

as final, there is none at all for the belief that anything essentially inexplicable either physico-chemically or genetically will be discovered in their organization.

Putting aside all contentious matters, it is abundantly clear that nebulæ, however they may vary among themselves, are made up of vast extents of gaseous material and dust which are exceedingly rare and at very low temperature, and that they may contain all kinds of foci of condensation, from stars to meteorites, in great variety of forms and conditions.

On the whole the common-sense judgment that the solar system may be taken as a fair sample of the universe, and that its probable evolution is in the main typical of cosmic evolution in general seems to be well founded. Any other hypothesis does violence to a host of facts, and to the larger generalizations of modern science.

II

POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS

If now we seek to make the best of existing astronomical knowledge, as hastily sketched, in the study of our biological problem, certain considerations at once present themselves.