

*Prof. Brant*

# HAMILTON LIFE.

Vol. II.

CLINTON, N. Y., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1900.

No. 17.

## A Cutting System Discussion.

There is one thing, touched upon before by us, which we wish to emphasize now. If any person differs with the ideas we express, we would be glad to publish an answer. Hamilton College is an institute to fit young men for life. Now, these young men come to Hamilton College because it is of their choice, and not because of any power that the college can exercise on them. On this basis, the cut system is wrong, because if students come here to learn, they should not be forced to learn, but should be taught to seek learning. But, as a protection against ourselves, most of the students here are glad of the cut system which compels them to overcome their temporary laziness, and strive on to the goal of that ambition which they have set for themselves. Now, we maintain that this compulsion should cease when there is good reason for an absence. When a whole class, composed of students voluntarily coming here to be trained, for some especial reason, wish to have a recitation omitted, then that recitation should be omitted. The trustees and faculty may say if you do not like our cut system, get out. This is too infantile a proposition to admit of its discussion. Again, they may say that students are sent here by their parents, and that the officials owe it to the parents to see that the students are educated nilly or willy. We answer this by saying that if a college is to be a training school of life, you should not restrict collegians to such an extent that they are mere children, for you so unfit them to take the place of a man of discretion in the world. If this does not apply to sophomores and freshmen, it must of necessity apply to seniors and juniors, if we assume the ideal of a college to be the making of a man who is fit to be a citizen of the world.

On these grounds we condemn the refusal of professors to give cuts when classes ask them; the arbitrary legislation and punishment of the discipline committee, any arbitrary and absolute cut system. To meet the requirements of a college which would fulfill its duties, we then maintain that a cutting system should be flexible, and a considerable amount of discretion should be left to be exercised by separate professors who can see and understand the needs and demands of separate classes.

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### The Cutting System.

"Life" has had something to say upon the cutting system in a former issue; and we shall continue to oppose it as it now stands. The number of cases in which injustice is done by the operations of this iniquitous system is increasing every term. We wish to be understood in this matter. We favor any just and equitable set of rules, administered in a fair manner, that will tend to diminish the absence rate; and the present system, with a few, but radical alterations, would meet the demands of the faculty, and commend itself to the good sense of the student body.

The main objection to the present tyranny is in regard to the action taken upon absences because of illness. The mode of procedure is to soak a man for all his cuts of the term succeeding that in which he was ill. Suppose a man becomes injured, or is taken ill, and has to stay indoors for a week or longer. Naturally he uses cuts in excess of his allowance. At the next faculty meeting his cuts are taken away from him for the succeeding term. If he sends in an obsequious request, the zeros attendant upon his over cutting certain recitations are remitted. In sooth, this is gracious on part of the faculty. The idea of punishing a man, for that is what it practically amounts to, for having

fallen ill, something for which, supposedly, he is not to blame; or, at least, which he didn't bring on himself for the sake of pleasure and recreation.

But view the further consequences. Suppose the man be compelled to stay out for some period in the next term. Of course, all absences taken thus are overcuts; and the righteous faculty soak him in the same manner as before for his next term's cuts; so on, as far as you please. The only possible way a man can regain his original status is by attending every single chapel and recitation for some one term. Then, perhaps, he will receive his cuts again. This has been done, and hence can be done, we admit. But the cases in which a man has succeeded in attending every recitation and exercise during a term, are very, very few and far between.

A man who is compelled to stay indoors because of illness or injury ought to receive an absolute excuse. There is no other fair way. It could not be difficult for the faculty to know or to ascertain that a man had been legitimately kept indoors. The more the college reflects upon this injustice, notes the increasing number of cases where injury is wrought, the more bitter does it become. There ought to be a change here, in the name of justice. "The cases will be decided according to equity," says the catalogue, but they are not.

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When we begin to grow reserved, and cold, and less patronizing toward those whom we have considered our intellectual inferiors, and they to grow more familiar toward us, it is a clear indication that we are both sensible of a diminishing relative superiority.

Men often hold in contempt those who have an idolatrous admiration for them, one reason being perhaps that they are conscious of not deserving it, and sensible, therefore, of the poor discernment of their worshippers.



