Handel

MASTER SERIES FOR THE YOUNG

Compositions for Piano in their Original Versions
Selected and Edited by

Edwin Hughes

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GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

There exists a well-known painting which pictures the boy Handel, in his night-shirt, seated before the old harpsichord in the dead of night, and surprised by the astonished family, which is headed by the father, lantern in hand, all pressing into the room, and bewildered at seeing the youngster's calm disregard for paternal injunctions. History does not tell whether the immediate consequences of the discovery were sensibly painful for little George; but if they were, they did not deter him from pursuing, all his life, a vocation to which his singular genius called him, in spite of his father's wish that he should be a lawyer. And the little player in a nightie grew up to be a great master in a fine periwig, clothed in silk and velvet, decked with jewels, the friend of kings and dukes, basking in the glorious rays of popular and universal veneration.

Handel was born at Halle, in Saxony, on February 23 of the year 1685, or a little less than a month before the birth date of J. S. Bach, whom he survived by nine years, dying at London on April 14, 1759. But the lives of these two great contemporaries have little in common, save that both lost their eyesight with advancing age. Bach married twice, Handel not at all. Bach never left the shadow of the church; Handel was always drawn to the footlights of the stage. Providence played an important rôle in the life of Handel. A chance visit, with his father, to the court of a German princeling who expressed his delight when he happened to hear the boy play, was the cause of his receiving music lessons. He made such rapid strides that, ten years old, he was a performer of no mean ability and had written several pieces. The father, now proud of his prodigy, took him in 1696 to Berlin, where young Handel earned the admiration of all the musicians, and where for the first time he heard an opera, a style of musical composition to which he was to devote a great deal of his time, and a form of entertainment in the providing of which he was to make, and subsequently lose, much money. After the father's death, in 1697, Handel studied law at the University of Halle, as an act of filial devotion; he also filled a position of church-organist, as a means of livelihood.

But the lure of the stage was too strong. In 1703 he went to Hamburg, where resided the best German opera troupe of the day; he entered the theatre orchestra as a violinist, later advancing to the post of clavecinist, and finally graduating conductor. All the while he busied himself with the writing of operas, some of which were successfully produced. His temperamental ways once led him to quarrel at the theatre with his associate Mattheson, a talented composer and able historian, and after the fashion of the times they proceeded to settle their differences with the aid of swords. If Providence had not placed a large brass button between the point of Mattheson's weapon and Handel's heart, the story of his life would have ended here. The antagonists are said to have made up forthwith.

Opera writing was Handel's avowed ambition, and it could be developed only in the land where opera had been invented a mere hundred years earlier and was then especially flourishing; that land was Italy. Handel crossed the Alps, in 1706, and spent three fruitful years in studying the works of Italian masters, among whom he made many friends, and writing, in turn, many master works of his own which won him the enthusiastic plaudits of theatre-going Florence, Venice, Naples and Rome. On his return to Germany, he accepted a position as court musician to the Elector of Hanover. The desire to see new countries seized him soon, however, and in 1710 he went to England on a "leave of absence." London was to be his real home. There his operas became the rage. Fame and money effaced all memories of, and sense of obligation to, his Hanoverian employer. The English court attracted him more; and, not pausing to weigh political considerations, he wrote a "Te Deum" in praise of the peace of Utrecht, signed in 1713, whereby England was distinctly favored at the expense of the Continent, including the sulking Elector of

Hanover. Providence seemed sadly remiss when in 1714, according to dynastic settlement, this very Prince, as George I, ascended the throne of Great Britain. Handel was in an awkward situation. But Providence came to the rescue with a royal pleasure trip on the river Thames, for which Handel wrote some "water music" that greatly delighted the King and led to a reconciliation. Thereafter, Handel was in great favor at the Court. For a time, he was attached as organist to the Duke of Chandos; he gave the daughters of the Prince of Wales lessons on the harpsichord, writing for the young ladies, among other studies, "The Harmonious Blacksmith," found in this collection. But his life was devoted to the opera and to the theatre, composing many of his scores in postcoaches on his mad journeys across the Continent, in search for singers, ever greater and more renowned, with whom to attract a fickle crowd. Intrigues, mismanagement, the success of rival companies, led finally to his own failure. Discouraged and broken in health, he turned to another form of composition, the oratorio, in which he was to immortalize himself.

Handel's oratorios are not written in the style of Bach. They are not interspersed with chorales in the singing of which a pious congregation joins. His theatrical mannerisms he retained. While his subjects are sometimes biblical, they are more often mythological or allegoric. His melodies have the grander sweep, the richer ornamentation of stage music. His massive choruses have dramatic life rather than devotional depth. His greatest oratorio is "The Messiah," first given at Dublin on April 13, 1742, and since become an institution of musical Christendom. Outside of his many oratorios and his numerous operas (to German, Italian and English texts), Handel wrote other works for the church, concertos for organ, pieces for the harpsichord and much beautiful chamber music. Through it all, you hear the accomplished artist and idolized man of the world who writes to obtain a certain effect, and achieves his ends with the help of unflagging inspiration and inexhaustible resourcefulness.—His ashes rest in Westminster Abbey with those of his foster-land's greatest sons.

C. E.

28930

MASTER SERIES FOR THE YOUNG

In presenting this unique series, issued especially to meet the need of the young pianist for material from the master composers for the instrument, a work is put before the public which, it is hoped, will fill a long-felt want.

Each volume contains a collection of the technically easiest compositions of the master represented, arranged progressively with regard to difficulty, and edited and fingered from a thoroughly modern standpoint. The numbers included were all penned especially for the instrument by their composers, so that the edition contains none of the tasteless arrangements from operas, symphonies, string quartets, and so forth, which have disfigured many publications of like nature in the past.

Naturally, the volumes do not all represent one particular "grade" of difficulty. Chopin and Grieg, for example, wrote no specific "children's pieces," as Schumann and Tchaikovsky did, and Mendelssohn's "Pieces for Children" require a technical development much more advanced than that demanded by the simpler compositions of Bach, Handel and Mozart. Each volume may be looked upon as an introduction to the study of the individual style and characteristic manner of the composer in question.

The use of excerpts from larger compositions has been necessary in a few instances, on account of the lack of sufficient appropriate material among the composer's works. In the case of some of the older compositions, undue prolixity has been avoided by a judicious paring of the numbers.

Attention is called to the completeness and accuracy of the modern pedal markings, the observance of which will result in the development of the student's taste and ear in the direction of correct pedalling. The use of the antiquated and inexact "Ped. ★" has been done away with entirely. Where pedal marks are absent, as in the case of the Bach and Handel numbers, which were written for instruments not equipped with the damper pedal, the use of the latter is to be avoided.

EDWIN HUGHES

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Master Series for the Young

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

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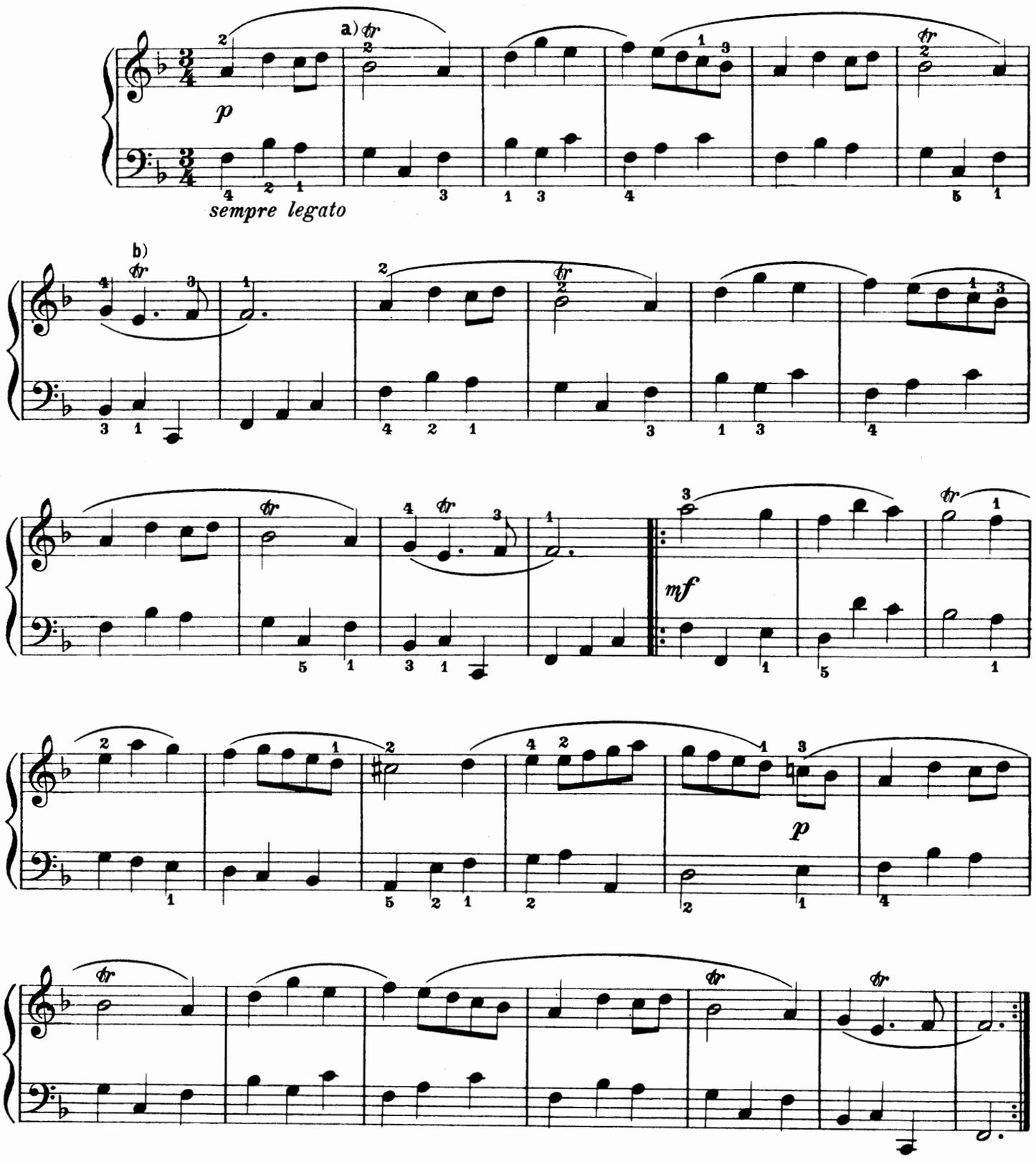
Edwin Hughes

Minuet I

G. F. Handel

Moderato (♩ = 116)



a) b)

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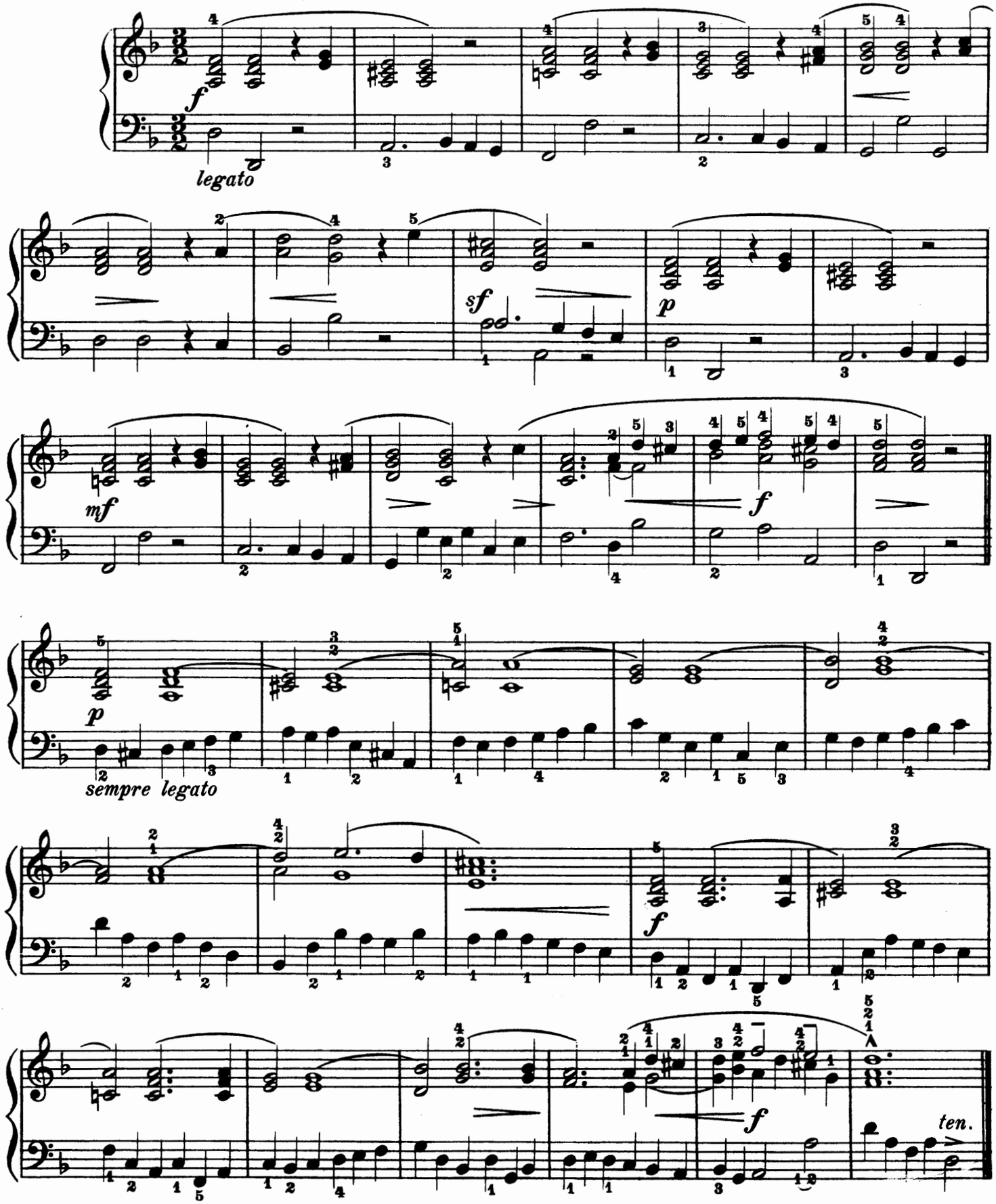
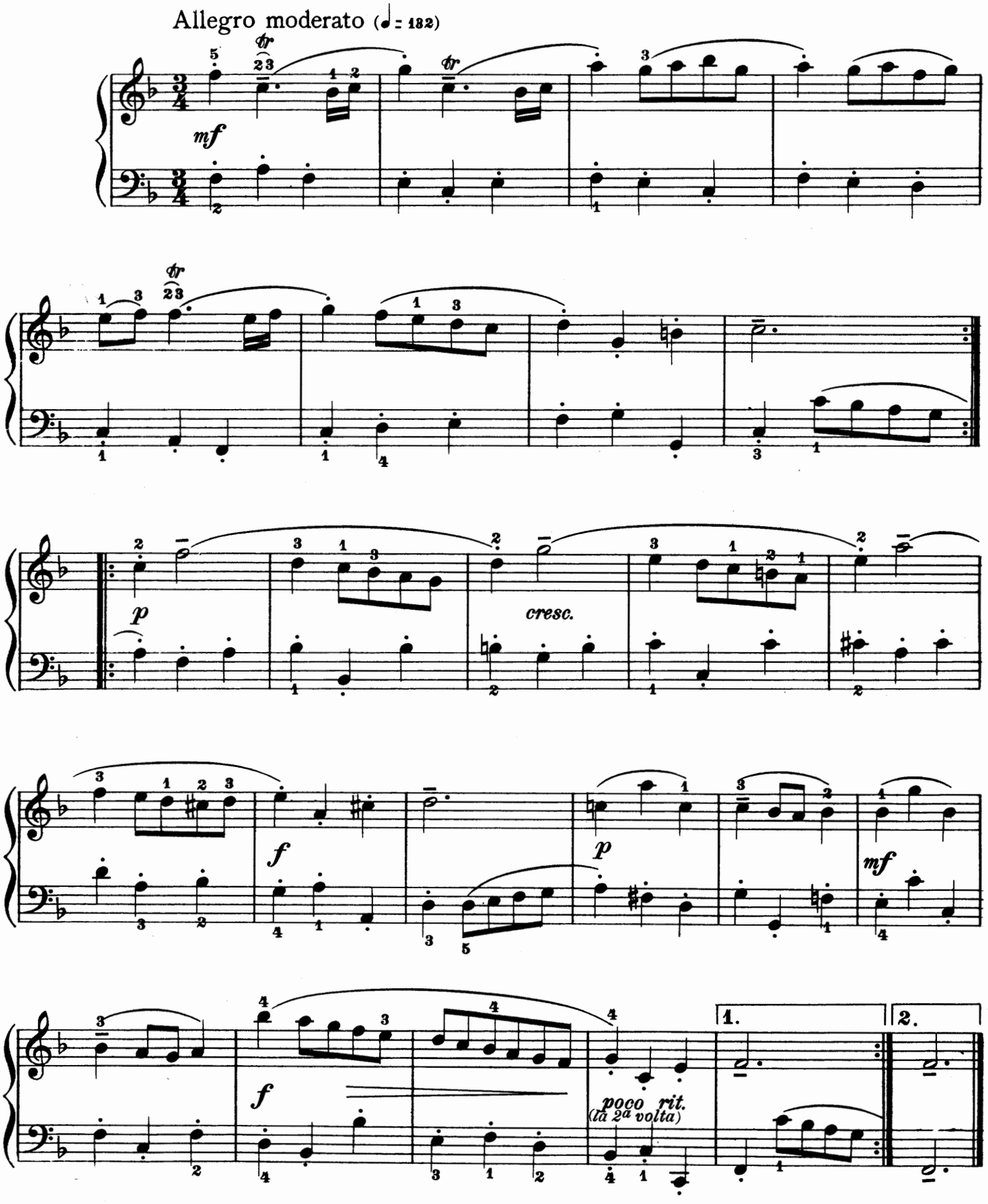
Sarabande

