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You are how a LEICA owner! We hope that you will derive as much pleasure and success from this camera as the multitude of LEICA enthusiasts in every corner of the globe. In constructing the LEICA M3 our engineers and optical designers have combined their great experience and long tradition of top quality optical manufacturing to produce an instrument-quality camera that is both scientifically correct and remarkably easy to use successfully. The short time you invest in studying this little manual — with your M3 in hand will be repaid many times over by rapidly enhancing your skill as a LEICA-photographer. The LEICA's reputation is based upon outstanding results, and we want yours to be as good as possible, as soon as possible!

> ERNST LEITZ GMBH WETZLAR, GERMANY

Your LEICA is not only a precision camera, but a ruggedly reliable instrument that will yield optimum picture quality over many years of trouble-free service. More than this, it is part of the world's most successful system of photography, the LEICA SYSTEM, with an unmatched family of interchangeable LEITZ lenses and the widest assortment of logically conceived accessories ever supplied for a single camera. This means that as your skill and talent develops, with ever-widening photographic horizons, your LEICA will remain equal to the greater challenges you place upon it. With an assortment of precision LEICA lenses your M3 is not just a camera, but as many different cameras as you want it to be. Your franchised LEICA dealer has many illustrated

> pamphlets explaining the full range of LEITZ lenses and accessories for your LEICA. Please ask for these

> > brochures, and discuss them with him — you'll find he's a mighty good man to get to know!





Rapid Check-list of Basic LEICA Functions

- 1 Single-stroke film-advance and
- shutter-cocking lever
- **2** Shutter release button
- 3 Automatic film counter
- 4 Shutter speed selector dial (couples to LEICAMETER)
- 5 Reversing lever for film rewinding
- 6 Raised red dot on lens bayonet mount
- 7 Delayed-action self-timer
- 8 Bayonet mount locking button
- 9 Lens focusing lever
- 10 Focal frame preselector lever
- 11 Lens operture scale 12 Lens depth-of-field scale
- 13 Rangefinder window
- 14 Focal frame illuminating window
- 15 Combined range-viewfinder window
- 16 Film rewind knob
- 17 Accessory shoe
- 18 Locking synchro contact for flash bulbs 19 Locking synchro contact for
- electronic-flash units 20 Combined range-viewfinder
- eyepiece lens
- 21 (e and b) Carrying-strap systems 22 Baseptate locking key
- 23 Film-type indicator
- 24 Tripod bushing
- 25 Hinged, flip-open comero back

- A. Taking the Picture 1. Remove lens cap. (If lens is a
- collapsible model, extend and lock).
- Set lens aperture (11) and shutter speed (4).
- View subject through finder eyepiece (20) and compose picture within the bright-line frame. Focus lens on most important subject area by turning lever (9) until the two rangefinder images fuse into one.
- Release shutter (2) with steady, gentle pressure — do not jab!
- Work advance-lever (1) to prepare LEICA for next shot. Train yourself to do this immediately after each exposure so that you're always ready for the next — and frequently unexpected — situation.

B. Changing Lenses

 Depress bayonet mount locking button (8), rotate lens to the left, and lift out. Gently insert new lens into mount operture so that red dot near base of lens (6) lies opposite red dot on camera mount near locking button (8), and turn to the right until lock engages with audible "click".

C. Loading the Film

- Turn baseplate locking key (22) to "auf — open", and remove. Place camera upsidedown with lens towards you, and swing open hinged back (25). Withdraw take-up spool (which automatically resets film counter (3) to two marks before "0").
- Push end of film leader under spring of take-up spool, holding film in left hand, take-up spool in right, with both projecting knobs pointing up. Be sure that perforated film edge lies flat against upper take-up spool flange.
- Press cassette and take-up spool into comera as shown

by diagram engraved on inner body cover-plate. Do not pull out more film than is needed!

- Check that teeth of transport sprocket properly engage film perforations. If not, work transport lever slightly forward until sprockets engage.
- Advance film by two frames to bring counter (3) to "0". The LEICA is now ready to shoot.
- Set film type and speed on indicator (23).

D. Unloading an Exposed Film

- 1. Set reversing lever (5) to "R".
- Pull rewind knob (16) up and turn in direction of arrow until a slight resistance is felt and overcome with an extra one or two turns. The film is now completely rewound and free of the take-up spool.
- Open baseplate and remove film cassette.

