

I. *Be it Enacted by the Governor, Council and Assembly,* That it shall be lawful for any Persons, who have Debts owing to them, by any Person where the whole dealing or Cause of Action does not exceed Three Pounds, to cause such Debtor to be summoned to appear before two Justices of the Peace of the County or District where either of them shall dwell, and the said Justices after such Summons are hereby impowered to make such Orders and Proceedings between such Parties, Plaintiffs and their Debtors Defendants, touching such Debts as they find to stand with Equity and good Conscience, and shall allow the Defendant to produce his Account against the Plaintiff, or any Receipts or other Discharges for Payments made, either in the whole or in Part, and the said Justices shall examine and enquire into the Merits of both Accounts, and of such Discharges, and by such other Proof as to them shall seem requisite, to ascertain the Debt so due, and at their Discretion to decree the Payment thereof, at such different Times and Periods as they shall think fit and proper, agreeable to the Circumstances of the Debtor, and with as little Prejudice as possible to the Creditor, and to award Costs as they shall find whether for the Plaintiff or Defendant without Appeal, unless the Debt or Cause of Action shall amount to upwards of Twenty Shillings, any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

Manner of Proceeding before two Justices in Suits where the whole dealing or cause of Action does not exceed £3.

No Appeal unless Debt be upwards of 20s.

II. *And be it also Enacted,* That if any Defendant after being duly summoned to appear, shall without just Cause to be allowed by the Justices, refuse to appear, or shall not perform such Order as the Justices shall make concerning such Debts as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for such Justices to issue a Warrant of Distress against the Goods and Chattels of such Defendant, and for Want of such Goods or Chattels whereon to levy the Sum due with Costs, as herein after mentioned, such Justices shall commit such Defendant to Goal for any Time, not exceeding two Months, according to the Amount of the Debt, or until he performs such Order.

Defendant not appear on Summons or refusing to perform Order.

Warrant of Distress to be issued against Goods, &c. and for want of Goods, &c. to be committed. not exceeding two Months.

III. *And be it also further Enacted,* That no Action for any Debt where the whole dealing or cause of Action does not exceed Three Pounds shall be brought against any Person in any Court of Law in this Province, except by Appeal.

Where no suit Debt or whole Dealing does not exceed £3. to be brought in any other Court.

IV. *Provided,* That nothing in this Act shall extend to any Debt for any Rent upon any Lease of Lands or Tenements, or any other real Contract or Specialty, or any Contract concerning Matrimony.

Certain Debts not liable to be sued by this Act.

V. *And be it Enacted,* That the Summons in such Causes as relate to the Township of *Halifax*, shall be directed to the Provost Marshall or his Deputy, and in all such Causes as relate to the other

Manner of directing the Summons.