

**The Extraordinary  
Early History  
of the  
Boston University  
School of  
Medicine  
1848 - 1918**

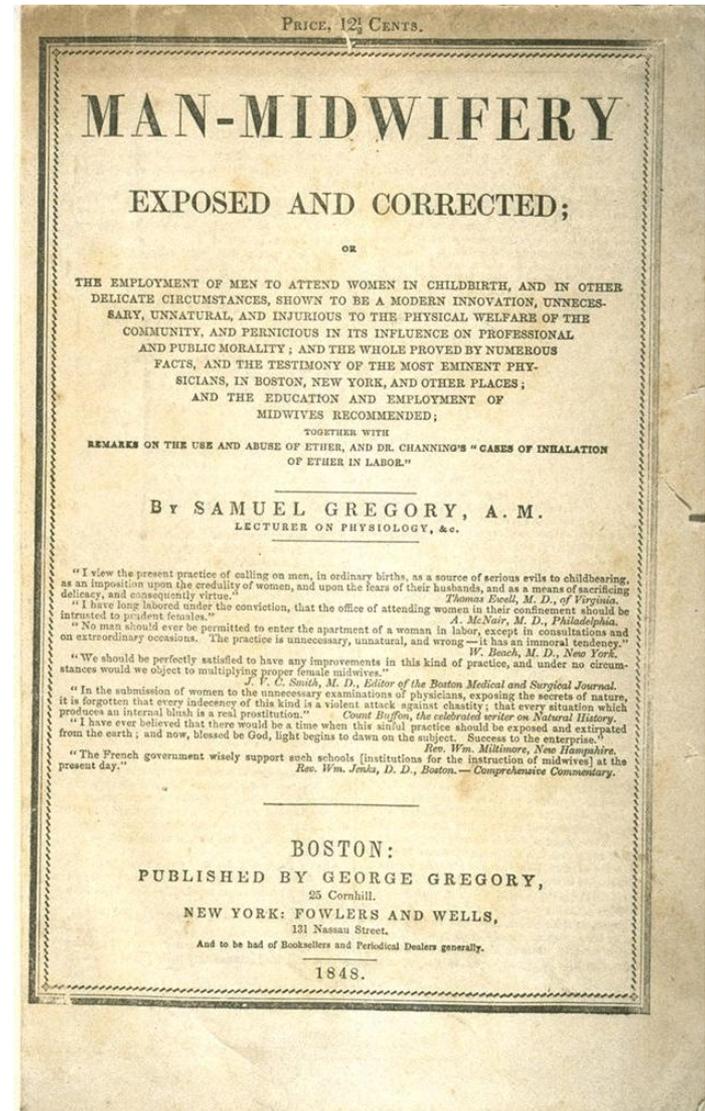
# *Chapter 1*

# **The New England Female Medical College**

# Samuel Gregory (1813-1872)

The prime mover in founding and maintaining the NEFMC.

- rural background
- educated at Yale
- itinerant teacher, lecturer and pamphleteer
- fundamentalist and evangelical religious bent
- honorary M.D. degree in the 1850s, but not a practicing physician



**1847: Gregory arrives  
in Boston**

**lectures and writes in  
opposition to the  
impropriety of  
obstetrics by male  
physicians**

**“man-  
midwifery”**



# **The New England Female Medical College**

- **Gregory's solution to "impropriety" --- training women to practice obstetrics**
- **NEFMC opened in Boston in late 1848**
- **significant advancement in medical education, rights and opportunities for women**

- **Boston, liberal minded: wider opportunities for the medical training of women**
- **school never widely accepted**
- **tension between Gregory and those who wanted complete women's medical education (not just obstetrics); Gregory continued to play a central role in the school**
- **difficulties in finding funding, facilities and teachers, but NEFMC eventually granted full MD degrees**

# Marie Elizabeth Zakrzewska, M.D.



**Accomplished midwife in Germany before emigrating to the United States in 1853**

**MD 1856, Western Reserve in Cleveland**

**1859 – comes to NEFMC as Professor, and head of their new 12 bed hospital. She proves to be an excellent teacher, mentor and role model for the full fledged, scientific practice of medicine by women.**

**1862 – Zakrzewska resigns because of her frequent disagreements with Gregory. She remains in the Boston area. Founded and runs the New England Hospital for Women and Children.**

# NEFMC Achievements



Anna Inman, M.D.  
NEFMC 1857



Alida Avery, M.D.  
NEFMC 1864

**98 women were  
granted MD degrees.**

**1864 graduate  
Rebecca Lee Crumpler  
was the first  
African-American woman  
to earn an MD degree.**

**Helped, at least in some small  
way, to create a greater  
acceptance for women in  
medicine.**

TWENTY-SECOND  
ANNUAL CATALOGUE AND REPORT  
OF THE  
NEW-ENGLAND  
FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE.



View of the new College Building, on East Concord Street, opposite City Hospital.  
See Plan of Grounds on second page of Report.

BOSTON:  
PUBLISHED BY THE TRUSTEES.  
AND TO BE HAD GRATUITOUSLY AT THE COLLEGE.  
1870.

Published by Order of John Wilson and Son

# Decline of the NEFMC

**1870:** permanent instructional building on East Concord Street, across from the Boston City Hospital, incurs large debt

**1872:** Samuel Gregory, still the main fund raiser, dies

**1873:** school near bankruptcy

## TIME TO SEARCH FOR A FINANCIAL SAVIOR

# ***Chapter 2***

***Boston University***

**1839: a group of Boston Methodist ministers  
establish bible institute in Vermont**

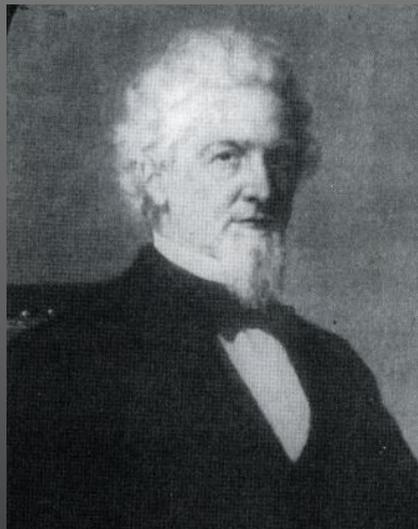
**1867: Institute moves to Boston**

**1869: 3 members, wealthy philanthropic  
businessmen, found Boston University**

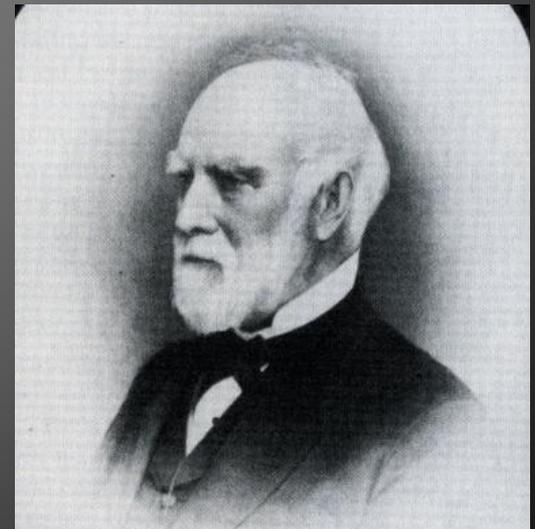
*Lee Claflin*



*Isaac Rich*



*Jacob Sleeper*



- **New England Female Medical College financially floundering**
- **merger with Harvard seems logical, but...**
- **perhaps merge with (well financed) Boston University?**

## Harvard's offer:

- 1) You pay up your debts.
- 2) We'll take over and run the New England Female Medical College, but separately from our own medical school.

## Boston University's offer:

- 1) We'll pay your debts.
- 2) We'll take over your school, turning the NEFMC into the Boston University School of Medicine.
- 3) We'll admit men, but continue to provide full fledged medical education for women.
- 4) *AND.....* the new medical school will be homeopathic.

# Fate intervenes.

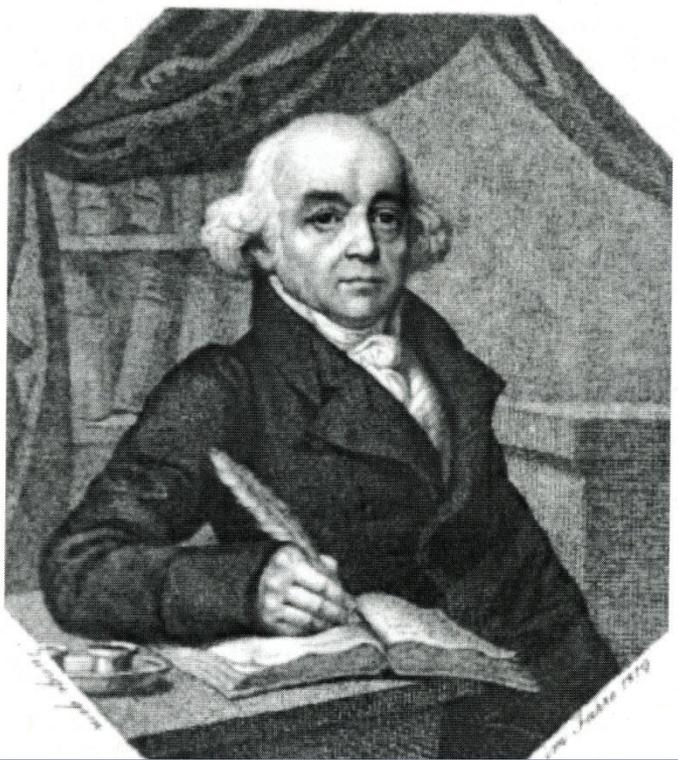
- **1872: disastrous Boston fire destroys property of NEFMC trustees**
- **Harvard-favoring trustees now cannot pay school debts**
- **Several BU founders have close ties to homeopathic medicine, choose it for their own care**
- **New homeopathic hospital being planned alongside the new NEFMC building anyway**

