



Planning for Permanence: the Speeches of J.C. Nichols
[Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City](#)

Merchandising and Traveling in South America
Southwestern Retail Merchants, Kansas City, Missouri August 1, 1938

The world's population is 2,088,000,000.

Asia 1 billion.

Europe one half billion.

North America 170 million, more purchasing power.

Africa 142 million.

South America 87 million.

Oceania 60 million.

90 to 95% of South America lies east of New York. The paunch, or belly of Brazil injects far into the Atlantic, only some 1,200 miles across to Africa which formerly was connected by land.

The southern tip of South America is the furthest south continental land in the World.

South America has 13 nations.

Brazil is larger than the United States counting Texas twice.

Chile averages 100 miles in width and is as long as from New York to San Francisco.

Argentina would stretch from San Diego to Nome, Alaska.

The climate of South America goes all the way from the extreme hot, steaming tropical jungles along the Amazon, across arid deserts; everlasting snow in the high Andes along the west coast where there are 300 peaks higher than any in the United States (many of them 22 to 23,000 ft. high) – mountains which are younger than our own Rockies and on South 2 glaciers around the straits of Magellan and Cape Horn.

Economically South America compares with the United States 75 years ago.

Great areas of undeveloped land which need manpower and transportation.

Most of the countries claim no unemployment.

A low labor scale running as low as 25¢ per day for common labor in many countries.

The watershed of the Amazon River the greatest in the world. Riverboats ply this river for nearly 3,000 miles.

LaPlatte River 2nd largest in the world with navigation over 1500 miles. This river is 28 miles wide at Buenos Aires, 170 miles from the sea.

There are only two east and west railroads in South America.

There are no continuous north and south railroads.

There are only a few east and west passes through the Andes for motor car or pack train in some 4000 miles.

South America air-minded.

Regular German and Italian planes to Europe. Both of these countries under Hitler and Mussolini are on the job.

South America has the highest railroads in the world. Up to 14 and 15 thousand feet.

Bogotá capital of Columbia.

Quito capital of Ecuador.

La Paz capital of Bolivia – all some 10 to 12,000 ft above the level of the sea.

Buenos Aires is the largest city south of the Equator. It drew in population from 84,000 in 1850 to 7th largest city in the world today. 3rd only to New York and Chicago, absolutely flat.

We spent five days to Panama and then down the west coast of South America stopping at some nine ports; crossed through the beautiful Chilean lake district, 600 miles south of Santiago, further south of the equator than Kansas City is north; and came back the east coast to New York, traveling 17,000 miles; 36 days on the ocean counting many half or full days on shore. Travel expense in South America about 1/2 of United States.

Crossing the equator going down it was cool enough for us to wear topcoats on deck at night on account of the Humboldt Current from the Antarctic Ocean.

We visited Buena venture, Columbia in a torrential rain. They have rainfall of 200 to 300 inches per year.

About four days later we were in Talara, Peru where the annual rainfall is zero – an absolute desert with great oil fields.

Lima, Peru, 7 miles from Calloa the port, is a splendid city of almost quarter of a million.

Salaverry, Peru we landed from lighters in buckets and electric cranes.

Visited sugar plantations Chiclin, 3,000 employees, sort of feudal set-up.

Llama, fiesta, nature dances, etc.

Using irrigation ditches more than 400 years old.

Great art and archaeological collections, going back 4 to 6,000 years.

Incas ruled Peru from about 800 to 1500 when they were conquered by Spaniards. Believing them in their shining armour and with their white horses, messengers of the Gods, the Incas surrendered in great hordes.

Evidence of civilization goes back 30,000 years. The Cradle? A History may be in Peru.

We visited Chan Chan in Peru where they have great walls 10 to 20 ft. thick, built of adobe mud by people of unknown civilization, and greatly damaged by freak torrential rains which come to this desert coast about every 35 years when the Japanese and Humboldt currents go on a jag in the Pacific Ocean.

Don't forget the Spanish Conquistadors came to South America more than a 100 years before our Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock.

