TWO FORGOTTEN LIMERICK POETS

George Roberts And Richard Bulkeley

EXTRACTS FROM THEIR WORKS

Literary Styles Of Other Days

(By ROBERT HERBERT)

ON the 30th of October, 1762, the citizens of Limerick saw a new poetic star burst into their ken. The occasion was the publication of the first part of a long didactic poem, "Joseph," by George Roberts, an obvious pupil of Alexander Pope, whom he modestly quotes on the title page:—

"Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be."

The poem, printed anonymously for the author and published in a twenty-four page booklet for the modest sum of four-pence, is dedicated to James Gough, the author's teacher, once of Mountrath, but then living at Bristol, "beneath whose tutelary care I was made acquainted not only with the learned languages but also with true knowledge, abstracted from the learning of the schools; to whom I owe the cultivation of the seeds of virtue, primarily implanted in mine and every human breast, and who first gave me a relish for true wisdom."

BIBLICAL STORY.

It tells, with few variations, the Biblical story of Joseph, his betrayal by his brothers, his life as a slave, and his finding favour with Pharaoh and promotion to the Governorship of Egypt. It describes Pharaoh's dream, which was interpreted so simply by Joseph:—

"On the gay shores, which Father Nilus laves,
Methought I stood and viewed the rolling waves;
Pleased, I beheld till these astonished eyes
Saw seven oxen from the water rise;
Pontentous sight! whose tallow'd quarters shew'd
The fertile pastures which the Nile o'erflowed;
Which scarce had on the nearest margin stood,
When seven others rose from out the flood:
But lean and poor, voracious they devour,
The former sev'n upon the sandy shore . . ."

The poem dwells lengthily, rather too lengthily for a didactic poem, on Potiphar's attempts to seduce Joseph and his escape from her clutches, literal and otherwise, by leaving his empty robe in her hands. It then ends abruptly with the story of Potiphar's vengeance by accusing Joseph before her husband of an attempt on her virtue:—

"In vain I urg'd to baffle her pretence,
In vain I strove to plead my innocence;
My Lord enrag'd, condemn'd his slave to bear
The noisome stenches of the dungeon's air.
There long I lay, my bed th' unwholesome ground,
And there the Royal Mercy Joseph found."

EXCITED MUCH INTEREST.

The publication of the poem excited much interest in Limerick and several poems were written in praise of the author. In one, Jossy Crampton, a picturesque individual apparantly, who claimed to be "conversant long in the ways of sin," acknowledged his conversion by "Joseph," and wrote:—

Accept my thanks, then for your book,
I love it well and wish you luck,
And if your muse should want a champion,
You'll find a friend in Jossy Crampton.

His old schoolmaster wrote to thank Roberts for dedicating the book to him, but at the same time warns our poet that "to bestow much time and pains in poetry I have experienced to be time, etc., misapplied." Even his mother wrote a poem in honour of the occasion, gently chiding her son for putting his own sex on so high a pedestal and belittling hers:—

For search the annals of mankind,
Another Joseph you'll not find,
The princely Judah, not so nice,
Forsook his virtue in a thrice.

In the following year, Roberts was persuaded to issue a collected volume of his poems. The title-page reads:—"Juvenile poems on various subjects, **Sunt bona, sunt quaedam mediocria, sunt mala plura Martial.** By George Roberts. Limerick: Printed for the author by John Cherry. MDCCLXIII." The printer was the father of Andrew Cherry, actor, playright and author of "The Dear Little Shamrock."

PRAISE FOR SYLVESTER O'HALLORAN.

