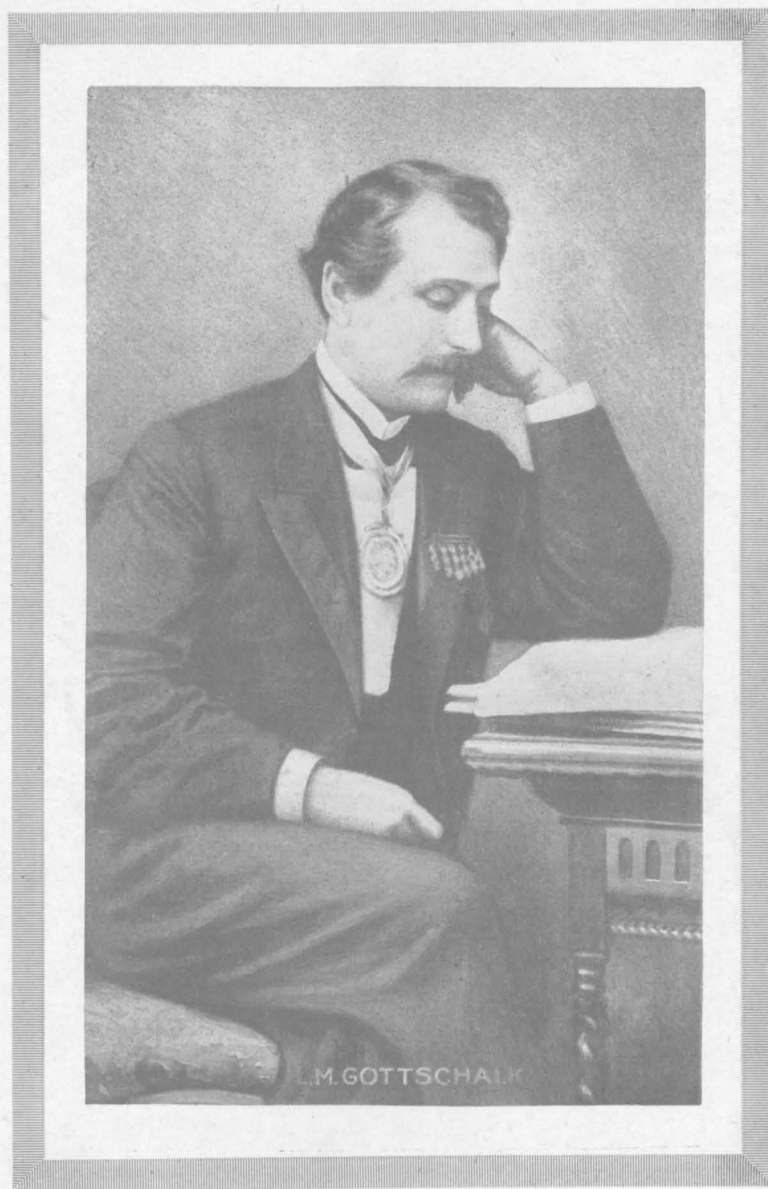


CRADLE SONG

OP. 47.

By

L. M. GOTTSCHALK



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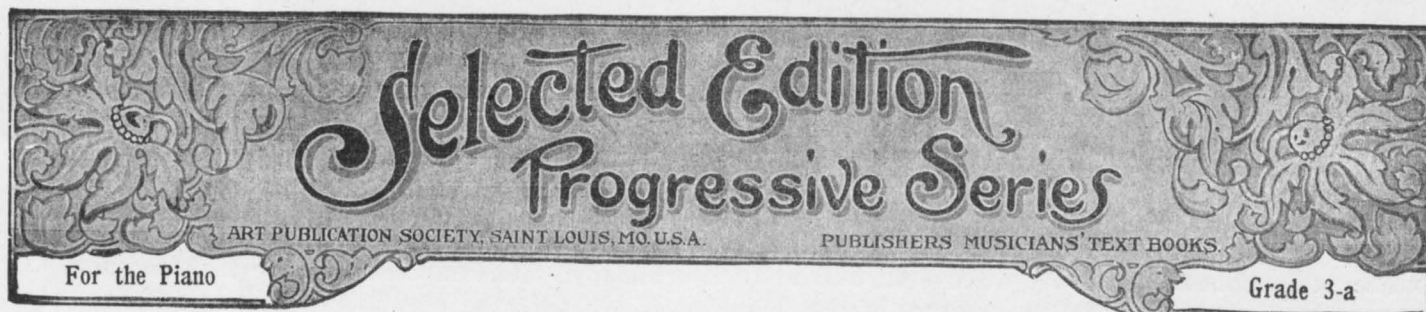
Vienna

