

**THE ORPHANS;**

OR, THE

**TRIUMPH OF INTEGRITY.**

AN

INTERESTING, AMUSING, AND INSTRUCTIVE TALE,

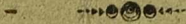
FOR ALL

**YOUNG PERSONS.**



BY W. F. SULLIVAN, A. M.

*TEACHER OF ELOCUTION AND BELLE LETTRES.*



LONDON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY

DEAN & MUNDAY, THREADNEEDLE-STREET.

1824.

Frank John Helyar

The gift of his sister Sarah

Hindley

<sup>th</sup> 15 of November  
1830

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"Where are you going, my little dears," said the Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Shepherd, &c.

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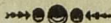
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## THE ORPHANS.



“ INDEED, brother, I am very tired, and very hungry;—let us sit down on this stone, and rest a little. I wish you would break a bit off from that brown loaf, and give it to me.”

“ So I would, sister, but mother would be very angry; for the loaf is not ours, you know; it is for poor Goody Foster, who was our nurse, and who is now very sick; so we must not touch it. I am very hungry, too; but we shall soon be at home, and then have our supper, and go to bed.”

“ True, brother; but sometimes we are put to bed without any supper.”

“ That is when poor mother has none to give us; and then she sighs so.”

“ Ah! poor mother!—come, brother,

let me carry the basket a little way; you must be quite tired out."

"Let it alone, sister; you'll let the basket fall, and break the doctor's bottle of physic, which is so dear,—besides I am older and stronger than you."

This little dialogue the Rev. Mr. Shepherd overheard, one beautiful moonlight evening, in the month of March, as he was returning from a funeral. He stopped his horse, and beheld a little boy and girl, neither of them nine years old. "Where are you going, my little dears?" asked he.

"Home, sir, an' please you." said the little girl, with a low curtsy.

"Home! are you near your home? for your brother seems heavily laden."

"We have but half a mile to go, sir," answered the boy.

"I am going your road, and I will carry it for you, my little man,—will you permit me?"

"Yes, sir, and thank you kindly too," returned the boy.

“What is your mother, my little friend?”

“My mother is a widow,—poor father died last winter:—she now keeps a little school, but she has very few to teach, times are so hard.”

“When you get home, you’ll both eat a hearty supper, I warrant.”

“I—I don’t know, sir,” said the boy.

“Yes,” said the little girl, “if poor mother has it, we shall, sir; but she often goes without herself, to give us some; and sometimes we all go without.”

“How many brothers and sisters have you?”

“We have a baby at home, sir, which mother nurses; but both mother and little Sue, our sister, are very poorly,” said the little girl.

“Is your mother at home, my little dear?” said the curate to the little girl.

“Oh yes, sir; she has a sad bad cough, and is quite pale and thin; and she frets and cries so, when she thinks we don’t



see her, but we do though; and then we cry too; but my brother Dick, here, wipes her eyes, and says he longs to be a man."

"Yes, sir, because when I am big, I could work for mother and baby, and sister Bess, here."

"Well said, my good boy: God Almighty, I doubt not, will bless and prosper your endeavours, for the sake of your good mother, who has brought you up so carefully.—Here, my little dears, here is half-a-crown for each of you."

The worthy clergyman stretched out his benevolent hand to each of the children, but they shrunk back, and seemed loth to accept the gift. "Why do you refuse it?" said Mr. Shepherd, greatly surprised at their behaviour.

"Mother, sir, has told us never to take money from any person," said little Dick, "unless we earned it; and I'm too young yet, and so is sister."

"And mother says, none but beggars take money from strangers on the road,"

said the girl, "and she would be so angry with us, sir, you cannot think."

"Your mother is a very uncommon woman, and I shall be glad to see her."

"We are just at home," cried the boy; "yonder is our cottage, sir,"

The gentleman turned his head and beheld a mean looking small cottage, about a stone's throw from the high road; he rode up to it, followed by the children, and alighting, knocked with his whip at the door: it was opened by a very decent woman, in black, with a young child in her arms; she, with a low curtesy, enquired his business.

"I must first, madam, apologise for this intrusion, but I have been a fellow-traveller with your little ones, whose conversation has so highly delighted me, that I own my curiosity has thereby been excited to behold the parent of such truly excellent children; at the same time, to deliver you this loaded basket, which I took from your little son."

"You are very obliging, sir; but I

hope neither of them made too free, to put you to this inconvenience."

"Their conversation, madam," said the clergyman, smiling, was what induced me, but it was truly of the most affectionate kind;—I am rejoiced to see such cordiality and feeling in children so young."

"They are good children, sir," returned the widow, "and constitute the only comfort that's now left me." The tear of maternal tenderness glistened in her eye, while a deep but suppressed sigh reluctantly escaped her bosom.

The curate cast his penetrating eyes on her, and then round the apartment; too plainly could he perceive that sickness and poverty had taken possession, though neatness and cleanliness were visible in both.

"You have recently lost your husband, your son tells me?"

The widow looked at little Richard, which Mr. Shepherd observing, said, "Do not be offended, nor angry with

my little friend here, madam; he only very modestly answered the few questions I put to him; not from any idle curiosity on my part, be assured; but from a wish to be serviceable, if it is in my power:—You keep a little school, I am informed?”

“It is a little one,” returned the widow, with a faint smile, “and that little, sir, is likely to be less, the times are so distressing, and my health so very precarious.”

“You will pardon, before I wish you a good night, my making a complaint to you: Your little son and daughter very firmly refused a little trifling present, which I intended as a reward for their mutual affection; I requested their acceptance, but the little rogues rejected it with such an air, I was quite astonished.”

“Not rudely, I hope, sir.”

