The Birmingham Eccentric

(Founded in 1887)

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 236-238 North Woodward Avenue.

Telephones 11, 12, and 13

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Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at Birmingham, Michigan

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(In Oakland County)		(Outside Oakland County)	
One Year	$2.00	One Year	$2.50
Six Months	1.00	Six Months	1.50
Three Months	.50	Three Months	1.00

All newspaper and advertising copy must be in the Eccentric office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, University Press Club, and Oakland County Weekly Press Association.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1933

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have news value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be presented before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by those other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

Uncle Sam Should Help Schools

Birmingham school teachers have been given, for the first two weeks of work in this month, 75 per cent of their pay in cash, the balance in scrip. The problem before the teachers is to be able to use this scrip for purchases; in turn, this becomes the problem of the local merchants. For merchants, unless they are able to keep the scrip in circulation, are unable to accept it beyond a certain limit—since wholesalers who supply them with merchandise are unwilling to take it for goods they sell locally.

All of which brings up the real problem facing Michigan's educational system, namely: how can the public schools be financed during the coming winter? There is great danger to the safety of American traditions in the fact that school treasuries all over the country face exhaustion. Something sound and practical must be done about it.

Public schools have two major items of cost; one is to meet bonded debt obligations, the other is to pay current expenses, which includes salaries. Paying the teachers, of course, is the most pressing of the two. They must be provided with food, clothing, and shelter. On the other hand, persons who have invested in school bonds are entitled to every consideration for they, too, may be dependent upon the payment of them to aid in keeping the wolf away from the door.

So why not ask the federal government to assist the nation's public schools by assuming, at least for the time being, the payment of bonded indebtedness. If this were done, the current tax collections could be applied to the payment of current obligations. Teachers would then receive all their pay in cash, and the complicated problems involved in scrip circulation would be eliminated.

Surely, with so many projects of lesser value to the people contemplated by the federal government for financing, the Washington administration can come to the rescue of an American institution that is one of the very foundation-stones of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Shall We Have a New Postoffice?

Do the citizens of Birmingham wish to give the middle block of the Civic Center, situated between the City Hall and the Public Library, to the United States government, for the erection of a new Postoffice? This question is being debated by City officials, following presentation of the idea to them by Postmaster Joseph P. Byrne. The land cost Birmingham $148,091.10, exclusive of condemnation legal fees, and Birmingham still owes $129,272.00 on it. It was purchased on a contract several years ago, as part of a general plan to create an area for the housing of public buildings, which included three blocks. The block suggested for a Postoffice site was originally intended as a park area, although some discussion was held on the advisability of it being used some day for a Postoffice.

It seems to us that the idea of using the site for a Postoffice is somewhat practical—especially as it offers jobs for people. However, we do urge Birmingham citizens to consider the necessity of having the federal government assume any unpaid balance due on the land contract, should the Postoffice idea go on the ballot. Assumption of the unpaid balance by the government is just as necessary to relieve an over-burdened tax roll as the actual financing of the Postoffice itself.

Advises Newspaper Advertising

From an exchange we pick up the following circular, sent out to store managers by the J. C. Penney company, operators of a large chain of retail stores:

"(1) Do you want to be certain of reader interest? Then use the newspapers. Many a circular receives only a glance, while the local newspaper, with hundreds of general news items, is read thoroughly from first to last page.

"(2) Do you want representation in the same 'shopping window' as the other merchants of your town use? Then use the local newspaper. Women, the purchasing agents of the home, read newspaper advertising daily, whereas many a circular is tossed into the waste basket without a glance.

"(3) Do you want fast action? Then use the newspaper. The ad that you run today, if it contains real merchandise news, will bring immediate results tomorrow. You can receive and sell out a consignment of merchandise with newspaper advertising in less time than it takes to prepare a circular.

"(4) Do you want to be recognized as a factor of importance in your community—a real hometown store? If you do, use the newspaper—it undoubtedly is a strong factor in the building of good will and acceptance by the whole town as a good place to trade."

"Com's-Tax"

Chet Howell, Chesaning editor, served several terms in the State Senate at Lansing. He ought to know something about the maneuvers of politics. So when he says that the State Sales Tax officials, in their efforts to make the new sales tax "stick," are putting on a campaign of propaganda, Mr. Howell simply means that "the administration does not propose to let loose of the goose that lays the golden (sales tax) eggs." Anyway, it appears that the sales tax revenue is improperly named—it ought to be "Com's-tax."

