The Right Posture Toward Christ.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

There is a vast amount of precious gospel to be gathered from those passages which describe various persons as sitting "*at the feet of Jesus.*" Nearly all of them are to be found in the narrative of the Evangelist Luke; they present a series of most instructive object-lessons. The core of Christianity then, as now, consisted in contact with Jesus Christ.

(1) The first figure we contemplate is that of the sinful woman who bent weeping at His feet as He sat at the table of Pharisee Simon. Here is the posture of true *Penitence*. Remorse ends often in despair; but Christian penitence has a sweet apprehension of mercy in a loving Saviour. Confession of guilt, with a forsaking of sin, always brings pardon. When we take that contrite woman's place, heart-sick of sin, if we listen attentively, we will hear the comforting words "thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

(2) A place at the feet of Jesus is also the right posture of sincere *Humility*. Self-conceit is every one's besetting sin. When it overmasters us, we are so sure that we are right, that we are never willing to be set right. When it becomes stubborn self-assertion and self-excusing before God, it is a long step towards perdition. There is no salvation for the man who has built his own raft, and tries to float on it into heaven. The difference between the Pharisee and the Publican was that while both were sinners, only one of them realized the fact. When that fact is realized, and self-conceit grounds its arms at the feet of Jesus, and sues for mercy, then the conflict ends in the victory of grace. For the decisive battle for every one's salvation is fought out just at that very spot—the feet of the Crucified Saviour. When pride, or self-will, or covetousness, or fatal sin of any kind, submits to Christ, the question is settled. Conversion takes place right there. This humble self-submission never degrades us; he that thus humbleth himself shall be exalted. Whoever would go into heaven, must go there on his knees.

(3) Beautifully are we taught what is the proper posture of *Prayer* by such examples as that of Abraham, who fell on his face, and then God talked with him; and those of Jairus and the Syro-Phenician mother who fell at the feet of Christ. Prayer is the soul's converse with God; it never should assume the slightest air of demand or dictation. It is supplication—the more humble, childlike, and submissive, the better. Its right posture is at the feet of the Divine Giver; its richest blessing often is in its influence upon ourselves. When you or I can rise up from the feet of Jesus, satisfied entirely to let Him have His own way, then our prayer has brought a supreme blessing. The more fully that we can get into heart-harmony with God, the more of *Him* shall we possess; and what else can compare with this? If we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desire of our hearts. One prayer is *sure* of an answer, and that is the trusting prayer of a true penitent; the Master himself has given the assurance—"him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

(4) The fourth scene from this book of Luke presents the posture of *Docility*. There at the feet of her condescending Teacher sits the loving Mary in the Bethany home. She has done her part in the household preparations and then, impatient for something which Christ can give to her, she hastens to take her seat as a lowly listener and a loving learner. The supper she hungers after is *soul-food*. The very word "disciple" signifies a learner; he is the wisest Christian who is the most teachable. The term time in Christ's school is short; some of the lessons cut deep; but when we draw up close to the Master, He rewards us with the gracious word "thou hast chosen the good part, which shall never be taken from thee."

(5) This brings us on to the posture of joyful *Gratitude*. Look at that healed leper with smooth skin and clean tongue, who is prostrate before his deliverer, not whispering but shouting his thanks. As he lies there overwhelmed with gratitude, he puts to shame thousands of discontented, growling Christians. One of the most abominable sins of which any pardoned, converted, adopted heir of heaven can be guilty of, is that of grumbling ingratitude. Brethren, we apply the microscope to our troubles, and make them as big as possible, and then minimize our mercies. Having Christ, who should dare to complain?

Instead of whining complaints and grumbling disquietudes, let us imitate that cured demoniac who was so delighted with his deliverance from the legion of devils, that he not only sat down happy at the feet of his Saviour, but wanted to stay with Him forever. His attitude is one of *self-consecration*. Jesus takes him at his word, and sets him to preaching to all his neighbors "what great things Jesus had done unto him." Here is a hint for young converts. If you do not use the first ardors of your spiritual life in personal efforts for others, and in setting forth Christ to them, you are likely to be a mute or a drone in the church as long as you live.

