

1832

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES

William Cullen Bryant

Bryant, William Cullen (1794-1878) - American poet and editor of the New York Evening Post who practiced law before devoting his life to writing. A master of blank verse, Bryant's earliest works are considered his best. Hymn of the Waldenses (1832) - Opening lines: Hear, Father, hear thy faint afflicted flock / Cry to thee, from the desert and the rock;...

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES

Hear, Father, hear thy faint afflicted flock
 Cry to thee, from the desert and the rock;
 While those, who seek to slay thy children, hold
 Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold;
 And the broad goodly lands, with pleasant airs
 That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are theirs.
 Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
 And this wild life of danger and distress
 Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,
 And meetings in the depths of earth to pray
 Better, far better, than to kneel with them,
 And pay the impious rite thy laws condemn.

Thou, Lord, dost hold the thunder; the firm land
 Tosses in billows when it feels thy hand;
 Thou dashest nation against nation, then
 Stillest the angry world to peace again.
 Oh, touch their stony hearts who hunt thy sons
 The murderers of our wives and little ones.
 Yet, mighty God, yet shall thy frown look forth
 Unveiled, and terribly shall shake the earth.
 Then the foul power of priestly sin and all
 Its long-upheld idolatries shall fall.
 Thou shalt raise up the trampled and oppressed,
 And thy delivered saints shall dwell in rest.

THE END