The book contains 168 pages and about forty new poems, as well as the first part of "Joseph," already published, and its conclusion. Of particular interest, though not for their literary merit, are "Colnadons" and "Instructions to a statuary to erect the busts of the Irish poets." The former is a versification of MacPherson's supposed translations from Ossian, and in the "advertisement," Roberts praises Sylvester O'Halloran, the Limerick historian, for his refutation of MacPherson's statement that the original Ossian belonged to Scottish and not Irish literature. The latter is dedicated to "Sylvester O'Halloran of Limerick, Surgeon, whose steady zeal and unwearied application in asserting, from undeniable proofs, in the case of Ossian against MacPherson, etc., of his country deserves the highest applause." Poor O'Halloran was so busy searching for proofs that the original was Irish and not Scotch that he failed to see that most of MacPherson's work was of his own composition.

For the rest, the collection is a strange mixture of love poems, religious poems and poems of praise, the first class being far and away the best. One finds it hard to realise that the same poet who wrote "Joseph" also wrote the charming love-lyric:—"To Laura."

A painter once, of old, essay'd
To paint the beauties of a maid.
In whom, conspired, he'd trace
United all the brightest charms,
The heaving breasts, the snowy arms,
And every killing grace.

The summon'd nymphs of Greece collects,
Choses from some, and some rejects,
For patterns to his mind;
From one an eye, from one a hair,
This gave a lip, and that an air,
And every beauty join'd.

But had he seen my Laura's face,
Her eyes, her shape, her mein, her grace,
And every beauty weighed;
No longer, vainly, would he seek
The dimpled smile, the rosy cheek,
But from her draw his maid.

TOUCH OF HUMOUR.

The only touch of humour in the whole book is provided in the last poem, "The miseries of an author, or, the coffey-house Miscellany." In this poem the author imagines himself hidden behind a screen at the coffee-house, listening to the comments made on his newly-published book. In turn a captain, "all incloased in lace," a "smart" attorney, a doctor with "suit of sable and a hippocratic look," and a buck who "stamped and kicked and hectored round the room," give their opinions and none are flattering.

O Lord (the author cries, behind the skreen,
For now, indeed, he wished not to be seen),
Sure nothing can exceed an author's curse
Who, tho' he's bad, must still be judged by worse;
First comes a captain, with a face of brass,
Calls me a fop, which shows that he's an ass,
The smart attorney, then, because he's woke
From pleasing dreams of suits, designs a stroke,
Which levelled at my bosom, does portend
Death, or, at least, a lawsuit in the end;
Next, comes a doctor. O good Lord deliver
Me from his hands, for ever and for ever!
The poor man's mad, he cries, with looks demure,
And 'cause he gets no fee, why, I'm past cure;
His malice all his learning cannot fetter—
But I forgive the buck—he knew no better;
His element is but to damn and sink,
But be it what it will, he made me think,
Nay, almost swear, that if I 'scap'd this squabble,
I'd shew no more my poems to the rabble,
Who at thy coffee-house, good Tom, assemble,
To make the votaries of the muses tremble.

An inability to find out anything about Roberts in the standard Reference books sent me back to the poems for biographical details.

AN APOTHECARY BY PROFESSION.

Here I discovered the author was born about the year 1743 and was an apothecary by profession.

I knew him well, who with the poet's part,
Pretence to join th' apothecary's art.
O Heav'n, and wasn't all the force of medicine able,
To purge his magotty brain's augean stable!
And cou'd the mortar's musick not confound
The rhyming measures of Castalian sound."

They further inform us that, as he was engaged in studies of a higher nature, "which proposes for its object, no less than the preservation or resteration of health to mankind," he did not intend to continue writing.

An examination of the Subscribers' List gave the most important clue to Roberts' identity. Instead of the usual list of patronizing country gentlemen who usually left their purchases uncut, this was composed with the exception of Sylvester O'Halloran, Ralph Ousley and a few other "literary agents" of Limerick, almost entirely of tradesmen, many of whom I knew to have been members of the Society of Friends. This sent me hunting to the very full records of the Irish Quakers and in a book entitled "A Roberts Family," recently compiled by Ethel S. Impey, of Birmingham, the author, and his family are described, although Miss Impey does not seem to have been aware that Roberts was a poet, or an apothecary, or that he had any connection with Limerick.