We have thus presented a half-dozen object lessons from Scripture as a guide for all who are inquiring "What must I do to be saved?" The answers are, Go to the feet of Jesus in true penitence; confess your sins with humility and self-surrender; pray to Him with submissive spirit; entreat Him to give you love; then pour out your hearty thanks to Him, and ask Him to let you serve Him as long as you live. Can any better passages for an inquiry-room be found than these which set forth the right posture towards Christ the only Saviour?

The Apostle John tells us that when he first saw his glorified Lord amid the flashing splendors of heaven, he "fell down at His feet as one dead"! So will we if our eyes ever see the King in His beauty. John laid prostrate until his Lord lifted him to his feet, and bade him not be afraid. To the feet of Jesus let us all hasten, the backslider for recovery, the penitent to find pardon, the troubled to find help and guidance, the awakened to find salvation. Let us lie very low there, and lie until He lifts us up, for he that humbleth himself shall in due time be exalted. Surely when we get to heaven we shall want to bathe with grateful tears, and to kiss the sacred feet which trod our earth on the errand of divine love, and which were pierced for us on the Cross.—*Evangelist.*

"The New Theology."

When the Church of Christ was suffering persecution in the second and third centuries, it was very natural for philosophic minds among the Christians to attempt to show that there were fundamental points of agreement between Paganism and Christianity—that, although the many gods of the heathen were an error, yet the views of the great Pagan philosophers were in accordance with Christian faith, or at least were not antagonistic to it. It is very natural that by such a showing they could expect to mitigate the hostilities of the Pagans and to put an end to persecution. The Church at Alexandria (the new Athens,) seems to have been first and foremost in this policy, and the school that was successfully directed by Pantenus, Clement, and Origen, appears to have been shaped by it. It was certainly a main design with these Alexandrian Christians to build up Christianity on human reason, and hence they made much of the Grecian philosophers. Clement is full of admiration for them, and considers them as much the forerunners of Christianity for the Pagans as the prophets were for the Jews.

Any such ground as this will prove hostile, and not friends to Christianity. Christianity is a supernatural revelation, to which human reason can, unaided, make no approaches, and which human reason, acting by itself, must ever fail to comprehend. When Christian teachers take this ground, they at once belittle the revelation God has given in His Word. Accordingly we find in the Alexandrians a deficiency of reverence for the Scriptures. They are always made secondary to the propositions of reason. They are explained on rationalistic principles, although the rationalism of the third century presented a different phase from that of the nineteenth century, owing to the different enlightenment of the public mind.

But now, in this nineteenth century there is a revival of the Alexandrian school in what is termed the "New Theology." It is the same endeavor to show the world that Christianity is nothing new or strange, but just the natural outgrowth of the human reason, and hence that what we call revelation is to be trimmed down to suit the demands of the original reason. Prophets and Apostles, and our Lord Himself, must be subjected to a cross-examination, and some of their old testimony thrown out by the process. They were misinformed, they yielded to popular errors, they were Rabbinical in their notions and reasonings, they had not a correct knowledge of history, they were not philosophers, they meant well, and were thoroughly honest, but they lacked the clear insight which the *Leitgeist* of the present age confers.

In this way prophecy is shown to be largely a guess of a highly sensitive soul, or perhaps only the retrospect of a poetic mind, and the sacred narrative of our Lord's life is the pious record of enthusiastic admirers, whose errors may be pardoned on the score of their lofty moral character. The Epistles of Paul and Peter and James and John are intensely personal in their coloring, and all allowance must be made for their idiosyncracies.

The new theology is thus a theology which thrusts away the Bible as the foundation of our theological knowledge, and puts in its place the human reason, enlightened by culture—that is, large observation and learning. Such a theology parts company from the Bible on the following points:

1. *It dimishes the heinousness of sin.* Sin is rather a misfortune than a fault. If a fault, it is one for which we are not responsible individually. It is rather a social or race fault, belonging to the aggregate, and not to the individual. That it is a damning virus in each soul cannot be allowed. God's hatred of sin, and his everlasting condemnation of the sinner, are not corelative propositions. Hnece, the sinner is not to abhor himself. Repentance loses all its force. It becomes only a signature to a good intention. The struggles of the soul are not to be against sin, but against adverse circumstances. Pardon is attenuated into a right subjective view of God as Love. The whole divine action is transferred to the human side, just as the movements of the heavenly bodies are shown by the Copernican system, to be really the movements of the earth.