**The winner was  
Boston  
University!**

## ***Chapter 3***

# ***Homeopathy***

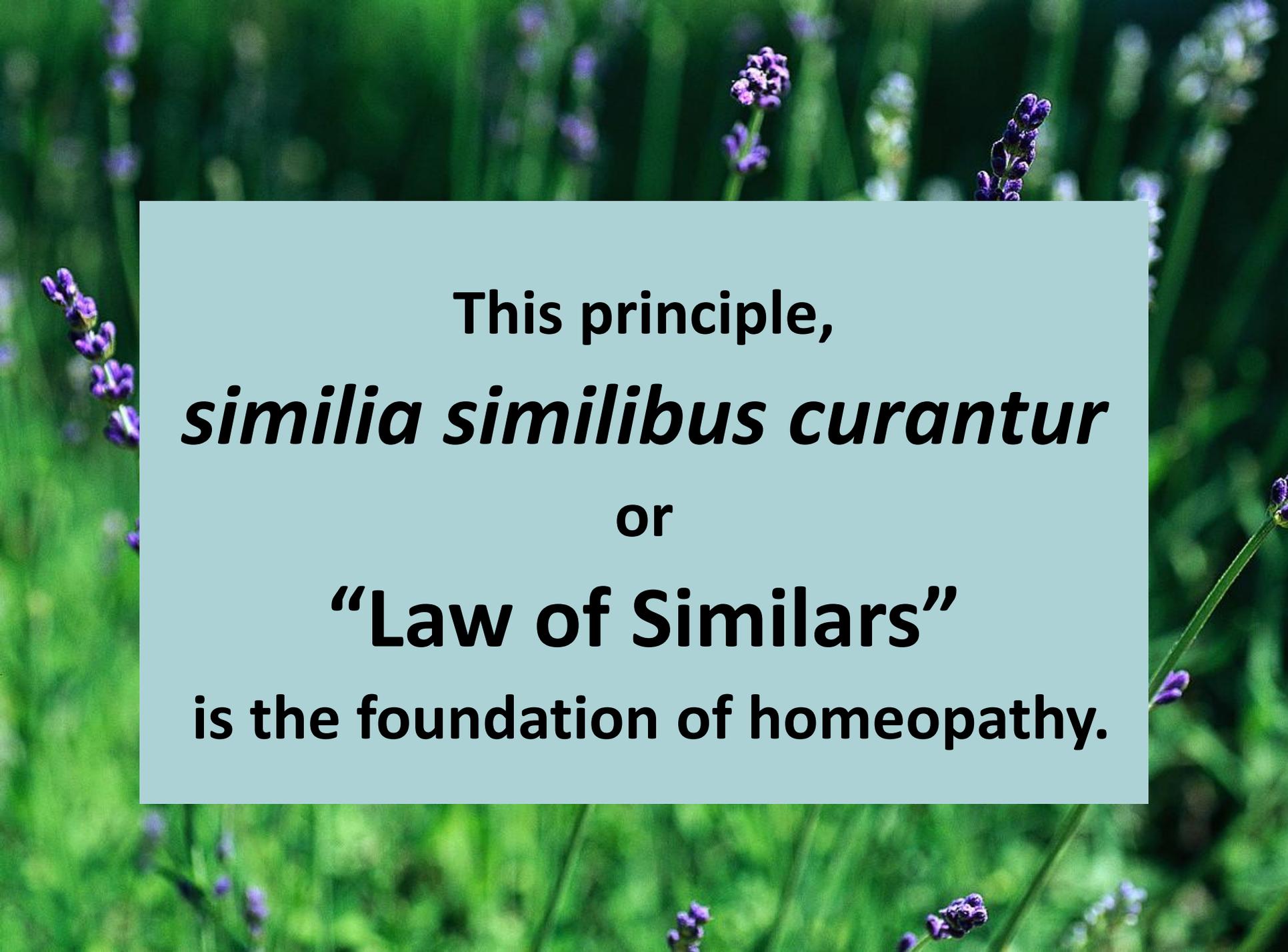
# THE FOUNDER OF HOMEOPATHY



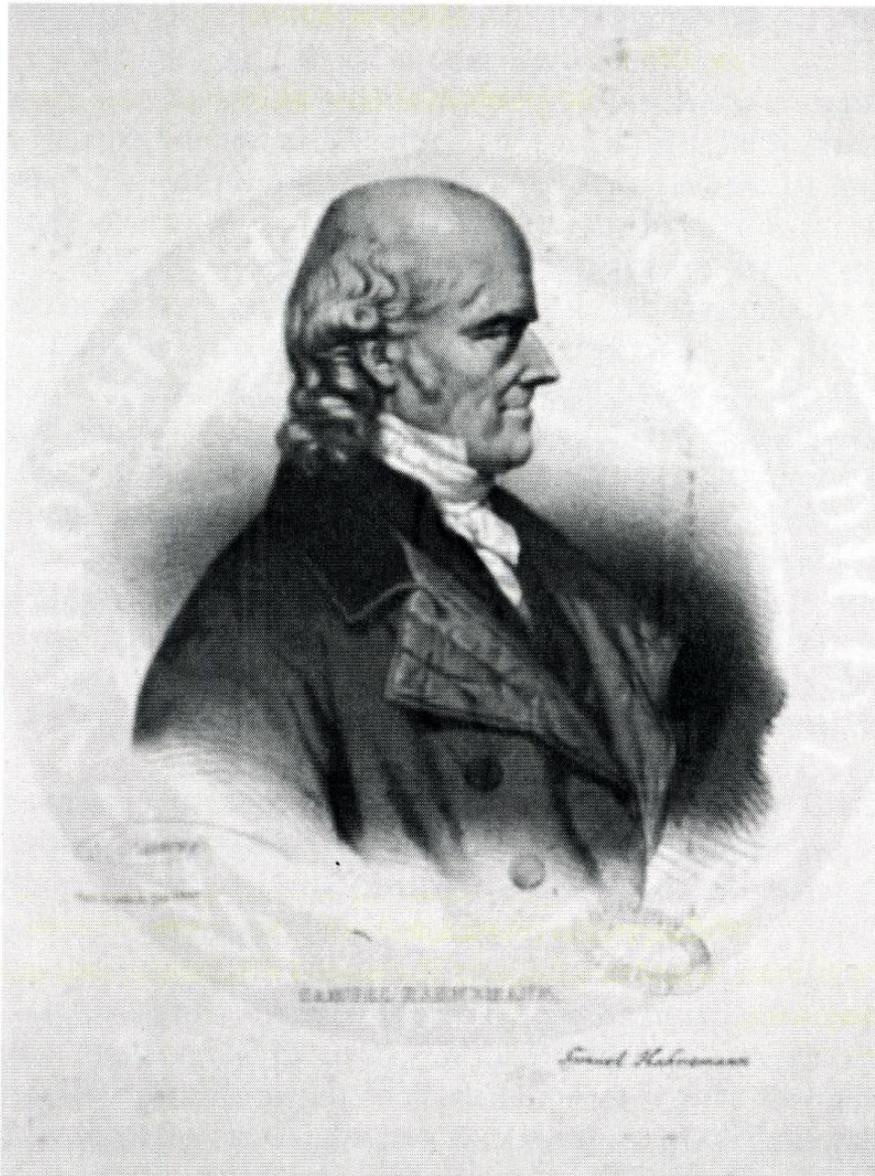
**Samuel  
Hahnemann**  
(1755-1843)

- Born in Meissen, Germany in 1755, studied medicine in Leipzig
- Cinchona (Peruvian) bark current method of malaria treatment
- Why did it work? Took cinchona, experienced “identical” malaria symptoms

***Hahnemann’s conclusion:***  
to be effective, a drug must cause symptoms in a healthy person that are similar to those of the disease it will be expected to treat.

A background image of a field of lavender flowers in bloom, with green stems and purple blossoms. The flowers are slightly out of focus, creating a soft, natural setting.

**This principle,  
*similia similibus curantur*  
or  
“Law of Similars”  
is the foundation of homeopathy.**



Hahnemann identified three distinct systems of medical treatment:

- 1. Allopathic or heteropathic**
- 2. Antipathic**
- 3. Homeopathic**

# ALLOPATHIC = other, different

- Treatments with effects dissimilar from the illness, counterirritants which often attempted to draw out or overwhelm the disease
- In that era, Hahnemann was referring to bleeding, purging, vomiting, toxic drugs
- Mainstream physicians found the term insulting
- Currently, the term *allopathic* used to differentiate MDs from DOs; misnomer.

# ANTIPATHIC = opposite

- **use of a single substance producing an opposite effect**
- **opium for pain, anti-pyretics for fever**
- **logical and still often done**
- **Hahnemann's view: not a cure, short period of relief after which the patient's symptoms would worsen**

# The Steps of Homeopathic Treatment

- 1. Identify patient's symptoms.**
- 2. Concoct remedy specific for that patient made of substances causing the same symptom(s).**

**“Proving” = testing in healthy subjects, a vital part of the process.**

***3. Potentization or dynamization:***

remedy greatly diluted,  
1/30<sup>th</sup> to 1/1000<sup>th</sup> strength,  
but is more effective.

