

## THE LIFE AND GENIUS OF

William Hathorne with that movement; and the best authorities in regard to the events of that time make no mention of him.\* It was the clergy who aroused public opinion and instigated the prosecutions against both the Quakers and the supposed witches of Salem, and the civil authorities were little more than passive instruments in their hands. Hathorne's work was essentially a legislative one,—a highly important work in that wild, unsettled country,—to adapt English statutes and legal procedures to new and strange conditions. He was twice Speaker of the House between 1660 and 1671, and as presiding officer he could exert less influence on measures of expediency than any other person present, as he could not argue either for or against them. And yet, after Charles II. had interfered in behalf of the Quakers, William Hathorne wrote an elaborate and rather circuitous letter to the British Ministry, arguing for non-intervention in the affairs of the colony, which might have possessed greater efficacy if he had not signed it with an assumed name.† However strong a Puritan he may have been, William Hathorne evidently had no intention of becoming a martyr to the cause of colonial independence. Yet it may be stated in his favor, and in that of the colonists generally, that the fault was not wholly on one side, for the Quakers evidently sought persecution, and would have it, cost what it might.‡

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\* Sewel, Hallowell, Ellis.

† J. Hawthorne's "Nathaniel Hawthorne," i. 24.

‡ Hallowell's "Quaker Invasion of New England."