

# Our Substitute

A soldier worn out in his country's service took to the violin for earning his living. He was found in the streets of Vienna playing, but after a while his hand became feeble and tremulous, and he could make no more music. One day while he sat there weeping, a man passed along, and said, "My friend, you are too old and feeble; give me your violin"; and he began to play most exquisite music, and the coins poured in and in, until the old man's hat was full.

"Now", said the player, "put those coins in your pocket", which the old man did; and then he held his hat again, and the violinist played more sweetly than ever, until some of the people wept and some shouted. And again the hat was filled with coins. Then the violinist put down the instrument, and turned away. Soon the whisper went around, "Who is it? Who is it?" and someone just entering the crowd said, "Why, that is Bucher, the great violinist, known all through the realm. Yes, that is the great violinist."

The fact was, he had just taken that man's place, and assumed his poverty,

and borne his burden, and played his music, and earned his livelihood, and made sacrifice for the poor old man.

So the Lord Jesus comes down and finds us in our spiritual penury, and across the broken strings of his own broken heart he strikes a strain of infinite music, which wins the attention of earth and heaven. He takes our poverty, he plays our music, he weeps our sorrow. He dies our death – a sacrifice for sinners, a sacrifice for sinners!

**Dr. Thomas DeWitt Talmage**  
**(1832-1902)**