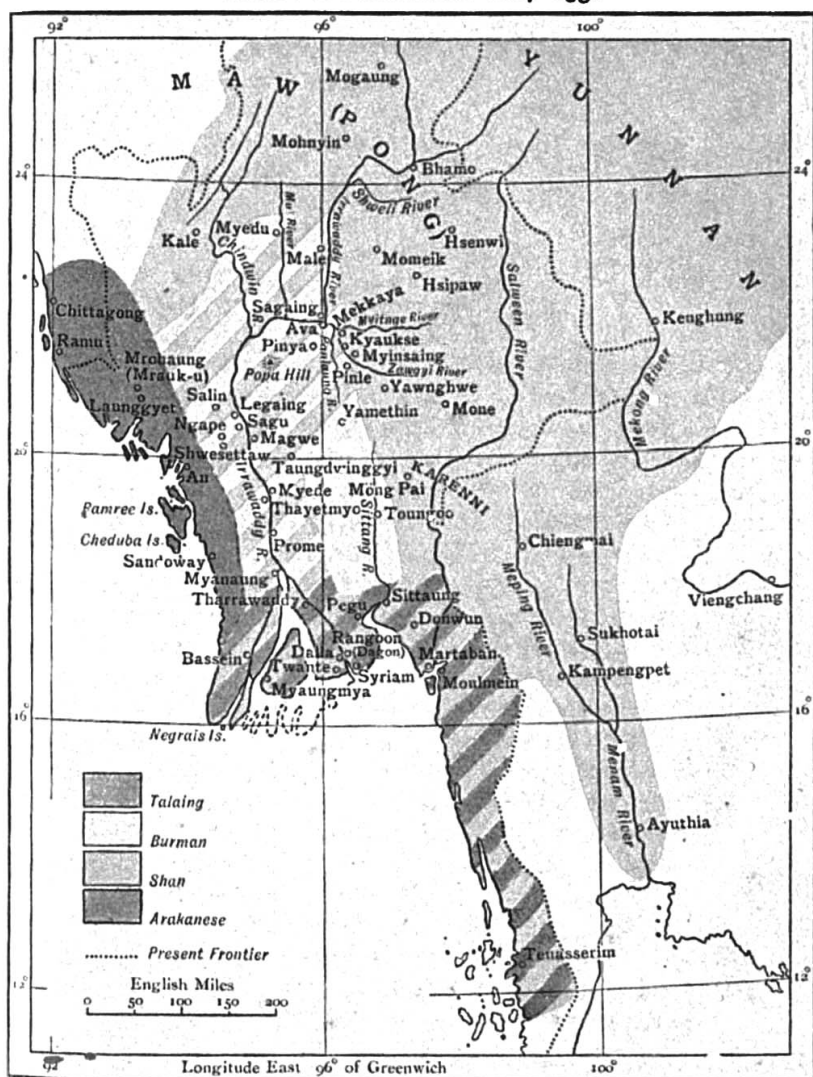


CHAPTER III
SHAN DOMINION 1287-1531

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SHAN DOMINION 1287-1531

- (a) AVA pp. 75-109
- (b) PEGU pp. 110-22
- (c) TOUNGOO pp. 123-5

THE Great Khan accepted the conquest of Burma now that it was an accomplished fact, and for the next two and a half centuries the princelets who ruled the various parts of Upper and even of Lower Burma usually held authority under the Chinese seal. Technically they were Chinese governors; actually they were the native chieftains who would have ruled there in any case, and they did as they pleased.

Since the Nanchao barrier states (p. 13) were henceforth the Chinese province of Yünnan, the road lay open and there was no longer any impediment to communication with Burma. That being so, we should now witness a marked advance in Burmese culture, for China possesses the greatest civilisation in the East. What we actually witness is the exact opposite: for the next two and a half centuries there is a marked decline. Instead of the great dynasty with the refining influence of the palace, we have half a dozen squabbling little courts, all of them, even when not positively barbarous, busily engaged in degrading the country with civil war. Sacred literature languishes, and if pagodas continue to be built, most of them are of a sort which might just as well remain unbuilt, while even the best cannot be mentioned in the same breath as the temples of Pagan. When at length the darkness lifts, it is from the opposite direction to China that two rays of light appear: one is a religious revival from Ceylon, the other is the birth of vernacular literature.¹

Indeed it was not the Tartars who destroyed the Pagan

¹ See note "Chinese inscription" p. 337.

monarchy. It collapsed temporarily under the defeat but could have risen again had it been a real government. The Tartars did not wish to upset existing conditions, and gave the royal family every support in re-establishing itself. It was washed away by a wave of migration which was beyond the control of a purely dynastic government. What we are now to witness is not so much a series of internal squabbles as a racial movement affecting all Indo-China: the Shans swarm south, east, and west. In 1229 they founded the Ahom kingdom of Assam along the Brahmaputra river, about the same time they made themselves felt in Tenasserim, in 1294 they raided north Arakan, and in 1350 they founded the kingdom of Siam—Siam is the same word as Shan, and she is simply the greatest of Shan states. In Burma they overran the entire country, swamping Burman and Talaing alike. To-day they are the most numerous race in Indo-China, numbering eighteen million.

CHAPTER IIIA

AVA 1287-1555

AFTER murdering his father, Thihathu did not go to Upper Burma, for he knew it was no use trying to murder Tartars. He murdered three of his brothers—the nearest he could get to the Massacre of the Kinsmen (p. 338)—and then tried to recover the Delta. He went to Bassein but instead of trying to make common cause with its lord, his eldest brother Uzana, he hacked him in pieces as he lay ill in bed. He then attacked his other brother Kyawswa at Dalla but was driven off. So he went to Pegu where Tarabya, the lord who had rebelled, shut his gates and stood on the wall hurling insults which stung Thihathu into coming out with a bow to shoot him in such fury that he succeeded only in making the arrow hit himself, with fatal results.

The surviving son Kyawswa returned to Pagan where he paid annual tribute and in 1297 sent his eldest son to receive investiture from the Emperor himself, not as king of Burma, for the kingdom had ceased to exist, but as prince of the Upper Burma state. This state lasted till 1555 and ran from Myedu in Shwebo district and Bangyi in Monywa district to below Prome, and from Laungshe in Pakokku district to Kyaukse; sometimes its authority was real in this area, but sometimes it was not, and from the first the rulers of places such as the recently founded Toungoo (p. 123) were independent chiefs rather than governors.

At the same time as he invested Kyawswa, the Emperor sent a seal to Athinkaya as prince of Myinsaing in Kyaukse district; Hsenwi had been similarly recognised in 1289, and Mohnyin¹ in 1296. Athinkaya was eldest of the Three Shan Brothers who now became the real rulers of Upper Burma;

¹ *Parker* "Précis."

the second was Yazathinkyan chief of Mekkaya, the youngest Thihathu chief of Pinle. Their towns, all in Kyaukse district, command passes into the Shan hills and were exactly where a chieftain ruling over hill and plain would fix his stronghold—to command the plain and afford easy escape to his ancestral highlands. They were sons of a hill chief¹ who owing to a family quarrel had fled in 1260 to Myinsaing where there was already a Shan colony; he settled and proceeded to have these three sons and a daughter who married Thihathu, the parricide prince of Prome, for the family rose in favour and Narathihapate entrusted them with the Kyaukse area. The Three Brothers were not quite such savages as some of the later Shan rulers of Upper Burma, for they had been bred at Narathihapate's court. Probably they were loyal so long as the monarchy was unshaken; but when it fell they went their own way and had every temptation to do so because, being in power at Kyaukse, the granary of Upper Burma, they could control the kingdom through its food supplies.

When Kyawswa received the investiture brought back from the Chinese court by his son, he was so pleased that he summoned a great meeting of all his lieges to hear the reading of the imperial rescript. But the Shan brothers would not attend, and in 1298 they plotted with the dowager queen Saw, who thought Kyawswa was not paying her sufficient attention.

Queen Saw spake unto the king saying "My Lord's ancestor Anawrahta founded eleven villages in the Kyaukse rice land, and the fields thereof are fair as the fields of Pegu. Let my Lord go and see them, and worship at the pagoda on Pyetkaywe Hill." And the king believed her and went with a host of all four-arms, and when he was come to Kyaukse he ascended to the Thalyaung pagoda and looked forth from the top of the hill, and lo! he beheld the monastery² built at Myinsaing by the Three Shan Brothers. And he asked "What is that shining there?" And queen Saw, being of one mind with the ministers, answered "It is the offering made by us and the Three Brothers on behalf of my Lord. Let my Lord go there and ask a blessing on it." And the king went there unheeding to ask a blessing on it, for he believed her. But when he was come to Myinsaing the Three Brothers made him wear the yellow robe and shave his head and dwell under a guard in that monastery. (*Hmannan* I. 368.)

¹ "Chief of Beinnaka town" says *Hmannan* I. 366. But *GUB* I. i. 198 says *beinnaka* simply means "a man."

² Together with it the Three Brothers built the Nandawye pagoda.

Having set up his sixteen-year-old son Sawhnit they reported to Yünnan that Kyawswa was justly deposed for asking Chiengmai to send an army into Burma, and for intercepting envoys whom the new Talaing state of Pegu was sending to Yünnan.

What had really happened was that they had murdered Kyawswa with his eldest son, his monk and a hundred principal followers, alleging him to be in league with the Chinese to enslave the country. He was chained by the leg in a pigsty while they seized his harem; at his death he said "None of my ancestors were ever executed with the sword. Either throw mé into the river or strangle me." So they strangled him, and buried him under the palace threshold; but a tempest raged for seven days and his ghost appeared complaining of such ill treatment; so they cremated his remains and cast them into the river; then the tempest subsided.¹ They also burnt Pagan, killed such Chinese as were settled there, killed some more princes, forcibly seized the princesses, and went raiding beyond Male (in Shwebo district), then in the area occupied by the Yünnan government.

Scions of the fallen house applied to the Emperor for protection. The Yünnan commandant asked leave to march with 6,000 men, but the Emperor, in granting sanction, authorised up to 12,000, remarking that it was best to be on the safe side, as the rumour about Chiengmai sending help might turn out to be true. The expedition marched in 1300 and besieged the Brothers in three walled towns at Myinsaing. On their walls the Brothers mounted balistae, and in one assault the Chinese lost 500 men through the arrows, blocks of stone, and beams which were hurled down on the stormers.

Finally the Brothers bought off the commanders with 800 taels of gold and 2,200 taels of silver (66 lb. of gold and 183 of silver), and they withdrew to Yünnan after letting their men help on the Kyaukse irrigation works, constructing Thindwe canal. At the high feast that followed their departure, Thihathu the Shan Brother danced and sang in triumph; the words of the song² were his own and they ran:

¹ See note "Royal drowning" p. 338. Kyawswa blends with the warrior prince Minrekyawswa (p. 95) to form the Minkyawswa Nat spirit, *Temple* 56.

² *Anthology* 0.

တရုတ်လာသည်။	The Chinks came down the passes,
ရိုင်းရိုင်းလော့၊ရိုင်းရိုင်း။	Roaring, boys, roaring ;
မြားမှိုင်းရွာသည်။	The rain of their arrows
ဖြိုဖြိုလော့၊ဖြိုဖြို။	Pouring, boys, pouring.

This is the end of Chinese interference resulting from the 1287 expedition, but none the less there was trouble for those commanders when they reached home. This is the relevant extract from the Chinese record :

The civil councillor and the pacificator had already surrounded the city, and the food and fuel were exhausted. The Burmese were just on the point of capitulating when these two individuals accepted a heavy bribe to withdraw their troops, the pretext being that the climate was hot and malarious. Let them be executed.

Men now deserted Pagan, for she was clearly ill-omened. But there were probably other reasons as well. Whether the climate had hitherto been fertile or not (p. 15), it was certainly unfertile now, and the soil of Myingyan district assumed its present desolate and barren aspect. Derudation of the forests to provide fuel for pagoda bricks had doubtless lessened the rainfall, and extensive irrigation at Kyaukse might attract rainfall thither from Pagan.

Crops grow there, but not in such quantity as to supply a city of some 50,000 inhabitants who eat rice. There was rice in the Delta, but it was far away and in any case it was not to be had, for the Delta was now under a hostile chief. There was rice in Kyaukse, but a capital there would be too far from the country's one highway, the Irrawaddy river. It was necessary to find a site which should be on the Irrawaddy and accessible to the rice of Kyaukse.

The obvious site was Ava in Sagaing district, where the Myitnge river brought down the grain boats from Kyaukse. But the omens were adverse to Ava, and as the ancients in their wisdom knew better than to disregard omens, Thihathu the Shan Brother ceased to consider Ava and in 1312 set up his Golden Palace at Pinya nearby. He had only himself to consider now, for one of his elder brothers had died and he had just poisoned the other. The opening of the palace was a great event, and at the feast the dowager queen Saw presented a golden belt and a golden tray which had been handed down in the royal family since the time of Anawranta 1044-77.

She had no children and she had long accepted the Shan as one of the family. He was worth accepting, for he had all power, and the Three Brothers certainly became part of the family when they seized the harem.

Thihathu built pagodas and shared the merit with the son of Kyawswa, the master he had murdered. This son **Sawhnit 1298-1325** and his son **Uzana 1325-69** continued to rule Pagan as *myosa* governors, and with them the dynasty of Anawrahta ended, save on the distaff side where it merged with the new rulers.