Progressing Toward Justice

Slowly but surely progress is being made to correct America's system of jurisprudence, so that before many generations have passed something like real justice may be administered by our judiciary. The greatest single aid to this will be the willingness on the part of lawyers to regard themselves as agents of a common justice, not as paid defenders of persons who seek to evade punishment for wrong-doing.

The average lawyer is a lawyer just as the average doctor is a doctor, the average businessman a businessman, the average carpenter, plumber, metal-worker, etc., etc., are what they are: namely, to earn a living. Therefore they accept cases that come to them, perhaps altruistically motivated, to be sure, but not unmindful of their bread and butter. And they work under a handicap to Justice in our country, insofar as our system of jurisprudence adjudges a person innocent until proven guilty, which provides a distinct advantage for the defendant and his counsel. France, for instance, we are told, works under an opposite belief: in France persons are held guilty of the crime for which they are arrested until they, through counsel, prove themselves innocent.

Both these systems tend to make of the administration of justice a sort of "game of wits," with lawyers both for the State and the defendant playing with the sharp swords and rapiers of forensic dramatics.

Human nature, of course, is responsible for the miscarriage of justice, just as it is at the base of all our social and political and economic problems. People do wrong things, get into trouble, then try to get out of it. Too many who get into trouble refuse to do penance as a retributive measure, and this throws the well-known emery into the oil, the fly into the ointment, and further human problems remain with us.

State Bank Officials Lax

Judge James S. Parker, of Flint, condemned Michigan's Banking and Securities Departments for allowing the Clare County Savings Bank to accept deposits when it was known by them to be insolvent. The Judge's scorching denunciation came as the result of a trial held before him to convict officers of the bank who were charged with attempts to cheat and defraud. The bankers were acquitted, blame being placed directly in the lap of State officials. We hope that Rudolph E. Reichert, who has been Michigan's banking commissioner for six years, will bow his head as he reads Judge Parker's words. All of this only serves to increase the evidence that a form of bank deposit guaranty is needed in this country.

Excessive Auto Taxes

Automobile authorities claim that excessive taxes on motor vehicles and their accessories, including gasoline, have driven nearly 20 per cent of the cars from the highways, during the three-year period from 1929 to 1932. That's serious for industry, which means labor. Too much of the burden of taxation is being imposed upon motor cars, just as the case of real estate. Either the cost of government must be decreased, by mutual arrangement between the public and the officeholders, or else all of us should "go on the government payroll." Then, finding it unnecessary to work and pay taxes, we would be in Utopia. But, you say, how would government get along without taxes to pay us? You would bring that up, wouldn't you! The answer is that all of us would have to go to work again to make money to pay taxes so we could all work for the "government" again.

State Expense Accounts

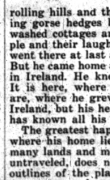
John K. Stack, Jr., militant Democratic auditor-general of Michigan, from time to time has denounced unnecessary extravagance on the part of employees of the State who turn in large expense accounts. Mr. Stack has opposed such items from those in every department, from the Governor's down. We hope he continues his efforts in this direction. And we wonder, too, if he could not have made greater headway had he kept his own office free from criticism—from such things as appointing an ex-convict as one of his chief aides. We do not wish to place any barriers in the way to the reform of any person; but we do feel that Mr. Stack made a mistake in selecting a former prison inmate to aid him in his supervision of other State departmental expenditures.

Good News for home-owners comes from Chicago where a real estate authority told his audience that a "realty boom" is on the way. That sort of news will be received hopefully by all who have had confidence enough in humanity to invest their savings in man's dearest of all material possessions—his fireside.

All of Us

—By Marshall Maslin—

I KNOW A MAN who went back to Ireland this spring—and he would not surrender that experience for any material thing . . . it was a lovely time and he found green Ireland all that he had dreamed it would be. Not that he had ever been there before, but his fathers had come from there, he had people there whom he had never seen, and I think in his heart he may have thought of it, always, at his home.



