The Way of Life.

You have been earnest and sincere for a great many years, and you have kept on hearing and reading, and, after a fashion, you have even kept on praying; but all the while you have been on the wrong road. Suppose yonder young man should start with his bicycle to go to Brighton, and he should travel due north; he will never get there. The faster he travels the farther he will go from the place. If you follow after righteousness by the works of the law, the more you do the farther off you will be from the righteousness of God. It must be so. Hear a parable. Yonder is a river, deep and broad. You imagine that the proper way to cross it is to wade or swim through it. You will not hear of any other way. The king has built a bridge; it is open, free, and without toll; the passage is as safe as it is plain. You refuse to be beholden to his majesty. You mean to get across by your own exertions. Already you are wet and cold, but you mean to persevere. You are nearly up to your neck in the stream, and the current is too strong for you. Come back, O foolish man, and cross by the bridge. The way of faith is so safe, so simple, so blessed; do try it! Have you not had enough of self-saving? After years of struggling you are no forwarder, and have no more comfort; quit the struggle and rest in the Lord Jesus. Give up your self-confiding folly, and confide in the Son of God, the bleeding substitute for guilty men.

Do you not see, my friend, that in all your selfish trustings you are really fighting against your God? Jesus says: "Trust me; I will save you," and you reply: "I prefer my own doings." Is not that a great insult to Jesus? Have you not a tacked the great Father upon a tender point? May he not appoint his own way of saving you? He has chosen the way of grace through faith. What arrogance to refuse that way! God gives without money and without price; why do you provoke him with your fancied merits? You are flying in the face of the great God, and therefore your very religion is a sin. The cross is a superfluity if human merit can suffice. There was no need for the Father to put his Son to grief if, after all, men can work out a righteousness of their own. If works can save you why did Jesus die? Do you see what you are driving at? Do you mean to trample under foot the blood of Jesus? I beseech you, abhor all notion of self-justification. Dash down the idol which would rival your Lord. "Well," saith one, "you seem to know the ins and outs of a soul aiming at self salvation." I do, for I long labored to climb up to heaven upon the treadmill of my own works. At length I grew weary, and gave myself up to Jesus, that he might bear me there in his own arms. Will you not do the same?

Now, my reader, it will be an awful thing for you to understand this way of grace, and yet to neglect it. How long am I to preach to some of you? How long am I to wear my heart out in crying, "Come to Jesus; believe in Jesus?" If any body had said twenty years ago that yonder scal-holder would still remain an unconverted man, he would have replied, "Impossible; I am near to the kingdom; I am almost persuaded, and before long I shall decide." Yes, you are persuaded on Sundays, but you forget it all on Mondays, and all because faith is not exercised. You believe on faith; but you do not believe in Jesus. You know that Jesus could save you if you trusted him; but you do not trust him. O that this moment you would end this delay! I see God's only-begotten Son, who has deigned to become man for our sakes, and to die in our room and place, and from the cross I entreated him to speak to you. Speak, O my Master! He does speak, and these are his words: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Look, I pray you! Look and live.—*The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

All of Grace.

"For by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Within the circle of these words my theology is contained, so far as it refers to the salvation of men. I rejoice, also, to remember that those of my family who were ministers of Christ before me preached this doctrine and none other. My father, who is still able to bear his personal testimony for his Lord, knows no other doctrine, neither did his father before him.

