

## THE JESUITS AND THE MOHAMMEDANS.

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VICTOR CHARBONNEL, well known to the world as the Abbé Charbonnel, who tried to convene a Parliament of Religion at Paris but failed and then left the Roman Church, publishes in a recent number of the *Revue des Revues* an interesting article on the origin of the Jesuit order in which he gathers good evidence that Loyola founded this most powerful Roman Catholic institution upon a Mohammedan pattern. That Loyola had many connexions with Mussulmans, both in Spain and Jerusalem, is well known, for he was even suspected of having a secret inclination for Islam, and had to justify his conduct before a court of inquisition.

The arguments upon which the Abbé Charbonnel bases his contention consist mainly in the similarity between Mohammedan religious societies and the regulations of the Jesuit order.

At the time of Loyola, we know of two Mohammedan religious societies in Spain—the Kadryas and the Kadelyas, the latter so called because they were founded by Sid Abdel Kader. The members of this congregation are called *Sufis*, or *Kuans*, i. e., brethren; they are subject to the *Uerd*, i. e., rule. They have a *Dikr*, i. e., common prayer, which must be repeated several thousand times a day, and serves them as a means of mutual recognition. They are absolutely subject to a *sheik*, who governs the whole congregation. They live in *Zanias*, i. e., monasteries, governed by *mokaddems*, or abbots.

The reception of a novice among the Kadryas consists in an apprenticeship of at least a year and a day, in which the novice learns by heart all the rules of the order, and practices the virtues which are expected of him. Thirty to forty days of perfect isolation are required, during which time the novice is not allowed to

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of Nov. 21, 1899.

speaking except with his superior. He must demand in writing what he needs, and is not allowed to take more nourishment than is absolutely necessary for the sustenance of life. The time of sleep is also limited, and is strictly submitted to rule. The novice's employment consists of prayers, meditations, and the reading of sacred books. Unless he be reading, the novice must "close his eyes to illumine his heart." In the same way the Jesuits expect a retirement of thirty to forty days, in which the first week is devoted to a purification of the soul. Light is permitted only for reading and eating. The novice is forbidden to laugh, and must speak to his superior only, who regulates his fasts and vigils. His meditations are limited to such subjects as death, hell, etc. The result of these spiritual exercises is the same both with the Kadryas and the Jesuits, a mental condition which prepares the mind for hallucinations.

The similarity between the rules of the two orders can be traced in detail. The regulations of the Kadryas prescribe: "If a novice is of a common nature, it is advisable to let him proceed by degrees, and only easy prayers should be imposed upon him." The Jesuit rule reads: "If the leader of exercises notices that his disciple shows only inferior natural faculties, it is advisable to impress upon him only lighter exercises."

The same regulations exist among both the Mohammedans and the Jesuits for the repetition of some definite prayers. Even the attitude in prayer is prescribed. The Mussulman Kuan must "raise his eyes in praying, and gaze at one single definite point without swerving"—a method which was known to the Arabians as the best way of self-hypnotisation. The same is literally prescribed for the Jesuit exercises. The Kuans pray in cadences, utilising inspiration and expiration, and pronouncing some sacred word while breathing, then devoting the time of exhaling to meditation thereon. Between the various acts of breathing, no more than one single word must be uttered. In the same way the Jesuits know in their prayers one method which is called "the third way of praying;" and is praying according to the rhythm of breathing as prescribed in the regulations of the Kadryas. And it is stated in the latter that a truly faithful Kuan "will see, and hear, and feel, and smell, and taste" the object of his meditations. These words remind the reader of one of the Jesuit exercises in which it is said that "Hell shall be meditated upon from the point of view of the five senses: first, I see with the eyes of imagination the enormous flames and the souls of the condemned entirely surrounded with

fire; secondly, I hear with the aid of imagination the shouts and cries and blasphemies of the condemned against Jesus Christ and his saints; thirdly, I imagine that I breathe the fumes of sulphur and the odor of the pit or of fetid matter; fourthly, I imagine I see bitterness, tears, sadness, the gnawing worm of conscience; and fifthly, I touch the flames of vengeance and imagine vividly how the souls of the condemned burn."

