

## INTRODUCTION

There have been relatively few osteopathic textbooks published in recent years. There have been even fewer written by British osteopaths and hardly any of these touch upon such fundamental matters as diagnosis and the clinical application of techniques. This perhaps reflects the prevailing culture in our training schools; a "show me how" attitude rather than "tell me why". The Institute of Classical Osteopathy has always held the view that the "why" is at least as important as the "how" and the articles in this volume attempt to deal with both the "how" and the "why".

The first of a planned series covering all areas of the spine and the upper and lower extremities, this book aims to provide help and guidance for the busy osteopath as well as that essential stimulus for the "thoughtful and reflective practitioner" - food for thought!

It seems that lesions of the pelvis, especially those of the sacro-iliac joints represent something of a Cinderella subject amongst contemporary osteopaths. One might be tempted to conclude that the reason why this area receives such scant attention is because of the complexities involved in diagnosis and successful treatment. It is a fact, however, that unless the pelvis is adjusted, both in terms of position and mobility, the body as a whole cannot remain in optimum condition. For those familiar with the theories of body mechanics suggested by Littlejohn and refined by T.E. Hall and John Wernham, this statement may seem obvious. However, it is a fact that for all the talk about osteopathy being a 'holistic' therapy, very few osteopaths have any idea of how to adjust and integrate the body as a unit. When the ideas of Littlejohn, Hall and Wernham were put to one side by the educationalists (largely because they could not comprehend them) no other model, certainly no better model, was introduced in their place. As a result, much treatment given by osteopaths today has degenerated into either piece-meal manipulation, an eclectic mishmash approach encompassing the A-Z of alternative therapies, or a quasi-religious faith-healing (cranio-sacral therapy).

One of the reasons that Littlejohn's ideas were discarded was that they were difficult to understand and to apply in practice. Osteopaths with the intellect and technical ability of Hall and Wernham found no such difficulty, but for those not prepared to spend the necessary time in study and practice, there were easier, less demanding routes to follow and follow them they did, much to the detriment of osteopathy as a system of medicine.

The articles in this book are taken from the archives of the Institute of Classical Osteopathy and cover many aspects of diagnosis and technique. Different viewpoints are given, some of them seemingly contradictory and this reflects the complexity of lesion patterns in the pelvis. Different techniques and treatment approaches are described in some detail, but perhaps here we should recall the wisdom of I.E. Hall who often stated that "technique is eighty per cent correct diagnosis" i.e. make the correct diagnosis and the correct application of technique should be relatively easy.

Finally, please remember that although this book deals with the diagnosis and adjustment of the neuro-musculo-skeletal systems this should not be regarded as an end in itself. The intention of such adjustments is to achieve a physiological response and thus restore optimum functioning of the body.

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