

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Mr. Bibb has referred to the startling fact, that there is a proposition to turn all the United States officers into judges, to sit upon the great question, whether the black man is entitled to make a defence of himself when north of Mason and Dixon's line. Now, for my own part, I say that there is a Constitution above all men's Constitutions—it is the law of God, as written on every human heart; a law which binds us to be and act like a brother to our brother man. But in all laws, whatsoever they may be, we shall never consent to the re-deliverance of any fugitive slave, unless he is flying from a tribunal for the commission of some criminal offence. I think this comes up as a test question. We are all to be tested in this country as to whether we shall or shall not uphold the Constitution in its right, or let it fall in its errors. Were I a member of Congress, and in the Senate, (and there is no knowing what may be—though it would be strange to see a man of my complexion in Congress,) [Laughter,] and were I to swear to give my aid to the furtherance and sanction of slaveholding, I should regard myself as perjured before high Heaven.

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