
Theophrastus on Stones. *Earle R. Caley and John F. C. Richards.* The Ohio State University, Graduate School Monographs, Contrib. in Physical Science, No. 1. vii+238 pp. 1956. \$6.00.

Until now, translations of Theophrastus in English were out of date and out of print. Professors Caley and Richards deserve our thanks for making this work available again and for revealing, through their commentaries, the wealth of information contained in this ancient Greek treatise. The translation is highly readable by itself because of the light it sheds on Greek knowledge of minerals and rocks twenty-three centuries ago. The commentary makes it extremely valuable because it takes up the important statements in the text and explains them in the light of twentieth-century knowledge of the nature and distribution of the minerals and rocks involved. Professor Caley's knowledge of mineralogy and chemistry brings out the nature of *alabastrites*, *anthrax*, *smaragdos*, *chrysokolla*, *iaspis*, and many others from the meager descriptions of Theophrastus. These minerals and rocks and many others do not correspond to their modern analogues, alabaster, coal, emerald, chrysocolla, and jasper; they are more general in meaning and, in the case of *anthrax*, coal is not meant at all, but a red precious stone. As we read the commentary, we feel that we are being guided by expert hands and that we are getting the full meaning of Theophrastus' text.

This book is a valuable contribution to the early history of science, in particular to the early history of chemistry, mineralogy, geology, and economic geology. The Graduate School of The Ohio State University is to be congratulated for sponsoring this publication and for sparing no effort to ensure good, clear printing and pleasing appearance of this volume. It is an example of fine printing as well as of scholarly achievement.

A. LA ROCQUE