

Q. What followed?

A. The Irish revolted against the Danes; and as they combined together tolerably well, they drove the invaders out of the centre of the country to the coasts; where, however, they still kept possession of the seaports.

Q. Did the Danes ever recover their former power in Ireland?

A. No; in the eleventh century the Irish resolved to make a grand effort for their final expulsion from the island; and a battle was fought on the plains of Clontarf, near Dublin, on Good Friday, 1014, in which the Danes were driven to their ships with great slaughter.

Q. Who was the leader of the Irish army upon that occasion?

A. Brian Boroinhe, king-paramount of Ireland, the greatest and best king that Ireland ever saw.

Q. Did he live to enjoy the fruits of his victory?

A. No; he was slaughtered while at prayer in his tent, by a straggling party of the enemy.

Q. What was the result of Brian Boroinhe's death upon the general interests of the kingdom?

A. In the last degree disastrous. On the death of the monarch, whose skill and wisdom had for many years governed the land in prosperity and peace, the absurd and criminal squabbles of the petty princes were revived, and the country was ravaged with intestine warfare.

Q. Is there any use in recording and dwelling on these disgraceful contentions?

A. Yes; they teach us a useful, though a bitter lesson. The crimes of our forefathers shows us what we should avoid. We see in their miserable domestic quarrels, the true cause why foreign power was able to introduce and to establish its supremacy in Ireland.

Q. Did the unsettled state of the country afford strong encouragement to the English king, Henry II?

A. Of course it did. Several of the Irish princes, and all the Irish prelates, wearied with perpetual civil discord, were not unwilling that the kingdom should be placed under a strong sovereign ruler; and this circumstance gained a welcome for Henry from the heads of the church, and a large number of the temporal rulers of the island.

Q. What circumstance first drew the British invaders to Ireland?

A. Dermot, king of Leinster, having been driven out of his kingdom by O'Rork, prince

of Bressny, and O'Connor, king of Connaught, sought the assistance of Henry II. of England, against his native rivals.

Q. In what year did Dermot thus seek help from Henry?

A. In 1168.

Q. How did Henry receive Dermot's application?

A. He required the Irish king to do homage to him for his possessions; and being then unable to go to Ireland himself, he gave Dermot letters-patent, authorizing any English subjects who might be so inclined to assist Dermot against O'Connor and O'Rorke.

Q. Whose assistance did Dermot procure?

A. That of Richard, earl of Strigul and Pembroke, usually called Strongbow, from his skill in archery.

Q. What reward did Dermot promise Strongbow for his help?

A. He promised to give him his daughter Eva in marriage, and also to bequeath to him the inheritance of his kingdom.

Q. Did Dermot obtain any other help than Strongbow's?

A. Yes; he got the aid of Robert Fitz-Stephen, Maurice Fitz-Gerald, Meyler Fitz-Henry, Maurice de Prendergast, Hervey Montmarisco, and several other knights.

Q. When did the Anglo-Norman invaders first land in Ireland?

A. They landed on the coast of Wexford, in the month of May, 1170.

Q. Was Strongbow among their number?

A. No; he had waited to obtain the express permission of King Henry for his Irish expedition.

Q. Did Henry grant permission to Strongbow to go to Ireland?

A. No; he was jealous of Strongbow, and doubted his allegiance.

Q. What did Strongbow then do?

A. He sailed for Ireland *without* Henry's permission, carrying with him a considerable force, with whose aid he seized Waterford.

Q. What followed?

A. Strongbow married Eva, the daughter of Dermot Mac Murrough, king of Leinster, and on Dermot's death he succeeded to his father-in-law's territory.

Q. In what year did Henry visit Ireland?

A. In 1171. He pardoned Strongbow, and confirmed to him the possession of his territories under the English crown.

Q. Did the Pope sanction Henry the Second in his invasion of Ireland?