

ABBOTT JACOB

ROLLO IN
LONDON

Jacob Abbott

Rollo in London

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Jacob Abbott Rollo in London



LONDON BRIDGE.



THE PARK. (See Chap. XI.)

Chapter I. City and Town

"Which London shall we visit first?" said Mr. George to Rollo.

"Why," rejoined Rollo, surprised, "are there two of them?"

"Yes," said Mr. George. "We may almost say there are two of them. Or, at any rate, there are two heads to the monster, though the immense mass forms but one body."

While Mr. George was saying these words Rollo had been standing on the step of the railway car and looking in at the window towards his uncle George, who was inside. Just at this time, however, the conversation was interrupted by the sound of the bell, denoting that the train was about to start. So Rollo jumped down from the step and ran back to his own car, which was a second-class car, two behind the one where Mr. George was sitting. He had scarcely got to his seat before the whistle of the conductor sounded and the train began to move. As it trundled along out of the station, gradually increasing its speed as it advanced, Rollo sat wondering what his uncle meant by the double-headed character which he had assigned to the monstrous city that they were going to see.

What is commonly called London does in fact consist, as Mr. George had said, of *two* great cities, entirely diverse from each other, and completely distinct—each being, in its way, the richest, the grandest, and the most powerful capital in the world.

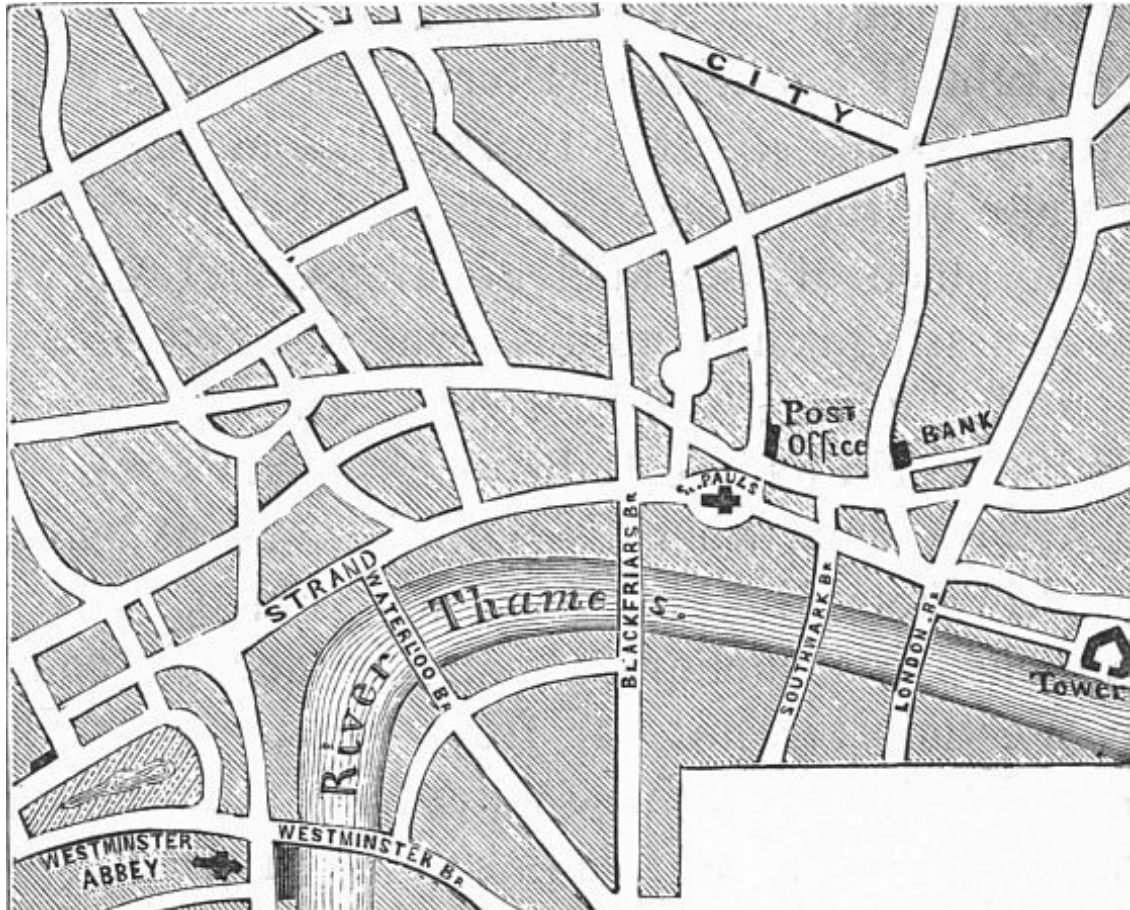
One of these twin capitals is the metropolis of commerce; the other is that of political and military power.

The first is called the City.

The second is called the West End.

Both together—with the immense region of densely-peopled streets and squares which connect and surround them—constitute what is generally called London.

The *city* was the original London. The West End was at first called Westminster. The relative position of these two centres may be seen by the following map:—



The city—which was the original London—is the most ancient. It was founded long before the days of the Romans; so long, in fact, that its origin is wholly unknown. Nor is any thing known in respect to the derivation or meaning of the name. In regard to Westminster, the name is known to come from the word *minster*, which means *cathedral*—a cathedral church having been built there at a very early period, and which, lying west of London as it did, was called the West Minster. This church passed through a great variety of mutations during the lapse of successive centuries, having grown old, and been rebuilt, and enlarged, and pulled down, and rebuilt again, and altered, times and ways without number. It is represented in the present age by the venerable monumental pile—the burial-place of the ancient kings, and of the most distinguished nobles, generals, and statesmen of the English monarchy—known through all the world as Westminster Abbey.

After a time, when England became at length one kingdom, the king built his palace, and established his parliament, and opened his court in Westminster, not far from the abbey. The place, being about three miles from the city, was very convenient for this purpose. In process of time public edifices were erected, and noblemen's houses and new palaces for the king or for other members of the royal family were built, and shops were set up for the sale of such things as the people of the court might wish to buy, and streets and squares were laid out; and, in fine, Westminster became gradually quite an extended and famous town. It was still, however, entirely distinct from London, being about three miles from it, farther up the river. The principal road from London to Westminster followed the margin of the water, and was called the Strand. Towards Westminster the road diverged from the river so as to leave a space between wide enough for houses; and along this space the great nobles from time to time built magnificent palaces around great square courts, where they could ride in under an archway. The fronts of these palaces were towards the road; and there were gardens behind them, leading down to the water. At the foot of the garden there was usually a boat house and a

landing, where the people who lived in the palace or their friends could embark on board boats for excursions on the Thames.

