



A Plain and Easy
Introduction to Practical MUSIC,
Set down in Form of a Dialogue,

Divided into **Three Parts**,
The First Teacheth to SING,
The Second Treateth of DESCANT,
The Third Treateth of COMPOSITION,

By THOMAS MORLEY
Batchelor of Mufic .

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Now Reprinted for William Randall Successor to
the late M. J. Walsh in Catharine Street, in the

S T R A N D, L O N D O N.
M D C C L X X I.



TO THE MOST EXCELLENT MUSICIAN
MAISTER WILLIAM BIRDE,

One of the Gentlemen of her Majesties Chappell.

THERE be two, whose benefites to vs can neuer be requited; God, and our parents: the one for that he gaue vs a reasonable soule, the other for that of them we haue our being. To these, the prince, and (as *Cicero* termeth him) the God of the *Philosophers*, added our maisters, as those by whose directions the faculties of the reasonable soule be stirred vp to enter into contemplation, and searching of more then earthly things: whereby we obtain a second being, more to be wished and much more durable then that which any man since the worlds creation hath receiued of his parents: causing vs to liue in the minds of the vertuous, as it were, deified to the posteritie. The consideration of this, hath moued me to publish these labors of mine vnder your name; both to signifie, vnto the world, my thankfull mind: and also to notifie vnto your selfe in some sort the entire loue and vnfaigned affection which I beare vnto you. And seeing we liue in those dayes wherein Enuie raigneth; and that it is necessaric for him who shall put to light any such thing as this is, to choose such a patron, as both with iudgement may correct it, and with authoritie defend him from the rash censures of such as think they gain great prayse in condemning others: Accept (I pray you) of this book, both that you may exercise your deepe skill, in censuring of what shall be amisse, as also defend what is in it truely spoken, as that which sometime proceeded from your self. So shall your approbation cause me to thinke the better of it; and your name, set in the forefront thereof, be sufficient to abate the furie of many insulting Momistes, who think nothing true but what they doo themselues. And as those verses were not esteemed *Homers*, which *Aristarchus* had not approued: so will I not auouch, for mine, that which by your censure shall be condemned. And so I rest,

In all loue and affection to you most addicted,

THOMAS MORLEY.

To the Courteous R E A D E R.

I Do not doubt, but many (who haue knowen my disposition in times past) will wonder that (amongst so manie excellent Musicians as be in this our countrie at this time, and farre better furnished with learning then my selfe,) I haue taken vpon mee to set out that in our vulgar tongue, which of all other things hath beene in writing least knowen to our countrimen, and most in practise. Yet if they would consider the reasons mouing mee thereunto: they would not onely leaue to marueile, but also thinke mee worthy, if not of praise, yet of pardon for my paines. First, the earnest entreatie of my friends daily requesting, importuning, and as it were adjuring me by the loue of my countrie, which next vnto the glorie of God, ought to be most deere to euery man. Which reason so often tolde and repeted to me by them, chiefly caused me to yield to their honest request in taking in hand this work which now I publish to the viewe of the worlde: Not so much seeking thereby any name or glorie, (though no honest mind do contemne that also, and I might more largely by other meanes and lesse labour haue obtained) as in some sort to further the studies of them, who (being indewed with good naturall wittes, and well inclined to learne that diuine Art of Musick) are destitute of sufficient masters. Lastly, the solitarie life which I lead (being compelled to keepe at home) caused mee to be glade to finde any thing wherein to keepe my selfe exercised for the benefite of my countrie. But as concerning the booke it selfe, if I had before I began it, imagined halfe the paines and labour which it cost mee, I would sooner haue beene perswaded to anie thing, then to haue taken in hand such a tedious peece of worke, like vnto a great Sea, which the further I entered into, the more I sawe before mee vnpast: So that at length despairing euer to make an end (seeing that growe so bigg in mine hands, which I thought to haue shut vp in two or three sheetes of paper,) I layde it aside, in full determination to haue proceeded no further, but to haue left it off as shamefully as it was foolishly begun. But then being admonished by some of my friends, that it were pittie to lose the frutes of the employment of so manie good houres, and how iustly I should be condemned of ignorant presumption, in taking that in hand which I could not performe, if I did not goe forward: I resolued to endure whatsoeuer paine, labour, losse of time and expence, (and what not?) rather then to leaue that unbrought to an end, in which I was so farre ingulfed. Taking therefore those precepts which being a childe I learned, and laying them togither in order, I began to compare them with some other of the same kinde, set downe by some late writers: But then was I in a worse case then before. For I found such diuersitie bet-wixt them, that I knew not which part said truest, or whome I might best beleue. Then was I forced to runne to the workes of manie, both strangers and English men (whose labours togither with their names had beene buried with mee in perpetual obliuion, if it had not beene for this occasion) for a solution and clearing of my doubt. But to my great grieffe, then did I see the most part of mine owne precepts false and easie to be confuted by the workes of Tauerner, Fairfax, Cooper, and infinite more, whose names it would be too tedious to set downe in this place. But what labour it was to tumble, tosse, and search so manie bookes, and with what toyle and wearinesse I was enforced to compare the parts for trying out the valure of some notes, (spending whole daies, yea and manie times weekes for the demonstration of one example, which one would haue thought might in a moment haue been set downe,) I leaue to thy discretion to consider: and none can fully understande, but he who hath had or shall haue occasion to do the like. As for the methode of the booke, although it be not such as may in euery point satisfie the curiositie of Dichotomistes: yet is it such as I thought most conuenient for the capacitie of the learner. And I haue had an especiall care, that nothing should be set out of his owne place, but that which should serue to the vnderstanding of that which followeth should be set first. And as for the definition, diuision, partes, and kindes of Musicke, I haue omitted them as things onely seruing to content the learned, and not for the instruction of the ignorant. Thus hast thou the reasons which moued mee to take in hand and go forward with the booke. The paines of making whereof,

