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THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

Vol. I.]

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1835.

No. 18.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE LANTERN FLY.

This is a very curious kind of fly. Its head looks like a large hollow lantern.— This shines so brightly that travellers are said to pursue their journeys by the light of this fly. For this purpose, they catch one of them, and tie it to a stick, and carry it before them as if it were a torch. This fly is said to be found in many parts of South America. A lady, who was travelling in the country where these flies abound, gives an account of her surprise at seeing these insects, before she was acquainted with the shining nature of them.

"The Indians," she says, "once brought me a number of these lantern flies, which I shut up in a large wooden box. In the night they made such a noise, that I awoke in a fright, not being able to guess from whence the noise came. As soon as I found that it came from the box, I opened it, but was still more alarmed when I saw a flame of fire come from it; and as many animals as came out, so many different flames appeared.— When I found that it was the insects that caused the light, I recovered from my fright, and again collected them, much admiring their splendid appearance. The light of one of these insects is so bright, that a person may see to read a newspaper by it." The light given by this fly proceeds entirely from the hollow part or lantern; no other part being luminous. The lantern fly is sometimes three or four inches in length.

It is a different insect from what is called the fire-fly; this latter insect is to be seen in most of the warmer parts of America, and about the woods in the West Indies. These flies shine in the dark: their light proceeds chiefly from four parts; namely, from two spots behind the eyes, and one under each wing. But they can stop this light whenever they please. A person may, with great ease, read the smallest print by the light of one of these insects, holding it between the fingers, and moving it along the lines, with the bright spots just above the letters; but if eight or ten of them be put into a phial, they will give light enough for a person to write by. It is said that the Indians travel in the night with these flies fixed to their feet and hands, and that they spin, weave, paint, and dance by them. The following is a part of a letter from a gentleman who himself saw what he describes.

"The birds which build the hanging nests are here numerous. At night each of their little habitations is lighted up as if to see company. The sagacious little bird fastens a bit of clay to the top of the nest, and then

picks up a fire-fly and sticks it on the clay to illuminate the dwelling, which consists of two rooms. Sometimes there are three or four fire-flies, and their blaze of light in the little cell, dazzles the eyes of the bats, which often kill the young of these birds."— *Youths Magazine*.

THE CEDAR.—'The forest of cedars' on the famed mountain of Lebanon, which once furnished the sacred writers with so many beautiful images, has now almost wholly disappeared. Some few trees remain, to remind us of their former glory, (Isa. lx. 13.) and to teach us the mutability of all sublunary things.

The cedar is a large majestic tree, rising to the height of thirty or forty yards; and some of them are from thirty-five to forty feet in girth. It is a beautiful evergreen, possessing leaves something like those of the rosemary, and distils a kind of gum, to which various qualities are attributed. Le Bruyn says, the leaves of the tree point upward, and the fruit hangs downwards: it grows like cones of the pine tree, but is longer, harder, and fuller, and not easily separated from the stalk. It contains a seed, like that of the cypress tree.

The wood of the cedar is very valuable; it possesses a strong aromatic smell, and is reputed to be incorruptible.—The ark of the covenant, and many parts of Solomon's temple, were constructed of it.

The cedar of Lebanon, says Paxton, is one of the natural images which frequently occur in the poetical style of the prophets; and is appropriated to denoté kings, princes, and potentates of the highest rank. The spiritual prosperity of the righteous man is compared, by the Psalmist, to the same noble plant: "The righteous shall flourish as the palm-tree; he shall grow as the cedar in Lebanon." To break the cedars, and to shake the enormous mass on which they grow, are the figures that David selects to express the awful majesty and infinite power of Jehovah: "The voice of the Lord is powerful: the voice of the Lord is full of majesty: the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn," Ps. xxix. 4. This description of the Divine majesty and power, possesses a character of awful sublimity, which is almost unequalled, even in the page of inspiration. Jehovah has only to speak, and the cedar, which braves the fierce winds of heaven, is broken.—even the cedar of Lebanon, every arm of which rivals the size of a tree: he has only to speak, and the enormous mass of matter on which it grows

shakes to its foundation, till, extensive, and lofty, and ponderous as it is, it leaps like the young of the herd in their joyous frolics, and skips like the young unicorn, the swiftest of the four-footed race. The countless number of these trees in the days of Solomon, and their prodigious bulk, must be recollected, in order to feel the force of that sublime declaration of the prophet: 'Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.'