I am led to remember this by the fact that a somewhat singular circumstance recorded in my memory connects this text with myself and my grandfather. It is now long years ago. I was announced to preach in a certain country town in one of the eastern counties. It does not happen to me to be behind time, for I feel often punctuality is one of those little virtues that may prevent great sins. But we have no control over railway delays and break-downs, and so it happened that I reached the appointed place considerably behind the time. Like sensible people they had begun their worship, and had proceeded as far as the sermon. As I neared the chapel I perceived that some one was in the pulpit preaching; and who should the preacher be but my dear and venerable grandfather? He saw me as I came in at the front door and made my way up the aisle, and at once said: "Here comes my grandson! He may preach the gospel better than I can, but he cannot preach a better gospel, can you, Charles?" As I made my way through the throng I answered: "You can preach better than I can. Pray go on." But he would not agree to that. I must take the sermon; and so I did, going on with the subject there and then, just where he left off. "Then," said he, "I was preaching on, 'For by faith are ye saved.' I have been setting forth the source and fountain-head of salvation, and I am now showing them the channel of it through faith. Now you take it up and go on." I am so much at home with these glorious truths that I could not feel any difficulty in taking from my grandfather the thread of his discourse and joining my thread to it, so as to continue without a break. I went on with "through faith," and then I proceeded to the next point—"and that not of yourselves." Upon this I was explaining the weakness and inability of human nature, and the certainty that salvation could not be of ourselves, when I had my coat-tail pulled, and my well-beloved grandsire took his turn again. When I spoke of our depraved nature the good old man said: "I know most about that, dear friends." And so he took up the parable, and for the next five minutes set forth a solemn and humbling description of our lost estate, the depravity of our nature, and the spiritual death under which we were found. When he had his say, in a very gracious manner, his grandson was allowed to go on again, to the dear old man's great delight; for now and then he would say in a gentle tone, "Good! good!" Once he said, "Tell them that again, Charles;" and of course I did tell them 'that again.' It was a happy exercise to me to take my share in bearing witness to truths of such vital importance which are so deeply impressed upon my heart. While announcing this text I seem to hear that dear voice, which has been so long lost to earth, saying, "Tell them that again, Charles."

I preach the doctrines of grace because I believe them to be true; because my experience endears them to me, and because I see the holy result of them in believers. I confess they are none the less dear because the advanced school despises them. I should never think it a recommendation of a doctrine that it was new. The doctrine which I preach to you is that of the Puritans—it is the doctrine of Calvin, the doctrine of Augustine, the doctrine of Paul, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of grace is the substance of the testimony of Jesus.—*Spurgeon.*

The Crimson Snow.

A STORY OF NORWAY.

The white rays of the arctic moon fell upon a trackless plain of snow, the firtrees waved their hoary limbs like so many spectral shapes, and everything around the old farmhouse of Stettin looked weird and ghostly in the intense stillness. Suddenly the sound of sleigh-bells struck the ear, and a pulkha, drawn by four reindeer, came up to the door. A gentleman wrapped in furs stood on the threshold, holding out his hand to a young lady, who was so muffled in wraps that her face was wholly invisible.

"Don't go, Mr. Jansen—don't go out in this terrible cold," pleaded a lovely girl.

"Eric, my boy," said an old man, scanning the heavens anxiously. "I wish you would be persuaded to stay. I don't half like the looks of those clouds."

He shook his head to both pleas. "I am sorry, sir, but I must go; my mother will be anxious."

"Well, Ella, then; leave Ella till it is warmer."

"When will that be, Christine?" laughed Ella. "I am afraid Stettin would be tired of me before the three months were over."

"Ella shall do as she pleases," said her brother.

What she pleased was very evident, for she ran down the steps, and lightly jumped into the sleigh.

"Of course she will not stay," called a gay girl. "We know who is waiting for her at Kronenthal."

A general laugh followed, and Ella was thankful for the cloud of Shetland wool that hid her face.

Eric lifted Carl, the ten-year-old brother, into the sleigh; then gathering up the reins, settled down in his own place, the bearskins and wolf-robes were spread over them and tucked in, and with a merry good-night to all, he gave a touch of the lash to the deer.

They shook their horns and bounded forward, the sleigh skating lightly over the frozen snow; the silver harness glittered in the bright moonshine, and the silver bells tinkled merrily in the night air.

For some time they rode in silence. Not a sound was to be heard, not a creature to be seen; they seemed to be traversing a vast desert of snow. The moonlight, reflected from the thousand points of ice sparkling like silver in its rays, was increased to an intensity of brightness that almost equalled the light of day, while up in the heavens flashed the glorious northern lights, flickering, streaming like fiery banners across the sky, and lighting up the snow-banks with green, purple, red, and gold.

Carl clapped his hands with delight, and then exclaimed, in a tone of terror:

"See, sister, see! the snow looks as if there was blood spilled on it."

"Yes," said Eric, as Ella drew the child closer to her; "our forefathers used to think that blood-red color meant death or misfortune for whoever saw it."

