

N^o 23.*Adultery and Fornication.*

Part of an Act, Intituled,
*An Act for the Punishing the Offences of Adultery and
 Fornication.*

Laws of Ma-
 ryland, p. 88.
 See p. 89.

*How to know a Lewd
 Woman, by Assistance
 of the Minister, Vestry
 and Churchwardens,
 and how they are to
 proceed.*

*And what Proof suffi-
 cient to convict them.*

And for the ascertaining what Woman shall be accounted lewd,
Be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, by and with the Advice
 and Consent aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for the
 Minister, Vestry and Churchwardens of any Parish where there is
 a Minister, and for the Vestry and Churchwardens where there
 is no Minister, before any Admonition by them or any of them
 given, in pursuance of the Directions aforementioned, to give
 Notice, or cause Notice to be given to any Person or Persons by
 them or the major part of them, suspected of Lewdness or In-
 continency, and being or residing within their respective Parishes,
 to appear before them or the major part of them, at such Time
 and Place as they or the major part of them shall appoint, and
 on the Appearance of such Person or Persons, to acquaint them
 of the Suspicion that is had of them, and to hear what reasonable
 Excuse such Persons shall offer, why they ought not to be pro-
 ceeded against according to Law, as Fornicators or Adulterers,
 as the Case shall happen; and in case the Person or Persons,
 having such Notice given them, shall not appear according to
 such Notice, on *Affidavit* of such Notice given; or appearing, do
 not excuse or acquit themselves of the Grounds of such Suspicion,
 in such Manner as such Minister, Vestry and Churchwardens, as
 aforesaid, shall approve, that then it shall and may be lawful for
 such Minister, Vestry and Churchwardens, or the major part of
 them, as aforesaid, and they are hereby required to admonish such
 Person or Persons, according to the Directions aforementioned;
 which Admonition, together with Proof of the Co-habitation of
 the Parties so admonished, or their frequenting the Company of
 each other, contrary to and after such Admonition given, shall
 be sufficient Evidence in any Court of this Province, to convict
 the Persons so co-habiting or frequenting each others Company,
 after Admonition given as aforesaid, of Fornication or Adultery,
 as the Case shall happen, and subject them to the Penalties afore-
 mentioned, any Law, Statute or Custom to the contrary notwith-
 standing.

At an Assembly begun
 April the 26th, 1715.