

The Campaigns of Razadarit - *Binnya Dala*
Translated by San Lwin

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When the Buddha, foremost of the victorious personages, was a hermit by the name of Sumedha during the time of the *Dīpankarā* Buddha, he prostrated himself (on a patch of wet) ground and requested the Buddha to step across using him as a bridge. With his omniscience, the Buddha saw that the hermit would become a Buddha by the name of Gotama and made his pronouncement of this event. From this time onward the hermit practiced to perfect the ten virtues with their thirty derivatives and the five great renunciations¹ and he was eventually reborn as a god in the *Tusitā* heaven from whence he allowed himself to be conceived in the womb of *Srī Mahāmāyā*, queen to King *Suddhodhana*, ruler of *Kapilavatthu*. Born ten months after the conception, he took seven steps towards the north and exclaimed, "I am supreme, the acme of humanity."

At the age of sixteen he was wed to Princess *Yasodharā* and enjoyed the kingly pleasures up to the age of twenty-nine. On the day that a son by the name of *Rāhulā* was born to him, he took a sojourn in the park where the four visionary figures of the aged, the sick, the dead and the recluse were revealed to his eyes which prompted him to be apprehensive of the unending cycles of births and rebirths with their concomitant sufferings and on this very day he took to the forest mounted on his steed, *Kandika* and taking only his equerry, Channa along. As he crossed the *Anomā* river and entered the *Anupīya* forest, the *Ghadikāra Brahmā* god presented him with a set of monastic robes upon which he shaved off his hair with a dagger that he carried as a regalia of royalty and threw his shorn lengths of hair skyward. These were retrieved by *Indra*, ruler of the *Tāvātimsa* heaven where the famous stupa of *Cūlāmaṇi* was built to enshrine it.

Changing into the monastic robes and leaving his princely robes behind, he became a monk and practised severely trying austerities for a total of six years. Resting at the foot of the *Ajapāla* fig tree at the end of this phase, he received the offering of rice boiled with milk in a bowl of gold made by a lady named *Sujātā*. After partaking of forty-nine morsels of this rice he made a vow and floated the bowl on the waters of the *Nerañjarā* river where it headed upstream like a paddling duck.

From there, he approached the Bo tree where *Sudhiya Nga Sin* (*Sotthiya*) the grass cutter offered eight handfuls of *cuscus* grass² which turned into a throne as

Perfection of virtue (*pāramī*) is composed of ten aspects:— (*dāna*) giving; (*sīla*) conduct; (*nikkhama*) renunciation or taking to the forest as ascetic; (*paññā*) perception; (*vīriya*) diligence; (*saccēa*) verity; (*adhiṭṭha*—na) resolution; (*mettā*) compassion or loving kindness and (*upekkhā*) detachment.

When these involve the sacrifice of life and limb the derivatives become threefold, thus acts of supreme sacrifices are counted as thirty.

The five great acts of renunciation or sacrifices (*pañca mahā paricāgā*) are:— renunciation of wealth, of one's limbs and organs, giving away one's son, one's wife and sacrificing one's life.

cus-cus grass (*Andropogon squarrosus*) also known as vetiver grass has highly aromatic roots reminiscent of sandalwood.

he spread it under the tree. He was ensconced cross-legged on this throne when the satanic *Mara* came with his evil horde to make war on him. As the Buddha-to-be's mind dwelt on the perfections of virtue on which he had spent superhuman efforts through the preceding countless rebirths, *Mara* and his horde were routed by this insuperable force of virtue. On this Wednesday the full moon day of the month of Kason (*Vesākha*) he attained the vision of omniscience and Buddhahood.

On the 49th day after this event which the Buddha was spending under a Rajāyatana (*Sapium baccatum*) tree, he was offered honey-cakes by the merchant brothers (*Tapassu and Bhallika*) to whom the Buddha gave eight strands of hair from his head. These sacred hairs were enshrined in a stupa built on the *Saṅguttara* hill by the brothers and came to be known far and wide as the *Dagon Hsandaw Shin* (*the Shwedagon pagoda*). From there, the Buddha left for Rājagaha city to accept food offertories.

The saint Gavumpati on seeing that his mother in a previous life was now a citizen in the city of Thaton, travelled there by means of levitation and on reaching there gave tidings of the Buddha to its king *Srī Mahāsoka*. The king was much moved by these tidings and entreated the saint to invite the Buddha so that he would be able to pay homage to him. Gavumpati's mother was then a member of a hunting tribe but all of them became pious Buddhists after the saint had admonished them. The saint then left in the same manner as he had arrived and made his request to the Buddha who came to Thaton and preached to the king and people. King Sri Mahasoka and his subjects held grand charitable events for seven whole days.

Founding of the city of Mautamau (Martaban) by Narapitisithu
Thence, (the Buddha) travelled to the Mautamau region which was inhabited by ogres. Their first thought was to be hostile towards the Buddha but their hearts were won over on seeing him and the ogre Sumana prepared a seat of pristine rock and invited the Buddha to sit on it. He held a great leaf from the wood-oil tree to protect the person of the Buddha from the sun and reverently offered a cordial made of fruit juice and a fragrant pile of flowers. The Buddha in his omniscient vision made preordainment that Sumana would one day become the Lord of the White Elephant (ie a powerful king) in this region.

Just as the Lord Buddha had made this preordainment, eventually Narapatisithu, descended from a long line of kings, made a tour of this region in his wondrous boat and on reaching Dalamyinepatwa, founded the stockaded city of Mautamau and appointed a retainer by the name of Aleinmar as its governor. Later, Mautamau came to be known as Muttama (Martaban).

The ogre Sumana eventually passed away and was reborn as a human being by the name of Magadu in the locality of Takawun. His sister went by the name of Hnin U Htai. After Magadu had come of age, he led a trading party of thirty men to Sokkate Sukhotai).

One of them fell ill at the foot of the pagoda hill. Magadu shouldered the sick man's load in addition to his and climbed on. As he reached the mountain top, a rainstorm brewed up and lightning struck the yoke shouldered by Magadu. Turning towards the west, Magadu saw a golden vista of palatial buildings with tiered roofs and spires in the flash of lightning. He took this as a sign that he was born to be great. The rest of his party were unscathed and eventually reached a large unstockaded village with a marketplace on the mountain and decided to stop for the night there. On investigation it was found that there was a learned reader of omens in the village and Magadu went there with appropriate presents to seek his counsel. The soothsayer said that because what Magadu had witnessed was of great importance he would have to offer silver heaped to the height of his person before he would consent to read this omen. Magadu being a person with no mean acuity of mind, piled the thirty pieces of silver he had with him on a termite mound and told the soothsayer that he had completed his end of the bargain. The soothsayer, realising that Magadu had great intellect in addition to his accumulated merits from the past, advised him "From this day abandon your trading occupation and take up serving king. You will become a king within this year." Magadu kowtowed three times in joy and left.

After selling off their goods the thirty traders left Sukhotai, but Magadu remained behind as he was advised. Seeking service with the king he was deterred by his lack of proper attire but was employed by the chief of the king's elephantry who took to him kindly. Magadu persevered in his task, feeding the elephants whenever needed whether it was night or day and he swept the elephant stables clean, leaving not aisp of weed in them. One day the king of Sukhotai came to inspect his elephants and seeing Magadu going about his tasks asked the chief who he was. The chief of elephantry replied that he was a Talaing youth who was serving under him. The pleased king instructed the chief to keep the youth well clothed. This the chief was glad to do as he felt kindly towards Magadu. Magadu was unceasing in his efforts to discharge his duties day and night. One day, the king removed the betel quid from his mouth and on rinsing it a tiny cowrie fell out which he pointed out to Magadu. Magadu kowtowed to the king before picking it up. After the king had left, Magadu mused over this incident and decided that the king wanted to test his abilities. He went to buy some amaranth seeds with the cowrie but the woman who sold the seeds mockingly said that for such a tiny cowrie he could take as much as he could with his finger.

Magadu being well gifted with intellect asked her to confirm whether he could take as much as could with his forefinger. Obtaining the woman's assent he wet his finger in his mouth and then poked it into the pile of seeds so that a good deal of seeds stuck to his finger as he withdrew it. The woman also inwardly praised Magadu for his cleverness.

With these seeds, Magadu fertilised the soil with elephant dung and planted the seeds watering them well so that they thrived and bloomed white and red. When the

king next came on a visit, he selected the best of the amaranth plants and after washing them well presented a glorious bunch to the king. When the king asked how he had come by them he related how he had bought seeds with the cowrie the king had given him. On hearing this the king was moved to ask the chief to give him. This the chief did gladly, upon which the king asked Magadu to oversee the preparation of his meals.

Magadu executed his new duties with great zeal day and night and he was later appointed as the captain of the palace guards. In this post also, he was unflagging in his efforts to see that none was amiss and for his diligence and abilities was awarded the title of Sawtitan-yi.

At this juncture, the king of Java began to carry out raids on the fringes of the kingdom. The people clamoured for the king to save them. Accordingly, the king marched forth, leaving Sawtitan -yi the responsibility of the city garrison. Sawtitan-yi did as he was ordered, inspecting and supervising everywhere in and around the palace. During these tours on duty he became acquainted with the princess Mai HninThweda and later became lovers. As their affair became common knowledge, the commander of a thousand troops with his interests at heart cautioned him saying that he would be punished severely if the news reached the king. Sawtitan-yi, felt fear in his heart and talked it over with the princess who instead said "If you can strive to escape get a swift she-elephant and take me with you". This was done and with quite a load of gold and silver and accompanied by seventy shieldbearing retainers and two hundred warriors who were of the same mind with him, he eloped with the princess. From Dalamyinepatwa they reached his native Takawun. Sukhotai men who were sent after him could not catch up with him and the thirty raders who had worked under his leadership professed their fealty to him.

He made himself king of Takawun where he looked after his people as if they were his own children and sought the counsel of wise men who advised him to make friends with Aleinmar, the governor of Martaban who was very powerful so that it would be best for the long run. Magadu being a knowledgeable person thought of befriending him giving his sister Hnin U Rai in marriage and then contrive to have him killed later.

He duly sent many presents of golden bowls and rich fabrics to Aleinmar and word that he would give his sister in marriage only after peaceful intercourse had been established between the two countries. Aleinmar, wanting to see the likes of Hnin U Rai came up in the company of some fisherfolk. As Aleinmar was casting his cast-net happened that Hnin U Rai came with a bevy of female attendants to bathe at the river bank.

Aleinmar was smitten on sight and sent envoys with a great number of presents so that Hnin U Rai had to be sent to him accompanied by her mother. Aleinmar had a great pavilion erected on the Taung Lwe sandbank for a grand feast to mark the

happy occasion. He also arranged with his men to attack and kill Magadu and his men once they were suitably inebriated and a signal was given. This piece of information reached Magadu's mother who duly informed him. Magadu warned his men to pretend to drink but not actually do so and let Aleinmar's men get drunk. He would then pass out the word "ma za " but no action would be taken then, he said. At the signal " mon zon" they would begin to eat and only when he said "mat zat" would they get up and start cutting down Aleinmar's men. When Magadu reached the pavilion on the beach Aleinmar came riding on a female elephant and accompanied him. Aleinmar's plan was to wait until Magadu's men had fallen into a drunken stupor when his men would go in for the kill. This was known to Magadu as they started their reveleries and as the evening sun's rays glinted on the swollen tidal waters he gave the word "mon zon " and his men began eating. When he cried " mat zat " they rose as one man and hacked at their hosts. Aleinmar tried to escape on the elephant but was caught by Magadu's men and killed. His corpse was buried on the Taung Lwe sandbank and to this day it is known as the Aleinmar beach.

Magadu assumes the name of Wareru and becomes king of Martaban

In the year ME. 643 (1281 A.D) Magadu seized Martaban. Erecting a large ornate hall in the center of the city, he conferred with wise men learned in the Vedas, monks and Brahmin and compiled a code of laws which became renown as the Wareru Dhammathat. Later he planned to wall-in the city. He took the counsel of wise men Daza, Maha Sami, Lawa Seyaw and Kawaw and as they paced out the plan they came upon a tiger at which the sages predicted that their city would be powerful and that there would be war. Later they came upon a granary and they pronounced that it would become a sea port.

In M.E 649 (1287 A.D) on Thursday, the full moon day of the month of Dabodwe (February), when Capricorn was in position with the sun, the moon was with the sun and 21 lunar mansions were in attendance, the auspicious post in the city walls was erected. It was predicted that the city would either be visited by war or a white elephant would appear. When Magadu heard of this, he said, "As a king I will not turn away from war but I would much prefer to have the white elephant and bear the title 'Lord of the White Elephant'". Many gifts were prepared and a minister by the name of Loki was sent with them to the king of Sukhotai to ask for the white umbrella and other kingly regalia. The king of Sukhotai was overjoyed and spoke to his assembled ministers, " Young Magadu has been nurtured by myself, he was my assal and has my daughter with him. Titles are given in accordance with a person's lineage and I myself took the title carrying the meaning ' Celestial Aura '. Since Magadu is my descendant he should take the title 'Suwaru', 'Descended from the sky' "He then sent the crested headress, the white umbrella and others in the set of five kingly regalia with Loki for Magadu.

When the city walls were built on 649 (on the day mentioned above) it was predicted that a pregnant woman would come to give the signal for the auspicious

oment. A pregnant woman did indeed come, one whose time had come, after
 erating her husband to the place where a party was waiting for the predicted
 oment. Accordingly, when she reached them, she was pushed into the already dug
 and the timber post dropped on her. Her stomach burst and blood spattered out
 which eight snakes appeared. Seven died on the spot and the remaining one
 eaded towards the west where it died also. The wise men seeing this pronounced
 at a succession of eight kings would ascend the throne of which seven would pass
 way in this place while one would move towards the west after becoming a king
 and continue to rule from there. In that year Waru (Wareru) assuming kingship,
 iled with justice and brought benefits to his people.

uring the time that Wareru ruled in Martaban, Tarabya ruled in Pegu. Embassies
 ere exchanged between them and Tarabya gave the hand of his daughter
 hinsawhla to Wareru and Wareru in turn gave the hand of his daughter Mae Hnin
 hida to Tarabya. They then made a pact that one would come to the aid of the other
 he was attacked by enemies.

arathihapate, King of Pagan (Bagan) sent an expeditionary force under the
 ommand of Yazathinkyan to take Dala. Tarabya, fearing that Pegu would be
 tacked eventually asked Wareru to come to his aid. Wareru, being a man of
 onour marched with his army and joining forces with Tarabya headed for
 akamo where Min Hpyit Taw could not face them and withdrew and Wakamo was
 asily captured then advancing on Dala, it was likewise captured when
 azathinkyan also withdrew. In the same way, Henzada was taken after
 gapaukhyu retreated, and Kyunthado captured after Nga Myat Noe was killed in
 attle. After the Talaing country was cleared of Burmese governors placed there by
 e Burmese king in this fashion, Tarabya, under the ruse that he would fete
 Wareru's men and reaffirm the alliance between Wareru and himself invited them
 Pegu while he went there in advance.

Wareru was encamped in Mogaung when Tarabya returned from Pegu with his
 ontingent of foreign musketeers and in battle formation. As his boats were set on
 re by a raging forestfire Wareru had to come out into the open. Seeing the battle
 ennants on the war elephant of Tarabya, Wareru made a vow and poured water
 om a golden bowl on top of his elephant calling to witness the gods around him
 at for his aid Tarabya's enemies had been defeated and his fiefs restored to him,
 ut that Tarabya had repaid him with treachery so that he prayed that he would be
 ictorious in the coming battle. In the single combat on elephants between Wareru
 nd Tarabya, Kawmuthauk, Wareru's warrior speared Tarabya's elephant making
 urn back. Not having the time to award his warrior, Wareru tossed his napkin to
 m and continued in his pursuit of Tarabya who was caught as he made for the
 over of Kyatpawtaw forest. However, he spared Tarabya's life as monks
 terceded with him. Tarabya was brought with his family to Martaban and the evoy
 Sukhotai, Loki was installed as the governor of Pegu. The warrior who had
 eared Tarabya's elephant presented the napkin to Wareru who declared that he

had indeed achieved a great coup and awarded him with the title " Bo Htu Hpyet "(meaning 'he who scatters the host'). He was also given a Ceylonese drum and his fief demarcated as comprising of all the area from which this drum could be heard when sounded from his native village.

Later, Tarabya again made an attempt on Wareru's life for which he was handed over to the executioner. Wareru's daughter Mae Hnin Thida, being very fond of her husband knotted her hair with her husband's thus presenting a dilemma to the executioners who reported the matter to the king. The king gave orders to cut off Tarabya's hair close to his scalp so that his daughter's hair might be freed and thus Tarabya was taken away and executed. Tarabya's two sons Shin Gyi and Shin Nge being his own grandchildren were brought up in the palace by Wareru.

In the sixth year of his reign in Martaban in the year M.E 655 (1293 A.D) just as preordained by the Lord Buddha, a young male white elephant together with his mother³ was brought to the king of Sukhotai. White as a boll of cotton, its tusks were the colour of hibiscus, its buccal cavity red as the colour of a ripe *Trichsanthes palmata* fruit, its eyes like a pair of rubies and its nails vermillion. When this white elephant reached the age of nine, the king of Sukhotai had a dream in which the young elephant told him that he should not stay at the present place any longer as it would bring disaster. The king pondered on this matter with his ministers who advised him to find out where it would like to go. The king and his ministers then devised a way to discover it. Four bundles of grass, one each from Linnme (Chiang Mai), Lagun, Yodaya (Ayuthia) and Martaban were put before him and the king then made a vow that may it take up the grass from the direction it would like to leave. The elephant was seen to push aside three bundles, leaving the grass from Martaban on which he proceeded to dine. The king was pleased with his choice, the lord of Martaban being his own son-in-law and decided to send it here saying to Wareru that when the elephant had a change of mind, it should be allowed to return. Wareru was overjoyed at this news and with his ministers and men of wealth a great number of presents was sent to the king of Sukhotai. The people, monks and brahmin of Sukhotai were however desolate on learning that the white elephant would be sent away and some of them wailed out in their misery and presents of popcorn and flowers were respectfully offered to the elephant. To carry out the task of taking the white elephant to Martaban five hundred men commanded by a chief were specially appointed and were instructed take its mother along, though they were to bring the latter back. Of the five hundred a hundred men were armed with pickaxes and another hundred with axes to root out any obstacle in the way such as tree stumps, stakes and snags and smoothen the path. A tasseled canopy shaded it from the heat of the sun while four learned men one posted at each cardinal point, recited apotropaic scriptural verses.

Wareru constructed an adequate, well-made raft for transporting the elephant and ¹ "lampha" [Pali] red skinned elephant ? (written "twa" in palm-leaf manuscript and variously interpreted as "a", "kwa", "ta kwa" etc. perhaps misled because "akwa" or "lakwa" means "together" in Myanmar]

went upstream with a sizeable flotilla to welcome it. When the elephant party arrived at the Pyi ferry, the young elephant pushed its mother onto the raft before leaping on it putting a scare into its wards. "We'll be executed on our return if the elephant king takes his mother with him," they cried. At this, the young elephant gently pushed its mother ashore, greatly relieving the Sokkate crew. Wareru showered lavish gifts on the leader and the five hundred from Sokkate who later left with the mother elephant in tow. Wareru sailed downstream to Martaban with great pomp and ceremony. ME 655 (1298 A.D) was the year in which the white elephant was borne to Martaban.

When the king of Ngaw Daw⁴ heard that a white elephant had been installed in Martaban, he came and besieged it with a force of 180,000. The citizens were much alarmed and the ministers conferred urgently. However, the white elephant communicated through a dream saying that the coming of the enemy host would only serve to spread the power and glory of the king throughout the region and told the people not to be afraid and to bring a golden vat of scented water to him. When this was done, the white elephant took the water from the vat of gold with his trunk and sprayed it on the besieging forces. The attackers were scattered by the white elephant's might and Wareru assigned forces to after them. They brought back much booty consisting of captives, elephants, horses, gold and silver which greatly enriched the people of Martaban.

Wareru held consecration ceremonies and on the twenty second year of his reign, appointed Shin Gyi and Shin Nge, sons of Tarabya, bearers of the royal betel box and drinking water to keep them close to him. But the two brothers considering the king as one who caused the death of their father sought revenge and being grown up now, murdered the king as he entered the water closet. The two brothers ran away after committing the deed but were captured and killed by the ministers. Their bodies were cremated at the spot where Wareru's remains had been cremated.

The words "Do not leave the roots behind when you cut down rattan cane and do not keep the son near you when you have killed his father" were carved on the figure of a bird and planted near Wareru's grave. Wareru died in the year ME 658 (1301 A.D).

He ascended the throne at age of 39, reigned for 22 years and died at the age of 61. He was succeeded by his younger brother Hkun Law who was careless and neglected the city's defences. He was like a tree without heartwood and people were afraid of the day when even some vassal of a potentate would come and conquer them. If some king knew that the people were disheartened he could easily have taken us captive and the priceless white elephant would be taken away they thought. By artifice the king was informed that a magnificent elephant had made its appearance in the vicinity of Min Than pagoda. Hkun Law believing it to be true went there to corral the elephant and on his return from this useless task, found himself locked out of his royal city. Not succeeding in having the city gates opened for him he was captured and killed while taking refuge in a banana plantation. Hkun

⁴The Shan King Thihathu of Pinle - according to Harvey

Law ascended the throne at age 19, reigned for 14 years and died at the age of 33.

Smim Min Hla tried to succeed Hkun Law, but was deterred by his wife Hnin U Rai who told him that he was too old for the job, as a king should have the strength of a lion to keep others in awe of him. She suggested that the elder of their two sons Saw O be made king. Smim Min Hla built himself a palace atop the Palinpu mountain. On a certain day he went on a pleasure trip to Kamabaran Lake, after locking the crossbar on the palace door. It so happened that a crow carrying a chunk of roast meat in which a burning ember was embedded alighted on the roof of the palace setting it on fire.

Women in his harem who had remained behind perished in the fire. On his return, Smim Min Hla collected the unburnt parts of his palace and used the material to cremate the bodies of the dead women until the remains were reduced to ashes and then built a stupa in the locality which came to be known as the "Kyunpun Palinpu stupa". Saw O's queen Mae Hnin Saw Pi gave birth to a boy and a girl. Smim Min Hla and Dala Hnin U Rai died in the same year. An expedition was launched at Lampun in the year ME 682 (1320 AD) but was unsuccessful. The next year another attack was mounted against Tavoy but was again defeated. A mandarin by the name of Hkum Yin was then given command of an expeditionary force against Tennessarim. It was successful and brought back many horses and elephants as booty. No enemy appeared at the gates of Martaban during Saw O's reign. People lived in peace. Saw O ascended the throne at the age of 22, reigned for 14 years and died at the age of 36.

Saw O was succeeded by his younger brother Saw Zein. He took Hkun Law's daughter princess Hnin Am Po to be his queen and also married his brother's wife Mae Hnin Saw Pi. He ruled over Pegu, Dagon, Dala and Wakamo and resided at a place north of Pegu. Nyi San, governor of Bassein and Saw E That, governor of Myaungmya rose against him but were captured. Kum Yin was sent to capture Tavoy and on being successful ordered to attack Tennessarim again but was unsuccessful and returned. Smim Nyi San was sent on an expedition to Myaung Talwe which he captured. He was then put in charge of it.

At this point 500 Shan Byat-Byi troops from Sukhotai came over seeking his patronage as they had heard that he esteemed warriors. They were rewarded and placed under the command of Zeip Pun, his attendant during his infant days. The attendant of Smim Nyi San, E Pagan Daung died whereupon his brother asked permission to marry his widowed sister-in-law who was pregnant. The king said that he would allow him to marry if she should give birth to daughter but would not allow it should she give birth to a boy. About a month later, a son was born so that marriage was not allowed and the child allowed to inherit his father's inheritance wholly. The child was known by the name of Saw E That. He was then placed in command of an expedition against Prome which eventually succeeded in capturing

ku pū - name of the Kyaikhpyingū pagoda at Martaban (Shorto)

it. Saw E That had four sons, Nyi San, E Bya Pom, Laukpya and U Lay. All four were later raised to the status of nobility.

Sanda Minhla had two daughters of which the elder died and the younger was named Mahadevi. Later a son was born and was named Binnya U. Queen Mae Hnin Saw Pi gave birth to a daughter who was named Moe Masum. Later, he sent his nephew (Saw O's son) Saw E Gam Paun to take Tavoy. He was maliciously villified by some who accused him of not pursuing his mission aggressively and of retiring from battle. As a result he was clapped in irons at Tamywa -ni. Zeip Pun, Smim Saw Zein's attendant during his infancy, plotted against him. He made a moated pleasure garden with a shingle-roofed mansion in its centre and invited the unsuspecting Saw Zein. Once there Zeip Pun with his 500 Byat Byi Shans behind him seized and murdered the king. Saw Zein ascended the throne at the age of 20, reigned for seven years and died at the age of 27.

Zeip Pun made himself king thereafter but Queen Sanda Minhla bribed the ministers with much gold and silver and had him killed. As he had turned against his own lord and master he was on the throne for only seven days.

Queen Sanda Minhla then had Saw Zein's nephew, Saw E Gam Paun released from Tamywa -ni and bestowed the throne to him. They ruled as king and queen. Saw E Gam Paun treated the queen with love and affection at first, mindful that she had raised him to this position. Later he spent his time carousing with the concubines and failed to show proper respect towards Queen Sanda Minhla for which she poisoned and killed him. Saw E Gam Paun ascended the throne at the age of 27, reigned only for 49 days and died in the same year he became king.

With Saw E Gam Paun no more, Saw (Binnya) E Law, son of Hkun Law came from the town of Thittaung and became king at Martaban. Thinking that Sanda Minhla might be resentful, he left his concubines behind, taking only his son Saw E Law along with him and made her queen. During his reign, Mra Dica, King of Sukhotai angered that his grandson Saw E Gam Paun had been murdered, sent an expeditionary force against Martaban, commanded by his ministers Dawgon, Sitaga, Narala and Sesabyat. A combined force commanded by the governors of Thittaung and Wun was sent against the invaders but was defeated and the two commanders captured. Then Binnya E Law himself organised a force with archery and cavalry commanded by Zeip Bye, Nyi Pathi, Thwe Lagun, Razadit, Ya Pon, Sit Daun, Smim Lamyo Nyigapan and Pitpe. He had them mount a two-pronged attack on the enemy which they successfully did and killed many of the Sukhotai King's men. Friendship existing between Sukothai and Martaban was ended by this incident. Due to this Shan invasion, people of Martaban, Wun and Thittaung could not pursue their peaceful occupations and were visited by famine. This year was also notable for a fight between a tiger and a pig and the white elephant suffered a broken tusk. There was also an invasion of Pegu by Pagan.

At one time, Binnya E Law had an idea. My son Saw E Law and Binnya U are about the same in their capabilities, he thought, let us see who will become king after me. He then pretended to be ill, keeping only two trusted persons near his bed and keeping his concubines at a distance. His concubines informed prince Saw E Law of this development who then promptly gathered his men and set out to seize and kill Binnya U. Binnya U was not submissive and fought back mounted on his elephant. Saw E Law had to flee hotly pursued by Binnya U. At this, the king intervened and on hearing his shouts Binnya U ran away. Binnya E Law blamed Binnya U for behaving in such a manner towards his son on account of having many relatives behind him when he had only fallen ill. Queen Sanda Minhla and Dala Shin Saw Paik had to intercede for him and vouch for his good behaviour. Later, Saw E Law died of small pox. Binnya E Law ascended the throne at the age of 23, reigned for 22 years and died at the age of 45.

He was succeeded by Binnya U who took the title Hsinbyushin (Lord of the White Elephant). Once returning from an elephant catching trip Hsinbyushin happened to meet Mwe Magu Thwaut, daughter of Brat Lann and was smitten by her beauty. He brought her along with him to Martaban in great style, travelling along a route lined with latticed bamboo fencing all along the way and pennants and flags fluttering here and there. Women of Pegu and Martaban then started singing a song which ran thus :-

“ Kaunn Twe Let Ou’; Mwe Magu You’; Kwan Nya Brat Lann”

In Myanmar it meant “Pay respects with hands clasped together to the daughter of Brat Lann, Mwe Magu paragon of beauty”, a song in praise of the king’s consort. Hsinbyushin Binnya U adored her and made her queen. A minister from Wareru’s time by the name of Bra Pyet Pe which meant “He who scatters the enemy host together with their ministers” (Amat Bo Htu Pyet) had four daughters, Moe Auk, Moe Kaung, Moe Zeip and Moe Daw all of whom he presented to the king. The king gave Moe Daw the fiefdom of Dagon and wed her to his brother Min Letya and took the remaining three sisters to wife.

After Binnya U had reigned for three years, the king of Chieng Mai sent an expeditionary force of 80,000 troops, massed elephantry and cavalry against Martaban led by a minister by the name of U Paik Lam Sa. He laid waste Thittaung, Paikala, Wun and Lagun Byi and deployed his forces at Mawdon-Thandaung. Citizens of Martaban and Moulmein quaked with fear. The king and queen together with monks, court brahmins, ministers, men of wealth and their ladies assembled together and prayed that the white elephant communicate with them through a dream.

They had a dream that if the people feared the Shan invasion and wanted them to leave quickly, they should place him (the white elephant) on a high mountain and erect a canopy for him suitably ornamented with umbrellas and pennants. Then from

the king, queen, minor queens and concubines to the rich, officials and their wives and ladies were to dress with elegance and to follow him onto the mountain peak. Then a golden basin of perfumed water was to be placed near him and when he sprinkled this water the Shan invaders would be routed. This was done and in the ensuing rout, many good horses and elephants were captured together with a great number of prisoners of war.

After defeating Chieng Mai, a mission was sent with a friendly letter to Ceylon with a request for the bodily remains of the Lord Buddha. The king of Ceylon welcomed the request and sent back many sacred relics which were enshrined on the mountain peak from which the white elephant had performed the feat of defeating the Shan invasion. Likenesses of king Binnya U, the queen and his concubines were made of solid gold in the attitude of paying obeisance to the relics and a stupa erected over it. The stupa came to be known as the "Kyun Pun Kyat Cana".

The governor of Pegu, Nyi Gaung Thain rebelled but captured and executed. Binnya U took his wife whom he gave the title of Thiri Marlar. She had two daughters Shin Saw Hla and Shin Saw U and a son Manyi Gam Gaung by Nyi Gaung Thain.

Binnya Nwe is born *

A son was born to Binnya U. The child had a mark on his tongue and was therefore known as Basum Banset. Later he was known as Binnya Nwe. A daughter was born to Hnin Am Po and was named Talamithiri. Queen Sanda Minhla had no son. Sanda Devi gave birth to a daughter and was named Talamidaw. Baw Hkun Hmaing was born to Razadevi.

Three years after the defeat of forces from Chieng Mai, the white elephant died. The king, queen and all the people, monks and brahmins were devastated at the news. With great pomp and ceremony the carcass was borne through a route lined with bamboo lattice, marked by banners, pennants, impregnated with perfume and lit by oil lamps.

On reaching the landing on the river the carcass vanished. The white elephant expired after living for 42 years (from ME 655) in Martaban but had reached the age of nineteen in the year of his arrival so that it could be said that it died at the age of 61.

When elephant trackers reported of coming upon the spoor of an elephant that was about 18 inches across in the Lapu forest. Officials from elephantry were amply rewarded and the king himself led a party to track down and capture the elephant. He spent an entire 14 month in this venture, an absence which encouraged the four

Byattapa brothers to rise up in arms. Byattapa took over Martaban while Binnya U⁷. E Bya Pon, Laukpya took over Moulmein, Prome and Myaungmya respectively.

Byattapa's children were Maywe Makaw, Razathu, the wife of Smim Kari, the wife of Mataw and the wife of Nyi Hpathi. Laukpya, the governor of Myaungmya had many wives out of which 16 bore children. Manya, Magam, Macani were the three sons born to Moe Zaw; Nga Kyee, Talashin Saw Et, Tala Sawmyo, Talashin Saw Aw and Talami Hninsawnim, altogether five were born to Samgye Kadaw; two children Talmikwe, Ma Htunsam were born to Mitalabre; four children Gaw Pasam, Talalamzin, Paw Sri, Mi Hnin were born to Talami He; four children, Min Kyawswa, Malagun, Madwat and Matan were born to Mi Hninbama, five were born to the chief wife, MaE Letyapyanchi, Minhlamyin, Minrekyawswa, Pyit Nwe, Mangat and Min Yothe; two children, Sitmat and Watisar were born to Tala Moepan, six children, SamLam, Nibarkyaik, Bramse, Sri Brataman, Yamdeva and Minsithu to Mi Hninpatha, two children, Hnin Kanyanari and Sawsit, were born to Mwelut; three children, Min U No, E Brapon and Maga were born to Sam Kaladevi, nine children, Bawtam, Brapongam, Baw Myaing, Bawgam Maidaun, Talumire, Mike, Moe Lut and Moe Swe were born to Mezi, four children, Min Shwege, Bin Law, Bawzin and Mipo to Moe E; four children, Baw Daw, Baw Eip, Baw Taik and Baw Pein were born to Mihnin Sri and four children, Baw Zin, Baw Lam, BawLaw and Baw Le to Minwe. He had altogether 57 children by 16 wives.

While Hsinbyushin was in the jungle he had no inkling that the governor of Tari, Byattapa would rebel against him. However, on observing the sight of a star encroaching on the moon, he had this sign interpreted by ministers and brahmins who said it portended that a vassal would turn against his lord. They said "Your lordship's horoscope shows malign influences acting on it and the white elephant is no more. Yet you turn your back on the royal city to live in the jungle. It is not fitting for a king to abandon his domain and the pleasures of his royal palace to tarry for long in the jungle; even the lion king, lord of three thousand forests lost his life to a lowly frog because he was heedless of where he went; we consider that it would be best for your majesty to return." Hsinbyushin accordingly turned homeward. After taking over Martaban, Byattapa summoned the governors of Thittaung, Taikala and Laing. When E Bya Poun heard that Hsinbyushin was on his way back; he dared not stay in Lagun Byi any longer and went to Martaban.

As Hsinbyushin arrived, his men living outside the city walls rallied to his side while the citizens inside were much afraid. They would have liked to open the city gates for the king but Byattapa's brother, E Bya Poun kept patrolling the city on a white elephant with 300 armed troops and could not do so. There were scares every now and then so that this patrolling was kept up assiduously. A town crier with a gong was sent out warning that anyone who failed to stand to in his appointed place on the battlements would be executed. Thus no one dared to defy this order and the

⁷U Lo according to Nai Pa. n Hla.

battlements were properly manned. One thousand troops were deployed at each city gate. Hsinbyushin attacked resolutely but fire from the battlements caused many casualties among his men and he had to turn to besieging tactics. Byattapa had the wives of nobles who were in Hsinbyushin's camp shout to their husbands from atop the battlements. Thus their husbands decamped during the night to join their families. Of those who had been with the king during the elephant hunt, many had died and many were sick or ill.

The nobles from Pegu were summoned to come to the king's aid but did not come. At this point minister Pun Se advised that they should not stay longer but should join forces with the governor of Wun, Byathabaik who was the king's brother-in-law. With him and summoning the nobles from Pegu, he said, Byattapa will then be like a fox facing a lion, he said. The king retired to Wun but fell ill so that an attack on Martaban was made with Byathabaik in command. He attacked furiously but could make no headway because of heavy fire from atop the city walls. He besieged it for a month making food very scarce within the city. Then Byatapa had his wife, Moe Mathan Pashu, who was Byathabaik's sister send some presents to Byathapaik with the following letter.

"Byattapa, my husband has behaved like this after listening to his relations. He does not listen to me. I consider myself as a vassal of Hsinbyushin. I would like to send some delicacies to you but you would not accept them on account of Byattapa's behaviour so that I am sending some to your followers instead. You are the sole supporting pillar to our Hsinbyushin."

Byathabaik said "I believe in my sister as what she says is true. Even Byattapa will return to Hsinbyushin's fold when circumstances change. I believe in my sister totally"

When this was reported to Byattapa he had his wife send delicacies continually to Byathabaik and he, not being farsighted, ate these in front of those who brought them.

Thus one day these gifts were tainted with poison and the unsuspecting Byathabaik was killed. With the commander dead, it turned into a rout and the king was much depressed. He married off his sister to Zwe Thura, governor of Hmawbi. Hsinbyushin being ill during that year an expedition was headed by Zwe Thura. The attack was made strenuously but facing heavy fire from muskets and cannon Zwe Thura was killed while mounted on his elephant.

Byattapa pursued the attackers and catching up with them at Zaung Kyat captured all the five nobles in the attacking force. They were Sasidarauk, Sasidarat, Sallapam, Montaung Dala and Dala Chit Thin. They were not killed but kept in irons. Zwe Thura's son was given his father's inheritance and his position. Hsinbyushin had

the defences of Wun improved and moats were dug. Citizens of Martaban and Moulmein were afraid at these developments. Byattapa conferred with his relatives and consequently a mission was sent to Chieng Mai with the following letter.

“ My Lord to whom Byattapa, Governor of Martaban doth address with deep reverence, I have differences with Hsinbyushin and seek to become your vassal. Come in force with strong elephantry and cavalry and we will march with Martaban and Moulmein against Hsinbyushin. If we attack Wun where he is now, what can he do if we attack him from two fronts. If we are successful I will render a tribute of 10 viss of gold from Martaban's port earnings.”

The king of Chieng Mai began mobilising after receiving this message.

When Hsinbyushin heard of this he conferred with his ministers and nobles. Noble Pun Se, governor of Wun suggested that if things were left to run their course, all the territories on the east would soon fall into their hands and that they should seek out an ally.

When Hsinbyushin asked who he should turn to, Pun Se replied that if another king was approached he would surely come but by that time the king of Chieng Mai would be at the gates of Thittaung and things would be getting very difficult so that it would be best to turn Chieng Mai into an ally. Then Hsinbyushin asked him how he should go about it. “ It is said that a mother in dire distress has to abandon the welfare of her child. Byattapa, has not only turned against his lord and master but has now invited a foreign king to take over part of the land. You should present (Chieng Mai) with your daughter so that you become relatives at which he will not interfere on behalf of Byattapa. Byattapa has been able to hold out because only nobles had been sent against him. If your majesty marches against him it will be like the case of a fox or a munjac deer unable to face a lion or an ordinary elephant unable to face a white elephant. There is no way that Byattapa including his wives will not fall into your hands.”

Hsinbyushin agreed to this advice and his daughter Talamithiri was sent to Chieng Mai together with a gift of five young male elephants. The king of Chieng Mai chose not to aid Byattapa.

Queen Sanda Minhla in her illness asked to treat his nephew, Manyi Gam Gaung not only as his nephew but as his loyal subject as she had been acting as his guardian since his father's death. She said she did not think she would be recovering from her illness. Hsinbyushin gave his word and not long after she died. After Hsinbyushin had reigned in Martaban for five years and in Wun for another six years, noble Pun Se became ill and died. As a sign of sorrow the citizens shaved their heads.

When Byattapa heard of this he had 700 warriors shave their heads and putting E

Bya Poun in charge, sent them with 700 elephantry to Wun. They concealed themselves in the jungle during daytime and marched through the night reaching the gates of Wun at dawn. As the gates opened for the morning, they entered, raising no suspicion as they had their heads shaved too. Then E Bya Poun followed on an elephant which gave no time for Hsinbyushin to prepare his war elephant and had to flee on a female elephant. His retainers were unable to catch up with him save for the chief of elephantry. In crossing a stream the elephant that Hsinbyushin was riding on became mired and he was carried on the back of the chief of elephantry. As they entered the Khusanaran forest the king began asking the names of fruits and flowers they came across. At first the chief of elephantry answered the king's questions but as more questions were asked he naturally felt angry as by this time he was quite exhausted "Sister's husband asks me needless questions. I can no longer answer them. The elephant was mired so that I picked you up on back and ran to escape from the enemy," he said in anger.

Only when they reached Kyatshat Forest did they join up with his officers, men, horses and elephants to regroup and enter Pegu.

Mahadevi, Hsinbyushin's sister

Razadrit's sister, Mahadevi came up from Dagon to join him and they hugged each other and cried on meeting. When they had composed themselves fiefs the nobles were awarded with fiefs according to their suitability. The chief of elephantry was however left out which prompted Mahadevi to ask Razadarit why he had neglected to reward his benefactor.

Razadarit admitted that he was indeed indebted to him but that the chief of elephantry had been guilty of referring to them in an extremely indelicate way for which the fact that he had not executed him should be an ample reward. Thus Mahadevi had to give him a suitable fief herself.

Hsinbyushin made Pegu his capital in the year M.E 731. (1369 A.D). Pegu had regressed from its former status as the royal capital since the (Thamala-Wimala) dynasty had ended with Tissa, donor of the Samphao pagoda.* It had been reduced to the status of a large village when Hsinbyushin turned it into a royal capital. Minkyiswa-sawke was his contemporary in Ratanapura-Ava. The two kings exchanged embassies and gifts between each other. Later they met and entered a friendship pact.

When Zeip Bre, the governor of Dala died, Manyi Gamgaung was installed in his place. Malagun, son of Laukpya was awarded the title Thambyat and the fief of Lak Khaik after he had vowed fealty. He fought successfully in many battles

Pegu came under Pagan's suzerainty in the year 1287 A.D
Laukpya's brother, as mentioned later.

against Laukpya and was thus rewarded with the town of Sayat¹⁰. Masam, brother of Zeip Bre was given the title of Thamlaik and the fiefdom of Taikkala. He was permitted to install himself with his Zoutkari unit in a stockade east of Taikkala.

Later when Byattapa's son died and the citizens of Martaban, Lagunbyi and Wun tonsured their heads in the front as a sign of mourning, Smim* Samlaik had his men tonsured likewise and mounted on his young male elephant Patle which was in musth made a night march to Wun and assaulted it when the gates opened just before dawn. He killed its governor named Thwe Pahmu and held it securely which made Hsinbyushin very happy. Queen Thirimarlar died after giving birth to prince Basum Banset.

He was looked after by Mahadevi. When he had reached the age when he could run and play, he was taken by Mahadevi in her arms and presented to the king. On seeing him Hsinbyushin said, "He is my son truly but his looks differ from me. He has a large head, crinkly hair, coarse hands and feet and bulging calves. He seems to have the marks of a cruel personality." This he used to say repeatedly and he was fond of Baw Hkonmaing, born to Razadevi, who was handsome and looked noble.

Princess Talamidaw, was born to Sanda Devi¹¹. Talmithiri who had been wed to the king of Chieng Mai was distressed as her husband did not treat her with love and respect. Hsinbyushin hearing of this, remarked that this happened on account of his vassal Byattapa who turned against him and he had to give his daughter away in order to save the situation. He sent word to Byattapa and Laukpya in the following manner :-

"Byattapa and Laukpya, The number of kings who have successively reigned in Martaban are not few. There had been no instance of giving away their daughters to other kings in their time. I have raised you to nobility because you are close to me. Instead you have chosen to turn against me on account of having many relatives and followers behind you. Consequently I had to give my own daughter away to another king. Now I have heard that she knows no peace of mind. What do you say to this ?"

On receiving this Byattapa and Laukpya replied with this letter, "Your Majesty, to whom Byattapa and Laukpya submit that, We had been raised to nobility on account of being your close servants and because of our worth. We have only done this as we were afraid of losing our lives should you believe in malicious slander against us and be angered. We have no design to wrest away your throne and we have only stayed away from serving at your feet only because of hostilities unleashed against us. We are your humble

Syriam according to Nai Pan Hla's version.

¹⁰ Amended in accordance with palmleaf manuscript and Nai Pan Hla's version.

servants. If you say that you have kindness and love for us as servants we are ready to lay down our lives for you and will see that your daughter, the princess is delivered to you."

Hsinbyushin then had an agreeable message composed for the king of Chieng Mai and with five viss of gold and five elephants to be delivered by each, sent these to Pyattapa and Laukpya who went to the king of Chieng Mai and brought back the king's daughter on their return. Hsinbyushin invested prince Basum Banset with the title Binnya Nwe.¹²

On a certain day, Binnya Nwe had Talamidaw elope with him to Dagon but were caught at Maw Nyut. Hsinbyushin was not angry at Talamidaw but reserved his anger wholly on Binnya Nwe and had him incarcerated. Mahadevi interceded for him but was to no avail "He is cruel and has no consideration for his own father whom he has made very worried" was the king's remark. Mahadevi had to plead again and again and even then only allowed his release but no formal marriage ceremony was held. The couple was handed over to the care of Mahadevi together with a house and garden for them.

When Hsinbyushin felt poorly and out-of-sorts he mentioned in this way to Mahadevi "Young Basum is harsh and cruel and will not be compatible with the people, do not let him become king. My son Baw Hkonmaing has a noble aura about him and he will get on well with the people. Let him become king."

Then later Smim Maru approached the monk Maha Thami who was the king's mentor and beholden to the king. Through him he presented five viss of gold and asked for the hand of Talamithiri. The king in addressing his council said "My daughter Talamithiri had gone to Chieng Mai on a quest to bring me peace of mind when I was in a great difficulties. She had been very unhappy there for which her return had to be arranged and she is here now. If I wed her to a man with parents still living, they might cause her unhappiness some day which shall be depressing to me. Smim Maru's father died mounted on his elephant in the course of rendering me service. I had his son raised to nobility for which he will not dare to go against my wishes. I will wed my daughter to Smim Maru." He had a house built for holding the nuptials and the wedding ceremonies were lavish and lasted a whole week.

The union of Binnya Nwe and Talamithiri eventually produced a son. Hsinbyushin was delighted on hearing this news and said "When my sister Sanda Minhla was born during an eclipse of the moon, my father gave her this name. No conspicuous marks the birth of my grandson so that he will be named Bawlawkyantaw in keeping with family tradition, just as my father took the name of Binnya E Law." Brahmins proficient in prognostication were awarded robes.

This was done by tying the legend describing the title on the forehead of the recipient during monarchical times.

Once Hsinbyushin, his queen, his sister Mahadevi, his sons and daughters and his sons-in-law went on a pilgrimage to the Shwedagon pagoda. While they were in Dagon, miraculous phenomena was observed at the Athout pagoda¹. Seven days of festivities were held there after which the king returned to Pegu while Mahadevi stayed on in Dagon. The king had the Mawi Lake cleaned and spruced up. Meanwhile the governor of Sayat, Thambyat rebelled and Smim Maru was recalled from Dagon to lead an operation with Yokarat against him. While these arrangements were being made the rebellious Thambyat was struck dead by lightning. The king addressed the assembled nobles "I looked after Young Malagun because he was Laukpya's brother. He drank the water of allegiance vowing fealty to me and fought well on my behalf so that I trusted him and invested him with the title of Thambyat and the fiefdoms of Lek Khaik and Sayat. When he had come to accumulate considerable wealth and power he turned against me but during unseasonable rains he was struck down by lightning. When one turns against one's benefactor, he will die ignominiously, even without the benefactor killing him. He shall be even struck dead by lightning. This lesson should be remembered by all my nobles. One who wrongs his benefactor will not achieve glory if he lives long and will not live long if he achieves glory."

