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THE

PORTFOLIO


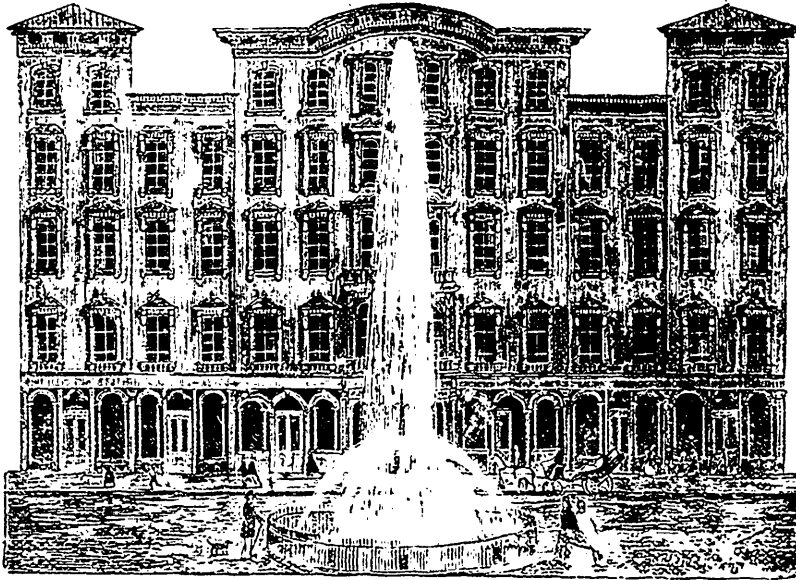
January, 1892.

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
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Notes.

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring happy bells, across the snow."

Christmas has come and gone with its annual reunions and festive gatherings amid the decorations of holly and mistletoe, which with the Yule log made the Christmas of "Merrie Englande" in the days of long ago.

The Old Year has passed into the silence of the centuries. It is with mingled feelings of regret and pleasure that we write 1892. One more page has been added to the chapter of history and the unwritten record of human daily life with its joys and sorrows, its labors and triumphs too has passed on. To all our readers the Portfolio extends a cordial greeting on the threshold of the New Year.

The New Year brings with it a wreath of laurel for each earnest student. The fact of "something attempted; something done" brings its own reward. Each difficult problem solved is a victory, each new lesson mastered a step onward. Let us press on then remembering that nothing in this world worth the having is ever accomplished, save by long and earnest toil.

"The heights by great men reached and kept,
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

Education is necessarily of slow growth. "Rome was not built in a day" and this old adage holds good when applied to our student life. A college course is simply the foundation of an education. The mind has been trained to think, estimate and weigh for itself. The ripest scholars and the most profound thinkers of the day in literature science and art have been and are life long students.

For the student nature unfolds some new beauty day by day. A wild "flower in the crannied wall" contains a world of beauty all its own. Who has not observed the peerless beauty of the snow-flakes as they flutter to and fro, silently unfolding the earth in a mantle of the purest white? Here are crystals of the most exquisite design. Each one is a work of art and the soul of beauty is present in many forms. Beauty is an intuition. The sense is all pervading, surrounding us on every hand. We may have observed common objects, such as rocks and crystals before, but the study of science enables us to view them in a new light, as regards composition and symmetry, thus lending an added charm.

The members of Centenary Church together with a large circle of friends, have sustained a deep and heartfelt loss in the death of their esteemed pastor, Dr. Stafford, who passed away after a short illness.

Note well Reading Matter at foot of Pages.

Though Dr. Stafford's sojourn among us was brief, he won many warm friends and his memory still remains to those of his congregation an example of a gifted and brilliant life devoted to the cause of Christ.

One View of Shakespeare.

The glory of a nation lies not in the path of conquest amid heaps of gory slain and the ashes of burning hamlets, but in the victory of mind over matter, the progress of literature, science and art. The advance of literature marks a grand march of mental and moral culture. The barriers of bigotry and ignorance are rapidly disappearing before the advent of a wider range of thought. Though the hand of time has scarred and seamed the Gothic edifice and trailed the ivy over the ruins of the Norman castle, its scarring touch rests lightly on the old masters of English literature. The nineteenth century still drinks at the "well of English undefyled," and derives its inspiration from the bard of Avon.

