

PATHFINDER

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Persistent Fight'



Mrs. Sanger's Persistence is Characteristic

In New York the past fortnight, Mrs. Edith How-Martyn of England addressed a large group of men and women on a subject that remains controversial in almost all countries of the world. Her underlying theme had to do with health, but she dealt specifically with birth control.

At the meeting with her was Mrs. Margaret Sanger, president of the Birth Control International Information Center and widely known for her frequent tilts with officials who object to her organization's purposes. Although Mrs. Sanger is perhaps the more experienced campaigner of the two, Mrs. How-Martyn, as a foreign guest, did all the talking.

After a world tour, said Mrs. How-Martyn, and after a study of the field far and wide, she was forced to observe that more abortions were performed in the United States than in any other country abroad. This she blamed largely on the fact that the dissemination of birth control information is not allowed in America.

"The challenge to women," she said further, stressing world health implications, "is what are they doing to lessen the annual sacrifice of the million women who die in childbirth, and the 10,000,000 babies who die before their first birthday?"

As her solution to part of this problem, Mrs. How-Martyn suggested that a center be established at Geneva, the League of Nations city, for the "coordination and dissemination" of birth control information.

The English woman's talk was much like the many that have been delivered on the subject for many years past, but Mrs. Sanger listened attentively because not even repetition dampens the ardor of her long fight for legislative recognition of birth control.

In the current issue of "The North American Review," Genevieve Parkhurst writes of Mrs. Sanger and her work. The article points out how the control movement has come up against the strong opposition of a large section of the public, medical and religious. Its greatest opponent has been the Catholic Church, which sees deep moral danger in Mrs. Sanger's

Mrs. Sanger

principles. Others in the opposition include a number of doctors and members of church societies.

Persistency has been characteristic of Mrs. Sanger, however. Principally because of her long campaign, 235 birth control clinics have been made lawful in the United States. As a young woman she wanted to be a physician but her father found it difficult to support 11 children, so she became a nurse.

In 1913 Mrs. Sanger started a magazine called "The Women Rebel" which was quickly banned by postal authorities. For some time after that she faced trouble, sometimes landing in jail and sometimes being fined. Today the imprisonment threat has passed, but sincere and serious opposition to her movement continues to be strong. For that reason her fight has not lessened and she is constantly glad to listen to women like Mrs. How-Martyn say the very things she said years ago.

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