



The following is the text of Gabriela Mistral's speech at the Nobel Banquet at the City Hall in Stockholm, December 10, 1945:

Today Sweden turns toward a distant Latin American country to honour it in the person of one of the many exponents of its culture. It would have pleased the cosmopolitan spirit of Alfred Nobel to extend the scope of his protectorate of civilization by including within its radius the southern hemisphere of the American continent. As a daughter of Chilean democracy, I am moved to have before me a representative of the Swedish democratic tradition, a tradition whose originality consists in perpetually renewing itself within the framework of the most valuable creations of society. The admirable work of freeing a tradition from deadwood while conserving intact the core of the old virtues, the acceptance of the present and the anticipation of the future, these are what we call Sweden, and these achievements are an honour to Europe and an inspiring example for the American continent.

The daughter of a new people, I salute the spiritual pioneers of Sweden, by whom I have been helped more than once. I recall its men of science who have enriched its national body and mind. I remember the legion of professors and teachers who show the foreigner unquestionably exemplary schools, and I look with trusting love to those other members of the Swedish people: farmers, craftsmen, and workers.

At this moment, by an undeserved stroke of fortune, I am the direct voice of the poets of my race and the indirect voice for the noble Spanish and Portuguese tongues. Both rejoice to have been invited to this festival of Nordic life with its tradition of centuries of folklore and poetry.

May God preserve this exemplary nation, its heritage and its creations, its efforts to conserve the imponderables of the past and to cross the present with the confidence of maritime people who overcome every challenge.

My homeland, represented here today by our learned Minister Gajardo, respects and loves Sweden, and it has sent me here to accept the special honour you have awarded to it. Chile will treasure your generosity among her purest memories.

—Gabriela Mistral