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A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF THE FOURTH TEXT OF THE MYAZEDI INSCRIPTIONS

By C. O. BLAGDEN

HAVING dealt in JRAS., October, 1909, and July, 1910, with the Talaing text of the inscriptions of the Myazedi pagoda at Pagan (Burma), I propose to offer a few suggestions here upon the hitherto undeciphered fourth text of this polyglot record. This text, like each of the others, exists in two copies, on two separate pillars. On the one it measures about $39\frac{1}{2}$ by 13 inches, on the other about $45\frac{1}{2}$ by 11 to 12 inches. I shall call the former A, the latter B, when a distinction has to be made between them. The script is an old form of the Indian alphabet.

I have to thank M. L. Finot and Mr. Taw Sein Ko for valuable assistance in dealing with this text. The former lent me two photographs and an estampage of it, the latter also furnished me with photographs and estampages, both of this text and of others which might throw some light upon it. Each also gave me useful hints and information, for which I am much indebted to them.

I am informed that this text has puzzled a good many people, and that a number of views have been held as to the language in which it is written. It has variously been conjectured to be in some old form either of Assamese, Tibetan, Cambojan, or Shan. These suggestions appear to have been purely hypothetical: they are certainly not confirmed by the internal evidence of the document itself. It did not seem to be practicable to make a start by attempting to identify the language of the text, there being too many languages that might conceivably have been used for epigraphic purposes on this occasion. Yet, as a matter of fact, one circumstance that made the inscription the more mysterious and interesting was just

this, that apart from Pāli, Burmese, Talaing, and Sanskrit, no language was known to me as having been so used in Burma about this time: and it was certainly none of these, so that all *a priori* theories were necessarily of the vaguest kind.

My own method has been to study the text itself, in both copies, compare it with the parallel versions and endeavour to analyse it as far as possible. It seemed to me that when this process had determined a certain number of words and thrown some light on the structure of the unknown language, there would be a reasonable chance of identifying it, supposing that it still existed. For one must not lose sight of the possibility that in the eight centuries or so which have elapsed since the engraving of this record the language may have become absolutely extinct, leaving no direct descendant or closely related collateral to represent it. In that case, unless further material for its study is made available, it does not seem likely that a complete analysis of this short record can ever be made. If, on the other hand, the language has survived in some modern form, a careful comparison of it with our text will probably (as in the case of the Burmese and Talaing versions) succeed in solving all or nearly all the problems presented by this inscription.

The script being Indian and the parallel versions containing a number of proper names and Indian loanwords, there was no lack of clues to help towards the reading of the alphabet; and the first step was to pick them out and thus identify as many of the letters as could be determined in that way. A first glance at the A text brought out two leading facts: one, the very frequent use of symbols resembling the visarga ∴ and anusvāra °¹ (and also

¹ Sometimes written on the right of the character, when by reason of the presence of vowel symbols there is no room for it on the top. A similar reason appears to account for ∴ (but there is apparently one case of ∴).

a subscript form of anusvāra ° and various combinations of these, ∴, ∴, and ∴); the other, the division of the text into clauses by marks of punctuation || similar to those of the other versions, and also in some cases by a simple stroke |, which is not, as has sometimes been supposed (e.g. in Haswell's *Grammatical Notes and Vocabulary of the Peguan Language*, 2nd ed., p. 12), a modern invention, but quite a common feature in the Talaing inscriptions of this period. Next a comparison with the other versions of the Myazedi record brought out the proper names and some of the loanwords which are common, *mutatis mutandis*, to all or more than one of them. They are the following¹:—

FOURTH TEXT (A).	OTHER TEXTS.
1. 2 ² . Rimadhanabū	Arimaddanapur
3. Sri Tribhuvanadi°tyadhamaraja	Sri Tribhuvanādityadhammarāj
4. Trilogavādasagadevi	Trilokavātamsakādevi
4, 6, 8, 18, 22. Rajaguma	Rājakumār
15. mahatthe	mahāther
Mūgalubūdadisatthe	Muggaliputtatissatther
Sūmedhabadi° ³	Sumedhapandit
16. Vrahmaba	Brahmapāl
Vradeyo° ⁴	Brahmadiw
Sū	Son
17. Sagasivarabadi°	Saṅghasenāwarapandit

¹ The forms in the first column are transliterated to the best of my ability, having regard to the shapes and probable values of the letters. Those in the second column are taken from one of the other versions, usually the Burmese, as spelt therein and transliterated (except that I here write *w* instead of *v*) in the ordinary way, without any reference to the modern peculiarities of Burmese or Talaing pronunciation. I leave the visarga and anusvāra symbols (and their variants and combinations) in their original shapes for the present.

² The line-references throughout are to A unless otherwise stated.

³ The engraver forgot the *Sū* and put it in afterwards below the line, adding a small cross to mark its proper place.

⁴ A mistake for *Vrahmadeyo°*: *v. infra*.

FOURTH TEXT (A).	OTHER TEXTS.
l. 20. Samanaḷō ¹	Sakmunalon
Rabai	Rapāy
[?] ivūs	Henbuiw
23. saveñodeñe	sarwwañutañān
breñe	prajñā
26. Medeya	Metteya

I need not detail the various steps by which these words were identified: of course it was not all done at once, but these were the points to which inquiry was first directed, and their identification produced a goodly array of letters of the alphabet. In l. 26 the two words preceding *Medeya* were presently recognized as *Būḍha Ari* (i.e. *Buddha Ariya*, in the Burmese text *Ari*), thus discovering two more letters, a new *b*² (oblong in shape, rather like the other *b*, but with a cross-bar), evidently related to and perhaps borrowed from the Talaing *b*, and an initial *a* (a most archaic form, closely resembling the *a* of the fourth century Veṅgi script) which apparently does not occur elsewhere in our text.