whereof, though they haue bene peculiar to mee, and onely to mee: yet will the profit redound to a great number. And this much I may boldly affirme, that anie of but meane capacitie, so they can but truly sing their tunings, which we commonly call the fixe notes, or vt, re, mi, fa, sol, la, may without any other helpe sauing this booke, perfectly learne to sing, make discant, and set parts well and formelly together. But seeing in these latter daies and doting age of the worlde, there is nothing more subiect to calumnie and backbiting then that which is most true and right: and that as there be many who will enter into the reading of my booke for their instruction: so I doubt not but diuerse also will reade it, not so much for any pleasure or profit they look for in it, as to finde something whereat to repine, or take occasion of backbiting. Such men I warne, that if in friendship they will (either publicly or priuately) make me acquainted with any thing in the booke, which either they like not or vnderstand not: I will not onely be content to giue them a reason (and if I cannot, to turne to their opinion,) but also thinke my selfe highly beholding to them. But if any man, either vpon mallice, or for ostentation of his owne knowledge, or for ignorance (as who is more bold then blinde bayard) do either in buggermugger or openly calumnie that which either he vnderstandeth not, or then maliciously wresteth to his own sense, he, (as Augustus said, by one who had spoken euil of him) shall finde that I haue a tongue also: and that me remorsurum petit, He snarleth at one who will bite againe, because I haue saide nothing without reason, or at least confirmed by the authorities of the best, both schollers and practitioners. There haue also been some, who (knowing their own insufficiencie, and not daring to disallow, nor being able to improue any thing in the booke) haue neuertheless gone about to discredite both mee and it another waie; affirming that I haue by setting out thereof maliciously gone about to take away the liuings from a number of honest poor men, who liue (and that honestly) vpon teaching not halfe of that which in this booke may be found. But to answere those malicious caterpillars, (who liue vpon the paines of other men,) this booke will be so farre from the hinderance of any, that by the contrarie, it will cause those whom they alledge to be thereby dan.nified, to be more able to giue reason for that which they do: Whereas before they either did it at hap-haxerd, or for (all reasons alledged,) that they were so taught. So that if any at all owe mee any thanks for the great paines which I haue taken, they be in my iudgement, those who taught that which they knew not, and may here if they will learne. But if the effect do not answere to my good meaning, and if many do not reape that benefit which I hoped; yet there will be no reason why I should be blamed, who haue done what I could, and giuen an occasion to others of better iudgement and deeper skill then my selfe to doe the like. And as for those ignorant Asses, who take vpon them to lead others, none being more blinde then themselves, and yet without any reason, (before they haue seene their workes,) will condemne other men, I ouerpasse them, as being unworthie to be nominated, or that any man should vouchsafe to aunswere them: for they be indeede such as doing wickedly hate the light for feare they should be espyed. And so (gentle Reader) hoping by thy favourable curtesie, to auoide both the malice of the enuious and the temeritie of the ignorant, wishing thee the whole profit of the booke and all perfection in thy studies, I rest,

Thine in all courtesie,

THO. MORLEY.

