THE DIVINE LAW OF SOCIAL PURITY

PLAIN TALK FROM AN EPISCOPAL PULPIT.

Text of a Fearless Sermon Recently Delivered by the Rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rev. F. S. Ballentine, Upon the Meaning of the Seventh Commandment.

By request space is given to the text of an outspoken sermon recently delivered by Rev. F. S. Ballenting, rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd, upon the vice of unchastity, the text being Exodus xx:14: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The sermon follows:

From time immemorial has this been known as the Seventh commandment. It has more recently been called the law of social purity.

Of all the specific laws of the decalogue this is the one that is least specifically preached upon and at the same time most frequently broken. Teachers of religion by common and most ominous consent have banished the subject from the midst of their public counsels and have left it to the insinuating influences of secular poets and novelists. Is it a wonder we hear of men attributing no small share of the follies and vices of their youth to the fact that they never heard a plain, outspoken sermon on this Seventh commandment?

But if the ministers of God's word have acquiesced supinely to the general and growing dislike to deal with such a subject the word of God itself is not silent, nor speaks it out in an uncertain sound.

Let us then first to the Word and to God's testimony: "Thou shalt not commit adultery. * * * For this is a heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges. For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase. * * Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burnt? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbor's wife; whoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. * * * Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. * * * Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminates, nor abusers of themselves with mankind shall inherit the Kingdom of God. * * * Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. * * * But fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be named among you as becometh saints, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting which are not convenient: but rather giving thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

COMMANDMENT'S SCOPE.

We come back to the original commandment. You will notice that it is not: Thou shalt not commit fornication. It is not: Thou shalt not be unclean. Nor is it even: Thou shalt not commit incest.

I call your attention to these distinctions, not to intimate that they form no part of this Seventh commandment, but to emphasize their real relation to it. This commandment includes each and all of them, but no one of them, nor all of them together have such importance in the eye of God's great law as this fundamental and all inclusive principle of divine law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," means: Thou shalt not be guilty of the heinous sin of incest. It means: Thou shalt not commit fornication. It means: Thou shalt not be guilty of any kind of sexual uncleanness whatsoever. And it means each of these, because it is the sin out of which all these others flow. It means let the home become vitiated by the infidelity of father or mother and there is no end to the possibilities of sin and iniquity that will necessarily follow. For the home is before the Church. The home is before the State. The home is before any other moral or spiritual or social condition whatsoever.

What I wish to emphasize first of all, then, and to emphasize as forcibly as possible, is the fundamental fact that this great commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," is a law bearing primarily upon husband and wife and was meant to guard the sanctity of home life and to uphold its most sacred rights. In other words, single men and single women can commit greater abominations of uncleanness and can involve themselves in most woeful filthiness of the flesh. They can bring upon themselves all the horrors of spiritual and physical disease and death, which science as well as religion shows are necessary concomitants of fornication, but it is the married man and the married woman alone who are capable of that greatest of all such abominations, adultery.

Such, then, is that most heinous crime, adultery. Such is the fountain head of physical and spiritual corruption which has swept nation after nation out of existence. That is it which brought fire and brimstone from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah. That is it which insidiously sucked the vitals out of that glorious Roman state and brought its proud and mighty dominion to the ground. That is it which has been the most insidious foe to the power and dominion of the Church of the spotless Lamb of God and has kept her still struggling along in the battle of life.

Where there is no sacredness around the home, family virtues disappear, the seeds of sure decay spring up, children are corrupt from their birth. Of course, they follow in the footsteps of their inconstant parents. They cannot well do otherwise. They sin before marriage and they find it very easy to break this commandment after marriage. And then comes the natural sequel, the divorce court and a legal separation. Is it a wonder we hear so much of the question of marriage and divorce in these days? No, there is no wonder about it, when we really look the question fairly and squarely in the face. We are, in this respect, reaping nothing else but the same kind of fruit as all the nations that have gone before us. The only question open for us on the subject now is: Are we going to be content to go the way of all such nations of the earth and end in utter destruction and oblivion by the way of such noisesome corruption, or shall we arise yet in the indomitable strength of a divine and virile manhood and the purity and power of a most sacred womanhood to the possibilities of our calling in Christ Jesus and rid ourselves of this terrible social fungus that is now eating the vitals out of our very life's core? May our Father in Heaven hasten the day of our deliverance.

