

Scripture Standard

Pleading for a complete return to Christianity as it was in the beginning.

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Abraham and His Seed.

WITH the call of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees an important stage in the story of 'that wonderful redemption, God's remedy for sin,' is reached. To any who doubt the reality of the history of Abraham, we commend Sir L. Woolley's small books, 'Ur of the Chaldees' and 'Digging up the Past.'

At the time of God's call to Abraham to leave that populous and highly cultured city; God made the following promises to* him: 'I will make of thee a great nation'; 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed'; 'Unto thy seed will I give 'this land.' (See Genesis xli).

Concerning the Great Nation. Though from the human standpoint it seemed impossible that a numberless seed could proceed from the aged pair, Abraham 'staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able to perform.'

'Therefore,' wrote an inspired Hebrew, 'sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore, innumerable.' (Hebrews xi. 12.)

Concerning the Land of Canaan. This promise was repeated again and again. It is maintained by some that 'these promises were not fulfilled in the experience of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, nor have they been fulfilled at any time since

'What saith the Scripture?' After Joshua, the successor of Moses, had led Israelites into Canaan, and divided the land among them, it is written: 'And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers . . . there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.' (Joshua xxi. 43-45.) David, speaking of this, said: 'He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant . . . and gave them the lands of the heathen; and they inherited the labour of the people.' (Psalm cv. 42-44.) But their occupation of the land was conditioned on their obedience; and they were warned that if they transgressed God's

laws they would 'perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.'

We have recently read, 'The Everlasting Nation and their Coming King,' by Samuel Schor. The title seems to us in striking contrast to the Lord's emphatic statement to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.' (Matthew xxi. 43.)

On page 16 of the above-named book we read: 'His [Abraham's] descendants occupied the land of Israel, but also, did not keep true to God. They were constantly backsliding, and Jeremiah predicted the destruction of the Temple and City of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people in Babylon. (Jer. xxi. 7-10.) By Babylon's waters they sat and wept, but Daniel, the man of God, made his supplications and searched the Scriptures. Reading Jeremiah's predictions of a restoration after seventy years, he prayed the more ardently, *and lived to see the fulfillment of his countrymen's return to Palestine. (Dan. ix. 2.)* (Italics ours.)

Yes, they returned under Ezra and Nehemiah; and it is written: 'Thou art the Lord, the God, and God who didst choose Abraham . . . and madest a covenant with him to . . . give the land of the Canaanites . . . to his seed and hast performed thy words: for thou art righteous.' (Nehemiah ix. 7, 8.)

After the date of that return there is, in the Scriptures, neither prophecy, hint, nor suggestion of a return of the Jews to Palestine; and wonder of wonders, if such a theory be true, the New Testament writers, inspired Jews, are as silent as the grave about it. Instead of pointing us to the earthly Jerusalem, 'which now is, and is in bondage with her children,' they point us to the 'Jerusalem above (which) is free, which is the mother of us all.' (Galatians iv. 24-26.)

An inspired Hebrew affirms that Abraham, while dwelling in the land of promise, 'looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God'; and of his numberless seed is written: 'Now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.' (Hebrews xi. 9-16.)

Another inspired Hebrew declares that God 'according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefined, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.' (1 Peter i. 3-5).

Of the promised blessing for all the families of the earth we hope, D.V., to write in a later issue. EDITOR.

The Great Commission.

PERHAPS some reader exclaims, 'The Great Commission.' What Commission do you mean?

.Yet it can only be one here and one there, exceptionally placed, who need to ask the question. Most readers will know as well, as does the writer that the name above, is used, as the designation for the last "instructions given by Jesus Christ to His apostles

In the Gospel of Matthew, one of these apostles these instructions, form the con-

clusion of his interesting, book, That we may feel that these instructions are as sublime and truly great as anything in the gospel, we quote the verses in full: 'Ariel' Jesus, came to them and spake unto them,' saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of every nation, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to ob-

observe all things whatsoever, I command you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt, x^{viii}," 18-20.)

