

**THE DAILY NEWS  
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**WHERE CELEBRITIES SPEAK THEIR MINDS**

**Shocking the Public Out of Its Calm**

LONDON, July 10.

*A Chance meeting with Miss Christina Foyle, the power behind the famous Foyle's Literary Luncheons, would never lead you to believe that this slip of a girl, with a mop of dark hair and a muntinous mouth, was the means of inaugurating what has come to be accepted as one of London's most brilliant and interesting social institutions.*

Someone told me that Christina Foyle was just back from Athens, on one of her roving trips about Europe, during which she usually manages to sign up some celebrity as a speaker at one of her famous luncheons, at which an average of 950 people attend. Up into London's "book world"—Charing Cross-road—I went to talk to her, expecting to find a "blue-stocking." Instead, I met a charming young thing little more than a school-girl, who has crowded into her short life more interesting encounters and experiences than falls to the lot of most people.

Last year she was in Russia, tried to see Stalin, but failed. She is continually popping across to France or Germany or Italy. Twice, during her business life, she has left her father's organisation. Once she got a job as secretary to a cancer specialist, which offered opportunities for extensive travel. Then she had another, teaching a Persian count English! Now Charing Cross-road has lured her back.

I induced her to tell me of the beginnings of Foyle's Literary Luncheons, which, although they have been taking place only during the last two years, sometimes contrive to begin controversies which rage all over the world. Miss Christina has stage-managed all 31 of them. When the idea first came to her she approached Lord Darling, and found that erudite old man sympathetic. He attended the first luncheon and ever since there has been no difficulty in obtaining speakers.

## OUT OF THE RUT

To astound and to shock people out of the rut of their everyday conventional state of mind—that is her object in selecting speakers. Most folk are enchanted with the idea, but as well she has her indignant critics, who often overwhelm her with letters of abuse after she has sponsored some particularly revolutionary personality. There was Emma Goldman, for instance, the fiery anarchist, who is forbidden entry into many countries in Europe. Alistar Crowley, the apostle of "black magic," at one time dubbed "the wickedest man in the world," also aroused a storm of protest. Among her biggest captures have been Andre Maurois and Emil Ludwig—and the only character who has point blank declined her invitation was Dr. Rosenberg, Hitler's emissary to England.

The actual "teaming-up" of the speakers presents some interesting problems in selectivity. Four persons speak at each of the luncheons; and there is always the possible contingency of sitting someone down next door to their dearest enemy, according to Miss Foyle. So a great deal of reconnaissance work goes on behind the scenes before the final decision is made. It is a tribute to her tact that never once has a blunder of this description been permitted to occur.

With Miss Radclyffe Hall (whose books are banned in England) she assembled Sir Arbuthnot Lane, Miss Rebecca West and Mr. L. A. G. Strong. Mr. Osbert Sitwell had as conversational sparring partners Sir Gilbert Parker, Sir Norman Angell and Miss Gwen Ffrangcon Davies. Mr. Bertrand Russell (whose revolutionary views of education have aroused world-wide discussion) was in company with Mr. C. B. Cochran, Miss Ethel Mannin and Mr. A. S. Neill.

## YOUNGER INTELLIGENTSIA

One day there was a gathering of the younger intelligentsia—Miss Pamela Frankau, Mr. Beverley Nichols, Mr. S. Fowler Wright and Lord Conway of Alington,. The older generation was represented on another occasion by Mr. Bertram Mills (the great circus showman). Mr. Charles Coborn, Dame Laura Knight and Miss Jose Collins.

Personalities so varied as Sir Alan Cobham, Miss Elinor Glyn, Sir Charles Higham, Mr. Hannen Swaffer, Sir Oswald Mosley, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, the late Mr. W. Temple Thurston, Professor Julian Huxley, Lord Riddell and Mr. Paul Robeson are among

the celebrities whom Miss Foyle has captured in her time. And the interesting part about it all is that everyone is allowed to say exactly what he (or she) likes. There is no censorship of speeches whatever.

As well as arranging these luncheons Miss Foyle takes an active part in the business organization of her firm. Part of her mission to Greece was in connection with establishing an English circulating library in Athens. In Moscow she arranged the exchange of English text-books on machinery for treatises on Russian grammar.

Another interesting library sidelight from Miss Foyle is that of the persons who visit the section of the shop devoted to occult and black magic, quite a large number are obviously mentally affected. It is the rule to change the assistants in this department at least once every three months. Otherwise it is found that after embarking upon an intensive course of reading of such books, they, too, show signs of mental aberration.