T H E
F I R S T P A R T
O F T H E
I N T R O D U C T I O N T O M U S I C K E,
T E A C H I N G T O S I N G.

Polymathes. Philomathes. Master.

Polymathes.

STAY, brother *Philomathes*: What haste? Whither go you so fast?

Philomathes. To seeke out an old friend of mine.

Pol. But before you goe, I pray you repeate some of the discourfes which you had yesternight at Master *Sophobulus* his banquet: for commonly he is not without both wise and learned guests.

Pbi. It is true indeede. And yesternight there were a number of excellent schollers, both gentlemen and others: but all the propose, which then was discourfed vpon, was Musicke.

Pol. I trust you were contented to suffer others to speake of that matter.

Pbi. I would that had beene the worst: for I was compelled to discover mine owne ignorance, and confesse that I knew nothing at all in it.

Pol. How so?

Pbi. Among the rest of the guests, by chaunce, master *Aphron* came thither also, who falling to discourse of Musicke, was in an argument so quickly taken vp and hotly pursued by *Eudoxus* and *Calergus*, two kinsmen of *Sophobulus*, as in his owne art he was ouerthrowen: but he still sticking in his opinion, the two gentlemen requested me to examine his reasons, and confute them. But I refusing, and pretending ignorance, the whole company condemned me of discourtesie, being fully perswaded, that I had beene as skilfull in that art, as they tooke me to be learned in others. But supper being ended, and Musicke bookes (according to the custome) being brought to the table; the mistresse of the house presented me with a part, earnestly requesting me to sing; but when, after many excuses, I protested vnfainedly that I could not, euery one began to wonder. Yea, some whispered to others, demanding how I was brought vp: so that, vpon shame of mine ignorance, I goe now to seeke out mine old friend, master *Gnorimus*, to make my selfe his scholler.

Pol. I am glad you are at length come to be of that minde, though I wished it sooner: therefore goe, and I pray God send you such good successe as you would

THE FIRST PART.

would wish to your selfe. As for me, I go to heare some *Mathematical Lectures*; so that I thinke, about one time we may both meete at our lodging.

Pbi. Farewell, for I sit vpon thornes till I be gone: therefore I will make haste. But if I be not deceived, I see him whom I seeke, sitting at yonder doore: out of doubt it is he. And it should seeme he studieth vpon some point of Musicke: but I will driue him out of his dump. Good morrow, Sir.

Master. And you also, good master *Philomathes*, I am glad to see you, seeing it is so long agoe since I saw you, that I thought you had either beene dead, or then had vowed perpetually to keepe your chamber and booke, to which you were so much addicted.

Pbi. Indeede I haue been well affected to my booke. But how haue you done since I saw you?

Ma. My health, since you saw me, hath beene so bad, as if it had beene the pleasure of him who may all things, to haue taken me out of the world, I should haue beene very well contented; and haue wished it more than once. But what businesse hath driuen you to this end of the towne?

Pbi. My errand is to you, to make my selfe your scholler. And seeing I haue found you at such conuenient leisure, I am determined not to depart till I haue one lesson in Musicke.

Ma. You tell me a wonder: for I haue heard you so much speake against that art, as to tearme it a corrupter of good manners, and an allurement to vices: for which many of your companions tearmed you a *Stoick*.

Pbi. It is true: but I am so farre changed, as of a *Stoick* I would willingly make a *Pythagorian*. And for that I am impatient of delay, I pray you begin euen now.

Ma. With a good will: But haue you learned nothing at all in Musicke before?

Pbi. Nothing. Therefore I pray begin at the very beginning, and teach me as though I were a childe.

Ma. I will do so: and therefore behold, here is the Scale of Musicke, which wee tearme the *Gam*.