Three years after Smim Maru had been wedded to Talamithiri, rumours flew linking him with Mahadevi. The following joke circulated among the people of Pegu Kwe mi ni daon; hpyu tu ta naon; daon tuon kame; pre pru la cim kru bre; hto tale tale daon jaon."

This can be translated as "The old peahen climbs up a tree to lay a clutch of eggs; the old woman brazenly steals another woman's husband." Prince Binnya Nwe was informed of secret liaison between Smim Maru and Mahadevi. At one time while Binnya Nwe played a game of dice with Smim Maru, the latter slammed the dice against the board which toppled all the dice. Binnya Nwe immediately left. Smim Maru realized that the prince was angry and told him that he had only meant to do what he had done as a joke for which the prince was angry, but that he was always aware that he was only a servant of the prince and was thinking of asking the fiefdom of Martaban for himself once the prince ascended the throne after Hsinbyushin passes away. He offered to back his words by vowing his fealty to the prince.

"If my brother-in-law says so we shall seal this pact by drinking each other's blood" said Binnya Nwe as they rode home on palanquins. There Binnya Nwe drank draught of alcohol in which a drop of Smim Maru's blood had been dissolved. As similar drink with the prince's blood was being prepared, Smim Maru pretended to feel the heat and had himself fanned and caused a burning lamp to go out. During this period of darkness he threw away the contents of the cup containing the prince's blood and drank in its stead a mixture prepared by Talamithiri containing lime and turmeric mixed to resemble blood. This was seen by Nga Daw Koun who

scratched the sole of his master's foot. As the lamp was lighted again the prince could not ask what Nga Daw Koun wanted to communicate to him. Binnya Nwe could however sense that something was afoot so that he drank moderately and left. Once in his home he asked Nga Daw Koun why he had scratched his foot and was told of the incident. This was overheard by Talamidaw who said "I kept silent this long because my words might be construed as causing mischief between the nephew and aunt but I know what they are scheming." Then the prince asked her what she knew and how she had come about this information.

It has been quite a while when I heard that your aunt was going to do away with you and Baw Hkonmaing and put Smim Maru on the throne because in her years she wants to marry a young husband. I wish to see with my own eyes my sister Almithiri in trouble," said Talamidaw. The prince made a vow that Smim Maru be at his own hands. At dawn he had his nurse Moe E Law come to him and told her "It's been a long time since I had slept on your bosom. I asked you to come because I want to sleep on my Mother's bosom." The nurse spread a shawl for the prince to lay his head on.

With his head pillowed on the bosom of his old nurse, the prince finally fell asleep. Moe E Law looked at the prince's face sadly and a teardrop rolled down her cheek to the prince's face and the prince woke up as she wiped it away. "Why do you cry mother?" inquired the prince. The old nurse told him that since she had nursed him from infancy she wanted to see him live a long life. She also hoped that the prince would not be deprived of his rightful inheritance and was afraid it might not be brought to a happy conclusion. She warned the prince not to be careless and to be resourceful and diligent. She then kowtowed to the prince and left.

The next day dawned, an invitation came from Smim Maru to go on a hunt in the Kyat Patan forest. The prince sent a reply that he was unable to come because of illness but that he would accompany Smim Maru on another trip. About fifteen days later he was again invited to join in a water festival that would be held on Lake Inkalasing. Again the prince begged off saying that he had a cold. When Talamidaw heard of this she said "Smim Maru invites you not out of love but because he wishes to harm you. You can't be faulted for behaving this way knowing full well that the underlying reason is one of love or hatred." Later Smim Maru sent word that he had been informed that there was plenty of deer in the Inkalasing forest and invited the prince to go on a deer hunt with him. The prince sent a reply that he could come but that he had no elephant to ride and asked Smim Maru to provide him with a female elephant.

Talamidaw asked the prince why he had consented knowing that it was an invitation by his enemy. The prince replied that since Smim Maru had invited him many times and if he kept turning down every invitation he would think that he suspected him. Therefore he said he would feign ignorance and go along with him as the time was not ripe for him to make a move. He left word to her that she was to send Nga Daw Koun after him to say that she had fallen ill. He then left on an elephant with servants in tow. Smim Maru planned on riding the elephant Agundraung and informed the chief of elephantry Epana that he was going to do so, but the chief of

elephantry demurred saying that he was afraid of Hsinbyushin's wrath.

Binnya Nwe knew that the elephant Agundraung was to be watered and sent Bawmun to inform the chief of elephantry that he wanted the use of this elephant. It so happened this elephant was on its return from a soak in the river. The prince drew abreast of it and shouting to Madala that he was going to take it jumped across from the female elephant that he was riding on. Smim Maru was also bent on riding it whether the chief of elephantry liked it or not and knowing that it was being watered he was coming to take it by force but Binnya Nwe was already beaten him to it so that he had to abandon the idea. Later Nga Daw Koun came running up to report what he had been bidden to.

Binnya Nwe said to Smim Maru that he would have to go and asked Smim Maru to go ahead but to send him some venison from the hunt. Smim Maru returned from the hunt at dusk and had some venison sent to the prince together with the message that he asked after Talamidaw's health and that he and his wife would be coming over to visit her. Binnya Nwe sent back word that his wife had recovered and that it would not be necessary for Smim Maru to come. Later, they came to know that it was a plot hatched by Smim Maru in connivance with Mahadevi. Sagacious men of the court wanted to give counsel to the prince but dared not do so as they were afraid of incurring the wrath of Mahadevi and Smim Maru.

One day when some nobles were engaged in a polo match on the grounds between the (Shin) Upagutta pagoda and the city moat, Binnya Nwe coming over to watch witnessed an exotically dressed person weeding in front of the pagoda. I have never seen this person before in all the times that I have been here he wondered and went to ask him where he sojourned and from whence he came "I have come from the manor of Nigroda to speak a few words to the son of the patron of Buddha's teachings," said the quaint person "You will be king certainly. Observe the five precepts from this day onwards and you will find a good friend in a place west from here. A novice in the place called Pala, where the king of Dagon released Sutapanwan¹⁴ when Buddha was in Dagon, will be talking of strange things which you will be able to answer. He shall also talk of such things once as a cowherd and you will know the answer to that riddle also. Then he shall become a novice again at the age of 18. He is Tuesday born, when the sun was in Aries. He will speak enigmatically again and you will be able to unravel these enigmas too. Keep him near you and seek his counsel. You will see the domain of the Naga king where he observes the precepts as if it were on the same plane." Then there was just a puff of dust and he vanished into thin air. The prince experienced gooseflesh and there was only his personal attendant, Mathout near him. When his retainers caught up with him later the prince returned home on his elephant.

How Binnya Nwe Escaped Death

The prince related what had happened to him to Mathout and told him to go to Pala, Prisoners according to Nai Pan Hla's version.

where the king of Dagon had released Sutapanwan and to listen to the strange words of a novice there and come back quickly. Mathout went as he was bid and reached Pala after spending a night on the way. There was a cockfight where Talakhwagaran was participating. When Talakhwagaran saw the novice he asked how the donor of the monastery was doing¹⁵. The novice replied that he was going there as his teacher had sent him there to inquire. Talakhwagaran told the novice that he was friendly with the donor of the monastery they were talking about, and that he had not gone there to inquire himself because of the high stakes of the game. When the novice returned later he was asked how the person they had been talking about was doing, the novice replied that "His illness is not like the figure 8 and not the letter ga," he said, "His illness is like a plough drawn by a pair of water-buffaloes being driven at the corner of a paddy plot or a jube-jube fruit covered with a canopy."

People at the cockfight dismissed the novice's words as eccentric, esoteric and enigmatic but Mathout marked his words carefully and returned. Talakhwagaran related the novice's words to the latter's mentor monk. The monk commented that the novice was learned in the matter of horoscopic calculations and was very knowledgeable so that what he said should not be considered mere gibberish as his words could be full of meaning. Mathout meanwhile had reported what he had witnessed to the prince who made a vow that should he become king one day, he may be able to decipher the novice's words. For a start, he made a guess that what is written in the manner of the (Mon or Myanmar) figure for eight or the letter "ga" but not read as this character must be "aac"¹⁶.

In driving a buffalo-drawn plough the command "kup" is given when driving straight ahead, and "ze" when one wants to turn it around on reaching the corner of a paddy plot, he thought.

The expression putting a canopy over an incipient jube-jube fruit " would mean the word "wā"¹⁷ he then thought, and putting these three syllables together would form the word "aac ze wā"¹⁸, and it meant the donor of the monastery was lifeless, that is he had died.

Mathout was sent back to investigate whether the prince had interpreted the novice's words correctly and sure enough it was confirmed that the donor of the monastery had indeed died from his illness. The prince was overjoyed to hear this news on Mathout's return.

¹⁵ The term "donor of a monastery," is often used as a honorific in connexion with respected elderly males, although in this context it seems to be applied to an actual donor.

¹⁶ "aac" is the word for "one" in Pali and in the Mon and Myanmar scripts, the figure for eight of the character "ga" when turned ninety degrees on its axis resembles the figure for "one"

a jube-jube fruit being a round thing resembles the letter "wa" and the symbol for the vowel ā, is somewhat like the Arabic 7 and is written above and immediately following the consonant resulting in the combination "07".

¹⁸ Probably should be taken as "ajīva" i.e. "without life; dead" in Pali, which sounds quite close to it.

One day, the brother of Buddhanyana the aforesaid novice, who was indentured to Talakhwagaran, ran away so that their mother was held as surety for the money owed.

Buddhanyana therefore volunteered to take his brother's place and asked permission from his mentor monk that he might leave the order to do this. His mentor said "I couldn't help you out with goods or money because my trees do not bear fruit, but your resolve to repay your beneficence of your mother is commendable"

Thus Buddhanyana left the order and became an indentured servant in the place of his mother who left for her native Wakamo. Buddhanyana took the name of Min Kan Si on his return to lay life.

Talakhwagaran made him a cowherd and being knowledgeable he assumed leadership of other cowherds. The prince sent out Mathout again. As Mathout rested for a while near the Saw Min Lake, he heard Talakhwagaran's son call out to Min Kan Si to take a look at the cows. Min Kan Si climbed a banyan tree and saw the cows feeding near the lakeshore. Climbing down, he saw a snake nestled in a fork and avoided it as he came down. When other cowherds asked him if he had seen the cows, Min Kan Si said "I saw only because I did not see and after seeing I did not see." The other cowherds said "Nga Kan Si talks in riddles and we cannot make head nor tail of his words."

Mathout noted the exchange and noticed that the cowherd who spoke enigmatically was the novice who had commented on the health of the monastery donor with such quaint words. When Mathout reported what he had heard to the prince, he again made a vow in the same way that he had done in the past

The lad must have climbed the tree and sighted the cows after which he climbed down and in doing so noticed a snake in one of the forks of the tree he surmised. May I become a king if what I have surmised is true, he vowed. Meanwhile Min Kan Si's mother had approached the presiding monk of the Nirvana monastery to relate what had happened and the monk being his uncle had the ransom paid so that Min Kan Si could don the robes again.

Again Mathout was sent out and he happened to take a rest near the monastery where the novice stayed. The monk called the novice Buddhanyana and asked him what was in the pouch at his waist. He was heard to answer "It is 'shyava kwam¹⁹' Sire" and the monk smilingly commenting that he talks even to me his mentor in mysterious ways.

Mathout looked closer on hearing this exchange and noticed that he was the novice he had come across before. The novice's words were duly reported and the prince

¹⁹ "sva" is the Mon term for curry, broth or soup ("hinn" in Myanmar) and "kweh" the Mon term for "only, truly etc" ("thar" in Myanmar) and "hinn thar" is the Myanmar pronunciation of the hamsa or ruddy shelduck.

again made a vow as in the past. Then he guessed that "syha wa" referred to the Mon word for curry ('hinn' in Myanmar) and "kwann" referred to the word in Mon which meant only ('tha' in Myanmar) and combining these two came up with the word "hinantha", the hamsa bird. He then called Mathout and asked him if the novice was needy. Mathout affirmed that he was indeed. The prince sent Mathout with a bolt of fine cloth and a bottle of rose water with a plea to the presiding monk of the Nirvana monastery for the novice.

Mathout after presenting the offertories submitted to the monk that Binnya Nwe, son of Hsinbyushin craved for the advice from the novice Buddhanyana and that the prince was ready to make offertories if needed. The monk was well pleased and said I am now 45 years of age and have spent 27 years in the order. The merit that I have earned from learning the doctrinal and practical aspects of the Buddha's teachings I share with the son of the patron of the doctrine. My pupil left the order when I had passed 25 years as a monk in order to become an indentured servant. He is honourable, learned in the scriptures and shines like the universal monarch's ruby. He is fitting to be with the son of the patron of our religion. I give him leave to go with you, Mathout, personal attendant to the prince." He then admonished his pupil Buddhanyana in the following manner :-

"Always keep in your mind the five skills, the eight attributes, the six virtues, the three crafts and the nine beguilements.

The five skills are :- *yogasikkhā* - martial skills, *vinicchaya sikkhā* - skill in passing judgement; *ketu sikkhā* - skill in interpretation of signs and omens; *porāṇa sikkhā* - skill in knowledge of archaisms and dynastic chronicles; *hatthi assa sikkhā* - skill in horsemanship and elephantry.

The eight attributes are :- *pathavi guṇo* - having the attributes of the earth; *loka guṇo* - having the attributes of Indra; *samudda guṇo* - having the attributes of the ocean; *Brahma guṇo* - having the attributes of the Brahma celestial deity; *Yama guṇo* - having the attributes of the king of purgatories; *aggi guṇo* - having the attributes of fire.

The six virtues are :- *katiññū* - recognizing another's beneficence; *katavedī* - liberating one's indebtedness; *dalha atthi* - keeping one's word; *dukkha* - sympathizing with a person in distress; *kalyāṇamitta* - making friends; *mittasamsagga* - being faithful towards one's friends.

The three aspects of craft are :- *jīvitamāyā* - strategem in the face of death; *yoga māyā* - strategy to overcome the enemy; *mahāvināsa māyā* - strategem when the lives of creatures are threatened.

The nine aspects of deception are :- *bhayāmusā* - deception to avert danger; *jīvitā musā* - deception to escape death; *mahāvināka musā* - deception to escape ruination; *vyāpātī musā* - deception to overcome the enemy; *alaṅgavacana musā* - deception through ignorance; *yassarājagūḥhā musā* - deception to preserve an official

The novice paid obeisance to the monk and left with Mathout.

Meanwhile, the prince was worried lest the novice should fail to arrive and prayed for a dream before he slept. In the dawning hours of Saturday morning, the prince dreamt that a turret was built in the front part of his house and a ruby placed in his palm. When dawn broke, the prince offered 108 baskets of oblatory food to the gods of the eight planets and the god *Supinna*²¹. He had the ex-monk Zarwekanun summoned to interpret his dream and was told that the turret (on palaces and city walls) or *pra* being spelt with the letter *pa* and the "encircling *ra*" symbol and as it is equivalent to the combination *pa* and *ra*, stood for *parasuveva*, which means that the novice will arrive the day after tomorrow. The ruby placed in your hands symbolising *ma*²² in our Talaing (Mon) language represents Saturday and since Hanthawaddy is nominally Saturday, it means that you will be king of Hanthawaddy.

The prince was overjoyed to hear this and presented him with a bolt of fine cloth. Two days later Mathout and the novice arrived. The prince raised his arm in elation and on interviewing him he found the novice to be methodical in his answers and cultured in the ways of worldly things and doctrinal matters. At dinner, the prince smiled at the novice. I serve at your feet and will obey your command, he said. The prince then told him to forsake his red robes for the white. He had Nga Daw Koun bring a suit of white and the monastic robes were duly exchanged for a white layman's suit in the interconnecting passage. He then followed the prince into the hall where Talamidaw smiled on seeing him. When he asked whether she had smiled because she knew how they were related, she admitted that she did not know and that he would have to tell her. The novice then replied that he and (Mathout) had been separated during the raid on Wun town and they were reunited only after he had entered the order. He told the prince that his name was Min Kan Si.

Talamidaw then presented him with a bowl of gold weighing 5 ticals and a bolt of cloth. After Min Kan Si had had his meal, the prince related his enigmatic words on three occasions and asked for their answers to see if they matched with his own interpretation. After Min Kan Si had explained these, he went on to say "My prince desires the throne of Hanthawaddy and I am the one who had the hamsa bird in his hands. Now that I am your servant you shall be the master of Hanthawaddy." From that time the prince asked Min Kan Si's opinion on matters occupying his mind and Min Kan Si counseled him to the best of his ability.

Then Hsinbyushin fell ill and could no longer give audience so that oblatory ceremonies were held in the house of minister Zeip Bye. These were attended by dignitaries beginning with the king's sister Mahadevi, princes, princesses, nobles

Nai Pan Hla's translation of the Mon version mentions the three aspects missing in the Myanmar version as :-
"deception in order to keep something secret from one's wife; deception to keep something secret from others
and deception arising from destitution"

supina - [Pali] dream, vision; therefore it probably means the god of dreams and visions.
ma nuik : *mat nuik* [Mon] - ruby.

and their ladies. Mahadevi in league with Smim Maru took this opportunity to have Binnya Nwe killed and had three of his henchmen armed with swords conceal themselves near the door. This was reported to Zeip Bye by his men and the minister had them removed and stationed his own men near the door. When Zeip Bye's daughters Mwe Kanaungmut²³ and Mwe Hpyoun Gre²⁴ gave a dance performance Binnya Nwe took a pair of cymbals to accompany them. Later he presented two bolts of skirt material and two bolts of fine calico to the girls. Zeip Bye considered that his daughters had caught the prince's eye.

While drinking and feasting Smim Maru, complaining of stiffness stretched his foot and touched Binnya Nwe with it but the prince bore it quietly. But Manyi Gam Gaung saw it and spoke up saying that although the prince might bear it patiently he would not do so. Mahadevi took Smim Maru's side and chided Manyi Gam Gaung for talking in a disruptive manner. Smim Zeip Bye interceded and said that he was to be blamed for causing the princes to come to words. Mahadevi then left the party and Smim Maru followed in her wake. As Binnya Nwe made a move to leave Zeip Bye held to him until the place was nearly clear of people and only then he took the prince's hand and escorted him to the door. He told him how Smim Maru had tried to assassinate him by posting his men at the door but that his men had caught on to them. He said that the prince should be aware that Smim Maru was scheming and that he only feared that he might find some subtle way. If violent means were resorted to, he said, he would deal with them.

At dawn Binnya Nwe went with presents to pay his respects to the king. Manyi Gam Gaung was seen to be weeping and the king asked why he did so. "I would like to pay obeisance only to the true sacred relic of Maw Daw (ie The Shwemawdaw pagoda) and not to what are unauthentic relics," Manyi Gam Gaung replied. Binbyushin told him that of the three brothers and sisters he loved him most so that he should not say things that distressed him. Manyi Gam Gaung made his obeisance and then left for Dala. This interchange reached the ears of Mahadevi and after talking over with Smim Maru prepared presents consisting of a bowl of gold 10 cals in weight, two bolts of cloth, gilt candles and popped rice. Mahadevi, Palmithiri and Smim Maru went with these presents to Binnya Nwe's house where they were welcomed by Binnya Nwe carrying his child in his arms. Reaching the elephant mounting deck running around his house, Binnya Nwe handed the child to his wife and knelt down to offer his hand. After Mahadevi had sat down she said that they had come because Smim Maru wanted to beg his pardon for inadvertently touching Binnya Nwe's person while he was drunk the other day. Binnya Nwe replied that he took no offense for just as Smim Maru might have knocked against him while drunk he could also have done it to Smim Maru while he was drunk. However, Mahadevi insisted that he accept the presents to show that he forgave him as otherwise Smim Maru would be discomfited by the thought that Binnya Nwe was still angry with him. Thus Binnya Nwe accepted the presents and the apology after the act of paying obeisance was made Mahadevi announced that she was happy now and they left.

Kedong mot - (Mon) eye

Kruh - (Mon) heart; liver

Binnya Nwe conferred with Min Kan Si and confided that it was like living in a termite mound now and any slip could land them in trouble. At that moment an invitation to hunt in the Parapang mountain came from Smim Maru. The prince begged off saying that he was unwell. A message also arrived from Zeip Bye informing the prince that the Mahadevi and Smim Maru were plotting to kill him and to begging him be careful. A message also came from Manyi Gam Gaung advising him to remove himself to Dagon. The prince asked Min Kan Si to suggest where they should go. Min Kan Si suggested that they propitiate the 108 planets, offer oblations to the noble gods and go on a round to listen for prognostic utterances at the city gates. On that very night, Binnya Nwe, Min Kan Si and Baw Mun after saying their prayers made a vow that some sign may be revealed to show where they should go to serve the Teachings of the Buddha. First they went to the Maw Tarok gate and heard a mother singing a lullaby to her child at about the time that children go to bed (ie. about 8 p.m) in these words :-

"awe talwe dabhwan ddhta nga myak kyat pan maññwat shyā do smiun ce twei"
which meant "As big as the emblic myrobalan tree, where four Buddhas have left their sacred relics, go to that golden land, O'prince."

When Binnya Nwe asked Min Kan Si about the significance of her utterance, Min Kan Si replied that it refers to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda where the relics of four Buddhas are enshrined. They then went to the Maw Daw gate where a mother was singing this lullaby :-

"awe min ei phyok ladaw thwak thok ran; dok kwan ciñ kwan ciñ pariuk lā joñ tat ke ā ma ā pro roñ syha dosmin"

It meant "The nun bought a young elephant to avoid walking and the young elephant browses on the Bermuda grass near the lake. O'prince go to the foot of the place where the sacred hair relics are enshrined and you will become king." To the prince's question what this signified, - Min Kan Si interpreted the words as an exhortation for him to go to Dagon. From there they went to the Dalei Thwat gate where a mother was jouncing her child and singing "*tu syha mashin gwu; anutham nako namideva tosyhat, jañke ava mam lu*"

"Because the gods and people favour you they bring the white stamens for you, son of our king, O'prince."

As to its meaning Min Kan Si interpreted it as "the people favour our move to Dagon and the gods will bestow you the golden throne". They then went to the Da Ngaw Hnin gate where a woman was singing to her child by the light of an oil lamp in this way:-

"dīm syha dīm dīm kwan samin mwan; dūm yamina ññam; pare ma syha do sim"

The meaning of this lullaby was "O young Talaing prince, go to the city with four titles without delay" Again Binnya Nwe asked Min Kan Si what it meant and the latter replied that it meant Dagon, as it was also known as Pokkharavati, Dīñyavati, Isindharam and Triya gumbha, although Dagon was its foremost title.

From there they listened at the Malwepauk gate where they heard these words being sung :- " *mado kalāla papa tegalāni; cepatithan kaṭi; lagū pwan camak nwan haṇsā* "

It meant " Do not believe loving words that have been uttered long ago. Go to the place where four streams have four names and you will be on the throne of Hanthawaddy holding a noble audience " The prince asked Min Kan Si of its significance. " It means that do not believe that your aunt loves you. The four creeks with four names again refer to Dagon as there are the *Naratika* or the Fig-tree creek, *Avandhika* or the Myrobalan-tree creek, *Esan* or the Long Tusk creek and *pāyapka* or the Paddy bird creek there. Go there and you will reach the pinnacle " Min Kan Si explained.

They then went and listened at the Byadon Gate where a mother was singing this lullaby to her child - " *awe ta!we tan kwa; jø oet kesā ghiu giun ce āhaṇsā; diṇ piump masyhiun da twe* "

It meant " The emblic myrobalan tree dies without being struck and has a dusky sheen Not far from it is the stupa of the sacred hair relic whence the prince should repair with haste to have his wish fulfilled." When the prince asked Min Kan Si what it meant, the latter replied that it again meant that their destination was to be none other than Dagon to which the gods were urging that they should go quickly as these women had sung these words of prophecy under the direction and the urging of gods they were of the opinion that they should leave at the soonest for Dagon. The prince then sent for the chief of elephantry Pamu Lauk to ask about the number of war elephants available. "Most extraordinary ! " declared Pamu Lauk but was later persuaded by gifts to announce that " , There are 5 elephants to be kept ready and delivered on demand. These are Adarung, Pazwelaman and Eilakaik Nyat, three males in all and two female elephants," he said "Adarung and Pazwelaman are in their prime and will knock out elephants nine feet in height. The mahouts are all from my family and will follow my orders. Please let me have something for them. There is also Muzamat and Dazwe in Ba (twe) Byaw which we can take along on our way out." The prince gave gold, silver and clothes to Pamu Lauk.

After he had gone, the prince discussed things over with Baw Mun and Min Kan Si.

"If we try to organise sons of the nobles this news will be bound to spread. Instead we should recruit country lads and village folk." Thus Baw Mun was sent on a mission to recruit people from this category with silver and gold. Mahadevi asked Baw Mun where he was going and on being told that he was leaving for Wakamo where his aunt (his mother's sister) lived. " Most singular ! " was Mahadevi's comment. When this was reported to the prince by Baw Mun, he said " We are like blacksmiths who cannot avoid the heat from the furnace. By the way how did you do? ". Baw Mun replied that he had recruited thirty sturdy peasants. Min Kan Si suggested that the prince should make an appointment to a hunt in the Lahazakyat Lake area and then leave. Binnya Nwe liked the idea and sent an invitation to Smim Maru to join him on a deer-hunt in the Lahazakyat Lake region. Smim Maru

declined saying that he had other engagements so that the prince asked him to send some men with him. Accordingly, five of Smim Maru's men followed the prince on the hunt and they were given some venison to be given to Mahadevi and Samim Maru on their return.

Only after four or five days later was Baw Mun sent to collect his crew of thirty. Binnya Nwe regularly sent out invitations to go on deer hunts so that Mahadevi and Smim Maru were lulled into believing him. Only then did the prince send for the thirty who were at Tarulin with Baw Mun.. The thirty were :- *Masiñ -1; Manwain -1; Masiun -1; Baw Lakwan -1; Mabo-1; Mazo -1; Mañdeva -1; Ma U -1; Bawgala -1; Mawat -1; Samtwe -1; Baw Gamumañ-1; Mindhanu -1; Mince -1; Saw Ein-1; Saw Mañ -1; Mañ Caññsū -1; Mañ Yodā -1; Baw Sri -1; Mañ Mañirut -1; Baw Kan -1; Baw Dala -1; Ma Wo-1; Mago Wāci -1; Sak Datū MaE -1; Baw Shan -1; Byā Duñ -1; Mathout -1; Ma ñe -1; Krat Kye -1; Macalwan -1; Che gri marā -1.*²⁵

They were made to swear allegiance and given suitable awards. Since some of them had fifteen, twenty, twenty two or twenty three men with them, they altogether totalled six hundred *. They were instructed to be at the Tarulin Monastery by the month of Kason (April-May) and sent back.

On his return the prince sent word to Smim Maru that the deer hunt was unsuccessful.

A message arrived from Zeip Bye saying that Mahadevi and Smim Maru were whispering to each other cheek-to-cheek, a most unbecoming way for a mother-in-law and her son-in-law to behave, and that they were plotting to have the prince seized. The ex-monk Zarwekanun also called and said that having seen the good portent of a white umbrella, the time to leave had come. The prince summoned Pamu Lauk and instructed him that they would leave in two day's time. On that day the prince sent an invitation to Smim Maru to go on a deer hunt with him to Kyat Paw forest. Smim Maru declined saying that he had sworn off unwholesome deeds and would not be able to come. at dawn he sent word to Pamu Lauk to bring five elephants before dusk. Smim Maru suspected Binnya Nwe's motives and sent one of his men by the name of Baw Ba and instructed him to return as soon as Binnya Nwe left, otherwise he was to stay with him. Baw Ba reported to the prince what was asked of him to do. Binnya Nwe then said if that was so he was thence to be known by the name of Smim Maru and to come with him. Baw Ba agreed to follow the prince's instructions.

Meanwhile Smim Maru was thinking that Binnya Nwe had not gone anywhere as Baw Ba had not come back. When the chief of elephantry arrived with the five elephants the prince worshipped at the Shwe Mawdaw pagoda and then mounted the elephant Adarung. Pamu Lauk rode the elephant Pazwelaman, Baw Mun was on Asura and Apasein and Apasu on female elephants. The two elephants at Batwe Byaw were told to go ahead and wait at Maw Nyat.

²⁵ There are 2 extra names ie 32 altogether in the nominal roll instead of 30. Nai Pan Hla's version shows thirty exactly but names differ.

Binnya Nwe slips away to Dagon

In the year 745 M.E(1883), on the night of the third waxing day of the moon in the month of Nayon, Binnya Nwe left Bago and skirting the forest left by way of Lagu Hill. Only when three watches²¹ of the night were struck that Mahadevi and Smin Maru came to know that Binnya Nwe had left. Immediately, they approached the king Hsin Byu Shin and apprised him of the news that Binnya Nwe had run away. The king on hearing this, remarked that had he not told her that he knew that young Abasun would turn bad. He then called his daughter Talamidaw and reproached her for not reporting it immediately. Talamidaw, who had come carrying her son BawlawKyanntaw with her replied, "Your majesty's son has not been treating me like a wife for quite a long time and because your majesty yourself has not been feeling well, I dare not come and submit this news".

When she had left, Zeip Bye was summoned. King Hsinbyushin did not give an audience as he was ill. Mahadevi alone pronounced that the minister had been summoned to go after young Basun who had run away. Zeip Bye replied that all his men were at present in the rice fields and it would take four or five days to assemble them. "During the time that it would take for me to march en masse with good elephants and horses he would be ensconced in Dagon and men of Dagon will by then be on his side. If I should march on to Dagon without due preparation, he could attack us on the way and if some of the good steeds should fall into his hands, it would then be quite difficult even to disengage and fall back and it would be like reinforcing him", he said. Mahadevi agreed the minister had made a good point "I had known that Eilo and Amun's young sons been recruiting men for quite a long while", she said, "I have heard unconfirmed reports of these movements. I disregarded these reports." Zeip Bye had the prince's interest at heart so that he tried to prolong the task of going after him as long as he could.

Prince Binnya Nwe reached Z'Ywe at dawn and breakfasted in Maw Nyut. He reached Dagon in the third hour of the night. During a halt at Saw Min Kan Gyi, he announced his plan of action for Dagon. "I will assemble the citizens and all of Mahadevi's men", he said, "When all of Mahadevi's 18 men have assembled bide your time when I say 'mom zom', but when I say 'mat zat', get up and cut them down". To the assemblage of townsmen and Mahadevi's men he announced that he had come down on hearing the news that an invasion force from the upcountry kingdom had reached Tharawaddy and he was to see that the defence works consisting of city walls, bastions, moat and ditches were kept in good repair and to corral all the elephants and horses to be kept in readiness. That was the purpose of why he was here and why he had them assembled. The Maha Devi's 18 men were:-

Khut Za Beit -1; Siddarth -1; Duttiba -1; Senior minister -1; Junior minister-

²¹ approximately 3am.

1; Ship's Captain-1; Baw Dwa -1; Masin -1; Samin Pinle -1; Man Yan Dagon -1; altogether 10; Baw Bawi -1; Sapara -1; M'rut -1; Baw Ba -1; Daka Baka lauk -1; Daga Bhago -1; Man Desi-1; altogether 7.²²

Of these 18 (actually there are 17 names only) the last named customs officer Man De had not arrived yet and therefore the prince did not utter the codeword yet. Finally Man De arrived dressed in finery and wearing scent and sandalwood paste. The prince then gave the codeword "mat zat" at which his thirty men attacked the Maha Devi's men and in a trice 17 were cut down. The lone exception was Man De. Samin Maru hacked at him five times and he was not even scratched and he climbed up the roof. However, the tasseled hem of his sarong got caught in the rafter trim so that he was pulled down where Manun belted him with the flat of the sword and killed him. Only then did the townfolk realise that the prince was leading a rebellion.

The prince then asked them whether they were on his side or the other side. With the exception of Mane who was Khut Za Beik's younger brother and a certain Ma Sut they replied that they were now his servants. The two, in contrast remarked that if his lordship were to fail in his endeavour, it would mean death for all of them. At this, these two also were killed. When the prince's anger had subsided, the prelate, MaPaing Sayadaw and the intellectual Ei Ta Sun approached him and saying that since they had been dealt with according to their karma, leave should be given for their remains to be collected and cremated. The prince assented to this proposal and the remains were duly collected and cremated. Property owned by this score of individuals were confiscated and divided among the prince's thirty men.

Mathamke presented two viss²³ of gold to the prince. When the prince asked the reason for this act, he replied that he was the first person to present two viss of gold and when the prince had his wishes fulfilled, he would submit his request to be granted the feifdom of Wun Town. The prince assured him that his request would be granted and Mathamke made a kowtow, observing that the prince's words was for him a command he would follow with utmost veneration.

When the townsfolk proposed a new residence for the prince, he rejected it arguing "When womenfolk have their periods and are unclean, do we then abandon them?" He did not let anyone clean up the gore, leaving it to instil fear in everyone who saw it. The walls, turrets, moat and ditches were put to good repair. While this was going on, five youths of noble blood stayed constantly at his side. He asked them, "The five of you are constantly at my side, but are you united?". One of the five called *Min Ram*, had a buck

²² Most of the names do not agree with Nai Pan Hla's translation of the Mon text where 18 are mentioned.

²³ One viss equals 3.6 lb or 1.6 kilogram approximately.

killed and in a ceremony of drinking the water of allegiance, they drank its blood. The village where this took place came to be called to this day, *Min Ram Dalaw Nwaa Zaa*, "the village where *Min Ram* ate a bullock." The five were *Min Ram*, *Min Ka Deviss*, *Pamadah*, *Pan Pe Htaw* and *M'Pyi*.

He awarded the five youths and said, "I will send you on a mission. I cannot send my trusted servants because if I do, they will recognise them. They will be in the dark if I should send you instead. I must learn what they are planning and what they are saying at present."

He then retired to his chambers with *Min Kan Si* to confer with him. When he asked whether he should send a letter to *Manyi Gam Gaung*, Lord of Dala, the latter seconded his proposal. He sent for *M'Sin*, his scribe and told him to compose a letter from what he dictated and ordered *Min Kan Si* to edit it. The resulting letter was as follows:-

"Elder Brother Lord of Dala to whom your younger brother *Binnya Nwe* informs,

I was in dire circumstances at Bago. My benefactress and aunt *Mahadevi* and *Smim Maru* are of one mind. Meanwhile my father *Hsinbyu-shin* is seriously ill and should he pass away, they have conspired to do away with me and my brother *Baw Khon Hmaing* and place *Smim M'ru* on the throne.

Once during a royal water festival which was held at the headwaters of a stream, *Smim Maru* was seen eating a mango, then playfully tossing the seed at *Mahadevi*. You yourself have witnessed this little episode and later related it to me. At another time when the ceremony of watering the Bo tree was held at *Moe Dala The*, a hollowed-out fresh areca nut stuffed with lime was presented to *Smim Maru* on a golden salver having a figure of a lion for its base. *Mahadevi* was seen to smile when *Smim Maru* winced from the lime burning the linings of his mouth as he chewed betel with the doctored areca nut. This little scene was seen by my sisters *Talamithiri*, *Talamidaw* and yourself Elder Brother. The fact that this was enacted in front of us, princes of royal blood, was not even considered. Should a mother-in-law and her son-in-law behave in this manner? I have fled to Dagon to save my own life.

Sir, I am writing this to inform you why I have come here and that I may be able to see you again, dear brother, only if I survive."

This letter was sent with suitable presents to the Lord of Dala, *Manyi Gam Gaung*.

On receiving this letter *Manyi Gam Gaung* raised his fist in a gesture of exultation, "*Binnya Nwe* has spoken like a true son of the king," he said "And we have drunk each other's blood seven times as tokens of pledging our solidarity. *Laukpya* is aligned with the royal aunt and she had summoned him

to refurbish the fortifications. I know that the minister Zeip Bye is inclined towards Binnya Nwe”.

Binnya Nwe's messenger was sent back and the latter duly reported what had occurred to Min Kan Si. Min Kan Si relayed the news to Binnya Nwe adding “My lord's wishes have been fulfilled. There is no cause for worry now.” They then went around inspecting the fortifications and had the railings around the turrets strengthened. An order was also issued that no one was to take even one leaf bud or a sprig of roselle from the garden belonging to Mahadevi or Moe E Law who had been Binnya Nwe's nursemaid. When they arrived at the Kyeit A Thout pagoda, the prelate Ma Paing Saya and Min Kan Si conferred in selecting a fitting place for the conference hall of the palace. The selected site lay between the A Thout and the Parami pagodas. “Astrologically, the A Thout pagoda represents Friday and you Prince is Friday born, A Thout pagoda has the triad sign and the Parami pagoda as its name implies will assist in the perfection of your virtues.” Ma Mwe Kale was given the title of “Samin Ma Go” and appointed as the minister responsible for building the palace.

Baw Kane was stationed at the entry to the palace to control entry into the palace. Min Ram and his section were assigned to man a village outpost. Head mahout Pamu Lauk submitted that his elephants be allowed to range in the forest north of the town as the forage within the city was not strengthening. The prince asked whether his elephant would charge and ram and was told that it would do so even should its opponent be one 6 cubits (9 feet) high. The prince was gladdened to hear this.

On the day that the prince gave audience, the sage Ei Ta Sun presented him with flowers that astrologically signified Monday. Min Kan Si smiled when he saw this.

When the prince asked the meaning of this, Min Kan Si replied that on the day that you mounted the podium of the new audience hall, the sage presented you with flowers that signified Monday. The sage gives sermons on the doctrines to people from all walks of life and it means that you have won Pegu equitably.

The prince agreed with this interpretation.

On meeting Mathamke, the prince remarked in jest, “Well, your two viss of gold have gone down the drain”. To this Mathamke riposted, “My two viss of gold is my principle for the feifdom of Wun, from which I will progress to the feifdom of Martaban.” The prince remarked, “When my aspiration to the throne of Hanthawaddy is realised, you will be given the feifdom of Wun and when the feifdom of Martaban becomes vacant you will get it.” Mathamke danced a jig in joy and said “The Lord Buddha and the kings speak on issues but once, there are no second thoughts once they have spoken. Your

words are beholden to me. I will be the lord of Wun when you confer it on me and when Martaban falls vacant I will be vested with two feifdoms which I will rule from the town of Wun. Please take note of that mandarins of the court."

At night (the prince) went around inspecting the city's fortifications. He mustered his 500 troops and decreed that they were not to go around looting people. Taking 500 sarongs from the storehouse of Mahadevi and the two viss of gold that Mathamke had presented he divided it among his troops. Baw Kane was put in charge of blocking the riverine approach to the city.

The next day at dawn, the prince worshipped at the Shwe Dagon pagoda. On his return, he came upon a beautiful woman and asked her who she was. She replied that her name was Mwe Mneit and that she was the wife of a Rakhine scribe named Ma Pyi Nge²⁴. Ma Pyi Nge, sensing the interest the prince was showing in his wife, felt afraid and fled for Pegu. There he was questioned by the Mahadevi on how A'Ba Sun was behaving himself. She was told that on his arrival, he had summoned Maha Devi's twenty officials, had them killed and divided their belongings among his retinue of thirty. "When he had collected 500 men", he continued, "he raided your store for clothes and gave it to his men. He gave the title of Smin Ma Go to Ma Mwe Kale. Mathamke presented two viss of gold and made a supplication that he be granted the feifdom of Wun and Muttama when the latter becomes available. He questioned my wife with the intention of taking her to wife and as such I feared for my own life and have sought refuge under your feet."

Mahadevi approached the king and complained that young A'Basun had killed a score of her good men and had taken gold, silver and clothes from her store and that she had been informed of this by the scribe Ma Pyi Nge.

The king commented that he (Binnya Nwe) had become arrogant because he was too ill. He then had Talamidaw summoned and told her that young A'Ba Sun was saying that he will make Mwe Maneik his queen when he becomes king and how did she feel about that. Talamyidaw replied that he was making free with the prerogatives of a male and she had not followed him because she did not like his attitude.

The king then announced that the task of bringing him back was delegated to his sister and Smim Maru who were to lead the mandarins as he himself was not well. When the mandarins were assembled they deferred to the chief mandarin Zeip Bye, only who they stated, could speak for the king. They would obey whatever was said by the sister of the king or Zeip Bye, they said. When Zeip Bye was asked to comment, he said, "Since the monsoon season had arrived mounting a military campaign would mean that rice cultivation would suffer."

²⁴ Nai Pan Hla's translation of the Mon texts mention his name as "M'Khyap Ciup" and that his wife was a hawker of cooking oil as we shall see later.

wise mandarins should also be employed to persuade him to come back. Moreover, what we have designated as our enemy is none other than the son of Hsinbyushin our lord and king. If we press him, wouldn't he flee to either the Shan or Myanmar country and wouldn't we feel sorry if he does that? We should send for him once or twice and in the event that he refuses to come, we can mount a three-pronged campaign with Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya and Bra Tapa lord of Martaban leading riverine columns while we will march forth with massed elephant and cavalry by the land route. Dagon has no masonry walls, she is defended by a wooden stockade only and cannot withstand such a force." He said this to gain time as he had Binnya Nwe's interests at heart.

The assemblage of mandarins declared that what Zeip Bye had said was true. Smim Maru said it was fair enough and Mahadevi announced that an envoy be sent for the time being. Looking around for a suitable envoy, the name of Smim Tissa Kummar was suggested. On being given the task, Smim Tissa Kummar assured them that he had always served his master, the king's interests and he would take on this task also.

The letter was as follows:-

"Binnya Nwe to whom your aunt informs,

You are acting like a fool with the backing of thirty rice-field cultivators and on the advice of a young cowherd. Your father the king has recovered now.

He asks whether the information that you have fled to Dagon is correct or not. I have told him that you have gone there to repair fortifications that have fallen into disrepair. However he thinks that I am covering up for my nephew and is not convinced. He said in great anger that troops from Pegu be sent out en masse to take you by storm. He was only appeased when I said that I had sent you there and that you will not run away. Is there anyone besides you that deserves to rule over Hanthawaddy? Your son Bawlawkyantaw is ill. Your wife Talamyidaw is also sick for four or five days and cannot eat. You should come quickly. Smim Tissa Kummar has been sent to call you."

Smim Tissa Kummar took this letter, riding a she-elephant and escorted by a contingent of fifteen men went down to Dagon. On reaching a picket, sentries sent back the report that Smim Tissa Kummar had come. The prince asked how many had come with him, the sentries duly replied that he had come on a she-elephant with fifteen men. The prince told them to let him come in and escorted by a detail arrived in Dagon at dawn. The men from Pegu were commanded to keep a quiet presence. The prince asked Min Kan Si where he should meet the Pegu contingent and was told that the conference hall would be suitable. The prince summoned Smim Tissa Kummar to come into the office. On seeing him the prince commented that there must be some reason for

coming and Smim Tissa Kummar replied that he would now make a koto and then presented Mahadevi's letter to the prince. The prince himself read the letter and when he reached the part that mentioned that his wife and son were both ill, wept. Seeing this, Smim Tissa Kummar related the story of the Buddha-to-be Prince Siddattha who on the eve of assuming the life of a recluse in the forest, only took a look at his wife Yasodhara and child Rahula from outside the chamber as his overriding aim was to become the Buddha and left for the forest riding his horse Kandika and only accompanied by his man Chanda. While being seated under the Bo tree the Purified One was confronted by Mara and his evil hordes who had come to wage war on him. As the Buddha reminisced on his perfection of virtues through the long past, the hordes of Mara were destroyed by the power of his amassed virtues. Later, when his father, King Suddhodana sent envoys to persuade him to return, he refused to do so for nine times in all. Only at the time when the minister Kaludayi was sent that he finally consented to return, was it not?, asked Samin Tissa Kummar. Realising that though Smim Tissa Kummar was officially Mahadevi's envoy, he showed his concern for the prince's interest by relating this story thought the prince and he was very gladdened.

"Smim Tissa Kummar you are my alter ego," said the prince, "What kind of forces and resources do I have that I can rise up against my father Hsinbyushin? It was because they were plotting to kill me that I have come to Dagon; only in order that I might escape with my life. Please relate things to my father Hsinbyushin and my benefactress and aunt Mahadevi in a way that they will not be angered."

When Smim Tissa Kummar heard this, he said "When Your Highness have assumed kingship, please remember that I am old with teeth falling off and wizened cheeks and cannot chew the rocks of Wun town². I'd rather chew the soft sod of Martaban". At this, the prince looked quizzically at Matham Ke who smiled. The prince then had many presents prepared for Samin Tissa Kummar, but the latter refused saying that he should not take them and that he should not even stay longer but requested that he be escorted back just past the sentry picket.

This the prince arranged for and he was soon back in Pegu. He reported to the Mahadevi in the way he was instructed by the prince to do so. When he was asked if that was true, he replied that he had seen the dispositions and attitudes there and has observed that things were lax and that there were no signs of preparations being made for starting a rebellion and that he thought that people were just being afraid of being hurt should there be an altercation between the forces of the queen and of the prince. When he was asked whether the words of the prince that he had relayed were true, he replied that he could

² Because "Wun", the name of the town had been derived from "Gawun" a term for laterite.

not know (the prince's inner feelings). Then he was asked how the prince reacted to the news that his wife and son were ill. He replied that the prince himself read the letter and when he came to the part about the illness of his wife and child he looked mortified and his eyes brimmed with tears. Samin Tissa Kummar was then awarded gifts.

The prince then had Mwe Maneit summoned (and installed in his royal pavilion).

He then summoned Min Ram Daw, Marapa, Mataw, Mapyi and Min Dewit and told them that as his old retainers would be quickly recognised if he were to send them to pegu but no one would know if they went instead and listened around. They accepted the task and after giving out awards and making them swear their allegiance to him, were told to post reliable sentries at the picket and were sent to Pegu to listen to what was being said by children at the four city gates, to note them well and to report to him on their return.

The five vowed their allegiance and departed. On reaching Pegu, each put up at the house of a relative and at nightfall went to the Maw T̄arok gate at which children were singing thus :-

"Kywan mapi piu ta mo pi; lu ca rhiñ sac toñ syhañ; dokyat tapyoñ to' ma nwhe daguñ"

Which meant "Three groups of fledgling sparrows, three in each group came flitting to *Sac Toñ* stream. A good and renown king will he become, he that is actually in Dagon."

