



Literary and Scientific Institutions Act 1854

1854 CHAPTER 112 17 and 18 Vict

An Act to afford greater Facilities for the Establishment of Institutions for the Promotion of Literature and Science and the Fine Arts, and to provide for their better Regulation.
[11th August 1854]

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1 Act restricted by [Commons Act 1899 \(c. 30\)](#), s. 22, [Sch. 1](#)
- C2 Preamble omitted under authority of [Statute Law Revision Act 1892 \(c. 19\)](#)
- C3 This Act is not necessarily in the form in which it has effect in Northern Ireland
- C4 Act amended (retrospectively) by [Reverter of Sites Act 1987 \(c.15, SIF 98:1\)](#), [ss.1\(1\)](#), 7(1)(b)

1 Lands to be used as sites for institutions, &c.

Any person in England, Wales, or Ireland, being seised in fee simple, fee tail, or for life,^{F1} in any^{F1} lands^{F1}, and having the present beneficial interest therein, may grant, convey,^{F1}, by way of gift, sale, or exchange, in fee simple or for a term of years, any quantity not exceeding one acre of such land, whether built upon or not, as a site for any such institution as hereinafter described: provided, that no such grant made by any person seised only for life of and in any such^{F1} lands shall be valid, unless, if there be any person next entitled to the same in remainder, in fee simple or fee tail, and if such person be legally competent, he shall be a party to and join in such grant; provided also, that where any portion of waste or commonable land shall be gratuitously conveyed by any lord of a manor for any such purpose as aforesaid, the rights of all commoners and others having interest of a like nature in the said land shall be barred and divested by such conveyance.

Textual Amendments

- F1 Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\)](#), [Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)

Status: Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Literary and Scientific Institutions Act 1854. (See end of Document for details)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C5** Reference to Ireland to be construed as exclusive of Republic of Ireland: S.R. & O. 1923/405 (Rev. X, p. 298: 1923, p. 400), art. 2

2 Chancellor and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster empowered to grant lands for the site of an institution.

The Chancellor and Council of her Majesty's Duchy of Lancaster for the time being, by any deed or writing under the hand and seal of the Chancellor of the said Duchy for the time being, attested by the Clerk of the Council of the said Duchy for the time being, for and in the name of her Majesty, may, if they see fit, grant, convey,^{F2}, to or in favour of such institution, any land forming part of the possessions of the said Duchy, not exceeding in the whole one acre in any one parish, upon such terms and conditions as to the said Chancellor and Council shall seem meet; and where any sum or sums of money shall be paid for the purchase or consideration for such land so to be granted, conveyed,^{F2} as aforesaid, the same shall be paid into the hands of the Receiver-General for the time being of the said Duchy, or his deputy, and shall be by him paid, applied, and disposed of according to the provisions and regulations contained in an^{M1} Act of the forty-eighth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the Third, chapter seventy-three, or any other Act or Acts now in force for that purpose.

Textual Amendments

- F2** Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\), Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)

Marginal Citations

- M1** [1808 c. 73.](#)

3 Officers of the Duchy of Cornwall empowered, upon sufficient authority, to grant land for the site of an institution.

Any three or more of the principal officers of the Duchy of Cornwall, under the authority of a warrant issued for that purpose under the hands of any three or more of the Special Commissioners for the time being for managing the affairs of the Duchy of Cornwall, or under the hands of any three or more of the persons who may hereafter for the time being have the immediate management of the said Duchy, if the said Duchy shall be then vested in the Crown, or if the said Duchy shall be then vested in a Duke of Cornwall, then under the hands of any three or more of the principal officers of the said Duchy, or under the hands of any three or more of the persons for the time being having the immediate management of the said Duchy, may, if they think fit, and are so authorized, by deed grant, convey,^{F3} to or in favour of any existing or intended institution any land forming part of the possessions of the said Duchy of Cornwall, not exceeding in the whole one acre in any one parish, upon such terms and conditions as to the said Special Commissioners or principal officers, or such other person as aforesaid, shall seem meet.

