

to deal with this session. One is the necessity for checking the incursion of rabbits, in regard to which so much has already been said; and I think that if the two previous Governments had been so anxious to conserve the interests of farmers and agriculturists as they professed to be, they should have taken action as soon as the Rabbit Commission handed in their report, by setting about immediately to erect the fence recommended in that report. I trust this House will act at once, and try to prevent this dreadful scourge from coming into the settled parts of the country. The other troublesome question is the management of the aborigines in this State. When in Melbourne recently, I and some other members of this House were surprised and pained at the appearance of letters in the Press, professing to make exposures in regard to the treatment of natives in Western Australia, some writers saying the natives were treated so cruelly that the practice here was a disgrace to humanity. I do not know anything practically on this matter, but I consider this House should take into serious consideration this question, and place the natives under a proper board of management, so that they may be looked after in such a way as will not give cause for the publication of such scandals as have been set forth in the *Age* and *Argus* newspapers. One question which I hope this House will take into consideration is the amendment of the Municipalities Act, which was amended only last year. This Act, comprising close on 400 sections, was left till the end of the session, with the result that many of its provisions are antagonistic to each other; and I consider that an effort should be made to get the Act amended so that an opportunity will be afforded to municipalities to control their own affairs. The municipal bodies have had four or five conferences, and have come to a unanimous decision on certain questions which they desire to see settled. I am sure those bodies have given serious consideration to the various matters, and it is for this honourable House now to sanction the alterations in that Act asked for by those bodies. A local question affecting my constituents is that of the removal of the explosives magazine from Owen's Anchorage. The Government Analyst and Inspector of

Explosives reports on this very strongly. He says:—

During the year several risks have been run from the action of persons whose motives, I regret to say, do not appear to have been altogether free from mischief.

I think the Government Analyst refers to bush fires which came very close to the magazine; indeed, I have seen bush fires raging within 20 or 30 yards of it. I think it is to the interest not only of my constituents, but of the whole State, that the explosives magazine should be removed to Garden Island, or some other place where it would be free from the risk of bush fires, and other dangers of the kind. All explosives come by water from England or the Continent to this State, so that they could be loaded into lighters alongside ships and taken to Garden Island without coming into Fremantle at all.

MR. DOHERTY: Hear, hear. The late Government promised to do that.

MR. McDONALD: We trust the present Government will carry out the promise.

A MEMBER: That is all they did in the days gone by—promised.

MR. McDONALD: I can only say, in conclusion, that so long as the present Ministry proceed on the lines laid down in the Governor's Speech and in the Premier's speech at Queen's Hall, I shall give them my loyal support. I am sure the great majority of the electors of this State are with the Leake Government at the present time.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): An opportunity should be taken to place before this House and the country a statement of the position taken up by fruit-growers in regard to the new regulations drafted by the Government relating to the importation of fruit, and I propose to deal with this subject a little this evening. Before coming to that, I should like to pass a few criticisms on other portions of the Speech. The question of immigration is one that has been debated to a considerable extent during the last election campaign. I felt that it was impossible for us to enter on anything like a satisfactory immigration scheme. The difficulty that I foresaw, and now foresee, is that when you have imported your men, there is no certainty of keeping them in the State. We in



the country districts are badly in want of agricultural labour, but I do not think any system of immigration is likely to be of material advantage to us unless it is combined with a scheme for settling the immigrants on the land. I hope that before the close of this session the House will discuss a scheme for the importation of agricultural people from Europe. I am afraid it is useless for us to look to England now; but probably in some parts of Europe we shall find the class of men to suit our conditions; and I hope we shall be able to devise a scheme whereby we can secure a supply of good agricultural labourers and be certain of keeping them here when we get them. This essential can be assured only by a scheme for their settlement on the soil. The adoption of any other system of immigration should be left to the Federal Government, which has power under the Commonwealth Act to deal with the matter. Since there can be no certainty of an individual State keeping for any length of time immigrants whom it might go to considerable expense to get, I think it would be far better for the States to leave a general scheme of immigration to the Commonwealth Parliament. Therefore, unless our Government can show in their scheme of immigration some certainty of keeping the immigrants here when we do get them, I shall have to oppose that matter when it is brought up by Bill. One hon. member—I think it was the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish)—in dealing with this question of immigration suggested that the idea was to secure cheap labour. I desire to point out to the hon. member that all aliens, such as Italians, employed on public works in this country receive exactly the same wage as English labourers.

