

which rose and growled as the stranger entered, while they stood, finger-in-mouth, gazing at him in childish awe. A space at each end of the room was allotted for sleeping places, one for the family, the other for chance travellers, benighted at this primitive inn. These places were raised slightly above the floor, and heaped with the soft branches of the pine, spruce, cedar and hemlock, which gave a pleasant odor to the otherwise close atmosphere of the place.

It was an interior which, though lacking in all that refinement demanded, yet provided, no doubt, on many a bleak night a simple comfort to the hardy pioneer, who, travel-worn and weary, and sheltered from the inclement storm, lay or half reclined, wrapt in a single blanket or a fur covering, upon its branchy couch, and watched the showers of sparks shoot upward from its flaming cheery hearth, which gave both light and heat to the apartment.

The woman of the house had a careworn, faded appearance, pale eyes and hair, and dark, sunburnt face. She wore a simple homespun dress and no foot covering. At her invitation he entered and was about to take his place at the rude table, when the doorway was again darkened, and a voice came in a benediction:

"The Lord be with all in this house."

"Amen to that, Parson Webb," cried the woman, her face lighting up with a homely welcome; and forgetting her other guest, she went forward and received the preacher with a warmth that showed her appreciation.

He was a small man, somewhat over middle age, with