Universities, churches, art galleries, libraries and palaces were being built in Peru and elsewhere in South America while only Indian villages were known in North America.

The story of the conquest of South America by the Spanish is probably the greatest epic of bold adventure, of daring and bravery, true has ever been recorded in the annals of world exploration. With no means of travel except sailing vessels and pack mules they dared and faced unknown tribes, conquering and fighting their way through some of the highest mountains in the world, across waste deserts of more than a thousand miles; they penetrated jungles infested with every kind of wild animal, reptile and insect; they battled disease and ferocious Indian tribes; and yet for more than 2 centuries all of South America was ruled from Peru.

Spain had Peru well conquered. Lima was the city of kings; the seat of vice-roys and churches and government of all South America. It withstood all attempts of entry into the country through any other gateway until the Portuguese entered Brazil and along about the 1800 the French, Dutch, and English began to get toeholds along the eastern shore.

Lake Titicaca in Bolivia is the highest lake in the world, 12,500 ft. high.

Describe Igassu Falls, between Argentina and Brazil on Parona River. 300 ft. high, 42 1/2 miles.

Cusco, Peru ancient Incan seat of government and worship where single blocks of stone weighing 170 tons or more were placed in position with precision unknown today. Transportation of these huge blocks of stone from the distant mountainsides remains an unsolved mystery.

Gold and silver abounded. Fable, at least, claims that Incan streets were paved with gold.

Their wonderful ancient roads are a marvel to the engineers of our time, and in some places these old cobblestone pavements are still serving today.

But get a picture of the South American topography.

Two great coastal ranges along the entire western shore. By some freak of nature for 1,000 or 1500 miles along southern Peru and northern Chile it is one of the driest

coast belts in the world. Jungles occupy this coast belt further north in Columbia and Ecuador and glaciers and jungles and lakes occupy it in southern Chile to Cape Horn and Straits of Magellan.

Along the eastern slope of the high Andean mountains of the north, are torrential rains.

Further south in Bolivia and Argentina conditions change on the East slope and there are immense areas of land covered with sagebrush similar to our own Arizona and New Mexico.

The far-reaching Amazon valley, much of which has been explored, has 50,000 known varieties of trees, orchid abound, sell for 5 to 10¢.

You can ride a thousand miles in Argentina on ground as level as the floor of this room – rich and fertile; producing wheat, cotton, corn, and cattle taking much of the export trade formerly coming to the United States.

On south to Cape Horn, forests and jungles again abound; high snow-capped mountains and glaciers occur over a large area, much of which is still unexplored.

You must get the picture of this almost impenetrable range of the Andes.

We came over a series of lakes and connecting roads in a pass 600 miles south of Santiago, which is the only pass for 1,000 miles in the wintertime.

Get the picture of the growing of every crop that is known to temperate and tropic zones.

Get the picture of a country originally occupied by native Indians all the way from the headhunting Indians in the Amazons (shrunked heads) to the unconquered Arucanians in Chile – one of the few Indian tribes in the world that has withstood the invasion of the white man.

While Spanish is generally spoken officially, Portuguese is the language you hear in Brazil. Millions of Italians are to be found; immense numbers of Turkish and Syrians merchant; a good many Japanese; French, English, Danes, Germans and a few Americans.

Slavery was abolished in the last country in South America in 1888.

Negroes from Africa were brought as slaves by the Portuguese to live in the tropics of Brazil, yet in the second country south, Argentina, you will seldom find a Negro. The same is true of much of Chile.

13 nations warring and fighting over boundary lines for generations, and still many boundary disputes to settle, yet they seem to have an intense spirit of nationalism, and a growing, recognition of mutuality of interest with North America; the standing together of the western hemisphere against the encroachment of the totalitarian governments of Europe. American goods are preferred.

American automobiles, meat packing houses, American typewriters and adding machines; much American railroad equipment is to be found everywhere. And yet today,

Germany and Italy particularly are going after this trade most vigorously. German compensation marks give her importers 20 to 25% advantage of the United States.

