

1933 is the centenary of several events which are landmarks in the history of constitutional reform. Two may be specially mentioned namely, the abolition of slavery in British dominions and the first really effective factory laws which reduced the evils of child ^{labour}. These two reforms were the result of educating the conscience. That slavery could legally exist in a Christian country or under the authority of a Christian ruler seems to us 'a contradiction in terms'. The Christian doctrine of man, ~~the~~ the equal preciousness of all souls in God's sight, & the Christian teaching on love & one's duty to one's neighbour make slavery essentially sinful from the Christian point of view. Christianity condemns slavery, and yet organised Christianity condoned, tolerated, & sometimes upheld slavery during many centuries. When the Evangelicals led the anti-slavery movement they met opposition, as might be expected, from vested interests. & what ought not to have been expected, from apparently sincere Christians. ~~Rev~~ John Wesley denounced slavery, George Whitefield saw no wrong in it. John Wesley's conscience was awake & active, George Whitefield's conscience was asleep & lethargic on this slavery issue.

It was so when Lord Shaftesbury fought for the factory children when he held a meeting in Bradford which was notorious for its deformed & crippled victims ^{who were the product} of child-labour. He could not get a local parson to be ~~stand~~ on the platform beside him. It took many years of patient agitation & publication of facts recorded & verified by a Royal Commission, to educate the conscience of a sufficient number of the British public to persuade Parliament to move in the right direction.

A third instance of the education of the 'public' conscience is the abolition of State Lotteries in England in 1876. The abolition was recommended by a Select Committee of the British Parliament which reported "That no mode of making money appears to the Committee so burdensome & pernicious under no system of regulation which can be devised will it be possible for

Thought, said as much in the National Assembly of the Church of England last November. The same Assembly ~~pass~~^{unanimously} passed a resolution condemning the use of gambling devices to raise revenue for public or private purposes. The deliberate voice of organized Christianity is against gambling, & the deliberate policy of civilized states, as expressed in legislation, is equally decisive that gambling is an evil thing & has a bad effect upon business & upon the character of the people.

Yet in the face of the vast mass of evidence from economic thinkers & writers, from the testimony of Labour leaders before English Royal Commissions, in spite of the melancholy records of police courts & the abundant, & decisive opinions of judges & magistrates, in face of the fact that gambling debts are not recoverable by legal process, in defiance of the ruin that reckless speculation brings upon business, & the way in which gambling has corrupted more than one form of organized sport, and in wilful blindness towards the perilous extension of the evil, there are still persons who see no harm in it, & feel no sense of responsibility towards their fellow men. They are as blind to the evils of gambling as their forefathers were to the evils of slavery & of child labour. Those who advocate the retention of the State Lottery, should, to be consistent, urge the repeal of all laws against gambling.

But some one will say, "Why do you consider it wrong to gamble?". Here are the reasons in summary form.

First I would define gambling as an appeal to chance to determine the ownership of property. ^{This definition} Gambling covers any method by which property - usually in the form of money - passes from one person to another, not in return for services rendered or goods supplied, but solely & simply on the appeal to chance. I have often been challenged on this point &

my answer is to such a challenger: "I mean by gambling an attempt to get, by chance, money you have not earned, to which you have no right & for which you give nothing in return".

Gambling is wrong because: -

1. It is essentially dishonest - getting something for nothing - taking other persons' property without giving them any equivalent.
2. The gambler, as such, is a parasite upon the community. He performs no service, he produces no goods, in fact he does nothing at all for the money he may win & he gets nothing for the money he may lose. The person who gains a prize in the Lottery, or makes any other gain by gambling, gets it at the expense of other people. They must lose in order that he may win.
3. Gambling appeals to and encourages the wrong motives, namely: -
 - i. Greed of gain, the coveting of other persons' money & property;
 - ii. Laziness, shirking honest work & living on other people.

The persons who say "we don't gamble for money, we have a little money on the game to add interest to it," give themselves away. The game, as a game, is not good enough for them; they play it, not because it is a game, but because they may gain something by it.

4. Gambling produces deterioration of character. No business man will employ a known gambler in a position of responsibility. No bank clerk dare openly win a prize in the State Lottery. Banks are shy of gamblers in their business. Judges & magistrates affirm that their experience demonstrates the fact that gambling is the most fruitful cause of crime & brings more persons into the criminal courts than any other evil brings therewith.
5. Gambling dislocates & spoils legitimate business. It injures retail business because it is the chief cause of bad debts. The State Lottery has already done much damage in this way, & the worst sufferers are those least able to bear it. Gambling injures wholesale business because it makes markets jumpy & erratic and causes crashes which may easily create crises. The wild speculator is a nuisance on the Stock Exchange & is treated accordingly.

6. Gambling creates bad feeling between persons. Gamblers distrust one another ~~as~~ can be seen by the tremendous precautions & penalties against cheating. The history of horse racing the way bad characters flock to the race course is significant. It is also notorious that organised betting has spoiled a good deal of what ought to be healthy sport. Boxing & Football have suffered severely from the dirty methods of organised gambling. Many clubs have had to make strict rules about players betting on the game. It is too great a temptation to dishonesty.
7. The State Lottery is a peculiarly poisonous form of gambling for it lends a specious air of pretended respectability to an evil with so bad a record that the State has tried to check it. But the State in one department invites persons to gamble & in another department punishes them heavily for daring to do so.
8. The State Lottery is a wasteful & unjust method of raising money. It is wasteful because it takes $13/14$ to collect a net amount of $6/8$, & it draws vast sums from legitimate trade. It is unjust because enriches the few at the expense of the many. ~~and~~ A tax would be a much smaller burden on the community & would compel every person to contribute to the revenue.

To sum up, Gambling in general, & State Lotteries in particular, have a bad record, & a persons who attempt or desire to justify gambling must be singularly blind to economic facts, singularly dense to moral principle, & singularly incapable of sincere religious feeling. If the N.S.W. Government is sincere in its care for the welfare of the Community it will abolish the State Lottery as a relic of economic barbarism.