

SIR JOHN THOMAS BANKS.

Sir John Thomas Banks, Physician, was the twenty-fourth child of Percival Banks, who was also a doctor with a good practice in Ennis, and of Mary Ramsey. Banks was born on 14th October, 1815, and entered Trinity College, Dublin, at the age of 17. He graduated from there B.A., and M.B., in 1837, and M.D. in 1843.

In the meantime, he had entered the Royal College of Surgeons and, after several years apprenticeship under the famous physician, Sir Henry Marsh, he obtained his doctor's licence in the year 1836. In 1841 he became a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, and, in 1844, a Fellow of the same College.

After such a brilliant educational career, Banks very soon established a large practice in Dublin and, in addition, there was hardly a hospital in the city in which he did not hold some sort of position as consultant. He was President of the College of Physicians in 1869 and President of the British Medical Association in 1887, on the occasion of their general meeting in Dublin. Without danger of contradiction, it may be said that Banks was the most eminent Irish physician of his day.

He was the recognised authority on typhus as well as diseases of the brain and, in his younger days, he had done much clever research work into these two subjects. His busy life, however, left him little time for scientific research, and it is on his practice that Banks' reputation now rests.

In 1848 he married Alicia Wright, of Monaghan, and had an only child, Mary. In 1883 he declined a knighthood, but, in 1889, accepted the far greater honour of K.C.B. Banks lived to be a very old man and, although his eyesight failed him in his last few years, it did not interfere either with his practice or his social activities. He died at 45, Merrion Square, Dublin, on 16th July, 1908, aged 93, and was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery.

A portrait of him, painted by Sarah Purser, now hangs in the Hall of the Royal College of Physicians. Another portrait, designed by Oliver Shepherd, for a medal to be awarded to the winner of the travelling scholarship in medicine in Trinity College is in that College.

BRIAN BORU, High King of Ireland.

Brian Boru, High King of Ireland, was born in the first half of the tenth century, about the year 926. He was the son of Kennedy the Pure, of the Dalcassian Race, and in the sketch of his elder brother, Mahon, we have already described his early exploits. When Mahon was slain in 976, Brian assumed the Kingship of Munster and quickly avenged his brother's death.