Merry Christmas

Christmas Lesson

The Child and The Kingdom

Mathew 1: 18-25; 18: 1-14; 19: 13-15.

PRINTED TEXT, Matt. 1: 18-25; 18: 1-6; 19: 13-15

GOLDEN TEXT—A little child shall lead them. Isa. 11: 6.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING

TIME—The annunciation to Joseph, the conception of the Virgin Mary, and the birth of Jesus all took place, probably, in the year 5 B.C. The teaching of Jesus concerning childhood was given in the autumn of A.D. 20.

PLACE—Mary's conception and the annunciation to Joseph occurred in Nazareth. The birth of Jesus took place in Bethlehem. The teaching of Christ found in this lesson was given in Capernaum.

Matthew 1: 18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. The divine conception of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit is given with much greater detail in Luke's Gospel (1: 26-38). Mark has written nothing whatever concerning the birth and childhood of Jesus. Only Matthew and Luke tell the story of the supernatural birth, though John seems to refer to it (1: 14). Matthew tells it to us from the standpoint of Joseph, who was betrothed to Mary, and therefore legally her husband.

Message To Joseph

19. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 20. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. "Jesus" was a very common Hebrew name (Joshua) in its Greek form. It means "Jehovah's Salvation." God took hold of a name perfectly familiar, which set the new-born Child among the children of men.

Birth of Jesus

22. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 23. Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us. This prophecy is found in Isa. 7: 14. 24. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife; 25. and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name JESUS.

The Little Child

Matt. 18: 1. In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2. And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them. 3. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. No one has yet given the perfect and exclusive interpretation of this profound idea — it has been suggested that here means that we should be like children in humility, in obedience, in indifference to the distinctions of rank and wealth, pure-hearted. 5. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. Let us receive and cherish children in Jesus' name, just as he would receive himself.

Let No Harm Come

6. But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea. How can we cause little children to stumble? By letting them see our own unbelief, cynicism; by letting them have their own way, by failing to restrain or discipline them. Children cannot have a full knowledge of Christian doctrines, but they can know Jesus as one who loves them, whom they can trust and pray to.

Christ's Blessing

13. Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven. 15. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

Palestine Has 11 Christmases

Different Dates Marked By Religious Groups in Country

Note to little boys and girls who are sorry that Christmas comes but once a year: Palestine has 11 Christmas days, the only country in the world to have so many.

They extend from the Latin services on December 25 to the Abyssinian liturgy on March 25 and result from a fourth century dispute, within the Christian church over adoption of a unified calendar.

Julian, Gregorian Calendars

Some Christians adopted the Gregorian calendar, which puts Christmas on December 25th, while others retained the Julian calendar and still others chose their own dates for Christendom's great festivals.

The Abyssinian church celebrates the birth of Christ on the 25th of every month, but the greatest celebration is the solemn liturgy on March 25th.

On January 6th, under the Julian calendar, comes the Greek Orthodox celebration. As Latin Christians did on December 25, members of the Greek Orthodox community will make a pilgrimage to the Bethlehem shrine and re-enact the drama of Christ's birth.

The British mandate government of Palestine has recognized all of these denominations and has given them equal rights and privileges in all Christian shrines throughout the Holy Land.

The Christ Child

MADONNA AND CHILD — SWIGLEA

IN THE STABLE

The little bulls drew together
With the doves softly whispering,
While the ass wondered whither
He wanted out or in,
Pulling at his rope and starting
to paw
His stall, scattering the straw.
Each in his gentle way, uneasy,
not at rest,
Not knowing why oppressed.

And then the light!
Not day or night,
But something different and
strange—
So that they stopped all movement, waited—
As if each moment now were
freighted
With some new thing beyond
their vision's range,
Till clearer, by the manger, they
all saw
Mother and child.
And now no longer timid, stumbling, wild,
They stooped above them—seeing
how they smiled—
Knowing in some mute, kindly
way that all was well,
Not knowing what but feeling
love was there.
And Mary, raising happy eyes to
them
Ranged round her as if holden by
some spell.
Lifted the babe with care,
And blessed them gently—dumb,
inarticulate, yet getting each his
share
Of that great love which to the
world had come.

