

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

Twas battered and scarred, and the Auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the Old Violin,
But held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who will start bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar" --then, "Two!, only two?
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?

Three dollars once; three dollars twice:
Going for three --" but no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow,

Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As sweet as the caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bidden for the Old Violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once; three thousand twice;
And going, and gone!" said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply:
"The touch of the master's hand!"

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scattered with sin,
is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,

Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine;
A game -- and he travels on.
He's "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost gone."

But the Master came, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

---Myra Brooks Welch--