

Maung Yin Maung and Ma Mè Ma is the first modern novel in Myanmar. Published in 1904, the author James Hla Gyaw adapted the first part of the book (only about one third of the whole) from Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo*, translated into English from the French.

In the second part, the Myanmar hero of the novel who is a true Buddhist, forgives all his enemies, who suffer bad fates because of their evil deeds. Unlike the vengeful Count obsessed with revenge Maung Yin Maung even forgives his mortal enemy. He is united in the end with his true love, Ma Mè Ma, whereas the Count abandoned his first love for marrying his friend turned foe.

James Hla Gyaw's historical novel set in Myanmar around late 1830s to mid 1840s is now superbly translated into English by Professor of History and Member of the Myanmar Historical Commission **U Tun Aung Chain**. It will undoubtedly become an excellent example of the few Myanmar novels available to the world in English.

U Thaw Kaung