

found in the rock pools. It was noticed that limpets (*Patella vulgata*) had become much looser in their attachment to the rocks, and some had fallen or been washed off. Most of them, however, were still alive. Far fewer gastropod snails were seen than on the previous day, and only a few specimens of *Littorina littoralis* were found. Other molluscs seen included dead specimens of a chiton and a sea-snail.

According to local information, spraying had been carried out on the previous day from about 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., that is from half an hour before low water to an hour and a half before high water. Some traces of oil still remained on the rocks, and on the upper shore some thick deposits of oil still existed in clefts between rocks.

### Comments

It is apparent from these findings that the mixture of emulsified oil and detergent is far more toxic than the oil itself. Two theoretical considerations would seem to lend support to this view. First, all or nearly all detergents are themselves toxic; second, once the oil is emulsified it ceases to become merely a surface layer and becomes instead an actual part of the aqueous environment where it may be taken into the gills of fish or ingested by filter-feeding organisms, etc. Thus where littoral marine life is concerned, the use of detergents constitutes a "cure" worse than the "disease" itself.

In offshore waters, the effects of spraying oil patches with detergents are as yet unknown. It is hoped that the immense capacity for dilution available in the sea may alleviate or nullify any toxic effects. Much of the emulsified mixture, however, is likely to remain near the surface and, while pelagic fish may not suffer harm from it, it is possible that large numbers of planktonic organisms may be destroyed.

Much work needs to be carried out before the most effective way can be found of solving such oil problems—taking into consideration all interests including marine life, fisheries, sea-birds and amenity value of beaches. It is hoped that the Torrey Canyon affair, disastrous though it has been in many respects, will act as a spur to such efforts.

We thank Mr. G. Wollaston, M.A.F.F. Fisheries Officer at Newlyn, and Mr. B. T. Hepper of the Fisheries Experiment Station at Conway for advice and encouragement, Mr. B. W. D. Richardson for encouragement and invaluable help during the survey of Sennen Cove, Miss Monica Gaiger for putting her car at our disposal, and the military and civil personnel engaged on operations at Sennen who allowed us unrestricted access to the area where detergent spraying was being carried out.

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### University News:

### The City University

DR. M. A. JASWON, at present a reader in mathematics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, has been appointed professor and head of the Department of Mathematics, and Dr. V. E. Price, reader in mathematics at the university, has been appointed professor of computer science. Mr. P. K. M'Pherson, at present a lecturer at St. John's College, Oxford, has been appointed first professor of instrument and control engineering at the university, an appointment which is unique in Great Britain.

### London

PROFESSOR A. P. WATERSON, professor of medical microbiology at St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, has been appointed to the chair of virology tenable at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School.

### Appointments

MR. D. W. WRIGHT, at present deputy director of the National Vegetable Research Station, has been appointed director of the station in succession to Dr. James Philp.

DR. W. A. SIMMONDS, at present director of industrial research at Solihull, has been appointed director of the Gas Council's Midlands Research Station at Solihull, Warwickshire, in succession to Dr. F. J. Dent.

### Announcements

THE Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina, Halle, recently elected the following new members in the sections indicated: *Physics*, Professor H. Schopper (Karlsruhe); *Chemistry*, Prof. D. H. R. Barton (London); *Geology*, Professor D. Andrusov (Bratislava); Professor P. F. J. Macar (Liège); Professor T. F. W. Barth (Oslo); *Botany*, Professor A. E. Pop (Cluj); *Anatomy*, Professor G. Wolf-Heidegger (Basle); Professor G. Romhányi (Pécs); *Physiology*, Professor K. Lissák (Pécs); *General Pathology*, Professor W. E. Griesbach (New Zealand); Professor G. Holle (Leipzig); *Hygiene*, Professor H. Meisel (Warsaw); *Pediatrics*, Professor H. Asperger (Vienna); *Internal Medicine*, Professor R. Schmid (Chicago).

CORRIGENDUM. On page 157 of the article entitled "An Early Miocene Member of Hominidae" by L. S. B. Leakey (*Nature*, 213, 155; 1967) the height of the incisor of *Kenyapithecus wickeri* is given as 10.25 mm (labial and lingual). This should read 9.25 mm.

## THE NIGHT SKY IN MAY

All times are in Universal Time

MOON		CONJUNCTIONS WITH THE MOON	
New Moon	9d 15h	Venus	13d 07h, 2° S.
Full Moon	23d 20h	Mars	20d 16h, 2° S.
		Jupiter	15d 04h, 5° S.
		Saturn	6d 04h, 0.5° N.

### PLANETS

Name	R/S	Times of rising (R) and setting (S) during the month			Mag.	$D_p$ (10 <sup>6</sup> miles)	Zodiacal position
		Beginning	Middle	End			
Mercury	S	Unfavourable	20h 15m	22h 00m	-1.7	121	Taurus
Venus	S	23h 20m	23h 30m	23h 35m	-3.6	98	Gemini
Mars	S	4h 10m	3h 00m	2h 00m	-0.9	60	Virgo
Jupiter	S	1h 30m	0h 35m	23h 40m	-1.6	524	Gemini
Saturn	R	Unfavourable	2h 50m	1h 55m	+1.1	946	Cetus

$D_p$  is the distance of planet from the Earth on the 15th of the month.

### OTHER PHENOMENA

6d 04h Saturn occulted by the Moon, visible in S.E. Asia, Indonesia, W. and N. Australia.  
9d 15h Partial eclipse of the Sun, visible in N. America and N. Europe (not in British Isles).

Eclipse begins	12h 37m
Greatest eclipse	14h 42m
Eclipse ends	16h 47m

21d 01h Mercury 7° N. of Aldebaran.  
31d 13h Venus 4° S. of Pollux.