The only specific mention of the Ari after their overthrow by Anawrahta (p. 26) occurs in connection with Thihathu's son Sawyun who in 1314 enumerated Ari among his armed retainers; apparently they were like the warrior abbots of contemporary Christendom.

Unlike some of his successors, Thihathu was a Buddhist, with a monk as his teacher, and the 1829 chroniclers regard him as a wise ruler; thus, he would tell one of his sons to attack another in his fief, and meanwhile warn the second son that the first was marching against him. His family ruled till 1364. His son Sawyun set up at Sagaing in 1315 a line which held the north and west independently of the elder branch at Pinya.

The Shans, having dwelt so long in isolated valleys, seem to have inherited centrifugal instincts, and for the next two centuries Burma was the victim of separatist tendencies. Taungdwingyi, with Toungoo, probably under Burmans, and Kyaukse, probably under Shan invaders, revolted. Yet amidst such revolts the following inscription occurs:—

This realm of Pagan is so named because it is the fairest and dearest of lands. It is also called Arimaddana because its people are warriors who vanquish their foes, and even its name is terrible. Its folk are free from pain or danger, they are skilled in every art, they possess the tools of every craft, they are wealthy, the revenues are past telling and the land is full of useful things. Verily it is a land more to be desired than fairy land. It is a glorious realm and its people are famed for their splendour and power. The monastery I have built stands to the east of the capital. (Year 1343. *Tun Nyein* 134.)

The memory of Pagan must have seemed like a golden age to the donor of the inscription, Narathihapate's daughter Mi Saw U,

who was queen to her brother Kyawswa 1287-98 and to his supplanter **Thihathu 1312-24**. Of her sons, one resigned the crown in high dudgeon and entered a monastery on finding that his brother and successor,¹ **Ngasishin 1343-50**, had collected no fewer than five white elephants.

At Sagaing the family assassinated each other and finally the state there passed to a kinsman by marriage. Then Narathu, chief of the Pinya state, angry at an outsider's elevation in Sagaing, asked the Maw Shans to oust him. The Maw Shans had long been in their states to the north, but now they were doubtless greatly strengthened by immigration. They accepted the invitation and swarmed down on Sagaing. Its lord made his elephant drunk on fermented rice, opened the gate, and let it loose on the Shans. But, maddened by their darts, it ran back into the town, knocking down the houses. What with the Shans outside and the elephant inside, the townfolk all stampeded into the jungle, so that when the Shans entered they found nothing but two old men. But they remembered that there were plenty of people in Pinya to carry off as slaves, so they crossed the river, looted Pinya, and went home rejoicing with three white elephants. Narathu regretted his invitation, for they carried him away also. Crowds of Burmans fled to Toungoo,² and with this year 1364 such migrations became a regular feature during the Shan irruption into Upper Burma, so that Toungoo became the stronghold of the Burmese race.

After the Maw Shans had departed, **Thadominbya 1364-8**, one of the Sagaing family, killed off his kinsmen (p. 338) who stood in his way there and at Pinya, drained the swamps round Ava, and built the town. It was usually the Burmese capital during the next five centuries; till two generations ago the English, like the Chinese, referred to Burma as Ava, and for the Shans the king of Burma was till the end "The Lord of the Golden Palace at Ava."

On his mother's side Thadominbya was descended from the Three Brothers and his father was a Shan notable of Tagaung through whom he claimed descent from the primitive Pyusawti lineage. He proved his primitive origin in various

¹ He is the Ngasishin Nat spirit, *Temple 57*.

² *Tun Nyein 149*.

ways, such as killing a Toungoo rebel and eating a meal on the corpse's chest. One of his right hand men was a dacoit whom he captured and raised to high office instead of torturing him to death as he had originally intended; however, this method of selection was occasionally used as late as 1885.

His country was in uproar to the south. In 1359 Toungoo had raided Kyaukse and still went its own way. He reduced Taungdwingyi in Magwe district, but while trying to take Sagu he was seized with small-pox. As he lay dying at the age of 25, a pagan who had no respect for Buddhism, he told an officer to return to the palace and kill his queen Saw Umma lest she should pass to another man. The officer went upstream to the palace and told her his orders, so she then and there married him. She was of the fallen Pagan house, and, as part of the regalia, had already passed through the hands of four Pinya chiefs in succession. The couple now executed everyone who opposed them, crossed over to Sagaing, and ruled there. But the ministers would not have them, and hawked round the crown, till at last

Minkyiswasawke 1368-1401 accepted it. He drove out the Sagaing couple; the husband absconded and Saw Umma was given to the officer who captured her. Minkyiswasawke was descended from the parricide Thihathu's union with the Shan sister, and so could claim from both Narathihapate 1254-87 and the Shan Brothers. As a child of two he had been carried away into captivity with his brothers and father, the lord of Thayetmyo, when king Minhti of Arakan raided it in 1333. So he was brought up in Arakan; on his release he became *thugyi* of Amyin in Sagaing district and when he became king he made an Arakanese monk his primate.¹

He now built the Zidaw weir in Kyaukse district and repaired the embankment of Meiktila lake. While superintending work on the lake he met a villager of Wunzin and finding him learned in ancient traditions called him to court where he became famous as the wise minister Wunzinminyaza and lived till 1422.

In 1371 Minkyiswasawke met Binnya U, king of Pegu;

¹ *Tun Nyein* 146, 159. He also built Shwethelut pagoda at Thayetmyo in 1373 to commemorate the saving of his life when carried away as a child.

they exchanged their betel boxes, spittoons, and such like articles of pomp, and delimited the frontier together. But when Razadarit ascended the throne of Pegu in 1385, his uncle wrote to Minkyiswasawke offering to hold Pegu as a vassal state if he would help to oust Razadarit :—

I, Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya, bow at thy feet, O king of the Golden Palace at Ava, and pray that thou march against Razadarit before he is firm upon his throne. I will bring men by water. When we have conquered him, do thou keep the heart-wood and leave me the bark (*Razadarit Ayedawpon*).

This started a war between the Upper Burma and Talaing states which lasted a generation. Although Pegu town was never captured and finally held its own, the fighting was almost entirely in the Delta. Possibly it was a war of migration, in that the main avenue of Shan pressure was from the north and the Ava state, thus reinforced, was able to swarm down on Pegu. The Burmese base was Prome and their usual line of advance was down the Hlaing river to Dagon, sometimes with another string of levies going down the Sittang valley from Toungoo. With them marched contingents from allied states, such as Mohyin, Kale, Yawnghwe; indeed the Talaings sometimes refer to their adversaries as simply "the Shans." The total strength of the invaders would usually be about 12,000.¹ This went on every other year or so, both sides going home for the rains, and there was no warfare in any sense understood by the regular soldier. Now, as to the end of time, it was desultory irregular fighting, consisting largely of ambushes and skirmishes. Occasionally some determined leader would bring about a battle in which there would be real fighting, and then men could be brave and destructive. But the casualties mentioned are seldom more than a decimal per cent. of the numbers engaged and it is difficult to avoid the impression that most of the fighting was of the type not uncommon in mediæval countries, when there was as much shouting as killing and the wretched villagers were the chief sufferers. Not improbably it resembled the fighting which a professional soldier² witnessed between

¹ Partly because the *Hmannan* figure is usually 120,000 and the chronicles habitually overestimate by ten, see "Numerical Note" p. 333.

² *Crawford* II. 39.

Burmans and Talaings in 1827 when "the courage and conduct of both parties were on the very lowest scale."

The energy which should have been directed to reaching a decision was dissipated on tortuous strategems. Thus, a commander would desert to the enemy, complaining of oppression, and fight bravely on their side until the critical moment arrived when he would reveal his true colours with great effect. An ambassador would be arrested and held as hostage. A lord would ask the enemy prince to receive him and his wife as they were in fear of their lives; and when the enemy prince came by boat to meet the distressed lady at the appointed place, her curtained barge would suddenly disgorge a band of armed men. One side would invite the other to discuss terms at a pagoda, and ride up on elephants with daggers concealed in their clothes, but on the way one of the lords would relent and shout a warning to the enemy lords as they came riding along; he is called upon by the infuriated king to explain why he gave away the plot, and the delighted chronicler is thus enabled to put into his mouth a noble reply on the imperative necessity of honourable dealing. A besieged commander forges a letter from his king announcing his early arrival with overwhelming forces, sends men out with this letter and they pretend to get in again through the lines of the besiegers who capture them, read the letter, and beat a terrified retreat. A leader challenges the enemy's best commander to single combat in war canoes, and when his canoe is fully engaged, three other war canoes, which have been concealed, dart out and finish him.

The ideal of Burmese warriors was cunning. Yet there are less unattractive stories, some of which probably happened at one time or another, and in any case they mirror the mind of the people. The commanders and even kings sometimes challenge each other to single combat, and actually fight, though seldom with serious results, partly no doubt because they felt due respect for their august skins, but also because it was mainly an affair of elephants, and one of the two elephants would find the other too strong for him, unlock his tusk, and turn tail. Or take the following Burmese account of a Talaing exploit in 1415 when Minrekyaawsa, the famous

Burmese prince, is besieging Dalla, defended by prince Binnyadala, son of king Razadarit. The town starves and Razadarit sends gold so that the besieged may buy food—how, the chronicler does not explain. The gold is smuggled into the town by Emuntaya, a Talaing officer from Pegu, who deserts to the Burmese until they let him fight close up to the walls, whereupon he slips into the town.

Then prince Minrekyawswa shouted out to prince Binnyadala "Emuntaya spake untruth and hath done me disrespect. By guile hath he entered the town. But if he can come out and return to his king, I will give him great gifts." When prince Binnyadala told these words to Emuntaya, he said "Son of my glorious master, tell them that Emuntaya will go up to Pegu to-morrow." And the Burmese shouted "Hath Emuntaya wings to fly above? Or is he a snake that can creep beneath? He entered the town by guile only." And Emuntaya answered them "I shall win forth, keep what guard ye please." And prince Minrekyawswa charged his captains saying "To-morrow Emuntaya will come forth, saith he. Keep ye watch to take him." And they kept double watch by land and water. But Emuntaya gave unto the king's son Binnyadala the five *viss* of gold that the king had entrusted unto him, and then he made the counselors and captains go far away, and before dawn he caused men to make a raft of plantain trees, and he thrust his sword inside one of the trees. And he made himself appear like a corpse, smearing his cheeks and ears with turmeric, and wrapping his body round with old matting. And four or five women let down their hair and beat their breasts and wept as they wailed "Other husbands cleave to wife and child through good and ill, and forsake them not in war or famine. But thou hast forsaken us and gone away. What shall we do, thy wife and orphans, in this cruel war, this cruel famine?" Thus wailing they lifted up the corpse, while the Burmese soldiers who were near the Shan-Death gate of the town looked on. Gently the women laid the body on the plantain raft, with an earthen dish and a cup of rice and a chicken; and they lit oil lights and placed them at the head, and pushed forth the raft into the middle of the stream. And the women followed it beating their breasts and weeping and crying aloud "Shalt thou forsake us thus?" But the raft floated along and came near to a Burmese boat, and the Burmese said "See! It is a corpse," and they pushed it away with a bamboo. And the raft was carried up stream by a strong flood tide, and when it was come to Ta-paw-ta-ngauk [in Pegu district near Kyauktan], because it was now far from the Burmese boats, Emuntaya took his sword from out the plantain log and went up to Pegu. . . . And prince Minrekyawswa sent a messenger to Pegu . . . and the messenger asked king Razadarit saying "My master asks if it be true that Emuntaya hath returned to thee, as men say." And king Razadarit

called Emuntaya and he came before the messenger. And when the messenger saw him, he gave him a horse with golden trappings and a velvet robe from prince Minrekyawswa. (*Hmannan* II. 44.)

Minkyiswasawke attacked such places as Pankyaw north of Pegu, Hmawbi, Dalla, Dagon, and the then town of Hlaing, and after succeeding in some cases in spite of the mosquitoes,¹ would withdraw for the rains. In 1390 Razadarit captured Myaungmya with its rebel lord whose son Nawrahta and son-in-law Pyanchi fled to Minkyiswasawke. Nawrahta was made lord of Salin and Pyanchi lord of Prome and henceforth they are prominent leaders on the Burmese side. In 1391 Razadarit cleared the Burmese out of their frontier garrison Myanaung (Lunhse, Kudut) in Henzada district. Minkyiswasawke tried to recapture it but was beaten off with the loss of his own golden barge, which the Talaings returned, with a chivalrous letter. Also, contrary to usual practice, they treated the Burmese wounded humanely and even returned them, for Razadarit made several efforts to stop the war and live on friendly terms; but the Burmese always insisted on renewing the struggle.

In 1371 the *sawbwas* of Kale in the Upper Chindwin district and Mohnyin in Katha district each applied to Minkyiswasawke asking him to help oust the other and promising to become tributary. The wise minister Wunzinminyaza said "Temporise and let them fight it out till they are exhausted and then you can get both." The king did so, and secured a nominal supremacy, but in 1373 Mohnyin raided the frontier at Myedu in Shwebo district and the king had so much trouble that he sent an embassy to Yünnan in 1383. China thereupon graciously appointed him governor of Ava and ordered Mohnyin to behave.² In 1393 Mohnyin came again in spite of the homily; the lord of Legaing in Minbu district marched to Tagaung against him but was driven headlong into Sagaing town while the Shans burnt the houses and monasteries outside the walls until Thilawa of Yamethin came up and broke them, pursuing them as far as Shangon (20 miles N.W. of Sagaing town) where he heaped their corpses in piles. Thilawa was a great character. He was brother-in-law to the king and had refused the crown in 1368, saying "I do not

¹ *Hmannan* I. 430.

