A DESCRIPTIVE DICTIONARY

OF

BRITISH MALAYA.

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[Articles marked * are wholly or in part taken from Crawford's "Dictionary of the Indian Archipelago."

Ablution.—The Malays emulate other Mahommedans in their regard for physical purity. For this purpose, tanks are placed beside each mosque, to enable worshippers to bathe before prayer, if they have not been able to otherwise cleanse themselves. The Arabic word *wudu* is used to express religious ablution, and *heds* the state of defilement during which Malays cannot pray.

Aboriginal Tribes.—The wild tribes of the Peninsula and Settlements comprise the following. It must be understood that some are generic terms and some specific. Thus the word *benua* includes many others, but as particulars will be found under each word in its alphabetical order, it will suffice to give the terms met with in various authorities on the subject:

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The generic terms for "aborigines" are *Orang buket*, *O. liar*, and *O. sakei*.

**Acre** (rélong) or orlong, equal to 1½ English acres, 3 orlongs making 4 acres.

**Adiantum Fern**, of which the Maiden hair is a charming variety.—This is a native of the Peninsula, and was discovered by Bishop Hose to exist in Malacca. It is also found on Penang Hill.

**Admiral**, in Malay, is *laksamana*, but the term has long since been disused.

**Adze.**—See Axx.

**Agar-Agar.**—The Malay name for a species of marine alga, the *Fucus saccharinus* of botanists; growing on the rocky shores of many of the Malayan islands, and forming a considerable article of export to China by junks. It is esculent when boiled to a jelly, and is also used by the Chinese as a vegetable glue.* Of late years it has been largely adopted in the European cuisine as a substitute for isinglass with which to make blanc-manges, jellies, &c., though wanting somewhat
in delicacy of taste. The principal place of production is Pulo Pangkor Laut (Dindings) opposite Perak.

Agriculture.—The agriculture of the Malas (that of the Chinese is referred
to below) is, strictly speaking, almost confined to one object—the cultivation of
rice, of which several varieties are grown. The labour rendered necessary is con-
fined to only two or three months of the year, immediately after the autumn rains,
when the padi fields are submerged, and the task of turning in the stubble and
weed of the preceding season is thus rendered easy. The planting of fruits, &c., can
scarcely be termed "agriculture," the natural fertility of the soil rendering any
labour unnecessary. In the Settlements and Protected States large areas are put
under rice every season. In the Independent States, the clearings being smaller,
operations are conducted on a more limited scale, and it is only with great difficulty
that enough grain is raised to supply domestic consumption, a good deal being
imported from Siam.

The following remarks by the late Mr. Logan on the agricultural capabilities of
the southern portions of the Straits, apply almost equally well to the Peninsula
generally:—"Although the soils of the district have not the fertility of the volcanic
and calcareous soils which occur in many parts of the Indian Archipelago, they are
covered with an indigenous vegetation of great vigour and luxuriance, supporting
numbers of animals of different species. The hills of plutonic rock support dense
and continuous forests composed of more than 200 species of trees, many of which
are of great size. So long as the iron is not in such excess as to decompose the
clay into stone or render it hard, those soils which contain most iron are most fertile.
The purely or highly felspathic are the worst. But even felspathic soils, when
intermixed with a sufficient proportion of quartz, are, in this climate, capable of
producing an abundant vegetation. Although it is obvious to every observer that
there is no kind of soil in the district for which nature has not yet provided plants
that flourish luxuriantly in it, yet it must not be hastily concluded, as some have
done, that this exuberant vegetation indicates a general fertility in the soil. It is
found, on the contrary, when the native plants are destroyed and the land is
employed for agriculture, that there are very few soils in which cultivated plants
not indigenous to the region, but whose climatic range embraces it, will flourish
spontaneously. While the cacao nut, betelnut, sago, gomuti and the numerous
Malayan fruits succeed well with little care, the nutmeg and clove are stunted and
almost unproductive, unless constantly cultivated and highly manured. Yet the
climate is perfectly adapted for them. Place them in the rare spots where there is
naturally a fertile soil, or create one artificially, and the produce is equal to that of
trees in the Molucca plantations. With respect to indigenous plants, gambier,
pepper and all the fruit-trees flourish on the plutonic hills, provided they are not
too deficient in iron and quartz. The hills of violet shale, where they are not too
sandy, are equal to the best plutonic soils—those namely in which there is a suffi-
cient proportion of hard granules to render them friable, and sufficient iron to
render them highly absorptive of water without becoming plastic. Of all the
sedimentary soils, the sandstone and very arenaceous shales furnish the worst. Of
the alluvial soils, the sand, particularly when it contains a mixture of vegetable
matter or triturated shells, is the proper soil of the cacao nut, and the vegetable mud
of the sago. When the country has been better and longer drained and cultivated,
the latter soil will become a rich mould. At present it is everywhere too wet and
sour to make a fertile soil. Rice is grown on some patches of it. The bluish sea
mud contains good ingredients, but clay is in excess, and the animal matter in it
appears to assist in rendering it hard and untractable when it is not saturated with
water. Even for such a soil nature has provided plants useful to man, for the
betelnut and some of the indigenous fruit-trees grow well in it with little cultura-
tion. Although there are cultivated plants adapted to every kind of soil in the
district, and it has indigenous tribes who can live exclusively on its yams, sago, fish, and wild animals, it is incapable of feeding a population of the more civilized races, and the latter must always be dependent on other countries for the great necessary of life—rice."

