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Perhaps some of our readers may think that they have had enough of these details. Yet there is one point on which I cannot refrain from dwelling once again. The Prayer-Book Psalter is a very precious heirloom of the English Church, and it should be a labour of love with Anglican scholars to bring all possible light to bear on its details. Whether it is ever destined to undergo a revision, which, while judiciously weeding out its faults, shall leave its matchless English unspoilt, we cannot say. Certainly recent attempts have proved anything but encouraging. If it should ever be undertaken, the workers should be men gifted with strong, solid Hebrew learning, they should be keenly alive to the fact that it is a most glorious work of literary art which they are handling, and they must bring to their task love and reverence for words which twelve generations of Englishmen and Englishwomen have loved only less than those of the Gospels. One can but protest, and that strongly, that our Psalter is not a document of no special consequence, which may be cut and hacked about, in the spirit of some pedantic schoolmaster seeking to exact from his schoolboys minute exactitude and strict uniformity of rendering, even if the result is flat and tasteless. In the early days of Church restoration, zeal, not always accompanied with discretion, wrought things to be repented of, which stand on record to this day. We can afford to wait for the revision of our Psalter till the right men come. It is not yet four hundred years old; the Gallican Psalter, a far less noble production, is over fifteen hundred years old.

R. SINKER.

ART. III.—CHRIST AND ETHICS.

IT is generally recognised that God, in giving to the world His revelation of the supreme Truth, chose a time when human thought had well-nigh spent itself in its efforts to know Him. Man's extremity was God's opportunity. Philosophy had run into mysticism, mysticism into thaumaturgy. In philosophy itself systems had arisen, done their work, and disappeared, leaving nothing but a richer terminology and a wider capacity to receive and interpret the truth of God, when it should be revealed. Like decayed vegetation, when the day of their life and beauty was over, they fertilized the soil that it might blossom as the garden of the Lord. Men learnt, not the solution of the problems, but what were the problems to be solved.

The progress towards the attainment of truth was a regress as well as a progress. When the minds of men lay hold of some new reality, it is impossible to weld the new thoughts with the old into a perfect harmony. The new truth must oust old truths as well as old errors. And especially was this the case before the coming of Christ. Man might discover truths, but *the* Truth must reveal itself to man. Human thought might work forward in a straight line, or it might work round in a circle, but God's revelation alone starts from the centre and sheds light on all around.

It will be my object in this paper to suggest a few thoughts connected with the ethics of the ancient world, which may illustrate the central position occupied by the Gospel as the absolute truth which combines all relative truths.

It is a familiar fact that two main lines of religious and moral life converged at the point where the revelation of the truth was given, Judaism and Paganism. Each had its part in the great preparation of the world for Christ's coming. Paganism, as Bishop Westcott says, testified to the dignity of man, Judaism to the supremacy of God; Christianity reveals the dignity of man in and through God. To the Jew, God and man stood in the sharpest contrast; the immanence of God was forgotten in His transcendence. The Jew was impressed rather with the nothingness of life than with its richness, rather with the littleness of man than with his greatness. Orientalism in general, as we know it, is simple in its ideas, traditional in its instincts, stereotyped in its habits, both of thought and life. So even the Jewish religion with all its intensity could never help a man to face the problems of complex duty or to devote himself to the service of his kind. At its worst it was narrow and petrified; at its best it was unreasoning and intuitive; unfit, in any case, to foster an active and progressive civilization, or to link itself with the spirit of free inquiry.

Thus the religious forces of Judaism perished by a process of contracting and shrivelling, while the religious forces of Greek and Roman civilization expended themselves by the opposite process of dissipation.