811179

Grave (♩ = 76)



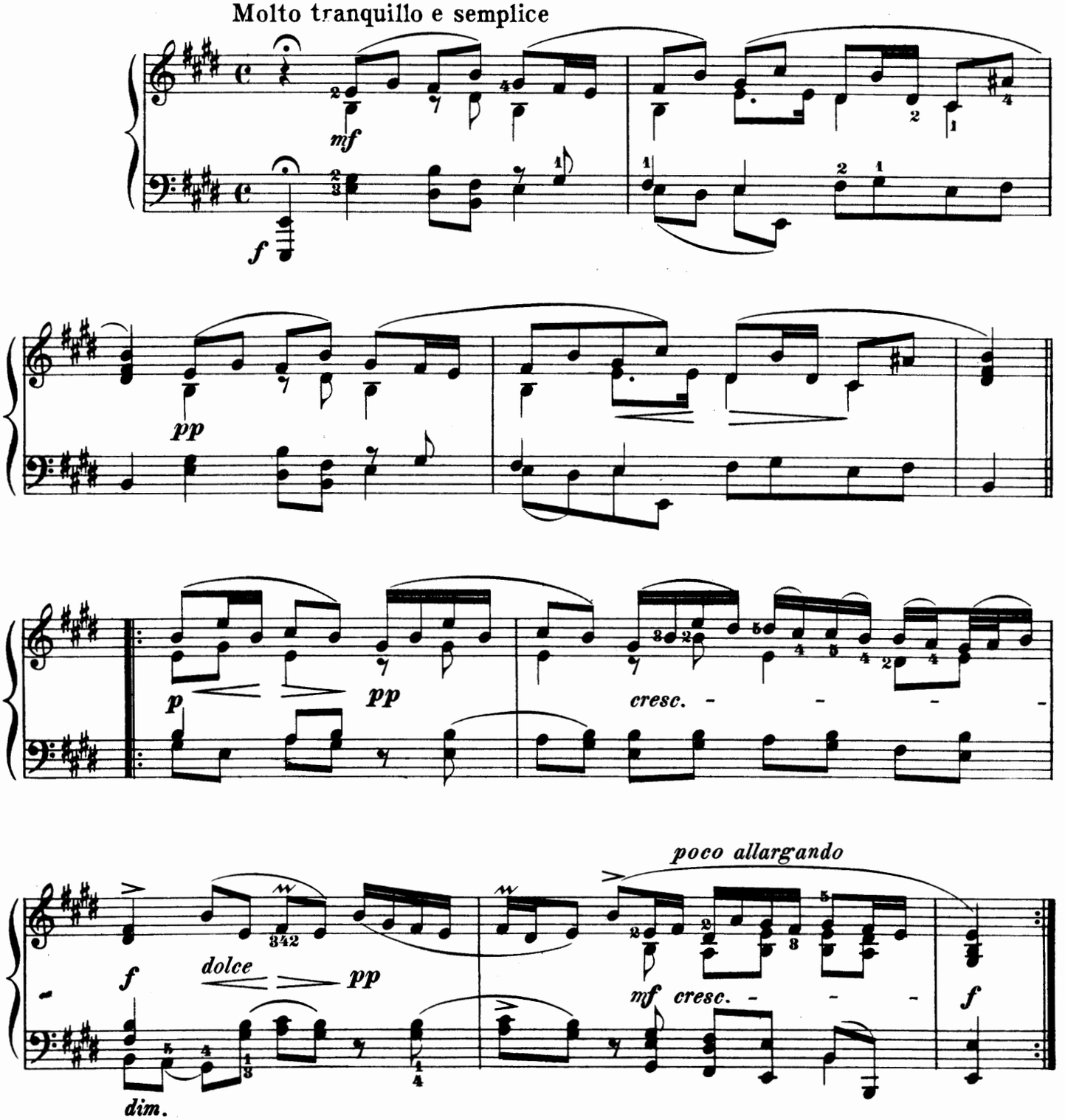
Minuet II



Air, "The Harmonious Blacksmith"

Revised and fingered by
Hans von Bülow

Molto tranquillo e semplice



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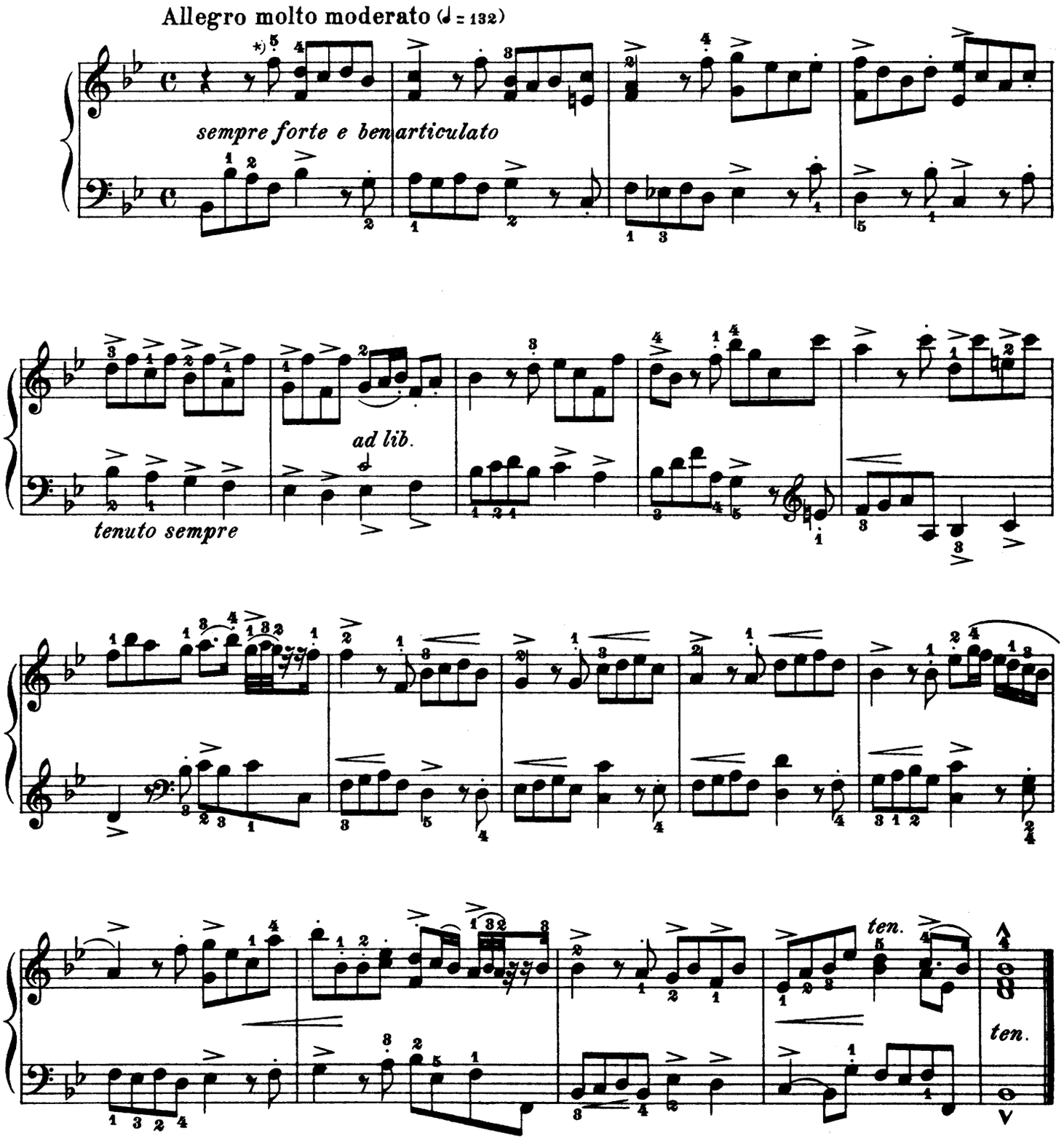
Sonatina

