SUITE IN G MAJOR

For the Harpsichord

By

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

Transcribed for Piano

By

ARTHUR WHITING

Prèlude-Allemande-
Menuet-Gavotte-
Sarabande-Passacaille-Gigue

Price, $2.00, net

New York · G. SCHIRMER · Boston

NOTE

The *Flügel* of Bach and Handel and their contemporaries was the harpsichord (Italian, *Clavicembalo;* French, *Clavecin*), which they used on formal occasions and for which they wrote Toccatas and compositions of a virtuoso character, distinct from those of a more intimate style for the delicate and sensitive clavichord. The tone of the harpsichord, produced by plucking the strings, was brilliant and incisive, but thin and of limited duration; the lack of body in a single tone was met by a combination of stops which increased the volume, as in the case of the organ.

Like the organ, the harpsichord had, usually, two banks of keys. These operated several sets of wires which were tuned as 4, 8 and 16-foot registers and were brought into use by pedals or hand-knobs. Some of the larger instruments had a key-board for the feet, coupled to the manuals, so that the mechanical principle of the harpsichord was exactly that of the organ.

When the 4, 8 and 16-foot stops were drawn and a single key was pressed down three tones were produced, thus: and a two-voice fugue, with this registration, was, actually, the utterance of six voices. A harpsichord score is, therefore, in most cases, music written in shorthand which calls for tonal amplification by means of registration.

A statement of these well-known historical facts would be a work of supererogation were it not that pianists of all degrees of intelligence have played literally music written in shorthand, as if such a meagre texture of sound were the intention of the composer.

Bach, as well as Handel, knew the pianoforte only in its experimental stages and wrote nothing for it. While his clavichord compositions can be played adequately on the modern instrument, he would have scoffed at a literal rendering of his harpsichord scores. To give their approximate effect on the pianoforte they must be transcribed according to its essential principles, in the manner already done with his organ scores. This calls for a frequent substitution of octaves for single notes and, sometimes, for an inversion of intervals.

Most important is a free shifting to high or low registers to correspond with the effect of playing a passage on the harpsichord, written in the middle position of the score, on a 4 or 16-foot stop only. Harpsichord registration was never suggested by the composer, but was left to the discretion and art of the performer. In the same way, the pianoforte transcriber must use his own taste in this matter, convinced that the author expected that 4, 8 and 16-foot stops were to be heard both singly and in combination.

A pianoforte transcription of music written for the eighteenth-century instrument is, at best, only a translation. The unique multitudinous sound of the full harpsichord, as brilliant and as colorful as the aurora, is not to be reproduced on the pianoforte, were the player equipped with a hundred fingers. But its infinite variety can be suggested and the grand manner of Bach and Handel realized when their scores are amplified to meet the requirements of pianoforte art.

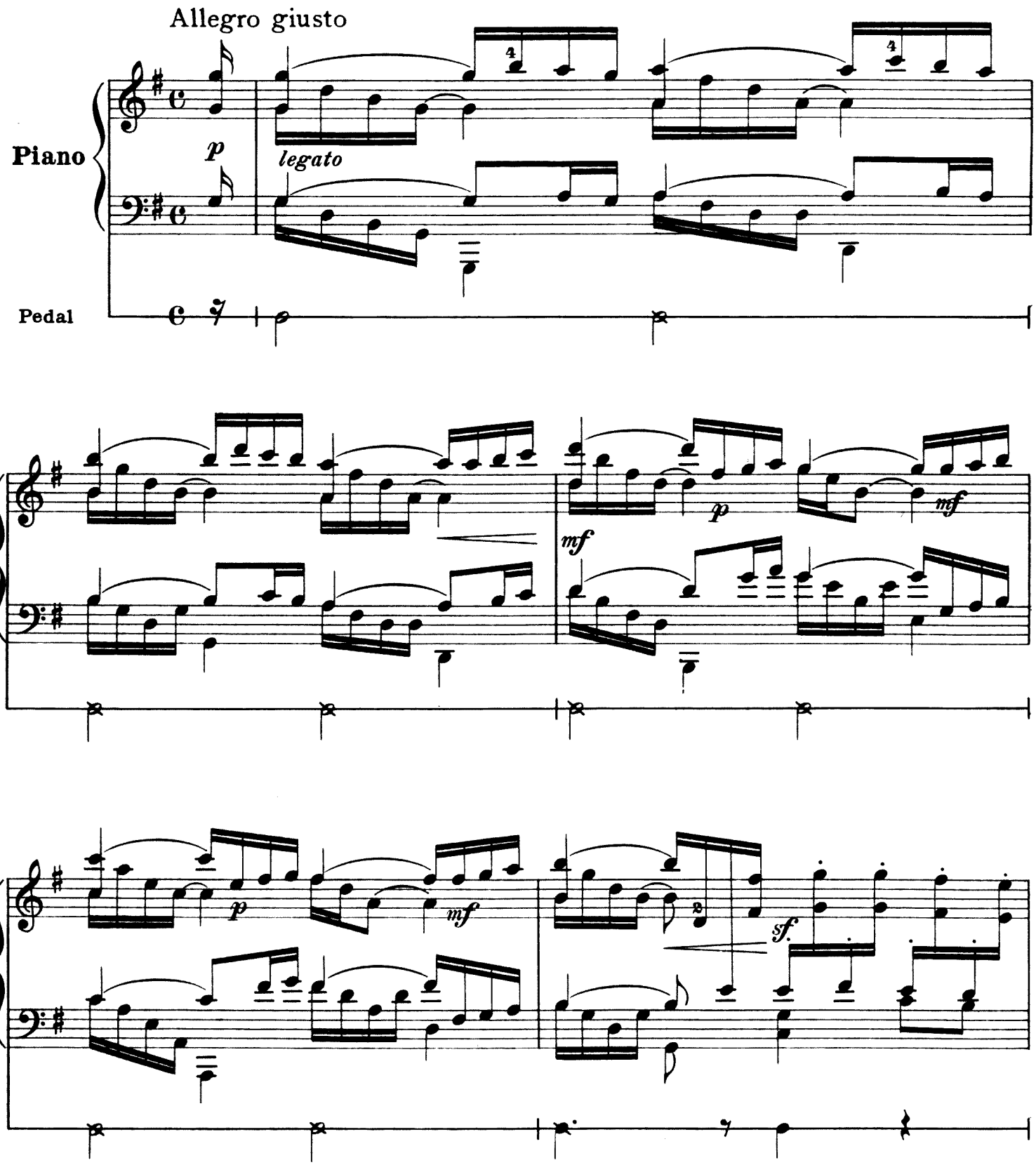
The use of the damper-pedal in this pianoforte transcription is suggested by means of notation. A diagonal line through a note indicates that the down-movement of the pedal-lever should be somewhat delayed. Half-pedalling is indicated thus: *and gradual damping thus:*

