

Catholic Citizen

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society),
55, Berners Street, London, W.1.

Vol. XXVIII. No. 11.

15th NOVEMBER, 1942.

Price Twopence.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which *you* shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

Francis Thompson.

To Christian England

By CHRISTINE SPENDER.

We do not know what the post-war world will be like. Much as we may plan and dream incalculable events may have occurred before the armistice, which will inevitably push these plans awry. Yet this should not prevent us from making up our minds that certain wrong things that happened all the time in the pre-war world shall not continue to show their ugly heads after peace has been signed. Thus the perpetual profit motive in trade and big business, which put the emphasis on success in competition with a rival rather than on the welfare of the worker and real excellence in the goods, hardly did credit to a Christian country. What did it matter to rivals in the trade and business world that thousands of able men and women were unemployed, that so many were round pegs in square holes and that profits were being made at the expense of dead-end juvenile labour? While the adolescent was being lost as a useful citizen he was at the same time acting as black-leg to the older worker—all for the sake of profit-making. Everybody knew something was wrong yet nobody knew quite what to do, and economy of national means was always the tune the piper played. War has put many problems in the background for the time being—but they will return to the foreground in peace, and even now such things as slums and malnutrition are always with us.

John Armitage in his book, "To Christian England," tries to put his finger on the crying evils of English life in pre-war days and to suggest some remedies. He realises in the first place that there must be a real change of heart in the individual Christian before our collective

sins can be remedied. What is the use, indeed, of crying "equality of opportunity for all" when each one of us clings hard to privilege and prejudice at the expense of others? What again is the use of saying evils must be remedied when we refuse to look those evils in the face, when we shrug our shoulders and say, "Really—are you *sure*?"—as some particularly nauseous aspect of poverty is described to us? When we refuse to walk through slum districts; refuse to think of our brother or sister who has become "unemployable," or to consider the permanently injured of the last war? These are painful things and human nature shrinks from pain and lets the other fellow bear it. It was not till the raids were on us in all their grim horror that we made any real stand for adequate shelters and shelter accommodation. Then things were done and done immediately. It is not, as John Armitage points out, until propaganda employs itself in showing up our blots and branding them as disgraceful that we shall really get to work.

John Armitage is above all practical in his diagnosis and in the remedies he suggests. He takes the housewife and points out how the great improvements in our health services "though available, have largely passed by the mothers in the courts, streets and alley-ways." "For one thing," he says, "the mothers come under no system of insurance . . . the mother, being an unpaid domestic worker, does not easily fit in with a national scheme and is therefore allowed, to remain forgotten . . . voluntary schemes are insufficient." The housewife's health suffers greatly from bad living conditions and from living below the poverty line as was pointed out in Margery Spring Rice's "Working Class

* "To Christian England." By John Armitage. (Longmans. 5s.).

Wives." Even if she makes use of clinic and doctor she so often finds herself unable to take their advice, through lack of money and a little leisure.

In considering problems such as illegitimacy, the fate of old age pensioners condemned to live on means only just adequate to sustain life, real equality in education, John Armitage does not forget to consider the domestic servant. He hopes she will not survive this war "in the still recognised form of an underpaid, status-less creature whose wellbeing depends on the good or bad intentions of a mistress." He considers it "little short of a crime that most of the duties, like cooking, sewing and looking after children, should be regarded by the well-to-do as something to escape from, while they occupy their time with trivialities of relatively little social importance." If one set of people regard domestic duties as beneath them it is hardly surprising that others should do the same and prefer different employment. However "many girls are eminently suited to domestic duties" (less soul-deadening after all than some factory processes) and John Armitage seems to think that these natural proclivities may be satisfied and difficulties overcome by Domestic Help Agencies who "will supply domestic assistance at reasonable terms either regularly or when needed." He thinks the living-in maid will go, because when a domestic help lives in it is almost impossible to remove legitimate grievances though this could be done by according "a forty-eight hour week, more late nights and a social status in the household."

