

# Kilmainham Gaol Document Pack

## PARNELL



# KILMAINHAM GAOL DOCUMENT PACK

## CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

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## **INTRODUCTION TO KILMAINHAM DOCUMENT PACK CHARLES STEWART PARNELL**

Kilmainham Gaol was opened in 1796 as the gaol for the County of Dublin. It underwent frequent structural changes and, in 1862 a spectacular improvement was achieved with the addition of the East Wing. Apart from common convicts, state (or political) prisoners were held there from time to time. During the era of transportation it acted as a depot for transportees bound for the convict colonies of Australia. Many of the most prominent personalities in Irish history were imprisoned and in some cases executed there.

This Document Pack contains a selection of documents relating to the key events in the life of Charles Stewart Parnell, including his arrest and imprisonment in Kilmainham Gaol. The Gaol reflected many of the political and social events of the period: agrarian crime, the Land War, the Kilmainham Treaty, the Phoenix Park murders, the Pigott forgeries, Home Rule. The documents in this pack present these and other topics in the written record of the time to convey some of the immediacy and excitement which people experienced in living through the events described. Sources include newspaper and parliamentary reports, extracts from the Gaol Register and from the private correspondence of Parnell.

The Junior Certificate History syllabus recommends the 'proper use of appropriate documentary sources' by teachers in the classroom. The documents in this pack can be used in the study of this period for the Junior Certificate and also possibly as a special topic for the Leaving Certificate. They might equally form the basis for a Transition Year project. The teacher will be the best judge of the use of the documents, but a visit to Kilmainham Gaol is recommended to add to the learning experience.

**Pat Cooke**  
**Curator**  
**Kilmainham Gaol**

**Dóirín Creamer**  
**Chairperson**  
**Blackrock Teachers' Centre**

**Additional Packs in this series include:**

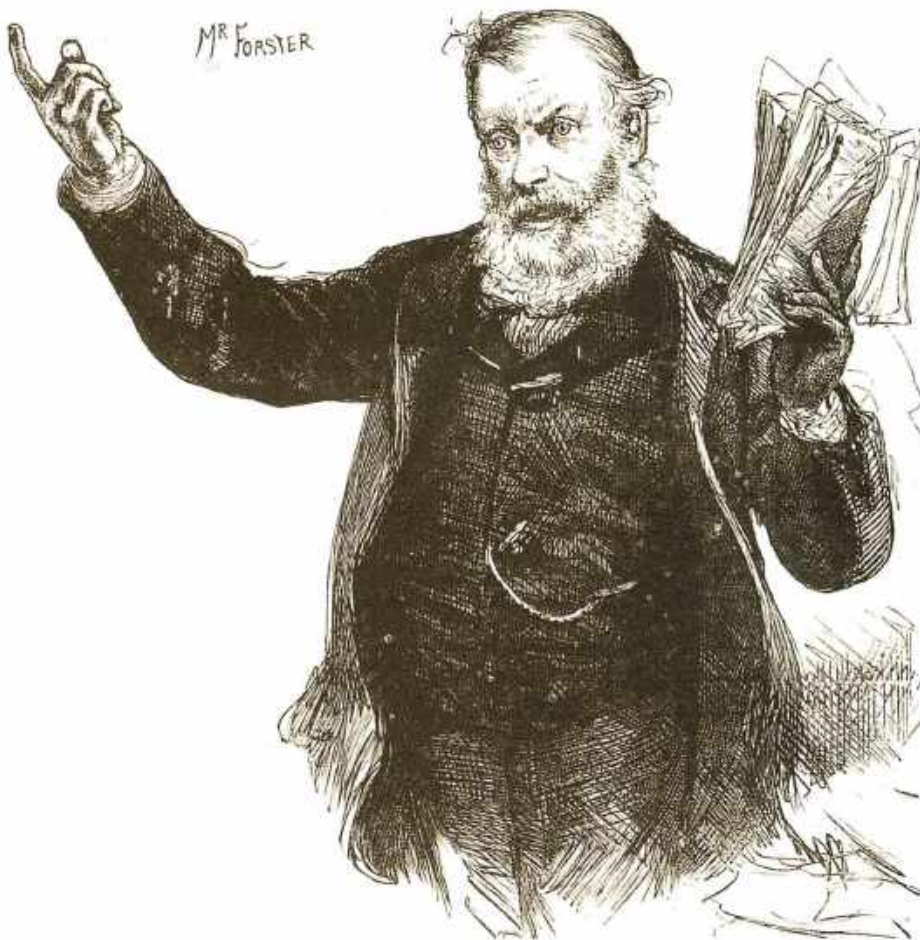
Kilmainham Gaol Document Pack: Primary  
Kilmainham Gaol Document Pack: 1796-1849  
Kilmainham Gaol Document Pack: The 1916 Rising



## PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY ACT 1881

The Protection of Persons and Property Act (Coercion Act) was introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, W. E. Forster, in order to deal with an upsurge in agrarian crime in the countryside. It gave the Government the power to suspend the ordinary law in 'proclaimed' districts and to imprison without trial persons suspected of committing agrarian crimes. The Act had a very stormy passage through Parliament (one sitting, for example, lasted 41 hours), but it was eventually introduced into law on 2 March 1881. At the end of that year, over 1000 men, including Parnell himself, were in prison.

The following is a list of people committed to Kilmainham Gaol over a period of seven months during 1881 under the terms of the Act.



'Buckshot' Forster, Chief Secretary for Ireland, vehemently advocated the arrest of the Land Leaguers and subsequently resigned when the leaders were released from gaol in May 1882 under the terms of the so-called 'Kilmainham Treaty'.

UNIT 1

### KILMAINHAM TREATY



DOCUMENT  
—1A—

*Extract from The  
Kilmainham Gaol  
Register 1881*

# Extract from the Kilmainham Gaol Register

1 April – 10 October 1881

No.	Name	Why Committed	Address	Occupation
1843	Joseph B. Walsh	Inciting other to intimidate certain of H.M. subjects to compel them to quit their lawful employment.	Castlebar, Co. Mayo	Spirit Dealer
1844	Cornelius Keogh	Intimidating divers of H.M. subjects to compel them to leave their lawful employment.	Rockfarm Ballybrood, Co. Limerick	Farmer
1845	Michael P. Boyton	Inciting divers persons to murder certain other persons.	Rathdangan, Co. Kildare	Engineer Newspaper Correspondent
1846	Thomas B. Kelly	Treasonable practices.	Oranmore, Co. Galway	Farmer
1847	Denis Hannigan	Intimidating persons to compel them to quit their farms and give up their lawful occupations.	Drumcollogher, Co. Limerick	Farmer
1848	Martin Halloran	Intimidating divers persons to compel them not to pay rent.	Kiltulla, Co. Galway	Turner and Farmer
1864	William Kennedy	Shooting at with intent to do grievous bodily harm.	Newtown Ellard, Co. Limerick	Farmer
1865	Patrick D. Kenny	Inciting divers persons to assault dwelling houses of certain persons and by threats and menaces cause arms to be delivered up.	Ballymacadam, Castleisland, Co. Kerry	Farmer
1866	Edward Hussey	Assaulting certain dwelling houses and by threats and menaces cause arms and weapons to be delivered up.	Castleisland, Co. Kerry	Farmer
1867	John Nally Co. Mayo	Inciting to murder.	Balla,	None
1868	Michael Quigley	Assembling with divers persons and maliciously assaulting the dwelling house of one of H.M. subjects and shooting at certain of H.M. subjects.	Knockfances, Co. Clare	Farmer
1869	Michael Flynn	Inciting divers persons to assemble and assault the dwelling house of one of H.M. subjects and shooting at certain of H.M. subjects.	Milltown, Co. Clare Affick.	Farmer
1870	Charles Nelson	Assaulting and beating one of H.M. subjects.	Killeen, Leitrim. Sweetwood.	Farmer



1871	John McMorrow	Riot and unlawful assembly.	Lower Drumreilly, Cornamucklagh, Co. Leitrim	School Teacher
1872	Patrick McManus	Like offence.	Drumshambo, Co. Leitrim	Farmer and Shopkeeper
1876	Daniel Kevane	Maiming cattle.	Mamagurrane, Co. Kerry	Labourer
1879	Bernard McHugh	Intimidating certain persons to compel them to give up their farms.	Thomastown, Co. Roscommon	Farmer
1822	Thomas Daly	Inciting others to intimidate certain persons to compel them not to pay rent.	Coolnabin, Co. Mayo Crossmolina	Shopkeeper and Farmer
1926	John Ryan	Intimidating a certain person to compel him to join the Land League.	Cappawhite, Co. Limerick	Farmer



Recreation time in the gaol. Parnell, Davitt and the other leaders of the Land League were imprisoned in Kilmainham Gaol in October 1881. They enjoyed privileges not accorded to other prisoners, as this sketch clearly illustrates.



## Questions

- (1) How many counties are represented in the list? What part of the country was most affected by the agitation?
- (2) What do you notice about the occupation of the prisoners?
- (3) Why do you think non-farmers got involved in the Land League?
- (4) What sort of crimes were the prisoners accused of? Explain 'divers' and who or what does 'H.M.' refer to?
- (5) For what reason would people compel others to join the Land League (see, for example, Prisoner No. 1926/John Ryan in the Gaol Register)?
- (6) Suggest a reason why some farmers were intimidated 'to quit their farms' during this period (see, for example, Prisoner No. 1847/Denis Hannigan in the Gaol Register).



**Lease-burning was a common feature of the Land War in the late-19th century as the Irish peasantry were locked in bitter conflict with landlordism. This scene in Kildare is typical of the mass meetings that were to lead to the accusation that the leaders of the Land League were inciting unrest in the country.**



## CHARLES STEWART PARNELL AND THE LAND LEAGUE

Speeches made at Land League meetings were usually recorded by members of the local constabulary and sent to the Chief Secretary's office in Dublin Castle. In 1880, Parnell was prosecuted with Dillon, Biggar and other Land League officials 'for conspiring to prevent the payment of rents and the taking of farms from which tenants had been evicted, for resisting the process of ejectment and generally creating ill will among Her Majesty's subjects'. The trial began on the 28 December 1880, but the jury could not agree and the case collapsed on 23 January 1881.

The following extracts are from speeches made by Parnell in Ennis, Co. Clare, on 19 September 1880 and in Galway City on 24 October 1880.

### Extract from Parnell's speech in Ennis 19 September 1880

Witness:  
**ALFRED F. MILL,**  
Professional Reporter

Speakers: **Mr. C. S. PARNELL, MP**  
**Mr. FINIGAN, MP**  
**Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN, MP**

Referring to the question whether the farmers should give evidence before the Land Commission, Mr. Parnell said that his opinion 'decidedly was that whatever harm they may do to the cause by going before the Commission, they will certainly be able to do it no good'.

Speaking on the subject of land-grabbing, he used the following words: 'What are you to do to a tenant who bids for a farm from which his neighbour was evicted? [*Shouts and cries of 'Kill him', 'Shoot him'.*] Now, I think I heard somebody say "Shoot him", but I wish to point out to you a very much better way, a more Christian and a more charitable way, which will give the lost sinner an opportunity of repenting. You must show him when you meet him, in the streets of the town, at the shop counter, in the fair or market place, and even in the house of worship, by leaving him severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him as if he was a leper of old; and you may depend upon it, that if the population of a County in Ireland carry out this doctrine, there will be no man as to dare public opinion and transgress your unwritten code of laws. [*Cheers.*]

'How would the English Government like it if some day we told the people not to pay any rent, until this land question was settled? We have not told them that yet. If it should not be settled, it will be for wiser heads than mine whether we shall not be obliged to tell the people of Ireland to strike against all rent until the question has been settled. And if the 500,000 tenant

UNIT 1

## KILMAINHAM TREATY



## DOCUMENT —1B—

*Extracts from  
speeches made by  
Charles Stewart  
Parnell in Ennis  
and Galway*



farmers struck against the 10,000 landlords, I should like to see where they would get police and soldiers enough to preserve the peace.' [*Cheers.*]

