

MARIE LOUISE A MONK

TEACHES IDEALISTIC, THEISTIC PHILOSOPHY IN BROOKLYN.

Strange Career of a Former Parisienne, Who Believes in Reincarnation, and Recognizes Only the Universe of Spirit—Speaks of "Christ the Man," and Says All Suffer Purgation in This Life—Views on Woman Suffrage.

There is an elderly woman living in Brooklyn who is known as the Swami Abahayananda of the order of Sanyasin monks of India. Swami means monk, Abahaya means fearless, and nanda means bliss. The literal interpretation of her name is, therefore, the "Monk of Fearless Bliss."

A reporter for THE NEW-YORK TIMES interviewed the Swami at her home, 35 St. Felix Street, yesterday. She wore an ordinary dress of rough material, but when she goes out to lecture she wears a long yellow gown. The yellow is emblematic of the sun.

"I became a monk last July," the Swami said. "I was initiated at the Thousand Islands Park, by Swami Vivekananda, a Hindu monk. At that time I renounced the world and forgot the past. My theory now is that I was born. We are not supposed to live in this world, or to recollect anything. The new life is altogether different from the old. We recognize neither sex, nationality, nor anything else worldly. We recognize only the universe of spirit. The Supreme Being is sexless, and we speak of him as 'It.'"

"The order to which I belong is Hindu. It is monastic in character. We teach the Vedantic philosophy, which differs from the Buddhistic in that it is idealistic, theistic, while the Buddhistic is materialistic, atheistic. It is founded on the great school of thought taught by Sankaracharya and the Upanishads of the East.

"Sankaracharya lived in the seventh century of the Christian era. He was born about seventy years after the death of Buddha. Buddhists assert that he was the reincarnation of Buddha, because he was only sixteen years old when he wrote his great commentary, which is still recognized as the ablest theological work ever written. We also believe this, because no child could have evolved such a masterpiece, and our belief in reincarnation is based upon that circumstance.

"We believe that every religion is right, and that every man's religion is the best for him, but that there is something higher which we offer to those who comprehend.

"I teach four classes of philosophy—the Karma Loga, which is the philosophy of actions; the Bhakti Loga, the philosophy of devotion and love; the Rajah Loga, the physiological and psychological man, and the Gnana Loga, or philosophy.

"I teach at home three times a week, and at the houses of pupils whenever required, and lecture every Sunday. I have a great many pupils, mostly women. No fee is charged for my teaching, for ours is a mendicant order, and I live on what my pupils are pleased to give me. If I were in India I would carry a cup to receive the offerings of the public, but that would not be permitted here, so I have a small basket in my room, into which those who wish may drop money for me. Sometimes I have enough to eat, and sometimes I have not, but it does not matter. I take things as they come, and am thankful.

"I teach Christ the man. All men are Christs, and are crucified on the cross of life."

The Swami permitted herself to think for a moment of the years before she became a monk.

"I was born in Paris," she said, "and my name was Marie Louise. My last name? I never told any one that, and it was not necessary, for I was known as Marie Louise only. I became interested in Vedantic philosophy twenty-five years ago through reading Walt Whitman's 'Leaves of Grass,' which is the Vedanta of the West."

On a blackboard were written the "Three Degrees," which are as follows:

When I think I am the body I am Thy servant.

When I think I am the mind, I am a part of Thee.

When I think of the Atman, I and Thou art one.

The reporter asked the Swami what were her views regarding woman's suffrage.

"The woman suffragists," she replied, "are children playing with dolls, but if men vote, then women have a right to vote on the theory of right; but on the plane of love they have no right to vote. A 'right' implies brute force and power. A King has a 'right' to behead half of his subjects if he chooses, if the subjects cannot preserve their 'right' to live. It is the 'right' of brutes. My ideal of government is no government at all. Men should revert to their original nature, which is not animal, but divine, in which all are truly equal, and where all are equal who is to rule over the other? There is but one real ruler—the Supreme Being."

The Swami said she was the first initiated in the Western World. There are but two others in America. The second is Swami Kripananda, or Merciful Bliss. He was formerly an art critic on a leading New-York daily newspaper. The third is Yogananda, or Joining Bliss, who was a teacher in Brooklyn. Each member of the order is independent of all others.

Death Messenger Asked to Resign.

The Commissioners of Charities yesterday asked for the resignation of John Maloney, who has been the death messenger at the Morgue for several years. His successor has not been appointed. The Commissioners say that Maloney has been procuring trade for his brother, an undertaker.

Patrick Donnelley, stableman at Bellevue Hospital, has been suspended by the Commissioners, pending an investigation.