ROOSEVELT TALKS TO WAGE-EARNERS

Labor Day Address Delivered at Fargo Is Well Received.

JOINT ACTION A NECESSITY

Trades Unions Commended, But Some of Their Acts Criticised—American Federation Planks Approved by Speaker.

Fargo, N. D., Sept. 5.—The union labor forces of Fargo and thousands of other persons had a treat today when Theodore Roosevelt delivered the Labor Day address. He spoke with great seriousness and with frankness, and his speech was well received by the big crowd that heard it. Colonel Roosevelt's address was as follows:

Today—on Labor Day—I speak in one sense especially to those personally and vitally interested in the labor struggle; and yet I speak of this primarily as one aspect of the larger social struggle growing out of the attempts to readjust social conditions and make them more equitable.

The nineteenth century was distinctly one of economic triumphs—triumphs in the domain of production, including transportation and the mechanics of exchange. The marvelous progress made in these respects multiplied man's productive power to an almost inconceivable degree. In the matter of the production of wealth, as much progress was made during the nineteenth century as during all previous periods since history dawned; that is, the changes brought in a single century through machinery and steam have been greater than the sum total of the changes of the preceding thousands of years; and these very changes and this material progress have thrust upon us social and political problems of the first magnitude. The triumph of the physical sciences in the nineteenth century represented progress primarily in the material elements of civilization. The most pressing problems that confront the present century are not concerned with the material production of wealth, but with its distribution. The demands of progress now deal not so much with the material as with the moral and ethical factors of civilization. Our basic problem is to see that the marvelously augmented powers of production bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century shall in the twentieth be made to administer to the needs of the many rather than be exploited for the profit of the few.

The American wage-earner faces this larger social problem in a dual capacity; first, as a citizen of the Republic charged with the full duty of citizenship; and next as a wage-earner—as a wage-worker—who, together with his fellow-workers, is vitally concerned in the question of wages and general conditions of employment, which affect not only his well-being and that of his wife and children, but the opportunities of all workers for a higher development.

Must Depend on Our Own Efforts.

It is true of wage-workers, as of all other citizens, that most of their progress must depend upon their own initiative and their own efforts. Nevertheless, there are three different factors in this progress. There is, first, the share which the man's own individual qualities must determine. This is the most important of all, for nothing can supply the place of individual capacity. Yet there are two other factors also of prime importance; namely, what can be done by the wage-workers in co-operation with one another; and what can be done by government—that is, by the instrument through which all the people work collectively. Wages and other most important conditions of employment must remain largely outside of government control; must be left for adjustment by free contract between employers and wage-earners. But to attempt to leave this merely to individual action means the absolute destruction of individualism; for where the individual is so weak that he, perforce, has to accept whatever a strongly organized body chooses to give him, his individual liberty becomes a mere sham and mockery. It is indispensably necessary, in order to preserve to the largest degree our system of individualism, that there should be effective and organized collective action. The wage-earners must act jointly, through the process of collective bargaining, in great industrial enterprises. Only thus can they be put upon a plane of economic equality with their corporate employers. Only thus is freedom of contract made a real thing and not a mere legal fiction. There are occasional occupations where this is not necessary; but, speaking broadly, it is necessary throughout the great world of organized industry. I believe this practise of collective bargaining, effective only through such organizations as the trades unions, to have been one of the most potent factors in the past century in promoting the progress of the wage-earners and in securing larger social progress for humanity. I believe in the principle of organized labor and in the practise of collective bargaining, not merely as a desirable thing for the wage-earners, but as something which has been demonstrated to be essential in the long run to their permanent progress.

This does not mean that I unequivocally indorse any or all practises that labor organizations may happen to adopt, or any or all principles that they may choose to enunciate. Labor organizations have the weaknesses and defects common to all other forms of human organizations. Sometimes they act very well, and sometimes they act very badly; and I am for them when they act well, and I am against them when they act badly. I believe that their existence is a necessity; I believe that their aims and purposes are generally good; and I believe that all of them have occasionally made mistakes, and that some of them have been guilty of wrong-doing. Just in so far as they are strong and effective they tempt designing men who seek to control them for their own interests, and stimulate the desires of ambitious leaders who may be clever, crooked men, or who may be honest but visionary and foolish. In other words, in treating of labor unions, as in treating of corporations, or of humanity generally, we will do well to remember Abraham Lincoln's saying that "there is a deal of human nature in mankind." Whether in a man or in an organized body of men, the power to do good means that such power may be twisted into evil; and in proportion as the power grows, so it becomes steadily more important that it should be handled aright. Just in proportion as it is in its proper function power is important to social progress, so in its improper function it becomes fraught with social disaster.