PENNSYLVANIA PIONEERS.

Some Idea of Their Privations and Many Anxieties.

From "The Story of the Pioneers," Published by the National Book Company, Cincinnati.

When the third year after Braddock's defeat rolled round, the boundless brutalities of the Indians, instead of being checked, were more constant, more widespread, and more terrible than ever before.

What at the beginning of the war had been the interior, in which danger was never apprehended, became in turn the frontier. The territory now forming many counties, which, in 1755, was tolerably settled, became a howling wilderness, and was abandoned to savages and wild beasts. The bold invaders pushed farther and farther to the east. One day Philadelphia learned that a band of warriors had sacked and pillaged the country and massacred the inhabitants, only thirty miles away.

The instances we have given are only a few drops from a mighty flood, only a few dead coals raked from the embers of a tremendous conflagration. There is enough of insecurity, of transitoriness in life at best. The universal tragedy goes on around us perpetually. Each of us comes to take his turn in the last sad act of the dreadful drama.

Yet to all this, for the pioneers of Pennsylvania were added the horrors of border warfare. As the family huddled around the fireplace at evening, they felt that each rattle of the shutter in the wintry blast might be the work of a savage hand. The rustling leaves of the forest might only conceal the stealthy approach of moccasined feet. Each trip to the well after nightfall for a bucket of water was like a sally from a beleaguered fort. Every shadow might hide a dusky form. Behind every tree might lurk a murderous enemy. The bark of the dogs, or the querulous cacklings of the sleepy hens, might be the warning of the approach of an Indian war party. Life had no security. The regularity of toil, the pursuit of ambitions, the routine of the family, the quiet succession of tasks in the respective seasons—all this was broken into and interrupted.

But why not fly? Why wait until the crimsoned tomahawk was raised in air, and the little cabin crackled in the flames? It is easy to answer. To fly was to lose home and all means of subsistence, and become homeless refugees, starving wanderers, pensioners on a cold and reluctant charity. Added to the real dangers of the situation were the fantastic horrors of the imagination. In such a community wild rumors filled every breeze. Hardly a day passed that some messenger of alarm did not dash past the cabin on flying steed. A hundred times a year the settlers took refuge in the forts from imaginary enemies.

In such sorrows did the rivalries of France and England involve the innocent settlers of distant Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. In this way did the arts of the Frenchman turn the rage of the Indian against the English in favor of himself. Yet it was useless. England, defeated and humiliated on every battlefield, whether in Europe or America, called to her help a single man, an invalid, without fortune, family or party. That man was William Pitt. With the voice of an archangel he roused the states of Protestantism to wage a war for mastery against the despotic monarchy and the institutions of the Middle Ages, and to secure to humanity its futurity of freedom. The mighty alliance which he created humbled the haughty monarch of the French and changed the destinies of mankind.

In 1758 three great military expeditions were fitted out by the English in America. One of these achieved the conquest of Louisburg; another that of Fort Frontenac. A third was dispatched, under General Forbes, to attack Fort du Quesne, and if possible, drive the savages from the country. It was successful. The fort at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers once more passed into the hands of the English. With unanimous voice the new fort, rising on the ruins of the old was named Fort Pitt, in honor of the great statesman, whose genius was overwhelming the enemies of England. "Pittsburg," says Bancroft, "is the most enduring trophy of the glory of William Pitt. Long as the Monongahela and the Allegheny shall flow to form the Ohio, long as the English tongue shall be the language of freedom in the boundless valley which their waters traverse, his name shall stand inscribed on the Gateway of the West."

EXPLANATION OF 'SIRDAR."

Interesting Items Concerning the Egyptian Title Borne by Kitchener.

From the Chicago Times-Herald.