The variants of the above words presented by the B text are curious and instructive. They are: (B) l. 3, Triḷogavadasagadevi; l. 15, mhathe, Mūḷalubūdi^osathe; l. 16, Saumedhaḷadi^o, Vrahmadeyo; l. 20, Samanaḷō, and l. 21, Ji^ovūs (or, possibly, Ji^ovūs).

Before attempting to decipher any more of the text I think it will be as well to set out in tabular form the letters thus identified, together with their equivalents in the other versions and their probable phonetic values in this text.

¹ The *o* has a hook on the top turning to the right, the force of which I do not know: it looks like *o+au*, an improbable combination; perhaps it is meant to denote *ō* (or *ā*?).

² I distinguish it conventionally by a dot underneath, as I have previously done in the case of the Talaing equivalent.

APPARENT PALÆO- GRAPHICAL VALUES.	CORRESPONDING LETTERS OF OTHER VERSIONS.	PROBABLE PHONETIC VALUES.
I. Consonants.		
g	k, (gg), (ngh)	k
j	j, h	j (and s?)
ñ	ñ, (jñ)	ñ
ṭh	th, (tth)	th
t	t	t
d	t, (ṇd), t, (tt), d	t, d
dh	dh, (ddh), (dd)	dh
n	n	n
b	p	p
bh	bh	bh
m	m, (mm), (km)	m
y	y, (eyo = iw)	y
r	r, (ar)	r
v	v (Pāli), w, (rww), b, (nb)	v (or w?), b
s	ś, s, (ss), (ms)	s
h	h	h
l	l	l
ḷ	b, p	b (or p?)
II. Vowels.		
a (initial)	a	a
a (inherent)	a, (am), (ak), (aṇ), (an), (at), (ad), (am), ¹ ā, u	a
i	i, (it), ī, (iya), (en), (ena)	i (and ī?)
u	u, i	u
ū	u, (ug), (ut), (ud), (ur), (uiw), (on)	ū
e	e, (et), (en), (er), a, (aj), ā, (āṇ), (eyo = iw)	e
o	o, u, (eyo = iw)	o
ō (?)	(on)	ō (?)
ai	āy	ai
au	u	ū (?)

¹ These and some of the other groups in parentheses are of course alternatives to some of the double letters similarly grouped in the first

I shall not attempt to discuss in detail the palæographical characteristics of the script. I have compared it with the various forms of the Indian alphabet given in Holle's *Tabel van Oud- en Nieuw-Indische Alphabetten* (Batavia, 1882) and with a good many Indian inscriptions without finding anything quite like it. But I am struck with its extremely archaic character, especially as regards the letters *dh*, *b*, initial *a*, and subscript *y*. This fact was also pointed out to me by M. Finot, who drew my particular attention to the last-named letter, which in its anchor-shaped form (he informs me) is characteristic of the early period of the Indian alphabet, up to *circa* 350 A.D., and is quite exceptional in an inscription of *circa* 1100 A.D. It appears further from the table of letters just given (1) that the letters are not used consistently but interchangeably, so that it looks as if the traditions of correct spelling had almost died out, (2) that there is a tendency to use the sonants as surds,¹ from which it may perhaps be inferred that the language had had time since its first acquisition of this alphabet to suffer considerable phonetic changes, some of its original sonants having become surds.²

In view of all these facts I think it may reasonably be inferred that this script had been in use for several centuries for writing this particular language, and that the people who wrote and spoke it had an ancient but

part of the Table. The object in displaying them thus is to draw attention to the peculiar phonetic character of the language pointed out *infra*.

¹ I am not quite sure that the letter I have rendered *d* may not (in some cases, at any rate) be *t*.

² Or, alternatively, that the language of our text derived its alphabet not direct from India, but through a language in which this phenomenon had occurred. In Talaing similar changes have taken place; but whether they can be dated as far back as some centuries before the date of this inscription is a question that needs further inquiry. In any case the form of this alphabet is much more archaic than the contemporary Talaing.

rather decaying civilization (of Indian origin, like all the civilization of western Indo-China) and lived in some little backwater of their own rather outside the main current of progress and change. It also seems to follow that the language of these people (1) did not draw a very clear distinction between long and short vowels, (2) did not tolerate closed syllables at all, and therefore objected to final consonants and also such medial combinations as *km*, *ngh*, *nd*,¹ etc., and doubled consonants such as *mm*, *ss*, but (3) allowed combinations beginning a syllable, if they were of the type *ty*, *tr*, *br* (= *pr*), *vr* (= *br*),² and (4) tended (like the languages of Indo-China in general) to abbreviate long Indian words by cutting off the last syllable. These facts, so far as they may be confirmed by the rest of the record, when ultimately deciphered in its entirety, must be taken into account in any speculation that may be made as to the identity of the language.

Going back now to the beginning of the text and applying these ascertained results, we find the Indian word *siri*, "prosperity," occurring near the beginning of l. 1. The name of Buddha does not occur close to it, as it does in the Burmese and Talaing versions, but instead of it is a group which appears to read *Dathagada*, for *Tathāgata*, a title of the Buddha. The second letter, conjecturally recognized as *th* by its characteristic form, will be found confirmed later on. The word *Būḍha*, however, occurs *passim* in the text with reference to the Buddha-statue which the prince Rajakumār made. It will be found in ll. 10 (twice), 11, and 22; and in l. 19

¹ Aspirated consonants do not count as two but as one. This may serve to explain the apparent exception *hm* in *Vrahma*-; or it may have sounded *Vrahama*- (cf. the variant spelling *mhaṭhe* for *mahaṭhe*). It is noticeable that even *m* and *n* are unrepresented in the language of this text. This goes to show that its anusvāra does not stand for either of these.

