W. McC. Morrison – "Kuonyi Nshila"

by

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George West Diehl

William McCutchan Morrison - "Kuonyi Nshila"
(Permanent Path Opener)

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WILLIAM McCUTCHAN MORRISON — "KUONYI NSHILA".

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the eyes of the world were focused upon the choice valley of the Kongo River in Africa. The great work of Livingstone had been followed by the spectacular effort of that British-American newspaperman, Henry M. Stanley. The values to be found in the hitherto "Dark Continent" were being realized and, from Capetown to Cario and from Boma to Mombassa, the nations of Europe were greatly concerned, each striving with the others for a portion.

In 1876, at the call of King Leopold II of Belgium, a conference of those interested in the opening of the Kongo River valley was held in Brussels. From this meeting grew the International African Association, officered almost entirely by Belgians. Within a few years another society was formed for the purpose of "studying what might be made of the Kongo and its basin". By the eventual blending of these two organizations, the "International Association of the Kongo" was created. This was made possible by the fact that the officers were Belgians and under the control of the king.

Hardly had Henry M. Stanley landed on European soil at Marseilles in 1876 before he was approached by an emissary of the Belgian king and he became the agent for the Association. He accepted the position in good faith and, by diligent work, he was able to secure 450 treaties with native chiefs; it is doubtful if any of these natives had any idea they were bartering away the land since it was held by a communal tenure for the whole tribe. (1) But is such a manner approximately one million square miles of territory came under the control of King Leopold.

The wild scramble for control in Africa led to secret compacts and mutual understandings which threatened the peace of Europe. Certain nations, including the United States, recognized the Association "as a properly constituted State." This added to the complications. Bismark was dubious as to the proper stand to take, but he led Germany to recognize the flag of the Congo Association and the next day, November 8, 1884, he issued formal invitations to fourteen powers to participate in an

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(1) A. C. Doyle: The Crime of the Congo, p. 5. New York: Doubleday, Page and Co.. 1909.

international conference to be held in Berlin for the purpose of considering the African question. The meeting was called to order by the German chancellor on November 15 and the sessions closed on February 26, of the following year. It has been said by some that the Congo Independent State was created by this conference, but such does not seem to be the case although it did pass certain regulations, formulated into an act, which had to do with the Kongo valley.

King Leopold II was busy. Having secured the recognition of France, the United States, and Germany for the Association before the Berlin Conference, he was engaged, while that body was in session, in securing a formal treaty, more than the nominal recognition, from ten other European powers, including Belgium. These compacts were all signed t wo days before the close of the Conference. Three days after the Berlin Conference became history, the Association gave assent to the resolutions made by the conference. "These resolutions, gathered in a General Act, establish freedom of trade in the basin of the Congo and declare navigation absolutely free on the River Congo, its tributaries, and the lakes and canals connected with the latter."(1)

After Belgium had accepted the work of the Berlin Conference, the problem of a head for the new project arose. It was logical that this be the Belgian king. In a letter to his Council of Ministers, dated April 16, 1885, he proposed that he be the Sovereign of the Congo State as well as the King of the Belgians and incidentially makes the statement, "For its defense and its police it would rely on African forces commanded by European volunteers."(2) The Belgian Chambers passed a resolution which approved the king's plan.

A great task confronted Leopold. The worst form of slavery was being conducted in the Congo and Arabs and Arabised negro chieftans practiced it. The first problem was to destroy it. Pope Leo XIII was requested to give support to the move to abolish the evil and Cardinal Lavigerie was delegated, as a result, to stir up the necessary enthusiasm. Military expeditions were sent out, battles were fought, posts were established, and a system of law was set up. It was all expenditure and no returns.

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(1) D. C. Boulger: The Reign of Leopold II, Vol. I, p. 153. London: Ardenne Publishers. 1925.
(2) Ibid., p. 164.

As a solution to the financial dilemma, King Leopold was able to secure a regular donation to the annual expenditure of the Congo administration and the support of the Belgian treasury for the construction of a railroad up the river. He also invited all the powers to send representative to a Conference which he was to hold in Brussels, stating that the purpose was to be the "discussing the best means for obtaining the gradual suppression of the slave trade (la traite) on the African Continent, and the immediate closing of the exterior markets supplied from that source." The Conference convened on November 18, 1889 and the concerted effort of the nations to eliminate the slavery problem was decided. Furthermore, Belgium was allowed the right of placing import dues of ten percent. ad valorem, a privilege also extended to France, Portugal, and Germany as territorial powers in Equatorial Africa.

To win the support of Belgium for the development of the Congo and to show his patriotic spirit, Leopold made his will on August 2, 1889, bequeathing all the sovereign rights over the Independent State of the Congo to Belgium. The will and the accompanying letter were read in the Belgian Chambers on July 9, 1890. In the spirit of enthusiasm, the necessary money for the Congo project was voted.

The Congo System. In the "set up" of the administrative machinery of the new State, King Leopold chose three ministers, one for foreign affairs, one for internal affairs, and one for finances. These men were responsible to me and they performed their work as any employee would do - conformed with the employer's wishes. A Governor-General, who should reside at Boma, the capital, was selected and, for the field administration, he was given fifteen District Commissaries as the territory had been divided into that number of districts.(1) As the system developed, a "capita" was placed in the native villages; he was a native soldier and often a member of a most ferocious tribe, or one of the two thousand or more white agents scattered throughout the Congo. Sometimes a group of villages would be placed under the direction of one or two of these white men and a native "capita" would be assigned to each village.(2)

Before 1888, when the Congo Public Force was organized, the State had employ-

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(1) Doyle, op. cit., p. 9.
(2) Ibid., p. 23.

ed about 3,000 mercenaries, mostly Haussas, Zanzibaris, and Senegalese. Now it was decided to purely Congolese natives would be formed into eight companies, each company having a full muster of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty men.(1) In 1891, the military was re-organized. As there were twelve administrative districts, there would be a company for each district and sixty commissioned and sixty non-commissioned officers, chiefly from the Belgian army, were selected to train the native recruits. The soldiers were to serve on the active list for five years and then they were to be held for two years more on the reserve. The uniform selected by the State for the armed forces was a blue tunic with a crimson fez.

As a result of this military policy, a large group of Zappo-Zapp natives were enrolled as soldier and armed. These people were cannibals and had been brought into the Congo region about 1890 by a State officer, Paul Le Marinel. With the reputation for being brave warriors as well as cannibals, they practiced the slave trade among their more passive neighbors in whose hearts they always struck terror.(2) Armed with excellent rifles and empowered by State authority, these people were tyrannical and heartless.

With the development of the military was the development of a policy relative to the land and its products which ultimately brought to pass conditions worse than the most degraded form of slavery. Independent trading with the natives was forbidden and those so engaged were forced into the status of agents of the State or compelled to quit the Congo. In 1902, one independent trader said,

"The State considers as its private property the whole of the Congo basin, excepting the sites of the natives' villages and gardens. It decrees that all the products of this immense region are its private property, and it monopolizes the trade in them. As regards the primitive proprietors, the native tribes, they are dispossessed by a simple circular; permission is graciously granted to them to collect such products, but only on condition that they bring them for sale to the State for whatever the latter may be pleased to give them. As regards alien traders, they are prohibited in all this territory from trading with thennatives."(3)

All such actions were against the word and spirit of the Acts upon which the nations had agreed. King Leopold, as head of the State, must have known of this conduct; it could only come to pass by his permission.

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(1) Boulger, op. cit., pp. 31, 32. Vol. II.
(2) Senate Document, No. 282,, Fifty-eighth Congress, p. 35.
(3) Doyle, op. cit., p. 15.

Another situation that was even more grievious was the compulsory labor policy. Natives, impressed by the Congo administration for public service and guarded by black soldiers, were forced to work and live under the most distressing conditions. If these poor humans resented the despotism of their taskmasters, they were cruelly flogged with the 'chicotte', tortured, or shot to death. Raids were made upon the native villages to secure new supplies of people to replace those who were dying under such dire circumstances.