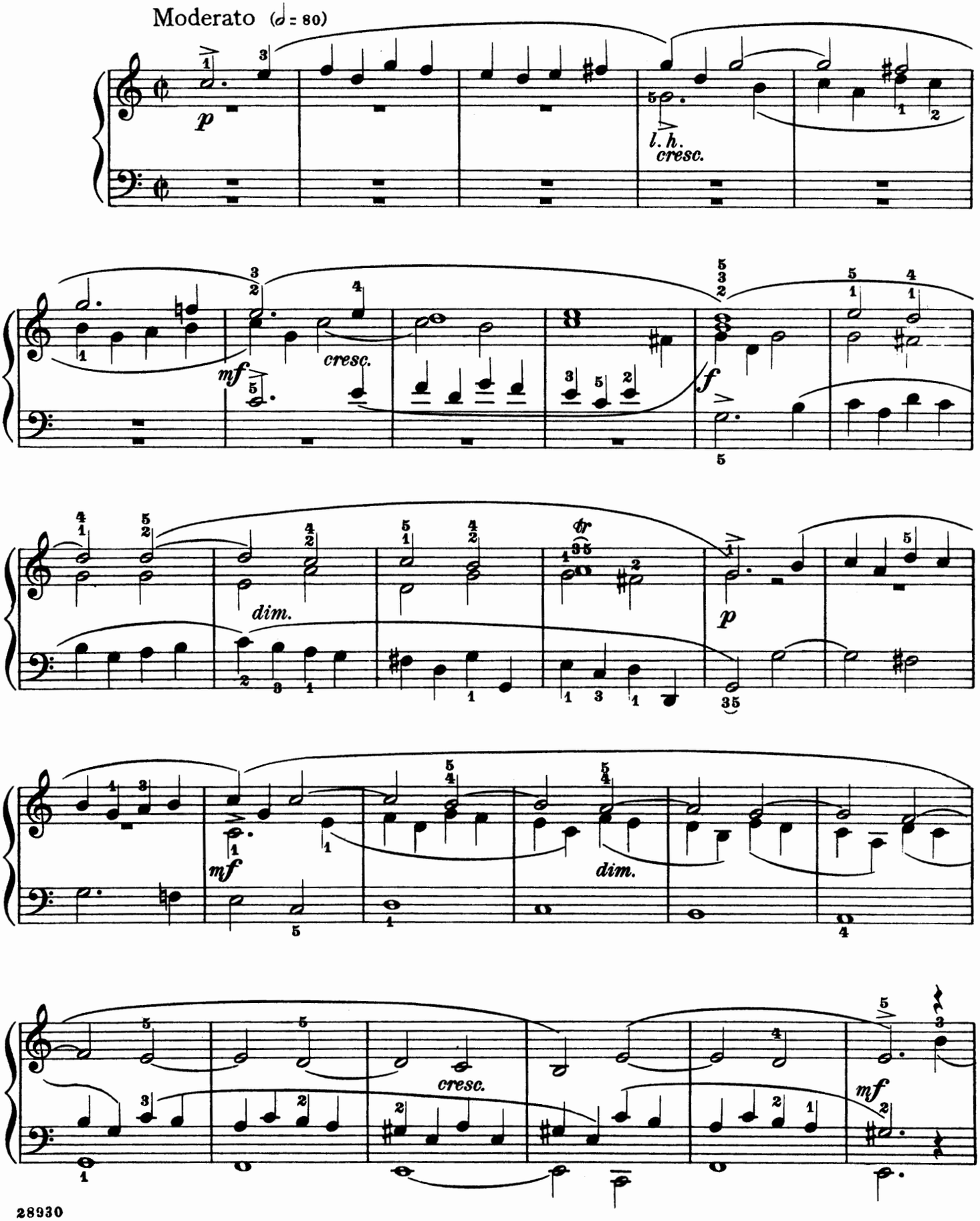
Edited by
Hans von Bülow

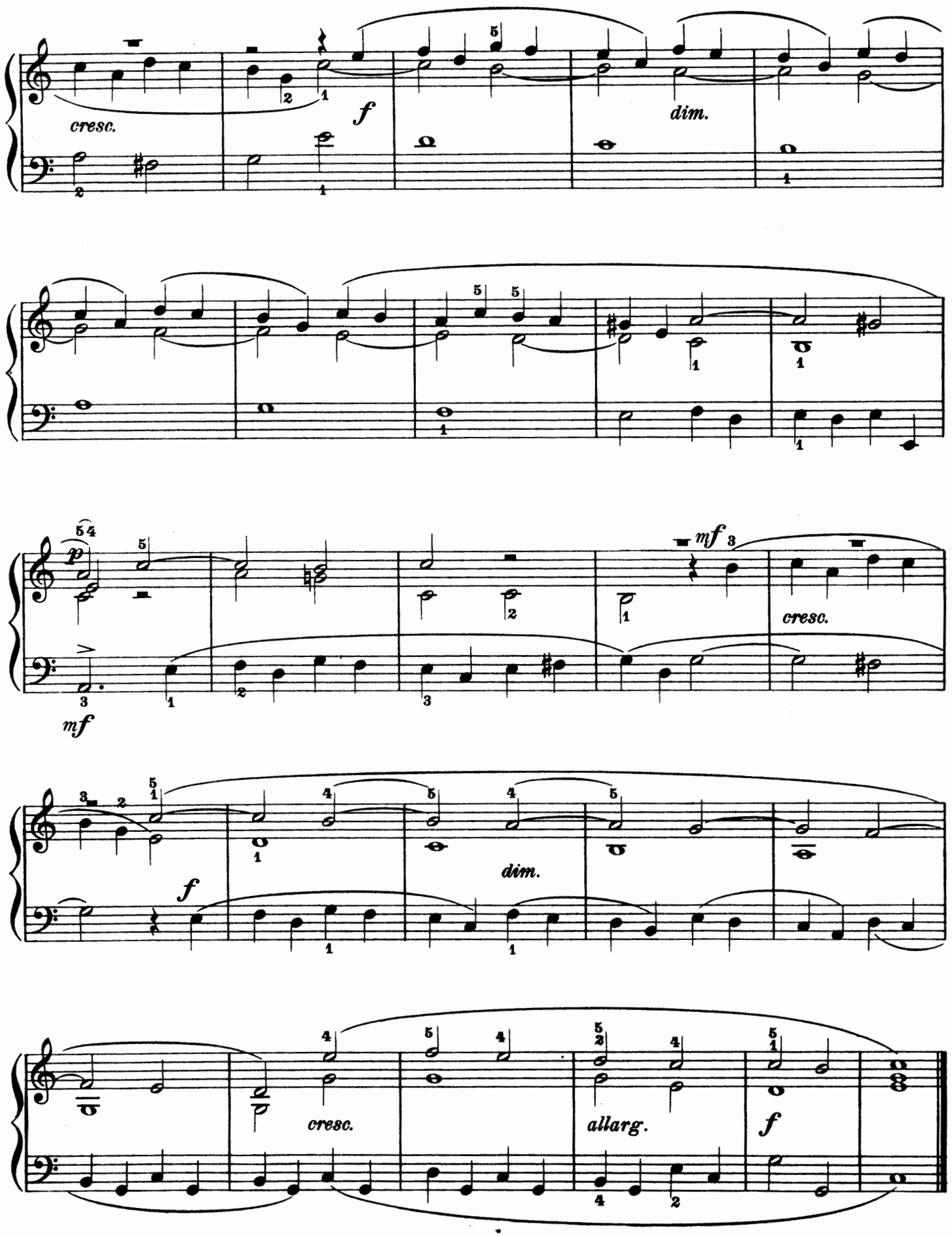


*)The staccato-sign over the unaccented 8th-notes indicates their due and precise marking (as short quantities), but does not imply that the notes not so marked are to be played *"legato"*. All the notes not grouped by slurs must be played with the so called *"non-legato"* touch.

