

in our Colonies, give the Foreigner an entire command of the market. In this case, though the duties on foreign wood were reduced to the rates of 1801 to 1803,* there is no reason to expect that the price would be lower than it was at that period; on the other hand, a *higher* rate of duty would, assuredly, fall wholly on the consumer in the shape of additional price, which the absence of competition would enable the Foreigner to demand. In either view, therefore, and taking the question as one solely of Revenue, the country would suffer by the change, while, if duly considered in all its consequences, any alterations unfavourable to the Colonies will be found fraught with the ruin of British ship-owners,—driving thousands of our sailors into the service of the United States, to seek for that employment in foreign merchant ships which is denied them in our own—occasioning the decrease of demand for our manufactures—increasing pauperism, by checking emigration—and throwing an advantage in the scale of our rivals, who may again be as they have formerly been, our enemies. The experience of the past affords us too solid grounds of apprehension for the future.

This is viewing the matter merely in regard to its expediency; but as implicating the Government of the country in a charge of bad faith to those, who, on the express invitation and encouragement of the Ministry of the day, were induced to embark their property in this trade—it is utterly indefensible. When this question was agitated in 1831, much stress was laid on the assertion, that an alteration in the duties would be a saving to the country; but it was well remarked by one who took a statesmanlike view of the subject, in a speech replete with sound argument,† and who, in denying the conclusion, observed on the principle contended for—“that it was but bad economy which had not justice for its basis.”

* 10s. 11d.

† Mr. Attwood.