

## Selected Article.

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### THE PREVENTION OF APOPLEXY.

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From the time of Hippocrates physicians have aimed, by methods better and worse, at the forecast of disease. They have perceived that successful forecast is not only of prime utility in the particular case, but is the test by which they must be judged concerning their knowledge of the causes of disease, a knowledge in which must lie, in the long-run, our command of the means of cure. And if, leaving the particular instance, we turn our eyes towards the broader incidence of disease, we shall see that a knowledge of causes is the only way to what is far more than individual cure, namely prevention. On such considerations as these we may be content to be judged to-day. To the great Italians of the early renaissance we owe far more than we are wont to acknowledge. To them we owe not, indeed, Harvey himself, but surely the spirit and the teaching which made Harvey what he was; and as in Harvey physiology began, so pathology had its chief source and inspiration in Morgagni.

Virchow has said that the key to Morgagni's reform was the substitution of the question, Where is disease? for What is disease?—the substitution of an enquiry into the place and order of the phenomena, instead of that which had ruled the Middle Ages, the enquiry into the essence of disease. Since Morgagni's day the revelations which have rewarded this change of attitude and method have been prodigious, and not in the direct results of anatomical search only. By the new method wide and deep changes have penetrated thence into the fields of clinical and therapeutical knowledge. In therapeutics, for instance, the distance between Morgagni and Wilks was as great as in morbid anatomy itself. The reform was sound, useful and progressive, almost above our appreciation. Yet, like all reforms, it has had its defect or partiality. To ask, as Virchow put it, Where is disease?—unless we give an infinite extension to the word "where"—is to convey too stationary a sense to the problem; to make it too static. Among the consequences of this limitation was a certain fatalism, both of pathology and of therapeutics; and this the more that, as in