

VAN VLIET'S  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF SIAM.

IN THE 17TH CENTURY

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT.

*Of the illness and death of Pra-Inter-Va-Tsia-Thiant-Siangh Pheevgl (Phra Inthra Racha Haeng Chañy-Phuock), the great and just King of the White Elephant, and of the revolutions which took place in the Kingdom of Siam down to the coming to the throne of Pra Ongly (Phra Ong Lai), who reigns there to-day and who takes the style and title of Pra-Tiaww, Pra Sathovgh (Phra Chao Prasut Thong), Pratiaww Tsangh, Pra-Tiaww Isi angh Ihon-Dengh Pra Thiangh Choboa, that is to say the King of the Golden Throne as also of the red and white Elephant with the twisted tail.*

Written in the year 1647

by

IEREMIE VAN VLIET

and dedicated

to

Antoine van Diemen, Governor-General of the State  
of the United Provinces of the Netherlands  
in the East Indies.

For the elucidation of what I have to say on the subject of the revolutions that took place some time since in the Kingdom of Siam, it would be pertinent, before commencing this account, to give an

exact description of the position of this Kingdom, of the natives in this nation, of their religion, and of the state of their political government. But inasmuch as that has been done by several persons of merit, and as at Batavie in 1638 I myself made a whole treatise on it by order of the late Director Philippe Lucas, I shall content myself with saying that there is a fundamental law in the Kingdom of Siam which calls the brother of the deceased King to the throne, and excludes the son. In defiance of this law the last great and just King of the White Elephant and of the Kingdom of Siam—being moved more by his private affection than by what he owed to the State,—appointed his son to the succession of the Kingdom, in place of his brother, to whom the crown was due.

Some alteration in the health of the King was begun to be remarked upon from the change that was seen in his temper. For while formerly he was good-humoured and agreeable in company, and very good to his subjects and to his servants, his disposition became, towards the end of the year of the rabbits, in the waning of the eleventh moon, unbearably peevish, so that the Mandarins and other grandees of the Court did not dare any longer to approach him in order to speak to him of the important and necessary affairs of his Kingdom. At the beginning of the twelfth and last moon of the year the King fell all at once into a state of exhaustion, and it was very soon evident from the course of his sickness that there was no hope of his recovering. That was why he gave his last thoughts to the preservation of the Crown in his own house, and to the bringing about of the succession of his son, to the exclusion of his brother, the legitimate heir of the Kingdom. For this purpose he sought the advice of *Oya Siworrawongh* (Okya Sriworawong), whose real intention was to usurp the Crown himself, by taking it from this young Prince, who was only 15 years old, and of so bad a character that the Minister did not doubt he would become the aversion of all his subjects. Nevertheless in order to give some appearance of justice to this new succession, opposed as it was to the fundamental laws of the State, the King and his Minister *Oya Siworrawongh* desired to know the feeling of the Mandarins, and had them summoned to an assembly expressly for that purpose. But there was not one of them who dared to speak freely. Some were not explicit, and others said not a word till, finding themselves pressed by the Minister, they said that they believed the Prince to be old enough

to reign and to succeed, and that the King's Brother, having already children, could do in his own house what the King had occasion now to do in his. But the others, and principally *Oya Calahom* (Okya Kalahom), *Oya Kheeu* (Okya Kien), *Opera Taynam* (Okphra Tainam), *Opera Sirsy Anerat* (Okphra Sri Saowarat), *Opera Tiula* (Okphra Chula), and *Oloangh Than Aray-lacq* (Okluang Tham-trai-lok), maintained that the King's Brother had the right of succession, and they had the courage to say that the ancient laws of the Kingdom could not be violated in that manner. The rest referred the matter to the King, saying that both Princes had all the qualities required in a good monarch, and that they would recognise as King the one his Majesty appointed to succeed him.

Following the advice of *Oya Siworrawongh*, the King by his will, without having regard to the laws of the Kingdom, nominated his eldest son heir to the throne, and at the hour of his death commanded *Siworrawongh* to make known his last wish to the Mandarins immediately after his decease, charging him to assist the Prince on his attainment of the Crown, to watch over his actions, and to care for the well-being of the Kingdom. Now during the illness of the King, *Oya Siworrawongh* caused all the approaches to the Palace to be so well guarded that no one could approach without his permission, and there was not a single Mandarin who was able to see his Majesty during that time. All orders and commands were borne to the Council and to the assembly of the Mandarins by the mouth of this one Minister. And in order to mislead the Prince, brother of the King, and the Mandarins who desired the laws of the Kingdom to be adhered to, he caused a rumour to be spread that the King was getting better and that there was more reason for hope than for fear in regard to his illness.

The opposition of some of the Mandarins to the express wish of the King, gave umbrage to his Majesty, and all the more as he had been warned that *Oya Calahom*, General of the elephants and of the infantry of the Kingdom, had taken the side of the Prince, his brother. Accordingly in order to remove all obstacles which might prevent his son succeeding, he desired by means of *Oya Siworrawongh* to secure *Oya Senaphimoc* (Okya Senaphimuk) the General of the Japanese, who are maintained by the Kings of Siam to the number of about six hundred; and this was done, *Senaphimoc* promising to the other and swearing solemnly that he would help to put the King's

son on the throne. In order to give proof of his affection *Senaphimoc* secretly lodged a good number of his Japanese in the Palace and its environs. On the other hand *Oya Calahom*, fearing the recovery of the King much more than his death, on account of the strong opposition he had offered to the succession of the King's son, tried to gain over *Oya Senaphimoc* and his companions in order to advance the brother to the throne by their means. But the Japanese, instructed by *Oya Siworrawongh*, had the cunning to use words which promised nothing really, but which nevertheless did not withdraw all hope from the man who had obliged him to enter on this conference. Moreover, not content with having fortified himself with these Japanese and the ordinary Guards, *Oya Siworrawongh* further had 4,000 men brought secretly into the Palace and caused 10,000 other soldiers to be held in readiness in the neighbourhood of the town. He had it reported that the King wished to make use of them on a journey that he intended to make as soon as he should be completely cured. This *Siworrawongh* did in order to deceive the others.

*Oya Siworrawongh* had leisure to make all these preparations and to make everything secure before the King died, which he did on the 22nd day of the first moon of the great year of the serpents, to the great regret of his subjects, who had enjoyed a long peace and profound repose during his reign. At the time of his decease he was only thirty-eight years old so that he died in the flower of his age, after having reigned about nine years, almost the whole time in peace. He had had, of several wives, nine sons and eight daughters, most of whom were of tender age at the time of their father's death. Personally he was good and liberal, a student and no warrior, but devoted to his religion, being almost continually busied in reforming the worship of their Gods as well as their ecclesiastical discipline and the laws of the Kingdom. He gave much to the people of the Church and to the poor; he built and repaired the Churches, the pyramids, the Palaces, and the other ornaments of the town—more in fact than any of his predecessors had done. It pleased him to know that his Mandarin were rich, and to see them splendidly dressed, well attended and magnificently housed. He had of his own bounty several houses built for the members of the Household. He loved justice, upright judges and all good men, and he took so great care of his subjects, and even of the foreigners who were to be found in his Kingdom, that he acquired the reputation of a saint, and was so

highly respected by his neighbours that his enemies did not dare to attack him. Thus it is not to be wondered at that he was given the epithets of great and just.

As soon as the King was dead, *Oya Siworrawongh* caused all the Mandarins to come to the Palace. They believed it was the order of the King; for that reason all appeared, not a single one being absent. *Siworrawongh* told them that the King had just died an hour before—though several believed that he had been dead a long time, but that his death had been concealed—and that before dying his Majesty had declared his intention to be that his eldest son should succeed to the Crown and be the heir of the Kingdom, and further that his Majesty had wished him, *Siworrawongh*, to assist his son and advise him in the conduct of affairs. Thereupon the Prince showed himself to the Mandarins on the royal throne, as King and legitimate heir of the crown. This *Siworrawongh* confirmed by the will of the father, thereby obliging the Mandarins to recognise him as King, which they did, some by inclination, and the others through fear of their enemies and of the troops that the Minister had brought into the Palace.

Those who were known to be attached to the late King's brother, or who had not clearly declared themselves when the late King wished to know their feeling in the matter, were at once arrested. They were closely imprisoned, and their houses and goods given over to pillage. Their slaves were taken from them, and at the same time the King had three of his principal prisoners taken from prison and cut in pieces at *Thacham* (Tha Chang), one of the gates of the Palace, as disturbers of the public peace, and as having conspired against the true and legitimate heir of the Crown. Their heads and other members were exposed on various lofty places in the town to serve as a warning to those who might wish to offer opposition to this illegitimate succession. In addition all their property was confiscated, and the King caused it to be distributed among his favourites.

These three lords who were thus executed were among the most wealthy, and the most highly placed in the Kingdom, and in the previous reign had been greatly considered by the people and greatly loved by the King. One was *Oya Calahom*, General of the elephants, who was one of the six leading Mandarins and one of the richest men in the Kingdom, possessing as he did more than 2,000 slaves, 200 elephants and a number of very beautiful horses. The second was

*Opera Taynam*, General of the Cavalry, who had been *Oya Bergkelang* (Okya Phra Khleng) previously for five years and two months on end, and in that position had amassed great wealth. The late King had honoured him with his special favour, because of his virtues and his eloquence. The third was *Oloangh Thamtraylocq* (Okluang Tham-trai-lok) who had been governor of *Tunassary*, and who was a noble of great age and held in high esteem among them. It was solely the hatred of *Oya Siworrawongh* which brought about the death of these nobles, and they suffered death with the greater patience since they knew that they had not merited it.

There were also taken from prison and led to the gate of the Palace two other nobles, to wit *Opera Seray Anerat* (Okphra Sri Saowarat) and *Opera Tjulo* (Okphra Chula), bound and pinioned, the intention being to put them to death. But *Oya Senaphimoc*, General of the Japanese, saved their lives by embracing them and covering them with his body, in such a way that the blows of the executioner could not reach them without killing him, and by sending at the same time to *Oya Siworrawongh* to ask that they should be pardoned. This powerful intercession, joined to that of the ecclesiastics of the country, saved their lives, but they were deprived of their offices, their property and their titles, and even of their liberty, since they were confined in a close prison all the time till after the revolution of the administration, when some were executed, others exiled, and others set at liberty. Those who had not expressed themselves quite explicitly on the matter of the succession, who had spoken ambiguously, and who had referred it to the King to appoint whom-ever he should please to the throne, were put in prison and their property was confiscated, till the King took pity on them and had them released.

The day after the death of the King, his son and successor caused all the Mandarins and vassals and slaves of the King to come to the Palace, and obliged them to do him homage and to take the oath of fidelity by drinking the water of allegiance, which their Brahmins or priests had expressly consecrated for that purpose. And then he took the name and style of *Pra Ongk Thit Terrastia* (Phra Ong Chetthathirat). Thus it might be said that with but little effusion of blood, and without manifest opposition, he succeeded to the Crown, contrary to the regular order, and contrary to the laws of the Kingdom. The very day of his accession to the throne he caused to

he put at liberty and recalled to his presence several nobles who had been imprisoned, or exiled, by the King his father, as also several criminals who were in irons. This brought him a certain reputation at the very commencement of his reign.

The young King having thus been crowned, and confirmed on the throne, *Oya Siworrawongh* advised him to dispose of the vacant offices of the nobles that had been executed, in favour of persons whose worth was recognised and who were held in esteem by the people. He desired also that the King should show his bounty towards those of the Mandarins who had some special merit, or who had given evidence of their affection for his interests, in order to bestow on them the wherewithal to enable them to appear in accordance with their rank. But he wished above all that the King should examine carefully the temper, the inclinations, the qualities, the life and the past actions of him whom he should honour with the appointment of *Oya Calahom*, because of its importance and of the power that is entrusted to him who holds the office. For while unfaithfulness on the part of Ministers is to be feared in all the appointments, it was extremely dangerous in this case, as on this Minister the whole Army depends. He made it sufficiently plain that although the appointment which he then had was much more advantageous to him in every way, he would not refuse to be prevailed upon to accept the lesser rank for the sake of the greater security of the person of the King and for the preservation of the Kingdom. The King approved this advice, and at once gave the confiscated property of those who had been executed, banished or disgraced to nobles whom *Siworrawongh* named to him, and who were more dependent on that noble than on his Majesty. The greater part of the property and the rank and appointment of *Calahom* the King gave to this Minister, and the appointment of *Oya Siworrawongh* to the brother of the new *Calahom*. He having by this means become head of the Army, and his brother Minister of the King's household and chief of the Council, they easily persuaded the King that he had nothing more to fear after having put these two important posts in the hands of these two brothers.

There seemed then to be wanting to both only the repose of spirit that they could not find save in the death of the Prince, the King's uncle, who gave them umbrage by his refusal to come to Court though he had been summoned several times. This rendered *Oya Calahom* uneasy, and by offers and presents he obliged *Oya Sena-*

*phimoc* to promise and swear to him that he would bring the Prince to Court in secular dress; since in that of an ecclesiastic no one would have dared to lay hands on him. To do what he had promised *Oya Senaphimoc* found the Prince and, pretending to share in his affliction at seeing himself thus deprived of the Crown after the death of the King, his brother, declaimed loudly against the execution, the banishment and the imprisonment of so many persons of quality and Mandarins. Enlarging further on the severity, bad conduct and cruel government of the King, and on the too great authority and power of the *Oya Calahom*, he protested to the Prince that he himself and several other Mandarins were so distressed about it that they had often deliberated among themselves as to the means they could take to kill the King as well as his *Oya Calahom*, and to raise his Highness to the throne. He added that if the Prince could be prevailed upon to go with him to the Court, he would use his Japanese soldiers and his friends to deprive the King of the Crown, to expel him and his favourite and to open to his Highness the way to the succession to the throne. Although he had been strongly advised not to do so, the Prince too readily trusted the words of *Oya Senaphimoc*. He set out and went with this traitor straight to the royal Palace and, seeing the Japanese guards at the gate, he made the more sure of the affection of *Senaphimoc*. But that disloyal man, starting to carry out what he had promised to *Oya Calahom*, told the Prince that those friends whom he would find in the Palace being armed and waiting only the arrival of the Prince in order to begin to act, it was necessary that his Highness should put himself in the same state as they, and that he should quit his ecclesiastical robe, which henceforth would be of no use to him, in order to show himself a man of heart and action. The Prince made no scruple to follow this advice, and so throwing aside his robe he appeared as a Prince. But scarcely had he entered the Palace in this state, with *Oya Senaphimoc* and with some Japanese soldiers, than he was seized and bound, and in this condition was conducted before the King. *Oya Calahom*, imagining that he had no more enemies to fear now that he had in his hands the only one who could serve as a pretext for rebellions and disorders, the only one who could put himself at the head of the discontented, thanked *Oya Senaphimoc* very heartily for this important service and made him very considerable presents. The poor Prince was at once condemned to death; but the King not wishing to steep his



hands in his blood, the Council judged it well to send him to *Pipry* (Phetburi), where they put him in a very deep and dry well, the intention being to make him die of hunger by diminishing every day his victuals little by little. They established good order for the guard of the pit, and appointed commissioners, who visited the Prince three times a day in order to make their report, and principally to be witnesses of the end of his life.

