

TOLD BY THE CLOCK

(By Jerome Hart.)

Gentle reader, I am an old clock, and I have a story to tell, as old people sometimes have a way of doing. Unfortunately, I am not one of those great, tall grandfather effects that have stood in the corner for ages. Would that I were! I have been singularly observing in my life. What tales of the gallant, knee-buckle knights of old, and the shrinking, picturesque maids of the misty past might I not tell you, if I were a more ancient timepiece!

As it is, however, I have seen and observed, and I have a tale to tell you. Then, too, I am old enough! I am twice as high as I am broad and I have rounded peaks upon my head, like the spires of an old church. You see my architecture belongs to quite a past day in clocks. There is a crack across the lower part of my face, where a few trees of grotesque and hideous green hue stand out in stiff adornment, and I have stood upon this mantle above the fireplace niche on to thirty years, now—ever since her grandfather bought me from a peddler and set me here.

The fireplace is boarded up now, for the house is heated by a furnace. You see, when she grew up, they fixed up the old house in modern style. But they never touched me. I am an heirloom, a curio, and they are proud of me. I have been standing here all this time, ticking away the years. The dining room, my home, is small and cozy. All day the table is set with dainty taste; at night, they clear away the dishes, and a low lamp with a broad puffy shade is set upon it, in the middle of a bright sitting room. And it was here that he and she used to sit together and read and study through the long winter evenings while she was young. I know more about it than anybody else. That is why I am going to tell you her story.

Who is she? Well! Well! Is it possible that the whole world does not know her? Why, she is the little girl who grew up in the house and who laughed and sang and romped all the live-long day. She made everybody happy. She was a plump little thing with bright brown eyes and dark curls that were always tumbling into her face. I used to think that she was the sweetest, happiest, sunniest girl in the world, and I guess she was. She had no mother or older sister to talk to and advise her. Her young father came to the old house only once or twice a year. So, the little girl was pretty much alone with the old folks. When she began to grow headstrong and disobeyed them, they, the old grandfather and the grandmother and the prim maiden aunt, sighed about it in my hearing, and said that things might have been different if she had some one to whom she might have told her little love affairs. I am afraid she had been blossoming into womanhood.

He was small, too, not quite as tall as she, and his face was fair and girlish. His eyes were dreamy and his hands thin and delicate. I used to wonder how she could love so effeminate a man. But she did love him. She would listen every night for his step on the porch and then, when the old bell tinkled through the house her cheeks would burn and her eyes would shine with pleasure.

The prudent aunt and the dotting old grandparents did not like him and it showed in their frigid greetings. And do you know why they did not like him? Ah! it's such an old story, and yet, each time it is almost new. She was a Roman Catholic and she was a staunchest up-bringing and she was a Protestant of Puritan type. Of course, if they loved each other they would marry and how often, say you, is the mixed marriage a nappy one? The old folks were greatly troubled, for the happiness of their little one lay close to their hearts.

That they did not like the boy grieved the girl very much. It showed in her face while the old people were near, but when they were gone she would ripple into laughter and he would kiss her tenderly on either rosy cheek. Then she blushed a deeper red and hid her pretty face in her hands. I used to chuckle behind my cracked face. What fond, foolish things young lovers be!

Then she would get out her books and they would pore over them together. He thought he was helping her, but bless you, he was not! And when they read together I am sure that neither knew what the story was about.

Sometimes they played cards, and the maiden aunt and the stern, kindly old man took a hand. That was not pleasant, for not one of them forgot that the boy was unwelcome to her guardians. More often they went away, and I could hear their gay young voices singing in the big old parlor. Then, too, they often danced and made candy in the great kitchen. How happy they were! It made me wish that I had not been born a chematic old clock.

Of course, they talked to the girl, and she told the boy, through tears, what they had to say. She could never marry a Protestant. She was a Roman Catholic and those were never happy marriages. She was very young and so was he. Let them wait a while before deciding. She was to tell him that he must not come to see her for a year, and she must not see him nor hear from him in all that time. It might be hard, but the old folks were sure it was for the best.

