

BELGIAN CONGO



1887 - 50 CENTIMES - OBVERSE

BELGIAN CONGO, INDEPENDENT STATE of
BRUSSELS MINT

50 CENTIMES 18MM .835 FINE 2.5 GRAMS

1887	20,000	CD- 31
1891	60,000	CD- 76
1894	40,000	CD- 83
1896	200,000	CD-124

▲OV: Head of LEOPOLD II, facing left, LEOP. II
R.D. BELG. SOUV. DE L'ETAT INDEP. DU CONGO (Leopold II Rio des Belges Souverain de L'etat Independent du Congo = Leopold II King of Belgium, Sovereign of Congo Free State) around / L. WIENER under bust.

▼RV: Crowned arms within wreath of palms, 50 CENTIMES, above / DATE below.

EDGE: Reeded

MINT: (no mintmark) = BRUSSELS

DESIGNER: L. WIENER = Leopold Wiener

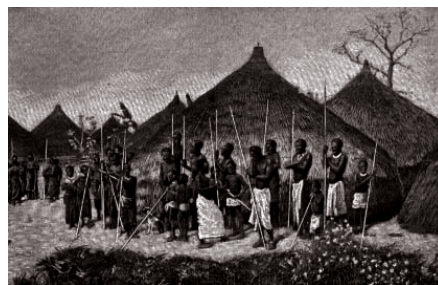
REFERENCE: Y-5

POPULATION: Belgian Congo - 1900 - 30,000,000 including 2,000 whitemen in the service of the State, trading companies, and missionary societies.



1887 - 50 CENTIMES - REVERSE

FOOTNOTE: From the official bulletin of the Belgian Kongo dated April 14, 1908. "Article 1. The silver coins of 5 francs, 2 francs, 1 franc and 50 centimes, coined by the Independent State of the Kongo by virtue of the decree of the reigning King, July 27, 1887, shall cease to have legal currency in the country from October 1, 1909. Article 2. Up to July 1, 1911, these coins shall be exchanged against the coins of account (legal coins) by the Colonial Treasury at Brussels and by the Cash Offices of the Kongo, which shall be designated by the Minister of the Colonies."



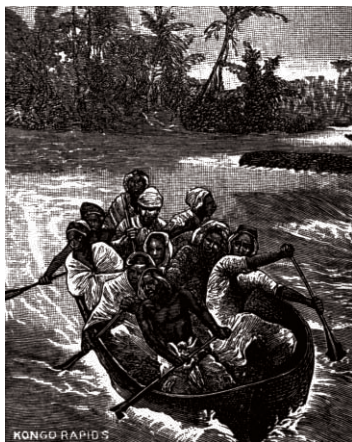
Natives and huts

FOOTNOTE: Congo Free State, a state recently founded on the River Congo, in central south Africa, stretching by a kind of narrow neck of territory to the river's mouth, but expanding inland so as to cover an immense area, mainly lying south of the river. The obvious advantages of the Congo as a waterway in opening up the continent led to the formation at Brussels in 1878 of a Comite d Etudes du Haut Congo, under the patronage of Leopold II, having as its aim the internationalization and development of the Congo area. *Cabinet Cyclopaedia, 1895.*



Grass huts, Kongo State - 1902

FOOTNOTE: Stanley, a New York reporter and explorer, returned to the Congo in 1879 to open up the river and form a Free State under European auspices. He established a first station at Vivi, the limit of maritime navigation, 110 miles above the mouth of the river, constructed roads past the Yellala and Livingstone cataracts, and hauled steamers up to the higher reaches of the Congo, where in 1882 the station of Leopoldville was formed on Stanley Pool. Of the 223 miles between Vivi and Leopoldville only 88 are navigable water; but from the latter station to Stanley Falls the Congo itself is continuously navigable for 1000 miles, to which its great effluents already explored add no fewer than 5000 miles of serviceable water-way. Above the Stanley Falls station (destroyed by arab slave-dealers in November 1886) the river is again navigable for a distance of 385 miles to Nyangwe, which is about 1300 miles from the Chambezi sources. The work having been thus initiated by Stanley, and the feasibility of the project made manifest, the Association in 1884-85 entered into treaties with all European powers and the United States for the recognition of its Sovereign powers. The boundaries of the New Congo Free State were settled at the same time, it being agreed that the basin of the Congo and its tributaries should be free to all nations, that no duties should be levied on imports, and that the slave-trade should be suppressed... the exports forming the staple of present trade are palm-oil, caoutchouc, ivory, orchilla, copal, ground-nuts, camwood, wax, etc. *Cabinet Cyclopaedia, 1895.*



Kongo rapids

FOOTNOTE: The principle part of the great colony of Belgium Congo is in the interior of south Central Africa. It has only a short coast line on the South Atlantic at the mouth of the Congo River. to the north and west of it lies French Equatorial Africa, and on the northeast it touches the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. To the southwest is Angola, a Portuguese colony. Northern Rhodesia lies to the East, along with Uganda and German East Africa. *Missionary Atlas, Harrisburg, Pa., 1950.*



The vastness of Africa, with the Congo River in Central Africa

FOOTNOTE: The series of bold explorations which resulted in increasing knowledge of the interior of Africa began when in 1852 the celebrated Dr. David Livingstone traversed South Africa, and after a four-year journey of eleven thousand miles, descended the Zambesi River to its mouth. In 1856 Burton and Speke landed at Zanzibar, and two years later, after a journey of a thousand miles, discovered Lake Tanganyika.. Speke immediately pushed his exploration to the northward, and discovered the magnificent lake to which he gave the name Victoria Nyanza. (N'yanza, meaning "the lake," is the native name of this body of water.) Victoria Lake was in 1861 revisited and further explored by Speke, accompanied by Capt. Grant. Three years later, Sir Samuel Baker discovered the great lake to which he gave the name of Albert Nyanza, traced its connection with the Victoria Nyanza, and behold, emerging from the former, the majestic Nile, whose sources had been vainly sought for two thousand years. From 1865 to 1871 Dr. Livingstone made extensive surveys of the region of the great lakes, exploring lakes Bangweolo, Nyassa, and Tanganyike. For two years subsequent to May, 1869, at which time Dr. Livingstone was at Ujiji, no tidings were received from him, and he was supposed to be dead; but in 1871 Stanley found him, alive and well, at the last-names place. Soon afterward, Livingstone undertook another series of explorations toward the west, but died in the midst of these in 1873. Stanley again returned to the heart of the African continent, and starting from the head waters of the Livingstone River, sailed down its entire course to the sea. This was followed by the exploration of the Congo and its tributaries and the opening of them to the commerce of the world. *Geography, William Swinton, New York, 1880.*