We would express satisfaction that these verses should have come, to be known throughout. Christendom by the name, 'The Great Commission'; There is often a great deal, in a name; and in this case the name places us at the right point of view from which to look at these verses. They are practical. They contain instructions." Great because these instructions came from a great authority, Great "because they have a bearing, on the life of every human being, of every soul that needs salvation. "Great, too, because they came from Him who forsook heaven and endured the Cross, and are instructions by which, those for whom He died may be brought into the saving relationship to Him

'First the 'Risen' Lord' describes the authority on the "ground of which, the Commission' is given: 'All authority, hath been given unto "me in" heaven and on, earth.'" The language points to a past act rather than to a gift recently bestowed. This is not the first time Jesus referred to this great endowment. In Matthew, He says: 'All things have been

delivered unto me of my Father.'" Jesus was the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world; and when it was prearranged that He should make the necessary atonement, for sin, it was also decreed that for the purpose of conferring the benefits of His death, He should have 'All authority in heaven and on earth.' Into the exercise of this patrimony He entered by His resurrection and His ascension to the 'right hand of God.'

The instructions which follow command the apostles to; make disciples of all the nations. It should be noticed that there is here implied work of highly mental and spiritual kind implying the presence of mind both on the side of the workers and also on the side of the material upon which they are sent to operate.

The common version here was simply to teach all nations. This was long known to be misleading, the word being quite another "and different word from that usually rendered 'teach.' But now that we have got familiar with the Revised Version 'make disciples,' we must not fail to note this implies teach and even more. What is it to make a disciple? Is it not to take hold of some individual and inform the mind of that person to become a disciple of that Master? I repeat there is here implied a mental and spiritual work on the part of those who make disciples. And on the part of those who are thus made is there not a corresponding quality, of mind and heart implied? It is implied that the individuals can listen to what is said about the Master; weigh it in his mind; take it into the heart until it influences the will and the grand result is reached: that one operated upon is persuaded and says: 'Ye?, I will be a disciple of the Master!'

if this is noted no one will be able to think for a moment that the Great Commission has to do with infants. The very word 'make-disciples'; defines the persons to be operated upon, as persons, young or old, who are able to understand a plea for being a disciple of Christ. Only when the children are old enough to understand about Christ Jesus- as being our Lord and Saviour, and to be accepted and followed as our Master, are they comprehended in the Commission. But when they can thus understand then, however young they may be, they are enough to become disciples.

The Commission next requires that those who are persuaded to be followers of Christ, His disciples should be baptised into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Here again we have no mere mechanical or formal work enjoined on the apostles. • - -

The circumstances are poles apart from those which obtain when an infant, is baptised. It is a disciple who is to be

that ye should follow His steps.' The salvation of sinners depends on Christians who have their gaze fixed on Jesus—who have really seen the Saviour. Have you this heavenly vision? Are you truly 'looking to Jesus'?

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

The Nursery of the Church,

THERE will always be a need for teaching new converts of the gospel, in order to establish them in the faith. No one will deny that our union with Christ, through faith, is but the beginning of our efforts to be like Him, and that if we then relax our attention to His instructions we shall soon slide back from grace into sin.

In a physical family, much time and trouble are spent by parents and family in instructing the young, inexperienced child in the ways of life: how to feed, how to exercise his muscles, how to deport himself, in short how to be a true child of his parents. The nursery, whether in a separate room or not, is a most important sphere of family activity. Surely in God's family, too, time spent in the nursery will never be wasted. If we are to become true children of our Father, we must continually study His desires and learn His manners and deportment.

Do not let us shelve this matter on the Sunday school, for that can never really be the nursery of the Church, because it is primarily evangelistic—for fertilising the seed of the gospel and bringing the young soul to birth into God's family. Indeed, there is no justification for the existence of the Sunday school that does not present the gospel to the children and endeavour to bring them to conversion.

