

migration policy. Let us hope that a common basis of agreement upon this important subject may be reached by the land-holding corporations, the Government and the residents of the West, and that each will sacrifice something, if need be, to attain a common patriotic object.

SUBSIDIES TO MAIL STEAMERS.

The annual subsidy given to the steamers of the North German Lloyd Company, which has been £225,000 sterling, is about to be increased to £300,000. For the additional £75,000 the company agrees to make a fortnightly service to China instead of its present monthly one. This money is given, ostensibly at any rate, for carrying the mails. But it is significant that where in the year 1888 the merchandise carried by these German vessels was 58,447 tons, it had grown in 1895 to no less than 152,415 tons of a value of 140,000,000 marks.

Commenting upon the decline of French shipping and contrasting the Republic's attempted stimulus of it by bounties for the building and sailing of ships, instead of, like the British and the Germans, giving subsidies for work done in mail-carrying, the *Glasgow Herald* says:

"The proposed subsidy in connection with the new swift mail service to and from Canada, is considerably less than that now offered to the North German Lloyd—£225,000, as compared with £300,000. It may be that the work to be done in the one case is greater than in the other; but the Government might do well to consider whether the meagreness of the sum they are offering is not standing in the way of a settlement of the matter." The *Herald*, apparently, does not understand that two thirds of this £225,000 offered subsidy is contributed by Canada, and only one-third, or £75,000, by the British Government. It is something, however, to have the opinion expressed by an influential Scotch journal, that the amount offered is a "meagre" one, considering, of course, the importance of the interests involved.

OVERWORK IN SCHOOLS.

The effect upon the brain and nervous system of childhood and youth produced by too long school hours and excessive study, is a subject not sufficiently studied by schoolmasters and those responsible for the curriculum of our schools nowadays. It is a matter upon which the experience and superior knowledge of the medical profession should be brought to bear. Indeed, we sometimes think that doctors are remiss in not realizing promptly the damage often done children by over-cramming their brains with a variety of indigestible matter, and making that danger known to parents. On this very subject Dr. Jacobi, the New York specialist in children's ailments, says: "Perhaps the greatest negligence shown by medical men is in regard to mental overwork. . . . Our schools have become hot houses in which spinal curvatures, anæmia [lack of blood], nearsightedness, neurasthenia [nervous debility], chlorosis and cerebral exhaustion and disease are being bred in incredible numbers of cases. . . . It is time that the medical profession looked into the increasing degeneration of the people resulting from the overtraining of the young brain." The doctor even says that the apparent offset to this mental work, gymnastic or calisthenic exercise in the same building, "adds or may add to the general exhaustion." The doctor does not explain himself here fully. But we understand him to mean that when the nerve force of the young system has been drained by brain-work is the wrong time to impose upon the body tasks in class for which the physical forces are inadequate. Some boys and girls are strong

enough to perform tasks of both kinds, but to others, to the majority perhaps, strain, rupture or fainting fits may be the result of such forcing. The sort of recreation a youngster wants after study is free open-air play. Marching under a drill master or doing "the bars" or "the rings" under an instructor cannot be considered play.

—We learn from British Columbia that the promoters of the railway from Vancouver to the Rossland gold diggings now agree with the Van Horne estimate of its cost, for whereas they at first said it would cost "probably \$6,500,000 or \$7,000,000," they told the Nanaimo city council the other day that it was likely to cost \$15,000,000. The British Columbia local government is being asked to assist the projected road. But, as our correspondent points out, the Provincial Government is limited in its present power to aid railway undertakings, by the fact that its members are pledged in the British money market not to add for at least two years to the loan indebtedness of the province.

GRAVEYARD INSURANCE.

In January last particulars were given in these columns of the unearthing in North Carolina in 1894 of a huge conspiracy to defraud life assurance companies. Some half dozen of the conspirators were tried, and in 1895 condemned to imprisonment. Appeal was taken from this decision. It is supposed that over \$100,000 had been collected, from first to last, upon fraudulent risks procured by the men engaged in the nefarious business at Beaufort, N.C. Thirteen of these rascals were indicted, on several counts, viz., criminal conspiracy, forgery, and obtaining money by false pretences. The cases were removed from Carteret county to Jones, an adjoining county, because of the general sentiment in the former county in favor of the criminals. The judge who tried the case and the leading counsel for the State were threatened with assassination if they proceeded in the discharge of their duty. This, however, did not deter them. The main defendants were convicted and sentenced to five and seven years in the penitentiary, and some for two years in the county jail, besides being fined. All the defendants appealed to the Supreme Court, which has just handed down an opinion, affirming the judgment of the lower court in each case. We give parts of this opinion:—

David Parker, a witness for the State, "gave a full and detailed account of his connection with the defendants for a number of years previous, and of their place and methods of together cheating and defrauding the insurance companies." He explained "that he was the agent of the defendants to work up their business for them, and that when a policy had been fraudulently obtained upon the life of deceased or aged persons, he (Parker) was to procure a purchaser for it, who would take it and keep the premium paid up on it." Parker then testified "that William (Bill) Fisher was also the agent of the defendants, that they all said he was." Among other things, Parker was allowed to testify as follows: "I saw Bill Fisher offer to sell a policy in the Massachusetts Benefit Life Association on the life of Melissa Guthrie."

The same rules of evidence that govern the trial of other criminal offences, apply when the indictment is for conspiracy. But there is a marked distinction growing out of the manner of their application. Ordinarily it is incumbent on the prosecution to prove participation in an act, but on trials for conspiracy the State must show participation in a design, and the facts in issue are:

- (1) Whether there was an agreement for an alleged purpose.
- (2) Whether a defendant charged participated in the design, and
- (3) Whether the common purpose was carried into execution.

Here the testimony tended to prove an agreement between the defendants to constitute Fisher (who is not indicted) their agent to do the same unlawful acts that the witness Parker had been doing, in furtherance of a common purpose to cheat certain insurance companies, and to show that the agreement, which they "all said" they had made with Fisher, culminated in similar covinous acts. All who aid, abet, counsel or procure others to commit misdemeanors, are principals. 1. Roscoe Cr. Ev. Stat., p. 189. Conspiracy is under the law of North Carolina a misdemeanor. State vs. Jackson, 82 N. C. 565. When once evidence of a common design is shown, and two or more of the conspirators are indicted and on trial, testimony tending to prove the unlawful acts of a person not on trial, or not indicted, in furtherance of such purpose, is clearly competent. Those who aid, abet, counsel or encourage, as well as those who execute their designs, are conspirators, and certainly where the unlawful act is done within the limits of the State in whose courts the indictment is found, as in our case, the conspirators, who only participated in the design, may be tried and punished without joining in the indictment the perpetrator of the overt act shown.

There was evidence reasonably sufficient, if believed, to warrant the inference of a conspiracy, and it was properly left to the jury to pass upon its sufficiency. . . . It is competent to show a criminal act by confession of a party as well as by means of direct proof by the testimony of others. While the declarations of Fisher as