SUNDAY'S SERMON.

OF DR. T. DEWITT TALMAGE'S THRILLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "The Sick General."

TEXT: "He was a leper."—II Kings v., 1.

Here we have a warrior sick, not with pleurisies or rheumatisms or consumptions, but with a disease worse than all these put together. A red mark has come out on the forehead precursor of complete disfigurement and dissolution. I have something awful to tell you. General Naaman, the commander in chief of all the Syrian forces, has the leprosy! It is on his hands, on his face, on his feet, on his entire person. The leprosy! Get out of the way of the pestilence! If his breath strike you, you are a dead man. The commander in chief of all the forces of Syria! And yet he would be glad to exchange conditions with the boy at his stirrup or the hostler that blankets his charger. The news goes like wildfire all through the realm, and the people are sympathetic, and they cry out, "Is it possible that our great hero, who slew Ahab and around whom we came with such vociferation when he returned from victorious battle—can it be possible that our grand and glorious Naaman has the leprosy?"

Yes. Everybody has something he wishes he had not—David, an Absalom to disgrace him; Paul, a thorn to sting him; Job, carbuncles to plague him; Samson, a Delilah to shear him; Ahab, a Naboth to deny him; Haman, a Mordecai to irritate him; George Washington, a childlessness to afflict him; John Wesley, a termagant wife to pester him; Leah, weak eyes; Pope, a crooked back; Byron, a club foot; John Milton, blind eyes; Charles Lamb, an insane sister, and you and you and you something which you never bargained for and would like to get rid of. The reason of this is that God does not want this world to be too bright. Otherwise we would always want to stay and eat these fruits and lie on these lounges and shake hands in the pleasant society. We are only in the vestibule of a grand temple. God does not want us to stand on the door step, and therefore He sends aches and annoyances and sorrows and bereavements of all sorts to push us on and push us up toward riper fruits and brighter society and more radiant prosperities. God is only whipping us ahead. The reason that Edward Payson and Robert Hall had more rapturous views of heaven than other people had was because, through their aches and pains, God pushed them nearer up to it. If God dashes out one of your pictures, it is only to show to you a brighter one. If He sting your foot with gout, your brain with neuralgia, your tongue with an inextinguishable thirst, it is only because He is preparing to substitute a better body than you ever dreamed of, when the mortal shall put on immortality.

It is to push you on and to push you up toward something grander and better that God sends upon you, as He did upon General Naaman, something you do not want. Seated in his Syrian mansion, all the walls glittering with the shields which he had captured in battle, the corridors crowded with admiring visitors who just wanted to see him once, music and mirth and banqueting filling all the mansion from tesselated floor to pictured ceiling, Naaman would have forgotten that there was anything better and would have been glad to stay there 10,000 years. But, oh, how the shields dim, and how the visitors fly the hall, and how the music drops dead from the string, and how the gates of the mansion slam shut with sepulchral bang as you read the closing words of the eulogium! "He was a leper! He was a leper!"

There was one person more sympathetic with General Naaman than any other person. Naaman's wife walks the floor, wringing her hands and trying to think what she can do to alleviate her husband's suffering. All remedies have failed. The surgeon general and the doctors of the royal staff have met, and they have shaken their heads, as much as to say, "No cure, no cure." I think that the office seekers had all folded up their recommendations and gone home. Probably most of the employes of the establishment had dropped their work and were thinking of looking for some other situation. What shall now become of poor Naaman's wife? She must have sympathy somewhere. In her despair she goes to a little Hebrew captive, a servant girl in her house, to whom she tells the whole story, as sometimes, when overborne by the sorrows of the world and finding no sympathy anywhere else, you have gone out and found in the sympathy of some humble domestic—Rose or Dinah or Bridget—a help which the world could not give you.

