PERHAPS it is not accidental that two books on Chinese art have appeared almost simultaneously in absolute independence of each other. One is written by Friedrich Hirth, the other one by Herbert A. Giles, both professors of Chinese, the former at Columbia University in New York, the latter at the University of Cambridge, England. Our interest in the Chinese is growing, and we begin to appreciate that Asia has developed a civilization different from our own, yet after all worthy of the name, and scholars will find there a rich mine for the study of comparative religion, comparative art, comparative ethics and all other branches of human culture.

In spite of the enormous work that has been done by isolated pioneers in the line of art, our general knowledge of the field is still in its infancy. For these reasons each of the two authorities in an unconscious agreement regards his labors as preliminary to a real history of Chinese pictorial art. Giles calls his an "Introduction" and Hirth, Scraps from a Collector's Note Book.

It is interesting to notice how both workers in the same field supplement each other. Hirth appreciates the time of the Ming dynasty with which he seems most specially acquainted, while Giles regards that period as an age of decay. The history of Chinese art will certainly be benefited by this division of labor.

Both works are illustrated and give us a fair insight into the character of the different Chinese artists.

We reproduce here a picture, purporting to be Tsiang T'ing-si's phenix, and it is dated A.D. 1688. Tsiang T'ing-si was born near Soochow in 1669 and died in 1732 in a high official position, and during his active life was in charge of the publication of several

large works on government institutions and a large cyclopedia of five thousand volumes. Professor Hirth's picture, however, though made by a genuine artist, is probably not the original painting, but a forgery. Professor Hirth says:

"It was partly by his pictures that, after his promotion, he made

friends in the Imperial palace. Genuine paintings by Tsiang T’ing-si are said to be exceedingly rare, but being great favorites among amateurs, they were much imitated and forged. Two well-known artists are specially named as having successfully palmed off their own as Tsiang T’ing-si's work, Ma Fu-hi, father and son, i.e., Ma
Yuán-yü, the talented disciple of Yün Shóu-p'íng, and his son Ma I. Both are said to have imitated those rare originals in such a manner that even connoisseurs would not easily discover the fraud. It seems, however, that in this case the forger must be a greater artist than the original painter himself. Ts'iang Ki-si, T'íng-si's sister, had studied Yün Shóu-p'íng's manner apparently under the tutorship of Ma Yuán-yü. One of the scrolls in my collection, representing a phenix, bears T'íng-si's name and seal, and is dated 1688, purporting to reproduce the style of the Yuán dynasty. The date belongs to a period long before the time when the artist had made his name; indeed he must have drawn it as a boy of nineteen, if it is not one of the well-known forgeries. Such tricks, as we see from this account, have been played even by men of solid reputation, whose names would have been good enough without their taking resort to dishonesty, if indeed the Chinese way of looking at it would stamp it as such. The picture market abounds with false seals and signatures, and he who falls in love with a Chinese painting should do so for no other reason but because he really likes it; the artist's name and his seal are scarcely worth more than the dealer's label pasted on the outer end of the scroll, and certainly less than the trade-mark on a wine-bottle. Chinese law has no punishment in store for the forgers of such works of art, and the only sympathy the native public will show with the victim is a laugh. Great artists are, of course, those whose names are mostly seen on such pictures."

Another painting which in the original exhibits very dainty colors is made by Hwang Hau and dated 1811. It represents K'in Kau, the hero of a Chinese fairy tale, riding on a red carp. Says Professor Hirth (p. 45):

"A short inscription in running hand characters, written by the artist himself, tells us what we read about K'in Kau in an old fairy book, the Lié-siën-chuan. The man's name 'K'in' means a 'lute,' and since he is an entirely legendary personage, it does not matter much whether his being described in the fairy book as a virtuoso on the lute is an allusion to his name, or whether the name was invented on account of his musical talent, which had caused a king in remote antiquity to take him into his service. K'in Kau's special fad was the art of living in water, in which respect he finds his equal in the heroes of some old Italian legends, and so he disappeared some day to be seen no more. For he traveled about in the rivers of his province, when, about two hundred years after his disappearance, his return was announced to his amazed relatives who had built a little temple by the riverside to receive him. Huang
Han's picture represents him as riding on a red carp, carrying a sword and a sun hat on his back."

Professor Giles has given more attention to the ancient schools from the Han dynasty to the Ming. From his book we reproduce an ancient Taoist legend, which on account of its oddity is apt to strike us as a queer combination of the humorous and profound. T'ieh Kwai Sien-sheng² is one of the legendary Taoist patriarchs who devoted himself wholly to the study of occult lore. We learn that he received his instruction from Lao Tze himself who for this purpose sometimes visited him on earth and sometimes summoned him to appear in his celestial abode. He accomplished this feat by breathing out his spiritual essence which returned to the body after having received its lesson at the feet of the immortal sage. On one

² Mayers, C. R. M., I, 718.
THE SAGE AND HIS SPIRIT.
occasion we are told that Li T'ieh Kwai "left the inanimate body under the charge of a disciple till his return; but the disciple being called away to a dying mother, the returning spirit was unable to find its body, and seeing a ragged beggar on the point of expiring, seized upon the corporeal lodging thus vacated."

