

of them went into the drawing-room, where some "ladies" of their own class were playing on a piano-forte; other mechanics were reading newspapers and books, but after a short stay they all returned to their work. On looking at the books they had laid down, I found that one was D'Israeli's "Coningsby," another Burns' Poems, and a third an article just reprinted from Frazer's Magazine, on "the Policy of Sir Robert Peel."

As we passed through Conway, seeing there was but one meeting-house, I asked to what denomination it belonged. The reply was, "Orthodox." I went on to say that the place seemed to be thriving. My informant replied, with evident satisfaction, "Yes, and every man here is his own tenant," meaning that they all owned the houses and lands they occupied. To be a lessee, indeed, of a farm, where acres may be bought so cheap, is a rare exception to the general rule throughout the United States. The approach to an equal subdivision of property among children, is not the result here of a compulsory law, as in France, but of custom; and I was surprised to find how much the partition is modified, according to the individual views of the testator. I was assured, indeed, by persons on whose authority I could depend, that in nine cases out of ten the small working farmers in New England do not leave their property in equal shares to their children, as the law would distribute it if they died intestate. It is very common, for example, to leave the sons twice as much as the daughters, and frequently to give the eldest son the land, requiring him to pay small legacies to the others. In the case of one of my acquaintances, where the sons had larger shares than the daughters, it was provided, that if one of the two brothers died, the other should take all his share. As a general rule, the larger the estate the greater is the inequality of partition among the children. When I inquired into the manner in which the twelve or fourteen largest fortunes, such as would rank as considerable in England, had been bequeathed in Boston and its vicinity, and in New York, I was astonished to learn that none of them had been left in equal shares among the children by men of English descent, the one and only exception being that of a Frenchman. In the more newly settled states, there is less in-