In a very interesting chapter John Armitage describes the "Family House." He models his ideas on the famous Peckham Health Centre, but in his family house a niche for all would be found. There the health of the community would be cared for, from the cradle to the grave, with no self-consciousness about regular health inspections, attention to the pregnant and nursing mother, and so on, because it would be the ordinary routine enjoyed by all. There the working wife would find a centre of solace and warmth—a prop in all her difficulties. "It would be the place where she could, while shopping, leave her children for an hour or two; it would be the place where she herself could go in the afternoon for a cup of tea and gossip; it would be the place where the children could play while she returned to get father's high tea or supper; it would be the place where, on occasions, she would spend an evening with her husband." He goes on to enlarge the idea. There might be communal meals (a development of the British

Restaurant) a communal laundry and so on. "It would bring a new community life into existence, and at the same time a chance of leisure." In the "Family House" the old age pensioner, the unemployed would find their place and duties. They would have no chance of losing their self-respect for they would still be part of the human family in tangible reality, and in the case of the unemployed new heart would be put into the search for employment, while he or she would be helped perhaps by refresher courses, but above all by human contact and sympathy. The Family House would be a centre of education and culture for both young and old, besides supplying healthy recreation.

An impossible dream? Or impossible unless it is ordained from above, in the true dictatorship manner? Not at all. It is often forgotten that in this country all our public health and assistance services were begun by individual effort and experimentation—by a process of trial and error, with responsibility shouldered by the individual. The individual Christian cannot be expected to solve all our national difficulties himself. But he can, as John Armitage points out, lay down "the conditions which he believes are necessary to enable the individual citizen . . . to lead a satisfactory and full life." His demands will include "freedom from overcrowding, sufficiency of light and an outlook which does not darken the spirit or the soul." (We will continue in John Armitage's words). "He will bear in mind the different requirements of young married couples, the parents with many children, spinsters, bachelors, and old-age pensioners. He will make provision for social activities of every kind, and will present a whole host of demands on behalf of the unaided mother, who will need a rest period, a gossip, health supervision and all manner of gadgets to help her in the daily round." It is for the expert to meet these demands. It is for ordinary Christians "to keep a watchful eye on all experiments, trying to interpret through experience what it is that their neighbour needs and wants."

John Armitage puts forward many concrete ideas which would enable people to get to work without that sense of hopelessness which often accompanies the initial effort of tackling social problems. He quotes Richard Cobden to George Foster (April 14, 1836):

"Let it be done in a formal and open manner to the leading people of the place and neighbourhood, who will thus be openly called upon to exert themselves, and be at the same time instructed how to go about the business. There are many well-meaning people in the world who are not so useful as they might be, from not knowing how to go to work."

Notes and Comments.

Mrs. Roosevelt, whose purpose in this country is "to see for herself what the women of Britain are doing towards winning the war," has had a strenuous time. On different occasions, at luncheon at Buckingham Palace, she has met the heads of the Women's Services, including of course Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Director of the W.R.N.S., and the women M.P.s; she has seen women's public work in its every aspect. At a gathering at the Ministry of Information, at which St. Joan's and many other women's organisations were represented, she declared herself much impressed by what she had seen in England of the work now being done by women for their country, and resolved to tell her own people, when she returned to the United States, that she had found the British people filled with the same spirit as Mr. Churchill.

* * *

The Catholic Insurance Magazine for October, quoted in *The Universe*, records an unusual "dependency" case which came before the Tottenham police court recently and raises large questions of principle. The Middlesex County Council asked that a wife should be ordered to contribute towards the maintenance of her husband, who was an inmate of one of the county institutions. The wife asked the magistrate whether it was not for the husband to keep the wife, but the magistrate replied that the position of men and women had changed tremendously in the past 26 years. It was argued that the husband had not worked for ten or fifteen years and had in that time been kept by the wife, who was receiving 9s. sick benefit for her husband. The court ordered an arrangement whereby the wife when in work should pay over to the authorities an amount equivalent to the sick benefit.

* * *

In Parliament.

On October 14th, Mr. COLEGATE asked the First Lord of the Admiralty why officers of the Women's Royal Naval Service working at the Admiralty or at the W.R.N.S. Headquarters do not receive the allowance given to officers of the Royal Navy working at the Admiralty; and whether he is taking any steps to remove this anomaly?

