

3-507001

61/63

FEATHERS MAY BOOM

On the biggest ostrich farm in Africa, rumour said prosperity was just round the corner.

They couldn't all rush to hear if the news was true; motherhood came first. Interfering busybodies had father to reckon with. No use telling him that ostrich feathers may boom again. His mind was on his new family. They'd been six weeks hatching out and looked a credit to mum and dad. In fact dad went about with his head in the air.

The riders weren't trying to be Lester Piggett in the Ostrich Derby, they were experts, selecting the best birds for feather-cutting.

It was plume-harvest time. They forestall protests, not by telling the bird to put a sock in it; they put one on it!

It's better in blinkers.

They cut the feathers, painlessly, every nine months. Ostrich farmers love to hear their grandfathers tell of the fabulous days before World War One, when all smart women wore so many feathers, they almost looked like ostriches themselves. Now, the farmers and dealers think the old fashion is coming back. So the auction at Oudshoorn did the best business for many a long year.

It only wants Dior to feature feathers in his next collection, and there'll be quite a run on the fine birds that grow them. The mere rumour has got the ostriches all in a flutter.