The picture is by Yen Hui, an artist whose style has greatly influenced Japanese art.

Of peculiar interest is a medallion which bears the inscription "Three in One." Professor Giles attributes this picture to one or other of the brothers Yen who in all probability painted also the picture of "A Man of Ta-ch'in" (Syria) a copy of which may be found in the University library at Cambridge. Professor Giles adds that our picture "Three in One" consists "of a figure of Christ, a Nestorian priest kneeling at his feet with one hand upraised in benediction, and another priest standing behind. Nestorian Christianity soon disappeared from China, leaving the famous Tablet in Si-ngan Fu as a witness that it had reached the Far East,—an honor which must in future be shared by this unpretending picture, which contributes one more to the early portraits of Christ. Three Chinese
characters to the left signify 'May not be rubbed' — Sacred, and were probably inserted at the instance of the Nestorian priests."

This is extremely interesting and deserves attention and critical examination. It seems almost too remarkable to be true, and we should like to see the other picture called "A Man of Syria.

We can not help expressing our doubts concerning Professor Giles's explanation. The inscription "not to be rubbed" may just as well be regarded as the painter's name to be read Pu K'o mo. The picture itself is a typical group, and the very expressive phrase "Three in One" suggests to the Chinese the commonly accepted idea that the three religions, Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, agree so perfectly in their moral maxims that they are practically "three in one." If the medallion truly represented Christ the title "Three in One" would scarcely have been applicable.

We reproduce here for a comparison another picture made by a famous Japanese painter Kano Yuki Nob', an artist many members of whose family were distinguished in the history of Japanese art, their style being known as that of the Kano school. The name Yuki Nob' means literally "of faithfulness" (the first uppermost characters in the signature of our picture).

Yuki Nob's picture is called "The Three Sages Tasting Vinegar" and represents the Buddha pointing with his index finger, Lao Tze with a peculiar twinkle in his eye raising his little finger, while Confucius is holding the ladle in his right hand and raises his left hand in what in Western countries would be considered a gesture of benediction. The cask means the world. The three attitudes are different, and yet there is an agreement as to the nature of the contents.

Other pictures representing the same subject are by no means uncommon, and in the light of this fact, with all deference to Professor Giles, we would look upon his interpretation of "The Three in One" as extremely doubtful.

In the unshod figure standing aloof we see Buddha, the Enlightened One, his carriage and the position of his arms clearly indicating the great ascetic. The man in the background with a cap on his head can only be Lao Tze, while the third person in the moralizing attitude would be Confucius.

I will add in this connection that I have to thank Professor Giles

Cf. also Kircher's reproduction of a Chinese picture representing the three religions of China, which was published in The Open Court, XVII, 623.
THE THREE SAGES TASTING VINEGAR.
for calling my attention to some mistakes which I made in my explanation of Wu Tao Tze's famous Nirvana picture.

Professor Giles says: "As this monograph may easily run to a second edition, I would suggest 'Lo-yang' as the place of Wu Tao Tze's birth for 'K'ai-fung Fu' on p. 1, line 8.

"Also, p. 3, line 8, I think the translation should read instead of 'before his mother seated'—'on behalf of (t'ei fourth tone, not second) his mother arises and.' The fifth character cannot by any possible stretch mean 'seated,' whereas you yourself, three lines previously have 'the Buddha arose from the coffin.'

"With regard to the sentence translated on p. 3, line 4 from foot, by 'as witnessed by,' this should be 'as a manifestation to a great multitude.' There is an important difference here which cannot be neglected."

In comment on Professor Giles's suggestion, I will say that Kai Fung Fu is the place mentioned by Professor Hirth in his discussion of the same picture on page 77 of his Collector's Note Book. Having no idea of the geographical site of Yang ti, I must leave it to these two authorities to decide to which place Wu Tao Tze's birthplace Yang ti is nearer. Otherwise Professor Giles's comments on the translation are in order, and I am grateful for the corrections.

In his History of Chinese Art Professor Giles makes some comments on Wu Tao Tze which will be interesting to those who have seen his Nirvana picture. Professor Giles says:

"More than once Wu Tao-tzŭ painted the great magician, Chung K'uei, who could exorcise demons. In one instance the magician was represented 'dressed in a blue robe, with one foot bare, blind of one eye, a tablet at his waist, with disheveled hair, holding a demon in his left hand as he gouges out its eye with his right,—a powerful work and a model of painting.'

