
Book Reviews

Dictionary of Biochemistry

J. STENESH

Wiley-Interscience, Chichester, 1976, pp. 344, £11.95

A large part of the training of a scientist is concerned with learning the terminology that describes the specialist systems and processes dealt with by the science. Biochemistry has a particularly large terminology drawn from chemistry, microbiology, physiology etc., as well as including the peculiar semantic inventions and abbreviations of biochemists themselves. Consequently few biochemists must be able to read research papers and reviews, especially ones dealing with topics outside their main interests, without referring to other sources for clarification of certain points. Therefore, by compiling a *Dictionary of Biochemistry*, Professor Stenesh has done a valuable service for biochemists. The dictionary appears to contain definitions of all the terms and abbreviations used in biochemical texts, giving a total of 12000 entries. However, the brevity of some definitions is annoying, for example, dissociation constant, association constant and equilibrium constant are all cross-referenced, but no term is adequately defined. The magnitude of Professor Stenesh's contribution is greatly diminished by his publishers, who have priced the book at £11.95. I am sure that a reasonably priced paperback edition would be purchased by biochemists and students for use as an invaluable desk reference.

K. J. CATTELL

Concise Etymological Dictionary of Chemistry

S. C. BEVAN, S. J. GREGG and A. ROSSEINSKY

Applied Science Publishers, Barking, 1976, pp. 140, £7.00

The title of this volume adequately explains its contents. It is indeed concise, running to around 120 pages of etymological definitions.

Not only does the book define the origins and meanings of many chemical names, but it also most thoughtfully defines the word 'etymology', thereby enabling anyone who is puzzled by the title to make at least one use of the book. In fact, the authors seem to be at pains to point out the relevance of their subject area, and include a lengthy introduction explaining the need for the volume.

I must confess that my first response on receiving this book was that the information it contained was usually reasonably well known. There are, for example, very few texts on chromatography that do not include the information that the word is derived from the Greek *chroma* (—colour) and *graphein* (—to write), and hence means 'colour writing'. This is perhaps a rather extreme example, and as I read through the derivations included in the book I found my attention was caught by the information included.

The concise nature, however, of the contents, and the fact that it is produced for chemists rather than biochemists, does mean that many biochemical terms are omitted, but, for its size, it does include derivations of the trivial names of many organic chemicals, most of which double as biochemical substrates.

From Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
Related topics: Chemistry
chemistry
chem
s
istry / ˈkɛmɪstri/ W3
noun [uncountable] 1 HCthe science that is concerned with studying the structure of substances and the way that they change or combine with each other
â†’ biochemistry, biology, physics
2 if there is chemistry between two people, they like each other and find each other attractive
chemistry between.Â The drug may cause changes in a person's body chemistry.
â€¢ Teams with good chemistry win.
â€¢ Edison was his hero; chemistry and electricity were his passions.
â€¢ Fleischmann graduated in 1948 and began to study for his doctorate in chemistry which he obtained in 1951.
â€¢ A to Z Chemistry Dictionary. Look Up Definitions of Important Chemistry Terms. Share. Flipboard. Email. Print. Chemistry is full of precise definitions!. COLIN CUTHBERT/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY / Getty Images. Science.
Â balanced equation - chemical equation in which the number and type of atoms and the electric charge is the same on both the reactant and product sides of the equation. Balmer series - the part of the hydrogen emission spectrum for electron transitions $n=2$ and $n>2$, There are four lines in the visible spectrum.