“By no means, my dear madam, but with a truly noble and independent spirit, worthier a much more elevated

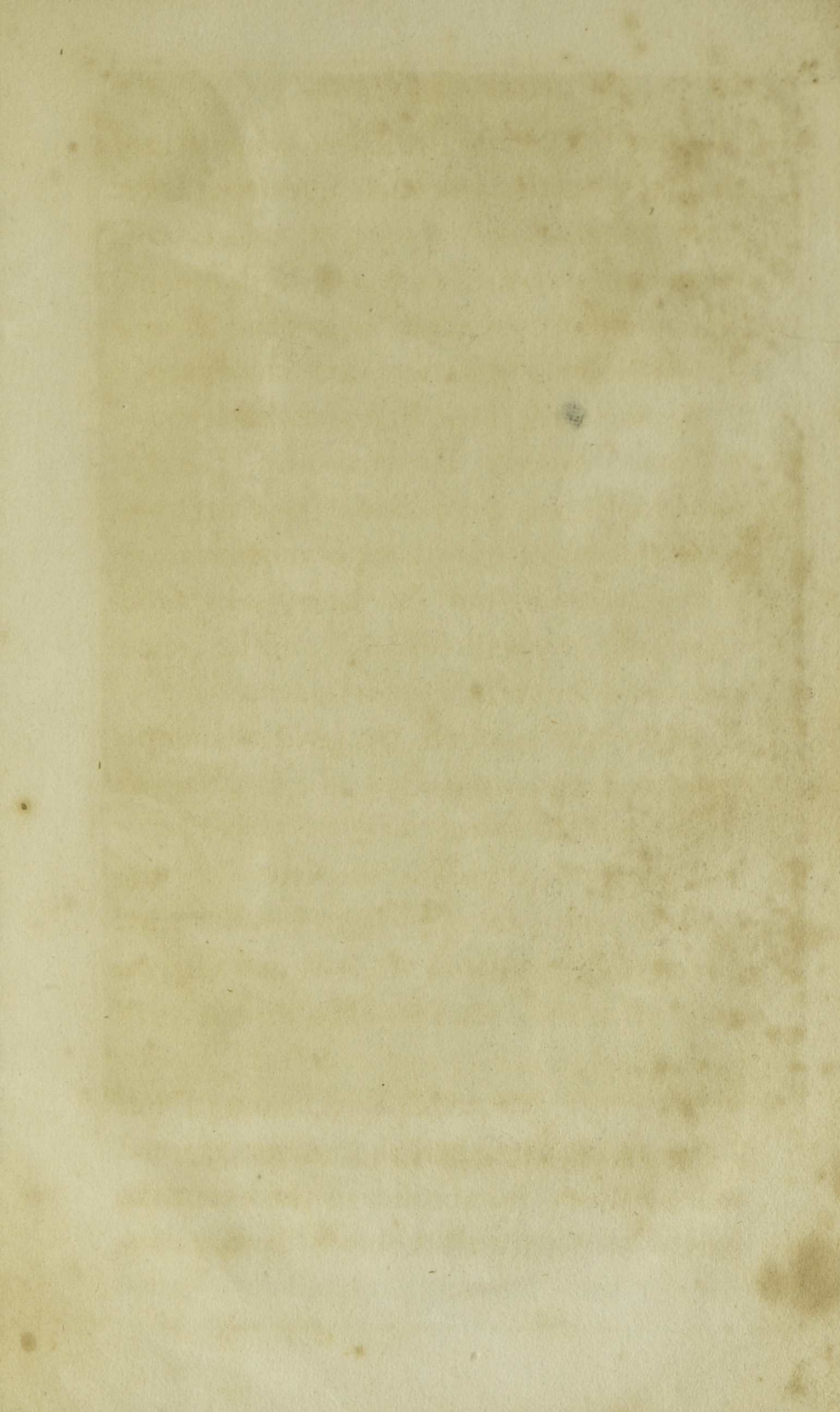
rank in life; and which convinced me, that the mother of such children must have seen better days; yet, unless you permit me to gratify myself, I shall consider you are offended, and proudly reject the offer of disinterested friendship."

Saying this, he called the children.—  
"Come hither, Richard and Betsey, now each give me a kiss; good night—give this piece of paper to your mother, she will lay it out for you,—now God bless you, my little dears," and he put a two pound note in the girl's hand.

"Oh, sir!" cried the widow, quite overcome, and bursting into tears, she sat down, unable to reply.

The worthy curate was strongly affected, and taking her hand, said, "Farewell, madam; I shall call on you as I pass this road." He then hastily mounted his horse, and rode off.

The Rev. Mr. Shepherd, though but a humble curate, had the universal good will of every inhabitant in the extensive parish of Kirkwall Abbey; he was in-





Mr. Shepherd's visit to Goody Foster.

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defatigable in his duty, even to the injury of his health; for no weather prevented him from fulfilling not only his clerical calling in its widest round, but his voluntary and unremitting exertions in the cause of suffering humanity; yet he was poor, very poor indeed, as to worldly circumstances—

“ But passing rich, with forty pounds a-year.”

To add to his income, he kept a school; but all his endeavours scarcely enabled him to keep above actual want, a wife, and eight children, all daughters. Still was he cheerful, still resigned; and his own exigencies, however pressing, always gave way to the more immediate calls of the poor or sick of the parish.

We are sorry to delineate the reverse of this amiable character, in the person of the Rector, Doctor Tythe, a fat pluralist, who, from the fruits of good living, was generally confined by the gout, to his chamber, one third of the year; and when he made his appearance, his conspicuous equipage and costly car-



riage, usually conveyed him from one sumptuous invitation to another; add to this, he was a justice of the peace, and the dread of all poachers. With the utmost reluctance, he was at length prevailed upon to allow Mr. Shepherd an additional stipend of £20 per ann.: and on this condescension the rector highly applauded himself. This *disinterested* man was a widower of near sixty-three, had a trifling estate of his own of £600 a-year, and the three livings, with a prebend, amounting £1700, or more, per annum.

