

The Charge of The Archbishop of Fredericton To Anglican Synod

(Continued from Page Two)

used, is wider than that. It connotes also service of a definite and detailed character. As Christians, we are all chosen of God, not alone that we may enjoy the exalted privileges of our calling, but also that we may "tell out the excellence of God" to others. That, indeed, is one of the primary purposes of our calling. A considerable part of my charge a year ago was devoted to a critical examination of the Group Movement. As many of you are aware, I have found no reason to modify the views which I then expressed, but I am more convinced than ever that in the clarion voice with which that Movement proclaims the duty of personal service in the cause of Christ, it is rightly interpreting the mind of Christ. I do not believe that it is God's will that the world shall be converted through the efforts only of the sacred ministry, but that every member of the body shall make his or her contribution to that triumph. It may well be suspected, indeed, that in the widespread failure to envisage fully that great truth must be sought and found at least one secret of the weakness, which we all deplore. We have depended far too much upon the efforts of the formal ministry.

As I look back upon the history of this Diocese, I seem to see much that confirms me in that conclusion. In the early days of the Diocese the Church of England had many advantages that were denied to other religious bodies; yet some of those bodies, at least, developed at a far more rapid rate than did our own communion, and are today in almost unchallenged possession of fields of work that once were largely in our hands. I do not think that the ministers of those religious bodies were more earnest than the clergy of the Church, and many of them would seem to have lacked the intellectual equipment that they now possess. These communications had learned from the first, however, a lesson that the Church of England still has to learn—how to enlist the services of laymen in active missionary work. While we left large areas of the Province unsheltered for lack of sufficient number of ordained men, or for lack of money to support a formal ministry, they proclaimed the message of the Gospel by the voluntary services of consecrated laymen.

I have said that it is hardly possible, perhaps, to find in every parish men qualified to undertake the work of a Lay Reader, but I am quite convinced that in many parishes there are those who might be trained to discharge the duties of that office. I would urge the clergy to consider the question very carefully. Careful discrimination must be used, of course, in the matter of their selection, and I ought never to be asked to license a layman, about whose fitness for the work in view there is any reasonable doubt.

I will add a few words for the special consideration of the clergy, whose work lies in the centres of population, where it ought to be possible, it may be supposed, to find suitable candidates for the office of Lay Reader more easily than in the rural districts. I am thinking of such centres as Rothesay, Hampton, Sussex, Moncton, Chatham, Newcastle, Bathurst, Campbellton, Sackville, McAdam, Woodstock, and so on. Why is it that in such parishes as these there are no Lay Readers? In most cases, I shall be told, perhaps, that there is no scope for their work. So far as is concerned, the answer is very obvious, for, if the need of their assistance is not felt in the parish itself, opportunities for useful work seldom present themselves in the surrounding districts. The task of ministering to vacant parishes, and unorganized districts, would be much less serious than it is, if, within reasonable reach, Lay Readers were ready to do part, at least, of that important work. If I may be forgiven for taking by way of illustration, a concrete case, here is the Parish of Moncton with its large and flourishing congregation. Within comparatively easy reach of it is the Mission of Weldford and Harcourt, having in it a very considerable number of Church people. Financial reasons have made it impossible for many years now to keep a resident clergyman in that parish. Its people are loyal members of the Church, and value such ministrations as they receive, but they are far from being sufficient. It might mean much to the spiritual welfare of the Mission of Weldford and Harcourt, if from time to time there could go from St. George's Church, Moncton, a Lay reader to give them services; and, if, may add, it might mean much to the spiritual welfare of the Parish of Moncton, for missionary work, like mercy, blesses those who give as well as those who take. So in the case of other urban parishes.

There is another answer to the objection that in many parishes there is no scope for the work of a Lay Reader. There are very few clergymen, who do not at times, at least, feel the voice strain of preaching and taking services, and for such it would be a great relief to have the help of a Lay Reader. There is no sound reason why such an assistant should not take part of the services under such circumstances. So far as the Lessons are concerned, it is a very common thing in England to have them read by competent laymen, and there can be no objection to the extension of the practice in this Diocese.