Textual Amendments

- F3** Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\), Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)

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4 If lands cease to be used for the purposes of the Act they shall revert.

Provided, that upon any land so granted by way of gift as aforesaid, or any part thereof, ceasing to be used for the purposes of the institution, the same shall thereupon immediately revert to and become again a portion of the estate or manor or possessions of the Duchy, as the case may be to all intents and purposes as fully as if this Act or any such grant as aforesaid had not been passed or made, except that where the institution shall be removed to another site the land not originally part of the possessions of either of the Duchies aforesaid may be exchanged or sold for the benefit of the said institution, and the money received for equality of exchange or on the sale may be applied towards the erection or establishment of the institution upon the new site.

5 Persons not having legal estates empowered to convey lands for the purposes of this Act without the concurrence of their trustees.

Where any person shall be equitably entitled to any . . . ^{F4} land, but the legal estate therein shall be vested in some trustee or trustees it shall be sufficient for such person to convey the land proposed to be granted for the purpose of this Act, without the trustee or trustees being party to the conveyance thereof; and where it is deemed expedient to purchase for the purpose aforesaid any land belonging to or vested in any infant or [^{F5}person of unsound mind], such land may be conveyed by the guardian or curator of such infant or the committee of such [^{F5}person of unsound mind] respectively, who may receive the purchase money for the same, and give valid and sufficient discharges to the party paying such purchase money, who shall not be required to see to the application thereof.

Textual Amendments

F4 Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\), Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)

F5 Words substituted by virtue of [Mental Treatment Act 1930 \(c. 23\), s. 20\(5\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C6 [S. 5](#) excluded by [Mental Health Act 1983 \(c.20, SIF 85\), s. 113, Sch. 3](#)

6 Corporation, justices, trustees, &c. to convey lands for the purposes of this Act.

Any corporation, ecclesiastical or lay, whether sole or aggregate, and any officers, . . . ^{F6} trustees, or commissioners holding land for public, ecclesiastical, parochial, charitable, or other purposes or objects, may, subject to the provisions herein-after mentioned, grant, convey, ^{F7} for the purpose of this Act such quantity of land as aforesaid, in any manner vested in such corporation, officers, . . . ^{F6} trustees, or commissioners: provided, that no ecclesiastical corporation sole, being below the dignity of a bishop, shall be authorized to make such grant without the consent in writing of the bishop of the diocese to whose jurisdiction the said ecclesiastical corporation shall be subject: provided also, that no parochial property shall be granted for such purpose without the consent of . . . ^{F8} the [^{F9}Secretary of State], to be testified by [^{F9}his] seal being affixed to the deed of conveyance . . . ^{F8}; and that no property held upon trust for charitable purposes shall be granted without the consent of the Charity Commissioners.

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Textual Amendments

- F6** Words repealed by [Local Government Act 1933 \(c. 51\)](#), [Sch. 11 Pt. IV](#)
- F7** Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\)](#), [Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)
- F8** Words repealed by [Local Government Act 1929 \(c. 17\)](#), [Sch. 12 Pt. VII](#)
- F9** Words substituted by virtue of [Local Government Board Act 1871 \(c. 70\)](#), [ss. 2, 7](#), [Ministry of Health Act 1919 \(c. 21\)](#), [s. 3\(1\)\(a\)](#), Sch. para. 1, [S.I. 1951/142](#) (1951 I, p. 1348), arts. 3(1) 5(2) Sch. Pt. I, 1951/1900 (1951 I, p. 1347), (W.) 1965/319, arts. 2(1), 10(1)(a), Sch. 1 Pt. I and (E.) 1970/1681, arts. 2(1), 6(3)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C7** [S. 6](#): transfer of functions (1.7.1999) by [S.I. 1999/672](#), [art. 2](#), [Sch. 1](#); [S.I. 1998/3178](#), [art. 3](#)

7 How such parties may convey.

Where any officers, trustees, or commissioners, other than parochial trustees, shall make any such grant, it shall be sufficient if a majority or quorum authorized to act of such officers, trustees, or commissioners, assembled at a meeting duly convened, shall assent to such grant, and shall execute the deed of conveyance, although they shall not constitute a majority of the actual body of such officers, trustees, or commissioners;^{F10}

Textual Amendments

- F10** Words repealed by [Local Government Act 1933 \(c. 51\)](#), [Sch. 11 Pt. IV](#)

8 Where part only of lands subject to a rent under lease is conveyed, the rent and fine upon renewal of lease may be apportioned.