The serial numbers of your LEICA camera and lenses provide positive identification and proof of ownership — be sure to record them in a safe place.





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This Instruction Book

contains everything you should know about your [®]LEICA M 3. Please devote some time to reading it carefully, and practice the simple operations – without a film, to start with. You will get the hang of it much quicker than you thought. The LEICA is an advanced high-grade camera, but nevertheless – or rather because of that – amazingly simple to operate.





The Transport Lever

Hold the camera in both hands, and with the right thumb push the transport lever to the right as far as it will go. The lever movement tensions the focal plane shutter of the LEICA and advances the film by one frame. You may also work the film advance lever by several short strokes – if you find this more convenient.

The Release Button

With the right index finger gently press down the release button — never jab it! You will hear the click as the shutter runs down. A film in the camera would now have been exposed, in other words you would have taken a picture.

Let go of the release button (lift the finger off), and you can once more operate the transport lever to tension the shutter and advance the film.

® = registered



For exposures with slow shutter speeds you must, of course, have a firm support. A tripod is ideal in conjunction with a locking cable-release. Screw in the cable-release without pressing the button. The handy LEITZ table tripod is very useful when travelling. (Ask for brochure No. 12-35.)

The Film Counter

is coupled with the transport lever. If the film was correctly loaded (see notes on pages 22—24), the film counter indicates the number of exposures made. The counter stops at No. 40, and automatically returns to its initial position when you withdraw the take-up spool.

The Shutter Speed Dial

controls the exposure times. The enaraved figures stand for fractions of a second Thus 1000 indicates 1/1000 second, 125 is 1/125 second, 4 is 1/4 second, and 1 stands for $1/_1$ second, i.e. 1 second. The dial engages at each position with the set shutter speeds opposite the small index line, and remains at this settina. You can therefore set or read off the speeds equally well before or after tensioning the shutter. When set to "B", the shutter remains open as long as the release button is depressed.

Intermediate shutter speeds can be set within the range of 1 to $1/_8$ second, also between $1/_{15}$ and $1/_{30}$ second, and $1/_{60}$ to $1/_{1000}$ second (or $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1/_{1000}$ second). The speed dial features click-stops at all engraved settings.

The Lens Aperture

Hold the lens of your LEICA up to your eye, and rotate the aperture ring. You can then see how the aperture opens and closes. It works rather like the iris of your eye which also opens or closes to adapt itself to weaker or stronger light. The lens aperture has a similar purpose, namely to cut down very bright light by "stopping down" – i.e. the use of a smaller lens opening. Conversely, in poor light the use of a larger aperture admits more light to the film. At the same time the depth-of-field changes.

The apertures or f-numbers $1.4 - 2 - 2.8 - 4 - 5.6 - 8 - 11 - 16 - 22 - 32^*$) are a measure of the amount of light reaching the film. They are chosen in such a way that closing down the aperture from each number to the next reduces the light by one-half.



Similarly on opening up, each aperture passes twice the light of the next smaller one. So remember: a high aperture number signifies a small opening, and vice-versa.

*) The length of this numerical scale depends on the type of lens

The Depth-of-Field Scale

The lens reproduces sharpest those parts of the scene which are at the exact distance – in a plane parallel to the film – on which it is focused. This maximum sharpness gradually falls off in front of, and behind, the focused distance, resulting in a certain zone within which everything is still acceptably sharp. The extent of this zone of sharpness – the "depth-of-field" – depends on the subject distance, the focal length of the lens, and the aperture. Stopping down increases the sharp field, which is desirable for most subjects extending appreciably in depth.

To find the limits of this zone, look at the depth of field scale of your lens. The sharp zone is that enclosed between two index lines of the same aperture number. If, for

instance, you have set your 50 mm SUMMICRON lens to 15 feet, the available depth-of-field with an aperture of f/4 (see red arrows in the illustration) extends from about $121/_2$ to 20 feet. If, however, you stop down to f/11, the zone of sharpness covers a field from about 9 to 40 feet. When altering the aperture, be sure to adjust the exposure time accordingly.

