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February 5, 1952

Personal

My dear Dr. Canónico:

I have just received your letter of January 30 and I appreciate your writing us more than I can say. Mrs. Messersmith is for the present at our home in Cuernavaca, which is not far from Mexico City and about 3,000 feet lower, but she will be back tomorrow and she will be as happy to have heard about you and your family as I have been. We are delighted to know that you have another baby and that all is well. Our very sincere congratulations and good wishes.

I am glad to say that my health is so much better in spite of the fact that I do more than I should. As I told you I believe before, when I undertook this work for a private company after my retirement, I did not realize that the obligations which fell on me would be so time consuming and so considerable, but on the whole I am inclined to think that it has been a very good thing, because if I had retired without some specific occupation other than writing books, I do not think that I would be as well as I fortunately am. I shall never forget the extraordinarily kind and considered attention which you gave to me while I was in Buenos Aires and without which I am sure I should never have been able to recover my health as I did.

I do less traveling now than I did during the first three years after my retirement, and I spend two days out of every week at our home in Cuernavaca and really do nothing, and I am hoping to spend the fourth week of every month there as well very soon. When one undertakes obligations towards others it is difficult not to carry them through if one is a person of good conscience, and perhaps I suffer from the fact that I have always been too conscious of my obligations.

I was in the United States in New York when I learned through a friend that you were there incognito and in connection with the illness of Mrs. Perón. I wanted very much to get in touch with you to have the opportunity of seeing you if only briefly, but I felt

Dr. Abel N. Canónico,
Buenos Aires, Argentina.

that it would be an indiscretion on my part. I am sure you will appreciate why I did not get in touch with you. I had been told that it was the desire that your visit and its purpose not be known.

I need not tell you how deeply distressed my wife and I have been to learn of the illness of Mrs. Perón, for whom we have very real affection, and it is my hope that she is on the road towards complete recovery. Knowing the close relationship which there is between the President and Mrs. Perón and the deep affection which they have for each other, I can appreciate to what degree the illness of Mrs. Perón has concerned the President and I have often wished to write him, but you know that it is difficult to write a personal letter to a Chief of State. I am sure, however, that both the President and Mrs. Perón know how much the thoughts of my wife and myself have been with them during the last months and how earnestly we hope and pray that Mrs. Perón's recovery may be rapid and complete. I am very happy to know that she is receiving attention from your hand, as I would take it that this is the case since you made this trip towards the end of last year in connection with her illness.

Perhaps I am committing an indiscretion in telling you that I have any knowledge of your trip, but you may be assured that I was told about it only because it was known what deep affection and friendship I feel for both the President and Mrs. Perón.

I am very happy to learn that you are still thinking of another trip to the United States and I hope that when you go again that Mrs. Canónico can accompany you. If you can tell me beforehand, I would certainly make every effort to arrange to be in the United States when you are there to have the opportunity of seeing you. I also wish to repeat that if you do make a trip north, it would give my wife and me infinite pleasure and satisfaction if you and Mrs. Canónico could make us a visit in our home in Mexico City and in Cuernavaca. Mexico is an interesting country in many ways and I am sure that you would both enjoy a holiday and rest here and that there would be much to interest you. I repeat that it would give us infinite pleasure to have you in our home here for a good visit.

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We both join in affectionate good wishes to you and Mrs. Canónico and for the children, and we join in the sincere hope that before too long we may have the pleasure again of seeing you. Believe me,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

George S. Messersmith