2. Hence *the Saviour's work is diminished.* He came not to atone for sin, but only to show us how he loved us, and so to bring out our love, to warm up and evoke the good germ in our hearts. The Cross loses all its meaning. Sacrifice, as a substitute suffering, is clean gone. Imputation of sin to Christ, (who became sin for us,) and imputation of righteousness to us, (Christ being our righteousness,) are both absurd delusions. We have been all along deceived by Oriental hyperbole and exagerating figures.

3. Then, of course, if sin is so small a matter, and Christ's atonement by His blood as the Lamb of God, are done away, we must also do away with hell. Why have a hell when God is so good, and man is so good? Hell is the invention of a diseased imagination. Christ draws all men to Him, even the Scriptures say, and hence all men find themselves at last in the bliss of heaven.

This is the new gospel that the new theology is presenting to the church of to-day. It suits the world admirably, but it grieves the heart of the believer, who has gone through the deep experiences of remorse and repentance, and has found peace in the blood of the Cross. It is a gospel to encourage men in their selfish and sinful ways, to flatter them with a sense of their own excellence, to take away their fear of the Divine threatenings, and plunge them blindfold into hell. Alas! for those who are preaching it! They are thwarting the work of the Spirit. They are crying "Peace! peace! when there is no peace." They are false watchmen on the walls, false shepherds over the flock.

The only gospel that God has given us, is one that shows the vanity of human reason as a basis of life; that declares man's utter ruin and misery; that shows Christ's death as the necessary propitiation for man's sin; that demands of each soul a living, personal faith in Christ, by which that propitiation is effective in Him, and proclaims in emphatic tones that he who hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. (1 John 5: 12; John 3: 36.) Any other gospel is a false gospel, and must receive the curse of God. Gal. 1: 8. May God save the churches from the specious delusions of the New Theology!—*Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., LL. D., in Pres. Observer.*

The Measure of Character.

There is a beauty and grandeur in moral power as we mark its presence and influence in all the walks of life, drawing its strength and motive power from the will of God. In daily living the work is going on, and the tests are being made. It is hard to decide what men and women are to be admired and praised? Shall it be she who sits in the midst of luxurious surroundings and sheds sentimental tears over the trials of the heroine of the latest novel, or some lonely Dorcas making garments for the poor? Shall it be the man who is rising step by step by any means, fair or foul, to a position of influence and power, or the one that is striving day by day to conquer some mastering habit, or keep down some evil passion which rages like a fire in the bones? Shall it be the one who is courted and admired solely because of her beauty, her accomplishments or her wealth, or she who in some lonely garret, in the silence of the midnight hour, plies her needle, her eyes blinded by tears and heart filled with infinite longings after the Lord, that she may be kept from a life of shame, to which she is in danger of being driven through want? If we could strip off the vain tinsel which gilds many a life, we would find nothing but emptiness and sin. If we could but take away the outer surroundings which, like a hard, prickly burr, envelop many a person, we would find the sweetest of kernels in hearts that are pure and lives that are Christ-like.

But we must needs come into contact daily with the whole sum of finite things, which ever acts as a screen hiding the things of God. While the darkness as a dominating power to the Christian has passed, and the true light is now shining, yet the spirit of the world still strives, and the things that are in the world ever stand out in direct opposition to the love of the Father. The world becomes an idol to which there is rendered a slavish service. Over against this is the blessed state of the disciple in earnest activity seeking to do the will of God, which is joyous freedom.

We have to do with this great enemy, and how shall we successfully strive against him, as he ever works through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and so corrupts the truth, and makes confusion in all our moral distinctions. It is the prince of this world who blinds the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Things false and unholy are made to appear in the form and garb of the angels of light. The subtle and dangerous influence of the world in its fascinating allurements and pleasures causes men to forget the eternal in the present, to sacrifice priceless jewels for mere empty baubles, and yield to an earthly love rather than rejoice in the possession of a heavenly affection, which alone creates and nourishes within us the true spirit of true manhood. But can a man of himself resist these things, and be all that he should be? Can the enslaved will of itself do the will of God? Can the fountain suddenly, of itself, change from bitter water to sweet? Can one reach an ideal which is divine by mere human instrumentalities?

