

HENRY HASTINGS SEABROOK examined.

1. *Mr. Ostler.*] What is your full name?—Henry Hastings Seabrook.
2. And your occupation?—Manufacturer.
3. And your address?—Business address, Grafton Road.
4. Have you ever had any difficulty—any controversy—with the Post Office about papers being stopped?—I have had two tiffs with the Government over that question.
5. When was the first?—Early in 1914.
6. How did that arise?—Well, I think—of course, I am speaking from memory now, but that would seem to be about the time when the Roman Catholic Federation was started—I think it was about that time it was announced they were out to suppress immoral literature. Of course, I do not know, but that may be so.
7. Did you see that when it appeared in the newspaper [extract from *New Zealand Herald*, 20th May, 1914]?—I did. Previous to that I had seen some letters, *Mr. Ostler*, that announced the fact that they were visiting the booksellers in the city for the purpose of getting to know, or perhaps finding out, what sort of books they had on their shelves. I think that occurred all through the Dominion.
8. That occurred right throughout the Dominion?—I believe so.
9. [Portion of article read.] Did you see that?—Yes; my copy is in the Government now.
10. You cut it out?—I cut all that out, and sent it to the Government.
11. Did you take steps to find out what the paper was that they had succeeded in getting the Postmaster-General to stop?—Certainly. I was interested in this. I know a little about it. I thought I would interest myself to find out what sort of paper this was.
12. You need not state the steps; what paper did you find it was?—I found it was *The Menace*.
13. Have you been a regular subscriber to *The Menace* for some time?—Well, I have subscribed to *The Menace* for the last fifteen months.
14. Would you describe *The Menace* as disgustingly immoral?—Not at all. I would like to say, first, when I found out what paper this was I took steps to get a copy of it, and I managed to get a couple of copies after a good deal of difficulty.
15. Is that one of the copies you got [issue of the 16th May, 1914]?—Yes, that is one.
16. Did it have any immoral advertisement in it?—Absolutely, no. I got two copies of it. I read them from top to bottom. Do not make any mistake, *Mr. Ostler*; I am not here to support immoral literature, but when I read that paper from top to bottom I did not find one single sentence or one single word I could say was immoral in that paper. And I would like to say that I found out that the editor of that paper was a respected minister of my own denomination—a Congregationalist—and the last man that would send out immoral literature.
17. When you discovered this what steps did you take to bring the matter to the notice of the Government?—I at once wrote to the Postmaster-General.
18. Is that a copy of your letter [copy dated the 26th May, 1914]?—Yes, that is a copy.
19. “Marked in blue”: what part was that?—The interview that you quoted.
20. *Mr. Ostler* read the letter, and asked, Did you get that letter in reply [letter from Postmaster-General, 29th May, 1914]?—I did.
21. *Mr. Ostler* read the letter, and asked, That had attached to it the article, did it?—Yes; he sent me up the clause of the Act and a letter which appeared in the *Evening Post* of the 25th May, 1914. Somebody had attacked him, and he had made an explanation in the paper.
22. Did you write him in reply?—This was when I had heard the name of the paper and got to understand it was not an immoral paper at all—purely a Protestant paper. I then wrote (to *Mr. Rhodes*, I think it was, if I remember right) saying I had received a copy of *The Menace*.
23. That is the copy [of *Mr. Seabrook's* letter]?—Yes, dated the 20th June.
24. Did you also write to *Mr. Massey* about it?—I had been in conversation with him when he was in Auckland, I think. I told him distinctly what I had done with relation to the Postmaster-General, and he said if I would send in all particulars and a copy of the paper I had secured he would see his colleague and go into the matter. I then sent full particulars to *Mr. Massey* and a copy of the paper, and also a copy of an advertisement that was supposed to have been the cause of stopping this paper. I found that this advertisement—the alleged reason for stopping this book—was a medical work by *Dr. Hall*, of Philadelphia. I have found out since that she is one of the leading doctors of Philadelphia; and it was on the organs of women. I went through the booksellers here in Auckland; I wanted to find out whether there were any such books on their shelves. I cannot say to that particular book; but they nearly all said, We have exactly the same things on our own shelves. I found out, of course, it was stopped on account of this advertisement. Now, that book was published by the Bible Depot of Philadelphia. I was indignant—

*His Worship* informed witness such comment was not to be continued.

*Witness:* I am only showing the nature of the book and its publishers to show that the Bible Association would be the last to put out an immoral book. That is all I want.

25. *Mr. Ostler.*] You wrote *Mr. Massey* and you wrote *Mr. Rhodes*, and they removed the prohibition?—They have removed it—at least, they said this: *Mr. Rhodes* stated to me that he assured me he would not suppress that paper on account of the Protestant element of the paper.

26. *Mr. Ostler* read *Mr. Seabrook's* letter to the Postmaster-General, 20th June, 1914. Before that you wrote to *Mr. Massey*: is that a copy?—

*Mr. Gray:* Well, sir, where is this going to end?

*His Worship:* *Mr. Ostler* must be the judge and not put in anything not relevant.

*Witness:* That is a copy of the letter I sent to *Mr. Massey* [letter of the 20th June, 1914]. We do not want to hide anything; you might read it.