A NEW CONTINENT.—An extraordinary phenomenon presented in the southern ocean may render our settlements in New South Wales of still more eminent importance. A sixth continent is in the very act of growth before our eyes! The Pacific is spotted with islands through the immense space of nearly fifty degrees of longitude, and as many of latitude. Every one of these islands seems to be merely a central spot for the formation of coral-banks, which, by a perpetual progress, are rising from the unfathomable depths of the sea. The union of a few of these masses of rock shapes itself into an island; the seeds of plants are carried to it by birds or by the waves, and from the moment that it overtops the waters, it is covered with vegetation. The new Island constitutes in its turn a centre of growth to another circle. The great powers of nature appear to be still in peculiar activity in this region; and to her tardier process she sometimes takes the assistance of the volcano and the earthquake. From the south of New Zealand to the north of the Sandwich Islands, the waters absolutely teem with those future seats of civilization. Still the coral insect, the diminutive builder of all these mighty piles, is at work; the ocean is interested with myriads of those lines of foundation; and when the rocky substructure shall have excluded the sea, then will come the dominion of man.

FORTIFICATIONS AND CAVE OF ST. MICHAEL, GIBRALTAR.—The fortifications are excavations in the solid rock.— They were commenced during the reign of Napoleon, and are designed to prevent all approach on the land side. The entrance is at an old Moorish castle, about four hundred feet above the level of the sea. The principal avenues are large enough for a carriage to pass through, and are several thousand feet in length. These ascend gradually to the northeast, but so gentle is the ascent, that a mule loaded with cannon balls easily makes his way to the farthest extremity. From these principal avenues, are cut lateral passages, terminating in small chambers with port-holes, in which lie guns of the largest size ready for action.

Towards the southern extremity of the rock is St. Michael's cave, 1000 feet above the level of the sea. The mouth of the cave is but five feet wide, but descending a slope, it opens into a spacious hall, apparently supported in the centre by a large stalactitical pillar. Succeeding this is a series of caves, but the passages are so narrow and intricate, as to render them hardly accessible. The whole of the cave appears like a darkened church destitute of galleries. This cave is thought by some to extend under the bed of the sea, to Apes hill on the opposite continent. This notion has its origin, in the frequent and mysterious appearance of African monkeys, which, as they have no other mode of reaching Gibraltar, are supposed to pass through the cave under the sea.

PROCESS OF MAKING A SHAWL.

That beautiful article, a Cashmere Shawl, (which is so called because it is made in the City of Cashmere) furnishes employment to the industry of nearly fifty thousand individuals. The number of shawls manufactured at this place every year is not known; but sixteen thousand looms are employed—and if five shawls were made, on an average, at each loom, it would give eighty thousand in a year.

A shop may be occupied with one shawl, provided it is a remarkably fine one, above a year, while others may make eight or ten in that time. Of the best and most worked kinds, not so much as a quarter of an inch is completed by three people, in a day, which is the usual number employed at one of the shops. Shawls containing much work are made in different pieces at different shops, and scarcely ever these pieces come together so as to correspond in size.

The shops consist of a frame work, at which the persons employed sits on a bench; their number is from one to four. On plain shawls, two people alone are employed, and a long narrow, but heavy shuttle is used; Those of which the pattern is variegated, are worked with wooden needles, there being a separate needle for the thread of each color, and without the aid of a shuttle. The operation of the whole is exceedingly slow; the women and children pick out the fine wool from the coarse hair, which is afterwards carded by young girls with their fingers on India muslin, to lengthen the fibre and clear it from dirt, and in this state it is delivered to the dyers and spinners. The weaver sits on the bench, a child is placed below him with his eyes on the pattern, and gives him notice, after every throw of the shuttle, of the colors wanted, and the bobbin to be next employed. When a merchant enters into trade, he frequently engages several shops which he collects in a spot under his own eye, or he supplies the head workman with the thread which the women have spun and colored; and they

carry on the manufacture at their own houses. The duties paid upon these shawls, added to the labour to make them, renders them very expensive.

