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THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

LITTLE FOXES.

Among my tender vines I spy
A little fox named—By-and-by.
Then set upon him quick, I say,
The swift young hunter—Right away.
Around each tender vine I plant
I find the little fox—I can't.
Then, fast as any hunter ran,
Chase him with bold and brave—I can:
No use in trying—lags and whines
This fox among my tender vines.
Then drive him low and drive him high
With this good hunter, named—I'll try.
Among the vines in my small lot
Creeps in the young fox—I forgot.
Then hunt him out and to his den
With—I will not forget again.
A little fox is hidden there
Among my vines, named—I don't care.
Then let "I'm sorry"—hunter true—
Chase him afar from vines and you.
—Christian Union.

IN TIME OF TROUBLE.

What a kind provision of an All-wise Creator it is that inclines the human heart to sympathy with others in their troubles! How instinctively the wish to aid and assist arises within us when we hear the story of our friends' misfortunes. How often our hearts go out in friendly sympathy even toward strangers, when the sad tale of trouble and consequent suffering is poured into our ear! Rochefoucauld has left on record the saying: "There is something secretly pleasing to us in the misfortunes of our friends." Only a cynic with heart chilled by selfishness and repression of all tender impulses, could voice so unjust a thought. Rather would we believe the reverse true; that our friends' troubles become in a measure our own, through that sympathetic vibration which thrills us with a sense of what this misfortune means to them. We may not be able to lessen their sorrow, or lighten their burden, but our hearts are stirred to sympathy; sympathy which is dear to them and which is humanly akin to the divine compassion with which our Heavenly Father looks upon us.

At no time are our sympathies so aroused for friendship's sake as when sickness and death, unwelcome but sure visitors, come among us. Whether it is that we know to this same strait we must all some day come; or that—and I like this thought best—our kindness and compassion are aroused in proportion to the measure of the cup our friends are called

upon to quaff, sure it is that when Death, the great leveler, comes, all differences and dissensions are merged in the thought, how most to help, how best to comfort, how spare the sorrowing. How many of us have said "I never knew how many friends we had until our trouble came," in recalling the kindness of friends and neighbors after the brown clouds have been heaped above a grave. Trouble is the truest test of friendship; its breath falls upon our false friends, those who seek us for selfish ends, and they are gone. Some cups are fashioned shallow.

It seems to me that in no relation of our lives to others is *tact* so necessary as in visiting the sick, or those bereaved by death, especially when they are outside of our own immediate circle of relatives or intimate friends. We must know what to do and how to do it if we would avoid injury to the sick, or thrilling with keener pain hearts already riven with anguish. It is often a duty to visit the sick, when they are not included among those we call friends, particularly in farm neighborhoods, where one's friends are widely scattered. The duty may be obvious, the impulse noble, but good sense should equal or exceed the sympathy. To go to sit around the house and be waited upon, expecting those who already have more on their hands than they can manage to enjoy a *visit*, is to prove one's self full of what Emerson would call "the wadding of stupidity." To take the baby, or two or three young children where a person is very ill is worse than stupid, it is wicked; for the noise and bustle will inevitably annoy and excite the sick. To go to stay, unless one can aid in the care of the sick, put a willing shoulder to the housework, or unless one is needed for company, is another blunder. (And here I will mention, *par parenthesis*, that to spy out deficiencies in the domestic menage, privations carefully concealed by pride, or any family disagreements or difficulties, and gossip about them afterward, is worse than stupid, or wicked, and is downright *meanness*.) Unless we can be helpful our visits should be short. To take a cheerful voice and face into the sick room for a little time brightens the weary hours; but it is better to go away while the patient would like you to stay a little longer than wait till she is overtired; best of all to have a quick perception of the first symptoms of fatigue, and go at once. And do not converse in undertones with the nurse or attendant. To many, especially when ill, the murmur of

voices in indistinct conversation is peculiarly irritating. A lady in this city, dying of consumption, was visited by *six* acquaintances at once, even their names being unknown to her husband, but who had lived near them in another neighborhood. The nurse refused them permission to see the sick lady; she was too ill to receive calls. But instead of going away after sending a message of remembrance, they sat down in the front parlor, the invalid's bed being in the back parlor, and held quite a little social till the patient became so restless that the husband was obliged to ask them to go away, which they did in a huff. They "guessed they'd not go there again."

