control. Hence his encapsulated policy advice of 1902: ‘Secure popular government, in substance and in form, and you secure internationalism: retain class government, and you retain military Imperialism and international conflict.’

What Hobson had dismissively dubbed ‘the merely sentimental diagnosis’ that concentrated on ‘outbursts of patriotic animosity’ was, of course, the central thesis of the book that Angell had nearly completed. To deal with Hobson’s arguments, he therefore spent the early months of 1903 completely rewriting its beginning. Patriotism under Three Flags eventually came out in June, bearing its author’s real name, Ralph Lane, and the imprint of T. Fisher Unwin. It was fitting, given that Angell was to make his name by expounding a version of the Cobdenite thesis, that his first British publisher was one of Cobden’s sons-in-law, being married to Jane Cobden Unwin, herself an active liberal who had recently headed the women’s section of the Stop-the-War Movement formed to oppose the South African conflict.

Being naturally verbose, Angell had no difficulty making the quantum leap from articles to books: indeed, his ‘want of compactness’ was remarked upon by a reviewer. He began by claiming that the upsurge of imperialism had made it the principal touchstone of contemporary political values, at the expense of a more pacific view of international relations:

Not for very many years has the English-speaking world shown so profound a cleavage of opinion as that which is now displayed in the politics of national policy arising, in England, mainly out the South African War, and in America out of the conquest of the Philippines. On the one hand, the awakening of an Imperial temper and the discredit which has fallen upon social and liberal doctrines dominant fifty years ago are deemed all to the good, a welcome sign of national energy and vigilance; on the other hand, the new trend of feeling and opinion is regarded as infinitely mischievous, a menace to both freedom and material well-being.

This cleavage was neither ‘superficial’ nor a mere ‘incident of party politics’; rather, it was profoundly ideological:

A whole philosophy separates the two conceptions of polity. The fundamental nature of the difference is shown by the fact that almost all the greater states display the same conflict. The division of opinion which has taken place in England and America is over the problem of Imperialism is duplicated in other nations events which at first sight have nothing in common with South African or Philippine matters.

Having thus introduced this ‘wider aspect’, Angell proceeded immediately to criticize much of the discussion which has been provoked by the South African War. Judgements as to the real nature of Imperialism, Jingoism, and the like, have so evidently been influenced by the particular circumstances of the South African conflict. Thus several Liberal writers – notably Mr J.A. Hobson – have ascribed to finance a preponderating role in the creation
and maintenance of Imperial sentiment and policy. The inference naturally is that if financial influence is kept well in hand by democratic control, nothing is to be feared.

Angell played to his own strengths, his familiarity with French and American politics. Hobson’s diagnosis, he insisted, ‘seems to overlook, among other things, the case of France’. This was because, although in ideological terms ‘French Nationalism is . . . indistinguishable from English Imperialism’, its domestic support was very differently constituted. It was less widely supported at the elite level because ‘the forces of finance are all against it’. (Though Angell did not spell it out, this was because France’s Jewish bankers were alienated by the anti-Semitism of their country’s ultra-patriots.) But it had a greater mass following, as a consequence of which the political remedy favoured by radicals in Britain – subjecting elites and vested interests to popular scrutiny – would not ‘obviate’ the problem of patriotism but ‘increase it’: ‘The French Nationalists declare that unchecked democratic control would deliver the country into their hands.’ He also noted that this was already the case in the United States, where xenophobes found the country’s democratic processes particularly helpful to them.162

Rather than dissect a single instance of jingoism, as Hobson had done, Angell claimed to identify what was ‘common to all’ instances, and came up with three observations. The first was that in every case ‘sentimental considerations have dominated those of interest’. The second was that these sentimental considerations always included ‘vanity and all its concomitants: national pride of place, of mastery; coerciveness, that conception of “honour” which demands vindication by force of arms, the lust of rule and dominion, the pride of territorial possession, and the jealousy of like possessions in others’. And the third was: ‘Irrationalism in vanity in insisting most upon those qualities which least of all inspire respect in foreigners, and in taking that line of conduct most likely to bring the nation into discredit with the outside world.’163

He supported this analysis with a range of justifications. One, given prominence at the start of the book but little pursued thereafter, was the psychological claim that the ‘collective mind . . . displays a lower degree of rationalism and a more intense emotionalism, good or bad’ than its individual counterpart. Here Angell drew on his experience of lynch mobs and gold fever in the United States as well as on Le Bon’s theory that ‘for the creation of the mass-mind, of the “psychological crowd” as he calls it, propinquity is not necessary’. Recast into the phraseology of a century later, this meant that a ‘virtual’ mob was possible: an individual who imagined himself or herself to be part of a collectivity behaved as if physically part of a crowd. In consequence: ‘As one of a crowd the individual acquires, by the simple fact of numbers, a feeling of irresponsible power which permits him to cede to instincts which in a condition of isolation he would have resisted.’164 This pessimistic analysis chimed with Angell’s belief, perhaps based on his long-standing sense of intellectual superiority to the unreasoning mass of humanity, that emotion was ‘common to all’ but ‘ratiocination, implying an idea of causation and the capacity to follow an argumentative process of any complexity, is the possession of a comparative few’.165 Since his subtitle was ‘A Plea for
Rationalism in Politics’, Angell implied that that the capacity to ratiocinate could be enhanced by reading his book, but did not explicitly develop this point.

Angell’s second justification for his claim that nations were motivated by sentiment rather than interest was based on ‘the analogy of personal conduct’: if individuals could be influenced by vanity, so too could nations.\(^\text{166}\) Invoking Herbert Spencer as an authority for the view ‘that in point of time vanity precedes comfort in human development, decoration precedes dress’, he emphasized its continued importance for most individuals, even asserting that ‘the greater part of the English people socially above the labouring class are mainly concerned, not with the increase of comfort, but the keeping up of appearances’, and insisting that this psychological truth ‘is not likely to have left politics altogether unaffected’.\(^\text{167}\) Moreover, nations were vainer than individuals. Just as their mutual relations were ‘less controlled by rationalisation’ than those of individuals,

so is national vanity of a distinctly lower order than the vanity which obtains between civilized individuals. This is shown in two ways: by the survival among nations of the morality of the duel, with its archaic notions of an arm-defended honour, notions long since abandoned between at least English-speaking individuals; and the distinctly cruder type of that barbarous boastfulness which vaunts mainly bigness of territory and greatness of wealth – a type of vanity which in this crude form has quite disappeared in the intercourse of all civilized individuals – Saxon, Celt or Latin.\(^\text{168}\)

He applied this analysis to the concept of ‘honour’, which still impelled nations to fight even though individuals had moved away from ‘this old notion’. It was characteristic of his willingness to make bold statements, as well as his lack of knowledge of contending claims for moral improvement such as the abolition of slavery, that he stated that this more relaxed view of individual honour ‘stands out as the one clear moral gain of the nineteenth century’.\(^\text{169}\)

Yet this critique of patriotism did not lead to policy for curbing it. And, as a purely analytical exercise, Angell’s book was spoiled by cutting corners. For example, in setting out his qualifications to write it, he claimed that ‘from observation at first hand’ he knew about ‘such apparently dissimilar events as Cleveland’s Venezuelan Message, the Hispano-American War, the Dreyfus Affair, and certain phases of the South African conflict’,\(^\text{170}\) though he had nothing that could count as ‘first hand’ experience of the Spanish–American and Boer Wars. He also used some material from J.G. Godard’s *Patriotism and Ethics*, a book published in 1900, without either attribution or quotation marks: after a complaint of plagiarism from Godard, he was obliged to insert an explanatory slip in later copies.\(^\text{171}\) However, the Liberal MP and rationalist intellectual J.M. Robertson, whose work he had more properly acknowledged, sent an approbatory letter;\(^\text{172}\) and *Patriotism under Three Flags* also received a number of favourable reviews. Even so, it ‘sold only a few hundred copies’, and was soon branded ‘a failure’ by its author.\(^\text{173}\) As a result, having dipped his toe into the progressive debate about how to prevent war, Angell drew back from it for the next few years.

He turned instead to his other ambition: he ‘greatly fancied’ himself as not just the contract printer but the saviour–proprietor of *Daily Messenger*, which was
facing closure. His first thought was to ask the dynamic owner of the *Daily Mail*, Alfred Harmsworth, to buy it while he himself ran it. He therefore had a first encounter with the future Lord Northcliffe, who met him in Paris on 1 April 1904, quizzed him about the paper, and, on discovering how small was its circulation in relationship to what it charged for its space, memorably described it as ‘a fraud on your advertisers’. Possibly Angell also asked the owner of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, whom he encountered in Paris at this time; but, if so, the answer was similarly negative. Still believing he could rescue the *Daily Messenger* on his own, Angell next proposed to the *Gentlewoman’s* proprietors that if they would transfer the whole of the twenty-thousand one-pound ordinary shares to me, I would give them half the amount in debentures. The proposition that they should pass over the whole of the shares in the company for no cash at all to a man who had barely a shilling to his name took their breath away for a moment.

However, they eventually acceded to a takeover on these lines, and gave Angell a ninety-day option so that he could go into the paper’s finances more thoroughly before committing himself. An agreement was signed on 2 July envisaging a transfer of ownership on 30 September. Any elation he felt at securing this deal was soon replaced by a sense of personal responsibility for the thirty or forty staff who would shortly be employed by him. As he waited for his train at Calais on his way back from securing this deal in London, he ‘developed a most appalling funk; and, as a by-product of my gloomy reflections, saw the “capitalist exploiter” in a new light. . . . I knew that I was returning to the fears, anxieties and responsibilities that I had known as a nascent “land-owner” and farmer in California.’

One condition of the proprietors’ consent to Angell’s takeover was that they would provide no more funding, so he had to borrow from his elder brother Tom the ‘small sums which would enable me for a few weeks to pay the salaries’ of his staff. His apprehensions proved justified: exercising due diligence during his ninety days, he very soon discovered that more of the paper’s anticipated advertising revenue had been spent in advance than he had realized. He had no alternative but to inform his proprietors that he could not exercise his option to purchase, with the result that they closed the paper forthwith. The final issue of the *Daily Messenger* appeared on 30 July, its editor fulminating to the last against the great powers and their perverted ‘patriotic’ values: ‘The end of government, according to the Nationalist, that is, the jingo view, is not the well being of the governed but the subjugation of neighbouring peoples.’ Anticipating his ‘illusion’ thesis, moreover, Angell insisted that free and prosperous yet small powers, such as Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark, were much worthier of admiration.

Despite having maintained his editorial pugnacity to the bitter end, Angell was plunged for ‘some months’ during the summer and autumn of 1904 into a ‘state of deep depression’, according to his autobiography, and even ‘felt like suicide’, according to his reminiscences. Having suffered a second economic failure, and failed to redeem it by literary success, he was, in his early thirties, an obscure, unemployed, and unhappily married editor. He was not to know that the hands-on experience of modern newspaper production that he had gained
in Paris, as well as the independent thinking about domestic and international politics upon which he had been simultaneously engaged, were about to pay off in a spectacular way.

NOTES

1. AA, 105.
2. Cited in AA, 71.
4. AA, 33, 67.
5. AA, 35.
10. AA, 39.
11. AA, 46. AA drafts: BSU.
15. For biographical information about Purucker, see Theosophical Forum, Nov. 1942, 527.
16. The legal description of his land was the east half of the south-east quarter of section 10, township 31 south, range 29 east Mount Diablo base and meridian. Order Book 40, p. 227: Hall of Records, Bakersfield. I am grateful to M. Ferdinand for checking this transaction.
20. AA, 44.
23. AA, 60–1.
26. For Pogson, see Bakersfield Californian, 18 Jan., 22 Feb., 30 Oct.1896.
28. AA, 34, 50.
29. A to H.A. Lane, 15 June 1892 (transcribed copy): BSU.
31. A to H.A. Lane, 15 June 1892 (transcribed copy): BSU.
32. AA, 52.
34. ‘Reminiscences’, 36. See also, AA, 55.
36. AA, 50.
37. Fragment of A to H.A. Lane, ‘Summer-autumn 1892’: BSU. AA, 55.
38. Its legal description was the south-east quarter of section 30, township 11 north, range 19 west San Bernardino base and meridian.
41. A to H.A. Lane, 30 Jan. 1893: BSU. (There is also a typescript version of this letter; but the transcriber, deceived by the fact that Angell often left the tops of his ‘a’ open, misread ‘Jan’ as an unlikely abbreviation for June.) Gavin and Leverett, Kern’s Movers and Shakers, 160. AA, 69. Testimonials from Rosedale featured in advertisements by the California Land and Commercial Company: see TT, 10 Oct. 1893, 9. AA, 57–8.
43. Letter to H.A. Lane, headed ‘My Place in the Country’ and dated ‘May 20–27–29’ [1893]: BSU.
44. AA, 57.
45. The legal description was the south half of the north-east quarter and the north-east quarter of the south-east quarter of section 24, township 28 south, range 25 east Mount Diablo base and meridian.
46. Bakersfield Californian, 18 Feb. 1894, 3.
47. Order Book 048, p. 0414; 0019, p. 0070; 0023, p. 0148; 048, p. 0414: Hall of Records, Bakersfield.
49. George Nasmyth reminded him of this on 22 July 1914: [J. Hilton (ed.)], International Polity Summer School, Old Jordans Hostel, Beaconsfield, under the auspices of the Garton Foundation (1915), 160.
50. AA, 51.
51. WöP, Nov. 1914, 24. This is unlikely to have referred to the 1896 campaign because Spain was by then the principal object of popular hostility.
53. AA, 64, 84.
54. ‘Reminiscences’, 43.
57. AA, 52.
58. Lane, *Patriotism under Three Flags*, 147.
59. AA, 50.
60. I here quote it from what I assume to be the most widely available source: N. Angell, *America and the New World-State: A Plea for American Leadership in International Organization* (New York, 1915), 186–7. For Angell’s use of San Francisco’s public library, see AA, 73.
62. Ibid. 203–4.
63. Ibid. 205, 207.
64. Ibid. 198.
67. AA, 71.
68. H.A. Lane to A, 6 June 1896: BSU.
69. It is acknowledged in Carrie Lane to A, 6 Dec. 1896 (typescript copy): BSU. The photo was reprinted in the *Daily Herald* feature of 18 Apr. 1939 on Angell, which is itself reproduced in *Norman Angell by his Contemporaries*, 142.
72. *Bakersfield Californian*, 5 Sept. 1896, 3 (which also gave his name as Frank Lane).
73. AA, 64.
74. Angell, *America and the New World State*, 211.
75. Ibid. 212, 228.
76. Ibid. 213.
77. Ibid. 218.
78. His father sent him the Sept. 1896 issue of *Longman’s Magazine*, which contained this article: T.A. Lane to A, ‘Holbeach Nov. 1896’ (typescript copy): BSU.
80. Ibid. 231–2.
81. Ibid. 233.
82. Ibid. 236–8.
83. Ibid. 243.
84. Lane, *Patriotism under Three Flags*, 120–1.
86. ‘Reminiscences’, 44–5. AA, 84.
87. A. Brown to A, 20 Dec. 1896: BSU.
90. www.notarialarchives.org/Notaries/listC.htm
91. H.E. Monroe to Mrs B. Kinney, 23 July 1897; to Miss B. Cuvellier, 15 Aug. 1897: BSU.
92. Bender & Hewitt to A, 9 Jan. 1897: BSU.
94. The certificates, dated 5 Feb. 1897, can be found in BSU.
95. AA, 69.
96. Bakersfield Californian, 27 Feb. and 10 Mar. 1897: I am grateful to C. Ferdinand for these references.
97. AA, 58. ‘Reminiscences’, 42–3. The reference to his lack of inches is found only in AA, draft: BSU box 47.
100. Bakersfield Californian, 28 May 1897, consulted by C. Ferdinand. AA, 63–4. H.P. Bender to A, 13 Apr. 1899: BSU.
101. H. Blodget to A, 30 Dec. 1897: BSU.
103. AA, 89. ‘Reminiscences’, 60–1.
105. W.O. Covert to A, 17 June 1897: BSU.
108. AA, 92.
111. A to T.A. Lane, 14 July 1897: McM box 2.
112. DM, 15, 29 July; 6 Aug. 1897.
114. DM, 1, 4, 19 July; 3, 5 Aug. 1897.
117. From 5 Sept. 1897 until 1 Feb. 1898, the Daily Messenger (as it had become in Jan. 1896) carried the statement that C.J. Radclyffe was now ‘the sole proprietor’ and that Sydney John Howard had ‘no longer any connection with the paper in any way whatsoever’. From 8 Apr. 1898 (to 7 June 1899), the paper announced that its London office was provided by W.L. Erwood at 30 Fleet Street, who presumably now owned it.
118. AA, 92–3.
119. AA, 93–4, 100.
120. D. Purucker to A, 1 Sept. 1897, and ‘Sunday’ [late 1897]: McM box 3.
122. B. Cuveiller to A, ‘Bayeux, Saturday night’: BSU.
123. B. Cuveiller to A, ‘Bayeux, Saturday 5.45pm’: BSU.
124. B. Cuveiller to A, ‘Saturday night’: BSU.
125. Spalding Gazette, 4 June 1898, 8.
126. AA, 94.
127. See Warden’s obituary in Hendon Times, 6 Feb. 1942, 1.
129. AA, 94–5.
130. T.A. Lane to A, 1 Feb. 1899; A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [early 1950s]: BSU.
131. AA, 94–6.
133. M.A. Lane to A, 13 Nov. 1898: BSU. AA, 95.
135. A to E. Wrench, cited in Marrin, Sir Norman Angell, 46. I have been unable to locate the original of this letter, apparently sent in the early 1950s.
136. D. Purucker to A, 8 May 1899; H. Purucker to A, 10 June 1899: McM box 3.
137. T.A. Lane to A, 21 June 1899; Mrs M.A. Lane to A, n.d. (typescript copies): BSU.
139. The Daily Messenger’s ownership changed with effect from the issue of 14 June 1899. From 2 to 20 July its colophon, which had previously referred to the rue Croix des Petits Champs, gave ‘M. Sabatier, Imprimeur, 10 rue du Faubourg, Montmartre’; and from 21 July 1899 to the final edition on 30 July 1904 it gave ‘Imprimerie L’Éclair, Haguenauer 10, rue du Faubourg, Montmartre’. AA, 94–5. ‘Reminiscences’, 94.
141. A to Mary [Lane], n.d. [c. 8 Feb. 1955]: BSU.
142. Cited in Marrin, Sir Norman Angell, 46.
143. [B. Cuvellier to A] ‘Tuesday morning’ [Jan. 1900]: McM box 3. Only pages 2 and 3 of a longer letter survive. The letter was found in the unidentified correspondence file.
144. T.A. Lane to A, 29 Jan. 1900 (typescript copy): BSU.
145. M.A. Lane to A, 25 Apr. 1900 (typescript copy): BSU.
146. This address appears on A to H. O’H. Cosgrave, 10 May 1910, and B. Hunt to A, 8 Dec. 1910: BSU.
148. The Sunday supplement began on 28 July 1901 and lasted until 26 Oct. 1902. From 2 Aug. 1901 the DM also provided Paris offices for the Sphere, Tatler, and Financier and Bullionist.
149. For references to linotype, see DM, 20 Oct. 1897, 2; 17 Feb. 1903, 2. AA, 100. For the title of Hamon’s paper, see ‘Cheiro’ [W.J. Warner], Cheiro’s Memoirs: The Reminiscences of a Society Palmist (1912), 71–6. The date of Cheiro’s takeover of the American Register can be inferred from the first appearance there of ‘Occult Notes’ on 27 Dec. 1902; and his use of Angell’s linotype is apparent from the changed format with effect from 22 Feb. 1903.
150. AA, 99.
151. DM, 2 Jan. 1900, 2; 26 Jan. 1900, 2.
152. DM, 22 Feb. 1900, 2.
153. DM, 4 May 1900, 2.
156. Lane, Patriotism under Three Flags, 24.
157. It was noticed by the TLS, 10 Oct. 1902, 303, and given a hostile review on 5 Dec. 1902, 364.
160. Spectator, 21 Nov. 1903, 845.
162. Ibid. 2, 3.
163. Ibid. 5–6.
166. Ibid. 6.
167. Ibid. 32, 33.
168. Ibid. 45.
169. Ibid. 48.
171. A to T. Fisher Unwin, 3 Aug. 1903: BSU. The slip is at p. 48 of the Bodleian copy, but not in the complimentary one, now in this biographer’s possession, that Angell had presented to his journalist friend Harry Cozens-Hardy on 22 June 1903.
172. J.M. Robertson to A, 20 June 1903, was recalled in A to J.M. Robertson, 3 Apr. 1911: McM box 1, and reproduced in *Norman Angell by His Contemporaries*, 148.
175. ‘Reminiscences’, 45.
176. The agreement is in BSU box 29.
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The ten years, almost to the day, between the Daily Messenger’s final appearance on 30 July 1904 and Austria-Hungary’s declaration of war against Serbia on 28 July 1914 saw an astonishing improvement in Angell’s fortunes, though also a dramatic increase in the demands upon him. First, the obscure journalist and failed entrepreneur metamorphosed into the respected manager of the Daily Mail’s new continental edition, a job that for all its strains proved remunerative and opened doors. Next, he became the fashionable author of Europe’s Optical Illusion (November 1909) and its enlarged version The Great Illusion (November 1910, with further expansions and revisions in January 1911 and September 1912), and was obliged both to defend a thesis that was overstated in certain respects and under-explained in others and to clarify policy implications that, pulling as they did towards both pacifism and strong defences, were highly ambivalent. On top of this, he understandably but unwisely chose to confront those who criticized his economics-based theory for ignoring non-materialistic motivations for war: as a result he ventured onto intellectual terrain upon which he found himself dangerously exposed. Lastly, after an exhausting effort to combine his managerial job with these demanding authorial challenges, he greatly reduced his newspaper responsibilities from the autumn of 1912 so as to become an almost full-time peace activist of a novel kind. In public, occasional lapses aside, he presented himself as an educator, the pioneer of the scientific study of ‘international polity’ rather than a controversialist, and as a sober realist with conservative and business support, rather than an ‘old pacifist’ of leftist and utopian affiliations. In private, however, he was building up a network of connections with liberals, radicals, and even socialists, and trying not only to understand their ideas but relate them to his ‘illusion’ campaign. In the personal life he kept concealed from all but his closest friends, he achieved a degree of separation from his wife, and explored a number of business ventures. Yet a mere couple of days after a major conference of his international polity movement had confidently concluded its deliberations, this most triumphant though hectic time of his life was cut short by European war.

* * * * *

After the Daily Messenger died, a deeply depressed Angell made ends meet by continuing to supply his news items to the American, British, and French press.
But after a few months he received a telegram inviting him to a second meeting with Sir Alfred Harmsworth (now a baronet), who told him: ‘I would not buy your paper but I’m prepared to buy you. I have decided to produce, or reproduce, the Daily Mail in Paris; and I think you are man who can do it for me.’ Harmsworth supposedly declared that Angell would have ‘a completely free hand’, would be ‘head of the whole Continental organization’, would be permitted ‘three major mistakes’, and would control an initial budget of £50,000 with the same again as a reserve. A breath-taken Angell raised two objections, or so he later claimed. The first was that he did not share Harmsworth’s political views and even regarded him ‘as the most mischievous man in England’. That part of the story in particular may have gained significantly in the telling. Although Angell must already have disliked the Daily Mail’s ‘patriotism’, there is no evidence that he as yet strongly disapproved of its proprietor. Indeed, as late as 1913 he was privately assuring an acquaintance that the press magnate ‘is not so black as he is painted, and he is, in his own field, an extraordinary, able and remarkable man’. It was not until the First World War, when Angell’s political stance moved further to the left, that he made the transition from disagreement to hostility. In any case, his memory was that Harmsworth dismissed any political differences as irrelevant to an essentially administrative job. Angell’s second objection was that his own particular bent was for the journalistic rather than the business side of the industry. This was flatly contradicted: ‘You quickly get to understand details and appreciate their importance. You understand people, which is the main thing in administration.’

Harmsworth’s gamble on Angell showed his shrewdness. To produce an eight-page mass-circulation paper he had chosen an energetic and practical man with seven years experience in Paris who proved to be an admirable subordinate until distracted by his parallel career. The Daily Mail’s ‘business uptown office’ at 3 Place de la Madeleine being fashionably located but inconvenient, Angell temporarily reoccupied the editorial offices he had used for the Daily Messenger, now additionally renting ‘a flat for myself at the top of the building, so as to be on the spot day and night until such time as we had a permanent building of our own’ – a further indication that his marital home was some distance away. He also re-hired his former production facilities from the Éclair’s printers. On 9 May 1905 he delighted his anxious boss, who had fortuitously turned up at Place de la Madeleine just after a trial run, by pulling a dummy edition out of his desk drawer. ‘Experimental copies very great success’, Harmsworth noted; and in gratitude he not only gave dinner to all the staff of the new paper, but a few days later took ‘Mr and Mrs Lane’ to dine at the Ritz – a very rare appearance by Beatrice in her husband’s increasingly absorbing professional life. The Continental Daily Mail began regular publication on 22 May, and seven months later (just as its upwardly mobile proprietor was ennobled as Baron Northcliffe) consolidated all its operations on a single site of its own at 36 rue du Sentier, in the press quarter, where new linotype machines were installed. In addition to reproducing and distributing material from the London paper, Angell gradually took on responsibility for some local editorial insertions. He managed a staff of
250 with a judicious mixture of firmness towards the printing unions and charm towards the journalists. Following an early ‘publishing debacle’ he ‘cleared out’ a recalcitrant group of printers in 1906, forestalling a protest strike by arranging ‘if needs be, to take over the staff of another paper’; and later that year he defeated an attempt by the unions to have British rather than French pay scales applied. He also impressed Northcliffe by maintaining production, unlike the rival Paris edition of the New York Herald, during a lightning strike by the city’s electrical-power workers: he borrowed Le Figaro’s private generator. Yet the journalist Evelyn Wrench, arriving as a two-month holiday relief in May 1907, found him ‘as nice as could be’, and became a lifelong friend. And other junior colleagues who went on to successful press careers remembered him fondly: Valentine Williams, though acknowledging his ‘cold temperament’, recorded that ‘he had the warmest of hearts’; and William Colley judged that he had ‘a brain capable of meeting most problems likely to present themselves in the rue du Sentier. . . . Principles and humanity governed him’.

Managing the Continental Daily Mail had its stresses, which, in conjunction with Beatrice’s instability, took their toll. Although Angell’s health had improved during his American years, his insomnia now worsened to such an extent that Harmsworth advised him to stop drinking tea. Economic stresses made their contribution too. During its first few months the continental edition lost an ‘average of £200 per week’. In both 1908 and 1911 it was to be damaged by downturns in the business cycle. His proprietor, despite having promised complete independence, monitored his work closely, issuing from his London headquarters at Carmelite House what Angell termed a ‘daily grumble’ about the content of the paper, and nit-picking on his frequent motoring trips to France about glitches in its local distribution.

However, the job brought Angell significant material rewards: within six months he had been given a share in the profits, which were soon generated on a regular basis, in addition to an annual salary of £750; and in 1909 he was not only granted power of attorney for the Continental Daily Mail but some shares in the London paper. In addition, working for Northcliffe was a lesson in popular psychology, which, Angell believed, could assist his efforts to influence the public mind. As he put it in his autobiography: ‘I knew after the writing of Patriotism under Three Flags, that, if we were to wrestle with the weaknesses which so often make human society so sorry an affair, we should have to acquire something of the knowledge Lord Northcliffe possessed so abundantly.’ By the time Angell published The Great Illusion he over-confidently expected to win over ‘general opinion’ in both Britain and Germany, on the basis of having ‘watched and been concerned with the organisation of some of the most commercially successful “movements of opinion” in recent years’.

As he fell under Northcliffe’s spell, he drifted apart from Beatrice. Although she had joined him for dinner with his proprietor in May 1905, within five months she sent him a spoof newspaper that carried among its ‘Answers to Correspondents’ the announcement: ‘Forlorn wife: The Manager of the Paris edition of the “Daily Mail” can be seen by appointment only; but the office boy is good looking.
and has charming manners.’ In January 1907, when thanking Northcliffe for increasing his salary to £1,200, Angell noted that it would have the effect of ‘liberating me from certain domestic preoccupations’ – perhaps by funding his wife’s travels. On 8 June 1907 he lost his mother, who died suddenly at Holbeach during a period in which Wrench was deputizing for him. In his private life he found escape not only in yachting but in the boy-scout movement, which had developed rapidly after the publication in 1908 of Robert Baden-Powell’s *Scouting for Boys*. As early as October 1909 he registered the First Paris (English) Troop, and soon boasted of being the ‘first Scout master created in France and the only one holding a Baden-Powell warrant for France’. This suggested that by then Beatrice was not filling such leisure hours as he had, perhaps because she was often away from Paris. He may conceivably also have resumed amateur dramatics among the expatriate community: many years later an acquaintance from this period of his life jogged his memory about an acting club, and was told: ‘I remember the old Thespians . . . but can’t for the life of me recollect whether I took part.’

Crucially, Angell became more interested than before in international relations, though because he was no longer writing political leaders the precise development of his views cannot be traced. The *Continental Daily Mail* had been launched less than two months after first Moroccan crisis had been triggered by the Kaiser’s visit to Tangiers, a counterproductive German attempt to disrupt the Anglo-French entente. However, it was not until ‘the end of 1906’, when after eighteen months Angell had got his paper onto an even keel and ‘had a little time to look around’, that he became actively concerned about ‘the Anglo-German situation’. An important stimulus was his ‘increasing contact with people around Northcliffe’ – another instance of his ideas being shaped by his circumstances – who argued that Britain must rearm in order to assure not only its security against Germany but its prosperity too. They believed it would suffer not only the seizure of its assets if it was invaded but also exclusion from its foreign markets if it was perceived as being militarily weak. As already noted, the process whereby Angell came to dissent from this widely held opinion had begun with his Californian essays of 1896/7: indeed, he was to claim in *Europe’s Optical Illusion* that ‘the economic futility of political force’ had ‘first thrust itself upon my attention some ten years since’. The Anglophobia of American farmers who ought to have been grateful to Britain for purchasing their produce lastingly convinced him that external policy was not always rational. Britain’s practice of allowing all countries to trade freely with its Dominions persuaded him that ‘ownership’ of territory did not necessarily bring economic privileges. At the same time, supposedly, he had discovered financial interdependence from the failure of a South American venture that had wiped out his savings in England. On returning to Europe he became even more interested in nationalist irrationality and economic interconnectedness. The former was, of course, the theme of *Patriotism under Three Flags*, published in June 1903. The latter was the message of both a French economist, Pierre Aubry, whose lecture in Paris on 5 February 1906 argued: ‘La guerre devient une catastrophe de plus en plus terrible à mesure
que les communications entre les peuples se ressèrèrent davantage;° and the financial editor of *The Times*, Hartley Withers, whose 1908 book *The Meaning of Money* explained the interlocking fragility of the international monetary system. And as a senior Northcliffe employee attending his boss’s Savoy Hotel luncheons and country-house weekends Angell discovered that leading figures in British public life ‘all accepted as truths so self-evident as not to be worth discussion certain “axiomatic premises” which were, I soon became convinced, either dangerous half-truths or complete and utter fallacies’.°° Persuading himself that in fact military power was irrelevant to national prosperity, Angell experienced ‘a sense of wandering through a nursery in which it was necessary to explain to children the realities of the world outside’.°°° What prompted him to produce his explanation in book form was the British defence scare of March 1909, caused by a rumour that Germany had accelerated its Dreadnought programme. A highlight was Frederic Harrison’s letter in *The Times* of the 18th of that month claiming that the risk of a ‘direct plunge at the heart of the Empire – on our arsenals, our ports, and the capital’ by a German fleet designed as ‘the spearhead of a magnificent army’, resulting in an economic catastrophe for Britain, required that priority now be given to ‘the formation of an adequate land defence at home’. Such alarmism was all the more remarkable for the fact that Harrison was a veteran Positivist intellectual with a forty-year record of opposing militarism.

Angell later described *Europe’s Optical Illusion* as ‘a political pamphlet written at a time of panic and for quite definite reasons’.°°°° Since it was structured as a reply to Harrison’s letter, and cited several items from the May 1909 issues of the periodical press, it was evidently begun in the spring of that year. Its completion proved difficult, according to Angell’s autobiography: ‘More than once the feeling came upon me during the writing . . . that I myself was an imbecile to suppose that the flood of human imbecility could ever be stemmed by efforts of reason.’

He also had his daily grind to attend to, his obligations during the summer including attendance at the luncheon on 26 July at which the French aviator Blériot was presented with the *Daily Mail*’s prize for the first cross-channel flight.°°° Yet, receiving encouragement from the bankers, including ‘one of the Rothschilds’, upon whom he tried out his ideas,°°°°° he finished his text, and ‘submitted it to one publisher after another’. Because each in turn told him that the public was not interested in such a subject, he decided, as a well-remunerated Northcliffe functionary could, ‘to have the book – abbreviated to about 28,000 words – printed at my own expense’. He paid Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd, a long-established publishing firm, to bring it out, the distribution being handled by W.H. Smith, a leading newsagent. To keep ‘this bit of pamphleteering’ separate from his work for Northcliffe, whom he had cited disapprovingly, he conjured up the name ‘Norman Angell’ for the title page, though he informed his boss and a few others of this subterfuge.

He must have done his cutting and rewriting in the late summer and early autumn of 1909, on the evidence of the sources he cited. ‘As these pages go to press’ he put in a quotation from Asquith’s speech in the House of Commons on 27 August. A month later he later added one from the Berlin Correspondent
of *The Times* that can be found in the edition of that paper published on 27 September, and at the same time incorporated material from ‘Mr Baty, the writer on international law’ that, though no source was given, came from a book published the same week. While applying what must have been a final touch, he observed that the Austrian press was then commemorating the first anniversary of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had taken place in early October of the previous year. Thus although *Europe’s Optical Illusion* carried no publication date, enabling its author later to deceive himself that it had come out in 1908, in 1907, or even earlier, it was evidently completed in October 1909 and published the following month. This was the date given in those editions of *The Great Illusion* that carried its full publishing history, and is consistent with the appearance of a notice in the *Times Literary Supplement*, summarizing its argument in fourteen lines, on 9 December.

November 1909 was a difficult moment to publish, because of the controversy over the ‘People’s Budget’, introduced by the Liberal chancellor of the exchequer David Lloyd George, which on the 30th of that month was rejected by the Conservative-dominated House of Lords, precipitating a major constitutional crisis that was to produce general elections in both January and December of the following year. This domestic distraction probably contributed to the slight delay that took place before *Europe’s Optical Illusion* attracted significant attention. The following year Angell recalled this as having lasted ‘over six weeks’, but subsequently doubled it in order to make a better story. Three years later, a disciple repeated what his master must have told him: ‘For about three months no public recognition of any sort was bestowed on the book.’ By the time Angell wrote his autobiography he was claiming: ‘The book was sent to about a hundred papers for review, and I waited. I waited a long time. Beyond the formal two- or three-line notices of its appearance not one single notice concerning it appeared.’ So in desperation, and because otherwise he would be left with a large stock of ‘remainders’, he ‘sent copies to between two and three hundred selected public men, concerned with politics, in Britain, France, and Germany…. At first nothing happened. But after about three months a few things did begin to happen.’ The turning point came after he asked H.W. Massingham to notice it in the respected Liberal weekly he edited, the *Nation*. ‘The result was a two-page review of the book, done, I believe, by H.N. Brailsford. This I sent to a score or so of journalists. In a few months reviews came in scores and hundreds, not only from Britain, the United States, and France; but Germany also.’

The account in *After All* had some truth in it. Angell did send out some free copies. And Brailsford did indeed write an unsigned article for the *Nation*, entitled ‘The Motive Cause of War’, which lavished praise on Angell’s book before going on to argue for the contradictory radical thesis that for certain vested interests war was highly profitable. Yet Brailsford’s piece appeared as early as 18 December 1909, just six weeks after publication, and did so in an issue which also carried a half-page advertisement for the book that quoted from fifteen favourable reviews, although admittedly these were mainly from local papers and may have been the ‘formal two- or three-line notices’ that dissatisfied him.
Furthermore, Angell was already receiving fan letters, one of which called for a cheap edition so that every working man could buy a copy.39 Thus the early neglect of his book was both briefer and less total than he soon liked to maintain.

Angell’s real breakthrough came when the book was read over Christmas 1909 by Viscount Esher, the definitive eminence grise of that era, who decided off his own bat to promote it. An active homosexual despite a successful marriage, he kept discreetly out of the limelight, though he was influential both as a courtier, skilled at decorating state buildings and staging royal ceremonies, and as a member of the government’s Committee of Imperial Defence.40 Esher admired Europe’s Optical Illusion enough to impose it on his friends and acquaintances. A quarter of a century later Angell told Bernard Falk that Esher had bought two hundred copies, the British foreign secretary and German Kaiser being among the recipients.41 In that interview Angell claimed to have sent only fifty out himself: the figure of ‘between two and three hundred’ he was to give in After All suggests that by then he was conflating his own distribution list with Esher’s rather longer one. One of the latter’s first copies went to the Tory leader A.J. Balfour: on 31 December Esher tried to persuade his friend that ‘the little book I sent’, which he had come across ‘casually’, was ‘worth looking at’. Others were sent to Lord Roberts, the former British commander in South Africa, who acknowledged it politely, and to Charles Hardinge, then permanent undersecretary at the Foreign Office and about to become Viceroy of India, who soon admitted that it had ‘set my brain in a whirl’.42 And on 11 January 1910 Esher conveyed his own enthusiasm directly to Angell, arguing that his book ‘can be as epoch making as Seeley’s Expansion of England and Mahan’s Sea Power’, reporting that Balfour had ‘discussed it at length on Sunday with me’, and initiating a series of contacts that were to result two years later in the creation of the Garton Foundation.43

Meanwhile Angell’s book was making progress through other channels. It was praised as ‘clever and entertaining’ in the Daily Mail on 8 January 1910, and processed by Oxford University’s Bodleian Library five days later. It also reached the Italian head of state around this time: on the 17th Angell reported excitedly to a Daily Mail colleague that when an American journalist, Melvin Stone, ‘recently saw the King of Italy they discussed at length “Europe’s Optical Illusion” – the king has since had a copy sent him. I’m getting on with the crowned heads!’44 Over next few weeks it became a word-of-mouth success among Britain’s middle classes: for example, Robert F. Horton, an able and influential Congregational minister in Hampstead who in his New College days had been the first Nonconformist to hold a fellowship at Oxford, planned a sermon about it for the first Sunday in March, and, though prevented by illness from delivering it, took pride in having promoted Angell’s work ‘before it was publicly known’.45 Europe’s Optical Illusion received a proper review in the Times Literary Supplement on 10 March, and four days later was mentioned for the first time in parliament, by the Labour MP G.N. Barnes, who summarized its thesis as being that ‘international finance is simply making the weapon of war almost impossible’.46 The following month it was reprinted.
By then Angell was jubilant. His publishers received an inquiry during April 1910 as to his real name and address that led him to believe that he was under consideration for that year’s Nobel Peace Prize. He kept on top of his duties in Paris, giving a successful speech in French on behalf of his proprietor at the reception for another French aviator, Paulhan, winner of the Daily Mail’s prize for flying from London to Manchester in under twenty-four hours. The elation he felt as an author was expressed on 10 May in a letter – written, interestingly, ‘as a Californian’ – to an American magazine editor whom he was trying to interest in promoting his ‘illusion’ thesis on the other side of the Atlantic:

Having seen how this book was received, I know there is life in it as the basis of a radical departure in modern statecraft, and that the idea is sufficiently simple to be capable of popular achievement. It means… the automatic extinction of military conflict within a decade, or perhaps two, because it means a complete revolution in the ideas which heretofore have prompted national aggression.

He was given further cause for hubris on 25 May when his work was mentioned by the foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, in his speech at a public dinner in the Hotel Cecil to commemorate the centenary of Argentine independence:

Just lately there has been published a very interesting little book, ‘Europe’s Optical Illusion’, the moral of which is to try to impress upon nations that commercially and financially their interests are so bound up together that even the victor in a quarrel between them is bound to lose a good deal more than he can possibly gain. When I read that book I was reminded of the saying of a great thinker many years ago that it is not things which matter so much, but people’s opinions about things. True as the statement in that book may be, it does not become an operative motive in the minds and conduct of nations until they are convinced of its truth and it has become a commonplace to them.

The further publicity given by Grey’s speech contributed to a second reprinting, in June. Already a critical success, Angell’s book was on its way to becoming a popular one too.

When peace literature strikes a chord – which happens rarely – it usually exploits an intensifying fear of war and offers a plausible recipe for peace. Europe’s Optical Illusion was produced because the political élite had lost its usual confidence that conventional defence policies would keep the peace. Angell thus began with the eye-catching observation: ‘It is pretty generally admitted that the present rivalry in armaments with Germany cannot go on indefinitely’, and went on to note that although a minority, dismissed in both countries ‘as dreamers and doctrinaires’, believed that peace could be preserved through ‘general disarmament, or at least a limitation of armament by agreement’, the majority view on both sides, ‘accepted as one of the laws of life’, was that ‘the present state of rivalry and recurrent irritation is bound to culminate in armed conflict’.

The recipe he offered was the correction of the illusion on which this majority view was based, namely the false assumptions that Britain’s ‘past industrial success’ had been attributable to an ability ‘to make her power felt’ and that Germany’s ‘giant strides in general prosperity and well-being’ of recent years were
‘the result of her military successes and the increasing power which she is coming to exercise in Continental Europe’. This illusion rested on the view ‘that the victorious party in the struggle for material dominance gains some material advantage over the party which is conquered’ – a view that was also taken by ‘the pacifist’, who, in calling ‘for “altruism” in international relationships’, implied that ‘successful war may be in the interest of, though the immoral interest, of the victorious party’. This acceptance on all sides of the view that ‘national power means national wealth, national advantage’ was the reason, Angell argued, ‘why... peace propaganda has so signally failed’. He therefore posed the question ‘But are these universal axioms unchallengeable?’, and insisted that it ‘had to be answered in the negative’.

To make this point, he surveyed some typical expositions of the conventional wisdom, as expounded by militarists in Germany and alarmists in Britain, before identifying the misconceptions they contained. He insisted that ‘since trade depends upon the existence of natural wealth and a population capable of working it’, it could be destroyed by an invader only ‘by destroying the population, which is not practicable’. Moreover, to the extent that ‘the confiscation by an invader of private property’ was achieved, ‘the internationalisation and delicate interdependence of our credit-built finance and industry’ would ‘so react upon the finance of the invader’s country as to make the damage to the invader resulting from the confiscation exceed in value the property confiscated’. Even annexation would not result in economic gain: ‘if Germany conquered Holland, German merchants would still have to meet the competition of Dutch merchants, and on keener terms than originally, because the Dutch merchants would then be within the German’s customs lines’. More generally, the ‘wealth, prosperity, and well-being of a nation depend in no way upon its political power’, as was shown by the fact that the ‘trade per capita of the small nations is in excess of the trade per capita of the great’. And Britain ‘could not suffer material damage’ by the loss of its self-governing colonies because they were ‘in fact independent nations, in alliance with the Mother Country, to whom they are no source of tribute or economic profit’. He also asserted, somewhat breezily, that Britain’s directly ruled colonies did not ‘differ essentially’ from the self-governing dominions to which he had been referring.

These economic realities were new, being a consequence of ‘the complex financial interdependence of the capitals of the world’ that had arisen from the improved communications ‘of the last thirty years’. Thus the arrival of a German army to loot the Bank of England would trigger an international financial ‘collapse’ that would affect Germany and give rise there to ‘a condition of chaos hardly less terrible than that in England’. Indeed, it was ‘not putting the case too strongly to say that for every pound taken from the Bank of England German trade would suffer a thousand’, because an attempt at confiscation would cause the credit system to ‘collapse like a pack of cards’.

Having set out these propositions, Angell was aware he might be accused by militarist critics of ignoring non-economic impulses towards aggression, such as an appetite for the status that hegemony over others would bring. He therefore
considered an objection he expected the followers of the American naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan to make, namely that ‘though Europe might so reform her political conceptions as to admit that there can be no material gain from conquest, their mere desire for domination and mastery, apart from all question of material advantage, will suffice to push nations into war’. Angell readily conceded – as befitted the author of *Patriotism under Three Flags* – that ‘the role of emotionalism in international conflicts is enormous’, but immediately went on to insist that, even so, such emotionalism has its origin in the same sort of optical illusion as that which is responsible for so much misconception when the material interests of nations are under consideration. For just as we commonly overlook the fact that the individual citizen is quite unaffected by the extent of his nation’s territory, that the material position of the individual Dutchman, as the citizen of the small State is not going to be improved by the mere fact of the absorption of his State by the German Empire, by which he becomes the citizen of a great nation, so in the same way his moral position, despite Captain Mahan, remains unchanged. Do we respect a Russian because he is a citizen of one of the greatest Empires of history, and despise the Norwegian because he is the citizen of one of the smallest nations of Europe? The thing is absurd…

This argument – that although a state might achieve domination and mastery, its citizens did not thereby achieve greater respect from the citizens of other states – ignored the possibility that they might nonetheless obtain direct psychological gratification from their nation’s power. Predictably, it also failed as an attempt at pre-emption: Mahan himself was later to accuse Angell, amongst many errors, of exaggerating the role of material self-interest in human motivation.

After repeating the claim made in *Patriotism under Three Flags* that ‘national vanity’ was ‘of a distinctly lower order than the vanity which obtains between civilised individuals’, *Europe’s Optical Illusion* tackled militarism’s basic premise: that because moral progress was achieved through struggle and sacrifice, it was independent of social and economic development. On the contrary, Angell insisted: ‘Without material well-being, without a well-fed body, and a decent dwelling and tolerable physical comfort no high morality, no character development is in the long run possible. . . . The best service the statesman can do for the moral well-being of his people is to ensure their material well-being.’ Indeed, this last consideration, ‘far from constituting a sordid aim or a sordid test of political and sociological effort, is, all things considered, the most practical, the most useful, the very highest to which the politician can aspire’.

In the last part of his text Angell considered the policies to be inferred from his arguments. Acknowledging that they might be thought to be non-resisting ones, he confronted the question whether ‘the practical outcome of a recognition of the foregoing truths’ was that we ought ‘immediately to cease preparation for war, since our defeat cannot advantage our enemy nor do us in the long run much harm?’ His answer was a resounding negative. He argued that ‘so long as the misconception we are dealing with is all but universal in Europe…we all do, in fact, stand in danger from…aggression’. Indeed, he insisted that, given the
‘current political philosophy in Europe…we or any other nation are justified in taking means of self-defence to prevent…aggression’, which meant that he ‘would not urge the reduction of our war budget by a single sovereign’. And, because governments could not currently be expected to behave differently, he even criticized ‘the peace advocate’ for having ‘concentrated upon securing Governmental action’, a tactic ‘foredoomed to sterility’. Instead of asking governments to disarm unilaterally and practise appeasement, Angell called on civil society to absorb a truth that would of itself abolish war: ‘Were there a general recognition in Europe of the fact that it has become a physical impossibility to benefit by military conquest the whole raison d’être of the aggression of one nation upon another would disappear’, in which case it was ‘inconceivable that such an attack as that which haunts Mr Harrison should be made’. He proposed ‘a campaign of education in political rationalism’ that would proceed in parallel in Britain and Germany in order to avoid militarily disadvantaging the country in which it made more progress, implicitly Britain. To carry it forward he suggested a ‘pairing’ arrangement on the lines used in the House of Commons to equalize the effect of absenteeism on voting: thus, were ‘an anti-armament league’ to be established in London, ‘for every member enrolled in England a corresponding league should enrol a German in Germany’. Angell expressed the hope that the efforts of such a league would be assisted by the increasing propensity of both capitalists and labour to cooperate across frontiers, which ultimately held out the prospect of ‘the organisation of society on other than territorial and national divisions’. Here he quoted the international jurist Thomas Baty, who argued that the ‘stratification’ produced by such ‘class cohesion’ posed a threat to ‘territoriality’. Angell understandably knew nothing of this remarkable individual, a homosexual barrister who wrote novels under a female identity, and lived up to his anti-nationalist principles: having expressed his belief, in a passage not cited by Angell, that ‘Nationality’ was ‘breaking down before Cosmopolitanism’, Baty was to leave Britain in 1916 to work in Japan, where he remained until his death in 1954. Despite Angell’s hopes for an anti-armament league and his interest in Baty’s ‘stratification’ theory, he never believed that they could of their own end aggression: ‘a revolution of ideas…effected imperceptibly’ was essential. He therefore devoted his final chapter to showing that such revolutions had been achieved in the past, most notably when Europe had repudiated religious persecution and individual duelling.

Although Europe’s Optical Illusion did not give rise to complaints of plagiarism, its standards remained journalistic rather than academic. The citations from The Meaning of Money not only compounded sentences from different sections of this work to form seeming paragraphs but also sometimes reworded them. For example, Hartley Withers’s phrase ‘No one can quarrel with the Germans for making use of the credit weapon in extending their trade’ became ‘No one can quarrel with the Germans for making use of the credit we offered for the expansion of the German trade’. It seems that, because Angell disliked credit being presented as a ‘weapon’, he altered Withers’s prose. Many other quotations were unattributed. Angell also failed to acknowledge his own argument as
neo-Cobdenite: it was some time after the Economist had pointed that this was the case, and the Cobden Club had made him an honorary member, that Angell acknowledged that Richard Cobden had paved the way for his line of argument.

More importantly, Europe’s Optical Illusion had eight intellectual deficiencies, each of which merits attention here because of the trouble it stored up for its author in decades to come. First, its primary claim, that the acquisition of a territory brought no economic advantage at all, was simply too sweeping. It was disbelieved even by otherwise sympathetic readers: for example, the Liberal MP and Quaker Edmund Harvey complained that it ignored the advantage that Britain gained from its exploitation of Ireland and India. It was an over-statement arising from the habit of hyperbole that Angell had acquired while dismissing out of hand his mother’s evangelism, the Californian farmers’ Anglophobia, the French right’s persecution of Dreyfus, and Britain’s imperialist war in South Africa. It produced unanticipated policy implications: if territorial control did not matter, why not espouse pacifism or at the very least appeasement?

Given that Angell himself had acknowledged that ‘our defeat cannot advantage our enemy nor do us in the long run much harm’, and given that military defence itself caused a lot of damage, it was unsurprising that some readers assumed that, even if the author did not like the fact, his primary claim led in a pacifist direction. The Spectator’s reviewer was of this opinion. So too were many of Angell’s disciples, as was noted by his fellow alumnus of the lycée in St Omer, G.G. Coulton, who had become a rare British advocate of a Swiss-style citizen army and in consequence a stern anti-pacifist. While acknowledging that ‘Mr Angell himself disclaims all ideas of non-resistance’, Coulton pointed out that his writing ‘encouraged such ideas in other people’. Much later, when ‘illusion’ claims were no longer central to his propaganda, Angell was to concede that they had indeed implied pacifism. He announced in a lecture at Geneva during August 1934: ‘I am personally of the opinion… that there is a great case for simple non-resistance. I happen on one part of its economic side to have been arguing it all my life. I have tried to show that wealth can no longer be seized by a conqueror to his advantage.’ Likewise, in a letter to The Times two years later he admitted that ‘for 30 years’ he had ‘urged considerations which certainly up to a point support’ pacifism. And in a book finished in the spring of 1939 he described his early work as having made ‘the economic case for pacifism’.

In similar but less extreme vein, the primary claim of Europe’s Optical Illusion might have been read as justifying appeasement. If colonies came without economic rewards, why not concede some of them to an imperial challenger on realist grounds – to forestall a military confrontation that was more trouble than it was worth, even though an adequate defensive capability was being maintained? Critics did not pick up on this point, however, because appeasement was a dog that almost completely failed to bark in British politics before 1914 – in stark contrast to a quarter of a century later. Admittedly, a few friendship associations were formed, particularly on an inter-church basis; yet ‘Anglo-German junketings, dinner-parties, exchange visits of clergymen,
and what not’ incurred Angell’s derision at this time. Looking back on the pre-First-World-War years during 1920/21, he was to regret this, stating that he should have recommended some economic concessions to Germany in an effort to prevent the First World War, though he did not persist with this retrospective appeasement, and forgot it when in the 1930s he became a scourge of the prospective variety.

At the time of writing *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, Angell denied the pacifist and appeasing logic of its overstated primary claim, most resoundingly in his refusal to cut Britain’s arms budget ‘by a single sovereign’. The second deficiency of his book was its inability to explain why it supported defence so unreservedly. If surrender involved no transfer of wealth, why was it nonetheless to be avoided, even at the price of high military expenditure? On one point Angell was clear: he believed that strong military and naval forces stood a good chance of deterring war – unlike pacifists, who mostly insisted that they triggered rather than prevented conflicts. But he also knew that such an attempt at deterrence might well fail because of the destabilizing effect of the unprecedented arms race. Even so, he failed to specify why, if aggression thus occurred, armed resistance should be offered, given that it involved costs beyond those of submission. This was no simple oversight: he did not know the answer, as became apparent when a number of his followers asked him point blank about this just days before the outbreak of the First World War.

Angell had a tactical incentive to appear patriotic: he would otherwise scare off the political élites he wanted above all to reach. Yet he seems subconsciously to have regarded the act of self-defence as a psychological and even moral imperative, though until circumstances required him to do so two decades later he failed to understand this. His pre-1914 propaganda avoided the subject. When he expressed his belated support for the First World War, he was bowing to the general will and did not need to offer a justification to those who were keen on fighting than he was, though he did use the argument that defence should be regarded as the ‘cancellation’ of coercion, ‘the attempt to see that military force is not imposed upon us’. During the interwar period, when he supported the League of Nations and denounced appeasement, he simply accepted the pro-defence premises of those he most needed to persuade. In his 1934 book *The Menace to Our National Defence* he thus stated neutrally: ‘Whether that decision to stand by armed defence is wise or not, is not here discussed.’ His concern was merely to show how it could best be carried out – collectively, and without conceding territory to aggressors. However, as the prospect of deterring the dictators faded later in that decade and he needed to justify war to an apprehensive public, he began to probe the values that underlay his own determination to offer armed resistance. In early 1938 he argued, albeit in as yet morally detached language, that a ‘deep urge for defence’ was ‘something which, like the feeling for nationality, we must accept as a fact likely to remain constant for a very long time, and take into account’.

In the autumn of the following year, as his country stood by Poland, he at last celebrated ‘defence’ positively, as ‘a universal impulse, rooted not only in a powerful instinct of self-preservation, but in [an] ingrained conception of dignity, of Right’.
Yet because he had been unable to articulate these pro-defence convictions while writing *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, that book had been ambiguous, failing to explain why armed resistance to aggression could be a good thing if was also economically irrational. When he glossed his text over the years to come, he normally gave priority to its pro-defence implication, very occasionally to its alternative, pacifist reading, but never reconciled the two, other than by invoking a very distant future when, his ‘illusion’ thesis having been accepted, defence for all its legitimacy would have become unnecessary. Yet with better access to his own intuitions during 1909, he could have achieved an immediate reconciliation. He could have argued that protective or defensive acts had to be judged by different criteria from acquisitive or aggressive ones: the former had to take into account such considerations as human dignity and moral duty; while the latter had additionally to meet the test of economic rationality. It would have been entirely persuasive to have advocated the defence of national, cultural, or ethical values against alien interference while also insisting on the economic futility of military adventurism. In the event, the book’s second deficiency – its inability to explain why armed resistance was good – doomed Angell’s ‘illusion’ campaign to send a mixture of pro- and anti-defence signals that long confused even its leader.

Third, its most persuasive and best-remembered argument, that a spoils-seeking conqueror would be worsted by the disruption of an interdependent financial system, was advanced in a form that invited misunderstanding and left its claims about the more general effects of war unclear. The metaphor of the credit system collapsing ‘like a pack of cards’ with a losses-to-profits ratio of a thousand to one was so vivid that readers mostly failed to notice that it was being applied to confiscatory behaviour in war, such as looting a national bank, and not to war as such. For that reason even an authoritative recent history has summarized Angell’s thesis as having been that ‘advanced capitalist countries would be brought economically to their knees within months, if not weeks, of the outbreak of a major war’. In fact, despite an occasional careless remark implying otherwise, Angell never considered it likely than an aggressor would attempt expropriation of a kind that would result in financial meltdown; and he was to be surprised as well as horrified by the reparations demands made of Germany after the end of the First World War. Yet he believed some risks were run even by a state that indulged in aggression but not in confiscation: this was implicit in his subsequent reference to interdependence as ‘a mechanical check on war’. Likewise, he expected war to have a damaging economic effect of some kind on all combatants. It is therefore astonishing that he said nothing of any precision about the consequences of a non-expropriatory war among the great powers. Deficiency number three – extreme vividness on certain points masking extreme vagueness on others – can be blamed on an intellectual training that was journalistic rather than academic.

Because Angell was widely misread as claiming that war itself, rather than a confiscatory type of aggression, would precipitate the disabling crash of an interdependent financial system, he was commonly misunderstood, particularly
after the outbreak of the First World War, as having asserted war’s impossibility rather than its unprofitability. He eventually admitted that this error indicated a ‘fundamental defect of presentation in a book that was highly, at times extravagantly, praised for its clarity and lucidity’. This introduces the fourth deficiency: the failure of its title to signal its argument clearly both to careless readers and to the even more important category of non-readers who had merely heard about it. Angell would have been spared much heartache had he called his book *The Economic Contradictions of Aggression* or some similarly substantive formulation that would have clarified that he was disputing neither the possibility of war nor the utility of defence.

Deficiency number five of *Europe’s Optical Illusion* was its aspiration to go beyond economics and tackle ‘emotionalism’ too. As already noted, his attempt to pre-empt the militarist accusation of ignoring non-materialist motives for starting wars overlooked the possible psychological satisfactions of military dominion for its own sake. With hindsight he would have done better to accept that his ‘illusion’ thesis considered only the economic consequences of aggression, and not its moral, political, cultural, psychological, or other effects, and to content himself with the plausible point that material well-being was the precondition for all other kinds of well-being. Admittedly, this would have made it easier for his critics to write him off as a sordid materialist; but they were to do this in any case. Exclusive concentration on the economic sphere would have spared him not only much authorial effort over the next few years but also certain intellectual contortions, such as those he was to go through during the Balkan War of autumn 1912 when he tried to deny the undoubted political gains made by the victors of that act of aggression against the Ottoman empire.

The sixth deficiency was that *Europe’s Optical Illusion* was unclear whether the necessary ‘advance of political rationalism’ could indeed be ‘effected imperceptibly’ by a purely educational process, or whether pressure-group activism was also needed. Angell disparaged the tactics of the traditional peace associations, which called for arbitration, federalism, and disarmament, and in a few cases also for appeasement and non-resistance. He assumed that his ideas could of themselves win over German and British decision makers – an approach that his conservative backers were to like because it seemed so reassuringly apolitical. Yet in proposing ‘a campaign of education in political rationalism’, *Europe’s Optical Illusion* had immediately specified an ‘anti-armament league’, though it was hard to see how this differed from traditional disarmament efforts. Admittedly, Angell stressed that his pairing arrangement would ensure that arms reductions were multilateral; but this was what the peace movement – apart from its pacifist minority – had long been working for. He maintained his self-denying tactical ordinance for the next three years, criticizing all ‘short-cut’ or ‘mechanical’ reforms for distracting attention from long-term attitudinal change, while inconsistently still proposing his anti-armament league.

During 1912/13, however, he realized that, for a long-term propaganda effort such as his to sustain public interest, it had no choice but relate its message to concrete reforms and contemporary issues, though he now dropped
his anti-armament league as too utopian. At first anonymously, but then under his own name, he accepted the need for a ‘definite policy susceptible of legislative treatment, providing subjects of topical political discussion and forming the object of political effort’. By the early 1920s he was privately admitting that he had been wrong in ‘not going forward to a positive policy’ of this kind from the outset. Although he never understood this, his difficulty had arisen from his assumption that it was sterile to expect governments to concede the reforms long pressed on them by the peace movement, and that civil society must therefore put its own house in order. He had not then realized that pressure-group activity was necessary to the changing of social as well as governmental attitudes, and that the peace movement had never sought merely to lobby the political authorities, being fully aware that its leverage with them depended on such public support as it had already mobilized for its proposed reforms. But once he had linked his campaign to achievable reforms, he had to work with the political forces promoting those reforms. This raised the question of whether he should overtly espouse liberalism, radicalism, or socialism, and, if so, what the intellectual relationship would be between a progressive ideology chosen in an effort to maintain the momentum of his campaign and his original goal of illusion-removal through value-free analysis that even conservatives could accept. This sixth deficiency, tactical unclarity, ensured much perplexity for Angell over the next few years. It ultimately came to seem the most important weakness in his campaign: he was to assert in his autobiography that ‘where my work failed mainly was in giving a plain and simple answer to the question: “How shall a political truth, once established, be translated into workable policy?”’

Deficiency number seven was much more understandable, given that Angell was responding to a contemporary military panic rather than composing a timeless academic monograph: *Europe’s Optical Illusion* assumed that the international economic interdependence arrived at in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was there to stay. In fact, as he began to realize in the final year of the First World War, it was being undone by the increased government intervention in national economies that conservatives and liberals had accepted for reasons of military efficiency. And this process was likely to continue, because socialists – among whose number he by then counted himself – wished to retain state control after the war for reasons of social justice. Yet, with his ‘illusion’ thesis coming back into fashion in the 1920s, as the public reacted against the events of 1914–19, Angell was understandably reluctant to declare it obsolescent, and so left its intellectual status more than a little uncertain in a world of fast-shrinking interdependence.

The eighth and final deficiency was prolixity. This may seem a harsh judgement on a text that, to lower self-publishing costs, had been reduced to 28,000 words before seeing the light of day. But as early as January 1910 a Boston publisher abridged it by almost another two-thirds to 9,600 words simply by excising redundant paragraphs. Though it was seemingly never issued, this abbreviation without loss of substance was an early warning of Angell’s propensity, all too apparent in the progressively lengthier editions, now entitled *The Great Illusion,*
of November 1910, January 1911, and September 1912, further to pad out his text and clutter his argument. Only when looking back on his writing late in life did he acknowledge its inexorable tendency to delve into ‘side issues and incidental matters arising in the course of the discussion’, thereby leaving his main claims either buried or underdeveloped.

In the long term Angell’s intellectual and tactical difficulties would have been fewer had a more tautly written and informatively titled Europe’s Optical Illusion merely done four things: first, highlighted the severe costs arising from disruptions to the international credit system that even successful aggressors would incur if they attempted confiscatory behaviour; second, specified the less severe but nonetheless adverse consequences of any kind of war for an advanced industrial economy; third, explained the human need for self-defence irrespective of economic calculations; and, fourth, welcomed campaigning efforts of all kinds and inspirations that drew attention to these arguments. But in the short term its ambition, exaggeration, chattiness, imprecision, and dismissiveness towards conventional peace activism enhanced its appeal, so that by the summer of 1910 ‘half of the publishers in London were asking [Angell] to enlarge on the book’. He accepted an offer from William Heinemann, and, on the evidence of the added sources, generated the new material between June and early August, dictating it to his secretary in Paris, Gerard (‘George’) Langelaan, who later claimed that the experience made his professional life ‘worthwhile, the most enjoyable form of work’. The enlarged text was set up in type in the third week of August; and by late September Angell was checking revised proofs.

While completing this task he established an important personal connection with the president of Stanford University, David Starr Jordan, a marine biologist whose many books included one of three years previously that had condemned war as dysfunctional in evolutionary terms. Jordan had just been appointed director of the World Peace Foundation, which the wealthy Boston textbook publisher Edwin Ginn was then establishing, and had therefore gone ‘to meet the pacifists of Europe’. Angell was his first contact in Paris; and the two men got on famously, meeting up again after Jordan had moved on to London. Their joint schedule for the first weekend of October 1910 gives an idea of the circles into which Angell was being introduced at this time: on the Saturday they dined at the London home of Herbert Hoover, with whose children Angell talked boy-scouting, as he was to recollect after their host became president of the United States; the following morning Angell and Jordan heard J.A. Hobson give an address at South Place Institute, before lunching with him at his house in Surrey; in the afternoon they took tea with the chemical manufacturer and Liberal politician Sir John Brunner, who lived in the same county; and finally they drove to Oxford to spend the evening with the celebrated professor of medicine Sir William Osler.

In an indication of his tactical thinking at this time, Angell explained to Jordan that it had lately been ‘borne in on me’...that the crux of...the work in which I happen to be interested lies in Germany: that is to say, the question of practical outcome depends
absolutely on the German response to the economic appeal contained in my little book. German’s policies are at bottom, of course, based on ‘realpolitik’ and the thesis I have attempted to elaborate is an expression of ‘realpolitik’.

He was therefore hopeful that Jordan might persuade Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate who was just establishing his Endowment for International Peace, to help fund a campaign in Germany. At that stage Angell did not think a major effort in Britain was necessary; but a number of Germans, including the prominent courtier Baron von Roeder, soon warned him that ‘if any campaign were limited to Germany German suspicions would be aroused’. Angell therefore informed Jordan that ‘a campaign must go on in both countries at once . . . but it need not be an expensive one so far as England is concerned’. Von Roeder further advised that the time for such a campaign would be during the six months before the Reichstag voted on a renewal of the navy law in October of the following year, and that the Kaiser would be sympathetic, having ‘read “Europe’s Optical Illusion” with keen interest and discussed it a good deal’. Angell passed this encouraging news on to the publisher Sir Ernest Cassel in an attempt to have a cheap German edition produced, promising optimistically: ‘Left to itself the book would affect opinion in the course of the next ten or fifteen years: that is a certainty. . . . But if I could get some help in pushing it home. . . there would be some modification in existing opinion . . . in six months.’

The expanded version of Europe’s Optical Illusion was published in Europe at the beginning of November 1910 as The Great Illusion: A Study of the Relation of Military Power in Nations to their Economic and Social Advantage, prompting Langelaan to joke to Northcliffe that he was raising his sons to be English patriots ‘unless Mr Lane turns swords into measuring rods and Dreadnoughts into pleasure steamers’. Angell had modified the title because in an otherwise sympathetic review for the Economist J.M. Robertson had pointed out that the misunderstanding being criticized was ‘not optic but psychic’. The new one, suggested by Northcliffe, was snappy, though Angell’s subtitle was not; and neither signalled the book’s argument in a fool-proof fashion. The author’s claim to his boss that it was ‘merely the old book with some additions’ understated the changes made. The preface admitted that even the material carried over from the previous version had been ‘considerably reinforced’: this was done by adding illustrations and by meeting points raised in reviews. Most of this reused and reinforced material became part one, ‘The Economics of the Case’, though it was further strengthened by a new chapter, ‘The Indemnity Futility’, written in recognition that the substantial reparations paid by France to Prussia after losing the war of 1870/1 were frequently being invoked as an example of victory leading to financial profit. This additional chapter admitted that a vanquished state could make a large payment from which a victor government might benefit, but in somewhat leaden language argued that nonetheless the population as a whole of any nation receiving a large indemnity must suffer from any consequent financial disturbance in the credit of the paying nation; that if the Protectionist doctrine is just they must suffer great disadvantage from the receipt of
wealth – *i.e.*, commodities – which has not employed the home population, and from the rise of prices which checks their exports; that those are the factors which must be taken into consideration in estimating the real advantage to the *general population* of any country which may succeed in extorting bullion from another as war plunder.103

In other words, an indemnity had adverse side-effects even for its recipient.

The main addition, comprising half of *The Great Illusion*, was part two, ‘The Human Nature of the Case’, which greatly expanded the short section of the first version that had dealt with ‘emotionalism’. It has already been argued that this expansion was a mistake; and Coulton was to note that part two was ‘more ambitious’ than part one ‘and in the same proportion unsuccessful’.104 Yet it was understandable that, faced with ‘the very commonest objection urged to a purely economic statement of the case for peace’, namely that it ignored motives for fighting that had nothing to do with ‘material interests’,105 Angell felt obliged to attempt a thoroughgoing rebuttal. He thereby not only overloaded his text further but pretended familiarity with a literature of which in reality he knew little, prompting accusations of intellectual deception, not least from Coulton.106

Part two initially confronted the objection ‘that those who plead for rationalism in the international relationship “leave human nature out of account”’. Its answer was that this accusation of ‘ignoring human nature’ was ‘often used as implying, not that men are disposed to overlook their material interests, but that it is absurd to suppose they should ever do so. In other words, the phrase is often used indifferently to mean two diametrically opposed things.’107 Here Angell had a point: when challenging his essentially economic ideas, militarists stressed the non-materialistic side of human nature, and lauded its capacity for idealism; yet when faced with the traditional peace movement’s essentially idealistic ‘old pacifism’, they switched to the realist claim that humans necessarily gave priority to their own self-interest. Militarists evaded this basic inconsistency in their thinking, he argued, by lazily implying that international conflict arose ‘from sudden “hot fits” . . . too obscure in cause for examination’. But this was ‘the extreme of unscientific fatalism’, because in reality war ‘in the modern world’ was ‘the outcome of armed peace’ in the sense of being the product of ‘fixity of policy and purpose extending over years and sometimes generations’.108 In order to understand his militarist adversaries, he examined the literature asserting that ‘at the bottom of man’s tendency towards war lies some quality which makes for his uplift and for his material and moral advance’,109 and reduced it to two propositions, ‘The unchangeability of human nature in the matter of pugnacity’ and ‘The survival of the warlike nations of the world’,110 which he then set out to challenge.

Although conceding that ‘the law of survival with man, as elsewhere’ was indeed one of struggle, he insisted that this was ‘the struggle of man with the universe, not man with man’. In respect of relations with his fellows, moreover, man’s increasingly successful contest with his environment was producing an ‘irresistible drift away from conflict and towards co-operation’.111 It is worth quoting how he began demonstrating this proposition, because it revealed his
facility – albeit not an infallible one, as will be seen – for reducing abstract generalizations to what he would later call ‘homely illustrations’:112:

When I kill my prisoner (cannibalism was a very common characteristic of early man), it is in ‘human nature’ to keep him for my own larder without sharing him. It is the extreme form of the use of force, the extreme form of human individualism. But putrefaction sets in before I can consume him (it is as well to recall these real difficulties of the early man, because, of course, ‘human nature does not change’), and I am left without food. But my two neighbours, each with his butchered prisoner, are in like case, and though I could quite easily defend my larder, we deem it better on the next occasion to join force and kill one prisoner at a time. I share mine with the other two; they share theirs with mine. There is no waste through putrefaction. It is the earliest form of the surrender of the use of force in favour of co-operation, the first attenuation of the tendency to act on impulse.113

Angell liked this pseudo-historical conceit enough to reuse it.114 In the contemporary world, he continued, international hostilities depended ‘upon our conception of the foreign State with which we are quarrelling as a homogeneous personality’. Yet, like our own, it really consisted of a ‘variety of community interests’, many of which ‘cut clear across State boundaries’. Examples included Lancashire’s textile industry, which, being dependent on Louisiana’s cotton crop, was more interested in its suppliers in the American south than in ‘say, the Orkneys, part of the same State’, and an Oxford professor, who had a ‘closer community of feeling with a member of the French Academy than with, say, a Whitechapel publican’. Indeed: ‘In a thousand respects association cuts across State boundaries, which are purely conventional, and render the biological division of mankind into independent and warring States a scientific ineptitude.’ Angell inferred from these intensifying transnational ties an eventual ‘psychic community’ based on awareness that state borders were ‘artificial’. Perhaps because he had been made more conscious of class conflict by the crisis over the People’s Budget, to which he alluded, he predicted a dawning realization that ‘the real psychic and moral divisions are not as between nations, but as between opposing conceptions of life’.115 He had earlier noted that, in constructing their alarmist scenarios, militarists had warned ‘that an autocratic Germany or Russia will find sufficient ground in the defence of its national conception of life for attacking a Liberal or Radical England whose influences threaten autocratic conceptions the world over’.116 He now argued that

at the bottom of any conflict between the armies or Governments of Germany and England lies not the opposition of ‘German’ interests to ‘English’ interests, but the conflict in both States between democracy and autocracy, or between Socialism and Individualism, or reaction and progress, however one’s social sympathies may classify it. That is the real division in both countries, and for Germans to conquer English or English Germans would not advance the solution of such a conflict one iota. . . .117

Because human development was speeding up – ‘We see more change now in ten years than originally in ten thousand’ – it was possible that very soon ‘both States will find inconceivable the idea that artificial State divisions . . . could ever in any way define the real conflicts of mankind’.118 In rejecting the militarist
conception of the state Angell thus went so far in the opposite direction that even some progressive political theorists, including A.D. Lindsay, accused him of underestimating the state’s role in fostering social solidarity.\textsuperscript{119}

Angell next queried how ‘the alleged unchangeability of human nature’ could be sustained in the face of the evident progress of the species ‘from cannibalism to Herbert Spencer’, as he summarized it, which included the abandonment of duelling. Shrewdly, he pointed out that even militarist writers accepted that human nature was becoming less pugnacious, though they feared that this was particularly the case among their own compatriots: thus, American, English, German, and French ‘advocates of war’ were ‘at one in declaring that foreign countries are very warlike, but their own country “sunk in sloth”, [and] drifting away from war’.\textsuperscript{120}

He then turned to the claim ‘that the warlike nations inherit the earth’.\textsuperscript{121} This enabled him to indulge the dislike of certain Latin American republics that he had first expressed during the Venezuelan crisis a decade and a half previously. In the racially insensitive vocabulary of that era he argued that it was ‘the “Sambo” republics, like San Domingo, Nicaragua, Colombia, and Venezuela’ that were ‘always fighting’ and should therefore be idealized by militarists. In an exasperated tone, he asked how critics of Cobdenism could seriously ‘urge that non-military industrialism, which, with all its shortcomings has on the Western Continent given us Canada and the United States, makes for decadence and degeneration, while militarism and the qualities and instincts that go with it have given us Venezuela and San Domingo?’ Moreover, ‘what Venezuela and Nicaragua are to the American Continent, Arabia, Albania, Armenia, Montenegro, and Morocco are to the Eastern Hemisphere’. He also denied that war eliminated the unfit, offering an illustration that showed his adherence to the prevailing assumption that the non-European races were in demographic decline: Britain’s conquest of India had given ‘the inferior race...an extra lease of life’, so that if ever ‘the Asiatic threatens the white race, it will be thanks in no small part to the work of race conservation which England’s conquests in the East have involved’.\textsuperscript{122}

Angell concluded part two with a couple of afterthoughts that, had his book been better constructed, would have been fitted in at appropriate places in the preceding text. The first explained why, despite the decline of physical force in human affairs, ‘the police-force’ remained so important to civilized societies: this was because ‘force employed to secure completer co-operation’, as in policing, was efficacious.\textsuperscript{123} The second was that likening the state to a person exaggerated its unity, whereas his own contacts over ten years ‘with financiers on one side and labour leaders on the other’ had led him to realize the extent to which the ‘internationalization’ of both sides of industry was in fact fragmenting the state.\textsuperscript{124}

Part three, ‘The Practical Outcome’, showed Angell groping towards an understanding of the policy implications of his thesis, albeit with limited success. In expanding the equivalent section in *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, he discussed the arms race in a more critical tone but, confusingly, without a change of substantive approach. Instead of simply reprinting the section asserting
that Britain should not yet reduce its arms budget ‘by a single sovereign’, he reproduced it as a quotation – in itself a distancing device – before commenting: ‘I see no reason to alter a word of this, but I would add one or two….’ Moreover, these additional words warned that ‘so long as the production of war material and the training for war are our only preparation for peace, we shall almost certainly prepare, not for peace, but for war’.

But, in case this seemed to align him with the old pacifism, he went on to deny having ‘overlooked the fact that arms are for defence and not aggression’, thereby reaffirming – even if only half-heartedly – his no-disarmament policy. The unresolved tension between the pacifist and pro-defence strands in his thinking was already causing him difficulty. However, in a more successful section, he set out in fully than in *Europe’s Optical Illusion* the syllogism explaining how this tension might ultimately be resolved. Defence was required to guard against aggression. Only when states believed that there was ‘some advantage in aggression’ were they likely to indulge in it. *The Great Illusion* showed that there was no such advantage. So: ‘If it be demonstrated that no possible advantage can be obtained by a successful attack, no one will make that attack.’ The need for defence thus disappeared.

Part three ended as unconvincingly as it had begun, with material that had sooner or later to be discarded. In his chapter on ‘Methods’ Angell’s knack of producing a simplifying illustration temporarily deserted him as he constructed a cumbersome analogy between Germany’s contemporary challenge to the Royal Navy and a hypothetical example from the era of religious conflict in which ‘a nominally Catholic Teutonia was about to commit an aggression upon a largely Protestant Britain’. This was dropped from the next edition, a mere two months later, as was an overly specific criticism of the international reforms his rivals had been promoting: ‘No mechanism, however, well devised, no leagues, no *ententes cordiales*, no Hague Conferences, will in the long-run avail anything if the great illusion on which the whole armament competition is based remains undisturbed.’ A seven-page appendix on the cost of colonies, which made for an anti-climactic ending, was omitted then too. What survived into the January 1911 edition included both a more tactfully phrased justification of his ‘not pointing to any very royal road, to any fascinating short-cut, or responding…to the very human desire to “do something”’, and – somewhat inconsistently, of course, given that it might itself be thought to be a ‘short-cut’ – a reiterated suggestion of an anti-armament league with a pairing arrangement. Another survivor in the short term was a new and notably optimistic observation about ‘how favourable the present moment’ was for making such pairings, given ‘the most deep-seated opposition in the Social Democratic Party to the naval policy of the German Government’. But in due course the anti-armament league and partnership with the German left became embarrassments too, and were both to disappear from the September 1912 version.

These additions and alterations meant that on its appearance in November 1910 *The Great Illusion* weighed in at 90,000 words, though its price, two shillings and sixpence (22½p), was the same as the self-published original. Taking no chances with its reception, Angell offered £50 to the editor of *Public Opinion*,
a struggling literary digest that had praised *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, in return for favourable notices that could then be circulated to philanthropists, journalists, and legislators in Britain and the United States. This ethically dubious but mutually beneficial arrangement, which promoted his book whilst also bringing the digest ‘to the notice of a useful class’, was subsequently extended to cover foreign editions. Angell must nonetheless have been anxious when publication was almost immediately followed by a second dissolution of parliament resulting from the continuing constitutional crisis. Northcliffe warned him that ‘the British public will think of nothing but the Elections’, yet for once had misread the popular mood. Reviewers gave *The Great Illusion* a fair wind even during the general-election campaign. Among them, Brailsford, to whom Angell had sent a presentation copy in recognition of his previous year’s notice, contributed an unsigned editorial entitled ‘The Psychology of War’ to the *Nation* of 3 December. Once again he combined a generous tribute to Angell with the predictable radical riposte to any statement of the liberal case: ‘he has not yet undertaken a study of the private interests which do gain from war’. Their relationship was thus entrenched for decades to come as one of personal cordiality yet ideological antagonism.

Despite having underestimated its immediate impact, Northcliffe helped to publicize *The Great Illusion* because, as Angell put it to Wrench, ‘he thinks the book may shift the whole discussion on to a more useful plane – “What do you, Germans, hope to get from attacking us?”’. ‘It is more than generous of you to help me again with the book – but then you have always been generous’, Angell told his boss, adding proudly that it ‘has gone into eight languages . . . and the whole thing at publishers’ risk’.

On 15 December 1910 the *Daily Mail* duly reviewed it as a work ‘being widely discussed at the present moment in political circles both here and on the Continent’, and also allowed him to reply to his critics twelve days later. At the same time G.P. Putnam’s Sons brought out an American edition. So many reviews appeared that by the end of the year Angell’s cuttings agency had sent him ‘something over three hundred . . . in Great Britain alone’.

*The Great Illusion* sold so well that a new British edition – in effect the third, counting *Europe’s Optical Illusion*, of four – was almost immediately needed, so Angell ‘modified it a little’. The main change for the version that appeared in January 1911 was the addition of a chapter in part one to explain why the undeniable benefit derived by the United States and France from their annexations of California and Algeria respectively did not refute his thesis. Entitled ‘Conqueror or Policeman’, it argued that – unlike, for example, Alsace Lorraine when Prussia took it over – these were disordered territories, so that ‘in each case the arms were employed not, properly speaking for conquest at all, but for police purposes, for the establishment and maintenance of order; and so far as they filled that role, their role was a useful one’. Angell also modified the problematical part three, making some excisions (already identified) from the ‘Methods’ chapter, and refocusing it on the disappointing quality of some reviews – not the half-dozen that had disputed his thesis, but the larger number that claimed
to accept its truth while insisting that, even so, it would never win over the people who mattered, whether politicians, capitalists, workers, or Germans. Understandably, this new edition was rushed: to Sir John Brunner, who discovered ‘defects’, Angell was to admit that ‘the finishing touches to my work are often done at a gallop’ and that in consequence ‘the polish is often smudged’. Despite its blemishes, *The Great Illusion* became during 1911 ‘the most discussed book of recent years’, as the *Daily Mail* claimed in an introduction to one of Angell’s articles. Its author was soon persuaded that it was ‘going to start a movement’; and from the House of Commons J.M. Robertson soon reported that it was achieving ‘the greatest effect in the way of persuasion that I have witnessed in my lifetime. One of our whips told me today that he had just read the book, and pronounced it “epoch making”’. What were described as further British ‘editions’, albeit without textual changes, appeared in March, May (with a reprint later in the same month), July, and October.

All these commercial versions were too expensive for the working class, so Angell was initially tempted when, a few days after quoting *The Great Illusion* approvingly in the House of Commons on 13 March 1911, Keir Hardie, a veteran of Labour’s ethical-socialist affiliate, the Independent Labour Party (ILP), suggested printing half-a-million copies in a one-penny (½p) edition that the ILP would underwrite from its own funds. Angell and Hardie discussed the matter over lunch on 7 April. Angell was also in contact at this time with Ramsay MacDonald, Labour’s chairman, about a ‘manifesto’ upon which the British, French, and German lefts could unite: such a document was to be a preoccupation of Angell’s for the next two years. He was also to act as translator when MacDonald lunched in Paris two months later with the French socialist leader Jean Jaurès, who admired *The Great Illusion* and praised it in the French parliament. These contacts with Hardie, MacDonald, and Jaurès were the first sign of Angell’s subsequent ‘left turn’; but at this time he saw both ideological and tactical difficulties in using socialists to promote his work. Some ILP members disputed his ‘illusion’ thesis because they believed that capitalism profited from war, forcing him to take issue with their arguments. More practically, he concluded that association with a left-wing party would limit his appeal to mainstream opinion. Certain radicals to whom he talked during the spring also understood the need not to offend conservatives and businessmen: he could thus report that the Quaker and Liberal MP Arnold Rowntree ‘quite realises that if the commercial classes are to be captured his particular friends will, so far as that phase of the propaganda is concerned, have to keep in the background’.

*The Great Illusion* also began enjoying some success overseas during 1911. To promote the Putnam’s edition, Angell – who, as already noted, had described himself to an American editor the previous year as ‘a Californian’ – publicly claimed to be a United States citizen. On 20 February he wrote from Paris to the *New York Times*: ‘May I, in justice to my American citizenship, say that, though resident in Europe, I am American and that such success as the book may have in Europe is, I hope, in no small part due to my contact with American affairs.’ This was untrue, given that he had not completed the naturalization process he
had started when making his homestead claims, though perhaps after nearly twenty years living outside his home country he no longer felt English. As a sales ploy it enjoyed only limited success: Putnam’s later complained of its failure to secure ‘any substantial success with American readers’, though its first two editions sold a respectable 4,000.\textsuperscript{154}

In promoting his European editions Angell was initially handicapped by his ignorant assumption that the continental peace movement resembled its British counterpart. The founder of the German Peace Society, Alfred Fried, was therefore justified, while helpfully supplying a list of ‘writers and university professors’ to whom free copies could be sent, in reproving Angell both for exaggerating its pacifist element, which was much smaller than Britain’s, and for overlooking ‘the works of Bloch, Novikow and others’\textsuperscript{155} – Europeans whose pacifist critiques in certain respects anticipated Angell’s. Only a passing reference to Novikow had appeared in the November 1910 version of \textit{The Great Illusion}, though Angell expanded upon it in subsequent editions and in other writings.\textsuperscript{156} A further handicap in the case of the first German edition was the ‘very poor’ quality of \textit{Die Große Täuschung} as a translation.\textsuperscript{157} Its reception was predictably unfriendly: Baron Roeder soon felt obliged to apologize for the failure of his country’s press to show ‘a better understanding’.\textsuperscript{158} Soon afterwards, and with less hostility, editions appeared in France, Denmark, Spain, Finland, Holland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and also Japan, with versions in a number of Indian languages being announced too.

Launching \textit{The Great Illusion} in Britain and overseas while ‘up to my head and shoulders in all sorts of work’ for Northcliffe\textsuperscript{159} stretched Angell to breaking point during the first half of 1911. In addition to everything else, on 14 January he moved from 8 rue Weber to ‘a garret’ – an apartment on the seventh floor – at 10 Cité [de] Trévise, which was located in a stylish square a mere six minutes on foot from his place of work, 36 rue du Sentier.\textsuperscript{160} His return from a western quarter to the city centre may have been because Beatrice had left Paris for the foreseeable future: he had already reported to one of her relatives the previous March that she was in Sicily and would remain there ‘for a month or two’; and he was to inform Mary Lane decades later that Beatrice had left him to live there before moving to the Italian mainland.\textsuperscript{161} He gave the impression of still being in touch with her: when a former \textit{Daily Messenger} colleague contacted him in April 1911, Angell claimed to have heard reports of him ‘occasionally through my wife’; and three months later he included Beatrice when he submitted his first entries for the British and American editions of \textit{Who’s Who}, which were to appear the following year.\textsuperscript{162} Yet he was already being pursued by Florence Schofield, who kept the Hôtel d’Iéna, and whom he had presumably met in the course of ensuring that all Parisian hoteliers made his paper available to their English-speaking guests. Tall, striking, in her late thirties, and seemingly bisexual, she was the first Englishwoman unconventional enough to interest him. She had adopted a daughter with a lesbian companion, Elinor Fell, with whom she undertook charitable work and was during the First World War to raise funds in the United States for the orphans of French soldiers.\textsuperscript{163} Angell was due to have lunch with
Florence around the time of his move, but, grossly overcommitted, had cried off in a somewhat formal letter.\textsuperscript{164} She refused to be discouraged, and gradually became better acquainted with him.

Angell’s punishing schedule left him little leisure for such diversions. In apologizing for his tardiness in thanking the editor of \textit{Public Opinion} for his help, he explained that he was ‘so wrapped up in the work itself, for which I can get relatively so little time from my other work, that the civilities and decencies sometimes escape me’.\textsuperscript{165} He told the \textit{Westminster Gazette} that, being ‘fully occupied… in business’, he was ‘unable to devote much time personally’ to his campaign, though ‘at least three secretaries’ were engaged on it.\textsuperscript{166} He had stressful tactical decisions to take. For example, to propitiate the French peace movement he agreed to contribute an article to one of its periodicals, \textit{La Paix par le droit}, but in doing so criticized a statement by Fried which he regarded as typical of the old pacifism, and, when asked by the editor to modify this, was prepared only to drop Fried’s name and attribute the statement to ‘un pacifiste éminent’.\textsuperscript{167} Angell created more time for his peace work by giving up his scout troop, which within months ‘fell on hard times’ as a result.\textsuperscript{168} Further to ease the strain of overwork he sometimes relaxed at the Savoy during his frequent short trips to London rather than always billeting himself upon Harry in the east end.\textsuperscript{169} But, almost immediately after addressing the Sphinx Club, a private cabal of London-based journalists, on 5 May 1911, he suffered a health collapse. A week later he informed his boss: ‘I have “pernicious” anaemia, which is setting up various troubles which otherwise I should not have at all, among them an ophthalmic difficulty, which, though at present not serious, might conceivably become so.’ He needed to devote six weeks ‘to a cure in the air and sunlight’ under Harry’s supervision. Northcliffe granted this request with the gracious observation: ‘Your health is more valuable to the paper than anything else.’ While expressing his gratitude, Angell, enthused by his meeting with Jaurezs, MacDonald, and other socialists, suggested that the \textit{Daily Mail} devote a supplement to ‘social organization the world over – old age pension schemes, insurance against sickness, unemployment, etc’ so as to provide the sort of information sought by ‘the up to date Socialist’.\textsuperscript{170} It is doubtful, however, whether his generous employer appreciated so left-leaning a proposal.

Angell cancelled some commitments, including attendance, alongside MacDonald, at the ninety-fifth annual meeting of the Peace Society, the ageing \textit{doyen} of the peace movement, in London.\textsuperscript{171} Florence Schofield hoped he would spend more time with her: on 3 June she promised to ‘be at home without any inconvenience all tomorrow Sunday afternoon, so come in whenever you like….I shall be glad to see you.’\textsuperscript{172} But, though ordered to rest completely, Angell admitted ‘not obeying this altogether’ at first, because of the continued need to promote \textit{The Great Illusion}, though he intended ‘really going away for a month’ as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{173} In particular, he had to negotiate in London with Baron de Forest, a wealthy radical MP of Austrian-Jewish descent, who was offering to subsidize a cheap version provided that he was credited as a co-author. Angell refused this condition, hoping, as he confided to Massingham, that de
Forest was ‘too much committed . . . to back out of the proposal merely because I resist an enforced literary collaboration’. Indeed, the Daily Chronicle announced that £20,000 had definitely been provided by a ‘London gentleman’, and the supposed donor’s identity also leaked out. The British security service, which implausibly suspected de Forest of being an agent of the Central Powers, took note: as will be seen, its belief that his work had been subsidized by de Forest was to be a factor in the government’s decision to deny Angell a passport for several months during the First World War. Hilaire Belloc took note too: these dealings with a Jewish financier and politician prompted him to make the anti-semitic innuendoes noted in the introduction, which in turn caused the author of The Great Illusion to claim that his baptismal name had included ‘Angell’. However, de Forest dug his heels in, and at the end of the summer was ‘no nearer’ paying up ‘than he was three or four months ago’, as Angell admitted to Hobson. In consequence, relations between Angell and de Forest became strained: when later in the year the Young British Liberals’ Society wanted to invite the millionaire MP to a dinner it was holding for Angell, the guest of honour indicated to his hosts that their prospective invitee might find this ‘a little embarrassing for reasons which I can explain verbally’.

Having given up on de Forest, Angell rested for most of June 1911. He did not return to his desk until the 28th, soon afterwards reporting to Northcliffe that, though his health was much restored, ‘a little operation may be necessary’. Doctors were apparently divided as to whether the problem lay in his appendix or his stomach, so Angell approached the health therapist F. Matthias Alexander, pioneer of the Alexander technique, for a further opinion. He did so while visiting London in mid-July to discuss tactics with Esher. He also saw the internationalist and former Liberal MP Lord Weardale, who put in a good word on his behalf with Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University and acting director of the relevant section (‘the Intercourse and Education division’) of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It was indicative of Angell’s engaging sincerity that Weardale informed Butler: ‘I like the man very much and believe him to be a very genuine fellow with his heart right in the movement.’ An approving reference to Angell’s work by the British foreign secretary at a dinner for Carnegie himself, and the fact that it was ‘received with cheers’, can only have helped his cause. Weardale was soon able to pass on the news that Butler was recommending that the Endowment ‘give you substantial help in the circulation of your book in different languages’.

Angell’s ‘illusion’ message seemed more than ever timely. His return to work in late June 1911 had coincided with the second Moroccan crisis, another German test of the Anglo-French entente that backfired so badly as to create intense frustration and even war talk in Germany over the summer. When this angry reaction produced a commercial disturbance in Berlin, Angell could not resist claiming in the Daily Mail of 15 September that the episode would teach his critics where their ‘best interests’ lay, though he also tried to make clear that he had never predicted ‘that war would “ruin” both victor and vanquished, as from the most elementary motives of self-protection each side would refrain from...
inflicting “ruin” on the other. This important qualification of his argument was widely ignored, however, even by his admirers, one of whom was soon to insist that war would bring ‘universal starvation and anarchy’. Thus when on 28 September Italy launched a war to extort Tripoli from a declining Ottoman empire, its action was claimed in some quarters as a double disproof of Angell’s thesis, showing that a war could not only still happen but do so without triggering a financial collapse. The Daily Mail allowed him another attempt, on 5 October, to make clear that he saw any financial disturbance arising from war as having a chastening rather than a paralysing effect. Moreover, after the Germans backed down over Morocco in return for concessions in the Congo, it allowed him to argue, on 14 November, that the ownership of ‘some vague African swamp near the Equator’ was insignificant, except possibly as ‘a wealth draining incubus’, compared with the prosperity European countries could achieve through trade with territories outside their direct control.

The Daily Mail’s indulgence of his opinions may have persuaded Angell that he was winning over his colleagues in Carmelite House: in London for an autumn visit and dining with Arnold Rowntree on 16 October 1911, he had told his host that he had ‘unconsciously converted them largely to his view’. Rowntree was sufficiently impressed to recommend to one of his family trusts that it ‘provide Norman Angell with a good secretary so as to help him with his propagandist work’. On 9 December, therefore, the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust – the branch of the Rowntree philanthropic effort that supported overtly political causes and therefore was not a charity – agreed to provide £500 a year for office expenses. Since Angell believed that the costs of his campaign were consuming his royalties, this was very welcome. So was the decision of the Carnegie Endowment to invest $36,000 in cheap foreign editions of The Great Illusion, as recommended by Butler, who shared Angell’s view ‘that Germany is the hardest nut to crack’.

The year 1911 thus ended on a high note. After another London visit in late November and early December, which had been delayed by ‘a really bad attack of Influenza Cold’, Angell returned to his Paris duties with a sense of achievement. He had not only secured considerable funding but had set up eight major meetings for mid-January to mid-February 1912. He had been offered the services of John Hilton, a clever but angular autodidact who was later to become professor of industrial relations at Cambridge and a well-known broadcaster. And he had been put forward by friends and associates, including Wrench and Esher, for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Though this last initiative failed, Angell became a public figure during 1912. He undertook a series of remarkable personal appearances, acquired significant administrative support, reduced his duties for Northcliffe, revised The Great Illusion substantially, and moved his base of operations to London. His systematic campaign of lecturing and lobbying under the name Norman Angell began on 10 January when he arrived in Britain ‘to spy out the land – to see how near the general public might be to being able to seize and act upon some of the principles I have tried to make plain’, as he later put it to Esher. He was ‘travelling
constantly for nearly two months... through England and Scotland on a very representative tour’, as he informed Jordan.\textsuperscript{189} His first widely reported meeting was at the Institute of Bankers in London on the 17th where a ‘large audience’ had gathered to hear his beguiling claim that the German government ‘was modifying its policy of aggression in response to those new economic needs that had come to make Germany dependent on the financial security of its neighbours’. In the subsequent discussion a financial writer, W.R. Lawson, said that ‘he understood Mr Angell had converted four Cabinet Ministers at Westminster, but he ought to go to Berlin and convert the German Chancellor’. ‘He is going’, Lawson was immediately assured from the platform,\textsuperscript{190} although in the event the trip, which required careful preparation, did not happen for a year. From his meetings Angell also learned the consequences of his previous overstatements: his audiences often assumed that ‘the necessary profitlessness of war between civilised nations, the necessary interdependence of nations’ would automatically keep the peace. He therefore wrote another \textit{Daily Mail} article to warn that it was only ‘the general recognition of those truths that will stop war’, not the interdependence itself.\textsuperscript{191} His lectures were everywhere generating an enthusiasm that astonished him. By 12 February he could report to Esher that the ‘whole trip’ had been ‘a revelation’, because ‘citadels’ had fallen so easily to him across ‘a pretty wide territory: Bankers, West End Social Clubs, Nonconformist Chapel “Brotherhoods”, Scottish Provosts and Corporations, Tory newspaper-proprietors, Black Country Ironmasters, Anglican Bishopry, Presbyterian Ministry...’.\textsuperscript{192}

Angell was delighted to discover that, despite his inexperience, moral seriousness, and diminutive size, he could hold his own on a platform: when he had told the Sphinx Club the previous spring that ‘talking is not my profession’, he had not been indulging in false modesty.\textsuperscript{193} On attending a very early public lecture, Hilton was struck not only by the audience’s astonishment that ‘the Great Man was a small man!’ and ‘no orator’ at that, but also by its subsequent surrender to his ‘close-packed thought’ and lack of histrionics.\textsuperscript{194} Though still aware that ‘all this talking business is new to me and I have to learn the trade and have very little time’, as he put it to Joseph Rowntree’s solicitor Richard Cross,\textsuperscript{195} Angell had begun to realize that he had the knack of extemporizing replies to critics. Indeed in a handbook he issued two years later he claimed that the ‘hundreds of lectures’ that he had by then delivered had mostly been ‘an excuse for answering questions put by members of the audience, the one form of \textit{viva voce} treatment of a subject which seems to me to have undoubted superiority over the written word’.\textsuperscript{196}

The climax of Angell’s triumphant opening sortie came in Cambridge. On 13 February 1912, at the Union, a student debating club at the heart of the university’s political life, he defeated a ‘two keels to one’ motion by 203 votes to 187 with a ‘brilliant debating speech’ that received an ‘enthusiastic reception’ for its insistence that the Navy League was wrong to deny to Germany ‘the rights it claimed for us’.\textsuperscript{197} It was understandable, given the Navy League’s claim that prosperity depended on naval strength, that Angell should debate against it, even though the motion concerned the appropriate level of national defence and aligned him with advocates of disarmament. Indeed, his supporting speaker
was Philip Baker, a Quaker undergraduate expressing moral disapproval of the army and navy, who was to become a prominent internationalist and Labour politician. Ten years later Baker added his wife’s maiden name, Noel, to his own, and two decades after that inserted a hyphen so as to become Noel-Baker, the identity under which he was to be best known. He established a bond with Angell that was to last for five and a half decades.

On 14 February 1912, the day after Philip Baker helped him to his Union success, Angell gave a paper to the university’s Political Economy Club in the rooms in King’s College of the political scientist who two and a half years later was to be the earliest advocate of a league of nations, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson. The chair was taken by another Fellow of King’s, John Maynard Keynes, to whom Angell later admitted having been ‘on several points taken unawares’ by the clever questions from the largely undergraduate audience. Even so, the celebrated economist invited him to that year’s dinner of the Political Economy Club, though his prospective guest declined on account of editorial duties in Paris; and six months later Keynes asked Angell to review a book on the economic foundations of international justice for the *Economic Journal*, which he duly did.

During this Cambridge visit of 13/14 February 1912 several undergraduates were won over by the objectivity that Angell seemingly brought to a subject they had previously regarded as a matter of pure emotion. Clifford Allen, a young socialist who was soon to become a celebrated conscientious objector, remembered that Angell’s arrival in the university as ‘the man of hard facts’ had constituted the ‘revelation’ that had done much to alter the thinking of his student cohort. Even more importantly for Angell’s future campaign, Harold Wright, later an editor of the *Nation*, concluded that ‘the only discussion of War and Peace which is not militarist and not pacifist is that of “The Great Illusion”’, and resolved to promote it.

Wright’s education had been delayed by childhood illness, so he did not come up until his mid-twenties, and then took five years to complete his degree. He thereby possessed not only the maturity and leisure to become editor of Cambridge’s student magazine *Granta* and president of its Union but also the detachment from ordinary undergraduate experience to understand Angell’s need for intellectual and emotional support as he ploughed his lone furrow. Having invited him to the debate, Wright followed it up by founding the Cambridge University War and Peace Society as a specifically Angellite association. Other Cambridge converts on this visit were Hubert Henderson, an economist who was to become Warden of All Souls’ College at Oxford; Dennis Robertson, who later held the chair in economics at Cambridge; William Searle, a classicist-turned-lawyer who eventually became a solicitor; and Geoffrey Toulmin, an economics student who was to run an engineering firm. A more senior university admirer was Gerald Shove, an economics don close both to Keynes and the Bloomsbury group, who little more than two years later was to claim that ‘the whole economics school at Cambridge has been completely captured by Norman-Angellism’. Angell’s ability to win the loyalty of such men indicated that, even if Coulton was correct in disparaging the ‘older Angellite’
as ‘very often a person of rather limited reading and outlook’ who measured ‘the absolute novelty of [Angell’s] theories by the novelty of his own discovery’,\(^\text{205}\) there was also a younger Angellite with greater critical capacity who nonetheless took his ideas seriously.

After his Cambridge success, Angell returned promptly to Paris, where he was to be based for six more months. He needed to calm down his employer, who had suddenly become irritated not only by his employee’s burgeoning outside career but by an editorial insertion late the previous year that took a ‘party line’, as understood by Northcliffe, who instructed him to produce material ‘of a perfectly innocuous nature’ in future, for example upon the subject of ‘Continental travel’. This time Angell was adult enough not to stand upon his editorial dignity; yet during the early months of 1912, as he disappeared onto his British lecture tour, he had again annoyed his boss, who believed that his absences were having ‘a bad effect on others’ working for the paper.\(^\text{206}\) As a propitiatory gesture, Angell suggested a business venture linked to, but independent, of the Daily Mail; this was a Franco-British Travel Union ‘somewhat on the lines of the Touring Club de France, but aiming at a better social class’. Exploiting his new fame, Angell was to be one of its patrons, though he assured Northcliffe: ‘If you object to public association with Mr Norman Angell, he will retire!’\(^\text{207}\) However, nothing seems to have come of this; and it was becoming evident that a full-time Northcliffe connection was no longer compatible with an ‘illusion’ campaign.

Angell was offered a solution by Esher and Balfour, who, after two years of personal preoccupation with constitutional and defence issues, and in Balfour’s case also with an unsuccessful struggle to hang on to the leadership of his party, now arranged the practical support that enabled Angell ‘to make the break’.\(^\text{208}\) They talked Sir Richard Garton, a wealthy manufacturer of brewing sugar, into funding the exploration of the ‘illusion’ thesis. Having studied in Germany, Garton may have understood the need for that country to be taught that aggression did not pay; but he was, as Arnold Rowntree was to discover on meeting him at one of Angell’s gatherings, ‘a Tory and evidently very much afraid of the movement going too fast and much scared of the ordinary peace organization’.\(^\text{209}\) The Garton Foundation was set up early in April 1912, Angell coming over from Paris to ‘put in a couple of days . . . at the new offices’ in Whitehall and arrange ‘the necessary formalities . . . at the Bank’, into which Sir Richard Garton deposited an initial instalment of £500.\(^\text{210}\) It provided salaries for key associates, including Hilton, who had initially been paid out of Angell’s own general fund (largely provided by the Rowntrees), B.N. Langdon-Davies, a charismatic but struggling Cambridge graduate who had previously made a living as a personal tutor and in that capacity had prepared Harold Wright for university,\(^\text{211}\) and Wright himself. Esher intended to supervise the new body closely, not only installing his favourite son, Captain Maurice Brett, as its secretary, but seeking to influence Angell’s message by asking Balfour ‘to suggest certain expansions of The Great Illusion privately’.\(^\text{212}\) Balfour’s rapid response on 20 May, which Esher immediately passed on to Angell, was that he had ‘grave misgivings about the advisability of preaching the doctrine that no individual is
the better or worse off for “Empire”, and considered it ‘worthwhile, in order to dissociate the Norman Angell theory from all taint of “Socialism” to make clear that a Nation’s happiness and well being is not altogether and absolutely dependent upon the pounds, shilling and pence which every individual citizen has in his pocket. There are other things!”