Small patches of tobacco and sugar-cane are common, but in each case the cultivation is for domestic use only. The implements used are of the rudest nature, the plough being a rough wooden affair capable only of scratching the surface, while the harrow is equally primitive. The one tool of the Malay agriculturist is the changkol, or large hoe, q. v. Some indication of the comparatively slight importance attached to the art of cultivation by the Malays is afforded by the fact that no generic word exists for it in the language; that used, viz., tanam, and its derivatives, meaning accurately to plant or bury.

The Chinese have, in fact, become the real agriculturists of the Straits, coconuts, sugar, indigo, pepper, gambier, nutmeg and pine-apple being all "cultivated" by them in the full sense of the word. European enterprise has of late attempted coffee, tea, cocoa, cinchona, coconuts and sugar, the latter having been cultivated for many years and alone yielded results of importance. Guano, oil cake (especially the latter), lime and other fertilizers have been plentifully used on the sugar estates, and a good deal of care has been taken with cocoa, &c. The Chinese, however, resort almost exclusively to excrement and sewerage.

Aker.—Means a root, and is constantly used to form compound words, such as A. kaluna, A. sinapo, A. tuba, &c. (Kaluna-root, &c.)

Akki or Akki Apple (Blighia sapida).—A vegetable which during growth is surrounded by a hard shell; when the kernel ripens this splits open, disclosing a yellow gelatinous seed. Fried with butter and pepper it is an acceptable addition to the table. It has been introduced into the Straits from the West Coast of Africa.

Albino.—Persons born without the colouring matter of the skin, eyes, and hair, and thus far imperfect, are occasionally to be seen in every race and tribe of the Malayan Peninsula, as they are of those of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The native terms are baler or sôpak.

Alboquerque, Affonso.—Or Afonso ALBUERQUE, was the second son of GONSALVO DE ALBUERQUE, lord of Villaverde, and an illegitimate descendant of the royal family of Portugal. He was born in 1452. In 1503 he made his first voyage to India in the joint command of a fleet with his relative FRANCISCO ALBUERQUE. Returning home in 1503, he was appointed to the command of a squadron bound for India, forming part of a fleet under the orders of TRISTAN DE CUNHA, who, proceeding himself to India, left ALBUERQUE to carry on a desultory and unprofitable warfare with the little Mahomedan States on the eastern coast of Africa. In 1508 he acquired the government of India. In 1510 he attacked and, after a first unsuccessful attempt, succeeded in capturing Goa, which has ever since continued the capital of the Portuguese possessions in India. In 1511 he undertook and achieved the conquest of Malacca—the enterprise which connects his name with the present work. His last achievement was the conquest of Ormus, soon after which he fell sick, returned to India, and died a few days after, in the sixty-third year of his age.*

Allakan Durian Tembaga.—V. in S.E. Selangor, about 5 miles from the Sungei Ujong frontier.

