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THE DEVIN-ADAIR COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

23 & 25 EAST 26th STREET

NEW YORK

Tel. LEExington 2-6713

June 5th, 1946

Dear Senorita Mistral:

Recently, when you spoke at Barnard College, I had the pleasure of being present. Had I your gift for words, I could tell you how really great that pleasure was - and how much your words moved me; but I haven't - so will merely let it go at that.

I am a graduate of Barnard, where my principal subject was Spanish -- mostly under the stimulating tutelage of Sra. del Rio. My interest in Spanish stemmed from the fact that my mother is Venezuelan. Her grandfather was one of Bolivar's comrades-in-arms, General José Antonio Páez. I tell you this bit of personal history because I want to assure you that my interest in South America and, specifically, in yourself as one of the outstanding representatives of that Continent, is not merely professional.

I am also, however, intruding on you in a professional capacity. Briefly: I am keenly interested in learning whether you have a North American publisher. This because I am associated with a publishing house who hope to work increasingly in the field of Latin-American literature....A field too long neglected by most publishers in the United States. To give you an idea of the kind of books we are doing, I will mention one of the titles on our fall list: a translation of Jorge Mañach's biography of José Martí. It is a splendid and scholarly work that will introduce a great Latin-American figure to a North America almost totally unaware of his existence. One of the editors on our staff is doing the translation.

I only joined the company a short while ago -- attracted to it because of its growing reputation as a sponsor of books of high caliber. Devin Garrity, who heads the firm, is a man with a dynamic belief in the influence of fine books. He is somewhat unique in that he has never compromised that belief in favor of mediocre books and higher profits. Mr. Garrity and the rest of us associated with him would consider it a rare privilege, and in line with the aims of the organization, to publish the work of Gabriela Mistral. Of course, if you already have a publisher, then we are the loser. But if you have not, we would very much like to know whether you would consider the idea of our bringing out a

[Carta] 1946 June 5, New York, [EE.UU.] [a] [Gabriela]
Mistral, [EE.UU.?] [manuscrito] Patricia Páez MacManus.

AUTORÍA

Autor secundario:Mistral, Gabriela, 1889-1957

FORMATO

Manuscrito

DATOS DE PUBLICACIÓN

[Carta] 1946 June 5, New York, [EE.UU.] [a] [Gabriela] Mistral, [EE.UU.?] [manuscrito] Patricia Páez MacManus. [3] p. ; 28 cm.

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