REVISED EDITION WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,
POETIC IDEA, FORM AND STRUCTURE
AND METHOD OF STUDY

BY

W. S. B. MATHEWS

No. 507



CRADLE SONG

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—LOUIS MOREAU GOTTSCHALK (gôts'-chôlk).

Born in New Orleans, 1829.

Died in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Dec. 18, 1869.

HE was the first American composer and artist to gain distinction and European recognition, a distinction he well deserved for the attractiveness of his music, and his own fascinating playing. He was born in New Orleans, of French parentage. The boy showing musical gifts of a rare order at a very early age, his father diligently fostered them, so that as a boy he made many public appearances in his own country and played his early compositions, always with charm and public success.

When Moreau (as the family always called him) was 12 years old his father took him to Paris and entered him with Stamaty, the distinguished teacher of piano at the Conservatory, and with Male-den in harmony. Here he continued his studies until he was 17; taking a vacation now and then for a short concert tour through the provinces of France and Switzerland, where he was received with great favor. In 1852 he made a tour in Spain, where his extremely brilliant and highly rhythmatized playing exactly took the Spanish fancy, the Queen, in particular, being very fond of his playing.

In 1853 he began his concert tours in the United States, and these continued at intervals during the next ten years, with occasional visits to Cuba, etc. The late Max Strakosch engaged him in 1865 for a long American tour, taking in California and the central cities of Mexico and the other states adjacent. Later he went on a grand tour of South America, where he met a success almost royal. He played everywhere his own compositions; he organized local festivals, with chorus and orchestra, copying out with his own hands the innumerable orchestral parts for the large bodies of players he brought together.

In these he produced compositions often specially composed for the occasion, full of patriotic and national fervor, and always full of that sharp and fascinating rhythm of the negro and native dances and songs. His own playing was but an incident in these concerts, yet an incident without which the concerts could not have taken place. Owing to the hard work involved in these affairs, and the continual strain, he became debilitated and so fell a victim of fever and died at Rio de Janeiro, in 1869, at the early age of 40. Many of his works, especially those still in manuscript, were lost and never recovered. This was true, especially of these festival works, in which he made such remarkable successes.

During the most of the American war, Gottschalk lived with his mother and younger brothers and sisters in Paris, where his home became a salon, to which gathered most of the gifted musicians, writers and artists of the time. Here were brilliant thoughts, spirited and striking music, and everything which makes life attractive.

A younger brother of Gottschalk (a half brother) is still living, Mr. L. Gaston Gottschalk, a distinguished operatic baritone, later a prominent teacher of singing in Chicago and at the present writing (1912) living in Portland, Oregon.

As a pianist Gottschalk was gifted with a very commanding touch; he played brilliant passages with tremendous brilliancy, and melodies with a most delightful sentiment. His own melodies, which were peculiarly original with him, were truly charming. At the time when he was before the public it was the fashion for pianists to exploit their technic in operatic fantasias, but Gottschalk indulged in this style but little, preferring his own melodies and the peculiar rhythmic piquancy native to southern lands. The late Dr. William Mason, who knew him quite well and was contemporaneous with him, used to say that such was the charm of Gottschalk's touch, that if he had taken a notion to play scales an entire evening, his audience would have held themselves spell-bound all the same, such was the charm of his touch and personality.

