

Three Vegan Hymns

Op. 46

William C. White

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Composed June, 2020

The texts for these hymns come from a volume titled
Select Hymns for the Use of Bible-Christians
by Reverend William Cowherd, published in Manchester in 1841.

Reverend Cowherd (1763 – 1816) founded a sect of Christianity known as the Bible Christian Church, notable for its strict adherence to vegetarianism, among other forms of temperance.

Cowherd claimed his dietary principles were rooted in scripture (in particular, Proverbs 23:20) however, it is more likely that he was influenced by a slowly burgeoning awareness in British society of the dietary practices of the cultures of the Indian subcontinent.

For more information on this subject, I'd recommend reading Tristram Stuart's *The Bloodless Revolution: Radical Vegetarians and the Discovery of India*, which is how I learned about Cowherd and the remarkable theological and societal debates taking place over the subject of vegetarianism in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries.

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“Eaters of Flesh!”

William Cowherd
(1763 – 1816)

LAMBKIN

William C. White
*1983

1. “Eat - ers of flesh!” could you de - cry our food and sa - cred laws, _____
2. Lo! there it strug - gles! hear it moan, as stretched be - neath the knife: _____
4. Hold, dar - ing man! from mur - der stay: God is the life in all. _____

Did you be - hold the lamb - kin die, and feel your - selves the cause? _____
Its eye would melt a heart of stone! How meek it begs its life. _____
You smite at God when flesh you slay: can such a crime be small? _____

3. Had God, for man, its flesh de - signed, ma - tured by death, the brute, _____

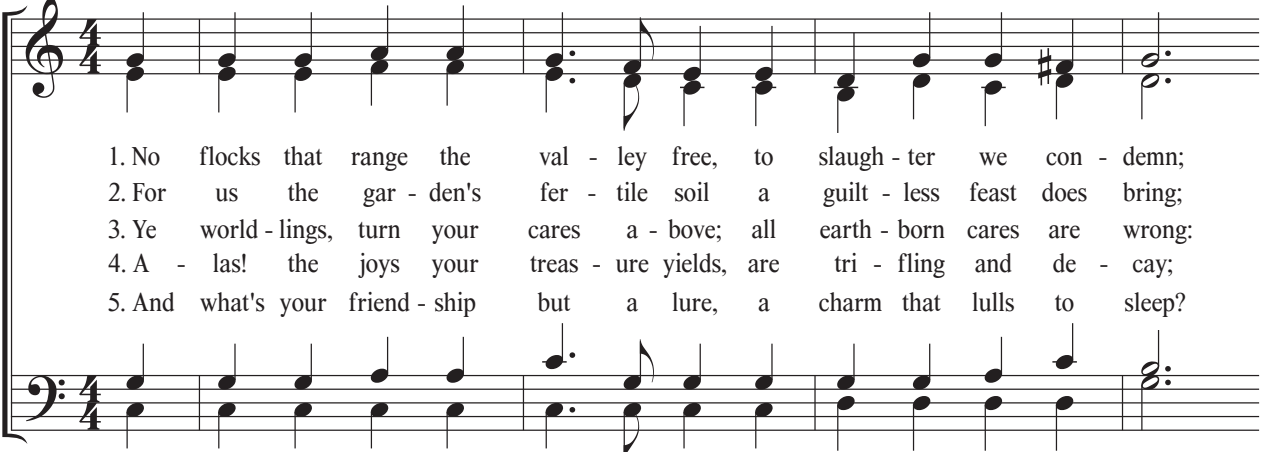
Life-less to us had been con - signed, as is the ri - pened fruit. _____

“No flocks that range the valley free”

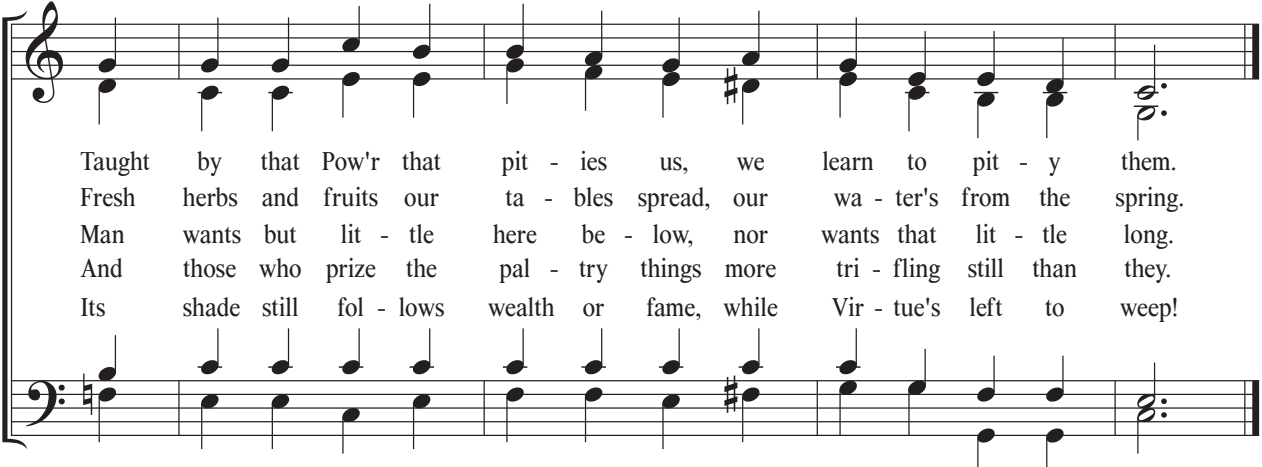
William Cowherd
(1763 – 1816)