In the mean time, while Westminster was thus becoming a large and important town, London itself, three miles farther down the river, was also constantly growing too, in its own way, as a town of merchants and artisans. Other villages, too, began to spring up in every direction around these great centres; and London and Westminster, gradually spreading, finally met each other, and then, extending on each side, gradually swallowed up these villages, until now the whole region, for five or six miles in every direction from the original centres, forms one mighty mass of streets, squares, lanes, courts, terraces, all crowded with edifices and thronged with population. In this mass all visible distinction between the several villages which have been swallowed up is entirely lost, though the two original centres remain as widely separated and as distinct as ever. The primeval London has, however, lost its exclusive right to its name, and is now simply called the *city*; and in the same manner Westminster is called the West End, and sometimes the *town*; while the name London is used to denote the whole of the vast conglomeration which envelops and includes the two original capitals.

The city and the West End, though thus swallowed, as it were, in the general metropolis, are still entirely distinct. They are in fact, in some respects, even more widely distinct from each other now than ever. Each is, in its own way, at the head of its class of cities. The city is the greatest and wealthiest mart of commerce in the world; while the West End is the seat and centre of the proudest and most extended political and military power. In fact, the commercial organization which centres in the city, and the military one which has its head quarters around the throne at the West End, are probably the greatest and most powerful organizations, each of its kind, that the world has ever known.

Mr. George explained all this to Rollo as they walked together away from the London Bridge station, where the train in which they came in from the south stopped when it reached London. But I will give a more detailed account of their conversation in the next chapter.



Chapter II. London Bridge

When the train stopped at what is called the London Bridge station, the passengers all stepped out of their respective cars upon the platform. In the English cars the doors are at the sides, and not, as in America, at the ends; so that the passengers get out nearly all at once, and the platform becomes immediately crowded. Beyond the platform, on the other side, there is usually, when a train comes in, a long row of cabs and carriages drawn up, ready to take the passengers from the several cars; so that the traveller has generally nothing to do but to step across the platform from the car that he came in to the cab that is waiting there to receive him. Nor is there, as is usual in America, any difficulty or delay in regard to the baggage; for each man's trunks are placed on the car that he rides in, directly over his head; so that, while he walks across the platform to the cab, the railway porter takes his trunk across and places it on the top of the cab; and thus he is off from the station in his cab within two minutes sometimes after he arrived at it in the car.

The railway porters, who attend to the business of transferring the passengers thus from the railway carriages to those of the street, are very numerous all along the platform; and they are very civil and attentive to the passengers, especially to those who come in the first-class cars—and more especially still, according to my observation and experience, if the traveller has an agreeable looking lady under his charge. The porters are dressed in a sort of uniform, by which they are readily distinguished from the crowd. They are strictly forbidden to receive any fee or gratuity from the passengers. This prohibition, however, does not prevent their taking very thankfully the shillings or sixpences¹ that are often offered them, particularly by Americans, who, being strangers in the country, and not understanding the customs very

well, think that they require a little more attention than others, and so are willing to pay a little extra fee. It is, however, contrary to the rules of the station for the porters to receive any thing; and, if they take it at all, they try to do it as secretly as possible. I once knew a traveller who offered a porter a shilling openly on the platform; but the porter, observing a policeman near, turned round with his side to the gentleman, and, holding his hand open behind him, with the back of it against his hip and his fingers moving up and down briskly in a beckoning manner, said,—

"We are not allowed to take it, sir—we are not allowed to take it."

As Mr. George stepped out upon the platform at the London Bridge station his first thought was to find Rollo, who had chosen to come in a second-class car, partly for the purpose of saving the difference in the fare, and partly, as he said, "for the fun of it." Rollo had a regular allowance from his father for his travelling expenses, sufficient to pay his way in the first-class conveyances; and the understanding was, that whatever he should save from this sum by travelling in the cheaper modes was to be his own for pocket money or to add to his reserved funds.

Mr. George and Rollo soon found each other on the platform.

"Well, Rollo," said Mr. George, "and how do you like travelling cheap?"

"Pretty well," said Rollo; "only I could not see out much; but then I have saved six shillings in coming from Dover. That is the same as twelve New York shillings—a dollar and a half. I can buy several pretty things with that to carry home."

"That's very true," said Mr. George.

"Some time I mean to go in the fourth-class car," said Rollo. "'Tis true we have to stand up all the time like sheep in a pen; but I shall not care for that."

¹ Whenever shillings or sixpences are mentioned in this book, English coin is meant. As a general rule, each English denomination is of double the value of the corresponding American one. Thus the English penny is a coin as large as a silver dollar, and it is worth two of the American pennies. The shilling is of the value of a quarter of a dollar; and a sixpence is equal to a New York shilling.

"Well, you can try it," said Mr. George; "but now for our luggage."

The English people always call the effects which a traveller takes with him on the journey his luggage.

Very soon a porter took Mr. George's trunk from the top of the car.

"Will you have a cab, sir?" said the porter, touching his cap to Mr. George.

"I want to leave my trunk here for a short time under your charge," said Mr. George. "That is a little out of the line of your duty, I know; but I will remember that when I come for it."

"All right, sir," said the porter, promptly, touching his cap again.

He took up the trunk and threw it on his shoulder; and then, followed by Mr. George and Rollo, he walked away to the luggage room. After it had been properly deposited in its place, Mr. George and Rollo went out of the station into the street.

"Are not you going to ride?" said Rollo to Mr. George.

"No," said Mr. George; "I am going to walk."

"What's that for?" said Rollo.

"There are two reasons," said Mr. George; "one is, I want to show you London Bridge."

"Well," said Rollo; "and what is the other reason?"

"The other is," said Mr. George, "that I do not wish to have the trouble of the luggage while I am looking out lodgings. If I go to a hotel and leave my luggage there and take a room, and then go and look up lodgings, we have the hotel bill to pay, without getting much benefit from it; and, if we take the luggage on a cab, we might go to a dozen different places before we find a room to suit us, and so have a monstrous great cab fare to pay."

