

Robben Island Gul,
P. O. Robben Island.

19th February, 1969.

Mrs N. J. Marquard,
Windrush,
Drapers Street,
Claremont.

My dear Nell,

There is so much I have to

thank you for. But first, please let me
tell you that on Sunday I met John
Betjeman in "High and Low" and I felt that
I had not read poetry before then. What
sound, what rhythm, what motion!

What chance has any inland lung

Against this multi-waters noise?

That's the ocean he is writing about. And
then, somewhere, he observes that:

"It's strange that those we miss the most
are those we take for granted.

I suppose Wordsworth and Company must
have made the same impact on a
society bored with lovely little rhymes
and rhythms about drawing-room

society. We too have had to content with so much obfuscation, obscurantism and obscurat<sup>ion</sup> <sup>in poetry</sup> that we began to wonder whether we had any intelligence at all. And lo and behold, Betjeman shows us that we are not such nitwits after all.

Well, well, I had to tell you that.

Well now, my last letter to you was written on the 21st November, last year and I hope I thanked you and Leo for the birthday wishes and the Five Lands. Thank you also for the Calendar which I received at the beginning of the year. It is a lovely thing. One feels reluctant to get rid of the pictures.

Veronica and the children were here once more. She's beginning to feel the strain, I suppose. She was quite snappish. The children are growing up fast and require this and that. Benjie met them at the station and took the children to Table Mountain.

As for books and journals now what have I? You will remember - that I didn't receive the Faulkner book. But

Realities, and Discovering Art and the Sunday Times Magazine article; these I received. Thank you.

I had so hoped to send you good wishes on your birthday, but Veronica and the children were arriving on the seventh and I believe that in the excitement I forgot to send your card. But I did not forget the day and I blessed you in my heart.

Whether Mercy and my mother will come in April is still uncertain: their hosts of last year have moved to pastures new - Fort Beaufort to be precise. I am waiting to hear from Mercy what their plans are.

My plans for studying for the Honours degree in English are running into trouble. I am supposed to have done a classical language - Latin or Greek - or Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi and similar tongues. Unfortunately I haven't done any. I have decided to do Arabic and will now have to acquaint myself with the Ibn al Juffiq and

and clowns of the same sort.

Well, Well, so much for now

Keep well.

Best wishes to you and Leo.

yours affectionately,

Robert

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## Robert Sobukwe Papers

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