

ducible by artificial means during the absence of that luminary, render us habitually less sensible of its real value, than undoubtedly we should be, were we to experience a long continued privation of it. And as to the regularly periodical privation of it which we experience in consequence of the alternation of night with day, this is so far from being an evil, that it is obviously beneficial; inasmuch as, in consequence of this very absence, sleep is both directly and indirectly conciliated: without which gift of Heaven, all our faculties would soon be exhausted, and all our happiness consequently extinguished.

The beneficial influence of sleep on our whole frame is too obvious in its effects to require any formal demonstration: but it will be interesting to consider its relation to the absence of light. It appears then that, by a fundamental law of our nature, a sense of uneasiness invariably follows a long continued exercise of our powers, either corporeal or mental: and, unless this sense of uneasiness have been produced by too inordinate exercise, it is soon relieved by that state of the system which we call sleep; during the continuance of which, provided it be sound and of a perfectly healthy character, all the voluntary muscles of the body become relaxed, and the nervous system remains comparatively inactive; the whole body acquiring by this temporary cessation of its energies a renovated ac-