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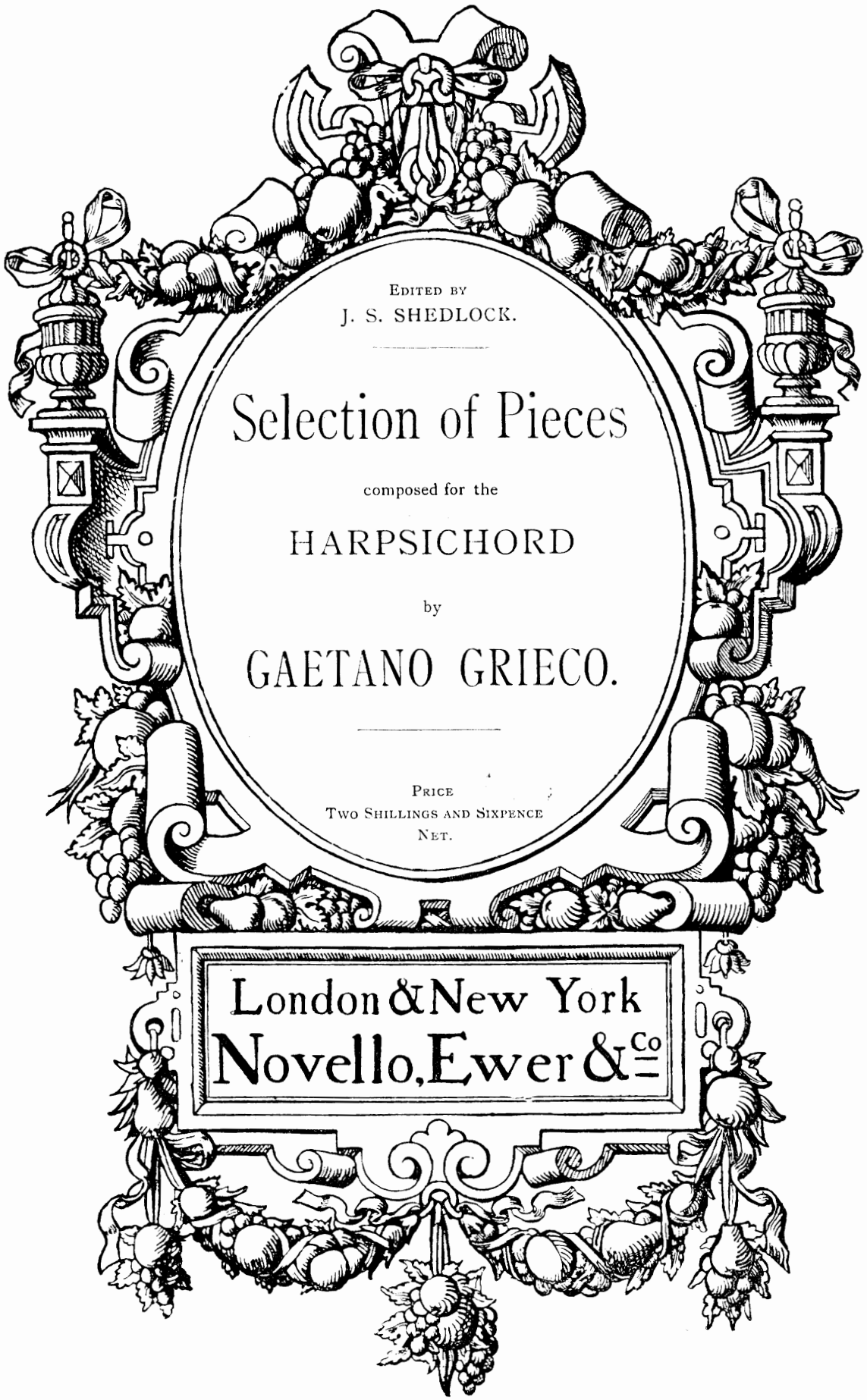


EDITED BY
J. S. SHEDLOCK.