Gottschalk, as one of the very earliest of American piano composers, naturally attracted the attention of the musical critics, especially of those who stood for the standard and classical. The late John S. Dwight, of Boston, was one who especially distinguished himself by his contemptuous criticisms upon the work of the young American. Whereupon Gottschalk played a trick upon him. At his next concert in Boston he played under his own name a little known composition of Beethoven; and under the name of Beethoven, a freshly discovered and attractive melody. Whereupon the critic took occasion to contrast the simplicity and naturalness of the Beethoven piece with the pianist's own composition; only to be apologized to later for the unfortunate mistake of placing the pieces wrongly as to their writers. Gottschalk thanked Dwight for noticing his own work so favorably.

Gottschalk by no means confined his compositions to the piano. He wrote two operas, "Chas. IX," and "Isaura de Salerno," which it is believed were never performed. Two symphonies for full orchestra, "A Night in the Tropics" and "Montevideo," which he had played with brilliant success at his festivals, for which they were no doubt written. He wrote about 12 songs, of which the beautiful slumber song, "Slumber On, Baby Dear," is perhaps the most attractive; another, "Oh, Trusting Heart, Trust On," is an impassioned and eminently singable melody.

His piano works were written for his own playing. Mme. Carreño, who was a pupil of this master for quite a long time in New York, says that Gottschalk played all the classical repertoire of the piano beautifully, especially Beethoven and Chopin. His time was earlier than that in which Schumann's work began to attract attention. Among the most popular of his own compositions for the drawing-room are his "Last Hope," "The Dying Poet," his "Berceuse" (the same as the song "Slumber On") his brilliant "Bananier," his first piece, a negro dance, worked up to a climax, and his "Bamboula," another negro rhythm, handled with exceeding brilliancy. These compositions, especially the last named, involve lightning-like interchange of hands upon chords, and are of great difficulty, even now when piano technic has so much advanced. Among the 90 piano compositions of his, there are probably others which will come back again into popularity some of these days, inasmuch as they have taking melody, striking rhythms and brilliant piano effects.

A very admirable thing of his, is his four hand piano arrangement of the Overture to "William Tell," a most brilliant piece for exhibitions.

In his "Notes of a Pianist," originally contributed to the Atlantic Monthly, Gottschalk gives many whimsical accounts of his concert tours in this country. The book is well worth reading, both as a document from a charming personality, and for the side-lights it throws upon the uncultivated state of the country at large, during and after the civil war.

THE POETIC AND MUSICAL STAND-POINT.—To the American composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk, belongs the honor of having composed one of the most beautiful (and much the most singable) cradle songs ever composed. It has had a wide currency and still deserves a long life. Despite the forty years since Gottschalk passed over to the majority, nothing better has been composed to take its place.

In the original edition there was a long introduction of nearly two pages, almost wholly upon the chord of A major here much shortened. This matter, has nothing to do with the case, and can be made interesting (if at all) only by a player of rare powers and distinction of touch. We have also lessened the space by indicating a repeat, where the original engraves out the same matter over again. The Coda is also here very much shortened, for the same reason as the introduction. It was not good enough "for keeps."

FORM AND STRUCTURE.—As here divided, the Cradle Song consists of six Melodies or Stanzas. Melody A is introduction. Melody B is the main melody, beginning in measure 5, ending in measure 13. Here it immediately repeats itself, with the same harmonies, but with a high treble note put in above the melody, the left hand crossing over for the purpose. This brings us to measure 21. Here begins Melody D, which is the Original Melody transposed into the C Sharp Minor, ending in measure 29. Melody E is Melody A again, but now with a beautiful Obbligato Melody above it, added by the left hand crossing over the right. This takes us to measure 37. Here Melodies D and E are repeated, down to measure 34 (now measure 50, through the repetition of measures 22 to 34), closing in measure 53. Here begins Melody F, the Coda or Finishing Part, which ends in measure 63.

FROM THE PLAYING STANDPOINT.—The principal difficulty in this piece lies in delivering the melody in a fine and singing way, like a superior solo voice, because it has to be played by the 4th and 5th fingers of the right hand while the strong fingers of the same

hand are generally putting in soft notes below, belonging to the accompaniment. The tone of the melody must be full enough to preponderate sufficiently, and it must also be expressive, increasing and diminishing according to the intensity of the idea. Moreover the melody must be very legato indeed.