Shakespeare's influence on the literature of his own age is associated with the progress of the drama. During the time of Chaucer mysteries or miracle plays were celebrated by the churchmen to instruct the people regarding Biblical characters and the legends of the saints. These finally became secularized, taking the form of the Interlude. The comedy sprang from the interlude winning its first triumph in Ralph Roister Doister. The story of Gorbuduc next laid claim to public attention and founded the tragedy. Notwithstanding the great advance made since the time of the early drama, these plays were dull and insipid, devoid of real human interest. The increasing demand for dramatic literature is evinced by the group of writers who now began to give their attention to it; Ford, Marlowe, Greene, Kyd and Peele. Actuated by caprice and bowing at the shrine of

popular opinion, their finest productions were invested with a semi-barbarism such as characterized their lives.

From the rude quarry of the middle ages, the stately edifice of English literature now rose in all its splendor. The rough hewn ore in the hand of the miner and the polished gem at the lapidary bear little similarity, its symmetry and its beauty are the result of combined labor. Shakespeare's genius never shone more resplendent than when breathing life into the dust and ashes of the past, retouching and condensing the treasured material of the ages. Aware that modern originality consists in resetting ancient gems of thought, Shakespeare combined the research, and the sublime ideas of his predecessors in his early plays *Venus and Adonis* *Romeo and Juliet*, *Midsummer Nights Dream* are famous, not because of unique conception, but for the blending of exquisite thought and exquisite verse. Ransacking the dusty pages of a decayed civilization and exploring the misty realms of the ideal world, he elevated the drama from mere imitation to art. The dim shades of thought and fancy which had as yet found no adequate expression, were seized with a grasp of a master mind and placed before the world of letters for ever.

This literary age, the Shakespearian, was one of regal magnificence combining much of the splendor of the Orient, with the exquisite harmony of combination and symmetry of form which mark the writings of this great author. No one writer has bequeathed such an array of characters or exhibited so completely the human mind in all its varied moods and phases from the cruelty and extortion of *Shylock* to the mad, overcharged soul of *Hamlet*, who thinks "the time is out of joint." The panorama of human life, from the cradle to the grave is enshrined in a volume of his plays and poems. The inmost recesses of the soul are explored, and every chord and passion vibrates with his touch. Classic legend, fairy tale and ballad lore form the ground work of the most interesting thread of comedy and tragedy, woven yet by artistic hand.

Recent research clearly demonstrates

that Shakespeare was the great national poet of his day, that his works were well known and eagerly sought for throughout England, and that they were reproduced by companies of strolling actors in the remote provincial towns. He acquired a much greater popularity during his life time than fell to the lot of the ordinary dramatist. This is clearly attested by the fact that his plays alone were selected from a host of others and published, and this is an age when but little reading was done. Shakespeare was introduced to the people under the most favorable auspices. Froude says: "acting was the special amusement of the English during the sixteenth century from the palace down to the village green."

Shakespeare's sway in the sixteenth century is less marked. Three great forces were at work to account for this. The rise of Ben Johnson and the Metaphysical School. Again national discontent in reality an outburst of political feeling assumed the garb of Puritanism. Mental culture received a deadly blow when Puritan England suppressed the drama and trod underfoot the time honored customs of the Yule-log and the May-pole. Then the accession of Charles II gave free reign to French, thought which rapidly prevailed politics, religion and morals nothing was exempt. The drama became that of Corneille and Racine, while Dryden rendered homage to the new order of things by writing tragedy in rhyme. Vanbrugh, Wycherley and Congreve were read by the courtiers. Yet even in this age Dryden says "He was the man who of all modern and perhaps ancient poets had the largest and most comprehensive soul." Milton speaks of him in a poem prefixed to the edition of 1632 as:—

"Dear son of memory, great heir of fame
What needest thou such weak witness of thy
name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live long monument."

