

there was the boy, who got up and stood before us!¹ All this astonished me beyond measure, and I had an attack of palpitation like that which overcame me once before in the presence of the Sultan of India, when he showed me something of the same kind. They gave me a cordial, however, which cured the attack.² The Kazi Afkharuddin was next to me, and quoth he, "Walláh! 'tis my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending; 'tis all hocus pocus!"

The next day we entered the gate of the fifth city, which is the biggest of all the six, and is inhabited by the Chinese. It has splendid bazars and capital artificers, and it is there that they make the textures called *khansáwiyah*. Among the fine things made here also are the plates and dishes called *Dast*. They are composed of cane, the fibres of

¹ In a modern Indian version of this trick, which I lately heard described by an eye-witness, the boy was covered with a basket and desired to descend into the earth. On his refusal, the conjuror rushed at the basket and pierced it violently in all directions with a spear, whilst blood flowed from under it, and the boy's dying groans were heard. On removing the basket there was of course nothing to be seen, and presently the boy made his appearance running from the gate of the *compound* in which the performance took place. The vanishing *upwards* certainly renders Ibn Batuta's story much more wonderful. A like feature is found in some extraordinary Indian conjurors' tricks described by the Emperor Jihanghir in his memoirs.

² On the occasion referred to (iv, 39), Ibn Batuta, when visiting Mahomed Tughlak, finds two Jogis in the king's apartments, one of whom whilst sitting cross-legged rises in the air. His comrade then pulls out a shoe and raps on the ground with it. The shoe immediately mounts in the air to the neck of the elevated Jogi, and begins tapping him on the nape of the neck; as it taps he gradually subsides to the ground. The traveller, unused to such operations of "levitation" and spirit-rapping, faints away in the king's presence.

Ricold Montecroce ascribes such practices to the *Borità* (*Bakshis* or *Lamas*). One of them was said to fly. The fact was, says Ricold, that he did not fly, but he used to skim the ground without touching it, and when he seemed to be sitting down he was sitting upon nothing! (p. 117.)

A Brahman at Madras some forty or fifty years ago exhibited himself sitting in the air. In his case, I think, mechanical aids were discovered, but I cannot refer to the particulars.