

site knowledge we have yet attained, must be allowed to be exceedingly inadequate. The few observations which we have to offer regarding this question, may be comprised under the two following heads:—The *peculiarity of the composition* of organic substances; and the *nature of the agents* by which these substances are produced.

The *composition* of organized bodies may be viewed as of two general kinds, viz. their composition, as depending simply upon differences among the proportions of their essential elements; and their composition as depending upon differences among their incidental elements, the proportions of the essential elements being the same.* As instances of the first kind of composition, we may mention sugar and vinegar. Thus, sugar is composed of 42·85 per cent of carbon, and the rest water; while the same ingredient, carbon, in the larger proportion of 47·05 per cent, with the residue water, constitutes vinegar, a powerful acid. Why, with such similarity of composition, the sensible properties of these two substances should be so unlike, we know not; any more than we know why oxygen and hydrogen, when combined, form water; or than

* Of course there is a third, and perhaps the most extensive class of bodies, in which both the essential and the incidental elements may be supposed to vary; but partly from want of data, and partly to avoid too much complication, we shall not enter on the consideration of this class at present.