What a scene it was—one of the grandest women in all Syria in cabinet council with a waiting maid over the declining health of the mighty general! "I know something," says the little captive maid, "I know something," as she bounds to her bare feet. "In the land from which I was stolen there is a certain prophet known by the name of Elisha, who can cure almost anything, and I shouldn't wonder if he could cure my master. Send for him right away." "Oh, hush!" you say. "If the highest medical talent in all the land cannot cure that leper, there is no need of your listening to any talk of a servant girl." But do not scoff, do not sneer. The finger of that little captive maid is pointing in the right direction. She might have said: "This is a judgment upon you for stealing me from my native land. Didn't they snatch me off in the night, breaking my father's and mother's hearts, and many a time I have lain and cried all night because I was so homesick?" Then, flushing up into childish indignation, she might have said: "Good for them. I'm glad Naaman's got the leprosy. I wish all the Syrians had the leprosy." No. Forgetting her personal sorrows, she sympathizes with the suffering of her master and commends him to the famous Hebrew prophet.

And how often it is that the finger of childhood has pointed grown persons in the right direction! O Christian soul, how long it since you got rid of the leprosy of sin? You say, "Let me see. It must be five years now." Five years. Who was it that pointed you to the Divine Physician? "Oh," you say, "it was my little Amie or Fred or Charley that clamored up on my knees and looked into my face and asked me why I didn't become a Christian, and, all the time stroking my cheek, so I could not get angry, insisted upon knowing why I didn't have family prayers." There are grandparents who have been brought to Christ by their little grandchildren. There are hundreds of Christian mothers who had their attention first called to Jesus by their little children. How did you get rid of the leprosy of sin? How did you find your way to the Divine Physician? "Oh," you say, "my child, my dying child, with wan and wasted finger, pointed that way. Oh, I never shall forget," you say, "that scene at the cradle and the crib that awful night. It was hard, hard, very hard, but if that little one on its dying bed had not pointed me to Christ I don't think I ever would have got rid of my leprosy." Go into the Sabbath-school any Sunday, and you will find hundreds of little fingers pointing in the same direction, toward Jesus Christ and toward heaven.

Years ago the astronomers calculated that there might be a world hanging at a certain point in the heavens, and a large prize was offered for some one who could discover that world. The telescopes from the great observatories were pointed in vain, but a girl at Nantucket, Mass., fashioned a telescope, and looking through it discovered that star and won the prize and the admiration of all the astronomical world, that stood amazed at her genius. And so it is often the case that grown people cannot see the light, while some little child beholds the star of pardon, the star of hope, the star of consecration, the star of Bethlehem, the morning star of Jesus. "Not many mighty men, not many wise men are called, but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty and base things and things that are not to bring to naught things that are." Oh, do not despise the prattle of little children when they are speaking about God and Christ and heaven. You see the way your child is pointing. Will you take that pointing or wait until, in the wrench of some awful bereavement, God shall lift that child to another world, and then it will beckon you upward? Will you take that pointing, or will you wait for the beckoning? Blessed be God that the little Hebrew captive pointed in the right direction. Blessed be God for the saving ministry of Christian children.

No wonder the advice of this little Hebrew captive threw all Naaman's mansion and Ben-hadad's palace into excitement. Goodby, Naaman! With face scarified and ridged and inflamed by the pestilence and aided by those who supported him on either side, he staggers out to the chariot. Hold fast the fiery coursers of the royal stable while the poor sick man lifts his swollen feet and pain struck limbs into the vehicle. Bolster him up with the pillows and let him take a lingering look at his bright apartment, for perhaps the Hebrew captive may be mistaken, and the next time Naaman comes to that place he may be a dead weight on the shoulders of those who carry him, an expired chieftain seeking sepulture amid the lamentations of an admiring nation. Goodby, Naaman! Let the charioteer drive gently over the hills of Hermon, lest he jolt the invalid. Here goes the bravest man of all his day a captive of a horrible disease. As the ambulance winds through the streets of Damascus the tears and prayers of all the people go after the world renowned invalid.

Perhaps you have had an invalid go out from your house on a health excursion. You know how the neighbors stood around and said, "Ah, he will never come back again alive." Oh, it was a solemn moment, I tell you, when the invalid had departed, and you went into the room to make the bed, and to remove the medicine vials from the shelf, and to throw open the shutters, so that the fresh air might rush into the long closed room. Goodby, Naaman!