After noting it they pressed on to the Adalo gate and listened. There the children were singing thus :-

"Pu pañ pwat ñajaññ cut ke hta hto manik ta ñwe; sāmola rha dhani dhako; cut htak smoñ hto krat bo ña saññ" The meaning of this ditty was -"Serve the rice cooked in a small pot on a tray of gold Prepare the mattress and the pillows well. Crippled dog give water in a golden bowl for royalty to wash his feet. "

After noting it they went on their way to *Dango Duñ'* gate where they heard children singing "*yok' hpa mya: tat sok' manija mhan' nok' ma lup' carok'; bhwe. gun ma twe: koñ'*" which meant " Under the shadow of the sacred hair relic stupa on a hill , the good prince dwells, but anger in the form of an aunt who loves a youth is seen"

The five then proceeded to the wicket gate where the children were singing, "*Ei Pyaut Kyat* as he is known as a adult is king. The Friday -born of Talaing Country is powerful and an embryo for success. "

This was duly reported to the prince on their return. The prince asked the

prelate Ma Paing Saya and Min Kan Si to interpret these oracular sayings. Min Kan Si gave his interpretations thus; the first ditty refers to our lord who is sojourning in Dagon, they sang that overlordship will be attained in Dagon because the gods had inspired them to sing thus; in the second ditty, the rice from the small pot refers to our prince Binnyar Nwe, the term "to to" is associated with Saturday astrologically and means Hanthawaddy, the part saying "offer water in a golden bowl" means that we will be in Pegu without difficulty; the part referring to a crippled dog means that Mahadevi has acted like a bitch, and the part which mentions laying out the mattress and pillows and washing the feet with water from a golden bowl predicts that you will be ensconced with scrupulously clean feet on the Hanthawaddy throne. He continued his interpretations, "The part which mentions 'under the radiance of the sacred hair relic on a hill', refers to our prince Binnyar Nwe who presently resides close by the stupa of the sacred hair relic, the aunt's love refers to Smim Maru who is her lover and 'umbrage is seen in the Friday-born's hands' means that Smim Maru will die." "M'Twe Kwon", in numerology represents a series from one to six, Friday's number is six, our prince is Friday-born and therefore it means that Smin Maru will die at the hands of our Friday born prince. The reference to the embryo of victory in the Talaing country obviously means our prince. Thus Min Kan Si explained the four oracular pronouncements.

The prince rewarded his five servants and refurbished the fortifications. He also saw to the needs of his warriors. At this juncture Mahadevi sent one thousand lotus blossoms to the prince which were delivered by Baw Nyi. Binnya Nwe raised a lotus flower over his head and made a wish after which the thousand flowers were offered to the (Shwe) Dagon pagoda where the learned sage Ei Ta Sun was giving a sermon. He asked the prince's men where the prince obtained these lotus blossoms and on being told that these had been delivered from Pegu, remarked that since the lotus blossom signifies Monday and Pegu also signifies Monday, sending these from Pegu was tantamount to handing over Pegu.

The prince rewarded Baw Nyi and made a request that his nurse in childhood days Moe E Law be allowed to come down to Dagon. Baw Nyi then left for Pegu.

At nightfall, the prince summoned the sage and asked whether it was true that he had made a prediction. "Yes, I did" said the sage, "although the Lord Buddha's relics can also be worshipped in Bago, they have chosen to worship the relics at Dagon commenting that these are the authentic relics. The lotus flowers signify Monday and Pegu is also astrologically Monday. Moreover, Pa Kon Swa means 'flower that is easily plucked' signifying that Pegu will be easily won". The sage was rewarded with a bowl of gold weighing 10 ticals and 10 bolts of fine cloth. "This is only for the time being," he was told, "I

will reward you with a further 10 square chains of land, feifdom of a village worth 100 viss of copper anually and a gift of 115 bundles of areca nuts a year when my aspirations are realised. "

At that time the people of Dagon were singing " *M'Hnwak M'Hnwak; laññ ho yak lulan paun p'kaun puin ka lulan B'Ngo, Dat D'Gumñ talumñ m'hnav*".

It had the meaing "Aunt's father, aunt's father, you are called thus. Father does not come but a boatload of virginal lotuses is brought to the sacred hair relics in memory of Father. "

Another ditty ran thus " *M' Hnwak M'Hnwak; l'hoso; tho kyi kwan pro M' Ke zaku Ahna.kalok* "This could be rendered as, " Aunt's father, aunt's father, you are called thus. Father does not return. He has abandoned wife and child to do as a man pleases, like a celestial lord, verily ".

In yet another version, they sang "*M'Hnwak, M'Hnwak laññ; ho tuin nha ta nwañ ba puin ññava lo samo kî go ka rok*", which meant, " Aunt's father, aunt's father, you are called thus popularly. Father has not come forth. To the two merchant brothers, the Lord Buddha, resting under the Rajayatana²⁶ tree has bestowed, sacred hairs fom his head ". Asked for an interpretation, Min Kan Si replied that it was quite straightforward and referred to the episode in the life history of the Buddha when resting under the Rajayatana Tree in the Jeyya seṭṭha country, he plucked a few hairs from his head and bestowed them to the merchant brothers by the name of Taphussa and Bhallika²⁷, these sacred hairs being eventually enshrined in a stupa built atop the Singuttara Hill. The Mon term Khat Sok signifies Friday and our prince is Friday-born, the implication is quite straightforward, he said.

Meanwhile in Pegu the Mahadevi summoned Talamidaw and asked her whether, young A' BaSun had gone around listening for oracular sayings before he fled as it has been reported she asked. The latter replied "Your nephew does not care for me. I do not know". Then young Nga Daw Kunn was summoned and asked this question and because he did not tell the truth was beaten and tied up. Only then did he say that the trio of Binnya Nwe, Min Kan Si and Baw Mun had gone to the six gates and had heard good omens at all six but that he did know about the details. He was then asked which learned man had made the interpretations.

Upon being told that the ex-monk Zarwe Kanun used to come at all times he was rounded up and put in irons at Smim Maru's place.

Mahadevi then sent Mwe Aok, Mwe Rwe, Mwe Katain and Mwe Pyi on an

²⁶ *Buchanania latifolia*

²⁷ *Tapassu and Bhalluka* according to the Dictionary of Pali Proper Names

errand to listen at all the city's portals for portentous sayings making a submission beforehand to the gods to give some sign towards resolving the question of whether A'Ba sum would be caught or not.

The party duly visited the city gates, beginning with the Maw Tarok and the P'Ngaw Lun. They did not hear any oracular sayings right up to the fifth gate. Only at the sixth gate, at the monastery where Zarwe Kanun used to stay did a monk who was slightly touched in the head could be heard saying, "People say that I am ignorant of the doctrines, but listen to what I expound on." He then recited a stanza "*Putte puttañ gasidvōñ gōñ, gamanson dō kkhan dō*", then another "*Putte battoṅgasi dvon gaman son dōcogo é cadan*". The meaning of the verses were "The very aunt, teaching the Pali verse, 'putte, putta', chiding too much, the mother's dear daughter is now a lonesome widow after running away" and "The very aunt, teaching the Pali verse 'putte, putta', has come to a bad end after chiding too much. On the return, one will get what is deservedly one's". This was duly reported on their return and Mahadevi was incensed because the portents were ominous and reproached them "Why did you bring to me such nonsense", she said.

At daybreak Mahadevi and Smim Maru summoned the mandarins and conferred with them. Smim Tissa Kummar was also called but he did not come. He has asked through young Baw Nyi to let Moe E Law come. Will it be feasible to march with a complement of elephants, cavalry in full force? Should Moe E Law be set with a message? Should it be a written message or should it be conveyed through word of mouth? These were the pressing problems to which answers were sought. Moe E Law should be sent with a verbal message as she was his nurse, it was suggested. If another person were sent it would be appropriate to send a written message, it was said. Therefore Moe E Law was summoned, clothes, accoutrements, snacks, and jams which the prince favoured were given to her along with the message that was to be conveyed. Moe E Law dropped in at Talamidaw's house on her way to volunteer that she would take along any present that she might want to give to the prince. "He is the husband and yet he sends me nothing", Talamidaw said, "I am only the wife. Because of him my eyes and ears know no peace. I have no reason to send him anything." She then took a basket, a jar used for storing cooking oil and a pair of scales and told Moe E Law to give these to her son.

Moe E Law journeyed downstream in a boat. At Baw Kane's sentry picket, the boat was prevented from progressing further while the matter was reported to the prince.

They were ordered by the prince to let his mother proceed swiftly. Soon she reached his place where she sent in the presents given by Mahadevi. Summoned to his side, she showed the basket, jar and scales and explained that these had been sent by his sister Talamidaw. At this, the prince clapped his hands and dissolved in laughter and said, "These are for my little Mwe Maneit

from Talamidaw. Give these to her". On receiving these, Mwe Maneit remarked, "Of course I am a hawker of goods and my mistress pokes fun at me. Should I be ashamed ?".

Moe E Law reported to the prince that she had been sent by his aunt to give this message, "Your father is being ministered to by the physician, Cakkavadiya and he is now in good health. You are still too young. Wearing a robe as a sarong and using another for a sash, you foolishly take on the guise of a king, egged on by the words of a young cowherd from Pala turned novice and thirty hereditary serfs. I would fain see your advancement under my care. Can there be anyone else than you who deserves to rule *Hamsavati* ? Return swiftly before the Lord of the White Elephant is angered. I assume responsibility for all that has been done. "

The prince said, " I had sent for you because only from you will I hear the truth. From the very beginning of my infancy, I had suckled at your breasts instead of my mother's. Can you hold your silence in the face of my undoing ? " At this Moe E Law looked at his face and then towards his left and right. Sensing what she wanted to convey through her glances, the prince said " Mother, they've labelled my move to Dagon as an act of rebellion. All the while I do not even have an extra robe to wear or proper dishes for dining. Come have a look" and so saying led her into his inner chamber. The prince then asked, "Just now you glanced left and right but stayed silent. Was it on account of the others present that you kept silent ?"

Moe E Law replied, "Your aunt summoned young Nga Daw Koun and interrogated him. What do you know about Binnya Nwe's quest for oracles before he fled ? He denied knowing anything but after being beaten, he admitted that his lord, Min Kan Si and Baw Mun went around listening at all six gates, that all parents were said to be good nad that the ex-monk Zarwe Kanun came regularly. Zarwe Kanun was then placed in irons and handed over to Smim Maru. Mwe Aok, Mwe Rwei, Mwe Katin and Mwe Pyi were sent out on a quest for oracles which resulted in them making a report to your aunt about what they had heard from a demented monk. They were admonished for reporting the mouthings of a demented monk." She proceeded to tell the prince all the details of what had been going on in Pegu.

The prince then asked whether he should go up to Pegu after worshipping at the Dagon pagoda and asked what she thought of this idea. To this Moe E Law said "I consider you like a son that I myself have carried. Should you go up when she thinks of killing my lord's son ? Don't go. Your aunt is making arrangements to fabricate the white umbrella, crown and pearl encrusted tunic in readiness for the coronation of Smin Maru, as your father Hsinbyushin is deathly ill. Now the lord of Martaban has been told to send Baik Kamyin in his stead. She has also sent for Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya. The plan is to combine these with all available forces at Pegu to

bring you to your knees. Baik Kamyin and Laukpya can be bought off with presents. The minister Zeip Bye is on your side, this I know. With the help of three or four ministers Pegu will be yours. Don't let her know what I have told you. I must return quickly. I will go down and look over my house." Her servants reported that not even a stalk of roselle or half a leaf of vegetable has been taken and she was happy to hear this news. She gave five viss of gold to the prince to be used in providing for his troops "I will be a somebody only when you have bested the enemies, so be always careful" was her advice for him before she left. During that night's conference, the prelate of MaPaing and Min Kan Si asked him what was the news from Pegu. The prince replied that his wet nurse of infancy had informed him of developments and that he had the facts now. They commented that because of his past personal merit, their envoy turned to be his supporter. The prince then let Moe E Law leave for Pegu.

At Pegu she was greeted by Mahadevi's sarcasm "How is your son? How fat has he become? Will he be coming back anytime soon?" she jeered. Moe E Law replied respectfully that her lordship's son would be coming back for certain but that he was afraid of her on account of the death of her servants. "You say he will come, but I do not believe it" pronounced Mahadevi and went in. Moe E Law then left. Mahadevi conferred with Smim Maru and sent orders bidding Byattapa, lord of Martaban and Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya to be in Dagon by the month of Nadaw²² citing that the king had authorised this. This development was reported to the prince by the minister Zeip Bye. On receiving this news, the prince called for the quintet led by Min Ram Daw La and bade them to leave for Pegu, learn what occult preparations were being made in Pegu, and to return immediately after doing this. They left for Pegu under the guise of carrying turmeric roots on shoulder poles for sale. At a monastery attached to the Hmawpi Wish Fulfilling Pagoda, they came upon signs of grounds being prepared for building pavilions. In the evening a young monk from a nearby monastery came on a visit to the presiding monk of the monastery that they were putting up at. Two of the five cooked dinner while the remaining three stayed in the vicinity of the monks. They were all ears when the young monk asked the presiding monk what was the significance of the new pavilion. "Don't you know that the sister of Hsinbyushin wants Smim Maru on the throne and will be sending him to Dagon to deal with Binnya Nwe?" he said. "Since Smim Maru is Tuesday born under the sign of Cancer while Binnya Nwe is Friday-born, under the sign of Leo, the hair-washing ceremony will be held in Maw Ma Sam which is astrologically related to Friday."

The young monk then wanted to know what kind of effect it would have. "This cannot be called the right way to do things", the presiding monk said. "For both will have the same advantage".

²² The month of Nadaw falls in the November-December period.

The younger monk left when it was dusk and the presiding monk retired to his chamber. The five slept in the front hall of the monastery. After midnight, Phra's man, Mindeva came to dismantle the shed and when the monk asked the reason why, Mindeva replied that it was on the orders of the Brahmin Nadiya and Mahadevi. "If the hairwashing took place at *Maw Ma Sum*, it will only have any astrological significance for Binnya Nwe and not for Smim Maru, only in *M'sam zi* can both be astrologically affected and therefore it is going to be built in *M'Samzi*" he explained. The five were not asleep yet and therefore they heard this interchange. At dawn they presented offertories of chillies and onions. They then asked why the shed had been dismantled and were told that the washing of hair ceremony was to be held at *M'Samzi* before embarking on the campaign against Binnya Nwe.

When they asked what kind of effect this occult undertaking would have, the monk replied testily that this was an affair between royalty in which peasants have no occasion to inquire. The five pleaded, "Lord, after being blessed with the hard to obtain rebirth as men, we strain our shoulders against the shoulder poles like bullocks against the yokes, in trade and commerce to earn a living for our wives and children. If there is war, we find our mode of earning a living thwarted. That is why we wanted so much to know."

The monk then said "If the occult rehearsals were held in *Maw Ma Sum*, chances would have been equal for both sides. The venue was changed to *M'sumzi* in order to obtain an astrologically unfavourable turn for Min Kan Si. That was wrong. Min Kan Si is Tuesday born, under the sign of Cancer which is the same as that for Smim Maru. It is like taking a red hot ingot of iron in one's hand to throw it at another person in which case one's hand is burnt first of all. Binnya Nwe is truly a person with great merit, what was being done to destroy him has been rendered ineffectual by itself". The five then went to Pegu where the four generals, Smim Maru, Yo karat, Zeip Bye and Re San Ran deployed their troops in battle order and were ceremoniously washing their hair. On their return by way of the "Foreign Stupa they came upon a crowd of people at the *Dango dum* gate and went to investigate. As Smim Maru paraded with drums and gongs sounding, a demented woman by the name of Moe Atula came out running with a hibiscus blossom in her hair and took her place in front of Smim Maru's war elephant. Smim Maru hoped that something auspicious might be uttered and forbade others from shoos her off. As she reached the *Dangodum* gate she sang, "Kale brat lan kabhan bratamo, Bak mani do pyo. Amhu pyu nga puin amin" which could be translated as "The sugar cane was cleared and bananas planted hastily. Husband of an old woman sees umbrage and pursues one who flies swiftly." Then she sang again "(A transvestite) sok; shan gogano; nga rhe aik m'meik tain tain; sin rat rhapok vat ton" (A

transvestite affecting to be pregnant is like a short-legged beetle trying to be a bumblebee, a womanish man cannot uproot Mount Sineru)

Those within hearing whispered that it was not good. Binnya Nwe's men also heard it and made a full report on reaching Dagon. The prince then asked Min Kan Si how the words of the monk *Mau M'Sum* and Moe Atula were to be interpreted. Min Kan Si explained, "The words of the monk *Mau M'Sum* are in accordance with tracts on horology and cannot be gainsaid" he said, "Moe Atula says that sugarcane and banana are grown on the sugarcane field. These plants are chopped down and harvested within the year. This means that Smim Maru will come to a bad end within this year. The one who flies refers to our lord Binnya Nwe; the one who pursues is Smim Maru; the old woman is Aunt Mahadevi and the campaign to undo you that is being mounted at her urging will fail. That is what it implies. A transvestite gets pregnant, it was said. Has a travestite ever borne a child? The little short-legged beetle wants to become a bumblebee, it was said. Smim Maru is lowborn, he represents the short-legged one while the bumblebee implies our blue-blooded Binnya Nwe. Has a short-legged beetle ever turned into a bumblebee? Mount Sineru is our prince. Has the Mount Sineru been ever uprooted? These words have been put into her mouth by the gods. When we came down to Dagon we made a survey at all the gates. Because our prince is favoured by the gods, it augured well for us and we came here. The gods indicate that when Smim Maru comes down to wage war on our lord we will be victorious and they want the populace to know of it so that they have put these words into Moe Atulut's mouth and she had sung it for them" The prince was glad to hear this and rewarded Min Kan Si.

After learning that Smim Maru would be soon on the march, the stockades, bastions and other fortification works were repaired and strengthened. Streams and creeks were staked. From Pegu, general Smim Maru was mounted on the elephant named *Byu Bago*, ringed by a decad of mandarins entitled to have their betel carried in gold holders. Zeip Bye commanded one contingent, Smim Yokarat another, *Samin Re San Ran* the fourth. With 18 young male elephants, 50 young female elephants, and ten thousand troops, the column left on the 3rd waxing day of the month off Nadaw. The troops made their halts first at *Maw M'Sum*, then at Akharain and with the van in Maw D'Pru and patrols posted at the Gan Daraw lake, the main force camped at *Suthuraṅga*.

Manyi Gam Gaung had to reinforce prince Binnya Nwe with the elephant named *Azava* and 300 troops. Manyi Gam Gaung did not accompany the reinforcements but sent this message "I should have come to your aid personally. However, the lord of Myaungmya is coming with his sons and sons-in-laws with 300 large and small warboats, up from the tidal mouth of the Pe river and has intimated this to me by courier boat. He asks me

“Nephew, which side are you on in this conflict between Pegu and Dagon ?”. I had replied that Hsinbyushin is greivously ill and Mahadevi wants to put Smim Maru on the throne and plans to have Binnya Nwe and *Baw Khonmaing* killed; that was why Binnya Nwe has come down to Dagon. My sister Talamithiri was recalled from *Chievmai* when an agreement was worked out between you uncle, Lord of Myaungmya, Byattapa and Hsinbyushin. At this, Smim Maru presented five viss of gold and effected a submission to King Hsinbyushin to ask for her hand in marraige. This son of a knave for having the opportunity to marry a daughter of a king now entertains unseemly ambitions. What I am submitting to you is the truth. However, I will take whichever side you do. ”

When the above message was relayed to the lord of Myaungmya he bit his thumb and his face fell. Later when he reached Dala and saw that its fortification works were being repaired by Manyi Gam Gaung he smiled. Manyi Gam Gaung had presents sent to him. The lord of Myaungmya struck camp at the *L'pu Prain* landing in Dagon. As he was confronted on three sides, Prince Binnya Nwe told his troops to stand firm. I had thought they would begin their assault once they arrive, but it is now ten days and they haven't made a move yet. We will go out and fight them, he told Min Kan Si. Min Kan Si demurred saying, “This is not the time yet. There are four stratagems that a king can employ against his enemy, which are :-

sāmya upāya, *bhaya upāya*, *dhana upāya* and *danda upāya* ; *sāmya upāya* being employed against an enemy who is stronger and consists of employing diplomacy to attain one's end, *bhaya upāya* consists of creating dissention between the enemy king and his generals, *dhana upāya* means satisfying an enemy king's cupidity by plying him with gifts and winning him over and *danda upāya* consists of overwhelming a weaker enemy by use of armed force. All of those stratagems may be successfully employed and are well known. This is why I have submitted that the time is not ripe yet since we should employ one of the four stratagems appropriate to the situation before going out to fight them.”

Binnya Nwe then asked which of the four should be used against the enemy. “*Sāmya upāya* is the stratagem called for in this case”, said Min Kan Si, “Of the the three hosts facing us which shall we start making overtures ? Lauk pya and Baika Myin are really not our enemies. send the envoy to Smim Maru. Who shall we send as envoy. Saintly monks are compassionate towards all beings and he will be able to convince him.” The upshot of it was that the prelate Ma Paing was sent to Smim Maru bearing a memorandum which stated -

“My brother-in-law who is representative of the Lord of the White Elephant, Though it is true that I am the son of the monarch , what forces

characteristic of a prince do I have under my command ?I do not even have enough clothes to wear. I have no cause to rebel against the King Hsinbyushin. In an altercation with Mahadevi's men , they were unfortunately killed. I won't live long if I were to go to Pegu. I am staying here just to survive. If you are in a position to spare my life I'll come to you, brother-in-law. If you cannot do so tell me the truth as you and I have pledged our allegiance to each other in blood. In that case I'll flee to either Burmese or Shan country. "

The prelate left, and at Gan D'raw Lake he came upon the picket posted there. Sentries escorted him thence to the presence of Smim Maru who was ensconced amidst his staff of mandarins in battle array. On seeing the prelate Smim Maru greeted him and bade that he sit on the howdah decorated with battle emblems. The howdah broke as he sat down and the prelate fell to the ground. Smim Maru remarked that he had not even asked what Binnya Nwe had communicated to him and broke into a laugh. He then had a gilt howdah set up for the prelate. The monk handed over Binnya Nwe's letter to Smim Maru who had a scribe read it aloud for all to hear.

Smim Maru wept as he listened and said "I believe what my lord Binnya Nwe says. However, I do not believe the part about having no clothes to wear seeing that he has looted the manor of the king's sister. " The prelate riposted that far from looting the house of the king's sister, not even one roof -tile on the building has been broken. Smim Maru said that he and Binnya Nwe had make their pledge in blood and that he would petition that Binnya Nwe's life be spared. He wrote a letter to be submitted together with Binnya Nwe's letter and had it sent to Pegu in front of the prelate.

The prelate rose and left. Meeting him, minister Zeip Bye joked " My comrade in blood has come. What manner of sustenance will be there for me to enjoy?". "We are surrounded on three sides. What is there to be obtained and enjoyed" answered the prelate. "I want to enjoy Thwan Prat Pu Tii and Le G'li " the minister replied.

The return of the monk M'Paing was eagerly awaited by Binnya Nwe, Min Kan Si and the garrison from the turret of the *Bhalakam* gate. The prelate was seen to raise his fist when he reached the moat near the Shin Pin pagoda and saw the prince on the turret. After he had joined him on the turret, the prince asked him what was the reason for raising his fist high. The monk replied that he had done so because he had witnessed three momentuous portents during his mission. "First ", he said, "a howdah emblazoned with their emblem was placed for me to sit broke when I sat on it..Then a gilt howdah was brought for me to sit and Smim Maru wept when your letter was read."The prince then asked Min Kan Si to interpret these portents. "The emblazoned howdah relates to Tuesday in astrology and Smim Maru is Tuesday born. It broke when the presiding monk sat on it which means that he will lose for certain when you give battle. The Talaing term for the gilt

howdah is related to Saturday in astrology and Hanthawaddy is also related to Saturday. The fact that the prelate had sat on the gilt howdah means that you will have to fight but once to realise your aspiration to the Hanthawaddy throne. Only people who are miserable weep and by weeping when your message was read out means that Smim Maru will meet with misfortune. " On hearing this, the prince took off his ring and gave it to Min Kan Si as a reward. Mathamke recieved a casket of wax and the prelate a bolt of fine cloth.

In Pegu, Mahadevi heard out Binnya Nwe's letter and circulated this memorandum among all the courtiers. " Young A'Basum has the fear of death in him and says he will run away to either the Shan country or Burman country. You shall stand firm; both the riverine and land columns. The quintet of M'Ei Kyi, A'M'Nya, Matham Ke, the cowherd novice hailing from Pala and the presiding monk Ma Paing are to be brought here in irons to become a spectacle for citizens of Pegu. "

News about this letter was communicated to the prince by the minister Zeip Bye through Min Tagar together with a message from himself asking what was the prince's response to his uncle's (meaning his) request through the Ma Paing recluse and that if the prince would bestow that favour upon him he would present him with what he indicated by touching his eye with the right hand and the belly with the left , and also advising the prince to give battle only to Smim Maru's force when he mounted an assault.

When the prince commented that he had not heard about Zeip Bye's request from the Ma Paing recluse, the latter replied that he had inadvertently omitted to tell him that the minister had said that he would like to enjoy Thwan Prat Putii and Le G'Li. On being asked by the prince, Man Kan Si explained that by Thwan Prat Putii, he meant the feifdom of Pegu and Le G'Li is astrologically Monday and together it meant that he wanted the feifdom of Pegu if the prince was successful in his endeavour. With regard to Min Tagar's message that his uncle would present him with what was indicated by touching his eye and belly, Min Kan Si explained that it referred to his daughters, the one named Mwe Kou No²⁹ , and one Mwe Gre.

Min Tagar was given a reward and told to leave quickly as his presence might be detected and so endanger himself and minister Zeip Bye. Min Tagar kowtowed and left.

While going on a round of the city walls atop an elephant, the prince came upon a man who was shackled in irons and sent Baw Mun to look into this matter. It was then discovered that he was placed in irons for being unable to repay his debt and that his debtor was one, *Man Pan Rwe Suu*. This was relayed by Baw Mun to the prince who had his creditor summoned and told

²⁹ Please see footnote on P.26

him to free the man as he would settle what he had owed. The creditor told the prince that a sum of one hundred (ticals?) of copper was owed and this was duly weighed out and given to the creditor. The creditor took only fifty saying that he had demanded the money only because there was war and he needed money and that the remaining fifty was his present to the mighty prince. The debtor, named M'hala Tekhwa Depathwe was taken along shackles and all. The prince then asked him if he would serve him. To that he replied "I will serve my lord who has freed of this misery with my very life".

The prince said, "I will have you transported shackles and all nearabouts a sentry post from Smim Maru's column," the prince said, "Tell them that there was panic in the city during which you took the chance to leave it mingling with the exodus of people and that it has been rumoured that Binnya Nwe has left for Prome in a small boat accompanied by only thirtyfive of his men. when Smim Maru asks you. Come back when Smim Maru releases you after noting where the stockade is weak and the timber posts are small, where troops are concentrated and where it is thinly held."

He was then transported on a stretcher during the dark of the night near where sentries stood watch after which the stretcher detail left with the stretcher. At dawn all he had to do was to take a few steps to reach the picket which took him to the presence of Smim Maru who had him unshackled and asked why he had come out.

"There was a panic in the town yesterday evening and it is said that Binnya Nwe has left the town on a small boat with thirtyfive men and that he is headed for Prome," he replied, "I mingled with the crowd and left during the confusion and I'm to look for my family". To the question where his family was, he answered that they were in T'mhut Kawhmu Sok and that he had been put in irons by his creditors. Smim Maru was delighted by what he heard, caused his hair to be trimmed, rewarded him with a robe and ring and let him go on his way.

M'Ha kowtowed and left by way of the north gate of the stockade taking note of the state of fortifications and deployment of troops. When Smim Zeip Pye heard of these developments he was first disheartened and was only relieved when he heard the true story from a trusted informer.³⁰

M'Ha reached Dagon at dusk and reported all that he had seen and heard. He also showed him the robe and ring that Smim Maru had given him.

Binnya Nwe then asked Min Kan Si whether the time was ripe to mount an attack.

Min Kan Si noted that none of the forces facing them had withdrawn yet and

³⁰ There is a gap in this part in paper editions but fully recorded in the palm leaf manuscript and in Nai Pan Hla's translation.

till dawn breaks. From *Sudarin*, a celestial god turns back and retreats when the time comes. At the sound of gongs and threatening roars, flees in disorder." (A 'su alou datum ce cou pad palwei kanei rwei don, samin brei mishya laññ thwa de tam ngei maya yam samwei dalok laññ shya te paik laññ cana rei nwam talok mwei Cudaran gaju bayam shya ga da ngarup daka khyei)

The prince had not retired yet and greeted the three on their return and ordered them to tell him what they had seen. Min Kan Si reported that they had heard good portents and related their experiences to him. On being asked to interpret these portents, he explained that the soka flower was astrologically Friday and symbolized the prince who was Friday-born, in the same manner, the winnowing tray was related to Monday as was Pegu and the first part of the song meant that the prince would conquer Pegu and support the teachings of the Buddha. The part about the young prince being fevered, he said, referred to his lord who was now being surrounded on three fronts and mention of dawn breaking meant that this fever would go away. The part about turning back and retreating meant that he should send out two envoys with appropriate messages and they that received them would soon turn back, he continued, that the celestial god from *Cudaran*, meant Smim Maru who had come down with his troops and that the part about fleeing before the sound of gongs predicts that he will run away in disorder without giving a fight.

The prince was much gladdened to hear this and rewarded Min Kan Si amply. Early next morning, he dictated this following letter for Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya, to the scribe *M'San* and asked Min Kan Si to edit it-

"My uncle, Lord of Myaungmya, to whom your nephew respectfully submits that -I was very much miserable in Pegu. Mahadevi was scheming to have *Baw Khonmaing* and me killed in order to put young *SminMaru* on the throne once Hsinbyushin is no longer. If you, uncle and aunt, Mahadevi had made a pact in the past you should have stood in for Hsinbyushin. If you were to take over the throne I would be happy. However this was not to be. Loyal, she was not.. She has corrupted herself in an unseemingly way with her own son-in law. She is also determined to do away with us. That is why I have distanced myself from them. I would have come to you, uncle, had I the boats to travel in. It was because I had no such means that I had to stay here in Dagon."

With five viss of gold, bolts of velvet and felt as presents, Mathout who had cared for the prince as a child was sent to the lord of Myaungmya. When the lord of Myaungmya had seen the letter and the presents he said "I have known the whole story from my nephew, lord of Dala, *Manyi Gam Gaung*. I have come because I was under the impression that I was following the orders

of our lord Hsinbyushin. Tell that to the son of our lord". Mathout, his mission completed, returned.

That night, the lord of Myaungmya summoned his sons and sons-in law, his trusted lieutenants and had a drinking party. While they were drinking, he asked them "Now that an altercation has arisen between Binnya Nwe and citizens of Pegu, which side shall we take?". His sons and sons-in law replied that they would fight on elephant, on horse, on warships, on warboats or on foot in the manner they were ordered to do so, but that they did not have any opinion as to which side they should be on. However, they said, "Binnya Nwe is the real son of our monarch."

Dala Chitthin³⁵, was summoned and was told to give his opinion. "If you side with Mahadevi who is getting on in years, she would not be able to look after your lordship's and your lordship's decedents for a long time. Smim Maru is only the son of a mandarin. It would be like a cracked pot that will not retain water for long. Binnya Nwe, on the other hand is a direct decendent of a monarch and like the acidity of a lime, he will grow stronger with time. When a plant that has just begun to sprout and whose leaves have just begun to open is not snipped with the fingers, would it not require an ax to cut it down when it has grown into a tree.?"

The lord of Myaungmya was by then feeling his liquor and felt angry at Mahadevi for being unfaithful and besmirching her reputation with Smim Maru. He decided not to help them. Among his subordinates, there were those who had become quite drunk and said "While we were at Pegu at the bidding of our lord, the people there were singing '*don byu thu hsu tha lon don, toun kamei bro byu l'sin, taru bra to balei talei do a non*' (the old peahen lays her eggs on the tree; the old woman is an unabashed husband snatcher). They were taking a sly dig at Mahadevi with this song". The lord of Myaungmya hearing this and being quite intoxicated by now swore that he would not help this evil woman and ordered the boats to head for Myaungmya. At about midnight, the lord of Dala, *Mnyi Gam Gaung*, hailed the boats in the rear and was told that the lord of Myaungmya has taken umbrage at Mahadevi and that they were heading for home. The lord of Dala was heartened at this developments and planned to report this to prince Binnya Nwe early next morning.

Binnya Nwe had a dream that very night. He dreamt that a golden torch shone brightly in the heart of Dagon and although storms swept in from the four points of the compass, the torch shone brighter than ever. Then the wind from the west died. Storm clouds darkened the Pan A'Lwei area but

³⁵ The paper edition accredits him as the governor of Dala, but *Mnyi Gam Gaung* holds that post, as it had been said earlier. He was in reality one of the nobles who was captured by Byattapa, governor of Martaban during Binnya U's reign. While being shipped off to Bengal, he was taken off from the ship by Laukpya to serve under him. (See also p.74)

later it grew bright. An ascetic pronounced that in the coming four or five days the storm coming in from the north will abate. After waking up from this dream the prince had it interpreted by *Min Kan Si* who explained that the golden torch meant the prince; the gathering storm from the four points of the compass symbolised the situation of being besieged from three fronts; the west wind that abated meant the lord of Myaungmya's troops and that victory would come during the coming four or five days as indicated in the words of the ascetic. "May it turn out as you predicted", said the prince.

When the courier sent by *Manyi Gam Gaung* arrived at the gates at dawn he was at first detained but let in when it was reported that he was a servant of the prince's brother in Dala. When the courier reported that the lord of Myaungmya had left, the prince hugged *Min Kan Si* in joy and let out a shout of exultation. The courier then conveyed the words of his lord requesting the prince to negotiate with the force from Martaban before attacking Smim Maru. The prince sent word to the lord of Dala that he should come at the soonest with all the available troops if he loved him and rewarded the courier before sending him off.

The prince, *Min Kan Si*, Baw Mun and the Ma Paing recluse conferred among them. To the question, who should be sent to Baik Kamyin, Baw Mun was the answer as they were friends from childhood days. The memorandum read as follows :-

"Baik Kamyin to whom this pronouncement has been addressed; When the lord of Myaungmya came to know that Mahadevi intended to put Smim Maru on the throne once Hsinbyushin passes away, he said he saw no reason to become an enemy of the prince, in the event that Hsinbyushin was no more he would pay obeisance only to the prince, as there was no call to kowtow to Smim Maru and that he had come as he had been told that Hsinbyushin had bade him come. He awarded the envoy and had these words conveyed to me. The lord of Myaungmya has now left. What option do you consider, Baik Kamyin?"

Baw Mun was sent on this mission together with a gift of three viss of gold and ten sets of good quality robes. Baik Kamyin seeing Baw Mun coming from a distance said in jest, "So the citizen of Dagon has arrived". Baw Mun presented the three viss of gold and the ten robes. At this, he asked "What occasions the son of the lord to honour us in this manner?" Baw Mun replied that these were for the procurement of rations for his troops. To this Baik Kamyin said, "Comrade in blood, you are my alter ego and I would like you to give your opinion". Baw Mun in return said, "The lord of Myaungmya commands a force of no mean strength. Yet he considers that he should not antagonise the son of his lord and has left. *Manyi Gam Gaung* is also from the same royal family as our prince but he does not fancy himself as a prince and pays obeisance to the prince. You have been delegated by the

lord of Martaban to represent him. When the prince becomes king you will become just one of his servants. However, should you have acted harshly against him now, wouldn't you be an enemy of the crown then?"

At this Baik Kamyin was wordless. Devaraja, *E Bra Kon* and *E Si Van* spoke up "Verily Baw Mun has spoken. Our sentiments are also much the same. However Baik Kamyin is the general and it depends only on him." Baik Kamyin then announced that he would turn for home. Baw Mwan returned. Then Baik Kamyin headed his warboats downstream with the receding tide.

Baw Mun reported that after he had communicated as he had been told, the Martaban contingent was delighted saying that they had come only because Hsinbyushin had bidden them, that they would be turning back even if their own lord had not sent word recalling them as now that the truth has been told they had no occasion to come here in the first place and that his friend had said that he would be leaving as the tide was running out, even as he, Baw Mun headed back against the tide. The news delighted the whole town including the prince who wondered whether the time had come to mount an assault on Smim Maru's force.

Min Kan Si said that he would like to scout around for oracles and after propitiating the gods, beseeched them to show some sign indicating whether the coming assault against Smim Maru's forces would be successful. After making this pledge the three went around in their search for some portentous sign and they were eventually rewarded when they heard a boy singing this near Mahadevi's residence.

"ga cam lha lwok mwa, pok ca swat ca rwe, ja gu ce viun magu magu-the prince's jousting routs the enemy and ends the battle." (a young sparrow hangs upside -down on a sprouting pipal twig eating the pipal fruit, the besieging host arrives and the monarch's son charges single -handedly on an intrepid elephant into the teeming host, easily scattering them)

To the prince's question, Min Kan Si explained that, the young sparrow symbolised Smim Maru as both were astrologically related to Tuesday, that it hung upside down on the twig meant that he would not last long in the high station that he had come into, the reference to a besieging force plainly refers to the present situation and it meant that an elephant charge led by the prince would rout Smim Maru's forces. The prince hugged and kissed Min Kan Si saying "Let what you have interpreted come true !". At this moment it was announced that the lord of Dala, Manyi Gam Gaung had landed and the prince went there on an elephant to welcome him. The two royal brothers rode together on the same howdah. The latter advised him not to tarry in the conference hall but to mount an assault that very night.

Smim Maru had a report sent to Mahadevi to acquaint her with the news that the lord of Myaungmya and Baik Kamyin had turned back. While

waiting for word from her, he dared not withdraw yet and so conferred with his generals. The mandarin Zeip Bye suggested that without a word from the sister of Hsinbyushin, they should not withdraw yet.

On reaching his tent, he sent a message which ran "Wouldn't you rather nip it off with your fingernails now than use an ax to chop it down later?", to the prince.

He also asked him to attack the troops of his enemy and not the other troops who would just stay quiet and that he be made a minister. He also sent one of his men to Yo Karat to pass on this message in a whisper "You and I are brothers, should there be some commotion during the night or at any hour just stay within your stockade and don't panic".

The prince mounted the elephant Ajapa after seeing to the garrisoning of the city's stockade. The elephant Adaraung carried Pamu Lauk. With Baw Mun riding amidships. Mathauk was mounted on Pazwe Lamun. With Matham Ke riding amidships, Baw Mwan³⁶ was mounted on Asura. With Min Kan Si riding amidships, Baw Kane³⁷ rode Ei Magu Thauk. With the brahmin Ma Yaññ amidships the recluse Ma Paing was mounted on the elephant Ei Lagaik Nyat. Maha Min Dey was mounted on a she-elephant. Another carried Apa Sain with Apaja riding amidships.

With four young male elephants, four female elephants, two thousand troops under prince Binnya Nwe, a thousand under Manyi Gam Gaung there were three thousand warriors who were the pick of the bunch. Mamwe Kyi and Kyat Taye Phrac Lwan manned the battlements with Baw Kane commanding the garrison troops. After seeing to that the war boats were properly manned, the prince rode out. He had not travelled far when a cock careening through the air stepped on his head. As he stopped momentarily disturbed by this intrusion, an old man approached him and asked him why he had stopped. The prince replied that he thought he would stay for a while because a flying cockerel had stepped on his head.

The old man said that this was an auspicious omen, the finial of a stupa could not be raised without a cruciform base and since the flying cock had placed the sign of a cross on his head with his feet, he continued, it meant that the umbrella signifying kingship would soon be raised over his head. The prince was overjoyed to hear this and rewarded the old man well. The column moved out with Dey Pathwe, Tala Khwa Maha riding point on a she-elephant. At Hin Paza, south of Lagu and north of Hemavan he had a pavilion erected for the ceremonial washing of hair in which he and his elephant-mounted warriors took part.

Baw Mwan Nyi according to Nai Pan Hla's translation.

Baw Kane commanded the war-boat flotilla according to Nai Pan Hla's translation.

As Smim Maru was encamped at Sudaranga which in astrological terms signified Monday as did firewood, he had all his warriors beginning with Maha Min Dey wear the Anan (*Fagraea fragrans*) flowers which signified Saturday and thus, fire.

As they proceeded from Hin Paza to *Je Kapan* a great voice like that of a man shouting "Maha Jeyatu, Maha Jeyatu" issued forth from the northern face of the Dagon pagoda. This was heard by all of the troops. The prince enquired "Is that the sound of someone sermonizing?" The brahmin Ma Yaññ said "This is not a sermon, but the gods proclaiming that your highness will be victorious".

The prince summoned Tala Khwa De Pathwe Maha and directed him to lead him there by the shortest route. Maha kowtowed to him and respectfully observed "How can I go wrong?".

The route he took led from Lagu Gyi to Pallin, thence Ganaing Marut, through Deylato to Janam Pala. The prince surged forward riding abreast with Maha and ordered him to go straight to Smim Maru's camp and to break in where the moat was at its shallowest and the posts weak.

Smim Maru at that time was packing for retreat as his allies on two fronts had melted away. Past midnight and under the hazy light of a moon, they reached Smim Maru's camp. The attackers gave a thunderous battle cry as the drew near and elephants flanked by cavalry charged the stockade. The enemy buckled under the assault of the prince's hardened troops. Smim Maru ran down from a water closet built on a raft and jumping on a pony rode away. His elephant Byu Bako was in musth and scenting Adaraung tugged at his halter but could not break free. The chief mahout Pamu Lauk descended from his elephant and quieted him with a few words. Pamu Lauk then mounted him and clapping his arms with the palms of his hands in jubilation exulted, "Now that I can ride him my lord will soon be master of Pegu." During the headlong assault about two to three hundred were cut down and about an equal number of Shans also met this fate. The carnage was stopped by the prince who shouted orders to his men to cease. The tents were set on fire.

Seeing this, troops under Yo Karat and Re Thin Ran left their camps and joined up with Zeip Bye's for safety. "We do not know whether Samim Mru escaped or not. If we retreat at dawn the prince blocks our line of retreat from the very start."

"What do you have on your mind?" they asked him.

"Is he not the son of one who is the lord of all of us?" he replied, "If Smim Maru has been defeated who will dare face the prince whether Smim Maru lives or not?" "Binnya Nwe can be very severe and pitiless. If we had run

away individually mingled among the crowd during the night we might have escaped but not once dawn had broken. Should we be brought before Binnya Nwe we would not be forgiven" they said. The old noble said, "If that is what you say, I am but an old courtier so I will go and die in your stead. You shall stay here". He left on a female elephant taking only a retinue of seven. When he reached the stockade he hailed "Your servant Zeip Bye is here". It was heard by the prince who said "Let my uncle in." When he had arrived, the prince and Manyi Gam Gaung dismounted and the three of them conferred in a tent. Then the dead were collected and properly laid out and the injured carried into tents. After that a liaison team made up of Zeip Bye's and Binnya Nwe's men to summon Yo Karat and Re Thin Ran. All the mandarins and commanders were assembled at the prince's feet. When everyone had assembled this was said "All of us had paid allegiance to the king's sister vowing to kill every adult after taking Dagon. We did not have the chance to kill them. Instead they have killed many of our fellows who had also paid allegiance. All of us have now fallen into the hands of the prince and can be put to death. However since the prince has grown up in our care he does not think of killing us in reprisal for he is our lord's son. We will remember this boon and give up our lives in your service. Pegu will be easily taken." The prince commented that while his father lived he would not deprive him of his station in life. Baik Nyei argued, "If you Binnya Nwe will not advance to Pegu, Smim Maru will be there ahead of us and saying that we have gone over to your side will have our families shipped to Martaban. and would this not place difficulties for us?". To this Zeip Bye said, "This is altogether off the point. At present we are like people who have been put into a cage, our means of escape being cut off. No one can help us out of this predicament. We must get out on our own. May the son of our Lord treat us with compassion as great as that of a Buddha and after holding the ceremony of swearing allegiance lead us forward before dawn." The prince agreed to this and summoned Manyi Gam Gaung to arrange a swearing in ceremony for the officers on the pagoda enshrining the sacred hair relics (i.e the Shwe Dagon) The recluse Mapaing observed that by doing so it would not be possible to advance before dawn. At this Min Kan Si suggested that a gold image of the Buddha be obtained for the ceremony. A gold image was duly obtained and the ceremony of drinking the water of allegiance held before it.

Only men, elephants and horses from Smim Maru's force were taken with the organisation of troops under his mandarins left intact. On the 10th waxing day of the moon in the month of Nadaw (1383 C.E), Smim Maru's force was routed and he ran away to Pegu. His officers arrived the next day. Maha devi condemned the officers, blaming them for the defeat at the hands of the other side and threatened them saying, "Because Hsinbyushin is ill, do you think that I, a woman cannot kill you?". The officers replied that there was

no cause for this censure, as if they had stood idle while her son-in-law was engaged by the other side in battle. This was not the case, they said, since his troops had been easily overpowered only because instead of facing the enemy he had fled the scene on a pony. After destroying his force, they said, the other turned and engaged their troops but that they had fought and had withdrawn in good order without any further losses. Mahadevi was left speechless at this riposte. They repaired the fortifications where it was necessary and dug up the moat where it was shallow. These developments were reported to the prince by a stream of couriers. When Hsinbyushin was severely ill and comatose this was reported to the prince by the noble Zeip Bye. Smim Maru summoned the nobles and set them repairing the battlements. When the prince heard of this he sent Manyi Gam Gaung back to Dala ordering him to stand firm should the lord of Myaungmya march against him. Mamwe Kyi, Smim Bako and Matham Ke were put in charge of the Dagon garrison. Warboats under Saw Te Raik and War Kamaw were told to rendezvous at Maw Thabyaw. A hand-picked corps of five thousand warriors were organised. Mwe Maneik rode Ei Magu Thauk. Mwe Mathin commanded the warboat Rangamein while Binnya Nwe was on the Jambu Jayum warboat. Lawk Win rode the elephant Byu Bako, with Baw Mwan on the Pazwe Lamun, Min Kan Si on the Asura, Mathauk on Adaraung, Masaing on Pauk Lan, while the recluse Mapaing and some others were ensconced on Ei Lagaik Nyat and the two she-elephants Apa Mwe Su, Apa Mwe Ein. Other elephants and horses of medium mettle, were allotted to those who were suitable to be mounted on such steeds. On the eleventh day of the waning month of Pyatho, the march to Pegu was begun. They camped at Sayi and sent out a party to keep an ear for oracles.

What they heard was a ditty "Pan Ba gwe bala dwe dwa bharwe janon dwaok atassala araria mwe pa thaññ cwè" (The two gates are agape like a tom-cat's wide open jaws, the great Bo tree falls and the son of the king succeeds in less than a day). To the prince's enquiry, Min Kan Si replied that Bagwe stood for Pegu, "dwe dwa" meant two portals will be opened, the Bo tree symbolised his father the King and that the part about succeeding in less than a day referred to the prince.

The prince was delighted to hear this and marched off at dawn. They camped at Maw Thabyaw where the naval contingent under Saw Te Raik caught up with them. Baik Nyei, governor of Zarweboun also joined up bringing his troops and reported that the king had passed away yesterday. When he was asked how he had come to this information, Baik Nyei replied that two of his nephews served the king in the royal palace and had this information from them. The prince covered his face and wept when he heard this. He then summoned Saw Te Raik, ordering him to leave only a small party to watch over the boats and follow him with the rest of his troops. The lord of Zarweboun asked permission to fight a duel on elephants with Smim Maru as

he wanted to repay the prince's magnanimity in sparing his life. The prince, however, bade him not to and marched off from Maw Thabyaw and being a moonless night, made straight for the objective.

