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RADIO VIEWSREEL What Our Commentators Say

Look Before You Listen

KEEN programme followers are as unlikely to be separated from their current Listeners as punters from their racecards, but it occurred to me to wonder the other day whether we make as good use as we might of the People in the Programmes page, which after all is the nearest thing we've got to television. Would not our appreciation of the song cycle be heightened if, instead of fixing our eyes on the black cross beside the programme item we allowed them to dwell on the features of the singer? Filmgoers who have seen too much of Durbin and Macdonald tonsils will not bemoan the fact that such representation is purely static, and listeners in general will be pleased to find there is often a positive correlation between comeliness and musical aptitude. When we reach the dramatic field the whole thing becomes a little more complicated, and I think it should be made quite clear to listeners whether we are seeing the star in propria persona or in her current role. It is quite obvious, for example, in the recent photograph of John Bushelle and Winnefred Greene (stars of Crossroads of Life) that both are taken on location, since Miss Greene wears a hand-knitted afghan. On the same page, however, we have Miss Elizabeth Wing in a sophisticated tricorne, and when I start in listening to Stepmother I have no idea whether, hearing her as Anne Meredith. I should make her keep it on or take it off. And it might make all the difference.

Two-way Stretch

N The White Unicorn (2ZB, Thursday. December 14) I struck a half-hour play that had all the hallmarks of a serial, so that when it ended on the dot of 8.30 I felt the deep thankfulness of one who has escaped a fate worse than My Husband's Love. For what better serial material could be devised than this dual-strand drama of high and low life and love? Lucy Glover (Margaret Lockwood) thinks Love is the most important thing in the world but marries Philip who has one eye on her and the other on his career. So she divorces him and marries Dick, who is killed on their honeymoon, and her consequent unhappiness qualifies her for the post of Warden of a girls' reformatory, where she meets Lottie, who really has got something to keep a stiff upper lip about but who rates a far smaller ration of listener's ear. Any script-writer worth his salt would be appalled at the indecent haste with which Lucy is divorced, remarried and widowed, and would be anxious to make this portion of the story at any rate a little more like real life. And to make sure Lottie got a fair go it might be found desirable to separate the scarcely twisted strands and give Lottie Tuesdays and Thursdays while permitting Lucy to luxuriate on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Flats and Sharps

SHOULD people live in flats? In the Speaking For Ourselves discussion at 2YA on December 13, Professor Ernest Beaglehole defended the flat ably, Dr. Agnes Bennett condemned it roundly, and Mr. Stuart Perry said suavely that flat life was quite good until children came. Clash of opinion is not common in these radio discussions, and some of

the success of this particular form came from the fact that a real difference arose. It gave a sharp, piquant flavour to the talk. It was one of the brightest of these sessions—a team of good speakers with worth-while opinions and ready with what they had to say. Professor Beaglehole, arguing on the problem of the vandal, said that it was not nearly so simple as many people thought, for the vandal's



conduct often arose from a grievance against society, and that grievance should be resolved. The subject, which is painfully topical in Wellington just now, had an excellent airing in the few minutes allotted. The session ended on a frivolous note: Do cats pur when they are alone? This was treated in the right mood, with a dart or two into metaphysics, so that I almost expected someone to quote:

There once was a man who said, God Must think it exceedingly odd If He finds that this tree Continues to be When there's no one about in the Quad.

Who could tell what a cat did when it was alone? The only solution, it was suggested, was a microphone, but, I ask, if a microphone was introduced, would the cat be alone? Remembering the old description of a metaphysical discussion as two blind men looking in a dark room for a black cat that is not there—I give it up.

Remember Caesar? ...

THERE was something familiar about the title, and sure enough after I had turned up to 2ZB on a recent Sunday to listen to it I did remember Remember Caesar which I had heard from 2YA some months ago; and my memories were so pleasant that I decided to listen again to this parable of the inadvisability of leaping to conclusions with both feet, as the announcer so sportively put it. There is a surprising amount of amusement to be got from repeat listening to a comedy with a surprise ending, since it is naturally more fun to be in on the joke from the beginning then, like the victim of the party stunt, to enjoy one hollow laugh at the end. And better to hear a good play twice then lend the ears to two mediocre ones.

Wuthering Heights

SOMEWHAT acclimatised by now, I sat down without a shudder to the premonitory and ominous howlings of tempest that preceded the third and final instalment of Wuthering Heights (almost pronounced Withering). At the end of the hour, having heard Hareton and Catherine safely into one another's arms and Heathcliffe safe buried in the

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