## Athletic Department.

R. S. C. DRUMMOND, - - - - - Editor  
E. J. WARD, - - - - - Reporter

### Intercollegiate.

Active efforts are being made by Yale Upper-classmen to entirely suppress sophomore secret societies. Indications point to their early abolition.

Yale, Amherst, Brown, Wellesley and University of California have new Presidents this year.

University of California beat Stanford in their recent intercollegiate debate. The subject was "Resolved that in France the minister should be responsible to the President."

In the Rutger N. Y. N. debate scheduled for April 20, all the Rutger representatives are seniors and all the N. Y. N. men, juniors.

It costs a girl \$400 to go to Vassar, \$400 to go to Smith, \$420 for a year at Wellesley, and between \$450 and \$550 to spend a year at Radcliffe. Ex.

California and Stanford have agreed to employ hereafter as foot-ball coaches only alumni from their own institutions.

The University of Pennsylvania has two new undergraduate publications, "The Examiner," a weekly; and "The Punch Bowl," a monthly, sixteen page comic paper illustrated. Ex.

An athletic council has recently been chosen at Dartmouth to direct her general athletic policy.

Union contemplates the organization of an undergraduate council similar to that in vogue at Amherst.

Among the coaches engaged by the different universities for base ball are Dr. E. H. Nichols, Harvard; Irwin of Washington league team, U. of P.; Keater, Yale '97, Columbia; and Jemings of last year's Brooklyn team, Cornell. Ex.

The Amherst club of Chicago has offered to Amherst students two prizes of \$25 and \$15 respectively for the best two new Amherst college songs.

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### Some Coasting Suggestions.

In considering the means to be employed in making coasting on the hill less dangerous to life and limb, there

are but two or three improvements necessary, as far as the hill itself is concerned.

The first dangerous point is the curve above the arbor. To insure safety in rounding this, a plank should be placed on each side of the arbor entrance, above, and running a little distance inside, to prevent a sled from striking either of the stone pillars. Some such preventative is necessary on each side, to protect the coasters in case the sled leaves the rut too soon or too late. That this is a requisite improvement must be admitted, in view of the accident which happened lately. Had there been some guide on the right side of the walk, beginning just above the arbor, even though the speed were extraordinary, no possibility of such a severe bodily injury could have arisen.

The second which needs some remedy to render it less dangerous to personal safety, is the Psi U curve. This turn in its present condition, no matter whether the speed be excessive or moderate, owing to its shallowness, causes the sled to jump the rut at several points. This danger necessitates a deepening of the rut all along the walk, or else the railing of a two by four on the edge of the walk to raise the level above that of the ground. Were such a remedy applied there would not be so much danger of the coasters being precipitated over the embankment, and of having their career ended in the ditch.

But all the aforesaid improvements are of the material sort. These alone can not entirely do away with the perils of swift coasting. No matter how well these dangerous spots may be repaired, unless necessary precaution be taken, the remedy will be of no avail. Moreover, even in gliding along the straight stretch below the corner of the campus, a careless steersman may be hurled against one of the trees bordering the path, owing to the dangerous pitch-holes. Care must be observed on this part of the course, especially when the snow is worn away to the ashes. Such dangers can only be averted by observing a proper amount of precaution, and by keeping cool, for no artificial remedy would suffice. So we may even go so far as to say that precaution is of primary importance, and that the improvement which may be made, will serve only as a

means of salvation after the former has failed. In fact, they are correlative. A man after his attention and care have proven inadequate, either owing to the speed or his inability to brake sufficiently, can only look to these projected remedies in the light that they may in the case of the arbor, save him from destruction, and in that of the Psi U curve, afford him a possibility of changing to the deep rut or timber, and thereby getting safely around the turn.

(Written by a competitor for the staff.)

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### The Fire Escape Question.