Double or Treble keyes. Meane keyes. Crane of Base keyes.	ee	La	La	1 note.
	dd	La sol	Sol la	2 notes.
	cc	Sol fa	Fa sol	2 notes.
	bb	Fa mi	Mi fa	2 notes, 2 cliffes.
	aa	La mi re	Re mi la	3 notes.
	g	Sol re ut	Vi re sol	3 notes.
	f	Fa ut	Vi fa	2 notes.
	e	La mi	Mi la	2 notes.
	d	La sol re	Re sol la	3 notes.
	c	Sol fa ut	Ut fa sol	3 notes.
	b	Fa mi	Mi fa	2 notes, 2 cliffes.
	a	La mi re	Re mi la	3 notes.
	G	Sol re ut	Vi re sol	3 notes.
	F	Fa ut	Vi fa	2 notes.
	E	La mi	Mi la	2 notes.
	D	Sol re	Re sol	2 notes.
C	Fa ut	Vi fa	2 notes.	
B	Mi	Mi	1 note.	
A	Re	Re	1 note.	
F	Vi	Vi	1 note.	

Pbi.

Pbi. Indeede I see letters and syllables written here, but I doe not vnderstand them nor their order.

Ma. For the vnderstanding of this Table, *You must begin at the lowest word Gamvt, and so go upwards to the end still ascending.*

Pbi. That I do understand. What is next?

Ma. Then must you get it perfectly without booke, to say it forwards and backwards. Secondly, *You must learne to know, wherein euery Key standeth,* that is, whether in rule or in space. And thirdly, *How many cliefes and how many notes euery Key containeth.*

Pbi. What do you call a Cliefe, and what a Note?

Ma. A Cliefe is a character set on a rule at the beginning of a verse, shewing the height and lownesse of euery note standing on the same verse, or in space (although vse hath taken it for a general rule neuer to set any cliefe in the space except the *b* cliefe) and euery space or rule not hauing a cliefe set in it, hath one understood, being only omitted for not pestering the verse, and sauing of labour to the writer: but here it is taken for a letter beginning the name of euery key: and are they which you see here set at the beginning of euery word.

What a cliefe is.

Pbi. I take your meaning so, that every key hath but one cliffe, except *b fa b mi.*

Ma. You haue quickly and well conceived my meaning. *The residue which you see written in syllables are the names of the Notes.*

Pbi. In this likewise I thinke I vnderstand your meaning. But I see no reason, why you should say the two *b b* be two seueral cliefes; seeing they are but one, twise named.

Ma. The *Herralds* shall answere that for me: for if you should aske them, why two men of one name should not both giue one Armes? They will straight answere you, that they be of seuerall houses, and therefore must giue diuers coates: So these two *b b*, though they be both comprehended under one name, yet they are in nature and character diuers.

Pbi. This I doe not understand.

Ma. Nor cannot, till you know all the cliefes: and the rising and falling of the voyce for the true tuning of the notes.

Pbi. I Pray you then go forwards with the cliefes: the definition of them I haue heard before.

Ma. There be in all seuen cliefes (as I told you before) as *A. B. C. D. E. F. G.* but in vse in singing there be but foure: that is to say, the *F fa vt*, which is commonlie in the *Basse* or lowest part, being formed or made thus, 

How manie cliefes there be. The formes of the vsuall cliefes.

The *C sol fa ut* cliefe, which is common to euery part, and is made thus, 

The *G sol re ut* cliefe, which is commonly used in the *Treble* or highest part, and is made thus, 

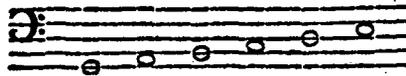
And the *b* cliefe, which is common to euery part, is made thus *b*, or thus ; the one signifying the half note and flat singing; the other signifying the whole note or sharpe singing.

Pbi. Now that you have told me the cliefes, it followeth to speake of the tuning of the notes.

Ma.

The fixe notes
in continuall
deduction.

Ma. It is so, and therefore be attentiuē and I will be briefe. There be in Musicke but vi. Notes, which are called *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*, and are commonly set down thus :



Pbi. In this I vnderstand nothing, but that I see the *F fa ut* cleife standing on the fourth rule from beneath.

Ma. And do you not vnderstand wherein the first note standeth ?

Pbi. Verily, no.

How to know
wherein euery
note standeth.

