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Religious Miscellany.

Sacred Song.

ALABAMA—(HERE WE REST).

By Mary E. Herbert.

Alabama: we have reached
Home at last,
Cross thy wanderings weary feet,
All are past;
Toil and heat and arctic cold,
Snares and perils manifold,
That beset the devious way,
Alabama: all are past,
Home at last!

Alabama: trembling heart,
All is o'er,
Sinking, fainting, hoping, fearing,
Nevermore!
Sorrow of old has been thy lot,
Now thou art as if forgot,
Perfect bliss awaits thee here;
Alabama: trouble past,
Joy at last!

Press'd by weariness and care,
Full of grief,
Alabama: we have found
Sweet relief,
From the pains that rack'd us sore;
From the burdens that we bore;
From the farewells uttered low;
Alabama: all are o'er,
Evermore!

Clad in robes of spotless white,
Here we rest;
In the Palace of our God,
Henceforth blest!
Full of rapturous surprise,
At the wondrous scene that rise,
Far away has vanished fear;
Alabama: doubting ceas,
All is peace.

Alabama: toil nor strife
Ere we here;
Never, to molest our bliss,
Temper date,
Welcomed by a radiant band,
Gathered out of every land,
Hark, our loved ones come before,
Hail us victors, cohorts past,
Home at last!

Dartmouth, July 24.

Modern Infidelity versus Faith.
Nature celebrates God. Man alone revolts against his Creator. Since from a lofty point of view, history reveals the divine plan, and humanity has its destinies. The divine power appears amidst all the hideous and fantastic acts of human liberty. The conclusion must always be that of Bossuet: "We must not speak of chance or games of chance. This which is chance to us, is a design concerted in a design yet more extended."

Our age ought to adore, with more fervor than Isaac Newton, the Creator of the heavens; and to find language more elevated and sublime than that of Bossuet. History and science increase faith; they do not create it. Science unduly elevated can only have the effect of imposing on the mind a control, to prevent its rising to a higher principle. Now the sciences of fact have become, by their pretension, a cause of scepticism. The duty of the historian is to study the details, the traits; and to defy generalizations hastily preconceived. Before to look at endless variety, his mind forces to vacillate. He wishes to study things only in their human relations; and considers himself wiser in proportion as he shuts his ear to the great voice of eternity. It is even more remarkable in the science of nature. It attains only to the stately heavens. The naturalist is too often induced to believe that his method of attaining truth is the only one to be found. If one speaks to him of the invisible world, the smile is seen upon his lips as the transparent veil of doubt. He is tempted to believe that the only truths are those which can be demonstrated to the senses, and that all else are chimeras. In place of searching for unity, an infidel philosopher recognizes only a collection of material facts. Instead of rising to the supreme cause, it stops short at the laws which are subordinate. Everything is in process of change, it says; there is nothing stable, nothing permanent. Continuous change is the normal state of the universe. Its disciples believe in the senses, in matter, but in nothing else.

But these very men, who have excluded God from their thoughts, to whom nature is without a cause, and humanity without providence, find again the need of a faith. This world, this humanity with all its impurities, they defy. They protest against being called Atheists; they deny a personal God, but they do not wish to be regarded as Atheists. Their indignation is a homage, which, despite the delusion, their conscience renders to the Divinity.

What they worship especially is the mind of man. Here we can penetrate the secret of a doctrine proud in its poverty. The mind of man is characterized, it says, by the consciousness of thought; but all the thoughts of men are true for they are divine. Hence the mixture of disdain and arrogance which characterizes the followers of this philosophy. It is not new, as they pretend. "Nothing is true," was the first formula of the sceptic Gorgias: "All is true," was that of the rhetorician Protagoras. How strange to see men offer us gravely as a novelty the errors against which Plato protested!

God and the truth are in the closest union. That the world invisible may be present to the reason, there is necessarily an act of faith produced in the entire soul, and not in the reason only of him who accepts God. Descartes descended into the depths of the soul; he saw there a divine reflection, and he proclaimed God—the most certain of all truths. This done, he comprehended that if God is not, reason offers no guarantee. He confessed that all his rational proofs depended on a belief which preceded them. This great mind avowed that reason proves God. He recognized an act of faith as lying at the basis of reason.