Alligator.—By a common error all reptiles of this family are usually termed alligators (Spanish el lagarto, the lizard), but the ten species known are all American, though the discovery of a true alligator in India has recently been announced. Alligators are all fresh-water animals; the muzzle of the animal tapers roundly from the back of the jaw to the snout, and its toes are partly webbed, the outer toe
being free. The canine teeth fit into pits in the upper jaw. The hind legs are without scales.

The crocodile likes brackish or salt as well as fresh water, has scales on the hind legs, its teeth fit into notches in the upper jaw, and the side of the jaw is depressed in front of the snout. See Crocodile.

**Alligator or Avocado Pear.—**Not indigenous. Introduced from the West Indies.

**Allspice (Pimenta vulgaris).—**This is exotic. Mr. Cantley, writing in December, 1886, says of a specimen in the Botanical Gardens: — “A plant of allspice raised from seed some nine years ago is now about twelve feet in height and is for the moment covered with blossom and small fruit.”

**Alma Estate.**—Eight miles and 3 furlongs from Butterworth, and situated in the centre of Province Wellesley, between Macham Bubo, Bukit Minyak and Tebing Tinggi. This estate, which lies two miles inland from the high road, was opened nearly 50 years ago by Mr. Robert Wilson of Penang for the purpose of growing the manioc or cassava root, here called ubi kayu, for the manufacture of tapioca, and it turned out a great success. The soil proved well adapted to the growth of the root. A head of soft water for turning the mill and washing the flour was obtained by throwing a dam across a stream running from Bukit Mertajam towards the Juruj, and now there are 1,000 acres under cultivation producing a proportionate quantity of that substance. The labourers employed are nearly all Klings and Chinese. The house of the manager is situated on rising ground surrounded by magnificent trees and opposite the lake formed in consequence of the damming operation above described, and is one of the most picturesquely situated in the colony.

**Almighty** as distinct from “god” is rendered by Maha Kuasa, but is rather a descriptive than nominal phrase.

**Almond** trees abound in the Peninsula. They are called bādam (a Persian word), betapong or los. A wild almond is commonly met with.

**Alor Gajah.**—A village in the Pigo district and on the S. borders of the Nanjing territory, N. Malacca. Near it was situated Fort Lismore, at one time occupied by a garrison under the East India Company, but now abandoned. A Government bungalow and police station exist here, and prior to the reduction of Nanjing, the place was of some importance. It is about 15 miles N. of Malacca-town on the high road to the Tabu district, and was frequently mentioned by early explorers of the province.

**Alor Star or Kota Star.**—q.v.

**Amber, so called in Malay. Known but not found in Malaya.**

**Amangan.**—V. on the S. slope of the hills below Kwala Lumpur in S.E. Selangor.

**Amok.**—“Running amok” describes a species of murder-madness peculiar to the Malays. Inflamed by some real or fancied injury, or in some few cases insane, the amok runner rushes through the streets, cutting down with his sword or parang every one he can. As an illustration we quote the following: “On the 8th July, 1846, Sunan, a respectable Malay builder in Penang, ran amok in Chulia Street and Penang Road, and before he was arrested killed an old Hindu woman, a Kling, a Chinese boy, and a Kling girl about 8 years old in the arms of her father, and wounded two Hindus, three Klings, and two Chinese, of whom only two survived. On his trial it appeared that he was greatly afflicted by the loss of his wife and child, which preyed upon his mind and quite altered his appearance. A person with whom he had lived up to the 15th of June said further: ‘He used to bring his child to his work; since its death he has worked for me; he often said he could
not work as he was afflicted by the loss of his child. I think he was out of his mind. He did not smoke or drink. I think he was mad.” On the morning of the amok this person met him, and asked him to work at his boat. ‘He replied that he could not, he was very much afflicted.’ ‘He had his hands concealed under his cloth, and frequently exclaimed, Allah! Allah!’ ‘He daily complained of the loss of his wife and child.’ On the trial SUNAX declared he did not know what he was about, and persisted in this at the place of execution, adding: ‘As the gentlemen say I have committed so many murders, I suppose it must be so.’ The amok took place on the 8th, the trial on the 13th, and the execution on the 15th of July—all within eight days.”

British rule has almost exterminated amok in the Settlements, the prospect of being hanged in cold blood causing a disinclination to run the risk. An amok always expects to be cut down while under the influence of his simulated passion.