The annals of literature with those of science give evidence that "to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." The reaction began when the eighteenth century ushered in the dawn of a great national awakening. The signs of the times were visible in a series of articles which appeared in the Spectator favorable

to the poet. Numerous editions and reviews of Shakespeare followed Rowe's edition of 1709. These tended to neutralize the French influence though the leading literary lights, Pope and Johnson still clung to the precise French drama and Shakespeare's violation of the "Unities" received due censure at their hands. A Pharisee of the most rigid type could scarce have adhered more strictly to the letter of the law than they to the form of the Greek drama. Meanwhile Garrick won his first laurels, while personating Richard III, and thenceforth devoted much energy and talent to a Shakespeare Jubilee and the remainder of his life was spent amid the influence of Shakespearian literature. The nineteenth century is one grand burst of song, the measured cadence of Alfred Tennyson struck the key-note. The strains of Longfellow, the sweet singer of the American nation and the sage, homely counsel of Whittier have smoothed the rough places and rounded the angles of life. Not will the rugged, majestic ~~flow~~ of thought traced in Carlyle's English, the liberal views and caustic remarks of Macaulay, the deep research of Matthew Arnold be forgotten while the landmarks of a national literature remain. An effort to trace the relation of cause and effect, carries the mind back to the sixteenth century; while the flag of England floats side by side with that of the young republic whose people bear so largely the impress of Saxon thought and feeling the name of William Shakespeare will be revered.

Our modern literature owes much to the reflex influence of Shakespeare through Germany and her writers. Lessing was the first German savant to recognize his genius, Schlegel and Wieland translated his plays into German. These in the meantime were permeating German thought until finally the climax is reached in the triumphant outburst of German literature which points to the names of Goethe and Schiller. The great revival known as the Sturm und Drang period moulded to a great extent nineteenth century literature. Scott's boyish admiration of Goethe grew with his years, and in his day no novelist was more widely read than Scott. No author has wielded a greater sway over the English speaking race than Carlyle, and he was a

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German enthusiast. Coleridge is said to have understood Shakespeare more thoroughly than any other writer except Goethe, inseparable companions it was but natural that Lamb should entertain a profound admiration for his friends hero. The German Shakespeare Society at Wiemar is a memorial of the love and gratitude of the German people. Ralph Waldo Emerson says that "now literature, philosophy and thought are Shakespearized."

The dayspring is at hand, the fiat of science has gone forth to enlist the century in a grand search after truth. She has ploughed the face of the mighty deep, traced the pathless orbits of the stars and despoiled the earth of her hidden treasure. Although the annals of literature are bright with the names of Scott, Byron, Keats and Browning, the grand sweep of thought is but the promise of that which is to be. The rosy dawn of science, the vanguard of literature own the sway of one great mind. Through the medium of Goethe and Schiller, Shakespeare has come into his own rightful inheritance. His shade lurks in the author's sanctum, supplies the missing link in an orator's train of thought and presides over magazine and essay literature. But perhaps the greatest tribute of all to this author lies in the fact that his writings are in constant demand in a fastidious literary age, an age requiring the barest scientific facts to be couched in the language of a Huxley or a Darwin. Shakespeare's sway has been eminently beneficial. Noble thoughts can come only from a noble mind and like the mellow radiance of an October evening rest with a benediction on all things.

"When a great man dies
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Far on the paths of men."

Correspondence.

MY DEAR GIRLS,

You will see by my letter last month that in my travels as far as Hong Kong, I have not entered very minutely into details as so many fellow citizens have

taken that route. On reaching the above mentioned place, we proceeded to the Hong Kong Hotel, where after a day's rest we began our sight-seeing by a trip up to the Peak in the train, and from the flag-staff one gets a magnificent view of the harbor which is acknowledged to be one of the largest and best in the world, you can easily realize that fact on seeing the marvellous way nature has assisted in its protection, and inside those enormous rocks which seem like sentries guarding its entrance hundreds of ships and steamers of all nations ride snugly at anchor. The flag-staff is about 2,000 feet above the sea, and from it you can see signalled the out-going and in-coming vessels, the temperature being so much cooler on the Peak most of the private houses are built there especially since the train has been running, they have also three very good hotels up there. After a very pleasant day we returned to the hotel, and after dining some friends took us over to Kowloom (this is about a mile across the water on the main land) and we here visited the gambling farm, it is an enormous building with tables here and there, around which are crowded the Chinese who are very fond of this vice, during the short time we were present I saw two of them after losing their "little all" proceed to the pawn shop attached to the farm and raise money on their jewels to enable them to continue gambling, evidently the vice is contagious for we Europeans hazarded more than we cared to lose and considered ourselves lucky not sharing the fate of one in our party Captain S. who returned with us so bankrupt, that we laughingly passed round a hat among us for his return fare in the launch. About 11 o'clock next morning we took chairs and were carried in the Happy Valley Cemetery, which is without exception the loveliest spot I've ever seen in the East. After two hours spent there, we proceeded along the water works road which is extremely pretty, and from it you get a good view