² Parker "Précis."

open my mouth to speak three words a day. You had better choose Minkyiswasawke." He laughed only thrice in his life, one occasion being at Yamethin when his wife interrupted a cock-fight he was watching to tell him that the Shans were rushing the town; she was so dishevelled that even he smiled; but he finished the cock-fight before driving off the Shans.

In 1374 the throne of Arakan was vacant and some of the faction-ridden people asked Minkyiswasawke to send a king. He sent his uncle Sawmungyi, charging him to cherish the people and rule justly. On Sawmungyi's death in 1381 he sent his own son by the daughter of the wise minister Wunzin-minyaza; but this son oppressed the Arakanese and soon came fleeing back to Ava.

Like every other chief of Ava, Minkyiswasawke had even less control over Toungoo than over other outlying areas. But when he found its chief, Pyanchi, becoming friendly with Pegu in 1377, he told his brother, lord of Prome, to inveigle Pyanchi into a visit and kill him. The king's brother carried out instructions with the skill of an artist. He wrote to Pyanchi "Come and marry your son to my daughter." Pyanchi accepted the invitation and came with his son to Prome, staying just outside at Nawin where during the night his host fell on him unawares, did him to death, and seized his retinue and much booty. The king rewarded this exploit with rich presents, and the 1829 chroniclers who record the incident classify him as a king with a most upright heart.¹ He died at the age of 70, and after some palace murders was finally succeeded by a younger son.

Minhkaung 1401-22 had been married by his father to Shinminauk, a daughter presented by the chief of the Maw Shans during a friendly mood at the time when the Talaing king Razadarit put to death his own son Bawlawkyantaw (p. 114). A year later, during her first pregnancy, she longed for strange food from the Delta, so the family asked Razadarit, though a foe, to send some. Razadarit consulted with his ministers and they perceived that the unborn child must be Bawlawkyantaw himself taking flesh again according to his dying prayer; they sent the food, such as mangoes from Dalla, having bewitched it.

¹ *Hmannan* I. 420, 440.

The child, prince Minrekyawswa, was born in 1391 and was already campaigning at the age of thirteen when he accompanied the 1404 expedition to Arakan. This expedition was a reprisal for an Arakanese raid on Yaw and Laungshé in Pakokku district. It was completely successful, for the Burmese, marching from Minbu up the An Pass where they broke the enemy at Hnanwin Hill¹ and killed the leader, probably the lord of An, occupied the capital Launggyet and drove out the king Naramaikhla who fled to Bengal. They returned after leaving behind as king Anawrahtaminsaw, who next year was sent the five regalia and a bride aged thirteen, Sawpyechantha, the sister of Minrekyawswa.

The Onbaung (Hsipaw) and Yawnghwe *sawbwas* entered into friendly relations with Minhkaung, partly owing to the tact of Wunzinminyaza. In 1406 the Burmese, siding with Kale, occupied Mohnyin in Katha district, overrunning the state and killing the chief. China sent an envoy² to expostulate with the Burmese, who withdrew as they would doubtless have done in any case. In 1407 Minhkaung, who had for years been recognised as governor by China, sent a mission to Yünnan. In 1413 the northern Shan state of Hsenwi ravaged the Ava villages and sent some prisoners to Peking, but Minrekyawswa broke the Hsenwi host at Wetwin near Maymyo, himself killing their leader in single combat on his elephant; in the next year Hsenwi made another foray at the instigation of Razadarit, whose envoys travelled via Chiengmai, carrying a considerable weight of gold as an inducement. Two Shan brothers, chiefs of Mawke and Mawdon in Shwebo district, attacked Myedu until Minrekyawswa drove them off in 1414; in 1415, while he was away in the Delta, they came back and ravaged up to the walls of Ava, which they invested for a time.³

Taking advantage of the palace troubles which attended Minhkaung's accession, Razadarit made several raids, and in 1406 he came up the Irrawaddy river. It is characteristic of Burmese warfare that though he failed to reduce the Burmese

¹ Sanwingaing Hill in Ngape township, Minbu district.

² Parker "Précis," *BEPEO* 1904 Huber "Une embassy chinoise en Birmanie en 1406."

³ See note. "Smim Payan" p. 339.

garrisons at Prome Myede and Pagan, he simply left them in his rear, pressed on straight to Sagaing and camped there, raising the white umbrella and beating his drums. Minhkaung was taken at a loss and called a great council. Nobody dared speak, for after all there was nothing to be said. But at last an eminent monk of Pinya came forward saying he had eloquence enough to persuade any king in the universe, and he would undertake a parley. Minhkaung consented and the monk went forth riding a tall elephant with a golden howdah, attended by 300 *thadinthon* (fasting elders) robed in white, 300 old men bearing presents, and many elephants also loaded with silks and rich gifts. They met Razadarit on his great barge moored at O-hteinmaw village, north of Shwekyetyet in Mandalay district. There the monk spoke holy words on the sin of bloodshed and Razadarit inclined his ear. It was the most graceful thing to do, for he could not stay for ever in Upper Burma, and although he might have devastated as many villages as he liked, he could hardly reduce the walled town of Ava. He consented to withdraw on the return of a detachment which had gone ravaging up to Tagaung; he even rebuked his men for taking the heads of forty of the Shwekyetyet pagoda slaves.

Having broken up his state barge and built therewith a *zayat* at the pagoda, he went down-stream with all his host and many prisoners from the villages. He had only reached Kyauktalon, the landing stage below Ava, when, looking back, he saw the smoke ascend from his *zayat* which the Burmese were already burning; and when, lower still, he received news of his daughter's capture he could with difficulty be restrained from returning. She had been taken by the Prome garrison under the son-in-law of his enemy Laukpya and was now sent to the Ava harem.

Razadarit executed her husband for failing to prevent her capture, and as soon as the rains were over he invested Prome. On hearing that Minhkaung was coming in great strength along the east bank of the Irrawaddy, the Talaing commanders Byat Za and Deinmaniyut wished to withdraw all forces to the west bank where the majority already lay at Thalesi lower down. But the commander of three stockades at Nawin, just north of Prome, insisted on being left where he was, and

Razadarit consented, over-riding his two senior commanders. Minhkaung arrived before he was expected, for his men covered the last forty-five miles down the river from Myede in a single night, planted their scaling ladders at dawn, and were swarming inside the three stockades before the Talaings had rubbed the sleep out of their eyes.

But although Minhkaung killed or captured them all, from the commander downwards, the enemy main body was still intact on the west bank and now proceeded to send 300 war canoes upstream to ravage the villagers as far as Thayetmyo and cut his communications. His men had brought nothing but what they slung on their shoulders; in a few days they were starving, and he had to ask for terms. Meeting with a refusal, he promised his liberty to the captive Talaing commander, who was father to two of Razadarit's queens, if he could get them to work on Razadarit's feelings. The captive commander sent this letter to the two queens in Razadarit's camp:—

Suffer me not to die a captive in my old age, without my two daughters to close my eyes. If I die in a foreign land, my regret will drive me to the four hells. I shall never rest till the two kings are at peace. Dear daughters, entreat His Majesty to make peace. (Year 1406, *Hmannan* I 467.)

They came weeping into Razadarit's presence. He consulted Byat Za, who said "He went his own way. He let himself be taken. It is all one whether he lives or dies." Razadarit said to his queens "I overrode Byat Za once, and see the result. I cannot override him again." They therefore sent Byat Za rich presents, including a *vis* (3.65 lb.) of gold, which he promptly returned without an answer. They worried the king again, and he again asked Byat Za, who said "I am concerned with my king's victories, not with women's feelings."

But at last, day after day, clinging to Razadarit's knees, the two queens had their will and he granted terms. In spite of his victory he consented to evacuate Myanaung, although he had won it and it was really a Talaing town. Both sides exchanged prisoners and the frontier remained as before below Prome. The armies fraternised, and Byat Za received especial honour in the camp of his Burmese enemies.

The two princes sent each other richly caparisoned elephants, they exchanged their white umbrellas and plate, and they ate together in high festival. Before going their several ways, they worshipped at the Shwehsandaw pagoda, holding each other by the hand as they mounted the steps, and plighting their troth to eternal love and friendship.

Next year, Minhkaung even acceded to Razadarit's request for a marriage alliance and sent his sister in charge of the minister Wunzinminyaza to Kawliya in Pegu district where she was married to Razadarit amid great rejoicings. Razadarit granted Minhkaung the customs revenue of Bassein. This, and the fact that throughout the fifteenth century Tharrawaddy was subject to Prome and was held by a governor who was appointed, at least nominally, by Ava, suggests that one cause of the war was the need of Ava to trade along the Irrawaddy as far south as possible.

Razadarit could hound his devoted wife into her grave, he could murder his son and wretched suppliants, but when it was necessary to be hard with a purpose he sold his country for a woman's tears. At Prome he had held in the hollow of his hand the young manhood of the Burmese race, with their men of mark from the dynasty downwards. It was his duty to end the struggle for at least a generation. The numbers that would have fallen or passed into captivity there would have been fewer than those who fell during the succeeding years of dreary warfare, and meanwhile his people would have had peace. How little the unctuous promises at the Shwehsandaw pagoda were worth was soon to appear.

After the king of Arakan had fled to Bengal (p. 87), his son fled to Sandoway, where, hearing that Razadarit was at Bassein, he came to pay homage at Bassein and started working on Razadarit's feelings so as to get reinstated in Arakan. Again, there came Minhkaung's younger brother Theiddat (p. 96); he had loyally helped Minhkaung to his throne, going out to do battle in his stead when he wavered, and killing a rival claimant for him; when in 1407 Minhkaung passed him over and appointed Minrekyawswa *yuvaraja* (crown prince), he was naturally furious, rebelled, fought Minhkaung hand to hand on his elephant, and fled to Pegu where Razadarit gave him great state. Minhkaung now sent

a cavalcade of a hundred men with a letter to the chief of Chiengmai. But south of Toungoo they missed their way and strayed into the territory of the Talaing governor of Zayatmyo who sent them under arrest to his king. Razadarit took their papers and read

Letter from Minhkaung, Lord of the Golden Palace, to the King of Chiengmai. Razadarit hath broken the oath he sware in the holy presence of the Shwehsandaw pagoda. . . . He hath received my younger brother who fled because I corrected him for ill-using me. He sendeth no more his tribute of thirty elephants and the customs revenue of Bassein. Whereas he hath thus proved ungrateful and faithless, I will march against him. Do thou also, cousin, march by way of Sittaung. And when I have had my will on Pegu I will give thee its virgin daughters and great elephants and horses and all that thy heart desireth. (*Hmannan* I. 480.)

Razadarit said nothing but released the envoys and sent them back to Minhkaung with the letter, its seals broken. He also told the refugee Arakanese prince to have his way. The prince marched home with Talaing commanders whose levies had strict orders to refrain from the usual excesses and to explain to the population that they made war not on the country but on the Burmese intruders. The people were delighted and came to join them on the way. The townsfolk of the capital Launggyet deserted to them, leaving Anawrahtaminsaw in the palace with only his Burmese guards round him. The Talaings took altogether 3,000 Burmans, probably including the garrison's families, and deported them to the Delta. On arrival there, Anawrahtaminsaw¹ was executed and his little queen Sawpyechantha passed into Razadarit's harem, not however as a concubine but as a full queen.

When her father Minhkaung heard the news he burst into fury and called a council. He might as well not have called it, for he would listen to nothing it said. In vain did Wunzinminyaza and the commanders point out the madness of marching now, for by the times the levies were raised and had reached the Delta, the rains would be on and the Talaing land would be a swamp. Minhkaung would not listen. Raging through the May heat he marched down from Toungoo, with crowds of levies who swarmed over the hapless country like

¹He merges with Nāwrahta (p. 105) into the Shwenawrahta Nat spirit, *Temple* 56.

locusts, ravaging villages by the score. But at Pankyaw, north of Pegu, he was checked and had to stockade himself. The rain never ceased night nor day, his communications were cut, he had no supplies, and soon he was asking for terms again and proposing more marriage alliances. The Talaings took good care that his envoys should see Sawpyechantha waiting humbly on her new lord, but they granted no terms, and proceeded to devise a series of tricks which the chroniclers regard as profound strategy. Once they nearly ambushed Minhkaung with the aid of his refugee brother Theiddat and though Minhkaung got away, Razadarit executed Theiddat for having relented at the critical moment and shouted a warning. The series ended with his sending Lagunein, one of the Talaing heroes throughout these years, to slay Minhkaung while asleep.