At last the child slept. On, on they flew, past rocky valleys, all clad in bridal garments of snow; past deserted summer chalets, which mocked one with the human life that had been there; beneath black, overhanging precipices, where no snow could find a lodgment; through pine woods, which shivered around them as if spirits were imprisoned therein and sighing to be loosed.

Suddenly Carl sprang up with a scream. "Didn't you hear it?"

"Hear what, my darling? You have been dreaming bad dreams."

"Have I?" said the child. "Was that all? But it was awful." And his blue eyes had a look of terror, while a shudder shook his small frame.

"Carl must be a brave boy. There was nothing to hear save the crackling of the pine branches. There, don't you see?" as, with a sharp sound, one fell from the tree, broken by a sudden gust of wind that swept through the wood.

"It was not like that," said the child; "it sounded as if something was coming after us." And he drew a long, sobbing breath, and clasped his arms tightly around Ella's neck, and said, "Sister, sing to me some more; sing about the Erl King."

"Oh, no, dear! not that one, she answered quickly.

"Yes," said he, with the persistency of childhood, "I want to hear that one."

She, controlling her voice as well as she could, she sang:

"Who rideth so late through the night-wind wild?
It is the father with his child.
He has the little one well in his arm;
He holdeth him safe, he holdeth him warm.

"Why, son, why hidest thy face so shy?"
"Seest thou not, father, the Erl King nigh?—
The Erlen King, with train and crown?"
"It is a wreath of mist, my son."

"My father, my father, and dost thou not hear
What the Erl King whispers in my ear?"
"Be quiet, my darling, be quiet, my child!
Through withered leaves the wind howls wild."

"O father, the Erl King now puts forth his arm!
O father, the Erl King has done me harm!"
He reaches his home with fear and dread,
And lo! in his arms the child was dead.

Absorbed in the song, Ella had not heeded a sound which came borne on the wind. She thought it was the fall of avalanches from the mountains; but as the last note died away it seemed to be brought back from the hills, and to fill the valley with the echo. She looked up at Eric, who with blanched face was listening intently.

"Oh, what is it, Eric?"

"Nothing, nothing," he muttered, and urged the deer forward with another touch of the lash.

"There it is again; it is no echo now," she said, as a deep, prolonged sound rose, died away, and rose again.

"Is it—O Eric! is it the wolves?"

"Cheer up; be brave, Ella! They are a long way off, and please God, we'll get home first." But his face contradicted his cheerful words, and he twirled the long lash again. The maddened deer, hearing the ominous sounds in the rear, needed no goad to spur them on, but rushed forward, while an unmistakable howl drove the blood from the hearts of the occupants of the sleigh.

"There, sister, that is what I heard. I told you something was coming after us!" exclaimed Carl.

Ella was silent, and only held him closer. Was it a dream, or had the child heard anything their ears had been unable to detect?

"It is the Erlen King, Eric; he has come for us."

"It is the Saviour, my little brother, who will come for us. Ask the Christ-Child to help us to speed the deer and stay the wolves."

With the unquestioning faith of childhood Carl instantly obeyed.

"Why can't we take refuge in some of these chalets?" said Ella. "We could barricade the door and wait for help."

"It would be impossible. We could make no barricade they could not force. It would only be quicker death. No, our only chance is to trust to the deer."

Ella covered her face with her hands. Was there no help? She looked around, above, beneath—nothing but snow and clouds and mountains. To her heart, how ever, a voice seemed to speak. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." Yes, there was help from above. And her heart was moved.

Gently putting Carl out of her arms, she got out the rifle, which none in those countries ever travel without, and loading it, laid it ready for action. Eric, who dared not relax for an instant his iron grasp on the reins, smiled at her and said, "There's my brave girl!"

Holding on to the side of the pulkha, she raised herself on the seat and scoured the country over which they had come. On the brow of the hill they had just descended she saw a black, moving mass defined against the sky.

"I see them, Eric; but they are a long way off."

"Then God help us!" said Eric; "they are surely gaining on us; the deer are doing their best."

On come the pack—twenty five lean, hungry, howling creatures, panting for the blood of their victims. The nostrils of the deer are red as coals; they are making a supreme effort, but it cannot last long; they are spent and worn, while the wolves are fresh, and wild with the pangs of hunger.

