

THE LAND
OF THE
WHITE ELEPHANT



By **FRANK VINCENT**

With an Introduction and Notes

by

John Villiers



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THE LAND
OF THE
WHITE ELEPHANT



Tonsure Ceremony of Prince Chulalongkorn. Photograph
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THE LAND
OF THE
WHITE ELEPHANT

SIGHTS and SCENES in

BURMA, SIAM, CAMBODIA, AND COCHIN-CHINA

(1871-2)

By FRANK VINCENT, Jun.

With an Introduction and Notes

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John Villiers



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from Francis Garnier, 1873.**

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INTRODUCTION

Frank Vincent Jr. was born on 2 April 1848 in Brooklyn, New York, the son of Harriet (née Barns) and Frank Vincent of the prosperous drygoods firm of Vincent, Clark and Co., in New York City. Frank Vincent Sr. had an estate at Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson and sent his son to Peekskill Military Academy near there and then in 1866 to Yale College. But at the end of his second term he was forced by ill health to leave college, and his attempt to resume his studies in the following year proved abortive for the same reason. However, in 1875 Yale was to confer upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts and in 1905 he was permitted to enrol as a graduate member of his old class of 1870.¹

Denied the opportunity of pursuing his studies at the university, Vincent determined instead to "survey the entire field of literature, science and art...in famous standard and epoch-making books" and to make a systematic tour of all the most interesting and less frequented parts of the world, "whether or not they offered the most romantic opportunities for picturesque description."² He had the means, the leisure and the energy to undertake this ambitious programme and between 1871 and 1886 he claimed to have travelled 355,000 miles "over the entire world," to have crossed Lapland alone and to have penetrated a thousand miles into the interior of Brazil, where he discovered the great double cataract of Iguacú.

1. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol XIX, Troye-Wentworth (1936) p.227.

2. *Norsk, Lapp and Finn*. Preface, p.v.

Between 1873 and 1895 Vincent published five books on his travels in Southeast Asia, India, Scandinavia, Africa, Central and South America, and elsewhere. His first book, and arguably his most readable, was *The Land of the White Elephant, sights and scenes in South-Eastern Asia, a personal narrative of travel and adventure in Farther India, embracing the countries of Burma, Siam, Cambodia and Cochin-China (1871-2)*, published in London in 1873. This was followed three years later by *Through and Through the Tropics, thirty thousand miles of travel in Oceanica [sic], Australasia, and India* (New York, 1876) and in 1881 by *Norsk, Lapp and Finn or Travel Tracings from the Far North of Europe*.

In 1890 he published two books about his travels in Latin America—*In and Out of Central America and other sketches and studies of travel* and *Around and About South America: Twenty Months of Quest and Query*. In addition to accounts of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, *In and Out of Central America* contains a description of Angkor and Cambodia under the title of “A Rival to Solomon’s Temple,” which is an updated but scarcely more accurate version of the chapters on that subject in *The Land of the White Elephant*, together with essays on the atrocities committed by King Thibaw of Burma and some of his predecessors, entitled “An Oriental Monster,” and on the recently deposed Emperor Dom Pedro II of Brazil, whom Vincent greatly admired. Finally, in 1895 an account of his travels in Africa appeared, for which he chose one of the sillier of his alliterative titles—*Actual Africa or the Coming Conti-*

ment. By this time, he was generally acknowledged to be, in the words of the *Chicago Tribune*, "one of the most brilliant and judicious of literary travellers" and, as the critic of the *Christian Union* described him, "one of the most practiced and agreeable of writers of books of travel." The deficiencies in his much vaunted scholarship and his lack of scientific knowledge were in the opinion of most of his contemporaries compensated for by the acute observation, good humour, enthusiasm and intelligence which his writing displayed. The modern reader, with the advantage of being a great deal better informed about almost every part of the world, including Southeast Asia, than the majority of Vincent's contemporaries, may not be willing to view his shortcomings quite so indulgently, but cannot fail to be attracted by his spontaneity and candour.

The Land of the White Elephant received no less critical acclaim than his later works. *The New York Times* wrote that "the narrative of Mr. Vincent may claim a high rank for the variety and attractiveness of its information, the consistency and apparent correctness of its statements, and its rare power of graphic description...It betrays the zeal of the genuine traveller." In London *The Pall Mall Gazette* considered that "the whole of his book is worth reading, as giving the latest observations of an intelligent traveller over countries that are rapidly changing their characteristics," while *John Bull* declared rhapsodically that "Farther India is still more or less a sealed book to most of us, and one could not desire a more pleasant tutor in fresh geographical lore than our author. He won our heart at once by plunging *in medias res*, instead of devoting a

(x)

chapter to the outward voyage; and he tells us sensibly and intelligently, in a natural and unaffected style, what he saw and heard." "It is the writer's object," said the *Utica Herald*, "to introduce civilization in Farther India to the notice of the English people. We think he succeeds admirably in his effort." *The Land of the White Elephant* went through five editions and was translated into French and German.

Vincent was well connected, particularly in diplomatic circles, and this made his travels much easier and enabled him to meet heads of state and other eminent personages and to visit places that might otherwise have been inaccessible to him. The debt which he owed to his many diplomatic friends is shown not only by his frequent references to their assistance and to the journeys he made in their company, but by the dedications of his books. *Through and Through the Tropics* is inscribed to Baron de Hübner, "ambassador [*sic*], minister, historian, an honored companion in several Asiatic journeys," and *In and Out of Central America* to the Hon. John A. Halderman, "diplomatist, statesman, jurist, soldier," while *Around and About South America* is dedicated to no less a personage than the Emperor Dom Pedro II, "scholar and scientist, patron of the arts and letters, sterling statesman and model monarch," whom Vincent had met in Rio de Janeiro and at Petropolis shortly before he was deposed, and *Actual Africa*, "by special permission," to King Leopold II of the Belgians. *Norsk Lapp and Finn* was inscribed, perhaps a little incongruously, to Henry Stanley "in admiration of his inestimable services to science and civilization," while for *The Land of the*

White Elephant Vincent chose Baron Henry Calicé, “minister-resident and consul-general of His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary etc. in China, Japan and Siam, with pleasant remembrance of rare experiences in Shanghai, Chefoo and Peking.”³

In 1909 Vincent, then aged 61, married a distant cousin, Harriet Stillman Vincent of Brooklyn, and set up house with her in New York City. There were no children of the marriage. On 19 June 1916 he died in Woodstock, NY and was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Tarrytown. By the time of his death he had become an honorary member of 26 scientific and literary societies and had received nine decorations from rulers and governments in the countries he had visited. In 1885 he had given his collection of antiquities and works of art, including some fragments of sculpture from Angkor Wat, to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and was accordingly made a patron of the Museum.

Vincent’s style was admired by Longfellow and other writers of the New England school, and the reading public acclaimed him as a second Marco Polo. Today, however, his works are largely forgotten and are certainly no longer read for their scholarly content. Nevertheless, they remain of considerable interest because of the keen powers of observation of their author, his zest for adventure and his unaffected delight in seeing new places and meeting new people. He always did his homework most conscientiously – among the authorities he consulted

3. See page 115 below.

before writing *The Land of the White Elephant* were Fitch, Sangermano, Bigandet, Bowring, Mouhot, Bastian, Carné, Abel Remusat, John Thomson and Christoval de Jaque – and his work is notable for its open-mindedness and lack of prejudice. Perhaps it is for this reason that his writing retains today its freshness and vigour and that, even though he was so wrong about so much of what he saw, not least about the origins and history of Angkor, which was the main objective of his travels in Southeast Asia, his books are still both enjoyable and instructive to read.

The present edition of *The Land of the White Elephant* is reprinted from the first edition, published in London in 1873 by Sampson Low, Marston, Low, and Searle, while the text of the Supplement is reprinted from the fourth edition, published in New York in 1884 by Harper and Brothers.⁴

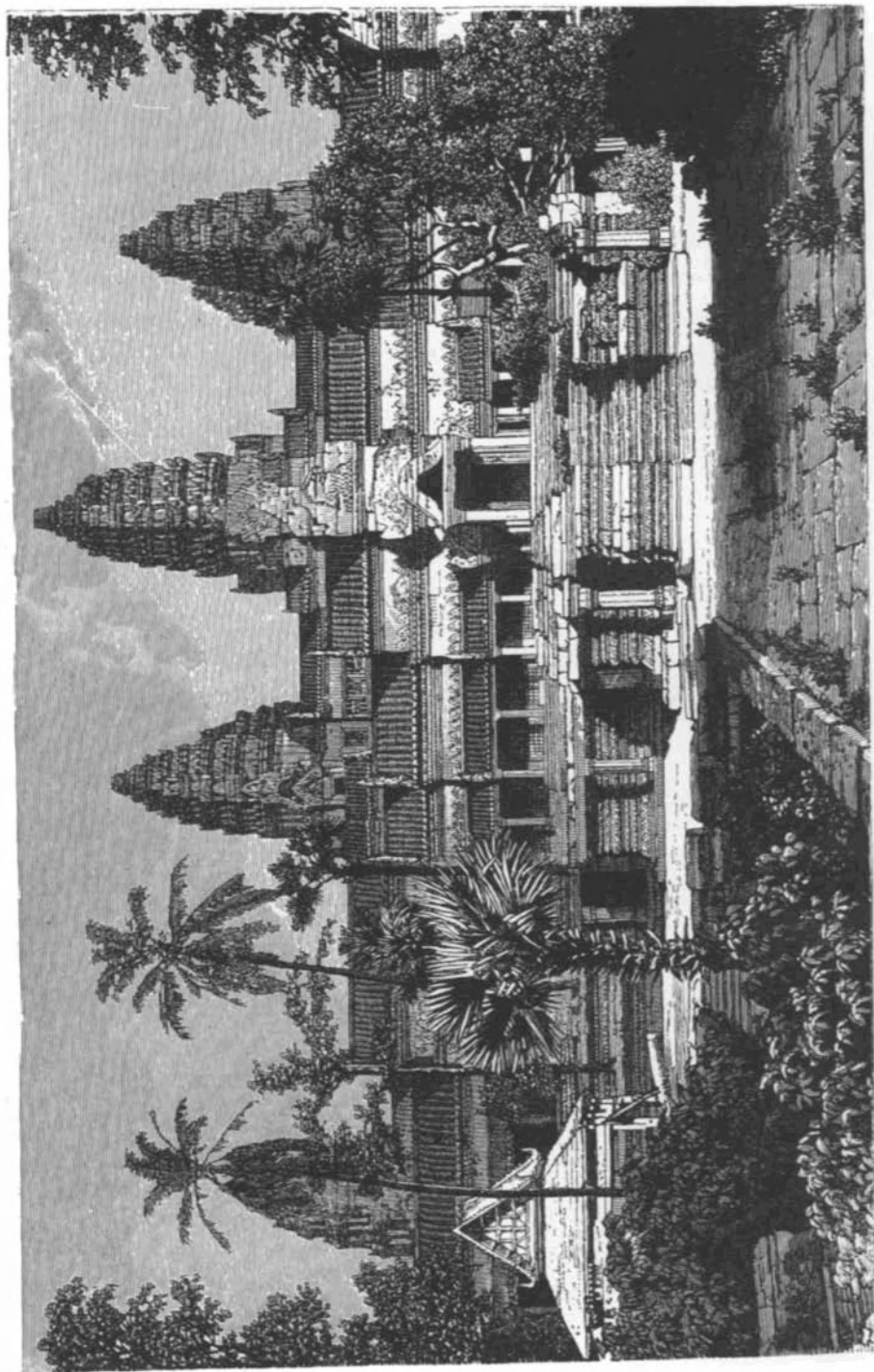
A glossary and notes on the text can be found at the end of the book on pages 385-422. Because of their abundance, I have not corrected in the notes all the minor factual errors and orthographic inaccuracies of Vincent's text (for example, his spelling of Crawfurd as 'Crawford' and his dating of the foundation of Singapore to 1818 and the establishment of Bangkok as the Siamese dynastic capital to 1769) and I have only drawn attention to those few which I considered might

4. The reprint of this work recently published by the Oxford University Press in its Oxford in Asia Hardback Reprints series states incorrectly that the first edition was published in New York in 1874 by Harper and Brothers.

affect the reader's understanding or create problems of identification. I am grateful to Dr. Andrew Forbes and Mrs. Gretchen Lin for contributing information to the notes to pages 76, 110 and 122.