We must now notice a gentleman, a parishioner of Kirkwall - Abbey, one Captain Crump, who had been many years employed in the East India Service, and had now retired; he, also, was a bachelor of fifty, a thickset man, with a loud rough voice, and most forbidding aspect: his habits and manners were singular, for though supposed to be immensely rich, he mixed but seldom with the neighbouring gentry. We shall

mention no more of his character at present, than that whenever he passed the curate, it was with a familiar nod and a smile; while he always crossed the road, if Doctor Tythe's carriage passed him, whose low salute was returned with a pish! accompanied by a shrug of his broad shoulders.

Several weeks elapsed, ere Mr. Shepherd's business caused him to pass by the widow's humble habitation, which he found shut up and deserted: on enquiry at the next cottage, he was briefly informed, that the poor woman had been buried by the parish, but a few days before; that her children were, for the present, with an old woman, called Goody Foster; that, indeed, they had known little of her, but that she was very poor and very proud, and kept herself, while living, quite retired; and that they were too distressed themselves, to be troubled with the misfortunes of other people.

The good curate was much shocked at this intelligence; and wondered, at first, that the circumstances should be unknown to him, till he recollected the cottage did not belong to his parish, but to the neighbouring one of Kerdale; he now blamed himself for not calling sooner, as his presence and advice might have restored the unfortunate sufferer, or have alleviated, in some degree, the pangs of death. He lost no time, therefore, to find out Goody Foster, and know the true situation of the destitute little orphans, left so suddenly on the wide world.

He found the poor old woman at the door of a miserable hut, winding yarn on a wheel, and discovered the little boy and girl, sitting on a low stool, eating some cold potatoes. As soon as they saw the good man, they rose and came to him; but they both burst out crying, when he mentioned their mother to the old nurse, who, having wiped the only

chair her poor cabin afforded, begged his Reverence to be seated, while she endeavoured to answer his enquiries.

Accordingly he seated himself, and taking the children between his knees, listened attentively to the old woman's account.

“ Indeed Rev. sir, the mother of these poor babes, was, I may truly say, a gentlewoman born and brought up, for she was the third daughter of Parson Goodman, who had a small living at Cotterfield, about forty miles to the north; he was a worthy gentleman, and a fine preacher; I lived in the family till he died, for I was wet-nurse to Miss Lizy, as my young mistress was then called, when Heaven took my old master; he was too charitable to leave much money behind, and so all poor Miss Lizy's share was no more than £300. Her sisters were both well married to topping gentry; but my poor child, not being so handsome as the other daughters, had not equal luck, but she married an in-

dustrious young farmer of the name of Smallstock, who leased a little ground of the great Squire Raiseland.

“ Well, your Reverence, and so this marriage was thought quite unbecoming by her proud sisters and relations, though her husband was getting pretty forward, until farmer Holdfast purchased the little farm over his head, as I may say, from Squire Raiseland; and so my master was obliged to leave that part of the country, with his wife and five children, then living. But I don't know how it was, the next farm he took was very unprofitable: though he laid out all his money on it, he could never make it answer, but went more backward every year. To add to his misfortunes, his cattle died too, and three of his children; though my mistress generally brought him one every year; however, she at last fell into a wearing with grief, and when a recruiting sergeant came to the neighbourhood, and wheedled away young master Thomas, I thought they would

have broke their hearts; and sure enough, my poor master never held up his head after, for he died last Christmas. My dear mistress then sold all off, and by paying all his debts, left herself and babes quite pennylesse. She then removed to this neighbourhood, and strove to set up a school, for my mistress was a scholar, being bred a gentlewoman; our countryfolks, here, cared nought about learning, and so,—so, as I may say, it broke her poor dear heart at last. She and the little infant at the breast, were buried in the same grave, and the parish officers took possession of every thing to indemnify themselves; and I expect them, every day, to call and take these dear children from me. I shall then never see them more! but I shan't long stay behind my mistress, that's some comfort."

"The parish must not have these orphans, if we can possibly prevent it," said Mr. Shepherd; "I well know how such destitutes are generally treated.

The sufferings these friendless children are made to undergo from the vulgar and unprincipled persons they are too often consigned to, must excite the sympathy of every thinking mind. You say, my good old dame, their mother's sisters were opulently provided for, by marriage: they must be applied to, in behalf of these little ones; if even lost to the ties of blood, surely their pride will never suffer their little unfortunate relations to be dependent on parish-support.—Let me know their names, and the places of their abode?"

"The eldest sister, Mary, was married to one Squire Norcott, and he took her with him, soon after into Northumberland; he is a tenant of the great Duke there; but whether they are in Alnwick or Morpeth, I cannot say. The other sister, Margaret's husband, I heard, was a merchant of Hull, in the Greenland and Baltic trade; his name, I think, is Freightwell."

"From their conduct to the mother,"

returned the worthy Curate, "I have my fears for her children; but it is fit they should be apprized of their hapless and forlorn situation: the Northumbrian Squire's lady can take her little niece, and the Hull merchant his nephew, if they think proper: I shall write to them by this night's post; in the mean time, keep the children with you, 'till I call again, and here is a trifle for the present; and now, God bless you all," said the good man, kissing the children, as he left the humble dwelling.

The humane divine, ever indefatigable in the pursuit of good, on his return dispatched two letters to the sisters of the deceased widow. The intelligence he had received from the old nurse was correct. The merchant's wife wrote word, that her sister had disgraced her family, and forfeited all claim to future notice, by such an imprudent and disreputable marriage; and besides, it was impossible, in justice to her own numerous family, to take any additional incum-



brance. She was very sorry for their situation, but it was impossible for her to interfere in the business; and that this must serve as an explicit and decisive answer to all further application.

From the lady of Nathaniel Norcott, esq., M.P., Mr. Shepherd, the week following, received his own letter back, enclosed in a cover franked by the husband, containing a £10 bank note, and the following lines scratched thereon.—

“ Mrs. Norcott encloses £10 for the use of the child, and desires it to be considered as the only notice she shall ever take of the offspring of one, who had long, deservedly, lost the esteem and affection of those who had the misfortune to be any way connected with her.”

