In God I put my trust,
I neither doubt nor fear,
For man can never harm
With God my helper near.

For Thou hast saved from death
From falling kept me free,
That in the light of life
My walk may be with Thee.
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GRAND RAPIDS 7, MICHIGAN
The Pilgrims and Thanksgiving Day

Mr. G. Borduin — Grand Rapids, Mich.

The time of year has rolled around again when old and young are directing their thoughts to Thanksgiving Day, and plans are being made to celebrate the festival among relatives and friends after attending church services to thank the providential Father for the abundance of food and clothing and for other favors He has bestowed upon us in the past year.

In this connection it would be interesting to review the origin of this harvest festival, and this would take us back to the time of the Pilgrims. It will be remembered that the Pilgrims came over in the Mayflower in 1620, landed in Cape Cod Harbor, and stepped out on a rock which they named Plymouth Rock. The little settlement that was then started they called Plymouth after the place in England from which they embarked. When they had gathered in their first harvest the following year they had their first thanksgiving day. These facts are fairly well known, but there are many interesting details in both the preceding history of this day of feast and in subsequent events that would be worth while mentioning. Accordingly I have gathered material from various sources, and will attempt to give the gist of it in this article.

First, as to the origin of the Pilgrims it may be said that they were called pilgrims because of their various wanderings. In England a large number of the clergy and people were dissatisfied with the form of religion in the State Church. About seventy years before this time the state religion had been changed from Catholic to Protestant, but the change had not been complete, and it was this state of affairs that caused many of the clergy and people to demand a more thorough purification from the old observances and doctrines. Because of this they were called Puritans. This demand was not only refused by the government, but they were also punished for not using the prescribed form of worship. This led some of the clergy to question the authority of the government in things religious. They came to believe that any body of Christians had the right to organize itself into a church independently from any external authority. When they began separating themselves from the Church of England
and organizing themselves into independent congregations they were called Separatists and Independents. One of these Separatist churches was at Scrooby, in eastern England. Not being allowed to worship in peace they fled to Leyden, Holland (1608) where they lived for twelve years. But evil influences surrounded their children, and they longed for a land where they could worship God in their own way and save their families from worldly follies. America offered such a home. They came, braving every danger, and trusting God to shape their destiny.

Accordingly on Sept. 6, 1620, one hundred and two pilgrims embarked at Plymouth, England on the Mayflower, a little vessel hardly as large as a lake excursion boat of today, though by the standard of that day it was a well-equipped, if not luxurious boat. On Dec. 11 they reached Provincetown Harbor in Cape Cod. (This Dec. 11 old style is the same day as Dec. 21 new style. In 1752 eleven days were added to correct an error in the calendar. This made the date the 22nd. However, only ten days should be added for 1620). They had paid for transportation farther south, but the Dutch bribed the ship's captain to keep away from Holland colonies at what is now New York. Before landing the little group drew up what has since been known as the Mayflower compact. In this they expressed their loyalty to the king of England and agreed to maintain law and order in accordance with the will of the majority. This was a new idea at that time. A little shallop was sent out to reconnoiter before landing, but it was lost in a furious storm and lost its rudder, sail and mast. Late at night the party sought shelter in the lee of a small island. They spent the next day in cleaning their rusty weapons and drying their wet clothes. Every hour was precious, the season was late, and their companions on the Mayflower were anxiously awaiting their return; but "being ye last day of ye week they prepared there to keep ye Sabbath". This incident gives an idea of their religious character.

They spent considerable time in selecting a suitable place to build their log houses. They finally found a place which furnished fresh water, a safe harbor and a hill on which they could build a fort. They suffered severely during the first winter. They were hampered by the weather in building their homes and in obtaining food. They had no experience as hunters or fishermen, and the fish-hooks they had brought along were too large for the fish there. The chief food was clams, mussels and eels. The climate was more severe than that to which they were accustomed so that many fell ill with pneumonia. By the next spring one half of their little company, including their first governor, John Carver, died from the effects of disease, hunger and exposure. Nevertheless when the Mayflower sailed again in April not one of the survivors wished to return. At one time there were only seven persons who were well enough to take care of the sick. Miles Standish was one of those who proved himself
a tender nurse as well as a fearless soldier. You can imagine what hardships must have been endured if you consider that they had only a few hand tools, such as axes and hammers and small saws with which to fell trees, cut them into proper form for building their houses, and had no horses or oxen to move them, but had to move them all by manpower through the deep snow.

Lest the Indians should learn how greatly their number was reduced they buried their dead at night, and in the spring corn was planted over the graves. Fortunately the settlers were able to win the friendship of some of the Indians. Tisquantum or Squanto, an Indian who had been captured by the crew of an English vessel to be sold as a slave in Spain, but who had escaped to England, and there learned the English language became their interpreter. Through him and Samoset, an Indian chief, a meeting was arranged with the powerful Massasoit, sachelm of the Wampanorgas, and a treaty of peace was signed which was not broken for fifty years. Massasoit was a true friend and once he sent the settlers news of a threatened attack by another tribe of Indians. One day an Indian brave came bearing the skin of a rattlesnake filled with arrows as a challenge to war from the chief of the Narragansets. Governor Bradford returned the skin filled with powder and shot. The Indians appreciated the answer and abandoned the attack.

The friendly Indians also taught them how to plant Indian corn, and next year's harvest banished famine and want from the settlement. In ten years the result of this grave venture of freedom-seekers in the New World had proved not only a great religious victory, but also an economic one, and thus proved the way for further colonization.

It must have been a happy occasion that November day in 1621 when the Pilgrims realized their first harvest was a very good one, and they sent four men on a hunting trip for the first Thanksgiving turkey. The little group had been hungry so often that they could scarcely gaze on a plentiful supply of
food without thoughts of thanksgiving. As soon as the harvest had been gathered in, Governor Bradford appointed three days for feasting and thankfulness. He left nothing undone to make the day a success and a real holiday, for "he dispatched four men on fowling, so that we might after a more special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as many fowle, as with a little help beside, served the company almost a week." Also he sent Squanto to Nancasket to dispatch from there a runner to Massasoit inviting him with his brother and a fitting escort to the feast on the following Thursday. Governor Bradford, as usual, was up early, for he loved that early morning hour for devotion and meditation. The over-punctual guests, the invited Indians, coming early, undoubtedly found guests to welcome them.