Lagunein chose twelve brave men. They took swords and spears and after the second hour of the night they came to king Minhkaung's camp and went round spying it. On the north side they saw where the moat was shallow and the guards few and the fence weak. Now there was an *okhne* bush [Streblus asper, Lour.] outside, so they hid thereunder, and took two stakes out of the fence and entered in. Three men he left at the *okhne* bush; three he left behind, charging them "If the captain riseth up, cut him down"; three he left at the elephant sheds, charging them "If men wake, cut the elephant fastenings"; three he took with him and they went in under the royal hut. And Lagunein stood on the shoulders of his two companions and cut the fastenings and opened the floor and went up on to the hut. There he took the betel box of king Minhkaung and handed it down to the men below. Then he took the king's ruby sword, but when he was about to smite him, the concubine who was set to watch during the night saw him in the light of a lamp and cried aloud "Talaing thief!" and the king awoke and the attendants arose in confusion. But the three men cut the elephant fastenings and many elephants ran loose so that the Burmese said "It is but a false alarm, it is but the elephants breaking loose!" And Lagunein and those with him escaped, and when they arrived outside he counted his men and they were twelve complete, and they returned. But in the Burmese camp there was noise for about the space of two hours. And when Lagunein and his men were come, Razadarit asked "Is it done?" and Lagunein answered saying "My father and mother taught me that he who taketh the life of a consecrated king, his life is not long neither hath he honour among the children of men. Therefore I slew him not, that my days may be long to serve thee. And lest thou believe not that I came to his side, see here his betel box and his ruby sword." And when the betel box and ruby sword were shewn to king Minhkaung's daughter

Sawpyechantha, she wept saying "They are his." And Razadarit was well pleased and he said to Lagunein "I give thee thy life." (*Hmannan* I. 487.) Cf. I Samuel xxvi 6-21.

Next day Minhkaung knew it was not a scare among the elephants, for his betel box and sword were missing. He proceeded to cut his way out. The devoted men around him saw that he got safely through, but his wretched levies were shattered "as a bundle of bamboos is broken and scatters." His queen Shinminauk¹ the Maw Shan mother of Minrekyawswa was captured in the rout, and the south queen Shin Bo-me fell off her elephant and was wandering hopelessly by the banks of a stream when the Master of the Elephants luckily found her. Minhkaung could not be troubled with what became of his queens or his men, many of whom, including all his sick and wounded, were captured; he was busily engaged in performing the remarkable feat of reaching Ava in seven days. There he was in such a state of nerves that he would jump at hearing a drum, and even *nat* spirit dances had to be stopped. He said "They've got the Maw girl. If they have taken Shin Bo-me also, I do not wish to live longer." When, some days later, the Master of the Elephants appeared with Shin Bo-me safe and sound, the king was beside himself with joy and overwhelmed him with rewards. But subsequently Shin Bo-me, vexed at dropping her betel-cutter, happened to utter the Master of the Elephants' name. The king at once became suspicious and questioned him.

And the Master of the Elephants answered "My lord, from the moment I found the queen wandering by the stream I knew that I must die. If I saved her not, she would fall into the enemy's hand, and when she was restored she would tell my lord that though I saw her I saved her not, and then not only myself but my wife and children also would die the death. But if I saved her my lord would never believe me, and I knew that I should die. Yet in very truth, from the day I found her, if when we came to rest it was a wood, I built her a sleeping place on a tree, with branches tied together, but I and the mahout kept watch on the ground till it was dawn, and we placed her on the elephant and continued on our way; and if when we came to rest it was a village, we put her on a house to sleep, but we slept on the ground." And the king said "Fine words!" and they executed him. Thereafter he called the mahout and questioned him and he said

¹ She is the Anaukmibaya Nat spirit, *Temple* 56.

even as the Master of the Elephants had said. And the king repented him exceedingly saying "I have slain a faithful servant" and he gave unto the dead man's son his father's villages and made him Master of the Elephants in his stead. (*Hmannan* I. 490.)

Minhkaung's treatment of the Master of the Elephants reached the ears of the Talaings, and they made a proverb¹ about it—"If you find a man down, leave him down, unless you want to be down yourself."

After this defeat Minhkaung seldom accompanied an advance into Lower Burma but left the war to Minrekyawswa. Now that not only his sister Sawpyechantha, but also their mother, Shinminauk the Maw Shan, was a prisoner in Razadarit's harem, Minrekyawswa became a fiend. "As a crocodile eats his victims, so will I rend the flesh of the Talaings" he said. Sometimes his men, Shans and Burmans who had never seen the sea, lost heavily by being lured into tidal swamps. Sometimes both sides would march into Arakan and fight round Sandoway. In 1412 Minrekyawswa ousted the Arakanese prince whom the Talaings had restored, and in 1413 the Talaings as promptly marched back and turned out the Burmese governors.

But even when Minrekyawswa was recalled to Ava to deal with the Shan trouble which Razadarit had stirred up (p. 87), the Talaings were too exhausted to follow him, and he ended by making their lives unbearable. Numbers of them were deported to Upper Burma. Their great captain Byat Za aged and ended his days in his fief of Myaungmya, other old leaders died off one by one, no fields could be worked in Myaungmya and Bassein for terror of the Burmese, and in 1415 the whole west side paid Minrekyawswa homage. Eastwards he came ravaging almost within sight of the Shwemawdaw pagoda and things were in such a pass that a hundred Talaings would turn tail at the sight of a couple of Shan-Burmans. He kept writing to his father for support, but Minhkaung was ageing and said he was a young hot-head who overestimated the chances of success. None the less Razadarit had only Pegu and Martaban left him and clasped his knees in despair, saying "Why, when I was a lad of sixteen with only two score men at my back, I had won half my kingdom. Minhkaung has a real son, but you sons of mine are useless."

¹ *Razadarit Ayedawbon.*

Yet finally he had his revenge when in 1417 the raging re-incarnation of Bawlawkyantaw (p. 86) came to an end. Razadarit, choosing a day when the omens were favourable, and trusting to Minrekyawswa's impetuosity, set out from his stockade at Kyattale near Twante, lured Minrekyawswa out of his besieging lines at Dalla till he was separated from his men, and then, himself heading some thirty lords on their elephants, dashed out on him. Minrekyawswa's elephant, maddened with a hundred gashes, shook him off and crushed his thigh; he crawled away under an *okhne* bush (Streblus asper, Lour.), but was found and taken to Razadarit's camp. There he refused Razadarit's chivalrous advances and died during the night, uttering hatred with his last breath.¹

The news of his death spread consternation among the Burmese garrisons in the Delta. Some of the levies collapsed and fled back to Ava. Minhkaung came down to Dalla and exhumed his son's bones from where Razadarit had given them honourable burial. The whole court knelt by the graveside while they were placed in a gold pot and then, shaded by the white umbrella, they were borne solemnly away and dropped into the water at Mahtiwa (Pathiwa), the river mouth near Twante. There was little more fighting, and the Delta was free from the Burmese.

The Ari-gyi-dō-ahnwe (descendants of the Ari) frequented Minhkaung's palace and drank there, sometimes ending in such a condition that they had to be carried back to their monasteries in palanquins.²

After Minrekyawswa's death, Minhkaung was heart-broken, and spent his remaining years in piety. He was succeeded peacefully by his son, born of the Maw Shan queen.

Thihathu 1422-6 took over his father's queen Shin Bo-me (p. 93) and was so fond of her that his first wife retired into religion. But he marched into the Delta to help in a quarrel among Razadarit's sons, and when he came back it was with their sister Shinsawbu (p. 116) as bride; he crowned her queen consort in great state and grew so fond of her that Shin Bo-me

¹ He blends with Kyawswa 1287-98 (p. 77) into the Minkyawswa Nat spirit, *Temple* 56.

² *ARASI* 1915-16 Duroiselle "The Ari of Burma and Tantric Buddhism" 93. See notes "Ari" and "Drink" pp. 313, 314.

sent a message to the *sawbwa* of Onbaung (Hsipaw). The *sawbwa* hid in the wood with a bow near where the king was making a canal at Aungbinle in Mandalay district, and shot him dead.

But the court would not set the *sawbwa* on the throne and instead appointed the dead king's nine year old son ; him Shin Bo-me poisoned in three months and brought in a cousin of the royal house, **Kalekyetaungnyo 1426-7**, who was supported by Onbaung. A senior lord, Mohnyinthado, drove off the Onbaung levies and began to encircle Ava. The lords deserted Kalekyetaungnyo and withdrew to their fiefs. Shin Bo-me, seeing she had too few men to resist, fled with her lover to Arakan. They went in a single boat to Salin and then started overland for the An Pass. But when near Shwesettaw, Kalekyetaungnyo¹ sickened and died. Shin Bo-me, in despair, thought of fleeing to the Talaing country. But the one faithful lord who still attended her said "Many men have seized the throne but none has ever harmed the crowned queen of his predecessor. Abide here and await events." So there in the woodland, by the holy hill, she took her rest.

Mohnyinthado 1427-40 had as good a claim as anyone, because recent kings had few sons by recognised queens, and he was of semi-royal blood. He had had a romantic career. Saying their lives were not safe in the palace because of their elder brother, Minkyiswasawke 1368-1401 had turned out his little sons Minhkaung 1401-22 and Theiddat (p. 90) in the care of some attendants. They lived as wandering minstrels and *nat* spirit dancers, one of the older attendants playing a drum, another a horn, and so on. Thus they strayed down to Taungdwingyi, and then, crossing over to Minbu district, lived at Ngape and Padein. Later the father recalled them, saying the lads could take their chance in the palace. When Minhkaung 1401-22 came to reign, he remembered the companions of those early days ; he who blew the horn became Letygyi lord of Toungoo 1409-12 and then, being old, was transferred to a less arduous charge away from the Talaing frontier. A little boy who had followed the two young princes to wait on them became Mohnyinthado ; he was one of Minrekyawswa's

¹ He restored the Shwepaunglaung pagoda in Sagaing district, built in the twelfth century by the monk Paunglaungshin Kathapa.

best captains, winning fame in 1406 when he fought his way into Prome with pack-ponies carrying rice, and having provisioned the garrison fought his way out again through the Talaing lines; thereupon the king gave him one of his own queens together with Mohnyin, which had just then happened to come under the influence of Ava. He was forty-seven when he ascended the throne. His braves celebrated the event by sacrificing horses and cattle to the Mahagiri spirit on Popa Hill, but after they were flayed the carcasses stood up and bellowed as if alive. He allowed nobody but himself to interpret the omen, and he interpreted it to mean that his seed should reign for seven generations; and they actually reigned until 1527.

Shin Bo-me had not long to wait at Shwesettaw before he sent for her. Men called her fair, but it would have mattered little had she been plain. No king could afford to weaken his claim by omitting to unite his blood with his predecessor's queens. He was her fifth crowned consort but she died childless.¹ In delight at getting her he built the Chanthagyi pagoda at Minbu town.

He took Shinsawbu (p. 95) from the lord of Pagan to whom she had been given during the recent upheavals, but she tired of Upper Burma, as he bestowed his principal affections elsewhere. She had two Talaing monks to teach her letters, and in 1430, at the age of thirty-six, she managed to get out of the palace on the pretext of being ill, and fled down the river to Pegu with her two monks whose presence facilitated her flight, as, by benefit of clergy, a boat carrying monks could not be challenged.

Mohnyinthado's reign was spent trying to maintain his throne. Taungwingyi, Yamethin, Pinle, and above all Toungoo, under princes of much the same standing as himself, went their own way and treated him as at best a senior. When he tried to reduce these towns, he found some of them defended by Shans, possibly recent immigrants; and Onbaung (Hsipaw) and Yawnghwe made common cause with them. He was so weak that he had only intermittent control of the Kyaukse canals on which his granaries depended. Onbaung attacked

¹ See note "Married his father's queen" p. 324.

Myedu and the northern frontier in Shwebo district, and even for eight months drove him out of his palace, withdrawing only on payment of a large sum. Binnyaran, the prince of Pegu, retained his exiles and was in league with Toungoo but never actually invaded the Ava state; when he sent envoys to Ava asking for a princess as the price of extraditing a fugitive lord and of ceasing to besiege Prome, Mohnyinthado was so angry that he kept the envoys waiting three months without audience and had to be dissuaded from killing them;¹ but finally he gave the princess.

About 1435 the first European wandered into Burma. This was Nicolo di Conti, a merchant of Venice—

He arrived at the city of Ternassari [Tenasserim] which is situated on the mouth of a river of that name; this district abounds in elephants and a species of thrush. Afterwards having made many journeys he entered the mouth of the river Ganges . . . and departing thence he arrived at the mouth of the river Racha [Arakan], and navigating up the river he came to a large city of the same name. Quitting this city he travelled through mountains void of all habitations and then through open plains and arrived at a river larger than the Ganges. Having sailed up this river for a month he arrived at a city more noble than the rest, called Ava. This province abounds in elephants; the king keeps ten thousand and uses them in his wars. They fix castles on their backs from which eight to ten men fight with javelins and bows. This animal is so intelligent that when he is in battle he frequently receives the javelins of the enemy on the sole of his foot in order that those whom he carries on his back may not be injured. The king of this province rides on a white elephant, round the neck of which is fastened a chain of gold ornamented with precious stones which reaches to its feet. The men are satisfied with one wife. All the inhabitants, men as well as women, puncture their flesh with iron pins and rub in indelible dyes, and so they remain painted for ever. All worship idols, yet when they arise in the morning from their bed they turn towards the east and, with hands joined together, say "God in His Trinity and His Law defend us" [clearly the prayer "I take refuge in the Lord, I take refuge in his Law, I take refuge in his Clergy"]. There is also a tree called *tal* [talipot palm], the leaves of which are extremely large, and upon these they write, for throughout India they do not use paper. There is also an animal [the rhinoceros] which has a head like a pig, a tail like an ox, and on his forehead a horn like that of a unicorn but shorter, being about a cubit in length. In size and colour it resembles the elephant with which it is constantly at war. They say its horn is an antidote

¹ *Hmannan* II, 82.

against poisons, and it is on this account much esteemed. In the upper part of the country, towards Cathay, there are found black and white bulls the hair of whose tail, fine and light as a feather, is valued at its weight in silver and is made into fans for the service of their idols and their kings. The cavalry also carry the hair at the head of their lances as a mark of nobility. Beyond this province is a land superior to all others in the world, and it is named Cathay [China]. Afterwards he departed from Ava and proceeded towards the sea and at the end of seventeen days he arrived at the mouth of a moderately sized river, and having entered the river, at the end of ten days he arrived at a very populous city called Panconia (= Pago, Pegu. Nicolo di Conti's full text is in *Major*).

