

were accepted, not only in this but in other particulars, and he at once entered seriously upon what must be recognized as his more distinctive life work. The museum at that time contained 1,500 preparations; at his eightieth birthday, as the result of his own individual labors, the number had increased to 23,000. In his work he was actuated by the view, expressed in his own words, that "the role of pathological anatomy as a dogmatic science is at an end, for each individual law we must have the proof clearly recognized and carrying personal conviction." He insisted that the whole of the then existing system must be abolished, and that a new philosophy, based upon observation and experiment, must take its place. This new pathology, he insisted, must come about gradually, and not as the mental product of individual enthusiasm. It must be achieved as the outcome of laborious research by many competent investigators, and, when thus evolved, and thus only, could it be accepted as the basis of scientific medicine.

The engrossing character of Virchow's labors at the Institute at this time, the absorbing enthusiasm involved in the promulgation of a new and revolutionizing philosophy, the exactness of editorial duty, all combined with the responsibilities of professorial work were not sufficient, however, completely to divert his attention from collateral and often apparently irrelevant studies, and from participation in the fierce political controversies that were then agitating the German people. William I. had ascended the Prussian throne in 1858. There was some hope of relief from the oppressive measures of his predecessors, and this very hope stimulated the activities of the Democrats or of the "Demagogen," as the party was appropriately designated by the Conservatives. Virchow, notwithstanding his unpleasant experiences that had resulted from his banishment to Wurzburg, immediately identified himself with the cause of popular liberty. In this he was actuated by a profound contempt for the reigning house, a contempt which, on occasion found expression in his famous observation on heredity. "I know a family, a very exalted one," he was wont to say, "in which the grandfather had softening of the brain, the son hardening of the brain, and the grandson no brains at all," the reference being to the three Frederics, the immediate predecessors of the then reigning monarch. The work of the mere agitator, however, was not sufficient for one of Virchow's temperament, particularly to one who, after a previous election to the National Legislature, had been denied his seat on account of his youth. He was, in 1862, older by fifteen years, and, accordingly, offered himself as a candidate for the Prussian Chamber, to which he was duly elected. It was in the same year that Bismarck became