Soon the roll of drums announced the morning prayers, which began each day for the pilgrims, and certainly were not omitted on this day of thanksgiving. The Indians must have stared openmouthed at this demonstration of devotion to their God, and at the sight of so many stern pilgrim fathers, busy mothers and homespun-clad children who were gathered for morning devotions.

Speaking of children, there must have been plenty of them, for the usual quota per family was between fifteen and twenty, although the mortality rate was high. And what strange names they bore. One family included a Hopestill, Wait, Thanks, Desire, Unite, Supply, Experience, and Waitstill. The first child born on the Mayflower was named Oceanus. Events, emotions, Bible characters, and even whole Bible verses became names for children who were, of course, not able to protest or defend themselves.

Going on with the feast, we find that they "gathered in the meeting house beginning some halfe an hour before 9, and continued until after 12 oclocke", with psalm singing, prayer and sermon. Then came "making merry to the creatures, the poor sort being invited of the richer." A sumptuous meal was served of meat with mustard, turnips, clams, plum porridge, turkey with beechnut dressing, and hosty pudding. A bushel of pop-corn was added by Massasoit's brother. This was the first pop corn the colonists had ever seen.

The meal over, a lengthy grace was said.

Miles Standish had prepared, so he thought, a pleasant surprise for the Indians, who had on their holiday paints. Chief Massasoit wore a chain of bones about his neck, a bag of tobacco down his back, and a knife dangling on his chest. His head and face were oiled we know - because one chronicler relates that "he looked greasily".

But if the Pilgrims had hoped to please their guests, they were disappointed. They had prepared a display of musketry, a wild fanfare of trumpets, and a terrifying roll of drums. The sound of so much exploding gunpowder and the sight of the military display struck terror into the hearts of the In-
dians. They wondered if they had perhaps been lured into a trap.

So the diplomatic Quadequina, Massasoit's brother, suggested the Indians go hunting deer for a while until the ardor of the Pilgrims for shooting had spent itself. The Indians returned early the next day with enough venison to last the group for four days. Such was the first Thanksgiving.

In the course of the Revolutionary War the Continental Congress appointed November 18, 1777 to be observed generally as Thanksgiving Day in consequence of the surrender of Burgoyne. In the first year of his office president George Washington issued a proclamation recommending that Nov. 26, 1789 be kept as a day of national thanksgiving.

For years the festival was exclusively a New England institution celebrated by religious services in the churches, the sermon often being a political address. The day gradually became a custom in the western and some of the southern states, each appointing its own day. In 1864 President Lincoln issued a proclamation in which he set aside and appointed the last Thursday in November as a day of national thanksgiving "for the defense of unfriendly designs without, and signal victories within over the enemy who is of our own household."

Each president has since followed Lincoln's example in proclaiming a day of thanksgiving, and, of course, the governors of the various states also issue a proclamation. For years the custom has been to proclaim the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day, but in 1939 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt proclaimed the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day for commercial reasons, there being more shopping days between Thanksgiving and Christmas by that arrangement. Twenty three states followed the president's lead but the other twenty five refused to change the custom, and stuck to the traditional last Thursday. In 1940 the president again proclaimed the fourth Thursday as Thanksgiving Day, and all but sixteen states followed his lead. In the next five years the fourth and last Thursdays are the same, so there was no confusion. In two out of seven years November has five Thursdays. But this year again November has five Thursdays so again we will celebrate two Thanksgiving Days. Forty one states will celebrate on the fourth Thursday, November 23, seven states will celebrate on the last Thursday, November 30, and one state, Georgia, will celebrate both days.

No settlement of the issue is in sight. However, let us not commercialize the day. Originally the day had no commercial significance. It was only intended as a day to be set aside to give our Heavenly Father our thanks and express our gratitude for His gracious blessings. And let us not forget that each and everyone of us is able to celebrate this day, for we have all received grace in one form or another, be it in prosperity or adversity, in joy or in sorrow, in health or in sickness, for we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, that are called according to His purpose.
SO THIS IS WAR! Lying here in a foxhole, pinned down by enemy fire! Wonder for how much longer! It's been two days and two nights now. I suppose I could be philosophical about it though and say that at least it gives a fellow time to think. Wish I had some one to talk to. Wish my buddy had kept his head down. Then he wouldn't be sprawled out there stiff and cold. Even now they don't let him rest. Every once in a while a slug rips through him. Someone over there just making certain I guess. Swell buddy he was too. Had lots of nice talks together. He believed like I did when it would be our time to get it. We never spoke of luck or having your number come up. We were both agreed that our life was in the Lord's hand. And we weren't ashamed to admit we were scared but we both had that only comfort in life and death and knew where we were going if they got us. I'll surely miss him though. We'd been inducted the same day, had our basic training together and shipped out on the same transport.

They say though, that we won't be the same as when we left. I'll agree, too, for how could we be? When we were kids we used to watch the vets of the last war parade on Memorial Day and thrill as they fired a volley over the Honor Roll in the city park. We thrilled as we watched those vets march in perfect step as the band struck up a martial air. We thought, in our boyish minds, that that was war. Honor, glory, love of flag and country, devotion to duty and shiny medals for deeds of valor. Surely, we know that many made what was called the supreme sacrifice, but when you're young you don't think so much about that part of it. Or perhaps you think of them as quietly sleeping in Flanders' fields where poppies blow; between the crosses, row on row. And we were even stirred to a patriotic fervor when in public speaking class we'd expressively proclaim, "Take up our quarrel with the foe. To you from failing hands we throw—the torch. Be yours to bear it high." And the solemn threat—"If ye break faith
with us who die—we shall not sleep though poppies blow in Flanders' fields!" Funny how a fellow thinks of all those things in a fox hole!

I remember, too, how I came home on that one furlough I had before I shipped out. It was pretty tough. Seeing folks you'd known and loved all your life. Especially when some seemed to be so proud of that snappy uniform. People at church who'd never noticed me before, now flocked around and asked questions. Wonder if they'll remember me when I put on that old blue suit again—if I do! Wish some of them could see me, now in dirt-caked battle dress and a three day's growth of beard. Wish I could scratch that bite but I daren't raise up because I know that Tommy gun will get me.