of the town, principal buildings, barracks, forts, etc. After a long day of sight seeing, we were glad to get back to our dinner and long chairs. Early on the morrow we drove in rickshaws through Chinatown, this part of Hong Kong seems quite separate from our European settlement and one very rarely sees any one but Chinese here, the streets are narrow, dirty and busy, I was not at all sorry to leave that part and visit the Botanical Gardens, which are very lovely, full of the most exquisite eastern flowers. Cacti are trees here, and the scent of the Magnolias greeted us long before we reached the trees one mass of bloom, Hydrangias too with enormous bunches of blossoms grew almost wild. Returning I could not help noticing several Chinese fast asleep lying on the top of a narrow stone wall over-hanging a precipice, the smallest movement would dash them into eternity, and yet one seldom hears of their making that movement. At 5 p. m. we left by steamer for Canton, reaching that place at 6 a. m. next day. Everything here is thoroughly Chinese, but there are a few European inhabitants we visited some of the temples accompanied by guides and several friends, as one cannot venture about Canton alone in safety and even as it was, the Chinese had an insolent way of looking at us and making remarks as we were carried along. We visited the curio shops and picked up a lot of that pretty feather work made there, also a few pieces of jade which is very expensive even in the pawn shops. The hotel being a wretched one, we slept on our steamer and left at 5 a. m. next day, reaching Hong Kong about 1 p. m. After a hurried tiffin, we proceeded to the jetty to fulfil an engagement we had made to spend the afternoon and evening on board one of H. M. Ships, here we found plenty to amuse us. Shooting at corked bottles and inspecting all that was so new and interesting to us, no trouble being spared to make us enjoy ourselves, though one

would judge hearing most sailors speak of women on board ship that they consider them a regular nuisance, there after dinner the sailors gave a concert which was very amusing and thoroughly appreciated by us all. The next morning we left about 11 o'clock for Macoa reaching there about 4 p. m., fortunately it was on the birthday of the King of Portugal, and there were two receptions one at 2 p. m. for officials and the second at 9, a general affair at which they had Chinese Fireworks, a band and dancing, the latter I indulged in, as even in that climate the music was too tempting to resist and after a few hours spent very pleasantly we left as our steamer was proceeding to Hong Kong very early next morning, which place we reached before noon, and as the next steamer we were to take for the Straits Settlements was in from Shanghai, I went off to her to inspect my cabin and see how I was to fare for the next five or six days. She was one of the P. and O. steamers and proved to be a very good one the "Pekin," and having been introduced to her Captain and officers and put under the former's charge, I returned to the hotel, paid a long farewell to my friends and once more found myself on the deep feeling decidedly lonely and sorry to leave a place where I had been treated so kindly and spent such a pleasant time. Good-bye till next month dear girls.

Believe me, your's very sincerely,

LENORA.

Lord Macaulay.

Among the English prose writers of the nineteenth century, there are none who stand more prominent than Lord Macaulay. His highly descriptive and clear, rich prose won for him a place equal to that of Carlyle or Ruskin.