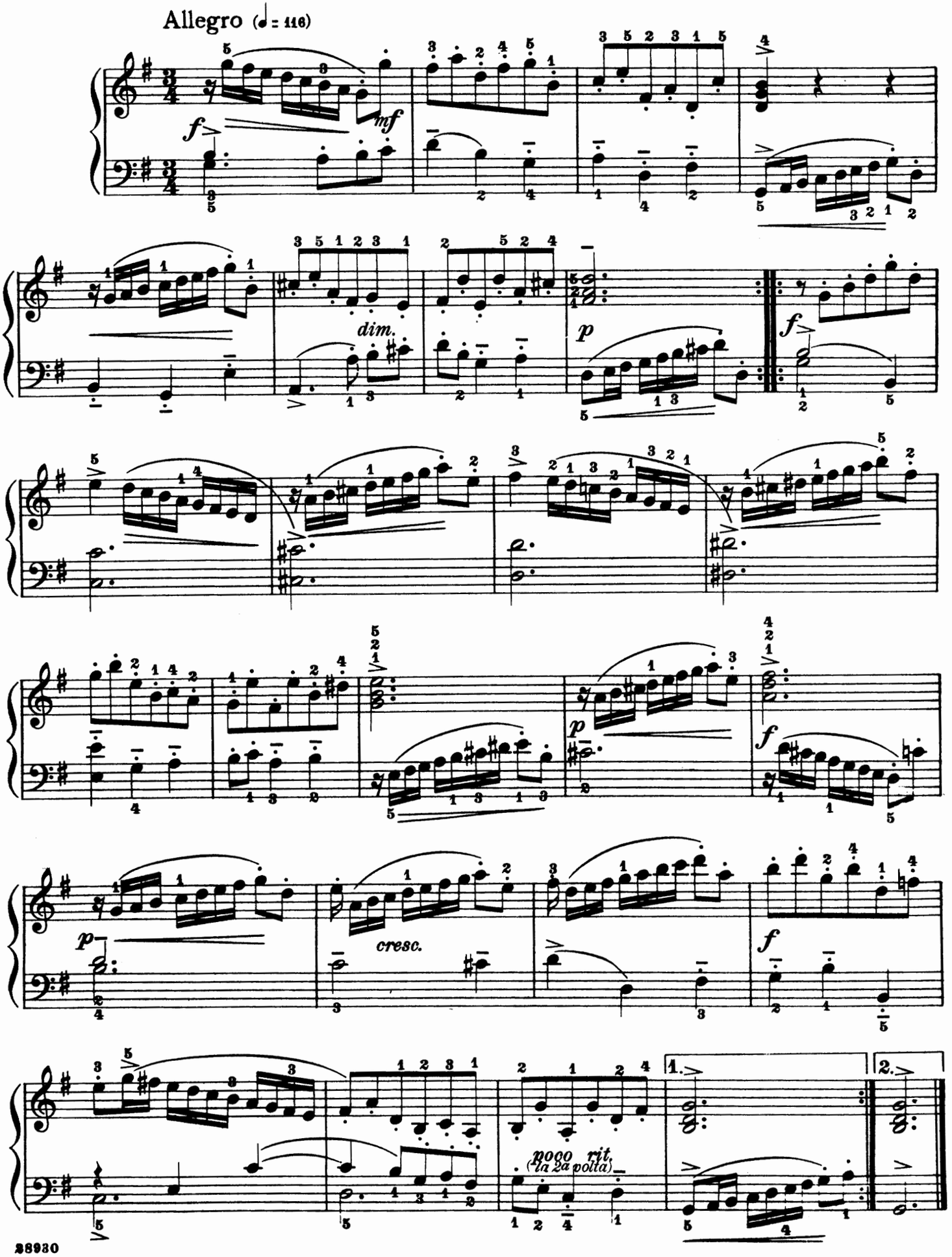
Little Fugue

No. 1

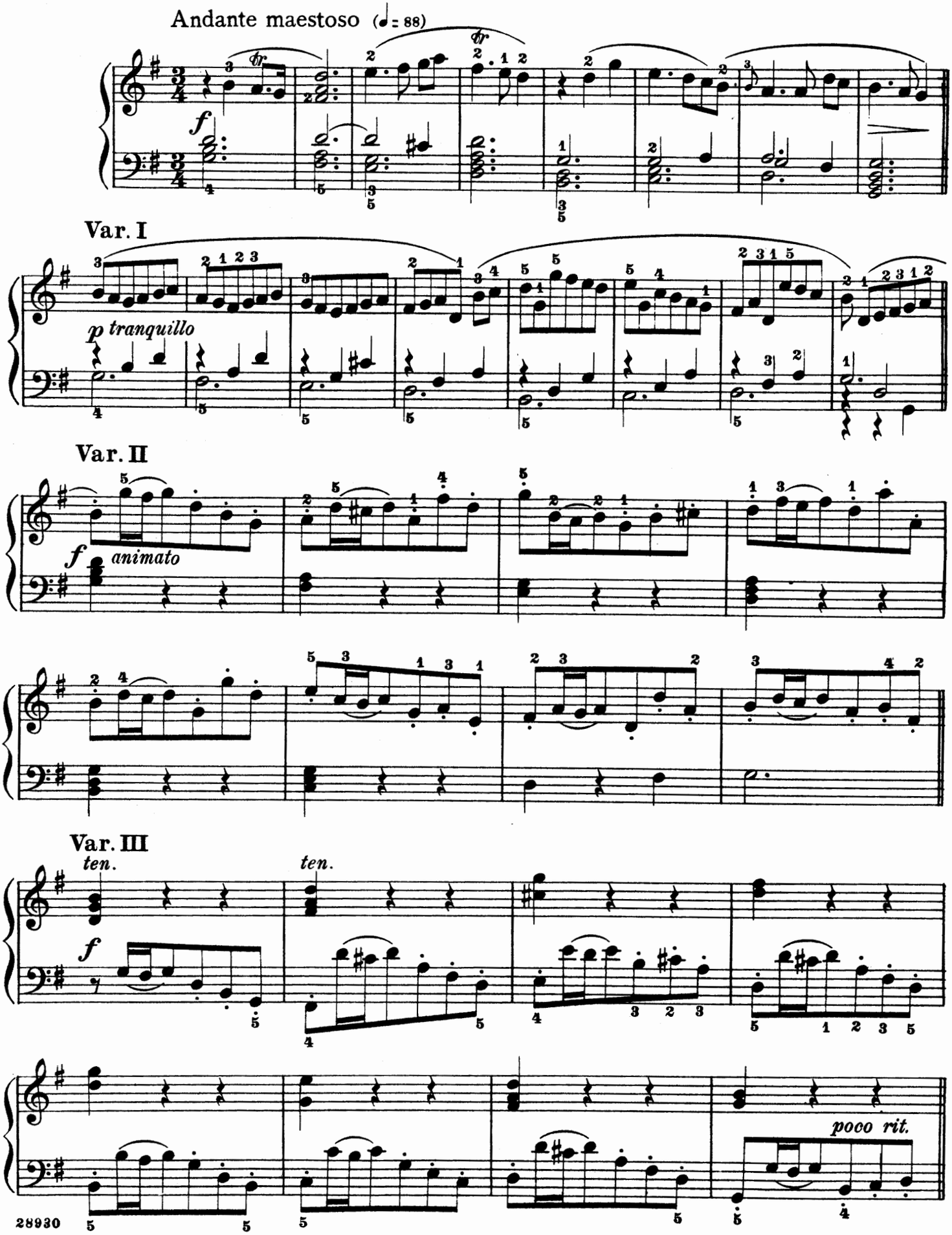


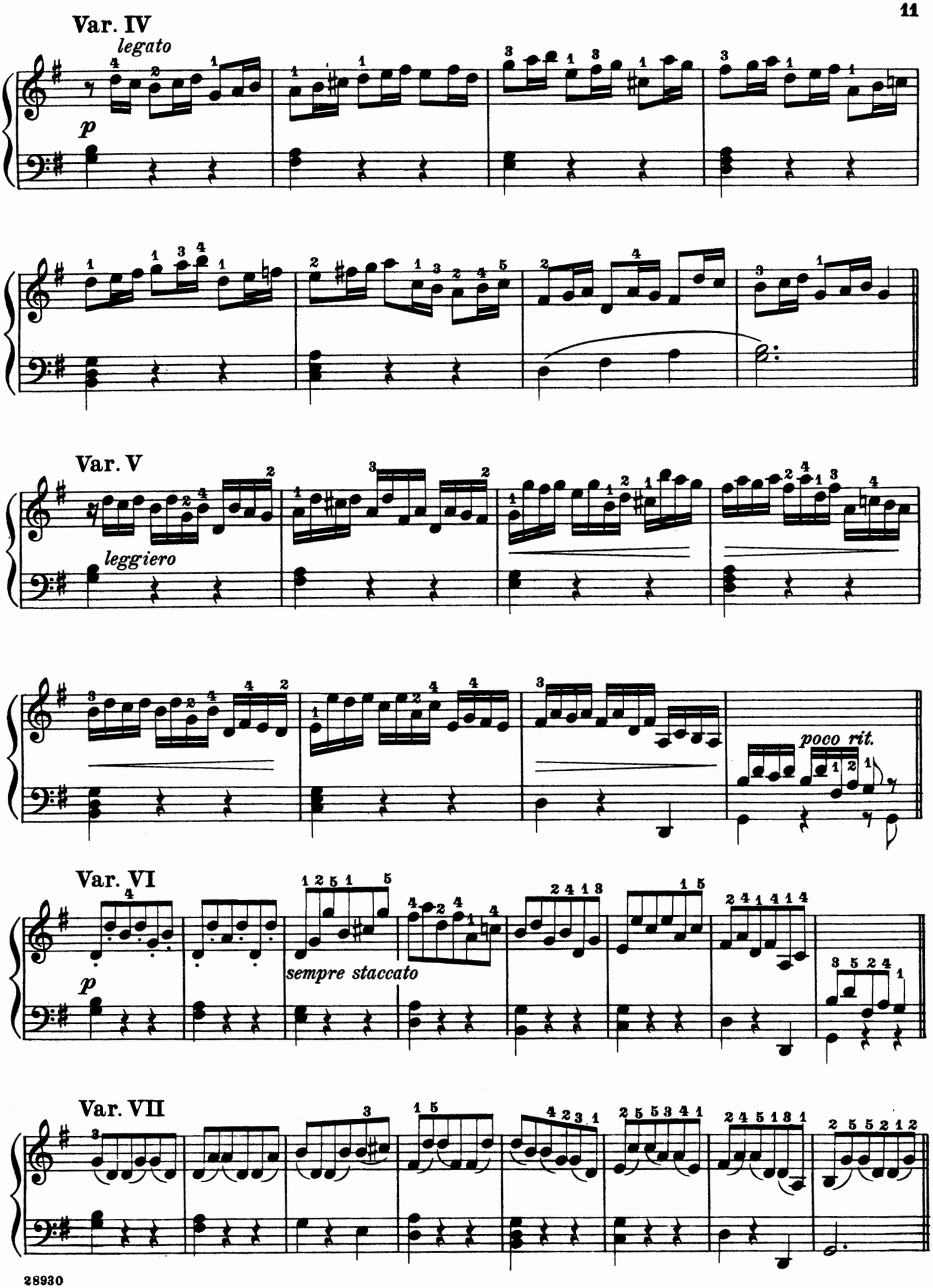

cresc.
f
dim.
p
mf
cresc.
f
dim.
cresc.
allarg.
f

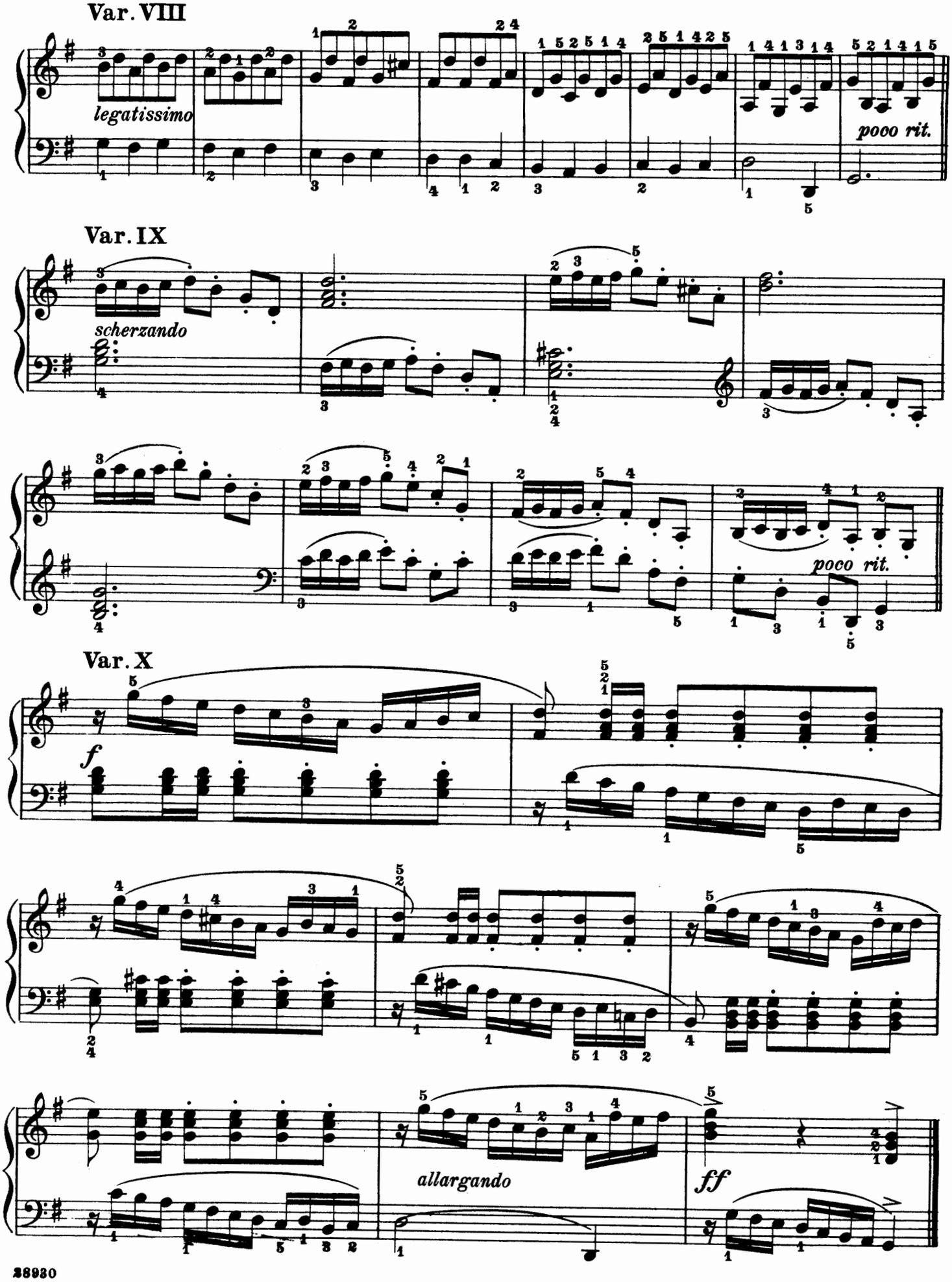
Prelude



Chaconne

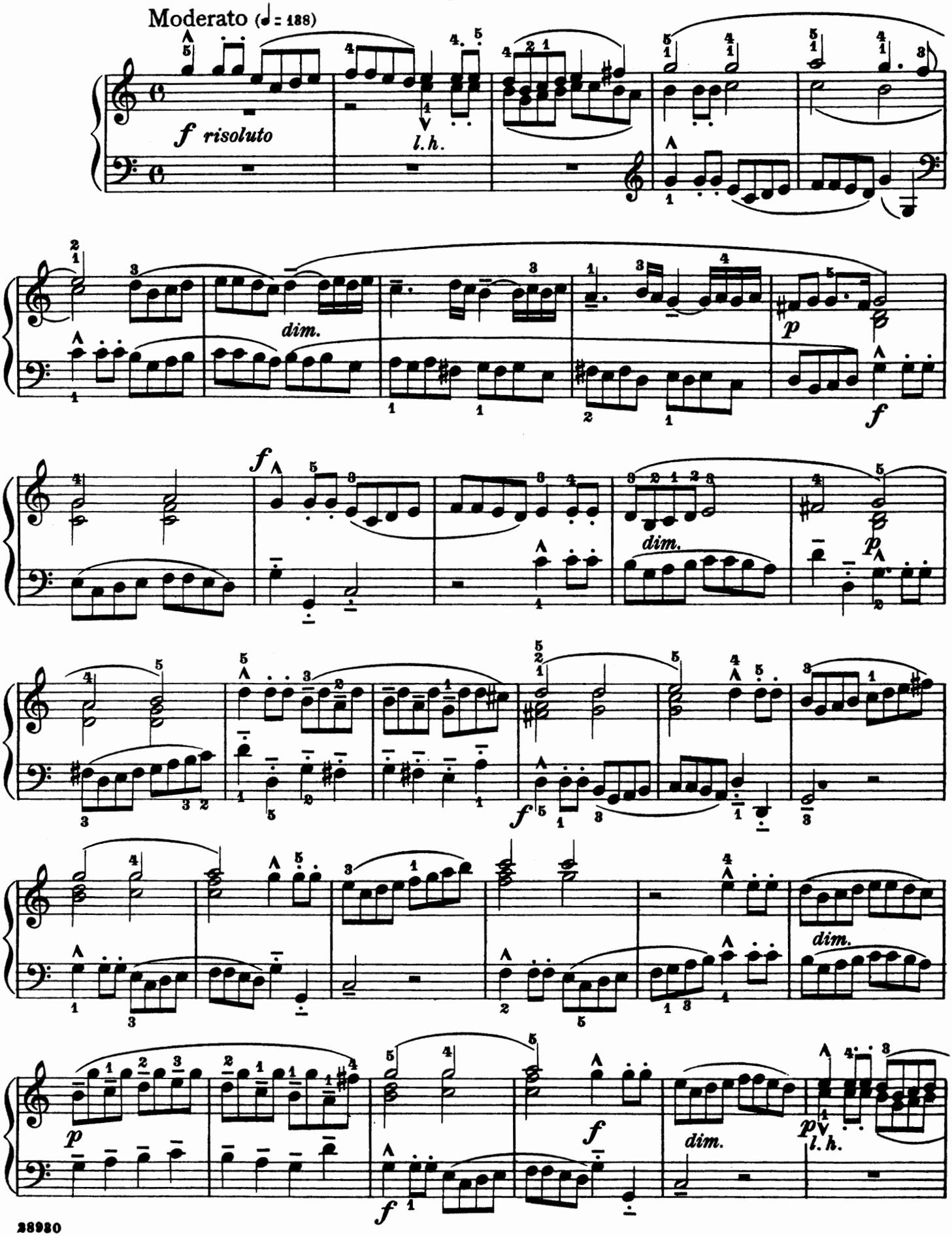

Andante maestoso (♩ = 88)
f
Var. I
p tranquillo
Var. II
f animato
Var. III
ten.
ten.
f
poco rit.

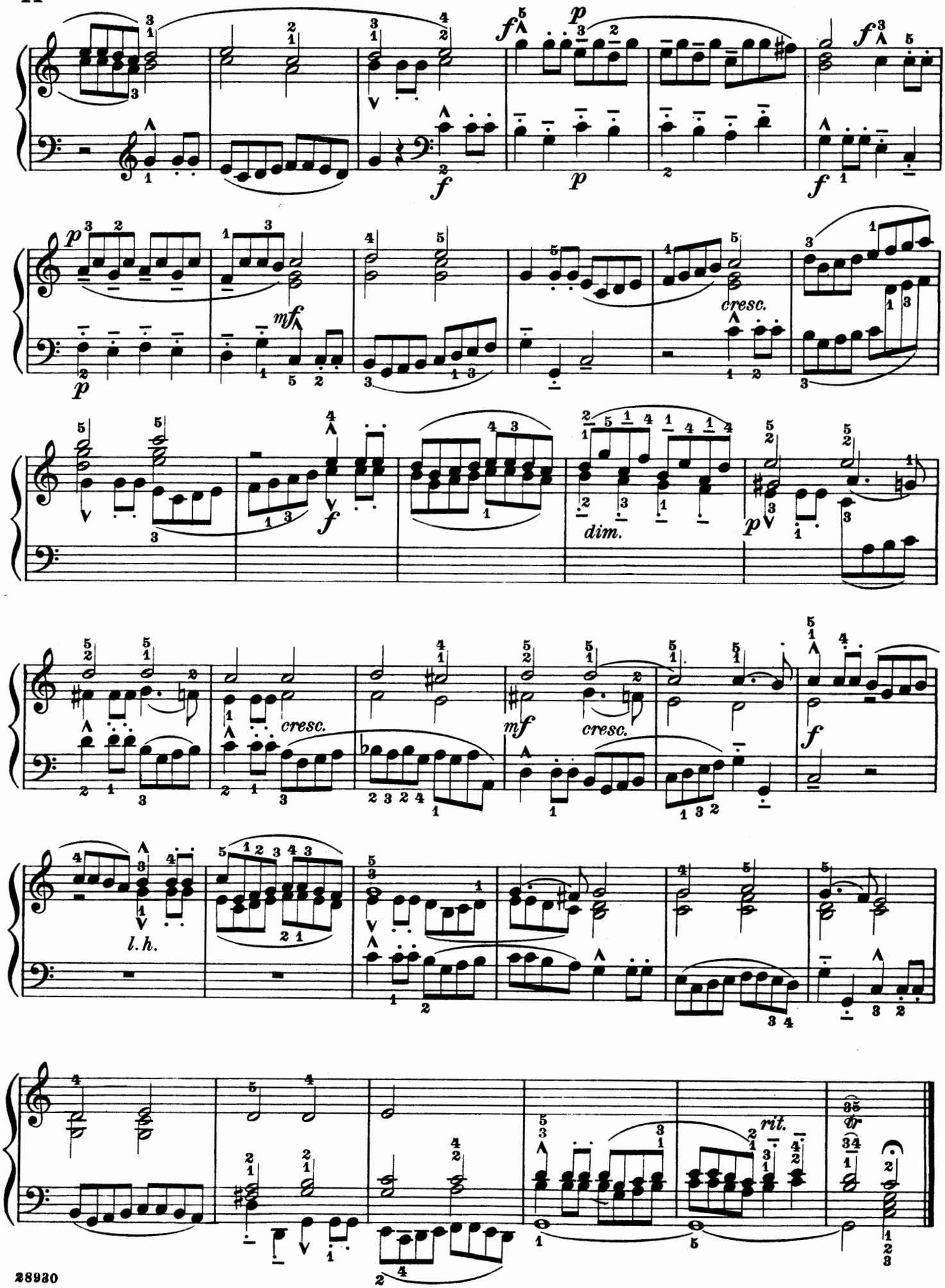

Var. IV
legato
p
Var. V
leggiero
poco rit.
Var. VI
p
sempre staccato
Var. VII


Var. VIII
legatissimo
poco rit.
Var. IX
scherzando
poco rit.
Var. X
f
allargando
ff