² And even *sr* in *Sri*; but this may be merely a conventional way of writing. There are some subscript letters in the text where a vowel must be supplied.

occurs *gūḍha*, which I take to be a mistake for the same word (in the variant spelling *Būḍha*).¹ Transliterating the other words that can now be read more or less completely, we find after *Rimadhanabū* in l. 2 a formula of which the first letter is as yet undetermined. It looks rather like an initial *u*.² The vowel over the next letter is evidently a form of *i*, but as it appears to have an extra hook I take it provisionally for *ī*,³ and tentatively read the whole formula as *umī bĩ si*. The same expression occurs after *Sri Tribhuvanadītyadhamaraja*, the king's name, in l. 3 and in the variant form *bĩ si umī* after *Trilogavadasagadevi*, the queen's name, and *Rajaguma*, the prince's (*vide* ll. 4, 5, 8, 19). Evidently it means something like "(was) named", and consists of two parts, *umī* and *bĩ si*. (But what is meant by *bĩ si* alone in l. 14 is not clear, unless it means "exclaimed". It may be a mere expletive.)

As we find the prince's name repeatedly preceded by the formula *mayaḥ u (?) saḥ* (in ll. 6, 8, 21, where this formula is preceded by a word *bāḥ*, and in l. 18, where it is not), the natural inference is that this formula means "the queen's son". Testing this, we find that *mayaḥ* precedes the queen's name in l. 3 and *u (?) saḥ* occurs just before the prince's name in l. 4, where they are respectively introduced. Therefore *mayaḥ* means "queen" or "consort" and is the *mayā* of the Burmese version, the modern Burmese မယော, "wife," and *saḥ* means "son" and is the Burmese ⁴ *sā*, modern သား, and the syntactical order here is the same as in Burmese, but contrary to the Talaing idiom. This conclusion is confirmed by the phrase in l. 24, where we find *gi* (probably to be pronounced *ki*)

¹ B rightly has *Būḍha* here.

² Or initial *i*?

³ Perhaps, however, the hook is merely a prolongation of the left part of the *m*, and the vowel symbol stands for *i*.

⁴ Hereafter, when giving a word in the Roman character and calling it simply Burmese I imply that it occurs in the Burmese text of the Myazedi record.

saḥ with the meaning "my son" or "my child", as the parallel versions require. From this it follows that *gi*, which occurs thrice in this line, means "my" and precedes the noun it qualifies (as in Burmese, not in Talaing), and that in the phrase *mayaḥ u (?) saḥ* the word provisionally read *u* is a possessive affix or particle.

From the analogy of the corresponding Burmese words it also appears highly probable that the visarga symbol is used in this text as a tonal mark; and it seems not unlikely that the Burmese (who did not use it in the parallel version) subsequently borrowed its use as such from the people who spoke the language of our text. This use of the visarga symbol as a tonal mark is confirmed by the proper names in which it occurs. Similarly, the proper names show that the subscript anusvāra can only indicate some slight peculiarity in the pronunciation of a vowel, while a combination of it with an anusvāra symbol placed rather higher and to the right of a letter-group also has some such effect. These are therefore apparently also tonal marks.

We should expect to find a word for "city" somewhere near *Rimadhanabū* in l. 2, and looking for it we find a group which apparently reads *priḥ*. The close analogy of the Burmese *prañ*, modern ပြည်, sufficiently confirms this reading, but it is to be noted that the order is different from the Burmese, for the word *priḥ* precedes the proper name instead of following it. Reverting again to l. 24, we see that the word occurring immediately after the second *gi* must be the equivalent of "grandchild" and looks like *pli*, which compares very well with the Burmese *mliḥ*, modern မြေး, and also confirms the reading *priḥ* above.

Going back now to ll. 20-1, which contain the names of the three villages, *Samanalōo*, *Rabai*, and [*J*]*ĩ*^o *vūḥ*, we see that each is followed by a similar pair of characters, which on the analogy of the Burmese and Talaing versions

may be supposed to mean "village" and "one" respectively, reading the second one *tā*. To test this we look a little further on in l. 21 and find the other character in a phrase, which must mean "those three villages of slaves", between a word *tra* and something that looks like *ho*; and looking back at ll. 5, 6, and 12 we see that these same three words have also been used there in the same order and with the same meaning of "three villages of slaves". Therefore the middle one, which may be conjecturally read *o*, though this is a mere guess founded on its shape, must mean "village", and the other two, *tra* and *ho*, must mean "slave" and "three". But which is which? Line 24 tells us that *tra* means "slave", for it occurs there without any of the other words. Therefore *ho* (if that be the right reading) means "three" and may be compared with the Burmese *sum*, modern ခံ, and *tā* means "one", Burmese *tac*, modern ထ. Moreover, the language uses the order "slaves villages three", not like the Burmese and Talaing "slaves three villages", and in this respect apparently resembles Chin, Lushai, Miri-Abor (and Kachin, sometimes), but differs from Shan and Karen.

Going back to l. 10 we find a phrase *Būḍha u (?) cha*¹ *bo bradima tha*. The long word *bradima* suggests an Indian loanword, and my friend M. Cabaton, to whom I referred it, at once identified it with the Sanskrit *pratimā*, "statue." The natural inference is that *tha* means "golden" and is a loanword from the Talaing *thar*, modern ထ. Testing this by reference to l. 19, we find *tha* there twice, once after *gūḍha* (for *Būḍha*) and again after a word which must mean "spire". It also occurs in l. 11 after *Būḍha* and in l. 13 after *bā* *hra*. Therefore the word really is *tha* and means "gold" or "golden"; and the language, though it follows

¹ The *ch* is a new letter, conjecturally identified by its characteristic shape, which is not unlike the older Indian forms and the contemporary form in the parallel Burmese and Pāli versions.

the Burmese order in putting the possessive before the principal noun, nevertheless agrees with Talaing in putting this descriptive word (which may, however, be regarded as being primarily either noun¹ or adjective, though here used as the latter) after the principal noun. Incidentally this identification also confirms the reading *Dathagāda* in l. 1. The words *cha* *bo* may be compared with the Burmese *achān*, modern ခာန်, "likeness," "image," and the modern Burmese ခံ, "shape"; the whole phrase must mean "golden image in the likeness of the Buddha".