Ampang.—V. in E. Selangor. A little over 10 miles E.S.E. of Kwalor Lumpor.

Amulets.—See Charms.

Anak Ayer Pari.—A small tributary of the R. Sei Pari, a branch of the Kinta River, C. Perak.

Anchor.—“The Malay anchor is constructed of a piece of forked timber, the fluke being strengthened by twisted rattans binding it to the stem, while the cross-piece is formed of the long flat stone secured in the same manner. This anchor when well made holds exceedingly firm, and, owing to the expense of iron, is still almost universally used on board the small prahu.”—Wallace. The native word to anchor is berlabuam. Hence Labuan, the British Colony of that name.

Ang Mo Kio.—District in E.C. Singapore, greatly settled by Chinese.

Angin-Angin.—A weather-cook, which see.

Anised.—This well-known article of trade is termed Adas or jintan manis.

Anjong Meandong.—V. in the Pahang Delta about 1½ m. S.E. of the junction of the R. Pahang and Pahang Tuah.

Ant.—S’nut or Semut in Malay. A number of varieties are found in the Peninsula, the largest being the semut lemunggong, an insect about 1½ inch in length, of black colour and armed with formidable forceps which will make an appreciable wound. The longkiah is another black variety over half an inch in length and found only on the ground, as it never ascends trees. Its nest is formed in the earth, and it is mostly visible in wet weather. It frequently bites the bare feet of the natives. Next to this comes the karingga, a red ant, which, like the lemunggong, bites viciously, and is remarkable for the rapidity with which it transfers itself from the branch, &c., it may happen to be on, to the person. Hundreds will thus attack one in a few seconds, in which case the only alternative is to immediately strip—an easy proceeding when within reach of a bath-room, but embarrassing when away from home. Of the onei-onei, or in Singapore semut puteh, or white ant, much might be written, but its depredations are precisely those described in countless works of travel. It differs from its American congeners in never building the lofty tumuli familiar to all readers of Natural History, but is none the less a nuisance. This species always attacks the butt end of wood, and never (unless the piece attacked be joined to another already perforated) commences its boring from the side. Metal shoes and a plentiful use of tar, kerosine and its other derivatives, are the only known means of repelling their attacks. The slight mounds raised by this insect burn, if properly lit, with a powerful red heat for some days. A small black ant, of which the largest specimens are only a quarter of an inch long, comes next in order. It is called semut sawa by the Malays and is apparently harmless. A smaller reddish ant, exactly resembling that at home, comes next. It is known as semut kera. The smallest of the house pests is
the semut api, or “fire ant,” the bite of which is aptly likened to the prick of a red-hot needle. A yet smaller species, the semut kah, infests the skins of specimens prepared for the museum, but do no damage beyond clearing away any minute fragments of flesh left adhering in the course of preparation. These species embrace all commonly met with, but the field is yet open to exploration.

Antimony.—This metal, formerly unknown to the natives of the East, as it was to Europeans until the fifteenth century, was found for the first time in Borneo, in 1823. The ore is a sulphuret in a matrix of quartz, and at present furnishes the chief supply of Europe, being exported, from the Emporium of Singapore, to a large yearly amount.* Oxide of antimony is obtained in large quantities amongst the hills of Perak, chiefly in conjunction with veins of tin.

Antiquities, Malayan.—No remains of any archaeological importance, save a few inscriptions, are to be found in the Peninsula, but an interesting sketch of those found in Java, &c., is given in N. & Q. with No. XVI (1886) of J. S. B. R. A. S., p. 88. Traces of ancient Buddhist temples are said to exist in Province Wellesley. Some of the shell mounds occurring there might be worth exploration.

Ape.—See Monkey.

Apit-Apit.—The game of draughts, much resembling our own. See Draughts.

Ara Panjang.—V. on E. bank of Perak R., C. Perak.

Ara Rendang.—A small village, 9 miles N.E. of Butterworth, Province Wellesley, and close to Malakoff estate. A police station is established here. The name is applied by the natives to the district, including the estate referred to.