MR. DAGLISH: No; not necessarily.

ANOTHER MEMBER: The agent unfortunately gets it, in many instances: the men don't get it.

MR. JACOBY: I speak of instances which I have had the opportunity of observing. At Mundaring, where a large number of Italians are employed, about eighty, I find they are in some cases receiving the maximum wage of 9s. a day. In this connection I cannot help mentioning an incident which came under my notice at Mundaring. I saw some trucks being loaded with ballast there:

four Italians were employed in loading one truck, and three Englishmen engaged in loading another truck; and I observed that the latter finished their truck in the same time as it took the four Italians to get theirs loaded. I wish to point out to the Government that they might help the agricultural industry in this labour difficulty at the present time by keeping the best positions on public works, so far as wages are concerned, for our own people, and allowing the Italians to be employed by the agriculturists. Several hundreds of Italians are now being employed at very good wages on public works in this country, and they are probably more suited for agricultural work than are English or Irish labourers; and I think it would be of some assistance to agriculturists at the present time, when so short of labourers, if the Government were to refuse to employ Italians on public works. This would give the farmers an opportunity of getting the Italians for labour on land. I noticed the other day that the plea was put forward by the Treasurer on behalf of some Italian immigrants who desired to land here, that they were to be sent to vineyards and orchards in the Darling Range. I have ascertained where a good many of those men went to; and in each case that I looked into I discovered they stayed in the vicinity of a vineyard for a day or two, and then graduated to Mundaring to work at 8s. or 9s. a day. I would point out to the Government that if they would refuse to employ these Italians—men who cannot be compared with our workers—on public works, that class of labour would be available for agriculture. I regret to see that the Government have not taken advantage of the magnificent opportunity given them of bringing this State into line with the Commonwealth as regards the franchise for the Upper House. It appears to me somewhat ridiculous that the Upper House should be paid by the whole of the taxpayers when it is elected by only a section of them; and the time has arrived for widening the franchise for the Upper House. I regret, as I said before, the opportunity was not taken by the Government of providing for this in the Speech. It is admitted on all sides, I think, that we should bring our legislation into line with



that of the Commonwealth in this respect. As the Upper House salaries are paid by the whole of the community, and as the expense of the Upper House falls on the whole community, I repeat that that House should be elected by the whole community.

HON. W. H. JAMES: You will burst up your party, if you adopt those ideas.

MR. JACOBY: I do not think my party are against them. I was glad to hear from the Premier that he intended taking steps to make the Midland Railway Company carry out the terms of their agreement with this State. The unfortunate episode which occurred during the recent Ministerial trip to the Murchison has, I fear, practically forced into the background the matter of the purchase of the Midland Railway by the State. I think it quite possible that if the Treasurer had not adopted such a remarkable course as that of urging the Midland Company to ask for considerably more than it is asking at the present time, the negotiations which have been carried on might have been brought to a successful and satisfactory conclusion from the country's point of view. I see, however, that it is impossible for the Government to handle the matter after the extraordinary statement of the Treasurer; so that it will have to remain in abeyance for the present. There is a small railway line which should be taken over by the Government at the earliest possible date: I refer to the Canning Jarrah line. If the working of this line were inquired into, it would be found there is a reasonable prospect of its paying working expenses, and perhaps something more. Along that line there is a good deal of settlement with a tremendous amount of cultivation going on; and in my opinion the time will soon arrive when, after inquiry, the Government will find they are justified in taking the railway over. I trust they will make inquiries with that object at an early date.