I have known people so foolish as to cherish a sense of personal injury because they were not permitted to see a sick person "after they'd rode all that ways on purpose to see her." Such inconsiderate ones should think how it would be with them, were a member of their own family ill. If the scales, almost evenly balanced between death and life, would tip either way according to the care of the frail spark of vitality, if slight excitement might produce great harm, would they hesitate to exclude even the best beloved, if he came from the other hemisphere? It is a safe rule to put yourself in another's place before indulging in resentment for such reasons.

Often some unexpected delicacy to tempt a capricious appetite, some little comfort for the sick room, a blossom or two, something to show the loving remembrance of the donor, is the best of visitors to the sick. There is expressed all tenderness of affection with no need of exertion by the sick. Often the truest cheer our presence brings in time of trouble is to those who watch and wait, who are brightened and encouraged by the evidence of good will. As a friend who has recently suffered the loss of a well-beloved child said: "There was nothing any one could do, but we were so glad to have our friends come in. The days were so long when we could only wait, and their coming broke the monotony a little."

As the mimosa shrinks and shrivels under the touch of a warm and friendly hand, so a sensitive nature may quiver with acutest pain under the tenderest words of sympathy. So in time of trouble let our words be few, our deeds many, lest under our kindly but rude touch the tense nerves thrill with a double anguish. The gentlest touch, though soft as snowflake, makes the raw flesh quiver with

agony, and the stricken heart is infinitely more sensitive. Words are at best but feeble agents to express our deepest feelings; we can understand without them, through that electric bond which always exists in true friendship. Nor shall we deem the bereaved unfeeling or uncaring because they are undemonstrative and seemingly unmoved. It is finer courage to take up a burden quietly than with murmurings and complainings, but it often bears more heavily upon the bowed shoulders. Let Christian charity rule our judgments.

BEATRIX.

READING CLUBS.

In reading Beatrix's article on forming reading clubs, I thought of the experiences and results of a "Home Culture Society" in this neighborhood some years ago, and that it may help others, or encourage them by its suggestions, I will give some of them.

Through the influence of one lady, some eight or ten busy housewives organized a society for general mental improvement, or as its name indicated, "home culture."

The first year we had miscellaneous programmes, made up of readings, essays, recitations and discussions. A committee made out the programme two weeks in advance. It was quite satisfactory, but had its defects, which were these: One person might be thoroughly prepared on a subject of little interest to the others, while if one missed a meeting, or had no part to take in the next one, she had nothing to study or think of at home, hence was not so interested.

At the beginning of the second year we decided to take up some study in common that there might be uniformity to our reading. Like all mothers we decided on the study of physiology, which as girls we had skimmed over the lightest, only to realize as we reached maturity that we needed it the most. We studied it by topics; sometimes they were written and in essays, and at others given orally. We were more than pleased with the result; every one had preparatory work to do at home, in reading, studying or writing, and when we met we were all interested; questions were asked and answered, references were looked up, and different authorities compared. No set of school girls carried their books more proudly, or hugged them more tightly than we did, going to and from the meetings.

The next year we took botany and then rhetoric. I well remember when we were studying botany, the collection of buds, branches, roots and leaves which was brought in one stormy April day, to illustrate our lesson. Still better do I recall the minor members of the family at home bringing in their specimens, and talking about "terminal buds," "parallel veined leaves," &c., which shows the influence it had in the home circle.

As Beatrix says, this has "paved the way" for a most enthusiastic and thorough C. L. S. C., with nearly the same members, and is sure death to gossip.

By all means form a reading club, and

let it be in some one direction; if literature, take one author's work at a time, or some class, prose or poetical, or nationality, American, English, Latin or Greek. This would soon lead to, or include, the histories of the several countries.

I do not know of a more readable book combining historical facts and entertainment than "Pictures from English History," published by Phillips & Hunt, New York. They are pictures truly, arranged chronologically, by such pens as Dickens, Disraeli, Macaulay and Gibbon. C.

LITTLE PRAIRIE RONDE.

