

---

MR. PORTER'S  
**Fast Sermon.**

AUGUST 20, 1812.

---

THE PRESENT DISTRESSED SITUATION OF OUR COUNTRY,  
AND THE DUTY OF MINISTERS AND PEOPLE IN SUCH  
A TIME AS THIS; CONSIDERED, IN A

# SERMON,

PREACHED AT RYE,

AUGUST 20, 1812;

THE DAY RECOMMENDED BY

PRESIDENT MADISON,

FOR A

NATIONAL FAST.

---

---

BY HUNTINGTON PORTER, A.M.  
Pastor of the Church of Christ in Rye.

---

---

Published by Request.

AM I THEREFORE BECOME YOUR ENEMY, BECAUSE I TELL  
YOU THE TRUTH? *St. Paul to the Galatians.*

PORTSMOUTH, N.H.

PRINTED AT THE ORACLE PRESS,

BY WILLIAM TREADWELL.

## PREFACE.

*THE ensuing Sermon was not written, or preached with any expectation of its being printed. It now by particular request, appears before the Public; and appears without any material alteration in the style or sentiments, in which it was delivered. The Reader's candor is therefore requested.*

*If by its being published or read, any mistakes imbibed at the time of hearing it, are removed; or any misrepresentations made since its delivery, counteracted; or, if any useful information, however small in degree, is conveyed by it to those who need instruction; its publication will not be in vain.*

*It is certainly no disadvantage to any person or people to know the truth—the true state of things; to know, especially at this critical day, the situation of our country, to be acquainted with the public sentiment on our great national concerns, and particularly, on the interesting question of the war, in which we are now involved. Every citizen should be alive—every person awakened to due inquiry, and to an humble desire of the best information. For, it is not a knowledge of the truth, and its proper influence, either in religion or in politics, but the want of them, that render a people liable to err, or to be misguided.*

# SERMON.

JOEL II. 15, 16, 17.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly :

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation : assemble the elders : gather the children, and those that suck the breast ; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.

**O**N account of a national calamity threatened to ancient Israel, and coming upon them, they were, as in the words before us, called into solemn assembly, to observe a day of fasting and prayer.

It is very proper for any people, when under the mighty hand of God, to humble themselves in his presence for their sins, which are the procuring cause of calamities, and to present their fervent supplications to him, that he would spare his people, correct in measure, and not give his heritage to reproach ; but would mercifully forgive their transgressions, sanctify his judgments to them and remove from them in due time the tokens of his displeasure.

The particular judgments threatened to Israel and that were now coming upon them, and on account of which they were specially called to humiliation and prayer, were *drought* and *famine*—sore and very distressing calamities ! And the prophet Jeremiah, after faithfully representing to them these distresses coming upon their land, reminds them of their duty, urging to an immediate discharge of it in a very pathetic manner—“ Rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious

gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach."

These words plainly point it out to be the duty of all, rulers and subjects, parents and children, married and unmarried, ministers and people, to assemble together in the day of public distress, to humble themselves before God, and cry unto him for deliverance.

The special occasion of our being called to observe this day "with religious solemnity" is, the war in which our country is now involved. President Madison having by advice and act of a majority in Congress, declared war against Great Britain and her dependencies, has seen fit to recommend to the people of these States, religiously to observe this day, as a day of humiliation and prayer; as manifested by his proclamation, which has been read to you.

We are now met, my hearers, in solemn assembly, to attend to the duties of the day. May we attend to these duties in a serious and becoming manner. May we and may the people of these states attend this day to those things, which ought to have a humbling influence upon all; and may suitable addresses be presented to Almighty God, the great arbiter of nations, the righteous governor of the universe, and the only hope and Saviour of Israel in times of trouble.

The present subject and occasion naturally lead us,

I. To take some view of the situation of our beloved  
yet

yet distressed country, which renders it proper and an important duty in the people of these United States, to observe a day of humiliation and prayer.—and

II. To consider the duty of ministers and people to unite in humbling themselves before God in times of public calamity, and in earnest prayer to him that he would in his great mercy, spare his people, and not give his heritage to reproach.

I. To take some view of the situation of our beloved yet distressed country, which renders it proper and an important duty in the people of these States to observe a day of humiliation and prayer.