Germany and Italy have invited commissions from South America to Europe, wined and dined them lavishly; decorated them with high honors, and I am told resorted to many methods of getting business which our Government would not countenance.

I also want to compliment the splendid character of American business men, and our government representatives though comparatively few in number, who are fighting for our share of the South American business to take care of the surplus products of our industry, and endeavoring to do their part in solving the problem of unemployment in our own country.

South America is a continent of contrasts. Oxen carts alongside electric railroads, and big tractors. They are even considering a rail plane to be driven by air propellers on a suspended rail in Brazil with a speed of 200 miles per hour. A great mass of population in bare feet, or wooden soles strapped on their feet, alongside the display of beautiful Paris gowns in the shops.

Up-to-date use of finger print system in Brazil for identification of everyone.

A 93-mile highway in Uruguay without a grade crossing.

The largest copper mine in the world in Chile.

Coal mines for miles out under the ocean in Chile, and yet you will see them driving goats from door to door to sell milk, or herding ducks from house to house to sell.

You will find the large two-wheeled vegetable carts drawn by donkeys.

You will find men, women, and children carrying immense loads of freight on their heads.

You will see a man riding on a gaily-decorated horse delivering milk from door to door.

You will find elevators so small that hardly two people can crowd into them, and yet you will find the highest air-cooled apartment building in the world erected with no steel frame – only re-enforced concrete 32 stories high in Buenos Aires.

You will find a subway in Buenos Aires surpassing in cleanliness and efficiency that in New York.

Then a few miles away you will find families who have never ridden on a train.

You will find most beautiful parks, plazas and squares with exquisite fountains and pools, and splendidly landscaped, and yet you will find nearby a street so narrow that it is closed to vehicular travel.

In Sao Paulo, Brazil you will find a city of 1,200,000 people that has quadrupled its population in 40 years.

They paint a line down the center of a shopping street and make pedestrians keep on their right side and forbid all vehicles.

Business buildings; perhaps too ornate and over adorned according to our ideas, and residences containing paintings of the old masters and sculpture exquisite in design.

You will find great masses of people living on mate and beef at a cost of a few cents per day, and yet you will sit down in a restaurant with meals to satisfy the taste of the most meticulous epicurean. In Buenos Aires I was served some of the finest meat I have ever eaten with the hide and the hair still attached to the beef!

Along the Amazon you will find girls marrying and bearing children at the age of 12 and 13 years, yet in Buenos Aires you will find that the daughter is never permitted to go any place – even with her fiancé – without a chaperon.

In Argentina you will find residential palaces built 50 to 75 years ago by the large cattle and estancia owners of that country that surpass anything I have ever seen in this country, Europe or Africa – yet a few miles away you will find habitations which we would consider unfit for human beings.

You will find interiors of some of these fine Argentina homes to which we were most graciously invited, whose decorations would grace any art gallery in the world.

You can stand upon one high point and view arid deserts; fertile irrigated lands; active volcanoes; glaciers, colorful jungles, and snow-covered mountains all at the same time. Trees bloom even as our shrubbery.

Down the west coast you find haciendas. In Argentina they are called estancias, and in Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay, camps.

We visited estancias in Argentina where the home itself would cost at least \$200,000 in North America. It had its beautiful little chapel building; its tennis courts; its swimming pool; and its miles of drives. Its great barns with some of the finest Hereford and shorthorn cattle and rambouillet sheep to be found in the world.

50 or 75,000 cattle on one estancia is not uncommon.

You can buy the finest Panama hats in the world in Ecuador. Specimens so fine that they can be drawn through a finger ring, and some of them retailing as high as \$1500 each in New York.

You will find the finest weaving of Vicuna rugs in Peru.

And yet as a whole South America has never developed handcraft such as is found in Mexico and northern Africa. It has been a land of the soil and the cowboy.

In Buenaventura you will find naked children on the street.

