

**AMONG THE  
NORTHERN HILLS**

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Among the northern hills by W. C. Prime

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**W. C. PRIME**

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# AMONG THE NORTHERN HILLS

BY

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"I GO A-FISHING" ETC.



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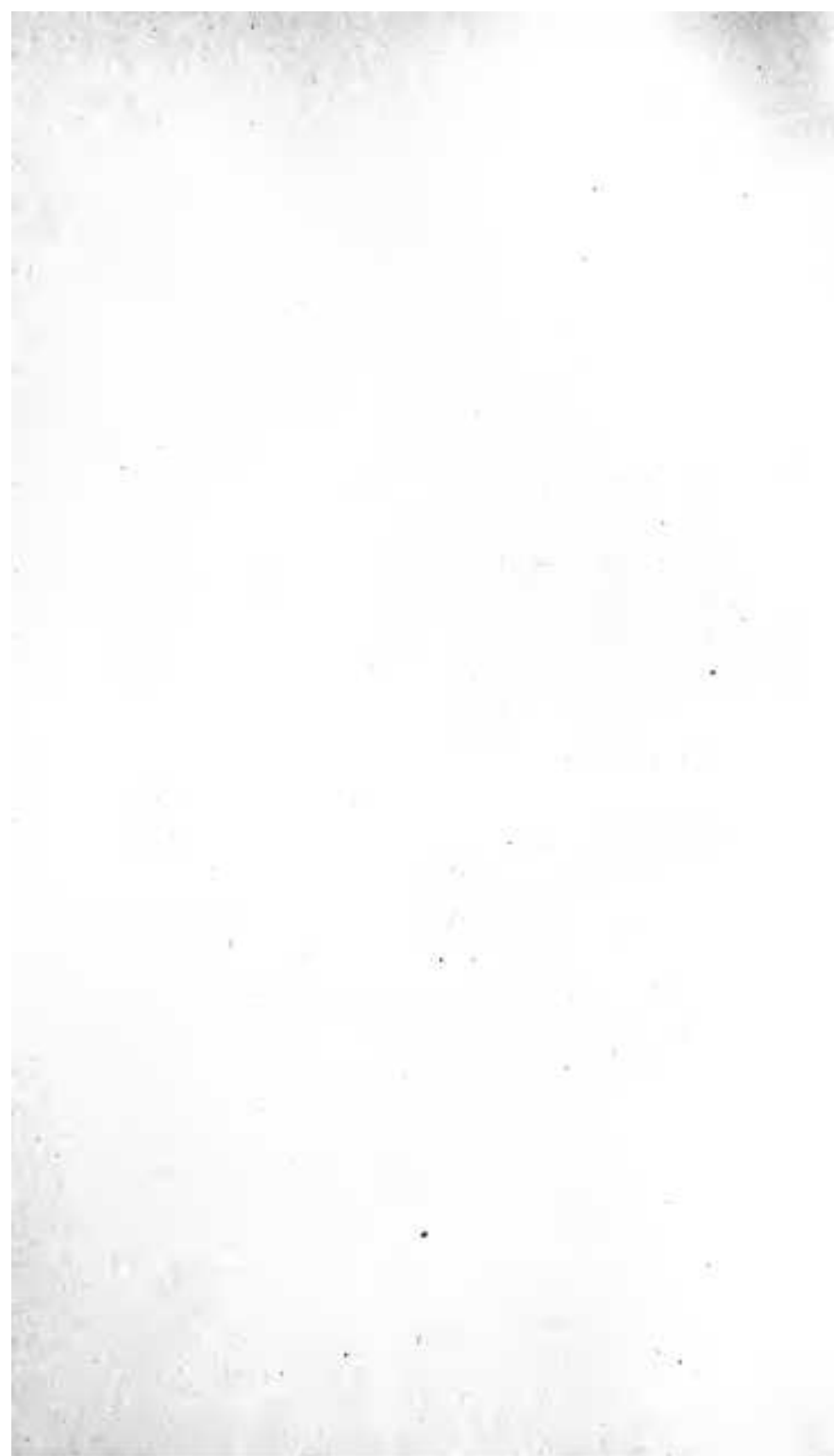
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## I

### THE PRIMEVAL FOREST

LONESOME LAKE cabin stands three thousand feet above the sea, in the primeval forest. It is reached by a zigzag bridle-path, cut in the mountain-side, which leads up from the Franconia Notch road. The cabin and lake are a thousand feet above the road. Both road and bridle-path go through the primeval forest. No axe of lumberman has, hitherto, desecrated this forest sanctuary.

The expression "primeval forest" is little understood by many who use it. While there is an almost universal desire to preserve portions of our American forests from the saw-mill, there seems to be everywhere a prevalent notion that this end can be accomplished by a judicious system of forestry, which includes the plan of thinning out the woods, selecting and cutting from year to year some of

the older trees, guarding the younger to grow up and grow old, thus preserving and cherishing a perpetual succession of shadowy groves. Well meant though this plan doubtless is, and suited to preserving parks, it would, if carried out, be destructive to the primeval forest, whose grandeur in things large and beauty in things small can only be preserved as they have been created, by letting alone. The forest can take care of itself, but is jealous of interference. It is not a park, nor does it resemble a park. The one is mere nature, the other is art. The natural forest is a world of innumerable creatures, animate and inanimate, who have from time immemorial lived in community. You can never tame the wildness of those people.

Why not call trees people?—since, if you come to live among them year after year, you will learn to know many of them personally, and an attachment will grow up between you and them individually. They will be companionable to you, as are your horses and your dogs, and after a while you will have the same sympathy with them that you have with the next higher order of living beings whom you call animals.

There are hundreds of white-birch trees on the mountain-side, and on the ridge, and around the lake, each of which I know, and of these there are perhaps twenty or thirty with which I have had long relations of friendship. I would not have the