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RUDOLF VIRCHOW—AN APPRECIATION.*

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The object of this address, the invitation to deliver which is an honor for which I am profoundly grateful, is to express, in some measure, an appreciation of the life and labor of Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow, a deceased Honorary Fellow of the Medical Society of the State of New York.

In approaching this task we become at once impressed with the fact that the influences which develop greatness are subjects of speculative inquiry not less interesting and important than the momentous question of what constitutes greatness itself. When, therefore, we for any reason examine into the facts relating to the evolution of a given historic character, we at once think of the conditions and forces concerned in its production—we think of ancestry, of domestic surroundings, of scholastic opportunities, of personal associations, and of the forces that were at the time dominant in the social, political and intellectual atmosphere. We are prone, also, as we turn to greatness itself, to measure it, not alone by the standard of its own time, not alone by the rule of personal achievement, but to estimate it with reference to both its immediate importance and its final influences. Thus, as we glance over the vista of history, and our fancy nestles naturally enough about the most imposing figures of the ages, we discover, for instance, that we would like to know more of John and Mary Shakespeare, who blessed mankind with the Bard of Avon—the man of sympathy: and we yearn for an acquaintance with the

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