THIS country, which gave birth to the most if not all of us; and to whose rights liberties and independence we are naturally attached, and which we all wish to have respected and maintained, is at this day on various accounts, in a very unhappy situation. It is viewed so, I believe, by all reflecting and considerate persons, whatever may be their particular political or religious sentiments. Some may think it unhappy more especially, on one account, and others on another; and different persons may be led to assign different things as the causes of this unhappiness. It is not my design to go into the various particulars that might be noticed; but shall offer what I propose on this part of my subject, under the three following articles, namely—The *irreligion* and *sins* that are visible among us. The *divisions* that appear in the land—And the *War* in which our country is involved.

On these several accounts, these United States are, and must be viewed in a distressed situation.

*First.* The *irreligion* and *sins* that are visible in the land.

That we live in a degenerate age—an age, not of right reason in many respects; but of great irreligion and neglects

gleects of personal, relative and social duties ; and that we are a people laden with iniquity, are truths easily to be demonstrated, by comparing the sentiments and lives of men with the law and word of God, which we account a perfect and just rule both of faith and practice. This being the standard, by which to try the sentiments and lives of all, in their various stations and relations in society ; who does not stand condemned by it, more or less in his thoughts, words and actions ? What man is he that liveth and sinneth not ? Some, indeed, are more vile and wicked than others ; more neglectful of duty ; more deeply involved in guilt ; and therefore do more to draw down divine judgments upon our country, and have reason themselves to fear “ the greater damnation.”

On this subject of the *irreligion* and *sins* of people, a wide field opens itself for description and lamentation.—Scarce a sin can be named, but what is to be found among us, as a people. To enumerate and enlarge on all the sins and vices of the present times, and that are more or less prevalent through the states, would swell the present discourse to a length beyond what time would allow, or your patience bear.

But can we fail to mention and lament, the sinful errors of atheism and deism ; the great infidelity, and indifference to the things of religion ; and those errors in general, which have been embraced by the several parties and sectaries in religion that have appeared in this, as well as in other countries, to the no small disturbance of the Christian Church, by dividing and separating it, and so rending, if it may thus be expressed, the “seamless coat of Jesus Christ ?” Can we fail to mention and lament the great sin of the general rejection of Christ ; not only, as a *Prophet*, by pretending to be wise above what is written, and by refusing to submit to the instructions and reproofs of his word ; but also, as a *Priest*, in not humbly depending on his atonement and merit for pardon and acceptance with God ; and as a *King*, by refusing a ready and universal subjection to his laws and government, to his institutions and ordinances ? Can we fail to mention and lament those sins of heart ; as, unbelief, blindness, hardness,

hardness, obstinacy, pride, envy, malice, desires of revenge, grieving at the prosperity, and rejoicing at the calamities of others, and evils of this kind with which the hearts of many appear to be so much filled, by their being openly and frequently acted out? Can we fail to notice and lament, the sins of injustice, falsehood, perjury, intemperance, prophane swearing, fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, emulations, wrath, strifes, seditions, revilings, riots, murders, and such like things; because of which the wrath of God often cometh upon the children of disobedience; and under the fury of which the innocent sometimes suffer with the guilty? Can we fail to notice and lament, the omission of many plain and positive duties; duties of religion and morality; duties in families, neighbourhoods and societies, and in the various relations and stations of life and office, from the highest to the lowest! "A truly faithful man who can find?" Can we fail to mention and lament, the ingratitude and unfruitfulness of people in general, under the means of grace, under the cultivation of the divine hand, and the many mercies and privileges, with which God has been pleased to favor us?

No people, perhaps, have been more highly privileged in all respects than the people of this country. What people ever enjoyed a more free and undisturbed use of the sacred scriptures, than this? How many nations are there, who are entirely destitute of the word of divine revelation, and never heard the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ? And of those nations, who have the sacred scriptures among them, how many are there, deprived in great measure of the use and benefit of them; having the scriptures either locked up in some obscure language, or the meaning of them perverted by jesuitical and designing men? What people is there, among whom the word of God has been in general more faithfully explained and inculcated; or that has enjoyed greater privileges, religious and civil; or been allowed to sit more peaceably in general, under their vines and figtrees; or experienced more signal and gracious interpositions of Providence and more wonderful deliverances? Of us, therefore, proportionate and correspondent fruits of righteousness,