Wise Course For Original Labor.

Outside critics should appreciate the necessity of organized labor, and understand and sympathize with what is good in it, instead of condemning it indiscriminately. On the other hand, those within its ranks should fearlessly analyze the criticisms directed against it and ruthlessly eliminate from the practises of its organization those things which justify such criticism and attack. This is the path, not only of right, but of wisdom and safety. Public opinion in the United States is daily becoming more alert and more intelligent and more forceful; and no organization whether trades union or corporation, whether industrial or non-industrial, can endure or permanently amount to a social force if it does not harmonize with a wise and enlightened public opinion. Hitherto we Americans have been over-occupied with material things, and have neglected to watch the play of the social forces about us. But now we are awakening from that indifference; and every form of organization representing an important economic, political, or social force must undergo a closer scrutiny than ever before.

I think that the next quarter of a century will be important politically in many ways; and in none more so than in the labor movement. Not only are the benefits of labor organizations more clearly understood than ever before, but any shortcoming or vice displayed in connection therewith is also more clearly understood and more quickly resented. The public is growing more and more to understand that, in a contest between employer and employee—a corporation and a trades union—not only the interests of the contestants, but the interests of the third party—the public—must be considered. Anything like levity in provoking a strike, on the one hand or on the other, is certain more and more to be resented by the public. Strikes are sometimes necessary and proper; sometimes they represent the only way in which, after all other methods have been exhausted, it is possible for the laboring man to stand for his rights; but it must be clearly understood that a strike is a matter of last resort. Our social organization is too complex for us to fail quickly to condemn those who, with levity or in a spirit of wanton brutality, bring about far-reaching and disastrous interference with its normal processes. The public sympathises cordially with any movement for a good standard of living and for moderate hours of employment. (I personally, for instance, cordially believe in an eight-hour day, and in one day in seven for complete rest.) Where men and women are worked under harsh and intolerable conditions, and can secure no relief without a strike, or, indeed, where the strike is clearly undertaken for things which are vitally necessary—and then only as a last resort—the public sympathy will favor the wage-workers; but it will not favor them unless such conditions as these are fulfilled. Therefore it is becoming more than ever important that the labor movement should combine steady, far-seeing leadership with discipline and control in its ranks. Dishonest leadership is a curse anywhere in American life, and nowhere is it a greater curse than in the labor movement. If there is one lesson which I would rather teach to my fellow-Americans than any other; it is to hound down the dishonest man—no matter what his condition—and to brush aside with impatient contempt the creature who only denounces dishonesty when it is found in some special social stratum. There are dishonest capitalists, dishonest labor leaders, dishonest lawyers, and dishonest business men; dishonest men of great wealth and dishonest poor men; and the man who is a genuine reformer will decline to single out any one type for exclusive denunciation, but will fearlessly attack the dishonest man as such, whenever and wherever he is to be found.

Worthy Leaders Available.

For many years I have been more or less closely associated with representative leaders of labor unions. Some of these men are among my close friends, whom I respect and admire as heartily as I do any men in America. There are some of them to whom I go as freely for assistance and guidance, for aid and help, in making up my mind how to deal with our social problems, as I go to the leaders of any business or profession. I cannot pay too high a tribute to the worth and integrity of these men—to their sincerity and good judgment as leaders. But no movement—no leadership—however earnest and honest, can endure unless the rank and file live up to their duties, and search for such leadership, and support it when they find it. If the best men in a labor union leave its management and control to men of a poorer type, the effect will be just as disastrous as when good citizens in a city follow the same course as regards city government. The stay-at-home man in a union is just as much responsible for the sins of omission and commission of his organization as the stay-at-home man in a city is for the civic conditions under which he suffers and about which he complains.

All that can properly be done should be done by all of us to help upward the standard of living and to improve the ability of the average man to reach that standard. There are still in the United States great masses of skilled and unorganized labor, whose conditions of work and living are harsh and pitiable. It is a shocking indictment of our industrial condition to be told in a matter-of-course way in a government report that thousands of workers in this country are compelled to toil everyday in the week, without one day rest, for a wage of $45 a month. Such a condition is bad for them, and, in the end, bad for all of us. Our commercial development should be heartily encouraged; but it must not be allowed to commercialize our morals.