The great remedy for scepticism is faith in God. Study, reflection, and science have a great part to perform. But the isolated intelligence

is not the entire man. The heart and the conscience are not of those facts which you can weigh and measure; but they are facts notwithstanding. We have the right to say to the sceptic, What do you make of the conscience? You deny these facts in order to satisfy the conclusions of your logic. You say there is no such thing as absolute truth, or even moral truth. But the voice of humanity answers, (as it did to the sophists by the mouth of Socrates, to the modern sceptics by that of Kant). "There is one law of duty; then there is a unity of truth." Man is an enigma, of which God alone is the solution. But this solution is not imposed on a science of mathematics; it is proposed to the liberty of man, and needs an act of the soul to receive it. The act of the soul which seizes the truth, is, to know, as a credulous superstition. Without doubt, credulity is a temptation. But faith is a virtue, and doubt is a temptation. Do not be troubled, if the storm of doubt passes across our country. There are clouds in the horizon; but be calm. God sustains the human mind. To the aberration of thought, as to the waves of the sea, He has said, "Hilbert shall ye come, but no farther." The struggle of good and evil will last; but scepticism will never cover the whole earth with its shadow. The future will always show that the world of errors is that there is no truth.—*Pittsburg Christian Advocate.*

A Remarkable Conversion.

Adouiram Judson, the illustrious American missionary, was a minister's son; he was very able and very ambitious. He was early sent to college. In the class he was a young man of the name of E., brilliant, witty, and popular, but a determined deist. Between him and the minister's son there sprang up a close intimacy, which ended in the latter gradually renouncing all his early beliefs, and becoming a great skeptic as his friend. He was only twenty years of age, and you may be sure it was a terrible distress and consternation which filled the home circle who, during the recess, he announced that he was no longer a believer in Christianity. More than a mark for his father's arguments, he steered himself against all after influences, and with his mind fixed on enjoyment, he and the minister's son set out on a solitary tour. One night he stopped at a country inn. Lightning lit his room, the landlord mentioned that he had been obliged to place him next door to a young man who was exceedingly ill, in all probability dying, but he judged it would do him no business. Judson assured him that, beyond pity for the sick man, he should have no feeling whatever. Still the night passed a restless one. Sounds came from the sick chamber, sometimes the groans of the sufferer, and the young traveler could not sleep. "So close at hand, with but a thin partition between us," he thought, "there is an immortal spirit about to pass into eternity, and is he prepared?" And then he thought, "For shame of my shallow philosophy? What would E., so intelligent and clear-headed, think of this boyish weakness?" And then he tried to sleep, but still the picture of the dying man rose up to his imagination. He was a "young man" and the young student felt compelled to place himself on the neighbor's dying bed, and he could not help fancying what in such circumstances would be his thoughts. But the morning dawned, and in the sun-drenched daylight his "superstitious" illusions fled away. When he came down stairs he inquired of the landlord how his fellow-traveler had passed the night. "He is dead!" was the answer. "Dead?" "Yes; he is gone, poor fellow; the doctor said he would probably not survive the night." "Do you know who he was?" "Oh yes, it was a young man from Providence College; a very fine fellow; his name was E."

Judson was completely stunned. Hours passed before he could quit the house; but when he did resume his journey, he would not leave it until he had again seen the dead! Lost! Lost! He was continually singing in his ears, "There was no need for argument, God had spoken, and from the presence of the living God the chimeras of unbelief and the pleasures of sin alike fled away." The religion of the Bible he knew to be true; and turning his horse's head toward Plymouth, he rode slowly homeward, his lips of enjoyment all shattered, and ready to commence that rough and unpolishing walk through the death prison at Ava and its rehearsal of martyrdom conducted to the grave at Maulmain.—*Dr. James Hamilton.*

A Prayer.