Smim Maru, having heard that Binnya Nwe was coming, sent out commands to man the battlements. However, no one heeded his commands and men of the royal blood and common troopers alike deserted him and went over to the prince.

Smim Maru came to realize that he must be getting away on his own and taking Talamithiri, ten elephants loaded with gold and silver left for Martaban with a retinue of seven hundred of his most trusted servants. This was reported to the prince by the noble Zeip Bye. The prince sent the trio of Zeip Bye, Saw Te Raik and Baik Nyei after him. They cut through Dalanin to pursue him by the shortest route. Baw Hkonmaing and nobles came to greet the prince. The ex-monk Zarwe Kanung was freed by the guards and was able to come over to the prince who greeted him warmly. To his complaint that he was put in irons by Smim Maru on account of the prince, the prince acknowledged that the ex-monk had suffered because of him and thought up a fitting reward, investing him with the title of Yaza Paroheit (ie. "the King's Brahmin Seer").

"When should I ascend the throne," the prince then asked him and received the reply that he was to ascend the throne the next day, the first day of the waxing moon in the month of Pyatho after the first watch of the dawn had been struck³⁸, together with his queen. He was also to observe the ceremony of treading the auspicious soil. At this he invested Mwe Manaik with the title of Piyarazadevi, Mwe Mathin with the title Tala Thuta Maya and his brother Baw Hkonmaing with the title, Binnya Paik during the course of that same day. At this moment Yaza Paroheit announced that kings of long ago in Martaban used to walk on the platform of the stupa in performing the ceremony of treading the auspicious ground. "Why was this so?", asked the prince. The reply was that during the time after King Atha (C.E 854) defeated the seven thousand Indians and wanted to build a stupa over the ground where he had speared the Indians, the wise men protested saying that the site being truly a field of victory, building a stupa over it would prevent it being tread when an enemy host appeared. Thus, the commemorative stupa was built outside the field of victory and the stupa was named Yan Aung Myin ("Vanquisher of the Enemy"). However, although the field of victory was not covered by the stupa, he was told, it might be possible for one to miss treading it if the exact spot was not known. When the prince asked how was one to come by the exact spot, the ex-monk replied that his mentor had told him when he was young that digging down to a depth of about a cubit and a hand span (nearly 29 inches) below an obelisk in Ma Ei Nwan Hsei would

approximately 9 am.

yield earth of a reddish golden hue which matched the colour of soil distinctive of the field of victory and that after treading it, no enemy would be able to defeat his lord the prince. This spot was duly prepared by the royal brahmin. Before the ceremony a grand pavilion complete with a neat canopy was prepared for his stay during the interim period. At dawn, with an attendant retinue of nobles and officials he set out for the field of victory. Dismounting from the elephant, he was lent a hand by Smim Tissa Kummar. After treading the auspicious ground he paid homage at the Yan Aung Myin stupa where prayers were recited by the whole group and offerings of oil lamps, popped rice, betel and pickled tea were ceremoniously made.

At this moment a report was received that Smim Maru had been caught at Po Mgam. The prince ordered that he was to be held at the foot of the elephant ramp on the pavilion and Smim Maru and Talamithiri were duly placed there when they arrived. The prince came mounted on an elephant in splendour accompanied by a crowd of nobles and officials and on his arrival told Baw Hkonhmaing to call his sister-in-law. Queen Talamidaw was however chagrined at Mwe Manaik being made a queen and did not come, weeping in her sorrow. Therefore Baw Hkonhmaing carried Bawlawkyantaw in his arms and returned with him riding an elephant. The prince took the child and enfolded him in his arms. Mahadevi also came and asked after Min Kan Si and the Mapaing Saya on her arrival. At this juncture she sighted Smim Maru and Talamithiri as they lay bound with ropes at the foot of the elephant ramp. Smim Maru wept on seeing Mahadevi who just gritted her teeth. When the prince came upon them he said "So he is still there, the sight of him is like grit in my eyes". The Mapaing Saya and Min Kan Si intervened, requesting him to formally ascend the throne first. Their request was however denied and Smim Maru was handed over to Manwam to be executed. At this moment, Raza Paroheit announced that the auspicious moment had arrived. The prince with his son Bawlawkyantaw in his arms and accompanied by his queen Piyarazadevi entered the royal apartment of Hsinbyushin.

Binnya Nwe ascended the throne on the 12th waxing day of the moon in the month of Dabodwe, 745 ME. (1383)¹⁹. Then he announced that although he had slain an enemy another still remained and that the official Deinmaniyut was to be executed. Deinmaniyut kneeled before him and bravely asked him to point out where he had gone wrong to deserve such a fate as, he said, only by executing those who committed wrongs would a king's power and glory increase.

The king replied, "If you want to know your mistake I will tell you. When I was away in Dagon, nobles and citizenry came to me as to show their respect and fealty. Some sent their representatives, while some proffered their advice. It was the same at Maw Mathan and at Maw Thanbyat. Now that you come to me only when I am at the pinnacle of kingship with your sweet words, this is

¹⁹ 1385 according to Harvey.

your great mistake." Deinmaniyut then made his supplication, "I had been a servant to your father, the king and had enjoyed his trust. In return I had been awarded the feifdom of Syriam (Thanlyin). I pay court only to a king who wears a white umbrella, not to one who is without this emblem of kingship. If you should take umbrage for this and have me executed, I lose nothing more than my life but the underpinnings of good administration would be uprooted for good. People would point out my fate as an example of losing one's life and leaving one's wife destitute for being loyal only to a crowned king and omitting to make overtures like offering advice to a pretender who later becomes king. Such attitudes are an anathema to good administration and will destroy your peace of mind. The citizenry and ecclesiastics as well will suffer should such attitudes become prevalent in a country." The king was rendered speechless by this argument and only Mapaing Saya and Min Kan Si spoke up to second Deinmaniyut's proposition, stating that it was based on truth and reality. Only then did the king relent and reinstated his title and feifdom which incidentally made him one who was invested with a title even before the king's most trusted servants from childhood received their's.

The ex-monk Mapaing Saya was named Sit Lun, Min Kan Si as Raza Manuttha Bala, Baw Mwan as Siri Manu, Ma Thaing as Saw Nu Thain, Ma Mwan as Saw Nu Thin, the scribe Ma Thin as Bawga Raza and Mathamke as Thanlaik.

His most trusted servants were each given feifdoms of villages or towns based on their individual merit. Before retiring, he even had Deinmaniyut conveyed to his home in honour, to the accompaniment of drums. Even Mahadevi was given Dagon in deference for what she had done for him during his childhood. This magnanimous deed was appreciated by the people who remarked among themselves that he had the compassionate heart of a Buddha. Others who had served him were also awarded, each according to his merit. The city's fortifications were also improved.

When Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya heard that Binnya Nwe had ascended the throne, he conferred with his sons and sons-in-laws and sent envoys named Sitdarat, Pathoun, Min Se Oo, Malagun and Mindey bearing many gifts to Minkyiswasawke, King of Ava (Innwa) with the following message :-

"The Lord and King of Ava to whom Laukpya, bestowed of the fief of the town of Myaungmya do submit,

That my lord of the golden palace march against him that has been consecrated as the king of Pegu before he has time to consolidate his kingdom while I will lead a maritime assault on him. If we are successful my lord shall take the core of spoils while I will be satisfied if you will give me the rind "

On being read this letter, Minkyiswasawke mobilised his men. With his son, the Lord of Kukhan, the Lord of Sagaing and the Lord of Salin, altogether

four armies marched along the Tharawaddy route. Hsinbyushin, king of Rakhine, the Lord of Taungdwin, the Lord of Toungoo, the Lord of Pinya and the Lord of Myede, altogether five armies, advanced along the Toungoo route.

King Razadarit had Thamlaik, Lord of Wun summoned but as he did not show up he marched against him and encamped at Zutkari Lauktet. Only when news of the invading Ava force reached him did he turn back. The armies taking the Toungoo route reached Pankyaw. Pankyaw was the fief of Kyattayasalun now titled Bayananda. He was overwhelmed and troops from Ava occupied Pankyaw.

Minkyiswasawke advanced along the Laing axis. E Gon Gam Mathain who had the fiefdom of Hmawbi, caught a column of the invading force in a ravine and the chief of Pinle was pierced by a lance and slain atop his war elephant. The ravine in which this battle took place was later known as Zayaung Pinle. As the king reached the battleground, he attacked the Rakhine king's force at Pankyaw but could not make any impression so that he had to content himself laying siege to it. The Rakhine king jeered, "Binnya Nwe does not give battle and it becomes a deer hunt instead". Because the enemy had been joined by the lord of Myaungmya, he withdrew and was informed by nobleman Maha Thamun that the enemy was in *Tālein*. At this, he turned and attacked the Rakhine king's force but again could make no headway so that he retired as he became concerned of being caught in a pincer-movement. As the Rakhine king sent out his cavalry in pursuit, Razadarit turned and charged at the enemy on his elephant Adaraung. Seven cavalymen fell while his forces sustained fifty casualties and the elephant Adaraung lost its tail. As Razadarit entered the city gates, Minkyiswa joined up with his forces at *Tālein*.

Yaza Paroheit pronounced that in the coming days the Burmese forces would be destroyed as the place where they had encamped was in reality not *Tālein* but Talaing. Hsinbyushin (ie Razadarit) made preparations to personally lead a besieging force of over ten thousand against the enemy stockade. During the march at night his white umbrella was knocked down into the dust by a sudden gust. Taking this as a bad omen, he was on the point of aborting the operation when Raza Manu (Min Kan Si) observed that it was such a good portent as the white umbrella had covered the ground signifying rulership over the whole extent of land and water. The king praised him for this. As his force marched out monks climbed the Thinbaw pagoda to get a grandstand view of the coming battle.

Minkyiswa sent word to his son cautioning him not to cross the stream as there must be a reason for coming out with so small a force. The prince however chose to ignore the order saying that coming that far from Ava to fight the Talaings he would not stay now that he had seen them. As Minkyiswa was biding his time on the other bank, the prince's forces were scattered by

Razadarit's onslaught. As they heard about the clash in the stream, the king of Ava's forces also collapsed. Only their numbers kept Razadarit's men from following up their victory and they collected only the elephants, horses and men that fell into their hands. The lord of Myaungmya too, withdrew on learning the fate of the king of Ava.

King Razadarit conferred with his ministers saying that now that even the servants of his father rebelled against him and invited the Burman king to attack him, people could not live in peace. To put an end to this, Saw Htut and Shwe Taung Nya were duly sent to the king of Ava with bolts of velvet, felt and cotton cloth, a plentiful amount of gold and silver and a message which ran - "Elder Uncle and Lord of the Golden Palace to whom your son the King tenders that-

In the absence of my father Hsinbyushin, I look upon you as my own father and have these presents sent to you as you, my elder uncle and elder brothers, had departed too quickly from your last visit and I did not have the chance to proffer these to you."

When the Shwe Taung Nya delegation reached Ava and the king learnt of the message he was discomfited with its seemingly innocuous politeness and said "This young Talaing has spoken to me in such a way. When he has the time to consolidate his forces Bassein, Myaungmya, Martaban and so on will be acquired by force of arms." The Shwe Taung Nya delegation was sent off with fitting presents. Then lord of Myaungmya again made an overture :- "Sire, the lord of Myaungmya town makes this submission :-In the last campaign, My Lord advanced along the Prome (Pyay) route and I along the riverine route so that our forces could not join up and as a result our campaign was unsuccessful. On this occasion I will come up to Pan Alwe while My Lord brings up at Panhlaing. We will then join forces and take Laing. From Laing we attack Hmawbi, then Dagon and then Dala will be taken. Can Binnya Nwe withstand us if we were to attack in this way?"

Minkyiswa was pleased by this plan and marched off en masse to attack the fortified town of Laing. The governor of Myaungmya came with a flotilla of warboats and took up his position at Panhlaing.

Meantime, king Razadarit had organised two forces, one commanded by Deinmaniyut and the other by Re Thin Ran together comprising twenty war elephants and twenty thousand troops to garrison Laing. The town was besieged for more than a month without avail. Realising that Laing could hold its own, Razadarit sallied out with elephants and cavalry. The king of Ava also moved to meet him and his vanguard took up positions (ie. stockaded itself) at Hmawbi. Seeing this, Razadarit also deployed his forces. On the next day, without rallying his nobles, he mounted the elephant Re Lapun and with a guard of seven hundred warriors he reconnoitred the enemy stockade.

The Burmese troops inside made Talaings captured from previous engagements cried out, "If we open the gates will your lord come in ?". Razadarit replied, "If you open up I will enter". Burmese troops took up positions on the bastions and ramparts and then opened the gates.

Razadarit being of one mind with his seven hundred men let out the goad and allowed his elephant to charge headlong into the stockade. Arrows rained down like hail but no Burman governor dared enough to clash tusks with Razadarit's mount and ran away. Twelve elephants and over ten horses were captured. The stockade was set on fire the smoke from which attracted Razadarit's nobles to caparison their mounts and rush off to reinforce him. Only when they were at the stockade did they realise that their king had won the battle. They collected the booty and presented it to their king. Sit Lun and Raza Manutha however, did not follow their example but reproached the king instead. Razadarit, for that matter, accepted their reproach good naturedly.

When news of his victory at Hmawbi reached the governor of Myaungmya, he dared not stay longer at Pan Hlaing and retreated. One day, a sentry piquet captured three Burmese soldiers which they brought before the king. "The Burmese people have made war on us because they put their faith in one of my servants who is a scoundrel and a ne'er-do-well. There is no peace in my villages and realm. I will charge straight for the face of the Burman king and snap him like a twig," the king shouted loud enough for them to hear. He then rode four or five laps to display his riding skills. The captured soldiers were ordered to be tied up but secretly his men were told to bind them in such a way that they would be able to make their escape. That happened and they duly reported what they had heard on reaching their side. On hearing this, the governor of Myinsaing observed, "Let the young Talaing get bolder. Then we will be able to get him with ease." But other voices were raised complaining that they had camped there too long and the place was teeming with gnats and flies and they should shift elsewhere. Minkyiswa agreed and as they struck camp to move elsewhere, panic broke out and men began running. The king could not control his troops and therefore had to retreat with them.

Razadarit did not know of this development and was giving out awards to Re Thin Ran for holding out resolutely at Laing. When information came to him that the governor of Myaungmya had headed for home and that Minkyiswa had withdrawn, he began his pursuit up to Prome. As the defensive works at Prome had not been repaired yet, bastions and railings were nonexistent. But Razadarit reached it only at dusk and the troops were tired so that they made camp. Minkyiswa, meanwhile had the men working on the fortifications throughout the night and work was completed during its course. Thus, Razadarit reckoned that it could be only taken with difficulty and his men being fatigued, he too made for home. At Pegu, he had its fortifications repaired and rested his men. Only afterwards did he march against the 32

walled towns in the east that had become rebellious and disrespectful.

As he deployed his forces against the town of Wun, the governor of the town Than Laik protested that he was only holding the town that he had won and that he was not a rebel like those from Martaban, Lagun Byi, Tari and Thanmaung, that he would not obstruct the king's march and if he would attack him after capturing the aforesaid towns, he would not find it an easy proposition. At this message was conveyed to him he conferred with his nobles and a consensus was reached on the following points; that the approach to Wun was too restricted for tactical deployment, that it would be difficult to mount an attack against it, that Than Laik had said that he would give right of way and that he did not deny vassalage to the king. Boats and barges from Wun and Taikkala were to be requisitioned for transport of provisions to Pankataing and Tari would be attacked from both the land and riverine routes. At this point, Tari was governed by Saw E Binnya, son-in-law of Byattapa and the son of Baran. He fled to Myaungmya on a swift dragon boat. The son of E Byapon and the son of Baw Gun who had provisioned Tari for a siege did not make a stand in the face of the king's joint land and riverine assault and fled to Martaban. The governor of Thanmaung came over after Tari was taken and he was given the water of allegiance to drink and reinstalled as the governor of Thanmaung. Martaban and Moulmein were shaken at these developments. Tham Lam was given a force a force of five thousand and installed in Tari. When Tari was attacked by Martaban and Moulmein after the king had returned home, they were repulsed everytime. In these incidents a certain Mathalon, son of Atut, who served under Tham Lam distinguished himself again and again. The king heard of his exploits and showered awards upon him.

Later, the king attacked Wun. He suffered so many casualties, that as a ploy it was shouted across to Than Laik that his daughter Hnin Kethara would be soon relegated to the task of pounding rice and fetching water. To this, Than Laik shouted back that his son-in-law must be destitute for his daughter to have do these tasks and that if she did so, he said, she could be only called a good wife for serving her husband in this manner. Re Thin Ran was summoned and the king ordered him to persuade Than Laik to vow fealty to him seeing that in the past, they had drunk each other's blood to pledge comradeship. Re Thin Ran gave his assurance and at dawn approached a bastion on the city walls to ask for Than Laik. When Than Laik responded, his friend said, "You fool ! Razadarit is your king, why do you not come to serve at his feet ?" " Byattapa and Laukpya are rebels but do they have the chance to ride on the elephant Byat ? I ride on the elephant Byat, I hold the fief in the town of Wun and the title of Than Laik. Having these three marks of nobility do I have to kowtow anyone?" was the reply." "You do not have to pay homage to others but Razadarit is the son of your lord Hsinbyushin" riposted Re Thin Ran. Than Laik shouted back not to talk in this way. Re Thin Ran

then tried another tack and had Than Laik invite him in for a drink. He then reported this to the king and asked for gold, silver, ear ornaments and rings to give his friend. These were provided by the king and permission given to proceed. Re Thin Ran entered the town gates with these presents and gave them to his friend. Such visits became frequent and eventually three hundred armed men were insinuated inside the city without raising Than Laik's suspicions. On the appointed day, the city was assaulted from without by the king while Re Thin Ran and his men started hacking down the besieged from within. Than Laik mounted Byat and left for Martaban with three hundred men.

But the elephant Byat was in musth and kept dragging his feet. Seeing this Saw Byalak, a noble on Rajadirit's side, mounted a female elephant and drawing abreast of Than Laik attacked him with a lance. The king sent an order not to kill him but the deed was done before it could be transmitted. The king was sorry to lose him and chided Saw Byalak saying that he had plans to entrust outlying districts to Than Laik to defend them on his behalf.

After taking Wun, Razadarit made plans for laying seige to Lagun Byi. Marching forth from Tari he asked who held Lagun Byi on approaching it. When he was informed that Baw Goon did he remarked that young Baw Goon would soon surrender Lagun Byi just as he did the town of Tari. Surveying the town he noticed an elephant shed near its moat. Filling the shed with dry reeds and hay, it was set ablaze after midday when thermals began to form. Helped by these currents the conflagration spread to the fortified town. Baw Goon came riding on an elephant to take charge of putting out the fire but his elephant panicked at being confronted with the flames and ran. Baw Goon could not control the runaway elephant which ran under his own house (built on stilts) where he was knocked off by a floor beam and was killed. The death of Baw Goon led to the surrender of the town. The king appreciating that Mathanlon was a stalwart took him in. The troops on the outside were those under the command of various nobles and it occurred that the reinstalled governor of Thanmaung, Magyan decided to turn traitor and mounted an attack at night on the outlying troops with a force of five thousand men. The outlying troops were scattered and the stockade set on fire. By the light of the flames Magyan could be seen commanding his troops from a palanquin. "Who will get this sorry specimen of a vassal, Magyan, for me?" asked the king and Mathalon kowtowed to the king and taking a shield and sword went out. He held an earthen pot in his hand as if he was carrying the head severed from an enemy and made as if he was going to present it to Magyan. Being nighttime he was able to approach Magyan as he was mistaken for one of his own men. When he was within striking distance, Mathalon threw the pot away and in the same instance hacked down Magyan. Taking the severed head with him he returned and presented the head to the king who just said "Well done!" but did not give him any award which made Mathalon

unhappy. One day, the king assembled his generals together and wondered aloud how the towns of Martaban and Moulmein that still remained out of his hands could be taken without difficulty. At this, Than Myan submitted his plan. He said that taking Martaban could result in heavy casualties and that the king should position himself at Lagun Byi and organise seven columns each commanded by a noble which would cross over to Kaungton Kaungkyan and attack to the east. The king thought this plan reasonable and Than Myan, Deinmaniyut, Re Thin Ran, Bya Paik, E Gaung Pain (only five are named although both versions in two palm leaf books written long ago mention seven units)⁴⁰ were named as commanders.

This force together with elephants and horses crossed Tharup Dabya and deployed. From Martaban, with E Byapon and his uncle in command, war boats with supply boats in tow came up at night reaching Rajadarit's force at midnight.

Making land in the dead of the night, they achieved surprise and scattered five of the columns. Only the columns of Than Myan and Deinmaniyut were left intact.

Cautioning his men to stay quiet Deinmaniyut went over to Than Myan and conferred with him whether to fight or flee. Than Myan assessed the situation. To withdraw would mean that they would put the whole operation into jeopardy, while to fight the enemy at present it was probable that they could lose, however, if they could lull the enemy into believing that the entire force had been put off-balance instead of just five of the columns, then suddenly pounce upon him, they would be able to destroy him, he said. They agreed to go by Than Myan's plan which was to stay quiet and then pounce upon the enemy when they were engaged in picking up the spoils on the battlefield. This was duly done and the tables were turned. Such was their success that E Byapon and his uncle abandoned their warboat for a small canoe and paddled away for dear life, not even stopping at Martaban and made straight for the coast of India.

The leaderless citizenry of Martaban surrendered. Hearing the news of success, the king came down from Lagun Byi to Martaban where Than Myan and Deinmaniyut briefed him on the details of the encounter. Than Myan was invested with the title of Byat Za. The wife of the governor of Martaban was summoned and gold, silver and other treasure that was due to the king was calculated and confiscated. Samim Hsinbyushin, his father and predecessor was calculated and confiscated. Samim Hsinbyushin was invested with the title of Byakaman, his wife with the title of Hala Hnin Byi and the governorship of Martaban bestowed upon him. The governorships of Moulmein, Tari, Lagun Byi and Thanmaung were also given to suitable nobles. When the force reached the town of Taikkala, a

⁴⁰ The remaining two, He(E?) Nare and Pit Be are mentioned in the Universities Central Library palm leaf m/s.

house of five spans was built and Hnin Kethara, daughter of the governor of Wun town⁴¹ and the king's concubine, installed in it. The king then called for Byat Za and instructed him to invite Mathalon to his house where he was to ply the latter with enough drink to make him dead drunk and then take him on a palanquin and deposit him on an ornate couch in the five-spanned house, that he bestows the title of Lagunein together with the coronet on which it was inscribed, the governorship of Taikkala, five young male elephants and the king's concubine Hnin Kethara in marriage and that this news was to be given only when he had recovered from the effects of drink. Byat Za duly called for Mathalon and gave him enough drink until he was stupefied and then some more. He then had him taken over to the house on a palanquin where the sleeping Mathalon was placed on the couch and Hnin Kethara apprised of the king's instructions before he left.

When Mathalon woke up from the drunken stupor he found himself on an ornate couch used by royalty, in a room lit by oil lamps and lulled by the soft music of harp and syrinx. He immediately thought that he had wandered into the royal bedchamber in his befuddled state. As he made a move to leave the couch, Hnin Kethara restrained him and told him that he had not got there by mistake, that the king had bestowed on him the governorship of Taikkala, the coronet with his title Lagunein inscribed on it, five young male elephants and herself for wife. Then did he recall that after his exploit at Lagun Byi, the king had only praised him when he presented the head of Magyan but neglected to give him any reward at that time. This was the reward that had been deferred, he realised. Turning toward where Razadirit would be, he paid obeisance. From that time it was said that Mathalon enjoyed the amenities of a celestial god.

It was in the year 750 M.E (1388 C.E) that Martaban was taken. In that same year Martaban was visited by famine. While the king was preoccupied with the task of imposing his authority over the 32 principalities of the east, news reached him that the governor of Dala, Manyi Gam Gaung had entered into a pact with Laukpya, the governor of Myaungmya. Eindazeik was put in charge of an inquiry into this matter. It turned out to be true and Manyi Gam Gaung was executed. His son Bawgyaw was placed in his stead and was allowed to keep his patrimony. From thence, he turned his attention towards Myaungmya. However, since Myaungmya had considerable resources in the form of manpower buttressed by familial ties, good defensive works and therefore difficult to take, he decided to attack Bassein first. Bassein was held by a trio all of whom hailed from Myaungmya - Nawratha, Smim Bya Gyin and Laukshin. His attack was met by sailing ships manned by foreigners who fired their weapons at them causing much casualties among which was Raza

⁴¹ The late Than Laik, previously known as Mathamke

Manussam who died while mounted on his elephant. Raza Manussam⁴² was cremated with ceremony and his bones placed in a golden urn which was buried on the platform of the Dagon pagoda. The attack on Bassein proved to be only partially successful and he turned back to Myaungmya expecting that if the latter fell Bassein would fall of its own accord. Meanwhile, Bassein made contact with Myaungmya and told them that they would assemble a flotilla of warboats for a riverine attack while Myaungmya was to come out and attack. Can Binnya Nwe stand a two-pronged attack, they said. The king heard that Bassein was coming to the help of Myaungmya with a great array of warships and planned to have Lagunein hold them off at Daungpaung Lulin. The plan called for the breadth of the river to be staked leaving only narrow channels between the stakes which were to be just below the water at floodtide and for Lagunein to head up to Panpin to lure the enemy into the trap with a score of handpicked warriors on light boats which could navigate the channels. When the enemy flotilla was truly entangled on the stakes he was to come out with the rest of his force which up to this time would be well hidden, with some deployed on land. In order to make Lagunein strive even better, he sent his queen Talathutamaya to give a present of betel to him personally. Lagunein took the betel made obeisance to the king and left. Later he thought "Bassein has a formidable riverine force while we are but a few. I will test the king whether he loves me and I will lay my life on the line when I am sure that he loves me". So saying he covered his head with a blanket and slept.

At dawn when Deinmaniyut and Byat Za were making an inspection round, Lagunein was absent so that they were concerned, since he had agreed to carry out the king's plan and tide was running in, he should have embarked on his mission by that time. A messenger was duly sent to inquire into this matter and to whom Lagunein's men as instructed by their master, explained that he was ill.

Deinmaniyut and Byat Za set out by boat to Lagunein's catamaran and after finding no sign of sickness on him asked him why he did such a thing. Lagunein knelt before them and kowtowing said that he could not even eat a bite after witnessing the spectacle of queen Talathutamaya's bodice coming loose as she presented betel to him and as he would die whether he went or stayed, he had elected to stay. Asked if they should report these words to the king, Lagunein affirmed that it was to be so. Deinmaniyut and Byat Za duly reported to the king that Lagunein had not left yet. When the king enquired why, they at first only said that the sly vassal's words were not fit to be repeated. At the king's persistence, they finally reported what Lagunein had said. Instead of being angry, he said that he could stand losing a queen but not him, he summoned the queen and persuaded her to obey him. The queen wept as she knelt before the king but was eventually installed in a gilt

⁴² formerly Min Kan Si who was bestowed the title of Raza Manussa Bala

canoe under an ornate canopy. Deinmaniyut and Byat Za followed her as the canoe made its way to Lagunein's catamaran. Lagunein, on seeing the procession, came out to the prow of his boat with many gifts and fell on his knees. As the queen drew up he touched the deck with his forehead and presented the gifts. Saying that he had only wanted to know how much the king loved him and that he realised now that he truly did, he then led his force toward Daungpaung Lulin.

There were two heavily-armed warboats, four high-sterned galleys and forty fighting boats. Including supply boats the little flotilla was about a hundred strong. As instructed by the king, the breadth of the river was staked and part of the force stationed on its bank. Then putting together a small force of swift, light boats manned by trusted men, he went up as far as Panpin where the enemy was camped. Laukshein was there with a flotilla five to six hundred strong. His men seeing Lagunein's boats came after him with the rising tide. On reaching Daungpaung Lulin, it was observed that there were only a few boats on the water while men were to be seen on the bank which led the pursuers to believe that part of the force had landed and had abandoned their boats to flee before them. Thus they plied their paddles even harder to catch them. Lagunein's men sped deftly through the staked area but the boats pursuing them were impaled on the stakes and those coming up later rammed into them turning that part of the river into a melee of sinking boats and men with those still afloat hopelessly snarled among the wreckage forcing their occupants to abandon them. Laukshein himself made land and beat a hasty retreat toward Bassein. Lagunein returned with the captured boats and presented them to the king who was overjoyed at the success of his tactics.

The king pronounced that although Bassein had been routed, Dey Pathwe was still held by Saw E Binnya and it must be taken before Myaungmya could be seized.

At this Deinmaniyut proposed that the king should turn back to Dala as it was not provident to attack Dey Pathwe while he was in an exposed position. The king agreed and after organising a force of ten thousand men, cavalry and elephantry with thirty nobles in command, he left for Dala.

At Dala, his mind was not easy, being beset with rebels on one hand and with memories of his father on the other who had repeatedly said that he wanted his younger brother Baw Khonhmaing to succeed him. Fearing that he might rebel and bar his return to the palace he sent E Gaung Pein to kill him. At Dey Pathwe, Deinmaniyut took up positions near the town after which he sent this message to Saw E Binnya - "My lord Binnya to whom Deinmaniyut tenders - that since we are vassals of Binnya Nwe, our future has become as viable as a pumpkin on the back of a horse. I have always looked forward to be here and now that I am here I beseech you, my lord not to relent in your endeavour to make us your vassals." Saw E Binnya was delighted with the message and sent

out one of his men to administer the oath of allegiance. Deinmaniyut took a blank palm leaf carefully wrapped up in fine cloth and an empty relic casket in hand and took the oath of allegiance in front of Saw E Binnya's man. He then asked him to convey the message to his master that Deinmaniyut would advance with his officers and men as if to attack at which Saw E Binnya was to come out of the stockade and accept the vassalage of all the nobles accompanying him.

Saw E Binnya on being apprised of what his man had seen and heard believed it to be genuine and came out mounted on a she-elephant and with an escort of twenty only. Deinmaniyut also came riding on a female elephant but had made arrangements to have his war elephant caparisoned with a rope harness brought up later. A thousand warriors followed him after which nobles mounted on horse and elephant brought up in the rear. The rest of his troopers were instructed to stay put. When Saw E Binnya saw this horde advancing on him, he dared not advance far from the city portal and complained to Deinmaniyut that he had come with too many men. Deinmaniyut replied that his lord's wishes would be fulfilled only if he came up to meet them. Saw E Binnya again complained that Deinmaniyut was not approaching him alone and that the latter's officers kept coming nearer and nearer. At that, Deinmaniyut said he would send them back if they were not required and actually sent back some of them. Thus Saw E Binnya became convinced that it was not a ruse and moved out from the vicinity of the gate. When he was quite near Deinmaniyut climbed down from the elephant he had been riding and leaping onto the back of his war elephant charged at Saw E Binnya. Saw E Binnya's mount being a she-elephant turned back and ran inside the gates. Deinmaniyut followed him in pursuit and his nobles spurred their steeds to catch up with him. As the town's gate could not be closed in time to keep them out, they were able to kill Saw E Binnya.

On hearing the news that Dey Pathwe had been taken the king left Dala for Myaungmya. On meeting Deinmaniyut, the delighted king remarked in a jocular tone that not only was he an accomplished orator, he was a splendid warrior too and once he had become a warrior in elephantry, there was no one in this world who could face him.

Hearing that Lagunein had beaten the Bassein contingent at Daungpaung Lulin and that Deinmaniyut had vanquished Saw E Binnya, the lord of Myaungmya prepared to sail off to Arakan (Rakhine). Byi Nwe requested him to tarry awhile saying that he would challenge Binnya Nwe to a duel on elephants and if the outcome was favourable to enjoy the pleasures of a king and only take to the sailing ship if he were defeated. The lord governor of Myaungmya duly deferred the departure of the ten ships while Byi Nwe tendered a letter to the king Binnya Nwe in which he said, "You, my lord's son, have won Hanthawaddy on account of your prowess in elephantry. I too have faith in my

prowess as a warrior on elephant and stand in the fastness of Myaungmya. If you desire victory meet me in a duel. Take over the towns of Myaungmya and Bassein if you win and return to Hanthawaddy if you cannot defeat me. I do not indulge in ambiguity but speak only what is true. Enter the city and fear not that pitfalls, stakes and traps await your elephantry and cavalry. If you doubt my word send your men to see for themselves. "The king sent this reply " As I am the son of the monarch Hsinbyushin and royal blood runs in my veins, let the god who guard the teachings of the Buddha for five millenia be my witness. Byi Nwe challenges me to a duel on elephants and this is to my liking. If Byi Nwe wins keep Myaungmya, Bassein, Khepaung and regions west of them. If I win, I will not kill the governor of Myaungmya but will only have him lead a monastic life at the foot of the Dagon stupa. I have spoken verily as the son of a monarch. " When this was reported, Byi Nwe was pleased and sent back word that the duel would take place the next day.

At dawn on the appointed day, Razadarit breakfasted and mounted his elephant Ngayet Nwe and moved off. Deinmaniyut and Byat Za remonstrated, saying that the king should not demean himself by taking on someone who was not his peer.

The king brushed their argument aside saying that it was beside the point. Nobleman Saw Nu Thain tried to enter with mounted warriors one on each flank but was stopped by Byi Nwe who said that this was to be a duel between prince Binnya-nwe and himself and that was no place for the nobles in this affair. When this was reported to the king, he ordered them to stay and announced that he would enter alone. He had his men reconnoitre for pitfalls and traps and they duly returned and reported that there was none.

Meanwhile Byi Nwe, mounted on his war elephant (which was also) called Ngayet Nwe (both palm leaf book versions inscribed during the olden days give identical names for the elephants involved) positioned himself diagonally behind the portal. When the gates opened, Binnya Nwe entered unawares, thinking that Byi Nwe would be waiting at the foot of the gate. As soon as the head of Binnya Nwe's elephant passed the edge of the gate panel, Byi Nwe sent his mount forward to catch the prince's elephant from behind and to its flank. The tusks of his elephant caught the other at the base of its tusk and they were now drawn abreast. Byi Nwe tried to unsheath his sword but could not draw it out so that he slashed at the prince with his elephant goad. The beak of the goad caught the prince on the forehead splitting it. The elephant Ngayet Nwe sensing that it was not well with the prince who was in a daze retreated for some thirty yards⁴³ outside the city gates. When his head cleared, the prince, steering with the goad charged in again. This time catching the other head on, their tusks clashed. Byi Nwe's mount being not as strong as the other fell back and the prince's elephant seizing this advantage pressed forward

⁴³ Twenty yards, according to Nai Pan Hla's version

again and butted the other felling it. The prince hit Byi Nwe with his goad tearing the other's ear off. The latter's elephant succumbed to his injury. Byi Nwe was captured and taken along as the prince then moved out of the town. He sent men after Laukpya who had run away.

Myaungmya had so many rich men among its citizens that silver was distributed by the helmetful to the troops. Over ten thousand were taken as prisoners. When the king gave audience, Byi Nwe was brought before him. "You are only one of my vassals," he said, "yet do you think yourself man enough to challenge even a king such as I am?"

Byi Nwe replied, "I am but a vassal, but a good serviceman and warrior, if you were to ask this question to me with the intention of investing me with a fief in the outlying districts. But if it is on the grounds that I have challenged you to a duel and have fought this duel and asked this question with enmity in your heart, it is not right. Even if you let me live I would not be happy. If I could have unsheathed my sword during the duel I would have cut you down and my sword would even cut the elephant with the same stroke. But I have nevertheless cut your forehead open with the beak of my goad and I will die everytime that you see that scar in your ruby-lined mirror and say that this has been done to me by Byi Nwe. I would fain die but once." "You esteem your despicable sword too much. Can you cut me with it?" asked Razadarit. "You will be able to judge for yourself when I cleave a boulder more than a cubit thick with it", answered Byi Nwe. Accordingly such a boulder was brought and it was found that the sword performed as it had been claimed by its owner. Razadarit praised it as an excellent sword. He had also wanted to have Byi Nwe among his warriors but the latter himself did not want to live any longer so that he was executed.

The king stayed at Myaungmya for only two days and proceeded to Bassein. Laukshein had already left by that time. When he reached Maneik glen the citizenry of Bassein came to welcome him as their sovereign. Laukshein had left with ten elephant loads of gold and silver and he hoped to find refuge at Prome. Byat Za was sent after him with ten elephants and seven thousand warriors. Finding no place to cross that was not blocked, Laukshein gave up his plan and instead turned towards Sandoway (Thandwe).

When the king reached the town of Bassein, he summoned Dala Chitthin and bade him tell how he had responded to the governor of Myaungmya's enquiry at the time when he was in Dagon. He related faithfully to the king what he had told the governor of Myaungmya then. The king appreciated his stand and gave him an award as well as the fiefdom of Thagyi town. Dala Chitthin went on to say that he had the honour to serve under Razadarit's father and was in the campaign mounted against Byattapa, the rebellious governor of Martaban. In the attack led by Zwe Thura, the commander of the king's force suffered a gunshot wound and died on his elephant after which the king's force had to

retreat with Byattapa in pursuit and he fell into the enemy's hands at Zaung Kyat and was later put on a ship from which he was taken off by the governor of Myaungmya to serve under him. Now that he had become a vassal of the king who had not only let him off with his life but had given him a fiefdom in the bargain. Such was the magnanimity of the king that he asked to be allowed to take the oath of allegiance and to let his son, Bechitta serve in the royal court. Meanwhile, Byat Za had pursued Laukshein up to Sandoway but could not take the town so that he had to be content with besieging it. The people of Sandoway had no time to provision their town as strife had reached their doorstep under short notice. Therefore they calculated that they could not be able to withstand a long siege and went forth to negotiate. "Why have you come?", they asked, "Is it to attack our town to catch your enemy?" "I have come not to fight you but in pursuit of our enemy and if you will hand him over we will leave you in peace," replied Byat Za.

They proposed that an oath be taken to solemnise this understanding and this was duly done by both sides. After this ceremony, the citizens of Sandoway produced Laukshein together with his family and possessions. As Byat Za prepared to return, Laukshein revealed that Sandoway had yielded him only because they had not the time to provision themselves with adequate rice and if Byat Za were to hold on for another four or five days they would be able to take it with ease. Would it not be a greater prize then to set before the king with all the captives, he asked. However, Byat Za was not amenable to this idea and they duly left Laukshein and family were presented to the king who had Laukshein executed and his family sent off to Martaban.

This episode on their foray into Arakan (Rakhine), duly reached the king's ears through the mouths of the mandarins and the king summoned Byat Za and asked him why had he not taken Sandoway when he could have done so in a matter of four or five days. Byat Za scraped his forehead on the ground and said, "Lauk-shein had reached Sandoway before us and could not be divested, we had to be content with surrounding it. Then the citizenry came out to negotiate and handed over Laukshein only after an oath had been administered. We came to know of famine stalking the town only after we had Laukshein in our hands. Most of the men wanted to stay on and take Sandoway and only I was against it. One of the reasons was that you have campaigned without rest. There are two aspects of war.

One is to settle matters through the exercise of diplomacy and the other through force of arms. In this affair it was settled by negotiation and the enemy was handed over only after taking an oath. If we had broken our word and attacked them, we would be denied the chance to settle things through negotiation if another occasion should arise in connexion with Sandoway. Then it would have to be carried through by force of arms only at risk. One who habitually goes back on his given word will die from the potency of the

conservation made and even if he is spared, his life can never be peaceful nor will he be able to serve his master for long. I would like to serve you for a long time to come and that is why I had returned. "

The king was profuse with praise for Byat Za, recommended him for being farsighted and declared that he was fitting to be a general in command. He invested Byat Za with the title Smim Be Byat Za, a tazza with a cover as an official accoutrement and the governorship of Myaungmya. The governorship of Bassein was given to Thilawa. On 752 M.E (1390 C.E) consecration ceremonies were held with Piyarazadevi by his side. He was angry with Talamidaw and took away all her retinue of servants and possessions except for the 12 rings given her by her father. These rings were kept hidden in her tresses and so escaped being confiscated. Deinmaniyut was entrusted with the task of getting these rings. He had ministers who were in the know tortured and eventually learned that their mistress kept the rings in her hair knot. This Deinmaniyut informed the king who ordered him to unravel her hair and get them. Deinmaniyut went to the queen Talamidaw crouched before her respectfully while tears rolled down his cheeks. When Talamidaw asked why he was weeping he informed her of the king's command and said, "My hands being that of a poor servant are not worthy of touching the hair of the daughter of a monarch, please help me from touching your hair. " At this Talamidaw fell in a dead faint. Later when she had recovered she removed the rings from her hair and gave them to Deinmaniyut.

When he presented these to the king he was ordered to give them to Queen Piyarazadevi and this was done so. Talamidaw was heartbroken and could not take food or drink. Later she thought it better to die than live in this fashion and committed suicide by taking a solution of camphor and lime.

His son Bawlawkyandaw lived in a separate house under the tutelage of Ne E Gangaung. The king commemorated his unprecedented victories by treading on the field of victory again, feasted and drank with his nobles and bestowed titles, appurtenances of office and fiefdoms on those who deserved to be rewarded. The king's body weight in gold was donated to the Shwemawdaw stupa. A great pavilion was built which stretched to the foot of the stupa in the east, up to ZarweTashe in the south, up to Kyat Paw in the west and up to Thandwetira in the north. At each face of the stupa forty satellite stupas were erected. Over a thousand monks were respectfully invited and feted for seven days and five hundred viss of copper donated to each monk. The ex-governor of Myaungmya, Laukpya was pardoned and left to end his days as a monk on the Shwedagon pagoda. In the year 752 M.E (1390 C.E)⁴⁴, Razadarit was 23 years of age. Hanthawaddy prospered and thrived like a realm of the celestial gods. Bassein, Myaungmya and Khepaung were mobilized and warboats mounted with weapons and machines of war to attack Kudut (Myanaung) which was then a fortified town under the suzerainty of the Ava king. After

⁴⁴ amended as verified from palm leaf manuscript

Kudut had been taken, it was stockaded with wooden posts and Samim Bechitta and Samim Thankye were placed in charge to hold it with enough men. As he was about to return, news that his son Bawlawkyantaw was sharpening the tusks of his war elephant and that he was practising elephantry and equestrian skills disquieted his mind as he drew a parallel with his own sojourn in Dagon when he had scant followers and riches. He began to fear that his son might rebel against him. E Gaungpein was dispatched to Pegu with orders whispered into his ear to end it once and for all. At Pegu, E Gaungpein related the royal orders that he had received to the prince. Bawlawkyantaw said that he had practised martial skills with the elephant and horse as this was part of the 18 manly arts required of a prince. He had no designs against his father and was therefore innocent, he said. "My mother is also his royal sibling. He takes a common woman to wife and raises her to noble status while my mother the daughter of a monarch is abandoned because he has been advised to reject his descendants of the royal lineage and as a result my mother has died an awful death. And now I am to suffer the same fate also. E Gaungpein stay a moment while I seek refuge in the Buddha and his teachings." So saying he went to the Shwemawdaw, made an offering of the rings, bracelets and ornaments that he wore and prayed that after his death he be born as the son of another king and that he would wage war against his father. He was executed on his return from the pagoda. In that year the ex-governor of Myaungmya also died.

It was 775 M.E (1413 C.E) when Razadarit returned to Hanthawaddy. E Gaungpein was summoned and was asked to report the prince's words which he did. At this he left for the Shwemawdaw stupa where he took off his crown and donated it, praying that when Bawlawkyantaw, reborn as a prince in another country comes to wage war may he be able to defeat him on his elephant.

When the king of Ayuthia heard that Binnya Nwe, son of Hsinbyushin had ascended the throne of Hanthawaddy and had he had cleared his realm of rebellious elements and that it was peaceful now, he sent an elephant called Gandha that was a fit mount for kings. Hearing this news General Byat Za, Dein-manryut, Baik Nye, Re Thin Ran and Zeip Bye, five mandarins in all were sent with a hundred elephants and five thousand troops up to Kamanpaik to receive the elephant.

The act of stockading Kudut and putting under the command of Smim Bechitta and Samim Thangye with a sizeable garrison meant that an outlying part of his realm was being strongly held by a force of Talaings to Minkyiswasawke, king of Ava. Accordingly he came down with his army and navy. On seeing that the Talaing force was quite large, he inferred that Razadarit himself must be there and he left his warboat and joined his land forces. Mahathamun's archers noting that Minkyiswasawke had left the riverine force attacked them

destroyed it capturing some of the boats. Some of the boats were set on fire and abandoned.

The land force with its cavalry and elephantry was not attacked as it was quite large and the king himself was in command. Booty captured from Minkyiswasawke's multiple-hulled war boat and from those belonging to the nobles were checked and returned to him with an accompanying letter which stated :- "The Lord of the Golden Palace, elder uncle of our Lord and Master to whom we four generals and officers bow low to the ground and submit before his royal feet that - We inadvertently clashed with your warboats and destroyed not knowing that your most glorious self had come with them. Should your son Razadarit know of this episode he will blame us severely. He will be asking how can it be that you have succeeded in an action against the king who has come down to bestow his beneficence on you vassals, Smim Thangye and Smim Bechitta. Should we try to explain it will be like belittling your power and glory. We are only vassals who enjoy the beneficence of our lord and will stand firm and not turn away from a fight. In our hearts we wish you to have what you have come for, but we are not looking for a fight and we submit this in order that peace may flourish between the kingdoms of Ava and Hanthawaddy." After it was read out to Minkyiswasawke he asked the envoy why they were returning the warboats that they had captured. He answered that this unfortunate incident had occurred only because they had not know that his majesty was on the march and were now afraid that their lord's ire will be raised should he now of this so that they were returning them as a present. Minkyiswasawke then asked, "You say in the letter that you would like me to have Kudut but want no conflict. How will you explain it?" The envoy answered, "Kudut has been part and parcel of your majesty's realm. Only because your son, our king had attacked and taken it, it was stockaded and his men placed in it. This has caused you to march against us. Please take back Kudut but let us go. That is why we have said we want you to have it but want no conflict." Minkyiswasawke spoke, "He had rebelled against his father at the age of sixteen. When his father passed away, he prepared to attack his brother-in-law who had ensconced himself in a fortified city causing the latter to flee and inherited his father's realm. I have made two attempts against him at the invitation of the governor of Myaungmya but both failed and he has quelled all the rebellious elements in his realm. I have come marching because my territory has been infringed upon. Now you say that my territory is for the taking. I would like to take those who are holding the fort but a diligent effort will have to be made and Binnya Nwe may not be content to take it without rancour. At my age I do not want to commit more unwholesome acts. Because your lord has done an unworthy deed I should not put the blame on you. As I do not scheme in the manner of your lord and master I will abide by your wishes." He awarded each of the four commanders with a young male elephant

and drew back his besieging forces. A representative was sent to observe the oath-taking ceremony with the four commanders on the other side. A suitable person was appointed in charge of Kudut town. Smim Bechitta and Smim Thangye together with their troops went to pay their respects to Minkyiswasawke who gave out ample awards.