In 1430 two monks returned from Ceylon with five relics and though the Talaings stopped them at Bassein they insisted on reaching Ava where the whole court came out to meet them. Mohnynthado built them a huge monastery of which the site, Kyaungdawgyi, is still to be seen two miles west of Sagaing, and nearby he built a pagoda, Yatanazedi, now called Payabyu, to enshrine the relics. He died shortly after making a minor alteration in the calendar. When the monks cautioned him that kings who alter the calendar die he said, "If I must die, let me die. I will not be put into a song as the king who was afraid to do his duty."

He was succeeded by his sons **Minrekyawswa 1440-3** and **Narapati 1443-69**. Their kinsmen for a time gained Kale and Mohnyin and proceeded to capture the Maw Shan chief Thonganbwa when he was being hard pressed by the Yünnan government. Narapati refused to surrender him, denied his own liability to tribute, and in 1445 drove off the Yünnan levies at Kaungton in Bhamo district. But when in 1446 they appeared in strength before Ava, he yielded. Thonganbwa committed suicide, so only his followers and his body could be given up. The Chinese removed the inside, dried the body in the sun and at the fire, thrust an iron spit through it and took it away.¹

Before returning they assisted the king in reducing Yamethin which was in rebellion. In 1451 they sent him

¹ Thonganbwa is given at *Hmannan* II, 97, *Parker* "Burma, relations of China" 44 and "Précis," the Burmese and Chinese versions agreeing in essentials. The Shan version in *Pemberton* III-2 gives date 1333, a mere century's inaccuracy being nothing in a Shan chronicle; it misled *Phayre* "History" 61, 85 into recording the event as if it were two events, one at each of these dates.

a golden seal as governor of Ava and in 1454 they gave him some Shan territory in return for the surrender of a Mohnyin chief with whose resistance to China he had previously sympathised. At this time China enumerated in and near Burma eight states held by what she was pleased to consider her "comforters" or governors, of which five can be identified—Ava, Kenghung, Hsenwi, Pegu, and the country round Viengchang (Linzin).¹

In 1443 king Narapati built the Tupayon pagoda at Sagaing, and the dedication festival was attended by the neighbouring *sawbwaws* and by people, probably pedlars who happened to arrive, from Pegu, Tenasserim, Viengchang (Linzin), and Ayuthia. In 1455 he met Ali Khan, king of Arakan, at the Pohkaung-nwe-ngan-taw (Natyegan) Hill up the An Pass in Minbu district, where the two courts camped fraternally for a month and fixed the frontier (p. 140). In 1456 he sent offerings of gold and gems to the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy² in Ceylon and bought land there for the support of clergy visiting the shrine.

In 1468 Narapati was stabbed by his grandson whom he had reprov'd for a love intrigue with his cousin; the wound was not mortal. The king took fright and fled to Prome. His nervousness is explained by the sort of thing he had witnessed all his life; thus, even as a little page he had stood beside Thihathu the king as he lay dying in 1426 from the arrow of the *sawbwa* who hid in the bush (p. 96). Nobody could induce him to enter the palace again, and he died at Prome a year later.

He was succeeded by his son Thihathura 1469-81 who allowed his boy to marry the girl for whom he had stabbed his grandfather. The queen dowager was shocked, and instigated Toungoo to revolt. Toungoo called in Pegu, but the king suppressed the rebels. He next had to take Prome, and having done so he pardoned his brother who was lord there. It is hardly worth mentioning such troubles, for they were normal.

¹ Parker "Burma, relations to China" 60, and BEFEO 1909 671.

² The Tooth has been in this temple since 1286, see Gerson da Cunha. The silver gilt caskets, one within another, which enclose the Tooth, are not unlike a pagoda in shape. The gems which encrust them and the metal of which they are made, are largely the proceeds of Burmese offerings.

In 1474 the king and queen made their hair into a broom, studded the handle with gems, and sent it to sweep the floor of the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy; the envoys took *pahsos* (dresses) of Chinese silk to the king of Ceylon.

In 1475 the king and Hsipaw raided Yawnghwe, securing its submission. In 1476 he raided Kawliya in Pegu district, and Sithukyawhtin, lord of Toungoo, enlarged his town. The ministers perceived that this meant Toungoo was about to revolt but the king showed them they were wrong by telling him to let himself be dragged by the hair to court; he did so, saying "It is my king's command," but the fact that such loyalty created a sensation shows how little power the ruler of Ava had.

In 1472 he asked China to give him Mohnyin and some neighbouring territory. China warned the chief in possession not to obstruct the road from Yünnan to Burma, but she would not give his territory to Ava as he had done nothing to merit eviction. One reason for the consideration shown to Mohnyin may be that he kept on good terms with the Chinese frontier eunuch, presenting him with a jewelled girdle.

Jewels also played a great part in the expansion of Momeik, the Ruby Mine state; founded in 1238, the town was part of Hsenwi but about 1420 it received thirteen villages as a reward for helping Yünnan to raid Chiengmai. In 1465 its chieftainess Nang-han-lung sent ruby tribute separately from Hsenwi and her presents of jewels completely won over the frontier eunuch. She even tried to ally herself with Annam. When she filched most of Hsenwi, and China sent to remonstrate with her, she said "Momeik is the baby elephant which has outgrown the mother elephant Hsenwi and can never enter the womb again," and as, in addition to talking, she presented more rubies to the inquiring officers, they reported sympathetically on her case and she remained in possession in 1484. In 1488, indeed, China told Mohnyin to send troops and prevent Momeik attacking Hsenwi; but he sent only decrepit men, who were of course beaten, and nothing more was done.¹

Our materials are too scanty to justify more than a guess, but it seems possible that the continuance of Chinese interest

¹ Parker "Précis."

in Burma is due to the fact that after Kubla Khan's dynasty 1206-1368 had passed away, China lost control of the route across Asia to Europe. China had to look for other outlets, and the trade route down the Irrawaddy was possibly one of them. Chinese porcelain¹ of the fifteenth century has been found in the bed of the Bassein river near Negrais, and it is recorded² that in 1450 the ruler of Ava gave to a favourite "the Chinese customs revenue," probably Yünnan frontier tolls. Her records show that China knew only the roughest outline of what was occurring in Burma, but she none the less tried to see that the road lay open.

The king was succeeded by his son **Minhkaung 1481-1502**. Sithukyawhtin of Toungoo had received his dying instructions, gave him honourable burial by dropping his bones in the river,³ and loyal'y assisted his son; but he could do nothing in face of the increasing uproar, and died a captive in the hands of Yamethin and Kyaukse whose revolt he had tried to quell. Hanthawaddy and Prome even came raiding up to Magwe, and the Shans as usual attacked the frontier at Myedu in Shwebo district. Nyaungyan in Meiktila district and Salin also rebelled. In most cases the rebels were of the royal family.

Hearing that Bimbisara, the king of Buddha's day, had raised his son to the throne as joint king, the king determined to do likewise, gave his son the white umbrella, and shared the throne with him.

In 1486 the governor of Toungoo was assassinated by a nephew Minkyinyo who seized the governorship and, to make his peace with the king, sent a present of two young elephants. The king may not have felt strong enough to give him his deserts, but he might have refused him recognition. Instead he took the two young elephants and said "I appoint you governor of Toungoo"; nay more, he afterwards sent him the five regalia, telling him to reign as king. Having thus condoned murder and put a premium on disloyalty, he refused to believe that Minkyinyo was about to attack him, mumbling "He would never dare." But Minkyinyo did dare: whenever he wanted slaves or cattle, he came raiding as far as Meiktila to get them, and his son conquered Ava. The 1829 chroniclers⁴

¹ *RSASB* 1915 35.

² See note "Royal drowning" p. 338.

³ *Hmannan* II. 99.

⁴ *Hmannan* II. 127, 185.

cite Minhkaung's treatment of Minkyinyo as an instance of statesmanship.

Hitherto writing had been in the classical languages, principally Pali, but in this age Burmese vernacular literature makes its appearance. Its rise may seem incompatible with the character of the period, but our picture of the period is that given in the chronicles, and the chronicles are a mere list of dates, battles, and official acts. Apart from a few frescoes, and from inscriptions which, though numerous, are narrow in scope, there is nothing corresponding to the private letters, monumental brasses, illuminated manuscripts portraying contemporary dresses and occupations, records of manors and monasteries, official inquests and so forth, which make it possible to reconstruct the daily life of ordinary people in mediæval Europe. Hence it may be that the chiefs who parcelled out Burma in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries often had too little power to be oppressive outside their immediate neighbourhood, and that the mass of the people away from the track of the armies lived reasonably happy lives. In many a monastery, at least, existence must have been calm and beautiful.

As is usual in secluded countries Burmese literature is narrow in range and, though quite voluminous according to mediæval standards, small in quantity; it shows little development, and no improvement has been made on the earliest poets. Most is unoriginal, consisting of translations and paraphrases of sacred stories; some of these evince a considerable sense of style. Although what would in a developed literature go into fiction, goes in Burma into historical works, the editors of the eighteenth century chronicles are not without a critical sense, and show it in their discussion of authorities. The poetry, marked by a restrained and beautiful diction, is minor poetry of a high order, but the condensation of its style and the obscurity of its dialect militate against its having a wide appeal.

The usually accepted view, that the following are the first vernacular writers, is probably correct, and certainly their poems are the earliest to which a date can be assigned; but the finish of their style indicates that the vernacular had been practised for some generations previously and that its use had not been restricted to the recording of bare inscriptions.

Shin Uttamagyaw was born at Pondawbyi village in the same year as Shin Thilawuntha 1453-1520 and on the same day they entered a monastery school together at Taungdwingyi in Magwe district. As the monk considered poetry profane, Shin Thilawuntha was expelled for writing Paramiganpypo and went to Ava where Minhkaung built him a fine monastery called Yatanabiman; he wrote a grammatical work, poems such as Hsutaungganpyo, Taungdwinlapyo, Tada-u-ti-mawgun, and the Yazawingyaw chronicle, the earliest history extant; had he been content to write a simple account of what was happening around him, he might have left us an invaluable picture of fifteenth century life; but, like a true cleric, he preferred to indite an account of the mythical past, and hence his chronicle is valueless. Shin Uttamagyaw remained twenty years a monk at Taungdwingyi and then went to Ava where he was often invited to the palace for consultation on the scriptures; he wrote only one poem, the famous Tawla.¹ Shin Maharattathara 1468-1529 was descended from the Shan Brother Thihathu 1312-24 and was carried off to Prome when Ava fell (p. 106); he wrote poetry, such as Koganpyo, Hattipala and Meiktilakanbwemawgun. Shin Aggathamahdi, born in 1479 at Kanbya, east of Tabayin, wrote poetical versions of the *jataka* stories of Buddha. Yaweshintwe, a maid of honour in the Ava palace, probably at this time, wrote *angyin* verse on the fifty-five styles of hairdressing used by maids of honour under the kings of Ava; most of them are obsolete, but one, *hsabinsuli*, now called *kyettaungsi*, can be seen to-day in little girls aged ten to twelve whose hair is gathered to stand upright with a string tied at the base.

Minhkaung built the Mingalazedi pagoda at Tada-u on the model of the Tupayon (p. 100), and was succeeded by his younger son Shwenankyawshin 1502-27, as the elder son, the joint king, had died. The younger son already had a wife whose sister was married to the dead joint king; yet now, when he came to the throne, it was not his own wife, but her sister who became his chief queen, because she was already part of the regalia.²

¹ *JBRS* 1917-20 Po Byu "Shin Uttamagyaw and his Tawla" (with translation by Ba Han).

² See note "Married his father's queen" p. 324.

In his first regnal year, Shwenankyawshin's life was attempted by order of his kinsman Nawrahta of Yamethin:—

Nga Thauk Kya came upon the king of the Golden Palace unawares and struck at him with a sword. But the sword struck the pole of the white umbrella so that it covered the king. Then Nga Shwe Kyaing, lord of Yenantha and son of an attendant, rose and seized Nga Thauk Kya. And as they struggled for the sword, they fell. Now Nga Shwe Kyaing, knowing that if he loosed his hold Nga Thauk Kya would kill the king, cried "If I loose him, thou wilt be undone. Master, smite us both." But the king slew Nga Thauk Kya only, so that Nga Shwe Kyaing was freed. (*Hmannan* II. 131.)

Nawrahta¹ lived in the palace so that he was easily caught; and being of royal blood he was drowned. But his party, five lords and seven hundred followers, escaped to Toungoo. The king thereupon gave a daughter in marriage to Minkyinyo of Toungoo, together with Kyaukse as dowry, and a string of villages all the way from Toungoo to Kyaukse (p. 124). He was giving his daughter to the harbinger of his assassins, and in giving away the rice area of Kyaukse he was giving away his crown. But he could not help himself, for the uproar was worse than ever—Prome and Salin were again in revolt, and Mohnyin was attacking the Myedu-Ngayane-Siboktaya-Sitha-Tabayin frontier in Shwebo district. The gift did no good. The only gratitude Minkyinyo of Toungoo showed was to join Nyaungyan and Prome in raiding up stream as far as Sale until the king in desperation called in Hsipaw Yawnghe and Mone to drive them back. In 1507 he surrendered Tabayin and Ngayane to Sawlon, chief of Mohnyin, on condition that he came no further.