MR. GEORGE HALL: It has recently been decided to pay Admiralty headquarters allowances to officers of the W.R.N.S. at two-thirds of the rates payable to naval officers of the same relative rank. Payment will be retrospective to 31st July, 1942.

MR. COLEGATE: Upon what principle is the two-thirds allowance based?

MR. HALL: It is in accordance with a policy common to the three Services.

MISS WARD asked the Secretary of State for War whether in view of the fact that children are recognised as legal dependants of widows, they will be so recognised for service allowances when the widows join the Auxiliary Territorial Service?

SIR J. GRIGG: The children of widows who join the A.T.S. are recognised for service allowances in so far that Army dependants' allowances may be issued in respect of them, subject to the usual conditions governing this allowance.

MISS WARD: Are they not issued under a separate order and not as a right as in the case of ordinary families?

SIR J. GRIGG: They are certainly dealt with as dependants' allowances and not as family allowances, but I will certainly look into that point. It merits examination.

MISS WARD: It would be a great satisfaction if my right hon. friend could carry out that undertaking.

* * *

We welcome the fact that Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., at the invitation of the Colonial Secretary, has become a member of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Colonial people.

* * *

The City of Edinburgh's Women's Will to Win rally was held in the Usher Hall on November 7th, Miss Horsbrugh, M.P., and Lady MacRobert, of Dounside, being among the speakers. On November 8th there was a parade through the city of uniformed women and Services and dedications were held in St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral and St. Giles' Cathedral. St. Joan's Alliance was represented by Miss Mardon and Mrs. Watters.

* * *

On October 15th an impromptu tea party was arranged for the Committee members of the Alliance to meet Miss Gertrude Gaffney, the distinguished journalist attached to the *Irish Independent* and a member of the Alliance.

We were happy to have with us also Señorita Durland, of the Cuban Legation, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, and friends from Belgium, France, Greece, and Poland; Miss Mannion from Oldham, Miss Conway and Miss Keenan from the *Catholic Herald* and the *Universe*, respectively.

* * *

Regulation 33B:— This regulation, just announced, compels any man or woman accused, by two independent patients suffering from venereal disease, of being their suspected source of infection, to submit to medical examination and to undergo, if found diseased, the treatment prescribed by the Medical Officer of Health. St. Joan's Alliance opposes this regulation. Write at once to the office for information for your M.P.s.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen"

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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Girls Growing Up*.

The war has produced a spate of books dealing with various aspects of the Youth Movement, but here we have, I think for the first time, a book which sets out, in a practical way, the use, function and cultural advantages of Girls' Clubs. It is a book to make one think: a book which brings home to one the responsibilities we owe to the younger generation. Here is no mere regimentation of facts. The facts are there, it is true, circumstantially and abundantly, but there is something more—something from the pen of one who has delved beneath the surface and who has written an account of her delvings with an obvious desire to help those about whom she has written.

The first chapter of Pearl Jephcott's book is given over to "One Girl's Story," by Mary Smith. It is simply written—often ungrammatical and mis-spelt—in Mary Smith's own words. She starts her narrative at her elementary school in the last year of her schooling:

Lord Keep us safe this night
 Secure from all our fears.
 May angels guard us while we sleep
 Till morning light appears.

"Once more we gabbled, rather than sang the old Vesper hymn and thought how many more times have we to sing it, we have sang it for eight years and there is still another year of school yet." The chapter closes, five years later, with another sentence and quotation:

"In all my books I have a little verse written and I think it is a good one—

I am only one
 Still I am one.
 I can't do everything
 But I can do something.
 What I can do
 I ought to do
 And what I ought to do
 By the grace of God I will do."

* "Girls Growing Up," By A. P. Jephcott (Faber & Faber, 6s.).

Between these two quotations Mary Smith's story—and character—for five years are unfolded. There is the constant inarticulate groping after an ideal which she knows is there but which she cannot express or reach. She tells how she so often failed in the jobs which came her way, haphazard jobs which were often forced upon her because they brought in her weekly contribution to the household exchequer, jobs which she kept for a while until disinclination for the work or the exigencies of the industrial situation made her change. The high lights in the five years were the evenings spent in the Girls' Clubs—of which she appears to have sampled several—and the odd weeks spent at Camps and at Conferences.