If new to this kind of difficulty (it is a principle which well taught players acquire during the first two or three years of lessons) you would better begin by studying the Melody A in the manner following: Leave out the bass. Play the melody with the right hand, and play the 8th-notes below (in the right hand part) with the left hand. In this way you will easily be able to follow the melody and the 8th-notes of the accompaniment together and enjoy both. As soon as the 8th-notes get quiet in their gentle delivery and the melody stands out, like an intelligent and sympathetic woman singing to the child, then take the right hand part with the right hand alone, and work at it until you can do these two things with one hand. That is, until you can bring out the melody as directed and play the accompaniment along with it in a soft and satisfactory manner, and do both without difficulty. It is merely a knack, which any one can get by working at it long enough. It depends upon supporting the hand upon the melody keys, while the accompaniment keys are lightly touched.

When the right hand knows all its part in Melody A, then add the left hand part. And only after this thorough beginning go on to Melody C. This will be easier. The right hand part remains almost exactly the same as before; the left hand crosses over for its high notes.

You should work out Melody D in the same manner as Melody B. The same principles prevail.

In Melody E, you have the difficulty of keeping up the original melody and accompaniment with the right hand, and still adding the soft and charming embellishing phrases which the left hand puts in above the soprano voice.

In the chromatic cadences, such as in measures 19, 20, 28, 29, 35, 51 and 52, the chromatics must seem almost to melt into each other, in the smoothest possible way. The pedal, if used at all in these measures, must be put in very carefully not to mix up harmonies. From measure 53 to the end, it is a question of gradually dying down in power, and playing slightly slower and slower, until at last the chord of A simply vanishes.

For the sake of contrast the soft pedal can be used upon one of the repetitions (generally the second) when the same melody occurs a second time. At the close, measures 58 to 63, it is necessary, as also the damper pedal.

The lower notes in the low bass octaves, measures 14 to 27, can just as well be omitted. If played at all, they must be very soft, and "pervading" in tone quality; not loud and obtrusive. They form a low background to the harmony.

RATE OF SPEED.—The quarter-notes in this piece should go at about the swing of a pendulum from 14 to 16 inches long. The latter is perhaps better.

CRADLE-SONG.

3

"SLUMBER ON, BABY DEAR."

Revised and annotated by
W. S. B. Mathews.

L. M. GOTTSCHALK, Op. 47.

Andantino. Quietly. $\text{♩} = 14'' \text{ to } 16''$

A. *pp*

B. *marcato il canto ma p*
molto legato

C.

1 *pp* 2 *pp* 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

Ped.

4

17 18 19

20 21 22

23 24 25

26 27 28

29 30 31

D.

E.

Cradle S 3

[illegible][illegible]

59 60 61 62 63

rall molto *morendo* *ppp* *pppp*

Cradle S 3

RECITATION QUESTIONS ON GOTTSCHALK'S "CRADLE SONG."

- 1.—What is the Signature to this Piece, and what the Key?
Ans.
- 2.—Are either of the Melodies in any other Key than that of A? If so, which one?
Ans.
- 3.—What is the Time Signature and what the unit note?
Ans.
- 4.—What is the proper Rate of Speed for this Piece?
Ans.
5. What difference is there between Melody B and Melody D?
Ans.
- 6.—What difference is there between Melody B and Melody E?
Ans.
- 7.—What is the pianistic difficulty in playing this piece with satisfactory effect?
Ans.
- 8.—Did you have any trouble in playing the Melody with its proper singing quality, and the accompaniment soft enough at the same time?
Ans.
- 9.—Do you like this Piece?
Ans.
- 10.—How many Measures in this Piece contain the Chord of A?
Ans.
- 11.—Who was Gottschalk, and for what was he celebrated? Mention several of his best pieces.
Ans.

For Teacher's Record

Class No. _____

Received _____

Pupil _____

Grade (on Scale 100) _____

Address _____

Teacher _____