Bangkok, July 1988.

John Villiers



ANGKOR WAT : PRINCIPAL FAÇADE

THE LAND
OF THE
WHITE ELEPHANT

SIGHTS and SCENES in SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE

IN

FARTHER INDIA

EMBRACING THE COUNTRIES OF

BURMA, SIAM, CAMBODIA, AND COCHIN-CHINA

(1871-2)

By FRANK VINCENT, JUN.

WITH MAP, PLANS, AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

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1873

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AND PARLIAMENT STREET

TO
BARON HENRY CALICIÉ

MINISTER-RESIDENT AND CONSUL-GENERAL OF
HIS I. AND R. AP. M. THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA, KING OF HUNGARY, ETC.
IN CHINA, JAPAN, AND SIAM

WITH PLEASANT REMEMBRANCE OF RARE EXPERIENCES IN
SHANGHAI, CHEFOO, AND PEKING

This Volume

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES OF INDO-CHINA

Is Gratefully Inscribed

PREFACE

WITHIN the past five years the attention of the western world especially has been earnestly and anxiously directed to many of the countries of Asia—to Burma, Siam, Cambodia, and Cochin China amongst others—where unusual and extraordinary innovations have been introduced, where encouraging social and religious revolutions have been initiated, and where ‘modern progress’ is now so rapid as almost to raise fears of dangerous reaction or even collapse.

Last year the Kings of Siam and Cambodia left, for the first time in history, their capital cities, and travelled in search of instruction and pleasure, the one to Java and India and the other to Hong Kong and Peking.

Opinions, laws, customs, even religions, which have been rooted and established for ages, are gradually undergoing change, and a change on the whole for the better. And still there are no countries in Asia, where the arts of civilised life are understood, of which we have so limited a knowledge as those which lie between the Bay of Bengal and the China

Sea. Although during the present century something has been learned, yet much remains to be told; a great deal of important information has to be gathered before we can claim a full and true acquaintance with the kingdoms and protectorates of Farther India—their present condition, capabilities, and prospects. A country of 1,000,000 square miles in area and 25,000,000 inhabitants—having a wonderfully productive soil and a greatly extended commerce—with which the unavoidable march of events shows we are soon to have more intimate relations, certainly merits a careful study.

A three-years' journey round the world—the greater part of the time occupied in which was employed in studying Man and Nature in the various lands of southern and eastern Asia (from Persia to Tibet, to Mongolia and Japan) and but recently completed—included visits to Farther India or Indo-China (as it is also styled) in the years 1871–72. The following pages also contain a personal narrative of travel and adventure in Burma, Siam, Cambodia, and Cochin China, for which little else is claimed than the merit of being true.

F. V. JR.

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THE LAND
OF
THE WHITE ELEPHANT

CHAPTER I.

RANGOON

It was at daybreak on the 2nd of April, 1871, that we—an English friend was with me—first saw the shores of Burma. We had been a short time at sea, having left Madras eight days previously, but the end of the voyage was none the less welcome, for it was about the season that the monsoon changes, and those terrific revolving storms called cyclones sweep the upper part of the Bay of Bengal, so often with fatal effect. Our steamer was the 'Oriental' (Capt. Smith). We had a full list of passengers, many of them being English officers, who were ordered from various Indian stations to the cantonment of Tounghoo, on the Sittang

river, in north-eastern Burma. The route usually taken by these steamers—calling at Masulipatam, Coconada, Vizagapatam, and Bimlipatam on the coast of India, and thence nearly due east to Rangoon—is about a thousand miles in length.

We enjoyed a remarkably pleasant voyage. Masulipatam was reached on the second day. This town is of importance only as being the nearest seaport to the large city of Secunderabad, in the Nizam's dominions of Southern India. In 1865 a tremendous cyclone and tidal wave destroyed thirty thousand of the inhabitants, and nearly all the buildings of the town. Coconada is a larger town than Masulipatam, and from it are exported large quantities of cotton, castor-oil, seeds, and grain. On the third day we anchored off Vizagapatam, a large town, most picturesquely situated on a plain surrounded by gently sloping hills, near the sea shore. The houses are built of mud and unburnt bricks; and crowning the summits of several of the nearer hills are graceful little temples; and at their bases date and cocoa palms, whose green, feathery leaves add very much to the beauty of the scene. Leaving Bimlipatam—a simple cluster of mud huts—we saw nothing but sky and water until the lighthouse on the Alguada reef, fifteen or twenty miles distant from Cape

Negrais (the south-west extremity of Pegu), rose up from the ocean's bed before us. It is erected on a very dangerous reef, more than a mile in length, and much of which is only just above water at low tide. The shaft, built of a red stone, is 160 feet in height, and, no land being in sight, certainly presented a most singular appearance; however, with our binoculars we could distinguish two or three lines of billows dashing themselves one after another upon the dark rocks.

Soon after 'sighting' the land we received on board the pilot, and then half an hour's steaming brought us to the mouth of the Rangoon river, with its low, wooded shores, and red obelisks on either headland—warnings to the mariner. Sandbanks, whose edges are marked by large iron buoys indicating the channel's bed, stretched for a long distance out to sea. We passed a dozen or more large ships before reaching the river's mouth; these, the captain informed us, anchored there in order to free themselves from the port dues to which they would be subject if lying at the city, and the masters go 'up to town' and engage their cargoes. At its entrance the Rangoon river is two miles in width, while opposite the city, twenty-six miles above, it narrows to about a third of a mile, with four or five fathoms' depth. The foreign ships anchored

in the river made a very considerable show, our visit being at the height of the rice season. Rangoon, lying upon level ground, extends for about a mile along the river, and perhaps three times that distance inland. By the bank of the river there runs a broad macadamised street, called 'the Strand,' and facing this are the Government offices and many imposing and substantial stores and dwelling-houses. The city abounds with rich tropical foliage, which shades many of the teak and bamboo built huts, and from the steamer's deck we can see a small English cantonment, two or three European churches, and several large pagodas, with gilded and richly ornamented spires. Beyond the city we see a jungle of palms and bananas, and bamboos stretching away, a waving sea of green, to the very horizon itself. The country about Rangoon—the delta of the great Irrawaddy river—is of much the same nature as that at the *embouchure* of the Ganges, being low, sandy, and muddy, and subject to tremendous floods in the rainy season.

There are two or three hotels in Rangoon, but these were full, and not being able to obtain rooms in any private dwelling, we were compelled 'to go to house-keeping,' i.e. to have an entire cottage and order our meals from a neighbouring bakery. The next few days

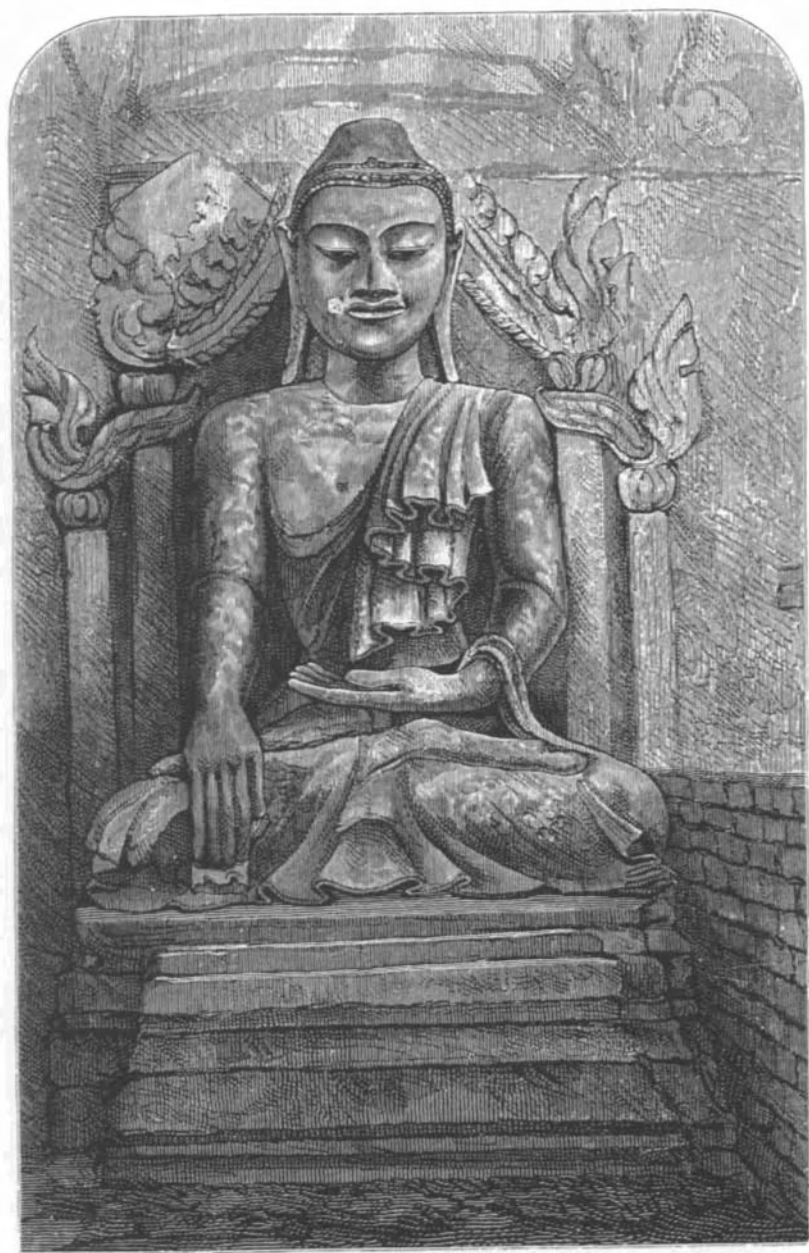
were pleasantly passed in seeing 'the sights' of the city.

Rangoon, the commercial capital of Burma, was founded by King Alompra, the Burmese conqueror of Pegu, in 1755, and was peopled by the inhabitants of the ancient capital of the province, who were brought away for that purpose. It was captured by the British during the first Burmese war in 1824, but was afterwards restored. In 1852 it again fell into the hands of the English, and will now remain, doubtless, permanently in their possession. The population at present is about 60,000—Burmese, Chinese, and Hindoos. The streets of Rangoon are laid out at right angles, and most of them are broad, macadamised, and clean. The greater part of the European private residences are raised upon piles. These are built of plain teak boards and have tiled roofs, but the native town or quarter is very mean-looking, the huts there being of bamboo, with palm-leaf thatched covers.

The most wonderful sight in Rangoon is the great *Shoay Dagon*, or Golden Pagoda—the largest edifice of the kind in Burma, and probably the largest in the world. It is situated about a mile from the city upon a hill perhaps eighty or a hundred feet in height. The entrance, guarded by two huge griffins of brick

and mortar, passes between long narrow sheds, which are beautifully carved and gaudily painted in vermilion and gold, and covered with horrid representations of the Buddhistic tortures reserved for the damned; and thence, mounting a very dilapidated staircase, the immense stone terrace upon which the pagoda itself stands is reached. This terrace is nearly a thousand feet square, and the base of the structure, standing at its centre, is octagonal-shaped and fifteen hundred feet in circumference, while the entire height of the pagoda is three hundred feet. It is built of solid masonry and lime, covered with gold leaf, and gradually tapers to a spire, which terminates in a *tee* (umbrella), an open iron-work cap, twenty-six feet in height. The gold upon this pagoda is said to equal the weight of a former Burmese king, and the spire blazes so fiercely under a noonday's sun as to almost dazzle the beholder. At the base of the immense structure are broad stone steps and large griffins, and also some smaller pagodas of like design and finish.