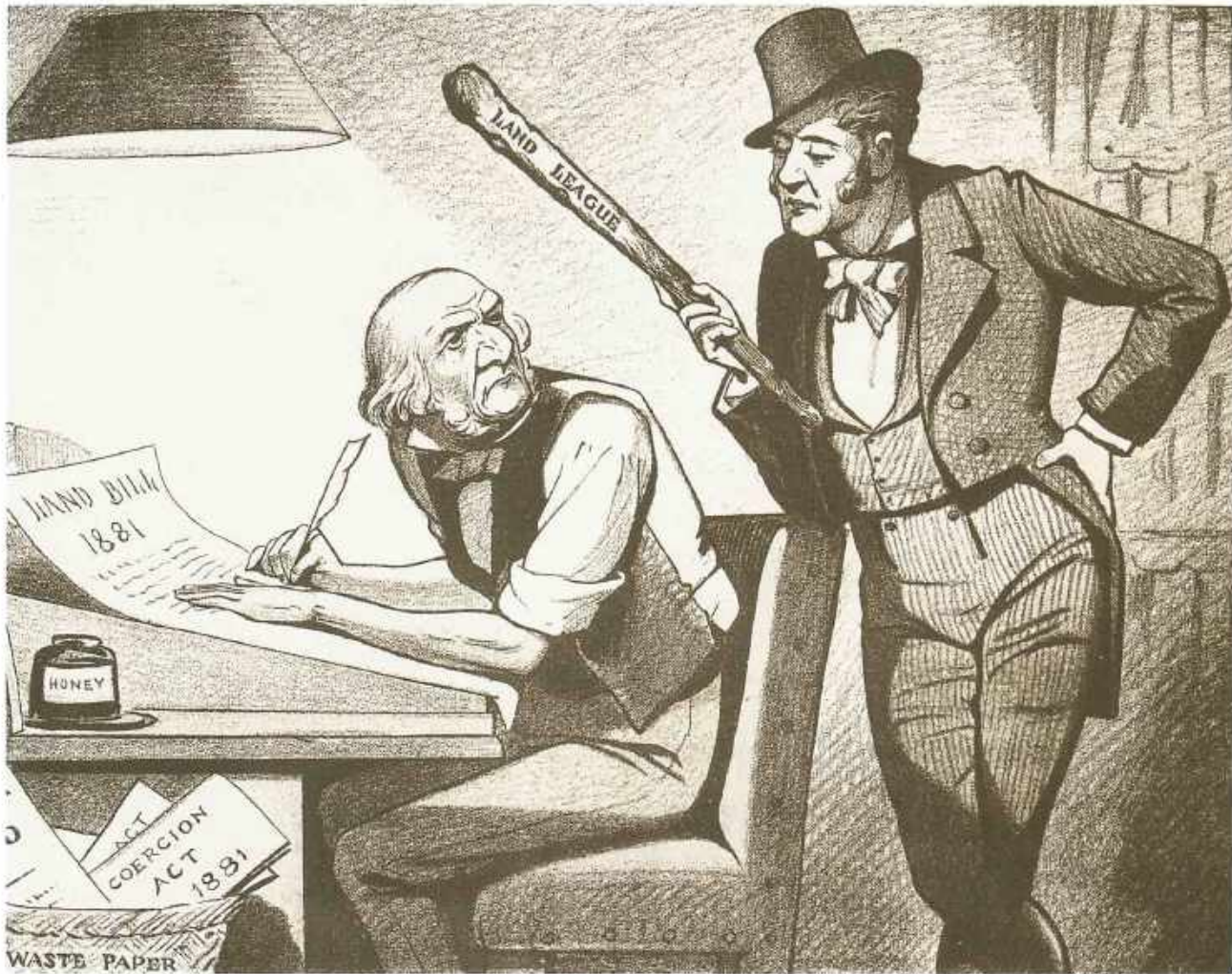
### Extract from Parnell's speech in Galway

24 October 1880

'Who are responsible for the murders of landlords which have from time to time, at all times in our history, taken place in this country? It is admitted by everybody that English-made law is responsible [*cheers*]; and I say that the people who are primarily responsible for the murder of Lord Mountmorres, if it was an agrarian crime, and of that I have very great doubt, are the House of Lords, who, by rejecting the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, took the arbitrament of this question from the Courts of Law and placed it in the hands of the people: and the man who is secondarily responsible is this pretended humanitarian Chief Secretary of ours, buckshot Forster, who, when the House of Lords kicked out his Bill and smote him on one cheek, turned to them the other cheek to smite also. He foresaw then, and he publicly stated in the House of Commons that he anticipated, an increase of crime, outrage, and loss of life in Ireland; and yet, in the face of that, he deliberately refused to keep Parliament together, and to force through the House of Lords a measure which would prevent him from being made the instrument of landlord tyranny and injustice.

'Well, you are left to your own resources, as the people of Ireland always have been left, as far as anything that the Parliament of England ever has done or is ever likely to do for you; and I suppose that we shall witness the usual crop of prosecutions this winter [*laughter*], the return to the old policy of coercion, which has always been the resort of English statesmen after they have found out that England is unable to govern Ireland. I anticipated this when this great Liberal Ministry came into power, of which we have heard so much and of whose professions we have heard so many. I expressed my belief, at the beginning of last session, that the present Chief Secretary, who was then all smiles and promise, would not have proceeded very far in the duties of his office before he would have found that he had undertaken an impossible task to govern Ireland, and the only way to govern Ireland is to allow her to govern herself. [*Cheers.*] And if they prosecute the leaders in this movement, it will not be because they wish to preserve the lives of one or two landlords [*'Nor we – away with them all.'*], but it will be because they see that behind this movement there is a more dangerous movement to have a hold over Ireland, because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism here – and they will fail – they have no chance of maintaining it in Ireland, because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism in Ireland, their power to misrule Ireland will go too.

'I wish to see the tenant-farmers prosperous; but large and important as is the class of tenant-farmers, constituting as they do, with their wives and families, the majority of the people of this country, I would not have taken off my coat and gone to this work, if I had not known that we were laying the foundations by this movement for the recovery of our legislative independence. Push on, then, towards this goal; extend your organization, and let every tenant-farmer, while he keeps a firm grip of his holding, recognize also the great truth that he is serving his country and the people at large, and helping to break down English misrule in Ireland. [*Cheers.*]



Prime Minister Gladstone is shown in this cartoon from the *Weekly Freeman* to be intimidated by the Land League into introducing the 1881 Land Act, which granted tenants a 'fair rent' to be established by an independent Court – provided, of course, they were not in arrears. Some 125,000 *were* in arrears.

## Questions

### PARNELL'S SPEECH IN ENNIS

- (1) What advice did Parnell give regarding the Land Commission?

*Extra information:* Disraeli's Government, which was defeated in the general election of 1880, had appointed a Royal Commission to examine the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland. When Gladstone came to office in April 1880, he appointed another commission to examine the operation of the Land Act of 1870 and it was this commission that Parnell was probably referring to in his speech.

- (2) What did 'land-grabbing' mean?



- (3) What advice did Parnell give to the people regarding the treatment of land-grabbers?  
*Extra information:* Tenants throughout the country began to act on Parnell's advice. One of the first people to be affected by this policy was a landlord's agent in Co. Mayo called Boycott. Soon this policy became known as 'boycotting' and a new word entered the English language.
- (4) What threat did Parnell make in his speech?

#### PARNELL'S SPEECH IN GALWAY

- (1) Who did Parnell blame for the murders of landlords?
- (2) What happened to the Compensation for Disturbance Bill? Why?  
*Extra information:* The Compensation for Disturbance Bill was introduced by Chief Secretary Forster in June 1880. It provided that an evicted tenant was entitled to compensation if he could prove that he could not pay his rent for a good reason.
- (3) What did Parnell predict would happen that winter?
- (4) What, according to Parnell, was the only way to govern Ireland?
- (5) Why, according to Parnell, was the government determined to uphold landlordism in Ireland?
- (6) Why, according to Parnell, did he get involved in the land question?

## ARREST WARRANT FOR PARNELL

In early 1881 the British Prime Minister, Gladstone, introduced a new Land Act for Ireland. The terms of this Act allowed tenants who felt their rent was too high to apply to a new Land Court to have it reviewed and a 'fair rent' would be fixed by the Court. Unfortunately, tenants in arrears and those holding leases were not eligible to apply, thereby excluding about a quarter of a million people. Until this problem was resolved, Parnell was reluctant to support the new Act. Gladstone, however, believed that Parnell was opposing the new law and so ordered his arrest.

### Warrant To Arrest

Whereas by an order of the Lord Lieutenant dated the 30th day of April 1881, and made by and with the advice of the Privy Council in Ireland, and by virtue of the Act made and passed in the 44th year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, entitled 'An Act for the Better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland', and of every power and authority in this behalf, the Lord Lieutenant specified and declared that the hereinafter mentioned part of Ireland (that is to say):

*The county of the City of Dublin*

should, upon the making of the said Order, become and be and continue a Prescribed District within the meaning and provisions of the said Act, and whereas our said Order is still in force

Now We, the Lord Justice General and General Governor of Ireland, by virtue of the said Act, and of every power and authority in this behalf, do, by this our Warrant declare

*Charles Stewart Parnell Esquire  
of Avondale  
in the County of Wicklow  
Member of Parliament*

to be reasonably suspected of having, since the 30th day of September 1880, been guilty as principal of a crime punishable by law, that is to say: inciting other persons wrongfully and without legal authority to intimidate divers persons with a view to compel them to abstain from doing what they had a legal right to do, namely to apply to the Court under the passing of the Land Law (Ir.) Act . . . to have a fair rent fixed for their holdings, committed in the aforesaid prescribed District and being:

UNIT 1

KILMAINHAM  
TREATY



DOCUMENT

-1C-

*Arrest Warrant for*

*Charles Stewart*

*Parnell*



*THE INCITING TO AN ACT OF INTIMIDATION*

and tending to interfere with the maintenance of Law and Order.  
And this is to command you to whom this Warrant is addressed to arrest the said

*Charles Stewart Parnell*

in any part of Ireland, and lodge him in Her Majesty's Prison at

*Kilmainham*

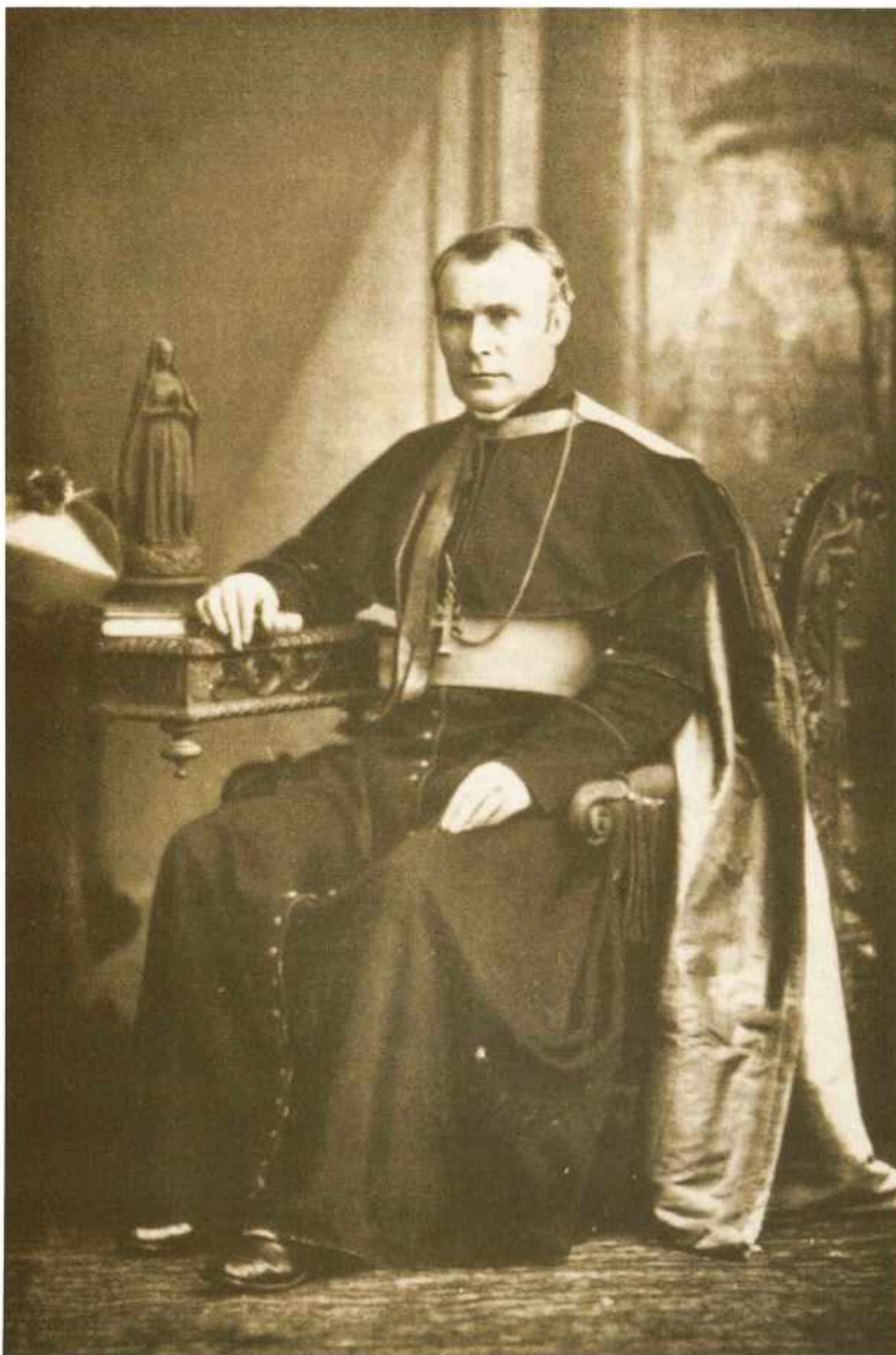
there to be detained during the continuance of the said Act, unless sooner discharged or tried by  
Our direction.

**Given at Dublin Castle, the 13th day of October 1881  
By Their Excellencies' command**

*(Signed) . . . W. E. Forster*  
*Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant*

To: John Mallon  
Superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Police and his Assistants,  
and to the Governor of Her Majesty's Prison at Kilmainham.





Archbishop Croke, Patron of the Land League.



## Questions

- (1) Under which Chief Secretary was Parnell arrested?
- (2) What was the charge for which Parnell was to be imprisoned?
- (3) For how long was Parnell to be imprisoned in Kilmainham?
- (4) Keeping Parnell's 1880 speeches at Ennis and Galway in mind (*see Document 1B*), suggest a reason why the Government felt the ordinary law was inadequate to deal with people like Parnell.
- (5) When you visit Kilmainham Gaol, find out the type of conditions under which Parnell was held.



## PARNELL'S ARREST

Parnell was arrested on Thursday, 13 October 1881 and imprisoned in Kilmainham Gaol the following day. On the way to the prison, the police allowed him to post a letter to Mrs. Katharine O'Shea, who was pregnant with their first child at the time. In this letter, Parnell confided his belief that the Land League had effectively outlived its purpose with the coming of the new Land Act; he also said that, from a political point of view, his imprisonment was quite fortunate.

