

The Sungskrit inscription at the Kothoutiga gate of the fort, alluded to by Buchanan, page 432, was, I believe, brought to Chuprah by Mr. Walter Ewer, and is at present in the grounds of Mr. Luke's house. I shall endeavour either to forward the original, or a copy to the Asiatic Society.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

E. L. RAVENSHAW.

CHUPRAH,
21st April, 1839.

P. S.—Since writing the above Mr. Luke has promised to forward the slab by a boat which is about to start for Calcutta.

ART. II.—*The “Mahimnastava,” or a Hymn to Shiva; with an English translation. By the Rev. KRISHNA MOHANA BANERJI.*

The well-known invocation to SHIVA, of which an English translation is presented to the public, together with the original, in the following lines, is held in high repute among the Hindus. It purports to be written by PUSHPADANTA, chief of the *Gandharvas*, who was in the habit of stealing flowers, for the purpose of worshipping SHIVA with them, from the garden of king VA'HU, unseen by the keepers of the garden. As he was gifted with the power of walking in the air he baffled for a long time all the efforts of the keepers to catch him, who observed every morning large quantities of flowers stolen away, but could not ascertain how the thief got into the garden by night, in spite of all their watchful vigilance. They suspected at last that it was a being capable of flying that committed the robbery night by night, and left in several places some holy flowers sacred to SHIVA, with the hope that the thief might tread upon them in the dark and be deprived of his supernatural powers, in consequence of the curse which such an insult to those sacred mysteries would necessarily bring upon him. The plan had the desired effect. The *Gandharva* trod upon the sacred flowers, and lost his power of riding on the wind. He was accordingly caught and taken into custody, when, through fear of the king whom he had offended by stealing his flowers, he offered the following supplication to SHIVA.

In the translation of this composition I have consulted the *scholia* of a learned commentator, as well a version in the Bengalee language, both of which have been printed with the text. As all classes of the

Hindus are allowed the privilege of worshipping SHIVA, this hymn is distinguished from invocations to other gods by the liberty with which it may be read and repeated even by the *Shudras*, and it is therefore more widely known among the natives than the other prayers and mantras with which the Brahmins alone are familiar, because they alone are allowed to use them.

महिम्नः पारन्ते परमविदुषो यद्यसदृशी
स्तुतिर्ब्रह्मादीनामपि तदवसन्ना स्त्वयि गिरः ।
अथावाच्यः सर्वः स्वमतिपरिणामावधि गूणन्
ममाप्येष स्तोत्रे हर निरपवादः परिकरः ॥१॥

If the offering of praise by one that does not comprehend the supreme limits of thy glory be unworthy of thee, then the language even of BRAHMA' and the other gods must be deficient. No one therefore that sings according to the measure of his understanding is culpable—and this attempt of mine too, O HARA! to celebrate thy praise, may be excused.

अतीतः पन्थानं तव च महिमा वाङ्मनसयो
रतद्वावृत्या यं चकित मभिधत्ते श्रुतिरपि ।
स कस्य स्तोतव्यः कतिविधगुणः कस्य विषयः
पदे त्वर्वाचीने पतति न मनः कस्य न वचः ॥२॥

Thy glory, incapable as it is of any definition, and described with awe even by the Vedas, surpasses the utmost stretch of thought and expression. Who then can duly set forth its praise? Who can comprehend its nature and properties? And yet as to its figurative illustrations, vouchsafed by thee in condescension to the infirmities of the faithful, who would not set his mind upon them and give expression to them?

मधुस्फीतावाचः परमममृतं निर्मितवतः
स्तव ब्रह्माण् किंवागपि सुरगुरोर्विस्मयपदं ।
मम त्वेतां वाणीं गुणकथनपुण्येन भवतः
पुनामीत्येतस्मिन् पुरमथन बुद्धिर्व्यवसिता ॥३॥

Can the word even of the chief of gods (BRAHMA') be a matter of wonder to thee who art the cause of the nectar-like sweets of language? My mind is thus bent upon this invocation, O thou destroyer of TRIPURA, to the end that I may purify my language by the virtue of recounting thy attributes.