The four commanders returned to their post and a Talaing who was suffering from diahorrea was carried by the Burmese on a stretcher to his camp. On the other hand a Burmese captive demanded by the king was not returned although it was said that he would be returned after due investigation. Thus the Talaings were said to have broken their promise and the saying "Given but not recieved" came into currency. Minkyiswasawke then returned to Ava.

The four commanders on reaching Pegu reported to their king Razadarit that their negotiations with king Minkyiswasawke of Ava were successful. The king was delighted and praised them saying, "You commanders and nobles have carried out negotiations with a powerful monarch and handled matters of the state well. You have enhanced the might of your sovereign." The party sent out to receive the gift elephant from Ayuthia also returned. During this year the chief queen Piyarazadevi passed away. An earthquake and a flood also occurred.

The governor of Moulmein, Saithu, also passed away. Binnyaparan was born this year which also marked the demise of Mahadevi. In the month of Kason (May-June), Moe Ounaung was consecrated as Queen Razadevi. People shaved their heads in deference to the death of the chief queen. Moe Ounaung was the daughter of Sitrepain who was the son of Binnya The who had left the king of Chiengmai, Maharat because he was disenchanted with the king and came to serve under (Binnya U). With his wife he brought a son and a daughter by the name of Hnin The. When his wife who had accompanied him from Chengmai died, he was given the hand of Binnya U's daughter Myi Talasawlung in marriage. The sister, Hnin Khe O⁴⁵ was wed to Khun Hmaing who hailed from the Shan country. To Binnya The and Myi Talasawlung was born a son named Sitrepain, and a daughter Moe Akhinlay. Sitrepain had three daughters, Moe Ounaung, Moe Auk and Myi U Si. The king took all three of them as his queens, Moe Ounaung being given the title Razadevi, Moe Auk, the title Lawkadevi and Myi U Si, the title Thirimayadevi. Their aunt Moe Akhinlay was also invested with the title of Tala Hninthiri at the same time and one of her two sons, Baukanbaru given the title Saw Maharat and wed to the king's daughter Talamikyaw. The other, named Bawchi was given the title Ein Kummar and later with the title Byattapa and the governorship of Lagun Byi town.

After Minkyiswasawke had passed away, his son Hsinbyushin became king of Ava. Later he became insane and was assassinated by Nganauksan, the son of

⁴⁵ Binnya The's daughter according to Nai Pan Hla's translation. The name also differs.

his guardian and himself was killed in turn by the nobles (who placed) Minhkaung on the throne. The citizenry of Ava and Pagan (Bagan) became restive and there was no unity among them. The king (Razadarit) raised his fist in jubilation when he heard of this state of affairs. He summoned General Byat Za before the court and pronounced that a god had once predicted that not only he would rule the three Ramanya kingdoms of the Talaings, but his suzerainty would stretch right up to the northern realm "where the Naga serpent sojourns "; that Burma was in a chaotic stage presenting an opportunity to take up arms against it and seize Laukpya's sons and sons-in-laws; that it would be feasible even to take over the country or establish friendly relations with it.

After that men were set to build war boats for the nobles and when this project was completed, thirteen battle formations were fielded, the Lagunein force, Upakaung's vanguard, Avanannaing's force, General Byat Za's main force, Deinmaniyut's force, Re Thin Ran's force, the governor of Dala Baw Gyaw's unit, the regiment commanded by his son-in-law Saw Maharat, Yo Karat's unit, E Gaungpein's unit, the governor of Bassein, Thilawa's unit and the king's own troops. An armada of four thousand large and small vessels with rafts carrying elephants and horses moved up the river Irrawaddy (Ayeyarwady). E Byare was placed in charge of the garrison troops. It was on the 9th waxing day of the month of Nadaw 756 M.E (1394 C.E) that the armada set out for Ava.

Prome was then held by Pyanchi, son of the governor of Myaungmya⁴⁶. Prome was well defended with strong walls, turrets, bastions and an adequate moat and met the siege with closed gates. Because the elephantry and cavalry could not yet advance an assault could not be mounted against the defenders. Meanwhile the defenders could not counterattack because they were weak on water. As the attacking force reached Khaunglaungkya, the king's daughter Talamikyaw fell ill and the king decided to leave her behind with his son-in-law Saw Maharat in a stockaded position. Deinmaniyut submitted his concern that they could be isolated and attacked and that it would be better to bring them along. The king replied that since he had reached Burmese territory, he had confiscated all boats, taking the good ones, destroying and setting fire to those that were not. He would build a strong stockade for them and leave a reserve force of war boats to go after the enemy if they came out to forage and would they dare attack them, he said. He didn't take Deinmaniyut's advice and leaving his daughter and son-in-law at Khaunglaungkya continued his advance.

One or two days after the king had pushed forward, Pyanchi, the governor of Prome had boats that had been hidden in a lake portaged to the river and mounted a night attack . The troops in the stockade stood to at their appointed

⁴⁶ The late Laukpya.

ces on the ramparts and bastions. Saw Maharat, however thought that a
 in attack was being mounted against him and leaving his catamaran barge
 d in a small boat. The Burmese force captured princess Talamikyaw who
 escorted to Ava by land and presented to the king who gave her to his son
 hithathu in marriage. Razadarit did not know of this development and on
 ching Ava he had the ceremonial drum sounded and the white umbrella of
 gship raised over his royal person. Seeing that he did not have the naval
 wer of his adversary, the king of Ava stood in the fastness of his royal city.

azadarit sent Deinmaniyut and General Byat Za up the river as far as
 gaung.

side Ava, King Minhkaung assembled his ministers and nobles, invited the
 esiding monks from within the royal city and its environs and asked for
 eir advice on how to deal with the emergency situation. Not one minister or
 nderable monk had any advice to offer except Panya Thukyo a monk aged
 rty one years who had spent twelve years in the ministry who spoke up
 om behind the ranks of venerable prelates, "My lords have partaken of the
 ighteous king's generosity yet you have no advice to offer when he asks you
 this tme of emergency. No official has also come forth with a suggestion.
 o plan to raise the Talaing king's seige have been thought out. Is it right to
 main silent in this situation?" To this older monks commented in derisive
 nes, "No one else but this saintly person has a plan to make the Talaing king
 thdraw." Panya Thukyo smiled and just said "Very well." King Minhkaung
 as gladdened and called him aside saying, "Pray think of something, my
 n". Panya Thukyo assured the king that he would take care of matters and
 ld the king not to worry. He then sent this epistle to Razadarit, "Righteous
 ng of Hanthawaddy who holds the title of King Razadarit", I am of thirty
 e years in age and have observed twelve monsoon retreats as a monk in the
 dy of the scriptures. I have planned to journey down to the royal city of
 anthawaddy just to have the chance of seeing your majesty but have been
 able to do so. I send this epistle because should I die before I have had the
 ance to see you I shall certainly be consigned to one of the four miserable
 odes of existence but if I am able to see you in person, though I should die I
 ll be reborn in one of the celestial realms." This letter was sent to
 azadarit.

s the letter was read out to him, the king thought, "I did not come across
 y monk throughout my voyage from my city to the gates of Ava. Now that a
 onk sends a request to see me I would be criticised that I chose to ignore one
 the Three Gems should I refuse to see him." He sent an invitation to the
 onk saying that he wished to see him the invitation being ceremoniously
 ecompanied by a present of betel. Having received this invitation, the monk
 formed king Minhkaung that he had been invited by the Talaing king and

asked him to provide some presents to accompany him on that visit. King Minhkaung provided thirty eight golden seats, thirty sets of elephant harness chains in gold, one thousand ornamented rugs of fine quality and a thousand pieces of fine cloth carried by a train of ten thousand white-robed nuns with the monk riding on a tuskless elephant equipped with howdah. Razadarit exclaimed that the monk had brought him a great quantity of presents and provided him with a suitable place to sit near him.

Panya Thukyo asked " Pray listen to me king and upholder of the faith, while the Lord Buddha was seated under the rajayatna (*Buchanania latifolia*) tree the merchant brothers Tapussa and Bhallika rendered an offertory of honey-cakes and the Buddha gave eight hairs from his head for them to worship which were eventually enshrined on top of the Theinguttara hill as has been foretold. This was on the full moon day at the time of neap tide. King Anawratha sought the sacred hair relics but as it was not preordained that he obtain them he sailed upstream (from Dagon) when the tide rose to the level of the reliquary (in the Shwedagon pagoda). When he reached Pagan (Bagan) the difference in the two levels was 1750 *ta* (ie. 18, 375 feet). Why have come up such a distance at a great expenditure of effort from your rowers and paddlers ?" "I have come here for four reasons ", replied Razadarit, "One, because I want an enemy king to suffer; two, because I want to take over his realm; three, to increase my manpower and my might; four, because I had heard that Pagan and Ava are rich in the numbers of pagodas enshrined with Buddha's sacred relics. " Hearing this Pinya Thukyo smiled. Upon being asked why he smiled, the monk replied that he smiled because the righteous king was without a proper mentor and general and upon being asked why he made this claim, he replied, "Pray listen to me righteous king, according to the scriptures, of the realms of existence, the great island of Jambudipa is of ten thousand *yojanas* (nearly 130,000 miles), as is the extent of the Tavatimsa (realm of a class of celestial gods), Asura (realm of a class of gods who are the sworn enemies of the Tavatimsa gods) and Maha Aviji (the nethermost hell); Jambudipa is composed of 16 kingdoms and there are separate cities towns and villages and oceans but these are clearly demarcated;

The Tavatimsa celestial abode has the great parks of Nandanavana, Missakavana and Cittalatavana and manors of one or two *yojanaa* belonging to the gods and these are also clearly demarcated, there are no territorial disputes, the same is with the realm of the Asura. However, this is not the case with the purgatory of Maha Aviji where it is like rice dough that has been rammed into a joint of bamboo. This is because sentient beings are full of greed. They take another's territory for their own. They take another man's wife for their own. They take what property another man has for their own. That is known as greed. Your majesty has given me four reasons for coming here out of which there is only one that Buddha will commend because it is based on good reason and he will not be pleased with the remaining three.

Only your objective of coming here to worship at the pagodas will be accepted by any Buddha. Your coming here from Hanthawaddy is commensurate with the building of a place of worship dedicated to the Buddha and is deserving of untold merit. Since no one seems to have raised his voice against the remaining three reasons given I have said that you lack a mentor I have said that you lack a general because ancient kings used to send envoys to other kings to befriend them and to establish peaceful relations among their nations, to promote trade and commerce, that the rich, the monks and brahmins may be prosperous and live well so that it will be fruitful in the present existence as well as in the coming ones. There is no one to give you this beneficial advice so that I have said that you lack a general." The king was pleased with these words and said that he had not come by the land route but by the riverine route so that he would leave once the party that had been sent to the Tagaung-Male area upstream, returns. Panya Thukyo then commented, "Righteous king, you are like the Buddha, the monk is like Indra and the people of Ava are like the citizens of Rājagaha city. Why have I said thus? This is because once when the Buddha went on a round of accepting food offertories in that city the citizenry remained behind closed doors in their houses and Indra, knowing of this and that to remain that way would consign the citizens of that city to the netherworlds in their coming life, took pity on them and taking the guise of a human being went up to the Buddha and placed an offertory of food in his bowl. Only then did the citizens come out and followed his example and in the end the people of Rājagaha were reborn in the pleasurable abodes. That is why I have said that you are like the Buddha, the monk is like Indra and the people of Ava are like the citizens of Rājagaha."

Razadarit said, "Since I came up here no one has come forward to offer me even a solitary cockerel. If I were to let this hurt my pride and letting my wrath get the better of me and carried out hostilities all creatures will come to suffer. We two kings will then have committed unwholesome acts. Because Panya Thukyo has given us a sermon, the two kings will not fight each other but hostilities are ended and there is reciprocal friendliness and respect. This is a very beneficial thing." At this point, some of Razadarit's men who had made a foray into the precincts of the Shwekyetyet pagoda returned with thirty to forty slaves that had been dedicated to that pagoda and heads severed from some of their group. At this Panya Thukyo remarked that the king was being ungrateful towards his benefactor. The king asked who was this benefactor that the monk was referring to. Panya Thukyo the monk replied, "Righteous king, you have attained the power, the glory and the amenities you enjoy now because in a past existence you have made offertories to a Buddha or a Lesser Buddha. You have now caused the slaves that serve the pagoda symbolising this benefactor to be killed which is a very great misdeed and that is why I've said that you are ungrateful towards your benefactor. Monarch of Hanthawaddy, since you have reached Burma, to say nothing of meeting a

learned son of the Buddha as I am, have you ever had the honour of being presented with a single flower even by a young child ? As befitting a monk, I have discoursed on matters that bring benefit in this present existence as well as in the future ones while those who ply the paddles and sweep the oars bring you presents. I've shown you the way how monarchs may befriend each other. You have met me, a son of the Buddha, because I have come to you righteous king, in order that two monarchs may have the chance to establish friendship and respect for each other and that you may benefit by being prevented from doing wrong in this present life and avoid enmity in the future"

The king was deeply touched by Panya Thukyo's counsel made with allegorical references and his hardened heart turned as soft as wax heated by flames. He could not make an ascerbic riposte and could only look on the noble monk's countenance with admiration and spoke of his deep respect for him. The pagoda slaves from the Shwekyetyet pagoda were also freed and allowed to leave in peace by his command.

The king declared that he would build a monastery near the walls enclosing the precincts of the Shwekyetyet pagoda and would sail down the river for home in a week. Panya Thukyo was taken back to Ava in the king's golden boat, riding in the royal seat under the towering tiered golden canopies. A monastery of five pavilion-roofed halls joined together was constructed on the platform of the Shwekyetyet pagoda and donated complete with the four requisites of monks. Panya Thukyo informed king Minhkaung that he would be enlightening the Talaing king on the teachings of the Lord Buddha before he departed downstream.

King Minhkaung commented that Razadarit would be turning back only because the monk had gone out to meet him but that his mind was troubled at the thought that he might return again. The monk replied that he would see to it that he did not return by calling on the two brothers who commanded the cavalry to take two thousand mounted troopers with them and to ride along the bank of the river showing themselves whenever the Talaings set ashore to gather firewood and vegetables but not attacking them, relying on this show of force to make them turn back for their boats, keeping this up until they had reached Prome. The king was pleased with this plan and summoned the two brothers who commanded the cavalry and let Panya Thukyo give them their instructions. Panya Thukyo told them "You take command of two thousand horse and ride with them along the riverbank, make them see you whenever they come ashore to gather firewood or vegetables, do not attack them but let your presence send them scurrying back towards their boats. When they land at Pagan to pay pilgrimage to the pagodas there, ride between the monastries and gardens so that they will be deterred from their pilgrimage. Keep this up until they reach Prome when you will ride down onto the sandbank and

breaking up your formation into numerous troops, scare them away by your numbers. In this way prevent them from worshipping at the Myathitin pagoda (now better known as the Shwehsandaw⁴⁸) and keep harrying them until they are past Prome."

At dawn king Razadarit sent for Panya Thukyo entreating to accompany him as far as Pagan. The monk was given a golden outrigger canoe with tiered golden turrets in which to ride. As they sailed downstream, they could see smoke rising from the monastery on the Shwekyetyet donated by king Razadarit which was now being put to the torch on the orders of king Minhkaung. King Razadarit was angered and gave orders to turn back, vowing that he would return to Hanthawaddy only after crushing Ava. On hearing this Panya Thukyo placated the king by saying that only those who destroyed another man's meritorious work would deserve demerit, as once a meritorious deed is done, it is not wasted and its author immediately earns merit and similar meritorious works can continued to be done elsewhere to earn further merit. Since a monk propagates the teachings of the Lord Buddha, he continued, the royal word once given should not be amended. The king was mollified by these words and the journey downstream was continued until they reached Pagan where the king built a monastery near the Tankyi stupa and donated it together with a monk's four requisites to the monk Panya Thukyo. At Sale, the departing invaders tried to take away the gracious Sagyo image but was deterred from doing so by the cavalry. The king had his royal boat drawn near the shore and landed some of his troops while he left his seat under the ornate canopy to stand at the prow and took command. As one of his generals Upakaung landed, he was set upon by the enemy cavalry and had his thigh pierced by a thrown lance. The trooper who had thrown the lance approached the fallen Upakaung to claim his head but Upakaung speared the trooper's steed from under him, cut off his head as he was brought down from his saddle and presented the severed head to his king. When the Burmese troops saw this, they exclaimed in wonder that he could not be human but must surely be a god. When the riverine force had disembarked in great numbers the horsemen of Ava left. About ten horses were captured and these were presented to the king. The king seeing that Upakaung was bleeding from the lance wound tore his robe into shreds and stanchd the flow of blood with these. "I have laid waste Tagaung-Male and put the countryside to torch but no one there dared to lift a finger against me," he said, "but Sale has the temerity to wound one of my generals and therefore I will not return without taking it." He accordingly sent his commanders who took it and presented some captives to the king. From the captives he learnt for the first time that his daughter had been captured and that she had been taken to Ava to be presented to the king. A courier boat was sent to Prome which returned to report that the force there had not been destroyed but that the princess had

⁴⁸ U Po Latt's "Research on Ancient Myanmar History and Culture", Pyinnya Nada Press, Yangon 1962 .p.101

indeed fallen into the hands of the enemy. This was a great blow to him and his anger blew up like rape seeds being roasted over a hot fire. He vowed that he would not return until he had sacked Sale and Prome. At this point Deinmaniyut and Smim Byat Za intervened to plead that the men were tired and it would be better to resume hostilities again only after the men had a rest and the coming monsoon season was over. Then a large force of both land and riverine components could be mobilised to realise his ambitions, they said. After taking a large number of captives, they sailed for home.

Razadarit's daughter was wed to the son of Minhkaung, prince Minethihathu and on reaching Dala, Razadarit had Saw Maharat executed. Once home in Pegu, King Razadarit gave Upakaung the hand of his daughter Talamikaung in marriage and invested him with the fiefdom of Paungnin. When the monsoon came to an end, two columns, one land and the other riverine set out. The land force was made up of five combat formations with General Byat Za, Smim Ava -nannaing, Smim Baw Kyaw, Smim E Byare and Smim Byapaik in command of each and totalling a hundred elephants and thirty thousand troops. The riverine force comprised of eight flotillas with the king Razadarit himself, Deinmaniyut, Smim Yokarat, Upakaung, Lagunein, Smim Sithu, Smim E Gaungpein and Smim Mawkhwin in command of each and totalled seventy thousand marines, one thousand warboats and over two thousand supply boats.

First Kudut was attacked and then the towns of Uyinput, Kyakhat and Shwedaung were sacked and captives taken. Tayokmaw was attacked but could not be taken.

As Razadarit approached the besieged town the governor of Tarokmaw fled into the jungle. Tarokmaw was bypassed after taking captives and the fleet left for Prome as the nobles commented that if Prome was taken, Tarokmaw would fall of its own accord.

At that time Prome was held by Letya Pyanchi, the son-in-law of the late Lauk-pya. Another of his son-in-laws, by the name of Min Hla Kaung was given the governorship of Salin and the title, Nawratha. Nawratha was also given the task of holding Prome. Prome was under assault three times but these attacks proved to be costly and were not successful so that Razadarit had to content himself by surrounding it from the landward side. On hearing that Prome was under siege and that its citizens were facing famine, a force of thirty thousand comprising four regiments each commanded by the governors of Kukhan, Talokmyo, Kinda and Pinle were sent as reinforcements. Hearing of this development, Razadarit summoned Deinmaniyut and Byat Za and said, "Min Swe (Minhkaung) does not come in person but sends four regiments commanded by nobles, shall we let them approach the city walls or fight them before they reach here?" Byat Za answered, "If we let them approach the city we will be attacked from two sides, by reinforcements from Ava on one side

and troops in Prome on the other. Maintain the siege with the marine forces while our seven regiments will sally forth to meet them". The king agreed with the scheme and left his landforce commanders to carry out their plan. They set out with Lagunein in the van, the general Byat Za riding on the Gandha elephant that had been presented by the king of Ayuthia, and accompanied by the troops of Smim Awanannaing, Smim Zeip Bye, Paw Kyaw the governor of Dala, Smim Byapaik and Upakaung. When enemy movement was detected in the village of Theymathaw, they concealed themselves behind a range of hills as they were quite close to each other. At the head of the Burmese forces was the Kale regiment which advanced without hesitation. Byat Za sent a message to Lagunein telling him not to advance too quickly and to wait for his signal, to venture out on to the plain only then and to attack the enemy where it was favourable in terms of strength.

Lagunein, however, ventured out onto the plain saying that by staying as it was they could not put fear into enemy's heart. Upakaung followed. Lagunein's charge scattered the vanguard but the Kale regiment reformed and charged putting Lagunein's unit into disarray and sixty of his men were killed. Seeing this, the troops of Upakaung, Byapaik and Baw Kyaw were scattered. Only the three troops under Byat Za, Zeip Bye and Awanannaing that remained in concealment in the jungle were intact. Awanannaing standing on his elephant could observe four of their units being scattered and he had the news relayed to Byat Za together with his query whether they were to fight or withdraw. Byat Za replied that by withdrawing they would not accomplish anything and as loyalty to their benefactor required of them, he would not budge from his place atop the elephant and would only strive for victory. Remaining on his station atop the elephant, he passed water in a spittoon repeatedly. His elephant's escort footsoldiers seeing this remarked that their elephant was in musth in the front as well as in the rear and therefore the Burmese troops will not be able to withstand its charge. Meanwhile the troops pursuing the four regiments that were put to flight were observed not to be in orderly formation themselves so that the two regiments of Samim Ava-nannaing and Samin Zeip Bye under Byat Za's command hurled themselves at the Kukhan regiment and scattered it. They set the Tarokmyo governor's stockade to the torch making its occupants flee and eventually scattered all the four regiments.

Lagunein meanwhile was regrouping his scattered forces in a nearby forest and seeing this chance, went out and captured elephants, horses and men from the disorganised enemy forces and then he lost no time in turning back and presenting this booty to the king who showered many gifts on him. When the general Byat Za returned he heard of this and retired to his tent without giving his report to the king. He entered the king's presence only when he was summoned and when he was asked why he did not come immediately, he replied that since the king had awarded Lagunein without examining the nature of his exploits, (it would seem as if) he had taken only those that had

remained after his foray which he deemed not worthy of presenting to his majesty and therefore he had not appeared before the king. Lagunein admitted that his troops had been put to flight at the beginning, but that he had later taken the opportunity to capture the enemy that had been scattered by the general (Byat Za)'s counter-attack.

The king clapped his hands in delight and laughed. He then chided Lagunein that his words were not that of a noble and warrior but that of a cowherd and if warned him that if it happened the next time, he would be handed over to the general to be disciplined. Then seeing that his general Byat Za, who had been ill from the start of the campaign was ill at ease, he had a round cushion brought for him to lean on (from that time onwards, this amenity was provided every time the general was present when the king gave audience) General Byat Za then submitted that the besieging of Prome could only succeed by starving out their citizenry, it would take time and meanwhile the miasmic environment could exact its toll on the troops. Since the enemy reinforcements had been put to rout, he said, only three regiments should be placed at Nawin and the main force, both riverine and land concentrate at Thale where the climate was salubrious. Prome would succumb, one time or another, he said, since the four troops had been prevented from reinforcing it. The general's advice was followed and Byapaik, E Byare and Baw Kyaw were sent to hold Nawin with Upakaung's force stationed on its riverside. The king erected a great redoubt at Tale and named it Baranasi (Banares).

The citizens of Prome faced famine subsisting on rice bran and pith of the toddy palm. When King Minhkaung heard of this, he realized that it would soon fall into enemy hands unless he intervened and marched off with two thousand elephantry and one hundred and twenty thousand troops. A forced march took them to Myede where they struck camp. As lookouts brought this news to Razadarit, he conferred with Deinmaniyut and Byat Za. "Min Swe has come with a large horde. Is it advisable or not to withdraw the besieging force ?" he wanted to know. Byat Za commended its withdrawal. The three governors commanding the besieging forces protested "Even though Prome is starving it has not fallen yet. Repeated assaults on it has not been effective. If the besieging troops are withdrawn will it not weaken the effort ?" At this point Deinmaniyut intervened "Prome is defended by brick walls and a wide and deep moat while our defences consist of stockades encircled by ditches. The Burmese king is a king no less than our Hsinbyushin is, while you are but nobles. In war, forces led by nobles are usually no match against a force under the leadership of a monarch. That is why we recommend withdrawing your besieging troops". The general stayed silent while E Byare exuberantly claimed that they would fight undeterred. Deinmaniyut again reasoned against it saying, "You say you will strive your best but it will be like a carver of wood who takes on a huge log with a small thin chisel and a lightweight mallet. " At this point king Razadarit made his exit and the meeting broke

up. He was swayed by the three commanders of the besieging troops who opted to continue the siege.

When he gave audience in the evening he asked the three commanders of the besieging forces whether they were united in their purpose. They affirmed that they were and asked only for some reinforcements which the king arranged for. He had them widen the moats and ditches and strengthen the stockade.

As King Minhkaung of Ava marched forth from Myede he was met by the four governors who had suffered defeat earlier. They admitted that they had erred in being too hasty and had paid for it and that they would try their utmost in the future. King Minhkuang carried out the assault on the Talaing stockade at dawn, Tuesday, the 5th day of the waxing moon in the month of Dabodwe (January).

The assault force included elephantry and cavalry, while infantry scrambled over the stockades with scaling ladders. Although the besiegers now turned into the besieged withstood the assault determinedly and King Razadarit himself lent his aura to Byapaik's troops, every stockade was breached, Byapaik and Baw Kyaw were killed in action and Samim Zeip Bye was captured. During the furious onslaught following the breaching of the defences, seven to eight hundred defenders were slaughtered and about the same number of Shans were captured.

Hundreds fled to the river. When King Razadarit heard this commotion he asked about it and was told that they were troops fleeing from the breached Nawin stockades. Furious, he commanded that ten reconnaissance boats be launched to kill the fleeing soldiery from Nawin crossing the river. Emuntaya took this order, kowtowed and left. At this point Mahathamun interceded for the men, pointing out that the three governors were the ones who had made the madcap claims, not their men and that by killing his own men it would be like helping the enemy. Thus the king was pacified and Mahathamun was allowed to save the swimmers. After winning the battle King Minhkaung's troops filled the fortified city of Prome with their numbers.

During the royal levee held at daybreak, the king commented that he had been put to shame because he had disregarded Deinmaniyut and General Byat Za and had listened to the yelping of curs instead. General Byat Za said that although the battle had been lost because his words came to nought, victory would be assured if his advice was followed in the future. The king asked how was this to be. Byat Za explained that since they had been subsisting on the environs of Prome and King Minhkaung had only come with rations carried by porters it would soon be used up and it would be necessary to provision himself by drawing on supplies from the Ava-Pagan region. "When the environs of Prome face famine we will win", he said "The Burmese king will

at this point as well as I do. Therefore do not negotiate with him when he asks for a truce. With three to four hundred boats and picked men led by nobles we will see that rice from the Myede - Thayet - Magwe - Malun is collected and any amount remaining burnt and destroyed. " The king approved this plan so that this scorched earth policy was carried out in every town and village in that area. As King Minhkaung could not get his supplies from far or near, he had to send an envoy by the end of ten days or so with gifts of two good horses and ten robes. His envoy brought this message to King Razadarit, Elder Brother to whom the Lord of the Golden Palace of Ava informs that - I have come here, honourable brother, not with the intention of waging war against you, who have ruled the kingdom of Hanthawaddy after your father Hsinbyushin had passed away and impressed your rule on such parts of your realm that had been insurgent, just as I, who have also inherited the country of Burma after my father had died and have to put down insurgent elements in my own country. As brotherly kings blessed with power and glory I have come to behold you with love and affection. On my way as I march forth with all the power and glory of a monarch, I had inadvertently clashed with three troops under your servitors who had neglected to keep their proper station.

In that clash, Zeip Bye alone has survived and I will be sending him to you, Elder Brother. This I do inform you with love and respect. "When the king heard this message being read out, he looked at Byat Za and remarked "This minister has the vision of a person gifted with omniscience. He truly befits his office " Byat Za remained with his face lowered.

The king said, "My younger brother King Minhkaung is said to be wise and indeed he is wise. I have come upstream from Pegu and attacked Prome but my endeavours have not succeeded and have lost many of my men. You have won the battle, younger brother so that you can ask for a truce. Meanwhile I have lost a battle so that in my embarrassing situation I cannot grant one until I have taken Prome. Only then will I be able to grant what you have asked for. "King Razadarit did not appoint his own envoy to convey this message to King Minhkaung but had the latter's envoy carry it on his return. When the envoy had left, the king retired to his chambers where queen Tala Thutamaya, learning that her father had not been killed but was being held captive by King Minhkaung entreated the king tearfully, prostrating herself and hugging his feet, that he end the hostilities by negotiation and ensure her father's release. The king reappeared before his generals "I retired to my chamber but I cannot stand the queen's querulous pleadings that the war be ended and she be given the chance to see her father again. What do you think of it General ?", he asked Byat Za who replied "I only know the business of war not of women" After an interval of two or three days King Minhkaung again sent an envoy to deliver a message that read "In the preceding year, while my elder brother came up to the Tagaung - Male region and later returned downriver, there was no outbreak of hostilities. In the interests of making merit in this present

life as well as for the future rebirths, I had my mentor the *sayadaw* visit you and after his discourses on the teachings of the Lord Buddha no war was waged between us. During your present campaign, you have set fire to the stockaded towns of Kudut and Uyinput, the four regiments that I had sent as reinforcements to Prome were also set upon by my brother's men and choice elephants and horses had been taken from them as booty. I have only won a battle against my brother's three servitors who had neglected to observe the necessary etiquette they should have accorded a column headed by the monarch himself. Therefore, elder brother, though you say that your men had suffered casualties, you have had the most number of victories overall. Please consider that a son of a monarch is a monarch and will he turn away from an enemy who faces him with cavalry and elephantry? I fear only that should monarchs wage war against each other in their arrogance with full panoplies of cavalry and elephantry the people, laity and monks alike, will suffer and evil deeds prevail. Since we are brother monarchs we are both invested with power and glory resulting from accumulated past merit. If we should pray that we might become a future Buddha or a chief disciple of the Buddha our aims will be fulfilled. Let us pray together to attain nirvana when the future Buddha Metteyya attains Buddhahood and makes his preordainment."

When this letter was read out to him, King Razadarit commented that the king of Ava had spoken with grace and courtesy in accordance with the tenets of the Buddhist doctrine. He then retired to his chamber where his queen Tala Thuta-maya again beseeched him which prompted him to send this message to his counterpart "You, Younger Brother have spoken in the interest of what is honourable in this present life and in the future cycle of rebirths as well. Should I reject your proposal it would seem that I care not for these principles and therefore I agree to your wishes." Amicable relations between these two monarchs ensued and envoys shuttled between them. From King Minhkaung came a conciliatory message which read "Elder Brother, you are well-known far and wide. If you deem that a lesser figure has the temerity to oppose an aggrandiser I humble myself before you." He sent this message with a delegation headed by Tharay Sithu and returned six to seven hundred captives including Zeip Bye. Gifts comprising one hundred horses including ten caparisoned in gold, two female elephants with gold howdahs and one thousand rugs from China carried by a retinue of a thousand also accompanied this delegation. On arrival, Tharay Sithu was appointed a place beside Byat Za. After the former had made his asseveration he was given five young male elephants and five female elephants, all with gold howdahs. Following Tharay Sithu's return, Razadarit sent General Byat Za together with presents consisting of ten young male elephants, five female elephants and bolts of velvet and rolls of felt which required one thousand bearers.

At the ceremony of offering the presents, Byat Za's profferal was recieved by

the king himself. With Tharay Sithu in front Byat Za made his asseveration after which the king presented him with thirty horses of which two were caparisoned in gold, bracelets and rings for each of his fingers. Byat Za was made to bare his chest and parade in front of the king who remarked that he seemed to be quite thin, at which Byat Za replied that he was not in good health at the present. The king praised Byat Za commenting that he befitted his reputation that he was a man of physical and mental prowess and remarked that he would like to see him catch elephants. Byat Za replied that it would be only worthwhile to witness the catching of wild elephants but the spectacle of lassoing domesticated elephants was not to be recommended. The king remarked jocularly in friendly tones that in the presence of Byat Za, he felt as if Razadarit himself had honoured him with a visit before letting him return.

The two monarchs then sat together on the platform of the Myathitin pagoda and exchanged pleasantries. Razadarit made a present of his white umbrella and personal betel leaf holder and betel box to Minhkaung who in turn presented him with his white umbrella and betel box. The two kings demarcated their territories, designating Tapindaraung as the western border point, Thapaka in the east, the upcountry as the territory of Ava while the downriver country was the territory of Pegu. Razadarit then said that he would maintain a garrison in the stockade named Baranasi in Talehsi and that he requested Minhkaung to bear with it until he retired that garrison. This was only to impress the neighbouring kings, he said, and assured Minhkaung that it would not be held with a strong force. King Minkhaung agreed to this and later they parted.

Razadarit returned to Pegu and Minhkaung to Ava respectively. When he had reached his capital, King Minhkaung initiated a mission to investigate whether the Talaing garrison holding Talehsi had departed or not. When it was reported that it had not, he commented that the Talaings had failed to keep their word, that while it had been agreed on Tapindaraung they are now trying to keep Talehsi in their hands. He said that he would first attack Arakan (Rakhine) and having taken it, he would attack Pegu. He also sent thirty horse to the King Saw Maharat of Cheingmai (Zinnme) with this message "Elder Brother King of Cheingmai to whom the Lord of the Golden Palace informs - that the servitor of a Talaing king has gone against the pledge he had made with me and now tries to hold on to part of my territory. For this act I am going to attack Arakan first; then with Arakan in my hands, I will attack Pegu, in which case I ask you to march as far as Thitdaunk. When I have won Pegu, we will sit together and I will let you have your share of the choicest of women, horses and elephants to your heart's content." Meanwhile, King Razadarit had, Maw Khwin, the governor of Salat set up a picket to cover the jungle trails and arrest anyone using them. The thirty horse from Ava were captured by this picket and presented to the king. The king took

umbrage at the expression "Talaing servitor" and ordered the thirty mounted couriers to be executed. Deinmaniyut pleaded for a stay of the sentence to let him interrogate them first as a pact had been made with the Burmese king with whom they had been enemies not long ago so that if they had been sent before the pact had been made he should not be angered. He then asked the couriers when they had been sent on their mission. When the Burmese officials answered that they had been sent on their way during the month of Dagu, Deinmaniyut reported to the king that his anger was justified as the pact had been made in the month of Dabodwe (ie two months before they had embarked on this mission) and had the men executed. "Min Swe asked for a truce and after an agreement had been made, betrayed his trust," he said "Should I stay quiet ? Send a spy to Ava. " When it was reported that Minhkaung had left for Arakan, Razadarit marched out to Bassein. As Minhkaung took over Arakan, the Arakanese king fled to India while his son prince Naramekhla fled to Sandoway (Thandwe) taking with him a force about a thousand strong together with elephants and cavalry. Hearing that Razadarit was in Bassein, he sought his protection which was readily given. Razadarit told him not to worry and that he would help the prince regain his rightful heritage.

Baik Nye and Maw Khwin were appointed co- commanders with Thanlaik and Bya Nare as their deputies at the head of a force made up of 50 elephants, three hundred horse and twenty thousand troops with orders to escort Naramekhla who was to be borne under the white umbrella of kingship, install him on the Arakanese throne and to refrain from looting Sandoway which was on their line of march. An ultimatum was to be sent to the governor of Sandoway to accept Naramekhla as their sovereign by which means they would be left in peace but should they ally themselves with the Burmese and chose not to be his subjects there would be war. When the whole Sandoway countryside had rallied to his side, he said, the men that Min Swe had left behind in Arakan would not stand and fight against them.

When this force reached Sandoway, the whole town rallied to the side of the prince and the official named Maha who was in charge of the town had to flee to Arakan. Prince Naramekhla awarded the citizenry of Sandoway with gifts and the commanders added levies from that town to their column and headed towards Arakan. Meanwhile Arakan was held by Garmani, who was wedded to Min-hkaung's daughter, princess Sawpyechantha. King Minhkaung had installed his son-in-law on the Arakanese throne saying that they deserved its golden palace and its thriving seaport. The ministers thought otherwise but since the royal edict had been rendered they did not dare give their opinions. As Razadarit's expeditionary force approached the Arakanese city with the deputy commanders in the van, the citizens rallied to their side as their prince Naramekhla was in it.

Garmani was isolated with his troops. As the force with Thanlaik and and Bye Nare in command of the spearhead and Narameikhla following close behind them entered, Garmani lost his nerve and fled but was captured with his wife, the princess, together with their insignias of state and three thousand horse and elephantry. Meanwhile at Bassein, Razadarit relieved Thilawa of its governor-ship and placed Deinmaniyut in his stead. He then left for Pegu and at Zanawdaw he watched a polo match played between teams formed from his officers.

It was at this point that the victory at Arakan and the news that captured daughter and son-in-law of Minhkaung, princess Sawpyechantha and Garmani, were now in Bassein was reported by Deinmaniyut. Razadarit clapped his biceps with his hands in jubilation and exclaimed that the Burmese king's daughter and son-in-law had fallen into his hands as the direct result of his betrayal of the pact they had once entered. A stupa was then built on this spot and titled Kyat Kanat. Later it came to be known as the Sanaw Daw.

Razadarit sent Mahathmun to Bassein to have Garmani executed and escort Sawpyechantha who was made a queen on her arrival. Two large high-tailed dragon-boats laden with largesse were sent to the commanders of the victorious expeditionary force together with instructions to install Narameikhla on the throne complete with the white umbrella (the insignia of kingship), to establish his suzerainty over the whole domain and to bring back Burmese artisans at Arakan who were skilled in painting, carving, sculpture, weaving, bronzework and carpentry. On receipt of these orders, Narameikhla was duly installed on the throne, any incipient movement towards insurgency quelled and all Burmese artisans taken away with them on their return.

Meanwhile, King Minhkaung was on an expedition to put down a rebellion by the Shans of Bhamo (Bamaw). After attaining his objectives he returned with a number of men and women of all ages taken as captives. The king listened to a recital of the King Sittathon Story⁹.

Thus he was engaged when news arrived that the city palace of Arakan had been taken and that his daughter and son-in-law captives of the Talaings. The king exploded like " rape-seeds sprinkled onto a blaze " and in rage had the Bhamo Shans executed. Mobilizing his men and augmenting this force with levies from Kale and Mohnyin he assembled an army 150 thousand strong, with six thousand horse and five hundred elephants. Taking the Yamethin route he swore that he would return to Ava only after taking Pegu and Binnya Nwe.

The year was 765 M.E (1403 C.E). Reports from lookouts reached Razadarit that the king of Ava was on the march. The king mobilised a force of 80

⁹ (The Cullasutasoma Jataka - Jataka no.525)

thousand troops, over two hundred jousting elephants and over five hundred young male and female elephants. Setting out, he encamped at Pasa on the first day of the march and waited there four or five days for the rest of the troops to catch up.

The next stop was at Thakyin where he feted his men and showered awards of gold and silver on his warriors. "I am the son of a monarch," he proclaimed, raising his arm "Who shall encroach on my territory? We will strive to the utmost to attack the Burmese land". The nobles had to pledge their fealty by taking part in the ceremony of drinking blood in front of the king. From Thakyin they advanced to Depade and thence to Akharein but did not stockade themselves. Byat Za suggested that a force to reconnoitre the movements of the Burmese force be sent out and Lagunein was duly sent on this mission with fifty fighting elephants, six hundred troops and over one hundred pathfinders. They reached the vicinity of Langet after a day's march.

Meanwhile, Minhkaung had reached Taungoo after striking camp five times along the way. Approaching Langet, Lagunein could hear the commotion raised by a large number of troops and ordered the pathfinders to take to the treetops. They came back with the report that there were many, many troops and that they should withdraw quickly as they might be soon engulfed by the horde. Lagunein said that they would not before he had taken a look himself and climbed up a tree.

From its vantage point he could see wave upon wave of infantry, cavalry and elephantry advancing towards them, an endless sea of troops. Lagunein returned from his perch and taking his men across the Langaik stream ambushed the Shan troops advancing in the van. After killing twenty to thirty men, they had to get out fast without taking any enemy alive as they were in the danger of being engulfed by those following. Taking to the woods, they felled trees and planted stakes to hinder the enemy advance as they retreated. When Lagunein reported to the king that the enemy's strength was between fifty and sixty thousand, the king raised his arm in defiance and said, "Who are they to encroach on my land!"

Byat Za addressed Lagunein "You are tired after your strenuous patrol," he said, "Take a rest in that hut."

Later, Byat Za, Samim Sithu, E Byare, Samim Awanannaing assembled before the king and sent for Lagunein. "Did you see just the van or the entire main body of troops?" he was asked. Lagunein replied that from his perch in the Langaik woods he could count two hundred pennants and estimated a strength of seventy thousand, that he had mounted an ambush at the stream crossing but could not hold on for long and that only Shan troops were in the van.

azadarit assessed that the strength of the Burmese troops favoured the open

plains but were weak where elephants were concerned and that therefore, they would catch them in a pincer movement in the jungle. Byat Za pointed out that the Burmese troops were numerically superior as Lagunein had observed and as one mounting an offensive tends to surge ahead with great momentum, he said, meeting them in jungle would mean success only after a long hard fight. It would be similar to wild buffaloes straining at each other with horns locked, he said. "It would be easier," he suggested, "to let them take to the jungle while we prepare to fight on our home grounds; to ensconce ourselves in the fastness of our city walls and tire them out as they batter futilely at them from without." As all of the officers were in agreement with the general's view, Razadarit asked if that meant that they should withdraw. Byat Za replied that they should indeed but that they should send the womenfolk ahead of them. Razadarit directed that Mahathamun should take in charge of that detail but the latter protested "I would personally wash the clothes of my ladyship if I were ordered to do so during normal times, but in the face of battle I would rather fight on my elephant at the foot of my lord." Thus the order was amended and Eindazeit placed in charge of escorting the king's harem back home. After they had departed they waited for a while and began their march, keeping enough intervals between elephants as most were in musth. As they took the Salat route, there were murmurings that the Burmese would be there before them as their route across Za-rwe was more direct. Byat Za and Razadarit quieted these fears, saying that if this happened they would be able to take the enemy from behind and destroy them. The order of march was Byat Za in front, followed by Samim Awananaing, then Upakaung and finally Lagunein bringing up in the rear.

Meanwhile, Minhkaung was stockading himself and gathering his forces around him thinking that his vanguard's skirmish with Lagunein meant that Razadarit would be waiting in the jungle ahead. That took him five or six days.

As Razadarit's force reached Thakyin he thought up a scheme to play a joke on Zeip Bye, who was the governor of Thakyin and put a scare into him. He told Zeip Bye that he was to stem the Burmese invasion forces at Thakyin while he mobilised his forces for about ten days after which he would come to his aid with dispatch. At this, Zeip Bye protested that Thakyin was protected by a timber stockade only which was not too strong, that the moat was narrow and quite shallow, the surrounding terrain was flat and that as he was too old and tired it would be better to put someone who was young and skilled in the art of cavalry and elephantry in charge. Razadarit countered that when he was given the revenues of Thakyin he did not complain that he was too old to enjoy them and was it to be that the young and hardy should hold it only when a battle is imminent? He then retired to his chamber. Zeip Bye was persuaded to think that he would actually be left behind and approached Byat Za saying "I have erred in the past because I forsook your advice and I live now only

because I was very fortunate. Shall I be able to withstand the onslaught of an assault led by a monarch himself ? Please be forbearing like a Buddha and convince the king that I should remain at your lordship's side. "The general asked Zeip Bye whether he could afford a present of ten viss of gold for the king. This he could not afford, said Zeip Bye, but he would find seven viss for the king and a viss for the general to which the general agreed. Presenting a bowl of gold weighing one viss to the general they went together to seek audience with the king, Zeip Bye bringing seven viss of gold which they presented to the king. Again Zeip Bye submitted that he was too old to take command of a stockade that was under the threat of an assault and that he made a present of the gold in order that the king might use it to recruit warriors and that he might be allowed to serve in the shadow of the royal feet and continue to campaign with Byat Za.

The king remarked that as he had presented him with seven viss of gold, he asked how much he had given Byat Za. Byat Za replied that he had received one viss of gold upon which the king said he would be taking over that too since he needed it to give as bounty for warriors in the meantime but would compensate Byat Za for it later. He then had the Thakyin stockade destroyed and rice stocks burnt. He then struck camp at Einaing stream and the spot was named Yameyi. Byat Za however recommended that the camp be made further ahead and they moved to Pankyaw stream where the general commented that the stream was wide, the sand banks adequate and tidal bores could be counted on. A stockade strétching from Kyat Sri to Depankara pagoda in the west to the short-cut path in the east was erected and eight armies large and small were stationed within. Outside its perimeter, five to six thousand hardened and reliable troops were deployed.

The invading Burmese troops set fire to every village they came across and butchered all the cattle they could lay their hands on. On sighting Razadarit's fortifications, Minhkaung sited his own stockade facing it from the east. The latter's stockade stretched up to Panapo Daniye in the east. Troops from Kale and Mohnyin were placed in front. As Minhkaung's forces arrived during a period of neap tide and the Shan troops had no experience of tides they went around looking at the stockade. There were mutterings amongst them that they had been told they would be sacking Pegu but so far they had not seen it yet and they had not carried out an attack on the enemy stockade so that they were doing nothing more than just wandering around.

Meanwhile the Talaings had carved out ramps in the banks so that when the tide came in horses and elephants would be able to climb up on to the safety of the bank. At the opportune moment the Talaings shouted across to the Shans taunting them that since they would not come to fight them they would attack the Shans. The ramparts and battlements on the stockade were manned while nobles and troops carrying their arms ran down into the stream. Seeing what

seemed to be an assault in the making the Shans charged out. The Talaings then feigning to retreat and advance in turn drew most of the Shans into the stream. Razadarit had a rider sent downstream to report when the tide came in. when it was reported that the incoming tidal bore had reached Daniye he ordered drums, bugles, gongs and conches to be sounded to drown out the roar of the tidal bore. Thus the Shans had no inkling of impending trouble until the tidal bore was on them and as they tried to clamber out only those who were close to the banks could make their way out of the melee. Some were carried away by the tide and drowned. Those who could make the exit from the confines of the stream slashed at the tidal waters in frustration. When the water receded the bodies of the Shan troops were revealed. There were more than two hundred corpses in the stream and Talaing soldiers came out and hacked at the dead bodies.

This prompted a Talaing onlooker to remark that there was no reason for them to hack at the Shan dead as they had been killed by the tide and not by their bravery as men. This was heard by one of the deputy commanders who censured him for talking irresponsibly and slew him, then placed his corpse with the dead enemy. The commander then reported his action to the king who approved it. A spirit shrine was erected near the bank of the stream. The king had brahmins wear turbans and robes coloured with red ochre stand on the bank chanting and waving palm fronds and branches once when the tide came in and once when the tide went out. When the Shans saw that the brahmins apparently seemed to be able to beckon and dismiss the waters with their gestures and mantras, they were awestruck by this phenomenon.