Almost at the same time as the Prince was thus condemned and sent to his death, one of his near relatives, named *Oloangh Mancough* (Okhuang Mongkhol) left the Court and withdrew with his brother secretly to *Pipry*. There he represented to the ecclesiastics the injustice of the sentence passed on the Prince and begged them to assist him in the design that he had of taking his Highness from the hands of his executioners. But the ecclesiastics fearing the indignation of the King, and seeing that there was little chance of delivering the Prince because of the number of the guards and soldiers who were conducting him to his execution, did not wish to take the matter in hand openly. Nevertheless they bore such love to this Prince because he had always worn the ecclesiastical robe in order to give the Court no reason for jealousy of him as the presumptive heir of the crown, and in order to preserve his own life, and because he had constantly frequented the churches, shown much devotion and manifested great respect to their ecclesiastics, that they did assist *Oloangh Mancough*, his brother, and his slaves, to make another well, from which a passage was made under ground, like a mine, to the one where the Prince had been put. Carried away with affection and zeal for the liberty of the Prince, *Oloangh Mancough*, finding himself one night alone in the mine, advanced the work so well that he heard his Highness sigh deeply and say, 'Alas! if they would but give me a single glass of water before my end, which is fast approaching.' This obliged *Oloangh* to go with all diligence to assure his friends that the Prince was still alive. The result was that after having deliberated some time together on the existing state of affairs, which admitted of no delay, it was resolved, on the advice of the ecclesiastics, that *Oloangh Mancough* should strangle one of his slaves with his own hands and that the body should be carried through the mine into the other well to be put in place of the Prince, whom they should strip of his clothes in order to dress the slave. This having been done, the guards who had seen the

Prince the evening before in a very bad state, at the last extremity in fact, did not doubt that it was the Prince when they saw next morning a dead body at the bottom of the well. Accordingly after having filled up the well, without having touched the body, and without having paid it the last honours, they went off and carried to the Court the certain news of the death of his Highness. This news caused there so universal a joy that the King and his Minister imagined there was no longer anything which could trouble the repose of the Kingdom, and flung themselves into a strange security.

However the ecclesiastics took so great care of the Prince that in a short time he recovered his former health and strength. All his partisans and even a section of the people were so delighted that several of them quitted their ecclesiastical robes in order to take up arms, and they let several Mandarins and some other persons of quality know how the Prince had been delivered from the pit as by a miracle, and how he was in life and in complete freedom. The Prince would have liked it better if they had kept the matter secret till the severe and tyrannical government of the King had resulted in rendering him odious to the nobility and to the people, as this would have strengthened his party, which for the moment was esteemed by reason of the person of *Oloangh Mancough*, principally. But those gentlemen who love to meddle in affairs of state and who settle them by maxims, would have it otherwise. The rumour as to the safety and the liberty of the Prince, attracted a large number of nobles to *Pipry* while *Oloangh Mancough*, who was highly esteemed by the whole kingdom of *Siam* because of his strength of body and of his courage, went in person to the neighbouring towns and sent express messengers to his friends, in order to try to strengthen the party. And in fact he had credit enough to form an army corps of 20,000 men, commanded by several nobles of rank. The Prince, finding himself in this condition and having been assured of the town of *Pipry*, had himself proclaimed King of *Siam* and crowned. He distributed among those of his party all the offices of the Court, and all the dignities of the Kingdom. He gave the post of Generalissimo to *Oloangh Mancough*, as much because it was he principally to whom he owed his life, as because he was of the blood royal, or because he had the reputation of being one of the most valiant men in all *Siam*, or because, besides, his body was so charmed that no point of steel, of lead or of tin could cut his skin, and no arm of man

could wound him. In a short time the Prince saw himself master of several towns, with much likelihood of becoming master of the whole Kingdom; but the superior Power had disposed of the matter otherwise.

For on learning of the Prince his uncle being alive and at liberty, of his proclamation and of the rising of several towns, the King at once caused all the passes and roads to be occupied, by which the army of his Highness could be increased, and at the same time he sent an army of 15,000 or 20,000 men and of 700 or 800 Japanese to *Pipry* under the command of *Oya Capheim* (Okya Kamhaen) General of the Army, and of *Oya Senaphimoc*, Colonel of the Japanese. On their arriving near *Pipry* they found the affairs of the enemy in such good condition that at first they did not dare to attack, but sent to the King for reinforcements. The two armies engaged, however, in frequent skirmishes, that decided nothing. Meantime, following the moves and the advice of *Oya Calahom*, *Oya Senaphimoc*, Colonel of the Japanese was managing to bring about a private understanding with the General of the Prince's army, with the consent of *Oya Capheim*. He had the General told that his design was to pass with his Japanese to the side of the Prince and to join the troops of His Highness. For that purpose, after several conferences, they came to an agreement that on a certain day, which they fixed on, they should on both sides take the field with their troops as for the purpose of giving battle, but that they should charge without bullets in order not to wound or kill any one, and that *Oya Senaphimoc*, as being forced, should surrender himself and be made a prisoner. This agreement having thus been made with *Oloangh Mancough* and confirmed with the blood of both of them, which they respectively tasted, the Prince and his people did not hesitate to put faith in the compact; but they found themselves again completely deceived. For the two armies having taken the field on the day named and the attack having commenced, the Japanese, powerfully seconded by the Siamese threw themselves on the enemy with such fury that *Oloangh Mancough* was forced to find safety in flight. Moreover the King was continually sending more troops to *Pipry*, with the result that in a few days his army found itself so strong that the Prince, not daring to venture on a second battle, resolved to withdraw to *Ligoor* (Nakhon Sri Thamarat). And that he might be able to retire there in safety, he set out in front with a small suite. But *Oya Capheim*, having

been warned of this by the guard, desired to have him followed with speed, and *Oloangh Mancough*, wishing to prevent this, the two armies engaged in skirmishes, which developed into a set battle, in which *Oloangh Mancough* was defeated, and lost a large number of the greatest nobles and the best soldiers of his army. This victory enabled *Oya Capheim* to have the Prince pursued, and he was taken prisoner before he had reached *Ligoor*.

The Prince, having been taken in this fashion, was led to *India*, (*Ayudhya*) where he was soon condemned to death. This having been announced to him, he instantly asked that before dying he might see the King in order to tell him several things of importance to his service. Permission being granted, he addressed the King practically in these words:—"I stand here in thy presence thy legitimate uncle and the true heir of this Kingdom, and yet, because of the misfortune it has pleased the Gods to send upon me, a vanquished and disgraced Prince, who waits only the hour of death and who cannot escape it. Nevertheless, as a brave man hates not life so long as he can possess it, so he fears not death when it presents itself to him, because death is a door by which one closes the warehouse where all the inconveniences and miseries of life are sold. That is why I shall not give myself much concern about my life, and shall not fear death, although the relationship by which I have the honour to be so closely connected with your Majesty, yields me a very cruel and very bitter fruit. But with all that I prefer being conquered in this fashion to being the conqueror and treating your Majesty as your Majesty treats me. Only I beg you to reflect on the state I find myself in, and to profit by my disgrace. For the best and most important service that one can render to a friend, is to give him faithful advice in his need. If then you wish to acquire a good reputation and to give the same to your government, be not negligent, shun dissoluteness, embrace justice, and know that virtue is an impregnable bulwark, a spring that never dries up, a fire that is never quenched, a load that is no trouble to him who bears it, a treasure that does not grow less, an invincible army, a guide who does not go astray, and a reputation that does not become tarnished. And in order to give a true proof of a sincere and truly royal heart render to the Gods veneration, and to the house of your father the honour that you owe to it. Acquire a good reputation, give joy to your friends, try to gain their affection and then good people will serve you from inclination and

with true zeal, while the wicked will be dispersed of themselves. For it is a great advantage to a King to be able to make himself loved for his goodness and feared for his justice. Finally, I again exhort your Majesty to take warning from my misfortune and to profit by it. For my part I am quite ready to go to meet my doom, where I had not anticipated it, and which I cannot avenge. I should suffer death, too, with joy if I knew that the destruction of my body could strengthen the state of your person and the repose of this kingdom, but I foresee that the same doom as you make me suffer now, will soon overwhelm yourself. If your Majesty wishes to escape the misfortune that threatens you, beware of *Oya Calahom*, for he has been a wicked man and a traitor from his youth up, and as such he was often severely punished by order of the late king. He will worm himself in adroitly, and will take the crown from your head, and will put you to death, both you and all those who are of the blood of the King, my brother, your father, in order to put himself on the throne and to reign."

Those remonstrances made no impression on the mind of the King, nor did they stir him to pity. On the contrary, changing nothing in the resolution that he had already taken, his Majesty commanded them to hasten the execution. Thereupon the Prince was led away to the temple named *Watprahimin Khopirja* (Wat Phramen Khok Phya), opposite the Court. They laid him on a piece of red cloth, and drove a piece of sandal wood into his stomach, a form of execution that is used, in Siam, only in the case of Princes of the blood. They wrapped up the body and the wood in the cloth, and the whole was thrown into a well, where the body was left to decompose. Such was the sad end of this unhappy Prince, who died for having dared to pretend to a crown that was lawfully his by his birth. He was a Prince of great hope, and one who possessed many fine qualities, so that there is no doubt if he had come to the throne he would not have been less esteemed than was the late king his brother.

There was hardly anyone who did not regret this Prince, but no one dared to give any sign of his grief. For as soon as there was recognized in anyone, whatever rank he held, an attachment to or affection for the deceased, that man was put to death and his goods were confiscated. Mandarins and soldiers alike were reduced to slavery and were treated so badly that in a very short time all the friends and all the party of the Prince had disappeared.

*Oloangh Mancough*, former General of the army of the late Prince, was reduced to despair by the loss of the battle and by the death of his master. Being warned that the King was having him searched for everywhere, he fled from one place to another, and not knowing any longer what refuge to find, he entered by night into the town of *Iudia*, for the purpose of hunting down *Oya Calahom* in his house and killing him. But *Oya Calahom* was by accident detained at the Court that night, and the project was not successful. For that reason, having gone to his own house, he took away his first wife and one of his concubines, and fled with them to *Pra Sop Sacce Gram* (*Pra Sop Sakae Krang*) on the frontiers of the Kingdom of Pegu. There he dwelt for some time, living only on what nature yields gratuitously. At last the place of his retreat was discovered; so that the magistrate of the district, taking the opportunity when *Oloangh Mancough* was out hunting, visited his house and carried away his women. This put him in such a fury that, renouncing all sorts of pleasure and even his life, he went and put himself in the hands of justice and begged to be conducted to *Iudia*. Forewarned of his more than natural strength and of the advantages that he derived from magic, the magistrates caused irons to be put on his feet, his hands, his arms, his neck, and on several other parts. Thereupon *Mancough* began to laugh and to make fun of them, telling them that it was vain to put in irons one who surrendered himself a prisoner voluntarily. "For," he said, "if I had any desire to live it would not be in your power either to take me or to keep me." And saying that he snapped the chains with the same ease as he would have broken tow or rotten hemp. He then went on: "And if I wished to prove my strength and my knowledge, I could cause several of you to lose your lives. But I wish to die; therefore take me in complete liberty to *Iudia*, in order that that tyrant *Oya Calahom* and that murderer of a Prince may satiate themselves with my blood, for which they have long been athirst." The King was very glad to learn that he had arrived at *Iudia* for he loved the man, as much because of his magic as for his courage; and, desiring to save his life, he sent *Oya Calahom* to him in order to prevail upon him, as if of his own impulse, to offer his services to his Majesty, representing to him that, if he took the oath of fidelity to the young King, his life would be saved. But *Oya Calahom* found *Oloangh Mancough* so very obstinate that the only reply he could get out of him was:

“The King, Monseigneur, is no more, and the unlawful King you speak of and you, together, have assassinated the legitimate successor to the throne. For that reason I prefer death to obeying tyrants, murderers, rebels and disturbers of the public peace such as you are. Therefore you need not hope that I shall take the oath of fidelity to those whom I do not recognise as my superiors.” *Oya Calahom* having reported the result of his commission to the King, *Oloangh Mancough* was condemned to death, and to be executed with the sword. But before his death he made an address to the people and represented to them the danger in which the Kingdom stood, and foretold a part of the misfortunes that afterwards came upon it. He spoke finally of his own courage and of the knowledge that he had from magic, adding that if there was any one who could still doubt what he said on this subject, he would give proofs in their presence. And in fact when he had put himself in a posture to receive the last blow, the executioner was not able to make an incision in his body, although the violence of the blow was so great that the blade of the scimitar was bent by it, and every time that he struck, the blow sounded as if it had been struck on an anvil. After that *Mancough* rose, snapped the cord which he was bound, seized the executioner and strangled him. That done he asked for water, over which he pronounced some words, drank some of it, poured some of it on his body, dipped the finger of his right hand in it and made a mark on his left side, below the ribs, because it is there that the blow is struck when in the Kingdom of Siam anyone is condemned to die by the sword, so that the bowels may come out as quickly as possible. After that *Mancough* lay down and ordered the other executioner, who had been brought, to strike him on the place marked, threatening him that if he missed he (*Mancough*) would not fail to stretch him by the side of his comrade. The executioner struck his blow, but the fear of missing made him err so that the blow was not mortal. *Oloangh Mancough* uttered a loud cry and commanded them to strike him a blow in the heart or he would strangle this executioner too. Such was the end of this terrible man, who kept the King and all the Court in such fear that after his death the King and *Calahom* said openly that with the death of *Oloangh Mancough* the Prince and his party were lost and ruined, but that while he lived the resentment and vengeance of the Prince lived still.

