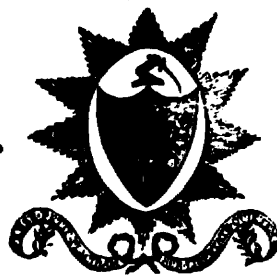


Commonwealth of



Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY,

ELBRIDGE GERRY, Esq.

Governor of the Commonwealth.

A Proclamation,

FOR A DAY OF PUBLIC FASTING, HUMILIATION, AND PRAYER.

THE "Father of All," by whose unbounded mercy we are yet alive, and by whose revolving season we are admonished of our duty, having displayed his infinite kindness and forbearance to us the year past, notwithstanding the continuance and increase of our innumerable and aggravated offences; I have thought fit, in conformity to the invariable usage of our venerable ancestry, to appoint, and with the consent of the Council I do appoint, THURSDAY, the NINTH of APRIL next, to be a DAY of SOLEMN FASTING, HUMILIATION, and PRAYER, throughout this Commonwealth. And the ministers and people of every religious denomination, are called on and requested, to assemble in their respective places of public worship, that with a devotion in some degree commensurate to our crimes, we may endeavour to perform on that day, the solemn duties of it, in sincerity and in truth.—And deeply impressed with a sense of our unparalleled ingratitude, let us contemplate the blessings which have flowed from the unlimited grace and favour of offended DEITY:—That we are still permitted to enjoy the first of Heaven's blessings, the Gospel of Jesus Christ;—That we have been highly favoured with federal and state systems of Government, wisely adapted to our relative circumstances and situations;—That we have been protected by a National Government, whose wisdom, firmness and integrity are acknowledged and applauded, with a remarkable degree of unanimity by the respective States; are an impenetrable shield against the wiles and attacks of foreign and domestic foes; and are the best pledge of our union, prosperity and independence;—That we have been favoured with able Legislatures, just and salutary laws, and upright and learned interpreters of them;—That we have been preserved from civil commotions, the dangerous consequences of party strife and animosities;—That we have been distant from the unwelcome din of war; but not disposed to meet it, whenever called on by Divine Providence for the defence and preservation of our liberty and independence;—That we have been blessed with remarkable health, which has exhilarated every part of our land;—That we have been secure in the full and free exercise of our civil and religious rights and liberties;—That we have been exhorted and instructed by so many learned and benevolent divines, whose precepts and examples evince the purity of religion, and uniformly proclaim "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will towards men;"—That we have colleges and other literary establishments, which are in high estimation, and which diffusing the principles of religion, morality and science, are rendering the most essential benefits to society;—That the smiles of Heaven have been extended to our husbandry, that great source of our subsistence and wealth; to our manufacturing interest, an important pillar of our independence; to our indispensable mechanical concerns; and to their essen-

tial supports, our navigation and commerce, exposed as these inevitably have been to systematic and lawless depredations;—That "our lots are cast in pleasant places" abounding with the necessaries, conveniences and luxuries of life;—That we are defended by a brave and patriotic militia, which is ardent in the pursuit of military accomplishments and fame, which is equally the foe of foreign and domestic tyranny, and which has for its object the preservation of our invaluable rights and liberties;—That we have been free from those awful convulsions of nature, which have distressed many of our sister States, and from any such calamity as has covered one of them with the garb of sorrow;—And that we have been preserved from many evils and miseries incidental to communities.—And penitently reflecting, that for these and innumerable instances of divine goodness, we have been utterly destitute of the gratitude due to the "Great first Cause" of all our happiness, let us prostrate ourselves at the throne of celestial Grace; confess with unfeigned sincerity and penitence our numerous transgressions, and unworthiness of the least blessing; rest on the inestimable merits of a Mediator for pardon; earnestly solicit his aid, conscious of our inability, to abandon our vices and crimes, and whilst beseeching "forgiveness of our trespasses," may we "forgive those who trespass against us."

And with hearts overflowing in future with gratitude to our Sovereign Benefactor, for granting to us existence, for continuing it to the present period, and for accumulating on us, blessings spiritual and temporal through life, may we with fervour beseech him, so to continue them, as best to promote his glory and our welfare;—to incline the belligerents, who with unexampled injustice for a series of years, have loaded us with injuries, to redress our wrongs; and to prepare us for the result, whether peace or war;—to preserve to us the inestimable life of the President of the United States;—to arm with wisdom and power the National and State Governments, and to inspire with patriotism the people, in defence of our unalienable rights;—to defeat all machinations foreign and domestic to engender strife, and by means thereof to destroy the Governments, Union and Independence of these States;—to preserve us from pestilence and famine;—to prosper our public and private institutions of every description;—to grant success to our husbandmen, and reward their industry, the present year, by a plentiful harvest; to restore to a flourishing state our navigation and commerce;—to continue and increase our manufacturing and mechanical interests;—to animate our Governments to promote and patronize them;—and to grant success to our fishermen, and to the honest pursuits of our fellow citizens, throughout the United States.

And it is earnestly recommended to the citizens of this Commonwealth, to abstain from every measure inconsistent with their duty on that day.

Given at the Council Chamber in Boston the sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twelve; and in the thirty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States.

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

By His Excellency the Governor,
with the advice and consent of the Council.

BENJAMIN HOMANS, Secretary of the State.

God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!