Within the enclosure of the pagoda are many temples, most of them containing huge images of Gaudama (the last Budha), made of wood, brick and lime, marble and metal, and nearly all thickly gilded; some of the sitting figures are twelve feet, and some of



GAUDAMA, THE LAST BUDHA

the standing ones as much as eighteen feet in height. I noticed that all the faces wore a humorous, contented expression, one sensual, however, rather than intellectual. Some of their drapery was made of minute pieces of glass, especially were the fringes of the robes thus ornamented. This gave them the appearance of coats of mail, and when different coloured glasses were used in a court dress the effect was quite gay. Some of the idols were clothed in yellow garments—yellow being the ordained colour of all priestly robes. On small tables in front of many of the images were placed candles, flowers, and little paper flags; some of these being used in the forms of worship, and some having been presented as offerings by religious devotees. Lofty poles were planted at short intervals around the pagoda. These were crowned with *tees*, and also at several feet from their tops were fixed rudely made game-cocks—the national emblem of the Burmese—and the remainder of the pole was hung with varicoloured streamers. Burma is well known to be one of the strongholds of Budbism. The *Shoay Dagon* pagoda derives its peculiar sanctity from being the depository, according to Burmese tradition, of relics of the last four Budhas—viz. the staff of Kanthathon, the water-dipper of Gaunagon, a garment

of Kathapa, and eight hairs from the head of Gaudama. Burman pagodas, it may be observed, are not temples, but monuments erected to the memory of Gaudama, and they are all supposed to contain sacred relics, and consequently are objects of worship to the Buddhist. The Golden Pagoda rears its lofty head from a beautiful grove of Palmyra and cocoa palms and mango trees, but it is not a very symmetrical structure, the base being far too large and the shaft too massive to secure an elegant effect.

What is justly termed 'the great bell' of Rangoon is hung in a gaily ornamented pavilion near the large pagoda. I stood upright under it with perfect ease, and a dozen men might have stood there with me. The bell has a long inscription in the Burman character, eulogistic of the king who presented it, cut around its circumference. Hopes are expressed that for this meritorious gift, replete with the virtue of beneficence, he (the king who presented the bell) may be conducted to Nieban (the Buddhist heaven), and obtain the destined blessing of men, *nats* (genii), and Brahmas by means of divine perfection, and that he may also obtain in his transmigration only the regal state among men and *nats*. 'Thus, in order to cause the voice of homage during the period of five hundred years to be

heard at the monument of the divine hair in the city of Rangoon, let the reward of the great merit of giving the great bell called *Maha Gauda* be unto the royal mother queen, the royal father proprietor of life, lord of the white elephant, the royal grandfather *Aloungmeng*, the royal uncle, the royal aunt-queen, the royal sons, the royal daughters, the royal relatives, the royal concubines, the noblemen, the military officers, and teachers. Let the nats who guard the religious dispensation five thousand years; the nats who guard the royal city, palace, and umbrella; the nats who all around guard the empire, the provinces, and villages; the nats who guard the monuments of the divine hair, around the hill *Tampakokta*, together with the nats governing *Bomma* and *Akatha*, and all rational beings throughout the universe, utter praises and accept the supplications.'

Though many natives were in the pagoda enclosure, we were allowed to freely walk about, to enter all the image-houses, and to inspect everything at our leisure, the Burmese having less fanatical notions in regard to their religious edifices than either the Hindoos or Mohammedans. The English military officials have built a strong brick wall, pierced for musketry, about the *Golden Pagoda*, to serve as a temporary retreat in

case of any sudden outbreak among the natives, and because it, being upon high ground, commands the city, and the cantonments are near at hand.

There are several other smaller pagodas in Rangoon, but all of them are built pretty much on the same plan ; the base consists of one or more quadrangles, succeeded by a tapering bell-shaped structure, either round or forming a polygon, the apex of which is crowned with the *tee* (umbrella), and without that addition it would be considered incomplete. The building itself is invariably a solid mass of masonry constructed of unburnt brick, with an outer coating of plaster, which usually is richly gilded.

CHAPTER II.

BURMESE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

It is now generally believed that the Burmese, and indeed all the various races and nations of Indo-China, migrated at a remote period from the plateaus of Central Asia, and that they are of mixed origin, possessing some of the characteristics of the Hindoo (the Caucasian) and some also of the Chinaman (the Mongol). Thus in person they are short and stout, with the small, oblique eyes, high and prominent cheek-bones, and flat, short, and broad nose of the Tartar, Chinese, and Japanese races, and the 'raven black' hair, pearly teeth, and olive-brown skin of the Hindoos and the Malays; and though of nearly the same stature as the latter, they generally possess the stouter frames of the former. The Burmese are a simple-minded, indolent people, frank and courteous, fond of amusement and gay-coloured apparel, friendly among themselves and hospitable to strangers. They appreciate a quiet life, smoking, and gossiping, and sleeping

throughout the day, and listening to wild music and singing through half of the night; 'stern' ambition is among them, indeed, a very rare trait of character.

Burmese houses are built of teak wood, palm leaf, bamboo, rattan, and grass; and are generally raised upon piles four or five feet from the ground, as a preservative against fevers, bred by the great dampness of the climate, and to provide against the inundations of the rainy season. Native villages often consist of but one long and broad street, running through perfect jungles of date, banana, palm, or other tropical trees; and beneath and among these, nearly concealed from view, are the little bamboo huts, artfully carved monasteries, and tapering pagodas.

The costume of the Burmese is remarkably simple. Both sexes wear a short white jacket, called an *engie*; and the male a *putso* (a piece of silk or cotton cloth, usually the former), and of gay colour (red or yellow), about a yard in width, and four or five in length, which is worn round the hips; while the women wear a *temine*, which is a nearly square piece of cloth, or silk, sufficiently large to wrap around the body, but fastened merely by tucking the outer end within the other, and consequently it gapes open at every step taken by the wearer, and discloses nearly the whole of

one leg ; but this exhibition, being ' the custom,' is not deemed immodest. The men wear gay-coloured silk bandannas—*gounboungs*—in adjusting which they sometimes entwist a thick lock of hair ; the women wear no



BURMESE WOMAN

head covering. Both men and women leave their hair long ; the former gather it in a bunch on the top of their head, and the latter comb it straight back from the forehead and tie it in a knot on the back of the

head. The men seldom or never wear any hair upon their faces, unless it might be a very feeble moustache. The sexes generally walk barefooted, though the women sometimes wear a sort of leather sandal, made after the classical Roman model.

The Burmese males are all tattooed from above the hips to the knees with a blackish-blue pigment, and some besides have punctured spots upon the upper part of the body stained a vermilion colour. This tattooing of the thighs is a painful operation; it is done when they are very young, a little at a time, and opium is often administered on such occasions, and deaths from an overdose of this drug, or from inflammation, are not infrequent. Regarding this curious custom of tattooing the body of the males, and of the immodest dress of the females, an old traveller in Burma states that, ‘the men of this nation have a singular custom of tattooing their thighs, which is done by wounding the skin and then filling the wound with the juice of certain plants, which has the property of producing a black stain. Some, besides both their thighs, will also stain their legs of the same colours, and others paint them all over with representations of tigers, cats, and other animals. The origin of this custom, as well as of the immodest dress of the women, is said to have been

the policy of a certain queen, who, observing that the men were deserting their wives and giving themselves up to abominable vices, persuaded her husband to establish these customs by a royal order, that thus by disfiguring the men, and setting off the beauty of the women, the latter might regain the affections of their husbands.⁷

The food of the Burmese is both simple and wholesome. The general food of the nations of southern and eastern Asia is rice. Of the Burmese we may say that salt fish, rice and *ngapee*, and fruits constitute the solid and substantial part of their bill of fare, while betel-nut and the cheroot make quite an enjoyable dessert. The condiment *ngapee*, for which there is a very great demand, is made of preserved fish, fish which has arrived at that epicurean stage termed 'high : ' it is a sort of paste which mixes with rice like the Indian sauce, *chutnee*. The betel-nut is extensively used, and most houses have about or near them trellises of the piper-betel plant, which is chewed with the nut. Smoking is universal and continual among both sexes and all ages ; cheroots of solid tobacco, but more often a preparation covered with a green-leaf wrapper, and some of them of enormous size, are used. Burmese boys take to smoking even earlier than do

the youths of this country. I have frequently seen babes at their mothers' breast alternating the nourishment of 'Nature's Nile' with pulls and puffs at their cheroots.

The natives of Burma do not appear to wear so much jewellery as the Hindoos, but they delight especially in ear ornaments. The lobe of the ear is bored to a hole of astonishing size—often an inch in diameter—and in it various articles are worn: pieces of wood, jewels, or rolls of solid gold or silver. When no ornaments are in the ears, the men often put their cheroots, or any small article in frequent use, through them, and the women use them as bouquet-holders or flower-stands, thus presenting a very comical appearance.

Burmese laws on the whole seem wise, and evidently are calculated to advance the interests of justice and morality; but they very often prove futile, owing to the tyranny and rapacity of the king and the venality of many of his officers. False swearing is particularly obnoxious to the Burmese citizen. A witness in court takes a fearful oath, which is so singular that I give it entire, through a translation: 'I will speak the truth. If I speak not the truth, may it be through the influence of the laws of demerit—viz. passion, anger, folly,

pride, false opinion, immodesty, hard-heartedness, and scepticism—so that when I and my relations are on land, land animals—as tigers, elephants, buffaloes, poisonous serpents, scorpions, &c.—shall seize, crush, and bite us, so that we shall certainly die. Let the calamities occasioned by fire, water, rulers, thieves,



BURMESE JUDGE, CLERKS, AND ATTENDANTS

and enemies oppress and destroy us, till we perish and come to utter destruction. Let us be subject to all the calamities that are within the body, and all that are without the body. May we be seized with madness, dumbness, blindness, deafness, leprosy, and hydrophobia. May we be struck with thunderbolts and lightning, and

come to sudden death. In the midst of not speaking truth may I be taken with vomiting clotted black blood, and suddenly die before the assembled people. When I am going by water may the water nats assault me, the boat be upset, and the property lost ; and may alligators, porpoises, sharks, and other sea monsters seize and crush me to death ; and when I change worlds may I not arrive among men or nats, but suffer unmingled punishment and regret, in the utmost wretchedness, among the four states of punishment, Hell, Prota, Beasts, and Athurakai.'

'If I speak the truth, may I and my relations, through the influence of the ten laws of merit, and on account of the efficacy of truth, be freed from all calamities within and without the body, and may evils which have not yet come be warded far away. May the thunderbolts and lightning, the nat of the waters, and all sea animals love me, that I may be safe from them. May my prosperity increase like the rising sun and the waxing moon ; and may the seven possessions, the seven laws, and the seven merits of the virtuous be permanent in my person ; and when I change worlds may I not go to the four states of punishment, but attain the happiness of men and nats, and realise merit, reward, and perfect calm.'

The vernacular tongue of the Burmese has neither declension nor conjugation, and is very difficult for Europeans to learn. It is written from left to right, with no division between the words, and with letters most of which are circles or parts of circles. The



COPY OF AN OLD BURMESE PAINTING

alphabet contains forty-four letters. Printing is unknown. The Burmese write generally upon long pieces of black prepared paper, and with thick soapstone pencils. Knowledge is so widely diffused that there are few of the common people even who cannot read and write. Burmese literature consists for the most part of treatises upon theological and legal themes in

the Pali dialect, and legends of the different Budhas, simple ballads, and books of astrology, cosmography, and astronomy in both the Pali and Burmese languages.

The religion of this nation is Buddhism; and all the peoples of farther India profess the same faith. And Buddhism is, without doubt, the most extensively diffused religion of the world—its followers numbering more than three hundred millions—though it has never been extended beyond the limits of Asia and its adjacent islands. The Burmese burn their dead, as do the Hindoos. The bodies of the priests are first embalmed, and then publicly burned with great demonstration.

Having seen all of interest in Rangoon, I determined to make an excursion up the great Irrawaddy river, as far as Mandalay, the capital of Ava, to pay my respects to His Majesty the King. One of a large flotilla of English steamers runs monthly to Bahmo, nearly a thousand miles from Rangoon, and there are weekly trips as far up as the capital. My English friend preferred to remain in Rangoon until my return. But nothing could change my plan, and so, all preparation being made, I embarked on the *flat* 'Pegu,' towed by the steamer 'Colonel Phayre,' on the 7th of April, for a long river voyage through British Burma, and into the very centre of the kingdom of Ava.

CHAPTER III.