30095

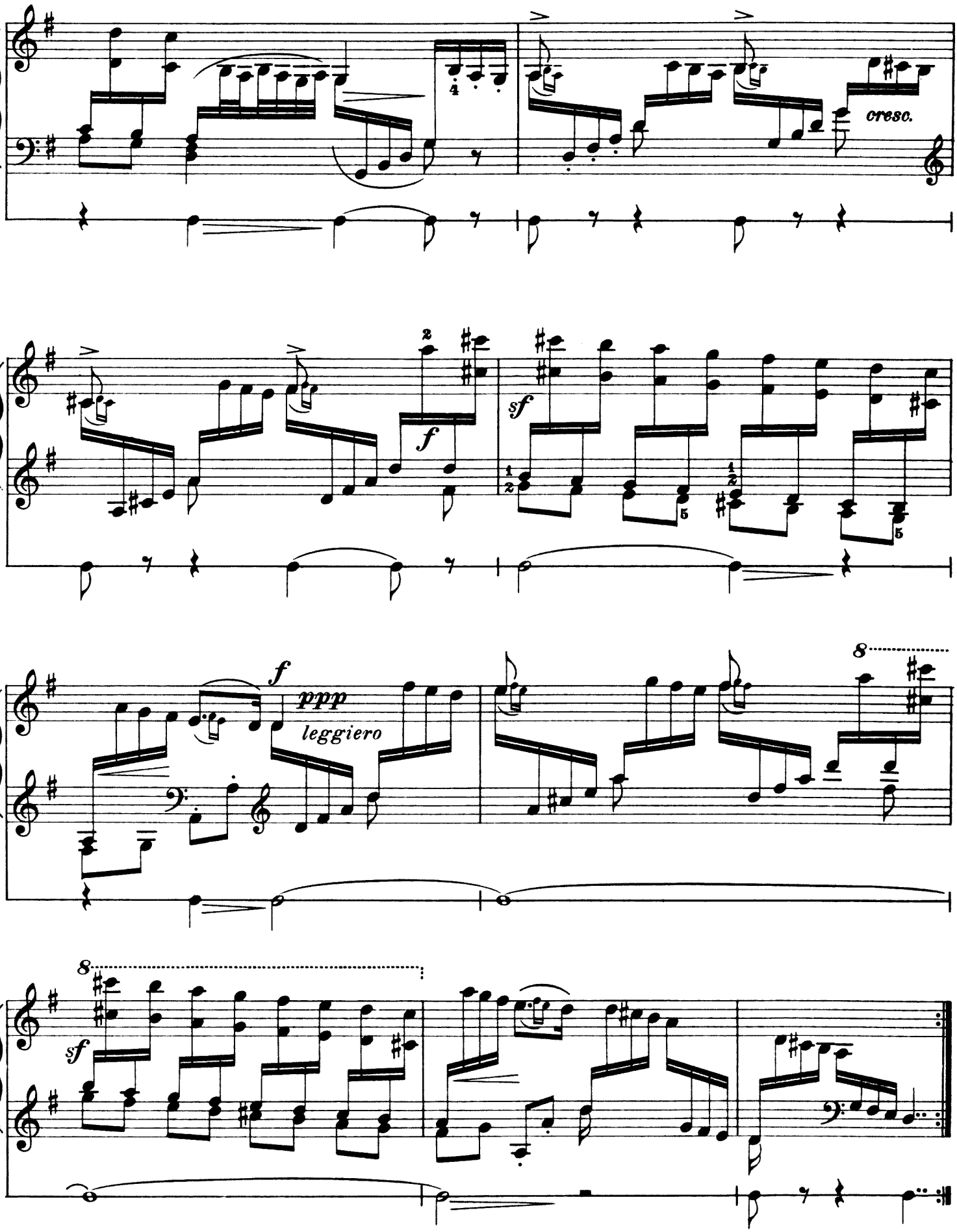
Prélude

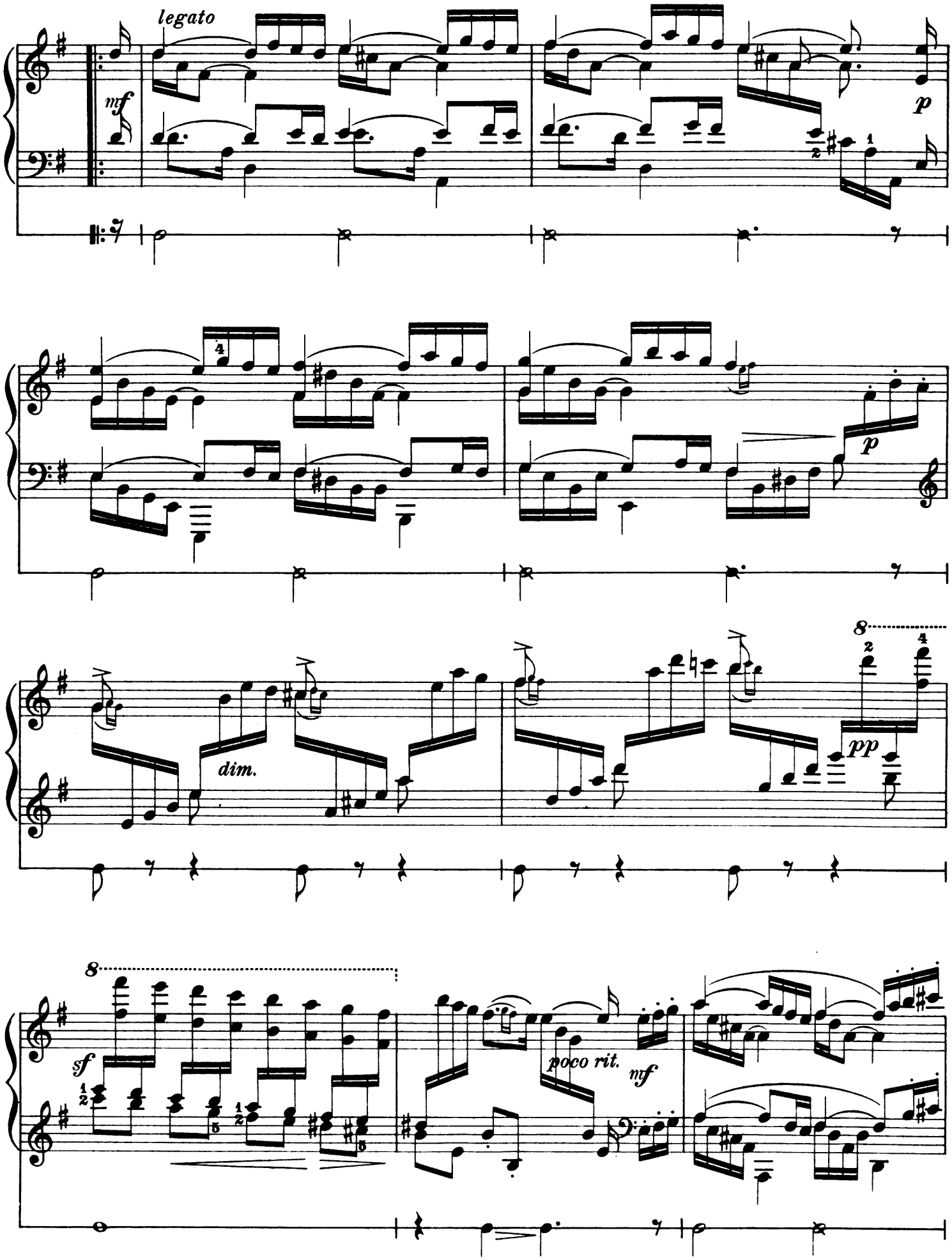
Transcribed by
Arthur Whiting

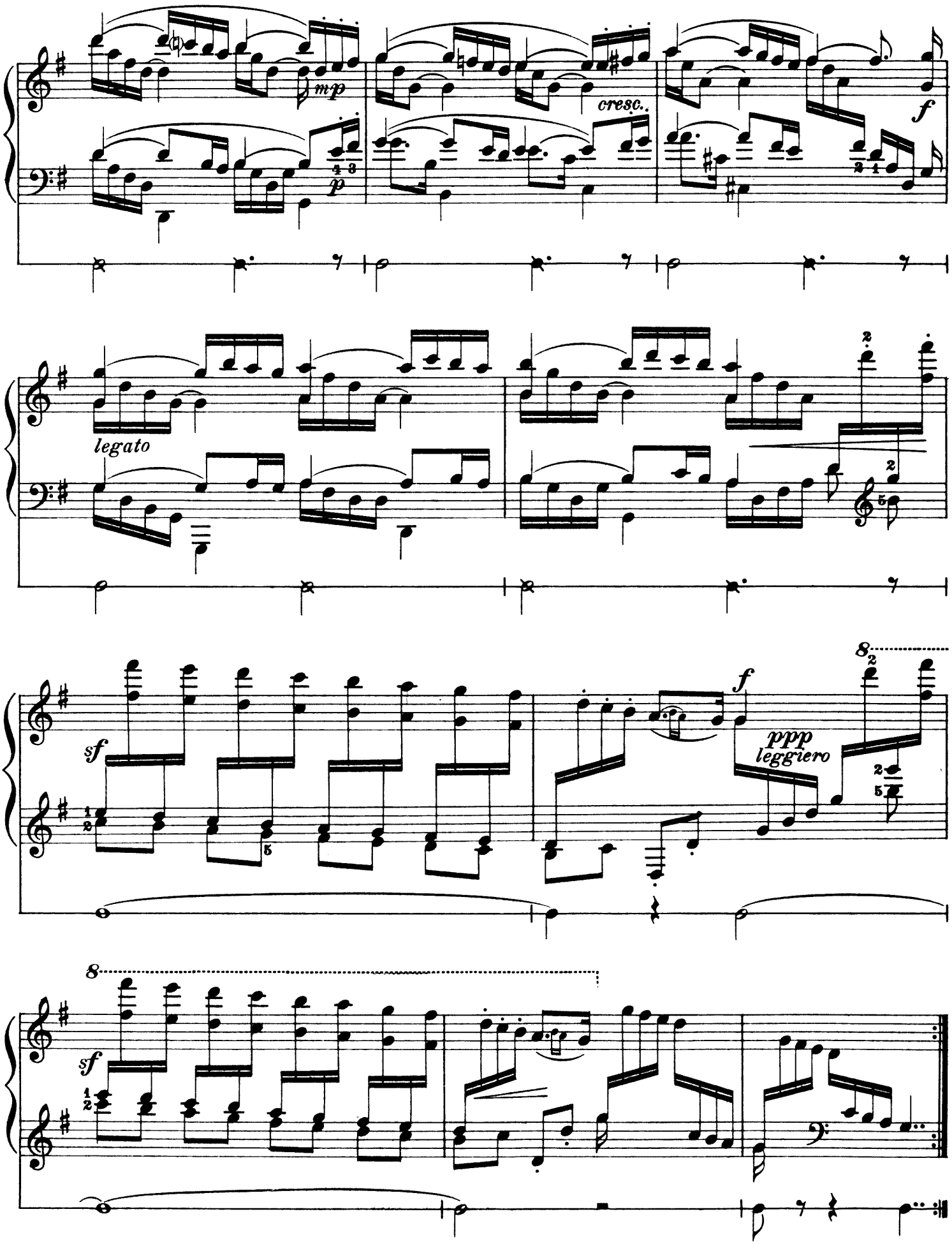
G. F. Handel



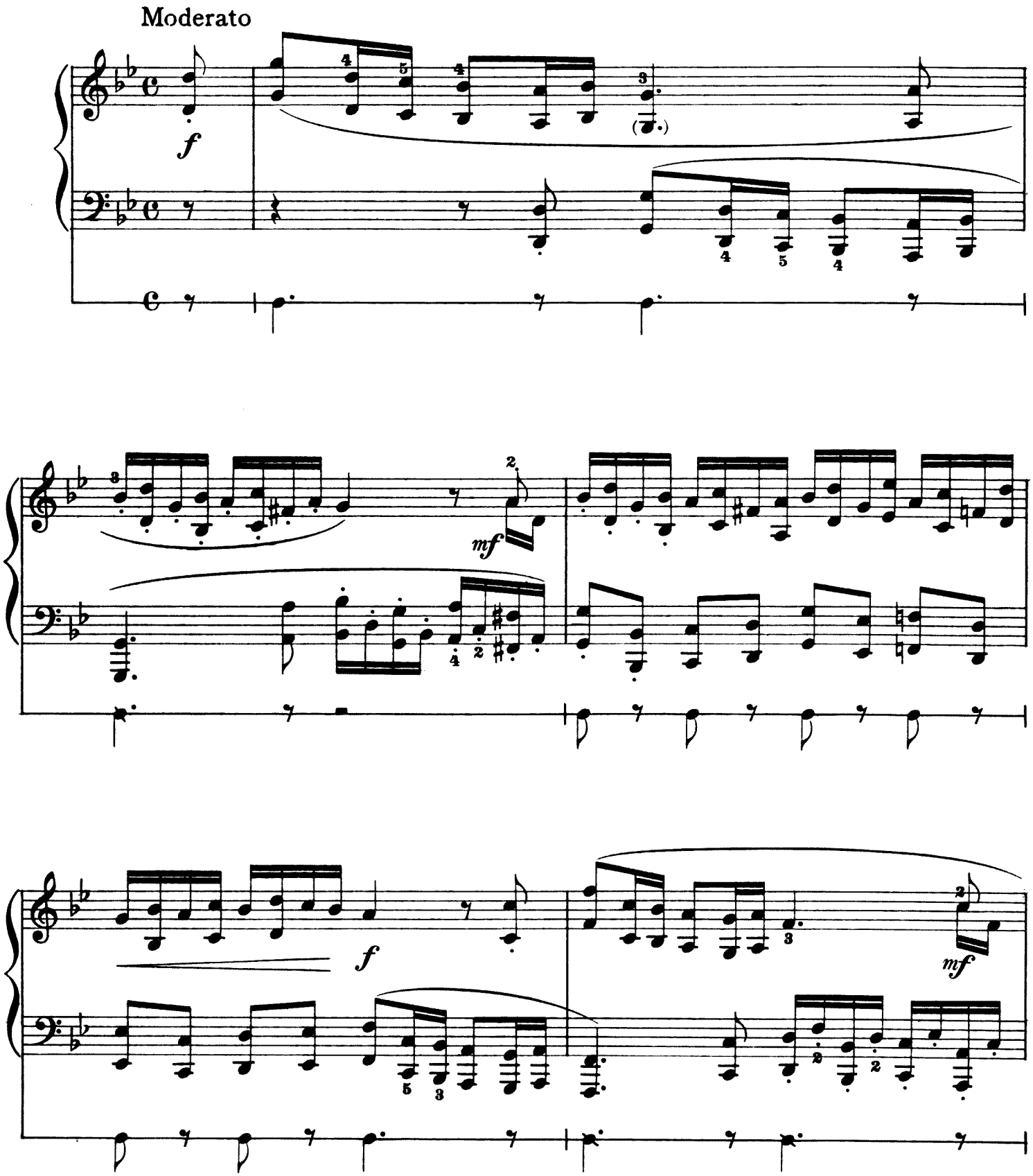
Copyright, 1921, by G. Schirmer, Inc.