But I mustn't become so cynical that I forget some of the true values which I possess. And I can't help but recall some of those talks my buddy and I had. We both knew and confessed that when our earthly tabernacle was dissolved, we had a building not made with hands. And that's his earthly tabernacle lying over there. He moved out but the burial squad will probably still think it's he. My buddy and I agreed on most things like that. But there was a difference though but towards the last he began to see it more and more my way. I thought it rather unimportant when I was going to catechism. Thought it was one of those cases of theological hair-splitting. I remember so well now how that one year we studied the Three Points of 1924.

My buddy and I talked about it often. He'd heard that a certain preacher had made them up and then separated himself and consistory and practically all of his congregation from the larger denomination. And I remember how many friendly debates we had about these matters. Most of the time, though, he was the pupil and I was the teacher. Seems that his church didn't like to say too much about what happened in '24. Of course we were just kids then, but I remember my folks talking about it and read a history of our church in which those events were related. I understand those things much better now. The truth of the world and life view as taught us has become a practical reality.

Maybe I shouldn't have kidded my buddy about it, but I used to ask him to show me some of that "common grace" when we'd sit on our bunks and talk about this mad war. And when we'd see some of the fellows go off to town to spend the evening with the daughters of Jezebel and stumble back in the early morning hours, we both got to understand a little better the totality of total depravity. And when he'd start talking about a certain restraint of sin through a
general operation of the Holy Spirit, I'd point to an M.P. and ask how come we need him. Or how come we need fellows like you and me or how come we need policemen? If this restraint is done by the Holy Spirit we surely could save a lot of taxes! I didn't mean to tease him or be sarcastic and he could take it. He didn't call me a mud-slinger or fault-finder. Rather, but of course I can't take credit, he started seeing things my way.

I remember though how only a few days ago we had to step off the road to let some Red Cross ambulances through. He thought then that he could best me in debate. He wanted to know how I explained those acts of mercy and unflinching courage which is so characteristic of the medical corps. Were they not doing 'good works'? And of course I couldn't deny that they relieved the distress and eased the suffering inflicted upon man by man. To both of us it seemed that it was the only noble work to be found in this whole mad business. But he didn't stop me there either. I'd heard too many of those "illustrations" when I was still in the States. I'd give him texts to prove my contention. One of them, I recall, was from the Psalms, where it says that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. And I'd ask him if a bitter fountain could produce sweet water. He believed in the Heidelberg Catechism too, so I asked him if he knew how it defined good works. He surprised me and quoted I believe it's question and answer 91. The question is just like I put it to my buddy—"But what are good works?" And I can still hear him saying—"Only those which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to His glory; and not such as are founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men." I think a few more talks like that with my buddy and he would have been thoroughly convinced. He'll never get to read question and answer 8, I believe it is, or the complete text of Art. 4 under the third and fourth heads of doctrine in the Canons of Dort. I told him about that though and how his church chose to quote only the first part when they sought for proof of their false contention.

Wish those reinforcements would come along. I'm thirsty and my rations are about gone.

And I was thinking, too, how that it's been twenty years now since we've been members of that "Hyper-Calvinist movement" as some would sneeringly call us. Oh how I wish I could write down all these thoughts and send them home and tell the fellows and girls to study these doctrinal truths. I know now that they're true and important, but I never thought I'd learn that from being in the army!
God I Thank Thee

You are well acquainted, of course, with the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican who went to the temple to pray. We find it recorded in Luke 18:9-14. Likely as not, you've always heard the Pharisee condemned and the Publican commended, which is correct as we may readily gather from verse 9.

But, apart now from the intents and thoughts of their hearts, is it not perhaps possible that this prayer of the Pharisee, taken as a whole, is a very proper prayer? It is our contention that it is and is also a prayer which we may pray. The trouble with the Pharisee was that he did not first pray the prayer of the Publican and that he did not know the depth of his own sin! All he could see was his external deeds, and external self, and using that measure he was indeed a "good" man. And this error is even present in supposedly Reformed circles.

But, as was stated, we feel that apart now from the person, the content of the prayer as a whole may be justified, yes, even commended. And we also trust that the Publican, perhaps at a later date, prayed this same prayer and it was received at the Throne of Grace!

You see, the Publican had come, as it were, to the first part of our Heidelberg Catechism which deals with the misery of man, and the Pharisee had come to the third part which speaks of thankfulness. But the Pharisee did not know the first part, neither indeed would he have understood it, and the thankfulness which he expressed was superficial and external and did not spring from a knowledge of the depths of his misery.

But, how about we who know our misery? We who have smote, and, of course, still do, on our breast and cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" Shall we leave it there? May we never, as we view the corruption round about us, say, "God, I thank Thee!" We certainly may and do, for indeed it would be a miserable situation if the only result of our salvation were a knowledge of our sin and misery. We have not only this truth revealed to us but we have also in principle begun a new life. And according to that principle we are not as other men are. For we have been cleansed and made beautiful and although we do it imperfectly we travel another way—the right way—the only way! And viewing the world round about us and never forgetting that we are no more worthy and in spite of the old man of sin which would ensnare us, we look to Him and say, "God, I thank Thee!" G.T.E.
Chelonia

By Mr. C. De Boer — Kalamazoo, Mich.

FROM THE weedy margin of a muddy inland lake we see a slowly moving object approach us. Its body resembles a modern war machine with its heavy protective armor-plate and its retractible appendages. The body shell to a great extent compensates for its lack of fire power for its enemies find it wellnigh impregnable. Nearly all of the two hundred and fifty species are amphibious — adapted to both land and water. Unlike our amphibious tanks which are well equipped with guns the chelonia: have no weapons for offense except their small claws and toothless mouths. Deliberately and resolutely it moves about depending on its strength of armor for protection.

Perhaps, you have already surmised that chelonia are the common turtles, which all of us are familiar. When you were a child and read the fable of the Tortoise and The Hare, you undoubtedly wondered whether it differed from a turtle, and, if so, to what extent. Some are characterized by heavy ‘stump-shaped’ hind legs and high arch-
ed shells; they can endure the hot sandy deserts and by the very nature of their feet are restricted to land — they are designated as tortoises. On the other hand terrapins are certain species of fresh water turtles which are edible and consequently found on sale at the fish markets.