See also page 9: Optical Depth-of-field Indicator in the measuring field of the combined range-viewfinder.



The Brilliant-Frame Range-Viewfinder

of the LEICA M3 is designed to function as both a particularly efficient viewfinder and as a highly accurate coupled rangefinder. Everything visible within the bright line frame is recorded on the film. The brilliant frame is coupled to the focusing movement and automatically shifts itself throughout the whole focusing range. This compensates for parallax errors due to the different positions of the optical axes of the lens and the finder.

The viewfinder shows the image in almost natural size. So even if you should occasionally open your other eye to survey the field, you will not be startled by a sudden change in image scale. The brightness of the brilliant frame is sufficient to show up the limits of the field equally clearly with dark subjects. An additional advantage is that the subject remains visible even during the exposure.

In the center of the finder the sharp rectangular rangefinder field is visible. This appears brighter than surrounding viewfinder area. The rangefinder field disappears if you cover the small rangefinder window with your finger. This is useful when you want to observe the effect of your subject in the viewfinder image only.

All LEICA lenses from 21- through 135 mm couple to the rangefinder. The built-in parallaxcompensated bright-line frame of the LEICA M3 are for 50-, 90-, and 135 mm lenses, as well as for the 35 mm wideangle when a LEICA lens of this focal length with integral M3 viewfinder attachment is fitted. The VISOFLEX housing converts the LEICA M3 into a compactly efficient reflex camera for LEITZ lenses from 65- to 400 mm.



How the subject appears in the brilliant-frame range-viewfinder with a 50 mm lens.



The Distance

can be set on the distance scale engraved on every lens, or with the aid of the rangefinder image visible in the finder. Some lenses lock in the infinity position; for focusing on nearer distances this lock must be released by depressing the infinity catch.

Always remember to extend and lock the barrel of collapsible lenses (see page 15). If you now rotate the focusing lever or mount of the lens, a scale of numbers moves

past the fixed focusing index and indicates the distance in feet and/or meters. This way of focusing is less important, as you can set the distance much more accurately with the aid of the built-in coupled rangefinder. The scale is useful, however, for reading off the available depth-of-field and for special subjects where the rangefinder cannot be used.

Practice in using the rangefinder is important for developing an efficient focusing technique, and is also great fun. Set the lens to infinity, and observe, say, a window a few yards away through the rangefinder. You will see a bright sharp rectangle in the center of the finder area. Hold the LEICA in such a way that the vertical window bar cuts through this rectangular rangefinder field. Inside the rangefinder field you will see a double image; i.e. the window bar appears as a second image to the left of the main one. This indicates that the lens is not correctly focused on the film. Now turn the lens lens while still looking through the finder; the second image moves to the right until it coincides with the stationary outline in the rangefinder field. You have now measured the distance by what is known as the **coincidence method**. Whenever vertical lines cut through the rangefinder field, you can also measure the distance by the **split-image method**. This is made particularly easy by the sharp boundary of the rangefinder field. The part of the subject that is displaced sideways in this field moves across during focusing until the image becomes continuous across the boundary of the frame. In measuring the distance you have simultaneously set the lens exactly to this distance.



The functioning of the **optical depth-of-field indicator** in the measuring field of the combined range-viewfinder:



Automatic Finder Adjustment for 90 mm and 135 mm Lenses



Field of view with a 90 mm LEICA lens. The subject area covered with the longer focal length is indicated by the additional. bright line frame within the large brilliant frame showing the field of view of the 50 mm lens, which **remains visible all the time**.



90 mm Lenses

Fit a 90 mm LEICA lens in your LEICA M 3, lock it in position, and again look through the rangeviewfinder. You will now see an additional bright line finder frame which indicates the field of view covered by the 90 mm lens within the field of the standard 50 mm lens, and reproduced on the film with 1.8 times magnification. An important point is that the surrounding subject area remains visible in the finder, so that you can easily follow moving subjects and bring them within the 90 mm finder field. In the same way the finder automatically indicates the view of the 135 mm lens when you fit the 135 mm ELMAR in the camera. In addition, the parallax error is automatically compensated during focusing – just as with the 50 mm lens – over the whole focusing range. The image frames are designed so as to include the full field taken in by the film even at the shortest subject distances that can be set on the coupled LEICA lenses. At greater subject distances the lens therefore covers a slightly larger angle of view than shown in the finder.