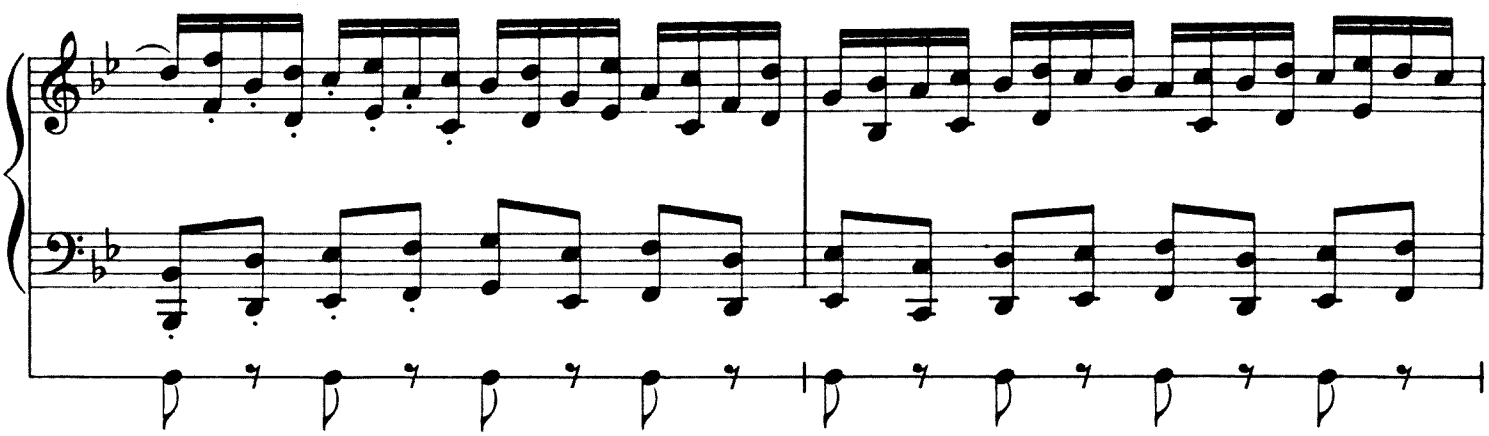

cresc.
f
sf
f
ppp
leggiero
8
8
sf

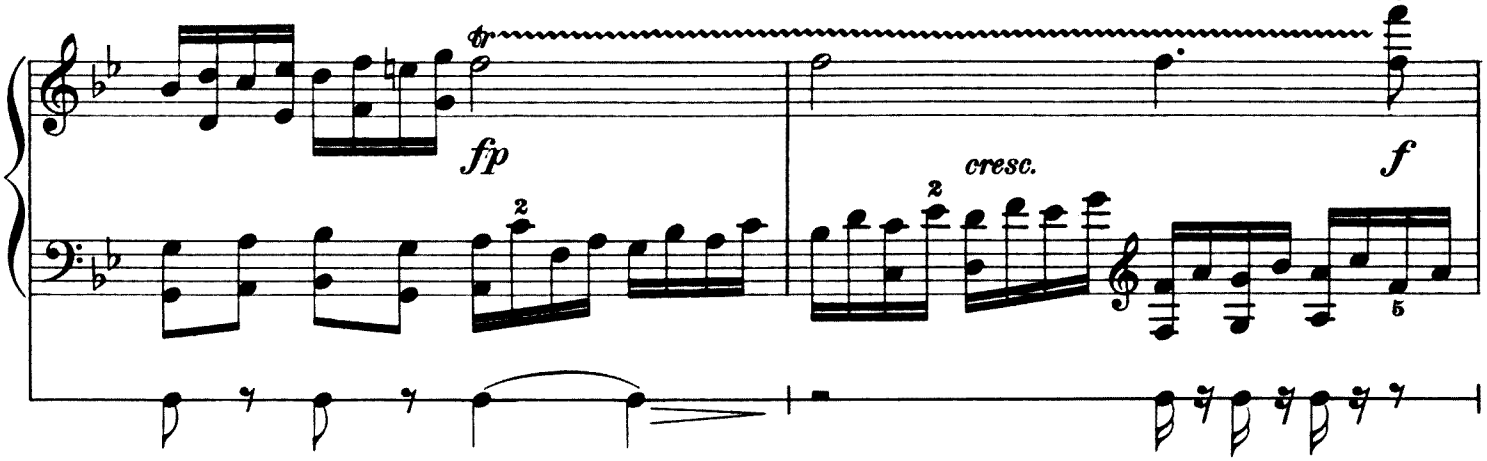

legato
mf
p
p
dim.
pp
sf
poco rit.
mf

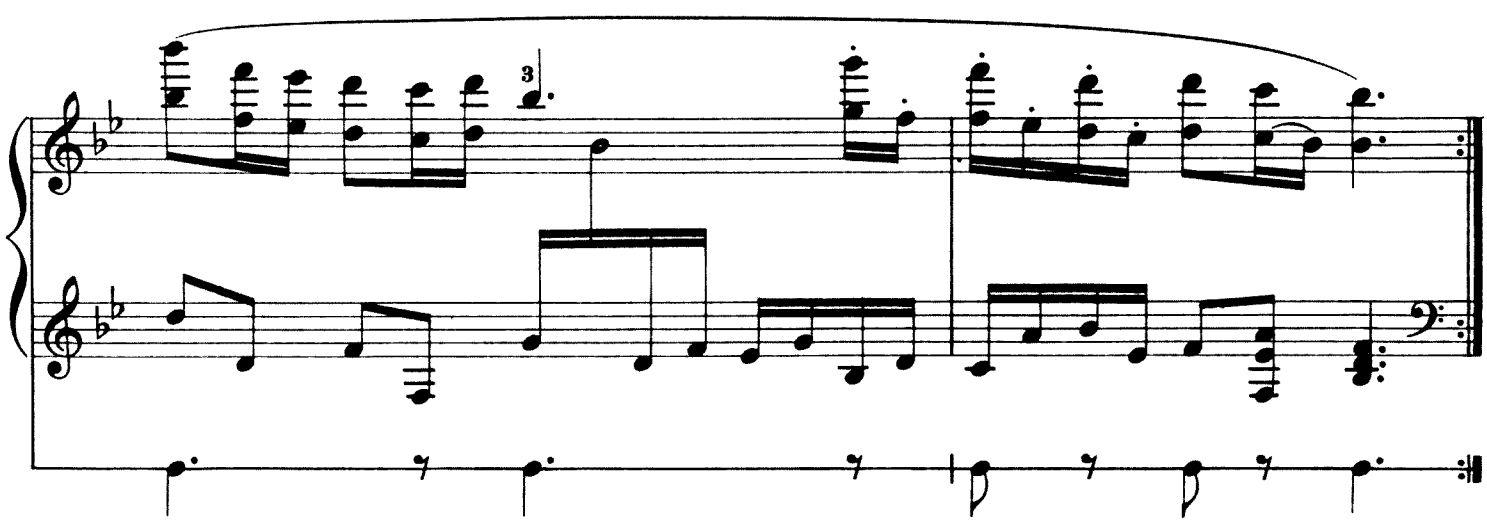

mp
cresc.
f
p
legato
sf
f
ppp
leggiero
8
sf

