

18           BOOKLET ON SANITATION HISTORY  
LAW OF THE SENATE ON PENNSYLVANIA STATE ABOUT FINLAY'S  
DAY  
SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA HARRISBURG, Pa.  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
R E S O L U T I O N

In the Senate,  
September 13, 1955.

On the 22nd and 23rd days of September 1955, The Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, will celebrate the Centenary of conferral on March 10, 1855, of its Degree in Medicine on Carlos Finlay, one of the leading healers in the history of mankind, and towering pioneer-combatant of the scourge of the "Yellow Jack."

The celebration will comprise a series of meetings which have been organized by The Jefferson Medical College in cooperation with the officers of the Cuban Government, as well as with the officers of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, that will consist of a festal reception on September 22nd for distinguished visitors from most of the Americas, and be followed by a meeting under the auspices of the Section on Medical History of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, of which Finlay was an Honorary Fellow. The speakers for this meeting will include Dr. Philip Hench, Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Dr. Horacio Abascal of the Cuban Academy of Medical Sciences. An academic convocation on the morning of September 23, 1955, will be dedicated to suitable tributes that will be paid to the memory of Finlay, and the presentation to the Jefferson Medical College of a marble bust of Finlay by the distinguished Cuban Minister of Public Health, Dr. Armando Coro.

Carlos J. Finlay was born in Camaguey, Cuba, in 1833. His father was a Scotch physician, his mother was French. His early education was by private tutors but at the age of eleven he was sent abroad for schooling in France and in Germany. The process of education was frequently interrupted by illness but he achieved a solid foundation in the classics, history, mathematics, geography, physics and languages. For the latter he had great facility and insisted upon this all of his life—breakfast was in Spanish, lunch in English, and dinner in French. Presumably he reserved German for certain other periods.

In 1853 at the age of 20, Carlos Finlay came to Philadelphia with his uncle, Philip de Barres and both registered at the Jefferson Medical College, But Finlay signed with the name Charles

and on October 27 paid the admittance fee of \$5, and the course fee of \$15. On the 17th of October, 1854, he registered for his second year and paid \$15. At that time he paid another fee of \$15 and indicated that his preceptor was S. W. Mitchell. He was the first pupil of Weir Mitchell and his first disciple: this was the beginning of their lifelong friendship. He received his doctor's degree on March 10, 1855. No record of his thesis has been found-

Following his graduation he spent an additional year with Weir Mitchell in Philadelphia, but in 1856 he began a series of travels, which included a period in Paris of post graduate study in Ophthalmology. He finally began permanently to practice medicine in Havana in 1865. His great interest in epidemiology and public health began in 1867 when Havana suffered from a severe epidemic of cholera. His logical reasoning showed the disease was water borne and he traced one phase of the epidemic to the original case. His views were so opposed to those of the time that his communication was refused publication.

During the next few years he undertook to investigate the matter of yellow fever; the basic equipment was the microscope which he had brought from Philadelphia. In due course he attained a considerable reputation in this field. This was officially recognized in 1879 when the Governor General appointed him to cooperate with the United States Commission on Yellow Fever. He served several appointments as official representative in the following years. The theory of the "intermediate agent" in the transmission of yellow fever was propounded in 1881. His contributions to the work of the Walter Reed Commission are well known.

Dr. Finlay actually tried mosquito transmissions of yellow fever in a series of 102 volunteers beginning in 1881. It is likely that he succeeded in 11 instances.

Although history has marked Finlay for his work on yellow fever his interests were wide. He made significant contributions on leprosy, beri-beri, filariasis, trichinosis, relapsing fever, cholera, tuberculosis and many other topics.

Jefferson recognized the quality of Finlay and his work by awarding him the honorary degree of Doctor of Science in 1902. It was also at about this time that he was proposed by his friend Weir Mitchell for honorary fellowship in the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. He received many honors in his lifetime but evidently treasured the citation from his professional school above all others.

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Carlos Finlay died on August 20, 1915. The ensuing years have dealt well with the man and with his work. There is a Finlay Institute in Havana, a Laboratorio Carlos Finlay in Bogotá, Colombia. There are Finlay streets in various cities. The Pan American Medical Congress celebrates Finlay's birthday, December 3rd, as the official Day of American Medicine therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania felicitate The Jefferson Medical College upon the occurrence of his great celebration and express its pride that so great servant of humanity received his medical education in Pennsylvania, and voice its gratification by His Excellency the Governor of Pennsylvania issuing a suitable Proclamation on the Carlos Finlay centenary, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate be and he is hereby directed upon passage of the instant resolution, to forward copies thereof to James Laurence Kauffman, Vice Admiral United States Navy (retired); President of The Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia; and to Dr. George Allen Bennett, Dean of the Jefferson Medical College.

I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution introduced by Senators Leroy E. Chapman and Israel Stiefel and adopted by the Senate of Pennsylvania, the thirteen day of September, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-five.

(fdo.) **G. Harold Watkins,**  
Secretary,  
Senate of Pennsylvania.