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The general outline of the career of this famous historian has long been familiar, and offers neither need nor scope for detail. After taking his degree at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he highly exemplified himself by his contributions to the journals of the day, Macaulay entered the political campaign. After four years of high parliamentary distinction, and his first assumption of office, he accepted a lucrative appointment in India. During his residence here he was led to the investigation of Indian history, and to this we no doubt owe two of the most brilliant essays in the language. Returning to England in 1839, Macaulay again entered Parliament and for a number of years had a seat in the cabinet. Laborious as were his ministerial duties he yet found time to pursue his literary work. His essays on Lord Clive and Warren Hastings, also those splendid specimens of "rhymed rhetoric" the Lays of ancient Rome, were the product of this period. But Macaulay was ambitious to do more than write essays and compose verse. He had long cherished the idea of writing a History of England, and fortunately for literature Parliamentary defeats and the loss of office, gave him the leisure, though at a late day, to effect his wish. From now to the close of his life, with brief interruptions incident to Parliamentary affairs, Macaulay threw his whole heart into the writing of his history. Few Englishmen of the time were so deeply versed in their country's annals, and none had hitherto hit the idea of making history popular and giving it a picturesque effect. But the author lived to see about four volumes published for in December 1859, his soul, left this life for ever. His remains were interred in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay's works are of much interest to us and in reference to them much has been written. Perhaps the chief among these is his History of England, commenced about the year 1847. In this he has related the establishment of the English Constitution. The history is universal and not broken. It comprehends events of every kind and treats of them simultaneously. Some have related the history of races, others of classes, others of governments, others of sentiments, ideas and manners, Macaulay has related all. He has separated nothing and passed

nothing by. A second characteristic of this history is clearness. The same idea is represented in so many different forms and made sensible in such familiar and precise examples that you cannot help being enlightened and convinced. The last feature and most singular, is that it is interesting. The first merit of a reviewer or journalist is to make himself readable. A thick volume naturally bores us, it is not thick for nothing; its bulk demands at the outset, the attention of him who opens it. The solid binding, the table of contents, the preface, the substantial chapters, all tell us plainly what to expect. Macaulay attained through practise this gift of readableness and adheres to it throughout his history. He employs every means of keeping up attention, good or indifferent, worthy or unworthy of great talent, among others he never forgets the actual.

His essays written at different periods are an assemblage of articles. We can throw down the volume after a score of pages, begin at the end or in the middle; we are not its slave but its master. They are also varied; in turning over a page we pass from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, from India to England, this diversity pleases and surprises. The author is discreet, he displays himself to us, keeping back nothing; it is a familiar conversation and no conversation is worth as much as that of England's greatest historian. In fact all his works possess a charm for the reader, because they deal with all kinds of subjects, give the author's opinions in all sorts of things, and lead us to a conception of his thoughts.

Macaulay's style is characterized by its strength and clearness. It is said he never wrote an obscure sentence in his life, it may also be affirmed he never penned a weak one. In reading Macaulay, you become so completely fascinated that you are loathe to leave until you have finished the volume. In his writings there is little humor and less which will cause emotion. Yet every page is instinct with life, brightly colored, and highly illustrated. Macaulay is said to be the most pictorial writer in English prose, but some one has said he is not a genuine artist. When he draws a picture he is al-

ways thinking of proving something. He gets too near the canvas and consequently there is a lack of perspective. But despite these defects, Macaulay is a great and attractive writer and rarely surpassed in his animated and picturesque style.

Macaulay was indisputably a man of splendid talent. He had a sagacity and swiftness of understanding that enabled him to comprehend and rapidly methodise his vast array of facts. He was not in the least affected by the immensity of his attainments. He wore all his load of learning lightly as a flower. In ease, purity, grace, and point, he rivals those who have made felicity of style their chief study. He has been accused of partiality, of exaggeration, and of gratifying his passion for epigram at the expense of truth, but the essential truth and accuracy of his narrative, as a whole has never been disapproved.

The influence exerted by this able essayist and his works over English prose has been very near read. He was among the foremost ranks of critics and these criticisms have been of great benefit to many of our writers of English prose. His widely-read essays have give us a more extended knowledge of some of the British dominions and their populace. They have also encouraged and raised essay writing to a much higher standard. His history has introduced that picturesque and pleasing effect in history writing, making it interesting and pleasurable reading. In fact few authors and their works have had a more elevating and praise-worthy effect than Macaulay and his productions.

E. M. D. M.

The Canadian Log Cabin.

It seems strange now to think of a time, when in this Canada of ours, every one lived in a log house. Yet such was the case and the time is not so very far distant either.

