

Baltimore Morning Herald
April 8, 1901

Terse and Terrible Texts

Mayor Thomas G. Hayes is a conundrum to those citizens who attempt to follow the newspaper accounts of his doings and something more than a conundrum to those who meet him face to face.

The alias of Thomas the Sudden, which has been bestowed upon him by certain of his critics, is misleading, in that it indicates that his opinions are hastily formed and his acts but half considered. As a matter of fact, few men are more careful in drawing conclusions or more cautious in making inferences. The mayor's long experience as a lawyer has taught him that haste is the parent of error. Yet this same experience, combined with his natural keen wit, has enabled him to make analyses and delve into facts with extraordinary accuracy and expedition.

If he encounters a difficult problem, he does not waste time in marvelling at its difficulty. Before most people would have summoned up courage to attack it he has reduced it to the lowest common denominator and made good progress in separating the relevant from the irrelevant. Then he weighs the two sides and draws his conclusions, and when they are once formed, not all the king's horses or all the king's men can shake them.

It is true, of course, that the mayor sometimes changes his mind, and it is also true that these changes are often incomprehensible to the man up a tree. Given fixed premises, he will remain immovable. But given new evidence and an irresistible force and he will prove an unusually willing convert. By his own confession, he is a practical politician. He knows the devious mazes of municipal wire pulling as well as most men, and this knowledge, more than anything else, has enabled him to carry into effect his pet theories. That he has endeavored to govern the city according to his idea of business is not denied by his enemies, and that this idea is pretty near the right one is also undisputed. But that his methods have grated harshly upon many excellent citizens is as true as it is unfortunate.

In the selection of his advisers the mayor has naturally gravitated toward those whose advice is largely concurrence, for he is beyond and above all assertive and pugnacious and cock-sure. His ego is conspicuous at all times. Opposition he looks upon, not as an obstacle, but as something to afford pleasure in being overthrown. For this reason he has gathered about him a cabinet of gentlemen whose dearest aim in life is to find favor in his eye. And thereby he has antagonized others whose counsel possibly might be of greater value.

Personally the mayor is democratic and straightforward in the extreme. If he dislikes a man, he says so, and will have nothing to do with him. If he is out of humor, he will be gruff and repellant, but if, on the other hand, he is enjoying much peace of mind, he will be as pleasant as the spring. Most people, on meeting him for the first time, change their preconceived notion of him. His photographs represent him as a little man behind a big mustache. But face to face his slight frame is forgotten and the keen, incisive glitter off his eye holds the attention. In every line of his face one may read the reason why he is looked

upon as one of the best lawyers in Maryland. In the square chin there is the determination, in the guileless smile there is the subtlety, and in the broad forehead there is the hard, solid gray matter that makes the man.

Mr. Evan H. Morgan, the representative of the Eighteenth Ward in the first branch of the city council, is six feet or more in height, heavy as to build, deep as to voice, olly as to laugh, and well endowed as to flowing iron gray mustache. Despite the fact that he possesses all the attributes of a Sandow, Mr Morgan is a writer of romances by profession. This remarkable circumstance was noted the other day by Mr. Roger W. cull, that astute student of human nature. The two met for the first time after a committee meeting, and Mr. Cull gasped with surprise.

"I expected to find you as thin as a rail," he began.

"Why?" asked Mr. Morgan.

"Because you're a literary man,:" answered Mr. Cull.

"Haw, haw!" laughed Mr. Morgan, and then he went on to explain that in these days of big space rates even poets are able to partake of an occasional table d'hote.

There are a good many people who hold that Mr Morgan is a handsome man. These, however, he reckons as flatterers.

Few men in Baltimore should have a more vivid idea of what Colonel Roosevelt calls "the strenuous life" than Water engineer Alfred Quick. This is not to be taken as an indication that he is a man of terrific personal prowess, or that he has engaged in physical combats with anyone or anything. Far from it, indeed, for Mr. Quick is the embodiment of all that is mild mannered and gentle.

But in polite persiflage and pointed invective he has good schooling, and if he is not now a master of polished "roasting" it is the fault of the man and not of the circumstances. First of all came the special subway committee's attack upon the municipal conduits. In the preparation of this document Mr. Quick had a prominent share, and as a reward he was made the bright, particular subject of a lurid and sizzling "roast" by subway engineer Phelps. Mr. Phelps, too, is a mild mannered man, but this time he cast loose from all restraint and sailed in to do or die. Subsequent events have shown that he did.

While recovering from this assault Mr. Quick spent his time in penning a wild and woolly "roast" of his predecessors in office. In the space of 10,000 words he accused them of almost every crime in the calendar except manslaughter and mayhem. And on MOnDay, after the smoke of this cannonading had cleared away, Mr. Quick himself was attacked in turn by Councilman Sudler, who practically charged him, through the medium of an innocent appearing resolution, with the heinous offense of shielding the Republicans in the water department from the Democratic ax.

In appearance, Mr. Quick is tall and rather straight, with a baldish head and an exceedingly short ad blond mustache. He is a man of few words and with a perpetual and quizzical smile. When he is asked a question he smiles mysteriously and rewards his questioner for a minute or two without moving a muscle. Then, if he intends to make an intelligible answer, he says "See me tomorrow." If, on the other hand, he deems it unwise to reply, he merely continues to smile.

Mayor Hayes told the legislature at Annapolis that Mr. Quick is an unusually efficient official. "He has saved money," said the mayor.

With the solitary exception of the lawyers, no class of citizens is better represented i the city council than the coal dealers. In the two branches there are four purveyors of the black diamonds, and all of them are ranked among the leaders in the business. The lawyers

eat them y two. Among the remainder of the councilmen there are three physicians, one druggist, one story writer, one caner and two men of independent means. In addition there are three men who labor with cashbook and ledger, one theatrical manager, one retired merchant, one butcher, one marble dealer and one contractor. Dr. Linthicum is the oldest member and Mr. Brown the youngest. In the first branch there are 13 Democrats and 6 Republicans In the second all are Democrats. By the gerrymander of the wards the second will be given at least one Republican in May.

Councilman Joseph Steinacker of the Nineteenth Ward is a lumber dealer by trade and a joker by profession. For the past month he has spent his days and nights in a strenuous endeavor to have a new engine house built at Carroll. As the lumber yard he owns is the largest piece of property in the district it was at first insinuated that he desired to have his insurance rates reduced at the expense of the city. The falsity of this base canard, however, was soon shown.

When his engine house ordinance was before the board of public improvements he made a speech in favor of it an hour and a half in length. At the end of one of his most flowery periods one of the members of the board suggested that in view of the fact that there were no fire plugs at Carroll it would be useless to build an engine house.

"In reply to that," said Mr. Steinacker impassively, "I would point out the fact that if the horses of the city engines are compelled to gallop all the way to Carroll the department will soon have 'plugs' enough."

When this shaft permeated the intelligences of the board the meeting nearly ended in what is commonly known as a roughhouse Last week Mr. Steinacker had his joke printed for private circulation among his friends. An engrossed copy will be filed among the archives of the city.