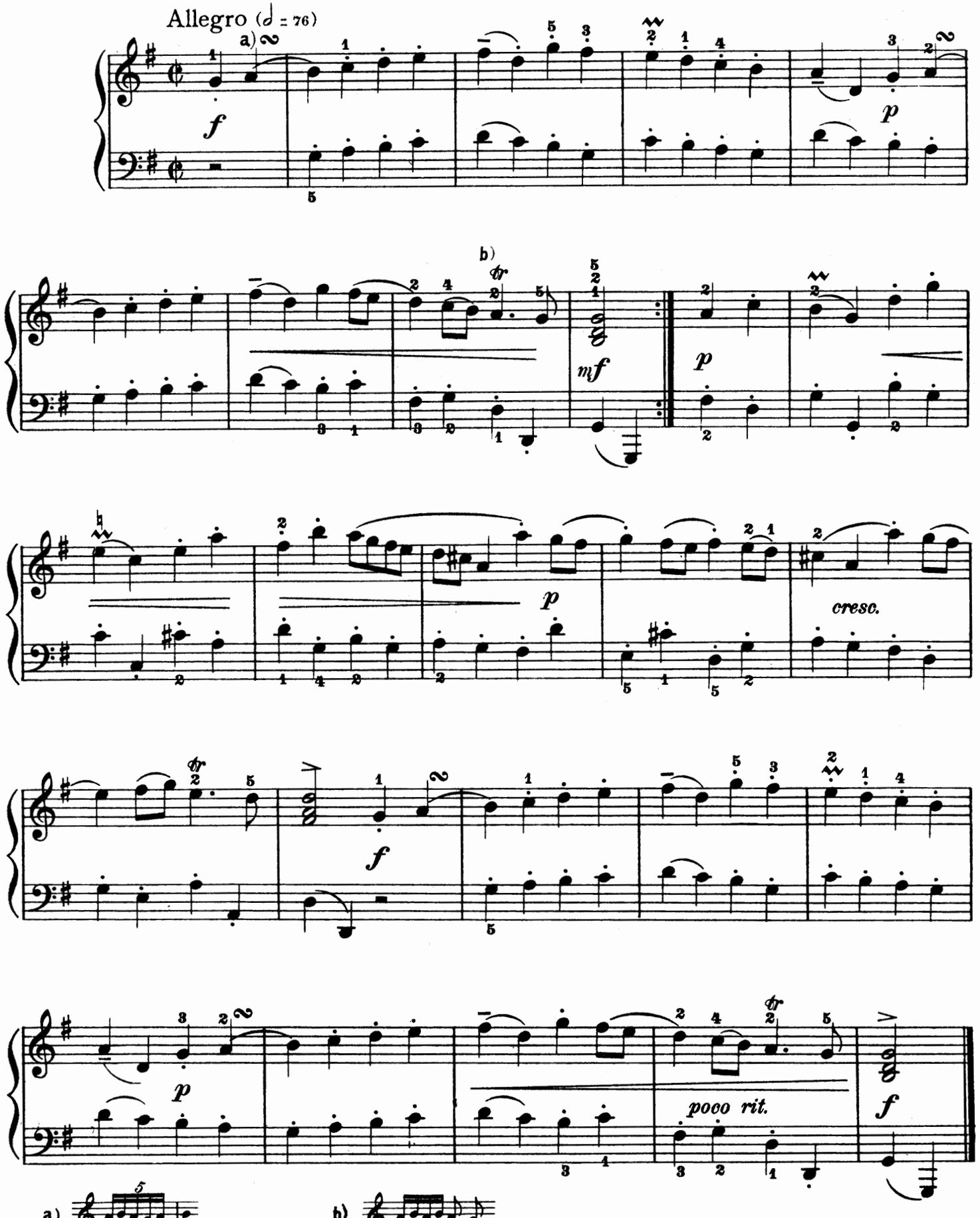
Little Fugue

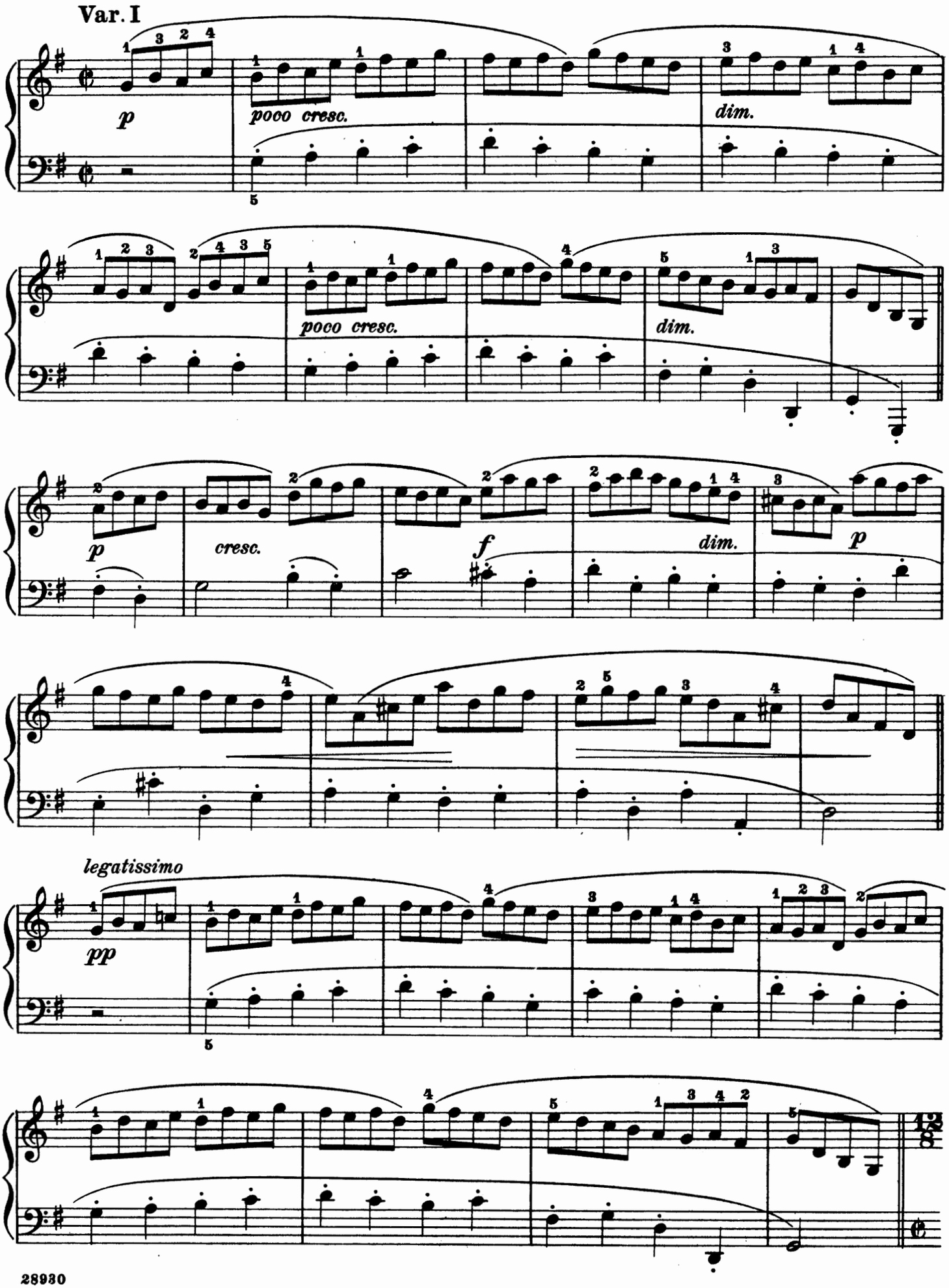
No. 2

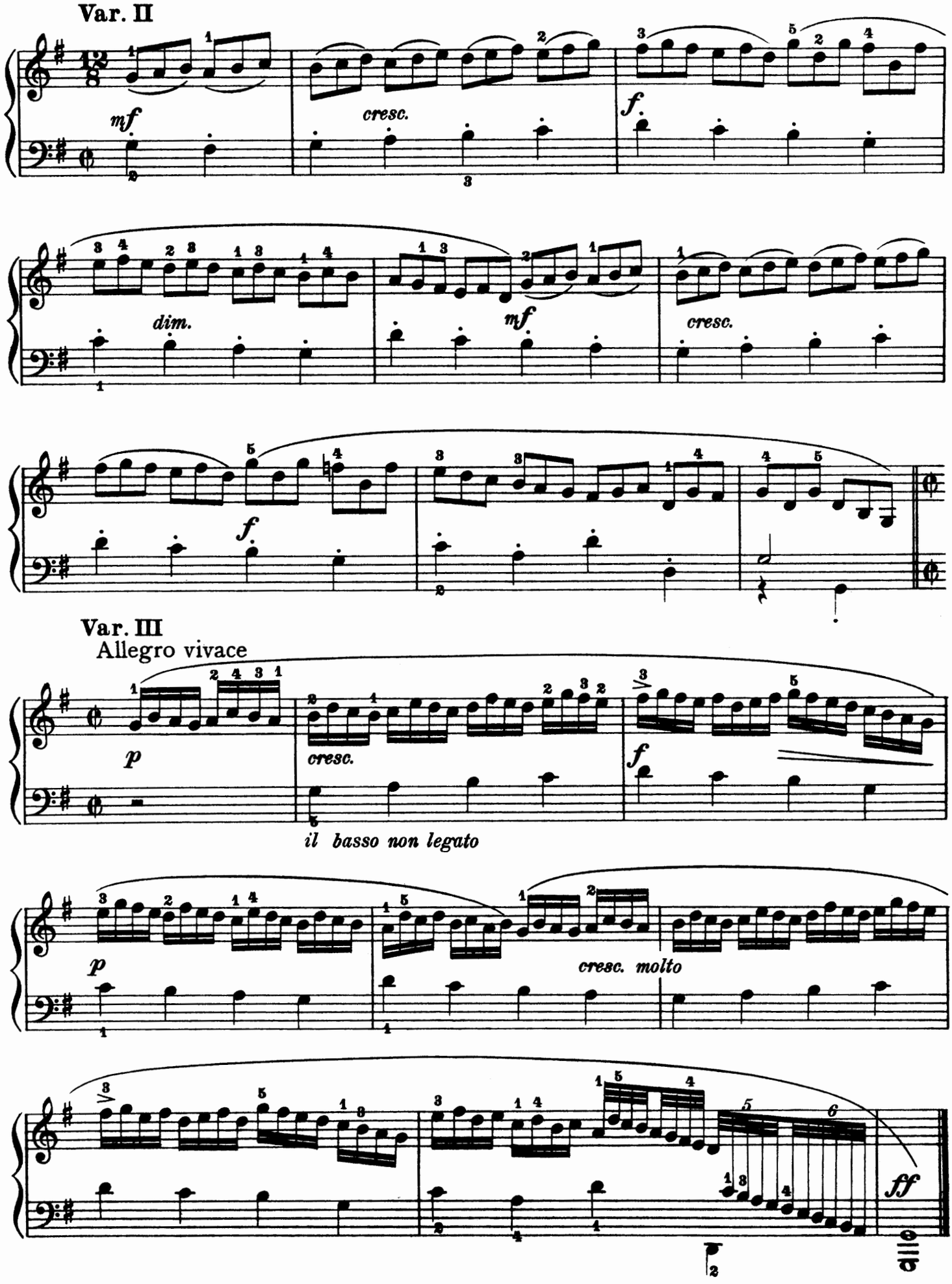



f
p
f
p
f
p
mf
p
cresc.
f
dim.
p
cresc.
mf
cresc.
f
l. h.
rit.

Gavotte with Variations



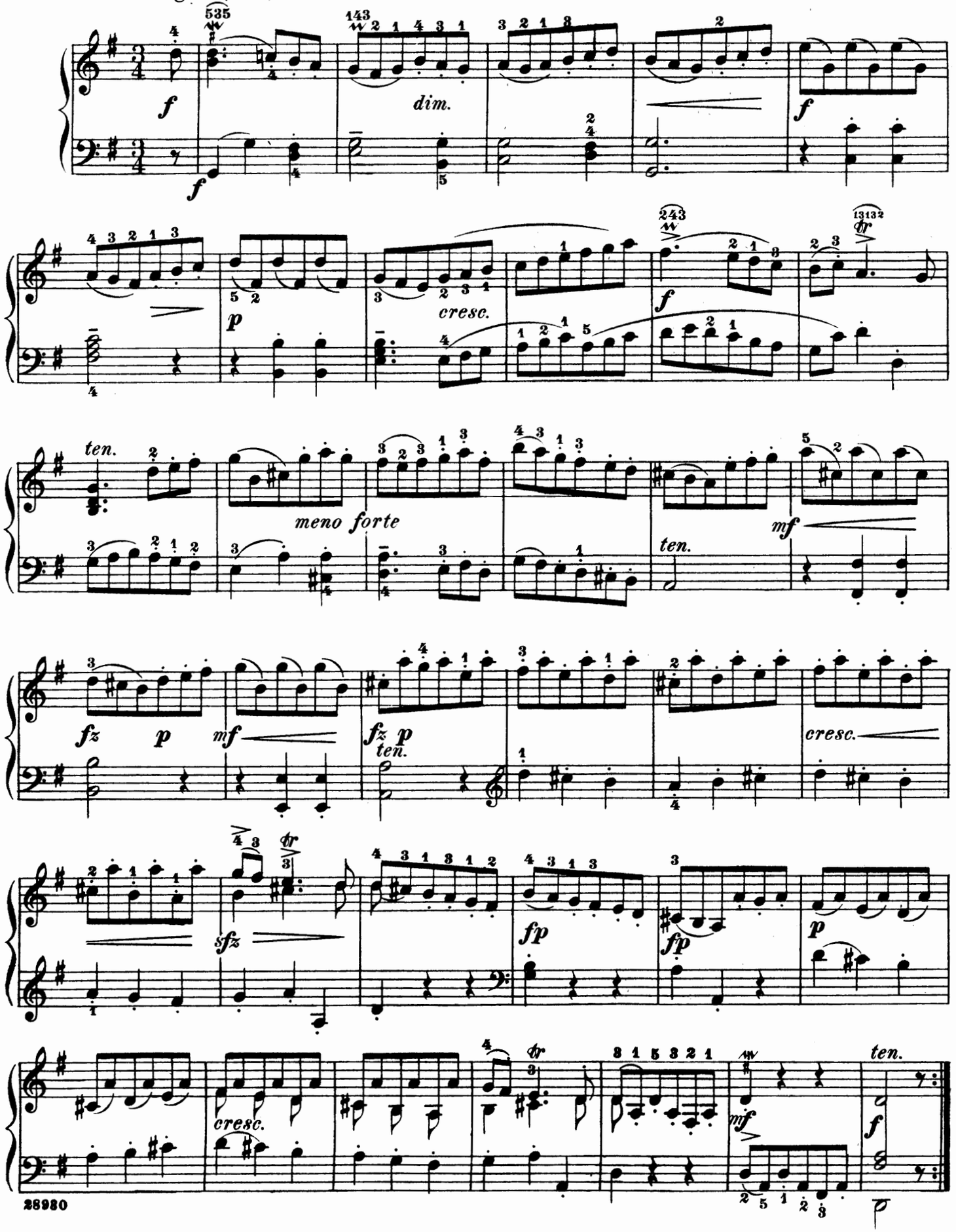

Var. I
p
pooco cresc.
dim.
pooco cresc.
dim.
p
cresc.
f
dim.
p
legatissimo
pp

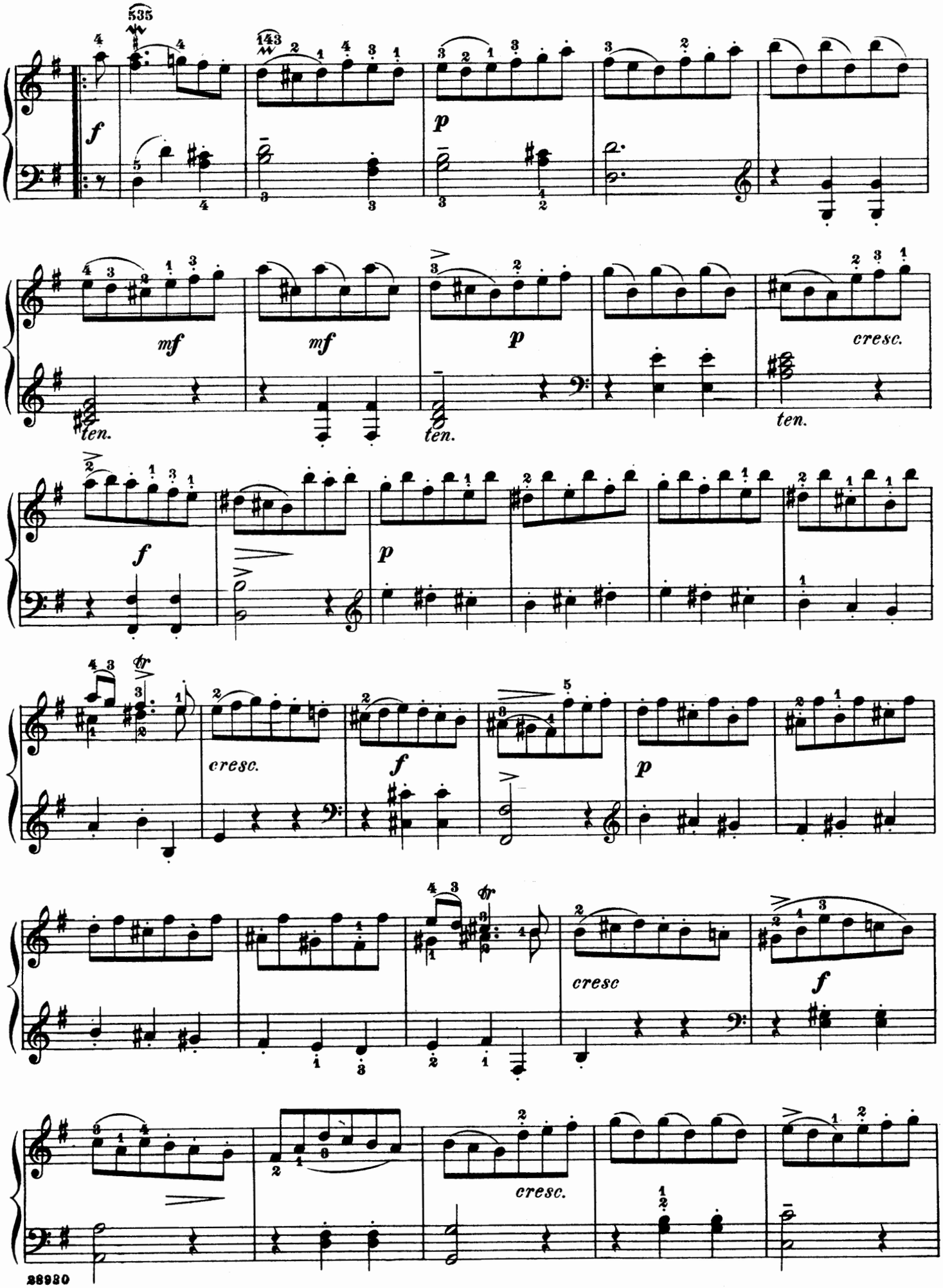

Var. II
mf
cresc.
f
dim.
mf
cresc.
f
Var. III
Allegro vivace
p
cresc.
f
il basso non legato
p
cresc. molto
ff

