

## THE SECOND WOMAN IN THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The October number of the "International Woman Suffrage News" gives an account of the election of a second woman to the House of Commons. Mrs Margaret Wintringham, M.P., is the widow of the late member for Louth, who died after little more than a year of Parliamentary experience; and Mrs Wintringham now occupies her husband's seat, to which she was elected by a majority of 791, notwithstanding that there were two other candidates in the field. Mrs Wintringham is by no means unknown in public life, having held positions as J.P., member of Education and of Housing Committees, and Vice-President of the Grimsby Woman Suffrage Society, and she is now President of one of the societies affiliated to the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. She has also gained intimate knowledge of Parliamentary business by her close association with her husband in his public work; and her election appears to have given satisfaction to all parties.

The Louth constituency, which Mrs Wintringham now represents, consists of the market town of Louth itself, with its fine church and picturesque old red brick houses, two or three other small market towns, Grimsby with the comparatively new port Immingham, one or two seaside resorts, and a wide agricultural area. A mass meeting in her support was organised at Louth by the N.U.S.E.C. It was crowded, and entirely successful. "But," writes the Secretary of the N.U.S.E.C., "successful as this great meeting was, the real work was done at the cottage doors, in the farm yards, on the sea sands, and in the market-place." "It is perhaps too soon," she goes on, "to sum up our impressions of the campaign in the first flush of victory, but we cannot refrain from referring to the remarkable absence of sex prejudice. This, we think, was due to the respect and love felt throughout the constituency for the woman candidate. As a country labourer said, in his broad Lincolnshire dialect, 'Some folks are all heart, and some are all head, but Mrs Wintringham is both heart and head.'"

Though Mrs Wintringham does not belong to the same political party as does Lady Astor, the two women are at one in their support of many social re-

forms, particularly those for the political equality of women, and Lady Astor not only wrote to Mrs Wintringham to wish her success, but was also one of the first to send congratulations as soon as the news came through.

The following was published by Mrs Wintringham in "The Vote" a few days before her election:—

"If I were M.P., I should work for such reforms as the League of Nations and Disarmament; the health of the nation; education; housing; child welfare; and full equality between the sexes.

"Peace comes first on my programme. Two of the biggest evils to-day are traceable to war—the appalling famine in Russia and the increasing army of unemployed, the latter owing to a large extent to the disorganisation of foreign trade. We need greater power for the League of Nations, the best instrument at present to end war. Money is needed for education, housing, and health, but in the current year we have spent three times as much on the Army, Navy, and Air Force as on education. The money spent on Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine would sweep away most of our slums, and half the amount spent on armaments in the ten years before the war would almost exterminate the scourge of consumption.

"As an ex-member of the Grimsby Education Committee, I am keenly interested in education. Equality of opportunity as between rich and poor, boy and girl, should be striven for. By best education I mean 'the training of the physical, intellectual, artistic, and moral faculties to their highest capacity.' The ideals of citizenship—the service of each individual to the community, and the right of the community to protect each individual—should be taught in all our schools.

"I should strive for sufficient well-planned houses for the workers. My recent work among the women in our Lincolnshire villages makes me welcome a saying from one of our Labour leaders that no man has a right to an eight-hour day when his wife is sentenced to a fourteen, sixteen, or eighteen-hour day in the house. As a woman, I realise how a woman's work is lengthened and her days shortened by an inconvenient, badly-planned house, and this is especially apparent in the rural districts. A healthy, contented agric-

tural population stops the supply of casual labourers, among whom unemployment is most rife in large towns. A big effort should be made to brighten the lives of the agricultural labourer and his wife, and well-planned houses are a big step in the right direction."

"I should work to destroy many of the existing legal and economic anomalies between the sexes. My canvass here strengthens my conviction that Adult Suffrage is reasonable and right. The mother should be recognised as the equal guardian of her child. The grounds for divorce should be the same for women and men. Many women workers are still shockingly underpaid, and 'equal pay for equal work' is fair and just."

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