[Beatrix had in mind this very organization which "C." so graphically describes above, in her letter advising the formation of reading clubs. Its history was given her by an acquaintance in the vicinity, and every one of these ladies whose mental atmosphere has been so broadened and enlarged by the information and culture thus gained, should be deeply grateful to the noble woman who led them into such pleasant paths. And, dear ladies, the way is open to all of you, and indeed you should walk therein, for your own and your children's sake.]

HOPE.

"Our lives are songs. God writes the words,
And we set them to music at pleasure;
And the song grows glad, or sweet, or sad,
As we chance to fashion the measure.
We must write the music, whatever the song,
Whatever the rhyme or meter;
And if it is bad, we can make it glad,
Or if sweet, we can make it sweeter."

It is very seldom that we meet two people who are constituted alike, or who look on life with the same eyes. What gives pleasure to one, would be very distasteful to another. Let two persons look upon a landscape, they see different points of beauty. One likes a soft, subdued beauty, another a bold and pronounced style, and I think it is better so. I remember an anecdote of an old deacon, who was present at a meeting when some church question was under discussion. No two thought alike, finally he arose and remarked that it was impossible for every one to think alike: "Now supposing all men were of the same mind, they would all want my wife." Another old fellow who knew her to be a domestic shrew, rose and said if they were all of his mind no would want her. It is equally true of everything. One man congratulates himself upon being the happy possessor of the best team in the neighborhood; as he cleans their glossy coats and harnesses them to his carriage, he is more than satisfied, perhaps his next neighbor laughs in his sleeve, and whispers to himself, "They are not half as good as my grays."

I think it is a part of our "make up" to think our own property the best. It makes the machinery work easier, it is not such uphill business to get along. While there is a great deal of reality about life, there is also a great deal that is visionary. How many of us who have lived to attain years of wisdom, have realized all that we expected? Do we not rather live in anticipation than in realization? Hope ever holds the loveliest rainbow hues before our eyes, luring us

on; we reach and grasp for the gaudy bubbles, which fickle fortune shows us, but they vanish in mid-air, even as our fingers close over them. God intended that hope should be the prime factor in our organization. You may strip a man of home, family and money, but as long as he has breath he will hope for better days.

It is not necessary to have the wealth of a Vanderbilt to be happy. "Money after all is not in itself a blessing. It is only a blessing when it is possessed by those who know how to employ it for good purposes. In the hands of men who do not know how to employ it so, it often proves to be a curse." We are so happy in thinking of the wonderful things we shall have "sometime;" ever before our eyes is that beautiful "sometime." It helps us to bear the heat and burden of the day. It helps us to carry the load of care, which would be so heavy if that goal were not to be reached. Oh! we cannot live without hope; we might as well be out on an open sea without oars, in a ship without sails, rudder or compass.

There are very few of us, who have not said "good bye" to loved ones, seen them pass to the other shore. Take away the hope of meeting them again in the heavenly home, where it is one long springtime, and our life would be unbearable. How could the young mother who feels the baby fingers unclasp from hers, sees the lids flutter down over the violet eyes, and the coldness of death creep on, bear the terrible separation if the hope were not strong within her, that sometime in a fairer, better land she should know her darling:

"Better to hope, though the clouds hang low,
And to keep the eyes still lifted;
For the sweet blue sky will soon peep through,
When the ominous clouds are lifted,
There was never a night without a day,
Nor an evening without a morning,
And the darkest hour, so the proverb goes,
Is the hour before the dawning.

"Better to weave in the web of life
A bright and golden filling;
And to co God's will with a ready heart
And hands that are swift and willing,
Than to snap the delicate silver threads
Of our curious lives asunder;
And then blame Heaven for the tangled ends,
And sit and grieve and wonder."

EVANGALINE

BATTLE CREEK.

THE BIRTHDAYS.

One of the pleasant family customs becoming quite general, is that of celebrating the children's birthdays in some simple way. Somebody has said that the fact of having a name gives a sense of responsibility and personality. To have a birthday which is of sufficient moment to be celebrated by a *fete*, much intensifies the feeling of personality and adds a new and often not unpleasant dignity to the young master or mistress of ceremonies. I think a wise mother will make the children's anniversaries "days to be marked with a white stone;" notable, though in other ways than by an unlimited consumption of cake and candies. Let them feel that they are milestones on the way to man and womanhood, and instill into the busy brain, that is capable of far more serious thought than you give it credit for, the habit of looking back

over the year, and finding out what advancement has been made. How much more of geography and arithmetic and history have they acquired since the last birthday; what books have they read, what pleasures enjoyed, what progress made in conquering bad habits or the "besetting sin;" what kindnesses done to others. Such a review serves an excellent purpose in inducing thoughtfulness, and is a measure of advancement, and reward in the guise of a birthday party or gift is a stimulus to endeavor, and a pledge for the future.