Field of view with the 135 mm HEKTOR lens which yields a magnification of 2.7 times as compared with standard 50 mm lens. 135 mm Lenses

When you fit one of the 35 mm wide-angle LEICA lenses with integral M 3 finder attachment to the camera, the viewfinder is automatically converted for wide-angle photography.

The 135 mm ELMARIT f/2.8 has an integral view-finder magnifier giving a magnification of $1.4 \times$ (40% larger than life-size) with the LEICA M3 range-viewfinder.



Lever in normal position: field of view for 50 mm lens





Lever pointing inwards: field of view for 90 mm lens*

Lever pointing outwards: field of view for 135 mm lens

The Finder Frame Preselector

With the small lever on the front of the body you can make the 90 mm and 135 mm finder frames visible in the viewfinder when the standard 50 mm lens is fitted to the camera. If you release the lever, it returns to its original position, and the additional finder frame disappears.

When no lens is mounted in the camera, the finder frame for the 135 mm lens appears within the frame for the 50 mm lens. (* The lever will take this position with the 135 mm ELMARIT f/2.8.)

Holding the Camera

A good camera grip is the best insurance against camera shake. Hold the LEICA M3 so that the base rests in the palms of both hands, with the thumb against the transport lever, and the index finger resting lightly on the release button. Use the left hand to operate the lens focusing lever. Keep the eye close to the range-viewfinder eyepiece. Practice, holding the camera so that it is supported as much as possible against the face; the camera, head, and hands should act as one unit. The purpose of this is to ensure a really steady camera position. This will prevent camera shake, and give you that high standard of definition which has always been the hall-mark of the highly corrected LEICA lenses.

Press the release button smoothly and gently, never jab it. Move only the index finger, not the whole hand.

At first try exposing with shutter speeds of 1/60 second or faster; after some practice you will eventually be able to expose even slower speeds without camera shake. If you find it more convenient, the left eye is just as suitable for viewing as the right one.

When you want to change from horizontal to vertical shots, turn the LEICA upright about the optical axis of the range-viewfinder. The camera hold does not change much. Grip the LEICA in the same way as for horizontal views.

Alternatively, you can also bring the right hand down for vertical pictures, and release with the thumb. Grip the camera so that the tip of the thumb rests against the release button, and the fingers exert a counter-pressure on the base-plate. Focus the lens with the left hand, and support the upper part of the camera against your forehead. This hold ensures particularly smooth releasing and film advancing. Whether you take vertical or horizontal shots, you never have to take the eye from the camera, not even for picture sequences.



Changing Lenses

To remove the lens, hold the camera in your left hand, pressing the button of the bayonet lock with the thumb. Grip the lens by the focusing ring with your right hand, as close as possible to the camera body, and turn to the left to release. It can now be lifted out of the mount. Lenses fitted with an infinity lock should be locked at infinity before changing. A red dot is visible next to the bayonet lock button. When another lens is to be inserted, place the red dot on the lens mount opposite the red dot on the camera body. Then secure the lens by turning it to the right until the bayonet lock engages with an audible click.

Avoid changing lenses in strong direct light. Turn your back to the sun, and hold the camera opening towards your body. If you keep the camera and lens separately use a protective cap for each. Rear caps are available for all LEICA lenses.



The Collapsible Lenses

When not in use, certain LEICA lenses (for instance the 50 mm ELMAR f/2.8 and the collapsible 90 mm ELMAR f/4) can be retracted by slightly turning the front to the left and pushing into the camera body. For use, fully extend the lens, and lock by turning to the right. (The collapsible 90 mm ELMAR f/4 can only be focused when it is properly extended and locked.) With any lens, always remember to take off the lens-cap.



Lens Coating

Modern coated LEICA lenses show a colored sheen on the surface, due to an anti-reflection layer which appreciably increases the brilliance and crispness of the image. The outer surfaces are hard coated and will therefore stand up to careful cleaning.