There is only one cheerful face looking at him, and that is the face of the little Hebrew captive, who is sure he will get cured, and who is so glad she helped him. As the chariot winds out and the escort of mounted courtiers, and the mules, laden with sacks of gold and silver and embroidered suits of apparel, went through the gates of Damascus and out on the long way, the hills of Naphtalia and Ephraim look down on the procession, and the retinue goes right past the battlefields where Naaman in the days of his health used to rally his troops for fearful onset, and then the procession stops and reclines awhile in the groves of olive and oleander, and General Naaman so sick, so very, very sick!

How the countrymen gaped as the procession passed! They had seen Naaman go past like a whirlwind in days gone by and had stood aghast at the clank of his war equipments, but now they commiserate him. They say: "Poor man, he will never get home alive! Poor man!"

General Naaman wakes up from a restless sleep in the chariot, and he says to the charioteer, "How long before we shall reach the Prophet Elisha?" The charioteer says to a waysider, "How far is it to Elisha's house?" He says, "Two miles." "Two miles?" Then they whip up the lathered and fagged out horses. The whole procession brightens up at the prospect of speedy arrival. They drive up to the door of the prophet. The charioteers shout "Whoa" to the horses, and tramping hoofs and grinding wheels cease shaking the earth. Come out, Elisha, come out. You have company. The grandest company that ever came to your house has come to it now. No stir inside Elisha's house. The fact was, the Lord had informed Elisha that the sick captain was coming and how to treat him. Indeed, when you are sick and the Lord wants you to get well, He always tells the doctor how to treat you, and the reason we have so many bungling doctors is because they depend upon their own strength and instructions and not on the Lord God, and that always makes malpractice. Come out, Elisha, and attend to your business.

General Naaman and his retinue waited and waited and waited. The fact was, Naaman had two diseases—pride and leprosy. The one was as hard to get rid of as the other. Elisha sits quietly in his house and does not go out. After awhile, when he thinks he has humbled this proud man, he says to a servant, "Go out and tell General Naaman to bathe seven times in the river Jordan, out yonder five miles, and he will get entirely well." The message comes out. "What!" says the commander-in-chief of the Syrian forces, his eye kindling with an animation which it had not shown for weeks and his swollen feet stamping on the bottom of the chariot, regardless of pain. "What! Isn't he coming out to see me? Why, I thought certainly he would come and utter some cabalistic words over me or make some enigmatical passes over my wounds. Why, I don't think he knows who I am. Isn't he coming out? Why, when the Shunamite woman came to him, he rushed out and cried: 'Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child?' And will he treat a poor unknown woman like that and let me, a titled personage, sit here in my chariot and wait and wait? I won't endure it any longer. Charioteer, drive on! Wash in the Jordan! Ha, ha! The slimy Jordan—the muddy Jordan—the monotonous Jordan! I wouldn't be seen washing in such a river as that. Why, we watered our horses in a better river than that on our way here—the beautiful river, the jaspar paved river of Pharpar. Besides that we have in our country another Damascene rivers, Abana, with foliaged bank and torrent ever swift and ever clear, under the flickering shadows of sycamore and oleander. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?"

I suppose Naaman felt very much as Americans would feel if, by way of medical prescription, some one should tell us to go wash in the Danube or the Rhine. We would answer, "Are not the Connecticut and the Hudson just as good?" Or as an Englishman would feel if he were told, by way of medical prescription, he must go and wash in the Mississippi or the St. Lawrence. He would cry out, "Are not the Thames and the Shannon just as well?" The fact was that haughty Naaman needed to learn what every Englishman and every American needs to learn—that when God tells you to do a thing you must go and do it, whether you understand the reason or not. Take the prescription, whether you like it or not. One thing is certain. Unless haughty Naaman does as Elisha commands him, he will die of his awful sickness. And unless you do as Christ commands you you will be seized upon by an everlasting wasting away. Obey and live; disobey and die. Farther, overarching, undergirding, stupendous alternative!

Well, General Naaman could not stand the test. The charioteer gives a jerk to the right line until the bit snaps in the horse's mouth, and the whir of the wheels and the flying of the dust show the indignation of the great commander. "He turned and went away in a rage." So people now often get mad at religion. They vituperate against ministers, against churches, against Christian people. One would think from their irate behavior that God had been studying how to annoy and exasperate and demolish them. What has He been doing? Only trying to cure their death dealing leprosy. That is all. Yet they whip up their horses, they dig in the spurs, and they go away in a rage.