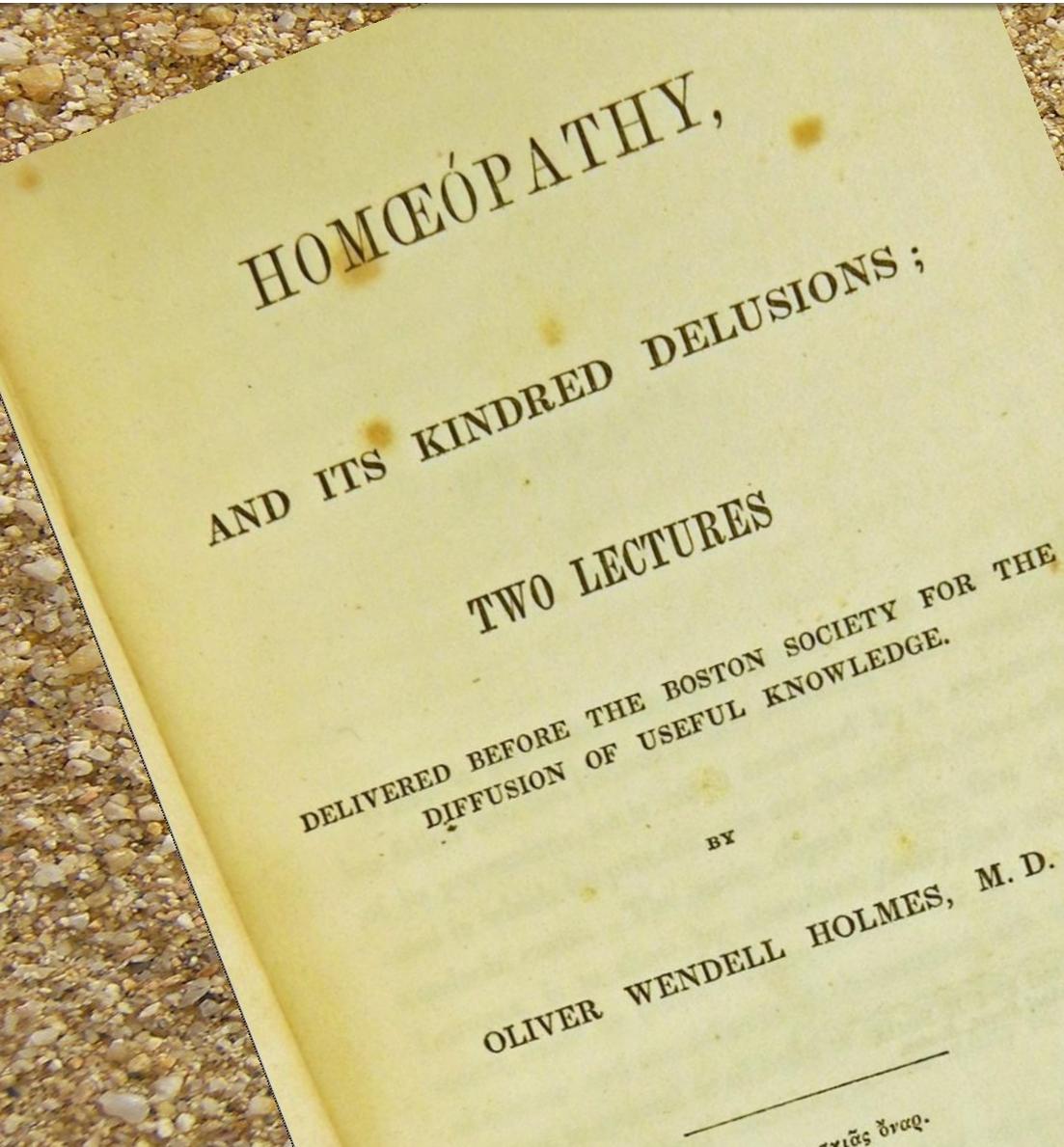
4. Patient given remedy orally

5. Artificial disease substitutes for  
the natural one and makes it  
disappear

# Homeopathy spreads...

- **First New England homeopathic practitioner: Samuel Gregg (1799-1864),**  
(not NEFMC founder Samuel Gregory)
- **early Boston devotees: brothers William and Robert Wesselhoeft**

# The Antagonist --- Oliver Wendell Holmes





# Oliver Wendell Holmes

(1809-1894)

- The most important critic of homeopathy in New England
- Gifted writer, pointed out the illogical aspects of homeopathy

But the  
homeopathic  
community fired  
back, led in  
New England by  
Robert  
Wesselhoeft.

SOME REMARKS

ON

DR. O. W. HOLMES'S

LECTURES ON HOMŒOPATHY

AND ITS KINDRED DELUSIONS;

COMMUNICATED TO A FRIEND

BY ROBERT WESSELHOEFT,

HOMŒOP. PHYSICIAN IN CAMBRIDGE.

Many are called but few are chosen.

MATTH. xxii. 14.

BOSTON:

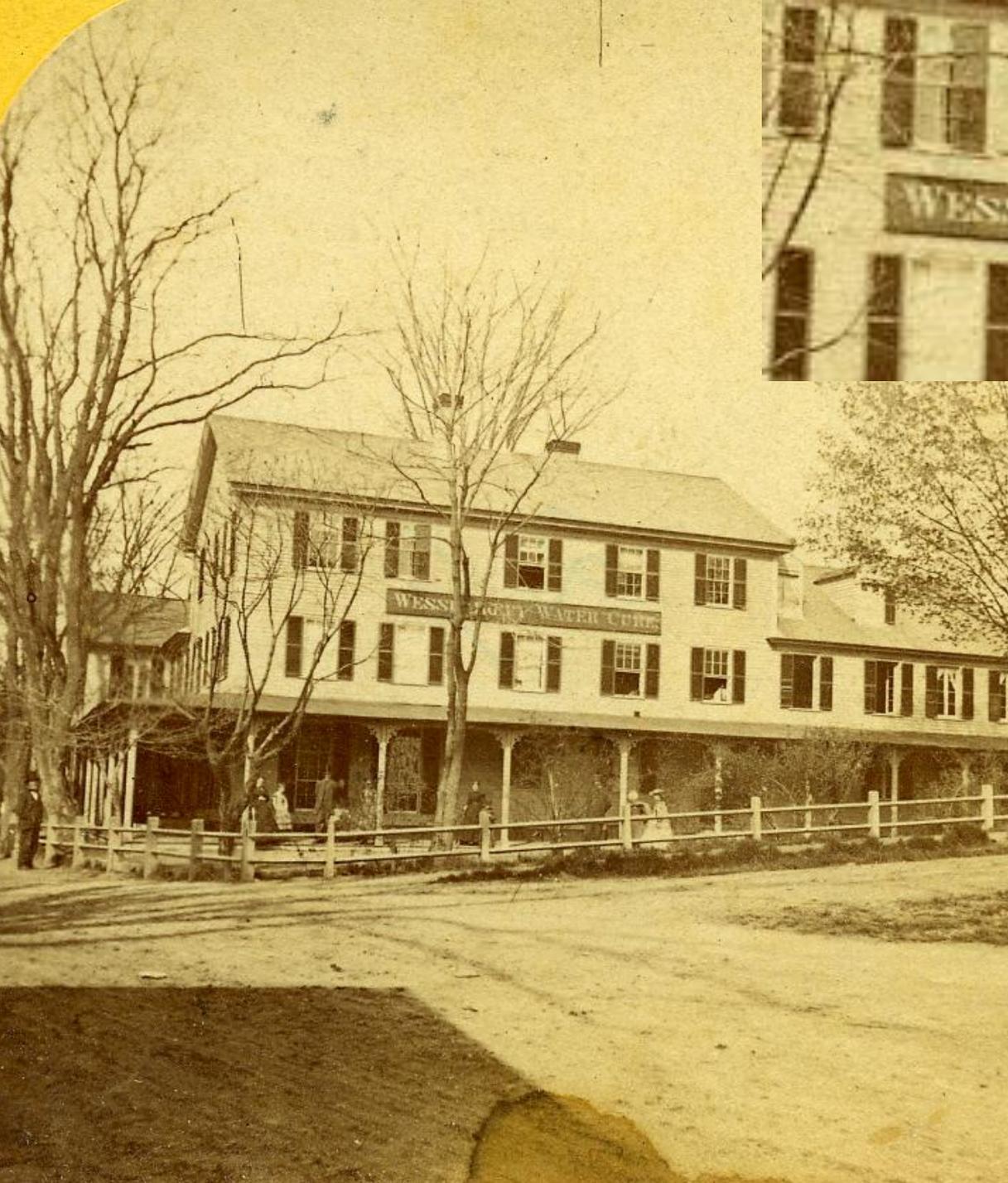
OTIS CLAPP, SCHOOL STREET:

S. COLMAN AND WM. RADDE, NEW YORK;

J. DOBSON AND J. G. WESSELHOEFT, PHILADELPHIA.

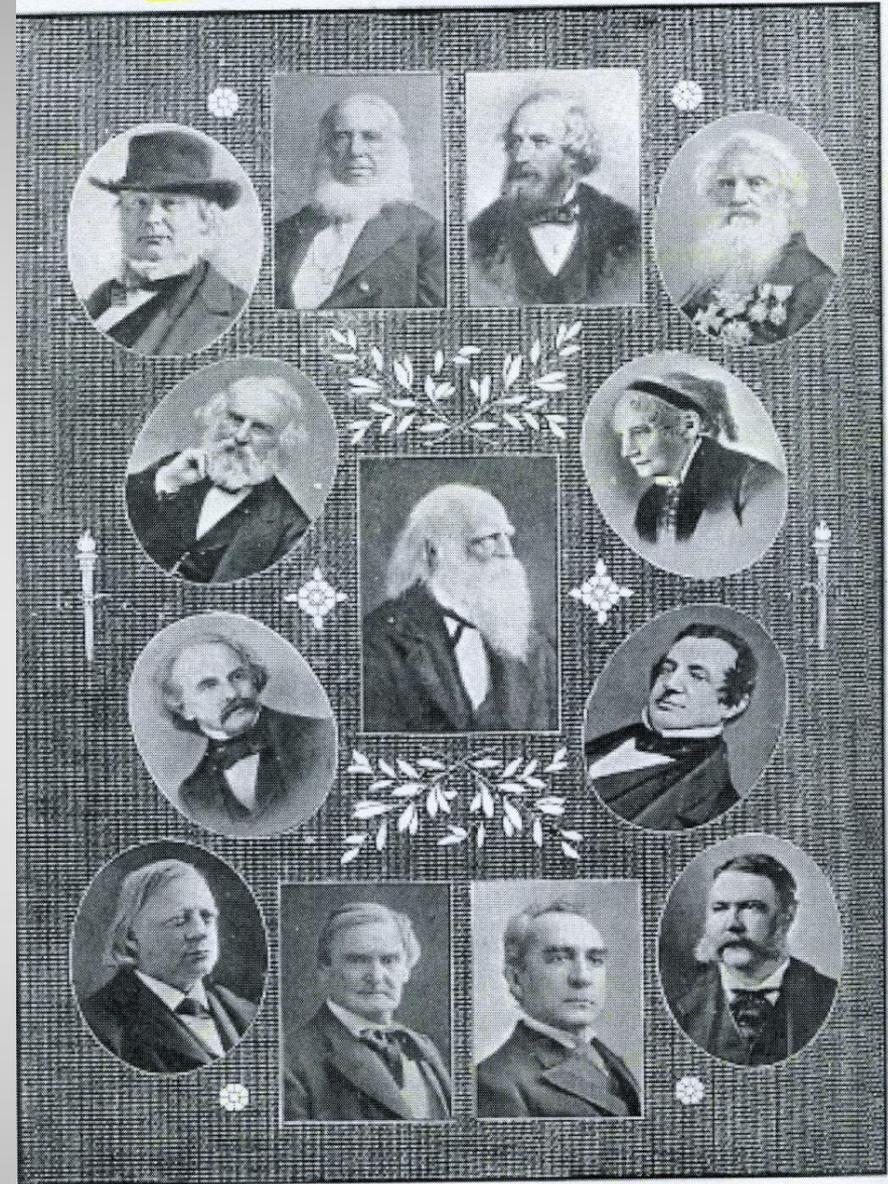
1842.