Finally, there was the enforced co-operation of the natives in securing the products of field and wood for the State authorities in order that the process of colonization would be on a paying basis. The demand for rubber made upon the natives by the Belgian officers was incessant. It was a drastic procedure. A Swedish clergyman, Mr. Sjoblom, was an eye-witness to this barbarous method; he says,

"If the rubber does not reach the full amount required, the sentinals attack the natives. They kill some and bring the hands to the Commissary. Others are brought to the Commissary as prisoners. The sentinals, or else the boys in attendance on them, put these hands on a little kiln, and after they had been smoked, they by and by put them on the top of the rubber baskets. I have on many occasions seen this done." (1)

In their villages, they were shot down like beasts, women were violated and many died by horrible and unmentionable means, and not even the children were spared in this reign of terror. Their grass huts were given to the flames and many of them were murdered by the light of their burning homes.

One writer cites the three dominant features of the system that the Belgian authorities were enforcing. He says,

"(1) All the natural wealth (possessing negotiable value) of the Congo was held to be the property of its European rulers.
(2) The native population was compelled by the continuous and pitiless application of physical force in every form and to both sexes, to gather the raw products of the country which constituted that natural wealth for its alien rulers and their financial associates in Europe; to labour incessantly the whole year round at the muzzle of the rifle and at the end of the lash for its foreign taskmasters.
(3) The native population was additionally required to feed the native army; to supply carriers for it, carriers for transport of all kinds labour for the whole processes involved in the handling and export o the vast quantity of raw products thus sweated out of the country; a to feed that labour."(2)

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(1) Doyle, op. cit., p. 36.
(2) E. D. Morel: Red Rubber, p. 216. London: The National Labour Press, Ltd. 1919.

Protest against the System. As early as 1890, protests against the policy of the Belgians in the Congo were being heard. These were mostly letters to private individuals, but they were read in public. However, such was the indifference and the stoic unconcern of the civilized nations that the letters were ignored. Even the diary of E. J. Glave, who crossed the Congo in 1894-1895, was published in the Century Magazine in 1896 and civilization was not indignant over such conditions as

"The white officer at Kamambare has commissioned several chiefs to make raids on the country of the Warua and bring him slaves. They are supposed to be taken out of slavery and freed, but I fail to see how this can be argued out. They are taken from their villages and shipped south to be soldiers, workers, etc., on the stations and what were peaceful families have been broken up and the different members spread about the place.... Many women and children were taken, and twenty-one heads were brought to Stanley Falls, and have been used by Captain Rom as a decoration round a flower-bed in front of his house.... Most white officers out in the Congo are averse to the india-rubber policy of the State, but the laws command it....If the Arabs had been the masters it would be styled iniquitous trafficking in human flesh and blood, but being under the administration of the Congo Free State, it is merely a part of their philanthropic system of liberating the natives."(1)

However, the Aborigines Protection Society, an English organization of which H. R. Fox-Bourne was the devoted Secretary, called the attention of the public and, for a short time, there was a sensation. The nations relapsed into a state of lethargy. Then came the Congo Reform Association, under the leadership of the dynamic E. D. Morel, the author "Red Rubber", and, from the moment of its inception, it was relentless in its warfare against the inhumane policies in vogue in the Congo. It voluntarily dissolved on June 16, 1913, having accomplished its aim. This Association was the champion of the oppressed and in it those who wished to declare their attitude toward the existing condition of things in the Congo found a willing auditor and a mouthpiece for their cause.

The missionaries in the Congo valley made reports to their various Boards and Societies. Some of Secretaries protested in letters to King Leopold, but no effort was made to arouse public opinion. Some of the missionaries presented reports to the local officials in the Congo, but all to no purpose. However, a member of the American Baptist Missionary Union, Sjoblom, by name, who was a missionary in the Congo, made such positive protestations locally that he was notified by the Governor-General,

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(1) Morel, op. Cit., p. 42.

Baron Wahis, that a repetition of his indiscretion would bring upon him five years' sentence to prison. Then, the zealous missionary appealed to the civilized world through Fox Bourne in a public meeting held in London, May 12. 1897.(1)

The man Morrison. On the last day of the year 1896, the Belgian steamer "Edward Bohlen" lay in the harbor on Boma, the capital of the Congo Free State, and William McCutchan Morrison came ashore. He was to become the dynamic voice for the oppressed natives and, through him, they were to be freed from the tyranny of the oppressor. On May 7, 1897, he arrived at Luebo, a mission post of the Southern Presbyterian Church on the Lulua River, a tributary of the Kassai River which is one of the main branches of the Congo.

A man is the product of his sires and Morrison evidenced the truth of that statement. His great-great-grandfather, because of his religious beliefs, left Scotland and settled at Londonderry, Ireland. His great grandfather, Robert Morrison, a school-teacher by profession, emigrated to America with his two brothers and found a home at Philadelphia. After he married Miss Susan Murek, former student at the University of Heidleburg in her native land and a member of a family of teachers and ministers he and his bride settled on a farm near Lexington, Va.. Their youngest son, Robert, noted for his piety and most worthy character, was the father of three sons, the eldest of whom, Luther, a farmer by vocation and a leading officer in the church, married Miss Mary Agnes McCuthhan, a woman of sterling character. William, their eldest son, was born on November 10, 1867. The sturdy Scotch-Irish stock, strong in religious convictions, steady in industry, and faithful in the discharge of assigned tasks, has been a factor in the making of history and young Morrison early gave promise of his future activity.

At the age of sixteen, he entered Washington and Lee University in Lexington, having been prepared for college work in home instruction and in the local public school. The Morrison homestead is located three miles from Lexington and it was necessary for young Morrison to walk that distance night and morning so that he could do his part with the farm duties. He was graduated at the age of twenty and went to Searcy,

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(1) Morel, op. cit., p. 42.

Ark., to teach school in order that he might have the finances to take up the study of law.

For six years he taught school at Searcy, a very important element in his preparation for the work he was to do. At this time, he decided to become a minister in the Southern Presbyterian Church, the church in which he had been reared, and, entering the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., he gave himself to his studies with the same faithful and conscientious application that he had given to his undergraduate work. At this time, he decided to offer himself to the church as a missionary to Africa. This he did immediately upon graduation and he was accepted. On November 7, 1896, having been licensed and ordained by the Presbytery of Arkansas under whose care and direction he had pursued his theological studies, he sailed from Philadelphia for his post on the Congo.(1)

In later years, Dr, Morrison said,

"Before my arrival on the Kongo I had often read and heard of the humane and liberal government which had been so auspiciously begun by King Leopold II, and I felt that it would be a great privilege to labor under a government alleged to be so just in its treatment of all - natives, missionaries, and traders alike. I had however been in the country only a few days when I began, with deep sadness, to realize that things were not as they had been represented. While going along the old caravan route between Tumba and Stanley Pool I almost hourly met caravans of boys and men carrying heavy loads of rubber and ivory down to Tumba, to be there shipped on to Matadi by rail. Upon inquiry I found that the greater part of these men had been forced into the service of the State. From that time on to the present my intercourse with and knowledge of the State have only tended to increase the suspicion then formed that the published protestations of philanthropy are not really sincere."(2)

Leaving Ibanche, where he had been stationed, he went to Luebo on a business trip shortly after he had taken charge. In his absence two native tribes, who lived on the road between the two places, went to war against each other. This strife closed the route of communication and the consternation was great for Luebo was the metropolis of that section and it was imperative, for trade reasons, that the road be kept open. On his way back to Ibanche, Morrison stopped to see the chieftans and made peace between them. When he had arrived at his post, the news of the peace pact spread among the natives and they came to thank him. As they left him, they said, "Kuonyi nshila" - "Don't let the path get closed again." This expression became the native name of the

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(1) T. C. Vinson: William McCutchan Morrison - Twenty Years in Central Africa, pp. 9 -17.Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Comm. of Publication. 1921.
(2) Senate Document, No. 282, Fifty-eighth Congress, p. 34.

man, and it was very fitting as he was the "Permanent Path Opener" in a greater way than those black people knew.(1)

He soon came in contact with the pernicious policy of the State. After a few months of residence among the Bakuba people at Ibanche, he received notice from the State that the post must be abandoned within fifteen days and no reasons were given. At the same time like orders were given relative to the station at Ndombe. The order was obeyed under strong protest. The situation called forth Morrison's first letter to a State official and his last one, written twenty years later, was relative to an order demanding the closing of a station in the Baluba country.