Before *gūḍha* [sic] in l. 19 we find what looks like *stabana* (to be pronounced *stapana*), clearly the Sanskrit *sthāpana*, "placing," here with the special meaning of "enshrining" (like the Talaing *thāpanā*). The use of the Sanskrit instead of the Pāli form used by the other versions is quite in harmony with the other archaic characteristics of our text. We need have no hesitation now in identifying *go* in the same line with the Sanskrit *guhā*, "cave" (i.e. a particular type of pagoda), for this is confirmed by its recurrence in ll. 20 and 22. Clearly also the word for "spire" which follows almost immediately in l. 19 can be read *stau* (probably to be pronounced *stū* or *stu*, cf. *Saumedha* in B), and it would seem to be the Sanskrit *stūpa*. These words are supported by the Pāli version with its *guhaṃ kañcanathūpikaṃ*, and thus the reading *stabana* receives corroboration.

Going back to l. 18 we find a phrase of three words which must mean "that having been done", or the like, as the other versions show. The second and third words are *bi* *tadā*. The inference is that *tadā* is a participle denoting the past tense, and this is confirmed by its occurrence, mostly at the end of clauses and just before punctuation marks, in ll. 5, 7, 18, 20, and 22. We may provisionally assume that *thadā* in l. 2 and *dā* in ll. 9, 14,

¹ Probably primarily a noun: cf. *tra* *bā* *sagha*, infra.

and 21 are mere variants of the same word. The first word of the phrase of three above referred to suggests the meaning "that". Testing this by l. 4 we find that when followed by the possessive affix *u* (?) it means "her". Conjecturally one may compare the Burmese *thuiw*, *thiw*, modern ခို, and having regard to the form of the letters one may provisionally read the word *dhau*. The consonant agrees well with some of the older forms of *dh* and with the modern Burmese form. The vowel is the same as in *stau* and *Saumedha* (B), and the pronunciation was probably *thū* or *thu*. Anyhow, the use of the word (as appears from ll. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17, 18, 20) is parallel to that of the Burmese word which resembles it so closely. The word *yā* (ll. 2, 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 24, 26) appears also to be a demonstrative and may perhaps be compared with the Burmese *iy*, *īy*, modern ငှိ. Both these words precede the nouns they qualify, as in Burmese. In Talaing such words usually follow their nouns.

Another word very frequently used in our text is *bā* (ll. 5, 6, 8, 21), before *Būdhā* (ll. 9, 10, 11, 26), and preceded by another symbol (possibly to be read *tra*, and in that case apparently identical with the word for "slave")¹ before the names of each of the ecclesiastics mentioned in ll. 14–17, and again in the same combination before what looks like *sagha*² (probably representing *saṃgha*, "church") in l. 17. The inference is that *bā* is an honorific prefix or title, meaning "lord" or "lady" as the case may be. It is to be noted that the Burmese version also uses what appears to be an honorific (*pay* or *pāy*) before its *mayā*, "consort." As

¹ Very possibly "slave" is here used as in Burmese to replace a personal pronoun of the 1st person, so that the combination *tra* *bā* would mean "my lord". It must have some such meaning in any case, however arrived at. Note that the syntax is analogous to that of possessive pronouns (which precede) but contrary to that of descriptive words (which follow the principal noun).

² The *gh* is a new letter conjecturally identified by its shape.

this *bā* in ll. 7 and 13 precedes a word which looks like *tda* (also occurring in ll. 9 and 17) where a word for "king" must occur, we infer conjecturally that *tda* means "king". If rightly read, this can only be pronounced with a short indeterminate vowel after the *t*, as *tda* is unpronounceable.¹ Going back to l. 7, we see that the words for "28 years" must be found somewhere between this *tda*, "king," and the *tadā* (past participle) at the end of the clause. Comparing the intervening symbols with the corresponding ones in ll. 1, 2, where equivalent² words must occur, we are forced to the conclusion that *hrā* means "eight" and the word beginning with *s* and ending with *i* means "year". If the subscript letter can be *n* the word is to be read *sni*, and we may compare the Burmese *anhac*, *nhac*, modern အနစ်, နစ်. With *hrā*, "eight," we may compare the modern Burmese ခန့်; but the contemporary Burmese spelling, curiously enough, was *het*. (The Burmese *h*- must have been almost a palatal sibilant: cf. *Henbuiw* = *Ji^hvū*.)

As the word for "death" or "to die" must occur with reference to the king and queen in ll. 5 and 7 respectively, we look for what the clauses have in common and find a word *hi*, which in l. 5 is immediately followed by *tadā*, denoting the past tense. Therefore *hi* means "to die", and one may compare the Burmese equivalent *siy*, modern ခဝ, which goes some way towards confirming our former equation *ho* = Burmese *sum*, modern အံ. In the clauses which contain the word for "to give" (ll. 5, 6, 12, 13)

¹ It is possible that the subscript anusvāra in this and other such words is the tonal mark of the first, indeterminate, syllable. But as I have at present no means of deciding the point I transcribe them just as I find them.

² Unfortunately it appears that different expressions for "twenty" are used in these two places. Consequently I have not been able to identify either of them with certainty, and cannot be quite sure of the equivalents for 1,000, 6, and 100 which should occur in l. 1.

we find the form *pāṣ* recurring and infer that it means "to give". The Burmese *piy*, modern ဝေ, is apparently a distant relative; and there are somewhat similar equivalents in other languages of the family.