In southern Chile you will find peons working with nothing much on but a loin belt; yet the Union Club in Santiago is one of the most beautiful and aristocratic institutions I have ever visited.

The cemeteries are beyond description, elaborate. Vaults and mausoleums closely built above the ground and extending in landscaped corridors in all directions. A funeral is a real blowout in South America.

Space is rented in the cemetery and when a family ceases to pay, the bones are ousted.

I will venture to say that the population in the “cities of the Dead” per acre surpasses any other cemetery in the entire world.

There are many cities in South America larger than Kansas City. And yet many of you, I feel sure have never heard of some of them.

Greater Buenos Aires has nearly 4,000,000 – flat.

Rio 2,000,000 – mountainous.

Sao Paulo 1,200,000 – quite rolling.

Santiago 800,000 – 2 hills.

Rosario Argentina 500,000 – flat.

Pernambuco, Brazil 423,000 – flat.

Bahia, Brazil 400,000.

Valparaiso, Chile 300,000 – 17 hills.

Port Alegre, Brazil 300,000 – flat.

Every one of these cities is growing rapidly.

They are generally of rectangular street plan as laid down by Spain centuries ago. Never an alley in either residential or business areas. All garbage and deliveries through the front door.

Shop display windows are usually closed with iron shutters at night and during the siesta hours from 12 to 3 every day.

In small towns the hardware store dominates the business district.

Most cities are built around civic centers with public buildings well grouped about and facing the square.

Streetlights are frequently hung in the center of the street and very ornate.

Shops are generally small, with very high ceilings, some 20 feet and merchandise arranged clear to the ceiling and ladders used to reach the upper shelves.

Related shops are placed together. I counted 7 shoe stores in one block in Buenos Aires.

Ceilings in the homes also are very high. Often as much as 18 ft. Said to be cooler.

Sidewalks in Rio de Janeiro are built of small stone cubes in elaborate decorated designs. In Buenos Aires many sidewalks in front of retail streets were 2 feet wide.

Numerous large and hideous advertising signs confront you everywhere – often stretching clear across the street.

Merchandise is displayed freely on the streets, even dry goods.

In Brazil, is the ever-present coffee drinking shop, and some Brazilians drink as much as 20 to 40 cups of coffee per day. It sells for 1 penny per cup.

In fact, when you go into a place of business in Brazil the first courtesy they offer you is to bring you a small cup of coffee. (Ambassador story).

In most South American cities businessmen go home to lunch.

You find very few large general stores in South America. Mappin & Webb of London, however, do have large stores in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and Santiago.

Most of their shops are small and individual – highly specialized and handling no general line of merchandise.

They generally have one clerk, at least, who can speak English.

They have very definitely learned the value of courtesy and friendliness in salesmanship.

I was interested in the efforts of one shop owner to direct me to another shop when he failed to have the thing for which I asked. This is a lesson which we all should learn.

There were many little smart dress shops equal to anything you will find in this country. Their millinery shops were excellent.

Lingerie shops seemed to be somewhat over crowded with display of merchandise, but some very splendid articles.

As a rule South American merchants have not learned the value of frequent changing of their window displays and they overcrowd their windows, creating a feeling of confusion, and inability to center interest on any one article. To me this is a very important consideration in the display of merchandise.

While cleanliness is generally the rule, occasionally you find offensive disorder and dirt such as no merchant in this country should tolerate, yet you see much modernizing of storefronts, lifting the face of Main Street.

Those merchants down there have learned the value of suggesting related articles after you have made a purchase. And, they do it in a way that is pleasant and does not create any feeling of high-pressure salesmanship.

I was impressed with the tidiness and care with which they wrapped your packages for you – and how they would suggest wrapping all the small packages which you might be carrying in one easily carried bundle.

Also, I liked the way in which they seemed to continue their interest in you even after they had made their sale. Here, again is a good lesson for every merchant.

