Continuance of Acts.

3. This Act and the Acts mentioned in the schedule to this Act, so far as they are unrepealed, shall continue in force until the thirty-first day of December one thousand eight hundred and eighty, and any enactments amending or affecting the enactments continued by this Act shall, in so far as they are temporary in their duration, be continued in like manner.

SCHEDULE.

ACTS REFERRED TO.

Session and Chapter.	Title.
	PART I.
17 & 18 Vict. c. 102 -	The Corrupt Practices Prevention Act, 1854.
21 & 22 Vict. c. 87 -	An Act to continue and amend the Corrupt Practices Prevention Act, 1854.
26 & 27 Vict. c. 29 -	An Act to amend and continue the Law relating to Corrupt Practices at Elections of Members of Parliament.
	PART II.
31 & 32 Vict. c. 125 -	The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868.
32 & 33 Vict. c. 21 -	The Corrupt Practices Commission Expenses Act, 1869.
34 & 35 Vict. c. 61 -	The Election Commissioners Expenses Act, 1871.

CHAPTER 76.

An Act to amend the Law with respect to the Liability of Members of Banking and other Joint Stock Companies; and for other purposes. [15th August 1879.]

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Companies Act, 1879.

Act not to apply to Bank of England.

2. This Act shall not apply to the Bank of England.

Act to be construed with 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89., 30 & 31 Vict. c. 131., and 40 & 41 Vict. c. 26.

3. This Act shall, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof, be construed as one with the Companies Acts, 1862, 1867, and 1877, and those Acts together with this Act may be referred to as the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1879.

Registration anew of company. 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89. 30 & 31 Vict. c. 131. 40 & 41 Vict. c. 26. 42 & 43 Vict. c. 76.

4. Subject as in this Act mentioned, any company registered before or after the passing of this Act as an unlimited company may register under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1879, as a limited company, or any company already registered as a limited company may re-register under the provisions of this Act.

The registration of an unlimited company as a limited company in pursuance of this Act shall not affect or prejudice any debts, liabilities, obligations, or contracts incurred or entered into by, to, with, or on behalf of such company prior to registration, and such debts, liabilities, contracts, and obligations may be enforced in

manner provided by Part VII. of the Companies Act, 1862, in the case of a company registering in pursuance of that Part. 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89.

5. An unlimited company may, by the resolution passed by the members when assenting to registration as a limited company under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1879, and for the purpose of such registration or otherwise, increase the nominal amount of its capital by increasing the nominal amount of each of its shares. Reserve capital of company, how provided. 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89. 30 & 31 Vict. c. 131. 40 & 41 Vict. c. 26. 42 & 43 Vict. c. 76.

Provided always, that no part of such increased capital shall be capable of being called up, except in the event of and for the purposes of the company being wound up.

And, in cases where no such increase of nominal capital may be resolved upon, an unlimited company may, by such resolution as aforesaid, provide that a portion of its uncalled capital shall not be capable of being called up, except in the event of and for the purposes of the company being wound up.

A limited company may by a special resolution declare that any portion of its capital which has not been already called up shall not be capable of being called up, except in the event of and for the purpose of the company being wound up; and thereupon such portion of capital shall not be capable of being called up, except in the event of and for the purposes of the company being wound up.

6. Section one hundred and eighty-two of the Companies Act, 1862, is hereby repealed, and in place thereof it is enacted as follows:—A bank of issue registered as a limited company, either before or after the passing of this Act, shall not be entitled to limited liability in respect of its notes; and the members thereof shall continue liable in respect of its notes in the same manner as if it had been registered as an unlimited company; but in case the general assets of the company are, in the event of the company being wound up, insufficient to satisfy the claims of both the note-holders and the general creditors, then the members, after satisfying the remaining demands of the note-holders, shall be liable to contribute towards payment of the debts of the general creditors a sum equal to the amount received by the note-holders out of the general assets of the company. 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89. s. 182. repealed, and liability of bank of issue unlimited in respect of notes.

For the purposes of this section the expression "the general assets of the company" means the funds available for payment of the general creditor as well as the note-holder.

It shall be lawful for any bank of issue registered as a limited company to make a statement on its notes to the effect that the limited liability does not extend to its notes, and that the members of the company continue liable in respect of its notes in the same manner as if it had been registered as an unlimited company.

7. (1.) Once at the least in every year the accounts of every banking company registered after the passing of this Act as a limited company shall be examined by an auditor or auditors, who shall be elected annually by the company in general meeting. Audit of accounts of banking companies.

(2.) A director or officer of the company shall not be capable of being elected auditor of such company.

(3.) An auditor on quitting office shall be re-eligible.

(4.) If any casual vacancy occurs in the office of any auditor the surviving auditor or auditors (if any) may act, but if there is no

surviving auditor, the directors shall forthwith call an extraordinary general meeting for the purpose of supplying the vacancy or vacancies in the auditorship.

(5.) Every auditor shall have a list delivered to him of all books kept by the company, and shall at all reasonable times have access to the books and accounts of the company; and any auditor may, in relation to such books and accounts, examine the directors or any other officer of the company: Provided that if a banking company has branch banks beyond the limits of Europe, it shall be sufficient if the auditor is allowed access to such copies of and extracts from the books and accounts of any such branch as may have been transmitted to the head office of the banking company in the United Kingdom.

(6.) The auditor or auditors shall make a report to the members on the accounts examined by him or them, and on every balance sheet laid before the company in general meeting during his or their tenure of office; and in every such report shall state whether, in his or their opinion, the balance sheet referred to in the report is a full and fair balance sheet properly drawn up, so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the company's affairs, as shown by the books of the company; and such report shall be read before the company in general meeting.

(7.) The remuneration of the auditor or auditors shall be fixed by the general meeting appointing such auditor or auditors, and shall be paid by the company.

Signature of balance sheet.

8. Every balance sheet submitted to the annual or other meeting of the members of every banking company registered after the passing of this Act as a limited company shall be signed by the auditor or auditors, and by the secretary or manager (if any), and by the directors of the company, or three of such directors at the least.

Application of 25 & 26 Vict. c. 89., 30 & 31 Vict. c. 131., and 40 & 41 Vict. c. 26.

9. On the registration, in pursuance of this Act, of a company which has been already registered, the registrar shall make provision for closing the former registration of the company, and may dispense with the delivery to him of copies of any documents with copies of which he was furnished on the occasion of the original registration of the company; but, save as aforesaid, the registration of such a company shall take place in the same manner and have the same effect as if it were the first registration of that company under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1879, and as if the provisions of the Acts under which the company was previously registered and regulated had been contained in different Acts of Parliament from those under which the company is registered as a limited company.

25 & 26 Vict. c. 89., 30 & 31 Vict. c. 131., 40 & 41 Vict. c. 26., and 42 & 43 Vict. c. 76.

Privileges of Act available notwithstanding constitution of company.

10. A company authorised to register under this Act may register thereunder and avail itself of the privileges conferred by this Act, notwithstanding any provisions contained in any Act of Parliament, royal charter, deed of settlement, contract of copartnery, cost book, regulations, letters patent, or other instrument constituting or regulating the company.