

though it is probably far beyond our present power to make a complete study of the problem, I feel sure that a brief analysis will justify certain very definite conclusions. Life as we know it is a physico-chemical mechanism, and it is probably inconceivable that it should be otherwise.¹ As such, it possesses, and, we may well conclude, must ever possess, a high degree of complexity, — physically, chemically, and physiologically; that is to say, structurally and functionally. We cannot imagine life which is no more complex than a sphere, or salt, or the fall of rain, and, as we know it, it is in fact a very great deal more complex than such simple things. Next, living things, still more the community of living things, are durable. But complexity and durability of mechanism are only possible if internal and external conditions are stable. Hence, automatic regulations of the environment and the possibility of regulation of conditions within the organism are essential to life. It is not possible to specify a large number of conditions which must be regulated, but certain it is from our present experience that at least rough regulation of

¹ I mean, of course, for the purposes of physical and chemical study. With such qualifications the statement is probably no longer open to objection from any quarter.