



PC1/1/7/3d/114
1st August, 1948.

Thank you for your letter of 3rd July. As you will see from the above we are installed in our new abode - have in fact been for about six weeks. We were lucky to find a place without undue difficulty - an oldish house but comfortable, and standing in quite ~~XX~~ big grounds. Unfortunately, as it had, strangely enough been untenanted for several months, the garden was not in a very good condition and will need quite a lot of attention. We are in rather a pleasant part of the town though a little further away from the centre, than we were before.

I have been enjoying the freedom from the cares of the office, although in fact I have been kept fairly busy - what with settling in to a new place, a good deal of political activity, and some writing - on the whole quite a pleasant life, and I am all the better in health for it.

In two days' time I leave for Capetown for the Parl: session. It will probably last about two months. My mother will not be going with me. We of course no longer have a Ministerial house to go to, but she probably would not have gone anyhow, as this is climatically the worst time of the year at the Cape, damp, cheerless, and chilly, whereas up here it is bright and sunny with the cold weather which this year has not been very severe practically at an end. I shall be staying at one of the Clubs in Capetown.

The new Govt has now been in office for almost two months. It has done one or two silly things, but on the whole is playing for time with a view to the consolidation of its position. Its aim is obviously to get a larger Parliamentary majority, and also to get on better terms with the world outside. Meantime there are signs of a break in our economic prosperity, and there appear to be difficulties ahead. The Parl: session should be quite interesting, and we shall also watch carefully what happens at the UNO Assembly.

One of the results of the election was an intrigue against me within the Party based on my alleged responsibility for its defeat. It has however now petered out for the time being anyhow. Some people do not show up very well in defeat.

Smuts has been quite active since his return. He is seemingly well and vigorous, but one can't help feeling sorry for him. It is in any case not pleasant to become Leader of the Opposition at 78, and no doubt galling to him, after the part he has played, to take the second fiddle. I have been asked by the Oxford University Press to write his biography, but have replied that, while I would like to do it, I don't think I should undertake the task while he is still alive, or at least in active politics.

PS. I hope England will win the last Test match at the Oval.