The Garton trustees had reason to be suspicious of Angell, who began using his pen name not only for his ‘illusion’ campaign but for articles on controversial political topics too. Thus on the last three days of May 1912 he had contributions published in the Daily Mail as part of its five-week series on ‘The Labour Unrest’, the wave of strikes that had latterly affected important sections of British industry. Angell’s articles showed that he was attracted by the syndicalist ideas that were entrenched in France and beginning to receive attention in Britain: indeed, in his first two articles he accepted the syndicalist argument that, parliament being unable to cope with ‘the immensely intricate division of labour in the modern world’, ‘the real power in the State will inevitably drift… to bodies created by industrial functions of the community – the trade unions, commercial and professional organisations.’ However, seemingly at the point of committing himself to a far-left position – Captain Brett admitted having been ‘rather frightened after reading the second one, that you were going to turn out to be a syndicalist’ – he used the third not only to acknowledge that the empowering of trade unions carried a threat ‘of social slavery’ but also to call for a reinvigoration of conservative doctrine in order to show that ‘the institution of private property’, though perhaps ‘destined finally to disappear’ was nonetheless ‘part of the doctrine of individual right, and consequently of individual freedom’. The very different thrust of Angell’s third Daily Mail article may have partly been the result of the editorial interference about which he later complained. But it also reflected his underlying doubt as to whether industrial conflict could transfer wealth any more than international conflict.

In late June 1912 these ‘labour articles’ caused their author a further difficulty: he pledged them to another publisher before Northcliffe decided to develop the whole series into a Daily Mail book and asked for them too. Angell replied robustly: ‘As I am giving up my Paris salary, and as I am not paid for my “Norman Angell” articles, I am likely to get thin if I am to be precluded from expanding such articles as I may write gratuitously for the “Mail” into book form.’ Eventually, he backed down, presumably in the interests of a favourable new concordat with Northcliffe whereby he reduced his contractual obligations while retaining some of his remuneration. As he later explained to Jordan, although surrendering his ‘active directorship’, he had retained ‘a “watching brief” on the business, because I want to keep in touch with Lord Northcliffe and his colleagues’. Angell persuaded himself that a connection with Carmelite House helped with what he described to MacDonald as his ‘mission . . . to the heathen – to the unconverted. That is why I use the “Mail”.’ But he also saw it as insurance against a bursting of the international-polity bubble: given Angell’s previous personal failures, cutting himself off completely from Northcliffe was a risk he was not prepared to take until the First World War made it inevitable.
At the beginning of July 1912 Angell made another short visit to Britain. On the 5th he addressed an invited audience in the home of Lord (Leonard) and Lady (Kate) Courtney, long-standing peace activists. As sharply observant as her sister, the Fabian socialist Beatrice Webb, Angell’s hostess perceived the moral intensity which, though understated, transcended his physical slightness: ‘A plain puny man “in bodily presence contemptible”, he was filled all through with his creed and I seemed to detect a good deal of emotion under the appeal to pure reason and argument – a fanatic for an idea.’ Contact with the Courtneys, who became friends, may have disposed Angell more favourably towards the established peace movement.

He spent the last week of July 1912 in Berlin. For much of the time he attended to business related to the new German edition of *The Great Illusion: Die Große Täuschung* having proved unsatisfactory, a new translation, *Die Falsche Rechnung*, was now issued with the Carnegie Endowment’s help. But he also held a ‘private meeting with the heads of the Social Democratic Party’, namely the revisionists Bernstein and Südekum, to whom he proposed that they ‘maintain a permanent lobby in the House of Commons’ and that the Labour Party ‘maintain one in the Reichstag’, while both parties campaigned in favour of ‘earmarking in some definite way that proportion of taxation that goes to armaments’, so that the public in each country would better understand the true cost of its military preparations. He felt that this idea needed ‘much more development in private before it can usefully be discussed in public’. Yet he tried to interest the Liberal MP Noel Buxton, a radical from a Quaker background, in the idea that armaments expenditure be funded in all countries through direct taxation only, with the effect that ‘every additional battleship would mean a penny more income tax’.

With Angell thus showing partiality towards syndicalists, peace activists, socialists, and radicals, the Garton Foundation did its best, in going public at the beginning of August 1912, to confine his propaganda within bounds acceptable to conservative opinion. It proclaimed its goal to be the creation of ‘a more informed public opinion upon such questions as the extent to which the general well-being of one group can be advanced by military domination over another, and how far the interlacing of interests checks the useful or effective imposition of such domination’, on the conservatism-friendly grounds that a ‘right understanding on these and kindred problems . . . would add to the security of the British Empire’.

Aware of these constraints, Angell did not put all his eggs into Sir Richard Garton’s basket. He cultivated his private network of Cambridge disciples: during the first half of August, his final month as a resident of Paris, he took Henderson, Robertson, Searle, Toulmin, and Wright for a sailing holiday on the Seine.

He also pursued entrepreneurial ideas: towards the end of that month he approached Northcliffe with a further ‘business proposal, which I think would interest you’. Seemingly, this was a project for mass instruction in economics, which ultimately evolved into a card game: when sixteen years later *The Money Game* was marketed, the first of its several copyrights was dated 1912; and its origins were traced back to ‘efforts to do something which was not primarily to make a game’. In addition, Angell exercised his watching brief
on the *Continental Daily Mail*, attending an important strategy meeting on 31 August.\textsuperscript{225} He seems not to have found time for Florence Schofield, whose growing affection for him had led her to offer an improved French translation of *The Great Illusion*. Leaving Paris on 16 June to spend the summer at Sangatte, near Calais, she had pledged to start work on this ‘the very next day and so I shan’t feel lonely or as though I were far away from you’. A month later she had implored him: ‘when you next write, say “I care for you Florence” in print if you like’, expressed the hope that he would come and spend three weeks with her during August, and claimed to be happy ‘so long as I have your care’.\textsuperscript{226}

Angell’s main task in this mid-summer of 1912 was completing what turned out to be the last major revision of the British text of *The Great Illusion* other than the updates of the 1930s which were to advance a very different message. It had again been reprinted in January and April; but Angell had even then wanted ‘to make the whole thing clearer’\textsuperscript{227} and, though this was left unsaid, more congenial to the Garton Foundation. He took the opportunity to amend the preface so as to specify for the first time that its thesis was ‘not that war is impossible, but that it is futile’.\textsuperscript{228} Unfortunately, he also redoubled his unavailing efforts to contest the charge of being solely concerned with material questions, which both glorifiers of war and critics of war had more than ever been levelling at him. In *Everyman*, the anti-semitic journal he edited, Cecil Chesterton had claimed that *The Great Illusion* had merely addressed the unedifying question: ‘Should usurers go to war?’\textsuperscript{229} And in *The Passing of War*, a book first published in March 1912, Canon W.L. Grane of the Church of England Peace League had accused Angell of hostility to Christian arguments, prompting him to send what Grane acknowledged in his second edition as ‘a charming letter’ insisting that his approach had always been ‘parallel with and complementary to the religious’.\textsuperscript{230} To forestall further such accusations Angell did some stealthy relabelling: he altered *The Great Illusion*’s subtitle to ‘A Study of the Relation of Military Power to National Advantage’, ‘National’ sounding less materialistic than ‘Economic and Social’; and he incorporated a mention of morality into the title of part two, which thus became ‘The Human Nature and Morals of the Case’.

In addition, he reworked the final sections of part one. He cut and rewrote the chapter on the French indemnity, inserted in November 1910, ‘in order to clear up misunderstandings’. (He did so to avoid offending free traders, though he later came to regard their objections as misconceived, and so restored the original version of the chapter in the 1933 and 1938 editions.)\textsuperscript{231} He recast the interpolation of January 1911, ‘Conqueror or Policeman?’, as ‘The Fight for “The Place in the Sun”’. And he included a new chapter, ‘The Bearing of Recent History’, to incorporate some of the optimistic observations of his address to the Institute of Bankers. The new illustrative material he added to part two included references to the Prussian author of a recent militarist classic, *Germany and the Next War*, General Friedrich von Bernhardi, and a libertarian warning, ‘England stands in danger of being Prussianized by virtue of the fact of fighting Prussianism’,\textsuperscript{232} that Angell was frequently to repeat during the First World War.
Finally, he undertook a second complete overhaul of part three, supposedly ‘to meet the changed form of criticism which has resulted from the discussion of this subject during the last year or two’. Angell had become more irritated than ever by those who accepted his analysis yet assumed that Europeans in general would never do so, a defeatist attitude that he now disparaged as ‘Oriental fatalism – “Kismet”... “the will of Allah”’ and blamed largely on public awareness of ‘the failure of such efforts as Hague Conferences’. Albeit in more measured terms than two years previously, he revived his criticism of the ‘mechanical’ reforms favoured by much of the peace movement. Thus, whilst tactfully conceding that the gatherings at The Hague, along with arbitration treaties, notions of international federation, and attempts to foster friendship between particular states, ‘involve a new conception of relationship between nations’, he warned against such attempts ‘to modify by mechanical means the political machinery of Europe, without reference to the ideas which had brought it into existence’. More sharply, in a preface contributed to another book at this time he disparaged ‘any such short cut as a mechanical contrivance, any federation scheme’ and insisted that there was no substitute for ‘the sweat of hard thinking, of better understanding’.

In a significant change, Angell dropped both his suggestion of an anti-armament league with a pairing arrangement and his hopeful mention of the German Social Democrats as partners in this venture. As Coulton soon noted, though part three was still labelled ‘The Practical Outcome’, there was now ‘nothing really practical about it’. Angell had switched to the argument that Britain had a special mission to reform international relations – as the traditional peace movement had also from time asserted – and could demonstrate the truths of international polity through its own history. It had shown itself ‘a leader in political ideas, or rather in the application of political ideas to practice’, as for example in the abolition of slavery. Of particular current relevance was the fact that its ‘Empire, a congeries of independent States’ was already ‘itself a forecast of what the relationship of all European States will be’, in that the constituent elements of the British empire had already ‘surrendered... the use of force against each other’, to their common advantage. It was, in consequence, ‘to English practice, and to English experience, that the world will look as a guide in this matter. The extension of the dominating principle of the British Empire to European society as a whole is the solution of the international problem which this book argues.’ Angell thus presented the British Dominions, which is what he always meant by the empire, as a practical demonstration that the renunciation of aggression among states was possible – in other words, an illustrative example to be cited while trying to reason others states into similar self-restraint. It should here be emphasized that as yet he did not invoke the British empire in order to claim that reasoning alone was insufficient to prevent aggression and must therefore be supplemented by an international organization that fostered harmony among its members through its institutional procedures, though by the time he revisited the book in the 1930s to update it, he wished he had done precisely this, because by then he regarded both the British empire and the collective-security system of the
League of Nations as essential for international order. In the mid-summer of 1912 he merely invoked Britain’s peaceful relationship with its Dominions as the ideal to which the states of Europe should aspire, which may have gratified the patriotic Garton trustees but had little prospect of being taken seriously by other countries.

These attempts to deal with objections to earlier editions had again caused *The Great Illusion* to ‘grow in bulk’; as its author acknowledged ‘with very great regret’ and in the hope that ‘the increase in bulk will not render it less clear’. It now peaked at 115,000 words, four times longer than *Europe’s Optical Illusion* as published and twelve times longer than its unpublished abridgement. Angell soon worried that his readers would not persevere beyond part one of his hefty new version; yet it was only when he came back to it two decades later that he recognized it as a ‘hodge-podge’ generated by a sense that ‘criticisms had to be replied to’. For all its flaws, whether noted at the time or later, it sold well, being reprinted within two months and again in April and June of the following year.

Coinciding with the appearance of the expanded and definitive fourth edition of *The Great Illusion* in September 1912, Angell came back to live in his home country. He appointed C. Ernest Fayle, a thoughtful man in his early thirties with a special expertise in defence issues, as his London-based personal secretary. Angell’s address to the British Association in Dundee on the 5th marked the start of a six-week tour in which he gave ‘some forty lectures all over the country’ yet also wrote magazine articles and fitted in a quick business trip to Paris. His propaganda at this time concentrated on his claim that, though the ‘illusion’ thesis had an economic and technological basis (‘the primary operative fact is the division of labour which the improvement in communication had set up’), it was no less applicable to the non-material aspects of human existence: ‘For the economic division of labour and the economic interdependence has [sic] its counterpart in the moral and intellectual sphere.’

Between engagements he managed to find an impressive London home, into which he settled towards the end of the month. When previously in town he had stayed either with Harry, who had moved to a new leasehold property in the east end, 34 Bancroft Road, which Angell had helped him acquire, or at the Salisbury Hotel, which for a journalist was more conveniently located than the Savoy since it was just south of Fleet Street, in Salisbury Square. As a contact address he had used 4 Tudor Street, where the London Office of the *Continental Daily Mail* was located: this appeared in his first *Who’s Who* entry. Now he took an apartment on the top floor of 4 King’s Bench Walk, part of a seventeenth-century terrace in the Temple that he later described as ‘something like a university quadrangle given over to lawyers either as offices or chambers where they can live’. It was not only a stylish location, fit for a public figure and with well-connected fellow tenants, but a convenient one, being just a stone’s throw from Tudor Street, Carmelite House, and indeed the Salisbury Hotel. He was to rent these ‘chambers’, as he liked to call them, for a third of a century.

This move from 10 Cité [de] Trévise to 4 King’s Bench Walk, Temple, was significant in personal terms. Although it put more distance between him and Florence Schofield, it also marked a further stage in the breakdown of his
marriage. When that summer he had revised his personal details for the following year’s *Who’s Who*, he had dropped not only his original surname but the reference to his wife. (It was presumably through oversight that she remained in its American counterpart until his unrevised entry lapsed early the following decade.) He later claimed never to have seen her again after moving to England. She certainly did not accompany him, unlike his housekeeper, Gabrielle, an elderly Frenchwoman of peasant stock, who insisted on doing so and was duly installed in 4 King’s Bench Walk. Even so, he paid his wife generous maintenance, later claiming to have given her £500 a year at this time, though within two years, as will be seen, he was contemplating divorce.

Angell’s relocation from Paris to London consolidated his change of professional identity from Ralph Lane, newspaperman, to Norman Angell, peace publicist. He had adopted the latter name at the Garton Foundation from the outset, and, as already noted, in his *Who’s Who* entry from its second appearance. He now started using it for all communications other than with family and long-standing friends. However, this restyling did not resolve the problem as to what his new persona was to be: a quasi-academic, explaining the embryonic science of international polity to an educated élite; or a campaigner, projecting a simplified version to a mass audience; or again a progressive politician, propounding an overtly ideological reform of international relations to all comers? It turned out that the Garton trustees wanted the first, and their employees the second; while Angell himself increasingly hankered after the third.

As soon as the Foundation had been launched, Hilton and his colleagues began arranging ‘200 to 300 lectures to be given in practically every important town in Britain’ over the coming winter, as Angell was able to report to Butler on 7 September 1912. Meanwhile Angell compiled a manual for Garton lecturers that dissected the standard objections to *The Great Illusion*, such as the misconception that it had claimed ‘that war is impossible’, and indicated approved forms of rebuttal. But when this manual was printed in mid-September, the trustees developed cold feet about the demagogic and possibly radical implications of training speakers for public meetings in urban centres. Anticipating second thoughts of this kind, Angell had recently warned the Carnegie Endowment, to which he was also looking for assistance, that because ‘the whole of Mr Balfour’s public life has been devoted to the Conservative Party… and the whole of Lord Esher’s public life to the interests of Imperial Defence and Imperialism generally’, they might in certain circumstances use the foundation ‘for rendering “innocuous” the peace advocacy it was ostensibly founded to promote’. Even so, Angell had striven to avoid partisanship. Thus on 9 October he sent what he feared was an ‘impertinent and unpardonable’ letter to Noel Buxton asking him to stand down as chairman of a meeting he was to address at Borough Polytechnic in favour of ‘some Conservative’ so as to prevent its appearing ‘a Liberal manifestation’. Captain Brett duly took the chair.

But Balfour in particular was not won over, and carried his fellow trustees with him. On 4 October 1912 Esher had sent him the new edition of *The Great Illusion* with a request to write ‘something that will induce [Conservatives] to see that this
is no peace propaganda in the ordinary sense . . . and that so far doctrine is in an academic phase’. Although he admitted ‘never [having] read Mr Norman Angell’s book with the attention which I am sure it deserves’, Balfour responded eight days later with a heavily qualified promotional statement: it endorsed the view that aggression was economic folly, but reiterated his fear that to the uninitiated the ‘illusion’ campaign might seem ‘peace at any price’. Esher took the hint, and produced strict new guidelines for the Garton Foundation: in future it should direct its efforts ‘to the elect few’ capable of exploring its as yet tentative theories, and abandon the ‘contrary method’ of targeting a mass public in a manner that ‘may appear to strike at the foundations of individual patriotism and so of our national life’. On 17 October he informed Angell personally that Garton resources could be expended only on ‘Study Clubs’ in Britain and similar educational work in France and Germany, and was relieved when this ‘general plan’ for getting the foundation ‘into shape’ proved acceptable.

Indeed, Angell stepped up his efforts to appear apolitical. Although a fortnight previously he had accepted an invitation from Beatrice Webb and her husband Sidney to chair one of their public lectures on ‘Modern Industrial Warfare’, he now declined an invitation from the Liberal MP Arthur Ponsonby to join a radical foreign affairs group, assuring him ‘how much I want to join’ as well as ‘how much I think I ought not to’. Ponsonby had recently met Angell over lunch at the Courtneys, and, though regarding him as an ‘unimpressive little man’ in physical terms, had appreciated his ‘pleasant expression’ and ‘clear head’. Angell also went along with the Garton Foundation’s efforts to nurture highly respectable local associations – ‘Kinder-Gartons’, Wright jocularly called them – sponsored by civic or academic dignitaries. Apart from the Cambridge University War and Peace Society, the leading early exemplars were the Manchester Norman Angell League, where an indefatigable liberal internationalist, Leonard Behrens, cut his teeth; the Glasgow International Polity Club, which enjoyed the support of the Lord Provost, Sir Daniel Stevenson; and in London the Association (later the Civil Union) for the Right Understanding of International Interests, run by Miss M. Talmadge, a business woman, and equipped with an impressive array of vice-presidents, including Angell’s friend Erskine Childers, best known as the author of the defence-alarmist novel The Riddle of the Sands. There were also significant affiliates in Aberdeen (where however the student Peace Society failed in its efforts to arrange a visit from Angell), Doncaster, and Leeds.

Angell had four reasons not to contest the Garton Foundation’s new restrictions. First, he was simply too busy: in addition to rushing to Paris for a business conference about the Continental Daily Mail on 14 November 1912, he was holding peace meetings almost daily, and by the end of the month claimed to have ‘given some 40 lectures all over the country during the last six weeks’. Second, he wanted to keep on good terms with Esher, who, in return for Angell’s acquiescence, gave a major address on 2 December to the Cambridge University War and Peace Society in the hall of Trinity College with the Master in the chair. Despite this ivory-tower setting, Esher’s message was beamed at the City of London: a war in Europe could result in a ‘transfer, perhaps permanently, from
London to New York of that enormous mass of financial business which on behalf of the whole mercantile and commercial world we at present transact in the metropolis of our Empire. To avoid this calamity, Esher hoped that the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente could ‘be drawn together by . . . some great explanatory and illuminating doctrine’, and, whilst not wholly endorsing Angell’s ideas, presented them as the basis of such a doctrine.260 Third, having anticipated Balfour’s and Esher’s decision, Angell was already pursuing alternative sources of funding. Thus although he ‘surrendered part of the allowance’ paid by the Garton Foundation, in recognition of the fact that he would henceforward carry out a narrower range of activities under its auspices, he nonetheless ‘continued the other phases of activity’261 – such as a major lecture in Sheffield on 16 December, in which he again denied having ever ‘attempted to preach that war was impossible or unlikely’262 – without restriction. He used Rowntree money to hire a Canadian friend of Hilton’s, A.W. (‘Wilk’) Haycock, to organize meetings in the Manchester area,263 and had high hopes of both the Carnegie Endowment and the World Peace Foundation. And, fourth, Angell knew that on top of his Garton-funded activities he could engage in radical politics behind the scenes.

Angell’s own lectures carried on without interruption; but, as he gave them, he came under pressure to explain his attitude to the Balkan War of autumn 1912, in which a coalition of nation-states seized territory from the Ottoman empire, thereby securing a handsome political (rather than economic) return on their military investment. He personally welcomed the humbling of the Turks, but, having unwisely chosen to extend his ‘illusion’ thesis beyond the material sphere, had somehow to square the two. The result was Peace Theories and the Balkan War, a hasty and jumbled book that was still being compiled in mid-November, just three weeks before publication.264 In it Angell interestingly anticipated the doctrine of colonialism as permanent aggression that the Indian leader Nehru was to formulate half a century later in order to justify seizure of the Portuguese enclave of Goa: he described the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans as ‘war waged daily by the Turks as conquerors, during the past 400 years’. He then less persuasively argued that this ‘war’ confirmed rather than disproved his thesis about the futility of conquest, since the Ottomans had ultimately been unable to consolidate their military seizure of the Balkans. Next, he claimed that, by attacking the Turks, the Balkan states had merely ‘chosen the less evil of two kinds of war’ – in other words, a defensive action against permanent aggression – and would ‘use their victory to bring a system based on force and conquest to an end’, with the consequence that ‘we who do not believe in force and conquest rejoice in their action and believe it will achieve immense benefits’.265

Having set out this dubious argument in the first half of the book, he filled out his text in the second with a series of points that were only loosely connected to its main purpose. Perhaps to compensate for past neglect of his intellectual precursor, he praised Richard Cobden, and also his associate John Bright, for having opposed the Crimean War of 1854–6: this had been fought in support of Turkey, so Angell was thereby indicating that Cobden and Bright had shared his
Angell in London, c. December 1912 (reproduced by permission of McMaster University Library).
anti-Turkish sentiments. He also criticized Winston Churchill for claiming that his ‘illusion’ thesis was that war was impossible rather than unprofitable. One of these ancillary points was of particular interest given Angell’s condemnation of compulsory military service in *Patriotism under Three Flags* and his current opposition to the National Service League: he accepted the principle of conscription, provided that the military situation really required it. It was not surprising that the second half of the book was omitted when a new edition, re-titled *Modern Wars and the Peace Ideal*, was issued by a Quaker publisher in York the following year.266

Although 1912 thus closed with an unconvincing literary excursion, the new year saw Angell emerge as an international campaigner, with high-profile visits to Germany and the United States, though he reluctantly declined ‘an invitation to tour Australia’.267 Having spent from mid-December until just after the new year in Paris, he came to Britain to keep various engagements, including a successful private dinner on 5 January 1913 with twenty radical MPs, a larger event at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce fifteen days later, and a meeting with the Quakers of York. This last was presumably one of the occasions in which, as *After All* recounted, he stayed with old Joseph Rowntree,268 and may have been also resulted in the abbreviated re-publication of his latest book in that city. Then, at the very end of January, he embarked on his long-promised visit to Britain’s principal adversary. He had already cultivated contacts with Germany’s Social Democrats, but for this attempt to win over mainstream opinion relied mainly on the good offices of George Nasmyth, an American Quaker who was studying physics there. Already an active internationalist, Nasmyth was now persuaded to make it his career: it was ‘after long walks and talks with Norman Angell during his stay in Heidelberg; in which the suggestion was made of his abandoning physics for a new science, International Relationships, formed from the sciences of Economics, History and Law, that Nasmyth resolved to ‘sacrifice . . . science on the altar of peace’, in his words, and work for Edwin Ginn’s foundation.269

Angell’s German trip was also assisted by the Carnegie Endowment, which had sent 40,000 copies of an open letter summarizing the argument of *The Great Illusion* to students in the universities he was visiting and 2,000 copies of the new translation, *Die Falsche Rechnung*, to selected university professors.

Accounts survive of seven of the ten meetings Angell held in the course of a fortnight. His opening address in Frankfurt am Main on 1 February 1913 was well received; and four days later in Heidelberg, where Nasmyth was based, the audience was so large that a bigger venue had to be found. At Göttingen on the 7th he spoke to 300 people; but nationalist students complained to the authorities that a political meeting was being held in a foreign language, even though oral and written translations had been provided. Prussia proved especially problematical: in Berlin on the 10th his meeting broke up in disorder, although this was partly because of factional hostility to the student group hosting him. By comparison, Angell’s visits to Leipzig, Munich, and Würzburg, on 11, 12, and 14 February respectively, went better; and he left for London, via Paris, on the 16th, relieved at having nothing worse to report
than that ‘out of the ten meetings held . . . three showed at times rather a high temperature and one was rowdy’. The anxiety he had nonetheless experienced during his visit calls into question recent attempts by revisionist historians to downplay the differences between British and German political values at this time: it was much easier to condemn war in London than in Berlin. Significantly, he never considered a follow-up visit during the remaining seventeen months of peace, despite fitting in two much longer trips to the United States. Even so, he came to believe that he had planted ideas that might later take root, later claiming that ‘if we could have had five years in which to work among young Germans, we could have diluted Prussianism’. They certainly took an interest in his ideas: *Die Falsche Rechnung* sold better than other continental editions. But most seem to have been unpersuaded: for example, when the future prime minister Gustav Stresemann reviewed it, he predicted – correctly, as it turned out – that, its thesis notwithstanding, the loser in a future war would forfeit both its world trade and its merchant fleet, and also be required to pay reparations.

The mere fact of having emerged almost unscathed from the German cauldron left Angell in an upbeat frame of mind. After undertaking more engagements in the north of England during the last ten days of February 1913, he spoke on 13 March at Britain’s most privileged school, Eton College, where he converted a future Conservative MP, Victor Cazalet, to near-pacifism. Five days later Angell gave the Conway memorial lecture at the South Place Institute, likening his job to the uprooting of a thicket of intellectual weeds, after which truth would flourish of its own accord: ‘Advance is achieved by the destruction of elaborate theorems with which the past has covered quite simple, visible facts. Once destroy that overgrowth, and the right idea then emerges of itself.’

Angell was similarly hopeful that a programme for uniting the anti-militarist efforts of the British, German, and French lefts could now be formulated. His contacts with them over the two previous years had contributed to a significant though unannounced change in his thinking. He was no longer content merely to expound his ‘illusion’ thesis, as during 1909–12: he now began paying more attention to supplementary policies, though at first he kept this quiet. He tried out some ideas for a European anti-militarist programme at ‘a private meeting of Union Delegates of the ILP, some three or four hundred of them’ on 12 April 1913, though he found their approach ‘somewhat too narrow and special’. He also discussed them with C.P. Trevelyan, an intense junior minister in the Liberal government whose radical instincts were accompanied by what Angell called ‘curiosities of personality’. In accepting Trevelyan’s invitation to dine with a group of radical politicians, Angell promised to send him ‘a private memorandum of some suggestions as to a “practical parliamentary platform of pacifism”’, and looked forward to meeting ‘those members to whom it would particularly appeal’. This memorandum was printed ‘for private circulation’ as an anonymous 37-page pamphlet entitled *Towards a Parliamentary Platform of Pacifism*. It put forward nine points, the first two being that increased arms expenditure should be funded ‘from direct taxation of the property owning class’ and that any
increase in military manpower should be provided not by conscription but by increasing the pay of the part-time, volunteer Territorial Force, the cost of this again to be borne by the rich. The next two points condemned secret treaties and any military convention with France – views that were shortly to make him a neutralist. The fifth point, necessary to the implementation of the first four, advocated ‘systematic co-operation with the democratic bodies of France and Germany’. The next two sought to restrict Britain’s use of its sea power, calling respectively for the British government to drop its opposition to the convention for assuring immunity from capture of private property at sea and for a change in the Admiralty’s ‘prize’ rules so as to reduce the incentive to seize foreign shipping – arguments that he was controversially to repeat during the First World War. The eighth point insisted that Britain take a more cooperative attitude to international legal conventions in an effort to reduce foreign suspicion of its motives. And the ninth one prohibited war loans, as a breach of neutrality. The platform thus contrasted with the business-friendly approach of the Garton Foundation, which must have been why Angell kept his name off the pamphlet.

On 28 April, just back from a week in Paris, he duly dined with Trevelyan and some of his radical colleagues, and promised to get back in touch with them after his imminent trip across the Atlantic.279

Angell had for some time been anxious to return to the United States, if only to engage with the World Peace Foundation. Its founder had previously notified him that he wanted his ‘corps of workers established right here in Boston where they can communicate with each other every day and gain knowledge and strength from such intercourse’280 But Angell was keen ‘to see whether part of the funds he has available could not be more usefully employed in Europe’. Eventually Ginn ‘asked him to come over for this purpose’, so he arranged a two-month visit.281 As he boarded the German liner Kronprinzessin Cecilie at Southampton on 30 April 1913, he told reporters:

My visit to New York is quite unofficial, but I am going to confer with friends as to a method of securing a sounder education of the individual in international affairs. The lesson of international independence should be taught. Men should understand that if the Germans bombard the Bank of England the Deutsche Bank would have to suspend payments.282

On board he thought he detected signs that his ideas were indeed taking root among Germans: he overheard passengers talking about Die Falsche Rechnung; and even the captain complimented him on it.283 He landed in New York on 7 May in very different circumstances from his only other visit twenty-one years before, being greeted by the press, which reported him as saying that ‘he did not think a European war was impossible, but he thought it highly improbable’, partly because of the prudent behaviour of the great powers in respect of the Balkan situation.284

Although he had cabled breathlessly to Butler that the ‘main object’ of his six-week American visit of May–June 1913 was to ‘see publishers confer pacifist methods propaganda learn attitude business world etc rather than lecturing',
Angell addressed several peace gatherings in the east of the United States and in Canada: they included the annual dinner of the Massachusetts Peace Society in Boston, that year’s Conference on International Arbitration at Lake Mohonk in New York State, a meeting in New York City of the local Peace Society at which Butler took the chair, and a public event in Toronto.285 He was based for much of May at the World Peace Foundation in Boston, though he made it clear to one of its officials, Edwin Mead, that he could only commit a fraction of his time to Boston or indeed to North America more generally.286 He met Butler in New York on 9 June to discuss the further help the Carnegie Endowment might offer. Amongst other arrangements, he and Butler agreed that Langdon-Davies, described by Angell as ‘a magnetic personality . . . who has thoroughly mastered my thesis’, would come out in the autumn for a three-month lecture tour designed for labour and commercial audiences, with Angell himself following early the next year to talk mainly to bankers and merchants, their schedules to be arranged by the American Association for International Conciliation.287 He even met Andrew Carnegie himself: as Angell recollected two decades later, they ‘walked round and round the garden’ of his expensive Manhattan residence discussing the problem of peace education.288 He gave a long interview to the New York Times during which he traced his ‘illusion’ thesis back to the Anglophobia of the Venezuelan crisis, and stated that he was trying ‘to make this thing a scientific presentation of the case for international order as against international anarchy’.289 Surprisingly, in view of his publicity material for the New York edition of The Great Illusion and the similar claims he was later to make, Angell seems not to have assumed an American identity on this trip.

On his return to Europe in late June 1913, Angell exhibited strange uncertainty about whether he should continue as an almost full-time peace activist, as he had been for the past nine months. Though finding it hard to shake off a cold he had caught in Boston, he hurried to France, where Northcliffe was intending to bring out a version of the Continental Daily Mail at Nice to cater for English-speaking sun-seekers. Astonishingly, given the demands of his ‘illusion’ work, Angell offered ‘to fix up the whole Riviera edition if you would care to have me do so. I can if need be devote a month or even two months solid to establishing it. I shall be a good deal in Paris during the remainder of the year.’290 This gesture reflected the ‘nightmares’ about neglecting his former job, which he was then experiencing, and which he afterwards attributed to ‘an unconscious, unavowed conviction’ that he should have ‘stuck to the newspaper business and its advantages, and never have attempted to challenge public folly’.291 It was characteristic of Angell’s temperamental caution that he was still keeping his career options open in this way. Because Northcliffe understandably accepted his offer, Angell was left with a significant additional responsibility during what turned out to be the last twelve months before world war.

Even so, he kept up his ‘illusion’ campaign as best he could. Back in London for the last part of July 1913, he sent a letter to a New York magazine pointing out how successfully Europe was containing the second Balkan War, which had begun in June, when the allies of the previous autumn fell out over what they
had then extorted from the Ottoman empire, and was to last until August.²⁹² He contributed a chapter to a book issued by the Rationalist Peace Society, repeating his original theme: ‘The prime, if not the sole, factor of progress is hard thinking.’²⁹³ He reported having ‘just about completed a text book’ for young people, to be called ‘The Citizen and Society’, which he over-optimistically expected to publish in the autumn.²⁹⁴ And he was billed to appear at The Hague between 18 and 23 August in order to address the Universal Peace Congress for the first time.²⁹⁵ Perhaps embarrassment had led him to accept the invitation to this annual rally of the European peace movement, which had expressed hurt at Angell’s ignorance of its work.²⁹⁶

At the end of August 1913 he faced another difficulty with the Garton Foundation, which, believing that the acceptance of a grant from the Carnegie Endowment would require the disclosure of confidential information, rejected the arrangement he had negotiated with Butler. There was, however, a consolation, as Captain Brett pointed out, since Sir Richard Garton now undertook to give a year’s notice if ever he decided to discontinue his own funding. Angell again bowed to an adverse decision from the trustees, though he pointed out to Esher that, if he had known they would decline the Carnegie money, he would not have committed himself to the reciprocal part of the deal, another tour of the United States early the following year.²⁹⁷

As the summer of 1913 drew to a close, Angell prepared for his own version of America’s Lake Mohonk Conferences, held at the northern French seaside resort of Le Touquet over the long weekend of 19–21 September. It brought together personal friends, peace activists, and outsiders. In the first category were Henry Bell, a Lloyds banker, and Dr Archibald A. Warden, a physician both to the Hertford British Hospital in Paris and the American hospital in the same city, who was writing a book challenging the conscriptionist claim that compulsory military service brought health benefits. In addition to Arnold Rowntree and Miss Talmadge, peace activists included Lady Barlow, a Quaker who had admired his work since April 1910,²⁹⁸ and the radical activist E.D. Morel, remembered by Angell as a ‘tall handsome agitator’²⁹⁹ yet regarded by his critics as a conspiracy-theorist with a vendetta against the makers of British and French foreign policy that had originated in their supposed attempts to thwart his campaign for reform of the Belgian Congo. Outsiders were represented by two Conservative MPs and an arms manufacturer.³⁰⁰ Although the Garton Foundation had declined to fund the meeting, both Garton and Brett showed good will by attending, while Esher invoked an unimpeachable excuse – a royal summons to Balmoral – for staying away.³⁰¹ Angell’s opening address was notable for particular generosity to the old peace movement: he acknowledged that the economic argument for peace had been ‘stated long ago with incomparable lucidity by Cobden’ and also ‘by Continental economists and pacifists – Passy, Yves Guyot, De Molinari, D’Estournelles de Constant, Novikow’.³⁰²

Angell followed up his successful Le Touquet conference by renewing his assault on the citadels of the British establishment. On 8 October he lectured on ‘The Place of Military Force in Modern Statecraft’ to the Royal United Services
Institution, causing a general in the audience to complain that what had been established as ‘a place for the discussion of military questions’ had been turned into ‘a sort of temple of peace’. On the 30th he visited the Oxford Union and carried the motion ‘That Military Power is economically and socially futile’ by a majority of forty in a house of about 570 students. An undergraduate reporter considered this a ‘really rather astonishing’ result, particularly in view of the fact that, for all his intellectual clarity, Angell had not made ‘a great speech so far as oratory was concerned. There was much hesitancy and a tendency to become inaudible towards the end of his sentences.’ One of his opponents was Harold Macmillan, a Balliol undergraduate who was later to become a Conservative prime minister. Angell was astonished too, having previously regarded Oxford as the ‘centre of dead languages and undying prejudices’. Fifteen days later he returned to that university to present a version of the student addresses he had delivered in Germany to ‘a joint meeting of the Tory and Liberal Clubs and the Oxford Society for International Friendship’ in the hall of New College under the chairmanship of its Warden, William Spooner, who is now remembered for the (probably apocryphal) syllabic transpositions that have become known as ‘spoonerisms’. By this time Esher was observing to Balfour ‘how the discussion of the Economic theory of Norman Angell has “caught on”’, and taking an alumnus’s pride in the fact that ‘all the impetus comes from Cambridge in the first instance’.

Angell maintained a steady literary output over the autumn and winter of 1913/14, including articles in every issue of War & Peace: A Norman Angell Monthly. Launched in October by a company created for the purpose, and edited by William Searle, this new periodical easily sold out the 10,000 copies of its first number. Its initial success may have owed something to its ostensible open-mindedness: having approached the Boer War general Sir Ian Hamilton for a contribution, it printed his letter of refusal even though it expressed the desire to ‘break a lance with Mr Norman Angell, whose doctrines I believe will tend to . . . produce a world catastrophe’. Angell’s first contribution criticized the ‘grotesque Determinism or political Predestination’ of those accepting the inevitability of the arms race. His second, in November, attacked Churchill’s proposed ‘naval holiday’ as designedly unacceptable to Germany. December’s article rebutted the charge that his own mainly economic approach to international relations was ‘sordid’, which even a fellow member of the Rationalist Peace Society had taken up. That of January 1914 claimed that the Zabern incident, in which high-handed behaviour by the army had aroused much criticism in Germany, indicated that ‘civilism’, rather than the ‘discredited crankism’ of militarists such as von Bernhardi, was dominant in that country. And February’s made a point to which he was to return again and again, particularly during the 1930s and which academic students of international relations were later to call the ‘security dilemma’: it identified the ‘physical impossibility’ for Europe as a whole of implementing Churchill’s maxim that ‘the only sure means of peace is to be so much stronger than your enemy that he will not dare to attack you’. (Angell made no contribution to the March edition,
because it was inconveniently timed in relation to another of his visits to the United States.)

Not all Angell’s output at this time was cogent, however. Around November 1913 he wrote War and the Workers, a long pamphlet issued the following month by the National Labour Press. Using the ILP’s publishing arm was not in itself controversial, given that Angell’s ostensible purpose was to challenge the ‘general impression among workers that if the world abandoned armaments they might have surrendered a weapon which could be used against capitalist oppression; or that … armament expenditure is “good for trade” generally’. In the same vein he denied that war was a capitalist plot, and observed that ‘a general strike might stop war, but it does not stop armaments’. Yet in the final section of the pamphlet Angell not only forgot that he was addressing a specifically proletarian readership, he also gave his first public hint that he was a man of the left with political ambitions. He put forward an edited version of the parliamentary platform of pacifism that only seven months previously he had circulated not only anonymously but with middle-class radicals as a major part of his intended readership. Because War and the Workers thus abruptly changed target two-thirds of the way through, it was criticized for the obscurity of its argument. Even its main section, addressed to socialist working men, did not ring true, as his former secretary, Gerard Langelaan, candidly informed him:

You can talk to bankers and dons but your Labour pamphlet shows you ‘not quite at your ease’… When you get among the Labour Party and speak from their platform I always feel you are like a confirmed teetotal atheist singing a hymn at a Salvation Army meeting because the Salvationists are believers in teetotalism.

After finishing this unsatisfactory pamphlet, Angell collected a number of his speeches from the past two years for Heinemann to publish under the title The Foundations of International Polity. He completed this contribution to the ‘general cause of intellectual sanitation’ during January 1914, and, with his permission, dedicated it to Esher. In a freshly composed ‘Introductory Summary of Argument’, Angell not only reiterated his claim that ‘interdependence’ had established itself during ‘our generation’ to such an extent that ‘any State destroying wealth in another must destroy it in its own’, but took it further. He insisted that ‘the mechanical forces which are necessarily created by a condition of interdependence progressively nullify the effectiveness of physical coercion by either party against the other’ – a proposition that academic theorists were to rediscover more than half a century later. Even more boldly, he included a throwaway remark to the effect that ‘the World State, though real, is intangible’, implying that interdependence was already turning into political integration and producing a de facto world organization – a striking claim, which he was shortly to develop on the American lecture circuit. Angell also brought out a 1914 edition of The Great Illusion, because the previous ones had sold out, though this involved only an improved index: for the first time the text did not expand. But he had still not completed ‘The Citizen and Society’, though it was now advertised as being in preparation.
The failure to finish this last book and the uneven quality of his recent writing were both understandable given that Angell had taken on too many commitments and was unable to cope. Although while in London at the end of October 1913 he had suffered a bout of sickness, later claiming to Esher that his temperature had reached 104 degrees,\textsuperscript{316} he had from Paris the following month overconfidently assured Northcliffe that he would be willing to devote ‘all but three of the next seven months’ to the Continental Daily Mail, including if necessary the launching of the Berlin version that was then under consideration. Angell had in addition taken charge of the Nice edition, as already noted, even persuading Blériot to supply a plane to help distribute it.\textsuperscript{317} However, perhaps because he had delegated too much of the work, the Riviera supplement was shoddy, his boss describing it on its Christmas launch as the ‘feeblest and least original production ever issued in connection with this business’ and warning of ‘extremely unpleasant’ consequences.\textsuperscript{318}

A chastened Angell realized that he had overreached himself, and wrote a long private reply from Nice on 3 January 1914. He explained in confidence that he would have to make an immediate visit to London ‘concerning a wearisome domestic business – a possible impending divorce’. He asked to be ‘replaced entirely so far as any paid services are concerned’, so as to ‘be free for work which will ultimately, I believe, be of infinitely more worth to you’. Here, he made clear, he was ‘not referring to the “Great Illusion” matter at all’, but was alluding to his continuing efforts to develop materials for teaching economics, a venture that he hoped would be profitable for Northcliffe:

For two years I have been at work intermittently on an education scheme which but for other calls would have been complete a year since. If I could give my mind and time to it and the arrangements and experiments involved, it would be a much bigger matter, because non-controversial, than ‘Great Illusion’ interests.

He made clear that he did not ‘lightly’ propose to give up the last of his Daily Mail pay: ‘I need even the small salary I have been receiving this last year. But I need still more to be free of obligations which, apparently, I cannot now effectively fulfil.’ He wryly wished his boss, ‘despite the pungency of your recent communications’, a happy new year, and signed off with the greeting that Roman gladiators expecting death gave their emperor: ‘Morituri te salutant.’\textsuperscript{319}

Angell soon had second thoughts about surrendering all his remaining salary at once, and in mid-January 1914 wrote another frank letter to Northcliffe, this time from Paris. He again proffered expansive promises about his educational project, claiming that, within ‘six or eight months’ of being sufficiently free of other duties so as to spend ‘at least half my time in London’, he could bring you the results of certain experiments – demonstrations, if you will – showing, I think, that your business could, as part of its ordinary commercial enterprise, re-cast the education of Great Britain and place the coming generation indubitably at the head of European civilisation; in ten years perhaps there would not be a school in the civilised world that would not be employing in part a system which your business had created and using material produced by it.
He now proposed halving his salary at the end of June and giving it up altogether only at the end of the year, though ‘earlier if everything goes smoothly’. Northcliffe responded helpfully, so the storm was weathered. Angell duly returned to a busy schedule that included major visits to Edinburgh and Liverpool in the third week of January.

For all his recent success he was financially anxious, partly because of his need to support Beatrice, whether he divorced her or not. ‘I have unfortunately got responsibilities that I must make quite definite provision for’, he observed on 22 January 1914 to Tom Lane in the course of a discussion as to whether they could still afford to guarantee the business activities of their improvident half-brother Will. ‘Though *The Great Illusion* sold many copies it didn’t give me financial independence’, Angell later explained, because it was ‘part of an agitation’ that necessitated ‘heavy personal expenditure’, particularly on secretarial services. He had built up more than £2,700 in investments; but he would soon have no salary; his future earnings as a writer were uncertain; and those as an entrepreneur were pie in the sky. It was the assurance of earning substantial sums – he was about to earn £453 in just over two months’ speaking in the United States – that reconciled him to the transatlantic visit to which he had committed himself, despite the ‘very uncertain health’ he emphasized to the tour organizer in an attempt to avoid having to travel overnight between lectures.

On 4 February 1914 he embarked from Southampton, the passenger list recording him as Ralph Norman Angell Lane, aged thirty-nine (a two-year underestimate), married, and of English nationality. The *Oceanic* ran into storms that extended its voyage from six to nine days and necessitated some rearrangement of his commitments. He did not this time visit Canada or New England, but went to Washington, where he lunched with William Jennings Bryan, now secretary of state, with Elihu Root, a former secretary of war who was now in the Senate, and with Butler, and also held four public meetings. Angell then made an unsuccessful foray southwards: in Atlanta his ‘audience was composed of a dozen street loafers who had come in for the warmth and who slept serene’; and other meetings in the region were little better attended. After ‘the disappointment of the southern states’ he proceeded to ‘the Middle West’ where ‘the audiences became immediately large and important’ and thence to ‘the Pacific coast’ where he found ‘all the meetings…large and of very good quality’. Having concluded his lecture tour in southern California, he made ‘a pious pilgrimage’ to Bakersfield, finding it, as he told a British interviewer on his return, no longer ‘a place of wooden shacks and “bad men” from the mountains [who] would come in and “hold it up” [but] very respectable and progressive, with street cars and a high-brow government containing a strong prohibition party’. He met only one person he knew from his former life there: ‘the last of his tribe’ of English fruit-growers, living in a house where the decoration remained as incomplete as it had been two decades before. Angell took the opportunity of checking the fate of ‘some land I used to own here’, as he reported to his secretary; and it must have been as a consequence of doing so that his brother Alexander received a token payment for his interest in the Shafter property.
On this American trip of February–April 1914, in contrast with that of the previous year, Angell was addressing general audiences rather than peace organizations, and at a time when his ‘illusion’ thesis had lost much of its novelty. He therefore needed to persuade the paying public of a proudly aloof nation that the outside world concerned it at all. On arrival he had made the point that the European arms race was having ‘a very direct influence on conditions in the United States, although that does not seem to be realized very generally in this country at present’; and he had told one of his early meetings that socialism and militant trade unionism ‘were imported from Europe as a direct result of the cry of the people against the great burden European nations were imposing in armament’.330 In the New York edition of *The Foundations of International Polity*, published at the end of his tour by Putnam’s with the titular prefix *Arms and Industry*, he again insisted that ‘the underlying problems of organized society concern Americans as deeply as they concern any of the other groups comprising that society’.331

To give substance to this claim, he took up the notion of a real yet intangible world state that he had previously only touched upon, and made it the centre-piece of his propaganda. In the course of the previous two or three decades, he now argued, there has come into being, unnoticed for the most part, a World State, that is to say, a whole body of legislation concerning…the negotiability of bills of exchange, the standardization of electrical and railroad machinery, the system of bookkeeping between the various national postal departments, copyright, the safety of life at sea, marine signalling, the investigation of the white slave traffic, and much else which has grown up more or less haphazard.

He identified this proto-state as a prelude to offering Americans the flattering role of turning it into an actual organization. What was there, he now asked rhetorically, ‘to prevent the United States, the great neutral, industrial, most modern of all states, organizing this World State, giving it, by its beneficence, a capitol, and definite and permanent means of carrying on its work…?’332 As well as expounding this idea to audiences and interviewers, Angell also set it down in a pamphlet for the American Association for International Conciliation.333

Though jarring with his previously declared disbelief in federation proposals, his exploration of this world-state theme was to stand him in good stead after the outbreak of war in Europe, when a league of nations and American participation in international affairs became hot topics.

Angell also resorted to less abstract issues in his continuing effort to interest the public in international issues. On the Pacific coast, for example, he talked a lot about Japanese immigration, though he dismissed a military invasion by Japan as ‘a physical impossibility’.334 And in all sections of the country he highlighted the situation in Mexico, which, particularly after General Huerta seized power, was experiencing post-revolutionary turbulence. Initially, Angell was pleased by how much less responsive to the rhetoric of military intervention the United States had become since the Venezuelan and Cuban crises, telling an
interviewer in Georgia that if ‘the American people had the same temper’ as in the late 1890s ‘the United States army would have been in Mexico before now’. While President Woodrow Wilson showed restraint, Angell praised his policy as ‘absolutely perfect’, argued that ‘a policy of non-intercourse, enforced by the larger nations’ was the only way ‘to settle the disorders in Mexico’, and warned that military intervention by the United States would commit it to ‘years of guerrilla chasing’. But after Wilson landed troops in Vera Cruz on 21 April 1914, Angell warned of the risks of the United States being sucked into central America and thereby acquiring ‘twenty or thirty millions of people who are not white – or at least very white’, with damaging implications for ‘the capacity of the American people to manage their own society’. However, he also criticized the country’s anti-war propagandists for their lack of ‘analytical’ content. Indeed, in a cable to War & Peace on 25 April he condemned not only Wilson’s ‘bad generalship’ but also ‘paciﬁsm of the Bryan type, which is based on the assumption that high aspiration, good intention, and sentimental declamation can somehow be substituted for a knowledge of facts and an analytical demonstration of their bearing’. This was unusually ‘plain speech’ for Angell, as he recognized, tempering it with an assurance of his ‘highest personal regard for Mr Bryan, whose acquaintance I enjoy’. The Mexican crisis of spring 1914 enabled Angell to become one of the first advocates of economic sanctions as a means of securing international justice. Seeking a method of punishing the Huerta regime without intervening militarily, he insisted that ‘a policy of non-intercourse’ – the international severance of ﬁnancial and other communications with that country – could ‘reduce Huerta to submission in six weeks’. Sanctions of this kind, he told a reporter, would already be available to the United States had it ‘done its part in bringing about international peace agreements in the last twenty years’, implying that such agreements could have created a collective-security organization capable of mounting a boycott of this kind. The fact that he was already thinking in this way helps to explain the ease with which he was able to endorse collective security at the end of the year, after a brief isolationist diversion triggered by war in Europe.

Throughout this American tour Angell as an individual attracted some interest but also some scepticism. A journalist in Kansas City, Missouri, found him a ‘quiet gray little man’, though skilled at explaining complex problems. A more astringent colleague at St Louis in the same state was unimpressed by his intermittent claim to be a fellow countryman, judging him ‘British, throughout, in spite of his American citizenship. . . . His manner of speech, his frequent use of such terms as “shares” for “stocks” and “trams” for “street cars” and his allusion to the Mexican situation as “your Irish problem” are among the identifying marks of insularity.’ This St Louis journalist also found him over-earnest, reacting to his claim to have moved the peace movement forward from a ‘sentimental’ beginning to a ‘realistic’ second stage with the waspish observation: ‘If there is to be a third phase, that of humor. . . Norman Angell will have to turn the job to someone else.’
While he was away in the United States, his international-polity movement gained ground in Europe. For example, ‘on the energetic initiative’ of Angell’s Paris friend Dr Warden, Viscount Esher gave a major lecture in French at the Sorbonne in late March 1914, in which he praised Angell’s work, though press attention focused more on his assertion that in the short term Britain, France, and Russia should solidify their entente into an alliance, so as to establish parity with the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy that he considered essential to an orderly Europe.341 As well as reporting ‘His Lordship’ to be in ‘a very sweet temper’ and even to favour an ‘extension’ of Garton Foundation activities, Wright informed Angell: ‘The tendency on the part of the press is to drag in your name and our movement is rapidly increasing.’342 He was receiving recognition across the political spectrum as a publicist of an exceptional kind. On the left J. Bruce Glasier of the ILP represented him as belonging ‘to an order by himself. Worldwide in fame, he is one of the most obscure personalities of our time…. He keeps away from peace and anti-war demonstrations, from Socialist meetings and political gatherings of all kinds – as if determined to have the fight out with the whole legion of war propagandists single-handed’. And on the right a worried Morning Post described him as ‘just now the leader of the…attack on the institution known as the State’, and acknowledged that ‘behind Mr Norman Angell’s theories there is an element of truth the existence of which lends them plausibility’.343 Even the Earl of Cromer announced: ‘Mr Norman Angell’s plea that, in the present condition of the civilised world, the mere fact of conquest would in no way improve the economic position of the conqueror appears to be absolutely unrefutable.’344 With Britain’s former Consul General in Egypt volunteering such an endorsement, it was small wonder that the comic magazine Punch, ever a barometer of the conventional wisdom, decided that Angell should be lauded not mocked for The Foundations of International Polity.345

One reason for the rise in his stock during these early months of 1914 was the growing belief that the Balkan crisis had passed off without military escalation. He even told an American journalist: ‘There will never be another war between European powers. If there had been any recent tendency to go to war they would have done so at the time of the Balkan trouble.’346 This complacency, though imprudent given that he had long been correcting the misconception that The Great Illusion had asserted the impossibility of war, was not unique to him. For example, a book Brailsford was finishing at precisely this time stated categorically that ‘there will be no more wars among the six Great Powers’.347

Angell’s tour having reached its financially satisfactory conclusion, he landed on 3 May 1914 at Plymouth, his secretary Fayle, who met him there, being relieved that he ‘seems quite O.K.’, though the returning traveller himself was soon complaining of ‘a sort of influenza’ contracted on the boat.348 Angell brought with him a dictaphone that raised the prospect of an even faster flow of words in future, yet was surprisingly unsure what reception this enhanced output would receive. He asked Northcliffe to ‘drop a hint’ to his editors ‘that Norman Angell is not taboo’, and offered articles on other American themes such as ‘The Failure of Bryanism’ and ‘Industrial Insurrectionism’.349 To his followers
he acknowledged concerns that his and Langdon-Davies's efforts would ‘have been better extended to Europe’, but insisted on the growing importance of the United States within the international system, particularly since the opening of the Panama Canal.350

By the summer of 1914 Norman Angellism had reached its intellectual and organizational peak. President Wilson’s advisers took it seriously.351 The Garton Foundation now had sixteen local associations in Britain – including belatedly an Oxford University War and Peace Society, set up in February by an undergraduate at Magdalen, E.G.R. Romanes, with the help of the professor of Greek, Gilbert Murray352 – plus forty-six study groups. Across the Atlantic, thanks to Angell’s latest tour, there were International Polity Clubs at the universities of Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale. In collaboration with the American Association for International Conciliation, the Foundation was also arranging another conference, an International Polity Summer School at the hostel in the historic Quaker village of Old Jordans near Beaconsfield, during the second half of July. In preparation for this the Garton Foundation printed A Grammar of the Discussion of War and Peace in which for the tactical guidance of his followers Angell reduced their opponents to three categories: those who regarded war as inevitable because, for example, of a fatalistic view of man as a fighting animal; those who illogically claimed that every country should seek to be stronger than its neighbours; and those whose misconception of the nature of the state led them to believe that one country could own another’s territory as the result of conquest.

Out of the blue on 28 June 1914, just four days after Angell addressed a big meeting of the Manchester Norman Angell League,353 a Serb assassinated the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary in Sarajevo. At first, though seeming to be state-sponsored terrorism, this act in far away Bosnia caused little concern in a Britain preoccupied by a possible civil war as Ulster prepared to resist Home Rule for Ireland. Indeed, as late as mid-July, when Northcliffe invited Angell to lunch and took him up to see ‘some of the preparations we are making for the war’, the ‘photos of ambulances, artillery, nurses, Red Cross units’ littering the floor of the press baron’s room in Carmelite House all related to Ulster.354

Nor did the Balkan crisis much affect the International Polity Summer School that duly assembled on 17 July 1914, to be greeted by Hilton, who lived locally, because on that day Angell had felt ‘seedy’.355 Sixty-eight followers were present for at least some of the time, fifty-one of them from Britain, ten from the United States, four from France, and one each from Germany, Italy, and New Zealand; and there were also ten ‘visitors’.356 Only three of those attending were female: Maude Pease, a stenographer from the Garton Foundation who was recording the proceedings;357 an American accompanying her husband; and Lady Barlow, listed as a visitor though she was a long-standing supporter of Angell, who the day before the summer school had hosted a pre-conference reception for its members.358 This indicated how overwhelmingly male Angell’s movement was, even by the standards of the time: only one of the inner circle that gathered regularly in 4 King’s Bench Walk to discuss policy was female, Mrs Marjorie Manus, a journalist of Dutch ancestry employed by War & Peace; and on this occasion
she was absent. Angell’s unease at this time when dealing with women on a professional basis was noticed by contemporaries such as E.D. Morel.359

As the forty-one-year-old leader of a movement consisting predominantly of clever and well-educated men in their twenties, Angell had shed the arrogant manner of his teenage years, and, steeled by marital difficulties and managerial responsibilities, had acquired the guarded yet assured style of a sage. Wright wrote publicly of his ‘detached, impersonal’ manner; and Ponsonby, though acknowledging his ‘subtle brain’ and ‘very good heart’, was privately to describe him as ‘a rather cold and reserved man’.360 That summer school at Old Jordans, which began nine days of serious discussions under Angell’s tutelage on 18 July 1914, saw him in his element, as can be judged from the transcript of the proceedings, which was published the following year, even though by then – as Hilton, its editor, was all too aware – it was of historical interest only. A ‘German Junker of enlightened views’ who had been studying at Christ’s College, Cambridge, W.G.A.J. von Lübtow, made the summer school aware that even the most left-wing of his fellow countrymen regarded Slavdom as barbarous;361 but there were very few mentions of contemporary problems even after Vienna’s ultimatum to Belgrade on 23 July. Angell’s priority was not to discuss the current situation but to inculcate effective propaganda techniques. In order that his disciples knew their enemy he had invited a number of his opponents to visit the summer school, including spokesmen for the Navy League and the National Service League, the Marxist scourge of Germany H.M. Hyndman, and even Belloc’s ally G.K. Chesterton, whose acceptance must have been facilitated by the fact that he lived nearby.

Angell devoted several sessions to practising quick ripostes to awkward questions, on the grounds that this was ‘what you have to do when you come into the field’.362 These had the air of master classes. At one, he asked for possible responses to a heckler who asserted that disarmament would produce unemployment. Dismissing the thirteen attempts made by his followers, he told them: ‘Do not be abstract and indulge in economic terms’. Instead, he urged them to offer ‘a definite simple explanation’, such as:

The gentleman thinks that because in Newcastle battleships are built costing two million pounds . . . therefore two millions more of money is circulating among the population. Where did the two millions come from? Did it come from the moon? It came out of your pockets. Would it not have given employment if you had spent it instead of the government?363

His disciples did better when he rehearsed them on what differentiated them from the established peace movement: ‘in being rather a realistic more than an idealistic movement’ was a characteristic reply. But more than once Angell warned them ‘not to disparage the older pacifism’364 – a sign that after several years of campaigning he had become more respectful of the tenacity and courage of those who had been doing the job for much longer.

The transcript revealed the extent to which Angell was still grappling with the confusions of his ‘illusion’ thesis. Presumably prompted by ‘What is Force?
And Why Resist It?’, a closely argued article by Robertson of Cambridge in the latest issue of War & Peace,365 Romanes of Oxford asked why, if wealth could not be extracted by a conqueror from the inhabitants of a defeated country, and if the process of resistance imposed costs on the defender, Angell nonetheless favoured military resistance? Would a country lose its wealth if it chose not to defend itself? Haycock, all too aware from the meetings he had organized in Manchester how difficult it was to avoid being tarred with the pacifist brush, was on tactical grounds horrified by this question, insisting that ‘if we . . . discuss non-resistance we may as well shut up shop’. But Angell was intrigued, insisting that albeit in private he and his colleagues had ‘to decide in our minds why it is that we do not advocate non-resistance’. Taking pride in being ‘perhaps mistaken, but at least . . . a man who tries to thresh these things out’, he offered the off-the-cuff observation ‘that we shall arrive best at peace . . . by resistance’. This in effect repeated the claim of The Great Illusion that aggression was best deterred by maintaining strong defences, but again failed to consider why armed resistance should be offered if such deterrence failed. Although Angell promised his followers a complete explanation ‘with a little more leisure’,366 events were almost immediately to deny him this. It was more than two decades, as already noted, before he could articulate his conviction that self-defence was a deeply rooted human instinct.

The July 1914 summer school also showed that he not wholly resolved his tactical tension between an educational approach, confined to the inculcation of general principles, and a policy-oriented one, focused on the practical application of those principles. His acolytes included advocates of both approaches. Hilton, later an academic, argued: ‘We have nothing to do with application . . . . Our one aim . . . is to set up a new mental attitude towards the relations of men.’367 But Haycock, later a Labour MP, insisted that ‘we need pegs upon which to hang our particular ideas’.368 Though aware of the propagandist’s need to refresh his long-term campaign by linking it to topical issues, Angell sought to damp down expectations of a quick fix for contemporary problems. Thus he responded to von Lübtow’s worries about the Russian threat by stating: ‘In ten years the spread of our ideas will have brought about the possibility of co-operation between the Great Powers. . . . You say Russia may invade Germany tomorrow. No remedy we may apply will act in twenty-four hours.’369 And he warned against predicting ‘a financial catastrophe’ at the outbreak of war, because he did not expect nations to be so foolish as to ‘break contracts and seize wealth’.370 Yet he endorsed Haycock’s emphasis on the need to relate general principles to particular situations. And a part of him relished the idea of taking up an issue of immediate relevance to national policy, as he hinted in the course of the final ‘stocktaking’ on the evening of Sunday 26 July. Having explained that whenever participants had described their movement as ‘Norman Angellist’, he had experienced an uncomfortable shiver because there was ‘only one loyalty in the domain of pure ideas, and that is loyalty to the truth’, he went on:

If, however, we were coming to the domain of action – if it were a policy to be executed . . . I should not feel a shiver if you happened to invest me with the guidance and leadership in that . . . In the domain of action, you will find me a most autocratic person. . . .371
This was a prescient remark: within forty-eight hours he was to be offering guidance and leadership of an autocratic kind in the domain of action. On the morning after he made it, that of Monday 27 July 1914, his summer-school participants dispersed just as war in Europe became a certainty. He himself, having left Old Jordans early, reached King’s Bench Walk before lunch to find his ‘desk loaded with telegrams and letters: from the various organizations, societies, International Polity Clubs, Study Circles, which had been the outgrowth of the Garton Foundation: Where are you going to stand if war breaks out?’

Von Lübtow was being seen off by Hilton and Pease at Beaconsfield railway station when he supposedly spotted a newspaper headline about Austria’s rejection of Serbia’s reply to its ultimatum, and announced: ‘This is war – European war. I am going straight home to Germany. I’m going to fight for my country.’

This story, based on what Pease remembered four decades later, may have gained in the telling: as will shortly be seen, within eleven months von Lübtow was to be at an American university in difficult personal circumstances, thereby making it unlikely that he went back and joined the German army. But the first half of his alleged prediction was all too correct. On Tuesday 28 July Austria-Hungary declared war; and later that day Angell launched a vigorous campaign in support of British neutrality, thereby exchanging a life in which his propaganda had generally been received with courtesy and respect for one in which it was in many quarters to provoke anger and loathing.

NOTES

1. AA, 110.
3. AA, 111.
4. Ibid., 112–3.
10. A. Harmsworth to A, 18 Sept. 1905: BSU.
12. A to Northcliffe, 1 Jan. 1906: BSU.
13. His agreement of 14 Nov. 1905 is mentioned in A to Northcliffe, 13 Jan. 1907: Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62216 fo. 35.
15. AA, 119.
17. ‘Elsaville Chronicle, Sat. 30 Sept. 1905’ (printed): BSU.
18. A to Northcliffe, 13 Jan. 1907: Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62216 fo. 35.
22. AA, 135.
23. Ibid., 138.
24. N. Angell, Europe’s Optical Illusion (1909), 120.
27. ‘Reminiscences’, 100.
28. [J. Hilton (ed.)] International Polity Summer School, Old Jordans Hostel, Beaconsfield, under the auspices of the Garton Foundation (1915), 393.
30. TT, 27 July 1909, 12.
31. As he recalled in A to H. O’H Cosgrave, 19 May 1910: BSU.
32. AA, 146–7. The mention of Northcliffe in Europe’s Optical Illusion was in the footnote on page 11.
34. TLS, 8 Dec. 1909, 487.
37. AA, 147–8.
40. AA, 163. See W. M. Kuhn’s excellent entry on Esher in the Oxford DNB.
41. Falk, Five Years Dead, 263.
43. Esher to A, 11 Jan. 1910: BSU.
44. A to A. Bates, 17 Jan. 1910: Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62216 fo. 94.
47. A. Marrin, Sir Norman Angell (1979), 114.
48. TT, 3 May 1910, 7.
49. A to H; O’H. Cosgrave, 10 May 1910: BSU.
50. TT, 26 May 1910, 6.
51. Angell, Europe’s Optical Illusion, 1, 2.
52. Ibid. 3–5, 10, 13–14.
53. Ibid. 25–9, 85.
54. Ibid. 44, 46–7, 55–6.
55. Ibid. 89, 92–3.
58. Ibid. 104–5.
60. Ibid. 106–7.
61. Ibid. 113–5.
68. E. Harvey to A, 27 and 29 Sept. 1910: BSU.
73. Ibid. 47, 105–6, 110.
77. N. Angell, *Prussianism and its Destruction, with which is reprinted part II of ‘The Great Illusion’* (1914), xiv.
83. AA, 150.
84. See Angell, *Peace Theories and the Balkan War*.
86. Ibid. 114–5.
89. A to H. Wright, 20 Oct. 1920: BSU.
90. AA, 318.
93. G. Langelaan to A, 1 Dec. 1945: BCU box 1. Langelaan was initially known as ‘George’, which is what Angell called him: see AA, 121–2, 312. But, having given this name to his son, a writer whose story ‘The Fly’ was turned into a well-known film, he reverted to Gerard in later life: see G. Langelaan to A, 18 Jan. 1952: BSU.
98. Ibid., 27 Oct., 2 Nov. 1910: Jordan papers, 41/11.
100. G. Langelaan to Northcliffe, 10 Nov. 1910: Add MSS 62218 fo. 38.
104. Coulton, Main Illusions of Pacifism, 30.
108. Ibid. 113, 115.
109. Ibid. 119.
110. Ibid. 128.
111. Ibid. 129, 130.
116. Ibid. 121.
117. Ibid. 140.
118. Ibid. 141.
121. Ibid. 161.
123. Ibid. 197.
124. Ibid. 248
125. Ibid. 257–8.
126. Ibid. 273.
127. Ibid. 273–4.
128. Ibid. 286–8.
130. Ibid. 306–12.
131. Ibid. 285.
133. Ibid. 294.
139. See the notice in *NYT*, 17 Dec. 1910, BR16.
143. Ibid. 304–9.
144. A to Sir J. Brunner, 28 June 1911: BSU box 3.
146. A to W.C. Reich, 21 Feb. 1911; J.M. Robertson to A, 3 Apr. 1911: McM box 1.
152. A to H.S. Perris, 13 May 1911: McM box 1.
154. G.N. Putnam to N.M. Butler, 25 Apr. 1912: CEIP I&E vol. 96, BCU.
155. A. Fried to A, 5 Dec. 1910: BSU.
157. ‘Reminiscences’, 111.
158. Roeder to A, 30 Mar. 1911: BSU.
160. This move was mentioned in A to E.W. Fox, 10 Jan. 1911; and the ‘garret’ was referred to in A to H. Begbie, 7 July 1911: BSU. The street was then called Cité Trévisé; but ‘de’ has since been inserted.
161. A to R. Kruttschnitt, 21 Mar. 1910; A to Mary [Lane], n.d. [c. 8 Feb. 1955]: BSU.
168. 'Johnes' to A, 16 Oct. 1911: BSU.
172. F. Schofield to A, 3 June [1911]: McM box 1.
173. A to Mrs Whyte, 20 May 1911 (typescript copy): BSU.
176. A to J.A. Hobson, 23 Sept. 1911: BSU.
179. A to H. Begbie, 7 July 1911; F.M. Alexander to A, 9 Aug. 1911 (replying to a letter of 19 July): BSU.
185. N.M. Butler to A, 15 Dec. 1911 and 2 Jan. 1912; A to Butler, 27 Dec. 1912: BSU.
187. E. Wrench to Esher, 27 Nov. 1911: Esher papers, ESHR 5/38; A to P.L. Parker, 7 Dec. 1911: McM box 1. A to E. Wrench, 18 Dec. 1911: BSU.
189. A to D.S. Jordan, 7 March 1912: Jordan papers, 41/11.
195. A to R. Cross, 22 Feb. 1912: BSU.
196. [N. Angell], A Grammar of the Discussion of War and Peace (1914), 3.
198. 'Reminiscences', 114. A to J.M. Keynes, 19 Feb. 1912: BSU.
201. H. Wright to A, 3 June 1912: BSU.
204. [Hilton (ed.)], *International Polity Summer School*, 275.
205. Coulton, *Main Illusions of Pacifism*, 2 (see also 28).
208. AA, 162–3.
210. A to Esher, 5 Apr. 1912: BSU.
211. A. to J. Rowntree, 15 Apr. 1913: BSU.
214. Capt. Brett to A, 31 May 1912: BSU.
218. A to J.R. MacDonald, 23 June 1912: BSU.
219. Kate Courtney diary, vol. 35 (entry written on 10 July 1912): BLPES.
221. TT, 3 Aug. 1912, 6.
222. H. Wright to A, 18 Aug. 1912: BSU.
223. A to Northcliffe, 22 Aug. 1912: Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62216 fo. 159.
225. For the minutes of this meeting, see Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62218 fo. 134.
226. F. Schofield to A, 16 June 1912, and n.d. [mid-July 1912]: BSU.
238. Ibid. v.
240. For information on Fayle, see his obituary: TT, 3 Jan. 1944, 6.
241. A to H.A. Lane, 16 Sept. 1912. A to A. Rowntree, 29 Nov. 1912: BSU.


243. A to E. Childers, 25 Sept. 1912: BSU.

244. Angell’s personal balance sheet of 31 Dec. 1913 lists the lease as a capital asset: BSU.

245. ‘Reminiscences’, 258.

246. A to M. Lane, n.d. [c. 8 Feb. 1955]: BSU.

247. A to N.M. Butler, 7 Sept. 1912: BSU.

248. Collection of Articles and Letters Bearing upon International Polity by Norman Angell (Garton Foundation, n.d. [1912]), vi–viii: WCO. The material included appeared between 27 Dec. 1910 and 5 Sept. 1912, so the collection was probably printed soon after the latter date.

249. A to N.M. Butler, 9 Sept. 1912: BSU.

250. A to N. Buxton, 9 Oct. 1912: BSU.


253. Angell was announced on 4 October as chairing Sidney Webb’s lecture on 4 November: TT; 4 Oct. 1912, 10.


256. She was so described by Jordan, Days of a Man, ii. 512; but no other biographical details can be found.


259. A to A. Rowntree, 29 Nov. 1912: BSU.


261. ‘Norman Angell: Report for 1912’ (Carnegie Endowment version): BSU.


263. A to J. Rowntree, 15 Apr. 1913: BSU.

264. Its date of publication can be estimated from its review in TLS, 12 Dec. 1912, 567.

265. Angell, Peace Theories and the Balkan War, 9.

266. The publisher of Modern Wars and the Peace Ideal (York, 1913) was Richard Westrope, who used the alias ‘Brother Richard’: there is a copy in the Bodleian Library.


271. For example, T. Weber, Our Friend ‘The Enemy’: Elite Education in Britain and Germany before World War I (Stanford, 2008).

272. AA, 172.
277. A to A. Rowntree, 16 Apr. 1913: BSU.
278. AA draft: BCU, box 4.
280. E. Ginn to A, 20 Apr. 1912: BSU.
281. A to J. Rowntree, 14 Apr. 1913: BSU.
284. *NYT*, 7 May 1913, 11.
286. A to E. Ginn, 28 May 1913: BSU.
287. A to N.M. Butler, 29 May 1913: CEIP I&E vol.96; N.M. Butler to A, 9 June 1913: BSU.
290. A to E. Mead, 14 July 1913: BSU. A to Northcliffe, 1 July 1913: Northcliffe papers, Add MSS 62216 fo. 162.
291. AA, 161.
293. J.M. Robertson et al., *Essays Towards Peace* (1913), 67–74 at 70.
294. A to A. Rowntree, 30 July 1913: BSU.
295. Angell’s attendance was advertised in *Christian World* (New York), 6 Sept. 1913: cutting in WCO scrapbook 3b.
297. Esher to A, 28 Aug. 1913; M. Brett to A, 28 Aug. 1913; A to Esher, 30 Aug. 1913; A to A.J. Balfour, 27 Sept. 1913: BSU.
298. Lady Barlow to A, 26 Apr. 1910: BSU.
299. AA, 193.
301. Esher to A, 1 Sept. 1913: BSU.
304. *Isis*, 1 Nov. 1913, 5.
305. A to N.M. Butler, 11 Nov. 1913: BSU.
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311. Angell, War and the Workers, 3–4, 51, 55–6
312. TLS, 11 Dec. 1913, 607.
313. G. Langelaan to A, 12 June 1914: BSU.
316. A to Esher, 7 Nov. 1913: Esher papers, ESHR 5/45.
321. ‘Engagements’ (12–22 Jan. 1914): BSU.
322. A to T.W. Lane, 22 Jan. 1914: BSU.
323. ‘Reminiscences’, 147.
324. A to F. Keppel, 9 Dec. 1913: BSU.
325. Information from http://www.ellisisland.org
329. A to Fayle, n.d. (on the notepaper of the Southern Hotel, Bakersfield).Indenture, 6 July 1914: BSU.
332. St Louis Post Dispatch, 8 Mar. 1914: WCO scrapbook 3b. See also NYT, 28 Apr. 1914, section VI, 6.
337. NYT, 28 Apr. 1914, section VI, 6.
339. NYT, 28 Apr. 1914, section VI, 6.
342. H. Wright to A, 1 Apr. 1914: BSU.
347. H.N. Brailsford, *The War of Steel and Gold* (1914), 35. (Its preface was dated March 1914.)
348. C.E. Fayle to A.W. Haycock, 7 May 1914; A to A.A. Warden, 7 May 1914: BSU.
354. AA, 179.
355. A to J. Hilton, 17 July 1914: BSU.
356. See the list of ‘guests’: [Hilton (ed.)], *International Polity Summer School*, xi–xiv. It however omitted the prominent peace activist G.H. Perris, who chaired the evening session on 21 July.
358. Lady Barlow’s guest list for her reception on 16 July 1914 is in BSU box 29.
363. Ibid. 129–34. This device had already been used in Angell, *War and the Workers*, 12–13.
367. Ibid. 32.
368. Ibid. 393.
369. Ibid. 43.
370. Ibid. 164.
371. Ibid. 391–2.
373. Nixon, *John Hilton*, 55–6, which however gives the date as the 28th.
5

Attempting Neutrality, Achieving Notoriety: July–December 1914

The confusion between the anti- and pro-defence strands in Angell’s thinking was laid bare by the European conflict: the former initially took precedence; but the latter soon kicked in, leaving his attitude to the war effort ambivalent. In the emotion of its outbreak the supposedly ultra-rational student of international polity forsook international interdependence and the embryonic world-state in favour of isolationism. He campaigned flat out for British neutrality in the eight days available, winning considerable peer respect for the panache with which he did so. He was, moreover, in the minority that continued to dissent after the government’s ultimatum to Germany expired at 11 pm on 4 August 1914, becoming one of the four founders six days later of the Union of Democratic Control (UDC), a radical and initially private organization, which, while claiming merely to want a clarification of the principles governing a post-war settlement, implied that British intervention had been a blunder. Angell took this contentious step largely because he was both flattered by radicals and socialists who insisted that he was uniquely qualified to lead an agitation and enraged by advocates of intervention who asserted that his ‘illusion’ thesis had been discredited by the war’s outbreak.

Even so, his pro-defence instincts caused him to become deeply alarmed by the rapid German military advance of late August 1914, which occurred while he was holidaying in northern France, not far from the fighting. He also had reservations from the outset about democratic control as a panacea, and was taken aback by the blast of hostility that greeted the UDC after its existence was exposed on 10 September. Though stung into defending his new organization for the next four weeks, he was then tempted to abandon it as a mistake. His propaganda became markedly less strident; and he prudently both announced his support for the war and planned ambulance work at the front. But after a month of agonizing, he decided at the end of the first week in November that to leave his UDC colleagues in the lurch would not only discredit him as a leader of the left but be personally disloyal. He therefore stood by them publicly, albeit while trying privately to moderate their activities.

On account of his association with the UDC, he received few commissions for talks and articles during the autumn, and therefore had the leisure to write two books and a long pamphlet, in the course of which he significantly revised his views. For a while he tried to equate the ‘illusion’ against which he had been
contending for five years with the ‘Prussianism’ against which Britain was now battling – an ingenious attempt to assert the continued relevance of a trademark thesis that was now widely vilified for allegedly having denied the possibility of war. But he soon tacitly conceded that his pre-war ideas were of little current relevance, particularly as, thanks to successful government economic intervention, wartime financial difficulties proved surprisingly minor. Furthermore, he changed his opinion of the outbreak of the conflict, now concluding that had Germany known in advance that by attacking Belgium it would become embroiled not only with France and Russia but with Britain and other countries, it might have refrained from doing so. From this it followed that the best way to deter future aggression was for all major countries to pledge to intervene whenever it occurred – the same policy of collective security with which he had experimented during his American tour of February–April. By the end of the year he understood that this liberal internationalism in some respects contradicted the radical isolationism that he had hastily endorsed in the July crisis, though his instinct was still to find some way of bridging the two. Having thus successively protested, drawn back, and reluctantly changed course, Angell ended the year by undertaking his ambulance service in France.

* * * * *

Austria-Hungary’s declaration of war against Serbia on Tuesday 28 July 1914 made it impossible for British progressives to ignore the European crisis any longer. On that day Graham Wallas, a prominent radical intellectual who lectured at the London School of Economics, rang J.A. Hobson to set in train the discussions that led to a reinvigoration of the Liberal Foreign Affairs Group and the establishment of a British Neutrality Committee. Simultaneously, Angell, who was invited by J.L. Hammond, acting editor of the Nation, to write a major piece on the European situation, consulted his friends, and shortly before midnight launched his own Neutrality League. Based in 4 King’s Bench Walk but spilling over into rooms rented at the Salisbury Hotel, which provided an additional source of refreshment during those demanding days, this organization made a feverish but doomed effort from 28 July to 4 August to keep Britain out of the European war. Most of its workers, including its secretary and assistant secretary, Dennis Robertson and Miss M. Talmadge, came from Angell’s existing movement; but some were new to peace work, including Catherine Marshall, for whom it was a transitional experience between campaigning for women’s suffrage and becoming the highly regarded secretary of the No-Conscription Fellowship. Angell kept the Neutrality League separate from the Garton Foundation, which, he suspected, would disapprove: he later recalled that Esher ‘avoided seeing me’ at this time. He also stayed aloof from other radical bodies because he preferred to remain the autocratic leader of his own young men rather than become a rank-and-file follower of more established intellectuals and politicians, and to make his own mark on public affairs.

He must also have seen two practical advantages in remaining independent. First, not publicly tarred with a radical brush, as many other neutralists were,
he had a better chance of being listened to in the City of London. Second, lacking any connection with official Liberalism, he was free to criticize the government. By contrast, Liberal parliamentarians were hamstrung by their reluctance either to question the good intentions of, or to create political difficulties for, Sir Edward Grey: for example, when eleven members of the Liberal Foreign Affairs Group met on Wednesday 29 July 1914 to draft a neutralist message to the foreign secretary they were, as Arthur Ponsonby reported on their behalf to Grey, ‘most anxious to take no action which would embarrass you in the delicate negotiations which you are now conducting and it was decided that our proceedings should not be reported to the press’. The foreign secretary summoned Ponsonby and did so much to reassure him that, after several meetings on Thursday 30 and Friday 31 July, the group dropped the idea of even putting down a parliamentary question, and decided to take no ‘definite step’ until after the weekend.6 The British Neutrality Committee was only slightly less inhibited. It consisted of Hobson’s and Wallas’s friends and acquaintances, who, though not MPs, were mostly loyal Liberals, plus the Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald. Though Wallas had telephoned Hobson on Tuesday 28 July, as already noted, the pair did not meet for two days, and did not draft any public protest or contact sympathetic MPs until the Friday. On Saturday 1 August at the National Liberal Club they had a private meeting with C.P. Trevelyan, who, though still in the government, helped them obtain an office at 19 Buckingham Street, off the Strand. The following day they sent a manifesto to the press signed by Hobson, Wallas, MacDonald and other intellectuals, politicians or journalists: Lord Courtney, J.L. Hammond, Gilbert Murray, A.G. Gardiner, F.W. Hirst, L.T. Hobhouse, G.M. Trevelyan, and Basil Williams. They did not formally constitute themselves the British Neutrality Committee until noon on Tuesday 4 August, just eleven hours before Britain went to war. Since the committee wound itself up at 11am the following day, its official lifespan was thus only twenty-three hours, and its total expenditure less than £20.

Immediately after Britain joined the war, Angell was to pour out his frustrations at the sloth and timidity that neutralist progressivism had mostly shown in the face of ‘effectiveness of propaganda’ – pro-war campaigning that carried, in an Americanism of which he was fond at this time, ‘a kick and a punch’ – on the part of The Times and Daily Mail:

At that early stage a move was made among small groups on the anti-war side to resist this propaganda with an equal ‘kick and punch’; but immediately considerations of ‘not being controversial,’ ‘not embarrassing the Government,’ ‘not alienating X, Y, or Z,’ began to paralyse, to some extent at least, the clear downright expression of opinion hostile to intervention. There seemed to be no general realization on the peace side that the danger was desperate, that we were on the side of a volcano; that the war party were not hampered by considerations of ‘not embarrassing the Government’; and of nothing being ‘too controversial’. There was thus created a situation in which all the psychological momentum which counts for so much in these things was on the side of war, while the forces which might have been ranged on the side of peace were in large part inert and disorganized. . . . We who favor peace have suffered in the past from the general impression that good
intentions and high aspirations would in some way atone for the absence of the humbler virtues of technical efficiency in the method and management of propaganda...?  

Soon after these bitter words were published, the ever self-critical Ponsonby privately admitted having ‘played a poor[,] wretched [and] ineffective part’ in the peace campaign. Angell’s Neutrality League had been not only quicker to get into action, as already noted, but more energetic and professional. It spent £2,379 attempting to reach public opinion generally and not just parliamentarians, editors, and intellectuals. Its manifesto was signed mainly by civic, religious, and business leaders whose names indicated the wide range of contacts Angell had established: the Lord Mayor of Manchester (Lord Welby), the Lord Provost of Glasgow (Sir Daniel Stevenson), the Bishop of Lincoln (the Rt Revd Edward Hicks), the Bishop of Hereford (the Rt Revd John Percival), Sir William Mather (manufacturer and former Liberal MP), Sir Albert Spicer (wholesale stationer and Liberal MP), Sir Arthur Haworth (businessman and former Liberal MP), Sir William Hartley (jam manufacturer), C.P. Scott (editor of the Manchester Guardian), D.A. Thomas (coal entrepreneur), J.J. Thompson (Cambridge physicist), Richard Whiteing (retired journalist), W.F. Stubbs (a supporter from Altrincham), Ernest Schuster (barrister), M. Philips Price (landowner, Russia expert, and Liberal parliamentary candidate), and Dr R.F. Horton (Congregational minister, as already noted). Others received Angell’s telegrams too late to sign: Arthur Henderson (Labour Party secretary) assured Angell on 4 August 1914 that ‘it would have given me the greatest pleasure to have associated with you’; and Arnold Bennett (novelist) replied two days later expressing ‘entire agreement with your arguments’ though also implying some sympathy with the government.

Unlike the British Neutrality Committee, Angell’s Neutrality League astutely purchased advertising space in which to insert material that was excluded from editorial columns. In addition, as Angell later recalled: ‘Half a million leaflets were printed and distributed by some two hundred voluntary workers in London and the provinces. There were meetings in Trafalgar Square. Three hundred sandwich men patrolled most of the main streets of London. Members of the House of Commons were personally interviewed.’ The leaflets, printed by War & Peace, bore emotive headings such as: ‘Why Fight for Russia?’, ‘Must England Fight for Belgian Neutrality? No!’, and ‘Englishmen Do Your Duty and Keep your Country out of a Wicked and Stupid War’. They made unashamed use of techniques learned from the popular press, as ‘Stand Clear, England!’ illustrated:

AUSTRIA AND SERVIA ARE AT WAR.
The nature of the Austrian demands and the attitude of Servia in regard to them would indicate that Servia is in the right.
The Slavonic menace behind Servia, and the danger of Russian intrigue against Austria, would indicate that Austria is in the right.
In neither case does it concern Great Britain.
Russia and even France may intervene on behalf of Servia, Germany and even Italy on behalf of Austria. In that event
What should Great Britain do?
The right course may be summed up in two words –
**NO INTERVENTION**.

Why? Here are seven reasons:

1. We should have no direct interest in this war.
2. We should have a direct interest in limiting its area, for our trade and welfare depend on order and security in other countries.
3. We are under no obligation to support France except against an unprovoked attack.
4. There is no object in preserving the Balance of Power unless it secures peace. This it would have failed to do.
5. We should have no interest in helping Russia to dominate the Continent of Europe.
6. Interference could only increase international rivalry and armament competition after the war.
7. To take part in such a war would set back our progress at least a decade and could bring us neither honour nor profit.

It is therefore the duty of every Briton to urge upon the Government that:

We will allow nothing short of a direct attack upon us to draw us into this quarrel.

Like much of progressive opinion, the Neutrality League was Russophobic, its manifesto insisting that a Russian victory, far from upholding the balance of power, would ‘upset that balance enormously by making her the dominant military power in Europe, possibly the dictator both in this Continent and in Asia’. It warned of the consequences of allowing a country that was ‘only partly civilized, governed by a military autocracy largely hostile to western ideas of political and religious freedom’ to prevail over a Germany that was ‘highly civilised, with a culture that has contributed greatly in the past to western civilisation, racially allied to ourselves and with moral ideals largely resembling our own; possessing a commercial and industrial life that is dependent upon an orderly and stable Europe’. The Neutrality League was also financially alarmist, its leaflet ‘How War Will Affect You’ urging Britons to learn ‘the lessons of the last few days. The stock exchange has been closed. In two days the Bank Rate has risen from 4% to 10%. Credit has been shattered. The price of foods is leaping up. This on a mere rumour of war. . . . What will the reality mean?’ Angell expanded this argument, though also subordinated it to other considerations, in an article, ‘Norman Angellism and The War’, which – remarkably, since that paper had already come out in favour of British intervention – appeared in the *Daily Mail* on 1 August 1914:

The shocks which have been precipitated around the stock exchanges of the world during the last few days, the many failures reported, the paralysis of trade over very wide areas, the stoppage of the means of livelihood for many millions of men and women, have been pretty seriously accepted as confirming certain principles to which a little group in this and other countries have of late been trying to draw attention.
Even so, he conceded, ‘the conclusions which the public seems disposed to draw from these very visible facts . . . are not the conclusions which we have been urging’. He pre-empted the charge of materialism by insisting that fear of financial loss should not prevent the country going to war for its ‘larger interests, rights and dignity’. Then, in three sentences of prodigious length, he insisted that military intervention could not achieve these wider, non-material goals either:

Now all these developments, of which the Stock Exchange panics are merely the outward and visible sign – the essential economic interdependence of the modern world, the closeness and complexity of our contacts, the impossibility of confiscating the wealth of a vanquished people, and so depriving them of the means of livelihood, all tendencies which, whether we like it or not, the ordinary bread-winning efforts of every one of us intensify – all of this would render the war futile as a means of imposing or defending a moral or ideal object. Austria may crush Servia, but if these territories which she acquires are brought even partly into touch with the economic and social forces of our time, it is as certain as anything well can be that she will be unable to crush out the Servian national question and impose her own. We may go to war to ensure the victory of Russia and the ‘defeat’ of that Teutonic civilisation with which we have such close and ancient racial and moral affinity, but if after the war Russia desires to extend her railways, her oil-wells, develop her country for the benefit of her people, she will, however victorious, be compelled to allow the normal economic life of Germany – as of the rest of Europe – to go on as before, which means that German industry and competition, brains, culture, and ideas will occupy the place that they would in any case, because the conqueror must, by reasons of the economic pressure of his own needs, leave the vanquished their material possessions: he is by that fact compelled to leave them their moral and spiritual possessions.

After noting the persistence of Irish nationalism, he concluded:

Whatever may be the future place of the Slavs, Teutons, French or English in the world, this war is not going to settle it or seriously to affect it, except to render the condition of all more barbaric. We may inflict on Germany a serious suffering, but when it is all over we shall see that it is as futile to settle problems of nationality and racial culture by war as an earlier generation found it futile to settle religious rivalries by that method.15

When the financial ‘shocks’ to which this article referred were brought under control by the British and German governments, Angell was to be accused of having wrongly predicted economic collapse. He in turn was to deny this, claiming that although in ‘the first days of August’ 1914, ‘very many’ people had predicted ‘catastrophic effects paralysing both’ Britain and Germany, he himself ‘did not take and never had taken that view’.16 Yet, clearly, in the heat of the moment he had hinted vividly at such catastrophe, before going on to claim in more contorted and less memorable language that a more important objection to war was that it could not advance Britain’s moral and political objectives.

On the day his Daily Mail article appeared, the Saturday of 1914’s August Bank Holiday weekend, Angell was visited by Evelyn Wrench, who found ‘something reassuring in the creaking stairs of 4, King’s Bench Walk’ and also in the fact that Angell ‘still thought we might keep out’ of the war.17 Angell’s optimism and
dynamism at this time were much appreciated by those who shared this wish. Lady Courtney recorded in her diary that when Stephen Hobhouse, the high-minded Quaker socialist who was later to suffer famously as a conscientious objector, had visited the peace movement’s coordinating body, the National Peace Council, on Thursday 30 July, its secretary had been absent. However: ‘One of Norman Angell’s young men had come in, and S[tephen] was going to them later in afternoon. That set are, at any rate, bestirring themselves.’ She further noted on Saturday 1 August:

The Norman Angell Society has a circular “‘Stand Clear, England”, and N.A. is trying to organise a propaganda in the press for the City. The absolute fulfilment of his prophecies in his book some years ago (which even L [her husband Leonard] thought at the time were a little exaggerated, though true in the main) have been justified.’

And in a diary fragment written a fortnight later E.D. Morel described how on Monday 3 August he went ‘to Norman Angell’s rooms in King’s Bench Walk, found him busy, shirt-sleeves rolled up, concentratedly active, putting neutrality appeals in the papers…issuing leaflets in thousands all over London…half a dozen of his “young men” around him enthusiastically devoted.’

Perhaps Angell’s greatest admirer at this time was C.P. Trevelyan, who less than three weeks previously had been providing him with tickets so that the American participants in his summer school could tour the House of Commons. Angell had dropped him a note on Friday 31 July 1914 that revealed his exhilaration at the opportunity for action:

I have this evening at 7 a dinner with our ‘young men’ to see what we can do in this crisis. (We have got all sorts of schemes on hand.) It is very secret, and all sorts of plots are toward. But if you care to join us under an oath of secrecy, we shall be delighted to have you.

That Friday was the day on which Trevelyan, according to a vivid ‘personal account’ of the neutralist effort which he wrote in longhand at the end of the first month of the conflict,

began to be really alarmed [and] went to see Norman Angell. I found him preparing for a press demonstration next week in favour of neutrality. He had become rigidly practical. He was buying up whole sheets of newspapers for advertising neutrality. I wired for George, who was in Cumberland, to call him at once to write and help.

G.M. Trevelyan responded immediately to his brother’s summons, taking the overnight train, arriving in London at breakfast time on Saturday 1 August, and composing an immediate letter to the Daily News. Then the two of them

went to look for Ramsay MacDonald but found him out, then for Norman Angell and found him in. He was hard at work for next week, the only man indeed who seemed to have much initiative. The Neutrality Committee with Hobson and Graham Wallas was getting names, but did not know how to act furiously in an emergency. I of course could do nothing overt, being in the Government, but help to warn and stir up.
The brothers soon learned that a journalist friend was imminently departing from a London railway station for Paris as a war correspondent. Wanting his services ‘badly, for neutrality purposes for Angell’, C.P. Trevelyan ‘sent one of Angell’s young men to Victoria and went with another to Charing Cross, to find out when the Paris train went.’ Trevelyan’s ‘personal account’ did not indicate whether this mission was successful or whether he dined with Angell and his helpers that evening; but it made clear that he regarded them as the most vigorous neutralist force of the moment.23

The neutralist camp dwindled rapidly on the afternoon of Monday 3 August 1914 when a number of liberals, including Murray, were won over by Grey’s speech in the House of Commons; and many more followed when early the following day Germany violated Belgian neutrality. Of those still opposed to British intervention when it occurred at midnight German time on Tuesday 4 August, a majority fell into line with national policy. As a prominent member of the Liberal association in Dunfermline put it to his local MP, Ponsonby, the following day: ‘I think the majority of us are keen peace men, but we feel that now we are into war it is our duty to support the Government and to do everything in our power that will in any degree help to secure victory.’24 By its first wartime edition on Saturday 8 August, the Nation, which only a week before had asserted that ‘there has been no crisis in which the public opinion of the English people has been so definitely opposed to war as it is at this moment’,25 had arrived at the same conclusion.

Many Angellites accepted the war too. Although War & Peace’s August number, which went to press before the British ultimatum, had urged neutrality and included ‘Stand Clear, England!’ as a flysheet, its September issue carried Lord Kitchener’s ‘Your King and Country Need You’ recruiting appeal in place of its usual listing of organizations supported by the Garton Foundation. Robertson responded, despite having taken a leading role in the Neutrality League, as did Romanes, who was to die of his wounds at Gallipoli the following June.26

However, some Angellites were among the minority that still refused to support British intervention. This fell into two categories: pacifists, like Langdon-Davies; and pacificists, who did not reject military force as such but either disputed the war’s progressive credentials – for example, because as socialists they regarded it as an imperialist quarrel, as Haycock seems to have done – or remained isolationist in their geopolitical and moral instincts, like Angell himself. Of these the pacifists, who by the end of 1914 were launching two new associations, the Fellowship of Reconciliation for Christians and the No-Conscription Fellowship for socialists, were in the more straightforward position. Their opposition to all war, though disapproved of, was understood, as was to be shown by the provision for conscientious objection when conscription was introduced in 1916. The small group of socialist pacificists, though more controversial, was sustained by its simple verities: imperialism and militarism were evil. The radicals who believed merely that there was neither a geopolitical nor a moral case for British intervention were in the hardest position, particularly when it became clear that they were in a small minority even among progressives.
Sympathizing for the most part with the Liberal government, they could not, for all their dislike of secret diplomacy, draw strength from a fundamentalist rejection of the existing political and international order like pacifists and extreme socialists. And their belief in democratic control sat uneasily with the evident fact of majority support for the war. They were therefore to find themselves in an uncertain position, unable either to endorse or to condemn it outright. They took refuge in the argument that they were calling not for an end to the war but merely for early consideration to be given to the principles that should govern a post-war settlement. This halfway house did not carry much credibility with the general public.

It was into this uneasy group of radical pacifists that Angell soon became drawn after the failure of his neutrality campaign had left him in a state of indecision. Sitting in his apartment with Philip Baker and others as the chimes of Big Ben indicated that Britain was at war, he ‘didn’t know what to do’. The following morning, Wednesday 5 August 1914, he breakfasted with Arnold Rowntree and ‘talked over future policy’ before his host went off to the meeting at which the British Neutrality Committee dissolved itself. Angell then wound up his own Neutrality League. That day he also had a significant encounter with ‘an educated Prussian turned socialist (nothing less) who had spent some years at an English university’, and who now explained to him how British institutions ‘successfully masked’ a version of the Junkerdom that was overt in Germany. It is most likely that this was von Lübtow, despite his alleged remark to Hilton at Beaconsfield station about immediately returning home to fight for Germany. Though in fact a Saxon, having been born and educated in Dresden, he was the son of a military officer and had himself attended military college in Germany before going to Cambridge at the age of thirty. His name had appeared on the modern languages tripos list at Cambridge University that summer, albeit with an aegrotat rather than a classified degree. A year later he was at the University of Denver and in circumstances that prompted Angell to convey sympathy (‘I do so hope that things will look up with you, and that you will soon find a palatable employment’), which suggests that he had burned his boats with regards to his own country. During the war his Cambridge colleagues, who remembered him as an atypical German, hinted that he was living in exile: thus when in 1917 two of them discussed the unfinished business of teaching Germany the futility of aggression, they looked forward to when Angell ‘goes there after the war (or sends von Lübtow!!)’.

At the end of the first day of the war, either at about ten o’clock, as Angell told a journalist two decades later, or at midnight, as he stated in his memoirs:

I was lying in my room at the Temple half-dead with fatigue, the whole place in a disorder of papers, proofs, packages of leaflets, placards; another room was piled high with plates and dishes, remnants of meals which had been prepared for the workers who had filled the place night and day for three days; suggesting somehow the strewn battlefield of our dead effort. . . . Had I been in the habit of seeking such escape (or had a digestion sufficient to stand it) I would have drunk myself into insensibility.
At that moment Ramsay MacDonald knocked at his door. He had resigned as leader of the Labour Party because it supported war credits, making way for Henderson, and had dined at Philip Morrell’s house in Bedford Square with Ponsonby, Morel, and Russell where the conversation had turned to the need to pre-empt an unsatisfactory post-war settlement. MacDonald announced: ‘I’ve come to see you because you’re the only man in England outside politics whom the public knows who’s taken a definite stand against our embroilment at this moment in the war. Those of us who have taken that line will have to stand together and see what we can do now.’ Angell – who claimed to have been ‘greatly surprised’ at this visit, even though MacDonald lived only a ten-minute walk away at 3 Lincoln’s Inn Fields – declared himself ‘too done in (hardly having been to bed for three days) to discuss the merits of this or that course’.33

After a night’s sleep and a day’s discussion with his followers Angell was willing to accept the challenge, as is evident from the section of Trevelyan’s ‘personal account’ that dealt with the evening of Thursday 6 August:

I went to a dinner of Norman Angell and his young men at the Salisbury Hotel. As I came in I was greeted with loud cheers…. We had a very long talk about producing literature and what the Norman Angell pacifists must do. N.A. is determined to convert his speculative campaign into a practical one.

Although Trevelyan had already been talking to anti-war Liberal MPs and Labour leaders, the resolve and enthusiasm that Angell and his young men showed at this dinner was apparently a greater stimulus to the launching of the UDC. Indeed, ‘the Norman Angell dinner’ was of sufficient significance to Trevelyan for him to sketch out its seating plan on the back of a letter received the next morning.34 This provides a revealing glimpse of Angell with his acolytes. He had placed himself at the head of a long table. On his right were J.B. Sterndale-Bennett (soon to be a prisoner of war and later a minor dramatist), Trevelyan himself, F.H. Nixon (who had begun a long Treasury career in 1912 and was later to receive a knighthood), Baker, Mrs Manus, Langdon-Davies, and Fayle. On his left sat Searle, Wright, Hilton, Price, Seymour Cocks (a disabled member of the Civil Union for the Right Understanding of International Interests who later became a Labour MP), and Roland B. Hugins (president of Cornell University’s International Polity Club).35 Angell’s connection with Trevelyan was strengthened the following day, the latter’s ‘personal account’ of Friday 7 August, noting: ‘Met Ramsay Macdonald, Norman Angell, Ponsonby and others at lunch at Morrell’s. Decided to meet them on Monday to form some plan of action.’

Angell already had slight reservations about the direction in which his radical friends were starting to take him. In Lady Courtney’s drawing room on the evening of 7 August 1914 he was recorded by his hostess as thinking ‘of shutting up altogether for a time – going into the country as an agricultural labourer’.36 The next morning the Nation published a substantial article – perhaps a delayed version of the one Hammond had asked him to write on 28 July – in which he reiterated his reservations about seeking the solution to the problem of war in ‘political machinery’, as radicals did. Entitled ‘The Unsound Foundations’, it was
sufficiently anti-war to be reprinted in the Quaker weekly the *Friend.* As well as containing the diatribe, already quoted, against the timidity of much of the neutrality movement, it implied that the country had blundered into conflict: ‘Everybody wanted not to go to war. Everybody has gone to war. The action which we did not intend we have taken. The action we did intend, we have not taken.’ He indicted the intrigues of a handful of politicians and diplomats as a contributory factor:

It would be easy to show, of course, that in our own country, in some respects the most democratic in Europe, the determining factor of policy has been the secret action of three or four men, incurring without popular sanction, without the nation knowing to what it was committed, obligations involving the lives of tens of thousands and the destiny of our Empire.

In doing so, moreover, he echoed his complaint of eight and a half years previously about the American public waking up to the existence of the Monroe doctrine only after Cleveland had invoked it as a possible justification for war: ‘We find that we have obligations of “honor” of which not one man in a hundred thousand was a week ago aware . . . ’ But he made clear that, unlike most radicals, he regarded mechanisms of democratic control as but part of the solution: ‘This essential helplessness of men, their failure to have formed a society which can carry out their intention, goes a good deal deeper than mere political machinery.’ As an observer both of the mass-mind and of Northcliffe’s exploitation of it, he still saw the real problem as lying in the poor quality of public thinking, but now, anticipating a theme which was to preoccupy him in subsequent decades, attributed it to educational failings:

one must look for the prime cause behind the mere defects of machinery in the defect of an education which makes it impossible for the mass to judge facts save in their most superficial aspect, or to think of war as other than a jolly football match; which also makes it impossible for the average man to keep two co-related facts in view at the same time.

Rather than pursue this point, he used it as a peg on which to hang restatements both of his Russophobia and of his ‘illusion’ thesis. Whenever the public perceived one side’s faults, it overlooked the other’s: thus ‘in the Crimean War we saw Russian barbarism but not Turkish; in 1914 we can see German barbarism but not Russian.’ Those seeking British intervention had also been able to ‘appeal to the momentum of old political conceptions so intimately associated with ideas as to the preponderating need of military power and political domination’. The need, therefore, was ‘mainly’ for a ‘change of ideas’:

The importance of securing the realization of certain economic and material truths is not the hope of dissuading men from going to war because their bank account would suffer, but of showing that the interdependence of the modern world has made the whole conception of society as a conglomeration of rival States an absurdity, an impossible foundation for our work in the world. What is now happening to the credit system of the world is important in this: that it is a very visible demonstration of the unity of
mankind, of the need for confidence and co-operation, if States are to fulfil those functions for which they were created.

During the weekend on which this forthright article appeared in the Nation, Angell was consulted by another Liberal MP upset by Grey’s foreign policy: this was Aneurin Williams, who reported to his wife that he had held ‘long talks’ on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 August 1914 with Angell, among others, ‘as to the possibility of mediation by the President of the U.S.A. (now backed by the King of Italy)’.

On the Monday Angell attended the dinner at Morrell’s house which had been arranged to continue the discussion begun at Friday’s lunch at the same location. Arnold Rowntree, who was also invited, thought the occasion ‘very interesting. MacDonald, E.D. Morel, Angell, Ponsonby, Trevelyan – we talked until late . . . about the organization that will be required in future to advocate a safe foreign policy and the way in which this will probably affect parties in the future.’