Ma. You must then reckon downe from the cleife, as though the verse were the Scale of Musicke, assigning to euery space and rule a seueral Key.

Pbi. This is easie. And by this meanes I finde that the first note standeth in *Gam ut*, and the last in *E la mi*.

Ma. You say true. Now sing them.

Pbi. How shall I tearme the first note ?

Ma. If you remember that which before you told me you understood, you would resolue your selfe of that doubt. But I pray you in *Gam ut*, how many cleifs, and how many notes ?

Pbi. One cleife and one note. O I cry you mercy, I was like a potte with a wide mouth, that receiueth quickly, and letteth out as quickly.

Ma. Sing then after me till you can tune : for I will lead you in the tuning, and you shall name the notes yourself.

Pbi. I can name them right till I come to *C fa ut*. Now whether shall I tearme this, *fa*, or *ut* ?

A note for
singing of *Vt*.

Ma. Take this for a generall rule, that in one deduction of the fixe notes, you can haue one name but once vsed, although indeede (if you could keep right tune) it were no matter how you named any note. But this we vse commonly in singing, that except it be in the lowest note of the part we neuer use *ut*.

Pbi. How then ? Do you neuer sing *ut* but in *Gam ut* ?

Ma. Not so : But if either *Gam ut*, or *C fa ut*, or *F fa ut*, or *G sol re ut*, be the lowest note of the part, then we may sing *ut* there.

Pbi. Now I conceiue it.

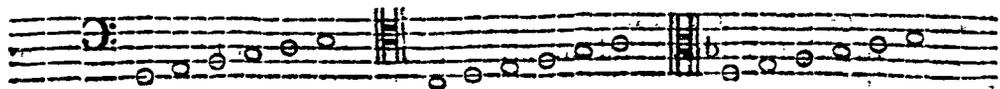
Ma. Then sing your six notes forward and backward.



Ma. Very well.

Pbi. Now I pray you shew me all the seuerall Keyes wherein you may begin your fixe notes.

Ma. Lo here they be set downe at length.



Pbi.

T H E F I R S T P A R T .

Pbi. Be these all the ways you may haue these notes in the whole *Gam*?

Ma. These and their eights: as what is done in *Gam vt* may also be done in *G sol re vt*, and likewise in *G sol re vt* in alt. And what in *C fa vt*, may be also in *C sol fa vt*, and in *C sol fa*. And what in *F fa vt* in *Base*, may also be done in *F fa vt* in alt. But these be the three principall keyes, containing the three natures or properties of singing.

Pbi. Which be the three properties of singing?

Ma. *b quarre*, *Properchant*, and *b molle*.

Pbi. What is *b quarre*.

Ma. It is a property of singing, wherein *mi* is alwayes sung in *b fa* & *mi*, and is alwayes when you sing *vt* in *Gam vt*.

Pbi. What is *Properchant*?

Ma. It is a property of singing, wherein you may sing either *fa* or *mi* in *b fa* & *mi* according as it shall be marked *b* or thus & ; and is when the *vt* is in *C fa vt*.

Pbi. What if there be no marke?

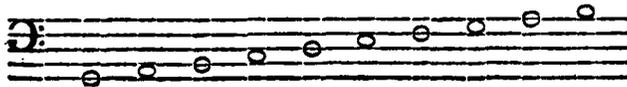
Ma. There it is supposed to be sharpe. &

Pbi. What is *b molle*?

Ma. It is a property of singing, wherein *fa* must alwayes be sung in *b fa* & *mi*, and is when the *vt* is in *F fa vt*.

Pbi. Now I thinke I vnderstand all the cliefes, and that you can hardly shew me any note, but that I can tell wherein it standeth.

Ma. Then wherein doth the eighth note stand in this example?



Pbi. In *G sol re vt*.

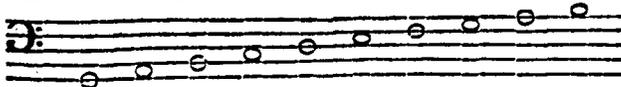
Ma. How knew you?

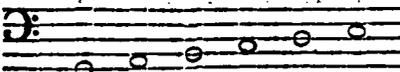
Pbi. By my prooffe.

Ma. How do you prooue it?

Pbi. From the cliefe which is *F fa vt*: for the next keye about *F fa vt* is *G sol re vt*.