UP THE IRRAWADDY

OWING to the shallow water we could not ascend the Rangoon river in order to enter the Irrawaddy, but were compelled to go by the Bassein Creek, and then through another called the China Bakeer, a narrow but deep stream, with low, jungle-clad banks. We had an excellent breeze during the day and through part of the night, until early morning, when so dense a fog enveloped us that the captain dropped anchor and awaited daylight, before effecting which, however, the vessels grounded near the bank, but managed after a while to work off the sandy bottom. At the breakfast table I noticed that the European passengers were eight in number, viz. three young ladies who were going to Thayet-myo, to see some relatives in the cantonments; a young married couple just out from England, who had taken passage to Mandalay—the gentleman was a mining engineer and under engagement with the King to prospect and bore for coal in

Ava—an assistant who accompanied him to the capital ; and two English officers who were going to cantonments at Thayet-myo. Then, as ‘upper deck’ passengers, there was a company of English troops, and, as ‘lower deck,’ fully fifty Burmese, Chinese, Hindoos, and Mussulmans, who were ‘booked’ for various towns along the river. The natives pay Rs. 15 (a rupee is about 50 cts.) for passage to Mandalay, and provide their own food ; the cabin passengers (European) pay Rs. 100, and Rs. 4 per diem additional for the table.

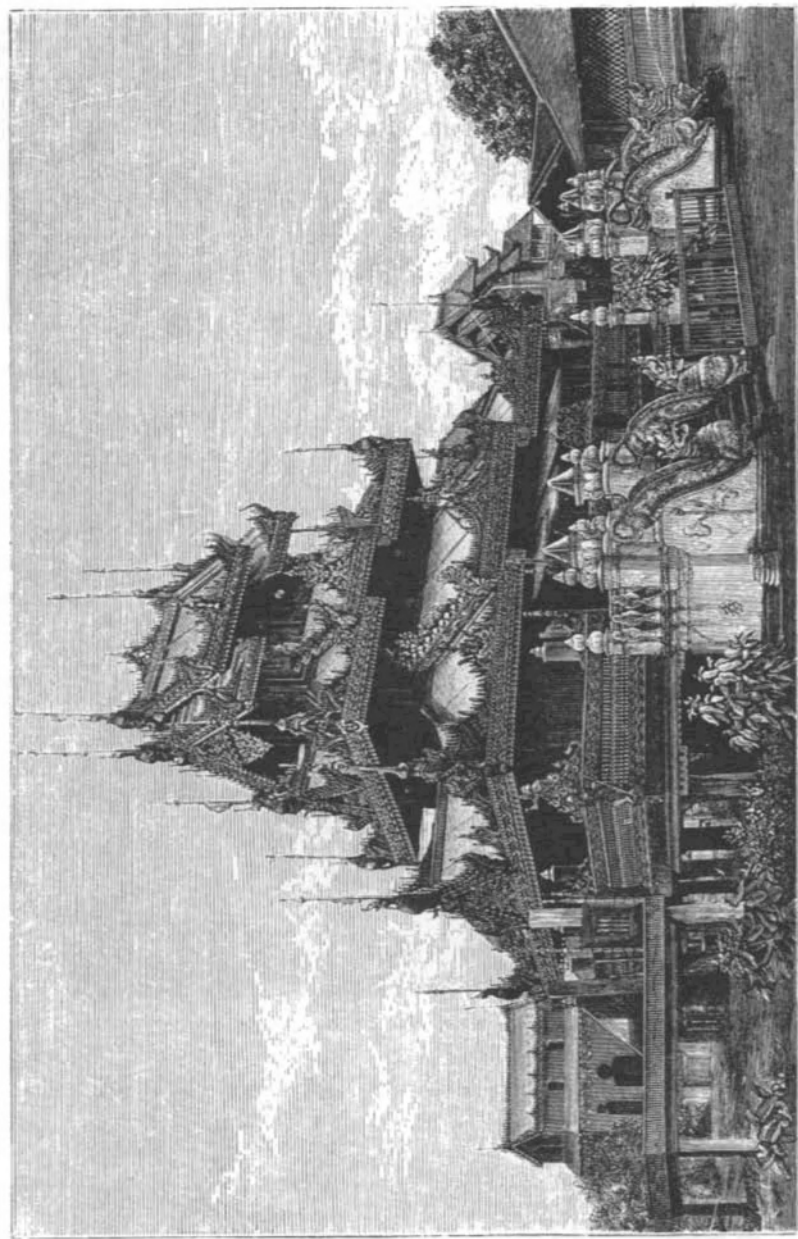
At noon on the second day from Rangoon we wheeled into the great Irrawaddy—the fourth river of the world in point of size, and the great highway into the dominions of his ‘golden-footed’ Majesty of Ava. The head of this celebrated river—styled ‘Irrawaddy,’ from the elephant of Indra—has not yet been actually discovered. It is probably, however, in the Himalaya mountains, east of Tibet, and near the Brahmapootra. This would make the entire river—which flows southerly and debouches into the Gulf of Martaban, or Bay of Bengal, through nine large mouths and a perfect labyrinth of small ones—about 1,400 miles in length. Its width varies from three to five miles when flowing through British Burma, and may, perhaps, average a mile or less from Mandalay to

Bhamo, a thousand miles from the sea. During a great part of the year the channel is very intricate and the current swift, but in May navigation is comparatively easy, for in that month the river begins to rise, and so continues until, during July, its height above the lowest level will often be as much as forty feet.

The scenery of the river became more interesting as we proceeded. Sometimes for miles and miles we had in sight nothing but the gigantic 'elephant' grass (so called from its being, when in flourishing condition, tall enough to conceal an elephant); then we would have straggling villages—the huts made of bamboo framework and palm mats, and covered with grass roofs—and the people in gay-coloured garments would flock to the river's bank, and squatting down upon their haunches, gaze curiously at the wonderful fire-boat and its 'barbarian' passengers; then followed a long reach of sandy or muddy beach; then we would pass miles of bananas, growing so rankly as to resemble the common jungle; and next a beautiful fringe of the richest green foliage skirting the water's edge. The first large village at which we stopped was Myanoung. Some of us went on shore to see 'the sights,' which consisted of half a dozen pagodas and

image-houses. I endeavoured to purchase a couple of small gilt images of Gaudama from a *pongyee* (priest), and offered a rupee in payment, but he either did not understand, or the offer was insufficient, or his religious scruples prevented the sale. The English authorities have built a brick market-house with an iron roof here for the accommodation and use of the natives. In it we saw an excellent variety of vegetables, fruits, and grains, also some few stalls containing dry goods. We had anchored near the bank, and, during the night, female coolies walked up and down the steep bluff, some fifty feet in height, carrying upon their heads large flat baskets of *paddy* (rice in the husk) on board the 'flat'—3,000 baskets of the grain being our cargo from that place.

Leaving Myanoung, we found the scenery improve still more. The high sand and mud banks which before had obstructed our view of the country inland now had disappeared, and we saw upon our left a low range of hills called the 'Arakan,' and upon our right plains covered with the densest of luxurious vegetation. The current became stronger, and the stream more tortuous, averaging in breadth less than a quarter of a mile. Near where a spur of the 'Arakan Hills' comes to an abrupt termination at the water's edge we ob



BURMESE IMAGE-HOUSE

served a number of small niches cut in the face of the rock; there were forty in one row. These contained brick, and plaster, and marble (white marble of very good quality is quarried some forty or fifty miles from Ava) images of Gaudama, placed in various positions. One very large 'reclining' Gaudama especially claimed our attention. It must have been as



IRRAWADDY RIVER BOAT

much as thirty feet in length, and had been recently gilded and painted.

The curious river craft of various forms and size afforded us much amusement. Teak timber seemed to be the material most generally employed in their con-

struction. They are of all lengths and widths, and the usual style is that modelled somewhat after the ancient Phœnician galleys. They have one lofty mast, and a long yard which supports an immense 'spread' of canvas; then there are usually two studding-sails and two upper sails; besides these are oars for eight, ten, or twelve rowers, when there is no wind; most of them have high and beautifully carved sterns, sitting on which the steersman directs the course of the vessel at will. The captain told me he had seen native boats whose yards were 110 feet in length, and whose ropes required 122 'blocks' (pulleys) to assist in the proper manœuvring of the sails. Against a strong current these boats sail but poorly; three or even four months from Rangoon to Mandalay, a distance of seven hundred miles, is the average time employed. The Burmese have also long narrow canoes, made from the single trunk of a tree, which they paddle very dextrously and swiftly. An upset, which, by the way, does not often happen, seems to occasion them no inconvenience; for should such an accident occur, they at once right their canoes, and swim round until they are partly baled, when they re-enter, and shaking themselves with a grin, paddle on as if nothing wet and uncomfortable had happened. The Irrawaddy

boats and rafts are often the homes of large families. Their cargoes are usually salt fish, earth-oil (petroleum), *paddy*, and the condiment *ngapee*.

The Burmese men are remarkably indolent; the women, however, are industrious, but it is because the men compel them to do all the household work, at least the heaviest and most irksome part of it, and they will even sit about a place where their wives are at work, chatting and smoking, or else stretched upon the ground at full length asleep. If you give the native sufficient rice and *ngapee* to keep him just above the starving point, he will not work for Rs. 2 per diem; but take these articles of diet away, and he will cheerfully work for eight annas (25 cts.) However, like their neighbours the Chinese, they make excellent carpenters and blacksmiths. Marriage among the Burmese is a most peculiar institution, and the 'marriage knot' is very easily undone. If two persons are tired of each other's society, they dissolve partnership in the following simple and touching but conclusive manner: They respectively light two candles, and shutting up their hut, sit down and wait quietly until they are burned up. The one whose candle burns out first, gets up at once and leaves the house (and for ever), taking nothing but the clothes he or she may have on at the

time ; all else then becomes the property of the other party.

On the 12th we reached the large town of Prome. It lies upon a level plain, which juts out into the river a considerable distance. The hills round about were covered with custard apples, bananas, and many unknown plants. The fourth largest pagoda of Burma is situated in Prome ; a party from the steamer, including myself, visited it. In general arrangements and character it resembles the Golden Pagoda at Rangoon ; some of the images of Gaudama and some of the bells (cast from a mixed sort of metal resembling bronze) were of fair model and most extraordinary workmanship. The people evidently possess no small talent and ability for Easterns, but are too indolent to employ their faculties of mind or body in severer labour than eating, sleeping, chatting, and smoking. After our walk to the pagoda, which, situated upon a hill back of the town, is fully a hundred feet high, we visited several native huts, where the women were weaving, upon primitive looms, silk cloth of various gay patterns, stripes of alternate colours being the most esteemed. Between Prome and Thayet-myo the scenery of the river is most diversified ; highlands and lowlands, islands and sandbanks, villages and boats,

pagodas and temples, thick groves of palms near the banks and bare ranges of hills in the distance follow in quick succession and combine to make a picturesque scene, which is calculated long to remain green in the memory.

A day or two after leaving Thayet-myo we passed the steamer 'Nagpore' on her downward passage. The captain of this vessel reported 'all quiet at the capital,' though disturbances had been feared for some time previously, and for the following reason: It seems the King had built a very fine *tee*, or gilt umbrella, as a gift for the great *Shoay Dagon* pagoda at Rangoon, and wished to send it down in grand state with an escort of 10,000 troops. To this the British Commissioner objected, reducing the number of the escort to 300; but afterwards political and prudential motives had induced him to forbid any escort at all to accompany the *tee*. This decision naturally irritated the King exceedingly, and grave fears of rebellion or riot were entertained by the European residents at the capital.

The same day we passed the 'boundary pillars' which separate the British territory from that of the King of Ava, and anchored at a small village called Mengla for the night. As soon as we were made fast

about thirty coolies, men and women, began to bring firewood on board. I was much surprised at the immense loads the women would carry—six or eight sticks of wood four feet long and nearly as large as one's leg—and these they carried from the top of the steep bank down to the steamer's deck, and threw into the hold.

CHAPTER IV.