If part only of any land held in fee subject to a perpetual rent, or comprised in a lease for a term of years unexpired, shall be conveyed or agreed to be conveyed for the purpose of this Act, the rent payable in respect of the lands subject thereto, and any fine certain or fixed sum of money to be paid upon any renewals of the lease, or either of such payments, may be apportioned between the part of the said land so conveyed or agreed to be conveyed and the residue thereof, and such apportionment may be settled by agreement between the parties following; that is to say, the person for the time being entitled to the rent, where the land is held in fee, or the lessor or other the owner subject to such lease of the lands comprised therein, the person entitled to the fee subject to the rent, or the lessee or other party entitled to the land by virtue of such lease or any assignment thereof for the residue of the term thereby created, and the party to whom such conveyance as aforesaid for the purpose of this Act is made or agreed to be made; and when such apportionment shall so be made it shall be binding on all under-lessees and other persons and corporations whatsoever, whether parties to the said agreement or not.

9 Liabilities of tenants, and remedies of landlords as to lands not conveyed.

In case of any such apportionment as aforesaid, and after the lands so conveyed or agreed to be conveyed as aforesaid shall have been conveyed, the person entitled to the fee or other estate in the lands subject to the rent, the lessee, and all parties entitled

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under him to the lands not included in such conveyance, shall, as to all future accruing rent, and all future fines certain or fixed sums of money to be paid upon renewals, be liable only to so much of the rent or of such fines or sums of money as shall be apportioned in respect of such last-mentioned lands; and the party entitled to the rent charged or reserved shall have all the same rights and remedies for the recovery of such portion of the rent as last aforesaid as previously to such apportionment he had for the recovery of the whole rent charged or reserved; and all the covenants, conditions, and agreements, except as to the amount of rent to be paid, and of the fines or sums of money to be paid upon renewals, in case of any apportionment of the same respectively, shall remain in force with regard to that part of the land which shall not be so conveyed as aforesaid, in the same manner as they would have done in case such part only of the land had been subject to the rent or included in the lease.

10 Any number of sites may be granted for separate institutions.

Any person or corporation may grant any number of sites for distinct and separate institutions, although the aggregate quantity of land thereby granted by such person or corporation shall exceed the extent of one acre, provided that the site of each institution do not exceed that extent.

11 Grants of site may be made to corporations or trustees to be held for the purposes of the institution.

Where the institution shall not be incorporated, the grant of any land for the purpose of such institution, whether taking effect under the authority of this Act or any other authority, may be made to any corporation sole or aggregate, or to several corporations sole, or to any trustees whatsoever, to be held by such corporation or corporations or trustees for the purpose of such institution.

12 ^{F11}

Textual Amendments

F11 S. 12 repealed by [Charities Act 1960 \(c. 58\)](#), [Sch. 7 Pt. I](#)

13 Form of grants, &c.

All grants, conveyances, and assurances of any site for an institution under the provisions of this Act may be made according to the form following, or as near thereto as the circumstances of the case will admit; (that is to say,)

“I, or We, [*or the corporate title of a corporation,*] under the authority of the Literary and Scientific Institutions Act 1854, do hereby freely and voluntarily, and without any valuable consideration, [*or do in consideration of the sum of to me, or us, or the said paid,*] grant and convey ^{F12} to all [*description of the premises*], and all my, or our, or the right, title, and interest of the to and in the same and every part thereof, to hold unto and to the use of the said corporation and their successors, or of the said and his or their [*heirs or executors or administrators or successors*], for the purposes of the said Act, and to be applied as a site for and for no other purpose whatever; such to be under the management and control of [*set forth the mode in which and the persons by whom the institution is to be managed and directed; in cases where the land is purchased,*