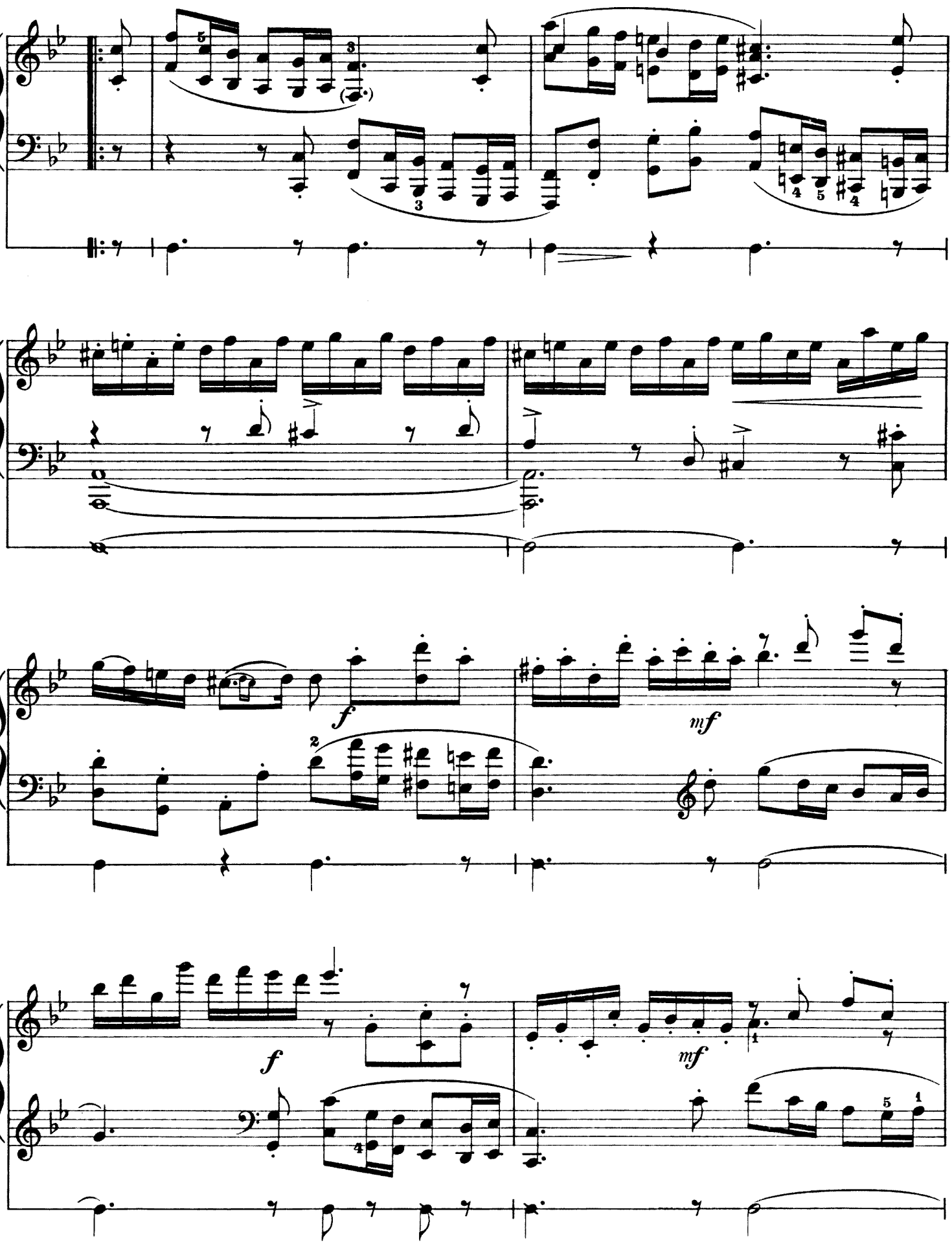
Allemande

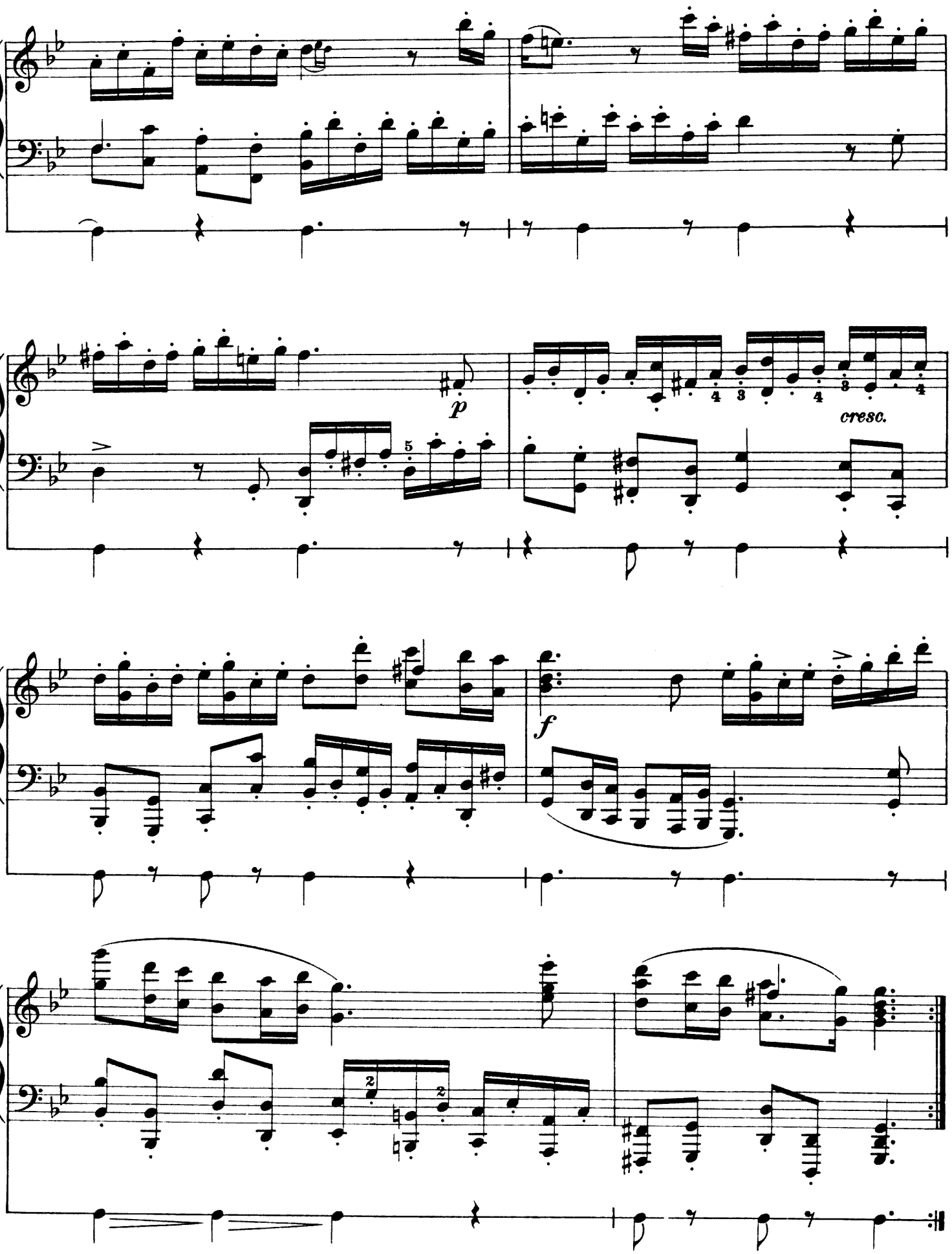





tr
fp
cresc.
f

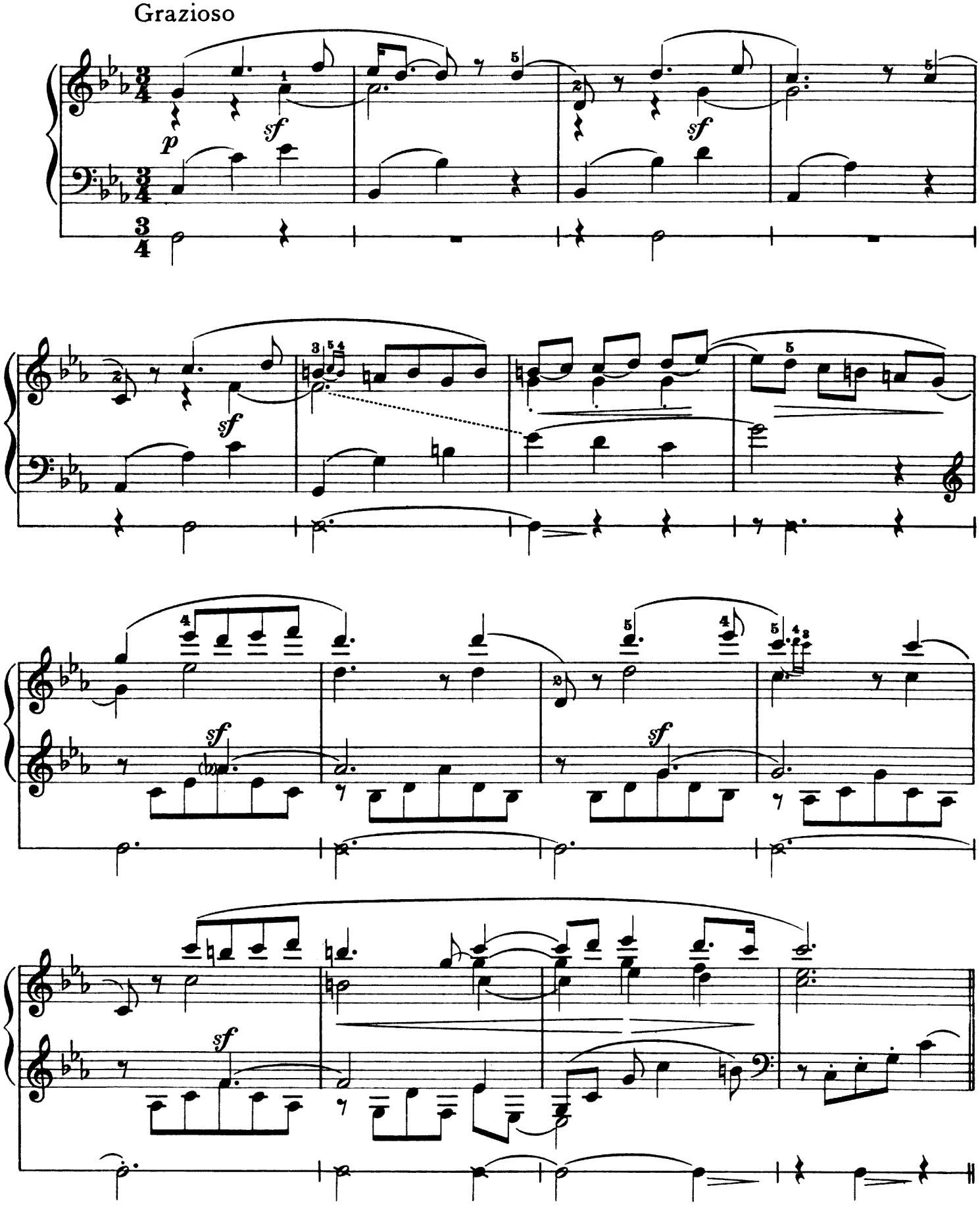


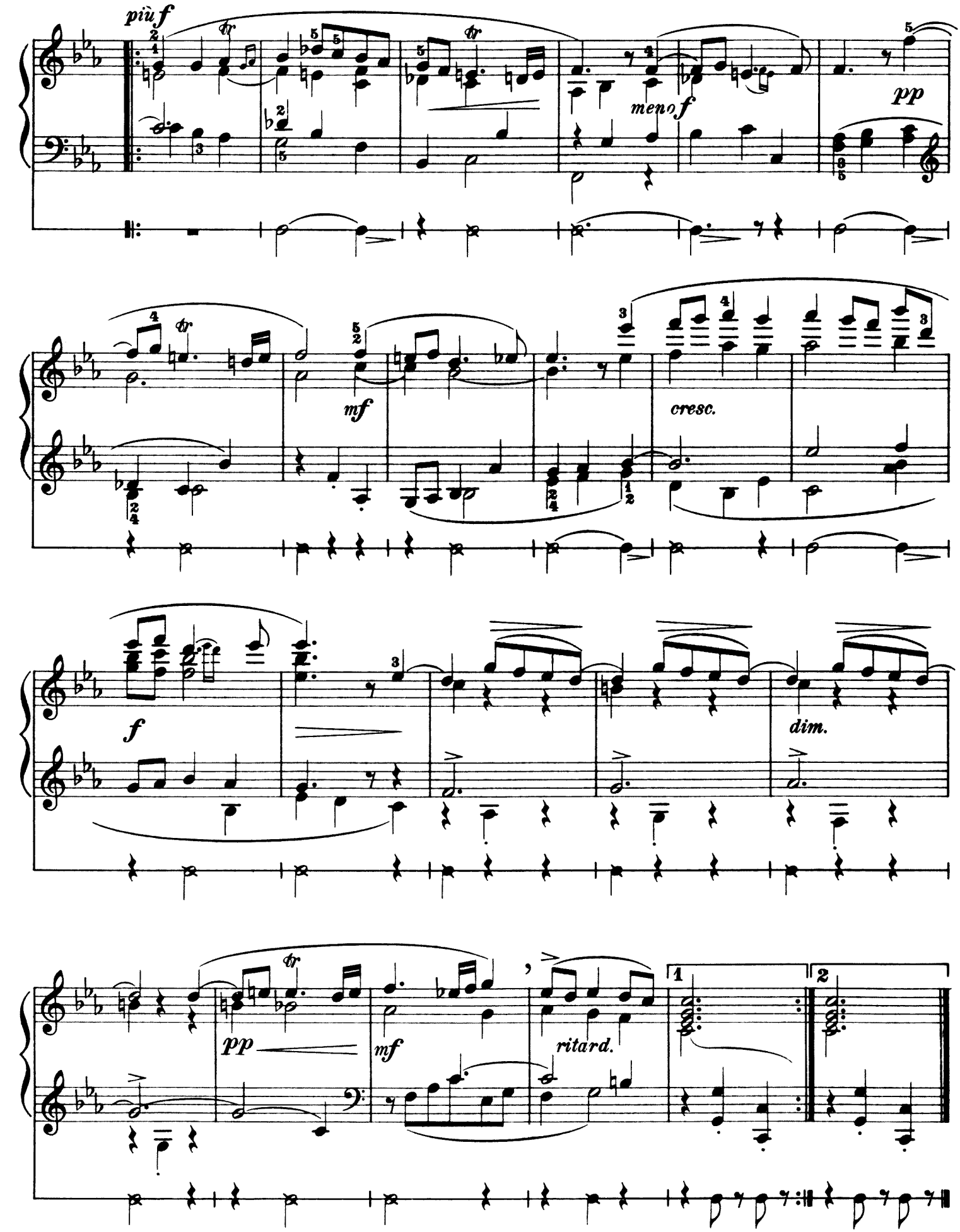

f
mf
f
mf


p
cresc.
f

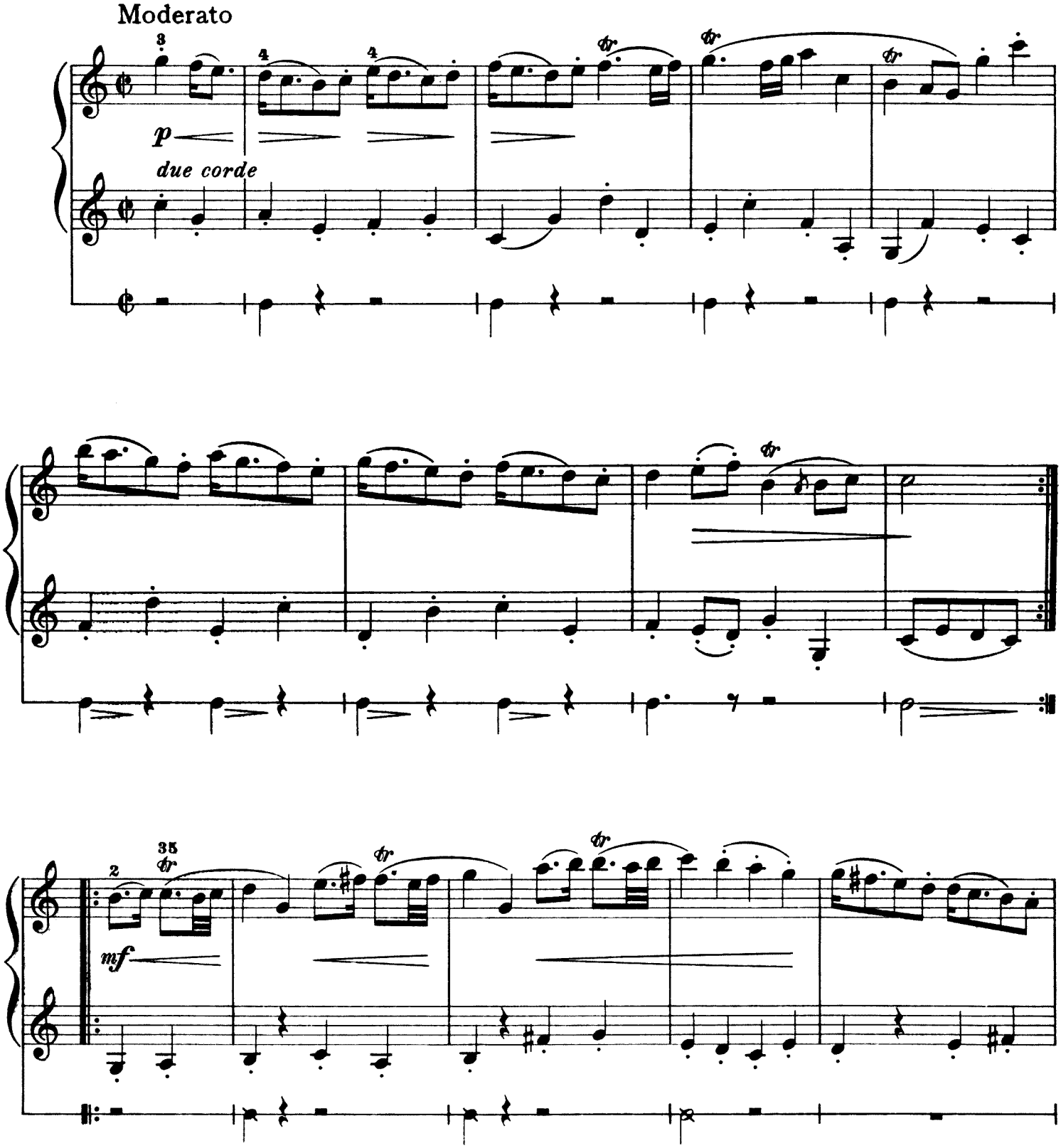