In China turtles occupy an exalted position, being mentioned in the Book of Rites as one of the four benevolent spiritual animals and regarded as an example of righteousness and an emblem of old age. Sacrifices have been made to them for protecting the dikes of the Yellow River, “China’s Sorrow.” An old practice was that of scorching turtle-shell bones with fire and then reading the cracks that appeared to determine the
Supreme Ruler's will.

The armor consists of two parts—the upper shell is called the carapace while the lower half is the plastron. Both parts of the shell are subdivided into several scale-like segments termed shields. In classifying turtles, the number and shapes of these shields are important. As the animal increases in size, demands are made upon the shell for expansion with the result that each scale-like segment grows peripherally (in circumference). In many cases rings are formed where the new growth commences indicating another year's development. Just as the age of trees may be discerned by counting their annual rings, likewise the age of many species of turtles may be thus ascertained. Unfortunately, other species cast off their old shells annually and attrition wears down the shells of others making an accurate age-reading impossible. Painting the shell of a living turtle in order to make a novelty of it definitely interferes with its proper development. Should you receive such a novelty by all means remove the lacquer with a sharp razor blade.

According to records it is not uncommon for a turtle to reach the half century mark. Some are estimated to reach the age of two hundred years. The largest turtles in existence are the famous leatherbacks of the coastal region of the South Atlantic States which often attain the tremendous weight of six to eight hundred pounds.

Being a member of the class of Reptiles it reproduces by means of eggs. They literally resemble ping pong balls in size (in most cases), shape, and color. The egg is pure white and has a tough, leathery shell, and when it is fresh it will bounce. Neither pigment nor pattern is present in the egg-shell because camouflage is unnecessary since turtles instinctively dig a flash-shaped hole in the ground in which they deposit their eggs.

No further care is given them by their parents; they are abandoned. In warmer regions the heat of the sand incubates them while in cooler climates decomposed vegetation is placed in the nest to provide warmth. Eggs are laid in large numbers to compensate for the high mortality in early life. When the young leave the nest they are seriously handicapped because they have no parental guidance nor protection. As their shells are still soft, and their movements are very slow they become easy prey.

The Green Turtle and the Diamond Back are commonly used in making soup while the shell of the Hawksbill is used for decorations. Even though these lowly creatures may lack appeal to the casual observer, they do possess many interesting traits and characteristics which give evidence of divine design and purpose in nature.
Remember Now . . . .

It seems as though there are always some people who do not want young people to act like young people and seem to regard youth’s enthusiasm as the “proper work of the devil.” Consequently they are always bewailing youth’s manner of life and predicting all kinds of dire results.

Personally, we do not agree with them.

However, we should not be too hard on these people. In the first place, they no doubt mean well. We may certainly assume that they are motivated by the desire of seeing youth’s welfare, even though we are perhaps inclined to think that they are given to exaggeration, are too concerned and are filled with all kinds of fears that are entirely unfounded. I’m quite sure that this is the point of view that our young people usually take in respect to those who are always harping on the carelessness and recklessness of our present-day youth. But then, again, we cannot very well overlook the fact that these people are not always entirely wrong. And it sometimes seems as though there is plenty of reason for them to think as they do. Not only are there numerous examples of the bitter fruit which youth’s enthusiasm has produced in lives that are damaged and well-nigh wrecked through a careless attitude toward the ever-present power of sin, but there are besides many evidences of danger that are far from imaginary. We cannot avoid the fact that the dangers which lurk in all kinds of temptations and apparently innocent fun are realities which cannot be ignored by a shrug of the shoulders or the casual comment that “youth must have its fling.” The power of sin and darkness is real and its reality is very serious. Well may our youth be constantly reminded of this. And well may they heed the warning and learn from the many examples of those whose lives are burdened and broken through thoughtlessness and sin.

However, this does not alter the fact that young people must be expected to act like young people. Surely no one deems it natural
when he finds a young man who has grown old before his time. Nor does anyone like to see a youth who acts like a tired old man. Our young people have every right to be young and no one has any right to expect anything else. Surely Solomon contends for this when he says in Ecclesiastes 11:9, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth: and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes. . . ." Nor does he in any sense contradict himself when he adds, "but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Some contend that the writer doesn't really mean what he says in the first part of this verse and that the last part shows that he is using sarcasm.

We do not agree.

We are of the opinion that Solomon meant exactly what he said and that this is apparent from what he adds in verse 10, when he says, "therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity."

I would have you notice however, that Solomon does not tell the young man that he can do anything that pleases his fancy. He doesn't say, "Go ahead and have your fun as you like it and never mind about anything". He, in fact, says the very opposite. He limits and restrains in the most emphatic way when he says that youth must remember that for all these things the Lord will call him into judgment. The things that are right in the sight of his eyes must certainly be governed by the Word of God. For notice, he is to remove all evil from his flesh! If then the young man walks in the ways of his heart and the sight of his eyes as determined in the light of the Word of God, and if he will view those ways in the light of the fact that he shall stand in judgment, then he may feel free to act like a young man and need not fear that he will sin.

But only in that way!

Positively, Solomon expresses it all when he says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. . . ."

In the way of remembering Him, we have naught to fear!
Byron Center, Mich.

