

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁵⁰ cannibal in Pali

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Baikamyin reached Sandoway.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁵³ that is about thirty minutes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Minrekyawswa began to move with land and riverine forces.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Burmese meanwhile moved their camp to Bye Myay.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This ditty also became popular in the town of Dala.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

The prince awarded Emuntaya.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Razadarit was staying at Thebyuchaung when Minrekyawswa's courier arrived and after the message had been conveyed Razadarit told the courier "Tell my nephew that he need not come up to Pegu but that I will be coming down to Dala." Then the courier submitted to the king that he had also been given the task of looking up Emuntaya. Emuntaya was summoned and Minrekyawswa's presents were duly given to him. King Razadarit then gave a green velvet robe and 16 bolts of material each enough for a suit as presents for Minrekyawswa and a bowl made of gold and a length of quality cloth for the courier. All these were duly reported on the courier's return. When King Minhkaung heard that Razadarit had returned to Pegu he set off with Prince Minrethihathu and Thado (with his deputy Turinkyaw) each commanding a column, the two columns having a total of 50 war elephants, 500 horse and 10,000 troops for Salat. At that time Salat was held by Smim Byat Za with 1,000 men, 5 war elephants and 30 horse. Meanwhile King Razadarit was in Kyat Zana where he built a pavilion with tiered roofs and held a hair washing ceremony. The ceremony was held on the 5th day of the waxing moon in the month of Dabaung (Feb.- Mar.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(ie approximately 3 am)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

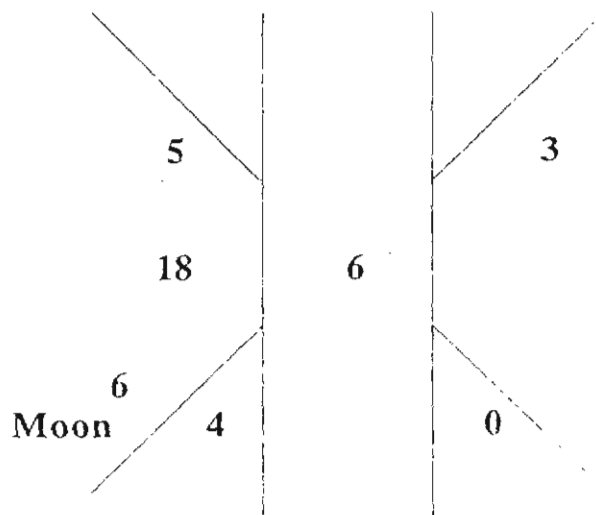
He became king on Thursday, 2nd waxing day of the moon in the month of Dabodwe (January - February) in the same year (1384 A.D).

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

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

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

Razadarit's Horoscope



⁵⁷ amended in accordance with palm leaf manuscript