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Baltimore and the Rest of the World

Mr. Henry Williams, the new president of the second branch of the city council, is a slender gentleman who looks taller than he really is, and affects a short white mustache and close cropped gray hair. Originally a lawyer in Calvert County—where he was born 60 years ago—he is now president of the Weema Steamboat Company and the possessor of a rather comfortable store of minted coin.

While yet a Calvert countian he was elected to the state legislature by the unanimous vote of his fellow citizens. Since he has been in Baltimore, however, he has not been so fortunate. In 1895 the ambition to be mayor of Baltimore took charge of him, but a certain Alcaeus Hooper wiped it out. In 1897 it reappeared, and one William T. Masten gave it its death blow. Today, because Mayor Hayes is out of town and the president of the second branch of the council is mayor ex-officio in his absence, Mr. Williams at last, and by a circuitous route, will have his dream of burgomasterial honors realized.

Personally the new president of the second branch is the embodiment of affability. His office is on the second floor of the Weems Line Light street pier, and anyone who wants to see him may do so without waiting in an anteroom. He is looked upon as being one of the best men in his party—not the best politician, but the best citizen.

Mr. Williams is a mason, an Episcopalian and a member of the Merchants' Club. Thomas John Claggett, his great-grandfather on his mother's side, was the first bishop of any denomination ordained in America.

President George M. Upshur of the board of police commissioners is a man upon whom honors and dignity rest heavily. It would require much courage to slap him upon the back and superhuman valor to call him by his first name. He was born at Snow Hill, the home of Governor Smith, and because of this fact, perhaps, he is now a full fledged tinsel colonel upon His Excellency's resplendent staff. The first American Upshur came to Virginia from England in 1638. Since then there have been many of them, and all have been good citizens. Abel P., a near relative of the police commissioner, was secretary of the navy and later secretary of state in the cabinet of President Tyler.

For the benefit of the statistical it may be stated that Mr. Albert Sproesser, who was nominated by the Republican caucus last week for the presidency of the first branch of the council, is about five feet nine inches in height, 165 pounds in weight, well proportioned as to build, German as to ancestry and happy as to smile. He was born in Philadelphia in 1957, but awoke 13 years ago and came to Baltimore. For 13 years he was a special post office inspector. In the unlucky year he lost his place and began the study of the law. Today he is a member of the bar, a civil justice of the peace, a Mason, an Odd Fellow and a Royal Arcanumite.

Those of Mr. Sproesser's colleagues in the old council who are given to the practice known as guying, say that when he arrived in Baltimore he called himself Schpresser—the orthodox Teutonic version of his patronymic. Later he became Spros-ser, and more recently, they say, he has been heard to pronounce the word Sproh-ser. This, however, is absolutely false, and Mr. Sproesser proves its falsity by demonstrating the fact that he has never, even in his unguarded moments, spelt any part of portion of his name with a y.

In the old council Mr. Sproesser has worked hard as the Republican floor leader. Taking one with the other there has been no better solon. Unless all signs fail and the prognostications of the prophets go for naught, he will make a first class president.