

Static sparks have also been observed when 'dry' liquids like petrol or ether are being handled. When any inflammable liquid is being poured from one vessel into another it should always be discharged so that there is no appreciable fall through the air into the lower vessel. It is well-known that the human body can store electricity sufficient to cause a small spark when it is brought near an earthed conductor. Coal gas can be ignited in this way. Cases have been recorded where static discharges from a painter's hand have ignited the vapour from a paint remover. In another case, vapours from rubber cement were ignited by a spark from the body of a woman who was working near it.

#### Cæsalpinus and Harvey

IN a letter to the *Lancet* of November 17, dealing with the remarkable absence of any reference in Harvey's writings to his predecessor Cæsalpinus, who is still regarded by some Italians as the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, Dr. D. F. Fraser-Harris remarks that he has recently found the three words "J. Cæsalpinus Aretinus" in a translation of the MS. notes of Harvey's lectures edited by a committee of the Royal College of Physicians in 1886. He points out, however, that the Christian name of Cæsalpinus of Arezzo was Andreas, so that the initial letter should have been A. instead of J. He therefore suggests that Harvey, whose handwriting was execrable, really wrote "J. Cæs. Arantius", an abbreviation of Julius Cæsar Arantius, the celebrated anatomist of Bologna (1530-89), to whom Harvey afterwards referred in his essay on the placenta when dealing with the relation of the umbilical vein to the uterine vessels. In support of this suggestion is the context, in which Harvey is describing the three semi-lunar valves at the base of the aorta and pulmonary artery, on the cusps of which the corpora Arantii are found.

#### Ramanujan Memorial Prize in Mathematics

IN 1933 the University of Madras offered a Ramanujan Memorial Prize for the best thesis based on original contributions submitted by an Indian (or one domiciled in India) on some definite branch of mathematics, applied or pure. The underlying idea was to stimulate interest among the younger mathematicians of India and to attempt in some way to commemorate the spirit of the late S. Ramanujan, the first Indian fellow of the Royal Society, whose untimely death in 1920 at the early age of thirty-two years robbed the world of one of the most brilliant mathematicians of his time. A number of these were submitted and the University of Madras has now announced that the prize of value about £70 (nine hundred rupees) has been divided equally between the following: S. Chandrasekhar, fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; S. Chowla, reader in mathematics, Andhra University, Waltair, India; D. D. Kosambi, professor of mathematics, Ferguson College, Poona, India. Ramanujan was the first Indian to be elected to a fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge, and it is interesting that

two of the successful candidates (S. Chandrasekhar and S. Chowla) are both Trinity men.

#### Air-Conditioning in Mines

WE are informed that air-conditioning plant is about to be installed in the well-known Robinson Deep Mine, Johannesburg, South Africa, the deepest point in the mine being 8,380 ft. below the surface of the earth. The mine is naturally hot and damp, the high temperature (100°-120° F.) being due to adiabatic compression at the lower levels; it is calculated that the temperature increases 5° for an average depth of every 1,000 ft. of the mine. The air is also very moist, having a relative humidity of 90-100 per cent, owing of course to the necessity of wetting the mine walls after every blast to prevent siliceous dust from being thrown into the air and being inhaled by the workers, thus causing the silicosis which is well known to be the scourge of South African mining. It is stated that the air-conditioning, cooling and dehumidifying plant is the largest in the world, and will be capable of dealing with 400,000 c. ft. of air per minute. It is stated that the cooling effect is equal to 4,000,000 pounds of ice.

#### Research on Silicates

IN *Veröffentlichungen aus dem Kaiser Wilhelm-Institut für Silikatforschung in Berlin-Dahlem* are reprinted a large number of papers published since the beginning of 1932. There are two papers on chemical and thermodynamic aspects of the constitution of glass, two on cements, and one on the specific heats of calcium-aluminium silicates with special reference to the Neumann-Kopp rule. Many of the papers are incomplete in the sense that they are part of a series and must be judged as such. One paper of particular interest deals with the reactions of glass-forming oxides under high pressures of oxygen, up to 350 atmospheres. The authors, H. Möttig and W. Weyl, consider that in glasses containing lead, plumbates are formed; in glasses containing barium they have evidence of the presence of the peroxide. High oxygen pressure modifies the colouring effect of a given amount of manganese additive.

#### Greenland Researches

THE Oxford University Exploration Club has published in one volume the collected reports from various journals on the work of the Club's expedition to Greenland in 1928 ("Greenland and Spitsbergen Papers". Oxford University Press, 1934). This expedition, under the leadership of Dr. T. G. Longstaff, aimed at an intensive study of the ecology of a small area in Godthaabs Fjord, and its results have been published in some ten British and foreign journals. These nineteen reprints are now conveniently bound together and include important papers on the vegetation, birds and insects. In addition, the volume embraces four papers, principally geological, on Spitsbergen, the outcome of the Oxford Expeditions to Spitsbergen in 1921, 1923 and 1924. These are supplementary to the collected papers