

NURSES' MISSIONARY LEAGUE.

As we have already announced, the Tenth Annual Conference and Meeting of the Nurses' Missionary League will be held at University Hall, Gordon-square, W.C., on April 23rd. Nurses who come up from the provinces the day before to attend the Nursing and Midwifery Exhibition and Conference should note that the morning meeting of the Nurses' Missionary League opens at 10 o'clock, so that they could spend some time there before going on to the Royal Horticultural Hall. The meetings of the League are always interesting, and all nurses would be sure of a welcome.

The Nurses' Missionary League propose to raise a Memorial to the late Miss Kathleen Miller, in proof of its appreciation of her devoted work upon its behalf. It is intended that the money raised shall be given to the work that she had so much at heart—the cause of Medical Missions; and it is suggested to devote it to the new hospital at Onitsha, West Africa.

At the May Meetings of the various Missionary Societies to be held in London a cordial welcome awaits any nurses who are able to be present. The C.M.S. has made arrangements by which a block of seats shall be reserved for nurses in uniform at their meeting at the Queen's Hall at 7 p.m. on May 3rd.

THE RELEASE OF NURSE PITFIELD.

Greatly to the relief of the thousands of readers of this journal and their friends, it was announced on Tuesday that Nurse Ellen Pitfield had been released from Holloway Prison, no doubt largely owing to the indignation upon the part of the public, which was bringing into the office of this journal an unprecedented demand for forms of petition to sign for her immediate release. To sentence a woman suffering tortures with incurable cancer to six months' imprisonment for a political offence has produced a profound sense of outrage in the public conscience, which the Home Secretary has been wise to placate without delay. Nurse Pitfield is now receiving every care and comfort in a Nursing Home, where everything is being done to minimise her sufferings by the most sympathetic and highly skilled nursing.

Mrs. Saul Solomon, a Holloway Prisoner, hastened the moment she was at liberty to sign the Petition in favour of the immediate release of Nurse Pitfield, and she has since sent the following note to this journal:—

Having won her golden spurs in many a glorious contest for Woman's Freedom, Nurse Ellen Pitfield has long enjoyed the confidence and affectionate regard of the Union. As a faithful and devoted servant of suffering humanity, Nurse Pitfield never spared herself in ministering to the sick and the needy, and she carried the same spirit of self-sacrifice into every Suffrage protest in which she took part.

It was her profound conviction that the grievances of women and children could never be properly redressed, nor any effective check be applied to the terrible White Slave Traffic until women were in a position to exercise their rights of citizenship by means of the vote.

In Holloway prison the mention of Ellen Pitfield's name has arrested many a murmur, and dried many a tear, for in the face of heroism like that of this dying woman our sufferings and privations seem to dwindle into nothingness. The simple suggestion, "think what *she* is enduring for the Cause!" changed indignant voices in a moment into deprecating tones of loving sympathy.

About ten days ago I caught a glimpse of her dear face at her cell window upstairs in the hospital. We were exercising up and down the terrace beneath when she called and greeted us. "We are all thinking of you: *so sorry for you!*" was our swift reply. The wardresses did not allow us to speak, as it is against the rules, and kept so close a watch that we dared not add more. Three days later I once again caught the flutter of a white hand at that open pane. Pausing for a moment, I exclaimed, "God is our Refuge and Strength!" It was indeed heartening to hear the warm response from the lips of our poor invalid. Since then, alas! we have been unable to enter into any communication with her and fear she has been too ill to approach the window. At times her irrepressible cries of agony have been heard ringing through the corridors of the hospital.

Is it not criminal to keep this heroic woman incarcerated? For the sake of their own reputation the authorities should have set her free weeks ago. "*I suffer for the freedom of all women!*" she said as she left the dock at the Criminal Court. We—her fellow-prisoners—earnestly call upon your readers to demand the remission of Ellen Pitfield's sentence for the honour of Christian England before it is too late."

We beg to thank all those kind people who responded to our demand for justice for this stricken woman, especially those matrons and nurses who have shown their love of mercy, and the courage to publicly plead for it.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)