

Chief had but *seven hundred* men. "When the elephants felt the arrows (of the Mongols) they turned tail and fled with the platforms on their backs into a place that was set thickly with sharp bamboo-stakes, and these their riders laid hold of to prick them with." This threw the Burmese army into confusion; they fled, and were pursued with great slaughter.

The Chinese author does not mention Nasr-uddin in connection with this battle. He names as the chief of the Mongol force *Huthukh* (Kutuka?), commandant of Ta-li fu. Nasr-uddin is mentioned as advancing, a few months later (about December, 1277), with nearly 4000 men to Kiangtheu (which appears to have been on the Irawadi, somewhere near Bhamó, and is perhaps the Kaungtaung of the Burmese), but effecting little (p. 415).

[I have published in the *Rev. Ext. Orient*, II. 72-88, from the British Museum *Add. MS.* 16913, the translation by Mgr. Visselou, of Chinese documents relating to the Kingdom of Mien and the wars of Kúblái; the battle won by *Hu-tu*, commandant of Ta-li, was fought during the 3rd month of the 14th year (1277). (Cf. Pauthier, *supra.*)—H. C.]

These affairs of the battle in the Yung-ch'ang territory, and the advance of Nasr-uddin to the Irawadi are, as Polo clearly implies in the beginning of ch. li., quite distinct from the invasion and conquest of Mien some years later, of which he speaks in ch. liv. They are not mentioned in the Burmese Annals at all.

Sir Arthur Phayre is inclined to reject altogether the story of the battle near Yung-ch'ang in consequence of this absence from the *Burmese Chronicle*, and of its inconsistency with the purely defensive character which that record assigns to the action of the Burmese Government in regard to China at this time. With the strongest respect for my friend's opinion I feel it impossible to assent to this. We have not only the concurrent testimony of Marco and of the Chinese Official Annals of the Mongol Dynasty to the facts of the Burmese provocation and of the engagement within the Yung-ch'ang or Vochan territory, but we have in the Chinese narrative a consistent chronology and tolerably full detail of the relations between the two countries.

[Baber writes (p. 173): "Biot has it that Yung-ch'ang was first established by the Mings, long subsequent to the time of Marco's visit, but the name was well known much earlier. The mention by Marco of the Plain of Vochan (Unciam would be a perfect reading), as if it were a plain *par excellence*, is strikingly consistent with the position of the city on the verge of the largest plain west of Yünnan-fu. Hereabouts was fought the great battle between the 'valiant soldier and the excellent captain Nescradin,' with his 12,000 well-mounted Tartars, against the King of Burmah and a large army, whose strength lay in 2000 elephants, on each of which was set a tower of timber full of well-armed fighting men.

"There is no reason to suppose this 'dire and parlous fight' to be mythical, apart from the consistency of annals adduced by Colonel Yule; the local details of the narrative, particularly the prominent importance of the wood as an element of the Tartar success, are convincing. It seems to have been the first occasion on which the Mongols engaged a large body of elephants, and this, no doubt, made the victory memorable.

"Marco informs us that 'from this time forth the Great Khan began to keep numbers of elephants.' It is obvious that cavalry could not manœuvre in a morass such as fronts the city. Let us refer to the account of the battle.

"The Great Khan's host was at Yung-ch'ang, from which they advanced into the plain, and there waited to give battle. This they did through the good judgment of the captain, for hard by that plain was a great wood thick with trees.' The general's purpose was more probably to occupy the dry undulating slopes near the south end of the valley. An advance of about five miles would have brought him to that position. The statement that 'the King's army arrived in the plain, and was within a mile of the enemy,' would then accord perfectly with the conditions of the ground. The Burmese would have found themselves at about that distance from their foes as soon as they were fairly in the plain.