cousness and praise have been expected ; and for these God has long waited upon us. But what returns have we made ? Have we rendered unto God according to his benefits ? Or, have we not, on the contrary, evilly requited him for his mercies ; and repaid his distinguishing goodness, with much ingratitude and disobedience ? Surely, his mercies have not melted us, as they ought to have done, into love and obedience ; neither have his judgments when sent upon us, as might have justly been expected, humbled us, and reclaimed us from our sins. Both under his gentle and his afflictive measures, we have not been brought to a proper sense and discharge of our duty ; but too much like the deaf adder, have stopped our ears, and not hearkened to the voice of his mercy, or the voice of his rod. And therefore what reason have we to fear, that God will give us up more and more to eat the fruit of our own doings ; to experience more and more the sad calamities, which our ingratitude and wickedness deserve ?—What could we say against God, should he proceed with the people of this land, as he did with his antient Israel ? saying, as in the prophecy of Isaiah, (5th chap.) “ And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard,” i. e. betwixt me and my people. “What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it ? Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes. And now go to ; I will tell you what I will do with my vineyard : I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up ; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down ; and I will lay it waste : It shall not be pruned, nor digged, but there shall come up briars and thorns.”

Thus God proceeded with his antient people. And have we not much reason to fear, that he will thus deal with us, sooner or later, except we repent ? How incumbent then is it on us, the people of these States, to humble ourselves before God, to be truly penitent for sin, and to cry mightily unto him that he would mercifully pardon our transgressions, and yet spare and save his people !

*Secondly.* The divisions that appear in our land.

That we are a divided people is manifest to all. Different political as well as religious sentiments, are entertained; different attachments and alienations of affection, have also taken place; and these things have been owing in some measure, doubtless, among other causes, to local circumstances, to unreasonable prejudices, to high party feelings, and to a pride as we may say, of favorite theories and experiments in politics.

But, to view the matter with respect to our public concerns, in the most favorable and candid light, and in which we ought to view it: The principal and great difference between the two leading parties in this country, appears to have arisen from a persuasion, that a certain, though different policy, or course of measures in government, would best subserve the peace, prosperity and honor of the nation. The great body of both these parties we may consider, whatever may be the case of a few individuals among them, as real friends to the liberties, rights and independence of the country. For what reason can be assigned, why any native American, where he has interest, friends and every thing dear to bind him, should yet be an enemy to his country? Is it not idle to suppose, notwithstanding the many suggestions in private conversation, and in some of the public papers to the contrary, that *either* of the two leading parties should wish to have this country subjugated to any foreign power, or to see the true liberties, rights and sovereignty of these States prostrated, or even abridged? For my part, I would for the present view them both, as friends at heart to our common beloved country, and as wishing its best good. The case is this. They differ in opinion with regard to the measures proper and best to be pursued, in order to promote the public welfare. All, however, it is to be remembered, are liable to err. "To err is human." And we ought not to expect perfection in any man, or in any human administration: For "what is man," low or high, peasant or President, "that he should be perfect?"

But, nevertheless, it is an incumbent duty in people, while they exercise a suitable spirit of candor and charity to take the best and most impartial view they can of public men and measures ; that they may be the better enabled to act with discretion, in those matters which come before them from time to time, and in which they are so deeply concerned.

It must be allowed, and is to be regretted, that things have been often carried to extremes in politics ; not only in private intercourse, but in some public productions and debates. There have issued from the press, under every administration of our national government, scurrilous pieces, abusive anonymous publications, dishonourary to their authors, and injurious to individuals, to rulers, and to the public. My brethren these things out not so to be. No man of sober sense, of sound judgment, or of real patriotism, can give these things his hearty approbation, but must in soul despise them.

Nevertheless, it is to borne in mind, that freedom of speech and the freedom of the press, in fair reasoning, in a manly and critical discussion of public men and measures, and in exposing folly and wickedness, as they become manifest, whether in high places or in lower stations, are rights belonging to the citizens of these States ; are virtually if not expressly secured to them in the general and state constitutions ; and ought ever to be held sacred and unalienable. If these are once given up, or wrested from us, an important portion of our liberty is gone, and the vessel of state becomes immediately in danger of being materially damaged, if not totally wrecked.

