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General Grosvenor's pessimistic personal prognostications have proved perfectly correct.

Philadelphia seems to like her experience. At any rate she has again turned down the "gang."

If Mr. Baer is the mouthpiece of the coal trust the other members would do well to silence him.

General Grosvenor will now have ample time in which to figure out a large number of problems.

Strawberries are moving up from Florida, and the bottoms of the boxes are meeting them halfway.

As might have been expected a ship subsidy bill went through the senate ahead of the pure food bill.

The explanation department of the canal commission has the dredging department beaten to a standstill.

If there is a coal strike it will not be the real cause of an advance in the price of coal. It will merely be an excuse.

Mr. Garfield denies that he promised the packers immunity. Doubtless they were deceived by Mr. Garfield's conclusions.

Kansas City has another new union depot in sight. If the official accountant has not skipped a few this makes the 3,443d.

Harvard has abolished football by faculty enactment, but it is quite generally believed that Yale had something to do with it.

It took the pure food bill four years to come to a vote in the senate. Senator Smoot need not begin packing his trunk just yet.

Mr. Cleveland is again viewing democratic prospects through pessimistic spectacles. Anything genuinely democratic worries Mr. Cleveland.

It is to be hoped that a "lock canal" does not mean one to be constructed by gentlemen who are securely handcuffed by the railroads interested in delay.

D. M. Parry says that the labor unions are cutting their own throats. If Mr. Parry believed it he would be sitting quietly by and waiting for the end.

Mr. Rockefeller is still in hiding, but there is no doubt that the six million dollar quarterly dividend of the Standard Oil company will find him all right, all right.

## WASHINGTON CITY LETTER

Washington, D. C., Feb. 26.—The ship subsidy bill that recently passed the senate is now before the house committee on merchant marine and fisheries, of which General Grosvenor, of Ohio, is chairman. Senator Frye, of Maine, has been hammering away on this proposition for the last twenty years. It has a been veritable hobby with him. The late Senator Hanna, of Ohio, was an enthusiastic supporter of the measure. His influence, however, was not great enough to put the bill through. The truth of the matter is that the republicans are seriously divided on the question of voting millions of dollars annually to private corporations. Not a democrat in the senate supported the bill. Five republicans voted against it. The friends of the bill would feel happier if they had been almost any other five republicans who could possibly have been grouped together. It should be recalled that Senators Spooner and La Follette, of Wisconsin, were two of the republicans recorded in the negative. The other three were Messrs. Warner, of Missouri; Dolliver, of Iowa, and Burkett, of Nebraska. The ship subsidy advocates do not mind the action of the three last mentioned as much as they do the votes cast against the bill by Messrs. Spooner and La Follette.

There is a Mr. Minor on the house merchant marine and fisheries committee. Mr. Minor is also from Wisconsin. And for the past eight years Mr. Minor has been making no end of trouble for the scheme in the house committee. His opposition was even intense when Mr. Payne, of New York, was chairman of the committee. That was before Mr. Payne became chairman of the ways and means committee and by virtue of that position leader of the house. Mr. Minor is still full of fight and those who know him best say that he and Chairman Grosvenor will not be able to agree. Worse than that Mr. Minor is likely to have the assistance of several other republican members of the committee. Not a democratic member of the house committee will favor the subsidy plan. They think it is a vicious principle and do not believe that it will generally benefit the shipping interests of the United States. On the contrary they think it is an organized effort to enrich a few corporations whose officials have long yearned to get their hands into the public treasury. At this writing General Grosvenor is not inclined to say much regarding the prospects of the bill. That veteran legislator has been in the depths of gloom for two or three weeks. After serving for nearly twenty years his constituents have refused to send him back to congress. Although they have had such lively tilts with him many of the leading house democrats are sorry that the Ohio member will retire at the end of the present term. It is a reasonably safe republican district and nothing but a landslide in favor of the democrats like that which occurred in 1890 could possibly give the district to a democrat. General Grosvenor is a unique figure in the house and by friends and foes is regarded as a man of ability.

