

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—On the 31st of January the first meeting of the committee formed for the establishment of a British Hospital at Port Said was held. The members of this committee—Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., Admiral Sir E. Inglefield, K.C.B., Major-General Sir Frederic Goldsmit, K.C.S.I., Colonel Sir John Stokes, K.C.B., Sir W. P. Andrew, C.I.E., Mr. T. Sutherland, M.P., Chairman of the P. and O. Company, Mr. C. M. Palmer, M.P., and others, including the Rev. Canon Scarth, late hon. chaplain at Port Said—have requested me to ask a brief space in *The Times* to plead the cause of this hospital before the British public.

About 7,300,000 tons of shipping pass through the Suez Canal annually, and this number is continually on the increase. These ships carry their living freights with great rapidity from one extreme of climate to the other, and always at high pressure; not unfrequently this means accident to the strong and illness to the weak. Every ship must touch at Port Said, and numbers of them send a sick or disabled man on shore. Last year the British Consul paid about £600 in fees for these poor fellows while lying at the native Egyptian hospital. I will not stop to describe—nor would it be a pleasant task—the total unfitness of such a place for an Englishman; but I know of two or three who said they would have preferred the cemetery at once. How many a passenger might have been saved from illness or death, had there been a British hospital to receive them on their voyage through the Canal, is a thought that must have occurred to all of us who have invalid friends passing to or from England, India, China, or the Colonies. There is also a considerable population on shore in banks, telegraph, commercial, and other offices, for whom no relief when sick has as yet been provided.

And so we earnestly ask for donations to enable us to build this hospital. An excellent site, worth £4,500, was given some years ago; a plan, suited to the climate, of a compact, one-storied building to hold 40 beds, has been approved; the furniture, linen, &c., is on the spot waiting to be used; and, still more important, a sufficient income for the maintenance of the hospital is secure; all we want is a few thousands for the structure itself. If the money were given at once, the building could be completed before the sickly season of the summer. Will not England come forward to do this one work in Egypt—absolutely unpolitical, and urgently needed for her own people—the sailors to whom we owe so much, the friends and relatives for whose safety at sea we pray so anxiously?

I am, Sir, &c.,

E. STRANGFORD.