तवैश्वर्यं यत्तज्जगदुदयरक्षाप्रलयकृत्
त्रयीवस्तु व्यस्तं तिसृषु गुणभिन्नासु तनुषु ।
अभयानामस्मिन् वरद रमणीयामरमणीं
विहन्तुं व्याक्रोशीं विदधत इहैके जडधियः ॥४॥

Thy godhead, celebrated in the Vedas, and displayed in the three-fold forms of BRAHMA', VISHNU, and SHIVA, distinguished severally by the three properties of *Sattwa Rajas*, and *Tamas*, is the cause of the creation, preservation, and annihilation of the universe; and yet there are certain foolish and stupid men in the world who oppose this thy godhead in an abominable way, however acceptable that way may be to the wicked.

किमीहः किं कायः सखलु किमुपायं विभुवनं
किमाधारो धाता सृजति किमुपादान इति च ।
अतर्कैश्वर्यं त्वय्यनवसरदुस्थो हतधियः
कुतर्कोऽयं कांश्चिन्मुखरयति मोहाय जगतः ॥५॥

“What is his attempt? What his form? By what means—with what implements—of what materials does the Creator form the universe?” Vain questions like these, unworthy of thy incomprehensible glory, and therefore wicked, pass the lips of some infatuated men for the delusion of the world.

अजन्मानो लोकाः किमवयववन्तोऽपि जगता
मधिष्ठातारं किं भवविधिरनादृत्य भवति ।
अनीशोवा कुर्याद्भुवनजनने कः परिकरं
यतो मन्दा स्त्वां प्रत्यमरवर संशेरत इमे ॥६॥

Can this embodied universe be uncreate? Could its existence proceed from any one except the Creator of the world? Or who else but the

Lord could attempt the production of the world? The wicked, regardless of these considerations, indulge in scepticism concerning thee, O thou supreme of immortals!

त्रयी साङ्ख्य योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति
प्रभिन्ने प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।
रुचीणां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्य स्त्वमसि पथसा मर्णवईव ॥७॥

While the Vedas, the Sāṅkhya philosophy, the Yoga śāstra, the system concerning the creature and the creator, the doctrine of the Vaishnavas, &c. involve many conflicting theories and sentiments of which some follow this, some that—and while there are consequently different kinds of men pursuing various paths, straight, as well as crooked, according to the diversity of their opinions—thou art alone the one end of all these sects, as the sea is of different rivulets.

महोक्षः खड्गाङ्गं परशुरजिनं भस्म फणिनः
कपालञ्चेतीयत्तव वरद तन्त्रोपकरणं ।
सुरास्ता न्ता मृद्धिं दधति च भवद्भूषणहितां
नहि स्वात्मारामं विषयमृगतृष्णा भ्रमयति ॥८॥

A large bull, a wooden staff, an axe, a tiger or elephant's hide, ashes, snakes, and a skull—these, O thou dispenser of blessings, are thy principal ornaments and furniture. The other gods are indeed tenacious of this and that enjoyment, all which thou mayest call forth by a mere turn of thy eye—but a feverish thirst after such objects cannot disturb a self-contented being.

ध्रुवं कश्चित् सर्वं सकल मपर स्त्वध्रुवमिदं
परो ध्रौव्याध्रौवे जगति गदति व्यस्तविषये ।
समस्ते प्येतस्मिन् पुरमथन तैर्विस्मित इव
स्तुवन् जिह्मेमि त्वां न खलु ननु धृष्टा मुखरता ॥९॥

One philosopher* says that every thing is eternal; another† says that every thing here is perishable; while a third‡ maintains that in

* KAPILA, the founder of the Sāṅkhya philosophy.

† BUDDHA, the last pretended incarnation of the Deity, from whom originated the sect which goes by his name.

‡ GOUTAMA the founder of the Nyāya philosophy.

this universe, composed of various materials, some things are eternal, others perishable.—Although I am in a manner bewildered by these speculations, I am not still ashamed of setting forth thy praise, for my tongue cannot be held.

तवैश्वर्यं यत्नाद्यदुपरि विरिञ्चिर्हरिरधः

परिच्छेत्तुं यातावनल मनिलस्कन्दवपुषः ।

ततो भक्तिश्रद्धाभरगुरुगृण्यं गिरिश यत्

स्वयं तस्ये ताभ्यां तव किमनुवृत्तिर्न फलति ॥१०॥

In order to estimate thy glory, who art fire and light, BRAHMA attempted in vain to measure its upper and VISHNU its lower part.—But when they sang thy praise with faith and devotion, then thou didst manifest thyself unto them. Can then thy service ever be pronounced futile or fruitless ?

