

## Editorial

This Symposium, 'Recent Developments in Sweeteners', was given under the auspices of the Industrial Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry, organised by the chairman, Dr T. H. Grenby, in the Tower Lecture Theatre, Guy's Hospital, London SE1, on the 26 October, 1984. As the papers in this Symposium, the ninth of the RSC Food Chemistry Group Symposia to be reproduced in *Food Chemistry*, indicate, developments in sweeteners, particularly the non-sugar variety, are slow. This is not so much because they are difficult to formulate, but because of the lengthy procedures required by 'authority' before they can be approved for use in foodstuffs, etc.

However, an appreciable amount of progress *has* been made and the speakers at this symposium have described various aspects of that progress most satisfactorily. For instance, this Editor well-remembers the furore that arose when it was reported that cyclamate could be metabolized to cyclohexylamine. In the paper dealing with this, a wealth of additional information is assembled, suggesting that the risk of its use is far less than originally suspected.

Unfortunately, the full paper of Dr F. Berschauer is not available for publication, but the abstract, as published in the symposium programme, has been reproduced. Dr H. Houghton read a paper to replace Dr Langlais' paper on 'Application of the sweeteners in soft drinks', but this text is also unavailable. Very many soft drinks use saccharin as a sucrose-sparing non-sugar sweetener. The level of its use in this country is legally controlled, even though the proportion used is almost always limited by organoleptic considerations as, at relatively high concentrations,

saccharin gives a bitter taste. Dr T. Pepper replaced Dr A. Dodson to read the paper on confectionery technology.

In some ways one of the most important of the comparatively recent developments has been that of hydrogenated glucose syrups. Their ability to complex with mineral components of food may well prove to have important pharmacological implications.

Whether a new sweetener is an 'intense sweetener' or a 'bulk sweetener', many of the papers emphasize how important it is to establish their acceptability to *human* metabolic processes as compared with those of the *rat*. This Editor has never accepted that what occurs during the latter's metabolic processes can be satisfactorily extrapolated to those of the former, for man was 'created in the image of God' and, as Dr Snodin rightly points out, some of the discussion 'has become almost theological'.

**L. F. Green**