



## REVIEW.

THE PLACE BRITISH AMERICANS HAVE WON IN HISTORY.—A Lecture delivered at Aylmer, L. C., on Thursday evening, 22nd February, 1866, by Henry J. Morgan, corresponding member of the New York Historical Society.

In the last number of the BEE we remarked upon the claims to historical fame, put forth by Mr. Morgan in his lecture, on behalf of the British North Americans (?) therein named. To-day we propose to inquire, and find out, if possible, what the conditions are, which in the estimation of the distinguished lecturer, entitles a person to the glory of being an American Brittitler. Most men hold the orthodox creed that being born in a stable does not constitute children colts, or when grown, horses,—though it is undoubtful true that many persons born in noble stables have turned out mules and asses. Mr. Morgan, however, is magnificently independent of axioms, and lays it down squarely that if a papoose opens his blinkers to the sun in British America, though he be the offspring of a German emigrant on his way to Illinois, or the son of a British soldier here to-day and gone to-morrow, or the seed of an Ethiopian run-a-way from the South, or the progeny of a peripatetic mountebank come to flech our cash, he is to all intents and purposes a British American, and, ergo, if such child should afterwards become famous—or infamous—British Americans take the glory or the shame. It is of no consequence whatever that the progenitors were aliens, or that they removed before the picaniny had well learned how to suck: he had first filled his lungs and agitated his diaphragm with the magic air of Canada, and must, perforce, be indebted to that happy circumstance for his after greatness. Nay more, the British American need not even have been born in British America, or born of British American parents, possibly not born at all; it is enough that he squinted at us as a full grown tourist, a famous English engineer, a celebrated geologist, a distinguished Governor, or, if you please, a first-class acrobat! By the same rule, as he proceeded westward, he became a Michigander; eastward, a whittling Yankee; southward, an all-fired "old chevalry" man, and north, an Esquimaux. The rule is, we must say a very Catholic and generous one, for by it the merits of greatness may be appropriated to all the nations of babbling mother earth.

Seven cities gloried in the fame of Homer, and claimed each, to have given him birth; but the world did not then understand the Morganic theory for winning places in history, else they never would have quarrelled about such a trifle. Why! by the celebrity-made-easy system of our erudite lecturer, combined with his patent general-appropriation plan, we convert every soldier of distinction who ever trod our soil from Wolte, every statesman from Lord Darham, every engineer from Stevenson, every visitor from Dickens, every correspondent from Russell,

and every sneak from Doyle of the New York Herald, into British Americans. More than that,—we may claim the Prince of Wales, Prince Alfred and Prince Napoleon, who each gave us a peep, as Canadians! We could enumerate scores of eminent men who, having come to brace their nerves, shoot our deer, catch our salmon, and see our waterfalls, must now of necessity be included on the roll of our celebrities. Mr. Seward and the naturalist Audubon were in Quebec a few years ago; General Grant was there last summer, and George Peabody was lately in St. Catherines, syllogistically they are British Americans. The thing is as visible as that Mr. Morgan is a great man—in his boots. A British American is a man who lives in British America. The Duke of Newcastle lived in British America (a few days) ergo, he was a British American. Deny that who can! We need not pursue the subject, nor give illustrations from the lecture which all can read for themselves; but if any one prefers taking our word on trust, we tell him that "the British Americans who have won places in history" are all of them about as much entitled to the distinction of being British Americans, as they are to that of being historical characters, and at the very least, as much as Mr. Morgan is entitled to the credit of writing English.

CONFUSION OF METAPHORS.—The Toronto Leader, speaking of the course taken by the American Government towards Fenianism, says:

"Those who fostered the noxious plant until it obtained strength enough to do harm cannot be held innocent of the effects which it has of late been the cause of producing."

Now we would respectfully ask of our big contemporary whether he clearly remembered that it was a "noxious plant" he had before mentioned when he went on to describe it as obtaining "strength enough to do harm." We rather think his mind was running on the story of the man who, to his sorrow brought up a young lion in his household. At least we are very sure of this, that it is not customary to talk of plants being allowed to obtain strength enough to do harm. We might also, perhaps, hint to the Leader that to talk of "the effects which it has been the cause of producing" is a very cumbersome, not to say blundering form of expression. Would not "the effects which it has produced" do just as well, and be a great deal better.

RIGHT.—It has been suggested that instead of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, to catch the Fenians, who "live and move and have their beans" in our midst, the Legislature might have more properly suspended the Fenians already caught, and the rest would very probably suspend their treasonable practices for a time. A good suggestion this.

## STRAY THOUGHTS.—No. 3.

BY AVONMORE.

I am pleased to observe that an old custom of great men of ancient times is being revived by the great men of modern days; that is, their reading their own productions for the public. There is nothing in the practice to object to, but everything to commend, for the author of a poem, essay, or editorial, as the case may be, is supposed to be better able duly to emphasise and display the spirit of the production than the ordinary reader. Homer recited his great epic, the Iliad, throughout the lovely isles of Greece, and in breathing into it the noble spirit in which it was conceived, no doubt, invested it with a peculiar interest that no subsequent reader could hope to awaken, with equal force, in the minds of an auditory. At the present time Mr. Charles Dickens, who, while refusing to read for the Queen, condescends to honor the mediocrity with a display of his elocutionary powers, is raising quite a *furor* in England. This very day I was pleased to discover that a certain City editor from the East end—a great man—has landably entered on the avocation of trumpeter and interpreter to his own articles, and that henceforth he will not only write, but read them for the public. The productions are novel and abstruse, and as the sheet that contains them is obscure, they seldom meet the public gaze. To have them read, then, by the author, will be a blessing. The discovery was purely accidental. I was going down Sussex street, and in an archway I observed a gentleman with a newspaper in his hand; his facial abductors were in violent motion, and his head ever and anon bowed forward, like that of a painted mandarin in a grocer's window. On taking a close look I discovered it to be our friend, the editor, reading in a most marked, and peculiarly emphatic manner his morning article, and in such eloquent style that his sole auditor, our much respected fellow-citizen of the Streets Department, Mr. Thos. K-n-e-l-a, was entranced to the ground, with look intent and lips apart, which latter permitted freely the Heliconian draught that flooded on them to descend uninterrupted to his yearning bowels. On subsequent enquiry I have learned that archway display was simply an experiment, and that your Daly St. contemporary intends shortly to read his editorials in the lecture room of the Mechanics' Institute. The Confederation series will be the first, and for these the members of the Government, I learn, are already furnished with tickets. The Hon. John A. McDonald is expected to preside at the opening of the reading. The treat will be a rare one, and may nothing prevent me from being present, for I love occasionally to take a step from the ridiculous to the sublime.

BRAVERY.—Why are Robinson & Rowsell supposed to be very brave men? Because they can face a dozen regimental coats without ever flinching.