अयत्नादासाद्य त्रिभुवन मवैरव्यतिकरं

दशास्यो यदाह्ननभृत रणकण्डुपरवशान् ।

शिरः पद्मश्रेणीरचितचरणाम्भोरुहवलेः

स्थिराया स्त्वङ्गते स्त्रिपुरहर विष्फुर्जितमिदं ॥११॥

It was only owing to the unshaken faith with which he worshipped thy lotus-feet with his heads, as with so many rows of lotuses, that, O thou destroyer of TRIPURA, the ten-headed RA'VANA having gained unrivalled and undisturbed possession of the world exerted the strength of his arms, ever itching for war.

अमुष्य त्वत्सेवासमधिगतसारं भुजवनं

वलात् कैलासेपि त्वदधिवसतौ विक्रमयतः ।

अलभ्या पाताले प्यलसचलितङ्गाष्ठशिरसि

प्रतिष्ठा त्वय्यासीत् ध्रुव मुपचितो मुह्यति खलः ॥१२॥

When he (RA'VANA) exerted against *Kailāsha*, even thy dwelling, the power of those very arms which he had got as a reward for his services to thee, (so true it is that the wicked forget themselves in prosperity !) it would have been impossible for him to find any resting place, even in hell, hadst thou only slightly moved the tip of thy toe. [But thy long-suffering remembered his former devotions, and spared him.]

यदृद्धिं सूत्राम्नो वरद परमोच्चैरपि सती
 मधश्चक्रे वाणः परिजनविधेयत्रिभुवनः ।
 न तच्चित्रं तस्मिन् वरिवसितरि तच्चरणयो
 र्न कस्या उन्नत्यै भवति शिरसस्त्वय्यवनतिः ॥१३॥

That VA'NA, who had reduced the whole world under his subjection, should pull down the dominion of INDRA, although so high, was not a matter of wonder ; because he worshipped thy feet. What elevation is there which the prostration of the head before thy feet could not procure !

अकाण्डब्रह्माण्डक्षयचकितदेवासुरक्षपा
 विधेयस्यासीद्य स्त्रिनयन विषं संहृतवतः ।
 सकल्माषः कण्ठे तव नु कुरुते न श्रियमहो
 विकारोपि स्नाध्यो भुवनभयभङ्गव्यसनिनः ॥१४॥

Does not the blue spot which coloured thy throat, when thou drankest the deadly potion in pity to the gods and demons, who were all afraid that the universe should have an untimely dissolution, serve to set forth thy beauty ? Surely even a disfigurement becomes graceful in a person who undertakes to relieve the world from fear.

असिद्वार्था नैव कचिदपि सदेवासुरनरे
 निवर्तन्ते नित्यं जगति जयिनो यस्य विशिखाः ।
 स पश्यन्नीश त्वामितरसुरसाधारण मभूत्
 स्मरः स्मर्त्तव्यात्मा नहि वशिषु पश्यः परिभवः ॥१५॥

That victor, whose shafts were never discharged in vain in this world consisting of gods, demons, and men, even KANDARPA, met with dissolution when he looked upon thee, O Lord, as if thou wert like any other common god. So impossible is it to despise the self-controlled with impunity !

महीपादाघाताद्भजति सहसा संशयपदं
 पदं विष्णो भ्राम्यद्भुजपरिघरुग्रग्रहगणं ।

मुहुर्द्यौं दौस्थ्यं यात्यनिभृतजटाताडिततटा

जगद्रक्षायै त्वन्नटसि ननु वामैव विभुता ॥१६॥

The safety of the earth became doubtful by the stamp of thy feet—the firmament became giddy and unstable, with all its stars and luminaries, shattered by the stroke of thy hand—and the heavens, touched by thy clotted hair fell into a troublous state, when thou dancedst in order to defend the universe from the *Rakshases*. How mysterious and seemingly contradictory must be this thy providence, by which thou didst thus trouble the creation while thou wert in fact effecting its preservation !