"On another occasion, the Emperor Ming Huang, who had suffered from fever for nearly a month, saw Chung K'uei in a dream fighting on his behalf against the fever demon. 'When his Majesty awaked, the disease had left him; he therefore sent a command to Wu Tao-tzŭ to paint a picture of the occurrence. The latter had no sooner received this order than he seemed to see the whole scene, and at once completed the picture and took it in to the Emperor. His Majesty gazed upon it for some time, and then struck the table with his hand and said, Minister, you must have dreamt the same"

'A photogravure of this remarkable picture accompanied by the author's explanatory notes has been published by the Open Court Publishing Co. A half-tone of the same picture forms Plate 23 of the Portfolio of Buddhist Art, published by the same company.
NIRVANA BY WU TAO TZE.
dream as Ourselves: or how could you have made your picture so like as this?

"Here is another story. 'Wu Tao-tzû once went to see some priests, and met with a somewhat rude reception. He therefore drew a donkey on a wall in the temple, and at night the furniture and other paraphernalia of the priests were all kicked to pieces. The priests were sure that this was Wu's handiwork, and begged him to erase the drawing, after which there was no more trouble.'

"We are told however that 'in Wu Tao-tzû's pictures it was not the wealth of detail which so much struck the beholder as the extraordinary power he possessed of producing his effects by masterly brush-work. Further, many of his frescos were merely ink sketches, to which later generations have never been able to supply coloring. In painting aureoles, he would use no measurements, nor even compasses, but would trace the outline with a single stroke.'

"At a certain temple, about the year 806, there was an old man over eighty years of age, who remembered that when Wu Tao-tzû painted a god with an aureole, all the people of Ch'ang-an, young and old, scholars and laborers alike, gathered around the picture in a dense wall. The aureole was produced by a few rapid strokes, which seemed as if driven by a whirlwind; 'and everybody declared that his hand must have been guided by a god.'

"While on the subject of aureoles, the remarks of a writer of the eleventh century, named Shên Kua, may perhaps be quoted. 'When painters paint Buddha's aureole, they make it flat and round like a fan. If his body is deflected, then the aureole is also deflected, —a serious blunder. Such a one is only thinking of Buddha as a graven image, and does not know that the roundness of his aureole is everlasting. In like manner, when Buddha is represented as walking, his aureole is made to trail out behind him, and this is called the wind-borne aureole,—also a serious blunder. For Buddha's aureole is a divine aureole which even a universe-wrecking hurricane could not move, still less could our light breezes flutter it.'

"Another writer says, 'Wu Tao-tzû excelled in technique, and must be regarded as the inspired painter of all generations. In his early years he used a fine brush, but in middle life he used a brush like a cabbage.'"

Many ancient Chinese pictures have been bought up by Japanese art patrons, and the original of Wu Tao Tze's Nirvana, too, is said to have found its way to the country of the Rising Sun. Professor Giles speaking of Wu Tao Tze in the book discussed says
on page 44-45 that the original of the Nirvana picture "is said to be preserved in the monastery of Manjuji near Kioto, Japan; and an engraving of it was published in Anderson’s *Pictorial Arts of Japan*, 1886. Mr. Kohitsu, the eminent art-critic, is not prepared to say that this very picture is actually from the brush of Wu Tao-tzǔ. At the worst, however, it may be regarded as a very early copy, and its accuracy may to some extent be tested by the following description from the *Wên chieh hou lu* of a similar picture which once existed in China:

"'At the K’ai-yüan temple in Fêng-hsiang Fu, on one of the inner walls of the great hall, Wu Tao-tzǔ painted incidents in the career of the Buddha from his birth, his period of preparation, and his appearance as a preacher of the Law, down to his entry into Nirvana. The picture includes scenery, buildings, human figures, birds and beasts, to the number of several thousands. It is the most beautiful and perfect work of all ages. While Buddha is passing into Nirvana, the bhikshus are beating their breasts and stamping in lamentation, as though utterly beyond self-control. Even the birds of the air and the beasts of the field are wailing and knocking their heads on the ground. Only Buddha himself is placid as usual, with no trace of anguish in his face. How could the painter have thus fathomed the mysteries of life and death? The answer is, that he was inspired.

"'The above refers to the year 742. Fêng-hsiang Fu is now in the hands of our enemies, and its hamlets and buildings are but heaps of ruins; therefore I have made this record.'"

Professor Hirth publishes Anderson’s reproduction of the Nirvana picture in his *Collector’s Note Book* on the plate facing page 76. The half tone here reproduced as well as the photogravure published by the Open Court Publishing Company are made from a copy which is painstakingly neat in the minutest detail. It stands to reason, therefore, that it is more faithful to the original picture than the somewhat cruder sketch from which Mr. Anderson’s reproduction has been made.