

ment or any other criminal prosecution, for a libel, the party so prosecuted shall be entitled to give the truth of the matter charged in the said indictment, or other prosecution, in evidence, under the general issue, by way of justification, any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

Persons prosecuted for a libel may give the truth in evidence.

CHAPTER 63.

AN ACT to establish Pilots, and regulate their Fees.

Supplements are 1818, ch. 188; 1823, ch. 176; 1829, ch. 74; 1832, ch. 115; 1838, ch. 186. A correct understanding of these various acts can only be acquired by a careful and very minute examination.

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the safety and preservation of vessels bound from this state to sea, or coming into Chesapeake bay and bound up any river of this state, or some port thereof, that able and experienced pilots should be established to conduct and pilot such vessels, for reasonable fees, to their several moorings, and that ignorant and unskilful persons should be prevented from undertaking such pilotage;

Preamble.

SEC. 2. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That James Clarke, John Hollins, Thomas Moore, Thomas Tenant and Gilbert Middleton, or any three or more of them, be and hereby are appointed a board, to examine any person who shall desire to be admitted a pilot, he first producing a certificate from the court of the county where he resides of his honesty and good behaviour, and paying to the said board the sum of four dollars, and to the register of the board seventy-five cents, and if, upon public examination, the person shall appear to the board of sufficient ability, skill and experience, they shall grant him one of three kind of warrants of appointment and license, according to the qualification of such person, thereby authorizing such person for one year from the date of such warrant, either to pilot vessels of any draught of water, or vessels not exceeding twelve feet draught, or vessels not exceeding nine feet draught; and every person receiving a warrant of appointment and license agreeably to this act, shall thereafter be reputed a lawful pilot; but no person shall be entitled to receive a warrant as aforesaid as a first rate pilot, unless he hath employed himself at least three years in the business of piloting vessels of any draught, or unless he hath served at least four years as an apprentice to the business of piloting; and every pilot shall renew his warrant of license every year, in the month of April or May, and that no renewals shall be granted at any other time, or new license applied for, unless the pilot had been carried to sea, or confined by sickness, so as to prevent his application within that period; and every first rate pilot shall pay two dollars, and every second rate pilot one dollar and fifty cents, and every third rate pilot one dollar, to the

Board of examiners appointed.