Selection of Pieces

composed for the

HARPSICHORD

by

GAETANO GRIECO.

PRICE
TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE
NET.

London & New York
Novello, Ewer & Co

PREFACE.

GAETANO GRIECO[1] was born at Naples about the year 1680. He entered the Conservatorio de' Poveri di Gesù Cristo, and his master for counterpoint and composition was the renowned Alessandro Scarlatti. About 1717 he succeeded his master, and when the Conservatorio de' Poveri was abolished he occupied a similar position at the St. Onofrio Conservatorio. Cavaliere F. Florimo, in his "Cenno Storico sulla Scuola Musicale di Napoli," remarks that Grieco's best title to fame is that of having been the first teacher of the "divine" Pergolesi del Vinci and of Francesco Durante; he was also the master of Domenico Scarlatti. Beyond these very few facts, nothing whatever seems to be known about his life; neither is there any record of the year of his death. Florimo, however, states that he went to St. Onofrio when De' Poveri ceased to exist. According to the article "Naples," in Sir G. Grove's Dictionary, this happened in 1744; it would seem, then, that Grieco lived, at any rate, until that year. So far as I can make out, the pieces of Grieco contained in this Album are the first ever printed. In the "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" a short article with the familiar signature G. states, indeed, that "none of his music appears to have been printed, and only a very few pieces are known in MS." Of his compositions, some: *Litanie a quattro voci con due violini, viola, basso ed organo,* are mentioned by Florimo, who speaks of them as "*opere pregiatissime,*" which served as models to Durante in compositions of a similar kind. Dr. H. Riemann in his "Lexikon" also refers to them, and states that they have been preserved in manuscript at Rome. Florimo mentions, in addition, some excellent *Toccate e Fughe* in the collection of the Abbé Santini, some *Partimente* and *Tuoni Ecclesiastici* in the Archives of the *Real Collegio di Napoli,* and, likewise, a volume there entitled "Intavolature per cembalo."