Russell, another diner, was more cynical, describing the gathering as ‘eight fleas talking of building a pyramid’, though he acknowledged that Angell and MacDonald afforded him some hope.

Trevelyan’s ‘personal account’ noted that of those present on 10 August it was only Angell, MacDonald, Morel, and himself who endorsed his draft ‘letter inviting support and stating the policy to be pursued’.

Four of the eight fleas had at least built the UDC, albeit without yet naming it: it was sometimes referred to as a watching committee on the war. Trevelyan’s letter to potential supporters – dated ‘August 1914’, marked ‘Private’, and signed by MacDonald, Trevelyan, Angell, and Morel in that order – showed a touching faith that public opinion could be won over to the radical viewpoint:

There are very many thousands of people in the country, who are profoundly dissatisfied with the general course of policy which preceded the war. They are feeling that a dividing point has come in National history, that the old traditions of secret and class diplomacy, the old control of foreign policy by a narrow clique, and the power of armament organisations, have got henceforth to be countered by a great and conscious and directed effort of the democracy. We are anxious to take measures which may focus this feeling and help to direct public policy on broad lines which may build up on a more secure and permanent foundation the hopes which have been shattered for our generation in the last month.

This letter, the first of two, identified three ‘objects’: first, to ‘secure parliamentary control over foreign policy’; second, after the war, to ‘open direct and deliberate negotiations with democratic parties and influences on the Continent, so as to form an international understanding depending on popular parties rather than on governments’; and, third, to avoid peace terms that ‘either through the humiliation of the defeated nation or an artificial rearrangement of frontiers, merely become the starting point for new National antagonisms and future wars.’

And it explained the methods to be used: ‘When the time is ripe for it, but not before the country is secure from danger, meetings will be organized and speakers provided. But the immediate need is in our opinion to prepare for the issue of books, pamphlets and leaflets, dealing with the course of recent policy and suggesting
the lines of action for the future’. It noted that such materials were already being prepared, welcomed ‘any subscriptions which you can spare’, and invited indications of support so that ‘we may communicate with you as occasion arises’.

The other four fleas had declined to help launch the UDC on 10 August 1914. It was too bold a step for Morrell, Rowntree, and (as yet) Ponsonby, who were all Liberal MPs. And it was perhaps an insufficiently bold one for Russell, who was to dedicate himself to the No-Conscription Fellowship. But MacDonald and Trevelyan, though still in the House of Commons, had burned their boats by resignation from party chairmanship and ministerial office, respectively; and Morel was prepared to sacrifice his Liberal parliamentary candidacy because he was devoted above all to the cause of democratic control. Angell committed himself for a combination of reasons. One was that he had become dissatisfied with the educator role to which he had given priority before 1914. In the first article for War & Peace written after the outbreak of war he admitted that with hindsight he and his co-workers should have worked ‘a little differently, more with a view to visible and rapid, rather than slower and deeper results’, and that in future their cause would require greater political engagement:

I think the instinct of most of us is that our efforts will have to be more direct, more combative even, more designed for immediate effect on political action and linked up and co-ordinated more closely with all correlated activities. Peace in the future must be much less an isolated propaganda and more an integral part of all social and political endeavour.

Another reason was that he wished to retain the reputation for decisive activity that he had built up among progressives since 28 July. He was to admit in After All:

The stand I had taken in the Neutrality League, a stand which seemed to put me ‘in opposition to the war’, brought me immediately great praise from the absolutist anti-war groups; praise for consistency, ‘integrity’, adherence to ideals. Not then, but somewhat later, I was to question seriously whether I was not being praised for the wrong thing. It should have been my job to fight for the triumph of the ideas which might, if they prevailed, bring the international anarchy to an end. And that would depend on those ideas making headway among the conservative as well as among the radical and revolutionary elements.

In any case Angell probably believed he could convince his colleagues in the new organization, which as yet lacked not only a name but a defined policy, of the limitations of democratic machinery as a panacea. He may indeed have had some success with MacDonald, who was soon to try to persuade Morel of the notably Angellite proposition that ‘mechanical changes’, such as the establishment of a parliamentary committee on foreign affairs would not suffice, and that public opinion would also have to be changed.

As Trevelyan’s ‘personal account’ noted, by the end of the week following the UDC’s creation on 10 August 1914 Morel had accepted the secretariateship of the new organization; Langdon-Davies had left the Garton Foundation in order to
assist him; both had started work in a temporary office in Trevelyan’s London house, 14 Great College Street, Westminster; and the letter signed by MacDonald, Trevelyan, Angell, and Morel had gone out to potential sympathizers. The co-founders were exhausted after three weeks of intense activity. As Trevelyan reported to Ponsonby on Thursday the 13th: ‘MacDonald, Angell, Morel and I are dead beat. Angell is going off for three week[s], MacD[onald] for a week, Morel and I till Monday.’

Angell departed on 17 August 1914. His initial destination may have been Paris: in his memoirs a journalist friend recalled meeting him there around the middle of that month. But his three-week break was mostly spent at the Hôtel des Bains in Sangatte, with Dr Warden and his family, and just conceivably, since she had previously holidayed at that resort, Florence Schofield too. He was therefore in northern France when the German army broke through into that region. On the 29th even the Spectator admitted ‘cause for manly anxiety’ as both Paris and the Channel Ports were menaced; and on 2 September the French government left the capital. Angell’s visit to northern France at this time must have been the occasion of an episode that he was to mention, as an illustrative example, in a book written soon afterwards for the American market:

During the German advance on Paris, I happened to be present at a French family conference. Stories of the incredible cruelties and ferocity of the Germans were circulating in the northern Department where I happened to be staying. Everyone was in a condition of panic, and two Frenchmen, fathers of families, were seeing red at the story of these barbarities. But they had to decide – and the thing was discussed at a little family conference – where they should send their wives and children. And one of these Frenchmen, the one who had been most ferocious in his condemnation of the German barbarian, said quite naively and with no sense of irony or paradox: ‘Of course, if we could find an absolutely open town which would not be defended at all, the women and children would be all right.’

It is strange that nothing appeared in his memoirs or other writings about this vivid situation, which must have eroded his former neutralist confidence.

During Angell’s unexpectedly eventful French holiday, Trevelyan – apart from a weekend at home in Cumberland inaugurating the grouse-shooting season – attended to UDC business in London. During the week beginning Monday 17 August 1914, as his ‘personal account’ recorded, ‘replies began to come in and subscriptions’. And during the next one ‘letters were pouring in. Clearly the peace movement will soon be a big thing. . . . The parlour at my house was added as part of our office. Morel and Langdon-Davies constantly there. Mrs Manus (an Angell Lady) and Morel’s Secretary there at other times.’ Morel had also started to draft a pamphlet along lines agreed at a conclave in Morrell’s house on 26 August which he, his host, MacDonald, Ponsonby, and Rowntree had attended. The last of these had expected to find Angell there, a letter to his wife begun at 6.45 pm on that day noting: ‘Just off to Ramsay MacDonald, Trevelyan and Angell meeting.’ Concluding it at 11.40 pm, he did not mention Angell: ‘Just got in, darling, from a very interesting gathering at Morrell’s – Ramsay, Ponsonby,
E.D. Morel, and Trevelyan – laying our plans for future organisation. We are going to have two important gatherings next Thursday week to somewhat enlarge the group.

The German advance curtailed Angell’s holiday by a few days. He probably returned home late on Thursday 3 September 1914, for it is unlikely he would have delayed in the slightest his response to a notably unfair attack on him by H.G. Wells that had appeared in the previous Saturday’s *Nation*. Irascible at the best of times, the novelist and social progressive was under particular strain, his mistress Rebecca West having given birth to their child on the very day that Britain’s ultimatum to Germany expired, and had impulsively become a leading defender of British intervention on the grounds that it was a war to end war. Declaring the doctrine of Prussianism to be Britain’s real enemy, his article ‘The War of the Mind’ insisted: ‘Our business is to kill ideas.’ Perhaps aware that this sounded rather like Angell’s long-standing claim that only an intellectual revolution could prevent war, Wells took a side-swipe at the propaganda with which the name of Mr Norman Angell is associated; this great modern gospel that war does not pay. That is indeed the only decent and attractive thing that can still be said for war. Nothing that is really worth having in life does pay. Men live in order that they may pay for the unpaying things.

And Wells made a sneering reference to ‘these ingenious arrangements of figures that touch the Angell imagination’. In a controlled but angry reply dated 3 September, to make space for which the *Nation* apologetically displaced a contribution by Russell, Angell pointed out that the need to kill pro-war ideas was not a new discovery: ‘A very large number of men and women have not merely been convinced of this for many years, but – without waiting until the cataclysm had come upon us – have been attempting to carry their conviction into effect.’ These people had for the most part come from British, German, American, and French universities, and had suffered materially for their cause:

It is, perhaps, essentially a young men’s movement; and, to my certain knowledge, very great personal sacrifices – hostility of relatives, surrendering of financial advantages, and so forth – have been made by young men in every one of the countries I have mentioned in order to take an active part in the work.

Angell disputed Wells’s characterization of his approach, arguing that ‘a mere fraction of my own writings deals with the financial and economic aspect of this question; and there are no “ingenious arrangements of figures”: not a single table of statistics in the whole of them’, and insisting that the greater part of *The Great Illusion* had dealt with ‘the protection and enlargement of the moral and spiritual possessions of men’.

Wells’s ill-tempered article was not all Angell came home to on 3 September 1914. His UDC colleagues were in turmoil as a result of a military crisis that challenged their isolationist assumptions. That very day – the ‘next Thursday week’ mentioned by Rowntree nine days before – C.P. Scott, a signatory of the Neutrality League manifesto and a recipient of the UDC’s private letter, arrived...
from Manchester in response to ‘Philip Morrell’s invitation to dine and meet
Trevelyan’s Watching Committee on the War (Trevelyan, Ramsay MacDonald,
E.D. Morel, Norman Angell), and others who had opposed the war’. His diary
recorded that he saw ‘the first three at Trevelyan’s house in afternoon’. Presumably
through his editorship of the Manchester Guardian Scott was in possession of
ultra-alarmist information about the German threat, and largely for that reason
told Trevelyan, MacDonald, and Morel of his strong objection ‘to the change of
policy which had converted a movement for establishing a skeleton organization
to act later when the time came for ending the war…into one for influencing
opinion now’. Without realizing it, Scott scared MacDonald so much that the
latter ‘walked over to see Norman Angell’, and discovered him to be similarly
worried, on the basis of the experiences in northern France from which he
had just returned. MacDonald accompanied Angell when on the afternoon of
4 September he had his own meeting with Scott, whose diary noted: ‘Both
agreed – Angell strongly and MacDonald quite definitely – to my surprise.’ Scott’s
military intelligence soon turned out to be exaggerated, however. Had it proved
true, MacDonald later acknowledged to Morel, it ‘might have driven us into the
arms of the recruiting sergeants’. As it was, MacDonald sent a message of support
to a recruitment meeting in his constituency, which, albeit amid phraseology of
agonized convolution, insisted: ‘Victory must…be ours.’ The German advance
continued for a few days: on 7 September the Continental Daily Mail retreated to
Bordeaux.53 But then the French army, with assistance from the British, began
prevailing in the battle of the Marne; and on 12 September the Spectator could
report that the Germans have been ‘checked in Northern France and to some
extent repelled’. There followed a renewed contest for the Channel coast, the
race to the sea; but in the first battle of Ypres, fought from mid-October to mid-
November, the French and British prevailed. Instead of this being the prelude to
the expected Franco-British push towards Germany, the war of movement ended.
The Germans dug in; and the resultant line of trenches was to endure with only
minor changes for three years.

Angell’s acceptance of Scott’s cautious line during the military emergency
of September 1914 was a sign that his appetite for defiance was diminishing.
He also turned down speaking engagements at this time with evident relief,
though he was able to explain that this was in line with UDC policy.54 Yet he
did not wish to jeopardize the standing he had built up on the left. According
to After All, Russell in particular had already cast him in a heroic role:

He called at my chambers a few days after the dissolution of the Neutrality League to say:
‘I thought you were one of those who were for peace in peace time and for war in war time.
I see I was mistaken. I believe that if you were to give a lead to the young men, you would
produce a great anti-war movement. There are thousands now, owing to your stand at
the outbreak of the war, who would follow any lead you would care to give.’55

During Angell’s absence in France, Russell had agreed to become a vice-president
of the Civil Union for the Right Understanding of International Interests.56 And
on 10 September he tried to flatter Angell – ‘the man, above all others, who can
do most in the future to promote peace’ – into writing a book-length indictment of Sir Edward Grey’s foreign policy.57 Even after Angell declined, obliging him to take on the task himself, Russell compared Angell to the inspirational spokesman for the Anti-Corn-Law League of six decades previously, writing to his lover Ottoline Morrell on 17 September: ‘If there is to be an Anti-War League, he might be its Cobden.’58 Russell also included favourable references to Angell in his writings. The admiration of so brilliant an academic must have weighed strongly with the half-educated journalist.

Another factor making it hard for Angell to act on his doubts about the UDC was a sudden attack on it by the Morning Post, which had learned of it while its own nerves were frayed by the German advance. Angell’s breakfast with Rowntree on 10 September 1914 was presumably spoiled by the shrewdly targeted leader with which the Tory newspaper celebrated that day’s journalistic scoop:

MR RAMSAY MACDONALD and his friends have been secretly circulating an appeal, the object of which is to form a party for the purpose of letting Germany down lightly should the Allies have the good fortune to be victorious. The circular, which is signed by MR RAMSAY MACDONALD, MR CHARLES TREVELYAN, MR NORMAN ANGELL and MR E.D. MOREL, begins with a great parade of democracy…. But if our foreign policy is supported by the nation, as must now be clear even to those who disagree with it, then it is MR RAMSAY MACDONALD and his friends who are anti-democratic, since they are going against the manifest will of the people. But to pass that point and to come to the real substance of the letter, the third object of the proposed organisation is: ‘To aim at securing such terms that this war will not, either through artificial rearrangement of frontiers, merely become the starting point for new national antagonisms and future wars.’ We should like the public to take careful note of this fact, that an organisation is being secretly prepared in order to flood this country, ‘when the proper opportunity occurs’ with ‘books, pamphlets and leaflets’ directed to the opportunity of a peace satisfactory with Germany.

To this accusation of an undemocratic conspiracy, the Morning Post added a charge of taking victory for granted (‘counting our chickens before they are hatched’) and implied that the precarious state of the war (‘victory is still in the lap of Fate, hidden from the blind eyes of men’) strengthened the case for crushing Germany (‘we must make this war a decisive war’).60

These imputations could not be ignored, particularly after the military situation stabilized. On 13 September 1914 – the day after the Daily Mail had announced: ‘Great and glorious news reaches England from the front’ – Trevelyan warned Scott that because the Tory press was accusing them of secrecy, and because the ‘tide of the war has decisively turned’, he, MacDonald, and Morel had ‘come pretty decisively to the conclusion that we ought to publish the full statement of our case’.61

‘I think Angell agrees’, Trevelyan had added. In fact, Angell was being warned at this time to detach himself from MacDonald and Trevelyan. He recalled in his autobiography being rung up by Northcliffe for this purpose. On 15 September 1914 Angell sent a letter in reply, indicating that he had ‘been thinking very seriously over what you said over the telephone the other day’ and expressing
concern that ‘the authorities somewhere feel that work which I am doing in
association with others would jeopardise the country’s interests’. Angell insisted
that he was doing no such thing, but asked: ‘If the authorities really feel that, and
perhaps have knowledge that I have not, would five minutes talk between them
and me be of any use?’ He assured Northcliffe that he appreciated his personal
concern: ‘But I am afraid the issues have gone beyond even personal friendship.’ Angell thus stood
firm and endorsed the decision to publish, Trevelyan attaching
considerable importance to this in the addendum to his personal account of
the beginning of the war which he made a week or so later: ‘One evening, Sept.
15th, Angell proposed to come out at once with our programme. So we agreed
a letter announcing the Union of Democratic Control, and giving its policy.’
MacDonald being in Lossiemouth, Trevelyan travelled there overnight to secure
his concurrence.

The first public letter from the UDC was issued on 17 September 1914 over
the signatures of Angell, MacDonald, Morel, and Trevelyan, and appeared widely
in the press the following day. Merely dated ‘September 1914’, making no
reference to the Morning Post, and understating the period which had elapsed
since the first, private circular, it adopted an upbeat tone:

A fortnight ago we issued a previous letter to those whom we thought likely to be
sympathetic. We are delighted to be able to state that the response to the appeal contained
therein has been most encouraging. From all parts of the country and from men and
women and widely divergent interests there come expressions of approval and o

It announced that ‘the Union of Democratic Control’ was ‘now in the process of
formation’, noted that the pamphlets and leaflets justifying those objects ‘have
already been written, and will be issued as soon as the military situation justifies
the direction of public attention to any object other than methods of defence’, and
stated that in the meanwhile the UDC was devoting itself to ‘the perfection of the
Organisation itself’.

The public letter also enclosed a ‘simple statement of objects’. This set out
four cardinal points: first, that no territory was to be transferred without the
consent of its population; second, that foreign policymaking was to be controlled
democratically; third, that an international organization was to be established;
and, fourth, that international armaments were to be reduced and the armaments
industry nationalized. Points one and two were standard radical demands,
while point four contained a hint of socialism.

However, point three – which repudiated ‘alliances for the purpose of main-
taining the “Balance of Power”’ and called for ‘the setting up of an International
Council whose deliberations and decisions shall be public, with such machinery
for securing international agreement as shall be the guarantee of an abiding
peace’ – was notably ambiguous. The ambiguity it embodied was crucial for
an understanding of Angell’s changing approach to war-prevention in the last
third of 1914. The UDC’s ‘International Council’ has often been interpreted by
historians as ‘a forerunner of the idea of a league of nations’; but this is an
oversimplification. The league idea was indeed starting to catch on, but mainly among liberal intellectuals who had endorsed British intervention and were in search of a constructive war aim to salve their consciences. A ‘League of the nations of Europe’ had been advocated by Lowes Dickinson in the first month of the war, though at that time he conceived of it ambitiously as a federation to which nations would hand over all their armaments. It was shortly to be given more modest and achievable inter-governmental form through the efforts of Aneurin Williams, a Liberal MP, and Viscount Bryce, a former British ambassador in Washington. During October Williams completed an article, ‘Proposals for a League of Peace and Mutual Protection among Nations’, for the following month’s issue of the Contemporary Review, and on the 8th consulted Angell and others gathered at the Courtneys’ house. Bryce agreed to chair an informal group set up by Lowes Dickinson, to consider the various league ideas, convening a meeting in his house on 9 November at which Angell was present, along with Lowes Dickinson, Hobson, Wallas, and others. It ended up with a scheme very similar to Williams’s.

Although soon won over to them, Angell initially regarded these league proposals as unnecessary duplications of the UDC’s point three. After his meeting with ‘Angell and his friends’, Williams had reported to his wife that none of them was ‘inclined to back me much’, being more interested in their ‘four points’, and that in particular ‘Angell was inclined to argue that [the UDC’s point three] covered my League idea’. Unlike others in Bryce’s group, moreover, Angell did not submit written comments on the drafts its chairman circulated. He seemingly did not yet appreciate the difference between the league of nations, as conceived by Williams, Bryce, and most of those who the following May were to constitute the League of Nations Society, and the international council, as conceived by the UDC. The core of the former was the need for international engagement and collective security. In a world in which a war sparked by an assassination in the Balkans could involve Britain, all international quarrels were the concern of all countries. A league of nations would thus require its members to commit themselves to both mutual defence against aggression and international sanctions against breaches of international law. Being instinctively isolationist, the UDC’s leaders thought differently. Despite having accepted the reference in point three to ‘such machinery for securing international peace as shall be the guarantee of an abiding peace’ (which had perhaps been inserted at the insistence of Ponsonby, an active member of the Bryce group, though opposed to coercion), MacDonald, Trevelyan, and Morel conceived their international council essentially as a way of avoiding alliances and secrecy by providing an arena in which all diplomacy could be made public. Admittedly, some of their supporters – notably Brailsford and Hobson – wanted a much more ambitious body, federal rather than confederal, which could also tackle the economic and colonial causes of war and provide for peaceful change; and because they lost the battle to commit the League of Nations Society to left-wing federalism of this kind, they remained active in the UDC, somewhat complicating its attitude to an international council.
The UDC’s third cardinal point was thus multiply ambiguous. For the radical leaders of that organization it was merely a forum in which a new, unsecret diplomacy could be conducted: it would not have security or indeed governmental functions. For some UDC supporters of advanced social views it was both such a forum and a stepping stone towards a left-wing supra-national organization that would remove the financial and imperial pressures for war and perhaps even promote public welfare. For more mainstream liberals, who were increasingly to prefer the circumspect and respectable League of Nations Society to the controversial UDC, it was a body for settling international disputes and organizing collective security. And for a fourth group, which in September–October 1914 included Angell, it was a muddle of more than one of these conceptions.

In addition to its public letter and statement of objects, the UDC also issued a declaration on 17 September 1914, which appeared in sympathetic newspapers. This carried Ponsonby’s signature as a fifth co-founder: not having committed himself to the UDC at the time its original private circular was issued, he could not sign the public letter because Morel, already a dominant influence, deemed it to be a sequel to that first document. The declaration tried to protect the UDC from accusations of pacifism, insisting that ‘there as no question of this association embodying a “stop-the-war” movement; not a suggestion even has been made as to the stage in the military operations at which peace should be urged’.

The UDC thus attempted a difficult balancing act: it did not oppose the war effort; yet it denied that Germany bore sole responsibility for its outbreak; and it strongly implied that the British government had misled its own public. On the very day, 17 September 1914, it admitted its existence, Angell spelled out this mixed message at a private dinner in the Salisbury Hotel for a group of his American supporters, who included Emile Holman, later a professor of surgery at Stanford but at that time a personal assistant to David Starr Jordan. As Holman reported to his boss, Angell began by claiming: ‘Our fight for the next few years will be to smash secret diplomacy in England. It appears that Sir Edward Grey did his best in the last week for peace, but he is culpable in that he had not placed, five or six years ago, the proposition of the alliance with France before the people.’ Although the evidence suggested that Germany had indeed ‘precipitated’ the conflict, ‘not one nation alone can be said to be guilty’ because ‘the catastrophe’ was ‘purely the result of the system of armed peace’. Angell also gave hints that he was moving to the left: claiming that British foreign policy had ‘been in the hands of men not Liberals at heart’, he insisted that ‘a radical socialist party, or a liberal-labor party, or whatever it may be called’ would replace the Liberal Party as the major challenger to ‘a protectionist and conscriptionist’ party of the right. He also returned to the internationalist theme which he had developed on his most recent American tour. ‘In the event of a German defeat’, he argued, there might be an ‘opportunity for the establishment of a World State’, with ‘your President’ being particularly well equipped ‘to take the leading part’ and also to supervise a peace settlement on the basis of the UDC’s four points. Although the length of the war was uncertain, Angell speculated that Britain would fight Germany for perhaps a year and half before spending an equivalent period
‘fighting Russia alongside of Germany’. On financial issues he was in alarmist mode, claiming that Britain’s position being fragile, ‘a crash and collapse of the whole system of credit was possible’. He also portrayed its political authorities as fearful of popular unrest: ‘Machine guns lie prepared for action in the cellars of Buckingham Palace.’

Angell was no less critical of the British government in the ‘private and confidential’ letter he sent the following day, 18 September 1914, to Nicholas Murray Butler in New York. He bluntly asserted that the ‘immediate cause’ of Britain’s entry into the war was ‘the intrigue of a dozen men connected with the Foreign Office, the Naval and Military Departments’. He confidently predicted ‘a revulsion of feeling’ against this decision that would give rise to a new progressive party committed to peace. To maintain the pressure on London to compromise, he urged – in stark contrast with what he would be suggesting a matter of months later – that the United States ‘maintain at least some semblance of moral neutrality during the war. If there is a strong and somewhat violent anti-German and pro-British manifestation of public opinion, her possibility of useful influence will be diminished.’

In another letter to America written around this time, probably to Nasmyth, Angell blamed Grey for having ‘managed to stampede the whole country on the Belgian issue, right at the very last minute’, and asserted that the general principles of the newly established UDC found favour among ‘scores of millions in England’.

Angell’s misreading of British opinion was brought home to him within a matter of days. Immediately the UDC’s public letter, statement of objects, and declaration appeared in the press on 18 September 1914, he discovered how many of his supporters disliked his new allegiance. Dennis Robertson was the least reproving: having ‘always suspected that you personally would tend to the Quaker position’, he pronounced the UDC manifesto ‘very good’, though even he warned Angell against ‘narrowing your public’ by forming this alliance with ‘the traditional cavillers’. The Garton trustees were also surprisingly tolerant: Captain Brett having been called to the colours, they allowed the foundation to continue, so at the end of the year Angell was to submit an activity report as usual. But the banker Frederick Huth Jackson immediately resigned as treasurer of the Norman Angell general fund. And a history fellow at Christ’s College, J. Holland Rose, appealed through the correspondence columns of the Spectator to his colleagues in the Cambridge University War and Peace Society ‘to repudiate all connexion with this mischievous development, which will tend to harass the Foreign Secretary and arouse the distrust of our allies’. Angell’s hurt response to Rose was to deny that the UDC was criticizing Grey, as distinct from ‘the present system of European diplomacy’, and to insist that it was merely launching the debate about war aims of which everyone was theoretically in favour but from which everyone in practice hung back:

We were aware, of course, that ‘this is not the time.’ It never is the time, unfortunately. Before the Treaty of Peace it is too early; after the Treaty of Peace is too late. Nearly
everyone who discusses these matters at all has talked vaguely and generally of making this war the occasion for fundamental and political reform; but nobody begins…?

The critics of the UDC did not primarily object to its attempt to discuss a post-war settlement: they were upset by its implication of equal British responsibility for the war. Angell was technically right to ask the editor of the Spectator, who had in effect accused the UDC of blackening Whitehall and whitewashing Wilhelmstrasse: ‘Will you quote a single line from the circular, from anything I have written personally or have signed collectively with others, that justifies the statement that our people are “knaves and tyrants and wolves,” or the Germans are innocent lambs?’ But, strangely in view of all that he had written about patriotic ideology, he had failed to realize that it would affect the way in which the UDC’s message was understood. Thus the editor of the Spectator did not bother to take up Angell’s challenge: he simply asserted that his claim about the beliefs of the founders of the UDC had reflected ‘the impression of their mental attitude made upon the present writer, and, we believe, on many other people’. However, Rose was prepared to identify precisely what many progressives disliked about the UDC’s manifesto: ‘It contained not a word which distinguishes between the action of Great Britain and Germany.’ In other words, the real charge against the UDC was its implication that Britain was almost as responsible for the war as Germany. Angell later tried to correct this, for example claiming that the ‘fact that the balance of guilt in this war is tilted hugely against the Germans’ was something ‘which no single Pacifist that I have ever heard of desires for a moment to deny’. But the damage had already been done.

The shock of discovering the extent of public revulsion against his new organization may have prompted Angell to declare support for the war, which was already implicit in the UDC’s claim not to be ‘a “stop-the-war” movement’. He asserted in its second pamphlet, Shall This War End German Militarism?, that military victory must be secured ‘at any cost’, though he insisted that it be ‘accompanied by political wisdom on our part’, which would require ‘a correction of ideas’ – in other words the adoption of the four points. He periodically reaffirmed and never retracted this support, in large part because it improved the prospects of his propaganda being listened to. Yet not only did he fail thereby to win over the British public, which continued to regard him as a pacifist: he did not fully convince himself, and later claimed to have opposed the First World War. Torn between conflicting impulses, he did not know his own mind.

Despite the UDC’s unpopularity, Angell did his best for it during the remainder of September and the beginning of October 1914. He communicated its programme to contacts in the United States to try to secure the approval of the American administration. Accepting the need ‘personally…to begin at the beginning in some sense’, as he put it to the Quaker J.W. Graham, because ‘the special methods I have been employing in the past will not be suitable for the future’, he tried to persuade his followers to see his co-creation in that light. He admitted in War & Peace that ‘the composition of the Union of Democratic Control seems to indicate action through party politics, a thing from which our
movement has heretofore been careful to dissociate itself’, but insisted that ‘if we are to affect the terms of peace at all it must be by affecting direct political action’ given that his movement’s normal ‘educational and intellectual processes’ had been ‘necessarily in large part suspended’ in wartime. He used all his influence to persuade the Civil Union for the Right Understanding of International Interests, a still active component of his Garton movement, to transfer its allegiance. This body issued an appeal for funds to campaign for ‘such a settlement at the close of the war as will lead to a permanent peace instead of a period of renewed conflict’; but in his capacity as its president Angell added an accompanying slip that made clear that in his mind the UDC now came first:

As Mr Norman Angell is actively associated with another Organization, the Union of Democratic Control, this appeal is not meant to clash with any statement or appeal issued by that organization. It is hoped that a working arrangement may be arrived at between these two bodies to prevent overlapping and duplication.

When Morel even so complained that the Civil Union was fishing in the same pool of subscribers, Angell pressed it to become the London branch of the UDC. This caused consternation within its ranks, as Wright predicted. On 3 October Lady Courtney noted in her diary: ‘My friends in the Civil Union [are] much troubled as to whether they should obey their teacher, Norman Angell’s request to amalgamate with the Democratic Control Party started by C.P. Trevelyan and J.R. MacDonald.’

But at the end of the first week in October 1914 Angell began a month-long wobble in his commitment to the UDC. When, as their hostess recorded, ‘Lord Bryce, Norman Angell and Aneurin Williams’ dined with the Courtneys on the 7th, Angell showed himself ‘doubtful about his action in joining D.C.P [the Democratic Control Party] and J.R. MacDonald’s Society.’ On the 19th, in fulfilment of a pre-war engagement, he ‘addressed a very big meeting in the University of Leeds and found, somewhat to my surprise, that I could talk just as I did before the war to a large mixed audience with nothing resembling the kind of thing that the pro-Boers experienced 15 years ago’. This nostalgic experience at Leeds, soon repeated at the City Temple, may have tempted him to resume the role of sage rather than polemicist. He responded with notable cordiality to a request from Gilbert Murray, who had become a leading apologist for Grey, for a list of ‘Norman Angell Societies or Peace Societies or International Friendship Societies’ to which the government could send a defence of its actions ‘from the suspicion of having provoked or sought the war’. Angell insisted that he saw nothing whatever to object to in the line that you indicate, though I am not clear as to the details. Personally I do feel rather strongly that the real need is not so much to demonstrate that our Government was not to blame – practically no one believes they were in any sense that concerns the people as a whole – as to show that the general system of indifference to international questions and the inertia on that subject was [sic] to blame. To drift into the attitude that the other man is entirely to blame, and that nothing that we could have done would have prevented this catastrophe, is almost equivalent to the admission that it is no use trying to do anything, since the best efforts may be rendered
futile by action that cannot affect. It is some such feeling which has prompted me to stand by the heretics and to insist that the defects in which like the rest of the world we had our share are not to be excused simply because the war which they rendered inevitable has at last broken out.

This claim not to be one of ‘the heretics’ himself, merely someone standing by them, suggested that he was distancing himself. He now refused to recriminate over Britain’s pre-war policy, insisting to Murray that ‘the best thing which we can do is to turn our backs on the past and see what can be done in future’. Angell had evidently ceased to believe there would be a backlash against the decision to enter the conflict. He declined to follow his friend Dr Warden in ‘the direction of non-resistance’, pointing out to him in late October: ‘If I write a book or address an audience from the stand point of “stop the war now” I simply don’t get another word in from that point.’ Instead, Angell began to plan ambulance work in France with Warden, admitting to his sister that it was ‘a somewhat cheap way of fore-stalling critics’. Joining up would have been a more costly way of doing the same, and seems never to have been contemplated.

Angell was at this time investigated by the security services, and although making a joke of it – he claimed on 3 November 1914 that he was ‘only able to escape the dungeon because the “Daily Mail” guaranteed me’ – the episode added to his doubts about the controversial course he had taken, as did his cordial reception on 4 November by the Institute of Directors for an address arranged before the war. Moreover, Northcliffe invited him to lunch in order to renew his warning: ‘Do think twice. These people you’ve begun to associate with – Ramsay MacDonald and these other fellows – I’m going to smash and destroy. I don’t want to smash and destroy you. Please, get out and don’t associate with them.’

With the launch of the UDC as a democratic organization on the 7th looming, Morel feared that Angell would decline to serve on its executive committee on the advice of his supporters. As Morel informed Trevelyan as late as the 6th, he had heard a rumour that Lowes Dickinson was being asked to lead opposition in the Civil Union to the proposed merger with the UDC. Morel further reported ‘an effort on foot among Angell’s immediate entourage to separate him from us; to keep him as a distinct entity apart from us. … I told Harold Wright who is evidently one of them that no man was big enough to be able to afford to be thought not to have played the game by his colleagues, which would undoubtedly be the case if he persevered in his view.’ Interestingly, Morel claimed that in this encounter with Wright he ‘went into the past and made him feel uncomfort- able’ – perhaps by telling him about Angell’s pre-war backchannel to him and other radicals and socialists. Even so, Wright remained critical of Angell’s new colleagues, telling Robertson that ‘their game is not our game’.

Finally, at the end of the first week of November 1914, despite his own continuing doubts and those of his Cambridge circle, Angell resolved to stay in the UDC whatever damage it was doing to his reputation. He later informed Esher that ‘what finally made it impossible for me to leave it were the attacks to which it was subjected. When a dead set was made at my colleagues I could not
Angell therefore not only attended the inaugural meeting of its general council on the 7th but nominated Morel as honorary secretary and treasurer, and accepted election to its executive committee. Three days later Angell spoke on the UDC's behalf at the City of London branch of the Independent Labour Party (ILP), his meeting being a ‘great, enormous, astounding colossal, epoch-making and unparalleled success’ in the enthusiastic words of the branch secretary, who noted that the audience consisted of 250 people packed into a room intended for 100. Angell also made a major donation, £250, to the UDC. And he insisted that the Civil Union go through with the merger, Lady Courtney recording on 14 November: ‘N.A., the President, and other Vice President’s [sic] would leave if we did not; others would leave if we did.’ She was part of a narrow majority that voted to accept the leadership’s recommendation, thereby in effect killing the organization. Furthermore, as will be seen, even after Angell’s views turned in an internationalist direction he did his ingenious best to harmonize them with the UDC’s rather different outlook; and on going to the United States the following year, he attempted to raise funds for it.

In return for this loyalty, his UDC colleagues moderated their tactics. Whereas their first leaflet had been a tabloid effort reminiscent of the Neutrality League, their subsequent propaganda adopted a sober tone. Angell was to emphasize this change to the Carnegie Endowment, noting that whereas the UDC had been formed in the belief that ‘the only possible activity would be of an almost purely political nature, uniting groups like the Labour Party and the Radicals of the left in favour of political agitation for a liberal settlement at the end of the war’, events ‘soon showed that better results would be obtained by…a more definitely educational and non-party propaganda’.

Yet, however much the UDC softened its tone, Angell’s association with it had dramatically reduced the demand for his journalism and lecturing. An ironic compensation for this reduction in his income was that his profits from the Continental Daily Mail soared as British troops in France began buying the paper as the most accessible source of home news. He therefore had the leisure to undertake major writing projects, and completed three of these by the end of 1914: a revised and expanded version of part two of The Great Illusion; an adult-education textbook on peace and war; and a book for a transatlantic audience. They illustrated both the moods through which he had already passed in the first three months of war. The first, at its height in August, had been one of recrimination, partly on account of the misrepresentation of his previous work by supporters of British intervention and in the hope of a political backlash against the government. The second mood, which had replaced it by early October, was one of consternation, as he realized how unpopular the UDC was. They further indicated a third, which was brought on in late November by the process of writing, by the deliberations of the Bryce group, and by a return to ideas developed before the war for American audiences: this was a mood of reflection, as Angell had second thoughts about isolationism, and once again saw the advantages of internationalism.
Even before the European conflict Angell had been discussing with Heinemann a reissue of the three parts of *The Great Illusion* as separate one-shilling tracts, beginning with the second on the grounds that, after the whole text had grown to a length of 400 pages, this had never been reached by a significant number of readers, who, by reading only part one, acquired ‘a very lopsided view of the case presented’.\(^{104}\) In other words, they read only his economic arguments, not his extension of his thesis to other spheres of life. He was obliged to make a number of alterations after Europe went to war, and on taking up his pen gave vent to certain frustrations, before moderating his tone, and ultimately coming up with a more constructive outlook. He added an introduction, three new chapters replacing the original first chapter of the reprinted part two, and a forward-looking appendix. And, in order to flag up this new material and pre-empt accusations of pacifism, he adopted a new title, *Prussianism and its Destruction, with which is reprinted part II of ‘The Great Illusion’.*

The introduction included several passages reflecting the ‘more combative’ approach that he had advocated in his first wartime contribution to *War & Peace*,\(^ {105}\) particularly those defending *The Great Illusion* against the charge that it had been proved wrong by the outbreak of war and the subsequent absence of a major financial collapse. Though conceding that certain ‘estimates formed years ago’, which had been ‘given rather as illustrations than forecasts’, did ‘not in a world-wide war correspond in every small detail to the event’, he insisted that its ‘general thesis . . . remains absolutely unaffected – as valid as ever’. Moreover, he went onto the offensive by complaining that those like himself who had ‘argued insistently that armaments could never alone achieve peace are supposed to be entirely routed by the fact that the peace has been broken’, whereas his critics who had ‘urged that peace was to be secured by everybody having as large armaments as possible are believed to be vindicated by the fact of war – the fact that peace has not been secured’. He bitterly condemned the ‘gross distortion, mindless derision, honest and dishonest misrepresentation, falsification, and sheer falsehood’ to which his work had been subjected, in particular the claims that he had ‘preached the impossibility of war’ and had operated ‘on the assumption that men only went to war to make money’; and he urged that the reader of the reprinted section ‘judge for himself’ how accurate his critics had been.\(^ {106}\) He also indulged in the Slavophobia that had been a marked feature of his neutrality campaign, arguing that two supposed proponents of Prussianism, Nietzsche and Treitschke, were not Germans but Slavs.\(^ {107}\) He repeated the objection made in his *Spectator* letter of 3 October 1914 to the claim that ‘it was not the time’ to discuss the post-war settlement: ‘It never is: before the peace it is too early; after the peace it is too late. The real danger is that almost automatically the old ideas will after the war once more hold their sway.’\(^ {108}\) And he concluded the introduction by restating in forthright terms his long-standing scepticism about purely ‘mechanical’ reforms, this time with particular reference to the emergent demand for a league of nations. Thus he insisted not only that ‘the prevention of future wars will not be the work of a paper scheme for the mechanical rearrangement of European administration and the re-drawing of the European map’, but even that ‘a model
constitution for the United States of Europe... would, of course, be worth just nothing.'

Angell inserted some less recriminatory material into his introduction. For example, even more explicitly than in previous editions he denied ever having condemned defensive military preparations. He even made his first, tentative step towards an ideological justification of self-defence by insisting that

we should all realise the proposition, that ‘Military force is religiously, socially and economically futile,’ does not condemn a war of defence, or resistance to religious oppression, since such a war is not the imposition of military force upon others; it is the cancellation of such force, the attempt to see that military force is not imposed upon us.

He also strengthened his previous claim of support for the war effort: ‘Very many will genuinely feel that this is not the time for any consideration save that of the triumph of our arms. The belief in the vital need for that I share as intensely as any could.’

The three new substitute chapters were circumspect in style and content throughout, for example describing Nietzsche and Treitschke as ‘Polish’, a national label without the derogatory connotations of ‘Slavs’, a racial categorization. They must have been begun after Angell came back from northern France at the beginning of September 1914. Apart from one dated 10 August, the wartime sources they cited began with the attack by H.G. Wells which he had found on his return; most appeared during September; and the last was dated 13 October. Several of the ideas they contained were also present both in Angell’s article ‘The Prussian as Propagandist’, written for War & Peace during October, and in his first UDC pamphlet, composed around the same time.

This gentler tone reflected the moderation of his propaganda tactics during September and October 1914: instead of angrily confronting the public’s support for the war, as in August, he now tried to mould it to his purposes. He realized that ‘ninety-nine Britons out of a hundred’, not understanding the geopolitical case for supporting France, had supported British intervention on the grounds that Belgian neutrality had been violated. He was also aware that they mostly regarded themselves as upholding international law and working for the abolition of future international conflict, making it ‘for the British... almost the war of pacifists’. He therefore took as a starting point their idealistic willingness to define the enemy as an ideology, ‘Prussianism’, rather than as a nation, the Germans. By this ideology, the public understood militarism: the belief that civilization advanced through the capacity of the fittest nation to prevail militarily over the less fit. Angell now tried to convince his fellow citizens that it really meant the much more moderate belief that military strength sometimes brought material benefit – in other words the ‘illusion’ he had long been denouncing. He did so by stealth. In the introduction to Prussianism and Its Destruction he defined Prussianism as ‘the superlative importance of political and military power’ – in line with the popular understanding of ‘militarism’ – though he insisted that it ‘is not German or even European. It is world-wide. In all powerful nations it lurks, avowed or unavowed, in some degree.’ In one of the new
chapters, however, he subtly shifted his definition of Prussianism from being the belief of an extremist minority, albeit found in most major states, to being the ‘general impression’, held not only by ‘the German’ but ‘most of the other men of Europe’, that ‘conquest will somehow enrich him; that he would be better off as the subject of a great empire than as the subject of a small one – which is much like saying that the people of London are richer and better off than the people of Manchester or Leeds; or that a Russian is of course richer than a Hollander or Swiss’. This impression was, he of course insisted, illusory: ‘If Germany could conquer all Europe, not a single one of the millions of men and women who make up Germany will be one whit better morally or materially.’

This attempt to re-establish the centrality of his pre-war work – by equating the ‘illusion’ that he had been attacking with the ‘Prussianism’ that Britain had committed itself to extirpate – was unconvincing. But in any case Angell was moving beyond it. He was beginning to think that wars were caused not only by intellectual misperceptions but by substantive flaws in the international system. He had, of course, explored this possibility before the war in his musings about an embryonic world-state and the use of international economic sanctions to tame Mexico. And he was now pushed in the same direction by the UDC’s ambiguous ‘international council’ proposal and by his membership of the Bryce group, as well as by his developing reflections about the causes of the European conflict and the best way to handle Germany after it was over. Despite his earlier dismissiveness of mechanical reforms and paper constitutions, Angell suddenly recognized that ‘the formation of a European League or Federation or Council of Nations into which the German states should come on equal terms with the other European States’ might be a way of giving defeated Germans ‘some guarantees that the preponderant military power of their rivals would not be used in attempts to destroy their nationality’. He also condemned ‘international anarchism, the belief that there is no society of nations’, and praised Grey for not being wedded to the balance of power but in fact pursuing ‘the opposite principle of the Concert, or European League’.

This internationalist trend in Angell’s thought became most explicit in the appendix, ‘What Should We Do?’, an afterthought of late November 1914 seemingly prompted by the memorandum that Bryce had just circulated to his group as well as by his own re-engagement, shortly to be discussed, with the American market. In his appendix Angell acknowledged that ‘the practical man’ who had read the book up to that point would now ask: ‘What is the good of converting us, of making the Englishman see the fallacy of the old doctrine, when the German remains unconverted, and holds to it as strongly as ever?’, and would conclude: ‘Our only security is our strength.’ But Angell then insisted that the war had shown that no state could in future assure its own security:

The security of our nation and Europe is in part at least, based on international arrangement and treaty. The present position of the Allies, the fact that for defensive purposes engagements have been entered into between France, Russia, Belgium, Servia, Japan, Montenegro, and perhaps tomorrow Portugal and Italy, is proof, however little we may
like it, that without treaties and international engagements we can no longer be secure. And I want to suggest that the real line of advance is to extend the system we have adopted, render it more effective and more secure; that the older policy of ‘letting all foreigners go hang’ and of each trusting only to his isolated military force, without regard to the possible co-operation of other nations in the work of mutual defence. We have in any case abandoned it.  

From this particular instance of a mutual-defence bloc he inferred a need for a general system of collective security and eventually an international organization. It would enable the other powers to offer a disarmed Germany the reassurance: ‘We – all of us – will guarantee you against Russian aggression, just as we will guarantee Russia against your aggression.’ Such a system was not impractical, he insisted, given that a group of nations had already combined against Germany and Austria:

Why for the purpose of a permanent peace should not eight, or for that matter eighteen, undertake to combine against any one nation that commits aggression upon its neighbours? … Such a step is the natural development of the system of alliances to which we are already committed. It is the preliminary stage of the international police which we are unlikely to achieve at one bound from the present condition.

Angell was conscious of thereby contradicting many of the neutralist nostrums to which he had himself recently subscribed:

I am aware that this means the abandonment of certain Radical doctrines which have been held very tenaciously in the past: non-intervention, no military alliance with any foreign countries, etc. But those doctrines, defensible as they were before the war, have, for good or ill, by our act been abandoned. We have become an integral party of the European system and it is outside the domain of practical politics to go back.

When Dennis Robertson read this appendix, he expressed surprise at ‘the firmness with which you’ve plunged on the “mutual guarantee” idea’, though he deemed it ‘an attractive half-way house between balance and concert’.

Yet Angell’s continued reluctance to offend the UDC by rejecting its policy was apparent from the article he wrote in early December for the following month’s War & Peace, which, despite advancing essentially the same argument, had a markedly different tone. Its title, ‘The Case for Stating Our Terms’, was designed to appeal to the UDC, which existed primarily to discuss the basis of a peace settlement; and its basic assumption was that because ‘the war has entered upon the second stage, when the invader is repelled’, the proclamation of appealing armistice terms would make it harder for the Prussian military leadership to keep its people fighting. Such terms had not only be non-vindictive towards Germany: they had also offer it future protection against Russia (as well as Russia future protection against it), which required the construction of a ‘new Europe’ – in other words a continental system of collective security. The article then posed the hard question: ‘Is Pacifism, then, to abandon its old attitude of non-intervention, of refusal to enter upon Continental alliances and military obligation to foreign countries?’ Its answer was very apologetically phrased: ‘It is to be feared so: for
that policy, even if triumphant in public, will be defeated in secret. We are in any case definitely committed to foreign military obligation: it is almost certain that after this war we shall not withdraw our guarantee from Belgium.’

This implied that neutralist policies were still preferable, though they would never in practice be accepted by governments, particularly in respect of Belgium. Angell’s article was an early example of his strategy of ingratiation: he professed still to share the UDC’s radical-isolationist preferences; but he insisted that political constraints were such that the liberal-internationalist alternative was the best that could be achieved in practice.

Angell’s second project, as he reported to the Garton Foundation, was a ‘revised and enlarged’ edition of *A Grammar of the Discussion of War and Peace*, which had been privately produced for the Old Jordans summer school. Expanded to ninety-nine pages, re-titled *The Problems of the War – and of the Peace: A Handbook for Students*, and published by Heinemann, it necessarily eschewed, as a textbook, the irritable polemic of the opening sections of *Prussianism and Its Destruction*, but otherwise showed the same mix of ‘illusion’ thesis, UDC programme, and internationalism. It began by attributing the outbreak of war to ‘mental confusions which are to be found among the people of every country of Europe, though in an especial degree among the ruling classes of modern Prussia’. It proceeded to three policy recommendations, which, though it prudently did not mention this fact, were those of the UDC: ‘1. A real Council of all the Nations. 2. Publicity and openness in the deliberations of that Council. 3. The form of government of each nation, and of every part of each nation, to be decided by the people governed.’ Finally, there was a strong hint of collective security in the observation that, having dug these foundations, ‘we shall be on the road to . . . some means of enforcing the decisions of the international Council’. Since its recommended reading included M. Phillips Price’s *The Diplomatic History of the War*, which appeared in November, this primer was evidently completed late in the year.

Angell’s third substantial piece of writing was a book to be published only in the United States, by Putnam’s: *America and the New World-State: A Plea for American Leadership in International Organization*. Although he had developed its core argument during his American tour earlier in the year, he wrote it up in Britain in the autumn of 1914, which makes it all the more surprising that he claimed in his preface to have done so ‘as an American’:

At a very early age I acquired American citizenship and though by necessary prolonged absence in Europe I have reverted to British citizenship, I always claimed the right in dealing with American problems to speak as an American, because in those cases I feel as one. It is as an American that I envisage the problem here dealt with: and so I write.

Perhaps he again republished his Californian essays of 1896/97 in this book in order to reinforce his American credentials, and not merely to pad out his text.

He had acquired a sure eye for rhetoric that might have resonance in the United States, and had tried out some of his arguments on his American supporters at the Salisbury Hotel on 17 September 1914. His book began by
urging that country to ‘take the leadership in the civilization of Christendom, for which its situation and the happy circumstances of its history furnish so good an opportunity’ – his invocation of Christendom being in notable contrast to the secularist tone of his simultaneous writing for a British readership. It laid the flattery on thick: ‘Dangerous as I believe national vanity to be, America would, I think, find in the pride of this achievement – this American leadership of the human race – a glory that would not be vain, a world-victory which the world would welcome.’

Angell next argued that the United States was already affected by Europe’s war, as was shown by the early loss of exports for the cotton-producing states, ‘the increased cost of money, the scarcity of capital’ for all Americans, and the demands for naval and military expansion that would have been unthinkable a year before. In short: ‘Our impregnability does not protect us from militarism. . . . For good or evil, we are part of the world, affected by what the rest of the world becomes and affected by what it does.’

The United States was also enmeshed in a world polity, albeit an inchoate one. ‘If you are already able to send a letter to the most obscure village in China, a telegram to any part of the planet, to travel over most of the world in safety, to carry on trade therewith’, though there was ‘no overlord enforcing’ the ‘hundreds of international agreements involved’, it indicated that there already existed ‘a world-state which has no formal recognition in our paper constitutions at all, and no sanction in physical force’. Because this ‘World-State is unorganised, incoherent’, America should institutionalise it: ‘The World-State has not so much as an office or an address. The United States should give it one.’

The first thing America might do to assume this world leadership was to help terminate the European war: ‘The President of the United States will probably act as a mediator. The terms of peace will probably be ratified in Washington.’ Building on his argument in *Prussianism and Its Destruction* that a disarmed Germany would have to be reassured against a Russian threat in a post-war settlement and *vice versa*, he argued: ‘If it is to be real peace and not a truce, an attempt will have to be made to give each party security from the other, and the question will then arise whether America will come into the combination or not.’ Indeed, America had it in its power to create the collective-security system that the world needed. *America and the New World-State* thus contributed significantly to the revival of the internationalist strand in his thinking.

These three substantial projects were all completed by mid-December. He was able on the 9th of that month to send an advance copy of *Prussianism and Its Destruction* to his benefactor Joseph Rowntree, though, despite carrying 1914 as a publication date, it did not appear until early in the new year. On the 21st Fayle was to post Nasmyth *The Problems of the War – and the Peace*. And a week later he despatched ‘the manuscript’ of *America and the New World-State* to Angell’s agent in New York, who was already in receipt of its three core chapters.

Meanwhile, Angell was also turning out a few articles. He sent ‘America and the European War’ to the *Yale Review*, which published it in the new year. Albeit in more judicious language, it restated the central argument of *Prussianism and*
Its Destruction, and particularly of its epilogue, then added the comment that the ‘world-constitution of the future’ would be based on principles that ‘are pre-eminent those for which America has stood in her own development’ and would give that country an opportunity ‘to seize and maintain the lead in world polity’. For a readership in the United States, its own federalism and constitutionalism were now offered as a political model for the world, rather than the British empire, as in the September 1912 edition of The Great Illusion. In his home country, Angell’s journalism was less easy to place. He wrote an essay setting out the critique of Britain’s masked authoritarianism that he had learned from von Lübtow on the first day of the war. But it was rejected both by the Nation, which was confident that there was ‘no Junkertum with us’, and by the New Statesman, which remarked that ‘a Prussian holding such Bellonian views must surely be a unique specimen’.

On 15 December 1914, almost eight weeks since first discussing the venture as a way to improve his image at home, Angell crossed the channel with an ambulance car and a driver in order to join a medical unit where Dr Warden was serving. He had consulted Harry and ‘put in a brief period of training as a surgeon’s assistant’, but, finding that this required expertise that he lacked, opted instead for stretcher-bearing, which was ‘just a matter of muscle’. He saw ‘some little of the front, but still more of the dressing-stations and hospitals’, including a makeshift one in ‘the railway shed at Dunkirk’ in which he disap-provingly remembered a woman nurse giving preliminary treatment, in the full public eye, to bad venereal cases, without so much as a screen to shield the very naked men; in another corner a Belgian priest giving the last sacraments to a dying soldier; in the midst of so doing he catches sight of an English Duchess whom he had met ‘doing the front’, he interrupts or hastens the final consolation to greet the Duchess across the line of cots. ‘Bonjour, Mme la Duchesse. Vous allez bien’; and then resumes the interrupted conversation with the Almighty.

What most shocked him was ‘the official fatalism which insisted that nothing could be done about either the typhoid or delayed treatment of the wounded’, and in particular the ‘incredible incompetence’ in medical matters shown by the French army. He tried to intercede with the local French commander, helped by Irene Noel, who was working with her future husband Philip Baker in the Friends’ Ambulance Unit, which had crossed to France at the very end of October under Baker’s command.

Considerably disillusioned, and also distracted by an inquiry from Nasmyth about his availability for an early visit to the United States, Angell terminated his stretcher-bearing after a mere fortnight. That he recorded the experience in his memoirs showed that it stayed in his thoughts. He had no cause to feel personal guilt about the conflict, though he now professedly endorsed it: he had opposed British involvement, took every opportunity to support both conscientious objection and peace negotiations in order to limit it, and was to face the music when conscription was introduced. Yet there is no evidence that the continuing ordeal of his fellow Britons in the trenches impinged upon him over
the next four years, or that even during his various wartime holidays he felt uneasy about his own comfortable lifestyle. This may simply be because, unlike Ponsonby, he did not keep a diary in which to record such concerns, or because very few of his intimate letters to Harry survive from this period. Alternatively, it may indicate that Angell was able to block the suffering from his mind.

Although he had swiftly decided that the front line was not for him, his future was no less uncertain at the very end of 1914 than it had been when the Daily Messenger folded just over a decade before. In five stressful months his carefully nurtured reputation had been largely destroyed. The outbreak of war had inevitably undermined his ‘illusion’ thesis: critics wrongly accused it of having alleged the impossibility of such an event; and sympathizers turned increasingly to new political machinery such as a mechanism for achieving democratic accountability or an international organization for resolving disputes between states. In addition, his own wartime decisions had offended mainstream opinion, as he succumbed simultaneously to political ambition and to isolationist emotion, before discovering on reflection that he had badly misjudged the popular mood and that in any case internationalism was the more constructive policy.

NOTES

2. A. Manson to A, 28 July 1914: Massingham papers, MC 41/65.
3. The Salisbury Hotel’s hospitality bills survive: BSU.
4. Marshall’s efficient help was recalled in D. Robertson to A, 8 Feb. 1915: BSU. Her anti-war efforts at this time, though not her role in the Neutrality League, are mentioned in J. Vellacott, From Liberal to Labour with Women’s Suffrage: The Story of Catherine Marshall (Montreal, 1993), 359–61.
5. ‘Reminiscences’, 120.
8. A. Ponsonby diary (transcript), 13 Aug. 1914: Shulbrede Priory. This was his first entry of the war.
9. The Neutrality League’s accounts are in box 30: BSU.
11. AA, 184.
12. Neutrality League leaflets can be found in WCO box 6.
13. TT, 1 Aug. 1914, 6.
15. Daily Mail, 1 Aug. 1914, 4.
19. Diary entry 18 Aug. 1914: Morel papers, F1/1/14 BLPES.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
26. Information from C. Ferdinand.
27. For Baker’s recollection of this moment see his letter to B. Hayes, 26 Nov. 1976: McM box 1. ‘Reminiscences’, 121.
30. Information from Professor Geoffrey Martin, honorary archivist of Christ’s College, Cambridge.
31. A to W.A. von Lüdtow ‘c/o Dean of the University of Denver’, 12 June 1915: BSU.
32. G. Toulmin to H. Wright, 22 June 1917 (typescript copy): BSU.
34. It is on the back of F.D. Acland to C.P. Trevelyan, 6 Aug. [1914]: Trevelyan papers, CPT 33/53–4.
35. For Hugins’s position, see the inside back cover of *W&P*, July 1914. For his presence in London see Angell to Trevelyan, 13 July 1914: CPT 33/42.
36. Courtney, *Extracts from A Diary during the War*, 12.
38. A. Williams to Mrs A. Williams, 9 Aug. 1914: in the possession of Barry Dackombe.
41. Quoted from the copy in the Bryce papers: 239 fos. 23–4.
43. AA, 187.
51. Rempel (ed.), *Prophecy and Dissent*, 10.
52. *Nation*, 5 Sept. 1914, 815–16.
54. Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 64n.
57. B. Russell to A, 10 Sept. 1914: BSU.
58. Cited in Rempel (ed.), Prophecy and Dissent, 529.
60. Morning Post, 10 Sept. 1914, 6.
63. The UDC’s public letter is quoted from the copy in the Bryce papers: 239 fos. 44–5.
   The first four cardinal points can also be found in Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 42.
64. For example, by Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 42.
65. A. Williams to Mrs A. Williams, 8 Oct. 1914: in the possession of Barry Dackombe.
66. A. Ponsonby diary, 10 Nov. 1914.
67. A. Williams to Mrs A. Williams, 8 Oct. 1914: in the possession of Barry Dackombe.
68. Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 41n.
69. ‘Conditions of a Stable Peace’, Nation, 19 Sept. 1914, 865.
70. ‘Norman Angell Peace Dinner, Salisbury Hotel, September 17, 1914’: note enclosed with E. Holman to D.S. Jordan, 19 Sept. 1914: Jordan papers, 41/11.
71. A to N.M. Butler, 19 Sept. 1914: CEIP I&E vol. 96.
73. D. Robertson to A, 19 Sept. 1914: BSU.
74. ‘Report by Norman Angell of his activities during 1914 and the situation in Europe’ (Garton Foundation version): BSU.
75. A to F.H. Jackson, 18 Sept. 1914; F.H. Jackson to A, 29 Sept. 1914: BSU.
76. Spectator, 26 Sept. 1914, 412–3, 421.
77. Ibid., 3 Oct. 1914, 459.
78. Ibid., 10 Oct. 1914, 490–1.
79. WéP, Oct. 1915, 9 (an article written on 3 Sept.).
80. N. Angell, Shall This War End German Militarism? (UDC pamphlet no. 2, n.d. [1914]), 3, 20.
82. A to J.W. Graham, 22 Sept. 1914: BSU.
85. Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 92.
86. Courtney, Extracts From A Diary during the War, 22.
87. Ibid. 23.
90. A to A.A. Warden, 30 Oct. 1914: BSU.
91. S. Sturge to A, 26 Oct. 1914; A to C. Sheehan-Dare, 27 Oct. 1914: BSU.
92. A to D. Robertson, 3 Nov. 1914: BSU.
93. N. Angell, The Relation of Military to Industrial Conflict (Institute of Directors, n.d. [1914]).
94. ‘Reminiscences’, 87.
96. H. Wright to D. Robertson, 4 Dec. 1914, cited in Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 92.
97. A to Esher, 7 Sept. [1915]: ESHR 5/49.
98. Minutes, General Council, 7 Nov. 1914: UDC papers, DDC/1/1.
99. Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 47–9, 55, 63, 89, 97. Angell, Shall This War End German Militarism?, 3, 6.
100. Courtney, Extracts from a Diary during the War, 24.
101. It is reproduced in Swartz, Union of Democratic Control, 230.
103. ‘Reminiscences’, 95.
104. N. Angell, Prussianism and its Destruction, with which is reprinted part II of ‘The Great Illusion’ (1914), vii. [Hilton, ed.], International Polity Summer School, 395.
107. Ibid. xviii. See also 70, where they are described as ‘Polish’.
108. Ibid. xix.
109. Ibid. xx.
110. Ibid. xiv.
111. Ibid. xviii.
113. Ibid. 24.
115. Ibid. 9–10, 67.
116. Ibid. 52.
117. Ibid. 69–71.
118. E.R. Cross’s comment on Bryce’s memorandum is dated 27 Nov. 1914: W.H. Dickinson papers, MS Eng. Hist. c. 402.
120. Ibid. 235–6.
121. Ibid. 239.
122. D. Robertson to A, 20 Jan. 1915: BSU.
124. ‘Report by Norman Angell of his activities during 1914 and the situation in Europe’ (Garton Foundation version), 13: BSU.
126. Angell, America and the New World-State, iv.
127. Ibid. iii, 64. For a contrastingly secularist tone designed for British consumption see W&P, Mar. 1915, 88–90.
128. Angell, America and the New World-State, 12, 15, 17, 23.
129. Ibid. 54
130. Ibid. 59.
131. Ibid. 25–6, 61.
132. A to J. Rowntree, 9 Dec. 1914: BSU.
133. C.E. Fayle to G. Nasmyth, 21 Dec. 1914, and to J.B. Pinker, 28 Dec. 1914: BSU.
137. C.E. Fayle to G. Nasmyth, 21 Dec. 1914: BSU.
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By the beginning of 1915 Angell understood how far his star had waned at home, even though he had moderated his message and worked as a stretcher-bearer. It was symbolized by War & Peace’s ‘somewhat uphill fight’, acknowledged privately on 6 January by Gerald Shove, its temporary editor after William Searle joined the army, and by its dropping that month of its subtitle, ‘A Norman Angell monthly’, which was no longer a selling point. With little now to lose, Angell became increasingly outspoken in print, though, fearing rowdiness, he prudently avoided public meetings in Britain, and looked to the United States as the best market for his work and the likeliest bearer of the internationalist torch. After a frustrating delay, he made two substantial American visits, separated by a problematical thirteen months at home during which his political alienation intensified.

Given his previous isolationism, it was astonishing that on the strength of his first period in the United States (May 1915 – May 1916) he was credited by an influential New York magazine with doing ‘more than all the other Englishmen who have come over since August 1914 to make the idea of unneutrality in relation to the war persuasive to American opinion’. As well as writing and lecturing on this interventionist theme, he achieved some influence among President Woodrow Wilson’s political associates. Angell was to admit in his autobiography that it ‘puzzled friends and critics alike that, having stood for temporary neutrality for Great Britain in August, 1914, I should by 1915 be arguing that neutrality for the United States was, in the world conditions which by that time had developed, a policy disastrous alike for the interests of America and future peace’. Although he came to recognize his value to the British cause in winning over isolationists in the United States – as did a former home secretary, Herbert Samuel, who observed of him in the House of Commons: ‘Set a pacifist to catch a pacifist’ – Angell was never a government stooge or a cynical manipulator of transatlantic opinion. It was with complete independence and sincerity that he stumbled into the extraordinary position of being pro-war and close to ruling circles in the United States while remaining anti-militarist and largely reviled by them in Britain. He experienced a sequence of flashes of insight, each of which illuminated only the next step towards an ultimate destination that surprised even him.
Above all, he remained his own man – a controversialist who criticized conscription on both sides of the Atlantic, went through phases of wanting to lead an outright pacifist campaign in Britain, and moved steadily to the left politically, albeit while still seeking to influence mainstream opinion. When his home country introduced compulsory military service in 1916, he returned with the probable intention of taking a principled stand against it, but discovered that someone of his age was not liable, and so instead wrote pamphlets, made speeches, espoused socialism, and on his later admission ‘not infrequently provoked bitter anger and resentment’. Early the following year he discovered that the British government regarded him as too much of a trouble maker to have his passport renewed or to send his writings across the Atlantic. Only after a Liberal MP raised his case in the House of Commons and the United States entered the war was he allowed to make a second and longer American visit (July 1917 – December 1918), during which he attempted to shape the debate about a league of nations, though he was less popular than formerly on account of his controversial leftist, and had to do much of his work either at the political margins or behind the scenes.

Angell was already both torn between pro-defence instincts and anti-war ideas and tempted by progressive politics, of course, so the additional challenges and opportunities of 1915–18 sent him spinning along multiple ideological trajectories. The British public’s perceived war-weariness made the espousal of pacifism an appealing possibility, despite his professed support for the country’s military effort and his genuine belief in the need for American military intervention. President Wilson’s adoption of a league of nations as a war aim kept Angell active in the liberal-internationalist movement. The overthrow of Tsarism raised his hopes of a socialist revolution. And the abortive Stockholm conference persuaded him that the radical ideal of direct democratic participation in a post-war settlement might be achievable. In addition, for understandable reasons of personal consistency, he strove to keep alive the embers of his ‘illusion’ thesis, in spite of the evident diminution during wartime of the economic interdependence that had spawned it. Thus, as his standing with the general public on each side of the Atlantic plumbed new depths, so his intellectual eclecticism – and indeed inconsistency – attained new heights.

* * * * *

Angell saw in 1915 at the Grand Hôtel, Paris, still trying ‘with certain political and journalistic friends’, and possibly also with Florence Schofield, to improve the French army’s treatment of its wounded. Hoping to make an immediate visit to the United States, he sent instructions to his secretary in London cancelling a long-standing arrangement to address the Rainbow Circle, an influential club of progressive intellectuals, on 10 March: Wright was to deputize for him, even though Angell had not managed to leave by then. On reaching King’s Bench Walk on 4 January, Angell found that he had been wired seasonal greetings by Northcliffe, to whom he explained: ‘Absence at the front (where I have been
doing a little ambulance “joy riding”) has prevented my replying to your telegram of good wishes until to-day.”8 At the Union of Democratic Control (UDC) committee three days later he regaled Ponsonby with his experiences in ‘the French trenches’9 But he now discovered that his American trip could not after all take place ‘until towards perhaps the middle of March’. He apparently made another brief visit to Paris, to continue his agitation about wounded soldiers, and to bring back Dr Warden’s son Ken, who lodged with him during his first term at Westminster School.10 Angell found the eleven-year-old hard to entertain: when Erskine Childers’s wife complained to him about his association with the UDC, he included in his reply an inquiry as to whether any of her children were of an appropriate age to befriend his new ward.11

Arranging Angell’s delayed visit to the United States proved an unexpectedly protracted process. The charitable foundations there were less obliging than before: the Carnegie Endowment was in a timorous phase, refusing to supply further funds for European activities as soon as hostilities began; and the World Peace Foundation was handicapped first by legal disputes arising from Edwin Ginn’s recent death and then by Edwin Mead’s nervous breakdown. Angell’s only firm offer was from the American Association of International Conciliation to lead a three-week summer school at Cornell University starting in mid-June. On 20 February 1915 he therefore asked a commercial bureau in Cleveland to arrange lectures between mid-April and the end of September, hoping to better the ‘20 guineas’ (£21) per lecture which he had been able to command in Britain.12 However, his agent, who also made inquiries on his behalf, reported ‘distinctly discouraging’ prospects. Though Angell’s hopes of an early departure were intermittently raised – War & Peace even announced that he would ‘speak at the Newspaper Publishers’ Banquet, to be held in New York on April 22nd, at which it is expected that President Wilson will be present’ – all that he could secure to supplement his Cornell engagement was an invitation to attend the Lake Mohonk conference in late May.13

During the first four months of 1915, therefore, time hung heavily on his hands, though he continued to write articles and accept some private speaking engagements. By far his most creative initiative of this period was to develop a theme adumbrated two years previously in the sixth and seventh points of the programme advanced in his anonymous radical pamphlet, Towards a Parliamentary Platform of Pacifism: the need to restrict Britain’s use of its naval power. The war had highlighted the inherent conflict of interests between a belligerent, such as Britain, that wished to use its strong navy to blockade its enemies, and a neutral, such as the United States, that wished to trade as freely as in peacetime. At the outbreak of the First World War, despite a recent attempt to change it, international law still favoured belligerents, and thus caused some resentment across the Atlantic, as Angell was quick to notice. He wrote an article, ‘America and Sea Power’, which asserted that Britain’s control of the seas was acceptable to other nations only if ‘she makes herself the real policeman enforcing the common will of the community for the common good’, and warned that already there was a ‘very grave danger of conflict with America’ on this point.14
He did not yet realize how crucial this belligerent-rights issue was to be for the paradoxical bifurcation in his position whereby at home he seemed more subversive and anti-war than ever yet in the United States drifted towards the advocacy of military intervention on Britain’s side. When on 2 February 1915 ‘America and Sea Power’ was sent to the Nation, it was immediately rejected as inopportune ‘when events are so critical between us and America’, and so appeared in War & Peace instead. But across the Atlantic its thesis proved an important complement to that of America and the New World-State, whose core chapters were serialized in three consecutive Sunday editions of the New York Times starting on 28 February, and which was published in book form by Putnam’s soon afterwards. This work had made a purely abstract case for world leadership by the United States, giving no indication how that country would benefit concretely from assuming this responsibility. But a revision in America’s favour of the sea-power regime would offer it a material incentive to participate in the building of a new world order, and therefore to involve itself in the war. A New York publisher immediately spotted the significance of the issue, and commissioned Angell to produce a book on ‘the neutralization of the sea’.16

As a preliminary, Angell wrote the most influential short piece of his entire career, ‘America and the Neutralization of the Sea’, which was to appear in the North American Review for May 1915. Presenting himself as ‘a man of English descent whose youth and early manhood were passed in America’, he expressed the fear that the prospects of the United States’s ‘giving a new development to organized society by becoming the pivot of its world-wide organization on more civilized lines’ was being jeopardized by ‘a very serious cleavage of policy as between herself and England’. Americans were waking up to the fact that ‘sea law as it stands’ was ‘simply and purely a matter of might’, in that the supreme naval power ‘controls and dominates the traffic of mankind’; and they were unlikely to tolerate this state of affairs in the long term:

To put it briefly, America will not continue to accept the extraordinarily autocratic powers – the powers of controlling the highways of the world – contained in sea supremacy unless she herself in the last resort is its holder, or unless it is subject to an international control which will assure the terms of its exercise to western Powers as a whole, among whom she will bulk largely.

In consequence, after the war Britain ‘will be compelled either to internationalize her sea power so as to secure the interests of neutrals by their formal representation, or she will find herself confronted by a greater Power, like that of America, who may act either for herself…or on behalf of neutrals as well’.17 As yet, however, he did not foresee the next stage in the argument: that in order to guarantee its influence upon a post-war sea-power regime the United States should itself become a belligerent. Nor did he anticipate that in his own country his argument would generally be perceived as treacherous.

As he waited to cross the Atlantic, he became more critical of the arguments used by supporters of the war effort. Whereas in Prussianism and its Destruction he had eventually recognized Britain’s military intervention as ‘almost the war of
pacifists, he now complained in a second pamphlet for the UDC, *The Prussian in Our Midst*, that ‘during the last six months’ this justification of British military intervention in idealistic terms, as ‘a war against militarism, a “war to end war”’, had been supplanted by one based on the power-political ‘doctrines of our enemy’. (Meanwhile his agent was selling the text of his first UDC pamphlet to an American paper for $100.) To counter this move to the right on the part of British opinion, he made an overture to the left, accepting a request from Fenner Brockway, the Independent Labour Party (ILP) journalist who had recently founded the No-Conscription Fellowship, to inaugurate a series, ‘Towards a Permanent Peace’, in the *Labour Leader*. Taking the UDC line, Angell’s article insisted that the British government’s failure to state even its general principles for a peace settlement not only played ‘into the hands of the extremest and most resistant section of the enemy’ but, by denying the British public knowledge of these principles, condemned it to being ‘a blind instrument of a secret clique’. By further arguing that ‘in future there can be no separation between foreign policy and home policy, since the actions of a government in foreign affairs can cancel a generation of work in the home field’, it also hinted that someone with Angell’s kind of expertise had a significant role to play in socialist politics.

His contributions to *War & Peace* became more outspoken too. He attacked Britain’s wartime restrictions on individual freedom, which he likened to medieval statutes prescribing that heretics be burned at the stake, for not only ‘rendering us incapable of developing a public opinion which shall know what it wants at the peace’ but also ‘nullifying the moral object of the war by destroying in England the ideal it set out to protect’. After Britain opened a second front in Turkey, he complained about the lack of public discussion of what would happen to Constantinople if the allied military effort succeeded there, warning that Britain might hand the Ottoman capital to Russia. And in once more questioning the government’s implicit justification for its illiberal policies, its belief that ‘we may be conquered by the Prussian unless we adopt his doctrine’, he made the near-pacifist admission: ‘If the choice is really a choice between the risk of invasion and even defeat on the one hand, and the certainty of surrendering the noble and spiritual quality of our nationality on the other hand, then I hope that we shall take the risk.’

Meanwhile, he took part in a number of private gatherings. On 9 February 1915 he chaired the second session of the UDC’s general council, a sign of his continued loyalty to that organization. Six days later he addressed ‘a crowded meeting’ of the Friends’ Christian Fellowship Union at Devonshire House on ‘What about the Peace?’, exhorting his Quaker audience to explain ‘intellectually a truth which you hold intuitively by the Inner Light’. On 26 February he opposed the motion ‘that war was inevitable and a blessing’ at a meeting of the Sylvan Club, a long-established debating society that met at the Tavistock Hotel, his own argument being that, although there would be many more conflicts, ‘we are masters of our will and we can prevent wars’. As he reported to his sister, ‘more than one speaker, Conservative, Orthodox Churchmen, poured scorn on my Sermon on the Mount politics’. He also kept in touch with the Bryce
group, which was discussing the first draft of its report in early March. On the 21st of that month he lunched with Catherine Marshall and another suffragist-turned-internationalist, Kathleen D. Courtney – no relation to Lady (Kate) Courtney, with whom she is sometimes confused – to learn about the innovative Women’s International Congress that would be held five weeks later at The Hague. And on 26 March he attended a dinner to launch the Council for the Study of International Relations, an outgrowth of the adult-schools movement, where he was reported by Arnold Rowntree to have made a good speech and also to have privately predicted that ‘probably Holland will come in on our side’. Presumably, it was in connection with this council that Angell ‘joined a study circle to study the causes of war… composed largely of elderly working men and their wives’, as he was to recall in passing a decade and a half later. He also tried to keep in touch with friends in the Central Powers, asking an Austrian friend to forward a letter to another acquaintance who was serving in the Austro-Hungarian army. Yet, because of his underlying prudence, he steered clear of the public meetings with which the UDC now began experimenting. It was the ever-combative Morel who led the way with a speech at Cambridge in early March 1915. The impression given in After All that Angell himself faced a violent audience there on the UDC’s behalf at this time was misleading: in fact, the episode in question took place five years later, after the war was over. Indeed, in late April Ponsonby, who had himself already addressed ‘about 15 meetings’, considered Angell ‘cautious to a fault and too frightened of making a mistake’ (though also ‘a man of inventive genius’), and was to remind him after his first wartime visit to the United States that ‘before you went away you were rather reluctant to take part in this rather turbulent side of our propaganda’. Indeed, before making the final arrangements to cross the Atlantic Angell preferred to fit in another French holiday, at the Wardens’ villa at Agay on the Côte d’Azur. He set off from London by train on 9 April 1915, hoping to shake off his ‘infernal neuralgia’, though in the event his trip required the emergency extraction of two teeth. Breaking his return journey at the Hôtel Louvois in Paris on 22 April, he encountered Wrench, who reported to his parents that his friend ‘has been down on the Riviera having a rest and is going on lecture tour to America in ten days’ time’. Back in London, Angell sublet his apartment to a French family, with Gabrielle remaining as their housekeeper, although when her ‘crankiness’ caused problems for the new tenants the ever-dependable Mrs Manus was to engage her instead. Ken had already moved out to stay with an aunt; and both Harold Wright and Harry Lane offered to keep an eye on him. Angell kitted himself out in new clothes, and secured introductions from Bryce to influential Americans. Having also arranged that the Garton Foundation would employ Fayle as well as Hilton, in return for his renouncing his own financial claims on it, he informed its trustees of his imminent departure. On 8 May Esher replied with a request that he call round; but by then Angell had left for Liverpool to catch the St Paul. He departed in dramatic circumstances: the previous day, 7 May 1915, a U-boat had sunk the Cunard passenger liner Lusitania, killing 1,198 people, including many
Americans. Previously a believer in Germany’s civilized qualities, Angell was shocked: before boarding ship he told a New York Times reporter that the sinking constituted ‘inhuman warfare’, and insisted that United States ‘must now take cognizance of it’. He tried not to sound as if he expected a declaration of war, warning that ‘America must not go into it hot headedly’, and suggesting ‘an international court of neutrals to investigate the Lusitania episode’. Yet in the heat of the moment he did say that this international court ‘might conclude that the torpedoing . . . was sufficient grounds for America and other neutrals to go to war with Germany’. Even so, he was later to claim that, when asked whether he now loathed all Germans, he had replied this would be no more justified than loathing all passengers on the London and North Eastern Railway because one of them had ‘just been found guilty of an outrage on a little girl’.

Except for the gruesome experience of sailing through the human flotsam of the Lusitania, 8 May 1915 was a good moment to leave Britain. The atrocity itself, coming on top of mounting battlefield casualties, was to deepen the polarization of British opinion. A mere eighteen days later, partly in response to a campaign by the Northcliffe press for a coalition, Asquith brought the Conservatives under Bonar Law and the Labour Party under Henderson into his previously all-Liberal administration. On the other side of the debate May and June saw a number of tentative experiments in peace activism, including the launching of the League of Nations Society, a two-month campaign for a negotiated peace by the ILP, and a ‘Pilgrimage of Peace’ by the otherwise quietist Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Criticism of Angell became more frequent after word of his ‘America and the Neutralization of the Sea’ article, published in the United States in May 1915, and of similar writing for an American readership, reached Britain. In the pages of the Suffragette Christabel Pankhurst wondered: ‘Is He Working for Germany?’, and, affronted by his claim to be American, described him as ‘veritably a quick-change artist in nationality’. And in Cambridge, G.G. Coulton, who had criticized Angell’s imprecise arguments and poor scholarship in the previous October’s issue of Nineteenth Century and After as well as at meetings of the Cambridge University War and Peace Society, spent much of 1915 expanding them first into a pamphlet and then into a substantial book, The Main Illusions of Pacifism: A Criticism of Mr Norman Angell and of the Union of Democratic Control. This last was a triumph of academic overkill, which one reviewer summed up as ‘an onslaught – no milder word will suffice – on Mr Norman Angell’.

However, UDC colleagues who remained in Britain risked onslaughts of a less figurative kind as a result of press incitement. On 20 July the right-wing Daily Express, under its American editor R.D. Blumenfeld, condemned ‘the notorious pro-German Mr E.D. “Morel”’, and exhorted its readers to attend UDC meetings ‘in order that the national side of the question discussed should be heard as well as the anti-national’. The following day it printed photographs of MacDonald, Angell, and Morel, whom it labelled ‘A Trio of Peace Prattlers’, plus details of UDC activities. These articles resulted immediately in the roughing-up of three of Angell’s colleagues – Langdon-Davies, Ponsonby, and, despite his lameness, Cocks – while they were visiting Kingston in Surrey for a meeting on 21 July.
Having arrived in New York on 16 May 1915, Angell was not only out of physical danger but in demand for his opinions. Indeed, Nasmyth soon reported to Fayle that he was 'being overwhelmed with orders for articles'. Angell travelled upstate to Lake Mohonk, where on 20 May he heard the current secretary of war and a former chief of staff of the army give speeches advocating military preparedness by the United States. Angell told the press that these were ‘precisely the speeches he had heard so many times in Germany’, and issued a formal statement, ‘as an American’, which strongly condemned the sinking of the Lusitania, yet urged a non-military response, namely ‘a carefully organised system of non-intercourse’. Angell’s attack on military preparedness also attracted the editorial displeasure of the New York Times, which accused him of having once claimed that ‘war has been made impossible by modern economic conditions’. In writing his usual letter pointing out that he had merely argued that it had been made futile, Angell went on to insist that, though the United States might need ‘to have big armaments’, it was ‘just as necessary to know on behalf of what policy those armaments are to be used’; otherwise they might prove ‘a source of danger rather than safety’. Angell had thus stumbled upon a useful new propaganda theme: the United States might take the wrong path unless it clarified its foreign-policy principles. But that clarification would, he took for granted, lead to an internationalist conclusion. And espousal of internationalism would in turn give America an interest in shaping the post-war settlement, which it could best do by becoming a belligerent. Urging the United States to state its foreign-policy objectives thus constituted a first unwitting step along an interventionist road.

After Lake Mohonk, Angell had more than a fortnight before his Cornell commitment, which he spent partly in New York but mostly in Boston, where the World Peace Foundation proved hospitable. His priority had been to seek the help of the Carnegie Endowment both to fund the UDC in Britain and sponsor a major lecture campaign by himself in the United States. However, he found it paralysed by what he termed ‘neutralitis . . . complicated by a bad attack of preparedness fever’. As he reported back to C.P. Trevelyan: ‘I have tried to see Carnegie but the old man is, they say, seriously unwell, – a hint, indeed, that his mind is shaky.’ He admitted that he had ‘not seen the President and may not do so for some time’, and that a plan for giving a ‘ship-load of lectures is abandoned, partly on a direct hint from Washington’ – implying that the Carnegie Endowment had been placed under political pressure. Even so, he claimed to be fully employed writing a book and newspaper articles and giving some talks. He also apologized to Morel for ‘not having managed to lift the loot so far’ in his attempts to secure donations for the UDC. As happened throughout Angell’s life when he felt disoriented, his health suffered: he thus excused himself from an invitation to speak in Philadelphia on account of ‘insomnia continued by dysentery etc’.

Furthermore, his long-arranged summer school at Cornell from 14 June to 4 July 1915 proved disappointing, although he was able to use his recent textbook The Problems of the War – and of the Peace. His best pupils were impressive and became friends, including Manley O. Hudson, a future judge at the Permanent Court of International Justice, and Lewis S. Gannett, later a successful literary
critic. But ‘run-of-the-mill American students’ expected ‘cut and dried solutions, a world constitution. (‘Why not a United States of the World?’’),51 their naïve legalism accounting for the sharpness with which, in a book published in New York five months later, he criticized the elaborate paper schemes of World Federation which flourish so abundantly in this country. If we were within measurable distance of having achieved an international ‘will’ to co-operate so complete as to agree upon the numberless and immensely difficult details that the simplest Federation plans involve, there would be no need for Federation so far as war prevention was concerned, because war would not take place.52

Yet he himself had just argued in America and the New World-State that an embryonic world government was waiting only for the United States to provide it with institutions.

It was the growing reputation of ‘America and the Neutralization of the Sea’ that opened doors for him during July 1915. He was invited to write two substantial pieces for the Saturday Evening Post, a middlebrow Philadelphia magazine with a wide circulation, which he did while in Ithaca.53 Appearing on 17 July, ‘Suppose America Declared War on Germany’ argued that for the United States to send half a million men to Europe would not further its interests, and claimed: ‘The sea is the highway of the world and to civilise sea law is to internationalise the world.’ A week later, ‘Boycotts vs. Bayonets’ argued that the United States, the one country invulnerable to economic sanctions, should in concert with other neutrals devise an agreement ‘concerning not only such things as the furnishing of supplies to the European and Asian combatants in warfare but also covering certain peace contingencies as well’, as a result of which it might expect to ‘dominate the situation as far as future international law is concerned and place the international relations of the future on a very different foundation by leading in the organization and application of those forces I have dealt with here’.54 These pieces made clear to Americans that he was no stooge of the British government, at the cost of making him more unpopular than ever at home – including with the Garton trustees, as he would discover within a couple of months.

Meanwhile, having gone, via an engagement at the Chautauqua Institution on 6 July 1915,55 to New York City, where he settled himself in the Manhattan Hotel, he made a crucial connection with the editorial circle of the New Republic, a progressive magazine that had been launched there the previous November. Edited by Herbert Croly, who in the words of a colleague ‘had a marvellous net out for notables’ and made its editorial luncheons a magnet for visiting intellectuals, it had already published a generally sympathetic account of Angell’s work, written by staff writer Alvin S. Johnson, and was now to make him ‘for about a year virtually a member of staff’, allowing him to attend gatherings at which its policy was thrashed out and even to write editorials.56 His first contribution, a critical review of an alarmist work about national defence by Professor Roland G. Usher, appeared on 17 July. It was followed a fortnight later by an article, ‘A New Kind of War’, which reworked his contribution to the North
American Review. It argued that the United States should ‘offer to settle the whole contraband and blockade dispute with England on the basis of making international that virtual control of overseas trade of the world which England now exercises’. If this happened, moreover, the resultant international trade authority would constitute

the beginnings of the world organization of our common resources, social, economic, and political, for the purpose of dealing with a recalcitrant member of international society, by other than purely military means – a starting point whence international law might be made a reality, a code, that is, not merely expressing the general interest but sanctioning processes which furnish means of enforcing respect for it.

Although insistent that the United States should not declare war, the article asserted that it should ‘at this juncture give what none of the combatants can give: a lead in the organisation of at present unorganised force that may lay the foundation of a new society of the nations’. The article was, moreover, sent by a friend to President Wilson.

This contribution triggered an exchange in the pages of the New Republic. Paying Angell back for his review, Professor Usher insisted that it was unrealistic to expect a powerful Britain to cede command of the seas, and – echoing the line Angell himself often took – argued that what was needed was new thinking, not new international machinery: ‘I believe that we have already all the necessary machinery to enforce the international mind; it is the mind itself that is lacking.’ Angell was still in New York when Usher’s article appeared: he sent a letter to the Nation from there on 8 August 1915. But his rejoinder was delayed because thereafter he was ‘cut off from newspapers for some weeks’, having gone upstate to Briarcliffe Lodge, a hotel on the Hudson River.

During this holiday, the Garton trustees sent a letter formally severing their connection with him because he had been ‘forced by convictions which we respect but do not share, to carry on a propaganda in the United States upon lines that made co-operation between you and the Foundation difficult and undesirable’. Esher included a covering note expressing personal appreciation of Angell’s ‘brilliant abilities’, and was rewarded with so emollient a reply – in which, though defending his actions, Angell warmly acknowledged the help the trustees had given him – that Esher annotated it with the comment: ‘A very nice letter.’ The Garton Foundation continued, under Hilton’s direction, but confined its attention to the economic impact of the war. In practical terms its break with Angell made no difference since he was no longer receiving any subsidy from that source: indeed, the one outward indication of this parting of the ways was that, with effect from the September 1915 issue, War & Peace stopped publishing a list of the societies affiliated to the Garton Foundation. But in psychological terms it not only constituted a hurtful snub but also removed the restraint of having to justify his actions to Conservative statesmen, and thereby gave free rein to the left-leaning politician within him. His belated reply to Professor Usher thus asserted controversially that Britain knew it was ‘in an all but desperate position’, and was therefore implicitly amenable to an agreement over maritime law.
It further stated that ‘Englishmen as a whole would, if the facts were clear, infinitely prefer some such international arrangement’ to appearing as a selfish exploiter of its national power on the German model.\textsuperscript{62}

A few days later, on 3 September 1915, Angell sent his impressions of the United States to \textit{War \\& Peace}. He again noted that the ‘sort of dementia which marked the American public as a whole at the time of the Spanish war has disappeared as a characteristic of national behaviour’, and gave particular credit both to President Wilson, who ‘seems to have done more than one would have supposed it was possible for one man to do’ and to ‘the young American, especially of the Universities’ – a recognition of his success in increasing the number of international polity clubs there from five to thirty-six. Nonetheless he predicted that the United States ‘at the instigation of a screaming demagogy on the western coast’ would eventually find itself fighting Japan.\textsuperscript{63} This emphasis on factors other than the European conflict that might draw America into war unless it clarified its foreign-policy principles became a growing component of his propaganda.

During September and much of October 1915 Angell knuckled down to the painful task of putting together the volume on the neutralization of the sea that he had contracted to produce before leaving England. He resented spending ‘two months over a book I thought I would have completed in as many weeks’, as he admitted to Wright, and, after its publication by Doran in New York at the beginning of December, was privately to describe \textit{The World’s Highway: Some Notes on America’s Relation to Sea-Power and Non-Military Sanctions for the Law of Nations} as ‘re-hashed rubbish’.\textsuperscript{64} It repeated both his claim that an international maritime organization might evolve into a world authority applying economic sanctions, and his isolationism-undermining emphasis on the many factors that might involve the United States in conflict. And it urged all countries to abandon ‘fictitious neutrality’ in favour of ‘common international action’,\textsuperscript{65} while as yet stopping short of accusing American neutrality of being fictitious. However, in addition to offering these liberal-internationalist arguments, the book showed traces of Angell’s UDC radicalism. Thus despite having already insisted that Britain’s ‘marinism’ was much preferable to Germany’s ‘militarism’, it not only questioned the supposed differences between ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘Prussian’ ideals, but warned that Anglo-Saxon societies might themselves be Prussianized in wartime, and also claimed that the most progressive features of British social policy had been copied from Germany.\textsuperscript{66}

As Angell completed this unsatisfactory text in the autumn of 1915, he was in a restless mood. His sacking by the Garton Foundation had already unsettled him. Now he encountered a coterie that was even more mesmerizing than the revolutionaries and bohemians of Geneva a quarter of a century before. On 8 October he attended a peace concert at the Friends’ Meeting House on East 15th Street and Stuyvesant Square, where he met the three Fuller sisters, a pioneering folk-singing troupe that was making a reputation for itself in the United States. Like Florence Schofield, they were English yet interesting: they had pacifist views and radical connections; and their brother and manager Walter
Fuller was shortly to marry Crystal Eastman, an American radical-feminist advocate of free love whose brother was the charismatic socialist Max Eastman. Angell was drawn into their circle, enjoying the company of Cynthia and Dorothy Fuller and being captivated by Rosalind, a clever and glamorous woman in her early twenties who was being pursued by Arthur Dakyns, a friend of Bertrand Russell’s, but did not reciprocate his wish to marry. Having added an ‘e’ to her first name for professional purposes in the 1920s, Rosalind achieved fame as an actress. Angell also fell more briefly under the political influence of Max Eastman and Walter Fuller. The latter was an anti-war activist, one of those shortly to suggest the ‘peace ship’ that the motor manufacturer Henry Ford was to send to Sweden in a vain attempt to bring about an armistice. Angell was also affected by his belated reading of Russell’s article ‘War and Non-Resistance’ in the August issue of *Atlantic Monthly*: its suggestion that, purely as a tactic, non-resistance might prove more effective than armed resistance set a bee buzzing in his bonnet.

Under these influences, Angell considered a dramatic new campaigning path. On 15 October 1915 he wrote a long and reflective letter to Wright, which he held back for five days, to make sure that it expressed his true feelings, and then posted off with an addendum. In the original section of the letter Angell informed his closest confidant that, though ‘not necessarily as a step to be taken during the war but as one to be taken immediately after’, he now favoured a straight out anti-militarist campaign among the more revolutionary of the Labour people – with a possible capture of the I.L.P., among the younger generation of Quakers, Socialists, certain of the “intellectuals” of the Bertrand Russell type. It would amount virtually to a preaching of non-resistance – or rather of moral and passive as opposed to military resistance – not from the religious standpoint but as the only way to save democracy.

This was despite the fact that in the preface to *The World’s Highway* he explicitly rejected non-resistance. Angell’s musings to Wright demonstrated not only his ideological fluidity but his political ambition, though ultimately his caution too. In the addendum of 20 October, he acknowledged his own ‘puzzlement and indecision’, yet pointed to the near impossibility of reviving such bodies as the Manchester Norman Angell League after the war. He asked rhetorically: ‘Will the old type of respectable “moderate” propaganda be of the slightest avail? . . . Will “educational” effort be what is needed at all? Shall we not have to be frankly revolutionary?’ He wondered whether the Labour Party would ‘offer a man like myself a pretty safe constituency if he were very humble and subscribed to all the Thirty Nine Articles on the understanding he should devote himself particularly to international work?’ He admitted embarrassment at not having been in touch with the UDC, though claimed to have been trying to raise money from ‘Ford the motor car man’ for peace work in Europe – presumably in conjunction with Walter Fuller. Characteristically, by the end of the addendum caution had prevailed: Angell retreated from planning an anti-militarist campaign to taking ‘a Sabbatical year’ while he worked out his position, though this would require him to relinquish the Rowntree subsidy.
Two days later, on 22 October 1915, he wrote to congratulate Russell on his ‘War and Non-Resistance’ article, which, he claimed, had chimed with his own thinking:

The effect of the war on my own mind has been rather to wear down that hesitation which I have always felt to urging non-resistance....I have a feeling that this may be our only way out – not of course that any country will adopt non-resistance as a practical policy, but that parties in England, Germany and France by urging non-resistance may throw the matter into public discussion and so tend to show what really is and is not threatened by the political domination of a foreign power, and thus help to dissipate the vague fears which play so large a role in preventing any international understanding. If the Quakers had, during the last generation, been definitely and somewhat aggressively making an intellectual defense of non-resistance in international politics, I doubt whether the panics that we have witnessed would have been possible. I wonder if such a movement is one of the possibilities after the war? If so, I may volunteer to help it along.70

Though stopping short both of calling for a non-resistance campaign during the war itself and of advocating principled pacifism, Angell’s remarkable letters to Wright and Russell contradicted After All’s categorical assertion that ‘a mere “anti-war,” non-resister negativism did not appeal to me’ . Angell now began a series of lectures, designed to fill the financial void left by the Carnegie Endowment’s circumspection. They had a significant effect on his propaganda, causing him to come clean as to both his nationality and his argument about unneutrality. His claim to be American was causing some controversy: a Californian reviewer of The World’s Highway, who may have known the author from his time in that state, pointed out that ‘Ralph Lane (“Norman Angell”) is veritably a chameleon in his citizenship. English he was; then American; again English, and now we find him saying “we” and “us” in “The World’s Highway” and meaning “we Americans”.’72 For these lectures Angell acquiesced in the label ‘English author and journalist’: he was so described, for example, when he addressed the Woman’s Peace Party in New York on 11 November. His main theme on that occasion was that the United States had to be able to do more than ‘repel predatory attacks on American territory’ because of the risk of war with Japan ‘over questions of the rights of Japanese labourers in Hawaii or the Philippines or the differential treatment of her citizens in the United States or the open door in China’, a war in which Japan might be backed in a challenge to America by a European country worried about being commercially excluded from Latin America.73 He was similarly billed when he spoke at the Cosmopolitan Club in early December. At this meeting he was reported as claiming that, though formally neutral, the United States was in effect helping the financially strongest belligerent, Britain, by selling it supplies, and was showing this partiality because it disapproved of Germany’s bellicosity. He moreover claimed that the United States was in practice ‘using her great resources to penalize a policy of aggression’, but that ‘this great force is wasted in so far as contributing to a better international order is concerned, because this country has no international policy’.74 Repetitive and improvised lecturing thus
caused him to make explicit what had merely been implicit in The World’s Highway: that the United States was already using its economic leverage to punish aggression, yet was failing to reap the policy advantages that it would have done if it had been candid about its actions. This claim, which he now repeated in War & Peace, ‘that America is intervening decisively in the war’ constituted his second step towards advocating military intervention. Thus, although Angell was mixing with socialist anti-militarists who opposed involvement in the war, and was personally drawn to non-resistance as a tactic, his propaganda in the United States was heading inexorably in a contrary direction.

Despite having promised to return to Britain once his lectures were finished, Angell decided to stay a little longer. To Wright he pleaded a bronchial condition that made an Atlantic crossing inadvisable in mid-winter. ‘Two lectures a day and sleeping in wickedly overheated sleeping cars has [sic] given me a cold that has developed into…uncontrollable and sleep defying coughing’, he reported on Christmas eve 1915 in another thoughtful letter that he ‘held up for further consideration’ and completed four days into the new year. In the short term he planned a visit to the warmth of Jamaica, Panama, Costa Rica, and northern Colombia, combining recuperation with reconnoitring of some of the republics of ‘Spanish America’ about which he had generalized in his early writing. Thereafter, he intended a prompt return to Britain, where conscription was imminent. Indeed, in a last-ditch effort to resist it, a National Council Against Conscription (soon renamed the National Council for Civil Liberties) had been formed in December 1915, with Langdon-Davies, now a socialist, becoming its secretary, and Mrs Manus being seconded from War & Peace to assist him, their strenuous but unavailing last-ditch efforts, which interested the security authorities, reminding Wright of ‘“neutrality” week’. Angell feared that he was liable to be called up, and concluded that ‘if I am, I cannot solve the problem of my submission or otherwise simply by running away’. He would use his proposed sabbatical to devise a progressive foreign policy for Britain: ‘Six months rest for cogitation and adjustment in which however I shall turn over certain conceptions for a real book – the application of Gt Illusion principles to a specific foreign policy.’ This was specifically in order to ‘give the Left – Socialists, U.D.C., etc., a definite platform in the subject’. Optimistically, as it turned out, he expected the World Peace Foundation to fund this period of reflection in England.

Having thus made up his mind, he wrote to the Rowntrees in early January 1916, advising them to suspend their financial assistance to him. He also passed on to C.P. Trevelyan some information he had received from Curtis Melnitz, an American journalist who had been working in Berlin, about ‘pacifist groups’ there, which Angell optimistically hoped, ‘might result in something like the creation of a powerful German U.D.C. acting in virtual co-operation with ourselves for the sanitation of German opinion and its preparation for the peace’. And he sent off a similarly hopeful article to War & Peace, which identified ‘a decided, though slow and halting, development of American opinion’ in the direction of assuming ‘some responsibilities and obligations as a member of the society of nations’. Then on the 8th of the month he headed south with his camera.
for a few weeks. It can only have been during this trip that he ‘walked across the American continent’, as he later put it in an anecdote intended to intrigue a great-niece before admitting to her that it was a trek of only ‘about fifty miles’ – evidently in central America. Likewise, a subsequent mention of having visited ‘San Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and other parts of Spanish America’ and found the ‘politically-minded inhabitants’ very disparaging about ‘the feudalism of the British constitution’ must also refer to this holiday.

On his return to New York Angell discovered several letters from friends in Britain advising him that the national service act of January 1916 applied only to bachelors: he was thus exempt in virtue of his marriage, despite not having seen his wife for four years. He therefore stayed on in the United States for almost four more months, an inducement to do so being an offer from a Washington socialite and independent political thinker, Mrs Juliette Rublee, to introduce him to members of the Wilson cabinet. He continued to hold successful meetings, giving a long address followed by a question-and-answer session at Poli’s Theatre, Washington, on 27 February, the transcript of which was issued by Putnam’s as a short book entitled The Dangers of Half Preparedness: A Plea for a Declaration of American Policy. (Characteristically, in the published version Angell post-dated the meeting by one day.) A bemused reviewer of the belated English edition calculated that Angell’s contribution must have lasted at least two and a half hours. Astonishingly, given that a Congressman spoke before Angell, this was about right: the local organizer reported to the Woman’s Peace Party, under whose auspices it had been held, that the ‘meeting was called for 2.30 p.m. and at 6 o’clock the ushers were complaining that the audience could not be persuaded to leave…’ In his bravura performance Angell developed his ‘unneutrality’ claim: ‘You realize, of course, that you are intervening in this war. You are possibly even settling its issue. At any rate the Germans believe that.’ He also defended this tacit intervention, while insisting that the principles underlying it should be made explicit.

Four weeks later, during the crisis that followed the torpedoing by a U-boat of the Sussex, a French ferry, in the English channel on 24 March 1916, Angell took a third step towards interventionism, concluding that the United States should now sever diplomatic relations with Germany. This fact was noted by Lord Eustace Percy, a Foreign Office official attending a press dinner while on a short visit to the United States, who later recalled: ‘I sat with him at a table with some dozen Americans in New York during the “Sussex” crisis, and heard him expound his ideas’, which were ‘very strongly that the United States must break immediately with Germany [and] that they had no other respectable alternative.’ But this intensifying anti-neutralism did not stop Angell denouncing compulsory military service at the same time. On 25 March the New Republic carried an article by Ralph Barton Perry claiming that a system of ‘freely adopted’ conscription could be beneficial for an enlightened country. Predictably, Angell countered with
the claim: ‘Conscription, to be effective, must be a conscription of minds as well as of bodies.’ Unwisely, however, he went on to complain that a conscript who deserted the battlefield because he did not agree with his government’s reason for fighting would be shot, allowing Perry to retort that this example was ‘a little absurd’ since it would be no less unacceptable for a volunteer to desert in the face of the enemy.\textsuperscript{87} Obliged to explain his position more carefully, Angell admitted (as he had already done three years previously):

If conscription is used on the grounds of dire military necessity, as the alternative to national extinction or the shirking of plain obligations, I have personally not a word to say. If the case of military need is manifest, adopt conscription, knowing it to be a real danger to freedom, but a danger faced with open eyes as an alternative to a still greater danger.

Nonetheless, he went on to insist ‘as a matter of fact’ that conscription was often advocated ‘not on the ground of military need so much as that of its educational or moral superiority to the voluntary system: as a means of assimilating the alien, of attaining general national integration, of correcting our materialism, spiritualising our democracy, democratising our plutocracy, of heaven knows what’ — a justification that he refused to accept and to which, he insisted, Perry’s original article had given some sanction.\textsuperscript{88}

In addition to thus offering a strange mixture of anti-neutrality and anti-conscription arguments, between late March and mid-May 1916 Angell was experiencing mixed emotions. He was keen to return to Britain, where an extension of compulsory military service to married men was expected, and was frustrated by the refusal of the World Peace Foundation to fund his work if he went to Europe.\textsuperscript{89} But he was enjoying his contacts with the Fullers; and his ideas were being taken notice of in the United States. On 24 April the American Union against Militarism reported a meeting with Angell to discuss the terms of an appeal to President Wilson. On 8 May Nasmyth urged Angell to extend his stay, which, having initially arranged to leave on the 13th, he did by a week.\textsuperscript{90} The President was taking a personal interest in Angell’s arguments. Though reluctant to sever ties with Germany, Wilson understood that an international organization might be an important part of a post-war settlement. Not only for principled reasons, but also because he was seeking re-election in six months, he was impatient to bring about peace negotiations in Europe; but Sir Edward Grey had always insisted that an American commitment to post-war cooperation was an essential precondition for these. The annual meeting of the League to Enforce Peace, due to be held at the New Willard Hotel in New York on 27 May, was an ideal opportunity to give such a commitment. Knowing that his address on that occasion ‘may be the most important I shall ever be called to make’, the President consulted his closest adviser, Colonel E.M. House, over how best to pitch it at both international and domestic opinion.\textsuperscript{91} As scholars have long recognized, Angell’s writings were drawn upon for that purpose.\textsuperscript{92} On the 19th Angell sent Wilson, via House, a list of internationalist statements by European leaders, which formed the basis of Wilson’s allusion in his 27 May speech to ‘repeated utterances of the leading statesmen of most of the greatest nations now engaged
in this war’ in favour of the view that public right should prevail over national interest. Angell’s unsigned editorial reiterating his ‘unneutrality thesis’ in the *New Republic* of 20 May was also taken into account.93 Moreover, when in his address to the League to Enforce Peace the President called for ‘an universal association of the nations’ he described its main purpose as being ‘to maintain the inviolate security of the highway of the seas for the common and unhindered use of all the nations of the world’ – his linking of internationalism with the command of the seas and his use of the word ‘highway’ being further testimonies to Angell’s direct influence upon the way Wilson presented his case.