In the flood of news which came to daily over the wire recently about Fashoda there was a constant reference, an iteration and reiteration of one word which, while persons who read might surmise it referred probably to a title, yet had no positive proof of exactly what it meant. That one word was invariably prefixed to Sir. Herbert Kitchener's name—the **sirdar.** Now, what meant this word **sirdar?**

A quarter of a century ago, or thereabouts, at the time when Great Britain, by right of might, and not for any other reason, occupied Egypt and took the sultan's khedive under its tutelate, one of its first acts was to reorganize the Egyptian army. British officers were sent to Egypt and placed at the head of native troops. These officers drilled the troops, taught them the manual of arms and gradually instilled in them that same esprit de corps and enthusiasm which makes the British army itself such a compact and formidable body. The native troops were allowed to retain their colors, their flags and insignia and all the paraphernalia of war distinctively the attribute of an unconquered people. British statesmen went further. They even allowed the same military titles to remain. It was a tactful thing to do. Britain lost nothing thereby, and the Egyptian warriors retained all that was sentimentally sacred to them.

Thus, therefore, the very ancient words sirdar, bimbashi, jougoul, etc., remained in the army. The sirdar of the Egyptian army is the general in chief. The bimbashi is a major, the jougoul a captain. Sirdar, literally it means officer, is as old an expression almost as the country of the Pharaohs itself. In Arabic the word means "head man." There needs be little stretch of the imagination to see how the term came to be given to the commandant of the Egyptian forces.

Sir Herbert Kitchener is the second sirdar of Egypt, the first to bear that name being Major General Sir Francis Wallace Grenfell. Sir Herbert Kitchener became sirdar in 1897. It is now a generally known fact that he was a fellow student of the late prince imperial at Woolwich Military academy. Born in 1850, he was, so to say, brought up in a barracks. His father, General Horatio Kitchener, was a soldier, and the future hero of Omdurman dreamed of soldiering in earliest boyhood. County Kerry, Ireland, was his birthplace, and on the downs near Crotta House, his home when a lad, a fine old mansion on the road to Tralee, the battle of Omdurman was really fought.

He thus possesses British tenacity and Irish pugnacity. And only forty-eight! What great eminence may he not then reach!

SVERDRUP'S PROGRAMME.

Details of the Work He Hopes to Do in Peary's Field of Exploration.

From the Sun.

Captain Sverdrup, who with fifteen comrades sailed on the Fram from Christiania, Norway, on June 24 last for explorations on the north coast of Greenland, arrived at Egedesminde, Greenland, after a rough journey on July 28. The party reached Upernivik, near the northern boundary of the Danish domain, on Aug. 4, and is supposed to have sailed on the following day for the far north. On the journey up the Greenland coast Sverdrup purchased some dogs, making about 100 sledge animals, including fifteen that he took from Norway. The Geographical Journal for February prints an official statement of Sverdrup's objects and equipment. This statement differs materially from Sverdrup's earlier announcements as to his purposes, and shows that his mission is in large part identical with that of Mr. Peary, whose plans were made public months before it was known that Sverdrup intended to occupy the same field of exploration.

Sverdrup's intention was to force his way through Smith Sound and Robeson Channel as far north along the coast of Greenland as possible, and then to use his ship as headquarters for sledge expeditions. These sledge parties will be sent out to explore and map the northern mainland coast line and to attempt to connect Cape Washington, the most northerly point known on the west coast of Greenland, with Independence Bay on the east coast, discovered by Peary, and, if possible, with Cape Bismarck, further south on the same coast. Other sledge parties will leave the Fram to explore the archipelago north of Greenland. Thus far Sverdrup's programme is identical with that which Peary had previously announced. It is in questionable taste and most unusual for an explorer to go to the field that another explorer intends to occupy and attempt to carry out there the same work the other man has previously planned to do.