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*exchanged, or demised, usual covenants or obligations for title may be added]. In witness whereof the conveying and other parties have hereunto set their hands and seals [or seals only, as the case may be,] this day of .
Signed, sealed, and delivered by the said in the presence of , of .” . . . ^{F12}*

Textual Amendments

F12 Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1976 \(c. 16\)](#), [Sch. 1 Pt. XV](#)

14 ^{F13}

Textual Amendments

F13 [S. 14](#) repealed by [Charities Act 1960 \(c. 58\)](#), [Sch. 7 Pt. II](#)

15 ^{F14}

Textual Amendments

F14 [S. 15](#) repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1969 \(c. 52\)](#), [Sch. Pt. III](#)

16 **Application of purchase money for land sold by any ecclesiastical or corporation sole.**

Where any land shall be sold by any ecclesiastical corporation sole for the purpose of this Act, and the purchase money to be paid shall not exceed the sum of twenty pounds, the same may be retained by the party conveying for his own benefit, but when it shall exceed the sum of twenty pounds it shall be applied for the benefit of the said corporation in such manner as the bishop in whose diocese such land shall be situated shall by writing under his hand, to be registered in the registry of his diocese, direct and appoint; but no person purchasing such land for the purpose aforesaid shall be required to see to the due application of any such purchase money.

17 **Certain clauses of the 8 & 9 Vict c. 18 rendered applicable to this Act.**

In cases not otherwise provided for in this Act, the clauses sixty-nine, seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two, seventy-three, seventy-four and seventy-eight of the ^{M2}Lands Clauses Consolidation Act 1845, shall apply in respect of the application of the purchase money of all sites purchased from incapacitated persons, corporations, and trustees hereby empowered to sell, other than the Chancellor and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster and the officers of the Duchy of Cornwall.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C8 Reference to [Lands Clauses Consolidation Act 1845 \(c. 18\)](#), [ss. 69–74, 78](#) to be construed as reference to corresponding provisions in [Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 \(c. 56\)](#), [Pt. I: ibid.](#), s. 39(2)

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Marginal Citations

M2 1845 c. 18.

18 Trustees may sell or exchange lands or buildings; or may let.

If it shall be deemed advisable to sell any land or building not previously part of the possessions of the Duchy of Lancaster or Cornwall held in trust for any institution, or to exchange the same for any other site, the trustees in whom the legal estate in the said land or building shall be vested may, by the direction or with the consent of the governing body of the said institution, if any such there be, sell the said land or building, or part thereof, or exchange the same for other land or building suitable to the purposes of their trust, and receive on any exchange any sum of money by way of effecting an equality, and apply the money arising from such sale or given on such exchange in the purchase of another site, or in the improvement of other premises used or to be used for the purposes of such trust; and such trustees may, with like direction or consent, let portions of the premises belonging to the institution not required for the purposes thereof, for such term, and under such covenants or agreements, as shall be deemed by such governing body to be expedient, and apply the rents thereof to the benefit of the institution.

19 Trustees to be indemnified from charges; in default thereof empowered to mortgage or sell the premises.

The trustees of such institution who by reason of their being the legal owner of the building or premises shall become liable to the payment of any rate, tax, charge, costs, or expenses, shall be indemnified and kept harmless by the governing body thereof from the same, and in default of such indemnity shall be entitled to hold the said building or premises and other property vested in them as a security for their reimbursement and indemnification, and, if necessity shall arise, may mortgage or sell the same, or part thereof, free from the trusts of the institution, and apply the amount obtained by such mortgage or sale to their reimbursement, and the balance (if any) to the benefit of the institution, subject to the restrictions herein-before contained with regard to lands given and lands belonging to the Duchies aforesaid.

