

Dr. W. J. LEYDS

KANTOOR.

SECOND EDITION.

---

THE INVASION  
OF THE  
TRANSVAAL.

\* \* \* \*

AN ADDRESS

Delivered at the Public Meeting at Lee, on  
Thursday, October 12th, 1899, by

R. D. YELVERTON, Esq.,

Ex-Chief Justice of the Bahama Islands.

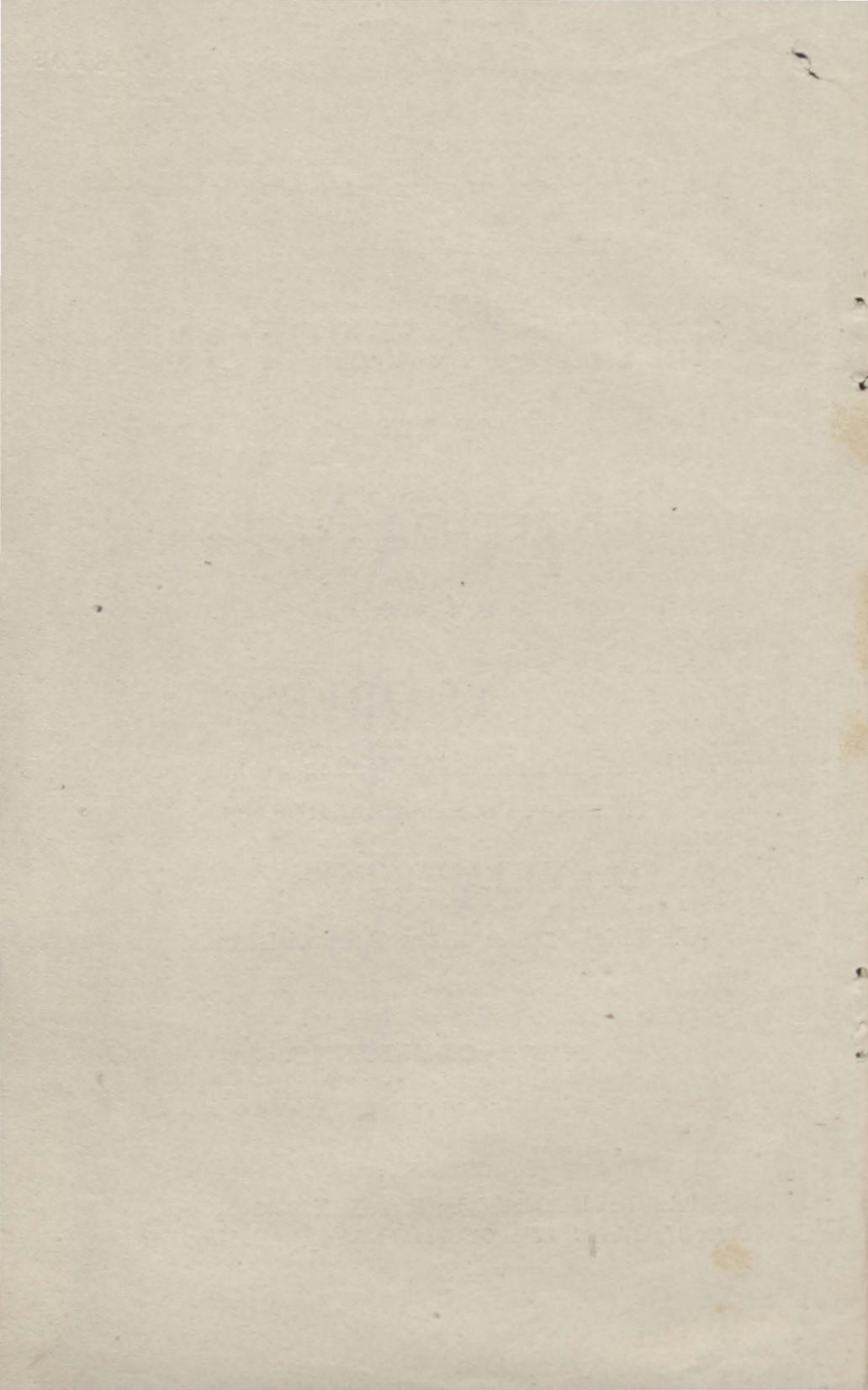
\* \* \* \*

PRICE ONE PENNY.

\* \* \* \*

CHELSEA :

Printed and Published by F. LONGMAN & SONS,  
*People's Advocate Office*, 71 Beaufort Street. (2d. Monthly).