Six of Sverdrup's crew are men of scientific education, and geology, botany and zoology are all represented by specialists. Astronomical, magnetic and other physical observations will be taken, and special attention will be given to glacial phenomena and to the study of the exact nature of the so-called palaeocrystic ice, whose origin, formation and drift are not yet understood. The party is equipped for four years. Sverdrup's plan to use his ship as winter quarters for his men does not accord with the judgment of Arctic explorers generally who, since the Nares expedition in 1875 have regarded it as far preferable, when an expedition has a land base, to live in a house on shore. The Fram's stores include 170 bottles of brandy and a large supply of tobacco, which is quite an innovation on modern ideas of Arctic equipment, the prevailing opinion being that creature comforts of this sort are better left at home. Nothing is said in the statement of Sverdrup's plans about the important matter of dog food. His arrival at Smith Sound, if he got there, must have been considerably later than that of Peary; and when the American started for the sound he had sixty walrus in the hold of the Windward on which to feed his dogs. Sverdrup could hardly stop at Littleton Island to hunt walrus without jeopardizing his chances of entering the sound last season, for at the time he was pushing north the Hope, Peary's auxiliary vessel, was returning south and found ice already forming in Melville Bay.

It remains to be seen whether Sverdrup's Norwegians, with the chances of disaster increased by their comparatively large number, will be able to equal the sledging feats in the coming season of the American explorer, who has been called by Sir Clements R. Markham "the greatest ice traveler in the world."

READS A THOUSANDS MILES.

Calculation Is Not for the Persistent Reader, but the Man of Affairs.

The average busy man who declares that he has "no time for reading" will be incredulous if he is told that in reading alone his eyes travel, during his lifetime a distance of 1,000 miles, which is equivalent to making an "ocular trip" from London to Naples, says Tit-Bits.

A comparatively slow reader will scan 300 words a minute—that is, he reads about twice as fast as he talks, and ten times as fast as he writes. At this rate of progression, allowing for diversity of type, a man may be said to read ninety-two yards of type in half an hour. As even the busiest man probably averages half an hour's reading a day, it is clear that every year he must cover a distance of nineteen miles in reading, or the very respectable journey of 950 miles in fifty years.

This is an exceedingly low average and there are probably many men who cover at least six times this distance; a feat almost equal to traversing with the eyes the whole of Europe, from Cape St. Vincent to the Ural mountains, and again from North Cape to Cape Matapan—a combined journey of 5,900 miles, or nearly a quarter of the way around the earth at the equator.

A statistician calculates that in reading all Zola's works the eyes travel a distance of thirty miles, and that the ordinary yellow-backed novel contains from a mile to a mile and a half of type; while, according to his estimate, the average reader covers a distance during his lifetime of 2,500 miles, or nearly six times the distance from Land's End to Berwick-on-Tweed.

Compared with such wonderful feats the journeys even of the busiest pen seem trivial and poor. Incredible as it may appear, there are many people who can use a pen with average skill and fluency whose writing during a lifetime does not exceed one or two miles. A good average record for one who does not earn his living by his pen would be ten miles for a life journey.

The professional writer naturally accomplishes a much bigger task than this. If he is fairly industrious he may produce for the press 300,000 words a year, which would mean a lineal journey for his pen of three miles. If he can maintain this rate of production for forty working years his pen will have accomplished a journey of 120 miles, or a few miles more than the distance from Charing Cross to Birmingham, while his remuneration may be anything from 100 guineas a mile upward.

There are, of course, many writers who, in a long and industrious life, far outstrip this record, but probably no man who has ever lived and written has driven his pen as far as from Lizard Point to the Grampians.

The Under Side of Things.

Mabel (after the caller had gone)—"Did you notice the pained expression that came over Mr. Hankinson's face when he shifted his chair?"

Maud—"No; what was the matter?"

Mabel—"I think he found where I had stuck my gum."—Chicago Tribune.

POEM.

Read by Archibald Hopkins at the dinner given to General Wood, Jan. 13.

True Anglo-Saxon through and through,
Bone, blood and muscle, nerve and will,
The brain to plan, the pluck to do,
The steady hand, the practiced skill.

The inborn genius for command,
That weighs and once for all decides;
Then takes against the world its stand,
Or straight to death or glory rides.

The sense of duty first of all,
Warm heart that seeks all others' good,
And wins and sways the great and small;
Just such a man is Leonard Wood.

