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HOURS OF LABOUR AS REGARDS HEALTH.

Action is unquestionably one of the essentials of life, and it was the unalterable and almost the first destination of man that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, while anatomy and physiology proclaim that the human frame, with its almost half a thousand muscles and its immense and powerful brain, was formed for activity, both physical and mental, but it does not by any means follow that it is best it should be always employed, daily and hourly in the same unchanging, monotonous course. Change and recreation are perhaps as essential to health and life, or, at least, to long life, as is action. Besides, in modern civilized life, the nearest possible approach to perfection is required in every art, and to attain this, the pursuits and actions of individuals are greatly restricted, and the tendency is to overwork a small portion of the body and under work the remainder, so that a large part of it is not called into that activity for which it is designed. In some vocations the muscular system is employed while the brain remains almost entirely inactive; in others, the brain is occupied and most other parts of the body are at rest; in a large number, the hands almost alone are used; while in not a few, only a portion of the brain is engaged. This state of things is incompatible with perfect health. A little time is required by persons thus engaged for the purpose of counter-acting somewhat the effects of this restricted and limited action, or impaired health in some form is certain, sooner or later, to follow.