



The Order of the Golden Age



The Faith We Need.

By Sidney H. Beard.
(Herald of the Golden Age – August 1901)

In the hour of difficulty and trial, when circumstances seem to combine to make us haul down our colours and give up hope of reaching those 'higher things' towards which we have stretched our hands, Faith is our supremest need. Infinite is the sum of happiness which the world has forfeited through lack of Knowledge; infinite also is the misery that the same want has caused. But lack of Faith rivals ignorance as a paralysing force and robs millions of souls of that inheritance of blessedness which it is their privilege to win and make their own.

Faith is not unreasoning credulity, nor is it confined to religious beliefs. It is, next to Love, the greatest of all human faculties, and without it human beings are weaklings. It is essential for the statesman, the merchant, and the soldier, and still more essential *for the Reformer*. Its possession in large measure will transform the humblest man or woman into a force that has to be reckoned with, for those who have it abundantly are, most frequently, endued *with power*, and win their way to whatever end they have in view.

As I look around me in the world, I see on every hand men and women who are suffering in body or feeble at heart because this great energising force lies undeveloped within them. Invalids who are bedridden because they have not faith to rise and walk—yet with no real disease other than the mental one of fancied impotence. Afflicted ones, who by magnifying the power of some malady which has developed in their poor human frames, and by minifying the potency of that Life-force within them which built their bodies from the dust of the earth, are paralysed into meek acquiescence with then-sickness and feebleness. Faltering ones who have embraced some lofty ideal and stepped out upon the waters which the worldlings cannot tread, and who have become daunted because the waves of difficulty have risen high around them.

Whichever way I turn, such are to be seen, and one can hear the despairing cry within their hearts " Lord save me, or I perish." But, just as in the olden days, the Christ-voice might be heard by them—if their ears were not so slow to respond to the vibrations of the spiritual ether—saying : " O thou of little faith wherefore dost thou doubt ? "

Has not the Lord of Life, whose offspring we are, a sufficient store of vitality for us to draw upon ? Is it not being lavishly manifested and expressed in every field and forest, in the, sea and in the sky? If "all things" are *ours*, because of our divine birthright, need we languish in poverty and weakness; should we not try to *help ourselves*, and trust in God to further our effort ?

The Scriptures are full of promises concerning 'strength renewed' and ' saving health ' and ' wings like those of the eagle ' and ' feet that can run unwearied.' Such are the rightful portion of the Children of God—not surgical operations, incurable maladies, and incapacity in general.

And if ' all things are possible to him that believeth,' may we not win our way to better conditions by the exercise of Faith? For this power waxes stronger through exercise—like our sinews and muscles.

Have we done all that we could to obtain this uplifting force which is based upon knowledge of physical and spiritual law— upon wisdom concerning things human and divine? Have we sought out the causes of those evils, and difficulties, and weaknesses, which surround us and rob us of our peace ?

For every effect there is a cause!

I often meet with backsliding humanitarians who have closed their eyes to the vision of the distant hills of the promised land, and who have returned to Egypt and its flesh-pots, simply because they have been too

apathetic to learn how to provide themselves adequately with pure and humane food, such as God intended for the sustenance of spiritual beings made in His own image. And thus they have fallen back to that plane where the vision of the soul is beclouded by carnal diet.

"And I have seen the divine call to high and noble service, and to self-sacrifice for the sake of God and humanity, come to human souls who truly aspire to the divine life. But for lack of Faith there has been that holding back, that fear of consequences, which I, as a brother man, so well understand, and with which I can so truly sympathize. And the prophetic mantle, which might have been bestowed as the gift of heaven, has been withheld, because there was not strength enough to bear the weight of its sacred folds. Alas for us all! Well may we pray "Lord, increase our Faith ! "

But let us remind ourselves that we *can* achieve, ultimately, that to which we aspire. Aspiration is the prophetic shadow of a coming event cast by the prescience of the Higher self within. The words, " Ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done," were not spoken to sincere aspirants after the overcoming life in order to mock them or to raise false hopes. Let us then try to believe in the Power that waits to bless us, and in our own inherent capacity to rise to the highest.

We may be sorely handicapped in our present incarnation, but the eternal future is ours, for we are immortal. As our bodies are changed, let us strive to make that change such as shall secure us better opportunity.

If our Faith is weak we can strengthen it by using it. We can make the effort to achieve that which we have hitherto not dared to attempt—whether it be to speak in public, or to write, or to strengthen somebody who is weak, or to re-form our bodies for the better by our thought forces, or to lead some misguided person into the upward path. If we resolutely say *I can ! I will!* we shall soon both *dare* and *do*. And " according to our Faith " it shall be done unto us.

Let us have Faith in our Ideals ! The Cause that is founded upon Truth and Love and Righteousness will assuredly triumph. Though the worldlings mock, and the weaklings backslide, and the enemies of progress strive to thwart the efforts of such as labour to promote the world's betterment, the day will dawn when the Gospel of Humaneness shall have won its way to victory.

The dark forces of cruelty and violence will ultimately be beaten back, and this Earth upon which we tread, will, through human instrumentality and the Divine overshadowing, become the abode of beings who are harmless and undefiled. Then, and not till then, shall *spirituality* supplant carnality and materialism.

By Faith will this stupendous work be wrought—Faith on the part of clear-seeing and spiritually-minded men in the accomplishment of the Father's purpose that divinity shall become universally manifest in humanity, and the Redemption of the World an accomplished fact.

For this consummation it is our privilege to believe, to labour, and to make sacrifice. Amidst the doubt that prevails throughout Christendom, and the despairing apathy which is so much in evidence around us, let us exalt this ideal, and shew forth our faith in its ultimate realisation *by our works*.

" Men whom God hath made fit for the fray !
Not yours to shrink, as the feeble ones may.
Not yours to parley, and quibble, and shirk.
Ill for the world, if ye do not God's work.
Move to the fore !

" Say not another is fitter than thou—
Shame to the manhood that sits on thy brow!
Own thyself equal to all that man may.
Cease thy evading, God needs thee to-day.
Move to the fore!

" God Himself waits, and must wait, till thou come.
Men are God's prophets, though ages lie dumb.
Halts the Christ-kingdom, with conquest so near?
Thou art the cause, thou man at the rear.
Move to the fore ! "