It is well known, that not long after the federal constitution was adopted, and the general government formed, there began to be different sentiments expressed, respecting public men and measures. Under the administration of the great WASHINGTON, whose patriotism, whose public and private virtues have been so universally celebrated, there were some who, from whatever cause, manifested themselves uneasy with the man, and dissatisfied with the measures

measures of government. They accordingly began their attack, and pursued it in various forms, upon his character, upon his patriotism, and upon the policy he thought best to adopt and pursue. Matters were carried to such a length, that in time, open opposition and rebellion against the constituted authorities were excited and encouraged ; great disturbances were made ; riots and insurrections took place, both to the disgrace of the men concerned in them, and to the dishonor of the country ; to quell which, and restore peace to the public, the civil arm and a military force were necessarily exerted, and a large sum of public money expended. The federal administration, however, as it has been called, went on under Washington and Adams for twelve years. At the period of which, there was, by the suffrages of a majority of the people, a change of men in the general government, and consequently, as was expected, a change of policy—a change, that has been more and more developed in the measures of the administration,

These measures have now likewise been pursued, and in experiment, for nearly twelve years, under Jefferson, and the present chief magistrate of the Union.

It would require much time and labor, if it were proper here, to draw any just comparison between the two administrations, i. e. the *Federal* and the *Republican*, as they have been denominated. It will not therefore be attempted : but is left to be done by every one, according to the measure of his own light and ability, or rather according to the best helps he can obtain ; and to judge for himself, under which of the two administrations, the measures have appeared to operate most for the honor and interest, the peace and prosperity of the country.

We cannot, however, but have observed, that a very considerable proportion of the people of the United States, especially of the easterly and northern states, have been for a length of time, and are at this very moment in particular, highly dissatisfied with the measures pursuing by the general government ; who do not think that these measures

asures have a favorable aspect on the public, or are likely to terminate in the welfare and respectability of the nation ; but who, nevertheless, as appears from various sources, are determined to encourage no riots or insurrections, but to adopt and pursue only peaceable and constitutional steps to obtain the desired alteration ; that is, by presenting such memorials and petitions to the present administration, and address to their fellow-citizens, as they have a right to present ; or, to effect, if it may be, a change of men in public office, and consequently, as they hope, a change of public measures.

Thus, in brief, things have appeared to go on under the several administrations of our national government, from the adoption of the federal constitution, down to the present “ season of calamity and war.”

These divisions in our country, relative to public concerns, however well meaning the most of the people may be in their intentions and wishes, cannot but be viewed on the whole, especially considering the irritations, the party feelings, the angry disputes, the bloody riots, and the great alienations of affection among the citizens, that attend, and often follow them, as rendering the situation of our country at this time, truly unhappy and perilous :— And plainly shows us the need there is of humiliation and prayer.

*Thirdly.* The war in which our country is now involved.

This is a subject, at all times interesting, but particularly so with the people of these States at the present day. The general question is, whether the present war be necessary, just, expedient, &c. or not ? A question that undoubtedly deserves the serious consideration, the deliberate, impartial and prayerful attention of every citizen.— It is not my intention however, to enter here into any particular discussion of this point ; but would merely state, what appears to be the impressions and sentiments of the people at large, on this subject ; which we plainly discern

are very different. There are many who appear to think that they can *see clearly*, the justice, necessity and propriety of this War, declared by our government against Great Britain; and seem confident, that it will terminate in the honor and welfare of this country. There are others, again; and the number is not small, who cannot *see things* in the same light—cannot view this war, considering the various and peculiar circumstances under which it has been declared, as being necessary, just, expedient, or honorable; but are decidedly of opinion, that measures ought to have been pursued, and might have been pursued, and such treaties of amity and commerce formed, as would have been inconceivably better than war; as would have preserved the peace, and yet secured the most essential rights and liberties, and the independence of the nation. And therefore they cannot in conscience justify or approve of the present war; but, lift their hands, and raise their voices against it.

From the public statements made, it is manifest, as no doubt many of you are sensible, that a large majority; yea, more than two thirds of the members in Congress from the eastern and northern States,† voted against the measure of war. And it is thought by some, who have pretty good means of information, that nearly or quite the same proportion of the people in the easterly and northern states disapprove of this war measure.