So, after all, it seems that this health excursion of General Naaman is to be a dead failure. That little Hebrew captive might as well have not told him of the prophet, and this long journey might as well not have been taken. Poor, sick, dying Naaman! Are you going away in high dudgeon and worse than when you came? As his chariot halts a moment his servants clamber up in it and coax him to do as Elisha said. They say: "It's easy. If the prophet had told you to walk for a mile on sharp spikes in order to get rid of this awful disease, you would have done it. It is easy. Come, my lord, just get down and wash in the Jordan. You take a bath every day anyhow, and in this climate it is so hot that it will do you good. Do it on our account, and for the sake of the army you command, and for the nation that admires you. Come, my lord, just try this Jordanic bath." "Well," he says, "to please you I will do as you say." The retinue drive to the brink of the Jordan. The horses paw and neigh to get into the stream themselves and cool their hot flanks. General Naaman, assisted by his attendants, gets down out of his chariot and painfully comes to the brink of the river and steps in until the water comes to the ankle, and goes on deeper until the water comes to the girdle, and now standing so far down in the stream just a little inclination of the head will thoroughly immerse him. He bows once into the flood and comes up and shakes the water out of nostril and eye, and his attendants look at him and say, "Why, general, how much better you do look!" And he bows a second time into the flood and comes up, and the wild stare is gone out of his eye. He bows the third time into the flood, and comes up, and the shriveled skin has got smooth again. He bows a fourth time into the flood and comes up, and the hair that had fallen out is restored; there are thick locks again all over the head. He bows the fifth time into the flood, and comes up, and the hoarseness has gone out of his throat. He bows the sixth time and comes up, and all the soreness and anguish have gone out of the body. "Why," he says, "I am almost well, but I will make a complete cure, and so he bows the seventh time into the flood and he comes up, and not so much as a fester or a scale or an eruption as big as the head of a pin is to be seen on him.

He steps out on the bank and says, "Is it possible?" And the attendants look and say, "Is it possible?" And as with the health of an athlete he bounds back into the chariot and drives on there goes up from all his attendants a wild "Huzza, huzza!" Of course they go back to pay and thank the man of God for his counsel so fraught with wisdom. When they left the prophet's house, they went off mad. They have come back glad. People always think better of a minister after they are converted than they do before conversion. Now we are to them an intolerable nuisance because we tell them to do things that go against the grain, but some of us have a great many letters from those who tell us that once they were angry at what we preached, but afterward gladly received the gospel at our hands. They once called us fanatics or terrorists or enemies. Now they call us friends. Yonder is a man who said he would never come into the church again. He said that two years ago. He said, "My family shall never come here again if such doctrines as that are preached." But he came again, and his family came again. He is a Christian, his wife a Christian, all his children Christians, the whole household Christians, and you shall dwell with them in the house of the Lord forever. Our undying coadjutors are those who once heard the gospel and "went away in a rage."

Now, my hearers, you know that this General Naaman did two things in order to get well. The first was, he got out of his chariot. He might have staid there with his swollen feet on the stuffed ottoman, seated on that embroidered cushion, until his last gasp, he would never have got any relief. He had to get down out of his chariot. And you have got to get down out of the chariot of your pride if you ever become a Christian. You cannot drive up to the cross with a coach and four and be saved among all the spangles. You seem to think that the Lord is going to be complimented by your coming. Oh, no, you poor, miserable, scaly, leprous sinner, get down out of that. We all come in the same haughty way. We expect to ride into the kingdom of God. Never until we get down on our knees will we find mercy. The Lord has unhorsed us, uncharioted us. Get down out of your pride. Get down out of your self righteousness and your hypercriticism. We have all got to do that. That is the journey we have to make on our knees. It is our infernal pride that keeps us from getting rid of the leprosy of sin. Dear Lord, what have we to be proud of? Proud of our scales? Proud of our uncleanliness? Proud of this killing infection? Bring us down at Thy feet, weeping, praying, contrite, believing suppliants.

For sinners, Lord, Thou can't to bleed,
And I'm a sinner vile indeed.
Lord, I believe Thy grace is free,
Oh, magnify that grace in me.