Yet Angell was not in New York for this moment of reflected glory. A week before, on 20 May 1916, he had set out for Liverpool on the *Philadelphia*, accompanied by the Fuller sisters: their brother, fearing conscription, remained in the United States. He read to them from the typescript of ‘The Citizen and Society’ – his unfinished book of 1913, which Wright had worked on and sent back to him – and was confided in by Rosalind about her relationship with Dakyns. Hanging over him for most of the journey was a second military-service bill, due to be published on 25 May: indeed, Walter Lippmann, an influential staff writer on the *New Republic*, was shortly to tell its readers that Angell had returned home because he was ‘just under the legal age for conscription’ in his home country. Wondering whether the British government ‘will order him to sweep up mines . . . or become a clerk in a munitions factory’, Lippmann declared that it should instead give him a desk in the Foreign Office ‘and order him to think’.94 However, on the 27th news reached the ship that Angell was in fact over age.95 He had been cautiously evasive about what he would have done if required to serve, his standard line having been: ‘However one may meet that liability I don’t want to do the thing by running away.’96 He could not have claimed a conscientious objection on pacifist grounds, having publicly argued, most recently at Poli’s Theatre: ‘Personally I am not a non-resister. I believe in defense.’97 Nor could he easily have done so as a voluntarist, since, as has been noted, he had been conceding for three years that conscription was justified in a military emergency. However, his mood was too intransigent to make it likely that he had returned home in order to give the authorities a quiet life. And, as will be seen, several of his friends were declaring conscientious objections. It is more likely than not that Angell would have done the same on some combination of voluntarist and socialist grounds, claiming that there was no true emergency and that the failure to conscript wealth made the conscription of the common man socially iniquitous. *After All* was to state that, on discovering his ineligibility, he tried to join up any way, and was rejected.98 But there is no corroboration of this, even though it would have been in his interest to publicize such a gesture in order to silence his right-wing critics; and had he been minded to offer his services he could of course have done so at any time in the previous twenty-one months. His claim to have volunteered reads very much like an autobiographical rationalization made after he had turned decisively against leftism and pacifism.

Disembarking in Liverpool on 28 May 1916, Angell hurried to London, where he still had tenants at 4 King’s Bench Walk, so based himself mainly at the
Arundel Hotel, though on occasions at Wright’s home in Banstead, Surrey; and he used Harry’s house when he needed to give a permanent address. On 1 June he announced his return to Joseph Rowntree, who expressed his pleasure, and soon afterwards agreed to keep subsidizing *War & Peace*, as he had been for almost a year. But others were less welcoming, on account of Angell’s propaganda in the United States. His own club, the Bath, had already called on him to resign because of his sea-power arguments, and, after he refused, was to expel him. At the National Liberal Club on 5 June 1916 criticisms of his nationality claims were made in the presence of Wright’s father Charles, a wealthy banker who had obligingly replaced Jackson as treasurer of the Norman Angell general fund. Angell felt obliged to send a self-exculpatory note, though it fell a little short of total candour:

I am of English birth and English nationality and travel on an English passport. As a lad I emigrated to America expecting to remain there my life, was prepared to become an American. But after coming of age decided not to do so, returned to Europe and am, of course, a British subject legally and in every way. In the preface to one of my American books I state that I am of British nationality, but claim, by virtue of my early associations, to discuss American affairs from the point of view of an American. I have always claimed in America, half-jestingly, a double nationality, but have always declared my British allegiance. In my public speeches in America since the war I have been trying scrupulously to ‘talk’ as an ‘Englishman’.

On the day he sent this note to Charles Wright he ‘reported fully on his visit to America’ to a meeting of the UDC executive committee, of which he was to be, by his own standards, a diligent attender over the next thirteen months, despite discovering that it was now ‘commonly regarded as a gathering of traitors’. His brother Harry, on encountering him later in June, was upset by ‘the spirit of opposition or unqualified adherence to any one party’ to which Angell had succumbed. For his part, Angell was shocked by how much more intolerant Britain’s public culture had become while he had been away. He likened his experience as ‘an Englishman coming from abroad after an absence of a year or two’ to that of someone ‘coming from the open air into a closed room where several persons have been sitting’ and being ‘astonished to find that they do not notice... how foul and heated that which they are breathing has become’.

Those still of a liberal persuasion had indeed much to nauseate them. Wilson’s speech of 27 May 1916 had been ‘received in a large part of the English press not only with coldness, but in some cases with violent hostility’, as Angell noted. In a third UDC pamphlet, which eventually appeared in August, he insisted that this ‘childish’ snubbing of Wilson jeopardized ‘perhaps the most valuable alliance offered to us since the war began’. When an Allied economic conference at Paris in mid-June decided that commercial warfare against Germany should be continued after a military victory, Angell protested in *War & Peace* that this robbed the international community of its most effective ‘instrument’ – the threat of economic exclusion – for drawing Germany into a future international organization. (This article was shown to President Wilson by Colonel House.)
Above all, Britain’s military-service acts, though by world standards generous in their provision for conscientious objectors, were producing a confrontation between the local tribunals, which applied them restrictively, and an intransigent core of ‘absolutists’, who unexpectedly held out for unconditional exemption. Among the latter were a number of Angell’s associates, notably Clifford Allen, who entertained Angell at his flat shortly before going into prison; Wilk Haycock, who was arrested in late September; and George Benson, an active member of the Manchester Norman Angell League, who for a time served with Haycock in Wormwood Scrubs prison. By contrast B.N. Langdon-Davies behaved as most objectors had been expected to: he accepted alternative service, working as a baker, which allowed him to continue helping the National Council for Civil Liberties in his spare time. In addition, Bertrand Russell, though too old for military service, had emerged as a leading defender of absolutist objectors, having dedicated himself to the No-Conscription Fellowship. During Angell’s first month back in England, moreover, Russell was fined for a leaflet ‘impeding recruiting and discipline’; and early in July he was not only denied a passport to visit the United States, but sacked from his lectureship at Trinity College, Cambridge, the latter deprivation eliciting a public protest from Dennis Robertson in his capacity as ‘a Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, albeit on military service’. Despite these rebuffs, Russell went ahead with a series of anti-war meetings in South Wales later in the same month. Thus, whereas at the start of the war Russell had deferred to Angell as an anti-war leader, the tables were now turned. Emulating the philosopher’s defiance, Angell condemned conscription in *War & Peace*, claiming that ‘to be effective’ it had to be ‘a conscription of minds as well as bodies’.

He received almost as much opprobrium as Russell. A diatribe by Cecil Chesterton in the *Daily Express* of 17 July, entitled ‘As an “Angell” of the Light: Pro-German Theories in English Guise’, accused him of ‘turning the anger of America away from Prussia and towards the Allies’. And Heinemann would not publish ‘The Citizen and Society’, the typescript of which was to languish in his strong room for thirty-nine years until it was discovered and returned. Nor would he take Angell’s more recent work, ‘his lack of courage’ in this regard causing a member of his staff, Minna Green, to go and work for the UDC instead, as she was to tell Virginia Woolf some years later. Angell mixed with the most resolute opponents of the war: on 10 August, for example, he dined with Allen, MacDonald, Catherine Marshall (now organizing the No-Conscription Fellowship), Ponsonby, and Russell. Yet he was more disconcerted than most of them by the intense unpopularity that he now experienced. His initial instinct was to escape back to the United States in the autumn, in order to resume his lecturing and also to accompany the Fuller sisters as they went over for the new performing season. However, Angell received ‘a hint from “a usually well-informed source” that it was quite unlikely, if I continued peace propaganda in England, that I should be granted a passport for America this fall’, as he later informed Herbert Croly. He therefore instructed his American agent, who had been provisionally taking bookings for the autumn, to cancel these.
By a series of Chinese whispers these cancellations created two widespread misunderstandings. First, an Italian newspaper report picked up by a German news agency led to a story in the American press on 21 August 1916 to the effect that Angell had been imprisoned for declining to join the army. Although a correction stating that he was ‘42 years of age and consequently not liable to military service’ appeared within forty-eight hours, Angell milked the misunderstanding skilfully, using an interview to expound his anti-conscriptionist views for an American audience: ‘If you suppress the right to private judgment you suppress the capacity for public judgment, and that is why I believe these conscientious objectors are doing their country and English tradition a very real service.’ He also claimed that government policy bears more harshly upon precisely those about whose genuineness of conviction there can be no possible doubt…. Thus if you will accept alternative service it is relatively easy to escape the trenches…. But the man who refuses this easy escape, whose very refusal to accept it is proof that he is a man, goes to hard labor, or a military prison, or is condemned to death.

On 28 August the New York Times commented disapprovingly on his adroit exploitation of ‘the widespread interest created by the report that he had been imprisoned by the British government’ in order to secure the widespread dissemination of ‘some rather extended remarks of his on “conscientious objectors”’. Second, within days of being corrected, the transatlantic rumour about his imprisonment mutated into an as yet false report that he had been refused a passport. The New Republic, which claimed this on 1 September 1916, considered that such a refusal was ‘if true, of a peculiar stupidity’ in view of Angell’s success in promoting the idea of unneutrality in the United States. Indeed, he was to have another triumph in this regard when Wilson, in accepting re-nomination by the Democratic Party’s as its presidential candidate on 2 September, made the important statement, ‘no nation can any longer remain neutral as against any wilful disturbance of the peace of the world’, which, as the New Republic loyalty pointed out, ‘originated with Mr Norman Angell and the words used by the President are Mr Angell’s own words’. The paper went on to credit him with having done ‘an incalculable amount to convince leaders of American liberalism of their international responsibilities’, whereas most ‘semi-official visitors have hurt more than they have helped by their insensitivity to America and their moral pretentiousness’. In fact, Angell had decided not to apply for a passport, in order avoid the restrictions on his behaviour that might have been required as a condition of being granted one. Worried that the Foreign Office ‘might make a grievance of allowing it to pass uncorrected’, Angell later sent a letter denying that he had made a passport request but nonetheless urging ‘Americans to realize both the extent to which this tyranny is growing in England and the extent to which it is resented’.

Angell’s visit to the Fullers on the south coast in September 1916 before their return to the United States marked a pleasant respite from was otherwise a difficult homecoming. While claiming characteristically to be ‘unwell,
extraordinarily tired’,126 he spent the autumn in Britain experimenting with a cautious version of the socialist and anti-militarist strategy that he had been contemplating since his rupture with the Garton Foundation. He engaged a secretary of left-wing inclinations, the exotic and idiosyncratic Konni Zilliacus. Born in Japan, because his Swedo-Finnish father had been exiled by the Russians, Zilliacus had been educated at Bedales and Yale, had served as an ambulance orderly on the western front, and was filling in while his application to join the Royal Flying Corps was being considered. He was later to work for the League of Nations in Geneva, and after the Second World War to sit as a Labour MP until expelled from the party for pro-communist activities, though unlike his fellow-travelling associates he preferred Tito to Stalin.127 With Zilliacus’s secretarial assistance Angell sent signed articles to the American press attacking conscription other than in a real emergency, and an exposition of his ‘American unneutrality’ thesis to the Yale Review.128 He took on speaking engagements for the ILP, despite not yet being a member.129 He wrote a substantial pamphlet, Why Freedom Matters, for the National Council for Civil Liberties, which heaped derision on the notion ‘that unless we harry and persecute the conscientious objector . . . we shall not win this war’,130 and implied that the threat to liberty came more from the repressiveness of the British state than from the aggressiveness of its enemies. And he had a letter complaining at the ‘chill aloofness’ of British opinion from the internationalist thinking of the American League to Enforce Peace published in the Nation.131 But in general he found himself too controversial in Britain to achieve much under his own name. He later informed Lippmann that ‘a good deal of time is taken up in work like “coaching” M.P.s’, and that, in consequence of the fact that even the ‘self-same men who slobbered over my work three years ago’ had now turned against him, ‘the only work I can usefully do for publication is mainly anonymous’.132 Indeed, starting in September War & Peace adopted a format of mainly unsigned contributions, many of which were by Angell, in some cases reusing material that had formerly appeared over his signature.133 At the same time the magazine became much more contentious, as in its suggestion that conscription was morally on a par with the confiscation of wealth: ‘If it is theft to take a man’s property for the purposes of the State, is it any more theft to take his life?’134

Despite this move to the left, Angell privately retained access to the liberal élite in London and Washington. The Courtneys invited him to dinner on 23 October 1916, along with Herbert Hoover and his wife, Viscount Morley and Sir John Simon, who had resigned from the Asquith cabinet over entry into the war and the introduction of conscription respectively, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, a former diplomat, and G.P. Gooch, their hostess recording that ‘we had an excellent dinner here – mixed company but free talk’.135 And Wilson still read Angell’s work. A substantial memorandum which he sent in late November was placed by the President in his personal file: it stopped short of advocating an American declaration of war, yet repeated his argument of the past two years that only an international organization to which the United States was committed could offer
Germany and Britain the ‘security from the abuse of the power of the other . . . for which both are now fighting.’

On 8 December 1916 Angell belatedly applied for a passport – or, strictly, for an endorsement of his existing one – so he could leave for the United States on either the 23rd or the 30th of that month. He claimed to be forty-four, though he was in reality eighteen days short of that age, and gave his name as Ralph Norman Angell Lane. His stated reason for wanting to leave the country was to spend between six weeks and two months talking to American publishers. But it is likely that sudden disillusionment with the British political situation played a part. Only two days before applying for his passport, he had accepted the invitation of V. Gordon Childe, later a celebrated pre-historian but then a postgraduate student at Queen’s College, to address the Oxford University Socialist Society in late January, which suggests that as late as 6 December he had intended to stay in Britain for at least a couple more months. However, on the day before Angell made his passport application Asquith was replaced as prime minister by Lloyd George, who appointed Balfour in place of Grey as foreign secretary. Angell was soon to label the resulting harder-line administration as the ‘Northcliffe Government’, because it was the press baron’s ‘constant stimulus to passion and the herd instinct’ that had paved the way for it, and was to describe the processes whereby Asquith had been pressured into forming a coalition in May of the previous year and into resigning eighteen months later as ‘moral lynchings’. It is likely that the ousting of Asquith changed Angell’s mind.

One of the Lloyd George coalition’s first tasks was to respond to the conditional offer of peace talks made on 12 December 1916 by Germany and Austria-Hungary. Angell feared that it would ‘let slip altogether the opportunity presented’, as he put it to Trevelyan, by failing to understand that its own commitment to ‘the destruction of German militarisation’ required it in any peace negotiations to offer ‘a League of Nations’ as the only way to satisfy the legitimate security concerns of Berlin and Vienna as well of the other European capitals. After Wilson responded on the 18th to the German and Austro-Hungarian offer by pressing the Allies to define their own peace terms, Angell asked Esher – presumably because of his influence with his fellow Garton trustee Balfour – to press the new government for a favourable reply. But his former patron had become ‘strangely embittered’, and rebuffed him with the assertion that it was impossible to reason ‘with an idealist like Wilson, who does not see that Germany acted like a burglar and that we mean to punish her accordingly’.

Depressed by these developments, and having heard nothing from the Foreign Office about his passport for a month, Angell wrote on 11 January 1917 to Lord Eustace Percy, on the strength of having met him in New York during the Sussex crisis. ‘The passport department do not refuse the endorsement – but neither do they give it’, he complained. He admitted that he held unorthodox opinions about the war, but pointed out that on account of these ‘I cannot be regarded as an “emissary of the British Government”‘; and that he was therefore ‘in a more, not less favourable position for urging that Americans cannot without danger to their security tolerate a German triumph’. Indeed, on the 13th Lippmann wrote
to express the *New Republic*’s possible interest in an ‘article from you justifying America’s entry into the war on liberal and international grounds’. Angell had evidently lost his innocence as a propagandist for British war aims, and was teetering on the brink of advocating American intervention.

His passport became the subject of an uncommon jurisdictional dispute between the Foreign Office and Home Office – uncommon in that each tried to leave the decision to the other. Perhaps because he felt that his former support for Angell disqualified him from ruling in his favour, or perhaps simply because of his laid-back attitude, Balfour informed Arnold Rowntree on 16 January 1917 that Angell’s propaganda work in the United States was not a matter for his department. This was an extraordinary judgement to make in view of the delicate state of Anglo-American relations. Wilson was so unhappy with the Allied reply of 10 January to his request for a statement of their war aims that twelve days later he called publicly for a ‘peace without victory’. It was only after Germany offended him even more by rescinding promises it had made after the Sussex crisis that he was to sever diplomatic relations with that country on 3 February.

The Home Office, to which Balfour had passed the buck, understood that Angell’s passport was in truth an external-relations matter, and consulted the British ambassador in Washington, whose advice was that Angell should be kept away from the United States. It also received advice from the security services, who had issued instructions that he should not be allowed out of the country: they did so partly in the light of his role in the UDC, his speeches to ILP meetings, and the fact that he ‘habitually writes and speaks as if he had no nationality, or if he had one, it was American’, but also because of their erroneous belief, already mentioned, that Baron de Forest had not only funded ‘the publication of his Peace book before the War’ but was a foreign agent. Unsurprisingly, the Home Secretary decided on 20 February 1917 to refuse Angell’s passport.

This setback was compounded by another. Angell had hitherto been able to send contributions from London to the *New Republic*, including an outspoken one on ‘The Problem of Northcliffe’; and on 2 March 1917 Croly cabled to commission an ‘article thousand words emphasising value of American participation in war? Now strong pacifist opposition here which might be influenced by such article.’ Angell duly drafted one, thereby taking the fourth and final step towards advocating American military intervention. In the hope that the *New Republic*’s invitation would assist a reconsideration of his passport ban, he sent details to the prime minister’s private secretary, Philip Kerr, who owed him a favour, having five years previously, when editing the *Round Table*, been provided with introductions to French politicians. Angell now pointed out:

The Englishman to whom the editor of a paper like the “New Republic” turns to help break down opposition in America to alliance with our cause is an Englishman whom the British government don’t allow to go to America! And I suppose it’s even betting that my article urging American association with us would be stopped.
Kerr duly interceded with the Home Office on the basis of having ‘known Mr Norman Angell and his opinions both private and public for many years’. On the same day that he did so, 5 March, Angell’s thousand words were intercepted, as he had predicted. The Home Secretary, after consulting his officials again, refused to budge, as Kerr was informed on the 24th. When Angell discovered that, as he had guessed, the New Republic had not received his communication, he visited the censor’s office for an explanation, but ran into a wall of silence. On his way out of the building he chanced upon William Pringle, an energetic Asquithian MP, who suggested that Angell send him details of his grievance. When Croly learned what had happened, he asked Colonel House if the Wilson administration could assist Angell’s return to the United States, pointing out that on his last visit had ‘contributed enormously’ by promoting internationalist ideals and making Americans ‘feel that their country had a direct responsibility in going into the war in order to make these ideals prevail.

During this period of waiting for his passport, which was to stretch to seven months (December 1916 to July 1917), Angell became so frustrated that – or so he later claimed – he contemplated ‘getting a job as [a] ship steward under an assumed name’ in order to sneak back to the United States. His propaganda became eclectic to the point of schizophrenia. For one thing, it combined pro-war and anti-militarist sentiments, as encapsulated in the claim of the American edition of Why Freedom Matters, when it appeared under a different title in Chicago in 1917, that its anti-conscriptionist arguments ‘gain in force from the fact that the author was – and is – an advocate of American participation in the war, and of the necessity for the military defeat of Germany’. For another, it catered simultaneously for a war-weary labour movement that was becoming sympathetic to ideas of democratic control and for a more circumspect liberal intelligentsia that was pinning its hopes on a league of nations.

His eclecticism was partly attributable to the ‘weak spot in his courage’ that Rosalind Fuller now identified, like Ponsonby before her. The caution inculcated by his early failures made him reluctant to forfeit his influence with moderate opinion even as he moved towards socialism. When communicating with a moderate progressive like Croly, for example, Angell presented the leftist strand of his propaganda as essentially tactical: ‘If in the future I work mainly in England, I shall have to associate mainly with the revolutionary parties in order to be able to do anything at all’, even though ‘I am not that kind of revolutionist for nuts and would far rather work constructively in the field of internationalism, if the authorities would allow’. (In accordance with what he came to view as ‘the whole comedy’ of his position, Angell soon discovered that this letter too had been stopped by the censor.) Only when associating with a ‘revolutionary’ party, such as the ILP’s Swansea branch, which he visited on 28 January 1917, did he sound like a true believer. His speech to what he thought was a private meeting was secretly reported to the authorities, and contributed to the Home Secretary’s decision to continue withholding his passport. After urging it to buy Philip Snowden’s pamphlet, Labour in Chains, Angell told his working-class audience:
Conscription after the War will include Negroes and Indian tribes as the working classes will be forced into a state of slavery....In this Country the workers’ wages are of no use, they are the wages of slavery. You must go over the heads of diplomats and rulers. You are not like cattle bred for profit. When this War is over we will not have 30s. [£1.50] a week minimum wage but a minimum wage of £1 a day and nothing less...If we are to have conscription we will follow the Derby principle, and conscript wealthy people’s money, the money of millionaires, we will have the abolition of titles. There is no form of slavery worse than the conscription of men’s bodies to put in the trenches, not only to be killed but they are told to kill others. It is the gravest form of slavery, no slave on a plantation is told to kill.

Yet within a few days of giving this fiery socialist oration he charmed a more sedate audience with an orthodox liberal-internationalist message when he spoke to the Chelsea branch of the Women’s International League in Lady Margaret Sackville’s house, Lady Courtney describing the occasion as ‘really a brilliant success – over 200, and half unconverted or opponents’. And he also moderated the message of War & Peace, which had lost readers since becoming anonymous and outspoken the previous September: he resolved that it would henceforth eschew ‘Pacifism of the “how horrible is war” variety’, as he put it to Lippmann, in favour of ‘the definite advocacy of a League of Nations’. This may have been the point at which Harold Wright took over the editorship.

Angell was exceptional in thus straddling the proletarian and the bourgeois strands of peace activism, each of which received significant boosts during March and April 1917 from, respectively, the first Russian revolution and the entrance of the United States into the war under a president committed to a league of nations. The abdication of the Tsar on 15 March aroused great enthusiasm in the Labour Party, which, though still split between a pro-war majority led by Henderson, a member of the war cabinet, and an anti-war minority led by MacDonald, began converging on the basis of the UDC’s programme – not pacifist or revolutionary, but critical of a fight-to-a-finish approach and committed to a moderate post-war settlement. The organization that Angell had helped to found began to move from the political fringe into the mainstream. On 29 March Angell dined with his UDC colleagues MacDonald, Morel, Ponsonby, and Trevelyan, and two sympathetic journalists, Massingham and Brailsford, and put his name to a collective message to the new Russian government urging that it begin peace negotiations. In due course, to the UDC’s great satisfaction, the Russians called for a peace without annexations or indemnities. In addition, Angell began participating in the more left-wing group around the Herald, a paper run by the Christian-socialist politician George Lansbury, though only his closest colleagues knew of this.

On 2 April 1917 Wilson asked Congress to declare war against the Central Powers, which it did four days later. Angell immediately threw his weight behind a league of nations. War & Peace had become unviable as an independent publication, but with effect from May became a monthly supplement to Massingham’s now strongly Wilsonian weekly under the cumbersome but informative title War & Peace: The Nation Supplement: A Journal of International Politics and
the League of Nations. Angell attempted to recruit prominent contributors, such as Lord Bryce, who could help in ‘getting attention focused upon Wilson’s “League of Nations” policy’. He was one of a group of progressives who at Hobson’s house on 4 May had a long discussion with General J. C. Smuts, a member of the imperial war cabinet interested in a league of nations. And ten days later Angell attended the first public meeting of the three-year-old League of Nations Society, held in the Albert Hall.

By this time the deadlock over his passport was breaking. On 7 May 1917, more than two months after encountering Angell outside the censor’s office, William Pringle asked in the Commons about the interception of his New Republic article. The Conservative leader Bonar Law, deputizing for Lloyd George, explained that it had been stopped because it contained ‘a statement which had been repeatedly claimed in Germany’, namely that throughout the war ‘America had not been neutral’. In a debate two days later Pringle raised the issue again, this time suggesting that Angell’s article had been censored not because it assisted German propaganda but because the British government did ‘not want to have America’s entrance into the war justified on liberal and internationalist grounds’. Bonar Law repeated his previous explanation, which was derided by the Nation as ‘a little more astonishing than the act [of censorship] itself’.

The adverse publicity convinced the Foreign Office, with another league-of-nations enthusiast, Lord Robert Cecil, to the fore, that now the United States was a belligerent, restrictions on Angell were pointless. On 10 May 1917 it telegraphed to that effect to its man in Washington, who, still seeing ‘no positive advantage in Angell’s presence here’, replied a week later with the unhelpful suggestion: ‘Best solution would be to get him to abandon visit voluntarily.’ Cecil thereupon overrode the ambassador, this belated and unilateral assertion of jurisdiction bemusing the Home Office, which closed its file with the dry office note: ‘Even if the new decision is right, it is an unsatisfactory way of doing things.’ Angell had visited the Foreign Office’s department of information to warn it that Pringle might next raise the question of his passport: he already knew its director, John Buchan, who while working for the publishing firm Nelson’s had issued popular French and Spanish editions of The Great Illusion. On 17 May Buchan told him to apply for a passport ‘in the ordinary way’ and promised to ‘expedite it’. The intercepting of Angell’s communications ceased: he could therefore join other UDC leaders in sending an appeal to Wilson urging him to press the Allies into restating their peace terms, though Colonel House, who disliked its tone, held it back. In mid-June the endorsement to his passport was finally forthcoming, enabling him to make his travel arrangements.

breakfast this morning . . . with Norman Angell who has at last got a passport for the States and will be off shortly. People here are getting anxious about America where opinion is somewhat faltering in expectation of a two years’ war! And it will be very useful to have Angell there in touch with the President who has I fear somewhat evil advice round him now.
Now that the constraints had been lifted and he would shortly be out of the
country, Angell could safely indulge both his anger over the continuation of
the war and his leftism. In an article for the *New Republic* of 16 June 1917 he
scathingly asserted that the war had degenerated into a ‘mere means of securing
certain primitive psychological satisfactions’. Although there is no evidence
that he had attended the united socialist convention at Leeds on 3 June, which
resolved to establish soldiers’ and workers’ councils in Britain, he participated
anonymously in the efforts of Lansbury’s *Herald* to devise a programme for those
councils. He almost certainly wrote the editorial on 16 June that posed the
rhetorical question ‘Is Prussia the enemy or Prussianism?’ and strongly criticized
Northcliffe’s recent appointment as head of the British war mission in the United
States. He definitely helped to draft the ‘Plans for the People’s Party’ that
appeared the following week: these went so far as to demand the expropriation
of private landowners and capitalists with compensation limited to the ‘provision
against individual hardship’ as well as a minimum wage of a pound per day.\(^\text{172}\)
This alarmed some of his friends: Toulmin warned Wright, in a letter passed on
by the latter to Angell, that those on the far left of the ILP, who found Snowden
and MacDonald ‘cautious and even reactionary’, were

insinuating into Angell’s mind the idea that he is a genius as a Labour leader and ought to
flying in his lot definitely with them, and that he will be able to sum up and reform the
world of industry as easily as he can sum up and could, if allowed, reform international
relations . . . The present result of that is the ‘Programme for a People’s Party, published in
this week’s Herald . . . This programme is Angell’s work very much.\(^\text{173}\)

Indeed, Angell’s autobiography was to describe ‘the Lansbury-Herald pro-
gramme’ as expressing the views of ‘the more extreme left at that time’, without
admitting his own authorship.\(^\text{174}\)

Toulmin had some grounds for fearing that Angell ‘is out of his depth and is
being taken advantage by the aforesaid I.L.P. left wing . . . If he appears now as a
mixture of Lenin, Marx, and William Morris . . . he may throw away all his
influence.’ Toulmin thought that the root of the problem was that ‘Angell
is finding time very heavy to this hands’,\(^\text{175}\) and was correct to the extent that,
while waiting for his passport, Angell had enjoyed sufficient leisure to leave
behind for the *Labour Leader* a signed essay long enough to be serialized in five
parts. It can be no coincidence that the first instalment of ‘Shall It Be a
New World?’, which publicly announced Angell as a socialist, appeared on
12 July 1917 – immediately after his departure for the United States. In this
substantial Parthian shot he acknowledged that a number of people, evidently
himself among them, who had not espoused that doctrine before the war ‘are
nevertheless turning to some form of Socialism as the best hope for saving the
world from that madness which threatens to send whole nations down the steep
places to destruction’. He reminded his readers that four years previously he
had spent much of his pamphlet *War and the Workers* denouncing the view that
war was a capitalist plot, and insisted that he had not changed his mind. But with
some ingenuity he now argued that, though *economically* peaceful, capitalism was
psychologically bellicose: ‘War in capitalist society does not arise from the mechanism of capitalism, but from the state of mind which a capitalist society engenders, quite as much among the workers as among the capitalists, and which may lead both to support policies obviously to their material disadvantage.’ He had decided that his pre-war bugbear, the fatalistic assumption of the inevitability of international conflict, was ‘closely related to the old individualistic and laissez faire conception of society’. He had also concluded that the remarkable productivity of state-controlled war economies indicated what a socialist state could achieve in peacetime: ‘It is obvious that if the two million munitions workers were producing consumable goods instead of war material, and the soldiers were also working instead of fighting, the amount of total wealth produced could be enormously increased – somewhere near doubled – and the standard of living corresponding still further raised.’ The ‘resulting revelation of the possibilities inherent in certain state powers will have a very important effect on the development of a national will to use them for other purposes’, such as to provide a living wage of ‘a pound a day for every full worker’. He also insisted that the conscription of manpower had legitimized the conscription of wealth, asking rhetorically: ‘Does anyone believe that if this parallel was really made clear the Institution of Private Property could survive?’ He thus concluded that it was possible to ‘make that new world, provided only that the workers wanted it’, but warned presciently that they might prefer the old one: ‘Perhaps the “religion of nationalism” will prompt them to decree … that the end of the State is not human well-being but military glory.’

As he prepared to depart, Angell also hit on an ingenious way of reconciling his new socialism with his continued support for both the democratic-control and league-of-nations movements. He must have been inspired by the International Socialist Bureau’s proposal to hold a conference in Stockholm at which leftist parties from all belligerent countries could discuss how to end the war. Angell’s bright idea was to call, not for a negotiated peace, which was too controversial, but for a parliament of the allies in which the principles of a post-war order could be discussed not only by diplomats but by all political parties while the fighting went on. Shortly after taking his leave of the UDC executive committee on 3 July 1917, he told Trevelyan that he now favoured ‘the summoning of a more democratic popular Conference to sit side-by-side with a Congress of Powers and make representations’. An international gathering of elected representatives, many of whom could be expected to be socialists, meeting alongside an official diplomatic conference and urging it to adopt, amongst other things, a league of nations, neatly harmonized the three strands of pacifism – radical, socialist, and liberal – that Angell had been supporting. The suggestion impressed Trevelyan, who reported it to his UDC colleagues at the following week’s meeting.

By then Angell had left the country, doing so again at an opportune moment. The government had just decided to make life harder for peace campaigners, as a result of which Russell was almost injured by patriotic thugs who attacked a meeting in a Hackney chapel late in July 1917; and Morel’s home was raided by the authorities the following month, leading to a spell of imprisonment that
did lasting damage to his health. Moreover, it had set itself against allowing its citizens to attend the Stockholm conference. When Henderson returned from a visit to Russia persuaded that such a gathering was essential to sustaining the democratic regime there, he was forced out of the war cabinet. He and MacDonald began working together to strengthen the Labour Party, whose reunification on the basis of UDC principles was now complete.

The well-timed Atlantic crossing upon which Angell embarked early in the second week of July 1917 was anxious but entertaining. Among his fellow passengers on the *St Louis* was Hamilton Fyfe, a former *Daily Mail* colleague whose political views were also moving leftwards in the course of the conflict, and who later recalled: ‘On that voyage, made longer by delays in Irish loughs to avoid enemy submarines, we talked incessantly. I owed to Angell, when we reached New York, a clarification of my ideas which was of the greatest value to me.’ Fyfe was on his way to join Northcliffe’s war mission as an honorary attaché and, after arriving on 18 July, must have informed his boss that his sometime employee was in town, for soon afterwards Angell picked up the hotel telephone to hear the memorable greeting: ‘Your enemy, my dear boy, the voice you think so evil . . . Why did you not come to me when you had trouble with your passport? However, you must come and stay with me out at Pelham.’ Angell duly visited Northcliffe’s temporary residence at Pelham Manor on Long Island Sound – the press baron had chosen to base himself in New York rather than Washington – and, in the words of his autobiography, ‘met some strange animals there collected’. Northcliffe’s other guests may well have returned the compliment, finding Angell, on account of his long-standing demand for a statement of war aims and his recent espousal of socialism, an exotic specimen to find socializing with the head of the British war mission.

Angell was irritated by his short stay at Pelham Manor for another reason: it delayed his going to see the Fullers, who, the theatrical year being over, were summering in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Rosalind, troubled by her relationship with the difficult Dakyns, had started a liberating physical liaison with her sister-in-law’s brother: according to Max Eastman’s biographer, this provided him with ‘his first uncomplicated sexual experience’, for which he was ‘properly grateful’ because it opened ‘the way for a lifetime of erotic abandon’. Rosalind was putting into practice her belief, which half a century later she could publicly avow, ‘that free love is better than marriage’. Angell eventually visited the sisters at the end of July 1917 for a couple of days, in the course of which they arranged to spend the last two weeks of August sailing together on Lake Champlain, which connects Vermont, New York State, and Quebec. It may have been during this fortnight that Angell encountered the farm that he was to mention in a book on unemployment written during the great depression: once evidently able to provide livelihoods for many people, yet long since abandoned as unprofitable in the more integrated and efficient economy of contemporary north America, this overgrown stretch of Vermont was stored in Angell’s memory as a homely illustration of how jobs could disappear as a result of economic development.
It was certainly during this holiday that he began an affair with Rosalind. According to her unpublished memoir, she, Cynthia, Dorothy, and Angell hired a small yacht and two tents that we could pitch on shore. Angell slept in one tent and we took turns to use the other, two of us sleeping in the boat. When it was my turn to use the tent I would wait until it was dark and then creeping into Angell’s tent would stay there until the sun was outlining the hills, returning to my bed like a contented cat.185

Within a fortnight of this idyll on ‘Lake Champagne’, as they dubbed it,186 Rosalind returned to Europe with her sisters.

Angell went back to Manhattan for the autumn of 1917, lodging for the remainder of the war at 420 West 116th Street, an area adjacent to Columbia University that he grew to like, and promoting his idea of a parliament of the allies. He sent his proposal to Colonel House, who forwarded it to President Wilson.187 He hoped that it would strike a chord in a borough that during the summer had been ‘full of rumours and controversies about the discussion of war-aims and peace terms – about an International Socialist Conference at Stockholm, and an International Capitalist Conference in Switzerland, and a Conference of the Allied Governments in Paris’, as he reported back to the new-format War & Peace. He explained that if ‘the proposals of the government delegates’ had to be approved by ‘a second body, composed of representatives of all the parties of the European parliaments’ it would mean that the decisive German voices in determining the post-war order would be not Prussian and conservative ‘but preponderantly Socialist and Liberal’, and that, in consequence of transnational links between progressives on both sides, ‘the sharpness and rigidity of national divisions would be lessened’.188 He repeated the idea in an article for the New Republic that must have satisfied the league movement by its emphasis on ‘modifying the rights which have hitherto attached to national sovereignty’ and pleased those of a UDC persuasion by its refusal to see a league simply ‘as a means of coercing disturbers of the international order’.189 He also developed it in a book, War Aims: The Need for a Parliament of the Allies, which was published in London by Headley Brothers in October. Incorporating some material written late the previous year, it rehearsed the various arguments he had put forward during his sojourn of 1916/17 in Britain except for the far-left ones: it thus revealed that his recent espousal of socialism had not killed his desire to reach a general readership. The preface insisted ‘with megaphonic emphasis’ that the book ‘Is Not a Plea for the Starting of Peace Negotiations. . . . It is Not Opposed to a “Fight to a Finish” . . . . It Does Not Deny that We Should Secure the Virtual Disarmament of Germany.’ In an effort to widen his audience he thus played down the misgivings about the war that would later cause him to claim that he had opposed it. He again criticized the decision of the Allies at Paris in June 1916 to carry on a commercial war against Germany because it deprived them of a lever for inducing that country to accept the obligations of a new league of nations. He also warned that, having entered the conflict, the United States would insist on such a league: ‘If she does not secure that by her war she will have secured nothing.’ He then came to his principal argument, which had occurred to
him during the summer of 1917: that a league should be set up through an assembly of the allied nations in which a council of governmental nominees would be answerable to ‘a larger body representing, proportionately, the component parties of the respective Parliaments’. This larger body would also be guided by ‘four indispensable conditions’ for a just and lasting peace: the right of national determination, economic rights for all peoples, provision for organic change without war, and sanctions.\textsuperscript{190} War Aims: The Need for a Parliament of the Allies made few converts. ‘This dangerous book will not meet with approval in America or in England’\textsuperscript{191} was the judgement of the Contemporary Review, with whose editor, G.P. Gooch, Angell had dined less than a year before at the Courtneys’ table.

During that autumn of 1917 Angell saw his role in the United States as building bridges between socialists and radicals on the one hand and conservatives and liberals on the other. He aimed to show that a war fought to create a league of nations could offer the former social justice and provide the latter with a broader-based support for the military effort in the short term and with an international system more to America’s liking in the long term. However, though socialists and radicals listened respectfully, conservatives and liberals bridled. On 23 September, an Intercollegiate Socialist Society meeting at Belleport, Long Island, heard him insist that a league could provide ‘economic rights, access to raw materials and markets, equal opportunity in undeveloped territory – such as Africa, Asia and South America’, as well as ‘military security’ and ‘national independence’.\textsuperscript{192} But the New Republic was displeased when a month later he expounded the views of the Guild Socialists, who advocated workers’ control of industry, in its columns: although Angell’s article had disclaimed ‘any necessary subscription on the part of the present reporter, to the validity of those arguments’,\textsuperscript{193} it proved to be his last signed contribution to that paper for many years. Even so, in mid-November he was approached as a possible lecturer by the Committee on Public Information, a newly established official body. Accepting the invitation as ‘a great privilege’ even though his ‘list of lectures for this season is already a pretty full one’, he explained:

The particular field in which perhaps I should be most useful... is in addressing Radicals and Socialists disposed to be somewhat hostile to the war. As one known to have Radical and Internationalist leanings, I should be sure of a fairly sympathetic hearing... The position I take with Radicals and Internationalists is that this war can be made the means of bringing their ideals to fruition... In addressing Conservative audiences I attempt to show the necessity of winning Radicals to the support of the war by emphasising its liberal and internationalist ends...\textsuperscript{194} But conservatives proved notably resistant to this last argument. Angell discovered this when he endorsed the call for moderate war aims made in London’s Daily Telegraph of 29 November 1917, by Lord Lansdowne, the elder statesman who, as foreign secretary of a Conservative government thirteen years before, had concluded Britain’s entente with France. The New York Times expressed editorial irritation that ‘Mr Angell has not failed to see in the Lansdowne letter...
one of his beloved opportunities’ to indulge an ‘insatiable desire to hear what
the allies are fighting for’. Moreover, as the implications of November’s
Bolshevik revolution became apparent, Angell’s adoption of socialism counted
increasingly against him. He began arousing at least as much hostility in the
United States as in Britain. Indeed, when again resident in the United States at the
height of McCarthyism thirty-four years later, he was to rate the intolerance of
1917 as ‘rather worse’. He was arrested at his Manhattan apartment and taken
in for police questioning, an experience which, though brief, ‘left a very bad taste’
in his mouth. And, although Angell’s pronouncements and activities had
previously been covered by the New York Times, they were boycotted throughout
the last year of the war: his lectures for the Woman’s Peace Party at the fashionable
Hotel McAlpin in Manhattan on 17, 19, and 21 December thus passed unnoticed
by its news pages.

Snubbed by a political mainstream with which he had tried to keep in touch,
despite his leftism, Angell concluded that the United States simply did not
understand political dissent. He expanded on this theme when, following Presi-
dent Wilson’s pressure early in 1918 for a statement of allied war aims, an Inter-
Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London produced a programme that
it wanted the American labour movement to endorse. In an article written on
3 April, Angell warned the European left that it was hoping in vain, because the
United States had ‘no political social-democracy’ and indeed no ideological or
class awareness:

The psychology of European Radicalism, born of revolt, remote or immediate, looking
upon authority and government as things to be watched, resented and suspected, is simply
not understood by the average native American worker in good standing with his union.
He has known no governing class, regarded by his forebears for generations or centuries as
enemies. He knows no tradition or literature of Radicalism and revolt…He has no
associations with a non-conformity which is a protest against a State church. He realises
no difference of vital principle between the parties.

At a ‘social conference’ of the leftist People’s Council in New York on 4 May,
moreover, ‘Norman Angell of the British labor party’, though described as
the ‘mildest…of the speakers’, was nonetheless reported as claiming that ‘the
American constitution is the worst in the world’. These sharp judgements on
politics in the United States implied that he saw no future for himself there.

Even so, during 1918 Angell was still able to lecture at some American colleges
and clubs, to send articles to his Nation supplement in London, and to write
books. What ensured some interest in his opinions even outside the left was that
a league of nations was widely accepted as inevitable, given Wilson’s support for
it. Realists began pondering how it could be turned to their ideological advantage,
and came up with the idea that such a league be created immediately, on the basis
of the existing alliance against Germany. Angell welcomed this indication that an
internationalist proposal, which for ‘three years or more in Europe, and nine
months or more in America’ had been ‘derided…as an attempt to substitute
“talk,” and pacifist talk at that, for hard knocks’, was ‘now universally admitted as
sound’, but warned that a league ‘formed now must make it clear that it will include all civilized states that are willing to join’.201

He therefore put together a second pro-league book, _The Political Conditions of Allied Success: A Plea for the Protective Union of the Democracies_, which was published by Putnam’s in May 1918. Essentially an expanded and updated American version of _War Aims: The Need for a Parliament of the Allies_, which had been published in London the previous October, it began with another angry prediction that, though its author had been ‘an earnest advocate of American participation in this war’ and had exercised ‘all prefatory caution’, its main thesis ‘will be misread’ as being anti-war. It emphasized its support for ‘the form of internationalism outlined by President Wilson’, and again urged ‘the calling of a Public Inter-Allied Conference’. In addition, _The Political Conditions of Allied Success_ had a number of new features. It specified that the non-governmental delegates should be chosen by proportional representation so as to ensure that progressive parties were represented, and predicted that ‘European Labour and socialist parties’ were ‘destined to be the most powerful political groups of tomorrow’ even though they were growing apart from the more conservative American labour movement. It explicitly reconciled its author’s long-standing reservations about ‘political machinery as such’ with his support for an international organization by arguing that machinery ‘in the form of consciously created institutions is itself a factor in the development of public opinion, as a well as a form of its expression’. It also specified that it was ‘not so much a court to administer the law or a body to enforce it, as a legislature to make it, that is needed’: in other words, it presented a league of nations more as a destroyer of old intellectual illusions and a generator of new international norms than as a judge or a policeman. Its reluctance to see the league as primarily an enforcement and security body was in line with the UDC’s radical-isolationist approach; but it was balanced by a liberal-internationalist insistence that international anarchy rather than diplomatic chicanery was the real problem:

Intriguing diplomacy, the irresponsibility of foreign offices, secret treaties, autocracy in foreign affairs, are not due to an extra dose of original sin on the part of a special race of men called ‘diplomats’ but to their entanglement in a very deeply rooted system which will inevitably continue, whatever our good resolutions, if a condition of international anarchy justifies their conduct. . . .

Unlike the League of Nations Society in Britain, Angell approved of the ‘transformation of our Alliance into a permanent League of Nations’, though he insisted that the enemy states must be entitled to join as soon as they accepted its principles.202 Two decades later, he was frequently to reprint sections of this book, which he had come to regard as a far-sighted statement of the case for collective security.

In principle, Angell’s propaganda activities should have been interrupted shortly before _The Political Conditions of Allied Success_ appeared. On 15 April 1918, early in the military emergency created by the Ludendorff offensive, Britain raised the age of eligibility for military service to fifty-one, thereby rendering him
liable. He made no effort to return to face the music, a fact about which his memoirs were silent. He was, even so, in touch with his British followers at this time about his post-war future, which he increasingly saw as lying with the Labour Party: this was partly because he felt himself unacceptable to other sections of opinion, and partly because he expected domestic issues shortly to eclipse external ones. Wright was reassuring, agreeing that ‘you should look to guiding the international policy of the Labour Party as your future job’, though suggesting that this ‘may be most effectively done by keeping in the background’. Toulmin was more doubtful, urging him ‘not to budget for being unpopular after the war’, and pointing out that ‘you have not done the foolish things that B[r]ant[on] [R]ussell has, and in being a free-lance supporter of Wilson, you have managed, sans calcul, to get into the train of ideas which is going to come out on top finally, if the line holds in Flanders’, yet conceding that ‘after the war everybody will be wrapped up in the “social question,” and they will accordingly be off foreign affairs altogether’. Toulmin further pointed out that a successful Labour career would depend both upon how well that party fared electorally, about which he was ‘not optimistic’, and upon how it treated Angell, about which his feeling was that ‘you must make your own terms before committing yourself, and only go in if they will give you a safeish seat and take their foreign policy from you’.

Meanwhile Angell was in touch with American socialists: at the end of May 1918, for example, he was invited by their future presidential candidate, Norman Thomas, to join ‘a small group’ at Belleport to discuss the convening of a conference on ‘certain social and international problems’. Angell was aware of their lack of support even among organized labour in the United States, and worried that trade union leaders such as Samuel Gompers did not understand that socialism was truly representative of working-class attitudes in Europe. He reported to his Nation supplement, writing as ‘Our American Correspondent’ because he now feared the use of his own name to be counter-productive even in liberal circles, that whenever he asked the ‘best American minds’ what British Labour could do to remedy this, they ‘seem to be agreed on one answer: “Educate us”’. He therefore wrote an article, this time signed because it was for an American academic journal, insisting that even though ‘American labor seems disposed . . . to back the political opponents of the British Labor Party’, it should realize that ‘without any sort of a doubt the British Labor Party is the coming greatest single force in British politics’. And, although he was not to get it published until after the war, he started to put together a book on this theme for the New York publisher B.W. Huebsch, The British Revolution and American Democracy: An Interpretation of British Labour Programmes. In so doing he recycled arguments and even material from his Labour Leader articles of eighteen months previously: thus whilst refusing to accept ‘the iron-clad doctrine of Marx’, and whilst acknowledging ‘the danger that the power gained by the State may be used to the ends of enslavement’ as was perhaps already the case in Soviet Russia, he advocated social ownership of the means of production. In the later sections of the book he lazily reprinted wartime essays and pamphlets; and as
appendices he included both the ‘Lansbury Herald Programme’ of the previous year and ‘Labour and the New Social Order’, a policy statement produced by the Labour Party early in 1918. Only in his opening sections on transatlantic differences, in which Angell showed himself to be a shrewd commentator on domestic politics, did he offer anything new. The book’s deficiencies were to be noticed in the New Republic by a staff writer who had once written an ‘all too flattering’ profile of him but had been put off by Angell’s left turn:

In feeling out new channels there are certain pilots more shrewd. His style in interpretation is not in itself remarkable. With all his material, much of it suggestive, he often fails to convert it, fails to oxygenate it from lack of time and strength. And he is not a pamphleteer who can be said to have developed any special order or conviction or revealed a particular type of programme.

With hindsight the most interesting aspect of The British Revolution and American Democracy was its flash of recognition that state control and socialism were undermining the economic conditions upon which his ‘illusion’ thesis had been based. Angell admitted that, by intervening successfully in their economies, belligerent states had largely avoided the financial difficulties that he had expected war to bring. Such state intervention, and the ‘nationalization of wealth’ of which he was a strong supporter, were diminishing the economic interdependence that had acted as ‘a mechanical check on war’. His conception of the state had thus become less minimalist since he wrote The Great Illusion, though he did not explicitly acknowledge this.

The petering out of the Ludendorff offensive in July 1918 happily distracted him from these emerging tensions within his thought, and made the last four months of the war a comparatively hospitable period for progressives and peace activists of all kinds. Despite his socialist work, Angell kept in touch with the liberal-internationalist movement, though he was now too controversial to do so publicly. He gave unpaid private assistance to ‘House, his assistants, and Wilson’s outside political friends’, as he later reported to Wright while passing on his thanks to Wright’s father for a financial subsidy that made this possible. Indeed, at this time the President himself read a memorandum from Angell calling for the immediate creation of a league of nations. Angell also privately urged the New Republic to defend, like the Nation in Britain, a liberal conception of such a league against conservative attempts to hijack it. He identified a ‘central issue’ in this struggle between liberals and conservatives as being the ‘admission or non-admission of Germany into the League’, the former being in his view essential, though the latter was favoured by the right. Another important concern was to avoid limiting the function of the league to ‘restraining disturbers of the existing order’ and enforcing international law in its present form, as in his opinion America’s existing internationalist body, the League to Enforce Peace, wanted to do. He therefore worked with Wilsonian colleagues to create a rival society to demand that the role of a league also include ‘determining by legislation what shall be done to make just and necessary changes in the structure of the law of nations’.
Confusingly, the organizers of this new American society decided to adopt the very name, League of Free Nations Association, which had recently been adopted across the Atlantic by a body of a much less idealistic kind. Convinced that London’s existing League of Nations Society was wrong to oppose the formation of an international organization until the enemy states could become founder members, the realist wing of Britain’s internationalist movement launched a League of Free Nations Association in July 1918 to press for a league to be formed at once, on the basis of the wartime alliance against Germany. This new London-based association was, however, overtaken by that autumn’s unexpectedly rapid end to the war, which rendered redundant its dispute with the League of Nations Society. In October, in anticipation of the armistice, it merged with its rival to create the League of Nations Union (LNU).

The self-consciously realist pro-league body that had entitled itself the League of Free Nations Association in Britain thus disappeared only weeks before a much more idealistic American one went public with the same label in November 1918. Though the product of ‘six months of study by 50 editors, publicists, students of international affairs and businessmen’, and of weekly meetings over the late summer and autumn in which Angell took part, America’s League of Free Nations Association did not announce itself until after the fighting stopped. Angell had never expected to be present when the project saw the light of day, since he originally planned to return to Europe on 10 October. But he found that he ‘came under the American draft’, and though initially irritated by the delay involved in extricating himself from this obligation, was soon glad of it, informing Cynthia Fuller: ‘Events here are moving very quickly and perhaps on the whole I can be of more use on this side.’

On 23 November, twelve days after the armistice, he was therefore able to send John Buchan at the British Foreign Office an ‘explanatory statement of a League of Nations policy that shall be something more that the mere organisation of repression’, which, having been drawn up ‘by a group of the President’s friends’, had been endorsed that day by the still secret association, as well as by the League to Enforce Peace. Three days later the League of Free Nations Association unveiled itself. Despite having done much to draft its statement of principles, Angell was not among the 110 signatories, unlike Herbert Croly and George Nasmyth. He cannot have been omitted merely because he was English or intending to leave the country, since Winston Churchill was included: it was because he was too contentious to be a political asset even for a movement expecting above all to recruit progressives – ‘an outlaw, an opponent of the war’, as he was somewhat exaggeratedly to put it eighteen years later when he and H.G. Wells found themselves publicly reminiscing about their roles in the early league of nations movement. Angell could use his own name only with particular audiences. He thus wrote a signed article for a Jewish magazine defending a ‘Liberal League of Nations’, as promoted by the League of Free Nations Association, against ‘the two fires of Bolshevism and reaction’. He did so after hearing ‘a Zionist disparage the “idealism” and impracticality of a League of Nations, and invoke instead the old statecraft of powerful combinations maintaining a Balance of Power’.
On 14 December 1918 Angell sailed from New York for France on the *Chicago*, a French ship that was rat-infested and crooked-beamed yet carried an interesting human cargo. He travelled as a journalist, though he told William Allen White, with whom he shared a cabin, that he had ‘a semi-official invitation from Colonel House to the peace conference’ in Paris. Angell impressed White, who particularly remembered his warning that ‘the imperialistic forces would check Wilson’. Two prominent American Quakers on a mission of service to Europe, Henry Scattergood and Rufus Jones, were also on board. So too was a company of Polish-Americans en route to defend the newly independent land of their fathers: this can be inferred from a footnote to an article Angell wrote eighteen months later in which he claimed ‘shortly after the armistice’ to have ‘travelled thousands of miles with a section of the Polish army’ recruited in the slums of Chicago and officered by Frenchmen.

After this motley boatload disembarked in Bordeaux, Angell apparently travelled straight to Britain for a quick visit, where, if he had not already been informed of it, he must have learned of the death of Harry’s only son, Dermot, a member of the armed forces, in the final phase of the war. Angell’s homecoming coincided with the disappearance of almost the last vestige of his pre-war campaign: with effect from the December 1918 issue, ‘War & Peace’ was dropped as the title of the *Nation’s* monthly foreign-affairs supplement in favour of ‘International Review’. It was now edited by Leonard Woolf, who had deputized during one of Harold Wright’s illnesses, though Mrs Manus, recognized by Woolf’s wife Virginia as an ‘industrious sub-editor’, continued to work for it, as did Langdon-Davies. The new editor intended to turn it into an organ of international labour and socialist opinion, but, meeting obstruction from a jealous MacDonald, failed to achieve this, so the venture was short-lived.

During Angell’s few days in London he seems to have resumed both his occupancy of 4 King’s Bench Walk and his affair with Rosalind Fuller, who had decided upon a solo career and an unorthodox lifestyle: her unpublished memoir records that they made love in his Temple apartment, and that she appreciated his attentive concern about her risky personal decisions. He later claimed to have attended public meetings in connection with the general election; yet this had taken place on the 14th, as he left America, though because of the delay while soldiers’ and sailors’ votes were counted the results were not declared for two weeks. Even so, he must have gained first-hand experience of the anti-German mood, fuelled in particular by Northcliffe’s papers, which had helped Lloyd George’s coalition to its easy victory. The only compensation for Angell was that Labour had overtaken Asquith’s section of the Liberals to become the largest opposition party.

On 27 December 1918, the day before the British election results were announced, Angell returned to Paris, joining White and other journalists at the Hôtel de Normandie, near the Gare St Lazare, which was so cold that he soon shepherded them to the comparative warmth of the Vouillemont, just off the Place de la Concorde, a hotel possessing a stock of coal left behind by the American naval officials until recently billeted there. He registered with the French authorities as Ralph Norman Angell Lane, born on 26 December 1873,
and married to an absent wife. Having turned forty-six – not forty-five as he then believed – he was almost halfway through his life, and had arrived at the intellectual watershed separating what a shrewd analyst has termed ‘Angell (I)’ and ‘Angell (II)’. Hitherto he had assumed that, once certain intellectual blinkers had been removed, public opinion would show itself to be essentially sound, which was why he had written *The Great Illusion* and supported democratic control. Now the British public’s disdain for reasoned argument as manifested in the December election, even though by then liberated from the insecurities of war, confirmed his growing sense that profound changes were needed before it could think straight. Some of these could be achieved through social reform, so for the next thirteen years he devoted himself to the Labour Party. Yet a more basic rethinking of mass education was also required, so for his remaining forty-nine years he endeavoured with increasing frustration to specify what this should be. In the very short term, however, he was back at square one in career terms: he was returning, albeit in the more stimulating atmosphere of continental Europe, to the anonymous press reporting that he had first practised as a sixteen-year-old in Weymouth.

**NOTES**

4. *Hansard* 93, col. 1179 (9 May 1917).
6. A to M. Soulié, 1 Jan. 1915; A to A.R. Fry, 4 Jan. 1915: BSU.
10. A to H. Bell, 7 Jan. 1914; A to A.A. Warden, 4 Jan., 8 Mar. 1915: BSU.
20. J.B. Pinkner to A, 8 Mar. 1915: BSU.
24. Ibid., June 1915, 136–8 (written before the author’s departure for the US).
27. Weekly Dispatch, 28 Feb. 1915; A to C. Sheehan-Dare, 27 Feb. 1915: BSU.
31. N. Angell, The Unseen Assassins (1932), 32.
32. A to C. Bergmann, 6 Apr 1915: BSU. The soldier in question was Karl Brunner.
35. A to A.A. Warden, 26 Apr. 1915: BSU.
38. C.E. Fayle to C. Wright, 25 Apr. 1915; A to Sir R. Garton, 28 Apr. 1915: BSU. AA, 201. Esher to A, 8 May 1915: BSU. Time and ship are given in A to A.A. Warden, 5 May 1915: BSU. (They appear wrongly in AA, 202.).
39. NYT, 9 May 1915, II, 8:2.
40. L. Woolf (ed.), The Intelligent Man’s Way to Prevent War (1933), 471–2.
43. TLS, 20 Apr. 1916, 182.
45. G. Nasmyth to C.E. Fayle, 27 May 1915: Nasmyth collection, Swarthmore College – a reference I owe to W. Minty. This letter mentioned 16 May as the day Angell arrived, which correlates with the docking dates of the St Paul given in the invaluable Morton Allan Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals (Baltimore, 1979).
46. NYT, 21 May 1915, 4; 22 May 1915, 7 and 10; 24 May 1915, 10. G. Nasmyth to C.E. Fayle, 27 May 1915: Nasmyth collection, Swarthmore College.
48. A to C.P. Trevelyan, 12 June 1915: CPT 79/141. See also A to E.D. Morel, 14 June 1915: BSU.
49. A to E.D. Morel, 14 June 1915: BSU.
50. A to E. A. Filene, 21 June 1915: BSU.
53. A to G.H. Lorimer, 11 and 17 June 1915: BSU.
55. A to A.E. Bestor, 26 June 1915: BSU.


64. A to H. Wright, 20 Oct. and 24 Dec. 1915: BSU.


66. Ibid. 30, 60, 64.


68. Information from G. Peter Winnington.

69. A to H. Wright, 15 and 20 Oct. 1915: BSU.

70. A to B. Russell, 22 Oct. 1915: BSU.

71. *AA*, 188.


73. *NYT*, 12 Nov. 1915, 7.

74. Ibid., 6 Dec. 1915, 3.


77. A to H. Wright, 24 Dec. [1915] and 4 Jan. [1916]: BSU.


79. A to Alice Lane, 17 Feb. 1950: Everard collection.


82. *Daily Express*, 9 Jan. 1917: BSU.

83. Letter of 28 Mar. 1916 from V. Dales, corresponding secretary of the Washington branch in the Woman’s Peace Party archive, notified to me by G. Peter Winnington.


85. Information from American Union against Militarism archive, supplied by G. Peter Winnington.


88. Ibid., 29 Apr. 1916, 345–6.

89. G. Nasmyth to A, 29 Mar. 1916: BSU.

90. Ibid., 8 May 1916: BSU.


95. Dorothy Fuller’s diary, 20–8 May 1916: BSU.
98. AA, 215.
101. A to H. Wright, 6 June 1916: BSU.
104. H.A. Lane to A, 1 July 1915: BSU.
107. N. Angell, America and the Cause of the Allies (UDC, Aug. 1916), 1, 13.
116. S. Cranston to A, 22 Feb. 1955: BSU.
118. A. Ponsonby diary (transcript), 10 Aug. 1916.
121. W.B. Feakins to A, 1 June 1916: BSU.
125. Ibid., 18 Nov. 1916, 76–7.
129. J.D. Jupe to A, 7 Aug. 1916: BSU.
130. Angell, Why Freedom Matters (1916), 10, 45, and ch. 3.
133. For example, W&P, Dec. 1916, 49 anonymously repeated Angell’s signed article in idem, June 1916, 137.
137. A copy of Angell’s application form is in his papers at BSU.
138. [K. Ziliacus?] to V.G. Childe, 8 Dec. 1916: BSU.
141. AA, 228.
147. AA, 219. See also HO 45/20834/328752.
150. A to F. Bouillon, 1 Oct. 1911: BSU.
154. AA, 217.
156. R. Fuller to A. Dakyns, 24 May 1917, as notified to me by G. Peter Winnington.
158. ‘Brief Summary of a Meeting held under the Auspices of the I.L.P. on Sunday, 28th January 1917, at the “Elysium”, High Street, Swansea. Chairman, Councillor D. Williams, JP, and lecture by Norman Angell’: HO 45/1084/328752.
159. Courtney, *Extracts from a Diary*, 109 (entry of 7 Feb. 1917, reviewing the period since 15 Jan.).
162. A to Bryce, 12 Apr. 1917: Bryce Papers, 284 fo. 121.
163. A. Ponsonby diary (transcript), 4 May 1917: Shulbrede Priory.
165. *Hansard* 93, cols. 1166, 1200.
166. *Nation*, 12 May 1917, 137.
167. HO 45/10834/328752. The file was closed on 27 May 1917.
168. A to J. Buchan, 4 Dec. 1911: BSU.
173. G. Toulin to H. Wright, 22 June 1917 (typescript copy): BSU.
174. AA, 232.
175. G. Toulmin to H. Wright, 22 June 1917 (typescript copy): BSU.
176. Labour Leader, 12 July 1917, 5; 19 July 1917, 5; 26 July 1917, 5; 9 Aug. 1917, 5; 16 Aug. 1917, 4; 23 Aug. 1917, 4; 30 Aug. 1917, 4. (There was no instalment on 2 Aug.)
177. Minutes, UDC executive, 3, 10 July 1917: DDC/1/4.
180. Fyfe, My Seven Selves, 218.
181. AA, 195, 226.
186. This in-joke was alluded to in A to C. Dehn, 5 June 1929: BSU.
194. A to A.E. Bestor, 22 Nov. [1917] (typescript copy): BSU.
195. NYT, 3 Dec. 1917, 12.
197. Information about these meetings from the Woman’s Peace Party papers in Swarthmore College supplied by G. Peter Winnington.
198. W&P – the Nation Supplement, June 1918, 273–5 (contribution dated 3 Apr.).
199. Washington Post, 5 May 1918; American (New York City), 5 May 1918: BSU box 30.
200. See the small advertisements of his meetings in NYT, 14 Apr. 1918, E3; 21 Apr. 1918, 16.
203. H. Wright to A, 21 Apr. 1918: BSU.
204. G. Toulin to A, 7 May 1918 (transcribed copy): BSU.
209. AA, 203. New Republic, 23 Feb. 1919, 122 (the ‘F.H.’ that wrote this article being presumably Francis Hackett).
211. A to H. Wright, n.d. [c. Mar. 1919]: BSU.

213. A to H. Croly, 4 Aug. 1918: BSU.

214. *NYT*, 27 Nov. 1918, 12.

215. A to C. Fuller, 21 Oct. [1918]: BSU.

216. A copy of Angell’s note to Buchan is in the Murray papers, 178 fo. 179. See also *AA*, 207, and *NYT*, 27 Nov. 1918, 12.


222. Information from Alice Angell Everard.


224. Information from G. Peter Winnington. Her memoirs locate the trysts between her return from the United States in September 1917 and her *ending* work in Paris early in 1919, in which case they must have taken place in late December 1918, the only time Angell was in London.


Exploring Politics, Enjoying Rehabilitation: 1919–31

The long post-war decade was another creative yet confused time for Angell. His activism was now channelled into three discrete areas – domestic politics, the world economy, and European security – each of which suggested a different ideological approach. His ambition to be a Labour politician required him, as he later put it, ‘to make the best of all the Socialist slogans and Marxist incantations’ favoured by his chosen political home.1 The economic recession caused him not only to revive his ‘illusion’ thesis but also to endorse the Union of Democratic Control’s (UDC) radical campaign against the reparation payments being demanded of Germany. And France’s insecurity activated his pro-defence instincts, convincing him from the autumn of 1922 that the protective capacity of the new League of Nations had to be augmented; yet how this internationalist policy related to his own ‘illusion’ propaganda was unclear even to him; and it was condemned by many of his Labour and UDC colleagues, who either remained isolationist or disparaged the League as a liberal, rather than a socialist or radical, organization.

British party politics were Angell’s priority, so after reporting in Europe for only two and a half months he threw in his lot with Labour. Initially, he brought to it avowed ‘revolutionary tendencies’,2 which extended to helping the Guild Socialists and to backing direct action by the Triple Alliance of mining, railway, and transport unions. Such policies prolonged his notoriety: he admitted to Langdon-Davies during 1919 that in popular demonology ‘“Pacifist” has been replaced by “Bolshevist”’.3 Although Angell’s period of ultra-leftism was brief – as early as the autumn of the following year he took a step back from it – he still favoured an increased economic role for the state, enthused about the cooperative principle, and strove to enter the House of Commons. Yet he never fully grasped his party’s ethos, particularly the values derived from its trade-union wing; and he exaggerated the utility of his foreign-policy knowledge and personal connection with Ramsay MacDonald, who resumed the leadership in 1922. Still outside parliament at the time (January–November 1924) of the first Labour government, Angell nonetheless aspired to supply it with a foreign policy acceptable both to a prime minister determined to show statesmanlike flexibility in respect of the Franco-German quarrel and to back-benchers, led by Morel, bent on following UDC guidelines to the letter. By then, having previously straddled radical isolationism and liberal internationalism, Angell had for some fifteen
months been tilting towards the latter. He had become convinced, despite his opposition to its reparations policy, that France deserved the reassurance of an enhanced system of collective security. He aspired to win both MacDonald and the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) over to this policy, but in the event convinced neither of them. Depressed by this failure, he lost any remaining ambition to be a big-hitter within the party, and settled for being a technical specialist, keen to serve in the Foreign Office or at Geneva. In 1925, he happily joined the executive committee of the League of Nations Union (LNU), even though its leaders were not only former supporters of the war who had disdained the UDC, but either loyal Liberals like Gilbert Murray or progressive Tories like Lord Robert Cecil (from 1923 Viscount Cecil of Chelwood) rather than radicals or socialists. In line with the LNU’s liberal-internationalist approach Angell began insisting that the refusal of ‘third-party judgement of disputes’ constituted an objective proof of aggression, and that under the League’s guidance law-abiding countries should apply their ‘collective power to the support of that principle’ – an argument he was to repeat time and again over the next decade and a half. Yet, particularly from the autumn of 1928 onwards, he also showed a sentimental attachment to the UDC, whose journal he agreed to edit, and began publicly to profess a personal belief in non-resistance. His eclecticism thus remained remarkable, as he juggled liberal, radical, pacifist, and ‘illusion’ thinking, whilst paying the necessary minimum of lip-service to his party’s socialist nostrums too. Ideological unpredictability thus reinforced political inexperience, insufficient partisan zeal, and edgy relationships with trade unionists, left-wingers, and the party leader, as reasons why Angell was passed over for office in MacDonald’s second government (June 1929 – August 1931), even though by then a Labour MP.

A compensation for this disappointment was that by then Angell’s intellectual reputation was partially restored, enabling him to resume his career as a pundit alongside his work as a politician. This was somewhat paradoxical, given that international interdependence was in decline, thereby in principle undermining his ‘illusion’ analysis. Yet Angell’s pre-1914 claims about the impossibility of turning military victory into economic gain were widely regarded as having been vindicated, as the British public turned first against the harsh Treaty of Versailles and later against the 1914–18 conflict itself: for example, by 1930 a conservative weekly could observe that it ‘is the fashion nowadays to decry war and to subscribe to Mr Norman Angell’s thesis’. Even so, neither his intellectual confidence nor his authorial impact quite reached its former peak. His pre-war assumption that illusions could be reasoned away had yielded to post-war puzzlement about the public’s inability to learn. Convinced that a profound change in mass education was a precondition for public rationality, he devoted himself for a while to social psychology, his books losing focus and impact as a result. Even on his more familiar economic terrain, he faced greater competition than previously from trained professionals. In any case he had difficulty in deciding his own attitude towards the economic depression that set in at the end of 1920 and deepened following the Wall Street crash nine years later.
Increasingly dependent on investment income as his royalties tailed off, he resented the ‘inflationary orgies’ of the war and its immediate aftermath. He also considered public-works remedies extravagant, and worried about a financial collapse. Yet he believed, initially for reasons of socialist principle but latterly also from practical experience of farming Northeby Island (a distracting acquisition made affordable only by heavy-duty lecturing in the United States), that capitalism needed rationalizing. And he was intuitively sympathetic to Hobson’s and Keynes’s arguments against deflationary orthodoxy. The tension between these orthodox and progressive strands in Angell’s economic outlook meant he felt unable either to condemn MacDonald for agreeing to a National Government during the financial crisis of August 1931 or to follow him into his newly created National Labour Party. Angell therefore retired from parliament, and to some extent from economic punditry too, just as Japan’s seizure of Manchuria marked the transition from a post- to a pre-war era.

* * * * *

Routine reporting was never his favourite occupation; but Parisian life in the early weeks of 1919 provided compensations. He saw more of Rosalind Fuller, who had found work at the Folies Bergère in ‘a pretty show – not very good or I wouldn’t have been in it’, as she told an interviewer many years later. On one occasion he met her at the stage door with two members of his Cornell summer-school class of 1915, Gannett and Hudson, who were in Paris for the peace conference. However, her stay in Europe was short: in 1920 she established herself in New York, enjoying a brief fling with the novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald, appearing in a revue on Broadway, launching a successful career as a serious actress (most notably by playing Ophelia to John Barrymore’s Hamlet in 1922/3), and forming a significant yet open relationship with the California-born photographer Francis Bruguier, who was eventually to exhibit many nude studies of her.

Despite his move to the left Angell also managed to re-establish some kind of relationship with Woodrow Wilson’s circle, which had decamped to Paris in such numbers that the progressive journalist Ida M. Tarbell found that venturing out of the Hôtel Vouillemont, where she and other colleagues were staying too, ‘was like walking the streets of Washington’. He even enjoyed a meeting with the President himself, presumably arranged by his press secretary, Ray Stannard Baker, another guest at the Vouillemont, who later recalled being warned by Angell, along with Lippmann, Tarbell, and White, that Wilson was giving no sign of understanding ‘the strength of the forces which were against him’. Angell must have been all too aware of these forces from his informal contacts with Philip Baker and Philip Kerr, who were both part of the British delegation. It is likely that through them he also met Harold Nicolson, then a diplomat though later a writer and politician, who three years later was to take the apartment below his at 4 King’s Bench Walk.

A chance encounter with Northcliffe (now a Viscount) resulted in an engagement to cover the conference of the Second International for The Times, which the proprietor of the Daily Mail also owned. Held in early February 1919 at Berne,
this was the occasion on which MacDonald, present on behalf of the Labour Party, was handed ‘letters of a secret agent in British pay reporting on the Conference’ that had been accidentally dropped in the street: intended for the same British intelligence officer whose partially inaccurate information had helped to delay Angell’s passport two years previously, these were copied and sent on to an embarrassed British consul, as MacDonald took pleasure in recounting to the readers of the Scottish Independent Labour Party’s (ILP) paper Forward. Angell shared a hotel room with a future American ambassador to the Soviet Union and France, William C. Bullitt, at that time an idealistic member of the American peace-conference delegation who was shortly to hold secret talks with Lenin. Observing MacDonald at work among the leaders of the Second International, Angell was impressed by his integrating role within a body that, as he noted anonymously in The Times, had two ‘intransigent wings’, anti-socialist and pro-Bolshevik, respectively, which ‘the centre’ was struggling to hold together. He later claimed to have assured MacDonald at this time that he would do his best to help him become prime minister. With his own campaign for a democratically created League in mind Angell also used his reports on the Berne conference to insist that its ‘chief achievement was its discovery that the League of Nations should represent Parliaments, not Governments’.11

After his brief Swiss excursion of February 1919 he returned to Paris, though only for about a month. He moved on because Lansbury, who had also been reporting on the peace conference, had decided with effect from the end of March to convert his Herald from an independent-socialist weekly into a Labour-supporting daily. Angell had offered Lansbury his newspaper-production expertise, his consequent departure for London being regretted by White, who on 13 March recorded that Angell had been ‘a source of inspiration and of information. And I have grown quite fond of him.’12 Thus, just as Wilson returned for a crucial second period in Paris, Angell turned his back on the peace negotiations and his Paris-based friends, a sign of his impatience to find a role for himself within the British left.

He was back in London in time to dine with Wrench on 21 March 1919. Not having seen Angell for four years, his friend noted with interest that he was ‘now helping to start the new Labour paper the Daily Herald. He was full of information, and I greatly enjoyed meeting him again.’13 To Wright, who remained staunchly Liberal, Angell admitted that his Lansbury connection ‘sounds pretty Bolshevik’, but argued that it was now impossible to promote internationalism other than as ‘part of the general social and political reconstruc-

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tion’. In any case, he insisted, his work for the Daily Herald would ‘be concentrated mainly on making the thing a newspaper and not a pamphlet’.14 Despite this assurance he threw himself into writing opinionated articles that ventilated his recent concerns. The first, appearing on 3 April, insisted that the diplomatic representatives in Paris should be supplemented by party delegates chosen by proportional representation. His second, nine days later, attacked ‘the kind of lunacy which demands that we crush Germany commercially and exact a large indemnity’, although he made clear that he largely blamed ‘public opinion’ for
15 He claimed to have written ‘many’ of the paper’s leaders too, and, in an overture to the UDC, also made his first-ever contribution to its monthly review.

Angell was suspected by Lansbury of viewing ‘with dismay’ the left’s endemic ideological squabbles; and indeed, despite having taken to platform speaking like a duck to water at the beginning of the decade, he needed time to find his feet in labour politics. His later claim to have ‘drifted’ into it understated the considerable effort he put into navigating its channels. At a dinner party on 16 May 1919 he encountered Clifford Allen, who, not having seen him for almost three years, thought him ‘very quiet and hesitant, rather disposed to give information and report conversations than to express any definite opinions’. An article for an American journal at this time revealed Angell’s bafflement by strikers ‘who throw the whole country into industrial chaos because they have a grievance about the dinner hour’ that ‘an active minority’ had been able to exploit. He also seemed content to be in the audience rather than, as formerly, on the platform. When in the third week of May William Allen White passed through London, he was taken by Angell to ‘meetings of the Labour Party called to protest certain provisions of the peace treaty’. Impressed by the outspoken denunciations of the Lloyd George government they heard there, White concluded that Britain currently enjoyed freer speech than the United States.

After two and a half months in left-wing politics Angell’s self-assurance began to grow as new opportunities opened up for him. Having been asked by the Labour Leader to become a regular contributor, he started on 29 May 1919 with articles on both of the themes that were to preoccupy him over the next year and a half. On the front page he urged the labour movement not to be ‘inert and docile in the presence of the attempt to destroy Russia’s experiment in industrial democracy’. (This theme was to lead him into particular criticism of Winston Churchill during the months to come.) Four pages later Angell argued that the long-term militarization required to batten a harsh settlement upon Germany and Austria would have reactionary implications for domestic politics even within the victor countries: enforcement of the yet-to-be-signed Treaty of Versailles would ‘depend upon the maintenance during a whole generation of extremely powerful naval and military forces by the non-German States of Europe’, which would in turn lead to ‘the suppression of democratic tendencies, and more particularly industrially democratic developments’ in those states. At the same time the Fight the Famine Council invited him onto its economic committee alongside Hobson, Keynes, and Sir George Paish, distinguished names that Angell was proud to drop to American journalists; and in support of its objectives he wrote a strong protest against the threat to cut off food supplies if Germany did not accept the Versailles treaty. On 3 June he joined Labour’s advisory committee on international questions, a forum through which middle-class intellectuals, including Brailsford, Morel, Ponsonby, and Trevelyan, were supplying foreign-policy skills to a PLP that was at a low ebb under Willie Adamson and J.R. Clynes, who successively led it until MacDonald returned to the Commons. The advisory committee immediately deputed Angell to work
with Brailsford on a memorandum about the peace settlement, and the following
month to collaborate with MacDonald on the rewriting of a statement calling
for revision of the Versailles treaty, which Germany had signed on 28 June. In
addition, Angell was asked to write several memoranda of his own. He became
for fifteen months an assiduous attender of the advisory committee, even taking
the chair on one occasion, as well a prolific producer of papers for it. In addition
to thus helping an official Labour committee, Angell was ‘greatly drawn’ to the
Guild Socialists on the left of the movement, as were Langdon-Davies and Manus:
in late July he tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to arrange for a group of them, led
by their ‘high prophet’, Oxford academic G.D.H. Cole, to cross the Atlantic in
order ‘to create a bond of sympathy between English and American Radicals,
Trade Unionists, Liberal people, and so forth’.26

On 31 July 1919 Alexander Lane died at the age of fifty-two, perhaps a victim of
the post-war influenza epidemic, which Angell escaped at this time, though
he succumbed to something similar a year and a half later. His memoirs omitted
this loss of a third brother, but recorded that he took up sailing again in that first
post-war summer, having bought a ship’s lifeboat that had been converted into a
forty-foot yacht.27 He spent part of August on the Devon coast with Geoffrey
Toulmin and his wife Doris, who was shortly to become his secretary.28 Despite
such escapes into the open air, he suffered badly from neurasthenia, though the
pulling of more teeth gave him ‘a little spurt of energy’ in October.29

During the autumn of 1919, Angell felt that he knew enough about the
economic irrationality of the settlement concluded at Paris to expend this energy
on The Peace Treaty and the Economic Chaos of Europe. It was a book intended for
the political mainstream, showing that even at the height of his leftism he desired
to retain a wider audience. It was carefully and cautiously written, its eschewal
of sweeping generalization and polemic contrasting with his pre-war work for a
similar readership. And only in the most self-deprecating way did he allude to his
own pre-conflict predictions:

However much before the war we may have disparaged this interdependence as mainly a
mere theory of faddists which nations in practice could disregard, it is perhaps the
most insistent fact of a time which finds England desperately dependent upon American
financial help and America having so far ‘licked’ her European ‘rivals’ that American
goods lie rotting in her docks because those rivals have not money therewith to pay for
them.30

His analysis was informed by the first-hand accounts of the economic plight of
central Europe he heard at a private conference in November of the Fight the Famine
Council, which, having invited German and Austrian representatives, was lambasted
by the Northcliffe press.31 Angell’s appetite for politics at this time was voracious.
On Christmas eve he was one of a distinguished group of signatories – the others
support for a National Guilds League pronouncement on ‘the present industrial
crisis’, which had been drafted at a ‘series of meetings recently held in Mr Norman
Angell’s rooms in the Temple’.32 Soon afterwards Angell was involved in promoting
a memorandum by Clynes intended to demonstrate the depth of trade-union opposition to the government’s anti-Soviet policies, urging Josiah Wedgwood, who had switched from being a Liberal to a Labour MP, ‘to see that Adamson and the Parliamentary Party generally’ took the same line.33

In late December 1919 The Peace Treaty and the Economic Chaos of Europe was published under a Quaker imprint, Swarthmore Press. The press described it respectfully as ‘a monograph’ that was ‘soberly expressed’,34 but understandably paid greater attention to J.M. Keynes’s more vivid and authoritative rendition of the same theme, The Economic Consequences of the Peace, which the commercial publisher Macmillan had brought out earlier the same month. Angell reviewed his competitor generously, though now he could not resist drawing attention to his own seniority as an expositor of their common critique by observing that ‘some years before the war a writer anticipated the precise difficulties about the creation of an indemnity which are in fact those that have arisen’ only to be accused at that time of having propounded ‘an absurd paradox’.35 His new colleagues on the left loved both books: H.B. Lees-Smith, a radical-turned-socialist, declared it ‘a fortunate event for mankind that men like Mr Norman Angell and Mr Maynard Keynes are already working out in detail the foreign policy of a Labour Government’.36 Encouraged, Angell now joined the ILP, which was now the leading left-wing ginger group within the Labour Party.37

Keynes’s best-seller of December 1919 ‘had an immediate effect upon “inside” informed opinion’, as Angell acknowledged a few years later.38 By apparently vindicating his own pre-war views, it restored his personal confidence almost overnight. In an article for the Contemporary Review Angell restated the argument of his own book in a less inhibited style: ‘London drinks champagne as never before, and in cities that were yesterday our playgrounds, so near are they to us, children die miserably for lack of a little milk’.39 Although he continued to write outspoken articles for the socialist press – for example, accusing the British government in January 1920 of preparing ‘an invasion of Russia by a motley collection of Poles, Letts, Japanese, French and Roumanians’40 – he began to believe he might also revive his career as a pundit for a general audience.

February 1920 was when his rehabilitation gathered pace. During its second week, Wrench ‘lunched with Norman Angell and found him full of interest. By degrees he is coming into his own and people are realizing that in all his main points he was right in The Great Illusion’.41 On the 14th Co-operative News led with an article on ‘The Vindication of Norman Angell’; and Langdon-Davies recommended him as a possible candidate for the Rushcliffe division of Nottinghamshire, claiming that he had been an ILP member ‘for some time now’.42 Three days later Angell was invited to let his name go onto the Rushcliffe shortlist. He immediately agreed, offered to pay ‘the larger part’ of his electoral expenses, and committed himself to ‘the most thorough-going labour social programme (nationalisation of all the great public utilities, combined with management by the workers themselves through their Unions), to be realised by means of Parliamentary and Constitutional action, as being in the circumstances the quickest and most effective method’. He thus implied that direct action was
acceptable to him in principle, though ruled out by practical considerations. He also claimed that his early forecasts about the economic consequences of war ‘have been, in every particular, confirmed by the events’. As already noted, this step towards standing for parliament led on the 24th to his changing his surname by deed poll, Wrench accompanying him as he made the legal transition from Lane to Angell. The following day another national newspaper declared: ‘After five and a half years in the wilderness, Mr Norman Angell has come back.’

Within a week, however, Angell was to discover the hard way how controversial he still was in certain quarters. On 1 March 1920 he travelled to Cambridge to address the local UDC branch in St Andrew’s Hall: this was the episode he later misremembered as having taken place during the war. In announcing his visit, the town newspaper had adopted a critical tone, observing that he had ‘suffered something of an eclipse since he was last in Cambridge’ eight years previously to debate at the Union. Remembering him as having on that occasion insisted that ‘if a nation is attacked it should defend itself to the last plank’, it asked rhetorically: ‘Were those the views of the U.D.C. in the war just ended?’ Not only ‘town’ but ‘gown’ had its critics of Angell’s decision to speak. Hostile students almost kidnapped him when his train reached Royston, a stop on the way from London to Cambridge: he escaped interception then only because his co-speaker, Helena Swanwick, believed he had missed the train she was on, and in good faith told the students inquiring for him that he would be coming on the next one. According to a draft of his autobiography, they tried again at Cambridge station, claiming to have a car to take him to his hosts; but, suspecting foul play, he ‘lay doggo’ when shouted for, and made his own way. The students therefore disrupted his meeting instead. In advance of 8.30 pm, when it was scheduled to begin: ‘Swarms of riotous undergraduates descended upon the hall and packed it’, in the words of a local reporter. The police blocked the door, prompting Sub-Lieutenant Pennell Hawkins, aged 20, a Queens’ College student on the Admiralty’s six-month Junior Naval Officers’ course, to attempt entry via an upper window, only to fall badly and be rushed to hospital. The two speakers and their chairman, the Revd S.C. Carpenter, were then escorted in. Despite ‘a running fire of interruptions and . . . thunderous ironical applause’, Swanwick managed ‘to get through some sort of speech’ to the effect that the UDC’s original ‘four points’ had subsequently achieved widespread acceptance. But when Angell rose to follow her, ‘the undergraduates refused to let him speak more than a few words at a time, and roared and gibed until he lost his temper and twice sat down in despair. And twice the undergraduates yelled rhythmically, “We want Norman,” until he stood up again.’ T.R. Glover, who as Senior Proctor was responsible for student discipline and had been anticipating trouble, arrived and urged the audience to respect ‘the Cambridge tradition’ of tolerance; but the students switched off the lights and threw a bag of flour at him before breaking into a chorus of ‘He’s a jolly good fellow’. He beat a tactical retreat, leaving one his Pro-Proctors to keep an eye on events, shortly after which a policeman arrived to announce that the student who had fallen from the roof was seriously injured. (After All claimed that Hawkins ‘later died from his injuries’;
but he merely missed his final examination later that month.) Although the students dutifully left the hall, many lingered outside. The speakers picked their way through them to seek refuge in nearby Downing College, and were followed there by a rowdy group, whereupon ‘in spite of the brave efforts of Mrs Swanwick, Mr Angell was dragged out of the College gate, and down St Andrew’s Street’. Two policemen, seeing his plight, ‘made a valiant attempt to get him back to Downing’, but ‘the riotous undergraduates – two or three hundred in number – had shut the gate… and tried to carry Mr Angell towards the river with the avowed intention of ducking him’. They formed a ‘first-class Rugby scrimmage’ that ‘bore Mr Angell and the two policemen before it’ until police reinforcements ‘dragged Mr Angell into the Fire Station and defended the entrance’. Baulked of their prey, the ‘mob of undergraduates then divided’: one part rushed to the home of the chairman of the UDC meeting and ‘pushed down thirty yards of wall’ in his garden; ‘and the other part formed up behind a passing Boys’ Brigade band, and marched away into the darkness’.

Though embarrassed by the international publicity given to this episode, Angell initially tried to shrug it off as ‘a pure “rag”’ that ‘did not really have any reference to opinions whatsoever’. The correspondence columns of the Cambridge Daily News give the lie to this, however, by confirming that he was viewed as the symbol of a particular, negative opinion of British foreign policy in 1914, and that he had become all the more provocative to supporters of that foreign policy because this negative opinion seemed suddenly to have gained ground. One critic insisted that, given the UDC’s wartime stance, ‘it was simply courting trouble for Mr Norman Angell to address a meeting under the auspices of that Union’; and another argued: ‘The Norman Angell “rag” was simply a protest (carried too far, no doubt) against the “know-all” person who never has a good word to say for his own country’. But one supporter ‘could not understand the special hatred shown to Mr Angell’, who had not opposed the war effort and whose views had generally been proved ‘accurate’; and another, noting that all copies of The Great Illusion had suddenly been borrowed from the public library, argued that if ‘every public man who now agrees’ with that book ‘is to be ducked, our “raggers” will have no time to work for their degrees’.

Angell’s Cambridge ordeal of 1 March 1920 made him all the more determined during the next six months to pursue his international, domestic, and personal agendas. Within a week he had both published an article in the Daily Herald warning of food shortages across Europe and defeated the local contenders in the selection contest at Rushcliffe, and though the speech with which he did so ‘was very frankly anti-direct action and anti-revolutionary’, as he assured Wright, he probably again implied that his preference for parliamentary methods was tactical rather than principled. Though a county division, Rushcliffe offered ‘a fighting chance’: Labour had pushed the Liberals into third place there in the previous general election; it contained a mining district from which the party could expect strong support; and there was also some prospect of ‘swinging around a certain portion of the middle class vote’ in West Bridgford, which, Angell assumed, was why he had been selected. He embarked on his
candidacy, which Labour’s national executive committee approved in April, in a
conscienious manner, making several week-long visits in the course of the
summer. Although already persuaded that attitudinal change required serious
educational preparation, he nonetheless hoped ‘a serious two or three years’ effort
put into instructing his constituents would suffice, a belief that by mid-decade he
recognized as far too optimistic.\(^49\) Meanwhile in London he used a dinner laid
on for him by friends at the National Liberal Club to defend himself once more
against the charge of having alleged the impossibility of war, noting sorrowfully
that ‘it would be affectation on my part to pretend that this extraordinary lusty
myth has not affected the public’s attitude to what I have written.’\(^50\) Convinced
of his intellectual vindication, he was irked when the press ‘ignored’ this dinner,
despite having ‘publicised my Cambridge rag.’\(^51\)

During the summer of 1920 Angell built up ‘a veritable barbed-wire entangle-
ment of engagements’\(^52\). In addition to nursing his constituency and defending
his personal reputation, he worked hard to convey a staunch leftism during
a phase of unusual political militancy. When Poland went to war with Soviet
Russia, the Labour movement created a ‘Council of Action’ to organize strikes
against any attempt to support the Poles. Angell not only wrote in support of
Russia but accepted an invitation from Robin Page-Arnot, who was shortly to
become a Communist, to join the Council of Action’s press and publicity
committee.\(^53\) In a *Labour Leader* article on 5 September Angell asked why the
ordinary Briton, who had accepted the utility of nationalization in wartime,
allowed capitalists to ‘put it all over him again when it becomes a problem
of providing houses?’ He urged the Council of Action to put forward a general
programme, putting Peace with Russia (‘immediate, concrete, and formal peace’)
and with Ireland well into the foreground and making Nationalization a
direct and not an indirect issue. If the programme were not accepted by the
Government then Labour should demand a general election. If an election were
not granted then progressive industrial pressure could be applied.\(^54\)

However, this explicit endorsement of direct action proved to be the high-water
mark of Angell’s socialism. When the miners went on strike in October 1920,
Angell, though insisting that they were ‘entitled to what they claim – and more,’ felt
compelled to warn that all the miners could thereby gain would be ‘more paper;
not more wages’, and that the inflationary consequences of their strike would
encourage other unions to follow suit. He was in effect applying to industrial
relations the same reasoning that had caused him to argue that coerced transfers of
wealth were impossible in international relations. He rejected uncoordinated
sectional demands and favoured instead ‘a predetermined plan’, which, in the
interests of securing the support of the ‘non-revolutionary outside world’, should
be drawn up by Parliament rather than the trade unions themselves – a repudi-
ation of the syndicalist views with which he had once flirted.\(^55\)

He did not confine his rethinking to domestic issues. In a letter to Wright on
20 October 1920, he made the remarkable suggestion that with hindsight *The
Great Illusion* should have argued for an attempt to ‘ placate’ Germany by ‘offering
her guarantees of economic access to undeveloped territories’.\(^56\) Apparently in
response to the reparations being demanded of the Weimar Republic, which both the UDC and Labour Party opposed, during 1920/1 Angell went through his one and only appeasing phase. As already noted, appeasement was an inference that could be drawn from his ambiguous ‘illusion’ thesis: if colonies brought no benefits, why not let another country have them? He decided to embark on a general review of his pre-war thinking in order to establish its applicability or otherwise to the post-war situation.

He began work on this project in the last week of October 1920 as he crossed to the United States on the Finland, and tried out his ideas in some of the talks he gave on arrival. His tour, which lasted until the new year, was the first of seven that decade: he went again in early 1922, 1924/5, 1926/7, 1927/8, and 1928/9, later explaining that during those years ‘it was possible to earn more in a week of lectures than a year’s work on a book would provide in royalties’. The United States subtly undermined his career as a Labour politician, not merely because it took him away from his party work, or because its lecture circuit required him to tone down his leftist rhetoric, but more fundamentally because its laissez-faire capitalism was technically so impressive as gradually to erode his professed socialist beliefs. Thus in a parliamentary speech ten years later he was to recall his surprise on this late-1920 visit that in a wood-producing country several industries – among them building, warehousing, and office equipment – had already upgraded to metal, a spontaneous feat of training and standardization his own homeland could not match. Being a very moderate drinker, Angell was not bothered by the ‘prohibition’ introduced that year: indeed, he came to consider the ability of the American hotel even late at night to provide ‘fresh and decent food with no obligation to swill alcohol’ a positive advantage, one of many that even modest establishments had over their supposedly grander British counterparts.

However, he was less content with the political attitudes he found in the autumn of 1920. Having last been in the United States during the final seventeen months of the war, when he had been battered by ‘a flood of rhetoric’ about ‘the two great branches of the English-speaking race’, he ‘less than two years later found that this great cement had already lost its potency’. Moreover, the American elections that he witnessed on his arrival, during which both Wilsonianism and domestic progressivism were repudiated, showed public opinion in almost as bad a light as had the British general election two years previously. In response, Angell argued for the inevitability of some form of internationalism and government intervention in the economy. He thus told an interviewer that the ‘theory of isolation and self-sufficiency’ was contrary to ‘the simple facts of history, recent and remote’. He further claimed that the war had everywhere entrenched ‘state socialism’, albeit sometimes in a concealed form such as ‘the confiscation of something like a two-thirds part of the accumulated fortunes’ of the French population through the ‘debasement of the currency’ by ‘very bourgeois governments’. That property was already in jeopardy from supposedly conservative and liberal administrations, though the victims
were worried only about a possible threat from avowedly socialist ones, became a recurrent theme of his propaganda during this decade. The late-1920 visit yielded Angell a profit of £600 for only ten weeks’ talking.\textsuperscript{63} It also reminded him that his expertise lay mainly in foreign policy and that this subject received too little attention in the leftist circles to which he had mainly been confining himself in Britain. This neglect seemed all the more short-sighted after the dramatic collapse, while he was away, of the post-war economic boom, which he attributed to Europe’s inability to afford British exports. Soon after his return in January 1921 he complained to the readers of the \textit{Labour Leader} that it was ‘quite notorious’ that to announce “Foreign Policy”… as the subject of a Labour public meeting … was quite sufficient to ensure an all but empty hall’. The onset of unemployment in response to deficient purchasing power in Europe should have alerted the Labour movement to the importance of external factors, he argued; but, its industrial wing being both dominant and parochial, it lacked the necessary economic intelligence. Angell insisted that the proper coordination of production and consumption, upon which economic stability depended, ‘must in its nature be political, and include things which harassed and overworked Trade Unionist officials cannot attend to merely in their spare time’.\textsuperscript{64}

He now concentrated on the book applying his ‘illusion’ thesis to the war and its aftermath. Unlike much of his output during this decade, it was the product of considerable reflection. Although he was able in ten days of writing during January 1921 to set down a first draft, and found himself ‘much more content with it than I have ever been before’,\textsuperscript{65} he needed to refine it, and in particular take into account the severity of the British economic recession. But some time after addressing a meeting in Essex Hall about reparations on 18 March, he succumbed to an illness as debilitating as the post-war influenza. It kept him at home for several weeks and for a while delayed his rewriting. As late as 9 June, by which time the book was finished, Angell warned his agent in Rushcliffe: ‘I shall not be returning to active work for a month or two yet (this is merely an entr’acte), but when I do return I hope it will be very actively’.\textsuperscript{66} Despite later claiming that he ‘for years attended every meeting regularly’,\textsuperscript{67} Angell did not resume his attendance at the advisory committee on international questions until 21 June.

He returned to full activity just as \textit{The Fruits of Victory: A Sequel to ‘The Great Illusion’} was published in Glasgow by William Collins during the third week of June 1921. Century brought out an edition in New York two months later. Angell had recovered much of his pre-war verve and even indulged in some triumphalism, particularly in a seventy-nine-page addendum that reviewed and dismissed many previous criticisms of \textit{The Great Illusion}. He insisted that his thesis had been vindicated both by the events of 1914–18 and by the subsequent failure of the victors to convert military preponderance into economic success: ‘Our minds are still dominated by the medieval aspect of wealth as a “possession” of static material such as land, not as part of a flow. It is that oversight which probably produced the war; it certainly produced certain clauses of the Treaty’. To explain France’s problems in extracting payments from Germany, he repeated his argument: ‘As interdependence increases, the limits of coercion are narrowed’.
He also described the standpoint he was criticizing as ‘the “realist” view’. He twitted those who had disliked his emphasis on the economic dimension of international relations, to many of whom the word ‘economic’ had ‘seemed to carry no picture but an obese Semitic stockbroker, in quaking fear for his profits’, whereas in the event ‘the “economic futility” of war expressed itself otherwise: in half a Continent unable to feed or clothe or warm itself’.68

As Trevelyan’s predictably approving review noted, rather than dwell on the past, Angell ‘carries his argument forward and applies it to the new and much more terrible situation which seven years rioting in the illusion have brought us’.69 He did so by claiming that, though in general proved correct, his magnum opus had suffered from three defects. The first was its failure to recommend the economic appeasement of Germany: he regretted not having given ‘greater emphasis’ before 1914 ‘to some definite scheme for assuring Germany’s necessary access to resources’.70 He had little more to say about this than in his letter to Wright, however, and never took this appeasing argument further. Within a few years he had reverted to the alternative, pro-defence reading of his ‘illusion’ thesis: that because economic prosperity had nothing to do with politics, and the British empire was unusually non-exclusionary in its policies, concessions to ‘Have-Not’ states were unnecessary.

The second defect he now discovered in his pre-war books was their failure to anticipate that the Allies would pursue so irrational a post-war settlement.71 This was indeed true: though they had predicted that confiscatory behaviour would have disastrous consequences, their author had never expected great powers to behave so foolishly, which is why he did not believe that the outbreak of war would of itself trigger a financial meltdown; yet he now regarded the post-war settlement as confiscatory foolishness of a high order.

The third defect was The Great Illusion’s underestimate of the potential for nationalism to invade economic life. This was also true: as he had realized late in the First World War, his ‘illusion’ thesis had posited the permanence of an ‘international – or, more correctly, a transnational economy’; yet soon afterwards this transnationalism had been undermined by the state control that the right had introduced during the war for reasons of military efficiency and that the left, himself included, wished to retain after the war for reasons of social welfare. He now predicted that because ‘the nation, taking over individual enterprise, became trader and manufacturer in increasing degree… the political emotions of nationalism will play a much larger role in the economic processes of Europe’. A European economy that required international cooperation in order to sustain acceptable living standards had thus fallen victim not only to state-centred selfishness but to a new territorial order dominated by ‘small “absolute” nationalisms’. In consequence, ‘the new Europe is economically less competent than the old’.72 In thus identifying unfettered national sovereignty as the major problem of international relations, while also exonerating capitalism, Angell was tacitly endorsing liberal internationalism. Even so, he was still also paying lip-service to socialism and endorsing the UDC’s radical demand for the preferential economic treatment of Germany.73
Angell's June 1921 'sequel' to *The Great Illusion* did not receive the same intellectual respect as the original. With academic expertise in economics more plentiful than before the war, his plain-man pronouncements on this subject were taken less seriously. 'What incompetent devils reviewers are!', wrote Keynes in a personal note thanking him for a copy of *The Fruits of Victory*, which he claimed to have thought 'extremely good', though the *Economic Journal*, co-edited by Keynes, did not notice it. Reviewing it elsewhere, Dennis Robertson took the tactful line that it 'would be unjust to Mr Angell' to treat the book 'as solely or even primarily an essay in economics'.74 Notices for the general reader were more generous: for example, *Public Opinion* for 10 June not only carried one but reprinted its enthusiastic January 1910 review of *Europe's Optical Illusion* under the heading: 'I Told You So'. Signing himself Ralph Lane, Angell even asked Northcliffe to help promote *The Fruits of Victory* on the grounds that 'fifteen years ago' – in fact less than twelve – the *Daily Mail* had helped promote a theory which had proved 'on the whole, well-founded'.75 Though ailing – he was to die the following year – the press baron seems to have been sympathetic. 'Even the “Mail” is taking my stuff now', Angell was soon to note.76

Buoyed up by some public recognition and by restored health, he in the third week of June 1921 made his one and only speech to a Labour conference, calling for revision of the peace treaties and claiming to have supported the party for twelve years. He also turned his attention to the reasons why unwise policies were adopted. In an article for a humanist journal on 'The Social Failure of Learning' he noted that distinguished scholars, 'British, French, German, American', who had uncritically put their 'ripe learning' at the disposal of their own country's war effort, 'would certainly be extremely embarrassed if they were to-day confronted with the judgements that they passed only half a decade ago', their 'erudition' having spectacularly failed to produce 'wisdom'.77 This thought encouraged him to proceed with his constituency-education project: in the same month he wrote a pamphlet, 'Labour and the Middle Classes', which he wanted to get into the hands of the '150,000 middle class voters in West Bridgford', who constituted his principal electoral target.78 He also booked the services of Labour worthies, including Philip Snowden and Sidney Webb, for Sunday lectures during the coming autumn and winter. Angell explained to Marian Ellis, who had given generously to his Neutrality League and whom he invited to address women's and peace organizations in Rushcliffe, that he was 'trying to train an English constituency to recognise the value of a new foreign policy for this country'. He emphasized that ideologically his constituency had given him 'a very free hand', allowing him to admit that on industrial issues he was 'almost a Liberal'.79 When in November he was offered another seat, West Birmingham, he declined to abandon Rushcliffe on the grounds that it had 'behaved on the whole very well' towards him and that he 'had devoted a great deal of labour, time and money' to it in return.80

Meanwhile the public mood began to turn against the First World War, as symbolized by the return to parliament at a by-election in August 1921 of the first former conscientious objector. In consequence, Angell's reputation was further
enhanced. During November, with talks on naval disarmament in the offing, he invited the ever-loyal Wright and Fayle to discuss how he should ‘shape [his] course in lectures and so forth, in view of the Washington Conference and the curious mood of optimism that is sweeping over everyone’ and decide ‘what the role of a vindicated prophet should be!’

A book published around this time observed in passing that events ‘so far have tended to vindicate Norman Angell’s view; perhaps the next ten years may vindicate him entirely’. His name was sufficiently well known again to be the subject of an affectionate joke in a new play on the London stage whereby a character was made ‘to confuse Mr Norman Angell with Michael Angelo.’

Statesmen wanted to meet him: on one of his visits to London towards the end of the year, the German industrialist and future foreign minister Walther Rathenau visited 4 King’s Bench Walk and ‘lay on the sofa, discussing the German problem until three in the morning.’

The UDC’s status increased for the same reason; and Angell drew closer to it during the autumn and winter of 1921/2. He took part in its annual meeting in November 1921, his first appearance at any of its official gatherings for more than four years. In the new year, he echoed an attack that Morel had made on France two years previously for using African soldiers in its temporary military occupation of the Rhineland and expecting local brothels to cater for them, though this time the prostitutes were French rather than German. Angell’s article ‘France and the Black Power’ was mainly a speculation, stimulated by his attendance at a Pan-African conference in Paris the previous September, that the willingness of France’s African subjects to accept conscription arose from their calculation that this would help them to secure social and political concessions from the French government; but it concluded with a prurient personal account of having chanced, during a visit to Strasbourg, upon ‘long queues of negroes’ outside brothels staffed by local ‘white girls, the Liberated Daughters of France’.

With Angell’s former standing and his relations with the UDC to a considerable extent restored, Angell became less interested in becoming a well-rounded and reliable Labour politician. Although on 8 December 1921 he attended an emergency Labour meeting, the experience only prompted him to complain about its widespread failure to realize that ‘without a reform of the Government’s international policy there can be no cure of unemployment’. The one section of the movement in which he felt at ease was the Co-operative Union: he gave it considerable support, and even spoke to its conference delegates. In general, he settled for being an expert on the issues that interested him – foreign policy, finance, and the press – and one, moreover, who was not shy about stating his personal opinions. By contrast, Clifford Allen made the opposite choice at this time, becoming an ILP loyalist and saying little about the issue, opposition to war, which had made him famous.

