

Commonwealth of



Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN A. ANDREW,

GOVERNOR:

A PROCLAMATION

FOR A DAY OF

PUBLIC THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE.

BY the advice and consent of the Council, I do hereby appoint THURSDAY, the 26th day of November next, to be observed by the people of Massachusetts, as a day of Public Thanksgiving and Praise. And I respectfully but earnestly exhort all the people of this Commonwealth, whom this Proclamation shall reach, wherever they may be, whether on sea or land, within our quiet borders or abroad on distant fields of War, to consecrate that day, in the sight of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, by heartfelt works of charity, by devout thanksgiving, and by joyful praise. "O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name. For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting."

For all the innumerable mercies, for the infinitude of blessings, by which the year has been crowned; for health and prosperous industry, for peaceful homes, for waving fields of grain, for harvests rich with all the food of man, for all the bounties of the sea, the wealth of mines, the skill and thrift of every handicraft; for the great agencies of Nature herself, working as kindly helpers to the hands of men, and for all the fruits of their gigantic toil; for intellectual activity, and moral life; for every gift and fruit of reason, of conscience and religion, bless ye the Lord, and him only; praise him and magnify him forever.

Let us reverently contemplate the wonderful providence which has led and guided the hearts and minds of this people, and is shaping and working out the destiny of this Nation. Even in time of War we are rejoicing in the growth of the arts of Peace. Subjected to its temptations and demoralizing influence, yet the virtues of forbearance, patience and charity are daily illustrating the social life of our people no less conspicuously than their loyal patriotism. Side by side with the march of armies, and the destructive engines of War, move the messengers of Love, with every solace for the body or the mind, to soften the soldier's lot or alleviate the travail of mortality. Sometimes slowly, and with hesitating tide, but always surely; sometimes with a receding eddy, but always on an undercurrent of steady and majestic power, has been borne the symbol of our Nationality. The moral sight has been quickened, duty has grown clearer to the mind, and faith has grown warmer in the heart, as the revelations of trial and the discipline of a great suffering have done their appointed work.

Blending the temper of forgiveness with an unflinching integrity of purpose; weeping with the bereaved who mourn the beauty of our Israel slain upon our high places; but catching the sublime spirit of those who have sealed their testimony with their blood, may we fail not to implore on this, our annual festival, strength from above to exercise ourselves also in every heroic virtue for the vindication of right and the overthrow of wrong.

Let us trust that Peace shall soon return to our borders, and a union of hearts and hands revive on the ruins of that injustice and inhumanity which bred our sorrows; when all the inhabitants of the land will unite to sing, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed his people."

Given at the Council Chamber, in Boston, this first day of October, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and the eighty-eighth of the Independence of the United States of America.

JOHN A. ANDREW.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR,
WITH THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL.

OLIVER WARNER, *Secretary.*

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.