वियद्वापी तारागणगुणितफेणोद्गमरूचिः

प्रवाहो वारां यः पृषतलघुदृष्टः शिरसि ते ।

जगद्दीपाकारं जलधिवलयं तेन कृतमि—

त्यनेनैवोन्नेयं धृतमहिमदिव्यं तव वपुः ॥१७॥

Those streams of the *Ganga* which extend far in the sky, whose frothy appearance is that of clusters of sparkling stars, which replenished the mighty ocean, forming it like a great ring round the insular earth, looked a small drop when thou didst sustain them on thy head ! What a glorious conception does this give of thy wondrous and majestic body !

रथक्षौणी यन्ता शतधृतिरगेन्द्रो धनुरथो

रथाङ्गि चन्द्राकौ रथचरणपाणिः शर इति ।

दिधक्षो स्ते कोयं त्रिपुरतृणमाडम्बरविधि

र्विधेयैः क्रोडन्त्यो न खलु परतन्त्राः प्रभुधियः ॥१८॥

When thou didst resolve upon consuming *TRIPURA*, the earth was thy chariot, *BRAHMA* thy charioteer, the chief of mountains (*Mandara*) thy bow, the sun and moon thy wheels, and *VISHNU* himself thy arrow ! What was all this preparation against a city that was but as grass before thee ? Not that the will of the lord was dependent upon any instruments, but that thou wert pleased, as it were, to sport with those implements.

हरिस्ते साहस्रं कमलवलिमाधाय पदयो

र्यदेकोने तस्मिन् निजमुदहरन्नेत्रकमलं ।

गतो भक्त्युद्रेकः परिणति मसौ चक्रवपुषा

त्रयाणां रक्षायै त्रिपुरहर जागर्ति जगतां ॥१९॥

When HARI (VISHNU), who was daily in the habit of worshipping thy feet with a thousand lotuses, found on a certain occasion that the number was short by one, he plucked one of his lotus-eyes to fill up the want. Then did the fulness of his faith, thus tried and approved, become, by means of his wheeled body, the watchful principle of the world's conservation.

क्रतौ सुप्ते जाग्रत्त्वमसि फलयोगे क्रतुमतां

क्व कर्म प्रधस्तं फलति पुरुषाराधन मृते ।

अतस्त्वां सम्प्रेक्ष्य क्रतुषु फलदानप्रतिभुवं

श्रुतौ अद्वां वध्वा दृढपरिकरः कर्मसु जनः ॥२०॥

The sacrifice being ended, thou alone remainest as the cause of reward to its performers. How can a work that is finished and has ceased, be efficacious afterwards, except because of thy worship? It is accordingly only by looking up to thee as the pledge of reward in sacrifices, and by reposing faith in the *Vedas*, that a person can be said to commence a great work.

क्रियादक्षोदक्षः क्रतुपति रधीशस्तनुभृता—

मृषीणामातिर्विज्यं शरणद सदस्याः सुरगणाः ।

क्रतुभ्रंशस्त्वत्तः क्रतुषु फलदानव्यसनिनी

ध्रुवं कर्तुः अद्वाविधुर मभिचाराय हिमखाः ॥२१॥

Although DAKSHA* so perfect in works, and lord of all creatures, was the offerer—although *Rishis* were the priests, and gods the assembled partakers of the sacrifice, yet was it interrupted and rejected, and DAKSHA himself destroyed by thee; for such oblations as are made without faith in him, who is the giver of rewards in them, are productive only of evil.

* DAKSHA was the father-in-law of SHIVA.

प्रजानाथं नाथ प्रसभ मभिकं स्वां दुहितरं
गतं रोहिद्धूतां रिरमयिषु मृष्यस्य वपुषा ।
धनुष्पाणेर्यातं दिवमपि सपत्राकृत ममुं

त्रसन्तं तेद्यापि त्यजति न मृगव्याधरभसः ॥२२॥

When BRAHMA'* lusting after his own daughter (that had through fear of her father's attempt against her virtue transformed herself into a hind) became a stag, with a view to gratify his passion, thou didst bend thy bow against him; and when he had fled from thy fear, even into heaven, thy hands, like those of a chasing hunter, took him, and have not yet set him at liberty.

