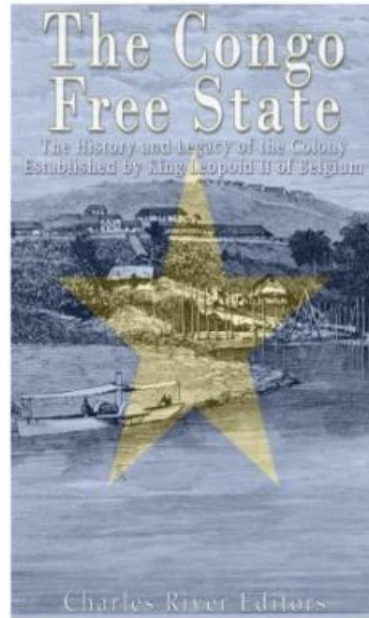


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Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. *Includes pictures *Includes contemporary accounts of the Congo Free State *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading I do not want to risk losing a fine chance to secure for ourselves a slice of this magnificent African cake. - King Leopold II of Belgium King Leopold II of Belgium emerges from the pages of history as a curious character. He was a member of a privileged clique of European monarchs, bereft of power but rich, indulgent, and indolent. Leopold certainly availed himself of all the pleasures of court life, but he was also shrewd, astonishingly competent, and avaricious to an almost unimaginable degree. His initial interest in foreign real estate was imperial, insofar as he desired on behalf of Belgium the main accoutrements of a first-rate power, which were, of course, foreign estates and colonies. He was, however, unable to move the Belgian parliament to act in accordance, the conservative belief perhaps being that Belgium could not afford to compete on that level. Belgium was a small European nation, existing between major and, at times, belligerent powers, and as such, it quietly went about its business with a determination not to rock the European boat. Displaying enormous ability and a masterful grasp of diplomatic maneuver, Leopold was able to secure primary rights over the territory of the Congo River catchment, a portion of the globe more than three times the size of France. By any standards, this was a monumental coup, and by the time the other European powers woke up to precisely what was underway, it was too late to arrest the momentum. Of all the issues on the agenda as delegates gathered in Berlin in 1884, foremost was...



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