This refusal of the State to allow the Protestant missions the right to concessions for the advancing of their work was in direct violation of the Treaty of Berlinaccording to the interpretation placed on it by the nations but which Belgium, rather King Leopold did not accept.(2) However, the Belgian and Catholic missions were not hampered in this manner. Morrison was not able to purchase concessions. He said,

"After the refusal to concede land to us, on the ground that no more concessions were being made, I showed the Kongo Government, by a record in its Bulletin Officiel, that in 1901 four concessions had been made to Roman Catholics at a time when they said no land was being granted. They could not give any explanation of that."(3)

Although this refers to a later situation, it shows the attitude of the State and reflects the agreement made in Belgium between the king and the Catholic authorities.

The fighting spirit was aroused in the breast of Morrison and, by pen and type, he waged the war. Letters were sent to the State officials and articles appeared in periodicals andin it all he endeavored to voice the protest of the missionaries and expose the unprincipled practices of those representing the king in the Congo.

In July, 1899, the Zappo-Zapps, under the leadership of Mlumba Nkusa, a famous chief with an unsavory reputation, made a raid into the Bena Pianga country to collect tribute and secure stores for the State. His trail was one of blood. When Rev. Shepherd, a colored missionary at Ibanj, having received orders from Morrison, came to the Zappo-Zapp camp, he saw, on the outside of the stockade, more than forty dead

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(1) Vinson: op. cit., pp. 28, 29.
(2) See page 2.
(3) Senate Document No. 282, Fifty-eighth Congress, p. 48.

bodies piled in a heap and inside the stockade he saw and counted eighty-one human hands, being slowly dried over a fire. The blood-thirsty chief declared that he had carried out the orders of the State officer at Luluaburg to whom he had already sent sixteen slaves. Sheppard made his report to Morrison and the latter, with no delay and in positive terms, wrote a letter to the officer at Luluaburg, charging him with the whole savage affair and demanding the recall of the Zappo-Zapps.

Within a few days, Morrison was summoned to Ibanj to establish the charges he had made and he complied. The investigation was a farce. The judge wrote down all the evidence offered, coloring it so that the guilty officer would be exonerated of all guilt; he even dared to attempt to bribe and persuade the witnesses to perjure themselves. Morrison was permitted to hear some of the evidence that was being offered and the investigating judge was reprimanded later for this indiscretion. The result was the the guilty white officer, Dufour by name, was found innocent and the full blame placed on Mlumba Nkusa, who would have been punished to satisfy the demands of the people for justice, but the Belgian officers feared his 25,000 to 30,000 cannibals would revolt in protest.(1) As evidence that Morrison was not intimidated by the court held at Ibanj, it may be cited that he affirmed his charges and insisted on being allowed to present them before an impartial court.(2)

In 1902, he reported another case which happened in Luebo. Three months later a judge came to investigate and spent half a day with Morrison. On the morrow, the latter and one of his colleagues, a Mr. Hawkins, went to court. At first, the judge refused to allow Morrison, the legal representative of the mission in the Congo, to hear the evidence offered by Hawkins, but he was finally persuaded to permit it. However, he denied Morrison the privilege of hearing the evidence offered by the native witnesses. "If you won't permit me to hear the evidence of the natives, intimidated as they are by your soldiers, I will go out into the civilized world and will tell the facts." The judge was obdurate and Morrison accepted the challenge.(3)

After six and one-half years in the Congo, Morrison left Africa in 1903 on furlough, firmly set in his purpose to declare to the world the real conditions in th

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(1) Senate Document, No. 282, Fifty-eighth Congress, pp. 36, 37.
(2) Vinson, op. cit., p. 46.
(3) Senate Document, No. 282, Fifty-eighth Congress, p. 42.

Congo. The cause of the Congoese had a champion in him. He would carry the story of brutality and force to nations. The rising tide of resentment against the policies of the Congo government, which was then being shaped in Europe, especially in England, would be given more power by the statements of Morrison.

He visited Brussels to confer with King Leopold upon the situation. Not only did he wish to discuss the colonial situation, but he was eager to understand why it was impossible to secure concessions. He was unable to secure an audience with the king, but he did confer with some of the officers of State. From them, he could obtain nothing definite in the way of written promises. However, his Scotch-Irish tenacity was persistent in following his self-determined course.(1)

Proceeding to England, he was able to meet some of the great leaders in religion and politics through the kind services of Robert Whyte. To them he told the story of the Congo. On Tuesday, May 5, 1903, the Aborigines Protection Society met in the Royal United Service Institution, Whitehall, London and Morrison was present as a guest. He was introduced to the assembly by the Chairman, Rev. John Clifford, D.D., LL.D. as one "from the Kassai district, who will speak to us of his work in that neighborhood, and of what he knows of these Kongo atrocities."

Without sparing words, Morrison presented the situation as he saw it. He gave a brief history of the Congo, discussed the reason for the divergent reports which had been given out, told why the missionaries had been silent, and cited the list of atrocities. His conclusion was one of fiery denunciation. He said,

"I protest against those hypocritical protestations of righteousness and justice that come from the ruler in Brussels. We want to see some administration of justice. We are tired of words, mere words; we are tired of the denial of such horrible facts as I have related to you to-night. The King of the Belgians is afraid of an impartial international inquiry, and pending it he wants to get all he can out of the country so cruelly misgoverned. In the name of humanity, in the name of the defenseless natives in the Kongo Free State, in the name of the men following honest commercial industry in that State, I plead to the English nation to come to our rescue." (2)

This fierce censure of the government of the Congo Free State and King Leopold is only equalled by a statement he made in the course of his address when he said,

"If the heads of that (Baptist Missionary Society) society can be prevailed upon to

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(1) Vinson, op. cit., p. 47.
(2) Senate Document, No. 282, Fifty-eight Congress, p. 42.

act, and the men on the spot to speak out, I believe there will be such a revelation as will stagger the whole world. I say this because I believe to-day that there is not, perhaps, in all the world a Government that is so wicked and iniquitous in all its relations, both to the natives and to foreigners, as the Government of the Kongo Free State. I am not even prepared to make an exception of Turkey."(1)

A few days later, Morrison was given the opportunity to speak on the Congo question before both Houses of Parliament. In clear and concise terms, yet with the firmness of conviction, he told the story. Human indifference could not stand before such an attack. The real contest for liberty and justice on the Congo now began. On May 20, 1903, Mr. Herbert Samuel brought forth a motion of indictment against Belgium and King Leopold for the policies being enforced in the Congo in violation of the act drawn up at Berlin. On August 8, of the same year, the Marquis of Lansdowne addressed a Circular Note to the Powers who had participated in the Berlin Pact, requesting suggestions as to a possible solution to the problem. In the meanwhile, Roger Casement had been sent, on June 5, to the Congo to make an investigation. His report was a complete verification of the statements made by Morrison and others.(2)

Hardly had Morrison sailed for America until King Leopold and some of his henchmen gave out the report that Morrison had not given them specific instances of brutality as he did in England and the inference was that they thought he was afraid to do so at that time and, when he spoke in England, he did it because he was bribed to report incidents which would be detrimental to the king's integrity. On June 20, 1903, Morrison wrote a letter to King Leopold from Lexington, Va., in which he challenged the charges. It was most positive and hurled the lie back upon the royal head. He offered to appear before King Leopold and tell him the same things he had told in London, if the Congo Free State would pay his expenses for the trip to and from Belgium. No answer was received to this communication.(3)

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States met in Lexington, Va., in May, 1903. Due to the influence and arguments of Morrison, a committee of three, of which he was a member, was appointed to present an appeal on the behalf of the Congoese to Secretary of State John Hay. When the committee went to

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(1) Senate Document, No. 282, Fifty-eighth Congress, p. 41.
(2) Boulger, op. cit., Chapter VIII, Vol. II.
(3) Vinson, op. cit., pp. 49 - 51.