*Prof. Longfellow from  
the author*



**Eventually,  
Wesselhoeft  
went to Vermont  
and established  
his famous  
“water cure”.**

Despite its logical shortcomings and unusual teachings, homeopathy became very popular with the intellectual elite in Boston and around the northeast.



Horace Greeley      Peter Cooper      Cyrus W. Field      Samuel F. B. Morse  
 Henry W. Longfellow      William Cullen Bryant      Harriet Beecher Stowe  
 Nathaniel Hawthorne      Washington Irving  
 Henry Ward Beecher      Joseph Jefferson      Edwin Booth      Chester A. Arthur

***Chapter 4***

***The Boston***

***University***

***School of Medicine***

# Israel Tisdale Talbot (1829-1899)

*First Dean of the Boston University  
School of Medicine*



- One of New England's leading homeopathic physicians
- Harvard MD
- BUSM Dean from school's inception in 1873 until shortly before his death



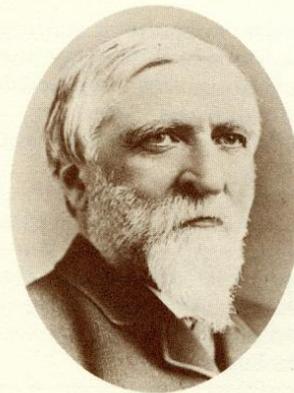
To the memory of  
I. Tisdale Talbot, M.D.

“this tablet is erected by the  
faculty as a tribute of their  
esteem and affection.”



# BUSM

- Honored commitment to female medical education
- First class 1/3 female
- Females well represented in faculty



*Henry C. Ahlborn  
General Pathology*



*Henry C. Angell  
Ophthalmology*



*Adeline B. Church  
Gynecology and Anatomy*

*Members  
of the  
original  
faculty*



*Caroline E. Hastings  
Anatomy*



*Mary Safford Blake  
Gynecology*



*George R. Southwick  
Gynecology*



*Conrad Wesselhoeft  
Pathology and Therapeutics*



*Walter Wesselhoeft  
Obstetrics*

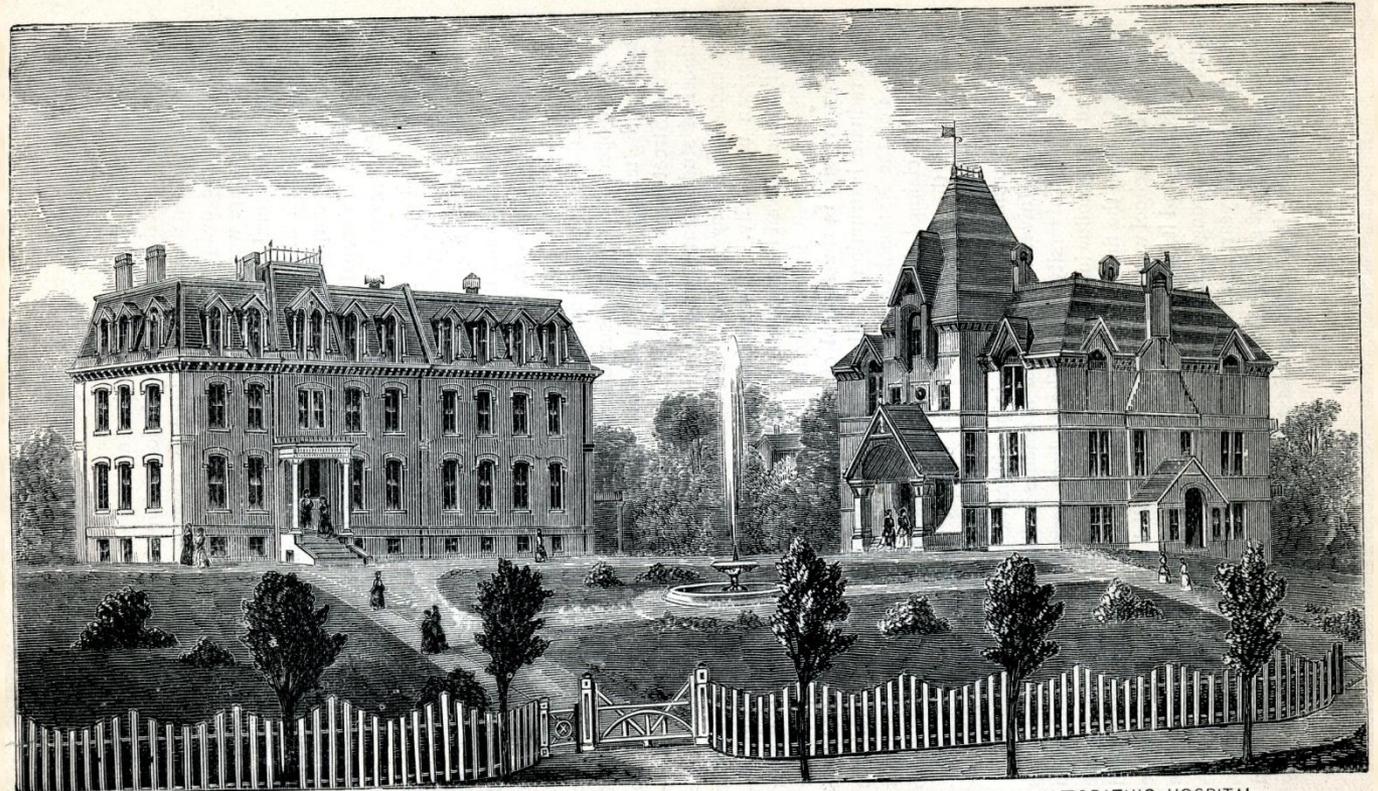
# The campus grows

The original NEFMC building, completed in 1870,  
is expanded in 1874.

The new Massachusetts Homeopathic Hospital  
is built in 1876.



1870



BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

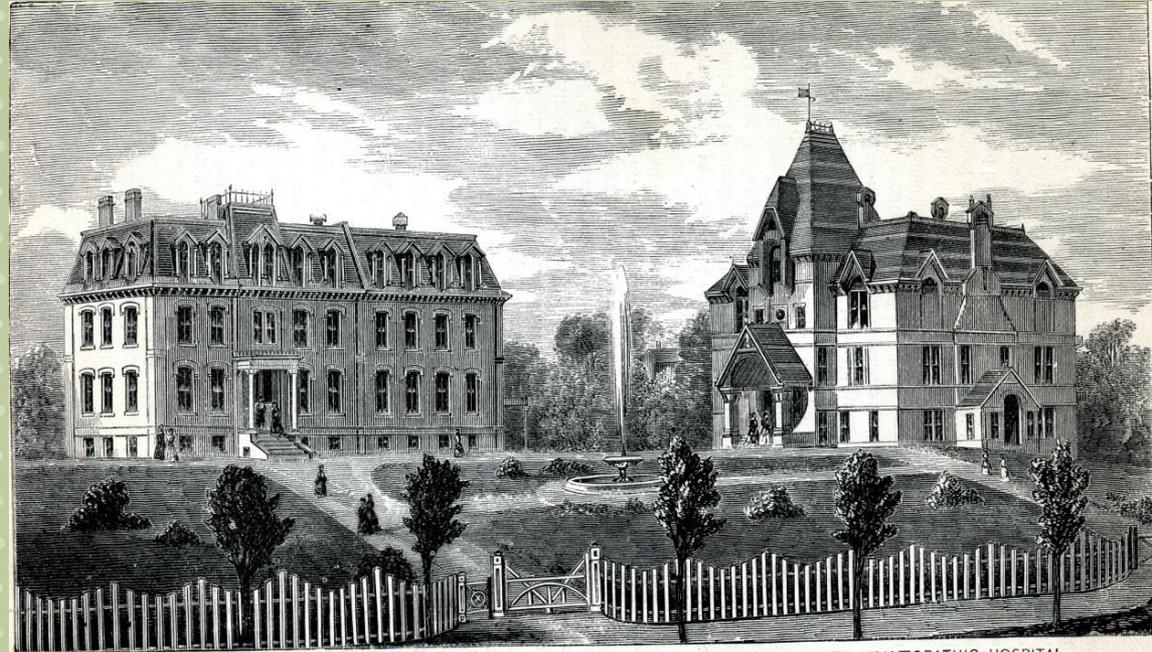
1878

MASSACHUSETTS HOMŒOPATHIC HOSPITAL.



**Circa 1880**

**1878**



BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

MASSACHUSETTS HOMŒOPATHIC HOSPITAL.