At 6:30 o'clock, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (continuing): I regret the position taken up by the Gov-

ernment with regard to the future development of railways. It would be a great mistake if we adopted the policy of tying up all future railway development in this country for at least five years or more. If it can be demonstrated that a railway in any portion of the State can be made to pay, that is sufficient justification for borrowing the money to construct that railway. It is not so much a question of how much we owe, when we come to consider whether any farther railways should be built; it is mainly a question as to whether the line has a fair chance of paying; and, if so, the country is justified in incurring the expenditure. The hon. member for the South-West Mining District (Mr. Ewing) says there are very good prospects of a line from Collie to the goldfields paying; therefore we are justified in carrying out such a line if it is likely to pay after a short while. Then there is the Armadale and Kelmscott line which will open up a tremendous amount of country particularly adapted for the growth of vegetables, and it is a great pity to my mind that we are so largely dependent at the present time on Chinamen for our vegetables. If we were to open up such places as the Jandakot Area, or the Wanneroo Area, by light lines of railway, we would be justified in doing so if we think they will pay, as these areas would considerably add to our vegetable supply and cheapen it also. In dealing with the apple question, I may say I do not approach it as a grower: I look at it more from an economic standpoint. To me it is a question whether the result of keeping this State free from the codlin moth will justify the sacrifices which people would make. There has been a public grievance which has been justified, because all of us know that apples have been at an extortionate price for years past; but the growers do not reap the benefit. In the majority of instances the outside price received by the growers at the height of the season is from fourpence to fivepence per pound, yet the same fruit is retailed at from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per pound in Perth, and on the goldfields at something like 2s. a pound. The shortage of the supply has given an opportunity to the middleman to corner the crop. No doubt some growers have been more fortunate, and have received for their crop higher prices than those I



have mentioned; but the price received by the majority of growers this season has been 5d. per lb. There has been an enormous outcry on the fields in reference to this question. I was there a few weeks ago myself and saw evidences of it, and it struck me as somewhat ridiculous that such an enormous outcry should be made over the price of apples, which is likely to be maintained only for a short time. You cannot get a glass of whisky on the goldfields under a shilling, yet nobody says anything about that, nobody asks the Government to come in and cheapen the price of whisky. Then meat is an extraordinary price on the goldfields, and very little is said about it. It seems to be a favourite subject with some speakers to attack the fruit-growers, and call them unprogressive, and that sort of thing. A few figures which I shall quote by and by will show that the fruit-growers have done their part, and have planted very considerably. I think also, taking into consideration the fact that so soon as the imposition of uniform customs duties by the Commonwealth comes into force, this prohibition must cease, and as it is likely to take place within a couple of months, we might very reasonably have waited until then; in the meantime full inquiries could have been made into the position of apple-planting in this country. The inducements to settle and plant orchards in this country are many, and very powerful too. We have had attracted to this State men from all parts of Australasia, men who have practically been starved out of their holdings in other parts by the codlin moth; and they have come here because of the guarantee they practically had that the country was free from this terrible pest. Our geographical position is such that we are likely to command the very cream of the export trade. We have the advantage of several days in transit, and most of us know the price realised in London for apples is regulated by the condition in which the fruit arrives there. As we have this great advantage in time of transit over our neighbours in the other States, it stands to reason that we shall always receive the highest price available in the London market. There is our climate also: a great portion, if not the whole of our south-western district, is eminently suited