PAGHAN AND THE OLD CAPITALS

WHAT is generally known by the term Burma comprises two distinct regions : British or Lower Burma, which is under English rule, and Upper Burma, or more properly Ava, under the dominion of a native sovereign. British Burma embraces the three divisions of Arakan, on the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal ; Pegu, bordering on the Gulf of Martaban, on the south ; and the long and narrow strip of country styled Tenasserim, which extends to the Isthmus of Kraw on the Malay peninsula. These divisions of the country are some of the results of two wars which the English Government have waged with Burma. The first, in 1824, caused by some insults offered to the British flag by the Viceroy of Rangoon, was settled two years later by ceding to the crown of England the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim ; the other, concluded in 1853, and brought about by native outrages towards European merchants and aggressions upon British territory, resulted in the annexation of the rich

province of Pegu to the already enormously extended Anglo-Indian empire in the east. So that at the present day King Mounglon has no sea-board : Ava is entirely inland. The Irrawaddy river still remains as an outlet for the produce of the kingdom, though passing through foreign territory.

Proceeding up the river, we anchored on the 15th at the picturesque town of *Yaynan-gyoung*, with its long line of high-sterned fishing boats moored to the shore, and with scores of pagodas and temples crowning the neighbouring hill-tops for miles around. This town is noted for its export of earth-oil, or petroleum, so valuable to the Government as a source of revenue ; the wells are situated about six miles distant from the river, and the oil is transported to this the nearest port in large earthen jars carried on carts drawn by bullocks, and then shipped to Rangoon. We received on board 3,000 baskets of *paddy* for the King at Mandalay, and the night was nearly spent before it was all shipped. The manner of loading was peculiar. Five large boats were rowed out from the shore in succession, and being made fast alongside, coolies carried the rice, in baskets holding sixty pounds each, upon their heads, and deposited it loose in the hold of our 'flat.'

The scenery was fast becoming dull and monotonous. The banks were of sand, and inland low and barren hills alone were to be seen. Pagodas and temples seemed to increase in number, and many *zyats* (free houses of rest for travellers) also appeared. The ruins of Pagan—a city founded over a thousand years ago—were an interesting study. No other signs of its former splendour now remain, however, than some pagodas and temples, a portion of very massive brick wall, and part of an old gateway. The ruins extend for eight miles along the bank of the river and two miles inland. The pagodas are of all sizes, shapes, and almost colours, and there are said to be nearly a thousand of them still standing. They are very massively built, the foundations being of stone and the superstructure of brick and plaster. Many of them are square structures raised over vaults, where Buddhist priests dwell; then come several terraces gradually decreasing in width, and a bell-shaped spire, or in some of them a slender dome, rises above all. In the temples are many images of Gaudama, some of them of white alabaster and others of brick and plaster, painted red, and twenty feet in height.

The various forms and contents of the pagodas and temples now remaining render it extremely doubtful

what people were formerly the builders or possessors of this ancient city of Paghan. Thus, besides the purely Budhistical monuments, there are statues bearing remarkable resemblances to those of the Egyptian Feticism; others are of a Brahminical or Hindoo character; and some even, wonderful as it may seem, bespeak a Christian origin, or rather possess elements which have evidently been incorporated with the doctrines of Christianity. In support of this last statement I will quote the observations of a recent visitor at Paghan; says the author, speaking of one of the ruined buildings, 'On either side of the entrance to this pagoda, at the summit of the steps above the dragons, were two small figures of priests standing in long gowns, with umbrellas over their heads. One of these figures was the very counterpart of the statue of an English archbishop of the Middle Ages; and I was once before startled with a similar resemblance in a life-sized image of the same character, covered with gold mixed with black, near the foot of the staircase in the rooms of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta. Moreover, the umbrella over the little archbishop bore a remarkable similarity to the small circular roof over the pulpit of an English cathedral, which is popularly supposed to serve as a sounding board. Other resem-

blances, including the ground plan of most of the temples, which is shaped like a cross after the manner of European cathedrals, have induced some missionaries to presume that these buildings have a Christian origin. This idea seems somewhat preposterous. It is far more likely that there is a Buddhist element in the Christianity of the dark ages, of which monasticism evidently forms a part, just in the same way that there is a great deal of Platonism in the early Fathers.'

Just after leaving Paghan the bank rises in a high sandstone bluff, and cut in the almost inaccessible face of this were many small openings which led to equally small chambers within, where some ascetic priests had taken up their abode. The next town we reached was called Tsagaing. It lies at the foot of some beautiful hills which are almost covered with pagodas, temples, griffins, and long, winding staircases. Some of the stone staircases, leading from the little town to the pagodas on the tops of the hills, were as much as half a mile in length. Before reaching Ava we noticed on the left bank of the river an immense bell-shaped pagoda. It was built after the Mussulman model found in India, and reminded me strongly of some of the tombs which are to be seen in the old cities near Delhi. This pagoda is esteemed very holy, and

once a year a great *mala*, or religious festival of different nations, is held in its honour. Ava, formerly the capital, and built on an island, is now only a miserable village, though the massive ruins still standing attest its former splendour. The ancient city wall, sixteen feet high and ten feet thick, formerly enclosed six or seven miles of buildings. Ava was very famous for its silk manufacture in olden times. Amarapoora, which was also at one time the metropolis of Burma, and contained 175,000 inhabitants, was but dimly seen on the left bank of the river, six miles east of Ava.

The Burmese have been accustomed to change their capital rather frequently for many years back ; this was owing, sometimes, to revolution ; again to royal caprice, or superstition, or else change of dynasty. Thus Ava was first made capital A.D. 1364 ; next Monchobo (about 1740) was used as the seat of government by King Alompra (surnamed 'the Great,' though a man of low birth, who having first driven the Talains out of Pegu, caused himself to be proclaimed king, then built a palace at Dagong, changing its name to Rangoon, made a treaty with the English, and established a new dynasty—that at present on the throne), it being his native town ; then, in 1782, the court was removed to Amara-poora ; in 1819 the government was changed back to

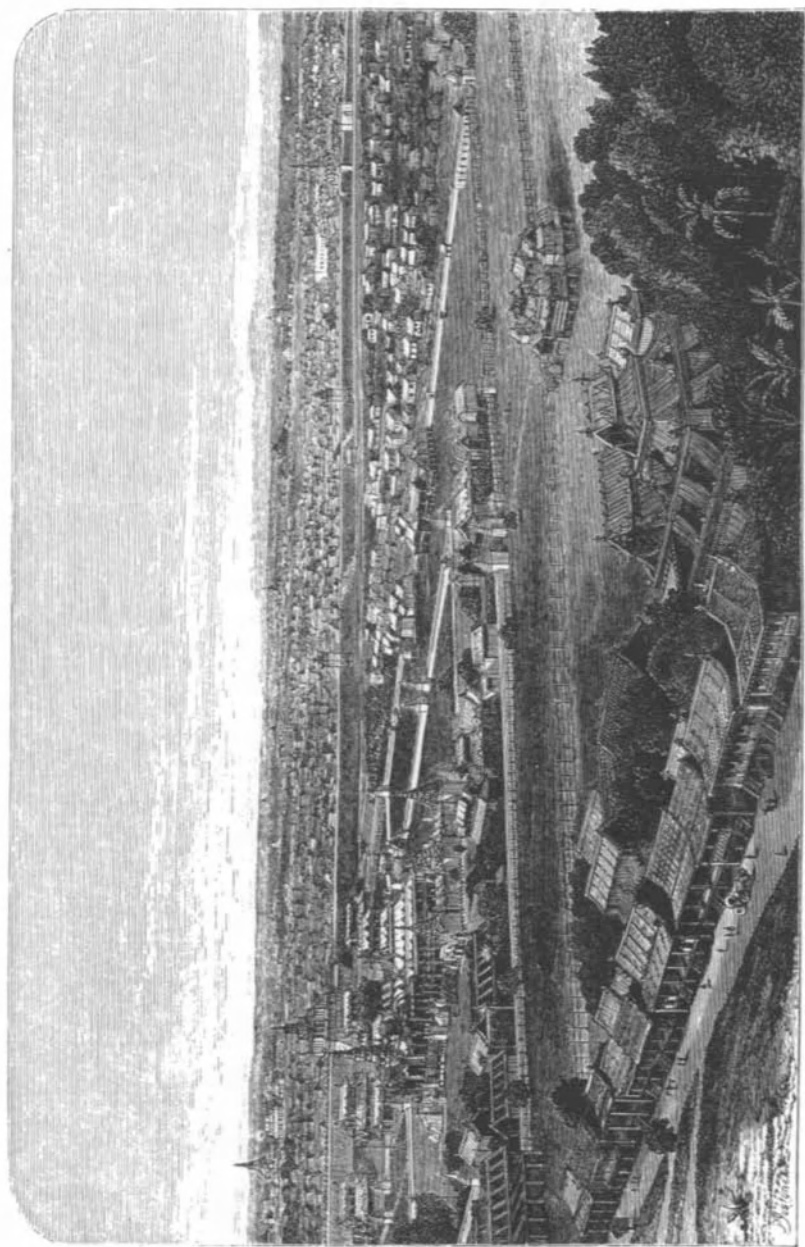
Ava, the reigning king being thus advised by the court astrologers. In 1839 Ava was destroyed by an earthquake, and then again Monchobo became the capital; not long afterwards Amarapoora was a second time chosen as the residence of the fickle court; next again, for the third time, Ava, and now, since 1857, Mandalay has been the abode of royalty and power.

Mandalay is but a few miles above Amarapoora, on the same bank of the river. On the 18th we anchored at the port or landing of the 'golden city,' and so safely reached the proposed limit of my excursion north from Rangoon.

CHAPTER V

MANDALAY

ALL that can be seen of the city of Mandalay from the river is a confused mixture of spires, and towers, and temple-tops appearing above the rich masses of foliage with which it is thickly surrounded. We anchored at twelve o'clock by the side of a dreary sandbank, with some fine large trees a little distance inland, a few bamboo huts in sight, and the usual complement of dirty and curious natives squatting along the bank—the landing being three miles distant from the city. Just behind us in the river lay a large steamer belonging to the King, but which was not then in use. His Majesty owns several others which are in the same predicament; and, besides, he is building ten steamers of a larger size and better constructed—for what purpose I did not learn. These steamers lie upon the stocks in rows, and are covered with huge sheds; they are being built of solid teak timber, and the work is done by the natives under the direction of



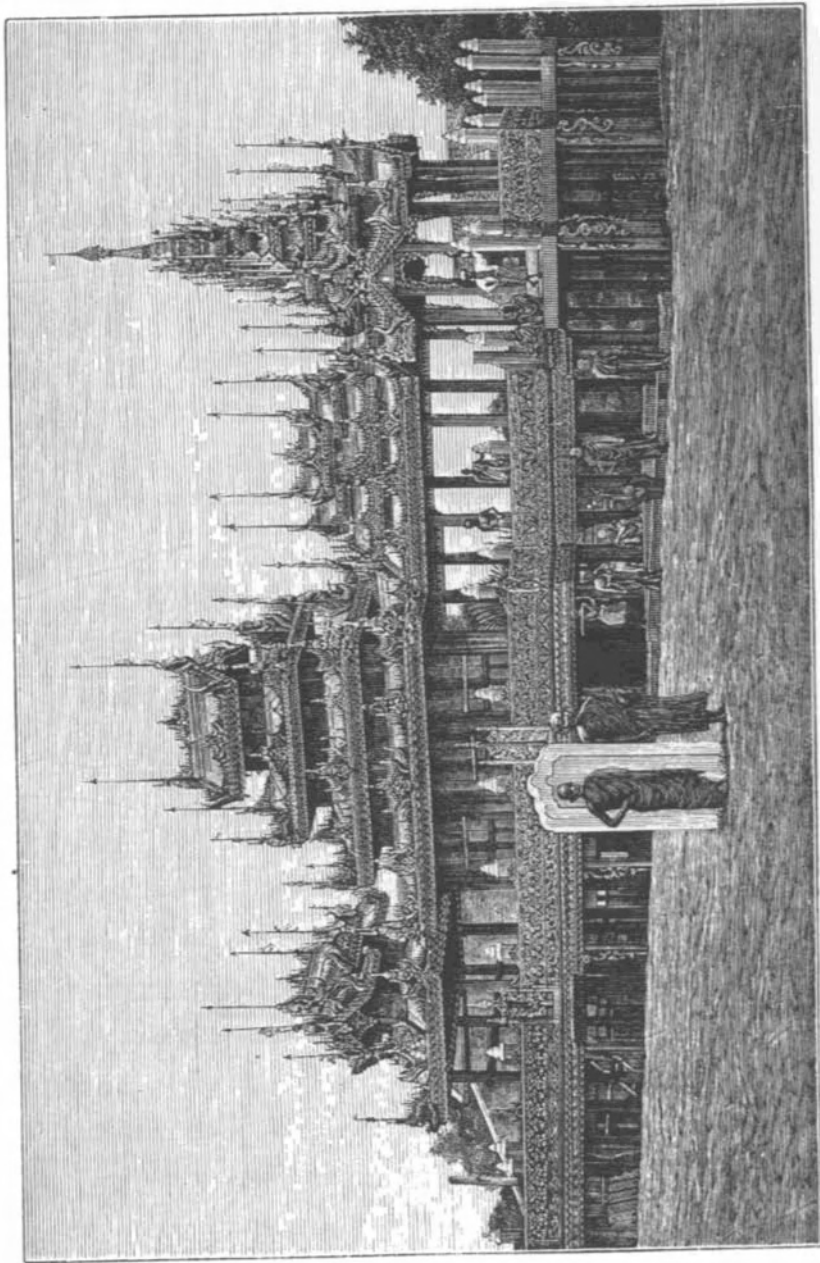
VIEW OF THE CITY OF MANDALAY

a European, who bears the proud title of Shipwright to H.M. the King of Ava.