It is interesting to see, from this unsophisticated account, how Mary Smith's character slowly unfolds and develops until at the age of 19 she becomes a proud probationer nurse in a busy municipal hospital.

After this revealing opening chapter the book deals with almost every aspect which affects the adolescent girl. One feels that Pearl Jephcott has a real human and sympathetic interest for these girls. She says: "Adolescence is a lovely thing. Artists sometimes crystallise it in a portrait, and many older people are aware of its beauty. On the whole, however, our society seems to ignore its existence for the great proportion of young people who at fourteen have to begin to earn their own living."

One might almost say that the book is an account of a sifting. The girls Pearl Jephcott writes about are girls who do not enter any specialised field of work, they have no individual training. They are mainly factory hands, packing hands and laundry workers. It is only the few—like Mary Smith—who realise that there is something more in life than the ordinary day-to-day living and who aspire to something higher than the factory bench or the ironing table. And

it is through the medium of the Girls' Clubs that this aspiration is aroused.

The chapter on "Leisure" is particularly revealing. Pearl Jephcott certainly must have entered deeply into the life and mind of the girls whose interest she has so much at heart. She was never satisfied with a superficial interest but seems to have penetrated into the personality of these girls and one feels she has a real desire to ascertain their needs—and their preferences in order that she may be of service to them.

"Personal Relationships" is the heading of another chapter. Pearl Jephcott points out how keenly family responsibility is felt by most of these girls who are, in the main, members of large families. At an early age they learn how to look after the younger members of the community, sometimes their own small brothers and sisters and sometimes the children of other families. This is epitomised in the story of a girl of fourteen who says: "A little boy, he's one and a half, came over to our house to-night with a bit of paper pinned on him. "Mind me. Gone to the Pics." I turned it round and wrote: "Can't, going to the Girls' Club," and sent him home. He came toddling back again with: "Take him to his Aunty's" written on him. I was just starting so I gave him to my sister, who is ten, to take up." Later that evening the girl heard from a policeman that a little boy had been found wandering about. She was terribly worried. "Eh! He was my responsibility. I was responsible for him."

And so, I feel after reading Pearl Jephcott's book, we are responsible for these girls. It is for us, whose way is lighted by a larger light of hope and a wider horizon, to light the little candle which these girls gropingly hold up to us. They are willing to learn and we must be equally willing to teach.

The book is full of relevant detail, practical and absorbing. The readers of the *Catholic Citizen* should find it interesting and inspiring and it should prove a useful handbook of concrete information for all concerned with the welfare of youth.

KATHARINE DAVIS.

Books Received.

"MOTHER BRITAIN." By a Trained Nurse and Mid-wife. (John Long. 6s.).

"THE COMMON-SENSE OF CHRISTIANITY." By Dorothy Crisp. (Rich & Cowan. 5s.).

CONFERENCES.

In October conferences were numerous. Among important resolutions passed at the Conference of the **National Council of Women** was one urging that, in the reorganisation of industry after the war, women who now replace men in skilled work practised before the war should resign in favour of men returning from war service, whether combatant or industrial, but that skilled women should be retained in all other employment. This would prevent the dismissal of women now employed on new or expanded processes and their replacement by youths who had done no war service. The same resolution urges that wages should be based not on sex but on nature of occupation, that hours of work should be fixed, and the safety and amenity of working conditions safeguarded, without regard to sex, and that entry into skilled trades, and employment on skilled processes, should be open to men and women equally. Another resolution demanded strict enforcement of protective legislation for those under 18 and the strengthening and extension of such legislation where necessary.

A further resolution called upon the Government to adhere, without compromise, in its schemes for the treatment of venereal disease, to the present voluntary scheme, and to take immediate steps to expand, extend and render accessible facilities for the voluntary skilled treatment of the disease. The necessity for active welfare work in the Forces at home and abroad was emphasised.

At the Conference of the **Women's Freedom League** on "Women's Influence in Parliament and Local Government," Mrs. Tate, M.P., gave a brilliant exposition of the problems facing women in public life together with suggestions for their solution, while Mrs. Cusden, J.P., spoke of the rights and responsibilities of the woman ratepayer.

