

To give Massachusetts such a character is the noble work committed to the constituted authorities of the state now before me. We congratulate them upon the honor of occupying seats made sacred by so long a line of illustrious men, with so illustrious a beginning. It is indeed a distinction to be coveted to take the place of such men, and to have confided to your management interests so momentous. And it is a delightful evidence that the spirit of our fathers still lingers here to find his excellency the Governor, his honor the Lieutenant Governor, the honorable Council, the honorable Senate, and the House of Representatives, instead of converting the Sabbath into a holiday or a business day, converting a business day into a Sabbath, and calling to their aid the ministers of the gospel, that, at the commencement of their responsible duties, they may recognize their dependence upon an overruling Providence, and baptize their legislation with the spirit of religion.

It is gratifying also to know that the long and eminent public services of the beloved statesmen who for six successive years have filled the two highest places in the executive department of the government have been a practical exemplification of the principles which I have advocated in this discourse; and therefore, although I have given them no instruction, I feel almost sure that I have had their sympathy. Their oft-repeated reëlection affords evidence that the people of Massachusetts are not tired of hearing their rulers called "the just." Nor can I doubt that all the other gentlemen composing the government, and elected by the same people, are imbued with the like spirit, and that their legislation, the present session, will show that they regard religion, education, and freedom as inseparable. God give them success in a career so noble and important! And God inspire all their