20 Property of institution, how to be vested.

Where any institution shall be incorporated, and have no provision applicable to the personal property of such institution, and in all cases where the institution shall not be incorporated, the money, securities for money, goods, chattels, and personal effects belonging to the said institution, and not vested in trustees, shall be deemed to be vested for the time being in the governing body of such institution, and in all proceedings, civil and criminal, may be described as the monies, securities, goods, chattels, and effects of the governing body of such institution, by their proper title.

21 How suits by and against institutions to be brought.

Any institution incorporated which shall not be entitled to sue and be sued by any corporate name, and every institution not incorporated, may sue or be sued in the name of the president, chairman, principal secretary, or clerk, as shall be determined by the rules and regulations of the institution, and, in default of such determination, in the name of such person as shall be appointed by the governing body for the

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occasion: provided, that it shall be competent for any person having a claim or demand against the institution to sue the president or chairman thereof, if, on application to the governing body, some other officer or person be not nominated to be the defendant.

22 F15

Textual Amendments
F15 S. 22 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1986 (c.12), s. 1(1), Sch. 1 Pt. I

23 How judgment to be enforced against.

If a judgment shall be recovered against the person or officer named on behalf of the institution, such judgment shall not be put in force against the goods, chattels, or lands, or against the body of such person or officer, but against the property of the institution . . . F16

Textual Amendments
F16 Words repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1986 (c.12), s. 1(1), Sch. 1 Pt. I

24 Institution may make byelaw to be enforced.

In any institution the governing body, if not otherwise legally empowered to do so, may, at any meeting specially convened according to its regulations, make any byelaw for the better governance of the institution, its members or officers, and for the furtherance of its purpose and object, and may impose a reasonable pecuniary penalty for the breach thereof, which penalty, when accrued, may be recovered in any local court of the district wherein the defendant shall inhabit or the institution shall be situated, as the governing body thereof shall deem expedient: Provided always, that no pecuniary penalty imposed by any byelaw for the breach thereof shall be recoverable unless the byelaw shall have been confirmed by the votes of three fifths of the members present at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.

25 Members liable to be sued as strangers.

Any member who may be in arrear of his subscription according to the rules of the institution, or may be or shall possess himself of or detain any property of the institution in a manner or for a time contrary to such rules, or shall injure or destroy the property of the institution, may be sued in the manner herein-before provided; but if the defendant shall be successful in any action or other proceeding at the instance of the institution, and shall be adjudged to recover his costs, he may elect to proceed to recover the same from the officer in whose name the suit shall be brought, or from the institution, and in the latter case shall have process against the property of the said institution in the manner above described.

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26 Members guilty of offences punishable as strangers.

Any member of the institution who shall^{F17} wilfully and maliciously, or wilfully and unlawfully, destroy or injure the property of such institution^{F18} whereby the funds of the institution may be exposed to loss, shall be subject to the same prosecution, and if convicted shall be liable to be punished in like manner, as any person not a member would be subject and liable to in respect of the like offence.

Textual Amendments

F17 Words repealed by [Larceny Act 1916 \(c. 50\)](#), [Sch.](#)

F18 Words repealed by [Forgery Act 1913 \(c. 27\)](#), [Sch.](#)

27 Institutions enabled to alter, extend, or abridge their purposes.

Whenever it shall appear to the governing body of any institution (not having a Royal Charter, nor established by nor acting under any Act of Parliament,) which has been established for any particular purpose or purposes that it is advisable to alter, extend, or abridge such purpose, or to amalgamate such institution, either wholly or partially, with any other institution or institutions, such governing body may submit the proposition to their members in a written or printed report, and may convene a special meeting for the consideration thereof according to the regulations of the institution; but no such proposition shall be carried into effect unless such report shall have been delivered or sent by post to every member ten days previous to the special meeting convened by the governing body for the consideration thereof, nor unless such proposition shall have been agreed to by the votes of three fifths of the members present at such meeting, and confirmed by the votes of three-fifths of the members present at a second special meeting convened by the governing body at an interval of one month after the former meeting.

