

The CATHOLIC CHRONICLE...

DEVOTED TO FOREIGN NEWS

IRELAND

ARCHBISHOP MACEVILLY DEAD.

Dublin, Nov. 26.—The Most Rev. John MacEvilly, D.D., Archbishop of Tuam, and private of Connaught since 1881, died to-day at the age of eighty-five years.

(Sketch Written During Life) John MacEvilly was, in April, A.D. 1817, born at Loughlin, in the County of Mayo. Going to St. Jarlath's College, at Tuam, he went thence to Maynooth, and, after a distinguished collegiate course there, he was ordained on the Dunboyne Establishment in 1840.

His most illustrious predecessors, Pius VI., who, in his letter to Martin Archbishop of Florence declares with the full force of Supreme Apostolic authority that the Sacred Scriptures are the most abundant sources which ought to be left open to everyone to draw from them purity of morals and discipline, to eradicate the errors which are widely disseminated in these corrupt times.

Few prelates in a church, especially remarkable for its self-sacrificing and untiring workers, have led so active a life as Dr. MacEvilly. We have seen what he has done as an author and an administrator, but his vigor in the management of parishes, in extent of area, the largest Diocese in Ireland is marvellous.

Dr. MacEvilly stands first among living Churchmen who write in English as a profound, prolific and scholarly writer. All through his long and active life he made the Holy Scriptures his special and earnest study, and there is no student of those inspired pages of light and lead-

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Dr. MacEvilly is the oldest Irish Bishop, dating his years from his consecration. He attended the Synod of Thurles, and is the only living Irish churchman who took part in its deliberations. He attended the Vatican Council, and is now the only Irish Bishop alive who was there at its opening.

He is an ardent lover of the old language, and for years, when Bishop of Galway, preached in Irish there every Sunday morning, while his discourses in English from the pulpit were especially admired for their rare ready, resourceful, racy eloquence.

Dr. MacEvilly is, and always throughout his long career, was a great advocate and encourager of temperance, and he practically carried out its principles by being himself for 40 years a total abstainer, and by endeavoring to recommend its practice by inducting children in thousands at Confirmation to take the pledge.

When an ambassador from England arrives at Paris or Berlin, what is his first duty? To produce his commission stamped with the genuine seal of his sovereign. This authoritative document and the limits of his power are carefully examined before he is permitted to speak or act in the sovereign's name.

Lessons in Irish History

(From The Dublin Freeman's Journal.)

KING BRIAN.

(By Mr. Barry O'Brien)

The statement may seem incredible, but it is, nevertheless, true, we have more authoritative information about King Brian than we have about Sarsfield. From the materials at our command we can get nearer to the great monarch of the 11th century than to the gallant soldier of the eighteenth. We have Brian's story from one who knew him, and who was familiar with the events of his life.

There is a brief description of this battle given in the "War of the Gaedhil and the Gaill," which I shall quote. "When the Dalcaissians arrived at Sulcoit the foreigners came against, and to meet them, and there was a fierce, bloody, crimson, violent, unsparring, implacable battle fought between them. They were from sunrise till mid-day striking and slaughtering each other.

But the victors did not give them breathing time. "They were followed," continues the narrative, "by (the Dalcaissians) quickly and rapidly throughout the great plain, who killed and beheaded from that time until evening. Nor did the victors pause until they reached Limerick itself. The battle was continued in the streets, and did not cease until the Danish force was annihilated. Then the Dalcaissians burned the town. The Danes took refuge in Scattery Island, and in other islands on the Shannon.

The want of National cohesion made Ireland a prey to the Norse pirates who swept down upon the country in the ninth and tenth centuries. The invaders were, no doubt, beaten in many a pitched battle, but their power upon the whole remained unbroken. They settled in Waterford, Limerick and Dublin, and thence made incursions into the interior, spreading ruin and havoc around a united and organized Ireland could have easily reduced them to submission.