It is not merely the duty of the wage-earner, but it is also the duty of the general public, to see that he has safe and healthy conditions under which to carry on his work. No worker should be compelled, as a condition of earning his daily bread, to risk his life and limb, or be deprived of his health, or have to work under dangerous and bad surroundings. Society owes the worker this because it owes as much to itself. He should not be compelled to make this a matter of contract; he ought not to be left to fight alone for decent conditions in this respect. His protection in the place where he works should be guaranteed by the law of the land. In other words, he should be protected during his working hours against greed and carelessness on the part of unscrupulous and thoughtless employers, just as outside of those working hours both he and his employer are protected in their lives and property against the murderer and thief.

Far Behind Other Nations.

This opens a vitally important field of legislation to the National government and to the state alike. It is humiliating to think how far we of this country are behind most of the other countries in such matters. Practically all civilized countries have, for more than a decade, prohibited by the strictest regulations the poisonous match industry; yet we had not done anything at all until very recently to protect the laborers against this horrible danger. The National government made an investigation a year ago into this industry, which showed a condition of things unspeakably shocking and revolting. Legislation to prevent these abuses was introduced in congress, which was not passed. Since then the companies in fault have ostentatiously announced that they have done away with the objectionable conditions. I hope so; but whether they have or not, a law should be passed in stringent form to prevent any possible backsliding.

So it is in the matter of injuries to employees. In what is called "employer's liability" legislation other industrial countries have accepted the principle that the industry must bear the monetary burden of its human sacrifices, and that the employee who is injured shall have a fixed and definite sum. The United States still proceeds on an outworn and curiously improper principle, in accordance with which it has too often been held by the courts that the frightful burden of the accident shall be borne in its entirety by the very person least able to bear it. Fortunately, in a number of states—in Wisconsin and in New York, for instance—these defects in our industrial life are either being remedied or else are being made a subject of intelligent study with a view to their remedy. In New York a bill embodying moderate compensation for accidents has already been passed. Other states will undoubtedly follow in the same path. The Federal government has, so far as its own employees are concerned, been the first to recognize and put into shape this principle. However, this pioneer law was not made comprehensive enough; it does not cover all the employees of the Federal government that ought to come within its provisions, and the amount paid for permanent disability or death is entirely inadequate. Nevertheless, it was a great step in advance to have this principle of workingmen's compensation accepted and embodied in the Federal statutes, and the recent action of congress in providing for a commission to study and report upon the subject gives promise that the same principle will soon be applied to private firms that come within the jurisdiction of the Federal government.

Federation Planks Approved.

Women and children should, beyond all question, be protected; and in their cases there can be no question that the states should act. They should be particular objects of our solicitude; and they should be guarded in an effective fashion against the demands of a too greedy commercialism. On my recent trip in the neighborhood of Scranton and Wilkesbarre every one I spoke to agreed as to the immense improvement that had been wrought by the effective enforcement of the laws prohibiting children under the age of fourteen years from working, and prohibiting women from working more than ten hours a day. Personally, I think ten hours too long; but be this as it may, ten hours a day was a great advance.

Among the planks in the platform of the American Federation of Labor there are some to which I very strongly subscribe. They are:

1. Free schools; free text-books; and compulsory education.
2. A work-day of not more than eight hours.
3. Release from employment one day in seven.
4. The abolition of the sweat-shop system.
5. Sanitary inspection of factory, workshop, mine, and home.
6. Liability of employers for injury to body or loss of life.

(I regard the demand in this form as inadequate. What we need is an automatically fixed compensation for all injuries received by the employee in the course of his duty, this being infinitely better for the employee and more just to the employer. The only sufferers will be lawyers of that undesirable class which exists chiefly by carrying on lawsuits of this nature.)

7. The passage and enforcement of rigid anti-child labor laws which will cover every portion of this country.
8. Suitable and plentiful playgrounds for children in all the cities.

Inasmuch as prevention is always best, especial attention should be paid to the prevention of industrial accidents by passing laws requiring the use of safety devices. At present the loss of life and limb among the industrial workers of the United States is simply appalling, and every year equals in magnitude the killed and wounded in a fair-sized war. Most of these casualties are preventable; and our legislative policy should be shaped accordingly. It would be a good idea to establish in every city a museum of safety devices, from which the workers could get drawings of them and information as to how they could be obtained and used.

The matter of compensation for injuries to employees is, perhaps, more immediately vital than any other. The report of the commission which has begun to look into this matter on behalf of the New York legislature is well worth reading. The bill presented by the Federation of Labor in Wisconsin on this subject seems excellent. In all dangerous trades the employer should be forced to share the burden of the accident, so that the shock may be borne by the community as a whole. This would be a measure of justice in itself, and would do away with a fruitful source of antagonism between employer and employed.