"How far, Eric," the girl whispered—"how far are we from home?"

"Too far—too far from there to be any chance of reaching it," he answered, with the calmness of despair.

He looked at his sister and the child that was so dear to them all, and growned aloud as he thought of his widowed mother. Carl opened his eyes. "Brother Eric, I asked the Christ-Child, as you told me to, and he will help us."

A cold perspiration broke out on Eric's forehead as he said, "Yes, he will come and take us to himself."

"No, no," said the child; "he will take us back to mamma, for he told me so."

The wolves were gaining upon them fast. They could distinguish clearly now the fiery eyes, the red tongues hanging out. One animal a little in advance of the others leaped up almost alongside of the sleigh.

"Eric, Eric, now?—may I fire now?" for he had cautioned her not to waste her ammunition.

"Yes, but for God's sake take sure aim!" He himself had taught her to use the rifle, and he knew that, unless unnerved by fright, her hand was steady as his own.

With a firm hand she levelled the gun, and the wolf fell dead, shot through the heart. The pack stopped to dispose of their dead companion, and Ella's face brightened, while the deer plunged on. But Eric shook his head.

"Only a check; they are mad with hunger. In a few seconds they will have devoured that one, and then—

The howl comes with redoubled force. They have tasted blood now, and are, if possible, fiercer than before. Again Ella's shot took effect, and again came the momentary lull.

"There is only one more load," said Ella at last.

"Then save it as long as you can, and God help us all!" said Eric.

"O Christ-Child, Christ-Child, come help us now!" rang out Carl's childish voice into the frosty air. And Ella caught him to her heart.

"Heap up the fagots, Hugh; it is a wild night," said Frau Jansen, as she and her English guest sat in the lofty old hall at Kronenthal. The rafters were black with age; the walls were adorned with curious carvings; over the floor were strewn wolf-robes, trophies of the chase; while at one end roared a gigantic fire.

Hugh Stanton gazed out through the casement; great banks of snow-clouds were piled up in the sky; a low murmur ran through the pine-trees. "Think you, mother," he said, "they would have left Stettin with this storm threatening in the air?"

"I cannot tell, my son. I would I knew they were safe. I like not the looks of the heavens; the aurora is crimson in the east, and the clouds are low in the west."

"There is blood on the snow," he cried.

"Yes, and it was an old superstition that it brought misfortune to the one who saw it."

Hugh paced the floor in silence.

"We are wrong," said the Frau; "the children are in God's hands, and Eric is the best driver in the district."

"Still an accident might come to the best and most careful. Shall I not take the men and go to meet them?"

"Well, go, my son, and God be with you!" was the answer.

It needed no urging to incite the men, for their young master was dear to them all, and in a few moments they were off, flying through the snow, which descended in a whirlwind, and cut their faces with its icy particles. On, on the horses bounded over the snowy waste, the only sound their deep breathing.

"Hark! what is that?" cried Hugh.

"It is but the moaning of the wind," said Jan.

"No," cried Hugh, as a shrill, piercing cry for help rang through the air. "It is the yell of a wolf."

A succession of loud yelps burst upon their ears, followed by a cry of agony and terror.

"That is the cry of a deer attacted by wolves. Let me out—let me out—that I may fly to their assistance," and he took his pistols in his hands ready to leap.

"Not so, my master, I implore you!" said Jan. "Our only chance of reaching them is to trust to the speed of the horses, if I can only keep them going."

"Get your pistols ready, Jan, you have your rifle."

"Can you manage, sir, to get my hunting-knife? it is under the seat."

"It is here," said Hugh, who, having secured the knife, sat with teeth clinched and eye strained in the direction from which the sounds came. "There they are—there they are—just ahead. Great heaven! the deer are almost down! Eric is flogging them. There is a great wolf close upon the sleigh."

With bated breath they watched while Ella stood up in the sleigh, rifle in hand. "So, she has fired—shot him down. Thank Heaven!"

The fury of the pack was checked for an instant, and Andreas forced his now frantic horses alongside of the other sleigh. Hugh, with his hunting-knife and pistols, sprang to Ella's side, who, now that she felt the strong arm of him she loved near her, fell back, exhausted with the strain. But only for an instant.

