taining some very moving quotes from dying and bereaved people, was too pathology-oriented to be of comfort or real help to those for whom it was intended.

Most of the examples appeared to be drawn from the author's clinical psychotherapy practice so that few examples of well-functioning families are described. The message seems to be that without long-term individual professional (i.e. psychiatric) help, bereavement often leads to inability to lead a normal life. Very little attention is paid to other forms of available help—family therapy, self-help groups, voluntary organisations like Cruse (or the Canadian organisation Widow's Aid—which is only mentioned in passing as an activity which occupied one of his patients).

Two areas where I feel the book is positively and dangerously misleading are "your own death" and "suicide". In former chapters he talks about dying as a "lonely and painful experience". Dying is rarely painful and need not be lonely. To make such a statement in a book meant for dying patients and their families is unhelpful. In the chapter on suicide I looked in vain for a statement about the cause of suicide. Since in 90% of suicides, the individual is suffering from a serious mental illness (depression or schizophrenia) which impairs his judgement and distorts perceptions, this chapter is likely to induce considerable unmerited guilt in the relatives of a suicide as it tends to attribute rationality to suicidal behaviour.

All in all I cannot recommend this book to the dying and the bereaved but it may be of some help to those who counsel them because of the quotations. Disappointingly, the author does not address himself to helping the reader to achieve what he states he wishes to do: to prevent the death of a family when death strikes in the family.

DORA BLACK
Consultant Child Psychiatrist

## DHSS/NAHA CONFERENCE ON CARE FOR THE DYING
## Central Hall, Westminster, 3rd December, 1985

**Extract from a report:**

An important point was raised by the Rev. Tom Scott, Education Secretary for the National Society for Cancer Relief, when he stressed the need for educating neighbours and friends in coping with death and bereavement. The taboo that existed on death had meant a de-skilling of people. We need to help those who are personally involved with care of the dying, so that the total needs of the patient can be catered for: physical, social, spiritual, emotional. There is a need not only to face the reality of death but also to listen to the dying person and allow him to talk in the words and time that he wants. We may need to rediscover a language for this, and to recognise that our own personal involvement often leads to feelings of helplessness. Sadness, he said, is inevitable, but helplessness is a state which can be overcome. He felt we should work to obtain the professional maturity to be inactive when appropriate, to stand back and observe and allow the dying to take that last step of the journey in the confidence that all has been said and that all has been done.

Dame Cicely Saunders, who received a warm ovation, finally summed up the Conference re-emphasising that the Hospice movement provides the opportunity for people to give time and professional care to the dying. Its whole essence is to offer the dying the total care and support that they and their relatives need.

MONICA A. WHIPP
Senior Medical Social Worker,
Yeovil Hospitals

## WIDOWED
## Philip Jebb, St. Bede's, 1984. £3.35.

I received an invitation to review the new edition of this book a week after my brother died, so I read it with special interest. I found some of the chapters, and their concluding prayers, very helpful. Dom Philip Jebb obviously writes from first-hand pastoral experience. He is not afraid to spell out many of the practical and painful aspects of bereavement, and has some sound advice to offer.

He writes unequivocally—as a Christian to Christians, setting death within the context of Christian belief. This is good. But if a person's faith is not so robust, or is of a different Christian tradition from his own, I think there would be some large question marks over some of his assertions and assumptions. Sadly but inevitably these lessen the impact of his message.

The book is well produced, light to hold and with good print. It took me some time to get used to the style of writing which I did not always find easy: some sentences I had to read twice! But for the most part the subject matter was important enough to make me persevere.

May we hope that someone will produce a book for those of the bereaved who do not have quite such a strong conviction about life after death—which makes their bereavement perhaps even harder to bear. They may not be able to call themselves Christians, but they too are hungry for reassurance.

NIEL NYE
Archdeacon

# A TRIBUTE

**Agnes Whitaker** was Publications Officer of Cruse and Managing Editor of **Bereavement Care** from Summer 1983 until her untimely death in January of this year. In that short time she saw it grow to become the foremost regular publication on Bereavement Counselling. Although already ill she attended the International Conference on Bereavement in Jerusalem in order to report on that important event.

She managed to ensure that neither Bereavement Care nor the other publications in her care ever became too clinical or too sentimental—a reflection of her own compassion and good sense. Her gentle and tactful guidance enabled her to handle the most recalcitrant of contributors and no one could doubt her genuine concern and commitment to the care of the bereaved.

Perhaps her greatest contribution was to draw together under one cover the compilation of writings whose title stands as her own best epitaph, "All in the End is Harvest".

C. M. PARKES

## CRUSE ACADEMIC PAPERS

**SUICIDE**
**Academic Paper No. 1** comprises a reprint of the article on *The Risk of Suicide following Bereavement* by Dr. C. Murray Parkes (originally published in **Bereavement Care,** Vol. 1, No. 1), together with A Review of the Literature on Bereavement following Suicide by Dr. S. Henley.

**SUPERVISION**
**Academic Paper No. 2** is a reprint of the article on *Supervision and Consultant Care —Counselling the Counsellors* by Gill Parker, Family Therapist, from **Bereavement Care,** Vol. 1, No. 2.

**BEREAVEMENT IN ISRAEL**
**Academic Paper No. 3** is an expanded version of the paper on *Bereavement in Israel from War, Holocaust & Terror,* given by Prof. Shamai Davidson to the 1983 Cruse Conference on Bereavement following Violence. *NEWLY PUBLISHED.*

**GROWTH THROUGH LOSS**
**A Jungian View of Loss**
**Academic Paper No. 4** is developed from an address given at a Cruse Annual Conference by Dr. Rosemary Gordon, Training Analyst at the Society of Analytical Psychology, London. *NEWLY PUBLISHED.*

Cruse Academic Papers Nos. 1 & 2 are available at 70p each (plus 30p p & p) from Cruse House. Papers Nos. 3 & 4 cost £1.70 (plus 30p p & p).

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