Sunday Observance

I have been asked by the General Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance to draw attention to what would seem to be an increasing tendency to make use of Sunday for the purposes of political meeting and the like. The practice has not come under my personal observation, but it is claimed upon what appears to be good authority that it is becoming not at all uncommon in certain parts of Canada, and, if that be true, the fact is certainly to be deplored. It is said more over, that this misuse of the Lord's

Day is defended by some political leaders on the somewhat specious ground that their program is in harmony with the work which the churches are doing, and, therefore, cannot properly be condemned. We have it on the authority of Holy Writ that the State, not less than the Church, is a divine institution, but its highest ends are not likely to be served by invading the sanctity of the one day, that has been set apart for the purposes of rest and worship. On the contrary, indeed, the heated atmosphere of political gatherings with their inevitable appeal to prejudice and passion is quite certain to injure the one institution not much less than the other. It is reassuring to hear upon what seems to be good authority that both the Prime Minister, and the leader of the Opposition, have placed themselves on record as being strongly opposed to official activities of any sort on Sunday. In view of the fact that both Federal and Provincial elections are close at hand, the time is not inopportune for the reference to the subject that has been made; and I hope that, without impropriety, I may appeal to the political leaders of this Province to throw the full weight of their influence against any encroachment upon the quietness and sanctity of Sunday in the course of the coming campaign.

Having said so much I may fittingly add a few words upon the general subject of Sunday observance, and, in doing so, I would appeal to the clergy and laity of the Church alike to give their full support to the work of the Lord's Day Alliance. Some of our Church people, I am aware, have been prejudiced against the organization by the somewhat intemperate earnestness with which at times its claims have been advanced by some of its supporters, whose zeal outruns their discretion, and who speak without knowledge. No movement, however, may properly be judged by its extremists, and that is notably true of the Lord's Day Alliance. Its aim is not, as is not seldom assumed, to compel people to observe Sunday in a religious way, but to give as many people as possible the opportunity to do so, and to safeguard the first day of the week against such secular encroachments as tend to rob it of its primary character of a day of rest. When on the plea of liberty, and the like, the secularization of Sunday is demanded, multitudes of men and women are in danger of being robbed both of their right to rest, and of their opportunity to worship. It is to worship. It is to guard the people of this quiet land against that danger that the Lord's Day Alliance stands, and I commend it heartily to your sympathetic support.

I desire to say a few words in this connection of a more specific character for the guidance of those who may feel themselves to be in need of help in a question that is causing them concern—the question, I mean, as to how far it is right for Christian people to use Sunday as a day of recreation and amusement. Whatever we may think upon this subject, we have to face the fact that the old-fashioned Sunday has passed, and is never likely to return. It has come to be widely felt that restrictions that were once generally accepted, and which may well have met the needs of those living at the time, no longer serve a useful purpose. By a vast number of thoughtful persons, for example, the question of the rightfulness or wrongfulness of such amusements as golf, tennis, and the like on the first day of the week, is no longer seriously debated. Whether it is wise to do these things on Sunday is another question, but it will hardly be contended that they are in themselves wrong. "History shows us," says a thoughtful writer on religious subjects, whose weekly articles in the London Times were widely read in the immediately post-war years, "that few things have done so grave injury to the cause of religion as the perversion of moral judgment, which condemns perfectly harmless conduct as sinful. When men are told that, unless they comply with this or that rule or custom they are guilty of sin against God, it is inevitable that when the custom becomes otiose, they will not only disregard it, but hold that those who condemned their conduct as sinful are the victims of superstition or mere convention. Those who insist that only a Sabbatarian regard for Sunday is according to the law of God do much to defeat the endeavours that are being made to secure an enlightened observance of that day. Though men do not desire to keep Sunday as a day of entire withdrawal from what used to be called secular occupations, they may still attain the purposes for which it was set apart from other days of the week, and gain in new ways what was secured for it by men of other times."

"It is plain that we cannot hope to perpetuate the Sundays of the last century. Not only have we come to a wider conception of our liberty as Christian men, but the extraordinary increase in transport, the growing desire for outdoor life, and the ampler means of the great mass of the people, enable them to travel far from their homes and their parish churches on Sunday" (Bishop Knight).

