

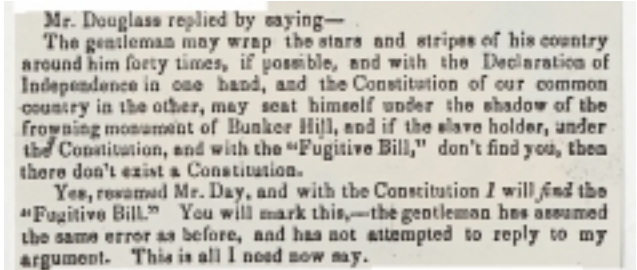
I cannot sit still, while this resolution is pending, and by my silence acquiesce in it. For all who have known me for years past, know that to the principle of the resolution I am, on principle opposed. The remarks of the gentleman from Cuyahoga, (Mr. Douglass), it seems to me, partake of the error of many others who discuss this question, namely, of making the *construction* of the Constitution of the United States, the same as the Constitution itself. There is no dispute between us in regard to the proslavery action of this government, nor any doubt in our minds in regard to the aid which the Supreme Court of the United States has given to Slavery, and by their unjust and, according to their own rules, illegal decisions; but *that* is not the Constitution—they are not that under which I vote. We, most of us, profess to believe in the Bible; but men have, from the Bible, attempted to justify the worst of iniquities. Do we, in such a case, discard the Bible, believing, as we do, that iniquities find no shield there?—or do we not rather discard the false opinions of mistaken men, in regard to it? As some one else says, if a judge make a wrong decision in an important case, shall we abolish the Court? Shall we not rather remove the *judge*, and put in his place one who will judge righteously? We all so decide. So in regard to the Constitution. In voting, with judges' decisions we have nothing to do. Our business is with the Constitution. If it says it was framed to "establish justice," it, of course, is opposed to injustice; if it says plainly no person shall be deprived of life, *liberty*, or property, without due process of law,"—I suppose it means it, and I shall avail myself of the benefit of it. Sir, coming up as I do, in the midst of three millions of men in chains, and five hundred thousand only half free, I consider every instrument precious which guarantees to me liberty. I consider the Constitution the foundation of American liberties, and wrapping myself in the flag of the nation, I would plant myself upon that Constitution, and using the weapons they have given me, I would appeal to the American people for the rights thus guaranteed."

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[Mr. Douglass replied by saying—

The gentleman may wrap the stars and stripes of his country around him forty times, if possible, and with the Declaration of Independence in one hand, and the Constitution of our common country in the other, may seat himself under the shadow of the frowning monument of Bunker Hill, and if the slave holder, under the Constitution, and with the “Fugitive Bill,” don’t find you, then there don’t exist a Constitution.]

Yes, resumed Mr. Day, and with the Constitution *I will find* the “Fugitive Bill.” You will mark this,—the gentleman has assumed the same error as before, and has not attempted to reply to my argument. This is all I need now say.



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