The Burmese had placed the Shans in the forefront and in the light of the Shans suffering heavy casualties they were reluctant to enter the fray. Meanwhile Deinmaniyut, the governor of Bassein had come with a sizeable force to join Razadarit at Pankyaw. Razadarit was much gladdened to see him. Deinmaniyut went on a tour of the defences and troop deployment and later commented that the stockade was sited too close to the stream which prevented warriors from putting on a display of their martial prowess to awe the enemy. He then had the posts of the stockade moved back 5 *ta* (ie about 16.5 yards or 16 metres). Then nobles on the outer perimeter put on a display of equestrian and elephantry skills while their troops paraded with flashing swords, glittering lances and gleaming shields. Burmese troops remarked among themselves that the Talaings were unfazed and enjoying themselves. Razadarit summoned Deinmaniyut and asked him to look around and estimate the size of his army. Deinmaniyut duly did and gave an estimate of eighty thousand. The king then sent four scribes on a head-count who later returned with a figure of eighty thousand. Razadarit praised Deinmaniyut saying that his appraisal by sight was as good as an actual count.

Razadarit likened Deinmaniyut to the fabled ruby of Cakkavattin, the universal

monarch, with its power to turn turbid water to crystal clarity as he had put his mind, which was set in a turmoil by the Burmese king who had only been born before his father had ascended the throne now come invading into his territory, at ease. It was then that the title "Deinmaniyut," was given him by the king.

King Minhkaung meanwhile was appraising his options and decided that he was not in a condition to attack the Talaing stockade and he was also not in a condition to make a successful withdrawal as their foraging during the advance and their destruction of foodstocks after taking what they needed had depleted the countryside. To gather supplies he had to send foraging parties totalling about three thousand strong as far as Paukngu, Malauk, Dawgon, Awtit and Taungnyo. Razadarit sent Samim Awanannaing after these foraging parties to ambush them on their return. As these parties came back bent under baskets of rice in the husk they made easy prey and five to six hundred were killed, over two hundred were captured alive, as were seven male and female elephants and over twenty horses. This happened two or three times. Thus casualties mounted and when they had to forage further and further, what meagre provisions these parties could collect were mostly consumed during their travels to and fro. To the west dense jungle barred their entry and to the east numerous lakes, swamps and morasses hindered their travels. Enemy ambushes made foraging costly. Therefore little rice was to be had and famine stalked the troops.

King Minhkaung sensing that victory was not possible in the circumstances summoned Innpe Thugyi and sent him with the following message to King Razadarit. "Elder Brother Hsinbyushin to whom your Younger Brother, Lord of the Golden Palace informs, that wars waged by monarchs and kings on this great island of the Eugenia tree are either met with success or failure. However that may be, they have always conducted themselves in a fair and just manner. But you have not acted fairly when you won the last time, my son-in-law died at Bassein after he became your captive and my daughter became one of your queens. When your daughter Talamikyaw fell into my hands, I wed her to my own son Thihathu. I took into consideration the fact that a tactical error may result in defeat and both of us being monarchs entitled to wear the white umbrella we might fight each other over territorial disputes but there is always the option to send envoys to make peace and become friends again. If you want your daughter back I will have her sent to you. I want you to return my daughter too"

After this communication was read to him, Razadarit said "My brother Minhkaung faults me that I had acted unjustly. You are clever with words to make this charge of which I have been made aware only now. I must say that your accusation is groundless. My brother, you were the one to betray the solemn pact made between us on the sacred Myathitin pagoda. In your letter

to the king of Cheing Mai you referred to me in the coarsest of terms. But your betrayal displeased the gods so that your thirty horsemen carrying that letter fell into my hands. The expeditionary force that I sent to Arakan overwhelmed your son-in-law and nobles. Now you have come with troops numbering in hundreds of thousands to lay waste ten or twenty counties in my realm and take my subjects captive but you conceal this fact. I cannot accept your proposal. Since you have come here in full force to fight me, just do so."

Innpe Thugyi conveyed this message to King Minhkaung who, in the face of starving troops, had to adopt a gentle tone in his response to King Razadarit's harsh words. The message he sent back with Innpe Thugyi was as follows :-

"If you say that this is not the time for us to make a pact let our minions do so among themselves and I will return home. Once I am in Ava I will send envoys to you, together with Princess Talamikyaw should you so desire." When this message was conveyed to King Razadarit by Innpe Thugyi, he was told that Razadarit would accede to this. Razadarit then showed Innpe Thugyi a pair of horses, a grey and a russet, and asked him whether he recognised them. When the latter replied that he did not, Razadarit told him that these once belonged to Garmani and had been captured in Arakan. One was worth twenty and the other seventeen viss of silver, he continued, so that Innpe Thugyi should have recognised them although he had denied knowing them.

Innpe Thugyi replied that horses of such quality were plentiful in Ava so that he should be excused for saying that he did not know them which was the truth.

Razadarit then asked Minhkaung's daughter to serve him betel so that Innpe Thugyi would see her and then told him to approach her to receive any message she might want to send. Innpe Thugyi replied that he had been sent on a mission to seek peace between the two nations by his lord and that it did not include taking messages from his lordship's daughter. Hearing these words Razadarit was impressed and remarked that the personality and farsightedness of the young Burman would raise him to nobility someday. Before Innpe Thugyi left, he gave him a date on which the oath-taking ceremony would be held.

Razadarit then conferred with Minister Deinmaniyut, General Byat Za, Samim Awanannaing and E Byare, all of them wise counsellors. He asked them what they thought of Minhkaung's latest proposal. To this Byat Za replied that if they kept their word they would do likewise but if they did not there was no reason why they should. His sentiments were seconded by the other nobles. Razadarit then laid down plans to seize the entire body of delegates from the other side during the oath-taking ceremony. Swords and

ances were secreted in the sand bank where the ceremony was to take place. On the day of the ceremony thirty delegates were appointed on each side with Byat Za leading Razadarit's party and the Minister Myinsaing Sithu on Minhkaung's side. Each of the thirty delegates on each side was paired to its counterpart on the other side. Thus the most junior official on the Talaing side, Lagunein, was paired with Thado on the Burmese side. As Lagunein's arms were bent and Thado was bowlegged, it was conceded that they made a fine pair. The Talaing party was primed to seize the other party when they were on their way to pay obeisance to King Minhkaung. As both parties drew abreast of each other as they entered the Pankyaw stream, Thado asked his counterpart Lagunein whether the oath-taking ceremony they were to participate in was genuine or not. Lagunein answered "You fool of a Burman, do you have to ask me such a foolish question? I will kill you if I can and you would do the same favour for me. Can an oath made between enemies in wartime be termed genuine by any chance?" At this Thado called out to his leader that they should not proceed any further as there was treachery afoot. The Burmese party on their elephants turned back and later so did the Talaings. As the latter reached their camp, they were asked by their king why their mission had failed. Deinmaniyut answered that it had broken up after an interchange between Lagunein and Thado from the Burmese side but that he did not what had been said between them. On being asked Lagunein admitted the truth at which the king condemned him for obstruction and commanded that he be drawn and quartered and let to die at the hands of Emuntaya who duly dragged him away.

Byat Za and Deinmaniyut fell on their knees to plead on Lagunein's behalf, saying that to condemn a brave warrior to die, one who the king himself had nurtured, would only encourage the enemy and that the king should give him a chance to redeem himself, carrying out the sentence if he failed. The king kept silent, giving Byat Za and Deinmaniyut a chance to stay the hand of the executioner. Meanwhile the executioner had bided his time in the hope that the king would have a change of heart. Lagunein sought refuge in the Three Gems to face his fate calmly. It was then that the messenger arrived and he was taken back to face the king. However he was in such a state of mind that he could not respond to Byat Za's questions. Deinmaniyut, sensing this asked that Lagunein be given a chance to compose himself until he was in a position to answer the general's questions in private, much less in the presence of his monarch. The king retired to his chamber and Lagunein was taken to Byat Za's tent where he was made to wash his hair and after he had regained his composure he was given the chance to his side of the story. Lagunein paid obeisance to the general and related that when Thado asked him whether the oath-taking ceremony was being held in earnest, it came to his mind that as the Burmese forces were on the point of running out of rations they would be beating a hasty retreat at that time and it was not politic to win through the

exercise of duplicity when they were on the verge of collapse. It would be like, he said, the instance when Atha the legendary king of old who instead of defeating the enemy in a fair fight resorted to a ruse, the consequence of which, the name of his kingdom, Hanthawaddy, given by Indra ruler of the celestial realm himself passed into oblivion and the name of "Upe kho," (meaning to steal by subterfuge) came into being and later became "Pegu". If this sham taking of oath was used to defeat the enemy this time he continued, he feared the kind of epithet by which Pegu would be known in the future. That was his reason for his reply to Thado's question, he explained.

Byat Za and Deinmaniyut then asked him what kind of plan he had in his mind.

When he said that he did not have a plan, he was told that in this case he would have to die. Lagunein conceded that he was likely to meet this fate unless the lordships helped him. At that point, Deinmaniyut remarked that Minhkaung regularly went on an inspection of his troops every evening riding a female elephant, from Panapo Daniye to the Mawlyin pagoda. A war elephant would be in tow, he continued, but usually it lagged far behind and security was lax so that if an ambush was carried out at Mawlyin employing a force of three hundred warriors and an elephant, Minhkaung could be taken. Lagunein agreed to this plan saying that if only the elephant Baka Mat was given him, he would get Minhkaung. When the plan was put up to the king, the elephant, Baka Mat was duly caparisoned and Razadarit said he himself would head the supporting troop of warriors who would be awaiting in the vicinity to join the fray when the bugles and trumpets sounded, signalling the fight. At this point, Lagunein bowed deeply and submitted that he did not know Minhkaung so that his brother, Min Theiddat, former governor of Sagaing, was given the task of riding amidsthips in the howdah. Razadarit spoke to Min Theiddat saying "The time has now arrived for you to benefit from your past meritorious deeds. You have only to point out Minhkaung to my vassal who has guaranteed to get him. This being done, I will march on to Ava and put you on the throne, after which I will make a pilgrimage to the shrines at Pagan and then return here." Min Theiddat let out a jubilant cry and mounted the elephant with Lagunein and the party set out.

Once at the head of the head of the stream the party observed strict silence and with Razadarit on the elephant Nan Laung the supporting force concealed themselves in the jungle. Byat Za was on his left and Smim Mawkhwin, Smim Baiknye, on his left with a total of thirty elephants and three thousand troops.

When dusk fell, King Minhkaung began his inspection tour with the vanguard far out in front and escorted by only five hundred men with sheathed swords. Only his war elephant Ye Myatswa followed close behind, with the remaining elephantry bringing up far behind. When the king drew near, Lagunein

broke cover, coming at him with booming drums and gongs. Seeing Lagunein, Minhkaung cried "I'll have you!", and leapt onto his war elephant Ye Myatswa.

As his cavalry in front wheeled back on hearing the commotion, Baka Mat paused momentarily, distracted by the flapping, jingling saddlery. Minhkaung charged at Lagunein who prepared to meet him. Just before the tusks of the jousting elephants clashed, Min Theiddat cried out "Has a monarch ever jousted with a noble on elephants? There are too many lurking behind, more than you can take on; so turn back!" Minhkaung then used his goad to stop his elephant's charge and turned back. Lagunein tried to get close but was thwarted by elephantry which had by now caught up with the king so that he too had to turn back. He met Razadarit who was coming to his aid at the stream who asked him why he had turned back. As he related the events of the encounter, Razadarit asked Min Theiddat whether it was true that he had shouted a warning to King Minhkaung. Min Theiddat admitted that he had because he could not bear to see his own brother endangered. Razadarit commented that although he had planned to aid Min Theiddat in attaining his birthright, he had insisted on being loyal to his brother and not to him so that it was evident that he could turn back on him someday and therefore had him executed. He also reproached Lagunein for not engaging Minhkaung on elephant as he had promised to do so and as such he said, had not earned his reprieve yet. Lagunein begged for remission, promising to infiltrate Minhkaung's tent during the night to assassinate him. Twelve warriors were selected to accompany him. Approaching the royal camp they entered it from the north where there was no moat and the stockade easy to infiltrate. Just outside the stockade three were left behind as rearguard while the rest proceeded.

At the deputy commander's tent, three more were stationed and three more at the elephant shed. With the remaining three, Lagunein entered the royal pavilion beneath the flooring. Hoisting himself up on the shoulders of one of his men, he cut through the flooring and heaved himself through the opening. It was then that one of Minhkaung's concubines who was messaging his feet saw him in the lamplight and raised an alarm. "Talaing thief!", she called out, at which Minhkaung woke up and slid down from the royal couch. Lagunein snatched Minhkaung's personal sword hanging from the couch and the king's betel box and exited. The deputy commander who came out to investigate this commotion was cut down by Lagunein's men. The three who had taken their post at the elephant shed cut the elephant's fetters so that Burmese troops thought that the disturbance was caused by an elephant that had turned loose. Lagunein and his men took this opportunity to get out of the camp and once a head count had assured them that all had been accounted for, they returned to their own camp. There Lagunein presented the king with the sword and betel box. When Razadarit asked him whether he had

accomplished his mission, Lagunein replied that he had been aware of the adage that a person who kills a monarch does not live long and as he wanted to serve Razadarit for a long time he had brought these souvenirs instead.

Minhkaung's sword and betel box were shown to his daughter who tearfully affirmed that these were indeed his. It was only then that Razadarit pronounced that Lagunein had earned his reprieve.

King Minhkaung was shaken by this experience and as his men were near starving ordered a withdrawal. His concubines, porters, the wounded and womenfolk filed out during that very night. King Minhkaung mounted his war elephant Ye Myatswa and with his royal guards, Myinsaing Sithu's troops and Kye Taungnyo the governor of Kale acting as the commander of the army left with a total strength of 70,000 men, 700 elephants and 3,000 horse to Akunpa forest. The sick and wounded were sent ahead. The unusual quiet moved Razadarit to send out scouts who later reported that Burmese force had withdrawn. Razadarit then set out on his elephant Baka Mat accompanied by his general Byat Za and the rest. After fording the stream and nearing the enemy position Byat Za advised the king that they should halt for a while. The king asked why they should halt while the Burmese King was on the run, Byat Za replied that as Razadarit was in a too exposed position, it could entice the enemy to come out of the forest and attack him. A troop of cavalry was sent out to reconnoitre and they came back to report that three regiments awaited in the forest. At this Razadarit took rings worn on his ten fingers and awarded these to Byat Za and asked him what his opinion was. Byat Za replied that since the enemy was beset with meagre rations while their own troops were well fed and in high spirits the king could mount an attack after deploying his troops. Re Thin Ran, commander of the garrison troops, was ordered to deploy his troops on the battlements.

On reaching Maw Lyin, Razadarit deployed his troops. Razadarit on his war elephant Baka Mat was escorted by a contingent of three thousand shield bearers, one thousand Marakat lancers and Saw Hankaik and Urang were appointed as lance bearers mounted on female elephants. Emuntaya and Mamun Zawgi were on each side of the royal elephant and they were told to hang on to its ears. Fifteen elephants were deployed on each side of the royal elephant. Byat Za and his troops were deployed to the right with the general mounted on the war elephant Nga Yet Nwe and aided by twenty elephantry, Smim Sithu mounted on his elephant Re Pauk Thar and aided by twenty elephantry and Bya Paik on the Peikthalin Taung elephant, aided by twenty elephantry. Sixty elephants were counted on the left wing. Deinmaniyut brought up in the rear, mounted on the Bya Lapun elephant and aided by twenty elephantry. In the van Upakaung was mounted on the elephant Zamanut with five elephantry escorts, Lagunein on the elephant Thuye Wun with five elephantry escorting him. There was also troops garrisoning the

panyaw stockade. Lagunein and Upakaung were sent ahead to draw out Minhkaung's troops. Lagunein skirmished with the governor of Kale's cavalry and felled ten of them, but as he pressed forward they withdrew and Lagunein was met by the governor of Kale himself mounted on his elephant Chit Myat Ke who thrust him back. Upakaung also reeled from the onslaught and both withdrew to join Byat Za who stood fast and killed about thirty Shans. Ebyare and Smim Maw Khwin came to his aid and together about a hundred Shans became casualties and the Shan army was routed. At this King Minhkaung came out on his war elephant Ye Myatswa escorted by his elephantry troops. Seeing this the governor of Myinsaing hastily approached the king riding a female elephant and implored the king to withdraw saying that this was only the enemy's forward troops, that the Talaing king was behind them with numerous war elephants, that his was the only army that was intact with the others far out of reach and that it would be difficult to make an orderly withdrawal once they were engaged. Minhkaung withdrew and the Myinsaing governor stayed on as rearguard. King Minhkaung turned his war elephant over to his chief of elephantry as it was slow and mounted a nimbler elephant named Nat Lulin. Ye Myatswa and the chief of elephantry lagged behind. Seeing Minhkaung's withdrawing, Razadarit followed in hot pursuit and only the light and fleet of foot amongst the elephants and horse escaped the heavier and slower ones being captured together with the concubines and other womenfolk. A Shan princess, one of Minhkaung's queens was captured at Mawkyi Mawpa and presented to Razadarit. Razadarit struck camp for the night in a nearby cotton field. Other nobles also followed his example and struck camp. The Byat Za came up and commented that no pursuit was been made when the Burmese king dared not enter a duel on elephants and his troops too famished to fight. The king replied that Min Swe had withdrawn without offering a stiff fight on elephants and horse so that he would still have his reserve of good elephantry and cavalry and there was no certainty of victory should the pursuing forces meet them.

The general pointed out that what had fallen into their hands were the slower elephants, horses and women so that it could not be called a decisive victory yet.

The enemy was starving so that if a determined pursuit had been conducted up to the border even the Burmese king could have been captured, he said. However, he continued, if the king was intent on having his pleasure with the captured women he had nothing more to say. Only Lagunein and Upakaung were on pursuit and reaching the border at dawn captured a great number of prisoners. King Minhkaung himself missed three meals during this time and the withdrawal had turned into a rout. Byat Za remarked that had only Razadarit led the pursuit they could have met no resistance even at the gates of Ava. Meanwhile the Queen of the Southern Palace had a mishap during the retreat when the harness holding the howdah in which he was riding broke

after fording a stream and she was thrown off. She was stranded there as the chief of elephantry arrived with Ye Myatswa and hailed him. The chief of elephantry commented to his mahout, "Mark my words, this is the day a death token has been given me," and collected the queen, making room for her on the howdah by dismissing the amidships rider. With the queen in his charge, he avoided skirmishing with the pursuing Talaing troops and pushed forward with all speed. At dusk he made a platform on a tree for the queen to spend the night while he and the mahout took turns, with one sleeping as he sat on the elephant's head while the other sat on its rear. They could get the queen some food only when they entered Burmese territory so that the queen missed three meals. When they came to a village, they arranged sleeping quarters for her in a house while the chief and mahout slept on the ground. When a horse could be procured the chief rode it while the mahout rode on the elephant with the queen in its howdah. Minhkaung had reached Ava meanwhile but he was in such a nervous state that he could not even bear the drums sounding when people were propitiating spirits that a halt was called to such ceremonies.

"I saw them capture my Shan princess," Minhkaung said, "I don't know whether they have captured my queen of the Southern Palace as well. If they have done so my life is not worth living." A troop of twenty horse was sent back to look into this matter. They came back to report that no one was expected save for the chief of elephantry whose elephant was too slow to catch up they said. Only after about ten days did the chief of elephantry arrive with the Southern Queen.

When this was reported by the mounted look-outs a pavilion was prepared outside the city walls where the queen had her hair washed and escorted by noble ladies arrived at the palace. Minhkaung was overjoyed and during the next audience that he gave he declared that the chief of elephantry had been a great help on two occasions, once when the Talaings were on his heels at the Bandulaing stream fording when he turned back to hold them off and now when the queen was facing imminent capture he had brought her back to him. "If both of my queens had fallen into the enemy's hands I would be at their mercy and should I refuse to bow down to them for their return I would be engulfed in grief," he said and so saying, took off his ornaments and awarded the chief of elephantry with these.

Relatives of the Southern Queen also showered gifts on the chief. On retiring to his chambers the king asked the queen where she had been picked up by the chief of elephantry and in what manner had she been borne during their journey home.

The queen related that she had fallen off her elephant when the howdah strap broke while fording a stream and that she had hailed the chief of elephantry who bringing up in the rear, that he had made the rider amidships dismount to place her in the howdah. She also told him how they had made a platform

on a tree to sleep during the night while the chief slept on the elephant, how they had missed three meals and had food only when they were in Burmese territory, that the chief rode a horse when one was available and on reaching a village she could sleep in a house while the chief and the mahout slept on the ground and that it took them twenty days to reach home. Noting that the queen's account tallied with that of the chief, the king rewarded the chief of elephantry with a ruby studded betel box. Later, the mahout who was with them was also questioned and when the king found that he also told the same story awarded him with a ruby ring, a golden bowl and clothes. However, the king's peace of mind was disturbed by suspicion and he again called the chief of elephantry and questioned him. The chief related how he had remarked to the mahout that his days were numbered from that day when he stopped to pick up the queen. Asked why, he explained that when the queen called out to him if he had ignored her she would have fallen into the enemy's hands and being the consort of a monarch she could be used as a pawn to gain concessions from the king and after she had been returned it would be reported that he had ignored her pleas and for that he as well as his whole family could suffer death while if he had picked her up because the return journey was a lonely trek his lord would naturally suspect him and in that case only he would be executed. The king praised him for reasoning like a true noble and took off his ring to reward him with it.

However, the king's mind was never at peace whenever he was with his chief of elephantry so that once when the queen had the misfortune to call out "Oh! You Chief of Elephantry!" when her betel box accidentally slipped from her hands while she was with the king, the king drew the conclusion that something must have gone on between them and had the chief of elephantry executed. This incident led to the popularisation of a saying in Talaing country "Don't give a stake to an indigent in pity, don't help a king who is on his downfall".

After winning this war against Minhkaung, Razadarit returned to Pegu and gave suitable awards of fiefs, insignias of office and the like to nobles and warriors who had proved themselves in battle. A wedding ceremony between his son, prince Binnya Dhammaraza and the daughter of Awanannaing was held for seven days with great pomp and ceremony. Awanannaing being the epithet meaning "defeater of the king of Ava," was thence addressed as "Father-in-law to the Royal Prince." Holding a royal audience with nobles during the nuptial ceremonies the king exclaimed "Min Swe has lost heavily and he would not dare engage in hostilities against me again". The senior nobles were silent but Saw Khan Khat, the son of Barang spoke up "During past festivities I witnessed a fight in which the victor who won prizes celebrated and caroused with his comrades while the loser approached his mentors and polished his skills so that in the encounter next year the former loser won the match. Since even such sons of peasantry can be staunch of

heart, Minhkaung who is a monarch by birth will not sit idle while a daughter he adores and one of his beloved queen is in your hands. Our mighty king has been remiss in preparing the weapons of war and have spent the time in celebration. Should Minhkaung return would our carelessness not bring on a crisis ? The time would be better spent in arming ourselves. " Razadarit conceded that for such a young person he had spoken well, only that his name Saw Khan Khat hardly befitted him so that he was invested with the title of Noble Mahathamun, allowed the use of gold betel leaf holder and betel box and gave him other awards as well.

It was in the year 756 M.E (1394 A.D) that this episode at Pankyaw in which King Minhkaung met his defeat. Minhkaung then mobilised all of Burma, rallying the Shan chiefs of Ohnbaung, Kale and Mohnyin; making four kings in all replete with their white umbrellas and together commanding a force consisting of 200 elephants, 6,000 horse and over 200,000 troops. As Razadarit was unprepared, Minhkaung reached the proximity of Hanthawaddy when Razadarit had to march out to Kyat Paw Taw to raise a stockade and field his forces leaving Re Thin Ran in charge of the Hanthawaddy garrison. European canoneers were emplaced to cover the approaches while the stockade was strengthened and when it was so, deployed to its rear at the fringe of the jungle. Razadarit cried " Wouldn't the Burmese troops suffer defeat in my hands ! " The royal brahmin then made his prediction that this time his victory would be four times greater than that of the past war. The king rewarded him with a golden bowl weighing one viss (1.633 kg or 3.6 lb) but the brahmin refused it saying that for predicting such a resounding victory the reward should be much more. Razadarit told him to take the reward now and he would reward him again when success was his. Mahathamun was also rewarded with a young male elephant and two pairs of bracelets for being prescient. At this, Indazeit, who was a habitual jester said that those who had served their lord with unrelenting diligence did not get any reward while a zany noble whose maunderings accidentally came true received rewards. The king said that Mahathamun had been rewarded because he had spoken out on military affairs which consequently proved to be sound and that he was prepared to reward lavishly all nobles who fought hard in the coming battles. Then he raised his arm in defiance of the enemy. He also had a stockade built in Arnan as a ration dump because provisions were running low in the city.

Meanwhile Minhkaung was stockading himself in Byat Lan. On that day Razadarit was in Arnan. Deinmaniyut and Byat Za proposed that he should not stay there as the stockade there was not too strong and the Ava horde was too close but should retire for the night in the city and then move to Kyat Paw Taw at dawn. The king conceded that their advice was sound but that there was no chance of the Burmese king defeating him and after the nobles had ceremoniously sworn their fealty feted them with food and drink. To this

assemblage he pronounced the order of the day thus , " My scouts have reported that the Burmese king has come with massive hordes including elephantry and cavalry. I am only concerned that you might be apprehensive at this news. As for me I am jubilant at this news. Years ago when I had only one fighting elephant named Adarung, Samim Maru had Byu Ba Ko, the ultimate of fighting elephants belonging to my father. His generals and nobles were also mounted on elephants of fine mettle. I went forth to meet them but Smim Maru fled so that I missed the chance of jousting on elephants. Then when Min Swe's father Minkyiswa(sawke) mounted a campaign against me, I thought of it another chance coming my way but he fled and I was denied a chance to joust on elephants. When Thanlaik of Wun rebelled against me too I missed the chance because he died at the hands of my vassal, Saw Bya. When I marched against Than Byat who rebelled against me, he came out riding an elephant but Saw Nu Thein intercepted him before he could reach me so that I lost that chance too. When Minkyiswasawke marched against me again I rode into the Hmawbi stockade on my elephant Bye Lapoun but the Burmese ran away so that I won without taking part in a fight on elephants.

When the governor of Martaban, E Bya rebelled, I marched against him but there too he fled on a fast dragon boat. The only chance to joust on elephants was given me by Byi Nwe, son of Laukpya the governor of Myaungmya. I won that too but it does not count because in reality he was only one of my vassals. When I was besieging Prome too, Minkhaung came to its aid, but he sued for peace so that I lost a chance there too. He ran away at Pankyaw too. Now that he has come with a very large force it makes me overjoyed at the prospect of having to fight on elephants. The army directly under my command has thirty elephantry and forty thousand troops, my son-in law Upakaung commands a force of five fighting elephants and five thousand troops, he is deployed to my right. On my left is Byat Za with thirty elephants and ten regiments ten thousand strong. My rearguard has eighty elephants and ten thousand troops. Even if my antagonist, the other monarch may have three or four sub-kings that wear the white umbrella of kingship, one to two thousand elephantry, a hundred to two hundred troops under him, this will not deter me from my resolve to fight him. Minhkaung has only three to four hundred elephants and over a hundred thousand troops. Why should I care ? I will move over to Kyat Paw Taw tomorrow where Minhkaung may either attack my stockaded army or city. Whatever may be his move I will meet him on my elephant. Just watch, if he does not come and attack me within the next three or four days I will go and fight him. "

Meanwhile Minhkaung had learnt from three captured Talaings that Razadarit was in the stockade at Arnan and marched with a large force of elephantry from his Byat Lan stockade. When this news reached Arnan, Razadarit was still sleeping off the effects of last night's revelry and he did not get up though it was long after sun-up. Elephants were caparisoned, horses were saddled up

and troops deployed in readiness to meet the enemy, but not even Deinmaniyut and Byat Za dared to wake up the king. Only at the last possible moment, Smim E Bye Raye was given the task of waking up the king. On waking up Razadarit viewed the enemy drawn up in battle order and pronounced that he was going ahead to attack the enemy before they had the time to fortify themselves well. He ordered Deinmaniyut and Byat Za to see to the deployment of his troops and sent instructions to Re Thin Ran that his garrison troops were to mount the battlements and stay on alert. He had the men tear down the frontage of his stockade and fill up the ditch that had been dug up as part of the defensive works.

He placed Lagunein and Upakaung with fifty elephantry and thirty thousand warriors on his wings. He then sent the mandarin Mahathamun to ask Minhkaung where he would like the attack to take place.

Minhkaung sent back word with Mahathamun that he was ready and that Razadarit was free to chose any place that he might wish to mount an assault.

Razadarit confided his plan to Byat Za saying "When I launch the attack the Burmese army will be routed. Unlike the past encounter Minhkaung has deployed his troops to give him good support. Therefore I will launch my assault at no one other than Minhkaung himself. When he is defeated the rest will no longer stand fast." The general agreed that this was the best strategy.

Letting out a bttle cry, Razadarit charged his elephant straight at Minhkaung which the latter tried to meet but could not withstand so that he had to turn away using his goad. Only the hardy and the hardened escaped which was about only two thirds and the rest of the elephantry, cavalry, troops and womenfolk accompanying them were captured.

At that time Prince Minrekyawswa, son of King Minhkaung was 17 years old. The prince said, " My father had marched forth with massed troops of warriors, elephantry and cavalry to wage war but he had been defeated and part of his forces fallen into the enemy's hands in every campaign. My mother and sister had also fallen into the hands of the enemy during these campaigns. Therefore if the Lord of the Golden Palace cannot wage a successful campaign against the Talaing king, let him enjoy the pleasures of his golden palace while I will become the scourge of the Talaings and eat them alive in the manner of a raging crocodile or a savage Porisāda.⁵⁰ " He then had many war boats and high-tailed war canoes built.

Minrekyawswa sailed off with his fleet of war boats on 768 M.E (1406 A.D).

Meanwhile, a spy in the employ of Razadarit had heard of Minrekyawswa's proclamation that he had taken the title of the man-eater Porisada and was making preparations to mount a campaign and had reported the matter to the king. On hearing this Razadarit announced that if Minrekyawswa had proclaimed himself as Porisada, he, Razadarit would be Sit-ta-sum⁵¹ and would chastise the young Burmese prince. He took the name of Binnya Sit-ta-sum. Minrekyawswa's fleet consisted of seventy warboats with seven large warboats each 25 to 26 *lam* (150-156 feet) in length, 300 high-sterned warcanoes, 700 plank-hulled boats accompanied by a host of supply boats. There were altogether a total of 70,000 men in five armies, with an army each under the command of Minrekyawswa, the Governor of Prome Letyapyanchi, the Governor of Salin, Nawratha, the Governor of Badon and the Governor of Pahkan. They attacked Myaungmya which was then held by General Byat Za who had also stockaded Deypathwe and installed thirty nobles to hold it. Deypathwe was overwhelmed. When reports that the Shans from Chieng-mai were coming, Razadarit reinforced Myaungmya and sent a message to Byat Za to hold it securely. Minrekyawswa launched an assault against the Myaungmya stockade with his crocodile warboat named "Iron " and flattened the posts creating a breach 30 to 40 feet wide. However, it was attacked by enemy boats when it entered the breach and was stranded when the tide went out. Byat Za had his men board the warboat to pry off the silver caps on the crocodilian teeth.

The men on the crocodile warboat being attacked from every angle could not prevent that. Neither could they burn their boat and abandon it as although it was not afloat, its hull was partly submerged. Minrekyawswa on his elephant Nga Chit Khaing led an assault with 20,000 Shan troops but Byat Za sallied out with select cavalry and elephantry which numbered five to six thousand, leaving his marines to secure the riverine approaches to the stockade. Byat Za then deployed his forces in the cover of the jungle. When Minrekyawswa

⁵⁰ cannibal in Pali

⁵¹ a Mon adaptation of the name of Sutasoma, who converted a porisāda or cannibal as related in the Mahāsuta-soma Jataka; Jataka No. 537

approached them his force was ambushed and he lost a good number of his men.

The ambushing forces even came within striking distance of Minrekyawswa himself who had to check his advance. "When even the Lord of the Golden Palace tries to evade a confrontation with me," exulted Byat Za "who is this whippersnapper of a prince with snot still on his face to behave like a rampaging bull against me?" Meanwhile Minrekyawswa had learnt that Byat Za "Elder Brother to the King," was holding the town and he said, "If it my elder uncle who is holding this town I am not going to attack it," and so saying broke off the attack. Byat Za returned to the city and addressed the assembled nobles and citizenry thus "Minrekyawswa is a prince of imperial descent and has come with a force of ten thousand to battle us. What are we, mere nobles who are but captives held for ransom, to do in this situation? It must not be allowed to become one in which I as a general could be faulted for not perceiving the right tactic to employ in such a situation." He then had two bolts of full-length material for robes, a golden bowl and the silver caps taken from the teeth of the crocodile warboat sent to Minrekyawswa with the message that his marines had defaced the warboat only because they had not known that the son of the Lord of the Golden Palace rode on it. Minrekyawswa in reply said, "Let it be conveyed to my elder uncle that the town deserved to be sacked for defacing my cherished warboat but since it was being governed by my Royal Elder Uncle, I will leave it in peace and will be heading for Bassein instead." Byat Za's courier was amply rewarded. When the tide came in the warboat was towed out with five high-sterned long canoes.

Talamipaik, wife of the general came to offer a sumptuous array of delicacies to the prince who took off his ring and presented it to her. He then marched on to Bassein which was held by Deinmaniyut. Failing to take it, Minrekyawswa proceeded to Khepaung which was held by Smim Thangye who defended the town tenaciously. Failing to take this too, he returned home. On 69 M.E (1407 AD) Minrekyawswa marched to Arakan and took it. The Arakanese king Naramekhla fled. The Governor of Myedu was given the charge of garrisoning the Arakanese city. At Sandoway, Sokkate was given that task and Minrekyawswa returned to Ava.

When this news reached Razadarit, he sent a task force consisting of thirty elephant and twenty thousand troops commanded by Bya Paik and E Gaungpein. When this task force reached Sandoway, its governor withdrew to join forces with the garrison at the Arakanese capital and these developments were reported to Minrekyawswa. Meanwhile the defences of Sandoway had been repaired and improved so that when Minrekyawswa returned to attack it three or four attempts made on it ended in failure. Casualties mounted so that the besieging troops were installed in stockades

ringing the town. Bya Paik sent parties at night to set fire to these stockades for a total of nine times so that they had to be repaired or rebuilt and secured assiduously. Meanwhile provisions ran low in the besieged town and there were murmurings that although reports had been sent to the king, reinforcements were not coming so that they would soon be facing famine. At that point the commander Bya Paik announced that he would, by means of a stratagem make Minrekyawswa withdraw and outlined his plan thus, "I will compose a letter in the manner of a directive from the king which will be placed in a cylindrical container together with letters from our families and small gifts such as snacks and delicacies which will be carried out during the night by a small party that will then let the Burmese sentries see them as if they had come from Pegu and were now trying to get into Sandoway. On being pursued by the Burmese, they will then pretend as if they were near capture when they are to shed their packs and then dash into our town. When the contents of their packs are reported to Minrekyawswa, he will think that reinforcements are coming and will withdraw forthwith." His plan was resoundingly supported by his men.

He composed a letter which ran as follows "Bya Paik and E Gaungpein to whom King Razadarit give this command - It has reached my ears that Minrekyawswa has come to attack you but that, as a result of your defence he has sustained losses, forcing him to besiege you from stockades erected a good distance from your defences. It has also come to my notice that you have raided these and set them on fire. I have benefited from having enobled you and raised you to high offices. You have done your duty. I am now coming to your aid with land and riverine forces to Uyinpu while General Byat Za and Deinmaniyut will advance with their troops from Bassein and Myaungmya taking the Linpate route and Baikamyin and his troops from Martaban will be bringing you supplies in seventy dragon boats. If Minrekyawswa discovers my move and withdraws, keep him engaged so that he cannot withdraw, if he withdraws before you can engage him pursue him up to Prome and try to capture as many elephantry, cavalry and troops as you can. Letters and food parcels from your wives accompany my orders to you." This was placed in a cylindrical case together with the food parcels and carrying packs of clothes and such a small party of men went out in the night behind enemy lines to turn back at dawn as if they had come from the direction of Pegu.

As they were pursued by the Burmese sentries, they took off their packs and burdens as if they were fleeing for their lives and ran into Sandoway. Their packs and burdens were duly taken to Minrekyawswa who, on examining their contents found that apparently he would be caught between the fortified town and reinforcements. He concluded that to fight the Talaing king would be a better proposition than engaging one of his minions and withdrew from Sandoway to meet what he thought was Razadarit who would be coming his way. Three or four days later 12 dragon boats under the command of

Baikamyin reached Sandoway.

The troops were well fed again. Of the two commanders E Gaungpein said he would return home. Bya Paik however, said that "We ate our leather shields and helmets during the time we ran out of rations and defended the town. Now that we are well fed again thanks to provisions sent by our lord, we will take the city of Arakan and place Naramaikhla back on the throne." This recommendation was accepted by the majority with the result that they headed for this objective.

The governor of Myedu in the Arakanese city had meanwhile heard that Minrekyawswa had left Sandoway as his attempts to take it had failed. He was therefore chary of having to face the same fate as Garmani had. He left. The two commanders therefore had no trouble in entering the city and taking over the territory up to shrine of the Great Image of Arakan. They then submitted this report to the king. "Your Lordship, mighty king to whose royal feet your minions Bya Paik and E Gaung Pein make the act of obeisance thrice from the lowly ground, we make this report. While we took Sandoway and had ensconced ourselves in it Minrekyawswa came and attacked us but withdrew when his attacks failed. We then marched to the Arakanese city where the governor of Myedu fled as he was afraid to face us and we now report that the city is in our hands." Razadarit was jubilant "This young stripling of a Burmese prince whose face is still smeared with snot tries to sound mightily defiant but his father has repeatedly failed against me and now he himself failed to take Sandoway which was held by my vassals. Now that they have taken Arakan from the governor of Myedu who was holding it, I will now take Prome which is held by the son-in-law of Laukpya, who rebelled against me and now owes his fealty to Min Swe".

He then mobilized a large force of infantry, cavalry and elephantry.

In the year 770 M.E. (1408 A.D) on the 5th waxing day of the month of Nadaw, Razadarit marched with his land and riverine forces towards Prome. Meanwhile Hsenwi had marched against Ava so that Minrekyawswa had left Ava to head off this menace. At Prome, Letya Pyanchi, Laukpya's son-in-law held off two or three assaults made by Razadarit who then laid siege to it. After a month or so had passed, Deinmaniyut came from Pegu to report that the governor of Kampengpek of Siam was at the gates of Moulmein and Martaban⁵². Razadarit held a conference with his commanders. General Byat Za laid out a plan in which Razadarit with himself and others under him would head for Moumein and Martaban leaving Binnya Pathein as general officer commanding & E Bya Re as troop commander of a force which would leave Prome to be deployed at Thalesi, which would then be named Banares. This was to prevent supplies transported by the riverine route from getting into Prome, for although it would be impossible to block off supplies carried by

⁵² The Saimese raided only Ye, a town under Martaban, according to the Glass Palace Chronicle.

porters from reaching the besieged town, it was felt that the latter means of resupply would not be adequate for Prome. To continue with the siege of Prome was not advisable, he said, as without the king himself, they could be easily cut off by reinforcements coming in, while the attack on Prome could be resumed later after the king had dealt with the other business.

Razadarit approved this plan and Thalesi was duly named Banares and Binnya Pathein and his command installed in its stockade. After attending to this, Razadarit and the main force left for Pegu. From Pegu he headed for Martaban.

When these developments reached the ears of King Minkhaung, he marched towards Prome and once near, stockaded himself at Nawin. Thus he was able to bring down supplies by means of boats and get them into Prome. Binnya Pathein meanwhile stayed on in his stockaded position. After King Minkhaung had been in Prome for a month or so, Minrekyawswa, having defeated Hsenwi cruised downstream with a fleet of twenty warboats with figures of crocodile, rhinoceros, buffalo and horse featured on some of them. These were escorted by a flotilla of two hundred high-sterned canoes and followed by four hundred barges. Four days after reaching Prome, Minrekyawswa deplored the static situation and urged his father to attack the Talaing stockade with all the available riverine forces under him saying that things would become difficult once enemy reinforcements arrived. Minrekyawswa himself went upstream as far as Karma to ferry his land forces across and then deployed them north of the Thalesi stockade where the defences seemed to be rather weak.

Meanwhile King Minkhaung had crossed the river and had deployed his forces on the remaining three sides. Minrekyawswa riding his war elephant, mounted a furious assault from the north. Caturangathu, son of the prince's nurse and his lieutenant, was mounted on a pony and made sure that the momentum of the charge was maintained. On the side of the defenders also, discipline was maintained by the bared sword to keep the battlements well-manned. Musket balls, bolts and arrows rained down on Burmese soldiery forcing their way across the moat and there were about one to two hundred casualties. The Governor of Pakhan, with a retinue of five hundred bearing shields, swords and three lances each escorting his war elephant crossed the moat and rammed the stockade walls making a breach of about seventy feet and bringing down the enemy manning the ramparts. As he charged in, he was met by Upakaung on his elephant and the result of this encounter was that Pakhan's elephant was felled and he had to flee, his elephant dying later. The charge was repulsed with the attackers sustaining two to three hundred killed in action.

Upakaung on his elephant, stationed himself at the approach to the moat while Nyi Gaung Thein and Smim Thamlaik were behind him in the moat with six to

seven hundred troops. E Bya Re himself took a pick and led his men in putting up the felled fencing posts and this job was completed in the time taken to cook a pot of rice⁵³. When the attackers saw this they were struck with wonder. Minrekyawswa made two or three more charges but every charge was repulsed by Upakaung who fought either mounted on elephant or horse or on foot. Upakaung distinguished himself and ably backed by Nyi Gaung Thein and Smin Thamlaiik sallied forth time and time again to break the enemy assault. The Burmese troops had to be content with reverting to siege tactics.

The Talaing stockade was surrounded on the land while approaches from the river were blockaded. Minrekyawswa then sent a letter accompanied by a gift of ten bricks of tea to Binnya Pathein. The letter read "Elder Brother Binnya Pathein to whom Minrekyawswa, son of the Lord of the Golden Palace informs that, Upakaung, son-in-law of the Elder Brother of my father is reported by my vassals to be a dashing rider on an elephant or horse and I would be pleased to see him as he is a warrior of repute as I am a warrior prince and hope that you will allow me that pleasure."

When this letter was read out to Binnya Pathein and Upakaung, Binnya Pathein sent back word that since Upakaung was under the command of E Bya Re, this matter should be addressed to him. Minrekyawswa again sent couriers with bolts of Chinese fabric, ten for Binnya Pathein and five for E Bya Re with the same request. To this, E Bya Re replied that although Upakaung was under his command, he was also the son-in-law of Razadarit and as such he was obliged to see to his safety as much as he was also obliged to listen to the request of a prince and son of an emperor. Later when he received assurances that Minrekyawswa would vouch for his safety and that he just wanted to see him personally, he consented.

On the appointed day, Upakaung arrived at Minrekyawswa's stockade in the attire of a warrior and riding a horse. A high-sterned canoe fit for royalty was sent out for him. Upakaung respectfully presented gifts to Minrekyawswa who accepted them and later bade him bare his torso and parade before his eyes. The prince then remarked that he had observed his movements and these truly reflected the stance of a distinguished warrior. Upakaung submitted that his prowess as a warrior should be demonstrated in tournaments, on elephants, horse or on foot, so that the prince might appreciate his ability. To this Minrekyawswa replied that he had called for him just out of love and if he were to arrange a joust between Upakaung and his men, Razadarit might assume that he, Minrekyawswa had made use of deception. He urged Upakaung to serve under him promising him to elevate him to a status no less than that of the governor of Prome if he agreed to do so. Upakaung replied that he was a true vassal of Razadarit and he found no cause to go and live in the country of Burmans. On hearing this Mirekyawswa remarked that he

⁵³ that is about thirty minutes

oke well for his liege lord and for this he admired him. There would be any more battles to be fought between him and Razadarit, he said, but he could not harm Upakaung should he meet him in such an encounter although there was a chance that he might be hurt seriously by others. Upakaung replied that being a noble and a warrior there was no chance that he would be taken alive in battle. Minrekyawswa smiled on hearing this and gave him a ruby ring, a bracelet set with rubies, a gilt saddle and harness, Chinese fabric of good quality and covering for a water goglet.

Upakaung left and on reaching his camp reported every word of these verbal exchanges and showed all the presents he received from the prince to Bunnya Pathein and the assembled nobles.

After four months had passed and famine stalked the Talaing camp, Razadarit sent a force led by Dala Chit Thin, son of Binnya Pathein, with provisions. His convoy was ambushed at Tarokmaw by the Burmese who captured all the supply boats. Razadarit then said he would himself lead a relieving force but was dissuaded by the court Brahmins on account of unfavourable omens. Then a message arrived from Binnya Pathein beseeching the king to come to their relief as they were in the imminent danger of falling into the enemy's hands. This hardened his resolve to march forth and collecting a force he moved off. As he struck camp at Kala Aing near Dala while waiting for the rest to catch up with him, Brahmins from Dala submitted their findings which predicted that if he stayed on at the river port of Kala Aing, he would lose his son-in-law and the battle as well, while should he camp at Myi Taloun his son-in-law would be spared although he would still lose the battle. The king therefore moved on to Myi Taloun where he had to wait ten days for the rest of his force to catch up with him. Byat Za arrived from Myaungmya but the old general was ill and when Razadarit visited his barge, he had to be helped by others to be able to sit after a style. The king urged the general to look after his health but Byat Za replied that he was too ill and he feared that he would soon be leaving his beloved lord and master. The king moaned that should he leave him there would be no one to turn to for sound counsel especially at this time when his son was being besieged by Min Swe. Then both of them wept. The king then gave a golden bowl to Tharada urging him to see to it that the general recovered from his illness. Lagunein then visited the ailing general and wept on seeing Byat Za who was also moved to tears again. Byat Za said that his illness would soon take him away from his comrades and that he feared for their sake in the coming battles. When Lagunein asked why, the general replied that with himself no longer there, the king would have to depend mainly on Lagunein and Awananaing in battle and since the king was under an ill omen for that year and was here only on account of his son-in-law being under siege, he would like them to be mindful of the fact that the present conditions could not be like what had been in the past and would like to remind them not to act capriciously as in the

past. "Minrekyawswa is a brave and young prince," he continued " he has vast forces under him, so that when King Razadarit reaches the scene he would probably lift the siege which might make the king to withdraw as he is under inauspicious astrological influences and that would be when you and Awananaing should see to it that nothing untoward happens that would wreck this campaign." Lagunein paid obeisance to the old general and left. The march was resumed three days later and the force had reached Hsamalauk -Thamathat when Byat Za died. The king was aggrieved deeply and he returned with the nobles to hold the funeral ceremony.

