

PRINCIPLES OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND RECIPROCITY AND NATIVE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,

Adopted at a Public Meeting, held in the Merchants' Hall, Glasgow,
18th May, 1849—

Sir JOHN MAXWELL, of Poloc, Bart., in the Chair.

1. That as "the annual labour of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all the necessaries and conveniences of life," the first duty of all governments is to maintain native industry, to encourage and preserve profitable employment for labour.

2. That the present condition of the industrial classes in this country calls for the serious consideration of the Legislature, the necessities of said classes requiring to be provided for before those of foreigners.

3. That the employment of large portions of our population has been diminished in quantity, or in remuneration, or has ceased—increased numbers are dependent on poor-rates (which are now excessive)—many thousands have emigrated—much of this loss of employment has arisen from the decline of our colonial trade, and from the severe competition of foreign industry, in our home, colonial, and foreign markets.

4. Considering *absolutely* "free trade" as an open question, but seeing that the concessions and sacrifices made by this country to other nations have not yet obtained adequate reciprocal or equivalent benefits, it becomes a matter for consideration whether it is incumbent on this country to continue that experiment, to the detriment of British interests, without obtaining some security from foreign states that reciprocal benefits shall be conceded to us.

5. That as "free trade" implies relief from burdens and restrictions on the home trade, as well as on the colonial trade, it was the duty of the British Legislature to have relieved domestic industry of a load of taxation, and to have established free trade with the British colonies to the utmost extent warranted by the state of the imperial revenue.

6. That, in the natural order of things, all arrangements and advances in the direction of free trade ought to have been begun and completed in our home trade, and in our colonial trade, *before* proceeding to give to our foreign rivals in trade the unrestricted, untaxed, unreciprocated privilege of competing in British markets with heavily taxed British industry.

7. That free trade with our own colonies would contribute largely to increase and consolidate the industrial, commercial, and political relations of Great Britain, not only with said colonies, but also with foreign powers.

THE OBJECTS OF THIS ASSOCIATION ARE—

I.—To obtain a free trade at home, by relieving domestic industry from various undue burdens and restrictions still remaining upon it.

II.—To obtain free trade with the British colonies, recognising them as integral portions of the empire, by treating coasting and colonial trade on similar principles.

III.—To obtain free trade with foreign states, on the basis of a true and equitable reciprocity.

IV.—To procure and circulate authentic information regarding native and colonial industry and interests; to watch the character of all measures introduced into the Imperial and Colonial Legislatures, which affect our industrial interests; and to promote and maintain a harmonious intercourse between all sections of the British empire.