



# The Order of the Golden Age



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## Fruitarian Diet

A Progressive Movement

Those whose privilege it was to visit the monastery of La Grand Chartreuse before the suppression of that world-famous institution, must have been forcibly impressed by many of the characteristics of its inhabitants. To put aside all considerations of the motives and principles which actuated the mode of life adopted by the ascetics who produced the wonderful and inimitable liqueur which bears their name, the powerful physique and robust appearance of every member of the order was quite remarkable. Yet everyone marvelled at the mere fact that these men could bear the strain of an arduous day's work with both physical and mental labour, and the minimum of rest, with no apparent signs of fatigue. For their diet consisted of the simplest and plainest of fare. They were, in a word, vegetarians, or, to use a more modern and comprehensive phrase, fruitarians. The Carthusian monks lived on the products of Nature - fruit, vegetables, cereals, milk, cheese, and such like fare comprising their daily menu. Yet they were men of Herculean strength, clear of intellect, of lovable dispositions, working long hours, and enduring more than an average share of strain, partaking only of this simplest form of diet. Visitors who were eye-witnesses of their rule of life, and others who read about them, wondered alike as to what superhuman gifts they possessed to enable them to exist under such apparently impossible conditions.

Popular ideas, up to within a comparatively short time ago, led to the belief that a certain amount of flesh diet was indispensable, and that without it men must be content to die. How those austere monks managed to exist on a diet which excluded meat remained a mystery, and, truth to tell, the statement was openly discredited in many quarters. But now-a-days we may exclaim with Molière, "Nous avons changé tout cela," for there are within our midst not hundreds but thousands, who rigidly exclude all forms of butchered food, and who avow that instead of feeling weaker on that account, they are quite robust, and enjoy the pleasures of life in a more intense manner than before their adoption of the veritable "simple life."

Vegetarianism was at one time looked upon as a fad of the worst and most bigoted type, but the day has come when it is accorded more serious consideration and has a greater number of followers than even the most optimistic adherent of the Cause could have dreamt of twenty years ago. Extremists are as a rule so uncompromising in their views as to merit but scant attention, yet the surprising feature of the rigid Fruitarian Movement is its extraordinary progress and the number of educated and cultured people who have openly joined its ranks. Furthermore, every simple and natural dietist is an enthusiast, and anxious to bring others into the fold. There must, indeed, be something pleasing and attractive about a mode of life which so fascinates its devotees that their labours to enlist others as followers are unceasing.

There could be no more opportune time of the year than the present to consider the value of fruit, vegetables, and cereals as food. Now is the time when the butcher's shop is - to put it mildly - unattractive; and the fishmonger's is far from aromatic; but the fruiterer's is, indeed, a place where one would willingly linger and feast, not only the palate, but the eye and sense of smell. Variety in profusion is now to be seen at the establishments of those who retail the fruits of the season, nor is there any need for their wares to be secluded from view owing to the hot weather. In fact, the hotter the weather the more welcome is the sight of fruit. Its very name is derived from a Latin root conveying the idea of enjoyment, and the presence of fruit, whether at

table or elsewhere, is always suggestive of merry moments. Nut, grapes, and the ever-popular strawberry are usually taken when we are in the most joyous of moods.

Much can be learnt from a body of fruitarians who have styled themselves "The Order of the Golden Age," and who openly avow their detestation of all the products of the slaughter house. Without a doubt these people are extreme in their views, but those who do not wish to adopt them in their entirety can learn many a useful lesson from the literature to be obtained at their Offices in the Brompton-road.

If for no other purpose than that of variation, a knowledge of vegetarian and fruitarian cookery is most desirable in this country. The neglect of vegetables in the average English household is of long standing, and it is quite time that a few valuable hints should be adopted. These can be found in a handy little book by Mr. Sidney H. Beard, which is, as its title explains, a Guide-Book to natural, hygienic, and humane diet. One cannot scan its pages without admitting the utility of the work, if only for the recipes contained therein, although the reasons urged for this class of diet will not meet with universal acceptance. An enthusiast is Mr. Beard, who for the love of the Cause, and apart from all motives of gain has devoted many years of his life to the advancement of the Fruitarian Movement. . .

In this guide-book there are many simple and palatable recipes for breakfast dishes, and a special "bloodless" menu for Christmas. From these the discriminating reader can select pleasing variants, which are undoubtedly acceptable in warm weather. Even the most devoted adherent of our ordinary method of living will be disposed to admit that the introduction of a much larger share of fruit and vegetables in our national dietary would be beneficial. We do not appreciate sufficiently the value of apples, oranges, grapes, nuts, and such like food, which are frequently looked upon as a fitting conclusion to a meat meal. All of these could be used more freely than is the custom at present, and with decided benefit to health.

Fruit luncheons are now becoming both popular and fashionable, and it is a distinct sign of the times that in some of our leading Restaurants and shopping centres a special feature is made of fruitarian meals. Quite a number of distinguished members of the medical profession are in favour of the inclusion of a larger share of fruit and vegetables in our daily meals, while there are not a few avowed vegetarians. Whether this Movement be eccentric or exaggerated there can be no doubt as to its increasing popularity, and the gratitude of all cultivators of the land is certainly due to the promoters of food reform.