American tours also distracted Angell. He had to turn down an invitation from Beatrice Webb to attend a financial discussion with a number of leading socialist intellectuals, including Harold Laski, Hugh Dalton, and E.F. Wise, because he had to depart for a three-month tour of the United States on 3 January 1922. He promised to rush back if an election were called, and arranged for Harold
Wright – though a Liberal – to nurse Rushcliffe while he did so. On this Atlantic crossing he met Mrs Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, a niece of the celebrated Victorian actor Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson. Eight years younger than Angell, she had divorced a left-wing American lawyer in 1920 and returned to Britain with her three children, but was now going back to the United States to lecture on feminism. She got to know Angell well enough to endorse his first parliamentary candidature in the autumn of 1922; and their relationship was to deepen in the next few years. On arrival, Angell discovered that his schedule, mostly in the mid-west but with forays into Texas and California, was ‘awful’, involving many overnight journeys, though he was pleased sometimes to gross the equivalent of £40 per lecture. He frequently talked on British issues, on which he proved to be something of a loose cannon. In an address to the League for Industrial Democracy in New York at the end of his tour, for example, he criticized his own party for not being yet prepared to cope with the problem of credit, paper money, and other financial questions. To railroad the Labor Party into power now might compel it to bite off more than it can chew. I hope that there will be a period in which the Labor Party will be in opposition. That will prepare it for the task to follow.

Even more tactlessly, he predicted that after the next general election an enlarged parliamentary party would include intellectuals ‘better equipped than the present Labor representatives’ to consider monetary issues. He presumably imagined himself among their number.

On coming home early in April 1922 Angell concentrated first on his role as party newspaper specialist, writing a quick book for the Labour Publishing Company, a venture in which Langdon-Davies was involved. Appearing in May, The Press and the Organisation of Society attacked Britain’s commercial papers for having coarsened public life, particularly during 1916–19, and predicted that they would use smear tactics against a Labour government. More constructively, it urged ‘the application of the Co-operative principle to the problem of the Press, using mainly the machinery of the Trade Unions, and the class loyalty which the Trade Union movement has developed’ in order to create a vibrant working-class press. ‘If five or six million workers could be depended on to “Buy the Labour Daily first,” a dozen such papers could be assured of success the day that they started.’ As in his simultaneous belief that he could educate the citizens of Rushcliffe, Angell was exhibiting excessive optimism.

During the summer and autumn of 1922 his writing took forward the liberal-internationalist critique of Europe as fragmented by ‘absolute’ nationalisms that he had sketched out in The Fruits of Victory. An article for the ILP’s journal identified the ‘formation of human society into rigid national groups’ as the principal danger and attributed it to ‘the obscure instincts of the herd and the tribe’. After sailing in the Blackwater estuary in late July and early August with Dennis Robertson, whose career as a Cambridge economist was making good progress, Angell started a book, If Britain Is to Live. Eventually published in the
new year, it concentrated on the ‘disintegration’ of the international economy due to ‘a greatly intensified “Balkanisation”, a fiercer nationalism’.97

However, a secondary theme that he took up at this time proved to be of greater significance for the evolution of his thinking. During the autumn of 1922, while he was in the throes of composition, an upsurge of isolationism took place in Britain, as a reaction against two developments. The first was Lloyd George’s attempt to enforce the post-war settlement imposed on Turkey, which, until abruptly abandoned in mid-October 1922, risked involving Britain in war. The second was Lord Robert Cecil’s proposal, with LNU support, of a draft treaty of mutual assistance as a means of strengthening the collective-security guarantees that the League of Nations could offer the French, thereby making it easier for them to reduce their armaments. Angell regarded the isolationist backlash against Lloyd George and Cecil as dangerously negative. He therefore made clear that If Britain Is to Live ‘was not an anti-war tract in the sense of being an attempt to strengthen intuitive objections to war’, there being no need do so in view of the fact that Britain was any case passing ‘through an intensely pacifist mood’. Indeed,
he insisted, a state of affairs in which ‘the Turks are allowed to tear the Treaty we made to pieces... cannot last. The mere decision not to enforce anything at all is not a solution of the European problem. The alternative to Nationalist militarism is, not surrender to the Nationalism that happens momentarily to be powerful, but the organization of a workable internationalism.’

He warned that ‘a policy of so-called disentanglement from Europe’ would result, as in 1914, in Britain’s being suddenly drawn into a balance-of-power quarrel in ‘active opposition to internationalist policy’ – a theme to which he would return eleven years later when Hitler’s accession to power prompted a bigger upsurge in isolationism. Although the economic policy he favoured was ‘a three-cornered arrangement between ourselves, Germany and Russia’ to manage trade, he went out of his way to insist: ‘This need not, and should not involve political hostility to France... Though we cannot “stand by France” in the sense of undertaking to support her whatever her policy is, whatever she chooses to regard as her “right”, we should pledge ourselves to her protection – as to others.’

Thus, while not yet endorsing the LNU’s treaty of mutual assistance, Angell indicated a serious disagreement with the unreservedly isolationist UDC, which explains why, despite having attended its annual meeting the previous autumn, he stayed away from the next six. On the issue of security – though not on that of reparations, where he remained for two more years in the UDC camp – he had already had taken a decisive step towards the LNU.

If Britain Is to Live was published by Nisbet, a small London publisher, in the new year, its completion having been delayed by its author’s involvement in the general election called on 23 October 1922 after Conservative back-benchers finally rebelled against their party’s coalition with Lloyd George’s section of a divided Liberalism. Angell’s tactics in Rushcliffe had been largely designed to woo Liberals, of whatever variety, who did not put up a candidate of their own. He issued a leaflet in which he was endorsed, on account ‘of his personal qualifications as distinct from the principles of the political party with which he is associated’, by such well-known names as Arnold Bennett, Jerome K. Jerome, Keynes, and Russell, as well as by civic and religious dignitaries, and, as already mentioned, by Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale.

However, Angell faced a sitting Tory of some astuteness, who, in his own bid for the Liberal vote, had early in October declared his support for the League of Nations and participated in the foundation of a local LNU branch. Angell prudently countered by attending a meeting of the LNU in the Hippodrome in nearby Nottingham on 25 October, but was overshadowed by the presence of ‘Prince Ranjitsinghi, the distinguished international cricketer’. Angell opened his electoral campaign two days later with his familiar argument that ‘unless we could recast social and industrial methods along the lines of the policy of the Labour Party, the population of this country would shortly not be able to live on its soil’. His Tory opponent struggled to cope with Angell’s criticisms of British foreign policy, arguing that Germany ‘must be made to pay’ yet also that there should be no injury to ‘British trade’. But he was on safer ground when he attacked Labour’s principal domestic policy,
the capital levy, whereby wealth would make a sacrifice comparable to that required of the conscripts of 1916–18.

On polling day, 15 November 1922, Angell’s supporters manifested ‘a considerable spirit of optimism’; and so felt ‘a bitter disappointment’ when it turned out that in a straight fight he had polled only 43.2 per cent of the vote. ‘Malicious, scurrilous and misleading statements’ by Tory campaigners, including one to the effect that Angell had hired paid speakers in his support, were blamed by the local Labour party, though it recognized that the Conservative victor himself had been ‘sportsmanlike’.101 Unofficial leaks from the count indicated that he had polled poorly in middle-class areas; and one of the local papers concluded that the capital levy had cost him ‘a large number of votes’. Angell’s own verdict was: ‘Capital levy, motor cars and nervous old ladies did us in’;102 and he may have had a Rushcliffe voter in mind when he later complained about the ‘maiden lady who trembles at the thought of a Labour Party Capital Levy’, yet ‘seems quite ready to overlook the fact that under bourgeois governments . . . the value of her property, in Consols and other gilt-edged securities, has been cut in half’.103 More generally, he concluded that his attempt over two years to educate his constituents had failed because those ‘racked by unemployment, suffering from low wages, bad housing, economic insecurity, danger of war’ had little interest in discussing those issues, preferring escapist fare (‘Master Jackie Coogan or Mary Pickford’) instead.104

After this setback of November 1922, and as the Conservatives returned to single-party government, Angell dutifully joined a Labour delegation to a conference of trade unions at The Hague.105 He also served as a press expert, the Labour movement having decided at this time to take over the struggling Daily Herald and to install his journalist friend Hamilton Fyfe as its editor in place of Lansbury. Angell’s advice to the movement was curiously mixed, combining a new, Rushcliffe-induced scepticism about the appeal of an overtly propagandist daily with a continuing confidence that an official paper of a suitably entertaining kind could win the loyalty of trade unionists. He thus counselled in December against the left’s tendency to attribute all the evils of the modern newspaper to its ‘capitalist direction’ rather than to ‘certain weaknesses and tendencies in human nature’, and suggested that, in addition to the Daily Herald, Labour create a ‘non-political, non-propagandist periodical of the Answers, Tit-Bits, Home Chat, Girls’ Friend, Fireside Companion order – which workers read’.106 Early in 1923 he was put on a ‘Daily Herald sub-committee’ and in that capacity attended a joint session of the Labour Party’s national executive committee and the Trade Union Congress’s general council at which the need to make the new daily as attractive as possible was agreed. Extra investment was consequently put in, Fyfe acknowledging ‘the help of Norman Angell’s clear thinking’ in bringing this about. At the same time the idealistic scheme he had suggested in The Press and the Organisation of Society, whereby trade unionists would undertake to ‘take the Labour paper first’, was put into practice, three million pledge cards to that effect being issued. But five months later only 25,000 had been returned; and Angell later conceded that his proposal simply ‘did not work’.107 That the circulation-hungry capitalist press would always be more responsive to what even the
Labour voter really wanted from a newspaper was something former Northcliffe employees such as he and Fyfe might have anticipated.

Meanwhile, the Franco-German dispute over reparations came dramatically to a head. In January 1923, to the fury of the British left, the French premier, Poincaré, occupied the Ruhr, Germany’s industrial heartland, in an attempt to extract these in kind. The UDC felt confirmed in its visceral isolationism and sympathy for Germany, issuing a policy statement to the effect that Britain ‘must now dissociate itself entirely... from the whole political settlement of the Treaty of Versailles’, and should therefore withdraw its occupation troops from the Rhineland. But Angell maintained his recent anti-isolationist line, arguing that such a withdrawal would limit Britain’s ability to restrain France. He insisted both that ‘non-intervention cannot be maintained’, involving as it did ‘the surrender of any attempt to create an organised Europe, an internationalist machinery’, and that it was impossible to ‘solve the problem of power by ignoring power’. As Germany responded to the French occupation with a passive resistance that caused its own economy to collapse into hyperinflation, he became even more persuaded that constructive engagement with the Franco-German quarrel was essential, necessitating attention to France’s security fears through the League of Nations. He consequently became more irritated than ever by his party’s propensity to treat the ‘pacificist and internationalist side of Socialist teaching’ merely as a ‘concession to bourgeois ideology’. Confusingly, however, he also regarded Germany’s passive resistance as a much cleverer policy than a violent response would have been. Albeit as yet only privately, his musings of 1915/16 about the efficacy of pacifism as a tactic were thus reactivated by the Ruhr crisis, just as he was otherwise committing himself to collective security.

In the spring of 1923 Angell’s political career was also reactivated, albeit not very happily. Having decided not to persevere with Rushcliffe, he had turned down a number of offers from Labour associations in the midlands and north, claiming either that he ‘had in mind a constituency nearer London that I could work somewhat more easily’ or that he would ‘be out of England a great deal this year’. However, in April he accepted an approach from Rossendale, a constituency further from London than Rushcliffe. It was ironic that, having done so, he was ‘not free to let [his] name go forward’ when, on 4 May, he was offered Maldon: by coincidence this was the precise part of the Essex coast where within months he was to acquire a second home. Though geographically inconvenient, Rossendale, where he was formally adopted on 14 June, seemed electorally promising. It was an urban seat, straddling the Lancashire towns of Bacup and Rawtenstall, where Labour had come second in the two previous contests. Yet some local workers immediately expressed a doubt ‘as to whether an intellectual is the best person for an industrial constituency like Rossendale’. And Angell’s selection was also queried by the London correspondent of the Manchester Evening News, who, in addition to repeating the myth about his having asserted the impossibility of the First World War, more shrewdly posed the rhetorical question: ‘But is not Mr Norman Angell an American citizen?’, and accused him of having retreated across the Atlantic after the fighting began.
Angell issued an emphatic denial, sending a copy to the newspaper in his constituency that had picked up the story:

I am not an American citizen; I am British; not by naturalization, but by birth. . . . I spent more of the war years in England and France than in the United States. Happening to be in the latter country (as I have been for a part of nearly every year for the last fifteen years) when military service was made compulsory in England, I came home immediately. As for being less publicly active after the war began, I find that during the four years of war I published five books in England and was active in all sorts of organizations. It is true those activities—which were mainly directed at trying to prevent the kind of settlement we are now enjoying—were not reported in the Press that now misrepresents them.¹¹³

His chickens of 1911–15 had once more come home to roost; and his denial did not quite pass muster: for example, he had spent twenty-eight out of the fifty-two wartime months in the United States.

With no general election expected for several years, he put little effort into his candidacy during the summer and early autumn of 1923, the local paper noting that ‘we in Rossendale have not yet seen much of Mr Angell’.¹¹⁴ He was engaged on his multifaceted journalism, including an article for the New Republic in which he now endorsed Cecil’s treaty of mutual assistance.¹¹⁵ More importantly, Angell was diverted by a major personal decision: to buy Northey Island, near Maldon, which he had discovered while sailing in the Blackwater estuary, and which had subsequently come onto the market. A tidal island that in the nineteenth century had been fully cultivated, it was being eroded by the sea: it comprised 300 acres at low tide but only 70 at high tide, though it still contained a farm, complete with cottage and barn. It was a considerable commitment as a second home, and somewhat impractical for a man who did a lot of travelling, being not only remote but often inaccessible by road: the causeway which connected it to the Essex mainland was covered by water for eight hours in every twenty-four. A special cable had to be laid to bring a telephone to the island. But it offered a ‘true retreat, a “funk hole”’; and it gave him somewhere to entertain the children of his friends and relations who were already coming on sailing trips with him. He could also raise livestock there, thereby gaining some of the satisfactions which he had sought in California three decades before, and perhaps earning some money too.¹¹⁶ Northey stretched his finances to the limit: on 26 October he borrowed $4,000 for four months from Maria C. Scattergood of the Philadelphia Quaker family.

Just as Angell started, despite this distracting purchase, to give his constituency some attention, illness struck. On 28 October 1923 he pulled out of a meeting of the Rossendale branch of the LNU with suspected appendicitis, for which he had to have an operation.¹¹⁷ The final months of the year were thus a tense time for Angell. Most inconveniently, on 13 November the Conservative prime minister, Baldwin, called an unexpected general election in an attempt to obtain a mandate for protectionism. Angell initially drafted a letter ‘withdrawing from the contest on the score of ill-health’, as he admitted to Arnold Rowntree the following day, but decided that this would leave the Rossendale party in ‘a very bad hole’.¹¹⁸
post-operative comfort was that his purchase of Northey was completed satisfactorily: on the 19th the local storekeeper wrote to welcome him; and Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale sent her congratulations upon his ‘island kingdom’.

On 25 November 1923, ‘in defiance of doctor’s orders’, Angell launched a strenuous campaign in Rossendale for two and a half weeks. Lodging ‘with a working man’s family’, he held two or three scheduled meetings a day, drawing large audiences, and tailoring his messages to the occasion. At a public meeting in a local school he targeted the floating voter, proclaiming himself a free trader but ‘no revolutionary’, claiming that socialism meant ‘merely that things like financial affairs should be the country’s business and not the business of a few individuals and a few groups’, and insisting that Labour was ‘not the enemy of private property, such as good clothes, houses or furniture’. At an ILP meeting in a cooperative society hall, by contrast, he tried to inspire the party faithful, announcing that voters ‘had the opportunity… of creating a real social revolution and enhancing tremendously the future of their children’. At the end of the campaign a local journalist judged that Angell had ‘made a splendid effort’; but on 6 December he finished last in a three-way contest with 30.6 per cent. Reunited after their wartime split, given renewed relevance by the challenge to free trade, and benefiting from fear even among progressive voters of Labour’s capital levy, the Liberals had enjoyed a modest revival, despite having had to bring in a candidate after the campaign had started. The successful Tory being a local man, the judgement of the Rossendale Free Press was simple: ‘The home product won.’ Angell attributed his defeat ‘to more money on the other side but also to trade unionists not being more solid for the party’. His agent agreed, noting that the chairman of one of Angell’s own meetings had called him ‘a parasite on the backs of the toilers’. But he also blamed a smear campaign: ‘Mr Angell was flouted with the innuendo, time and gain, of being a “Yankee”’, and a rumour was spread that during the war he had been ‘engineering a strike of munitions workers in Leeds whilst the lads were holding the trenches’. The campaign was thus a bruising one, though Baldwin’s failure to achieve his protectionist mandate was some compensation.

On top of ill health and rejection by the voters of Rossendale, Angell at the end of 1923 had the problem of repaying his short-term borrowings to buy Northey. He was alarmed to discover that some of the investments that he had been relying on had slumped in value, an experience he likened to ‘shell shock’. These must have been his pre-war Daily Mail shares, which, having ‘risen greatly in value’, had become ‘extremely insecure’ on account of ‘the finance re-organization which had followed Northcliffe’s death’ the previous year. However, after shrewd financial advice from Wright, Angell ‘cleaned up’, realizing enough money ‘to pay for Northey Island overnight and for a number of shares which should eventually provide very nearly sufficient income… to cover my wife’s allowances’. He lacked only ‘the little capital for my little scheme on Northey’; but Wright’s father proved willing to lend him this. On moving onto the island in time for Christmas, Angell was gratified to find that ‘it improves on acquaintance particularly from the point of view of the kind of enterprise I have in mind’. Having declared himself ‘better
now’, he admitted to having been through ‘a very bad passage – as bad as I’ve been through’, not merely because of ‘the share business’ but also because of a dawning realization ‘of what an incredibly lonely cuss I am’.\footnote{Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale was doing her best to assuage this, sending her warm sympathy on account of his depression, and offering to ‘play at being your pseudo-family’.} He threw himself into developing Northey, exploring the possibility of government grants for land reclamation, appointing a bailiff, and seeking planning permission for building work.\footnote{As Angell recovered his spirits, he found new stimulus in the political situation. On 22 January 1924, after a political impasse of six weeks since the general election, the first Labour government was formed, with MacDonald heading a minority administration dependent on Liberal support. Eight other UDC members, including Trevelyan, joined the cabinet, with a further six, including Ponsonby, becoming junior ministers. Morel, however, was excluded: despite poor health, a lack of party seniority, and a record of vilifying both France and the League of Nations, he coveted a Foreign Office post, and was distraught when MacDonald not only became foreign secretary, as well as prime minister, but ignored his offer to serve as a junior minister in charge of League affairs. Not having made it into parliament, Angell had no such expectations for MacDonald to dash, but found it a little galling to be asked to preside at the dinner given by the UDC in honour of its members who were now at Westminster, as this rubbed in the fact that ‘pretty well the whole Committee had been elected except myself’.}

Even so, he felt well placed to guide Labour towards a constructive foreign policy. As the author between 23 January and 1 August 1924 of eleven articles in the ILP’s journal, which had been revamped under Brailsford’s editorship as the \textit{New Leader}, Angell had the ear of the left. And having shared MacDonald’s wartime unpopularity without becoming a political rival, he also enjoyed some access to the prime minister. There was, moreover, a real need for brokerage between the party’s traditional, UDC-inspired opposition to France’s demands for both reparations from and security against Germany and its leader’s resolve to govern responsibly, which required even-handedness as between the French and Germans.

In the event, Angell bungled his opportunity. He sympathized with France’s sense of insecurity; but not with its economic demands on Germany, which confronted his ‘illusion’ beliefs. In other words, Angell wanted Labour to abandon conventional UDC thinking on security but not on reparations. But MacDonald chose to do the exact opposite, offering France a deal over its economic predicament while postponing consideration of its security claims. And Morel and his followers opposed any concessions to France, whether on security or reparations. Not only did Angell’s policy recommendations thus prove generally unacceptable: his tactics also fell between two stools. He made certain overtures to Morel and the left, but led them to believe he was closer to them than he was. He attempted to win the prime minister’s confidence by loyal support: Dalton was struck by the fact that, when at a \textit{New Leader} lunch on 4 February 1924 Angell, then acting as editor in Brailsford’s absence, received a scolding from
MacDonald about the disloyalty of the socialist press, he ‘did not scold back, as Brailsford would have done’. But Angell was too argumentative to hold back for ever. He thus ended by offending rather than persuading both sides.

Before MacDonald had finished appointing his ministers, Angell had begun arguing that France’s sense of insecurity should be alleviated, on the grounds that it was futile merely ‘to gird at French wickedness, or to assume that homilies thereon addressed from Downing Street will serve in place of a policy’. Britain should recognize that France was occupying the Ruhr for reasons of vulnerability rather than because of a ‘more purely economic motive’, from which it followed that ‘if it is only by some plan of security that France will at last see reason, then to that plan we must resort’. During February he sought to build up his stock with MacDonald by defending the government’s diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union against right-wing critics and its naval estimates against left-wing ones.

By late March 1924, in a partial recoil towards the UDC view, Angell expressed concern lest the easing of France’s financial crisis allow that country to become intransigent again on the reparations issue. He also made a rare appearance in Foreign Affairs, as the UDC journal that Morel edited was now called, paying tribute to Woodrow Wilson, who had died the previous month.

In April 1924 Angell renewed his attempt to curry favour with the prime minister. In an unusual digression into domestic politics prompted by a transport strike, he attacked ‘the use of such fortuitous and sectional power for sectional ends’ on the grounds that it was ‘fatal to working-class solidarity’. He also called for ‘a closer unification and co-ordination’ of inefficient industries so that they could afford better wages, which showed that his belief of 1917–20 in the nationalization of the means of production had softened into a belief in the rationalization of capitalism through state regulation. And, as he waited for the Dawes committee to recommend a solution to the reparations issue, he defended MacDonald’s ‘cautious line’ as one required by the ‘facts of the situation’.

The Dawes report reduced and rescheduled Germany’s payments, but did not in theory alter its ultimate liability; and so, though welcomed by Keynes as ‘an honourable document’, it proved unacceptable to many on Labour’s left. Angell was at a loss for a response. He was urged by Ponsonby to write privately to MacDonald, pointing out the lack of even ‘a syllable of sympathy for Germany’ emanating from the Labour government, but replied indicating ‘scepticism as to whether suggestions made in this way would be much good’. When asked by Morel to advise what the UDC could ‘usefully do at this juncture’, Angell requested a week or two in which to ‘think it over’. Indecision, and perhaps also fear of offending the prime minister, caused him to stay out of the columns of the New Leader for over two months, and away from meetings of the advisory committee on international questions, which he had been attending regularly again since January of the previous year. He used the time to paint a reassuring picture of the government for the American readers of the Saturday Evening Post, insisting that ‘for John Bull socialism has lost its fright-engendering quality’.

Meanwhile the Poincaré government was turned out by the French electorate in May 1924 and replaced by a centre-left administration under Herriot. The new
premier was keen to involve Britain in discussions of French security, and arranged to visit his opposite number at Chequers, the British prime minister’s country retreat, over the weekend of 21/22 June. Exploiting his facility in French to secure a scoop for the New Leader, Angell asked Herriot for an interview, and was granted one. It was the highlight of Angell’s journalistic career, though his published accounts of it were chronologically garbled, implying that the interview preceded the summit of the two prime ministers. The true sequence of events was that Angell made an advance arrangement to interview Herriot after his Chequers meeting, at which, because the French premier had been calling for the treaty of mutual assistance ‘in every statement that he makes’, he expected him to press it upon his British opposite number. Early in the week before Herriot’s arrival, Angell received an unexpected invitation from MacDonald, sent on 16 June, to lunch at 10 Downing Street three days later. Angell resolved to use the occasion to urge MacDonald to take Herriot’s expected request seriously and also, at Brailsford’s prompting, to ‘try and get a statement from the P.M. to accompany Herriot’s’ for the New Leader. During the lunch with MacDonald on 19 June, at which Helena Swanwick happened also to be present, Angell raised both these issues, but had his head bitten off. The treaty of mutual assistance was denounced by both MacDonald and Swanwick as ‘along the wrong lines – hopeless!’; and Angell was accused of having been ‘hypnotized by Bob Cecil’ of the LNU. To the request for a statement on the subject for the New Leader MacDonald retorted angrily that ‘he would rather give an interview to the Manchester Guardian’ – though this was a Liberal rather than a Labour paper. In the Chequers talks that followed, MacDonald duly refused to accept the treaty of mutual assistance; but Herriot did not give up, and used his subsequent New Leader interview to appeal over the British prime minister’s head to public opinion. In the course of a ‘long hour’s talk’ Angell was softened up by the French premier’s making clear that he had ‘read, really read, certain books of mine’ and could discuss them ‘in great detail’. The wily Herriot then floated a suggestion for keeping alive the treaty of mutual assistance despite MacDonald’s rejection: by inviting Germany to sign it too (and thereby also to join the League of Nations). Though himself a supporter of the treaty, Angell felt obliged to point out that it offended both ‘pacifists’, because ‘it involved in principle the employment of force’, and ‘militarists’, because ‘it might be a step towards a real League’. MacDonald cannot have been pleased when on 27 June 1924 the New Leader published the interview in which the French prime minister was allowed to make his pitch. Angell republished it in German and American papers, and sent a copy to Viscount Cecil, who responded cordially. In mid-July, moreover, when Brailsford went on holiday, Angell took over as editor for three weeks, during which international discussions began in London on a package deal with Germany that was likely to include the Dawes plan. Although privately indicating his doubts about Morel’s extreme position, Angell initially moved somewhat towards the UDC approach. After MacDonald hastily visited Herriot in Paris to bolster him against his nationalist critics, who had been outraged by his failure to achieve security
guarantees at Chequers, Angell called for ‘an equivalent effort to save the German Government and nullify German Nationalism’, though with characteristic independence of mind he included praise for the ‘much maligned “international financier”, the banker everywhere’ for seeing sense on the reparations issue.\textsuperscript{147} Meanwhile on 14 July Morel, whose health was deteriorating, finally lost his temper with MacDonald. During a debate in the House of Commons he denounced the government’s latest ‘attempt to square the circle and make economic truths compatible with the violation of economic truths’. Immediately afterwards he wrote an article for the \textit{New Leader} interpreting that day’s Commons proceedings as a ‘revolt of the back-benches against the hypocrisy of diplomacy, and, in particular, against the whole policy of reparations’.\textsuperscript{148}

Although as acting editor Angell published Morel’s angry piece on 25 July 1924 – an overture towards the UDC that further offended the prime minister – he distanced the paper from its argument, and in a signed article of his own in the same issue credited the government with having ‘perhaps done the best possible in the circumstances’. He had begun to believe that, combined with a loan to Berlin, the Dawes plan could revive the German economy, and indeed was already worrying about opposition to it from those in Britain who did not want such a revival. His concern on this score was justified: within months the ‘Daily Blackmail’, as he now dubbed the paper for which he had once worked, was threatening to name and shame any British financial institutions that helped Germany under the Dawes plan. ‘Will the City take it lying down?’ Angell was to ask the readers of the \textit{Nation} in bemusement.\textsuperscript{149}

His attempt at honest broking during the spring and summer of 1924 had merely aroused suspicion in all quarters. His acceptance of the Dawes plan shocked Morel and the UDC, yet did not spare him a long letter of reproof from MacDonald, and cost him his chance – which, he later implied to Haycock, had been quite good – of being sent to the League of Nations Assembly.\textsuperscript{150} This was an important time to be an official delegate, since during the autumn the assembly would consider a revised scheme for strengthening the League and therefore reassuring France: this was the Geneva Protocol, which Henderson had helped to devise and was designed to be less contentious than the draft treaty of mutual assistance. Swanwick was appointed instead; and although she voted for further consideration of the protocol, she did so ‘shrieking all the way’, as she told Angell, because its enforcement provisions conflicted with her visceral isolationism.\textsuperscript{151} MacDonald’s government had not strangled the Geneva Protocol at birth; but many of its members had yet to overcome their doubts about even a toned-down security commitment of this kind.

Angell’s acting editorship having ended, and his influence in both governing and leftist circles having waned, he turned increasingly to other activities during the late summer of 1924. He lectured for the first time at an international conference organized by a wealthy and effusive New Jersey Quaker in her mid-forties, Mary Kelsey, at Honfleur in Normandy, where she had a house.\textsuperscript{152} Like a number of women, Miss Kelsey found the dapper, fine-featured, and emotionally guarded Angell of the 1920s highly intriguing, being particularly struck, as she
later informed the readers of an American peace journal, by the way he combined ‘a curiously boyish look with his slender frame and long fair hair’ with ‘the face of a man who has thought and suffered more than for most men it is possible to think and suffer’.  

She therefore became keen to open doors for him in the United States, though her friendship was to prove over-demanding. Angell also wrote articles and addressed meetings, including a ‘No More War!’ rally at Bradford on 20 September that perhaps paved the way for his later adoption as a parliamentary candidate in that city. His major preoccupation was his pig farm on Northey, which was proving a costly investment. Since at least mid-July, therefore, he had been planning to leave on 10 October for ‘a prolonged lecture tour’ of north America. His normal fee of $200 per engagement would be supplemented by the three and a half guineas (£3.68) per week he would earn by subletting his London apartment while he was away.

However, on 8 October 1924, and before making up its mind about the Geneva Protocol, the Labour government lost a parliamentary vote and so triggered a third general election in twenty-three months. Having not taken on another constituency yet, Angell was free to proceed with his American trip as planned. His consequent absence on polling day, 29 October, when his party went down to a heavy defeat, symbolized the sense of detachment from public life he felt after his nine months of unsuccessful politicking. From the United States, he sounded off to Gerard Langelaan in Paris:

It is one of the absurdities of our society that for the services I should prefer to perform and which really would have some value it refuses to pay a living wage. But a lot of idle women, just because they have heard vaguely of Norman Angell, will pay a ridiculous price to have him talk to them for half an hour about the subject matter of books they won’t trouble to read.

He further complained that If Britain Is To Live had been ‘practically boycotted’ by the British press, despite selling 10,000 copies, and that he had been turned down for membership of the LNU’s executive committee after a ‘prominent public man’ had proposed him. ‘So I cultivate a sort of protective cynicism’, he informed Langelaan; ‘I also cultivate “my garden”, my garden being a little island off the Essex coast where I run a little farm, breeding pigs, building houseboats and things and entertaining my friends’ children.’

Money-making schemes increasingly interested him. As he reported to Ida Neilsen, the efficient and good-humoured Dane who had recently succeeded Doris Toulmin as his secretary, he and Wrench were developing ‘a plan, now much worked on in America, for bringing manufacturers in better contact with the public . . . the thing being part of the means of easing unemployment’, which he hoped would yield ‘very considerable sums’ by way of commissions. Though he and Wrench never exploited it commercially, Angell was to return to the idea later in the decade. He was also planning on his return to Europe ‘to become in fact the London – and Paris – correspondent of an American paper or syndicate’ – an arrangement which he had carried on during his Paris-based years but which latterly had ‘not been possible for me . . . because of my “pacifistic” reputation’.
Some of his lectures on this trip were important: on 15 November 1924, for example, he addressed the Foreign Policy Association in New York, defending the Geneva Protocol, despite its imperfections, on the grounds that the ‘great need of Europe is not abstract justice, but stability’.\textsuperscript{158} He also experimented with new political ideas, including corporatist or functional representation – ‘the choosing for members of the governing body of representatives of all branches of professional and civil life’ – as a corrective to the follies of the mass electorate.\textsuperscript{159} Nonetheless, the lecture circuit left him ‘lonely and uncomfortable’, as he complained to his secretary in January 1925, despite being ‘surrounded by vast crowds of audiences and living in gilt covered hotels’.\textsuperscript{160}

Having ended his long tour in Canada, Angell sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the Cunard liner \textit{Ausonia} on 28 March 1925, reaching London in the first week of April.\textsuperscript{161} While he had been away, the balance of power within British progressive thinking had tipped significantly away from isolationism and towards internationalism. By the logic of adversary politics the rejection by the incoming Conservative government of the Geneva Protocol, and its exploration of an old-style military alliance with France instead, ensured both that the Protocol enjoyed posthumous popularity in socialist circles and that the Labour Party came to share in the growing public enthusiasm for the League of Nations as an alternative to traditional power-politics. Admittedly, MacDonald and Snowden retained their suspicions of Geneva; but Henderson, assisted by Dalton and Noel Baker, began to move the party in a liberal-internationalist direction while insisting that this was an authentically socialist move. The UDC had suffered from the Labour government’s painful discovery that its approach was too negative to be practical, and lost its major asset when Morel dropped dead within a fortnight of the general election. It was rapidly supplanted as the most influential peace association by the LNU, which in March finally asked Angell to join its executive committee. A partial substitute in British public life for the Liberal Party and the nonconformist churches, which were both in post-war decline, the LNU was ceasing to be a mere peace association and turning into an expression of civil society. Unlike the unforgiving MacDonald, who had rejected the honorary presidency offered to all party leaders, Angell immediately accepted the LNU’s offer, and attended his first meeting on 1 July. Later, he acknowledged 1925 as the year in which he ‘became very willingly a private in a sizeable, if very scattered, army’, and expressed gratitude to Murray for approaching him ‘at a time when I was a little tainted by association with E.D. Morel and J.R. MacDonald’.\textsuperscript{162} Just as the LNU invited Angell onto its executive committee, an Austrian economics journal solicited an article from him, bizarrely addressing its request to ‘Sir Angell Norman, Governor of the Bank of England’, as his secretary reported with some hilarity.\textsuperscript{163} This conflation of his identity with that of Montagu Norman was an innocent mistake, unlike that made by the poet Ezra Pound a decade later, as will be noted.

Angell had returned to Britain just as a scholar published an authoritative identification of his island as the site of the celebrated Battle of Maldon: the causeway linking it to the mainland was where ‘the waterstreams locked together’, \begin{equation} \text{causeway} \cap \text{mainland} = \text{Battle of Maldon} \end{equation}
a phrase in the famous Anglo-Saxon poem recording the Viking victory of 991 that had long puzzled Dr E.D. Laborde until he ‘sat on the river bank opposite Northey and watched the tide come in’. The island was Angell’s main priority for the rest of the year: though ‘badly neglected’ in his absence, it remained promising, he believed, ‘as a small stock farm’; and indeed in August he received his first income, £65, from selling pigs. Northey also provided him, now that he was in his fifties, with the equivalent of parental or grandparental experiences. Having adapted an abandoned barge, soon known as the Ark, into what a visitor described as ‘an enchanting guest house’ with ‘a big cabin furnished with a long table’ and ‘numerous little cabins equipped with cozy bunks’, he was able during the summer of 1925 to offer hospitality to Mary Kelsey; to the Kibbo Kift Kindred, an anti-militarist scouting group on whose advisory committee he sat; to Langdon-Davies’s son; and to his future secretary and honorary niece, Barbara Hayes, then in her mid-teens, who came to the island with her mother, sister of Carrie’s son-in-law. As he then explained: ‘I turned a wreck which I found on the beach into a large houseboat, filled it in the summer time with my friends’ children, and began to farm the place’. He was less successful recruiting the right couple to care for the property, later understanding that wives tended to dislike so remote a location, though Forbes-Robertson Hale considered it ‘rotten luck that you have had two female “lemons” in succession’. Northey’s biggest problem was continuing coastal erosion. Angell consulted experts about planting Spartina grass as a way of binding land flooded by salt water and restoring it to animal pasture. This became a major interest of his: he was to chair a lecture on this subject at the East Anglian Institute of Agriculture; and twenty-eight years later, when the east of England suffered severe floods, his pioneering request for information in 1925 was to be recalled as the reason why ‘Spartina Townsendii’ had been experimented with in Essex, albeit on too small a scale to produce the same beneficial effect as in Holland.

The distractions of lecturing and agricultural improvement were only part of the explanation for Angell’s loss of momentum as an author in 1925: no less important was that his old and new agendas had differing implications, so he had no clear message to impart. In the economic sphere Britain’s continuing recession, for which the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles could plausibly be blamed, caused him to stand by the ‘illusion’ thesis that had made his name and still found particular favour in the UDC. But in the security sphere continuing Franco-German tension had led him to abandon the UDC’s isolationism in favour of the LNU’s policy of engagement in European affairs. There was no logical inconsistency in thus calling attention to Britain’s and France’s inability to cash in on their victory in 1918 while also hinting that they might have to resist aggression again, this time under the League’s auspices: it was quite possible to believe that another conflict might have to be risked even though it could bring no economic recompense. Nonetheless it sent conflicting signals, which Angell was as yet unable to harmonize. The best he could do was to put forward his mixed message as a blandly judicious synthesis. An article for the New Republic thus called on the American and British publics to accept the ‘Geneva minimum’,
a package of policies that would end Germany’s inferior status and avoid the ‘blank check’ of a military alliance with France (as the UDC particularly wanted), yet would also enhance French security and strengthen international law by deeming the refusal of arbitration to be proof of aggression (the principle on which the Geneva Protocol had been based and which the LNU strongly supported). Angell also endorsed the Conservative government’s eventual compromise, which even Winston Churchill then supported, whereby France was offered not an exclusive military alliance but instead the half-way house of a non-aggression pact of which Germany was a co-signatory: indeed, at a conference in Paris in early September Angell praised France’s ‘realism and intelligence’ in accepting this very modest palliation of its security demands. The resultant Locarno Treaties were initialed the following month, and almost immediately lightened the international atmosphere, although in a memorandum for the advisory committee on international questions Angell worried about their possible anti-Russian implications.

Angell’s lack of ideological direction during 1925 slowed him down as an author. The two volumes, Foreign Policy and Our Daily Bread and Human Nature and the Peace Problem, which William Collins published in October, were not new: each was ‘a reprint’ of, respectively, the political and economic and the moral and psychological sections of The Fruits of Victory, a work which was by then four years old; and although ‘considerable new material’ was claimed by the publisher, it was hard to detect. The Times Literary Supplement duly gave each only the most perfunctory of notices, and stopped mentioning Angell’s publications at all for the rest of the decade. He got nowhere when he tried to interest a publisher in a human-interest book about his ‘Crusoe Experiment’ on Northey. More surprisingly, he had little to say in his capacity as an economic journalist about Britain’s decision to return to the gold standard at pre-war parity, which had been implemented soon after his return from the United States, despite his later claim to have argued that it would help the ‘the bondholder’ and disadvantage ‘the worker’. And he suffered as a political commentator not only from the eviction of his friends from government the previous autumn but from the drift of his views too far towards the centre to enthuse the socialist press. For example, his sole contribution to the New Leader during a two-year period questioned the Labour left’s view that the ‘transfer of the ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange’ was the only means to social improvement, on the grounds that across the Atlantic farmers were more radical than industrial workers, despite owning their own land. And his policy recommendation – that ‘co-operative marketing’ had an important part to play in the ‘adjustment of production to consumption’ – was too moderate for many Labour activists.

Indeed, Angell was no longer sure whether he was more irritated by those to his right than by those to his left, as became apparent during the writing of his next book, which began as he set off on another lecture tour. Having dutifully attended the LNU’s executive committee on 17 December 1925, he sailed for the United States five days later, possibly in the company of Forbes-Robertson Hale, who,
having engagements there herself in the new year, had asked him: ‘Could we go
together?’ He used ‘the solid week on the boat despite terrific gales’ to write
‘at least half’ of a new work, as he later reported to Langdon-Davies, who had
commissioned it for his latest publishing venture, Noel Douglas. Angell began
his book in anti-conservative mode, rehashing arguments he had been using since
the war, such as: ‘Military conscription implies that we may, for the general good,
take and even destroy the person of the citizen. Why not, then, his property?’ He
repeated his criticism of the right’s economic management, complaining of ‘a
failure not only to realize that it is not Socialism, but Nationalism, which has so
far half-ruined Europe; but a failure to notice that the confiscations and financial
disorders which are so feared as a possibility of the new order have actually
occurred under the old’. He defended the use of state power, albeit to rational-
ize rather than to destroy capitalism. He thus insisted that Britain had achieved
economic wonders during the war because it had ‘applied the principle of the
“national plan,” a complete national co-ordination through the authority of the
State’. And he argued that, because post-war markets were already being managed
through ‘the Cartel, or the Co-operative, or Protection, or the Trade Union, or a
variety of legislative enactments’, there was no escape from ‘a great deal of what a
generation ago we would have called Socialism’.

On arrival, Angell had to set his text aside for some weeks. He spent three days
attending an ‘Americanised Honfleur Conference’ at the behest of Mary Kelsey,
who had declared herself ‘better from the heels up’ on learning that he would be
coming. Her attempt over the next few months to make him her soulmate sent
him into defensive mode. As he informed her in general terms of his ‘personal
story’, he pulled out all the stops. Having ‘had a battered time of it emotionally’
during ‘years of bitter and sordid domestic misery’, and then suffered ‘years of
dislike, enmity, misunderstanding, misrepresentation’ during the war, he had
next experienced both the ‘humbug’ of Labour politics and ‘a sudden
financial misfortune’. More recently, ‘as enmity to my opinions declined in the post war
years, he had found himself lacking ‘the energy to follow up the advantage’; and,
because of ‘some laziness, some lack of courage’ on his part, he feared that he was
failing to live up to his friends’ ‘expectation that I should do certain great things’.
In consequence he was now ‘too selfish in the sense of being self-centred about
my work, to be worth personal affection’, and had developed a certain ‘hardness
and coldness’.

Kelsey took the rebuff well, and remained in regular though less
intrusive touch. In the new year, Angell went onto the lecture circuit, enduring
the bronchial problems that overnight train journeys in the American winter
often brought him.

In mid-February 1926 he received a significant, though disorienting, intellec-
tual stimulus when Ida Neilsen sent him a booklet by the prominent Bolshevik
Leon Trotsky, Where is Britain Going?, which had been issued by a commercial
London publisher with an introduction by Brailsford. What Trotsky and
Brailsford had written irritated Angell so much as to set him off in a new
polemical direction. He decided to make the refutation of Trotsky the main
theme of the book he had begun writing on the boat over, and now gave it
the title: Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road? With special reference to Leon Trotsky’s Book Where Is Britain Going? He did so even though this required an abrupt ideological reversal: having thitherto been attacking conservatives, he now turned his fire against communists. He did so because he was particularly offended by Trotsky’s anti-bourgeois arguments, such as that Labour had been weakened by attracting middle-class recruits who diluted its proletarian class-consciousness, and by Brailsford’s sycophantic deference towards ‘the prestige of experience’ underlying the Russian’s ‘wit and logic’. He also had a long-standing disagreement with Trotsky’s view of how wars were caused, insisting instead: ‘It is not the Capitalist organisation of society … that gives us National wars; it is the Nationalist order of society.’ Furthermore, because Angell read Trotsky’s booklet in the United States at a time of unprecedented prosperity for all sections of society there, he was unconvinced by its assumption that the Bolsheviks had transformed the life of the Russian worker, when all they had done was seize power and abolish landlordism. Angell could see that it was the United States that had achieved a truer ‘economic revolution’. It had generated high wages for the American worker, through ‘the employers’ self interest’ more than through their caving in to political or industrial pressure. And it had also lowered prices, through its good fortune in possessing an unbalkanized national market: ‘A happy accident of history (the fact that the thirteen original colonies had “to hang together or hang separately”) has established Free Trade between the forty-eight states of North America.’

Angell began setting down these thoughts during the remainder of his American visit, though the constrictions of touring – ‘The mechanical difficulty of carrying the whole thing about in a suit case; of never being able to leave the papers spread out for more than an hour or two together’ – meant that he did not quite finish before his return to London. He was back in time to attend the LNU’s executive committee on 6 May 1926, the fourth day of Britain’s traumatic General Strike, which the Trade Union Congress had called to support the miners’ resistance to wage cuts. On 22 May, ten days after this sympathy action collapsed, Angell decided not to ‘alter a word’ of a text that by then had been not only completed but typeset, other than to add an introduction criticizing the employers and supporting the right of workers in essential industries to have their efforts ‘decently and humanly requited’. Though understandable in the circumstances, this re-enforcement of the anti-conservative thrust of the first half of the book made its abrupt switch to an anti-communist argument in the second even more jarring.

When published on 7 July 1926, Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road? met with some disapproval. From the left Brailsford, who had been stung by Angell’s criticism of his own introduction, used his review in the New Leader nine days later to deliver a sharper than usual restatement of the critique he had been offering since his notice of Europe’s Optical Illusion nearly seventeen years before. Accusing Angell of an ‘extreme rationalism’ that ignored class self-interest, Brailsford denied that imperialism could be reduced ‘to nationalist illusions’, rooting it instead ‘in the misdistribution of wealth under Capitalism’, and
warned: ‘One does not by renouncing revolution escape from the class struggle.’ Under the title ‘Where Angell Dares to Tread’, a shrewd Marxist reviewer in the *Sunday Worker* described the author of *Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?* as ‘a distinguished liberal with strong conservative tendencies’ who was ‘consequently an ardent enthusiast of Right Wing Labour’.\(^{191}\) The book was also criticized from a liberal-capitalist perspective, Charles Wright privately contesting the implication of its anti-conservative section that state monopolies would work as well in peace as they had in war.\(^{192}\)

After publishing this oddly structured and unenthusiastically received work in the summer of 1926, Angell sounded less like a socialist politician and more like a liberal-internationalist teacher than ever. He now explained that it had been ‘from a desire to become a bit better educated politically by meeting Public Opinion face to face, as it were, and not merely through the printed page’ – in other words, to hone his skills as a publicist rather than to advance a political cause – that he had stood for parliament.\(^{193}\) He wrote what turned out to be his final article for the *New Leader*, using Poincaré’s return to government in France as a peg on which to hang a trademark condemnation of ‘ridiculous indemnity claims’, yet blaming these largely on British public opinion.\(^{194}\) On the day that this appeared, 30 July, an LNU summer school assembled in the congenial surroundings of Trinity College, Cambridge, with Angell among its keynote speakers. He told his fellow members that they should emphasize the need for the ‘pooled power of the nations’ to be placed behind international law: if they did not do so now, their organization would build up a fair-weather membership that would crumble in a crisis because it had not understood the League’s need in a last resort to take enforcement action – a warning singled out for its prescience by the historian of the LNU.\(^{195}\) In addition to an August retreat to Northey, where Angell enjoyed toiling outdoors on improvement works, he attended ‘two Continental conferences’, one of them at Honfleur, and in September took a party of workers to Geneva so that they could ‘see the League actually at work’.\(^{196}\) While he was in Switzerland the International Peace Bureau, a venerable Berne-based secretariat in search of a role, offered him a permanent post, at £1,000 a year; but he was not prepared to ‘face exile and ineffectiveness’.\(^{197}\)

During this time Angell was also producing another work for Noel Douglas, *The Public Mind: Its disorders, Its exploitation*. It was an attempt to explore a theme he had been pondering since Britain’s December 1918 election: that, being so often at fault, public opinion constituted ‘the heart of the matter’.\(^{198}\) But it was no better constructed than his previous book, being largely a montage of disparate elements, including his Californian essays of 1896/7 (reprinted for a third time), a four-year-old obituary of Northcliffe, a section about the press ‘written in 1924’, and recent American-lecture routines about mechanisms for political accountability. Even the matter composed for the occasion was ill considered. For example, it began with the conceit that to be ruled by public opinion was like making one’s opinionated barber the ‘manager of civilisation – in his spare time’, yet soon acknowledged that the problem was not, as this conceit implied, inappropriate expertise: because the public committed its most characteristic errors in respect
of ‘self-evident truths’, it ‘was not knowledge that was lacking’, but judgement.\textsuperscript{199}
The book was both gloomy and vague: because ‘the voice of the people is usually the voice of Satan’ – a mantra that Angell was to intone with increasing frequency as he grew older – democrats should apply ‘the right social discipline and educational processes’, though he could not say what these were. Its final chapter acknowledged its negativity by observing: ‘One may say of many of these pages: they are an attempt to indict the human race, which must necessarily be a futile attempt.’\textsuperscript{200} Ida Neilsen thought it ‘a difficult book to read’; and its author later regarded it as insufficiently constructive.\textsuperscript{201} It was an early warning of the difficulty he would have in explaining the psychology of political illusions.

Just before this depressing work appeared early in the autumn of 1926, Angell left for the United States. While in Liverpool to board his ship, Angell gave a talk in which, to show that generally accepted lore was not always accurate, he told a true story about one of his Northey sows. Trapped by the tide, and ignorant of the widespread human opinion that pigs do not swim, she had not only learned perforce to do so but had then taught her piglets to do the same, so that they all now swam when the need arose. This heart-warming anecdote found its way into the international press.\textsuperscript{202} Angell’s ‘dollar chasing’ visit lasted six months, from 3 October 1926 until 20 March 1927, and enabled him to repay part of the money he still owed to the Scattergood family. In America he found ‘buildings higher, skirts shorter, subways more crowded, audiences stupider’ but lecturing ‘easier’ as he acquired the facility to ‘talk on any mortal subject if necessary’.\textsuperscript{203} One of these was the largely unnoticed ‘ending of the British Empire’ as the dominions moved towards full independence.\textsuperscript{204} His secretary kept him informed about constituencies at home where the Labour candidate might be retiring, as notified to her by Haycock.\textsuperscript{205} In reply Angell teasingly counselled her, now married to a Mr Robertson and preparing her first Christmas dinner, to ‘take advantage of the modern division of labour’ by buying ready-made fare from Lipton’s or Lyon’s. Her riposte was shrewd: ‘I baked the mince pies and roasted the ducks for exactly the same reason that you go and dig holes on Northey.’\textsuperscript{206}

On his return to Britain, he went to the LNU’s executive committee on 7 April 1927 and was to attend it with unusual regularity over the next six months. He lectured in Holland about ‘Britain, the League and Europe’ during the last week of that month, addressed the Bristol Co-operative Society about international cooperation on 20 May, and wrote an article for the June edition of the LNU’s journal \textit{Headway}. Yet he did not write the ‘book on the League’ he had been contemplating since the previous autumn.\textsuperscript{207} Indeed, he never produced such a work, being less interested in the League of Nations as an institution than in collective security as a system that member states ought to be capable of operating even without an international organization to help them. Instead, he began giving talks for BBC radio, the first of which, about ‘The Festival of Youth’, took place on 16 June.\textsuperscript{208} He worked on \textit{The Money Game}, which frequent Atlantic crossings had given him the leisure and captive audiences to develop out of his pre-war educational project: he was by now discussing how to box it, and writing ‘a little book about it which gives me copyright of the idea’.\textsuperscript{209} He undertook further
therapeutic labour on Northey, where Mary Kelsey again came to stay and was impressed by his ‘family of semi-amphibious pigs’. His farming experience was convincing him that ‘fourteenth-century’ marketing arrangements were impairing the efficiency of British agriculture. He also made several continental trips, attending another Honfleur conference, and visiting the Langelaan family in Paris in early September en route for lecturing in Geneva, where he made a further broadcast. At the end of the summer, Ida Robertson having moved with her husband to the north of England, he engaged a new secretary, Joan Callon, a scatterbrained though attractive young woman to whom he took an immediate shine. Her sister was an aspiring actress; and Angell asked Rosalinde (as she now styled herself) Fuller if she could be found ‘work in the movies’. She had recently arrived in London with Bruguière and soon met up with Angell; but her visit was rendered tragic by the sudden death of her brother Walter, who had become the first editor of the Radio Times.

On 22 October 1927 Angell left for Liverpool to board the Celtic, thereby missing the chance to see Rosalinde as ‘a whirlpool of a gipsy’ in a play at the Globe Theatre. He assured the Labour Party’s national agent it would be his last such excursion ‘for several years’, so he was ‘quite prepared to nurse and fight a constituency’. Disembarking in Boston on 30 October he gave his age as fifty-three, a one-year underestimate. His new secretary, who had begun signing her letters to him ‘with love’, had already broken through the many barriers to emotional intimacy that he had itemized the previous year to Mary Kelsey. On arrival in New York he urged Joan Callon to write to him ‘freely . . . about yourself and all that’s happening to you’, admitting: ‘I wish you were here . . . you would have millionaires laying their millions at your feet in a week’, and ending: ‘with much love’. By the end of November the message from ‘your devoted N.A.’ was that she had ‘something more than beauty – appeal, seductiveness, a genius for interesting men’; and by 10 January 1928 he was owning up to ‘dreams that there might be some reciprocation of what I feel’. He therefore found it something of a wrench to challenge the predictions being made at this time of conflict between a rising America and a declining Britain, which, though implausibly alarmist, were grist to his professional mill. Moreover, his lecturing during this six-month trip was disrupted again by illness. Even so, he made further progress with The Money Game, in which according to family tradition he proposed to give his beguiling secretary a financial share. No less unwisely, since it was beyond his unaided intellectual capacity, he undertook to write a serious book, The Story of Money, a commitment from which he later tried to disentangle himself. On the emotional front, however, he was saved from further indiscretion by Callon’s decision to marry one of her several suitors and quit her job while he was still away. He returned to England with a more suitable replacement, Patsy Kelley, a young Quaker acquaintance of Mary Kelsey’s from Philadelphia. Even so, it was seemingly with a hint of jealousy that Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, meeting them from the boat, declared the young American a ‘very fine girl’: she herself had stayed occasionally at 4 King’s Bench Walk during Angell’s absence, and hoped to develop her own relationship with him.
Back in time to attend LNU’s executive committee on 19 April 1928, Angell became suddenly interested again in his political career, though out of personal ambition more than revived partisanship. In early May he received what he took as ‘more than a hint’ from MacDonald, via ‘a certain alter ego of his’ encountered at the home of ‘some mutual friends’, that he ‘would find a place for me in the Cabinet as a matter of course’ when Labour was next in government, sending him ‘to the Foreign Office in one of the two capacities’ – in other words as foreign secretary or junior minister. With a general election due by October of the following year, Angell asked Haycock to ‘do the best you can for me’ in the way of finding him a winnable parliamentary seat. He was determined not to take long shots any more, and in the course of the next ten months was to reject overtures from Chelsea, Cheltenham, Croydon, Fairfield, Holborn, Moseley, Norwood, Oswestry, and Rusholme. That Angell was in such demand indicated how, as disillusion with the results of the First World War became more widespread, his stock continued to rise. In November he agreed to allow his name to go forward for Kennington in the London borough of Lambeth, which was both winnable and local, though, perhaps because he acknowledged both an obligation to visit the United States in the new year and a ‘Fabian outlook . . . rather to the Right than the Left in the Party’, nothing came of it.

In any case he had much else on his plate during 1928. The Story of Money, due for submission to the publisher in the spring, was causing him intellectual grief. ‘I ought not to have undertaken to do it’, he admitted to Dennis Robertson, though ill-health and a minor operation in June provided an excuse to postpone its delivery until the autumn. On 8 October he tried to pull out of the commitment altogether, offering to hand over the factual material that had already been gathered so another author could use it. His publisher suggested instead that he find collaborators to help him finish the task. This he did, farming out the technical sections to three specialists: Charles T. Hallinan, whom he had met as an American peace activist during the war and who had subsequently become United Press International’s financial editor in Europe; H.V. Hodson, the first-ever prize fellow in economics at All Souls’ College, Oxford; and Louis Rasminsky, a future governor of the Bank of Canada. In addition, Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale was causing him emotional grief. In May 1928 their relationship had deepened – probably, as Marrin implies, becoming physical – causing her to ask, given that they had by then known each other six years: ‘was it quite necessary for me to wait so long before being quite myself with you?’, and to promise now that their relationship had entered ‘a new, more intimate and dearer phase’, that she would ‘never make demands on it’. Yet in October she admitted having broken this undertaking, and having thereby provoked him to put up his ‘own inner defences, a sort of “keep off the grass” sign’ – an indication that she was now triggering a response similar to that given to Kelsey two years before. Even so, Forbes-Robertson Hale could not restrain herself from declaring in her next letter: ‘Darling, I adore you! I’m afraid you will just have to put up with it, for I can’t help it.’ By judiciously staying out of her way for a time, Angell managed to control, without destroying, the
relationship, which by the following spring had stabilized itself at a lower level of intensity. He also kept Kelsey sweet by agreeing to attend another of her Honfleur conferences even though his summer schedule was complicated by a ‘quite minor, indeed trivial, operation’ in June.228

The late summer and autumn of 1928 saw Angell make significant progress with two educational projects: the long-awaited launch of his card game, and the revamping of the UDC’s journal. After sixteen years of private trial and error, The Money Game: How to Play It: A New Instrument of Economic Education was placed before the public by the publisher J.M. Dent. It had been elaborately tested on adults, including the philosopher and educationalist John Dewey in addition to friends Lippmann and Wrench, as well as on a younger generation, including ‘long-suffering nieces and nephews’ and the pupils of Battle Abbey School, which was run by Carrie’s daughter Mary Sheehan-Dare. This first version was produced as a substantial hardback volume, containing 168 pages of endorsements, explanation, and rules, with the back part hollowed out as a container for cards and notes. It was novel, and may conceivably have influenced the board game ‘Monopoly’, which appeared six years later. It was also ambitious, aspiring to inculcate the principles of monetary economics. Its scenario was complex: on a small, civilized, yet money-free island like Pitcairn or Tristan da Cunha, a small population had inherited industrial equipment that it could not operate; but a shipwrecked sailor, with the knowledge to make the equipment productive if he could purchase it, arrived with a block of bullion that could not be sent for conversion into gold coins until the next ship chanced upon the island. On the security of his bullion he could meanwhile issue promissory notes – in effect, paper currency – if the islanders would accept these. The game established how many notes could be issued on the basis of the economic activity that they would generate. It thus assumed the existence of a gold standard shortly before this was about to disappear. A more serious flaw for an entertainment designed for six or seven contestants was that, as its instructions admitted, it took at least an hour to learn. It was, moreover, ‘a card game’ devised by someone who later admitted having ‘never played a game of cards’ before doing so.229 Its final trials had suggested that it was less gripping and more taxing than its creator was willing to admit: one that ‘went rather heavily’ when Fyfe and others played it in the spring of 1928 was blamed by Angell on ‘the awful British dinner sent in from the pub next door’; and after playing it herself Ida Robertson judged that it ‘might “frighten off” the average bridge-playing adult’.230 Nonetheless, when it appeared in late November 1928, with the Christmas market in mind, its first edition of 2,000 was exhausted in three weeks.231 In the long term, however, it disappointed its deviser. Although selling moderately well in Britain, being taken up by some private schools, going through several editions, and earning him steady if modest royalties, it flopped in the United States, where its launch the following autumn was overtaken by the Wall Street crash, though in any case reviewers found it ‘neither “very, very simple” nor to the man-on-the-street instructive’.232 It thus fell well short of its aspiration to transform popular understanding of monetary economics.
Launching *The Money Game* was at least a hopeful innovation, whereas editing the UDC’s journal was a hopeless attempt at resuscitation. The parent organization had been a shadow of its former self since Morel’s death, as already noted, despite gaining some distinguished young recruits, such as the authors Vera Brittain and Winifred Holtby. In 1928, when a majority of its members declined to reject the principle of League of Nations sanctions, several of its leaders resigned, including Ponsonby, who had by then espoused pacifism, and Swanwick, whose isolationism had become even more absolute. In Angell’s view it was in effect ‘dead’ from that time, though, having been left a legacy, it declined ‘to commit Hari Kari’ as self-respect required. *Foreign Affairs* had already been turned from a house journal to an independent monthly review. When Swanwick, its editor, departed, Angell agreed to replace her with effect from October. He did so partly because the job was salaried, partly because he fantasized about developing the UDC into something like the Foreign Policy Association of New York, and partly because it was a propitious time to take over a peace journal: exactly a decade after the armistice a sudden boom in books and plays reliving the experience of trench warfare was under way, indicating the emergence of an anti-war, pro-disarmament, and pro-League consensus in Britain. On taking charge of *Foreign Affairs*, Angell gave it the subtitle ‘A Monthly Digest and Interpretation’, neatly reconciling its didactic new tone with the UDC’s original objectives by claiming that educating ‘the ordinary citizen and voter’ about international issues would undermine the case for leaving ‘all such matters to the expert’, namely ‘the old-time diplomats, the devisers of secret treaties’. On 6 November he appeared at his first UDC general council for seven years, a reception being given in his honour; and over the next two and a half years he was to be an assiduous attender.

Even so, Angell’s principal editorial message was more to the liking of the LNU than to the UDC’s old guard: he acknowledged the need for the League to provide collective security against an aggressor, defined objectively as ‘the nation which refuses third-party judgement’. Yet, finding himself both free of editorial supervision and faced with an unprecedentedly compliant public, he undercut this message by arguing that ‘the nation which disarmed without waiting for the others to do so, would incur less risks than it incurs by armament competition’. He did so partly as a propaganda ploy – the better to persuade unilateral disarmers that, as a practical fall-back, they needed to support collective security. He thus went on to argue that, because their preferred policy would not obtain significant political support in the foreseeable future, the question they had meanwhile to ask themselves was: ‘By what half loaf are we to live until our oven can bake us a whole one?’ But this strategy of ingratiation would have lacked credibility had he not genuinely believed that non-resistance might prove an effective tactic: he had first been persuaded of this in 1915, when, snubbed by the Garton Foundation and galvanized by the Eastman-Fuller circle, he had read Russell on the subject; he had been reinforced in this belief by Germany’s passive resistance of 1923; and he was now seemingly confirmed in it by the anti-war atmosphere of autumn 1928. Over the next eleven years, moreover, Angell was frequently to repeat this
part-tactical, part-propagandist claim of personal pacifism, before wiping from his mind that he had ever done so.

Shortly before Christmas Angell took leave from his editorship to spend a ‘few weeks’ lecturing in the United States: he was thus on the ocean when the German chancellor quoted his work as justifying his country’s criticisms of reparations.239 After seeing in the new year with Mary Kelsey, he based himself at the Murray Hill Hotel in Manhattan while he discoursed on a variety of themes, including the need for voter education at a meeting of the United Parents’ Association on 4 January 1929. He also reported back to *Foreign Affairs* on America’s refusal to waive the debts it was owed by France and Britain so that they could in turn let Germany off its reparations.240 Ostensibly to avoid ‘collapse’, but perhaps because of developments at home, he cancelled the Pacific leg of his tour,241 which therefore ended as early as 6 February.

Almost immediately after his return, his political career made belated progress. At a very convenient moment for Angell, Labour’s candidate in Bradford North, Alfred Pickles, stood down because of illness.242 On 3 March 1929 Angell travelled for a selection meeting to the Yorkshire city where the ILP had been founded thirty-six years previously. It had an entrenched three-party system. Labour had already won three of its four constituencies, and currently held two of them; but it had never taken Bradford North, which the Liberals had narrowly won in 1923 with only 34.0 per cent of the vote and the Conservatives had recaptured the following year with 39.6 per cent, Labour coming second with 32.7 per cent, and the Liberals last with 27.7 per cent. Unlike at Rossendale, the local Labour association united behind Angell from the outset: after preferring him to the two others on the shortlist, the selection committee was able to make his nomination unanimous; and, far from distrusting an intellectual, it welcomed the man who ‘was right about the war’. Indeed, the future Labour cabinet minister Barbara Castle, who as an eighteen-year old cut her political teeth canvassing for Angell, recalled that ‘the whole town was atwitter at having such a famous man in their midst, seeking their votes’. He believed that votes could be won on the peace question, and was therefore concerned not to throw them away on domestic issues where Labour’s policies might be perceived by floating voters as too left-wing. When on 24 March 1929 he held a preliminary meeting ‘for workers and friends’ in his constituency he explained a ploy for disarming those claiming to find socialism too extreme: canvassers should ask such people ‘whether they were prepared to adopt as strong methods of fighting unemployment as those taken to fight the Germans, and if they answered “Yes,” then they were self-confessed socialists’. Carrying his renewed educational enthusiasm into his political career, he also offered to ‘hold small meetings of workers at which he would thresh out with them the details of banking, currency, etc’, as expounded in *The Money Game*. In mid-April he returned to Bradford ‘for a week’s electioneering’.243

On 24 April 1929, as expected, a general election was called. Angell devoted the May issue of *Foreign Affairs* to external-policy statements on behalf of the three parties, but did not write the Labour one. Instead, he composed a neutral
editorial noting that party labels could be unhelpful in the international sphere since a Tory like Cecil was more progressive than a number of Labour and Liberal candidates. His claim that there was a ‘case for regarding foreign policy as the paramount issue just now’ took him as close as he dared to telling Labour voters not to support a party candidate whose commitment to internationalism was insufficiently strong. In Bradford North he issued an electoral leaflet in which he promised both to ‘oppose any tendency to Revolution or violence’ and to ‘give no doctrinaire allegiance to any “ism”’.\textsuperscript{244} His campaigning relied heavily on the anti-war card, causing his Conservative opponent to complain about Labour’s allegation ‘that neither of the two elder parties was in earnest about peace’, though at times, as Angell later reported to the \textit{Manchester Guardian}, he found himself ‘in the strange position of having to meet the criticism that I was not Pacifist enough’. He also insisted that the Liberal Party ‘was on its last legs’ and that the Conservatives ‘stood for old ideals, the ideal of “the rich man in his castle and the poor man at his gate”’. The devoted Forbes-Robertson Hale again came and spoke on his behalf. His combination of emollience and robustness produced the hoped-for result: on 30 May his 41.0 per cent of the vote in a three-cornered contest gave him a majority of 2,460 over the Conservatives, and contributed to a clean sweep by Labour of the city’s seats. The \textit{Bradford Pioneer} was particularly impressed that ‘a stranger, even so famous a stranger as Mr Angell, could come into Bradford at the eleventh hour and win such a seat’, and considered it ‘to a great extent Mr Angell’s own personal achievement. His peace propaganda and sane setting-out of socialist ideas have gained many new converts’.\textsuperscript{245} This May 1929 election resulted in a second Labour government, again dependent on Liberal support. Despite his supposed hints via an intermediary, MacDonald missed the chance to make a ‘Ministering Angell’ of the new Bradford North MP, as a northern newspaper was to joke,\textsuperscript{246} appointing Henderson as foreign secretary, with Dalton and Noel Baker as his junior ministers. Angell was bitterly disappointed, despite his later claim not to have sought office.\textsuperscript{247} A friend in the cabinet – probably Trevelyan, who became president of the board of education for a second time – attempted to soften the blow by explaining that his known independence of mind, which would have made it hard for him not to embarrass the government when he disagreed with it, had in the end been decisive.\textsuperscript{248} But Angell, though pleased for Noel Baker, was particularly annoyed by the appointment of those he regarded as less qualified on international issues than himself. He even considered Henderson, known affectionately throughout the party as ‘Uncle Arthur’, an obstacle to a constructive foreign policy – a strange misjudgement, given the close fit between the new foreign secretary’s views and his own. Angell confided in Zilliacus, now working as a League civil servant and pseudonymously writing books on international affairs: ‘I shall do my best with Baker and the others to get a move on, but as you know, the weight of the sort of thing that puts Uncle A. in the Foreign Office is enormous. It may be pretty deadening at first.’\textsuperscript{249} Angell’s inability to recognize either Henderson’s stature in the party or his internationalist credentials revealed the ‘limited sympathy with the party’s culture and priorities’ that a shrewd historian has noted in another
context. Angell revealed a surprising tactlessness. He published a profile of the new ministerial team in *Foreign Affairs*, which, by mentioning only Henderson’s and Dalston’s domestic-policy credentials, prompted the latter to complain: ‘Your pen-picture of me... seems to suggest that I am a curious misfit in this Office!’ Dalston reminded Angell of his own book on international affairs and of Henderson’s role in promoting the Geneva Protocol. Angell made an off-hand reply, to the effect that his editorial assistant had relied on information in *Who’s Who*. It was small wonder that the Foreign Office chose to pass him over again when choosing delegates to Geneva.

Even so, Angell found a certain gratification in simple membership of the House of Commons from June 1929 onwards. It increased the demand for his articles: even *Reynold’s Illustrated News*, a popular paper, began asking for them. Cynthia Fuller, now Mrs Dehn, revived pleasant memories by congratulating him on his election, prompting him to suggest that she visit Northey ‘with Rosalinde and we would put the clock back ten years and pretend it was Lake Champagne’. His continuing contacts with the by now famous actress during his time in parliament became the subject of an anecdote that he widely disseminated, seemingly to pre-empt gossip. Allegedly, the post-office at Maldon misread the second word, ‘sup’, of a telegram from her, and telephoned it to him as: ‘Can sleep with you after the theatre Friday night. Love, Rosalinde.’ Insisting that ‘those were not my relations with her – “cross my heart”, as the children say’, Angell complained ‘half-seriously’ – and in reality mendaciously – to the Post-Master General, Lees-Smith, that his department had committed a libel on the delightful actress and a cruel slander upon himself. Lees-Smith was but one of several old acquaintances with whom he found himself working at Westminster: Angell observed to Seymour Cocks that ‘a bigger proportion of the old gang of the Garton Foundation and the Jordans days is now in the House: yourself, Benson, Haycock, Philip Baker and many who were more or less in touch like Charles Trevelyan’. Another old Garton hand, Maude Pease, became Angell’s secretary, Patsy Kelley having left to marry a British civil servant, while Isobel Goddard of the Society for Cultural Relations between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the U.S.S.R. provided additional research assistance.

After taking the oath, as Ralph Norman Angell, on 26 June, he received the consolation prize of election by his colleagues onto the consultative committee of the PLP, albeit to the last of its twelve places. He soon made ‘rather a special friend’ among his new parliamentary colleagues, Ellen Wilkinson, a striking single woman in her late thirties whom he remembered as ‘a generous, red-headed spitfire’: perhaps he was one of the ‘many men friends’ to whom her biographer somewhat coyly alludes. During his short first session he was a model back-bencher, voting in all the divisions, and, after a
month, asking his first question, a friendly one to the Foreign Office about the situation in South Persia.259

On the day after this first parliamentary intervention, 26 July 1929, the Commons adjourned for a three-month recess, during which, after holidaying on Northey, Angell spent some time in Geneva, where he addressed the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the utility of defining aggression as the refusal to refer disputes to a third party.260 He then went to France for conferences in Paris and at Honfleur. He also published an early criticism of the anti-French line that Snowden adopted at an inter-governmental meeting on reparations at The Hague in August, fearing it might ‘reawaken the jingoism which has been so happily quiescent for some years’.261 Back in London, Angell was asked by a press agency on 26 September to join the journalistic pack accompanying MacDonald across the Atlantic for the first-ever summit meeting between the heads of the American and British governments, and to transmit ‘daily wireless reports’ from the prime minister’s ship for a fee of £200 and all expenses paid. After briefly wondering whether this was compatible with his parliamentary duties, he accepted, and two days later was on the Berengaria, pleased to find that Fyfe was once again a shipboard companion. He also walked the decks with the deputy cabinet secretary Thomas Jones, and talked ‘a good deal’ to MacDonald, as ever without penetrating the ‘shell that somehow he cast about himself’.262 Reaching New York on 4 October, MacDonald travelled on to meet the American President, Angell’s dinner companion of 1910 and 1916 Herbert Hoover, at his retreat at Rapidan in Virginia.263

Angell did a rapid turnaround: he was back in London for the UDC’s general council on 18 October 1929, at which the major issue was the continuing heavy losses on Foreign Affairs, and for a visit to his constituency the following week.264 During the next parliamentary session, which ran from 29 October to 20 December, his voting record was reasonably good, as was his attendance at the consultative committee; and he asked a written question about the number of children in primary schools that was answered by Trevelyan.265 Angell ended the year in a loyal and conscientious frame of mind. Indeed, he cancelled the one-month lecture tour for which he was due to leave on Christmas Eve, and underwent another minor operation. He told his lecture agent that this was because of a recurrence of the ‘not very serious but extremely troubling difficulty’, which had necessitated medical intervention earlier in the year, receiving in reply a criticism of his ‘excessive tea drinking’. Admittedly, his cancellation may also have been influenced by the recent Wall Street crash, which must have reduced the profitability of a tour. However, to Kelsey, to whom he tactfully described his decision to stay at home as ‘heartbreaking’, he claimed that getting fit for his duties as an MP was a major consideration, on the grounds that ‘next year will be my third session in the House, and I have not made a beginning there at all’.266 His review of the year for Foreign Affairs dutifully emphasized the foreign-policy achievements of the Labour government as well as the continued beneficial ‘change in the emotional attitude towards war’ of the British public.267 He also defended Snowden at a ‘very disturbing’ party meeting in Bradford on
22 December, where there was strong criticism of the chancellor of the exchequer for not increasing benefits to the levels that Labour had recommended in its evidence of three years previously to the Blanesburgh Committee on unemployment insurance and had reaffirmed in its election manifesto. Angell, along with two of the other three Labour MPs for the city, had voted with the government when it raised benefits more modestly; and he made matters worse by muddling the Blanesburgh Committee’s majority and minority reports. Perhaps it was to rebuild some credibility with the left that he now agreed to write a pamphlet on disarmament for the No More War Movement, a pacifist body with strong ILP links.

In the new year, Angell gave another radio talk, this time on naval disarmament. More significantly, just before 6 pm on 27 January 1930 he made his maiden parliamentary speech in support of the government’s decision to sign the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, a small gesture in favour of international arbitration that he represented as marking a profound difference of approach from that taken by the Conservatives. In accordance with parliamentary etiquette the MP who followed him paid a courteous tribute: this was a future Conservative prime minister, Anthony Eden, who declared it ‘a very exceptional maiden speech’. The next Labour MP to speak, a veteran of Angell’s pre-war movement, Seymour Cocks, complimented his ‘old friend and teacher’ on a ‘very brilliant’ debut. Soon afterwards, Angell arranged a meeting with Snowden, at which he urged him to improve his communications with the PLP.

Yet as the House of Commons routine palled and the world depression deepened, Angell became disillusioned. He had less access to the prime minister as an MP than as a journalist. He must have been tantalized by his occasional glimpses of life inside the government, such as when on 22 January 1930 Trevelyan invited him to dinner, along with Dalton, to discuss naval issues with Herbert W. Richmond, a retired admiral who supported the LNU. Life on the back benches disagreed with Angell: put off by ‘the bad intellectual quality of most members on both sides’, he shunned the smoking room and sat abstemiously ‘up in one of the galleries where I could cock half an ear to the debate and yet go on with the writing’ of articles and books. Sensing his detachment, most of his PLP colleagues did not warm to him, judging with Fenner Brockway that he lacked ‘the parliamentary manner’ and ‘spoke too much like a professor’. Whenever possible Angell escaped the Palace of Westminster altogether to join intellectuals such as David Mitrany and Leonard Woolf, who in February 1930 had created an informal ‘International Peace Group’ to discuss the production of internationalist literature. Nor did he enjoy engaging with the electors of Bradford North: he complained to a local journalist that he ‘could employ all his time answering’ the two-hundred letters he received each week, and preferred ‘to deal with the troubles of his constituents through the post and not in an interview’. He later admitted that, having at first taken his parliamentary work ‘seriously’, he had ‘discovered very quickly that if I continued to do so too ponderously I would either go mad or be driven to
give it up altogether’. Outside the Commons, moreover, Angell was irritated by *Punch*’s repetition at this time of the ‘outrageous myth’ that before 1914 he had written ‘a book proving that another war was impossible’: in apologizing, *Punch* acknowledged his belief that such allegations had ‘reduced his market value, as an author, during twenty years by about ninety-per-cent’, but hoped that ‘this too is a misstatement’. Angell’s frustration with his lot boiled over on 20 March 1930. It should have been a wholly happy day, because at 1 pm he had the cheering experience of a four-course luncheon in the House of Commons organized by Wrench and Wright to celebrate, albeit seven months prematurely, the twenty-first anniversary of *Europe’s Optical Illusion*. The menu card alluded to the guest of honour’s cowboy past, depicting him as ‘An Angell’, wings and all, though ‘a perfect devil on horseback’. Wright had just taken over as editor of the *Nation*, so was able to report the occasion fully in that paper, just as Angell himself did in *Foreign Affairs*, reprinting the respectful account that had appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, whose editor, E.T. Scott (son of C.P.), had been present. Garton veterans Searle, Sterndale-Bennett, Manus, and Pease were joined at the lunch by Dalton and Noel Baker from the Foreign Office, by Harold Laski, a leftist intellectual who was shortly to become one of Angell’s favourite ideological punchbags, by Edmund Blunden, an established anti-war poet who contributed fourteen lines of undistinguished yet admiring verse, and by R.A. Butler, a rising Tory MP of progressive views. George Bernard Shaw, the dramatist, sent a telegram; and tributes were paid in person by Lady Barlow, Buchan, Cecil, Snowden, and General Sir Ian Hamilton. That this last, who seventeen years previously had wanted to ‘break a lance’ with Angell, now not only broke bread with him instead but also drank his health was a sign of how greatly attitudes to war had changed. In reply to these assorted compliments Angell dwelled with some emotion on the distortions, calculated and casual, to which his ‘illusion’ thesis had long been subjected: ‘I have deliberately held back from co-operating in work that needed doing from the fear that I might taint others with the derision which has grown from this falsehood or confusion.’ A warm thank-you letter to Wrench further indicated his depth of feeling on this matter, claiming that the occasion ‘really has bucked me more than anything of the kind I’ve ever known’ because it ‘marked a point where at last one was emerging from the smothering and cramping sense of misrepresentation into the fresh air’. What ruined Angell’s day was the prime minister’s absence. Although according to Wright’s letter of invitation MacDonald had ‘promised to attend if his engagements permit’, he merely sent a message. He had good excuses – the London naval conference was in session; and he had to take prime-ministerial questions that afternoon – yet also loved to deliver a snub. Angell took umbrage, and, perhaps because he had drunk a glass of wine too many at the luncheon, decided immediately to get his own back. In the Commons chamber around a quarter to four he followed up a colleague’s question to MacDonald by peremptorily asking whether it was his intention to fulfil ‘all the obligations of the Covenant of the League’, which was rather like asking whether the prime
minister intended to behave virtuously. Not receiving an answer, Angell repeated his question four days later, now including Britain’s obligations under the Locarno treaties, and this time elicited the frothiest of affirmatives from his former UDC colleague.281

In the following weeks an alienated Angell became more unreliable in his parliamentary attendance, and more outspoken in his defiant defence of the League and France against their detractors within his own party. He accepted Cecil’s invitation to join the LNU’s political committee, and reproved the Manchester Guardian for its hesitations about collective security, to the delight of Murray, who had been ‘disquieted by the spread of Isolationist doctrine’ among Labour supporters. Angell used both the Daily Herald and Foreign Affairs to argue that France was ‘not the criminal’, and that ‘repeating towards France the attitude which twenty years ago we took towards Germany’ made no sense.282 The Spectator thought it suspicious that ‘his remarks were quoted with approval in the Echo de Paris and the Temps’, prompting Angell to point out that when France had pursued an anti-internationalist policy in the immediate post-war period he had criticized it.283 Over the next year or so he acquired a reputation for being ‘particularly well fitted to understand the French point of view’, as an independent weekly put it, so that when Noel Baker was asked by a local LNU branch to suggest someone able to explain France’s perspective on disarmament, he named Angell as the ‘only good speaker who knows how to put the French view with whom I am acquainted. . . . He is not easy to get but is very good if you get him.’284

In his disgruntled and dissenting mood of early spring 1930, Angell was willing to sign a memorial in which the consultative committee expressed dissatisfaction ‘as to the non-fulfilment of Labour’s policy with regard to Native Races, particularly in connection with East Africa’.285 Yet even at his most disaffected he had no truck with the leftist purism that was taking hold of the ILP, and argued forcefully that ‘out-of-government critics, alike of armaments and imperialism, oversimplify the issues, and sometimes present as alternatives to the existing order policies which cannot, in fact, when it comes to the pinch, be put into execution; and sometimes policies which, if they could, ought not to be’.286 His dislike of nationalism as a fragmenting and inflaming sentiment made him more sceptical than many on the left of demands to replace imperial rule with national self-determination. He thus disapproved of the Indian Congress Party and Mohandas K. Gandhi for borrowing from Europe an idea – nationalism – that was in his opinion based on ‘extremely insecure moral foundations’. For similar reasons he criticized exclusive Arab claims to Palestine, and in any case, as will shortly be seen, supported Zionist claims to at least a share of that territory. However, this dislike of new nationalisms sat uneasily with his longer-standing approval of Britain for not ‘owning’ its empire and for permitting at least some territories to set their own tariffs. In other words, though he believed that colonial nationalism was adding to the intolerant balkanization of the world, he also welcomed Britain’s relaxation of its imperial controls. These two principles were about to collide, as the British dominions prepared formally to become sovereign states. At this time Angell’s anti-nationalism took precedence over his
anti-imperialism: he gloomily predicted that the Statute of Westminster, which made this legal change, ‘will solve no problem and create a great many’.287

Just as Angell was thus asserting himself as a critic both of MacDonald and Snowden for being too isolationist and of the Labour left for being too supportive of colonial self-determination, his health collapsed again. It did so, what is more, just days before the House of Commons reassembled on 30 April 1930, so Angell was to be absent from the division lobbies, except for five critical votes taken after 5 pm on 9 July, and also from every meeting of the consultative committee, throughout a long and arduous session that lasted until 1 August. He needed at least one minor operation, as he notified the prime minister, who managed a courteous response, on 1 May.288 Given that during this whole period the Conservatives were harrying the minority government by proposing numerous amendments and forcing all-night debates, his colleagues were very generous in their insistence that he take the time needed to restore his strength.289 He promised to resign from parliament if he did not achieve this: ‘I have not the slightest intention, I do assure my Bradford constituents, of saddling them with an invalid or crippled member.’290 And he did not seek re-election to the consultative committee. Although he was able to resume some writing late in May, he continued to convalesce for much of the summer. To a Labour colleague who was surprised by his brief appearance in the division lobby on 9 July, he explained that this had been during ‘an interlude in my treatment’ when he had been urgently needed to constitute ‘fifty per cent of the government majority’.291

During Angell’s somewhat self-indulgent convalescence, much of it spent on Northey, his alienation of the early spring gradually dissipated. He was pleased when his ‘attempt to show what money has done to human society’, The Story of Money, was finally published by Cassell in June 1930, and proved to be by far the best produced of his books. Illustrated, elegantly printed, and referenced with endnotes, it acknowledged the editorial help of Barbara Hayes and the farming out of three technical sections: indeed, Angell had wanted to credit Hallinan, Hodson, and Rasminsky as co-authors but was told by his publisher that his undiluted appearance on the title page was needed to ‘carry’ the book.292 It surveyed the various theories of money without committing itself to any, a self-denying ordinance that caused the Times Literary Supplement, on reviewing a work by Angell for the first time in five years, to declare it ‘disappointing’,293 but that helped it find a niche as a university textbook.294 Even so, Angell could not resist including a reminder of his own pre-war scepticism about indemnities, which had been ‘met with vast derision’, not ‘a single economist’ then admitting ‘the validity of his argument’. He also repeated his standard refrain of the previous decade:

A very large proportion of the propertied classes in Europe…have seen themselves dispossessed, sometimes down to the last penny, by an economic revolution not engineered by Moscow or precipitated by Socialist agitators, but arriving as a direct result of policies pursued by ‘law and order’ governments, by the guardians of wealth and commerce.295
The failure of the bourgeoisie to realize this led him again to consider writing a book about the deficiencies of general education. He was encouraged to do so by the publisher Hamish Hamilton, then working for Harper, but interested in it as a project that would help him set up on his own.296

Time spent with his pigs, as Angell recuperated over the late spring and summer of 1930, drew him into microeconomic reflection upon the realities of marketing. Having first considered this issue with Wrench during his 1924/25 visit to the United States, he had for at least three years been taking a Northey-related interest in it, as a livestock farmer who found it hard efficiently to locate suppliers and customers at critical times. He therefore devised an ‘immediately practical project’, namely ‘the building up of a marketing organisation of a special kind’ intended to improve the efficiency of local markets, both agricultural and industrial, and, by stimulating economic activity, to reduce unemployment.297 He wrote a memorandum on these lines, which he sent to Wright, who assured him on 14 July ‘that the proposal is a thoroughly sound and good one, and that everything seems to depend upon launching your Home Marketing Board in a proper way and the right man at its head’, and, being a Liberal, suggested Lloyd George.298 Angell circulated his memorandum to the PLP and the government, and, while waiting for a response, spent part of August sailing near Paris, with an old friend from pre-war days, and also with Barbara Hayes, who was about to spend a year at the London School of Economics studying for a diploma in international and diplomatic studies.299

By the late summer of 1930 Angell was willing to resume his normal activities. In September he acted as director of studies at a Boeke conference, an annual workers’ educational discussion of international issues organized by Cadbury’s, which that year met in Paris. Early the following month he began writing articles calling for a managed international currency.300 On the 21st, almost exactly two years after being elected to its council, he gave his first address to the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, insisting that although most people discussed protectionism ‘as a purely economic problem produced by economic conditions, its roots really lie in the idea of political nationalism’.301 When the House of Commons reassembled a few days later, he resumed attendance in a reasonably diligent and docile manner. He continued to refine his marketing scheme, writing to the minister of agriculture on 3 December to propose ‘local agricultural exchanges, coupled with greater use of the telephone’, so producers could more easily find consumers.302 On the 16th, in a debate on unemployment, he made his second speech, arguing that the fall of prices produced by the slump favoured ‘the bondholder’ at the expense of ‘the entrepreneur class’, repeating his call for ‘a Home Marketing Board’ because this type of state intervention offered ‘the greatest measure of co-operation from industry’, and citing both his experience of American industrial modernization and his difficulties as a livestock farmer in getting reliable market information.303 He was also to discuss his scheme privately with Israel Sieff of the retail chain Marks and Spencer, who was exploring similar ideas. He had met Sieff at the dinner table of Chaim Weizmann, whose Zionist campaign he had begun supporting so
loyally that the historian of the British left’s attitudes towards a Jewish homeland has claimed: ‘Perhaps the only Labour figure who proclaimed straight-forward, unqualified support for Zionism was Norman Angell, the editor of Foreign Affairs’. Angell’s memorandum on unemployment received only an occasional acknowledgement from a minister, and caused the faintest of ripples among his parliamentary colleagues. Being a loner, he lacked a network through which to disseminate his views; and unlike Sir Oswald Mosley, whose own unemployment-fighting ministerial memorandum, resignation from the government, and independent manifesto had successively convulsed the PLP during the past twelve months, Angell also lacked the charisma to command attention for idiosyncratic personal opinions. His Home Marketing Board thus suffered the same fate – eclipse by a better connected and more confident competitor – as had his The Peace Treaty and the Economic Chaos of Europe at Keynes’s hands eleven years previously.

When in mid-December 1930 Angell was offered a knighthood, he interpreted it as ‘a sort of sop’ to compensate him for the lack of a governmental job and the ignoring of his memorandum, and immediately drafted a therapeutic letter of rejection. However, he mentioned it to Wright; and, as he was probably expected to do, his loyal counsellor pointed out that a title would complete the restoration of his reputation and thus help the cause to which they had both devoted such effort. Angell promptly gave in, and on the 31st sent a circular to friends explaining why he had been talked into accepting the honour, emphasizing the continuing need to refute the calumny that The Great Illusion had alleged the impossibility of war, and claiming: ‘Business men will be less suspicious of a titled man than a mere Pacifist.’

The knighthood, announced on new year’s day 1931 and conferred by King George V on 24 February, released a torrent of goodwill from friends and colleagues. Buchan assured him that it ‘will undoubtedly increase your international authority’. In greeting ‘Dear “Sir”’, Behrens shrewdly noted: ‘You would hardly have expected this twelve years ago!’ Benson welcomed ‘the first Knighthood for Pacifism pure and simple. What we really have is Sir Great Illusion.’ And Hallinan thought it the ‘first time a pen name has been knighted’. To keep Angell grounded, a very old acquaintance accompanied his congratulations from Paris with the confession that ‘what you have done since you wrote Europe’s Optical Illusion I haven’t the ghost of an idea’.

One effect of his honour was further to loosen Angell’s tongue. In January and early February 1931 he undertook a well-reported tour of Scotland and the north of England, and, while advocating disarmament at the ILP rooms in Halifax on 7 February, waxed lyrical in the manner of a Christian-pacifist preacher: ‘If we took risks they must be risks for peace and not for war. . . . Believe and ye shall be saved, doubt and assuredly ye shall perish.’ In Foreign Affairs he had recently indicated that his ‘personal conviction’ was ‘to scrap four-fifths of the British navy and take whatever risk is involved’, though he insisted this was no criticism of Henderson or Cecil, who as statesmen had to show due prudence.
so four times during the next six. On 11 February, in the debate that led to the creation of a committee to investigate excessive government expenditure, he made his third speech, arguing that bondholders rather than workers should be expected to lower their incomes in a depression, and warning that deflationary policies often resulted in protectionist measures.311 On 9 March, during a debate on arbitration, he spoke for a fourth time, reiterating his support for ‘the principle of third-party judgement through the medium of international authority’.312 His fifth intervention, in a disarmament debate seventeen days later, claimed that, given Britain’s international undertakings, ‘the only war in which we are entitled to enter’ would be one in which the country ought to ‘have the greater part of the world allied with us’, a fact which would permit it to reduce its armaments. This was another of the occasions in which he used a pacifist argument, affirming his ‘personal conviction . . . that it would be safe to set the example of disarmament without waiting for the others to come in’, though he accepted that, being ‘a trustee’, the government could not try this.313 In addition to asking two parliamentary questions in May, he made a sixth speech in June, criticizing the prime minister for implying that it was ‘now the turn of the foreigner to disarm’.314 At the LNU’s request this became a pamphlet in support of the world disarmament conference, though it irritated Admiral Richmond and other conservative-minded members.315 Angell’s loosened tongue and continuing irritation with MacDonald thus combined to make him seem a zealot for disarmament at this time. Yet after the Manchuria crisis he was to present the reduction of armaments as more as a by-product of security than as a contribution in its own right to the prevention of war.

Angell’s knighthood seemed to give him a general surge of energy and productivity throughout the first six months of 1931. He went to two meetings of the advisory committee on international questions despite having attended only once in the previous three-and-a-half years.316 He chaired meetings of a parliamentary currency group, in some secrecy, which the governor of the Bank of England addressed on 8 May and 9 June. Midway between these dates, he sent off an eighty-page essay to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, which, along with contributions by two Americans, was published the following January as *The United States and Great Britain*. It was an ambitious attempt to combine his ‘illusion’ thesis, his liberal internationalism, and his views on current affairs. To alarmists in the United States, who had been claiming that their country would soon need to fight Britain, he pointed out that the defeat of Germany in 1918 had not solved the victors’ economic problems. To British imperialists like Lord Beaverbrook, the proprietor of the *Daily Express*, as well as to American Anglophobes, he reiterated his long-standing claim that the empire was ‘an extremely loose, undefined alliance of independent states’ in which, for example, even India since 1919 could impose tariffs against Britain. To sceptics about the legal approach to war prevention, he repeated his belief that refusal to arbitrate a dispute constituted an objective ‘test of aggression’. Responding to recent events, he noted that both the United States and Britain had tacitly modified their formerly conflicting positions over sea power. America’s decision to outlaw
aggression through the 1928 Kellogg-Briand pact marked a retreat from its previous claim to be entitled to trade with all belligerents. Likewise, Britain’s acceptance at the 1930 Washington Conference of naval parity with United States undercut its capacity to rule the waves on its own. Angell concluded that an Anglo-American ‘understanding’ was possible as well as desirable, though it should be viewed as ‘a step to wider internationalism’ rather than as a ‘substitute’ for it.317

In June 1931 Angell took on the chairmanship of the LNU’s publicity committee, where he introduced innovative methods based on his Northcliffe press experiences. The following month he accepted appointment to the National Peace Council’s executive committee, so as to coordinate its efforts with those of the LNU.318 He also wrote the economic chapter for What Would Be the Character of a New War?, an alarmist work published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in July, which was to attract considerable attention when Victor Gollancz reissued it seventeen months later: Angell’s pessimistic contribution was particularly notable for its concern about the threat of communism.319

Not everything went smoothly for Sir Norman in the spring and summer of 1931. His wife, who had been resident in Rome, could not resist coming to London in order to use the title Lady Angell. She lodged at a guest house in Hampstead, where her erratic behaviour became an embarrassment. Angell, who dealt with her through his solicitor, decided upon a legal separation, though he continued to support her financially, albeit at a lower level than before the war because his own income had approximately halved. She stayed put in London, and continued to worry Angell’s solicitor by making defamatory remarks about her neighbours,320 though obligingly the press was to turn a blind eye to her disturbed behaviour during her remaining quarter-century of life. Another setback was that, the depression having exacerbated its chronic financial crisis, the UDC was unable to maintain Foreign Affairs as a separate publication beyond April. Angell used its last issue, so disrupted had the international economy by then become, to endorse the case for making ‘trade between nations a deliberately planned bargain between nations’.321 Angell’s increasingly tenuous link with the UDC was thus finally broken. From May, his monthly ‘Foreign Affairs’ essay appeared as a supplement to Time & Tide, an independent magazine subsidized and edited by Lady Rhondda, the feminist daughter of millionaire coalmine owner and Neutrality League supporter D.A. Thomas, and like her father a survivor of the Lusitania.

The worsening economic situation also delayed what Angell came to regard as his ‘best book’, The Unseen Assassins. It had been commissioned early in 1931, under the working title ‘First and Last in Foreign Policy’,322 to help launch Hamish Hamilton as an independent publisher. Angell made considerable progress with his text during long afternoons and evenings spent in the gallery of the House of Commons, but in late spring interpolated a more topical work on unemployment, and did not finish it until early August. While it was in production the publisher was panicked by the political crisis and subsequent general election into holding it back until the new year,323 which meant that by the time it
appeared it was strangely silent about Japan’s seizure of Manchuria, a recent event of enormous significance.

The Unseen Assassins focused on the difficulty of persuading a public that in Angell’s view was generally sound in its intuitions to apply these to international issues, where a crude nationalism tended to hold sway. In a jaded tone Angell announced the book as the latest iteration of an intellectual inquiry ‘now going back (alas!) over thirty years’. Its title referred to the ‘unforeseen implications’ of policies that unwittingly had fatal consequences for ‘our peace and welfare’. He rejected both the radical view that these were imposed by ‘small minorities or vested interests’ and the socialist view that they were inherent in capitalism, and instead advanced the liberal view that they arose from the susceptibility of public opinion to the ‘political nationalism’ that had ‘become for the Europe of our age the most important thing in the world, more important than civilization, humanity, decency, kindness, pity; more important than life itself’. This was essentially the diagnosis put forward in The Fruits of Victory a decade before. Yet whereas when Angell had written that book he had still aspired to learn all ‘the facts’, he now realized wearily that there was ‘a literally illimitable mountain range of them’, and – switching metaphors – that what he needed was ‘a compass or a chart for the navigation of these vast oceans of facts’, in other words ‘a technique of interpretation of evidence’. He reproduced Chatham House lecture lists and House of Commons order papers as examples of information-overload. The real need, he implied, was not for detailed information about public affairs but for elementary comprehension of what made for social cohesion and what for social disintegration. For much of the book he mused in a forlorn tone about the ‘strange gap in education’ that caused the basic principles of economic and social life to be overlooked. Using as a peg some alarmist American literature predicting that the depression would generate a conflict with Britain over trade, Angell complained once again of the myth that The Great Illusion had asserted the impossibility of war. Although admitting that in ‘recent years the baiting has dropped’, he noted that it had nonetheless persisted for a decade and a half, though it could ‘hardly be questioned… that the outcome of the war has vindicated broadly the author’s contentions’, and though he himself had issued ‘literally hundreds of denials’. He now presented his ‘whole thesis’ as having really been ‘that understanding, work, cooperation, adjustment, must be the basis of human society; that conquest as a means of achieving national advantage must fail; that to base your prosperity… upon having more power than someone else, and exercising it against him is an impossible form of human relationship that is bound to fail’.

Consequently, ‘the ultimate question of all’ was: why was this truth misunderstood? A later generation might have preferred rational-choice explanations for suboptimal political outcomes. But Angell sought the answer in psychology, a ‘terrifyingly complicated’ subject that needed ‘bringing into the street by some method of simplification’ yet had already identified ‘the greatest obstacle of all, ultimately, to the establishment of co-operation’, namely ‘the instinct or desire for power’.
Angell's arrival, via his psychological research, at a belief in a destructive human power-drive caused him briefly to doubt the relevance of his own thesis, although he could not as yet even spell out his concerns, let alone arrive at a remedy. He acknowledged ‘a more than usually penetrating criticism of The Great Illusion’ by R.G. Hawtrey, an economic adviser at the Treasury, who argued that, though generally on the right lines, the book had neglected the extent to which states sought not only welfare but also power. This last was a ‘relative’ (or zero-sum) commodity, so, in Hawtrey’s words: ‘Conflict is of the essence of the pursuit of power’. (Characteristically, Angell got this quotation, and indeed its author’s name, slightly wrong.) In describing this criticism as ‘penetrating’, Angell implied that his own magnum opus had failed to recognize that an improved share in the distribution of power could be obtained by military strength. However, he had not been persuaded that – contrary to his ‘illusion’ thesis – this enhanced relative power could be turned into substantive gain. Instead, he apparently feared that, though still analytically correct, The Great Illusion would simply be ignored by states in the grip of a psychological addiction to power for its own sake. In other words, Hawtrey had implied that economic rationality stood no chance of acceptance in a power-crazed international system. Yet because Angell was not yet able to articulate this point, he could not draw the obvious practical conclusion: that such power lusts could in principle be contained by a robustly deterrent system of collective security. So, instead of concluding his book on constructively internationalist lines – as a pioneering advocate of economic sanctions since 1914 and a member of the LNU’s executive committee since 1925 might have been expected to do – he ended it with a hundred-page ‘Part II: A Book of Cases’, in which recent talks and essays were desultorily recycled. Indeed, rather than offer a policy recommendation of any kind, he merely posed the question that had been at the back of his mind since the end of the war and was to be at its forefront over the next three and a half decades: how could the public be taught to ignore its primitive instincts and apply its common sense? It is puzzling that Angell came to admire the book so much.

The completion of The Unseen Assassins was postponed by the intrusion of current concerns. On 9 June 1931, finding a crumb of comfort in the fact that in a severe depression economic issues were no longer considered ‘sordid’, Angell signed a contract with J.M. Dent and Sons to deliver by 20 August a short work on unemployment. It was to be written jointly with Wright: that he could collaborate on an economic topic with a Liberal, even using the device of a dialogue between the co-authors at the end of certain chapters to permit a measure of disagreement, was a sign of his centripetal drift over the last ten years. Angell’s economic thinking had also become so down-to-earth since he had drafted his memorandum for the PLP and the government that, as Wright warned, he was in danger of appearing ‘slightly ridiculous’ if he gave the impression that he considered ‘the sovereign remedy’ for unemployment to be ‘a Home Marketing Board’. Their joint book therefore began abstractly by identifying a ‘badly co-ordinated division of labour’ as the cause of unemployment. It then argued at some length that, though communism had ‘come to stay’ in Russia, it ‘would simply not work in
Angell rejected public-works schemes as too costly, provoking some
dissent from Wright, who on partisan grounds defended the Liberal Yellow Book
that had proposed them. Both authors recognized that the gold standard was
malfunctioning because the United States had been acquiring, and then steriliz-
ing, a substantial part of the world’s gold reserves, with the result that ‘shiploads
of yellow metal’ had moved ‘from places where it could have served a useful
purpose to places where it is a nuisance and has to be hidden away’. Angell’s
journalism at this time, which was in considerable demand, made the same point.
On 28 July he informed the readers of Reynolds’s Illustrated News that the
problem was ‘at bottom a money crisis’ and thus could be tackled only ‘as a
world’. To the readers of the Daily Express that same day his message was:
‘We have not yet managed to manage gold. And we are apparently not yet efficient
and civilised enough in an economic sense to manage without it.’ But the core of
the Angell–Wright book remained the Home Marketing Board, though it was
now presented as an aspect of a wide-ranging ‘National Plan, involving cooper-
ation between a series of interlocking industries to supply the ascertainable needs
of the community’. The co-authors reconciled their conflicting party allegi-
ances by stressing that socialism and capitalism ‘fade imperceptibly into each
other’, there being in consequence ‘a broad neutral territory in which they are
compelled to operate together’. Their book was thus an early manifestation of
the ecumenical, centrist political approach that has been well described as ‘middle
opinion’.

Can Governments Cure Unemployment? was in proof when the financial crisis
of August 1931 transformed British politics. The alarmist report of the committee
to investigate public expenditure had triggered a run on the pound; but New
York financiers would provide loans only if unemployment benefit was reduced.
On the 23rd a large minority of the cabinet, including Henderson, refused
to accept this condition, thereby making it impossible for a divided Labour
administration to restore financial confidence. Originally intending to lead
his party into opposition, MacDonald was the following day persuaded by
King George V, in the interests of avoiding the devaluation of sterling, to stay on
with a few of his colleagues in a National Government composed also of leading
Conservatives and Liberals. The failure of the Labour leaders joining MacDonald’s
new cabinet, who included Snowden, to explain their actions led to their being
disowned by most Labour MPs, who took their party into opposition under
Henderson’s leadership.

