

ON GOTTSCHALK.
(The Musical Courier, 16 Dec. 1908)

Last week, in speaking of the death of Francis Gilder, THE MUSICAL COURIER made some references to the compositions of Gottschalk. No reference whatever was made regarding the late L. M. Gottschalk himself personally. It was merely an opinion as to the status of the music he composed, and as a result the following letter has been received from his sister:

To The Musical Courier:

I have by chance come across an editorial by you, headed "Reflections," in THE MUSICAL COURIER. Permit me to say that the unjust and abusive criticism you use regarding "The Last Hope" by my brother, the late L. M. Gottschalk, has astonished me more than it has hurt my feelings. If, as you assert, this composition "belongs to a period which now is happily in desuetude," then the musical world (America especially) has made no progress, since "The Last Hope" sells now better than ever, after yielding a small fortune for years. Now that the copyright has expired, every publisher is exploiting the piece as well as the others, as fast as they become public property.

As regards the use of a mechanical player, I agree with you that the result is unsatisfactory, but the fault is not with the piece, but with the machine. America has not given the world so many great composers and pianists that you should try to belittle the *first* great musical genius she has ever produced. I had always thought THE MUSICAL COURIER was a just and impartial musical organ. I fear my opinion is no longer the same, and I deeply regret your assault on my brother's music and memory. I console myself, however, by the thought of the thousands who still pay tribute to the composer of "The Last Hope" and "The Dying Poet."

Yours truly,

CLARA GOTTSCHALK PETERSON.

Furthermore, we believe that there is no trouble in proving our assertions by simply referring to the programs of the pianists who play in Europe and

America. If there is a large sale of "The Last Hope," it also indicates that a great many people have not yet risen to the proper estimation of the music of those composers that figure on the programs. For instance, let us have the programs of the pianists in this city during the last month, or the programs showing what the pianists in Europe play; then take the last five years, the last ten years, the last twenty years, and see how much Gottschalk is on the living programs. It is this matter to which we refer. Musical taste has been diverted entirely from that style. Of course, the people who are personally attached to the memory of Gottschalk are substituting their feeling for the personality for the feeling for art and for music, but the facts are against any successful denial of the proposition published by this paper regarding Gottschalk's music. No matter how much of it may be sold in America, there is none of it played publicly.