Read the following contemporary account of Parnell's arrest (from the *Freeman's Journal* of Friday, 14 October 1881) and see what evidence there is to support Parnell's assertion.

### The Arrest of Mr. Parnell, MP Full Particulars Great Popular Indignation

A great and painful sensation thrilled the metropolis yesterday morning when the news spread with astonishing rapidity that Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell, MP, had been arrested. It is not too much to say that every man received the intelligence with bated breath, and it is nothing but the truth to add that in the minds and hearts of many, who wish our country well, the amazement was mixed with alarm.

The citizens were on their way to business when Mr. Parnell was on his way to Kilmainham, and the latter went as contentedly to his Bastille as did the others to their respective avocations. The details of the illustrious gentleman's arrest have a transcendent interest . . . He arrived in the city by the last train from Bray, and stayed on Wednesday night at his usual city residence, Morrisson's Hotel, Dawson Street, his intention being to proceed on yesterday morning to County Convention announced to be held that day at Bray. His arrangement was to travel to Sallins by the 10.15am train. Though this detail was not generally known, the whole world, if it cared to know, was aware of the fact that he purposed speaking at the Naas convention. Her Majesty's Government knew it well, for all Mr. Parnell's movements are perfectly open, and having arrested the Honourable Member for Tipperary while on the way to the Parliament of the Empire, they decided to intercept Mr. Parnell while on his way to the County Convention.

Here, in Mr. Parnell's own words, addressed to our reporter at an interview in the prison, is how the purpose was effected. 'Intending to proceed to Naas this morning, I ordered, before retiring to bed on Wednesday night, that I should be called at half past eight o'clock. When the man came to my bedroom to awake me he told me that two gentlemen were waiting below who wanted to see me. I told him to ask their names and business. Having gone out, he came back in a

UNIT 1



## KILMAINHAM TREATY



DOCUMENT

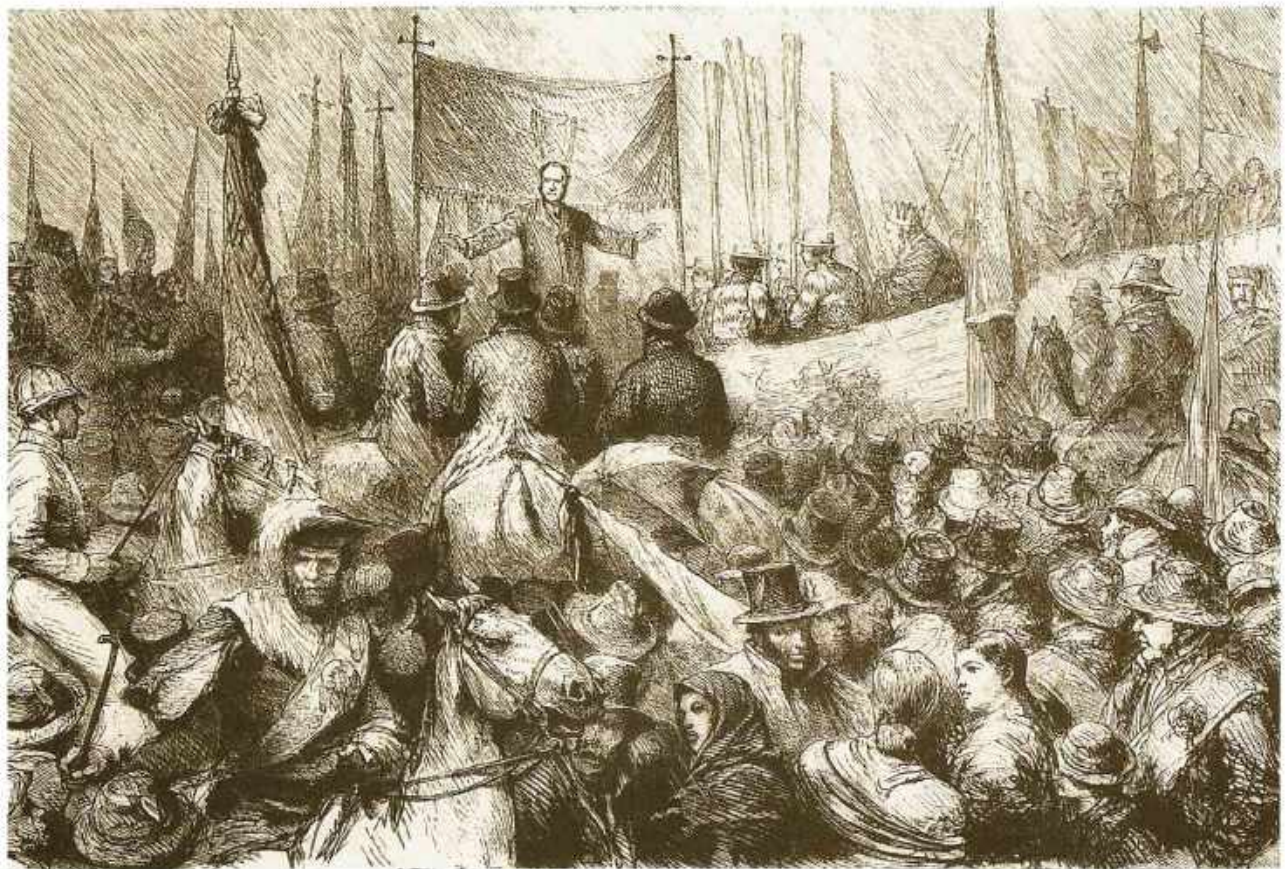
— 1 D —

*The Arrest of  
Mr. Parnell, MP*



few moments and said that one was the superintendent of police and the other was a policeman. I told him to say that I would be dressed in half an hour and would see them then. He went away but came back again to tell me he had been down again to see the gentlemen and had told them I was not stopping at that hotel. He then said that I should get out through the back part of the house and not allow them to catch me. I told him I would not do that, even if it was possible, because the police authorities would be sure to have every way most closely watched. He again went down and this time showed the gentlemen to my bedroom.'

Accompanying these two officers although not present at the interview, was Inspector Smith and Officers Sheridan, Carey and Cooper. In Foster Place there was a force of one hundred policemen in readiness in case of any emergency. Mr. Mallon, when he entered the bedroom, found Mr. C. S. Parnell in the act of dressing and immediately presented him with two warrants. He did not state their purpose but Mr. Parnell understood the situation without any intimation. It is not true to state that he exhibited surprise or that he looked puzzled. The documents were presented to him with gentlemanly courtesy by Mr. Mallon, and the Honourable Gentleman who was about to be arrested received them with perfect easiness and deliberation. He had private advice from England regarding the Cabinet Council and was well aware that the Government meditated some coup d'état . . .



**Agitation in Ireland: the Land League demonstration at Limerick.**





However, having given him the warrants to arrest, Mr. Mallon expressed his anxiety about a crowd collecting and asked Mr. Parnell to come away as quickly as possible. A cab was called and the two detectives with the Honourable Prisoner were driven away . . .

When the party reached the Bank of Ireland . . . four or six Metropolitan Police jumped upon two outside cars and drove in front of the party. On reaching the quays at the foot of Parliament Street, a number of horse policemen joined the procession at the rear. In this order the four vehicles made their way to Kilmainham. This strange procession passed along the thoroughfare without creating any remarkable notice. A few people did stop to look at it on part of the route and then pursued their policies. They stopped their charge after going a few yards and at half past nine o'clock Mr. Parnell appeared in front of the dark portals of Kilmainham . . .

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### Questions

- (1) Where in Dublin was Parnell arrested? (The place is now part of the Royal Hibernian Way off Dawson Street.)
- (2) What was Parnell's reported reaction to his arrest?
- (3) Do you think Parnell could have avoided arrest?
- (4) What was the public's reaction to Parnell's arrest? Support your answer by reference to the report given in the *Freeman's Journal* above.
- (5) From a political point of view, would the imprisonment of Parnell be likely to help or to hinder his career as a leader in Ireland? Give a reason for your answer.



## PARNELL'S LETTER FROM GAOL

While in Kilmainham Gaol, Parnell was anxious that no other body should assume the role of the Land League, which had been outlawed. His sister Anna set up the 'Ladies' Land League' to do just that, but Parnell quickly stamped it out on his release from prison, in May 1882. It seems that he now wanted to get back to the cause of Home Rule and any continuance of the Land League, or similar group, would only distract from this aim.

The following letter from Parnell to the Editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, written from Kilmainham Gaol on 23 October 1881, reveals his feelings about other land associations springing up.

### To the Editor of the *Freeman's Journal*

Dear Sir,

*I have noticed that a proposition has been made in some parts of the country to form Tenants' Defence Associations with the view of replacing the organization of the Irish National Land League, and I take this, probably the last opportunity I shall have, of putting our friends throughout Ireland in possession of the reasons why we here are all strongly opposed to the formation of such associations.*

*Freedom of speech and the right of combination have now been forbidden by the Government, and the proposed Associations would only be tolerated by Mr. Gladstone so long as they appear disposed to carry out his views and policy, and so far as they appeared likely to attempt to undo the work which the Irish Land League has done during the last two years. It is the purest childishness to say that it is only the name of the League which has been proclaimed. It is the spirit and its principles that have been really aimed at, and no other organization will be tolerated by our rulers for an instant unless it promises to be of a reactionary and Whiggish nature, willing to assist the Government in their attempt to repress, mislead, and demoralize the Irish Tenant Farmers.*

*Michael Davitt opposed me when two years since I suggested for the sake of harmony that the title 'Tenant Farmers' Defence Association' should be added to that of 'Land League', and I have lived to recognize the wisdom of his judgement. We call therefore upon our friends who are true to the principles of Davitt and the League to discourage the formation of those mongrel and reactionary associations, and have nothing whatever to do with them.*

*The only organization any longer practicable is that the tenants should meet by estates when called upon to pay rent, and decide upon the common line of action recommended in the Manifesto of the Executive, and we will devote our resources to protect and support tenants who may be evicted for adopting this course.*

## UNIT 1

## KILMAINHAM TREATY



## DOCUMENT —1E—

*Parnell's letter  
from Kilmainham  
Gaol to the Editor  
of the Freeman's  
Journal.*

*The decision of the Court that evicted tenants may only sell, but may not redeem, renders any further action in the Courts on their behalf useless. For this and other reasons already stated, Mr. McGough has retired from the conduct of these cases, and we recommend the evicted tenants to continue to rely upon the League, and not to waste their slender resources or those of their friends in a useless legal struggle.*

*Permit me to express, in conclusion, the unanimous feeling of every man in this gaol, that they are willing to remain here any number of months or years that may be necessary, so long as the Irish people outside, whom it is impossible to imprison, stand by the lessons we have taught them during the two years of the existence of the Irish National Land League.*

*Yours truly,*  
**CHARLES STEWART PARNELL**

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## **Questions**

- (1) Why did Parnell oppose the setting up of Tenants' Defence Associations?
- (2) What action did Parnell recommend to Irish tenant farmers?
- (3) What, in your opinion, was Parnell referring to when he wrote of 'the principles of Davitt and the League'?
- (4) A 'No Rent Manifesto' was reluctantly issued by Parnell and the other leaders of the Land League imprisoned with him. What support was the League prepared to offer people who followed this policy, as stated by Parnell in his letter above?
- (5) Does imprisonment seem to have defeated the spirit of Parnell, as seen in this letter? Give reasons for your answer.



## 'THE KILMAINHAM TREATY'

Parnell and his Land League associates were released from Kilmainham Gaol on 2 May 1882. Announcing their release in the House of Commons, the British Prime Minister, Gladstone, also stated that the Coercion Act would be allowed to lapse in the autumn. W. E. Forster resigned the same day as Chief Secretary of Ireland because he could not accept the change in the Government's Irish policy.

The Tories believed that a deal had been struck with Parnell and they questioned the Prime Minister about documentary evidence he had received regarding Parnell's intentions if released. The *Freeman's Journal* of 16 May 1882 reported: 'The terms of the document, which the Tories for their own purposes delight to call the "Treaty of Kilmainham", were disclosed to the House of Commons last evening under circumstances not altogether unsensational.' The *Freeman's Journal* goes on to describe the parliamentary debate that followed:

### The Government and the Irish Party

Mr. PULESTON (for Mr. Lewis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will now produce the documentary evidence of the intentions of the recently imprisoned members of this house with reference to their conduct if released from custody, which evidence the First Lord of the Treasury stated had reached him through the late Chief Secretary.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The documentary evidence referred to in this question consisted of certain letters between members of this house. Their production would not come under any usual rule that I am aware of, and there is no reason at present why they should be produced: in fact I think it would be open to objection as tending to diminish the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. PARNELL: Perhaps it may be better to read the letter in question - the letter which, I understand, forms the documentary evidence alluded to in the question. I will read it to the house. [*Cheers.*] It consists of a letter from myself to the honourable and gallant member for the county of Clare. It is headed 'Private and Confidential'. It is dated from Kilmainham, April 28th 1882, and is in the following terms:

"I was very sorry that you left Albert Mansions before I reached London from Eltham as I had wished to tell you that after our conversation I had made up my mind that it would be proper for me to put Mr McCarthy in possession of the views which I had previously communicated to you.

## UNIT 1

## KILMAINHAM TREATY



## DOCUMENT —1 F—

*A Report of a  
Parliamentary  
Debate in the  
Freeman's Journal,  
16 May 1882*

"I desire to impress upon you the absolute necessity of a settlement of the arrears question which will leave no recurring sore connected with it behind, and which will enable us to show to the smaller tenantry that they have been treated with justice and some generosity. [Irish cheers.]