**Late 1800's: wings added to MHH,  
new building and tower erected**



**But right across the street,  
the Boston City Hospital, built in 1864,  
excludes first the female NEFMC students,  
then those of the homeopathic BUSM.**



**BCH ca. 1876**



**Despite any controversy over homeopathy,**

**BUSM goes on educating doctors, some of whom achieve remarkably.**

# Anna Howard Shaw

- Boston University School of Theology, 1876
- first ordained woman Methodist minister in America
- Boston University School of Medicine, 1886
- never practiced as a physician
- famous woman's suffragist



ANNA HOWARD SHAW

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
CLASS OF 1886

ERECTED BY THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
TO COMMEMORATE HER SERVICE TO  
ALL HUMANITY

MCMXXI

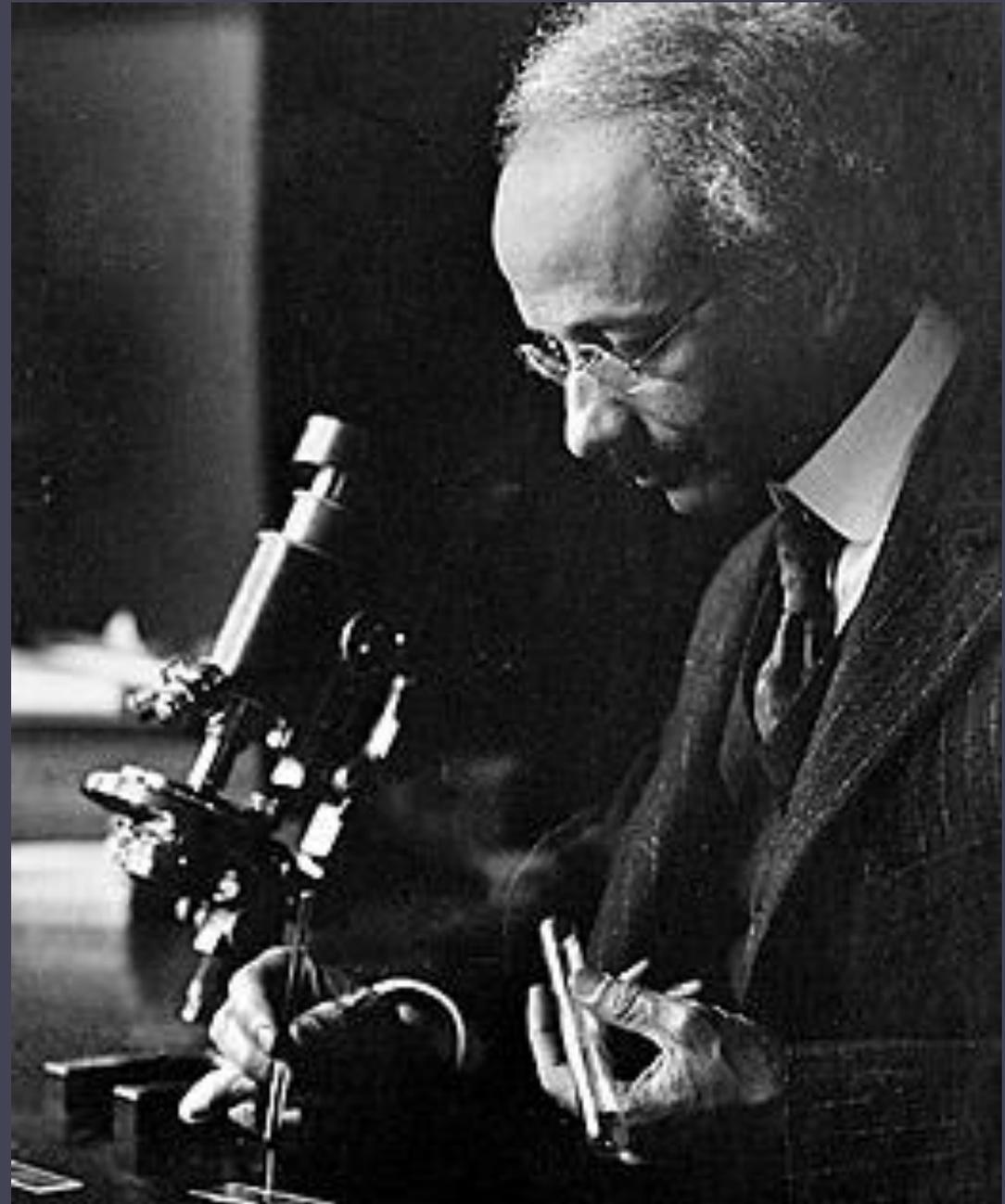
# **Solomon Carter Fuller**

**class of 1897**

**first African-American  
psychiatrist**

**studied in Europe with  
Alzheimer and Kraepelin**

**distinguished academic  
career**





# **Rebecca Lee Dorsey**

**class of 1883**

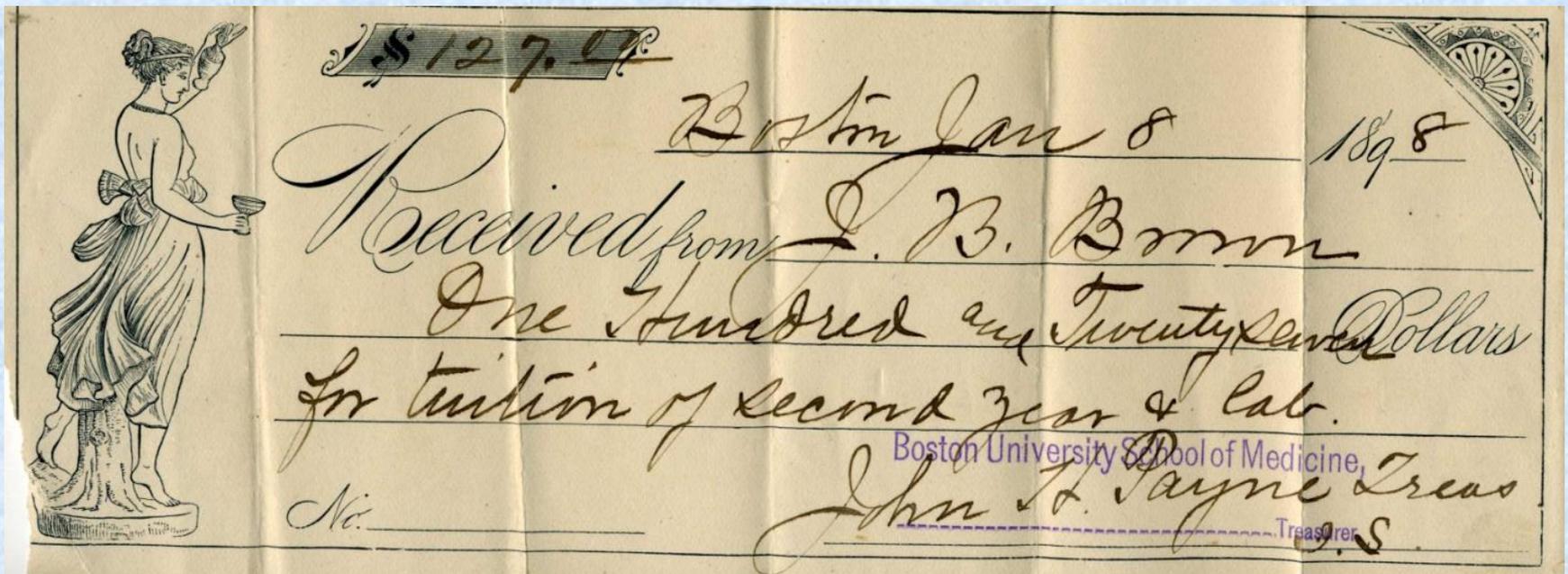
**studied abroad with  
Koch, Pasteur, Lister**

**1885: first female  
physician in  
Los Angeles**



# John Bean Brown, M.D., class of 1900, typical BUSM student

**Tuition for the second and third years of medical school:  
\$127.00 total each year**



BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.  
REGISTRAR'S OFFICE, EAST CONCORD STREET.

BOSTON,

Dec. 1, 1898

Mr. John B. Brown

The following is a statement of your present tuition dues. These are payable at the beginning of the school year, and must be settled before November 1, with the TREASURER, JOHN H. PAYNE, M. D., PIERCE BUILDING, COPLEY SQUARE, BOSTON. Dr. Payne will be in his office every week-day from 3.30 to 4 P. M. Upon presentation to me of this statement received the proper tickets will be furnished.

J. P. SUTHERLAND,  
Registrar.

Matriculation.....	\$2.00
Microscopical Laboratory.....	
First Year's Tuition.....	
Second " ".....	125.00
Third " ".....	
Fourth " ".....	
Postgraduate Course.....	
Special Course in.....	
Graduation Fee.....	

Total, 127.00

Received payment,  
John H. Payne, Treasurer.

Treasurer's Office,

Boston,

January 5, 1899

**\$125 per year plus  
an additional \$2  
for the  
"Microscopical  
Laboratory"**

Boston University School of Medicine.

Mr. John B. Brown

Has attended the course and been admitted to an examination in Op Surgery held this day, and has received therefor 97 per cent., (fifty per cent. being required to pass this chair).

J. Emmet Briggs

Boston, MAY 6 1899 189

Boston University School of Medicine.

Mr. John Beau Brown

Has attended the course and been admitted to an examination in Pathology and Therapeutics held this day, and has received therefor 85 per cent., (fifty per cent. being required to pass this chair).

C. Weuelkerff Professor

Boston, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1899.

Typical course cards,  
received for every class completed.

Boston University School of Medicine.

Mr. John Beau Brown

Has attended the course and been admitted to an examination in second year Anatomy held this day, and has received therefor 65 per cent., (fifty per cent. being required to pass this chair).

John P. Sutherland  
Anat. Prof.

Boston, May 21 1898.

Boston University School of Medicine.

Mr. J. B. Brown

Has fulfilled the requirements of Practical Anatomy.

Per cent.

80

Winslow B. French M.D.  
Demonstrator.

Boston, May 21<sup>st</sup> 1898.

# First, second and third year report cards

Boston University School of Medicine.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN.

BOSTON, June 22, 1897

M. *John Beau Brown* -  
 You have received the following percentages on your final examinations of the FIRST YEAR:

- General Chemistry, 90 7/8
- Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, 68
- Human Anatomy (1st year), 78
- Physiology (1st year), 76
- Physiological Physics, 65
- Microscopy, 83
- Botany, 77



NOTE. — Marks above 80 indicate special credit. Those below 50, that the subject has not been passed.  
 Another examination will be given at the beginning of the next school year, on the second Tuesday of October, at ten o'clock, at the College.

Boston University School of Medicine.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN.

BOSTON, June 1898

M. *John Beau Brown* -

You have received the following percentages on your final examinations of the SECOND YEAR:

- Medical Chemistry, 80 1/2
- Human Anatomy (2d year), 65
- Dissections (completed), 80 1/2
- Physiology (2d year), 82 1/2
- Minor Surgery, 75
- Sanitary Science, 85



NOTE. — Marks above 80 indicate special credit. Those below 50, that the subject has not been passed.  
 Another examination will be given at the beginning of the next school year, the second Tuesday of October, at ten o'clock, at the College.

*These chairs not yet heard from*

Boston University School of Medicine.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN.

BOSTON, June 1899

M. *John B. Brown* -  
 You have received the following percentages on your final examinations of the THIRD YEAR:

- General Pathology (1st year), 85
- Special Pathology and Therapeutics (1st year), 61
- Materia Medica (1st year), 97
- Operative Surgery, 83
- Obstetrics (1st year), 79
- Gynaecology, 70
- Diseases of the Chest, 80
- Diseases of the Throat, 85
- Diseases of Children, 85
- Dermatology, 85



NOTE. — Marks above 80 indicate special credit. Those below 50, that the subject has not been passed.  
 Another examination will be given at the beginning of the next school year, on the second Tuesday of October, at ten o'clock, at the College.