"Yes," said Rollo; "I understand. Besides, I should like to walk through the streets and see the city."

As our two travellers walked along towards London Bridge, Mr. George explained to Rollo what is stated in the first chapter in respect to the double character of London.

"What we are coming to now, first," said he, "is the *city*—the commercial capital of the country. In fact, it may almost be said to be the commercial capital of the world. Here are the great docks and warehouses, where are accumulated immense stores of merchandise from every quarter of the globe. Here is the bank, with its enormous vaults full of treasures of gold and silver coin, and the immense ledgers in which are kept accounts with governments, and wealthy merchants, and great capitalists all over the world. Here is the post office, too, the centre of a system of communications, by land and sea, extending to every quarter of the globe.

"The chief magistrate of the city," continued Mr. George, "is called the lord mayor. He lives in a splendid palace called the Mansion House. Then there is the great Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, and a vast number of other churches, and chapels, and hospitals, and schools, all belonging to, and supported by, the commercial and business interests which concentrate in the city. You will find a very different set of buildings and institutions at the West End."

"What shall we find there?" asked Rollo.

"We shall find there," said Mr. George, "the palace of the queen; and the houses of Parliament, where the lords and commons assemble to make laws for the empire; and the Horse Guards, which is a great edifice that serves as head quarters for the British army; and the Admiralty, which is the head quarters of the navy; and the private palaces of the nobles; and the parks and pleasure grounds that connect and surround them."

About this time Mr. George and Rollo began to come in sight of London Bridge; and very soon afterwards they found themselves entering upon it. Rollo was, for a time, quite bewildered with astonishment at the extraordinary aspect of the scene. They came out upon the bridge, from the midst of a very dense and compact mass of streets and houses, on what is called the Surrey side of the river; and they could see, dimly defined through the murky atmosphere, the outlines of the city on the other side. There were long ranges of warehouses; and innumerable chimneys, pouring forth black smoke;

and the Monument; and spires of churches; and, conspicuous among the rest,—though half obscured by murky clouds of smoke and vapor,—the immense dome of St. Paul's, with the great gilded ball and cross on the top of it.

The bridge was built of stone, on arches, and was of the most massive and ponderous character. There was a roadway in the centre of it, on which two continued streams of vehicles were passing—one on the left, going into the city; and the other on the right, coming out. On each side were broad stone sidewalks, formed of massive blocks of granite, feeling solid and heavy under the tread as if they had been laid upon the firm ground. These sidewalks were crowded with passengers, who were going, some into, and some out of, the city, so as to form on each sidewalk two continuous streams. On each side of the bridge, towards the water, was a solid parapet, or wall. This parapet was about as high as Rollo's shoulders. Here and there, at different places along the bridge, were groups of people that had stopped to look over the parapet to the river. Each group formed a little row, arranged along the parapet, with their faces towards the water.

"Let us stop and look over," said Rollo.

"No," said Mr. George, "not now; we will wait till we get to the middle of the bridge."

So they walked on. When they had proceeded a little way, they came to a place where there was a sort of niche, or recess, in the parapet, perhaps ten or fifteen feet long, and four or five deep, from the sidewalk. There were stone seats extending all around the sides of this recess; and these seats were full of boys and men, some with burdens and some without, who had stopped and sat down there to rest. Rollo wished to propose to Mr. George that they should stop and sit down there too; not because he was tired, but only to see how it would seem to be seated in such a place. He did not propose this plan, however, for he saw at a glance that the seats were all occupied, and that there was no room.

A little distance beyond they came to another niche, and afterwards to another, and another.

"These niches are over the piers of the bridge," said Mr. George, "I suppose. Let us look over and see."

So they stopped a moment and looked over the parapet. They beheld a turbid and whirling stream pouring through the bridge, under the arches, with a very rapid current, and at the instant that they looked down, they saw the bows of a small steamboat come shooting through. The deck of the steamer was crowded with people—men, women, and children. Some were standing, and others were sitting on benches that were arranged round the side and along the middle of the deck; all, however, in the open air.

"I wonder where that steamer is going," said Rollo.

"Down the river somewhere," said Mr. George; "perhaps to Greenwich or Woolwich."

"Up the river, you mean," said Rollo. "Don't you see she is going against the current? See how swift the water runs under the arches of the bridge!"

"Yes," said Mr. George; "but that current is the tide, coming in from the sea. This way is down towards the mouth of the river. See all this shipping here! It has come up from the sea." Here Mr. George pointed with his hand down the river, waving it from one side to the other, so as to direct Rollo's attention to both shores, where there lay immense forests of shipping, three or four tiers deep on each side, and extending down the river as far as the eye could penetrate into the thick and murky atmosphere. Besides the tiers of shipping which lay thus along the shores of the river, there were two other ranges, each three or four tiers wide, out in the stream, leaving a broad, open passage between them, in the middle, and two narrower passages, one on each side, between them and the shore.

"It is a city of ships," said Rollo, "with streets of open water."

"Yes," said Mr. George, "it is indeed."

The streets, as Rollo called them, of open water, were full of boats, going and coming, and of lighters and wherries, with a steamer now and then shooting along among them, or a large vessel slowly coming up or going down by means of its sails.

"This is the way *down* the river," repeated Mr. George. "The ships have come up as far as here; but they cannot go any farther, on account of the bridge. Look above the bridge, and you will see that there are no ships." So Rollo and Mr. George turned round to look up the river. They could only catch an occasional glimpse of the river through casual openings in the stream of carts, carriages, vans, cabs, wagons, and omnibuses that were incessantly rolling on in opposite streams along the roadway of the bridge. Although the view was thus obstructed, they could easily see there were no ships above the bridge that they were standing on. There were, however, several other bridges farther up, with a great many boats passing to and fro among them; and, here and there, there appeared a long and sharp-built little steamer, gliding swiftly through the water. These steamers were painted black, and they poured forth volumes of smoke so dark and dense from their funnels as quite to fill the air, and make the whole prospect in that direction exceedingly murky and obscure.

"Let us go over to the other side of the bridge," said Rollo.

"Not yet," said Mr. George; "but you see that there is no shipping above the bridge. Vessels *could not* go up above the bridge, in fact. They could not go up, for the masts are too long to pass under the arches."

"They might have a draw in the middle of the bridge," said Rollo.