Moderation At Christmas Time

"Too Much Christmas" Is To Be Avoided

Even at Christmas time it is possible to have "too much of a good thing" say authorities of the Department of Pensions and National Health at Ottawa.

"Have a Christmas without regrets. The health-angle of Christmastide is important. Glowing faces of children and gladdened hearts of adults are signs of upsurging spirits. There is a close relationship between happiness and health. Christmas gives everyone an opportunity to discard unhealthy moods and repressions, and to let the spirit of joy have full rein."

Spirit of Joy

Fire marshals warn against accidents setting fire to Christmas trees by the use of lighted candles, and, since medical authorities are interesting themselves in accident prevention, this further word of advice comes from National Health headquarters. "If you must celebrate away from home, leave your car in the garage, and take a taxi."

"O Little Town Of Bethlehem"

There, Was Born A "Saviour Who Is Christ the Lord"

Bethlehem or The House of Bread, was more anciently known as Ephrath or Fruitful, but in modern times is called Beit-lahm or "House of Flesh."

All these names are significant to Christians whose interest in it arises from the tremendous fact that in that little town was born Him Who was rightly called "The Bread of Life;" Who was to be the fruitful Head of a new race, widespread as the world itself; and Who was there born in human flesh, though the Almighty Son of God.

"House of Bread"

Its history was by no means all bright and holy. Jacob burying along with a deathly sick wife, was compelled to halt nearby, while his greatly beloved Rachel gave birth to the little Benjamin, and then in her husband's arms died there.

Her grave is still marked by a rough stone monument!

It was in Bethlehem that the young Levite lived, who Micah hired to be his chaplain, and with whom is connected the tragic story in the last chapters of the book of Judges. The terrible tale of wrong doing and reprisals came perilously near to the destroying of the whole tribe of Benjamin, within whose limits Bethlehem was situated.

Its Past History

Thither came the widow Naomi, and her daughter-in-law Ruth, the Moabitess, mourners, bereft of all they had held dear. There the young widow Ruth was wedded to her wealthy kinsman Boaz, thereby becoming great-grandmother of the Psalmist-King David, and also one of the progenitors of the Christmas King, the Lord and saviour of Mankind.

Rehoboam, son of Solomon, made a fortified city of Bethlehem (2 Chronicles XI. 16) and later a famous khan (corresponding to our hotel) was built there probably by Chimham, son of Barzillai the Gileadite who befriended David (2 Samuel XVII.) when in trouble and was named after him (Jeremiah XLI. 17). This khan appears to have been a place where caravans were made up for long journeys, and it was from thence that the rebellious Jews, disregarding God's orders set off for Egypt, carrying the prophet Jeremiah with them. It may have been that same khan, or in New Testament terms that inn, at which Joseph and Mary (Luke 11) applied for lodging, but could find no other accommodation than a stable in a grotto under, or near to it, wherein to spend the first of all Christmas Eves, although they were both of royal descent, descendants of King David himself!

That poor stable became the most famous bed-chamber in the whole world, for there amidst the cattle was born the holy Baby, Who was God, the Creator of all things, clothed in mortal flesh, that He might become the Saviour of all who wished it from their sins!

The Poor Stable

To the stable came the shepherds called away from their own sheep-folds by a herald in the heavens, accompanied by singing choirs of angels, who made the thrilling momentous announcement: "unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 11, 11).

Countless thousands have knelt in sacred worship before that most holy shrine, once "a lowly cattle shed," the only shelter this evil world could provide for its Maker, Redeemer and King, when in pitying love and tender saving mercy He came to visit it, at the Christmas tide!