But he had not only to get down out of his chariot. He had to wash. "Oh," you say, "I am very careful with my ablutions. Every day I plunge into a bright and beautiful bath." Ah, my hearer, there is a flood brighter than any that pours from these hills. It is the flood that breaks from the granite of the eternal hills. It is the flood of pardon and peace and life and heaven. That flood stated in the tears of Christ and the sweat of Gethsemane and rolled on, accumulating flood, until all earth and heaven could bathe in it. Zachariah called it the "fountain open for sin and uncleanness." William Cowper called it the "fountain filled with blood." Your fathers and mothers washed all their sins and sorrows away in that fountain. Oh, my hearers, do you not feel like wading into it? Wade down now into this glorious flood, deeper, deeper, deeper! Plunge once, twice, thrice, four times, five times, six times, seven times. It will take as much as that to cure your soul. Oh, wash, wash and be clean!

Bicycle Champions Arrive.

New York, Nov. 19.—Willis B. Troy, manager for A. A. Zimmerman the cyclist, a passenger on the steamer New York, is accompanied by a number of crack bicyclists, who are coming to take part in the great meeet at Madison Square garden. Among the number are A. C. Edwards, champion of England; Luigi Colombo, champion of Italy; Adrien Guerry, champion of France; Mr. Verheyen, champion of Germany and Lucien Lesna, champion of Switzerland.

Tired, Weak, Nervous

"I was troubled with that tired and all gone feeling, had no appetite, had a cough and asthmatic symptoms. I have been troubled thus some thirteen years and had to

Mr. Frank Charon

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three years ago. Last spring I commenced taking Hood's Sarsaparilla and felt better from the first. My appetite returned and my cough left me. I have used half a dozen bottles and am a well man. I should have written this statement before but wanted to wait until after cold weather had settled with us and see if any symptoms of my trouble returned. But not so, for I am now in the best of health. I am 64 years of age, and doing a full day's work at blacksmithing. Hood's

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Pink-Eyed Trout.

The Game and Fish Commissioners of Minnesota have succeeded in propagating, at the State Fish Hatchery in St. Paul, a breed of trout that cannot be duplicated anywhere in the known world, says the Minneapolis Journal. The albino trout is nothing more or less than a freak of nature, and up to three years ago, when these fish began to make their appearance at the Minnesota hatchery, none were known to exist. Three years ago Superintendent S. S. Watkins secured thirty-nine specimens, though where he got them is a secret locked in the breast of the gray-haired official, who is by no means anxious to tell how his pets were acquired. From these fish he succeeded in bringing thirteen to maturity, but only three specimens wintered successfully. At the spawning season there were found to be two females and one buck. From these were obtained eggs that turned out at the hatching 147 fish, but of this number only forty-nine arrived at maturity. The forty-nine have since multiplied, until now Mr. Watkins has 700 albino trout in the tanks. The Superintendent is exceedingly careful of these beauties, and well may care be taken of them, for, with their pure white bodies handsomely dotted with pink spots—with pink fins and pink eyes—they are a curiosity not to be duplicated in America at least. The Commission has obtained another very handsome species of trout by crossing the native brook trout with the lake trout. The result is a large and beautiful fish, highly colored and possessed of all the game fighting qualities of the brook trout, an exception to the ordinary results of crossing, which are to eliminate many of the game qualities of the fish. Within the last year a variety of experiments in fish culture have been made at the St. Paul hatchery. Mr. Watkins has superintended all these experiments, and in a conversation with a representative of the Sunday Times yesterday he said that the next twelve months would, he believed, add a good many valuable facts to the knowledge now possessed of fish culture. U47

98%

of all cases of consumption can, if taken in the earlier stages of the disease, be cured. This may seem like a bold assertion to those familiar only with the means generally in use for its treatment; as, nasty cod-liver oil and its filthy emulsions, extract of malt, whiskey, different preparations of hypophosphites and such like *palliatives*.

Although by many believed to be incurable, there is the evidence of hundreds of living witnesses to the fact that, in all its earlier stages, consumption is a curable disease. Not every case, but *a large percentage of cases*, and we believe, *fully 98 per cent.* are cured by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, even after the disease has progressed so far as to induce repeated bleedings from the lungs, severe lingering cough with copious expectoration (including tubercular matter), great loss of flesh and extreme emaciation and weakness.

