

By His EXCELLENCY

JOHN HANCOCK, Esq;

Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Commonwealth of *Massachusetts*.

A PROCLAMATION for a Day of THANKSGIVING.

WHEREAS it hath pleased Almighty GOD, the Father of Mercies, remarkably to assist and support the United States of *America*, in their important Struggle for Liberty against the long continued Efforts of a powerful Nation; it is the Duty of all Ranks of People to observe and thankfully acknowledge the Interpositions of his Providence in their behalf.

Through the whole of the Contest, from its first Rise to this Time, the Influence of Divine Providence may be clearly perceived in many signal Instances, of which but a few are mentioned.

In revealing the Counsels of our Enemies, when the Discoveries were seasonable and important, and the Means seemingly inadequate or fortuitous.—

In preserving and even improving the Union of the several States, on the Breach of which our Enemies placed their greatest Dependence.—

In increasing the Number and adding to the Zeal and Attachment of the Friends of Liberty.—

In granting remarkable Deliverances, and blessing us with the most signal Success when Affairs seemed to have the most discouraging Appearance.—

In raising up for us a powerful and generous Ally, in one of the first of the European Powers—

In confounding the Counsels of our Enemies and suffering them to pursue such Measures as have most directly contributed to frustrate their own Desires and Expectations.—

Above all,

In making their extreme Cruelty to the Inhabitants of these States, when in their Power, and their Savage Devastation of Property, the very Means of cementing our Union, and adding Vigor to every Effort in Opposition to them.

And as, therefore, it is the incumbent Duty of the good People of this State, as well as of those of the other States, to take a Retrospect on the Events which have taken Place since the Beginning of the War, so I cannot but recommend, in a particular Manner to their Observation, the Goodness of GOD in the Year now drawing to a Conclusion.

In which,

The Confederation of the United States has been completed.—

In which,

There have been so many Instances of Prowess and Success in our Armies, particularly in the Southern States, where, notwithstanding the Difficulties with which they had to struggle, they have recovered the whole Country which the Enemy had over-run, leaving them only a Post or two on or near the Sea.—

In which,

We have been so powerfully and effectually assisted by our Allies, while, in all the conjunct Operations, the most perfect Harmony has subsisted in the Allied Army.—

In which,

There has been so plentiful a Harvest, and so great Abundance of the Fruits of the Earth of every Kind, as not only enables us easily to supply the Wants of our Army, but gives Comfort and Happiness to the whole People :—And,

In which,

After the Success of our Allies by Sea, a General of the first Rank, with his whole Army, has been captured by the allied Forces under the Direction of our Commander in Chief.

I Do therefore, by and with the Advice of the Council, appoint, and do hereby appoint the Thirteenth Day of *December* next (the Day recommended by the Congress to all the States) to be religiously observed as a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer; that all the People may assemble on that Day, with grateful Hearts to celebrate the Praises of our gracious Benefactor; to confess our manifold Sins; to offer up our most fervent Supplications to the God of all Grace, that it may please Him to pardon our Offences and incline our Hearts for the future to keep all his Laws, to comfort and relieve all our Brethren who are in Distress or Captivity; to prosper our Husbandmen and give Success to all engaged in lawful Commerce; to direct all our public Counsels, and to impart Judgment and Fortitude to our Officers and Soldiers; to protect and prosper our illustrious Ally, and favour our united Exertions for the speedy Establishment of a safe, honourable and lasting Peace; to bless all Seminaries of Learning, and cause *the Knowledge of GOD to cover the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea.*

Given at the Council-Chamber in *Boston* the Twenty Second Day of *November*, in the Year of Our LORD One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty one, and in the Sixth Year of the Independence of the United States of *America*.

By His Excellency's Command,
John Avery, jun. Secretary.

John Hancock.

GOD SAVE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.