

pen. In the punishment of the delinquent slanderer they fancy they perceive an attack on the great principle which they so justly cherish, and the guilty frequently escape lest an injury should by possibility be inflicted on the important privilege under which defendants invariably shelter themselves; and when the foulest guilt has flown for protection to the shadow of that venerated sanctuary, the sword of the

avenger falls powerless to the ground, and the felon escapes that the principle may be vindicated.

"I care not," said Sheridan "that there may be a corrupt and licentious aristocracy,—a venal House of Commons,—that tyrants profane the Throns, or traitors guide our councils in the Senate,—give me a 'free Press,' and I defy them all"!

AGRICULTURAL PROTECTING DUTY.

PUBLIC attention has lately been drawn to the condition of the agricultural interest in Upper Canada, and various methods have been suggested for its improvement. It seems to be generally conceded that his produce does not pay the farmer a remunerating price, and that it is necessary to devise some plan by which his labours shall be better rewarded than they are at present. What is chiefly desired, however, seems to be this—that a duty be levied on produce imported from the United States for home consumption; and that Canadian bread stuffs be admitted into the English markets duty free, including therein flour manufactured in Canada from wheat imported from the States. By this conjoint operation, of a duty on foreign produce here, and freedom from duty for Canadian produce in the English markets, it is supposed that prices would be kept higher in our markets, and yet the exporter would reap ample profits by being no longer subject to duty in England. It is supposed that this double measure would increase the price of wheat about 1s. 3d. per bushel, and other things in proportion, and thus place the farmer above all reasonable grounds of complaint. How far these opinions are well-founded, or the proposed remedy is adequate to its design, we shall now enquire.

That agricultural labours are inadequately rewarded is certain. The farmer is very far from receiving a compensation equal to what can be obtained in other pursuits. A mechanic who is sober and industrious will often make money much faster than the farmer, and live,

or at least appear, much better all the time.—And as for store-keepers, each one could soon buy out half-a-dozen farmers, and live and appear like a prince to boot. Perhaps in nothing is the contrast between Canada and England more striking than in the different circumstances in which farmers appear. *There*, the farmer is a kind of petty lord, and often looks with some degree of contempt on those who are engaged in trade; but *here*, the traders are the lords of the land, and farmers, most of whom are struggling more or less with difficulty, are constrained to appear, and in some respects to be, an inferior class. Individuals of course there are, many altogether, who have surmounted their difficulties, have become easy in their circumstances, and have money at command; yet even these are in general far from exhibiting that quiet ease and joyous good humour with themselves and the world that generally characterize the English farmer. The former commonly shew the signs of their early struggles, and seem rather to live than enjoy life. We of course speak here of those who have spent most or the whole of their lives in Canada; for as to those who have emigrated from England, they bring with them and retain as far as possible the habits and manners of the classes to which they belonged. But those who have spent their active lives here have had to tread a rugged path, and have been engaged in labours of comparatively small profit. The well-spring of rural felicity has been frozen up by the rigours of the clime, and the severe labours required by a new, rough,