"No," said Mr. George. "A draw will not answer, except in cases where there is only a moderate degree of passing over a bridge, so as to allow of an interruption for a little time without any great inconvenience. But this bridge, you see, is perfectly thronged all the time with continued streams of foot passengers and carriages. If a draw were to be opened in this bridge for only ten minutes, to allow a vessel to go through, there would be such a jam on both sides that it would take all day to disentangle it."

"I don't see how the little steamers get through under the bridges," said Rollo. "The smoke-pipes are higher than the arches."

"Yes," said Mr. George, "they are. But I will show you how they manage that by and by. There is something very curious about that. Now let us look down the river again."

So Rollo turned round with Mr. George, and they both looked down the river. They saw on the left hand of the river—that is, on the London side, the side towards which they were going—a great steamboat landing, with several steamboats lying near it.

"That is where the steamboats lie," said Mr. George, "that go down to the mouth of the river, and across the sea to France, Holland, and Germany."

"I should like to go in one of them," said Rollo.

"Do you see that large building just below the steamboat landing, fronting the river?"

"Yes," said Rollo; "what is it?"

"It is the Custom House," said Mr. George. "Every ship that comes into the Thames from foreign countries has to send her manifest there and pay the duties."

"What is a manifest?" said Rollo.

"It is a list, or schedule," said Mr. George, "of every thing there is contained in the cargo. The officers of the Custom House make a calculation, by this manifest, of the amount of duties that are to be paid to the government for the cargo, and the owners of the ship have to pay it before they can land their goods."

"Can we go into the Custom House and see it?" said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George. "I am sure it must be open to the public, because all sorts of persons must have occasion to go there continually, to transact business; but I do not suppose there would be much to see inside. There would be a great many tables and desks, and a great many clerks and monstrous big account books, and multitudes of people coming and going continually; but that would be all."

"I should like to go and see them," said Rollo.

"Well," said Mr. George, "perhaps we will look in some time when we are going by on our way to the Tower or to the Tunnel. But now look down just below the Custom House and see the Tower."

Rollo looked in the direction which Mr. George indicated; and there he saw upon the bank of the river, a little below the Custom House, rising above the other buildings in that quarter of the town, a large, square edifice, with turrets at the corners. This building was surrounded with other edifices of a castellated form, which gave the whole the appearance of an extended fortress.

"That," said Mr. George, "is the famous Tower of London."

"What is it famous for?" said Rollo.

"I can't stop to tell you about it now," said Mr. George. "It was built originally as a sort of fort to defend the city. You see, the place where the Tower stands was formerly the lower corner of the city; and there was a wall, beginning at the Tower, and running back all around the city, and so down to the water again at the upper end of it. Do you see St. Paul's?" added Mr. George, turning half round and pointing.

"Yes," said Rollo; "but it is pretty smoky."

"You can see," said Mr. George, "from the position of St. Paul's, where the old wall went. It passed some distance back from St. Paul's, and came down to the water some distance above it. All within this wall was the old city of London; and the Tower was built at the lower corner of it to defend it."

"Do you see any reason," continued Mr. George, "why they should place the Tower at the lower end, rather than at the upper end, of the city?"

"No," said Rollo, "I do not see any reason in particular."

"The reason was," said Mr. George, "that what they had reason to guard the city against was the danger of an attack from enemies coming *up* the river in ships from the sea; and so they placed the Tower *below* the city, in order to intercept them. But now the city has spread and extended down the river far below the Tower, and back far beyond the old wall; so that the Tower is, at the present time, in the midst of an immense region of streets and warehouses, and it is no longer of any use as a fortification. It is too high up."

"What do they use it for, then?" said Rollo.

"It is used by the government," said Mr. George, "as a sort of strong box, to keep curiosities, treasures, and valuables of all sorts in, and any thing else, in fact, which they wish to have in safe and secure custody. They keep what are called state prisoners there."

"Can we go in the Tower," said Rollo, "and see all these things?"

"Yes," said Mr. George, "we can see the treasures and curiosities; but I believe there are no prisoners there now."

Just then Rollo heard a rapping sound upon the stone of the sidewalk near him. He looked round to see what it was. There was a blind man coming along. He had a stick in his hand, which seemed to be armed at the lower end with a little ferule of iron. With this iron the blind man kept up a continual rapping on the flagstones as he slowly advanced. The iron produced a sharp and ringing sound, which easily made itself heard above the thundering din of the carriages and vans that were rolling incessantly over the bridge, and served as a warning to the foot passengers on the sidewalk that a blind man was coming. Every one hearing this rapping looked up to see what it meant; and, perceiving that it was a blind man, they moved to one side and the other to make way for him. Thus, though the sidewalk was so crowded that a person with eyes could scarcely get along, the blind man, though he moved very slowly, had always vacant space before him, and advanced without any difficulty or danger.²

"Think of a blind man in such a crowd as this!" said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George.

² See frontispiece.

"And he gets along better than any of the rest of us," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "so it seems."

"The next time I wish to go through a crowd," said Rollo, "I mean to get a cane, and then shut my eyes and rap with it, and every body will make room for me."

"Look round here a minute more," said Mr. George; "there is something else that I wish to explain to you. You see there are no bridges below this, though there are a great many above."

"Yes," said Rollo; "and how do they get across the river below here? Are there ferry boats?"

"I think it likely there are ferry boats down below," said Mr. George. "At any rate, there are plenty of small boats which any body can hire. They are rowed by men called watermen."

"'Bound 'prentice to a waterman,
I learned a bit to row.'"

"What poetry is that?" said Rollo.

"It is part of some old song," said Mr. George. "Look down the river and you can see these boats cruising about among the shipping."

"Is that the way they get across the river below here?" said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George; "and then there is the Tunnel besides. They can go *under* the river through the Tunnel if they please, about a mile and a half below here."

"Is that the reason why they made the Tunnel," said Rollo, "because they could not have any bridge?"

"Yes," said Mr. George. "It would have been a great deal cheaper and better to have made a bridge; but a bridge would have interfered with the shipping, and so they made a tunnel underneath."

"I never knew before," said Rollo, "why they made the Tunnel."

"Yes," said Mr. George, "that is the reason. It was a very difficult and expensive work; but I believe it proved a failure. Very few people use it for crossing the river, though a great many go to see it. It is a curious place to see. But now let us go across the bridge and see what is on the other side."