Menuet

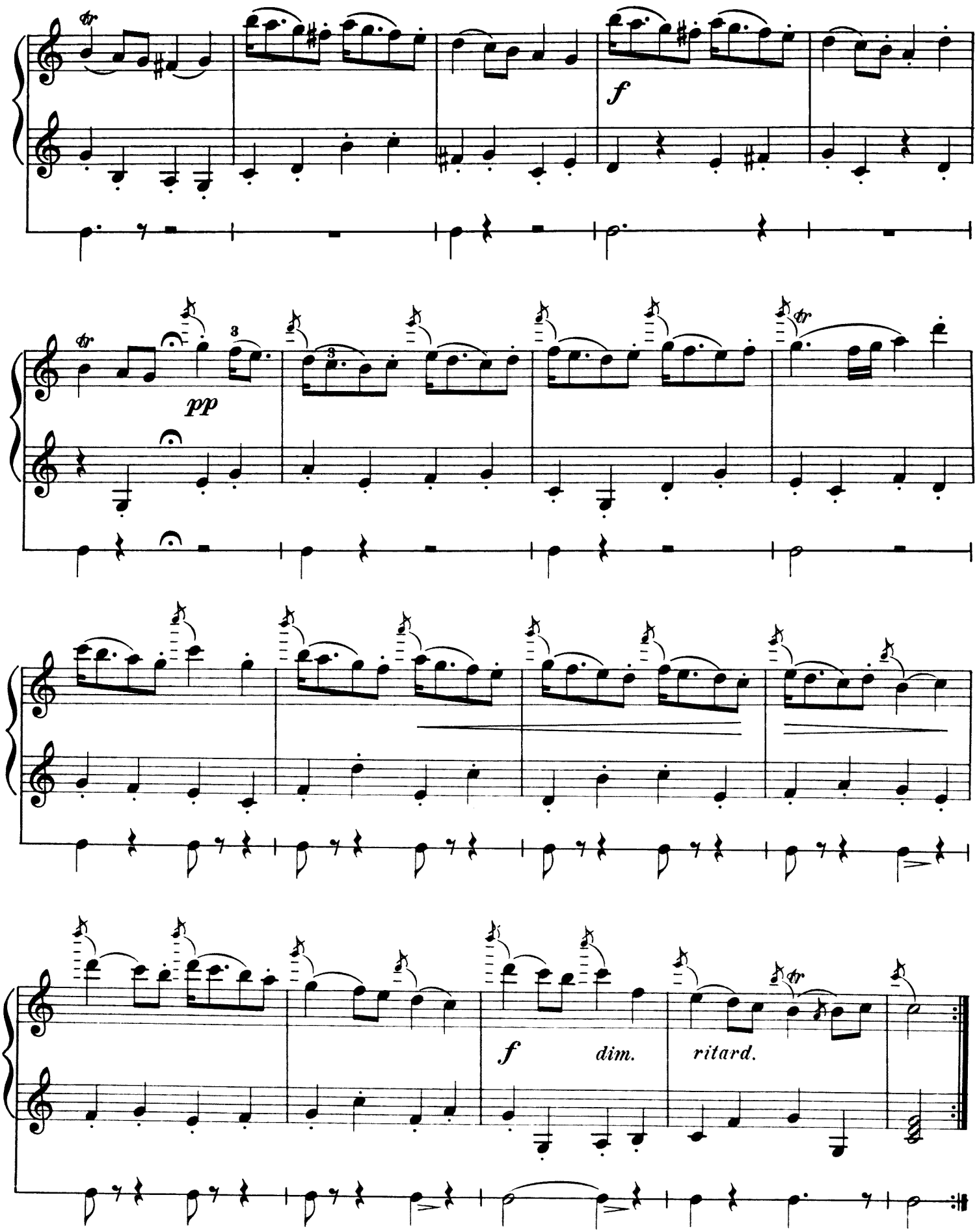
Grazioso




più f
meno f
pp
mf
cresc.
f
dim.
pp
mf
ritard.
1
2

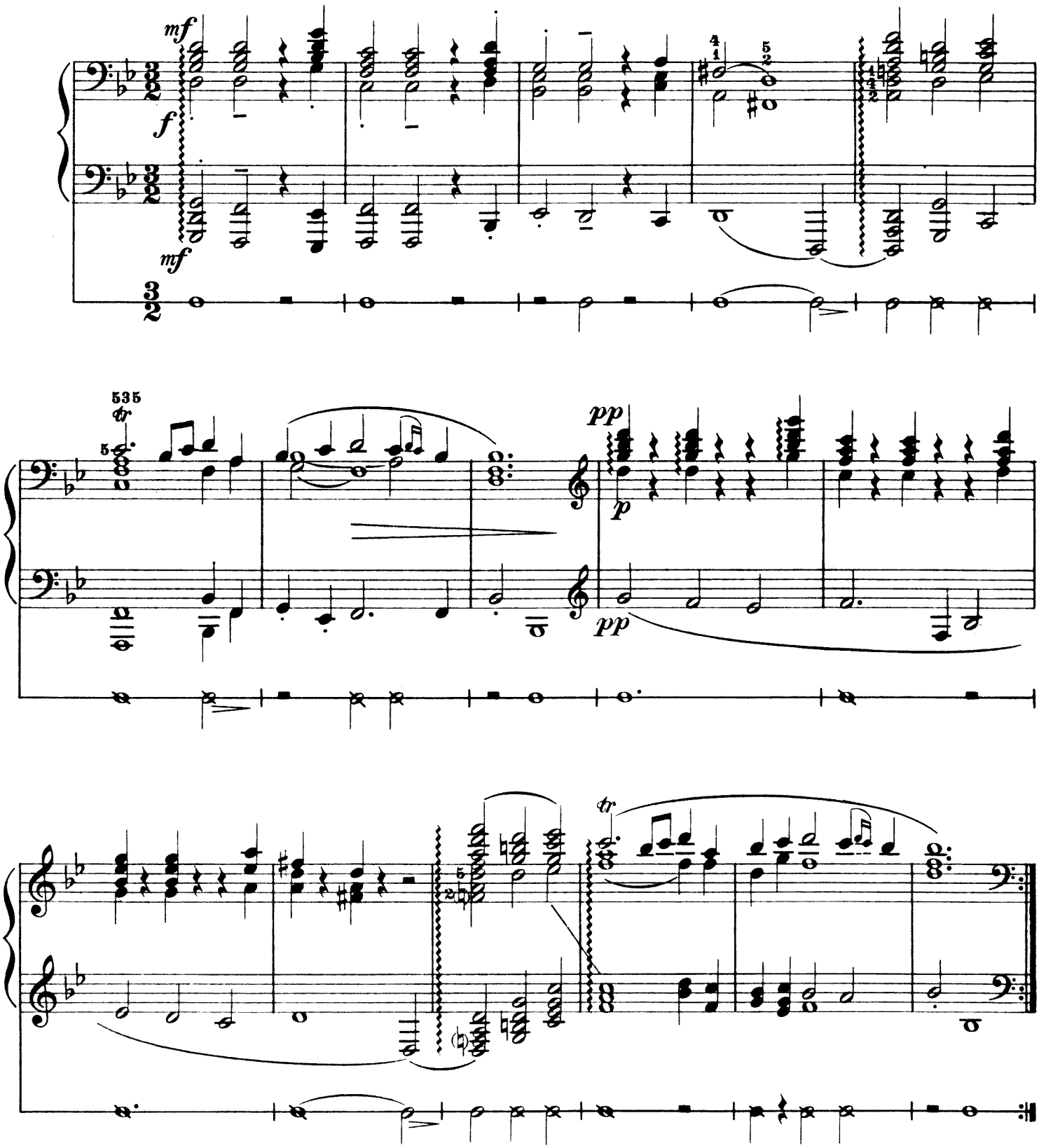
Gavotte

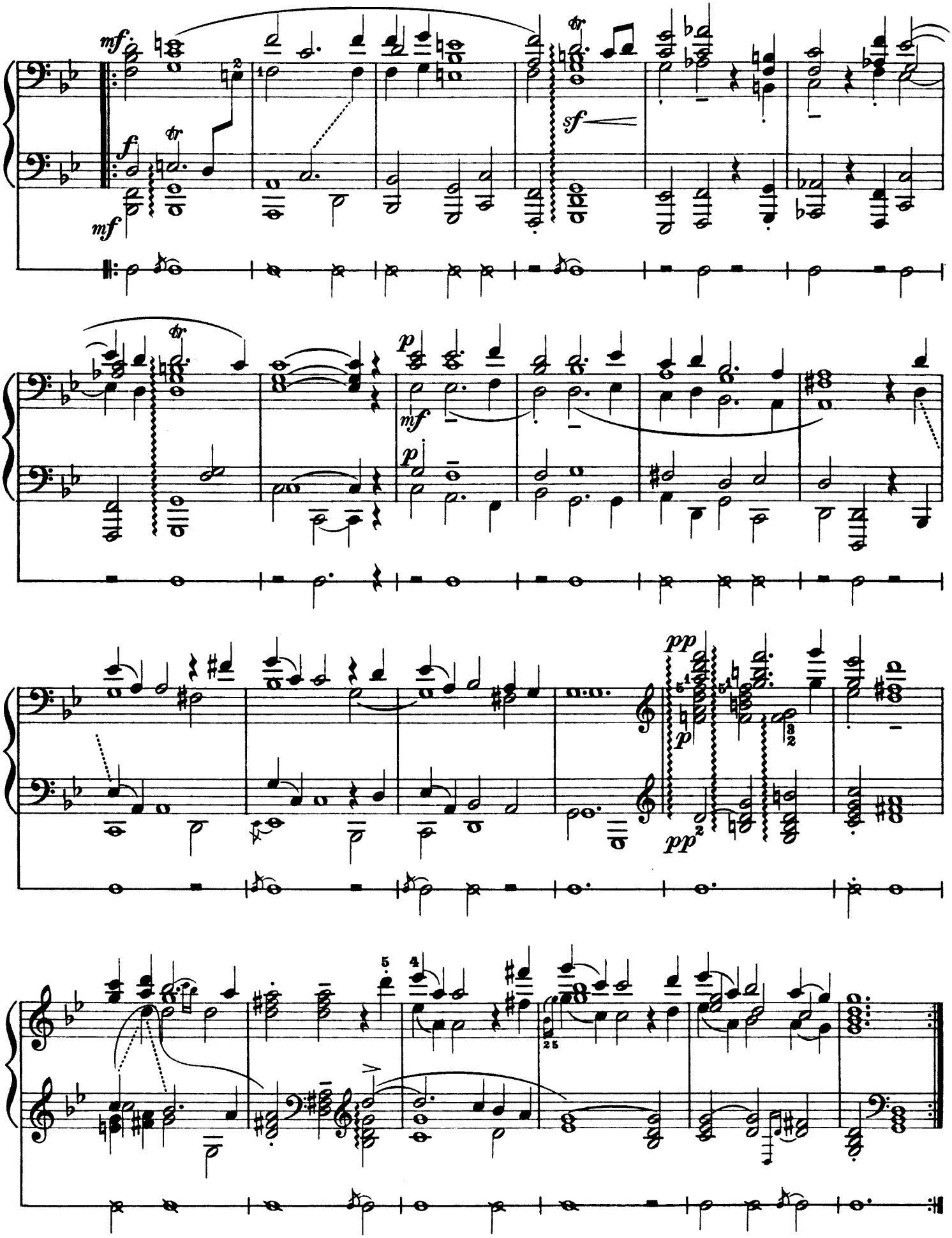



f
pp
3
3
f
dim.
ritard.