The boy put his arms about her and comforted her, with heated words. They should not be separated! It was cruel and they had no right to do it! He was a man and he could keep her and they would be married at once. "Not see each other again? Nonsense! They would see each other every day!" Strangely enough, the boy had no compromise to offer on the question of religion. He was a Puritan of the Puritans. "They have no right to object to my religion," he said. "They are bigoted and superstitious!"

"But, Donald," said the girl, "you could change. It's such a beautiful religion and I'm sure you would love it!"

The boy laughed at her. "Come with me, and you will not be bothered with religion! What does it amount to? I could never be bother-

ed with your mumbled prayers and your candle-lights!"

I think that staggered the girl. She would not go with him, but she promised that she would meet him every evening. She was very young and she loved him dearly. I think she did not realize what her disobedience might lead her to.

Those were troublous times after that night. The little girl did not laugh and sing about the house as she had been wont to do and her eyes were fever bright. In the evening, she did not often sit in the dining-room with the old folks. Instead, she would plead a headache and go upstairs to bed. Only I knew that it was not really to bed she had gone. Only I knew that she went away that she might creep out and see the boy. Poor little girl! After all, she was a lonely, heartsick child.

The old folks shook their heads in sorrow and worried much about her. Once, the old grandfather patted her curly head and said: "Brave little girl! It's all for the best. You may see him soon again, for the year is almost up, and then, who knows? He may fervently wish to embrace our faith that he may win this little woman! It's the only way!" He pinched her ear. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder, little girl," he said, and chuckled.

And then, she burst into tears and ran weeping from the room. They thought it was nerves, and who but I knew that she wept because she had deceived them all, and had only that hour come from the boy's loving arms? For he was loving!

Put not even I knew that the die was well-nigh cast, and that the little girl had given the boy her word to flee with him in another day and that, too, to give up the faith of her fathers and to enter the church of his Puritan ancestors. She was only a very young girl and she had learned to love the boy quite madly.

I do not know how they found it out. They did not talk it over in my hearing. But the maiden aunt discovered the little girl's absence before she had well got away. The old man rushed after them. It was winter and he did not stop for his great-coat. They say he rode his old horse without saddling her, and he caught them at the minister's door. They had not had time to be married.

It was the only time I ever saw the old man in a temper. The maiden aunt and the hired man had followed him with a horse and buggy and his great-coat and he came back with them and the little girl. They said that he would not let her go from him long enough to put on his coat. He strode into the house with her still in his arms, and she was sobbing like a frightened child. He raved and stormed as though he were mad, and the grandmother and the maiden aunt put the girl into bed, just as they had done many a time, in her childhood, when she had wet her feet or fallen in the snow. And all the time they wept, and the old man, downstairs, raved in his anger. The little girl cried herself to sleep, as a child will.

She did not disobey them again. In the dining room I heard the old man tell the boy that he would shoot him on sight if he ever again came to the old house. And for many and many a day the boy did not come.

The little girl became a woman in a brief space of time. She became, not the merry woman I had always expected to see, but a quiet-voiced woman who smiled but with a world of sadness in the smile. And she was very kind and gentle to everybody. Do you know how I found out that much of her time was spent in prayer? Every time my hoarse old bell beat out the hour, she looked to heaven and her lips moved. And you must know that I struck each quarter hour and that, strangely enough, she spent most of her time in the dining-room. Perhaps she was training herself to forgetfulness, or did she linger there for memory's sake? You can tell so little about a woman!

And then, the other man came. How well I remember! He was tall and erect and stalwart, and his was a clear, strong eye. The grandfather met him with ill-concealed joy when he came each night. I knew that they all approved of him and why. I did not blame them. I knew by his mouth that he was worth a hundred such as the boy, and then, too, he belonged to the Faith.

I watched the girl receive him. She did it quietly, sweetly, as she did everything now, and she never would speak about him when he was gone. He gave her his ring in the dining room one night. I saw it all. He looked so brave and handsome as he sat at the table beside her and held her hand in both his own. I knew why her lips were so white and why her cheeks burned dull red, but I blamed her, too. Could she not see how fine a fellow loved her?

It was a beautiful ring he had given her. She uttered a little low gasping cry and held it up to the light. It gleamed with a thousand sparkles. The spinster aunt and the grandparents came in, and how they laughed and talked! Their delight was genuine. The girl held her hands so tightly. I wonder no one noted it. I knew the new ring was cutting into the flesh.

