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It is often the intention of the author of a general text on teaching for the undergraduate student to provide a 'Companion' to the main text. This is a different audience, and it is often the case that the contributions in such books are often too detailed, too expensive and, in some subjects, appear too infrequently. It is felt that the *Companion to Biochemistry* may fill this gap between basic text and specialist by providing a collection of articles on topics suitable for advanced courses in biochemistry. The articles, written with the student in mind, assume a familiarity with material in the basic text, and, building on this, provide accounts, at approximately the level of the final-year student, of twenty or so areas of biochemistry.

We realize that the choice of topics must necessarily be a personal one. We have tried to select topics that are either poorly treated in the textbooks, or poorly understood by the average undergraduate. We have also included some topics that are not at present regarded as important to the teaching of biochemistry but which may become increasingly important. We are aware that some subjects have been omitted but many of these have been adequately covered in publications. We have allowed the type of presentation to vary in the hope that this will allow authors to develop their topics according to their own interests.

We hope that the *Companion to Biochemistry* will be useful. If it is, we would like to prepare editions from time to time and would welcome suggestions from both students and authors for further topics to be covered and for ways of improving the book.

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