REGISTRAR

# Success!

John B. Brown, <sup>78½</sup>  
Thesis  
967

Boston University School of Medicine.

Mr. John Bean Brown

You are hereby informed that, having completed the course of studies, and complied with the requirements of this School, you have been recommended by the Faculty to the Trustees of Boston University for promotion to the degree,

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

John B. Outhwaite Dean.

Boston, May 30, 1900

# Benefits of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Homeopathic Treatment

- relatively benign compared to other treatments
- placebo based (30% response in most studies); ritual favored response
- personalized remedy
- time, attention and concern from trusted and empathetic doctor and expectation of benefit – general elements of psychotherapy

# An example of beneficial homeopathic practice



## Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888)

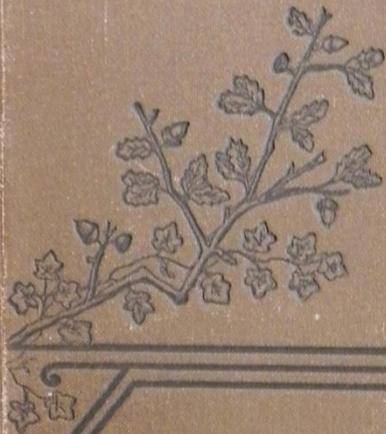
- popular American author
- 1862: volunteer nurse in a Union hospital in Washington, D.C.
- contracted typhoid pneumonia
- treated with Calomel, a strong mercury-containing medication in common use
- health problems throughout her life, which she attributed to mercury poisoning

## Conrad Wesselhoeft, M.D. (1834-1904)

- homeopathic physician
- original BUSM faculty member
- long-time professor of pathology and therapeutics
- Louisa May Alcott was Wesselhoeft's patient for the final twenty years of her life.
- She warmly dedicated her final book, *Jo's Boys*, to him.



# Jo's BOYS



· LOUISA · M · ALCOTT ·

To  
DR. CONRAD WESSELHOEFT  
This very inadequate tribute of affection and respect  
is gratefully inscribed  
by his friend and patient,  
The Author

TO

DR. CONRAD WESSELHOEFT

THIS VERY INADEQUATE TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION AND RESPECT

Is Gratefully Enscribed

BY HIS FRIEND AND PATIENT,

*THE AUTHOR.*

# The Flexner Report 1910

- grant commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation to study educational standards
- Abraham Flexner evaluated 168 United States medical schools
- Flexner included small proprietary schools, major universities, “sectarian” schools – homeopathic, eclectic, physiomedical, osteopathic
- 1910: 15 homeopathic schools still open, down from 22 a decade before
- of those 15, Boston University garnered the most praise

**MEDICAL EDUCATION  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES AND CANADA**

**A REPORT TO  
THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION  
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING**

**BY  
ABRAHAM FLEXNER**

**WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
HENRY S. PRITCHETT  
PRESIDENT OF THE FOUNDATION**

**BULLETIN NUMBER FOUR**

# **Flexner's Evaluation of BUSM**

## **Positives for BUSM:**

**The only homeopathic school that had any  
“progressive scientific work” going on in its  
“fairly well equipped laboratories in anatomy,  
pathology, bacteriology and physiology.”**

**One of only three to “possess the equipment necessary  
for the effective routine teaching of the  
fundamental branches....a museum showing care  
and intelligence....a beautifully mounted collection of  
pathological material....a decent library (with a librarian).”**

**“Hospital facilities with an adequate supply of material under proper control.”**

**“Boston University alone has a really model dispensary.”**

**“An excellent building...  
an excellent refrigeration plant.”**

**“Boston University deserves especial commendation for what it has accomplished with its small annual income.”**

# **Negatives for BUSM:**

**Entrance requirement**

**“covers less than two years  
of a good high school course,”**

**and**

**“only nominal connection to the university.”**

***“One should not teach dogmas, on the contrary,  
every utterance must be put to the proof.”***

**Abraham Flexner**

**Flexner did not say that the homeopathic  
or other sectarian schools had to close,  
only that they had to be scientific,  
and if they were,  
any problems with dogmatic beliefs  
would disappear.**

**AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED**

*The BUSM catalog for 1918 reads:*

**"The spirit of the times is to do away with sectarianism in things scientific on the grounds that sectarianism and science are "incompatibles"— that creeds and beliefs are only useful as theories or working hypotheses that may lead to the establishment of true knowledge..."**

**“In accord with this spirit, therefore,  
and in harmony with the true scientific spirit,  
the School in 1918 announces  
that its curriculum has been made  
as broad and inclusive as is consistent  
with the medical science of the day,  
and that  
hereafter it is non-sectarian in scope  
and character.”**

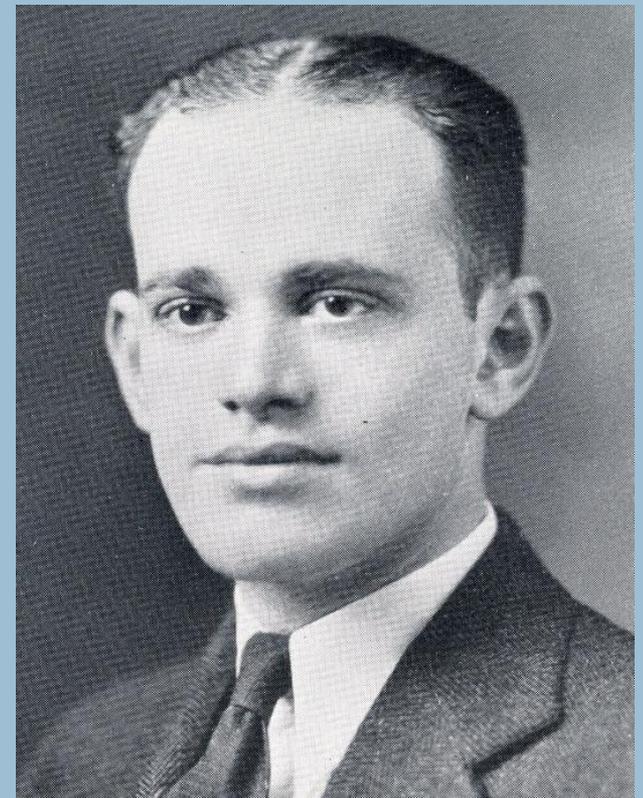
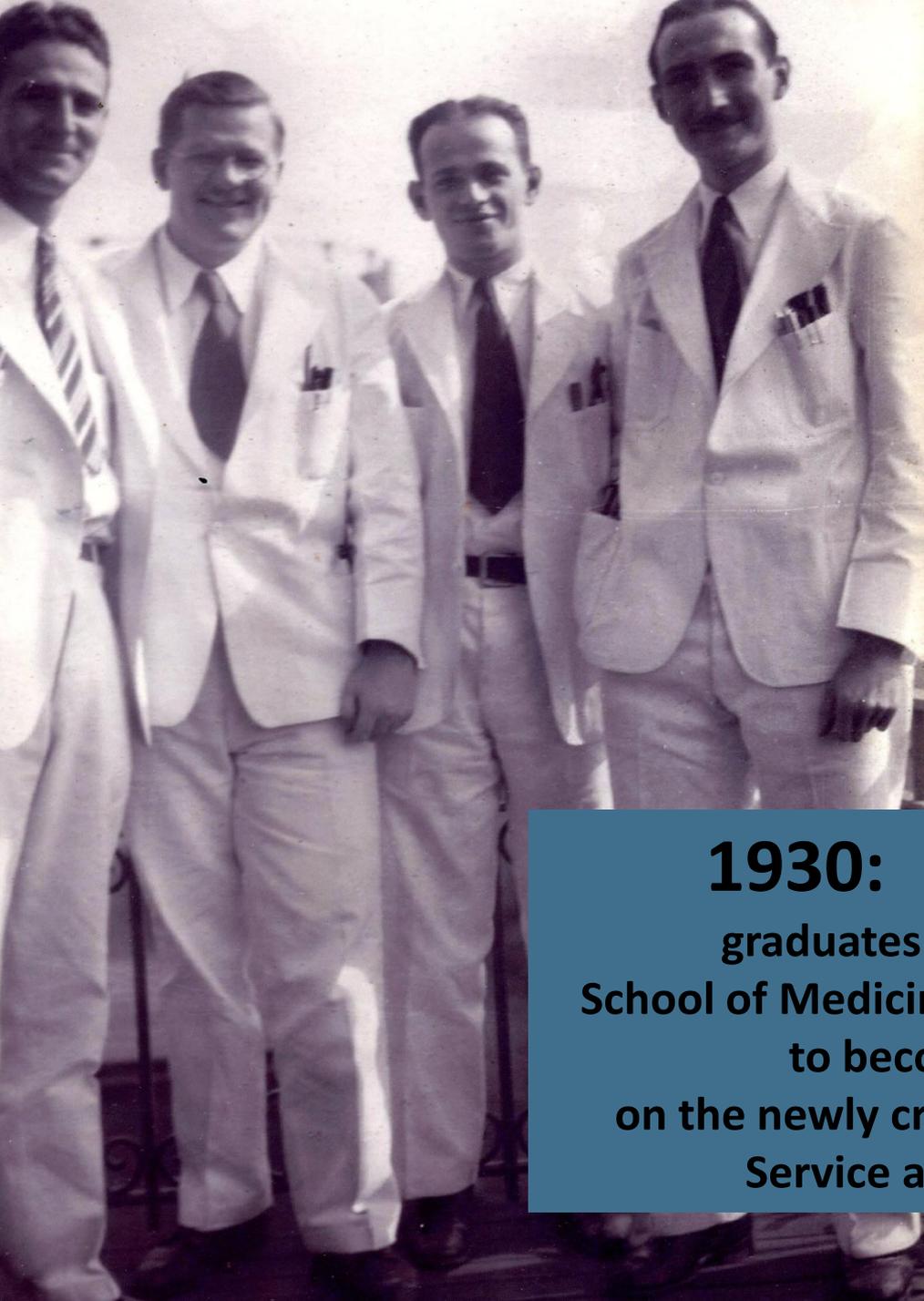
***BUSM was a homeopathic school no more.***

***Post Script #1***

***Henry Rosenberg***

***Walks Across***

***The Street***



**1930: Henry Rosenberg**  
graduates from the Boston University  
School of Medicine and crosses East Concord Street  
to become the first-ever intern  
on the newly created Boston University Medical  
Service at the Boston City Hospital.

