

## **'TIS NATURE'S NEED; 'TIS GOD'S DECREE**

The leaders of the Abolitionist movement set up anti-slavery singing circles and wrote special songs for them, generally set to the tune of old hymns. The best of them was this "Abolitionists Hymn" set to the familiar "Old Hundredth.", which was published in the Genevan Psalter in 1551. John Pierpont wrote the lyrics as a poem in 1842. If you have ever accompanied a hymn singalong, you will know that many hymn tunes change chords just about every beat. This one is no exception, so don't take it too fast. I have simplified the chords somewhat from the nice rendition by Stephen Griffith that can be found on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72yrWCaoiY8>.

### **THE ABOLITIONIST HYMN**

**G D Em D G D G**  
We ask not that the slave should lie  
**G D Em C G D**  
As lies his master at his ease,  
**G D G D G C D Em**  
Beneath a silken can - o - py,  
**D G Em Am G D G**  
Or in the shade of blooming trees.

We mourn not that the man should toil.  
'Tis Nature's need, 'tis God's decree.  
But let the hand that tills the soil  
Be like the wind that fans it, free.

We ask not 'eye for eye'—that all,  
Who forge the chain and ply the whip,  
Should feel their torture—that the thrall  
Should wield the scourge of mastership—