Preface

The Norwegian Institute for Comparative Culture Research honored me with a commission to give lectures dealing with folklore methodology for its first session in 1924, and I attempted to describe the experience of Finnish researchers in a half century of work of thousands of compatriots. Of interest are not only their fortunate finds and auspicious efforts but also their mistakes and failures. The latter have encouraged renewed, ever more penetrating, research, especially in the area of the *Kalevala* cycle.

It was not possible within the restricted format of the lectures to give the various problems equitable and satisfactory treatment. In a young science it is above all important to point out the difficulties that should gradually succumb to the common effort of future researchers. It has been with the intention of arousing such an interest that questions have been posed that defy the solution of any one all-encompassing answer.

In preparing this book for publication, I added as the first chapter a discussion of Julius Krohn, the founder of methodological folklore research in Finland, to clarify the conditions under which the “Finnish method” was developed.

At this time I wish to express the thanks I owe my father for the good fortune of having him introduce to me the wonders of
Finnish folk literature, in the beautiful language of the Finns—my own language from childhood on.

I proclaimed my indebtedness to my deceased friends, Moltke Moe, Axel Olrik, and Antti Aarne, by the dedication of this study.

Finally, sincere thanks are due Professors Walter Anderson, Knut Liestøl, Gustav Schmidt, and Archer Taylor for their kind examination of the manuscript.

K.K.