The king's speech in l. 14 gives us a phrase of three words, repeated. This must mean something like "good deed", and the reading appears to be *ha pra choṣ*. As the word *pra* appears to recur in l. 23, where a word "deed" or the like must occur, it seems likely that *pra* means "deed". Perhaps one may compare the modern Burmese ငါး; but I note that the contemporary forms are *plu* and *plo'* and that in the Burmese version they mean "to make". Here, on the other hand, the word for "to make" appears to be *se* (l. 10, *biṣ se kyaṣ(?)*;¹ ll. 11-12, 19, *biṣ se*). The syllable *biṣ* is found constantly before verbal roots. Thus, besides the cases already quoted (and others as yet unexplained) we have *biṣ hi tadā*, "died" (l. 5), *biṣ pāṣ*, "gave" (ll. 5, 6, 12), *biṣ stabana*, "enshrined" (l. 19). It would seem that this *biṣ* is some sort of verbal auxiliary or prefix. In view of the other words which have proved to be more or less closely related to Burmese equivalents, it is now perhaps legitimate to assume (at any rate provisionally) that *umī* (if rightly so read) is related to the modern Burmese ဘဝဏ္ဏ, "name." The old Burmese formula corresponding to *umī biṣ si* is *mañ su*, while *mañ e'* corresponds to our *biṣ si umī*.

Besides the points of syntax already noted a few more are illustrated by the portions of the text which can now be made out. The direct object generally precedes the verb (as in Burmese; not Talaing, as a rule, though exceptions do occur). Thus, in l. 10 we have *Būḍha u chaṣ bo bradima tha tū (?) biṣ se kyaṣ (?)*, "made a golden image in the likeness of Buddha." Likewise in l. 6 we

¹ I cannot explain *kyaṣ*, which may be a verbal affix helping out the sense of *se*. The letter *k* is a new one, conjecturally identified as such by its resemblance with old forms in various Indian alphabets.

find *mayaṣ u tra¹ traṣ o hoṣ biṣ pāṣ ṭhaṣ bāṣ mayaṣ u saṣ Rājaguma uvā*, "gave the queen's goods and the three villages of slaves to the queen's son Rājakumār" (see also ll. 5, 12, 23, 26). But there appear to be instances to the contrary in l. 19. It is almost certain that the language, like Burmese but unlike Talaing, uses postpositions for prepositions. This seems to follow from the order of the words in l. 17, where after enumerating the names of the several ecclesiastics the next clause begins *ḍhau traṣ bāṣ sagha*, "these church dignitaries" (?). The equivalent of "in the presence of" must be found in the words that follow this phrase.² On the whole the syntax comes fairly close to the Burmese without, however, being actually identical with it. The language is largely monosyllabic, and it evidently possessed a fairly developed system of tones, some of which (perhaps all) are indicated in the script by the visarga and anusvāra symbols and their combinations.

At this stage it seems desirable to make a provisional summing up of the results arrived at up to the present. As the language is certainly not Indian, the Indian loanwords can have no bearing on its identity, and I leave them out of count, like the proper names. There then remain the following words (I add a query to such readings or interpretations as seem to me at all doubtful):—

1. *saṣ* = son (Burmese *sā*, modern ဘဝဏ္ဏ).
2. *mayaṣ* = wife, consort (Burmese *mayā*, modern ဝေဝေ).
3. *hi* = to die, death (Burmese *siy*, modern ငေ).
4. *hrā* = eight (Burmese *het*, modern ရှစ်).
5. *pāṣ* = to give (Burmese *piy*, modern ဝေ).
6. *tā* = one (Burmese *tac*, modern တစ်).

¹ This *tra* may represent Sanskrit *dravya*, "goods."

² On the other hand there is the curious position of the word *tī* (apparently = "in") between the demonstrative *yā* and the noun *priṣ*. Cf. its use in ll. 23, 24, 26.

7. priꜜ(?) = city (Burmese prañ, modern ပြည်).
8. hoꜜ(?) = three (Burmese sum, modern သို့).
9. sniꜜ(?) = year (Burmese anhaꜜ, modern အနှစ်).
10. pli(?) = grandchild (Burmese mliꜜ, modern မြေး).
11. u(?) = possessive affix (? cf. modern Burmese ၏).
12. d̥hau(?) = that, the (? cf. Burmese thuiw, thiw, modern ၎).
13. umi(?) = name, called(?) (? cf. Burmese mañ, modern အမည်).
14. yã(?) = this, that (? cf. Burmese iy, iy, modern ၏).
15. chaꜜ(?) = likeness(?) (? cf. Burmese achan, modern အဆင်း).
16. bo(?) = shape(?) (? cf. modern Burmese ဝံ).
17. traꜜ = slave.
18. gi = my.
19. hãꜜ = honorific prefix or title.
20. o(?) = village.
21. tadã, thadã(?), dã(?) = past auxiliary or participle.
22. tdaꜜ(?) = king.
23. ha pra(?) choꜜ(?) = good deed(?).
24. se = to make(?).
25. h̥iꜜ = verbal prefix(?).
26. tha = gold, golden (Talaing thar, modern ဝေ).

