



**DR. MORRISON**

**William McCutchan Morrison**  
**Twenty Years in Central Africa**

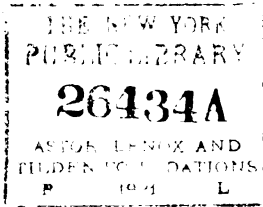
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*By*  
**REV. T. C. VINSON**

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bribed to bear false witness against the king and his government.

Mr. Morrison's reply to these insinuations is given in a letter to King Leopold from Lexington, Va., under the date of June 20, 1903:

"I have the honor to write you concerning certain statements which I have made about your administration of affairs in the Congo Independent State. Some of your agents in Belgium and in England have been making great show of the fact that when I was in Brussels recently, under the advice of the Governor-General, to consult with you and the State officials regarding land concessions which had been refused us, I did not make mention of the outrageous conduct of your government toward the natives. My reason for not referring to this matter was because I had reported several cases to you and your government, and as a result of the so-called 'investigations' nothing has ever been done—in fact, nothing can be done so long as your present *system* of forced labor and military service prevails. I considered the question as closed by your own courts to which the cases had been referred. It would, as you well see, have been simply effrontery for me to have mentioned these matters in Brussels. I am sorry now, however, that I did not mention them, at least to enter my verbal protest against such a system, since you are using this to make it appear that I was not open and honest with the State. It was only as a last resort, when I saw that justice could not be gotten, that I made public the facts.

"In view of these things, and in view of the fact that you seem so anxious to have these matters told to you personally, and in view of the fact that your agent, Sir H. Gilzean Reid, seems to intimate that I was unwilling to face you and other Congo officials with the charges which

I have laid before Lord Landsdowne and which I expect in a few days to lay before my government at Washington, I hereby state that if the Congo government will pay all my legitimate expenses on railroads, steamers, at hotels, etc., from here to Brussels and return, I shall gladly go and tell you face to face the charges which I have laid before the governments mentioned above; but I want you to distinctly understand that I am not willing to submit the case to your Congo State courts. I only demand an impartial court composed of men not interested in any way in the Congo State. I am not willing that the Congo government shall be the judge of its own case.

“I await your answer with interest.

“I can assure Your Majesty that nothing has ever given me greater pain than to be compelled to lose confidence in the government’s real desire to do justice according to the spirit of the Treaties of Berlin and Brussels, and it is after the most careful deliberation that I have reached the conclusion that our only hope lies in arousing the public opinion of the world against the iniquities which you know that your system must produce in Africa. I have lived under that unfortunate government for over six years. I have suffered myself, and I have seen the natives and traders suffer; and you treat those sufferings with disdain, though all the while making protestations of philanthropy and virtue. If you are really desirous of having me tell you the same things which I have told in London and will tell in Washington, I place myself at your disposition.”

We can imagine Leopold’s “soliloquy” upon the receipt of such a letter, but we have no record that the challenge was accepted.

Immediately upon the arrival of Mr. Morrison in America he entered the lists in an endeavor to arouse the public