



DAVE'S DAIRY

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Everybody in our district, as well as all over Australia, has been saddened by the terrible fires in Tasmania. I suppose the people in the country who have always faced the risk of being burnt out have more than the usual understanding of the damage that has been done.

So, I know that all readers of the *Stock Journal* will feel as desperately sorry as I do about the dreadful calamity that took place.

But I've also got a guilty feeling, too.

After the news of the Tasmanian tragedy I went out and had a look at my place with a critical eye and I can't help feeling guilty about the amount of grass there is around the place — grass which I know shouldn't be there.

It is not that I didn't mean to get rid of it during the spring and early summer, but it's still there and, of course, it should not be.

So it is not that I didn't mean to get rid of it, it's just that I kept putting it off, and I feel very guilty about it now.

This is one of my troubles — I am always meaning to do things, but somehow I never get round to it.

The truth is, I am so full of good intentions it is almost uncomfortable. But when it comes to doing things, I seem to miss out, somehow.

A symptom of this, of course, is the tendency I have to put all correspondence in the china ornament on the mantelpiece to let it mature.

I always mean to empty the ornament regularly but I don't seem to do it, and that's the trouble.

And in the same way, I seem to put off straining up the fences and straightening the gates and even cleaning out the blacksmith's shop.

I know at one stage I had to lift the roof of the blacksmith's shop by a foot to give me room to work. I kept hitting my head on the roof because there was so much rubbish on the floor.

I have been worried about this tendency in myself for some time because although I have always had this trouble, it seems to be getting worse lately.

So I suggested to Mary that perhaps I ought to go and have a talk to the doctor about it.

But when I said this, she just sneered and said the reason why I kept putting things off was because I am just fundamentally lazy.

And the reason why it was getting worse was because I devoted more and more time to playing bowls.

I don't think this is a very nice attitude for Mary to take, particularly as I have just finished painting the house in a very dedicated manner.

Fortunately young Harold doesn't seem to have this unfortunate tendency firmly fixed into his make-up.

Perhaps a reason for this is that the example I have set has been a grim warning to him.

Or perhaps being married to a Clarkson has snuffed out any tendencies he may have had in this direction.

I notice Clarkson has been, for him, very quiet recently.

Of course, he still goes round the country looking important, or trying to do so, but he hasn't been making many statements lately and that's a relief.

And I notice he has been keeping very quiet about tariffs which were his main interests in life before they muzzled him by making him a Minister.

I often wonder how comfortable it is to wear a muzzle in this way. I put a muzzle on a dog once because I had some strychnine baits out and it was quite pathetic to see the poor animal trying to remove it with his paws.

Whether Clarkson will have the same trouble with his muzzle, I just don't know.

But I can't help hoping that some of the other Members of Parliament will start to take up this tariff question, particularly the tariff on weedicides and other chemicals which I know were worrying Clarkson before he became a Minister.

Surely some of them will be worried about what appears to be a serious increase in our costs.

And there's no doubt that all kinds of chemicals are going to become more and more important in the modern farming world in which we find ourselves.

So if the other Members aren't interested they ought to be, and I think it's only proper that farmers who are similarly concerned, as I am, should get in touch with their local Members or Senators and start to worry them about it.

I often think that we farmers are too casual about these things and just expect people to take things up when it is really our duty to put our case to our Parliamentary representatives and make them aware that we are not too happy about things.