Washington in July, the President and the Secretary of State were out of the city, but a date for a later conference was arranged and the data on the Congo situation were left in the hands of proper officials.

Up and down the country, Morrison went making his appeal for succor to the Congoese. His was a ready pen and articles appeared in magazines and newspapers. It was his constant effort to secure the aid of influential men and he was fortunate enough to secure the favor of such men as some United States senators who championed the cause on the floor of the Senate. For their use in getting the matter before the lawmakers of the nation, a memorial was prepared; it bears the caption, "Memorial of the Chairman and members of the Conference of Missionary Societies, Representatives of American organizations conducting missionary and philanthropic work in the Independent State of the Kongo in Africa, praying that Congress investigate existing conditions in the Kongo State, and taks steps to ameliorate and correct the evils from which that State is suffering." This memorial was presented to the Senate on April 19, 1904, by Senator Morgan, of Alabama; it was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed. It is the historical Document No. 282.

In the following October, Morrison addressed the Boston Peace Congress, held in the Massachusetts city. Again he made a fervent appeal for aid in lifting the hand of oppression from the Congo. As a result, a group of resolutions was passed, recommending "either a renewed conference of the Powers concerned in the formation of the Congo Free State or a commission of inquiry as provided in the Hague convention."(1) Ever driving toward his objective, the dauntless Morrison waged his fight.

On July 11, 1905, Morrison and his bride - he had married Miss Bertha Stebbins, of Natchez, Miss., on June 14 - sailed for Liverpool on their way to the Congo. It was his expectation to see a decided change in the condition of the people, due to the pressure brought upon King Leopold. Public opinion had been stirred and the Nations had registered their protests. There was a change, but not the change he had anticipated. But with heart undaunted he began his work anew.

King Leopold, disturbed by the reaction against him after the Casement

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(1) Vinson, op. cit., p. 53.

report was made public, had appointed, in July, 1904, the Commission of Inquiry which was composed of three men, E. Janssens, Giacomo Nisco, and E. de Schumacher. The Commission sailed from Antwerp in September to investigate the Congo conditions. After a trip up the Congo from Boma to Stanley Falls and a short trip in the Lopori valley, it returned to make its report, March, 1905, but the publication was delayed until in the autumn. Meanwhile, the Congo Reform Association secured copies of much of the evidence placed before the Commission at eight points on the Congo and placed it in bulletin-form in the hands of the public.(1)

While the Commission had endeavored to belittle much that had been said against the Congo government, the pigment of the old paint could be seen under the whitewash. There was but one thing to be done and it was accomplished finally.In August, 1908, Belgium annexed the Congo Free State, taking is virtually from the hands of the dying king. He died on the 17th of the following December.(2)

Upon his return to the Congo, Morrison found that the era of hand-cutting, murder, and slave-raiding had passed, but the evil of the system was still abroad in the valley in the form of "concessionaire companies", working under a charter from the government and with the State generally holding the controlling interest. The policy and the component elements of these companies is well described in a letter Morrison wrote to the Congo Reform Association. He says,

"The statement that is persistently put forth by the State, as an excuse for these companies, is that they are "controlled; that the native is not allowed to cut the rubber vines, that the companies are compelled to plant rubber vines, etc. As an actual fact, within the sound of where I am writing these words, I can hear the people beating the bark of the rubber vines, which have been stripped, killing the vine of course. Not only are the people forbidden to do this, but they are encouraged to get rubber in any way. It can be seen that the only desire of the so-called companies is to gather the cream of the country as soon as possible, without concern for the future. I say so-called companies, because, as is well known, they are controlled absolutely by the State, which holds never less than one-half the stock (so far as my knowledge goes). This means that the State and the companies work hand in glove, and it would surprise the uninitiated to see with what masterly skill the whole thing has been worked out. I give only one example. In some places in this region the State demands its tribute in copper crosses, weighing about a pound each. It is prohibited to import these; the native copper is necessarily limited for the crosses have to be made and brought from far away in the Katanga district. After the native has paid his crosses to the State they are turned over to the company. In a little while the native is ordered to bring in more crosses. Buthe can only get them from the company, and that means that he must

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(1) "Evidence Laid Before The Congo Commission of Inquiry", Liverpool: John Richardson and Sons, 1905. Issued by the Congo Reform Association.
(2) Boulger, op. cit., p. 179, Vol. II.

bring in rubber in order to get them - heaven and earth are turned upside down in order to get rubber."(1)

The activity that Morrison had manifested in behalf of the Congo natives and this renewal of the attack did not escape the notice of King Leopold and he was a marked man. He had been termed an "infamous calumniator" by the subsidised press of Belgium and accused of seeking "material interests" when he had protested to the officials in Brussels against the withholding of mission sites. Now a more subtle method of discrediting the man were adopted.(2) Sly as a pack of wolves waiting to pounce upon the stag in an unguarded moment, they waited for their opportunity to strike.

Rev. W. H. Sheppard, the colored minister, who has already been referred to as being stationed at Ibanj(3), had been on his furlough to America. Upon his return to the mission, he drew a contrast between the country of the Bakuba as he saw it on his first coming to Africa and he saw in now. The beautiful native home-life, centering in villages had given place to desolation. So impressed was he with the picture, that he wwote an article upon that subject and gave it to Dr. Morrison for publication in the mission paper, the "Kasai Herald". In January, 1908, it was given to the world. Although only a very brief sketch, yet it was one of the means of bringing the attention of the world to a stuffy courtroom in an African village as two men fought a commercial octopus. It may be well to quote it.

"These great stalwart men and women, who have from time immemorial been free, cultivating large crops of Indian corn, tobacco, potatoes, trapping elephants for their ivory tusks and leopards for their skins, who have always had their own king and a government not to be despised, officers of the law established in every town of the kingdom - these magnificent people, perhaps abour 400,000 in number, have entered a new chapter in the history of their tribe. Only a few years since, travelers through this country found them living in large homes, having from one to four rooms in each house, loving and living happily with their wives and children, one of the most prosperous and intelligent of all the African tribes, though living in one of the most remote spots on the planet. One seeing the happy, busy, prosperous lives which they lived could not help feeling that surely the lines had fallen unto this people in pleasant places.

But within these last three years how changed they are! Their farms are growing up in weeds and jungle, their king is practically a slave, their houses now are mostly only half-built single rooms and are much neglected. The streets of their towns are not clean and well-swept as they once were. Even their children cry for bread.

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(1) Vinson, op. cit., pp. 77, 78.
(2) Morel, op. cit., p. 174.
(3) See page 9.

Why this change? You have it in a few words. There are armed sentries of chartered trading companies, who force the men and women to spend most of their days and nights in the forests making rubber, and the price they receive is so meager that they cannot live upon it. In the majority of the villages these people have not time to listen to the gospel-story, or give an answer concerning their soul's salvation. Looking upon the changed scene now, one can only join with them in their groans as they must say: "Our burdens are greater than we can bear."