Mr. George and Rollo had to stand several minutes on the curbstone of the sidewalk before they could find openings, in the trains of vehicles which were moving to and fro over the bridge, wide enough to allow them, to pass through to the other side. At length, however, they succeeded in getting across; and, after walking along on the upper side of the bridge for some distance farther, until they had nearly reached the London end of it, they stopped and looked over the parapet down to the water.

Of course their faces were now turned *up* the river, and the view which presented itself was entirely different from that which had been seen below. Immediately beneath where they were standing, and close in to the shore of the river, they witnessed a most extraordinary spectacle, which was formed by a group of small and smoky-looking steamers, that were hovering in apparent confusion about a platform landing there. The decks of the steamers were all crowded with passengers. Some of the boats were just coming to the land, some just leaving it, and others were moored to the platform, and streams of passengers were embarking or disembarking from them. The landing consisted of a floating platform, that was built over great flat-bottomed boats, that were moored at a little distance from the bank, so as to rise and fall with the tide. There was a strong railing along the outer edge of the platform, with openings here and there through it for passage ways to the boats. Behind, the platforms were connected with the shore by long bridges, having a little toll house at the outer end of each of them, with the words, "Pay Here," inscribed on a sign over the window. The passengers, as they came down from the shore, stopped at these toll houses to pay the fare for the places to which they wished to go. The decks of the steamers, the platforms, and all the bridges were thronged with people, going and coming in all directions, and crowding their way to and from the boats; and every two or three minutes a steamer, having received its load, would push off from

the platform, and paddle its way swiftly up the river among a multitude of others that were shooting swiftly along, in all directions, over the water.

The volumes of dense, black smoke which rolled up from the funnels of the steamers made the atmosphere very thick and murky; and the whole scene, as Mr. George and Rollo looked down upon it from the parapet above, for a time seemed almost to bewilder them.

"Let us go down and take a sail in one of those steamers," said Mr. George.

"Where do they go to?" said Rollo.

"I don't know," said Mr. George.

"Well," said Rollo, "let us go."

So saying, Mr. George and Rollo walked on towards the end of the bridge. Here they found a broad stone staircase, which turned off from the great thoroughfare, at a place near the corner of a large stone building. The staircase was very broad and massive, and was covered with people going up and coming down.

"This must be a way down to the landing," said Mr. George.

So our two travellers began to descend; and, after turning several square corners in the staircase, they came out into the street which led along the margin of the river, at a level of twenty or thirty feet below the bridge. This street passed through under one of the *dry arches* of the bridge, as they are called; that is, one built on the sloping margin of the shore, where no water flows. They passed across this street, and then entered a broad passage way which led down towards the floating platforms. There were a great many people coming and going. They stopped at the toll house on one of the little bridges to pay the fare.

"How much is to pay?" said Mr. George to the tollman, taking out his purse.

"Where do you wish to go?" said the tollman.

"I don't know," said Mr. George, looking at Rollo; "about a mile or two up the river."

"To Hungerford landing?" asked the tollman.

"Yes," said Mr. George.

"Or Westminster?" said the tollman.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "we will go to Westminster."

"Twopence each," said the tollman.

So Mr. George and Rollo each laid down two pennies on the little counter in the window sill, and the man giving them each a little paper ticket, they passed on.

"Now the question is," said Mr. George, "how to find out what boat we are to get into. Here is an orange woman on the platform; I will buy a couple of oranges of her, one for you and one for me, and then she will be glad to tell us which is the boat."

"She will tell us without," said Rollo.

"As a matter of favor?" asked Mr. George.

"Yes," said Rollo.

"I suppose she would," said Mr. George; "but I would rather that the obligation should be the other way."

So Mr. George bought two oranges of the woman, and paid her a halfpenny over and above the price of them. She seemed very grateful for this kindness, and took great interest in showing him which of the boats he and Rollo must take to go to Westminster.

"There's one thing that I particularly wish to go and see," said Rollo, "while we are in London."

"What is that?" asked Mr. George.

"One of the ragged schools," said Rollo.

"What are they?" asked Mr. George.



THE FIRST RAGGED SCHOOL.

"Why, they are schools for poor boys," replied Rollo. "I believe the boys that go to the schools are pretty much all ragged. These schools were begun by a cobbler. I read about it in a book. The cobbler used to call the ragged boys in that lived about his shop, and teach them. Afterwards other people established such schools; and now there are a great many of them, and some of them are very large."

"We'll go and see some of them," said Mr. George. "I should like to go and see them very much."

So saying Mr. George led the way to the boat that the orange woman had pointed out as the one for Westminster; and they stepped on board, together with a little crowd of other passengers who were going up the river like themselves.



Chapter III. The River

Mr. George and Rollo fell into the line of people that were pressing forward over the plank which led to the boat that the orange woman had directed them to embark in; and they soon found themselves on board. The boat was small and quite narrow. There was no saloon or enclosed apartment of any kind for the passengers, nor even an awning to shelter them from the sun or rain. There were, however, substantial settees placed around the deck, some forward and others aft. Some of these settees were on the sides of the steamer, by the railing, and there were others placed back to back in the middle. There were not seats enough for all the passengers; and thus many were obliged to stand.

As the boat glided along swiftly over the water, Rollo gazed with wonder and interest at the various objects and scenes which presented themselves to view around him. The rows of dingy-looking warehouses dimly seen through the smoke along the shores of the river; the ranges of barges, lighters, and wherries lying at the margin of the water below; the bridges, stretching through the murky atmosphere across the stream, with throngs of people upon them passing incessantly to and fro; the little steamers, long and slender, and blackened by smoke, shooting swiftly in every direction over the surface of the water; and the spires and domes of the city seen on every hand beyond the nearer buildings,—attracted by turns the attention of our travellers, and excited their wonder.

In a very few minutes, however, after the boat had left its first station, she seemed to be approaching another landing-place, and Rollo was very much amused to observe how the steamer was manœuvred in coming up to the landing and making fast there. The pilot who had the command of her stood upon the wheel house on one side, and gave his orders by means of little gestures which he made with his fingers and hand. The helmsman, who stood at the wheel in the stern, watched these gestures, and regulated his steering by such of them as were meant for him. There were other gestures, however, which were meant for the engineer, who had charge of the engine. This engineer, however, could not see the gestures of the pilot, for he was down among the machinery, beneath the deck; and so there was a boy stationed on the deck, near an opening which led down to where the engineer was standing; and this boy interpreted the gestures as the pilot made them, calling out to the engineer the import of them with a very curious drawling intonation, which amused Rollo very much. Thus, when the steamer approached the land, the boy, watching the fingers of the pilot, called out, with intervals of a few seconds between each order, in a loud voice to the engineer below, as follows:—

"Ease—er-r-r!"

