

WAVE

*THE green wave fugitive and flowing
like grass in a paddock I may not walk,
tossed grass where I may not step—
something other than of heart or desire
was the wave, unsated, following.
That green, blue, white wave.*

*So memorial time, of course, was flowing.
Probably, idly I likened time and wave
counting that one and all summers going
discreetly thus and long impenitent
green out of blue, there at the beach
by the harbouring head. Defiant, pliant
further seaward the bars, all white, toss and reach
of summer and sea, the malicious bars
wanted the day-wind while the unknowing
black-back and red-beak coursed down
and up and down lawn sand and shell. I drown
deliciously down in that memorised bay,
rip salt smoky mussels from a rock,
crunch violet shell—whatever teach
miracles of morality latterly I pray
again up. Cumbersome starfish glowing
angrily at slackwater, lupin pods, trails
tyres left on sand and hoof marks, gather
all relevant now desired, following
momently blue and green under the hill, going
warmly under, blowing away with the sand
driven impenitent later at summer's end.*

—Kendrick Smithyman

would probably have given you to understand that in his private opinion the whole show was "corny."

—Westcliff

Saturday Frustrations

I KNOW of nothing more frustrating than an evening spent half-listening to a programme as full of concentrated drama as 2ZB's Saturday night. We were playing bridge at a neighbour's, and the poignancy of partner's reproaches was quite drowned for me by the narrator's fear-rasped accents: "But I wouldn't go there after dark because, you see—THEY WALK BY NIGHT!" This at the conclusion of the trial for witchcraft of Agnes Somebody who, after poisoning a wife, has taken protection money from the gullible husband. It was even worse when we came to *The Cruel Sea* and I was forced to leave Compass Rose blundering through fog in a U-Boat infested sea in order to do a little blundering myself in my own Culbertian fog. Next Saturday, I vowed, I'd stay home and concentrate. But I was disappointed in *They Walk by Night*. This week it was merely an hysterical Katherine Howard, pleading in clichés at the top of her voice, and the custodian-narrator, something of a Wilfred Shadbolt, making ghoulish remarks such as "They were happy at the court between executions." *The Cruel Sea*, however, was well worth concentrated attention.

Versatile Miss Pain

FEATURE after feature packed with information and yet fully entertaining—it's almost time we had a BBC feature on Nesta Pain herself to investigate the sources of such unflinching élan. This time the programme was *Ants*, ants in all their moods, militant material, hedonistic, altruistic and just plain practical; their social customs, their agriculture, their pleasures and their pets (Did you ever!). Miss Pain was fortunate in this programme in finding an excellent foil for her own approach to science in the person of the Reverend Gould, a 17th Century naturalist

who could be trusted to supply all the moral lessons that she herself scrupled to draw from the ant. Incidentally the Rev. Gould's description of the deep respect and obedience the worker feels for her Queen, the "particular acts of joy and exultation" which the ants are moved to perform at her coming, gave the broadcast just that extra touch of topicality it might otherwise have needed. After all, it's too soon yet to expect us to be total abstainers from Coronation.

—M.B.

Novelist Reading

IT was surely a misguided notion to have Miss Ngaio Marsh reading her latest novel, *Opening Night*, serially, as she is from 4YA at present. The book has been published sufficiently long for admirers to have read it, and not long enough for them to have forgotten it; nor, pleasant as it may be as detective fiction, has it that deathless quality which bears endless repetition. Miss Marsh is an intelligent reader, with an unusual and attractive voice: one feels that it might have been used to better purpose.

Great Ormond Street

CHILDREN IN HOSPITAL proved to be a dull BBC documentary which compared unfavourably with the NZBS production for schools on the work of Selina Sutherland, also heard recently. The main difference was probably caused by the fact that where the New Zealand production was centred round a vivid personality, the BBC relied on vaguely-imagined benevolent doctors, so that too much of the script ran: Oh, save my child, with the reply of the *something-must-be-done* variety. We were given some dramatic rescues; but to cinema-hardened audiences that is now an old story. The highlight of the programme was an impassioned appeal by Dickens, given by Emlyn Williams, a fact that might well have been mentioned before the programme, in view of Williams's enormous success in his readings from Dickens overseas.

—Loquax

N.Z. LISTENER, JUNE 26, 1953.

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