The article then closes with two paragraphs in which the writer describes the progress and the future of the mission work in which he is engaged, a more cheerful picture.(1)

This little article came to the attention of the director of the Kasai Rubber Company at Dima and an extensive correspondence between him and Dr. Morrison took place. The official demanded a printer retraction of the charges which he felt had been made against his company as it operated in the Bakuba country; he also said that his company was not chartered as had been imputed. This attitude did not disturb the American missionary leader; he claimed that, if the company was not chartered, it operated with the permission of the State and held a monopolistic position and was the same as if it were and he requested that an impartial commission be appointed to make a thorough investigation of the situation and that its activities take place there in the Congo. The challenge was not accepted.

In February, the month following the publication of Sheppard's article, the British Government requested their Congo representative, Consul Wilfred G. Thesinger, to make a trip through the Congo and investigate the validity of the various reports that were coming in from that section. In the course of his journey, Thesinger visited the territory were the Kasai Rubber Company operated. Upon his return, he sent a very carefully worded report to his government verifying the statement of the conditions. One paragraph of this report which pertains to the Bakuba may be cited. It reads thus;

"There is no doubt that the Bakuba are the most oppressed race to-day in the Kasai. Harassed by their own king in the interest of the Rubber Company, driven by the agents and their capitas, disarmed and deprived even of the most ordinary rights, they will, if nothing is done to help them, sink to the level of the vicious and degraded Bakette."(2)

As evidence that this condition was not due to the Belgian people, there is a fact that must be presented which is indisputable proof. Before 1902, the Kasai valley was the only section of the Congo basin left open to free trade for, when the editts

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(1) Vinson, op. cit., Appendix B, pp. 193, 194.
(2) Doyle, op. cit., p. 110.

of King Leopold II concerning his "sovereignity", in 1891 and 1892 were made, such a protest arose from the traders in that section that they were exempted from the decrees. Finally, the king forced the fourteen Dutch and Belgian traders to form a trust and, in the transaction, the natives as well as the rubber were considered as becoming the property of the firm, the Kasai Rubber Company. The king held 2,010 of the 4,020 shares chose two of the four members of the Permanent Committee, gave his approval or denial for the other two, and appointed the Chairman. Even the Administrators, forming the Administrative Council, were appointed subject to the kings approval. In the four years between 1902 and 1905, inclusive, the Company made net profits of 18,292,889 francs upon a capital investment of about £40,200. No wonder that the king was anxious to keep his control on the Kasai valley!(1)

When the Thesinger report was made public and other revelations of the true conditions began to pour into the English press, public indignation was aroused and the stock of the Kasai Rubber Company suffered a decided slump. This aroused the ire of the company and evidently it decided to retaliate. The missionaries were the ones who had created the trouble and they must be made to suffer.

The coutts in the Congo were implicated in the condition of things to such an extent that justice was an unknown quality. This was manifested in the Stannard case. This missionary was sued for criminal libel by a certain M. Hagstrom who had been accused of brutality to the natives. The documents, which would prove that the information Stannard claimed he had given the Commission of Inquiry and which was now denied to have been received, could not be secured. Lontulu, the chief around whom the whole affair centered, was Stannard's only hope. However, the authorities secured the native, beat and tortured him, plucked off his beard, broke his spirit, and threw him into jail. Were he to tell the truth at the trial he knew just what it would mean to him. In his desire for personal safety, he denied having told Stannard the things the latter had reported. Hagstrom won the case, Stannard was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, in lieu of which he could pay a fine of 40. Such were the court methods in the Congo under the Belgian taskmasters.(2)

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(1) Morel, op. cit., p. 130.
(2) Doyle, op. cit., pp. 91 - 93.

The famous trial at Leopoldville. The anticipated blow finally came. On February 23, 1909, a summons was issued by the bailiff, E. E. Kocher, for Dr. Morrison and Rev. W. H. Sheppard to appear before the Court of the First Instance which would sit at Leopoldville on the 25th of the following May. The article the latter had written was the cause of the action; the use of the word "chartered" and the fact that the Kasai Rubber Company, the plaintiff, was the only compoany operating in the Bakuba country made it clear that a wilful misrepresentation had been made. Hence, the grounds for the suit. It was an excellent opportunity to secure the conviction of the most troublesome of missionaries , Dr. Morrison, and to create the impression before the world that all reports of brutality in the Congo were false.

Well did the Rubber Company, working with the court, plan the trial. The place where it was to be held was Leopoldville, nine hundred miles away. It could have been held at some nearer point, perhaps even at Luebo. It would be impossible to take the necessary witnesses such a distance and maintain them during the trial which would be undoubtedly long drawn-out. The natives concerned would have another hundred miles to journey from their homes to Luebo.

The time of the trial was most unfortunate. From May 1st until October 1st, the "Lapsley", the mission steamer, remained idle as the condition of the rivers, due to the dry season, would not permit transportation. The only means of the defendents reaching Leopoldville was the steamer and May 25 was after the dry season had come. Both of these conditions could not have been unknown to the Congo authorities when the summons was issued. The place and the time were purposively chosen.

After Dr. Morrison had endeavored without success to have the court change the date, he appealed to Wm. W. Handley, the United States Consul at Boma, and even he was not able to persuade the authorities, receiving the curt reply that the matter was a problem for the defendents to solve. He immediately wrote to Dr. Morrison and reported his failure, urging the missionaries to be present on the set day. Knowing that the trial would hinge on technicalities, he endeavored to secure an attorney for the missionaries but he was unable to accomplish this. In his desperate need, he requested

the Governor-General, at Boma, to allow the defendents the services of a lawyer connected with the Court of Justice. His request was denied and he was told

"You know that the Reverend Drs. Morrison and Sheppard have not spared the administration on the occasion of their attack on the Kasai Company. A letter, which Dr. Morrison wrote me last October, containing violent criticisms of the Government is the proof. Now, there is ground to consider the hypothesis, apropos of the suit at Leopoldville, in which the reverend gentlemen of the American Mission would believe themselves bound to renew the criticisms. It is evident that the missionaries could not ask their lawyer, a colonial official, to associate himself with them in their attacks against the administration; and, on the other hand, it is necessary for the lawyer to have entire liberty of action."(1)

However, the full details of the affair, including verification of the truth of Morrison's charges and Sheppard's statement, had been forwarded to Washington by the consul. In the meantime, Morrison had written a letter to Dr. S. H. Chester, Secretary of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Church in the United States, explaining the situation. Immediately Dr. Chester laid the matter before Hon. Philander C. Knox, the Secretary of State, urging the intervention of the United States to see that the trial was in accordance with the rights of American citizens. Individuals, who had learned to love and admire Dr. Morrison, became active and a deluge of letters and callers assailed the Department of State. Delegations, representing many varied groups, visited the office of Mr. Knox. As a result of this expression of interest, the American Consulate in Brussels was ordered to demand of the Belgian government a change of time and venue so that witnesses for the defense could attend and the test of justice be rightly made. The date was changed to September 24, 1909.

In England, Mr. Robert Whyte, a staunch friend of Dr. Morrison and a firm advocate of the Congo rights, became active and solicited the aid of influential men and organizations. Public opinion was created and church societies were no longer in a dormant state. In Belgium was the Hon. Emil Vandervelde, who had advocated the cause of Congo reforms in the Belgian Chambers. He was to tell the legislators at a later date, when the bodies were discussing the first Congo budget and the so-called "forced labor" of the Congo natives for the next twelve months was mentioned, that "Your budget reposes upon confiscation and forced labour.... Your profits are made in blood and mud."(2) Mr. Whyte called upon Vandervelde and urged him to go to the aid of the

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(1) Vinson, op. cit., pp. 95, 96.
(2) Morel, op. cit., p. 218.

American missionaries. Without delay, the great Belgian lawyer consented and, when the day of the trial came, he was in Leopoldville, ready for the battle for human rights.

