

The new conditions which the temperate zone after the end of the Glacial Age offered its organisms have, on the other hand, also acted long enough to leave their mark on structure and mode of life. Such marks are the variation, local as well as seasonal, both of which are nothing but the efforts of the organisms to adapt themselves to the development of more favourable biological conditions consequent upon the milder climatic conditions. The differentiation in the outer conditions involved differentiation in structure.

*How have these extensive researches on the variation in the Northern and Central European fresh-water plankton influenced our conception of the species?* We must in this paper be content to deal mainly with the Cladocera and leave the remainder to the future.

I have here come to the point which is the goal of so many other comprehensive studies. I confess openly that I have held conflicting views at different times, but I believe that the result which I have arrived at lately is for me permanent. However honest and sincere one's researches may be, and however much one tries to be impartial, in such domains one is, in my opinion, only able to see what one is "born" to see, *i.e.* the combination of claims and conditions which is the reflection of one's self. I consider it highly probable that if other observers with other natural gifts had procured the material shown here and had now to say the final word, they would express it differently from what I should. Man cannot, on the whole, get beyond what he thinks is the nearest truth.

According to my view, the researches clearly show the almost incredible elasticity of the plankton organisms and their adaptability to variations in outer conditions. For many extremely different organisms the research has more or less distinctly shown that a transformation takes place in the shape of the organisms, which is uniform in its final results and everywhere parallel with certain fixed local and seasonal variations in outer conditions. This harmony between the variations in outer conditions and those in the shape of the plankton organisms is, *in my opinion*, so conspicuous that I do not doubt but that the latter are the outcome of the former. It seems to me that but few researches have been able to display so clearly the influence of outer conditions on the organisms; but even with regard to this point the mere subjective view cannot, as above noted, be excluded. According to my opinion, the salient point is that the research has proved the causal connection between the shape or form of the plankton organisms and certain regular variations in outer conditions. Which of the two really "strikes the first blow" in the mutual play between organism and outer conditions, whether the organism is forced or permits itself to be forced, is in my opinion a contest of words, and provisionally may be left alone. Through this