

LETTER TO *UNITED IRELAND*

**Taken from *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846-1891* by
R. Barry O'Brien.**

April 11, 1885.

You ask for my views regarding the visit of the Prince of Wales. In reply I desire to say that if the usages of the constitution existed in Ireland as they do in England there would, to my judgment, be no inconsistency in those who believe in the limited monarchy as the best form of government taking a suitable part in the reception of the Prince. But in view of the fact that the constitution has never been administered in Ireland according to its spirit and precedents, that the power of the Crown as wielded by Earl Spencer and other Viceroy's is despotic and unlimited to the last degree, and that in the present instance the royal personage is to be used by the two English political parties in Ireland for the purpose of injuring and insulting the Irish Nationalist party, and of impeding if possible their work, I fail to see upon what ground it can be claimed from any lover of constitutional government under a limited monarchy that the Prince is entitled to a recognition from the independent and patriotic people of Ireland, or to any recognition, save from the garrison of officials, and landowners, and place-hunters who fatten upon the poverty and misfortunes of the country. Let me suggest a parallel. Would it be tolerated in England for a moment if the Government for their own party purposes, on the eve of a general election, were to use the Prince of Wales as an electioneering agent in any section of the country, and were to send him upon a royal progress in order to embarrass their political opponents? The breach of constitutional privilege becomes still graver when we consider that it is the march of a nation which is now sought to be impeded – the fruition of a long struggle and of many sacrifices which the adventitious aid of this royal visit is enlisted to injure. I have, however, every confidence that our people, having been suitably forewarned, will not allow their hospitable nature and cordial disposition to carry them into any attitude which might be taken as

one of condonation for the past, or satisfaction with the present state of affairs.

CHARLES S. PARNELL.