Greek religion itself was at first simple and reverential. But it was changed by the conditions of civilization which prevailed in the Greek world. Life in the scattered and isolated cities, when each city was a State, differed widely from the dead level of existence that lay beneath the sceptre of the Great King. And different interests made different men. Let us note the effect of this citizen life on the moral character of the citizen. The moral law, though in its essence divine, takes its shape largely according to the needs of the world in

which we live. Honesty, truthfulness, justice, are duties we owe to society. When we wish to test the soundness of any rule of conduct we sometimes ask ourselves, What effect would be produced on society if such a rule were not observed? But when a man finds himself born into a little world within the great world—a little community at constant variance with the world outside—then a new code of duty is formed, a code based not merely on the broader needs of man as man, but on the needs of the microcosm to which the citizen belongs. This gave the ethics of the Greeks a special character; it raised them above rules to ideals. Consider how easily the exploits of one man could make themselves felt throughout the entire little world in which he lived. The pressure and the stimulus of a municipal democracy, the merging of private into public life, the acute, immediate interest felt by each citizen in the welfare of his city—these new influences made new men. The vast processes of history were condensed; cause and effect, action and reaction, followed in sharp and quick succession, and each little State throbbed with a rich and full and restless life. Mere tame propriety looked a poor thing amid the rush and hurry, the exuberance of spirit, the effervescent enthusiasm which were the life of every democratic State. The crowds of eager spectators at the pan-Hellenic games; the wild excitement of competition in all manly exercises—the boxing match, the chariot race; the ringing applause of a hundred cities; the arts of peace, the triumphs of war—these things were the inspiration of the citizen life.

It is true that over all this there brooded the ever-fading image of a Divine justice, the Judge of all nations. The crime of parricide transcended the ethics of cities, and the ministers of Divine vengeance hunted the unnatural murderer over sea and land to his doom. But such justice, even in the earlier times, seemed so rigid and mechanical, so narrow in its scope, that it could afford but a poor stimulus to righteousness amid the various cares and interests of Greek life. It was a justice whose laws were "Thou shalt not"—a justice too stately to regard any but the greatest crimes, or to look behind the act to the thought and intention of the heart. It carried no scales to weigh the niceties of right and wrong; it stood a cold and spectral form, with drawn sword and bandaged eyes, above the arena of human conflict and passion. The very name seems to imply a direct and unswerving course, the remorseless action of an inevitable law. As each planet revolves at once round the sun, and, independently, on its own axis, so within the sphere of the great laws of Δίκη that ruled the world, a new principle of virtue was formed in the miniature world of each Hellenic city.

To live for ideals is in itself a greater thing than to live merely under rules. The moral law, apart from Revelation, is strictly limited in its power. It is limited in three ways: In the first place, its demands must be sharply defined. Law as law cannot exhort or appeal or stimulate, it can only command. It addresses itself to the will apart from the emotions. In the next place, it must not be too exacting. As it cannot inflict a full and immediate penalty for every fault, it must economize the force at its disposal. It cannot peremptorily require a surrender of the whole life. Thirdly, if its limitations are connected with the emotions and the will, they are also connected with the intellect. When men begin to think on things in general, they will begin to think about the grounds of moral obligation. They will begin to analyze, and the very process of analysis weakens the sense of a direct monition from above.

The Greeks gained great things by this development of civic life. It is clear that as they rose in culture they were learning secrets of life, which for their barbarian neighbours had little meaning. The dignity of man, the many sidedness of true perfection, a common life that enhanced the individual, individuality consecrated to the common life—these were great lessons, and bore rich, if limited, promise for the future.

But if they gained, they also lost; and we see at once what they lost, when we take *motive* into account. The simple imperative of the old moral law, however limited in its scope, rested on the highest sanction that natural religion can give. The standard, however imperfect, however arbitrary, was at least objective and eternal. The impulse afforded by an ideal may be more stimulating, more positive, more inspiring, than that afforded by a law, but it may be less reverential, less purely ethical, less purely religious, more directly selfish.

In other words, the pursuit of an ideal tends to over-exalt self-culture. Natural religion can only supply a limited degree of motive. The instinct of kindness and fair-dealing towards man, the instinct of responsibility towards God, can only bear a limited strain; so, beyond this, the appeal must be to self. The old moral law had been rigid, clearly defined, and unchangeable; in that law man had recognised God, but the ἀρετή which the democratic State demanded was so lively, so diversified, so flexible, that it could not appeal solemnly and directly to the conscience as the will of God; while on the other hand, it was so blended with everything splendid and beautiful, that it appealed to the love of admiration no less than to the sense of duty. And so, when the old motive —an unreasoning intuitive piety—was growing weaker, the only motive that could take its place was self-love. The age

