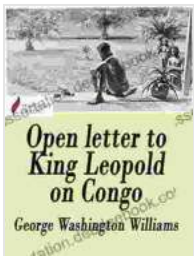


Open Letter to King Leopold on the Congo: A Condemnation of Colonial Atrocities

In the annals of history, the Congo Free State, a vast territory in central Africa, stands as a grim testament to the horrors of colonialism. From 1885 to 1908, the Congo was ruled by King Leopold II of Belgium, who established a brutal regime that subjected the Congolese people to unimaginable suffering and exploitation.



Open letter to King Leopold on Congo

by George Washington Williams

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 959 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 208 pages

Screen Reader : Supported



The atrocities committed in the Congo were met with international outrage, and one of the most powerful voices raised in condemnation was that of E.D. Morel, a British journalist and human rights activist. In 1904, Morel published an "Open Letter to King Leopold on the Congo," a searing indictment of the king's regime that galvanized public opinion and helped bring about its downfall.

The Congo Free State: A Reign of Terror

When King Leopold II established the Congo Free State, he envisioned it as a personal fiefdom, a source of vast wealth and power. He ruthlessly exploited the Congo's natural resources, including rubber, ivory, and minerals, using forced labor to extract the maximum profit.

The Congolese people were subjected to unspeakable brutality. They were whipped, maimed, and killed if they failed to meet production quotas. Women were raped and children were kidnapped and enslaved. The population of the Congo plummeted by an estimated 10 million people during Leopold's reign.



E.D. Morel: A Voice for the Oppressed

E.D. Morel was born in France in 1873 and moved to England as a young man. He began his career as a journalist, and his work on the Congo Free State brought him international recognition.

Morel was deeply moved by the accounts of atrocities that were emerging from the Congo. He spent years investigating the situation, interviewing missionaries, traders, and former colonial officials.

The Open Letter to King Leopold

In 1904, Morel published his "Open Letter to King Leopold on the Congo" in the British newspaper The Westminster Gazette. The letter was a powerful indictment of Leopold's regime, detailing the horrors that were being perpetrated in the Congo.

Morel wrote:



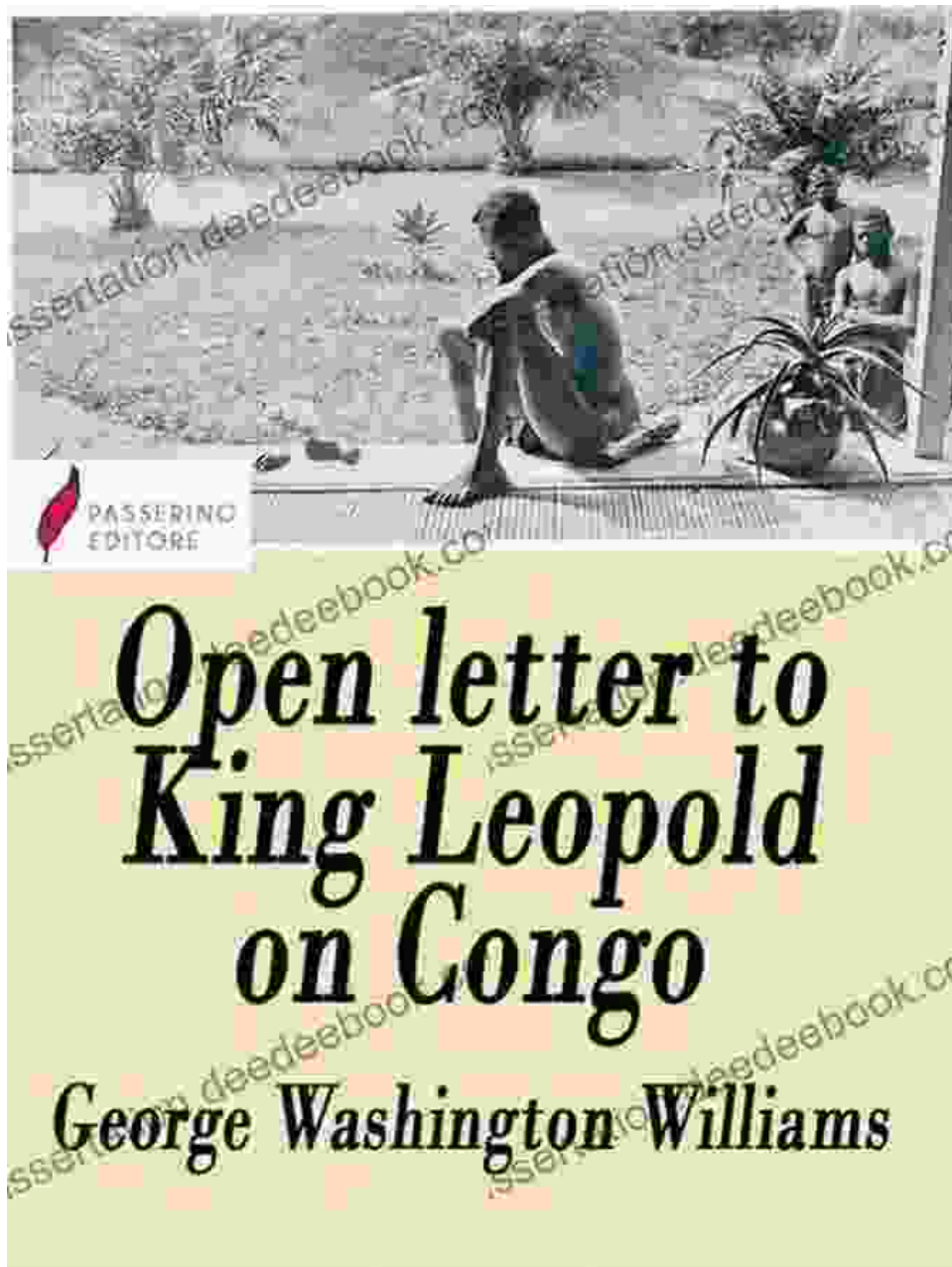
“Your Majesty, I am constrained to address you on behalf of those who have no voice, the helpless black peoples of the Congo, who have been subjected to such cruelties and oppressions as make the very name of civilization a mockery.”

Morel accused Leopold of being personally responsible for the atrocities in the Congo. He called on the king to end the reign of terror and to institute reforms that would protect the rights of the Congolese people.

International Outrage

The Open Letter to King Leopold caused a sensation. It was translated into multiple languages and widely distributed throughout Europe and the United States.

The letter galvanized public opinion and put pressure on governments to act. In 1908, the Belgian government annexed the Congo Free State and ended Leopold's rule.



E.D. Morel, the British journalist and human rights activist who wrote the Open Letter to King Leopold.

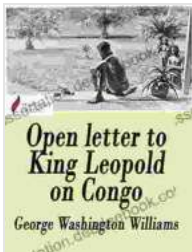
A Legacy of Human Rights

The Open Letter to King Leopold on the Congo is a powerful reminder of the horrors that can be perpetrated under the guise of colonialism.

Morel's letter helped to bring about the end of Leopold's reign of terror in the Congo, and it also helped to raise awareness of the importance of human rights.

Today, the Congo continues to struggle with the legacy of colonialism. The country is one of the poorest in the world, and it is still plagued by violence and instability.

However, the Open Letter to King Leopold is a reminder that even in the darkest of times, there are those who are willing to speak out against injustice and to fight for the rights of the oppressed.



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