

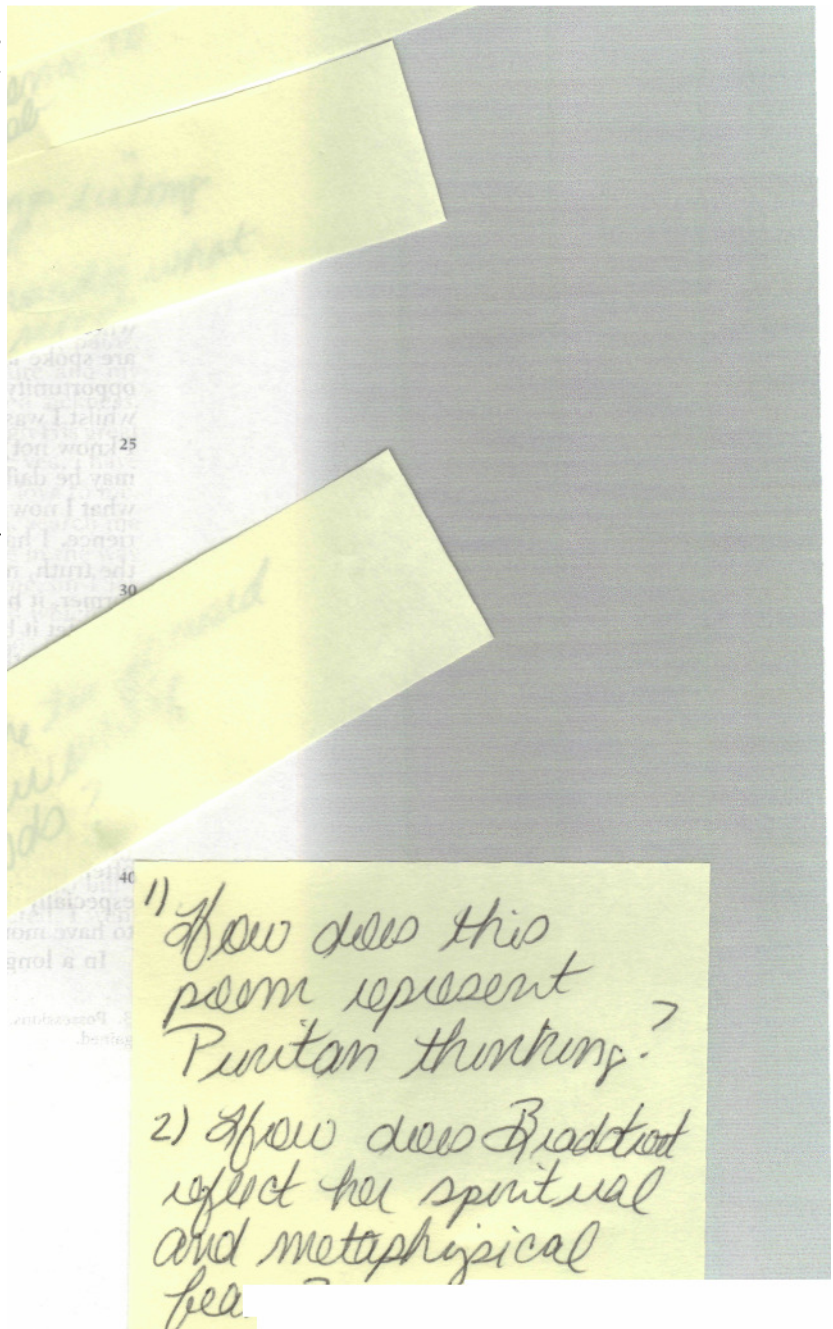
Anne Bradstreet

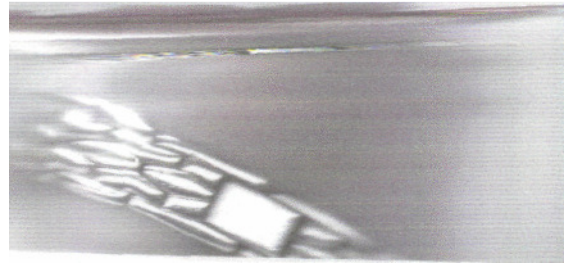
Here follows Some Verses upon the Burning of
Our House July 10th, 1666

Copied Out of a Loose Paper

In silent night when rest I took For sorrow near
I did not look I wakened was with thund'ring
noise And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice. That
fearful sound of "Fire!" and "Fire!" Let no man
know is my desire. I, starting up, the light did
spy, And to my God my heart did cry To
strengthen me in my distress And not to leave
me succorless. Then, coming out, beheld a
space The flame consume my dwelling place.
And when I could no longer look, I blest His
name that gave and took.^t) That laid my goods
now in the dust. Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.
It was His own, it was not mine, ^v "Far be it that
I should repine; He might of all justly bereft
But yet sufficient for us left. When by the
ruins oft I past My sorrowing eyes aside did
cast, And here and there the places spy Where
oft I sat and long did lie: Here stood that trunk,
and there that chest, There lay that store I
counted best. My pleasant things in ashes lie,
And them behold no more shall I. Under thy
roof no guest shall sit, Nor at thy table eat a bit.
No pleasant tale shall e'er be told, Nor things
recounted done of old. No candle e'er shall
shine in thee, Nor bridegroom's voice e'er heard
shall be. In silence ever shall thou lie, Adieu,
Adieu, all's vanity.² Then straight I 'gin my heart
to chide And did thy wealth on earth abide?
Didst *fix* thy hope on mold'ring dust? The arm of
flesh didst make thy trust? Raise up thy
thoughts above the sky That dunghill mists away
may fly. Thou hast an house on high erect,
Framed by that mighty Architect,

^t- Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; I have the name of the Lord" (Job 1.21).
². Empty, worthless.





With glory richly furnished, Stands
permanent though this be fled. It's
purchased and paid for too By Him who
hath enough to do. A price so vast as is
unknown Yet by His gift is made thine
own; There's wealth enough, I need no
more, Farewell, my pelf,³ farewell my
store. The world no longer let me love, '
My hope and treasure lies above.

1867

To My Dear Children

This book by any yet unread, I leave for
you when I am dead, That being gone,
here you may find What was your living
mother's mind. Make use of what I
leave in love, And God shall bless you
from above.

A. B.

My dear children,

I, knowing by experience that the exhortations of parents take most effect when the speakers leave to speak,' and those especially sink deepest which are spoke latest, and being ignorant whether on my death bed I shall have opportunity to speak to any of you, much less to all, thought it the best, whilst I was able, to compose some short matters (for what else to call them I know not) and bequeath to you, that when I am no more with you, yet I may be daily in your remembrance (although that is the least in my aim in what I now do), but that you may gain some spiritual advantage by my experience. I have not studied in this you read to show my skill, but to declare the truth, not to set forth myself, but the glory of God. If I had minded the former, it had been perhaps better pleasing to you, but seeing the last is the best, let it be best pleasing to you.

The method I will observe shall be this: I will begin with God's dealing with me from my childhood to this day.

In my young years, about 6 or 7 as I take it, I began to make conscience of my ways, and what I knew was sinful, as lying, disobedience to parents, etc., I avoided it. If at any time I was overtaken with the like evils, it was as a great trouble, and I could not be at rest till by prayer I had confessed it unto God. I was also troubled at the neglect of private duties though too often tardy that way. I also found much comfort in reading the Scriptures, especially those places I thought most concerned my condition, and as I grew to have more understanding, so the more solace I took in them.

In a long fit of sickness which I had on my bed I often communed with

3. Possessions, usually in the sense of being falsely gained.

1. I.e., stop speaking.