

Commonwealth of  Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

ELBRIDGE GERRY,

Governor of the Commonwealth.

A PROCLAMATION,

For a Day of PUBLIC FASTING, HUMILIATION,
and PRAYER.

“WHEN ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.” “But when thou fustest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which seeth in secret.”

The Omnipotent Creator of the Universe, the Great Protector and Benefactor of his creatures, having of his infinite mercy and forbearance, spared us, frail inhabitants of this Globe, a mere particle of creation; notwithstanding our wilful disobedience of his laws, physical, moral and divine: And our crimes demanding deep contrition, and speedy reformation; I have thought fit, agreeably to the invariable usage of our pious progenitors, to appoint, and with the advice and consent of Council, I do appoint, THURSDAY, the ELEVENTH DAY of APRIL next, to be a day of solemn FASTING, HUMILIATION and PRAYER, throughout this Commonwealth. And the ministers and people of every denomination, are called on and requested, to assemble in their respective places of public worship, on that day, and devoutly to perform the sacred duties thereof, agreeably to divine admonition, in spirit, and in truth.

And for our unparalleled ingratitude to that Adorable Being, who has seated us in a land, irradiated by the cheering beams of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—Who has preserved us in every stage of our existence, through innumerable dangers, physical and moral—Who has secured to us, inestimable liberties and privileges, civil and religious—Who has protected us by a federal and a state Constitution, each adapted to support the other—Who has blessed us with a wise and upright national government, which, amidst unnumbered embarrassments and difficulties, has promoted, beyond reasonable expectation, our peace, prosperity and happiness—Who has indulged us with wise legislatures, with codes of mild and equitable laws, and with learned judges to expound and administer them—Who has diminished that party spirit, which generated by craft and ambition, and fostered by ire and folly, has been destructive of social happiness—Who has exempted us from the ravages of war, that scourge of man, which marks with desolation the progress of its votaries—Who has favored us with able and liberal Divines, presenting to us religion, in its amiable form and comeliness—Who has provided us with Colleges, and numerous seminaries of literature, diffusing useful knowledge, morality and piety, through the various classes of society—Who has smiled on our husbandry, manufactures, navigation and commerce, which exhibit a Country, for the period of its establishment, surpass-

ing all others in its population, productions, wealth and improvements—Who has allotted to us a clime, exceeding many, and excelled by few, for its salutary qualities—Who has animated to exertions our brave and patriotic Militia, for rendering invincible our beloved Country—And who has preserved us the year past, from plague, pestilence and famine. For our marked INGRATITUDE to that merciful God, who, in so distinguished a manner, has heaped on us these, and innumerable other blessings, Let us fall prostrate before offended Deity; confess sincerely and penitently our manifold sins, and our unworthiness of the least of his divine favors; fervently implore his pardon, through the merits of our mediator; and firmly determine, That henceforth, by his aid, We will forsake our crimes and follies; That having presumed to solicit forgiveness of such aggravated offences, we will freely discharge the indispensable duty of forgiving offences against us; That we will restrain and regulate our malevolent passions, which indulged, have often occasioned misery to ourselves and others; And that we will cultivate those amiable virtues, and discharge those moral and religious obligations, which lead to happiness in time, and throughout Eternity.

And as every moment of our existence, has been, and must be dependent on the mercy and indulgence of our Omnipotent Benefactor, let us render our unfeigned thanks, at the throne of Celestial Grace, for all his spiritual and temporal blessings to us through life; and fervently beseech him, to continue those which we now enjoy, and most gratefully acknowledge; to preserve in peace, this highly favored and happy land, and in prosperity, all our civil, religious, and literary institutions; to inspire the inhabitants of this Commonwealth, with the love of order, morality, religion and their country; to support them in their sincere efforts for reformation; to bless the President, Officers, and People of the united and individual states, and to cement their union, the great guarantee of their rights and liberties; to smile on our husbandmen, by prospering their seedtime, and crowning their harvest with abundance—on our merchants, by preserving from plunder, their navigation and commerce, and by rendering lucrative their laudable enterprizes; on our manufacturers and mechanics, by rewarding with success, their skill and industry—on our fishermen, by supplying them bountifully, with treasures from the deep—and on the labours and pursuits of all classes of society.

And it is earnestly recommended to the citizens of this Commonwealth to abstain from all labour and recreation, inconsistent with their duty on that day.

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

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

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

BENJAMIN HOMANS, *Secretary of the State.*

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!