The King, seeing himself delivered from this formidable enemy, abandoned himself to all kinds of dissoluteness and debauchery, rendering himself, moreover, insupportable to the Mandarins by his pride and odious to the people by his cruelty, having none of the good qualities of the late King his father. Besides, one expected nothing from him but what was cruel and severe, because everything he did and all his amusements were so. For his only pleasures were in seeing elephants fight, in riding on horseback and in fencing; his utterance was harsh and his face of a fixed severity, so much so as to quite alienate the affection of the people about him, though no one dared to show his discontent. Besides he troubled himself so little about the administration of his kingdom that, trusting himself entirely to the guidance of *Oya Calahom*, he knew nothing of the cabals that the Mandarins were forming among themselves, being unable to imagine that there were any persons who would dare to drive him from his throne or to attempt to usurp his crown. Making the most of this opportunity, *Oya Calahom* used to complain every day in the council of the Mandarins of the bad disposition of the King, of his dissoluteness and debauchery, and even of his tyranny. He represented to them that he found himself charged with all the affairs of the Kingdom, which occasioned him much trouble; and nevertheless that he had so much respect for the last commands of the late King and for the duties laid upon him by his birth, as well as by that of his charge, that he would continue to labour with all his might for the preservation of the reputation of the King and for the repose of the Kingdom. These discourses, his way of acting, and the good will that *Oya Calahom* showed to everyone, caused him to have little difficulty in gaining the affection of the people and in making himself loved by the Mandarins. The result was that he made himself of such importance, that being, as it were, the master of affairs, there was no one who would not seek his favour and buy it, even, by means of presents; and on fête days or days of ceremonies, he found himself better accompanied and followed than the King himself.

But in order that there may be nothing wanting in this account for the complete understanding of what we shall have to say hereafter, it will not be out of place to speak here, in passing, of the person of *Oya Calahom*, of his birth and his life and of the many revolutions it was exposed to in the dissoluteness of his youth. *Cala-*



hom's father was the eldest and legitimate brother of the mother of the Great King, and was called *Oya Sidiurma Thyra* (Okya Sri Thamathirat). He had a royal title, but he had no office or share in the affairs of the Kingdom, which did not prevent him from making himself loved because of his good disposition and the kindliness of his conversation. The King last dead considered him, too, as his uncle, and conferred many favours upon him; but he had him also often put in prison for the crimes and evil deeds of his son. *Calahom* was brought up from his earliest youth at the Court and was at first a Mahat or Page of the Great King, and at the age of thirteen he was made Governor of the other Pages. From that time he gave evidence of having spirit and courage, but he led a very bad life, amusing himself by getting drunk and committing theft. The consequence was that he was often taken by the provost along with other sharpers who were robbing by night. This obliged the King to chastise him often, by giving him with his own hand several blows with his broad-sword on the head, and by having him thrown into very disagreeable prisons; but from these he always came out and was received into favour again through the intercession of his aunt, the mother of the King. At the age of 16 he was made *Pramonsy Saropha* (Phra Mūn Sri Sorarak), or Captain of the Pages; but in this office he did not do better than he had done before, and at the age of 18 he committed a crime which merited death, and which in fact just missed causing him to lose his life. Here is the story of the affair.

There is an ancient custom in the Kingdom of Siam, established for several centuries, that when the paddy is cut and stored away, and the earth has been cleaned of insects and other foulness by the fire that is put to the stubble, and before the plough is put in the Earth to till it, the King goes out to the country in great state and with a large suite in order to deliver the Earth from the bad spirits, that the grain and the rice may not be interfered with. If the King missed this ceremony, the Earth produced nothing, and if he conducted the ceremony he did not live for more than three years after. The mathematicians and the soothsayers, who are held in great repute in this part of the world, having been heard on this subject, said that they had seen in the course of the stars that if the King did not change this custom and give the charge of it to some of the Mandarins, the royal family would soon be extinct. Accordingly the commission

was given to that one of the Lords of the Court who had the position of grand purveyor of the Kingdom; but he was not able to carry out the ceremony, being prevented by a sudden death. Having been consulted on this accident the soothsayers replied that the stars threatened with a similar misfortune all his successors, and in order to prevent this it would be necessary to give this appointment to a person of lowly rank. The reason they gave was that the devils were becoming too proud because too much honour was done them, and the gods were annoyed at the Kings and the grand purveyors of the Kingdom lowering themselves too much by personally taking part in this driving out of the devils. On receiving this opinion the King and his council thought it well, with the consent even of the mathematicians and the ecclesiastics, to make use for this purpose of a particular person who, under the rank of *Oya Khauw*, (Okya Kaeo) would conduct the whole ceremony. This *Oya Khauw*, having been chosen for this, was sent to remain alone in a place some distance away from the town, and did not leave his house and the compound surrounding it, till the day appointed for the purification of the country. Then he went to the Court and presented himself to the King who had him re-clothed in royal robes and made him put a royal crown, made in the shape of a pyramid, on his head. He was then placed in a small house, made also in the shape of a pyramid, and eight men bore him on their shoulders into the street and from there, accompanied by a large suite of all sorts of persons and with musical instruments, to the country. Everybody, even the Mandarins and the other courtiers, renders him the same honour as they would render to the King if he were there in person. He has no other revenue but that which he draws from the fines that are paid to him by those whom he meets on his way, those who do not close their doors when he passes, or who have their shops or stalls in the open street, as he has the right of causing these to be looted unless they pay compensation instead. The effect of this corvée is that he can amass about three catties, money of the country, equivalent to a little more than 40 pistoles. As soon as he has left the Court, he has for that day the same power and the same authority as the King, and for that reason, moreover, the King himself does not leave his palace, and does not let himself be seen by anyone. This Paddy King having arrived at the place where he has to conduct the ceremonies, it is permitted to every one to attack and do

battle with his people and those of his suite, provided that they do not touch his person or his guards; and if the Paddy King emerges victorious from this combat of his people, the Siamese promise themselves a great abundance of rice for that year; and if on the contrary he is forced to take to flight, they take that as a very evil omen and are afraid that the devils will destroy the fruits of the Earth. These ridiculous skirmishes finish, very often, in serious combats which cost some people their life. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the mock King returns in the evening to the Court, where he lays aside the crown and the other royal ornaments, and goes away thence into his ordinary retirement, where he fares well or ill for the whole year according to the fortune he has had that day, and according to the fines that have been paid to him. Now *Oya Calahom*, who was still only *Pramonsy Saropha* and about 18 years old, found himself in the country one day when this ceremony was to be performed. He was accompanied by his brother, who is to-day *Feyna* (Fai-na) or Prince, and both were mounted on elephants and accompanied by their slaves. And he attacked this Paddy King with such fury that it seemed as if he wished to kill him together with all the persons of his suite. The guards, setting themselves to defend the mock King, charged these two young lords and threw stones at them; and his brother being wounded by a stone, *Pramonsy* drew his sword and threw himself so furiously upon them that the Paddy King and his guards were forced to take to flight. The Paddy King returned to the Court and complained to the King of the violence that had been done him by *Pramonsy*; and His Majesty was put in such a rage, by the account of what this debauchee had done, that he gave orders that *Pramonsy* be at once sought for and brought to Court. But the rascal, who knew very well what they wished to him, and not daring to present himself before the King during the first transports of his anger, had hidden himself in a sanctuary among their priests. And the King, being unable to overcome his first feeling of resentment, made *Oya Sidarma* (Okya Sri Thama Thirat), father of *Pramonsy*, feel the effects of it, threatening to put him to death if he did not produce his son. On learning this *Pramonsy* left his retreat, came and presented himself to the King and asked his pardon. But having caused him to be seized by the pages, the King gave him himself three cuts on each leg from the knees to the ankle; he then had him thrown into a dungeon and caused irons to be put on

five parts of his body. There *Pramonsy* remained for five months till *Zian Croa Mady Tjan* (Chao Khlua Mani Chan), widow of the late King, who was called *Pra Marit* (Phra Naresuan), or the Black King, made his peace and had him restored to favour. *Pramonsy* could not forget this bad treatment, though he had well deserved it, and from that time he thirsted for vengeance, desiring to wreak it principally on *Phra Onthong* (Phra Ong Thong) and *Phra Sysingh* (Phra Sri Sin), brothers of the King, and loved by him above the rest. To carry out this diabolical purpose he asked four of his comrades to dinner in his house, to wit *Oloangh Pibon* (Okluang Phibun), who was *Oya Carassima* (Okya Nakhon Ratsima) and has since died while still quite young; *Choen Choenpra* (Chong Chai-phak), who is at present *Opra Tiula* (Okphra Chula); *Eptiongh Omongh* (Aphai Ronarong), who is now *Oya Poucelouck* (Okya Phitsanulok); and *Tiongh Maytiau Wangh* (Changmai Changwang) who has now the rank of *Oya Berkelangh*. After he had entertained them well, and when the spirit had warmed their brains, he unfolded to them the design he had of avenging himself on the Princes for the affront that he pretended had been put upon him by the King for his last crime. Thereupon, taking a solemn oath to each other, with the usual ceremonies by tasting each other's blood, these four lords promised to support him; and to that end it was deemed advisable to break into the quarter where the Princes lived, to enter their apartments and to kill them. But, the conspiracy having been betrayed four or five days after it was formed, by one of the slaves of *Pramonsy*, the King sent for him and asked him why he had conceived so detestable a plot against his (the King's) brothers. *Pramonsy* denied it, taking horrible oaths to that effect; but the King, who was only too well assured of the truth of the charge, got in so great a rage that he was going to kill him with a Japanese cutlass if the sword had not been caught by a ribbon, which prevented the blow from falling. *Pramonsy* sought to save himself, but the King had him arrested, and gave him with his own hand some cuts on the shoulders and on the back. Then he had him thrown with his accomplices and their slaves into dungeons, among the robbers and murderers. His Majesty also had *Oya Sidarma*, father of *Pramonsy*, imprisoned; but his innocence was established and he was set at liberty again. Some years after, the King had two powerful armies raised for the purpose of making war in Cambodia to recall that country to its allegiance.

*Pramonsy* seizing this opportunity had *Oya Ombrat* (Okya Uparaj) beseeched to intercede for him with His Majesty, in order that being freed from prison he might be able to expiate his crime by the brave actions that he promised to perform in the war. *Oya Ombrat* is the chief of all the nobility of the Kingdom, and was to command the sea force conjointly with *Oya Berckelangh*, because the King wished to command the land army in person. Touched by the prayers of these Nobles, His Majesty put *Pramonsy* at liberty together with his accomplices, after they had been in prison for more than three years, and sent them by sea to Cambodia. And in truth, though this enterprise was not the success they had promised themselves, *Pramonsy* did so well there that on the recommendation of the generals he was once more taken into the good graces of the King, who made him return to the Court and honoured him with the rank of *Sompan Meon* (Phan Ngoen). But for all that *Pramonsy* did not change his way of life, for he debauched the wives and concubines of the Prince, the King's brother, who complained bitterly about his conduct. The King got in such a rage that he wished to have him condemned to death, and commuted the punishment into one of imprisonment for life only in answer to the prayers of the Queen mother and of *Oya Sidharma* his father. *Pramonsy* remained for another three years in this prison; but he was so mortified by it that from that time his conduct was very reasonable, and he even gave evidence of so much spirit and address in all his actions that the King gave him the rank of *Oya Siworrawongh*, and made him Superintendent of the Royal Household. We have already said that during the last years of the reign of this King, he alone possessed all the favour of the King and was his Majesty's sole confidante during his last illness, when he arranged things in such a way by evil design that at the commencement of the new reign he was made *Oya Calahom*, a dignity which served him as a stepping stone to mount to the rank of royalty by seizing the kingdom from his sovereign and by extirpating almost the whole royal House.

We have related also how, when he had been made *Oya Calahom*, he found means to make away with the most powerful, the richest and the most considered of the Mandarins, having some of them put to death and others exiled or imprisoned, after having rendered them odious to the King as partisans of the Prince, his uncle. Their positions were filled with creatures of *Oya Calahom*, and the confiscated

property of those executed and of those disgraced was given to his favourites, whom he meant to make use of on the occasions which soon offered, as we are going to see. The entire disposition of the affairs of state, which the King left to him, gave him also the means of making friends, while his authority made him respected. His father had died a short time before the death of the King; and his younger brother having died some time after, *Oya Calahom*, in arranging his funeral, caused the bones of his father, whose body had already been burned in accordance with the Siamese custom, to be also brought and had them burned over again. This is an honour which is paid only to the King, or to the Prince who, when Princes of the blood fail, succeeds, either by force or by election,—he can have the bones of his father or of his relatives dug up and burned with royal ceremonies. The Mandarins and the other great nobles, in order to do honour to *Oya Calahom*, attended in large numbers at the funeral of his brother and of the bones of his father. He caused the ceremonies to last for three days, contrary to the custom of Siam, and they were carried out with such magnificence that never had Mandarin done the like. The Queen, mother of the King, who had already taken umbrage at *Oya Calahom's* having conferred the first positions in the Kingdom on his own creatures and partisans, seized this opportunity to render him an object of suspicion and dislike to the King, her son. Acting in concert with the enemies of *Oya Calahom* she gave such a bad appearance to all his actions that the King was without difficulty led to regard them with suspicion and to resolve to rid himself of this favourite since he could not help being convinced that the authority of the Minister put his own in the shade. His resolution was soon taken, but he executed it with so much imprudence and precipitation that, following the hastiness of his mother, he drew on his own head the misfortune with which he threatened the other. Seating himself, then, on his throne, the third day of the funeral of *Oya Calahom's* brother, he demanded with much indignation what had become of all the Mandarins, and why they did not come to Court as usual and appear in their ordinary places at the audience in his presence. *Oya Berkelangh*, a partisan and creature of *Oya Calahom*, who had continued to go to the Court in order to observe the humour of the King and to see what he was going to do, replied that *Oya Calahom* was occupied in burning the body of his brother and the bones of his

father, and that the Mandarins had been invited to be present at the funeral ceremonies. Thereupon the King, foolishly giving way to anger, retorted, "I thought that the Kingdom of Siam had only one King, and I imagined myself to be the legitimate and solemnly crowned King, to whom alone all the inhabitants of the Kingdom, of whatever rank they might be, owed honour, respect and obedience. But I see that I have only the name and that *Calahom* is King in fact, since all the Mandarins renounce the service that they owe me, abandon me, and attach themselves to *Calahom*. But I shall take good measures. When *Calahom* shall have come to Court with his accomplices, I shall treat them in accordance with their deserts, *Calahom* in particular. I shall assuredly prevent his having so large a retinue in future or his having the honours rendered to his body, which he has caused to be rendered to his father and his brother." *Oya Berekelangh* desired to excuse *Oya Calahom*, and to represent to the King, with every mark of respect and submission, what obliged *Calahom* to act thus. But the King, considering him one of the accomplices of *Calahom*, treated him badly and threatened to put him to death. Then he caused his guards and soldiers to be put under arms and withdrew in a great rage, which prevented him from reflecting that *Calahom* would not fail to form a strong party with his friends as soon as he knew the threats that the King had uttered.

