

an extent which, whilst it might do no more than satisfy the present exorbitant demand, would certainly prove excessive if that demand were ever moderated, as it may be in the near future. As it is, the Chairman is of opinion that betting has advanced to a stage that can only be defined as excessive. Mr. Freeman and Mr. Heenan do not, however, agree with this view.

282. That betting to the present extent is not excessive was sought to be established by counsel for the New Zealand Racing Conference, who produced schedules showing the aggregate amount of betting through the totalizator during various years in relation to population, and the total of the readily available money owned by the community. The computation showed that 6·89 per cent. of the total available money in the country passed through the totalizator in 1927, and that the percentage consistently decreased (with the exception of the year 1930, when the percentage was 6·17) until 1935, when the percentage fell to 2·94. During the years from 1936 to 1945 the percentage never exceeded 5·11, nor was it less than 3·38. It rose from 3·82 per cent. in 1945 to 5·48 per cent. in 1946. Similarly, it was shown that of the aggregate private income of £185,000,000 in 1938–39, some 4·3 per cent. went through the totalizator, whilst in 1945–46, of a total private income of £310,000,000, 6·45 per cent. went through the totalizator. Of the income, 1·1 per cent. was absorbed in deductions. The total private income for 1945–46 is stated to be correct within £10,000,000. The total sum which passed through the totalizator is taken as aggregating £20,000,000. It did not quite reach that total in fact. The calculations are based on totalizator betting only and take no account of the sum of £24,000,000 per annum which it was estimated is handled by illegal bookmakers.

283. Whilst the figures are perhaps not assailable so far as they go, it can be argued that they contain, for present purposes, elements of fallacy. In the calculation of the moneys immediately available the value of notes in circulation and the total of bank and savings-bank deposits have been taken. It might be reasonably claimed, therefore, that a very considerable proportion of these notes is held, and an equally great proportion of the moneys on deposit is owned, by corporations and persons who do not bet. Equally, it might be said that the aggregate private income enjoyed by the nationals of the country must be very largely enjoyed by corporations and persons who are not concerned with gambling. The calculations therefore do not give any indication as to what percentage of the income of the people who gamble is adventured in gambling, nor yet what proportion of the immediately available money is owned by the people who do not bet. Yet the numbers who constitute the class which gambles are doubtless so great that their welfare is a matter of public concern.