

others supplement their diet with coffee and home-made unleavened bread. There appears to be a total absence of meat, milk, fat or vegetables of any kind in the diet. During the season, unsaleable oranges and prickly pears are eaten.

Most of the children appeared to be suffering from malnutrition. They looked uncared for, dirty and ill-fed. Many adults also were suffering from malnutrition, and mothers complained that they were not able to breast-feed their babies.

Health and Incomes

The 220 families we investigated comprised 579 adults and 806 children. Of this total of 1,385 persons, 161 were known to be suffering from T.B. Another 145 persons were found to be suffering from various other diseases, mainly gastro-enteritis, traucoma and chest complaints. Persons suffering from malnutrition, rickets, scurvy and worms are not included in the foregoing figures.

Excluding persons obtaining old age or disability pensions, the average monthly income is just over R3. In many cases this is the sole income on which a family consisting of three adults and five to seven children exists. Of the persons investigated, 69 are receiving old age pensions of R4.75 paid every two months; 10 persons receive the disability pension, also paid every two months, and varying from R4.75 down to less than R1, according to the degree of disability. Ten persons were found entitled to pensions but not receiving them. Among the latter is a man who claims to be 100 years old, and does not receive a pension as he is too old and weak to go into the village to apply for it.

The majority of the people belong to the Ethiopian Church (103 families). The rest are of the Methodist Congregational, and independent faiths. No effort is apparently being made by any of these churches to aid the people.

Lack of Employment

Of the families investigated, more than half the total number of adults (inclusive of women) are unemployed, and find it impossible to obtain employment. Severe drought has obliged the farmers in the district to reduce their labour force. A milk factory in the village has had to close down, rendering a number of people jobless. The village of Kirkwood is small and cannot absorb the large number of unemployed from the farms.

Much of the work obtainable is seasonal (orange picking and packing) so for many months these workers are idle and have to rely on casual labour in the village, which is almost non-existent.

Of the unemployed, many refuse to register at the

READER TAKES US TO TASK

From Miss Jennifer Mouat, 10 Woodlands Highstead Road, Rondebosch, C.P.

ON reading *The Black Sash* for March, 1961, it occurred to me that it might not be desirable to refer to Mr. and Mrs. Kleinbooï Sikade as "Kleinbooï" and "Pauline". In particular, this reference is used in the captions to the two photographs.

I am not at all sure whether my criticism is correct or not, but I thought you might be interested to know my impression on reading the article. I was a little taken aback that our magazine, of all magazines, should use Christian names only in referring to the Sikades.

Perhaps I am over-sensitive to this topic, but I have experienced the improvement in mutual respect between people of different racial groups when "Mr." and "Mrs." are used in referring to comparative strangers.

[Our correspondent is quite right. To some extent we are all the victims of custom. In this case Mr. and Mrs. Sikade, with whom Sash members have long been associated, have always been known, by common consent, by their first names.

—EDITOR.]

local labour bureau as they fear being sent away from their homes and families.

We found many families who have no income at all and rely on the goodwill of their neighbours (who are not in a very much better position) for food.

One family consisting of three adults and five children lives on an old age pension of R4.75 paid every two months. The head of this family has only one leg—the other was amputated in 1945 and the stump is still red and suppurating and causes him considerable pain all the time. His wife is chronically ill and all five children have T.B. His aged mother, on whose pension they live, is senile and almost blind. This, unhappily, is not an exceptional case.

It is little short of a miracle that, with the extremely unhygienic conditions prevailing, the lack of food and the general debility of the people, a major epidemic of some kind has not broken out in this location. With the winter months approaching the plight of these people will be terrible. It is most urgent that something be done immediately to help them.

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If you will not hear reason she will surely rap your knuckles.—B. Franklin.