In a matter of so much consequence to the citizens of these United States, as that of declaring war against Great Britain, or against any foreign power, it should seem highly necessary, and even indispensable, that the people in general, and especially their representatives in Congress, should see clearly, the justice, the necessity and expediency of the measure; and so be unitedly and vigorously engaged in it. But this is not the case. And it appears to many, truly surprizing, and in a measure mysterious, that under existing circumstances, under a view of the situation of the country, of a large number of vessels and of seamen, and immense property at sea, liable to capture; of the defenceless state of a large proportion

† See note at the end of the preceding page.

the maritime and inland frontiers ; and of the declared disposition of Great Britain, on her part, to negotiate and settle matters of difference between the two nations, and under the view of the large numbers opposed to the war, in Congress and among the people, there should nevertheless be a persevering determination in the President, and members of Congress who voted for War, though a majority, to risque the vessel of state at this time on the perilous, uncertain and tempestuous ocean of war. But the die is cast ! War is declared ! And what or where will be its end, or the intermediate expence of blood and treasure, no one is able to calculate !

War, my friends, whether it be viewed as just or not in its declaration, is a judgment of Heaven ; a sore and distressing calamity ! so represented in holy scripture, and so viewed by all wise and good people. Whoever or whatever may have been the instrumental causes of the present War ; God is the great over-ruler of the event ; his hand is to be acknowledged in it. And, is it not permitted, is it not to be considered as a token of his displeasure against this land, for the wickedness of them that dwell in it ? Were we not a sinful, but a righteous holy people ; did our ways, as individuals, and as a nation, please God ; things would, doubtless, go otherwise with us than they now do. We might expect to be spared as a people, saved from calamity, and not given to reproach.

War, horrid war ! is now the doleful sound in our ears ! Its sad effects already begin to be felt, in the shedding of human blood ; in the capture and imprisonment of many of our seafaring friends and brethren ; and in the destruction of much valuable property !—It surely renders the situation of our country, especially in connexion with other things, peculiarly unhappy and distressed, and calls this day, for the humiliation and prayer of the whole nation.

I proceed as proposed, II. To consider the duty of ministers and people to unite in humbling themselves before God in a time of public distress and peril, and in earnest

earnest prayer to him, that he would in his great mercy, spare his people, and not give his heritage to reproach.

This duty is plainly expressed in the words of my text. While the ministers of religion are called on to lead in the devotions of the sanctuary, it is made the duty of the people to join in the solemn exercises of divine worship. “Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the Altar, and let them say, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.” In these words are plainly intimated two duties, very proper and suitable to such a day as this; viz *Repentance* and *Prayer*. First, *Repentance*. “Let the priests weep,” not indeed alone, but “with the whole congregation,” called into solemn assembly. Let them unitedly humble themselves in the presence of God, mourning for their own sins, and the sins of the land, after a godly sort; having, as should be the case, but one heart and one voice on so solemn an occasion.

From the cursory view we have taken of the perilous and unhappy situation of our country, on account of its *irreligion* and *sins*—of the *divisions* of the people, and of the war in which it is involved; it is manifestly our incumbent duty, to mourn and lament; to mourn under the evils that are seen and felt, and in view of those calamities we have reason still to fear; to mourn especially on account of those sins, which are so much our reproach as individuals and a people, and those awful judgments, which are the fruits of transgression. Let all then, of every age and order, old and young, parents and children, ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, throughout these States, be sincerely engaged in the great work of repentance and reformation,—without which, how can we rationally expect to have present calamities removed, or those we deserve and fear, averted?

To humble repentance of sin, and sincere desires and endeavors after a general reformation let us subjoin the solemn  
C prayer



prayer in the text, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." The covenant people of God are here stiled his "heritage," that is, the people he has chosen, whom he loves, and with whom he is wont to dwell. But, when or how may God be said to give his heritage to reproach? Answer, This is the case, when he gives his people up to walk in their own ways, and to experience the fruit of their own evil doings; when he leaves them to their own weak and foolish counsels; and sends upon them those judgments, which are manifestly procured by their own pride, obstinacy, self-sufficiency, unbelief, distrust of Providence, ingratitude and disobedience; and which are evident tokens of his displeasure against them for their wickedness. When these and such like things befall a people, they are given to reproach. And under such circumstances of guilt and disgrace, it must be highly incumbent on them, to not only humble themselves before God and be truly penitent; but to intreat his merciful forgiveness and the return of his favor; that so they may be delivered from sin and the punishment of it, which are a reproach to any people; and may have the honor, and God the glory, of their being a people spared and saved of the Lord.