"The proposal you have described to me as suggested to me in some quarters, of making a loan (over however many years the repayment might be spread) should be absolutely rejected for reasons which I have already fully explained to you. If the arrears question be settled upon the lines indicated by us, I have every confidence - a confidence shared by my colleagues - that the exertions which we should be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds.

"As regards permanent legislation of an ameliorative character I may say that the views which you have always shared with me as to the admission of leaseholders to the fair rent clauses of the Act are more confirmed than ever. So long as the flower of the Irish tenantry are kept outside the Act there cannot be any permanent settlement of the Land Question which we all so much desire.

"I should also strongly hope that some compromise might be arrived at this Session with regard to the amendment of the tenure clauses of the Land Act.

"It is unnecessary for me to dwell upon the enormous advantages to be derived from the full extension of the purchase clauses, which now seems practically to have been adopted by all parties.

"The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched out to you would in my judgement be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the Land Question. And I believe that the Government at the end of this Session would from the state of the country feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures."

*Yours very truly,*  
**C. S. PARNELL**

Lord JOHN MANNERS: I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the letter we have just heard read by the honourable member for the city of Cork is the only letter which constituted the documentary evidence referred to in the question of the honourable member for Londonderry? [*Cries of 'Hear, hear'.*]

Mr. FORSTER: Before the honourable gentleman answers that question, might I be allowed to ask the honourable member for the city of Cork did he read the whole letter? [*Cheers.*]

Mr. PARNELL: I did not keep a copy of the letter in question. My honourable and gallant friend, the member for Clare, has furnished me with a copy, and it may be possible that one paragraph has been omitted [*laughter and Opposition cheers*]; but speaking for myself, I have no objection to the honourable and gallant member, if he desires it, communicating the whole of the letter as I wrote it to the House. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. GLADSTONE: When I spoke in answer to the former question I spoke in the plural number, therefore it would be obvious that I had some information over and above what was contained in the letter, not in the slightest degree qualifying or contradicting it. [*Laughter and cheers.*]



Mr. WARTON: Might I ask the right honourable gentleman whether the second letter was one from the honourable member for Dundalk?

Captain O'SHEA: I think I should take the earliest opportunity of explaining every detail in connection with this matter. [*Cheers and cries of 'Read, read'.*] I have not the document.

Mr. Forster at this juncture produced a copy of Mr. Parnell's letter, amidst the laughter and ironical cheers of the Opposition, and handed it to the honourable and gallant member for Clare.

Captain O'Shea [*amidst cries of 'Read, read'*] handed the document back to Mr. Forster, who immediately passed it over to him again. The honourable and gallant member then read the document as follows [the letter is the same up to the last paragraph, which reads:]

"...The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched out to you would in my judgement be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the Land Question ***and would enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal Party in forwarding Liberal principles and measures of general reform.*** And I believe that the Government at the end of this Session would from the state of the country feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures."

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Might I ask the late Chief Secretary of Ireland whether he obtained a copy of the letter of Mr. Parnell as a member of the Cabinet of which he was recently a member? [*Irish cheers, cries of 'Forster' from the Irish benches, and 'No, no' from the Opposition.*]

Mr. FORSTER did not rise to answer.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I will repeat the question for the benefit of the right honourable gentleman.

The honourable member repeated the question.



**Captain William O'Shea, Home Rule MP, was involved in the discussion on the so-called 'Kilmainham Treaty' in the House of Commons. Later he was to play a more dramatic part in the life of both Parnell and the Home Rule movement.**

Mr. FORSTER: The honourable member for Clare. [*Cries of 'Order, order'.*]

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is not entitled to ask that question, because it does not relate to any bill or motion before the House. [*'Hear, hear'.*]

Mr. DILWYN: May I ask the right honourable gentleman the Prime Minister whether any other correspondence passed between Her Majesty's Government and the honourable member for the city of Cork. [*'Hear, hear'.*]

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think the honourable member will infer from the answer I gave to the first question that it was not the only letter that passed. I did say, and I repeat now, that there never was the slightest understanding of any kind between Her Majesty's Government and the honourable member for the city of Cork. The honourable member for the city of Cork has asked nothing from us, and we on our side asked nothing and got nothing from him.

Mr. RITCHIE asked whether the suggestion referred to in the letter of the honourable member for the city of Cork as coming from 'some quarters' came from Her Majesty's Government. [*'No, no' from the front Opposition bench.*]

Mr. GLADSTONE made no reply.

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## Questions

- (1) Who was the First Lord of the Treasury? What was he also called?
- (2) From whom did the First Lord of the Treasury receive the 'documentary evidence'?
- (3) What did the 'documentary evidence' consist of?
- (4) Who was the honourable member for the county of Clare and the honourable member for the city of Cork?
- (5) In Parnell's letter to O'Shea, he set out what he saw were the major problems that needed to be solved. List them.
- (6) How, according to Parnell, would the implementation of his proposed programme be regarded in the country?
- (7) What was the significance of the passage in the letter that Parnell did not read out to the House and that O'Shea was forced to read out later?
- (8) What was the significance of Mr. T. P. O'Connor's question to Mr. Forster?



## THE PHOENIX PARK MURDERS

W. E. Forster resigned as Chief Secretary in May 1882 in protest at Gladstone's decision to free Parnell and other members of the Land League from Kilmainham Gaol. The new Chief Secretary was Lord Frederick Cavendish. He was assassinated on his first day in the country, along with his Under-Secretary Thomas Burke, while walking through the Phoenix Park. The assassins belonged to a breakaway Fenian group called 'The Invincibles'; they had been planning to kill Forster for some time, but his sudden departure from Ireland necessitated a change of target. Five Invincibles were hanged, and are buried, in the yard of Kilmainham Gaol for these murders.

James Carey was a member of the Invincibles but was not involved in the Phoenix Park murders. He was arrested and persuaded, in exchange for the promise of a new life in Africa, to give evidence against his fellow-conspirators. In the event, he was recognised by an Irishman aboard the ship sailing to Africa and killed as an informer.

### James Carey's evidence on the Phoenix Park murders

I met *Curley* at the corner of Holles Street. Before that I was across at a Mrs. Stafford's. When I saw *Curley* I said to him 'Is it true what I hear, that Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke are killed?' 'It is', said he; 'so I believe. I cannot tell whether they are killed or not, of course'.

*Curley* then described what he had seen. He said, 'When I seen the two men pass through the four, I and the two men turned round, and thought there was going to be another failure'.

Those three were armed with revolvers. I could not tell who had knives. I know who had two knives. That was *Joseph Brady*. I could not tell from whom he got them; he had them the day before.

*Curley* said in continuation, 'I seen then that they closed up on the two gentlemen, and I seen *Joe Brady* attacking one gentleman, and following the other on to the road, and attacking him also. I seen him coming back from him to the other party, and then I seen him wiping the knife in the grass, to take the blood off it, off the knife. I stood still until I seen them all on the car'.

He said that when *Joe Brady* came back to the other body, the body was lying on the ground.

UNIT 2

THE  
INVINCIBLES



DOCUMENT  
—2A—

*James Carey's  
evidence on the  
Phoenix Park  
murders from  
Kilmainham  
Archives*

He said that *Joe Hanlon*, *Fagan* and himself went away in the cab. He said they drove down straight to the Gough statue, and that one of the velocipede men followed them down, but that he was covered by two revolvers, and that the cab turned off towards Phibsborough at Gough statue, towards the Constabulary Barracks, and that they got out there, and that he, *Curley*, went straight to the *Express* office and put a card into the letter box stating how it was done, and the next day he went with the same to the *Irish Times*, *Freeman*, and the *Irishman*.

I saw the cards. On the card was written – ‘Executed by order of the Irish Invincibles’.

I met *Brady* about ten o’clock or after the same night. ‘Is it true’, said I, ‘about Lord Frederick Cavendish being that strange gentleman?’ and he said, ‘I don’t know who it is’.

He then told me how it happened. I asked him why did he let Mr. Burke pass at first, and he said there was a car passing, and that when they turned right about he followed Mr. Burke and put his hand on his shoulder and then stabbed him. ‘With that the strange gentleman struck me with his umbrella, and called me a ruffian. With that I got annoyed and excited, and I struck him in the arm, and then followed him out into the road and settled him there. When I looked round I saw *Tim Kelly* at Mr. Burke.’ Mr. Burke was on the ground when *Brady* had left.

*Brady* continued, saying ‘*Tim Kelly* was coming away from Mr. Burke. He left him, and I went to him and cut his throat’.

‘Were you so cool’, said I, ‘that you wiped the knife in the grass as *Curley* was telling me?’ ‘I did’, said he, ‘and threw them up on the car and got off’.



The murders in the Phoenix Park drew international attention to Ireland, as shown in this illustration from *Le Monde*, published in May 1882.





Two of the protagonists in the Phoenix Park murders were James Carey, who turned State's evidence, and Joe Brady, one of the principal assassins named in Carey's evidence.



### Questions

- (1) Who, do you think, was the Invincibles' main target?
- (2) Why is Lord Cavendish referred to as 'the strange gentleman'?
- (3) Although the Invincibles also carried guns, they decided to use knives in this case.  
Based on the account in the document, suggest a reason why they might have done this.



JOE BRADY.



## RESPONSE BY POLITICIANS TO THE PHOENIX PARK MURDERS

As part of the so-called 'Kilmainham Treaty', Parnell promised to do his best to bring peace to the country. The Phoenix Park murders in May 1882, just after Parnell's release, could therefore not have come at a worse time. Parnell feared that these murders would be used by the opponents of Home Rule as proof that the Irish were unfit to govern themselves. He, along with Dillon and Davitt, immediately issued a blunt and unequivocal statement 'To the People of Ireland' condemning the 'horrible deed'. It is ironic that some five years later, in the Pigott forgeries, suggestions were made that Parnell actually supported the killings.

**Extracts from the *Freeman's Journal*  
Monday, 8 May 1882**

### **(a) Rumoured Contemplated Resignation of Mr. Parnell**

(Special Telegram). London. Sunday.

The Central News is informed that in view of the dreadful tragedy, and the use likely to be made of it in party attacks on the Government for their promised measures of conciliation, Mr. Parnell contemplates the resignation of his seat in Parliament. He this morning declared his intention so to do in order not alone to mark his horror of the fatal murder of Lord F. Cavendish and Mr. Burke, but also in order to leave the Government free and unembarrassed in its endeavour to settle the arrears question and other amendments of the Land Act.

### **(b) Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Biggar on the Recent Outrage**

(Special Telegram). London. Sunday night.

The Press Association wires: 'In reference to the outrage Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., says: "In my mind, as in the mind of most persons, the news excited something like consternation. Indeed I don't think I ever had such a shock in my life. The crime is certain to be most disastrous at all points for some time to the Irish cause." Mr. Biggar, M.P., joins in deeply deploring the event, and says it is all the more to be lamented as Lord Frederick Cavendish was one of the least obnoxious of the official members of the Liberal side.'

### **(c) Manifesto by the Irish Party (Special Telegram). London. Sunday night.**

The Central News says the following Manifesto has been issued by the Irish Parliamentary Party:

#### **To the People of Ireland**

*On the eve of what seemed a bright future for our country, that evil destiny which has apparently pursued us for centuries has struck another blow at our hopes which cannot be exaggerated in its disastrous consequences. In this hour of sorrowful gloom we venture to give an expression of our*

UNIT 2

THE  
INVINCIBLES



DOCUMENT  
—2B—

*Response by  
Politicians to the  
Phoenix Park  
murders, from the  
Freeman's Journal.*



**MYLES KAVANAGH.**  
*(The car-driver, who died  
shortly after his trial.)*



**EDWARD M'CAFFREY.**  
*(Sentenced to ten years'  
penal servitude.)*



**JAMES MULLETT.**  
*(Sentenced to ten years'  
penal servitude.)*

*profoundest sympathy with the people of Ireland in this calamity which has befallen our cause with a horrible deed, and with those who had determined at the last hour that a policy of conciliation should supplant that of terrorism and national distrust.*

*We earnestly hope that the attitude of action of the whole Irish people will assure the world that assassinations such as that which has startled us almost to the abandonment of hope for our country's cause is deeply and religiously abhorrent to their every feeling and instinct. We appeal to you to show, by every manner of expression possible, that amidst the universal feeling of horror which the assassination has excited, no people are so intense in their detestation of its atrocity, or to entertain so deep a sympathy for those whose hearts must be seared by it, as the nation upon whose prospects and reviving hopes it may entail more ruinous effects than have yet fallen on the lot of unhappy Ireland during the present generation.*

*We feel that no act has ever been perpetrated in our country during the struggle for social and political rights of the past fifty years that has so stained the name of hospitable Ireland as this cowardly and unprovoked assassination of a friendly stranger, and that until the murderers of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke are brought to justice that stain will sully our country's name.*

**Chas. S. Parnell**  
**John Dillon**  
**Michael Davitt**



In May 1882, while strolling through the Phoenix Park, the newly appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and his Under-Secretary T. H. Burke were ambushed and stabbed to death. The Invincibles were responsible for these murders.



## Questions

- (1) In what way were the Phoenix Park murders seen as 'another blow at our hopes'?
- (2) Why did Parnell threaten to resign his seat?
- (3) With which murder victim, do you think, was there most sympathy?
- (4) Joseph Biggar, MP, the leader of Parliamentary Obstructionism in the 1870s, seems to pass a dubious compliment on Lord Cavendish in his response to the outrage. Read Biggar's comment carefully and say how it differs from that of other MPs quoted.
- (5) Lord Cavendish was replacing W. E. Forster as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Can you suggest why Cavendish was described as 'a friendly stranger'?



