

Excerpts from

Mabel Heath Palmer's

# Chiropractic Anatomy

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In these direct quotes from Mabel Heath Palmer's book, *Chiropractic Anatomy*, is an attempt to describe the functional structures of anatomy from an interior dimension. Palmer is describing the living system as intelligent, autopoietic, and recursively adapting to its environment. She does not use the latter terms, but viewed from the 21<sup>st</sup> century, those are certainly applicable. Her descriptions herein can be viewed as precursors to autopoietic theory, systems theory, as well as enactive cognitive science. She is describing the inside view of the exterior structures of the body. These quotes were chosen mainly because they describe anatomy in terms of Innate Intelligence. Palmer viewed the Innate Intelligence as the controller of metabolism and the director of the body's functions. The brain is the seat of both Educated and Innate Intelligence. It is the source of the mental currents, which flow to the body, and the receptor of impulses from the periphery; creating the cycle of life. The reception of impulses by the innate mind, form mental impressions, which are then acted upon by will. Interpretation is thus a function or action of Innate because the act of interpretation includes the response, the efferent impulse. This is an embodied and enactive approach to the life process. A subluxation disrupts this cycle by limiting the current and/or changing the function.

## **"PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION**

When it was suggested and urged, by Chiropractors, that I prepare a text-book of Anatomy—at this, a time when good text-books are in abundance—I did not accept without due reflection as to the nature of the demand for such a work, so my thot has been to produce a book which would supply the wants of students only, and not one for the finished anatomist.

This book represents a compilation of my lectures, given during the past nine years, and it is because of the interest which my classes have shown that I have thus consented to have the notes reproduced in book form. This volume is largely the result of information and knowledge acquired during my years of teaching and in its preparation I have consulted such ancient and modern books as I could obtain, and have gleaned from them much information.

The fundamental principle of this work has been to avoid any unusual presentation of the subject which would make the recognition of well known relations more difficult for the student, and to limit the material to what is essentially necessary from a Chiropractic viewpoint. Its object is to place Chiropractic on a more scientific basis by offering to the profession an anatomy presenting the subject as it is taught at the Fountain Head of Chiropractic. So this work is offered, not with the desire to supplant other valuable works, but with the hope of promoting among Chiropractors a better knowledge of the human body, which has been called the "temple of God."

Knowledge is the birthright of every being, and knowledge of no other subject is more useful than that of the human organization—the brain guided by the Universal Intelligence which governs it. Man is a being of such proportions and complexity as to completely baffle description, and I shall not attempt it here, whether he is spirit or matter, or both; but we do know that he has a body which is constructed on strictly mechanical

principles, and controlled by an All Wise Intelligence. It is my aim to lay particular stress upon this bodily structure, so that one may gain a better and more general knowledge of its nature.

It is to be regretted that anatomy loses so much in consequence of the want of a definite nomenclature, but I am of the opinion that the student's attention soon wearies of technicality, whether written or spoken, and I have, therefore, made use of such terms as experience has shown to be the most easily understood and remembered, and therefore I have tried by eliminating as many difficult terms as possible, tho using as many new and old terms as I deemed advisable to make this anatomy serviceable to all ...

“A **Sense** is a faculty possessed by animals, of receiving impressions from natural objects, or a faculty of perceiving impressions thru certain organs. Aristotle brot out the idea of the five special senses, and said that all other senses, aside from the special, were demonstrations of the soul. Bichat defined a sense as “the property possessed by living bodies of receiving impressions, whether the individual be conscious or not, if conscious the sensibility is known as animal sense and if not conscious, organic.” Referring to the vegetable world, minutely, the sense of sight, smell, thirst and hunger is not thot to belong to its units, altho they do absorb, exhaust and secrete; yet we cannot state this as a known fact. The human mind may never be able to fathom many of nature's innermost secrets. Chiropractic results would indicate that we are only beginning to learn the first fundamental principles of the metabolism of the animal body. The human mind had not previously realized that the educated mind itself, was a manifestation of an Innate Intelligence which controls the metabolism of its corporeal abode. An **organ of sense** is an instrument by which the mind is brot into relation with external objects.” (p.324)