THE LEGACY.

Clothed in the simple beauty of Spring, the landscape that surrounded Herton Cottage, presented the most delicious scenery in all the valley; and the passer-by, perchance, when he looked upon it from the dusty road, as it stood half hid away in the cool shade, surrounded by luxuriant shrubbery, and by fields loaded with flourishing vegetation, would naturally say to himself, there dwells a happy family. The Hertons were not unhappy—not unthankful. They were sensible of the blessings with which a kind providence had surrounded them; and laboured with care and diligence gradually to increase their little patrimony. No people were more honest, more faithful to their engagements, or more scrupulous in discharging the duties of good citizens among those around them, especially when such a discharge in no measure interfered with their interests—for after all it could not be said that within the memory of one of their neighbors, they had ever been known in a single instance to postpone their interest or comfort to those of any one. They were not rich—a competence was about the amount they possessed, and probably they did not save from their labours more than prudence might have whispered was necessary as a provision against adverse times.

Thus, at all events, the Hertons reasoned with themselves. They appeared to feel charitably disposed—they applauded those who ministered to the wants of others, they freely admitted the obligation in its fullest extent; but were always provided with an excuse to screen themselves. Often did Mr. Herton lament with apparent sincerity his want of wealth, because it obliged him to be close handed, and to deny the numerous calls for charitable purposes made upon him: these regrets seemed really to come from his heart; and though no man ever was more uncharitable indeed, yet so humanely did he talk about the matter that his neighbors often said among themselves, what a pity it is, that the Hertons are not wealthy; how liberal they would be; how much they would do for the poor.

Ah, Mrs. Moretley, Herton used often to say to the old lady who lived in the farm house, adjoining his plantation, and whose wealth was scattered yearly abroad, as a rich stream, winding through the vale, and carrying blessings whenever it meandered, ah, Mrs. Moretley, how happy would I be if I had the means to be generous like you: like you I would relieve the widows, and assist the orphans, bind up the broken hearts, and go about doing good; no occupation appears drest in so many attractions; but

this labor and toil, this scanty income; this poverty!—how it grieves me to be destitute of the ability to do as I would. Mrs. Moretley was charmed with those frequent ejaculations; this world of benevolent feeling; and she thought she could not put a portion of her fortune to a better purpose than by leaving it to the would-be philanthropist of Herton Cottage. She died—and in her will bestowed on Mr. Herton, a large and ample legacy—it made him rich.

The legacy was paid. Many pretty improvements were made about the cottage, and the inmates it was thought, soon began to hold their heads a little higher than usual; they dressed gayly; rode in a new carriage; and dined late. Improvement indeed, after improvement was seen to take place in their style of living; but in vain were the expectations of the neighbourhood, that the promised charities of the good hearted cottagers would now burst forth. The word seemed to have been strangely blotted out of their memories, since their good fortune put it in their power to practice on it. The distressed felt the loss of Mrs. Moretley most sensibly, and it was natural that they should look with much hope on the Hertons, the principal heirs of her fortune, for reparation of the loss her death had occasioned them. It was a forlorn hope; and speedily cut off. The doors of Herton Cottage were not unclosed to every one—the hearts of its inhabitants in process of time, grew proud and selfish, and scornful; and whenever a man was heard afterwards in Alesbury, boasting what good he would do with money that he had not—or talking much about charity, and doing nothing to illustrate his real meaning; it was said, that is a Herton story.