***Post Script #2***

***Chester Keefer***

***Walks Across***

***The Street***



**1940:**  
**Chester Keefer, M.D.,**  
leaves Harvard's prestigious  
Thorndike Research Laboratory and  
walks across East Concord Street in  
the opposite direction to become  
professor of medicine at BUSM,  
and director of the Evans Research  
Laboratory.

**Greatness follows, and the Boston University School of Medicine  
becomes a truly first rank medical center.**

***THE  
ACADEMY  
NAMESAKES***

# Rebecca Lee Crumpler, M.D.

(1831-1895)

Born free in Delaware

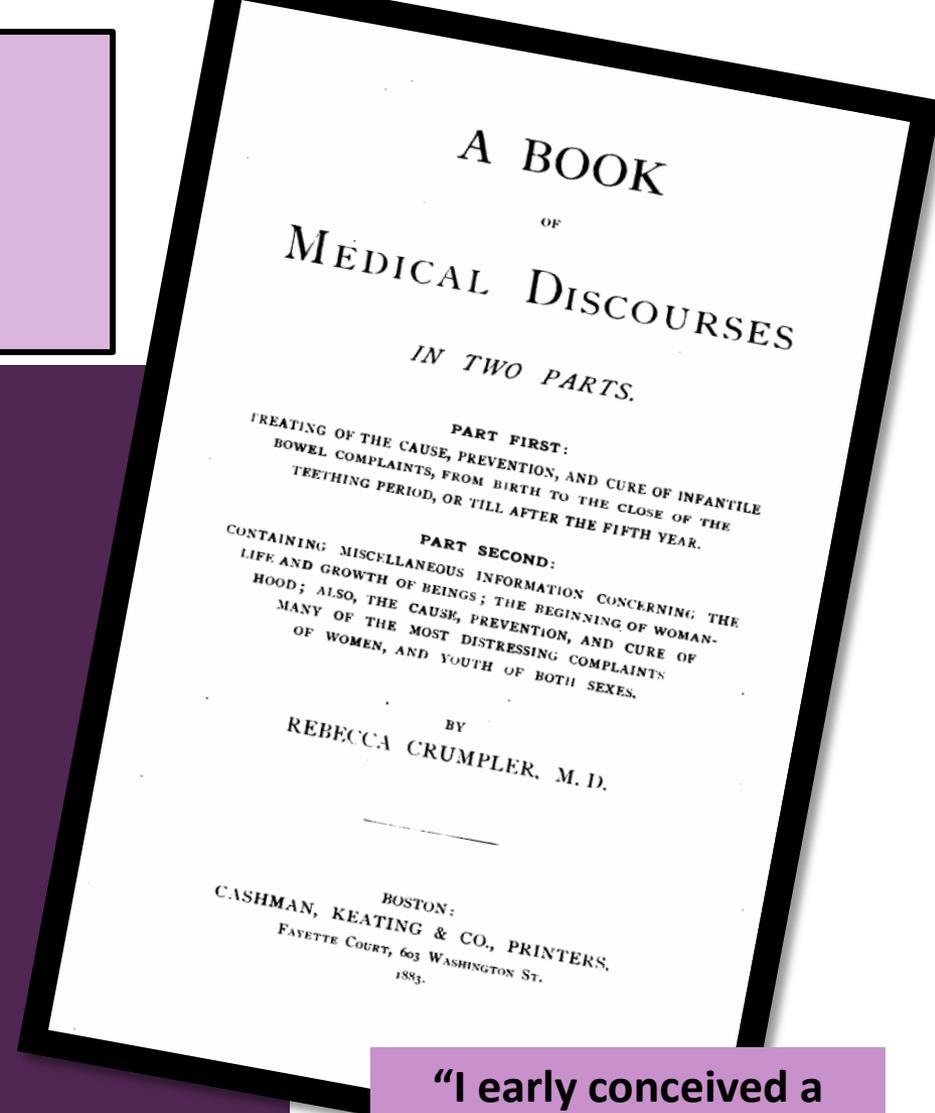
In 1852 she moved to Charlestown,  
Massachusetts where she became a nurse.

Enters NEFMC in 1860

In 1864, she became first  
African-American woman  
ever to earn an M.D. degree.

Practices in Richmond, Virginia, after the  
Civil War, then back in Boston.

Published *A Book of Medical Discourses* in 1883, based on  
journal notes she kept during her years in practice.

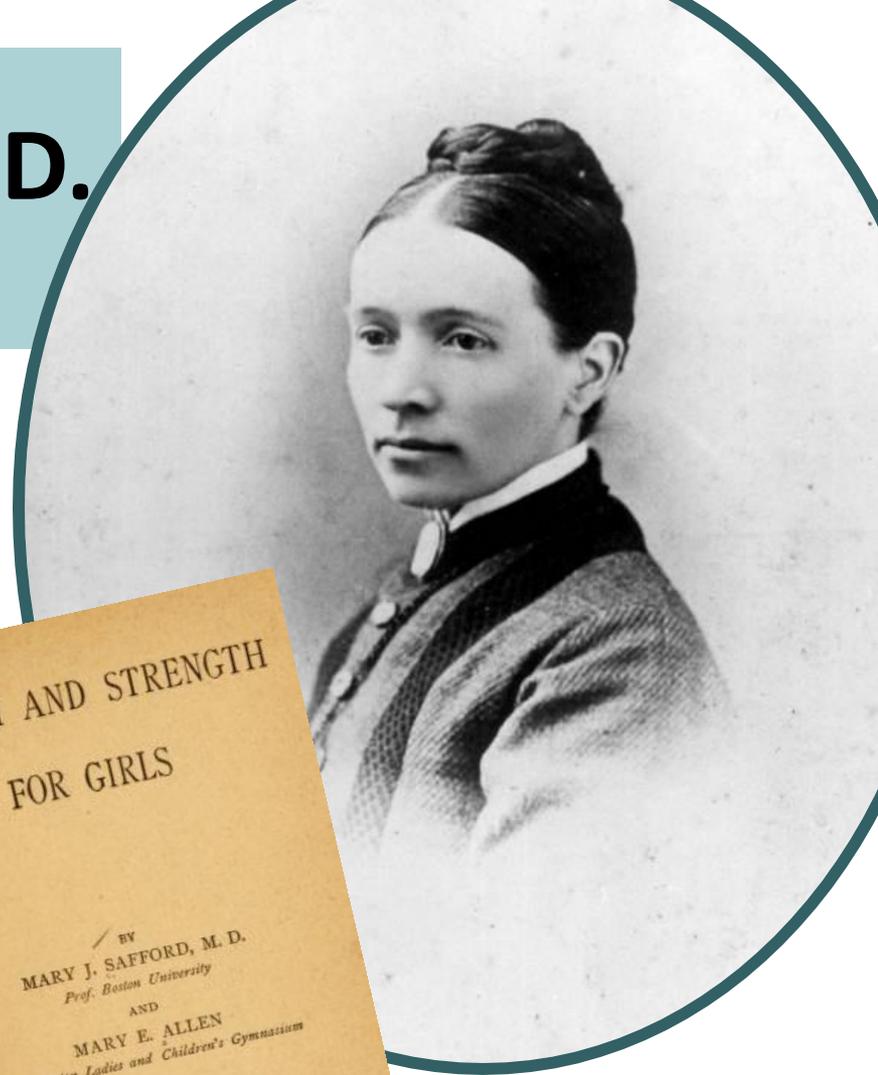
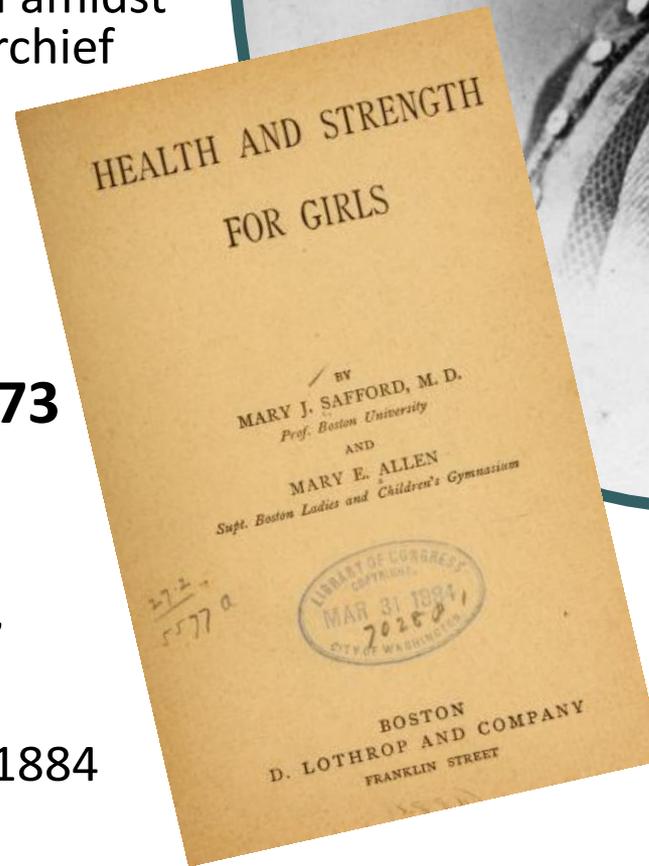


"I early conceived a  
liking for, and sought  
every opportunity to  
relieve the sufferings of  
others."