That seems to me to be an exceedingly wise and discriminating statement, and I commend it to your thoughtful consideration. Yet it must be coupled with a word of warning. Let it never be forgotten that Sunday was set apart by the Christian Church, in deliberate substitution, as we may believe, for the Jewish Sabbath, as a weekly commemoration of the Resurrection of its Lord and to provide members of the Church with an unhindered opportunity to worship God, and to train themselves in the things of the Spirit. While, therefore, we may justly claim greater liberty of action as to the use that we make of Sunday, we must not fail to safeguard ourselves against the ever-

present danger of making that use serve only, or in the main, the lower part of our being. We must not turn liberty into license. Under modern conditions that danger is always very close to us. Vast numbers of people spend their week-ends in the country, with the inevitable result that churches in the cities and towns are largely depleted of their customary congregations. I would appeal to all such people not to make their Sundays in the summer months serve only the purpose of a holiday, but to let them serve also all that is highest and best in them. If they are out of reach of their home churches, in very many cases, at least, they are within easy reach of other churches, and these may well help them to keep Sunday holy. Let us not fail to use some part, at least, of every Sunday in quiet reflection of the deeper things of life, and in ministering to the needs of the soul as well as to those of the body.

Board of Missions

You will be required to consider carefully a notice of motion to amend Canon 17,—that dealing with the Board of Missions,—in some very important respects. The proposed amendments are urged by a Commission which the Board of Missions requested me to appoint for the purpose of considering the difficulties under which the Board is labouring with a view to discovering some effective way of dealing with them. The Commission was made up entirely of laymen, as it seemed to me wise not to ask any of the clergy to accept the responsibility involved. The members are all men of standing and experience, and deeply interested in the work of the Diocese. The conclusions to which they have come, and the recommendations that they are prepared to make, demand, therefore, our most thoughtful consideration.

The question involved is that of the entire policy and practice of the Board of Missions in relation to the Aided Missions. As you are aware, for a great many years the domestic missionary work of the Diocese has been carried on under what is commonly known as the "Quebec System"—so called because it had its origin in the Diocese of that name. It is a system that has some manifest advantages, but also some serious disadvantages, and in recent years we have become increasingly conscious of the latter fact.

Under this system, the Board of Missions enters into agreement with a parish that is unable to support itself,—or, as in some cases, I fear, thinks that it is unable to support itself,—to make to it an annual grant of a stated sum, on condition that the parish in its turn agrees through its church-wardens to collect, and to send to the Treasurer of Synod in equal quarterly instalments a specified amount, described in the agreement as the "required contribution".

In consideration of this undertaking on the part of the parish, the Treasurer of Synod pays the missionary his monthly stipend in full on the first day of each month. Now, inasmuch as the required contribution is sent in at the end of each quarter, it will be seen that the Board of Missions "carries" the parish for a certain period, and in so doing runs, of course, a certain amount of risk. If, at the end of the quarter, however, the "required contribution" has not been received from the parish, the Treasurer is not authorized to pay the missionary his next stipend cheque. Thus the missionary does not receive either the monthly grant from the Board, nor whatever may have been paid on account by the parish. That is one disadvantage of the system, so far as the missionary is concerned, although it involves no injustice to the parish, inasmuch as the Board has already been making payments in advance. It will be noted however, that if under such a system as prevails in almost all other dioceses in Canada, the Board were to make a direct grant, leaving the parish to pay the missionary the balance of the monthly stipend, he would be sure to receive with regularity at least a considerable proportion of the amount promised him.

One great advantage of the system is the fact that, under normal conditions, the missionary received his stipend regularly and promptly. Every person living on a small income appreciates that gain. It enables one to pay cash for one's purchases, and, to a considerable extent at least, to avoid the necessity of running into debt. One of the disabilities to which the Rectors of some small self-supporting parishes are subject, and which is not always realized by the incumbents of Aided Missions, is the fact that they cannot rely upon their stipends being paid in full on the first day of every month. I have reason to fear, moreover, that in some of these self-supporting parishes heavy arrears of stipend have accumulated during the last few years of depression; and it is difficult to see how these arrears will ever be made up. It is indubitably to the credit of the clergymen concerned that they have accepted this disability without complaint, and with little reference to it. I trust that some of the incumbents of Aided Missions, who have found themselves under the unpleasant necessity of making in these difficult days a considerable contribution toward their own stipends, in order to obtain from the treasurer their monthly cheques, will remind themselves that some of their brethren in self-supporting parishes are suffering in precisely the same way, and, as I have remarked, are saying nothing about it.