The Kuans pass through various forms of perfection, and their books say that there are four methods of immersion in God. There are seven signs of true penitence; forty ways of the truly faithful to God; sixty-four ways of becoming estranged from orthodoxy; five prayers of the prophet or rules of orthodoxy. In the book of Jesuit exercises, we read: "There are four rules to make a good choice; three ways of prayer; eight rules to distinguish between good and evil angels; three degrees of humility; eighteen rules of orthodoxy. The Kuans are subject to five probations: first, to serve the poor; secondly, a pilgrimage to the tomb of the prophet or of their founder; thirdly, to serve for one thousand and one days as a menial or day laborer; fourthly, to explain the Koran to the people; and fifthly, to preach with solemnity. The Jesuits have exactly the same probations: to serve for a month some poor patient; to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem or some other holy place; to serve as a menial in the monastery; to educate children and country folks in the rules of Christianity; and to practice the great sermon. Obviously, the parallelism is complete.

The inner organisation exhibits the same similarity. The old Christian orders are based upon the principle of brotherhood. The law is the same for all. A novice, once received, is a member of the order, and has a right to elect his superior, and can be elected himself. Mussulman societies, however, are graded by hierarchical degrees and dignities, and the brethren are despotically and arbitrarily governed, while the whole organisation and its activity remains secret. This is one of the main characteristics of the Jesuits, who in addition possess exactly as do the Kuans lay members devoted to carrying out, and mostly in secret, the political commands of their superiors. All these features are too similar not to be derived from Mohammedanism, and are utterly unknown in more ancient Christian orders.

The authority of the superiors is absolute among the Jesuits as well as among the Kuans. The sheik can use his authority as it pleases him, and no one is permitted to object. This also is the rule of the Jesuit order. "The general can act just as it pleases

him ; one is bound to obey and to respect him as the vicar of Jesus Christ." The entire congregation of the Jesuits convenes only once, after the death of a general for the selection of a successor. The general is "the rule incarnate" of the society ; "he alone applies it, he alone can abrogate it." The Kuans allow their sheik to dispose of all the property and possessions of their order. It is the same with the Jesuits. The eighth general congregation has specially declared that he has the right to alter "the intentions of the benefactors, to retain their donations without complying with the conditions under which they were given, whenever he deems them too burdensome upon the society, and whenever it may be done without causing offence or without alienating the benefactors, if still alive." (Degree 41.)

The Kuans are pledged to absolute obedience and must see in their superior the beloved man of God. They are not permitted to reason for themselves.

The Jesuits demand in the same way the renunciation of the judgment of their members, and a suppression of their reason. In his relation to his superiors every single Jesuit should be, as the formulation declares, "Forthwith as a corpse (*perinde ac cadaver*)"; and it is strange that this very word, so characteristic of the Jesuit order, is found in the Moslem book of rules, which is older than Loyola's "Exercises." We read in Rinn's "Marabuts and Kuans" that the book of rules of the sheik Si Soossi declares : "Thou shalt be in the hands of thy sheik as a corpse in the hands of an undertaker (literally 'a washer of corpses')." In the "Exercises" we read : "Those who live in obedience must allow themselves to be guided by their superiors, as a corpse would allow himself to be turned and twisted in all directions." Even the famous motto of the Jesuits, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*, appears to be of Mohammedan origin.

According to the Abbé Charbonnel, the spirit and the aim of the Kuans and the Jesuits are the same. The spirit of these organisations is an absolute theocracy, the aim a spiritual government over all wordly affairs. A specialty of the Kuans is their method of assassination and the disposing of adversaries through the murderer's dagger. Charbonnel abstains from drawing further parallels, saying : "We do not mean to make odious comparisons, but we should in this place consider that the Jesuits have frequently justified political assassination." And he adds that this is one of the points which led to the expulsion of the Jesuits in almost all

the states of Europe, and caused Pope Clement XVIII. to abolish the order.

The salient results according to Charbonnel, are the same in both societies,—the Mohammedan Kuans and the Christian Jesuits. He says: “Wherever among the nations Kuanism or Jesuitism penetrated races, political parties, and religions, wherever their spirit was impressed upon them, we find the same corruption, the same fettering of all energy, the same shadows of death. The whole Orient is dead, Uruguay and Paraguay are dead, the republics of South America are dead; Cuba and the Philippines are taken away, otherwise they would be dead too; Spain is dead. All these countries were the possessions of the Sufis or the Kuans, of the clergy and the monks. The dreary work of the sheiks and of the monastic generals has been complemented everywhere through the assistance of real soldiers!

Abbé Charbonnel claims that he abstains from giving his own opinions on the subject, and only allows facts of history to speak. The book appears at an important juncture of events, for the battle between Jesuitism and republicanism is at present at its height, and no one can foretell what the final result of the struggle will be.