It is conversion, however, that qualifies for entrance to what we may call the Bible class, because there we have to learn to leave the elementary things, 'the milk of the Word,' and aspire to more advanced and deeper truths, partaking of solid foods, being tutored as responsible children of God and citizens *in* His kingdom. While the Sunday school is only for young people, the Bible class is the nursery for new converts of any age.

This, then, is a brief plea for more Bible study within the Church. Gathered round the Scriptures and assisted by the teaching of the elders, much more can be learned in an hour of discussion than in listening to an address for the same length of time. The opportunity of asking and answering questions more easily relates the Word of God to the exper-

ences and difficulties of individual students. Beside this, we can also get to know more of each other; discussions bring out bad as well as good qualities in our natures, and we have much to learn about smoothing out personal contentions.

R. A. HILL.

More Light Requested

Dear Bro. Crosthwaite,—Could you find space in the 'S.S.' to insert the following:

I. We have three distinct stages of meaning in the New Testament regarding the word Church, or assembly: (1) *ekklesia*; (2) *sunagoge*; (3) *paneeguris*.

II. Please explain the follow passages: Rom. i. 20, *theotes*; Col. ii. 9, *theotes*. Our translators have rendered both passages 'Godhead.' Are they identical in meaning? If so give proof.

Trusting some abler bretheth will reply.

G. ALLAN.

[Here is an opportunity for some 'abler' brother.—Editor.]

What Then ?

When all the great plants of our cities
Have turned out their last finished
work;

When our merchants have sold their last
yard of silk,

And have dismissed the tired, weary
clerk;

When our banks have taken in their last
dollar,

And have declared their last dividend;
When the Judge of the day says: 'Closed
for the night.'

And calls for a balance: WHATTHEN?

When the choir shall have sung its last
anthem,

And the preacher has pra'ed his last
prayer;

When the people have heard their last
sermon,

And the sound has died out *on* the air;
When the Bible lies closed on altar,

And the pews are all empty of men,
When we all stand facing the record—
And the Great Book is opened: WHAT
THEN?

When the actor has played his last
drama,

And the mimic has made his last fun-
When the film has finished its last pic-
ture,

And the billboard displayed its last
run;*

When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished,

And gone out into darkness again;
When the Trumpet of all ages is sounded,

And we stand before Jehovah: WHAT THEN?

When the last bugle call has been sounded,

Ahd the long marching columns stand still;

When the Captain has given his last orders,

And they've captured the last fort, and hill;

When the flag has been hauled from its rrfasthead,

And all the wounded soldiers checked in;

When a world that has rejected its Saviour

Is asked for a reason; WHAT THEN?
—Selected.



CONDUCTED BY UNCLE BERT

MONTH'S MOTTO:

'IP ye love me keep my commandments.'
(John xiv. 15).

THE FRIEND OF GOD

WHAT would you do, if one day someone said to you: 'Leave your country, family, home and friends, and come to another country, among strange people, who speak a language you do not know'? You would certainly hesitate. You might say: 'But I must have time to think it over. It may not be wise to go. What will it be like, and how can I know I shall be safe?' You would want so many questions answered first, wouldn't you?

Long ago, there was a man to whom that call came. God said to him: 'Leave your country, relatives and home, and go to another country which I will show you. And I will bless you and your descendants, and through you everybody will one day be blessed.' You might have replied: 'Why should I go? I am safe here, and who knows what dangers and difficulties I might meet in a strange land?'

Not so Abraham (for he it was). He believed God, and because he believed, he was called the friend of God. He did not hesitate. Nor did he doubt. He did not ask for time to think it over. He scorned thoughts of danger and diffi-

culty—he believed. Trusting God, he went forth into a strange, new land. Because of his great faith and trusting obedience, he was called the friend of God.

Jesus says to us: 'Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.' If we are to be friends of God we must be obedient like Abraham. We must faithfully obey God's commands. And as God speaks to us through His Son Jesus, that means that we must faithfully obey the commands of Jesus our Saviour. If, trusting in Jesus, you ever obey Him, you, too, will be a friend of God.

