

Gottschalk sitting at the piano

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...The man who brought the finest quality of tone out of the instrument, of all who ever played, was probably L. M. Gottschalk. Now, he sat so low down that the key-board came opposite his chest, much lower than any other pianist we have ever heard. All the strength he applied came from the wrist and forearm; he struck the keys with that peculiar elastic movement that we notice in the paw of a kitten, when she pats a ball of yarn. His position at the instrument was peculiarly adapted to this mode of striking, but peculiarly ill-adapted to gaining great power of striking hard. But all who ever heard Gottschalk play must remember his enormous power in strong passages. Gottschalk had, in fact, unusually great muscular strength in his arms, unusually great even for a strong man; and it was this extraordinary strength alone that enabled him to sit so low as he did. To compare his playing with Mademoiselle Krebs's, he did not probably play much louder than she does; but in all his loudest passages he preserved that resonant, elastic quality of tone which was one of the greatest charms of his playing, whereas Mademoiselle Krebs has to *force her tone*, as it is called, by the direct application of all her strength, to the detriment of its *quality*.