CAME TO IRELAND IN CROMWELL'S ARMY.

His great grandfather came to Ireland in Cromwell's army, and like many others who had gained an estate by the sword, forsook the ways of war for the peace-loving Society of Friends, and settled down near Mountrath. On his mother's side, the author is descended from John Craven, a Limerick Quaker, who is said to have been one of the two men who betrayed the Pass to the English during the Siege of 1690. When Dorothy Craven married George Roberts senior, she brought him some of the Craven property in Limerick and here they resided for some years, between 1758 and 1786. As well as being skilled in needlework she brought to her marriage 30 pairs of sheets of her own spinning and weaving. Dorothy Craven was an extremely well-educated woman and her letters teem with quotations from Milton, her favourite poet, from the Latin and from the French. Her husband, George Roberts, senior, was an unusual Quaker. In the words of his daughter, Abigail, "his person excelled in beauty all I have ever seen . . . He was humane, charitable, generous, and throughout his whole life his probity was so unquestioned that his word and his bond were looked upon as pretty equal. Why must I add that these qualities were obscured, though never defaced, by intemperance."

The Friends summoned him before them for excessive drinking and "behaving very contrary to what we profess," as well as for being involved in a duel which his son, Craven Roberts, fought for him. The warning proved of no avail and on 4th June, 1758, he was disowned. His son, Craven, was also disowned and became a soldier. His adventures in three campaigns abroad were the subject of one of the younger George's poems.

POETESS IN HER OWN RIGHT.

His daughter, Abigail, a poetess in her own right, though one of little merit, has left a series of letters to Molly Leadbeater, of Ballitore, and in them the history of the rest of the family—there were seven girls and three boys—can be traced.

We are only concerned here with George, the second son, described as the best-beloved, who was born, as already stated, about 1743. Abigail, who, it seems, required a higher moral standard than her Quaker relatives could aspire to, and who, incidentally, died at the age of eighty-five, unmarried and self-supporting, says he was "graceful in person and pleasing in manner beyond most men and possessed of qualities which, had temperance been of their number, would have rendered him almost perfect . . . A good wife might have done much, but he had the hard fortune to get one uncommonly bad, which put the finishing stroke to him . . . Except drinking, I do not know any other fault he had."

George was aware of his own failing, an hereditary one, apparently, and one of his poems deals with the subject, "A midnight poem, written on parting company at a tavern late at night." It begins:—

While sons of wit, over the midnight bowl,
In acts unworthy of a reasoning soul;
Blind to the future, and with mirth elate,
Shorten their days, regardless of their fate;
The precious moments of their time destroy,
While the loud room resounds with drunken joy:
Thinking, Vain Thought! such joys shall ever last . . .

"COOLNESS TO RELIGION."

Three years after the publication of his poems, when he was only twenty-three, George was called on by the Quakers for showing "too much coolness to religion," and for "being married by a priest." He replied, proudly and briefly, "I am of the Established Church of Ireland; you may deny me if you think proper so to do but would be glad to know who will sign my denial." Even the humble Quakers could not stand this arrogance and George was disowned on the 7th of December, 1766. The Quakers probably never fully forgave him for obtaining their subscriptions, to what I am sure they believed would be a book of religious verse, and then publishing those scandalously worldly poems with their respectable names in support.

The disownment was so complete that, in the volume of his poems before me, one of the few copies which can still exist, the only writing consists in the scratching out of his mother's name in the two poems which she wrote in his praise—and with the disownment George passes from our ken, as suddenly as he had arrived. The only remaining record is of his death on 9th June, 1777, at the early age of thirty-four.

In D. J. O'Donoghue's "The Poets of Ireland," there is the following entry under George Roberts:—"Prospect, or, Rural sports, a poem, etc., London, 1754(?) 4to; Juvenile poems on various subjects, Dublin, 1789, 12mo." The first is obviously wrong for our author was only eleven years old at that time. I have never seen a copy of the second, but it is undoubtedly a reprint of the Limerick edition of 1763, and was probably re-published by his sister, Abigail.