for the growth of apples. Though our soil is patchy, there is an enormous quantity available for apple plantations; and the quality of the apples will not be gainsaid by anyone who has had experience here and knows what apples are on the other side. Their quality leaves absolutely nothing to be desired; and I feel sure that in this respect our apples stand as high as those of any other State in Australia. The latest figures I have been able to obtain show that we now have 2,000 acres of trees planted. When the whole of these are in full bearing, the capital expenditure will be £140,000. The estimated minimum output, when they are in full bearing, should be 400,000 bushels, which, valued at 5s. per case, would give us an income of £100,000 per annum from all the trees now planted. The effect of federation must be to cause many of the small farmers in this State to look round for some more profitable method of cultivation than growing wheat or hay; and if we wish to succeed in keeping all the advantages we at present possess in the matter of fruit-growing, we must have an enormous development shortly after the imposition of uniform customs duties and the advent of free-trade between the States. It is not only the present plantations which we must be careful to guard, but we have to think of future developments; and I may say that unless we had ordered our trees a year ahead of the present season, it would have been quite impossible to get them at all, so extensive have been the areas planted in this State. Not only have local nurseries been completely cleaned out of apple trees, but tremendous orders have been sent to the other side; and I know of several striking cases there, of one in particular, in which the largest nursery in Victoria was unable to fill farther orders for Western Australia, because they had already exhausted their stock in supplying previous orders. There is, therefore, an enormous development of the apple industry in this State, a development which proves that in asking that every care be taken not to damage the industry as it stands at present, or in the future, we are only asking something that is justified by the facts. We have recently been told by a good many writers in the papers that the effect of the codlin



moth is not very serious; but it is a fact that the result of the ravages of the moth in Tasmania has been to damage from 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. of the crop in the infected orchards. I have here a report from Mr. Lea, the Government Entomologist in Tasmania, who writes on the 26th March a statement which is published in the journal of the *Bureau of Agriculture*, where he says :

Have just finished season's picking for codlin moth in my experimental orchard. From 244 bearing trees, 3,294 grubby apples were picked.

I quote these words to show that, even where every care has been taken in an experimental orchard, an orchard that has been planted for the purpose of allowing the Government Entomologist and other experts in Tasmania to experiment in every possible direction with a view to keeping down this moth, we find that from 244 trees there were over 3,000 apples of no value. Though the growers in this State have been accused of not adopting proper methods, and informed that by adopting them they could keep down the codlin moth should it get here, the authority I have quoted shows that it is practically impossible, even by the best methods known, to keep down the pest to any appreciable extent. We have been told that spraying would have the desired effect; but I would point out that, though this is quite true, it practically means that if you wished to save your apple crop from the codlin moth, you would have to spray every apple every day, from the formation of the apple until maturity. I have only to mention this to show how impracticable is the suggestion. As far as the regulations themselves are concerned, my idea is that this House should have had an opportunity of considering the report of the experts who deal with these matters. The amount of property involved, and the enormous loss that must ensue to this State if that moth be introduced, might surely have caused the Premier to hesitate, and not to anticipate the Commonwealth Parliament by a couple of months, but to allow the question to come up in the House, where it could have been threshed out and the information made available for everybody. In conclusion regarding the apple matter, I would say that this State has made a

very heavy sacrifice for the last three or four years, and has paid very high prices, with the main object of protecting our orchards. Well, I say it would be a great pity to render the whole of that sacrifice useless, unless we first had the fullest and strictest inquiry. The matter has several times been discussed in the Producers' Conference; and every time it has come up, all the growers have expressed the hope that the Bureau of Agriculture might, after subjecting the apples to some sort of fumigation, allow them to enter our State with a minimum of risk. And if the experts had not told us that it was impossible to admit apples with a minimum of risk, we should have been only too glad to insist on the removal of the prohibition. But each time the subject has come up in the conference, we have been told we cannot, with any degree of safety at all, admit these apples. Now I ask, what report have the Government received from the agricultural experts? If the report be the same as those made to the conference, then we are indeed taking a very large risk; and I much regret that the Government did not wait until they had first instructed themselves on the matter, and instructed the House more fully as well. [MR. THROSELL: Hear, hear.] Members on the Ministerial benches have challenged us to make an issue with them. Well, the Premier has been very astute in preparing the details of the Governor's Speech. I think the Premier must have been acquainted with the opinions of every member of this House; because he has taken particular care to put into that Speech what is practically the policy and what are the opinions of the majority of the members sitting on this (Opposition) and on the other (Government) side. If he wanted to test the strength of parties, then he could easily have put some contentious matter into the Speech.