BY MATTHEW ARNOLD.
Thou who dost dwell alone,
Thou who dost know thy own,
Thou to whom all are known,
From the cradle to the grave—
Save, O save!
From the world's temptations,
From tribulations,
From that fierce anguish
Wherein I languish,
From that torpid sleep,
Wherein we all sleep,
Heavy as death, cold as the grave—
Save, O save!
When the soul, growing clearer,
Sees God no nearer;
When the soul mounting higher,
To God comes no nearer;
But the arch fiend nigher;
Moulters at her side;
Feeling her high surprise,
Sealing her eagle eyes,
And when she falls would scar,
Melt into adoration,
Changing her pure emotion
Of her high devotion
To a skin-deep sneer;
Of her own eloquence;
Strong to deceive, strong to entice—
Save, O save!
From the ingrained fashion
Of this earthly nature,
That mars thy creature;
From grief, that is but passion,
From mirth, that is but feigning;
From tears, that bring no healing;
From mild and weak complaining;
Thine old strength revealing—
Save, O save!
From doubt, where all is double,
Where wise men are not strong,
Where comfort turns to trouble,
Where sweet things soonest cloy,
Where faiths are built on dust,
Where love is half mistrust,
Hungry and barren, and sharp as the sea—
O set us free!
O let the false dream fly,
Where our sick souls do lie,
Tossing continually,
O where thy voice doth come,
Let all doubts be dumb;
Let all doubts be mild,
All strife reconciled,
All pains beguiled,
All griefs unkindness,
All knowledge no unkindness,
All joy no unkindness,
All joy, and all peace.

Thy Word, Almighty Lord,
Where'er it enters in,
Is sharper than a two-edged sword,
To slay the man of sin.

Thy Word is power and life;
It bids confusion cease,
And changes envy, hatred, strife,
To love, and joy, and peace.

Susanna Wesley and the Unauthorised Meetings.
While her husband was absent in London in 1711, attending Convocation, Mrs. Wesley adopted the practice of reading in her family and instructing them. One of the servants told his parents, and they wished to come. These told

Is your Soul Insured?

"Pa," said a little boy as he climbed to his father's knee, and looked into his face as earnestly as if he understood the importance of the subject, "is your soul insured?" "What are you thinking about, my boy?" replied the agitated father. "Why do you ask that question?" "Why, I heard Uncle George say that you had your house insured, and your life insured; but he didn't believe you had thought of your soul, and he was afraid you would lose it: won't you get it insured right away?" The father leaped his head on his hand, and was silent. He owned broad acres of land that were covered with a beautiful produce, his barns were ever so full with plenty, his buildings were all well covered by insurance; but, as if that would not suffice for the maintenance of his wife and only child in case of his decease, he had, the day before, taken a life-policy for a large amount; yet not one thought had he given to his own immortal soul. Oh, that which was to waste away, and become part and parcel of its native dust, had been spared no pains; but for that which was to live on and through the long ages of eternity, he had made no provision. "What shall I do? What shall I do?" he asked in silence, his soul stirred within him; and he mentally exclaims: "What shall I do to be saved?"

Wait! years, golden opportunities unimproved, broken Sabbaths, a neglected Bible, the warnings of friends, and the voice of God's afflictive providence unanswered, rush to his mind; and he found no power left to throw himself into the arms of Jesus.—*Christian Banner.*

He is Joined to His Idols; Let Him Alone.

There is a legend among the peasants of Dalmatia of a fair and malicious spirit which at certain periods of great prosperity, emerges from its lair within the earth, to blow the crops, to perturb the minds of rulers, and descend to individual and petty malice. The legend goes that the demon, who always is at first unseen, deceives the victim who wanders near his neighborhood, with a voice of such wondrous sweetness, and accents so musically toned, that the hearer is unable to resist its spell, and walks insensibly towards his ruin. Step by step it leads him from the true road into the maze of the forest, and by its subtle artifice, he is left alone, and finally when night has overtaken him, and he is exhausted by his efforts, he finds himself surrounded by a host of devils, who, with a voice of such wondrous sweetness, and accents so musically toned, that the hearer is unable to resist its spell, and walks insensibly towards his ruin. Step by step it leads him from the true road into the maze of the forest, and by its subtle artifice, he is left alone, and finally when night has overtaken him, and he is exhausted by his efforts, he finds himself surrounded by a host of devils, who, with a voice of such wondrous sweetness, and accents so musically toned, that the hearer is unable to resist its spell, and walks insensibly towards his ruin.

God's Blessing on the Dance.

