

The Mil. Authorities afford all the assistance in their power which in men, ways & means is very limited.

I am, Colonel &  
W.S.H.  
Capt &c

### *Valley Virginian*, "What Are We To Do?" February 21, 1866

*The Valley Virginian, a newspaper that began printing in Staunton in late 1865, complains about the refusal of Republicans to allow Southern representatives to take their seats in Congress and the rising support for Republicans in the North, asserting that many white Southerners are contemplating leaving the country rather than live under the rule of Radical Republicans. The Virginian hoped, as did many in the South, that the Radicals would be voted out of office by a disapproving Northern public and that their policies concerning the South would be reversed.*

It is useless to deny that the course pursued by the Radicals in Congress and their evident determination to grind the Southern people into the dust, if they can, has caused a general feeling of distrust in the South, and produced the desire among many of our most respectable and worthy citizens to emigrate to Mexico or anywhere, so as to be relieved of the present painful feeling of insecurity for the future. The Southern people went into the war for independence honestly; they staked their all upon the issue and when they lost it they honestly submitted to the arbitrament of the sword. They were willing to give the North all it won in the fight and they have performed their part of the contract. \* \* \*

\* \* \* It was hard to be conquered; it was hard to furl the banner that had floated in triumph over so many glorious fields; it was hard to give up cherished hopes and fond anticipations of a separate na-

tionality; it was hard to reap such bitter fruits from four years suffering and privation and accept the result; it was harder still to trudge over weary miles, with the shout of the conqueror ringing in your ears, to desolated homes—but all this we did and nothing the Southern people endured during the war adds so much to their honor and glory, as the honorable manner in which they have carried out the pledges made to Grant at Appomattox. But now after all; after we have performed our part and accepted the pledges of Grant and Johnson, it is harder still to be threatened with new penalties and forced to live in a constant state of uncertainty and doubt.

It is not that we doubt the will and determination of Andrew Johnson to do us justice, but the fear that the mass of the people North are so imbued with Radicalism, that nothing but our extermination will satisfy them. It is this feeling that creates the desire to leave home and friends and settle in a foreign land. Carry out President Johnson's policy; fulfill the pledges made by Grant at Appomattox and afterwards approved by Johnson, in his amnesty proclamation; then, will the Southern people go to work with a new life and energy and the idea of leaving the country be abandoned. We can not think the people of the North are fools or radicals and we hope soon to see the latter overthrown. If the honest, conservative sentiment, is as overwhelming North as reported we will soon see a change, and we can not see anything for our people to do now but to await the result of the coming conflict between President Johnson and the Radicals as patiently and as bravely as they endured the storms of the last four years. There is much to do in our country; everything is to be "reconstructed" and wealth untold is ours if energy and good sense direct our labors. Let the radicals do their worst, we surely can wait for the development of their policy before we leave our homes and all we hold dear, to be occupied by strangers. And, after all, this is a good country to live in and it is our duty to live and labor here. The widows, the orphans of our dead are left a sacred heritage to us. A land made glorious by the deeds of Jackson, Lee and a host of brave hearts is still ours. By making it prosperous and wealthy; by working as a people never worked before, we can say, come what may, "we have done our duty."