Our ideal should be a rate of wages sufficiently high to enable workmen to live in a manner conformable to American ideals and standards, to educate their children, and to provide for sickness and old age; the abolition of child labor; safety device legislation to prevent industrial accidents; and automatic compensation for losses caused by these industrial accidents.

Have Faith in Yourself.

There is a tremendous power in the habit of expectancy, the conviction that we shall realize our ambition, that our dreams shall come true. There is no uplifting habit like that attitude of expecting that our heart yearnings will be matched with realities; that things are going to turn out well and not ill; that we are going to succeed; that no matter what may or may not happen, we are going to be happy, says Success.

There is nothing else so helpful as the carrying of this optimistic, expectant attitude—the attitude which always looks for and expects the best, the highest, the happiest—and never allowing oneself to get into the pessimistic, discouraged mood.

Believe with all your heart that you will do what you were made to do. Never for an instant harbor a doubt of this. Drive it out of your mind if it seeks entrance. Entertain only the friendly thoughts or ideals of the thing you are bound to achieve. Reject all thought enemies, all discouraging moods—everything which would ever suggest failure or unhappiness.

Wasted Effort.

It is said that a California poet was badly handled by his wife because he neglected to support the family.

When they asked for bread he gave them a sonnet, and when they clamored for pie he came across with a madrigal.

Nevertheless, it doesn't seem quite right for his wife to reach over and snatch tufts from his cranium cover and batter his shins with bench-made shoes and crack his slats with a broom handle. That sort of treatment doesn't bring results. A poet with a black eye and a twisted neck and a dented kneepan is no more useful than a poet in perfect order.

What the lady should do would be to have her poet hubby pick up some side trade that would promise financial results—as they did in Indiana, where you will find the baker writes poetry and so do the hairdresser and the motorman and the bartender.

But there is no use attempting to club money out of a poet.

The KITCHEN CABINET

THE law of the table is beauty—a respect for the common soul of all the guests.—Emerson.

"How green you are and fresh."
—King John.

Ideas for Porch, Garden, Excursion and Picnic Parties.

This is the heyday of the picnic season, when we flee to the woods if we can; if not we satisfy ourselves with a day in the park, a supper on the beach, or a quiet porch party at home.

The really enjoyable affairs are those arranged without much preparation.

Wooden plates, aluminum forks, spoons and cups are not expensive and lighten the weight of the picnic basket. Paper napkins will be found to answer every purpose and are a great saving when laundry work bust be considered. As these outings are for special rest and health, care should be taken to provide only easily digested foods, especially where there are children. Older people may indulge in fancy dishes and highly seasoned salads, but the children should be spared. A cheap chafing dish is a convenience in which one may prepare a chipped beef, creamed; creamed eggs or rarebit. These, with bread and butter sandwiches, a simple salad and coffee, make a pleasant first course.

Fruit alone may follow as dessert. Sandwiches are in endless variety these days. Chopped meat or fish rubbed to a paste with cream, butter or mayonnaise dressing and spread on thin slices of either brown or white bread, make a nourishing, wholesome sandwich.

Sandfiches should be wrapped in waxed paper. Salad sandwiches are nice only when fresh, as standing only an hour will spoil their crispness and make them unpalatable. Fruits are always acceptable both as food and drink. They quench the thirst and satisfy the hunger without adding burden to the body. The salts and acids they contain cool and thin the blood.

Tomatoes are easily carried and served on lettuce make a pleasant addition to a meat sandwich.

Water is the best, most wholesome and cheapest drink. Lemonade is a great favorite, but should be used sparingly if serving other fruit in quantity. The lemon juice may be extracted and carried in a bottle.

Garden and porch parties differ from picnics in both arrangements and serving. The kitchen being within easy reach, dainty entrees, salads and ices are possible to serve. One large table may be arranged on the porch or under the trees or small tables may be scattered about.

If hot dishes are to be served the preparations may be made early in the day. Croquettes and cutlets may be fried, placed on a paper in the oven and reheated in a few minutes in a hot oven.

Cold dishes like pressed chicken, deviled tongue, or salads are to be chosen by those who wish to entertain on small means and with limited help. Where wise forethought and planning are done forty persons may be nicely served by a single maid.

"UNLESS some sweetness at the bottom lie,
Who cares for all the crinkling of the pie."