JOSEPH SMITH.  
*(A workman at Dublin Castle  
who pointed out Mr. Burke.)*



JAMES FITZHARRIS  
("Skin-the-Goat").  
*(Sentenced to penal servitude  
for life.)*



JOE MULLETT.  
*(Sentenced to penal servitude  
for life.)*



## 'PARNELLISM AND CRIME' ACCUSATION

On 7 March 1887, *The Times* of London published the first in a series of articles entitled 'Parnellism and Crime'. The first article, subtitled 'A Retrospect: Ireland', accused Parnell and the Land League of promoting agrarian crime in the years 1880-82 (an extract is reproduced below). The second article, published on 10 March and subtitled 'A Retrospect: America', accused Parnell and the Land League of complicity in the Phoenix Park murders and of links with the Fenian Movement in America. The third article, published on 14 March and subtitled 'A Study in Contemporary Conspiracy', alleged that Parnell and the Irish Parliamentary Party maintained links with known murderers and advocates of murder in America.

None of these articles provided conclusive evidence of any links of Parnell or the Land League with crime. However, a month later *The Times* published a copy of a letter not in Parnell's hand, but allegedly signed by him, apologising for having to condemn the Phoenix Park murders. F. H. O'Donnell, a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party, sued the newspaper for libel. The case collapsed, but not before more incriminating letters, purported to have been signed by Parnell, were produced in court.

Parnell demanded the setting up of a Select Committee of the House to enquire into the charges made against him. This demand was rejected by the Government, which did, however, decide to appoint a Special Commission 'to enquire into the allegations and charges made against certain members of Parliament and other persons by the defendants in the recent action of O'Donnell v. Walter and another'.

The Special Commission sat 129 times between September 1888 and November 1889. Although some of the charges were proved against a number of Parnell's associates the overall outcome of the Special Commission was seen as a victory for Parnell personally. The letters in the possession of *The Times* were exposed as forgeries and Richard Pigott, the forger, fled to Madrid where he committed suicide. (A full account of the workings and findings of the Special Commission can be found in *Parnell* by F. S. L. Lyons.)



**Pigott, a Dublin journalist, broke down under cross-examination and confessed to forging the incriminating letters published in *The Times* which purported to show Parnell as a supporter of the Phoenix Park murders.**

### UNIT 2

### THE INVINCIBLES



### DOCUMENT —2C—

*'Parnellism and  
Crime' accusation,  
Extracts from  
The Times,  
7 March 1887.*



**Extract from 'A Retrospect: Ireland'**  
**published in *The Times*, Monday, 7 March 1887**

Lord Hartington . . . asked Mr. Parnell if he knew the past and present relations between his acknowledged agents and the miscreants who preach a war of murder against the Empire.



**From the beginning, Parnell denied the accusations and confidently declared that his good name would be cleared.**

The history of these relations is well established. It is familiar to all who have studied Irish politics. It has been told in the Parnellites' presence by Gladstonian and Conservative Ministers in the House. It has been repeated orally and in writing, where no privilege of Parliament exists. It has never been seriously disputed by the Parnellites themselves. Now and then they have ventured on some quibbling denial of verbal accuracy, some forced and incandid misinterpretation, some dishonest imputation of motive, or blustering threat of prosecution. But they have never dared to submit their whole case to the public judgement or to undergo the searching scrutiny of the courts of law. They have been well advised, for their own speeches and their own newspapers confirm the blackest charges against them, and judicial investigation, as they know, might readily mature moral certitude into legal proof.

It may be useful to briefly recapitulate those charges with the published evidence on which they rest and leave the 'ancient history' entombed in the blood-stained annals of the League to point its own moral. We shall trace the main outlines of the movement, illustrate its principles and its working, prove that it is essentially a foreign conspiracy, and demonstrate that its chief authors have been, and are, in

intimate these relations have been – who counselled, who connived at, who condoned individual deeds of blood – is yet unknown. A confessed assassin – a high officer of the League – took the precaution to remove that body's books and papers when he fled. Those records of a 'constitutional movement' have never been produced to show how the League's labours were divided between its organisers and officers, and its Parliamentary chiefs. Some day the dark secrets of the League's councils may be disclosed. Fear, or greed, or private hate may yet raise up informers of higher rank and deeper knowledge than Town Councillor Carey to forge the last links in the evidence and do sudden justice on the criminals. Meanwhile, we shall re-state the case as it





**The courtroom scene at the Special Inquiry Commission, set up to look into, not just the Phoenix Park murders but also the whole suggestion of 'Parnellism and crime'. Richard Pigott, soon to be exposed as a notorious forger, is in the witness box, his hands folded as he gives evidence. Parnell himself is seated to the right of centre, looking calm and composed.**

is known and leave the public to judge the League and its leaders on the cumulative evidence before them.

The Land League may claim 'apostolic succession' from earlier conspiracies, as the National League derives its mission from the Land League. The new movement was appropriately started by Fenians out of Fenian funds. Its 'father' is Michael Davitt, a convicted Fenian, whom Chief Justice Cockburn pronounced guilty of 'some dark and villanous design' against human life. In August 1879, Davitt negotiated a small loan from the Fenian war chest to start the 'constitutional movement'. Davitt's personal friend 'Patrick Ford' was the honest broker between the Fenian trustees and the Land League financier. That body held its first meeting in October and Mr. Parnell was appointed President. (Interview between Davitt and Mr. Balch, special correspondent of the *New York Daily World*, in Cashman's *Life*, pp. 218-219.)

In December Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon sailed for America, and immediately communicated with Ford and the principal Fenian ex-convicts. It is unnecessary to dilate upon the speeches Mr. Parnell delivered on his tour. They were frankly treasonable. Their spirit may be divined from the celebrated passage in which the 'constitutional leader' revealed his 'ultimate goal'. "None of us", he declared, "whether we are in America or in Ireland or wherever we may be, will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England". Mr. Parnell found that sentence troublesome last May and, not for the first time, disclaimed it as a calumny. Two days later, a correspondent confronted him in *The Times* with the special report

published in the *Irish World* of March 6, 1880. Ford himself has since gently rebuked, and magnanimously pardoned the moral cowardice of this leader's denial. (*Irish World*, September 4, 1886.) But treason is not our main charge against Mr. Parnell and his friends.

Treason, in these days of flabby tolerance, is leniently regarded as a political indiscretion, not as the deadly offence it is against the commonwealth. Rebellion is sin no longer in the eyes of Irish archbishops, or crime in the judgement of radical statesmen. But no prelate has yet dared to bless the deeds which stand proved against the Land League, no 'misty philosopher' has numbed the natural horror of humanity for 'the inevitable accidents' of the Irish revolution. Murder still startles the casuist and the doctrinaire, and we charge that the Land League chiefs based their movement on a scheme of assassination, carefully calculated and coolly applied. Be the ultimate goal of these men what it will, they are content to march toward it in company with murderers. Murderers provide their funds, murderers share their inmost counsels, murderers have gone forth from the League offices to set their bloody work afoot, and have presently returned to consult the 'constitutional leaders' on the advancement of the cause . . .

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### Questions

- (1) What party did Gladstonian Ministers belong to?
- (2) Why, according to *The Times*, had the Parnellites never dared to submit their whole case to the public judgement?
- (3) What did *The Times* mean by 'the blood-stained annals of the League'?
- (4) *The Times* stated that the Land League Movement was 'essentially a foreign conspiracy'. What was the meaning of the phrase?
- (5) Who were the chief authors of the League?
- (6) Who was Town Councillor Carey?
- (7) What, do you think, were the 'earlier conspiracies' referred to in the article?
- (8) What was the main charge that *The Times* made against Parnell?
- (9) What other charge did *The Times* make against Parnell and the Land League?
- (10) What was the 'constitutional movement' and who were the 'constitutional leaders' referred to in the article?
- (11) Why did *The Times* have the words 'constitutional movement' and 'constitutional leaders' in inverted commas?



## NATIONAL TRIBUTE TO PARNELL

Although Parnell owned the rich landed estate of 'Avondale' in Co. Wicklow, he was seriously in debt by 1882 and was forced to consider selling the property. When news of this got out, a national collection was started and, although the Vatican and some of the Irish hierarchy strongly opposed it, the public subscribed eagerly to the fund. A sum of £38,000 was presented to Parnell in December 1883, with a written and illuminated personal 'Tribute' to him.

The following document is an extract from that Tribute. It gives a good picture of the regard in which Parnell was held and the status which he commanded as he approached the pinnacle of his career as 'uncrowned King of Ireland'. Its rhetorical style and emotional content could not be in greater contrast to the terse note of dismissal handed to him in Committee Room 15 in December 1890 (*see Document 4A*).

### Extract from the Tribute to Parnell December 1883

... What we know is that in time of National prostration you stepped out of the ranks of a selfish aristocracy, and flung youth and fortune into the service of the Irish cause with an energy which has borne down every obstacle and with the hereditary chivalry of a house that has given patriots and heroes to two hemispheres.

You set forces in activity which, by the mere impetus of organised and earnest public opinion, are achieving results which in other countries have had to be won at the cost of the suffering and bloodshed of armed revolution. Finding the Irish peasantry starving and oppressed, you have placed them on the path to Independence; finding the Irish representation spiritless and disordered, you have made it a controlling force in the destinies of Ireland. Your courage, prudence, steadfastness, foresight and genius for command have knit together all the forces of Ireland throughout the globe and have inspired them with unexampled confidence in the possibilities of steady and resolute National Progress.

Admiration for your deeds and gratitude for your sacrifices have been kindled still more intensely by the noble fortitude with which you passed through a storm of calumny, unequalled in bitterness even in the long record of the misrepresentations which have in all ages assailed the leaders of our race.

The reply which you disdain to make to your calumniators is made by the offering of love and confidence which the Irish people lay at your feet today. May a nation's trust inspire you through many a future year of happiness and greatness! May it nerve your heart for the dangers

## UNIT 3

### UNCROWNED KING



### DOCUMENT —3A—

*An Extract from  
the National  
Tribute to Parnell*

that still beset the path to the complete realisation of our hopes, and may it be to you a pledge of the glory that will surround your name upon the day when a National Parliament – the crowning reward to your exertions – will be enthroned in the temple of Irish freedom!

*Signed:*  
*Lord Mayor Charles Dawson, MP*



Parnell's ancestral home, *Avondale*, in Co. Wicklow was in danger of being sold in 1882 to pay off Parnell's mounting debts. So popular was the 'Uncrowned King of Ireland' that the citizens of Dublin, at the suggestion of the Lord Mayor, raised the substantial sum of £38,000 which rescued him from insolvency.

### Questions

- (1) Mention some of Parnell's achievements as listed in this 'Tribute'.
- (2) What 'dangers' are hinted at in Parnell's future?
- (3) What would be the 'crowning reward' of Parnell's exertions?



## PARNELL AND HOME RULE

The 1886 Home Rule Bill was defeated in Parliament, with many accusing Parnell of using Home Rule as a stepping stone to complete separation from England. Some of Parnell's more radical speeches lend themselves to this interpretation (see the inscription on his monument in Parnell Street, Dublin). Nonetheless, Parnell seems to have had a vision for Ireland as a free and friendly member of the British Empire in an arrangement that later became known as the 'Commonwealth'.

Parnell had an interesting correspondence with C. J. Rhodes, one of the most energetic of British imperialist figures, the Governor of Cape Colony in southern Africa and a central figure leading up to the Boer War. Rhodes was so convinced of Parnell's intentions that he replied to one of his letters with a donation of £10,000 for the Irish Parliamentary Party. When the leadership issue arose over the divorce scandal, Rhodes sent Parnell a telegram advising him to step down temporarily as leader. Parnell did not take his advice.

**To: C. J. Rhodes, Esq., House of Commons  
23 June 1888**

*Dear Sir,*

*I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 20th last which confirms the very interesting account given me at 'Avondale' last January by Mr. Swift MacNeill as to his interviews and conversations with you on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland.*

*I may say at once and frankly that I think you have correctly judged the exclusion of the Irish Members from Westminster to have been a defect in the Home Rule measure of 1886, and further that this proposed exclusion may have given some colour to the accusations so freely made against the Bill that it had a separatist tendency – I say this while strongly asserting and believing that the measure itself was accepted by the Irish people without any afterthought of the kind and with an earnest desire to work it out in the same spirit in which it was offered, a spirit of cordial goodwill and trust, a desire to let bygones be bygones, and a determination to accept it as a final and satisfactory settlement of the long-standing dispute and trouble between Great Britain and Ireland.*

*I am very glad to find that you consider the measure of Home Rule to be granted to Ireland should be thorough-going and should give complete control over her own affairs without reservation, and I cordially agree with your opinion that there should be at the same time effective safeguards for the maintenance of Imperial Unity.*