Arabs, Arabia.—This country has been familiarly known to the inhabitants of the Malayan islands for six centuries, the majority of them having, within that time, adopted its religion and laws, and engrafted much of its language on their own. There are many merchants and petty shopkeepers of this nationality in the Settlements.*

Arabic Language.—Malay contains numerous Arabic words, mostly altered however in form. The Arabic alphabet with the six letters ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ forms that of the Malays. See Crawford, Malay G. & Dic., Vol. i. p. xiii.

Areca Palm, Areca catechu (Pokok Pinang). This is the tree which produces the well-known betel-nut (q. v.). The leaf-sheath is used to form water buckets and baskets. The tree itself is very slender and graceful, and gives its name to the Pulo Pinang, there being about three-quarter million of trees on the island. It is common throughout the Peninsula and Settlements, as also in the Archipelago and Southern India.

Argus Pheasant (Kuan) (Argus giganticeps).—A native of Malacca, one of the most magnificent, though less brightly coloured than others, of the pheasant tribe. The late Mr. Whampoa of Singapore had several in confinement, but it is somewhat difficult to keep them alive in Europe. The wing covers are beautifully marked with eyes, and the tail is of great length, requiring a very roomy cage indeed for its display.

Armadillo, the tinggiling of the Malays, is found throughout the Peninsula, and “cooked in the shell” is an attractive dish.

Arms.—In Malay sinjata, a word found in the language of all the civilized nations as far as the Philippines. The earliest weapons of the Indian islanders, after clubs, were most likely spears, for which their almost universal forests would yield a ready supply. The inhabitants of the island of Matan, scarcely exceeding an area of two leagues and a half, who defeated and slew the first circumnavigator of the globe, with his band of sixty Spanish cavaliers, were armed with hardly any
other weapons than wooden or cane spears sharpened and hardened in the fire, with wooden bucklers. The spear is still a favourite weapon with all the Malayan tribes. The sling, in Malay ali-ali, although well known, seems never to have been much used. The chief missile in use before the introduction of fire-arms was a small arrow ejected from a blow-pipe by the breath, called a sumpitan, meaning the object blown through. This instrument is at present in general use by most of the wild tribes. The bow for discharging arrows is well known to all the more advanced nations of the Archipelago, but does not seem, at any time, to have been generally employed, the blow-pipe probably superseding its use, although a far less effectual weapon. The common name for it—panah,—extends over the whole of the islands. But of all weapons, the greatest favourite of the Malayan nations is the kris, the native word for a dagger or poniard. Men of all ranks wear one, and men of rank, two, and even three and four when full dressed, the quality of the party being shown by the richness of the hilt, scabbard, and belt. The preference given to the kris over the more effectual sword had most probably its origin in the high price of iron in early times, and when there was no supply from abroad. In such times, a kris manufacturer—called a pande, cutler or blacksmith—was a person of distinction, as the same artificer is represented to have been in the Ossianic poems, and the names of several have been handed down by tradition. The word kris belongs equally to the Malay and Javanese, and is to be found in the languages of all the more advanced nations, expressing the same object. The sword is said to have been introduced about the year 1580, which is near 70 years after the Portuguese conquest of Malacca. Bucklers were largely used by the Malayan nations before the introduction of fire-arms, and in the Malay language there are no fewer than eight names for them, sometimes synonyms, and sometimes expressing their different forms.

Barros enumerates the different weapons generally used by the Malays of Malacca when it was attacked by Albuquerque. "They consisted," he says, "of daggers of from two spans and a half to three spans long, straight in the blade and two-edged (the kris), bows and arrows, blow-pipes, which discharged very small arrows barbed and poisoned, with short spears for throwing, and bucklers of two kinds, the one short, and the other long enough to protect the whole body of the wearer." Barbosa says that the Malays of Malacca obtained arms from Java. "They" (the Javanese), says he, "bring many arms for sale, such as lances, bucklers, and swords (krisves), having hilts wrought in marqueterie, and blades of the finest steel."—Ramusio, vol. i.

