

Bras, TV and sex

By IFAN PAYNE

"CARDIFF seems a very nice place, classy yet seedy at the same time."

Thus did Victoria Wood greet her audience at St David's Hall on Sunday evening.

Fans of Miss Wood's TV programmes will have recognised much of the material, but familiarity did not dim either the warmth of the reception nor the heartiness of the laughter.

Her show consisted of a medley of funny monologues and her own songs which combine laughter with pithy insight.

Some of her one-liners were funny — "Sexual harassment at work, is it a problem for the self-employed?" But perhaps too much of her material revolved around the subjects of TV, knickers, TV, bras, TV, contraceptives and sex. And those who are not afflicted with the *Emmerdale Farm* drug, only got half the point.

Many a story had pro-

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misingly offbeat beginnings: "I was leaning over the sink the other day — I'd been drinking — and I was thinking what a funny word Twyford is and then..." But this rapidly became a reminiscence regarding a man who carried out his own vasectomy.

Rather than raise a laugh through timing, she bludgeoned you with dirty words while throwing in accurate observations concerning the quirks of every day life.

Many of the images are indeed hilarious, like the psuedo tour of the Bronte home — "and she'd probably not been dead if she were alive today." — or the boyfriend who had a

sex manual but was dyslexic. And when the laughter was at its height, she sat at the piano and delivered a sad song about the loss of a wife.

Then it was music hall time with her impression of Paula Duval complete with banjo and this transformed into a nicely observed sketch of a budding actress's audition.

Victoria Wood is certainly a cheery sight to warm an audience's heart and this audience was, as she told us, a good deal more responsive than the previous night when the auditorium had been filled with feminists against laughter.

But there was no stemming the mirth in St David's Hall from an audience which knew all about lighting up Lillets at *Emmerdale Farm*.