Then, after two or three seconds,—

"Stop—er-r-r!"

Then again,—

"Back—er-r-r!"

The engineer obeyed all these orders in succession as they were thus announced to him; and the steamer was brought up very safely to the landing, although the person who controlled her motions could not see at all where he was going.

When the steamer was thus, at length, moored to the landing, a number of the passengers stepped off, and a great many others got on; and, immediately afterwards, the cables were cast off, and the boy called out,—

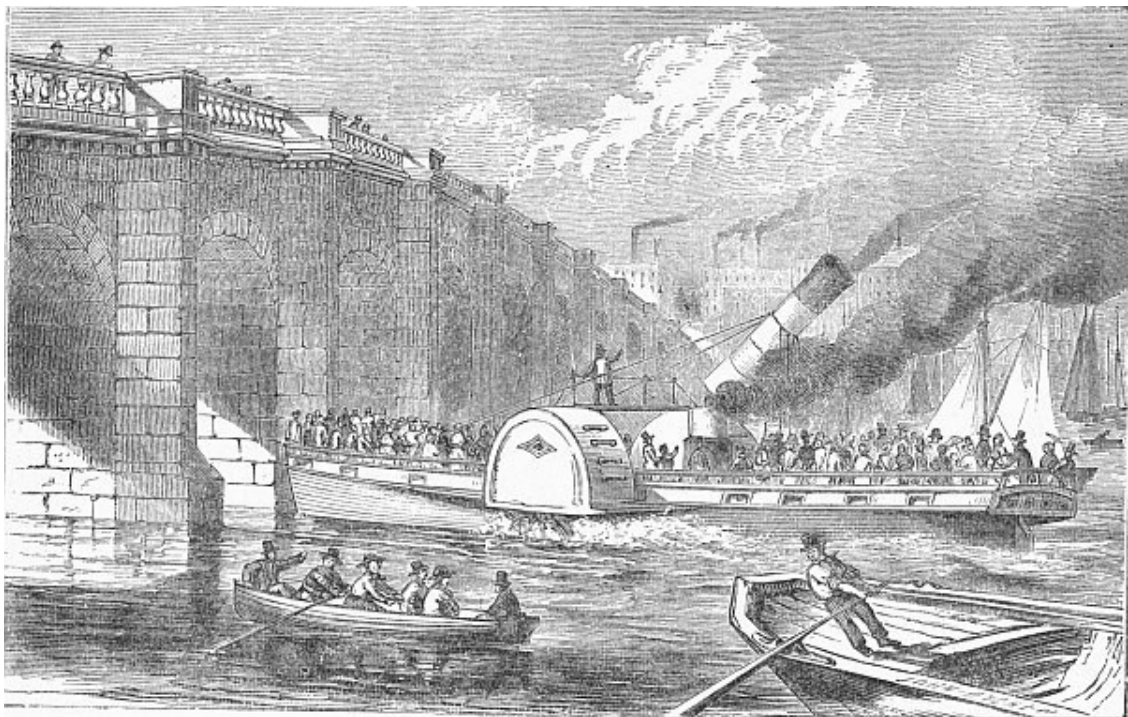
"Start—er-r-r!"

The steamer then began to glide away from the landing again, and was soon swiftly shooting over the water towards one of the arches of the next bridge up the stream.

"Now," said Rollo, "how are they going to get this tall smokepipe through that bridge?"

"You will see," said Mr. George.

Rollo looked up to the top of the smokepipe, which seemed to be considerably higher than the crown of the arch that the steamer was approaching. How it could possibly pass was a mystery. The mystery was, however, soon solved; for, at the instant that the bows of the steamer entered under the arch, two men, taking hold of levers below, turned the whole smokepipe back, by means of a hinge joint that had been made in it, not far from the deck. The hinge was in the back side of the smokepipe, and of course in bending the pipe back there was an opening made in front; and through this opening the smoke, while the steamer was passing through the bridge, came out in dense volumes. As soon, however, as the arch was cleared, the pipe was brought back into its place again by the force of great weights placed at the ends of the levers as a counterpoise. Thus the opening below was closed, and the smoke came out of the top of the pipe as before.



SHOOTING THE BRIDGE.

As soon as the boat had passed the bridge, Rollo, looking forward, saw another landing at a short distance in advance of them.

"Here comes another landing," said Rollo. "Is this the Westminster landing, do you think?"

"No," said Mr. George.

"How do you know?" asked Rollo.

"We have not come far enough yet for the Westminster landing," said Mr. George.

"How shall you know when we get there?" asked Rollo.

"I shall inquire," said Mr. George. "Besides, the Westminster landing must be at Westminster Bridge, and Westminster Bridge is above Hungerford Bridge; and I shall know Hungerford Bridge when I see it, for it is an iron suspension bridge, without arches. It is straight and slender, being supported from above by monstrous chains; and it is very narrow, being only intended for foot passengers."

"Well," said Rollo, "I will look out for it."

"I meant to have asked you," said Mr. George, "while we were on London Bridge, whether it would be best for us to take lodgings in the city or at the West End. Which do you think?"

"I don't know," said Rollo. "Which do you think would be best?"

"It is more *genteel* to be at the West End," said Mr. George.

"I don't care any thing about that," said Rollo.

"Nor do I much," said Mr. George.

"I want to go," said Rollo, "where we can have the best time."

"Yes," said Mr. George.

"And see the most to amuse us," said Rollo.

"I think," said Mr. George, "on the whole, that the West End will be the best for us. There are a few great things in the city to be seen; but the every-day walks, and little excursions, and street sights are altogether more interesting at the West End. So we had better take our lodgings there, and go to the city when we wish to by the omnibuses that go down the Strand."

"Or by these boats on the river," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "or by these boats."

Not long after this, the steamboat came to Hungerford Bridge. Rollo knew the bridge at once, as soon as it came into view, it was of so light and slender a construction. Instead of being supported, like the other bridges, upon arches built up from below, it was suspended from immense chains that were stretched across the river above. The ends of these chains passed over the tops of lofty piers, which were built for the purpose of supporting them, one on each side, near the shore. The steamer glided swiftly under this bridge, and immediately afterwards the Westminster Bridge came into view.

