

metallic state; and are incapable of existence upon the surface of our globe, on account of the tendency they possess to enter into combination, particularly with oxygen. It would seem also, from the intensity of the properties, and the general incompatibility of the simple bodies with the present order of things; that their compounds, rather than themselves, were the objects the Author of nature had in view. Hence perhaps we are more immediately interested in the character of the compounds, than in that of the elements themselves. Of the general nature of these compounds, the following observations, taken chiefly from Dr. Thomson's work on chemistry, will serve to convey some idea to the general reader.

The COMPOUNDS which bodies form with one another, are either PRIMARY, or SECONDARY. By PRIMARY COMPOUNDS, are usually understood those which are formed by the combination of two or more simple bodies with each other; while by SECONDARY COMPOUNDS, are meant the compounds formed by the union of the primary compounds with each other.

The PRIMARY COMPOUNDS naturally divide themselves into three grand classes; viz. *acids*; *alkalies*, or *bases*; and *neutrals*; on each of which we shall make a few remarks.

*Of Acids.* Formerly it was considered as requisite, that bodies, in order to belong to the