

THE SQUATTER'S DREAM

A Story of Australian Life



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BY
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A STORY OF AUSTRALIAN LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

“Here in the sultriest season let him rest.

Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees ;

Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,

From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze.”—*Byron.*

JACK REDGRAVE was a jolly, well-to-do young squatter, who, in the year 185—, had a very fair cattle station in one of the Australian colonies, upon which he lived in much comfort and reasonable possession of the minor luxuries of life. He had, in bush parlance, “taken it up” himself, when hardly more than a lad, had faced bad seasons, blacks, bush-fires, bushrangers, and bankers (these last he always said terrified him far more than the others), and had finally settled down into a somewhat too easy possession of a couple of thousand good cattle, a well-bred, rather fortunate stud, and a roomy, cool cottage with a broad verandah all covered with creepers.

The climate in which his abode was situated was temperate, from latitude and proximity to the coast. It was cold in the winter, but many a ton of she-oak and box had burned away in the great stone chimney, before which Jack used to toast himself in the cold nights, after a long day's riding after cattle. He had plenty of books, for he did not altogether neglect what he called his mind, and he had time