He was a great man and a strong personality, and he had the defects of his qualities. He could not brook a rival. He could not rest content with the sovereignty of a province; and, I think, it is clear, that from an early date, he contemplated the sovereignty of the whole island. We read that he sailed up the Shan-

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to weld the people together in one grand movement against the fierce and barbarous invaders. Brian was born in Kincora in 941. Twenty-three years after his birth (964) his brother, Mahon, became King of Munster. The Norsemen held Munster in thralldom, the Dane, reigned in Limerick, Danes ruled in Cork and Waterford. After many struggles, Mahon was forced to take refuge in the fastnesses of Clare. Thence he issued forth from time to time to attack the foe. But his efforts were unavailing. Ultimately he made a peace with Ivar, which still left the Danes supreme in Munster.

As usual, Brian followed up his victory. He marched into Dublin and took possession of the city. Sitric, the Danish King of Dublin, fled to the North to seek the help of O'Neill, King of Ulster. Brian sent in pursuit of him, and O'Neill surrendered to Brian's followers, by whom he was brought back to Dublin.

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non in command of 800 boats and overran Meath, and that he sent a force in Connaught to make his power felt in that province. It is no wonder that the Ardri-Malachy II., himself a famous man (who had become High King in 930, and who had beaten the Danes on many a field)—should have taken alarm at the operations of the King of Munster. He made an effort to enforce his authority over Brian, but in vain, and finally (in 988) he and Brian met on the shores of Lough Ree and agreed to divide the sovereignty of Ireland between them. Malachy to be High King of the North—Brian to be High King of the South—an arrangement which seems to have been received by the whole country with infinite joy. But peace, unhappily, was of short duration. Malmord, King of Leinster, was not satisfied with the compact of Lough Ree, and he joined with the Danes of Dublin in promoting a revolt against the High King. In 999 the Danes of Dublin rebelled and Malmord joined them. Brian and his son, Murrough, flew over the Wicklow Mountains to attack Dublin and crush the rebellion on the instant they passed in the valley of Glencanna, where they were joined by Malachy. The Danes of Dublin, under Harold, and the Leinstermen, under Malmord, hastened to meet them, and a great battle was fought at Glencanna which ended in the complete rout of the Danes and Leinstermen, of whom, it is said, 4,000 were slain, including Harold, the Danish leader, himself Malmord, on flying from the field, concealed himself in a yew tree but he was discovered by Murrough and made a prisoner.

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furious Dalcaissians. Yet both Norse and Irish fought with desperate and equal valor. At first the Norsemen drove back their assailants, and Sitric said to his wife (Brian's daughter), who stood by his side watching the battle "Well do the foreigners reap the field, many a sheaf do they cast from the." But she answered: "The result will be seen at the end of the day," for she thought only of her own people. Murrough, seeing that his men were falling back before the Norse forces placed himself in front of the fight, urging his warriors forward. At length he came face to face with Sigurd, and Sigurd did not shrink from the conflict. Hand to hand both warriors fought, and valiantly the retainers of each rallied to their chief. But Murrough with one crushing blow cleft the helmet of the Norse commander in twain, and with another struck him lifeless to the ground. Then the Dalcaissians dashed madly forward and the Norsemen fled to the sea. Sitric and his wife still watched the scene from the ramparts of Dublin. "Methinks," she said, "that the foreigners have gained their patrimony." "What meanest thou, woman?" he asked. "Are they not rushing to the sea, their natural inheritance?" was her answer. And so it was. The foreigners were literally driven into the sea. The rout was complete, the battle was decisive. "What hast thou to tell me of my men?" Haru the Red, who had escaped from the field, was asked by Earl Flos. "They all were there," was the reply. But the victory was dearly purchased. Murrough fell pursuing the flying foe, but not until the traitor Malmord was numbered among the slain. Turrough (Murrough's son), a youth of much promise, was found in the tide with his hand firmly clutching the hair of a dead Viking. Brian himself was killed in his camp by Brodar, though Brodar, too, fell at the same moment, slain by the hand of Brian. Three generations were destroyed in a single day. It is sometimes asked why did not the Irish follow up their success and take Dublin? Because Brian and Murrough, and, it may be, even Turrough were no more. No one was left behind to show the skill and energy which Brian and Murrough had shown on many a field. Without striking another blow, Malachy retired to Meath, and Donogh (Brian's youngest son) marched back to Kincora. Thus all the fruits of victory were not gathered. The power of the Danes, which had been undermined during the rule of Brian, was, no doubt, destroyed at Clontarf. But the strong National Government which that Monarch had established also came to an end. The dream of Danish dominion vanished. But the work of national consolidation was stopped.