

# Foreword

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Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief.

*Hamlet (Act II, scene ii)*  
W. Shakespeare

There is no shortage of major textbooks on medicine or the biological sciences that comprehensively cover the facts and background of Physiology. This book has a different aim. It is written to smooth the paths of medical and science students on the eve of their ventures into the fascinating world of their chosen subject and profession. For those who have already embarked on this journey, it provides a thoughtful and reflective view of Physiology. It has a friendly tone, is brief, and seeks to introduce and explain, rather than be comprehensive. However, it does not avoid the introduction of difficult ideas and concepts. Indeed, it has been written to draw attention to the relationship of this challenging subject with the more rigorous physical sciences and the existence of deeper analytical principles that both merit and require thoughtful reflection. As it takes the reader through glimpses of the body's systems and how they interact with each other and the world outside, it provokes interest, debate and curiosity about a subject that lies at the very foundation of medicine. If it persuades some of our most talented students that not all their studies in medicine or biology simply involve rote learning, this little volume will have served its

purpose. I have every confidence it will do so, and welcome it wholeheartedly.

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