

next after the offence shall have been committed, and not afterwards, and the defendant or defendants in such suit or action may plead the general issue, and give this Act and the special matter in evidence, at any trial to be had thereupon and that the same was done in pursuance of this Act; and if it shall appear so to have been done, then the Court shall find for the defendant or defendants, and if the plaintiff or plaintiffs shall be non-suited or discontinued his or their action, after the defendant or defendants shall have appeared, or if judgment shall be given against the plaintiff, the defendant or defendants shall and may recover treble costs, and have the like remedy for the same as defendants have in other cases by Law.