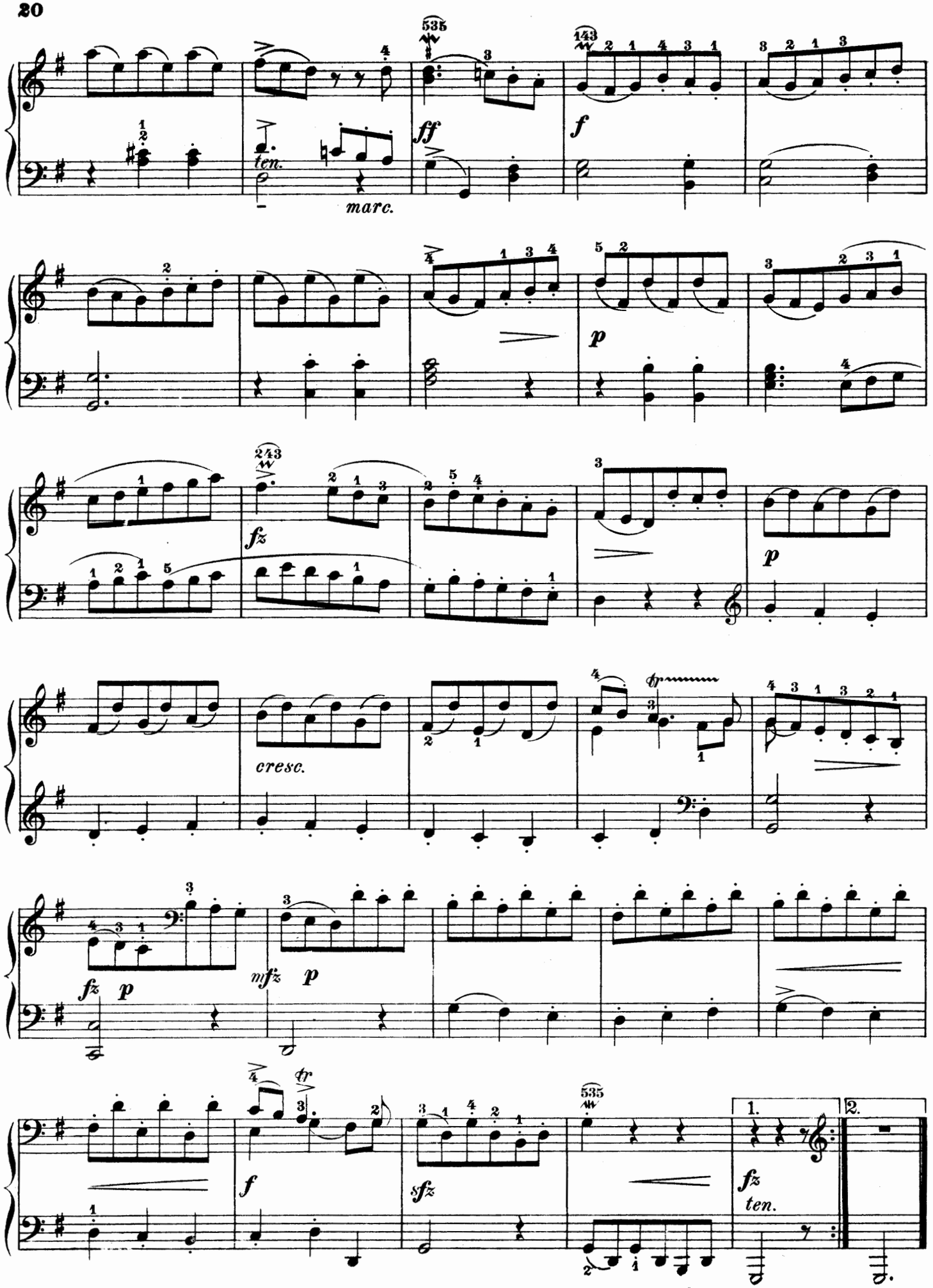
Courante

Edited by
Hans von Bülow

Allegro. (♩= 72)

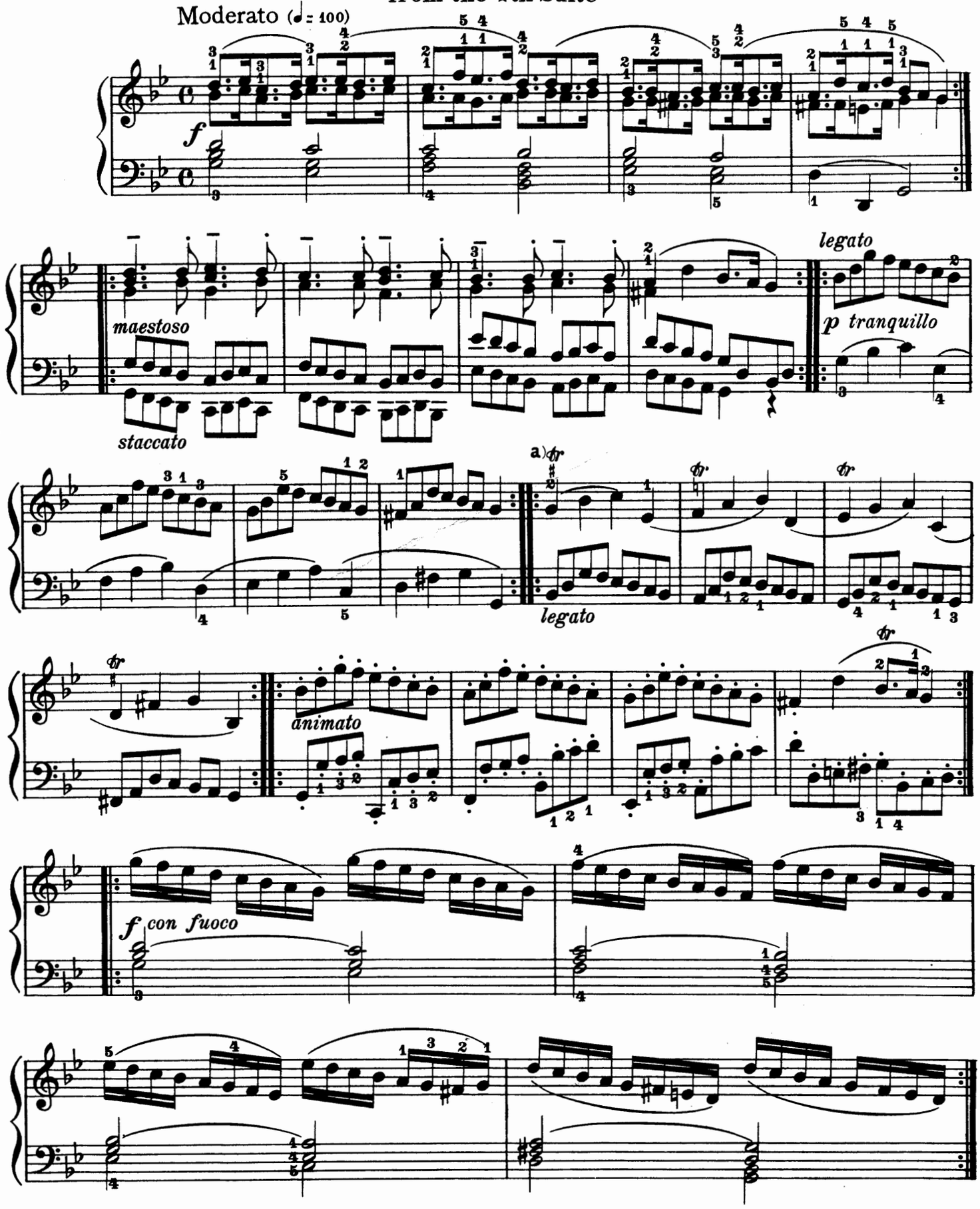


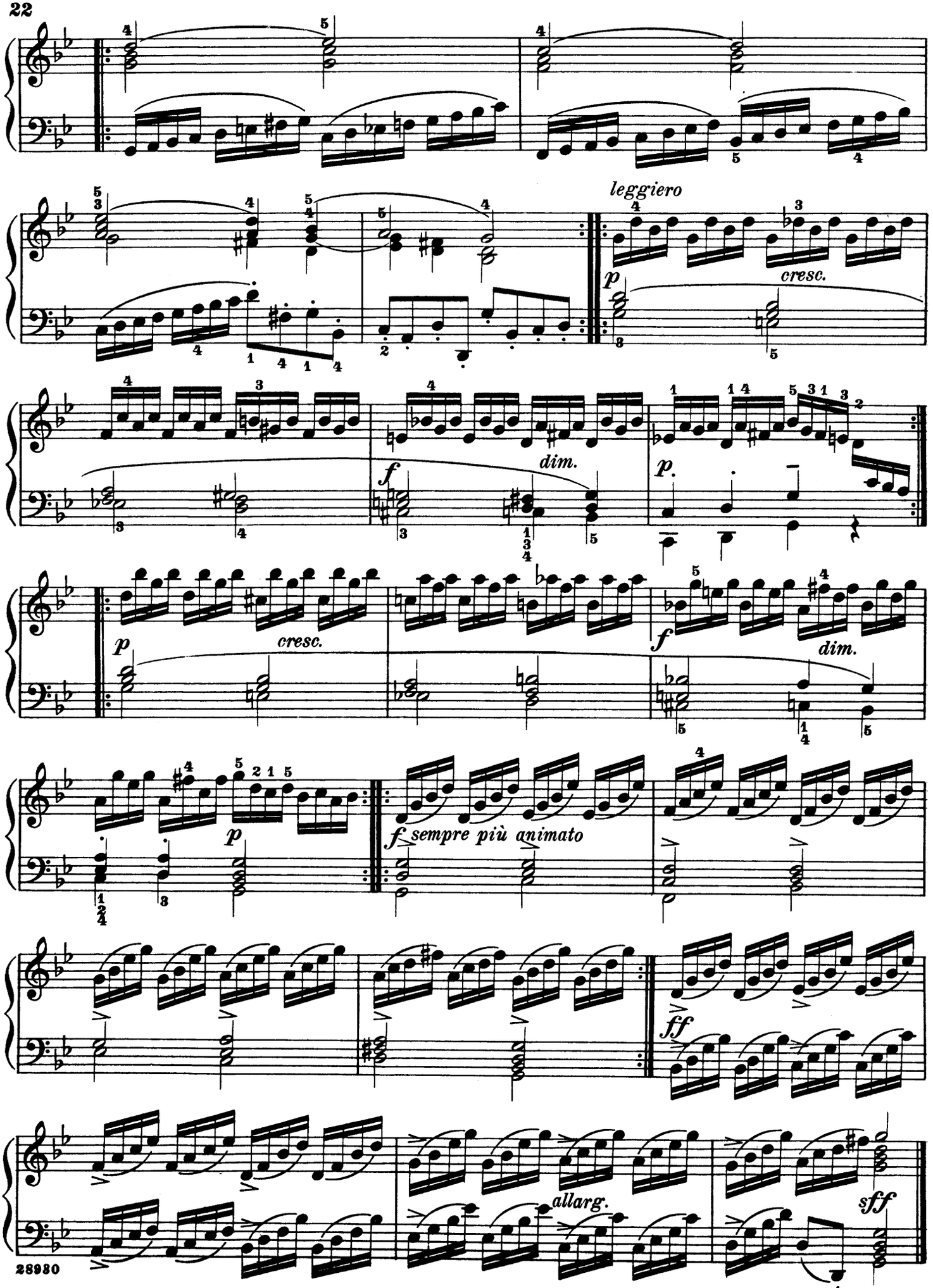

535
143
f
p
mf
mf
p
cresc.
ten.
ten.
ten.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc
f
cresc.


ten.
marc.
ff
f
p
fz
p
cresc.
fp
fz
p
mfz
p
f
sfz
fz
ten.
1.
2.

Passacaglia

from the 7th Suite

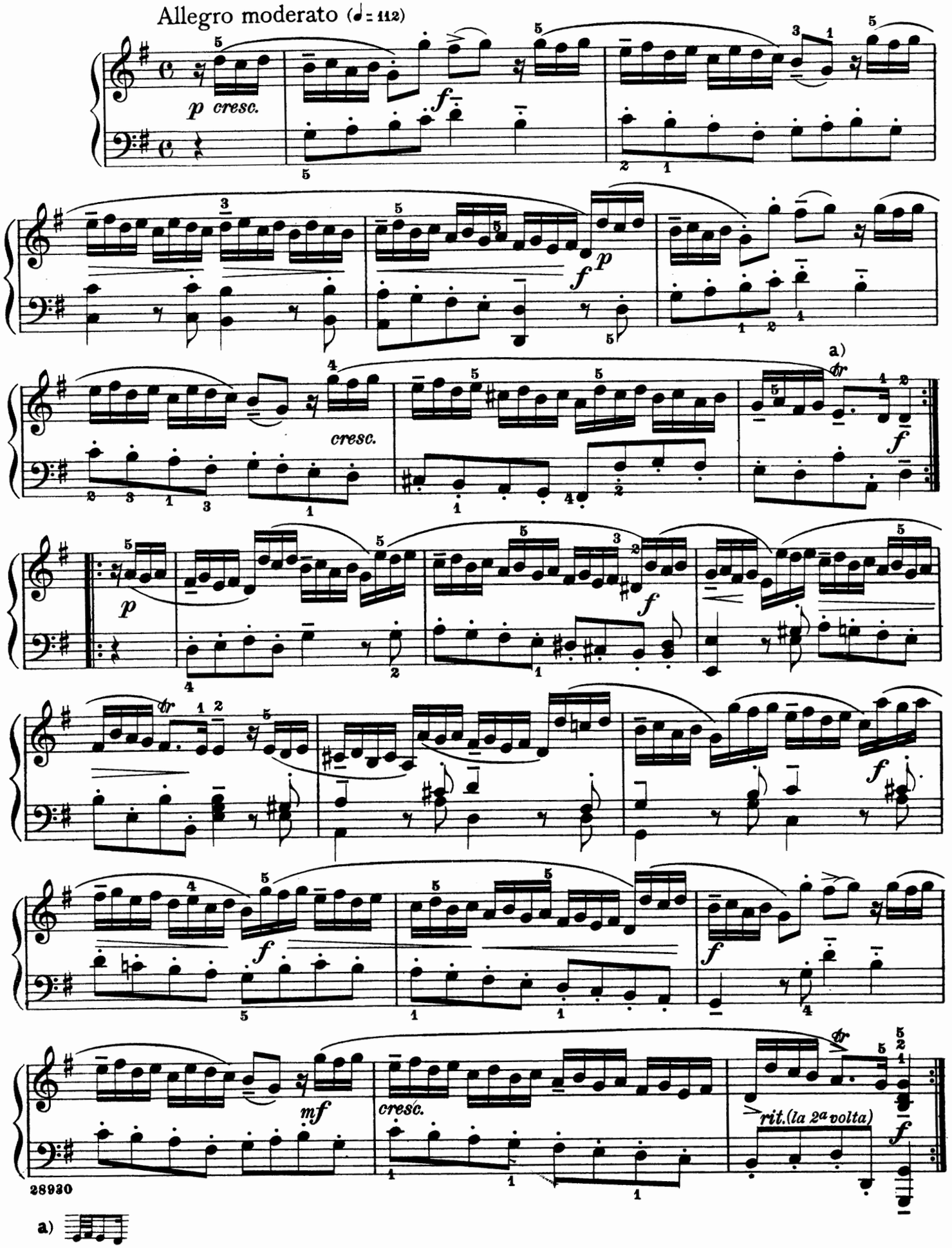



leggiero
cresc.
p
dim.
f
p.
cresc.
p
dim.
f
p
f sempre più animato
ff
allarg.
sff

