

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 *Dîpankarā* 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 fortynine 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 (*pārāmī*) is composed of ten aspects:— (*dāna*) giving; (*sīla*) conduct; (*nikkhama*) renunciation or taking to the forest as ascetic; (*paññā*) perception; (*vīriya*) diligence; (*sacca*) 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 *Sanguttara* 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
Hence, (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 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 cheekily 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. Jukhotai 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 Samî, Lawa Seyaw and Kâwaw 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 run 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 separating 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 headed towards the west where it died also. The wise men seeing this pronounced that a succession of eight kings would ascend the throne of which seven would pass away 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, ruled with justice and brought benefits to his people.

During the time that Wareru ruled in Martaban, Tarabya ruled in Pegu. Embassies were 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 if he was attacked by enemies.

Parathihapate, King of Pagan (Bagan) sent an expeditionary force under the command of Yazathinkyan to take Dala. Tarabya, fearing that Pegu would be attacked eventually asked Wareru to come to his aid. Wareru, being a man of honour marched with his army and joining forces with Tarabya headed for Wakamo where Min Hpyit Taw could not face them and withdrew and Wakamo was easily captured then advancing on Dala, it was likewise captured when Yazathinkyan also withdrew. In the same way, Henzada was taken after Gapaukhyu retreated, and Kyunthado captured after Nga Myat Noe was killed in battle. After the Talaing country was cleared of Burmese governors placed there by the 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 to Pegu while he went there in advance.

Wareru was encamped in Mogaung when Tarabya returned from Pegu with his contingent of foreign musketeers and in battle formation. As his boats were set on fire by a raging forestfire Wareru had to come out into the open. Seeing the battle pennants on the war elephant of Tarabya, Wareru made a vow and poured water from a golden bowl on top of his elephant calling to witness the gods around him that for his aid Tarabya's enemies had been defeated and his fiefs restored to him, but that Tarabya had repaid him with treachery so that he prayed that he would be victorious in the coming battle. In the single combat on elephants between Wareru and Tarabya, Kawhmuthauk, Wareru's warrior speared Tarabya's elephant making it turn back. Not having the time to award his warrior, Wareru tossed his napkin to him and continued in his pursuit of Tarabya who was caught as he made for the cover of Kyatpawta forest. However, he spared Tarabya's life as monks interceded 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 speared 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

³ "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 "takwa" 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

kuñ 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. Byatapa 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 Taikala.

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 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 pagoda¹³. 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 ale 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"

¹⁷ 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 kwam' '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

"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 "hinnta", 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; *yogamāyā* - 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; *jīvitamāyā* - deception to escape death; *mahāvināsa musā* - deception to escape ruination; *vyāpāti 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 Supinna²¹. 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 d̄d̄hta 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 mañ 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, Dīññyavatī, 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; dīn 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; Manwam -1; Masiun -1; Baw Lakwan -1; Mabo -1; Mazo -1; Mandeva -1; Ma U -1; Bawgala -1; Mawat -1; Samtwe -1; Baw Gamunān -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 Panu 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 kotow 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 town²⁸. 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

²⁸ 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 tuiñ 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 laifolia*

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 toward 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 D'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 gasidvoñ goñ, gamanson do kkhan do*", then another "*Putte battoṅgasi dvon gaman soñ 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 Kamyyin 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 Nadaw²⁴ 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".

²⁴ 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, E 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 Smin 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 shooing 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. Smin 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 Smin 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 *Chievhmai* 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 marriage. 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 *daṇḍa 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 *daṇḍa 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 ceu 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