

BOOK REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTES

CHINESE ART MOTIVES INTERPRETED.

Winifred Reed Tredwell. 8vo. New York, Putnam. Price, \$1.75.

It is not until in its decadence, when art has come to be regarded as a mystery and only to be understood of experts, that meaning in ornament becomes obscure, or even vanishes. The simple man, when he decorates the things which he uses every day, uses motives which have some pleasant meaning for him and for his fellow-men.

European art is full of such simple motives. The four-leafed clover for luck, the bee for industry, the lamp for learning, the Canadian maple leaf, are all symbols which we recognize without effort. So there are numberless stories, nursery tales and scraps of history which we make use of in decoration, knowing that they will be understood without the need for any great learning. The twelve Apostles appear on spoons; the twelve signs of the zodiac in our calendars. The three Graces, the seven planets and the nine Muses have all their places in European Art.

Similar motives are in use by all peoples, and, as Chinese Art in some form is to be found in almost every house to-day, some knowledge of its symbolism will give an additional pleasure to most of us. We have to learn, for instance, that a bat may mean happiness and a carp, long life.

Miss Tredwell's book gives us such knowledge in a very compact form. All the usual Chinese symbols are illustrated and described and the principal personages whom we may expect to meet, the Buddhist Apostles or the eight Immortals, are described with their attributes. The book is frankly popular but is sufficiently comprehensive to be of real use. It is well illustrated and the index is efficient, a most important feature in a book that will be used mainly for hasty reference.

It is a pity that the author has thought it necessary to intersperse the descriptions with rather laboured pleasantries. Apart from this, the book is very readable and, as the writer claims, contains information which would have to be sought in many and expensive volumes. The price, however, seems rather high.

IMPERIAL UNITY AND THE DOMINIONS.

By Arthur Berriedale Keith, D.C.L., D. Litt., Oxford. Clarendon Press, 1916. Price, 12s 6d net.

Prof. Keith's *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, published in 1912, at once took rank as a classic. Its three volumes, besides accumulating a great mass of detail, not easily accessible elsewhere, presented for the first time a complete view of the autonomous government of those portions of