KINNEAR

William C. White



1. No flocks that range the val - ley free, to slaugh - ter we con - demn;
2. For us the gar - den's fer - tile soil a guilt - less feast does bring;
3. Ye world - lings, turn your cares a - bove; all earth - born cares are wrong;
4. A - las! the joys your treas - ure yields, are tri - fling and de - cay;
5. And what's your friend - ship but a lure, a charm that lulls to sleep?



Taught by that Pow'r that pit - ies us, we learn to pit - y them.
Fresh herbs and fruits our ta - bles spread, our wa - ter's from the spring.
Man wants but lit - tle here be - low, nor wants that lit - tle long.
And those who prize the pal - try things more tri - fling still than they.
Its shade still fol - lows wealth or fame, while Vir - tue's left to weep!

“Thou, Lord, my table shalt prepare”

William Cowherd
(1763 – 1816)

HERBAGE

William C. White

1. Thou, Lord, my ta - ble shalt pre - pare, and feed me with a pas - t'ral care:
2. When in the sul - try glebe I faint, or on the thirst - y moun - tain pant;
3. Though in a bare and rug - ged way through de - vious, lone - ly wilds I stray,

With herbs and fruits my stores sup - ply; pre - serve them fresh with watch - ful eye;
With - drawn be - neath thy ban - n'ring love, from na - ture's scrip I time - ly prove,
Thy boun - ties still my toils be - guile, caus - ing each wil - der - ness to smile,

My dai - ly meals, in - voked, at - tend; my so - ber feasts from wines de - fend.
What na - tive sweets spon - ta - neous grow near peace - ful riv - ers, soft and slow.
With sud - den greens and herb - age crowned, from streams that mur - mur all a - round.

SELECT HYMNS

FOR THE USE OF

BIBLE-CHRISTIANS;

BY THE

LATE REV. W. COWHERD.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

BY THE REV. JAS. SCHOLEFIELD, CHRIST CHURCH,
EVERY STREET, ANCOATS.

SEVENTH EDITION.

MANCHESTER:

BRADSHAW AND BLACKLOCK, PRINTERS.

1841.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HUMANITY AND RELIGION PLEADING AGAINST
FLESH-EATING.—*Prov. xxiii. 20.*

218

C.M.

“Eaters of flesh !” could you decry
Our food and sacred laws,
Did you behold the lambkin die,
And feel yourselves the cause ?

Lo! there it struggles! hear it moan,
As stretch'd beneath the knife :
Its eye would melt a heart of stone!
How meek it begs its life!

Had God, for man, its flesh design'd;
Matur'd by death, the brute,
Lifeless, to us had been consign'd,
As is the ripen'd fruit.

Hold, daring man! from murder stay:
God is the life in all.
You smite at God! when flesh you slay :—
Can such a crime be small ?

No flocks, that range the valley free,
To slaughter we condemn ;
Taught by that Pow'r that pities us,
We learn to pity them.

For us the garden's fertile soil
A guiltless feast does bring ;
Fresh herbs and fruits our tables spread,
Our water's from the spring.

Ye worldlings, turn your cares above ;
All earth-born cares are wrong :
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.

Alas! the joys your treasure yields,
Are trifling and decay ;
And those who prize the paltry things
More trifling still than they.

And what's your friendship but a lure,
A charm that lulls to sleep ?
Its shade still follows wealth or fame,
While Virtue's left to weep !

Thou, Lord, my table shalt prepare,
And feed me with a past'ral care:
With herbs and fruits my stores supply;
Preserve them fresh with watchful eye;
My daily meals, invok'd, attend;
My sober feasts from wines defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant;
Withdrawn beneath thy bann'ring love,
From nature's scrip I timely prove,
What native sweets spontaneous grow
Near peaceful rivers, soft and slow.

Though in a bare and rugged way
Through devious, lonely wilds I stray,
Thy bounties still my toils beguile,
Causing each wilderness to smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crown'd,
From streams that murmur all around.