Then came September 30, 1909, the day of the trial. The defense was ready and the plaintiff anxious. The whole aspect of the trial was changed by what appears to have been an error on the part of the Clerk of the Court. The directors had requested that two spparate summons be served, one on Dr. Morrison for certain charges he had made in his correspondence,subsequent to the return from his furlough, with the Kasai director at Boma and the damage asked was 50,000 francs ($10,000) and the other on Dr. Sheppard for the article which had appeared in the "Kasai Herald" and the damage was set at 30,000 francs ($6,000). These two summons had been made one and Morrison, as editor of the paper, and Sheppard, as author of the article, were sue for 80,000 francs ($16,000). The attorney for the plaintiff decided to allow the trial toproceed, but he held that the Company could deal with Morrison separately later, if it saw fit.

The trial opened. Mr. Vandermeenen, the attorney for the Kasai Company, defended the policy of the company, denying the charges made against it. It was his argument that the statement made by Sheppard was made with the intention of damaging the company and that such an act was part of a plan against the Belgian government and the Roman Catholic missionaries in the Congo. When he made the statement that the Company had never resorted to "armed Sentries" and that there had been no compulsion brought to bear on the natives to produce rubber, he was forced to qualify his declaration by saying that such "was against the orders of the Company, but perhaps a few of their buyers might possess guns." Vanderveldt had told him before the trial that he had twenty witnesses in Leopoldville, from eleven different villages, who had until recently been acting as armed sentries for the Company.

Vandermeeren then resorted to citing letters (he did not state that they had been written four or five years before) to show that the incoming of the Kasai Company had not brought a worse regime. In this connection, he read some of the personal correspondence of Mrs. Morrison with different officials of the Company in which she thanked them for kindnesses she had received from them or invited them to dine at the Morrison home.

Having read the Company's instructions as to the price to be paid for rubber, he was not able to show that these orders had been carried out when Vanderveldt requested such proof. He contended that the Thesinger report was a part of British propaganda and that he could not see why the Protestant missionaries had voiced disapproval of the actions of the Company while others, especially the Roman Catholics, had kept silent. Never, during his entire harangue, did he endeavor to bolster his argument with positive evidence.

Vandervelde, in a brilliant address, proved himself to be worthy of his reputation. Declaring that his present course of action had caused criticism against him, a Belgian defending foreigners of the Congo in a Belgian Court against a Belgian Company, he asserted that his purpose was two fold, to defend the missionaries and to plead for justice and mercy for the natives. He expressed regret that he could not defend Dr. Morrison against the charges brought against him by his correspondence as that would allow him the privilege of exposing the whole Congo system.

Then, he assailed the policies of the Kasai Company in no uncertain terms. His statements could not be denied. The Company had declared that the price paid for rubber would be determined by competition, but no competition was allowed and the prices paid in the Kasai district were as low as two cents per pound. Armed sentries had been used and he had witnesses to prove it and,because of their use, fifty cases were pending against the company for brutality to the natives. He uttered the keenest of invectives against Vandermeeren for reading the letters of Mrs. Morrison, declaring no gentleman would have used innocent correspondence in such a manner.

He challenged the plaintiff to allow him to use witnesses to prove his statements regarding the treatment they had received, but this was ignored and flatly refused. "In that case", he said, "you are morally condemned, whatever the decision of the court may be."

In summing up the argument, he claimed that the two points upon which the the judge must pass his opinion were whether the Sheppard article was written with a malicious intent andif one had the right to prove the statements made in it.

The case was referred to the Tribunal for decision. In its usual secret session the evidence was weighed and the judgment made. Dr. Morrison8s case was ruled

out and Dr. Shappard was acquited. Furthermore, the Kasai Company was assessed forty-two francs to pay the costs of the trial. It was a great victory for justice and liberty. Well could A. Conan Doyle say in a book which appeared at this time that "Morrison in the dock makes a finer Statue of Liberty than Bartholdi's in New York harbour."(1) This was undoubtedly one of the most dramatic moments in missionary history and it is deserving of a place in the rank of the great trials.(2)

With this great test behind him, Morrison planned even greater things for the work of missions. With Mrs. Morrison, he journeyed into the Baluba country to select the site for two new stations. After a trip of between five and six hundred miles, they returned home. In the midst of all these plans for an extension of the work, Mrs. Morrison died on November 21, 1910, a victim of fever. From his sorrow, the great missionary arose to even greater efforts and, in all his labors, he seemed to find a peace and happiness. He became a leader on the Protestant missions in Africa, aiding other denominations to found their work, giving them the counsel drawn from his experience, and finally being twice elected President of the Conference of the Proest-and Missions in the Congo. A victim of tropical dysentery, he died at Lueba on March 14, 1918. In the little cemetery in the Mission compound, he was buried by the side of his wife.

The influence of the man. It is a far call from the banks of the Congo to the "templed hills" of America; it is a far call from the palms at Luebo to the crowded marts of Europe. Yet the man Morrison left his impress there. There were those in Europe, as there were in Africa, who felt the power of the man. Perhaps he did not inspire any definite social program in either Europe or America by personal contact with the organization, yet he fanned the flames of enthusiasm from the embers of religious supineness. Not that missionary enthusiasm did not exist before his day, but the world had not felt so keenly the sphere of those who toiled in the name of religion on the far flung battle line. The missionary was not merely a person who considered the spiritual wants of the natives - he was an individual who can take his stand in the vanguard and by life and

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(1) Doyle, op. cit., Preface, iv.
(2) Vinson, op. cit., Chapters IX and X.

example prove himself to be a reliable leader.

America has been active in foreign missions for years. In various climes the work had been carried on very efficiently, but, when Dr. Morrison and his co-worker Shepherd were on trial in Leopoldville, the eyes of the world turned toward that spot. It was the cause of a greater and a deeper interest in the matter of foreign missions. Many religious associations and bodies in America became concerned with the outcome of the trial. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America drew up a protest which was given to the State Department.

This interest went farther than mere protests. The enthusiasm of young men was fired. The missionary was really a man of affairs, a positive factor in the advancement of secular matters. As a result , the Committees on Foreign Missions had a deluge of applications from many who were before this indifferent to the call to the service in far-away lands. They sensed in the situation at Leopoldville more than a mere legal matter. Their feeling was well expressed by one who visited the Congo on a tour of investigation for an European organization. He says:

"On le voit, le jugment constitue non seulement un acquittement, mais un éclatant témoignage rendu aux intentions humanitaires des missionnaires protestants, et une condamnation explicite des procédés employés,dans certains cas, par le la Compagnie du Kasai."(1)

It should not be forgotten that Morrison was a Southern man and as such he knew the negro. His zeal in the cause of Christianity was stimulated by his great desire to aid a race which had known only bondage at the hands of the white-men. His affection for the negro was genuine and given from a heart that understood.

There can be no denial of the fact that there was an awakening of the interest in the welfare of the colored people in the Southland by this great trial in far off Africa. The two champions of the natives there, one white and the other black, gave concern to the churches in the homeland. Morrison, by his unselfish act, was presenting a challenge. It was accepted and the work in the home fields was made to feel the power of it. Missions were opened for the colored and the work which had been centered in a few places, comparatively speaking, now became wide spread. The

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(1) Henri Anet: En Eclaireur; Voyage d'Etude au Congo Belge". Bruxelles: Socicte belge de Missions protestantes au Congo. 1913. p. 270.

records of the leading denominations show a decided increase in the interest in the colored people in the United States in the year 1910 and following. This is traceable in a large degree to the influence of Morrison in his trial at Leopoldville the previous Fall. The Freedman's Bureau and many other like agencies were at work and had been for many years, but now the interest spread to the Christian churches and to the members.

In speaking of the effect of his work in Africa, Anet made this statement of Morrison which shows the man of dynamic influence and explains to some extent more fully the reaction in America.

"Ceci réflète bien le caractère de celui qui est l'âme de la mission: patience et prudence, courage et décision. Quand on voit à l'oeuvre un missionnaire comme le Dr. Morrison et que l'on vit un peu dans son intimité, on se prend à regretter amerement les paroles qui ont été jetées contre lui du haut de notre tribune nationale par un orateur qui certes était mal informé."(1)

Such was the man Morrison - leader by precept and example, one worthy of trust and confidence.