Some mothers whose olive branches are many, may object that to celebrate each birthday would give them as many *festa* days as an Italian peasant enjoys. Yet remember that it takes but little to please a child; a trifling exertion on your own part is repaid by so much of happiness on his. Where two birthdays chance to come near together, within one or two months, we may make one celebration do for both, alternating the dates one year with another, and giving the children to understand both are included. The pleasures of farmers' children are fewer in number than those of town children, and hence these little gatherings are more highly prized; the anticipation brightens the horizon for weeks in advance, and recollection renews the pleasures for weeks afterward.

In this city birthday parties are very much the fashion. Where the little ones attend the kindergarten, a birthday serves as a semi-holiday, if indeed we can speak of holidays in connection with what seems like one long pleasant play, and the small kindergarteners are treated to a lunch of cake and fruit. If the party is given at home, the parlors are opened, perhaps decorated with flowers, games are provided, and the mother and the young lady daughters, or her intimate friends, do not disdain to enter into and guide the children's sports, taking care that the shy are not overlooked, and that the boisterous are kept in bounds. Sometimes the number of guests corresponds to the years of the celebrator, oftener the favorite friends are invited with no regard to such limits. The supper is not elaborate; most mothers object to nursing a sick child all night as the result of eating fruit cake and sweetmeats. Sponge cake, macaroons, sandwiches, jellies, and fruit are better than more indigestible and richer refreshments. Always there is the birthday cake, which is handsomely decorated with candy figures, or flowers, and bears its burden of tiny wax candles, one for each year of child life, and "one to grow on." The lad or lassie in whose honor the *fete* is given, chooses those of the guests who shall blow out the candles with wishes; the one most beloved having the honor to extinguish the last, the "growing candle," and make the wish for the coming year. Often little souvenirs are given each guest for remembrance; some trifling gift, a *bon-boniere*, a gay paper box or cornucopia of candies, and among our wealthy citizens, very pretty trifles are given as such tokens. Generally the little guests send or bring some little gift, often flowers; and often this is omitted, and we think best so.

BEATRIX.

FAMILY REUNIONS.

The fall work is being finished, and there are now days of comparative leisure; and it is but right that we give ourselves time and occasion to renew social obligations, and friendly relations among neighbors and friends, and especially among the members of families. During the busy season farmers rarely take, or have the time to spend socially in receiving or paying visits; but now, when they do not think a day spent in recreation is wasted time, how pleasant and profitable are the family reunions. How the memory of these "red letter days" lingers with us and brightens many an hour of toil; and how they strengthen the affections until they become so many strong links binding the family together. Let us have as many of them as possible, for life is short, and there is no danger of having too many.

Last Saturday word came from a sister, eight miles away, that she wished father and mother, brothers and sisters, "with their families," to take dinner with her the following Wednesday. Wednesday came, and a happy family, seventeen, gathered at her home. A number of children in the families were unable to be present, as they are attending school, but to those who were present, the hours glided all too swiftly, and the words "time to go home" had an unwelcome sound; but another sister invited us all to spend Thanksgiving at her home, and we separated with pleasant anticipations of meeting together again in a few weeks. After Thanksgiving we all look forward to "a Merry Christmas," when all go home to father's. Soon the children will be counting the weeks to intervene before they can go to grandpa's to see the wonderful Christmas tree. Does ever any other time or any other tree bring half the genuine pleasure to the little folks? Ah! the merry Christmas! 'Tis not only the little folks that enjoy it, but "big" as well. What an opportunity for that exhibition of friendship between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and friends far and near! I think there are few so poor that they cannot give at this time some little token of love. Poor indeed, and deserving of pity, or contempt, are those who can not, or do not try to make the day happy and to be remembered with pleasure.

After Christmas comes happy New Year, another day of feasting and genial reunion, but I think this day is devoted more generally to acquaintances, and can not be called as strictly a family day as Christmas.

