

tendency and was likely to very seriously interfere with the proper conduct of the war, and that therefore the Post Office should not be allowed to be made the medium for its circulation to the public. It has been stated in evidence that twenty thousand copies of a pamphlet entitled "Rome's Hideous Guilt in the European Carnage" had been circulated, and this is one of the pamphlets considered mischievous by the Solicitor-General. It seems to me that this statement of the Solicitor-General, coming as it does from an authority of such high standing, sufficiently discloses the grounds upon which the censorship was established. I am not in any way called upon to express my opinion as to the sufficiency or otherwise of the reason. Suffice it to say that the Solicitor-General considered it wise in the interests of the country that the censorship should be established, and informed the Chief Military Censor accordingly, and that his advice was acted upon. The charge that the military censorship had been established in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church is thus absolutely disposed of and completely disproved. To emphasize this I need only quote Mr. Ostler's own words in his address at the close of the inquiry: "Now, the Solicitor-General has assured us that he did not act in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church; and I, for one, knowing him well, am quite glad to accept that, and to admit that in so acting he was not corruptly or even consciously influenced by any member of the Roman Catholic Church. I admit that he is not the kind of man that would consciously lend himself to any corrupt influence of that sort."

But, while thus acquitting the Solicitor-General of any conscious bias, Mr. Ostler goes on to modify his statement by asserting that the action of the Solicitor-General, being illegal in his opinion, has had the direct effect of operating in the interests of the Church of Rome. Mr. Ostler's remarks on the action of the Solicitor-General, and his assertion of its illegality, do not call for remark from me. Mr. Salmond will no doubt note the fact for his future guidance that Mr. Ostler considers his practice of the law is considerably weaker than his knowledge, and apparently chides him for attempting to act as a master or dictator instead of a public servant. I leave it at this.

I have already stated that it is perfectly clear that military censorship had not been established over box 912 in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, and it is perhaps difficult to understand why Mr. Elliott and his friends should be so deeply convinced that such is the case. I think the explanation is this: both the Orange Lodge and the Protestant Political Association have on occasion used the same box. Some time ago a paper named *The Menace*, published in America, came under the ban of the Post Office under section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908. This paper is most rabidly anti-Roman-Catholic, and makes most virulent attacks on that Church, especially with regard to its political activities. Some of its writings would very naturally give great offence to very many Roman Catholics. Some of these had apparently drawn the attention of the Postmaster-General to the fact that the paper contained objectionable advertisements of a nature to bring it under the prohibition set out in section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act. Very strong protests were made by Mr. Seabrook and others against this ban, as they considered that the objectionable advertisements were only made an excuse for stopping the paper. Subsequently the ban was removed, and *The Menace* was allowed free circulation. The letter produced below, from the then Postmaster-General, the Hon. R. H. Rhodes, sets out the position:—

DEAR SIR,—

Postmaster-General's Office, Wellington, 30th July, 1914.

In reply to your letter of the 20th ultimo about the newspaper *The Menace*, it was brought under my notice that copies of the paper contained advertisements of an immoral nature relating to sexual treatment addressed to women. Section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act provides, "If the Postmaster-General has at any time reasonable ground to suppose any person in New Zealand or elsewhere to be engaged . . . (d) in any fraudulent, obscene, immoral, or unlawful business or undertaking; or (e) in advertising in direct or indirect terms the treatment of diseases of the sexual organs; then the Postmaster-General may, by notice under his hand in the *Gazette*, order that no postal packet addressed to any such person (either by his own or any fictitious or assumed name), or to any address without a name, shall be either registered, forwarded, or delivered by the Post Office."