When Razadarit reached Prome, the besieging forces withdrew to Karma while Minkhaung crossed the river back to Prome. Smim E Bya Re and the nobles gathered at the feet of their king. The king asked his son-in-law and Smim E Bya Re what the Burmese forces were like and was told that they were a vast horde which was far greater in strength than the previous ones. The next day at dawn Minrekyawswa crossed over to Nga Nat Taw and sent couriers to Radazarit with the following message "We'll fight when your troops have had a rest but meanwhile we'll hold a duel between our warboats to help pass the time." As this was read out, Razadarit looked at his nobles but they stayed silent with heads bowed in the posture of paying obeisance. Then Lagunein kowtowed three times and announced that he would meet any man in the world on horse, elephant or boat in battle as the king could bear the witness. Thus the challenge was taken and the king gave the reply that the duel be held on the next day. When this was reported to Minrekyawswa together with Lagunein's words, he said " Byat Za and Lagunein are Razadarit's stalwarts in battle. Now that Byat Za is said to have died, Lagunein shall now fall into my hands. Can numerical superiority be said to be decisive factor in war? Success is above all! Lagunein might win in a one-to-one fight, but can he fight against four ? " He then had four stout warboats prepared. The warboat named "Wondrous " was captained by Sokkate, another named "Grand Matriarch, " was captained by Min Sithu, Governor of Myinsaing, another named "Shan Talaing, " by Caturangathu⁴. The warboats were manned by warriors known for their integrity and for being experts with lances and javelins. The glint of gold in their swords, shields and targets were accompanied by the sound of gongs and bugles. "The Wondrous", made more impressive by the white umbrella mounted on her was the ostensible combatant but the other three were kept well hidden. Razadarit gave Lagunein the warboat "Maru Smim Bre, " but Smim Avananaing objected saying that since this duel was not going to be the decisive battle the best of the warboats should be reserved for future engagements. Razadarit then gave Smim Laukshein's warboat "Rekanet Abar" but Lagunein did not want it as it was

⁴ The last boat and its commander is unnamed here, but the name " Mother of Many Sons, " captained by Min Sithu is mentioned later and there seems to be some confusion in the names. *Hman Nan* (The Glass Palace Chronicle) and Nai Pan Hla's version says that " Mother of Many Sons, " was captained by Uzana.

making in too much water. Razadarit replied that he did not want to risk the loss of Maru Samim Bre as however remote, there was the chance that the duel could be lost. Lagunein reasoned that if he won the king could proceed to the gates of Ava while if he lost the king could retire to Pegu but that in any event he could not see anyone who was fit to take command of that boat. Then he wept and the king also wept so that the nobles were much discomfited at the spectacle.

Lagunein, turbaned and suited in red, with rings on all his fingers, a ruby bracelet on each wrist and wearing his amulet of boar tusks mounted the crocodile warboat 126 feet long with three hundred armed warriors under his command. After making the gesture of paying obeisance to the king, his warboat turned upstream with a flourish of drums and gongs. Further upstream, Minrekyawswa waved a kerchief and on that signal "The Wondrous," floated down serenely, with white umbrella spread majestically and accompanied by the booming of drums and gongs. When the combatants drew alongside each other the Wondrous stood about three feet above the crocodile warboat so that Lagunein had grappling irons put across. At that moment, the warboat "Mother of Many Sons" joined in. About two thousand strong cavalry lined the riverbank on the side of Prome. The two-against-one battle went for a long time and then The Great Matriarch and Shan-Talaing joined in. Eventually two to three hundred of Lagunein's men were pitched overboard and killed but although Lagunein still fought on his warboat was bowled off by the four Burmese warboats. Razadarit took in the scene but did not send reinforcements because he feared that his forces might fall into disarray. Only then did the Burmese board Lagunein's warboat and in the fighting that followed at close quarters Lagunein was wounded by a lance in the groin. Minrekyawswa shouted out a warning to his men not to kill him. This incident was also reported to king Minkhaung who faulted his son for everely wounding a warrior, especially the one because of who he had escaped from a trap at Pankyaw. Minrekyawswa boarded Lagunein's warboat and parting the curtains asked the wounded warrior whether he would like to do something.

Lagunein denied the offer saying that he would only eat the rice given by his lord and not another's. Minrekyawswa then offered him betel which he accepted with some water. Minrekyawswa gave him betel from his own betel box and his goglet of water. After Lagunein had drunk some water and eaten betel he allowed that in order to repay the prince for his kindness he would like to offer a piece of advice. His advice was to the prince was that he should never meet Razadarit in single-combat either on elephant, horse or boat as the king was an expert rider and his personal guards of thirty each on his left and right side were all relatives, fearless of anyone and as ferocious as ogres. Should the prince chose to disregard his advice, he continued, he would like the nobles to note it well as his words would be vindicated should they meet

him in the future. Minrekyawswa remarked that Lagunein was like a venomous snake whose fangs can inflict a fatal wound even after dying and left Lagunein who died of his wounds around midnight.

Lagunein's death was duly reported to King Minkhaung who gave an order to float his remains downstream towards his master. A raft was made from banana tree trunks on which the corpse was placed and covered with a white shroud and it was lit by a torch stuck into raft near the head. When Razadarit saw the raft floating down he recognized it for what it was and had a boat retrieve it. Brought alongside his barge the king removed the shroud and touching his face with the face of his fallen warrior wept. He deplored this loss coming on top of Byat Za's death and moaned that he was now an elephant with both tusks gone.

Lagunein's remains were cremated. After that the king summoned Smim Awananaing and ordered him to command the rearguard. The withdrawal by both land and river began before dusk but the stockades were set on fire by the rearguard long after the withdrawal had begun. This was reported to Minrekyawswa who gave pursuit with warboats, high-sterned canoes, clinker-built boats altogether numbering about two thousand. The pursuing force was attacked by Smim Awananaing who was lying in wait for them at Tarokmaw and about four high-sterned boats in the van were sunk. Minrekyawswa on the Wondrous then caught up and entered the fray, destroying four warboats and sinking ten high-sterned boats belonging to the enemy. Smim Awananaing himself had to flee on a high-sterned canoe. Nyi Gaung Thein and E Nare also fell in that encounter and their side suffered about a thousand casualties in all. Razadarit was much unhappy at the turn of events. He summoned E Bya Re and ordered him to see that there was no hitch in the withdrawals by land and by river; that only the rearguard which was to be made up of select personnel was to fight a delaying action, taking to the jungle during daytime. He then summoned the Governor of Linpate and told him that the shortest route should be taken and advised him not to allow any straggling. He also awarded him. The king then resumed his journey downriver during the night.

At dawn he summoned Thamlaik and told him that now that Mathauk and Mathaloun were gone he would have to take their place. He entrusted him the task of keeping Mirekyawswa away from him and gave him the command of the warboat Maru Smim Bre and the gift of a gold betel receptacle. Thamlaik shouted with bravado and with the warboat manned by three thousand warriors took up the rearguard. He was assisted by Upakaung, Saw Shamkhat, Lauknare and Emuntaya. Smim Awananaing with a fleet of ten warboats and over a hundred high-sterned boats and clinker-built boats also took up the rear. As Minrekyawswa caught up with this fleet, he led the attack on Maru Smim Bre with a couple of crocodile warboats and the warboat, Mother of Sons. Thamlaik however kept the attackers at bay by throwing pots

filled with nightsoil at them. Minrekyawswa hailed the warboat asking who the commander was and was told that Thamlaik was in command. Thamlaik volunteered that Razadarit was not far ahead and that he had loitered behind because he wanted to come over to Minrekyaswa's side. If an attempt were to take his boat he was prepared to die fighting, he continued, but as he would be coming over to his side, it would be much better to leave him behind and press on with the pursuit. This interchange took some time and finally Minrekyawswa decided that since Thamlaik would fall into hands anyhow it would be better to press on after Razadarit. The rest of the flotilla followed him. When the last of the Burmese flotilla had passed him, Thamlaik and his men climbed ashore, abandoning the warboat after scuttling it at the mouth of the Ngawun River. Later, when it was evident that it would not be possible to catch up with Razadarit, Minrekyawswa abandoned his pursuit to deal with Thamlaik.

He waited in vain however, and when he eventually learnt what had transpired, he had to strike camp nearby, ruefully naming the spot "Hsapaka."

Three days later his father joined him and a conference was held aboard the king's barge. Minrekyawswa remarked that Razadarit's nimbleness in running away was so remarkable for an old man that even he, a young man, could not catch him. In the discussions on what should be done next, most of the nobles were for turning back, their reason being that for one thing they have been victorious and pursuing Razadarit up to Dala would be entering his stronghold from where it might be difficult to turn back if there was need to do so. Then Minrekyawswa turned to Letyar Pyanchi, the Governor of Prome and asked him what his opinion was. Letyar Pyanchi's opinion was that they could not be deterred even should they continue their pursuit to Pegu, to say nothing of advancing up to Dala. Then the Governor of Myedu objected, saying that the enemy could stockade both banks of the stream at Dala in which case, attacking the fortified town would mean running through this gauntlet and if the assault was not successful they would have to retire against the current. Letyar Pyanchi countered that when they had been defeated at Pankyaw, Razadarit could have chased them back right up to Ava where he would have found that there was not even one there to close the city's gates. The situation is reversed now, he continued, Dala will be unprepared and should it be rigorously defended as Myedu had envisaged, they could kill him there and turn back to Ava.

Minrekyawswa was delighted and took the ruby bracelet from his wrist and awarded Letyar Pyanchi with it. He submitted if the king would heed the advice of the rest of nobles he could retire with the rest for Ava, while he and the Governor of Prome would go after Razadarit to Dala. The conference ended with the king letting his son have his way and the advance to Dala was made. Meanwhile Razadarit had appointed Smim Awananaing to defend Dala

and the defensive works as predicted by Myedu were begun. Razadarit then left for Bago.

However, King Minkhaung approached Dala before the defensive works were completed so that it was easily taken. Razadarit had all boats removed to Panpadaw by means of Kalinraw creek. Meanwhile Myedu was installed in Dala and King Minkhaung advanced to Dagon took it and stockaded it. Minrekyawswa meanwhile had stockaded himself at Kyaik Dasum. Syriam was attacked and won, and the governor of Pakhan put in charge there. Letya Pyanchi was told to take Hmawbi and he was reconnoitring the objective when he was hit in the thigh by a poisoned arrow. He had to be taken back to Dagon and as his condition grew worse he was taken back to Prome but died on the way.

King Minkhaung stayed on at Dagon during the whole monsoon season, bringing down provisions from Ava. As a result lands west of the river excepting Bassein, Myaungmya and Khepaung were not put under rice cultivation. Captives were captured and sent back to Ava. As Hmawbi was not very secure, Razadarit had Paungnin stockaded and installed Upakaung in it together with Princess Talamikaungsaw. Razadarit stayed at Khmerbyin protected by a stockade. Deinmaniyut came to him and submitted his opinion that they should look for an ally as once the monsoon was over and the weather favourable for elephantry and cavalry Minkhaung would begin his advance against Pegu. When the king asked what he had in his mind for an ally, Deinmaniyut suggested that Hsenwi could be their ally as the Shan Chief of Hsenwi and the Burmese King were often at war.

Accordingly, Khonmaing was sent with five young male elephants and seven ass of gold as presents to Hsenwi. Khonmaing left by the Chiengmai route.

At Dagon, where Minkhaung was staying the Dewis stream was bridged and decked with planking for horses. When the bridge was finished, astrologers presented Minrekyawswa with a prediction stating that if he marched against Pegu in the month of Nayon (May-June), the city would be his. Minrekyawswa relayed the letter containing the prediction to his father who scoffed that the words of astrologers were just crazed rantings; that being able to deploy elephantry and cavalry was much more important as the monsoon rains has made it difficult for manoeuvres; that the Talaing king had only suffered a loss not more than a score of his nobles during his defeat. Minrekyawswa however did not agree with his father's view and taking his trusted lieutenants and about a thousand select cavalry troops marched off for Pegu. He had struck camp along the way at Haunglam, when the chief of Narwebon, Baiknye heard this news and left with four to five hundred cavalry to Khmerbyin to inform Razadarit. His move was observed by the cavalry contingent in the van and about three hundred troops began to give chase. They were however stopped by Baiknye who mounted an elephant and

counterattacked. When Baiknye made his report later, Razadarit was morose and hugged his knees dejectedly.

He then turned to Yokarat “, Do you know my predicament you imbecile of a Mon ? I was only sixteen when I knew of a plot against my life and at the bidding of gods started looking for supporters. When I had recruited about twenty or thirty I went down to Dagon and rebelled. Then I was hemmed in on three sides by Smim Maru, Laukpya and Baik Kamyin but I negotiated with them successfully. As I ascended the throne in Pegu, Laukpya brought the Burmese king’s armies against me but I jousting successfully on my elephant twice and brought off victory although I was numerically inferior. At the town of Wun I duelled twice on my elephant and won. At Lagunbyi I won a joust on my elephant too. It was the same at Myaunmya when I defeated Byi Nwe on a duel with elephants. Only after that did I gain suzerainty over all the three territories ruled by my father Hsinbyushin. All my three sons are useless and not at all like me. The Burmese king however has a son who invades my realm and shows his might.” To this Yokarat said “, Our mighty king and we his vassals do not fear even ogres to say nothing about mortals and we are all united behind our mighty king”. But Razadarit was not mollified, “ Is it natural for sons and grandsons of royalty to do nothing while their vassals do the fighting? If they have martial prowess their vassals will likewise have it. Is it right if the vassals are the only ones that have martial expertise ?” This was reported by Yokarat to the princes later. To this Binnya Kyan only commented that he would not argue about the merits of king’s remarks. However Yokarat insisted that they should speak out their minds to their father and later Binnya Kyan finally said to the king before an assemblage of nobles, “You praise the Burmese prince but you might also notice that he is given command of the nobles and troops while we are not even given fifty vassals to command. Give me ten elephants, ten nobles in the elephantry and I will go and fight the Burmese prince. May I win if it is my fate to be the patron to nurture the teachings of the Buddha in Hanthawaddy or else if I lose and die in the process take it as repayment of your beneficence”. At this Razadarit remarked that he had thought when Binnya Kyan was a boy that he would grow up to be like him. He took his ring from his finger and gave it to Binnya Kyan as a reward. The prince then mounted the elephant Bye Lapoun and was given four thousand troops, ten nobles in the elephantry and ten war elephants. Binnya Dhammaraza also spoke up in like manner and he was given command of a similar force. Razadarit advised him not to follow his younger brother’s route but to take the enemy from the right flank in coordination with his brother’s attack. Binnya Pathein then volunteered and he was also given a similar force and to attack from Binnya Kyan’s left. Thus the three princes had a total of ten thousand troops, and thirty elephants while Minrekyawswa had only cavalry and neither infantry or elephantry. Minrekyawswa had camped in a monastery and his men begged some rice from the monks to

prepare a meal for the prince. After he had his meal, Minrekyawswa asked a monk in which direction Pegu lay and the monk pointed out to the Mawdaw stupa and told him that was where Pegu was. At that point the prince saw Binnya Kyan's column and sent Nga Min Hla to investigate. When he came back and reported that it was Binnya Kyan's column, Minrekyawswa announced that what could Binnya Kyan do when even Razadarit could not face him and sallied out with the cavalry. Yokarat's nephew Ma Baik on an elephant saw this development and reported it to Binnya Kyan. When the elephantry troops heard the sound of saddlery, they turned back and as Minrekyawswa pursued them the elephants turned back too. At this Binnya Kyan charged and felled four or five horsemen. In this melee the infantry supporting the war elephants had a chance to fell about ten more horsemen while the cavalry was able to inflict wounds on Binnya Kyan's elephant in ten places. At this point Binnya Dhammaraza caught up and coming in from the right flank pushed the cavalry off balance and on being attacked by Binnya Patheingyi from the left the horsemen had to retreat. Then with thirty war elephants as spearhead the two cavalry columns were crushed and sent fleeing to regroup later at the Haunglam stockade. Minrekyawswa headed for Zarwebon.

Meanwhile King Minhkaung felt uneasy because Minrekyawswa had taken only cavalry with him and dispatched a riverine force to report developments. The sounds of drums and gongs from this force led the three princes to believe that King Minhkaung was coming and not daring to advance further bivouacked at Kyin Palwe. The ten heads taken from the Burmese cavalymen were presented to the king. The Burmese cavalry had in the meantime encamped at Maw Natsha and Minrekyawswa on his way to Zarwebon missed three meals. When it was heard that he was at Izzani, the governor of Pakhan came to meet him and they eventually met after passing Pansaung from whence they went to Syriam.

Sri Byat Kaman, under the command of Binnya Dhammaraza was going to give his elephant, Gandha a soak in a stream when it spied the Burmese cavalry at Maw Natsha on the other bank and being in musth charged at them. As Sri Byat Kaman was unable to control his elephant, it crossed the stream and it butted the stockade bringing down some of the posts. Seeing this Binnyaraza and his troops crossed the stream and was able to set fire to the stockade. The Burmese troops had to flee to the boats and Binnyaraza was able to take over the stockade.

At this the Hmawbi stockade was dismantled and the material taken away to Paungnin held by Upakaung. When the king heard that he had played havoc with the Burmese cavalry the king was pleased and conferred the title Saw Ma Shet on him. Upakaung however declined as it was the name of a son-in-law of an ancient king and the title of Saw Han Kaik was given him instead. During

this period a viss (1.6 kg /3.6 lb) of copper would not buy one *toun* (equivalent to one *pyi* ie. 0.25 litre or. 07 bushel) measure of rice. Deinmaniyut was sent with 150 viss of gold in dragon boats to buy rice and rations could be distributed only on his return.

Sri Byat Kaman with Smim Bre as deputy commander, Pitpe, Laukthana, Sitkalo, Ma Lagun, Ma Mun, Ma Yogi, noble Punse, Mathin among others were sent on a mission to proceed in canoes from Ebawthakyaikup to Lagu where they were to leave the boats and then mount a night attack on Syriam. At Syriam Pakhan Tarahpya was rather careless. The Talaing force reached Lagu cove at dusk. Leaving their boats behind they reached Syriam before midnight where they caught their enemy napping. Some swarmed up ladders onto the ramparts and sent the defenders scurrying down. However, some disobeyed Sri Byat Kaman and torched the huts and the resulting blaze revealed to the defenders that the raiders were not supported by cavalry or elephants so that they rallied and put the raiders to flight.

The Burmese troops chased them and caught Ma Mun as he was climbing up from a well in a sugarcane field into which he had fallen. When he revealed that he was a warrior in the service of Razadarit he was beheaded and his head presented to the governor of Pakhan.

Sri Byat Kaman could not find the boats previously cached at Lagu and had to flee on foot. Pitpe found a boat at Mawdaw and arrived ahead of the others but the king became incensed that he should leave his commander behind and handed him over to Emuntaya to be executed. Smim Bre arrived next and when he could not tell where his commander was, he too was handed over to Emuntaya to be executed. Deinmaniyut heard of this, took charge of them and clapped them in irons. Sri Byat Kaman arrived next day and gave a full report of the action. Hearing that Ma Mun and Ma Yogi were dead the king was much saddened. Four or five days later when the king's anger had cooled, Deinmaniyut pleaded on behalf of Pitpe and Smim Bre and their sentences were remitted. During this time, Minrekyawswa had advanced to Wunge and Razadarit hearing this news remarked that if Byat Za and Lagunein were present they would have attacked him and sent him off somewhere. At this point Smim Awananaing suggested that shouldn't they collect a sizeable force and attack him. Deinmaniyut thought otherwise and his opinion was that should they attack him now with cavalry and elephantry he would summon the main force as he has cavalry only.

Since they had been on the losing side much of this time it would be difficult to hold the infantry once the battle was joined, he said. Razadarit allowed that both views were reasonable and that he would wait and see. He then took off rings from his fingers and awarded them to the two nobles.

Two or three days later Deinmaniyut again conversed with the king pointing

out how Minrekyawswa, flushed with the confidence of youth, tended to be head-strong and even defied his father's authority sometimes. He referred to Minrekyawswa's proposal to Saw Han Kaik (Upakaung) to serve under him and suggested that Saw Han Kaik be used as a bait to get Minrekyawswa. The king agreed to this and Saw Han Kaik was duly summoned. The king commented that should Saw Han Kaik be successful in this venture he would be ridding a great load from his shoulders and he would bestow the title of Brang Thamet Myar Shin and the fiefdom of Thittaung Town on him. Ma (Saw) Han Kaik kowtowed and accepted it. Min Hla Kaung would also accompany him as he knew Burmese and he was promised with the title of Upakaung and the town of Paungnin if they were successful. Saw Han Kaik and Min Hla Kaung returned to Paungnin. Min Hla Kaung was then given a bowl of gold and a bolt of full-width suiting to take along as presents and sent on this mission to Minrekyawswa. He carried a letter which read "To the Son of the Lord of the Golden Palace does your vassal Upakaung inform respectfully that - Deinmaniyut has been making mischief behind my back. He has reported that I had proffered gifts to you while you were in Prome, that you were able to follow up to Pegu and that you are staying on even though it is the rainy season on account of this bond between us. The king believes him and I will surely be executed on my return. I would like to come over to you but for the fact that my wife insists on coming along with me. I will be able to serve under your royal feet only if you can arrange for both of us to be conducted safely to your presence. If you doubt my words please send someone over on your behalf and we will take the oath of allegiance."

Min Hla Kaung left with ten men in a small boat and eventually they were apprehended by a patrol and taken before the prince. Minrekyawswa was elated and forwarded the letter and presents to the king. Minkhaung showed the letter to his ministers who were sceptical that Upakaung, son-in-law to Razadarit and his wife who was a Talaing princess would be defecting. However, Minrekyawswa insisted that a delegate should be sent to administer the oath of allegiance to see what will develop. The chief of the hereditary slaves accompanied Min Hla Kaung on his return, Minrekyawswa giving him a ruby-ring to be given to the princess Talamisaw. The Ava delegate was placed within a curtained canopy on the boat and on arrival taken through a side entrance instead of through the main door of the house. Upakaung kowtowed as he took the proffered ring. Food and drink were then served for them and only after the delegate had enough to drink was the oath-taking ceremony held. It was a sham affair with Upakaung and his wife holding a blank palm leaf book and an empty reliquary casket of ivory over their heads as they faced the direction where Minrekyawswa was. What they intoned after paying obeisance to the prince was also meaningless but the chief of the hereditary slaves did not know Mon well so that he thought that all had been done in good faith. The delegate was given some presents and Min Hla Kaung

escorted him back where he reported to the prince what he had apparently witnessed.

Minrekyawswa was overjoyed and plied Min Hla Kaung with presents promising him that he would come in person to Paungnin in five days. This was duly reported to Saw Han Kaik and the information relayed to Razadarit. From Lo Atat to Paungnin both banks of the creek were smothered with reeds and ponds were scattered all around. In villages bordering the creek and its environs selected warriors were placed, four to five to a boat and armed with three harpoons each. Each boat had a horn which was to be blown after the Burmese boats had passed as a signal for all boats to converge on the enemy.

On the appointed day Minrekyawswa reported to the king that he was set to go and collect Upakaung. Minkhaung was worried for his safety and sent Mohnyin Thado and Uzana, the governor of Pagan to accompany the prince. There were about a hundred high-sterned canoes and clinker-built boats in all with Minre-kyawswa but he did not take any war-boat along. Meanwhile, Saw Han Kaik had stationed about 20 clinker-built boats filled with warriors in ambush positions along the approaches to the town. Saw Han Kaik came in a small canoe paddled by two men. Thado's boat was drawn alongside the bank with the crew posted on land. Minrekyawswa was on his golden barge about amidships. As Upakaung approached the royal barge the high sterned boats of the two officials took their positions on its flanks. Minrekyawswa greeted Upakaung as his canoe came in between the high-sterned boats.

A large boat from Paungnin then came out slowly with warriors hidden behind its side curtains. Emuntaya, Saw Hkan Hkat, Zalolamat, Thamlaik, U Ruen, Zwethiri, Min Hla Kaung, Ma Bo and Magadu were the champions among the thirty or so warriors manning the boat. Upakaung informed Minrekyawswa that his wife was in the boat. Hearing this, Thado sent one of his men up a toddy palm to survey the town. The lookout reported that all seemed to be quiet in the town. This raised Thado's suspicions and he invited Minrekyawswa to transfer to his boat. Minrekyawswa wanted to know the reason why but Thado replied that they had been given the task of looking after the prince by the king and he pleaded with urgency that the prince allow him to do his duty. After the prince had crossed over, the curtained boat from Paungnin drew up alongside the royal barge. Upakaung called out a request to the prince to lend a hand so that his wife could come aboard. Minrekyawswa ordered his sword bearer to do this favour and as he parted the curtains the sword bearer was cut down by Saw Hkam Hkat. The thirty men in the boat then swarmed onto the royal barge and Minrekyawswa had to clear off in a hurry. Thado and Uzana however, could not escape as Upakaung stood between them. Trumpets to signal the action were not sounded and the twenty clinker boats came out only after the drums on the boats were beaten and on hearing the shouts. As the commotion rippled out, the canoes hidden

Along the creek came out with horns blaring and in the resulting uproar the Burmese troops beat a hasty retreat thinking that a large enemy force was on them. They ran into each other in their haste and many boats were capsized. Only a few escaped unscathed and King Minkhaung was saddened at this news. On the other side, Thado and Uzana were presented to Razadarit who was much elated and invested the title "Brang Thamet Myar Shin," on Upakaung together with the fiefdom of Thittaung town and on Min Hla Kaung the title of "Upakaung" and fiefdom of Paungnin.

Chapter on the defeat of Minrekyawswa at Paungnin in 275 M.E*

Note: * 772 M.E ie.1410 A.D ? }



No long after Minrekyawswa suffered this setback, the Chief of Hsenwi came down (to Ava) to plunder the countryside and take captives. This was reported by Minrethiha to King Minhkaung. King Minhkaung addressed his ministers and nobles " , Our campaign has been protracted and grown stale, so that we shall return to our homes and give our men a rest. Then when we return, the Talaings will not be able to withstand our onslaught. We are now well aware of the tactics employed by the Talaings and victory will be ours when we return." Minrekyawswa was however not satisfied that they should leave before taking over the whole country. " I will be content only after eating the Talaing king's flesh, " he said. Minhkaung placated his son and later left for Ava.

Razadarit's men were also weary of continual fighting and scarcity of food so that the pursuit was launched with only some nobles in the lead and it netted them only some unserviceable boats and craft that had been abandoned. From Arakan Bya Paik and E Gaungpein turned homewards on hearing that Razadarit had suffered a defeat. Bya Paik even had planned to go over to Minhkaung's side and took his time at Bassein until news that King Minhkaung had gone upstream reached him. The two generals then resumed their return home. News that Bya Paik was planning to defect reached the ears of the king and he had Bya Paik executed. Egaungpein was invested with the title Smim Mawhkwinn and given the governorship of Salat News that Minhkaung was coming back reached the Hsenwi invaders which made them abandon their pillaging and head homeward.

Deinmaniyut put forward his proposal to Razadarit thus " We have become like bandits who raid the territory of others while neglecting to make their own territory prosper and secure. That is why we have suffered and we should start on defensive works as the Burmese prince will be soon making a

demented rush on our land with his father's forces. "Razadarit agreed to this and soon orders went out to improve the security of Paungnin, Salat, Western Lagunbyi, Dagon, Hlaing, Wakamaw, Dala, Letkaik, Bassein and Khepaung.

With the arrival of the open season, Minrekyawswa entreated Minhkaung to let him lead an expedition to the Talaing country with land and riverine columns.

From the last experience, he said, it would be best for the king to stay in Ava in order to prevent invasions from other directions and instead of operating too close to the enemy, he continued, he would attack Khepaung first, then Bassein, Myaungmya, Dagon, Syriam in that order and attack Pegu last. Consequently,

Minrekyawswa began to move with land and riverine forces.

Meanwhile Deinmaniyut had presaged what Minrekyawswa's move would be and submitting his opinion to the king, volunteered to hold Bassein which he said would be one of the objectives that Minrekyawswa would seek in the first phase of his campaign. He could rely on the people of Bassein, he continued, while Hlaing being close to the king could be easily aided. However, he said, it was different with Khepaung which was held by Smim Thamgye who could sometimes be quite obtuse and he would like Re Thinran to be given that task instead. The king agreed to his advice and summoned his brother-in-law Re Thinran making him overall commander with Smim Thangye as his deputy, a column under Nyigaungthein with Egaungpein as his deputy, under them were seventy warriors including Smim Rekamar, Ngawmin, Sipawut, Sri Kaman, Bawnyi, Malaung, Ma Bo among others and supported by 15 young male elephants and 5,000 troops, altogether 15,000 men and women. Dry rations of rice, salt and preserved fish enough for three months were stocked at Khepaung. Smim Rethinran had the defensive works repaired where necessary, feted the warriors with food and drink and held hair washing ceremonies using leaves which were symbolic of the enemy. The gods protecting the fortified town were also propitiated with proper offerings. He was unrelenting in his efforts to improve the defences.

With the end of rains Minrekyawswa came down to Prome and the battle order was the governor of Arakan's force with Razataman as his deputy, the governor of Kale with Nandayawda as his deputy, and Minrekyawswa's army with Razathingyan commanding and the son of the prince's nurse, Caturangathu as deputy. This was the riverine force with twelve warboats "the Wondrous", "the Grand Matriach," "the Mother of Many Sons," and others in the figures of a rhinoceros, a serpent dragon, a crocodile, the fabulous creature with a shaggy coat and horns called "toe", a water buffalo, a horse and a lion (both palm leaf copies enumerate only 10 although the total figure mentioned is 12) Each was rowed by either 70, 100 or 150 oars.

There were 50 high-sterned boats and 800 clinker-built boats. The overall strength of this riverine force was 60,000. The land columns consisted of the governor of Myedu's column with the governor of Pathnago as his deputy, the governor of Sampanago's column with the governor of Legaing as his deputy and Thiripyanchi's column with Sokkate as his deputy and consisted of 300 elephants, 400 horse and over 10,000 troops. These forces left Prome on the 3rd waning day of Thadingyut (October -November) and encamped at the mouth of the Ngawun river.

(Minrekyawswa) attacked Khepaung with his troops, the columns coming by the land route not having arrived on the scene as yet. The attack went on for 5 days but was of no avail and the attackers retired to the confluence with the Ngawun river. At that time Bassein was held by Deinmaniyut and the king's sons-in-law, Binnya Ran and Binnya Dala. Enare, son of Re Thinran was placed in charge of the Sitkhwin portal. The defenders were about 2,000 strong. With the arrival of the land columns, the Burmese again assaulted Khepaung from both land and water. Catrangathu, son of Minrekyawswa's nurse, went around the camp telling officers and men alike that when the assault began the next day, all the elephants were to be at the moat's edge, infantry was to swarm over ladders and scale the walls and anyone who disobeyed this order would have his limbs chopped off. He also warned the defenders to fight well as they would be attacked on the morrow. Re Thinran assembled his troops and gave out awards and feted them well and put on displays with swords and shield at every portal to the stirring sound of war drums. At dawn three columns each headed by the governor of Taungdwingyi, Thiripyanchi and the governor of Myedu respectively, carried out the assault from three fronts. The moat was drained and scaling ladders placed against the walls. The defenders countered by throwing rocks, bricks and sticks, heaving logs down the walls on those swarming up the ladders and thrusting at them with pointed staves. The assault lasted till the striking of the first watch of the day (ie about 9 am) when the attackers had to retire after incurring heavy casualties. When Minrekyawswa conferred with Razathingyan the next day at dawn the latter proposed that they should not stay for long at Khepaung but should retire to the mouth of Ngawun area. The next day as Minrekyawswa's troops began to head for Ngawun, some of the Talaings began to taunt them derisively, " Young Burmese prince we will fan your head with a woman's skirt," and waved a woman's sarong and beat upon rice winnowing trays. Seeing this, the royal blood in Minrekyawswa's veins boiled over and from the back of a female elephant he leaped onto the back of his war elephant Nga Chit Khaing and with a guard of over a thousand Shan troops flanking his elephant ordered a charge. Caturangathu waved his sword over officers and men alike and promised to kill anyone who hesitated to scale the ladders or dismounted from their elephants. Then a subordinate of Taungdwin, the governor of Panpe who was mounted on an elephant was seen

to hesitate on approaching the brink of the moat. Caturangathu promptly climbed up onto Panpe's elephant and cut him down with his sword. Caturangathu riding Panpe's elephant then cut in front of Minre-kyawswa and infantry accompanying him began to dislodge the stockade posts with adze and ax. This incident stirred the rest into making a determined effort and in unison some dug up the posts while others set them on fire and eventually made a breach in the stockade walls. Troops poured into the town through this breach and Samim Re Thinran was captured. Nyi Gaung Thein donned the robes of a monk in a trice but his page who tried to flee was cut down. Many nobles and their scions were captured and a total of one thousand taken. Six elephants were captured but promptly escaped into the jungle.

It was on the 7th waxing day of the month of Dabodwe (January-February) 773 M.E (1411 A.D) that Khepaung was demolished.

Khepaung was held by the Burmese. Razadarit was desolate and he had a talk with Smim Awanaing to whom he said " , In my opinion among the junior nobles there is no one to match Re Thinran when it comes to defence and none to match General Byat Za and Lagunein in attack " Only at this juncture did his sons step out. Prince Binnya Raza, Smim Sithu, Smim Thanlaik, Pitpe, Zeipmun, Byat Kaman and Lauhkwin formed a group. With the addition of troops from the eastern provinces there were 25 elephants and the war elephant Bakamat was carried on a raft. There were 50,000 land and riverine troops in all. Smim Payan commanded a warboat 114 feet long, its 200 marines carried golden lances and shields while shimmering peacock tails lined its gunwales. Binnya Dhammaraza's warboat, Sanghamari was 120 feet long and its complement of 200 warriors wore golden helmets and gilt armour. A white silk umbrella with a gold shaft graced the warboat. Samim Sawhtut's warboat was 102 feet long with a complement of 150 and Samim Thanlaik's warboat was 114 feet long with a complement of 150. There were ten warboats and 300 clinker-built boats in all.

After paying obeisance to his father, the prince and his nobles marched off.

Razadarit himself marched to Dala and thence Panhlaing. Binnya Dhammaraza reached Bassein in ten days where he was welcomed by Deinmaniyut who presented the prince with a velvet robe and a bolt of full width suiting while nobles under him each recieved material for a suit. Deinmaniyut's warboat, named Hledangaw in the figure of a Hamsa goose had a length of 206 feet and a crew of 300. From Bassein Binnya Dhammaraza headed for Panko where he bivouacked. The warboat flotilla of 20 sailed upstream to Atamaw. Burmese patrols observing this manoeuvre turned back to Khepaung. A warboat in the shape of a water-buffalo moved ponderously and lagged behind. Paik Thinran caught up with it and attacked it. Its commander and those who could reach the shore escaped but some were drowned. Paik Thinran was towing this prize away with his warboat when

Letwe Nandayawda made a counterattack. In this clash Paik Thinran was wounded by a spear thrust. All Burmese boats rallied together in this encounter but no Talaing boat came to aid Paik Thinran and he was made a captive. As further Talaing reinforcements arrived the Burmese turned and made for Khepaung. There, cavalry moving in coordination with the warboats had already reached Khepaung and had reported that a large fleet of Talaing warboats was advancing. Minrekyawswa was considering burning his warboats and withdrawing when Letwe Nandayawda presented him with Paik Thinran and that changed his mind. He decided to disregard the fact that provisions were getting low and stayed on. Meanwhile the Talaings considered that the Burmese force at Khepaung was too strong for them to take on and decided to play a waiting game, staking the river to block it so that the Burmese force would retire when they ran out of supplies. When Razadarit heard that Binnya Phamaraza was at Panko he sent him a detachment of ten elephants from Panhlaing. Min Hla Kaung, now with his new title of Upakaung was sent to Henzada to disrupt the enemy's supply lines. King Minhkaung on hearing that supplies were not getting through, summoned Minrethihathu from Taungdwin and sent him off to hold Prome. Prince Thihathu was summoned and Minhkaung briefed him that the Talaing king was at Panhlaing and told him to collect all large boats available and with the governors of Mindon and Pandaung hold Henzada and run supplies to his elder brother Minrekyawswa. Minrethihathu collected available boats and started moving along the river on both land and water. On learning of this move Upakaung reported developments to Razadarit who reinforced him with Binnya Pathein and Lauknare. As Minrethihathu approached Hsapaka, he was set upon by the abovementioned three Talaing forces. The warboat of 102 feet length commanded by the governor of Mindon was engaged by Upakaung's and Lauknare's warboats and Upakaung shot and killed the governor of Mindon with a bow. His head was taken as prize as his crew fell into disarray. Uyinyawda and the governor of Pandaung were captured alive. Seeing this, Minrethihathu urged his oarsmen forward but his warboat ran aground and sank so that he had to abandon it and flee on horseback. Other Burmese troops following in his wake also turned and made for Prome. They were pursued but escaped. Minrethihathu missed three meals during his flight. Meanwhile Binnya Pathein had carried out a raid on the outskirts of Prome setting fire to houses outside the protection of the city walls and carrying away captives.

During this period the fiefdom of Salat was held by Smim Mawhkwin. Hearing reports that the governor of Toungoo had reached Paninn with a sizeable force, Smim Mawhkwin and Smim Sawbaik engaged his boat at Paninn. Toungoo's boat was rammed by Smim Mawhkwin and began to take in water and the crew prepared to abandon the boat but the governor of Toungoo checked his men. Toungoo was bested by Smim Mawhkwin during this day's battle but they disengaged as dusk fell with the Talaings throwing taunts at the

Burmese. Seeing the enemy bivouacked on a sandbank, Toungoo prepared his position well, throwing a double line of stakes on the riverine approaches, the outer line of stakes being driven below the surface while the tops of the inner line were visible above the water. When dawn came, Smim Mawhkwin rushed at Toungoo's position on his boats in assault formation, their boats were either impaled or capsized by the submerged stakes. (Smim) Sawbaik's head was taken and Smim Mawhkwin captured alive. When this news reached Razadarit he was much saddened as they had been with him through thick and thin and were good warriors but their mistake had undone them.

Meanwhile Minrekyawswa was at Khepaung conferring with his officers. "We had come to play havoc on them like a raging crocodile," he said "Instead we have run out of supplies and are now like a crocodile stranded on land, the Talaings content themselves by blockading us from strongpoints. We have won battles against them but all that we have gained could be lost if we should suffer a reversal. Therefore we will abandon our boats and return by land. We return here after we have rested at Ava." Everyone agreed heartily and entreated him not to change his mind on this subject. But change his mind he did and later proclaimed "The Talaings are trembling with fear since Letwe (Nanda) Yawda vanquished Paik Thinran. We will try once more with an assault from land and water. If it's successful, well and good. If it fails, only then we will abandon our boats and head for Ava." This did not delight his officers and men as they had been subsisting on yams and tubers for quite a while but they were now past caring.

As news of Minrekyawswa's renewed attack came to Panko, Binnya Raza ordered Smim Payan, Thamlai and Smim Sitran on their warboats to deploy before the area staked with shorter poles. On land Smim Sithkwin was given the elephant Bakamat with Smim Zeip Pun as amidships rider and two female elephants were assigned to accompany Bakamat. Minrekyawswa was on a female elephant, his war elephant Nga Chit Khaing fully caparisoned coming up behind. Minrekyawswa gave the signal to attack by waving his kerchief and the warboats plunged forward aiming for the opening between the stakes. The land columns were however brought to a halt by the Talaing defensive works. The governor of Arakan attacked the stockade from the north and Maka Lekmana, from Smim Payan's elephantry broke out and hacked off the tail of the attacking elephant, then carrying the severed tail into the stockade. Meanwhile, Minrekyawswa signalled the governor of Salin to attack and after the crew had made the gesture of paying obeisance to the prince surged out with the governor stationed at its helm. Salin hailed from his 156 feet long warboat challenging Smim Payan, Razadarit's son-in-law to show himself. Smim Payan came out to answer the challenge and Salin's warboat, with the war drums in full cry rammed Smim Payan's warboat. The clash of warboats also resulted in breaking of some of the stakes driven into the riverbed. Smim Payan's marines grouped at the helm giving a chance

for Salin's marines to board her. Thray Sithu's warboat came rushing to Salin's aid, crashing through the barrier of stakes and ramming into Smim Payan's warboat at an angle. Smim Payan fought on undeterred and Razadarit's sons ordered their warboats to go to his aid but no one made a move and just looked on. The princes themselves did not join the fray but looked on. Three Talaing warboats including Deinmaniyut's Dangaw Hamsa, and Binnya Dala Baik were also on the scene but instead of going to the attack went into reverse. At this the warboats of the governors of Pandaung, Malun and Myawaddy came forward in formation. Even then Smim Payan stood his ground.

Smim Sawhtut's warboat was rammed and the hull ruptured, but the Talaing crew fought on. Smim Caturang's warboat was also rammed and broached by a Burmese warboat in the shallows but its crew also fought on. Minrekyawswa dismounted from his elephant and took the warboat "Shan Talaing," and with sunlight playing on the shimmering glint of gold, the gleam of peacock tails lining its sides, battle pennants streaming from its golden flagstaffs and crowned by a majestic white umbrella surged downstream to the accompaniment of battle drums. On its appearance the Burmese fleet raced ahead of the prince clearing the stakes and once they were past this obstacle, Binnya Dhammaraza and Binnya Dala retreated, turning the prows of their warboats away from the enemy. Even then Smim Payan did not give up, a lone figure fighting amidst the bodies of his crew all of whom had been wiped out. The governor of Thayet hailed him "Your cause is lost and all of your crew are dead. Yet you keep fighting. Have you gone mad?" At this Smim Payan climbed ashore and entered the stockade which was still intact. He mounted Bakamat and with Smim Zeip Pun and Smim U Ruen on the elephants rode off with 3,000 troops into the jungle. On being informed of this, Minrekyawswa disembarked from his warboat and mounting his steed "Nat Pay" went off in pursuit with 300 cavalry and 25 elephantry. Having tasted defeat, it was everyone for himself for the Talaing nobles and only the two on the elephants were still with Bakamat. The pursuing Burmese troops kept their sole attention on this trio too. The cavalry could not however close up as Bakamat was in high musth so that they kept a respectable distance from which they let loose with their spears. Bakamat's mahout Nga Pyan was struck by one of these spears and fell off. Its rear rider Ngacheik Nge ran off and Smim Zeip Pun and Smim U Ruen were also picked off by the Shans. Three hundred cavalry with Smim Payan were also wiped out. Bakamat then fell into a deep pond from which it could not clamber out. Minrekyawswa noticed it and warning his men not to kill him captured Smim Payan and his elephant. Smim Sawhtut, Smim Sawtesot and Smim Caturang were also captured.

Chapter on defeat of the Talaings at Panko on the 11th waxing day of the moon in the month of Dagu {(March -April) 777 M.E or 1418 A.D }

Minrekyawswa was jubilant after inflicting a defeat on the Talaings at Panko. While feasting, he summed up the past battles "Caturangathu, my nurse's son risked his life at Khepaung to crush the enemy after they hurled invectives at me. At Panko, had not Letwe (Nanda) Yawda taken Paik Thinran son of Binnya Dhammaraza's nurse, we would have to abandon our boats and would not be able to return with our pride intact to Ava. When Paik Thinran fell it emboldened our troops to attack the Talaings where they were holding strongly defended positions. Because we attacked boldly we have ample provisions now." Then he had the Yapyaw Tamut stream reconnoitred to see if it could be used as an avenue of approach to attack Bassein. It was found to be too shallow for this purpose and therefore bivouacked at Lamaiksa. Bassein was held by Deinmaniyut, Sri Byat Kaman, Enare the son of Re Thinran and others. Pennants were flown on the city walls and pitfalls for elephants and horses dug at every gate which was guarded by two elephants each with a contingent of 300 elephant troops.

The Burmese meanwhile moved their camp to Bye Myay.

During this period, Razadarit's brahmin Min Hla Myo arrived in Bassein. Min Hla Myo and two of the nobles with a knowledge of astrology predicted that had their main force stationed itself at Bassein instead of Panko previously, they would have won. They would be the victors in the coming engagements, they predicted. On the Burmese side, the governor of Salin was deployed at Kalawpathein, with the governor of Arakan between Kalawpathein and Wakali gate, while Sri Pyanchi held the sector stretching from Wakali gate to Nai Saikyai and thence to Talaingaik. Troops attacked the city along this front. All available boats and water craft also approached the city along its waterfront. Hemmed in by these moves, many Talaings went over to the Burmese side. Seeing this, Enare was incensed and mounting the guard elephant Thribu led about 300 troops out of the Sithkwin gate he was charged with and attacked the Shan troops who scattered. Enare gave chase but the governor of Kale seeing this incident harnessed his elephants and horses in a trice and collecting his troops rushed out of the stockade and broke up Enare's troops. The Shans followed him up to the gate when Deinmaniyut fortuitously arrived on the scene and with the defenders from the turrets and walls giving a good account of themselves the gate was secured and any breach prevented. Deinmaniyut was furious at Enare for charging out without asking permission from his superiors and for making a wrong move like his father Re Thiran which had cost a stockaded town. He was clapped in irons and told that he should be thankful for not being given the death penalty. The two gatekeepers were not so fortunate as Deinmaniyut executed them. Thenceforwards, Deinmaniyut patrolled the city regularly with a contingent of one thousand troops.

Deinmaniyut observed that the Burmese troops on the boats had become careless. He had 5 boats each 24 feet long brought within and shields and swords were hidden in these under piles of vegetables. As instructed by Deinmaniyut, they replied that they were the governor of Salin, Nawratha's men who had gone foraging. Reaching the Bassein waterfront in the pitch darkness of a moonless night, they attacked the enemy stationed there with swords taking two heads and a silver salver in the process. They then crossed over to the side of the town when they were pursued by five high-sterned boats but reached their side safely. Where they were met by Deinmaniyut who had come to their aid with 400 men. When they presented the severed heads and silver tray to Deinmaniyut, their chief said in jest "I told you to bring them back alive, what shall I do with this tray and these heads." He then rewarded them and he had the heads taken around the city walls so that the Burmese troops might see them. He also awarded a warrior belonging to Binnya Pathein with much gold and silver and gave him command of a hundred men who then carried out a surprise raid on a Burmese land column which terrified the Burmese. During the span of a month Deinmaniyut mounted two or three such raids. Then Sri Byat Kaman, son of Elder Sri Byat Kaman, feted 300 warriors and riding the elephant Thure Wun tried to leave by the Kyeip gate to mount a raid on the governor of Arakan. This was reported to Deinmaniyut by the gatekeepers and he rushed off to stop the youth. On meeting him Deinmaniyut scolded him "Even your father, the Elder Sri Byat Kaman has to inform me while you with snot still on your face dare to leave without telling me."