The Red Man's craft he overcame,
His stars he won on San Juan's height
And on our country's scroll of fame
His name is fixed forever bright.

And now he governs hearts and lives
With tact and firmness rare to see;
And stricken Cuba's hope revives
With foretaste of the days to be.

With such as he to rule and guide,
Where'er our flag shall be unfurled,
We'll shrink from no emprise untried,
And colonize the whole round world.

We've drunk to Dewey, Sanger, Schley,
Greene, Evans, too, as good friends should;
Tonight we drain our glasses dry,
With three times three for General Wood.

Sunday School Lesson for April 9.

THE ANOINTING IN BETHANY.

JOHN XII: 1-11

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D.,

Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

CONTEXT.—After the raising of Lazarus Jesus made a brief circuit in Ephraim and in the borders of Samaria. The synoptic Gospels record the following events of that journey, which John fails to mention—the healing of the lepers, the parable of the unjust judge, the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the question of divorce raised by the rabbis, the blessing of the little children, the rich young ruler, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, the request of James and John for places of honor, the healing of blind Bartimeus, the visit to the house of Zaccheus, the parable of the pounds. By these deeds and teachings Jesus was preparing those who accompanied Him for the approaching tragedy that would close His earthly career. At length He retraced His steps and moved toward Jerusalem, followed by the little band of apostles and by some of the people who clung to Him, partly through curiosity and partly through gratitude.

VISIT.—Directly in the pathway of Jesus was the little village of Bethany, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, near the point where the road to Jericho begins to descend more precitately to the Jordan valley. Many trees give the place an air of seclusion and repose. Here Jesus halted six days before His last Passover (verse 1), that is on Friday. He came to rest in the beautiful home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus whom He loved (John xii, 3), with whom previously He had held sweet converse. In that quiet retreat in the midst of tried friends He would find comfort as a preparation for the ordeal through which He must shortly pass. The historian has drawn a veil over the hours of the holy Sabbath that were thus devoted to those delightful communings which they only know who have been brought into the fellowship of complacent love and of admiring gratitude. We are left to conjecture what transpired.

SERVICE.—Of this visit at Bethany a single incident is mentioned—a supper made for Jesus at the house of Simon, the leper (Matt. xxvi, 6). There have been many conjectures concerning the host, most scholars (see Ewald) believing taht he was the father of Lazarus, and that Jesus had cured him of the leprosy. Be that as it may the feast was chiefly memorable because of a woman's deed of love. While Lazarus sat at the table, and Martha served (verse 2), true to her habit of busy usefulness (Luke x, 40), Mary sat and gazed anl yet more deeply worshipped the Lord who had restored her brother to life (John xi, 44). Impelled to some outward sign of her gratitude, she rose, brought a costly vase of Indian spikenard, broke the alabaster, and poured the precious contents over His feet (verse 3) and His head (Mark xiv, 3). And then, "unconscious of any presence have His, she wiped those feet with the long tresses of her hair, while the atmosphere of the house was filled with the delicious fragrance." It was an act of devoted self-sacrifice, of exquisite self-abandonment.

CRITICISM.—Did any one ever do a generous act that was not condemned by some one? Humanity appears to be divided into two great classes—those who go forward and do something, and those who come after and find fault. On this occasion the loving woman was censured by a selfish man—Mary, the hostess, by Judas Iscariot, the guest. How seldom does the mind of man place just estimate upon the heart of woman. The question of Judas (verse 5) was a left-handed profession of charity. He would have sold the ointment and given the proceeds to the poor. Regard for the unfortunate was in those days esteemed a mark of excellence, which most men were eager to exhibit before other (Matt. vi, 1). The plea of Judas, as he expected, gained favor with other disciples, who took up the same argument and murmured against Mary because of her wastefulness (Matt. xxvi, 8). On a commercial or humanitarian basis these men were right in their complaint. With fifty dollars bread could have been purchased for the hungry and clothing for those who were unclad.