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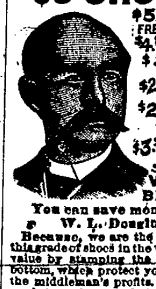

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The British Government has just suffered with the free exercise of religion in India by prohibiting the practice of hook swinging at religious festivals. By inserting a hook attached to a rope in his flesh and then swinging in the air for a few minutes the devotee believed that he promoted the cause of religion.

Clermont, a little town in Florida, revels in the luxury of two mayors. Last June Mr. Todd was elected to the office without a dissenting vote. He was away from home at the time, and did not return for ten days. The ordinances require the Mayor to qualify within three days after the election. Mr. Goodenough, who was Mayor last year, holds on to the office.

Horses are very cheap in Oregon just now. A herd of 800 head, just off the range, were sold at an average price of $5 each recently, and a few days ago, at a sale of fine stock near Portland, a splendid matched team of sorrel mares were sold for $40, and his bay horse brought only $22.50. Half a dozen years ago such horses would have sold readily for $100 to $150 each.

The sinking of the Japanese warship Tsukuba by collision with the steamship Zambesi in Kobe Harbor, reported in recent dispatches, is not a serious loss to the war strength of Japan. The Tsukuba was a wooden vessel of 1,980 tons displacement, carrying only eight ordinary breech-loading rifles and other guns, and was used as a training ship for cadets. She was only 194 feet in length and 250-horse power.

The National Game Bird and Fish Protective Association is moving to secure greater uniformity and effectiveness in the game laws of the United States. It is a good cause and deserves the support of all sportsmen. Unfortunately, in many States where natural conditions are not adverse to the cultivation of game the total lack of protection has resulted almost in the depopulation of both field and stream. It is not too late, however, to arrest the destruction.

There are more than 5,000,000 children in the elementary schools in England, 890,000 of whom pay for their tuition, and of these 500,000 pay no more than a penny a week, according to a recent official statement. Of the "voluntary schools," in which the whole or part of the tuition is paid by the parents, 5,000 receive from 10 to 20 shillings a head for the children in attendance, 4,000 between 5 and 19 shillings, and 5,000 under 5 shillings.

In the meat shops of towns in New Mexico and Arizona the visitor from the East is apt to notice that the dressed carcasses of sheep have a tuft of wool still attached to the head and tail. This is left by the butcher to assure the customer that it is mutton and not goat flesh that he is buying, for in these Territories many flocks of goats are reared and pastured by the small Mexican ranchmen to be killed for food for the poorer natives. Roast or stewed kid, with Chili pepper sauce, is an esteemed dinner dish at the tables of many well-to-do American and Spanish-American citizens.

The Emperor of China is the subject, if not the hero, of a story that is circulating in Peking. A palace eunuch, it is said, recently delivered a letter or dispatch meant for the Imperial eye alone into the hands of one of the ladies of the harem. Thereupon his majesty seized a sword and immediately decapitated the offending messenger. The people of Peking are said to speak of the incident with undisguised satisfaction, regarding it as a proof that the Emperor has a mind of his own after all, and may yet succeed in breaking through the trammels of the silken net which has hitherto completely hindered the development of the individuality.

There is a "whole" milk treatment as well as a skim milk cure, and an advocate of the former says that a patient requires from five to six quarts daily while confined to bed, and from one to four quarts more when working. To digest all this, the action of the skin, lungs and other organs must be secured by daily warm baths and an unlimited supply of fresh air night and day. Under this treatment the heart quickens, the alimentary canal enlarges and its glands increase in size and number, and the arteries enlarge and furnish to all parts of the body increased supply of blood. A patient with a supposed mortal disease was cured under this treatment between July 15 and Oct. 28, and during that time increased in weight from 106 pounds to 129 pounds 14 ounces.

A recent Board of Trade inquiry into the hours of labor of railroad employees in England has brought to light some cases of flagrant abuse. On one occasion a signalman was on duty 25½ hours and on the following days worked from thirteen to sixteen hours a day. Other signalmen on the same line were required to work from sixteen to nineteen hours. One switchman was at his post 16½ hours, and on Sunday