

"For We Love You, Tommy Atkins."

We hope that the press of this country will give the very widest publicity to the letter which appeared in Monday's *Times* from Lord Wantage, Chairman of the English Red Cross Society. He writes:—

"The English Red Cross Society, having offered supplemental aid to Lord Cromer and the Sirdar for the forthcoming Sudan expedition, have received, through the Foreign Office, the following message from Lord Cromer:—

Greatly appreciate offer of assistance: but the Sirdar and I are of opinion that very ample arrangements have been made for the sick and wounded, and that to accept offer would involve heavy call on transport beyond that for which calculation is made. This would necessitate diminishing the number of fighting men, which would be very considerable. We are, therefore, unable to accept.

During previous expeditions on the Nile, Red Cross aid has always been gratefully accepted; and in no case has the society made any demands upon the military authorities for transport, which they always provide themselves.

During the Egyptian campaign of 1884-85 two steamers were fully equipped by the society for service on the Nile; an additional vessel was lent by an English gentleman for transport purposes on the Red Sea; and over £34,000 (including the Princess of Wales's branch) was expended in a manner the value of which was fully recognized by the commanders of the expedition.

The Red Cross Society cannot, therefore, but regret that their assistance is declined, as both the English and Egyptian soldiers will thereby be deprived of many comforts and luxuries, which have never yet been fully supplied by the Medical Department, and which, for obvious reasons, cannot be given with the promptitude which individual agents are able to exercise.

In declining the assistance of a recognized body such as the National Red Cross Society, which has been in the habit of working in harmony with the Medical Department, the door is shut against the expression of the national feeling of the public, who will always desire to give practical effect to their sympathy with the sufferings of their soldiers engaged in war.

I write this for the information of those who have wished the Red Cross Society to take action in this matter, and I will thank you to give it a place in your columns."

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We drew attention last week to the well-known fact (thanks to honest war correspondents) that our sick and wounded soldiers in Egypt, have not had, and are not likely, under existing arrangements, to receive that care and attention which is imperatively due to the brave men who risk their lives in the defence of the country—and in extending its empire—and which a generous and grateful people has a right to demand, shall be given them.

The monstrous argument advanced by Lord Cromer, that to accept and transport efficient skilled help for the sick and wounded "would necessitate diminishing the number of fighting men," is as cruel as it is callous, and must not be permitted to prevail. The Sirdar is a keen soldier, and the success of his expedition is a laudable ambition. But no soldier is a great Commander who is not a humane man, and it is truly horrible that the lives of fellow men are to be *used and valued only so long as they can fight*, and thus add to the honour and glory of those who command them. No, "Tommy Atkins,"—we honour you far too well, and we call upon those who wield the pen to do so now in your defence. Much valuable time has already been lost, and if our soldiers are not to die like flies in the Soudan, of typhoid and other diseases, the Government must be compelled to insist that Lord Cromer and the Sirdar, shall accept the offer prompted by the splendid patriotism of Mr. Alfred Harmsworth, to which we alluded last week, or that of the English Red Cross Society. If there is any further shilly-shallying, and our soldiers lives are sacrificed by it, we trust to the honour of the War Correspondents to give a true and faithful account of the "Advance to Khartoum," and woe to those who are responsible for such deaths.

Items of Interest.

THE Duchess of York paid a private visit to the Paddington Green Children's Hospital on afternoon. In passing through the wards her Royal Highness spoke to each little patient, and distributed some flowers, which she had very thoughtfully brought with her. Before leaving her Royal Highness named one of the wards "Mary Adelaide Ward." In 1895 the hospital was opened by Her Royal Highness the late Duchess of Teck, after having been rebuilt and enlarged.

THE "At Home" given by the Nursing Staff of the London Homœopathic Hospital on Monday last, was a great success, as Homœopathic functions generally are. The sale of work last week realized £105, which after paying all expenses, including £20 paid to cripples for needlework, leaves £70 for Samaritan purposes during the year. A nice little nest egg which will benefit many poor convalescents.

MISS ANNIE HAMILTON on leaving the Royal United Hospital, Bath, to take up her new work as Matron of the Cancer Pavillion Hospital, Manchester, was presented with a gold watch, and printed testimonial from the Committee and Staff, a case of silver apostle tea spoons and sugar tongs from the Matron, Resident Medical Officer, and Resident Surgical Officer, and a gold ring, and an afternoon tea service from the nurses.

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