

**LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF LOUIS MOREAU  
GOTTSCHALK**

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Life and Letters of Louis Moreau Gottschalk by Octavia Hensel

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**OCTAVIA HENSEL**

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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

LOUIS MOREAU GOTTSCHALK.

By OCTAVIA HENSEL, *author*

HIS FRIEND AND PUPIL.

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"Nor blame I Death, because he bare  
The use of virtue out of earth ;  
I know transplanted human worth  
Will bloom and profit elsewhere.

\* \* \* \* \*  
"A life that all the muses decked  
With gifts of grace that might express  
All-comprehensive tenderness,  
All subtilizing intellect."

TENNYSON.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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41 ALBION STREET, HYDE PARK, LONDON,  
March 22, 1870.

TO MADAM OCTAVIA HENSKEL, BOSTON.

*My Dear Madam*,—I have received your letter, and, as far as time allows, will try and satisfy your demands. But first let me thank you for the true love and respect with which you speak of our dearly beloved brother, and tell you that I can entertain no doubt, that, even had you not the talent to write a book worthy of the greatest and best man that ever was, the *real* appreciation you seem to have had of his purity and nobility of sentiment would enable you to place before the public a book which his sisters and brother will fully approve.

Yet let me tell you it is a difficult, and to me, his sister, almost an impossible task. *No* words can ever give an idea of what *he was!* Those only who had *read* him when alive can understand the greatness of his genius and moral worth. Nevertheless, your book is a tribute of love, admiration, and respect, and as such must be acceptable to the public. *As* to his sisters,—who long to join him, who yearn to give him an embrace, whose hearts are utterly broken, whose lives are all dark since their guardian angel is gone,—what will it be to them! They love those who

have loved him, their heart's treasure; and they thank you, from their hearts, for trying to give the world an idea of what they once had the happiness to possess, and now have lost!

He has been — our darling Moreau — every thing to us, ever since I can remember, — loving, affectionate, yet firm. As we were separated from father, whose calling kept him in New Orleans, Moreau was looked up to with reverence; and in all our childish troubles and joys we went to him (even in preference to our dearest mother), sure to find there sympathy.

He took especial delight in my progress in music, because he thought I would play well one day: and he would often call me, when he had friends, to ask me to play; which I did on one piano, while he at the other was playing most elaborate harmonies and variations to my simple melody, immensely enjoying the fact that *I thought it was I who was playing the whole!*

My sister Celestine, who is older than myself, has written what she remembers of him when they were children together. Had you not been so pressed for time, I would have sent you some extracts of his letters when a little boy; but I do not like to keep you waiting.

We intend going to New York for a short time. The remains of our beloved lost one will be brought from Rio; and we shall be there to gaze for the last time on his darling loved face, and pay him the last tribute of love and respect.

You tell me that he was kind to you. I am not surprised at it, but would have wondered if it had been otherwise. *He could no more help being generous and loving than he could help having been invested with the genius given him of God!* We have had no other support than him *for years*. He sent us regularly forty pounds a month, besides giving us all the money from his music published

in Europe; and he would say constantly, "Dearest sisters, have you enough money to be comfortable? If not, tell me, and I will send more."

Last Christmas, twelvemonth, he wrote such a loving letter! (This Christmas he did not write: if he did, they destroyed it.) "Think," said he, "how blessed we are to love each other as we do! Think of the happiness of meeting again, strong in each other's love."

I think my sister has not told you our names. We are four sisters, and one brother. *Celestine* is the eldest; I, *Clara*; *Augusta* and *Blanche*. *Gaston* is our brother's name. Poor dear Edward was between *Celestine* and me. We were educated in Paris.

I must close for post. With very kind regards from my sisters and myself,

I remain, dear madam,

Yours sincerely,

CLARA GOTTSCHALK