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(1) Anet, op. cit., p. 98.

Bibliography

1. T. C. Vinson: William McCutchan Morrison; Twenty Years in Central Africa. Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1921.

A very readable volume by one who, for six years, was associated with Dr. Morrison in the work. Due to the fact the author had access to the personal files of Dr. Morrison as well as the files at Luebo and in the offices of the Committee Foreign Missions in Nashville and well as with his contact in the Congo, this work is authoritative.

2. Mark Twain: King Leopold's Soliloquy, Boston: The P. R. Warren Company. 1905.

A small book full of keen and cutting sarcasm as only Twain could produce. However, it contains verified passages relating to the Congo conditions, interwoven with the 'soliloquy', which are informing.

3. E. D. Morel: Red Rubber. London: The National Labour Press, Ltd.. 1919.

The author was the Secretary of the Congo Reform Association . He was in contact with the conditions in the Congo through correspondence and travel. The book has not a clear and concise arrangement, but as it was written in the heat of the controversy, this may be pardoned. It is strong in its denunciation of the Congo government and King Leopold II. He was also the author of several other books dealing with the African problem.

4. A Conan Doyle: The Crisis of the Congo. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.. 1909.

The author wrote with an outraged sense of liberty and justice, but the book is reliable. He does not hesitate to speak plainly in placing the guilt upon the Belgian King. He is very impartial considering the time he wrote and the fact England was facing charges from Brussels.

5. D. C. Boulger: The Reign of Leopold II. 2 vols. London: Ardenne Publishers. 1925.

This is a view from the Belgian standpoint. The author defends his King with great vigor and firmness, denying the charges made against him and flinging countercharges against other nations. There are some things which he states but does not explain. It may be classed as an eulogistic piece of defensive literature.

6. Memorial Concerning Conditions in the Independent State of Kongo. 2d Session of 58th Congress, U. S. A., Senate Document No. 282.

This is the American viewpoint and the protest against Belgian atrocities is strong. Besides the memorial, it presents copies of some important documents and proceedings. A most valuable work on the Congo problem.

7. Hilton-Simpson: Land and Peoples of the Kasai. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.,1912.

This is a travel-book of a journey made in 1907-1908 into the Kasai country. No atrocities are cited for, as the author says, "we were fortunate enough to win the confidence of nearly all the peoples with whom we dwelt, but I was able to obtain no tales of atrocities from them"(intro., p. ix). But is describes the country and gives an excellent portrayal of the life of the peoples. It is instructive and ought to be read by one interested in the subject of the Congo.

8. Evidence Laid Before the Congo Commission of Inquiry : Issued by the Congo Reform Association. Liverpool: John Richardson and Sons. 1905.

This pamphlet of 96 pages gives some of the material placed before King Leopold's Commission. It was printed before the report of the Commission was issued from the press. Affording as it does a glimpse of the Congo conditions and giving convincing cases of brutality, it confirms the rumors and reports previously issued. It is a valuable contribution to the knowledge of the state of affairs in the Congo valley.

9. L. W. Irwin: Rev. William McCutchan Morrison, D. D.; Washington and Lee University Bulletin (Jan. 3, 1927), Vol. XXVI, No. 1. Lexington, Va..

This pamphlet of 20 pages is an address delivered at the University in menory of an honored son. Dr. Irwin did credit to his subject. As one would suspect, it is somewhat laudatory, but not to the extreme. The work that Dr. Morrison did is well presented and shows his place as a leader, scholar, and exponent of Christianity on the foreign field.

10. Henri Anet: En Eclaireur; Voyage d'Etude au Congo Belge. Bruxelles: Societe Belge de Missions protestantes au Congo. 1913.

The author visited the Congo in behalf of the Society and tarried for some days at Luebo with Dr. Morrison. This is a very fine contribution to the Morrisoniana. Especially is Appendix V of value in the study of Morrison's trial. It is written in French. It is avery excellent work and worth reading by any one.

Addendum.

Henri Anet: "En Eclaireur; Voyage d'Etude au Congo Belge." Bruxelles: Societe belge de Missions protestantes au Congo. 1913.

The author and M. le pasteur Chrispeels were delegated by the society to study the missionary question in the Congo, a place in which they had great religious interest. The part copied is only that part with pertains to Dr. Morrison, his work, and his colleagues. M. Anet sailed on April 29, 1911.

"Les Belges, qui ont ete au Congo, ony generalement un profond respect pour les missionnaires protestants. Plus d'un passager me reconta comment il avait ete accueilli, heberge dans telle ou telle station protestante; parfois meme, soigne pendant des semaines avec un admirable devouement. Nombreux sont les coloniaux que les missionnaires ont tires d'un pas difficile, sans distinction de nationalite ou de confession religieuse, et sans recompense pecuniaire. Les missionnaires sont satisfaits, quand on ne les paie pas d'ingratitude; cela est heureusement exceptionnel." (p. 2)

"Apres avoir descendu le Sankuru, nous remontons le Kasai. C'est une large et belle riviere qui roule ses flots rougeatres entre de hautes berges couvertes d'un rideau ininterromptu de superbes couvertes ~~d'un rideau~~ forets. Les eaux etaient basses; plus d8une fois, nous fumes arretes par les bancs de sable.

"Nous fimes bonne connaissance avec le captaine, qui nous soigna tres bien. Il faisait un grand eloge des missionnaires de Luebo, si hospitaliers et si secourables envers les captaines de la C. K. Le mecanicien etait un ancien houilleur de Jemappes, qui evoquait devant nous le Borinage.

"A Bena-Luidi, au confluent du Kasai et de la Lulua, ou nous parvenions le troisieme jour, il fallut quitter l'"Antoinette" qui avait un trop fort tirant d'eau pour remonter jusqu'a Luebo, a cette saison.

"Le samedi et le dimanche se passerent a attendre un bateau. Un culte fut celebre pour nos hommes de Yakusu. Dans le village, une femme-fetiche, sorte de sorciere, dansait en faisant des contorsions disgracieuses, excitee par des musiciens et par tout un public.

"Le petit vapeur le "Velde" arriva enfin. Nous remontames d'abord un peu le Kasai, puis nous entrames dans la Lulua, jolie petite riviere aux nombreux meandres. Le trajet de Bena-Luidi a Luebo prit huit heures. Sur tout ce parcours, il n'y a pas trace de vie animale, ni humaine, sauf quelque aigles-pecheurs et quelque rares indigenes-pecheurs installes provisoirement sur les bancs de sable. Apres avoir passe entre deux rochers autour desquels l'eau tourbillonnait, le "Velde" nous debarqua sur la rive droit, au poste de la C. K.

"Un message a ete envoye a la mission protestante. Enfin arrive M. le Dr. Morrison. Nous traversons avec lui en pirogue la Lulua, et nous montons sur le plateau par un magnifique clair de lune. Voici les arbres et les allees de la mission, les maisons eclairees. Nous entrons; l'installation coquette, mais modests, du Dr. Morrison, nous parait luxueuse apres nos peregrinations: une table proprement servie, de vraies chaises, des tableaux, des livres, des tapis, et enfin un vrai lit dont je jouis apres les couchettes des vapeurs et la "malle-lit belge"!

"Nous etions installes dans la maison de M. le Missionnaire Motte Martin, occupee aussi par M. le Dr. Prtichard. M. Martin rentra bientot d'une longue tournee d'evangelisation poursuivie pendant plusieurs mois a l'Est de Luebo.

"Peu de voyageurs protestants passent par Luebo. A part une recente visite du secretaire du Comite americaan de la Mission, le Dr. Morrison n'a recu chez lui, depuis 16 ans, qu'un seul missionnaire evangelique. La mission de Luebo est donc peu connue; elle meriterait cependant de l'etre autant et plus peut-etre que n'importe laquelle des stations missionnaires du Congo.

