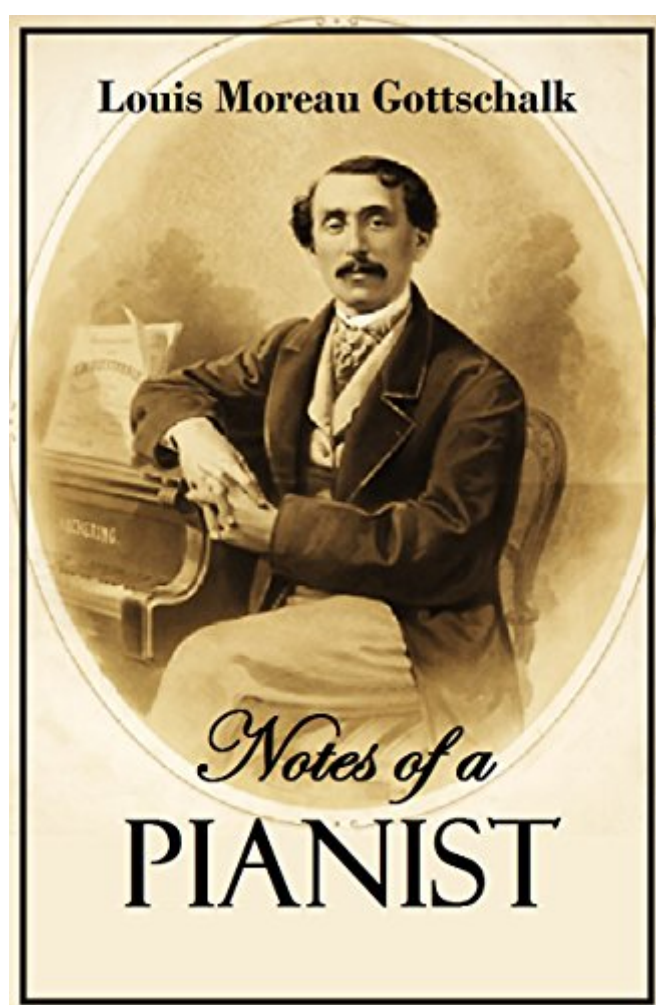


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Notes Of A Pianist: During His Professional Tours In The United States, Canada, The Antilles, And South America (1881)



Synopsis

Can America produce an artist?—Gottschalk was the first musician to prove the affirmative of this question which has often been skeptically asked in European countries. His reputation as an artist rests on too solid a foundation of contemporaneous criticism ever to be shaken. When a musician's right to the title of artist is affirmed by Chopin, Berlioz, Adam, and Marmontel, the matter is settled. When Gottschalk was thirteen he was sent to Paris, and confided to the care of friends, who were to place him under the best teachers the city afforded. When he was seventeen he decided to give a public concert. All were eager to hear him, as he had been greatly extolled in the fashionable world. His success was great. Chopin was present, and was so impressed with the young virtuoso's impassioned playing that he took his hand exclaiming, "My child, I predict that you will become the king of pianists." In 1862 he returned to New York and joined a company under Max Strakosch. He was with this company three years, and concerts were given in all parts of the United States (except the South, the civil war preventing,) and Canada. There were 1,100 concerts given in all. In 1865 Gottschalk went to South America. He was everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm. Gottschalk took many notes of his impressions of persons, places, and things. They have been published under the title of "Notes of a Pianist." It is a remarkably interesting volume, and shows Gottschalk to have been a highly cultivated man and thinker. There can be no doubt that it is as difficult a matter to make a popular book artistic as to make an artistic book popular. As a pleasant work of travelling gossip we may conscientiously recommend it; and all who take interest in the career of a pianist and composer whose individuality was strikingly apparent both in his playing and writing, will assuredly accompany him on his many long journeys with much pleasure. Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829—1869) was an American composer and pianist, best known as a virtuoso performer of his own romantic piano works. He spent most of his working career outside of the United States. Born in New Orleans, Gottschalk was on his mother's side a Creole, his father being an Englishman; what rendered this artist so attractive "was due to the two natures which he thus inherited, for he possessed the warmth of heart which characterises the Creole and the dignity of manner so peculiar to the English." It would be impossible to give any idea of the varied contents of the bulky volume before us—the substance of a diary kept by Gottschalk for very many years—but we may say that, in addition to a faithful record of his own artistic life, we have many highly interesting anecdotes of the numerous artists with whom he was professionally associated; and we can assure our readers that the book is never dull. Musicians will agree that Gottschalk is worthy of remembrance. The notes themselves are written with vivacity and show much shrewdness of

observation. They will be interesting to the Inhabitants of many towns in this country as stating with entire candor what Impressions they made upon the pianist. This book will be welcomed most heartily by all who are interested in musical literature. The volume is certainly very readable, especially that part which relates to his American tours.

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