

and the sure and definite relations between such bodies provide, as it were, a secure foundation for the more complex organic structures.

More obvious is the value of ions as sources of electricity. If the older electro-physiology of the third quarter of the nineteenth century has proved in some respects a sterile field, there can yet be no doubt that more subtly, and quite apart from the nervous impulse and the peculiar phenomena of electrical fishes, electrical phenomena are everywhere involved in the most intimate of the physiological processes.

Even without further discussion of a subject that must soon lead into difficult and highly technical considerations, I feel sure that the existence of another important fitness of water is patent. For ions are evidently a real contribution to the richness of the environment. They enhance the variety of chemical substances and of chemical reactions; they constitute a group of singularly mobile chemical agents; they provide electricity; and, finally, aqueous solutions are by far the best source of ions.

It must be pointed out before leaving this subject that the dielectric constant, hence the ionizing power, is somehow related to various other properties of the solvent. In