Angell, who had spent 15–22 August 1931 in Birmingham directing another
Boeke conference, experienced divided loyalties on his return to London to
witness the fall of the Labour government: indeed he later viewed his response
as ‘vacillating, even pusillanimous’. He believed that MacDonald and Snowden
were partly responsible for Britain’s economic troubles by rejecting the reforms
advocated by him and others, but also that they had behaved prudently once the
sterling crisis began. On the morning of the 27th he shocked Mary Agnes
Hamilton, a member of the PLP’s consultative committee, by telling her that he
‘accepted the seriousness of the financial debacle… and felt that MacDonald
might be justified in what he had done’.\textsuperscript{337} Around this time, or so he later claimed, he was invited by MacDonald to be his parliamentary private secretary.\textsuperscript{338} Wright, who believed unemployment benefit had to be cut, pointed out that MacDonald needed twenty or so Labour MPs to follow him and that ‘if you are not one, I don’t see where they are to come from’.\textsuperscript{339} But Angell publicly described the National Government as ‘a dangerous makeshift’.\textsuperscript{340} And, although his later claim to have favoured ‘the principle of deficit budgeting, which Keynes had outlined’\textsuperscript{341} involved some wisdom after the event, he privately made clear to Wright on 4 September that, though accepting that Labour underestimated ‘the seriousness of the present situation’, he believed ‘with Keynes that economy is no permanent cure’ and that no rationalization of capitalism would ever be achieved if, ‘whenever finance gets into a mess’, all attempt at reform was suspended. Angell fantasized about ‘a sort of new Tory-Socialism – a combination of a few really enlightened Henry Fords setting about the socialisation of industry’, but in its absence admitted that he was merely ‘waiting’.\textsuperscript{342}

Being in the same undecided condition when the House of Commons reassembled on 8 September 1931, Angell abstained in that day’s vote of confidence in the National Government; and even though he voted four times with the Labour opposition the following day and was appointed to one of its committees, he made no secret of the fact that he had yet to determine his ultimate allegiance.\textsuperscript{343} Meanwhile, he and Wright added a ten-page section to \textit{Can Governments Cure Unemployment?}, which cited Keynes approvingly and argued that an international currency conference was more urgent than the world disarmament conference.\textsuperscript{344} Indeed, Angell warned in \textit{Reynold’s Illustrated News} that capitalism was ‘probably’ collapsing, for lack of ‘a scientific international money’.\textsuperscript{345}

By the time Angell made his seventh and, as it proved, final Commons speech on 15 September 1931 – a cogent attack on Winston Churchill, who had spoken just before him – he had taken a decision to remain on the Labour benches for the moment while keeping open his options in the longer term. He admitted that he had come close to crossing the floor of the House and ‘may do so yet’. His autobiography was inconsistently to give two ‘main’ or ‘determining’ reasons for ultimately staying put: suspicion of MacDonald’s ‘judgement in foreign affairs’; and fear of ‘censure … for failing to stand by old comrades’.\textsuperscript{346} But he told the Commons that all that had stopped him crossing the floor was a conviction that sterling’s difficulty was caused not by a temporary crisis of confidence but by the lack of an internationally managed currency, which meant that continued pressure on the National Government was needed in order ‘to keep up the psychology of crisis’ so that it tackled this structural problem. His speech also sounded a valedictory note, pointing out that during twenty-seven months on the back benches he had ‘not troubled the deliberations often’, and repeating for the record that he had been the only economist to predict the impossibility of reparations.\textsuperscript{347} The following day he was one of a group of concerned and individualistic MPs – others included John Buchan, at that time a somewhat detached Tory back-bencher, Oswald Mosley, who had launched his own New Party, and Eleanor Rathbone, who sat as an Independent – that discussed the
financial crisis with Keynes and the day afterwards with Henry Clay of the Bank of England.\textsuperscript{348}

Once it became apparent that, MacDonald’s earlier assurances to the contrary notwithstanding, the National Government would call a general election in the autumn of 1931, Angell had a third option: retirement from Westminster. On 18 September he informed Henderson of his conviction that he could ‘serve the party and yourself better outside Parliament than within’.\textsuperscript{349} The following day he met his constituency association: the Bradford press, having been excluded, reported its occurrence under the heading ‘The Silent North’.\textsuperscript{350} He was apparently urged by local activists to reconsider, but declined. On the 20th Britain was forced off the gold standard. Five days later \textit{The Times} announced Angell’s decision not to stand again. When the election was officially called eleven days later, his absence from the contest was attributed in Bradford to health considerations.\textsuperscript{351} His parliamentary career drifted to an anti-climactic end. On the 30th he contemplated putting down a question about the National Government’s inert response to ‘the dispute which has arisen between China and Japan in Manchuria’, but was privately persuaded by Anthony Eden, now a Foreign Office minister, that it would serve no purpose.\textsuperscript{352} Angell went into the division lobby for the last time on 20 October, still in support of Labour, missing the final week of the session because of ‘an obstinate dose of flu’ – perhaps psychosomatic. By then he had accepted the inevitability of tariffs, but hoped that they could be set in consultation with the countries that they would affect.\textsuperscript{354} To please the party and to help a friend, he had spoken at Coventry in what proved to be a hopeless cause: like so many of his colleagues Noel Baker was swept away in what Angell labelled ‘the Great Electoral Deluge’ of the 27th, which entrenched the National Government in power.\textsuperscript{355} Even Henderson was defeated, resulting in Lansbury’s elevation to the leadership of a depleted PLP. With Labour also losing all four Bradford seats, and polling only 28.2 per cent in his former constituency, it was evident that Angell himself had jumped from parliament before being pushed by the electorate.

Having largely withdrawn from domestic politics, he had time to ponder Japan’s aggression in Manchuria a month before, which was evidently a test for his internationalist principles. In his November 1931 supplement to \textit{Time & Tide} Angell made clear his desire ‘to give the League power’, by which he meant ‘some form of sanction which may make it worthwhile for litigants not to defy justice by being their own judges’, yet ‘not necessarily military power’.\textsuperscript{356} Right-wing hostility to Geneva and partiality towards Tokyo soon made him more outspoken. In the December supplement he expressed irritation at the fact that the League, though endorsed by almost all leading politicians, was being dogmatically denounced by the \textit{Daily Express}, and asked: ‘just what is the Beaverbrook authority for dismissing the views of these statesmen in that airy fashion?’\textsuperscript{357} By the end of the year Angell was branding as short-sighted the ‘support given to Japan, in her defiance of the League, by Conservative opinion in the West’ given that Japan’s aggression came ‘at a time when the whole of the East – indeed the whole of the “coloured” world – is asserting its determination to be free of Western domination’.\textsuperscript{358}
When on 7 December 1931 Angell spoke at Chatham House, he chose not to discuss contemporary events but to propound the educational ideas of his as yet unpublished The Unseen Assassins. He thus complained that, although the world had changed dramatically as a result of the interdependence that had developed ‘in the last seventy or eighty years’, schoolchildren were still being taught ‘languages which died a thousand years ago . . . the geographies of countries they will never see . . . the celestial movements of worlds they cannot imagine’, but ‘nothing’ about ‘the money in their pockets and what it means’. Because Europeans understood, in order to prevent disease, ‘that sewage must be kept out of drinking water (something that the East had not yet learnt)’, they were no less capable of grasping ‘those principles of social prophylaxis’ that would prevent the ‘scourges of war and economic chaos’. In particular, they should overcome their own tendency to ‘react instinctively against a strange idea’ and acquire ‘a grammar of the interpretation of facts’. However, apart from suggesting that the study of economics was essential, he gave little sign of knowing what his new syllabus would consist of.\(^{359}\)

In personal terms Angell found himself ‘happier outside Parliament’,\(^ {360}\) which, despite his relative inactivity there, had proved a strain when added to writing, lecturing, touring, editing, farming, and devising The Money Game. This last had been made more topical by the sterling crisis; and an indulgent BBC now invited him not only to give a radio talk about it but to enact the game on air, the players including Langdon-Davies and Wright – plugs that were timed well for the Christmas market.\(^ {361}\) Angell had set up another round of speaking engagements in the United States, and so departed, despite ‘rather disturbing ill-health’, in time to reach New York on 29 December 1931. Having travelled with the president of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, he told the American press that he had come to lecture ‘on behalf of Zionism’ as well as to promote his card game.\(^ {362}\) At the age of fifty-nine, after thirteen years of trying out the life of a party politician, he had reverted to that of a freelance pundit at a time when a rapidly deteriorating world situation was not only boosting public interest in his areas of specialization but causing his formerly diffuse thinking to converge upon liberal internationalism.

NOTES

2. AA, 233.
3. A to B. Langdon-Davies, 1 Sept. 1919: BSU. I owe this to G. Peter Winnington.
8. See Gannett’s memories from the late 1950s reproduced in Norman Angell by his Contemporaries, 132.
23. See for example, Labour Leader, 7 Aug. 1919, 3.
27. AA, 282–3.
28. A to H. Wright, 26 Aug. 1919: BSU.
32. ‘Meetings in Mr Norman Angell’s Rooms’: BSU box 30. One meeting took place on 11 Nov. 1919: BSU box 41.
33. A to J. Wedgwood, 23 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1920: BSU.
34. TT, 11 Dec. 1919, 17. TLS, 1 Jan. 1920, 10.
42. B.N. Langdon-Davies to G. Speechley, 14 Feb. 1920: BSU.
43. G. Speechley to A, 17 Feb. 1920, and reply, 18 Feb. 1920: BSU.
44. Wrench, Uphill, 178n.
Officers’ Course). Information about Richard Pennell Caesar Hawkins from Dr Ian Patterson, Fellow Librarian, Queens’ College, Cambridge.

47. A to H. Wright, 8 Mar. 1920: BSU.
51. As he later complained in A to G. Langelaan, n.d. [early 1925]: BSU.
52. A to Miss Wrench, 9 July 1920: letter in author’s possession.
54. Labour Leader, 16 Sept. 1920, 1.
56. A to H. Wright, 20 Oct. 1920: BSU.
57. NYT, 1 Nov. 1920, 27.
60. T&I, 2 May 1931, FAS, 3.
61. Angell, Fruits of Victory, 117.
63. A to H. Wright, 7 Jan. 1921: BSU.
65. A to H. Wright, 7 and 19 Jan. 1921: BSU.
66. A to J. Kneeshaw, 9 June 1921: BSU.
68. Angell, Fruits of Victory, xi, 7, 201, 280–1.
69. Foreign Affairs, Aug. 1921, literary supplement, ii.
70. Angell, Fruits of Victory, 336.
71. Ibid. 297.
72. Ibid. xii, 63, 66–72, 100, 300.
73. Ibid. 51, 82.
75. A to Northcliffe, 6 June 1921: Add MSS 62216.
76. A to H. Wright, 18 Nov. 1921: BSU.
78. A to J. Kneeshaw, 20 June 1921: BSU. The pamphlet does not survive.
79. A to M. Ellis, 12 Oct. 1921: BSU.
80. F.W. Rudland to A, 16 Nov. 1921 and reply 18 Nov. 1921: BSU.
81. A to H. Wright, 18 Nov. 1921: BSU.
82. W. Irwin, The Next War (New York, 1921), 68.
83. TT, 19 Dec. 1921, 8.
84. AA, 171.
85. Minutes, 22 Nov. 1921: DDC/1/2.
88. N. Angell, Co-operation and the New Social Conscience: An Address Delivered by Mr Norman Angell at a meeting held in Brighton on Whit-Tuesday, June 6th, 1922, in
connection with the 54th Annual Conference of the Co-operative Union (Manchester, 1922): BSU.
89. B. Webb to A, 28 Dec. 1921: BSU.
90. A to G. Murray, 2 Jan. 1922; A to G. Shakespeare, 3 Jan. 1922: BSU.
91. She recalled this encounter six years later in B. Forbes-Robertson Hale to A, 19 May 1928: BSU.
92. A (from Buffalo) to H. Wright, 26 Feb. [1922]: BSU.
93. NYT, 7 Apr. 1922, 21.
96. D. Robertson to A, 13 July and 19 Aug. 1922: BSU.
98. Ibid. 31, 33, 34.
99. Ibid. 81, 127.
102. A to K. Zilliacus, 28 Nov. 1923: BSU.
111. A to W.J. Bell (of Stockport), 5 Feb. 1923; A to J.C. Black (of Huddersfield), 4 May 1923: BSU.
112. W. Burrows to A, 4 May 1923, and reply, 5 May 1932: BSU.
116. AA, 286.
117. A to E. Wake, 16 Nov. 1923: BSU.
118. A to A. Rowntree, 14 Nov. 1923: BSU.
120. *Rossendale Free Press*, 3 Nov. 1923, 3, 6; 17 Nov. 1923, 4; 24 Nov. 1923, 1, 6, 11; 1 Dec. 1923, 10; 8 Dec. 1923, 6; 15 Dec. 1923, 8. ‘Reminiscences’, 169.
122. B. Forbes-Robertson Hale to A, 28 Dec. 1923: BSU.
123. G.W. Irons to J. Hilton, 11 Jan. 1924; A to Manager, Barclay’s Bank, Maldon, 14 Jan. 1924; Borough of Maldon to A, 27 Mar. 1924: BSU.


126. Discarded draft, "AA": BCU box 2.


129. Ibid., 8 Feb. 1924, 8–9; 29 Feb. 1924, 3, 21.

130. Ibid., 21 Mar. 1924, 9; 28 Mar. 1924, 8.


132. *New Leader*, 13 Apr. 1924, 8–9; 11 Apr. 1924, 8.

133. *Nation*, 12 Apr. 1923, 41.


135. E.D. Morel to A, 9 May 1924, and reply 14 May 1924: BSU.

136. Angell chaired the meeting on 26 Mar. 1924, but missed those of 30 Apr. 1924 to 17 June 1925 inclusive.


138. Angell later made three inaccurate claims about this episode: that his interview with the French premier preceded the Chequers meeting by several days; that in the course of it Herriot asked him – ‘not as coming from me, of course’ – to prepare MacDonald for the security proposal he would make there; and that Angell solicited an invitation to lunch at 10 Downing Street in order to present Herriot’s case in advance of the meeting with MacDonald at Chequers. See N. Angell, *Let The People Know* (New York, 1943), 85–8, and AA, 241–4.

139. ‘Note on Conversation with the P.M., June 18th, 1924’: BSU.

140. J.R. MacDonald to A, 16 June 1924: a facsimile of this letter appears in Norman Angell by his Contemporaries, 150.

141. ‘Note on Conversation with the P.M., June 18th, 1924’: BSU.

142. AA, 242.

143. ‘Note on Conversation with the P.M., June 18th, 1924’: BSU.


146. A to E.D. Morel, 3 July 1924: BSU.


150. J.R. MacDonald to A, 31 July 1924 (transcribed copy); A to A.W. Haycock, 10 May 1928: BSU.


152. Angell’s agreement to attend had been announced in *NYT*, 25 June 1924, 23.


155. A to E. Wrench, 10 July 1924: BSU. I. Neilsen to A, 3 Nov. 1924: Everard collection.

156. A to G. Langelaan, n.d. [early 1925]: BSU.


158. *NYT*, 16 Nov. 1924, II, 1–2.

160. A to I. Neilsen, 27 Jan. [1925]: BSU.
171. TT, 10 Nov. 1928, 10.
172. TT, 16 Feb. 1953, 3.
175. ACIQ memorandum no. 341 (Nov. 1925): BSU.
177. Reynolds’s, 6 Sept. 1931, 4.
180. A to B.N. Langdon-Davies, n.d. [1926]: BSU box 2. ‘Noel’ was Langdon-Davies’s middle name.
181. Angell, Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?, 31–2, 33–4.
182. Ibid. 44, 67, 70–1.
183. A to M. Kelsey, 5 and 25 Nov. 1925: BSU.
186. L. Trotsky, Where is Britain going? (1926), vi, 61.
187. Angell, Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?, 53.
188. Ibid. 46–51, 104–6, 143, 175.
190. Angell, Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?, 9, 10.
191. Sunday Worker, 18 July 1926, 8.
192. C. Wright to A, 21 July 1926: BSU.
194. New Leader, 30 July 1926, 7.
198. Angell, Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?, 57.
200. Angell, 175, 177, 206.


204. N. Angell, ‘What’s Happening in Europe’ (address to the Chicago division of the Illinois State Teachers’ Association, 19 Feb. 1927): cutting in BSU.

205. I. Neilsen Robertson to A, 18 Oct. 1926: BSU.


207. A [‘c/o W. Feakins, Times Building, New York’] to H. Wright, n.d. [Nov. 1926]: BSU.


211. John Bull, 5 Nov. 1927, 15.

212. NYT, 16 Sept. 1927, 2. TT, 19 Sept. 1927, 10.


214. TT, 16 Nov. 1927, 12.


217. J. Callon to A, 26 Oct. 1927; A to J. Callon, 6 Nov. [1927]: BSU.

218. A to J. Callon, ‘Nov 19 (Despatched 24th)’ [1927], 10 Jan. [1928]: BSU.

219. G. Toulinmin to A, 30 Mar. 1928: BSU.


221. B. Forbes-Robertson Hale to A, 1 Jan. and 21 Apr. 1928: BSU.

222. A to A.W. Haycock, 10 May 1928: BSU.

223. A to W. Miles, n.d. [Nov. 1928]: BSU.

224. A to D. Robertson, 10 May 1928; A to C. Harold, 30 May 1928: BSU.


226. Marrin mentions an ‘affair’ in which ‘they enjoyed overnight visits alone on Northey Island’: Sir Norman Angell, 261 (note 59).

227. B. Forbes-Robertson Hale to A, 18 and 19 May, 5 and Oct. 1928: BSU.

228. A to M. Kelsey, 5 June 1928: BSU.


230. A to H. Fyfe, 5 June 1928; I. Neilsen Robertson to A, 8 May 1928: BSU.

231. To I. Neilsen Robertson, 21 Dec. 1928: BSU.


233. Ceadel, Semi-detached Idealists, 266.

234. A to H. Wright, 4 June 1928: BSU.


244. AA, 237.
247. AA, 318.
249. A to K. Zilliacus, 5 June 1929: BSU.
251. H. Dalton to A, 2 July 1929, and reply, 3 July 1929: BSU.
252. See Reynolds’s Illustrated News, 4 Aug. 1929, 2; 2 Nov. 1929, 2; 26 Jan. 1930, 2; 4 May 1930, 2.
253. A to C. Dehn, 5 June 1929: BSU.
255. A to S. Cocks, 5 June 1929: BSU.
256. AA, 312. A to M. Pease, 19 July 1929; and other material in box 28: BSU.
257. TT, 12 July 1929, 14.
260. TT, 30 Aug. 1929, 11.
261. Foreign Affairs, Sept. 1929, 185.
269. W. Ayles to A, 31 Dec. 1929: BSU.
272. A to P. Snowden, 31 Jan. 1930, and reply, 1 Feb. 1930: BSU.
276. Noel-Baker papers, 5/144: a reference I owe to Thomas R. Davies. See also D. Mitrany to A, 4 June 1930: BSU.
277. Yorkshire Observer, 28 Feb. 1930: BSU.
278. AA, 245.
288. J.R. MacDonald to A, 2 May 1930: BSU.
289. See, for example, C.R. Buxton to A, 14 May 1930: BSU.
290. Draft letter, n.d. [late Apr. 1930]: BSU.
291. A to A. Pickles, 22 Sept. 1930: BSU.
292. A. Fish to A, 9 Jan. 1930: BSU.
293. *TLS*, 24 July 1930, 600.
294. When this biographer read it in 2005, it was still on the Economics shelves of the Bodleian Library’s reading room for Philosophy, Politics, and Economics undergraduates.
297. AA, 319.
298. H. Wright to A, 14 July 1930: BSU.
301. N. Angell, ‘The New Imperialism and the Old Protectionism’, *International Affairs* 10 (1931), 69–83 at 77. He had been elected to the council at the RIIA’s annual general meeting on 30 Oct. 1928: information from M. Bone.
302. C. Addison to A, 19 Dec. 1930: BSU.
307. Copies can be found in many of his friends’ papers, for example, Cecil papers, Add MSS 51140.

309. Halifax Weekly Courier, 14 Feb. 1931: BSU.


312. Ibid. 249, cols. 875–80 (9 Mar. 1931).

313. Ibid. 250, cols. 543–70 (26 Mar. 1931).

314. Ibid. 252, cols. 403, 969–70 (6 and 12 May 1931); 254, cols. 932–8 (29 June 1931).


316. He was present on 28 Jan. and 3 June 1931, his two previous attendances having been on 1 June 1927 and 5 Mar. 1930: ACIQ minutes, Harvester microfiche.


319. N. Angell et al., *What Would Be the Character of a New War?* (1932 edn), 341–53.


325. Ibid. 18, 34, 36–7, 60.

326. Ibid. 143–50.

327. Ibid. 169, 172, 175.


329. Té-Té, 6 June 1931: FAS, 7.


331. Ibid. 96–7.

332. Ibid. 127.

333. Ibid. 134.

334. Ibid. 141.


336. AA, 256.


339. H. Wright to A, 30 Aug. 1931: BSU.


342. A to H. Wright, 4 Sept. 1931: BSU.

343. ‘National Government, 8 Sept. 1931, 9 Sept.’: BSU. See also AA, 257–9.


346. AA, 257, 259. See also ‘Reminiscences’, 180–1, 191.
349. A to A. Henderson, 18 Sept. 1931: BSU.
352. A. Eden to A, 30 Sept. 1931: BSU.
353. A to E. Wrench, 26 Oct. 1931: BSU.
357. Te−T, 5 Dec. 1931: FAS, 32.
360. ‘Reminiscences’, 182.
361. TT, 27 Nov. 1931, 6; 9 Dec. 1931, 10.
Angell had shaken off the shackles of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) only to indenture himself to the League of Nations Union (LNU), in the process finding an intellectual resting place as a largely orthodox liberal internationalist. Despite the temptation to make Northey ‘a retreat in a mad world’, he soon discovered that ‘the madder it gets, the less I seem to be able to retreat’. The biggest folly at first was the worldwide intensification of protectionism (a form of which, imperial preference, even Britain adopted in October 1932), nationalism, and fascism, which impelled Angell to keep asking his fellow citizens: ‘Why do we suppose anarchy will answer in the international field when we know it will not between individuals?’ Though aware of the accusation ‘that I push too far the analogy of individual action and national action’, he never held back from implying that the order achieved in the domestic sphere could be reproduced in the international one.

In spite of an ‘ambition . . . to produce a work that will do for our educational system what The Great Illusion in its own field has done for political thought’, as he put it to an interviewer in 1936, he finally understood that, at least in the short term, international order could not be achieved merely by teaching the irrationality of aggression. At last the penny dropped as to why he had started having doubts about the continued usefulness of his ‘illusion’ propaganda: it assumed that militarists and nationalists could be reasoned into restraining themselves, whereas he no longer believed that this would happen in time to prevent another conflagration. In the short term, therefore, either the carrot or the stick would have to be deployed to forestall international conflict; and Angell ruled out the former. Despite having claimed during 1920/1 that while trying to prevent the First World War he should have given ‘greater emphasis . . . to some definite scheme for assuring Germany’s necessary access to resources’, he did not now propose to buy off potential aggressors through the policy of concessions that idealists began labelling ‘peaceful change’ and realists ‘appeasement’. Indeed, the last evident effect on his thinking of his ‘illusion’ thesis, with its denial that territorial acquisition could increase prosperity, was to steel him against the claims of the ‘Have-Not’ nations that they needed to expand on account of their economic plight. So he plumped decisively for the opposite policy of upholding international order through a deterrent system of collective security, tirelessly propounding it not only in a much increased output of books and
articles, but also in innumerable talks for the LNU, whose 3,000 local branches proved a welcome, though also modest and hard-earned, source of speaking fees. Although with hindsight Angell identified the Manchuria crisis as the moment to have wielded the big stick of international sanctions, military if necessary, he and his fellow League supporters were much more restrained in their calls for collective security during 1932–5 than they later cared to remember. Their reticence was a product of two considerations. The first was the need to create a favourable climate of opinion for the world disarmament conference, which finally assembled in Geneva under Henderson’s chairmanship on 2 February 1932. To demand robust international action against Japan risked undermining this long-awaited opportunity by allowing opponents of disarmament to claim that existing defence capacities had to be retained in order to support the League against Covenant-breakers. The second was the British public’s aversion to another military conflict: Hitler’s coming to power on 30 January 1933 and his withdrawal of Germany from the conference and the League eight and a half months later were both widely greeted by a ‘never again!’ reflex that was variously expressed as isolationism, as pacifism, or as war-resistance. This last was the leftist policy of a general strike to restrain a capitalist government from fighting in what was assumed to be an incorrigibly imperialist cause: it drew its inspiration from not only the international crisis but also the domestic upsurge in Marxist thinking that had occurred in disillusioned reaction to the failure of the second Labour government.

Such essentially negative sentiment began to abate early in 1934; but Angell and the LNU prudently continued to play down the need for military sanctions to deter the rising militarist states, and offered two ways, one maximal and one minimal, in which the League could prevail without risking war. The maximal way was to abolish all national aviation as part of a multilateral agreement that would also create a League air force: under such conditions aggression would be nipped in the bud by an overwhelmingly powerful international police force. The LNU contained many enthusiasts for this proposal; and Angell intermittently advocated it, most emphatically in his final touches to a book written during the spring of 1934. Yet predictably the handing of the decisive instrument of armed force to the League proved to be both utopian and contentious: the world disarmament conference failed to produce a deal of any kind, let alone one of such colossal ambition; and in any case the Conservative members of the LNU’s executive committee, who were crucial to its status as an all-party body, insisted that to equip Geneva with its own bombing force would be to transform an intergovernmental organization with limited powers into a superstate, which was unacceptable to them on principle. Therefore the LNU’s leaders, including Angell, normally relied on the minimal alternative. This was to assert that economic sanctions alone would most likely prevent or punish aggression even by a state that had yet to disarm, and would certainly do so if a general reduction of armaments were achieved. With Angell’s full connivance, collective security was thus generally expounded during the first half of the 1930s as a magic middle way, a policy that could enforce justice, unlike isolationism, pacifism, or war-resistance,
yet could probably do so without requiring a full military commitment by the League’s member states. Only belatedly did Angell recognize that to have thus presented the ‘League and collective security’ as ‘the alternative to arms and force’, rather than as ‘the means by which . . . arms and force can be made effective for defense’, had served only to perpetuate the ‘confusion which bedevilled sound judgement’ at this time.7

It was the triple crisis of March–July 1936 – Hitler’s remilitarization of the Rhineland, Mussolini’s annexation of Abyssinia, and Franco’s rebellion in Spain – which discredited this fallacious assumption that collective security could be provided almost painlessly. Each side of the British political spectrum now had to face up to a stark choice between containing and accommodating fascism, both of which strategies had their dangers; and each split on the issue, creating unnatural foreign-policy partnerships. On the containment side of the debate, Angell and other LNU leaders stood by collective security even though this now patently required both rearmament and an alliance of the status-quo powers – a gamble on military deterrence that risked another world war. They found themselves working alongside Conservative anti-appeasers, led by Winston Churchill, Angell’s former bogey and a sometime critic of the League, who by 1936 was astutely justifying his campaign for an enhanced defence effort in terms of internationalism rather than of simple patriotism, thereby drawing close to the LNU. Angell instinctively met Churchill half way by where possible making the case for collective security using realist terms such as ‘defence’ and ‘alliances’. On the accommodationist side of the debate, many former League supporters abandoned collective security for either peaceful change or in extreme cases pacifism – a gamble on conciliation that risked German hegemony over Europe. They found themselves collaborating with Conservative followers of Neville Chamberlain (prime minister June 1937 – May 1940), who advocated appeasement on realist grounds. The unspoken hope of the accommodationist coalition was that Germany’s demands did not extend beyond the incorporation of all its nationals into the Reich and could therefore be satisfied by limited border changes. Angell and his fellow advocates of containment fought a losing battle for public support until 15 March 1939, when Hitler’s seizure of Prague signalled that his goals were not merely pan-German but imperialist too and potentially limitless for that reason. In consequence, support for peaceful change and appeasement subsided; and war was widely understood from that moment to be inevitable, in the absence of a political miracle, its eventual outbreak six months later constituting something of an anti-climax.

Despite becoming both a pillar of the liberal-internationalist establishment – a third member, alongside Cecil and Murray, of the LNU’s secular trinity – and a trusted member of Churchill’s pro-containment cabal, Angell remained capable of idiosyncrasy. He was one of the few non-communists to join the World Committee against War and Fascism, a fellow-travelling organization of limited credibility. He was also involved in the private discussions at All Souls College, Oxford, notoriously a haunt of appeasers, of a small group that attempted to find common ground between the Chamberlainites, who accepted that there were
limits to what could be conceded to the dictators, and the Churchillians, who accepted that minor concessions might have to be offered in order to legitimate a policy of standing firm on major issues. And most bizarrely, he still professed to support collective security only as a second best, because his preferred policy of pacifism was politically a non-starter. This allowed Helena Swanwick, of all people, to publish an attack in 1935 on ‘Norman Angell’s argument that a disarmed people will not suffer, if surrounded by armed enemies’,\(^8\) which must have been extremely perplexing to a public striving to follow the debate for and against collective security. Here was Angell, a leading supporter of that policy, and therefore an advocate of the last-resort use of military force, being exposed as in principle a non-resister. And the person thereby parading her own disbelief in pacifism was collective security’s most voluble critic, an isolationist so extreme as to be often mistaken for a non-resister herself: indeed, Angell went so far as to call Swanwick ‘not only a Pacifist, but an absolutist of the most unbending, uncompromising kind’.\(^9\) Angell had got into this pickle through a continuing inability to square the pro-defence and non-resisting strands in his thinking, and was to suffer acute intellectual difficulties between the spring of 1937 and the outbreak of war, during which time he qualified his supposed support for pacifism without as yet putting his finger on why in reality he preferred national self-defence. But although in certain respects a continuing source of confusion, Angell was an unflinching critic of fascism and an unwavering supporter of the LNU and Churchill.

\[\text{On 3 January 1932, shortly after Angell arrived in New York for the first visit on which he could exploit his status as a knight of the realm, his eldest brother Tom died while holidaying in the Far East, his entrepreneurial flair having ensured that the agricultural interests he now bequeathed to his son Eric were in excellent shape despite the depression. This was the first of only four, comparatively short, American tours Angell was to make during this decade, two that year and one each in 1933 and 1935, compared with seven, mainly longer ones during the 1920s – a reduction that reflected both the economic slump and his worsening health. Angell spoke dutifully in support of the impending disarmament conference at Geneva, but told journalists of his intention, as soon as his lectures were delivered, to spend more time on his island, build a light and airy house there, and write just ‘one more book’, which would be on the defects of popular education.\(^{10}\) He projected himself as rising stoically above a veteran campaigner’s physical problems: after making a radio broadcast on 24 January he informed one of his American woman friends that he was suffering ‘sub-acute appendicitis’ yet was fulfilling his engagements.\(^{11}\) He initially complained to the readers of \textit{Time & Tide} that the United States had succumbed to ‘a fit of isolationism and xenophobia as severe as any that I can recall the country going through’, though because of the economic crisis ‘The Banker’ had replaced ‘The European’ as the principal public scapegoat.\(^{12}\) But soon Washington’s refusal to recognize Japanese...\]
claims on Chinese territory made him less critical of it, as he realized that in respect of the Far East its approach was ‘in fact more interventionist than that of the chief members of the League’.\(^\text{13}\)

The visit culminated in a major dinner in his honour at the Waldorf-Astoria on 18 February 1932, to celebrate *The Unseen Assassins*, which had received a better reception on both sides of the Atlantic than any of his books since *The Fruits of Victory*.\(^\text{14}\) The dinner’s sponsors included Helen Keller and Senator Burton K. Wheeler; and among the diners were John Dewey and Henry Morgenthau. In his speech to this distinguished gathering Angell condemned public opinion for so often preferring ‘the policies of ruin’ to ‘the policies of salvation’.\(^\text{15}\) Later, reflecting upon this tour, he was to conclude that right-wing opinion was undergoing the same ‘metamorphosis’ in the United States as in Britain: those ‘who had heretofore derided pacifism’ were now declaring ‘League intervention or common action by the Powers utterly unacceptable because it carries a remote possibility of ultimate military action’. He baited such conservatives by arguing that their policy of inaction in respect of Japanese aggression ‘would amount in fact to a policy of national non-resistance’. Yet he could not resist inserting his customary but confusing claim that, given ‘a very great change in national feeling’, such a policy of pacifism ‘might work’.\(^\text{16}\)

Having sailed for home on the morrow of his Waldorf-Astoria celebration, 19 February 1932,\(^\text{17}\) Angell duly turned his attention to his island, which had failed to pay its way as a farm yet might instead become a retreat for a writer on the verge of retirement. He began to construct a house next to the cottage, acting as his own architect and clerk of works. His wooden-tower-on-stilts design was in less than a year to result in the ‘large room that is all windows’ that he had described in advance to American journalists.\(^\text{18}\) Its distinctiveness helped Northey attract regular journalistic attention in the course of the decade: later that year, for example, Gilbert Murray’s son Basil wrote a feature on ‘England’s Queerest Island’ for the *Evening Standard*, claiming success for its Spartina-grass experiment, and noting that its owner did not need a licence to drive on his two miles of private road.\(^\text{19}\)

It was not merely because he preferred Northey to Westminster that in early March 1932 Angell declined reinstatement as Labour’s candidate for Bradford North:\(^\text{20}\) another reason was that he was still flirting with MacDonald’s breakaway party, and was to do so for another year. In mid-March he was asked by Clifford Allen, whose redirection of his loyalties from the ILP to the National Government had led to his ennoblement as Lord Allen of Hurtwood, to host a private gathering of progressives who might be induced to support the National Labour Party. Angell duly set up such an occasion, and invited Herbert Morrison, who despite initially sympathizing with MacDonald, had found the prime minister’s decision to lead the National Government into a general election a ‘shattering blow’, and so would not cooperate.\(^\text{21}\) On a no-commitment basis Angell also attended National Labour’s executive committee in Oxford in early May, and contributed to its *News-Letter*.\(^\text{22}\) And around this time Allen apparently hinted that Angell could himself expect to go to the House of Lords if he did the right thing: some years later in a note describing the formation of the National Government, Angell recorded that the National Labour peer had expressed the
aspiration that ‘I too would soon be a member of the “Senate”, as he was sure Mac hoped. It was only afterwards in my usual esprit de l’escalier that I saw this was Mac’s way of offering me a peerage.’

Despite this blandishment, Angell did not in the end forsake the Labour cause, though he remained willing to collaborate with members of other parties, sometimes in ways of which Labour’s leaders disapproved. His loyalty was in part policy-related: during the 1930s he still saw himself as ‘a “planner” as opposed to a non-planner’; and he appreciated Labour’s majority support for the League, despite dissent from its radical-isolationist, pacifist, and war-resisting minorities. But it had a substantial personal element, reflecting the fact that Barbara Hayes resumed as his secretary in 1932, having taken a diploma at the London School of Economics, and increasingly became his companion. A forceful tomboy, thirty-eight years his junior, whom Angell always introduced as his niece, ‘the plump little lassie’, as a political associate in Bradford described her, was never taken for a mistress even when she travelled with him and stayed under his roof. They formed a strong bond, exchanging intense letters, and each year celebrating ‘The Anniversary’ of their initial collaboration, though this was in large part because Angell understood her to need constant reassurance of this kind. Lacking good career prospects, showing symptoms of manic depression, and perhaps also uncertain as to her sexual orientation, Barbara needed him for the employment, status, and emotional stability he could provide, even though he was a self-absorbed workaholic with many female admirers of whom she at times became jealous. Angell needed her less, being something of a loner since the failure of his marriage: he claimed to need a ‘daily bath of solitude’, and – in an unguarded moment – to have ‘never been very close to relatives’, whom at times he found ‘rather a nuisance’. But he appreciated her efficient support and ability to provide a sympathetic ear after some of his former counsellors disappeared from the scene. Perhaps too Barbara’s psychological vulnerability touched the same sympathetic nerve in him that Beatrice Cuvellier’s had when she was of a similar age. For whatever reason, he showed great patience in the face of Barbara’s emotional demands and mood swings, and, in an effort to secure her future, was to establish a commercial agency, Lecture Management Ltd, which offered services to a wide range of speakers during the last three years of peace. He also respected Barbara’s political activism and commitment to progressive causes. She was secretary of the Labour association for the London University seat, and would have strongly disapproved if her ‘uncle’ had left the party.

Barbara also became co-secretary of her local LNU youth group in Finchley, where she then lived with her parents, which may help to explain Angell’s dedication to that organization from the spring of 1932 onwards. What he brought to the LNU was a special enthusiasm for expounding basic principles – that all disputes be arbitrated, and that collective action be taken against states that refused this – rather than a special knowledge of international hot spots or League procedures. Having announced in *The Unseen Assassins* that general understanding was more important in the international sphere than particular expertise, he was less distracted than many of his compatriots by the undeniable
disorder in China, which Japan had invoked to justify its seizure of Manchuria. Instead, he blamed both ‘public opinion’ and ‘not a few editors of newspapers’ for failing to grasp ‘the first principle of the League’, and insisted: ‘Whether Japan has been wronged by China is not the issue. The issue is whether Japan shall be judge in the case.’ Although loyally supporting the world disarmament conference as a peace-movement priority, he increasingly regarded the reduction of armaments as an incidental consequence of collective security rather than as an independent solution to the problem of war. During the spring and summer he obediently put his name to disarmament statements on behalf of the LNU and the National Peace Council, but preferred to emphasize collective responsibility for upholding international law, and welcomed America’s refusal to recognize territorial gains achieved by aggression, thereby prompting Murray’s approbatory observation: ‘If only this Disarmament crisis were over we ought to devote ourselves to preaching that doctrine: the keynote of the League is not Peace but Solidarity.’ When asked early in September 1932 to produce a leaflet for the National Peace Council on the cost of armaments, Angell in his first draft revealed his sympathy for the maximal version of collective security: he suggested that military spending could best be reduced by handing all weapons over to the League. This embarrassed the National Peace Council, a coordinating body that dared not offend its pacifist affiliates by endorsing a coercive League, so Angell produced a second draft, which found a more oblique way to put his argument that disarmament was parasitic upon the provision of collective security.

In his independent journalism he was freer to speak his mind. In September 1932 he thus berated Beaverbrook not only for his isolationism in respect of Europe but also for his belief that imperial preference could construct an economic bloc powerful enough for Britain to go it alone, given that even the strongest economic unit of all, the United States, was currently afflicted ‘by every problem that the smallest nation has to face’. Angell diagnosed British opinion as dithering among three choices: isolationism in respect of Europe, combined however with a strengthening of links to either the empire or the United States; engagement with Europe on a traditional, balance-of-power basis; or engagement with both Europe and the wider world through the League’s system of collective security. He strongly advocated the last, but once again clouded his case by arguing that, were isolationism to be preferred, it should take the form of outright ‘non-resistance’: such a policy, ‘if applied, would be effective for national defence’, even though lack of public support ensured that it ‘will not be applied’. He also adopted a minimalist view of collective security in respect of the Manchuria crisis, defining the alternative to a policy of ‘No sanctions of any kind’ as being ‘energetic action by the League to the extent at least of diplomatic sanctions, and the hint of economic’.

Angell had told American journalists that his ‘one more book’ would be on education, and subsequently assured Laura Conkling Huyck, an internationalist from Albany, New York, with whom he had struck up a warm and uncomplicated friendship: ‘I really have something to say about education, I want to say it . . .’ Yet he was drawn to easier or more immediate work instead. Early in the
autumn of 1932 he agreed to produce a new version of *The Great Illusion* for Heinemann,\(^{37}\) which had not touched any of his work for seventeen years. On 30 September Angell took part in an LNU deputation that lobbied the prime minister about an increasingly deadlocked world disarmament conference, and three days later addressed the Publicity Club – a by-product of his continuing labours for the LNU’s publicity committee – being described by Beverley Nichols, a fashionable young journalist and pacifist with whom he shared the platform, as ‘a little man who had thin, restless hands and a tired smile’.\(^{38}\) However, Angell drew the line at Murray’s suggestion that he take over as editor of *Headway*,\(^{39}\) partly because of commitments he had made in North America.

Angell arrived in New York on 25 October 1932 for his second speaking tour of the year. He told the press that its purpose was ‘to arraign… the present world system of education’; and indeed, given the difficulty he was to experience in developing his educational theme beyond a few generalities, the one-hour lecture was the safest format for exploring it. He took up more topical issues too. Witnessing Franklin D. Roosevelt’s victory in November and guessing correctly that the President-elect would not cancel Europe’s war debts, Angell offered the ingenious suggestion that Britain repay in kind what it owed, by constructing ships for the American navy, and was gratified when even the *Chicago Tribune* concurred. No less pleasing was an offer by a former winner, Jane Addams, to sponsor him for the following year’s Nobel Peace Prize. On this trip he encountered the new buzzword ‘technocracy’, signed a contract with Putnam’s for an American edition of his updated *The Great Illusion*, and took part in a Foreign Policy Association luncheon discussion that was later published, before sailing from New York on Christmas eve.\(^{40}\)

On reaching home at new year, Angell found acute concern as to how France’s continued insistence on security could be reconciled with Germany’s demand for equality of armaments. He attended informal National Labour discussions of this subject at 10 Downing Street on 9, 16, and 24 January 1933, discovering that Lord Allen of Hurtwood wanted him ‘to give a few coffee parties in the Temple to thrash out the sanctions matter’ – in other words, to persuade opinion-formers that only an effective system of collective security could pave the way for a disarmament agreement. Angell noted that MacDonald was now ‘very cordial’ towards him but less so towards Allen, who for his part had been alienated by the prime minister’s visceral dislike of the LNU in general and of Murray in particular.\(^{41}\) Angell continued to attend private meetings with MacDonald and his close colleagues over the next three months,\(^{42}\) after which he lost any inclination to join National Labour, a bandwagon that had evidently failed to roll.

Among Angell’s many commitments in January 1933 the most exacting was to give that year’s Halley Stewart lectures at Faringdon Hall in London, doing so ‘extempore from notes’ despite being expected shortly to deliver a text for publication. His five offerings in this high-profile series purported to give ‘the reasons which prevent the ordinary man from seeing the simplest, the most fundamental of economic and social truths’, yet had little new to say. Taking as his starting point once more the ability of western societies to solve sanitary
problems that still baffled their eastern counterparts, Angell again argued that the causes of social and economic ills were ‘not inherently more difficult to see than that microbic theory of disease’. Yet westerners still clung to certain tenets, such as ‘that each state shall be his own judge of his own rights’, which were as disastrous in the political field as ignorance of the basic principles of hygiene was in the medical field. His thinking had progressed since his Chatham House address of fourteen months before only to the extent of abandoning the idea that compulsory economic instruction was the key. In its place he merely recommended the need through the general teaching of social and related studies to give scholars a lively sense (a) of the dangerous antisocial side of human nature as well as its great social potentialities; (b) of the way in which man has used his intelligence increasingly to shape his impulse to social ends; (c) of the essential insecurity, vulnerability, precariousness and imperfection of human society; and (d) to make the whole process a means of developing the skill for seeing the meaning of facts, of drawing the socially useful conclusions from them.  

Much less onerous than giving these lectures was producing a ‘revised edition’ of his eleven-year-old monograph *The Press and the Organisation of Society*, which a small Cambridge-based press was to bring out early the following month. All he did by way of revision was to excise most of the concluding sections, in which he had predicted ill-treatment by right-wing newspapers of a future Labour government and set out his ‘Buy the Labour daily’ scheme. These cuts must have brought home to him how many ideas and aspirations he had jettisoned since 1922, though his general concern with factors distorting rational public discourse remained as strong as ever.

Also in January 1933 Angell’s supporters took up Jane Addams’s suggestion about the Nobel Peace Prize. At the critical moment he discovered from a friend to whom it had been sent for review that a history of the prize had recently been published by the director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute, Ragnvald Moe, in which he was compared unfavourably with Jean de Bloch, and dismissed as ‘a popular journalist’ rather than ‘an academic economist’ or ‘a savant’. Partly as a result of Moe’s disparagement of the leading candidate, no prize was announced that year. Angell had therefore to be re-nominated the following January, as will be seen, before the prize for 1933 could be given to him retrospectively, at the same time as Arthur Henderson’s award for the current year was announced. Angell’s standing with the Nobel committee might have been irrevocably damaged had he become embroiled, as he so nearly did, in the ‘King and Country’ controversy. On 9 February 1933, just eleven days after Hitler became German chancellor, the Oxford Union resolved by a large majority: ‘That this House will in no circumstances fight for its King and Country.’ Mainly because of its timing and a crass overreaction by some right-wing old Oxonians, this innocently provocative debate provoked national outrage, and, albeit without a shred of evidence, was later blamed by some conservatives for convincing the new Nazi regime that Britain was not an adversary to be reckoned with. The invited speaker, the exuberant London University philosopher C.E.M. Joad, who interpreted the
resolution in a pacifist sense, had been only the fifth choice for that role. Angell had been the first (followed by Beverley Nichols, Bertrand Russell, and the Marxist convert John Strachey), but had declined, on account of a prior engagement, with the observation: ‘I might have had to modify the resolution a little, but as a piece of gymnastics would have liked to have talked to it, just as it stands.’ Angell had of course proved himself an effective debater when carrying the day at the Cambridge and Oxford Unions two decades previously; and although he would have interpreted the ‘King and Country’ resolution as essentially a rejection of nationalist wars only, his propensity to claim a personal belief in non-resistance might have muddled this intended message. In other words, by successfully proposing an ostensibly pacifist and highly controversial resolution, he might have made himself too contentious for the Norwegian Nobel Institute, aware of its director’s intellectual reservations, ever to make him a laureate.

Angell subsequently made a number of references to the ‘King and Country’ controversy, and got to know the president of the Oxford Union at the time, F.M. Hardie, well enough for the latter to write his first entry for the Dictionary of National Biography. But he never commented on his near-involvement in the debate, perhaps because intensive lecturing across Britain during much of February and March 1933 drove it from his mind. At Chatham House on 21 February he spoke about ‘American democracy and the new problems’. At Nottingham University on 17 March he gave a Montague Burton lecture in which, after attacking both protectionism and the view that capitalism caused war, he insisted that it was ‘better that power, if you must have power, should be in the hands of the judge, than that it should be in the hands of the rival litigants’. However, in line with the LNU’s minimalist approach at that time he argued that this did not imply ‘an obligation to send your boys to fight in distant territories’, because ‘no nation will in the long run persist in a course of action which isolates it diplomatically’. Indeed, an unofficial yet effective economic boycott was already taking place as a result of the Manchurian crisis: ‘Japan cannot borrow money; she cannot go into the capitals of the world and raise loans. The penalty is not formal or legal; it does not need to be; it is not the result of aggressive pronouncements. But it operates.’ He was also badgered by Beverley Nichols to provide questions to be put to a prominent critic of the League for a pacifist book, Cry Havoc!, which Nichols was producing on the back of the ‘Oxford Resolution’, as the ‘King and Country’ motion was starting to be called. Angell agreed, while pointing out that they ‘would not put the case for pacifism, but rather for the League solution; for internationalism’. Cry Havoc! duly included Angell’s internationalist questions, along with a clumsily curt reply to them from Beaverbrook, and went on to make a considerable splash.

As the world situation deteriorated during these early months of 1933, Angell admitted that ‘one’s mind turns naturally these days back to 1914’. He discussed with Harold Wright the remarkable crossover of opinions that had occurred since that time, when the two of them had been neutralists and their conservative opponents interventionists: ‘Today it is we who favour “commitment”, and they who hold in horror any notion of participation.’ Angell now condemned
isolationism as counterproductive because in practice it meant ‘not absence of commitment but the type of drifting commitment which diplomats can concoct in secret’ and which had resulted in British involvement in the last war. Indeed, he courageously defended Britain’s League and Locarno commitments, and wrote numerous articles criticizing those like Beaverbrook who wanted to ditch them on the grounds that they would draw the country into a Franco-German quarrel. In the *News-Chronicle* on 16 March, for example, Angell insisted: ‘We must be prepared to defend not France, but the law; or to defend France, if you wish, through the law.’ He was therefore an obvious choice for a study group on international sanctions set up by the Royal Institute of International Affairs: in urging him to join it, Noel Baker argued on 23 March that ‘the feeling against war is so strong in England that something will happen, either she will go isolationist or she may be brought to accept a real Sanctions policy’, and fervently prayed for the latter outcome.

Making an early stand against attempts to propitiate the Nazi regime, Angell criticized those whose response was to demand a conference to bring about treaty revision, pointing out that this was ‘infinitely more difficult’ to achieve than disarmament, a subject on which no progress was being made.

When on 1 April the LNU’s executive committee discussed whether to endorse collective security in its maximal version, a League air force, he was one of those who thought it should, thereby infuriating the leading Conservative present, Austen Chamberlain.

Angell also made a very rare appearance at that month’s meeting of Labour’s advisory committee on international questions in order to support Noel Baker and the sanctionist cause.

While keeping up with his journalism, lecturing, and committee work Angell had also been wrestling with two substantial texts. He needed to turn his Halley Stewart lecture-notes into a short book, entitled *From Chaos to Control*, which, given its educational subject matter, was inherently difficult. He also had to deliver *The Great Illusion* 1933 to publishers on both sides of the Atlantic. He had assumed, as he confessed to Mrs Conkling Huyck on 25 March, that the second of these tasks would be relatively simple, but found that the old book would not really give the message that I wanted to give about the present crisis; and the crises have been developing so rapidly that no sooner had I got the emphasis right for one condition of affairs, than conditions would change and I would feel the emphasis to be all wrong. And thus the thing went on hopelessly for a month or two, and I got almost into a state of hysteria, with a good deal of other work coming in between and interrupting.

Though stressful, this re-engagement with his *magnum opus*, so soon after realizing that his thinking had reversed itself since his neutrality campaign, enabled him to understand that it constituted a very limited guide to the current international situation. He began by noting what it still had to offer: although a work ‘written at the beginning of the century’ whose ‘war does not pay’ thesis had already been widely accepted, it had continuing value as a warning against both economic nationalism and economic justifications for territorial expansion. In the seventy-page introduction that constituted part one of the 1933 edition he
pointed out that the public had yet to learn that, for the same reason that war itself was futile, reparations and tariffs were counterproductive too. He again likened this educational task to the teaching of modern sanitation to Indians and Chinese, except that its particular challenge was to discredit ‘abstract philosophy expressed in slogans and sweeping generalisations (“no entangling alliances”; “My country right or wrong”; “You can never change human nature”; “there always have been, always will be wars”; “there will always be rich and poor”). And because economic explanations had recently been offered for Japanese aggression in Manchuria, he considered it timely to remind his readers that the allied victory in the First World War had not produced the hoped-for material benefits.58

His introduction soon touched on what from a contemporary perspective was the book’s main deficiency, its silence on the subject of collective security, which now seemed the best hope for keeping the peace. On the basis of the deepening disarmament crisis, Angell predicted that ‘war one day is certain’ if there was a failure not only of the conference at Geneva but also of the whole ‘collective system’ for ‘resisting (not necessarily by arms) the state that refuses to arbitrate’. Significantly, he now qualified his claim about the efficacy of non-resistance: although ‘in a material sense’ it had worked for Germany when it offered no military response to the French occupation of the Ruhr ten years before, its psychological effect had been to exacerbate the ‘fear, “inferiority complex,” the deep impulse to assert power’ that were all too evident in Hitler’s ‘mystic nationalism’.59 He was to take these themes further later in his text.

The core of the 1933 edition, its part two entitled ‘The Great Illusion 1908–14’, was not a simple reprint of an early edition of the book: it was ‘abbreviated and rearranged’ as to ‘omit certain matter which belongs entirely to the past’ and make space for material of greater contemporary relevance. It defiantly included ‘The Indemnity Futility’ in its original and outspoken form of 1910, rather than its watered-down versions of 1911/12, and insisted that two-thirds of the original book appeared without alteration. A brief part three headed ‘The Verdict of Events’ attacked the war-is-impossible smear, but was less concerned to ‘score a point than to clarify the problems which confront us’60 – in marked contrast with the self-justificatory tone of the equivalent section of The Fruits of Victory.

While writing The Unseen Assassins two years before, Angell had hinted that The Great Illusion had been at fault in ignoring the drive by some states to achieve power for its own sake, but had been unable to explain what he meant. By the time he finished the 1933 edition he could articulate the shortcomings of the original text. Having ‘repudiated in the most specific terms the conclusion of non-resistance as the right policy’ yet having ‘left open the question of what was the right conclusion’, they had merely implied that ‘when nations realised the futility of conquest they would just drop the effort and you would get throughout the world an international relationship somewhat similar to that which marks the members of the British commonwealth’, namely ‘a peaceful anarchy’. Because Angell no longer regarded as adequate this attempt to induce self-restraint and orderly behaviour by simple persuasion, he offered a ‘recantation’: whereas he had once ‘been deeply disturbed at the notion of definite commitments… for
mutual defence’, he now favoured ‘the conscious international organization of power’. Not only did he thus endorse collective security more clearly than ever before and clarify its relationship to his ‘illusion’ thesis: he further ventilated the anti-appeasement case in which he was soon to specialize, concluding the book with a chapter ridiculing Japan’s claims that its seizure of Manchuria offered a solution to its population and economic problems.

‘I have disposed of the books’, he duly assured Mrs Conkling Huyck. ‘They are not in the least what I wanted, but they seem to be all that one could do.’ As well as falling short of his high expectations, they also got in each other’s way. From Chaos to Control was published by Allen & Unwin in June 1933, one reviewer commenting that it was based on lecture notes that ‘seem to have been expanded in rather a haphazard way’. It somewhat spoiled the impact of The Great Illusion 1933, which appeared less than a month later, being sometimes reviewed in tandem with it. As its publisher noted, Angell’s updated magnum opus was now noticed more by the provincial press than its London counterpart – a sign that its author had ceased to be fashionable. Symbolically, at this very time he received an advance copy of a book that was to seize the public imagination, a memoir by UDC activist Vera Brittain, sent personally by the author as a small tribute to your work for peace which has so deeply influenced many survivors of that generation to which I have attempted to erect a memorial. ‘Testament of Youth’ represents an endeavour to plead for that rationality in public affairs for which you have so significantly contended all your life.

It was, as Angell’s thank-you letter noted, immediately devoured by Barbara Hayes. That Brittain’s Testament of Youth, like Nichols’s Cry Havoc!, made so much more impact than his own rival offerings indicated that a younger cohort of anti-war writers had supplanted him. It was significant that, having during June raised with a number of his long-standing followers the possibility of recreating the ‘Norman Angell’ study circles of Garton Foundation days, he did not go through with this attempt to ‘blow old embers into flame’ once the lukewarm reception of The Great Illusion 1933 had become apparent to him. But if Angell’s marketability had thus declined significantly since pre-1914 days, his appearance had not, a female interviewer noting at this time that ‘the only difference is a slight fading of the soft fair hair, a more pronounced sculpting of the finely modelled bones’, and commenting on his ‘delicacy of appearance’.

Unable to re-establish his former rapport with mass opinion, Angell tried to connect with his fellow peace campaigners. Having initially declined to do so, he was persuaded by Allen to address the National Peace Congress in Oxford on 10 July 1933: this was the first such gathering for three years, and was seen by League supporters as an important opportunity to arrest the slide towards pacifism, war-resistance, and radical isolationism. Angell did his best to get across an internationalist message, yet – despite having just pointed out the psychological disadvantages of non-resistance in The Great Illusion 1933 – also revived his claim to a personal pacifism. In the same spirit that had recently impelled him to claim in the National Peace Council’s magazine to be
‘a non-resister . . . prepared to vote for unilateral disarmament irrespective of what other nations do’, he told the activists gathered in Oxford:

I have supported the Oxford Resolution, and would encourage young men to form societies to induce others to take that position. I myself have opposed every war waged by our Government during my life time, have supported conscientious objection to it, and do not doubt for a moment that if a war occurred again I should find myself in exactly the same position.70

His strategy of ingratiation thus caused him to misremember his public stance (though not his underlying emotional attitude) in the previous world war, and also – given that, at sixty, he was already well above the normal age limit for conscription – to overdramatize his likely role in any future one.

Later in that summer of 1933 Angell drew on his growing knowledge of the diverse currents of anti-war opinion for two contributions, on ‘Pacifism’ and ‘Peace Movements’, respectively, to the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, whose associate editor, Alvin Johnson, had worked with him on the New Republic.71

Unlike the linguistically conservative Oxford English Dictionary, which included the three-decade-old word ‘paciWsm’ for the first time in a supplement published that year yet gave it a very broad definition, Angell recognized that, though at first used generically of all irenic ideas, it was latterly being restricted to the absolutist refusal ‘to sanction war for any purpose’, and should therefore be distinguished from, for example, internationalism. He also claimed that ‘ample historical evidence’ existed to demonstrate that ‘in the international field . . . non-resistance can be consistent with national security’. His second contribution was more perfunctory, and drew heavily on A.C.F. Beales’s recent study of anti-war activism, A History of Peace.72

Around the same time, Angell wrote two substantial chapters for The Intelligent Man’s Way to Prevent War, a serious symposium edited by Leonard Woolf and published by Victor Gollancz. The first of these chapters insisted not only that the ‘general will to peace’ was much stronger than before 1914 but also that ‘the price at which we may have peace’ was now known, namely the costs of the decision ‘to transfer power from the litigants to the law’,73 and for once avoided a distracting digression into the efficacy of non-resistance. His second chapter restated his educational preoccupations, albeit so inconclusively as to leave ‘even the parameters of the discussion unestablished’, in the words of an otherwise sympathetic student of his work.74

As the prospect increased of a confrontation with Hitler once the world disarmament conference reassembled in the autumn of 1933, the ‘never again!’ impulse intensified. Angell did not share the mounting fear of Germany, being convinced that so long as the pro-League powers maintained their unity it ‘would be impotent for evil’.75 Yet he was aware that ‘many among the rank and file of the Labour Party’, who had been won over to the Geneva ideal during the second half of the previous decade, were now becoming ‘indifferent or hostile’ to the League out of concern that it would draw Britain into a repeat of the last conflict.76 Indeed, at Labour’s annual conference on 4 October his old comrade Trevelyan,
who had moved sharply to the left and embraced war-resistance, proposed a
motion ‘to take no part in war’ that implicitly rejected all Britain’s international
obligations. Guided by Henderson, the party’s internationalists decided not
to risk a humiliating defeat by opposing Trevelyan, who therefore had a walkover,
but salved their consciences by securing acceptance of a long and seemingly
uncontroversial ‘composite’ resolution into which the endorsement of an inter-
national police force had been bundled. Even though Labour had thereby
committed itself to contradictory policies – the war-resistance, radical isolation-
ism, or pacifism that Trevelyan had proposed and its leader, Lansbury, favoured,
and the maximal version of collective security that Henderson had smuggled into
another resolution – Angell saw it as ‘the only party in Britain which includes
in its programme a really constructive plan for international law and order’. By contrast he despised the Conservatives for indulging in ‘very belated criticism
of the Treaty of Versailles’, despite having formerly exulted in its harshness.

Frustratingly, just as the disarmament crisis came to a head, he was drawn away
on another transatlantic trip. He had arranged to leave on 20 October 1933 in
order to visit John Buchan, now Viscount Tweedsmuir and Governor-General in
Ottawa, and then spend the rest of the year lecturing in Canada, California, Texas,
and the mid-western states, taking Barbara Hayes along to give her some experi-
ence of a north-American university. Angell was therefore unable to accept an
invitation from Allen to a private meeting of leading peace activists at the offices
of the National Peace Council, scheduled for the day of his departure, to devise a
package of concessions to both France and Germany that might keep the Geneva
conference alive. Instead, on 9 October he sent Allen a statement of his own views,
in which he made the case for collective security but fudged it with an approving
reference to non-resistance. Publicly, moreover, Angell claimed in an LNU pub-
lication: ‘In the view of very many (of whom this writer is one) National security
would best be achieved by total and even one-sided disarmament, by non-
resistance.’ When on 13 October Allen replied that such remarks ‘rather play
into the hands of the pacifists whom you are attacking’, Angell defended himself
spiritedly yet unconvincingly.

The following day turned out to be what a leading contemporary historian
soon recognized as ‘one of the most outstanding dates of European history’, because on 14 October 1933 Hitler withdrew his country from both the world
disarmament conference and the League, skilfully presenting his action as a
justified protest at Germany’s unequal treatment. Although great efforts were
made to revive the conference, these had to be abandoned the following spring;
and Germany never rejoined the League either. Hitler’s action panicked a section
of British opinion: for example, it permanently altered Allen’s priorities from
reassuring France to conciliating Germany, so that over the next few years he grew
into a fully-fledged appeaser. Although Angell’s nerve held, he was unable to play
his full part in challenging isolationism and appeasement at this time because
six days later he was obliged to depart on his intellectually inconsequential yet
financially important speaking tour. Having Barbara in tow proved a mixed
blessing: she could not help expressing her displeasure, for example, when
towards the end of the trip Mary Kelsey’s social demands interfered with her own plans ‘to go up the Empire State Building’.84

Angell returned to London on the first day of 1934, which was to prove a year of mixed fortunes. It began miserably, proved physically gruelling, and generated only failed or frustrating book projects. Yet the public’s ‘never again!’ mood gradually subsided; Angell’s personal influence grew; and he ended the year in a state of jubilation. On 2 January, complaining of ‘having suffered more from cold in the twenty-four hours I have been back in London than all the weeks of zero weather I had in the United States’, he undertook the embarrassing chore of editing the re-application for a Nobel prize that his friends had put together.85

On 20 February Harold Wright died prematurely, depriving him of his closest adviser, to whom he paid warm tribute in the memorial volume that C.E. Fayle brought out later in the year.86 Despite this loss, Angell soldiered on with three months of lecturing across Britain in defence of the League: a surviving appointments diary records engagements on the Isle of Wight, at Birkenhead, Liverpool, Blackpool (two days), Bramhall, Cheltenham, Bristol, Birkenhead (again), Liverpool (again), Dublin, Lewisham, Wanstead, Tunbridge Wells, and Maldon – all in the course of three weeks during March.87 He spoke mostly to LNU branches at five guineas (£5.25) a time, but sometimes to luncheon clubs and other social organizations at a slightly higher fee. He could have earned considerably more addressing business audiences, as he explained later in the year, ‘but then would not have been doing the work I wanted to do’.88 Barbara Hayes managed these commitments for him, arranging for the local branch to provide a cup of tea and a sandwich before an evening lecture but never a full meal, and more generally played the role of sounding board now that Wright could no longer do so. Angell was again asked to edit Headway, this time at an enhanced salary of £800 provided by a special donor, but gave ‘threatened heart trouble’ as a reason for agreeing only to chair its editorial committee.89

But though his lecturing was going well, apart from health worries, Angell’s authorship was not. He had come back from the United States determined ‘to write three books which direly needed doing’, as he was to inform his old friend Dr Warden.90 One was on education, another on collective defence, and the third on the war-prevention debate itself. In March 1934 he submitted a proposal to Hamish Hamilton in London and Harper in New York for the first of these, ‘provisionally entitled PEACE AND THE PLAIN MAN’. Since it was partly a re-tread of his updated ‘illusion’ thesis and mainly a reiteration of the inconclusive educational arguments of From Chaos to Control and his second chapter in The Intelligent Man’s Way to Prevent War, it was unsurprising that his publishers were ‘somewhat doubtful as to the freshness of the subject matter’. Angell responded to their criticism with the artless admission that he had ‘not had time to get down to what is the hardest part of most books, namely a readable, accurate, striking summary and synopsis of its scope’, in part because he was busy with ‘the other project’.91 It was indicative of how diffuse his educational thinking still was that it could not be crystallized into a coherent book proposal.
The ‘other project’ on which he was already engaged, *The Menace to Our National Defence*, was easier for being topical and policy-related, yet exacerbated a tactical difficulty he then faced: he was pitching his propaganda for collective security at both its progressive and its right-wing critics. Later he was to claim that this attempt to fight a propaganda war ‘on several fronts’ – against pacifists, against Marxists, and against conservatives – had been ‘the chief weakness of those of us in the Collective Security ranks at that time’. In fact, during the spring of 1934 it was as important to persuade pacifists, war-resisters, and radical isolationists of the need to organize against aggression as it was to warn patriots and imperialists that another arms race would be unprecedentedly dangerous now that bombers, against which cities were almost unprotected, had succeeded battleships as the currency of competition. Angell’s problem was less a double-fronted propaganda battle than his own ambivalence as to whether he was at heart pro-defence or non-resistant.

If only as an ingratiation strategy, he claimed to be the latter. He did so in the *Manchester Guardian* of 13 March, whilst also pointing out that he had ‘signally failed to convert any considerable number of my countrymen to my point of view’, with the result that collective security was the only politically achievable alternative to a military free-for-all. It was perhaps in response to this conditional avowal of non-resistance that on that same day the prime minister, MacDonald, sent Angell a remarkable private letter confessing that, following the collapse of the world disarmament conference the previous autumn, he was ‘not comfortable about the way things are going regards Peace’, and in particular about demands within his own government for rearmament, ‘which recalled the sort of things said in 1911–12’, when the two men had first worked together.

Angell also sent a message to the April issue of the No More War Movement’s magazine, reminding its readers that he had ‘on many occasions put forward “realist” grounds’ for their shared belief that the ‘best solution of all would be the risks of unilateral disarmament, unarmed passive resistance’, before urging them to support collective security as a more practical second best. By contrast, when dealing with the Marxist analysis of international relations upon which war-resisters based their objections to the League of Nations, Angell refused to feign sympathy, and indulged instead in robust criticism. When in the *Spectator* for 20 April he reviewed the latest book by Brailsford, whose leftism now extended to the abolition of private property, he thus poured scorn on its ‘very hackneyed theme, that “capitalism is the cause of war”’. In other words, Angell put a lot of his propaganda effort into inveigling pacifists and browbeating war-resisters into endorsing collective security.

At the same time, he used his *Time & Tide* supplements to remonstrate with patriots and imperialists whose response to the paralysis of the world disarmament conference was that the British empire should pursue a policy of armed isolationism. For this purpose he adopted an anti-idealist rhetoric. He accused those of his fellow countrymen who were ‘indifferent to the power which either Germany or Japan may achieve’ of standing in effect ‘for virtually complete unilateral disarmament’. He urged them to ‘talk less about securing peace, and
more about securing national defence’, which, military logic suggested, could better be provided cooperatively than on a go-it-alone basis. He insisted that ‘the devil’ had done well ‘to get the effort for peace associated in the public mind not with the realist political purpose of national defence, but with sermons, Sunday schools, Uplift, the Higher Thought’. And he justified general disarmament in realist terms, as the process of ‘transferring arms to the law, and securing their reduction as the result of that transfer’.96

As its title suggested, The Menace to Our National Defence, which recycled much of this Time & Tide material, was intended to take these realist arguments further. To avoid glaring inconsistency with its author’s simultaneous claims of sympathy for pacifism, it claimed not to justify ‘armed defence’ but merely to examine how according to its own assumptions it could most effectively be practised.97 It made the minimal case for collective defence under the auspices of the League of Nations in a restrained, realist manner calculated to appeal to its intended readership. But shortly before he finished it, Angell suffered the emotional shock of realizing the world disarmament conference could not be revived and British rearmament was in the pipeline. He therefore underwent a momentary panic: as he added the finishing touches, he changed its whole character by switching abruptly to the maximal version of collective security. He inserted an alarmist foreword, which warned that any aerial attack would be ‘paralysing in its destructiveness’. And he used his final pages to urge every country to abolish its military and civil aviation altogether and to grant the League a monopoly of air power, observing with heavy emphasis: ‘THE MAJORITY OF POWERS HAVE DECLARED IN FAVOUR OF ABOLISHING NATIONAL AIR FORCES AND INTERNATIONALISING AIR TRANSPORT.’98 So strident a call must have seemed irredeemably utopian to patriots and imperialists. It must also have confirmed pacifists, war-resisters, and radical isolationists in their suspicion that he was a closet militarist: indeed, Angell’s colleague-turned-adversary Mrs Swanwick, who believed that existing air forces were ‘at least honestly national and not camouflaged’, singled him out for special rebuke in one of her many diatribes against collective security in general and a League air force in particular.99 By thus offending both conservatives and progressives, The Menace to Our National Defence hindered rather than helped Angell’s cause.

Having at the beginning of June 1934 completed this tactically injudicious pièce d’occasion, which appeared at the end of that month and was soon forgotten, Angell returned briefly to his educational work, ‘Peace and the Plain Man’, which he now intended to call ‘The Alphabet of Peace’. He wanted it to show that international conflict was the fault of ‘John Smith’, the ordinary citizen: ‘War is the last thing that Smith desires but it is inherent in the policies he imposes on his governments.’ Angell proposed to explain this paradox through his educational theories, and began by stating: ‘The purpose of this book is to disentangle from specialist knowledge those political truths which correspond in medicine to the transmission of disease by micro-organism.’100 But, despite intermittent attempts, he was never able to do this to his own or a publisher’s satisfaction: an
undated typescript labelled ‘The Alphabet of Peace’ survives among his papers at Muncie, but never saw the light of day.

In early July 1934, Angell turned to his third project of the year, which was intellectually less ambitious and, consisting of short items rather than one continuous text, easier to compile in the gaps between lectures and committees: ‘a sort of grammar . . . a systematic guide to the whole area covered by all these books’ on how to prevent war. He originally gave it the title, ‘The Alphabet of Peace’, that he had transferred from his becalmed educational work, though it eventually appeared in Britain as Preface to Peace: A Guide for the Plain Man. Mary Kelsey’s tactfully disappointed reaction to this lowering of his sights was: ‘Much love, my dear, and good luck to the new book. But get at the book on education whatever happens.’ The new ‘grammar’ proved, however, unexpectedly laborious: in the two decades since Angell had last produced such a work the literature to which it needed to provide a guide had become more diverse and complex. He felt obliged to retain old chestnuts, such as ‘What would you do if a brute attacked your sister?’, whilst adding current concerns, such as whether support for the League ‘involves economic sanctions which would embroil Britain and America’. Moreover, instead of confronting only ‘militarists’, as in 1914 when he had compiled A Grammar of the Discussion of War and Peace for his Old Jordans summer school and then expanded it for general publication as The Problems of the War – and of the Peace: A Handbook for Students, he now had also to tackle isolationist, war-resisting, and pacifist dissenters from his new refrain: ‘The problem in the international field is to transfer power from the litigants to the law.’ He thus ended up compiling answers or rebuttals to nearly seventy frequently asked questions or frequently asserted propositions; and his text consequently sprawled to 300 pages. When late in September Angell fell ‘rather ill’ for ten days, he blamed this on his inability ‘to finish a book which is much overdue and . . . has got frightfully on my nerves’. Preface to Peace: A Guide for the Plain Man was hastily completed in early December, Angell admitting to Mary Kelsey: ‘It is not what I intended, and it is not a good book.’ It was published by Hamish Hamilton in the new year, and by Harper a couple of months later, though the latter’s more condensed title, Peace and the Plain Man, was fortuitously what Angell had originally suggested for his educational work. A handful of plausible titles were thus being rotated among various projects in a bewildering fashion during what had proved a consistently vexing year for book-writing.

By contrast, the last seven months of 1934 were triumphant for Angell on the platform, in the media, and behind the scenes. At the LNU’s East Anglian Federation meeting on 9 June he ‘gripped the attention of the delegates and the public with his vast knowledge and outspoken criticisms’. In the Daily Mail on 28 June, he launched a series of articles on ‘How I Would Procure Peace’ by insisting that, although all nations ‘rightly’ put defence before peace, they could achieve this only if they ‘put the law before the litigant’. He was asked by the Warden of All Souls to join a ‘Liberty and Democratic Leadership’ meeting at Oxford on 1 July along with Allen (National Labour), Lees-Smith (Labour), Macmillan (Conservative), and the newly appointed Gladstone Professor of
Political Theory and Institutions, Sir Arthur Salter (Independent). This middle-opinion grouping was the following year to publish a widely discussed manifesto, The Next Five Years, after which it became known as the Next Five Years Group. Its advantage to Angell was it enabled him to cooperate with like-minded people from other parties without leaving Labour. The BBC asked him to debate with the ultra-nationalist Sir Charles Petrie in July, though Angell had to postpone the broadcast on account of illness. The Geneva Institute of International Relations invited him to address it in August; when he did so, he not only restated his claim that ‘there is a great case for simple non-resistance’ but for the first time admitted that this had been the implication of The Great Illusion, though he went on to insist that, because the public would not accept pacifism, the lesser evil of internationalized force was the only feasible policy. And in the autumn LNU branches offered him a meaty schedule of lectures.

November 1934 proved to be one of the most satisfying months of Angell’s entire career. On the 19th his address to a peace meeting in Cambridge was declared ‘a thumping success’ by Gerald Shove, who had organized the event. Around the same time, he received the letter sent from Oslo on the 16th retrospectively conferring the previous year’s Nobel Peace Prize upon him. (Arthur Henderson received the current award, as already noted.) Though far from being ‘genuinely a surprise to me’, as false modesty later required him to claim, the recognition greatly pleased Angell. He received numerous congratulatory messages, including one from the association of former pupils at the Lycée of St Omer. Moreover, as he admitted to Nicholas Murray Butler, ‘the economic factor is not negligible to me’: the prize money enabled Angell to offer repayment of the financial help he had received from Harold Wright’s father and the Scattergood family in Philadelphia, as well as to send a donation to Jane Addams and fund a post in the LNU’s research department. Admittedly, the need to exploit the brief window of attendant international publicity forced him to polish off Preface to Peace at breakneck speed. Yet in the last week of the month his morale was further boosted by the first local returns from the ‘Peace Ballot’, a private referendum that the LNU had decided to conduct across the United Kingdom over a six-month period. Designed to show the Daily Express and the Daily Mail that their hostility to the League did not represent public opinion, the ballot had been Cecil’s brainchild. Like many members of the LNU’s executive committee Angell had initially doubted whether the public could be brought to endorse military sanctions, as one of the ballot’s questions invited them to do, or indeed to cooperate in sufficient numbers to justify the high-cost, eight-month enterprise. He was therefore delighted when its early results indicated enthusiasm for the League and support for collective security.

He now threw himself into promoting the Peace Ballot. ‘For six weeks I have talked every night, because we have a rather special peace campaign on in Great Britain just now’, he explained on 12 December 1934 to Laura Conkling Huyck. The ballot’s organizers subsequently acknowledged his Time & Tide supplement of that month as particularly helpful to their cause. In apologizing to Murray on the 21st for having ‘got more entangled in the job of meetings than I had
intended to do’ during the preceding year, Angell was understandably upbeat: ‘On the whole, things go our way.’

An extra source of cheer around Christmas was a visit from Rosalinde Fuller, whose presence on Northey was recorded by chance when *Weekly Illustrated* turned up to photograph the new Nobel laureate for its issue of 29 December. It is unlikely to have been her only stay on the island.

The year 1935 thus opened ‘on a note of optimism, and justifiably so’ that helped Angell sustain an impressive rate of campaigning. On 21 January, for example, he addressed the LNU’s Oxford Youth Group, whose student organizer, A.H. Cooke, was four decades later to show the same efficiency and moral seriousness when Warden of New College. A few days later, having accepted an engagement in Bradford, Angell again came under pressure to resume the Labour candidacy for that city’s northern division, but activated a battery of excuses: his health had ‘been getting steadily worse’; he had ‘a long-standing obligation to go to America in October’; and he needed to pursue his elusive quest to solve the problem of popular education.

I have a conviction ‘in my bones’ that we shall not make Socialism workable and preserve freedom, unless we make certain radical changes in our methods of education. To prove this, will need a book, articles, arguments, addresses, committee, agitations. The book has been buzzing in my head for several years but it remains there because I have never had time to get it out.

The publication of his ‘controversialist’s handbook’, as a reviewer described *Preface to Peace*, achieved some impact. Its strong criticism of the capitalism-causes-war thesis provoked editorial dissent from Kingsley Martin and a two-month exchange of opinions with Brailsford, Laski, and others in the columns of his *New Statesman* that was later reissued in book form.

Angell spent the first half of February 1935 holding meetings in Wales, returning with ‘a most damnable cold of an influenza nature’, yet continuing to speak intensively across various parts of Britain during March and April, as the Peace Ballot proceeded from strength to strength. It helped propel ‘collective security’ into the language: indeed by May he was describing the phrase as ‘hackneyed’. In addition, he not only strove to make *The Money Game* more player-friendly, but wrote a number of book chapters, one of which, an account of his neutrality campaign for Julian Bell’s anthology *We Did Not Fight: 1914–1918 Experiences of War Resisters*, confirmed that Angell now regarded himself as an opponent of that conflict.

Such relentless work took its customary toll: at the start of spring 1935, with the battle of the Peace Ballot clearly won, Angell cancelled some lectures and worried his friends by again reporting ‘symptoms of heart trouble’. After taking life more easily for a few weeks, he left for the continent on 8 June, where four days later he belatedly fulfilled his obligation as a Nobel laureate by giving an address in Oslo on the need for ‘a clearer understanding of the elementary, the rudimentary principles upon which all human society rests’.

On his return he invoked ill health as a reason for missing the Peace Ballot’s final rally on
27 June\textsuperscript{127} – with hindsight the peak of fair-weather support for collective security in Britain. He rested on Northey, where his summertime relaxation was to build ornamental garden walls with picturesque circular towers around his farm cottage and tower house, and during July was visited there for a weekend by Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale and her children.

Over the summer of 1935, Angell became concerned that British opinion was turning against collective security once more. Pacifists were doing so in unprecedented numbers: having decided not to queer the LNU’s pitch during the Peace Ballot, Canon H.R.L. (‘Dick’) Sheppard now established the absolutist movement that he had been contemplating since the previous autumn and was to relaunch the following spring as the Peace Pledge Union. So too were war-resisters: these were now represented not only by the ILP, which had disaffiliated from the Labour Party three years previously in order to become a separate sect, but more importantly by the ILP’s successor as a Labour ginger group, the Socialist League. In consequence of these reactions against the LNU, the peace movement was splitting, in Angell’s words, ‘on quite fundamental principles’\textsuperscript{128} And, on the other side of the political divide, an increasing number of risk-averse conservatives were tempted by what Angell called ‘non-resistance in the face of Japanese–German power’\textsuperscript{129} This broad-based flight from collective security intensified when, in order to prepare world opinion for his seizure of Abyssinia, Mussolini launched a propaganda barrage that presented Italy as a ‘Have-Not’ nation entitled both to an outlet for its surplus population and to a source of raw materials. Idealists began demanding peaceful change, and realists appeasement.

Mussolini’s assertions brought Angell to the forefront of the campaign in favour of sanctions and in opposition to concessions. Indeed, from mid-1935 until the outbreak of war, except when out of the country, he was effectively a co-equal member, on a par with Cecil and Murray, of the triumvirate that led the LNU. Having long taught that political ownership of territory brought no economic advantage, and having recently rejected Japanese claims to the contrary, Angell took umbrage at the Italian dictator’s ‘Have-Not’ thesis. Although he had recently agreed ‘to do a considerable monograph on Education for Citizenship’, he soon found that ‘this infernal Italian business . . . made my education book impossible’\textsuperscript{130} – in reality a blessed release, though of course he did not recognize this. Nobel-laureate status had opened the letters page of \textit{The Times} to him, and produced numerous invitations to address meetings, so Angell became ubiquitous. He was, for example, the leading signatory of a letter in \textit{The Times} of 18 July urging League members ‘to combine together to apply whatever sanctions might be necessary to preserve peace’. Early in August he warned of the danger of Italian aggression against Abyssinia both at a conference of the All People’s Association in Oxford on the 1st and at a Liberal Summer School in Cambridge on the 6th.\textsuperscript{131} He then travelled to Honfleur for Mary Kelsey’s gathering, but cut it short to return to London in the last week of the month. He had a letter in \textit{The Times} of 26 August, which warned critics of collective security that ‘a post-War Leagueless world’ would be even more dangerous than its pre-1914 counterpart, and insisted that, just as Italy was deterred from attacking Malta by the certainty that Britain would
fight for any of its colonies, so ‘a similar definiteness of intention to defend the Covenant’ would forestall an Italian attack on Abyssinia. Three days later he was present when the LNU’s executive committee endorsed economic sanctions in the event of such aggression, and was minuted as emphasizing ‘the dangers to the British Empire of having an expansionist and reckless state on an important line of communication’. On 3 September, he spoke in French at three meetings in Paris organized by the Communist-led International Committee for the Defence of the Ethiopian Peoples, his message being the need ‘to get rid of the cant phrase that sanctions meant war’. In the middle of that month, as the Labour Party also moved towards endorsing collective security, he made what turned out to be his final appearances at its advisory committee on international questions, in order to argue the sanctionist case. He also signed a statement on behalf of the Next Five Years Group, his all-party co-signatories including Macmillan. Meanwhile, his journalism chipped away at the ‘Have-Not’ claim that states needed colonies in order to acquire vital resources, pointing out that these could be purchased cheaply on the open market because ‘every State productive of raw material is asking nothing better than to get rid of it’.

On 3 October 1935, Mussolini duly invaded Abyssinia; but, although able to attend that day’s meeting of the LNU executive committee, Angell was obliged almost immediately to leave for the United States. Indeed, he had recently cried off a conference of the National Peace Council on the grounds that he was sailing ‘for America the first day or two in October’. Thus, as had happened two years before when Hitler had withdrawn Germany from Geneva, Angell was required by a previous commitment to sacrifice the guiding of the counsels of the British peace movement at a critical moment, in favour of what he called ‘the footling-ness of talking to hordes of uncomprehending women’ on the American lecture circuit. He was therefore in irritable transit when on 11 October the League imposed economic sanctions, albeit mild ones, against Italy, having been allowed to take this small but significant step because Stanley Baldwin, who had recently succeeded MacDonald as prime minister of the National Government, realized in the light of the Peace Ballot’s endorsement of collective security that the British public would expect no less. Having travelled via Canada, Angell reached the Commodore Hotel in Manhattan on 17 October, being depicted there by an interviewer as ‘a little gnome of a man . . . drinking tea and alternating prophecies of ruin with optimistic schemes of political combination’.

He had been in residence only three days when, on 20 October 1935, Baldwin called a snap general election while he could still claim credit for instigating League action. Though unable personally to electioneer from across the Atlantic, Angell was persuaded by Barbara Hayes, who as secretary of the local Labour association offered to run his campaign, to accept nomination in absentia for the London University seat, with Liberal endorsement too. ‘I cannot win, and I may poll a very small vote’, he warned her, but welcomed the opportunity ‘to state my “case” to an extremely conservative lot’. He might have added that the case for collective security needed stating to some of his progressive friends too. Lansbury, more than ever a pacifist, was a particular enthusiast for Mussolini’s ‘Have-Not’
analysis, and was deposed from the Labour leadership in favour of Clement Attlee. And MacDonald, who still used Angell as a supposedly sympathetic ear for his ingrained UDC opinions, sent him ‘quite a long letter’ expounding his worry ‘that the Collective System would be used as an excuse for a burst of Jingoism and militarism in England’. Angell later explained that he had ‘only entered [the London University contest] because I knew that I could not win’; and indeed when Britain duly voted on 14 November 1935, he polled only 30.4 per cent in a straight fight with a supporter of the National Government, which duly achieved a comfortable victory nationwide.

At the same time that he agreed to fight this election, he accepted Romain Rolland’s invitation to join the presidium of the World Committee against War and Fascism, replacing the recently deceased Henri Barbusse, whose memorial dinner in a New York club on 15 November 1935 Angell also co-sponsored. This was a more surprising decision, given that it was a communist front organization shunned by most British progressives and that he was a long-standing scourge of the Marxist–Leninist interpretation of international relations. The World Committee had probably approached Angell because he had recently spoken at communist-organised meetings in Paris. Though Angell was no fellow traveller, his chronic failure to understand the Labour Party’s ethos meant that he did not share its justified suspicions of anything under the Comintern’s direction. Believing that Rolland’s committee was ‘not merely Communist’, he naively persuaded himself that it could bring the French and British left into dialogue, a task for which he himself felt particularly well equipped. ‘I might as well use my French’, he told Barbara, ‘since so few in the Labour Party have any.’

His main preoccupation during his tour of the United States in autumn 1935 was that country’s response to the sanctions applied by the League. Though this was initially sympathetic, Geneva’s failure, as Italian aggression proceeded with unchecked ferocity, to proceed to an oil embargo created ‘doubt in America concerning the sincerity of League action’. Moreover, Angell found himself contesting a growing assumption that the Italo-Abyssinian problem could be solved if Britain, definitively a ‘Have’ nation, ceded some of its imperial territory to Italy, presumptively a ‘Have-Not’ one. In his lectures, many of which were to university audiences, he met Mussolini’s population-outlet argument head-on, pointing out that there were ‘fewer than one hundred genuine Italian colonists living in Eritrea, which has been owned by Italy for nearly half a century’. Angell developed this critique in a forty-eight-page pamphlet for the World Peace Foundation, which was published in Boston the following February as Raw Materials, Population Pressure and War. His royalty was $200 – ‘not bad for a rehash of The Gt. Illusion’, as he put it to Barbara. In addition to this commission, he produced for J.M. Dent a short textbook, The Money Mystery, designed both to teach schoolchildren the ‘primary rules of economic health’ and to accompany a cheap edition of The Money Game. Angell took prudent precautions against ‘technical slips’ by paying an academic at the London School of Economics to check it, but could not thereby cure its real flaw. This was its attempt both to educate and to entertain: on publication early the following year a reviewer
pointed out that its didactic value was compromised by the ‘somewhat complicated’ scenario required to play the card game. Angell also took part in an ‘America’s Town Meeting of the Air’ radio broadcast on 28 November 1935, arguing that states should either ‘surrender armed defence altogether...like the Scandinavian states...or make armed defence collective’. All the while his desire that, whatever the dangers, the League intensify its sanctions against Italy grew stronger: he endorsed a blockade despite ‘the risk of a naval operation’; and when on 10 December the leaking of the secret Hoare-Laval pact revealed that the British and French governments had all along been negotiating with Mussolini, he roundly condemned this ‘betrayal of the League’.

Having spoken at fifty meetings in two months, Angell sailed for home on 14 December 1935. He did so too late to attend the dinner given on the 18th for the Webbs by Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador in London, to celebrate their Soviet Communism: a New Civilisation?, but arrived just as Sir Samuel Hoare was forced by public disapproval of his pact with his French opposite number to resign as British foreign secretary, to be replaced by Anthony Eden. Hoare had been given the job only in June after his precursor, Sir John Simon, had become very unpopular; and Angell was immediately impressed by the fact that ‘two foreign ministers in succession’ had been ‘broken by the sheer force of unorganized opinion’. He also noted with satisfaction the ‘belated championship of the League’ on the part of Winston Churchill, hitherto an adversary but henceforward an ally.

Angell energetically resumed his co-leadership of the sanctionist campaign, re-entering the correspondence columns of The Times on 8 January 1936 with a letter pointing out that America’s new neutrality policy would not interfere with a League blockade of Italy, and attending the LNU’s executive committee the following day. He was back in The Times on 27 January with a protest against George Bernard Shaw’s claim that the Italian invasion of Abyssinia was ‘an advance of civilisation’. He then went to Paris for the launch of the Rassemblement universel pour la paix, a collective-security movement known in Britain as the International Peace Campaign. Passionately supported by Cecil as the organization most likely to reproduce in Europe the success of the LNU and the Peace Ballot in Britain, it nonetheless aroused suspicion on account of its Comintern connections as well as its duplication of the LNU’s work. Angell endorsed the International Peace Campaign, not merely out of loyalty to Cecil, but because he came to regard it as ‘a British popular front’ – the communist term for a coalition in which a united proletariat was joined by the progressive section of the bourgeoisie – of a kind that ‘in more purely party-political matters’ the Labour Party was obstructing. Only in the Cold War did he become more suspicious of communism and conclude that the International Peace Campaign had been a mistake.

On his return from France, he had another letter published in The Times on 21 February 1936: it challenged the assumption of his old acquaintance Philip Kerr, who had inherited the title Marquess of Lothian and become an influential appeaser, that the remedying of international injustices was an alternative, rather
than a possible complement, to collective security. In *Time & Tide*, Angell rebuked war-resisters who regarded League sanctions against Italy as a form of imperialist war, accusing them, contrary to their professed socialism, of frustrating ‘any attempt to prevent traders in iron, steel and oil from making wartime profits’.149 Despite lecturing and writing duties, and involvement in the Next Five Years Group, he attended all thirteen meetings of the LNU’s executive committee between 27 February and 11 June – a sign of how seriously he was taking the international situation.

The major reason for his intensifying concern was Hitler’s remilitarization of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936, which opportunistically exploited British, French, and Italian divisions over Abyssinia in order to remove a significant constraint imposed on Germany by both Versailles and Locarno. By raising the spectre of Britain’s bombardment by the *Luftwaffe* if it challenged Hitler’s move, the Rhineland crisis undermined the complacent assumption that collective security could be almost painlessly achieved through economic and naval pressure alone. The euphoric bubble created by the Peace Ballot and Hoare’s enforced resignation was thereby pricked; and an urgent debate about Britain’s European policy began within London’s coterie of opinion-formers. It was, ironically, as a guest of the appeaser Lord Astor, who was chairman of the council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, that Angell dined at the Marlborough on the 18th, along with Cecil, Keynes, and others, before the whole party proceeded to Chatham House for the first of three influential discussion meetings. It was addressed by his neighbour Nicolson, who, characteristically, ‘desired to come to no definite conclusion’. Seven days later it was Angell’s turn. He emphatically extolled ‘the collective method of defence’, criticized the ‘half-thought-out and sometimes specious pacifism’ of many critics of the League, complained that ‘we have always boggled at sanctions, commitments’, and argued that ‘Germany’s departure from Locarno automatically turned it into an alliance of Britain and France and Belgium, even with Russia since she was allied to France’. This last point was articulated in approving response to Wickham Steed, a journalist of Churchillian views: that Angell found himself agreeing with Steed was a sign of the new alignments being created by events. In the third meeting Lord Lothian advocated appeasement, a policy which Angell strongly condemned in the ensuing discussion as guaranteeing a German ‘preponderance of power in Europe over France’.150

Angell also threw himself into the public version of this debate. On 23 March 1936 he signed a contract with Hamish Hamilton for an anti-appeasement book, which was to appear in May under the title *This Have and Have-Not Business: Political Fantasy and Economic Fact*.151 It was a reprint of his World Peace Foundation pamphlet, topped and tailed with fresh material in which Angell expressed scepticism about the feasibility of the ‘world economic conference’ for which accommodationists of all varieties were calling, and insisted that supposed ‘Have-Not’ powers – of which the most important was now understood to be Germany rather than Italy – should state their demands precisely enough to ‘a fact finding commission of inquiry’ for their economic merits to be assessed objectively.152 Meanwhile, in a letter to *The Times* of 31 March on behalf of
the Next Five Years Group he reiterated his argument that Britain had not become involved in ‘the War of 1914’ because of its previous ‘commitments’: it was the very lack of these that had encouraged Germany to gamble on British neutrality and launch the war into which numerous states were soon sucked. Clear commitments would have deterred Germany and kept the peace: ‘If, that is, it had been clear beforehand that the combatants would do what at the last they were obliged to do, they would not have had to do it.’ In respect of the widespread alarm at an alliance with France, Angell’s strategy, which facilitated cooperation with Churchillians, was to deny that it was incompatible with liberal-internationalist principles: ‘The danger is not in an alliance – the League itself is an alliance – but in allowing an alliance designed to be the nucleus of a true European society upholding a principle of security which can be applied to all alike becoming an alliance which is in fact a challenge to that principle.’ Implicitly, therefore, a French alliance, being both defensive and open to all law-abiding states to join, would be compatible with the League Covenant, as well as prudent on power-political grounds. When this claim was widely met with scepticism, Angell reiterated it in other letters and articles.

During April 1936 Angell refused to allow the Rhineland crisis wholly to distract attention from Mussolini’s increasingly successful aggression. On behalf of the Abyssinia Association he wrote again to The Times, condemning Italy’s ‘employment of the most appallingly cruel instruments of war, such as poison gases, which blind and often practically slay alive the bare-footed peasants who are fighting in defence of their country, as well as blinding and killing the women and children of the open towns’, and warning that ‘a failure of the League in Africa will imperil its success in Germany’. In Time & Tide he came clean as to the risks involved in denying victory to Mussolini: ‘There is only one way to save Abyssinia: to close the Suez Canal to Italian ships. It might mean war with Italy.’ Such honesty triggered abusively dyslexic letters sent from Rapallo by the anti-semitic and pro-fascist poet Ezra Pound that accused ‘Montagu Noramn [sic] Angell’ of being ‘a banker’s pipm [sic]’. However, the Abyssinian cause was already lost: by 5 May Italian troops were in Addis Ababa, after which right-wing opinion began to demand the termination of League sanctions and even their removal from the Covenant.

By the spring of 1936 a policy of containment – the resolute upholding of the Versailles and Locarno treaties and of the League Covenant – was more unpopular in Britain than ever. Although almost all realists had ceased to believe that pure isolationism was possible, many pinned their hopes instead on ‘limited liability’, the geopolitical doctrine that Britain must defend the Low Countries, France, and its own empire, yet could safely ignore the rest of Europe and of the world. A majority of idealists had retreated from collective security. A few took refuge either in pacifism, prompting Sheppard to relaunch his movement on 22 May as the Peace Pledge Union, or in war-resistance to all capitalist-imperialist commitments, as propounded by the ILP and the Socialist League. And a much larger number had been seduced by the language of peaceful change into advocating revision of the Paris peace settlement. Angell was aware of the diversity of this
accommodationist coalition, noting that in the rejoicing that would greet a final
collapse of the League of Nations the ‘bonfires will be lit on very widely separated
political hills’.158 He hoped to pick off all its constituent elements, but made the
limited-liability lobby his priority target. In The Times of 1 May he thus pointed out
that Lothian, whose support for rearmament suggested he was prepared to fight
under certain circumstances, had a ‘regional, “cartographic,”’ conception of defence’,
which limited Britain’s continental interests to western Europe, and would conse-
sequently allow Germany to subordinate eastern Europe and, having done so, to
acquire hegemony over France. He renewed this challenge to Lothian in person at a
Next Five Years Group conference on 3 May. Watching Angell’s authoritative
rebuttal of appeasement on that occasion, Barbara Hayes became convinced that
‘there is no one in England at this point whose views and opinions are as important
as N.A.’s,’ particularly in correcting ‘the muddles created by pacifism and the
National Government’. On her own initiative, therefore, she privately inquired
of certain of his long-standing supporters whether an organization could again
be formed to support his work.159 Yet she proved no more able to recreate his
Garton-era movement than he had been two years before.

Instead, Angell began tapping into other networks, both Churchillian and
communist, during a very busy couple of months. He was one of almost twenty
representative figures invited to a private luncheon on 19 May 1936 organized by
a shadowy organization, the Anti-Nazi Council. His speech was later remem-
bered, along with those of Wickham Steed and the trade-union leader Sir Walter
Citrine, as having helped to instigate an all-party campaign in support of
Churchill.160 After reading the address of welcome to Haile Selassie as the exiled
Ethiopian emperor arrived at Waterloo Station in London on 3 June,161 Angell
crossed to Paris for a congress of the World Committee against War and Fascism
on the 5th and 6th. Shortly afterwards he allowed his name to be used as a
director of Clarté, a communist journal; he also wrote an article for the British
communist magazine Labour Monthly, albeit one emphasizing the non-economic
aspect of the prevention of war;162 and he contributed one of the forewords to the
English edition of the new Soviet constitution, saluting its ‘turn towards democ-
racy and liberalism’.163 He observed to Zilliacus that, though assailed from
Labour’s ranks by former friends such as Ellen Wilkinson, now a pacifist, and
Charles Roden Buxton, now an advocate of peaceful change, ‘I am now embraced
by the Communists who pester me to write for their journals’.164

Angell’s message was becoming increasingly realist in tone. On 29 May 1936, at
the first of a series of Chatham House discussions on the future of the League
of Nations, which Arnold Toynbee introduced with some highly abstract musings
about that organization’s essential purpose, he bluntly insisted that this was
‘the defence of its constituent members’, and that any ‘combination’ taking on
such a function, ‘whatever form it takes’, would count as a true League.165 At the
second meeting early the following month, he opened the proceedings himself,
insisting both that ‘you cannot separate problems of peaceful change from
problems of defence’, and that the former could be tackled only after the latter
had been solved. He thereby offended his former UDC colleague Ponsonby,
now active in the Peace Pledge Union and leading for the accommodationists in this discussion, who privately judged his opening remarks ‘characteristically didactic[,] elaborate and obscure’. At Scarborough for the mid-year session of the LNU’s general council, Angell warned its increasingly restive pacifist minority that their desire for moral purity was unachievable: ‘One could not drink a cup of tea without helping to support the army and navy.’ He was concerned more than ever with the distribution of international power. In June’s *Time & Tide* supplement he emphasized the extent to which ‘Germany won the last War; how much, that is, her relative position has been strengthened’. And at the Savoy on 16 July, the day on which sanctions against Italy were humiliatingly terminated, he identified the Soviet Union as essential to the rectification of the European equilibrium, telling his fellow diners, among them Harold Nicolson, that ‘the future of the League depends on our relations with Russia’. After Franco launched his rebellion in Spain two days later, Angell acknowledged the ideological dimension of the intensifying international crisis too, using *Time & Tide* to predict a ‘European civil war of one Party against another’.

During this period of intense public discussion he had every reason to feel appreciated and influential, in contrast with the two previous crises when he had sidelined himself by disappearing onto the American lecture circuit. The headmaster of a leading private school, Rugby, funded a prize competition for essays expounding the ideas of *The Great Illusion*, *The Unseen Assassins*, and *Preface to Peace*. Angell’s skilful handling of the vocal Marxist minority at the National Peace Congress in Leeds in late June won him the admiration of G.P. Gooch. The eminent physicist Albert Einstein sent Angell a letter from the United States on 23 July 1936 praising the clarity of his writing. Churchill invited him to lunch in his London flat the following day, along with Wickham Steed and others, to discuss recent events. And Keynes hailed Angell’s contribution to the current issue of *Political Quarterly* as a ‘brilliant article’. This last indeed exposed with some literary verve the ‘amazing upside-downness’ of a state of affairs that once upon a time would have been ‘rejected as nonsensical alike by the Marxist and the Imperialist’ yet had produced ‘astonishingly little comment’ in Britain: the expansion of the Japanese and Italian empires was being winked at by the right and warned against only by the left. However, its argument was once again complicated by Angell’s non-resistance claim: ‘If the motive behind the policy of receding before aggression had been that of absolute pacifism . . . there would certainly be, in the view of the present writer, a great deal to be said for it.’

Even during August 1936 he was much in demand. Between visits to Northey, he attended several continental meetings, including a youth conference at Geneva organized by the International Federation of League of Nations Societies at the end of the month. While there he had a number of discussions with Zilliacus, by now a well known author under the pen name ‘Vigilantes’. The two men planned a joint book in which they would debate the relationship between liberal internationalism, which they both supported, and Marxist domestic policies, which Angell opposed but the ideologically eclectic Zilliacus favoured. But back home in September to co-judge the essays sent in for the prize offered by
the headmaster of Rugby, Angell found his ego deflated rather than boosted, as ‘hundreds after hundreds of them missed the main points of the books’. Even so, four essays, one of them by the brother of the new Labour leader, were deemed publishable, and appeared under the imprint Lecture Management Ltd, the agency he had just established for Barbara.¹⁷⁷

Yet pacifism’s continued progress throughout the summer of 1936 wrong-footed Angell. Just a week after the Peace Pledge Union had adopted that name, he had dismissively told Chatham House: ‘You can rule out non-resistance. The creed of not fighting at all is the creed of a tiny minority, interesting in its way, for which one has infinite respect, but [which] is not going to cut any ice’. (Even so, he went on to boast once more of having opposed the First World War.)¹⁷⁸ But Sheppard’s re-branded organization had taken a leaf out of Gandhi’s book, and claimed to stand for non-violent resistance, a positive technique for disarming aggressors, rather than for non-resistance, a negative refusal to fight; and this had helped its membership reach six figures, more than ten times that of any previous pacifist association.¹⁷⁹ When Angell woke up to the Peace Pledge Union’s success, he stepped up his ingratiating strategy. He devoted an extended Time & Tide supplement to pointing out that ‘on a score of occasions’ he had asserted that if a nation were converted to ‘the policy of non-resistance or passive resistance . . . it would obviously be successful’, but nonetheless insisting that, given widespread disagreement with this view, the only acceptable alternative was ‘an Alliance of the Democratic States (including Russia)’.¹⁸⁰ Likewise, in a letter to The Times a fortnight later, he admitted, for a second time, that The Great Illusion had pacifist implications: ‘for 30 years’ he had ‘urged considerations which certainly up to a point support’ non-resistance, though on grounds of political feasibility he had always endorsed the internationalist (as distinct from the nationalist) use of force.¹⁸¹ Despite such efforts to win non-resisters over to collective security, he was obliged to admit in November that the ‘policy which at the moment is gaining ground is that of the absolute Pacifist, the non-resister, or non-violent resister or passive resister’.¹⁸²

As the public continued to shun collective security over the winter of 1936/7 Angell for several months suffered both a physical and an intellectual crisis. Earlier in the decade he had begun ‘to develop a peculiar type of migraine, waking up after three or four hours’ sleep with an instant and raging headache’. He had carried on regardless, and during the last two years, as he came to the forefront of the campaign for collective security, had pushed himself particularly hard. Now feeling spent, he became alarmed about his health. Although able to address the LNU’s general council on 16 December 1936, he informed Murray early in the new year of a warning from ‘my doctor that if I don’t rest completely for a couple of months, I may face permanent disablement’. In a letter of late January 1937 to Barbara, which expressed his fears and hopes with great candour, he stated that the ‘source of my feeling of helplessness is not the headaches but the fatigue’, and speculated that ‘if I had but the physical energy I could capitalise on my reputation slowly built up all these years to fill positions of some power: Chairman L.N.U., or Royal Inst[itute of International Affairs] or positions on
B.B.C. – or Cabinet or what not’. He hoped that this explanation of his predicament ‘may help your very difficult job of “managing” me’, and carefully complimented her on what of late had been ‘sensible, grown up, self controlled, civilised behaviour’ on her part. Hamish Hamilton having urged him ‘to relax completely for at least a month’, Angell took Barbara for a fortnight’s holiday in Switzerland, though possibly the stresses of this trip contributed to the relapse on his return that forced him to pull out of a Churchillian rally in Manchester’s Free Trade Hall on 11 February. Thereafter, on top of these ‘physical difficulties’, he ‘collapsed with influenza’ on the 14th, his condition being serious enough to receive three bulletins in The Times. It was probably in the ensuing days that he spent the ‘period in a nursing home’ mentioned in his draft memoirs. His incapacitation embarrassed him, as he admitted to Allen, because he could see ‘older men like Cecil doing more work’. Angell managed to keep up his contributions to Time & Tide, in which he repeated his complaint about the ‘failure to guide policy by knowledge which in fact everyone possesses or could easily possess’. But he dropped out of the Next Five Years Group for several months, and missed all the meetings of the LNU’s executive committee from 18 December 1936 to 8 April 1937 inclusive. He had recovered sufficiently by 2 March to lecture at Chatham House on ‘The retreat of Britain’, but eight days later was explaining to Murray that every ‘third day or so I now have to go to the doctor and have my sinuses and ears fiddled with in an effort to relieve periodical maddening headaches’. Angell decided to spend three weeks convalescing on Northey, whence he reported to Barbara that it was ‘a bit ghostly here at night – the ghosts of children to whom this was a sort of earthly paradise’. This period of rest eventually helped. By 14 April he was sufficiently revived to lecture at Kettering for the Churchillian movement, which now privately called itself ‘Focus’ and publicly used the label ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace’. He also resumed attendance at Churchill’s lunches at the Savoy, and at the committees of the LNU and Next Five Years Group. And on 18 May he even acted as best man for Evelyn Wrench in a big Knightsbridge ceremony – despite a jaundiced view of marriage that had caused him to wonder, when recently sending his best wishes to Barbara’s brother Dennis on his engagement, why in such circumstances congratulations were thought appropriate.

This sharp but temporary downturn in Angell’s health coincided with a loss of intellectual confidence caused mainly by the upsurge of pacifism, though also by his inability to see the way forward for his educational study. Whilst convalescing early in 1937 he had asked Barbara to procure him the Peace Pledge Union’s publications so he could proceed with a study of its ideas, and as late as the third week of April was still claiming that his next book for Hamish Hamilton would pose the question: ‘Is Pacifism the Way to Peace?’ But he made little progress with it, presumably because his ingratiation strategy was being overtaken by events. The Peace Pledge Union’s impact had become so considerable as to raise the possibility, however slight, that it might win Britain over to non-violent resistance. In such circumstances, should Angell not logically work to win converts for his declared preference, pacifism, and forget collective security, a
second best that he had supposedly supported only because his first choice was doomed to permanent unpopularity? Yet, having become a committed Churchillian, he did not want to do so, and was for a couple of months lost for a reason not to promote pacifism. Understandably, therefore, he postponed his book on the subject. And he invoked ‘rotten’ health (‘The last two years I have not gone downhill – I’ve just fallen over a cliff’) to delay the Angell-Vigilantes collaboration too. He informed Zilliacus that he wanted above all to produce his ‘book on education, which I think might do in the educational world what The Great Illusion did in international politics’; yet this was a further source of intellectual trouble for Angell, because he had no idea how to write this either. Moreover, in his heart of hearts he must have known that theoretical works were not only more difficult but less useful than those that addressed substantive and topical concerns.