On the opposite side of the river, and four or five miles from Mandalay, there is a very large bell, the largest in the world with the exception of that at Moscow. It is said to be twelve feet high, and more than sixteen feet in diameter at the lip, and could easily contain twenty people. There is no clapper, as in former times it was beaten from without. It emits no sound now. It is still slung from a great beam by a huge copper hook or sling; but the hook has given way, and the bell now rests upon some blocks of wood carved in strange, grotesque figures. The thickness of the metal of the bell varies from six inches to twelve, and its actual weight is about *ninety tons*. The exterior measurements of this bell do not much exceed those of 'the great bell of Pekin,' that being thirteen feet in diameter and fourteen feet in height, but weighing only fifty-three and one-half tons, being much thinner than the Burman bell. Early on the morning following our arrival Mr. Seng-Ko, a Chinese gentleman to whom I had brought a letter of introduction, called on board. I was much surprised at the abilities of this gentleman. He is one of the richest men at Mandalay, speaks English fluently, and enjoys the especial confidence and

friendship of the King, having a private *entrée* to 'the Presence' by day or night. He remained to breakfast, and before leaving promised 'to do his best' to obtain me an audience with His Majesty.

At six o'clock the next morning Mr. Seng-Ko's servant arrived with a pony; he also brought a note from his master, which read: 'I have seen His Majesty personally, and spoken to him about your desire to see him. H.M. is happy, and has desired me to bring you up to-day (Thursday). I send you the pony; the boy will be your guide to—Yours faithfully,' &c. I did not delay for my breakfast, but mounting the beautiful little Pegu pony, started at once for the city. Riding up the sandbank, which is covered by the river in the wet season, a little inland we passed, first, a large new palace, which the King has just built as a residence during the warmest months of the year. It consists of an immense square of fantastic-shaped buildings, with pretty little carved and peaked roofs, the whole lavishly ornamented with fancy wood carvings. A bamboo fence, twenty feet high, and fully a quarter of a mile square, surrounds the royal mansion. Then we crossed an immense plain and saw before us the numerous pagoda and temple spires of 'the golden city,' and beyond a small eminence called 'Mandalay



BUDHIST MONASTERY

Hill,' covered with monasteries and bell towers. During a great part of the year this plain is inundated with water, and then for locomotion the natives are compelled to betake themselves to canoes and rafts *in lieu* of ponies and bullock-carts. Mandalay is a *new* city; as recently as 1855 the area now thickly peopled was merely farm land; building began the following year, and the Court have resided there since 1857. The houses in the suburbs of Mandalay do not at all differ from those in any of the villages seen along the river; they are simple, frail structures of bamboo framework and mat covering, with grass or palm-leaf thatched roofs, and are raised some four or five feet from the ground upon wooden piles, as a precaution against inundations, dampness, fevers, and dysentery. This lower story is sometimes used as a stable for the domestic animals.

In the principal streets of the suburbs the majority of the houses are either built of brick or large bricks are *nailed* to the timbers and sidings, and then the whole exterior is thickly plastered with lime or mud. Some of the Chinese shops are two stories in height; these present a very neat and tidy appearance. Numbers of pagodas and temples and *kyoungs* (schools or monasteries) were seen in all directions. As many of the

houses are built of very inflammable material, and are crowded so closely together, and as the natives are so apathetic and phlegmatic, a fire becomes a terrible scourge. One occurred several weeks before my visit, and destroyed about five thousand houses; our road led through the burned district, and the desolate picture there presented was fearful to behold. The ground was covered with the charred and blackened remnants of huts and household goods, the dead trees were heaped about and still smoking, and, as if to heighten the mournful spectacle, here and there, at considerable intervals, might be seen little mat hovels which had just been erected by some of the sufferers, who had saved only enough to shelter themselves from the scorching mid-day sun.

At last we halted before a plain brick house built much in the European style; and, dismounting, I was cordially welcomed by the Chinaman, who, after he had examined my present for the King—a large magnifying glass, with a bright gilt rim and an ivory handle—and pronounced it both novel and appropriate, ordered his own pony to be brought, and then we rode at once to the palace—distant about a mile and a half from his residence. By the wayside I noticed a large image of Gaudama (the last Budha), which had its head protected

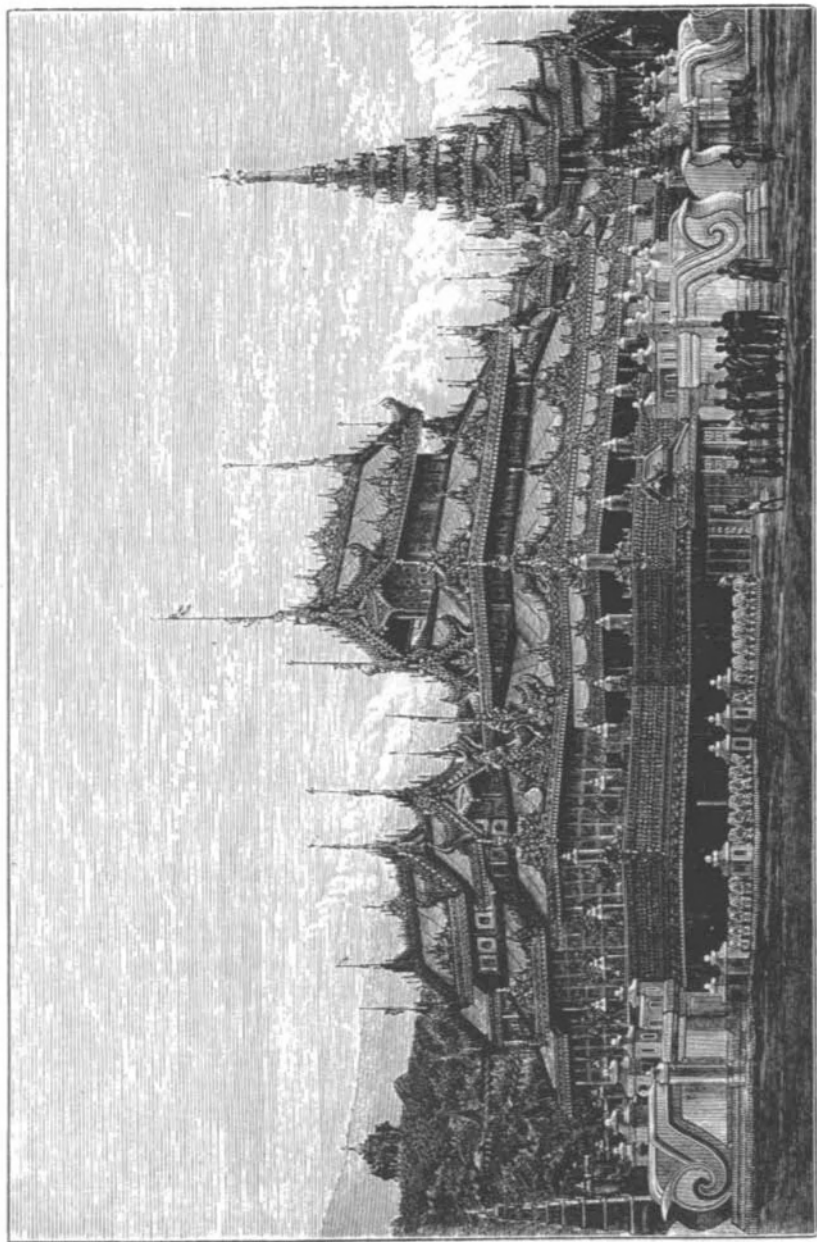
from the sun by a broad-brimmed and peaked-crowned Chinese hat; the picture produced by the smiling, gilt-faced god shaded by such a curious head-gear was most ludicrous.

There are several Asiatic nations represented in Mandalay, the population of which is about a hundred thousand, but the Chinese, dwelling mostly in the suburbs and southern parts of the city, have the greater part of the trade in their hands; the Europeans, living in the western quarter, all told, number but fourteen, some of them being officials of the English Government and a few being engaged in trade.

The city proper is a square—a mile on each side—and is surrounded by a lofty and very thick wall of loose brick (unplastered) with a notched parapet, and having a broad and deep moat filled with clear water. There are three gates on each side, and macadamised streets about a hundred feet in width, leading from them, intersect the city at right angles; then between these there are small and irregular streets and by-paths. Along the sides of the larger avenues there run channels for carrying water (which is brought from the river in a canal fifteen miles long) throughout the city. Each gateway is surmounted by a lofty pyramidal-shaped wooden tower with the customary terraced roof, and

at irregular intervals there are turrets raised a little higher than the wall and surmounted by small wooden pavilions of the same model as those over the great gates. We crossed the moat on a massive wooden bridge, and passed through one of the western gateways—the only one through which corpses are allowed to be taken from the city, as my guide observed. The gates are of enormous height and thickness, and are built of teak beams fastened together with huge iron bolts. A few half-naked soldiers, who were stationed as a guard just within the entrance, saluted us by squatting on the ground in true native fashion. On reaching the palace we left our ponies and proceeded on foot, entering through the south gate.

The outer palace walls are double, the one being thirty feet distant from the other; both are built of brick, and enclose about seventy-two acres of ground. The western gate is strictly set apart for the use of the ladies of the Court; near the one at which we entered were some barracks and a guard-house, before which latter, standing in a row, were five of the King's soldiers. They wore brass hats, shaped somewhat like a broad-brimmed 'panama,' with griffins in front; red coats, with green facings (British army pattern); their legs and feet were bare; and their only weapon consisted of



THE PALACE, MANDALAY

an immense *dah*, an instrument shaped precisely like our butchers' cleavers, and which they held over their shoulders in a most laughable serio-comic manner. It is not always, indeed, that the Burmese soldiers adopt even so much uniform as this; their profession can often only be known by a tattooed mark on the back of the neck. Walking into the square, which was filled with natives of all ranks passing in every direction, I saw upon the right a small pagoda, farther on a bell tower, and in the left-hand corner a magazine and some buildings filled with light ordnance; next came the 'High Court,' and then the 'Royal Mint,' while towering high above all rose the graceful spire of the magnificent 'Hall of Audience.'

In a small building, or rather shed (for it was a very plain bamboo affair, and contained no furniture, carpets, or vessels of any kind), near the High Court-house, was the *Pakhan Mengyee*, or Foreign Minister, and upon him we made our first call. The shed was entirely open on the front side, and there a low bamboo platform was placed; and upon this we sat, and taking off our shoes and leaving them underneath (agreeably to Burmese etiquette) we walked in a rather humble manner into the diplomatic office and sat, or more properly lay, down upon the floor on our hips, with the

feet thrust far to the rear, for the soles of the feet must never be shown when in the presence of a superior. The *Pakhan Mengyee* was taking his breakfast, but he at once entered into conversation with my Chinese *cicerone* concerning my nationality, age, business, travels, &c. This gentleman, whose rank is only second to members of the royal family, appeared to be upwards of sixty years of age ; he had a rather sinister and crafty countenance and a very pompous and conceited manner. The minister was plainly dressed, with his hair 'put up' in a knot and a white handkerchief twisted into a coil and bound once round his head, the two ends left out and appearing just above the hair, like the war plumes of a North American Indian. I afterwards noticed that all the Government officials and clerks wore this style of turban or head-dress, instead of the usually seen vari-coloured bandanna.

