

**MANUAL OF HARMONY: A
PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ITS STUDY,
PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR THE
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT
LEIPSIK**

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Manual of harmony: a practical guide to its study, prepared especially for the Conservatory of Music at Leipsic by Ernst Friedrich Richter

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RICHTER'S
MANUAL OF HARMONY:

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ITS STUDY

PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR THE

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT LEIPSIK.

BY

ERNST FRIEDRICH RICHTER,

UNIVERSITY MUSIC-DIRECTOR, ORGANIST OF THE CHURCH OF ST. NICOLAI, AND IN-
STRUCTOR IN THE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATEST GERMAN EDITION

By JOHN P. MORGAN,

ALUMNUS OF THE LEIPSIK CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, AND PUPIL OF THE AUTHOR.

FIFTH EDITION.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN offering to the American public this translation of RICHTER'S HARMONIELEHRE we need have no hesitation in saying, that we offer a translation of the best *text-book* of Harmony which has, as yet, been given to the world.

No one knows better than its author the road which one must take to become a *practical harmonist*; and no one has been more successful in leading pupils to real success.

The Manual contains the outlines of the course which has proved itself the best during his many years of efficient labor as Instructor in Harmony in the Conservatory of Leipsic; and the immense sale the work has had in Europe, shows in what estimation it is held by the musical public.

A few remarks as to the translation:—Every one who is at all acquainted with the matter, knows how exceedingly difficult it is to do justice to a German scientific work in an English translation; and in no science is the poverty of exact and definite English terms greater than in that of music.

The translator has striven to give, throughout, the exact sense of the original, without any embellishment for the sake of attractiveness, and has always preferred a square-cut sentence containing the idea of the original *in full*, to a more smoothly-rounded one which would omit or add something.

A few clauses or words which seemed necessary for clearness, have been enclosed in square brackets.

The whole work has been performed as a pleasant duty to a

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teacher to whom the translator owes all gratitude, and in behalf of the many earnest students in this country, who are utterly without an *adequate, practical* Manual of Harmony and Introduction to Counterpoint.

Thanks are especially due to his revered father, Rev. JOHN MORGAN, D. D., of Oberlin College, for his kind assistance in the work, which, without the aid of his comprehensive knowledge of language in general, and of the German in particular, must have been done much less accurately.

JOHN P. MORGAN.

NEW YORK, *June 1st*, 1867.

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE most immediate occasion for publishing this text book of harmony is indicated in the title. It was desirable, in connection with the practical course of studies in the theory of music, to put into the hands of the pupils a help for the explanation of the doctrines brought forward, and for their repetition. The qualities of such a manual, the author believes to be these: *It must contain the most essential, fundamental part of the musical theory expressed in a manner brief, but as complete as possible; there must be these fundamental features always accompanied by reference and guidance to the practical application, in order to qualify for later attempts at composition.*

The book contains no scientifically theoretic treatise on harmony, but, although as far as is the case with any system of harmony, it is supported upon a firm basis, is only dedicated to the *practical* object, which with the scanty means now accessible, would be very difficult to attain in an abstractly scientific way.

There has, indeed, ever been a disposition to inquire after a mathematical definiteness in musical rules, and especially youth, opposed to the belief in authority, would like to have everything so clear that no doubt would be possible, much as it shrinks on the other side, from learning, by means of the anatomical knife, to know and understand the blooming life of art; and it is not to be denied that in this respect a want is found in musical literature, which no one has as yet entirely succeeded in supplying. All attempts

of the sort have as yet failed to create a really tenable scientifically musical system, according to which, through *one* fundamental principle all phenomena in the musical realm are found exhibited as always *necessary* consequences, and what philosophers, mathematicians and physicists have accomplished in this regard, is indeed worthy of attention, but in part, too much divided into isolated portions to allow the easy discovery of the connecting links for the completion of the whole, in part, too abstract, serving music itself less than other objects, and with all the understanding of musical things shown in it, still having little reference to the properly musical, which is, after all, of the most immediate importance with the musician. What is laid down in musical text books of a scientific basis, has not, however, hitherto verified itself, because it in part as application of single learned investigations, was just as little able to create a system complete in itself, with indubitable conclusions, and in part, as a fanciful structure, was utterly without scientific basis.*

Still, rightly regarded, this deficiency is perceptible only to the ripper and educated musician, who likes to busy himself with theory, not, however, so disadvantageous to the *advancing student of music* that his immediate education must suffer in consequence of it; and this scepticism, referred to above, might be compared in a certain measure, with that childish mode of procedure, which from over great curiosity, would get at the origin of all things through questions which seldom can be answered comprehensibly enough for the questioner's stage of education. The advancing student of music has to apply his whole power to his technical education, because it will cost him time and trouble enough to attain the stand-point, starting from which he can with greater ease advance towards the position of a real artist. Here the question to be asked is not *Why?* the inquiry of immediate application is, *How?*

* It may here be permitted to call attention to a work which might be adapted to meet a palpable want: *Die Natur der Harmonik und Metrik* by M. Hauptmann.

The thing to be done is, from experience, from the best models, to understand, not to calculate, the necessity of certain principles; later, if education, acquirements, capability and calling require it, it will be time enough to investigate the *why*, and all knowledge obtained from experience will be an aid not to be despised, for discovering also the laws of nature pertaining to music.

This practical aim in view, the author was at pains to give the exhibition of harmony, and of the propositions resulting from observation and experience, in a simple and clear manner, and since he destined the book for *study*, to let the truths, perhaps contained in it, work through themselves; without wishing, through an especially learned dress or an attractive form, to obtain for them an extended *circle of readers*. It contains the doctrine of harmony complete, with hints for a rational method of performing exercises, for the fixing of the whole, and for the ready carrying out of all harmonic principles. These exercises extend to the beginning of contrapuntal studies; the doctrine of counterpoint itself will follow, however, in a later volume after the same plan.

In closing, still a word to the disciple of art; an earnest one, indeed, but well meant.

It is our object to reach a distant goal; this goal is the actual production of works of art. For this a vigorously exercised, enduring activity is necessary, to comprehend the musical principles, to form that which is won and recognized into structures capable of life. Those will bitterly deceive themselves, who, filled with the works of our great masters, gifted with a poetic mind, think to be able to pluck the blossoms, without learning thoroughly to know and prove the technical aids; who are of the erroneous opinion that the consecration of beauty which extends itself over the work of art suffers under the dissection of the material, or that the first natural formations of the latter could never develop themselves to that requisite beauty. No person of talent has ever, without thorough knowledge (to attain which was, to be sure, easier to him than to the less gifted), risen to that height, upon which alone

the achievements of art thrive. Exercise without consciousness is not artistic skill, it is only the working of the instinct, which will always make the want of a complete education sensible. The spiritual thought cannot do without the form, and it is this which must be recognized and learned. Even if it often comes with the conception of itself, still, with music, more than with anything else, it is of importance, as it were, logically to dissect the thought, to remodel it into new forms, to transform it in the most manifold manner. The knowledge of these things and skill in them must be acquired by the person of talent also, and this can only be attained by taking pains to recognize the musical laws, and endeavoring to imitate and extend what others have already long since discovered. Earnest, persevering activity, and above all, a rational method for the development of maturity, for the formation of works of art capable of life, will, in connection with musical capacity, certainly lead to the goal.