

opinions existing about the climate. During our stay, the weather was unfavourable for all astronomical observations, and almost the whole time cloudy or rainy. It was amusing to find many of those to whom I had the pleasure of an introduction, apologizing for the badness of the weather. It brought forcibly to my recollection, the fault that Captain Basil Hall finds with the people of the United States, but was far from being annoying to me. I have but little doubt, that the climate is, generally speaking, a healthy one, and not unlike that of some parts of our own country. The colony is subject to occasional epidemics, and from the best information I could procure, it is thought that the mortality is about one in forty-three; this may be called a very small proportion, when one takes into consideration the great quantity of ardent spirits that is consumed.

The general appearance of the vegetation of New South Wales presents many peculiarities. The character of its productions is totally distinct from those of the other portions of the globe. The gum trees, Norfolk pines, and those of Moreton Bay, attract attention from their scattered appearance, and peculiar foliage. All these have a dark and sombre hue. A remark made by one of our gentlemen is characteristic of the former, "that they were ghosts of trees." The leaves being set edgewise causes this appearance, and in consequence give little or no shade. This peculiar position of the leaf is more conspicuous in the *Eucalypti* than in other genera, for in them the leaves are all pendant, while the leaves in the other genera are usually upright, rigid, and somewhat as may be seen in the acacias and other tribes. It was observed that both surfaces of the leaves were much alike, having as it were, two upper surfaces. Whether any physiological purpose has been assigned for such an arrangement I have not been informed.

According to observations made by the gentlemen of the Expedition, the great mass of the vegetation of Australia belongs to the natural orders of *Myrtaceæ*, *Leguminosæ*, *Proteaceæ*, *Epacrideæ*, and *Compositæ*.

The most common genera are *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia*. Many trees of one of the species of the former genus were seen one hundred and twenty feet in height, and with a girth, about six feet from the ground, of eighteen feet. This species is called by the settlers black gum, and is much used for domestic purposes, particularly its bark, with which they cover their huts and houses. The dilated foliaceous acacias are very numerous, and are objects of attraction from their gay and fragrant blossoms. The trees which present the greatest variety of species, are those known as gum trees, viz.: blue gum,