The king had three half brothers whom he had treated well, even refraining from appointing his own son Crown Prince out of consideration for their claims. They might have regarded all this pandemonium as a reason for rallying to his side if only in their own interests, but they preferred to see in it a great opportunity for making a career, and they called in Minkyinyo of Toungoo. Minkyinyo ravaged Myingyan district and then, with the lord of Prome, halted at Magwe till the time came to join the three brothers. The time did not

¹ He merges with Anawrahtaminsaw (p. 91 above) as the Shwenawrahta Nat spirit, *Temple* 56.

come, as the three brothers, after marching with several thousand men and occupying Pahkangyi in Pakokku district, were defeated and captured by the king. Instead of following what had become almost a rule by pardoning them, he reminded them of their father's dying exhortations, and executed all three in 1508.

But it was too late for the kingship to start asserting itself. Upper Burma was a bedlam of snarling Shan states. Ava's only friend was Onbaung (Hsipaw) and the two of them combined could not prevent Mohnyin in 1512 taking sixteen villages from Onbaung, one of which was Bhamo, then in its youth.¹ Year after year rebellions continued at Sagu, Myede and elsewhere. On his Shwebo frontier the king regained for a time Ngayane, perhaps because Mohnyin was busy fighting Kale. But in 1524 Mohnyin wiped out the frontier stockades and drove the Burmese as far as Inpe-Thayaing in Shwebo district.

It was the beginning of the end. Sawlon of Mohnyin overran the west bank and also occupied Thayetmyo, where the king's first cousin, lord of Prome, came to kneel before him, saying "Put me on the throne of Ava and I will hold it as your vassal." The two worthies, after carrying off cattle and elephants in central Burma from Taungdwingyi to Yamethin while the people hid in the jungle, set out for Ava. The king and his *thwethauk*,² the chief of Onbaung (Hsipaw), lay camped at Taungbalu, south-east of the city. There the armies met, but the mere sight of Mohnyin Sawlon waving his sword sufficed to make the Shan levies in the Ava ranks desert, and the king fled with Onbaung to Singaung and Wetwin near Maymyo. Ava was all but empty when Sawlon of Mohnyin entered it. He and Prome went home after taking what was left, Sawlon the horses and elephants, Prome a few people and the poet monk Shin Maharattathara (p. 104). When they had gone the king came back, but in 1527 Sawlon of Mohnyin broke into Ava again and the king, fighting on his elephant, was killed by a jingal shot.³ Such of the Burmese

¹ Parker "Précis." Bhamo is not mentioned until the fifteenth century. Before that time the chief place was Kaungsin, "The town at the head of the river."

² See note "Thwethauk and Thissa-ye" p. 339.

³ See note "Firearms" p. 340.

population as could, stampeded southwards, especially to Toungoo.

Sawlon set up as king his son **Thohanbwa 1527-43**. Yünnan sent an officer to ascertain what all the trouble was among the wild tribes round Ava ; but the officer found conditions so disturbed that he went home.¹ Sawlon and his son Thohanbwa marched on Prome in 1533 and came back carrying its lord captive. When Sawlon had got past Myedu in Shwebo district his own men murdered him. The lord of Prome was released and returned to find his gates shut against him and his son usurping the throne ; so he camped at Nawin and died, and his usurping son gave him most honourable burial. In 1539 Prome, having received Takayutpi, king of Pegu, in his flight from the Burmese conqueror (p. 154), took steps to guard herself against Burmese vengeance by calling in Ava ; Thohanbwa went gladly and helped Prome to drive off the Burmese. When the Burmese again attacked Prome in 1542, he marched with his friends Mohnyin, Hsipaw, Momeik, Mogaung, Bhamo and Yawngnhe, but they were badly beaten by Bayinnaung outside Prome and returned, leaving the town to its fate.

Thohanbwa was a full-blooded savage. He said "Burmese pagodas have nothing to do with religion. They are simply treasure chambers," and proceeded to pillage such as were in reach. It is not unlikely that, as on other occasions, the monks led the people in resistance ; he said "Monks surround themselves with followers and could rebel if they like. They ought to be killed." Therefore in 1540 at Taungbalu, south-east of Ava, he covered a field with *mandat* pavilions, slaughtered buffaloes, cows, pigs and fowls for a great feast, and invited the monks to feed. When they were all in the pavilions he surrounded them with his braves and massacred them. The survivors fled to Toungoo. Out of 1,300 monks in Ava, Sagaing and Pinya, he succeeded in killing 360, of whom thirty were eminent for their learning. He then proceeded to seize the manuscripts in the monasteries and made bonfires of them. Signs and portents preceded these events, the Shwezigon pagoda at Pagan shedding tears.

Thohanbwa's right hand was Minkyiyanaung, a Burman

¹ Parker "Précis."

officer of the old Ava court. He succeeded in dissuading Thohanbwa from attacking Toungoo, the last stronghold of the Burmese race, saying it was quite unnecessary to do so, as Toungoo would pay homage in fear of his glory if he ordered it. The Burmese officers in the palace were subject to continual indignities from their Shan colleagues, who would knock off their head-dress. They appealed to Minkyiyanaung. He hesitated but finally he consented, thinking "He reveres not the Three Gems, he regards not human life, he respects not other men's wives, and the fear of the Lord is not in him. We shall be destroyed unto the seventh generation." In the hot weather of 1543 Thohanbwa moved into a temporary palace, a collection of field-huts; being a true parvenu he was desirous of following the correct procedure of the old court, and asked Minkyiyanaung what it was. Minkyiyanaung explained that one of the customs was that no officers or men wore swords in the summer camp, but everybody took his ease. So Thohanbwa disarmed even his Shan officers. Minkyiyanaung had seen to it, when the camp was pitched, that the Burman attendants lightly buried their swords in the positions they would occupy while waiting in the presence. When all was ready, and he was talking to the king, he turned the subject to swords. Thohanbwa said "They say my predecessor, king Shwenankyawshin, had a fine blade. Once he cut a man down with it and the blade went through the man, through the howdah, and into the elephant even. Did you know that sword?" Minkyiyanaung answered "And who should know it but I, seeing that I was His Majesty's sword-bearer? I could tell it at a glance." The king sent for the old royal swords. When he had the bundle, Minkyiyanaung picked out the blade, and bending low as if to present it, went close to the king and smote him so that the blade went through and out again, severing five bamboos of the dais floor. The Burmans took their swords out of the loose earth and killed the Shan attendants inside, and when the Shans outside, hearing the cries, came running in, they also were cut down. The throne was there for the taking and they all asked Minkyiyanaung to take it. He was only thirty-six and he was kinsman to the fallen Ava house. The friendly Hsipaw *sawbwa* sent congratulations and said he would recognise

him as a matter of course. But Minkyiyanaung would have none of that blood-stained throne, and so it passed by general agreement to Hsipaw.

Minkyiyanaung consented to remain in office and advise him for the first year of his reign; when the year was over, he laid aside his pomp, and retired into a woodland monastery near Mekkaya in Kyaukse district, and there ended his days telling his beads. The modern world regards the monastic life as a form of shirking, but in those days of violent contrasts a cloister was the only place on earth where existence was bearable to a man of finer nature.

The Hsipaw chief ruled Ava as **Hkonmaing 1543-6**. He went with six other *sawbwas* (Mohnyin, Momeik, Hsenwi, Bhamo, Yawnghwe, Mone) to regain Prome in 1544 but they were again broken by Tabinshwehti who thereupon permanently occupied the country as far as the north of Minbu and Myingyan districts (p. 158). Hkonmaing was succeeded by his son **Mobyé Narapati 1546-52** who constructed Ngakyi 'weir in Kyaukse. Even with the imminent power of Tabinshwehti staring them in the face, the Shans' continued the kaleidoscopic methods so dear to their heart. The various *sawbwas* went on playing at war with each other, and Mohnyin supported Sithukyawhtin, a Shan who had held Salin till Tabinshwehti ejected him, in holding Sagaing and attacking Ava, and was furious on finding that he refrained from hacking the heads off the Ava wounded. Finally Mobyé Narapati fled, paying homage to Bayinnaung and leaving Ava to its last *sawbwa*, **Sithukyawhtin 1552-5** (pp. 163, 165).

Indeed for two and a half centuries the rulers of Ava had been *sawbwas* in all but name; yet there was this difference between Ava and the other Shan states, that whereas they were so wild as to leave not even a record,¹ the tradition of the Burmese palace gave Ava a veneer of civilisation, and her numerous monasteries contained monks, who, if not learned, were at least literate; and to them it is due that though the lamp of civilisation flickered and burnt low, it never went out.

¹ There was, however, from the late twelfth century onwards, a school of repute, the Kambojasangha, among the monks of Lai Hka, Southern Shan States. Some of them dwelt in the Delta.

CHAPTER IIIB

PEGU 1287-1539

Wareru 1287-96, a Shan pedlar born at Donwun in Thaton district, took service in the elephant stables of the chief of Sukhotai, a Siamese state, became Captain of the Guard, eloped with the chief's daughter and some kindred spirits from the Guard, and set up at his native village.

He had a fair sister, and made her choose for her bathing place in the river a spot where Aleimma, the Burmese governor of Martaban (p. 62), would see her. Aleimma asked for her hand. Wareru, saying he was overwhelmed with honour, arranged a wedding feast, and when Aleimma came to it, murdered¹ him, seized his governorship and so became lord of Martaban in 1281.

The Pagan kingdom was now breaking up, and Wareru made common cause with Tarabya, the revolting governor of Pegu (p. 75), each marrying the other's daughter. But in 1287 after they had expelled the Burmese governors and occupied the country south of Prome and Toungoo, Tarabya tried to ambush Wareru, and failed. Wareru, calling the spirits of earth and air to witness his innocence, and pouring libation of water from a golden bowl, mounted his elephant, fought with Tarabya in single combat, and took him prisoner. At the intercession of the monks he spared his life. Tarabya again plotted, but his wife, Wareru's daughter, warned her father in time.² So Tarabya was executed although she twined her tresses with his and dared the executioners to cut off his head.

Wareru now became sole prince of the Lower Burma state which lasted till 1539. In 1298 it received recognition from China which henceforth chose to regard its rulers as governors

¹ See note "Drink" p. 314.

² *Paklat Talaing chronicle.*

appointed by herself.¹ Its capital was Martaban till 1363 and Donwun till 1369 when the palace was moved to Pegu.

Wareru received recognition from his old master and father-in-law the chief of Sukhotai, who in 1293 sent him a white elephant because it chose to eat Martaban grass; no sooner did they hear of its arrival than the Shan Brothers² of Kyaukse came raiding Martaban to get it, but were driven off. Wareru is responsible for the Wareru *dhammathat*, the earliest surviving lawbook in Burma; the Hindu colonists who came to the Delta a thousand years previously had left traditional laws, ascribed to the ancient sage Manu who found them written on the boundary walls of the world; these laws survived in Talaing monastic writings, and Wareru made his monks produce the collection known by his name. It is Hindu, but not Brahmanical, and the sacerdotal element is ignored, marriage no longer being treated as a sacrament; it forms the basis of Burmese law literature.³

Wareru was murdered by his grandsons, the children of Tarabya; they took sanctuary in a monastery but were dragged out and killed by the ministers, who handed over the throne to his brother. For some years the family ruled down to Tenasserim and even received homage from the Lampun villages south of Chiangmai; but after these areas had continued to change hands for a generation, they remained in Siamese possession and the frontier was that of the present province of Burma down to Tavoy.

As usual, there was little real government and the land was in continual uproar. If it was not brigands it was kinsmen who revolted, and there was trouble from Shan immigrants such as the 500 braves who took service under one of the princes and ended by murdering him in 1331. The Sukhotai chief then came raiding to Martaban because his grandson had perished in one of the palace murders.

Binnya U 1353-85 had to repel a formidable raid of several

¹ China called Pegu Kulah, and the prince of Pegu her "comforter" or resident governor of Kulah. *Parker* "Burma, relations to China" 60, *REFEO* 1909 Huber "Fin de la dynastie de Pagan" 670-1.

² *Razadarit Ayedawpon* calls them "Ngawdaw king." Ngawdaw is the Talaing version of Ngedo, the *kwin* lands near Pinle, the town of the third brother Tihathu.

³ *Forchhammer* "Jardine Prize" 37.

thousand men from Chiengmai who destroyed Taikkala, Sit-taung and Donwun in Thaton district before they were driven out in 1356; he built a pagoda on the spot where they retreated, enshrining relics which he obtained by sending a mission to Ceylon. The Siamese kingdom, founded in 1350, included in its list of provinces Tenasserim, Moulmein, and Martaban;¹ it certainly held Tenasserim, founding the town in 1373 and building the Wutshintaug pagoda in 1380; but it can have received only nominal tribute from Moulmein and Martaban.

