

“CHIROPRACTICS” IS PRACTISING MEDICINE, AND
REQUIRES A LICENSE.

On appeal from a conviction of violation of Massachusetts Rev. Laws, Chap. 76, Sec. 8, by practising medicine without being lawfully authorized, the defendant contended that he was a chiropractor, and that his acts did not constitute a violation of the statute. The evidence tended to show that he kept an office in Boston, indicated by a sign on which was his name followed by the word “chiropractor”; that he practiced for pay; that he said that the basis of chiropractic is the adjustment of the vertebræ of the spine; that the vertebræ when not in their normal positions press upon the nerves at the spine; that the malposition of these vertebræ was the cause of abnormality and that the adjustment of these vertebræ to their normal positions would remove the pressure at the spine; that he said that he did not cure, that he simply adjusted. He testified that “chiropractic is the specific science that removes pressure upon the nerves by adjustment of spinal vertebræ; there are no instruments used; it is done by the hand only.” The treatment pursued by the defendant was to have those who resorted to him go into an inner room and remove their outer garments until they were stripped to the waist. The patient then took a sitting position. The defendant examined down the spine, beginning at the top, by feeling with his fingers to see whether each vertebræ was in its proper position. The method to discover whether a vertebræ was out of position was by making a gliding move of the three middle fingers of the right hand, which constituted the process of “palpation” where one vertebræ was compared with another. As a result if this “analysis” the defendant was able to tell whether vertebræ were out of alignment or out of their normal positions. In making “adjustments” the patient was placed face downward on a low table and the vertebræ which was out of condition was given a quick thrust or push by the hands of the defendant. The acts performed by the defendant constituted, first, an examination of the vertebræ of the spinal column and a determination whether they were in a normal or in an unnatural position; and, second, a manipulation of such of the vertebræ as were found to be out of position, so that they would become regular and correct with reference to each other. Although the defendant did not prescribe medicine, and testified that he paid no attention to the patient’s description of symptoms or disease, yet it was obvious that his purpose was to treat the human body in order to make natural that which he found abnormal in the narrow field of his examination. “Chiropractic” is defined as: “A system of healing that treats disease by manipulation of the spinal column.” (Webster’s International Dictionary). The court said that the defendant’s