Leaving the Foreign Office, we passed round the *Hlot-daw*, or 'High Court'—a large but not imposing building, painted red, with gilt ornamental work ; and in which the four principal *Woongyees*, or ministers of the King, sit to adjudicate all appeal cases—and were about to enter, through a double line of walls, the enclosure which contains the palace buildings, when our attention was attracted by a regiment of native Burmese

soldiers, who had been out at target practice. They marched by us in column, four deep, clothed in nothing but the *doty* (waist cloth), and carrying huge old-fashioned muskets, closely resembling the historic blunderbuss of the sixteenth century. Judging from the appearance of these troops I should say that a thoroughly equipped European soldier would be a match for at least ten of them, and yet it has been said that the Burman soldier fights well under favouring circumstances. But the chief excellence of a Burman army lies in the absence of the *impedimenta*; the soldier carries his bed (a mat or blanket) at one end of his matchlock, a package of powder and a brass kettle at the other, and his provisions (rice, salt, and the half-putrid fish condiment called *ngapee*) in a cloth about his waist. After a few words with the 'Captain of the Guard,' who showed me some 'Schneider' rifles recently imported, we entered the square which contains the temporal abode of the 'Lord of Earth and Air.' Near the centre of this enclosure is the imposing 'Hall of Audience,' which is only used on great or solemn occasions, as for the reception of foreign ambassadors or the celebration of royal *fêtes*. The building consists of a lofty tower, with terraces of little roofs rising one above the other, and crowned by the gold umbrella in

the centre, and two smaller ones on each wing, over a long central court or hall (both also in the many-roofed style of Burmese architecture), and the whole gaudily painted in red and gold and covered with ornate carvings and decorations of brass, china, and glass. In front of the grand staircase are two immense cannon, mounted on primitive carriages having solid wooden 'block' wheels. On the right hand were barracks, a carriage foundry, and the royal gardens; while on the left were ordnance stores, the abode of the 'white elephant,' a building filled with canoes, and some sheds containing war and work elephants—these latter black.

We then called at the office of the Prime Minister, whom we found, with his assistant, discussing a wholesome breakfast. The food for each was brought by servants in four or five little bowls placed upon trays, and they ate with their fingers, taking something from each bowl in turn. The meal embraced vegetables and fish, rice, *ngapee*, greens, and spices; water only, from wooden cups, was drunk during the breakfast. My Chinese friend here learned that the King had just terminated his first 'audience,' and so I would have to wait nearly two hours, and then attend the second. During this time he introduced me to some other of

the Government officials, with all of whom he seemed to be on most excellent terms. The conversation with all of them was similar to that held with the Foreign Minister, except one with the *Yaw-Ahtween-Woon*, or Minister of the Interior, who was singularly and not altogether politely curious, asking such embarrassing questions as how much money I expended in travelling, what business my father did, what I was travelling for, and why I did not settle down somewhere. His Excellency imagined I must be travelling for political purposes, and could not comprehend any other motive for visiting foreign countries. He was a middle-aged man, a thorough politician of the unscrupulous sort, and I doubt not exceedingly cunning; but yet it appears he had quite recently been forbidden by the King to transact any further business with Europeans, owing to some discrepancies in the official returns, and his duties and powers had been transferred for the time to one of the royal secretaries. Near the office of the Minister of the Interior I saw a half-dozen men who were shackled with their hands behind them, and exposed, bare-headed, to the noon-day rays of the sun; they were prisoners for debt, and would be held in 'durance vile' until some friend advanced sufficient funds to satisfy the just claims of their creditors.

At the *Yaw-Ahtween-Woon's* office I met a very intelligent young Burman, who had studied in Paris, spoke French fluently and English fairly; his Burmese title being *Pangyet Woon*, or 'Governor of the Glass Manufactories'—a rather irrelevant appellation, for there are no such manufactories in Ava. I conversed with him nearly an hour, and obtained much valuable information concerning his country and countrymen and women. In a small pamphlet published in Rangoon (November 1870) I found the following account of this talented native gentleman, which presents a notable, though not unique, example of the capabilities and intelligence of the higher class of Burmese youth—the nobles: 'At eighteen years of age he was sent by the late Crown Prince to Calcutta, to be educated in English at Doretou College. After four years' residence at Calcutta this young Burmese gentleman returned to Mandalay, and during the voyage he made the acquaintance of Count de Lacy, who was a passenger on board the steamer, and could speak English. After staying a few months at Mandalay the King was induced by his French proclivities to send the young Burman to Paris, in charge of the Count, to study French. After acquiring the language he studied sciences for five years at the institution known as the

Pantheon, and here he took the degrees of both Bachelor and Master of Arts. Finally he studied for three years at the Central Imperial School of Arts and Manufactures, and obtained a diploma. His career in Europe was brought to a close by the rebellion in 1866, in which the Crown Prince was slain, and early in 1867 he was recalled to Mandalay by the King.' In addition to his duties as one of the royal secretaries, he had been appointed to sit with the Political Agent (*English*) as judge of the mixed court at Mandalay. Well, indeed, would it be for King Mounglon were there more such as he at the Court of Ava!

In one of the offices, a minor court, there seemed to be a great deal of business transacted, for there were as many as thirty or forty people waiting all the time; each seemed to speedily finish his errand, whatever it might have been, but more coming in kept the room continually full. In asking favours of an official the natives prostrate themselves upon their stomachs, clasp the hands as if in the act of worship, and scarcely dare to raise their eyes from the floor. The Government clerks 'keep' their accounts, as is usual throughout Burma, upon long strips of a prepared black paper, which is very rough; it is written upon with slate

pencils or sticks of French chalk the size of one's finger. After remaining in the Court-room about twenty minutes an officer came with a message that the King was ready to give 'audience,' and so, preceded by two of the grand ministers, we approached the Mhaw-gaw—the Crystal Palace—passing through still another gate in a low brick wall. A huge elephant looked calmly at us from a red shed near the road, but we did not stop; and soon after, leaving our shoes at the foot, mounted a long flight of stone stairs and entered another office, where our arrival was announced to His Majesty. While awaiting an answer I strolled into the 'Hall of Audience' to see the throne. It is a flat, raised *dais*, perhaps eight feet square, richly gilded, and on either side are the white and gold silk umbrellas, symbols of royalty (it is said that umbrellas were a sign of rank in ancient Nineveh, and they are so esteemed by most Asiatic nations at the present day). The hall is gaily painted, and the ceiling is supported by enormous round teak pillars. Banquets, at which the table service is of pure gold and silver, are sometimes served here. In the rear of this building, and connected with it, are the minor audience chambers, one or the other being used at the humour of the King, and each being named from their

peculiar style of decoration ; thus there is the ' Golden Palace,' which is entirely covered with gold (?), and the Mhaw-gaw, or ' Crystal Palace ' (already mentioned), and so called because it is adorned with trimmings in isinglass, porcelain, and glass—small mirrors.

CHAPTER VI.

AUDIENCE WITH THE KING OF AVA

AFTER waiting five or ten minutes we were summoned to a small pillared portico, open on two sides. At our backs there was a golden door leading to another chamber, and before us was a large green baize curtain, extending from the ceiling to the floor of another room which was some few feet above us. In the centre of this screen was an opening about ten feet square; here a red velvet cushion and a pair of silver-mounted *binoculars* were laid upon the floor, where there was an elegantly carpeted staircase connecting the two chambers. The roof was supported by immense pillars, grouped around the bases of two of which were the royal umbrellas and other *insignia*. No one save the King is allowed to possess a *white* umbrella, and princes of the blood are allowed to have *two* umbrellas (gilt, with poles ten or fifteen feet in length attached) carried above them by their servants when they walk or ride in public—ministers but *one*. There were

about half a dozen princes in the 'Audience Chamber,' among them the heir-apparent, an intelligent as well as handsome young man, plainly dressed, *excepting* a pair of immense cluster diamond ear-rings. Our party—for there were several others whom we found waiting—was disposed in the following order: The princes sat upon the right, then came the *Yaw-Ahtween-Woon*, then another minister, then myself, next Mr. Seng-Ko, then two ex-ministers of the former King; adjoining them were two Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries, and then two commercial gentlemen upon the extreme left; besides these, in the rear, were some dozen or more clerks, who were paying their respects to His Majesty upon the receipt of new appointments, each offering a large basket of fruit in support of his loyal feelings. Our presents were displayed before us, placed on little wooden stands about a foot in height. The natives were all prostrating themselves flat upon their stomachs, with their noses nearly touching the carpets and their eyes cast down in a most abject and servile manner.

In a few moments we heard two or three muffled booms—taps on a large tom-tom probably—and then all of us becoming at once silent, the King appeared, and quietly and slowly laid himself down, reclining

against the velvet cushion and only partially facing the audience. At the same time one of the queens entered and placed a golden spittoon, betel-box, *chatty* (with water), and cup on the floor before him. The King is a short, stout, pleasant, though, like many of his ministers, an exceeding crafty-looking gentleman, fifty-four years of age. His hair was thin and was tied in the usual Burmese knot; the head was high at the crown, showing 'self-esteem,' large, and the eyes were closely set, indicating cunning (if we are to believe phrenology and physiognomy); the neck was thick, expressive of vitality and physical power, and the face close shaven, excepting a thin black moustache. His dress was very plain and simple, consisting merely of a white *engie*, a white linen jacket, and a silk *putso*, a cloth worn around the hips and thighs; there were no ornaments in the ears, though their lobes contained holes nearly an inch in diameter, which did not improve the expression of his countenance very materially. His Majesty first took up his opera glass, though we were not more than twenty feet distant, and surveyed us in a very grave and leisurely manner, ending with a flourish of the glass, as if to say, 'Now, then, for business.' The royal secretary read aloud our names, business, and the list of the presents which were placed before

us; this was done in a loud, drawling style, and concluded with a sort of supplicating moan.

His Majesty then began the conversation through the Minister and my Chinese friend as interpreters. After the usual questions concerning my age, business, residence, and travels, the King said he wished me to convey to my Government the sentiment that 'he had a great partiality for Americans, and wished them to come over and colonise in his dominions.' But a word preliminary: it seems that I had the honour to be the first *American* presented at the Court of Ava (excepting a mechanical engineer, who was in His Majesty's *employ* ten or twelve years ago), and that the King in his astuteness graciously thought me a *spy*, or at least that I was visiting Burma for political purposes, and consequently had some influence with as well as instructions from the Government at home. It was in vain that I protested being a simple traveller, visiting different countries for the purpose of studying their geography, climate, productions; the people—their manners and customs, government, religion, laws, language, literature, industries, and commerce—and all for the improvement of mind and health of body, and that I had travelled about twelve thousand miles more especially to pay my respects to the King of Ava, and

to see the wonderful white elephant, about which I had heard and read so much in my own country ; but to no purpose, for it was quite evident His Majesty thought politics were surely my main object and end. Promising to make his wishes known to the proper authorities at home did not seem to be alone sufficient for his purposes, for he said he would keep me in Mandalay while I wrote, and until an answer came from America. At this I demurred of course, when His Majesty said if I would remain he would give me a house, living, and *as many Burmese wives as I wished* (a rather tempting offer, for the women of the upper classes are both pretty and modest), and, furthermore, he would 'make my fortune.' I was fast becoming very much interested, and slightly excited as well. His Majesty wished to make also a commercial treaty with America, and my services would be indispensable. Thus were alluring nets spread for my feet and enticing temptations presented to me. Still I was not then prepared to enter the King's service ; the idea was too new and novel, the change—from republican America and steam ploughs to monarchical Burma and white elephants—too great. 'I must have time to consider His Majesty's gracious offers,' said I to the interpreter. 'You will never

have a better chance,' was returned from the King. Seeing me still reluctant, the King condescendingly offered to 'make me a great man'—to give me high rank among his own nobles and princes. To this I answered my duty was first to my parents, and next to my own country, and that I would return to the latter and consult with the former, and then, *if they were willing*, I would be most happy to accept his magnificent and unusually gracious terms. He replied, 'It might then be too late;' and there the matter dropped, and the conversation was changed to other topics, though the King was evidently not a little vexed at my obstinacy, and doubtless thought me mad or certainly very foolish not to accept such generous proposals. One of the missionaries then presented some petitions, which were referred to the proper minister; some State business was transacted; a present of Rs. 100 was brought me ('to use for my travelling expenses or to purchase a memento of my presentation at the Court of "His Golden-Footed Majesty"'), and then the audience was terminated by the King suddenly rising and abruptly retiring from the room.