Angell’s peace of mind was restored, and with it his health, when in May 1937 he turned aside from the Peace Pledge Union and the educational system to concentrate on a more important obstacle to a rational foreign policy. This was the unholy alliance between a majority of conservatives, who advocated appeasement, and a large number of former League supporters, who called for peaceful change, that had come together in the belief that the 1919 settlement could be revised in a way that was at the same time prudent and fair. Angell instinctively knew that what appeasers and advocates of peaceful change were pursuing ‘is not realism; it is not equity. Remedy of grievances, “revision,” is not an alternative to the policy of collective security. The latter is the sine qua non of being able to carry any just revision into effect . . .’ He therefore decided to write an anti-accommodationist book; and, drawing on ideas from his Political Quarterly article of the previous summer and cutting and pasting from his more recent Time & Tide pieces, he put it together with remarkable speed. It appeared in June 1937, shortly after Neville Chamberlain succeeded Baldwin as prime minister. Its patriotic-sounding title, The Defence of the Empire, was deliberately ironic: the book indicted the ‘new John Bull’ for condoning imperial concessions that his pre-1914 self would have considered ‘acts of supine treachery’. Angell spent 100 pages documenting ‘the retreat of Britain’ that had begun with its abject response to the Manchuria crisis. Yet he was aware that he too could be accused of changing his mind in respect of the empire, albeit in the opposite direction. Having achieved fame by insisting that ownership of colonies brought no economic benefit, he was now opposed to relinquishing that ownership. He sought to clarify his position by identifying two ways in which Britain’s empire was now useful. The first was as a continuing force for international stability: although ‘we do not “own” our Empire, we have an interest in the preservation of order in the area it covers’ – a concession he had made on aligning himself with the Garton trustees a quarter of a century before. The second was as protection against the rising tide of economic nationalism: Britain had an interest in preventing its colonies ‘being closed against us in the economic sense of passing into other hands’ and their resources being used ‘as power against us’. As the international situation deteriorated, he again acknowledged, so interdependence declined.
'Colonies of doubtful value in peace, may be a source of material, human and inanimate, in warfare, because of a disruption to normal trading patterns.' Conservatives had lost sight of these facts because their 'distrust and dislike of the League has been definitely stronger than [their] fears for Imperial security'. Angell expected this hostility to abate as soon as 'our political commitments have no longer a "League" connotation, no longer a "Geneva flavour"'. This would shortly be the case, he implied, given the discrediting of the League of Nations as an institution by its failure to save Abyssinia, and the obvious incentive for progressive states such as Britain, France, and the Soviet Union to create a system of collective security on their own initiative and without reference to the Covenant. 188

Angell hoped that these states providing freelance collective security outside a League framework would undertake three tasks. The first two were to establish 'a Fact-Finding Commission' that would examine German, Italian, and Japanese economic claims, and then to satisfy any grievances found to be justified – recommendations he had already made during the Abyssinian crisis. As on that occasion, he did not seriously expect the revisionist powers to make a credible case for anything other than minor concessions, so his third and most important task for the new collective-security system was to form 'a defensive alliance or confederation' against any attempt to fight over revisionist claims that proved to be unjustified. In that context he warned that this 'Grand Alliance which seems now in process of formation' might be jeopardized in Britain by a mistaken 'fear and hatred of Moscow'. Because he was mainly targeting National Government supporters, who criticized collective security on avowedly 'realist' grounds, he turned little of his fire against progressives, who did so for other reasons. Yet he pointed out to pacifists that, contrary to their hopes, 'the entire success' of its non-violent response to the 1923 Ruhr occupation 'did not convert Germany' to that policy in the long term, but led instead to Nazism; and he warned war-resisters that capitalism, far from being the aggressive force they assumed, 'is at present plainly afraid of war'. 189

Another reason why Angell's spirits rose was that, while awaiting publication of The Defence of the Empire, he hit on what he believed was a clinching argument for not promoting pacifism, despite its growing support. He tried it out for the first time on 1 June 1937 when he carried out a long-standing obligation to the Oxford University Liberal Club to debate 'Which is the best way to peace?' with his erstwhile ally, Russell, who had thrown in his lot with the Peace Pledge Union. The Town Hall was 'crowded to the doors' to hear Angell claim that, even if non-resistance would work in international relations, it was ruled out by recent developments in British politics. 'The whole pacifist issue had been altered by the emergence of fascism, the armed political party,' he now insisted. A pacifist government in Britain, having renounced force against foreigners, could not consistently employ it against its own citizens, so would be unable to avoid deposition by 'passionate patriots at home' in a violent coup. Although this ingenious argument satisfied Angell, it did not make clear why, if a government could not successfully practise non-resistance against home-grown fascists, it
could do so against foreign ones, as he still seemed ready to accept. Indeed, from this spring until the war finally clarified his thinking Angell became particularly incoherent on the subject of pacifism: he could not as yet break the habit of making sympathetic remarks about it, but increasingly undercut these with reservations and criticisms. Even so, his arguments at Oxford Town Hall have stood the test of time better than those of his opponent Russell, who asserted that ‘an alliance between England, France and Russia against Italy, Germany, and Japan, where the forces are evenly balanced’ was ‘not collective security’ but ‘what you had before 1914…two armed camps’, and, as he had done on that occasion, urged Britain simply to ‘stand aside and let other people fight their own battles’. However, this ignored the fact that even if its internationalist legitimacy was indeed tarnished by the size of the militarist bloc that was challenging it, an Anglo-Franco-Russian combination had a much stronger claim than its rivals to be acting in accordance with international law. Russell’s case was also based more on a geopolitically imprudent isolationism than on an idealistic faith in the disarming effect of non-violent resistance, as he himself realized during the military crisis of 1940, when he retreated from what he later admitted had been an overstatement of pacifism. On the train back to London the day after the debate Angell encountered Nicolson, who had been visiting All Souls, and used the journey to complain to his travelling companion about the general ignorance of the extent to which Britain had de-imperialized.

After a break on Northey, he set out on 14 July 1937 by car for Geneva, to teach at a summer school, an engagement that would give him a chance to read Zilliacus’s initial contribution to their collaborative venture and offer some time for relaxation too. ‘Wandering from city to city, visiting Universities and educational institutions’, Angell reported in *Time & Tide*, ‘one finds in the fascist areas, or in those who come there from that strange, sudden, complete abandonment of intellectual freedom’ as a value. He optimistically promised Hamish Hamilton his manuscript on pacifism ‘in the autumn’, and in late August fitted in a trip to Paris for the 32nd Universal Peace Congress in Paris, which, under the patronage of the French prime minister, constituted the dignified rather than the efficient part of the international peace movement.

On coming home in mid-September 1937, Angell took a painful decision, ostensibly on health grounds. He cancelled an American visit scheduled for the new year in a hyperbolic telegram to his agent: ‘Deeply regret doctor just announced that lecture tour would mean death stop Must consequently cancel stop Possibly next fall.’ Since his autumn proved a surprisingly active one, however, it is possible that his decision to stay in Britain was motivated at least in part by a desire to help the LNU. On 10 October he complained to Carrie of being ‘dragged into’ the peace movement’s organizational problems, but felt the need to give Cecil every assistance. Two days later he spoke at the emergency session of the LNU’s general council that had been convened to consider the deteriorating situations in China, where Japanese aggression had resumed, and in Spain, where Italy was intervening to help Franco, and during the rest of
that month and the following one undertook some lecturing for local branches. He also wrote a short introduction to a book of essays in which the collective-security and peaceful-change wings of the newly founded Scottish Peace Council advertised their disagreements. Rather than take sides, he called on all sections of opinion to adopt the ‘scientific method’ of testing its ‘working hypothesis’ against the ‘relevant facts available’. As with his Fact-Finding Commission, this was a tactful way of subjecting the accommodationist case to the scrutiny under which, he was convinced, it would crumble. Moreover, in an article for the *Contemporary Review* he conceded that ‘revision [of Versailles] is indispensable’ and that in particular ‘the return of the German colonies’ was open to negotiation, before undercutting the case for appeasement by insisting that ‘the defects of the Treaty are irrelevant to the main problem’, which was Germany’s new determination to dominate Europe. He also reviewed *The Conquest of Violence*, a major work by the Dutch anarcho-pacifist Bart de Ligt, shrewdly noting that its ‘verbal violence and invective’ against the current social order were an inappropriate ‘moral preparation for a non-violent world’.

When the award to Cecil of that year’s Nobel Peace Prize became known in November 1937, Angell urged the LNU to make it ‘the occasion of a really big “manifestation”’ in support of the policies with which its leader was associated, and attended the large gathering it duly held in the Dorchester Hotel on 16 December. Less happily, he had to be a soothing influence within the LNU when Cecil became deeply offended by the hostility of certain staff members towards the International Peace Campaign. Angell spent the weekend of 18/19 December at All Souls for the opening sessions of a policy forum organized by Sir Arthur Salter and involving several members of the now-disbanded Next Five Years Group. Some of these, notably Allen, had become overt accommodationists, while others, such as Macmillan, had opted decisively for the containment of fascism. The former, not being pacifists, accepted an element of firmness towards the dictators; and the latter, aware that a rigid adherence to the status quo lacked public support, accepted an element of conciliation. But each side thought its own policy should take precedence in the mix, so the hoped-for synthesis of Chamberlainite accommodation and Churchillian containment did not materialize. A week after these difficult discussions in All Souls, Angell attained the age of sixty-five. He could take comfort from his increasingly respected position in public life, made apparent by the numerous dinners and receptions to which he had been invited in the course of the year, by the five letters published in *The Times* of which he had been asked to be a co-signatory, and by his being the subject of a question (about his original surname) in that paper’s 1937 Christmas quiz.

Yet perhaps because he had overworked since cancelling his American tour, he became ‘beastly ill again’ in January 1938, at which time his valetudinarianism scaled new heights. Although by 10 February he had recovered sufficiently to lunch with Allen, he was so gloomy about his medium-term prospects that his table companion was left ‘terribly distressed by what you said to me about yourself’, and suggested that he ‘make the experiment of going right away
for perhaps a year lying absolutely fallow—205—a selfless expression of concern
given that, whereas Angell in fact had twenty-nine years to live, Allen had only
thirteen months. Illness provided an excuse for reducing Angell’s commitment to
collaborate with Zilliacus to the mere writing of an introduction to one
of Vigilantes’s books. Perhaps it also caused Lady Rhondda to doubt his capacity
to sustain his monthly ‘Foreign Affairs’ essay: from the February issue this ceased
to be a separately paginated supplement, and was absorbed into the main body of
*Time & Tide*.

In the event, his period of prostration soon refreshed him. On 14 February
1938 he fulfilled the engagement at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester that he had
been obliged to cancel a year before; and on 1 March he attended a Focus lunch.
At this time, moreover, Barbara reported to Harry that he looked fitter than for
some time and was deep into another book. This was *Peace with the Dictators?
A Symposium and Some Conclusions*, which had been begun at the start of
February, was completed two months later, and appeared in May. Aware that he
was necessarily repeating the anti-appeasement arguments of *The Defence of the
Empire*, he varied the format in which they were expressed by organizing the new
book as a series of cases put forward by ‘educated and intelligent’ national
spokesmen. Though making for readability, this device was potentially confusing:
indeed, when he had tried out the statement on behalf of Germany in *Time &
Tide*, some readers had interpreted it as Angell’s own position. The first two
chapters gave the floor to the German and Italian protagonists: these were made
sufficiently persuasive not to be dismissed as straw men, though the inclusion of
both countries subtly undercut the claims of each to constitute a special case.
(Presumably because he could not do so with cultural plausibility, Angell did not
attempt a statement by a Japanese representative.) The German spokesman, who
was given more space, asserted that his country intended to ‘absorb into our state
all those Germans at present outside it’ and ‘forbid the erection anywhere
of Bolshevist or near-Bolshevist governments’, and that it might possibly in future
need also ‘to impinge in Africa or the Near East’. In contrast with these united
national goals, the German went on, the British had ‘no political principles’ and
even boasted of being ‘above the battle’ between contending ideologies. After the
Italian had stated his version of the ‘Have-Not’ case with some humour, an
Englishman who was evidently a close reader of Norman Angell replied on behalf
of his country’s ‘collective view’. Focusing on the colonial issue, he insisted
that imperialism was ‘economically out of date’ and that even after Britain’s
modification of its free-trade policy in 1932 ‘something like ninety per cent’ of
its trade was still with territories ‘to which we are unable to dictate fiscally’. But if
other countries intensified their economic nationalism, ‘we shall have to cling like
leeches to that ten per cent of our trade which is “imperial” in any true sense... hoping that it may be developed as a counterpoise to the exclusions we
should be facing elsewhere’. Therefore, the handing over of colonies to a nation
that would immediately apply closed-door policies to them would not be
rational. On the subject of national values, the English spokesman highlighted
tolerance, insisting: ‘Democracy is not indispensable to good government, but
liberalism is’ – a conclusion Angell had reached under his own name in *Time & Tide*. Subsequently other Englishmen, all but one of them Angellites too, made further points. One identified ‘the principle of third-party judgement’ as the only ‘principle of justice which is equal for both’ haves and have-nots. Another summarized the story of British imperial surrender as presented in *The Defence of the Empire*. The one non-Angellite Englishman, ‘Smith for Isolationism’, wanted to let ‘the foreigners – particularly the Hun and Bolshie – eat each other up while we look on’. But another compatriot stepped in to insist that isolationism was possible only ‘if we are prepared to accept the position of a Norway, or a Sweden, or even a Holland’. He in turn gave way to a sixth Englishman, who insisted that the upholding of international law was essential to democratic defence, and invoked the Angellite doctrine:

> Only one law at this time is needed: the law that there shall be no more war; that the war-maker shall be regarded as the common enemy to be restrained by all those forces, moral, diplomatic, political, economic, financial, and finally military and naval, which those who are prepared to surrender force as the instrument of their own policy . . . can manage to assemble. . . .

Such a policy, this sixth Englishman went on, did not deserve to be called ‘coercion’. To show that the need for a ‘Grand Alliance of the Democracies’ of this kind could have been foreseen, Angell reproduced chunks of his 1918 book *The Political Conditions of Allied Success*, as he was to do in most of his books over the next two years.206

Having concluded the symposium that constituted nine tenths of *Peace with the Dictators?*, Angell proceeded in his own voice to the notably disconnected ‘Part II: The Pacifist Position Examined’. It was a way of using the research done the previous spring for the book on pacifism that, as he later acknowledged, ‘was never written’;207 but it showed him to be dithering painfully between his old ingratiation strategy and a new honesty about the harmful effects of non-resistance. He admitted having ‘said on a score of occasions in the past that if we could imagine a nation being converted to that policy and applying it, it would obviously be successful’. But he immediately conceded that such success might be so limited as scarcely to merit the word. Although a pacifist nation would succeed in avoiding war, as Germany had in the Ruhr crisis, it would still be treated by an enemy as if it had fought and lost. It ‘might have to submit to foreign rule’ and ‘stand by and see Jews expelled or segregated and maltreated, men of liberal or socialist views, imprisoned, bullied, bludgeoned, bumped off’. After all, the ‘unarmed and defenceless people’ of Africa, who had long been in this predicament had ‘suffered even more over the centuries than the Jews’. Angell moreover acknowledged that a ‘deep urge for defence’ was ‘something which, like the feeling for nationality, we must accept as a fact likely to remain constant for a very long time, and take into account’. Although thus taking a major step towards a long overdue explanation of why he in practice supported defence despite his professed preference for non-resistance, he as yet presented the self-defensive instinct as an unfortunate constraint on rational behaviour rather than a healthy
human response. Nor was he willing to confess that in reality he had abandoned such faith as he had ever possessed in pacifism: he did not need to do so because, to his secret relief, the Peace Pledge Union had reached a plateau stage in its growth, indicating that support for its policy would always be ‘very, very small’. In addition, enthusiasm for war-resistance had ‘greatly diminished of late’, as the Spanish Civil War taught socialists that some conflicts were worth fighting. Although he repeated his claim of the previous year that a government that refused to use military force would be deposed by domestic fascists, he could again deploy his favourite argument against pacifists and war-resisters: that because their desired policy was unavailable, they must prefer next best to worst case. In other words, being supported only by a small minority of citizens, pacifism and war-resistance were from a practical point of view not even worth discussing because their advocates would clearly have to settle for either the national or the international use of force. Because in his experience none of them ever claimed that the ‘old competitive system of arms is preferable to the proposed collective method’, it was clear that collective security was the achievable second preference and a return to the go-it-alone anarchy of the pre-League years the outcome to be avoided at all costs.

While Angell was thus coming close to renouncing pacifism and wholeheartedly endorsing the defensive instinct, the cause of collective security suffered further setbacks. On 20 February 1938, Eden resigned in protest against Chamberlain’s concessive policy towards Mussolini: Angell immediately claimed in Time & Tide that ‘even when not fully realising it’, the outgoing foreign secretary had ‘always wanted a policy aimed at the ending of the old international anarchy’, thereby laying himself open to the not inaccurate charge ‘of drawing an Eden in the image of an Angell’. On 13 March, Hitler annexed Austria, after which the All Souls forum became more polarized than ever, particularly when it met in Angell’s chambers on the 16th and the 31st. Angell therefore gave Peace with the Dictators? a hard-hitting epilogue, ‘Today’s Issue and Tomorrow’s Fate’, which described ‘Austria, China, Abyssinia, Spain’ as ‘portentous warnings’, and insisted that everyone in Britain understood what was rarely stated publicly:

that whatever the degree of danger it can only come from one quarter, Germany; and that we can only be reasonably secure from it if we are heavily armed and if France is secure and our ally; and that if our arms and alliances are to prevent war the aggressor must know beforehand at what point, and to resist what policy, they will be brought into action.

It went on to warn of the British right’s hostility to Russia and complacency about Franco, and to argue that Chamberlain’s attempt ‘to detach Italy from the Rome–Berlin axis’ could not succeed without making ‘commitments to help Italy’ of the very kind that the prime minister had generally shied away from. The epilogue also expressed concern that ‘a Labour Government in Britain, whose success and popularity would be feared by fascist states, might – indeed pretty certainly would – become the signal for much greater activity on the part of semi-fascist reactionary groups in Britain whose influence at the moment is derisory’.
The events of February and March 1938 re-politicized Angell, albeit now as a Churchillian more than a Labourite. For the final eighteen months of peace he was to be an outspoken critic not only of the Chamberlain government for its appeasement policy but also of the Labour Party for its hostility to a popular front. In *Time & Tide* he bitterly condemned ‘Clivedenism’, the ‘very pro-German view of foreign policy’ promoted by the Chamberlainite circle that frequented Lord Astor’s country house. He took an active part in the left-leaning ‘peace weeks’ organized by the International Peace Campaign. Addressing 4,000 people in a rugby-league stadium in Leeds in early April 1938, he insisted: ‘We could stop this war which is looming on the horizon. . . . But certain people are more afraid of this thing called Bolshevism than of Hitlerism.’ In Sheffield city hall a couple of days later he urged cooperation with Russia on realist grounds: ‘We are not concerned with the internal policy of a nation – we don’t care whether it is Fascist or Communist. What we are concerned with is its external policy.’ More than ever he wanted to construct an all-party coalition against Chamberlain. On 13 April he praised Churchill to his Liberal friend Behrens as an ‘intelligent militarist’, despite ‘his anti-Russian slant and his anti-Spanish slant’, who ‘stated the League case better than any man on the Conservative side’. The following day Angell asked Nicolson whether by resigning as ‘Labour Party candidate, London University’ perhaps in conjunction with others ‘on the fringe’ of the party, he ‘could help to ameliorate the outrageous stupidity of the present political position’, admitting that he felt ‘very deeply’ about Labour’s ‘popular front bogey’.

Early in May 1938, Angell was again struck by influenza, which stopped him being present at the LNU’s executive committee on the 5th or taking his place in a delegation to present the case of the Abyssinian government-in-exile to the League Council in Geneva on the 9th. While recuperating, he was visited by Konrad Henlein, the leader of Czechoslovakia’s German-speaking Sudetenland, who met an array of public figures on the 13th during a surprise visit to London. On 2 June, Angell attended the LNU’s executive committee, an exertion that apparently triggered a relapse: two days later Barbara cancelled one of his engagements with the explanation that he was ‘rather seriously ill’; and Allen, now an extreme appeaser who hoped that his old acquaintance would ‘try not to think of me as a traitor more than you can help’, again urged him to ‘let the doctors have their way during the summer’. Despite awareness that its readers ‘may sometimes wonder why it goes over the same ground so often’, Angell wrote his *Time & Tide* column, but otherwise spent two months convalescing.

Angell resumed public appearances on 1 August 1938, when he lectured to the City of London Vacation Course in Education. That he repeated his demand for the claims of the ‘Have-Nots’ to be resisted unless upheld by a Fact-Finding Commission indicated that he was as *parti pris* in a supposedly educational context as in his political journalism, where he continued to insist: ‘So long as Hitler feels there is a reasonable chance of France, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Britain standing together, there will be no open war.’ His bias against appeasement and in favour of containment made it unsurprising that at another international summer school in Birmingham in the last week of August Angell was
troubled, as he reported to Barbara, by complaints from certain participants that he ‘was not conducting the discussions fairly (there are full blooded Nazis and fascists here and wild Irishmen who are worse)’, which exacerbated headaches that made him ‘howl’. He was also being put under pressure by a Jewish ‘multi-multi-millionaire’, Sir Robert Waley Cohen of the oil company Shell Mex, to help revamp the LNU’s house journal *Headway* as an all-embracing organ of Churchillianism: Angell was to be the link between the LNU’s executive committee and the specially created ‘Focus Company’ that was to buy the publication. He feared that to decline would damage his standing with Churchill and his associates:

If I turn this thing down I shall offend Cohen (his letter is in strong terms) and consequently Winston and his lot. I shall drift out of it; repeat what has so often happened with me, get going pretty well in an interest and then get drawn away from it and fail to follow it up.221

This was an allusion to his half-hearted careers in the UDC and the Labour Party, his fruitless flirtation with National Labour, and the interruptions to his work in the LNU and the middle-opinion movement caused by American tours and illness. But if he now cooperated, he ‘should in some sense be very close to the centre of what may be the new government of England, if England in the next five years is going to have a government other than a Nazi-appointed one’.222 In responding favourably to Waley Cohen on 10 September, Angell also showed that he was more than ever thinking in realist terms: he argued that perhaps ‘the machinery of Geneva was all wrong’ from the outset, because it had aspired ‘to gather sixty nations when there was no nucleus of four or five powerful states who were committed to the principle of standing together’.223

He had private worries to accompany his new obligations to *Headway* and his fears of approaching war in September 1938. He and Harry resented the ‘real burden’ of subsidizing their half-brother Will, now in his late eighties, and his wife, even with the help of their generous nephew Eric Lane, and were trying to persuade them to move from Hampstead to cheaper accommodation in the country.224 Angell was also concerned about Barbara’s position. Saluting her decade of working for him, ‘in many respects the most momentous and fruitful of my life’, he expressed guilt at her devoting herself to ‘a man who may now be broken, who seems to be slipping down a steep hill into invalidism’, particularly if it denied her the prospect of finding a husband:

The coming years may be vital for your life and though you can never be of the old maid type, and are coming to have such a definite place of your own in the world of action . . . that marriage may not after all be he best for you, nevertheless I ought not to allow any sacrifice for a now ailing man to be made – if sacrifice it be.225

When the Czech crisis came to a head late in September 1938, Angell stood firm in his advocacy of collective security, despite acute fears about the aerial bombardment that would probably result. At its height, early in the morning of the 28th, he wrote his regular *Time & Tide* piece, which he entitled ‘Let us realize why we fight’, not knowing ‘whether these lines will ever reach those who are
usual readers of this paper, for the new "Totalitarian" war may quite well have begun by the time the paper appears, and readers, paper, writer may all be buried beneath the general ruin.\textsuperscript{226} At 11 am on the same day he was among a hundred representatives ‘of (what used to be called) the Peace Movement’ who met in a committee room at the House of Commons.\textsuperscript{227} The following day he urged the LNU’s executive committee ‘to take immediate advantage of the recent movement throughout the country in favour of collective security’.\textsuperscript{228} And the day after that, by which time Chamberlain’s war-postponing concessions at Munich were known, Angell drafted a protest statement for another emergency meeting of that executive committee.\textsuperscript{229}

He shared the general relief at the Munich retreat, publicly conceding that ‘most of us’ agreed that ‘the surrender of Czechoslovakia was better than war’, and that had Chamberlain then gone to the country he would have won ‘an overwhelming victory’, though Angell was angry that the public mostly still refused ‘to address itself at all to the relevant question: “How did we get into such peril?”’.\textsuperscript{230} In view of this uncritical national gratitude to the prime minister, the beginning of October 1938 was a dire moment to launch \textit{Headway: Towards Freedom and Peace}, with its doubled size and Churchillian message. Even so, Angell was convinced that conflict had merely been postponed. Writing on 21 October to Harry, he admitted that by the last week of September there was nothing Chamberlain could do except what he did. But he had got into that position by flouting and repudiating everything for which men like Cecil and I have stood these last ten years. He has certainly not brought peace, and the war which he has brought nearer may be of a most frightful civil war type.\textsuperscript{231}

Publicly Angell warned with grim humour that the ‘supply of third parties who can be sacrificed…is steadily running short’.\textsuperscript{232} He also expressed alarm at the appearance of an ‘alternative which seems to be attractive to so many at the moment: Alliance with Germany and her associates for the common exploitation of conquests’. But in realist vein he warned both that Britain’s ‘share of the spoils’ would be as limited as its ‘power’ within such an alliance, and that Germany’s most likely attempted conquest, the Soviet Union, would be a tough nut to crack: ‘Other dictators have burnt their fingers in Russia.’\textsuperscript{233}

To show that connivance in German aggression was ‘as morals, contemptible and as politics, imbecile’, he ‘began systematically on the morrow of the crisis’, in October 1938, to write a third anti-appeasement book, a version of which was eventually published by the Labour Book Service as \textit{Must It Be War?}.\textsuperscript{234} Sketching its argument out in \textit{Headway} and \textit{Time \& Tide}, he insisted that, as in the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises, Britain had been ‘trapped into the elaborate discussion of the details’ of Germany’s quarrel with Czechoslovakia instead of concentrating on the principle of ‘preventing its settlement by the violence of the stronger party’. He further blamed the ‘inverted tu quoque’ which had implied that because Britain was not itself perfect it could not criticize Hitler’s much greater failings.\textsuperscript{235}
However, during that autumn he was diverted from this new book by an offer from another publisher, Allen Lane (no relation), to issue a further-updated version of his signature work as a ‘Penguin Special’, the eighteenth in a series that had enjoyed spectacular success in the previous eight months. *The Great Illusion – Now*, which was Angell’s first paperback, ‘sold about a quarter of a million copies in that series’ after it appeared in mid-December. Yet it gave its readers little sense of what the message of the original editions had been. Indeed, whereas in the version of five years previously Angell had scrupulously distinguished between what he had argued before the First World War and what he subsequently wished he had argued, he now claimed continuity between the two. For example, because in an ingratiating spirit he wanted appeasers to believe that he had never been opposed in principle to peaceful change, he alleged: ‘Years before the war this writer urged Conference with Germany.’ In fact, of course, he had not done this before 1914, as he had ruefully admitted during 1920/21. Similarly, because he was now in favour of collective security, he implied that *The Great Illusion* had argued for it from the outset. In staccato prose he claimed to have warned that the necessary efforts by Britain and its Entente partners to prevent German hegemony might result in that Entente’s becoming hegemonic to a degree Germany could not be expected to accept. The alternative of a flexible balance-of-power system, in which swing states changed sides whenever the equilibrium needed restoring, would be too volatile. In consequence, stability could be achieved only through collective security.

The writer agreed [in the original edition] that if the power of Germany became preponderant, she could deprive this country of all means of defending its rights, [and] would place us at a rival’s mercy, a position no free country should accept. But he also insisted that the right alternative was not to ask Germany to accept it; to do what we refused to do; to be at our mercy. Nor was the practical alternative the maintenance of an unstable equilibrium, a Balance of Power, which could be upset from day to day by some new alliance combination. The way out was to make of power in the international field what it is within the state, an instrument whereby the settlement of disputes by the sheer brute force of one of the parties is made impossible by the common and collective resistance to aggression, by common defence of the one supreme law that no nation should use war to enforce its own view of its own rights; the law under which all should be entitled to protection from violence, a protection ensured by the general power of the community of nations.

This misrepresentation of the pre-1914 versions required him to downplay their real thesis, the futility of aggression, which he did by alleging that merely ‘among other things’ had they argued that ‘certain preliminary assumptions about the economic advantage of conquest, accepted universally as true, were in fact false’. From this time, Angell in effect dropped his ‘illusion’ thesis from his propaganda.

The more he forgot his Garton-era opinions in order to express his Munich-era ones, the easier he found it to state the ‘reasons which prompt me to reject non-resistance, unilateral disarmament, as the right conclusion to be drawn from the arguments here presented’. Even more clearly than in the 1933 version
he now argued that all states had power-drives arising from the anarchical structure of the international system and that indulging these drives was everywhere legitimized by a deliberately inculcated nationalist ideology:

even in the small state the impulse to the increase of power is constant; power is desired as a means of maintaining national right; and in any dispute with another, even minor material questions, especially questions of frontier adjustment, become questions of abstract right for the vindication of which the whole nation – each side is deliberately taught to feel – should be prepared to die.

These power-drives had to be contained; so for once he avoided claiming any personal predilection for ‘absolute pacifism’, while conceding that it ‘would obviously avoid war’, and instead emphasized that it would necessitate ‘surrendering our tradition of Liberalism – free speech, free press, free discussion’, because a ‘triumphant, irresistible, fascist hegemony in Britain would no more tolerate a Left government here than it has tolerated one in Spain.’

Almost a third of *The Great Illusion – Now* constituted avowedly new material. Some of it rehearsed Angell’s educational claim that ‘we have gone wrong, not from lack of knowledge in any technical sense, but from failure to apply to public policy knowledge which was universally possessed, from failure to see the meaning, that is, of facts which are beneath our noses’. The decade’s international crises had required not ‘ethnographical’ expertise, merely a capacity to identify the real question at issue: ‘Shall disputes between a great State and a small one be settled by the force of the greater?’ The country’s consistent failure to grasp this indicated that its ‘education for citizenship, for democracy’ was flawed. But mostly, Angell took the opportunity to state the case against appeasement. His strategy of ingratiation required him to concede that negotiation with the dictators might be appropriate.

But the indispensable condition of a successful Conference, as of successful revision of treaties, peaceful change, is that the Nazi-Fascist group, fanatically convinced of their right to seize any opportunity of rule, shall realise that through partnership, equality of right is open to them, their domination is not, and will face resistance.

He further accepted that it was right for Chamberlain to have been swayed in the Munich crisis by ‘the possibilities of air attack’. But the prime minister’s offence had been ‘to get into that position’ of vulnerability in the first place. Earlier in the decade Britain could have acted against Japan and Italy without such a risk, yet had chosen not to do so. At that time ‘fear of war was not the major motive’ of the opponents of collective security: it was ideological hostility, first to the League and then to the Soviet Union. Perceiving this, Germany had developed a ‘new technique of conquest’: the exploitation of divisions within European democracies ‘as to whether a German or a Bolshevist Europe is the greater danger’, in consequence of which: ‘We now have a situation in which, if Germany should go to war with, say, France or Great Britain, powerful sections of opinion within these two democracies would desire the enemy’s success, not necessarily as something good in itself, but . . . as the lesser of two evils.’ Yet for geopolitical
reasons it was ‘patently impossible to create a balance of forces in Europe which can meet the totalitarian challenge without Russia’.

While composing most of this additional content in late October and early November 1938 Angell was deeply pessimistic about achieving that balance of forces. He thus acknowledged that the ‘situation may be past saving’ and that, in a war with Germany to break civilian morale, ‘everything is overwhelmingly in her favour’. Hitler’s premature death or deposition seemed the only hope: ‘Some fortunate accident, the passing of a dictator or some other fortuitous circumstance, may furnish an opportunity for recovering the situation.’ If it was otherwise ‘too late to retrace our steps and the situation now beyond saving’, there was no point in rearming, as Britain now was, ‘unless indeed we are arming to add power to the anti-comintern bloc’. His despair made him morally ambivalent about the policy appeasers were pursuing. At one point he questioned their ‘ethical sense of awareness’, implying that they were morally in the wrong. Yet soon afterwards he made the remarkable admission that, if ‘peace could be saved by surrender of freedom, democracy, justice, honour, this writer for one would accept that price too. For in war there is so little of freedom, or democracy, or justice, or honour, that its choice as a means of defending those things would indeed be hard to make.’ He had thus, in his despair, ceased to claim that a policy of ‘surrender’ was immoral. Instead, having abandoned his belief in non-resistance as a tactic that might disconcert an aggressor, he argued that a refusal to fight would produce, not the hoped-for lasting peace, but, by whetting the aggressor’s appetite, ‘more and more of war’ instead.

However, the concluding section of The Great Illusion – Now, ‘The Final Moral’, was less negative, as the sense of hopelessness engendered by Munich faded a little. It called more constructively for ‘a dual policy; resistance to claims of exclusive possession, combined with an offer of real equality of access, of economic rights; partnership’ – in other words, for a combination of his ‘Fact-Finding Commission’ to test the claims of the ‘Have-Not’ states and his ‘defensive alliance or confederation based on the principle that an attack on one is an attack on all;’ its ‘nucleus’ being ‘Britain, France, Russia, China; drawing in later, Poland, Jugoslavia, Rumania’.

One reason why Angell’s despair had slightly abated by the time he completed his Penguin Special was that in a by-election at Bridgwater on 17 November 1938 the journalist Vernon Bartlett, standing as an independent progressive and criticizing appeasement, captured a Conservative seat in a straight fight, the local Labour and Liberal associations not having put up candidates. Sir Richard Acland, a Liberal who was to found the wartime Common Wealth Party, urged Angell to attempt a similar feat either at a by-election or in the general election that might be called at any time and would in any case have to take place within two years. Though he did not ‘really want to get back to the House’, he wished ‘to pull together at all costs the opposition to the Government policy’, and formally retired from his Labour candidacy for London University in early December, thereby ‘keeping his hands free’. He sent a message of support to an anti-appeasement Conservative, the Duchess of Atholl, who now resigned her
seat at West Perth to make an unsuccessful by-election protest against Chamberlain’s foreign policy on 21 December. Angell also indicated his own willingness, ‘if sufficient support is forthcoming’, to run at Bury, Lancashire, as an independent progressive in the next general election, forms being printed on which electors could pledge that support. Getting wind of this, Labour’s national executive committee asked the party secretary, James Middleton, to interview him; and, before this could happen, the Bury Labour association warned Angell that it would definitely adopt its own candidate in the new year.

On 2 January 1939, Angell duly met Middleton, and was ‘shaken somewhat’ by what he was told about the threat posed by the popular-front campaign then being launched by the leader of the Socialist League, Sir Stafford Cripps, with whom Angell had neither connections nor sympathy. A week later Middleton informed him that the national executive committee wanted him to be the Labour candidate at Bury, and that this view would be ‘strongly pressed’ on the local association. On the 23rd, Angell addressed a large independent-progressive meeting in that Lancashire town, warning: ‘If France goes the way of Czecho-Slovakia, democracy on the Continent of Europe is at an end and the British Empire has become incapable of defence.’ Even so, the Bury association dug its heels in, and chose someone else. Because the national executive committee expelled Cripps and warned Angell that it would do the same to him, he resolved with characteristic caution not to run against an official candidate. Instead, he let off steam by protesting in Time & Tide about Labour’s indifference to creating the conditions for ‘a Conservative defeat’, and by sending a message of support, ‘as a member of the Labour party for more than twenty years’, to the Liberal who was to come second to a Conservative in the Holderness by-election, even though Labour was also contesting it.

Meanwhile, before returning to Must It Be War?, Angell took up the refugee cause, with which Barbara Hayes had become keenly involved and to which his own sympathy for the Jewish cause in any case predisposed him. In January 1939, he signed a contract for a second Penguin Special, the twenty-ninth in the series, You and the Refugee: The Morals and Economics of the Problem; and, having found it ‘one of the books that gave me the most pleasure to write’, had finished it by the end of the following month. Dorothy Frances Buxton was billed as his co-author, having ‘contributed a couple of valuable chapters’. The wife of Charles Roden Buxton, she had produced an influential survey of the German press during the First World War before founding the Fight the Famine Council. Her Quakerism gave parts of the book a more Christian tone than any other appearing under Angell’s name. His own sections concentrated on two points. The first was that, instead of swelling the ranks of Britain’s unemployed, refugees would in fact stimulate the economy, as they had that of the United States in the late nineteenth century, and compensate for a declining national and imperial population. The second point was that Britain must continue to support Jewish emigration to Palestine in accordance with the Balfour Declaration, in support of which argument Angell claimed with evident sincerity that ‘not a single Arab has
been deprived of livelihood or his economic condition worsened by reason of the Jewish home.²⁵⁷

By the time the Angell–Buxton collaboration was published at the beginning of April 1939, the European situation had further deteriorated. In February, Franco had won his civil war, causing Angell to remind Time & Tide readers of the ‘tragic sequence . . . Manchuria, Abyssinia, China, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, and now Spain’.²⁵⁸ On 3 March, Angell’s long-standing colleague Allen had died, being thereby not only released from considerable physical suffering but spared the mental anguish of Hitler’s seizure twelve days later of the rump of Czecho-slovakia, which in Angell’s words showed the post-Munich ‘optimism . . . to be groundless and the world . . . threatened with a vast Hitlerite domination, and this country . . . in deadly danger’.²⁵⁹ In a policy somersault that Angell hailed as a ‘vindication of the L.N.U. policy’,²⁶⁰ the Chamberlain cabinet now guaranteed Poland, and also brought in limited conscription. Some of those who had pinned all their hopes on peaceful change or appeasement, including Lothian, now transferred them to Federal Union, an obscure peace association founded after Munich that was now given huge momentum by the timely publication of Union Now, a best-seller by a New York Times journalist, Clarence K. Streit. Invoking America’s successful transition from a confederal to a federal constitution, Streit called ambitiously for the United States, the British Empire, and the European democracies to merge into a single political federation.²⁶¹ Though normally suspicious of purely institutional solutions, even Angell thought that Streit’s book ‘might mark an epoch in the political development of the West’.²⁶² On reflection he realized that an important reason for federalism’s sudden popularity in Britain was ‘that it comes from America’²⁶³ – the one country capable of acting as deus ex machina.

Once the prospects for accommodation with Germany collapsed in the spring of 1939, the country mostly accepted a policy of containment while realizing it had been adopted too late to stand much chance of preventing war. However, Waley Cohen ‘proved rather a broken reed’, as Angell later admitted to Murray, losing the will to keep subsidizing Headway, which in any case was proving ‘a blasted nuisance’ to Angell, who had to supervise it editorially and also write for it more frequently than he would otherwise have done. The paper dwindled in size, and was soon handed back to the LNU.²⁶⁴ Angell’s personal reaction to the Prague crisis took a predictable form: in early April 1939 he became ‘iller than for a long time – a touch of gastric flu with nausea’,²⁶⁵ and was absent from the LNU’s executive committee for four months. Illness at least enabled him to resign on health grounds from the presidium of the World Committee against War and Fascism, though the Nazi regime did not notice this, the Gestapo putting him on its wartime arrest list in his supposed capacity as a co-president of this body.²⁶⁶ It also allowed him to spend much of the next three months on Northey. His life there was recorded in a Daily Herald photo-feature on 28 April, which pictured him, among various activities, pounding a portable typewriter in his tower-room as he resumed work on Must It Be War?.

³⁴⁶ Living the Great Illusion
Having postponed completion of this book until after Britain had guaranteed Poland and introduced conscription, Angell now had a new agenda to explore. The sections he had already written repeated the anti-appeasement arguments of *The Defence of the Empire* and *Peace with the Dictators*. They therefore claimed that collective security was not an alternative to peaceful change but ‘the condition *sine qua non* of being able to carry any just revision into effect’. And they insisted that ‘if we cannot co-operate to resist lawless violence against others, we are bound in the end to become its victim ourselves’. But the main body of the work responded to the government’s post-Prague reversal of policy. Some of the points Angell now made echoed those of 1915/16 when a still-neutral United States had been increasing its military strength without clarifying its foreign-policy principles. He thus insisted that ‘power of itself, however great, does not, cannot, deter aggression, unless used as the instrument of law, a constitutional principle’. The same held true, moreover, of military victory, which ‘cannot be permanent or give secure peace unless it is victory for a constitution, a workable principle of social life’. His adoption of the term ‘constitutional method’, in place of ‘League method’, was a recognition of the ‘widespread enthusiasm’ stirred by Streit’s proposed federal union of the democracies as a replacement for the League of Nations, though he pointed out that its implementation was ‘somewhat remote’ and that a policy for ‘to-day, this week’ was urgently needed. He therefore called for ‘deep shelters, evacuation plans, billeting, food storage’ to be provided by the government, ‘along the lines of Nationalisation, Socialism’, and also insisted: ‘If we boggle now at an association with Russia then we should give up pretending to resist Germany.’ Moreover, an Anglo-French alliance had to become ‘the nucleus of a Defensive Confederation open to all who will accept its principles and obligations’, which would include the abolition of ‘economic preferences and exclusions as between members of the group’ and also the placing under international control of all dependent colonies. He admitted that these policies required the removal ‘from the minds of most’ of ‘certain old conceptions, preferences, prepossessions’. Yet his lingering predisposition towards non-resistance as a tactic died hard. He could not stop himself making some concessions towards it, such as: ‘The pacifist belief that the best way to secure peace is to refuse to use force for any purpose whatever, may be entirely sound’, and: ‘If the elector had to choose between a pacifist and Colonel Blimp [the retired military diehard of Low’s political cartoons], he would do well to choose the pacifist.’ Angell once more acknowledged that his early work had made ‘the economic case for pacifism’, and insisted in respect of the Ruhr crisis: ‘The pacifist solution emerged triumphantly.’ Confusingly, however, he also repeated his anti-pacifist arguments, and in acknowledging his neutrality at the start of the previous world war insisted – despite what he had just said in its favour – that he ‘never took the pacifist position of non-resistance’.268

While Angell finished *Must It Be War?* and awaited its publication in mid-June 1939, his mood of resignation was apparent in his journalism. He warned in *Time & Tide* that if the Germans were not persuaded in the ‘next few months’ to join the collective system ‘then they will wage war to the death’, and also condemned
Britain’s White Paper on Palestine as ‘the latest ineptitude’, another surrender, this time to ‘Arab terror’. He also enjoyed the freedom of The Times correspondence columns. A letter from Northey in the issue of 15 May insisted that only a ‘peace front’, the term increasingly being used for an alliance of progressive states against the dictatorships, would make possible meaningful dialogue with Germany, ‘discussion that is on equal terms’.

By the time Must It Be War? appeared, to respectful notices, Angell was well enough to spend more time in town. At King’s Bench Walk in mid-June 1939 he wrote another letter to The Times advocating a peace front, which ‘Germany can break her “encirclement” by entering’, and which would thereby constitute the ‘nucleus or foundation’ of a revived League. This triggered a number of responses, to which Angell in turn replied with an emphasis on the advantages of not waiting ‘until the whole world will agree’ to a federal constitution, but of starting on ‘the basis on the actual Peace Front we are now constructing’. He also sent his views to Labour’s advisory committee on international questions. Because he was still receiving approaches from various constituencies about standing as an independent progressive, he sought ‘not an expression of the official attitude of Transport House, but friendly advice’ from Dalton about these. However, Labour’s national executive committee, learning that the local association in Stroud intended to endorse Angell as an independent progressive, wanted party officials to warn him off again. In any event, Angell was more interested in practical assistance to refugees. He supported the Refugee Guarantee Appeal Committee, and gave a radio talk on the need for ‘adequate man-power and high production’, and consequently for refugee labour, in the event of war. Moreover, when on 18 July he was back on the letters page of The Times it was to argue that, in view of the ‘lightning stroke’ with which another conflict would almost certainly begin, the admission of refugees who were medically qualified or who could provide other emergency services made practical as well as humanitarian sense.

In late July 1939, Angell decided to take Barbara, via the French Riviera, to Geneva, where he had summer-school work. In preparing for what ‘Hitler may decree . . . shall be our last trip together’, he tried tactfully to remind his companion how intemperately she had behaved on previous such excursions: ‘Just occasionally I have done something or suggested something which seemed to be innocent or reasonable enough and the result has been a smouldering fire which scorched my nerves more perhaps than you realised.’ Attempting also to reduce her emotional dependence on him, he warned: ‘If these headaches get worse I shall not live more than a year or two’ – a misjudgement that he was to quote in his autobiography ‘as a caution against the kind of pessimism it reflects’. On arrival in Switzerland a letter from Acland caught up with him, urging that he accept the candidacy at Stroud. Angell replied that he was currently in discussions with Chester, where Labour looked more certain to stand down, but also expressed concern that parliament might take him too much away from his ‘main job’ of generating ‘propaganda through the press and books’. In that propaganda he concentrated on the widespread hostility to an alliance with the
Soviet Union, which persuaded him that ‘a really astonishing amount of “appeasement” opinion’ survived, and wondered whether the ‘next victory’ would be squandered politically, as the last had been.278

He and Barbara stayed in Geneva until mid-August 1939, and so had not long returned when Stalin made his notorious pact with Hitler on the 23rd. For all Angell’s previous claims that appeasement merely stored up trouble for the future, he judged it a rational defensive move by the Soviet Union.279 Having been absent since April, he attended the LNU’s executive committee for its final peace-time meetings on the 28th and 31st. When Germany thereupon invaded Poland on 1 September, and Britain honoured its guarantee two days later, Angell found himself in a transformed situation. After a decade as a co-leader – alongside Cecil and Murray, and latterly in alliance with Churchill – of internationalist dissent from the National Government’s policy of drift and concessions, he became a staunch propagandist for the British war effort. In doing so, he finally appreciated the intrinsic moral worth of self-defence, and shed the last vestiges of his leftism, his pacifism, and his ‘illusion’ propaganda.

NOTES

1. A to L. C. Huyck, 28 June 1932: BSU.
2. N. Angell, From Chaos to Control (1933), 201.
4. Falk, Five Years Dead, 269.
8. Swanwick, I Have Been Young, 371.
9. AA, 240.
14. See, for example, TLS, 14 Jan. 1932, 19.
15. NYT, 19 Feb. 1932, 16. The dinner card is in BSU box 31.
17. A to N.M. Butler, 19 Feb. [1932]: Butler Papers, BCU.
18. NYT, 8 Feb. 1932, 15. The tower house is shown complete in Everyman, 1 July 1933, 16. I am grateful to Alice and George Everard for showing me round it on 27 June 2005.
20. T. Ashworth to A, 2 Mar. 1932; A to Ashworth, 3 Mar. 1932: BSU.
23. ‘National Government’: BSU.
27. See BSU box 15.
28. See B. Hayes and E. Cooper to G. Murray, 12 and 27 Oct. 1936: Murray papers. The location when I consulted these communications was box 74; but I have been unable to relocate them since microfilming.
36. A to L. C. Huyck, 28 June 1932: BSU.
41. ‘9th January at No. 10’ and ‘16th January at No. 10’: BSU. M. MacDonald to A, 12 Jan. 1933 (transcript): BCU box 5.
47. RIIA transcript 8/259 (21 Feb. 1933).
48. Sir N. Angell, *Britain’s Defence, the League and the Far East* (Nottingham, 1933), 19, 26, 27, 29.
51. Fayle (ed.), *Harold Wright*, 66, in which Angell recalled a conversation that took place a year before Wright’s death on 20 Feb. 1934.
52. *T*<sup>E</sup>*T*, 4 Mar. 1933, FAS, 12.
53. P. Noel Baker to A, 23 Mar. 1933: BSU.
54. T&I, 1 Apr. 1933, FAS, 14.
56. Minutes, ACIQ, 12 Apr. 1933; Harvester microfiche. Angell did not otherwise attend between June 1931 and Sept. 1935.
57. A to L. C. Huyck, 25 Mar. 1933: BSU.
59. Ibid. 44–5, 48–9.
60. Ibid. 72–4.
61. Ibid. 369–70.
62. Ibid. 371–89.
63. A to L.C. Huyck, 25 Mar. 1933: BSU.
64. Lloyd’s List, 16 June 1933: McM box 6.
65. A. Gyde to A, 15 Aug. 1933: BSU.
66. V. Brittain to A, 18 July 1933: BSU.
67. A to V. Brittain, 28 July 1933: BSU.
69. Everyman, 1 July 1933, 16–17.
71. A. Johnson to A, 29 Aug. 1933: BSU.
73. Woolf (ed.), Intelligent Man’s Way to Prevent War, 19, 35, 47.
74. Miller, Norman Angell and the Futility of War, 63.
75. Week-End Review, 23 Sept. 1933, 294.
76. T&I, 2 Sept. 1933, FAS, 33.
78. T&I, 7 Oct. 1933, FAS, 40, citing The Dying Peace, a pamphlet by ‘Vigilantes’ (i.e. Zilliacus).
79. T&I, 4 Nov. 1933, FAS, 42.
80. A to L. C. Huyck, 22 Sept. 1933: BSU.
81. LNU Quarterly News, autumn 1933, 3.
82. A to Allen, 9 and 17 Oct. 1933; Allen to A, 13 Oct. 1933: BSU.
84. B. Hayes to A, 3 Dec. 1933: BSU.
87. ‘Rymans Pocket Diary 1934’: BSU box 33.
88. A to H. Scattergood, 6 Dec. 1934: BSU.
90. A to A.A. Warden, 4 May 1934: BSU.
92. AA, 266.
93. Manchester Guardian, 13 Mar. 1934: BSU.
94. J.R. MacDonald to A, 13 Mar. 1934, cited in Marquand, Ramsay MacDonald, 758.
98. Ibid. 10, 164–5.
100. ‘The Alphabet of Peace’ (unpublished typescript): BSU.
101. A to H. Hamilton, 12 July 1934: BSU.
102. M. Kelsey to A, 25 July 1934: BSU.
104. A to Allen, 8 Oct. 1934: BSU.
105. A to M. Kelsey, 7 Dec. 1934: BSU.
106. *Bury Free Press*, 16 June 1934: BSU.
107. Box 31, BSU.
109. G. Shove to A, 20 Nov. 1934: BSU.
110. AA, 323.
111. Association des Anciens Elèves du Lycée de St Omer to A, 11 Dec. 1934: BSU.
114. A to L. C. Huyck, 12 Dec. 1934: BSU.
118. B. Hayes to A.H. Cooke, 16 Jan. 1935: BSU. The outstanding Cooke was Warden during the present author’s first six years as a Fellow.
119. A to A. Pickles, 29 Jan. 1935: BSU.
120. TLS, 24 Jan. 1935, 38.
122. A to W. Arnold-Forster, 14 Feb. 1935: BSU.
127. A to A. Livingstone, 19 July 1935: BSU.
130. A to M. Kelsey, 26 Aug. and 5 Sept. 1935: BSU.
134. TT, 4 Sept. 1935, 11.
138. TT, 4 Sept. 1935, 11.
139. TT, 31 Mar. 1936, 17.
140. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
141. TT, 7 Mar. 1936, 12.
142. Discarded draft, AA: BSU.
143. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
144. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
145. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
146. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
147. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
148. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.
149. TT, 2 May 1936, FAS, 16.

166. Ibid. 38–9. A. Ponsonby diary (transcript), 8 (see also 15) June 1936.


172. A. Einstein to A, 23 July 1936: BSU.


186. K. Zilliacus to A, 3 Apr. 1937; A to K. Zilliacus, n.d. [c. May 1937]: BSU. See also *AA*, 270.


189. Ibid. 212–5.


192. H. Nicolson diary, 2 June 1937.


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201. Reynolds's, 14 Nov. 1937: BSU.


204. A to G. Murray, 29 Jan. 1938: Murray papers, 231 fo. 159.

205. Allen to A, 11 Feb. 1938: BSU.


207. Discarded draft, AA: BCU box 2.


211. Angell, Peace with the Dictators?, 302–5, 318, 323.


213. A to L. Behrens, 13 Apr. 1938: BSU.

214. A to H. Nicolson, 14 Apr. 1938: BSU.

215. TT, 11 May 1938, 16.

216. Rosalinde Fuller heard of Henlein’s visit to Angell on BBC radio news, according to an undated letter to Angell of which G. Peter Winnington has informed me. Press accounts of Henlein’s engagements mention a meeting with a small group of MPs arranged by Harold Nicolson, which may have taken place at 4 King’s Bench Walk, in which case a private call upon Angell would have been easy to make: TT, 14 May 1938, 12; and Manchester Guardian, 14 May 1938, 13.

217. B. Hayes to W. Titherington, 4 June 1938; Allen to A, 8 June 1938: BSU.

218. T&G, 2 July 1938, 932.


221. B. Hayes to A, n.d. [31 Aug./1 Sept. 1938]: BSU.

222. Ibid.


224. A to W. Abbott, 18 Aug. 1938; A to H.A Lane, 6 Feb. 1939: BSU.


228. Minutes, LNU executive, 29 Sept. 1938.


232. Headway, Nov. 1938, 12.


234. Angell, Must It Be War?, 11, 17.


236. AA, 149.

238. N. Angell, 17–18.
239. Ibid. 22, 29, 36, 102.
240. Ibid., 46, 49.
241. Ibid., 22, 24, 26, 36, 43.
242. Ibid., 26, 28–30, 37, 51.
243. Ibid., 278, 280.
245. R. Acland to A, 28 Nov. 1938: BSU.
248. A to R. Acland, 28 Nov. 1938: BSU.
251. J. Middleton to A, 10 Jan. 1939: BSU.
255. ‘Reminiscences’, 192.
258. Té-T, 4 Mar. 1939, 270.
259. Angell, Must It Be War?, 21.
262. Té-T, 1 Apr. 1939, 412.
263. Angell, Must It Be War?, 249.
265. A to B. Hayes, n.d. [postmarked 14 Apr. 1939]: BSU.
267. Angell, Must It Be War?, 30, 31, 48, 57, 100, 206, 247–9, 252–3.
268. Ibid. 47, 105, 106, 110.
269. Té-T, 6 May 1939, 577; 3 June 1939, 709.
270. TT, 19 June 1939, 15; 27 June 1939, 10.
272. A to H. Dalton, 24 June 1939: BSU.
277. A to R. Acland, 30 July 1939: BSU. See also AA, 265.
279. Té-T, 7 Oct. 1939, 1300.
Angell responded to the Second World War very differently than to the First: from the outset he enthusiastically promoted Britain’s cause in a profusion of publications. Revealingly, for one of these he unwittingly adopted a title, *Why Freedom Matters*, which he had used during the previous conflict. He had then done so in order to highlight freedom as a value denied by a British state that was almost as illiberal as its adversaries, particularly on account of its resort to conscription and hounding of absolutist objectors. On this occasion he invoked it as the ideal to inspire that same state to victory over incomparably more totalitarian foes, having now accepted conscription and ceased to champion conscientious objectors. He belatedly understood why he had all along believed in defence, even when implying it made no economic sense. As a result he dropped his claim personally to favour non-resistance, and made no effort to promote his ‘illusion’ thesis. Just as the new *Why Freedom Matters* appeared in July 1940, Angell left for the United States, this time with the approval of a British government that had learned to value his sure touch with transatlantic opinion. He was to make his home there for eleven years. For the American market he produced a sober statement of allied war aims, *Let the People Know*, which became a best-seller in early 1943, and yielded him a larger net profit than *The Great Illusion*. It also prompted an invitation from the Ministry of Information to undertake a speaking tour in Britain that autumn. These propaganda activities constituted his last major contributions to public life, as he implicitly recognized during the final months of the war when he agreed to record his personal history.

Unexpectedly, however, the post-1945 confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union provided the seventy-two-year-old Angell with a new role: as a Cold Warrior. Yet he was now but a voice in the chorus, whereas in his League of Nations Union (LNU) period he had been a triumvir, and before that a prophet in his own right. Moreover, his political arteries were hardening. Having in wartime declared himself a liberal rather than a socialist, he now came out as in effect a conservative. Unlike the ever idealistic Cecil and Murray, he ignored the new standard-bearer of liberal internationalism, the United Nations Association, his continued residence mainly in America being merely an excuse. And he went into denial about his previous pacifist claims. After his permanent return to Britain in 1951, which coincided with the appearance of his autobiography, Angell continued for a decade and a half to lambast ‘the Communist-cum-atomic
pestilence' — he even brought the Cold War into his speech at the wedding of his god-daughter Alice — although the energy and enthusiasm with which he did so ebbed and flowed in response to events and his fluctuating health. He was cast down by his wife’s final crisis and Harry’s death, which both occurred in 1955, and more generally by a sense of being forgotten. Yet he was temporarily re-energized the following year by his determination to denounce Nasserism, and despite declining powers produced another book in February 1958. A bad accident six months later dampened his spirits again for about a year and a half. Then increasing recognition of his intellectual legacy revived his morale during the 1960s, even though he failed to make progress with his educational testament. As late as 1966, remarkably, he made another American visit and published a substantial essay. And he remained intellectually alert until the summer of the following year, when for his twilight months he entered a nursing home.

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After Britain went to war on 3 September 1939 Angell was apprehensive about the long-anticipated ‘lightning stroke’, warning: ‘Hundreds of thousands of our people, possibly millions, are about to die; for victory.’ Even though he had air-raid shelters dug on Northey, his caretakers there felt too exposed to remain. Practising what he preached while producing a second edition of Angell-Buxton on refugees, he replaced them with a Jewish doctor from Vienna, Dr Mia Holin, and her husband, Arnold.

When bombs did not immediately rain down on Britain, the nation began to discuss its war aims calmly and without a military distraction, unlike twenty-five years previously. Angell was privately unhappy that Churchill agreed merely to become first lord of the Admiralty again, rather than hold out for the prime ministership. Even so, he publicly endorsed a rhetoric of national unity, celebrating a ‘unanimity no previous war reveals’ in The Times of 14 September. Admittedly, he also urged Britain to acknowledge ‘with decent humility’ its ‘past faults of policy’, but only in order to indicate the sincerity of its internationalist war aims and thereby win the respect of neutrals and undermine the resolve of adversaries.

Even before Britain’s declaration of war Angell had stressed the need to persuade the American public in particular ‘that our cause is also theirs’. John Hilton, whose recent secondment to the Ministry of Information indicated how much closer Angell’s relationship with the authorities was to be during 1939–45 than 1914–18, suggested that he ‘do a lecture tour’. But as yet Angell preferred to stay at home and write ‘a book explaining what we were fighting for, as well as what we were fighting against . . . with an eye not only to the British, but also to the American public’ and therefore eschewing ‘blatant propaganda’. He consequently embarked at once upon For What Do We Fight?, in which he intended to offer not a ‘fierce indictment of the evil of the enemy’ but both an admission of Britain’s past failings and an assertion of its present rectitude. Compared with official propagandists at this time, he was free not only to highlight his country’s recent errors but also to simplify its current objectives so as to make them more inspiring:
Are the Ministries of Information, the colleges of propaganda, the British Councils, all the institutions of education and learning, all incapable of making clear to the world . . . that we stand for the right of men to be free from the alternative of being killed or submitting to inequity and iniquity?

Angell could also indulge in his own, astonishingly sanguine, interpretation of events. For example, he assumed that the Soviet Union had been significantly strengthened by its partitioning of a conquered Poland with Germany, and so claimed: ‘We entered the war to “stop Germany”. She has been stopped – by Russia.’ When after this Polish partition Hitler offered Britain and France a truce, George Bernard Shaw wished to accept, as he explained in the *Daily Herald* of 25 October. In a rejoinder published in the same issue Angell urged that Hitler’s offer be rejected, because, for the future of both Poland in particular and Europe in general, ‘talking with Russia’ was more important than talking with Germany. At this time Angell also trusted in ‘the security provided by the French Maginot Line and British sea power’. And he expected Hitler to come under serious political pressure from the German working class as soon as an air war with Britain and France started, offering the bizarre prediction that he would respond to such pressure with an opportunistic ‘acquiescence in the conversion of a Nazi revolution into a Bolshevist revolution’.

It was thus on the basis of fanciful geopolitical assumptions that from mid-September until late November 1939 Angell composed his war-aims book. The conflict having released him from his former malaise, he fulfilled several other commitments at the same time. ‘Looking back on this degree of activity from the near-octogenarian standpoint, I kept wondering how the devil I did it’, his autobiography was to observe. In sad contrast with Angell’s reinvigoration, Helena Swanwick succumbed to demoralization. As an honest isolationist she had long accepted that she was washing her hands of central and eastern Europe in an amoral fashion, but regarded this as an unavoidable consequence of an unreformed international system. On 9 October she sent Angell a reproachful letter claiming that his own recent defence of Russia’s pact with Germany and its partitioning of Poland showed that ‘at last’ he too had ‘accepted the fact that Isolationist a-morality is, in the existing state (Anarchy complicated by Alliances), inevitable’. So why – ‘Inability? Or contempt?’ – had he ignored her dissent from his advocacy of collective security? She asked this more in sorrow than anger, as was apparent from her despairing conclusion: ‘Everything I ever worked or cared for since long before I first met you in 1914 has been destroyed.…. We deserve what is surely coming to us.’ Angell had indeed paid little attention in his propaganda to Swanwick’s position, partly because it was repetitiously expressed, but mainly because the overt isolationism upon which it was based had negligible public support: his propaganda had understandably concentrated on the greater threats to the cause of collective security posed by Chamberlainite realism, by idealistic faith in peaceful change, by pacifism, and by war-resistance. But his reply of 20 October pleaded that pressure of work had always made it difficult ‘to deal with special individual criticisms’ of his work,
pointed out that his fundamental reasons for rejecting isolationism had been stated ‘repeatedly’ and at length, and concluded that ‘if I could not make myself clear in whole books, I should fail to do so in a letter.’ Unconsoled, Swanwick took her own life on 16 November, a tragic victim of her determination to carry Union of Democratic Control (UDC) principles into an era in which they were no longer plausible.

For all his own renewed sense of purpose Angell faced intellectual challenges from two quarters. When he argued that the ‘defeat of Germany means nothing unless it is followed by some amelioration of the fundamental anarchy – absence of law and government – of international relations’, he had to contend both with federalists insisting that anarchy be replaced by nothing short of a union of the democracies and with realists denying that anarchy could be transcended at all. Still loyal to the LNU, whose executive committee he had recently again attended, he was outflanked on the idealist front by the often naïve and dogmatic supporters of Federal Union. His initial strategy was to accept their ambitious federalism as ‘the fashion now (and on the whole a good fashion)’, but to stress the need for attitudinal more than institutional change, on the grounds that collective security had failed ‘not so much because the constitution of the League was defective, as that popular opinion was not ready to work any international constitution’. But he soon began to perceive federalism’s political potential, if interpreted flexibly. A ‘real Federal Union of the Commonwealth’ attracted him, even though it sat a trifle uneasily with his renewed insistence ‘that we are giving up our empire – have given up most of it already… to the people who live in it by creating independent states’. With American opinion in mind, he had for the time being dropped the criticisms of colonial nationalism that he had made at the beginning of the decade. Instead, he favoured the making ‘of the French and British Empires a unit. Not merely for war purposes but as the beginning of the permanent reconstruction of Europe and the world along new lines.’ He persuaded himself that by ‘the putting into practice, as between the Allies themselves now, of those principles of political and economic unification or Federation which we proclaim as our objectives for Europe, Britain and France might ‘prove to Germans’ that a union was being created ‘which it will be worth their while… to join and ultimately support’ – the same argument he had put forward during the last conflict in respect of a league of nations. Also predisposing Angell towards a form of federalism was his anticipation, even before the end of the phoney war, that ‘the day of the small independent state basing its independence upon its neutrality in the conflict of the great powers’ was being brought ‘to an end’. (This last argument confirmed his abandonment of his ‘illusion’ thesis, which had emphasized the viability of these small European states, in order to show the irrelevance of military power to national well-being.) Angell was regarded as sufficiently sympathetic towards federalism to be invited to write a foreword for a serious study of the idea by R.W.G. Mackay, a lawyer born in Australia who was active in Federal Union and was to become a Labour MP. Yet Angell expressed some doubt as to whether a post-war settlement would in practice produce a European federation, and endorsed Mackay’s book on the
qualified basis that it was worth reading ‘even if only for the purpose of being intellectually equipped to choose the next best alternative’.19

Although thus forced by federalist idealism at least partially to rethink his version of internationalism, Angell yielded no ground when attacked magisterially from the power-political flank by the pioneering realist E.H. Carr in The Twenty Years’ Crisis, which appeared in the second week of November 1939. Ever since Carr had left the Foreign Office to become professor of international relations at Aberystwyth three years previously, he had been developing in his lectures and talks an influential critique of the League of Nations movement as enslaved to an obsolete liberalism, and supporting peaceful change instead. Now, just three weeks after being appointed director of foreign publicity at the Ministry of Information,20 he brought out the book-length version, in which he identified Angell as a leading ‘utopian’. After consulting Oxford’s professor of international relations, Sir Alfred Zimmern, the only person criticized more often than himself in Carr’s book, Angell replied robustly with an article entitled ‘Who are the Utopians? And who the Realists?’ It pointed out that if ‘Chamberlain’s “appeasement” had succeeded . . . there would have been a certain plausibility in many of the theories that Professor Carr expounds’, whereas in fact they had all ‘been invalidated and discredited’ by its failure, unlike the LNU’s alternative policy. With an astringency previously reserved for those who alleged that he had asserted the impossibility of war, Angell accused Carr of giving ‘aid and comfort in about equal degree to the followers of Marx and the followers of Hitler’.21 Moreover, as Angell complained to Noel Baker in December 1939, it was inappropriate that the author of such a ‘completely mischievous . . . piece of sophisticated moral nihilism’ should be in charge of presenting Britain’s moral case to other countries.22 He feared that Carr’s dislike of ‘all “Utopias”’ would rub off on his fellow civil servants, and notified Hilton of his ‘misgiving’ about the ‘reception’ of For What Do We Fight?, which was on track for publication in December, ‘at the hands of some in the Ministry [of Information], if they should happen to be writing about it’, because it ‘does put forward an ideal’.23

Indeed, Angell’s book argued that Britain was at war to promote what ‘the eighteenth-century Enlightenment defined as the Rights of Man’, and made the ‘case for intellectual and political liberalism’ on the grounds that an ‘ideology’ of this kind was needed to counter the ‘passionate, fanatical, Mahommedan-like faith’ of the Nazis24 – this acknowledgement of an avowedly ideological purpose being its most arresting feature. Yet it was flawed, not only in respect of its over-optimistic geopolitical assumptions, but also because it had been put together ‘under great pressure as to time’25 even by Angell’s standards. It thus rehashed obsolete arguments, before offering belated correctives. Having insufficiently reworked passages written earlier in the decade, it carelessly lapsed back into pre-Federal-Union language, extolling ‘League principles, League policy’, instead of substituting the adjective ‘constitutional’ as Must It Be War? had done. Yet in material added later it acknowledged newly fashionable federalist ideas, and invoked the American Union as a political model.26 Similarly, it claimed unhelpfully for one last time that, during the Ruhr crisis, ‘the pacifist method had
completely succeeded’, before again noting that Germany’s humiliation at that
time had caused it to become more violent later; and it described as ‘the truth’
the pacifist’s claim that ‘if his method were adopted by the nations, it would mean
the final and complete end of war’, before recognizing that it was no less ‘a truism’.
However, the book’s message was unmistakeably pro-war. It now insisted that
the widespread belief in ‘defence’ was not merely an unfortunate fact of life, as
argued in Peace with the Dictators?: it was more positively ‘a universal impulse,
rooted not only in a powerful instinct of self-preservation, but in [an] ingrain
conception of dignity, of Right’.27 Angell had thus finally put into words the
sentiment that had always caused him to have doubts about non-resistance, even
when he had been attracted to it either as a plausible inference from his ‘illusion’
thesis, or as a tactic for disconcerting an aggressor expecting armed resistance, or
again as a strategy for ingratiating himself with pacifists.

What Angell had come to focus upon while hastily assembling For What Do We
Fight? was Britain’s urgent need to match Germany in ideological conviction; and
his principal charge against Carr was of making this more difficult. Indeed, Angell
was soon complaining that fear of being found ‘guilty of Utopianism’ explained
why Britain had ‘no dynamic doctrine…no counterbalance of the Hitler doc-
trine’.28 Although in a modified post-war version The Twenty Years’ Crisis was
to become a classic, its untimely first edition was soon regretted by its author,
who after a miserable time in Whitehall was to leave for The Times in March
1940.29 Angell on the other hand was spurred on by Carr’s assault, at a time when
he might otherwise have been cast down by an exceptionally hard winter. After
For What Do We Fight? appeared, he spent Christmas 1939 happily on his island
with German refugee children who were in Barbara’s charge.30 In January 1940,
he accepted the Daily Herald’s invitation to join the nine-person committee,
chaired by his sometime adversary H.G. Wells, which the following month
produced ‘a new Declaration of the Rights of Man’ intended to help the war
effort.31 On 18 February he was at a private dinner for a group of visiting French
intellectuals ‘at which a plan for a Franco-British Union was considered’ that
paved the way for Churchill’s offer four months later.32 And in a magazine article
published at the beginning of March he condemned the ‘moral nihilism’ not only
of Carr’s book, whose title he characteristically garbled as ‘Twenty Years of Crisis’,
but also of other realist works such as Moral Man and Immoral Society by the
American protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. Noting that victory depended
above all on ‘the human will’, Angell insisted that ‘unqualified pessimism is as
destructive of the will as unqualiﬁed optimism is fatal to its useful and practical
application’.33

During the early spring of 1940 Angell began to write Penguin Special number
62, for which he reused the title Why Freedom Matters. Inspired by Mill’s
On Liberty, which he had first read ﬁfty-six years previously, it was one of his
most thoughtful books. Its thesis was that, although the people ‘are all soldiers
now, and soldiers who contract out of their normal civil rights and accept the fact
that their job is . . . to be no longer free’, the war was ‘a political and psychological
as well as a military problem’ in the sense that its pressures could not be endured
without a profound understanding of the nature of the freedom being fought for. Angell had concluded that the existing consensus in support of the war effort was too negative and superficial: ‘though we are all prepared to fight to prevent Germany imposing upon us a form of society which disregards the principle in question, very many of us are quite prepared to impose such a society upon ourselves’. In other words, because the current consensus merely covered self-determination and autonomy and did not extend to freedom as conceived by Mill and widely accepted in British public life until the First World War, it was ideologically insufficient:

We have lost the political faith of an earlier generation as we have ignored or misinterpreted the intellectual basis of that faith…This lack of deep conviction as to the importance of any fundamental moral difference between the Totalitarian view of life and politics and our own, is not only affecting our unity and morale in the war, but the active political conduct of the war (particularly in relation to the co-operation of neutrals) to such a degree that our victory may be indecisive, or placed in jeopardy, and if achieved, no more permanent than our last victory over the Germans proved to be.

Enlightenment thinking, once entrenched in Britain, had ‘in two short decades’ been eroded first ‘by Fascist, Nazi, and Communist alike’ and now by ‘realists’ who played into their hands. Goebbels would find The Twenty Years’ Crisis ‘a veritable gold mine’, though ‘Professor Carr does a public service in compelling those whom he terms the Utopians to take stock of their beliefs’. Noting that ‘the fashionable disparagement of eighteenth-century rationalism and nineteenth-century liberalism’ by the likes of Carr rested on the false assumption that these doctrines had held ‘men to be innately and “naturally” reasonable’, Angell pointed out that in arguing for freedom of speech in the interests of truth Mill had insisted that ‘the need for the discipline of discussion arises from the…natural tendency of human beings without that discipline to become utterly unreasonable and incapable of correct judgments of fact’. Freedom was needed more than ever today to ascertain truth; and its ‘price…is vigilance over ourselves and our impulses; first and last this impulse to suppress those who do not share our opinions’. Freedom, Angell was in effect saying, required pluralism: ‘The price of the right to assert our view is a firm sense of the obligation to let others assert contrary views, and to listen to them….’34 In view of these arguments it was not surprising that in the month, July, in which Why Freedom Matters was eventually to appear, Angell was to inform Murray:

Thrown as I have been this last twenty years among the political left, and having tried to make the best of all the Socialist slogans and Marxist incantations, I have been pushed more and more to the conclusion that it is your type of Liberalism which alone can save us. I put the present catastrophe down to the Marx-cum-Machiavelli line which has become fashionable both on the Right and the Left, the ‘realist reaction against nineteenth-century Liberalism’.35

While in the early stages of writing Why Freedom Matters Angell was also expounding his more usual themes in the press: on 6 April 1940, for example, he
had both a letter in *The Times* reiterating his claim that ‘a process of de-
imperialization was rapidly taking place’ in the British empire and a feature
in *Picture Post* on the potential value to Britain of refugees. But three days later
the phoney war ended as Germany attacked Denmark and Norway, inaugurating
a year-long military emergency for Britain. Hitler’s rapid breakthrough sapped
public confidence in Chamberlain’s National Government, which on 10 May
made way for a genuine coalition under the prime ministership of Winston
Churchill, whom Angell had recently praised as ‘without any sort of doubt the
greatest living political orator’. Labour’s inclusion in the new government
allowed the conflict to become authentically a people’s war. Though still favour-
ing ‘the general resolve to abstain from all recriminations’, Angell argued that at a
moment when the nation was facing ‘peril more mortal’ than any previously
known it ‘does not add either to hope or confidence to suggest that Churchill has
been just as wrong as Chamberlain’. The change of British government could
not prevent either the rout of the British Expeditionary Force in late May or the
surrender of France on 22 June, just six days after Churchill had made his offer
of an Anglo-French Union. Angell thus sent *Why Freedom Matters* to the printers
all too aware that Britain ‘was engaged in a life-and-death struggle’. The
subsequent invasion scare led many British pacifists to recant, including Russell,
as already noted. But it also caused the government, fearing Hitler’s subversive
‘fifth column’, to intern most aliens, including Angell’s Northey caretakers,
though eventually Barbara Hayes arranged for the Holins’ transfer to the United
States. Angell’s alternative policy, hinted at in a letter to *The Times* of 21 May,
had been to train refugees as ‘a foreign legion’ of agents for special operations.

During June 1940 his island was ‘heavily bombed every night’, as with some
exaggeration he claimed to Mary Kelsey, forcing him to sleep in a shelter; and in
addition it was exposed to invaders and at risk of requisitioning by the army.

The United States was not only safer but, lacking the paper shortage and travel
restrictions that were hampering him in Britain, a much better prospect for his
writing and lecturing. By the end of the month, therefore, Angell was ready to
undertake the transatlantic trip that Hilton had suggested in the first month of
the war. He sounded out Nicolson, now one of Hilton’s colleagues, who in turn
consulted the Minister of Information, Duff Cooper. In consequence Angell was
given not only encouragement but, on 2 July 1940, a scarce berth on a ship leaving
for Canada within two days. He set his affairs in order as best he could: only on
the eve of departure did he buy his ticket, and request an exit permit at a future
date for Barbara Hayes, whose livelihood, Lecture Management Ltd, had been
destroyed by the war. He only just caught his boat, which sailed from Liverpool
on 4 July. He shared a cabin with Alexis Léger, the chief official of the Quai
d’Orsai, and renewed his acquaintance with another influential French exile, the
writer André Maurois, whose memoirs were to record Angell’s explanation for
the setbacks Britain and France were suffering at Germany’s hands: ‘While our
children were rejoicing in the delightfully optimistic endings of Hollywood films,
young Germans were at work modelling the real world.’ Having written so
much about refugees, Angell was, he now realized, living among them. Reaching
Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 12 July Angell then proceeded by train via Montreal where the following day he posted off a letter to Murray. It explained that he had left at forty-eight hours’ notice for the United States, ‘where I have a public’, because his island ‘was in the direct line of invasion’ and that, to his surprise, since he never knew ‘whether the official Olympians will kick or bless’, the Ministry of Information had ‘facilitated my leaving’. He put his American lecture agent’s address on the letter for reply purposes, and took a train to Washington, where the British embassy, now headed by Lothian, was supportive of him. Finally, he went to New York, where he found temporary lodgings at 410 West 110th Street. He sent his resignation both to the council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and to the LNU, whose executive committee he had only attended twice since the outbreak of war, though the latter asked him to nominate a deputy. Angell chose Leonard Behrens, who was unable to accept, so Leonard Woolf was appointed instead.

The British government gave Angell no financial help; and its exchange controls allowed him to take only £10 out of the country to supplement the $300 he had banked in America on previous trips. However, he did not need to worry about his liquidity because he was soon earning. His lecturing apparently began within twenty-four hours of his arrival, and continued with an engagement for the last three days of July 1940 at the final sessions of the ‘Institute of International Affairs’, an annual student summer school that Angell had previously addressed in Geneva but now took place in the greater safety of Williams College in Massachusetts. Angell’s keynote speech stressed Britain’s preservation of ‘primary freedoms’ despite its military predicament, and, noting that the Monroe doctrine implied that America would fight for any part of Latin America, ended by asking: ‘Is Patagonia more important to you than Britain? Is it really?’

In early August he visited Mrs Conkling Huyck in Albany, before going to give a talk in Montreal. Charles Lindbergh’s claim in a speech broadcast from Chicago on 4 August that the cause of the war was the excessive wealth of the British empire gave Angell a newsworthy target for both speeches and magazine articles, enabling him to propound his ‘de-imperialization’ thesis both at the British Empire Club of Columbia University on the 8th and, under the title ‘Who Owns the British Empire?’, in that month’s issue of Living Age. On the 28th he stirringly told a meeting of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies that the ‘soldiers and pilots’ engaged in the Battle of Britain were ‘fighting for the very souls of men’.

In September 1940 the blitz began in earnest at home. The English residences about which he was most concerned were soon bombed. On 17 October Essex Police asked their London counterparts to notify the Hayes family that Angell’s Northeys home had been ‘practically demolished by a parachute mine’. In fact, it was the old farm cottage that had suffered most damage: what he later called his ‘gimcrack sort of tower’ remained largely intact and was subsequently boarded up; and although many of his papers stored in outhouses ‘were mixed and scattered’, only ‘a few . . . were actually destroyed’. Having thus been rendered
uninhabitable, however, the island rapidly deteriorated: a traveller who ventured onto it in the late summer of the following year found it ‘a place of ruin and desolation. Ploughs and harrows lie rusting under the broken sea wall. The farmhouse . . . where Sir Norman Angell wrote The Great Illusion – Now is partly unroofed, blasted and knocked sideways . . . because a German raider . . . thought the strange look-out tower where Angell philosophized was a fort.’ Angell, while conceding that ‘the surrounding wall built with my own hands – buttressed by round towers in the Normandy fashion – may have given the place a military aspect from the air’, was not above hinting that the Luftwaffe might have targeted him individually.51 Soon after Northey took this knock, his wife’s lodgings in Bayswater, central London, were also hit, causing her to solicit $200, via an American charity, from a cousin in San Mateo to assist her ‘removal from damaged premises etcetera.’52 On 1 January 1941 his apartment at 4 King’s Bench Walk lost the panes and frames from its windows and some of the panelling from its walls, being ‘only just saved from being burned’ by the prompt action of a young man staying in Nicolson’s chambers on the floor below.53 Over the next few months of the blitz Angell gleaned further details of ‘what it is like to live under bombardment’ from his brother Harry’s letters, though all he could offer in return was ‘rather dull political speculation’. The following year he was to learn of bomb damage to his sister Carrie’s home.54

Aware of Britain’s suffering, Angell rapidly began a book for Harper in the first two weeks of October 1940,55 which was eventually entitled America’s Dilemma: Alone or Allied?, in an effort to persuade the United States to become an ally. He showed ingenuity in thinking up ways to jolt his readers out of their complacency. Pegging his observation upon Hitler’s current visit to the Brenner Pass (in order to meet Mussolini on 4 October), Angell began by claiming that a wicked man, government, or people could not receive the entire blame for the fate of Europe because others had been guilty of contributory negligence: ‘The power of a Hitler is the measure of the political incompetence of the multitudes with whose lives he plays so recklessly.’ After setting out the isolationist case with sufficient fairness not to seem a crude propagandist, he noted that, because the United States could not build an adequate navy for six years, it was in the interim being protected by the British navy. He again commented on the strangeness of the fact that the ‘most extreme of the isolationists’ would go to war ‘if Patagonia is attacked by an overseas power’, and in an overture to Irish-American opinion asked why those ultra-isolationists would not do the same ‘to prevent the German occupation of Ireland’? Angell’s essential claim was that ‘if Britain is defeated, the American people will be brought under the subjugation of Nazi power about as completely as Scandinavia, the Low Countries, Czechoslovakia, Austria, France, and the countries of the Balkans have been brought’. In the first stage of this process attitudes in the United States would be ‘turned’ by the ‘divide and rule’ tactic already used so successfully against France in particular: the Nazis would ‘make no effort to create an opinion favourable to Germany but make every effort to create an opinion if not unfavourable then lukewarm to Britain’; and in the process they would use not fifth-columnists but ‘sincere, patriotic, high-minded
and highly placed personages’, the local equivalents of a King Leopold of Belgium, a Weygand, or a Pétain. (He was clearly thinking of Charles Lindbergh.) Meanwhile, if Britain was blitzed so continuously ‘that the water, sewage, light, power, gas and communications are put out of order; the population by sheer physical exhaustion, lack of sleep, by illness and epidemic reduced to stupefaction’, it might seek peace terms. In that eventuality Hitler could concentrate on the ‘political and ideological – but very peaceful – penetration of Latin-American states both in South and Central America’, using the cultural influence of Francoist Spain, products supplied cheaply by Germany’s own ‘slave or semi-slave labor’, and also military facilities offered by the Reichswehr.

It would then be discovered, of course, that the magnificent airports which had been established in Latin America for the purpose of commercial aviation with the New Europe and Africa (which Germany now ruled) were in reality German airports; that the deepened and enlarged harbors, the oil depots . . . were just German harbors, German oil depots. And suddenly from them . . . bombs would be falling upon American cities, skyscrapers. . . .

All the while, the grievances of ‘the Wops and the Heinies’ within the United States against ‘the Anglo-Saxon element’ would be exploited psychologically by Hitler’s propagandists.56

Having thereby, he hoped, terrified his readers, Angell more soberly returned to his standard arguments about British ‘de-imperialisation’ and the ‘prejudices’ that had undermined British foreign policy during the 1930s and ‘seem now to be operating in the United States’. In so doing, he suddenly acknowledged that collective security had initially been advocated as an alternative to military force whereas it should always have been presented as the most efficient way of applying it. Next, he confronted Americans who asked what use Britain would make of victory, arguing that, because it would be unable ‘to enforce anything of her own power without regard to the United States’, the ‘more pertinent’ question was what America proposed to do. He hoped that it would not fall for the same spurious ‘realism’ as had prevented European states uniting in good time against Germany, but would take this ‘last chance’ to ‘learn from the errors of others, to avoid the pits into which they have fallen’.57

While still working on America’s Dilemma: Alone or Allied?, Angell suffered an unexplained ‘nasty fall’ during October 1940, which forced him to finish it in bed and miss a meeting of the Herald-Tribune Forum, at which he had agreed to speak.58 Even after sending it to the printers in time for publication at the end of November, he had more work than he could easily handle. On 9 November, for example, he needed to ask the editor of Atlantic Monthly for extra time to complete a journalistic commission because he was ‘lecturing practically every day without intermission’ in the coming five weeks.59 One reason for this was that Jewish groups, impressed by his record of supporting Zionism and criticizing Britain’s recent policy in Palestine, wanted to hear him. On 10 November, for example, he told the United Palestine Appeal Conference in Washington: ‘Your Foe Is Our Foe’.60 And at other meetings in November and December 1940 his message to similar audiences was: ‘If Britain goes down there is not a Jew in all
the world who will not be in mortal peril.’ For a general readership his strategy for promoting collective security was to turn the issue on its head and inquire how men had ever arrived at the ‘strange conclusion that defense is best undertaken individually?’

Angell achieved domestic stability at this time. In mid-November 1940 he moved into an apartment at 501 West 113th Street, on the corner of Amsterdam Avenue and diagonally across from the Cathedral of St John the Divine, which was to be his home for ten and a half years. A couple of weeks later he was joined there by Barbara, who had been helped to leave Britain by Nicolson on the grounds that she was carrying ‘certain correspondence and papers which are necessary for [Angell] in his lecture tour’. Though hoping to work for the refugee organization with which she had been associated in London, she in the first instance resumed as his secretary. When in the new year she was taken on by the British Information Services to arrange itineraries for speakers from the United Kingdom, Angell hired in her place a Mrs O. Stanoyevich, who served him well for several years.

His hectic campaigning enabled him, as he put it to Harry, to ‘build up comfortable dollar reserves if the headaches take me off the active list’, and also earned him a personal message of congratulation from Churchill. However, Angell feared that his efforts were having at best a superficial effect. When on 12 December 1940 he despatched what was by now a very occasional contribution to *Time & Tide*, he warned that although American cinema audiences usually greeted the appearance of the British *ag* in newsreels with ‘a deafening outburst of applause’, such emotionalism had yet to be converted into an understanding that ‘Britain’s continued resistance is indispensable to America’s own defence’. In a private circular sent in late January 1941, to compensate his British friends for previous communications that now found themselves ‘at the bottom of the Atlantic’, he admitted that his ‘thirty years’ record as a ”peace man” ’ gave him ‘a certain advantage in presenting the Allied case’, but described American attitudes as ‘still emotional, sentimental’. When even his old friend William Allen White resigned from the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, an organization with which Angell was actively cooperating, because he did not want that aid to go as far as military intervention, Angell warned that ‘perhaps not one in a hundred’ American admirers of British resistance ‘could explain just why the defeat of Britain could endanger the country’. He was also concerned because America’s socialists, led by his former associate Norman Thomas, had ‘lined up with the Communists in opposing the war against Hitler’.

Angell spoke intensively through the winter and spring of 1941, his main strategy being to chastise Britain for its disastrous delay in confronting Hitlerism as a prelude to warning the United States against making the same mistake. A meeting in Buffalo was thus reported in the local *Courier Express* on 15 April under the headline: ‘Angell Avers British Policy Produced War’. After his tour he informed Harry that the ‘hundred – rather more – lectures’ that he had given in the previous nine months were ‘unhappily, very necessary’ because of America’s ‘lack of solid conviction that the country would be endangered by a British defeat.’
Angell noted that, although it had long ‘been common in America to ascribe to Britain the possession of a vast, wickedly competent propaganda organisation’, its information service was in reality a recent creation ‘cursed by an attitude and tradition of amateurism’ – as presumably he had discovered through Barbara. He also complained that from the platform he could reach only a fraction of the numbers who read mass-circulation magazines. He was therefore delighted when Reader’s Digest reprinted versions of two of his articles, including ‘Who Owns the British Empire?’, which was being published for a third time. Lecturing also involved ‘travelling a terrific lot’, as he complained to Mary Kelsey: ‘This week I have had three nights running in the train.’ When he was at home with Barbara, moreover, tensions developed. The colour picture of him in his Manhattan apartment, dapperly suited and seated at his portable typewriter, which appeared in magazine section of the Philadelphia Inquirer on 1 June, gave a false impression of composure: after the exhilaration of the first year and a half of the war he had begun to find life more stressful.

He was relieved when his commitments were both educational and static, as when he spent the five weeks from 27 June to 1 August 1941 directing the student summer school he had addressed immediately on arrival the previous year, which had now moved on from Williamstown, Massachusetts, to a more permanent base in Salisbury, Connecticut. On the eve of taking up his duties there he had to react smartly to Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union: his instinctive response was to worry that it might encourage an already anti-Soviet America to appease the Nazis. After Angell left for Salisbury, his absence from New York was misinterpreted by the New Republic, to which he had sent a letter disagreeing with the views of Norman Thomas. Wrongly assuming that Angell had returned to Britain for the summer, the paper labelled his letter as having emanated from London. Angell’s reminiscences later claimed that he ‘went back during the war every year’; but this too was an unwitting trap for a future biographer. In fact he was to return home only once (in August 1943 for three and a half months) between July 1940 and May 1946.

After his comparatively restful stay in Salisbury, where he found American students preoccupied with the need for Britain to grant independence to its colonies, especially India, Angell returned to the lecture circuit, from which in mid-September 1941 he sent Barbara an emotional letter commemorating their ‘Anniversary’ and alluding tactfully to the strains of sharing an apartment. He again apologized for his ‘invalidism and headaches and silences and moroseness’, which ‘might well have tried the patience of a saint’, and confessed not only to suffering ‘a tiredness beyond words’ but also to being ‘pretty sick’ to the extent that unless his fortunes improved he would ‘not live more than a year or two’. He could not ‘retire’ and take things easily, however, because he had been ‘so long tied up with public events’ that ‘thought about them has become an incurable habit’. He also had ‘a constant nagging conscience about this war’, during which he lived ‘in safety and comfort not doing what I might because I am “tired”’, while others, like her brother Dennis who was in the Royal Navy, were ‘risking their lives’. He assured her that, although ‘I have to be alone’ at times of
exhaustion, ‘I can stand being with you when I could stand being alone with no other human being’, and urged her to consider ‘all your patience’ towards him ‘as part of your contribution to the war’. Replying from a very hot New York, Barbara admitted having been ‘too talkative, too anxious to be with you, too reluctant to go to bed’, and promised greater consideration towards him in future.76

During the autumn of 1941, still trying to engage isolationists with world affairs, Angell borrowed from the previous world war his tactic of asking whether they favoured a post-war international organization. When chairing a Town Hall Club meeting in New York in November 1941, he was encouraged to find some opponents of American involvement in the war willing to support such an organization, alongside interventionists.77 His propaganda repertoire having been almost exhausted over seventeen months of campaigning, Angell was delighted when the following month his job was done for him by Japan, which attacked Pearl Harbor, and by Germany, which thereupon declared war on the United States. Nor, after taking a short break, did Angell find himself made redundant by the success of the interventionist cause. Rather, his services were more in demand than ever in 1942 as Americans went through their own national debate about war aims. He variously defended Britain’s position in India, Zionist aims in Palestine, and the case for international organization despite the competing claim of improved domestic welfare: ‘If we don’t get order and peace, “a pint of milk a day” is simply going down the drain.’78 In one eight-day period, 15–22 May, his speaking engagements across five cities included one radio broadcast, three public dinners, and two large meetings.79

Despite this burden of work, his fatigue lessened now that the British empire was no longer fighting alone. At the end of the summer of 1942, during which he directed a second summer school at Salisbury, Angell realized he was suffering fewer bad headaches, a development which pleased his brother.80 He was able to take on an intensive academic schedule during the autumn. Leaving New York on 18 September, he spent four weeks as a visiting professor at the University of Kansas City, Missouri, though the graded papers that survive from this visit show that some of his students achieved only a very elementary understanding of what he told them.81

While at the university his press activities continued unabated. He engaged in a long-distance controversy with Harold Laski, who had begun attributing Britain’s military setbacks to its lack of socialist policies at home. In a New Statesman article overflowing with imprecise insinuations Laski had suggested that because the Churchill government sought ‘to wage a revolutionary war without revolutionary means’, it had evaded ‘the social question’, and so had been obliged ‘to refrain from using the men and the ideas that the defence of democracy requires’.82 Taken to task by the New York Times, Laski had repeated his argument on its letters page, which is where Angell encountered it. In fact, his old adversary was merely advancing the socialist equivalent of his own claim, under the influence of John Stuart Mill, that a successful British war effort required a profound domestic liberalism. But in the twenty-seven months since publishing Why Freedom Matters Angell had become less Millian and more Churchillian.
He therefore fired off a rejoinder to Laski, insisting, as ‘an Englishman who is also a member of the British Labor party’, that Britain was ‘the most socialized State in the world’ with its planned wartime economy and egalitarian tax system, and that its prime minister was ‘bold and radical’. Angell’s challenge to the leftist view that reconstructing domestic society should take priority over rebuilding international order drew an admiring private response from Murray, who was himself worried that even the LNU’s rank and file had become preoccupied with ‘their own pet domestic problems, wages, or the vices of capitalism, or the banking system, or the proper constitution of India, and of course they are always saying that the real cause of war is domestic distress’. In reply Angell admitted feeling ‘very guilty not to have written more frequently this last year or two to old friends in England’, and pleaded in mitigation ‘book writing, lecturing, and the travelling it entails, [and] absorption in newspaper controversy’. This last had included a trenchant defence of Britain’s reluctance to hand ‘all powers of government in the vast Indian subcontinent’ to Gandhi’s Congress movement, which Angell depicted as ‘a single party, dominated by a mystic, hypnotic and incalculable personality, subject to changing moods’.

Moving on from the University of Kansas City in late October 1942, he made shorter visits to the Texas State College for Women, the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, the California Institute of Technology, Mills College in Oakland, the University of Colorado, Iowa State College, Ohio State University, Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, and the University of Rochester and Colgate University, both in New York State. This autumn tour kept him away from Manhattan, apart from a four-day break there, for almost three months. But he was back in time to address a Nobel Anniversary dinner on 10 December at the Waldorf-Astoria organized by the Common Council for American Unity: Pearl S. Buck also spoke; and Thomas Mann’s daughter read a message from her father.

Despite these distractions, and very much to his surprise, the book that Angell had been writing throughout the autumn of 1942 turned out to be his second best-seller. As he informed Harry shortly before his seventieth birthday, he had some months previously been commissioned by Viking Press to write a book under ‘some such title as “The People’s War”’, though, reluctant to ‘do the demagogic stuff’, he ‘suggested as an alternative title “The People’s Fault”, and then ‘compromised on “Let the People Know” – the implication in my mind being let them know the unpleasant things’. As ever, Angell had tried ‘giving the best statement [he] could to the isolationist case’ before providing his ‘statement of the British case’, though neither he nor his publisher had much liked the end product, because, as he later told Mrs Conkling Huyck, it had been written ‘in intervals of travelling and lecturing and professoring, which made good work difficult’. Indeed, the thrust of Let the People Know was not always evident, as reflected in its resort to clarifications such as: ‘If this book has a single text, it is that. . . .’ Yet ‘at the eleventh hour’ it was ‘suddenly chosen by the Book of the Month Club here for its January selection’, thereby ensuring ‘a preliminary printing of a quarter of a million’. 
Angell’s flawed manuscript must have appealed to the club’s selectors because of its ostensible open-mindedness. It conceded that isolationist doubts had ‘not been answered; only silenced by the bombs at Pearl Harbor’, and therefore acknowledged the worries of ‘John Citizen’ about Britain’s empire and its degree of state control. As regards the former, Angell insisted that if ‘the advice of some anti-imperialists had been adopted’ and ‘Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Egypt’ had been handed over, ‘the world today would be in Hitler’s hands’. Britain had de-imperialized, as Eire’s freedom to pursue a policy of neutrality was then demonstrating, yet for the most part had not done so ‘until co-operation between its parts for mutual defense had been secured by a voluntary tie replacing that of authority’. The United States was fighting not to preserve the British empire but to prevent its constituent territories ‘falling into the hand of the Axis’.91 Angell tried to allay concerns about increasing state intervention in Britain by likening it to President Roosevelt’s own reforms: he therefore admitted being ‘a Socialist in the British Labour Party or the American New Deal sense of the term’. He also reproduced a dryly academic account of the improvements in British social provision since 1906 – presumably a by-product of his lecturing in universities – to emphasize that it was nothing to be frightened of. Furthermore, he dissociated himself from ‘the language of Marx and the class war’ employed by ‘Socialists of the school of Mr Laski’, insisting that even in Britain it was the ‘“bourgeois” people, and ridiculing the idea that the allied states ‘must all become Socialist in order to achieve unity and military competence’.92 Angell also accused the Laski school of underestimating Churchill:

The most revolutionary step taken in the political, international field, in modern times, was taken by a Tory-Capitalist prime minister, when he offered an Act of Union to France.... Yet there is a section of the British left which has campaigned against Mr Churchill on the ground that he is not sufficiently revolutionary in a social sense.

And, in his boldest move, Angell assured his American readers that Churchill ‘would be ready to offer, with the full concurrence of his people, a Union not less complete with this country. In which event the dominant voice in the future course of the Empire would be with America, not with Britain; America’s voting preponderance would be as 130 to 45.’93 The somewhat haphazard structure of Let the People Know enabled Angell to fit in nods towards his latterly somewhat neglected educational theme, as in his observation that ‘the most learned generation the world has ever known seems to be in a fair way of proving itself the most foolish and cruel’.94 He also found space for another attack on Professor Carr, whose initials he inadvertently reversed to ‘H.E.’.95 Angell had abandoned his claim of sympathy for non-resistance. though his disparagement of appeasement as ‘pseudo-pacifism’ may have been the faintest of hints at a residual respect for the genuine article.96

Buoyed up by the Book of the Month Club’s decision, but dragged down by a heavy cold, he went to lecture in the mid-west in January 1943, being then depicted by a reporter as ‘a tiny, gray-haired, scrawny man, hardly more than five feet tall, who wanders about the country in a broad-brimmed black hat, a thick
woollen scarf wound around his throat and a fur-lined overcoat that comes down to his ankles’.97 Meanwhile, *Let the People Know*, although making his ‘radical friends . . . a little angry’,98 was receiving critical and popular acclaim across the United States. By April, when he acknowledged Cecil’s praise for his anti-Laski stance, Angell could without immodesty describe his book, which had already sold 400,000 copies, as ‘an astonishing success’. From its proceeds he gave the LNU a hundred pounds ‘to fine myself for my absences’.99 Indeed, because ‘there wasn’t an agitation . . . connected with it’, as he later noted, it yielded ‘more net financial result than had come from *The Great Illusion*’; and its royalties ‘were a particular convenience at a time when pounds could not easily be converted into dollars’.100 The book’s success triggered ‘more invitations to lecture than I could manage’, and also requests to write articles for popular magazines, give broadcasts, and attend literary luncheons.101

One of these invitations came from the Ministry of Information in London, suggesting a home visit, to which Angell willingly agreed. He gave Barbara power of attorney in respect of his American affairs, and sent off a long piece to the *New York Times* that challenged the right of a post-war settlement to ‘impose some particular new social or economic order, some particular type of government, on all nations’. Then, during the second week of August 1943, he made his first air journey across the Atlantic, which took thirteen hours. Accustomed to sea crossings, he found it ‘strange to have tea in New York and breakfast in London’. Having left Britain before the blitz, he was saddened to discover its capital city ‘so much gashed and wounded, dismembered and disembowelled, that in streets where for thirty years I had walked daily and would have found my way blindfold I now lose my way’.102 Reflecting on this visit later, he was further struck by ‘the subtle fatigue and consequent irritation of temper which had resulted from four years of blackout’ and which ‘gave the Leftists, extremists, crackpots their opportunity’.103 Based in London for three weeks, he could stay for what turned out to be one last time at 4 King’s Bench Walk, where Nicolson, with whom he lunched on 13 August, had repaired his chambers; and he also joined ‘a small dining group of British and American officials’.104 Then for much of September Angell toured Scotland, the north of England and the northern midlands, his principal message being that ‘our survival depends on the Russians being able to put up a good fight against the common enemy’.105 On returning to London, he was guest of honour at ‘a small eclectic tea party’ hosted by Kingsley Martin on behalf of the UDC, which now had only a vestigial existence, though the occasion enabled him to renew acquaintance with Vera Brittain.106 On 5 October Angell gave a lecture at Chatham House in which he coined the term ‘defensive interdependence’ – in effect an updating of ‘collective security’, a term tarnished by association with pre-war failures – which he also used in a radio broadcast that was taped for later transmission.107 He also discussed with Cecil a book on the reconstruction of the League, although this was never written; and in another recorded broadcast Angell called for the British empire to evolve into a ‘Commonwealth’ with each part ‘having the maximum of independence compatible with . . . common defence’.108 He also kept up his attack on the Laski tendency in the Labour Party,
informing the readers of *Headway* that the attribution of ‘the political anarchy of Europe . . . not to divisive nationalism, but to a bad economic system . . . surely puts the cart before the horse’.109

Around the beginning of December 1943 Angell returned to the United States for another winter of lecturing, in the course of which he received unwelcome personal news. As Harry notified him just after Christmas, Carrie had died that month after a long illness.110 In the new year, moreover, Lady Angell was admitted to a mental hospital; and although she was eventually discharged, Harry was left with ‘little doubt the hallucinations and delusion will return’. Indeed, he was soon proved right: in the late spring an incident led to Beatrice’s appearance before a magistrate. An attempt was thereupon made to certify her as insane, which failed because the doctors noticed that, as Harry put it, ‘she had “insight” – knew the hallucinations to be just that’.111

By contrast Angell’s existence in the United States during 1944, particularly after another demanding round of lectures from January to April had been completed, was almost embarrassingly congenial, and indeed had something of the air of a veteran campaigner’s curtain call. He was ‘away upon the Pacific coast – mainly in Hollywood – for several weeks’ in the late spring, as he explained to the biographer of Hilton, who had died the previous summer.112 During this California trip Angell gave an address, ‘What will the civilian do with victory?’, to the Free World Association of Hollywood in the CBS auditorium on 23 May.113 He also discussed a producer’s fruitless quest to adapt *Let the People Know* for the screen, and wrote a remunerative *Saturday Evening Post* article defending the British empire, which appeared on 17 June. On his return to New York, he learned of the ‘satanic nightmare’ of V-1 pilotless bombers crashing down on London.114 Counting his blessings, he made a second celebrity visit to what his brother called ‘the land of moral irresponsibility’ during the summer: on 5 August Angell was photographed with Lauren Bacall, Humphrey Bogart, and Howard Hawks on the Hollywood set of their Warner Brothers’ film ‘To Have and To Hold’, his observation to studio staff that half a century previously he had herded cattle across the site of their film lot provoking predictable incredulity.115 Angell also enjoyed the financial windfall of a specially commissioned article, ‘International Meddlers Must Be Curbed’, in *Reader’s Digest*, which was directed against leftist demands that a successor to the League of Nations should be based on a particular conception of ‘the ideal form of human society’. Though as ‘a Liberal, a socialist’ and ‘a member of the British Labor Party’ personally in favour of ‘progressive change’, Angell insisted that it was ‘task enough’ for such a body to guarantee the ‘national right to life’ of ‘all nations, big and little’ without setting itself domestic-policy standards too. Moreover, to accept leftist ideological demands would be internationally divisive: ‘The adjustment of the differences between nations requires a tolerant give-and-take attitude. But the revolutionary temper is always the reverse of tolerance.’116 He thus once more saw the goal of the war as self-determination and autonomy for all countries, despite what he had written in 1940 about the need for a more positive ideology – a deep commitment to liberty – on top of this.
Soon after Angell’s Reader’s Digest contribution appeared in October 1944 he went back on the mid-western circuit, predicting correctly to Mary Kelsey that this ‘shall be my last travelling lecture tour’. A further indication that as his seventy-second birthday approached Angell was winding down his activities was his dwelling upon the past. For the March edition of the Rotarian he had already written the sentimental account of his cowboy adventures with ‘John Pavey’, a composite character based mainly on W.O. Covert, which was mentioned in chapter three. In a stock-taking letter to Harry during July he had compared himself with ‘the writers of our generation – Shaw, Wells, Russell, Chesterton – who have had great success d’estime’ and considered that ‘in a generation of flying Bombs’ his ‘own work’ had enjoyed ‘as much’ influence as theirs. When pressed by Hamish Hamilton to write his memoirs, Angell claimed in November to have been trying to turn his ‘articles on Anglo-American relations in the Reader’s Digest, Saturday Evening Post, and Canadian publications’ into a book, but to have failed to ‘hit the spot’, despite ‘re-shaping it now for the best part of six months’. He therefore could not produce any memoirs soon, but promised that his next book would be ‘a combination of biography and a summary of what I have wanted to say’. As he started to think seriously about such a work over the winter of 1944/5, his bad migraines returned.

