

# FAMOUS PEOPLE

BY FANNIE M. LOTHROP



Photo by Howe, Ithaca, N. Y.

## JACOB GOULD SCHURMAN The President of Cornell University

When Jacob Gould Schurman was a boy on his father's backwoods farm on Prince Edward Island, where he was born in 1854, educational advantages were scant in quality and costly in time and energy. Books were few, the one newspaper that connected the family with the outside world was but a provincial weekly, and the district school was taught by one teacher who gave the staple things of education, with no fancy dishes of the modern class.

When Jacob was thirteen he had to become self-supporting, and secured a clerkship of the general utility type in a country store at thirty dollars a year and his board and washing. In his second year he received sixty dollars, and with this coming of wealth came a longing for a better education.

In two years he had saved eighty dollars and with this as a bulwark against starvation he attended the village high school, studied voraciously day and night and entered a competitive examination for a scholarship at Prince of Wales College at Charlottetown, on the island. He won the scholarship of sixty dollars and went to the college. Then after a year of teaching he went to Acadia College, where his appetite for prize-winning became insatiable. He won a scholarship of \$500 a year for three years offered by the University of London, followed by his winning the traveling fellowship of the Hibbert Society, and other prizes, scholarships and similar rewards, with predestined certainty and monotonous iteration.

He studied in London, Paris, Edinburgh, Berlin, Göttingen, and half a dozen other cities, and when six or seven nations had given him all they could supply but not nearly all he could absorb, he returned to Canada as professor in one of the colleges.

In 1885, Andrew D. White recommended him to Cornell, and the year following, at the age of thirty-two, he became head of the Department of Philosophy; in 1891 was made Dean of the Sage School of Philosophy, and in 1892 he received the degree of Doctor of Laws from Edinburgh University and became President of Cornell, being the only man even considered for a moment for the position.

Dr. Schurman is remarkable as a lecturer, broad and liberal as a teacher, searching for truth *with* his students rather than giving them his opinions as finalities; sincere and thorough as an investigator; clear, eloquent and effective as an orator; simple and direct as an author; and as a man, popular, magnetic, sympathetic, sterling and broad-gauge.