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"SAUSAGE" FOR OIL TRANSPORT:

Southampton Water has seen all kinds of things that float, but the folk didn't know whether they were looking at a sea serpent or the local version of the Loch Ness Monster. The explanation? It's a revolutionary device mainly intended to transport oil. Stumped for a name, they describe it as a flexible barge. One of this size would hold 10,000 gallons, about 40 tons. Attached to the pipe of a ship, or a shore installation the sausage winds on to a drum at the other end, and discharges the oil, much as toothpaste is squeezed out of a tube. Then the drum can be carried by ship, or even flown, back to the Middle East oil fields, to load up again for another voyage on the end of a tow line.

What will they think of next? The sausage is made of a synthetic rubber-coated nylon fabric. As it moves with the waves, even a rough sea shouldn't damage it. Hard luck for a poor sailor who can't find the way to his bunk.