

Preface

This book is based on a course of lectures given to medical students at Sheffield in preparation for the 2nd M.B. examination. Although it is primarily intended for medical students, it will probably be of use also to students of physiology and pharmacology, as well as being a supplementary book for students of biochemistry who are interested in the more physiological aspects of the subject. It presupposes a knowledge of chemistry somewhat more than 'A' level and may require reference to a standard textbook, for example *Organic Chemistry* by Fieser and Fieser and *Textbook of Biophysical Chemistry* by West.

The book is intended as an introductory text rather than a comprehensive treatment of the subject and although we feel it may be of interest to the medical practitioner it will require supplementation by a text of clinical biochemistry to meet postgraduate needs.

Although the length of the book and the topics discussed have been limited by the needs of the 2nd M.B. course we have endeavoured in all cases to relate biochemical pathways to the functioning of some specific tissue or to the whole organism. Our experience suggests that students view biochemistry as something separate from the cells themselves. We have tried to show that the physiological and structural properties of cells and tissues follow from the metabolism which provides their energy, the materials from which they are made and the control required for their proper functioning. In this way we hope we have moved from the consideration of biochemistry as a series of arbitrary chemical reactions to an attitude in which biochemistry is another viewpoint of the total anatomy and physiology of the living organism.

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