of culture set in, and with culture the Greek mind connected virtue, all that fitted a man to become a good citizen, and to attain to honour and high position. Still there was a higher and lower culture. But the force which counteracted the aberrations of the Sophists was not a solemn and lofty morality like that of the Hebrew prophets; it was the higher culture as against the lower. Plato, when he pleads the cause of an objective standard of right, can only do so by setting truth against mere subjectivity, and teaching men that true happiness lies in the communion of the soul with the unseen, not the shallow excitement of the market-place and the law-courts. All Greek thought was permeated with the idea that man, in the last resort, lives for his own happiness. It is well known that humility is not held to be a virtue by classical writers; a Greek would have thought it absurd that a man who cultivated virtue should not enjoy the full consciousness of his possession. The truly noble man is, according to Aristotle's idea, the man who thinks himself worthy of great things, being truly worthy. Thus we can see how it is that Plato and Aristotle hold speculative thought to be a virtue. If righteousness is for a man's happiness, it is essential that he be acquainted with the fact, and that he understand wherein righteousness lies. Hence Plato's contempt for virtue merely as a habit of life, the result of circumstances and disposition, where it does not proceed from conscious choice based on just thinking. This view must, of course, be distinguished from the lower utilitarianism. Virtue is made practically an end in itself, for the very principle of happiness is bound up with the principle of virtue. This is very different from doing particular good acts from directly selfish motives. Yet how different is the simple and solemn morality of the Jew: "In much wisdom there is much grief, and increase of knowledge increases sorrow."

This brings us to our second point. We have contrasted the ethics of citizen life with the old conception of moral law, and we have seen how the former prompted men to the pursuit of positive ideals. Our second point, directly suggested by the first, is the connection between knowledge and virtue. This connection is prominent in the Old Testament; but there, practically, virtue is wisdom. With Plato wisdom is virtue. And we must do justice to his standpoint. The conscience of mankind recognises, however dimly, the objectivity of moral good. It feels that the Good is not merely a predicate, is not merely a state, a quality, a standpoint, but that it is something to be loved for its own sake, something outside and above us, something to be laid hold of by rational and deliberate choice. Virtue, in its complete-

ness, must lie before as well as behind consciousness: it must be an ideal as well as a quality. But how, apart from Revelation, is a man to know the Good? There can be but one reply: he must know it intellectually. If religion is not to be a matter merely of outward observance, or of ecstatic and irrational mysticism, it must be a matter of sober thought, and of systematic self-discipline. Here once more we have gain and loss. On the one hand we have the Good enthroned as the centre of all things, as the crown of human desire, as the goal of human effort. But its appeal to the conscience is lessened. It is reached by an intellectual process; a premium is set upon mental capacity and the health and leisure to use it, while the goodness of ordinary men is ignored and discouraged. It includes much, but it appeals to few. Where is the clue to be found? Where shall we find an ideal that shall claim everything and give everything, yet appeal to all men? Where shall we find an ideal that shall call for the highest service of the intellect, and yet win the allegiance of those who are capable only of the lowest? Where shall we find a motive which appeals to the conscience with all the force of Hebrew prophecy, and yet allures with all the richness and fulness of the Greek ideal? But before answering these questions, let us pass on to a later stage in the history of ancient thought.

The conquests of Alexander introduced this later stage. When the Greek cities lost their independence, when public life was drained of its charm and its inspiration, when men began to draw within themselves, and to fall back on literature and home-life, the ideal of the citizen also passed away. When at length the levelling hand of Rome was laid on these once free cities, each could no longer be a unit in the great life of humanity. Their citizens began to regard themselves as citizens of the world, and a broader conception of morality arose. To the true Stoic, let it be frankly allowed, there was neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. He looked to the broad principles of Nature for his guidance. He looked to the great brotherhood of man for his community.

The nobleness of Stoicism we cannot fail to recognise. It called on men not merely to live correctly and to be just, but even to show kindness and sympathy, alike to freeman and to slave. It sought for virtue and for rest of heart in the harmony of the soul with its surroundings. It brushed aside the arbitrary standards of the multitude, and sought to plant its feet on the sure ground of nature and universal law. Stoicism caught a glimpse—and more than a glimpse—of the great truth that the human soul finds rest and freedom by correspondence with

its environment; that God reveals Himself at the innermost centre and at the widest circumference—in the universe as an ordered whole, and in the innermost man. Plato had looked for the Good far off; Stoicism sought it close at hand. To Plato—at least in his earlier teaching—the Good was purely transcendent; the Stoic was a Pantheist, and God for him was immanent in the world. But this last contrast takes us to the limit of our subject.