"Now," said Rollo, "we are coming to our landing."

When the steamer at length made the landing, Rollo and Mr. George got out and went up to the shore. They came out in a street called Bridge Street, which led them up to another street called Whitehall.

"Whitehall," said Mr. George, reading the name on the corner. "This must be the street where King Charles I. was beheaded. Let me stop and see."

So Mr. George stopped on the sidewalk, and, taking a little London guide book out of his pocket, he looked at the index to find Whitehall. Then he turned to the part of the book referred to, and there he found a long statement in respect to King Charles's execution, which ended by saying, "There cannot be a doubt, therefore, that he was executed in front of the building which stands opposite the Horse Guards."

"I'll inquire where the Horse Guards is," said Mr. George.

"Where the horse guards *are*," said Rollo, correcting what he supposed must be an error in his uncle's grammar.

"No," rejoined Mr. George, "The Horse Guards is the name of a building."

"Then this must be it," said Rollo, pointing to a building not far before them; "for here are two horse guards standing sentry at the doors of it."

Mr. George looked and saw a very splendid edifice, having a fine architectural front that extended for a considerable distance along the street, though a little way back from it. There was a great gateway in the centre; and near the two ends of the building there were two porches on the street, with a splendidly-dressed horseman, completely armed, and mounted on an elegant black charger, in each of them. The horse of each of these sentries was caparisoned with the most magnificent military trappings; and, as the horseman sat silent and motionless in the saddle, with his sword by his side, his pistols at the holster, and his bright steel helmet, surmounted with a white plume, on his head, Rollo thought that he was the finest-looking soldier he had ever seen.

"I should like to see a whole troop of such soldiers as that," said he.

"That building must be the Horse Guards," said Mr. George; "but I will be sure. I will ask this policeman."

Chapter IV. The Policeman

The policeman was a very well-dressed and gentlemanly-looking personage. He was standing, at the time when Mr. George saw him, on the edge of the sidewalk, looking at some beggar boys, who had brooms in their hands, as if they were going to sweep the crossings. The boys, however, when they saw that the policeman was looking at them, seemed alarmed, and one calling to the other, said, "Joey!" and then they both ran away round a corner.

Mr. George advanced to the policeman, and asked him if that building was the Horse Guards. The policeman listened to and answered his question in a very polite and gentlemanly manner. Mr. George made several additional inquiries in respect to the building, and received in reply to them a great deal of useful information. Rollo stood by all the while, listening to the conversation, and observing with the greatest interest the details of the uniform which the policeman wore. He was dressed, Rollo saw, in a suit of dark blue, which fitted his form very nicely. The coat had a standing collar, and was buttoned snugly up to the chin with bright buttons. On the collar was worked the letter and number, A 335, in white braid, which denoted the division that this officer belonged to, and his number in the division. The hat was peculiar, too, being glazed at the top and at the brim, and having an appearance as if covered with cloth at the sides. The figure of the policeman was very erect, and his air and bearing very gentlemanly, and he answered all Mr. George's inquiries in the most affable manner.

Every part of London is provided with policemen of this character, whose business it is to preserve order in the streets, to arrest criminals, to take care of lost children, to guide strangers, and to answer any inquiries that any person may wish to make in respect to the streets, squares, public buildings, and other objects of interest in the metropolis. The whole number of these policemen is very great, there being near six thousand of them in all. They are all young and active men; and in order that they may perform their duties in an efficient manner, they are clothed with a great deal of authority; but they exercise their power with so much gentleness and discretion that they are universal favorites with all the people who traverse the streets, except, perhaps, the beggar boys and vagabonds. *They stand in perpetual awe of them.*

Each policeman has his own district, which is called his *beat*; and he walks to and fro in this beat all the time while he is on duty. There is a station near this beat, to which he takes any delinquents or criminals that he may have occasion to arrest, in order that they may be examined, and, if found guilty, sent to prison.

One day Rollo saw a policeman taking a prisoner to the station. It was a boy about thirteen years old. The policeman walked very fast, and the boy ran along by his side. The policeman took hold of the collar of the boy's jacket behind with his hand, and so conducted him along. There was a crowd of young men and boys following, some walking fast and some running, to see what would become of the prisoner.

Rollo was at first inclined to join this party, in order that he might see too; but Mr. George thought it would be better not to do so. Rollo then began to pity the poor prisoner boy very much, in view of the expression of dreadful terror and distress which his countenance had worn when he passed by him, and he was very anxious to know what he had been doing. He accordingly stopped to ask an orange woman, who stood with a basket of oranges near a post at a corner.



THE ARREST.

"He has been beating and abusing a little boy," said the woman, "and spilling all his milk."

"Come, Rollo," said Mr. George, "we must go along."

Rollo would have liked very much to have inquired further into this transaction; but he relinquished the idea, in compliance with his uncle's wish. He found, however, that his sympathy for the poor prisoner, as is usual in such cases, was very much diminished by knowing the offence of which he had been guilty.

Rollo had an opportunity to experience the advantages of the London system of police three or four days after this, in an emergency, which, as I am now speaking of the policemen, I will mention here. He had been to see the British Museum with his uncle George, and had undertaken to find his way back to the lodgings in Northumberland Court alone, his uncle having had occasion at that time to go in another direction. The distance from the museum to Northumberland Court was only about a mile; but the intervening streets were very short, narrow, and intricate, and were inclined towards each other at all possible angles, so that Rollo very soon lost his way. In fact, he soon became completely turned round; and, instead of going towards Northumberland Court, he went wandering on in exactly

a contrary direction. He turned this way and that, and looked at the names of the streets on all the corners, in hopes to find some one he had heard of before. Finally he became completely bewildered.

"I shall have to give it up," said he to himself. "If it was a pleasant day, I could go by the sun; for by keeping to the south I should, sooner or later, come to the river."

Unfortunately for Rollo, as is usually the case in London, the sun was not to be seen. The sky was obscured with an impenetrable veil of smoke and vapor.

"I'll take a cab," said Rollo, "at the first stand, and tell the cabman to drive me to Northumberland Court. He must find where it is the best way he can."