The Conference of the **Married Women's Association** wished that the Ministry of Health should allow married women workers to contribute to National Health Insurance when they returned to housewifery after the war, this measure to be preliminary to bringing all housewives into the National Health Insurance scheme. Dr. H. P. W. Morgan, M.P., was one of the chief speakers.

At the Conference of the **Women's International League** to consider the Declaration of the Rights of Man, a charter prepared under the chairmanship of Lord Sankey, the fact was stressed that the meaning of the word *man* in this charter includes throughout *woman*.

Lastly, the Annual General Meeting of the **National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child** called upon the Government immediately to bring into force the Adoption of Children (Regulation) Act, 1939, as a matter of pressing urgency. Mrs. Adamson, M.P., made a poignant appeal for marriages by proxy. The Bishop of Pella assured the meeting that they would present no difficulty to the Catholic Church, since Canon Law permits such marriages, provided they are according to the Law of the Land.

At all these Conferences representatives of St. Joan's Alliance were present. E.F.G.

International Notes.

The representations of the United Associations and of other women's organisations in **Australia** have obtained an increase of pay in the W.A.A.A.F. No member living away from home will now receive less than £2 16s. a week. Subsistence allowances have been increased so that they are paid at the same rate as to men in the Forces.

We congratulate Captain Isla Murphy, L.L.B., a committee member of the Australian section of St. Joan's Alliance, on her appointment as Captain in the Australian Women's Auxiliary Service.

Our Hon. Secretary in Australia reports a delightful "Come Together" at morning tea on St. Joan's feast-day at the Paraclete Arts Group Club. The one drawback to a most successful gathering was the absence through illness of Mrs. Henry, the vigorous vice-president, who had made all arrangements for the Mass that morning as well as for the social function. It was the first time she was absent and she was much missed.

We congratulate Mrs. Pierre Casgrain on her election to the House of Commons of **Canada**, where she represents a Quebec constituency as an Independent Liberal. Mrs. Casgrain is a Catholic and a feminist who took an active part in the recent campaign for votes for women in Quebec Province. Her husband, a Liberal, is a member of Mr. Mackenzie King's Cabinet.

News Review states that the Superior Court of Montreal has admitted its first four women barristers. It recalls that when during the last war, Miss Annie MacDonald Longstaff, a

graduate in law of McGill University, took action against the Provincial Bar for refusing her admission, Justice St. Pierre quashed the writ, holding that "to admit a woman—and more particularly a married woman—as a barrister would be nothing short of a direct infringement upon public order and a manifest violation of the laws of public decency."

The Countrywoman for October gives in a short review of "Forty Years Agrowing," Miss M. Viola Powell's history of the Women's Institutes of **Canada**, a vivid account of the origin of the movements—a mother's grief over the loss of her first baby through ignorance of proper infant feeding, and her generous wish to save others from such tragedies. The movement flourished despite the inevitable opposition, and developed and expanded until its influence spread beyond the boundaries of the individual family. It is interesting to recall that it was its President in 1915, Mrs. Alfred Watt, who brought the Institute movement to England.

The Bulletin of the International Council of Women gives an interesting account of the recent work of the N.C.W. in **Denmark**. At their Council meeting in January the main subject was "How can the Women's Organisations promote a better application of the law on 'The Mothers' Aid Institute' which was passed in 1939?" Two of the earlier proposals of the N.C.W. on finding work for unemployed women have now been accepted by the authorities and put into practice by Samfundstjenesten. Deputies for housewives who are sick can be obtained for some hours daily, and are paid no fee by families whose income is below a fixed amount. Centres for mending clothes have also been opened for these poor families.

The *Bulletin* also reports that in **South Africa** two women serve on the Social and Economic Planning Council and two on the Food Control Committee. Two women District Surgeons have recently been appointed and there are now six women Factory Inspectors.

We learn from **Ireland** that the bakers in Cork have gone on strike because women have been given men's work, making confectionery.

The First School in **Southern Rhodesia**, which was started by Mother Patrick and a few

Dominican Sisters, is now one of the leading Girls' Schools in the Colony and is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary.