"Can you take the reins?" said Eric.

"Yes," she answered, and by a mighty effort sent the blood back to her heart. The deer, as if they understood the peril, stood quiet, though trembling in every limb, under her gentle but firm touch.

Eric, taking one of Hugh's pistols, and placing Carl and Ella in the middle of the sleigh, fired right and left. With a howl, an enormous brute leaped over the back of the sleigh, and seized the robe in which little Carl was muffled. A piercing shriek from Ella called the attention of the two young men. Eric turned and fired, but the wolf, though wounded, held on to the child. Hugh wheeled around, and with his hunting-knife, gave a thrust at the heart of the wolf, which, rolling over backward, dyed the trampled snow with its crimson blood.

Andreas struggled manfully with the plunging, rearing horses. It required all the skill of his practised hand to keep them from galloping off into the forest, while Jan with his good rifle did full execution, till at last the wolves, frightened and cowed, turned and fled, leaving the ground piled with the slain.

"There, brother Eric," said Carl, "didn't I tell you the Christ-Child would come to help us?"

"Do I look like the Christ-Child, Carl?" laughed Hugh.

"Oh, don't laugh, Hugh," said Ella, leaning her head on his arm, "Carl is right; surely the Lord sent you to our aid." And she sank down, fainting, in his arms.

Tenderly they lifted her into the sleigh with the fresh horses, leaving Andreas and Jan to bring the deer, and turned their faces to Kronenthal. There was no need of whip or spur; they flew back over the road by which they had so lately come, winged by the fear of wolves and of the coming storm. In silence the journey was made. Ella's hand was clasped in that of her betrothed, while Carl was pressed closely to her heart.

The door of the farmhouse was thrown open, and the bright pine flames sent a ruddy glow out into the storm. The mother needed no words of explanation; the blood-stained garments, the agitated countenances, told the tale. "Let us thank God, my children," she said, in tremulous tones; and kneeling down, they thanked him whose little children we all are for their deliverance from a cruel death.—*Harper's Young People.*

Which Was The Fool?

BY OSCAR BLISS.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE.

"Dolly, I think that husband of yours is a fool."

"I've heard you say something of this kind before, brother; but out with it, what is the nature of his latest offence?"

"I suppose it's none of my business if he wants to go to the poor-house and drag his family along with him; it's a free country, and a man can do what he will with his own."

"You are very mysterious. I hope Sam has not suddenly taken to drinking, nor anything of that nature?"

"Sam is a good fellow, in some respects a capital fellow, but no man in business can afford to give away all his money. Five dollars here, ten dollars there, and a hundred dollars to-mor ow. I tell you what it is, Dolly, Sam has only what he has saved by hard work, and now he's giving it all away. In a few years he will not have a cent to his name, then he will come to those who have saved their money to borrow a loaf of bread for his family."

"Are you not a little mistaken, John? I know Sam is quite liberal, but I never supposed he wasted his money."

"Waste! I'd like to know what waste means? He gave that Jim Summers who broke his leg five dollars, and no one else gave over one. He would have been thought just as much of if he had given what others did, and saved four dollars by the operation. He subscribed for our church this year—I know, I saw the paper—$100! That is double as much as any one else gave. So it goes; when he hasn't a dollar left he will have only himself to thank."

"Did you know, John, that Jim Summers' wife has a young babe, and that only last week Jim paid the last dollar he had on the debt he owed for the house that burned down?"

"Well, what if Jim is an honest, needy fellow, Sam don't have to support him, does he? And then, what right has Sam to give $100 to the church when he has a family to support?

"Our duty, John, should be done, regardless of what the world may say. Sam does not give a second thought to what any one says, so long as his own conscience approves. And I must sincerely wish that every man was as thoughtful concerning his family as Sam is."

"Oh, well, as I said, it's none of my business, but I tell you plainly, it will be useless for you to come begging around me. I shall never have any more than enough for myself," and with this parting shot John took himself off.

