

THE DISCIPLES

*To Lionel Engers-Kennedy: to the memory of Hargrave Jennings: and
to A. C. W. G. and H. E. H.*

BENEATH the vine tree and the fig
Where mortal cares may not intrude,
On melon and on sucking pig
Although their brains are bright and big
Banquet the Great White Brotherhood.

Among the fountains and the trees
That fringed his garden's glowing border,
At sunset walked, and, in the breeze
With his disciples, took his ease
An Adept of the Holy Order.

"My children," said the holy man,
"Once more I'm willing to unmask me.
This is my birthday; and my plan
Is to bestow on you (I can)
Whatever favour you may ask me."

Nor curiosity nor greed
Brought these disciples to disaster;
For, being very wise indeed,
The adolescents all agreed
To ask His Secret of the Master.

With the *aplomb* and *savior faire*
Peculiar to Eastern races,
He took the secret then and there
(What, is not lawful to declare),
And thrust it rudely in their faces.

"A filthy insult!" screamed the first;
The second smiled, Ingenious blind!"
The youngest neither blessed nor cursed,
Contented to believe the worst—
That He had spoken all his mind!

The second earned the name of prig,
The first the epithet of prude;
The third, as merry as a grig,
On melon and on suckling pig
Feasts with the Great White Brotherhood.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.