MR. CHAIRMAN, MY FRIEND MR. FOSTER HOWE,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I AM exceedingly glad to be present here this evening, although I must say that the modesty which is proverbial with the Bar of England induces me to regret that I have been called upon for an address upon the Transvaal question and to move a resolution, instead of being allowed to take a humbler part and act as a seconder. However, I feel the very deepest interest in the subject, and although I agree that now in the presence of war, Englishmen should not do anything to accentuate the situation, still, I hold it to be right, and indeed the bounden duty of every honest citizen, to enquire as the conflict proceeds, into the circumstances which have unfortunately called it into existence. After some general observations upon the War and its consequences, Mr. Yelverton proceeded — Ladies and Gentlemen, I have elsewhere declared this War to be and I now declare it to be a War produced by Mr. Chamberlain. It was a great misfortune for us as English citizens when Mr. Chamberlain was placed at the Colonial Office. He then undertook work which his official position did not entitle him to attempt. The Transvaal was not a Colony, and the negotiations with President Kruger should have proceeded through the proper channel—Lord Salisbury—and not the improper channel—Mr. Chamberlain—and had President Kruger been inclined to insist upon the strictness of international usage, he could have refused to be a party to negotiations with Mr. Chamberlain. I am sorry to observe, also, that for the business of diplomacy Mr. Chamberlain was wholly unfitted. To successfully conduct diplomatic negotiations, three qualities are essential, namely, an

unbiased mind, placidity of temperament, and urbanity. Now in these three qualities it is well known that Mr. Chamberlain is lamentably deficient. Having, as I think thus unfortunately, become in a position of the greatest responsibility towards our Colonial Empire the Raid, which will ever constitute a disgrace to British men and women, took place. What was the result? If it had been successful, Mr. Chamberlain would have stood up in his place in Parliament, and congratulated his country upon having such a Prime Minister at the Cape as Mr. Rhodes. It was unsuccessful, and so he did the other thing; he expressed his astonishment and he pledged his word and the word of Mr. Rhodes that Mr. Rhodes was innocent in the business. Sir, I call things by plain names, and I say that such a statement was not true. Mark, what followed, a farcical tribunal, a Committee of so-called enquiry, was constituted. But whenever any question was put to a witness, showing the complicity of any official at home in the unholy business, either Mr. Chamberlain or some henchman of his objected to the question, and it was ruled out. We all know that the telegrams which had passed between certain officials and Mr. Rhodes and his fellow Raiders were not produced. Why? Because had they been produced the real movers in the wretched Raid would have stood revealed. As I have said, the Raid failed, and what was the next move? Mr. Chamberlain's ambition is to become the head of the Conservative party. Everyone who stands in his way must fall or remain and worship him. He sent out Mr. Conyngham Greene as agent at Pretoria. Now, I have a shrewd suspicion that Mr. Greene was sent with a view to have an eye on President Kruger. Then what was next done? Why the Colonial Secretary goes down Billingsgate way and fishes up Sir A. Milner from the Custom House. Now just consider the folly of this proceeding. It is appalling. Why, Sir, a man who is placed in the Government of a large and important Colony should be, it is well known, conversant with diplomacy and up to the position he has to fill. In such Colonies as the Cape the High Commissioner or Governor has always previously been a man brought up, so to speak, to the business. First, in a subordinate position in a smaller Colony,

then he is advanced, and then after some years of training, he becomes the head of an important Colony. The Colonial Secretary throws all this to the winds, he absolutely goes to the Board of Customs and pitchforks a man from there into one of the most difficult positions in the Empire—a position where Governmental training and diplomatic tact are absolutely essential. Unlike my friend Mr. Foster Howe, I have been now and then to a Music Hall, and I have seen on the stage, I think at the Aquarium, the "Two Macs"; they are individuals who carry on a dialogue on the stage with the object of amusing the audience. Now I say that Chamberlain and Milner were the "Two Macs" of this business—not with the object of amusing, but with the object of forming opinion in England, and with the necessary result also that President Kruger and his Government were annoyed. Sir A. Milner writes despatches depicting the woes of the Outlanders. Mr. Chamberlain replies, commiserating their position and promising interference on their behalf. All this is read in the newspapers at home. The result is that by reiteration between the correspondents, people become persuaded that these woes do exist, and that they are of the character depicted in the despatches. Then comes the "Outlanders' Petition" from the Transvaal. Do you know how easily such documents are signed. Why in such cases men will sign anything. Sign on both sides and then do not know what they have signed, and so it is that opinion in this country is excited against the Transvaal. Now I come to "Log-rolling"; it is an American expression. Do you know what it means? It means a community of individuals or of organisations secretly formed for the express object of obtaining benefits for themselves to the loss of other people. It flourishes in the American Parliament. It is, I grieve to say, obtaining a footing in our own House of Commons, and it controls a large section of the Press. When you go to town in your first-class carriages and settle yourselves to read the paper you are under the spell of the Logroller. It is a fact that the newspapers now, the "Daily Chronicle" is a noble exception, are largely owned and controlled by millionaires. You read the papers and you find them so unanimous that you think it is public opinion. It is not.