Everyone knows that north college should have fire escapes, and knows besides that it has none. If the dormitory was a hotel, the owners or proprietors could be prosecuted criminally under 4476 of the penal code. Unfortunately this law can not be made to apply to college dormitories, but law or no law, the moral rightness and wrongness is there. We should think that the conscience of Dr. Stryker and the board of trustees would tell them that they ought what they ought. Well, if this is true, the debatable question is, ought they to put in fire escapes. We intend to show that they should. Firstly, they are not expensive, and so no objections can be offered on that ground. Secondly, they might be a means of saving the building itself in case of fire; and finally they would be a precaution against a great disaster, a loss of life among the students during a fire. This disaster would injure the reputation of this college, materially if not fatally among the newspaper reading public.

There is no doubt that a fire in the college would have its humorous side. Few things are here which do not have that side. We can all see Little Greek clothed in a Greek lexicon and a Greek grammar dropping from his window in the second story. Dodge would come out weighted down with all of his belongings, not even one forgotten. Murray Andrews, mercifully covered with Latin texts and cat texts would lower himself down by means of his tied bedclothes; and Waddell, he would show his foresight by throwing a bed, a sofa or a Morris chair out of the window, so he would have some place to rest if he should get out. Undoubtedly, Dick Cookinham would have to go back for his waste basket, and Deke would probably be cremated with his book of jokes rather than escape without it. But this is irrelevant. Next week we will discuss this question from a standpoint purely legal, and endeavor to show that it is necessary in self-defense for the trustees to put fire escapes in north college.



**A Little Epic.**

Characters. Hank Miller and a freshman.

Place. Near Prexy's pig pen.

Freshman. Hank, where are all of Prexy's pigs?

Hank. Why, haven't you noticed all the pork we have been getting at the hash house lately? (There follows a soliloquy on the lack of perception of the ordinary man. In the meantime the freshman has fled.)

O:O  
**SQUIBS.**

When does Prexy's foot ball dinner come?

John Van Allen has been sick in bed with a sore throat the latter part of last week and first part of this.

Minor and Tuthill are laid up with the mumps. There seems to be quite an epidemic of these around college.

The Hon. Freak Hull has been out billing dates for the dramatic club. He has proved himself quite a hustler as an advance agent.

The dramatic club makes its first appearance in the Scollard Opera House on Saturday evening, February 17. Everybody is invited to come and pay the price.

Freshmen are beginning to realize some of their numerous duties.

Hodges was severely injured, while coasting the hill on February 1. He ran into the arbor, being unable to complete the turn. He broke his leg in two places, also rupturing two arteries. His injuries will not permanently disable him, but will lay him up for a considerable time. It is needless to say that Hodges has the sympathy of the college.

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Mail leaves the Hill at the convenience of the carrier and comes up after the carrier gets down.

There appears in this issue an answer to the criticism on the interclass debate which we published last week. This answer was written by one of our subscribers, and the attitude taken is manifest to all. "Life" wishes to state in regard to the criticism of last week, that it was not written by any senior or junior of our staff, but by one who was not of these classes, and so had no particular sympathy in the success of either side. The motive of the writer was to give a fair impartial account. If any person sees partisanship in the criticism, it would be well for them to examine their own judgment to see if it is unbiassed.

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The nature of the college man is subject to, and characterized by, the frequent ebullition of animal spirits. This desire to "have some fun" manifests itself in many ways, from the grander

acts of deviltry, such as stealing the chapel bell or tearing up village sidewalks, or releasing Prexy's pigs, down to "having a circus" in some recitation. When a class assembles, the slightest opportunity for fun or disturbance is seized upon immediately. This is natural. The college man tries his hardest to extract some fun out of existence; he flees at a chance to rid his mind of thoughts of bohning; the time or the theme of his mirth matters not, providing there are other congenial souls with him to sympathize with and partake of his merriment. Nor is it reprehensible. It may seem rude and disrespectful to the professor in charge, but it is never meant to be so. The instructor generally thinks that the disturbance is directed against him and his exercise, and he takes summary measures to check it. He is wrong, in our humble opinion, both as to his conception of the nature of the difficulty and as to the means he employs to secure cessation or prevent re-occurrence. We shall give the reasons for our statement.