Those families are to be envied that live in friendship and unity, and as "the chain" is broken and one member after another is called to the "other shore" still look forward with glad and sure expectation to a happy reunion in "the mansions of the blest" where parting is unknown. OLD SCHOOL TEACHER.

TECUMSEH.

EVANGELINE's letter which appears in this issue, was received just a few hours too late for publication in last week's paper.

THE BREAKFAST TEST.

Dr. Hammond, author of the new novel, "Lal," before referred to in these columns, gives the following opinion, which is supported by his medical knowledge and experience, in regard to woman at the breakfast-table:

"Perhaps there is no better test of a woman's health and beauty than her appearance when she presents herself at an early breakfast-table. She is then more as Nature made her than at any period of the day, when art has been brought in with a view of heightening her charms. If she has slept well, it argues, to some extent, a sound nervous system, and the effect is seen in the brightness of her eyes and the tone possessed by the muscles of the face and neck. Her movements are full of grace, for her limbs have been refreshed and strengthened by repose, and her mind is clear and bright. For it also has rested, and there have been no bad dreams to exhaust the nervous system and make her limp and haggard. Her intelligence is then at its maximum, and she feels the mental recklessness that is so generally the result of sound, healthy sleep, and that is only a natural elation of the emotions, pleasant doubtless, for her to exhibit, but far more pleasant to those to whom it is manifested. If, on the contrary, she has slept badly, or has suffered from nightmare in consequence of a feeble digestive system, her eyes are weak, dim, and watery, her face is flabby, her head appears to be held unsteadily on her shoulders, for it droops on the chest, or bobs helplessly from side to side, her complexion is dull and blotchy, red where it ought not to be red, and pale where it ought not to be pale. Her expression is indicative of the discomfort she has undergone during the night, her movements are either painfully slow or aggravatingly brusque, her intellect shows stupidity, her emotions are torpid, her perceptions dull.

"While the woman that is in good physical health exhibits all the beauty in the early morning that her features are capable of expressing, the one whose organic life is deranged is at this period of the day at her worst. There is no better test of a woman's health than her ability to eat a hearty breakfast, and it might almost be said that her physical beauty is in direct proportion to the amount of beef-steak or mutton-chops she can put into herself at this meal. Certainly, pretty women can always eat a hearty breakfast."

A HINT OR TWO.

When we left the opera house the other night it had been raining hard. When we went the moon was shining brightly, dimming the radiance of the electric lights, and rubbers and waterproofs were left at home. After the walk over the wet walks and muddy crossings, my new Dongola kid boots were "a sight to see." I do hate a shabby shoe, and looked mournfully at these, mud spattered, and with all their pristine newness gone. I managed, however, to restore them considerably, and this is how I did it: After they were dry I brushed them thoroughly then with a damp—not wet—rag rubbed off such stains as the brush had not removed. Then I brought forth my glycerine bottle, and with another bit of rag, rubbed on ever so little of its contents, rubbing it in thoroughly and using but a *very little*. The result was better than I expected; the boots look quite new and

nice again. Try it, if you ever get caught in a similar fashion.

A down town milliner recently gave away one of the secrets of the trade to me. Said she: "When you've been out in a rain, or of a damp evening and the plumes of your hat are dampened and uncurled do not put it away so. Hold the plumes over the stove to dry, ruffling them up with your hand as you do so. They will curl up and look fluffy again, whereas if put in the bonnet box while damp they will be straight as a string when you take the hat out, and very likely will have to be recurled." I have tried this several times and find it is true. The heat dries out the dampness in a few moments, and much improves the appearance of the plumes. B.

HOUSEHOLD TOPICS.

I have been a silent reader of your little paper, but I could hold my peace no longer. As rag carpets seem to be the present topic I will tell my way of sewing old sheets and skirts. If it is a sheet fold it together the long way, and sew it up, leaving one of the ends the width of your rags. Begin at the end left and tear around to the seam; cut it and tear again, and in that way you will have it all in one long strip, saving sewing by hand.

In blacking a stove mix the blacking with coffee, and add a little sugar. It will give it a nice luster and will not burn off.

Wash oil cloth in milk and occasionally in kerosene; it will preserve and brighten it.