The worthy pastor heaved a profound sigh, and for some time remained seemingly lost in thought,—the sad reflection which occurred to his mind, from the disappointment his endeavours to serve these two orphans met with, were not we believe, confined to them alone. His

own situation and large family, ten in number, all dependent on his exertions for support, caused this good man many an anxious hour, should his health fail, as the infirmity of years crept slowly on.

But his steady reliance on an all-seeing and merciful Providence, never deserted him, it calmed his mind, and shoothed the difficulties he encountered in the rugged path of life.

The Curate, though he had failed in his first effort, resolved to make another attempt to serve the children. "I will try Miss Tythe, the Rector's only child; she is rich, and I think, amiable; her charities, though not numerous, are generally judiciously arranged, and privately conferred; this is what I like; and I entertain a glimpse of success: with these words he arose and waited on the lady, at the Rectory.

Miss Tythe was a maiden of thirty-four, tall and stately in her person, her manners distant and reserved. She was thought proud by the undiscerning, but

she literally was not: she was particular in the selection of her associates, which were of the first order, for she was a woman of strong sense and superior acquirements; yet she could be very affable, at times, different widely from her father. She could discover merit, though veiled in humble obscurity. She never passed Mr. Shepherd, or any of his family, but with a smile of condescension, and a kind enquiry; his four eldest daughters were frequently sent for in rotation, to pass an evening with her, when alone, and they never departed without some little elegant mark of her attention.

In a feeling manner the good Curate explained the situation of the orphans, their respectable descent, the amiable qualities of the poor widow; and showed the cruel letters he had just received from the sisters. Miss Tythe listened attentively, and seemed thoroughly convinced of their destitute state; she therefore was soon prevailed on, by the

worthy man, to receive the little Betsy, that she would see what she was capable of, and if she proved a good, honest girl, she would be her friend; and added, she had already another girl, somewhat older, whom she some years had protected, and who promised very well to justify her patronage; and she doubted not, but they would prove agreeable companions to each other. "You may send, or bring her, as soon as you please, Mr. Shepherd," said she, smiling. On this he arose, and, invoking a blessing on her head, took his leave.

Having thus provided for the girl, even beyond his expectations, his next care was for her little brother, who was a manly little fellow. With this view, on his way home, he waited on Captain Crump. "I have been fortunate today, so I'll even try my luck here." With these words, he knocked at the Captain's door, who immediately opened it himself. "I have come, my good sir,—" said Mr. Shepherd. "I see

you are, Master Chaplain," interrupted Crump; "but don't stand freezing in the channel there; come into port and cast anchor a bit." On this he introduced the curate into a warm parlour. "You are somewhat of a stranger, for I don't see you for weeks, but on a Sunday."

"My time is not my own, captain."

"I know it, and so much the better: I wish I could say the same; but I am moped to death, for want of employment; I have none even to quarrel and argue with."

"You lament, my dear sir, the want of employment, consequently, that your time hangs heavily: would not reading afford you rational amusement?"

"I have read history and voyages, 'till I am sick of them; there is only one book which never tires me, and that is the bible; but my eyes fail me, and I can't meet with a pair of glasses that suit me."

"I think I can remedy that."

“ Ah, how? have you got a pair that will fit?”

“ I can procure you a pair of sharp, bright, and intelligent blue eyes, that can read a chapter that will surprise you, for one of his age; he is a fine little fellow, but a poor destitute orphan, fatherless and motherless;—to say the truth, I have called on you upon his account.”

“ Well, and what would you have me do for him?”

“ He wants a friend, a protector;—he he is a good, a pious child, and well brought up; you can make any thing of him.—If you do not receive him, the poor boy must go on the parish.”

“ No, rabbit 'em, the rascally overseers shall not have him; I know what they are; so send him to me. I'll make something of him, I warrant, if he's good for aught; if not, I'll soon send him adrift.”

“ I am certain you will be pleased with him.”

“ But how comes it, master chaplain, you are always going about to serve other people, and never think of yourself? methinks charity should begin at home,—you have eight children, I hear, all daughters.”

“ I have, sir.”

“ I have seen them, and fine girls they are:—now as I have obliged you, you can serve me a turn, if you will.”

“ How, pray? if it is in my power, you may command me.”

“ Why, to say the truth, I find myself quite lonesome, without a rational companion; I have nobody but old Peter Pipehard, my boatswain, and his wife Madge, who are both as deaf as a post, so that I am obliged to hail 'em with my speaking-trumpet: now I was thinking that——”

“ Well, captain?”

“ That Miss Fanny, your eldest daughter, being a notable and stirring girl, would be the very thing to keep an old bachelor's house tidy and comfortable.”

“ I thank you, captain, for your offer, which I am willing to believe is disinterested and friendly; but the world, my good sir, is prone to censure, and to put the worst construction on the best of motives.”

“ I understand you, master chaplain; but I mean all fair and above board, I I assure you. I have long had a fancy to be connected with your family, and if Miss Fanny could fancy an old fellow, as old as her father, here’s the hand and word of a rough seaman; you shall tack us together, this day month: I shall then not be devoured with the blues, but visit and be visited, like other folks, and have plenty of my wife’s relations,—what say you?”

“ Your offer is truly disinterested, and I shall acquaint my daughter with your generous intention,—she will not keep you in suspense.”

“ Well, do so;—and now send the boy, as soon as you please.” Mr. Shepherd and the captain shook hands as



they parted, and our curate returned home to announce the unexpected proposal to his daughter. Miss Shepherd asked for a week to consider. She was a prudent young woman of twenty-five, and soon determined to accept such an advantageous and disinterested offer, as he most liberally agreed to settle a thousand pounds on each of her sisters. The welfare of her family was her chief inducement; and her own sweetness of disposition made her pretty certain of happiness, with a man whose foibles and eccentricities were amply overbalanced by an excellent heart, and a property of thirty thousand pounds.