However prone to indulge in such "childishness," as it is called, the college man may be, we firmly believe that he is, every time, a gentleman; whole-souled, generous, chivalric, sympathetic. Often impulsive, he is always ready to acknowledge a mistake, especially of conduct, and to acknowledge it in a substantial manner, too. One of the most gartifying features of college life is the remarkable emwillen gress, on the part of any man, to give offence or to hurt another's feelings. The realization of any personal slight or wrong to another is followed by prompt amends. College men are always obliging. In this community of ours there are few men who wouldn't do a favor for their friends, who need more than a mere suggestion to induce them to accommodate their fellows.

This chivalric spirit is what professors ought to appeal to in case their pupils deviate a hair's breadth from the course of strict and absolute attention. Dr. Stryker realizes this, as is shown by the friendly talk he had with the college on the occasion of his resuming charge of the noon chapels. He didn't say in a brow-beating manner: "If I catch any man even whispering during

these exercises, I'll expel him from college." He did say words something like these: "You men can make impossible all my efforts if you want to. You can destroy order in this chapel, and I shall be powerless to prevent it. But you realize what a sacrifice I am making to take up this work again. I am doing this for your good, and I want your cooperation. I appeal to you as gentlemen to conduct yourselves properly, and I ask it as a favor to me." Has Dr. Stryker had any serious trouble during noon chapels? Not at all. His appeal met with a ready response from the hearts of his chivalrous and generous students. There wasn't a man that went out of the chapel after that talk, who didn't feel that he would be disgraced in his own eyes and in those of others, if he didn't oblige—yes, that's the word, oblige—the president. Professors can't realize too much the potency of such an appeal. A personal, friendly talk with a too exuberant student will work wonders. A young professor—or an old one, either—can so state things to a man that not only will he insure the future good behavior of the refractory, but he will also make of them friends and co-workers. The college man's heart is all right. He doesn't do wrong intentionally; and after having been disciplined for some act of thoughtlessness, he is likely to feel very bitter in his soul, and to cry out in that fallible but generous heart of his, "How much better it would have been for him to have taken me aside, and talked to me a little. Then I would have thought everything of him, and he would never have been troubled again by my inattention or my thoughtlessness."

All honor to the manliness of the American college student! Generous, obliging, good-hearted, gay, sincere, true, he is, nevertheless, a bitter hater of injustice. Let him, after calm deliberation, once decide that a professor has wronged him, and no longer may that professor count on loyalty and respect from him. Which course is the easier and more beneficial in the end? Resort to drastic measures or friendly and personal appeal? Ask any college student, and he will answer without hesitation.



Local Department.

H. MINTZ, - - - - - Editor.  
 J. P. TATE, - - - - - Reporter.

LOCALS.

The dramatic club appears in the Scollard Opera House to-night. "Life" has harped on this subject a great deal, but we still further urge on the college the propriety of supporting this college association. We understand from one of our reporters who was present at a rehearsal that the play "London Assurance" is a good one, and that the dramatic club will render it as well as could be expected. So, fellows, this duty of yours will be a pleasurable one. Happy is he who can combine pleasure and duty in such a way as can the student who goes to see the dramatic club's first night.

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February 14. Juniors takes the seniors' scalp in debate. Lucky juniors. Chick Mason curls his hair tight, and attempts to make a bluff. Bill Nye generously postpones history review. Dramatic club rehearsal at Chi Psi House. Deke Taylor gets off some pretty fair gags.

February 15. Prexy cuts ethics again. Seniors have not had ethics for over a week now. Waddell has a waking moment. He may "come to" yet. Hi. Henry has a little time on the campus. He is getting to be quite a gay boy. Everyone goes to the show in Utica, even Deke Taylor. The basket ball team goes to Utica and meet a defeat to the tune of 40-16. They seem quite happy on the train home, however. G. T. White comes out from Utica in his frock coat and top hat. "What makes the atmosphere so hot?" Freshmen have short gym.

February 16. Seniors have ethics again. They had almost forgotten what it was like, it was so long a succession of cuts. Little Shep appears with his beard trimmed. Ben Moore came back to consciousness. We had omitted to say that after hearing the decision Wednesday night he became delirious. Houghton gives a party, at which there are about forty college fellows. All the fellows who were there had an enjoyable time. They enjoyed the dancing.

