

what would prevent the establishment of agencies elsewhere? What was there to prevent people in New Zealand, if prohibited the use of the postal service for conveying their moneys, from appointing agents in the various colonies, and allowing their money to be deposited in banks, and remitted by draft to the agent? He questioned very much whether the proposal would effect what was desired. If New South Wales did not stand in with the others, he believed the right course for all the colonies to adopt would be to make it legal for this business to be carried on under stringent restrictions and legislation which would minimise the evils. He assumed Mr. Duffy's object was to get the great Colony of New South Wales to take the same position as the other colonies occupied, but he understood New South Wales was opposed to it. In New Zealand it was estimated that £25,000 per annum was sent out of the colony for sweeps, and unless New South Wales, which got this money, joined in the proposal, he believed it would be desirable to allow that money to circulate and be retained in his own colony under certain safeguards rather than send it out to New South Wales.

The Hon. D. O'Connor said, to promote morality among mankind is a very noble object, and I believe it would tend largely to that if we could altogether prevent gambling in these colonies, and if it were unknown elsewhere humanity would be the better for it. But what about carrying that out? And will the resolution proposed by my honourable friend Mr. Duffy, and which seems to receive the approval of my honourable colleagues, in any way tend to attain that noble object? I unhesitatingly say, No! And Mr. Duffy's own resolution is in sad contrast to the action of the Victorian Government, which provides so many facilities, especially in regard to railway conveyances, tending to the encouragement of this gambling propensity. It is a matter of fact that on one day every year at least there is proclaimed a public holiday to celebrate in that colony a carnival that does not belong to Victoria alone, but to Australasia, when tens of thousands of people are induced—and great inducements are offered them by the Government of that colony—to come to Melbourne to attend the great races and spend their money, a very large portion of it, at Flemington. Let us look at things straight in the face, and call things by their right names; and if there is any sham or hypocrisy, then there is a case to ask this Conference to discourage gambling. In Melbourne it is a very rare thing to find any less than a hundred thousand people at their November meeting every year, and there are four days out of every seven in the same week given over to the great meeting, besides the numerous other meetings that take place at other times of the year. For instance, last week, at the Autumn Meeting, there were the Australian Cup and the Newmarket Handicap. Now, this is in the Colony of Victoria, and that colony—the Government of it—may be said to have entered into partnership with the men connected with the racecourse, with the men who are called “blacklegs,” but whom I call “commercial speculators,” in a business. It is a transparent hypocrisy. I will give my honourable friend some facts. First of all, supposing to-morrow you restrict the sweeps; would that restrict gambling? Why, in 1883 they passed an Act in Victoria that gave the Postmaster-General almost unlimited power, and gave men in an inferior position in the Post Office the right to overhaul letters and find out the transactions of other people. But has that lessened gambling? At the present moment there is more gambling and more gamblers in Victoria than in the whole of Australasia put together. Why, they are known here as Silver Kings! To-morrow, I undertake to say, if the Victorian Government found itself in financial difficulties, and had to raise a loan, and appeal to the Thompson family and others that surround them to help them out of debt, these prosperous speculators could do it. Whilst they have taken out from the newspapers columns of advertisements regarding sweeps and consultations, yet we still find in the leading papers of Australasia—the *Argus*, *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Daily Telegraph*, *News*, &c.—advertisements under the hand and seal of some of the great officers of Victoria, offering all kinds of facilities to people to take them to Flemington. Let us look these things honestly in the face. Has gambling decreased in Victoria since you passed that Act? Unquestionably not. Look how unjust it is for a democratic community to propose to do this. Wealthy men can go to Flemington and Randwick, as they do, where you will find represented the merchant princes of the colony, Judges of the Supreme Court, leaders of the Bar, and leaders of many honourable occupations, including even my honourable friend Mr. Duffy, who likes to put down his pound in the hope of seeing it bring a hundred back to him. Wealthy men can go to the racecourse openly, and take their 100 to 5 or 1,000 to 50, according to their means; there is no attempt on the part of the Parliament of Victoria to restrict them from doing that; and why should a man, because an accident of fortune compels his residence to be on the Murray, or the Tweed, or the backwoods of Gippsland, or New Zealand, who cannot avail himself of the opportunity to enjoy the luxury of going out in a magnificent train to Flemington, not have the same privilege? Why are these people not to be permitted to bet their pound because they cannot go to Flemington or Randwick? Why, they have more claim, for they contribute something to the State. They post a letter, and have to get one in return, which has to be stamped; whereas the wealthy gambler gives nothing to the State. The metalicians do their betting at Flemington and Randwick without returning any revenue to the State. The thousands of the populace are the large contributors. It is not the wealthy swells who live at St. Kilda or Potts Point that maintain the public revenue, but the large mass of the people. Why should they be prevented from betting a pound in the only way they can? The only way they can do so is by utilising the post, and to say that to stop them doing so would reform morals and prevent crime, by discouraging gambling, is a shoddy argument, and will not stand a moment's investigation. If you want to show your sincerity, move a resolution for an Act to make it illegal to gamble. [Mr. Duffy: “It is now.”] Well, what effect has it? Does any policeman in Victoria walk out and interfere with you when you gamble? Does he say, “Your name, Sir?” because you are a gambler? Do they not see people taking the odds every day? On paper, only, I admit. Would it not be taking away the only means we have of getting a large revenue, and making people pay something for the luxury? I go to the races myself, and can afford to bet a pound or a couple of pounds, and like to do it, and I do it openly. On the racecourse you meet barristers, members of the various