

# President Livingston Farrand

*June 14, 1867 — November 8, 1939*

Livingston Farrand was born in Newark, New Jersey, on June 14, 1867. He was graduated from Princeton University in 1888 and studied medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, receiving the degree of M.D. in 1891. Princeton made him a master of arts in the same year. He then went abroad for two years of study at Cambridge and Berlin. He was appointed instructor in Psychology at Columbia University in 1893 and was afterward promoted to an adjunct professorship. His interest in American anthropology, his participation in anthropological expeditions, and the writings which resulted, brought him a professorship of Anthropology at Columbia in 1903. It was about this time that he became deeply concerned with problems of public health. He was appointed executive secretary of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, and from 1912 to 1914 he was treasurer of the American Public Health Association.

That period of Dr. Farrand's life which was devoted to important administrative work began in 1914 with his assumption of the presidency of the University of Colorado. In 1917 he was put in charge of the tuberculosis work in France of the International Health Board. In 1919 he was appointed chairman of the central committee of the American Red Cross. And in October, 1921, he became the fourth president of Cornell University. Retiring in 1937, he continued to serve actively on various organizations for public health and public service until his death in New York on November 8, 1939.

Dr. Farrand married, on February 1, 1901, Margaret K. Carleton of New York. They had five children.

It is needless here to summarize the achievements of Dr. Farrand's busy years in the presidency of Cornell. It was a period of great material progress. The University's endowment was nearly doubled, the value of its buildings, grounds, and equipment nearly trebled.

The mark of Dr. Farrand's spirit is to be felt in the mind and temper of the University, as it is to be seen in the physical evidences of the campus. No doubt every true leader communicates something of himself to his companions. The Cornell of Andrew D. White partook of his indomitable idealism; the Cornell of Jacob Gould Schurman shared his superb, almost restless energy; the Cornell of Livingston Farrand became somehow more urbane, more kindly, more human. Some of us remember well the three: White, dressed with old-fashioned formality, musing on his journey from his home to his library; Schurman, vigorous, tense, striding quickly from duty to duty; Farrand, pausing with a word, a salute, and always with a smile, for almost every one who crossed his path.

He had a genius for friendship. The secret, perhaps, of such a genius is a readiness to give friendship without waiting to be assured of its return. Or, simply, the secret is an innate liking for people and a respect for them. So much was certainly true of Dr. Farrand. Those who visited him in his office with a troublesome request, even one that warred with presidential policy, were disarmed by his eagerness to understand and to aid. No one had his grace in making a refusal, as few had his delight in granting an appeal.

This friendliness of spirit was especially manifest in his speeches. Standing on the platform, smiling in a deprecatory way to the eulogies of his introducer, he would thrust his thumbs in his vest, and almost shyly address his audience, with the informal directness of private conversation. His voice strengthened and grew more resonant as he gave to each hearer what seemed a personal message addressed to him alone. And if the words of the message were sometimes forgotten, the essential remained; that the human spirit of Livingston Farrand conveyed its good will to his hearer, and to the humanity that he loved, for which he labored.

It was only natural that his good will should have been returned to him. Innumerable Cornellians whom he could hardly have known felt for him a personal affection. Unique in the University's history was the tribute paid to him at his retirement in 1937, when thousands of Cornellians gathered in New York to honor him, only to feel, at his leave-taking, an emotion that expressed itself unashamedly in tears.

The affection of those whom he served was surely welcome to him. But his true reward was the success of his work. The honors he received meant little to him, and the ease that may follow achievement nothing at all. Always under the menace of illness, he spent his strength freely for causes that seemed worthy of his strength.

The chief of these causes was the welfare of Cornell. He accepted and gladly bore his responsibility for sixteen years. The Cornell that we know, that living thing, is largely of his making. And not its walls and towers only; its spirit bears, and will bear for long, the impress of his kindly spirit.