I have indicated some of the advantages of the system, under which we have been working for so long. They are very obvious advantages. The system is subject, however, to some serious weaknesses. I do not think that it is possible to doubt for example, that, in our experience, at least, it has only too often tended to weaken in an Aided Mission its sense of responsibility. The self-supporting parishes are always keenly conscious that, if they fail to fulfill their financial obligations, their clergyman will

certainly suffer loss. They are ever mindful of the fact that if they do not pay his promised stipend in full, no one else will pay it, and in the recollection there is a strong incentive to remedial action. Only too often, I fear, that incentive is lacking in Aided Missions. They are lulled into inactivity by the feeling that the Board of Missions will stand between their clergyman and suffering, and in times of financial stress there is an unhappy disposition to expect the Board to make up for their own shortcomings by a reduction in the amount of the "required contribution". I do not suggest that this is true of all Aided Missions, for that is far from being the case. Some of them, indeed, are admirable in their spirit of self-reliance, and set a commendable example to other parishes. It is indubitably true, however, I am afraid, that some of our Missions are lacking to a deplorable degree in the sense of responsibility, and make demands upon the Board for assistance to a wholly unwarranted extent. I find little room to doubt, indeed, that if such Missions would tax themselves for their own spiritual needs to the extent that many self-supporting parishes tax themselves, they would be in little need of help from the Board. I believe it to be true, moreover, that, a general rule, the grants made to Aided Missions are larger than they ought to be. A short time ago, I corresponded upon this general subject with the Bishops of a number of dioceses, whose circumstances are not dissimilar to our own. I discovered that, without a single exception, the average level of grants made in this Diocese is considerably higher than the level of grants made in other dioceses. I do not want to be unkindly critical, but I am quite convinced that in not a few cases the generosity of the Board of Missions is being abused. The people of the some of our parishes have been lulled into lethargy—subsidized into sleep, if you like,—and, sooner than make a vigorous effort to provide for the needs of their own parishes, they are prepared to see their churches closed.

It is impart, perhaps, a heritage of weakness that has come down to us from the beginnings of the Church's work in this Province. One has only to study the early records of the Diocese to see how shamelessly the generosity of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was abused. Long after all such grants ought to have ceased the Diocese clamoured for their continuance; and in some of Bishop Medley's Charges to Synod and other addresses, he commented severely upon the fact. Some of the older ones among you may remember that at the time of my assuming office the Diocese was still receiving an annual subsidy of \$1000.00 from the S.P.G.; and I have distinct recollections of sitting in this Board as one of its junior members, and listening to emphatic protests against the Society's policy of gradual withdrawal. I have read letters to the Society, indeed, pleading against any diminution of assistance. I am happy to remember that at the very beginning of my administration the Board passed an unanimous resolution, expressing gratitude for the generous assistance that had for so many years come to the Diocese from England, relinquishing all claim to future help. It was an acceptance of responsibility, however, that came many years too late. The habit of relying upon outside help had been firmly fixed in the minds of our people, and its demoralizing effect is, I believe, still visible in the Diocese.

Nor is the evil to which I refer confined to this Diocese. It is a simple fact that the whole Church of England in Canada is suffering from it. It is quite true, of course, that our missionary dioceses in the West have been confronted with difficulties, for which, I suppose, there can be found no parallel in our own experience, but does anybody really believe that the resources of the Church of England in this Dominion are not equal to the task of maintaining all its missionary work within its own borders? If I am not mistaken, during the course of the past winter vigorous appeals for help have been made in England for the support of our work in the western provinces. I do not say this in criticism of the Bishops, who have been making these appeals, for I do not see what else they could have done under the tragic circumstances with which they have found themselves confronted. I find it impossible to believe, however, that, even in these difficult days, there is not money enough in the hands of Church of England people in the Dominion to provide for all its missionary work. If the missionary budget were properly supported in every diocese,—and we can only confess to our shame that it is far from being properly supported in our own diocese,—there would be little need to appeal to England for help. It may well be true that our Indian missions, and those administered in the Diocese of the Arctic by Bishop Fleming, must remain for the present in a special category of financial weakness. There ought to be no great difficulty, however, about the maintenance of our other missionary work, and it seems to me to be little short of a disgrace that, after all these years, the Church of England in Canada is still looking to the Mother Land for help. The weakness lies, as I have indicated, in the fact that in multitudes of our people there is little or no enthusiasm for the Church's missionary enterprise. They are content to live and work within the limits of their own parishes. That is our real trouble.

