



No staying home sniffing by the fire for this girl. Like most modern misses she cuts colds short with "Baxters."



The proved pleasant remedy with the tonic action.



## Opinion Divided On Value Of Radio In Factories

**N**O self-respecting New Zealand cow would dream of giving her full quota of milk if she was denied the pleasure of listening to the radio at milking time. And in the case of the un-self-respecting cow to whom music means nothing the radio programme is not completely wasted, for from the human point of view there's something to be said for working to music, and the farmhand will forget his cold fingers if his heart is warmed by the hot rhythms of the Andrews sisters. And now the principle of Music While You Work has spread from the cowshed to the factory (or was it the other way round?) and many English and Australian manufacturers claim that their rate of production has increased by as much as thirty per cent. when operatives work to music.

A month or so ago the NBS inaugurated a special *Music While You Work*

session for the use of factories and workshops. Most factory managers agree that the mid-morning and mid-afternoon is the time when hands tend to tire at their work, and it is then especially that a programme of music has the effect of speeding up production and combating the inevitable boredom. The NBS accordingly provides a half hour session of music each morning and afternoon, and by switching from station to station factories can get two hours of music.

### Approval And Disapproval

It sounded an excellent idea. I decided to visit a few Wellington factories with pencil poised to take down stories of phenomenal increases in output, prepared to brush aside with a careless gesture the heartfelt gratitude expressed by managing directors.

First a clothing manufacturing company. The Managing Director was not enthusiastic. "It cost us almost £200 to get the equipment installed," he said, "and it certainly has not speeded up production."

Then the Factory Manager: "Of course the girls have it going in the lunch hour and before work, but in working hours it's merely a nuisance. It certainly doesn't help them to work faster, as they usually stop to listen to it."

The foreman was slightly more encouraging. "We like to have it going when a few of the girls are working back at night, but in the day-time when all the machines are going the noise interferes with the reception. And anyway look at the stuff they put over! If it were decent music it might have some effect." I asked him if he had made use of the special NBS session, but apparently he had not heard of it.

However, the girls were unanimously enthusiastic. "We should have it all the time." "It helps you to concentrate better than if you just hear the noise of the machines." "We do work faster with the wireless on because we don't talk so much." "It's all right when there's music all the time, but you can't hear anyone talking over the air."

### An Embittered Male

Nobody had any definite ideas about the type of music. "Anything as long as it's radio," was one comment. Most preferred something bright and jolly,

that you can "work in time to." There was a general preference for male vocalists, Bing Crosby and Nelson Eddy being specified. The foreman however maintained that music in factories should be gentle and soothing. "I don't know how they manage to work with that racket going on."

The solitary male employee was embittered about radio. "I think it's a curse. There's enough noise here already with the machines going and the women talking."

"But doesn't it stop the women talking?" I asked.

"They'd talk through anything," snorted the embittered male.

Next a hosiery mill. "No, I don't want to introduce wireless in my workrooms," said the manager. "It's impossible in many departments because of the noise, and I feel it would be unfair to those who wouldn't have the benefit of it."

"But if it speeded up production?" I asked.

"It wouldn't. People working in departments that didn't have radios would pay visits to the departments that did, and that wouldn't help much. Anyway, the American companies who began by being wildly enthusiastic about music increasing production have now decided it's a lot of hooey."

### A Bone of Contention?

A soft goods factory. "We have a radio in the recreation room, and that's in demand during the lunch-hour and before and after work. But I don't want it in the workrooms. For one thing there's too much noise, and for another it would only provide another bone of contention. There's enough fuss about the windows, because some people want them open and others are always leaping up to shut them. It would be worse with a radio when everyone wanted a different station at a different time, and some wanted it on and some wanted it off."

"I imagine small difficulties like that could be overcome if it was proved that music quickened the rate of production."

"It wouldn't," stated the manager.

Finally another soft goods factory. "We've been using the radio in our workrooms for six years now," said the forewoman, "and although it might have pepped things up at the beginning the girls are so used to it now that it doesn't have much effect. But they have it going all day and most of them go mad if it's turned off."

### Most Workers Like It

I walked through to the workroom. The noise was shatteringly loud, but the  
(Continued on next page)



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