

# M I N D

## A QUARTERLY REVIEW

OF

## PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

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### I.—OBITUARY NOTICE.

#### IAN GALLIE

IAN GALLIE was born on December 12th, 1907, in Glasgow. He was the second of a family of four brothers, sons of Walter S. Gallie and his wife Alice *née* Wormald. The father was a very able Scottish businessman who built up an important engineering firm in Glasgow; the mother was a gifted Englishwoman from Yorkshire, whose family had for long been connected with the wool trade. Both parents predeceased him, but not before he had completed his university education and was launched on his career in life. He inherited from both sides a very clear head, the power of working hard and efficiently, and considerable business ability. He was greatly devoted to his mother and was plainly much influenced by her. They had taken several long foreign tours together while he was an undergraduate at Oxford. Her illness and death at a comparatively early age came as a great blow to him at a time when his own health was far from good.

Gallie was educated first at a preparatory school at Kirkby Lonsdale and then at Sedbergh, where he specialised in classics. From Sedbergh he went to Exeter College, Oxford, in 1926, as an entrance scholar. He obtained a first class in Honours Moderations in 1928 and in *Literae Humaniores* in 1930. In 1927 he was *proxime accessit* for the Gaisford Greek Prize, and in 1929 he won it for a translation of Book VI, Chapter XI, of the *Memoirs of Philippe de Commines* into Greek after the manner of Herodotus.

From October 1930 to July 1931 he held a temporary post as Tutor in Philosophy at Jesus College, Oxford. He was appointed Fellow and Tutor of Wadham early in 1931, and was given leave of absence to study before taking up his duties. During that period he spent a long vacation in Germany and the first two terms of the academic year in Cambridge. While in Cambridge he was made a member of the High Table of Trinity College and became *persona grata* with all those who made his acquaintance there. Some time after his return to Wadham he was made Dean of College, a post which was far from being a sinecure in view of the spirited character of the undergraduates and the absence from College of most of his colleagues at week-ends. He was an excellent teacher, who readily got on friendly terms with undergraduates without loss of authority, and

he performed his decanal duties admirably. During part of this period his younger brother, Bryce, was an undergraduate at Balliol; and, as they were exceptionally good friends, this was a happy circumstance for both of them.

Even as an undergraduate Gallie had been subject to occasional mysterious spells of ill-health and bodily pain. In 1938 he became seriously ill, and from that year until 1942 he was compelled to desist from academic and all other work. He resigned his fellowship at Wadham in 1941. In 1942 he began to work again as a Principal, first at the War Office and then in the Control Office for Germany. He was apparently in fair health throughout 1943, 1944 and the first half of 1945. But his complaint, which was eventually diagnosed as Hodgkin's disease, was growing upon him; and it, and the after-effects of the treatment for it, caused him terrible discomfort and weakness. These he bore with a degree of fortitude and self-control which may fairly be called heroic. His powers of thinking and expressing his thoughts clearly and cogently in writing remained with him to the last, as is plain from the excellent paper on *Intelligence and Intelligent Conduct* which he wrote under appalling difficulties for the Aristotelian Society in the last months of his life. He died on April 5th, 1948.

Gallie married in 1940 Miss Elsie W. Peers, and they had one child, a boy. He owed much to the care and attention of his wife during his long and trying illness.

Gallie had in him the makings of a first-rate philosopher, and nothing but ill-health prevented him from establishing a high reputation among contemporary thinkers. He had great acuteness, together with good sense, balance, and complete intellectual integrity. He was not easily contented with his own or other men's answers to philosophical problems, and he would return again and again with the utmost pertinacity to the attack. In consequence of these qualities he worked rather slowly; but, when he had made up his mind for the time being, he had the power of expressing his arguments and his conclusions with admirable clarity. He had published little, but what little there was is of excellent quality. Apart from the recent paper to the Aristotelian Society, mentioned above, his main publications were "Oxford Moralists" in *Philosophy*, "Is the Self a Substance?" in *MIND*, Vol. XLV, and "Mental Facts" in the Aristotelian Society's *Proceedings* for 1937. In his last years he had become greatly interested in ethical theory and particularly in the ethics of Aristotle. I do not know whether he has left anything on these topics in a state fit for publication.

I suppose that I must have known Ian Gallie as well as, or better than, I have known anyone else. I felt a deep affection for him, but I am not singular in thinking that he was an exceptionally attractive and lovable person. He was admittedly 'difficult' during the period from 1938 to 1942, when his bodily illness (not then diagnosed by the doctors nor fully realised by his friends) was affecting his nerves. Happily, although his physical condition grew worse, the nervous cloud lifted towards the end of 1942. For the rest of his life he was his old lovable self, and one's affection for him was qualified only by sorrow for his sufferings and admiration for the strength of mind with which he bore them and triumphed over them.

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