स्वलावण्याशंसाधृतधनुषमक्लाय तृणवत्
पुरः सुष्णं दृष्ट्वा पुरमथन पुष्पायुध मपि ।
यदि स्त्रैण देवी यमनिरत देहार्द्धघटना
दैवैति त्वा मद्धा वत वरद मुग्धायुवतयः ॥२३॥

If, O destroyer of TRIPURA, even after seeing the flower-armed† god of love reduced like grass instantly to ashes for audaciously hoping to overcome thee by making‡ PA'RVATI's beauty as his instrument, the goddess still looks upon thee as if thou wert subject to animal passions, because half of thy body is joined with hers, then, O thou self-controlling dispenser of blessings, young women must be deceived.

शमशानेष्वो क्रोडाः स्मरहर पिशाचाः सहचरा
श्विताभस्मालेपः स्वगपि नृकरोटीपरिकरः ।
अमङ्गल्यं शीलं तव भवतु नामैव मखिलं
तथापि स्मर्तृणां वरद परमं मङ्गलमसि ॥२४॥

Although owing to thy sports in the cemetery, with the devils as thy followers—the ashes of the burnt pile as thy ointment—and skulls as thy necklaces and drinking cups—thy disposition and very name must appear evil and be awful—yet thou art the cause of supreme felicity to all that call upon thee.

* BRAHMA' is the first person of the Hindu Triad and the creator of the universe.

† KA'MADEVA, the god of love, or animal passions, is supposed to use flowers as his shafts when he strikes lust into the hearts of men.

‡ PA'RVATI was the wife of SHIVA.

मनः प्रत्यक्चित्ते सविधमवधायात्तमरुतः

प्रहृष्यद्रोमानः प्रमदसलिलोत्सङ्गितदृशः ।

यदालोक्याह्लादं हृद इव निमज्यामृतमये

दधत्यन्तस्तत्त्वं किमपि यमिनरतत्किलभवान् ॥२५॥

Thou art verily that incomprehensible truth which the self-controlled devotees contemplate when they put their fingers to their nostrils and fix their thoughts, abstracted from all external impressions, within their minds, and when through joy their hairs stand on end, and they, as if immersed in the sea of delight, feel themselves happy, plunged in the waters of immortality.

त्वमर्कस्त्वं सोमस्त्वमसि पवन स्त्वं हृतवहः

स्त्वमापस्त्वं व्योम त्वमु धरणि रात्मा त्वमितिच ।

परिच्छिन्नामेवं त्वयि परिणता विभ्रति गिरं

न विद्म स्तत्तत्त्वं वयमिह हि यत्त्वं न भवसि ॥२६॥

Thou art the sun—thou the moon—thou the air—thou thyself fire—thou art water—thou art sky—thou the earth—and thou the spirit. With such expressions did the ancients define thy essence. But as for ourselves, we acknowledge that we know no substance which thou pervadest not.

त्रयींतिस्त्रोवृत्ती त्रिभुवनमथो त्रीणपिसुरा-

नकाराद्यैर्वैर् त्रिभिरभिदधतीर्णविद्यति ।

तुरीयन्ते धाम ध्वनिभिरवन्धानमणुभिः

समस्तं व्यस्तं त्वां शरणद गृणात्योमिति पदं ॥२७॥

The mystical and immutable Om which being composed of the three letters A U M signify successively the three *Vedas* (*Rich*, *Yájus* and *Saman*)—the three states of life (awaking, dreaming, sleeping)—the three worlds (heaven, earth, and hell)—the three gods (of the triad, BRAHMA', VISHNU, and MAHESHWARA)—and which by its nasal sound is indicative of thy fourth office as supreme lord of all—ever expresses and sets forth thy collective and single forms.

भवः सर्वो रुद्रः पशुपतिरथोग्रः सहमहान्

स्तथा भीमेशानाविति यदभिधानाष्टकमिदं ।

अमुष्मिन् प्रत्येकं प्रविचरति देवश्रुतिरपि

प्रियायास्मै नान्मे प्रणिहितनमस्योस्मि भवते ॥२८॥

BHAVA, SARVA, RUDRA, PASHUPATI, UGRA, MAHA'DEVA, BHI'MA, and I'SHA'NA, of these thy eight names, each, O god, is celebrated in the *Vedas* (or each the gods desire to hear.) With a humbled mind I bow and adore to thee who art called by these precious names.