"I am glad that my Adonis hath a sweet tooth in his head."

Waldorf Salad.

Take a cupful of celery shredded, two cupfuls of apple cut in dice, a half cup nut meats. Mix all together and serve on lettuce with a mayonnaise or a boiled dressing.

When making apple pie put the apple without any sugar or seasoning into the crust and bake as usual. Slip a knife around the edge and remove the top crust; now add sugar, butter and nutmeg, seasoning to taste; put back the crust and serve. This method saves the loss of sugar and juice by boiling out in cooking.

Another nice way to serve fried apples is to core them, cut across, making circular slices, put in a pan with a very little fat; sprinkle with sugar and cook slowly.

A nice apple dumpling which is such a favorite with the children is made by preparing a biscuit dough; roll and cut in pieces large enough to cover a cored and peeled apple. Bake in a moderate oven and serve with sugar and cream.

Frozen Pudding.

Scald one cup of milk, add one and one-half cupfuls of sugar, stir until dissolved. Mix a tablespoonful of cornstarch with a little cold milk, cook all together ten minutes, add a beaten yolk of an egg, stir until well cooked, then add a pinch of salt, a teaspoonful of vanilla, a cupful of steamer raisins and a half cupful of chopped nuts. When cold add a pint of cream and freeze.

Beach parties and basket picnics will be the chief attraction for the next two months. A few suggestions may prove helpful.

Nellie Maxwell.

Their Little House

By TEMPLE BAILEY

Copyright, 1910, by Associated Literary Press

Lucile came slowly down the long walk. Her heart was full of bitterness. Why did some people have all the good fortune? Behind her was the great mansion where Marguerita lived with her rich husband. Marguerita and Lucile had gone to school together, and after their school days they had danced their way through life until the time when Marguerita met the man who had built the big house.

Marguerita's husband was the one rich man in the village. It had been a real love match, however, for the big man adored his little wife, and Marguerita thought there was no one in the world as perfect as her successful husband.

Lucile had not envied her friend, for she had a lover of her own, a better man, perhaps, if not as rich as the one who had chosen Marguerita.

Today, however, Lucile had come away from Marguerita's home with a feeling of discontent. The great house, with its exquisite furnishing, its servants, its air of luxury, had made her feel the contrast of her own future. Lucile was to live in a little house. Her lover was poor, but he had planned the cottage residence with much eagerness.

"We'll make up for all the littleness and lack of luxury," he said, "by the amount of love that we will have for each other."

Lucile reflected that in Marguerita's home there was also love, and she longed intensely for the pretty clothes, the ease, the softness of her friend's existence.

At this moment of her greatest rebellion she met the man she was to marry. "Philip," she said, as he joined her, "I have been up to Marguerita's. She has the loveliest home—her husband gives her everything."

He laughed. "No home could be lovelier than our little house," he said.

Her head went up. "I am not so sure," she told him, "that love in a cottage will be all we think it will be, Philip."

He turned and stared at her. "Has your visit to Marguerita," he asked, "made you think that?"

She shook her head. "I don't know, only it does not seem quite fair that Marguerita should have so much, does it, Philip?"

"She hasn't any more than you have," he said stoutly. "Both of you have love, and beauty and a home; that your home is to be smaller and less luxurious ought not to weigh greatly, Lucile."

His tone was so confident that it grated on her. Did he value her so little that he could see her beauty buried in his small house, while Marguerita's was to shine like a jewel in its gorgeous setting?

She turned to her lover, her eyes flashing. "I don't think I want to live in the little house, Philip," she said.

She did not really mean it; it was only a mood of the mind, but his confident bearing, his masculine denseness irritated her.

He stared at her unbelievingly. "Surely you don't mean that, Lucile," he said. "Surely you don't mean that you have let me build and dream, only to have that dream unfulfilled?"

They had come to the gate that opened the way to the little house. It was always their custom to go there on afternoons together to see what had been done. Every stone that had been laid, every room that had been finished, every bit of furniture that had been bought, had been the result of their careful planning. Today they entered it in silence. Lucile's glance seemed to take it in critically. She wondered how she could have been so enthusiastic. The simple prints on the walls, the inexpensive furniture in the living room, the muslin hangings, all looked so cheap after the magnificence of Marguerita's home.

She turned to him and flung out her hands. "I just can't live here, Philip," she said despairingly.

