

predictions, the confident, and, without doubt, sincere predictions of ruin which attended the progress of the measure of 1842, nor can they fail to contrast with those predictions the great subsequent extension, and the apparently flourishing condition of the trade at the present moment.

With respect, indeed, to the disadvantage of distance, which undoubtedly affects the competition of Canadian timber with that of the Baltic, Her Majesty's Government have not failed to make what they deem to be a sufficient provision, all things considered, for the charge which it entails, by proposing to retain a protective duty of 15*s.* per load on foreign wood; and inasmuch as they can by no means admit that it is the proper office of commercial laws to attempt in general to secure to places which are remote all the advantages of proximity, they trust the petitioners will recognize in the plan as it actually stands, a proof of their great anxiety to give every just consideration to the claims of the parties engaged in the trade, and to those of the colony, so far as its interests may be conceived to be affected by the question.

Her Majesty's Government look forward to an active competition, under the law as it is proposed that it should stand, and a competition by no means unfavourable to the timber and deals of Canada. Nor is it competition alone which Her Majesty's Government anticipate; on the contrary, they conceive, as I have already had occasion to state to your Lordship, that to no inconsiderable extent, the consumption of Baltic timber is actually auxiliary to the demand for that of Canada, and therefore, that to this extent a measure which cheapens the first, is likely to cause positive improvement in the market for the last.

For these reasons, which I need not pursue into further detail, and for others to which I have thought it unnecessary on this occasion to refer, Her Majesty's Government have been unable to advise Her Majesty to assent to the prayer of the petition transmitted to me by your Lordship.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *W. E. Gladstone.*

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