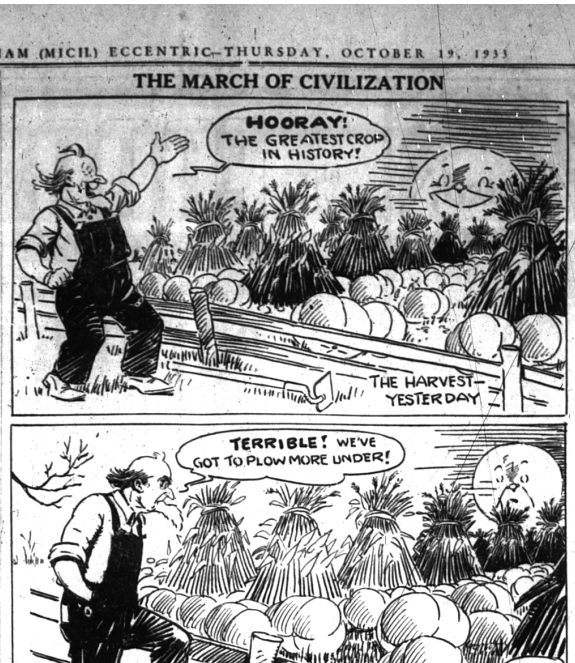
Marshall Maslin

(As I sometimes do, because my own great-grandfather came from there more than 80 years ago, and rounded the horn and came up the Pacific coast to California, a teacher, in search of gold—which he did not find.)

The spring of this man glow with remembered beauty when he speaks of Ireland—of the green rolling hills and the charming lakes and the flowering gorse hedges between the fields and the whitewashed cottages and the pleasant voices of the people and their laughter and I know he is glad that he went there at last and made a dream come true . . . But he came home again, not tempeted to live forever in Ireland. He knew that his home was not there. It is here, where he was born, where his friends are, where he grew to be a man. His fancy was in Ireland, but his heart is rooted deeply in the soil he has known all his life.

The greatest happiness is for that man who knows where his home lies. Who may wander far and see many lands and meet many people but whose heart, untraveled, does not forget the beloved, unchanged outlines of the place where it is at rest . . . Home may not even be a place. It may be a state of mind. It may be a way of living, an occupation. It may be a good friend. It may be a dear wife, a husband. It is a comforting, enriching, strengthening environment which surrounds a man and holds him steady in the shifting circumstances of his days . . . You can tell when you look into a man's eyes, when you hear him talk and watch him move, whether he has made for himself a homestead that will be forever his own. You can tell, when you are with him, whether he is restless, and secretly afraid, and has found no place in this world where he can be blessedly at home.

THE MARCH OF CIVILIZATION



FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Cancel Sayles will teach school in Southfield this winter. Success.

George Shadbolt and Joe Gravlin dug 116 bushels of potatoes in one day for Fred King of this place recently.

Miss Hattie Peabody will lead the stone school scholars in Rundel's district in the royal path of wisdom this winter.

Birmingham is growing, we now have three first class hardware stores, two drug stores, and another one promised and a spic and span, new, first class dry goods and boot and shoe store about to open with a $5,000 stock.

Miss Katie Kaniff got the $5 gold piece offered by C. B. Pittman for the best bread at the recent fair. She signed a contract to the effect that she was under 19 years old, but some of the envious ones are spiteful enough to say that all of 29 winters and a cognate number of summers are hers.

Miss Sarah Brown, whose parents live near Big Beaver—a charming, vivacious, petite body, is at present learning the art of dressmaking in a first class manner at the dry goods house of L. A. Smith & Co., of Detroit. And we have the promise of a Mother Hubbard as soon as she becomes proficient in the art.

There was a little social out at Jim Shain's last week, and after the blowout was over, Herbert Prince brought his two girls home only to find there was no key to get inside the house. Then Herbie like a little man, carted his load of sweetness back to Jimmie S's to stay all night, and in the morning the missing key was found safe in the pocket of the Miss who couldn't find it the night before.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Painters have been busy the past week polishing the woodwork of S. Bortle's cozy home, both inside and out. It is an excellent job.

To whom it may concern: Anyone wishing a hall for entertainments or to give pedro parties in, would do well to consult the Lady Maccabees of the World at Ford Hall.

Pontiac is contributing largely to the Michigan fire sufferers, and so is our sister village of Rochester. What is Birmingham doing? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Wake up. Be willing to give something besides sympathy.

The many friends of R. H. Weller met at the Manse, the home of Rev. Jamieson and wife and gave Mr. Weller a rousing personal testimonial of his worth in this part of the world. Over 50 were present and all had a sadly good time over the parting. Refreshments were served and a purse of gold was presented to the astonished recipient.

At Cranbrook, Tuesday, while cranking up his automobile, Master Harry Booth got a kick-back which broke his strong right arm below the wrist, making a painful break. Dr. N. T. Shaw reduced the fracture and Master Harry now knows all about the mystery of a kick-back.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cowan, in honor of their 10th anniversary Monday evening entertained at Pedro. High score was won by Mrs. E. Monroe, low score by Mrs. A. R. Parks and I. Lee Truax. In behalf of the friends, Mr. Truax presented Mr. and Mrs. Cowan with a hand-painted cake plate.