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the girls, and the refreshments. On the last sure, Miller, Henderson and Shepard can testify from long experiences—8 dishes of cream a piece. Several members of the faculty go to a farmer's association convention at Utica and cut their recitations.

February 17. Some of the fellows feel a little tired. Some were at the Houghton dance, and some others were at a cock fight. These latter seem to feel the effects of their dissipation exceedingly. Dr. Terrett postpones a review. Dramatic club's rehearsal at Chi Psi house in the evening, but Deke's jokes were missing. Lake, '02, arrives here for a short visit. We are glad to see our ex-members back to visit the old hill. Sophomore hop cards came out, and the scrapping begins. Committee appointed, by upper classmen to open negotiations for an intercollegiate debate with Colgate. Lee and Redmond selected as that committee. Freak does fine on chapel stage. Rick seconds a motion in college meeting. Freshmen have their essay work in Square's room.

February 18. Dr. Stryker preaches, and Dr. Terrett gives another of his lectures on "Sociology of the Bible" in Silliman Hall. Charles S. Hatch, 1901, comes back for sophomore hop. Another ex-member shows his affection for our alma mater.

February 19. Monday morning, the first week day of the momentous sophomore hop week. We see fellows getting in training already, so that they will be able to stand the pressure of three nights—all night. Freshmen get cut in Bible. Dr. Terrett holds a review in American history, and seniors feel happy to get it out of the way before the dances begin—is it not? Handy wipes that pious smile off his face, and prepares his mind for the coming festivities. Even Ben Moore allows some of the sad melancholy to fade from his countenance. Ratsey Fisher temporarily forgets his delinquency in economic history. Ham-Colgate, 1903, basketball team comes up to try our freshmen, and is defeated by a score of 32-9. Bugs cuts. Second time this year. Schnitz wears his overcoat in recitation, and the class follows suit. Juniors hold Bible in ethical room. Room cold as an ice box. Every man kicks his heels, swings his arms, scratches his head, and

adapts various expedients to absorb a little heat. It's too bad we can't have a hot recitation.

February 20. Preparations for the hop begin in earnest. Curry cuts French. All the classes strife for cuts on Friday, but don't all succeed in getting them. Chi Psi and D. K. E. have "house parties" this week. Dances at Chi Psi and Psi U Houses. The advance guard of the fair ones arrives on the hill.

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To the Editors of "Life,"

Gentlemen: A criticism of the recent inter-class debate appeared in the last issue of your paper, which I do not believe did justice either to the contest as a whole, or to the gentlemen who upheld the affirmative side. The writer begins his article by stating his intention to attempt "a critical estimation of the lines of attack and defense." But the report was neither that of a reporter, nor of a critic. It was written from the viewpoint not of a judge but of an advocate. It was not criticism but advocacy. The true critic, I have always imagined, was one who entirely eschewed obtruding his own peculiar opinions and sympathies upon his readers; whose point of view was entirely objective; whose purpose was to enable his subject to stand out clear and distinct in the light of just and intelligent analysis. In the present instance, the subject of our critic was not the Boer-British struggle, but the debate on that mooted question. It is a questionable procedure, it appears to me, to inject one's own views and partialities into a review whose avowed purpose is "a critical estimation of the lines of attack and defense." Though the writer doubtless intended to treat and probably in a greed he was treating both sides fairly, very evidently, he permitted his prejudices to a large extent to control his estimate of the arguments advanced. Perhaps this judgment is biased, yet I cannot but feel that he has been somewhat unfair to the affirmative debaters, and to the judges, who certainly could never have rendered the decision they did, had the true weight of the arguments pro and con been that which he gives to them.

The critic gives Mr. Stowell credit for "auspiciously" opening the debate, but

says he made a mistake in defining sympathy as something involuntarily. Now, Mr. Stowell distinctly stated that this was only the dictionary definition, and immediately after gave to the word that broader interpretation substantially similar to that with which Mr. Miller restated the entire argument of both sides. There was no "quagmire," therefore, from which "his colleagues failed to extricate" Mr. Stowell. Our critic states with reference to Mr. Stowell's contention, that the British should communicate their boasted civilization to the Boers, that the debaters of the affirmative expressed, at times, the opinion that the Boers would not be civilized. I am quite certain they expressed no such opinion, but held rather that this people refused to be civilized by force of arms.