When he had gone, she stole back into the dining room. Only I was there. I could hear all the family upstairs, and everything, save the dim lamp above the scarlet throw, was fixed for the night.

The girl stood beside the lamp, under my very shelf. She held up her new ring and stared at it with dry eyes. Then she loosened the neck of her gown and drew forth a ribbon that was tied about her throat. On

it was a tiny gold ring, guiltless of sparkle. She pressed it to her lips again and again, and the tears came. Ah, me, the dear little fool kept the boy's betrothal ring about her neck! Could she not see how unworthy he had been?

After that the house was very busy, for they were making her wedding clothes. Everybody petted and humored her and the man was the happiest man in the world. The girl flitted like a bird, hither and thither, and she was merrier than I had seen her since the old days. They were all sure that she was happy.

It was a wild night, raining and blowing outside, and she sat alone in the dining room. The man had just gone and the family was asleep. She had her sewing on the table, and she sat down to take a few extra stitches.

The boy came and put his fair face against the wet window pane. She looked up and saw him staring there. I thought she would scream, but she did not. She got up, quietly, and let him in through the long window.

His face was haggard and white and his hair-rain-wet lay dark against his blue-veined forehead. Neither said much, for the old man had promised to shoot the boy on sight.

He could scarcely speak, this lover-hurt lad. His white lips framed whispered hot words of censure and his tears flowed, weak man that he was.

She was the brave one. She talked in whispers to him, as I had never thought the lass could talk, and she smoothed his damp hair with her trembling fingers. Too well I knew what the other worthy one would have given for that little caress from her! She even tried to smile, poor heart-sick girl-woman!

He asked her to flee with him, but she shook her head sadly. He sneered and wished her much joy with "the parrot dog whom she would wed!" He cursed her and called her false and threw her from him against the wall. Then he rushed out into the night.

She did not fall. She stood panting against the wall, her wild eyes in the darkness into which the boy had gone.

I saw it all! Only I knew all about it. In a few minutes she straightened up and took her engagement ring from her finger. Very deliberately, she hurled it into a far corner of the room. Then she went out into the stormy night.

I know why she did not follow the boy. God and faintness overcame her a few feet beyond the window and they found her next morning, lying white and still in the soaked grass beneath the trees.

She was terribly ill after that. They thought she would die. The man came into the dining room that second day, and searched about. He found the ring in the corner, where she had cast it. I wished that I might talk to him, but I knew from his white face that he understood a great deal.

Her convalescent days were spent in the sunny window of the dining-room. The man seldom came to the house and he never saw her, but his flowers were always fresh upon the table. Beautiful flowers they were and they spoke his heart to her.

He came in one day when she was getting well, quite well. There was a little red in her thin cheek and she had been playing with the canary bird. Since her illness, she had grown rather like the little girl she had once been. She was like a child and she had many merry moments, as a child will.

He said very little to her at first, but she rattled on in a childish way that was, in her, altogether new to him. Then he came to the point of his visit.

They had put on her engagement ring during her illness and it shone brilliantly. Sometimes it turned half way round on her thin finger. He told her that he understood, and she need not wear the ring if she was unhappy. He said it so quietly, his eyes on the floor, that I wondered if she guessed how heavy his heart was.

And she laughed, a merry tinkling laugh, such as I had not heard since she and the boy romped together. I did not know what to make of it, and the man lifted his hurt eyes with a start. Her face dimpled with laughter.

"Listen," she said, after a moment, "I want to tell you a story. Once a silly girl loved a silly boy. She had no one young to love and she was cruelly lonely. The boy told her that the religion in which she had been raised, the dear simple faith that she loved, was a bundle of superstition and ignorance, and that she was too lovely to join in its incantations. She did not believe him, but she was very lonely, and she wished to be with the boy. So she promised to give up her God and go with him, and she tried to do it, but her guardian angel protected her until she was caught and brought back. I know that you have heard the story. I wonder if you know, too, that the girl thought she did not love Prince Charming when he came, and I wonder if you know, too, that she followed the boy out into the storm to go with him—to hell, if need be, and that only a God-sent swoon prevented her overtaking him!"