Young Sri Byat Kaman wept and paying obeisance to Deinmaniyut said "I weep not because of your scolding but because I had planned to raid the governor of Arakan who has grown careless and I want to get him and present him to the king who will raise then raise me to the rank of a senior mandarin and now you've ruined my plans. Is it not the nature of a person of noble blood to gain titles and insignias of office by proving his worth in battle?" He then kowtowed Deinmaniyut before departing to his camp. At dusk Deinmaniyut sent him presents consisting of a bowl made of gold weighing 3 ticals, two bolts of cloth each enough for a full suit and a ruby ring. Deinmaniyut placated him with the message "Your father, husband of Talahninpan is my brother-in-law and you are my nephew. The Elder Sri Byat Kaman does not disregard my orders and I want you to be like him. You will get the chance to prove yourself and win titles when I decide that the time has come." Sri Byat Kaman made obeisance facing the direction where Deinmaniyut would be and admitted that he was happy and that he would abide by his words. He also gave Deinmaniyut's men two bowls of gold weighing 10 ticals and two Talaing sarongs.

Minrekyawswa conferred with his nobles. "We made a determined assault on Khepaung and won it but it was with heavy casualties," he said "The defenders

of Bassein do not venture out but put up a stout resistance from within their city. Should we assail them with sheer force we will be having heavy casualties. "

Razathingyan then suggested that negotiations would be in order in that case.

Minrekyawswa agreed and the following message was accordingly sent "Elder Uncle and Minister to whom Minrekyawswa informs that - Re Thinran was confident in the inviolability of his defensive works and chose not to negotiate with the result that it was destroyed when I attacked it. He died while all of the defenders became my prisoners of war. Now that this city is in your charge please consider that although its defenses may be impenetrable can it be defended without officers and men ? If this happens will your reputation as a wise general remain unblemished. You hold the power and authority over the rest of the ministers and nobles. My opinion is that you should accept the suzerainty of the Lord of the Golden Palace for which your status will be a hundredfold better than what you are enjoying now under my uncle King Razadarit." This message was carried by Nga Lat together with a gift of a set of Chinese silk yarn. After hearing out this proposal Deinmaniyut summoned a scribe to compose a reply which ran thus " Son of the Lord of the Golden Palace, to whom Deinmaniyut the person in charge informs that -my lord Razadarit is not just any monarch and when he hears that my city has been besieged he will come forth to lift the siege. I have been put in charge of its defence as a senior minister and your advice that I accept the suzerainty of the Lord of the Golden Palace has been made only because you are still young in years. I receive 7,000 viss of copper from Bassein and another 3,000 from Thaton making 10,000 in all. I do not see any monarch who can give so lavishly. Moreover, he did not command me to accept anyone's suzerainty but to fight the enemy." This message together with a gift of double width material for a full set of robes, a shirt of fine calico and a bowl made of gold were entrusted to Nga Lat to be presented to Minrekyawswa. On receiving this Minrekyawswa summoned his nobles and announced that since the negotiations had not been successful, it would be fruitless to stay on at Bassein and it would be better to try and take Myaungmya.

On the 3rd waxing day of the moon in the month of Kason (April-May) 778 M.E (1416 A.D) Minrekyawswa headed for Myaungmya because he was unable to take Bassein.



After General Byat Za passed away, the governorship of Myaungmya passed on to Smim Sawhtut. On the 4th waxing day of the moon in the month of Kason, there was a great earthquake at Pegu which toppled the Shwe Mawdaw stupa. Likewise, the Shwedagon, reliquary of the sacred hairs, was also damaged.

coming to its aid and the Talaings had carried out a successful raid on the siege works. Razadarit sent supplies to Dala. Binnya Dala was charged with holding the town, the stream was staked and all boats gathered and placed inside this barrier.

The land column stationed itself at the approaches to Kyat Tale and stood in readiness to deter any Burmese attack. Deployed thus, rice husked and unhusked, salt, preserved fish, areca nuts, betel leaf, tea, rattan, bows, cross-bows, bowstrings, arrows, adzes, axes, swords, shields, helmets, spears and lances, jingals, cannon and firearms were brought in. The citizens of Dala were showered with gifts. Razadarit then had Prince Binnya Dala, Smim Awananaing, Smim Than Laik, Minister Maha Thamun, Epounthari, Zeip Na Re and Raza Binnya take the water of allegiance at which the nobles promised to do their part.

The king then went over to Syriam where he appointed Binnya Param commander, Smim Bre and Saw Tiraik deputy commanders and other posts after which he returned to Pegu.

He then placed Smim Mawhkwin in charge of defending Bassein and summoned Deinmaniyut to Pegu. The king asked the royal soothsayer to examine his horoscope. The royal soothsayer pronounced that the king was undergoing an ill-starred period. Deinmaniyut cautioned him not to mention it to anyone but to go to Martaban under the pretext of mobilizing troops and to return when that period was over. By that time, he continued, the Burmese invasion would have grown stale and they would have the upper hand. The king took Deinmaniyut's advice and gave Prince Binnya Dhammaraza, the responsibility of securing Pegu while he was away. He then moved to Martaban together with the queens and court.

When Smim Mawhkwin heard this, he summoned the town elders and leading citizens of Bassein and announced that since the king had ran away to Martaban as Pegu was not secure, it would also be difficult to secure Bassein. They would have to accept the suzerainty of Minrekyawswa, he said, in order to stay alive.

The others agreed with him and when Minrekyawswa on hearing that Deinmaniyut was not in Bassein and sent three columns, one commanded by Sri Pyanchi, the second commanded by Nawratha, governor of Salin and the third commanded by the governor of Kale, Smim Mawhkwin readily surrendered. Wealthy persons by ancestry, Indians, Mussulmen and citizens gave tributary gifts of gold, silver, rich cloth, velvet, felt, caulking material and red morinda dye. Two Shans and 13 Burman looters executed by Sri Pyanchi prevented further looting. Turin Theinzi and the son of Saw E Binnya were charged with holding Bassein and the three columns turned toward Myaungmya which readily sent tribute and accepted Burmese

suzerainty. There the incumbent Malauk Yotarak was kept on as governor. The three commanders submitted to Minrekyawswa that all towns in the western sector (ie. the Irrawaddy Delta) had been won, that the next step was to take Pegu and that no one could possibly stop them from doing it. Their troops were jubilant. Minrekyawswa caused two long, high-sterned boats to be built at Dala, one was 102 feet long with a canopied helm, fully gilt and its prow and stern decorated with gold cord and tassels, the other was 96 feet long painted with orpiment, carved rosettes in relief and tasselled gold cord draped along its bow and stern. Four cargo barges were rafted together two abreast and on it a high-sterned royal boat was mounted. Minrekyawswa rode in it constantly.

This gave rise to a popular ditty * “ A *hlawga* regal high-sterned boat for me. *mwe ti laññ hou dāna kalaññ; hou cou: min hpyuu lañ mata piuntun do larwat ññā manā mahpok carok tiun miu ñtiu;man: hpyuu te nai pata lok.* ”

This ditty also became popular in the town of Dala.

Minrekyawswa rode this rafted boat to Syriam, leaving his warboat at Pan-aw. His attacks on Syriam were countered by Prince Binnya Param and he returned to Dala which he attacked but there too he was not successful.

At that time King Minhkaung was leading an expedition against Mawdon Mawke. The chiefs of Mawdon Mawke had sought the patronage of U Ti Bwa of China and the latter had sent a force of 200 elephantry, 10,000 cavalry and 100,000 troops to invade Ava. As Minrekyawswa was away at Pegu with a greater part of nobles and warriors he made preparations for a siege. The Chinese surrounded the royal city. The Chinese then sent a message “ You do not come out to fight us and neither do you initiate negotiations with us. We are prepared to lay siege even for three full years but if you agree to a tournament of single combat on horseback between your champion and ours, it will be held under the condition that if our champion wins we will take Ava, while if we lose we will turn back and go home. ” Minhkaung asked among his warriors who would act as champion for Ava but there were no volunteers. Then the governor of Paungde suggested that Smim Payan, son-in-law of the Talaing king has a single forearm bone and that he might volunteer for this mission as he was one of the captives brought in by the prince and now kept in leg irons.

When he was duly approached he stated that he was ready to fight any man word to sword on elephant or horseback. When this was reported to the king he had the fetters taken off and was fed well. Minhkaung told him that if he won the coming tournament he would enjoy all the amenities that he had enjoyed under Razadarit. Smim Payan assured the king that it would be done and made obeisance.

The Chinese champion (Karmani) rode a blood-red horse caparisoned in

gold harness, usually wearing a devil-may-care air about him and to the Chinese his steed seemed to have come from the celestial world. He wore armour plate and he held a Cambodian sword embellished with rubies. He was also equipped with seven golden spears for throwing. Meanwhile, Smim Payan was being told by Minhkaung to choose any horse he liked and was shown the best that Ava had. He did not find one that suited him among them. Only later he chanced upon a bay which he decided to try. He had it caught and said that he would be riding it for seven days to familiarize himself with it and the tournament could be fixed at the conclusion of that period. Karmani agreed to that date and he spent the time feasting and proclaiming ferociously. On the appointed day King Minhkaung patted Smim Payan on the back and praised him saying that he had the mettle of a warrior undoubtedly as he was renown to be one. He urged him to serve him with unrelenting zeal in the coming event. Smim Payan told the king not to worry and then asked for an elephant goad and a basket saying that he needed the goad to hook Karmani's head with and the basket to put it in after he had cut it off. His words prompted the Burmese nobles to comment sarcastically that he was "looking for a wok before he had caught the hare." His steed caparisoned in gold and dressed like a celestial lord he rode out, turning at the city gate to pay obeisance to the king before proceeding. Citizenry and monks lined the battlements to overflowing, waiting for the coming spectacle. In response Karmani, fully clad in armour came riding out right up to the edge of the moat.

The combatants faced each other and Smim Payan proposed that both being noble warriors they would let everyone witness a fair fight and that a display of equestrian skill precede the actual fight. Karmani nodded in assent. Smim Payan crouched low in the saddle and rode at a fast gallop. Karmani did the same. Then Smim Payan stood up on the saddle and rode his horse while standing. Karmani followed his lead. Smim Payan then stretched his arms out and as Karmani did likewise, he noted that a link in Karmani's armour had broken under his armpit Smim Payan announced that the fight would begin and rode out with one arm stretched out to the fore and the other held behind his back. As they drew near each other and as Karmani raised his arm to strike with the spear, Smim Payan thrust his lance into the breach in armour under the former's armpit. Karmani was skewered on Smim Payan's lance through and through and fell from his horse. Smim Payan hooked Karmani's head with his goad and cut it off with a swipe of his sword. Then thrusting the severed head into the basket returned to the city. The Chinese said in wonder that no man could possibly be his equal.

King Minhkaung rewarded him handsomely and gave his (neice) to him in marriage.

ables and the citizenry of Ava showered gifts on him. The Chinese turned back as they had promised.



Minrekyawswa sent Nga Lat with the following message to King Minhkaung "Mighty King to whom I most respectfully inform that, my elder uncle Razadarit do not dare meet me and has now fled to Martaban. If he commits suicide in water out of fear, I will have fishermen with casting nets search the waters for his body and I will never rest until I have him cremated. Will my mighty sovereign send a knowledgeable person for the task of scrutinising and taking over his prized steeds, queens and consorts."

When King Minhkaung received it he clapped his hands as if he was enjoying a good joke and said "What an error you have made, my son. Among men of royal blood, he is a peerless fighter on elephant, horseback or warboat. He has removed himself to Martaban only because he is going through an unfavourable period as foretold by his horoscope. Do not be careless. Act wisely. I am sending Prince Minrethihathu down the Toungoo route to invest Salat." He urged Nga Lat to give this message to Minrekyawswa without delay and this was duly done.

Minrekyawswa made this observation to Nawratha, governor of Salin "Young Nga Baw acted as if he was going to defect and then after cutting off the elephant's tail ran back into the stockade. Fifty or even a hundred Taluings are now chary of facing a trio of Burmans." Salin assured Minrekyawswa that the troops would be getting good results. However, he said, since Prince Thihathu would be marching for Salat, the prince should take (Hanthawaddy) speedily, or Prince Thihathu might get there first and take the honours just as there was a saying "It matters not that some cry in the evening and some cry dawn, they cry all the same." Minrekyawswa was very amused and laughed heartily at this.

During this time, famine stalked Pegu and not a leaf of vegetable was to had in Dala. King Razadarit who had sojourned in the east (ie Martaban) since Razazaungmone (November-December), returned to Pegu in Dabodwe (February-March). On his return, the royal soothsayer, a certain Mahami and a monk, all three of them experts in astrology were asked to examine the king's horoscope. All three pronounced that the period of ill-fortune was over and that if he fought Minrekyawswa on Wednesday, the 4th waxing day of the moon in Dagu (March-April), the latter would be thrown off his elephant and have his hip trampled on by the elephant and broken, he would hide under a "Ohnnhe" (*Streblus asper*) tree growing at the water's edge and would be captured subsequently. The three astrologers were suitably awarded. The royal soothsayer added that if Minrekyawswa fought his duel on the aforesaid day, he would be captured, but should he decline to

right on that day he did not dare speak out what the outcome would be like. At this Deinmaniyut assured the king that it would only matter on the validity of their prediction that Minrekyawswa would be captured on that date, since he would be taking the responsibility to see that he came out on the crucial day. The astrologers were again rewarded with four bolts of cloth. Razadarit then wondered how Minrekyawswa might be advised that he would be in Dala. Emuntaya volunteered to have this accomplished by going over to Minrekyawswa as if he had defected from his side. Asked to furnish further details, he said he would say that he was disenchanted with his monarch for failing to pursue a more aggressive policy and for not taking action to dislodge the besiegers of Dala and with Deinmaniyut for not acting like a general as he was supposed to be; that for speaking out his mind he was threatened with the death penalty and to have his whole family clapped in irons by Deinmaniyut; that the king backed Deinmaniyut so that he had decided to defect and serve under Minrekyawswa; that he would then participate with the prince's nobles in one or two actions to further gain Minrekyawswa's confidence after which he would return to Dala.

The king agreed with this plan and gave him 5 viss (18 pounds / 8kg) of gold to be distributed among nobles and citizens of Dala. Emuntaya left with 3 men for Dala. As Dala was encircled in depth on both its land and riverine approaches, they were detained at Dala's port of the Lion by the governor of Panpe who was also the commander of the thousand strong palace guards and the governor of Myotaung who questioned him. Emuntaya told them that he had come to defect as he was disenchanted with his king and told them the same story he had outlined to the king. He was given a set of good clothes by the Myotaung governor who presented him to Minrekyawswa. There he related the story behind his so-called defection. Razathingyan commented that Emuntaya, a noble in Razadarit's court had come to serve under the prince such was his power and glory and that his words proved to be true he should be given any fiefdom he desires after Hanthawaddy has been taken. Emuntaya then spoke up, saying that he would demonstrate his fealty to the prince by killing his own people with his sword.

The prince awarded Emuntaya.

At dawn, some Talaings were seen outside the city gate near the palisade erected to prevent elephants from rushing the gate. Emuntaya accompanied a party of Burmese troops who attacked them with swords, killed a couple himself and dragged their bodies into the stockade. One day Emuntaya acted as the governor of Salin's mahout while the governor rode amidst ships on his war elephant. They rode out of their redoubt and as they neared the moat around the city walls, a Talaing force sallied out which made the party escorting the elephant to flee.

Emuntaya told Salin that he was going after the enemy but as he neared them

he threw his shield and sword away and ran into the town with them. When his was reported to Minrekyawswa by the governor of Salin, he was much displeased, smacking his hands together in anger.

Minrekyawswa had this message shouted out "Emuntaya by means of duplicity entered my service. If you can make the return journey to Razadarit I will see that you are amply rewarded." Binnya Dala conveyed this message to Emuntaya who had his reply to the prince shouted across the no-man's land, "Emuntaya will travel to Pegu tomorrow."

To this the Burmese rejoined "Do you have wings of a bird or can you tunnel through the earth. You could enter Dala only because you resorted to low subterfuge." Emuntaya then challenged the Burmese to wait for him, saying that he would do just what he had promised to do. Minrekyawswa exhorted his officers and men to keep a sharp lookout on all the approaches to the town.

Meanwhile Emuntaya handed over the gold that he had been entrusted with to Binnya Dala to be carried out as instructed by the king. He had a raft constructed of banana stems and had his sword hidden in one of these. He lay stretched out like a corpse with turmeric on his face and had himself rolled up in a tattered reed mat. He had four women with hair unravelled and beating their breasts with their fists cry out in lament "Others have their husbands to comfort them in these difficult times but you chose to leave us at a time when the visitation of war brings famine on us." This little scene was played out near the Lion Gate where it could be seen by the Burmese on the other side. He was then placed on the banana stem raft with an earthen plate of rice with a whole chicken near his head and lit by a glowing torch, the raft was cast off, the women giving a farewell whoop of lamentation and a final burst of breast beating. As the raft drifted close to one of the Burmese pickets keeping watch in boats it would be pushed away into the current and the raft was steadily carried upstream by the tide. By the time that Tapauk Tanaut was reached the picket boats had been left far behind so that Emuntaya climbed ashore after taking out the hidden sword and proceeded to Pegu. Around midday the Burmese troops called out for Emuntaya to come out if he was to come out at all and from the town came the reply that he had already left at dawn. The Burmese troops laughed derisively. At dusk Minrekyawswa sent his men to call on prince Binnya Dala and Smim Awananaing to inquire into this matter and they were told by Binnya Dala that did not Minrekyawswa know that he had left at dawn. Accordingly, a courier was sent to Pegu with this letter "Dear Elder Uncle to whom Minrekyawswa informs that, I had heard that you had run away to Martaban but now that you are back in Pegu my hopes of jousting with you on elephant will be realised soon. I was in Dala all the time but you chose not to come at me either from upstream or downstream but instead ran away. There is no monarch like you who is so battle-shy. If you would like me to come up to Pegu I will gladly do so or should you come

own for me I will welcome you..” This was carried by the commander of the left wing of blood brothers, together with a steed caparisoned in gold and a pair of ruby bracelets to be presented to Razadarit. He was also given a fine horse caparisoned in gold and a velvet robe with instructions that they were to be awarded to Emuntaya if he happened to meet him at the court of Pegu.

Razadarit was staying at Thebyuchaung when Minrekyawswa's courier arrived and after the message had been conveyed Razadarit told the courier "Tell my nephew that he need not come up to Pegu but that I will be coming down to Dala." Then the courier submitted to the king that he had also been given the task of looking up Emuntaya. Emuntaya was summoned and Minrekyawswa's presents were duly given to him. King Razadarit then gave a green velvet robe and 16 bolts of material each enough for a suit as presents for Minrekyawswa and a bowl made of gold and a length of quality cloth for the courier. All these were duly reported on the courier's return. When King Minhkaung heard that Razadarit had returned to Pegu he set off with Prince Minrethihathu and Thado (with his deputy Turinkyaw) each commanding a column, the two columns having a total of 50 war elephants, 500 horse and 10,000 troops for Salat. At that time Salat was held by Smim Byat Za with 7,000 men, 5 war elephants and 30 horse. Meanwhile King Razadarit was in Kyat Zana where he built a pavilion with tiered roofs and held a hair washing ceremony. The ceremony was held on the 5th day of the waxing moon in the month of Dabaung (Feb.- Mar.)

The king with his sons prince Binnya Dhammaraza, Prince Binnya Param and the nobles performed the ritual of hair washing. They were followed in this ritual by the rest of the warriors, troops and elephants. War elephants had their tusks pointed for seven days. All were feted and everyone was given awards. On the 8th waning day of the moon in the month of Dabaung, the march to Dala began.

Razadarit's main force had Deinmaniyut as commander, Re Kanan deputy commander, a column commanded by Prince Dhamma Raza had Baikamyin as deputy. Prince Binnya Param on the war elephant which was in musth and harnessed in a red howdah, red saddle flaps, red pennants flying on the howdah and ornamented with red on its forehead and with the elephantry guards holding red lances formed the van together with ten elephants and a unit of 5,000 troops.

The column under Binnya Raza had thirty elephants and 11,000 troops. The prince was mounted on the Raza Paukthar elephant in a gold howdah surmounted by a white umbrella, with gold howdah flaps, gold ornamenting its forehead and elephantry guards with gold lances. Razadarit's force comprised of 30 elephants and 10,000 men with the king shaded by a white umbrella riding the Hsin Re war elephant in a black howdah, black howdah flaps, elephantry bearing black lances. When Minrekyawswa received reports

That Razadarit was marching against him called a conference. Razathingyan spoke up "Razadarit is a very brave antagonist and rarely will he withdraw from an engagement. If he is in personal command, should we continue to lay siege we will be attacked from the front and rear. To prevent such a predicament we should lift the siege and combining both land and riverine commands establish a strongpoint in which we can go on the defensive if he chooses to attack us or mount an offensive if he does not move against us."

Minrekyawswa agreed with Razathingyan's estimate of the situation and lifting the siege established a strongpoint at Pethakan, concentrating both his land and riverine forces.

Razadarit established a stockade at Kyat Le near Dala. From there he mounted the elephant sired by Hsin Re and escorted by 1,000 troops entered Dala where he was jubilantly received by Prince Binnya Dala, Smim Awananaing and the citizenry of Dala. The king showered gifts on them. He then asked Smim Awananaing whether the Burmese prince was given to charging out from his stockaded camp.

Awananaing assured the king that the prince was like a fighting cock that was always eager to launch himself against any rooster it happens to see. "Then we are certain of getting the Burmese prince," said the king.

The king then turned to Thwe Lagunsan, his personal attendant and bearer of the betel box and water goglet. "Your elephant is nimble and quick. You go with an escort of 300 warriors to Minrekyawswa's camp and try and draw him out. If he pursues you don't turn and fight but come back with all speed." Thwe Lagunsan made the gesture of obeisance and departed on his mission. When they were detected, Minrekyawswa sent the Governor of Kale with 1,000 horsemen after him. Thwe Lagunsan turned back on seeing the cavalry emerge. The Burmese horsemen pressed on with vigour and started to catch up and at that point Thwe Lagunsan turned and fought back. Feinting, turning left and right during the skirmish, the elephant suffered about a hundred spear wounds. When the king heard of this he ordered to have Thwe Lagunsan dismembered for disobedience with a clap of his hands and the smiting of his thigh. He was handed over to Emuntaya who was to carry out this sentence. Awananaing interceded for him, pleading the king to be forbearing in the manner of a Buddha and to spare his life he was young and therefore prone to err. As a result, he was put in irons instead. On reaching his stockaded camp he summoned Nga Pyan, Bakamat's mahout and asked him for advice on the problem of how to deal with Bakamat, the war elephant that had been captured by the Burmese as there was no elephant they had that could challenge it.

Nga Pyan the mahout put forward two plans; the first was for him to head a quartet of she-elephants on which warriors of noble blood who were expert with the spear would be mounted, when they came upon Bakamat the mahout would call out and it recognising his voice would not attack them, then it

would be just a matter of disposing of whoever rode it and then he, Nga Pyan would take over; the second was to get in stealthily at night and hammer spikes into its feet, pinning them to the floor so that it could not move from the stockade. The king decided on the second plan and rewarded Nga Pyan amply. He also selected Bawgati and Mapaing to go with him. On the night when the raid was to take place, Nga Pyan peeled three lengths of sugar cane for Bakamat. The party successfully infiltrated past the dozing Burmese troops into the stockade and entered the shed where Bakamat was tethered. The elephant recognised the scent of his old mahout and stood quietly. Nga Pyan offered the sugar cane he had brought to Bakamat. He then spoke to the elephant "I have come with the king's order to nail your feet to the floor but now that I see you I cannot do that. If you love me, your two brothers and your mother, when the Burmans try to harness you for the coming battle do not let them, go on a rampage within this stockade and then come home to me. My life will be spared only when you come back to me." Bakamat nodded his head tears welled and rolled down his cheeks. Bawgati and Mapaing remarked that the king had sent them because he was planning to joust on elephants the next day as he did not want Bakamat to be on the other side and if it was not to be done as the king had instructed, the responsibility should be solely on Nga Pyan. Later they left. Meanwhile Razadarit kept vigil through the striking of the third watch of the night (ie about 3 am), waiting for the news of the raid's outcome.

When Nga Pyan and party reached their camp at the stroke of the third quarter of the night, they were asked by the king whether his orders had been carried out. Nga Pyan related to the king what had actually occurred. The king was furious "I had plans to raise you to noble status if you had accomplished your mission. I'll have you and your whole family burnt at the stake if your elephant does not come back," he said and slapped Nga Pyan's face.

On Wednesday, the 4th waxing day of the moon in the month of Dagu, Razadarit's deployment for the coming battle consisted of Prince Dhammaraza on the elephant Rangami escorted by 1,000 elephantry troops dressed totally in black and carrying black lances and shields, followed by the king mounted on the war elephant Ran. The elephant was harnessed to a gold howdah accented with ruby studded flaps, bravely flying gold pennants and surmounted by the white umbrella announcing his status. His nurse's son Paik Kaman rode amidst the elephant which was guarded by 1,000 elephantry carrying gilt lances and shields.

To the king's right Deinmaniyut rode the war elephant sired by Raza at the head of 1,000 elephantry. To the king's left, the minister Maha Thamun was mounted on the elephant named Maha Peiktoun at the head of 1,000 elephantry. The warrior Binnya Ram rode the Paswethamun elephant and Emuntaya was with him carrying an unsheathed sword. Prince Binnya Dala

had 1,000 men with him and rode the war elephant Sri Maran, the white canopy of an umbrella spread above him. He was deployed close to the Dala town and had Smim Awananaing, mounted on the elephant Nga Retnwe at the head of 2,000 troops by his side.

Meanwhile Minrekyawswa had learnt about this development and was in the conference hall of his camp with his nobles. Razathingyan cautioned the prince not to be hasty and to act judiciously as, he said (by paraphrasing a well known proverb) "one knows not the course of war just as one cannot fathom whether a white chick or black chick will hatch from a certain egg." Others agreed with his observation and Minrekyawswa continued to feast and drink with his nobles.

Meanwhile, Razadarit reminded Deinmaniyut that he had taken the responsibility to see that Minrekyawswa came out to fight. At this Deinmaniyut rode in a gilt basket-like howdah with a red umbrella spread top. Five female elephants and seven to eight hundred troops followed him with measuring poles, string and picks. Deinmaniyut went over to Pethakan where Minrekyawswa was encamped and from a respectable distance began to measure and mark out frontages with rope and stakes. Minrekyawswa saw this from a turret and sent his men to investigate. To their question what they were doing, the Talaing troops replied that they had been sent by Deinmaniyut to mark out frontages for each unit that was to participate in laying siege to Minrekyawswa's fortifications.

On receiving this report Minrekyawswa was enraged. He had come to besiege Razadarit and instead Razadarit was going to lay siege to him, that was unacceptable he said, and he would forthwith attack the Talaing king. No one dared to voice a different opinion and the nobles left for their units. Minrekyawswa usually gave his elephant Nga Chit Khaing two large bowls of liquor to drink but on that day he had it increased to three and he also drank more than usual. He held his consort Saw Min Hla in his arms and said "I'm about to take over the Talaing king's territory in its entirety. When my elephant Nga Chit Khaing whoops like a crane in battle, that is a sign that I'm going to win and that is what happened at Mohnyin and at the capital of Arakan. It is now singing like a crane and there is no way that Pegu can escape from my hands."

He emerged from his chamber and assigned the Governor Myedu to take Bakamat. He plied Nga Chit Khaing with more drink and after that climbed onto the elephant with a jubilant shout leaving word to his officers to saddle their mounts and follow him as best as they could. He detailed his nurse's son Nanda Thuriya to ride amidships. 100 Shans from Kale were directed to wear black robes and armed with spears they formed a guard around his elephant. Mohnyin Shan troops were armed with 3 throwing spears a person. 1,000 Burmese troops with gilt helmets, their shields of gold ornamented with peacock feathers were also armed with 3 throwing spears each. Horsemen

wearing buffalo horns, those with gilt helmets and clad in gilt armour accompanied him. The big drum was sounded thrice to announce his exit from the fort. As he charged out unhesitatingly Kye Toun Nyo, the Governor of Kale came out mounted on the elephant Re Thaw Boun with 50 elephants, 700 cavalry and over 5,000 troops. The Governor Arakan followed on the war elephant Re Myat Ke with 10 elephants, 500 cavalry and 7,000 troops. Then as the Governor of Myedu mounted the elephant Bakamat it went berserk butting and trampling people and smashing things. The Governor had to dismount hurriedly.

Meanwhile Razadarit poured water from a bowl of gold from his seat on the elephant and made a vow "I call on the gods who safeguard the Teachings of the Buddha for 5,000 years to declare that this land is the domain of my father, Hsinbyushin; that it was so has been affirmed in a treaty between myself, Lord of the White Elephant and Minrekyawswa's grandfather, Minkyiswasawke made at Thakycin. If what I have declared is the truth may I be successful and may Minrekyawswa fall into my hands, while if it not, may I lose the battle to him."

Minrekyawswa's headlong charge separated him from the rest of his troops. The Governor of Kale tried to catch up with him, but his elephant was in musth and disturbed by the din raised by the saddle flaps on the cavalry, the noise of the elephants and men following him, turned back to charge at them. This disruption prevented the cavalry and infantry from catching up with Minrekyawswa who was then isolated far in front. As Minrekyawswa saw Binnya Dala's column he asked what it was and on being told that it was Binnya Dala, dismissed him saying that Binnya Dala dared not face him. Further as he came upon Binnya Ram, Minrekyawswa disdainfully remarked that he was not a worthy adversary.

Seeing Binnya Dhammaraza coming up next, he too was dismissed by Minrekyawswa when his men identified the force. Then a dazzlingly resplendent column came into view and on being identified as Razadarit, Minrekyawswa said "Out of this group it is my Elder Uncle that I love. If I can defeat him the rest will melt away." With the resounding beat of big drums, Minrekyawswa attacked and about a fifth of the king's column scattered. He next went on to attack Binnya-raza and scattered a third of the force together with the prince. Then he turned towards Binnya Ram's column and broke it up. Awananaing was the next in line but he stood firm and had his 7,000 troops kneeling behind their shields to hold their positions. Razadarit, observing this, turned to him with a booming of the big drums. Binnya Dhammaraza, Binnya Ram and Binnya Dala also converged towards them on hearing the sound of the king's drums. Thus Minrekyawswa, having penetrated too far was isolated and surrounded by enemy elephants while elephant troops with them harried Nga Chit Khaing with spear and sword. The poor beast shook with pain dislodging Minrekyawswa from his seat. In the

Following dust raised by elephant hooves and the feet of men, Minrekyawswa seemed to have vanished and it was only after the third quarter of the night watch had been struck that the severely wounded Mirekyawswa was found under the *Sreblus asper* tree as predicted by the royal seer.

Razadarit went to Minrekyawswa and said "You are young (and I am not floating over this). When you get well after proper treatment you can return to Ava if you want or should you stay on here (I will give you the hand of my daughter in marriage) and make you crown prince. Get well." He then gave Minrekyawswa some medicine (It was refused). "I had come with the intent to fight you Elder Uncle," Minrekyawswa responded "I have made a promise that I will conquer Pegu (and I will not return without fulfilling this promise) therefore I will not take your medicine, being as such (since I will never become someone's vassal), death I deem to be more honourable than to go on living". Refusing to take medicine, Minrekyawswa died at the stroke of the third quarter of the night⁵⁵.

Razaadrit had him cremated with nobles in attendance and his bones properly buried at the Kyat Thale pagoda. He then summoned Han Nare and said "Your noble, the governor of Salat, Maw Hkwin is being besieged by Minrethihathu. Go and see that the siege is lifted." Han Nare protested that since he had no troops to accomplish that task how was he to do it. Razadarit directed him to take the governor of Nat Toung and to send him ahead to intimate the prince with the details of Minrekyawswa's demise. This was done and as a result, the prince lifted the siege and returned home.

At Dala the Burmese generals were still holding on, even after the death of Prince Minrekyawswa, melding their land and riverine components into a stronghold that Razadarit's efforts could not dislodge. At this Deinmaniyut suggested "Minrekyawswa came time and time again to lay waste our country. He could do this because he could disregard the advice of his ministers and nobles and act as he wished. Now that the prince is gone, the decision will be in the hands of his generals and nobles. My lord's efforts against them might as well end in vain. The Governor of Salin hails from Myaungmya and he should be approached to begin negotiations for if he agrees our aims will be achieved easily."

The king commended Deinmaniyut for his acumen and a message was composed thus- "This I proclaim to you Governor of Salin. My son Mirekyawswa fell into my hands but died because he would not accept medicine that I offered him. Do you think you can escape from my clutches? You've escaped because you retreated first isolating the prince which brought about his downfall and I could capture him. Therefore all of you will be faulted for not going to his aid and be put to death by the King of Ava. It will be difficult for you to make an orderly withdrawal and even if it could be done, you will be in a predicament when you reach Ava. Bassein and

(ie approximately 3 am)

Myaungmya count as your ancestral home and if you accept my suzerainty I will give you any one of these fiefdoms you fancy. "This was accompanied by a bowl made of gold weighing 10 ticals (163gm) and four bolts of suiting material. On receiving the message, the Governor of Salin showed Razadarit's envoy around that he might witness and report on the efficiency of their preparations and said " Our Lord's son is no ordinary prince. He is well versed in the affairs of war and his martial qualifications are undisputed. The contention that he committed a grave error which resulted in him falling into the hands of the enemy cannot be believed. Do not believe even if one thousand or even two thousand of your troops swear that they have captured the prince for they might be doing it in order to gain a great battlefield credit to their names. Even if Minrekyawswa had been captured you have seen with your own eyes what his generals and nobles have done to consolidate our strength and although your king strive mightily we will not be taken. Even now the King of Ava is boarding his royal barge to come to our aid and will be here soon. As for myself I have no yearnings for either Bassein or Myaungmya for I have drunk water from Burma. As your lord the king is the son of our lord the king we are the true sons of his vassals. One who comes to lay waste our homeland and then falls into our hands because of a tactical error will not live. That is why when we accepted the suzerainty of the Lord of the Golden Palace in Ava we were invested with amenities according to our abilities and we can never fully repay his largesse. Therefore, please do not say things just to quiet down some trouble spot." The courier was fed well and given a couple of valuable rings to be presented to the king on his return.

When this was duly reported to the king Razadarit remarked " Young Nga Pyin is as steady as they come." Meanwhile, the Governor of Toung Hteik who had been charged with holding Bassein, left for Ava on hearing the news of Minrekyaw-swa's demise. He travelled by the Pohkaung route and reached Prome.

The generals and officers at Dala submitted a letter to Ava which read "Mighty Lord under whose royal feet we generals and officers-in-command serve respectfully tender that - the son of our Mighty Lord, not being receptive to our advice and acting on his own, fell into the hands of the enemy. The enemy, encouraged by this victory has attacked us two or three times but has been resolutely held off and they have since retreated. No casualties have been sustained by your servants but we will be able to leave only when our Lord can reach us." They planned to send this message in the hands of two nobles who were to leave on three high-sterned boats. However when it came to assigning the crews for these boats there was a mad scramble to get a place which degenerated into a free-for-all in which swords were used and only the strongest among them were able to get on the boats. Some who were not strong enough to compete with them made for Princess Shin Min Hla's boat, swamping it and some were drowned as a result. The Princess

However made the shore but she was captured by a party of Binnya Dala's men. Some valuable horses and elephants became derelict. Binnya Dala neglected to present the princess to the king. Meanwhile, the tree spirit of an *albizzia lebbek* tree in Ava made it known that Prince Minrekyawswa had died and King Minhkaung had sadly formed a flotilla and begun his journey downstream so that he met the party coming up at Tarokmaw.

The abandoned elephants and horses were collected and presented to Razadarit.

Later Razadarit declared that Deinmaniyut being a knowledgeable and efficient minister, should remain at his side as such a minister should not stay far away from his monarch. He recalled that due to the minister's farsightedness, he was able to defeat the Burmese king at Pankyaw and even capture his queen and when Minrekyawswa recklessly mounted an invasion he was able to capture the prince who subsequently died. If the enemy mounted a lightning attack in the future, he said, he would need the services of the minister again. Deinmaniyut professed that he was ready to serve constantly at the king's side if need be. Accordingly he was given the fiefdom of Thittoung while his former fiefdom of Bassein was given to Smim Awananaing. Dala's defences were repaired and improved and Binnya Dala assigned to hold it while Binnya Set was placed in charge of Dagon.

When King Minhkaung reached Dala after a hectic journey he appreciated Dala's preparedness and left it alone. He asked after where his son's remains were buried and on finding it exhumed his bones over which the white umbrella was spread and after the ministers and nobles had paid their respects the remains were placed in a pot of gold which was consigned to the waters at the mouth of the Pe Myit Ti. Then King Minhkaung returned to Ava.

Chapter on the defeat of Minrekyawswa on Wednesday, the 4th waxing day of the moon in the month of Dagu, 775 M.E (1413A.D) and the later disorganisation of Burmese forces at Dala.



Razadarit's son, Prince Binnya Dala kept the capture of Minrekyawswa's consort Shin (or Saw) Min Hla a secret from his father but others reported the matter to Razadarit who was furious that he had been kept in ignorance in such an important matter as the capture of a monarch's daughter. He summoned Binnya Dala but the latter tried to have the senior queens intercede for him. The king did not permit this saying that "Peasants who desire a certain woman even sell their sons in order to be able to put up the required bride-price while my son has neglected to present me with the daughter of a monarch that has fallen into his hands. If my son himself does not respect me, over whom shall I be able to command respect?" Hearing this Binnya Dala

lost his nerve and presented the princess to the king. Later, the king left for Martaban. At Martaban, Deinmaniyut and Minister Maha Thamun had confided among themselves that they should discuss this matter with the king. However, Maha Thamun grew chary of the prospect at the last moment so that Deinmaniyut had to take on that responsibility alone. "My lord and the Burmese are constantly at war which has caused suffering among the people from year to year, and the root cause of this is because my lord has taken the King of Ava's daughter (Shwe Pyi Chantha also known as Sawpyechantha) to wife after her capture," Deinmaniyut submitted manfully to the king "This has embarrassed her father greatly causing this unending strife. If she had been wed with one of the princes her father would not be so furious and his anger would have gradually subsided." The king was angry with Deinmaniyut over this but on his return from Martaban wed her with Binnya Dala. Razadarit's queens teased the king over this matter to make light of it and to appease the king, Deinmaniyut requested the queens to soothe his anger and presented a bolt of suiting and a bowl made of gold weighing a viss (1.6 lb) to the king. Razadarit then asked Deinmaniyut why he was angry with him. When Deinmaniyut replied that he could not know, the king said that in that case he could think about it. After 4 or 5 days had passed he asked Deinmaniyut whether he had found an answer. When Deinmaniyut replied that he had not the king said that he must be feigning ignorance. Only when Deinmaniyut protested that he did not dare tell a lie to the king did the king ask him if he had not advised him to wed Sawpyechantha to one of his sons. When Deinmaniyut replied that he had, the king explained that by doing so he would be giving that son a chance to connive with the Burmese king so that he would be at the mercy of his son who would be able to deprive him of his kingly perquisites any time he liked."

Deinmaniyut confessed that he had indeed never considered it; that he was like a blind man who cannot see whatever that is placed before him.

With the transition into the next year the king went to the Swe Ya forest on hearing that a valuable elephant had appeared in that jungle. King Minhkaung returned to Dala but he made no headway against Prince Binnya Dala and therefore turned towards Dagon which was won and Prince Binnya Set taken. He returned to Dala but again he was unsuccessful. He then made for Bassein. At Bassein, Smim Awananaing was aided by foreigners (Portuguese) with cannon and firearms. Seeing that it was well defended Minhkaung sent a letter to Smim Awananaing, which ran as follows -

"My elder brother and father-in-law to royalty Smim Awananaing being a famous person, I want to see you in person and I hope you will be able to come to me."

Smim Awananaing replied "The Lord of the Golden Palace being a most mighty monarch, I am obliged to see that your wish to see me is fulfilled. However, I dare not place myself at your feet, for I am afraid of your

elder brother (ie. Razadarit). Therefore, if you will wait at the Maw Daw landing in your golden canoe, I will come out from the stockade and place myself on the landing. Early next morning, King Minhkaung came out in his gilded royal canoe, with four white umbrellas spread over him and escorted by a total of 300 high-sterned boats and clinker-built boats. The royal canoe drew alongside the Maw Daw pier. Smim Awanannaing came out dressed and bearing the insignias of his office as a senior minister. He was accompanied by men of wealth and station from the town. He presented the king with many gifts which were received and King Minhkaung in turn gave him many presents and greeted him affably. At this juncture, Nga Nattaw, a retainer with the king's grandson Min Nge Kyawhtin threw his spear at Awananaing. Luckily for the latter, the distance from the boat to the pier was quite considerable so that the spear fell short and to the front of Awananaing. Awananaing remarked sarcastically " You behave like this despite your being a monarch. " and retired within. This incident was seen by the foreigners on the battlements who fired their cannon and a shot splintered the parrot's perch on the royal canoe. After the king was back in camp, he summoned his grandson and asked him whether he had ordered his retainer to throw the spear. On being told that it was not the case, the king had Nga Nattaw bound up with road and sent to Awananaing. When the culprit was brought before Awananaing, he realized that the king had no hand in the morning's incident and admitted that he had been hasty in jumping to conclusions. He also explained that the cannon had not been fired at the king on his orders but that the canoneers fired of their own volition on seeing the spear being thrown. He said "I have faith in Your Majesty and as for this good-for-nothing, since you know him and now that I have seen him, I beg that his life be spared. " He then had the captive freed of his bonds and sent many presents to King Minhkaung as a gesture of respect. This compliment was returned by Minhkaung who sent lavish gifts to Awananaing in return.

On his return to Ava, King Minhkaung summoned the governor of Kanyinmyaung and urged him to keep the defence works of his stockaded town in good repair as it was close to the Talaing country. " Now that I have Prince Binnya Set, son of Binnya Thitathoun, my anger has been assuaged and I will no longer declare war on the Talaing king, " he declared.

Razadarit knew of his son's capture only after he had returned to Pegu from the Swe Ya forest. He made for Dala where he was told that King Minhkaung had returned to Ava and so he returned to Pegu.

After his return from Dala, King Minhkaung no longer resumed hostilities. He spent his days doing meritorious work, sponsoring the building of pagodas and monasteries, engaging in charitable deeds and observing the precepts. Four or five years later, he passed away.

On hearing this news, Razadarit mused how they had spent years fighting each other and that now that Minhkaung was no more, the inexorable law of

impermanence having led Minhkaung away, leaving him alone to ponder on its significance. When his bevy of queens heard him they teased him saying, "Min-hkaung is your brother as well as your father-in-law. Now that he is gone, why don't you march to Ava and take his queens, concubines, the whole lot?"

To this Razadarit retorted that he was now too old for war. From now on he said, he would bear the burden of nurturing them with one shoulder, while he would support the progress of meritorious work with the other. From that day, Razadarit no longer indulged in preparation for war but turned his attention toward the building of religious edifices, the replication of scriptures, in charity, observance of the precepts and religious meditation. But after about two years had passed in this way he was assailed by a great desire to go on an elephant drive and went to the jungle around the Labut-tha-lut creek. There, he was attracted by a handsome elephant which he personally tried to lasso it. The elephant was lassoed but as the elephant tore away, the king's leg was caught in its coils and he was injured in the thigh. The laceration was bone deep so that the king was placed in a canopied stretcher and ten elephants were sent ahead to make a bee-line for Pegu and thus carve out the shortest path for the stretcher bearers. Four physicians accompanied the king on the stretcher to assuage the pain by means of incantations. However, the injury was so severe that the king died on the way.

The king's body was then transferred onto a palanquin and was met by his queens, concubines, princes and princesses at Kamathameinpaik. When the royal family had assembled the body was cremated and the remains collected in an urn of gold. This urn was then buried when a new stockade was raised. King Razadarit who bore the formal title of Thiha Raza surrounded himself with retainers, generals, ministers and nobles who were trustworthy, loyal and skilled in the art of diplomacy and war. He himself was highly qualified in the art of vanquishing enemies (based on the four aspects of ; *bheda upāya* - creating disunity within the ranks of the enemy, *danṭa upāya* - using the threat of severe punishment, *sāma upāya* - cementing unity and promoting solidarity, *dāna upāya* - giving presents and awards) and a monarch but could not withstand Death's assault. Just as one has no defence against a lightning strike he was dragged willy-nilly to the realm of Death. Living beings without exception cannot escape from its clutches unless one has attained the knowledge of the right path and the perception of its fruition. That is why everyone should try to attain the knowledge of the right path and perception of its fruition which are like the celestial thunderbolt and the supernatural weapons which can keep Death's hordes at bay.

On the 6th waxing day of the moon in the month of Dabodwe (January-February) 729 M.E (1367)⁵⁶, with the Sun in Cancer, Mercury in Virgo, Mars in Pisces, the Moon in Leo and Saturn in Scorpio on his horoscope he

⁵⁶ Zwe edition mentions 711 ME ; amended in accordance with palm leaf manuscript

was born as Basum Banset. Later he was known as Binnya Nwe. He assumed the title Razadarit when he ascended the throne. He assumed the name of Sitasum after he had his son Bawlawkayandaw killed.

He left (Pegu) to set up a rival camp and rose up in arms at the town of Dagon on Thursday, 3rd waxing day of the moon in the month of Nayon (May-June) 745 M.E (1383 A.D).

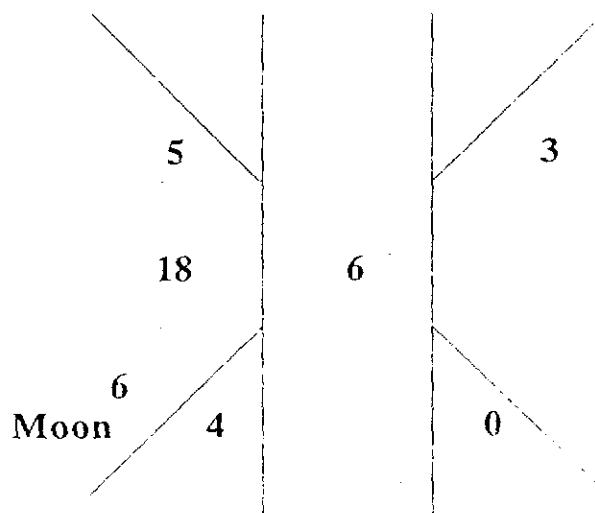
He became king on Thursday, 2nd waxing day of the moon in the month of Dabodwe (January - February) in the same year (1384 A.D).

He passed away in the year 783 M.E. (1451 A.D)

After he assumed the title Thiha Raza and became the monarch Razadarit, he took the advice of his wise counsellors who were learned in the ways of war, diplomacy, martial skills and general knowledge and as a result gained many victories on the battlefield. His life and campaigns have been chronicled by men of learning in order that later generations may profit from his experiences.

Born	729 M.E ⁵⁷
Ascended the throne	745 M.E
Passed away	783 M.E

Razadarit's Horoscope



⁵⁷ amended in accordance with palm leaf manuscript