Stoicism, then, gained much; but what did it lose? The good citizen of earlier times had lived for an ideal, fed day by day by an active public feeling, which throbbed with life around him wherever he went. He was a public man in a full sense of the term. In the animated market-place, in the law-courts, in the theatre, the public and its sentiments were always before him. The Stoic had no such source of inspiration; his virtue was too lofty for the multitude. Everywhere the degeneration of manners proclaimed that the world was no place for the truly good and wise man. He must therefore become self-sufficient, self-centred, indifferent to the outward and changeable world. Thus we see how Stoicism, though the noblest of human systems of morality, tended to cut away the foundations of the highest type of moral character. Sympathy is the soul of virtue; but the soul of Stoicism was just the reverse—an egotistical self-culture. And Stoicism was inferior to Platonism in this: Platonism had an ideal outside the soul of man—an ideal possessing an existence of its own apart from the soul and apart from the universe; the Stoic God was nature in its actuality. He sought for harmony with Nature, correspondence with his environment in its totality. But he soon felt that his environment was full of discord, seething with moral and physical evil; and, therefore, in the same breath with which he said "Live in harmony with the world," he said "Live above the world." But how above the world, if there was no ideal sphere in which to live—if God was merged in all things and the whole was God? If a man could live in touch with the universe as a whole, with Nature on all its sides, then, perhaps, the imperfection of the parts might disappear in the perfection of the whole, and Nature and God might blend into one. But this was impossible; for we are limited beings, and Nature, as it touches each of us, is partial, imperfect, impersonal, full of discord. And, therefore, as Stoicism would not look for God *above* nature, and could not find Him *in* nature, it had no resource but to look within. And this was the rock on which the Stoic's morality split. He heard the call to sympathy and universality which drew the man out of himself; he heard the call to freedom, to independence, to rest of heart, and this drove him back within him-

self. He sought for rest in self, yet deliverance from self; for harmony with the environment, yet deliverance from its discords.

Stoicism certainly dropped something that Platonism had given to mankind; and we need not wonder that Platonism, not merely as a philosophy, but as a religion, awoke into new life. But we will not dwell on this. The three features of the ancient morality which I have selected are sufficient to illustrate the failure and the significance of the old ethical theories. It is not hard to see how the supreme Revelation given by God combined the "broken lights" in the fulness of a perfect whole. Three antinomies required to be reconciled: First, the ethics of simple and reverential obedience with the ethics of civil life.

Can the moral law be made positive, all-embracing, inspiring, without losing the force of its direct appeal to the conscience? Or, to approach the problem from the other side, can self-culture and the pursuit of splendid ideals be invested with all the sanction and religious solemnity of moral law? The answer lies at the very heart of the Gospel: "Christ is the end of the law." When St. Paul tells us that our citizenship is in heaven, he reminds us that the law of Christ is not a mere code of bare statutes—that it is but one side of an entire citizen life, with its interests, its hopes, its responsibilities, its brotherhood, its cause to be promoted, its prizes to be won. The Christian, like the ancient Greek, has his world within the world—if also above and around it—a world in which he is not an atom lost in the mass, a kingdom which has walls to be defended, which has territory to be reclaimed, which asks the fulness of service, and which gives in return the fulness of life. Macaulay, in commenting on the ferocity of the Greeks in war, explains it as the natural disposition of men who are fighting in a cause which has a personal as well as a national interest for them. The man who fights simply for his country finds it easier to be chivalrous than one whose own fields have been ravaged and whose hearth and home are in danger. Such a state of things, whatever its evils, suggests at least the true ideal of common life—all for each and each for all; and this principle is involved in the very substance of our religion. Self-culture and the service of others are but two aspects, not two divisions, of the Christian life. The ultimate end is the same; for sanctification is to service what the nourishment of our limbs is to their use, and service is to sanctification what the use of our limbs is to their growth and perfection. The motive is the same too, for the love of Christ equally constrains to both. It is the same kingdom that is within and around us, and the same cause that must be defended against inward and outward