MOTIVE.—The question of Judas was a cloak to cover a sordid motive. People rarely sin under the full glare of self-consciousness—they usually blind themselves with false pretexts. While pleading the cause of distinterested charity Judas was dominated by the spirit of avarice (verse 6). He was the treasurer of the apostolic band, receiving and disbursing the money. This fact had strengthened his one besetting sin. "The failure to struggle with his temptations; the disappointment of every expectation which had drawn him to Jesus; the intolerable rebuke conveyed to his whole being by daily communion with sinless purity"—all these things gradually prepared him for this hour when he looked on Mary's offering with covetous eyes, feeling that he had been cheated of that which would still further minister to his greed. Unfortunate man! He could not appreciate the act of love of his Master, whom within a week he would betray (verse 4) for one-tenth the amount of the ointment (Matt. xvii, 9).

APPROVAL.—The Master came promptly to the defense of Mary, who had been rudely condemned in her own house by those who shared her hospitality. Jesus regarded the motives of all concerned, as well as the significance and far-reaching consequences of the deed. With authority He said "Let her alone," a sharp rebuke (verse 7) for their interference. Then came the explanations. Mary had "wrought a good work" (Matt. xxvi, 10). It was the outpouring of a heart full of love, and there is no condemnation proper to those who love Jesus. Besides, the anointing was prophetic, so Christ declared, a preliminary to His burial (Mark xiv, 8), a performance beforehand of what was usually done after death (Mark xiv, 1). As to the poor they might at any time receive alms (verse 8), but Jesus would soon be gone and this was the last opportunity to show affection for Him. Still further to commend the act of Mary and to encourage her, Jesus informed the company that what she had done would be told in distant lands (Mark xiv, 9) to her immortal praise, by successive generations.

CURIOSITY.—The words of Jesus closed the incident, and the narrative of the sacred writer next deals with outward conditions and surroundings. Owing to the simplicity of oriental life there was less seclusion in the home. People were not regarded rude if they came uninvited wherever any unusual event might awaken interest. Hence the Jews of Bethany, possibly some from other places, knowing that Jesus was a guest at Simon's house, gathered about and even pressed into the court. They may have interrupted the conversation just described. They were brought together chiefly out of curiosity (verse 9). They desired to see Lazarus, who a short time before had been called back from death. They would satisfy themselves that he did truly live, and they would witness the remarkable spectacle of a former dead man sitting in the presence of the one to whom he owed his life. There was nothing reprehensible in this. Most men in our day would be moved by a similar spirit.

ENMITY.—Many who thus came to see Lazarus and his illustrious Benefactor, convinced that the reported miracle had been wrought, believed on Jesus and went away from the house declaring their faith in Him (verse 11). It is impossible to state the nature of that faith. Probably it amounted to little more than an intellectual assent to His Messiahship, with indefinite notions of that. But this expression of popular approval, whatever it was, awakened the jealousy of the chief priests, who desired to retain for themselves and for the institutes of religion whatever support the people might give. But here was a dilemma. The living Lazarus was an unanswerable argument for the divinity of Christ—the work attested the worker (John xiv, 11), just as a saved man is a witness to the Saviour (Luke xxiv, 48). The enmity of the priests, who long determined on the death of Jesus, was therefore directed toward Lazarus, who was also named as a victim (verse 10).

Conclusion—Our lesson presents human society in miniature. Study the elements: 1. Here is the woman of thoughtful care, who serves at table, Martha, the practical housekeeper. 2. Here is the man, once dead, now sitting quietly at supper with friends. 3. Here is the loving Mary who honors her Master with a precious gift. 4. Here is the critic, who professes a virtue to hide his selfishness. 5. Here are disciples who are borne along by the specious cry of a bad man, for the moment drawn by his false pleading. 6. Here are the Jews, doubting but seeking, coming to see, going away to report. 7. Here are the priests, with murder in their hearts, beholding this scene of loving service, of sweet communion, of awakening faith, conspiring against the innocent. 8. Here is He, who all through His earthly life, endured the contradictions of sinners (Heb. xii, 3), who defends womanly love and sacrilice against man's deceitful accusation and base greed, the Lord Jesus, the lustre of whose character increases by contrast with those about Him.

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