A story so barren of incidents ought to be rich in instruction. Let us look to the moral. Are there not thousands in the world; many in your own neighbourhood; nay, are you not one of them—who think a great deal, and talk a great deal about doing good, and being charitable, when they become richer than they are, and yet who are very far from giving or doing now to the extent of their ability? Depend upon it those are all deceiving themselves. Wherever the root of the matter is, there will be fruit according to the means and opportunities. It is common for people to quiet their consciences in this way, by persuading themselves they are too poor to be charitable, while they neglect a thousand opportunities of doing good, which are entirely within their reach. But he alone discharges his duty who, whatever may be his situation, to the extent of his ability, casts his offerings into the common treasury, for the relief of human suffering wherever it is found.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

On these subjects much advice is given, and very little taken. If asked at all, it is

generally not until the mind is made up, the affections engaged, and perhaps the honour pledged.

Good Mr. and Mrs. T. were very often consulted on this business by the prudent young people in our neighbourhood. The first question they generally asked was, "Have you consulted your parents, and what do they think of it? for you cannot expect happiness if you marry without the full consent of your parents, and the parents of your intended partner."

My brother Richard, I remember, was in a terrible hurry to get married before he was out of his apprenticeship. Our father and mother did all they could to persuade him to wait awhile, and it was well for him that they succeeded. Mr. T. too, talked kindly to him on the subject. "Don't be too hasty, young man; 'tis easy to marry in haste, and repent at leisure. I would advise you not to think of marrying till you are settled in a fair way of getting a living.—You don't wish to be a burden to your parents, but to be able to provide for yourself, and those dependent on you; and for some years to come it will be much better for you to have one plough going than two cradles. You may think that love and a little will be quite enough, but let me tell you, love and nothing will be but sorry fare; and, 'When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.' You think, perhaps, that no such thing can happen to you; then, let me tell you, that, if you think your love strong enough to bear poverty after marriage, you had better try its strength in waiting beforehand. If you and your lass really love one another, you will find it easy and pleasant to work and save, that you may have something about you to make your home comfortable, when it is prudent for you to marry." My brother promised to wait a year or two, and set about in good earnest every leisure hour he had, to work and save for future comfort. But in less than three months' time he came again to Mr. T. in great trouble, and told him that Fanny was getting very shy of him, and had been seen walking with the squire's groom, and now what was to be done.

"By all means let her go," replied Mr. T. "and reckon it a very good miss for you. If she is tired of waiting, let her go on without you; and when she is gone, comfort yourself with remembering that there are as good fish left in the sea as ever were caught out of it."

This seemed hard doctrine at the time, and Dick was half inclined to break his promise, and go after Fanny with an offer to marry directly, but prudence prevailed.

After flirting about with three or four different young men, Fanny at last married William Stephens the sawyer, and a poor dressy dawdle of a wife she made him. As for Richard, he soon found that he could do

vastly well without her, and, I believe, he forgot all about marrying for four or five years, until he met with a steady, respectable young woman, whom all his friends approved, and who turned out an excellent partner to him, and a good mother to his children. When he looked at his decent, tidy wife, his well-furnished cottage, and his clean, well-managed children, and contrasted them with those of his neighbour Stephens, he sometimes went across the house humming the old ditty,

"Sic a wife as Willie had!
I wadna gie a button for her."

Family Book.

The Approaching Comet.—Lieut. R. Morrison, of the Royal Navy, has published a most interesting work upon this magnificent phenomenon, which is expected to be seen in the course of this year, 1835, between the months of May and August, in the constellation of *Ursa Major*.—Lieut. Morrison states that it will be far more splendid than the one of 1811; some writers affirm that "it will afford a degree of light equal to a full moon, that its tail will extend over 40 degrees," and when the head of the comet reaches the meridian, its tail will sweep the horizon. The author contends that the electric and attractive powers of the comet will have very serious effects upon our atmosphere, in producing inundations, earthquakes, storms, tempests, volcanic eruptions, and epidemic diseases. In support of the theory he refers to the different appearances of this comet for the last six hundred years—showing that in the comet years these phenomena prevailed to a great extent.

