

Political and General Miscellany.

FLIGHT OF THE RUSSIANS.

Written by a Russian Sister of Mercy (a Directress) immediately after the escape from Sebastopol to the north side:—

"My last letter breathed no presentiment of the deep and universal grief that has come over us. You know now that we have abandoned Sebastopol to the enemy; but how? The whole town was changed into a sea of flame; all the batteries and bastions are blown up. It was a horror of desolation—a chaos—more dreadful than hell. That is all I can tell you about it. As yet I can give no account of all we have gone through, nor can I comprehend how we have born such terrors, how survived such agony. I am hardly able to write to you, my thoughts are so confused: but, by God's grace, my strength of will is preserved. You will easily conceive how much we are suffering in our hearts and souls. I would rather have died than have witnessed that terrible moment—those scenes so bloody, such as no war has ever yet produced." She then proceeds to give some account of her movements to and fro, seeking the wounded, and rendering help during the day. The following is the clearest passage in the letter, which is a repetition of similar scenes: "Next morning (Sept. 8) we were all of us ready at five o'clock. I gave orders to have everything prepared that was requisite at the different stations, and went myself to our hospital. At ten o'clock I drove out, but our horses were so exhausted that it was eleven before I arrived at the hospital, which stands upon a hill. From there it appeared that a heavy cannonade was going on, but I could not imagine it to be actually the storming; the wind wafted the sound to another quarter. They told me in the hospital that the attack had begun; I begged my good and active Sister J.—she was a Miss B. before marriage—to neglect none of my arrangements, and then I left her in all haste to attend to my duty in all directions. On my way to the city I saw a strong body of mounted men riding at full gallop towards Sebastopol; it was the Commander-in-Chief with his suite. I made the coachman drive as fast as possible after them, going first of all to the barracks on the north side. Here I heard that a sister had been wounded, not mortally, but severely, at the Michailoff battery. The entire left wing and the Malakhoff tower were in a blaze with the firing of artillery. I found the space about the Michailoff battery covered with troops, who wanted to cross the bridge, and the enemy directed his fire most especially against that spot. All the sisters of the Michailoff battery were well. From here I wished to be accompanied across the bridge by Mother Seraphine, a nun, you must know, from Tiver, who joined our sisterhood at its foundation. Just as we were going, however, to step upon the bridge, in order to follow the troops, General Buchmeir held us back, and advised us to return, for it was too dangerous, he said. I begged him to let me go, made the sign of the cross, and ran across the bridge. The troops hastened at a running pace over to the south side. The wind was so strong that the waves washed over the bridge, but, independent of that, the weight of the troops pressed it down under the water. The shots from the enemy's batteries were very frequent in this direction; but God was gracious to us. Balls fell close beside us, or went over our heads, and often so near that we all stooped low—they missed. I had strength enough to run as far as the Nicolaieff battery, but I had no sooner reached

the sisters' room, when I felt giddy, and had to take some drops as a restorative. I was wet through up to my waist, for my dress and my feet had been all the time in the water. I asked after Sister S. She came to me with her eye bandaged up, but, thank Heaven, her wound is a slight one; not like that of poor Sister W. Then I went to see Count Osten-Sacken. I had to pass along a gallery on which many spectators were standing; as soon as a bomb or a ball came near, we hid ourselves under the archways. In the inner court of the battery I found several gentlemen of the Commander's suite, and inquired of them where I should find the Count. They told me he was up in the battery with the Commander-in-Chief. I went up a narrow wooden flight of steps, but could only crawl up very painfully, and when I was up my senses were all but leaving me. I could just ask the Count what his commands were for the sisters in the Nicolaieff battery. He answered, 'Take them all away. God knows what may happen in a few hours.' Somebody said the enemy's flag was waving already on the Malakhoff. A horrid depression seized my soul. I wept without tears; and I don't know how I got down again. I ran to the sisters, begged them to let everything alone and follow me to the Michailoff battery. We set off, hoping that we might be able to return to the hospital as soon as it became more tranquil. The rumour spread that our troops cut down the enemy's flag. What great—what a universal joy that was! For all that I begged the sisters to follow me, left the care of our property to the surgeons and inspectors, and walked as fast as our strength would let us. At the same time the sick were carried across to the north side. A few hours later, and all were safe. On the bridge we again met troops running; one ball hissed after another, and fell into the bay. Half-way across the bridge, Sister B. fainted away through fright; a ball flew by us so close that it all but struck the bridge; I recommended myself to God and looked about me to see if all the sisters followed. Behind me came Father Benjamin (the confessor of the sisterhood, and who has long been a monk on Mount Athos,) and the priest to the fleet, concerning whom I have often written to you. When I saw him I stopped, that I might go by his side, for he is not alone a pious and learned monk, but has a calm courageous mind. At that very instant a bomb fell close beside us. Sister B. could walk no further; Father Benjamin held her up by one arm, our soldier did the same by the other, and they half dragged her along. I dipped my handkerchief into the bay to revive her with it. By God's help we came safe and sound to the Michailoff battery, and there I left the sisters."

Correspondence of the Morning Star.

PROCEEDINGS IN CONGRESS.

First Triumph of Freedom—Mr. Banks elected Speaker—The American Freeman triumphs over the Aristocratic Slaveholder—Let God be acknowledged in this important victory.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 4, 1856.

MR. EDITOR:—"The Lord reigneth: he is clothed with majesty: the Lord on high is mightier than many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Yes, the God of our fathers has given us the present victory of *Freedom over Slavery* in the election of Mr. Banks as Speaker of the thirty-fourth Congress. The nine weeks siege is ended—the terrible struggle is over,—and, for once, Liberty has triumphed!!

During this protracted battle, facts and circumstances have been so developed and woven into the