Prayer is an appropriate and required duty of this day. And, in the proclamation issued by the chief magistrate of the union, recommending to the people to observe this day as a day of humiliation and prayer, we have several things pointed out, which it may be proper to notice, and which may in general be made the subject matter of our prayers on this occasion.

It is recommended to the people, in the first place, to observe the day to the devout purpose of "rendering to the Sovereign of the universe and the Benefactor of mankind, the public homage due to his holy attributes." The attributes of God are all incomprehensibly glorious, and ought ever seriously to impress the minds of men, especially when in his more immediate presence, and engaged in acts of public devotion. At such a time, all lightness and vanity should be suppressed, and men filled  
with

with reverence and godly fear. It should be their desire and endeavor to give unto God the glory due to his name, as the high Sovereign of the universe, a Being, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. For, "holy and reverend is his name. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; for thou only art holy."

It is also recommended to us, to observe this day for the devout purpose of "acknowledging the transgressions which might justly provoke the manifestations of the divine displeasure." The sins and transgressions of a people, of all orders and degrees of men from the lowest to those who are highest in authority, are justly provoking to the Majesty of heaven and earth, and often draw down his judgments upon them. These sins and transgressions therefore, should be humbly and penitently acknowledged, very deeply deplored, and immediately forsaken. And this day, set apart for humiliation, and when calamity is sent upon us for our sins, is a very suitable time to attend to this immediately necessary and highly important duty. O let none fail to comply with what is so manifestly incumbent on them.

It is further recommended, to observe the day for the purpose "of seeking God's merciful forgiveness, and his assistance in the great duties of repentance and amendment." What is more important to individual persons or to a people, than the forgiveness of sins? Surely this is one of the greatest blessings men can ask, or receive from God. To lie under the guilt of sin, and exposed continually to the amazing calamities it deserves, temporal and eternal, is a situation truly deplorable. How great then, is the blessing of divine forgiveness! But how can we rationally expect this great blessing, unless we earnestly seek it, and seek it in the right way? that is, in the name of the glorious Mediator between God and man. Let us therefore implore remission of sins through the merits and interces-

sion of Jesus Christ. Let us, this day, in his name, humbly ask forgiveness of God, for ourselves, for our families, and for our guilty land, that we may be saved. And let us also earnestly implore "divine assistance in the great work of repentance and amendment." Such assistance we absolutely need; such may be obtained; and such assistance, seeing God will be inquired of by us" for it, we should daily and fervently implore, that so we may become humble, holy reformed persons and people; and may be delivered from the present evils we feel, and not given over to final calamity and reproach.

It is further recommended, that the people especially offer fervent supplication to God this day, "that in this season of calamity and war, he would take the American people under his peculiar care and protection." In such a season as this, the lives and properties, the rights and liberties of the people, are at hazard; and the special care and protection of Almighty God are peculiarly needed. We should therefore earnestly pray, that he would not leave nor forsake us; that his providence might be a wall of fire round about our land; that in the use of means and suitable measures of defence adopted by us, he would ever grant us success against all invading foes; that especially, in this perilous day, and defenceless state of many parts of our country, he would mercifully save the exposed dwellings and properties of his people from conflagration and destruction; that the lives and health of the citizens at large may be precious in his sight, and the effusion of human blood prevented.

It is further recommended to the people by the President's proclamation, to pray, that "God would guide their public counsels." An highly important matter this, to be the subject of prayer! For, what is a people, or what are their rulers, without the guidance and blessing of Heaven! We cannot paint to our minds a more distressed situation of a people and their rulers, than their being wholly forsaken of God. Without his guiding influence, and his blessing upon our government and the administration of it,

it, what could we expect, but that the counsels of our Rulers would be “turned into foolishness,” and the people have every reason “to mourn!” We see then the propriety and high importance of praying, as recommended, that God would “guide the public counsels of the nation;” that rulers and people may be ruled and taught of God—may rightly estimate the high privileges we enjoy, not abusing them; and that the excellent constitutions of the general and state governments and our invaluable privileges, civil and sacred, may be continued to us, and neither we nor our posterity ever be left to experience the destruction or loss of them.