RICHARD BULKELEY.

That Richard Bulkeley flourished in the first half of the 18th century, and that he published a small book of verse in the year 1739, are the sole items of information regarding him of which we can be certain.

The booklet consisted of the title-leaf, the dedication-leaf and twelve pages of verse, and it is so rare—the imperfect copy in the Limerick City Library is the only one I know of in existence—that I give herewith a full transcript of the title-page. In any case, the latter is, for its own sake and for the information it gives the reader, worthy of full reproduction:—

"Poems on several occasions, viz, the Limerick Beauties; Verses on a young gentleman's being in love, "The Lover's Prayer," or "An Hymn to Venus." A Ballad in the old manner, occasion'd by two ruffians being gibbetted for the murder of an old woman. A Prologue addressed to the Ladies. Another in behalf of Mr. Dyer's Company of Comedians, and, A Poem on poverty. By Richard Bulkeley. OMNIA VINCIT AMOR. NIL HABET INFELIX PAUPERTAS DURIUS IN SE QUAM QUOD RIDICULOS HOMINES FACIT. Limerick: Printed by Andrew Welsh, Junr., Bookseller, opposite to the Exchange. M.DCC.XXXIX. (Price, One Shilling)."

The title-page is well laid out and where space allows the book is embellished with very pretty head and tail pieces. The paper is strong, the margins are wide, and the type is well chosen and evenly printed. In all, the booklet is a credit to the pre-machine-age printing in Limerick.

The dedication, which is to a Count Johnson, is long-winded and heavy, comparing the poet's title-page and dedication to the new public-house sign, hung out to entice the customers inside. The author demands that learning be displayed on the one end and wit on the other; and succeeds but poorly in accomplishing either.

FEW TOUCHES OF GENIUS.

The poetry is written in the stilted pseudo-classical style of the period and it has few touches of genius. The first poem, as the title implies, is written in praise of the various celebrated Limerick beauties of the day. It names them fancifully—Caelia, Serina, Cleora, Pyrrha and Marcia, all of whom, of course, outshine their pagan namesakes. It concludes by asking Worsdale's aid in depicting them but warns him of the risk he will run in so doing:—

"Worsdale, beware the fam'd Pygmalion's fate.
(I'll not to thee the well-known tale relate).
Tho' from love's power, thou long has kept thy heart,
Thou soon mayest fall a victim to thy art."

One clings to this Worsdale, for he is the one tangible thing in a company of ghosts, the one remembered person in all the little booklet's personalities. Born about the year 1692 he was the pupil and reputed natural son of the famous English painter, Sir Godfrey Kneller, but was dismissed from the latter's service when he secretly married Kneller's niece. Coming to Ireland he was befriended by Lord Blaney and the first Earl of Rosse, and, moré by his social attainments than the quality of his painting, he soon established a reputation as a portrait painter.

CURIOUS HABIT.

A curious and, I'm sure, very effective habit of his was to chalk the surface of a portrait, finished and not paid for, with lines giving the impression of the subject being in gaol, and the portrait was left so until redeemed. He was one of the foundation members of the Hell-Fire Club, that bleak ruin in the Dublin hills, and a portrait group of five of its members, by Worsdale, now hangs in the National Gallery of Ireland. In 1741 he was appointed Deputy Master of Revels in Dublin and this position of authority over the Irish theatre may have brought him into contact with our actor-poet, Bulkeley.

The next two poems are in the same strain and both again introduce the mysterious Marcia. The title of the fourth poem promised better but promised only to deceive. Although it lacks coherence, as is usual in so many ballads, it has none of the vivid phrases usually associated with this type of verse. It tells of the murder near Sanbach in Chester (another disappointment; one would have liked it to have happened in Limerick) of an old woman and of the subsequent execution of the murderers, Moss and Locket.

"Those wretches were but meanly bred,
Of whom I do indite,
The one he could not read, 'tis said,
And t'other could not write."