Like Abraham of old
O Lord, let me be,
Faithfully trusting,
Obedient to Thee.

ANSWERS

1. Jesus healed Peter's wife's mother (Luke iv. 38, 39).
2. Fisherman (Matt. iv. 18).
3. Andrew (Matt. iv. 18).
4. Andrew (John i. 40-42).
5. Cephas (which means 'a stone') (John i. 42).
6. Son of Jonas (John i. 42).
7. Bethsaida (John i. 44).

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Where Nathaniel lived?
2. Who brought him to Jesus?
3. What he said to Philip?
4. How Jesus described him?
5. What Jesus said to him?
6. Did Nathaniel believe in Jesus?

Coming Events.

ANNIVERSARY GATHERINGS, BEULAH ROAD, EAST KIRKBY.—Tea and Meeting, Saturday, July 24th. Tea 4.30, Meeting 6.30. Speakers: Bro. A. L. Frith and others. Usual meetings at 10.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. On the following Lord's Day, Bro. Frith again the speaker. Your presence and help are solicited and will be much appreciated.

EDINBURGH CONFERENCE

A CONFERENCE of those who desire to remain loyal to the original position and plea of Churches of Christ will, D.V., be held in Edinburgh, on Saturday, September 11th, 1943.

We are relying on your help to make this Conference a memorable one.

Will those from a distance who need hospitality please write early to Bro. W. Steele, Ravensheugh Cottage, Prestons, East Lothian. Fuller particulars later.

Wanted: A Plan.

'PLAN now for the future,' is the cry of many. If the future could be known half the battle would be won. A new plan implies an old one which has served its purpose or been found faulty. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: 'He taketh away the first [covenant], that he may establish the second.' (x.-9.)

During man's existence upon the earth, many plans have been formulated, and put into operation, which history has proved dismal failures. The first on record was the Tower of Babel, which met its doom at the hand of God. Scripture and history supply evidence that all human plans come short of meeting the people's real need. No human plan can change the heart of the thief, liar, adulterer, or murderer. No change of environment can change men's hearts. Christianity alone can reach and affect human hearts. With many plan-evolvers, Christianity seems to be a back number. Christianity has not been put into operation on the scale men think it should be, nor will it be. That is the key to the situation. To assert that Christianity is a plan for the whole world is far from the truth. The New Testament shows that Christianity is for those who have come out of the world, who have responded to the Gospel call. • It offers no plan by which saved and unsaved can combine. It declares: 'The whole world lieth in wickedness.' (1 John v. 19.) Its demand is, 'Ye must be born again,' so that men may be fit to put its plan into operation. It deals with the individual.

Christianity is not a group of ideas which can be successfully used by those who are not Christians. Its message is to the world; but to those who refuse it, and remain non-Christians, it only speaks of condemnation.

When Jesus said of His disciples, 'Ye are the light of the world,' he implied that those not His disciples were in darkness. Paul said the Church was the channel by which the manifold wisdom of God should be made known. (Eph. iii. 10.) It is not the Church's business to tell the world how to conduct its affairs, but to preach the gospel so that others may be persuaded to enter its spiritual community. The apparent failure of the Church is really the failure of its members. Well might Jesus say: 'When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth.' (Luke xviii. 8, R.V. margin.)

'Plan now for the future,' but beware how you plan. "The world by wisdom knew not God," hence the failure of all its plans. What is wanted is not the pooling of ideas of experts, but the production of better men and women. That is the Church's business: Yours, and mine. The Church is not composed of angels, but of sinners saved by grace.

Christianity does not cater for the world, but it plainly declare what must be the attitude of the Christian to the world

Jesus spoke to the Apostles about binding and loosing. The Christian is loosed from the chains of the Devil, and bound to the crucified and risen Christ. Loosed from the power of the grave: bound to the promise of eternal life. Bound yet free. 'Ye are not your own, "ye are bought with a price": the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are we as Christians putting God's plan into operation in our lives, so that the future may be secure?

