

PRAYER IN MASSACHUSETTS

Upon this soil may no tree ever grow.
In this land may no lips ever again
Speak the word justice, now that all men know
Those lips have long boasted and in vain
May never young men hither come to learn
What cruel elders have no power to teach
May no lights burn here save witch fires that burn
Along some desolate and abandoned beach.
May this dour land go back now whence it came—
To early granite, to implacable sea.
May there descend on it the cleansing flame
Of some remote supreme catastrophe
Divorcing it forever with its shame
From men who would be generous, wise and free.

—*Arthur Davison Ficke*