

**HERMANN AND
DOROTHEA: FROM THE
GERMAN OF GOETHE**

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Hermann and Dorothea: From the German of Goethe by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe & Thomas Conrad Porter

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JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE & THOMAS CONRAD PORTER

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Hermann und Dorothea.

Germann and Dorothea.

From the German of Goethe.

TRANSLATED BY

THOMAS CONRAD PORTER.

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P R E F A C E .

THE treatment which this exquisite poem of Goethe has received at my hands may appear to the scholar to savor of vandalism or sacrilege. The great bard forgive me! But I have this plea to offer: The verse of the original is hexameter, at best an almost unmanageable metre in our language. To translate it into the same verse, therefore, is beyond the skill even of a Longfellow; to translate it into another would destroy one of its principal charms. So that if English readers are ever to enjoy this beautiful creation of genius, the poetic form must, in any case, be sacrificed. And yet, unlike many works of art, its chief value does not rest in the form only, perfect as that is. A golden statue, wrought out with curious and elaborate skill by the hand of a master, loses, it is true, its artistic worth and beauty in the furnace, but the gold remains; so Goethe's rhyme, when melted into English prose, is Goethe still—the idyl is still idyllic.