Sarabande

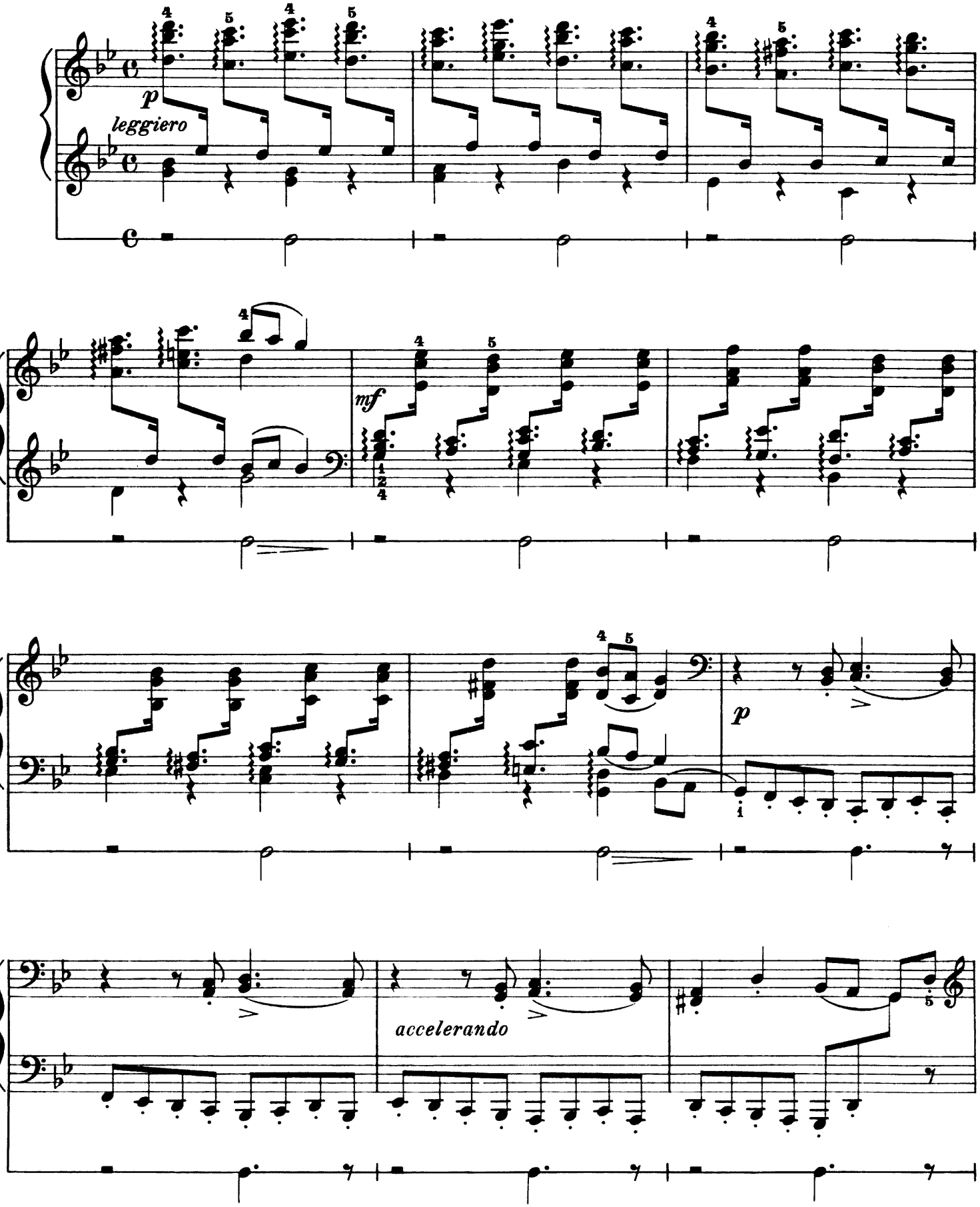
Andante maestoso

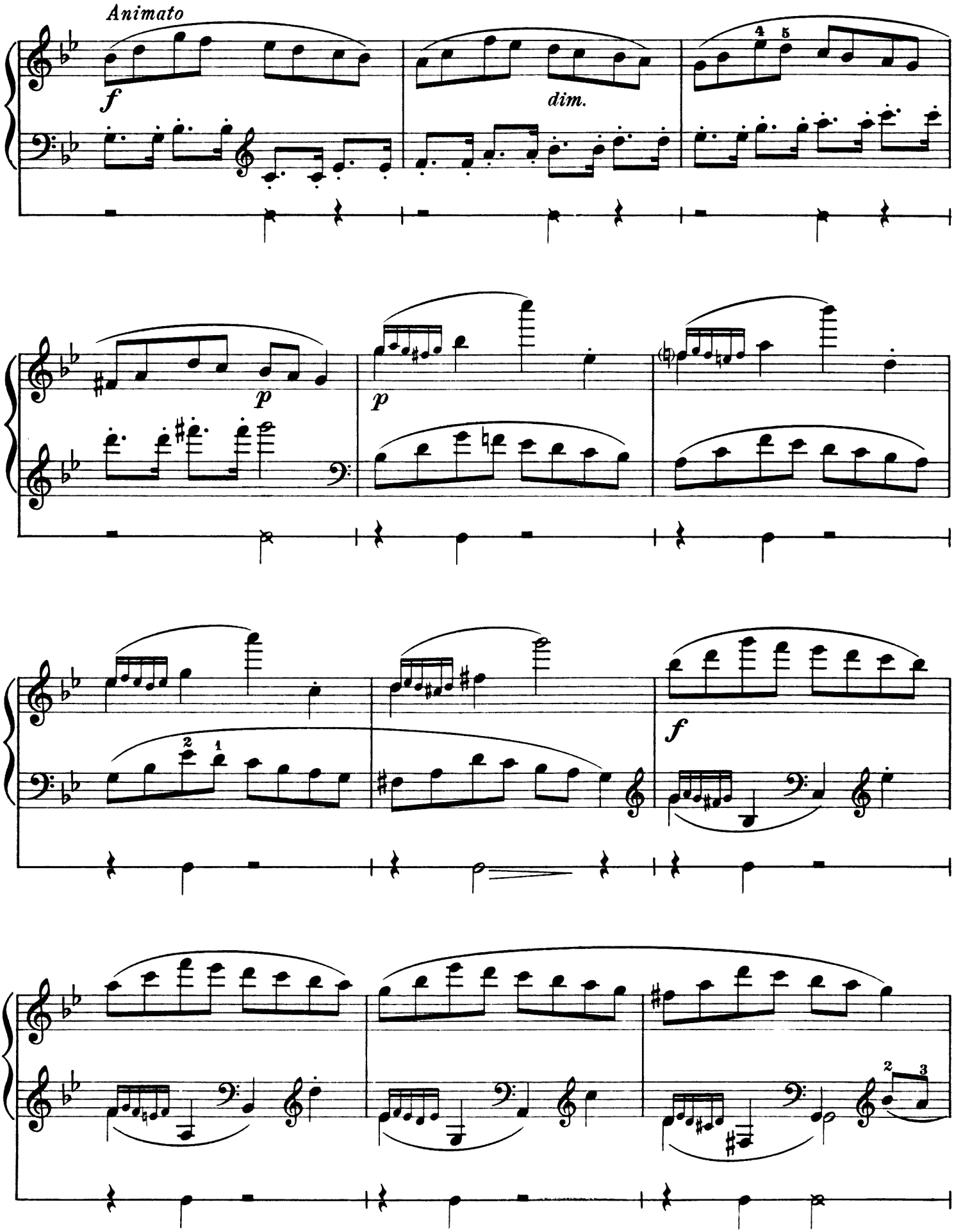


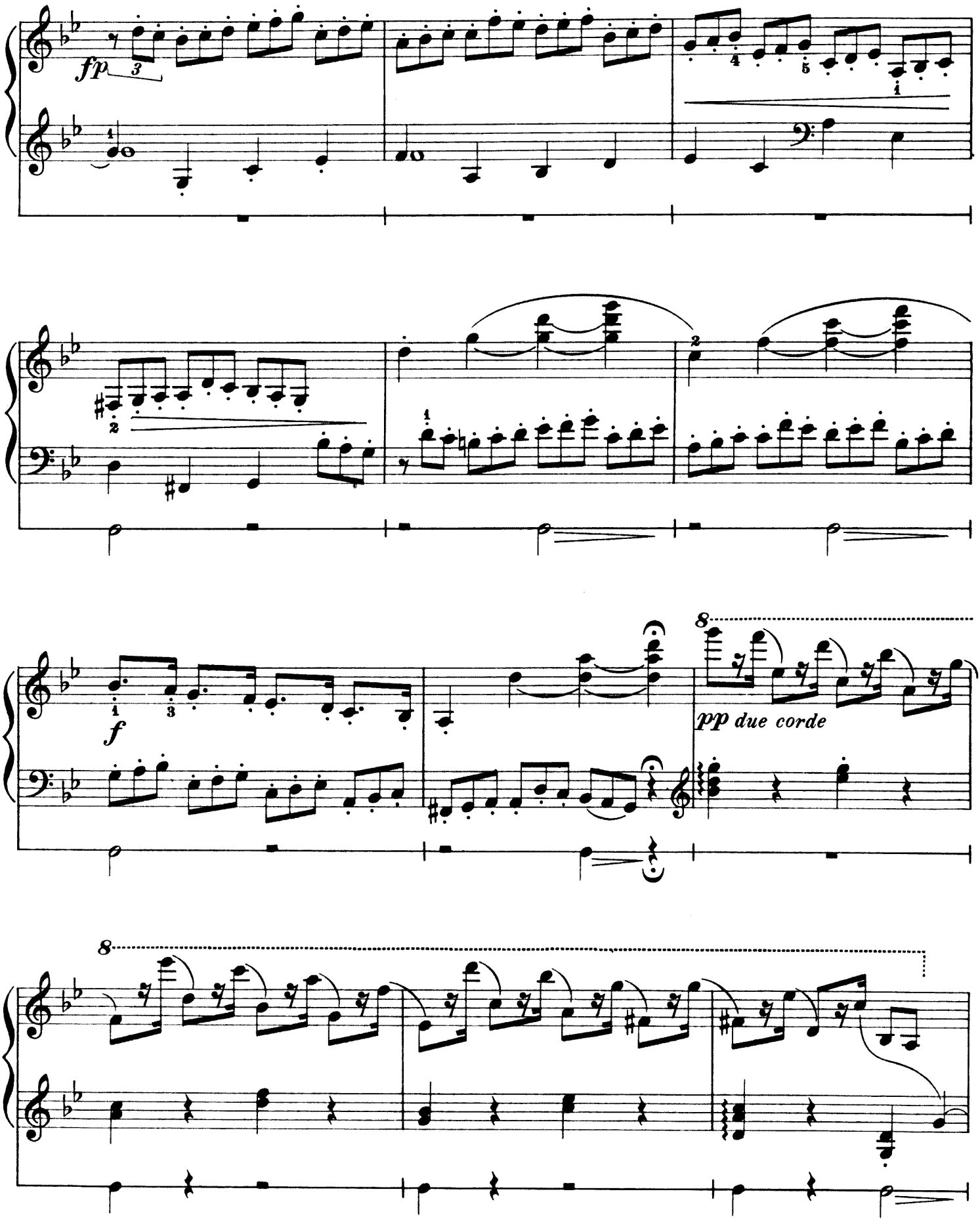

mf
f
mf
sf
p
mf
p
pp
p
pp

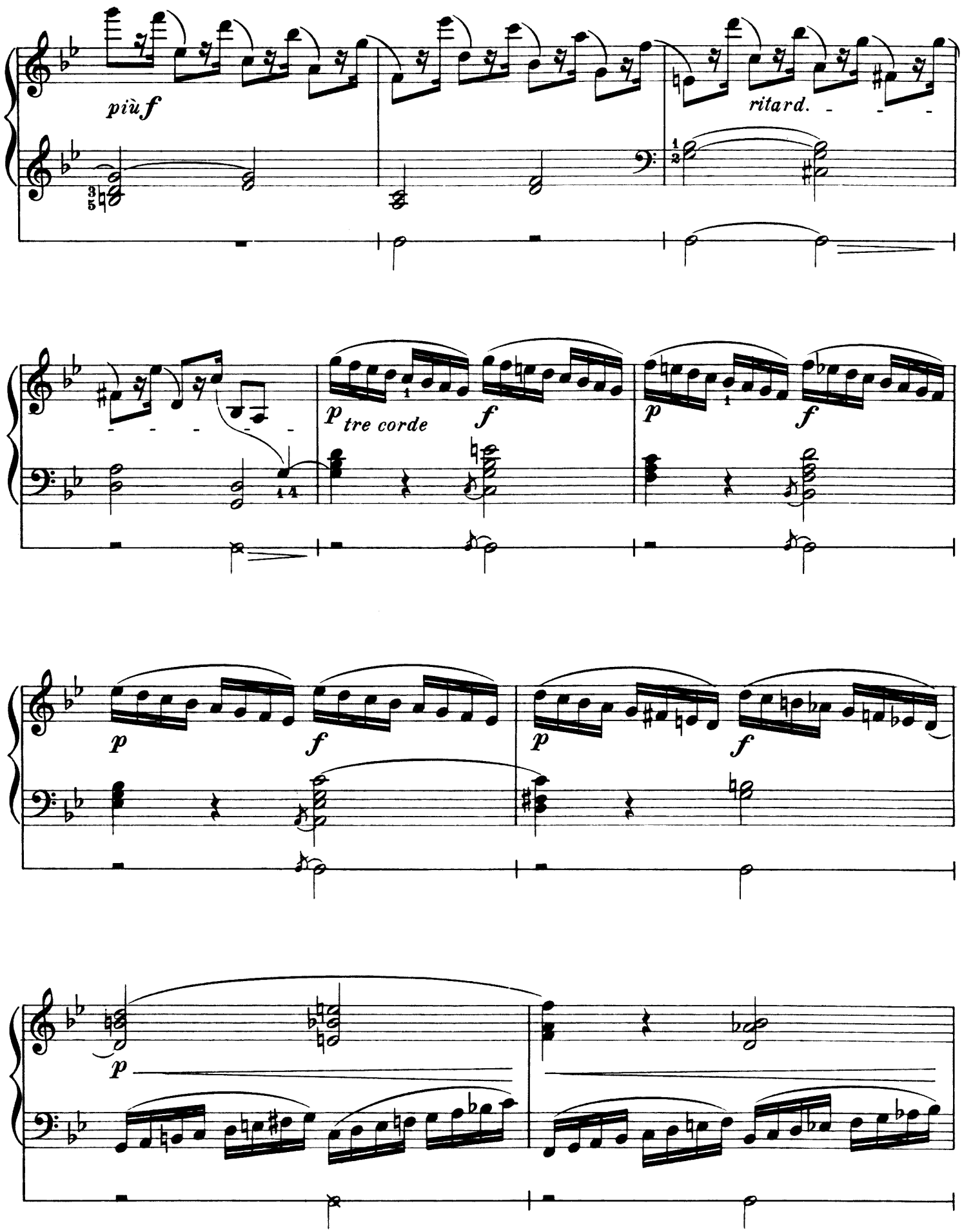
Passacaille