She paused for breath and the man half turned from her. I knew he could not speak.

"After this, the girl was very ill," she went on, in a moment. "You know that, but you do not know what happened to her while you all thought that she slept. Let me tell you. One night, a tall shining Man came and stood beside her bed. In His hands there were bleeding, ragged wounds, and blood flowed from His side. He asked the girl to go with him and she went. They went a long way, to a strange city. There was much excitement. He led her to a vast arena, the spectators' seats of which were choked with a howling festive multitude. In the dust of the arena hundreds of men, women and children were dying. They were led out, sewed in animal skins and smeared with blood. Then, huge, hungry wild beasts were set upon them and they were devoured. They died with their hands clasped, raised to heaven, and the littlest and weakest of them called the name of Jesus. Around the edge of the arena, men hung, nailed to crosses, and every now and then one lifted his dying head and called in tones of love to Jesus. It was night, and between the crosses, al-

ternating with them, were biers raised to the heavens, and, tied to the stakes upon them, men armed with tar. Regularly, the soldiers were about, lighting fresh piles; and as the flames leaped up each human body, the burning victim cried and sang the name of Jesus."

Again the girl paused, and I had never seen her so beautiful as she was that moment. She smiled brightly at the man's straining eyes.

"I knew much in a moment," she said. "There were all Christians, and they had died for the faith of our fathers. I had read it all many a time. And what was I that had dared listen to any criticism of the precepts of that religion that drew willing martyrs in Saint Peter's own day? How long after all this wonderful thing had Puritans been born to protest against the True? I saw the shining Man beside me and noted again his wounds. I bent my ear again to the cries of love that rose with the dying groans of God's chosen people, and I knew that I had been permitted to see a glorious sight. I closed my eyes upon the horror, and thus floated back gain to my bed. And then, the shining Man faded away. But he left a true Catholic upon a bed of pain. You understand? If you do not wish me to wear your ring, I will give it to you with a smile. If—if you love me and wish—"

For answer the man snatched both her hands and laid his hot face against them. The girl laughed, that rich, rippling laugh I had once known so well. She bent her curly head above the man's and lightly touched his hair. Then she blushed and jumped away and would have run from him, but he was too quick for her. He snatched her in his arms, as she had never tempted him to do, and they both laughed and cried together, like children who had long lost one another.

She has many a finer clock than I in her own house now. She is the happiest, sunniest woman I have ever seen, and the truest Christian. When she comes fluttering into this dining room, all loveliness and smiles, she laughs up at my cracked face and cries: "Oh, grandpa, what awful time this old clock keeps!"

Ha! ha! If she only knew what I know, I know! If she could only guess that I have told you her story! —Donohoe's Magazine.

Priests at the Wreck

On Sunday night, November 11, says a correspondent of the "Catholic Columbian," two sections of an emigrant train on the Baltimore and Ohio road were rushing westward through Northern Indiana bearing 167 passengers. The night was dark, and a terrible snowstorm was raging. In the coaches were emigrants from the far-off banks of the Rhine and from the mountains of Bohemia and a large number of Lithuanians and refugees from Russia, all seeking homes in the land of the free. Their destination was Chicago, and they were buoyed up with hope and looking forward to Christmas, when they would be settled in their new homes.

The train was divided at Garrett, Ind., and 167 men, women and children were known to be in the second section. Both sections were to run as one train, and were given the right of way to Chicago. Little did the passengers in the second section dream of the fate in store for them sixty miles westward, at the little station of Woodville, in Porter County, Indiana. About two miles west of Woodville a heavy freight, east-bound, was side-tracked to clear the way. The first division rushed past. The conductor of the freight saw no danger signals to indicate that another section was following, and immediately pulled out on the main track and proceeded on his way eastward. At Woodville, two miles east, on a high embankment, where the road curves south, the second section came on, unconscious of danger, at fifty miles an hour. There was a crash as the trains came together, and the engine of the freight plowed its way through the passenger coaches, setting them on fire. Then ensued a terrible scene.