When first our grandfathers came to this land, it was no such easy matter to get a

house as it is now a days. They could not merely buy the land and the material for their houses and set others to work to build them; no indeed, they had to set to work alone and single-handed to make a clearing in the vast forest and hew the great logs to the required size. Then unaided, or if so fortunate as to have a neighbor within thirty miles, with his most welcome assistance, these pioneers constructed their humble homes.

Humble—yes, very humble, and yet it seems to me that many of these log cabins, containing perhaps but two rooms, made happier and more peaceful homes than do the magnificent mansions of to-day.

When, in the twilight of evening, the weary farmer at last returned from his long day's work in the forest, glad and bright was the welcome awarded by his wife and children. And after their evening meal, they gather about the bright fire-place, perhaps to talk longingly of the old home and friends left so far away in the distance, or to cheer one another on with expressions of hope for prosperity in their new canadian home.

As the years roll on, ever increasing prosperity does reward their early self-denial and endurance. With increased prosperity comes the desire for more of life's comforts, until the old log cabin is no longer considered good enough. It is pulled down and a more commodious and finer house erected in its stead. So that now the log house is a land mark not often met with.

Yet in my mind's eye I can see one of these dear old cabins—a log house built by my grandfather, and in which he lived for over fifty years. A small hill lies on one side of the house, at the foot of which runs a clear little stream. On the other side is the lane bordered with poplars, which stand like tall sentinels on either side of the passage as if to guard the quiet spot from all marauders. The house stands some distance back from the road, and is almost lost to view amid the pines that surround it. Nothing could ever induce grandfather to leave it, and my only memory of him is as a white-haired old man sitting by its open fire-place telling me

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stories of his early struggle in constructing his home. After his death, his sons did not like the thought of tearing it down, so there it still stands, though when last I saw it, about two years ago, in a rather dilapidated condition.

To me, a log cabin is always a monument of the patient endurance and toil of those, the fruits of whose labors we now enjoy.

G. H. C.

Locals.

"A Giggle Gabble Gadding Git," will be held on February 12th.

A Bachelor, yet not a bachelor?

Miss Shaw, who won so many laurels when graduating in '00, is with us at present studying art. We hope she will be as successful in this as in her literary course.

We extend a welcome to Miss Purdy, who has returned to be one of our number.

We are glad to know, that a large number of new students have been enrolled in the College.

Another of our graduates has entered upon a new life. On the afternoon of Jan'y 27th, Miss Zealand and W. J. Wright, of Brockville, were united in matrimony. We wish them, all happiness.

Miss Munro, our teacher of Elocution, was pleasantly surprised on the occasion of her birthday, by receiving a handsome lamp for her study-table from several of the students.

A pleasing feature of the present year is the increased attention given to music. This speaks well for the musical ability at the head of our school.

Exchanges.

We are glad to find again within our sanctum the last numbers of our old exchanges, some bedecked in Xmas array, others in their usual attire, but all keeping up to their standard whatever it may be, and not a few surpassing it. The University News, in honor of the universal holiday, has assumed a special coat under which some sensible and interesting articles are to be found.

*
* *

The Earlhautc, one of the first magazines to arrive, seems to have started out with good intentions at the commencement of the New Year. A variety of articles and some of these well worth reading, are to be found within it.

*
* *

Judging from the large amount of space devoted to foot-ball on the pages of the Speculum, and the small share allotted to Literary Articles, we would conclude that the students who edit this paper have reversed the order of the old maxim, "Work before Play."

*
* *

We have been led to wonder what idea the Exchange editor of the Niagara Index has of the duties of one in his position. It appears rather evident by his exchange notes, that his opinion of criticism is that it should be overloaded with censure. If so, we do not agree with him on that point. We acknowledged that some censure is hardly avoidable, but we think some little encouragement should be given as well.

*
* *

The Owl is ever a welcome visitor to our table and always appears brimful of instructive and pleasing items. The article on education, though lengthy retains our interest throughout. We were also much pleased with the sketch on "The Modern Poetry of England." The neatness of appearance and literary excellence of this Journal, reflects much credit on the students.

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