“Under the **cerebro-spinal** or **central nerve system** are classified the **brain** and **spinal cord, cranial and spinal nerves**. The **peripheral nerve system** is made up of two gangliated cords extending from the base of the brain to the tip of the coccyx, the various gangliated plexuses, and the periphery nerves. All these anatomical divisions comprise the **brain system**, while its two principal functional divisions are the **Innate** and the **Educated nervous systems**. Just in what manner and in what part of the brain the line of division between the two is found, cannot be stated; for each part of the brain is dependent upon the other for the manifestation of the various functions of the body. The Innate and the Educated brain are intimately connected together, and connected also with all other parts of the body by a main nerve trunk, known as the spinal cord.

Each brain is divisible into many *lobes*, each of which is composed of abundant *cells*, each one of which has a *fibre* or a *fibrilla* which goes to a point where it meets similar processes of other cells of the brain, and all these fibres collect into a large cable of nerves, called the **spinal cord**, which in turn gives off thirty-one pairs of spinal nerves. Each spinal nerve consists of a bundle of fibres which go to the peripheral tissues of the body, so that the brain is in direct connection at all times with every functioning cell group of the body while life exists.

The brain, therefore, is the seat of all intelligence in the body the habitat of Innate Intelligence, which is the director of all functions in the body, from the time of birth to the dissolution of the physical and the mental, which is death. The brain is the place from which the mental currents, which control all functions of the body, emanate and flow to all parts of the body, to each tissue cell, the brain constitutes the beginning and the ending of the one great cycle, called life. **Nerve tissue** consists of **cells**, the gray **matter; nerve fibres**, the white matter, and neuroglia. Nerve-cells, like all other cells in the body, consist of a mass of protoplasm with or without a cell wall and having, at or near their center, a nucleus (a kernel) and, within the nucleus, a nucleolus (little kernel), which is sometimes peculiarly clear and brilliant. Leading from the body of a nerve-cell or, as we prefer, exclusively from the brain cell, is a prolongation, called a nerve fibre. This may or may not have a covering, if it has a covering it is called a **medullated nerve fibre**, but if the sheath is absent it is called a **non-medullated fibre**. **Neuroglia** is the delicate, web-like” (p. 405)

“A subluxation that pinches or presses upon a nerve may be likened to a rheostat on a live wire. The rheostat interferes with the current that passes, or would pass, thru the wire, it resists, keeps back the current, changes the functions of the wire, also of the motor or lamps on that wire.

Innate Intelligence has control over every tissue cell in the human body. Educated Intelligence has control over a very small portion, namely the muscular system; Innate guides the rest, every tissue cell, in the nine primary functions. These functions are as follows: **motor, sensation, secretion, excretion, calorific, nutrition, expansion, reparation and reproduction.**” (p.467)

“This variety of muscle tissue forms the voluntary muscles and are under the partial control of educated intelligence, tho not entirely so, while the involuntary are under the sole control of the Innate Intelligence. **Non-striated** muscle tissue consists of numerous elongated spindle-shaped cells held together in bundles by a cementsubstance, and these bundles are arranged in layers or flattened bands bound together by areolar tissue. It is this kind of muscle that is found forming the contractile coats of the intestine, stomach, bladder, esophagus, arteries and veins, lymphatics, urethra, ducts of glands, the iris, ciliary body, etc.” (p. 112)

#### “**THE FUNCTION OF THE CEREBRUM**

The **cerebrum** is the only part of the brain, in man, where the afferent impulses react in consciousness or are interpreted by the innate mind. It contains the centres where afferent impulses of the peripheral end-organs are received to give rise to mental impressions. It also contains the centres from which impulses proceed, by means of the power of the will, to various portions of the body and thus control the movements, which are the expressions of desires of the mental state; they being the centres of motion, sense, hearing, sight, smell and taste, and the seat of consciousness, intellect, judgment and ideation. All physical and moral actions have their perceptive centres somewhere in the cortical substance of the cerebrum.” (p.442)

