

Commonwealth of



1866
Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

ALEXANDER H. BULLOCK,

GOVERNOR:

A PROCLAMATION

FOR A DAY OF

FASTING, HUMILIATION, AND PRAYER.

By and with the advice and consent of the Council, I do hereby appoint THURSDAY, the Fifth day of April next, to be observed throughout this Commonwealth, as a day of HUMILIATION, FASTING, and PRAYER.

I entreat all the people of the Commonwealth, that they observe the day in the spirit of their pious ancestors, and that they hallow it apart from the uses of business and amusement; and, accordingly, that they assemble in their respective places of public worship, and supplicate the mercy of Almighty God for the manifold sins for which, as a distinct community, they are held to account.

It becomes us to be humble and penitent in review of the recent national trials, and in contemplation of those which remain; because, after the issue of battles, our hearts have not been properly moved by the wonderful Providence that hath given us the victory; because, in our exultation and prosperity, we are easy to forget that the practice of justice to all men is the only enduring basis of an enlightened and Christian government; and because our pride, selfishness, and ambition yet stand in the way of the perfect fulfillment of the mission to which we have been appointed, and which the God of nations hath proved Himself willing to aid us in completing, to the happiness of this whole people, and to the glory of His name.

Let us, therefore, implore the Divine favor upon our rulers, that, without hardness of heart and without perversity, but thoughtfully, religiously, and firmly, they may consummate the work of peace to this country and of equal rights to all persons in it, since to that work this nation has been consecrated by the sufferings and blood of its sons, and of its martyred chief magistrate; and let the descendants of the Puritans, on this day of Fasting and Prayer, renew their allegiance to patriotism and humanity, as a religious duty.

It becomes us, also, and especially, to offer earnest and penitential prayers for our own Commonwealth:

That the Creator and Preserver of states may inspire our hearts with a just sense of the obligation, imposed on us by the framers of this government, to practice the principles of humanity and general benevolence, morality and temperance, public and private charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality, sincerity and good humor, and all social affections, and all generous sentiments;

That He may dispose and enable our citizens to preserve and enlarge the institutions of religion and education;

That He may give to all our officers and magistrates grace to execute justice and to maintain truth, and, equally, to our people, the disposition to obey the laws;

That He may spare all the residents within our borders from the ravages of the pestilence which has recently afflicted other parts of the world, the advent of which to our shores is now so greatly apprehended;

That He may cause the seasons to smile upon the earth and upon the husbandmen, to the end that all the inhabitants may enjoy the kindly fruits of labor;

That He may incline the hearts of all who are blessed in health and in store, to relieve the unfortunate, and especially, to deal tenderly and generously with those, who, in the late war, have become disabled or bereaved;

And that in every relation, whether of ordinary life, or of public duty, He may grant to this people heart and strength in the cultivation of all the virtues and all the resources which are essential to a manly and Christian Commonwealth:

In the devout hope and faith, that these prayers in humiliation may be graciously received and answered by our fathers' God, in the name and mediation of His Son, our most blessed Lord and Saviour.

Given at the Council Chamber, in Boston, this sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, and of the independence of the United States of America the ninetieth.

ALEXANDER H. BULLOCK.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR,
BY AND WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL. }

OLIVER WARNER, *Secretary.*

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.