"Admirablement situee sur un haut plateau garni de palmiers, la mission americaine domine de cent metres la riviere Lulua au bord de laquelle sont etablies les factoreries, la mission des Peres de Scheut, et, un peu au-dessus, le nouveau poste de l'Etat. La mission catholique est installee a Luebo depuis deux ans seulement. Les protestants evangelisent et civilisent la contree depuis mai 1891.....

"Chaque matin, a 6 heures, la jolie cloche de la station appelle les ouvriers, les eleves et les habitants du voisnage a un culte tres simple et tres court, mais vraiment impressionnant dans la brume matinale et le reveil de la nature. On y voit de 500 a 600 personnes. (M. le Dr. Lambuth, qui a visite recemment le Kasai, evaluait a 10,000 au moins le nombre des auditeurs que rassemblent chaque matin les reunions de priere a Luebo et dans les annexes.)

"Le dimanche, le premier culte a lieu a 9 heures. Le temple est un vaste rectangle sureleve, couvert d'une toiture que supportent 55 colonnes de bois. Il n'y a pas de murailles, pour laisser l'air circuler librement. Aux deux extremites, le toit, qui descend tres bas, est dispose de maniere a retenir le son. L'acoustique est merveilleuse; sans hausser la voix plus que dans une petite chambre, le predicateur se fait entendre des 1,200 auditeurs. D l'autre cote de la ribiere, un autre service reunit quelques centaines de chretiens.

"Dans le grand tabernacle, l'ordre est assure par une quinzaine d'anciens et de moniteurs qui placent les gens, font des signes menacants aux enfants bougillons et veillent a ce que la sortie s'effectue en bon ordre.

"Apres le culte, j'ai assiste a la reunion d'une societe pour fillettes, sorte d'union cadette. Environ 120 jeunes filles et petites filles se trouvaient reunies sous la direction de trois femmes indigenes. La presidente dirigeait tout avec la dignite et l'autorite d'une grande dame. Une de ses aides expliqua la parabole des dix Vierges, une fillette pria; puis toutes chanterent avec justesse et rythme la traduction d'un cantique gallois: "Gloire a Jesus". Une collecte est faite en faveur des malades auxquels des secours sont portes par les fillettes; on jette la boite dans des cauries ou des pieces de nickel.

"L'Ecole du dimanche a lieu a 3 1/2 heures. Selon la coutume americaine tout le monde y assiste:petits et grands, jeunes et vieux. Il y avait foule, car le missionnaire (un noir americain) qui presidait le culte du matin, avait annonce que M. Lambotte et moi nous ferions un "grand discours". Nous le fimes aussi petit que possible, avec le Dr. Morrison come interprete. Apres le service, j'eus des centaines de mains a serrer et plusieurs des anciens me dirent: "Votre presence est un vrai miracle pour nous; c'est la premiere fois que nous voyons un chretien venant de votre pays!"

"Ensuite la foule de 1,200 adultes et enfants se subdivise en classes avec un grand nombre de moniteurs indigenes. Ceux-ci ont etudie la lecon le vendredi avec les missionnaires. On suit une histoire biblique, dont le cycle pour l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament est d'environ trois ans.

"Les garcons ont, apres l'ecole, une societe semblable a celle des fillettes. Je leur ai raconte l'histoire d'un garcon d'une de nos ecoles missionnaires, pour qu'ils ne soient pas jaloux des filles auxquelles j'avais parle de la fille d'un buveur actuellement membre une Eglise belge. Les cantiques sont entonnes par les garcons a tour de role pour leur apprendre a diriger une reunion.

"La nuit est tombee; la lune brille sur les grandes forets et sur la vallee profonde; la cloche tinte une fois encore; c'est l'appel a la priere. Tandis que nous nous rendons a la reunion anglaise pour les missionnaires, de tous les coins du grand plateau s'eleve le chant des cantiques. En petits groupes, dans les logements des ecoliers, des ecolieres ou des "boys", dans les differents quartiers des villages des deux rives, les chretiens de Luebo tiennent leurs reunions de priere dirigees par l'un d'entre eux. A la meme heure, les voix s'unissent et les genoux se ploient ensemble, dans tout le vaste champ de la mission, jusqu'a des distances de plus de dix journees de marche. N'est-ce la un triomple de l'Evangile du Christ?

"Ce qui me frappe le plus dans la mission de Luebo, c'est la grand place donne a l'activite laique. "Nous nous dechargeons sur des chretiens indigenes de tout ce qu'ils son capables de faire, " me disait le Dr. Morrison. Il serait difficle de combiner plus parfaitement la liberte des chretiens avec l'autorite du missionnaire, l'initiative individuelle avec l'unite d'action dans l'oeuvre religieuse. Ceci reflete bien le caractere de celui qui est l'ame de la mission; patience et prudence, courage et decision. Quand on voit a l'oeuvre un missionnaire comme le Dr. Morrison et que l'on vit un peu dans son intimite, on se prend a regretter amerement les paroles qui ont ete jetees contre lui du haut de notre tribune nationale par un orateur qui certes etait mal informe.

"Mes notes sont remplies de faits qui demontrent le courage, la fidelite des instituteurs places dans les villages eloignes, loin de la protection de leurs missionaires. Les menances, les flatteries, les offres de cadeaux, les conflits entre tribus ou de chefs a sous-chefs, les laissent presque toujours inebranlables avec autant de fermete que de dignite. Helas! pour le christianisme, le role du tentateur ou du terroriseur est souvent poue par un pretre. Voici deux faits entre beaucoup.

"N*** est un instituteur, place dans un village a environ 400 kilometres de Luebo. Un pretre vient le trouver, se saisit d'une traduction des Paraboles (edition de luebo) et lui dit: "Ce sont de mauvais livres, prenez les miens et enseignez ma religion." L'instituteur exige que le pretre lui restitue le volumme deja empoche. Le pretre [illegible] continue l'assaut:

"Les protestants ne vous disent pas la verite. Notre chef, le Pape, est roi de toute la terre et nous sommes tout-puissants."

"Les protestants nous ont appris a lire et a ecrire. Depuis le temps que vous avez ete dans notre pays, vous n'avez rien fait pour nous."

"Nous adorons Marie," reprend le pretre, "et les protestants ne vous apprennent pas a recourir a elle."

"Nous respectons Marie, car c'est la femme qui a donne naissance au Sauveur, mais nous ne la prions pas."

Voyant ses arguments sans effet, le pretre se mit a frapper N*** et meme, parait-il, a lui donner des coups de pied. Par malheur, l'instituteur, mis hors de lui par un pareil traitement, perdit la tete et, en presence de tout le village, administra au pretre une correction que les non-chretiens trouveront meritee. Mais frapper un Blanc, un pretre surtout, est un delit extrememont grave. L'instituteur a fait le grand voyage de Luebo pour confesser a ses missionnaires son moment d'egarement et demander leur conseil. Le pretre porta plainte, mais le juge acquitta l'instituteur, estimant que le pretre avait provoque le conflit en s'imposant de force dans le village.

"Autre fait. - Un sous-chef abandonne sa position pour devenir un modeste instituteur. Il batit un abri ecole. Passant par la, a son retour d'Europe, un haut dignitaire ecclesiastique ordonne, de la facon la plus imperieuse, la destruction de l'ecole protestante. Un chef, terrorise par les menaces et en plus sollicite par un cadeau, fait

ir l'ecole. On en appelle a un missionnaire protestant, heureusement en
nee dans la region; il envoie les representants du village au chef de
teur. Celui-ci fait donner au chef du village l'ordre de reconstruire
diatement l'ecole et de payer a l'instituteur protestant une indemnite
9 croix de cuivre (valeur d'environ 30 fr.). La chose fut faite, mais
stituteur refusa l'argent en disant au chef: "Je n'ai pas besoin de cela.
ous pardonne; tout le passe est efface."