*Oya Berekelangh*, having happily escaped from this scrape, left the Court and hastened to find *Oya Calahom* to whom he related everything he had heard from the mouth of the King, and the threats, the result of which he and all his friends had reason to fear. *Oya Calahom* gave evidence of being greatly astonished, and began to sigh and to bewail himself in such a way that the Mandarins, who were present in large numbers near him, pressed him to tell them the reason of the great change that they saw in him. He then related to them with much eloquence everything of which *Oya Berekelangh* had just informed him, and the purpose that the King had against them all, adding that he was ready to die if his blood was capable of extinguishing the fire of the King's wrath, and of reconciling him towards them all. "But, since the King threatens to have me put to death, me who have been his favourite, whom he has so tenderly loved, and who am the Chief of his Council, what misfortune ought not you others to fear? And how will you save yourselves from the hands of this tyrant? And who is there who

will prevent him from carrying out his evil designs? And consider, I pray you, what will be the state of this Kingdom after they shall have caused us all to perish. For you know the age of the King, you know his bad natural disposition, his humour, his inclinations, his debauchery and his cruelty better than I do. And if such is his character at this moment, what will he be when he has put to death the greater part of the Mandarins and when he will be no longer assisted by this wise Council which finds itself around him at present? It is impossible to doubt that when such a state of things takes place the Kingdom will be engaged in a civil war, and perhaps in a foreign one at the same time; and that can only end in the complete desolation of the State, causing us to fall under the domination of our neighbours."

This discourse, which *Oya Calahom* accompanied with tears, lamentations, and mournful accents, so moved the Mandarins that they at once bound themselves in friendship and interest with him, and made a league among themselves, confirmed by the solemn oath marked by drinking the blood of one another. Thereby they bound themselves not to suffer the King to seize anyone of them, and to join with their brethren to oppose what the King might wish to undertake against them.

Still, in order to assure themselves of the intention of the King, and to know if it was through rage and passion that he had made those threats, or if it was a firm resolution taken against *Oya Calahom* and against the other Mandarins, it was thought well that *Oya Berckelangh*—who is a resolute and eloquent man brought up from his youth at the Court, where he was Captain of the Pages of the late King—should go and see the King, sound his intentions, and try to obtain from him pardon for *Calahom* and for his friends. On his arrival at the Court, *Berckelangh* had the boldness to tell the King the object that had brought him, and sought to persuade his Majesty that he was badly informed as to the intentions and actions of *Oya Calahom* and the other Mandarins. But he found the anger of the King so much strengthened that he forbade *Berckelangh* to speak to him on that subject, and told him he was also among the accomplices of *Calahom*. The King ordered him to leave the Palace and to withdraw to those who like himself had become traitors to their King, and he continued his threats against *Calahom* and his accomplices. Seeing the King in this humour *Berckelangh* was



afraid and left the Palace. He made his report to *Calahom* and to the Mandarins about what he had seen, and he advised them to withdraw, everyone to his own house, in order to arm themselves and then to reassemble at a fixed hour for the purpose of marching straight to the palace, attacking it and rendering themselves masters of it, and taking the King prisoner. The whole assembly having approved this advice, they separated and went home in order to arm their slaves, with the intention of meeting again at the rendezvous at the hour that had been appointed. *Berckelangh*, however, had the boldness to return for the third time to the Palace, ostensibly to reiterate the prayers that he had made to the King for *Calahom*, but in reality to spy out what was being done there, to rid the King of any suspicion he might have of the purpose of the Mandarins, and to warn them of any preparations that might be being made against them if their purpose had been discovered. Now *Oya Capheim* was one of the most powerful nobles in the Kingdom, being greatly respected by reason of his birth, his devotion, and his wealth which was evidenced by his maintaining more than 200 elephants, 2,000 slaves, and a large number of horses. So in view of the fact that he had not attended the funeral rites of *Oya Calahom's* brother and had no part in the conspiracy, and that accordingly there was reason to fear lest he, being in great favour at Court, should seek out the King and join with him against the Mandarins, *Oya Calahom* went and called on him, with his brother *Oya Sivorrarawongh*, at his (*Oya Capheim's*) house. *Oya Calahom* bewailed bitterly the threats that the King was making against him and against the Mandarins who had innocently attended the ceremonies that the King himself had permitted to be carried out at the funeral of his brother, adding that he was ready to suffer death in any fashion the King might wish to order, but that he was too sensible of the disgrace with which so many great Mandarins were threatened for love of him. He went on to say that this was too cruel, and that this tyrannical resolution of the King could not be averted save by courageously opposing themselves to it, concealing nothing of what the last necessity had constrained them to resolve against the King, since they saw no other means of saving their lives. All this *Calahom* did with so much affection and warmth that, seeing *Oya Capheim* had been touched by it, he and his brother threw themselves at his feet, and reverencing him as their father, begged him

to adopt them as sons, to save their lives, and to protect them against the tyranny of this wicked King. On their side they promised that they would strive to have him put on the throne, and that they would render him perfect obedience as his servants and slaves, since that was the only means of preserving the Kingdom of Siam, which otherwise would perish through the unhappy rashness of the King. *Oya Capheim*, not grasping the design of *Calahom*, made the two brothers rise, embraced them and adopted them. Thereupon they promised fidelity one to the other by drinking one another's blood. Then *Calahom*, having in this fashion made sure of this noble, went home to get his own people armed and found himself in due course at the rendezvous with the other accomplices.

While *Berckelagh* was deceiving the King with prayers for the pardon of *Calahom* or reasons for his justification, *Calahom* had assembled his troops, had strengthened them with his friends, and was then marching straight to the Palace with the elephants, horses, and even with the soldiers of the Kingdom whom he commanded as Captain-General of the Elephants and Cavalry. The King, seeing everybody amazed and not knowing the reason, wished to know from *Berckelagh* the cause of this astonishment, and asked if it was not that *Calahom* was coming to attack the Palace. But *Berckelagh* assured his Majesty of the contrary, and in order to allay all suspicion said to the King that he offered his life as a pledge of the fidelity of *Calahom*. He wished that the King might cause his body to be cut in pieces and left for the beasts to eat, if *Calahom* undertook the slightest thing to the prejudice of the King's authority. This gave the King so great a feeling of safety that he gave no orders at all as to his men putting themselves in a state of defence. *Calahom*, however, attacked the Palace with such fury that the King saw that he had been deceived, and that he was ruined. Then he lost courage altogether, and was so surprised and terrified that he had scarcely the heart to order that the guards put themselves under arms, and that a vigorous resistance be offered to the entering of the gate. Knowing better than anyone what was happening, and seeing himself in peril of his life, *Berckelagh* told the King that he would go himself to see how things were and that he would come and make a report to his Majesty at once. The King, who did not doubt the fidelity of the traitor, allowed him to go. But *Berckelagh*, on leaving the King's apartment, went straight to the great gate of the Palace,

where he knew that *Calahom* was with the other Mandarins, their friends, slaves and Japanese, and caused it to be opened. When he had made the rebels enter he conducted them straight to the place where he had left the King, with the intention of seizing his person. But the King had withdrawn into another part of the Palace as soon as *Berckelangh* had quitted him, so that they failed in their object for that time. The other troops, however, not knowing that the great gate had been opened to *Calahom*, forced the Palace from the other side, and they cut in pieces all whom they met, with the result that a great carnage was made that night, and a horrible shedding of blood. The King did indeed make some resistance with his guards and with the officers of his house, with such effect that in some places the fighting went on till daybreak. But seeing that *Berckelangh* had deceived him, and that there was no longer any hope for him of being able to resist the fury of the Japanese, His Majesty condemned, unfortunately too late, his own imprudence and his too great credulity. Then abandoning the Palace he mounted on an elephant and fled across the river which waters the town, without any suite, taking refuge in the temple of *Monply Mecangh Jongh*, which is above the town, and bears a great reputation for sanctity. There the priests entertained him for some days meanly enough.

Seeing himself master of the Palace at break of day, *Calahom* at once secured for himself the collections of stones and the treasures of the King. Of these he distributed a part to his friends, sending them purses filled with gold and silver, and scimitars with gold handles set with stones. In particular he sent such gifts to those who had given proofs of their valour and of their affection in this affair, with the result that several became rich, and their condition was changed from that of slave to that of nobleman or Mandarin.

Knowing that the King had disappeared, and that he was either dead or had fled, and feeling secure in the promise that *Calahom* had given to make him King, *Oya Capheim* took his seat on the royal throne, caused the royal crown to be put on his head, the royal cushions under his arms, the royal sword by his side, and taking the golden fan in his hand, assumed the rank of King and said to *Calahom*—"My son, Fortune favours us to-day. Come and congratulate him whom you have chosen for father and who has adopted you for his son. Render to me the honour that you owe me as your King, in order that the other Mandarins may follow your example

and render me the honour that is due to me from them, that they may recognise me as their King, and that they may confirm me in the royal power. If you do this, I shall make you Prince and declare you the heir to the Kingdom of Siam." *Calahom* was surprised at seeing *Oya Capheim* in possession of the throne, crowned with the royal crown, and clothed with the royal robes and ornaments, and urging him to recognise him as King; for it had been *Calahom's* own intention to take that place and to cause himself to be declared King. Nevertheless, dissembling his displeasure, he said to *Oya Capheim* that it was not yet the time to take possession of the throne and have himself declared King, because it was not yet known what had become of the King, or whether he was alive or not. Apart from that, he further said, there were still Princes, sons of the late King, one of them 11 years old, and by causing him to be proclaimed King their rising would not be blamed by any one; no one would be able to accuse them of having taken arms in order to usurp the crown of the legitimate heirs. *Oya Capheim* retorted that the throne of Siam was a thing so sacred and so venerable that it was impossible for it to be occupied by so young a Prince; and in order that justice might not fail to be administered it could not remain empty any longer. "For that reason," he went on, "if you do not wish to crown me, or to recognise as King me who am your father, approach and receive this dignity from my hand. I shall put the crown on your head and shall cause you to be proclaimed King." But *Calahom* refused the honour, pretended to be disturbed at seeing the throne occupied by a noble who had intruded himself there without being in any way entitled to do so, and begged him to leave it in order to prevent the scandal and misfortune that might occur, and for the purpose of enabling them to act together for the settlement of affairs and in searching for the fugitive King. The result was that *Oya Capheim*, seeing he would not succeed, quitted the throne and followed *Calahom* where he wished.

So strict a search, however, was made for the King that it was known at last that he had withdrawn to the temple of *Monply Mecangh Jongh*. From there he was taken and brought a prisoner to the Palace, where the Mandarins, having been assembled, declared him unworthy of reigning. This was done on the proposition, which *Calahom* made, chiefly, that having fled from the Palace he had, as it were, abandoned the Kingdom. It was in fact by reason of this flight that he was declared unworthy of reigning or of living.

Seeing that the whole assembly was inclined to put the King to death, *Calahom* opposed it, and pretended to be desirous of preserving his life, allowing himself none the less to be overborne by the majority of voices.

Perceiving that he must die, the King showed signs of neither surprise nor annoyance, but said that he could expect nothing else from his Mandarins, who had become traitors and rebels. He reproached *Berckelangh* with his treason, and all the other Mandarins with their rebellion. He bewailed in particular the bad advice that *Oya Calahom* had given to the King, his father, with regard to the succession to the throne. Then, addressing *Calahom* personally, he said, "You have come into the world in order to be the ruin of this Kingdom, for you put my father to death by poison, and, by your intrigues, you caused the Prince, my uncle, to perish lamentably. Now you are going to shed my royal blood, and I avow that I should die with less regret if the shedding of my blood could end it all, and if the murders with which this Kingdom is threatened were comprehended in my person. But you will be the scourge of this Kingdom and people, and I shall pray the great God of gods to avenge my death and to bring upon your own head the evil that you have done, and that you are yet to do." After that, he begged the Mandarins to consent to save the life of the Queen, his mother, and to allow him to speak with her before he died. *Calahom* justified himself as best he could, and having caused the Queen Mother, *Praongo Marit* (Phra Ong Amaratit) by name, to attend in person, he reproached her with much bitterness. He alleged that she was the sole cause of the unjust reproaches that had been brought against him, as well as of so great an effusion of blood, and of the great disorders that were to be seen in the Kingdom; in part, because she had borne so wicked a son; in part, because by her advice she had strengthened him in his wickedness. He further said that she did not deserve to live, but he added that if she liked to deny her son, stifling her maternal affection, and to approve of the sentence of death that had just been passed upon him, they would preserve her life and give her maintenance in accordance with her rank. The Queen showed no emotion at all this, but replied coldly and with prudence:— "The King, sir, finds himself, while still in his youth, at the end of his days, owing to the bad and perverse advice with which you inspired the late King, in order to get

him to change, unhappily, the order of succession established by the laws of the Kingdom. But since your cruelty and your ambition destine him to so unhappy an end, I prefer to die with him rather than receive my sustenance at your bloody hands. The fear of the pains of death will never compel me to deny my son whom I have borne in my body, and whom I have cherished with every care; nor will it ever stifle the maternal affection that nature has implanted in me, were I to suffer as many deaths as my body has members. For if I were so far to forget myself as to deny my son, I should be rendering myself the accomplice of all your cruelties, and you would soon find a reason for having me put to death as a criminal, whereas now I shall die innocent. I have not lived long, but long enough to have felt the miseries, and to have tasted the bitterness of life; wherefore death has no horror for me, since I feel that it will be the beginning of my rest. I have given life to my son: I desire to finish mine with him." After that the King and the Queen, his mother, were conducted to the front of an old, ruined temple named *Walpramincho prae* (Wat Phramen Khok Phya), where the executioners laid them down on a scarlet carpet, and thrust them through the stomach with a sandalwood stake, and threw their bodies into a well, where they are still. On arriving at the place of execution, the King, who had reigned only eight months, bewailed aloud the misfortune of the Queen, his mother, who being innocent, was dying only for love of him. He also recalled the advice that the Prince, his uncle, had given him when he had caused him to be condemned to death and to be executed in that same place and in the same fashion as he was now about to be executed himself. His mother, on the other hand, gave no sign of being moved, and said to her son, that, at least, in this, the last and most important moment of his life, he ought to make it be recognised that he was a King because he was suffering a fate that it was impossible to avoid.

After this execution, *Calahom* put to death all those who had taken the side of the King, and those who had not taken any share in his rebellion, or who had not taken up arms with him. The others were sent into exile or dispossessed of their offices or degraded from their rank. The property of those condemned or disgraced was confiscated and distributed among the friends of *Calahom*. In this way a great change was brought about in the Kingdom of Siam, because several great lords lost their liberty and their wealth, while

seven of the mandarins and among the most powerful at Court.

