

seed of the Word and the fertile soil in which it was sown. He proposes a method of approach which respects at once the historic facts of development both in Hellenism and in the Church, the role of 'archetypal' patterns from below, and the divine designs for a *prae-paratio evangelica* from above.

The value of this comprehensive and yet scientific approach is best appreciated when Fr Rahner puts it to the test in actual application, and shows, largely in their own words, how certain specified symbols, myths and rites of paganism were understood, interpreted and utilised by ancient Christian writers, artists and liturgies themselves. 'Christian Mystery and Pagan Mysteries', 'The Mystery of the Cross', 'The Mystery of Baptism', 'The Christian Mystery of Sun and Moon'—these are the main headings of Fr Rahner's exposition of the fashion in which Christ was seen to 'recapitulate' pagan myths and mysteries, rites and symbols. A second section treats of 'Soul-Healing' in early Christianity under the Homeric headings of 'The Moly, the Soul-healing Herb of Hermes' and 'The Mandrake, the Eternal Root of Man'. The third and last section carries the intriguing title of '*heiliger Homer*' ('Saint Homer') and deals in turn with Christian interpretations of the Willow-Branch (*Odyss.* X) and of Odysseus at the Mast (*Odyss.* XII), and incidentally of many other favoured re-readings of the Odyssey as a Pilgrim's Progress.

It is possible to disagree with Fr Rahner at times; for instance his anxious dissociation of the *Benedictio Pontis* from phallic symbolism seems to be contradicted by the plain language of the *Benedictio* itself. But we can only be grateful for this illuminating, timely and refreshing book, and hope that the author will pursue his inquiries into the Christian catalysis of other myths and symbols (those of Orpheus, for instance). Meanwhile it may be hoped that this book will speedily find a worthy translator, who will also enrich an English edition with the index which the original—finely printed and designed though it is—somewhat inconveniently lacks.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

THE GREEK WAY. An Anthology by Kathleen Freeman. (MacDonald; 15s.)

We all know the *Week-End Book*; and many of us were aware that in Greek similar material was abundant; but the two notions were in different parts of the mind, and we have had to wait for Miss Freeman to bring the two together and to produce this very successful 'Week-End Book' from the Greek, in translation. The fact that the Greeks 'had a word for it' means, of course, that they had the thing itself; and it is the greatest of all compliments to our own age that we can parallel in our day so much that can be found earlier only among the Greeks. In these pages can be found the earliest appearance of our old friend 'Pop', scripts for Miss Ruth Draper, fragments on the bringing up of children that remind us of nothing so much as Bertrand Russell's little work on the same sub-

ject, epigrams like 'Work for the young, committee-meetings for the middle-aged, flatulence for the old', ghost-stories, mathematical puzzles that would do for a *Penguin Puzzle Book*—in short, what would you? It is a little odd, perhaps, to find it all cut up into little snippets—after all, the plums out of a plum-pudding are not quite the same thing as the plum-pudding itself, and this applies particularly to the many fragments of Homer; but an age in which a *Digest* has far the greatest circulation in the world should raise no objection.

Miss Freeman's translations are fluid and limpid, and avoid the odd idioms and word-collocations into which the translators of a generation ago used to twist themselves to show that their scholarship had not been outdone by some subtlety of particle or verb-compound. Not that scholarship is here missing; but it is decently clothed—its stockings may be blue, but they are of silk. Miss Freeman has her blind spots here and there, like the rest of us. *Croissons* (p. 217) for *croissants* is one, and one of the mathematical puzzles is a conflation of two side by side in the original Metrodorus (which has led to her giving the wrong answer on p. 310).

The book's first success should be as an admirable bed-book, both for those to whom it recalls the originals and for those who have, as yet, no Greek (Miss Freeman in her unalarming introduction urges winningly the possibility of learning some, for those who begin to feel the spell of a great literature); and its second success should be as a prize for those unfortunates who, being 'good' at science or mathematics, have their noses kept firmly to the grindstone while their preceptors pay uneasy lip-service to the importance of their education 'not being allowed to become narrow'. Many of them, if not yet too far gone in the worship of another Greek god—PI—would really enjoy it.

FELIX HARDY, O.S.B.

THE FALL OF THE SPANISH AMERICAN EMPIRE. By Salvador de Madariaga. (Hollis & Carter; 21s.)

This important work is in some ways more satisfactory than its forerunner, *The Rise of the Spanish American Empire*: it is better planned and more balanced. The review of the latter in this journal (August, 1947) must be corrected in one respect and an apology offered. The absence of any account of the Jesuit missions and of the suppression of the Society was there noted as a serious defect. The account is to be found here: that of the missions is indeed too summary to be adequate for any reader coming to that fascinating subject for the first time, but the importance of the suppression (as well as the very shady character of the whole proceeding) is fully stressed. 'The solid mass of white Creoles, however, remained attached to Spain because it remained attached to the Catholic faith, to the traditional way of doing things. Suddenly, from this Spain of the sceptre and the Cross, from the very King of Spain heir to Ferdinand and Isabel came that most tangible proof of Voltaire's philosophy: "Out with the Jesuits". On that day, the King of Spain