## ORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

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bon with hydrogen, and oxygen in such proportions as would form water.

If albumen is decomposed by heat, the result is not only carbon and water, but also animonia; this substance accordingly is *nitrogenous*.

The number of organic bodies is very great. As they are composed of a small number of elements only, it may be concluded that the latter unite in a very great variety of proportions; it is therefore of much importance to know the molecular grouping of these elements. The mere fact that the kind and number of elements entering into a compound are known, is not sufficient proof that its molecular structure is really determined. Synthesis must often be employed to confirm the results of analysis.

Berthelot has specially occupied himself with the synthesis of organic bodies, and has artificially produced a great number of them. Other chemists have experimented in the same direction during the last 15 or 20 years. However, Gerhardt's opinion advanced in 1854; viz., "The vital force alone operates by synthesis and reconstructs the edifice demolished by chemical affinity," has ceased to be held as true.

## ISOMERISM.

Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen are not only capable of uniting in a great variety of proportions, but these elements also furnish numerous *isomeric* bodies; these comprise substances which, while com-