

THE LOST CHORD

HARMONISATION
ON
KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

I

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The Lost Chord

*Seated one day at the organ,
I was weary and ill at ease,
And my fingers wander'd idly
Over the noisy keys;*

*I know not what I was playing,
Or what I was dreaming then,
But I struck one chord of music,
Like the sound of a great Amen.*

(Poem by Adelaide Proctor, set to music in 1877 by Arthur Sullivan)

PART I

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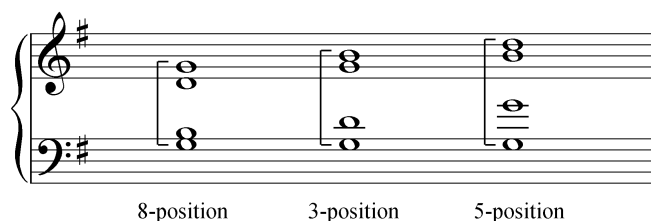
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Instructions for use

Readers are advised to consult the Preface to *The Lost Chord* elsewhere on this site.

The degrees of the scale are indicated by the Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, V, VI and VII.

In Part I only the triad with the root in the bass is used, as will be explained in ch.5. In four-part playing this triad may occur in three positions, named after the interval between the soprano and the bass:



Despite its usefulness, I have found no English terminology for the three positions of the triad with the root in the bass. In his *Practical Harmony* (Further Revised Edition 1907), Stewart Macpherson indicated these by placing a number 8, 5 or 3 above the soprano.

The above chords are in closed spacing: the distance between the soprano and the tenor is less than an octave; between the three upper parts there is no space to add a note belonging to the chord in question. All exercises in Part I are to be played in closed spacing, with the upper three parts in the right hand (r.h.) and the bass in the left hand (l.h.). See further ch.12. (The reason why open spacing is hardly employed is explained in Part III. ch.13.)

From ch.5, it is beneficial for organists to repeat exercises as indicated with a solo stop and pedals. From ch.12, additional exercises in more difficult keys are intended to challenge the more advanced player; they may be skipped by those who find them daunting.

Although I have devised the exercises in this tutor such that the player who follows my instructions should be able to harmonise correctly, I would advise all readers to seek the help of an experienced teacher. The latter will safeguard the student from pitfalls, and, if desired, provide the player with additional material. No tutor on any subject was ever complete, and still less definitive.

Many hymn tunes, and particularly those composed before the 19th century, have rich written and oral histories. This accounts for the fact that they are often transmitted in different versions, in variant keys and even with divergent titles. Many date from a period when barlines were employed irregularly; indeed, many tunes were not written in regular time at all but have a charmingly irregular rhythmic structure. Frequent alternation of duple and triple time, for example, was still widespread in the 17th century. In such cases, the addition of bar lines and time signatures often only muddles the score. Where clarification is desirable, vertical lines have been added between the staves.

For practical reasons, all hymns and chorales are named after the melody rather than the first line of the text (though in German chorales this is usually one and the same thing). In order to encourage historical awareness, I have mentioned the dates of melodies and settings in as far as they are known, though a certain caution is required, since these are often dates of publication rather than composition. An index of hymns and chorales used as exercise material in *The Lost Chord* is provided in a separate document.