A. JACKSON.

News.

BRO. KEMPSTER

WE intimated in our last Issue—that Bro. Kempster had to undergo an operation. He has passed through two operations, we are pleased to learn successfully, and is making progress towards recovery. He is still in a nursing home, and it seems that it will be a considerable time before he is home again. Readers will join, us in prayers for a complete recovery to health and strength.

N.B.—All contributions for Nyasaland Mission should be sent to Bro. W- Steele, Ravensheugh Cottage, Prestonpans, East Lothian.

EDITOR.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE EVANGELIST FUND.

THE following subscriptions were received for the Evangelist Fund up to May 13th:—

| Receipt No. | £ | s. | d. |
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R. MCDONALD,

Treasurer.

EVANGELIST'S REPORT

AFTER the conference held in Blackburn, in September last year, I went back to Scotland to serve the Churches' in Fife for a further period of six months. During October, I worked with the Dunfermline Church, when, as during July and August the meetings were satisfactorily attended, and interest was shown in the Bible class which was held each Tuesday evening. At this meeting, I addressed the brethren on some Biblical topic, and allowed time for questions and discussion. We spent a very enjoyable time together.

'It was whilst I was here that preparations were made for the Old Paths Rally, which was held in the Rose Street, Kirkcaldy, meeting-place, on November 7th, whilst I was serving that Church. Of the success of this Rally I need not write since a full report was made in an earlier issue of the 'Scripture Standard.'

I served the Rose Street Church for two months—November and December. Here we had very pleasing attendances at both worship and gospel services on the Lord's Day, and in December we had the great joy of witnessing the baptism of a lady.

•Also, whilst at Rose Street, we received the delightful news that the husband of one of our sisters in the Dunfermline Church, had decided to follow the Lord and had been baptised.

Each Wednesday evening a meeting, called the Christian Fellowship meeting, was held. This took various forms, devotional Biblical, or topical. It was rather informal, and discussion and questions made the fellowship both enjoyable and profitable.

From Rose Street I went on to the Church at Coaltown of Balgonie, where I also served for two months. And, though travelling difficulties prevented us from receiving the support of our brethren from other Churches on the same large scale as we did in June of the previous year, the gospel meetings were still very well attended. Sometimes there were as many as eight non-members present, which for a small Church like this, is very pleasing. Towards the end of the second month the grandson of one of the Church's oldest members was baptised.

The Lord's Day morning service was not quite so well attended, since a number of the already few menfolk worked on that day.

Here, too, a Bible class was held. This was on Thursday evenings, and the class studied the first letter to the Corinthians, chapter, by chapter. The meeting at Rose Street, was still carried on.

I was not allowed to complete my last month with Churches in Fife since I was called upon to undertake Fire Service. But I am stationed at present in Kirkcaldy, and am in a fellowship, with the Church at Rose Street, serving the Churches whenever possible, and sincerely looking forward to the time when I shall be free to give my whole time to the Cause again.

FRANK WORGAN.

Capetown, Woodstock.—On March 27th, we held our Bible School anniversary. The service was conducted by Bren. Hartle and Kannemeyer. Bright singing of choruses concluded with a recitation, 'Our Bible School.' After refreshments, prizes were distributed to the

scholars by Sister Britten, of Livingstone, North Rhodesia. Many parents were present. Bro. Christians, of Claremont, gave a brief talk on prize-giving, and urged all to strive to obtain the prize of eternal life.

Bren Hartle and Kannemeyer gave a brief resume of efforts in the Bible School during past years, and pleaded for more co-operation in this noble work.

