

OUR MAN OF THE YEAR

CANON W. SLATOR.

Carrick-on-Shannon

POET

SINGER

ENTERTAINER

COMMUNITY

LEADER

The Whispering Reeds by the River

Canon William Slator

*There are voices in Nature for those
who can hear,
There are sounds that are happy and
sounds that we fear.
Not the cry of the seagull, or roar of the
bull,
With songs of her own Mother Nature
is full.
The lake water lapping, the sigh of the
breeze,
The drum-beat of hailstones, the creak-
ing of trees,
But the sound which most often my
fancy doth please,
The whisper of reeds by the river.*

*When the storm beats in fury and white
breakers fall,
On the rocks, on the beach, or along the
quay wall
When the thunder storm rolls midst the
mountain tops bare,
Here are people whose pleasure is
listening there,
But for me it's enough when the winds
softly blow,
And across the tall reeds gentle words
seem to go.
With a message of peace for the whole
world to know,
From the whispering reeds by the river.*



We are delighted to announce that Canon William Slator, Church of Ireland Rector, Carrick-on-Shannon has been chosen Man of the Year. His is a household name throughout the county. Every week, almost without fail, his poems appear in *The Leitrim Observer*. He has been a constant contributor to *The Leitrim Guardian* since its foundation. This year is no exception. Now he appears in person, so to speak. We welcome him.

Canon Slator is an all-Ireland man. Born in Dublin and educated there, he found his first love there — music. He won a Gold Medal for bass singing at the Dublin Feis Ceoil. He was set fair to make a career in classical music when he decided to join the ministry. He was ordained in Belfast and his first curacy was Portrush. There he changed his musical outlook, he became interested in concert music, in ceili music, he became an entertainer. He is still an entertainer, though he still loves the classics. So does his family. His daughter Naoimi, now Mrs. Kenneth Maybury is an organist and a mezzo-soprano. Her husband is chorister in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

Canon Slator loves to write poetry. He has been writing it since he wrote that school essay at the age of nine — in

verse! He published a book of verse, 'It Happened To Me', in 1973. It was widely acclaimed. He writes songs and lyrics and choruses; he writes every morning. He says that he tries never to be cynical in his poetry, whimsical, yes; and he tries to publicise Leitrim.

Canon Slator has always been a man of the people and a community builder. He was curate in Mullaghduin, Co. Fermanagh, Rector of Boyle for 14 years, Rector of Clonbroney for 14 years. He came to Carrick-on-Shannon as rector in 1966. He is at the heart of community life in Carrick. He is a member of most of the local organisations, and still finds time to develop his interest in First Aid. He is vice-Chairman of the local branch of the Red Cross Society. He is chaplain to St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon. Every weekend he entertains the patients, often assisted by his wife. He even finds time to help her in her beautiful garden.

When we called on him to give him the good news Canon Slator said he was honoured to receive the award. He considers it an honour too for his family, his parish, his town. "I've done my best", he said. *The Leitrim Guardian* has decided that it is *THE* best. We congratulate him.