At first he would not believe her. She was so knit into his life that he refused to think of a future without her. But, with a wild feeling that she was tied to poverty if she married him, she demanded her freedom and, after he had used every argument in the long walk home, at last he gave it, with a look of pain that hurt her, and kept her awake in the watches of the night.

Indeed she got no sleep. She wondered what evil spirit possessed her that she should thus sell her birthright of love.

She rose and paced the floor, and at last she sank down by the window, looking out in the starlit night. But there was something more than the stars that lighted the night. On the hill that stood between her own home and that of Marguerita's there was a dull glow.

Lucile watched it in fascinated wonder. Something was burning—a barn, perhaps. She wondered whose barn it could be. In the distance she heard the bells that would bring out the only fire engine in the town. Philip was a member of the fire brigade. She knew just how strong and active he would be in trying to save the property of their neighbors. People began to hurry by the house, and scraps of their talk floated up to her through the open window.

"It's Philip Arnold's cottage," some one said, and Lucile's hand went to her heart. It was their cottage—hers and Philip's—that was burning, the home that was to have been hers, that she had planned from the beginning. She flung on her clothes, sobbing a little under her breath. It seemed to her that if that cottage burned, all of her happiness would burn with it. She ran out into the street and followed the crowd. The people who saw her whispered among themselves. "She was to marry him and live in the cottage." At last she came to the gate through which she had passed that day with Philip. There was a dense crowd in the yard, tramping the tender grass, crushing the life out of the crocuses and tulips that she and Philip had planted in the garden beds. For a moment she shut her eyes, afraid to look. When she opened them she saw that the little house was intact. Behind it the flames shot up, making that dreadful glow against the sky that she had seen from her window. The one fire engine was busy, with its hose playing on the burning heap.

Lucile turned to the man nearest her. "Then it was not our cottage?" she gasped.

"No," he answered, "it was just the little stable and the left-over building material back of it. But the cottage would have gone if Philip had not worked so hard to save it."

Then out of the crowd Lucile saw some one coming toward her. It was Marguerita—a fur wrap thrown over the whiteness of her evening gown.

"Oh, Lucile," she said, "what a dreadful thing it would have been if your cottage had burned. If you only knew how I have envied you! Our house is so big that Donald and I are always saying that it comes between us and our love. I wish sometimes that there were no servants, no one to do anything for him but me. Money separates people so, Lucile."

Lucile felt that she must get to Philip at once and tell him that there was no place in the whole world like the little house.

It seemed to her that there had never been anything as beautiful as the cheap rugs and the muslin hangings and the prints on the wall. But it was not until the crowd had gone that she had a chance to tell him. He came to her blackened with smoke.

"I saved it," he said, "but I suppose I might as well have let it burn for all the good it will do me."

She clung to him, crying a little. "It's the most beautiful cottage in the world," she said.

She told him then how precious it had seemed to her when she thought she was to lose it; and presently they went in together. The smoke had blackened the snowy hangings, but otherwise nothing was hurt. Marguerita had left them, and gradually the crowd had turned away. They stood together at the window, the sky rosy in the east.

"It's a new world, and a new day, and a new kind of love," Lucile whispered, and her lover smiled at her as together they faced the dawn.

NOW CUT THE WATERMELON

Times Change and the Rule of One to a Family Is No Longer Regarded.

In old times no dealer dreamed of cutting a watermelon; perhaps it would have been considered a sort of sacrilege. If a family wanted a watermelon they wanted a watermelon, not a part of it, the New York Sun says.

The watermelon was usually bought by the father of the family and he was often a qualified watermelon expert. He knew what sort of melon he wanted and then he could tell by tapping gently on the melon with his knuckles just what condition it was in. He didn't need to have a melon plugged for him and the inside of this melon was never seen until he cut it himself on the family table, where, as the ends fell apart, following his first grand cut down through the melon's middle, there ran around the table, coming from all the children, himself included, a delighted "Ah!" at the revelation of the melon's rich, rosy red interior.

Thus when the gross population was smaller, families larger, melons cheaper, everybody bought a whole melon. If they had cut a melon in the old days nobody would have wanted the other half; now many people never think of buying more than half a melon. The melons cost more now than they used to, for one thing, and then it may be really that all a small family wants is half a melon.

To be sure, if you buy only half a melon you don't hear the delightful crackling that follows settling the knife down through a whole melon, but it isn't so bad. In many places nowadays they keep watermelons on ice, keep them nice and cool, and you may see it cut and see how handsome it opens up, and the dealer will wrap up your half trimly to keep out the dust and you can carry it home, plumb fresh, if you want to. Not so bad!