The internal evidence suggests that Richard Bulkeley was a travelling actor and the best poem in the book, "A Prologue Address'd to the Ladies," was probably meant to be spoken by himself. It protests, rather too strongly:

To cultivate the wild licentious brute,
To pluck up vice and folly by the root;
To stem the torrent of a wicked age,
Was the intent and business of the stage;
It is the end, and main design of plays,
To punish vice, and give to virtue praise."

The next poem, "A Prologue in behalf of Mr. Dyer's Company of Comedians," was written at Cork in 1738 and spoken by a Mr. Mason. It describes how the comic muse was driven from England for its licentiousness and how it came to Ireland, "where wit's no crime and where the muses smile."

PLIGHTS OF ACTORS.

The last poem in the book, "Poverty," begins "Oh poverty, thou nauseous bitter pill," and is mainly concerned with the poverty of the actor. It holds interest by reciting, in the character of their parts, the various plights of the actors then in Limerick:—

If at the Play-house I'd divert my mind,
Thee, worst of evils there I'd sure to find;
I lately saw thee on the Limerick stage,
With Cato reason and with Orestes rage;
Observed thee sullen sit on B——y's brow,
And make poor P——r look I know not how;
There for a ticket you may nightly see
The true-born sons and heirs of poverty,
Where great King Henry has not half a crown,
To silence dums or drink his sorrows down.

Tamerlane, Falstaff and Shylock are all introduced, showing then as now the great interest of the people of Limerick in the plays of Shakespeare an interest which, I venture to say, would hardly sustain them through the first act, were such a company now to come to Limerick.

SERIOUS FIRE

THREE RICKS OF HAY DESTROYED

On Saturday night last (writes our Charleville correspondent) three ricks of hay, the property of Mr. Edmond Naughton, Shinanagh, Newtown, were completely destroyed by fire, the origin of which is not known.

When the blaze was first observed a message was sent to Charleville for assistance and within a short time the local Fire Brigade proceeded to the scene.

The members of the Brigade were handicapped owing to lack of water but they succeeded in saving some stalls and out-offices adjoining.

SMALL LIST

FOR HILARY CIRCUIT COURT

Judge Barra O Briain will have a small criminal list to deal with when the Hilary Sittings of the Limerick Criminal Circuit Court open in Limerick on Tuesday next. Only three defendants will be arraigned on indictable charges.

It is understood that the civil business, which opens on Tuesday week next, will be on the small side, too.

ASKED FOR A LIFT

And Got It To Garda Station

THREE £10 NOTES HANDED OUT

HOW a "wanted" man asked a Garda Superintendent for a lift and got it as far as a Garda station, handing up on the way three £10 notes he found, was told to Justice C. S. Kenny, B.L., at a Special Court at Adare on the 29th of December.

The man in question was an itinerant named George O'Neill, no fixed abode, and he was charged that he did, at Newcastle West, feloniously steal, take and carry away (by finding) the sum of three £10 notes (£30), the property of Thomas Fitzgerald, Askeaton.

Inspector Butler, Newcastle West, prosecuted, and the accused, who was not professionally represented, pleaded guilty and stated he wished to be tried summarily.

HOW NOTES WERE LOST.

Thomas Fitzgerald, Askeaton, stated that on the 19th December he entered Mr. Hough's premises, Newcastle West, to enter a dog for coursing. He pulled out a wallet to get the necessary papers and had three £10 notes in the same pocket. Having transacted his business with Mr. Hough he went down the town and missed the money. He returned to Hough's and searched the place but no trace of the money was found. The accused was on the premises when he first visited Hough's, but was not there when he returned. He reported his loss to the Gardaí.

Superintendent Keegan, Bruff, stated that he was returning from Limerick to Bruff by motor and the accused stopped him and asked him for a lift. He obliged and drove him to Hospital Garda Station, where he told the accused that he answered the description of a "wanted" man. The accused said "Yes, I suppose it is for this money," and handed out three £10 notes.