A large proportion of this list of words is related to Burmese. In the first few words on the list the relationship appears to me to be quite certain, in other cases it is at least probable. There should be clues enough here for the identification of the language, assuming that it still exists. But one thing is plainly proved even by this preliminary survey. It is that we have before us a specimen of a language of Burma, not some distant and foreign tongue. Moreover, the language must have been in some kind of contact with Talaing: the Talaing loanword and the peculiar letter *h̥* necessitate that inference. It seems therefore probable that it was spoken

somewhere on the northern fringe of the Talaing language-sphere, which at this time must have extended nearly to the latitude of Prome. Curiously enough, the only other specimens of the script in which our text is written have been found just there. They consist of two much dilapidated inscriptions discovered at the Bèbè pagoda and Kyaukka Thein referred to by General de Beylié¹ in his work *Prome et Samara* and a small clay votive tablet more recently found by Mr. Taw Sein Ko at Hmawza, near Prome.² Mr. Taw Sein Ko was good enough to send me estampages of these inscriptions. The two former are practically illegible, at any rate in our present state of almost complete ignorance of the language. But from a few combinations of letters that can be made out pretty clearly, I think it is likely enough that they are in the language of our text. The votive tablet is plainer; but though I can identify some of the letters, I am not able to make any sense out of it. Provisionally, however, I think the language of our text may with much probability be ascribed to the neighbourhood of Prome, and it is not an extravagant conjecture to suggest that it may have been the language of the Pyu (or Pru) tribe which is said to have inhabited that region at an early period. Mr. Taw Sein Ko informs me that "Pyu" is the name applied to Burma by the Arakanese as late as the twelfth century A.D. and by the Chinese in the eighth and ninth centuries. He says that the Pyus appear to have been converted to Hinduism and that they burnt their dead and buried the ashes in earthenware urns. He suggests that they were probably of Shan origin.³

¹ The recent death of this explorer (by drowning in the rapids of the Me Khong) is a great loss to Indo-Chinese exploration and research.

² The latter is illustrated in JRAS., Jan., 1911, Plate VIII. 1 (facing p. 150).

³ See also his Report of the Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Burma, 1910, pars. 44-5. He there quotes some remarks made by the late Professor Bühler on our text. But that eminent epigraphist only

On this last point I should be inclined to disagree with him. So far as I have been able to make out this Myazedi inscription, I have found no evidence of any close relationship to the Tai languages. What is quite certain is that the language of our text (though assuredly not a mere dialect of Burmese) is either a Tibeto-Burman one or has been deeply modified by some member of the Tibeto-Burman family. If the second alternative is the correct one, then such modifying influence would almost certainly be that of Burmese. But both the nature of the Tibeto-Burman words found in our text (which include such common words as "to die", "to give", "son", "wife", and the like, to say nothing of the numerals) and also their form make me regard the language as an independent member of the Tibeto-Burman family. I am not myself familiar with that vast group of languages and am therefore not qualified to pursue the inquiry much further. But I believe that enough has been done in this preliminary survey to open a path for other explorers who may be better equipped than myself.

A complete interpretation of this record will throw some light on the historical ethnography of Burma. It would seem as if the Burmese had been preceded by other Tibeto-Burman tribes who had got down to the neighbourhood of Prome long before the Burmese arrived there. But apart from legendary traditions of an ancient kingdom in that region, next to nothing appears to be known about them. They must, however, have received some measure of civilization from India, probably through the Talaings of the coast districts, for their possession of this peculiar script cannot otherwise be explained. This inscription may therefore be of considerable importance in its bearing on the date of the introduction of Indian culture into

glanced at the inscription and did not attempt to study it, as he at once recognized that the language was not Sanskritic. His remarks are therefore not very helpful. As to the votive tablet, see *ibid.*, par. 38.

Western Indo-China. The forms that survive in its alphabet are so archaic that they point to an importation of it from India at a fairly remote period. But I cannot deal with these matters, and I therefore leave the field to the palæographers and the Tibeto-Burman scholars who (I hope) will presently succeed in solving most of the remaining problems which this curious inscription presents.

I append a tentative transcription of the A text, divided into sections, with a conjectural translation added after each. It may be of use to other students, but I recommend them to regard it with a critical eye.¹ The lines are numbered according to A, and the B variants are added below.

§§ Siri §§ Dathagāda ḥa ḍo ḥāḥ ḥiḥ pdū sgu ḍaḥ ḥa
tva cū jha (2) e² hrā u sniḥ ḥiḥ tvāḥ thadā ||³—Prosperity!
1628 years after the Tathāgata's parinirvāṇa—yā tiḥ
priḥ Rimadhanabū umi ḥiḥ si || (3) Sri Tribhuvāna-
dī⁴tyadhamarāja umi ḥiḥ si || u ḍoḥ ḍa ḥāḥ uvoḥ⁴ ma(4)yaḥ
Triḷogavāḍasagadevi⁵ ḥiḥ si umi ||—in this city called
Arimaddanapur Sri Tribhuwanādityadhammarāja so-called
was lord, his queen consort was called Trilokawāṇsaka-
dewī—ḍhau u saḥ Rajaguma ḥiḥ (5) si umi ||—her son
was called Rājakumār—uvā traḥ o hoḥ ḥiḥ pāḥ toḥ ||—
(the king) gave her three villages of slaves—ḍhau ḥāḥ
mayaḥ ḥiḥ hi tadā (6)⁶ ma[ya]ḥ⁷ u tra traḥ o hoḥ ḥiḥ pāḥ
tḥaḥ ḥāḥ mayaḥ u saḥ Rajaguma uvā ||—when the queen

¹ Many letters are still doubtful, and there are also in several places marks above or between the lines to which I cannot at present attach any definite meaning.

² This and the three or four preceding words are somewhat of a puzzle. They must represent "1620". I am not at all sure that what I have transcribed e is not the old numeral figure for "20". The readings cū and jha are also very doubtful. Perhaps the latter is really hñā or jhñā. The former might possibly be thū.

³ B omits ||. ⁴ I am by no means sure of the final vowel.

⁵ B reads Triḷogavāḍasagadevi.

⁶ B inserts || ḥāḥ.