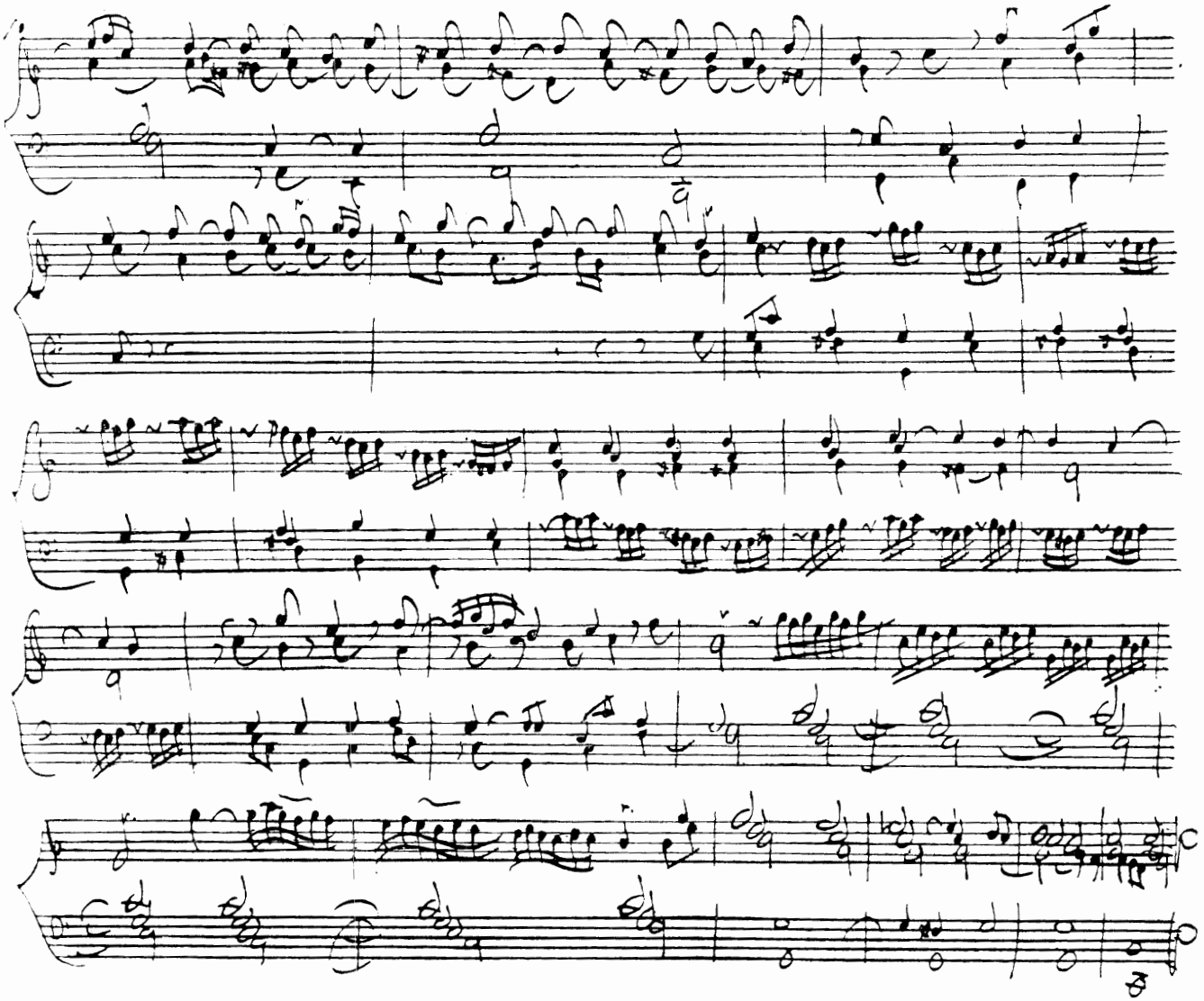
Now, as already mentioned in the foot-note, there is a volume in the Royal Library at Brussels, also bearing the title "Intavolature per cembalo," and marked in the Fétis Catalogue as an autograph. There is, however, no mention of it under the article "Greco" in Fétis' "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens." His son, M. Edouard Fétis, the present librarian of the Royal Library at Brussels, has been consulted, but is unable to furnish any other information than that contained in the "Catalogue raisonné" of his father's library, which the former published in 1877. The entry is as follows:—

6240. Intavolature per il cembalo del
Sig: Gaetano Grieco (Greci). MS. original.
1 Vol in. 4.° obl.

On the first page, someone (apparently an Italian) has written the word *originale.* In the British Museum (Add. MSS. 14,248) there is also a manuscript bearing the same title, but, for the most part, of different contents. One short piece is in both volumes, and, possibly, that may be the case with some of the other short pieces. The more important numbers in the two volumes are, however, quite different. The British Museum volume has every appearance of a copy; the writing is thick and by no means beautiful. The writing in the Brussels volume, on the other hand, has considerable character, as may be seen from the fac-simile on the next page.

[1] The dictionaries, also Cavaliere F. Florimo, write his name Greco. In the "Intavolature per cembalo," in the Royal Library, Brussels, which is said to be an autograph, it is written as above.

This fac-simile contains the latter portion of the second Grieco piece (pages 4 and 5).



The historical importance of Grieco's music is great. Alessandro Scarlatti is said to have been the first teacher of his son Domenico, and from the harpsichord pieces of the former, which have been preserved, there are faint traces of the paternal influence. But that of Grieco on the light-hearted, nimble-fingered youth must have been stronger. The pieces given here (the first and second are from the Brussels volume; the others from the one in the British Museum), in spite of their, at times, fugal character, are light and graceful. Grieco's music, generally, offers a striking contrast to the stately, though often formal and heavy harpsichord music of Alessandro Scarlatti; and it certainly seems to foreshadow that of Domenico. Apart from its historical interest, Grieco's music has certainly qualities of its own to recommend it. I have to thank Mons. E. Fétis for his courtesy and for his permission to print the above fac-simile; also Mr. A. Hughes-Hughes, of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, for kind assistance.