There is a story that Leonardo when painting "The Last Supper" finished the portraits of all the apostles, but could not paint that of our Lord, and found it one day miraculously finished. So we may have our ideals, mark out our course, make our plans, and acquire a certain degree of beauty and strength, and appear in the eyes of the world to be prospering, as we seem to call into active exercise many of the good qualities of mind and heart; but the hidden graces of the soul so essential to right living are lacking. We soon reach a limit, and the divine image is not restored. There must come in the exercise of a miraculous power, in the regenerating grace of God which cleanses the heart, renews the will, and restores the divine image, and makes of one a new man in Christ Jesus. We are thus brought into intimate relations with Christ and have a likeness to Him, for He hath said, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Should we ever forget that it is by the power of Christ dwelling in us that we are able to know and do that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God? He alone is the source of life and hope and power to every one that believeth. He is the sure refuge in the storm. He is the present help in every time of need. Without Him we are nothing. With Him are we not sufficient for all things? With the mind and spirit of Christ in us have we not the power? But to whom belongs the glory and the praise? Is it not through grace, by the gift of God, to the perfecting of the saints, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ?" Then the one that is coming out of darkness into light, that is forsaking the past time of life and striving to live in God's way; the one that is patient under the trials and disappointments of life, returning kindness for injury, good for evil, and love for hatred; the one that is resisting the sore temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; the one that is keeping down with mastering power the restless passions which would sweep in desolation over the soul; the one that has a heart clean for the Lord's indwelling, and feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and a face reflecting that light never seen on sea or land, should ever out of renewed and grateful hearts joyfully confess, "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto Thy name, O Lord, be the glory and the praise for Thy truth and grace, which worketh in in me both to will and do of God's good pleasure."—*The Rev. Wm. L. Ledwith, in The Presbyterian.*

—To live well in the quiet routine of life, to fill a little space because God wills it, to go on cheerfully with a petty round of little duties, little avocations; to smile for the joys of others when the heart is aching . . . who does this, his works will follow him. He may not be a hero, but he is one of God's heroes.—*Farrar.*

Balancing Accounts.

When Mr. Jenkins went to the city on Saturday morning, his wife accompanied him to do a little shopping. As they were walking to the train, Mr. J., happening to glance down at his coat, uttered a vigorous exclamation, and added: "I thought you promised to sew that loose button on my coat. Now it's gone, and a fine figure I cut! Don't I?"

"I'm very sorry, John, but—"

"'But' won't put it on again. There's going to be a committee meeting in the office, too, this morning, and I don't care to look as if I were coming to pieces. I'd like to know what was the use of leaving it at home yesterday?"

"I had the needle and thread in my hand to do it, John, just as the baby fell downstairs, and that frightened me so that it put everything else out of my mind. I was anxious about her for hours you know."

"How she come to get such a fall is more than I can see. What's the use, anway, of you women staying at home all day, if you can't keep children from breaking their necks?"

"She was scarcely out of my sight for a moment all day, except that once, and—"

"Well never mind. I suppose you can sew on the button to-night; but I wish you to keep a memordum. What you women ever do with your memories I don't see. Probably they're too precious to use." And Mr. Jenkins relapsed into silence and a perusal of the morning paper.

When they were leaving from the train, Mrs. Jenkins said meekly: "If you are not too busy to-day, John, I wish you would stop at Polisher's and get my lace pin. I shall need it to wear to the concert to-night. None of my other pins are fit. I'd get it myself, if it wasn't so far down town."

"There! I've thought of that pin a hundred times if I have once; but I never have more than time to catch the last boat as I come past. I'll get it to-night."

Mr. Jenkins had a hurried and busy day, and felt so warm in consequence that he had to stop on his way to the ferry to drink a glass of soda water. That used up all his spare minutes, and when he was passing Polisher's jewelry store he was walking as if for a wager.