Lens Care

Any high-quality lens can yield its best performance only if the outside glass surfaces are kept clean. And it is much better to keep them clean than to keep cleaning them. A colorless ultra-violet filter (LEITZ UVa) left permanently on the lens, will protect the surface against outside influences (e.g., fine sand at the seaside). The lenshood, too, guards the lens against accidental contact with your fingers, and against splashes in rainy weather. To remove dust use a soft camel's hair brush, or a clean linen cloth previously washed with pure soap. (Other washing or cleaning agents may leave harmful chemical residues.)

In addition to its name, every LEICA lens also carries its own "personal" serial number engraved on the front mount. Make a note of this number, and of the serial number of your LEICA; they may be prove to be of great help in case of loss.

The 50 mm Dual-Range SUMMICRON

This version of the 50 mm SUMMICRON lens has two focusing ranges: 1. The normal range from infinity to $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet (1 meter); 2. The close-up range from 35 to 19 inches (88 to 48 cm) from the film plane.

An optical finder attachment fits onto the top of the lensmount for use within the near range. This adapts the coupled range-viewfinder for close-up focusing with automatic parallax compensation.

The lens is inserted into the LEICA M3 — without finder attachment — in the usual way, by aligning the red dots on mount and body opposite each other, and turning to the right to lock.

Focusing between infinity and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet (1 meter). Over this range the lens is used like any other LEICA lens. At $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet (1 meter) the focusing movement is limited by a stop. Focusing between 35 and 19 inches (88 and 48 cm). The distances are measured from the back of the camera to the subject. Set the focusing mount of the lens to its near limit of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet (1 meter), as shown in Fig. 1, pull outwards, and move it across the stop into the 35 inch (88 cm) position (Fig. 2). The lens remains locked in this position until the optical finder attachment is pushed home in its special fitting, thus releasing the focusing movement for the close-up range (Fig. 3).





seconds delay about



Pull down the self-timer lever. The LEICA shutter can be tensioned; if not tension it now. To make the exposure, however, do not press the release button, but the small button above the self-timer lever. You will then hear the delayed action mechanism running down while the selftimer lever slowly swings up again, releasing the shutter just before reaching its original position.



delay seconds about

release

to Point o

The delayed action release works with all shutter speeds from 1 to 1/1000 second. With the self-timer lever fully pulled down, the delay is about 10 seconds; half-way down gives 5 seconds. Intermediate positions give intermediate delay times. You therefore have plenty of time to get into the picture yourself. The self-timer is also valuable for releasing very long tripod-mounted exposures.

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In its Ever-Ready Case

the LEICA M3 is protected against the weather and minor knocks, yet is always ready for action.

The lid of the ever-ready case is pivoted so that it is well out of the way, even for vertical shots.

LEICA filters

improve tonal rendition in black-and-white pictures. The yellow and orange filters, for example, yield pictorial cloud effects. The LEITZ polarizing filters subdue disturbing reflections from glass, water, and polished surfaces (other than metal ones) and increase the contrast of clouds against the sky. They are also useful in color photography. All normal filters for the LEICA M3 screw into the front mount of the camera lens. The polarizing filters have a clamp fitting.

Lens Hoods

protect the lens against direct rays of strong light that might give rise to flare, and also against rain and snow. Hold the lens hood so as to press in the two spring clips, place it over the lens and let it engage.

Lens hood and filter can be combined.

If you use the ever-ready case for the LEICA M3, the lens hood may be reversed over a number of LEICA lenses, and special lens hood caps are provided to protect the front surface of the lens.



The Flash Table

All electronic flash units and most types of flash bulbs are easily synchronized with the LEICA M 3. The left-hand socket marked \pm is intended for electronic-flash. With electronic-flash you can set any shutter speed between 1 second and the red \pm arrow which stands for $1/s_0$ second. The effective exposure time is governed by the flash-duration of the electronic-flash. (Usually about $1/t_{1000}$ sec.)

The right-hand socket is used for synchronizing class M flash bulbs. The use of focal plane type flash bulbs is recommended because these permit utilization of all shutter speeds up to 1/1000 sec. Furthermore, both electronic-flash units and flash bulbs can be connected to the M 3 at the same time, since the two circuits function independently of each other.

Protective plugs are available to cover the two flash sockets on the back of the camera. A helpful hint: leave only the socket in use uncovered at any time. Connection to the wrong flash socket is a cause of failure in flash pictures.

