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EDITORIAL

THERE is a wealth of talk and discussion these days about relaxation. It seems that we have so arranged our lives that we must practise this as a conscious art instead of its being a natural mechanism of mind and body. Mental and physical fatigue are the inevitable results of the extraordinary lust for getting what so many consider to be the utmost out of life. Petty jealousies arise, tempers become frayed and so much of what should be natural kindness is lost. Material gains are often made at the expense of mental ease, for the excessive pace forced on us by competition demands some payment.

If we accept this tempo of life, we should try to balance it by deliberate periods of relaxation. This does not mean just putting one's feet up for fifteen minutes a day. It is a practice which will vary with each person.

One form of relaxation which must benefit everyone is a change of environment, or some sort of holiday away from the normal routine. This applies not only to those employed outside their homes, but to the housewife and even to those who are not financially obliged to work.

Perhaps those who are subjected to physical and mental strain by dealing with the public all day, e.g. teachers, members of the medical pro-

fession, and shop assistants, need more frequent holidays than others. On the whole, teachers have been catered for in this way, but it is horrifying to read advertisements for medical posts where sometimes only three, and even two weeks leave per year are granted. Often too, this involves a full year's work before any leave can be taken.

Again it is a personal choice as to whether one takes a long holiday once a year, or more frequent but shorter breaks. However, it must have been proved that if a high standard of output is to be maintained, a "relaxation balance" must be achieved to prevent staleness.

Although the popular cry is now for higher pay and shorter hours, provided advantage is not taken of these benefits, there seems a great deal to be said in their favour. Certainly at the professional level, personal integrity and a sense of responsibility should outweigh the danger of laziness and greed.

To mention physiotherapy in particular, a certain lack of disciplinary rigidity and a respect for the individual's initiative and capabilities certainly pays dividends in small ways. If similar amenities were afforded in other spheres, we may be able to adjust ourselves better to the pressure of our work and reap greater enjoyment from it.