

PC1/1/7/14/11

P.O.Box 278,
Hillcrest,
Natal.



August 26th. 1970

Mr. R. F. Rorke,
50/1 Commissioner St.
Johannesburg.

Dear Mr. Rorke,

Thank you for your letter written to me some time ago about my book on Hofmeyr. Judging from the title you give you must have read the American edition which is an abridged version of the original. It is very reassuring to me to read that you found the American edition so interesting because I myself was always conscious of the pieces that were left out.

Although I do not like to say so myself, I think it is true that the life of Hofmeyr gives a clearer understanding of South Africa than any other book. This is not because I wrote it, but because it was in Hofmeyr himself that one sees most clearly the struggle between liberalism and conservatism, or to be more truthful, liberalism and white nationalism. Dr. Melen's life is a story of the struggle of Afrikaner Nationalism against British imperialism, and General Smuts's life was the story of the decline of the Anglo-Afrikaner ideal on which the Union of South Africa was founded. Hofmeyr's life was more fascinating than either of these because the struggle was taking place inside the man himself.