Samuel Grand had established himself in business in a small Western town. He married Dolly Whiting, a sweet girl of strong common sense, who had unbounded faith in her husband, and when he told her his plans and gave his reasons for what he did, she, believing him right like a sensible woman, gave him her earnest support. Nor could the lugubrious prophecies of her only brother shake her confidence in the least. At the same time she stored all these sayings in her heart, and watched and waited.

Ten years flew swiftly by. The Western town had grown to be a city and Samuel Grand was a wealthy man. His was the most extensive business in the place. He owned corner-lots, and was interested in every enterprise calculated to be of use to his neighbors, and though he lived plainly, his home was a delightful spot to which he joyfully returned after the toils of the day were ended. Here, too, the needy were always sure of sympathy and assistance, and it was the wonder of many how one family could do so much for others without becoming impoverished thereby.

John Whiting, on the other hand, was little if any better off than when ten years before he complained to his sister that Sam was on the road to the poor-house. In fact John's rapidly increasing family taxed his resources to the utmost, and one day he was forced to call on Sam for a small loan, though it cost him an effort to do so.

"Oh, certainly," said Sam, "I have a little fund which I keep for just such purposes. Here is the money, and when you are in need call again."

John was considerably overcome, but finally he said:

"Sam, I don't know what to make of you."

"Why so, John?"

"Well, when you were first married you and I were worth just about the same. You were always spending your money freely—even worse, I thought, giving it away—while I saved every dollar, and yet you have plenty and to spare, and I am not as well off as I was then. I cannot account for it, for we both had an equal start, and you have worked no harder than I have."

"John, let me give you a little bit of history. You remember when I commenced business here I bought wheat and stored it to sell in the spring. It so happened I had about all of a certain kind of wheat the farmers at that time used for seed. When they had done their spring sowing, a long rain come on and the seed rotted in the ground. Now, I reasoned, I can get double price for every bushel of wheat I have. The Sabbath day came, and while sitting at home I could not refrain from congratulating myself on my good luck to Dolly. I noticed she did not say much, and presently she took up the Bible, as she frequently did, and read aloud the eleventh chapter of Proverbs, closed the book, and said never a word. I could not tell, nor do I know to this day if she intended to read me a lesson, but I took up my hat and went out for a walk. I thought of the thousand bushels of grain, really worth about one dollar, which I could sell for two if I should demand that price, and then rirging in my ears, were the words Dolly had just read—

"'He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him.'

"You see what it says, the people shall curse him. I interpreted this to mean, it was not only their right but their religious duty to do so, because of the iniquity of the action. Was I then committing a crime? The next day I commenced selling my wheat at a dollar a bushel, which gave me a fair margin of profit. Men called me a fool. Dolly and my own conscience told me I had done right. About that time, you may remember, came up for discussion the question how much ought we to give to objects of charity and for the public good generally. I had long talks with Dolly about it, and she advised that we lay aside one-tenth of each year's income, to be devoted to such purposes as the occasion might warrant. The plan was adopted, and we have never missed the amounts thus expended. In fact it has seemed like good seed sown on good ground, or like bread cast upon the waters. Leaving out the question our duty to God, which should be the ruling principles of our lives, there is sound wisdom from a business stand point in the twenty-fourth and twenty fifth verses of that same chapter, which you will remember, say:

"'There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.'

"'The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.'

"Such is the history of my success, for in the eyes of men I have been successful. I have merely followed my guide—the blessed Word—and my good wife has helped me to do so. I have been blessed beyond my most sanguine expectations, and I have realized that it is surely more blessed to give than to receive."

"Sam, ten years ago I told Dolly you were a fool, and on the way to the poor-house. I have had my eyes opened and, I am now convinced that yours is the right path, even though my prediction had been verified. My children shall be taught to give as they have opportunity, and to remember that we are only stewards of God's bounty.—*Observer.*

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I have suffered, for years, from Catarrh, which was so severe that it destroyed my appetite and weakened my system. After trying other remedies, without relief, I began to take Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and, in a few months, was cured. —Susan L. Cook, 902 Albany st., Boston, Mass.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla is superior to any blood purifier that I ever tried. I have taken it for Scrofula, Canker, and Salt-Rheum and received much benefit from it. It is good, also, for a weak stomach.—Millie Jane Peirce, S. Bradford, Mass.

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