Sergeant O'Connell, Newcastle West, stated that he charged the accused with the offence and gave him the usual legal caution. He said nothing.

The accused addressed the Court and said he was never before a Court before and pleaded for leniency.

VERY CANDID.

Superintendent Keegan said the accused was very candid over the offence and from inquiries he had made there was nothing known against the accused and told the Justice that he was not pressing to send the accused to jail.

The Justice said in view of the accused's previous good character he would only impose a sentence of two months imprisonment, the warrant not to be enforced if the accused were of good behaviour for 6 months, and ordered that the £30 be handed back to Mr. Fitzgerald.

ALLEGED BREAKING INTO STORES.

At the same Court, Denis Leahy, Newtown, Caherconlish, was charged by Superintendent E. O'Riordan, Pallasgreen, that he did between 11 a.m. on December 22nd, 1949, and 9 a.m. on December 24th unlawfully break and enter the stores of Mortimer Leahy, Newtown, Caherconlish, with intent to commit a felony and that at the same time and place he did unlawfully steal, take and carry away 18lbs. of geese feathers, value £2 16s., the property of the said Mortimer Leahy, Newtown, Caherconlish.

Sergeant Bergan, Caherconlish, said he arrested the accused and charged him with the offence and gave him the usual caution. He asked for a remand to Ballyneety District Court on 5th January, as his inquiries into the case were not yet completed.

The accused, who was not professionally represented, was remanded on bail to the District Court at Ballyneety on 5th January.

DROVE HIS WIFE

AND FOUND HIMSELF IN COURT!

At Tralee District Court, Thomas Henry James, a hackney driver of Abbeydorney, North Kerry, was summoned for using his car for a purpose for which a higher rate of duty was payable.

It was alleged that by driving his wife, a hairdresser, to work, he was depriving the public of the use of his car.

The defendant, in evidence, stated that his wife paid him 30s. a week for driving her to and from her place of work. His wife, he said, kept her business independent of his own.

District Justice Johnson: "Even if his wife agreed to give him a shampoo, I think that could be regarded as payment and I am satisfied that the public were not deprived of the use of the car."

He dismissed the case.

KNOCKED DOWN AND THEN ROBBED.

About 11.15 on Saturday night a woman in Eglinton Road, Dublin, was struck on the forehead and knocked down by a middle-aged man, who then snatched her handbag and got away with it.

DIED A CATHOLIC

Emil Jannings, Austrian film star of the silent films, died on Monday, aged 82. He became a Catholic on Thursday and had the last Sacraments administered to him on Saturday.

KILLED THREE PIKE

Fishing on King's River, a tributary of the Nore, at Kells, Co. Kilkenny, William Donaldson, Patrick Street, Kilkenny, landed three pike weighing, respectively, 10, 15 and 18½ pounds—a total of 43½ pounds.

AN UNSAFE "BANK"

The dwellinghouse of James McDonald, farmer, Gortmillish, Armoy, Co. Antrim, was broken into during the early hours of Sunday and £2,000 stolen. The money was in notes of from £5 to £50.

IN JAIL AGAIN

After Getting His Freedom

MAN WHO STOLE £10 NOTE

JOHN O'LEARY, an itinerant, was released from Limerick Jail on Christmas Eve. He was benefiting by the amnesty granted by the Government for the New Year.

BACK IN JAIL AGAIN.

But to-night, O'Leary is back in jail again—in Limerick. For, the day after being released, he robbed Jeremiah O'Dwyer, Kilmoyley, Banagher, of a £10 note.

To-day in the Tipperary District Court, O'Leary pleaded guilty to a charge of having committed the crime.

Garda evidence was given that O'Leary had been convicted on 42 occasions between November 1926, and 1949. He had been in jail several times during the past quarter of a century.

Justice O Briain said to O'Leary: You are an old customer of this Court, but I should like to make it clear to you this time that you are not being convicted just because you are an old offender."