Dear Boys:—

I am glad for the opportunity of writing a letter to you all. Penning this missive is not difficult, but a light task on account of two reasons. First, I myself have two boys in the service, so that, in communicating to you this message, all I need to do is to allow myself to be driven by the same impulse that urges me when I write to them, which I now also do, this being a letter for all our boys. Secondly, there is one need common to you all, your need of the grace of Christ. It is the one indispensable thing and is sufficient to God's people in all circumstances. You know this from the Scriptures as corroborated by your own experience. With Christ's grace in your hearts and brought to rich fruition in your lives, you are spiritual. Being spiritual, you take to yourselves the whole armor of God and are able to withstand in the evil day. And the day is evil for all God's people and especially for you. Being spiritual, you are assured in your hearts that God loves you and in His love cares and blesses you, saves and preserves you through the blood of His Son, Who loves us unto death, us His people, who believe in His name by His mercy. Being spiritual, you take comfort from the fact of His resurrection—for He was raised unto the justification of His own—and from the fact of His entrance into God's sanctuary above—for there He prays for His people effectually so that their faith ceases not—and from the fact of His exaltation at the right hand of God. Verily, He is in God's very throne! It can only mean that He is the king of kings and the Lord of lords, that all power is His and that all things are in His hand and that He reigns in the midst of the world and on battlefields, so that His kingdom comes also through the confusion and destruction of war. Being spiritual you draw nearer to God and walk and talk with Him and have peace—the peace that passes all understanding—with death stalking all about you. Being spiritual, you perceive that God doeth all things, that also the dreadful events of this day proceed from His counsel and, as His doings, are the expression of perfect wisdom, thus doings through which He achieves His purpose, which is the salvation of His people to His everlasting glory. Being spiritual you are patient unto the coming of the Lord and rely on Him your Redeemer, cling to Father and follow where He leads, firmly grasping His hand that holds yours. And you are unafraid and assured that all things work together for good to them that love God! May God therefore multiply unto you His grace that this blessedness may be yours. We long for you our sons. But by His grace, you and we do pray that He do His will; and we will bless His name in all the sorrows and afflictions of this present time. Rev. G. M. Ophof.
NAMES OF SERVICEMEN WHOSE PICTURES APPEAR ON PAGES 16-17

7. George Ophoff Jr., F 1/c — Fuller.
11. Marvin Van Dellen, A.S. Fuller.
17. Henry De Zeeuw, M.O.M.M. 2/c — Fuller.
20. Sgt. Fred Ophoff — Fuller.
24. T/5 Louis Kikstra — Fuller.
34. Cpl. Stuart J. Bylsma — Fuller.
35. Orval Idema, S 1/c — Fuller.
38. Sgt. Ralph Baas — Kalamazoo.
42. Sgt. Lambert Vander Meer — Fuller.

ED. NOTE:—It is NOT too late to send in pictures of Servicemen. We hope to continue having a page of snaps of Servicemen in the Beacon Lights, until we have placed all pictures received. So send your pictures to Beacon Lights, 706 Franklin St., S. E. Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.
Dear Friends:

It is about time I write you once again, it's been a long time since my last effort, but usually there is little time for letter writing even to those very near to my heart. I am enjoying a little spell now due to weather in which to rest up—I would tell you much more of my experiences if I could but I'm sure you have a pretty good picture of what the troop carriers are doing for our country. As a job: a crew chief on one of our planes, you can see I get first hand knowledge of what is going on and therefore, so much the less am I able to relate.

I greet you now from England—I know it's pretty hard to keep track of just where I am—for I'm much like a leap-frog who can't hardly make up his mind just where he does want to be. but the place matters little, most of our thoughts are back home with you people and the church we left behind. Instead of trying to write you of what's going on right now, I thing what will be of as much or more use to you is an experience I had quite some time ago, and also it will show in a little way how much us boys need and enjoy such literature as you send us—the Beacon Lights, Standard Bearer and particularly the radio sermons which were printed for our benefit: they are very often inspiring to me. They bring back truths to me which I knew were true and should hold to, but seldom in my army life heard, and even at times were refuted.

A great lesson and a blessing in my life was once when I went to a Young People's discussion (much like our catechism), in Texas: it was a Lutheran Church. because of my friends invitation and his faith. This particular night they discussed God's calling to man, etc. I need not mention that I could not agree with every remark made by the speaker. Therefore when question time came I made it known, but not too forcefully as I thought it out of place, being a visitor. After session, however, the remarks I made, but didn't press, aroused the interest of three or four well versed, almost theologians, and so we got into a private discussion. To my consternation they began asking questions and I tried to answer them, some of them well, but others I knew but had no backing to uphold my belief. Naturally they going through seminary bombarded me with many thoughts and quotations to which after a time I had to confess I was not as well versed as they were and therefore could only remark that I knew what in my heart was right, nothing could change it unless scripture proved me entirely wrong. I asked for time to find my points and present them at a future friendly discussion. which they agreed would be only fair. Unfortunately the next day or so, as always happens in the army, I was called to other parts.
Nevertheless this made plain to me my duty to study and be better versed in the scriptures and my particular doctrine, which I still hold as being the purest form that can be found.

On my way over-seas and numerous other times I had ample opportunities to study and did so, always on the way finding opposition, but still doing it mostly by myself, and the hard way, almost alone, only by scripture itself which sometimes proves to be the most indelible. I've learned much, but when I again read the real truth in your sermonettes and other literature, I am filled with happiness for knowing it is still being proclaimed over the air and written on paper and spoken on our pulpits—I am not alone!

I hope and know that our other boys can also find this strength in the wonderful literature, Beacon Lights. Standard Bearer and the written sermons, that they may use it and support it wholeheartedly. We over here and also the many that are back home in the service. May God place His blessings on our efforts, that we may hold fast to the truth.

May God still watch over His own. I remain yours in Christ.

Henry Pipe, 
Grand Rapids, Mich.

* * * * *

Somewhere in Italy

Dear Friends:

I promised I would write once again and thought it was just about time. I have been receiving all the church papers and surely enjoy reading them. If it were not for the people back home who send these papers to us, there would be no Christian literature to read at all. A person never thinks of that when he is at home but when you are in a place where the Word of God is not spoken of at all, then a person starts to think and also to remember what they were taught back home. It is quite cold out tonight. We have been having such very nice weather out here the last few weeks, but then, I guess a person is never satisfied. There is not much more that I can write about. Many thanks for sending the church papers to us boys so far from home. May the Lord bless us and keep us wherever we are.

As ever,

John Den Besten, Pfc.
Doon, Iowa.
ELECTION

Time is here. Either Roosevelt or Dewey will be elected to become our President for the next four years. There has been one previous war-time election, in 1864, when Lincoln was re-elected. The present election is dull, speeches are few, excitement and enthusiasm lacking. The outstanding issues up to date have been the question of how to establish permanent peace and the problem of providing jobs for all. These are basic and important. It is interesting to pick up others.

From Dewey —

1. Roosevelt indispensible? In this Democracy of 135 million must we admit a one-man only? Surely he has experience, will have more after another term, still more after another! Did he not receive his first experience as Governor of New York, the position that Dewey now holds?