I also noticed in many shops they were very careful to segregate their high priced merchandise from that of lower cost. I presume they felt when they found a lady who was interested in a high priced dress they didn't want her to even see the price tags on a lower priced garment. Or, perhaps they wanted her to feel that they carried only the smartest and most exclusive of merchandise.

As a rule the sales people were neatly dressed, and did not wear flashy jewelry or strong contrasting color, distracting the attention of a buyer. I also noticed that the young ladies in the shops, though attractive, did not have their cheeks or lips extravagantly

rouged – they seemed to make no effort to look like nightclub hostesses as some of our sales girls in this country sometimes do. Chewing gum is not a habit among sales girls in South America.

Sales people are meticulous about their appearance – you do not see dirty finger nails; dandruff on the shoulders; soiled linen; an unshaven face, an unpleasantly missing tooth; a distracting habit of rubbing the nose, or picking nervously at an ear; or other distracting habits so offensive to customers. I never once found a salesman smoking a cigar or cigarette while he was trying to sell me something.

I was never made to feel that I had been high-hatted, or that the clerk had acted snooty.

The salesgirls don't have the unpleasant habit of calling women customers "honey," or "girlie, or some other flippant term.

The salespeople never made you feel that anything was too much trouble to serve you.

No clerk ever threw a wrapped package at me in a seeming effort to drive me out of the shop.

I noticed that salespeople were just as considerate of the poorly clad customer as of the more aristocratic buyer.

I was impressed with the manner in which most merchants and their employees answered the telephone. Some way or other whatever they said, or however they said it, it seemed to ring with welcome and cordiality.

Every time you entered a shop somebody came up and greeted you, no matter how busy they might be and politely asked you to wait a few moments and that they would be with you. The clerks never looked in another direction while waiting on you; they didn't carry on a conversation with another clerk; they always seemed to have the time to explain the merits of the merchandise; bringing out all the interesting and new features, and attributes.

All through South America the salesmen impressed me with the truthfulness of the presentation of their merchandise.

Even if you did not buy they didn't make you feel cheap – but on the contrary they made you feel you were a welcome guest and they your host. Even though a clerk could not speak English, his smile won many friends for his store. It has been said that a smile can sell sewing machines to bachelors, and last year's telephone books at a premium.

I also noticed where I called at a shop the second time they remembered my name and made me feel like quite a fellow.

I was distinctly impressed by the alertness of the personnel in the shops – the manner in which they quickly came forward to serve you.

Another thing which impressed me was the manner in which one shopkeeper and his employees hastened to recommend a competitor.

Never once did I hear an employer criticize a clerk in my presence. They realize it doesn't pay to wash family linen in public.

They all seemed enthusiastic about their business and didn't talk about hard times or immediately begin knocking somebody or something. They know the value of good bright light.

In all of these things I think the South American merchants were pretty smart.

Every city has a beautiful large racetrack surpassing anything I have ever seen anywhere, owned by a private jockey club which generally also has a lovely downtown clubhouse. Their tracks are turf and betting runs riot.

Casinos with roulette and other gambling games which pay generous taxes to the Government are found in every South American city.

All countries permit lotteries.

Even the number on a Government bond may win a prize which helps keep up the market for their bonds.

In Santiago and Buenos Aires you will find small shops and cafes to equal anything you will find in Paris.

In every city I saw some of the widest avenues I have ever seen. Some of them containing five parallel drives beautifully planted.

In Santiago and Buenos Aires you will find immense parking space underground, under the squares or parks.

You will find parked river fronts developed in Buenos Aires equal to that in Chicago along the lake.

Rio is built on a series of beautiful bays with high mountains all through the city and the city spreading out like the fingers of your hand between these mountains. No city in the world has more beautiful natural advantages. Whole mountains have been torn down to create additional plain areas.

As you go into Rio you pass alongside old majestic Sugar Loaf rising sheer 1,200 ft. above the ocean. You enter a bay 30 miles across with more than 300 islands. You are confronted with one of the most beautiful sites for a city you have ever seen. Mountains, jungle, shorelines develop with parks, islands, buildings with soft toned roof colors towers and domes stretching as far as the eye can reach.

