E.D. Morel: Leadership Through the Congo Reform Association

Ingrid Engelhardt, Amanda Hoffman, Houadraa Lee

Senior Division

Group Website

Process Paper Contains 487 Words

Our topic examines how Edmund Dene Morel formed and led the Congo Reform Association(CRA) to expose the atrocities in the Congo. The reform movement dismissed King Leopold II from his position as the owner of the Congo, forcing him to sell to the Belgian State. We first heard of Morel when Ingrid’s father suggested the topic to us and, after reading a short biography, we found that we were all fascinated by him. An interesting aspect of this topic was that it’s not very well known or recognized. We wanted to learn and discover more information about Morel and his work as well as how such an important man became so unknown to the world.

 To begin our research, we looked up E.D. Morel and his writings. We found books written by E.D. Morel at our local library as well as the University of Minnesota and Carleton Libraries. One of the main locations we did research was at the Wilson Library on the U of M campus. We found autobiographies on Morel as well as information on events surrounding the time. A major point to our research was to find primary documents, such as articles and pamphlets, written by Morel and the CRA.

The first, most important, source that we found was the book, *The Politics of Dissent* written by Donald Mitchell. This source guided us through his early work into the establishment of the Congo Reform Association as well as describing the effects of his campaign on governmental policies. By finding all the work that Morel wrote during the CRA, we were able to see events from his point of view. Our interviews with Adam Hochschild, author of King Leopold’s Ghost, Dr. Catherine Higgs, a professor at the University of Tennessee, and Dr. Dean Pavlakis, a professor at Carroll College, really helped us to understand the scope of Morel’s work and the people he effected.

Towards the beginning of our research, it was hard to find many sources on Morel and the work that he did. At the Central Library, there were few books on Morel (the majority based on Leopold and the Congo). When we went to the U of M and Carleton libraries, we faced this same problem. To find sources we had to use each libraries database to find titles of books and articles, then look at all the other books around or related to see if they could supply information regarding our topic.

E.D. Morel influenced many people because of his leadership in the CRA. He persevered against opposition, to convince and educate people about what was happening to the natives of the Congo, and, through the publishing of hundreds of articles, books, and pamphlets, he caused countless people to recognize and become impassioned about the events in the Congo. Many of these people would go on to influence and lead other campaigns and work for the betterment of African conditions.