

abolished at the same time. After effecting these sweeping measures, Sir Robert Peel resigned, and was succeeded by the Whigs under Lord John Russel.

4. The year 1847 was unfortunately distinguished by a famine in Ireland, owing chiefly to the failure of the potato crop; and by a commercial crisis in England, arising from over speculation in railroad and other stocks, by which thousands of families were ruined, and which, in some respects, resembled the famous South Sea speculations in the reign of George the First. As the country was recovering from these disasters, another revolution broke out in France, which resulted in the expulsion of the Orléans family, and in the formation of a republic. This circumstance, as usual, had considerable influence on English affairs. Trade was greatly depressed, and tumultuous meetings of the chartists had to be put down by a combination of the middle classes and others, who in London alone formed a force of 200,000 special constables. In Ireland, in 1848, an insurrection was attempted under Smith O'Brien and others, but with signal failure. Since that period the country has enjoyed an unexampled degree of peace.

5. It would be improper to pass over without mention the great exhibition of the arts, manufactures and products of all nations, which took place in London in 1851. In the early part of the same year the Whigs were again driven from power, having been defeated on a bill for the re-formation of the militia system; and the Tories, under Lord Derby, as Premier, and Mr. D'Israeli, as Chancellor of