

**SELECTIONS FROM
THE KALEVALA**

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Selections from the Kalevala by John A. Porter

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JOHN A. PORTER

**SELECTIONS FROM
THE KALEVALA**

SELECTIONS
FROM THE
KALEVALA

Translated from a German version

BY
JOHN A. PORTER M.D.

LATE PROFESSOR IN YALE COLLEGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS OF
THE POEM



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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

THIS volume contains the fourth of a series of great foreign poems which the publishers are trying to engraft upon American literature.

The first one issued was *King René's Daughter*, from the Danish. This has already passed to a second edition. It was followed by *Frithiof's Saga*, from the Swedish, with an introduction by Bayard Taylor. The third of the series is *Lessing's immortal Nathan the Wise*, which has lately been presented to American readers for, strange to say, the first time, through the translation of Miss Ellen Frothingham of Boston.

The present volume contains selections from the *Kalevala*, which were made by the late Professor Porter, after a long familiarity with the work, as forming the most interesting narrative, or episode, which it contains, and as being sufficient, without wearying the reader with uninteresting mythological details, and monotonous repetition, to give a just idea of the matter and manner of the poem. The translations were made from a close German version, by Professor Porter, to while away the hours of the long illness which terminated his valuable life.

The introduction and analysis of the poem have been prepared by a competent scholar, and will be found to contain valuable information on subjects which heretofore have hardly received just attention from American writers.

Not having been able to learn that any other English translation from the great national epic of the Finns has ever appeared, the publishers present this one with special confidence in its claims upon the attention of all cultivated readers.

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INTRODUCTION.

ABOUT the eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea live a million and a half of people, the last remnants of a race which has been pressed back from the Ural by advancing tribes. They inhabit a land of marshes and lakes, and call themselves Suomilainen, fen-dwellers ; to us they are known by the name of Finns. Of their congeners in Lapland, Russia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, only the Magyars have become civilized. The Finns are even more advanced than these. Their literature, and especially their popular poetry, show a high intellectual development, even in a very distant time—so far back indeed as to belong almost to the mythical period.

Finland, with its deep bays and inlets, its granite mountains and its lakes, its change of long sad winters with short and warm springs