2. As Commander-in-chief did he appoint the right men? Remember the Pearl Harbor affair?

3. Roosevelt’s administration is tired and old. He is a weak administrator, his officials quarrel, and government agencies are inefficient. Can these negotiate peace in world organizations? Are any plans ready at the right time? Are Reconversion plans ready? Of course not! Were they ready at the outbreak of this present conflict? We were caught with an army of 75,000.

4. Can Roosevelt provide jobs for men after the war? He tried in 1933 and 1940 and yet we had 8 million unemployed. Roosevelt plans to keep men in the armed forces to help the post-war unemployment problem. What we need is “real” jobs and Republicans can and will produce job-producing industries.

5. What has the New Deal done for Labor? Caused strikes and disputes. This resulted in agencies which only made things worse. What we need is a secretary of Labor from the ranks of labor and a Board that will direct and regulate efficiently and without delay. Roosevelt has shown favoritism to
labor groups, so if he wins this election he will owe it to the P.A.C. of the C.I.O. and will continue to be unfriendly to American Business.

From Roosevelt —

1. The Administration is in the Driver's seat during this war and must complete the trip because it knows the road. Roosevelt has the experience and can finish the job.

2. As Commander-in-chief Roosevelt has done well. War is being conducted with skill and success and the credit should go to the Chief. We are winning the war!

3. Roosevelt has always been a man of action. England and Russia received aid and efficiently too, saving them from defeat. Consider the home front that was organized and which produced, amazing the world. Much more could have been done in the preparedness program had not the Republicans voted against every measure.

4. Roosevelt took care of 15 million unemployed by putting them to work in sewage projects, dams, bridges, roads, etc. Of course the wages were low, but we came thru! Were the people satisfied with this? The answer is in the results of the 1936 and 1940 elections.

5. Labor has a right to organize. Roosevelt has always considered the worker who works long hours. There were strikes; but the miracles of production were still achieved! Dewey wishes to replace F. Perkins with a man from the ranks of labor. Will he be chosen from the ranks of C.I.O.—A.F.L.—or United Mine Workers? This certainly will lead to labor trouble.

ELECTORALLY

elected are the President and Vice-president of the U. S. When people go to the polls to vote, many are under the impression they are voting directly for the President and Vice-president. This is not true. They are elected by the Electoral College, a group of Electors from each state. On November 7 the people vote for these Electors, men and women, who in December go to the state capitol to cast their ballots for the President and Vice-president, a separate ballot for each. These ballots are sent to the President of the U. S. Senate and on January 6 the votes are counted in the presence of both houses of Congress, and results announced. The President and Vice-president are really elected on Jan. 6. We have 531 Electors in the U. S. A candidate must have a majority of 266 Electoral votes to be elected. Lacking this majority the election of the President is thrown in the House of Representaties and election of the Vice-president into the Senate.

Michigan has 19 Electors, the total being equal to its number of Senators and Representatives in
Congress, New York has 45, Iowa has 10, Illinois has 28, California has 2.5, Nevada has 3 e.t.c. Before the election each party nominates the required Electors for each State. Michigan would have 19 Republican Electors and 19 Democratic Electors. The candidate receiving the majority of the Popular vote will receive the 19 electoral votes. The Electors carry out the will of the people as expressed in the popular election. However, there is no law that binds them to this. That is the present trouble in Texas where the Electors claim they will not carry out the will of the people in case Roosevelt receives the majority. This will wreck the Electoral College to be sure.

The small states of our Union favor the plan of the College. A popular election would give the populous states like New York and 5 other the control of the election. Now the small states have greater presidential voting power. Nevada with 3 Electoral votes out of a total of 531 has more influence than it would have if only the popular vote counted. Half a dozen of small Western States, whose combined population is less than New York, together have more electoral votes than New York.

Many believe we should do away with this indirect setup. We also think this is desirable. It would do away with a lot of red tape and avoid such trouble as Texas may have. Wouldn't it be far simpler to let each state keep the apportioned total of electoral votes and do away with Electors? Then the voters would cast directly for the candidate of their choice. Another plan could be to distribute the electoral vote on a percentage basis. If one party would receive 60 percent of the state's popular vote, give him that percentage in Electoral votes and give the other party the remaining 40 percent of Electoral count. This would balance the electoral with the popular vote.

SOCIETIES

Beacon Lights is interested in receiving news regarding the activities of our Young Peoples' Societies. Why not appoint a reporter in your Society. We are interested in knowing if your society is studying the Bible Outlines, whether or not you find these outlines difficult to follow. What type of after recess programs do you have at your meetings? Is your society working on any special projects? Send us the news regarding the functions of your Society! The Secretary of each of our Young Peoples' Societies is requested to send her name and address to our Federation Secretary,—Henrietta Lubbers, R. 2, Hudsonville, Mich.
Beacon Lights

Book Review

Mrs. L. Doezena — Bellflower, California

Burma Surgeon

by Gordon S. Seagrave, M. D.

When the author of this book left for Burma with his young wife, the only surgical instruments he had were some broken ones salvaged from the wastebasket at John Hopkins. He began his work in Burma as a medical missionary in the North Shan States. Energetically he went to work, training native girls to become skilled nurses, and ingeniously developing his own skill in many different kinds of surgery. When the hospital became too small and they needed larger quarters, he raised funds himself, and he and his wife, who also worked as a nurse, made plans for new buildings, the building of which he supervised and partly built. Nothing would stand in the way of his work. Malaria was contracted by both the doctor and his wife and often hindered them in the work, but it never stopped them or made them think of quitting. Then the war came nearer. The Burma Road was constructed and an airplane factory set up right near the hospital and settlement of Doctor Seagrave. When the war actually came to Burma, he offered his services immediately and was made a major in the Medical Corp. From that time on there was never a moment of rest for the doctor and his staff of native nurses. Through bombings and fire they continued to care for the wounded and to perform emergency operations under tremendous strain. General Stilwell ordered Doctor Seagrave and his unit to join the retreat with him, and the closing chapters of the book are Doctor Seagrave's diary written of the days that he was carrying out those orders.

