

ON
THE TIMBER TRADE.

FEW commercial questions are more important than that of the Timber Trade, and few more difficult. It stands embarrassed with an intricate scale of duties, disputed facts, the great relations of foreign and colonial policy, the interests of home production and consumption, and, as if these were not sufficient to perplex the consideration, it is almost always associated with abstract controversies of political economy. Yet as one third part, or 700,000 tons, of the whole shipping arriving annually in the United Kingdom, from beyond seas, comes laden with wood, the maritime ascendancy of the British Empire may be said to depend upon this trade; and consequently its circumstances, however complex, demand the most thorough inquiry and accurate knowledge on the part of those, who attempt to regulate it by legislation.

The present is an essay to study and set forth this subject with all its bearings and ingredients, in order to determine the nature and consequences of the measures lately submitted to parliament. This object may perhaps be better attained, by separately considering what effect the proposed alteration would probably have had upon the Timber Trade, upon the British colonies, upon emigration, upon the manufacturers,