

28. The Committee's main conclusion was that it was impossible altogether to suppress betting, but that the best method of reducing it was to localize it as far as possible on racecourses and other places where sport was carried on. Incidentally, this same policy inspired our Legislature in 1907. The proposal that bookmakers should be licensed was negatived by the Committee on the ground that it was not desirable to legalize betting in this manner and on the further ground that the establishment of such a system would increase rather than lessen the amount of betting. The Committee likewise condemned the establishment of totalizator betting on the ground that the encouragement by that means of the gambling instinct would far outweigh any gain that might accrue.

29. In the result, the Committee recommended that street betting should be prohibited and that heavier penalties should be provided than were provided under local by-laws. It further recommended that any bookmaker who engaged in betting transactions at a sports-ground where his presence was not desired by the management should be liable to arrest and fine. The Committee, however, went even further and recommended that the provisions of the Betting Act, 1853, should be extended to cover offices or credit betting by correspondence and that betting advertisements and circulars and tipsters' advertisements should be prohibited. The Committee, however, did not recommend the prohibition of the practice of publishing starting-price odds.

30. The Street Betting Act of 1906 gave effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1902, but only in respect of the prohibition of street betting and in respect of the liability to arrest and penalty of a bookmaker who engaged in betting transactions at a sports meeting where the management did not desire his presence.

31. The recommendations of the Committee are of interest in many respects, and in none more than this : that their proceedings emphasized the difficulty of suppressing betting and afforded illustration of how ingenuity can find a way for its continued practice by professionals despite restrictive legislation.

32. Another example of ingenuity is afforded by the Ready Money Football Betting Act, 1920. Shortly before the war of 1914 the Football Association became concerned at the growth of organized betting on football matches. They were particularly concerned at the coupon-betting system. Betting, they considered, was having a detrimental effect on the game. After the war the question was taken up again by the Association, and the Ready Money Football Betting Act, 1920, was passed. The Act was directed against the business of ready-money football-combination betting. Despite this legislation, betting upon football is still widespread ; the promoters have found a way of escape by having recourse to a credit system.