

## A Short history of the Process between PETER WILLIAMSON and the Magistrates of Aberdeen.

**I**N the introduction to the former Discourse on Kidnapping, I fairly stated the case betwixt the Magistrates of Aberdeen and me, without disguising the truth in any the most minute particular. I therefore appeal to the unbiaſſed judgment of the candid Reader, whether, after the unmerited maltreatment I ſuffered from the arbitrary proceedings of theſe magiſtrates, merely for relating a ſimple, but diſagreeable fact, I ſay, I ſubmit it, whether I was not entitled to ſue for redreſs before a higher tribunal. The motives or principles upon which they acted, in the irregular proſecution againſt me, in which they were both my Accuſers and Judges, I ſhall not pretend to determine; but, from the proof before inſerted, the reader will hardly be at a loſs to form a conjecture. In order to aſcertain the power of a magiſtracy, it is neceſſary to have recourſe to the original institution of it. That liberty which the conſtitution of this country conſiders as its favourite object, is the reſult of the equipoiſe which our laws have eſtabliſhed between the authority of Magiſtrates and the rights of the people. As the relative duties of ſociety muſt be enforced by the Magiſtrate, and compliance with the law exacted from the Citizens, by means of his authority, all the power that is neceſſary for theſe ſalutary purpoſes is veſted in him; and, in the due execution of it, he is not only entitled to the protection of the laws, but is an object of its veneration: Yet the ſame principles that have thus armed him with authority, for the benefit of ſociety, have wiſely impoſed upon him a reſtraint from abuſing it.