It is the opinion of the millionaires who want to grab the Transvaal. Sir, if the Transvaal had grown cabbages, it would never have excited the cupidity of these men. It contains millions of gold, and therefore must be grabbed at the expense of the British taxpayer, who, forsooth is induced to spend his money for the benefit of the capitalists by warlike articles and manifestoes in the Daily Press. I think a little straightforward plain speech is what is wanted in the House of Commons; independence of mind; and to you as electors I say "do not vote in support of a Cabinet which has amongst its members a man in whom you have not confidence." I see in the newspapers that some Colonies have offered contingents for service in the Transvaal with the English Forces. I object to militaryism—we, or rather our ancestors, saw its evils in the American War of independence, and ever since that hour it has been an axiom at the Colonial Office to preserve our Colonies as much as possible from military display. All that is now changed under Mr. Chamberlain. What will happen? The Colonial soldiers serving with our Troops will go back to their Colonies having reckoned up our men, and with a desire for military aggrandisement. The military element is the most dangerous and the most powerful of any of the elements of order in any country. If in the future a difference arises with the Mother Country, these military instincts will prevail. Imagine for a moment the Cape or the Austrlian Colonies or Canada passing a resolution in the local Parliament asserting the absolute independence of the Colony. Is there any man in this country who could resist it? This is an ever present danger, and it is aggravated immensely by making our Colonial subjects proud of military display. For the loss of our Colonies through this War, or in course of time consequent upon the ripening of the seed now sown we shall have to thank Mr. Chamberlain. I have said that he is not a success as a Colonial Secretary, and I will give you an object lesson in my experience. Only yesterday I, having been Chief Justice of the Bahamas, was sought in conference by a Solicitor and his Client who claims an estate in that Colony. I resigned the Chief Justiceship because I found a Colonial Judge in a small Colony

could not administer independent justice and keep his position in comfort. Upon my representations Mr. Sydney Buxton stated publicly in the House of Commons, in reference to my complaints that natives and related as such to influential people in the Colony had been appointed to judicial office there, that in the future no native of the Colony should be appointed to execute judicial office in that Colony. Some time after I left the Colonial Service Mr. Chamberlain came into power; the Chief Justiceship fell vacant, by the resignation of Sir Charles Walpole, and he appointed a native largely related in the Colony to the position of Chief Justice. At the Conference yesterday it appeared that this gentleman had, when Attorney-General in the Colony, given his opinion declaring that the Client who consulted me was in the wrong. Now there is no other Judge of the Supreme Court in the Colony, and there is no appeal in this case, so my Client must either try her case before the Judge who has already given his opinion or must forego her rights. I say nothing in derogation of the uprightness of any Judge, least of all of a Gentleman who practiced before me and whom I respected, but in a Colony with only one Judge, and with no appeal, I emphatically say that his appointment by Mr. Chamberlain to the Bench in that small Colony was most unwise. These observations I have made in the hope of impressing upon my fellow citizens that whatever the result of this lamentable and unholy War, there must be a stern reckoning with its author, Mr. Chamberlain, and with the means which he has employed. It is a war which will cost £60,000,000. It is a War brought on a ground which wholly fails to satisfy any appeal to arms. Talk of Suzerainty. It is absurd. A Suzerain is a Power which has the control of the external and internal Government of a vassal State. We have not the control of the internal Government of the Transvaal, and the allegation of Suzerainty was utterly fictitious and tended only to exasperate and annoy President Kruger and the Burghers. - And then the word "Conventions." There are no "Conventions." The Convention of 1881 was distinctly and in terms supplanted by that of 1884, and the plural had the same unfortunate effect as the previous "Suzerainty." I say it is an

iniquitous and unholy War. Go to your Homes and when you are in your family circle think of the loving Boer Household, formed in some cases of relatives of English men and women out on the lonely Veldt Farm. The Husband has gone to the War to be slaughtered, with your money and by your soldiers. Why? Ask this question at every bye-election while this iniquity lasts. See our own Homes deprived of a son, or it may be a husband or brother in the same unrighteous cause, and then as I do pray God to defend the right and punish unrighteousness, even though the punishment may be, in the Providence of God, delayed. But it will come—"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

Mr. Yelverton then moved the resolution, which was as follows:—

"That this public meeting of inhabitants of Lee earnestly  
 "and respectfully calls upon the Marquis of Salisbury  
 "to avail of every opportunity which may occur in  
 "order to bring about Peace between this country and  
 "the South African Republic."

The resolution, which was seconded by Mr. J. Foster Howe, was put to the meeting by the Chairman and was carried unanimously.