On the Plazas and squares in these various cities you will find girls and young men promenading at evening time. Hundreds of them – the girls going in one direction and the men in the opposite. They continue this for hours – flirtations rife, but nothing unseemly. When a train comes into a station you see the same thing on the station platform. Natives sticking their heads out of the car windows do not hesitate to make frank comments upon the shapeliness of the girls' legs or figures.

Many of the business streets have three rows of trees – one on either side and one down the center forming isles of safety.

Many of the streets are named after important historical dates such as the “Ninth of July.”

You seldom see any loose paper in the streets or parks.

You will find cafes in most cities, with tables and chairs on the sidewalks where no one seems to be in a hurry.

All cities have splendid art galleries, opera, and libraries.

They have beautiful golf courses and tennis clubs. You find no baseball and no handball. Lots of horse back riding.

Drugstores have only drugs.

There are few 5 & 10¢ stores, and chain stores are comparatively new.

They are well aware of the value of river transportation such as our own Missouri River. Their inland empires have been developed with riverboats.

The docks in Buenos Aires are 10 miles long.

Every city has enormous well-attended, well-equipped livestock shows in Argentine and other agricultural counties.

We found churches built entirely of tin along the west coast where there is constant fear of earthquakes.

They use corrugated iron roofs there even on some of the finer residences. They are hot, and usually are left unpainted.

Many homes on the west coast are built on stilts in the heavy rainfall districts to avoid moisture and in the hot districts to give ventilation.

Many homes have no windows whatever on the sides. The fear of night air has a strong hold on the South Americans.

Apartment buildings and residences abound with balconies, beautifully carved wood, ironwork, or concrete, and stairways open to the sky.

They use brilliant tile on inside and outside.

Have painted scenes on buildings.

They avoid fireplaces on the west coast account of fear of earthquakes.

Most South American homes use patios or garden side of home more than we do.

I never have seen more beautifully decorated doorways.

In Santiago and Rio the flowers bloom the year around.

In Brazil it is a constant fight to keep the jungle from taking your farm or garden.

Poinsettias grow as high as 25 ft.

We were fortunate enough to see the coffee bushes in bloom. They grow 14 to 18 ft. high and require a rainfall of 75 to 100 inches.

The railroads are fined if late.

They collect the tickets at the end of the journey.

Most homes are cut up into a great number of very small rooms – generally with good closet space. The kitchens are larger than ours.

You find iron bars on many windows reminiscent of days when they were used for protection.

Many streetcars have first and second-class space with women conductors.

In Rio people crawl on streetcars and trains like swarms of flies – on the roof, the steps, the windows, and anywhere they can find a place to hang on. A death or two a day by accident does not seem serious.

Strikes are illegal in Brazil. We encountered only one strike in our 13 weeks trip.

In Argentina the school children all dress in the same design of white clothes. In Brazil it was red or blue.

A Brazilian talking to you with active gestures. He may even kiss you, pat you on the back.

Frequently women going to funerals dress all in white, and men wear black straw hats for mourning.

Women generally use pretty bright colors for dress.

The people love and appreciate flowers.

It was interesting to see how many homes had birdcages.

In Brazil you will find many Negroes intermarried with white.

Elections are generally held on Sunday, and people who fail to vote are fined.

As a rule they have larger families in South America.

Soccer, their football, is a great game, and the spectators often fight one another in their enthusiasm. It's not uncommon for someone in the grandstand to be killed at such a game.

There are no bullfights in South America.

There are beautiful orchid farms.

Also fine snake farms, to develop anti smoke toxin.

All through Chile and Argentina we slept on the hardest pillows I have ever known.

Down in the Chilean Lake District they advertise "Central heating" which means one small wood stove in the middle of the central room.

The cowboy is still the romantic figure on the South American frontier – known as the gaucho.

The door of the hacienda, estancia, or camp is always open free to visitors. A new horse is given without charge.

