In the bleak mid-winter AMNS 42 Melody: Cranham Irregular metre



In the bleak mid-winter

frosty wind made moan,

earth stood hard as iron,

water like a stone:

snow had fallen, snow on snow,

snow on snow,

in the bleak mid-winter,

long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him

nor earth sustain;

heaven and earth shall flee away

when he comes to reign:

in the bleak mid-winter

a stable-place sufficed

the Lord God Almighty,

Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim

worship night and day,

a breastful of milk

and a mangerful of hay:

enough for him, whom angels

fall down before,

the ox and ass and camel

which adore.

Angels and archangels

may have gathered there,

cherubim and seraphim

thronged the air –

but only his mother

in her maiden bliss

worshipped the Belovèd

with a kiss.

What can I give him,

poor as I am?

if I were a shepherd

I would bring a lamb;

if I were a wise man

I would do my part;

yet what I can I give him –

give my heart.

Words: Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music: Gustav Holst (1874-1934)