Legend Surrounds Christmas Fairy

Gossamer Creature Was Once A Poor Unhappy Little Girl

Have you ever wondered why the graceful, little fairies dressed in the loveliest of gossamer garments, with gleaming ornaments in their hair and dainty wands in their hands, figure so prominently in Christmas decorations and festivities? An old Yuletide legend is the origin of this. Let me tell you the story.

Many, many years ago on a Christmas Eve a poor little girl named Mary was very unhappy. Mary was an orphan, which means she had neither a mother nor a father, and the old woman she lived with made her very miserable by her cruel treatment. Snow lay deep on the ground, in the forest where Mary and the old woman lived.

"I want some strawberries," said the old woman. "Go fetch me some."

Mary said that there could be no strawberries growing in the snow but she was pushed out of doors into the forest. She sat down beneath a tree and began to cry, and while she cried there came a little gnome carrying a lantern. Night had come on, and it was very dark.

"Tell me why you are crying," said the gnome. Mary told him, and then the gnome said: "I am on my way to meet Santa Claus who is coming from Toyland."

This made Mary very happy, but all at once a dark cloud covered the moon, and the gnome turned pale.

"I know this is the work of the wicked underground gnomes. They have, by their magi made the cloud over the moon so that Santa Claus cannot find the way to the earth.

"Quick!" said the gnome, "take this lantern and hold tight to that tir tree!" Mary did as she was asked, while the gnome muttered some magic words and the little tree grew. It grew so quickly that it reached right up to the sky, and on top was Mary, holding the lantern. And by this means Santa was able to find his way.

"Make the tree its proper size once more," said Santa Claus afterwards. But when the tree became small again, on the top was — no, not Mary, but a beautiful fairy! The little girl had been transformed.

And she never had to go back to the cross old woman but instead remained in Fairyland where she lived happily ever after.

Pagan Evergreens

Decorating the house with evergreens at Christmas is a pagan custom and an edict compiled at the Council of Bracara forbade the people to deck their homes with bay leaves and green boughs. Pagans believed that the sylvan spirits would repair to them in very cold weather, shelter beneath their leaves and remain unnipped by frost and cold. Houses used to be decked with holm, ivy, bay, laurel, box, and holly.

Mistletoe was forbidden in English churches as it was a heathen emblem, the sole exception being York Cathedral. Dr. Stukeley tells us that it was customary to carry a branch of mistletoe in procession to the high altar and proclaim a general indulgence and pardon of sins at the city gates.

MISTLETOPICS

One naturally thinks of Christmas-trees, holly, and mistletoe.

Mistletoe gets its name from the German mist, expelled matter. The hard seeds are dispersed by birds passing them undigested through their bodies. Missel-thrushes often function so.

Mistletoe grows most commonly on apple and other rosaceous trees, very rarely on oaks. It gets its nourishment by putting suckers into the branches of its host. The sucker-bearing shoots display a weird kind of intelligence, actually groping their way along the branch for the best food-supply.

Flooded river and frosted roads,
Creaking carts with heaped-up
loads,
Wild duck winging through leaden sky,
Christmas day is drawing night.

Holly and mistletoe on the stalls
Lanterns, streamers and colored
balls.
Short the day and long the night,
Merry games by candlelight.

Silken snowflakes quivering
down,
Silent footsteps in the town,
Icicles on the window pane,
Christmas day is here again.

T. Lovatt Williams

CHAPTER TWELVE

"Goodbye, Mr. Chips"

Those four years were difficult years at Brookfield, what with the scarcity of masters, the military activities of the school — for it was training the older boys to be officers with the army in France —and an occasional air raid. But Chips was happy; he, too, was serving his country in a way, despite his more than forescore years.

He found time to keep his promise to young Peter Colley; every few weeks he ran over to Charborough to see Helen and her baby son who had the blond hair of Peter and a head that promised to develop into one just like his father's.

Chips refused Helen's urging to have another piece of cake.

"No, thank you. I always eat too much when I come here. Well, young Colley," he said to the baby in his high-chair, "that's a fine mess you are making! This young fellow must come to Brookfield, Helen."

