

## Book Reviews

**Recent Advances in the Chemistry of Meat.** Edited by Allen J. Bailey. The Royal Society of Chemistry, London, 1984. 231 pp. Price: £15.00.

Professor Bailey and his colleagues are to be congratulated in bringing together in one volume such a concise yet comprehensive series of reviews on several important aspects of meat chemistry. The book is in fact the proceedings of a symposium organised on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry in April, 1983 which in itself served as a timely update of current views in these areas.

Although there is little new information in the book it will be an invaluable source of reference (and references) for meat scientists in both the Research Institutes and Industry, dealing as it does with such important topics as the meat binding, water holding, and textural properties of the meat proteins, rancidity development, packaging, and, of increasing importance, the radiation chemistry of meat. In total there are twelve reviews, all written with authority by acknowledged experts and although they do inevitably show some of the prejudice of the authors I was most impressed with the objective and critical manner in which most were presented.

Each of the chapters are self-contained and assume little previous knowledge on the part of the reader, making them invaluable as references for undergraduate students of meat and food science. Although the articles are self-contained I would certainly recommend any student interested in the role of the different structural elements in

governing the texture of cooked meat to read Chapter 1 (the structure of muscle and its properties as meat), Chapter 2 (the chemistry of intramuscular collagen) and Chapter 5 (water holding in meat) at one sitting as much of the information, and the hypotheses so developed, are inter-related.

The book is well-prepared and free from typographical errors and all the figures and tables are clear and of relevance.

This book must find its way into the libraries of any institutes, universities and industrial companies interested in the science and technology of meat and at the relatively modest price of £15.00 may well be purchased by individual meat scientists who require frequent access to an easy to read yet comprehensive treatise on meat chemistry.

**D. A. Ledward**

**Isopentenoids in Plants: Biochemistry and Function.** Edited by W. D. Nes, G. Fuller and L. S. Tsai. Marcel Dekker, New York, 1984. xiii + 596 pp. Price: Swiss Fr 280.

This collection of review papers is derived from a symposium held in March 1982 at the USDA Western Regional Laboratories to honour the contributions of USDA scientists to the terpenoid field over the past 25 years. The contributors have many other affiliations but are largely based in the US from California or the Mid-West. Not surprisingly, in view of the research carried out in the USDA laboratories, the emphasis is on the triterpenoids; 16 of the 24 articles are devoted to saponins, limonoids, sterols, steroidal alkaloids and cardenolides. In addition, there are four chapters on monoterpenoids and sesquiterpenoids, two on gibberellins and two on carotenoids, mysteriously included here in a section of diterpenoids. Although much of the material presented is familiar, there is sufficient novelty in many of the essays that this volume deserves the attention of anyone seriously interested in terpenoid chemistry or biochemistry. The two-year delay in publication from camera-ready copy is unfortunate, especially since these days it is possible to do much better than this. For example, the proceedings of a similar symposium organized in April, 1983 by the Biochemical and Phytochemical Societies was published within six months and with typesetting as well (see *Biochem. Soc. Trans.*, **11**, 497–604).