In 1362 Binnya U repaired the Shwedagon pagoda, raising its height to 66 feet (p. 117). But for all his piety he was not to escape tribulation. The white elephant, after being sixty-one years in the palace, died; and while he was devoutly searching the forests for its successor, his kinsmen established themselves in the palace and asked Chiengmai to join them. He bought off the Chiengmai chief by sending him a daughter, but failed to recover Martaban, and for six years had to maintain himself at Donwun. In 1369 his wise minister died, and while his people shaved their heads² and sat distracted with grief, the watchful rebels entered Donwun and drove him out; so he moved to Pegu and repaired the walls; thereafter it remained the capital, and his successors continued to repair them. He became reconciled to his rebellious kinsmen and sent them to get his daughter back from Chiengmai, because she was not paid sufficient attention. But he never had peace, as the family was always quarrelling. The eldest son Razadarit (Binnyanwe) stole his half-sister Talamidaw, fled to Dagon (Rangoon) and was pardoned, but was then driven to rebel by the intrigues of the harem and his rival brothers. Razadarit's implacable foes were the chief queen and his uncle Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya, and although he succeeded in maintaining himself in the stockaded town of Dagon, loyally aided by his sister-bride Talamidaw, by some of his brothers, and by Mahomedan shipmen, there was continual fighting and plotting year after year, and even on his deathbed the old king could not induce the queen to be quiet.

¹ *Pallegoix* II. 75.

² *Razadarit Ayedawpon*. Shaving the head on the death of royalty is also found in Siam, *Jones* VII. 545.

Razadarit 1385-1423 succeeded in seizing Pegu as the townsmen would not man the walls against him. He was crowned there on the spot where Kun Atha had vanquished the Hindu giant (p. 6); the astrologers said it was an auspicious site which gave victory to those who trod it, so he trod it, and then built the Yanaungmyin pagoda on the site to prevent his enemies from ever treading there. He executed his opponents and was going to include the minister Deinmaniyut but relented on hearing his plea that he had only been true to his allegiance; Deinmaniyut was made lord of Syriam and became one of his most devoted officers. He showed a royal generosity to his father's wife the chief queen, forgiving her and granting her Dagon as a fief. But he failed to catch his raging uncle Laukpya, lord of Myaungmya, who brought in the Burmese (p. 82).

Razadarit had to contend not only with the Burmese but also with treachery and rebellion at home. He reduced Bassein among other revolting towns, but its lord put his treasure on elephants and with 700 followers fled to Sandoway in Arakan. Here Byat Za, Razadarit's best commander, brought him to bay. The Sandoway townfolk at first shut their gates but finding that Byat Za wished only to get the fugitives, gave them up on receiving his promise to withdraw. The fugitives on being surrendered said to him "The dogs! They were quite unprepared for a siege and had only three days' food left when they gave us up. There was no need for you to make any promise. Attack them now, and you can take the loot of the whole town home to the king." His officers agreed, saying it would be a great triumph, but he curtly refused and returned home with his prisoners who were then executed. Razadarit called upon him for an explanation of his conduct; he answered "Sire, a promise is a promise, and quite apart from that, they would never have trusted us again. It does not pay."

In 1390 he was at the height of his power. He had driven off repeated Burmese attacks, quelled rebellion everywhere, and had even captured Myaungmya with Laukpya inside. In thank-offering he built shrines at the Shwemawdaw pagoda, feeding a thousand monks throughout a seven days' festival

and offering his weight in gold.¹ He even gave Laukpya his life, and contented himself with seeing that he lived safely in a monastery at the Shwedagon. Hearing of this universal success, the king of Ayuthia sent him a white elephant named Gandayaw; Razadarit in delight sent a host of men and elephants in procession headed by his chief lords Deinmaniyut and Byat Za, to meet it at Kampengpet 250 miles away. He also proceeded to be crowned again with a favourite queen; some of his queens were from prominent Shan families in Chiengmai.

He grew weary of his first love Talamidaw the sister who had so befriended him during his unhappy youth; he took away all her jewels down to the family rings bequeathed her by their father, which she tried to hide in her hair, and seeing that she was finally cast aside she poisoned herself with a mixture made from *pon-ma-thein*, a camphor shrub.² With her fell her son Bawlawkyantaw. Hearing that he was practising horsemanship and sharpening his elephant's tusks, Razadarit thought "Even as I rebelled at Dagon against my father, so will he rebel against me," and sent two lords to slay him. They announced their duty to the lad.

And he said "I do but follow the custom of young princes in manly exercise. I do not plot against my father, neither is there any fault in me. My father and mother played together as children. When she grew to womanhood, he took her beauty, and then cast her away. She was a king's daughter, but he used her like a slavewoman and drove her to an evil death. And now he drives me also to an evil death." . . . He entreated the slayers, and they suffered him. And for three days continually at the Shwemawdaw pagoda, he hearkened to the reading of Abidhamma, the holy scriptures. When it was finished, he took off his ruby bracelets, his ruby earrings, and his ruby necklet, and offered them to the pagoda. And thus he prayed "If I have wished ill to my father, yea, even so little as the drop of blood sucked by a midge, then, after leaving this mortal body, may I lie in hell for ever, nor let me behold a coming Buddha. But if I have not wished ill to my father, then, after leaving this mortal body, may I enter the womb among the kings of Burma; so let me be born again, to be the scourge of the Talaings." Thus prayed he, and took the *pon-ma-thein* (it was but three ticals weight) and drank it with juice of the lime, and died (*Razadarit Ayedawbon* and *Hmannan* I. 432).

¹ See note "Tula-dana" p. 328.

² *Blumea balsamifera* DC. The kindred *Laurus camphora* is an exotic of comparatively recent introduction.

When this was reported to Razadarit, he said "It is a terrible prayer," and, gilding the pagoda from top to bottom, he prayed "If he become a king in Burma to make war on me, may I on my elephant vanquish him." Both their prayers were fulfilled (pp. 86, 95).

Razadarit had little success after this fatal year 1390. In 1414 he gained a temporary respite by stirring up Hsenwi to attack Ava, but was himself never free from the danger of Shan inroads and on several occasions when he was hard pressed from the north, Ayuthia, Kampengpet, and Chiengmai would raid him from the south.

China sent an embassy to recognise him as her "governor" of Pegu.¹ He was the builder of the Danok pagoda near Twante, and to him is ascribed the division of each of "the Three Talaing Countries" (Pegu, Myaungmya, Bassein) into thirty-two "provinces," i.e. village circles. He must have been a man of considerable character not only to win his throne at the age of sixteen but also to keep it in the face of savage irruptions from Ava and continual rebellions at home. Several times he killed his man in single combat; Minkyiswasawke never dared accept his challenge, and Minhkaung, who did so, turned his elephant and fled within a few minutes.

When the news of Minhkaung's death in 1422 reached Pegu, the queens jeered saying to Razadarit "Now you can pounce down on his palace and capture his harem." But he rebuked them, saying "My sweet enemy is dead. I will fight no more but spend my declining years in piety."

A year later, at the age of fifty-four, while snaring elephants with his own hand in the Labut-tha-lut jungle at the foot of the Pegu Yoma hills north of Pegu, he was caught in the rope and injured so that he died on the way home. His queens came out to meet the body and buried it at Kamathameinpaik (Minkanyo) near Payagyi railway station, north of Pegu. He has a chronicle all to himself, the Razadarit Ayedawpon (p. 170); it ends on the words "This Lion King, so wise, so generous, so mighty in word and deed, could overcome all his enemies, but he too at the last must bow before King Death."

He was succeeded by his son **Binnyadammayaza 1423-6** whose brothers tried to oust him by bringing in the Ava prince

¹ BEFEO 1909 Huber "Fin de la dynastie de Pagan" 652.

(p. 95). But the Ava levies, in addition to looting wholesale, captured so many men and women and put them into boats to carry them away as slaves, that the brothers grew disgusted, fell on them and drove them away for a time; they came again and besieged one of the princes so tightly that to free himself he had to present his sister Shinsawbu to the Ava chief. She was a widow aged twenty-nine, with a little son and two daughters. Binnyadammayaza pacified his brothers for a time but finally one of them poisoned him and succeeded as **Binnyaran 1426-46**. Toungoo gave Binnyaran a daughter saying "Put me on the throne of Ava and I will be your vassal." So they besieged Prome together until Mohnyinthado 1427-40 of Ava gave Binnyaran a niece to keep him quiet. Binnyaran found one of his concubines engaged in a love intrigue with a nephew, who thereupon fled with some hundreds of retainers to Ava and was given the revenues of Salin in Minbu district. In 1430 when his sister Shinsawbu returned from Ava (p. 97), where she was childless, her children did not recognise her, for she had left them in infancy and had been away seven years. He treated her with great honour and on his death was succeeded by her son,

Binnyawaru 1446-50, a king famed for his inflexible justice.¹ He said "In Razadarit's time the realm was happy because he was strict. While I reign the realm shall likewise be happy, for everyone who steals or does violence shall be hewn asunder by my sword." Accordingly, when an officer's servant once stole a pedlar's ring, and the officer came with a present of gold to please the king and free his servant, the king scarcely looked at the gold but had both the officer and the servant hewn in two and their bodies exposed at the cross roads. A cat caught a mouse and ate it; she also by royal command was hewn in two and her body was exposed at the cross roads under a guard. The king liked to wander about disguised as a commoner, ascertaining facts at first hand, and while thus disguised he rode his horse carelessly and knocked an old woman's pot off her head; she said "Knowest thou not that we now have a true king in the land? Verily I will hale thee before him and thou shalt die the death!" Thereupon he revealed his identity and paid her the price of the pot.

¹ Schmidt 124.

Following the royal example of strictness, everyone who had a son punished the son, everyone who had a slave punished the slave, and everyone who had a pupil punished the pupil. So criminals feared to be criminal, the land flourished exceedingly and men rejoiced, holding *pwe* festivals all day and all night. But the fact that His Majesty in person had time to try the cases of domestic animals helps us to appraise the statements of the chronicles that these were populous kingdoms in a mighty past.

Binnyakyan 1450-3 raised the height of the Shwedagon pagoda to 302 feet (pp. 112, 260). On his death there was, owing to palace massacres (p. 338), no male descendant of Razadarit left alive.

By general consent the throne passed to Razadarit's daughter **Shinsawbu 1453-72**. Village headmanships have been known to descend in the female line,¹ and Shan hill states have been held by chieftainesses (p. 101), but this is the only instance of a major state in Burma being held by a woman. Daughter, sister, wife, and mother of kings, she ruled well, leaving behind so gracious a memory on earth that four hundred years later the Talaings could think of no fairer thing to say of Queen Victoria than to call her Shinsawbu re-incarnate.

Once, while being carried round the city in her gorgeous palanquin,² sword in hand and crown on head, she heard an old man exclaim, as her retinue pushed him aside "I must get out of the way, must I? I am an old fool, am I? I am not so old that I could not get a child, which is more than your old queen could do!" Thunderstruck at such irreverence, she meekly accepted it as a sign from heaven, and thereafter styled herself "The Old Queen."

Save for a brief escapade on behalf of Toungoo against Ava, there was peace in her time, and even rebellions were fewer than usual. After ruling seven years she decided to retire. The men she admired most were the two monks who had accompanied her flight from Ava (p. 97). In doubt as to which

¹ *JBRBS* 1912 Furnivall "Matriarchy in Burma."

² *Thatonhnwemun Yasawin*. Palanquins could be of great size; thus the wife of the viceregal governor of Rangoon in 1821 rode one which was carried by no fewer than forty to fifty men, *Mrs. Judson* 289.

she should choose, she left it to providence. One morning when they came to receive the royal rice, she secreted in one of their bowls a *pakso* (layman's dress) together with little models of the five regalia; then, having prayed that the lot might fall on the worthier, she returned the bowls.¹ Dammazedi, to whom the fateful bowl fell, left the sacred order, received her daughter in marriage, and assumed the government. The other monk in his disappointment aroused suspicion and was executed at Paunglin, north of Rangoon. The lords also resented the choice at first but became reconciled owing to Dammazedi's high character; when some of them continued murmuring that he was not of royal race, Shinsawbu had a beam taken out of the floor of a bridge and carved into a Buddha image, and showed it to them saying "Ye say he is of common blood, he cannot be your King. See here this common wood—yesterday it was trodden in the dust of your feet, but to-day, is it not the Lord and do ye not bow before it?"

Shinsawbu spent her remaining years in retirement at Dagon (Rangoon), still interested in public affairs but occupied chiefly with religion. Her additions made the Shwedagon² almost what we see now, for she built the terrace, fifty feet high, three hundred yards wide, with a great stone balustrade, a circle of stone lamps, and several encircling walls between which she planted palm trees. She dedicated five hundred prisoners of war as slaves, kept forty-four people occupied in seeing to the sacred lamps, and beat out her own weight (25 *viss* = 91 lb.) of gold for gilding the dome. When her end came at the age of seventy-eight, she had her bed placed where she could see the Shwedagon, and thus, with her eyes fixed on that wondrous spire, she breathed her last.³

Dammazedi 1472-92 widened the river at Pegu after one of his favourites had been killed in a collision between two

¹ *Sayadaw Athwa* II. 137.

² *Schmidt* 133-35, *Forchammer* "Notes on Early History and Geography. I—The Shwedagon."

³ *Furnivall* "Syriam Gazetteer" 25 says the ramparts of her residence at Dagon are now the bunkers of the golf course near the Prome Road. But these bunkers seem to be the 1841 wall, see *JBRS* 1920 Fraser "Old Rangoon." She was buried nearby, west of the Prome Road, for there is a monastery on the Windsor Road which within living memory was called the Shinsawbu Tomb Monastery, see *JBRS* 1912 Saya Thein "Rangoon in 1852."