Even after the European war ended in early May 1945, his autobiography faced a logistical problem: as a preliminary he needed to put his papers in order, yet many of these were in England, where, even if he could get back there, he could no longer use either of his residences. Northey, which Angell now hoped to sell, remained desolate. ‘The pier by the Ark is down, the Ark derelict, decaying and looted’, Geoffrey Toulmin’s son Stephen reported after a disheartening visit, though Angell’s tower-house study remained ‘good and light’ and most of his papers survived, as did a large number of ‘dyspepsia tablets’. 4 King’s Bench Walk had been reclaimed as chambers for practising barristers for whom working space was scarce in consequence of the severe bombing of numbers 1, 6, 12, and 13 in that terrace and of other parts of the Temple. In any case, with insufficient shipping available he could not get a re-entry permit, as he told Mary Kelsey, though, as a government employee who needed to be redeployed, Barbara returned to London.

Alone in New York and no longer touring, Angell was to his surprise still in demand as a pundit: he received many requests to interpret for American readers the fast-changing world in which their country’s role would evidently be crucial. In response to these ‘demands for articles d’actualité’, as he described them to Harry on 19 May 1945, he explored five themes. One was the consequences of new military technology: even before atomic weapons were used on Japan, he was noting how ‘the robot bomb, the pilotless plane’ was making the world more dangerous. A second was the need, in replacing the League with a United Nations Organization at the San Francisco conference, not to treat ‘power as
wicked per se’, but to ‘make it the instrument of security, peace and national freedom’. A third and closely related theme was the importance, ‘when no nation anywhere can defend itself by its own power’, of ‘defensive interdependence’, particularly as between the United States and Britain. A fourth was that colonial empires should be not dismantled but ‘transformed by steady evolution into unions, like that of the British Commonwealth’.

The fifth and most problematical theme was, of course, how to handle communism. The previous summer he had predicted to Harry that ‘relations with Russia are going to be extremely difficult yet not so difficult as to be impossible’, and had emphasized the need for Anglo-American unity because ‘Stalin respects power (and very little else)’. In the spring of 1945 Angell was struck by the fact that, in addition to its own military strength, the Soviet Union was in the unprecedented position of having ‘volunteer agents and instruments for the increase of its power scattered throughout the whole world’ in the form of communist and other leftist movements. ‘What group of statesmen anywhere in history would be able to resist the temptations for power thus presented?’ he asked rhetorically. The challenge was how to ‘meet, not a plot or the machinations of bad characters, but the forces represented in the West by a faith, a fanaticism, which comes into conflict with the principles upon which western society had been increasingly developed ever since the Renaissance’. In addition to meeting the ideological challenge posed by the Soviet Union, the west needed to condemn its denial of self-determination in eastern Europe. Angell was therefore critical of what he saw as America’s ‘hush-hush policy based on the assumption that any whisper of criticism would mortally offend the sensitive souls in Moscow’.

Writing on these topical matters distracted him from his memoirs. ‘I don’t get on with the autobiography at all’, he was admitting by September 1945 to his niece Muriel Sheahan-Dare. He had sufficient self-knowledge to realize that part of his difficulty was that the ‘habit of “argument” has become so ingrained’ that he could no longer simply ‘tell a story… interestingly and simply’. Obliged to remain in the United States for the winter of 1945/6 as he struggled to learn the narrative art, he retreated to the General Oglehorpe Hotel in Savannah, Georgia, in order to escape the cold. His principal journalistic concern by the spring was the international left’s move away from a ‘position of freedom towards the position that power must be used to enforce the true doctrine’. He was also disturbed by Walter Lippmann’s advocacy at this time of American detachment from what he presented as an Anglo-Russian contest for control of Germany. In parallel with his memoirs Angell began planning a book on these and other issues related to the incipient Cold War.

In late May 1946, with the assistance of the British Information Services, he finally secured a sea passage to Britain. He used the Hayes family home in Finchley as his London base and contact address. Unlike in the aftermath of the previous world war, he took little interest in Britain’s partisan and pressure-group scene. This was despite the fact that Labour had formed its first majority administration, with Clement Attlee, who had cut his political teeth
in the UDC in the early 1920s, as prime minister, and with Noel-Baker as a junior minister. Angell did not even find time to meet Cecil, who with Murray was struggling against the odds to make the United Nations Association a worthy successor of the LNU. Instead, Angell went to Northey, where he later remembered staying ‘in a house without windows, without water, and with very little roof’, an experience that he described at the time as ‘camping…in an effort to sort out papers from the blitz and rescue records and documents’. After a few weeks he visited Holbeach, where he arranged to sell the island to his nephew Eric Lane, who was also to purchase a farm on the adjacent mainland in order to create ‘a workable economic unit’, while his wife Nora concentrated on rebuilding the farm cottage and restoring the tower house. Angell took for granted that he could still use Northey during summer visits, and perhaps even build his own bungalow there. He then returned to the island, ‘again camping in the midst of old papers’, before taking some of the material back to London, where the lack of a ‘pied à terre’ of his own irritated him. Needing to honour speaking engagements in New York, he left very abruptly at the end of October when, again with official help, he ‘was offered a berth on a banana ship going to Montreal at twenty-four hours’ notice.

He made no progress on his memoirs in the late autumn and exceptionally severe winter of 1946/7, although he was encouraged to receive reports from his island’s future owners of reconstruction work there: “Things certainly do move on Northey, what with the German prisoners of war and all. It is delightful for me to get news of such doings and to think that the poor old island is really and truly being rescued.” Instead, Angell’s mind was focused on contemporary issues. In addition to local lecturing, he was writing up ‘a book which I have been at work on more or less for two years’, as he informed Wrench, pointing out that otherwise he would have done more journalism ‘to blast the mischievous leftists’ – Zilliacus, now a Labour MP, not least among them – who were jeopardizing Anglo-American relations. Angell had decided to call this The Steep Places: An Examination of Political Tendencies, and was scheduled to finish it during January 1947 in Savannah, where he took another winter break. In early February he informed Hamilton that he wanted to take more time over a work about which he had developed ‘a feeling that it may come up to “The Great Illusion” standard in the sense of provoking discussion’. He eventually sent off the manuscript six weeks late in mid-March, though its production in Britain was in any case delayed by ‘fuel cuts’ in that crisis winter.

Reflecting the extra care put into its completion, The Steep Places began with a twenty-page introduction, ‘What This Book Is About’, which helpfully disentangled the four main factors considered in the ensuing text: atomic weapons, British decline, increased Soviet influence, and the emergence of United States as a world power. On the first of these, Angell showed sound judgement. The atomic revolution meant that the ‘pleasures of belligerent nationalism’ had ‘suddenly become suicidal’, particularly for ‘the New Yorks and the Londons’, though they ‘could not finish a population dispersed over the vast spaces stretching between, say, Stettin and Vladivostok; or wipe out the innumerable villages of China or
of India’. However, the risk of nuclear war did not entail ‘a policy of benevolent neutrality towards Russia’, which, he predicted, would pursue its goals through ‘a revolutionary ideological appeal to minorities’ rather than ‘through the instrumentality of the bomb’. Indeed, atomic weapons ‘despite our fears may never be used’.146

Angell’s account of British decline started gloomily but ended on a surprisingly upbeat note. In response to the country’s recent decision to reduce certain of its international commitments, he began by warning of a ‘dissolution of the British Empire accelerated by . . . a crisis so severe as to amount to threatened collapse of the country’s economic foundations’. A quarter of a century earlier, during the downturn that began two years after the previous world war, If Britain Is to Live had noted that international independence was being disrupted by Balkanizing nationalisms, with dangerous consequences for a nation like Britain that depended heavily on trade even for its basic sustenance. Now The Steep Places saw the same dislocating role as being played by industrial unrest: food that had once been locally grown ‘now comes from Buenos Aires or Chicago, where a lock-out has stopped its production; or a lorry-driver dispute keeps it piled up in the factory’, placing ‘the people of these islands . . . in imminent danger of finding themselves without the most elementary needs of life’. As well as failing to condemn ‘the unofficial strikes, the absenteeism’ that were further hampering the economy, the country’s ‘Leftist idealists’ were for ideological reasons denying the obvious fact that, if Britain needed to ‘export or die’, as the government slogan went, then it must ‘export mainly to Capitalist countries or die’. This required good relations with such countries; but the same leftists were hindering these by their ‘new version of Little Englandism’, which was rooted in the dogmatic ‘sense of right, of eternal justice’ that afflicted them, as it did most ideologists and indeed many religionists. Yet, despite such pessimism and apparently as an afterthought, Angell concluded the book with the notably confident claim that ‘the British Commonwealth and Empire’ was capable of ‘co-operation with the United States on broadly equal terms’, provided it agreed to ‘apply the means of expansion and growth which United States adopted: annexation of a sizable portion of Europe by the simple process of annexing groups of its people: commonly the most energetic and able’. In other words, the Dominions needed to repeat America’s immigration-fuelled economic miracle, though if the ‘British Communities scattered throughout the world’ failed to liberalize their immigration policies, they could not ‘blame Russia or the Communists’ for the dire consequences.147

In respect of a rising Russia, potentially ‘the most self-sufficient country in the world’, Angell combined ideological suspicion with confidence in its containability. He was impressed by neither the material nor the moral standards of Soviet life. Poverty, inequality, and tyranny were greater than in the west, yet most leftists ‘either ignore, or deny or hotly defend the methods used in Russia’. And, as had been pointed out by Max Eastman, whose views had also moved to the right since he and Angell had first met through the Fuller family in the First World War, the Soviet regime consciously resorted to duplicity. Despite its many
failings, however, Angell believed: ‘We can learn to live with her at peace by agreeing to differ’. He did so in part because of his middle-opinion assumption that differences ‘between Socialism and Capitalism tend to be exaggerated’, given that ‘Capitalism everywhere in the world is becoming socialised’ and that the Soviet Union had ‘been driven to adopt features which the pioneers would have condemned as most heretically Capitalist and bourgeois’. Peaceful coexistence could be achieved only through the containment rather than the accommodation of communism. Insisting that Churchill ‘alone of all living men’ could have rallied Britain ‘in time’ to survive its wartime emergency, Angell took a suitably Churchillian view of the Soviet threat, warning that the ‘seizure of power by minorities has happened again and again, all over the world’, and ridiculing the view ‘that Russia’s relationship to the Governments of Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, is merely the application of a Russian Monroe Doctrine’.148

The sections of The Steep Places that reused material written in or before early 1946 presented Anglo-American leftism and isolationism as the principal threats to a western policy of containment. Angell had then feared that the ‘complete somersault’ in respect of Nazi Germany performed by communists and their fellow travellers in June 1941 was being imitated in respect of the British empire by much of the American left, which had now resumed its ‘earlier position, that Britain, prompted by her imperialism, is the criminal’. But by the time he finished the book many in the United States had recognized the Soviet threat; and Angell had moved to the contrary worry, namely that ‘American opinion is tending to take on more and more the nature of a crusade against Communism’, whereas he wanted the country to eschew provocative moralism of this kind in favour of defence-minded realism, and ‘build up power, not against Communism, but against aggression’. In doing so, moreover, the United States should bolster rather than bully the British empire, which had been essential to the defeat of Hitler, and whose ‘liquidation is no simple thing, and . . . done clumsily . . . may bring disaster on the world’. By 1947 Britain had reached ‘a position similar to that occupied by France in 1918 . . . largely drained of power’: it was therefore as much in America’s real interest to forge a defensive alliance with it today as it had been in Britain’s real interest to stand by France during the interwar period. Such Anglo-American cooperation had an excellent pedigree, Angell pointing out British foreign secretary Canning’s role in the formulation of the Monroe doctrine.149

For a considerable part of The Steep Places Angell explored his still inchoate psycho-educational theme. Forgetting the federalism with which he had flirted during 1939/40, he concluded his introduction by dismissing constitutional solutions to the west’s problems and insisting: ‘Wise politics demands above all understanding of human nature, the requisite of which is understanding ourselves first of all.’ The goal was to identify ‘the subjective obstacle which prevents the truth being seen’ and so answer the question: ‘How may we get a sounder public opinion?’ Now that the full horrors of the Third Reich were known, he realized that merely ‘to say “education” says almost nothing’, given that the Germans had been ‘the most highly “educated” people in Europe.'
Though Angell willed psychology to become as rigorous a discipline as nuclear physics, he knew that as yet it was ‘a science in which the doctors differ’ and with which ‘the layman-citizen’ struggled. He could do no more than repeat yet again his observation that men still ignored ‘the commonplace knowledge derivable from the facts of daily life’, notably a ‘truth so simple that it lies at the very basis of all organised society… that any secure defence must be collective’. Thus unable to make explanatory progress, he itemized recent and current follies instead. In particular he complained that leftists failed to understand that both world wars ‘were wars of power politics in the sense… that power politics are the policy of not being overpowered’, which made them ‘basically political and psychological’ in their causation, rather than economic. Even so, he counselled against ‘panic pessimism concerning the possible improvement of public wisdom’.  

Having despatched the British edition of this substantial and serious work, Angell could turn his mind to other pressing issues, particularly the crisis in Palestine. From New York in April 1947 he warned Cecil that the city’s Zionists were ‘bedevilling Anglo-American relations and the international situation generally as much as the Irishry have done in the past’, and that American opinion in general refused ‘to believe that the Arab difficulty is real. They believe that Britain invented the Arabs, as for so long this country believed she invented the Hindu-Moslem difficulty in India.’ His solution, as he informed Barbara, was for the British government to tell the Jews in Palestine: ‘Any policy to which you can get Arab consent – immigration and what not – will get ours.’ Having in June failed to secure an early passage to Britain and then suffered a period of illness, he was further detained in New York by the need to oversee the Harper version of his book, which took much of the summer. That he thus tailored its presentation to the different needs of his American and British readerships was another sign of his taking unusual pains.

He reached London in mid-September 1947, in time for the publication there of The Steep Places early the following month. Hamish Hamilton warned him that it might not be ‘reviewed immediately’; but, as the Times Literary Supplement noted, ‘fortune smiles upon his work’ to the extent that its appearance was followed within days by the Soviet bloc’s creation of the Cominform, which marked an ideological intensification of the Cold War and ensured press attention. Angell’s six-week visit to Britain was mostly ‘taken up with work connected with this book and with broadcasting and what not’, as he reported to his niece Muriel. He admitted being ‘pleased’ at the reception of a book on which he had worked ‘so hard… for two or three years as to become stale about it’. He was still developing its ideas, particularly its last-minute suggestion that the British Commonwealth had the potential to undergo the same economic transformation as the United States. In both a radio talk taped for later transmission and an article for the Spectator, to which he had begun contributing regularly as a result of renewed contacts with Wrench, now its proprietor, Angell pointed out that the Dominions possessed ‘territories and resources far greater than those of the United States, but a population of only thirty millions’, and needed now to adopt the same liberal immigration and labour policies as those from which he
had benefited as a teenager when he had entered America ‘without passport’ and taken ‘a great variety of jobs…without reference to any union restriction’. The doubts about Dominion independence which had caused Angell to criticize the Statute of Westminster in 1931 had resurfaced: ‘A planned economy married to economic nationalism – as when a New Zealand (say) insists upon the exclusion of the products of British industry in order that it may plan its own – presents us with a whole series of dilemmas.’

156 His visit somewhat reassured him about Britain’s economic and political condition: it was ‘producing – and exporting’ as much as ever; and for the most part ‘the old tolerance and sanity remain’. For an American magazine he therefore sent a notably sympathetic account of the privations and egalitarianism of British ‘austerity’. 157 He also corrected the proofs sent by Harper, and completed the sale of Northey.

On 30 October 1947 he sailed for the United States, where over the winter he promoted his American edition, which soft-pedalled the role of the British Commonwealth and replaced mentions of ‘the British communities scattered throughout the world’ with allusions to ‘the English-speaking peoples’. 159 Barbara had already been transferred back there, and was again installed in the apartment at 501 West 113th Street that he described ‘as his home’ to a New York Post journalist who interviewed him during the winter. The resulting article reported that Angell kept the window open even on a cold day, managed only ‘five or six hours of sleep’ at night but topped this up with an ‘after-lunch siesta’, and regarded ‘books, papers and taxicabs’ as his greatest extravagances. 160 As he tried to return to his memoirs, the Cold War entered a distracting new phase, so it was not surprising that he airbrushed his former pacifist leanings from his narrative while he fretted about the pushing westward of the Iron Curtain. His journalistic response to the communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 was to urge that ‘sanctuary…be found for those who flee or fear forced return to the slave camps or prison torture chambers behind that curtain’. 161

In preparation for spending the summer in Britain, he arranged, as he informed Barbara’s mother, for ‘three-quarters of a ton of papers which I have accumulated here during the last six or seven years’ to be shipped directly to Northey to join his archive there, ‘where I hope at last to have leisure to go through the accumulation, make a bonfire of what I don’t want, and use the remainder in a biography and possibly one more book I may write’. He notified Eric Lane that he might even ‘start on the building of my hermit’s cave or bungalow somewhere off in the garden’ – a sign that he had not yet emotionally surrendered the island.

Angell left New York on 5 May 1948, and proceeded as quickly as possible to Northey. His English summer had its positive aspects. He travelled to Brown’s Hotel in London to discuss possible commissions with John Buchan’s son William and other staff of the new British edition of the Readers’ Digest, and also located his original contract for ‘The Money Game’, which he was hoping to relaunch. 163 But in general it was depressing. He was soon complaining to Carolyn Schuyler Joy, who had replaced Mrs Stanoyevich as his New York secretary, about working conditions on the island:
I had hoped that by May the house here would be in order for me and that I would be able to spread out my half ton of papers from New York and another half ton I have in cupboards here; consider them in quietude and solitude, decide what was relevant to a biography; think out quietly how to do it, with ample elbow room. ‘Instead of which’ the place crawls with builders, plumbers, carpenters . . . and not one nook anywhere to sort out either my papers or my thoughts. So my headaches still pursue me.164

Perhaps in reaction to his loss of control over the island, Angell also felt himself to be ‘a broken down crock’, as he reported to Wrench, so that even that year’s ‘glorious, real summer’ weather did not ‘help me physically’. He sent Harry a formidable catalogue of his ailments to show to a medical colleague:

I am 75 years of age [an accurate estimate of his age for once]. Between the ages of 40 and 60 I was subject to frequent headaches. . . . Since the age of sixty the headaches have been of a steadily increasing frequency and intensity, until, during the last two or three years, they are present three days out of four and can only be made tolerable with the help of aspirin, APC, and, just lately, ergotomine tartrate. . . . On most nights I am awakened after three or four hours (I seldom sleep more than five) by a sharp headache which gets worse unless I have coffee or tea and get up and move about. . . . I have had from time to time very thorough physical overhauls: blood-pressure, barium meals, X rays for sinus, X rays of the whole of the skull, eye tests by opticians. . . . I have been free of very serious illness; never had a major operation. Fifty years ago I had a dose of what the American doctor who attended me called typho-malaria. I have had no venereal disease. True, I have had to cope with constipation by use of enema and glycerine suppositories; but this has not seemed to distress me very much. . . . I do not smoke. Alcohol is confined to two or three glasses of sherry a day; practically never more than this. . . . In the past I have taken excessive quantities of tea and coffee. Not now. . . . A New York doctor (London and Vienna degrees) who has treated me for the last year or two insists that the cause is, as he puts it, “psychogenetic”: the outcome of irritations, angers, urges, resentments, which I repress because expression strikes me as uncivilised. I am not conscious of such a process going on within me, except perhaps a somewhat intense irritation at being interrupted in work I want to do by trivial social obligations which I feel unimportant but which I cannot without discourtesy decline. The discourtesy would distress me more than the waste of time does. This dilemma may have become sub-consciously more acute since at 75 one is bound to have a lively sense of the shortness of time before one, and be correspondingly savage at having to waste it.165

The psychosomatic diagnosis by the New York doctor had an element of plausibility. Angell’s health problems had begun in the emotional turmoil triggered by his Geneva theatricals and indecision over emigration (1891), had disappeared during his physically demanding Californian excursion (1892–7), and had returned during his decade and a half in Paris (1897–1912) perhaps as much because of marital strain as because of his night-shifts on newspapers. The account he sent his brother implied that his migraines had become entrenched when he controversially espoused neutralism and embraced left-wing politics during the First World War. Their exacerbation in the late 1930s was possibly the result of an intellectual crisis caused by his claim that pacifism was his preferred policy and Churchillianism merely a practical fallback. They had seemed to ease for a while when the outbreak of war ended this pretence and
also gave him a clear propaganda purpose, and again when America’s embroilment in the conflict increased the prospects of victory. But they had worsened from 1945 as he struggled to make sense of his personal story; and when at last he finished his memoirs he was revealingly to describe his ‘curious illness’ as being ‘made worse by the daily demonstration of my failure, and by my anxiety about the future’.166

There were contributory physical causes too. His health concerns of the late 1930s had coincided with his reaching the normal retirement age. And after consulting Harry’s medical colleague in person on the day before sailing back to the United States in early October 1948, Angell wondered if perhaps he had simply been ‘eating too little’. On the boat back to New York he went down with one of the severe though common colds that so frequently debilitated him. His uncertainty at this time about how long he would live was indicated by the fact that, in sending Wrench a diatribe against ‘Leftist errors’, he prudently appended some ‘“obituary” data’ for his friend’s future use.167

Angell reached Manhattan on 16 October 1948.168 As his seventy-sixth birthday approached, the Cold War became even more acute: the autumn and winter were marked by the Berlin airlift and negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty. In consequence of both age and events, he moved further to the right. On 8 December he discussed ‘What is wrong with the Left?’ over a long lunch with the American proprietor of Reader’s Digest, though he explained Labour’s popularity in Britain as ‘much more the result of the war crisis, actual shortage, than of socialist doctrine on Continental lines’.169 The magazine paid him ‘as usual, a perfectly fantastic fee’ for another commissioned piece, ‘Robertson is Above the Law’, which appeared in February 1949, being promoted as a ‘penetrating insight into the demagoguery of wild-cat strikes’. ‘Robertson’ – who had been Flannigan in Angell’s original text – was ‘a collective person’ found ‘in most countries’ but doing particular damage to the economies of the United States, Britain, and France.170 On 21 February Angell told the New York Council of Federal Union that a North Atlantic Pact would fulfil the principles of the Monroe doctrine and halt communism.171 These conservative and realist themes not only reduced his enthusiasm for telling his life story but also distorted his interpretation of it. He admitted to his publisher that each time he had turned to his autobiography in recent months he had suffered ‘a fit of boredom’, and informed him that he now intended to focus it on his disillusionment with socialism and on the ‘strange contrast’ by which the most left-wing generation in history was ‘the one most in danger of blowing itself to smithereens from its inability to restrain its animosities’. In virtue of this change of thrust, he would now call it ‘Reflections on the Left’.172 Some lightening of Angell’s mood occurred, however, when at this time he met the last of the spirited young American women in his life: Marion (‘Sunny’) Lozier, a student horn-player whose cleverness – she could pick up languages with remarkable speed – was matched only by her glamour. She rapidly became another honorary niece: in her case the deal was that her musical education would be subsidized in return for sorting and transcribing his papers.173
In mid-April 1949 Angell returned to Europe, with ‘an informal and private roving commission from Reader’s Digest’ to discern ‘economic trends’ there. This took him briefly to Paris, where he met up with Langelaan, was greeted in the rue du Sentier by one of his former printers as if he had never been away, and inquired about musical training for ‘a young niece of mine’, though high French restaurant prices intensified his fear of inflation. He then went to Northey on 31 April for a sustained effort on his autobiography, sleeping in the now fully repaired farm-cottage bedroom once occupied by his Viennese refugees. It proved a happier experience than the previous year. Initially on his own, he found that, although ‘being an author, cook, housemaid, wood collector, all in one has its trying side’, his headaches were for a time ‘much better’, presumably because he was fully extended. Shortly afterwards, his latest ‘niece’ joined him from the United States in order to arrange his papers and transcribe some of them: she was explained to Harry as his ‘young American secretary’. He was grateful that Barbara, at work in New York, seemed initially not too put out by the arrival of a young woman by whom he was obviously fascinated. ‘It was good of you to “accept” Sunny Lozier’, he acknowledged to her in July. With Harry as well as Eric and Nora also coming to the island during the summer, his 1949 visit turned into an acceptably sociable one. He even decided that membership of a London club – his first since being expelled by the Bath during the First World War – would be desirable: Lord Beveridge therefore agreed to propose him for the Reform. Cheered by good company, his memoir-writing made progress, though on being contacted ‘after so many years’ by Dennis Robertson in September 1949, he claimed it was ‘a gloomy occupation’ that had caused him to ‘regret party association for so long, and particularly to feel that Leftism had not made the world either safer or happier’. He also felt burdened by the extra work that had arisen as an unintended consequence of his call for Commonwealth development, complaining to Harry that he had become ‘involved in an aspect of refugee work – migration to the Dominions, not Britain’ that ‘a group of newspaper men, notably Astor and Hulton, had ‘more or less “wished” on me’. Angell left Britain again at the end of October 1949, by which time Sunny was installed at the Guildford School of Music. Britain had devalued sterling by thirty per cent the previous month, intensifying Angell’s worries about the economic and political situation he was leaving behind. In a third commissioned piece for Reader’s Digest, ‘The Worker under British Socialism’, written in New York during the autumn, he identified two dangers arising from the fact that most British workers felt obliged to join a trade union affiliated to the Labour Party. First, he believed that with the party of the left having the electoral advantage of this guaranteed mass support, the country was moving ‘towards the establishment of the one-party state’. Second, and even less plausibly, he argued that because workers in nationalized industries had the government as their boss, they were turning to ‘syndicalism’. When Labour called a general election for 23 February 1950, Angell admitted to Searle that ‘if I were in England, I should, despite my thirty-year membership [of the Labour Party], vote Conservative this
time’. Given the Attlee government’s leading role in the creation of NATO and its capacity to curb its left wing, the reason Angell gave for this volte face was unpersuasive: ‘with Russia in possession of the hydrogen bomb, governments in the west will have to move with circumspection and moderation, which I don’t think you would get from a Labour party that ran the risk of being run by its extremer and more violent-minded elements’.183 He was developing a habit of overstatement. After making a couple of appearances on American television to discuss what turned out to be a narrow victory for Labour, he described this ‘strange election’ to his god-daughter Alice as ‘un-like anything that has happened in English history for a hundred years’. Commiserating with Behrens, who had stood unsuccessfully in the Liberal interest, Angell described the overall result as ‘part of the dreadful confusion which has befallen politics the world over’. His increasing conservatism and declining judgement at this time were even causing him ‘to see more of the Southern white’s view’, as he artlessly avowed in the autobiography that was at last beginning to take shape.184

Although Angell’s humane sympathy for displaced persons survived, it was now entwined with a Cold-War calculation that ‘a liberal, though not necessarily unrestricted immigration policy’ on the part of the Dominions was needed to ‘maintain our bastion against the sheer deadweight of the Eastern nations, armed with the technology (including atomic technology) of Western science’. He noted shrewdly that past liberal policies had paid off handsomely for the western democracies. In particular, had it not opened itself up to immigrants of varied ethnicities the United States would not have become strong enough to play its part in stopping German and Japanese militarism: ‘Without the non-Anglo-Saxons, Anglo-Saxon institutions would have gone down.’

185 Despite the distraction of attending committees on the refugee and migration questions and the handicap of migraines that now reduced his working day to three or four hours, Angell had during this winter been writing what he expected to be the final text of the ‘wretched autobiography’ that had ‘bothered’ him, as he admitted to Harry, like ‘no book’ he had ever done before. The dates on various drafts of the introduction indicate that it was being fair-copied in the weeks beginning 1 February 1950.186 In promising his publisher the manuscript ‘before August’ Angell blamed ill health for the length of time it had been taking him.187 Even so, he was fearful that he would not have peace and quiet when he arrived on Northey to finish the job because Eric and Nora were planning land-reclamation work; and their hint that others wanted to use the farm cottage made him realize that his ‘hold on the Island’ was of a ‘tenuous nature’.188

Crossing to Britain in April 1950 and proceeding soon afterwards to Northey, Angell felt ‘a guest . . . in what I hoped would be my own house’ – an experience he unfairly blamed on Nora Lane rather than on his own decision to sell. His consequent ‘reflection about the future’ prompted him to write one of his delicate letters to Barbara reminding her she could ‘still marry and have children’ , while gallantly professing that, if she were to do so, he would feel ‘in one half of me a deep sadness (a few years ago I might have felt deep jealousy) but the other and sounder and juster half of me would rejoice that you were fulfilling a woman’s
Acknowledging that Sunny Lozier, who came for a second secretarial summer on Northey, was now entrenched as one of the ‘adolescent “women in my life”’; he took the opportunity to reassure Barbara that he had not started ‘at seventy-six… going in for “cuties”’ and knew that ‘in most respects she is a wanton little gold-digger’ who was cultivating a number of ‘uncles’ in order to fund her musical training. Barbara’s response was evidently jealous, for Angell’s next letter insisted that there was ‘no question of a girl of [Sunny’s] type and age, conceiving a “grande passion” for a man approaching eighty’, and that ‘whatever my interest in Sunny, it has not affected in the tiniest degree my feeling for you’. He also pointed out that he had never felt put out by what, he implied, were her equivalent relationships: ‘the friendships you have formed with Aina, or Eva, or Fran, or Carol or Anthony or…’. Although falling short of a categorical denial of intimacy with Sunny, this reassurance seemingly calmed Barbara in the short term. But it perhaps also made her more upset when at his death she came across the letters they had exchanged. She later confessed to Alice having been ‘appalled . . . and . . . considerably distressed by some of the discover-ies’ she had made when she ‘found a great deal of [Sunny’s] writings, photos, etc, in boxes of N.A.’s personal correspondence which I inherited as his Literary Executor’.

With Sunny’s attentions compensating not only for Angell’s guest status but also for ‘a relapse’ followed by yet more ‘maddening ill health’, he spent the spring, summer, and early autumn of 1950 on the island. Indeed, he claimed to have left it only once, which must have been for the launching in Westminster on 4 May of ‘The New Era of Emigration’, an all-Party organization to encourage a full flow of emigration from Europe to the British Dominions and to ‘other democracies handicapped by inadequate population’. Sheer persistence plus Sunny’s assistance enabled him to finish After All to his satisfaction; and he despatched it only a couple of months late to Hamish Hamilton. However, by the last week of October his publisher had come back to him with demands for ‘considerable’ changes, which was scarcely surprising given the ragged and ranting aspects of what he had submitted. Each chapter petered out into what the introduction honestly yet unappetizingly called ‘a selection of scattered notes that bear more or less on the theme of that particular chapter’. And Angell’s impractically hybrid conception of ‘an autobiography which should at the same time be a stocktaking of ideas’ as he had described it to Wrench three years before, had clogged his life story with opinionated interpolations. Most of these flew the west’s flag in the Cold War; but a few took up previous themes, including one of his earliest, latterly played down in order to support the League of Nations or curry favour with the supporters of Federal Union: that ‘attitude’ was more important for the prevention of war than ‘plan, or design, or union, or federation’. Hamish Hamilton’s complaints jolted Angell, who complained to Barbara: ‘I’ve never had a book so questioned by a publisher… They want a “straight narrative”, more personal and less political and philosophical.’ But he obediently took his typescript back to New York for major rewriting.
Before doing so, he kept a number of appointments in London. He gave the second Eleanor Rathbone lecture in Caxton Hall on 3 November 1950, which was published as *Freer Migration and Western Security*, developing the argument that, if the Dominions failed to develop economically on American lines, ‘the western democracies will not possess sufficient power to resist the expansive presence of totalitarian societies’.\textsuperscript{197} Two days later he had his first encounter for many years with Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, now a gaunt sixty-nine-year-old grandmother, whom initially he had difficulty in recognizing. The day after that, apparently motivated by financial worries, he saw his solicitor, North, instructing him to warn his wife that her current annual maintenance of £250, which on account of inflation he had only recently raised from £150 to a sum equivalent to his ‘nett English income’, might soon have to be reduced or even terminated. Angell also made a new will, which perhaps further to reassure her, appointed Barbara as his executrix.\textsuperscript{198}

Embarking on 7 November 1950, he suffered both ‘food poisoning of some kind’ and ‘very heavy weather’ that made him ‘sea sick for the first time in nearly fifty crossings’\textsuperscript{199} – a claim indicating that he had forgotten those of December 1891 and May 1916. Back in New York as Chinese troops entered the Korean War, he melodramatically informed Alice that he might ‘wake up one morning to find bombs dropping on the city’.\textsuperscript{200} Over the winter, despite a ‘beastly bout of illness’, he with exemplary self-discipline rewrote ‘about half’ of his autobiography. He posted it off on 17 March 1951 with the exception of a final chapter, which, after further indisposition, he despatched the following month.\textsuperscript{201}

Although with his autobiography out of the way he no longer had the excuse of consulting his papers on Northey, he decided to spend another long summer there, giving his reasons on 15 April 1951 in another careful personal statement to Barbara, whose employment tied her to New York. He claimed that ‘a sabbatical few months in the open air’ would give him ‘the best chance of reducing these headaches and drug-ridden weariness’, and that the ‘rent free, inexpensive domestic arrangements’ on the island were also a consideration, given that his ‘stock of dollars’ was ‘coming to an end’. Moreover, he suggested that his absence for some months from their shared apartment might reduce the ‘smouldering resentment’ he often provoked in her.\textsuperscript{202} It was evident, too, that he was thinking about returning permanently to Britain. Shortly before departing he gave his interviews to Columbia’s Oral History project, whose office in the Butler Library was only one block from his apartment. The invitation to record these constituted the first recognition that he was a figure of some significance, though for his part he seemed at least as keen to expound his current Cold-War concerns as to explain his historical contribution. During one of these interviews he admitted that, having ‘made my summer stay on Northey longer each year’, he might ‘find a final retreat in Northey Island’ during his coming visit, though it was also possible that ‘in the fall of 1951 I shall be back in the United States as usual’.\textsuperscript{203} On 24 May, just two days after finishing these tape recordings, he made what indeed proved to be, as his autobiography also predicted, his last exit from Manhattan as an American resident.\textsuperscript{204}
He reached London on 1 June 1951, just in time for Alice’s confirmation into the Church of England the next day, when he playfully abused his role as godfather by teasing her headmistress about the failings of conventional religion. Less enjoyably he learned the following week that his wife had alienated her landlord by giving further trouble to her neighbours. Angell’s rightward drift meant that during the summer he was commissioned by Wrench on a retainer of £3 per week to discuss with up-and-coming politicians how the Spectator could be developed into an influential mouthpiece for the full spectrum of anti-socialist opinion. Angell suggested holding dinners, on the model of Churchill’s ‘Focus’ luncheons, to discuss the threat posed by the leader of Labour’s left wing, Aneurin Bevan, who had walked out of the Attlee government in the spring. Angell’s eagerness to confront leftism at this time contrasted with his reluctance to promote organized internationalism: the lame excuse he sent Murray from Northey for not helping the United Nations Association was that his ‘health’ required him ‘to be such a hermit on this Island’. With another general election called, Angell claimed in the Spectator of 19 October that many in the Labour party regarded Bevan ‘as a far greater menace than Mr Churchill’, and accused the Conservatives of ‘complacency’ about the threat the Labour left posed. He even insisted: ‘The salt of Toryism is now needed to prevent the spread of a disease which has already covered half the earth, and which, if disregarded, may yet engulf the other half.’ Yet he held back from the change of party that his views seemed to require, reminding his readers that he was ‘not a Tory’. His panic about British domestic politics ended when the Conservatives won the election of 25 October, despite polling fewer votes than Labour.

Even before this welcome result Angell had resolved to remain in his native country. He had decided against building a bungalow on Northey, where residence during the summer and early autumn of 1951 had reminded him that he no longer ruled the roost. Moreover, Sunny Lozier was in London; and the increasing frailty that put him into hospital for observation in mid-October made a central location more practical. On 17 October Barbara bought a detached three-bedroom house, ‘known as the Entrance Lodge to Fernden Hill near Haslemere’ for £3,700. This was an attractively bucolic location, now called Fernden Lane, on the edge of the neat Surrey town where her parents now lived, and which possessed a railway station from which London could be reached in less than an hour. Angell funded at least part of its purchase by selling a considerable number of shares, but never legally owned it: it was presumably put in Barbara’s sole name in order to secure her economic future, and avoid the death duties that would be incurred if he owned it and then willed it to her. He renamed it ‘The Stone Cottage’, which he considered ‘simple, descriptive, natural, unpretentious with no suburban fancifulness or gentility’. Angell moved from Northey to Haslemere at the end of November 1951, a month before his seventy-ninth birthday, and was to live there for fifteen and a half years. Using the rough-and-ready methods applied to his homestead claim and his island, he adapted his new home to his simple wants, in which frugality and fresh air took priority over luxury and warmth. To haul himself up the stairs,
he fixed a piece of piping to the wall as an improvised rail. From a gas cylinder on the ground floor he ran another pipe straight up through the ceiling to a stove improvised from a kipper box. Though adequate for his culinary habits – in spite of taking the trouble to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden, he boasted of being ‘the quickest cook in Christendom’ – a large burn on the dressing gown he left behind on moving out suggested that this was not the safest of arrangements. He lived on his own, apart from a stray cat, and the occasional visitor willing to ‘make allowances for a bachelor-hermit establishment’, and in winter for extreme cold too. A housekeeper came in regularly and was empowered to cash small cheques on his behalf.212

His occupation of The Stone Cottage in November 1951 coincided with another milestone in his life: the publication by Hamish Hamilton of After All. Despite the revisions he had been required to make, it still showed the flaws that his publisher had identified. Even so, Angell’s longevity in public life and the colourful nature of his early life ensured ‘generous reviews on both sides of the Atlantic’.213 It also sold well in Britain, though less so in the United States, where, having failed to satisfy Harper, it was issued by Farrar, Strauss, and Young. Enjoyment of his new home and the successful release of his troublesome autobiography gave a short-term boost to his health. Although complaining that it remained ‘damned uncertain’, so that he was intermittently ‘laid flat’, he admitted that he had ‘got through the winter without any really bad cold’ and that his ‘headaches’ had been ‘less violent’.214

Unable to give more than an occasional lecture, however, Angell spent the early months of 1952 worrying about money as well as world politics. Anxious ‘to find out why I’m not selling stuff as I used to’, as he admitted to Mrs Conkling Huyck, he searched for subjects of appeal to magazines, finding one in ‘Franklin Roosevelt’s naïveté in thinking he could win over Uncle Joe’.215 In May, despite having his first review published in the Times Literary Supplement, he felt obliged to cut his wife’s maintenance back to £150 per year.216 In August he was engaged to address a Royal Empire Society summer school in Cambridge, where, sounding more like a Tory than ever, he stated ‘the moral case for the Empire’. He also showed his distaste for colonial nationalism as endorsed by most socialists, noting that the ‘slogans shouted these last few years by the schoolboys and students in the streets of Cairo and Teheran have been taken almost verbatim from British Leftist literature’, and insisting that the ‘claim of any nation to be completely independent and sovereign is an anti-social claim, incompatible with the rights of others’.217

Over the next eighteen months he became more than ever convinced that the ‘voice of the People . . . encouraged in emotional indiscipline . . . is pretty certain to be the voice of Satan’.218 He was increasingly fearful that in consequence of McCarthyism ‘American opinion now regards the menace of Communist China much as British opinion regarded the German menace before 1914’ with a similar risk of war. He also concluded gloomily that since ‘the worst manifestations of self-defeating nationalist passion or partisan fanaticism seem to be in Egypt, or Persia, or Burma, or Indo-China, or China, or Korea, or Trieste, or
Guiana... there is not much we in Britain can do in the way of improving ideas in these distant places.\textsuperscript{219}

As Angell’s political anxiety rose in this period, his health again deteriorated. To Columbia University he pleaded ‘recurrent illnesses, which made work impossible’ as the main reason for not having approved the draft transcript he had been sent almost two years before, though he also claimed to have found it ‘in parts incoherent and incomprehensible’, and wondered whether the secretary transcribing his interviews had been troubled by his English accent\textsuperscript{220} – if so, a far cry from his days of passing himself off as an American. In consequence his oral history did not become publicly available until three years after the original recording sessions.

Meanwhile, Angell had for a second time been recognized as a historical figure. In the spring of 1953 he was approached for information about his career by Mary Klachko, a young student of Ukrainian origin who was writing a paper about him for her course at Columbia. Though keen to help, he first kept her waiting because of illness, and then unintentionally misinformed her even about the argument of his magnum opus: ‘“Arm the law not the litigants” is a principle I enforced with all the energy of which I was capable in my book which appeared before the First World War, “The Great Illusion”.’ Having read the book, Miss Klachko knew otherwise, and so admitted difficulty, ‘coming from an occupied country myself’ , in accepting its ‘conquest does not pay’ thesis.\textsuperscript{221}

During the summer of 1953 Barbara left the British Information Services, compensated with an MBE in the Coronation honours list, and took up a similar post for the English-Speaking Union, of which Wrench was the founder. Being now based mainly in London, she sometimes saw Angell at weekends while visiting her parents. Perhaps because he had seen much less of her since they lived together in Manhattan, he convinced himself that she had ‘greatly improved over the years’.\textsuperscript{222} But when Barbara soon turned against her new job, he again worried that she was missing the ‘domestic relationship’.\textsuperscript{223}

Angell himself was starting to be troubled by mishaps and age-related ailments on top of his headaches. A broken rib led to complications that required him to be ‘in and out of hospital’ at the end of 1953.\textsuperscript{224} When during March 1954 he dined in London with Rosalinde Fuller, he regretfully declined an invitation to stay over at her flat because ‘for physical reasons I cannot spend a night away from home just now’.\textsuperscript{225} The following month he complained to Murray that he had to be ‘a good deal of a hermit here in Surrey’, and so had few opportunities ‘to exchange notes’ about how ‘to prevent the promised game of Bowls with H Bombs’. Angell’s intuition that ‘we look at the world through pretty much the same windows’ was correct, because Murray too had voted Conservative and come to disapprove of colonial nationalism. Angell informed his old friend of his concern that McCarthyism and crusading rhetoric in the United States were creating justifiable alarm in the Soviet camp, so that it was crucial ‘to convince Moscow that our purpose in the cold war is not to destroy Communism but to prevent aggression’.\textsuperscript{226}
Despite these worries, Angell could on occasion enjoy himself. In May 1954 a fourth commission from Reader’s Digest enabled him remuneratively to advocate a ‘worldwide British Union’ as a way of helping the west meet ‘perhaps the most serious threat that Christendom has ever faced’. Five months later he was judged by the Noel-Bakers to be ‘on very good form’ when he visited their Belgravia home. Especially in private Angell was capable of a zestful cantankerousness in respect of the foibles of other nations. ‘Why do the three great Latin Powers – France, Spain and Italy – show such grave political deceit?’ he asked Alice in November. ‘Has Catholicism anything to do with it?’ The eightieth anniversary of his birth – as he believed it to be – attracted gratifying attention. On 16 December he again went to town to record a television interview with the celebrated BBC broadcaster Gilbert Harding. To mark the same occasion, Eric and Nora commissioned August John to paint him for the National Portrait Gallery, though the distinguished artist’s illness postponed its execution until the following year. Angell’s own response to his supposedly significant birthday was a ‘stocktaking’ of his ‘sixty years of journalism, pamphleteering, book-writing’, which concluded that his ‘forecasts have stood up pretty well to the test of time’ although his expression of them had all too often been cluttered by incidents. In the version of this stocktaking published in an American magazine he admitted ‘much failure in the purpose I set myself’, and reiterated his warning that ‘the voice of the people can often be the voice of Satan’.

Just after what was in reality Angell’s eighty-second birthday on 26 December 1954 he was plunged into a domestic crisis. He was contacted by a stranger who, having seen him on television, wrote via the BBC to report that his wife, living at 37 Lamb’s Conduit Street in central London, had deteriorated alarmingly: ‘She is like a bag of bones tied up in rags. She is filthy dirty and smells like a pole cat.’ Despite her physical decline, Beatrice was as combative as ever: a kindly acquaintance, dropping her some food early in the new year, reproved her gently for a ‘rather naughty’ letter she had sent him, and urged her to be more considerate towards all her ‘very nice neighbours’. These well-meaning Londoners watched out for her, summoning the police on 29 January 1955 after she suffered a stroke. She was rushed to hospital, where she was found to be paralysed down one side and unable to speak. Angell paid £20 for the ‘complete rehabilitation’ of her flat by the Public Health Service, which had been ‘unable to get anyone’ to clean it during her occupancy ‘because of her behaviour’. More alarmingly, he needed an affordable care home, and in a state of high anxiety consulted a niece, Alexander’s daughter Mary Lane, a psychologist at the Maudesley Hospital, whom he had first to fill in on the unfortunate facts of his marriage. Mary not only came with Angell to discuss the situation with his solicitor, but also visited Beatrice in hospital on his behalf, informing him on 4 March that she had not regained the power of speech and was ‘in a pretty parlous state’. Eight days later Lady Angell died, aged eighty-two, her funeral taking place at Golders Green Crematorium on 18 March in Angell’s presence. She left no will; but her ‘few belongings’, including some personal papers, went to Angell, who probably acquired new information about her early life as a result. His solicitor’s
judgement upon her demise was indisputable: ‘for everybody, including for your wife, it might have been happier if it had occurred many years ago, for she has led a most miserable existence for a good ten years past, at least’. Beatrice’s death was followed within a month by a loss for which there was no consolation, that of Harry, his closest and – Will having not survived the war – last surviving sibling, who died on 8 April. Angell now felt some responsibility for Harry’s unmarried daughter, Nancy, who had never recovered from the death of her brother Dermot in the final days of the First World War. In addition, Sunny Lozier was no longer able to provide support, having abandoned her musical education and returned to New York.

Although Angell responded to these problems by carrying on as usual – for example, he reviewed three books for the *Times Literary Supplement* during the next twelve months – his spirits dropped to their lowest level at this time. Old associates attempted generously to raise them. In July 1955 Macmillan, now foreign secretary, went out of his way to remind the House of Commons of *The Great Illusion*, which ‘when I was a boy before the First World War... had a great vogue’, and to commend its author for having been ‘before his time’. The following month several friends from that era, including Lady Barlow, Behrens, Benson, Nixon, Murray, Lady Rhondda, and Wrench, sent a letter to *The Times*, which, on the flimsy pretext of welcoming that summer’s temporary thawing of the Cold War, praised ‘Sir Norman Angell’s contribution to the peace of the world’. In September Augustus John completed his portrait, and was given permission by the sitter to reproduce it in a Sunday newspaper. Despite these encouragements, and an invitation to address the English-Speaking Union, Angell still believed himself forgotten. ‘I’ve lived too long’, he told the British policeman-turned-journalist C.H. Rolph, who interviewed him for an American radio station after he turned eighty-three in December. ‘The people who once listened to me are all dead. No one will listen now.’ He also claimed to have collapsed in his garden the previous evening and to have been found by the postman in the morning, unconscious, wet, yet seemingly otherwise none the worse. It proved ‘a saddening experience’ for Rolph thus to discover ‘one of the pagan gods of my adolescence... ending his days in relative poverty and loneliness’.

Yet during the spring of 1956 political challenges to British authority in Cyprus and the Middle East rekindled some of Angell’s old fire. In an article in the *Sunday Times* of 15 April, ‘Suicide of the West’, he insisted that colonial nationalism, now ‘a monstrous and satanic evil’, had ‘helped powerfully towards the amazing territorial expansion of Communist power in the past decade’ and was contributing to ‘the still more frightening Communist conquest of the human mind’. He felt frustrated that most people nonetheless turned away to private pleasures, explaining to Alice that it was vital to persuade the kind of people who turn out a hundred thousand strong at a cup tie that the drama of civilisation – whether we are to commit a vast suicide with H-Bombs or as an alternative accept the Communist police state or have enough intelligence to make our
lives full and happy – that all this is a play, or drama, that can be more exciting, more absorbing than anything happening at Lords or the Oval.\textsuperscript{243}

Anger and irritation of this kind enabled him to fight back against his ailments. ‘This damned demon of migraine still tears every morning at my brain with tigerish claws, but I still manage to do a little, a very little work in the lucid intervals’, he told Mrs Hamilton in June.\textsuperscript{244} The following month he warned in \textit{Time \& Tide} that because of nuclear proliferation ‘the future risks may come less from Heads of State than from small fanatical nationalist minorities of the IRA, Cyprus, Mau Mau, Moslem Brotherhood variety’.\textsuperscript{245} In August he was visited by Sunny Lozier, now interpreting for the United Nations.\textsuperscript{246} In November he was further peppep up by the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, which, like Murray, he supported, though in Angell’s case more to protect Israel and thwart the Soviet Union than to uphold international law as such. In the \textit{Sunday Times} of the 11th of that month he thus asserted: ‘Egypt has lost her independence to Moscow’. Later, after his interpretation of events had been queried by his former ‘Focus’ colleague Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, he was to explain:

The UN – that is, its members – having created Israel, had an obligation to defend it against repeatedly declared Arab intentions (supported year after year by numberless acts of hostility) to destroy it. If this obligation continued to be evaded, the UN would suffer the fate of the League and collapse in the welter of passionate rivalries (the combatants having H. Bombs available) which would follow the destruction of Israel by the Arab-Moslem world, armed and used by Moscow as a tool of further imperialist expansion.\textsuperscript{247}

Because by the end of 1956 Angell had regained some visibility as a pundit, he was approached by Pall Mall Press to write what was provisionally entitled ‘The United Nations and the Liberal Idea’. He signed a contract in January 1957 for his ‘farewell book’, as he described it to Murray, emphasizing the ‘one point to which throughout I’ve attached most importance’, namely the ‘tendency of modern conditions to turn democracies into mobs, and for mob psychology to swamp and distort the Liberal idea so that the watchwords of liberalism become catchwords which the Bulgansins, Khrushchevs, Nassers can use with Asiatic multitudes as tools of demagogy and despotism’.\textsuperscript{248} In an article for the \textit{Daily Telegraph} in February, Angell complained that the United States had contributed to this process by its incessant denigration of colonialism, as a result of which Britain, worn down by ‘the hypnotic power of words which have been sanctified by tradition or folk-lore’, had been persuaded that ‘the proper alternative to colonial status is complete independence’. In taking this line, the United States had ignored the circumstances of its own creation, because the ‘obvious lesson of the North American Union’ was that ‘it qualified, limited, sharply restricted and sometimes even flatly denied...the independence and sovereignty of its constituent States’.\textsuperscript{249} Thus, although Angell had recently joined the Liberal International, he now believed that the Anglo-American liberal tradition had been guilty of ‘bamboozlement’ in allowing communists to appropriate ‘all the Liberal watchwords, particularly national independence, self-government, self-determination’. Even this claim, made in \textit{Time \& Tide}, elicited a protest on
behalf of Liberalism from the normally deferential Behrens.\textsuperscript{250} But Angell soon went further, telling delegates at the annual meeting of the Liberal International (British Group) that their ideology ‘embraces a fallacy and a falsehood, that the voice of the people is the voice of God’.\textsuperscript{251} He thereby indicated that he had lost not only his sense of proportion, as he panicked in face of colonial nationalism, but also his intellectual grip, since seventeen years previously he had berated E.H. Carr for wrongly assuming that the likes of Mill had made over-optimistic assumptions about human wisdom.

A review by Angell in the \textit{Times Literary Supplement} of 5 April 1957, his nineteenth in five years, proved to be his last. The decline in his powers was apparent as he thereafter grappled ineffectively with his book for Pall Mall Press. Despite comprising a mere 116 pages, many of which reused material from recent articles and addresses, it occupied him until late summer. This painful period of composition was punctuated, however, by welcome visits from Mary Klachko, whose research had switched to naval policy, and from Sunny. In addition, his admirable secretary of thirty years before, Ida Robertson (née Neilsen), had moved to the Haslemere area, and helped him to send off his text in August.\textsuperscript{252} Yet, despite having identified the need to ‘put Satan behind us in politics as in certain other matters’, Angell had no idea how to achieve this. He contrived to link his two current bogeys – the H-bomb, and ‘the illiterate African, Arab or Asian states’ – by noting that ‘a nuclear war’ would leave ‘life and civilization to be carried on by . . . those living in the great spaces of Russia, Siberia, China, in the deserts or impenetrable jungles of Africa and South America’. But his remarks about nuclear deterrence did not come close to matching the sophisticated analyses emerging at this time from academic specialists in strategic studies; and in respect of the Third World he had only alarmist, and at times offensive, platitudes to offer. Forgetfully, Angell now claimed that it was the atomic revolution that had undermined the ‘glory and trumpets’ view of war, even though three decades before he had credited the First World War with precisely this achievement. Inconsistently, moreover, when emphasizing the horrors of nuclear weapons, he first argued that a ‘clean’ bomb ‘does not at present exist, and it may be some time before it does’, then, perhaps realizing that this might justify the pacifist claim that the evils of nuclear war outweighed any conceivable benefit, switched to the assertion that ‘now with the H bomb in its cleaned and smaller form becoming an almost conventional weapon, we are in a sense back where we were’. Significantly, Angell had softened his support for the Suez invasion. He now admitted that the Anglo-French ‘police action’ had been ‘perhaps blunderingly attempted’. He even conceded that the creation of Israel ‘may well have been a political mistake’.\textsuperscript{253} Indeed, he confided in Murray that he ‘often cursed [himself] for having played a small part in promoting the Zionist idea’ in the belief that ‘the Jews could be trusted not to make everlasting mistakes of the nationalist the world over’.\textsuperscript{254} Even so, both privately and publicly, Angell insisted that, having been created, Israel, even if conventionally prone to chauvinism, was entitled to international protection.
Once again he failed to take his educational theme any further. His part four, ‘Can Education Save Us?’, was only ten pages long; and his excuse that this was because he needed ‘to sum up with a brevity that can do more than hint’ was self-deceiving: he was brief because he had little to say. No less disappointing was the epilogue on recent events that he added as ‘the proofs of this book go to the printer at the end of 1957’. He plausibly took comfort from the fact that the recent demonstrations of Soviet rocket power had helped to bring the United States and Britain closer together after their rupture in the Suez crisis. But he then became preoccupied with two domestic issues, inflation across Europe and political instability within France, and in response to them suddenly questioned the view ‘of nationalism as the main difficulty in international co-operation’.

Given that he had spent so much of his career denouncing nationalism, it was extraordinary for him to start querying its importance in the final section of what proved to be his final book, even though it exhibited an impressive open-mindedness. He would have done better to comment on the economic recoveries in West Germany and Japan, which, by gaining more from trade than from their former militarism, were bearing out the argument of *The Great Illusion*; but after two decades of ignoring his *magnum opus* he had almost forgotten about it. When *Defence and the English-Speaking Role*, as it was eventually entitled, came out early in February 1958, the *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer (Cyril Falls), having charitably acknowledged that it was ‘never less than the work of a high-minded man or an acute mind’, felt obliged to point out that ‘the threads are not as of old gathered up to lead to firm conclusions. He has set himself a thesis but not clarified it.’

It was some compensation for having produced a disappointing book that Angell was contacted again early in 1958 by Wilk Haycock, who began to fill something of the void left in his life by Harry’s death. The regular letters from his old supporter and parliamentary colleague extended Angell’s valetudinarian horizons to encompass dietary supplements, organic food, and acupuncture. The intellectual companionship they offered helped keep him doggedly at his typewriter even though his well of inspiration was running dry. He managed a final contribution to the *Contemporary Review*, which bemoaned the failure of ‘Western political philosophy, if one can speak of such a thing’ to match communism’s capacity for self-promotion. He also wrote his last essays for *Time & Tide*, his long connection with that journal being severed by the death in July of Lady Rhondda. The first of these posed the question ‘Can history be so taught that it would help understanding?’, thereby giving his educational theme a new twist by invoking a discipline other than psychology. But it could suggest nothing of substance about useful historical lessons. By contrast the second essay jumped back almost six decades to Le Bon’s herd-instinct theories by alleging that when ‘men act collectively as a group – nation, political Party, Trade Union, Church, or even as minorities within such groups, they become subject to a… psycho-pathology, a mental illness’; and, although insisting that ‘a properly designed education’ could provide a cure, it could not indicate what this might consist of.
Soon afterwards Angell suffered a major physical setback: just before midnight on 11 August 1958, while taking his nightly stroll on the hill next to his cottage, he caught his foot in a hole in the ground, and badly broke his femur. Having shouted for half an hour, he was heard by a passer-by, and taken to hospital, where he spent a month before being sent home to bed. He was incensed by the banal cause of his injury, given that in his time he had ‘busted broncos and sailed a little yacht single handed for weeks together without accident’. He was confined to bed for fourteen weeks in all, before ‘beginning to hobble about’ with a metal crutch. His bedridden phase, during which Harry’s daughter Nancy acted as an efficient ‘nurse-secretary-housekeeper’, may explain his acquisition of a small television set. His hobbling-about phase, by giving him time to rummage through his possessions, enabled him to find his birth certificate. He thereby discovered himself to be not eighty-four but eighty-six, which chimed better with how elderly he felt himself to be.259

During his slow recuperation over the autumn and winter of 1958/9 Angell did ‘a series of articles for American magazines, some broadcasting for the American service of the BBC, a couple of tape-recorded addresses for a women’s organisation, and one or two other jobs while in bed’.260 Hope still triumphing over experience, he also began ‘planning a “farewell” book on the failure of Western education to endow the multitude – voters, Trade Unionists, electorates – with anything approaching a sound political judgement’, as he put it to Haycock.261 He could pose questions, as he did for example to Mary Lane: ‘what has technical psychology to say to it? . . . If education has any bearing upon it all, what bearing?’262 But he was no nearer to answering them, as was revealed whenever he wrote on the subject. In a paper on ‘Education for the Nuclear Age’, which because of his accident was presented in his absence to a conference of the National Union of Townswomen’s Guilds on 20 November 1958, he produced some powerful rhetoric, attributing the advance of communism to ‘a sort of hypnosis induced by the endless repetition of words’, and denouncing some members of the recently formed Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament for claiming that ‘if you don’t agree to this policy of unilateral disarmament, then you are indifferent to human suffering’. But he still had nothing of substance to say about the ‘properly designed education’ that was needed to neutralize propaganda tricks of this kind.263

His intellectual difficulties were no less apparent in the autumn of 1959 when for a fee of $1,000 he contributed an epilogue, ‘The Quest for Enlightenment’, to the book of essays with which the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was to celebrate its half-century the following year.264 Now fearing that nuclear weapons were likely soon ‘to be within the reach of the new, sometimes very turbulent and unstable governments in the Middle East, in Asia, and in Africa’, Angell suddenly reverted to federalism of a utopian kind that he had not contemplated since the 1939/40 heyday of Federal Union. Despite a more recent return to his original scepticism about ambitious international structures that were not founded grounded upon genuine political support, he called for ‘some world authority amounting to a world government with police powers of
inspection and control’, without explaining how this could be achieved. He made progress with his educational remedy for the west’s continuing ‘political superstitions which block necessary measures of sanitation’ only to the extent of adding the Cold-War stipulation that ‘the average student in the west’ must learn ‘to state the case for a free society as competently as most Russians learn to state the case for Communism’.265 Yet his continuing inquiries about this subject came to the attention of Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, founder of the Council for Education for Citizenship, who invited him to dinner in December. Russell was invited to join them, but, still poles apart politically from his prospective fellow guest – he strongly supported the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament that Angell had criticized – coolly doubted ‘whether much purpose would be served’ by so doing.266 Despite having diligently done his physical exercises and regained the ability to walk unaided, Angell remained in low spirits, and had begun ‘an attempt to clear my desk by way of preparing for leaving it’. Lacking sufficient confidence in his reputation to believe that a library or an archive might wish to acquire his personal materials, he inquired of Dennis Robertson whether he knew of ‘a younger’ at Cambridge University who might be interested in being given his annotated collection of ‘some two thousand books dealing with my particular aspect of international affairs’, and complained of being ‘smothered under papers – a collection of some sixty or seventy years’.267

Early in 1960 Angell’s self-esteem received a boost. He was invited, along with other Nobel Peace laureates, to a Conference on the Reduction of World Tensions at the University of Chicago on 11–15 May. The millionaire founder of the Pugwash conferences, Cyrus Eaton, offered him hospitality in Cleveland too.268 Angell also made the stop-over mentioned in the introduction in order to stay with Alice and her husband, who were living in Pittsburgh, and then visited New York to talk to a publisher and see Sunny. The trip proved ‘pretty strenuous’, he admitted to Behrens. ‘The week in Chicago meant three, sometimes four meetings of one kind or another every day; and in addition I had meetings at Pittsburgh, Cleveland and New York.’ Yet it revealed a gratifying transatlantic interest in his opinions, prompting the conclusion: ‘I’m certainly more in demand in the US than Britain.’269

For the remainder of the year and the early months of the next he devoted his declining energies to his ‘farewell’ project. On 1 September 1960 he drafted a somewhat negative opening: ‘This book does not in the ordinary sense attempt to “review” the forty-five books by the same author which preceded this one.’ On 21 April 1961 a revised effort announced the more positive aim ‘of reaching and influencing certain ancient and deeply rooted sources of political disorder’.270 But he was unable to find either a structure or an argument.

He must therefore have found it a cheering distraction when in mid-May 1961 he was telephoned from Ball State Teachers’ College in Muncie, Indiana, by an American academic, Robert LaFollette, who had heard from a local admirer of Angell’s work who had recently visited The Stone Cottage that his library might be available. On being warned that Angell’s books were much scribbled in, LaFollette responded that such marginalia ‘would add considerably to their
value’, prompting Angell to reflect that there ‘would never be a re-action of that kind from any British University’. LaFollette came to inspect his collection on 8 June, and four days later reported to his college president: ‘Many research studies and dissertations can be drawn from these sources by doctoral candidates. Indeed, a major undertaking could be the writing of the biography of Sir Norman Angell himself.’ Within a fortnight the president had offered Angell £1,500 down for such books and papers as Angell could immediately spare, with the same amount payable to his executor when the material retained for his current work was sent on in due course. By the end of the month Ball State was publicizing its smart acquisition.

No sooner had the future of Angell’s books and papers been so satisfactorily determined in June 1961 than Barbara Hayes became a source of concern. By now in her fifties, she entered a particularly unhappy phase as a result of her difficulty in establishing comfortable relationships in either her working or her private life. Having left the English-Speaking Union five years previously for a new job in London, she decided in the autumn of 1961 to return to the United States, Angell being unable to attend a farewell lunch because he had broken his dentures and did not want to travel toothlessly to town. The agitated state of mind she revealed in her early communications home, seemingly the result of a problematical romantic attachment, troubled her parents and Angell alike; and they were greatly relieved in the summer of 1962 to receive ‘proof that you are truly your old competent self once more’, as Angell put it with affectionate bluntness. He assured her that no one would ask ‘questions as to why this, why that; what are your relations with Ernesto, and so on’. Even so, Barbara remained mentally fragile, leading Angell to suggest that she adopt ‘the habit of thinking of yourself as someone else – as Jane Smith with whose aires you happen to be intimately connected’ so as to be able to take decisions more objectively.

By then Angell was blaming his failure to make progress with his farewell book on the ‘quite new facts . . . that must be dealt with . . . the whole H. Bomb issue, unilateral disarmament à la Bertrand Russell, but also other movements that have taken on a real momentum – Common Market, European Federation, Britain’s place therein, the Commonwealth . . . and so on and so on’. As he struggled to keep pace with events, he drew some comfort from the first signs that his fellow countrymen were perceiving his historical significance: two Oxford graduate students destined to become prominent historians, Martin Gilbert and Keith Robbins, interviewed him during 1962. By coincidence Gilbert was also editing a volume in honour of his former undergraduate tutor, A.J.P. Taylor, who had recently resigned his Oxford University teaching post in high dudgeon. After a number of contributors to this controversial venture dropped out, Angell agreed to write an essay, despite never having even met Taylor. Angell saw his contribution, which he initially intended to call ‘History and the Child’, as an opportunity to develop the approach he had tentatively begun in his penultimate article for *Time & Tide* four years before.
The timetable for contributing to Gilbert’s book slipped, so, instead of immediately composing his essay, the new nonagenarian spent the ‘Siberian’ early months of 1963 making a selection from reviews of his books and having facsimiles made of them and of some other personal material. These were bound into a book of 154 large-format pages, *Norman Angell by His Contemporaries: A Random Collection of Reviews, Criticisms, Comments, Discussions, Letters from Readers, Caricatures, Sketches. Issued privately for Personal Friends and Some Students*, which he disseminated as widely as he could in an effort to remind the world of his former fame. Whilst doing so, he received the further encouragement of a luncheon in the House of Commons on 18 February to celebrate his ninetieth birthday: unlike the similar event thirty-three years previously, which had been spoiled for Angell by MacDonald’s absence, Macmillan, though now prime minister, not only attended but proposed Angell’s health. It was organized by the United Nations Association, which, not having itself received any help from Angell, must have done so in its capacity as the LNU’s residuary legatee. Insisting that there was ‘no merit in being ninety years of age’, the guest of honour used his reply to warn about a third world war. Perhaps it was the excitement of this occasion that triggered a ‘sudden change’ for the worse in his health, in the form of ‘devastating fits of fatigue’ – possibly a mild stroke. This setback required the late cancellation of a visit in March to give an address at Ball State, where the first batch of his books and papers had arrived the previous autumn. He was laid low for weeks, his recovery complicated by back problems that made bending difficult. It was some compensation that a doctoral thesis exclusively devoted to his work was now being undertaken: an enterprising Sussex University research student, Rodney Fielding, first came to talk to him about this on 22 May. On that day, coincidentally, Angell sent off his essay, now re-titled ‘History Teaching and the Voter’, to Martin Gilbert. Its argument was that in order ‘to render the youngster more conscious of the psychological forces which underlie the worst features of political behaviour’, it was better to offer ‘some elementary anthropology – stories of how men in the Stone and subsequent Ages lived and behaved and thought’, and of how in some cases they achieved a ‘transformation of conduct’ for the better, than to give ‘the youngster scraps of Freud or Jung’. It would have been Angell’s last significant publication even without the further delay that turned Gilbert’s book into a celebration of Taylor’s sixtieth birthday.

Angell spent the three years from the spring of 1963 to the spring of 1966 ‘still hammering away at that “farewell” book’, as he informed Behrens on 30 December 1963. He was increasing constrained by nonagenarian irritations: when congratulating Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale on becoming a great-grandmother at this time, he admitted that, though still able to travel, he found it ‘disturbing at ninety-one to have daily habits, siesta and so forth, upset’. He was able to link his educational and anti-inflationary themes in a letter that *The Times* published on 28 April 1964: ‘Economics has formed no part of popular education. Has this no bearing at all on the means by which we may hope to check the drift to ever more inflation?’ Yet throughout that year his writing went ‘desperately slowly’, as he reported to Haycock in June, so that the ‘the best I can
hope is that I shall finish it before I pass in my checks'. By 11 November he was experiencing 'fears that my “farewell” book may not be finished in time'. Two days later, 'Friday, the 13th appropriately', he slipped 'on the tiles at the bottom of the stairs' and suffered 'sprains and pains making me nearly a cripple'. Over the winter and spring he stuck to his task whilst sensibly lowering his sights: the introductory chapter he sent in June 1965 to his publisher envisaged that his farewell book would largely consist of lectures he had given over the years, including his address to the Norwegian Nobel Institute thirty years previously. This introduction, which cannot have enthused Hamish Hamilton and was never published, proved to be Angell’s last substantial composition. In the autumn, having in the meanwhile signed Linus Pauling’s plea for a negotiated end to the rapidly escalating Vietnam war, he reported to Laura Conkling Huck that his working day was reduced to ‘a couple of hours in the morning, or a little more’. Fearing that Angell would be unable to continue writing, or even stay, through another English winter, Haycock implored the new Labour prime minister, Harold Wilson, ‘to send you to a warm climate . . . and to get you secretarial assistance’, and received a reply that was sympathetic enough to pass on to Angell in November. In February 1966 the denizen of The Stone Cottage succumbed to influenza of sufficient seriousness to be reported in the press.

It was extraordinary, therefore, that only a month and a half later he made a three-week trip to the United States. On 30 March 1966 he made a new will, appointing Eric Lane, John Jacoby, and a local solicitor as executors. Apart from small bequests to helpers, it divided his estate between Nancy Lane and Barbara Hayes. To the latter Angell left an additional £500 ‘for the purposes of promoting the sale of any book or books which I may have written during my lifetime’ – evidence of concern for his legacy and perhaps also of his hope to bequeath a final testament in publishable form. Barbara accompanied him as he travelled to receive an honorary doctorate of laws from Ball State University (as the former teachers’ college had by now become) on 13 April. He thereby acquired his first academic qualification at the age of ninety-three. It meant a lot to him: it was as ‘Sir Norman Angell, LLD’ that three days later he sent a letter to The Times in London, though it was not published; and the heading of his printed notepaper was changed in order to incorporate his degree. An addendum to the agreement about his papers and books was signed during this visit to Muncie. Unfortunately, Barbara’s clumsy attempts to prove herself essential in securing his comfort there left a lasting legacy of dislike; and her subsequent paranoia that Ball State would use his papers for muckraking research almost poisoned the Lane family’s relations with that blameless institution.

This American visit, Angell’s twenty-sixth, was his swansong. Barbara began shielding him, as she informed an American research centre behind his back, from certain ‘invitations which, on account of age, cannot be accepted and which previously he would have much wanted to do’. In July 1966 Angell was in any case too restricted by a troublesome knee to keep an engagement in the west of England. The following month, coincidentally yet symbolically, the long-moribund UDC decided officially to terminate its existence fifty-two years after
he had co-founded it. In mid-August Angell was still able to manage ‘a good long chat’ when Martin Gilbert visited him in Haslemere.297 He spent the winter of 1966/7 there, and, after visiting Barbara’s cousin John Jacoby and his wife in the spring, hoped as late as 4 May 1967 to return their hospitality at The Stone Cottage.298 But it was already apparent to his family that he could no longer cope. Later that month he was taken in by Eric and Nora at Serpentine House, Holbeach, which was to be given as his address for probate purposes. They kitted him out with new clothes, as he had not bothered about his wardrobe for many years.299 In June arrangements were made for his remaining ‘books and papers’ to be transferred there from The Stone Cottage,300 though Barbara, intending to write a tribute of some kind, kept back some of the more personal material. She was pushed into a breakdown by his departure from Haslemere, and went into hospital for a time.301 Needing specialist care himself, Angell was placed in a nursing home at 33 Birdhurst Road, Croydon, Surrey, in the late summer. Even there he behaved as if he could still keep up with his correspondence and accept invitations: on her visits Alice humoured him by taking his dictation, and producing letters for him to sign, though she did not send any of them off.302

Angell’s self-deluding institutionalization was mercifully unprotracted: he died peacefully in his nursing home on 7 October 1967, eighty days short of his ninety-fifth birthday, and almost exactly fifty-eight years after finishing the original version of The Great Illusion.

NOTES

2. Information from Alice Angell Everard.
7. T&T, 2 Sept. 1939, 1179.
8. AA, 334. A to J. Hilton, 28 Nov. 1939: BSU.
10. Ibid. 260.
11. Ibid. 255, 269.
12. AA, 331.
17. T&T, 2 Dec. 1939, 1529.
18. Ibid., 2 Mar. 1940, 214.
22. A to P. Noel-Baker, 12 Dec. 1939: BSU.
23. A to J. Hilton, 28 Nov. 1939: BSU.
25. A to J. Hilton, 28 Nov. 1940: BSU.
27. Ibid. 65–7.
30. AA, 330.
37. Ibid., 1 June 1940, 579–80.
40. A to M. Kelsey, n.d.; A. to L. C. Huyck, n.d [both written between 4 and 12 July 1940]: BSU.
52. D. Jones (American Relief Society) to Lady Angell, 19 Nov. 1940: BSU.
54. A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [replying to H.A. Lane to A, 3 Oct. 1940, and written during the blitz]; H.A. Lane to A, 29 May 1942: BSU.
55. A to C. Canfield, 29 Sept. [1940]: BSU.
57. Ibid. 135–7, 181, 184, 215, 226.
58. C. Canfield to A, 29 Oct. 1940: BCU box 1. A to Mrs W.B. Meloney 18 Nov. 1940: Meloney papers, BCU.
59. A to E. Weeks, 9 Nov. 1941: BSU.
60. *New Palestine*, 15 Nov. 1940, 7–8.
61. *Jewish Post* (Patterson, N.J.), 12 Dec. 1940: BSU.
63. He gave his new address in A to Mrs W.B. Meloney, 18 Nov. 1940: Meloney papers, BCU.
64. ‘To Whom It May Concern’, signed on Ministry of Information notepaper by Nicolson, 18 July 1940: BSU.
66. A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [replying to H.A. Lane to A, 3 Oct. 1940, and written during the blitz]: BSU.
68. Circular letter, 29 Jan. 1941: BSU.
69. *T&T*, 15 Feb. 1941, 124; 29 Mar. 1941, 260. For Angell’s work with the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, see F. McKee to A, 21 Apr. 1941: BCU box 1.
70. ‘Income & Expenditure 1940’; A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [a reply to H.A. Lane to A, 3 Oct. 1940] and n.d. [spring 1941]: BSU.
72. A to M. Kelsey, 25 Apr. 1941: BSU.
74. *New Republic*, 28 July 1941, 119. ‘Reminiscences’, 260. For Angell’s presence in Connecticut, see *NYT*, 13 July 1941, D4, and the advertisement for the 1942 session, which pictures him in Salisbury with the previous year’s pupils: BSU. When Nicolson met Angell in London in the summer of 1943, he mentioned that this was after a three-year absence: H. Nicolson diary, 13 Aug. 1943.
75. As he recalled in N. Angell, *The Steep Places: An Examination of Political Tendencies* (1947), 78.
77. *NYT*, 12 Nov. 1941: McM.
79. ‘To NA, From OS, 5/14/42’: BSU.
80. H.A. Lane to A, 2 Oct. 1942: BSU.
81. The papers survive in BCU box 6.
87. ‘Itinerary of Sir Norman Angell’: BSU.
89. A to L.C. Huyck, 1 Mar. 1943: BSU.
90. A to H.A. Lane, n.d. [Dec. 1942; a reply to H.A. Lane to A, 18 Nov. 1942]: BSU.
   N. Angell, Let the People Know (New York, 1943), 125.
91. Ibid., 144, 173, 176, 217.
93. Ibid. 103, 222.
94. Ibid. 40.
95. Ibid. 79.
96. Ibid. 84–5.
98. A to L.C. Huyck, 1 Mar. 1943: BSU.
101. AA, 344. NYT, 24 Mar 1943; Philadelphia Record, 11 Apr. 1943; E. Lyons (editor of American Mercury) to A, 27 May 1943: BSU.
103. A to H.A. Lane, 8 July [1944]: BSU.
110. H.A. Lane to A, 27 Dec. 1943: BSU.
111. Ibid., 3 Mar. and 12 June 1944: BSU.
112. A to Mrs E.M. Nixon, 7 June 1944: BSU.
113. The text is in BSU box 48.
114. A to H.A. Lane, 8 July [1944]: BSU.
115. H.A. Lane to A, 28 May 1945: BSU. Norman Angell by His Contemporaries, 146. AA, 66n.
117. A to Mary [Kelsey], 23 Nov. 1944: BSU.
118. A to H.A. Lane, 8 July [1944]: BSU.
119. A to H. Hamilton, 14 Nov. 1944: BSU.
120. H.A. Lane to A, 14 Jan. and 22 Feb. 1945: BSU.
121. ‘Extract from a letter from Stephen Toulmin, date 17/9/45’: BCU box 2. See also AA, 294–5.
122. www.innertemplelibrary.org.uk/temple-history
123. A to Mary [Kelsey], 6 Aug. [1945]: BSU.
124. A. to H.A. Lane, 19 May [1945]: BCU box 1.
129. A to H.A. Lane, 8 July [1944]: BSU.


137. A to Cecil, 1 Nov. 1946: BSU.


139. AA, 296.

140. A to E. Wrench, 2 Sept. [1946]: Wrench papers, BL Add MSS 59546/40.

141. A to B. Forbes-Robertson Hale, 5 Nov. 1946: BSU.


144. A to H. Hamilton, 8 Feb. 1947: BSU.


147. Ibid. 7, 38, 41, 44, 201, 205–7.

148. Ibid. 10, 20, 25, 40, 42, 57–8, 62, 64, 111, 118, 148, 177, 191.


150. Ibid. 26, 46–7, 51, 69, 72, 81, 84, 99.

151. A to Cecil, 25 Apr. 1947: BSU.

152. A to B. Hayes, 28 June [1947]: BSU.

153. A to E.A. Lane, 29 June 1947; F. Brockway to A, 21 July 1947; A to H. Hamilton, 5 Sept. [1947]: BSU.


155. A to M. Sheehan-Dare, 12 Nov. 1947: BSU.


161. Sunday Times, 21 Mar. 1948: BSU.

162. A to Nellie Hayes, 3 May 1948; A to E. Lane, 21 Apr. 1948: BSU.

163. ‘Notes of Dinner July 6 at Brown’s Hotel’; A to B. Bowman, 28 July 1948: BSU.


165. A to E. Wrench, 14 July [1948]: BL Add MSS 59547 fo. 78. A to H.A. Lane, 21 July [1948], acknowledged in H.A. Lane to A, 12 Aug. 1948; medical statement headed ‘Norman Angell’: BSU.

166. Statement for B. Hayes, 15 Apr. 1951: BSU.


171. NYT, 22 Feb. 1949, 8.
172. A to H. Hamilton, 8 Mar. 1949: BSU.
173. AA, 313. Information from Alice Everard.
175. A to B. Hayes, 1 May [1949]: BSU.
176. A to H.A. Lane, 5 Sept. 1949: BSU.
177. A to B. Hayes, 21 July [1949]: McM box. 2.
178. W. Searle to A, 28 Sept. 1949: BSU.
180. A to H.A. Lane, 18 Oct. [1949]: BSU.
183. A to W. Searle, 13 Feb. 1950: BSU.
184. A to B. Hayes, 21 July [1949]: McM box. 2. A to B. Hayes, 3 May 1950: BSU.
188. A to D. Hayes, 23 Feb. 1950: BSU.
190. A to A. Lane, 20 Sept. 1950: Everard papers. A to B. Hayes, 10 (and 13) May [1950]: BSU.
195. AA, 351.
196. A to B. Hayes, 27 (and 28) Oct. [1950]: BSU.
199. A to A. Lane, 18 Nov. 1950: Everard papers.
202. A to B. Hayes, 18 Apr. 1951: BSU.
204. A to A. Nevins, 19 May 1951: Nevins professional papers, BCU. AA, 348.
206. E. North to A, 8 June 1951: BSU.
210. I am grateful to Deborah Ceadel for obtaining a copy of the conveyance.

211. A to B. Hayes, 5 Nov. 1951: BSU.

212. Information about The Stone Cottage from Mrs Ann Jordan and Prof. Keith Robbins. 

213. A to J. Rublee, 4 Apr. 1952: BSU.


220. A to W.H. Link, 14 Sept. 1953; A to A. Nevins, 14 Sept. 1953: Nevins professional papers, BCU.

221. A to M. Klachko, 31 Mar. 1953; M. Klachko to A, 23 June 1953: Klachko papers, BCU.

222. A to B. Forbes-Robertson Hale, 8 Aug. 1953: BSU.

223. A to L.C. Huyck, 1 Mar. 1954: BSU.

224. A to R. Fuller, 13 Jan. 1954; A to G. Murray, 5 Apr. 1954: BSU.

225. Ibid., 3, 18, and 30 Mar. 1954: BSU.


229. A to A. Lane, 21 Nov. 1954: Everard papers.


233. H.S. Grafton Bedells to Lady Angell, 4 Jan. 1955: BSU.


236. Mary [Lane] to A, 4 Mar. 1955: BSU.

237. E. North to A, 14 Mar. 1955; A to Mary [Lane], 18 Mar. 1955: BSU.


240. A to A. John, 17 Sept. 1955: BSU.

241. A to N. Lane, 1 Sept. 1955: Everard papers.

242. C.H. Rolph, *Living Twice: An Autobiography* (1974), 209–10. Rolph mentioned that his interviewee still had ‘ten years’ to live, which would place the interview before October 1957. If, as seems likely, he was working from Angell’s correct birth year when he calculated his age as 83, the interview took place after 26 Dec. 1955.

243. A to A. Lane, 30 May 1956: Everard papers.

244. A to M.A. Hamilton, 13 June 1956: BSU.


246. A to N. Lane, 27 Aug. 1956: Everard papers.


251. Liberal International (British Group), Quarterly Report to Members, Spring 1957: BSU.
256. TLS, 7 Feb. 1958, 71.
257. A to A.W. Haycock, 21 Jan. 1958: BSU. See also their correspondence in McM box 2.
260. A to D. Robertson, 2 Jan. 1959: BSU.
262. A to Mary Lane, 3 Oct. 1958: BSU.
264. A to L. Harris, 10 Aug. 1959; A to Deak, 6 Nov. 1959: BSU.
266. Simon to B. Russell, 9 Dec. 1959; B. Russell to Simon, 10 Dec. 1959: BSU.
267. A to D. Robertson, 16 Dec. 1959: BSU.
270. BSU box 41.
274. Ibid., 5 Aug. 1962: BSU.
275. Ibid., 15 Sept. 1962: BSU.
276. Ibid., 9 Jan. 1963: BSU.
277. Ibid., 5 Aug. 1962: BSU.
278. Angell’s letters to Gilbert begin on 9 Mar. 1962. For Robbins’s visit, see BSU box 22.
287. A to A.W. Haycock, 5 June 1964: McM box 2; A to M. Grant, 11 Nov. 1964; A to L. Behrens, 18 Nov. 1964: McM box 2.
288. A to H. Hamilton, 7 June 1965: BSU.
296. B. Hayes to Mrs Sawyer, 12 July 1966: BSU.
298. A to N. and J. Jacoby, 4 May 1967: BSU.
299. Information from Alice Angell Everard.
300. E.A. Lane to M. Gilbert, 4 June, 2 July 1967: Gilbert papers. E.A. Lane to E. Ferrill, 30 June 1967: BSU.
302. Information from Alice Angell Everard.
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Conclusion: Cowboy as Dialectician

Angell’s demise produced a muted response, which indicated that at almost ninety-five he had outlived too many of his contemporaries for all his achievements to be remembered. In the following decades, however, he was given due credit for putting interdependence theory on an empirical footing and for flying the internationalist flag, although aspects of his life and work nonetheless remained mysterious. This biography has for the first time provided a complete account, thereby not only filling in gaps but revising the conventional wisdom significantly too. On the negative side, it has demonstrated both the deficiencies of his magnum opus and the consequent major tensions and fluctuations in his thinking over the crucial decades that followed. On the positive side, it has highlighted the quality of his campaigning against appeasement and isolationism, as well as his engaging personality. It has also shown that weaknesses and strengths alike were heavily path-dependent – the product of a formative phase that narrowed subsequent options. The rails upon which Angell’s later life ran were substantially forged by his unusual childhood and early career, notably his attenuated formal education, his youthful exposure to living abroad, his marital and economic disasters, his teenage espousal of valetudinarianism, his fortuitous authorial breakthrough, his falling under Northcliffe’s spell, and his large Victorian family. Indeed, the extent to which Sir Norman Angell, the established public intellectual, was shaped by Ralph Lane, the opinionated autodidactic chancer, was hinted at in the title Bernard Falk gave to his 1936 interview with him: ‘Cowboy as Dialectician’.1

* * * * *

Angell left £19,006, which of course did not include The Stone Cottage because it had all along been Barbara’s. So substantial a sum, additional to the value of his house, suggested that he could have lived out his last years more self-indulgently had ‘mere physical comfort’ not been such a low personal priority.2 The books and papers temporarily held at Holbeach now went to their final destination at Muncie, Barbara’s misguided efforts to transfer them to a less remote and more prestigious location such as Princeton proving fruitless. Finding a book about her ‘uncle’ beyond her capability too, she helped Commander Willson with his, despite disapproving of his treatment of Angell’s relations with his women friends. She may have destroyed some of Rosalinde Fuller’s letters, which Willson saw and summarized but do not now survive.3 She also held back some letters...
to and from Sunny Lozier, who, having married in 1964, was to die in childbirth five years later: in 1985, the year before Barbara’s own death, she admitted having ‘no intention of letting Bill Willson see any of them’. She probably disposed of them, because the material that had so upset her cannot now be traced.

Angell received respectful obituaries, although many were inaccurate because of their reliance upon After All. He had some of his thunder stolen by the deaths on 8 and 9 October 1967 of Clement Attlee and André Malraux. And his memorial service in St Margaret’s, Westminster, on 3 November, was a second-rank occasion. A minor Labour politician, Lord Beswick, gave the address; Hamish Hamilton, Sir Stanley Unwin (another publisher), and Lord (formerly Sir Arthur) Salter were the closest approximations among the mourners to the great and the good; the United Nations Association, the Liberal Central Association, and the Institute of Journalists were the only organizations officially represented. Most of his best friends were dead, though Leonard Behrens and Cynthia Dehn (née Fuller), who had both known him for more than half a century, were present. The younger generations of Angell’s extended family turned out in force, among them Carrie’s son, the Revd Cyril Sheehan-Dare, who read the lesson. They loyally strove to keep his memory alive in the years to come. In 1968, Eric and Nora Lane gave a Norman Angell benefaction of £10,000 to Sussex University, which disbursed it in the form of student prizes and travel grants. A decade later, to ensure that Northey Island remained unspoiled, they transferred it to the National Trust. Barbara Hayes and John Jacoby created a memorial to Angell in St Bartholomew’s Church, Haslemere, that was dedicated on 21 November 1976 in a ceremony at which the journalist Bernard Levin spoke, but from which the increasingly erratic Barbara stayed away at the last moment. After the Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned The Great Illusion in his St Paul’s sermon commemorating the Falklands/Malvinas war of 1982, Eric Lane contacted a number of people, including this biographer, about a possible reissue of his uncle’s magnum opus. Having tried to buy Angell’s Nobel medal from Barbara, who instead sold it on the open market, he eventually acquired it at auction for £8,000, whereupon he and Alice lent it to the Imperial War Museum. Despite having no previous connection with the family, Ann Jordan, who had purchased the Fernden Hill property from Barbara soon after Angell moved out, renamed it ‘Angell’s Stone Cottage’ and put up a commemorative plaque in 2004.

By then, Angell’s importance as an original thinker and political campaigner was recognized; yet, as his entry in that year’s Oxford Dictionary of National Biography all too obviously revealed, the received view of his career was in various respects deficient. The orthodoxy on Angell the thinker, as expounded by the veteran international theorist J.D.B. Miller, was that, although his emphasis ‘changed over time’, he nonetheless manifested an overall ‘consistency in his attitude’. This comprehensive study has shown that intellectually Angell was incomparably more cross-pressured and volatile than Miller and others had realized. It was no accident, for example, that during the First World War he was identified with contradictory policies on different sides of the Atlantic: it reflected the capacity ‘to face both ways’ that so infuriated G.G. Coulton. Only when he was in his sixties did he turn into the consistent liberal internationalist
he is usually remembered as, and even then for some years still claimed to favour non-resistance as a tactic. However, although minute scrutiny of Angell’s life and writing has exposed many inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies of this kind, it has also revealed much to admire, including sound judgement when it really mattered and affability on almost all occasions. Indeed, there is nothing in either his political or personal record to make a biographer cringe, which cannot be said of the contemporaries against whom he privately measured himself in 1944, as has been noted: ‘Shaw, Wells, Russell, Chesterton’.13

Ironically, given that Angell is sometimes remembered primarily for winning the Nobel Peace Prize, his greatest propaganda achievements were to justify the risking, or even the fighting, of war, albeit in the best interests of long-term peace. This biography has shown him to have been perhaps the leading intellectual debunker of appeasement in 1930s Britain, contrary to some previous claims. Making the not uncommon assumption that a peace-loving rationalist must have been soft on the ‘Have-Not’ nations, Marrin argued that Angell was ‘closer (intellectually) to the appeasers than might appear at first glance’ and ‘shared many of the same assumptions about Nazism as the appeasers’; and Bisceglia suggested that ‘Angell’s was very much an appeaser’s philosophy’.14 Admittedly, Angell declared that the ‘Have-Not’ case should receive proper examination, but this was merely to make appeasers listen to what he and other advocates of collective security were saying. He was adamant that the case for ‘peaceful change’ was based not on a disinterested concern for international distributive justice but on a short-sighted fear of aerial bombardment and, in certain right-wing circles, of the Soviet Union too.

Angell also worked overtly for intervention by the United States in both world wars. His American propaganda was even more successful than his efforts at home, though his memoirs said remarkably little about it, not even mentioning ‘America and the Neutralization of the Sea’, which had the greatest political impact of anything he wrote. Albeit without realizing beforehand that this was what he was doing, he provided Americans with materialist as well as visionary justifications for entering the First World War: he told them they could achieve the reform of maritime law they had long been seeking, in addition to leadership of an emergent world community, but only by participating in the post-war settlement. At the same time, he warned them that, by allowing British ships to come and purchase supplies when Germany lacked the naval strength to do the same, they had been ‘unneutral’ since August 1914: it followed from this that President Wilson’s transition from the neutralist ticket on which he had been re-elected in November 1916 to his advocacy of military intervention in April 1917 was more a natural progression than a discreditable volte face. A subsequent major transatlantic achievement for Angell the campaigner was his nicely balanced, warts-and-all defence of the British empire, whose chestnuts an anti-colonial United States was being asked to pull out of the fire during the Second World War. By comparison, his subsequent role as a sometimes very strident Cold Warrior, though often overlooked, was run-of-the-mill.
Perhaps, above all, this biography has demonstrated the career-determining character of his early experiences. His formal education was more limited even than his own accounts suggested: after leaving school at fourteen, he received only tutoring from his former headmaster in Holbeach, instruction in practical subjects such as shorthand at commercial college in Holborn, and part-time extra-mural classes in Geneva. His lack of a sixth-form or a higher education helps to explain his unease when faced with what he called ‘academic swells’ or ‘academic hornets’, his limited credibility as a pundit on economic issues, and his inability to complete his psycho-educational study, as well as his generally undisciplined handling of ideas and information. He sharpened his considerable mind as best he could through teenage argumentativeness and opinionated journalism, and so brought to The Great Illusion an intellectual style formed by youthful diatribes against conventionality, religion, xenophobia, and patriotism, and a literary style formed by writing for newspapers. This explains why those works were fresh and arresting: he was untrammelled by orthodoxy, and wrote plainly and vigorously. But it also explains why they suffered, more than has been previously noticed, from overstatement, imprecision, and ambiguity. These defects in turn gave rise to the policy confusions that bedevilled Angell at the peak of his campaigning career, despite his fluency as a writer and speaker. He oscillated between drawing pro-defence inferences from his ‘illusion’ thesis and drawing pacifist ones, between promoting his distinctive thesis in isolation and linking it to other progressive campaigns, between calling for international engagement and advocating isolationism, and between remaining loyal to the UDC’s radical pacifism and committing himself to the LNU’s liberal alternative, having also toyed with the socialist version. Because for more than two decades he lacked a coherent framework for interpreting events, he was intellectually buffeted by them. Not until Hirohito, Mussolini, and Hitler concentrated his mind in the 1930s did Angell settle for the standard liberal-pacifist package, devoting himself to the LNU and allying himself with Winston Churchill. After 1945, he simply carried his by then deeply ingrained belief in containment over into the Cold War. Thus, although his unusual education helped launch him as a publicist who possessed, in Coulton’s shrewish yet shrewd phrase, ‘the attractive directness of an intelligent child’, it hampered him as an intellectual seeking to develop his initial intuitions, until he resolved his difficulties by slotting into a collective-security groove.

Other early influences proved on balance more empowering. Being sent to a lycée in St Omer aged eleven and finding employment in Geneva aged seventeen not only broadened the intellectual horizons and linguistic skills of a petit-bourgeois English fenlander but also predisposed him to work abroad thereafter. Apart from his eleven pre-lycée years and his sixteen in semi-retirement, he was based in Britain for only twenty-five years, compared with one in Geneva, three in St Omer, fifteen in Paris, and more than twenty-two in north America (plus nine months spent criss-crossing the Atlantic). The international perspective he gained while young was invaluable both for his critique of patriotism, which was an important stepping stone towards his ‘illusion’ thesis, and for his understanding
of political attitudes in the United States, which, as has already been hinted, was in some respects more acute than his understanding of British attitudes.

Angell’s move to Geneva at an impressionable age exposed him to lively young American women, to whom he became generically attracted; and his emigration to California led five or six years later to his fateful entanglement with an extreme exemplar. However, he was toughened rather than crushed by the miserable marriage that resulted. Artlessly open during his teens, as indicated by his first pamphlet, his early journalism, and his youthful letters to Harry, Angell could seem reserved to the point of coldness by the time he managed the *Continental Daily Mail*, and a controlled and clinical rationalist by the time he worked for the Garton Foundation, though his underlying emotionalism could show through when he became excited by his ideas or enraged by his critics. After separating from Beatrice Cuvellier, he treated his female friends, other than perhaps Joan Callon, with a certain detachment: he seemingly managed a long and intimate liaison with Rosalinde Fuller without jealousy of her other lovers; he maintained close relationships with Florence Schofield, Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, and Mary Kelsey on terms he dictated; and late in life he happily shared the disarmingly manipulative Sunny Lozier with her other sugar-daddies. He acquired the art of discretion, thereby allowing a bowdlerized impression of his private life to develop. And, without forgetting the attractions of sociability, he learned to live for long periods on his own. His most sustained experience of sharing accommodation – when he was cooped up with Barbara Hayes in a Manhattan apartment during much of 1940–51 – proved trying at times, which is why, despite his deep sympathy for her, he so readily escaped onto the lecture and summer-school circuit during the war and to England during six post-war summers, before setting up mainly on his own again at The Stone Cottage.

Private pain in his early adulthood also intensified Angell’s long-standing ambition to make his mark upon the world. Its scope had been apparent as early as 1891 when as an eighteen-year-old he had informed Harry of his intention to expose ‘The Great Fraud’ of life after death, in return for which he expected ‘the curse of this generation and the blessing of a future [one]’.\(^\text{17}\) As a result of the success of *The Great Illusion*, he discovered himself to be an effective speaker who could not only inspire a group of young intellectuals but establish links with prominent radicals and socialists, and therefore felt himself equipped to be a political leader. His adrenalin-drenched response to the European crisis of July 1914 almost caused his career as a publicist to jump the tracks altogether. He grabbed the opportunity it presented, even though the isolationism that the context required him to expound sat uneasily with his previous internationalism. The golden opinions he won among anti-war progressives for his short but sharp neutrality campaign tempted him to take a further step down the path of radical leadership by co-founding the UDC, a contentious organization that cost him much of his middle-of-the-road following. Later in the war he went the whole hog and became a socialist, despite his background as a Conservative, a land-speculator, a strike-breaking newspaper manager, a rentier, and an aspiring entrepreneur. For a few years he seemingly saw himself as the potential spearhead
of Labour’s left wing, and, even after abandoning such hopes and moving to the right of party during the 1920s, aspired optimistically to be foreign secretary. Though he left parliament and gave priority to the LNU after the 1931 crisis, his political ambition did not wholly evaporate: he first flirted with the National Labour Party, and then joined the Next Five Years Group, though both proved to be dead ends. On becoming associated with Churchill’s ‘Focus’ he was all too aware that, if he did not throw himself wholeheartedly into it, he might fail to obtain the further recognition that he felt he had earned. A revealing letter of January 1937, already cited, acknowledged his continuing aspiration ‘to fill positions of some power: Chairman L.N.U., or Royal Inst[itute of International Affairs] or positions on B.B.C. – or Cabinet or what not’.

Yet his traumatic speculative failure in California and inability to rescue the Daily Messenger ensured that such ambition was offset by the caution that Ponsonby and Fuller both noted during the First World War. Even when he seemed to be acting impulsively, Angell hedged his bets. At the height of his ‘illusion’ campaign he was reluctant to sever his lucrative connection with Northcliffe. As first a UDC activist and then a socialist politician he soon had second thoughts about courting controversy; and he did not go ahead with the non-resistance campaign he had mooted in the autumn of 1915. He strove to keep in touch with mainstream opinion as best he could, especially by writing books for it. Later, he shrank from the additional acrimony that he would have received had he followed his own political logic and stood as a popular-front candidate in 1938/9 or defected to the Conservatives after 1945.

From the moment he subsided into seemingly psychosomatic lassitude in the aftermath of adolescent amateur theatricals in Geneva, Angell was a thorough-going and wide-ranging valetudinarian. By his fifties he presented himself as a constant martyr to migraines, as well as a regular victim of viruses, and by sixty-five gave the impression that death always lay around the corner. Much of this seems to have been a working out of the tensions in his thought that the urbane exponent of intellectual sanitation could not at a conscious level acknowledge, and therefore a strategy for coping. Indeed, his health-obsessed lifestyle suited his slight yet deceptively durable frame. His habits of eating and drinking sparingly, living with the windows always open, and permitting himself periodic physical collapses that licensed spells of recuperation kept him lean, resilient, and rested for the long haul. They helped him avoid life-threatening illnesses and operations, recover well from a broken thigh even at the age of eighty-five, work for several hours a day well into his tenth decade, and visit the United States at the age of ninety-three. Yet he seemed little aware of all this: he was more interested in psycho-analysing the mass mind than his own.

Above all, Angell’s ‘life job’ not only depended on the luckiest of breaks but suited his temperament to a degree he did not anticipate. Europe’s Optical Illusion might have suffered the same neglect as Patriotism under Three Flags six years before had it not proved the unexpected highlight of Viscount Esher’s Christmas reading in 1909. Even after this authorial good fortune Angell might never have taken the plunge into campaigning had his experience of working for Northcliffe
not convinced him that he had learned his boss’s remarkable ‘understanding of the multitude’. In fact, Angell’s belief that he had grasped mass psychology was self-deceiving: he was rarely in step with the public he sought to reach, particularly in his home country. He badly underestimated its support for the First World War. He was far to its left during his socialist phase, the failure of the Daily Herald’s pledge scheme epitomizing his inability to fathom the ordinary worker. In the inter-war period he shared neither the British public’s suspicion of France nor its support for appeasement. By the time he came fully to appreciate Liberalism early in the Second World War this political tendency had lost most of its following. During 1945–51 he moved to the right just as the British electorate gave Labour its highest-ever shares of the vote at the three general elections of those years. And he never comprehended the pleasure that so many of his fellow citizens derived from sport and other escapist entertainment. What drove him on, although he took a long time to appreciate this, was not his supposed rapport with the masses but his undoubted appetite for dissenting from what he liked to regard as their illusions.

Angell’s pastime of choice was rationalist polemic, a taste acquired as a diminutive teenager, who, in order to hold his own with numerous, mainly older and larger siblings, and to dispel the dullness of small-town life during the Victorian age, repeatedly challenged his mother’s and Tom’s religious and social orthodoxy, possibly with the tacit encouragement of a father whom he was keen to impress, as well as with Harry’s more overt support. Although his style softened from cocksure to sagacious, his outward self-assurance, even in the face of powerful objections to his ideas, remained remarkable. Self-doubt was repressed until it erupted as ill health. Newspaper management proved lucrative; and entrepreneurship was always an enticing dream; but freelance peace or political campaigning was unfailingly satisfying, because it enabled Angell fully to indulge his delight in disputation. He would have been a more effective publicist had he stuck to the Garton Foundation’s strategy of focusing solely and solemnly on establishment opinion. He would have been a more successful Labour politician had he toed the party line. And he would have been a more effective LNU propagandist had he suppressed, much sooner than he eventually did, his idiosyncratic claim to prefer non-resistance. But he simply could not resist going wherever his intellectual impulses took him.

Nor did reiterating his current point of view ever bore him. Indeed, his most remarkable personal characteristic was the life-affirming enthusiasm with which, whatever his state of body and mind and his audience’s degree of responsiveness, he expounded first his trademark conviction that armed strength could not bring wealth, then the LNU’s argument that military force should be collectivized, and finally the west’s claim that communism and colonial nationalism had to be contained. It was not merely the economic insecurity of his chosen way of life that inspired him to rehash a limited repertoire of messages in countless lectures, debates, interviews, committees, private conversations, books, articles, essays, and letters to the editor: he positively relished doing so. He never abandoned his claim to a psycho-educational insight that he hoped one day to articulate, but
by his seventies understood that combative and repetitive propaganda was not only his key professional skill but integral to his very personality. As already noted, he recognized by the autumn of 1945 that the ‘habit of “argument” has become so ingrained’ that he could not write his life story without frequent polemical interjections.20 A disarming admission to Columbia University’s Oral History Project in May 1951 provides an admirably self-aware epitaph for a natural propagandist: ‘I so easily drop into the one sermon which I’ve preached in a thousand different forms.’21

NOTES

1. Falk, Five Years Dead, 261–9.
2. AA, 355.
3. A point I owe to G. Peter Winnington.
5. TT, 4 Nov. 1967, 10.
6. Everard papers.
7. Everard papers; and information from Alice Angell Everard.
11. J.D.B. Miller, ‘Norman Angell and Rationality in International Relations’, in D. Long and P. Wilson (eds.), Thinkers of the Twenty Years’ Crisis (Oxford, 1995), 100–21 at 103–4. According to Miller, Angell consistently propounded five themes: ‘1. that war by one big industrial power against another for gain is futile because the victor cannot successfully plunder the vanquished; 2. that wars are encouraged by irrationality amongst the public and by the potent use of national symbols; 3. that extensive education is necessary to overcome this use of the crowd mind; 4. that wars occur because of the pursuit of national power within an international anarchy; and 5. that war may be justified in cases of resistance to invasion or unjust foreign rule, but that the best solution to aggressive actions is some sort of “third party judgement” within a collective system.’ Over time, Miller accepted, Angell’s emphasis shifted from the first three to the last two of these themes.
13. A to H.A. Lane, 8 July [1944]: BSU.
16. Coulton, Main Illusions of Pacificism, 90.
17. A to H.A. Lane, 10 Feb. [1891] (typed copy, misdated 1890): BSU.
19. AA, 128 (see also 108, 111, 119).
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The place of publication is London, unless otherwise stated.

A. Sir Norman Angell

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BCU: Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.
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