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9SR58

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.S. SCOTIA

16th September - 3rd October, 1958.

Scotia sailed from Aberdeen at 5.0p.m. on Wednesday 17th September. During the evening the trawl winch which had just been repaired was successfully tested. Scotia then proceeded to the Buchan Deeps where she worked till the evening of Sunday 21st September when she returned to Aberdeen for stores etc.

During this first period quantities of whiting were taken in sufficient numbers to enable useful comparisons to be made between the three different covers. Analysis of the results so far indicate that the different covers have a measurably different effect on the percentages of fish of different lengths escaping from the cod-end. More detailed analyses are in progress.

The second part of the trip from 23rd September till the 2nd October was dogged by frequent strong to gale force winds which often made work impossible. Fishing was carried out in a number of localities as the weather allowed. Areas fished included the Moray Firth, the Firth of Forth, the Bell Rock, St. Abbs Head, the Wee Bankie and May Island. There was a marked scarcity of fish on all grounds and only a small amount of useful information on mesh selection was obtained.

The special stations for nephrops were worked during the second part of the trip according to standing instructions.

Hauls for plankton were made in the Moray Firth, in the Buchan Deeps and off St. Abbs Head. Those taken in the first two areas showed a similar distribution of plankton. The surface waters were dominated by decapod larvae, mainly *Megalopa* stages, the 20 metre level by Salps and *Fleurobrachia* whilst the bottom levels consisted of *Calanus*, *Limacina* and some *Sagitta elegans*. In these areas large numbers of Salps were taken in the trawl.

Off St. Abbs Head the Salps and *Fleurobrachia* were absent and the plankton here appeared more uniform with *Sagitta elegans*, *calanus*, euphasids, decapod larvae and *Limacina*. Large numbers of small *Loligo* were captured in the trawl here.

J. A. ROPE.

28th October, 1958.