One of his queens or concubines (he has four of the former and about a hundred of the latter) who, though out of sight, had been fanning the King with a gorgeous

fan of peacock's feathers during the audience, now took a peep at us, of course exhibiting herself at the same time, and such a beautiful creature I have rarely looked upon before and perchance never shall see again. She was one of the veritable 'houris of Paradise,' an oriental pearl of indescribable loveliness and symmetry. I will not attempt a description; but the King's liberal offers came at once to mind, and I felt what a great sacrifice it would be to return to my native land, and refuse—nay, almost spurn—rank, wealth, and beauty under the peacock banner and golden umbrella of His Majesty of Ava.

The 'audience' lasted over an hour. The King seemed to have very respectable ideas of America and a high appreciation of the (usually conceded) enterprise and industry of her people; perhaps he wished Americans to settle in Burma as a sort of political offset to the English, whose power—now owning two-thirds of ancient Burma—is naturally very great, but I think his main idea was simply to obtain from the United States a commercial treaty advantageous to himself. His Majesty's use of the binoculars, which he invariably employs in *all* audiences, is not altogether pleasant; but the manner in which he would scan our countenances while replying to some of his *commanding*

speeches was most amusing. His voice is soft and low, and he speaks in a very deliberate manner, taking ample time to arrange his thoughts before giving them utterance.

The present King is a son of the famous Tharawaddi ; his brother—the eldest legitimate son—assumed the government in 1845, but, proving a tyrant, was deposed and succeeded by King Mounglon in 1853. In 1857 he removed the capital from Amarapoora to Mandalay. The King, little thinking that he would ever attain the crown, had in early youth taken the vows of a *phongyee*, or Buddhist priest, and lived secluded in a monastery until his accession. Like his predecessors his reign has not been without its troubles. In 1866 a rebellion broke out headed by two of the King's sons, the Mengon and Mengondyne princes, having for its object the dethronement of their father. The attempt failed, and the former is a refugee in the Shan States, while the latter resides under British protection in Bengal. As regards the events of the King's rule much might be said of blame and something also of praise. The Government is a despotism ; among many others we notice the royal title of 'Lord of the Power of Life and Death.' The *Holt-daw* (Council of State), composed of the four principal ministers of

State, are the executive officers of the Government; they also try all appeal cases, forming a high court for that purpose, and receiving ten per cent. of the property in suit, are said to derive very handsome incomes from this source alone. The tyranny and weight of the King's rule is most felt at, or in the immediate vicinity of, the capital, the remote districts being almost independent, and paying but little more heed to the ruling monarch than to swear allegiance whenever visited by his officers. And so limited in extent of territory is the real power of the King that the people dwelling upon the borders of Yunan are said to acknowledge the sovereignty of the local rulers of the Emperor of China as well as those of the King of Ava, and so enjoy privileges from both Governments. At present there is a royal monopoly of the *paddy* (rice) and cotton and other leading products—marble, amber, gold, copper, coal, and guns above a certain size (all over Bs. 100 in value). The King dare not leave his palace for fear of foul play, and he has consequently never seen his own war canoes or steamers, nor has he ever visited his new palace built near the river.

The Government is 'rotten to the very core;' bribery and corruption reign paramount. The King appropriates most of the revenue; many of his

ministers receive no salary at all; and the King buys goods of merchants and serves them out as pay to his troops and followers, who afterwards have to sell them in the bazaars at half-price; besides, the country bitterly suffers 'from the extortionate duties, from the grinding taxation, and from the cruelties and oppressions that daily transpire (boys of tender years and infirm old men being flogged to death in the streets, or publicly crucified with a barbarity that beggars description), and from the guild of brokers, who rule the markets according to the orders of the King or his ministers, so that no one can buy or sell save through these brokers. And yet the King has shown some appreciation of the advantages of western civilisation. He offers good inducements to European mechanics and engineers to establish themselves in Mandalay. His Majesty has succeeded in bringing his country into telegraphic communication with India and Europe. The introduction of the electric telegraph into Burma is thus curiously described by my friend the *Yaw-Ahtween-Woon* (Minister of the Interior): 'The present founder of the city of Mandalay or Rutuapon, Builder of the Royal Palace, Ruler of the Sea and Land, Lord of the Celestial Elephant and Master of many White Elephants, Owner of the

Shekyah or Indra's Weapon, Lord of the Power of Life and Death, and Great Chief of Righteousness, being exceedingly anxious for the welfare of his people, in the year 1231 introduced the telegraph, a science the elements of which may be compared to thunder and lightning for rapidity and brilliancy, and such as his royal ancestors in successive generations had never attempted.' Orientals are profuse in high-sounding and adulatory diction; the foregoing article does not contain the half of the titles pertaining to King Mounglou.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WHITE ELEPHANT

HAVING put on our shoes at the bottom of the palace staircase, we went to see the so-called white elephant. One of the proudest titles of the King of Ava is 'Lord of the White Elephant,' though the King of Siam at Bangkok is also the possessor of one or more of these sacred beasts. The Mandalay animal I found to be a male of medium size, with *white eyes* and a forehead and ears *spotted* white, appearing as if they had been rubbed with pumice-stone or sand-paper, but the remainder of the body was as 'black as coal.' He was a vicious brute, chained by the fore-legs in the centre of a large shed, and was surrounded with the 'adjuncts of royalty'—gold and white cloth umbrellas, an embroidered canopy above, and some bundles of spears in the corners of the room. The attendants told me that a young one, captured in the north-eastern part of British Burma, near Tounghoo, had recently died, after a short residence in the

capital, and that the king had been 'out of sorts' ever since. This animal was suckled by twelve women, hired for the express purpose; these elephant 'wet-nurses' receiving Rs. 50 per mensem, and thinking it a great honour to serve in such capacity

The white elephant, well named the Apis of the Budhists, has long been an appendage to Burman state. Mr. Ralph Fitch, who travelled through Burma about the year 1582, speaking of the king who reigned at that time, says, in his quaint, black-letter folio, that "among the rest he hath foure white elephants, which are very strange and rare, for there is none other king that hath them but he; if any other king hath one, hee will send vnto him for it. When any of these white elephants is brought vnto the king, all the merchants in the city are commanded to see them and to giue him a present of halfe a ducat, which doth come to a great summe, for that there are many merchants in the city. After that you have given your present, you may come and see them at your pleasure, although they stand in the king's house. The king, in his title, is called the king of the white elephants. If any other king haue one, and will not send it him, he will make warre with him for it, for he had rather lose a great

part of his kingdome than not to conquere him. They do very great seruice vnto these white elephants; euery one of them standeth in a house gilded with golde, and they doe feede in vessels of siluer and gilt. One of them, when he doth go to the riuer to be washed, as euery day they do, goeth under a canopy of clothe, of golde or of silke, carried ouer him by sixe or eight men, and eight or ten men goe before him, playing on drummes, shawmes (clarionets), or other instruments, and when he is washed, and cometh out of the riuer, there is a gentleman which doth wash his feet in a siluer basin, which is his office giuen him by the king. There is no account made of any blacke elephant, be he neuer so great. And surely there be woonderful faire and great, and some be nine cubites in height." Again, in Father Sangermano's 'Description of the Burmese Empire,' some two hundred years later, we have interesting accounts of the capture, transportation (to the capital), and more than royal treatment of the white elephant: how, when caught in the forests of Pegu, it was bound with scarlet cords and waited upon by the highest mandarins of the empire; how the place where it was taken being infested with mosquitoes, a silken net was made to protect it from them; how it was

transported to Amara-poora in a boat having a pavilion draped with gold-embroidered silk, and covered with a roof similar to those covering the royal palaces ; how, on its arrival in the city, a grand festival, continuing for three days, was celebrated in its honour ; and how the most costly presents were brought to it by the mandarins, one offering a vase of gold weighing 480 ounces. This animal was honoured no less at its demise than during life. Being a female, its funeral was conducted with the same forms and rites as those practised at the death of a queen. The body was burned upon a pile of sassafras, sandal, and other aromatic woods, the pyre being fired with the aid of four immense gilt bellows placed at its corners. Three days afterwards its ashes were gathered by the chief mandarins, enshrined in gilt urns, and buried in the royal cemetery. A superb mausoleum, of a pyramidal shape, built of brick, richly painted and gilt, was subsequently raised over the tomb. If this elephant had been a male, it would have been interred with the same ceremonial as that used for the sovereign. And even at this day the ‘celestial’ white elephants are still the objects of great veneration, royal favour, and attention ; aside from their divine character of (being) trans-

migrating Budhas, their possession, according to Burmese superstition, is considered to bring prosperity to the country in peace and good fortune in war, and therefore their death is regarded as nothing less than a national calamity. At such times the entire nation shave their heads, and perform such deeds of sorrow and mourning as are customary on the loss of the nearest and dearest of their relatives.

In one shed were some large gilded war-boats, and in another were the royal palanquins and carriages, all richly gilded, the former of fantastic and whimsical model, and the latter of English design, if not manufacture. The 'Royal Gardens' we did not visit. They are said to be laid out in squares, crossed in different places by canals of brickwork, in which the water is seven fathoms in depth. The pathways run in every direction, and grottoes are thickly interspersed among them. We inspected the artillery sheds, and observed that most of the cannon were of small calibre and antique manufacture; some of them were as much as twenty feet in length and scarcely more than four inches bore from muzzle to vent; they had been captured from the Siamese. We next visited the 'Royal Herald's' office, and obtained a permit to take the present with which His Majesty had honoured me

through the palace gates. This 'pass' was simply a piece of prepared palm-leaf about five inches in length and a little more than one in width; the order was an engraved *intaglio* (in ordinary Burmese circular character), and in one corner was the King's Treasury stamp impressed on *basso relievo*. Strips of palm-leaf are also used by scholars. They usually write or engrave with a sharp iron instrument (a style) upon pieces about two feet long and two and a half inches broad, and with a number of these strips and two thin boards of the same size for covers they form their books.

Having gained the street beyond the outermost wall, we remounted our ponies and rode to Mr. Seng-Ko's house. My host's pretty little Burmese wife then 'served up' a very palatable *tiffin* (lunch), and over our cheroots and tea we discussed the events of the morning, the future of Burma, the present state of China, and the rapid rise and prospects of the Chinese population of San Francisco and California. Speaking of *tea*, this valuable commodity is raised, in small quantity, upon the northern hills, those bordering upon the province of Yunan, in China; but the Burmese devote the leaf to a far different purpose from that employed by the surrounding nations and by our-

some curiosities. I conversed with the King, through the interpreter, for upwards of an hour, principally concerning Burma and Siam, though the subjects of Panompin and Cambodia were also introduced. His present Majesty is a son of one of the brothers who, in the last war which Siam had with Cambodia, were retained in Bangkok as hostages or sureties for the good behaviour of the reigning monarch. And having been born, brought up, and educated in Bangkok, His Majesty knew very well many of the people I had had the pleasure of meeting there. The King seemed much pleased at my telling him his palace was superior in every respect, excepting size, to that at Bangkok (though the new palace now being built in the latter city will probably be, when completed, the most splendid edifice of the kind in Asia); it seems to be his great desire to excel the King of Siam in everything.

After asking my age, nationality, and business (stereotyped questions in the East), the King remarked that I had fortunately arrived at Panompin in time to witness the greatest *fête* ever celebrated either in Cambodia or Siam, that he was himself to perform the religious ceremony of cutting the hair of his royal daughter on the summit of the artificial 'mountain'

