

R. M. Hodges, I should have given up all hope in operating for cancer, for he had himself been led to the gloomiest prognostications.

The line of demarcation in 1875 between medicine, surgery, and the specialties was very sharply defined; between medicine and surgery it was especially clear. At that time surgery included the modern specialties of orthopedics, gynecology, and genito-urinary diseases. Orthopedics meant club-foot chiefly; gynecology, ruptured perineum; and genito-urinary diseases meant clap, syphilis, stricture, and stone in the bladder.

Bigelow did all these things, more or less, as well as operations on the eye. His chief pleasure was in genito-urinary surgery, and his influence first stimulated in Boston our best specialists in genito-urinary diseases. We had no idea what G. U. would mean, or what gynecology would claim. We little thought that the time would come when kidneys would be extirpated, or extra-uterine pregnancy diagnosed and remedied. What the surgeons of that time would have said of the specialty of gynecology, we cannot even guess. Indeed, at the present time it would be hard to say, when we are called, as I have been, by a gynecologist, to help decide between a paratyphoid fever and an appendicitis in a male!

In 1875, however, the visiting surgeons at the Massachusetts General Hospital had to do everything. The operation for club foot was a common one. To this day, gynecology is done by the staff, medical and surgical.

In many ways this simplicity of assignment of everything to the physician, to the surgeon, or to the then established specialties of eye, ear, throat, skin, and nervous diseases was commendable. I am not so sure that we should commend even now the splitting up of general surgery into specialties that are not practised by specialists—into highly specialized groupings presided over by general surgeons.

Bigelow was a surgeon with a predilection for genito-urinary work; Cabot, a general surgeon who enjoyed the gynecology of that day. Porter was more at home in hare-lip, cleft palate, and in fine plastic workmanship.

To-day this arrangement of cases which demand special skill is admirable, provided that in a hospital staff certain unusual diseases are all referred to one or two men who take special in-