



DAVE'S DAIRY

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He yearns for the gift of prophecy

Monday. — Had to get the sheep in today. They do not look as bad as you would expect, but some of the older ewes are showing that they haven't had a decent feed for months. But I do wish that they weren't going to lamb until the middle of May instead of the middle of April. If it doesn't rain before then there will be a lot of losses. I remember at mating time that Clarkson told me not to put the rams out till later this year. But I am getting a bit sick of Clarkson offering advice, so I told him I always put the rams out on November 15, and intended to do it again. But I can see now I should have waited another month. I must be careful not to tell Clarkson this, because he thinks he is always right.

Tuesday. — The banker rang up last night, so I had to go into the township today to see him. I suppose our banker is quite a nice chap, really — at least, he might be. He's got three kids, and they say he isn't cruel to them, and doesn't beat his wife. But as a banker he's got a mighty cold exterior. But I've noticed this with bankers. They are very pleasant to you when you are rich, don't speak to you much when you are paying your interest, but when you are not you seem to run into them wherever you go, and they are never pleased to see you. Anyhow, today the banker gave me two hours of his very valuable time. He says I have got to do some cropping. I didn't like the way he said that I "had to," but I suppose he's got a right to be a bit cross. He says I have got to do more prices for cereals, I should be able to do pretty well for myself for a few years. He's going to advance me a bit extra so I can buy some more seed and kerosene. I told him I wouldn't have enough super, or fallow, but he didn't think these things mattered much. He said he was only telling me this for my own good, but you could tell he was really thinking about his interest.

Wednesday. — Last night Mary and I had a long talk over the things the banker said. She said I ought to go over and have a talk with Clarkson. I must admit I didn't like the idea, because although Clarkson is a very decent chap really, he does think he knows everything, and a lot of us feel that he is too theoretical. But Mary talked me round, so I went over today. Clarkson agreed with the banker about it being a good time to make money, but he said that I would have to be careful not to make money at the expense of my soil. He said that it would be better to sow more oats and barley on scratched land than to do a lot of fallowing for wheat, and get it all washed away when we got a wet winter. Of course, Clarkson is a bit of a crank on soil erosion, so I didn't know what to think. I am quite good at growing wheat really, and don't like the thought of switching over to a lot of oats and barley. But I haven't got much fallow this year, and if I am going to fallow up a lot for next year, I'll have to get some more sheep. So I might follow his advice, and grow less wheat and more barley and oats.

Thursday. — Went down for the mail today, and all the chaps were talking about when it is going to rain. I think these chaps who knew when it is going to rain are wonderful. We have some awfully good weather prophets round here. Some go by the ants, others by the blowflies on the sheep, some by 11-year cycles, some by the barometer, some by instinct, and a few by whether the moon comes in on its back. The moon always seems to me to "come in" in the same position, and how these fellows know when it is going to rain beats me. Before Easter all

of the prophets agreed we were going to have a wet Easter. They were all so certain that I almost bought some more sheep. Now that Easter has gone, with no rain, they must all be rather surprised. But I wish I had the gift too.

Friday. — It came up a lot like rain today. But my barometer didn't go down, so I took it outside to see for itself, and still it didn't go down. I'm going to try to get a new one.