Wedding bells joyously rang so they were heard all over the village Wednesday, when Rev. Jamieson united in holy bonds of matrimony Miss Jessie Baker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. I. N. Baker, and Harley Shaffer of Pontiac. Our best wishes go with this popular young couple.

FIVE YEARS AGO

The admonition for Birmingham persons to attend the Village Commission meetings is often heard from those who serve on this board. It is pointed out that laws will be made to the satisfaction of many more if those interested will spend an hour or so a week with the Commission at the Monday night meetings. Perhaps when the sessions are held in the new Municipal Building, the setting will be more attractive and a greater number will be in attendance.

The heaviest receipts in the history of the Birmingham post office are expected for the December quarter by postal authorities, it is announced today. If the present rate of increase continues, a total of more than $20,000 for the quarter period starting this month will be reached, according to Assistant Postmaster T. C. Hoteling.

Many Birmingham residents were given a thrill yesterday when they received letters from Germany, which were brought over on the Graf Zeppelin. The letters were postmarked in New York City at 10 A. M. Tuesday, and arrived in Birmingham at 11 A. M. Wednesday.

The Birmingham police department today is in its new quarters in the first part of the Municipal Building to be completed. The quarters are larger than any before occupied by the department and thoroughly modern.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING

THE JURY IS INSTRUCTED

Interesting data:—In Detroit a hoodlum is arrested. His wife calls upon him. She has a revolver strapped to her leg. She cannot hear her husband very well in the hallway, so she is permitted to enter his cell with him. Four hoodlums shoot their way out of jail and do a lot of damage. They are apprehended and returned to their cells. Mrs. Maude Andrews, the woman who brought the pistol to the jail for her husband with which to shoot himself out, was arrested as an accomplice and brought before Judge E. J. Jeffries. Judge Jeffries instructed the jury to acquit Mrs. Andrews because she was "acting under duress of the influence of her husband" and because as his wife she is supposed "to obey" her husband! Maybe you remember the Buckley murder trial which likewise was a grand farce also in the same court. There have been other similar cases.

In the gangster clean up which is now in process it will be fine to discover that one party is not to blame for murder or the attempt to murder because he or she may be operating under the influence of another! That relieves every other person of any moral duty or obligation! Can you beat that?—Frank Bryce in Grand Ledge Independent.

ORATORICAL POWER

When you listen to an orator, one of those men who has the power to carry an audience along with him as he talks, always reserve your judgment and avoid reaching conclusions until the next day, or at least until in the quiet of your own home you can think over what he said calmly and deliberately. Oratorical ability is a power for both good and evil, and too often it is used by public men for purposes other than the public good. In times of depression one of the greatest enemies of any country is the demagogue.—Bill Berkey in Cassopolis Vigilant.

A SHORT SERMON

Out of all the welter of talk about restoring economic prosperity we seem to hear echoing down the ages an admonition which most of us too easily forget:

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

We are constantly being reminded of our "duty" to society, to the nation and the state, as if that were the first and most important concern of mankind. We do not understand it that way. We have the highest authority, just quoted, for saying that a man's first duty is to himself. His duty is to reconcile his conduct, his point of view, his character to the teachings which have been proven, through countless centuries, to be the only sound, safe and enduring rules for human happiness.

Were every human being, in his personal conduct and his relations with others, to follow the simple admonitions laid down by the Founder of Christianity we would hear no talk of the need of "organizing" men and women and business and industry in order to give everybody a square deal and an equal opportunity.

We are ready to agree that, with most of us humans still far from the individual perfection of character which a strict adherence to those rules of life would imply, it may be necessary to compel the majority to apply some of those rules against their will. But we do not think that salvation of any kind, whether spiritual or economic, has ever been or ever will be permanently achieved by the application of force from without.

Men are not "saved" wholesale. Neither is a social system recreated by wholesale methods. Each individual must arrive alone at the Mercy Seat. And unless each individual arrives of his own volition at the conclusion that he will accept the rules and play his part in the new economic order, no permanent betterment is to be looked for.—Trenton Times.

A good natured person is often imposed upon. That is one of the penalties for being good natured. A good natured person's compensation is that he has many friends. Folks enjoy a good natured person. We ill-natured person who enjoys making cutting, crabbed remarks, who is contentious and delights in tripping up others at every opportunity is not often imposed upon but seldom has many friends.—Harry Myers in Lapeer County Press.

