

"Cease your canting, and hear the indictment," cried the Chief Justice, his eyes in a blaze of anger, and his mouth adorned with an oath.

"Hold up your hand whilst the indictment is being read," the Clerk commanded in a tone of asperity. I held up my hand, and heard a long arraignment, partly in the Latin tongue, and partly in a language which I could better understand.

"How do you plead: Guilty or not Guilty?" the Clerk persisted.

"If I had a reading of that paper, I should better decide; for of some things I am guilty, and of others not."

"You must plead to the indictment as it stands," broke in the Recorder who occupied a seat below the bench.

"First, I demand to know why I am brought here without a warrant of law." There was some whispering on the bench, and the Sheriff was called. He stood forth with a mouth-gag and a dirty rag in his hand.

"Because your violence did not suffer it," he replied to my question, at the command of the court.

"That is a new ground of offence, and we shall enquire into it also," the Chief Justice said with satisfaction. But I resolved to speak first, and so give a true relation of what had occurred.

"But yesterday," I began, "I was walking peaceably in the Long Acre. I have a useful gift, which is a certain quickness in the apprehension of danger, and it seized me of a sudden. I turned about, and seeing a threatening face at my shoulder, I dealt a blow at the threat rather than at the face. I am obliged to admit