Hitting the Nail on the Head.—A few months previous to the death of De Witt Clinton, in company with his lady and younger children, he paid a visit to the Messrs. Thornburns' Seed and Flower Establishment in Liberty street. The elder of the firm waited on them with his usual polite attention, and accompanied them to their carriage which was in waiting at the gate. The governor, after handing in his wife and little ones, threw a glance along the front of the building and premises around. Says he, Mr. Thornburn, you once told me you were a nail maker by trade. Mr. T. replied he did, and that being a mechanic was his greatest pride. Well, said Mr. Clinton, when you purchased the friends' meeting-house, "you hit the nail on the head."—The prediction has been verified. The Messrs. Thornburns have just sold the premises for one hundred thousand dollars. In the year 1826, they made this purchase for twenty-six thousand dollars. We have often heard Mr. T. senior, remark, that he landed in New York, forty years ago, with three cents in his pocket, and his nail-hammer in his hand. He may now be called the richest man in America, for he says he has enough.

WEEKLY MIRROR.

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 1835.

The Public examination of the Halifax Grammar School, as appointed by law, took place on Monday last, the 11th May. His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, the Trustees of the Institution, and several other Gentlemen were present. The examination proved highly satisfactory, and confirmed the ample testimony which every previous examination has given, of the superior qualities of the Rev. Teacher.

Arrivals since our last have brought the following intelligence.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS.—On the 8th of April the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel informed Parliament that circumstances had arisen which had induced his Majesty's Government to consider it their duty to tender the resignation of their offices. This they had done, and only held office until such time as their successors were appointed, and in order that the public service might not be impeded they would conduct the Parliamentary business until a new Ministry was formed.

Friday night's Gazette contains the appointment of Lord Amherst as the Captain General of Upper and Lower Canada, and High Commissioner for the redress of grievances in Lower Canada; and Thomas F. Elliot, Esq. is appointed his Lordship's Secretary.

AMERICAN CLAIMS UPON FRANCE.—The Committee of the Chamber of Deputies to whom the demand of the United States was referred, presented their report on the 29th March. It recommends the fulfilment of the Treaty entered into on the 4th July, 1831—provided "the Government of the U. S. shall not have done any thing to injure the dignity and interests of France"—complains of the language used by President Jackson in his message to Congress, and of the measures he recommended, and declares that if the American Congress at the close of its Session, should by any resolution "coincide with the President's message, by granting him the powers he has called for, the interest and dignity of France, which the Committee looked upon as intimately united, would require that the payment of what is owing to the U. S. should be deferred until after the satisfaction which is due to France shall be made." The consideration of the report of the Committee was made the Order of the Day for the 7th April: we have conversed with a gentleman, passenger in the *Molly Moore*, who informed us that he saw, just previous to his leaving Waterford, a London Paper, which stated, that on the 7th April the Chamber of Deputies rejected the American Claims altogether.—*Gazette.*

POETRY.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

*Not a drum was heard, not a funeral-note,
As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot,
O'er the grave where our Hero we buried.*

*We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.*

*No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we bound him,
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.*

*Few and short, were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gaz'd on the face of the dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.*

*We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed,
And smooth'd down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread
O'er his head,
And we far away on the billow.*

*Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;
But nothing he'll reck, if they let him sleep on,
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.*

*But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock toll'd the hour for retiring,
And we heard by the distant and random gun,
That the foe was suddenly firing.*

*Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory,
We carved not a line, we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.*

VARIETIES.

THE TWENTY-FOUR LETTERS.—The father of the ingenious self-taught mathematician, Edmund Stone, was gardener to the Duke of Argyll. Edmund had attained the age of 18, when the Duke, walking, one day, in his garden, saw lying upon the grass a Latin copy of Newton's Principia, and, concluding it belonged to his own library, directed it to be carried back and placed there. This was about to be done, when young Stone, stepping forward, claimed the book as his own. "Yours?" replied the Duke; "do you understand geometry, Latin and Newton?" "I know a little of them," answered Stone, modestly. The Duke then entered into particular conversation with him, and requested to know how he had obtained his present knowledge. "A servant," said Stone, "taught me ten years since, to read. Does any one need to know any thing more than the twenty-four letters, in order to know every thing else one wishes?" The Duke's curiosity was redoubled, and sitting down on a bank with Stone, the latter, at his request, thus proceeded in his

