

a veil upon the evils of the past. They know that the Convention of 1851, fresh from the people, and with full experience of the workings of the life-tenure system, pronounced that it was a failure, and that a new and better system must be devised. It could not be said that that convention was incompetent.

The chairman of this committee (Mr. Dobbin) had paid that body the highest compliment. Both these systems had been tried. The life tenure had prevailed from the time of the Revolution, but after it was changed and the elective system for a term of years adopted, there was no instance of any return ever having been made to the old system. New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia had changed since 1815, but Georgia had inaugurated the elective system in 1798, and the fact that the system had been continued showed that there was merit in it. He maintained that it had been a success here, that judges had sat on the bench of Maryland since 1851 who would have done honor to that bench in its palmy days, judges who had stood up for private rights as nobly and as staunchly as any mortal man. He spoke of the system generally, and not of one or two particular cases. The fact was that where this system had been tried, it had never been deviated from. His friend from Allegany, (Mr. McKaig,) had spoken of judges stumping the State and electioneering for office. His friend's experience was different from his (Mr. F's.) He had never known of any judge going into the political arena. In regard to the term of fifteen years, it should be made sufficiently permanent to secure the services of a competent man. If a man was sagacious enough to get himself elected to the bench, he would be sagacious enough to know that the proper way to secure popular favor was to administer justice impartially and correctly. Very few cases occur where a political question is submitted to a judge, and if it does happen, he admitted that a judge might waver, but the grand model, the Supreme Court of the United States had wavered in their duty to the Constitution. After having made up their decision on a case affecting the dearest rights of large numbers of their fellow-citizens, (referring to the test oath decision,) they had withheld that decision for months through a base fear of party clamor. Human nature was fallible, and neither the one