



DAVE'S DAIRY

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When I wrote last weekend I said that it looked like rain. Since then we have had 100 points altogether, spread over two or three days. This was wonderful really, but I understand that there are other people who didn't get as much and I am going to try and feel sorry for them.

The only thing that really makes me feel cross about the rain is why we didn't get it a month ago? If Clarkson had been really on the ball, he surely could have done something about it earlier.

As I said last week, he has gone away to the Northern Territory and whether he has done that to dodge our disfavour about the weather or whether he has got himself into even deeper water, I do not know.

During the last week of Parliament he made a rather innocent kind of speech in which he pointed out that the artificial fibre industry received protection by bounty and tariff duty which is worth about £4 million for the whole rayon industry.

Then he went on to say that this works out at about £1,600 for each of the 2,500 people employed in the industry and that the whole community would be better off if these people were paid £30 a week to stop home and watch T.V.

Having said all this, Clarkson evidently went on to analyse the troubles of the industry and said that obviously the real trouble with the artificial industry is that the people didn't buy enough of the same kind of clothes and then he went on to make an innocent suggestion that if the Minister for Trade really wanted to make the industry worthwhile, all he had to do was to persuade women to wear the same kind of clothes, either inside or out.

Having delivered himself of this seemingly innocent pronouncement, he was evidently staggered to find that the press all over Australia took it up and women voters descended on him in droves and assailed him from all sides.

He was hopeful that the men would come hurrying to his aid, but probably from cowardice they didn't.

So that now it seems as if Clarkson has aroused a tremendous furore in the feminine world and his innocent remark has really got him into very hot water. He says that it will be the last time he will be anything but very serious and he also says that from now on all tariff debates, as far as he is concerned, will be conducted on a very lofty plane.

I can't help feeling sorry for the poor old boy really. I know he has put a lot of work into this tariff debate during this session. But of course, no one takes much notice of that.

But as soon as he makes some silly remark like women wearing uniforms, the whole press all over Australia rises up and roars.

Anyway that's enough about Clarkson. At present he is lurking up in the Northern Territory, waiting for this storm to blow over.

At home we have had a really busy time. We started working up land as soon as we could get on it, and having these continual showers — a little each day — has kept the top soil damp. This means we have been able to get four good days in cultivating and we have really got quite a lot done.

The sheep have had a pretty tough time, of course, because there is not a great deal of feed around, but this self-feeding of silage through the gates has enabled us to go on feeding while it has been raining.

But of course, we aren't out of the woods yet. We still want more rain, and even if we get it, we will be short of feed until the spring.

I can't help feeling extra glad I haven't any ewes lambing. And the wool market didn't actually go down much when I sold my wool.

So really I can't help feeling that I am getting pretty clever. But as soon as I start to think like that, I think about cattle, and how I bought them dear and sold them cheap, and how much feed they ate. Then I stop feeling clever.

I will soon have to start going round on my hands and knees looking for lucerne flea and red legged earth mites. And I will soon be anxiously looking for strips made by the aerial top dressing. And then I will have to start worrying about whether it is too late to sow peas.

So there is plenty of trouble ahead. But in the meantime I am fairly content (for me) and I will soon get me wool cheque and then I can go into the town and park in front of the bank!