

day for public fasting and prayer throughout the Commonwealth.

My brethren, the duty is important and solemn; and who will neglect it, that fears God, and loves his country? Whatever may be our professions of attachment to the land that gave us birth, if we have no disposition to look to Heaven for assistance, at a time of national calamity, our patriotism is no better than *sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal*. Lawless mobs, and fiery zeal, will only heighten the anger of Heaven against us. We must bring before God a heart deeply affected with the awful calamity that has fallen on our country, and under a solemn conviction, *that our iniquities testify against us*, and are the procuring cause of all our troubles, in whatever way and by whatever means they are brought upon us, we must humble ourselves before God, confessing our sins and imploring his mercy. In the prophecy of JOEL, II<sup>d</sup> chapter, 12th and 13th verses, there is a passage well suited to the present occasion.

*Now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

THIS earnest call to repentance, fasting and prayer, was given to Judah, at a time when their country was in imminent danger. Their sins had provoked the displeasure of Heaven, and God was about to visit them with desolating judgments. By a vast multitude of locusts coming on the land, darkening the heavens by their immense swarms, and spreading terror and desolation through the country, is represented the invasion of the Chaldean army, and the distress and ruin which would attend it. Read the eleven first verses of this chapter, and you will find an awful, but faithful picture of the calamities of war; a pic-