This is not so much a war book as an account of a tremendous job done by a doctor and his staff. The work is described in a way that is interesting to the non-professional, for few technical terms are used. What struck me especially when reading this book was the fact that although Doctor Seagrave was really a medical missionary, not much mention is made of the missionary angle of his work, even in the days prior to his war work. This often seems to be the case with the work of medical missionaries—the physical element seems to outshine the spiritual. The author seems a bit conceited in his account of his work, although he often tries to minimize his part in it. But I suppose one must almost have a bit of conceit to even begin to write an autobiographical composition.
Bible Study Outlines

REV. GEO. LUBBERS

RANDOLPH, WISCONSIN

Lesson XXXVI

PAUL AND BARNABAS ASSAULTED BY THE JUDAIZERS

Acts 15:1-5

I. In Antioch Of Syria: vss. 1, 2.

A. Occasion. 1. Barnabas and Paul had reported to the brethren of their preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. This report must have been brought by someone to Jerusalem to the church there. (A parallel case we have recorded in Acts 11:1-18). 2. Some from the church in Jerusalem come to Antioch in connection with this report. They had not been commissioned by the church, but had come upon their own authority and initiative. (vs. 24).

B. These self-appointed emissaries take issue with Paul and Barnabas. 1. The Issue? The manner of the salvation of the Gentiles. They allege: Circumcision is necessary condition to Salvation. Moses ordinances must be kept by the Gentiles. 2. Result? No small dissension and questioning of Paul and Barnabas arises with them. For notice: a. Paul had preached: "No flesh is justified by the works of the law" (Acts 13:38, 39). b. Hence the alternatives are only two: Saved by works, or, saved by grace.

C. Measures Taken? 1. A committee is appointed by the church in Antioch to go to Jerusalem and there confer with the Apostles, elders concerning this disputed question. This committee consisted of: Paul, Barnabas and "certain others". 2. The issue at stake was indeed great. a. Many practical questions involved. b. Yet, the principle question, of the offence of the Cross, overshadows all.

II. In Jerusalem: vss. 3-6.

A. The committee from Antioch receives a hearty welcome. 1. By the entire congregation. The church here greets Paul and Barnabas as they had been greeted by the church in Antioch on their return from the first missionary journey. 2. Further they are also welcomed by the Apostles (those who
were still living) and elders. This seems to have been a public meeting in distinction from the private meeting spoken of by Paul in Galatians 2:2.

B. The subject of discussion is: What God has done through the apostles among the Gentiles. Naturally this was apart from preaching the need to be circumcized or to keep the law of Moses. It was therefore as touchy a subject as it was interesting, and the believers, who were still belonging to the sect of the Pharisees rise to the occasion. They insist here in this gathering before Paul, Barnabas, the elders and apostles that: 1. Circumcision for the Gentiles is necessary to salvation. 2. That the Gentiles should be told that they should keep the law of Moses. The issue is red-hot! A crisis has been reached.

Questions:—Is circumcision a Mosaic institution? How about what Jesus says in John 7:22? Were these “Judaizers” believing Christians? In the sense of Galatians 2:20? How must we explain, without condoning, their attitude toward Paul’s preaching? Were these opposing brethren necessarily as evil as those spoken of in Gal. 2:4? Was it merely a matter of a lack of consistency? Was Paul personally in need of this meeting in Jerusalem? Compare Gal. 1:10-12 with verses 3-5 and verse 12. With whom was the sympathy of the Gentile churches? Did the Judaizers who came down to Antioch and mentioned in verses 1, 24 also evidently return to Jerusalem to this meeting?


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Lesson XXXVII

THE GATHERING IN JERUSALEM

Acts 15:6-29

I. The Debated Issue, vss. 6, 7a.

A. Concisely Stated: 1. Resolved, That the Gentiles need not be circumcized after the custom of Moses to be saved. 2. Resolved consequently, That circumcision, made with hands, need not be preached as a necessity to be saved.

B. A Hot Debate Ensues. The text says: much disputing. “Evidently, the Judaizers were given full opportunity to air their grievances and objections. They were allowed plenty of time, and there was no effort to shut off debate or to rush anything through the meeting.”—(Robertson).

II. The Following Speakers Marshall the Evidence that Sets the Matter. They are two “pillars of the church” (Gal. 2:9) and Barnabas and Paul. They have the “floor” in the following order: a. Peter. His burden of proof is: God is not a respecter of persons, but has given His grace to all who fear Him.
Paul and Barnabas tell nothing new in their experiences; nothing new in the sense of: never heard of before by the Judaizers. Compare Acts 11:1-18. The following matters Peter calls attention to: 1. God had many years before already appeared to him in Joppa; had chosen him to speak the Word to the Gentiles. Acts 10:1-11, 18. 2. God had at that time given to the Gentiles (it was at the home of Cornelius) the Holy Spirit even as he had to the Jewish believers at Pentecost. Hence God had clearly indicated what His will was in this matter. 3. Conclusion: To oppose the work of Paul and Barnabas was clearly opposing God. It was tempting God by acting contrary to His revealed will. It was just as the act of Israel at Massa and Meriba. Ex. 17:7; Deut. 6:16; 1 Cor. 10:9.

B. Paul and Barnabas. vs. 12. 1. They agree with Peter, of course. See Gal. 2:7-10. Paul and Barnabas must have met privately with Peter, John and James after the public welcome. These “pillars in the church” had accorded them the right hand of fellowship. 2. They relate: What God by signs and wonders had wrought among the Gentiles through them. This was not mere repetition of what had been stated by them in the public meeting. It placed the emphasis on what God had wrought. 3. Conclusion: God had placed His sanction upon their preaching and labors.

C. James. (the brother of the Lord.) Vss. 18-21. 1. He corroborates Peter’s address. Not those of Barnabas and Paul directly. Only by inference. 2. He does so by employing: a. Not experiences of visions. (thus Peter). Neither because of what he had experienced in the wonder-working of God (thus Paul and Barnabas). b. But: the Holy Scriptures. This is the last court of appeal always. And thus it is also here in this gathering. James is of necessity the last speech.

