

The Times - 31/8/1916

WIVES OF PRISONERS IN SWITZERLAND.

VISITS TO BE ARRANGED.

Lord Northcliffe's suggestion in his article in *The Times* of yesterday with regard to the wives of the British prisoners interned in Switzerland is already being acted upon. Lord Northcliffe stated that wherever he went he found that the British prisoners who were married were anxious to see their wives, and he suggested that the Government or the Red Cross authorities should take the matter in hand and arrange for the wives to go out to Mürren and Château d'Oex. In his article Lord Northcliffe said:—

The cost of bringing out the wives on a visit is but £12 each. Dare I suggest that, if Mr. Lloyd George and the Treasury do not see their way to a very trifling precedent, the British Red Cross Society should satisfy this earnest wish of those who, in the national cause, have been through the hell of the trenches and the bottomless pit of the German prison camps?

Mr. Fenwick Harrison, the purchaser of the Kitchener letter, was the first to offer assistance. As the result of his generosity the Lord Kitchener Memorial Fund Committee hope to be able to make the necessary arrangements for 50 mothers and wives to visit their relatives in

Switzerland at an early date. Applications should be sent to Sir Hedley Le Bas, 34, Norfolk-street, Strand, London.

But it can also be definitely stated that all the wives of the interned men will be able to go to Switzerland, for arrangements are being made for that purpose. Mr. Lloyd George stated yesterday that he hoped he would be returning to town in the next few days, and he would then give the matter his first attention.

If, as is possible, the arrangements for the visits cannot be undertaken by the Government, we are assured that the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John will gladly undertake the work and see that it is carried through.

These two societies are at present taking the relatives of dangerously wounded men to France, and while they are there they are the guests of the societies. This work is carried out by the Red Cross authorities in such a way that any relative who receives permission to cross the Channel has the least possible trouble in the matter.

The organization of this department could easily be expanded and altered so that Switzerland could be embraced. The Joint Committee of the Red Cross and the Order of St. John feel sure that subscribers to *The Times* Fund will approve of the use of their money for the purpose suggested by Lord Northcliffe. For the moment, however, they must await the decision of the Government and see whether it will be their duty to undertake this good work.