"Of course. The Colleys have gone to Brookfield since Queen Anne died. Peter counts on that for his son. Peter always asks after you in his letters."

"We're even then. His letters to me are full of you."

"I like to think ..... to hope ..... that he'll be back before the leaves fall."

Peter Colley Killed

"There's every hope, Helen — hope of peace. Beats me," he added, smiling, "how any war could last so long with a Colley in it."

"Oh, to think of living without fear again—without trembling at the sight of a letter or telegram. .....Surely, we shall never again take our happiness for granted."

It was but a few weeks afterward that Chips stood at the lectern in the school chapel. In his hand was the latest casualty list. Trying to master a great emotion, he spoke:

"From every point comes news of hope—we can say at last without fear that the end is in sight. ...But even in victory we have cruel news to bear—losses that are the more tragic because peace is so close at hand." He looked at the casualty list, braced himself as though against a sudden shock, and continued:

"'Peter Colley, Lieutenant in the Coldstream Guards, was killed in action during a trench raid on the night of November 8th. He remained in full view of the enemy in order to rescue his batman, Perkins, who had fallen fatally wounded ..... Both men died before they could be brought in'. Name?"

"Colley, sir."

"You're not ..... Peter Colley?"

"Yes, sir."

"I knew your father."

"Yes, sir. My father was here, and my grandfather."

"Take your cup and sit by the fire. Have a piece of cake .... What do you think of Brookfield?"

"It's...it's big, sir."

"You'll like it though when you get used to it. It's not half such an awful place as it seems the first day. Bit afraid of it?"

"A bit, sir."

"So was I to begin with. But that's quite a while ago. Sixty-three years. Tell me, how is your mother?"

"She's....You'd like my mother, sir. She's funny.....I mean, she makes quite good jokes. Won't you come and see us some day, sir?"

"It's good to have a mother that makes jokes. I was there one autumn when the leaves were turning....There, that's the bell for Call Over. You'll have to go. Just walk by the master and call your name. Don't let it scare you."

"I won't now, sir—after that lovely tea."

"You must come again, some day, Colley. Let yourself out. I'm ....I'm a little tired."

That tiredness failed to go away. And one day, Chips opened his weary eyes, coming to from oblivion, to find Marsham, the Headmaster, and Dr. Merivale talking in low tones.

"Poor old chap. Must have had a lonely life all by himself," he heard Marsham say.

"Not always by himself," responded Merivale. "He married, you know."

"Did he? I never knew that."

"She died, a long time ago."

"Pity," said Marsham. "Pity he never had any children."

"What was that you were saying about me?" asked Chips weakly.

Crowd Of Memories

"Nothing, Chips, nothing at all," Marsham hastened to assure him. "We were just wondering when you were going to wake out of that beauty sleep of yours."

"But I heard you. You were talking about me. Pity I never had any children, eh? But you're wrong, I have .... Thousands of 'em . . . thousands of 'em . . . and all boys...."

Chips smiled, and drowsed away again. Confused memories floated through his mind; boys passing him, calling their names ...Max Staefel saying something.... 'I would be happy to have you come with me' .... 'Smart, Sampson, Saville, Scott' .... The mist was rising, hiding the valley below ....! Owen, O'Hare, Pearson, Pringle, Pascall, Pierce,...A voice coming down through the mist: Hel-lo.... a girl's voice .... "You kissed me!" Kathie...Kathie!... "You are a very sweet person"... "Cooper, Craven, Castle, Colley ....." A boyish treble voice: ..... young Colley — Peter's son..... What is he saying?...."Goodbye, Mr. Chips..."

A low sigh fluttered from the dying man's lips. Dr. Merivale pressed down the eyelids.

THE END

She Cooked--- Their Marriage!

