

men are treated with great respect in that country, and are always addressed as *Athá* or "Father."¹

The Amír Kurtai is the greatest lord in China.² He offered us hospitality in his palace, and gave an entertainment such as those people call *Thuwai*,³ at which the dignitaries of the city were present. He had got Mahomedan cooks to kill the cattle and cook the dishes for us, and this lord, great as he was, carved the meats and helped us with his own hands! We were his guests for three days, and one day he sent his son to escort us in a trip on the canal. We got into a boat like a fire-ship,⁴ whilst the young lord got into another, taking singers and musicians with him. The singers sang songs in Chinese, Arabic, and Persian. The lord's son was a great admirer of the Persian songs, and there was one of these sung by them which he caused to be repeated several times, so that I got it by heart from their singing. This song had a pretty cadence in it, and thus it went:—

" *Tá dil ba mihnat dádím,*
Dar bahri-i fikr uftádím,
Chún dar namáz istádím,
Kawí bamihráb anderím."⁵

¹ See above, p. 118.

² I cannot identify this Prince in the translated Chinese histories. *Kurtai* is however a genuine Tartar name, and is found as the name of one of the Mongol generals in the preceding century (*D'Ohsson*, ii, 260).

³ *Thoï* or *Tuwi* is a word believed to be of Turki origin, used frequently by Rashid and other medieval Persian writers for a *feast* or *fête* (see *Quatremère's Rashideddin*, pp. 139-40, 164, 216, 414; see also a previous passage of *Ibn Batuta*, iii, 40).

⁴ *Harráqah*. "Navis incendiaria aut missilibus pyriis instructa" (*Freytag*). I do not understand what is meant by the comparison. It cannot refer to the blaze of light, because this was in the daytime. But perhaps Ibn Batuta applies the word only in the sense of some kind of state barge, for he uses the same title for the boat in which he saw the Il-Khan Abu Said with his Wazir taking an airing on the Tigris at Baghdad (ii, 116).

⁵ The "pretty cadence" is precisely that of—

" We wont go home till morning,
 We wont go home till morning,