OF ALL DISEASES, the one that probably affects the largest number of people and causes the greatest amount of illness, suffering and death, is childhood malnutrition.

The most tragic results of this disease are the degrees of physical and psychological impairment suffered by the victims, which is, in severe cases, coupled with permanent mental retardation resulting from a prolonged deficiency of nutrients at the most critical period of brain development. Children affected in this way are usually unable to function as productive adults in their respective societies, which has serious implications for the future of the poor countries in the tropics and sub-tropics, where malnutrition strikes most often and most severely.

With a high rate of infant mortality and a proportion of the surviving population intellectually stunted by the effects of malnutrition, these countries face serious obstacles to successful social and economic development. For the victims lost so early in their human resources, the strength and growth of the countries are seriously impaired.

The past two decades, however, have witnessed enormous strides in the prevention and treatment of this disease. In developing countries, countries in the tropics and sub-tropics, where malnutrition affects the largest number of people and prolongs deficiency of nutrients, the proportion of the surviving population intellectually stunted by the effects of malnutrition, has increased, and the strength and growth of the countries are seriously impaired.

Breastfeeding campaigns, child feeding programmes, the manufacture of inexpensive, ready-to-eat supplementary foods — all owe their origin to Cicely Williams. Her acute observation and concern for the health and welfare of the children in what she called her "small world" led her to study the problem of malnutrition in infancy. She discovered that the disease which threatened the lives of many of the babies in her care was kwashiorkor.

Cicely Williams, who was a Jamaican woman doctor, an outstanding pioneer in child health and nutrition, has been called "a blessing as a curse" in her native Jamaica. She was known for her work in the field of maternal and child health, and her contributions to the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in children.

In recent years, surveys in Africa, South East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean have suggested that kwashiorkor is more widespread than previously believed. It is estimated that between 15% and 30% of children in developing countries may be affected by this disease.

Cicely Williams was born in 1905 in Jamaica, where she grew up and attended school. She was the first female doctor in Jamaica and spent much of her career working in hospitals and clinics in the country.

Her work in the field of nutrition and child health was recognized internationally, and she received numerous awards and honors for her contributions. She was awarded the Order of Merit of Jamaica in 1974, and in 1981 she was awarded the Order of Merit of Jamaica, the highest honor given to a Jamaican citizen.

Cicely Williams died in 1987 at the age of 82, but her legacy lives on through the work of organizations such as UNICEF and the World Health Organization. Her dedication to improving the health and nutrition of children around the world continues to inspire those who work in the field of maternal and child health.

In conclusion, Cicely Williams was a pioneer in the field of maternal and child health, and her contributions to the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in children have had a lasting impact on the lives of millions of children around the world.
Government to lead a research project on Vomiting Sickness.

Her survey conducted from 1951-53, led to some important findings on the subject and contributed to an improvement in the nutritional status of the Jamaican population, and to the almost total disappearance of that illness. As in her previous work, her concern with the background details of the patient's life — his family, diet, and health record as well as the clinical picture — gave her valuable clues, and it is this feature that has always lifted the quality of her work above the ordinary.

She again returned to Jamaica in 1969 to accept the degree of Honorary Doctor of Science from the University of the West Indies, where she has often lectured to students in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine and in the Diploma Course in Community Nutrition. Dr. Williams has, throughout her career, maintained close personal contact with Jamaica, and has many devoted friends and admirers among both past students and staff of the University. Her family resides at Bethel Town in Westmoreland, and her brother is a well-known agriculturalist.

Her career since that time, has continued in the tradition of dedicated and unselfish service, dogged persistence and a deep unswerving commitment to the health of the family. She has been Visiting Professor in Maternal and Child Health at the American University of Beirut, and Adviser in Training Programmes for the Family Planning Association of the UK (FPAS) and has participated, in health programmes in countries as far afield as India, Burma, North Borneo, Italy, Yugoslavia, Tanzania, Cyprus and Uganda.

She still demonstrates her boundless energy in the capacities of Professor and Consultant in International Family Health at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Visiting Professor in the Department of Paediatrics of the University of Maryland School of Medicine — at the remarkable age of 82!

She has published over 40 articles in journals, and has contributed to several books, the latest being *Mother and Child Health — Delivering the Services*, which she published with Derr B. Jelliffe in 1972. Her many awards and honours include the James Spence Memorial Gold Medal of the British Paediatric Association (1965); the Joseph Goldberger Award of the American Medical Association (1967); the Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (1968) and most recently, the Order of Merit of Jamaica (1975).

"We always seem to tackle human welfare from the wrong end. We set up medical schools and train doctors long before we have studied local conditions and local needs. We prefer to force diseases into categories rather than to study their aetiologies." Thus wrote Cicely Williams, the great humanitarian, in 1941. Her life's work has been a testimony to that basic philosophy: A true and dedicated scientist, she drew conclusions from her observations, not from preconceived ideas or purely theoretical knowledge.

An energetic welfare worker, she raised the status of Maternal and Child Health Services in medical planning, extending its narrow limits to include family planning in its broadest sense, environmental health and nutrition, as well as the care of the whole child within the context of the family. She firmly believes that proper attention to the health of the family will ensure the well-being of the entire community.

A lover of children, only her own words do her justice: "... in the love of children is not a sentimental virtue. It is a natural function: it can be relied upon, and with foresight and intelligence and perseverance it can be educated into the most powerful disease preventing factor on the face of the earth."
... and after

Shows marked improvement after undergoing treatment in one of our hospitals.