T. HARTLE.

Morley, Zoar Street.—The Church is glad to report the addition of one by immersion. He is Fred Pegg, a soldier, who has been attending our meetings some time, and finally expressed a desire to follow his Lord 'all the way.' He was baptised into 'the ever blessed name' on May 19th, 1943. At the time of writing military duties have prevented our brother from being received into the Church, but we trust it will not long be delayed. We pray he may be richly blessed in his new life.

N. UAINES.

Nelson, Lancashire.—It is again a great pleasure to report another time of success and uplift. We have concluded a mission which began on Saturday, May 8th, and continued until May 13th. It was a grand period from every conceivable point of view. Brother L. Morgan conducted the event throughout, and gave of his best as a convincing and powerful exponent of the Christian doctrine. On Saturday we held a tea and social meeting. At the latter function the president, Bro. F. Sykes, told the audience quite frankly, that the mission had been designed to bring into the Church those who were yet outside, and that the Church had engaged a speaker who was, in every way, quite capable of putting to his hearers the plea of the Churches of Christ. Bro. Morgan later spoke on 'The Forgotten Lord' Seventy-eight heard this fine address*.

Throughout the period he was with us our brother gave of his best as an eloquent expounder of New Testament teaching. The climax was reserved for Thursday, the last night of the mission. A young lady, Miss Annie Presland, made the 'good confession' and expressed a desire to follow her Lord. Although we had just one decision, yet we feel there are others 'almost ready to come into the Church. We thank God for the ministry of Brother Morgan who worked so wonderfully during his stay. By the time this report appears our sister will have been immersed and received-in, and we are sure that she will prove to be a really faithful and loyal member of the Church. God bless her and all of us to perform further service for Him.

As the present year is our Silver Jubilee, we are looking forward to accomplishing great things and we intend to make the year one which everybody can look back upon.

F. SYKES.

Slamannan District.—The Sunday School Conference of the Churches in Slamannan District was held in Bathgate on June 5th. The chairman, Bro. W. Allan, in a few very appropriate remarks, pointed out that we had come to share our views with one another so that we might be able to strike out at a new angle for the benefit of the cause.

Bro. Crosthwaite gave his message on: 'Is there Scriptural Justification in the New Testament for Sunday School Work?' He emphasised that, as a body of people, we stood by that slogan: 'Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent we are silent. When we go beyond that there is no legitimate stopping place. Where do we find Scriptural justification in the New Testament for our Sunday school work? The Great Commission covers it all: 'Go make disciples of all nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and I, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.' That covers both young and old, and the Sunday school presents an opportunity, and one of the finest fields for preaching the Gospel of God. Example is a great teacher, therefore we need to be exactly what we wish the children to be. discussions and questions followed

The next conference will, D.V., be held in Bathgate on November 13th, and the speaker (Bro. James Black) will deal with the subject: 'Have we enough substance in the Bible for teaching in the Sunday school?'

We are sure those present found themselves strengthened by all they had

heard. A vote of thanks to Bathgate brethren who had provided the tea, and to all who had helped to make the conference so successful, brought the meeting to a close.
j. NKILSON.

Obituary.

Rodney Stoke, Cheddar.—Brother A. R. Adams fell asleep in Jesus on April 12th, at the age of seventy-five. His sister wife passed away on January 31st, 1942. For about twenty years, Brother and Sister Adams were in fellowship with the Church' at Sherbrook Street, Winnipeg, Canada. They returned to England some years ago, and remained faithful and loyal servants of the Lord to the end. Bro. Adams was ever jealous for the Lord and valiant for the truth. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'

Leeds, Wortley.—We mourn the loss of a dearly loved and faithful sister, who has kept the faith and fought a good fight. Our Sister Garie ended this life on May 6th, 1943, and her remains were interred at New Wortley on May 8th, Brethren H. Smith and E. F. Roberts officiating. There is a lifetime of incidents all of which make a character which no Christian need be afraid to copy. Sister Garie was immersed nearly seventy years ago, and reached the good age of seventy-nine years. We see the path of Christ made easier because she passed that way. Our sympathy goes out to those connected with her.

j. STEAD.

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