ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Plutarch of Chaeronea in 166 pages: that sounds like trying to pour the ocean into an aquarium! A project like that seems a priori undoable, for Plutarch is an extremely rich and versatile author and he wrote so many works on so many different themes. His *Parallel Lives* alone contain far too much information for a small volume like this one, and the same holds true for his *Moralia*. Therefore, the invitation of the New Surveys editors on behalf of the Classical Association to write this book was a real challenge and I'm grateful to them for their trust in me and for their support during the publication process. Inevitably, the focus of this volume will often be on bare essentials. Yet I also hope to give the reader an idea of the dynamics of Plutarch's thinking and indeed arouse a passion for this interesting author. Briefly put, my goal will be reached when my reader enthusiastically throws this book away (or, perhaps better, carefully places it on a shelf), runs to the library, and begins reading Plutarch for themself.

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they know how much effort it has taken to write this book but they were also kind enough to welcome the old Plutarch so often as a fellow banqueter and a member of our family, and this intellectual hospitality, no doubt, has contributed immensely to this book.

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