foes. The Christian citizenship, moreover, calls for a self-culture embracing the whole man. The Greek philosophers themselves felt the inadequacy of the citizen-life, with all its richness and fulness, as a sphere for the life of the soul. Plato sketched his ideal republic, but is careful to say that, whether or no it can ever be found on earth, it is true as an ideal, and as such we may live for it and in it, even though we live upon earth. And this thought, as profound as it is beautiful, receives in Revelation the one thing it wants—actuality. Plato did not say that the world is our true commonwealth, for that it cannot be. We are lost in the immensity of the world-life; we only touch it on one or two sides; it is not something to sustain and inspire us day by day. The small municipality, compact around its own centre, throbbing with a life that is personal as well as political, beset by the great world-life around, with every provision for culture and enjoyment within—this is a better image of the kingdom of heaven. And when we add to this that the city to which as Christians we belong is nothing less than the redeemed universe of the future, that it is the quintessence of all that is good and great in creation, that as members of it "all things are ours," then the picture is complete. The kingdom of heaven is not a vastness in which the individual is lost, nor yet a monastery in which his interests are confined and his life is cramped. It is a perfect whole, because it is a perfect sphere for each.

And we need hardly pause to show how the idea of the heavenly citizenship, though it appeals to the intellect, to the imagination, and even to self-interest, appeals none the less strongly to the conscience with the full force of moral law. It does this, not merely because the claims of the Gospel are simply the logical completion of the claims of the law, but because it places in our hands the means of fulfilment. "The higher the ideal," it has been remarked with reference to the law apart from the Gospel, "the greater the strain on those resources which alone could accomplish it." And, as we have seen, the efficacy of moral law as such depends on its accommodation to human limitations. Apart from Revelation, to change law into ideals is to destroy its power as law. But when the Ideal descends out of abstraction into the concrete, out of theory and dreamland into actuality, when it not only is sought by men, but comes to seek men, when the Word becomes flesh and dwells among us and we behold His glory, when, above all, the Ideal becomes no longer a mere Ideal, but a Person, when the soul is possessed not only by the sense of His glory, but by the actual indwelling of His life and power, then at last the will of the Ideal becomes law, and

law is transformed into life. "Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis."

But once more. Another problem presents itself: What place should knowledge occupy in a perfect moral system? We have spoken of ideals, but how shall the ideal be at once perfect in itself and perfectly accessible? How shall it be at once the crown of philosophy and the starting-point of practical life? If Platonism offers its prizes to an intellectual aristocracy, this is only because it sees clearly that the true ideal must be the highest thing that the highest intellect can grasp.

Thinkers of the nineteenth century have felt this difficulty, and have tried to solve it by a sharp distinction between religious and ordinary knowledge, between "*pure*" and "*practical*" reason. God does not reveal Himself, so we are taught, through any process of induction or logical inference; the truth as to His Being requires no metaphysics for its defence or expression; it reveals itself only *within* the soul. "Scientific certitude," says Auguste Sabatier, "has for its basis intellectual evidence. Religious certitude has for its foundation the feeling of the subjective life, or moral evidence. The first gives satisfaction to the intellect, the second gives to the whole soul the sense of order re-established, of health regained, of force and peace—it is the happy feeling of deliverance, the inward assurance of salvation." It would take too long to discuss this theory in full, but one remark may be made in passing: If we rest our belief *solely* on our own inward experiences, then either we are the slaves of feeling, blindly surrendered to care of instincts and impulses which are always liable to deceive or to fail us, or else we make these experiences the object of examination and inference —a psychological study—and thus seek from them that very "scientific certitude" which thinkers of this school would banish from the religious life. And if Platonism establishes an intellectual aristocracy, this opposite theory establishes a moral aristocracy. It tells us to look for God within, but it is just here that the soul feels its lack. If there is one thing rather than another that raises it from despair to hope, it is the sharp contrast between fact and feeling, the passionate clinging to something *outside* itself. The original Gospel in its essence was not a sermon, but a piece of news; Christian faith first appears not as a sense of the presence of God within the soul, but as the repletion of an empty vessel at the fountain of the Resurrection life. The Gospel is nothing if it is not historical. The sense of God within us presupposes His revelation from without, and if Christianity really rests on something that took place *in history*, then it cannot sever its

connection with ordinary intellect processes—in other words, Christ must be known to the intellect as well as to the "heart."