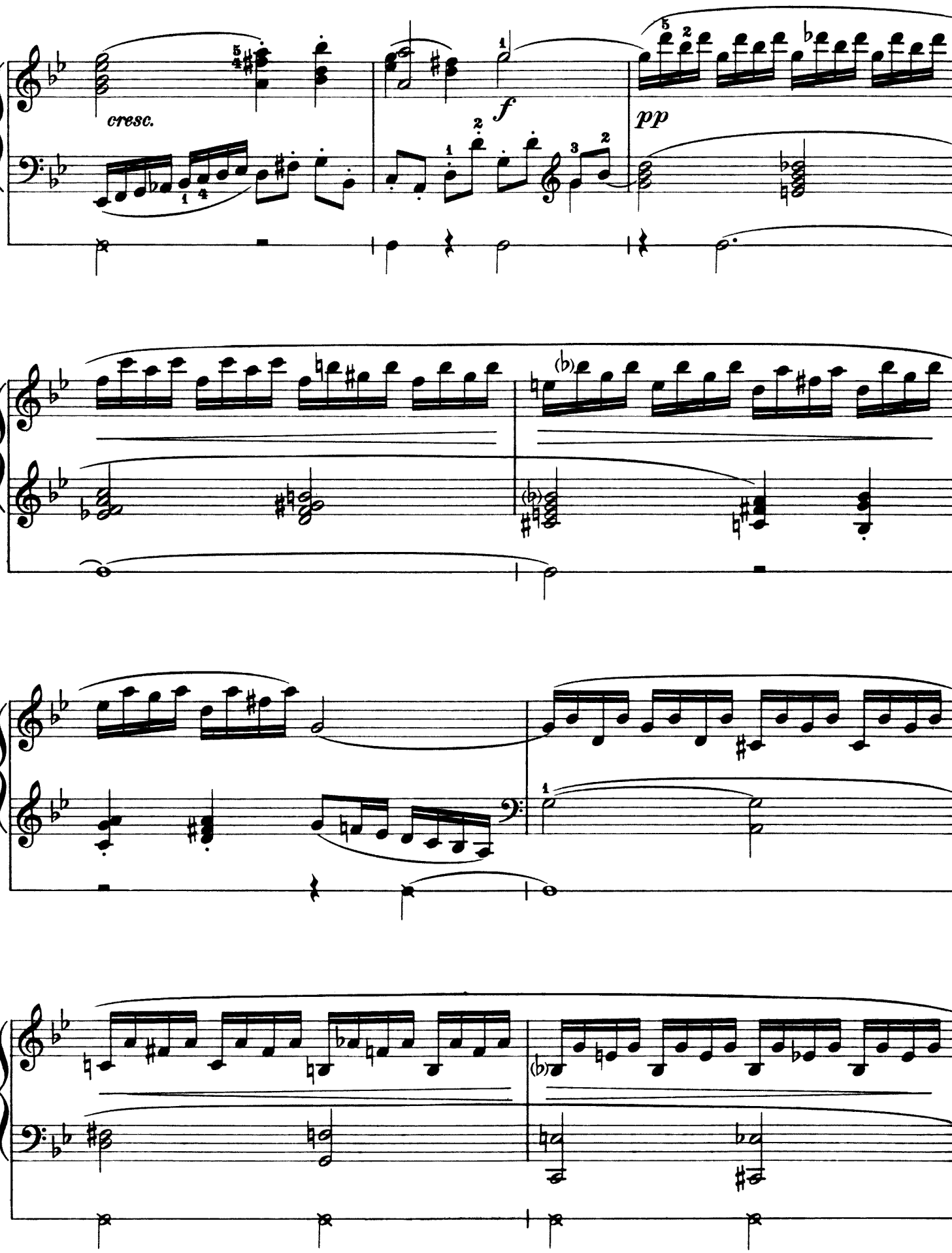
Allegro

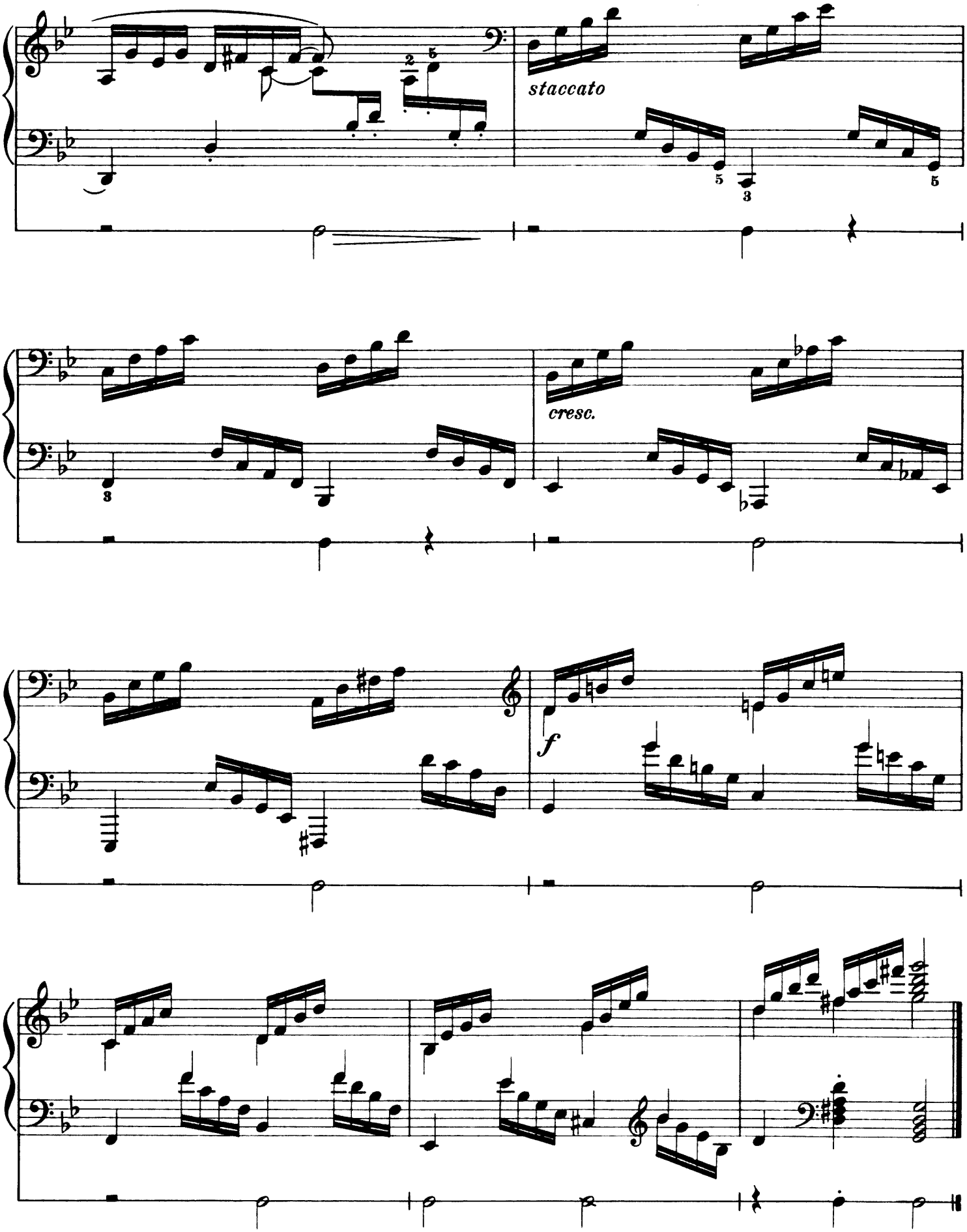



Animato
f
dim.
p
p
f

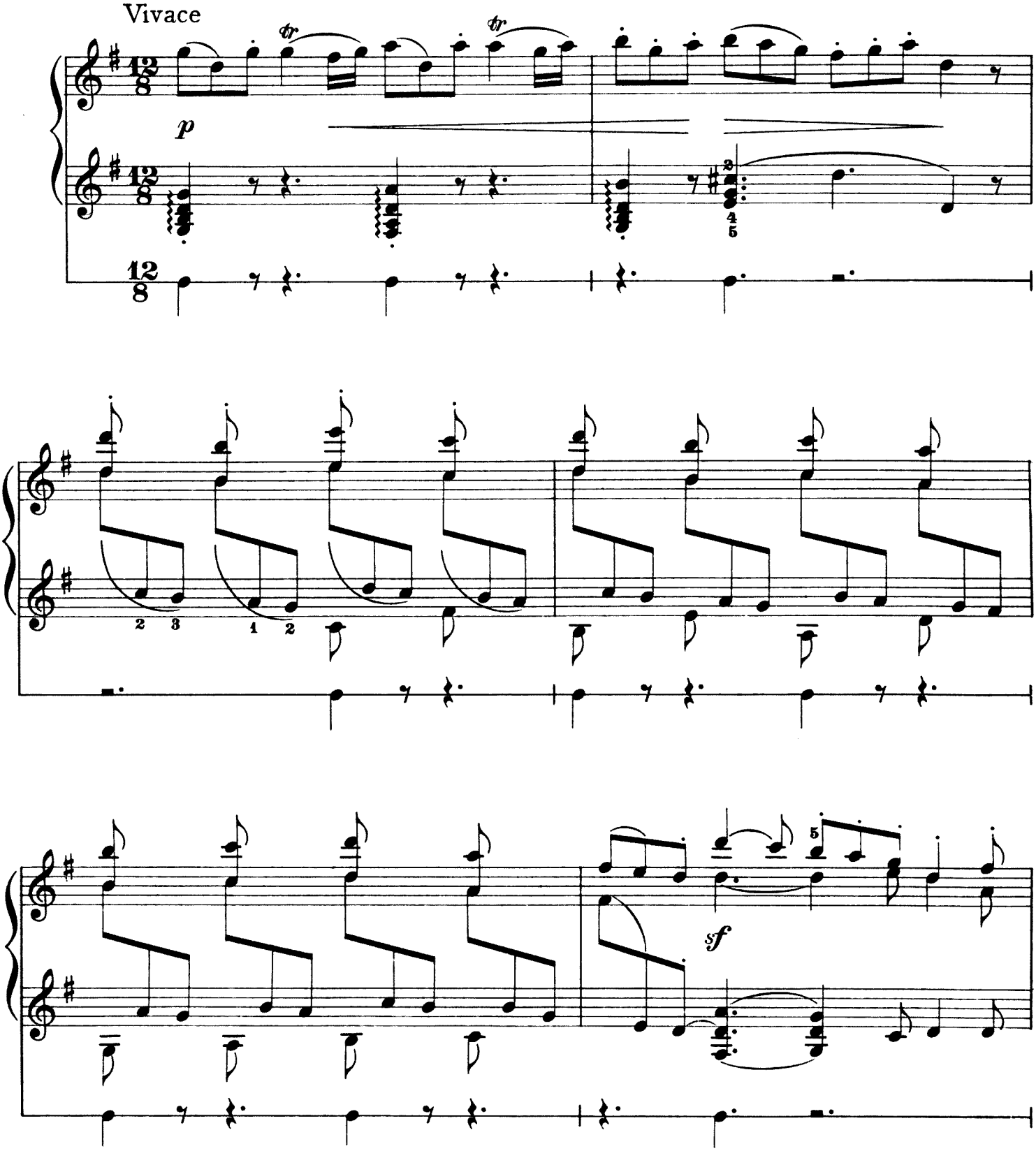

fp
f
8
pp due corde
8

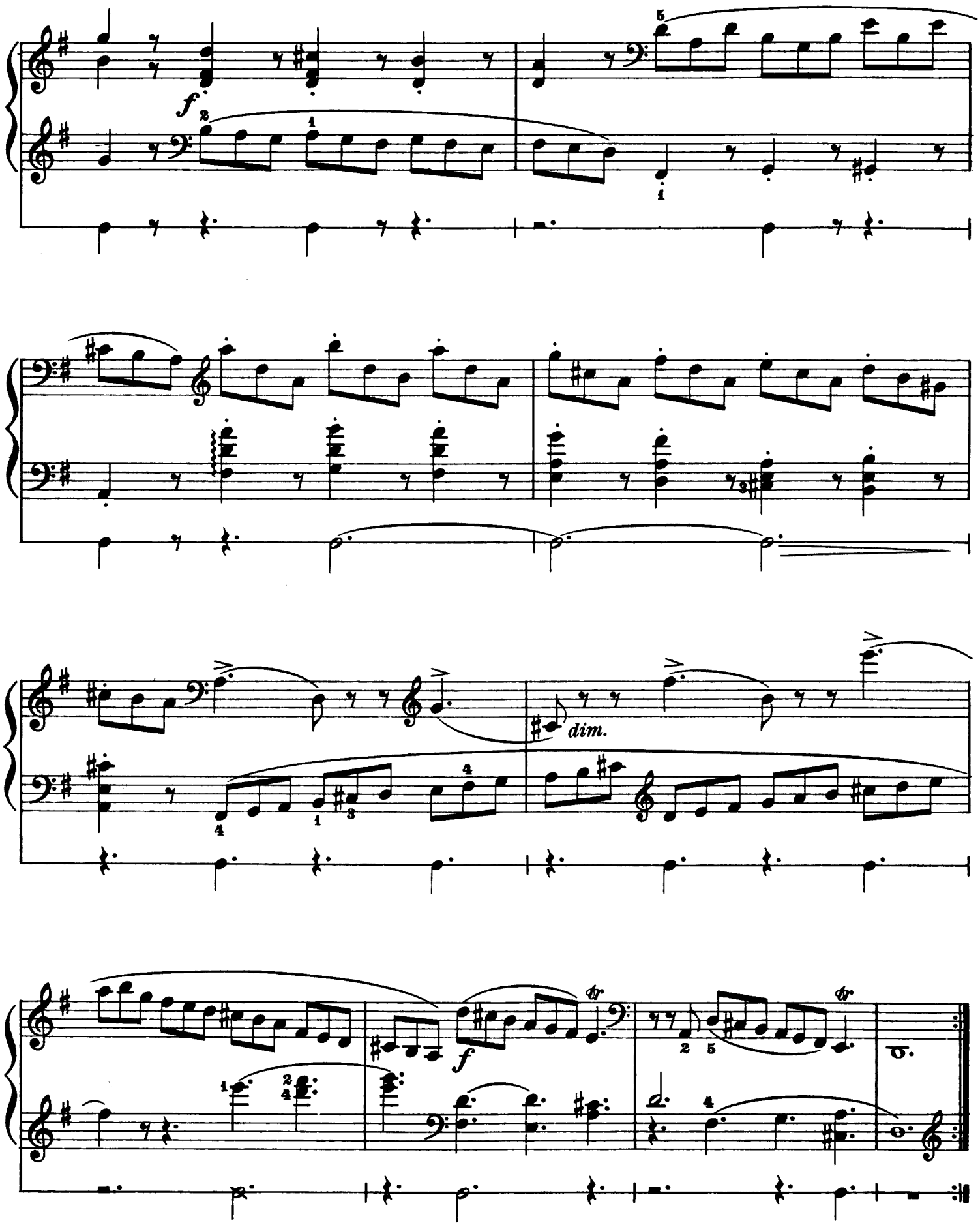

più f
ritard.
p