London, 1895.

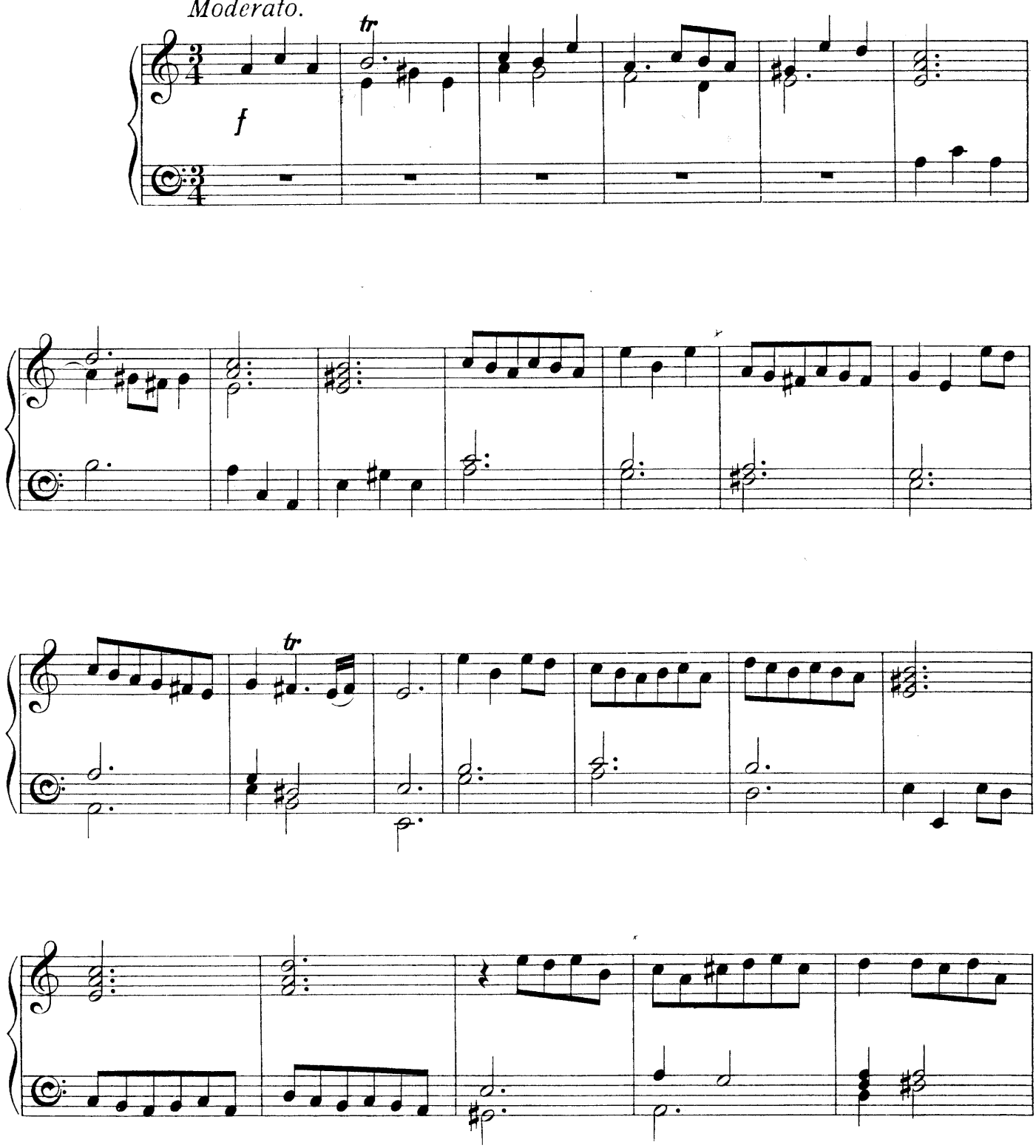
J. S. SHEDLOCK.

