

tion and repentance, and renewal of good resolutions. We addressed ourselves to God in prayer, and sought the mediation of the prophet (upon whom be peace!).

The merchants vowed to bestow alms in abundance, and I wrote their vows all down in a list with my own hand. The wind lulled a little, and when the sun rose we saw the mountain aloft in the air, and the clear sky between it and the sea.¹ We were in astonishment at this, and I observed that the sailors were weeping and bidding each other adieu, so I called out, "What is the matter?" They replied, "What we took for a mountain is the Rukkh! If it sees us it will send us to destruction." It was then some ten miles from the junk. But God Almighty was gracious unto us, and sent us a fair wind, which turned us from the direction in which the Rukkh was; so we did not see him (well enough) to take cognizance of his real shape.

Two months from that day we arrived at Java (Island of Sumatra), and landed at (the city of) Sumatra. We found the Sultan Malik-ul-Zahir had just returned from one of his campaigns, and had brought in with him many captives, out of whom he sent me two girls and two boys. He put me up as usual, and I was present at the marriage of his son to the daughter of his brother.

¹ Such an appearance is a well known effect of mirage, or abnormal refraction. As to the *Rukh* see Mr. Major's Introduction to *India in the 15th century*, p. xxxvi, seq., and a learned discourse in Ludolf's Comment. on his own *Historia Ethiopica*, pp. 163-164; also a cut from a Persian drawing in *Lane's Arabian Nights*, ii, 90. The most appropriate reference here however is perhaps to Pigafetta, who was told (possibly by descendants of Ibn Batuta's Malay crew) that in the sea of China *sotto Giava maggiore* there was a very great tree called *Campangunghi*, in which dwelt the birds called *garuda*, which were so big that they could fly away with a buffalo, or even with an elephant. No ship could approach the place within several leagues, on account of the vortices, etc. (*Primo Viaggio intorno del Mondo*, p. 174). *Garuda* is a term from the Hindu mythology for the great bird that carries Vishnu; its use among the Malays is a relic of their ancient religion, and perhaps indicates the origin of the stories of the *Rukh*. To an island of the Indian Sea also Kazwini attributes a bird of such enormous size, that, if dead, the half of its beak would serve for a ship (*Gildemeister*, p. 220).