Rollo put his hands in his pockets as he said this, and found, to his consternation, that he had no money. He had left his purse in the pocket of another suit of clothes at home. He immediately decided that he must give up the plan of taking a cab, since he had no money to pay for it. This difficulty, however, was, in fact, by no means insuperable, as he might have taken a cab, and paid the fare when he arrived at his lodgings, by asking the man to wait at the door while he went up to get his purse. He did not, however, think of this plan, but decided at once that he must find some other way of getting home than by taking a cab.

"I will ask a policeman," said he.

So he began to look about for a policeman; and as there are so many thousands of them on duty in London, one can almost always be very readily found; and, when found, he is instantly known by his uniform.

Rollo met the policeman walking towards him on the sidewalk.

"I want to find my way to Northumberland Court," said he. "Will you be good enough to tell me which way to go?"

The policeman looked at Rollo a moment with a kind and friendly expression of countenance.

"Why, it is two miles and a half from here," said he, "at least, and a very difficult way to find. I think you had better take a cab."

"But I have not any money," said Rollo.

The policeman looked at Rollo again with as near an approach to an expression of surprise on his countenance as it is possible for a policeman to manifest, since it is a part of his professional duty never to be surprised at anything or thrown off his guard. Rollo was, however, so well dressed, and was so gentlemanly in his air and bearing, that almost any one would have wondered a little to hear him say that he had no money.

"I accidentally left my money all at home," said Rollo, by way of explanation.

"Very well," said the policeman; "come with me."

So Rollo and the policeman walked along together. As they walked they fell into conversation, and Rollo told the policeman who he was, and how he came to lose his way. The policeman was very much interested when he heard that his young friend was an American; and he asked him a great many questions about New York and Boston. He said he had a brother in Boston, and another in Cincinnati.

After walking the distance of two or three blocks, the policeman said,—

"This is the end of my beat. I must now put you in charge of another officer."

So saying, he made a signal to another policeman, who was on the opposite sidewalk, and then going up to him with Rollo, he said,—

"This young gentleman wishes to go to Northumberland Court. Pass him along. He is from America."

So Rollo walked with the second policeman to the end of *his* beat, talking with him all the way about America and about what he had seen in London. At the end of the second policeman's beat Rollo was placed in the charge of a third policeman; and thus he was conducted all the way, until he came in sight of Charing Cross by a succession of policemen, without ever making it necessary for any one of them to leave his beat. As soon as Charing Cross came into view, with the tall Nelson monument, in Trafalgar Square, to mark it, Rollo at once knew where he was. So he told the policeman

who had him in charge there that he could go the rest of the way alone; and so, thanking him for his kindness and bidding him good by, he ran gayly home.

Thus the policemen are, in many ways, the stranger's friends. They are to be found every where; and they are always ready to render any service which the passenger may require of them. Each one is furnished with a baton, which is his badge of office; a rattle, with which he calls other policemen to his aid when he requires them; a lantern for the night; and an oilskin cape for rainy weather. In winter, too, they have greatcoats, made in a peculiar fashion.

But to return to the Horse Guards. After Mr. George had finished his conversation with the policeman about the Horse Guards, he said to Rollo that he was going over to the other side of the street, in order to get a better view of the building. So he led the way, and Rollo followed him. When they reached the opposite sidewalk, Mr. George took his station on the margin of it, and began to survey the edifice on the opposite side of the street with great apparent interest.

"I don't see any thing very remarkable about it," said Rollo.

"It is the head quarters of the British army," said Mr. George.

"What elegant black horses those troopers are upon!" said Rollo.

"It is the centre of a power," said Mr. George, talking, apparently, to himself, "that is felt in every quarter of the world."

"I should like to have such a uniform as that," said Rollo, "and to be mounted on such a horse; but then, I should rather ride about the city than to stand still all the time in one of those sentry boxes."

"About the *town*, you mean," said Mr. George.

Rollo here observed that there was an open gateway in front of the Horse Guards, and beyond it an arched passage, leading directly through the centre of the building to some place in the rear of it. There were a great many people coming and going through this passage way; so many, in fact, as to make it evident that it was a public thoroughfare. Rollo asked his uncle George where that passage way led to.

"It leads to the rear of the Horse Guards," said Mr. George, "where there is a great parade ground, and through the parade ground to Hyde Park. I have studied it out on the map."

"Let us go through and see the parade ground," said Rollo.

"No," said Mr. George, "not now. We had better go some morning when the troops are parading there. We must go now and look out our lodgings."

So Mr. George and Rollo walked on, and about half an hour afterwards Mr. George engaged lodgings in a place near the junction of the Strand with Charing Cross, called Northumberland Court.



Chapter V.

Lodgings

The whole system of providing for travellers at hotels and lodging houses in England is entirely different from the one adopted in America. In America all persons, in respect to the rights and privileges which they enjoy, are, in theory, on a footing of perfect equality; and thus, in all public resorts, such as hotels, boarding houses, public places of amusement, and travelling conveyances, all classes mingle together freely and without reserve. At the hotels and boarding houses, they breakfast, dine, and sup together at the public tables; and even if they have private parlors of their own, they do not, ordinarily, confine themselves to them, but often seek society and amusement in the public drawing rooms. At the places of amusement and in the public conveyances they all pay the same price, and are entitled to the same privileges, and they only get the best seats when they come early to secure them. This, in America, is the general rule; though of course there are many exceptions, especially in the great cities. In England it is altogether different. There society is divided into a great many different ranks and degrees, the people of each of which keep themselves entirely separate and distinct from all the others. The cars of the railway trains are divided into four or five classes, and travellers take one or the other of them, according to their wealth or their rank, and pay accordingly. In the hotels and lodging houses every arrangement is made to keep each guest or party of guests as separate as possible from all the rest. There are no public tables or public drawing rooms. Each party, on its arrival at the hotel, takes a suit of rooms, consisting, at least, of a sitting room and bed room, and every thing that they require is served to them separately there, just as if there were no other guests in the house. It is the same with the boarding houses, or lodging houses as they are commonly called. Each boarder has his own apartment, and whatever he calls for is sent to him there. He pays so much a day for his room or rooms, and then for his board he is charged for every separate article that he orders; so that, so far as he takes his meals away from his lodgings, either by breakfasting or dining, or taking tea at the houses of friends, or at public coffee rooms, he has nothing to pay at his lodging house excepting the rent of his rooms.

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