### UNIT 3

### UNCROWNED KING

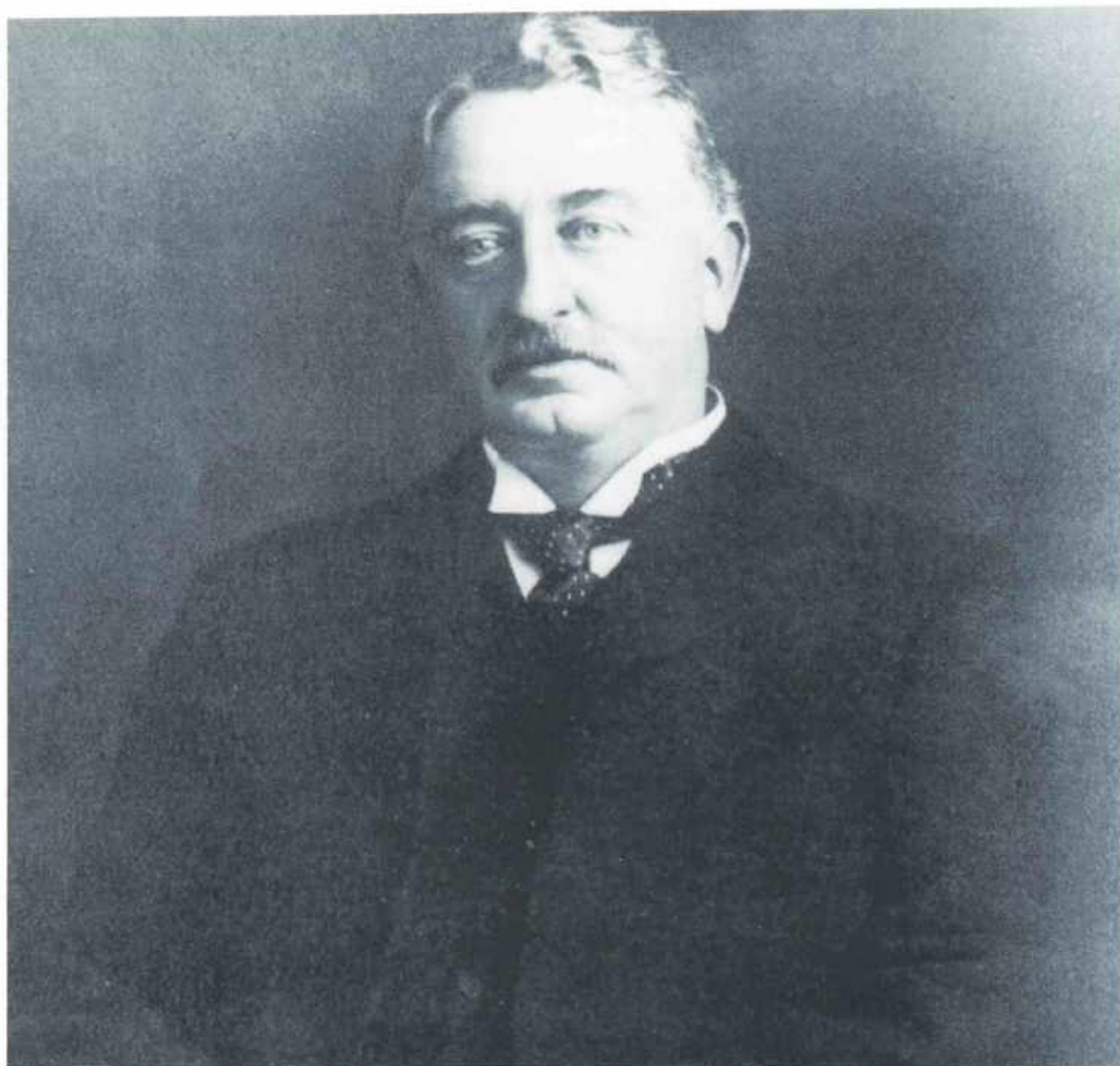


### DOCUMENT —3B—

*Parnell and Home  
Rule, a letter from  
Parnell to  
Cecil J. Rhodes,  
23 June 1888.*

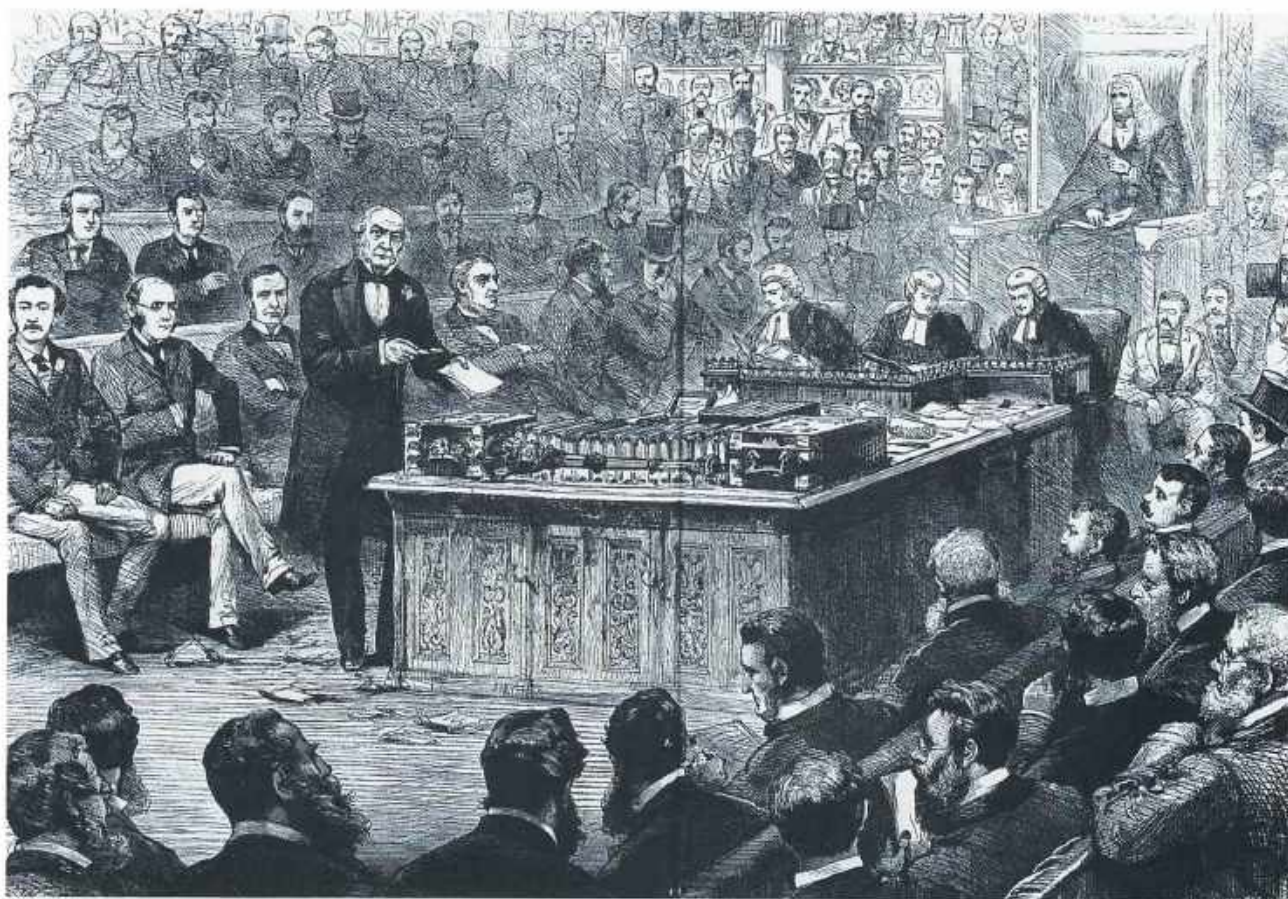
*Your conclusion as to the only alternative for Home Rule is also entirely my own, for I have long felt that the continuance of the present semi-constitutional system is quite impracticable.*

*But to return to the question of the retention of the Irish Members at Westminster, my own view upon the point, the probabilities of the future, and the bearing of this subject upon the question of Imperial Federation – my own feeling upon the matter is that if Mr. Gladstone includes in his next Home Rule measure provisions for such retention, we should cheerfully concede to them and accept them with goodwill and good faith with the intention of taking our share in the Imperial partnership. I believe also that in the event stated, this will be the case and that the Irish people will cheerfully accept the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, and will justly value the position given them in the Imperial System.*



**Cecil Rhodes, an arch Imperialist and British Governor of Cape Colony, confessed himself satisfied that Parnell's vision of Home Rule was not a threat to the Empire. The two men corresponded on the subject in some detail.**





**Gladstone introduced the first Home Rule Bill in 1886. He was met with widespread opposition, not only from the Conservatives but also from within his own Liberal party. Much to Parnell's dismay, the Bill was defeated in the House of Commons.**

*I am convinced that it would be the highest statesmanship on Mr. Gladstone's part to devise a feasible plan for the continued presence of the Irish Members here, and from my observations of public events and opinion since 1885, I am sure that Mr. Gladstone is fully alive to the importance of the matter, and that there can be no doubt that the next measure of autonomy for Ireland will contain the provisions which you rightly deem of such moment.*

*It does not come so much within my province to express a full opinion upon the larger question of Imperial Federation, but I quite agree with you that the continued Irish representation at Westminster will immensely facilitate such a step, which the contrary provision in the Bill of 1886 would have been a bar. Undoubtedly, this is a matter which should be dealt with in accordance with the opinion of the colonies themselves and if they should desire to share in the cost of Imperial matters, as certainly they now do in the responsibility, and should express a wish for representation at Westminster, I quite think it should be accorded to them and that public opinion in these Islands would unanimously concur in the necessary constitutional modification.*

*I am, Dear Sir,  
Yours truly,  
CHARLES STEWART PARNELL*

## Questions

- (1) What defect did Parnell recognise in Rhodes's observations on the 1886 Home Rule Bill?
- (2) Did Parnell see Home Rule as a step to complete independence?
- (3) To what extent did Parnell see Ireland as providing an example for other colonies of the British Empire?
- (4) Who was Cecil J. Rhodes and what role did he play in the expansion of the British Empire?



## THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

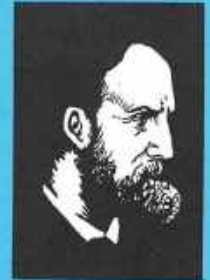
The year 1886 saw an increase in the number of evictions throughout Ireland. Poor crop yields, competition from America and industrial depression leading to shrinking markets in England resulted in many Irish tenants having great difficulty paying their rents, many of which had been fixed under the 1881 Land Act. The new Conservative (Tory) Government's response to the crisis was to appoint a commission to study the land question. Parnell brought a 'Tenants' Relief Bill' before the House of Commons, but it was opposed by the Government and rejected by the House in September 1886.

The situation in Ireland worsened and on Saturday, 23 October 1886, an article was published in *United Ireland* (a newspaper set up in 1881 by Parnell) entitled 'A Plan of Campaign', which advised tenants how to deal with landlords who would not reduce their rents and who evicted them.

Parnell held himself aloof from the Plan of Campaign for a number of reasons. In the first place, he became very ill with a kidney complaint in the autumn and winter of 1886-87. Secondly, he was afraid of the damage the Plan of Campaign would do to his alliance with the Liberals, from which party he hoped to attain his ultimate goal of Home Rule. Thirdly, he was spending more and more of his time in England with Katharine O'Shea. However, he decided to intervene after a particularly fiery speech delivered by John Dillon at Castlerea in December 1886. He called William O'Brien to London and urged him 'to set bounds to your operations or we shall be bankrupt and the Liberals will shake us off' (see *Parnell* by F. S. L. Lyons, p. 366).

### UNIT 3

### UNCROWNED KING



### DOCUMENT 3C

*Extract from the  
United Ireland,  
23 Oct 1886,  
on the Plan of  
Campaign.*





The Plan of Campaign continued in operation on some estates until 1890-91, during which time Dillon and O'Brien served several prison sentences for offences connected with it. Parnell still remained detached and, apart from sanctioning some financial assistance, gave no support whatever to the Plan.

The following extract is from the Editorial of the *United Ireland* newspaper, dated Saturday, 23 October 1886:



The 1887 Plan of Campaign, led by William O'Brien and John Dillon, sparked off fresh scenes of agitation among the tenants of Ireland. Parnell deliberately kept aloof from this policy for fear of endangering Gladstone's support for Home Rule.



## **The Tug-of-War**

The communication under the heading 'A Plan of Campaign', which we print in our first page today, will not fail to attract widespread attention. It comes from one whose name, sufferings and experience command in a high degree the confidence of the Irish race. The plan which he lays down with precision in every detail will probably be the model followed by every body of tenantry who are driven to resistance this winter, and who desire to render their resistance effectual. It is simple, it is lawful, and, given thorough earnestness on the part of the tenantry to begin with, it is irresistible. It will be observed that it harmonises with the plan outlined by Mr. Dillon at Woodford [part of the Clanrickarde Estate] last Sunday; but it fills in the outlines and it dots the i-s.

The tenantry upon a rack-rented estate give the best of all hostages of their sincerity to each other and to the landlord by lodging their refused rents in an estate fund, which Garnishee orders cannot capture and which will be available for the support of those whom the landlord may pick out to 'make examples of'. [Such orders were legal documents empowering a 'garnishee', or person holding money belonging to a debtor, to pay the money to a creditor.] The 'examples' will thus be assured of a sufficient income, with the certainty of complete restitution of their rights as the first condition of any possible treaty with the landlord, and the landlord will have the consolation of knowing that the more 'examples' he makes, the deeper he will be eating into the fund, which represents his own rents. Not a pound of money will be, under the terms of the trust, available for law-costs, which are in any shape simply a war indemnity to the landlords. The fund will be wholly an insurance fund against eviction.

Under the plan proposed – not, we have reason to think, without authority – by our respected correspondent, as soon as the Estate Fund is exhausted in support of the evicted tenants, the National League would guarantee grants of the same amount during the continuance of the struggle. Even should the League be nominally suppressed (which would be a naked stroke of tyranny if its function were confined to those of a sort of Red Cross Succour Society), its funds and leaders would still remain, and it is perfectly certain that the aid of our Irish-American kindred might be counted upon in limitless measure to enable evicted tenants to await the inevitable hour of victory with easy minds. The three conditions of successful resistance would thus be secured: the whole body of tenantry would be embarked in the same boat, the landlord would be fought out of his own funds, and the staying power of the resistance would be provided for in a definite way and during almost any conceivable prolongation of the struggle on the landlord's part. Such a plan, loyally and courageously carried out, would beyond all question break the power of the most determined rack-renter in the country.

