

A PICTURE

THE slim brown fingers kiss the viol-strings,
Dark, narrow eyes pierce to the soul within;
What slow enchanted joy reverie brings
To him, the lover of the violin;
Sorrow or joy: or saintliness or sin
To him are one, if only he may win
Unto the heart, the hidden heart that sings
What grave old histories, what mysterious things!

So there he squats to find the hidden flaw
In the dark doorway. God! I see him yet
With aweless face that yet reflects the awe
Of something greater than the music's fret;
On the dark soul within his thoughts are set;
No hope, no fear, no anguish, no regret,
But only wonder at some secret Law
That holds the sounds; he squats upon the straw.

Under that grave, blue sky no thing he sees:
The swift chameleon market-place; the white
Stern pillars of the churches; murmuries

That float on the summer air; the hot delight,
Awaken no response; only the might
Of the shy poesie that enchants the night
He cares to love; the eerie palaces
Where the soul finds forbidden harmonies.

Oh! Now his eyes dance up to meet the sun;
Curious, he peers into the hurtling air:
Oh! all his spirit follows, slim and fair;

The spears of light attract him: it is done;
The flaw is found; he bends again, to shun
The summer-heat: see! the swift fingers run
Like spiders o'er the strings: Look! it is bare,
The flaw: and he has found what godhead there!