

With strength of numbers and with a stake in the land the colonists set themselves to further the cause of Islam; and their efforts in this direction were strengthened by the fanatical crusaders who periodically appeared from over the border. Their bigot zeal increased. It bred iconoclasm and persecution, and these became the motive-power in bringing over multitudes to the standard of Mohammed.

The facts of history covering the period from the tenth to the seventeenth centuries bear out this statement. Mahmud of Ghazni (1001-1036 A. D.) is said to have copied Korans "for the health of his soul," but he also made at least sixteen campaigns in India, capturing cities and palaces and throwing down temples and idols, doubtless for the same reason. A story is told of two owls that wished long life to so diligent a creator of ruins. In 1200 A. D., when the Mohammedans became victorious in Bengal, their Viceroy first showed his authority by "the demolishing of temples and the building of mosques."¹ In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were forced conversions in Bengal, and Jallal ud din stands out a most uncompromising bigot and persecutor. The only conditions he offered were the Koran or death, and it is said that rather than submit to such terms many of the Hindus of Bengal fled to Kamrup in Assam and to the jungles of Cachar.

In the fifteenth century a regular officer was appointed in Gujerat to destroy the temples. All Hindus were branded on the arm and compelled to wear coloured garments. Failure to comply meant death.² The sixteenth

¹ The Viceroy, Bakhtyar Kiliji (1203 A. D.), mentioned in the Persian history, "Riyaz us Salatin."

² From *Mirat i Sikandari*, quoted in "The History of Gujerat," by Bayley, pp. 439-40.