The Bill introduced by Edith Nourse Rogers creating in the **United States** the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, was passed on May 14th, 1942. The W.A.A.C. will operate with, but not in, the Army, the Director being responsible to the Secretary of War. We are happy to note that women volunteers are entitled to the same pay as men in corresponding grades, but enrolled women are to be given civilians' benefit under the U.S. Employees Compensation Act. In this respect alone, they will receive slightly less than the regular soldiers. Women are entitled to get their jobs back after the war and to receive the same moratorium on debts as do enlisted men.

In answer to a question put by Mr. Creech Jones, the Under Secretary for State stated the number of women appointed since the war in the following colonial services:

Labour Inspection	...	...	1
Welfare and Social Services	...	...	1
Education	...	...	23
Medical	...	...	2
Nurses	...	...	249

He emphasised that there were undoubtedly many appointments made locally of which information had not been received. D.A.B.

CHRISTMAS SALE.

A BRING AND BUY PARTY AND CHRISTMAS SALE will be held on Saturday, December 5th, from 12.30 to black-out, at St. Patrick's Club Rooms, Soho Square. The proceeds will be used for the *Catholic Citizen*. Perhaps few of our readers realise that the cost of producing the paper has gone up by fifty per cent., so that we sell it at considerable loss to ourselves, and it occasionally needs a subsidy! We do not want to raise the price from 2d. as we fear this might limit the usefulness of the paper. So we ask for generosity in giving and buying. Gifts (priced) for the Sale will be gladly received at the office from now on. Friends are also asked to help with the supply of refreshments, which we hope to be able to give throughout the Sale (light luncheons and teas). There will be a stall for secondhand clothes which should interest everyone, and for which we ask gifts.

We feel certain that everyone will respond generously to our appeal and come to Soho Square on December 6th prepared to enjoy themselves—which they surely will do!

J. M. ORGAN, *Hon. Treasurer.*

OXFORD BRANCH OF ST. JOAN'S ALLIANCE.

A meeting to inaugurate an Oxford branch of St. Joan's Alliance was held, by kind permission of St. Anne's Society, on Saturday, 31st October, in Hartland House, 56, Woodstock Road, Oxford, where the Women's Service Library is now housed.

The speakers were Miss P. C. Challoner, M.A., Mrs. Shattock, M.B., B.S., and Miss Barry. Miss Challoner outlined the history of the women's movement, ending with the part played in it by Catholics. Dr. Shattock instanced some of the difficulties still encountered by professional women, and urged that the ground now gained should be retained and extended. Miss Barry put to the meeting the resolution for equal compensation for civilian war injuries, which was carried unanimously. Miss Douie (librarian of the Women's Service Library) spoke of the books, some of them of extraordinary interest, which are available in the library, to which a special subscription for members of the Alliance may be arranged. After the meeting she showed some of the library's treasures.

We were glad to see some old friends and to welcome some of the younger generation who will carry on the work in the future. Altogether the meeting was one which promised very well for the new branch. May it flourish bravely!

The following agreed to serve on the Committee of the Oxford Branch: Miss Joan Morris, chairman; Miss Douie, hon. treasurer; Mrs. Burrough, hon. secretary (Women's Service Library, c/o St. Anne's Society, 56, Woodstock Road, Oxford); Mrs. Lemon, Miss Murphy, Miss Shattock.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

Leonora de Alberti in the "Catholic Suffragist," November 15th, 1917.

"In a recent issue of the *Daily News*, Dr. Marion Phillips dealt with the "Food Difficulties" and the sufferings and hardships which high prices and scarcity bring upon the poor. Sugar, margarine and tea queues are in full swing, and we need little imagination to realise what that means to the already over-burdened working woman. "Is it to be wondered at," she asks, "that the revolutionary ferment amongst women seethes with a heat never known before?" Dr. Phillips feels that there should be priority of distribution to the working-class areas, and that communal kitchens should be established.—*Notes and Comments.*

WANTED a copy of "First the Blade," by Clarence Dane.—Write Box 3, St. Joan's Alliance, 55, Berners Street, W.1, naming price.

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