

“The Brown Man’s Burden” by Henry LaBouchere (1899)

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

10 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  
15 The brown man's loss must ever  
Imply the white man's gain.

20 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.

25 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,  
30 The fields his people tread;  
Go make from them your living,  
And mark them with his dead.

35 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—  
40 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!  
45 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  
50 With equity have done;  
Weak, antiquated scruples  
Their squeamish course have run,  
And, though 'tis freedom's banner  
You're waving in the van  
55 Reserve for home consumption  
The sacred "rights of man"!

60 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.