

**INCIDENTS OF COERCION:
A JOURNAL OF VISITS TO
IRELAND IN 1882 AND 1888**

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Incidents of Coercion: A Journal of Visits to Ireland in 1882 and 1888 by G. Shaw-Lefevre

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G. SHAW-LEFEVRE

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A JOURNAL OF VISITS TO
IRELAND IN 1882 AND 1888**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.



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A JOURNAL
OF
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1882 AND 1888

BY

THE RIGHT HON.

George (Hans)
G. SHAW - LEFEVRE, M.P.

THIRD EDITION

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1889

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PREFACE
TO
THE THIRD EDITION.

AFTER the whole of the present (the third) edition had been printed, and when it was already too late to make any alteration in the body of the book without sacrificing the edition, it came to my knowledge that the Court of Appeal in Ireland had given its decision in the appeal of Lord Clanricarde, in the action for libel against him by his late agent, Mr. Joyce, to which reference is made in pp. 21-3. The Judges decided that the letter of Lord Clanricarde to the 'Times,' which was in answer to a statement of mine in the House of Commons, did not contain a libellous charge against Mr. Joyce.

It would ill become me to question the decision thus arrived at. I have, in fact, always felt that it was very doubtful whether the action could be sustained at law. As, however, the Master of the Rolls, in giving judgment in the case, and others of the Judges, referred to my speech, without quoting it, and appeared to be under the impression that I had, before making it, been in communication with Mr.

Joyce, and as I was not a party to the suit and had no opportunity of affording any explanations, I feel it necessary for my vindication to put on record in an additional Appendix the passage which gave rise to the controversy, and also the letters which passed between Lord Clanricarde and myself in the columns of the 'Times.'

I have also added an extract from the evidence of Mr. Joyce before Lord Cowper's Commission, and some of the letters between Lord Clanricarde and Mr. Joyce, which were produced at the trial. These, I think, will completely vindicate my speech in the House of Commons and my narrative in this book. They also show that the decision arrived at by the Court of Appeal upon the point of law does not substantially alter the facts of the case; and they relieve the tenants of the Clanricarde property from the charge that they were engaged in an organised 'No Rent' agitation against their landlord.

More recently still, and since the above paragraphs were written, further very interesting information relating to this property and the action of Lord Clanricarde has been published in the columns of the 'Freeman's Journal.'

It appears that in consequence of my speech at the meeting at Loughrea in February 1888, advising moderation to the tenants, and urging them to meet the proposals of Lord Clanricarde, made on the morning of the meeting, in a conciliatory spirit, Dr. Healy, the Coadjutor Bishop of the diocese, thought the occasion an opportune one for opening direct negotiations with Lord Clanricarde with a view to a settlement.

These negotiations have unfortunately led to no result so far as Lord Clanricarde is concerned ; he positively declined to make any further advance on his previous offers. Dr. Healy, however, did not content himself with writing to Lord Clanricarde ; he also addressed the Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant on behalf of the Portumna tenants, and protested strongly against the forces of the Crown being used for the purpose of enforcing their eviction.

These remonstrances had the effect of inducing the Government to withhold the aid of the police and military from assisting the eviction of twenty-one tenants of the Portumna district, against whom Lord Clanricarde had obtained the necessary decrees. The ostensible reasons given for thus withholding the support of the Crown, were that many other notices of eviction in the same district, and at the same time, had been declared to be invalid by the County Court judge, and that it was doubtful whether all the decrees obtained were not subject to the same informality.

In consequence of this refusal of the Government to support these evictions, the notices have expired and the tenants have another reprieve. Fresh notices, however, have been issued by Lord Clanricarde, free from the technical defect of the previous notices ; it is understood that he will shortly be again in a position to evict these seventy tenants, and will call upon the Government to support him in this action.

I have added in Appendix D an extract from an address of Dr. Healy, in the parish church of Portumna, to the

viii *PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION*

tenants of that district, which will sufficiently explain his action. It is the more important as Dr. Healy has taken a different view as to the action of the tenants in combining against the payment of full rent to that taken by Dr. Duggan, the Bishop of Clonfert.

G. S. I.

January 20, 1889.

P R E F A C E.

DURING the last few months I have had many demands from all quarters for a reprint of my letters to the 'Times' describing the dispute between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants in Galway, and the methods of coercion carried out under the Act of last year in that district, and also of some speeches which I have made on the same subject, and on the kindred subject of the dispute on Lord Massereene's property, and the trial of Mr. John Dillon, M.P.

In lieu of republishing these letters and speeches as they stood, I have thought it better to wait till I should have leisure, after the rising of Parliament, for writing a fuller and more connected account of what I saw and heard in my various visits to the Loughrea district, including that in the year 1882, and also in my visit to the Massereene property, incorporating such parts of the letters and speeches as seemed to lend themselves to this treatment.

As regards the Clanricarde case, I should have been far better pleased to be able to let the subject drop; I have no personal feeling against the landowner of the district,