They having been executed in the manner we have just described, two *Oyas*, *Calahom* and *Berckelangh*, took advantage of the darkness of night, entered a boat alone, without any following of guards or slaves, and went to find *Oya Senaphimoc*, the Colonel of the Japanese, for the purpose of discovering his sentiments with regard to the election of a successor to the Throne. *Calahom* put before him that the Kingdom could not exist without a King; that the great King, father of the one just dead, had left only several small children; that it would be dangerous to entrust the royal dignity to such young princes, and that it would be a pity to see so powerful a Kingdom governed by a child. He begged *Oya Senaphimoc* to consider if it would not be wise, in order to prevent all these inconveniences, to proceed to the election of some one of the most powerful Mandarins who should reign, and who should be crowned provisionally till the prince was in a position to govern in person, the idea being that this Mandarin should then renounce the dignity and replace it in the hands of the legitimate heirs. *Oya Senaphimoc*, discerning *Calahom's* intentions, replied to him that, if it was necessary to proceed to the election of one of the Mandarins, it would inevitably fall on his own person, because, as he was of the blood royal, and the most powerful of all the Mandarins, no one else could be appointed without prejudicing him. "On the other hand, if they did elect you, everyone would have reason to condemn our actions," he said, "and to believe that we took up arms only through partisanship, in order to favour your unjust designs and to cause to fall into your hands a violent and illegitimate dominion. And besides, if we select some one of the other Mandarins, it is to be feared that he will desire to remain master even after the Prince shall have reached years of discretion, and that, in order to secure the crown for his own person and family, he will extirpate the whole royal house."

Further, he said, they must consider that already two Kings had been put to death, that much blood had been shed, and that it was time to put an end to the disorders, and to restore peace to the Kingdom. His advice was that they should crown king the Prince who was the eldest of the brothers of the one last dead, and that they should give the guardianship of his person, and the regency of the kingdom, to him, *Calahom*, who having been first minister under the

last reign, was capable of giving good counsel and of re-adjusting the affairs of the kingdom. He went that for his part, he would not consent that the crown should be the head of a stranger while there were princes of the race who could hope for this dignity by the fact of their birth, and who could oppose such a proposal with all his might. Seeing that he could obtain nothing else, *Oya Calahom* expressed approval of the sentiments and reasons of the Japanese touching the person of the young prince, but declined the position of guardian and regent. Nevertheless, being dependent in some fashion on *Senaphimoc*, and considering that on his refusal the latter would seek for someone else who would not be so unwilling, he went to the royal palace and caused all the Mandarins to be assembled next day. He then represented to them, that the Kingdom of Siam could not exist without a King, and that, inasmuch as there were still princes, sons of the great King, and brothers of the one lately dead, and among others the eldest of the three, a Prince of great hope, ten years old or thereabouts, he believed that they could not make a better choice than of his person, and he was of opinion that they must crown him. The whole assembly acquiesced in this, *Oya Senaphimoc* in particular expressing approval. Thereupon the young Prince was crowned, and received the name of *Phraongh Athit Socras Wangh* (Phra Ong Athit Chakrawong). This election was approved of, not only by the nobles, but also by the people, who hoped that by this means affairs would be restored to their former state. *Oya Calahom* was, by the same assembly, unanimously appointed the guardian of the King and regent of the Kingdom, in consideration of the prestige of his birth, he being of the blood royal and a near relative of the King. He refused the position for a long time, and accepted it at last only when the whole assembly entreated and insisted on his taking it.

This resolution, the age of the King, the power that was given him over the Royal person, and the authority that he acquired in establishing himself in the Kingdom by these two important offices of guardian and regent, strengthened *Calahom's* hopes marvellously, and flattered his ambition. But he foresaw clearly that it would be impossible for him to reach to the highest degree of absolute power if he did not with great foresight, and soon, remove two powerful obstacles, to wit, *Oya Capheim* and *Oya Senaphimoc*. He had formally promised the royal dignity to the one, and the



other had quite expressly protested that he would not suffer the throne to be occupied by one of the mandarins while any one of the princes of the royal house was still alive. *Calahom* had indeed some reason for saying that *Oya Capheim* aspired to the royal dignity, since he had taken incontinent possession of it after the flight of the late King, and had gone so far as to urge himself (*Calahom*) to cause him to be recognised as King and to get him crowned. *Oya Calahom* made use of this pretext in order to render him odious, and even criminal, in the eyes of the King,—to ruin him, in fact, in order that his authority and his wealth might no longer be able to prove an obstacle to his own ambitious designs. Accordingly, having disclosed his purpose to *Oya Berckelangh*, they resolved together to accuse *Oya Capheim*, and to let the King know that this Mandarin, having had the audacity to put himself on the throne in the lifetime of the late King, had still ambition enough to oppose himself to the present one, and that the crime he had committed in seeking to get himself proclaimed King could be expiated only by death. For this *Oya Calahom* was to serve as accuser, and *Oya Berckelangh* as witness. Thereupon *Oya Calahom* went and found the King, and said to him that *Oya Capheim* was the sole cause of the flight and death of the late King. He asserted that it was *Oya Capheim* who had incited the Mandarins—several of whom had been constrained by force, by the slaves and by the elephants of *Oya Capheim*—to take up arms; that, after the withdrawal of the King, he had put himself on the throne, had caused himself to be invested with the royal ornaments, and had pressed him, *Calahom*, to get him crowned and proclaimed King, and that he would have accomplished it if he had not been prevented by them. He said, further, that *Oya Capheim* had always favoured the party and the interests of the Prince, and that his design had been to join him with the army of the King which he commanded as General, if he had not been prevented by *Oya Senaphimog* and by the Japanese soldiers. *Oya Capheim*, he said, had greatly regretted the death of the Prince, and he had dared to say that this murder would not remain unpunished and unavenged. And, in addition to all, he urged that all the actions of *Oya Capheim* made it plain that there was nothing good to hope from him; that he was the enemy of the sons of the great King; that he loved still the memory of the Prince; and that he cherished an aversion against those whom he called usurpers, an aversion which it would be impos-

sible to overcome, and therefore that he merited death in all its forms. *Oya Berckêlangh* confirmed everything that *Oya Calahom* had said, and the two together caused the King to believe that, for the security of his person, and for the preservation of the state, it was necessary to do away with *Oya Capheim*. The young King, who was, in fact, only a child, acquiesced in this, and the noble referred to was at once arrested and put in prison, his feet, his hands, his arms and his head being loaded with irons. They gave his house up to pillage and distributed his slaves among the friends of *Calahom*. Thus in one moment, *Oya Capheim* saw himself without property and without friends. But, though treated in this fashion, he was unable to feel greatly afflicted, believing, as he did, that it was the result of the anger of the King who had been misled by his, *Capheim's*, enemies, and that *Oya Calahom*, his good son, would soon make his peace, and free him from prison with honour and restitution. And, in fact, pretending to be greatly surprised at the disgrace which had fallen on *Oya Capheim*, *Calahom* went to him in prison, and expressed to him his great astonishment at the step the King had taken touching his person. He consoled *Capheim*, exhorted him to have patience, and assured him that he would soon be out of prison. He pointed out that the action of the King was that of a young prince, and that nations were unfortunate under a young King. But he promised that he would make this his one business, and would soon have him out of that place, where assuredly he should not have to pass the night. Nor did he fail to keep his word. About two hours before sunset *Oya Capheim* was taken out of the prison and led to the gate of *Sachem* (Tha Chao or Tha Chang) on the bank of the river in order to be executed. Finding he was to die, and *Oya Calahom* had deceived him, *Oya Capheim* spoke strongly against him, relating the whole story of his treason in that he had chosen him for his father in order to shed his innocent blood, to put his whole house into disgrace, to pillage his wealth, and to put his children into slavery. He said *Calahom* had prejudiced the King by alleging false crimes against him in order to satiate his avarice and ambition, and that he was using him for a stepping stone to mount to the royal dignity. After these first expressions of anger, he begged to be brought before the King in order to establish innocence, and he asked that judges be appointed who would judge him according to the laws of the kingdom. But there was no question here of judging :

it was one of executing. Accordingly they tied him to the trunk of a *Bisang* (Banana) tree, laid him on the earth and gave him a blow with a scimitar on the left side. His entrails came out at once, and they finished killing him with a blow of a rattan with which they pierced his neck. The body was hung on a gibbet constructed of large bamboos, as an example, as though he had been convicted of conspiracy against the person of the King.

*Oya Senaphimocq* had not been to Court that day, but learning what had been done to *Oya Capheim* and how he had been executed, he was greatly angered, particularly against *Oya Calahom*, since if he was not the instigator of the death, he could at least have prevented it by his authority, and by interceding with the King. At first he could not believe that *Calahom* had been *Capheim's* accuser, but he was angry with him because he had not himself been warned so that he might have spoken to the King. Thereupon, having gone to Court, he caused the body to be taken off the gibbet, and had it buried, weeping tears for his friend. This compassion of *Senaphimocq* was not pleasing to *Oya Calahom*, but he did not dare to show his displeasure because of the great authority of *Senaphimocq*, and the consideration in which the Japanese were held. The fixed property and other wealth of *Oya Capheim* which had not been looted, such as the elephants, the horses, the arms, the coined gold and silver which the Siamese are accustomed to bury, and the slaves which had not been discovered at the time of the looting, fell into the hands of *Calahom* and *Berckelagh*, who employed it for the purpose of making fresh adherents, and attaching their creatures and partisans still more to their interests. They brought to the Court some of the principal wives and concubines with their daughters, and they still serve the Queen in the capacity of slaves; the others were given to their intimates. They brought also to the Court some of the sons of the deceased whom they distributed among the Mandarins. It was done because none of the daughters or wives could claim any of the property, and only some of the sons could claim any advancement. The compassion which *Oya Senaphimocq* had dared to show towards the body of *Oya Capheim*—who had been condemned by justice and disowned by the King—became so much the more suspicious in the eyes of *Calahom* that he inferred that the understanding between these two nobles must have been greater than he had believed, or than they had made appear. The result

was that, fearing some resentment on the part of the Japanese, he desired to strengthen himself against them by the friendship of all the Mandarins, and set himself to ingratiate himself with them as much as possible. *Senaphimoc*, on his side, having so many proofs of the perfidy and the bad intentions of *Calahom* abstained from going to the Court in order to avoid meeting him. But *Calahom*, being unable to endure his absence, resolved to go and see him at his house for the purpose of bewailing his own position. He decided to say it had become unbearable, because he was compelled to defer blindly to the whims of the King who, being still only a child, could not be expected to show much wisdom. This, he would say, exposed him to the distrust of his rivals, who laid to his charge everything that the King did against his advice. He desired also to justify himself as regards the death of *Oya Capheim*. But, having been warned of his purpose, *Senaphimoc* anticipated his visit, caused the door to be closed and refused to speak with him. *Calahom* put up with this affront, but, none the less, he did not lose his resentment.

Now, at this time, there arrived on the river of *Siam*, at the town of *Iudia*, Mr. Sebald Wondereer, then a free merchant and captain of the despatch vessel of the *Pearl*, and Receiver General of the revenue of the East India Company at Batavia.

*Oya Calahom* was afraid that *Senaphimoc*, in order to avenge the death of *Oya Capheim*, might make use of the Dutchmen to attempt something against his person and dignity. So he warned the Captain, in view of the bad state of affairs in the Kingdom, to be on his guard, and to do nothing if he were pressed to take a side, but to consider simply the interests of the King. And, in order to secure his good will, the Dutchman was presented with a scimitar from the royal treasure, having the hilt, and ornaments of the scabbard, of gold set with stones, while *Calahom* caused the rumour to be spread that *Oya Senaphimoc* had a special understanding with this Captain and that his intention was to join the people of this vessel to his Japanese and to attack the King in his palace. This rumour made such an impression on the minds of the nobles and the people that they began to arm themselves. But that was not the purpose of *Calahom*, who desired to utilise the rumour only in order to have an opportunity of conferring with *Senaphimoc*, and of placating the resentment which he might still entertain with regard to

the death of *Capheim*, and of securing his friendship. The rumour, however, rendered *Senaphimoc* so much suspect in the eyes of the King and the Mandarins that, in order to obtain some light as to his intentions, they caused him to be summoned to Court. But he excused himself on the ground of indisposition, which is the usual excuse of Siamese nobles when they do not wish to go to Court, hiding their fear under this pretext. Taking advantage of this convenient opportunity, *Calahom* resolved to go and see *Oya Senaphimoc* in his house, and, having obtained an interview, he was skilful enough to lay before him so many reasons, and cajoled him so completely, that the Japanese yielded, conceived a very good opinion of the intentions and conduct of *Calahom*, renounced all his resentment, and promised an inviolable friendship, as also to espouse his interests in all eventualities. This they both confirmed by a solemn oath with the usual ceremonies of the country.

Peace having thus been made between these two ministers and their friendship having been solemnly confirmed, *Calahom* at once planned to rid himself of the one who alone could prevent him from carrying out his design to gain the royal power. In order to succeed in this, and in order to cause him to perish far from the Court, he proposed to the Council of the King that it would be necessary, in view of the past disorders, and the rebellion and disobedience of several nobles, to cause the governors of the more distant provinces to come to the Court in order to oblige them to renew their oath of fidelity to the King. The Council unanimously agreed, and the resolution having been passed, *Calahom* had the order sent at once to *Oya Ligor* (*Okya Nakhon*). He did this because he knew that *Oya Ligor* would refuse to come on account of the state of his province, which was threatened with a serious war by the people of Patania, and because also the inhabitants were on the point of taking up arms. He would thus have a pretext for accusing the governor of rebellion, and an opportunity for having *Oya Senaphimoc* sent to arrest him. *Thirak Hidra Thy Bidy* (*Tra Rajendra Thi Bodi*), that is to say, an order under the grand seal, was at once sent to *Oya Ligor* who, in view of the absolute power of the King, found himself in great perplexity. When he considered, however, the state of the province, which would run the risk of being lost in his absence, he resolved with the advice of his friends to defer his journey to the Court, charging the messenger who had been sent, to convey his excuses and

his submissions, and the fact that he recognised the King as his sovereign and as the legitimate monarch of the Kingdom of Siam. This reply pleased *Calahom* extremely as it provided him with an opportunity to censure the conduct of this noble to the King, to make him appear of a disobedient and rebellious spirit, and to get it decided that, as soon as possible, another governor should be sent with orders to arrest *Oya Ligoor* (Okya Nakhon), and to send him a prisoner to *Iudia*, to be punished for his rebellion. This resolution having been taken, *Oya Calahom* represented to the Council that the government of *Oya Ligoor* was the most important of the whole kingdom, partly by reason of the situation of the province which has several seaports and is watered by very considerable rivers, partly by reason of the threats of the *Patanois* and of the disobedience of the inhabitants, who, required a vigorous and enterprising man to inspire the country's enemies with terror and its subjects with respect, who, further, should be able to arrest *Oya Ligoor* despite his great influence with officers of the army. He went on to urge that all the qualities necessary for this undertaking were to be found in *Oya Senaphimocq*, and that his authority and the reputation of the Japanese were alone capable of maintaining the authority of his Majesty in the province. *Oya Senaphimocq* desired to excuse himself from undertaking this commission, and would have preferred to remain at Court, because he suspected the fidelity of *Calahom*, and was beginning to believe that his purpose was to withdraw him from the Court in order that the authority of the Japanese soldiers might not be able to prevent him mounting the throne.