As has been repeatedly stated in this correspondence some sort of railroad rate bill will be passed before the close of the session. That is conceded by nearly everybody who keeps a close watch on legislative proceedings. The most prominent railway officials who visit the capital admit that fact, whether willingly or not. They have evidently made up their minds that it is impossible to stave off action. If the railroad people have maintained a lobby here this winter their work along such lines has been the most quiet in the memory of those who are supposed to know what is going on. In the old days when the late Collis P. Huntington and other powerful men connected with Pacific railroad enterprises wanted to prevent legislation their agents and attorneys swarmed about the capitol. Mr. Huntington came here himself and too often, in the opinion of those who opposed him, got at the hands of the republican party pretty much everything demanded by the corporations controlled by him.

It has been some years since a democrat was sent to congress from Philadelphia. A strong effort will be made this year to elect two, and probably three, democrats from that big city. A political revolution of huge proportions not only in Philadelphia, but also in Pittsburg, seems to be imminent. The republicans in Pennsylvania for the past twelve or fifteen years have been literally drunk with power. Only every now and then have the democrats elected a high official of the state, and when the late Robert E. Patti-

son was chosen governor the legislature remained republican so that none of the reforms demanded by the masses could be carried out at Harrisburg. For almost a quarter of a century the congressional districts of the Keystone state have been arranged so that it is impossible for the democrats to elect their candidates except in a few of the districts that have been left overwhelmingly democratic in order that the rest of them might easily be carried by the republicans.

During the past decade the republican bosses and grafters of Philadelphia have levied almost unheard of assessments upon the congressional candidates. The late Henry Burk, who represented the greater part of the old Randall district, did not conceal the fact that his nominations cost him every two years \$50,000. In addition he either was compelled to spend or else did of his own volition fully \$5,000 more in visiting the scores of political clubs that are peculiar to Philadelphia. These clubs are conveniently located near saloons of spacious size, many being over the places where wines, beer and strong liquors are dispensed. The name does not indicate it, but Henry Burk was a native of Germany. He was a millionaire manufacturer of vicid kid and other light leather. Burk, during his lifetime, seemed to think it entirely proper for the republican bosses of Philadelphia, to demand such outrageous sums for the seats in congress, and used to talk of his as if it had been a \$50,000 house or something else that he had purchased. His income was over \$300,000 a year, and he would explain his entry into public life about like this: "A great many rich men will spend their surplus cash in yachts, fine race horses or in maintaining palatial residences. I have no tastes in those directions. For years I thought I would like to go to congress, and the leaders hearing of my ambition made it easy for me to get the nomination. I was perfectly willing to put up the money—would indeed have furnished more if any other man in the district had 'raised the limit.' Money had to be collected to run the campaigns, and it was none of my business how much of it went into the pockets of the leaders."

At the same time Burk was in congress there was another leather manufacturer turning out products like his who was a representative from Philadelphia. His name was Foederer. He and Burk died about the same time. Within the past ten days there died in Philadelphia another millionaire republican congressman—George A. Castor. Each time Castor ran for congress the bosses assessed him for enormous sums. As Castor also had plenty of money he paid it out to the leaders with a free hand. These were all men of mediocre ability. In the old days the Philadelphia delegation was composed of men of exceptional ability. They died in harness, and not only were they permitted to come to congress as long as they wanted to but such a thing as assessing them for the campaigns was an unheard of proceeding.

The republican rings have flourished in Philadelphia and Pittsburg and have retained their power in recent years by not only raising vast sums of money with which to purchase votes, but every time there was a serious movement on the part of the people to put a stop to their grafting the leaders have prepared, and their organs have printed stories to the effect that if what they were pleased to term the "organization" was defeated it simply meant that Pennsylvania would go democratic. It would also mean the election of from ten to sixteen democratic members of congress from the state. Such a gain as that might give the democrats control of the house of representatives at Washington, and it would prove the entering wedge to split in two the protection log. Arguments of this kind have been potential in Pennsylvania, and the average business man and most of his employes have been gulled by such gauzy statements. They have shut their eyes when they must have known that the leaders of the "organizations" in the cities and in the state have simply been highwaymen in their treatment of the corporations and in manipulating legislation in the big cities and at the state capital. Last year the people of Philadelphia had their eyes opened. The ring got an awful wallop. The election at Pittsburg the other day when a democrat was victorious in the mayoralty race for the first time in forty or more years proves that the revolt up that way means serious business for the "organization."

ALFRED J. STOFER.