tre corde
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
p

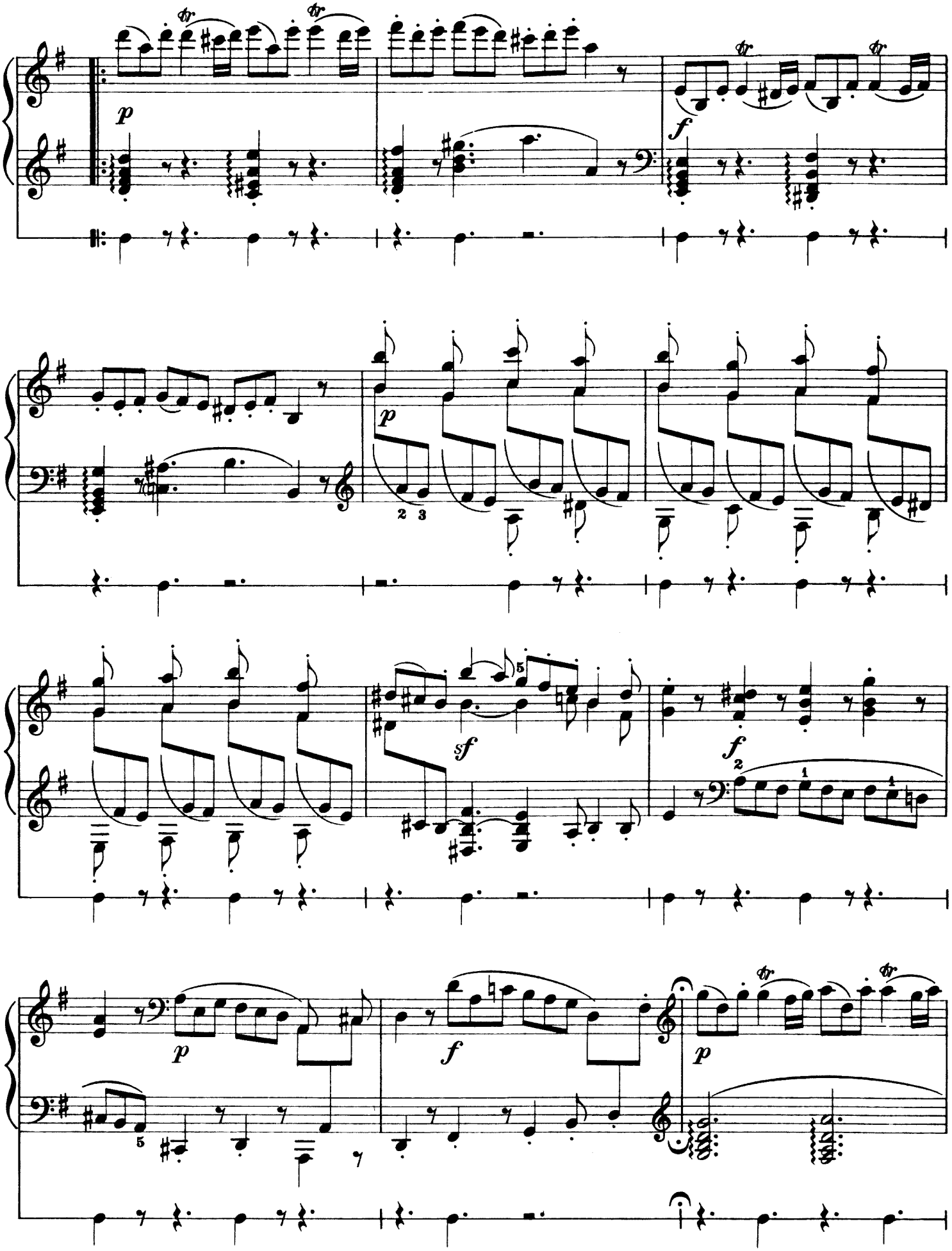

cresc.
f
pp

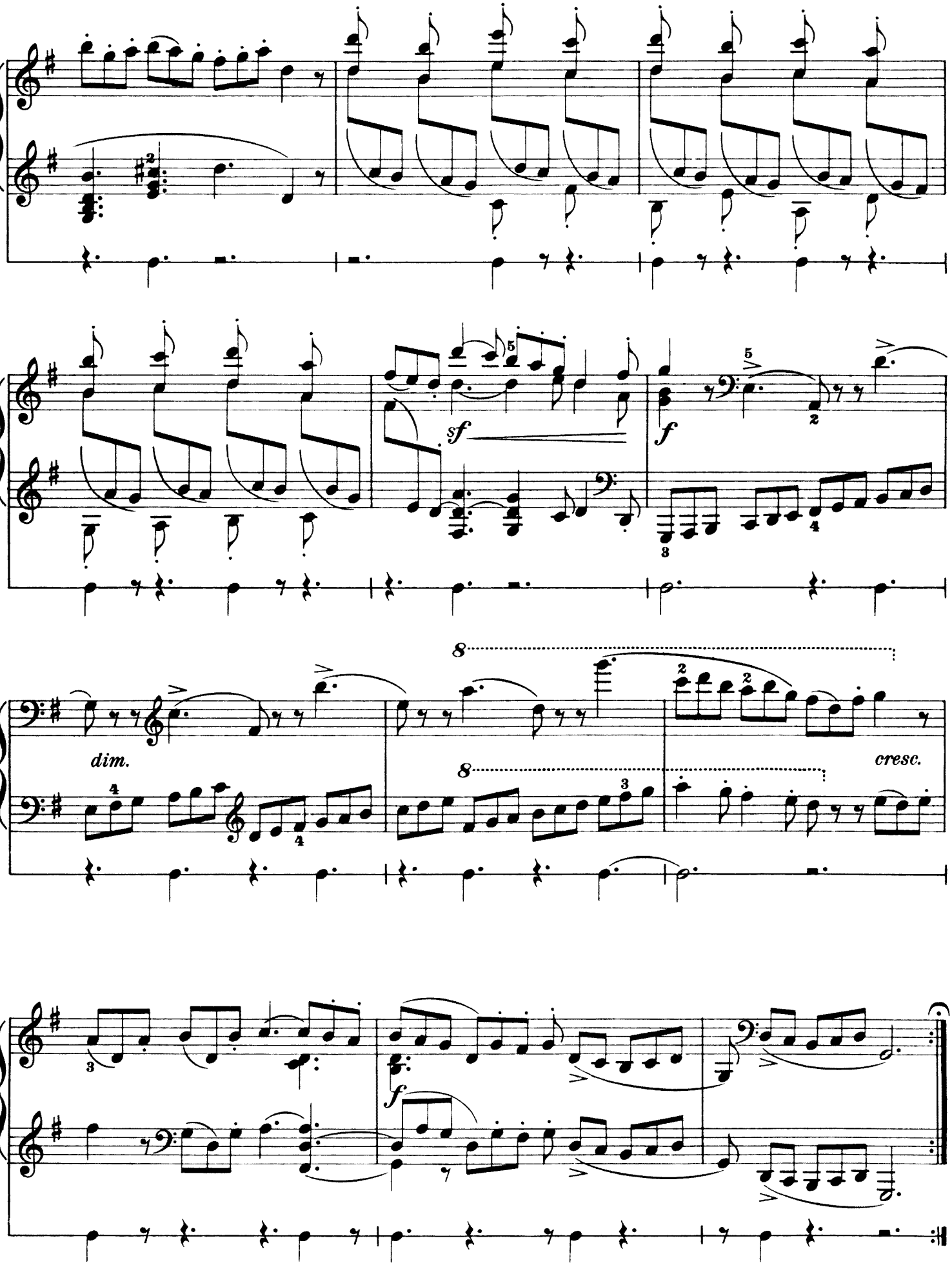

staccato
cresc.
f

Gigue




f
dim.
f


p
f
p
sf
f
2
p
f
p


sf
f
dim.
cresc.
f