In many countries almost a feudal system exists. The large ranch house set in its grove of eucalyptus trees, with its workmen's quarters, paid in kind; its miles of poplar trees marking its boundary lines; and in many instances almost a little government of its own.

American films are shown in the picture houses, and often the shows run until one or two o'clock, A.M.

The dinner hour in Chile is usually about 10 o'clock at night.

In Chile you can get good wines for 25¢ per quart – cheaper than bottled water. Scotch 8.00 in Chile, Brazil 2.00

If a woman who is working for you in Brazil is going to have a baby she gets three months free pay.

In South America don't wait for the train whistle before you board your train because there is no time after the whistle blows.

The dress of the men and women and house furniture with the exception of peons and Indians is very similar to ours.

I was told that many prominent men kept mistresses without their wives raising any particular hell about it.

The habit of marriages being arranged by parents is largely disappearing.

Girls and women wear their hair cut about the same as they do in this country, and beauty shops and barber shops do a thriving business.

The custom of women being employed in offices and shops is rapidly growing, but in most countries in the case of a divorce the law always favors the man.

South America is a great place for holidays, and they certainly have a lot of them. The South American people seem to take more time to play than we do here in the north. They transact business more leisurely.

South Americans celebrating Xmas in the middle of summer is a rather pathetic scene.

There were some of the best-lighted streets I have ever seen all over the country.

Most places in South America there are large numbers of menial and domestic services available for people of means. The man who carries his own bag at the station, or does work in his yard, or the woman who does work in her own home is likely to gain the disrespect of his neighbors and servants.

Three or four servants in a family of comparatively modest means is not unusual, and 10 or 12 servants in the well-to-do families.

Offices are well equipped with most modern type of office machines.

Farmland was very low in price in undeveloped areas around \$1.00 per acre.

It is difficult to send money out of the country.

Our summer time is the best time to go to South America.

Food generally is meat with 5 or 6 courses. Very highly seasoned. No loaf bread on whole trip.

Seeing one's friends off on the boat in South America is quite a gala occasion. There was a gathering of some 60 bearing gifts and good wishes to see us off when we left Rio, and the sailing of the boat being delayed 2 hours I had to spend 35¢ per Scotch highball for some 250 drinks before the dammed boat left.

Every house in every city seemed to have radio wires above the roof. They are radio-minded in South America.

American cigarettes cost 25¢ per package and in some countries gasoline was as high as 35 to 40¢ per gallon.

You can ride 1000 miles on a train in Argentine through the sagebrush country similar to Arizona, and at the end come out in the most beautiful lake and mountain scenery you have ever seen. We spent three most enjoyable weeks in the Chilean Lake District.

Railroad service is below American standard – no makeup of berths. You ride in dining car in daytime, rapid table d'hote service.

Describe work of Rockefeller Foundation in Rio.

Yes, it is a stupendous continent of possibilities. Great deserts; plains; tropical jungles; glaciers; mountain peaks; pampas – a land of contrasts with some of the most backward conditions in the world, and some of the most advanced achievements. There are many things that would make the United States sit up and take notice. The horse and the saddle and the gun are still carrying civilization onward in many South American countries.

Cities that would be the envy of any country in the world are being built. Industry is something at which to marvel. The up-breeding of livestock is most scientific.

These people like North America. They realize all the interests of the western hemisphere are mutual. In any great European, or old world conflict, we can be a united people.

Here in the southern half of our part of the world you find the same universal love of children; the love for flowers; for dogs and for people. The same struggle to own land. The same deep interest in industry and farms, the same interest in the building of cities and the best development of their country. The same importance of water transportation. The following of civilization along the early trails by our forefathers; the same romantic stories of the cowboy, the huntsman, and the frontier. The stories of their early days on the prairie or in the mountains ring with the same sacrifice and bravery, as do the stories of the development of our own North America.

The need of railroads and transportation has been the same as in our own land. We have the same desire for a stable and dependable government; the same aspirations for churches, schools and institutions of culture and education; the same sweetness and sacredness of family relations; and whatever the nationality, the same universal pride in one's own hometown or city.