To what extent need it or will it be put in force this winter? That depends entirely upon the extent to which the landlords may be found willing to put in force the principle of Mr. Parnell's Bill [this reference is to the Tenants' Relief Bill of 1886], which the more equitable among them have already confessed to be the just and the inexorable logic of the times. If the Clanrickardes and the Kenmares won't do what the Lansdownes and the Lismores are doing, they will have to be made to do it: that is all. And as to the question, to what extent the plan of defence above sketched will be resorted to? – that will depend upon how many landlords there may be who will

do the right thing without pressure and how many will prefer spending the amount of their income twice over on lawyers and emergency men plus vengeance to getting their rents minus 50 per cent . . .

---

### Questions

- (1) Who first outlined the Plan of Campaign?
- (2) What was 'a rack-rented' estate?
- (3) How did the Plan of Campaign operate?
- (4) How did landlords 'make examples' of tenants?
- (5) What would happen when the estate fund was exhausted?
- (6) What help might evicted tenants hope to get from America?
- (7) What type of landlords were:
  - (a) the Clanrickardes and the Kenmares?
  - (b) the Lansdownes and the Lismores?
- (8) What was the function of emergency men?



UNIT 4  
~  
THE FALL



DOCUMENT  
-4A-

*Text of a resolution  
terminating  
Parnell's leadership  
of the Party,  
6 Dec 1890.*

## PARNELL'S DISMISSAL AS LEADER

### Text of a Resolution terminating Parnell's leadership of the Party, 6 December 1890

Resolved

"That acting upon an imperative sense of duty to our country, we the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party declare that Mr. Parnell's tenure of Chairmanship of this party is hereby terminated"

Proposer: W. Abraham

Seconder: J.J. Condin

**Note from Elspeth Grahame**, who donated the Resolution document to the National Library of Ireland:

'This paper was handed to Mr. Parnell in the Committee Room at the House of Commons used by the Irish Parliamentary Party. He read it, tore it partially across, then crushing it in his hand flung it upon the table. Later it was retrieved by Mr. Justin McCarthy, smoothed out and given to me as the record of a most tragic occasion.'



Although Gladstone warned Parnell that he must resign if Liberal support for the Home Rule movement was to continue, Parnell did not inform his party of this warning. Under these circumstances, he was unanimously re-elected as leader, seen here in his characteristic pose, with folded arms seated beside the speaker Davitt. However, once Gladstone's message became known, a new contest was demanded.



Mrs. Katharine O'Shea became Mrs. Parnell soon after her divorce from Captain O'Shea was granted in 1891. The divorce scandal led to the downfall and death of Parnell, while she was subjected to unprecedented personal abuse.

One of Parnell's children by Katharine O'Shea (before her divorce). Claire Gabrielle kept the surname of O'Shea, although the resemblance to Parnell is striking.



### Question

- (1) Compare this terse note from Parnell's political colleagues with the generous 'Tribute' of 1883 to Parnell from the people of Ireland (see *Document 3A*) and comment on the different tones, styles, sentiments, etc. expressed in the writings.



UNIT 4  
~  
THE FALL



DOCUMENT  
—4B—

*Charles Stewart  
Parnell and the  
Clergy.*

## PARNELL AND THE CLERGY

On Christmas Eve 1889, Captain O'Shea filed for divorce from his wife Katharine, citing Parnell as co-respondent. The case did not come to court until November 1890. Many people thought that Parnell would be vindicated, as had happened in the case of the Pigott forgeries at the Special Commission in February of that year. However, when the divorce case came to court neither Mrs. O'Shea nor Parnell contested it, with the latter being cast in the role of villain while O'Shea played the role of victim.

Many people hoped that Parnell would, to quote Archbishop Walsh of Dublin, 'do the right thing' and resign as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Furthermore, it soon became known that the Liberals would withdraw from their alliance with the Party if Parnell remained as its leader. The Party members realised that without the support of the Liberals, there was no chance of winning Home Rule for Ireland. A meeting of the Party was called for Friday, 28 November 1890 to discuss the leadership issue. After an inconclusive debate, it was decided to adjourn until Monday, 1 December. The increasingly heated debate continued each day until the following Saturday, when finally the 45 Anti-Parnellite members, led by Justin McCarthy, withdrew and voted to terminate Parnell's leadership (*see Document 4A*).



Parnell tried unsuccessfully to regain his former support at various by-elections around this country. Here, in Kilkenny in 1891, the angry crowd and the inclement autumn weather combined to break his health. He returned to his home in Brighton to rest, but much to everyone's amazement, he died on 10 October 1891 in the arms of his beloved Katharine.

On Wednesday, 3 December 1890, the Standing Committee of Irish Bishops convened and issued a statement denouncing Parnell. It was signed by 23 bishops and published the next day in the national press, as follows:

**Address of the Standing Committee of the Archbishops and  
Bishops of Ireland to the Clergy and Laity of their Flocks**

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers and fellow countrymen,  
The Bishops of Ireland can no longer keep silent in presence of the all-engrossing question which agitates, not Ireland and England alone, but every spot where Irishmen have found a home. That question is – Who is to be in future the Leader of the Irish people or, rather, who is not to be their Leader?

Without hesitation or doubt, and in the plainest possible terms, we give it as our unanimous judgement that, whoever else is fit to fill the highly responsible post, Mr. Parnell decidedly is not.

As Pastors of this Catholic nation, we do not base this, our judgement and solemn declaration, on political grounds, but simply and solely on the facts and circumstances revealed in the London Divorce Court.

After the verdict given in that Court, we cannot regard Mr. Parnell in any other light than as a man convicted of one of the gravest offences known to religion and society, aggravated as it is in his case by almost every circumstance that could possibly attach to it so as to give it a scandalous pre-eminence in guilt and shame. Surely, Catholic Ireland, so eminently conspicuous for its virtue and the purity of its social life, will not accept as its leader a man thus dishonoured and wholly unworthy of Christian confidence.

Furthermore, as Irishmen devoted to our country, eager for its elevation and earnestly intent on securing for it the benefits of domestic legislation, we cannot but be influenced by the conviction that the continuance of Mr. Parnell as leader of even a section of the Irish Party must have the effect of disorganising our ranks, and ranging as in hostile camps the hitherto united forces of our country.

Confronted with the prospect of contingencies so disastrous, we see nothing but inevitable defeat at the approaching general election and, as a result, Home Rule indefinitely postponed, coercion perpetuated, the hands of the Evictor strengthened, and the tenants already evicted left without the shadow of a hope of being ever restored to their homes.

### **Questions**

- (1) What reasons did the bishops give for stating that Parnell was not fit to be leader of the Irish people?
- (2) What, according to the bishops, would happen if Parnell remained as leader, even of a section of the Irish Parliamentary Party?



UNIT 4  
~  
THE FALL



DOCUMENT  
-4C-

*Editorial of the  
Connaught  
Telegraph,  
6 Dec 1890 –  
'Fallen is thy  
Throne'*

## ONE NEWSPAPER'S VIEW OF PARNELL

James Daly was the proprietor and editor of the *Connaught Telegraph*. He was a founding member of the Land League and was imprisoned in Galway Gaol in 1881 under the Protection of Persons and Property Act. When the Irish Parliamentary Party split in 1890, he supported the anti-Parnellites and denounced Parnell in the most vitriolic terms in his newspaper.

For example, in his editorial on the 17 January 1891, he referred to Parnell as 'a pride-inflated lump of human folly and degradation'. Commenting on Parnell's death on 10 October 1891, he referred to him as a 'care-worn, sin-stained and sorrow-laden creature' who had gone 'out of this world to fill an unblessed and unhonoured grave' (for full text, see Document 4D).

The following extract is from Daly's editorial in the *Connaught Telegraph* of 6 December 1890, the day that Parnell's leadership of the Party was terminated.

### Fallen is thy throne

For some weeks past, while the name of Mr. Parnell was ringing through men's ears in all parts of the earth where the children of our race have found a home, we have carefully refrained from treating of a subject that we considered too painful and humiliating, because [*sic*] too shameful and filthy. To the proceedings in the English Divorce Court we have nothing to say – the disgraceful story is known to the world. With regard to the momentous incidents that have since cropped up, we cannot, however, remain silent any longer. If Charles S. Parnell were a private gentleman, or even an ordinary Irish MP, matters would not assume such a portentous aspect as now attaches to them: but when the individual clearly convicted (by overwhelming evidence and the convincing testimony of his own silence) of glaring, outrageous criminality, continued through a decade of years, happens to occupy the most exalted position in which a nation struggling for autonomy could place him then, indeed, is the face of the picture changed.

Oh, what bitter painful feelings of burning, poignant sorrow filled the breast of Irishmen, when the disastrous, but truthful story of that fallen Leader's abomination and guilt was spread broadcast through all lands; and how the still-confiding, still-forgiving hearts of our affectionate countrymen yearning for some means of palliating if not condoning that horribly degrading and almost irretrievable fall!

In such a disastrous state of affairs – gloomy and disastrous, indeed, to our national prospects – the question of leadership naturally suggested itself to men's minds, and was answered in various ways. Many, many of his old friends and admirers actuated, no doubt, by chivalrous feelings of devotedness that do credit to their warm-hearted nature, would be slow to remove from his high position, because of certain private frailties, a man who had done so much for the cause of Ireland, and under whose banner our people were steadily approaching the goal of national independence. On the other hand, the vast majority of our Catholic laity (leaving the clergy out of question on this point) felt it too keenly, too excruciatingly galling that a country like Ireland, which, from the earliest days of Christianity, had been remarkable for the virtue and chastity of its sons and daughters, should now give its unfaltering allegiance to a man who was steeped, from his very toe nails to his ear tops, in the filth of lewdness and impurity. Was such a person meet [*sic*] leader [*sic*] for an old nation of such proverbially famous morality as Ireland? What a contrast to the time, immortalized by Moore, when a beautiful lady, bearing 'rich and rare' jewels and gold thus answered a query:

'Sir Knight, I feel not the least alarm -  
No son of Erin will offer me harm;  
For though they love women and golden store,  
Sir Knight, they love honor and virtue more!'

There were others, too, who though not entering so deeply into the religious view of the case, still could not, without a deep tinge of shame, entertain for a moment the idea of keeping, in the position of our guide and director, a man whose once fair fame and proud escutcheon had been thus ignominiously sullied and tarnished; as this considered that the Leader of Catholic Ireland should be at least a gentleman and a person of upright character at the mention of whose name no follower of his might have cause to grow red in the face! Such persons as these remembered the lofty idea poor Thomas Davis had of morality in public men when he told us of his hope for Irish nationality:

'It whispered, too, that Freedom's ark,  
And service high and holy,  
Would be profaned by feelings dark  
And passions base or lowly;  
For Freedom comes from God's right hand,  
And needs a godly train,  
And RIGHTEOUS men must make our land  
A Nation Once Again!'

Whatever might be the views entertained of Mr. Parnell a fortnight ago, his own wayward, pig-headed stubbornness and defiant, bullying attitude have obliterated every chance of his again ascending that lofty pinnacle on which he ruled as an uncrowned sovereign, and from which, first, his own scandalous culpability, and later, his tyrannical disregard of Irish public opinion have precipitated him to his present ignominious position.

Our cause, we fear, has not only lost by his means the support of Gladstone and the English democracy – truly a most deplorable loss – but (what is still more serious) has created disunion in the Irish Party and evidently intends to ruin the prospects of Ireland. The man who, a few nights



ago, went into the Tory lobby and voted with Balfour has little consistency in him! The faithful Hierarchy of this Catholic old land have, however, spoken and spoken in unmistakable words – ‘Whoever is fit for the position of Leader, Mr. Parnell decidedly is not’. We publish their address to the clergy and people of Ireland and we ask who will dare to place the patriotism of this degraded debauchee in opposition to that of Archbishop Walsh or Dr. Croke?

There are no doubt, twenty or thirty members of the party who still adhere to him; but the glitter and glare of gold have a strange fascination that may account for this puny adherence. We do not, however, think that the Harringtons and Redmonds have such weight as William O’Brien, John Dillon, T. D. Sullivan, Justin McCarthy, Dr. Tanner, Thomas Sexton, T. M. Healy, and the scores of other honest men who ignore the impudent claims of this self-debased ‘Dictator’. Then, his puny followers gabble so much to us about ‘his great services to Ireland for the past ten years’. There is no denying the fact of his having done good work for which be it remembered, our countrymen were not ungrateful! Why does not such laudation contain any reference to the great services of Ireland to Parnell? In reality, he has received from our people, during that decade of years more money than, on an average, would double the annual salary of the President of the United States! Truly, might he be called an ‘uncrowned monarch’, for he was enabled by a confiding though famishing people to rule with kingly sway and live in right royal depravity and turpitude.

And then we hear of ‘his sufferings for Ireland’. Yes he was in prison in 1881 where he was as happy as a chicken in a coop, and became the hero of the famous ‘Kilmainham Treaty’.

What were his sufferings compared to those of O’Brien, Dillon and dozens of others? What did he suffer in comparison with John Fitzgibbon of Castlerea or P. J. Gordon of Claremorris? His ‘sufferings for Ireland’ indeed!



We have little more to say. The keynote of the situation has been sounded by our patriotic Prelates and there is, surely, no room for choosing between them and a ‘leader’ who, as Mr. J. F. X. O’Brien, MP, manfully told him, has done no ‘leading’ for the last four years! The other members of the Party did the work – he was absent, enjoying his filthy pleasures.

Mr. Parnell is a degraded, fallen man. The wretched O’Shea was his friend to whom he proved false and treacherous. Can a nation rely on the honour of such a creature, dead as he is to all shame and decency?

