

**FIRST STEPS TO THOROUGH  
BASE, IN TWELVE  
FAMILIAR LESSONS  
BETWEEN A TEACHER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649439508

First Steps to Thorough Base, in Twelve Familiar Lessons Between a Teacher by Anonymous

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Cover @ 2017

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**ANONYMOUS**

**FIRST STEPS TO THOROUGH  
BASE, IN TWELVE  
FAMILIAR LESSONS  
BETWEEN A TEACHER**



FIRST STEPS  
TO  
THOROUGH BASE,  
IN  
Twelve Familiar Lessons  
BETWEEN  
A TEACHER AND PUPIL.

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BY A TEACHER OF MUSIC.

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SECOND AMERICAN, FROM THE LONDON EDITION.

BOSTON:  
JAMES LORING, PUBLISHER,  
132 Washington Street.  
1841.

KC 16345



**Recommendation.**

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**Mr. JAMES LOBING,**

I know of no book in which the elementary principles of thorough base are made so plain and perspicuous as in the "FIRST STEPS, &c." published by you. Although originally designed for children, it is worthy of the attention of musical students generally; and it is decidedly the best work to put into the hands of any person commencing the study of musical science with which I am acquainted.

**L. MASON.**

*Boston, Dec. 18, 1832.*

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Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1832,

**By JAMES LOBING,**

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

## PREFACE.

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To give a pupil of ten years old any correct ideas of the abstruse science of Thorough Base, is an attempt so novel, that to many it may appear at least useless; and its execution absolutely impossible. But to these and many other objections, which I anticipate as being made to the plan of the following pages, I can only say, that I have already proved its efficacy by positive experience.

The first six of the following Lessons are exactly the same in substance, and nearly the same in language, as some I have held with two young persons. The last six may, perhaps, require the understanding to be rather more advanced, though I am willing to hope that they will not be found difficult to be understood at almost any age, by a child in any degree capable of reflection. The progress made by those who have already learned thorough base in this manner has been so rapid (I had almost said astonishing,) that I have been urged to communicate my method of teaching it to the public, by many good judges who have witnessed its effects with surprise; and though I acknowledge this to be an assertion as generally introduced into prefaces as the names of the publishers are inserted in title-pages, it happens, in this instance, to be

literally true. The award of the public will alone prove, whether the opinions of these friends were correct; and on that award must depend the future publication of a continuation on the same plan.

It will immediately be obvious to all who read the following pages, that in them my sole object has been to make my language as plain, as simple, and as intelligible as possible. I have carefully avoided all technical phraseology; and I have even, in many instances, indulged in tautology and recapitulations which may prove tedious to many. But it must be remembered that I have not written this to please the class of well informed readers. My only wish is to inform those who are supposed to be entirely ignorant of the subject; and if I succeed in my endeavors in smoothing its intricacies to one juvenile student, I shall feel sincerer pleasure than I could experience in extorting praise from the sternest critic.

This little work is not only singular in being addressed to children, but it also differs from all other publications on the subject of thorough base which I have happened to meet with, as it professes to show, from the very beginning, that the science of music owes its chief difficulty to the variety, and sometimes unintelligibility, of the terms in which it is expressed; and it is in the instance of chords—many different appellations are given to one and the same combination of notes, which very combination, on being analyzed (or as it might be termed *dissected*,) would appear a natural and familiar harmony. Indeed, so convinced am I of the simplicity to which it is possible to reduce the theory of this science, that I venture to assert, if its professors would agree amongst themselves to be content to appropriate one single name to each individual thing of which they treat, its principles would not only be more generally understood, but its practice, by which I



mean chiefly the art of composition, would be very essentially improved.

My object has been to exemplify in *generals* the principles on which the rules of thorough base are formed, without reference to any particular instrument for their application; so that a child with a pencil and ruler can put the *theory* of all the rules I have laid down to immediate proof. Their subsequent *practice* is, however, absolutely necessary, not only for the purpose of giving a readiness and facility in playing chords, but, likewise, that the ear may be early educated to harmony, and both the taste and judgment thereby improved: for this purpose, I strongly recommend Corfe's work, as the best practical exercise for the manual part of thorough base.

In some few instances I have referred to the piano forte, as to an instrument in general use, and have represented the pupil as occasionally filling up some exemplifications of the rules under immediate consideration. Blank copies of these examples I recommend should be given to those who are to be taught according to this plan, to be filled up by the learners themselves, in the same way that it is advisable for every pupil to give their *own* answers to the little catechisms which conclude each lesson. A little attention to these remarks, and above all, not permitting the pupil to proceed to any new lesson till he is quite perfect in the last, are all that is required in the teacher, and is, I flatter myself, not too much to ask from liberal and candid judges. With these conditions I entertain little doubt of these lessons being found generally useful.

It now only remains for me to say a few words on the rules which I have laid down as first principles. In almost every instance, I have taken for my authority, in them, some writer of acknowledged reputation. Rameau, Rousseau, Alembert, Pasquali, Callcott, Corfe, and Dr.

Busby, have been those whom I have generally followed, though I have not always given the names of the particular authors from whom I have taken my quotations, in order equally to avoid an air of pedantry in myself, and a possibility of confusion to the scholar.

In the elements of all sciences it is, perhaps, of as much consequence to avoid mistake as to give knowledge; as it is more difficult to clear the mind from the wrong deductions arising from one false idea than to engraft on it many new ones. I therefore hope the learned in the science of thorough base will give this little book the benefit of their criticisms, not so much for the sake of its author as for the benefit of those young friends for whose advantage it is particularly intended.

M. P.

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FIRST STEPS  
TO  
THOROUGH BASE.

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LESSON I.

EXPLANATION OF THOROUGH BASE.

*Pupil.* What is thorough base ?

*Teacher.* It is the science of music. It contains the rules for composition, and shows how harmony and melody are produced.

*Pupil.* What do you mean, by harmony and melody ? I thought they were the same.

*Teacher.* Harmony is a combination or union of several sounds, agreeable to the ear ; as a word is a combination of letters, which, though perhaps not each distinguishable separately, make altogether one complete, distinct sound ; and