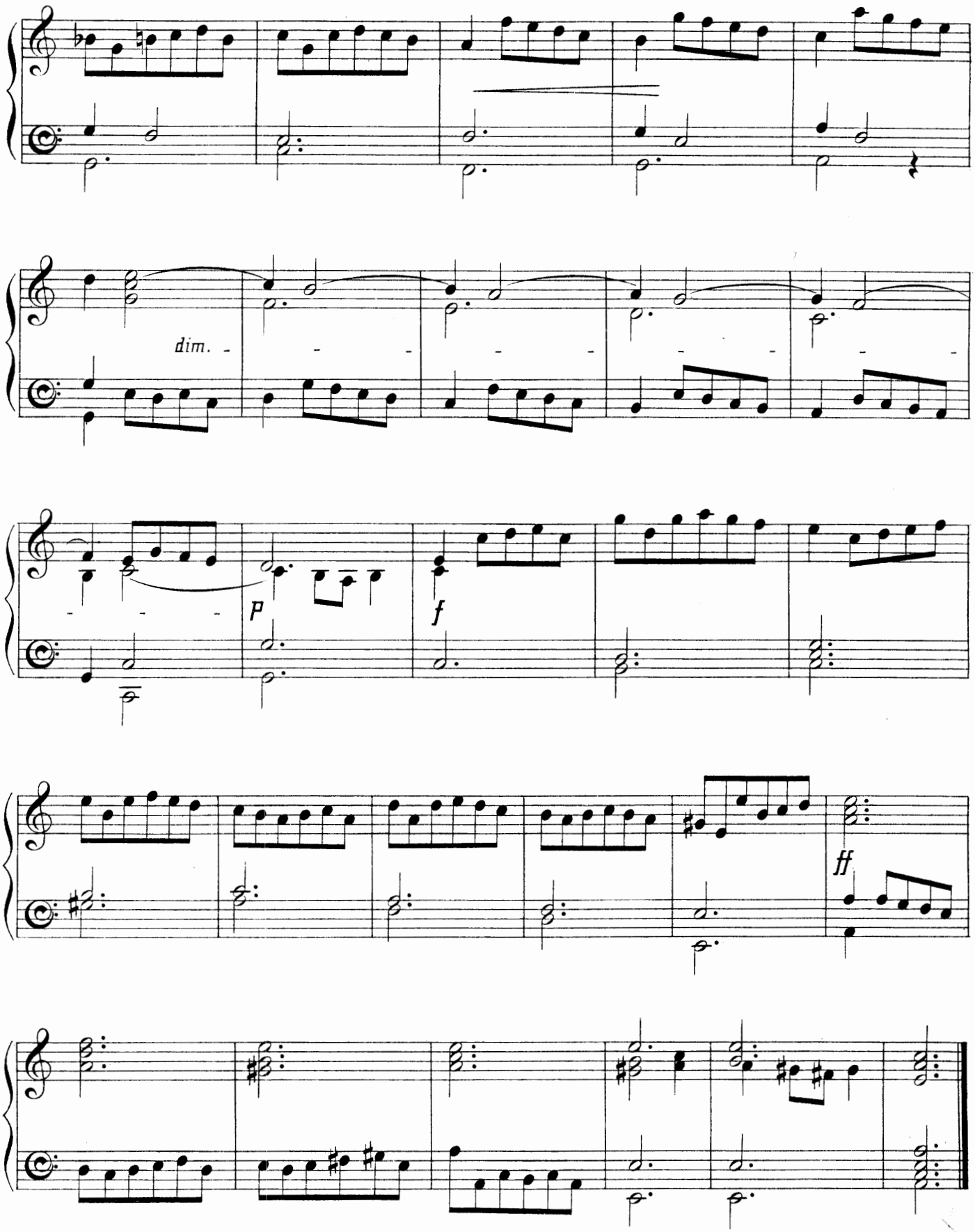
SELECTED PIECES.