Ma. Now sing this example:



Pbi.  But now I am out of my byass, for I know not what is about *la*.

Ma. Wherein standeth the note whereof you doubt?

Pbi. In *F fa vt*.

Ma. And I pray you, *F fa vt*, how many cliefes and how many notes?

Pbi. One cliefe and two notes.

Ma. Which be the two notes.

Pbi. *fa* and *vt*.

The three properties of singing.

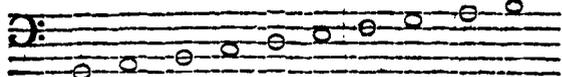
How to prooue where a note standeth.

What to bee
fung about *la*.

Ma. Now if you remember what I told you before concerning the finging of *vt*, you may not sing it in this place; so that of force you must sing *fa*.

Pbi. You say true. And I see that by this I should haue a very good wit; for I haue but a bad memory; but now I will sing forward.

Ma. Do so then.

Pbi.  But, once againe, I know not how to goe any further.

Vt re mi fa fol la fa fol la.

Ma. Why?

Pbi. Because I know not what to sing about this *la*.

Ma. Wherein standeth the note?

Pbi. In *b fa* \sharp *mi*.

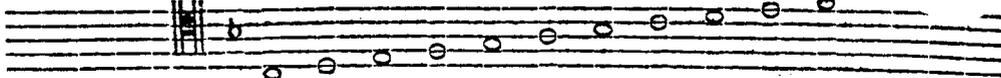
Ma. And what *b* hath it before it?

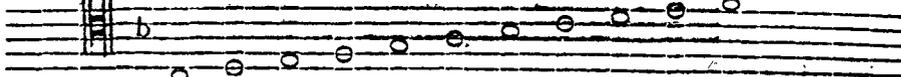
Pbi. None.

Ma. How then must you sing it when there is no signe?

Pbi. I crie you mercie, it must be sharpe: but I had forgotten the rule you gaue me, and therefore I pray you set mee another example, to see if I haue forgotten any more.

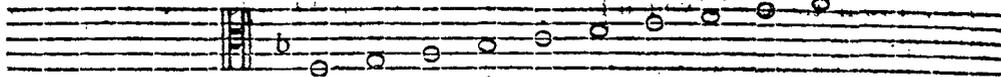
Ma. Here is one: sing it.

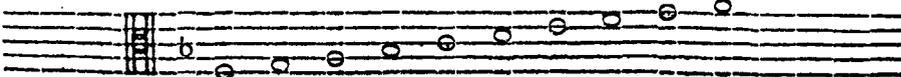


Pbi. 

Vt re mi fa fol la fa fol la mi fa.

Ma. This is well fung: now sing this other.



Pbi. 

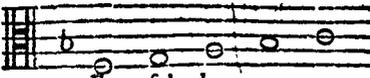
Vt re mi fa fol la mi fa fol la.

The three
first notes may
be altered in
name though
not in tune.

Ma. This is right: but could you sing it no otherwise?

Pbi. No otherwise in tune, though I might alter the names of the notes.

Ma. Of which, and how?

Pbi. Of the three first, thus;  &c.

and so fourth of their eights.

Fa fol la

Ma. You do well. Now for the last tryall of your finging in continual deduction sing this perfectly, and I will say you vnderstand plaine song well enough.

Pbi.

THE FIRST PART.

CANTUS.

Aria. A 3 voices.

When you see this
 signe :: of repe-
 tition, you must
 begin again mak-
 ing the note next
 before the signe
 (be it minime,
 crochet, or what-
 soever) a semi-
 brief in the first
 fing. At the
 second time you
 must sing it as it
 standeth, going
 forward without
 any respect to the
 close. When you
 come to the end,
 & find the signe
 of repetition be-
 fore the final
 close, you must
 sing the note be-
 fore the signe as
 it standeth, and
 then begin again
 at the place where
 the stroke parteth
 all the lines, & so
 sing to the final
 close. But if you
 find any song of
 this kind without
 the stroke so part-
 ing all the lines,
 you must begin at
 the first signe of
 repetition, & so
 sing to the end:
 for in this man-
 ner (for saving of
 labour in writing
 them at length)
 doe they write all
 their ayres & vil-
 lanellas.



T E N O R.



B A S S U S.



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