In a very few days, the two orphans, little Dick and his sister Betsy, were sent by Mr. Shepherd, to their respective destinations; and the marriage of Captain Crump and Miss Shepherd, took place a month after, to the utter astonishment of many, and the nine days' wonder of all.

Miss Tythe grew remarkably partial

to her new charge: there was a mildness, an amiable placidity of temper, that rendered Betsy particularly attractive to a woman of her discernment; a strict regard to truth, and an incorruptible principle of honesty, endeared her to all around; but she was open, generous, and unsuspecting. Sophy Ranklin was her companion, about three years older; she was, apparently, the most submissive and most grateful of girls to her mistress; but was sly, hypocritical, jealous, and revengeful, in the extreme.

Scarcely had three months elapsed, before the demon of jealousy rankled in her breast, and this young tempter began to practice on the unconscious little stranger.

Miss Tythe being a lady of fortune in right of her mother, independent of the family estate, occasionally visited and received the best society; on these occasions, she would dress in a very fashionable and expensive style: for this purpose, her wardrobe was various and

costly, and her drawers abounded with the richest laces, silks, jewellery, trinkets, and ornaments of the highest value; but she never used them but on such occasions of ceremony. At other times, she was neat, though mostly plain, in her attire. She was naturally studious, and appeared frequently absorbed in deep reflection: her drawers lay often open, and the girls had the care of laying out and folding up her dresses, and putting every thing in order, her attention being more seriously occupied.

Betsy viewed with astonishment the variety and extent of her rich veils, laces, ear-rings, bracelets, pins, and even diamonds, of great value, and wondered at her leaving the arrangement and care of such things to girls, like Sophy and herself; but the truth was, she took no delight in such trifles, nor knew she of the extent of her purchases. Frequently Betsy beheld Sophy go to the drawers and toilet boxes, and take out a piece of lace, a pair of silk stockings,

or gloves, a silver bodkin, or chased smelling-bottle, which, after admiring and showing to her, Sophy Ranklin would put in her pocket, laughing:—"Hush!" she would cry, "don't tell, she'll never miss them, she has plenty; here, do you take this broach,—this gold locket,—you're a fool, if you don't."

"Oh, Sophy, Sophy, for shame!" poor Betsy would exclaim, quite terrified, "how can you behave so? how wicked! how ungrateful!"

"Ay, do now, go blab; I don't care! she often gives me such, and she would not thank you, nor believe your tales."

"No, Sophy, no!—though I would die before I would wrong so good a lady, I will not turn tattler; but indeed, indeed, you do very wrong; and, depend upon it, you will be one day discovered: what can poor girls, like you and me, want with such finery?"

"I hope," cried Sophy, "you do not presume to compare yourself with me! you, who were taken out of charity:—"

but la! I mean no harm, I only took them out of fun; when I am tired of looking at them, I lock them up safe again;—but I believe you are right, and I'll not meddle with them in future.”

Nearly three years passed, and Betsy thought Sophy was quite altered for the better; she seemed more serious and attentive to her duty, and even treated her with increasing kindness, so that poor Betsy was content and happy;—little did the innocent girl suspect the deep-laid plot the other had planned to ruin her.

The two girls slept together in a little room next their mistress's bed-chamber; it was neatly furnished, and each had her separate trunk. It chanced, one day, that the keys, which were often left in the locks of these trunks, were both missing; neither of the girls could account how they could be mislaid, much less lost, as none entered their room but themselves; every search was made, but to no purpose, they could not

be found: accordingly Sophy was dispatched for a smith, who took off the locks, and made new keys for each trunk. Though nothing was missing out of either, their mistress cautioned them to keep them locked, and their keys in their pocket, and in every respect, to be more careful for the future. This was promised. Not long after, however, Sophy began to complain before Miss Tythe, and when Betsy was present, that she had missed a pair of fine cotton stockings; a few days after, a cambric handkerchief was gone! and in less than a week, a pair of small gold drops had vanished.

“Tis very strange, madam,” cried Sophy, “what can have become of them, for I have followed your orders, and locked my trunk carefully, and constantly keep the key in my pocket: I am loth to suspect any person, but—have you seen any thing of them, Betsy?”

“No, indeed, Sophy,” answered the innocent girl, “I have not; I never

enter the room but when you are there, or we both go together.”

“Pho!” cried Miss Tythe, “you have overlooked them in a hurry, or mislaid them:—nobody, sure, in this house, would presume to touch another’s property.”

“Certain it is, madam, returned Miss Ranklin, “that they are gone; and go without hands they could not.” And she cast her eyes full on the poor unconscious Betsy.

This passed without further observation; — in a few weeks, Miss Tythe dressed for a public assembly. She accordingly took particular pains in the selection and variety of her ornaments: in looking carefully over which, to make a judicious display, she missed a number of valuable articles: quite vexed and disappointed, she first rummaged every drawer, and unfortunately, the closer her scrutiny, the more was missing,—turning round to the girls, who were assisting in the search, she cried

“ This is astonishing,—but I am properly served in trusting my property to the inspection and handling of girls, who know not the value of such things: but go they cannot, without hands, as you say, Sophy; and I insist on their being found and accounted for.”

Susan, her own maid, was now called and questioned. The girl declared, solemnly, that the two girls were always present whenever she entered, and always remained in her apartment, while she made the bed and put the room to rights, that she had seen Miss Sophy sometimes admiring a necklace or a pin.

“ Yes, you might, Susan,” returned Miss Ranklin, “ but I always put them carefully up again, in the toilet drawers, did I not, Betsy?”

“ Yes,” said poor Betsy, trembling, and not knowing what she said.

“ I hope, madam, you do not suspect *me* or Betsy? I’m sure we would not, for the world; here is the key of my



trunk, and let Susan look over every thing in it."

Saying this, Sophy handed her key to Susan, and desired Betsy to do the same, which she instantly did; and Miss Tythe and Susan proceeded to unlock the trunks.

