minor tonic

Ramsay

The number of Diatonic Chords. In the major there are three simple chords, two compound chords, and two double compound, seven in all - subdominant, tonic, dominant, subdominant sixth, subdominant fourth, dominant seventh, and dominant ninth. In the minor there are the same number and order, making fourteen. It is not normal to the tonic chord to compound, but it may, in exceptional instances; the major tonic may, in a certain cadence, assume the top of the minor subdominant; and the **minor tonic** may assume, in a cognate case, the root of the major dominant.¹ [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 70]

common, to mingle with more chord-society. So those added thirds which constitute compound chords are like accomplishments acquired for this end, and they make such chords exceedingly interesting. The dominant assumes the root of the subdominant, and so becomes the dominant seventh that it may be affiliated with the subdominant chords. Inversely, the subdominant assumes the top of the dominant chord that it may be affiliated with the dominant. The major tonic may exceptionally be compounded with the top of the minor subdominant when it comes between that chord and its own dominant; and the **minor tonic** may in the same way assume the root of the major dominant when it comes between that chord and its subdominant. The minor subdominant D F A, and the major dominant G B D, are too great strangers to affiliate without some chord to introduce them; they seem to have one note in common, indeed, but we know that even these two D's are a comma apart, although one piano-key plays them both, and the F G and the A B are as foreign to each other as two seconds can be, each pair being 9 commas apart, and G A are 8 commas apart. In this case, as a matter of musical courtesy, the tonic chord comes in between; and when it is the minor subdominant that is to be introduced, the major tonic assumes the top of that chord, and then turns to its own major dominant and suavely gives the two to enter into fellowship; for the tonic received the minor subdominant through its semitonic E F, and carries it to the major dominant through its semitonic B C, along with C in common on the one side and G in common on the other. When it is the major dominant that is to be introduced to the minor subdominant the minor tonic fulfills the function, only the details are all reversed; it assumes the root of dominant, and by this note in common, and its A in common with its own subdominant, along with the semitonic second B C on the one hand and the semitonic E F on the other, all is made smooth and continuous. The whole of this mediatorial intervention on the part of the tonic is under the wondrous law of assimilation, which is the law of laws all through creation; but when the tonic chord has fulfilled this graceful action, it immediately drops the assumed note, and closes the cadence in its own simple form.¹ [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 71]

See Also

minor tonic