It is recommended to the people further to pray, that God would “animate their patriotism,” i. e. their love of country, and their desires and endeavors for its best good. This is an important petition. The patriotism of many is too low; is mixed too much with selfish, sinister ends; is turned, in short, by many, into *something*, that will scarce bear the *name* of patriotism. True love of country therefore, needs being revived, or restored—needs being animated, strengthened and established. And it is to be hoped, that the people of these States will unanimously join this day, in presenting the petition here recommended and similar sentiments, to the throne of divine influence and mercy.

It is further recommended to the people to pray that God would “bestow his blessing on our arms.” Were there a just ground to present this, as the preceding petition, the citizens of the Union would doubtless in general cordially unite in presenting it. As the case is; those who think they can clearly see the propriety, justice and necessity of the present war, can, no doubt, readily join in the request as recommended. But those who, from a careful attention to this subject, cannot see things in this light—who do not discern the wisdom of our Government in declaring this war—who cannot see the necessity, justice, or any probable good effect of it, but soberly think it will prove injurious; I say, those who view things in this light  
(and

(and there are now many such) cannot in conscience, as might well be thought, join in the petition, as here recommended, and understood.

It is further recommended in the President's proclamation, to pray, that God would "inspire all nations with a love of justice and concord, and with a reverence for the unerring precept of our holy religion, to do to others as they would require that others should do to them." None certainly but low and sordid minds can refuse to unite in such catholic, christian sentiments and requests, as these. It is very desirable and peculiarly important, that people should feel the propriety, and join in the sense and expression of these things; because, for the want of this "general love of justice and concord, and doing as they would be done by," are owing in great measure, the confusion and contention, the public wars and private quarrels and calamities, which do so often, and particularly at the present day, distress mankind.

*Lastly,* It is recommended to the people, to pray to God, "that turning the hearts of our enemies from the violence and injustice which sway their counsels against us, he would hasten a restoration of the blessings of peace." That we have public, if not private enemies, is too evident to be denied. France and Great Britain have both acted an unfriendly inimical part towards these United States. They have both had their public, if not private agents and influence here in a greater or less degree, ever since the adoption of our federal constitution and government. Both have undoubtedly infringed upon our national and neutral rights; have violently attacked, and unjustly destroyed our property; and have too pertinaciously persisted in their decrees, orders, and aggressions. And which of the two, considering their several ability and opportunity, has done us the most injustice and injury; or which of the two has used the most paltry intrigue and deception, are subjects on which different opinions are entertained, and which I feel entirely willing at present, to leave to the decision of others.

But

But all, I trust, surely all well-disposed persons, will cordially unite in prayer to almighty God; that "turning the hearts of our enemies" yea of all enemies to the rights, liberties and happiness of mankind, from the "violence and injustice that may sway their counsels," He would, in his overruling power and great mercy, "hasten a restoration of the blessings of peace." Amen.

---

**NOTE.**—Referred to in page 15.

† The following is a correct list of yeas and nays taken on the momentous question of a declaration of war against Great Britain, including Senators and Representatives from the following States.

	<i>against war.</i>		<i>for war.</i>	
Newhampshire,	Gilman, Sullivan, Bartlett,—3		Cutts, Dinsmoor, Harper, Hall,—4	
Massachusetts,	• • • 9	• • • 7		
Vermont,	- - - 1	- - - 4		
Rhode-Island,	- - - 4	- - - 0		
Connecticut,	- - - 9	- - - 0		
New-York,	- - - 12	- - - 4		
New-Jersey,	- - - 5	- - - 3		
Delaware,	- - - 3	- - - 0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>against war</b>	<b>for war</b>

Hon. Mr. BRADLEY, senator from Vermont, and a distinguished republican, was absent when the vote was taken, but it is said his vote would have been for Peace, if he had been present.

Among the above gentlemen, who voted against war, is a considerable proportion of republicans. From Newhampshire it is seen there are two.

In the southern and western States, that is, in all the states except what are mentioned above, the votes were—

For war—74.

Against war—16.

Whole number for war—96

Do. do. against war—62

Majority 34

The considerate reader will here see from what portion of the United States, the war comes, and will be led to reflect on the different state of the votes of the members as they are exhibited from the different parts of the country.