Air

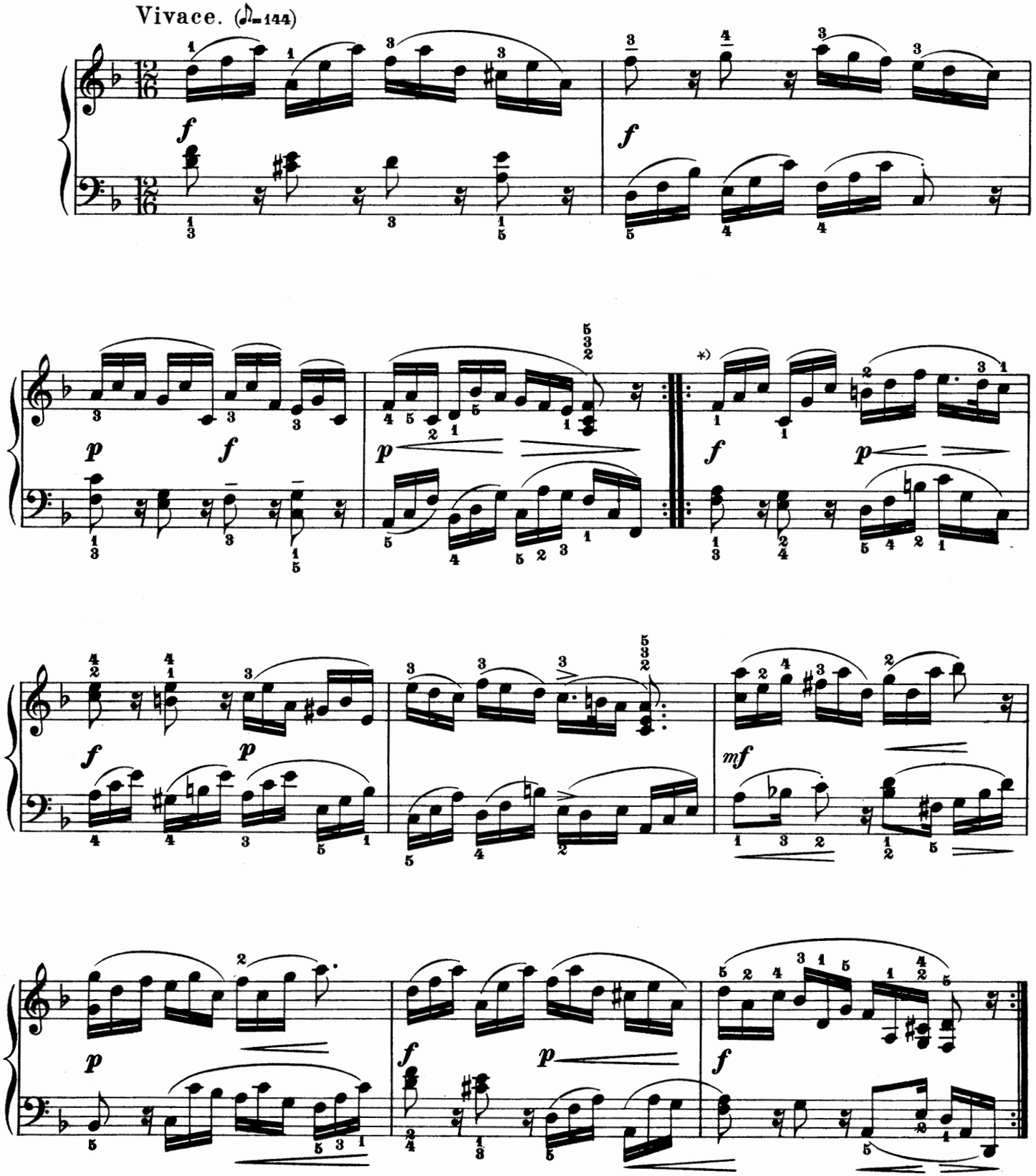
from the 14th Suite

Allegro moderato (♩ = 112)



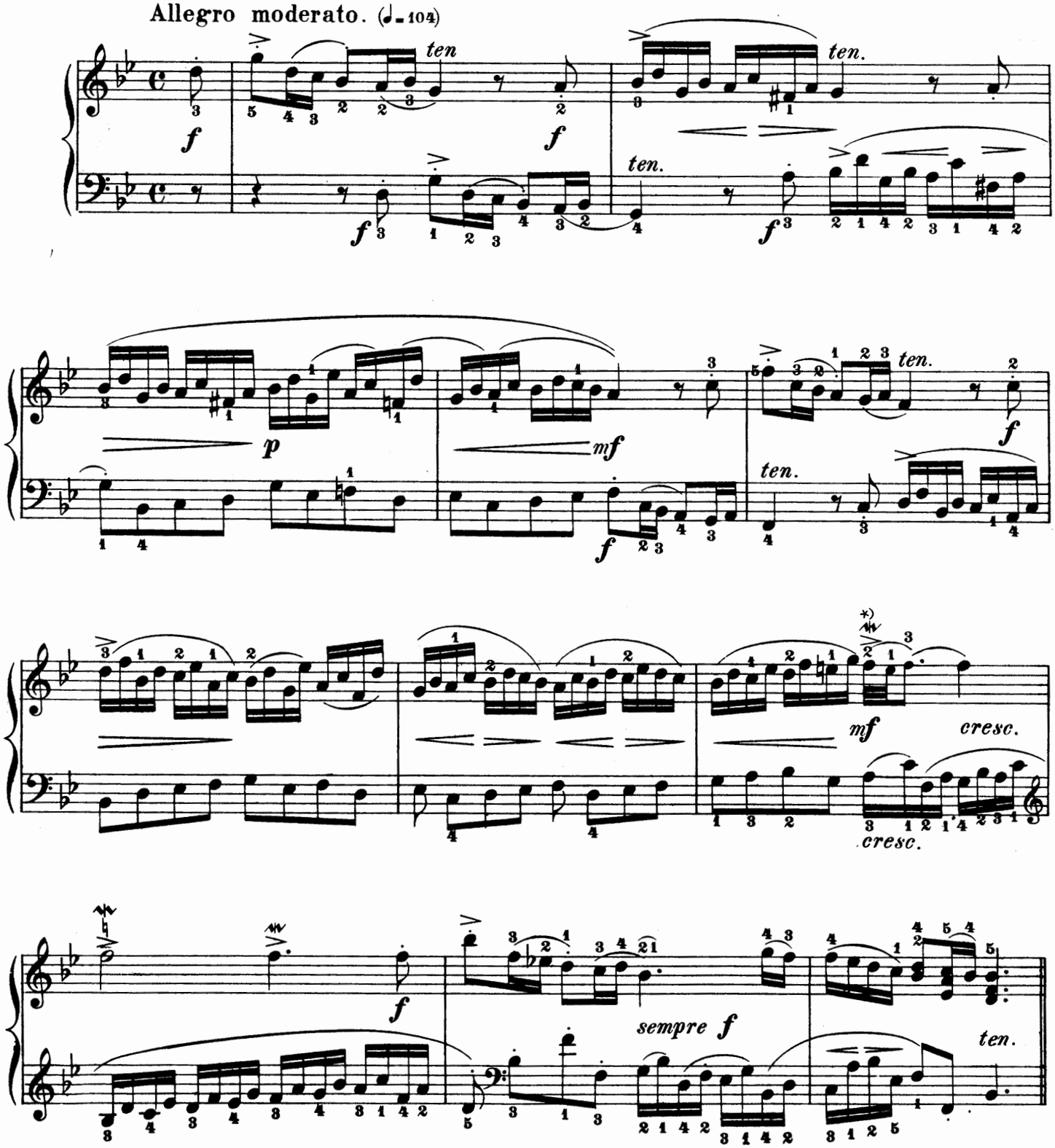
a)

Giga.

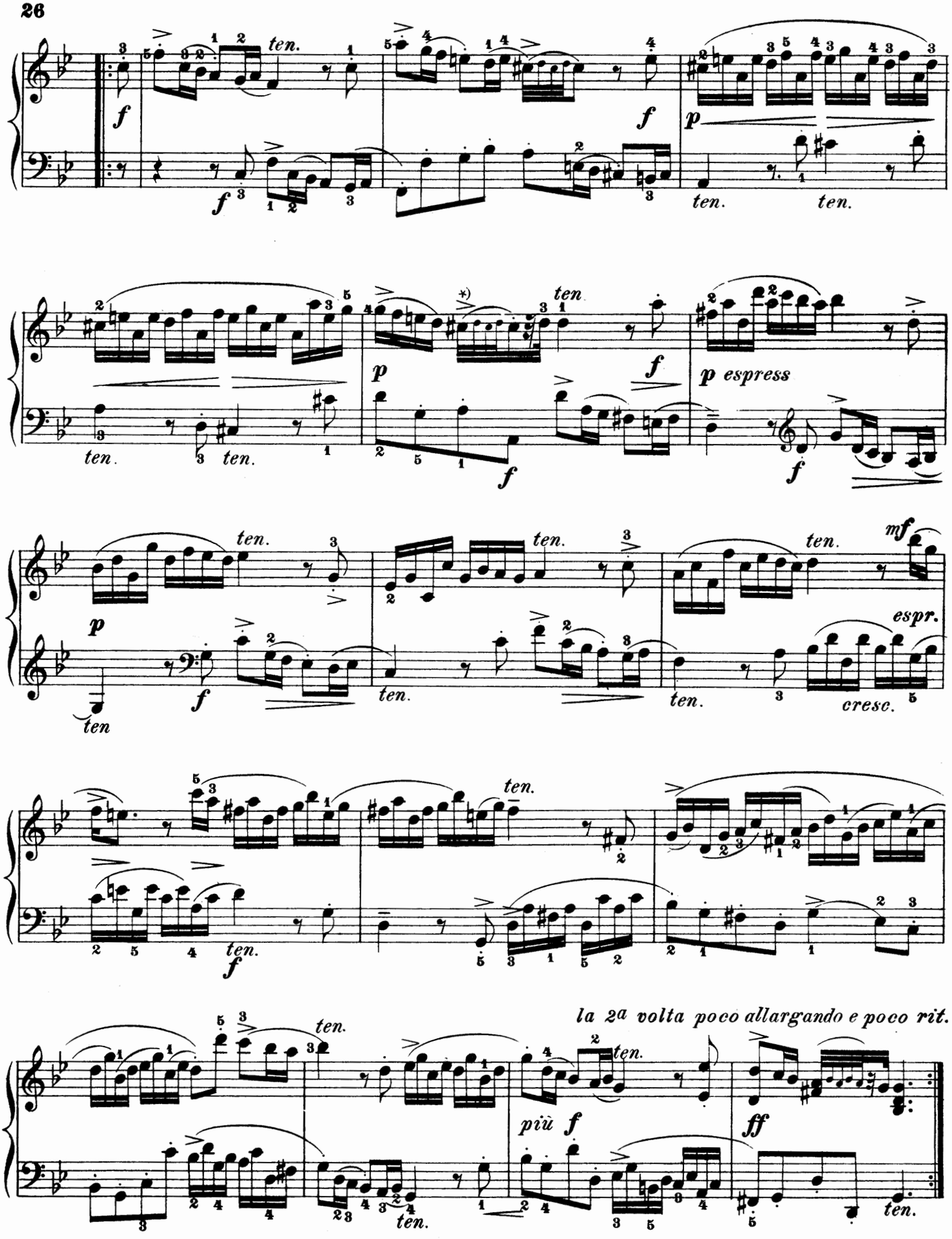


*)The three-measure period at the commencement of the second part demands particular attention.

Allemande.

