

*Baltimore Morning Herald*  
January 8, 1901

***Solons Victorious After a Hard Fight***

***Mayor's Veto of the \$1.95 Levy Ordinance Overridden***

***Megenhardt's Heroism***

***Taken to City Hall in an Ambulance to Vote***

***Flight of Mr. Touchton***

***Recaptured by the Anti-Hayes Men After a Long Search—A Close Battle***

With the aid of Mr. L.H. Miller, who deserted the Mayor at the last moment, and Mr. Megenhardt, who was brought from his six bed upon a stretcher, and in spite of the desertion of Mr. Touchton, who fled from the Council chamber and was only recaptured after a two hours' chase, the Mayor's opponents in the First Branch of the Council passed the \$1.95 levy ordinance over his veto last night.

There have been few more dramatic Council meetings in the history of Baltimore. Every incident of the long session was a bit of lurid melodrama. There were lots and counter plots and villains and heroes galore.

The Mayor's friends attempted to execute a coup d'etat. But, led by Councilman Morgan, the Solons outwitted them and beat them gloriously.

***Megenhardt the Hero***

Mr. Megenhardt was the man upon whom the belligerents based their hopes. For two months he has been ill in bed, but last night, with full determination to help form the 18 necessary to override the Mayor's veto, he went to City Hall in an ambulance and entered the Council chamber upon a litter.

Mr. L.H. Miller was the other Solon who had volunteered to swell the anti-Hayes force from 16 to 18. Until yesterday he was reckoned a friend of the Mayor. But at the last call he cast his lot with the belligerents.

***Touchton Disappears***

When the Mayor's friends heard of his desertion they acted quickly. Five minutes after the First Branch was called to order Mr Touchton—one of the "sure" anti-Hayes men—walked out of the Council chamber. With him was George W. Golden, a Republican politician. Nearby

were Warden Doyle, William M. Stewart, another Republican, and Mayor's Messenger Zimmerman.

"I'll be back in a few minutes," said Mr. Touchton.

The few minutes passed and his seat remained vacant. Then came the time to consider the veto. Mr. Megenhardt, upon his stretcher, waited impatiently in President Gephart's office.

"Where is Touchton?" asked Mr. Morgan.

"Kidnapped," said a half dozen.

Search was made about the hall. He could not be found. Then a recess was taken, and Messrs. Sproesser and Howser were appointed a posse to run him down. They set out at top speed and were gone for an hour and a half. Meanwhile Mr. Megenhardt lay wrapped in blankets and the other Solons vowed vengeance upon the missing Touchton.

### *The Lost Found*

At 7.20 Mr. Howser rushed in, breathless.

"We've got him," he cried.

"Where is he?" asked the Solons in chorus.

"At the Lexington Hotel, with Sproesser," replied Mr. Howser.

Then followed a whispered consultation and a minute later the Highways Committeemen, Messrs. Morgan, Norris, Wilson and Houser, were at the Lexington. Mr. Touchton was defiant, but after much argument he demanded, it is said, that his ward, the Sixth, be given an improved street in the repaving ordinance to follow the levy. Forced into a corner, the solons agreed. Then he was taken over to the hall, like a captive, and hustled into a committee room. There the leaders "worked" upon him, but he was not to be "bluffed," and five minutes later he walked to his desk triumphant.

### *Enter the Stretcher Bearers*

The scene which followed was dramatic in the extreme. As President Gephart brought down his gavel there fell a dead silence and during the first part of the roll call not a member stirred. When Mr. Megenhardt's name was reached the door leading to the president's sanctum opened and two men bearing a litter marched out into the chamber. Following them was the heroic Councilman's physician, Dr. I.L. Fetterhoff.

"I've been training him for this for two weeks," said the doctor.

The stretcher bearers deposited their burden in the aisle before the president.

"Proceed with the roll call," said the latter.

"Mr. Megenhardt," called the clerk.

"Here!" replied the representative of the Twentieth Ward clearly, and then, upon motion of Mr. Morgan, the consideration of the veto was begun.

### *Eighteen "Years"*

"Those who favor the passage of the ordinance will say 'yes'" said the president.

Dr. Sudler, the third member whose name was called, voted "nay."

Then came Mr. Miller, the Mayor's erstwhile adherent, and in answering to his name he made a speech explaining his "flop."

“I want an improved street for my ward,” he said in effect, “and by voting ‘yes’ I think I increase my chances of getting it. If I vote ‘nay’ there will be no repaving at all.

Down the line were 12 more “yeas” and four “nays,” the latter from Messrs Lamm, Reinhart, Donnelly and Watty.

Then came the man upon the stretcher. He voted “yes” in a hearty tone and with a sense of duty painfully performed.

Three more “yeas” and one “nay” from Mr. Galvin and the ordinance was passed over the veto.

The 60 cent suburban levy followed and the deed was done.

### *In An Ambulance*

Mr. Megenhardt, the hero of the hour, journeyed to the hall in the Johns Hopking Hospital ambulance. During the long wait, while Mr. Touchton was being hunted for high and low, he lay upon his litter and received the congratulations of his conferees.

“I think I am right,” he said, “and I am willing to suffer a little discomfort to show it.”

Mr. Megenhardt has been suffering from rheumatism for several months and will not be well for some time to come. His trip cost him much pain, but he bore it stoically, like a martyr.

### *Mr. Touchton’s Age*

Mr. Touchton, the solon whose mysterious disappearance almost caused the plans of the belligerents to fail, refused to offer an explanation of his flight.

“I was called home,” he said; and then he added significantly: “I’m more than seven years old.”

“He’s all right,” said Mr. Morgan. “All he needed was a little talking to.”

“Did he know that the veto was to be considered?” was asked.

“Certainly,” replied Mr. Morgan. “He was one of the most bitter of the Mayor’s enemies.”

During his absence Mr. Touchton’s fellow solons expressed their opinion of his flight in highly uncomplimentary terms.

“He pledged his word that he was with us,” said one member, with disgust.

“A mean trick!” said Mr. Megenhardt. “Here I have come downtown in an ambulance—for nothing.”

“Wait a while,” said the more patient ones; “we’ll get him yet.”

For half an hour the Second Branch solons waited with their brethren of the First Branch. Then, giving up all hope of the missing legislator’s capture, they adjourned to meet again this afternoon. Subsequently the lower house was compelled to concur in this action, though the necessity for it was gone.