⁷ B reads mayaḥ.

had died, he gave the queen's goods and the three villages of slaves to the queen's son Rājakumār—(7) dhau hā¹ tda² sni³ sū² hrā³ hī³ tadā³ ||³ hī³ sri³ hī³ hni³ hli³ hi u mtu dū³ (8) ro³ ||—when the king had reigned twenty-eight years, he fell sick nigh unto death—dhau hā³ maya³ u sa³ Rajaguma hī³ si umī || udi³ (9) hī³ mtau ma dhau tda³ to⁴ u lo³ tro³ di³ hī³ mda³ ha³ da³ dā³ ||—the queen's son named Rājakumār, being mindful of the benefits wherewith the king had nourished him—dhau hā³ (10) Būdhā u cha³ bo bradima tha tū⁵ hī³ se kya³ ||—caused this golden image in the likeness of the Buddha to be made—dhau hā³ Būdhā⁶ hī³ tu³ (11) thmū³ lo³ yā na hī³ tdi³ to³ ||—and brought this Buddha into the presence and spake thus—yā hā³⁷ Būdhā tha hā³ ra³ sa³ hī³ (12) se maḥū³ hā³ uvā pā³ che cho³ ||—I present to my lord this Buddha which I have made on my lord's behalf—yā tra³ o⁸ ho³ hī³ pā³ (13) maḥū³ ||—the three villages of slaves that my lord gave me—yā hā³ hra tha uvā pā³ che ||—I give to this sacred image of gold—dhau lo³ hā³ tda³ hī³ ri³⁹ (14) pa¹⁰ dā³ hī³ nū ha pra cho³ ha pra¹¹ cho³¹² hī³ si ||—thereupon the king was delighted and exclaimed, “A good deed, a good deed!”—dhau u dō³ tra³ hā³ (15) mahāthe¹³ | tra³ hā³ Mūgalubūdadi¹⁴ sa³the | tra³ hā³ Sūmedhabadi¹⁵ (16) | tra³ hā³ Vrahmaba | tra³ hā³ Vradēyo¹⁶ | tra³ hā³ Sū | tra³ hā³ (17) Sagasivarabadi¹⁶ || dhau tra³ hā³ sagha

¹ B wrongly reads hī³.

² Very doubtful reading, perhaps dū.

³ B has || o || for ||.

⁴ A appears to read tō, but the mark under the line may be accidental. B has to, only.

⁵ Perhaps to be read tkha.

⁶ B reads Būdhā.

⁷ B omits hā³.

⁸ B omits o.

⁹ B perhaps reads ri³.

¹⁰ A appears to read pha, a doubtful letter; B has pa.

¹¹ B omits this pra.

¹² A appears to have cho³ here. I have followed the B reading.

¹³ B reads mha³the.

¹⁴ B reads Mūgalubūdi³sa³the.

¹⁵ B reads Saumedhabadi³.

¹⁶ B reads rightly Vrahmadeyo³. (The -e- is doubtful in both copies.)

tvo u hñu di³ dū tda³ (18) tu hā³ hī³ cha to³ tū ||—then (in the presence of) my lord the chief monk, my lord the senior monk Muggaliputtatissa, my lord the scholar Sumedha, my lord Brahmapāl, my lord Brahmadiw, my lord Son, my lord the eminent scholar Saṃghasena, in the presence of these lords of the church the king poured water (on the ground)—dhau hī³ tadā³ maya³ u sa³ Raja(19)guma hī³ si umī ma ||¹ hī³ stabana² gūdhā³ tha hī³ se go³ u stau tha hī³³ (20) tadā³ ||—that having been done, the queen's son named Rājakumār enshrined the golden Buddha, and having made the golden spire of the cave-pagoda—dhau go³ u hñau hī³ sā³ to³⁵ || Samana¹⁰ō⁶ o tā⁷ Rabai o tā⁷ | [J]i³³ (21) vū³ o tā⁷ ||⁹ yā tra³ o ho³ di³ hī³ di³ dā³ ||—he pronounced the dedication of this cave-pagoda, and having assembled (the men of) Sakmunalon, one village, Rapāy, one village, and Henbuiw, one village, these three villages of slaves—yā hā³ maya³ [u sa³]¹⁰ (22) Rajaguma yā go³¹¹ Būdhā uvā tū hī³ chai tadā³ ||—the queen's son Rājakumār, having poured out water to this cave-pagoda and Buddha—yā na hī³ di³ cho³ ||¹²—spake thus—[yā]¹³ (23) ma gā³ pra hū³ saveñodeñe breñe hī³ hī³ pā³ che na³ ti³ plā³ pa¹⁴ ||—may this my act be a cause for giving me omniscience and wisdom—(24) yā tra³ ti³ mtu kū³ dū¹⁵ gi sa³ da | gi pli da¹⁶ gi sru³ da¹⁶ mra ja hñu da¹⁷ yā (25) [Būdhā]¹⁸ uvā gā³ hli³ to³ ma

¹ B has ||. There is a blur in A.

² B reads stabana.

³ For Būdhā: B reads Būdhā.

⁴ B rightly reads hī³. A has hī only, no trace of any ³.

⁵ B reads ma ro³ instead of to³ (which is not quite distinct in A: it might be ro³).

⁶ B reads Samana¹⁰ō³.

⁷ B has || instead of |.

⁸ B reads Ji³vū³ (or, possibly, Ji³vū³).

⁹ B has | instead of ||.

¹⁰ B reads u sa³.

¹¹ B inserts hā³.

¹² B has ||.

¹³ B reads yā.

¹⁴ Or perhaps pi or pau, though I hardly think so. It has one of the unexplained marks over it.

¹⁵ Conceivably these two words may be read kū³ dū.

¹⁶ B inserts |.

¹⁷ B inserts || or |.