account of himself:—"I first learned to read: the masons were then at work upon your house. I approached them one day, and observed that the architect used a rule and compasses, and that he made calculations. I inquired what might be the meaning and use of these things, and I was informed that there was a science called arithmetic. I purchased a book of arithmetic, and I learned it. I was told that there was another science, called geometry; I bought the necessary books, and I learned geometry. By reading, I found that there were good books in these two sciences in Latin: I bought a dictionary, and I learned Latin. I understood also, that there were general books of the same kind in French: I bought a dictionary, and I learned French. And this, my Lord, is what I have done: it seems to me, that we may learn every thing when we know the twenty-four letters of the alphabet."—The Duke now determined to draw Stone from his obscurity, and immediately provided him with an employment which left him in possession of ample time to follow his favourite pursuits.

THE GREEK TESTAMENT.—About a hundred years ago, a shepherd boy, wrapt in his plaid, went into a book-store in Edinburgh, and asked for a second hand Greek Testament, being unable to buy a new one. The bookseller having handed him one, he asked the price. "For whom do you want it?" inquired the bookseller. "For myself," answered the boy. "Then," said the bookseller, "if you will read and translate a few verses, you shall have it for nothing." The poor boy, highly pleased with the proposal, complied with the conditions, and carried off the Testament in triumph.

Many years afterwards, the late Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, then in the midst of his fame as an author and preacher, entered into conversation with the bookseller. The latter, who was well acquainted with both his person and his character, received him with the most marked respect. In the course of conversation, Mr. Brown inquired if he remembered the circumstance above detailed. "I remember it well," replied the bookseller, "and would give a good deal to know what became of that boy; for I am sure that he has risen to eminence, in some way or other." "Sir," said Mr. Brown, "you see him before you." It is needless to add that the recollection was highly gratifying to both parties.

ASTONISHING MEMORY.—There is still living, in Stirling, a blind old beggar known to all the country by the name of blind Alick, who possesses a memory of almost incredible strength. It was observed with astonishment, that when he was a man, and obliged by the death of his parents, to gain a livelihood by begging through the streets of his native town of Stirling, he knew the whole of the Bible, both Old and

New Testaments, by heart! from which you may repeat any passage, and he will tell you the chapter and verse, or you may tell him the chapter and verse, and he will repeat to you the passage, word for word. Not long since a gentleman, to puzzle him, read with a slight verbal alteration, a verse of the Bible. Alick hesitated a moment, and then told where it was to be found, but said it had not been correctly delivered; he then gave it as it stood in the book, correcting the slight error that had been introduced. The gentleman then asked him for the nintieth verse of the seventh chapter of Numbers. Alick was again puzzled for a moment, but then said hastily, "You are fooling me, sirs! there is no such verse, that chapter has only eighty-nine verses."—Several other experiments of the sort were tried upon him, with the same success. He has often been questioned the day after any particular sermon or speech, and his examiners have invariably found that, had their patience allowed, blind Alick would have given them the sermon or speech over again.

AN HONEST INDIAN.—An Indian living among his white neighbours, asked for a little tobacco to smoke. and one of them having some loose in his pocket, gave him a handful. The day following the Indian came back inquiring for the donor, saying he had found a quarter of a dollar among the tobacco. Being told that as it was given him he might as well keep it, he answered, pointing to his breast: "I got a good man and a bad man here, and the good man say it is not mine, I must return it to the owner; the bad man say, why, he gave it you and it is your own now; the good man say that's not right, the tobacco is yours, not the money; the bad man say, never mind, you got it, go buy some dram; the good man say, no, no, you must not do so; so I don't know what to do, and I think to go to sleep, but the good and the bad man keep talking all night and trouble me; and now I bring the money back, I feel good."

A GOLDEN RULE.—"I resolve," said Bishop Beveridge, "never to speak of a man's virtues before his face, nor of his faults behind his back." A golden rule! the observation of which would, at one stroke, banish flattery and defamation from the earth.

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TERMS.

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