GENERAL PREFACE

The Editors are keenly aware that the literature of Biochemistry is already very large, in fact so widespread that it is increasingly difficult to assemble the most pertinent material in a given area. Beyond the ordinary textbook the subject matter of the rapidly expanding knowledge of biochemistry is spread among innumerable journals, monographs, and series of reviews. The Editors believe that there is a real place for an advanced treatise in biochemistry which assembles the principal areas of the subject in a single set of books.

It would be ideal if an individual or a small group of biochemists could produce such an advanced treatise, and within the time to keep reasonably abreast of rapid advances, but this is at least difficult if not impossible. Instead, the Editors with the advice of the Advisory Board, have assembled what they consider the best possible sequence of chapters written by competent authors; they must take the responsibility for inevitable gaps of subject matter and duplication which may result from this procedure.

Most evident to the modern biochemist, apart from the body of knowledge of the chemistry and metabolism of biological substances, is the extent to which we must draw from recent concepts of physical and organic chemistry, and in turn project into the vast field of biology. Thus in the organization of Comprehensive Biochemistry, sections II, III and IV, Chemistry of Biological Compounds, Biochemical Reaction Mechanisms, and Metabolism may be considered classical biochemistry, while the first and fifth sections provide selected material on the origins and projections of the subject.

It is hoped that sub-division of the sections into bound volumes will not only be convenient, but will find favour among students concerned with specialized areas, and will permit easier future revisions of the individual volumes. Towards the latter end particularly, the Editors will welcome all comments in their effort to produce a useful and efficient source of biochemical knowledge.

M. Florkin†
E.H. Stotz

Liège/Rochester

There is a history in all men's lives.
W. Shapespeare, Henry IV, Pt. 2

History is the essence of innumerable biographies.
T. Carlyle, On History

PREFACE TO VOLUME 37

Perhaps one of the most exciting developments in the biological sciences of our times has been their merging with chemistry and physics with the resulting appearance of biochemistry, biophysics, molecular biology, and related sciences. The nearly explosive development of these 'newcomers' has led to the almost unique situation that these new biological sciences have come of age at a time when their founding fathers, or their scientific sons, are alive and active.

It was therefore an almost obvious idea to ask them to write, for the benefit of both students and senior scientists, personal accounts of their scientific lives. With this idea in mind one of us (G.S.) had already edited two volumes for John Wiley & Sons, which had, however, a somewhat different format.

As in Vols. 35 and 36, the chapters in this volume are meant to complement, with personal recollections, the History of Biochemistry in the Comprehensive Biochemistry series (Vols. 30-33, by M. Florkin and Vol. 34A, by P. Laszlo). It is hoped that the biographical or autobiographical chapters will convey to the reader lively, albeit at times subjective, views on the scientific scene as well as the social environment in which the authors have operated and brought about new concepts and pieces of knowledge. The Editors considered it presumptuous to give the authors narrow guidelines or to suggest changes in the chapters they received; they think that directness and straightforwardness should be given priority over uniformity. The contributions assembled in this volume will convey the flavour of each author's particular personality; whatever the optical distortion of one chapter, it will be compensated for by the views in another.

The development of today's life sciences was acted upon by se-

rious and often tragic historical events. The Editors hope that this message also will reach the readers, especially the young ones.

It proved an impossible task to group the contributions in a strictly logical manner, whether according to subject matter, geographical area, or time. In fact, most contributions cross each of these borders. Nevertheless, the Editors hope that the reader will find these contributions as interesting as they did.

The Editors want to express their gratitude to all individuals who made this series possible; first of all to the authors themselves, who not only wrote the texts, but also willingly collaborated in suggesting further potential contributors, thereby acting as a kind of 'Editorial Board at Large'. Thanks are due to Ms. U. Zilian who typed most of the correspondence.

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Zurich, 1989

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Regensburg, 1989

Rainer Jaenicke