HE didn't see how she could do it — cook steaks and fine dishes, with all the trimmings; dress smart and look new in last year's clothes. And save money doing it. As a matter of fact, she wasn't doing it. All of which plunged their marriage into unforgettable disaster. How, is told in the vital new serial

BRIDE ON A BUDGET

Starts Next Week

People Today Are Hungry For Laughs

Victor Moore, Comedian, Declares Humans Are Trying to Keep Their Balance By Encouraging A Sense of Humor

Victor Moore, who soon will celebrate his 64th birthday anniversary and his 60th year in the theatre believes that the people are more laugh-hungry now than they have ever been in his long career as a comedian.

"Especially the kids," he said in an interview. They want to laugh and are not much concerned about what they are laughing at. But the older folks are pretty much the same way; a lot of them seem to be liking more kinds of humor.

"Psychologists have got very profound over this, but it doesn't strike me as especially involved. The world has worked itself into another mess, and human beings are trying to keep their balance by cultivating a sense fo humor."

"Same Old Ingredient"

Five decades in show business have taught Mr. Moore that there's nothing new in comedy.

"We've dressed up the old material fit to kill and produced some gorgeous mountings, but the same old ingredients are still there and always will be," he said.

Rabbits vs. Snakes

Shoppers who had stopped to watch the antics of several rabbits in the window of a pet store at Hull, England, were horrified to see snakes escape from the next partition and steal among the rabbits. But a rabbit devoured one of the snakes, and the rest slid back to their own "den" as fast as they could.

Make Draperies Rejuvenate Room

Tips to Remember When Buying Fabrics For This Purpose

A new window treatment can often do more for making a new room out of an old one than anything else — especially if you have not much money for new furniture. But buying draperies, like buying anything else, must not be done blindly, writes Mary Davis Gollier in McCall's.

FABRIC: Cotton novelties and dull rayon fabrics are first choice for the average house today because of their pleasant informality. Shiny damasks, velvets and brocades call for a formal setting. Originality, color and texture are important but inexpensive requirements. For instance, unlined beige sheeting, 72 inches wide may serve as draperies.

YARDAGE: Never hang skimpy draperies. Floor-length is usually desirable and 36 inches is a minimum width for each side of a window. A 56-inch width is preferred and in lightweight fabrics a full 72 inches may not be too much. To be attractive, draperies must hang softly.

COLOR: Fastness to light is imperative, but consider also fastness to cleaning or washing. To be sure the color is pleasing, hold up by the window in the room in which it will be used. Hues vary with the quality of both day and night light.

CONSTRUCTION: Good tailoring is essential. Neat headings, carefully applied trimmings and hemmed edges instead of selvages are requirements. They must fit exactly the space for which they are intended.

HANGING: Makeshifts look dowdy. Correct hardware and securely tacked edges add to the appearance of draperies. Always use boards for supporting valances.

Middle School Pass - 50 P.C.

Secondary School Pupils Must Obtain Standing on Year's Work, Minister of Education Says

Students in Ontario high schools must attain a 50 per cent. standing on their year's work in order to obtain a middle school pass in 1940, according to a statement issued by the provincial minister of education. Hon. Dr. L. J. Simpson, in connection with the recent announcement that middle school examinations are to be abolished.

Upper School — 66

Upper school pupils will have to attain a 66 per cent. rating or they will have to write examinations if they wish to gain a departmental certificate. In 1941, all upper school students will have to take examinations.

"There shall be no appeal to the minister from the decision of the principal and his staff, but the special revising board will give consideration to cases in which, by reason of illness or other special circumstances, such consideration is warranted," the statement said.

Challenge To Rural Women

Setting Up of Welfare Legislation In Smaller Communities a Big Responsibility

Legislation is of little value unless it is generously interpreted and adequately administered, Dr. Charlotte Whitton, executive director of the Canadian Welfare Council, said at Toronto in an address at the recent banquet of the Women's Institutes.

Dr. Whitton believed the structure of Canadian law, so far as it pertained to welfare services, ranked high, but the challenge for improvement lay in the field of administration.