Speaking of Mr. Miller's debate, our critic says of it, that it was clear and logical, with which judgment I heartily accord. But to say that the affirmative made no effort to reply to it, "whether through a feeling of inability or a failure to perceive its dangerous force," is an error so gigantic, that it deserves more than a passing comment. I distinctly affirm that the next speaker, Mr. Quinn, did reply to it, and let us see in what manner.

Mr. Miller's argument was to the effect that the Boers had violated the treaty of '84, and on this account both parties were thrown back on the treaty of '81, which gave the British control over the internal affairs of the Transvaal. Mr. Quinn entirely disposed of this contention when he enumerated the provisions of the treaty of '81, and showed that it gave to England no right to interfere in the internal policies of the South African Republic. I am informed that he takes his authority not from prejudiced magazine articles, but from the Standard Encyclopedia, and from page 2964 of Larned's History of Ready Reference and Topical Reading. It was only one point against Mr. Miller's argument, but it removed the foundation from the whole structure. The critic also gives vent to a "vague feeling," that Mr. Quinn's statements with respect to Mr. Chamberlain's and Lord Derby's views on the treaty were unjust to those gen-



tlemen. I would like to ask if he can suggest any method by which one man can better represent another's opinion on any subject than by quoting that person's own words. The words of Messrs. Chamberlain and Derby were quoted absolutely and verbatim.

With the statement that Mr. Moore's argument was "interesting" and "effective," I cordially agree. But that it "was answerable as his opponents evidently realized," does an injustice, I believe, to the gentlemen of the affirmative. Mr. Moore's arguments were repeatedly answered immediately by Mr. Redmond, and later by his colleagues in a way that seemed almost if not quite conclusive. That Mr. Redmond's "chance guess at the source of the previous speakers information" was in truth a loss of "valuable time," may very well be questioned, for if it took Mr. Redmond fifteen seconds to state it, it consumed at least two minutes of his opponents' time in endeavoring to disprove it.

The arguments of Mr. Mintz that the Boers are legally right and morally justified in their policy toward the Outlanders, the critic attempts to answer only passingly by references to the negative and ambitiously, and at length by an array of his own convictions and sympathies, a procedure which seems to me to be entirely beyond the province of true criticism. It is my opinion that Mr. Mintz proved his contentions far more conclusively than did his opponents. I am inclined to think that the writer's prejudices led him to accept strong assertion on the part of the negative as positive proof.

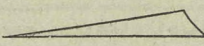
In his review of the rebuttal, the writer adopts substantially the same "critical" method, depreciation of the affirmative, exaltation of the negative, exposition of personal views and sympathies.

This paper, Mr. Editors, makes no pretense of being a complete, or even unbiased criticism of the debate, but is a partial answer to a criticism which I consider as little justice either to the judgment of the judges, or to the arguments of the affirmative.

Very respectfully,  
A Subscriber.

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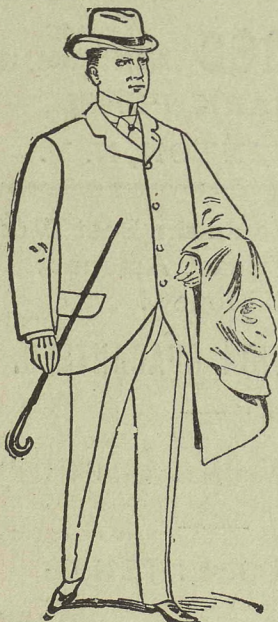
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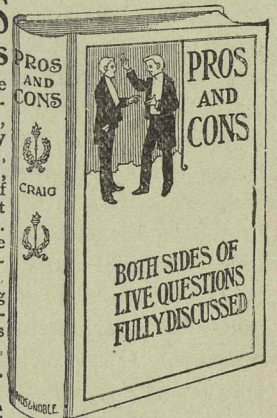
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