

MANIFESTO TO THE IRISH OF GREAT BRITAIN.

By Charles Stewart Parnell.

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Fellow-countrymen,

The attempt of the seceders to wrest the National League of Great Britain out of the national hands forces me to take steps to thwart their plans. In 1880-81, I founded the Land League of Great Britain, out of which has grown the National League. I guarded both organisations from the breath of English influence. I made both independent. It was my policy to make English parties subservient to Irish interests. The policy was successful. It bore fruit in the Land Act of 1881, in the Arrears Act of 1882, in the Land Purchase Act of 1885, in the Home Rule Bill of 1886, and in the amended Land Act of 1887. We were united and strong, and both English parties were ready to treat with us. We wrung concessions from both. But weakened now by the desertion in a moment of law recruits led by terrified Captains, it is sought to make our organisation subservient to English interests, to make it the mere instrument of English parties. That policy, if successful, will bear fruit, too. It will end in disorganisation and utter ruin. Under the cover of a Convention, with the promise of which the seceders try to lull our people into inaction, insidious people are at work for the purpose of corrupting the branches of the League, and packing with English agents an assembly summoned, forsooth, to represent Irish opinion. I was anxious that the National League of Great Britain should hold a neutral position in the present crisis. But the seceders, under the spell of English dictation, were resolved that the influence of the League should be used to drive me from public life, and to make an English statesman the arbiter of Ireland's destiny. The peaceful proposals of my friends on the Executive of the League have been rejected with scorn. The seceders have declared that I shall have no quarter. In these circumstances I turn from this Anglo-Irish party, and I appeal to the national instincts of my race. I ask my fellow-

countrymen in Great Britain if it is their determination to trust to English parties, or to rely on Ireland's strength to regain Ireland's freedom. I call upon my fellow countrymen in Great Britain to ignore the Convention summoned by Irish Whigs under the shadow of English influence. I call upon them to maintain the attitude of a self-respecting people, to assert the principle of national independence, to show the spirit of a fearless race, to declare that Irishmen shall alone regulate the conduct of Irish business, be that business the election of a leader in an English Parliament, or the fullest control of national affairs in an Irish Parliament. The seceding members of the Executive of the National League of Great Britain having resolved to make the organisation an English electioneering machine, I have, pending the meeting of a Convention which I shall call in due course, constituted a Provisional Executive consisting of those members of the old Executive who have been faithful to Ireland, and of representative Irishmen residing in England, whose names are a guarantee of worth and patriotism. Around this Executive I ask my fellow countrymen of Great Britain to rally in the interests of a free and independent Irish party.

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