Work Out A System

"An immediate challenge comes to women's organizations and citizen groups to acquaint themselves with the welfare legislation in their own communities," she said. "The biggest responsibility in the next decade will be in the working out in the smaller communities of a system for the best possible co-operation of voluntary efforts and public welfare service."

Survey Average Canadian's Diet

Study Being Made of Local Eating Habits in All Large Cities of Dominion

The current survey of local eating habits, now operating in Halifax, as in Quebec, Toronto, and Edmonton, is expected to produce data, about what and how much Canadians eat, never before recorded, says the Halifax Chronicle. The survey is under the sponsorship of the Canadian Council on Nutrition, set up by the Canadian Government in 1938, under the Department of Pensions and National Health, with the deputy minister Dr. R. E. Wodehouse as chairman.

Standard Set

The investigators will compare the diets of local families with a standard adopted by the council as adequate and satisfactory. They are trying to find out whether our people eat more or less than such a standard. During the surveys in the four cities, several hundreds of families will have their weekly food budget analyzed in terms of calories, fats, sugars, proteins, minerals and vitamins.

Important To National Health

The data which the survey will yield is of importance in national health work at any time. It is especially important during war in order to safeguard proper distribution of foodstuffs. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has computed figures on the export and import of foodstuffs for years, but figures on average food consumption have been lacking. The survey should yield an indicative picture of what foods and how much people in various parts of Canada are eating.

Strange Medicine

If you had a headache you would think twice before going to your chemist and asking him to mix you a potion of frogs' legs and powdered skulls. But that is the sort of remedy the healers of past ages used to recommend to their patients. As recently as 1716 a book of "receipts" was published in Britain, giving infallible remedies for all manner of ailments. Among them are these strange cures:—

Against Deafness: Ants' eggs, mixed with onion juice, to be applied in the ear.

Colic: A live duck, frog or sucking dog applied to the part "draweth all the evil to itself and dieth."

Fever: A cataplasm of snails, bruised in their shells, applied to the forehead.

Paralysis: Anoint the affected parts with an ointment made with earthworms.

Sleeplessness: Living creatures applied to the head.

Greens Fool Hens Into Spring Laying

Weather note: Winter seems to have skipped entirely the poultry house at the University of Tennessee.

Dr. Paul W. Allen, bacteriology professor, disclosed an experiment in which hens were fed succulent green vegetables "to fool them into thinking spring has come."

The heas fell for it, put off their customary winter strike against egg-laying. Dr. Allen said they produced 50 per cent more eggs than birds on normal rations.

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Christmas Trees Profitable Crop

Orderly Cutting And Marketing Each Year Provides A Worthwhile Occupation for Canadian Farmer

Canada's growing Christmas tree trade offers no serious threat to the forests, according to the Dominion Forest Service, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa. Each year about six million Christmas trees are cut in Canada, but under proper management these could be produced in perpetuity on an area of less than two hundred square miles

Indiscriminate and wasteful methods used by some tree dealers are condemned, but the orderly cutting and marketing of the annual Christmas tree crop provides the basis for a legitimate and profitable industry. About one million Christmas trees are used annually in Canadian homes, and five million are shipped to the United States.

Six Million A Year

Formerly young trees for the Christmas trade were secured with little or no difficulty from the woodlands or pastures situated within convenient distance of towns, villages and other shipping centres throughout Eastern Canada, particularly in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. Within the past few years, however, a scarcity of suitable trees has been experienced in some localities with the result that many farmers are now growing Christmas trees on managed plantations.

Weather Signs Mostly "Boloney"

Just because squirrels store extra large quantities of nuts and horses grow thick coats, it does not mean that a severe winter may be expected, Dan McCowan, Banff naturalist, said when he arrived at Winnipeg last week on a lecture tour.

"That's a fallacy," the naturalist declared when asked if the storing of nuts by squirrels was a sign of a cold winter. "The squirrel does not hibernate but sleeps intermittently. The milder the winter, the oftener he wakes up and eats. The colder the winter the more he sticks to sleeping and the less food he eats."

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