NATIVE artists paint the Eight Genii all together or sitting in groups of two or three under a tree or among rocks. They look eminently contented with their lot. They sit some of them with hands joined in their deep old-fashioned sleeves. One of them drinks a glass of cold water from a spring; two are walking. They have nothing to do but to enjoy the scenery of the grove and the freshness of the air. They are talking in the most leisurely manner, evidently with no thought of returning to the life of the market and the home. Their dress is that of the ancient Chinese—deep sleeves, flowing gowns, the hair tied in a knot on the crown of the head, which gives them a different look from that of the Chinese with shaven heads under Manchu rule.

One of the artists has represented the Eight Genii sitting in an irregular circle round a basket of fruit and fresh vegetables. They have said farewell to the quarrelsome worrying world and are happy with the flowers and under the shade of wide-spreading trees. Among them there is the same patient demeanour, the same contented look. They seem to have found peace and have no desire for the busy life of cities; country life is the limit of their enjoyment and their wishes.
There are the Eight Genii of old times when Taoism was in its youth, and native artists paint among them Laotze or T'ai-shang Lao Kiu. He rides a cow. Tradition has always required this. He is painted with white hair having had it from his birth. He has a round head and is dressed in a flowing gown. His fingers are long and thin and terminate in very long nails. Another of the Eight Genii is Yuen-shi Tien Tsun, who is otherwise a most powerful god and the first of the Taoist Trinity. He was probably one of the Eight Genii before he attained that high rank in the Celestial hierarchy of the Taoists. He rides a green Chilin with two horns.

The Genii all have magical power and one of them holds a hollow calabash from which emerges a cloud of magical vapour and with it a red pill—the elixir of life. He has
a bald crown, black whiskers and beard. He has a purple robe and youthful appearance with the usual Taoist top-knot of hair on the crown of the head.

The object of the artist is to suggest Taoist ideas in a personal shape. The power to impart ideas to a picture is in fact the measure of an artist's ability. A great artist is a man who can suggest majestic ideas in his pictures. He must be a thinker and in addition he must possess the gift of ornamentation in colour and form in imitation of nature. The Chinese artist tries to do his best and succeeds to some extent. He has not in Taoism a highly idealised religion; the artist is grotesque because his subject is grotesque.

It will be well for Chinese artists in these days to paint higher subjects. Let them try their powers on New Testament incidents. They might change the Eight Genii for the Twelve Apostles and study Raphael. They might paint historic scenes in European story. All the literati now feel that they must know about Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights. They must read about Napoleon's astonishing victories and Wellin-
the teachings of an ancient philosopher. They must share with the literati in their Western studies. They must go to Europe to see the modern world as it is. Painting in China will then experience an impulse of change. The native eye for colour will be retained; their power to draw a sweet little scene with trees, flowers, fountains, men and animals will remain as it was. But in the new ideal region they will obtain a great increase of vigour. Their future will prove to be much higher than their past because the Christian religion and the political art of European nations will inspire them with a higher genius than they ever had in past days.