

Lying poor in the manger
Win my soul for your vassal
In the heavenly mansions.

The prayers contained in other carols worship God explicitly through the intercession of our Lady:

It is right that we bless thee
And ask that thou pleadest
With thy Son, that great God may forgive us
Our debts through thy merits.—Amen.

Grant us, Virgin, ask your Son,
From exile here to bring us home
Through Christ thy womb's fruit. . . .

The true devotion to our Lady is the best way to him, who said that he is the Way.

The aim of this paper was to show the basis of this 'Way of Mary' as presented in the Polish Christmas Carols. It seems that carols were also used as means to teach in a form of simple songs, the true devotion to our Lady. We may conclude with the following quotations which dwell on this 'Way of Mary':

O venerable Mary, show us the sure way
Of the commandments of your almighty God,
He is the only hope
Of our salvation.

O beloved of God
We beg thee, be a straight way unto us
Leading to perfect life,
Bring us to eternal bliss. . . .

REVIEWS

SOUS L'INVOCATION DE SAINT JEROME. Par Valéry Larbaud. (Gallimard, 200 francs, 3rd edition, 1946.)

Perhaps 'Under the aegis of St Jerome' would best translate the title. For here is a well-known man of letters telling us that St Jerome, his personality, his literary style and his enthusiasms have been his inspiration throughout. 'What! Pray to St Jerome?' a young friend had said to him, 'you might as well pray to St Augustine; they are both too learned to listen to us.' From the literary point of view it is Jerome the translator who appeals to M. Larbaud. For Jerome rightly regarded translating as a fine art; his *De optimo genere interpretandi*, Ep. lvii, is, of course, the classic and M. Larbaud felt impelled to copy it out word for word. And what a translator Jerome himself proved! We all know of his Latin version of the Bible. But do we realise that its perfection is due to the fact that it was but the culmination of a long series of translations? Long before this he had translated Didymus the Blind *De Spiritu Sancto* and very much of Origen. But these were not inspired writers: hence his famous distinction: 'In translat-

ing Greek authors—save in the case of Holy Scripture where the very order of the words is a sacrament (*mysterium*), I do not translate word for word, but sense of sense' (*Ep.* lvii, 5, cf. his words on *Ezech.* i 13, v 12, and on *Mich.* i 16). A translator, he reminds Rufinus, ii 25, is not inspired, 'for he is not a prophet'. Verse after verse in the Vulgate New Testament contains precisely the same number of words as in the Greek.

Would it be an impertinence to say that every would-be literary man should at least peruse this really remarkable volume?

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BENEDICTINES OF TODAY. By Dom Romanus Rios, O.S.B., Monk of St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate. (Stanbrook Abbey Press; n.p.)

Very few people know much about the history of the Benedictine order in modern times. We know that it is an order with a venerable past and that it came to an abrupt end in this country at the Reformation, and that in spite of this it is still flourishing, but the history of the intervening period is, it may be guessed, for most people almost a blank. Dom Romanus Rios helps us to fill in this gap. He shows how the French Revolution and its aftermath brought disaster to the order on the continent almost as great as that of the Reformation in England. From about one thousand monasteries in Europe in 1780, the number had dwindled to fifty in 1880, and of all the once famous Congregations only five, including the English, survived to the present time. But the last century has witnessed a no less remarkable revival. Beginning with the restoration of the French Congregation by Dom Guéranger in 1830, the movement spread to Germany with the foundation of the Beuronese congregation and from there to Belgium. In Italy the Old Cassinese congregation was reformed in 1857 and spread not only over Europe but to America and Australia, and now the order has spread over the whole world and numbers, including all houses following the Benedictine Rule, over a thousand.

Such is the achievement of the past century in mere numbers. Dom Romanus then goes on to show something of the character of the men who have built up the order in modern times. They include a Pope (Pius VII), a Cardinal (Dusmet), several bishops, some heroic men and saintly women, and a notable number of martyrs, including the martyrs of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-7, among whom the whole of Dom Romanus's own community of El Pueyo finds a place. One cannot but admire the record and achievement of these men, and the diversity of character and the variety of the work achieved by them show the breadth of the Benedictine spirit. But yet one must admit that it does not make very inspiring reading, and, in spite of the fact that Dom Romanus is careful to show how all these different characters were formed