

adopted advantageously in Maryland. They do not think it as well calculated as others that might be suggested, "to secure justice to the suitors in our courts, fully without denial, and speedily without delay." In cases of the indisposition of the judge, or where he may be interested in the result of a suit, or may stand nearly related to the parties litigant, in such cases serious inconveniences might result to the public, were such a system adopted. Besides, the committee think that part of our present system, which makes the Chief Judges of the several districts to constitute the Court of Appeals, one admirably calculated to secure and preserve superior legal ability upon the bench. At the Court of Appeals, the Chief Judges of all the districts assemble twice in each year. Cases of vast magnitude and importance are yearly submitted to their decision. These cases, argued before them by the ablest lawyers of the State, call forth the most profound investigation from each member of the court. The high responsibility imposed upon them, and their anxiety to decide aright, impel them to enter into the fullest interchange of opinion among themselves, and the most laborious investigation of authorities upon the subjects before them. Thus when they return to their several districts, they return strengthened in legal knowledge, and the better prepared to decide properly and promptly upon all cases that may arise in their respective county courts. It is to this feature of our system, that the committee think, is principally to be attributed the high rank for learning and ability which has always characterised our Judiciary, when compared with that of our sister States of the Union.

The plan suggested by the order, proposes to continue the office of Chancellor. This office the committee think might be advantageously abolished. The county courts, as courts of equity have now concurrent jurisdiction in nearly, if not, every case, that comes within the jurisdiction of the Chancellor. To vest an associate judge of the county courts, with the exclusive equity jurisdiction for his respective district, according to the system herewith submitted by the committee, would they think, at the same time save the expense of the office of Chancellor, and better subserve the convenience of suitors. For these reasons the committee cannot approve the plan of re-organizing our judiciary system as proposed by the order.

To attempt a re-organization of our judiciary system is a task of vast responsibility and attended with no small difficulties. Any proposition of the kind, should be the result of deeper investigation and more mature reflection, than the committee, from the time allowed them, have been enabled to give to the subject.

But under the several orders of the House it was made the duty of the committee, to investigate the present judiciary system, and to suggest such plan of reform as in their judgment might seem expedient. Having considered the subject, as fully as time and opportunity would permit, the committee beg leave respectfully to suggest the following alterations to be made in the judiciary system of the State.