3. James very skillfully employs the Scriptures and applies it to question before the gathering. We notice the following: a. He quotes prophecy (Amos 9:11, 12; Jer. 12:15; Isa. 45:21 which see)—a prophecy showing the design of God, the broad outlines, the fundamental lines, the general plan of God—governing all the particular facts in the history of God’s covenant, and therefore a prophecy which also places the issue before the meeting in the proper perspective of all the work of God. b. He further suggests the course of action that the meeting should take on the basis of these facts. For indeed these O. T. prophecies teach what Peter and Paul had spoken of. There is perfect agreement in the work of God, and the various experiences of Peter and Paul are so many pieces that fit into the whole of this work. The course of action that James suggests is: (1) The following “burden” is placed on the Gentile churches: “that we write, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood”. (2) The motive: In part, the moral law, the seventh commandment, (abstaining from
the pollutions of idols and from fornication), and, in part, the law of love for the Jewish brother in the faith. (abstaining from that which is strangled and from blood). This latter is not a remnant of ceremonial leaven. Read: Gen. 9:4. c. This suggested course meets with unanimous approval.

Questions:—Was this gathering in Jerusalem a Synod in this sense that it was a representation of each local church? If not, was there ever a gathering again of this nature? Why can this James of Acts 15 not be James the son of Zebedee? What is the nature and purpose of “signs and wonders”? Are they a clear-cut testimony of God’s work? Are they added to the preaching of the Word, or is the Word added to the “signs and wonders”? Compare: John 14:11-15 with Acts 15:12.

Suggestions:—1. Read this chapter in its entirety. Read it! Acts 15 is the best part of the lesson: it is much better than the “outline” can possibly be. Only after you have really read the chapter can you usefully employ the “outline” and see the sense of the “questions”.


THE LETTER TO THE CHURCHES
Acts 15:22-29

I. The Content and Nature of this Letter.

A. It speaks of: 1. The writers. They are: Apostles, Elders. 2. The addressees: The brethren out of the Gentiles; the brethren living in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. Hence: the churches visited and organized by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, plus the church at Antioch.

3. Further it contained a statement: a. As to the occasion of this writing. “Some out of our midst have troubled you with words subverting your soul”. b. Of the names of the committee chosen to bear this letter to them. They are: Paul and Barnabas, men of good repute; Judas and Silas. The last two are the committee proper. c. And last, but not least, this letter contained the decision of the gathering with respect to the conduct of the Gentile Churches. (see former outline).

B. Authoritative Nature of this Letter: vs. 28. 1. Not because of the dignity of the persons present as such. This could not lend authority to this missive. 2. But because of: a. The factual, revelational evidence brought forth by Peter and Paul. b. The agreement of this revelational data with the Prophecies— as shown by James. c. The testimony of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all the brethren in connection with this evidence. (It seemeth good to us and to the Holy Spirit).
II. Its Reception by the Churches:

A. Which churches receive it. (as recorded in Acts). 1. The churches in Antioch. This is recorded in Acts 15:30-33. 2. The churches at Derbe, Lystra etc. chap. 16:4.

B. Result: 1. In Antioch. Great joy up the consolation and exhortation. Did this not concern their very life. Indeed they were concerned. 2. In Derbe, Lystra. The churches were established and the number multiplied. Surely the Holy Spirit was “backing up” His own work wrought in the counsel at Jerusalem. This is of course most important.

Questions:—1. Did the churches view these letters as authoritative? Can one opposing a well-motivated decision of a church council be as sincere in opposing as the man who humbly submits? What is the principle followed in Art. 31 of our Church Order (Manual)? 2. Does opposition to the elders and apostles ever work toward spiritual health and vigor? Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-5.


Lesson XXXIX

PAUL AND BARNABAS SEPARATE

Acts 15:36-41

I. The General Picture in Antioch.

A. Judas and Silas had returned to Jerusalem to the brethren there. They had completed their task assigned to them. vs. 33. However, Silas must have returned again to Antioch. See vs. 40.

B. Paul and Barnabas must have labored for some time again in Antioch. It is quite likely that at this time Peter came down from Jerusalem to visit the churches; he also came to Antioch. Of this visit at this time the book of Acts relates nothing, but Paul tells of this visit in Gal. 2:11-18. It seems that, in spite of Peter’s speech in the meeting in Jerusalem, he had acted cowardly toward the Jews that came from Jerusalem while Peter was at Antioch. At first Peter ate with the Gentiles, but when the Jews (those of James came) he separated himself and ate no longer in their fellowship. This did not seem to be a matter of wrong doctrine, but it was conduct inconsistent with the stand taken at Jerusalem; inconsistent with the vision that appeared to Peter at Joppa at noon-day. This must indeed have been a trying and sad experience for Paul. For even Barnabas dissembled. Did this experience at Antioch leave temporary wounds?

C. Paul at this time was becoming restless and concerned about the well-fare of the churches. He says to Barnabas in rather urgent tone: Let us go to
the churches and see how they fare. For Paul's true concern about the churches compare 2 Cor. 11:28.

II. The Separation.

A. Paul and Barnabas Disagree over the Person of John Mark. 1. John Mark. He was the nephew (cousin, Col. 4:10) of Barnabas. He had started with Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. Acts 12:25—13:14, but had deserted them at Perga and Pamphilia, and had returned to Jerusalem. Evidently he had a change of heart and purpose. He had quite likely indicated his willingness and desire to accompany Paul and Barnabas on their next tour.

2. Paul and Barnabas do not see eye to eye. Barnabas wills to take John Mark along. He believes the best. Paul does not judge him worthy. Ground: He had failed to go with them to the work. He fears a recurrence.

Both Barnabas and Paul steadfastly maintain their position. So hot was the contention that they separate. 1. Barnabas sails with John Mark and goes to Cyprus. 2. Paul takes Silas with him and goes to Syria and Cilicia. The church at Antioch evidently stood with Paul.


Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow
The Executive Board of our Young People’s Federation is sponsoring a mass meeting of all local societies to be held Tuesday evening, 7:45 o’clock, November 14, at the Hope Protestant Reformed Church. The Bible discussion will be in connection with the second Outline in our November issue of Beacon Lights. Rev. J. Heys will be in charge of the Bible discussion and the after recess program will consist of instrumental and vocal solos, numbers by a male quartet, and a speech by Rev. W. Hofman on a very timely subject. Refreshments will be served. We hope that every member of our Young People’s Societies in this vicinity will be able to attend this meeting which promises to be both interesting and beneficial.

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