A young lady who had been taught better things, was arrayed in the garb of fashion, and ready for the amusement of the ball-room. As she stood at the glass, arranging the last rose amid her clustered locks, she hastily turned round and said to her mother, "Why, what makes you look so sad? What is the matter? Come, do not be sad any more; put this rose in my hair, and see how pretty it will look." Her mother kissed her cheek, and she bade her good-night, whispered, "Can you say God's blessing on the dance, Elizabeth?" The gay, thoughtless girl gave her a quick, earnest look, and hurried down the steps. At an earlier hour than was expected, Elizabeth's voice was heard at the door. Her mother was up-stairs, and when she went down to meet her, found she had retired to her room, where she was heard earnestly praying, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, I see Thee, and I lay my cry before Thee." Her mother entered her room and welcomed her home. "Oh," said she, "I have good news. In that bewildered ball-room I danced with the merriest, and laughed with the loudest, but there was an arrow here," pressing her heart. "God's blessing on the dance! Those words rang in my ears at every turn. Oh, if God would forgive the past, if He will yet receive me, I will turn my back on all this gilded folly and lay upon His altar what I once promised to lay there—my whole heart." They knelt together, and asked God to strengthen the resolution then made in His name. Prayer was heard, for among the group of lively disciples who kept near their Lord, walking in His footsteps, and bearing His Cross, few were more humble, meek, modest, consistent and devoted, than the once gay and thoughtless Elizabeth.

D'Aubigne to Students.

The great historian of the reformation, in a recent address at Geneva, warmly recalled the offices of the minister, as a following of Christ in his work of teaching the Word. When the work of a ministry consists chiefly in liturgical services and supposed sanctified transformation, it has lost all its apostolic character, whatever be its claims. These are the eloquent words of the far-famed historian: "The object, the essence of the Evangelical ministry is to awaken, to justify, to convert souls, to make them meet; by the sovereign grace of God, for the inheritance of the saints in light. This was the work of the minister in the Apostolic times. If St. Paul traversed Asia Minor and Greece, if he stopped at Ephesus, at Philippi, at Thessalonica, it was, that those to whom he had access might be converted from idols to serve the living and true God. If the Saviour himself spoke by night to Nicodemus, it was to tell him, except he be born again he could not see the kingdom of God. If he rested by Jacob's well, it was to give to a sinful woman that water which springeth up to life eternal.

We do not open this school in order to train young ministers who should go and bury themselves in some cure, make their Sabbath sermon, and instead of arousing their hearers, lull them to sleep and fall asleep themselves. No, sir, the end, the requirement of this school is, that you should do the work of an evangelist, that you should proclaim Christ, 'tis instant season and out of season' that you should strive to make known of each one the sin which is in him, and which condemns him, so that he may be constrained to cry out, 'What shall I do to be saved?'—that you should show him the arms of Christ opened wide, to embrace with great joy, like the father of the Prodigal Son, him who was dead, but is alive again.

tion could scarcely have been uttered ere you were packing your present. Who should receive it? I went to my knees and thank'd my good Father with tears; and now I thank you. The gift which thus came opportunely was a large and excellent supply of stationery, accompanied by twenty-five shillings. That amount had been intended to extend in a writing case; but as he prayed a second thought arose in his friend's mind that perhaps at such a time cash would be more serviceable to him. The same day a lady of another Church, who at times had been severe in her strictures upon the thunder of his exhortation, sent an earnest request that he would call upon her. He did so, and with deep feeling spoke to her of the things of Jesus. At the far well he slipped a sovereign into her hand, and insisted upon its acceptance. Five shillings were yet wanting. Mr. Collins remarked to me: "I said no word to any creature, but felt sure that my Father would send them." "He was about to mount the coach—That last crown has not come. Will it?" "Mr. Collins," said the Rev. M. Raper, "I just occurred to me that upon the 'Narrative of William Goodell,' which we jointly published three a balance of ten shillings profit, half is rightfully yours; here it is!" So, with the last mite of the sum in his palm he mounted the coach, and found in that answer to prayer sweet solace amid the heart-breaking farewells of his friends. He writes: "As the vehicle rolled on, looking up to heaven, I said, 'Father thou art true; thou art all sufficient; thou art mine. Since thou givest thyself to me I will not be cast down, because thou wilt not leave thy children.' Whether I go east, or west, or north or south, I will be at thy work. From this no change of place can separate me. In this I have I friendship and wealth.—Thank all I need for time or through eternity; and since thou art my portion, in this will I be content."