¹⁸ B reads Būdhā.

dj° | ga jhī¹ chi ga bro pda ma taṣ nūṣ ḥūṣ ||—as for these slaves, be it my son, be it my grandson, be it my kinsman, or any other person, who shall do violence to those that I have dedicated to this Buddha—(26) yā ḥaṣ Būḍha Ari Medeya dā ḥaṣ dī chiṣ ti° tmū ma pāṣ che choṣ ||²—may he never be permitted to approach the presence of the lord Buddha Ariya Metteya.

The following may be regarded as more or less probable identifications:—tvāṣ (l. 2) = “to elapse”; u dōṣ (l. 3) = “therein”, dōṣ (l. 14) = “in” (ḍhau u dōṣ = thereupon); ḍa, perhaps to be read la³ (l. 3) = “was”, (l. 24) = “be it”; uvā (l. 5) = “to her”, (ll. 6, 12, 13, 22, 25) = a suffixed particle forming the dative; toṣ (ll. 5, 11, 18 (20), 25) = a verbal affix (cf. Burmese tuñ, modern ၵ်း); hñiṣ (l. 7) = “to be sick” (cf. Burmese nā, modern နာ); u mtu dū (l. 7) = “near unto”, ti° mtu (l. 24) = “as for”, di° dū (l. 17) = “in the presence of”; roṣ (ll. 8 (20)) = a verbal affix (meaning “when” ?); tuṣ (l. 10) = “to bring”; loṣ (l. 11) = “into”, (l. 13) = “in”; thmūṣ (l. 11), tmū (l. 26) = “presence”; na (ll. 11, 22) = “manner” (yā na = “thus”); tdjṣ (l. 11), dī° (l. 22) = “spake” (but this will not account for dī° in ll. 9, 21, 25); che (ll. 12, 13, 23, 26), choṣ (ll. 12, 14, 26), and perhaps cho (l. 22) = particles used together and separately, mainly as verbal affixes (with the former cf. Burmese ciy, modern ငဝ်း); ha (l. 14) = “good”, “worthy”; tvo (l. 17) = a plural affix (cf. Burmese tui, modern တွီ); cha (l. 18), chai (l. 22) = “to pour” (? cf. Burmese စက်ချသင့်); tdū (ll. 18, 22) = “water”; hlau (l. 20) = “dedication” (Burmese lhot, modern လှူ); gāṣ (ll. 23, 25) = “I”; kūṣ dū (if it can be so read, l. 24) = “in the future”; sruṣ (l. 24) = “kinsman”; mra ja hñu (l. 24) = “other men” (but the

¹ Very doubtful transcription; perhaps hñi should be read.

² B has some more punctuation marks to indicate the end of the text.

³ If la is the right transcription here, then ḍaṣ in l. 9 is probably to be read laṣ.

hñu in l. 17 is not quite explained); hñiṣ (l. 25) = “to dedicate, to give to pious uses” (cf. Burmese lhū, modern လှူ), but the hñiṣ in l. 7 seems to be a different word; ga (l. 25) = “if”; hñi chi (l. 25, if it is the right reading) = “violence, oppression” (cf. Burmese anhip acak, modern အန် အတ်). Other possible identifications will suggest themselves to anyone who studies this text and compares it carefully with the parallel versions. But I feel that I have already dealt rather too freely in conjectures, which at this stage of the inquiry are at least somewhat premature, and I must refrain from throwing out any more hints that might perhaps only serve to mislead other students.

I take this opportunity of correcting two slight misprints in my last paper (JRAS., July, 1910, p. 806):—

l. 20, for ၵ်းဝ်းဝ်း read ၵ်းဝ်းဝ်း.

l. 21, for ၵ်းဝ်းဝ်း read ၵ်းဝ်းဝ်း.

Also (with reference to JRAS., October, 1909, p. 1042) with the Talaing expression *blah goh*, “this having been done,” “thereupon,” compare Bahnar *bloh*, l’un des signes du préterit; “c’est fait, c’est réussi, c’est fini; déjà, oui,” Cham *blauh*, “puis, ensuite, après; fini, achevé, fin, c’est fait.”

Finally, I have to thank Mrs. Bode for the following corrections and emendations of Pāli words and phrases in my article in JRAS., October, 1909:—

p. 1022, l. 26, for *patitthāpiya* read *patitthāpiya*.

ibid., ll. 27, 32, for *patimāya* read *patimāya*.

ibid., l. 28, for *nibbinno bhavasāṅkate* read *nibbinno bhavasāṅkate*.

ibid., l. 29, for *karentena* read *karontena*.

ibid., l. 36, for *Metteyya-dipa-dinnasa* read *Metteyya-dīpadinnassa*.

p. 1033, l. 17, for *māran’ antikarogassa* read *māraṇan-tikarogassa*.

p. 1035, l. 11, for *mahantaguna sañcayam* read *mahantagunasañcayam*.

p. 1038, l. 30, for *tutthahatto* read *tutthahatto*, with the meaning "glad and joyful", not "clapped his hands". (This emendation, I may remark, brings the Pāli version into line here with the Burmese and Talaing texts, an additional proof of its correctness.)

p. 1042, l. 20, for *jalam . . . sakkhintu vasudhātalam* read *jalam . . . sakkhim tu vasudhātalam*.

ibid., l. 31, for *thāpanā* read *thapanam*.

p. 1048, l. 30, for *upadduvam* read *upaddavam*.

p. 1050, n. 2, for *Tilokavataṃsikā* read *Tilokāvataṃsikā*.

POSTSCRIPT. Since the above was written, I have received from Mr. Taw Sein Ko estampages of another inscription in the script and (apparently) the language of our text. It consists of a few words on the back of yet another votive tablet recently discovered at Hmawza, near Prome. The discussion of this and the other "Pyu" documents must be deferred to a future occasion, but it seems as though we were on the eve of interesting discoveries. If the evidence accumulates, a completely new line of research will be opened up, and our text will acquire additional importance as the only available clue to it.