“The olfactory nerves differ from other nerves in that they are composed entirely of amyelinic fibres, meaning fibres which have no medullary sheath or white substance of Schwann, but consist of axiscylinders with a nucleated sheath in which there are more nuclei than the ordinary amyelinic fibres possess. Impressions from the olfactory mucous membrane pass to the olfactory glomeruli, thence thru the central fibres of connection into the brush work of mitral cells, and, from these, thru the central fibres of conduction into the brain substance. Gaseous elements come in contact with the bipolar cells of the mucous membrane and afferent impulses are set up, which traverse the nerve fibres from the periphery to the brain, where interpretation takes place, and Innate thus becomes aware of the quality of the exciting agent.” (p.472)

“**Reflex actions** are those performed without consciousness. The Chiropractor recognizes no reflex action in the living, thinking body. However, those functions, which occur in living bodies, which are construed as reflex actions, can be better interpreted in the following language and thereby meet the conditions best understood by him: An impression, in a certain tissue or area, is carried by an afferent nerve to the brain, where innate intelligence interprets the impression. Such an impression is carried as an impulse back, by an efferent nerve, to the point in the tissue, where the impression produced the activity. It is not a question of what is, because that which is being analyzed, is the same in both instances, it is the question of how it is accomplished, that gives rise to the two differences of opinions.

So called reflexes have been classified as simple and complicated. Among the more common are the following: **abdominal reflex...; Achilles reflex...; plantar reflex...; patellar... Cranial reflexes...**

Do not these demonstrations prove that Innate is trying to adapt itself to the circumstance? For a blow on any organ calls for adaptative processes—a blow on the solar plexus would produce great responsiveness upon the part of the Innate mind, which would adapt its powers to the circumstances, be they great or small. Also, adaptations are the results of an intelligent thinking individuality, which has the ability to control bodily functions. This adaptation causes a withdrawal of the parts when they come in contact with objects foreign to them, and when the nerve is not impinged to a point of causing pain; merely a slight pressure on the nerve causes the skin to retract or the knee to jerk, demonstrating the fact that Innate, realizing the possible injury that might be done to the organs or parts involved, thus protects the tissues by adapting her intellectual forces to the condition of material things.” (p. 522)

Chiropractically speaking, all the centres are contained in the brain, and all impressions must be carried there to be interpreted and sent forth as an impulse, from the area where the interpretation takes place, to the tissue involved...

Authorities, except Chiropractors, consider a centre as a collection of nerve cells, to which external impressions are carried and whence impulses are sent out, and therefore they are considered as brains, being regions of gray matter in which the anatomical and functional bonds of union between elements and systems are established. Not all of these seeming centres are located in the brain, many of them are located in the spinal cord and the medulla. Take the vaso-motor nerves for an example, they form a system which presides, not merely over the circulation, but also over other analogous functions, and these nerves are considered as radiating from the vasomotor centre in the medulla and spinal cord—that is, the impression is said to be received there and the impulse sent from the centre for the control of the circulatory system...

These and many other centres are considered automatic or without consciousness. The digestion of food, healing of wounds, mending of fractures, are all considered as automatic and the functions for such intelligent actions are relegated to the numerous centres of the body, from whence the impression was received and the impulse sent forth to the tissue.

But Chiropractic teaches a direct system, which is given us by Innate Intelligence, in which every fibre leads from the tissue to the brain-cell, or vice versa. The brain-cell receives its impressions, the fibre transmits impulses and the impulses are interpreted or expressed in tissue cells.” (p.523)

“The **cerebrum** is the only part of the brain in man where afferent impulses react in consciousness or are interpreted by the innate brain. It contains the various centres where afferent impulses of peripheral end-organs are received and give rise to the mental impressions. It is the place which contains the centres from which impulses proceed by means of the power of the will, to the various portions of the body and thus control their movements, these centres give rise and expression to the desires of the mental ego, being the seat of consciousness, intellect, judgment, language, emotion and ideation.” (p.526)

“When no interference exists along the circuit, the brain works in completely harmonious order, for the fulfillment of the duty for which it was originally intended—a complete cycle— health.  
—MABEL H. PALMER.” (p. 530)