If you have to use hard water for washing dishes and hands, put in a little Sopona; it will soften it nicely. It costs ten cents for quite large boxes.

Will some of the Household ladies please send a recipe for fried cakes?

FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

WATERFORD.

USEFUL INFORMATION.

Dear ladies of the Household, it is a long time since I wrote, but I don't want the little paper to go back, so let more of us spend a little time and write; we can all tell experiences, give some useful hint, or contribute some recipe that may do some one some good.

To remove iron rust from white garments or cloth apply lemon juice and lay in the sun. As fast as it dries apply more juice until the rust disappears. I have taken out rust in this way that had been in over a year.

By burning sulphur in your hen house you can get rid of lice. Whitewash the poles with lime and kerosene oil.

MELLESENDA.

HUDSON.

A LITTLE borax dissolved in the water in which clothes are rinsed will make them beautifully white. It is especially good to remove the yellow tint from underclothing which has lain a long time unused.

SCRAPS.

THE *New England Farmer* in a late issue tells us that in the town of Medway, Mass., contributions amounting to nearly \$50 were made by a few prominent and progressive citizens, for the purpose of encouraging the study of the common weeds and insects of fields and gardens, by the pupils of the high school, the sum to be given in prizes for the best collections and descriptive essays upon habits and methods of destruction. The pupils spent their vacation in research among common things, made their collections, and the agricultural editor of the *Farmer* examined them and made the awards. There were ten entries, three of which were ruled out as not conforming to the rules of the contest. A fourth essay was carelessly written, showing little investigation, and hence set aside, and second place was accorded the fifth. Of the remaining five the judge said: "I find no evidence that any one is unworthy a first place." It seems to me that some such plan, adopted in our schools, might arouse an interest and enthusiasm in natural science, to be awakened in no other way. To be sure there is much to be said against prize giving, as a stimulus to what should be done without such incentive, but often the desire to win the offered prize induces an industrious application, not abandoned when it is attained; and often too the study taken up under such pressure, becomes a favorite pursuit, and the student works at last for work's sake, striving to excel for the sake of the nobility of excellence. There ought to be some means adopted by which the minds of farmers' children shall be turned to the study of the common things about them. We learn a great many facts at school; much that is useless because we make it the end, not the means; and in many things our present system of education reminds me of the philosopher, who gazing upon the stars, walked into the puddle.

In the November number of Harper's *Magazine*, one cannot fail to observe the strength of character evinced by the pictures of those old Columbia College dons, reproduced from old and long treasured paintings. Why is it, I ask myself, that the likenesses of the men of a past century show so much more character and strength and intellectuality, than those of the men of affairs of today? Is it that the present fashion of covering the lower part of the face and the lips with the beard, conceals those features that most give expression to the face? It is the lines about the mouth and the contour of the chin, that give character to the face. A man nowadays may hide what passion and care have written upon his face under a flowing beard, as under a mask. Or is it possible that the artists of the day care more to make a fair picture than a faithful one? Do they smooth a line here and an angle there, round the cheek and steal the furrows from the brow, till Time, who set his signet on the face, would never

recognize the semblance? Or is it that there is less in the present to bring out the best of manhood, than in those old days? Those were "troubled times," that tried a man's mettle as steel is tried by fire. To overcome difficulties and vanquish danger, to live abstemiously, to pursue a set purpose to its accomplishment, were characteristics of the men who made the early history of the nation. "There were giants in those days," giants in intellect and eloquence; and the square chins, firm set lips, broad brows and aggressive noses, represented in those old pictures, are in strong and favorable contrast to the more effeminate, be-whiskered, "good looking" faces of the leading men of to-day.

Contributed Recipes.

SUGAR JUMBLES OR COOKIES.—Four eggs, well beaten; three cups of sugar; one and one-half cups butter; two even teaspoonfuls of soda; five tablespoonfuls of water; flavor with nutmeg. They will keep six months.

RUBBER COOKIES.—Two cups molasses, one-half cup sugar, one tablespoonful soda, one large tablespoonful of vinegar, one egg. Mix soft and bake quickly.

ORANGE CAKE.—One-half cup butter, two cups sugar, three cups flour, one cup sweet milk, two eggs, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, and juice of one orange. Bake in layers and put together with icing and slices of orange.

MELLESENDA.

HUDSON.

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