नमो नेदिष्ठाय प्रियदव दविष्ठाय च नमो

नमः क्षोदिष्ठाय स्मरहर महिष्ठाय च नमः ।

नमो वर्हिष्ठाय चिनयन यविष्ठाय च नमो

नमः सर्वस्मै ते तदिदमतिसर्वाय च नमः ॥२९॥

Reverence to thee, O god of meditation and austerity, who art nearest (i. e. to those that serve thee), and who art also farthest (i. e. from them that disregard thee)—Reverence to thee who art the humblest (i. e. to those that are humble), and who art also the greatest (i. e. to those that are high-minded)—Reverence to thee who art old (as the creator of the universe), and yet young, being independent of the decaying effects of age—Reverence to thee who art all, and in whom all things subsist !

वज्रलरजसे विश्वोत्पत्तौ भवाय नमोनमः

जनसुखकते सत्त्वस्थित्यै मृडाय नमोनमः ।

प्रवलतमसे तत्संहारे हराय नमोनमः

प्रमहसि पदे निखैगुण्ये शिवाय नमोनमः ॥३०॥

Reverence, O Reverence, to BHAVA, who partakes chiefly of the *Rajas* quality for the creation of the world. Reverence, O Reverence, to MRIDA, who partakes of the *Sattwa* quality for the conservation of the world and the happiness of men. Reverence, O Reverence, to HARA, who is principally moved by the quality of *Tamas* in the destruction of the world.

हृत्परिणतिचेतः क्लेशवश्यं कचेदं

क्वच तव गुणसीमोल्लङ्घिनी शश्वदृद्धिः ।

इति चकित ममन्दीकृत्य मां भक्ति राधा

इरद चरणयोस्ते वाक्यपुष्पोपहारं ॥३१॥

How vast the difference between my understanding, capable of grasping only little objects and subject to the perturbations of the passions, and between thy everlasting glory, whose properties know no boundary!—Hence my faith having led me, who am fearful of thee, to this profitable exercise, casts me at thy feet with this verbal offering, as with that of flowers.

असितगिरिसमं स्यात् कज्जलं सिन्दुपात्रं
सुरतरुवरशाखालेखनी पत्र मुर्वी ।
लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा सारदा सर्वकालं
तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥३२॥

O Lord, even if there were a heap of ink like a black mountain, were the ocean itself the inkstand, and did SARASWATI herself continue to write for ever with the twigs of the *Kalpataru** as her pens, having the earth itself for her paper, [even if there were such a writer with such stationery, and to write for so long a time] still would it be impossible to express the limits of thy qualities.

कुशुमदशननामा सर्वगन्धर्वराजः
शिशुशशधरमौलेर्देवदेवस्य दासः ।
स्वगुरुनिजमहिम्नो भ्रष्टएवास्य रोषात्
स्तवनमिदमकार्षीद्विद्यद्विद्यं महिम्नः ॥३३॥

KUSHUMA DASHANA (PUSHPADANTA, or flower-teethed) the chief of all the *Gandharvas*, and the servant of the god of gods, who bears on his head the crescent of the moon, being in consequence of his wrath deprived of his greatness, composed this excellent hymn of the lord's glory.

सुरवरमभिपूज्य स्वर्गमोक्षैकहेतुं
पठति यदि मनुष्यः प्राञ्जलिर्नान्यचेता ।
व्रजति शिवसमीपं किन्नरैः स्तूयमानः
स्तवनमिदममोघं पुष्पदन्तप्रणोतं ॥३४॥

If a man, having worshipped the chief of gods, read with his hands closed together, and his attention fixed, this hymn, composed by PUSH-PADANTA, and of certain efficacy as the one only means of emancipation in heaven, he will join the company of SHIVA, and will be adorned by the *Kinnaras*.†

* A fabulous tree of mythological celebrity, which yields any fruits that are desired by any one.

† The *Kinnaras* were a species of celestial beings.



Banerji, Krishna Mouana. 1840. "Art. II.—The "Mahimnastava" or a Hymn to Shiva; with an English Translation." *The journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 8(89), 355–366.

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