

2687 Yale Station,
Yale University,
New Haven, Conn., U.S.A.
October 8, 1933,

Dear Ngcobo,

You will no doubt by have heard that I am comfortably settled in the land of the almighty dollar. The University has been in session now for two weeks and we have become more or less accustomed to our new surroundings. I am therefore now in a position to tell you a few things about Yale and America.

I must say that my first impression of the country was not very good. I particularly did not take to New York the first hours I was there. It was so different from London where Sililo, Blume, Bokwe and myself were the guests of Bishop Smythe. The old man gave us a good time, and naturally one did not feel the strange surroundings. But in New York I was all by myself, and I had to find about in the Subways, Street-cars, Buses, overhead railways in the busy thoroughfares. In a short time I had the hang of the City more or less.

When I reached New Haven I was made at home at once by Liebenberg who had arrived about a week before I did. Yale is a very large University. It would take one quite some time to see all its buildings and Colleges. I live in what is known as the Graduate School, where only postgraduate students stay. We have individual rooms, furnished with fine teak furniture and those who can afford it are allowed to take more than one room. The rent is fairly high--5 dollars a week for the single rooms. Boarding is 8 dollars a week, and Laundry works out at about 1.50 dollars per week. Reckoning a dollar at about 5s., you will readily see that this is not a university for poor men's sons. The students are mainly men, there are only a few women and in fact none in the undergraduate colleges of which there are altogether 7. 4 others are in course of construction.

The students are drawn from all parts of the world and from all universities. There are men here from Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and I do not know what not. What some of them have come to do here I do not know, because some hold doctorates. For instance in Dr Loran's class on the Introduction of Western Civilisation to Non-Western peoples there are at least four Ph.D.'s one from Oxford, one from London from Malinowski's School, one from Cambridge and another from Hawaii. People with one degree are rare in the graduate school. Naturally at first one is apt to overestimate the standard of these people and to feel somewhat put out, but you soon find that it is not the degree that counts in life, but experience and natural ability.

The method of teaching here is quite different from what what we are used to. The ordinary lecture method is frowned upon. Students are assigned long lists of reading references to be looked up in the splendid library of the University and then on the class day a discussion is conducted under the leadership of the professor of the particular subject on the material read. This means a lot of individual work, and if one has not already developed the habit of independent study, he would find himself lost at Yale. And I tell you there are "swatters" here if you want to see them. Nobody ever goes to bed before midnight. Classes begin at 9, and because of the discussion method each class period generally lasts about two hours. The average student has only 8 hours of class periods a week. Our first impression of that was that one would have plenty of free time, but the reading assigned is so much that you feel like reducing the hours from 8 to 6.

With regard to Sport, there is an excellent Gymnasium here which students can take advantage of, at the inclusive fee of 10 dollars a year. The gym. is a large building with all kinds of facilities for Sport--swimming pool

squash courts, tennis courts, basketball, etc. Yesterday was the opening day of the football season, and we went to witness a match between Yale and the University of Maine. Yale Bowl, as the ground is called, is quite a distance away from the Residential parts of the University, but you can get there by tram. The Ground is arranged just like a bowl, with the spectators looking down upon the players in the centre of the bowl. The Ground has a seating capacity of 80,000 and from any part of it you can watch the game with equal advantage. It is really a marvel to think that this is a University Sportsground. The admission fee to the matches is very high just by S.A. standards. The outstanding game of the season is that between Harvard and Yale at which the admission is @.40 dollars, approximately £1. No one can get in for less than that. Still they have an arrangement by which you can take put a season ticket costing 7.70 dol and then you can see all the matches at a reduced rate. At the opening match of the season there were about 17,000 people present and the enthusiasm was simply astounding. What it must be like in the Yale-Harvard or the Yale-Army match I can't imagine. American football is somewhat like rugby, but there are some rather important differences. The Game is so hard or rough that the players are protected in all sorts of ways with pads. They don't look attractive at all. The play consists of a series of rushes in which everybody gets into everybody's else's way in trying to keep the ball away from their goals. Maine gave Yale quite a hard time, but the final score was 14-7 in favour of Yale.

And how are things at Adams? I suppose you are busy preparing for the examinations. I hope you will keep up the Adams record especially in the J.C. and the Matric. Make those fellows--Tseleng, Robert, Albert and co., work hard; they ought to make it alright. I hope to be back in South Africa before the end of next year, in spite of the temptations I am being offered to remain here longer. There are any number of scholarships here and they do not seem to be very hard to get. So one need not give up hope about the future. I am busy on my thesis, and will probably be writing you folks for a little information on a few points, but in the main I think I have enough material for an M.A. thesis.

Well, I shall have to close now. I am expecting to hear from you some time. Be sure you tell all about the Adams "politics". I hear Miss Lamula has at last left the single for the wedded state. Lucky girl! Who has taken her place? How is Brueckner getting on? Is he doing any work in the H.S? How are the Societies getting on, and what about the Sport? My wife has been sending me your weekly notes. I enjoy reading them. Give my best wishes to the Native Staff. Tell Shembe I hope he is now well versed in Ovid. I am keeping up my reading in Latin here; there are many classical scholars here, in fact there is one living next door to me and another just opposite. We often exchange notes about the great Latin masters. No, I can assure you the reputation of Yale is not built on sand. The work here is of a very high standard, but we in South Africa have no need to be ashamed of the work we are doing. The advantage here is that the professors are really outstanding men in their fields. When you hear them speak about their subjects, you realise that they are masters. Then the stimulating atmosphere in which you live helps you to be always on the qui vive, facilities for study are so enormous that in the long run your education is bound to be broader than that of people in smaller universities, but in essentials the work done in South Africa cannot easily be surpassed. Well, more about all this when I return, D.V. Special konzelas to the Matric. from

Yours sincerely,