This unwillingness on the part of *Oya Senaphimocq* to undertake the government of *Ligoor* appeared very suspicious to *Calahom* and gave him great umbrage. In order to gain him over, therefore, *Calahom* employed his most subtle tricks and artifices; he paid him the most obsequious marks of respect and went to visit him every day at his own house, contrary to the laws and customs of Siam, continually bewailing the fact that he found himself charged with all the affairs of State. He told *Senaphimocq* that he could hardly suffer him to come every day to Court and do reverence to him as the one who represented the person of the Monarch, and that he would not permit it at all were it not that he was obliged to yield to custom in order to keep the other Mandarins to their duty. In order, however, to deliver *Senaphimocq* from this servitude and

subjection to which his stay at Court obliged him, *Calahom* said he had begged the King to confer the government of *Ligoor* upon him as being the most valiant man in the Kingdom and the most capable of doing the King service. This cajolery flattered the ears of *Oya Senaphimocq* so successfully that *Calahom* seeing him in good humour went at once to the palace, and a very great retinue was sent to call *Senaphimocq* in the name of the King. The King received him very kindly, declared him governor of *Ligoor* with the usual ceremonies and crowned him with a pyramidal crown, in this way doing him an honour which had never before been done to any private individual. These extraordinary honours displeased *Oya Senaphimocq* so much that he was unable to hide his annoyance altogether from *Oya Calahom*, but in order to completely gain him over the latter made him so many presents of gold, coined and worked, of stones, and of other rarities which he caused to be put on the vessel that had brought him to Court, that it was overloaded.

When *Senaphimocq*, who had thus become *Oya Ligoor*, had embarked on the river and was approaching his house, there arose so great a storm that, if some of his Japanese had not leaped into the river and borne up the boat with their shoulders, their Colonel would have been drowned with all his presents, and with all the marks of honour he had just received. Most of the Siamese who saw him land after this peril spoke of this incident as presaging a great misfortune, and, not long after, this came to pass.

*Calahom* gave himself no rest till *Oya Senaphimocq*, or *Oya Ligoor*, had taken the oath of fidelity for his new government, and till there had been given him the despatches necessary for his journey. And, in order that he might have the more authority in his Government, it was resolved that he should take with him all the Japanese in the Kingdom. This decision greatly pleased everybody, everyone being glad to see the Court cleared of this rabble, but no one penetrated the purpose of the Minister.

Having now, by the death of *Oya Capheim*, and by the departure of *Senaphimocq* and his insolent Japanese, rid himself of several perplexities, and finding hardly any other obstacle in his way, *Oya Calahom* began to insinuate little by little to his creatures and partisans that the King was an infant of bad natural disposition and incompetent, adding that it was against the laws of the State, against custom and even against common sense, to put so great and powerful

a Kingdom in the hands of a child. *Calahom* impressed upon them that he would succumb under the charge which the Mandarins had imposed upon him, and that several reasons obliged him to desire to be quit of it. There was reason to fear, he said, that when the King had come to man's estate he would lend ear to those who envied him (*Calahom*) his fortune and to his secret enemies, who would not fail to make him feel their hate in rendering his person suspect, and in decrying his government during the regency. The result would be, he said, that he would be unable to save himself from the cruel hand of the King who even in his present youth, made it plain enough what he (*Calahom*) had to hope from him. In order to prevent the disorders that the whole Kingdom might fear from his harsh disposition, he thought it would be well, therefore, if they put the King to school in the hands of some ecclesiastics who would be able to correct his disposition by their good training and to teach him the way of virtue. He said they should then elect a president who would govern the Kingdom with the title of "King" till the true King had come of age, when the regent could hand back to him all the authority and all the rights of sovereignty with the Royal title. When this proposal was communicated to his creatures and partisans it found among them so universal an approbation that they were not afraid to put it forward openly in the general assembly of the nobility, representing that for the good of the state, for the repose of the people, and to preserve respect for the Kingdom among neighbouring Kings and princes, it was very necessary to place the young King for some time in a monastery and to elect *Oya Calahom* president and regent of the Kingdom with the title of "King" and with all the authority necessary for the position. *Calahom* made a pretence of being anxious to refuse this, and even insisted that he should be relieved of the post of guardian and regent that they had conferred on him despite his express protests. He said that he would not consent to be constrained to occupy a still higher position. But as the whole assembly saw quite clearly that this was a piece of dissimulation, there was no one who did not support the election, some through affection, others through fear. The King was at once sent to the temple of *Watdemi* (Wat Temi) which is the synagogue where the chief of their ecclesiastics presides, and *Calahom* having been elected president and regent of the Kingdom under the Royal title, his new subjects did honour and service to him. He kept protesting, however, that it was in spite of himself that he accepted this dignity.



Having been thus elected, *Oya Calahom* acquitted himself at the beginning of his regency very worthily, and governed with so much prudence, moderation and justice that several mandarins, some by interest in order to make their fortune, and others through fear of his anger, adjudged that it was necessary to offer the Kingdom and the crown to him as deserving to be the legitimate King. On his part he represented to his partisans that it was impossible for the Kingdom to go on under two monarchs, and that he himself ran the same peril as he would have done in the position of guardian and regent. One day he would have to become a subject, when the young King came to the throne, and his actions would be subject to the same censure and the same envy. So, to preserve his life for the future, he was resolved to resign the regency and the dignity with which they had desired to honour him, principally because he foresaw that most of the Mandarins ran the same risk as himself. The Mandarins held some special conferences on this subject, and, after due consideration of the reasons advanced by *Oya Calahom*, they settled things so well that by means of some Councillors of State and of some of the principal nobility a special resolution was passed in an assembly that was held of all the officers of the Crown. This resolution set forth that there was great danger in suffering two sovereign Princes in the same Kingdom, since they threatened the State, not only with civil and foreign wars, but also with inevitable ruin, and that in order to prevent both dangers it was necessary to do away with this young King, who was incapable of reigning, and to elect in his stead one who by his good conduct and his equitable rule had shown that he was worthy of this high honour.

This proposition having been accepted by the whole assembly, the resolve was carried into effect with much injustice. Only the Regent (*Oya Calahom*), making a pretence of compassion for the young King, did not wish to consent to the proposal till, with apparently great unwillingness, he saw himself constrained to yield to the plurality of votes. The young King was at once taken from the college, his ecclesiastical robe was taken off him by a trick, and he was led to the same place where the Prince his uncle, and where his brother and his mother had been inhumanly executed, to the great regret of all good people. This young Monarch had been seated on the throne for only 36 days, when he was made to come down from it in order to mount a scaffold. When he arrived at the place

of execution he burst into tears and said: "Why must I die when I have not yet reached the age of eleven years? Is it not enough for this sanguinary Council to have put to death my uncle, my brother and my mother, and to wrest the crown from me, without sending me to my death? Let him whom they have elected King reign, and let them allow me to live." These words touched the hearts of all who were assisting at the scene, and even those of the executioners who, by their tears and their sobs, showed the regret they felt at executing these cruel orders. Nevertheless they had to obey and this young King had to die.

After the death of the King, in the year 1629, the Regent was declared absolute King, with much ceremony and pomp, he being then 30 years old. On his coronation he was given the name of *Praongsry dharma Raetsia Thyara* (Phra Ong Sri Thama Racha Thirat) and in order to strengthen his throne by a Royal alliance he took for his fourth wife, after the three chief ones, the eldest daughter of the sister of the great King. He gave the second daughter to his brother, whom he declared at the same time heir presumptive to the throne. He wished that the mother of the King last dead, who was one of the most beautiful women in the Kingdom, should be his concubine. But she showed such repugnance to that, that she absolutely refused to go to Court, which order had been sent her. Seeing at last that the King would compel her by force, she said: "The King my lord is no more, and my son is also dead. I, too, am tired of life seeing that I am unworthy to survive either of them. But while I do live, my body shall remain chaste and shall never be enjoyed by this usurper and tyrant." The King was so angered by this refusal, this bitter reply and this bloody reproach, that he at once caused this Princess to be dragged to the bank of the river, where he had her cut in two pieces and one part of the body fastened by the neck to a gibbet of bamboos. On the prayer of the ecclesiastics, however, he allowed the body to be taken down after two days, and burned without ceremonies. He took all the other concubines and daughters of the great King, making concubines of the younger and more beautiful, and putting to death with great cruelty those who refused that position. The aged ladies were shut up in a harem where they were supported very meanly.

This brutality exercised on the life of three powerful Kings consecutively in so short a space of time, moved extremely those who

had a spark of humanity left in them. But no one dared to show such a feeling, or to weep for the shedding of so much innocent blood, for those who were only suspected ran the same peril. There were in *Iudia* two sisters who had served the mother of the King last deceased in the capacity of maids of honour. They shed tears in their house for the death of their mistress and of the King her son; and this fact was reported to the reigning King. He at once caused them to be dragged by the hair to the bank of the river, where he had them fastened to a stake by passing a reed round their necks in such a way that their feet hardly touched the earth. Then he caused their bodies to be opened on both sides and gags to be put in their mouths, and they were left to die in this fashion, with unspeakable torture. When the father of these two sisters, learned of the condition of his daughters, he went to the place of execution and there gave expression to his mourning as nature obliged him to do at the sight of this sad spectacle. When the King was informed of this, he caused the man to be cleft through the body, which was then hung on a gibbet. The great cruelty shown in these executions closed the mouth of all the others and prevented them mourning the death of their friends or their relatives.

After having thus dealt with the revolution that took place in the town of *Iudia*, touching the unjust and tyrannical way in which the succession was secured of the Kingdom of Siam, we must now see what became of *Oya Senaphimoc*, and what he did with his Japanese at *Ligoor*, and in what fashion the King succeeded in causing to perish those who could trouble his repose and prevent his establishment in the royal power. The former Governor of *Ligoor*, having had sure information as to what took place at Court in his affair and that his successor was on the way, awaited him patiently and remained in his government. He did so, as much because he feared the first movements of the anger of the King, as because he hoped to be able to justify himself so successfully to his successor that he would promise him his protection, so that if he had to be conducted to *Iudia* he might be well treated on the way and have a powerful advocate with the King. On the arrival of the new Governor at *Ligoor*, he inspired everyone with such great dread that he dissipated the whole rebellion at once, so that not one of the rebels dared to make an appearance. But that did not prevent *Oya Senaphimoc* from marking down the chiefs and leaders, and having them

put to death, and punished with other punishments, or with banishment according to the seriousness of the crime. In general, all of them had their property confiscated, and that he distributed among his Japanese. The result was that in a short space of time he swept the province of what could trouble his repose, established his authority and secured the province for the King. And since in all this he had found the advice of his predecessor very useful, he consented to his remaining by him in the post of chief adviser.

After he had settled the most urgent affairs of his government, and not knowing anything of what had taken place at *Iudia*, the new *Oya Ligoor* despatched an express to the Court in order to report on the condition in which he had found the Province on his arrival, and on the means he had used to punish the rebels, to obtain peace for his government and to secure the province to the Crown of Siam. The King had supposed that the affairs of *Ligoor* would give more occupation to the Japanese, and was not greatly pleased at this big success, but he did not allow that to be seen. He expressed himself as being very satisfied with the conduct of the Governor, even as to his having made use of the advice of his predecessor, and himself proposed in the assembly of the Mandarins that it was necessary to give an extraordinary recompense for so important a service. He did so, he said, in order that by the marks he would give of his affection and of his royal benevolence he might mark this Governor an example for all worthy people, as his royal justice would always inspire terror in the wicked; but principally in order thereby to incite his officers to acquit themselves well of the duties imposed on them by their charges. This proposition was approved by the whole Council. It was resolved that the Governor should be obliged to take the oath of fidelity to the reigning King, and that with several very considerable presents they should send him a number of beautiful girls and women in the name of the King, one in particular whom he could marry in accordance with the customs of Siam.

This resolution was speedily carried into effect, and the young girls, with the presents, were sent with great pomp to *Ligoor*. But at the same time the King caused *Oya Berekelangh* to write to the Governor who had been dispossessed that, if he could rid himself of the Japanese Governor and deliver the Kingdom from the insolence of that nation, he would be able to secure the good graces of the King and his reappointment in his Government. *Oya Senaphimocq*, whom one ought

more properly to term *Oya Ligoor*, was very glad to see so many presents. But he was sensibly touched by the death of the young King, and showed much dissatisfaction at the fact that they had proceeded to the election and coronation of *Calahom*, without taking his advice about it. In fact it caused him profound grief, and carried him away so far as to say that this murder and this illegitimate election would find some one who would exact vengeance for the one as for the other. Nevertheless after the first emotion he came to himself, dissimulated his displeasure, and had triumphs and other rejoicings held for the succession of the King, who reigns to-day.

But he conceived so great a distrust of his predecessor that he caused him to be forbidden the house and desired not to see him any more. He did not cease, however, to make much of his brother, *Apra Marit*, (Okphra Amorarit) allowing him to visit him from time to time. About this time it happened that while *Oya Ligoor* was commanding an army corps against the *Putanois*, he was wounded in one engagement in the leg, and the wound being very painful he made use of some preparations that *Apra Marit* applied to it. As an effect of these medicaments the pain was not only soothed, but the wound was also almost cured, so that it did not prevent his celebrating his marriage with the girl that the King had sent to him. But when *Oya Ligoor* believed that he was going to enjoy the fruit of his love, he was in fact on the point of death; for at the height of the rejoicings of the wedding *Apra Marit* applied a poisoned plaster to his leg, which caused him to die in a few hours.