MR. HOPKINS: Or left something out: apples, for instance.

MR. JACOBY: No doubt the Premier wanted a test on the apple question; but that is not a national question, and I do not think members on this or on the other side who may be interested in apple culture are likely to challenge him on such a point. But, excepting the two items I have pointed out in my speech,



there is practically nothing left on which we can challenge the Government; because they have taken very good care that they shall have in the Governor's Speech only those proposals of which they know we are in favour. If I am asked why I am sitting opposite the hon. members on the Ministerial bench, I reply that *Hansard* gives my reasons for so doing. For years I have read the speeches and watched the proceedings of this House; and the result has led me to come to this side when I took my seat in the Chamber, because I consider I am following a leader who has the confidence of this country. I shall be quite pleased, and will congratulate the Premier, if he be able successfully to carry out the duties he has taken upon himself; and so long as he carries them out to the satisfaction of this House and to the satisfaction and for the welfare of the country, there is no reason why we should attempt to turn him out and to get into the Government seats. So long as he confines himself to carrying out our policy and making laws in pursuance of the opinions held by hon. members on this side of the House, then I see no reason for voting against him or his measures.

MR. WILSON (Perth): As one of the old members of this House who sat in the last Parliament, perhaps I may be permitted to sincerely congratulate you, sir, upon your election to the honourable position which you now enjoy. I have to place on record my appreciation of the courtesy you have always exhibited to members of this House, and more especially to new members, who are not thoroughly acquainted with the rules and regulations. I also wish briefly to state how deeply my sympathies are with the members of the family of the late Mr. Alexander Forrest, and to place on record that he, in my humble opinion, was a man worthy of the esteem of every member of this House, and indeed of the people of Western Australia. He did excellent work for his country; he was a man of large-heartedness and great generosity of spirit; and he was willing to help everyone who went to him in trouble. The Governor's Speech has been criticised pretty freely from the Opposition side of this House; and the principal complaint seems to be that it is

too general in its terms, not specific enough, and does not deal with any new or important works. I for one admit at once that I am not disappointed with the terms of this Speech. I go farther. I should like to know how any Ministry could produce a Speech on different lines from that recently delivered by His Excellency. I should like to ask the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Piesse) what difference he would have made in the matter of the Speech, if it had been prepared by him. For many years we have pointed out how this country, through the lavish administration of the late Forrest party, was drifting into a state of financial tightness—I will not use the term disaster, because it is one which is apt to injure the credit of the country. But certainly our finances have got into a tight condition; and it stands to reason that anyone taking office at the present time, when the out-going Premier declared that the finances of the country required straightening out, when he declared that public works must cease for many years to come, could not do otherwise than preach a course of caution and moderation, and the practical cessation of public works. The future, so far as the borrowing powers of this State are concerned, has been mortgaged for a considerable time. I venture to say our borrowing powers—as has been laid down not only by the members of the late Opposition, but also by the Forrest administration themselves—have been mortgaged for three or four years. We find that there is at least a sum of six millions of money to be raised. That has been admitted by the leader of the Opposition (Hon. F. H. Piesse), and emphasised by members on the Ministerial side.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I do not admit that at all.

MR. WILSON: I thought you did, and I listened to you very carefully. I should like to see the figures to the contrary, at any rate. The works contained in the legacy of the Forrest public works policy to be finished by the present Administration will commit this country to a farther borrowing of six millions, and if the figures are wrong, it is for the members opposite to prove them so. I listened to the leader of the Opposition. He gave a large quantity of figures which