**One of the last photographs to be taken of Parnell again shows his characteristic calm repose.**

## Questions

- (1) 'With regard to the momentous incidents that have since cropped up, we cannot, however, remain silent any longer . . .' What momentous incidents was the writer referring to?
- (2) Why, according to the writer, would many of Parnell's old friends be slow to remove him?
- (3) How, according to the writer, did 'the vast majority of our Catholic laity' feel about Parnell's leadership?
- (4) 'Whatever might be the views entertained of Mr. Parnell a fortnight ago, his own wayward, pig-headed stubbornness and defiant, bullying attitude have obliterated every chance of his again ascending that lofty pinnacle . . .' What was the writer referring to in this passage?
- (5) How, according to the writer, had Parnell's actions affected the cause of Home Rule?
- (6) Why, according to the writer, did twenty or thirty members of the Party still support Parnell?
- (7) What was the writer's opinion of Parnell's 'great services to Ireland for the past ten years'?
- (8) 'Our countrymen were not ungrateful . . .' How did the Irish people show their gratitude to Parnell, according to the writer?
- (9) What was the writer's opinion of Parnell's 'sufferings for Ireland'?
- (10) What was Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien referring to when he said that Parnell had done no 'leading' for the last four years?
- (11) While Parnell was imprisoned in Kilmainham Gaol in 1881, the writer says that he was 'as happy as a chicken in a coop'. Can you suggest any reason for this assertion?



UNIT 4  
~  
THE FALL



DOCUMENT  
-4D-

*Editorial of the  
Connaught  
Telegraph,  
10 Oct 1891  
- 'What a Fall!'*

## ON THE DEATH OF PARNELL

Charles Stewart Parnell died on the night of 6 October 1891 at his home in Brighton. He was only 45 years of age. The most probable cause of his death was coronary heart disease, which seems to have run in his family. His remains were brought home to Dublin for a national funeral, attended by thousands of people.

Less than a year before James Daly, as proprietor and editor of the *Connaught Telegraph*, had slated Parnell in the most venomous of terms (see *Document 4C*). Now, Daly wrote the editorial for Saturday, 10 October 1891 and commented on Parnell's death in somewhat more moderate language:

### What a fall!

The week that has just gone by was an eventful one – its death roll is truly remarkable. We have, however, to deal only with the leading figure – with a man whose fame was worldwide – a man who had made a reputation for himself in every corner of God's broad earth where a member of the ancient race, of the 'sea-divided Gaels', of the exiled children of 'the Isle of Destiny' could be found! And that man is now numbered with the dead and his relics will soon be laid to mingle with the cold clay from which he and all mortality were originally produced.

And may we say that that man was, a few days ago, Charles Stewart Parnell – a man that, one short year from this very date, was the more than idolized chieftain whom all Ireland felt delighted in honouring! He departed this life on the night of Tuesday last, but the exact cause of his dissolution is not properly revealed. It is said that he died from 'rheumatism of the heart' . . . but the stern fact confronts us that the late great statesman is no longer a living man.

We care not to go into the recent history of him that has passed forever from amongst us – let the veil of forgiving charity cloud it in oblivion! Charles Stewart Parnell has gone from this world: but his most inveterate opponent cannot deny that, in his death, a great and distinguished Irishman has been lost to the land which was so long proud of him, and which is sorry that he ever – let that and all talk about it be buried in the grave with him. There is, we are proud to see, a generally unanimous expression of regret at the unfortunate end of the once illustrious, but lately unhappy man who has so unexpectedly been called before the tribunal of 'Heaven's Chancery'; but it is painful to read the miserably vindictive article which the grabbing editor of the grabbed 'United Ireland' puts forward as his leader, and which abounds in semi-idiotic nonsense, without a single rationally expressed sentence in it from beginning to end. The very heading of 'Done to Death' is sufficient to make a sensible man feel painful – perhaps it would be nicer for the





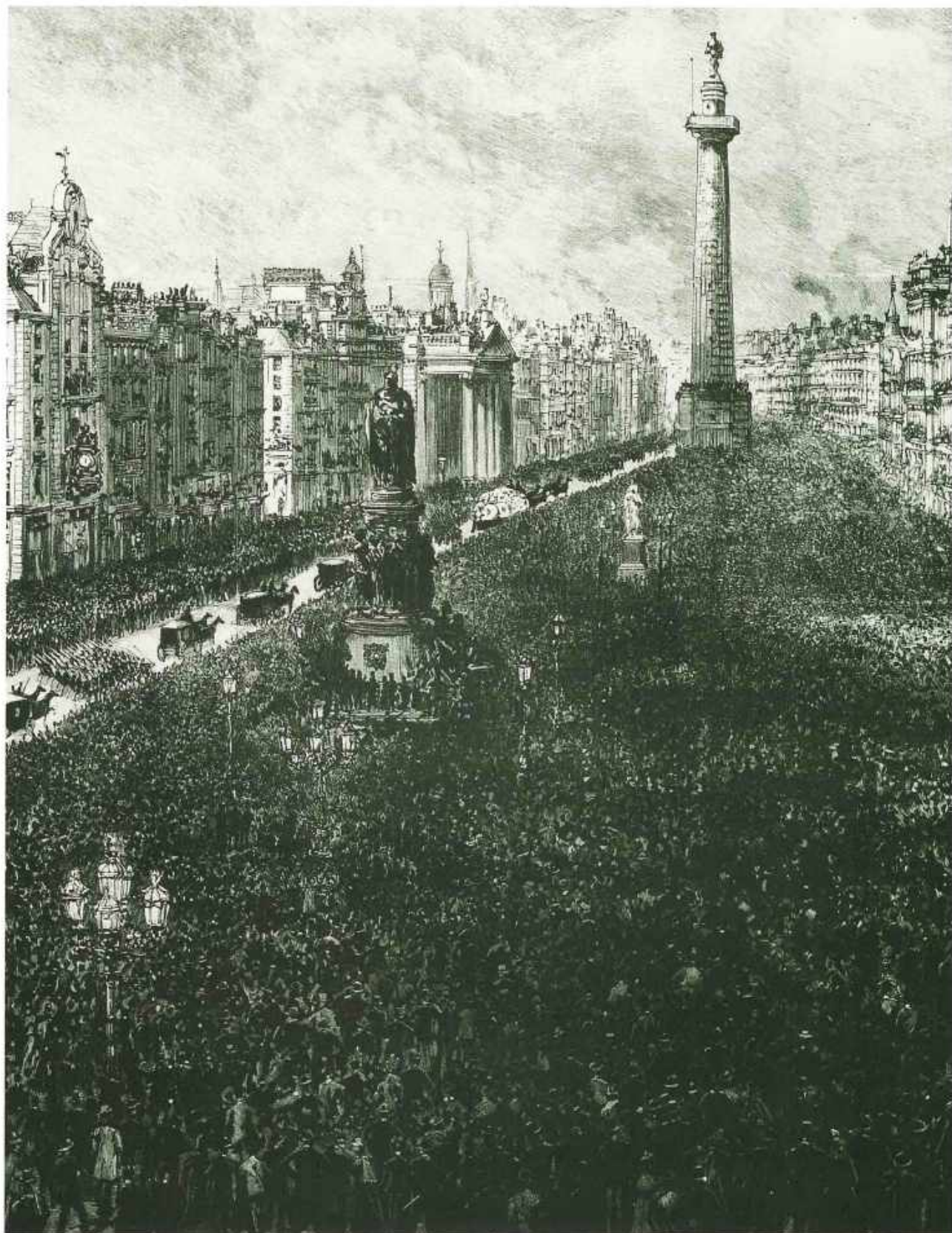
**Mourners, including his brother John, placed wreaths on the grave of Parnell, already bedecked with flowers. Today, a large granite bolder from *Avondale*, bearing the one word 'Parnell', marks his grave.**

precious scribe, who used the crowbar last winter in breaking into William O'Brien's office, to say nothing of how poor Parnell was done to death, as the world is already tormented with grave suspicions on that point! The feeling is, however, widespread that it was not the language of Tim Healy or any other speaker at the Kilkenny election, nearly a year ago, that sent, during the past week, the care-worn, sin-stained and sorrow-laden creature, who is now a lifeless piece of clay, out of this world to fill an unblessed and unhonoured grave.

Let, then, the puny factionists of his now exploded pretensions curb their impudent virulence and allow a forgiving nation to fling the charitable pall of forgetfulness over the many, very many, recent acts of egregiously reprehensible culpability by which the terrible downfall of him that is just gone from us had been so notoriously marked; and even his most inveterate antagonists of late times will content themselves with calmly letting his relics be laid in their kindred dust with the humanely benevolent exclamation of *DE MORTUIS NIHIL NISI BONUM* – or 'Say nothing bad of the dead when you are unable to say anything good of them'!

Had poor Parnell been called out of this world in October '90 instead of October '91, how many good things could be truthfully said of him: but over all his faults let the charity of silence be now cast and let his countrymen give (as we fondly hope they will) a truly national funeral to the remains of the dead ex-leader, on tomorrow, in Glasnevin.



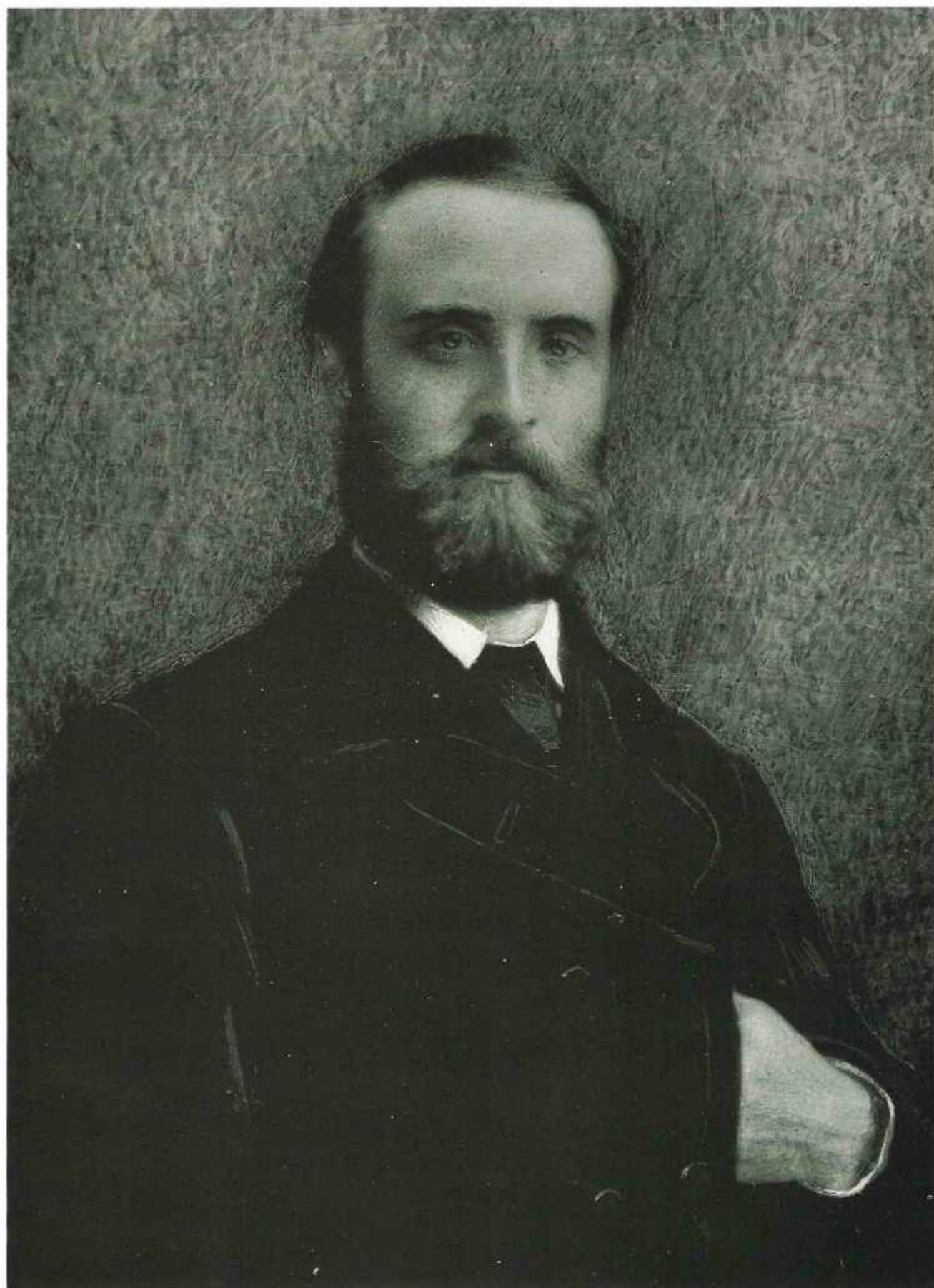


**Parnell's funeral was a magnificent affair, with crowds thronging the roads from early morning, waiting to pay their last respects to their 'Uncrowned King'. From Kingstown Harbour via Sackville Street (seen here), the funeral cortege wound its way to Glasnevin Cemetery, Parnell's last resting place.**

## Questions

- (1) Why does Daly refer to the editor of the *United Ireland* as the 'grabbing editor of the grabbed *United Ireland*'?
- (2) Who did the *United Ireland* editorial blame for Parnell's death?
- (3) Daly refers to the 'very many recent acts of egregiously reprehensible culpability by which the terrible downfall of him that is just gone from us had been so notoriously marked'. To what acts is he referring?
- (4) Find out what you can about Timothy Healy and the Kilkenny election.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Paul Leahy and Paul Nolan**

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