

*from Nathaniel Morton,
New England's Memorial*

[THOMAS DUDLEY FORESEES HIS DEATH]¹

[1653] Mr. Thomas Dudley, who was a principal founder and pillar of the colony of Massachusetts, in New England, and sundry times governor and deputy-governor of that jurisdiction, died at his house in Roxbury, July 31, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. . . . The verses following were found in his pocket after his death, which may further illustrate his character, and give a taste of his poetical fancy. . . .

Dim eyes, deaf ears, cold stomach show
My dissolution is in view;
Eleven times seven near lived have I,
And now God calls, I willing die:
My shuttle's² shot, my race is run, 5
My sun is set, my deed is done;
My span is measured, tale is told,
My flower is faded and grown old,
My dream is vanished, shadow's fled,
My soul with Christ, my body dead; 10
Farewell dear wife, children and friends,
Hate heresy, make blessed ends;
Bear poverty, live with good men,
So shall we meet with joy again.

Let men of God in courts and churches watch 15
O'er such as do a toleration hatch;
Lest that ill egg bring forth a cockatrice,³
To poison all with heresy and vice.
If men be left, and otherwise combine,
My epitaph's, I died no libertine.⁴ 20

¹Thomas Dudley was the father of the poet Anne Bradstreet.

²Shuttle: a dart, missile, or arrow.

³A fabled snake hatched from a cock's egg that can kill with a look.

⁴A free thinker on religious doctrines as well as one who lives unrestrained by moral law.