

## Studies on the Mechanism of Action of Pepsin: a Caution

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WE recently described in two communications<sup>1,2</sup> work on the mechanism of action of pepsin; each paper was based on more than twenty reproducible experiments. We regret to say that current attempts to repeat the work on the substrate-dependant incorporation of methanol into pepsin<sup>2</sup> have so far been mainly unsuccessful, although a clear reason for this failure has not emerged. In view of the doubts cast on the acyl-enzyme experiments we naturally feel less satisfied with another paper in this field concerned

with the formation of amino-enzyme.<sup>1</sup> The conclusions regarding the amino-enzyme intermediate<sup>2</sup> have since received confirmation from the work<sup>3</sup> of Godin and Yuan, but in view of the fact that our mechanistic conclusions were drawn from our original work referred to above<sup>1,2</sup> we feel that they should be treated cautiously until the experiments have been re-evaluated. (See also the communication by Kitson and Knowles<sup>4</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> M. Akhtar and J. M. Al-Janabi, *Chem. Comm.*, 1969, 859.

<sup>2</sup> M. Akhtar and J. M. Al-Janabi, *Chem. Comm.*, 1969, 1002.

<sup>3</sup> C. Godin and C. Y. Yuan, *Chem. Comm.*, 1970, 84.

<sup>4</sup> T. M. Kitson and J. R. Knowles, *Chem. Comm.*, following communication.