The Glory of Heaven.

A storm rose suddenly from the west, thunder crashed along the sky, lightnings flashed and hickered across the bosom of the storm. The rain descended in torrents, and fierce winds drove the clouds eastward. In a few minutes the clouds were risen, the sun looked forth and rainbows spanned the eastern hemisphere. If we were thinking of dear ones we sat looking upon the glorious scenery, when our soul was filled with praise at beholding the glory of God. Gazing thus upon the sky at sunset, and singing "Sweet Home" we could not keep our thoughts from wandering away. "Beyond the clouds beyond the tomb," to the beautiful world which Jesus called "My Father's House."

The sky was gorgeously arrayed in clouds of many shapes and hues. Just before us in the west they were parted and the sky was smooth as a mirror, of silver, or of glass. Perhaps it resembled the sea of glass which John saw opening before the throne of God. There was a splendour near the lowest bank of "Varnet's" clouds, then a wide channel of glass resplendent with various tints, and then a glittering glory which shined upon the upper bank of the picture. Above this resplendent cloud first quite dense, fringed with gold and silver, then deepening into crimson, then softened into pink, then a soft yellow or bronze, then fleeces of clouds like rainbows vanishing into the blue vault at the zenith. Between the rift clouds appeared patches of the deep sky of green and blue and white, fringed with royal purple and gold. Banks of the blue-black clouds rose upon the mountains away to the north and south, and as the sun sank down the colors melted into a soft silvery gray, and soon the intense colors of the western horizon were all directed into the modest hues of night. Venus shone out between the clouds near the horizon, and the crescent moon hung in the heavens above shedding her soft lustre over all. Fleecy clouds now spread over the sky, then dissolved, and then left the whole hemisphere gilded with stars, while upon the crown of Saturn displayed his glorious light. Beyond these crystal rivers and clouds, far away where some in limbo's space, sit God's throne and the Christian's home, if you glory on Zion to night! With Charles Wesley we sing—

"Even now we taste the pleasures there;
A cloud of spice, odours comes
Soft wafted by the breeze;
Sweeter than Araby's perfumes;
From Zion's top the breeze blow,
And cheer us in the vale below."

If this evening God's works seen by mortal eyes so beautiful, how glorious must be the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem! The light of the new city shines "like unto a Jasper stone, even like a Jasper stone, clear as crystal." Once in a while we go into a splendid store near our office to see the many beautiful things made by the deft fingers of men, and there we admire most of all the display of precious stones. Whether the stones bear the same names as those of the Revelations we do not know, but they are of exceeding beauty, and some of them are very precious corals. As to their commercial value, a small diamond piece are told to be worth eleven hundred dollars, and the values of others are immense. But the foundations of the wall of the city are garnished with all manner of precious stones. How shall we admire the Jasper, sapphire, chalcodony, emerald, chrysoptase, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, the topaz, chrysoptase, jacinth, and the amethyst of the walls? How wonderful at the gates of pearl! How walk through the streets of gold in the light of the Lamb, rejoicing with all the redeemed! "The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it." Above all the glories of the City of God, above all its wealth, and all its splendour, we shall prize the presence of Jesus. He reigns there, his triumph is complete, his glory unchangeable. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Such views of heaven fill up our hearts of joy. We can afford to wait and work until Jesus comes again. Earth is beautiful, its birds, flowers, seas, plains, rivers, rivulets, cascades, mountains, all are beautiful and grand. We admire all these, here all, but death with silent wing passes along by our dwelling and we feel his cold touch, and from it think away, and strive to find the eternal hills, the everlasting fountains, the unchangeable glory. O Jesus! "Thou knowest, in the spirit of prayer, We long thy appearing to see."

Religious Intelligence.

