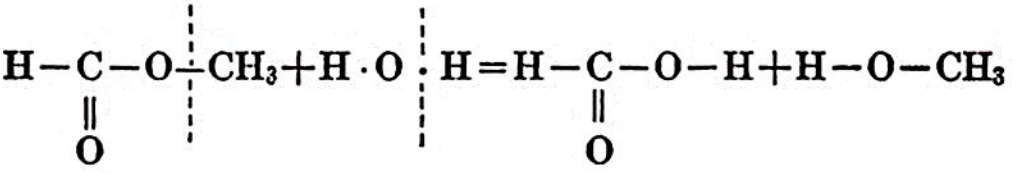
as hydrolysis. Essentially they amount to successive splittings of the large molecules of the native substances, each cleavage being accompanied by the addition of a molecule of water, until finally from starches and like substances the simple sugars like glucose result; from the fats, fatty acids and glycerine; from the proteins, the so-called amino acids.

The cleavage of fats closely resembles the hydrolysis of a simple ester; the cleavage of proteins and carbohydrates a little more remotely resembles the same process. Accordingly, the hydrolysis of the simplest ester, methyl formate, may serve as an illustration of the nature of the reaction:—



This process is nothing less than the typical reaction between water and organic substances. Accordingly, it is not surprising that such reactions are by no means confined to the digestion of food. Once formed, the products of digestion are absorbed, the more readily because of their simplicity, and, also because of their simplicity, they carry into the body no trace of the organism in which they previously existed. But, if they are to