fact that "there is an insistent demand among botanists, especially among the non-taxonomists, that plant nomenclature should be unified and stabilized . . . the non-taxonomist wishes to have one name for one plant, constant, invariable, and everlasting throughout the world." We do not find that the "everlasting" part is an essential requirement. But if approximate *uniform names* do appear to be so universally desired, why not meet this requirement by the best means at hand? This would relegate to less importance the intricacies of application of the rules of nomenclature.

ALFRED GUNDERSEN
BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN

NEW YORK CITY AN ASEISMIC AREA

DR. C. A. REEDS' article in SCIENCE of April 23, 1926, and other published statements of the same tenor prompt one to say that it is somewhat dangerous to call any district an aseismic area. Even if the evidence of aseismicity is based on records from a seismograph, caution is needed, as the majority of the world's seismographs are adjusted for recording distant earthquakes and make exceedingly poor records of small local earthquakes if they record them at all. Apparently the American Museum of Natural History seismographs failed to record the shake of June 8, 1916, that was felt in Eastchester, Mount Vernon and Scarsdale with estimated intensities varying from 3 to 5 on the Rossi-Forel scale. I have faint recollections of other shakes having been reported from the environs of New York City, but can not place my hands on the facts at present. Doubtless other tremors occur but are unnoticed on account of traffic. Earthquakes are not at all uncommon in the lower Mohawk valley.

R. H. FINCH
HAWAIIAN VOLCANO OBSERVATORY

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Aristotle. By W. D. Ross, M.A., fellow and tutor of Oriel College; deputy professor of moral philosophy in the University of Oxford, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1923.

Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung. By WERNER JAEGER, Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung. 1923.

THOUGH what other cause lies back of it is still a matter of conjecture, it is doubtless due to the revival of classicism among all the cultured nations of the world that two works on Aristotle, the man, of such impressive merit should have appeared, one in Germany and one in England, almost simultaneously. One represents the consequential and ordered study of a German savant pursuing, only as a German professor can, the intricacies of the evidence of Aristotle's mental development. The other book is by an Oxford don, who has lately given the world probably the best text of Aristotle's "Metaphysics" which the world of science has ever seen. Ross's book is rather a discussion of Aristotle's different works from the standpoint of a critic, but it does not lack a tribute to his personality. It does not exhibit, however, so much how his mind, as every thinking man's mind in step with his age and in accordance with his environment does, underwent its evolution. This is the striking feature of Professor Jaeger's work.

Both Ross and Jaeger have gone far and done much to show us how sympathetic Aristotle was towards platonic philosophy and how loyal he was to his master during the years of his long nonage and long after it, but the modern testimony even as to this is not always so unqualified. It is Ross who says that in distinction from his scientific work in natural philosophy there is no page of his purely philosophical works which does not bear the impress of Plato. To this opinion Jaeger still more emphatically commits himself, and he supports it by an overwhelming array of citation in parallel columns which quite negative the assertion of Mabbott in a recent number of the *Classical Quarterly* that Aristotle was unsympathetic and superficial in his treatment of Plato. It is true, Ross admits, that even while in the Academy, in the first decades of his life, he carried his studies in natural philosophy far beyond what the school could teach him and he seems to have lectured there on rhetoric. Jaeger offers good evidence that pursuing this line and joining with Plato in opposition to and rivalry with Isocrates he subsequently developed the doctrines of his ethics.

After Plato's death his stay at the Academy, and indeed in Athens during the dominance of Demosthenes in politics, became impossible or at least uncomfortable. He took refuge at Assos, and it was along the coasts of Asia Minor that he pursued his study of biology and laid the foundation of that knowledge which still astounds modern scholars. He fished for specimens at Mitylene and in the lagoon of Pyrrha. His father had been a physician at the court of the Macedonian kings. He himself was about the age of Philip and became the tutor of Alexander at Pella when the latter was about thirteen. As the latter swept the enemies of himself and his father out of the mainland and the islands of Greece preparatory to his meteoric career in Asia, Aristotle returned to Athens in the rising Macedonian flood of empire and in 355–4 rented some buildings and established a school, the Lyceum, in a grove near the Ilissus where Socrates had wandered and talked not of science