Using flash

Details about flash bulbs, guide-numbers and suitable shutter speeds are given on the enclosed flash table for the LEICA M 3.

Note: guide-numbers are only intended as approximate guides. They are based on the use of a fairly flat, matted reflector and are valid only for subjects of average reflectivity with allowance for same light being reflected from nearby walls and ceilings.



Loading the LEICA

Commercial daylight cartridges and properly loaded and closed "M" cassettes (type N) are light-tight. Nevertheless, avoid loading or unloading the camera in direct sunlight or strong artificial light. Outdoors, even the shade of your body will provide adequate protection. Do not leave exposed or unexposed cassettes lying about, but keep them safely in their cans until you are ready to use or develop them. Before opening the camera, make sure that it does not already contain a film by pulling up the rewind knob and turning it in the direction of the arrow. If you feel resistance, first



rewind the film and unload the camera as described on page 23. Turn the key in the base plate in the direction marked "auf – open", and lift off. The film cassette and the take-up spool are now easily withdrawn. Open the hinged camera back, and place the camera in front of you on the table with the open base upwards, and the lens facing you.

Hold the take-up spool in the right hand, and the cassette in the left, **both with the spool knobs pointing up.** Now push the beginning of the film under the clamping spring of the take-up spool as far as it will go. The perforated film edge must lie straight against the spool flange, as shown in the illustration below.

Next, draw out just enough of the film leader from the cassette to enable you to insert the two parts — cassette and takeup spool — into the camera. The milled spool knobs should still point upwards and remain visible while the film slides into the film slot in front of the open camera back.



The film cassette and the take-up spool must be pushed fully home to ensure that the film lies properly between the guides.

Check that the position of the film corresponds to that shown in the diagram. The matt emulsion side must face the lens and the focal plane shutter; the take-up spool winds the film with the emulsion side out.

The teeth of the transport sprocket should engage the film perforations. If necessary, slowly work the transport lever until the teeth engage.

Close the camera back, replace the base-plate, and lock, thus making the camera light-tight.

The film counter automatically returns to its starting position — two divisions before zero — when the take-up spool is withdrawn. The length of film between the cassette and take-up spool is, of course, already fogged and





useless for taking pictures. It must therefore be advanced inside the closed camera to bring a fresh, unexposed portion of the film into position for shooting. Advance the film by stroking the transport lever, and releasing the shutter. Repeat these steps, and advance the film once more so that the film counter indicates No. 1. You are now ready for the first exposure.

The correct functioning of the film transport can be recognized by the fact that the red dots on the center shaft of the rewind knob rotate while the film is advanced.

To Set the Film-Type Indicator

on the camera back, press lightly against the center, and turn to the type and speed of the film loaded in the camera. One of the three pointers next to the appropriate symbol (black-andwhite chevrons for black-and-white film, sun on red background for daylight color film, or lamp on red background for artificial light color film) should point to the required film speed in ASA or DIN. This now shows at a glance what film is loaded in the camera.

Unloading the Film

When you have exposed the whole film, the transport lever can no longer be moved; a sign that the film must be rewound into its cassette. Set the reversing lever on the front of the camera to "R", pull up the rewind knob (see illustration on page 20), and turn it in the direction of the arrow until you feel a resistance. Wind past the resistance, and give the rewind knob about one more turn. The film will now have come off the take-up spool, but a short piece should still protrude from the cassette. You can then open the camera (see page 20), and remove the cassette with the exposed film. It is not advisable to rewind the film end fully into the cassette, because the protruding piece makes the cassette more light-tight. Make a note on this piece that the film is exposed.

You can also partially expose the film, say the first ten frames, rewind it, and change to another film (e.g. color). When reloading the first film proceed as with unexposed film, and then keep releasing the shutter and advancing the film with a lens cap over the lens, until the film counter indicates No. 12. It is necessary to waste at least one full frame in order to avoid overlapping.







Cassettes for the LEICA M 3

In these instructions we show the loading of the camera with a commercially available daylight cartridge. These cartridges are very convenient, but many photographers prefer to buy their film in bulk lengths and load it themselves in the special LEITZ cassette. These cassettes are absolutely light-tight, easily cleaned, and never scratch the film, because they automatically open inside the camera. The loading method is described in a special instruction booklet.

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