But I am wondering from my subject. I have suggested that the system under which we carry on our domestic missionary work tends inevitably to weaken the sense of financial responsibility in some, at least, of our Aided Missions. It robs them of their self-reliance. The tendency is one, however, that affects also some of the clergy. I am afraid. The fact that their stipends are paid from headquarters,—an admirable arrangement in some ways,—that the transaction lies between the Church-wardens and

the Treasurer of Synod,—tends to encourage the clergy. I am afraid, in an attitude of laissez faire. Some of them seem to feel sure that the Board of Missions will do its part, and they tell themselves that it is "up to" the Church-wardens to collect, and send in, the amount of the "required contribution". It is the business of that laity, they say, to look after the finances of the parish, and not that of the clergy.

I remember discussing this subject some years ago with a young priest, who is no longer in the Diocese. He was a man of excellent character, and discharged the spiritual duties of the offices with commendable zeal, but the finances of his parish were in a state of chaos, and it had never occurred to him that he was in any sense responsible for the fact. He listened respectfully to all that I had to say upon the subject, and then replied with an air of finality that he was not interested in business matters. Those, were, he considered, the concerns of the Church Corporation and chiefly of course, of the Church Wardens.

Finances of The Parish

Now it may be admitted,—and the fact that cannot be stated too strongly,—that, primarily, it is the duty of the Church Corporation to look after the finances of the parish, whether missionary or local in character, but it must not be forgotten that the incumbent is the legal head of the Corporation, and, as such, he cannot divest himself of his responsibilities. It is his first, and most important, function to administer the spiritualities of his cure, but it is also his duty to care for the temporalities of the parish. In principle, no doubt, a clergyman ought not to have to spend much time in serving tables, but in practice he cannot avoid doing that altogether. It must never be forgotten, further, that there is nothing derogatory to the priestly office in the transaction of the Church's business. Happy the clergyman, whose laymen relieve him altogether of responsibility for parochial finances, but not all clergymen, unfortunately, are in such a case. To permit the business affairs of the parish to be mismanaged, or even to be neglected, is distinctly wrong in the incumbent. But that is not all. If his laymen are careless about their duties, or fail to perform them properly, it is the duty of the clergyman to teach them better things; and he is grievously at fault if he fails to do so. Teaching, however, it must be remembered, is not all done by word of mouth. It is done also, and often most effectively, by example. Thus for a clergyman to take the leadership in business administration is not seldom a most necessary duty. Not infrequently it is true that the laity fail in their business responsibilities for the parish for no other reason than that they are being taught neither by word of mouth nor by example. As a general rule, it will be found, I am sure, that in the parishes that are being administered most successfully from the business standpoint, the incumbent does not shrink from teaching his people in both of these ways.

I turn now for the few moments to the report of the commission, to which reference has been made. The report will be presented to you in due order, and I can wisely leave to the mover and seconder the task of making clear its implications. Those of you who have studied the report carefully, are aware that, among other amendments, the Commission propose one of great significance. Under the terms of the canon as it now is, each mission is required to send to the Treasurer of Synod quarterly the amount of its "required contribution", which amount is returned to the clergyman concerned month by month, together with the proportionate part of the grant. Much of our difficulty in past years has been due to the fact that missions failed to forward the full amount of the "required contribution", so that the stipend was paid at a direct loss to the Board. For some time past the Board has tried to avoid such loss by withholding the stipend cheque until all arrears had been sent in from the mission. Under that arrangement, however, the clergyman immediately concerned received no part of his monthly stipend, suffering thereby much inconvenience. In many cases, I have reason to believe, the clergymen thus penalized have found themselves forced to make up the parochial deficit, either by borrowing the money, or by a direct contribution.

Direct Payment

The recommendation of the Commission is that the "required contribution" from the mission be paid by the mission direct to the incumbent, while the Treasurer of Synod sends to him only the monthly proportion of the grant. Thus the responsibility for payment of the parish share of the stipend will rest solely upon the parish. The proposed change leaves the incumbent of an Aided Mission in a favored position as compared with the Rector of a Self-Supporting parish, in that part, at least, of his stipend is sure to be paid promptly month by month. In other respects, the two classes of clergymen will stand upon precisely the same footing.

