

millions; it is a paper which has become a force for righteousness and liberty and free speech not only in America, but wherever it goes; and the real cause of the Roman Catholic hatred of it is not that it is disgustingly immoral in tone, but because it has the courage to attack the abuses of the Hierarchy. Now, Mr. Morris very frankly agreed to produce the file showing what the advertisements were that were objected to, and he has been as good as his word and they have been produced. Your Worship will see three advertisements marked with blue crosses. They are advertisements with regard to regulating-pills or something of that sort. They are so small it would almost require a microscope to read them. I was amazed when I saw that paper yesterday and saw the sort of thing on which the Post Office stopped correspondence—

*Mr. Gray:* Not stopped correspondence.

*Mr. Ostler:* Stopped such literature. I was able to pick up yesterday's paper lying on the table and to point out to Mr. Morris exactly the same kind of advertisements. I noticed in to-day's *Herald* and last night's *Star* exactly the same kind of advertisements.

*Mr. Gray:* And what did Mr. Morris say?

*Mr. Ostler:* He said that if his attention was drawn to them he would take the same action. I am not going to say Mr. Morris acted in bad faith, because I am sure he acted in good faith.

*Mr. Gray:* It was the Postmaster-General, on the advice of the Solicitor-General—not Mr. Morris.

*Mr. Ostler:* Whoever did it, I admit he acted in good faith, but I say he was hoaxed by the Roman Catholic Federation. If your Worship will compare those, and if you look in this morning's *Herald* you will see exactly the same thing; and here is the *Star*, a paper conducted with decorum and cleanness—the same advertisement; and these things go through the post. I do not want to unduly delay your Worship, but I could produce advertisements from almost every paper that comes into New Zealand, and goes through the post, not only of that sort, but treating of the matter in very much plainer terms—*Lloyd's News*, *San Francisco Chronicle*—I am not going to read the advertisements—I have been given a good many—but I submit that is sufficient to show your Worship that the advertisements that were objected to were by no means disgustingly immoral in tone, nor is any of the matter in the paper. Now, what has happened to the Catholic Federation's zeal for purity? Why is it not waging its virtuous war against the *Star* and the *Herald* to-day? I admit, of course, that the Postal officers acted in good faith in the matter. I admit that Mr. Rhodes is not the sort of man who would be influenced knowingly by the Catholics or by any one else to do a wrong thing from a wrong motive; but the Catholic Federation must have laughed up their sleeves at the simplicity of these gentlemen and the way they had hoaxed them. Curiously enough, this morning a copy of the *Tablet*, the Catholic organ, was put into my hands in which there is an article headed, "The Filthy Menace," which contains a copy of the letter sent to the Hon. Heaton Rhodes complaining of this matter, and it appears from that letter that the blue marks were put on by the Catholic Federation or the gentleman responsible for the letter himself, because that is so stated in the letter. Apparently the Post Office officials were so busy or so blind that they took their microscope and examined those three advertisements without looking at another thing in the paper.

*Mr. Gray:* You might quote Mr. Rhodes's letter.

*Mr. Ostler:* Yes, I will quote Mr. Rhodes's letter: it is set out in the *Tablet*. [Letter read.] Now, sir, the very fact that that kind of advertisement appears daily in our Press must show to any reasonable-minded man that it was not the advertisements at all that the Roman Catholic Federation objected to, but the fact that the paper was an attack upon them, and not an attack upon their religion, because there is not a word which attacks their dogma or religious observances, but merely their political activities and the abuses referred to in the paper. Now, I really would like, if I may be permitted to do so, to advise the Postal authorities that next time the Catholic Federation sends them a letter complaining of one of the advertisements they look a little further than the advertisement and read the matter, and try and find out the motive before they act in this way. I say this instance fully proves a dishonest attempt by the Catholic Federation to interfere in the interests of its Church with the functions of the Post Office—an attempt which, unfortunately, the Post Office, through lack of knowledge or through simplicity, fell in with.

What next have we proved? We have proved the second attempt, in February, 1915, in the Post Office itself, to interfere with correspondence legally addressed to *The Menace*, for which the Acting Postmaster-General had to give a humble apology, and assure Mr. Seabrook it would not occur again. The files were agreed to be produced in that matter, but unfortunately I have not had time to look at them; but I should like before I leave the room to be shown them.

Thirdly, we have proved this: that the most disloyal and seditious utterances are appearing in the Catholic Press, which still has the free use of the Post Office for distributing that matter untrammelled by any censorship. Now, I have read some specimens of that, and I have been given the right by your Worship to put in some specimens. I am not going to delay your Worship longer than necessary by reading them; they are in evidence, and I presume I have a right to read them, but I would like to assure your Worship that if time permitted and your Worship would let me I could keep your Worship half the day reading extracts of sedition and disloyalty that appeared in the Catholic Press.

*His Worship:* If you put them in they will be read.

*Mr. Ostler:* I propose as a sample to read one—no worse than any of the others, but it is fairly short—just to show the sort of thing that is being said. It is headed "To Bagdad and Ireland." [Article read to words "killed for our sakes."] This is only a fair specimen. I think that, and specimens like it which I have put in and which will be put in, will show that we have proved conclusively that the Catholic literature which is going through the Post Office uncensored contains disloyal statements which are much more mete for censorship than that pamphlet.