Sophy's was first examined—nothing to criminate her, appeared. Betsy's was next inspected: in the bottom, artfully rolled up in a piece of old cotton, were several yards of the richest French lace; a new pair of silk stockings, and a beautiful tortoise-shell comb, set with topazes and emeralds, were concealed in a pair of black worsted stockings; and in a little chip box, which held comfits, at the bottom was found a most valuable pearl necklace and two gold pins!

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Miss Tythe, "can such ingratitude and wickedness dwell in so small a compass! take that little wretch from my sight."

Betsy could not reply, but casting her

eyes up, clasped her hands in agony, and, with a piercing shriek, fell senseless on the floor. Susan raised and placed her on the bed, where she lay senseless, and a considerable time regardless of her companion's situation. Sophy went to her trunk, saying, "I should not be surprised if the stocking and handkerchief I missed some time ago, are among her things;—see! here they are, marked with my initials, S. R.; Oh! Betsy! Betsy! fie on you!"

The poor girl still lay motionless and insensible to all that passed.

"If I have my eyesight, that chip box I gave *you*, Miss Ranklin, the other day, when you asked me for something to hold your pins, "cried Susan," and now I find it in Betsy Smallstock's trunk, full of comfits, and mistress's pearl necklace hid at the bottom."

"She must have opened my box, then, and taken it for that purpose," answered Sophy, somewhat confused.

"And I am equally certian," con-

tinued Susan, "I saw this very necklace in your hand, miss; and I desired you to put it safe by, and not meddle with things that did not belong to you, and so did Betsy, but you laughed."

"You tell a falsehood," said Sophy, colouring.

"How dare you say so to my face," said Susan; "I assure you, madam, it is truth;—but this is not the first fib she has told, by many; she never goes on a message but she comes back loaded with sweet things: I wonder where she finds money for such trash."

"Hush!" cried Miss Tythe, "this is nothing to the present. I must believe my eyes; this wicked little girl must be removed, and return to whence she came. I'll send for Mr. Shepherd immediately."

The gate-bell now rung, and the footman brought word the toyman and stationer, at the end of the street, wanted to speak with Miss Tythe. Sophy directly left the room.

“ Show him in ; and do you, John, run for Mr. Shepherd, and bring him with you.

The footman obeyed, and Miss Tythe descended.

“ I ask your pardon, madam,” said Mr. Trinket, “ for this intrusion, but I made a purchase, the other day, of this chased silver-gilt smelling-bottle: the young girl I bought it from, said she found it in the pathway of a field near town: I have shewn it to several ladies, and one of them informed me, she had seen such an one in your possession: here it is, madam.

“ This bottle is mine, sir; but I do not recollect passing through any field, this long time, and I am certain I have used it for the headache, about a week since.”

“ I am fortunate, madam, in restoring it to the right owner. I must own, the frequency of the girl’s visits to me, within these few months past, has ex-

cited unfavourable suspicions, for every time she called, she brought things of more value, for my purchase. She is particularly lucky in *finding* such articles; few persons are so fortunate. Having my doubts, I asked her where she resided; she told me, at Lady Careful's, but on enquiry, no such person lives with her ladyship. I am resolved, when next she calls, to detain her."

"I am glad you are come, sir; for though I want no additional proof, I have this moment detected a most notorious thief in one of the little girls I have taken under my protection. Do you recollect her face, sir?"

"I can swear to it, madam, at any time."

Mr. Shepherd and the footman now made their appearance.

"Wait here, Mr. Trinket, a few moments," said Miss Tythe, "I have a little business with Mr. Shepherd," and they both ascended to the girls' room.

Betsy had just recovered, and with most piteous tears was protesting her innocence to Susan.

“Look on that girl, sir, whom I took an orphan, on your recommendation,—she has turned out an adder, and has stung her preserver.”

On this, she related Betsy's supposed delinquency.

The good man was ready to faint, at hearing this account of ungrateful atrocity.

“Thou little fiend!” he exclaimed, “begone! thou hast disgraced me, and ruined thyself past remedy, for ever.” And he sat down in an agony, on Sophy's trunk, which gave a great crash under him.

“Susan,” cried Miss Tythe, “remove that trunk, and place a chair for Mr. Shepherd.

As Susan moved the trunk, a beautiful aigrette, set with rubies and diamond sparks, and two cards of rich

lace, were concealed under it, — the aigrette was broken to pieces.

“There, sir,” cried the lady, “fresh proofs every moment appear: she has not only stolen them, but has had the audacity to sell them. Susan, desire Mr. Trinket to walk up.”

“But, remember, madam,” said Susan, “it is under *Sophy Ranklin’s* trunk, these last things were found.”

Mr. Trinket was now ushered up stairs.

“There, sir, behold the thief, who has sold you my smelling-bottle, and various other articles of value, I have no doubt.—What shall we do with her, gentlemen? what punishment inflict?”

“I ask pardon, madam,” said Mr. Trinket, “but this is not the girl who sold me the articles, I assure you.”

“*Not!*” exclaimed Miss Tythe, “look again.”

