

Editorial

A Symposium, held on 27 October, 1983 at the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London, W1, UK, and organised by the Food Chemistry Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry, was entitled 'The Chemistry of Sulphur Dioxide in Food and Related Systems'. In this issue are published six of the seven papers presented, an Abstract is included (on page 139) of the remaining paper. It is the eighth in a series of Symposium publications in this Journal.

This Editor reviewed 'Sulphur dioxide and food preservation' (Green, L. F. (1976), *Fd Chem.*, **1**, 103–24), where it was mentioned that 'the United States Department of Agriculture began studying food adulteration as early as 1883', indicating that the interest in SO₂, then regarded as an adulterant but now as a useful additive, has been the subject of scientific interest for just about a hundred years. One of the latest papers referred to in that review was by McWeeny, Knowles and Hearne and was dated 1974. The first of these authors was Chairman of the Symposium morning session, showing *his* continued interest in this topic over at least a tenth of the century.

The remarks of the Chairman of the afternoon session summarise the commercial value of this additive, and highlight the value of this Symposium in recording new facts about the effect of SO₂ on the constituents of foods to which it has been added.

Biological studies appear to be lagging behind the chemistry of the subject, and it is to be hoped that these papers will act as stimuli to our biologist colleagues to lead us to a reduction of regulatory limits for SO₂.

L. F. Green