The proposed change is, as I have said, one of considerable moment and many members of Synod, no doubt, will view it with feelings of misgiving. The Synod must face the fact, however, that greater safeguards

must be provided unless we are to dissipate our capital resources. We cannot contemplate any further impairment of our funds. I do not hesitate to direct, as I have said, with the exception of Quebec, this is the only diocese in the Dominion, which is working under this system. Several other dioceses adopted it in recent years, and after due trial abandoned it. From two Bishops, to whom I wrote, a precisely similar statement came. "We tried the system out, and abandoned it to save ourselves from bankruptcy." Reluctant as I am to see the proposed change take effect, it seems inevitable.

Pension Fund

A question of great importance in connection with the General Synod Pension Fund, and one that concerns the clergy closely, will come before us at this session. You are all familiar with the history of the Fund, and I need not enter into that. Suffice it to say that, as one of the beneficial results of the Anglican Forward Movement a good many years ago the sum of \$750,000.00 was set aside as the nucleus of a future pension fund, in which all the dioceses in Canada should share.

It was recognized that such a capital sum would not suffice for all the demands that would ultimately be made upon the Fund, but for the time being it was enough; and plans were made for a later appeal for a much larger sum. As you are aware, circumstances over which we had no control have so far made such an appeal impossible, nor is there any likelihood of one being made in the near future, and the Fund has now come to a crisis in its history. We have been warned repeatedly that such a crisis was sure to come, and now we are faced with the necessity of meeting it.

What has happened is simply this,—the accrued liabilities have been steadily increasing as the years went by so that now the income from the Fund is insufficient to meet the demands that are being made upon it. In 1934 there was a deficit on income account, notwithstanding the fact that in that year the income was supplemented by the substantial sum of more than \$6,000.00 from the Special Maintenance Fund contributed by the Bishops, and Clergy, and agents of the M.S.C.C. in connection with the Restoration Fund appeal. If it had not been for that timely help the actual operating deficit upon the Pension Fund for 1934 would have been more than \$6,500.00, and it would have been necessary to make a ten per cent reduction in all pensions and grants. Now the Special Maintenance Fund will come to its end in June, so that, unless an additional source of income can be found, that reduction, at least, must be made during the current year.

But that does not tell the whole story, for two other adverse factors have to be faced. The accrued liabilities have not yet reached their peak, and the demand upon the Fund are certain, therefore, to increase more rapidly for at least some years to come. Each year, therefore, will add to the gravity of the problem before the Church. The other adverse factor, to which I have referred, is the inevitable fact that, in common with all investing bodies, the Church is certain to suffer a serious loss in revenue from endowments as the result of the marked decline in the earning power of money. It is quite clear, therefore, that, unless some can be found of augmenting the income of the Pension Fund to a considerable extent, it will be impossible to maintain pensions at anything like their present level. That is the situation with which we are confronted, and which it is our duty to consider at this session of Synod. It is, indeed, a serious matter.

With all the facts before it, and after prolonged and anxious thought, the General Synod Pension Board urges upon the Church in Canada the necessity of two steps being taken without delay. First, greater effort must be made to increase the parochial contributions to the income of the Fund through the Budget Apportionment in every diocese. That recommendation comes with special force to this Diocese because, as you are all aware, we fall so far short of paying our apportionment in full. Last year, for example, as part of the Budget, we were asked to give \$2,000.00 to the Beneficiary Funds,—that is, in effect, to the Pension Fund,—whereas we actually gave only 54 per cent of that amount. In 1930, the Diocese reached 70 per cent of its Budget objective,—about the highest point, I think, that we have ever touched. It is quite certain, I think, that the marked falling off in Budget receipts during the following years has been directly due to the depression, from which New Brunswick, in common with other parts of Canada, has been suffering so severely but we ought not to feel content with the best that we have ever done. Our record in that respect is far from being satisfactory. That is the first thing that the General Synod Pension Board asks us to do, as it is asking every other diocese to do,—to increase our offerings to the Pension Fund through the Budget.

The second step which the Pension Board urges this Diocese to take in common with all other dioceses, that

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