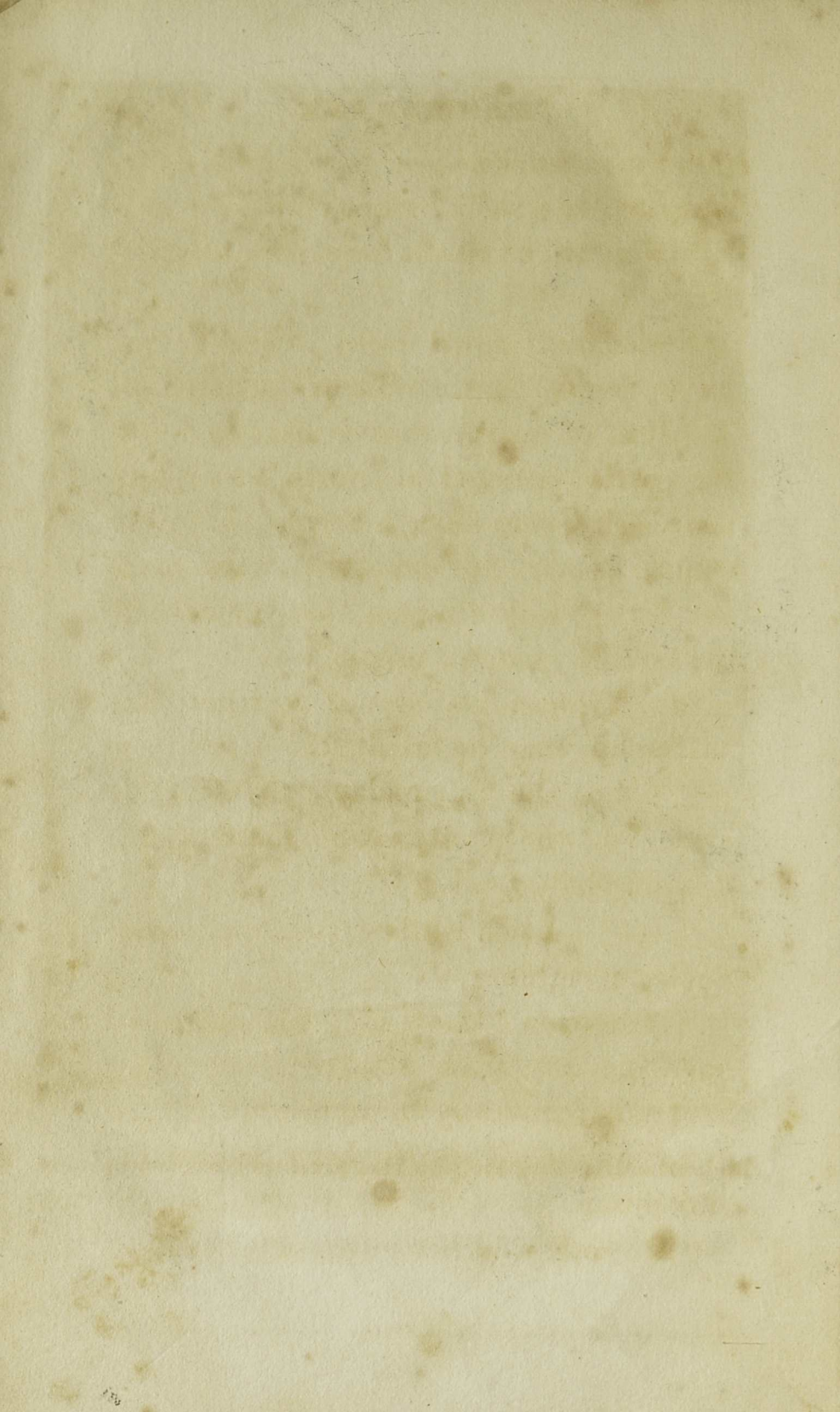
“If I were to look for ever, I must still say, she is *not* the person; the girl who came so often to my shop, is much



Richard overhearing the plan laid to rob his benefactor's house.

*Page 19.*





taller and much older, her hair is dark, and she has a mole on her chin."

"Susan," cried the lady, "call Sophy Ranklin here."

Susan went down stairs, calling "Sophy! Sophy!" but no Sophy appeared.— A pause of suspense and anxiety filled the parties present: at length Susan was heard—"Come along, I say; you must come; if you are innocent, what need you fear? why did you hide yourself in the butler's pantry, miss?"

Mr. Trinket no sooner cast his eyes on Sophy, than he cried out:

"There she is, madam, that is the very girl, who so often came to my shop; how do you do, miss?"

"I—I—I don't know you, sir," said Sophy, trembling.

"You won't know me, you mean:— have you any fresh articles about you? have you found any thing else?"

"Suppose I search her, madam?" said Susan.

"Do so," said her mistress.

This wicked girl now screamed and struggled in vain: her pockets were emptied, and out dropped two bright keys.

“Mercy!” cried Susan, “these are the two keys which were thought to be lost, secreted in her pocket; and what is this so hard in her housewife? let me see—a ring with a ruby heart! Heaven be praised! that poor child is innocent.”

“And here, madam,” said Mr. Shepherd, “stands the culprit, palpably convicted of the theft and falsehood.—Thou little monster! guilty as thou art of those heinous crimes, they are still light, compared to the diabolical, deep-laid scheme, to involve the unsuspecting innocence of thy little companion and bedfellow.”

“Take her away, my heart sickens at the sight of her,” cried Miss Tythe; “and come to my arms, my poor Betsy, the innocent victim of fiend-like malice.” The worthy lady embraced the child most affectionately.

“ Indeed, madam,” said Betsy, “ Sophy has often wanted me to take your things; she said you had such a plenty, you could never miss them; but I would not touch them.”

“ I believe you, my dear: as for that wicked girl,—Mr. Shepherd, you will be pleased to send for a constable, and let her be committed to the house of correction, for six months, at least; was my father to know this, he would inevitably have her transported for life.”

Sophy Ranklin was thus deservedly disgraced and punished; and the triumph of Betsy’s integrity rendered complete.

We shall now return to little Richard, Betsy’s orphan brother, whom Captain Crump had so kindly received.

He, in a very short time, won the affectionate regard of his master, who, in less than a year, treated him more like a relation, than a dependant orphan. He put him to a grammar-school in the neighbourhood; and the progress the

boy made was rapid, yet solid. Gentle and unassuming in his manners, he was even playful and frolicsome at times, to the great delight of his benefactor, whose whims and oddities the little fellow humoured on all occasions; no wonder he was a favourite: to finish his character, he was inflexibly honest, beyond temptation, and of a dauntless intrepidity.

Captain Crump, on his marriage, had enlarged his establishment; he had added a footman and two maid-servants; the man was a handy fellow, but was somewhat given to smoking and tipling; he would frequently beg Richard to help him to some tobacco, out of the Captain's canister; and when the boy was bid by the captain to fill the liquor-casters, the footman would ask him to fill a phial of rum or hollands for him, but Richard always refused.

