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Metaphysics

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Accuracy and consistency are essential to achieving this goal, obviously, but so too are extensive annotation and commentary. Some of this can consist, as it does here, of texts selected from other works by Aristotle himself, so that, while traveling through the region of the Aristotelian world the *Metaphysics* describes, the reader can also travel through other regions of it, acquiring an ever widening and deepening grasp on the whole—something that is crucial, in my view, to understanding any part of it adequately or perhaps, at all. But much commentary must simply be explanatory, clarificatory, and interpretative.

To make the journey as convenient as possible footnotes and glossary entries are replaced by sequentially numbered endnotes, so that the information most needed at each juncture is available in a single place. The non-sequential reader, interested in a particular passage, will find in the detailed Index of Terms a guide to places where focused discussion of a term or notion occurs. The Glossary shows key Greek terms and their English equivalents. The Introduction describes the book that lies ahead, explaining what it is about, what it is trying to do, how it goes about doing it, and what sort of audience it presupposes. It isn't a comprehensive discussion of all the important topics in the *Metaphysics*, nor an attempt to reconstruct Aristotle's thought in the history of metaphysics more generally. Many books exist that attempt these tasks, some of which are mentioned under Further Reading. Nor is it, I should add, an expression of scholarly consensus on the issues it does discuss—insofar as such a thing exists—but my own take on them. The same goes for many of the more interpretative notes. They are a place to start, not a place to finish—a first step in the vast dialectical enterprise of coming to understand Aristotle for oneself.