The son of the deceased *Oya Ligoor* was named *Oekon Senaphimocq* and might have been about 18 years old, a noble well born and of great hope. Following the impulses of his youth he caused himself to be declared Governor of the province, and believing as he did that the former Governor had poisoned his father he caused him to be arrested as a prisoner, having resolved to have him put to death and sacrificed to the "manes" of his father. But this old fox knew so well how to flatter the young Governor that not only did the latter lose all the suspicion he had had, but he also married the eldest daughter of the murderer of his father, swearing to both eternal fidelity and reciprocal assistance in all cases. After that, the former Governor commenced to make his son-in-law believe that the King had given the province to his father, not simply to govern, but to reign there with absolute power as sovereign, without being in any

way dependent on the Court, and that this province being like an hereditary Kingdom in his family, the succession belonged to him as being the eldest of the house. Such talk sounded so pleasantly in the ears of this young noble that, being supported by several flatterers, he found no difficulty in believing it, or in moderating the affliction that he might still feel on account of the death of his father. He then began to take all his measures on this footing, to fill the vacant offices, to distribute very considerable presents to his favourites, to make *Oyas*, and *Operas*, to appoint Mandarins, and even appoint a day for the public solemnity of his coronation in order to get himself recognised as King, and to get his new subjects to drink the consecrated water in taking to him the oath of fidelity. But while the traitor was influencing his son-in-law to do what we have just stated, he addressed himself to a certain Japanese Captain, the most redoubtable of the troop, named *Orkon Cirwy Aquodt* (Okkhun Sri Waiyawut), and represented to him that the incapacity of this young Governor rendered him unworthy of such a position. He urged that the command belonged to the Captain himself as being a man of merit, and the one who was the most valiant and the most considerable of all the Japanese. *Orkon Cirwy* lent ear to this talk, and desiring to put forward his claims he caused arms to be taken to his friends and declared himself against the young Governor, thus dividing the Japanese into two factions. They often had encounters, and this thinned the number on both sides.

The former Governor, having in this fashion armed the Japanese against one another, sought still other means to be quit of them and to cause them to be destroyed, by inciting opposition on the part of the nobility and the inhabitants of *Ligoor* to the insolence of the Japanese, and by representing to them that the enterprise of the young Governor was an act of sheer usurpation and an attempt on the Royal authority. He pointed out that the government of the province had never been hereditary, but depended on the absolute disposition of his Majesty, and that not only would their acquiescence displease the Court, but that even their silence would be criminal and would expose them to the peril of the utmost punishment. It was necessary, therefore, he urged, to act with prudence and to oppose themselves to the designs of the Japanese. The people of *Ligoor* appreciated these reasons so well that the whole of the nobility determined not to go to Court on the day that had been appointed for the

coronation, not to recognise the Japanese in any matter of State, and not to yield them any superiority. The Japanese, however, continued to make all the necessary preparations for the coronation, but on the appointed day not one of the nobility of the country appeared at Court, though the Japanese had pressed them urgently. But that did not prevent the Japanese from going to, and proceeding with, the coronation. They caused *Oekon Senaphimocq* to be proclaimed King of *Ligoor*, and orders were issued that the people would have to recognise him as such, to render him the usual honours, to come and render him homage, and to come and drink the water of allegiance. The people of *Ligoor* objected to doing so, and said that *Oekon Senaphimocq* was only an usurper and a rebel against the King of Siam, and that they would not, and could not, recognise him in any position or dignity that he had not formerly obtained from the Court.

The former Governor, however, stirred up the two factions of Japanese by his intrigues to such an extent that their hatred made them irreconcilable, and they began to fortify themselves the one against the other with the design of surprising one another at a disadvantage, each side remaining mistrustful and on its guard. Then *Oekon Cirwy Agwoc*, (Okkhun Sri Waiyawut), seeing that the former Governor was deceiving him and was seeking only to re-establish himself by the downfall of the Japanese, joined the son of the late *Oya Ligoor* and the other Japanese. He then attacked and surprised the former Governor in his house, where he killed him with his own hand, and caused the throats of all they found therein to be cut. On this occasion there was a cruel encounter between the Japanese and the people of *Ligoor*. Several were killed on both sides, but at last the Japanese, animated by despair, charged the others with such fury that they were compelled to turn their backs and flee from the town, which being thus abandoned was pillaged by the Japanese and in part reduced to ashes. Nevertheless, as the Japanese were unable to subsist of themselves, their pretended King caused a general amnesty to be published, and the exiles to be invited to come back to the town, promising to have returned to each of them whatever was to be found. But the distrust was so great that apart from a few Chinese no one cared to venture back, everyone remaining in the country or withdrawing to the neighbouring towns. The town of *Ligoor* thus remained a deserted and ruined place, while *Oekon Senaphimocq* and *Oekon Cirwy* did not cease to contend continually for the government. The

result was that the number of the Japanese diminished every day in the continual encounters that took place and in one of these the Captain, *Oekon Ciruy*, was killed. Then the Japanese, seeing how little advantage they were getting from their stay at *Ligoor* and reflecting that the King of Siam would not suffer them in his kingdom, but would soon have them attacked with the whole forces of the state, abandoned the town and withdrew to Cambodia. This they did to the great contentment of the Siamese, who were delighted at finding themselves freed from this vermin, regarding them as people from whose despair they had everything to fear.

There was no great distress over the disorders that had taken place in *Ligoor*, the murders that had been committed there, or the ruin of the town, because of the joy there was over the ruin and flight of the Japanese. Nevertheless though the conduct of these people had been extremely insolent and cruel, there were still some of them who had the courage to leave Cambodia and return to *Ligoor*, and even from there to *Iudia*. There they lived unpunished, nor was any harm done them, except that people avoided their company or meeting with them. They loaded a barque, however, with all kinds of wealth with the intention of sending it, with the body of their late Colonel, to Japan. But it was seized by the express order of the King, either to irritate them, or to incite them by this affront to quit the Kingdom of Siam. Finally, however, fearing to drive them to despair, he restored to them the junk or barque and allowed them to trade in Siam. But in place of being grateful for this civility, the Japanese became more insolent, and did not scruple to say aloud that they would go and attack the King on his throne, and they would put the town into the same state as in the time of the great King.

Then the King, being warned of the insolence of their words and fearing the result of a desperate resolve, determined to be beforehand with them. For this purpose he had fire set to the Japanese quarter on the night of the 26th October, 1632, when by the overflowing of the river all the streets of the town were under water. Further he at the same time had cannon fired on their houses with such fury that they were compelled to throw themselves into their junks. But inasmuch as they were not in sufficient numbers to be able to arm both junks, they made use of only one, in which they descended with the current of the river, fighting all the time as they retreated. The King caused the attack and pursuit to be kept up, at the cost of the



lives of several Siamese. Then those Japanese who had dwelt in other quarters of the town were diligently searched for and were cruelly put to death, to the great contentment of those to whom their insolence had been insupportable.

The inhabitants of *Ligoor*, finding themselves delivered from these Japanese, wished also to shake off the yoke of the Siamese domination. Accordingly they rose, took up arms and refused to recognise the King as their sovereign lord and lawful Prince, their purpose being to separate themselves from the Crown and to make their province an independent State. But they had to do with a Prince who knew well how to make himself be obeyed, and who for this purpose despatched there at once an army corps of 10,000 men under three of the principal generals of his kingdom. The vanguard, composed of 3,200 men, was commanded by *Opera Soupa Pontrook*, (Okphra Sakda Phelarit); *Oya Iainam*, (Okya Tainam), General of the whole army, commanded the battle corps, composed of 4,000 men; and *Oya Ligoor*, that is to say the new Governor of *Ligoor*, led the rear-guard. They all three attacked the town of *Ligoor* at the same time, and took it on the first assault. They hunted down the rebels in a quarter where they had barricaded themselves, and sent 17 of the principal prisoners to *Iudia*. There, without their being heard and and without any form of trial, sheets of red hot iron were applied to their feet, they were bound with heavy chains and were buried in the ground up to their shoulders, remaining thus exposed to the derision of the passersby, who were obliged to give each of them a thump on the head—the greatest insult that one can do to a man in the Kingdom of Siam. But after they had been in this position for 24 hours, the priests interceded for them, with the result that they were taken out of the ground and allowed to go.

Now at that time the Kings of *Ischeen Mey* (Chiengmai) and of *Naam*, who were brothers, were on very bad terms, because the elder, who was King of *Ischeen Mey* and who possessed the better part of the paternal succession, wished also to encroach on the share of his brother. And in fact he drove him from his Kingdom, and compelled him to withdraw with a few of his subjects into Siam. But after having dwelt some time under the protection of Siam, about 500 of his subjects, living in the province of *Lauwa*, (Law) withdrew and betook themselves to *Ischeen Mey*. This retreat caused the King of Siam uneasiness for he feared that *Ischeen Mey*, inspirited by these deserters,

might stir up the King of *Ava* against him, and that these two Princes might unite their forces to make war on him. For that reason he resolved to be beforehand with them, and for this purpose he caused to be raised an army of 90,000 men, foot and horse, accompanied by a large number of elephants, by artillery and all the other necessary things,—a great force for the country, and capable of taking the whole Kingdom of *Ischeen Mey*. *Iauphia*, (Thao-phyä) Lieutenant General of this army, and the *Oyas Calahom* and *Pithey* (Phichai) took the lead with a body of 9,000 men, among whom they had placed some Japanese, who had been taken out of prison, while the King followed them in person three days after with the rest of the army. Before leaving the Palace, the King made a solemn oath that the first four women he met should be used as a sacrifice, and that for this purpose he would have them cut in pieces, and would have his boats rubbed with their blood, their fat and their entrails. Scarcely had he put his foot out of the castle when he met four women in a boat, and in their persons he fulfilled the vow that he had just made. Thereafter he continued his journey greatly pleased at this encounter, which seemed to assure him of the advantage that he hoped to obtain over his enemies. On learning that the King of *Siam* was marching with so powerful an army, the King of *Ischeen Mey* abandoned his Kingdom and fled with all his subjects, without waiting for the help that the King of *Ava* might have been able to send him. The King of *Siam*, finding no enemies and being unwilling to lead back his army without employing it on some considerable enterprise, resolved to attack *Lycon Larwa*, (Nakhon Law) because the King of that province was a tributary of *Ischeen Mey* and had done him homage. For that purpose he sent *Oya Pouceloucq* before with some troops, and promised to follow him with the rest of the army. But *Pouceloucq*, believing that it would be derogatory to his honour if he gave the King the trouble of coming so far, attacked the chief town on all sides, forced the gates, and put fire to a number of houses. This so terrified the inhabitants, although they had among them a defensive force of more than 2,000 men, that the King fled with some of his suite; but he was hotly pursued and taken. He was however, so overcome with fatigue and grief, that he died before he could be brought back to the town. The King of *Siam*, having arrived at a distance of three days' journey from the town of *Lycon Larwa*, learned of the taking of the

town and of the capture and death of the King, and did not desire to advance farther. He halted there and caused notices to be put up on all the roads and highways announcing that if the son of the late King desired to do homage to him he could return home in full security and govern the kingdom of his father. But the young Prince did not appear. Accordingly *Pouceloucq*, after he had remained ten days in the town, abandoned it to pillage, leading and carrying off with him a part of the inhabitants, and all the wealth, all the artillery and all the provisions in the place. He left only about a thousand persons to have charge of the body of the late King, in order that it might be burned with the usual ceremonies. As soon as *Pouceloucq* had joined the main body of the army, the King returned to *Iudia*, which he entered in triumph, having in his train more than 10,000 prisoners, and among others some of those who had left the King of *Naan* to join his brother. Several of these were put to death in a very extraordinary fashion, being put into split bamboos—bamboos are huge cane—which were still growing in the ground. There they met a miserable death. Those who were found alive at the end of four or five days, were condemned to the fire, but on the prayer of the priests they were pardoned.

The King of *Siam*, seeing himself thus victorious over his enemies and having settled his affairs, then rid himself, under various pretexts, of the greater part of the more important nobles of the Kingdom, even of those who had most contributed to his advancement. He did so for fear that they might exercise against himself the same perfidy that they had shown towards their legitimate Kings. In the month of April of the year 1633, after the third year of his reign was completed, he seated himself on his throne and asked the Mandarins, whom he had expressly caused to assemble, if there was any among them who desired to get intoxicated. And inasmuch as no one said a word, he put to them another question, asking them which *Arac* (Arrack) they considered the better, the old or the new. Thereupon, when some of them had declared their sentiments, he said to them that there were still two bottles remaining of the cellar of the great King and that he would be glad to have their advice on what ought to be done with them, and if it would be better to throw away the arrack for fear that its age and its strength should cause the bottles to burst. He added, also, that no one could make use of it. *Oya Ombrat* and *Oya Immerat* (*Okya Yomarat*), seeing the intention of

the King, represented to him with much submission and respect that it seemed to them that it would be possible to pardon the insolence of the age of those two young Princes, sons of the great King, since, as their united ages did not amount to twelve years, they would not remember the dignity that their father had possessed. But the King considered this reply a reproach rather than a remonstrance, and allowed himself to be so carried away with anger that he put his hand to his sword and with his own hand inflicted several wounds on their heads. Then he had them thrown into dungeons, disposed of their slaves, and caused their houses to be looted. After that without any other deliberation he sent and arrested those two young Princes, one of whom was not yet seven years old and the other five. They were led to the ordinary place of execution and put to death in the same fashion as the Prince, the two Kings and the other persons of the royal house had been executed. This caused great displeasure to all the Siamese, whom such cruelty horrified. Their bodies were thrown into a well, and were left there for more than a year. At the end of that time the rotten members and the bones were taken from the well and burned on the bank of the river, into which the ashes were thrown in order that no memory of them might remain. In the same year the King met three other sons of the great King, of whom the eldest could not have been more than six, with one of the concubines of the deceased, whom he had caused to live in the Palace. Seeing them very sad, he imagined that they were reflecting on their past condition, and he sent at once for *Oya Siery* (Okya Chakkri), who is at present *Berckelangh*. To him the King said that the herbs whose roots were stringy from the beginning, were not good to eat, and that one must root them up and throw them away quickly. He went on to say that he had seen these children with one of his concubines, in a state which led him to judge that since at this age they had enough resentment of the past to dare to show it, they would not fail to act in another fashion when they should have more heart and more knowledge. Therefore he thought it would be better that they should be made to keep company with the others. This was accordingly done; they were taken to the same place where the others had been executed and put to death in the same manner. The woman was dragged to the river and there drowned.

There is still one Prince alive who is the eldest son of the great King, whose father ought to have succeeded to the Kingdom. But

inasmuch as *Para Marit*, that is to say the Black King, had caused his eyes to be injured or weakened his sight by fire, he renounced the throne and lived in the palace. He had only one wife and very few slaves while his sole pastime was to present himself several times a day before the King. Now in the month of March, 1635, fire destroyed a large part of the town, and devastated almost the whole of it. After the fire was extinguished this Prince was allowed to go into the town and see the pitiful state of things. But he had no sooner appeared in the street than, to his misfortune, the people, seeing in this Prince what remained of the royal house, regarded him with veneration and rendered him the greatest honours, such as it was not customary to render even to the King. This caused the tyrant such jealousy that he determined to put the Prince to death. Nevertheless in order to be able to do it with some pretext of justice, he caused him to be provoked by soldiers of the Palace, who have their arms tattooed. They treated him shamefully, and spoke to him very offensively, which obliged him to give a blow to one of the guards. This having been reported to the King, he sent for the Prince and reproached him very bitterly. His audacity, the King said, had become insupportable, and he had lost the respect that was due to him, by putting his hand on people who bear the King's mark, and who preserve the public peace and execute the laws of the Kingdom. Further since he had had the impudence to attack them, the King's royal person, his wife and his children would not be safe, and so in order to prevent the evils that were to be feared in the future it was necessary that the Prince should die. Having been thus condemned, the Prince was led to the place of execution, but the prayers of the Princess, grandmother of the King, saved his life, only however to render it more wretched. For the King caused him to take drugs that made him half-witted, by taking from him almost entirely the use of his eyes and ears, and injuring his brain. The result is that there can be no hope that this Prince will ever be capable of reigning.