But besides the arms thus enumerated, the Portuguese and Spaniards, when they first arrived, found the most advanced of the Malayan nations in possession of fire-arms. Barros incidentally mentions the existence of match-locks in the defence of Malacca. The Portuguese had manned a captured junk with cannon, and sent her forward to batter the defences of a bridge, and this is his account of the action which took place: "As soon as the junk had passed the sand-bank and had come to an anchor, a short way from the bridge, the Moorish artillery opened a fire on her. Some guns discharged leaden balls at intervals, which passed through both sides of the vessel, doing much execution among the crew. In the heat of the action Antonio d'Areu, the commander, was struck in the cheek from a fusil (espingardão), carrying off the greater number of his teeth." The son of Albuquerque, in his Commentaries, is still fuller on the subject of the captured artillery and the weapons of defence used by the Malays. "There were captured," says he, "3,000 pieces, of which 2,000 were of brass, and the rest of iron. Among them there was one large piece sent by the King of Calicut to the King of Malacca. All the artillery with its appurtenances were of such workmanship that it could not be excelled, even in Portugal. There were found also match-locks (espingardão), blow-pipes for shooting poisoned arrows, bows and arrows, lances of Java, and divers other arms, all which created surprise in those that captured them."—Commentarios
do grande Afonso d'Albuquerque; Lisboa, 1576. The greater number most likely consisted of the small pieces called by the natives rantaia or hand-guns. Castanheira also mentions match-locks (espingardão), and while he reduces the captured cannon to 2,000, he says that they threw balls, some of stone, and some of iron covered with lead. The cannon (bombardia) were some of them of brass and some of iron. By his account, the bridge—the chief scene of combat in the storm of Malacca—was defended by seventy-two pieces of ordnance.

The name by which fire-arms are usually called is badil, a general one for any missile, and mariam, which is Arabic, and in that language signifies the Virgin Mary,” which would seem to imply that the knowledge of artillery was derived by the Arabs themselves from the Christians, as without doubt it was. Smaller ordnance are called by various names, such as rantaia, lela, &c., &c., &c. The native term badil extends to the languages of all the more cultivated nations, although sometimes corrupted. The Arabic name mariam is also of general acceptance. The name of the match-lock is satingar, a corruption of the Portuguese espingardão, and the musket rifle is called sanapang, a corruption of the Dutch snappaan.

A knowledge of gunpowder must have been, at least, as early as that of cannon. It is not improbable that it may have been even earlier known through the Chinese, for the manufacture of fire-works, known to the Malays under the name marchum, a word of which the origin is not traceable. The principal ingredients of gunpowder are sufficiently abundant over many parts of the Archipelago, and known by native names, sandave being the name of saltpetre, and baldavim, or welevang, of sulphur. The names for gunpowder itself are a little singular. In Malay it is called ubat-badil, which literally means “missile-charm.”

The parties who introduced the knowledge of fire-arms among the Malayan nations cannot be mistaken. They were certainly the Mahomedans, and most probably the Arabs. Cannon were in full use by European nations for military purposes in the middle of the fourteenth century, and nearly at the same time by the Arabs of Spain, who had a frequent intercourse with their Eastern countrymen, and these, at the time, with the Oriental nations as far as China. Between the time when cannon were in general use in Europe and the first appearance of the Portuguese in Malaya, a century and a half had elapsed—ample time for the transmission of the new invention to the Malayan nations, and even to China, where also it was, most probably, first made known by the Arabs. The earliest reliable date which we possess of the use of artillery in continental India is the year 1492, when Mahommed Shah, King of Gujarat, employed cannon in a fleet during the war with pirates. In such cases the cannoniers are stated to have been Turks and Europeans. This seems to have been the case even after the arrival of Europeans; for in the great battle which secured to BABAR the possession of Northern India, it is represented by the historian Farishta, that “he ordered his park of artillery to be linked together with leathern ropes made of raw hides, according to the practice of the armies of Asia Minor.” On the arrival of the Portuguese on the western coast of India, they found all the maritime nations, whether under Mahomedan or Hindu rule, in possession of fire-arms, and employing them both on land and sea, and they found the same to be the case from the Arabian to the Persian Gulf. The handsomest piece of ordnance captured by them at Malacca, as has been already stated, had been a gift to the Malay prince from the King of Calicut, the Hindu prince called by the Portuguese the Zamorin. Of the actual year in which fire-arms were made known to the inhabitants of Malaya there is no record, but, considering the frequent intercourse which subsisted between them and the maritime parts of Western India, we may safely conclude that the event did not take place earlier than fifty years before the arrival of the Portuguese, that is, about the middle of the fifteenth century, or about a century after they had been in common use in Europe.

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