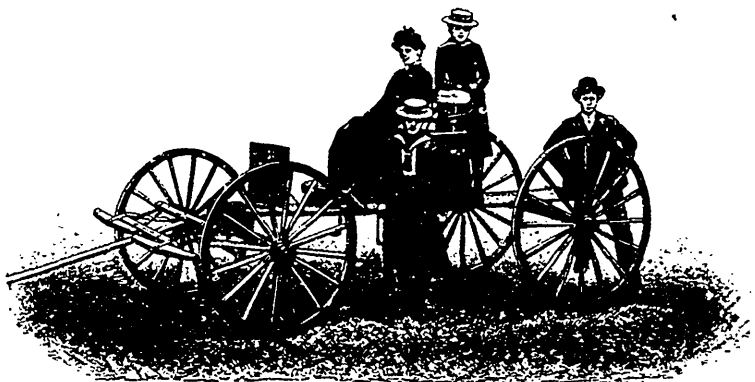


equal to that of the famous giants of California. The eucalyptus leaves possess therapeutic properties which science is engaged in utilizing, and which make Australia one of the most healthy countries in the world.

The eucalyptus is not a handsome tree. The leaves, which are long and drooping, half close during the day, and give no shade; the trunk peels every year, and the bark hangs down its sides in strips. The numerous branches writhe in despair in all directions. You feel a sentiment of sadness penetrate you at the sight of this

green, without any intensity of colour, and it never changes in appearance.

And how describe that profound, that solemn silence? I have been told that the bushman almost loses the faculty of speech in many instances, and it was not at all unusual to hear of shepherds having gone out of their minds. Miles from any town, unvisited by any human creature, save the man who brought him rations from month to month, and whom he missed seeing if he happened not to be in his hut when they were brought. The shepherd is alone



AUSTRALIAN BUCKBOARD.

vegetation, to which nature has been niggardly.

From the beginning of April to the end of October, Australia enjoys a magnificent climate; but in January, February, and March the heat is suffocating. The thermometer varies between 90 degrees and 120 degrees in the shade; and, when the north-west wind blows, the atmosphere becomes almost unbearable.

But what a weird, sad-looking landscape! No bright colours. All is dull and sombre, everything seems to be drooping and mourning. The verdure of the soil and of the trees is more grey than

in the solemnity of the bush, his only living companions the thousands of meek sheep and the faithful dog.

Alone, the laughing-jackass reminds you that one may find gaiety everywhere, even in the bush. He laughs consumedly, and his "Hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, ha, ha, ha, ha," is comic in the highest degree. When you hear him laugh, you want to laugh with him. This smallish, thickset bird has a head almost as large as his body, and a formidable beak, with which he attacks and destroys snakes; so it is not surprising to find that he is held sacred by the