Session of the German and Swiss Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
The German and Swiss Conference met in Berlin, the Prussian capital, on Thursday, June 17th, in the new chapel in the Junkerstrasse. The session was opened with the reading of the Scriptures by Dr. Jacoby, and prayer by him and several other members of the Conference.—G. H. Downing was elected President, and E. Gebhardt, Secretary. The standing committees were appointed. A fraternal communication was read and a committee appointed to reply to it. Measures were adopted for the formation of musical associations in connection with the different churches, for the promotion of congregational singing throughout the Conference. Resolutions were passed looking toward the founding of deaconess establishments in such parts of the Conference where they may be deemed advisable. These institutions already exist in the German States Churches, and have accomplished a vast amount of good, by educated care of the sick, wounded, and infirm. So far as we know, the only Methodist Church which was taking a practical step in this direction is that in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, where several deaconesses, who have passed through a special training, are members, and are in constant demand in families needing careful nursing.

Dr. Macey and Norris, and Mr. Muller, of California, were introduced to the Conference. Rev. Dr. Schaff, of New York, was also introduced and requested to dine with the Conference and make an after dinner address. In his remarks he explained the object of his mission to Germany, which was to promote an European interest in the American Session of the Evangelical Alliance to be held in New York in 1870. He had already been very successful in Great Britain, Holland, and France, and expressed the hope that the German Church would send a strong delegation to America. His whole address abounded in expressions of the most cordial and warm-hearted sympathy, and a glowing tribute to the labors of the Methodist Church in behalf of socialized education, the enlightenment of the masses, and the religious training of children. Several addresses were made by members of the Conference appreciative of Dr. Schaff's labors in the United States, particularly in behalf of the Sabbath.

Resolutions of condolence with Dr. Hart were passed, he having been suddenly summoned home by the death of his only daughter. A volume of sermons, containing two by each member of the Conference, was ordered for publication before Christmas, and to be prepared under the editorial supervision of the faculty of the Martin Mission Institute. The Rev. Mr. Nippert was requested to prepare a brief sketch, historical and otherwise, of the Institute. The Examining Committee on the Institute, through its Chairman, A. Lulzberger, presented their report, in which the progress and promise of the students, as evinced by their late examinations, were highly commended. A resolution was passed requesting the North German Conference to send a strong delegation to the conference, and that there be no little doubt that such will be the case, for important no more than one occasion interested himself in our movements, and relieved our preachers from the unwarranted obstructions placed in their way by the police authorities. Dr. Naest's *Larger Catechism* was recommended by the Conference for general use. A communication to the Conference, numerously signed, from the German Church of Paris, represented the status of the Society there, and requested the return of Rev. W. Schwarz as Pastor. The services of the work were very interesting, and the attendance increased from evening to evening. Without doubt, the session will prove of great advantage to our cause in the great political and literary centers of North Germany. Sermons were delivered by Dr. Schaff, Messrs. Schwarz, Nippert, Kinnert, Paulus, and Messmer, and a lecture on "Our view of the Church," by A. Spilzberger. Four preachers were received on trial, and two were admitted into full connection. The Conference Missionary Sermon was delivered by Rev. W. Nusslein, of Zurich, Switzerland, at the old Methodist house of six o'clock A. M.

Statistics: Members, 5398 (increase of 680); probationers, 1560 (increase of 437); local preachers, 23; travelling preachers, 25; Church property, 330,740 thalers. Collection: Preachers' aid Society, 476 thalers; Missions, 258 thalers; Martin Mission Institute, 1746 thalers; New York Mission House, 148 thalers. Total are the principal receipts, but the sum total is 22,684 thalers above the total for the Conference year of 1868.—*Christian Advocate.*

Mexico.

We have already referred to the wonderful work in progress in Mexico, and also to Miss Rankin under whose labors the work commenced. We present the following extract from one of her recent letters, and though somewhat lengthy, it will be read with interest: "Not since the glorious days of Martin Luther, in which D-vine truth electrified the blinded subjects of the apostate church into a new life, has there been a more remarkable exemplification of its potency than we are witnessing in Mexico at the present time. It is truly gratifying to see with what satisfaction these long-dead followers of Rome take the precious truths that of God's Word into their inmost hearts. All ages and conditions are alike influenced by

Regard to the burden we bear,
But looking to triumph with thee;
The goal at thy word to be here,
"Thou better in thee to be gone,
And rise for thy coming is sweet,
To meet for thy longer delay;
But thou, whom we bidden to meet,
Shalt chase all our sorrows away.
Thee shall we behold from our eyes,
When thou art weh'd in the cloud,
And when the trump of God."—*Central Christian Advocate.*

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