One evening, about the middle of the following week, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins sat in "social silence" on the broad piazza, the former trying to read by the waning light, while his wife was diligently making entries of some sort in a little red blank book.

Mr. Jenkins laid his paper aside for a moment, and watched his wife. Finally he said: "I'm glad to see you are growing so systematic and economical in your housekeeping. I hope it will tell when the bills comes in."

"It's not housekeeping accounts this time, John; though I do try to be regular about those."

"I don't see what it can be then. Seems to me you have grown very literary lately. I don't know how often I've seen you writing in that book. Suppose you let me have a look at it;" and he reached out his hand.

"Not just yet," said Mrs. Jenkins. "Please wait a little. You may see it Saturday night; that is, if accounts balance, or if there is something to my credit."

Mr. Jenkins looked puzzled. "So it is an account book, after all. Well, I'd just as soon wait, I will audit it for you on Saturday. That is, if the items are not too small and tedious—one cent for glove buttons, three cents for hair pins, five cents for a car fare."

"I don't think you will find the items tedious," was the reply; and the matter dropped.

About ten o'clock Saturday night it occurred to Mr. Jenkins to call for his wife's account book.

"You said it was not your household account, so I suppose it has to do with private expenses," he remarked.

"It is neither," said Mrs. Jenkins. "It is only a memorandum of items I wanted to keep in mind."

"Well, that's an excellent idea, though I don't see why it needs balancing.

"Perhaps you will see in a moment. It's an account of what ought to have been remembered, and not of what is to be; and I'll read it myself."

"Well, you are a queer woman! that's all I have to say. I don't see the sense of such a memorandum, but go ahead."

Mrs. Jenkins began to read aloud:

"Saturday—Debit: Forgot to sew buttons on Mr. Jenkins' coat. Credit: Mr. Jenkins forgot to bring my pin from Polisher's."

Mr. Jenkins whistled, and sat upright.

"You are keeping somebody's accounts besides your own, I observe."

"Certainly, my dear," said his wife, sweetly. "I couldn't make things balance otherwise, you know."

He subsided with a resigned air, and Mrs. Jenkins went on:

"Forgot to tell Patrick to put away the lawn-mower.

"In consequence of which," added John in an audible foot-note, "it was out all night in the rain and became shocking rusty."

The account proceeded.

"Sunday—Forgot the number of our new pew. Mr. Jenkins forgot nothing." A look of quiet triumph shone from the arm-chair occupied by paterfamilias.

"Monday—Forgot to have more starch put in collars and cuffs. Mr. Jenkins forgot to order a barrel of wood.

"Tuesday—My record is clear. Mr. Jenkins forgot to tell Jack that Lovering was spending the day here. Whereby Jack lost a golden opportunity, may end by losing Helen herself; and has a fit of the blues ever since."

"I would suggest," said a voice from the arm-chair, "that we deal with bare items, and dispense with superfluous comments.

"Thursday—Forgot to keep the scissors out of baby's reach. *Century* much the worse in consequence."

"Mr. Jenkins forgot to mail my letter to Harriet; as a result, letting her come up from Round Brook, yesterday, to find the house closed and family out of town.

"Friday—Forgot my umbrella and left it in the cars. Mr. Jenkins forgot, until after dinner, to tell me that Aunt Kate was expecting us to dine with her. Consequence, she ate a cold dinner alone after waiting an hour."

"I have once before remarked," interposed Mr. Jenkins, "that I would be obliged to you for sticking to the account in the book.

"It will help us to make a just balance, if we weigh consequences," replied his wife placidly. "Have patience; I have nearly finished.

"Saturday—Forgot to see that Bridget put salt into the bread. Consequence, it was insipid but not the comments made on it.

"Mr. Jenkins forgot to turn off the water in the bathroom this morning." At this announcement the gentleman in question raised his eye brows in sudden recollection, and looked slightly apprehensive. "Consequence, the kitchen ceiling fell at four o'clock.

