

Political and General Miscellany.

LORD PALMERSTON'S INDICTMENT AGAINST RUSSIA.

(From the London Morning Post, Nov. 3.)

One would have hoped that with a new Czar and the return of peace, a change would have come over the spirit of Russian diplomacy, and that, taught by disaster, the Emperor Alexander would have appeared a sadder and a wiser sovereign. But adversity, it appears, is without its "sweet uses" for kingly or imperial heads. The elder Bourbons, we know, "learned nothing and forgot nothing;" and it may be said of the house of Romanoff, that the son, with the benefits of increased experience, is no wiser as a sovereign, if he be any better as a man, than his imperial father, Nicholas.

A check, however, was given to the aggressions of Russia by the treaty signed between England and France in 1854, and now that, owing to the effect of that treaty, the schemes of Peter and his successors, for the possession and capture of Constantinople, are thwarted, the tactics of the Russian Cabinet have completely changed. Well aware that it was only by the union of England and France Constantinople was saved, the chief object of Russia now is to sow distrust between the two great Western Powers, and so to sever an alliance which stands in the way of future aggression. To achieve this grand object no expenditure of fraud, of treachery, of lying, of cajolery, of money, or of Machiavelism will be spared. Millions and millions of silver roubles have been, and will be, expended in every quarter of Europe, and in some quarters out of Europe—to wit, America and Africa; nor will a first or a second failure deter a cabinet which speculates so largely on the credulity and sordidness of mankind. There have been for months, and are now, scores of secret Russian agents at work in all the courts of Germany, in Spain, at Naples, in Sardinia, in Turkey, in the Danubian Principalities, in Greece, in America, and in Egypt, announcing that the alliance between France and England is dissolving, if not actually dissolved; and obscurely hinting that the unnatural union must give place to a more perfect understanding between France and Russia.

In Paris, and throughout France, Russian agents, male and female, from Madam de Lieven downwards, pursue a different species of tactics. There they are instructed to insinuate doubts of the fidelity and loyalty of England—to preach against English cupidity and sordidness, and that restless mercantile spirit so near akin to revolution. In England, on the contrary, Russian agents—and there are many in London, Manchester, and Ireland—declaim against the fickleness and perfidy of France, endeavour to revive the anti-Gallican mania, and seek to re-kindle the ancient rivalry and the extinct old anti-Gallican spirit. There are three or four sections of secret agents, spies, and *mouchards* at work, apparently with views altogether different; but yet the object of each section, or of the heads that guide each section, is only to cause first distrust and jealousy, and ultimately a coolness between two powers now happily in firm alliance—England and France. To persons who have not studied Russian history, or watched the secret diplomacy of Russia, the thing we allude to may seem incredible, or even impossible; but to those who are aware that Russia forced an ultra monarchic interference in Spain at the very moment she was openly exciting a democratic revolt in Greece, the policy now pursued will appear in accordance with the traditions and events from 1823 to 1827-8.

Though defeated in three battles, Russia still declares she is not vanquished, and still adheres to her traditional system of future aggrandisement. To the success of this system, however, disunion between France and England is an indispensable preliminary. No effort then, we repeat, will be left untied to sever a union which is an impediment to Russian success. Russia, to achieve her ends, will not scruple to create confusion or discontent either in France or England. In France she will unhesitatingly make use of Carlists, Orleanists, republicans, socialists, or even communists, to subserve her purposes; and in England or Ireland she will address herself with equal readiness to charists or repealers.

Failing in domestic intrigues in either of these civilized countries, there remains on the cards the game of exciting discontent in the British colonies in India, in Persia, or in Egypt, where the interests of France and England are supposed to be at variance, and the still more desperate remedy of exciting democratic revolution in central and northern Italy, simultaneously with the absolutism in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies and Spain. Any one of these objects may be attempted separately, or all of them conjointly, if the scheme of disuniting the Western Powers cannot be otherwise accomplished. Probably certain preparatory measures have also been previously arranged. For instance, M. Bounteneiff and his agents at the Porte, have been doubtless instructed to sow dissension between the English and French Ambassadors, whilst General Stackelberg, at Turin, M. Kokoschine, at Naples, and M. Benkendrof, at Madrid, have pursued a like course of unworthy chicanery. Amidst so many incentives to quarrel, so many provocations to a misunderstanding and a rupture, it would be astonishing, almost miraculous, looking at the weakness and the infallibility, and self-love of men, if Russia was not in some one instance successful; but we have firm faith in the wisdom of the people of England and France, whose instructed classes see through the Machiavelian policy of the Czar and his Cabinet, and, discerning the dishonest devices, are aware of their dangers.

By some it may be thought that we have dealt rather hardly with the Czar and his Cabinet. But the conduct of Russia in reference to the Isle of Serpents, to Kilis, to Ismail, to Kars, and to the frontier of Bessarabia, has been so discreditable, and in reference to the Bessarabian frontier, so dishonest, that one is entitled to presume any knavery or wickedness of a Power capable of so acting. Russia has not only refused to perform some of the articles of the Treaty of Paris, the ink of which is scarcely yet dry, but has evasively attempted to wriggle out of others of them. But this crafty and unscrupulous Power will fail to profit by her own wrong, and will find to her cost that all attempts to sow disunion between England and France will only serve the more firmly to unite civilized nations against falsehood, fraud, and diplomatic trickery.

LIGHTNING.

Arago has divided lightning into three classes. The first includes those where the discharge appears like a long, luminous line, bent into angles and zig-zags, and varying in complexion from white to blue, purple or red. This kind is known as forked lightning, because it occasionally divides into two branches before reaching the earth as if anxious to double its damages. It has also been seen to sever into three, Carpentier supplied Arago with a case of tricuspidate lightning, where the southern fork set fire to a house in the suburbs of Freiberg, the middle struck a build-