

learned professions, merchants, Judges, and other members of the community. One of the most enterprising men we have had on the turf here was a Judge who kept racehorses. It is one of the qualifications of the Governors of the colonies that they are to be men fond of horseracing; for a man not fond of it to aspire to the Governorship of Victoria would send a thrill of horror through the colony. Essential qualifications for a Governor are that he shall be a man who shall have independent means, and shall enter into and encourage the sporting amusements of the people, and therefore one who has a partiality for seeing a race. What is the good of our initiating here to-day a thing that can have no practical effect, and that absolutely involves an injustice, inasmuch as, if you could stop it, you would prevent the poor man from betting his 10s.; whereas there is no hindrance to the rich man openly betting his thousands or tens of thousands. I am not speaking theoretically. If you want to stop this, let there be a penal enactment passed that any man who gambles or who attempts to gamble shall be punished, and what a thrill of horror that would send among the commercial community engaged in mining, share-broking, land-buying, forming companies—for that is gambling. Men spend their means in seeking for minerals in the bowels of the earth, in developing mines; that is speculating, that is gambling. I have been myself six and a half years contributing to a mine in Victoria, at Tarnagulla, and have contributed £1,000. I have never got back a farthing. [Mr. Duffy: "And never will."] They want to introduce a Bill into Victoria to prevent money going over from New South Wales to develop your mineral resources. As regards sweeps, where is the difference between them and open gambling? Wealthy men go to Randwick or Flemington to bet; even in the pious Colony of South Australia, I believe, money is shelled-out freely. I do not believe they know anything about gambling in New Zealand, or horse-racing either. [Mr. Ward: "We provide you the best horses."] As a matter of fact, New Zealand had been tempting the whole of the colonies for years by breeding the best horses. Queensland has contributed also. Not one of the colonies but has by breeding, paying large sums to buy the best blood-stock, tried to produce the fastest horses—for what? To run on the turf for our edification? No; to get the most money they could out of them; and this can only be done by entering into a partnership between themselves and the public. If this causes demoralisation, as hinted by my friend Mr. Duffy, but which I doubt, it cannot be stopped by preventing letters about sweeps going through the Post Office. If there is one colony that gambles largely it is Victoria. You can see whole terraces of houses there owned by bookmakers. The finest I saw there a year ago, when I was at Melbourne, belonged to bookmakers. Let me tell you what took place in our own city. One of our loveliest suburbs is Randwick, and within the last five years it has been almost rebuilt, and many of the new houses put up are owned by professional bookmakers. What is the good of bringing in a Bill to stop poor men from speculating a pound while you encourage the wealthy to bet largely? Let us be logical. We cannot have one law for the rich and another for the poor. I could not assent to this; it is opposed to justice and fair play. But if a Bill is brought in for the purpose of making gambling in all the colonies illegal I will support it, but I will not support any measure that will not produce any good effect, but only set up an injustice. I repeat again, that because an accident of fortune, by geographical position or want of means, prevents men from witnessing horse-racing, they should not be deprived of the opportunity to bet a trifle on a race by means of the post. I therefore cannot support the motion of my honourable friend Mr. Duffy.

The motion was eventually carried.

Re Penny Postage.

The Hon. T. Unmack took exception to the statement of figures handed in by Mr. Duffy relative to the penny postage, as the figures relating to Queensland were incorrect and misleading, and suggested it be withdrawn.

Mr. Duffy declined to withdraw it.

Mr. Unmack said then he must protest against it as incorrect.

The Conference went into Committee, and considered the draft agreement with the E. E. Co., making certain alterations.

Adjourned till Saturday, 7th March.

MONDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1891.

Reduction of Cable Rates.

The Secretary submitted a communication from Sir John Pender, of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, relative to the proposed agreement between the Governments of the Australasian Colonies (excepting Queensland and New Zealand) and the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, for the reduction of cable rates.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy moved that a sub-committee be at once appointed, consisting of the representatives of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, to consider Sir John Pender's message. This was agreed to, and the delegates of the colonies mentioned went into committee to consider the message in question.

In connection with Sir John Pender's letter, some discussion arose, and Mr. W. Warren, general manager in Australia for the Cable Company, came in.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy: Were the Conference to understand the company were going to lay another cable, at a different place from where it is at present?

Mr. Warren: We are taking soundings to try and discover a new route; then we shall shift one of our present cables—in fact, make a new cable altogether; it will then be a triplicate cable. We want, if possible, to obtain a better route than the present one. The intention is that the ships shall sound all round, and discover the very best route.

Sir John Bray: It will probably be a year before that is done.