

Henry Labouchère



"Henry Labouchere" redirects here. For his uncle, see Henry Labouchere, 1st Baron Taunton

Henry Du Pré Labouchère (9 November 1831 – 15 January 1912) was an English politician, writer, publisher and theatre owner in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. He married the actress Henrietta Hodson. Labouchère, who inherited a large fortune, engaged in a number of occupations. He was a junior member of the British diplomatic service, a Member of Parliament in the 1860s and again from 1880 to 1906, and edited and funded his own magazine, *Truth*. He is remembered for the Labouchere Amendment to British law, which for the first time made all male homosexual activity a crime. Unable to secure the senior positions to which he thought himself suitable, Labouchère left Britain and retired to Italy.

The Brown Man's Burden

by **Henry Labouchère**



Pile on the brown man's burden
To gratify your greed;
Go, clear away the "niggers"
Who progress would impede;
Be very stern, for truly
'Tis useless to be mild
With new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.

Pile on the brown man's burden;
And, if ye rouse his hate,
Meet his old-fashioned reasons
With Maxims up to date.
With shells and dumdum bullets
A hundred times made plain
The brown man's loss must ever
Imply the white man's gain.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
compel him to be free;
Let all your manifestoes
Reek with philanthropy.
And if with heathen folly
He dares your will dispute,
Then, in the name of freedom,
Don't hesitate to shoot.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
And if his cry be sore,
That surely need not irk you--
Ye've driven slaves before.
Seize on his ports and pastures,
The fields his people tread;
Go make from them your living,
And mark them with his dead.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
Nor do not deem it hard
If you should earn the rancor
Of those ye yearn to guard.
The screaming of your Eagle
Will drown the victim's sob--
Go on through fire and slaughter.
There's dollars in the job.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
And through the world proclaim
That ye are Freedom's agent--
There's no more paying game!
And, should your own past history
Straight in your teeth be thrown,
Retort that independence
Is good for whites alone.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
With equity have done;
Weak, antiquated scruples
Their squeamish course have run,
And, though 'tis freedom's banner
You're waving in the van,
Reserve for home consumption
The sacred "rights of man"!

And if by chance ye falter,
Or lag along the course,
If, as the blood flows freely,
Ye feel some slight remorse,
Hie ye to Rudyard Kipling,
Imperialism's prop,
And bid him, for your comfort,
Turn on his jingo stop.

The Brown Man's Burden was first published in the London magazine, Truth, and republished in Literary Digest (Feb. 1899).