

mainly instrumental in subduing, to the not less responsible duties of enlarged statesmanship, in the restoration of the revolted States. The signs of a serious disagreement had already appeared among a class of politicians who repudiated the idea of an unbroken Union in their purpose to ignore the existence of the States in rebellion by reducing them at once, in violation of the principle on which our government was founded, to the condition of dependent territories, to be dealt with as Congress in its wisdom might decree. But in deploring the loss of one who recognized the true theory of this government in the perpetuity of the States, as integrals of a united system, which could only be dissolved by consent of the people themselves, we had reason for congratulation that his mantle had fallen upon another—not less the favorite and representative of the masses—whose sound constitutional principles led him to the adoption of the same well defined and maturely considered line of policy.

The work of restoring the States to their former status, in such a crisis, was one of the greatest delicacy and responsibility. Five millions of our deluded brethren, many of whom had been forced into hostility to the Union by crafty and designing demagogues, accepting the stern arbitrament of the sword, appealed for amnesty and pardon; and expressed their readiness to renew their allegiance to the flag which they had so wantonly assailed. There were also those, few in number it may be, in every State, who had never changed the relation of loyalty in which they stood to the Government, whose claim to protection, under their respective State organizations, was as perfect as that of any other section. President Lincoln leaned to the side of mercy and forgiveness, and announced his policy of reconstruction, at an early period, even before the war terminated. He accepted his obligation under the Constitution, to bring the States, whose functions had been suspended by the war, once more in harmony without doing violence to existing guarantees, or the unity of the Government. The war in which we had been engaged was not a *foreign* war against a separate nationality, but a war to put down insurrection among our own people. The power of the Government to do this had been fully vindicated. To argue the non-existence of States as the result of this effort would be to admit the weakness of the Government to maintain its own integrity against internal strife and domestic insurrection.

President Johnson, following in the footsteps of his predecessor, adopted the same plan of reconstruction. He threw himself upon the loyal element of the rebellious States—upon the white population, who alone possessed the right of suffrage under existing laws—extending amnesty in the beginning to those only who had faltered in their loyalty, whose