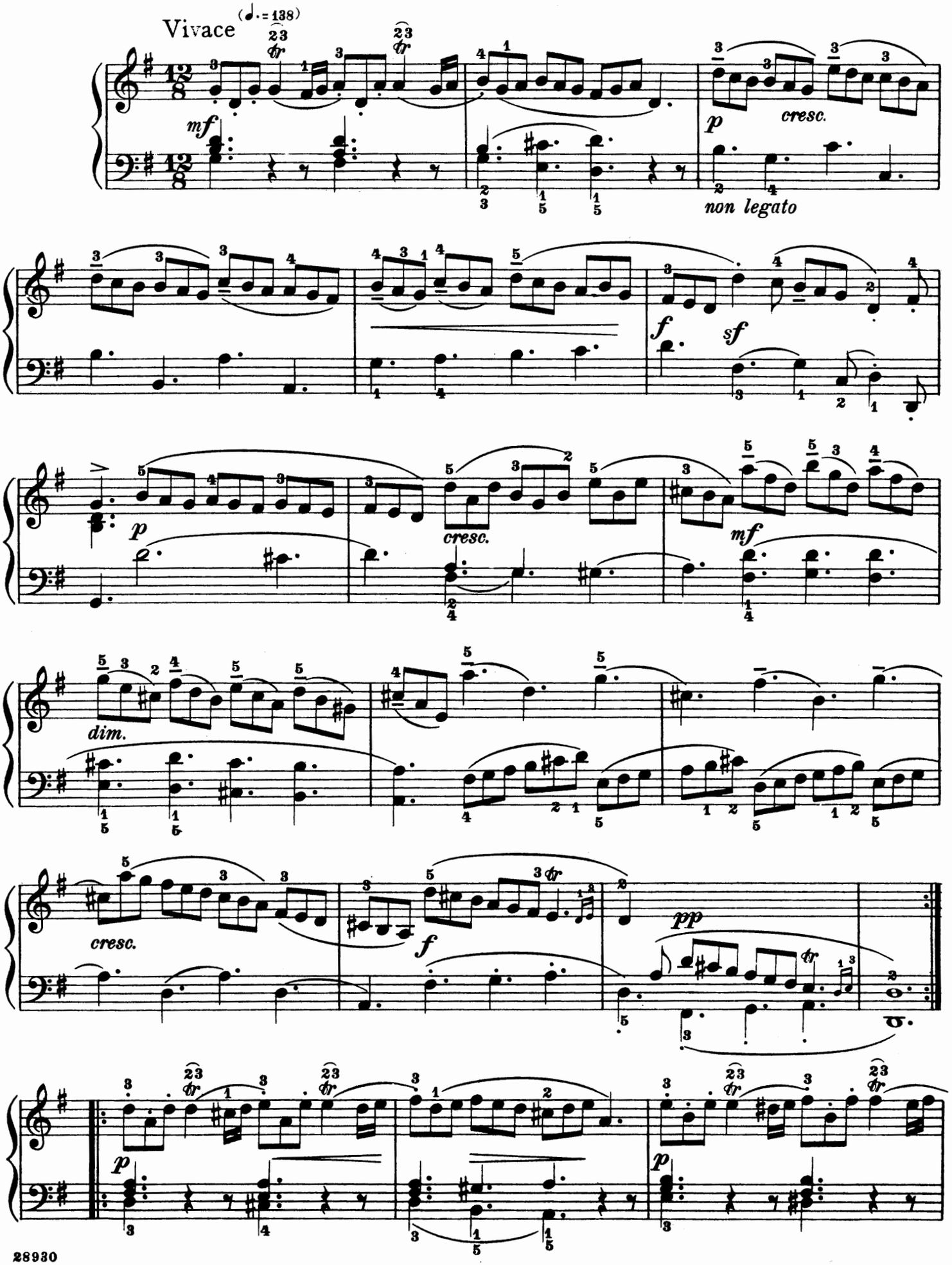


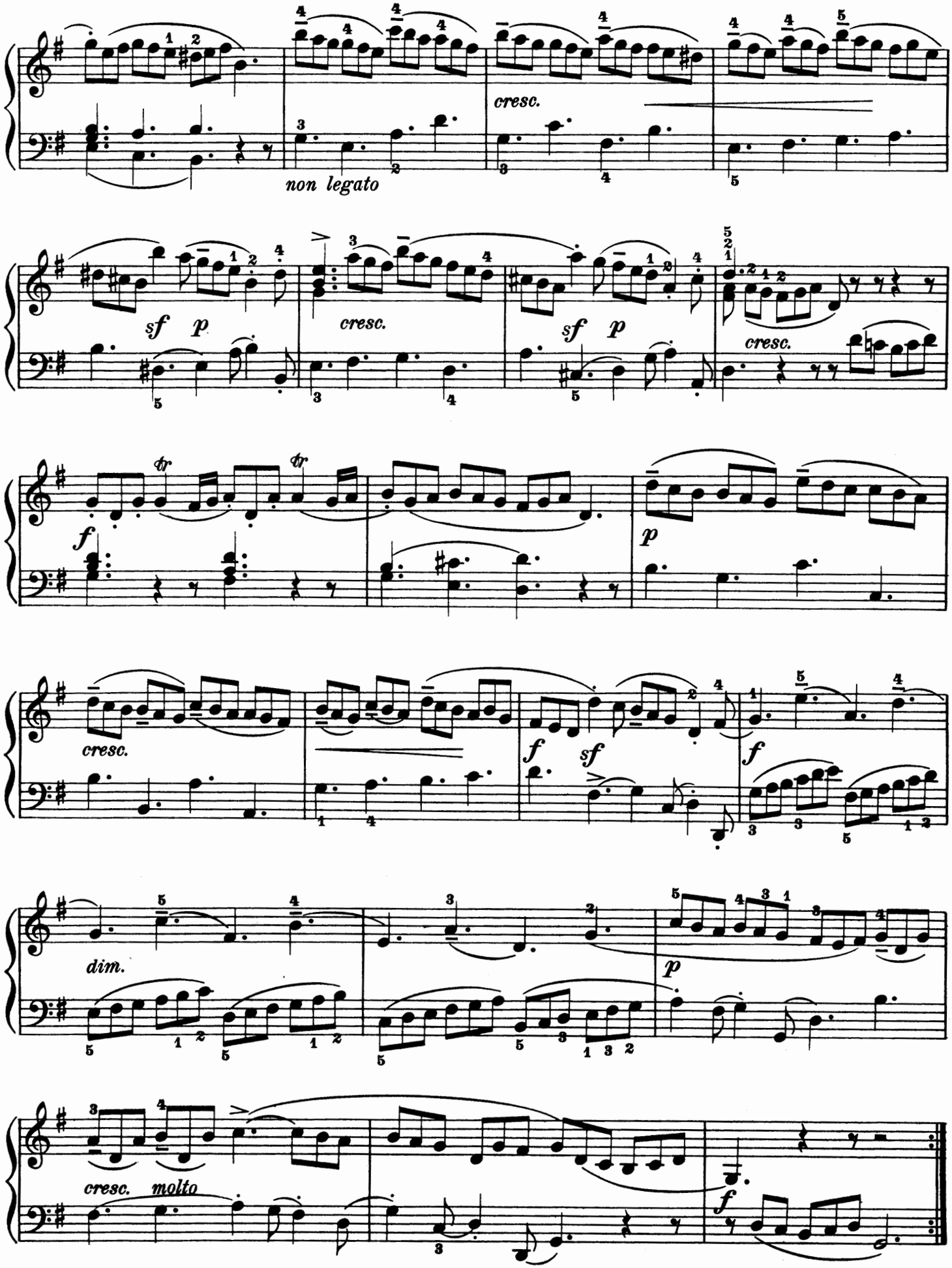
*) The Mordent, sign 𝆔, must not be confounded with the Inverted Mordent, sign 𝆕. The auxiliary note of the Mordent is auxiliary below the principal note, and is generally distant only a semitone from it, at least more frequently than the auxiliary note of the Inverted Mordent, which is generally a diatonic step above the principal note.



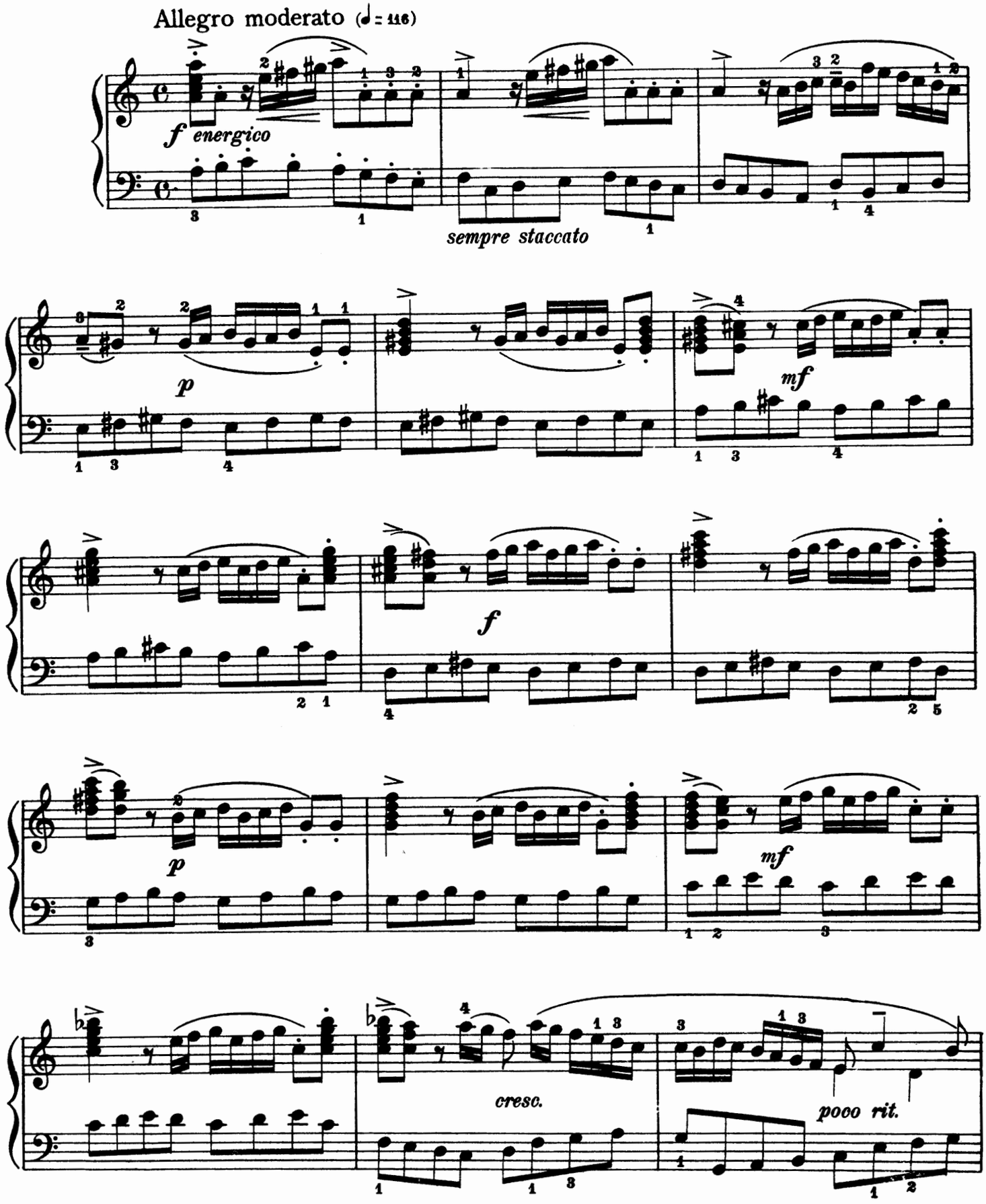
*) The "closing trills" in the 5th and 16th measures of the 2nd part, although marked as in the "Air" require a somewhat different mode of performance, on account of the slower tempo; or, rather, the *tempo presto* there necessitates an abbreviated execution— a transformation of the trill into an inverted mordent.

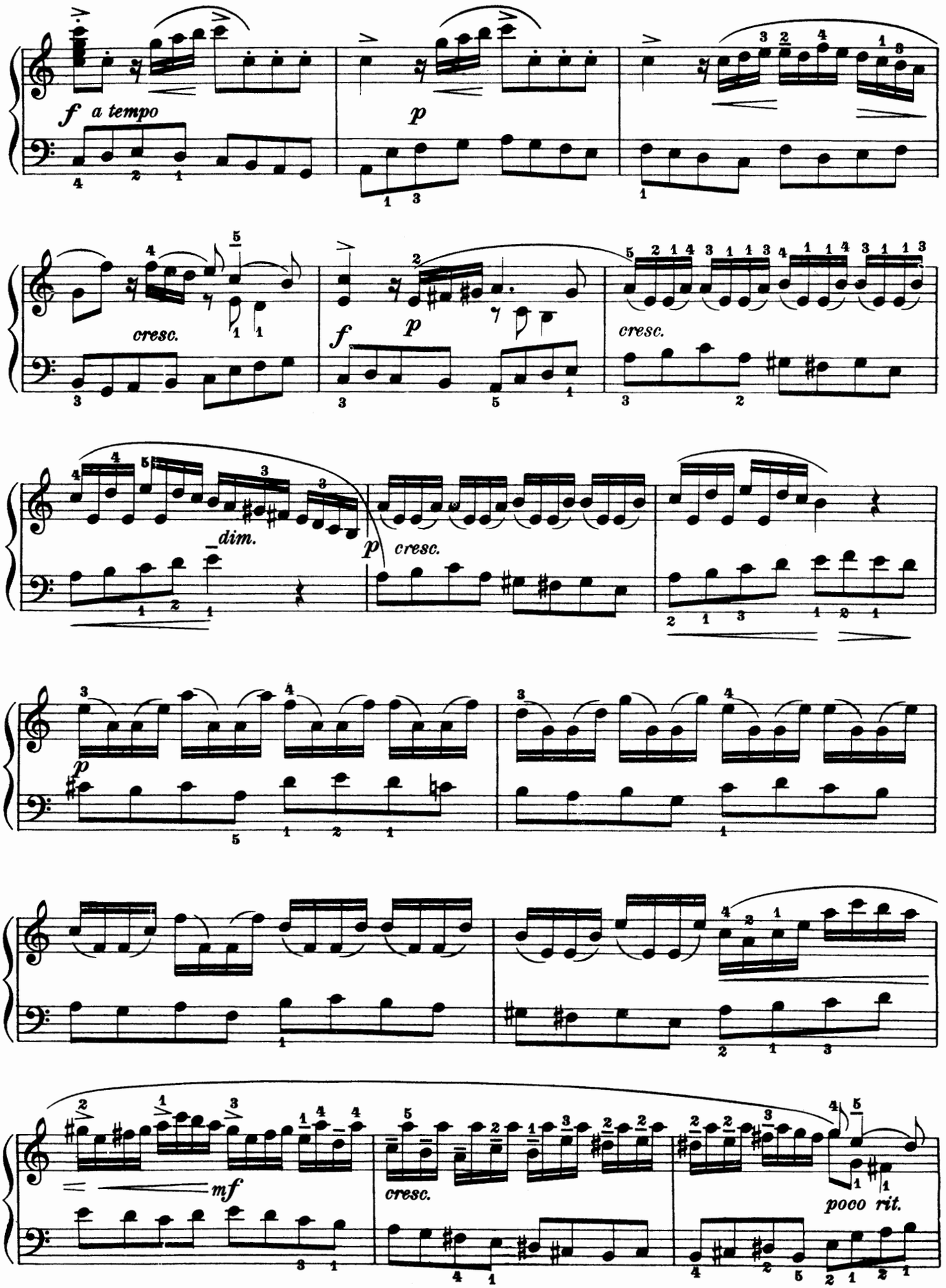
Gigue

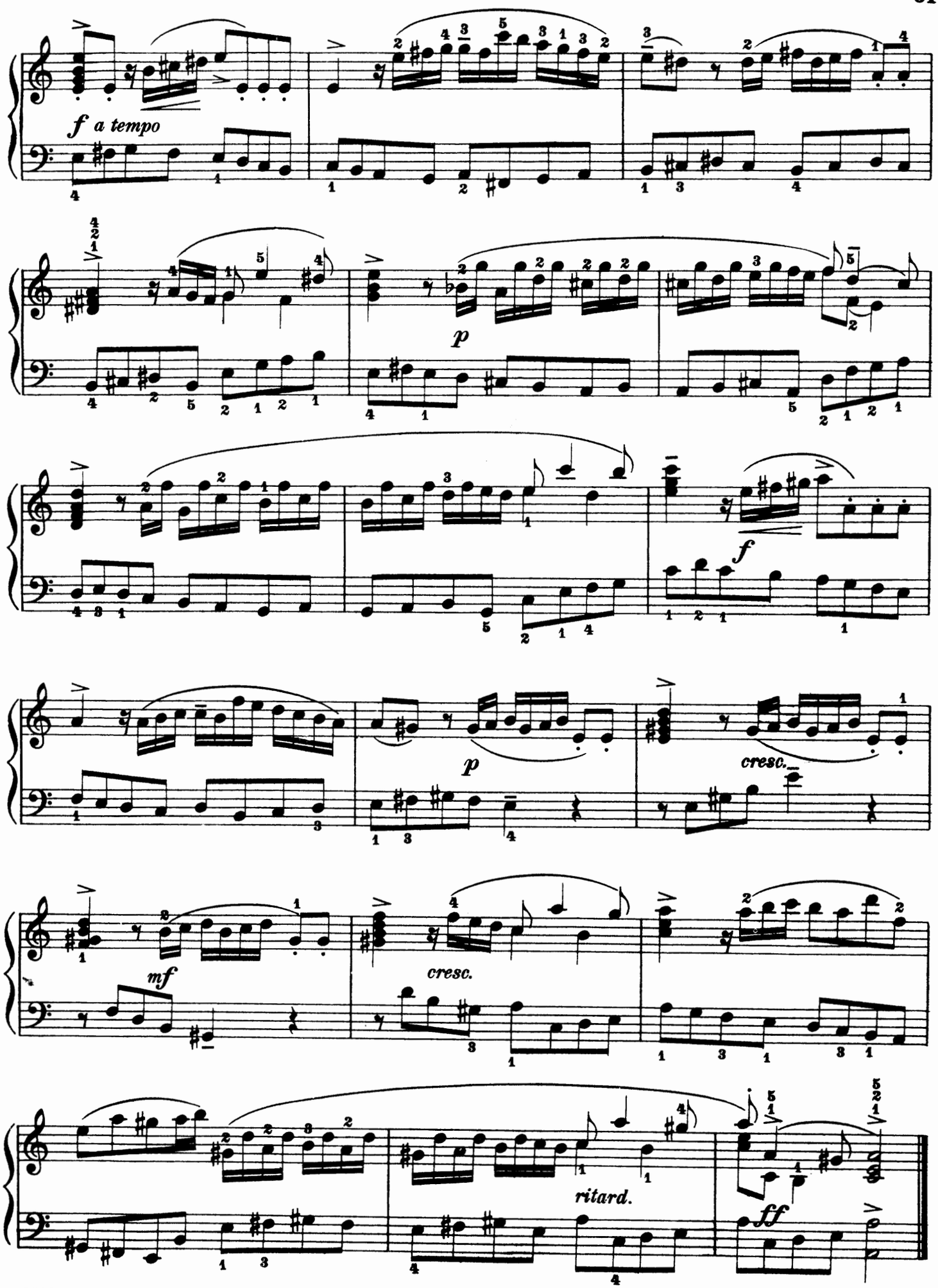



non legato
cresc.
sf p
cresc.
sf p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f sf
f
dim.
p
cresc. molto
f

Capriccio


Allegro moderato (♩ = 116)
f energico
sempre staccato
p
mf
f
p
mf
cresc.
poco rit.


f a tempo
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
dim.
p
cresc.
p
mf
cresc.
poco rit.



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