



The Order of the Golden Age



From The Christian Commonwealth of May 12, 1909:

A NEW CRUSADE.

By Edgar J. Saxon.

Forward movement of The Order of the Golden Age.

Many people to-day think there are far too many Societies for this and Associations for that; it is asserted that ideals are hidden in a cloud of organisation; that over-lapping and consequent waste of effort takes place; and that one enthusiast is worth half-a-dozen associates. Now it is, of course, a truism that a Movement can lose its soul in the machinery; it is also obvious that over-lapping is one of the dangers of associated effort; and no one denies the value of enthusiasm. But these criticisms are entirely outweighed by other considerations. First, that a Movement must have some sort of machinery in this world; second, what human thing has not its dangers; third, that twenty or a hundred enthusiasts are stronger when united than when isolated. Associated effort is after all a better risk, a safer risk, than individual effort. The possible wastage through over-lapping is more than counter-balanced by the intensification resulting from combination. And to bring it down to the simplest possible issue it is better that a dozen similar Societies should make us open our eyes than that we should remain blind.

We should, therefore, welcome the fact that there are a number of Societies in this country all having for their aim the reform of our eating habits. One of the most active and progressive of these is known as the Order of the Golden Age. This Society has been established for some years at Paignton, South Devon, and even in that isolated position has succeeded in winning an extensive following, having enrolled members and voluntary workers in forty-seven countries. It has now, opened a bureau in London, which is intended to be the centre of a thoroughly aggressive and educative Movement. The Order of the Golden Age has from the first avoided the use of the word "vegetarianism" for various reasons, the chief one being that in the popular mind the word suggested a diet of vegetables. It has adopted instead the word "fruitarianism," which, while also somewhat misleading, at least has a more attractive sound. The Order advocates fruitarianism not only or chiefly on hygienic grounds, but principally and fundamentally for humane reasons. The President claims that they have raised vegetarianism out of the realm of faddists and cranks, and made it an ideal. Meat-eating is deprecated on the ground that it is the direct cause of a large percentage of human disease and pain, besides involving an immense amount of needless animal suffering. The Order asserts that a reformation of the diet of Christendom will not only greatly mitigate or remove many of our social evils, such as physical deterioration, intemperance (the cause of so much poverty and crime), and the prevalence of many painful maladies, but will also tend to promote humane sentiment as materially to lessen cruelty in every form. In addition to these benefits which fruitarianism is expected to bring to the community it claims that it tends to promote longevity, to minimise the necessity for surgical operations, to increase stamina, endurance, and mental alertness, to clarify spiritual vision, and to render more subservient to the dictates of man's higher self the lower physical propensities. It is the aim of the Order to educate the English-speaking races up to these ideals, and posters, pamphlets, lectures, and press agitation will all be employed to that end.



A Press reception was given by the Order at their new London offices on April 29, at which I was present. A beautiful suite of rooms it is, and the photograph reproduced on this page gives but a meagre idea of the taste and artistic workmanship that have been exercised throughout, both in the decoration and in the furniture. Oak panelling covers all the walls, the polished floor is partially covered with large Oriental rugs, and there is a general feeling of refinement and culture pervading every room.

To the assembled representatives of the London Press the president, Mr. Sidney Beard, explained the work of the Order. Briefly, pithily, and with admirable restraint he touched upon the chief points of the Movement. He stated that upwards of one million books and pamphlets have already been issued by the Order, that its output of literature is rapidly increasing, that leaders of thought - especially journalists and physicians - in all parts of the world are now exalting the ideal of a humane and hygienic life as being possible and desirable for everyone, and that he confidently anticipates that before many decades the flesh-eating habit, with all that it involves, will be condemned by the conscience of Christendom and abandoned by all truly cultured and thoughtful persons. Amongst other points emphasised were the following: - (1) that man's physical structure clearly demonstrates that he is a frugivorous, fruit-eating creature - which is admitted by all eminent naturalists and anatomists; (2) that the sacred scriptures of nearly all religions confirm this fact; (3) that flesh-food is very frequently diseased and infected by germs or parasites which are communicable, and which cause many distressing maladies, and that in all cases it is impregnated with waste products and uric acid; (4) that "fruitarian" food, which includes nuts and their products, cereals, fresh and dried fruits, vegetables, legumes (and can be supplemented by milk, honey, cheese, and eggs), is first-hand material, vitally potent, virtually free from germs or excrementitious matter, and superior in nutritive value to the flesh of animals; (5) that the prolonged experience of those who have lived on "fruitarian" food abundantly confirms its health-giving qualities, and that many of the world's long-distance athletic records are held by fruitarians; (6) that it would be almost impossible to discover a fruitarian drunkard, and that the most difficult cases of dipsomania are now cured in the inebriate homes of the Salvation Army by this means; (7) that the advantages and remedial effects of "fruitarianism" have been proclaimed by a large number of the world's greatest philosophers, reformers, religious leaders, and men of genius.

These statements were corroborated by Dr. Robert Bell, late senior physician of the Glasgow Hospital for Women, and by Dr. Josiah Oldfield, senior physician of the Lady Margaret Hospital, Bromley, and by others. Dr. Bell's speech was extremely interesting, and his remarks on the subject of Cancer, in the treatment of which he is a specialist, evidently made an impression on his listeners. He declared with great earnestness that if the people of this country were to adopt a simple fruitarian dietary, in the course of two generations cancer would be unknown. "Cancer is the easiest thing in the world to prevent," he said, "but the hardest thing in the world to cure."

The Order of the Golden Age invite the public to visit their offices (153, 155 Brompton Road, London, S. W.), which are about three minutes' walk from Brompton Road Tube Station and a few yards west of Harrod's Stores, where gratuitous information and advice can always be obtained from the hon. secretaries; and many

useful books are on sale, the profit from which (if any) invariably goes to the extension of the work. The official magazine, entitled "The Herald of the Golden Age," is issued quarterly, price 3d., and amongst the instructive books published are "A Comprehensive Guide to Fruitarian Diet" (price 1s.), "The Testimony of Science in Favour of Natural and Hygienic Diet" (price 1d.), and the "Penny Guide to Fruitarian Dietary."

Readers of THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH should give their full sympathy to this Movement, for, as I have frequently said in these columns, it is vitally connected with, if not at the very root of, all true social reform.