It was 4:30 in the morning, and murky dark; the storm still raged, and the snow fell in blinding sheets. At Chesterton, two miles north, lives Father Herman Jeraschek, at whose church the Forty Hours' devotion was in progress, and he was being assisted by a number of priests, among whom was Father John Berg, of Whit- ing, Ind. The first glare of the holocaust lighted up the spires of Chesterton Church and fell upon the windows of the rectory. Father Jeraschek awoke, and, seeing the light, thought it came from the farm-house of one of his parishioners who lives near the scene of the accident. He rushed to the telephone, and was informed of the terrible wreck on the Baltimore and Ohio and that the cars were burning and human beings perishing. His duty was there. He called Father Berg, ordered his horse, secured the Holy Eucharist, sprang into his buggy, lashed his horse into

a mad gallop and rushed through the blinding storm to the scene of the wreck, arriving there twenty-five minutes after the crash.

When the two priests arrived the air was filled with the screams and groans of the wounded and dying, and the murky sky was lighted up by the glare of the burning cars. The four emigrant coaches were a mass of tangled wreckage, from which human beings were being taken; but the fire was gaining upon the heroic crew that were working with axe and lever to liberate the imprisoned passengers.

Father Jeraschek is an accomplished linguist. He called out in a clear, loud tone in the German language that he was a Catholic priest, and was immediately answered by a young girl who was pinned down by a beam which crushed and broke her lower limbs. The fire was creeping up to her. She reached into the bosom of her gown, displayed a medal of the Blessed Virgin and said: "I am a Catholic." Father Jeraschek was immediately at her side and administered the rites to the dying. He called out again in Polish that he was a Catholic priest, and was answered by a poor fellow who drew from his bosom a scapular. He left him in charge of Father Berg and rushed on, announcing in Lithuanian and in Polish who and what he was, and was answered by scores of suffering men and women, who handed out their prayer-books and rosaries. He was instantly among them, giving absolution and the last rites of the Church.

The fire gained on the crew and the heroic farmers, who rushed to the scene from the neighboring farm-houses and did everything that could be done to aid the emigrants, and one hundred were saved. As the fire crept onward those upon the scene knew that the remaining sixty-seven men, women and children were doomed. Father Jeraschek's hands were blistered and he was drenched to the skin, and as the fire reached the last car his tall form stood out against the inky sky as with impassive face and eyes turned to heaven he raised his hands and gave conditional absolution to the dying. Death had silenced the imprisoned passengers, and no sound came from the cars but the roar of the flames. The injured, the wounded and the dying lay around in heaps. It was still dark and raining but through the darkness of the night Father Jeraschek and his assistant, Father Berg, labored among the wounded and the dying until the gloom lifted and the gray dawn settled slowly upon the dreadful scene; they had done all that man and priest could do.

Father Jeraschek is a native of Germany, and little thought the poor emigrants from the Rhine and the far-off countries of Europe that in their dying hour and dire distress God would send a priest of their religion and of their race to minister to them in this lonely and desolate outpost of a strange land. What must have been their thoughts when they heard the dear language of their fatherland and the comforting voice of the Church? A spectator who witnessed the terrible scene informed the writer that when the priest called out in German and made known who he was, the answer was a great cry of joy, and the composure, fortitude and patience of the victims was wonderful, causing an onlooker to say, "My God! What faith is theirs! It is supernatural."

May God give them rest. And may He eternally reward His two worthy ministers who showed themselves so filled with the charity and zeal of their holy office.

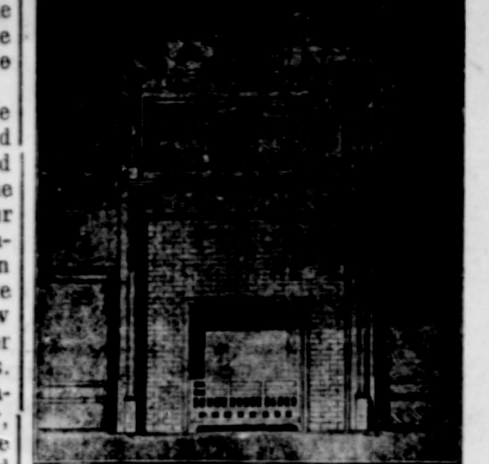
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Free Libraries

Free libraries, in the eyes of Cardinal Logue, are, to put it mildly, not altogether without pernicious effect. In a recent letter on the subject he says:

"I have always regarded them (free libraries), either in town or country, as a very great danger if not kept under the strictest supervision. Everyone who keeps his eyes open must see that at the present day the press is sending forth masses of anti-Christian and immoral literature, or, at best, literature of a doubtful morality. If these productions are allowed to get into free libraries, and fall into the hands of ignorant or half-educated people, we shall soon have the conditions as to faith and morality which now exist in France, or perhaps nearer home. Speaking generally, I think the utility of these free libraries is very questionable. No doubt, in cities and large towns, where there are many who wish to continue and complete their education, a library containing books of reference on technical, philosophic and scientific subjects would be a most useful institution; but from all the inquiries I have been able to make, I find that those who use the libraries for this most useful purpose are rare exceptions. The great run is on works of fiction, which are neither educating nor improving, if not positively injurious and corrupting, as most of them are. As to free libraries in country places, I think they will serve no good purpose. There are so very few who would use them for any purpose of any practical value, and so many who would glut themselves with the worthless stuff which is to be found in modern works of fiction."

THE BOY FROM CAPE TOWN. He came from Cape Town, Did little Joe Brown; And what do you think he asserted? That last New Year's Day He harvested hay! Was ever a boy so perverted? I thought I should die When of snow in July He talked just as if it were true! Do folks in Cape Town Have heads upside down? I can't understand it. Can you? —St. Nicholas.



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WELL KNOWN IN JARVIS, ONT.

Haldimand County Councillor tells how Psychine cured his Lung Troubles

"I contracted a series of colds from the changing weather," says Mr. Bryce Allen, a well-known resident of Jarvis, Ont., and a member of Haldimand County Council for his district, "and gradually my lungs became affected. I tried medicine and doctors prescribed for me, but got no relief. With two months' treatment I regained my health. To-day I am as sound as a bell, and give all the credit to Psychine."

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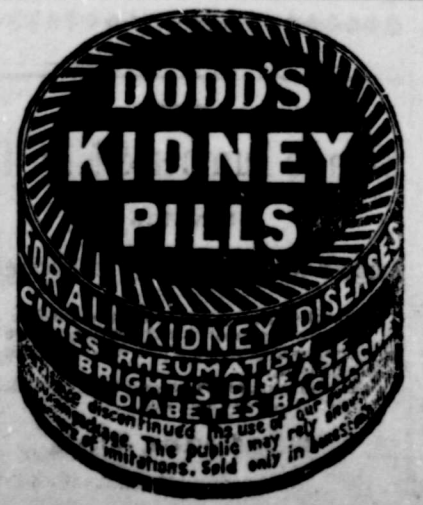
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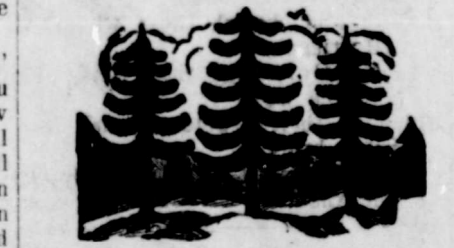
The annual meeting of the Trustees of the Catholic University of America took place on November 20, in Washington, D.C. The board is composed of Cardinal Gibbons, president; Archbishops Williams, of Boston, vice-president; Ryan, of Philadelphia; Ireland of St. Paul; Riordan, of San Francisco; Keane, of Dubuque; Farley, of New York; Messner, of Milwaukee; Glennon, of St. Louis; Quigley, of Chicago; Bishops Spalding, of Peoria; Maes, of Covington, secretary; Foley, of Detroit; Hortsmann, of Cleveland; Harkins, of Providence; Monsignor Dennis Joseph O'Connell, rector; Michael Jenkins, Baltimore; treasurer; Michael Cudahy, Chicago; Charles Joseph Bonaparte, Baltimore. With this board of trustees are associated ex-officio all the Archbishops of the United States, as an advisory board.

Many of the most distinguished Catholic prelates of the United States were present at the dedicating ceremonies of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, at Richmond, Va., the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Ryan. It is one of the greatest institutions of its kind in the United States and a monument of the Church in the South. Cardinal Gibbons, Apostolic Delegate Falconio and many Archbishops and Bishops from all parts of the United States were conspicuous figures in the services.

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