# Mary Jane Safford, M.D.

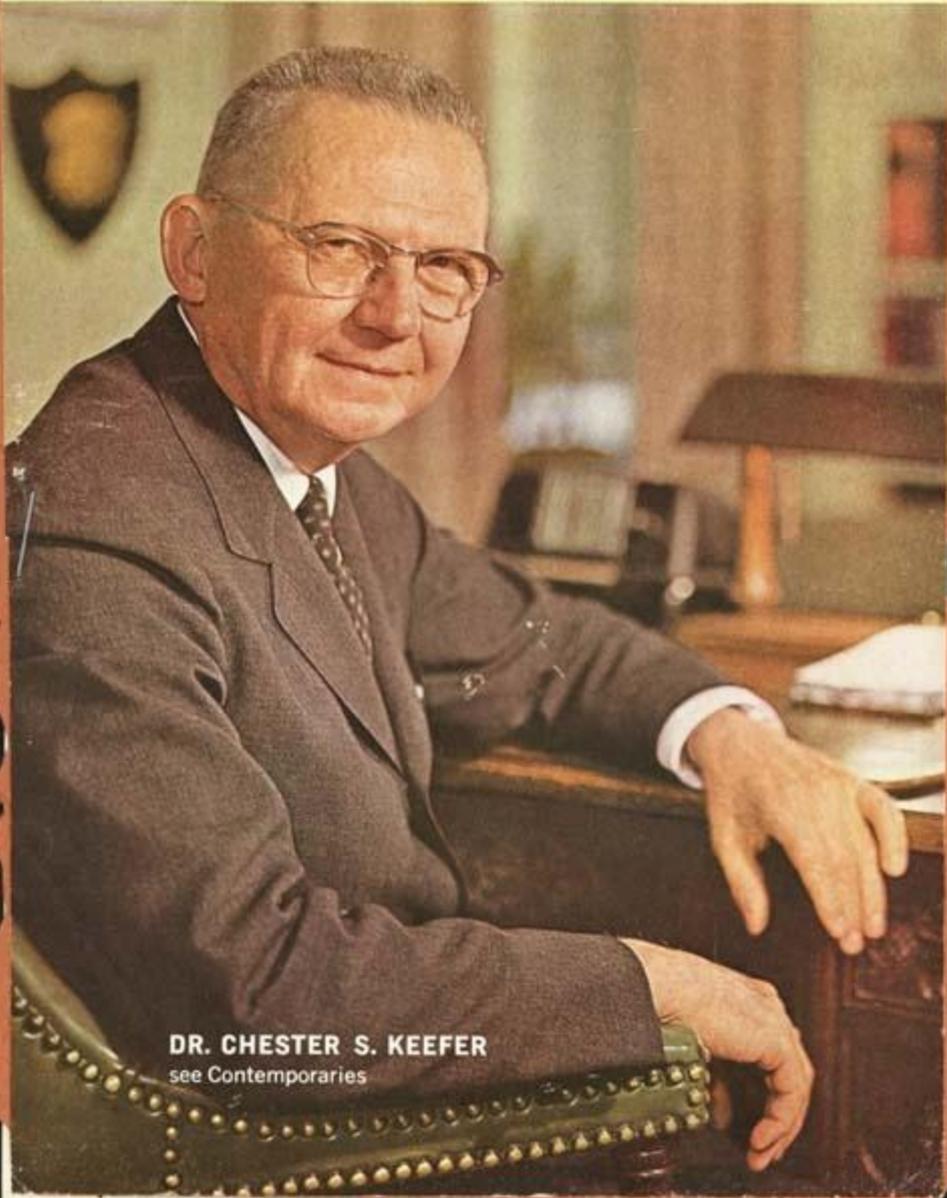
(1834 - 1891)

- Nursing efforts during Civil War:  
*“The Angel of Cairo”* -- to treat the wounded, walked the battlefield amidst enemy fire with a white handkerchief tied to a stick.
- M.D. degree in 1869 from New York Medical College for Women
- **BUSM founding faculty 1873**
- Physician and surgeon
- Professor of diseases of women, then professor of gynecology
- “Health and Strength for Girls”, 1884



# MODERN MEDICINE

Published alternate Mondays September 3, 1962



DR. CHESTER S. KEEFER  
see Contemporaries

## Chester Scott Keefer, M.D., D.Sc (1897 – 1972)

- Lured by BUSM from Harvard in 1940 – “come create a world class medical center”
- Professor of Medicine, director of BUSM hospitals and Evans Research Laboratory
- **“the Penicillin Czar”**
- Eisenhower administration
- BUSM Dean 1955 - 1960

# Robert W. Wilkins, M.D.

(1906-2003)

- Lured by Keefer from Johns Hopkins in 1940 (\$4,500 a year Assistant Professorship!)
- **First to identify safe and effective medication treatment to control hypertension**  
(Reserpine/rauwolfia)
- Anti-gravity “G suit”





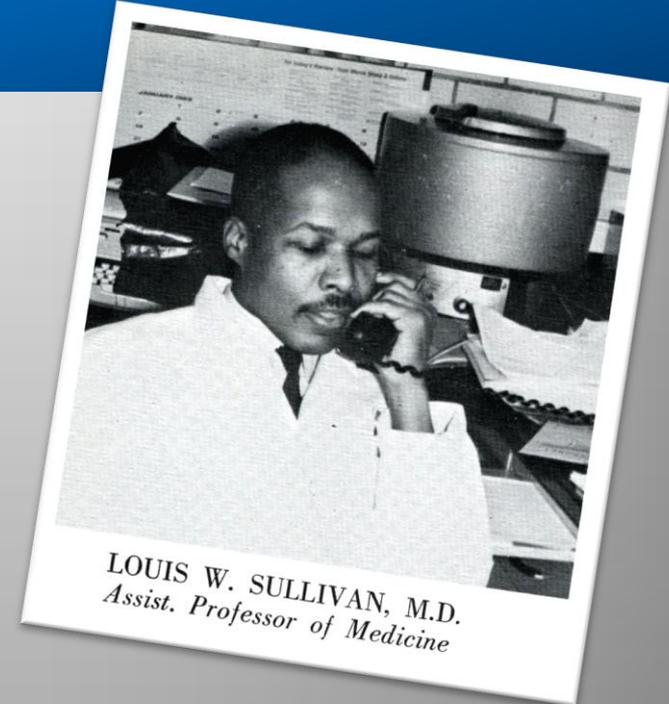
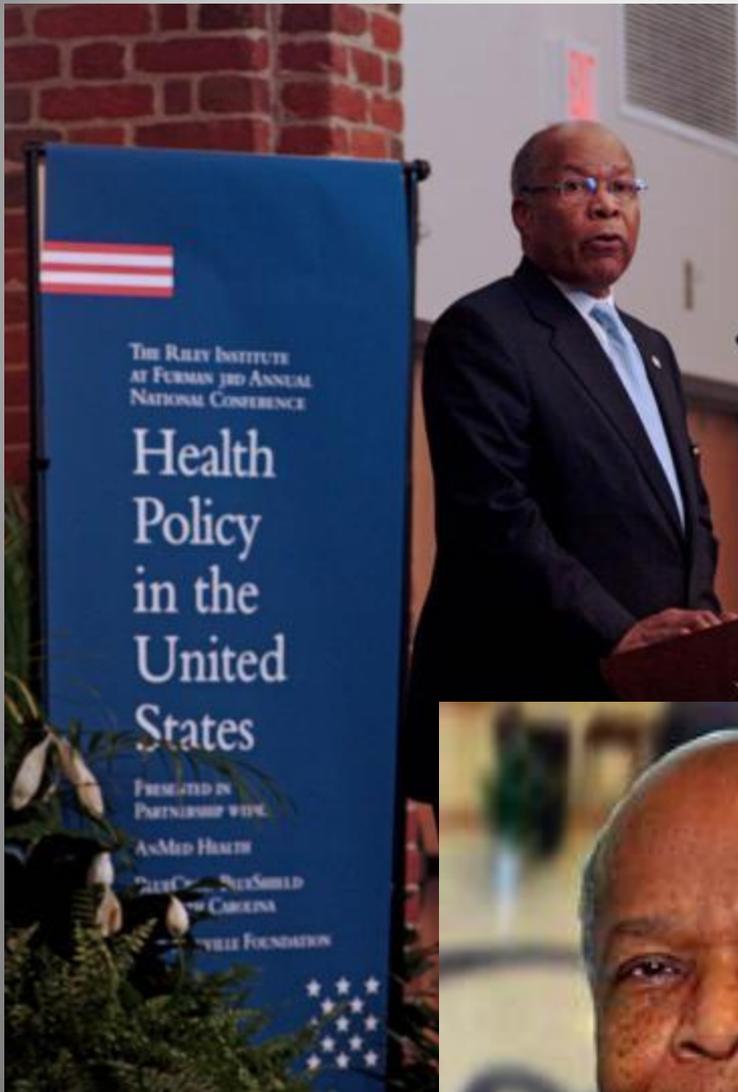
# Franz J. Ingelfinger, M.D.

(1910 – 1980)

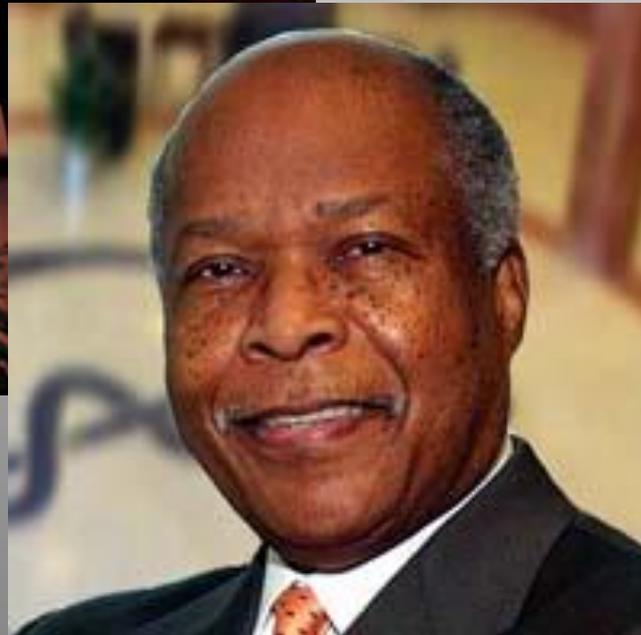
- Lured by Keefer in 1940 from Harvard
- Serotonin metabolism, intestinal absorption, motor function bowel/esophagus
- Lab trainee “Fingerlings”
- **“The Father of Modern Gastroenterology”**
- Editor of NEJM

# Louis W. Sullivan, M.D.

(1933 - )



LOUIS W. SULLIVAN, M.D.  
*Assist. Professor of Medicine*



**1958: BUSM grad**

**1958-64: Fellowships in pathology and hematology**

**1975: Founding Dean, Morehouse College Medical School**

**1989: Secretary HHS Bush Administration**

# Boston University School of Medicine