Photo Savarese

SHWEDAGON.

racing boats during a regatta on the narrow stream. Shinsawbu had intended building a new Pegu so as to include the Shwemawdaw, in accordance with a prophecy of Gavampati, the ancient Talaing saint; and Dammazedi proceeded to build a stockade west of the pagoda, set up his elephant stables, and dwelt in a palace there.¹

Shinsawbu had extended the Shwedagon glebe lands as far as Danok, and finding this excessive Dammazedi reduced them; in compensation he measured his weight and the weight of his queen in gold four times and dedicated that amount to overlaying the pagoda with scroll work and tracery.² He also dedicated a great bell there (p. 186).

He made the usual offerings to the Shwemawdaw, including *padeitha* trees, and two huge copper bells. He set up *nat* spirit shrines, and built two large monasteries and many pagodas of which the principal are the Shwegugyi and the Kyaikpon at Pegu. The masonry of his reign is excellent and a mass of pious edifices sprang up on the beautiful plateau between the old and the new towns, men vying with one another in works of merit. He exchanged envoys with Yünnan. In 1472 he sent a mission to Buddhagaya³ in Bengal to take plans of the Holy Tree and of the temple as a model for buildings at Pegu.

But his greatest work was the religious revival started by his mission of twenty-two monks to Ceylon⁴ in 1475. They suffered several shipwrecks and some of them died as castaways in their wanderings on the Madras coast where they reached Negapatam. To the Tooth, the Footprint, and the Holy Trees, they presented a stone alms-bowl studded with sapphires, and reliquaries of gold and crystal; to the Cingalese monks, cloths, and betel-boxes of speckled lacquer made in Chiengmai (p. 166); and to the king of Ceylon rubies, sapphires, Chinese silks, fine mats, and a letter on gold leaf. Their object was to secure valid orders from the clergy of the ancient Mahavihara, the great monastery of Ceylon which, founded in 251 B.C., still exists. On their return they proceeded

¹ *Shwemawdaw T'hamaing* 118, 122.

² *YBRS* 1915 Furnivall "History of Syriam" 56. See note "Tula-dana" p. 328.

³ *RSASB* 1914 11.

⁴ *IA* 1893 and 1894 Taw Sein Ko "Kalyani inscriptions."

to transmit these orders to the clergy throughout Lower Burma. So valid was this ordination that monks flocked to receive it from all over Burma and even from Siam; and thus religion in Burma, which for three centuries had been split into sects, each with its own ordination, received a measure of unity from the standard Kalyani ordination. It was and is granted at the Kalyani *thein* near Pegu, so called because the original monks were ordained on the banks of the Kalyani stream in Ceylon. Dammazedi recorded these events on ten inscribed stones, called the Kalyani Inscriptions.

One of the principal monks in this mission was Bud-dhaghosa, who translated the Wareru *dhammathat* (p. 111) into Burmese; he has been merged into his namesake, the Father of the Church a thousand years before (p. 309). Dammazedi was himself a wise judge, and a collection of his rulings survives, the Dammazedi *pyatton*. He died at the age of eighty and was succeeded by his son.

Binnyaran 1492-1526 was revered for his gentleness (p. 121), although his first act was to enforce the Massacre of the Kinsmen (p. 338), putting all the royal offspring to death. In 1501 he went with thousands of armed men up stream; the lord of Prome checked him but he replied "I could conquer both you and Ava but I do not wish. I only wish to worship before the Shwezigon at Pagan," and having worshipped there he returned.

Takayutpi 1526-39 succeeded his father and was the last of Wareru's line, being overthrown by Tabinshwehti (p. 154); the astrologers said he could have reigned till the age of eighty-five had he followed their prescriptions, "but he never looked at a book, he gave himself up to sport in the woods with elephants and horses, he searched for shellfish and crabs, he was like one witless." After abandoning Pegu town to the Burmese he fled to his kinsman the lord of Prome and they made common cause. But within the year, saying he must collect war-elephants, he built a stockade at Ingabu in Maubin district, and while hunting elephants there he suddenly fell ill and died.¹

¹ At Kangyigon, a mile from Ingabu Inma, there are traces of an old stockade and the fishermen worship a *nat* spirit called Po Yutpi = Takayutpi. There is no local tradition about him, but Smim Htaw (p. 163) is remembered as having taken refuge in the locality.

The years 1423 to 1539 were probably the happiest years in the annals of Pegu. The dynasty was mild. The kings could indulge their peaceful proclivities because the Upper Burma hordes found all the fighting they wanted among themselves, and the states of Prome and Toungoo acted as a buffer. It was the golden age of Lower Burma, and there can be little doubt that its civilisation was higher than that of the savage north. If few traces remain, that is because it was a simple civilisation, the steaming climate of the Delta hastens decay, and the Burmese conquerors touched nothing that they did not destroy.

Nitikin,¹ a Russian merchant from the great emporium of Tver, travelled in the East about 1470 and mentions Pegu as "no inconsiderable port, inhabited principally by Indian dervishes. The products derived from thence are sold by the dervishes." Of course the inhabitants were Talaings, but he was interested in the merchant community, and his remark shows that then as now these were mainly foreigners.

In 1496 an Italian merchant, Hieronimo de Santo Stephano,¹ came to Pegu. He could not go to Ava because communication with Upper Burma was disturbed. Thus he had to sell his stock at Pegu; it was of considerable value, so that only the king could buy it, and the king kept him waiting eighteen months for payment.

In 1505 there came another Italian merchant, Ludovico di Varthema, who also, after going three days inland, found conditions so anarchic that he abandoned the idea of reaching Ava; but he was granted audience in the Pegu palace and sold the king (Binnyaran) some coral. He writes:—

Do not imagine that the king of Pegu enjoys as great a reputation as the king of Calicut, although he is so humane and domestic that an infant might speak to him, and he wears more rubies on him than the value of a very large city, and he wears them all on his toes. And on his legs he wears certain great rings of gold, all full of the most beautiful rubies; also his arms and his fingers are full. His ears hang down half a palm, through the great weight of the many jewels he wears there, so that seeing the person of the king by a light at night, he shines so much that he appears to be a sun. (*Badger* 219.)

These three Europeans were but forerunners of many more,

¹ Major.

for the sea-route from Europe was opened in 1498 and soon the Portuguese came. In 1511 Albuquerque at Malacca sent Ruy Nunez d'Ancunha to make inquiries at Tenasserim, Martaban, and Pegu. In 1519 Anthony Correa on behalf of the Portuguese entered into an official trade agreement with the lord of Martaban; the agreement was sanctified by the presence of Martaban monks, and the Portuguese captain, not to be outdone, made his chaplain put on a surplice and bring a breviary, but the breviary was so tattered that Correa, for the sake of effect, opened an imposing book of church music and read aloud the first passage his eye met; it was *Vanitas Vanitatum*, an appropriate text for a Portuguese pioneer.¹ This branch at Martaban lasted till 1613 and one reason why the Portuguese preferred it to Pegu was that it lay on the sea, their base.

With the insecure condition of the interior there can have been little inland trade, but the Delta itself was peaceful, and the discovery of the sea route from Europe brought Pegu, as well as Martaban and Tenasserim, great prosperity. There was no coinage, but goods were sometimes weighed against *ganza*, an alloy of lead and brass which passed as currency either in odd lumps or in bars of specified weight stamped by merchants of repute but usually false. The native products were not the bulky raw materials of to-day (p. 10) but rubies and other gems from Upper Burma, lac, wax, ivory, horn, lead, tin, Pegu jars, long pepper (*Piper nigrum*) which grew in the moist forests of Tenasserim, and nyper wine made from the *dani* palm (*Nipa fruticans*, *Wurmb.*) of Tenasserim. What also attracted the Portuguese was the stock of foreign goods brought to the Burma ports for sale—pepper from Achin in Sumatra, camphor from Borneo, scented woods and porcelain from China. Chinese wares came by sea, as the trade of the overland route *via* Yunnan was meagre. The imports were piece goods, velvets and other European wares, and the opium which Mahomedan ships brought from Mecca and Cambay.²

¹ *Stevens* I. 227 says the senior monk made oath over the agreement by burning sweet leaves and yellow paper. This suggests the presence of Chinese.

² For Pegu jars, etc., see note "Pegu merchants abroad" p. 341.

CHAPTER IIIc

TOUNGOO 1280-1531

IN 1280 two brothers built a stockade round their village on the hill-spur *taunggnu*, and thus founded Toungoo; probably ferocious slave-raids from Karenni made the stockade a necessity. The Pagan kingdom was then on its deathbed, and Toungoo grew up without even such slight traditions of loyalty as other towns possessed. In the next two centuries she was ruled by twenty-eight chiefs, of whom fifteen perished by assassination.

Other places, notably Prome, were equally independent, but Toungoo differed in this, that she remained predominantly Burmese. The Shans made life so unbearable in Upper Burma that every now and then crowds of Burmese families would flock south and settle round Toungoo with its stronghold on the hill.

Within a generation of the town's beginning, its lords regarded themselves as people of importance and sported a hundred and fifty elephants. **Thinkaba 1347-58** styled himself king, built a palace near Gyobinzeik village, saw that tracks were kept clear through the jungle, and went on a foray. This foray was to relieve Yehlwengahkayaing, five of the Kyaukse irrigation circles, of some of their superfluous store; Toungoo always looked longingly on that prosperous hollow, growing three crops a year while she could grow only one, and the stronger she grew the more she encroached there.

Thinkaba's son **Pyanchi 1368-77** planted groves of toddy palms and built many a pagoda and monastery; there were already numbers of these round the town, showing its importance, and eminent monks are repeatedly mentioned there. He joined the princes of Ava and Pegu in making offerings at Pagan, and it is near the Shwezigon that he and his princess

set up an inscription¹ proudly recording how they gave refuge to the Burmans who fled from Shan brutality after the fall of Sagaing and Pinya (p. 80) and how she cut off her hair and twisted it into a torch to burn before the shrine. They prayed that in their next existence they might be man and wife together again, and dwell in the land of Toungoo, and once more rule the people they loved so well. Pyanchi's friendship for the Talaing prince offended Ava, who assassinated him (p. 86).

Sometimes father succeeded to son, sometimes Ava appointed a governor, sometimes Pegu supported the ruler. **Sawluthinhkaya 1421-36** gained divine recognition of his independence, as he found a white elephant. But there was no continuity, for although the rulers sometimes intermarried with Ava, Pegu and Prome, no one family maintained itself for long.

Sithukyawhtin 1471-82 was a murderous brute; he would eat anything, however unclean, short of vulture or human flesh, and he used to have little pigs ripped out just before birth so that he could eat them boiled; but he was the faithful vassal of Ava, and it was in his family that arose

Minkyinyo 1486-1531, father of the kings of Burma, who murdered his uncle and predecessor because he would not let him marry his cousin; thereupon Ava immediately recognised him (p. 102). He secured recognition from Pegu and Chiengmai, and he received propitiatory tribute from Karenni. In 1492 he founded Dwayawadi (Myogyi) near the Lawkoktaya pagoda outside Toungoo and captured Kyaungbya, forty miles southeast, from the Talaings, killing its Shan governor in single combat by jumping on to his elephant and cutting him down. In 1503 he received from Ava the present of a daughter and the coveted canal area of Kyaukse, together with all the country leading up to it from Toungoo, such as the Yamethin villages Taungnyo, Pyagaung (Kyidaunggan), Shwemyo, Kintha, Talaingthe and Petpaing. He deported the population of these to fill his new town Dwayawadi. Nyaungyan in Meiktila district joined him. He drove off the cattle of Meiktila district and raised a cavalry levy there. He joined Prome and the

¹ *Tun Nyein* 149.

rebel princes of Upper Burma against Ava (p. 102) and was going to take Taungdwingyi in 1509 when its lord induced him to make a marriage between their children instead. In 1510 he founded Ketumati, the present Toungoo, digging the lake within the walls and laying out orchards. He continued to sally forth on occasional raids up to Meiktila and to Natmauk in Magwe district, but after founding Toungoo he spent most of his life at home. When he heard the news of the Shans' first entry into Ava in 1525 he went north to see what he could get, but had to return because its own lord Shwenankyawshin regained his city and in retaliation came raiding as far as Toungoo. When the Shans finally took Ava in 1527 he marched out and deliberately devastated the country in the central zone, filling in the wells and breaking down the channels in the hope of making an impassable belt between himself and the Shan terror. The lords of Pinya in Sagaing, Myittha in Kyaukse, and Hlaingdet in Meiktila district, with many a Burmese family, noble and commoner, fled south to take refuge at his feet. In delight he exclaimed "Now I know why the bees swarmed on the gate of Toungoo. It meant that my city was to be populous"; it meant something far more than that, although he did not realise it. He had as commander of the warboats Thondaunghmu, a rimester who wrote courtly verses on the royal family, such as Mintayashwehtiegyin, and was father to Zeyyayandameik (p. 191). Minkyinyo could trace his descent¹ through forbears of rank back to the Pagan dynasty, and dying at the age of seventy-two he bequeathed a great name to Tabinshwehti, his son by the daughter of the *thugyi* of Penwegon, six miles north of Toungoo (p. 153).

¹ See note "Tabinshwehti and Bayinnaung" p. 342.