Surely, the answer to our question is to be found in the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The idea of a Divine Teacher satisfies the claim of the Gospel to be at once the fulness of truth and the simplest of truths. If it were merely a matter of mystic inward revelation, then it would not satisfy the universal reason; if it were merely a doctrine, then it would, unethically, set a premium on intellectual power. But the Divine Teacher, with His perfect knowledge, both of His pupils and of the truth He teaches, meets, in the fullest manner, the needs of a perfect revelation. The knowledge of the Supreme Good is, in Plato's system, the key to understand the lesser truths which it comprises. So we, too, believe that in Christ is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But Plato's supreme Truth has first to be reached before it can illumine the problems of life, whereas the Truth in Jesus Christ descends into the soul itself and becomes its teacher. For some persons the culture of the spiritual life is inseparable from severe intellectual effort; to others the same spiritual blessing is given in response to the most unreasoning faith. The Platonic Truth must be laid hold of by man; Christian Truth lays hold of man. It sets no premium on the higher faculties of the intellect. The use of such faculties is necessary *in those who have them* to the full knowledge of God; but the moral and spiritual value lies not in the possession of great mental endowment, but in the conscientious use of such as we possess. The Holy Spirit teaches the wise according to their wisdom, the simple according to their simplicity.

The third problem suggested by our review of ancient moral standards is that of *altruism*. We have seen how this problem comes to the front in Stoicism; and how Stoicism, seeking to embrace in its philanthropy the widest circumference, tends in the end to concentrate itself upon the innermost centre. Its deity was so completely everywhere as to be really nowhere; so tied down to things seen and temporal as to exclude any definite contemplation of a higher sphere around and beyond. Platonism stands for the transcendence, Stoicism for the immanence of God. But we must not pause to inquire how these two conditions are satisfied and harmonized in the Incarnation. The question before us is, How can the service of God be perfectly unselfish? This is a question not inapposite at the present time. We are often told, in effect at least, that self-sacrifice, in the sense of self-denial, is the highest thing in life. But is that so? Can we eliminate self from our moral teaching, after all that Christ said so emphatically

about rewards? Christianity does not abolish the "eudemonism" of the old thinkers; it is conspicuous in the teaching and example of Him "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross." The maxim that virtue is its own reward, whatever element of truth it may contain, is absent from Christ's teaching. This prominence of the thought of reward in the New Testament is explained, surely, when we consider what is the great law of Christian life. Love is the motive, and its satisfaction the reward, of the highest service. When we speak of love in connection with self-denial we are apt to forget that love is, in its essence and in its highest manifestation, not so much the denial of self for the sake of others as the identification of self with others, not so much to forego joy that others may find it, as to find joy in the joy of others. Self-denial is not an end, but a means; and it may be the means either to a selfish or an unselfish end; it is characteristic equally of the miser and of the philanthropist. It may, of course, be simply a response to the call of duty. As such it is a great thing; but self-denial prompted by love —by love which is not happy till its impulses are satisfied— this is the very core of the Christian character. "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?"

Thus we see how Christianity really justifies the eudemonism of the old philosophers, yet makes it absolutely unselfish. Stoicism endeavoured to find rest and satisfaction for self by harmony with the world outside; but Stoicism failed. It failed because it had nothing outside to lay hold upon. If Platonism offered an intangible ideal, Stoicism offered a material actuality; the one a glorious dream, the other an inglorious reality. Christianity alone supremely satisfies both the claims of self and the claims of others; because it presents not merely an Object of love, but an Object which can impart love. In Christ the soul finds its true resting-place; all the requirements are satisfied. The soul's resting-place must be something which is not itself; it must satisfy every need; it must be personal, responsive, self-communicating; it must be knowable and accessible. And such a resting-place Christianity affords. Love can now take its proper place in the moral scheme, for the soul no longer reaches after a splendid dream, no longer seeks for harmony with an environment which is full of discord, no longer turns inward upon itself. It finds in the Incarnate Son of God One Whom not having seen it can love, and in Whom believing it can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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