There is the same fear on the part of businessmen of the unrest throughout the world; the same growing consciousness that everyone of us must do our own part to save democracy throughout the world. And, after talking to foreign representatives of our America government, and South American government officials, including the presidents of some of the counties; the foreign business men; the farmers; to our guides in the mountains and on the lakes; to laborers in the fields, and I came back to our own wonderful country with a greater conviction than ever that personal initiative and thrift; the stability and protection of property rights; the solidarity of farm and urban property values; the preservation of law and order in every community; human interest in our employees; the consecration of ourselves to a deep interest in all government affairs; are absolutely essential in this trying time of world unrest if the great United States of America and the balance of the western hemisphere are to be able to preserve the liberty of humankind, the freedom of speech and the right to rear your family in the proper way is to be preserved in this 20th century.

People want peace; people want freedom from the leadership of demagogues; freedom from the selfish ambition of European tyrannical leaders; freedom from the attacks upon the very right to own land; to own homes and property in this great United States of ours and the entire western hemisphere.

With all these things our country must withstand the upheavals of Europe and of Asia, and after the great sacrifice of our Pilgrim Fathers – of your father and mine who pioneered this Middle West – can make our country safe for peaceful living.

One thing that impressed me in South America was the governmental cooperation with any new industry. Businessmen seem to have little fear of the future, and they seem to stand high all over South America and to have full and complete encouragement of both federal and local governments. Nearly every nation or local official to whom I talked seemed proud of every business activity in his community,

After all of my 17,000 miles of travel I came back to find the middle west beautifully green and luxuriant – more so than I have seen it for many years, and taking everything into consideration I am mighty glad to be a part of the city and region that is located in the finest agricultural area in the world; comprising a citizenship second to none; a city where some of these days industry, as a result of disintegration in the east will begin to flourish alongside our fertile fields and the middle west will go forward to its ultimate destiny of becoming the greatest inland area in all of North America.

As I have said before, the hand on the plow grasps the hand on the loom, and every furrow on the farm should lead to the smokestack in the city and nearby town. Great possibilities are ours in the Middle West.

Let's unite and look forward to the up building of our part of the United States which has been retarded in growth in recent years.

You as merchants of this territory are doing your part to build a great empire in the Middle West. Your interests are mutual with Kansas City, the financial, wholesale capital of your territory. We are all deeply interested in the agricultural progress of this territory; the building of more and larger industries in this section. We have not been keeping pace with the coastal areas of the United States. We must all work together for

the up building of the middle west; and I am proud to say tonight that the Chamber of Commerce of Kansas City; our wholesalers; our bankers; and the heads of our various institutions are ready and willing to cooperate with you. We are delighted to have you as our guests in our city, and are ready to respond to every act and every thought which may contribute to the up building of the grand central area of America.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) – Speech JCN051

Arguably Jesse Clyde Nichols (1880-1950) was the single most influential individual to the development of metropolitan Kansas City. Moreover his work, ideas, and philosophy of city planning and development had far-reaching impact nationally – so much so that the Urban Land Institute has established the J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionary Urban Development to recognize a person or a person representing an institution whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of responsible development.

Nichols' objective was to “develop whole residential neighborhoods that would attract an element of people who desired a better way of life, a nicer place to live and would be willing to work in order to keep it better.” The Company under Nichols and his son, Miller Nichols (1911-), undertook such ventures as rental housing, industrial parks, hotels, and shopping centers. Perhaps the most widely recognized Nichols Company developments are the Country Club District and the Country Club Plaza Shopping Center, reportedly the first shopping area in the United States planned to serve those arriving by automobile rather than trolley car.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) contains both personal and business files concerning J.C. Nichols' private and business life. Included are personal correspondence, family related material, and speeches and articles written by him. Business and financial files pertain to actions of the Company, including information about different developments and the securing of art objects; and printed materials produced by and about the Company.