"Bill for damages:

To Patrick's time spent in clearing away rubbish,	$ 50
To one meat dish (broken)	75
To one gravy boat (broken)	75
To one glass pitcher (broken)	50
To two pipkins (broken)	60
To Sunday's piece of roast beef buried in mortar,	1 25
To doctor's services to cook's injuries,	2 00
To court plaster and arnica,	25
To estimated cost of replastering kitchen,	5 00
Total,	$10 00

"Don't look so troubled, my dear," said Mrs. Jenkins cheerfully. "I would not let the children tell you, because I wanted to break it to you gently. Only before you go to bed, balance the account for the week." And she handed him the little red book.—*Good Housekeeping.*

The Wounded Lip.

"I do not see what I have to do with Missions at all!" cried curly-headed Robin, in answer to his sister Annie's gentle request that he would put one penny into her missionary box. "I can see the good of building our church here (I gave my new sixpence for that) or feeding hungry little children (we gave up buying sweetmeats last Christmas that they might have soup) but what do I care for work at the other end of the world, amongst black children whom I never shall see in my life?"

Poor Annie left the room with a sigh. Mrs. Mason had heard the conversation between her children.

"Do you know, my son, that all God's people form one body, though some are in India, some in China, some further off still? No part of the Lord's church can say to another, "I have nothing to do with thee; I care not what happens to thee.'"

"I don't understand," said the child.

Not many minutes afterward Robin came back to his mother, a handkerchief pressed to his bleeding lip, and tears in his eyes.

"Mamma, my foot slipped; I fell on the gravel; I have hurt my lip!" he exclaimed.

Mrs. Mason examined the hurt, and was glad to find that it was not severe; but there was gravel on the wounded lip. "I must wash and bind it," she said. "Run to the kitchen, my darling, ask for a little basin of warm water, bring it me, and we will, I hope, soon put matters to rights."

Robin soon came back, carefully carrying the basin, which was full and rather heavy.

Carefully and tenderly the mother bathed her boy's lip. "Now," said she, while binding it up, "does not Robin see how various parts of the body united in helping the one part that needed help?"

"I don't just see it," said the child.

"The feet never thought, 'How far we are from the lip—almost as far as can possibly be!' 'Right foot and left, off' they trotted to get the warm water. The ears had heard what I wished you to do, and quick as lightning had given their message to the brain. The tongue, like a kind, near neighbor, did its part. The eyes—"

"O, the eyes did nothing at all!" cried Robin, laughing at his mother's amusing smile. He had quite forgotten his pain.

"What! did they not guide you to and from the kitchen? If they had ill-naturedly kept shut, you might have had a worse fall than that on the gravel. The fingers—yes, even the little ones—helped to carry the basin of water."

"It is a good-natured body," said Robin, "every part so ready to help the poor lip."

"Now, my boy, do you see my meaning?" said the mother with a smile. "The missionaries who speak to the heathen are like the lip in the body, and they are sometimes in great trouble, and need our help and prayers. The ears are those who listen to the story of the wants of the heathen; and great societies are like the brain, to arrange how to send them the Bible, and men and women to explain it. We who try to give and to collect may be compared to parts of the feet and the hands. I must tell you something more about the body," said Mrs. Mason, "to show you how like it is to the church. There is always a life giving stream of blood flowing through it from the heart to the head, from the head to the feet, as it were joining the most distant parts together."

"I feel it beating at my wrist," said Robin. "What is like the life giving blood? Is it not to love the Saviour?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Mason. "And while that holy love joins the different parts of the church together, how is it possible for the true Christian to say, 'I have nothing to do with missions?'"

"Just Hear That Child Scream!"

said Mrs. Smith to her sister, Mrs. Davis, as the sound a child's shrieks came across the garden from a neighbor's house. "What kind of a woman have you for a neighbor? Does she abuse her children?" "No, indeed," replied Mrs. Davis. "She is one of the most tender mothers in existence. But you see, she believes in the old-fashioned styles of doctoring. When a child needs physic, she fills a spoon with some nauseous dose, lays the little victim flat on her lap, holds his nose till he is forced to open his mouth for breath, when down goes the dreadful mess. Then come the yells." "No wonder," said Mrs. Smith. "Why doesn't she use Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Purgative Pellets? They are effective without being harsh, and are as easy to take as sugar plums. I always give them to my children." "And so do I," said Mrs. Davis.

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