

## PREFACE.

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IN another book, I have told the story of how the English race gained a footing on the coasts of the New World, and the design of the present volume is to give some account of the clearing and settlement of its vast inland forests. To do so effectively, it has seemed best to restrict the view to one part, and that the most prominent in the story. Throughout the following pages, accordingly, 'the backwoods' are taken to mean that region most familiarly known to us under this name, the once thickly-wooded country between the Alleghany range and the prairies of the west, and from the cane swamps of the south to the Canadian lakes, now forming part of the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky. And the epoch I have chosen is the momentous half-century or so that has the revolutionary war as its central point, during which the pioneers of civilisation were in almost constant collision with the most formidable of the Indian tribes, who had learned to use the weapons of the white men, but had not yet learned