

organic compounds of a definite character; the essential composition of such substances, though exhibiting endless minor diversities, being, nevertheless, in all instances, precisely the same.

The means by which that *peculiarity of composition and of structure is produced*, which is so remarkable in all organic substances, are, like the results themselves, quite peculiar; and bear little or no resemblance to any artificial process of chemistry. For example, we have not, in artificial chemistry, any control over individual molecules; but are obliged to direct our operations on a mass, formed of a large collection of molecules. The organic agent, on the contrary, having an apparatus of extreme minuteness, is enabled to operate on each individual molecule separately; and thus, according to the object designed, to exclude some molecules, and to bring others into contact. In these processes, it may be conceived, that the molecules thus appropriately brought together, and, at the same time, guarded from extraneous influence by the organic agent, are in virtue of their own proper affinities, sufficiently disposed to unite, without requiring that any new properties should be communicated to them. Hence the organic agent, in its simplest state, may be viewed as a power so controlling certain inorganic matters, as to form them into an apparatus, by which it arranges and organizes other matters, and thus