HE HAD NO DOUBT.

The Justice said that if he thought there was a reasonable doubt about the case he would give O'Leary the benefit of that doubt. But there wasn't any doubt that O'Leary was the man who had stolen O'Dwyer's £10 note. In all the circumstances he could do little else than impose a sentence of six months imprisonment.

Soon after the Court O'Leary was taken back to Limerick Jail.

DEATH OF JUDGE IN U.S.A.

NATIVE OF CO. LIMERICK

Judge Michael F. Kinkead, who died rather unexpectedly in the United States of America on Tuesday morning was a native of Ballinvreena, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick. He was for a number of years past Judge of the Probate Court of Ramsey County, St. Paul's, Minnesota. He was cousin of Judge Thomas Kinkead and Judge James Meaney, both of whom are Judges in New Jersey. He was a member of a well-known County Limerick farming family and was cousin of the Raleigh family, Knocklong, and the Flanagan family, Kilbreedy. He was brother-in-law of Mrs. J. Kinkead, Ballinvreena.

He received his early education at Kilfinane and at Thurles College, going to America 40 years ago and completing his studies for the Bar at St. Paul's.

FIANNA FAIL

LIMERICK CITY COMHAIRLE CEANNTAIR

The election of officers of Limerick City Comhairle Ceanntair of Fianna Fail resulted as follows:—Chairman, Mr. Martin Corbett; Vice-Chairman, Mr. Gerald O'Connor; Hon. Treasurers, Mrs. James Barry and Mrs. L. McEvoy; Hon. Secretary, Mr. Michael J. O'Brien. Delegates to Comhairle Dail Ceantair, Messrs G. O'Connor, J. Gilligan and M. J. O'Brien.

LOWEST RAINFALL IN 22 YEARS

The rainfall for 1949, according to readings provided from Greystones, Co. Wicklow, was 23.71 inches, the lowest in 22 years. The driest month was June, with 1.05 inches, and the wettest month October, with 4.65. The average rainfall for the past 22 years was 37.27, with 1930 being the wettest year when 45.65 inches of rain fell. The average for each month during the 22 years was 3.105.

DIOCESE OF KILLALOE

Clerical changes have been made by Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty, Bishop of Killaloe as follows:—

Very Rev. M. Hogan, Adm., Ennis, to be Parish Priest of Kilmihill; Rev. T. Brady, C.C., Ennis, to be Adm., Ennis; Rev. J. O'Neill, C.C., Clarecastle, to be C.C., Ennis; Rev. E. Fitzgerald, C.C., Lissycasey, to be C.C., Clarecastle; Rev. R. Carey, recalled from England, to be be C.C., Lissycasey.

BIG VESSEL IN SHANNON

The s.s. "Ramore Head," a very fine vessel, has arrived in the Shannon from Baltimore with a cargo of 10,000 tons of maize. She has anchored at Beigh Castle, from which point 2,500 tons of her cargo will be removed by lighter to Limerick. The vessel will then proceed to Limerick to complete her discharge.

AFTER 33 YEARS.

In 1916 an Italian lady wrote to her husband fighting on the Italian front in the first world war announcing the birth of a son. The letter reached its destination only the other day, 33 years after posting, and the son whose birth was announced had fallen in the meantime in the second world war.

JEWELLERY THEFT FROM MOTOR.

Jewellery to the value of £1,860, and belonging to Mrs. Grainne Cazeneve, Springfield, Killenaule, Co. Tipperary, was stolen from a parked car in Dublin on New Year's Eve. The jewellery, which was in a handbag left in the car, included a diamond-studded watch, diamond breaches, ear-rings and pendants.

AGE KEPT HIM OUT OF JAIL.

When Samuel R. Wilson was fined £50 at a Co. Armagh Petty Sessions Court on Monday for having poteen and "still" in his possession, Mr. J. C. Austin, R.M., said the fact that accused was 72 saved him from a term in prison.