Criminal actions against bankers do not seem to be getting far in Michigan. Witness the trials of Clare and Buchanan officials of closed institutions. The fact seems to be that the evils complained of were the result of faulty laws that did not safeguard the interests of depositors by rigid regulations and inspections. It is up to the legislative bodies to see that such conditions are made impossible. Human judgment is not infallible and bankers are as liable to err as others, but as custodians of the people's money they must not be allowed too free a rein.—Fred Patterson in Holly Advertiser.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed, but signatures will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 500 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

SCORES NON-PARTISANISM

To the Editor:

The greatest need of this republic has always been for a loyal citizenship, and that need was never greater than now. The most sacred duty that rests on every individual and every organization is to develop that loyalty, and just to the extent that we are true to our mission will peace and prosperity reign among our people.

Democracy can function perfectly only under a two political party system with the line of cleavage always being the most vital issue of the time. The most vital question that can confront the citizens of this nation is the sustaining of the foundation upon which our Government was established by those patriots who gave their lives that we, their descendants, might have a Government of, and by and for the people, the most perfect form of Government the world has ever known.

In 1862 Abraham Lincoln said to a group of Congressmen, "Our common country is in peril, demanding the loftiest views and the boldest action to bring it speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of Government is saved to the world—its happy future assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you more than to any other the privilege is given to assure happiness and swell the grandeur, and to link your own name therewith forever."

Those words of Lincoln were never more fitting than now. Never since its adoption has the foundation of this Government been so severely bombarded by special interests as during the last 10 years, hence the chaos and disorder that engulfs us today.

There are but two sides to that most vital question that confronts the American people. We are either loyal citizens or disloyal. We can be loyal only as we align ourselves with a party that is true to our Constitution, that most sacred document ever bequeathed to any people. There are in our land organizations galore, some of which are false to the truth. Perhaps none have so poisoned the minds of the people and unfitted them for loyal citizenship as one, the leaders of which come as a wolf in sheep's clothing and plead with us to be nonpartisan, than which greater infidelity to God and man was never taught.

The only imperative law God gives to man demands partisan action. "Choose ye this day" which side we will support, and we can no more evade that command than we can prevent the air from entering our lungs. Every citizen is compelled to weigh on one side or the other of every vital question and just to the extent of their ability are they responsible for the success of truth and justice.

The founders of the republic had the wisdom to foresee the dangers that might come from such mob action as we witness today, and they made provision whereby the mob spirit could be checked. Dare we call ourselves loyal Americans if we sit idly by and allow taken from our Constitution that part that was put there by a greater majority than any other part ever received—that part that offers to humanity protection from the greatest curse man ever imposed on his fellow man?

Has our patriotism become so weak that we will surrender to its enemies the most sacred heritage ever bequeathed to man?

Has the mind of the American people been so poisoned by false teachings that we do not know the one and only source of salvation from the greatest curse the world has ever known—the curse that has debauched more men and women and caused more bloodshed than has all other blights combined?

"Am I my brother's keeper"?

Do I merit the friendship and respect of my brothers while I support a party that exploits them continually?

Let us awake to the responsibility that is ours and as we march to the ballot-box let us prove to the world that the founders of this, the grandest republic that ever existed, did not live and die in vain and that the patriotism which inspired them still lives in the breasts of their descendents to such an extent that we will place in control of our Government a party loyal to its foundation and loyal to its people, and then in the words of Lincoln "its form of Government is saved to the world—its happy future assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you more than to any other the privilege is given to assure happiness and swell the grandeur and to link the name 'America' therewith forever."

O. U. HULL,
Orange, Calif.

Our Scrap Book

THOUGHTFUL CONDUCT

The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring.

He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes penalties or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend.—From "The Idea of a University," by John Henry Newman.

Poems That Live

TO EVA

O fair and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine;
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will,
A sympathy divine.

Ah! let me blameless gaze upon
Features that seem at heart my own;
Nor fear those watchful sentinels,
Who charm the more their glance forbids,
Chaste-glowing, underneath their lids,
With fire that draws while it repels.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sage Sermonette

The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat and drink and sleep; to be exposed to darkness and the light; to pace round in the mill of habit, and turn the wheel of wealth; to make reason our bookkeeper, and turn thought into an implement of trade—this is not life.—Martineau.

One Minute Pulpit

For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.—Isaiah 2:12.

WABEEK STATE BANK

Wabeek Bldg.

BIRMINGHAM, MICH.

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FRANK COUZENS — GEO. B. JUDSON
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