“No James, I cannot; you must excuse me,—you do not want it, and I dare not wrong the trust our master

reposes in me." On which the man would retire, muttering, "You are a stingy little fellow; but no matter."

One evening, returning at dusk from school, the Captain and Mrs. Crump being gone on a visit, and were not to return that night, in turning the corner of a dark lane, he heard whispers,—he stopped—his own name and the captain's were mentioned,—he listened attentively,—he overheard the footman say to his companions:

"They'll not be at home before noon, to-morrow; I'll send the young chap to-bed soon; the maids will be tired with cleaning and scouring all day, and I'll give them and old Peter and his wife a drop of good stingo, and pack them, all boozey, to roost, and then seem to retire myself; then, in an hour after, when they are all snoring, on your giving a whistle, I'll come down and admit you;—I've packed up the plate, and master's strong box is in the closet inside his bed-room:—We shall have a glorious

haul. Come, let us go to the crooked billet, and have a tankard or two; I have an hour to spare."

Poor little Richard ran home as fast as his legs could carry him; in an instant he was up stairs, and taking the captain's iron box, which contained his bills, notes, and cash, to a very considerable amount, he descended softly with it to the wood-house in the yard, where he effectually concealed it under some logs; and then went up again, and very calmly loaded a small fowling-piece, and case of pistols, and put in a charge of duck-shot. Thus prepared, he came down and asked for his supper, and having eat heartily, he took up a book and began to study. James now entered, and turning to the maids, said, "Here, girls, I have brought a nice bottle of rum; and as master and mistress are from home, we can have a snug drop this raw blowing night."

The kettle was put on and the punch made; they all grew merry. James kept

filling their glasses, and asked Richard to partake; to avoid suspicion, he took a bumper,—presently, he began to yawn and appear quite sleepy.

“ You had better go to bed, master Richard, if you are drowsy.”

“ So I will, James; I am quite tired, and shall sleep like a top; give me a candle.”

“ Aye, we shall all sleep well to-night,” said the maids.

Richard left the room and went to bed, but not to sleep.—The clock now struck eleven, and all was quiet.

In a short time Richard heard a light footstep, and peeping out, saw James with a lantern in his hand, steal softly down stairs,—Richard followed him, in his shirt;—He saw the man gently open the back-door—a whistle was given,—James slipped out, and returned the whistle, leaving the door a-jar; on this, Dick stepped forward, and clapped the door to with a loud noise.



“ Confound the wind,” cried James ;  
“ what shall we do now ? ”

“ There’s a mason’s ladder at the next house which is repairing ; let’s fetch it,” cried one of his three associates, and away they went. Richard now double-locked and barred the door ; then getting a light, he ran up stairs into his master’s room, took down the pistols and fowling-piece, opened the shutters and softly raised the sash : here he could see them without being discovered. Soon after this the ladder was brought and applied to the window,—two men had ascended about half way, when little Richard let off the fowling-piece at them.

“ S’blood,” exclaimed they, “ we are discovered,—you have betrayed us,—let us be off : this will never do.”

“ S’death,” cried James, “ I’m sadly wounded too,—this is witchcraft ; I’ll swear, I left them all fast asleep.” And taking away the ladder, they then disappeared.

Richard reloaded the fowling-piece, and secured the window-shutters; he then went to his own room and dressed himself, and descended with his fire-arms to the kitchen, stirred up the fire, and lighted another candle; he then warmed himself, for he was shivering with the cold, and took a hearty sup of the cold punch that remained, which prevented the good boy from catching cold; he then kept parading up and down the house, till day-light. About seven in the morning, the maids got up, and were quite astonished to find Richard walking up and down, with the fowling-piece on his shoulder, and two pistols stuck in a shot-belt, round his waist. They asked for the key of the doors to get some wood, but Dick refused, and told them that nobody should stir out, or enter the house, till the captain returned,—he would shoot the first who attempted it. The girls, quite astonished, laughed and said, the punch he had drank had turned his brain, and bade him go to bed again

and sleep himself sober. The boy shook his head, and made no answer.

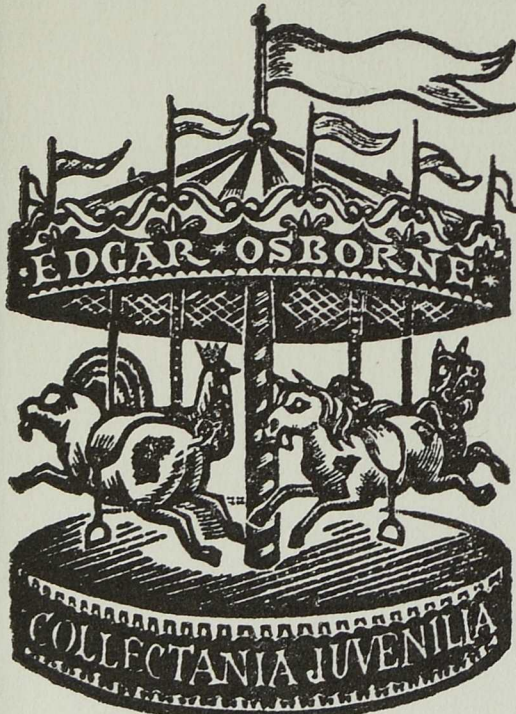
At ten o'clock, the captain and his lady drove to the door; the keys were now produced, and as soon as the captain entered, Dick calling him on one side, very cautiously related to him all that had happened.

James no longer thought it prudent to appear; however, he was soon after apprehended with two of the gang:—the proofs of his guilt were too manifest, his hand was wounded,—the plate and spoons were found packed up;—and he and his companions were transported for life.

Need we add, this good boy was amply provided for? — The captain having no children by his lady, immediately adopted him; and on his arriving at the age of sixteen, presented him with a pair of colours, for his spirited conduct.

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