

## News and Views

## Safety in Industry

THE annual report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for 1933 provides the usual impressive picture of what is too readily passed over even by scientific workers as one of the routine services which Government renders to the community. Despite this efficient and untiring service, however, industry's toll of accidents is high—113,260 as against 106,164 in 1932 and 688 fatalities as against 602. The increase is not entirely attributed to improved trade. The physical and mental deterioration of workers in prolonged unemployment has untoward results when they are again employed, and, even apart from this, there is a distressingly high proportion of accidents caused by carelessness or contempt of known dangers. The report is in part a record of the watch and ward which is kept over industry to eliminate its dangers and maintain the standards and conditions of employment required by law. It reveals, however, that the inspectorate, in discharge of such responsibilities, is being drawn more and more into educational work, both direct and indirect, perhaps even more among the employees than among employers themselves.

IN such educational work, there is an obvious place for scientific workers, but the report indicates also how important are the services which they can render in the development of safety methods, the investigation of industrial diseases, and the dangers inherent in new processes or products. Examples quoted in the report such as silicosis, cancer of the bladder, or the use of dioxan, sufficiently indicate the wide scope for research in the prevention of industrial disease, and the development of safer operating conditions depends as much upon scientific investigation providing the necessary knowledge as upon mechanical ingenuity in its use. Respirators, fire-extinguishers and the detection of small concentrations of toxic gases are other matters in which research is being conducted, sometimes in co-operation with other bodies such as the Chemical Defence Research Department or the Association of British Chemical Manufacturers. Chapters in the report in which the preparation of reliable accident statistics is discussed or the effect of industrial work on the health of women and girls equally illustrate the claim of the work of the inspectorate to be regarded as a fundamental scientific service which assists to place industrial practice on a basis of carefully ascertained facts.

## Coloration of Young Tapirs

ALL who are interested in the problems presented by the coloration of young animals, will probably pay an early visit to the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London, to inspect the young Brazilian tapir born there a few days ago. As with the wild swine, the 'porklings' of tapirs are longitudinally striped with white on a dark background, but after a fashion of their own, differing conspicuously in the two species.

For the young Brazilian animal presents evidence of a more primitive stage in the distribution of these markings, inasmuch as the spaces between the continuous stripes are partly filled in by rows of spots and dashes representing once continuous stripes. In the Malayan species of the same age these broken bands have vanished. The adults of the two species are no less striking in regard to their coloration. For the Brazilian animal, a forest-dweller, is of a uniform black, while the Malayan is one of the most remarkable to be found among the mammals, for the forepart of the body, including the fore-legs, and the hind-legs as far as the base of the tail, are jet black, while the rest of the body is greyish-white. Observation on the living animal has shown that this is really a singularly effective form of 'concealing coloration', since the animal spends the heat of the day asleep among the great boulders strewn over the floor of dried-up river-beds. To these it comes to bear a striking resemblance, the black areas of the body simulating the shadows and the greyish-white portion the sunlit surfaces of the surrounding masses of rock.

## Iron Age Finds in Berkshire

A SERIES of archaeological investigations on the Berkshire Downs has been organised by the Newbury Field Club under a scheme for the relief of unemployment. Some interesting finds have been made, of which the most noteworthy is an interment of two horses. The skeletons, which were found with their legs intertwined, according to a report from the *Times* correspondent in the issue of August 13, belong to the large-headed, short-necked and short-legged type of the Iron Age breed represented in modern times by the Exmoor and New Forest ponies. One of the skeletons is said to be exceedingly well preserved, but the other had lost its head. The burial is compared with the Yorkshire chariot burials, which are generally held to belong to the earliest phase of the later, or La Tène, period of the Iron Age. The Berkshire example did not, however, include harness and chariot as in the Yorkshire burials. A few miles west of the horse interment, a bronze age burial also included the remains of a domesticated animal. In this instance the skeleton of a dog was found in association with a human skeleton in the contracted position. Other finds include a fragment of beaker pottery (c. 1800 B.C.), and a Roman copper bracelet, found on the same site as the horse burial, and iron age pottery and an ornamented fragment of a Saxon shield found at Seutchamore Knob, near East Hendred.

## Excavations at Maiden Castle

EXCAVATIONS which have been planned to cover three years' work, have been begun on the prehistoric earthwork of Maiden Castle, near Dorchester. The responsibility for the excavation has been undertaken by the Society of Antiquaries, and the field-director is Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, of the