

fitness of water. But not only is it almost inconceivable that ammonia should ever occur in sufficiently vast quantities upon a planet's surface, but it is evident as well that ammonia wholly lacks the qualification of anomalous expansion, and also in some of the most important of the other thermal properties falls far short of water; while in latent heat of melting and in specific heat its advantage over water is inconsiderable.

It is obvious that upon a body like the earth the state of the oceans and the meteorological phenomena are of the utmost importance to all living things. Unless these be favorable, human experience and reflection alike agree that life could not widely exist. It seems, therefore, almost safe to say, on the basis of its thermal properties alone, that water is the one fit substance for its place in the process of universal evolution, when we regard that process biocentrically.

II

THE ACTION OF WATER UPON OTHER SUBSTANCES

Although the thermal properties of water make up the classical subject-matter for discussions of the fitness of the natural en-