



Commonwealth

of Massachusetts.

By His Excellency Increase Sumner, Esquire,

Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

A PROCLAMATION

For a Day of Public Thanksgiving.

THE sacred Character and benevolent Providence of God, being acknowledged by our Civil Constitution, the public and grateful Homage, usual at this season, is not less a dictate of Patriotism than of Piety. Under the influence of these united Principles, the Fathers of our Country instituted, and their Successors have observed, AN ANNUAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE.

In imitation of so pious and laudable an Example, I have thought fit to appoint a Public Commemoration of the Divine Mercies, particularly of those which crown the closing year; and for this sacred purpose, I do, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Council, appoint *THURSDAY, the thirtieth of November next, a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise, throughout this Commonwealth.* Calling upon Ministers and People of every Denomination, Religiously and Joyfully to observe the said Day, by assembling in their respective places of Public Worship, and offering their united Praises to the great Benefactor of their Country, and the Author of every Blessing.

Through his adorable and munificent Providence, the Seasons have been favorable—the Labours of the Husbandman successful and the Fruits of the Earth abundant. Through His Indulgence, our Fisheries have prospered—our Commerce, although unjustifiably interrupted, has not been annihilated, but in many instances has succeeded; and the efforts of Industry have been rewarded. Under His Protection, internal Peace and Tranquillity have blessed the Commonwealth, and the voice of Health and Plenty been generally heard in our dwellings. Through His unmerited Goodness, we continue to enjoy Constitutions of Government, by which our Rights, Civil and Sacred, are effectually secured; and by His Favor the important life of the President of the United States has been continued.—Whilst other Nations have been suffering all the horrors and distresses of War, under His watchful Providence we have been preserved from so grievous a calamity. And through the Forbearance of God, we are still favored with the Christian Religion—a Religion which inculcates Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men—a Religion highly propitious to Republican Happiness, whilst it reveals a future and most glorious state for the Righteous.

Together with the celebration of Divine Mercies, which ought to penetrate the hearts of a prospered people, I do recommend the most ingenuous Confession of our Sins and the most fervent Supplications to the Author of all our Enjoyments, that we may display our Gratitude, by a steady course of Obedience:—That through His wise and gracious Influence, the Negotiations for Peace may be so over-ruled, as that the lasting Tranquillity of the Nations in Europe, and of the United States of America, may be established, and Oppression and Disorder every where cease:—That he would so direct the Administration of our Federal Government, and that of the different States in the Union, as to promote the Peace and true Interest of our Nation: That we, sensible of the Blessings ensured by our Civil System, might be disposed to lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty:—That God would Protect our Trade and Navigation from unreasonable Obstructions—would give Success to our Agriculture, Fisheries and Manufactures, and continue His Smiles to our University and other Seminaries of useful Learning: That he would afford his Protection and Blessing to these United States, and not suffer any weapon formed against them to prosper.

Whilst with lively gratitude we acknowledge the great degree of Health enjoyed in this Commonwealth, it is recommended to remember with sympathy such of our friends, in some of the United States, as have been distressed by contagious, mortal Diseases; and to supplicate the Father of Mercies that Health and Prosperity may be speedily and universally restored. Finally, that all Mankind under the Sceptre of the Prince of Peace, may be animated with the noble Spirit of His Religion: Be enabled to pursue with united affections, their common Interest: Be convinced of their mutual Dependence, and of the absolute Dependence of all, on the Universal Parent.

I do further recommend to the Citizens of this Commonwealth, to suspend such Labours and Recreations as may not be consistent with the Solemnity of the said Day.

Given at the Council Chamber, in Boston, this twenty-third day of October, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-seven; and in the twenty-second year of the Independence of the United States of America.

INCREASE SUMNER.

Attest. JOHN AVERY, Secretary.

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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