Finally on the 18th February last year, desiring to be rid of everything that could overshadow him, the King resolved to put to death the two last sons of the King, Princes of the age the one of 16 and the other of 18 years. For this purpose he had them conducted at night before the temple *Pramank hopraga* (Phramen Khok Phya), where the Kings and the other Princes had been executed, with the intention of having them put to death in the same fashion as these.

The same Princess, grandmother of the King, who had advised him in most of these executions, his two first wives, and the two sisters of these two Princes, wished to intercede for them. But the King would not listen to them, till the mother threatened to throw herself into the river, and the queens prepared poison to take if the King persisted in his cruel purpose. Then he was compelled to cause the execution to be suspended. Since that time the Princes have been obliged to leave the Palace, to go and live on the other side of the river. The eldest has been married to a girl of very low class, and they both have very few slaves and an income so small that it is scarcely sufficient for them to live upon. They are obliged to go every day to Court, and when the King appears in public they appear in his suite mounted on fine elephants, or if the King goes on the river they sit in gilded and richly furnished barges. There remain alive to-day of all the royal family, only the Queen, who is the third wife of the King, her sisters, the two Princes of whom we have just spoken and some female cousins, who are quite distantly related. All the rest have perished at the hands of him who owed his life to them, and on whom more than any one else lay the duty of preserving theirs.

Despite all this it is undoubted that, for several centuries, no King of Siam has brought to the throne so great valour, prudence so consummate, or a policy so adroit; so that apart from the cruelty that he showed at the beginning of his reign, one may say that he has all the qualities necessary for reigning well. If he has no title for his succession to the Crown, he has the merit of a legitimate King. Thus one may say that all the happy success of his great enterprises is the result of his excellent conduct rather than of his good fortune. The inhabitants of *Patania* refused to pay him the homage that they had always been accustomed to render to the King of *Siam*. So, in order that they might not be able to find in their neighbourhood those who would strengthen them in their rebellion, or trouble the repose of the Kingdom by a foreign war, he sent at the beginning of his reign a solemn embassy to the Kings of *Athein* (Acheen) and *Arracan* in order to renew the treaties of alliance, friendship, and intercourse that his predecessors had always maintained with them, and made a treaty of peace with them. For although subsequent events have made it plain that this treaty is not to last, the King did not fail to make use of it in order to bring back the people of *Patania* to the obedience

that they owed to him. Being then secure on that side, he despatched in the year 1634 an army of 30,000 men, which he reinforced with a number of foreigners, Portuguese, half-castes, Japanese, Malays, etc., who were living in the Kingdom, and he furnished this army with elephants, horses, artillery, provisions and munitions necessary for a great undertaking. This army was commanded by four chiefs, to wit, by *Oya Ligoor*, *Oya Berckelangh*, *Oya Calahom*, and *Oya Rabasit* (Okya Ramasit), but their disputes, their want of experience of actual war and their bad conduct had the success that one should have expected from their disorder. Consequently, desiring to attack the enemy alone, without the foreigners and particularly without the Dutch, who were the best armed and disciplined, they met with so vigorous a resistance that they were compelled to retire. This obliged the King to raise a second army, which was so formidable that the Queen of *Patania*, availing herself of the mediation of the King of *Queda*, set about doing her duty and sent, in the year 1636, her ambassadors to the Court and had homage done in the customary form, this being accompanied by the usual acknowledgements in the shape of several flowers of gold and silver. After that, desiring to strengthen the repose of his Kingdom, to draw to it foreign commerce, and to obtain for himself and for his subjects freedom of trade and of sending their junks everywhere, the King made peace and alliances with all the Indian Princes and with all the Kings and States that are known in the Indies. And although he had expelled and maltreated the Japanese, he did not fail to make them come back some time after, or to send his ambassadors to Japan, in order to make a treaty with that powerful Emperor of a very considerable part of the Orient. That ambassador was the bearer of a letter written in characters of gold, and of several splendid presents. But inasmuch as he had not yet come back when I left *Iudia* two years ago, I can say nothing as to the success of his negotiations.

For a very long time the King of *Chiampa* (Champa) has also been a vassal of the Crown of Siam. And inasmuch as he refused to do homage in the time of *Pra Marit*, the Black King, about 50 years ago, that Prince entered his Kingdom with an army, conquered him in battle and compelled him to do homage. But as soon as that King, who was dreaded by his neighbours, was dead, the King of *Chiampa* refused to acknowledge the King of Siam. When the present King came to the throne he at once sent deputies, and among others

*Trackousa Tsibidi*, (Phra Kosa Thibodi), to the King of *Chiampa*. By them he had some presents made to the King of *Chiampa*, and had him reminded of his duty and invited to pay the homage that his predecessors had always rendered to the Kings of Siam. The King of *Chiampa* received the envoys very well, treated them magnificently and promised to send his people soon to *Iudia* there to do homage. These promises, however, remained unfulfilled and the King of Siam sent again, in the month of December following, the same *Trackhousa* with a pretty little present to the King of *Chiampa*, in order still to invite this Prince very gently to come and do his duty. But the success of this second embassy was not yet known when I left. This same King treated the Portuguese very badly, and kept them a long time miserably in prison at the commencement of his reign. But in the year 1636 he sent ambassadors to Malacca and Manila in order to renew the treaties of friendship with the Governors of those places, and in order to offer them peace, which, however, was only concluded in the year 1639, by the intervention of a Chinese ambassador of Macao. He sent also, at the beginning of his reign, ambassadors to the Kings of *Ava*, *Pegu*, and of *Lanchang* (*Lanchang*). By means of all these embassies and by the treaties that he thereby concluded, he assured peace with his neighbours and the repose of his Kingdom. The jealousy of these Kings of *Pegu* and of *Linghiangh* (*Lanchang*) is so great that they live in a state of continual distrust, and hold themselves on their guard, for fear of being attacked and surprised by the King of Siam. As a matter of fact there is little ground for such fear since the King of Siam, being anxious to secure the Crown for his family and for that purpose to gain the good will of his subjects, tries to ensure their living in peace and to enrich them by trade.

The King, having thus subdued the rebels and made peace with his neighbours, and being on the point of treating with the principality of *Patania*, had no longer anything to make him uneasy, except the presence of *Berckelangh* whom he had made *Oya Pouceloucq*. It was he who revealed to the King the design that the late King had of having him put to death, who risked his life so often to preserve that of the King when he was still *Oya Calahom*, and who by his courage, by his prudence and by his actions had been of the most use to him in the usurpation of Crown. In consequence his Majesty had solemnly promised him,



with the ceremonies that are customary among them, that on coming to the throne he would have him declared *Flyna* (Fai-na), that is to say, the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Siam. That promise he did not keep, however, for he declared his brother *Flyna*, or heir presumptive of the Crown, making *Berckelanch Oya Souarcolouq* (Okya Swankhalok) and then Governor of *Pouceloucq*. And although in the Kingdom of Siam the government of provinces is given only to sons of the King, or to Princes of the blood, *Berckelanch* was not content with that dignity; nor did he omit to murmur against the action of the King and to bewail his ingratitude. Addressing himself even to the King, he pressed him often on this subject, urging that it was to his valour that he (the King) chiefly owed the royal dignity. The King did not deny it, but the thing was no longer entirely in his hands; since he could not, to the prejudice of his own brother, be prevailed on to call *Pouceloucq* to the succession of the Crown, promising, however, to regard him as the person in all the world to whom he was most obliged, and to advance him to the highest positions in the Kingdom.

But after the victory of *Licoon*, (Nakhon Lampang) of which *Berckelanch* had all the honour, his reputation, his civility and his conduct began to be not only suspected, but even so formidable to the Prince, brother of the King, that by means of the King's grandmother, their common mother and some flatterers, the latter gained over the King. This he did so successfully that, without having regard to the powerful obligations he owed to *Pouceloucq* or to the oaths they had taken about three months before, His Majesty caused him to be taken by force, the soles of his feet to be roasted, and his whole body loaded with irons, and then threw him into a filthy prison under the guardianship of *Oya Iumerat*, (Okya Yomarat) his declared enemy. His house was pillaged, his slaves, horses and elephants were made a prey, and his valuables were borne to the Palace. The King went to these extremes chiefly because some Mathematicians and Astrologers had said that *Pouceloucq* had at the moment of his birth so favourable a star in the ascendant that it promised him nothing less than sovereign power and a royal crown. Consequently seeing him to have gained authority and to be powerful, rich and wise, the King began to fear and to hate him.

When *Pouceloucq* found himself in this position, some priests advised his son to go and throw himself at the feet of the King, and

to claim his pity. This young noble was only nine years old, and he did not fail to intercede for his father in terms which touched the King so powerfully that he formally promised the child to have his father freed from prison that very day and sent home. But the outcome did not bear out these high hopes. For when the child had withdrawn, the King, who had become warm by drinking, asked *Iumerat* what he would advise him to do with *Pouceloucq*. *Iumerat*, who sought only to rid himself of his enemy, said that a serpent that has been nourished and brought up by some one from its youth, will not fail to bite him if he treads on its tail. The King was so pleased with his reply that he at once ordered *Iumerat* to have *Pouceloucq* put to death. At that moment *Iumerat* left the presence of the King, desiring not to lose the opportunity of ridding himself of his enemy. Meeting in the ante-chamber the priests who were waiting the result of the promises that the King had made to the son, he deceived them by saying that they had only to withdraw to their homes, because the King had absolved *Oya Pouceloucq*, and was going to set him free from his prison. But causing *Pouceloucq* to be taken at once from his dungeon, for fear that the King should change his mind and save him on the prayer of the priests, *Iumerat* inflicted with his own hand a mortal wound, giving him a blow with a dagger in the right side. Seeing that he must die, *Pouceloucq* passionately inveighed against the ingratitude, the perfidy and the cruelty of the King who, being obliged to him for his life and his crown, was causing him to die when he was guiltless, contrary to the oath that he had solemnly renewed a few months since. He further said that death caused him no fear, but that his greatest regret was not to have drawn his sword when his authority and his friends could have given him reason to hope for the Crown. He wished to say more, but *Iumerat* had him conducted to the place of execution and his body cut in three pieces. The priests burned them and put the ashes with those of the Prince. The King has often regretted this death, but at the same time he has reduced the wife to slavery, and has never permitted the son of the deceased to be brought up at the Court among his pages, but on the contrary has suffered the lad's relatives to give him a bare wherewithal to live.

*Oya Iumerat*, the executioner of *Oya Pouceloucq*, was brought up in his youth with the King, by the Queen mother, but in a lowly enough position, and he rendered very considerable services to his

Majesty in the usurpation of the Crown. As a reward for these services the King made him *Oya Siery*, which is one of the first dignities of the Kingdom, and in this position he acquired a great reputation by his civility and by his liberality. In fact he thereby obtained the good-will of foreigners and Siamese alike to such a degree that the King began to be suspicious of his authority, but contented himself with fostering the jealousy that he saw between the nobles, and with curbing the authority of one by that of the other. At last *Oya Siery* was accused of having conspired against the State and against the person of the King. He having given a dinner at his house to three Oyas, three Operas and two Oloanghs, they were accused of having boasted that they had friends and partisans enough to treat the King in the same fashion as he had treated the two or three last Kings, his predecessors, and they were further accused of having promised to establish *Oya Siery* in the King's place. The King was warned of this and had him brought, together with all those who had dined with him, and examined them very closely. Then having reproached them with their treason, he mounted on an infuriated elephant with the intention of exposing them to the fury of that beast. It would have trampled them under foot but for the intercession of *Oya Pouceloucq*, who, representing to the King that he was putting his own life in danger, induced him to descend from the elephant; but it was only to seat himself on his throne and to command *Pouceloucq* to take *Siery* and his accomplices and put them to death with his own hand. Seeing the King in so great a passion and his own life in the utmost peril, *Siery* prayed *Pouceloucq* to save his life by his intercession. *Pouceloucq* spoke of it to the Queen mother and, some priests joining with her, together they obtained the pardon of the prisoners from the King. But the latter were shut up in a low den, and all the goods of *Siery* given to pillage. In order that the temple which the King had built and his arsenal might not be also looted in the disorder of the pillage, since they were near the house of *Siery*, the *Oyas Pouceloucq*, *Berckelangh* and *Pitterasia* (Phet Racha) got orders to have them guarded. In this matter *Pouceloucq* was unable to conceal the secret hatred that he bore to *Siery*, in that he had the threshold of the door of his house pulled down, saying that he would not enter the house by a door where the traitor had passed. After *Siery* had been a long time in prison, he vindicated himself as regards the crime of which he was accused by

the ordeal of fire. Consequently the King declared him innocent and caused to be restored to him his wives, his slaves, and what could be recovered of his property, making him *Oya Iumerat* the very day that *Oya Pouceloucq* was arrested and put under his guardianship. But *Iumerat* did not remember that he owed his life to his prisoner, and treated him in the manner that we have just related. This I have thought well to set forth in passing, in order to show the address of the King in using some to ruin others, for the purpose of ridding himself of those who would be able to repeat on his person what they had done for him against their legitimate Princes.

For the rest, in order to deprive the nobles, who might have such a wish, of every means of accomplishing it, the King has so curtailed the authority of the Mandarins, and reduced them to such subjection that there is not one who dares to dispense with going every day to Court and doing reverence to the King. Nor is it permitted to them any more to visit one another, or to speak when they meet, unless they do so aloud and in the presence of others, who can be witnesses as to what they say. Consequently by his severity the King deprives them of the means of conspiring against his person. He has a magnificent train and suite. All his ideas are vast. It is his pleasure to repair old buildings and to make new ones, but the Mandarins and the people are obliged to contribute to the cost, with the result that they are reduced to distress, which deprives them of the means of revolting. He changes so often the highest dignitaries of the Kingdom that there is not a noble who can be sure of what is his own, and the Governors of the Provinces and of the strongholds are obliged to remain in the town of *Iudia* and to be seen at Court every day, while their lieutenants discharge the duties of their posts. It is in this way that he secures his person and his throne, with the result that for several centuries there has not been a King in Siam who has been more dreaded than the present one.