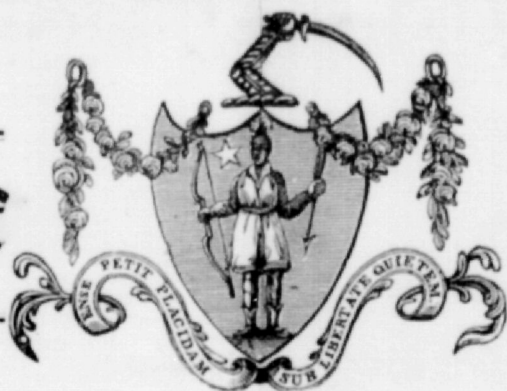


Commonwealth of



Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY,

HENRY J. GARDNER,

GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

A PROCLAMATION

FOR A DAY OF
PUBLIC THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE.

As States are but aggregates of individuals, to concentrate the powers and render uniform the action of society, the impulses of human nature attach to them, and it is meet that the instincts of a people's gratitude should find expression through their instrumentality. At this season, when the teeming earth returns an almost unparalleled reward to the wearied reapers; when Massachusetts has been preserved from that pestilence that God has permitted to decimate other portions of our land; when the horrors of war demand of us only the deepest sympathy with those who suffer them; when Heaven has filled our cup as individuals and as a Nation with such unnumbered blessings, it is fitting that the song of Thanksgiving, the notes of Praise, and the words of grateful Prayer, should ascend to the Giver of every good.

I do, therefore, with the advice and consent of the Council, appoint THURSDAY, the TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF NOVEMBER next, as a day of Public Thanksgiving, Praise and Prayer. The Citizens of our Commonwealth are requested to then assemble in their several places of religious worship, to meditate upon the blessings and mercies of the closing year, and to unite in prayer and praise to their Gracious Author. It is proper that the day be devoted, among other things, in the language of the Constitution of Massachusetts, to "sincerity, good humor, and all the social affections and generous sentiments among the people." Let the great primary relations of kindred and home be strengthened, and the recollections of youth freshened, and the paternal hearth witness in the children's return a realization of the parent's instructions and prayers.

Let us be grateful that the great forces of air, land and sea have been so balanced and disposed, and the vicissitudes of day and night, the rain and the sun, so tempered, that health has blessed our people, and plenty our fields; That the skill of the artisan, the enterprise of the fisherman, and the perils of those who go down upon the great waters, have been crowned with abundant success; That our nation has been preserved in external and internal peace, and its citizens have enjoyed, in such full measure, domestic and social happiness; That we can point to the splendor of the memories of that nation's past, and to the grandeur of its future hopes, whose destiny it is vouchsafed us to advance and to share; That the Church, the Bible and the School have been blessed in their holy work of warming the hearts, quickening the affections, and enlightening the intellects of our people.

On this day let us thank God, with reverential joy, as those who believe in the predominance of good over evil, and with generous hopes, as those assured of the eternal victory of truth over error. And let us also pray, that the holy religion of our fathers may not be sapped by the infidelities and rationalism, born of this too material and philosophical age; That the humbler virtues, the simpler elements of character, morality, sincerity, prudence, moderate desires and the more quiet enjoyments and ambitions of life, may be cultivated and prevail among our people; That in the hardy soil of New England, and amid the restless activity of our people, the more generous charities and nobler philanthrophies may still take root, blossom and bear fruit; That while to us, as a nation, temporal blessings have been granted in such affluent store, spiritual riches may accompany and hallow them; That vital Christianity may more and more exhibit its power to correct the errors and to control the passions of mankind; That the approaching winter may be tempered to the poor and friendless; That to those whom God has given abundance may also be vouchsafed hearts willing and desirous of bestowing freely upon the needy and destitute; That God would be graciously pleased in His wisdom to restore those rights and that freedom to any of His people who may have been deprived of them by fraud or by violence; And that our nation may become a righteous nation, our people a holy people, and our land a land of temperance, freedom, piety and peace.

Given at the Council Chamber, in Boston, this twenty-third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and of the Independence of the United States the eightieth.

HENRY J. GARDNER.

By his excellency the Governor, with the
advice of the Council.

EPHRAIM M. WRIGHT, Secretary.

God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!