28 Power to Board of Trade to suspend such alteration, if applied to by two fifths dissentients.

If any members of the institution, being not less than two fifths in number, consider that the proposition so carried is calculated to prove injurious to the institution, they may, within three months after the confirmation thereof, make application in writing to the Lords of the Committee of her Majesty's Privy Council for Trade and Foreign Plantations who, at their discretion, shall entertain the application, and if, after due inquiry, they shall decide that the proposition is then calculated to prove injurious to the institution, the same shall not be then carried into effect; but such decision shall not prevent the members of such institution from reconsidering the same proposition on a future occasion.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C9 Functions of Lords of the Committee of H.M. Privy Council now exercisable by Secretary of State concurrently with Board of Trade: [S.I. 1970/1537](#), [art. 2\(1\)\(a\)](#)

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29 Provision for the dissolution of institutions and adjustment of their affairs.

Any number not less than three fifths of the members of any institution may determine that it shall be dissolved and thereupon it shall be dissolved forthwith, or at the time then agreed upon, and all necessary steps shall be taken for the disposal and settlement of the property of the institution, its claims and liabilities, according to the rules of the said institution applicable thereto, if any, and if not, then as the governing body shall find expedient: Provided, that in the event of any dispute arising among the said governing body or the members of the institution the adjustment of its affairs shall be referred to the judge of the county court of the district in which the principal building of the institution shall be situated, and he shall make such order or orders in the matter as he shall deem requisite, or, if he find it necessary, shall direct that proceedings shall be taken in the [F19High Court] for the adjustment of the affairs of the institution.

Textual Amendments

F19 Words substituted by virtue of [Supreme Court of Judicature \(Consolidation\) Act 1925 \(c. 49\)](#), ss. **18(1)(a)(i)**, 224(1)

30 Upon a dissolution, no member to receive profit. Proviso for Joint Stock Companies.

If upon the dissolution of any institution there shall remain, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the said institution or any of them, but shall be given to some other institution, to be determined by the members at the time of the dissolution, or in default thereof by the judge of the county court aforesaid: provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any institution which shall have been founded or established by the contributions of shareholders in the nature of a joint stock company.

31 Who is a member.

For the purposes of this Act, a member of an institution shall be a person who, having been admitted therein according to the rules and regulations thereof, shall have paid a subscription, or shall have signed the roll or list of members thereof; but in all proceedings under this Act no person shall be entitled to vote or be counted as a member whose current subscription shall be in arrear at the time.

32 The governing body defined.

The governing body of the institution shall be the council, directors, committee, or other body to whom, by Act of Parliament, charter, or the rules and regulations of the institution, the management of its affairs is entrusted; and if no such body shall have been constituted on the establishment of the institution, it shall be competent for the members thereof, upon due notice, to create for itself a governing body to act for the institution thenceforth.

33 To what institutions the Act shall apply.

The Act shall apply to every institution for the time being established for the promotion of science, literature, the fine arts, for adult instruction, the diffusion

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of useful knowledge, the foundation or maintenance of libraries or reading rooms for general use among the members or open to the public, of public museums and galleries of paintings and other works of art, collections of natural history, mechanical and philosophical inventions, instruments, or designs; provided, that the Royal Institution,^{F20} shall be exempt from the operation of this Act.

Textual Amendments

F20 Words repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1973 \(c. 39\)](#), [Sch. 1 Pt. XIII](#)

34 Parish defined.

The term “parish” shall signify herein any place separately maintaining its own poor.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C10 Reference to parish to be construed as reference to rating district within meaning of [General Rate Act 1967 \(c. 9\)](#) except as provided in *ibid.*, s. 116(8)

35 Short title of the Act.

In all deeds, documents, proceedings, suits, and prosecutions, this Act may be cited and described by the name of “The Literary and Scientific Institutions Act 1854”.

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