I.

Gaetano Grieco.

Moderato.

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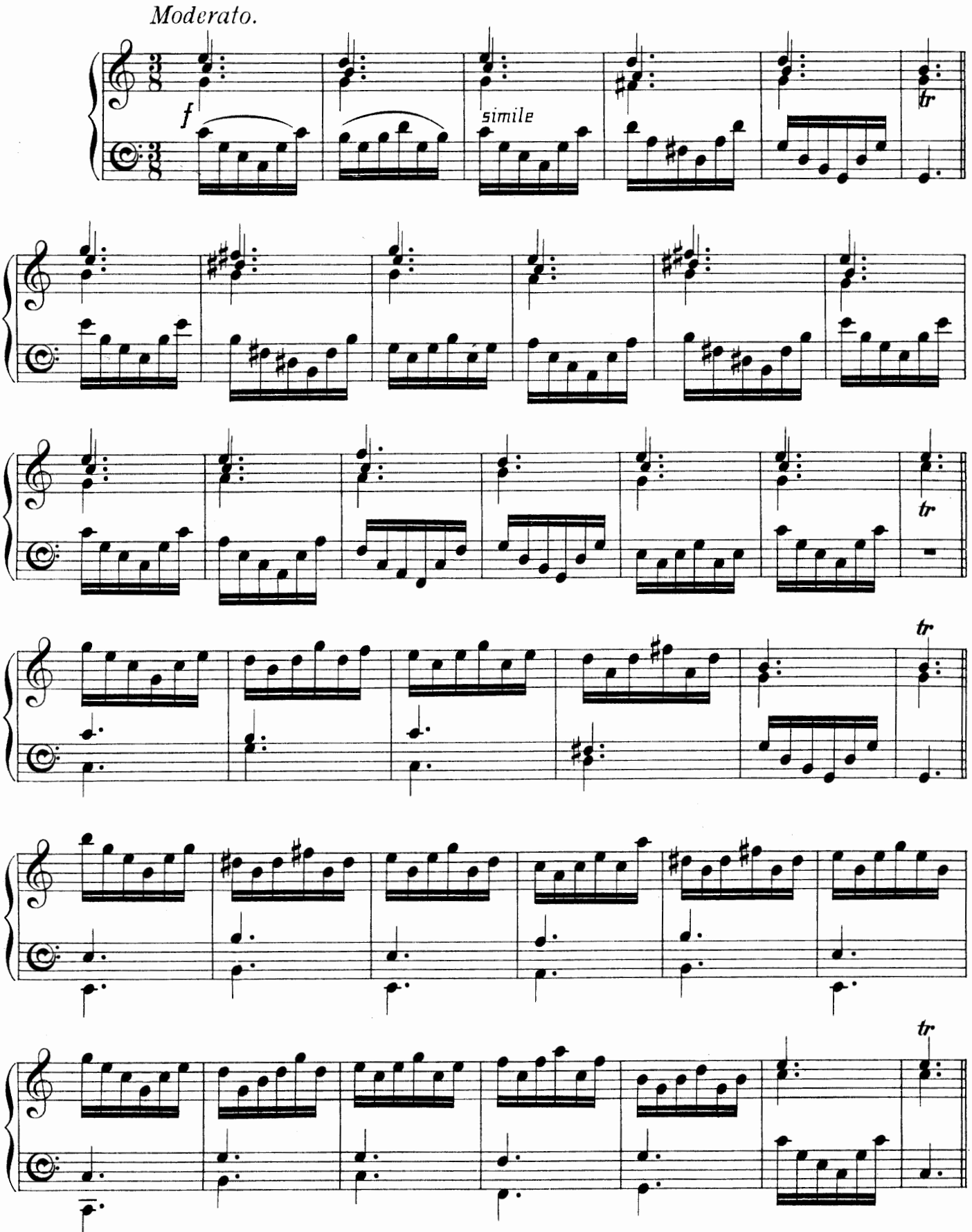

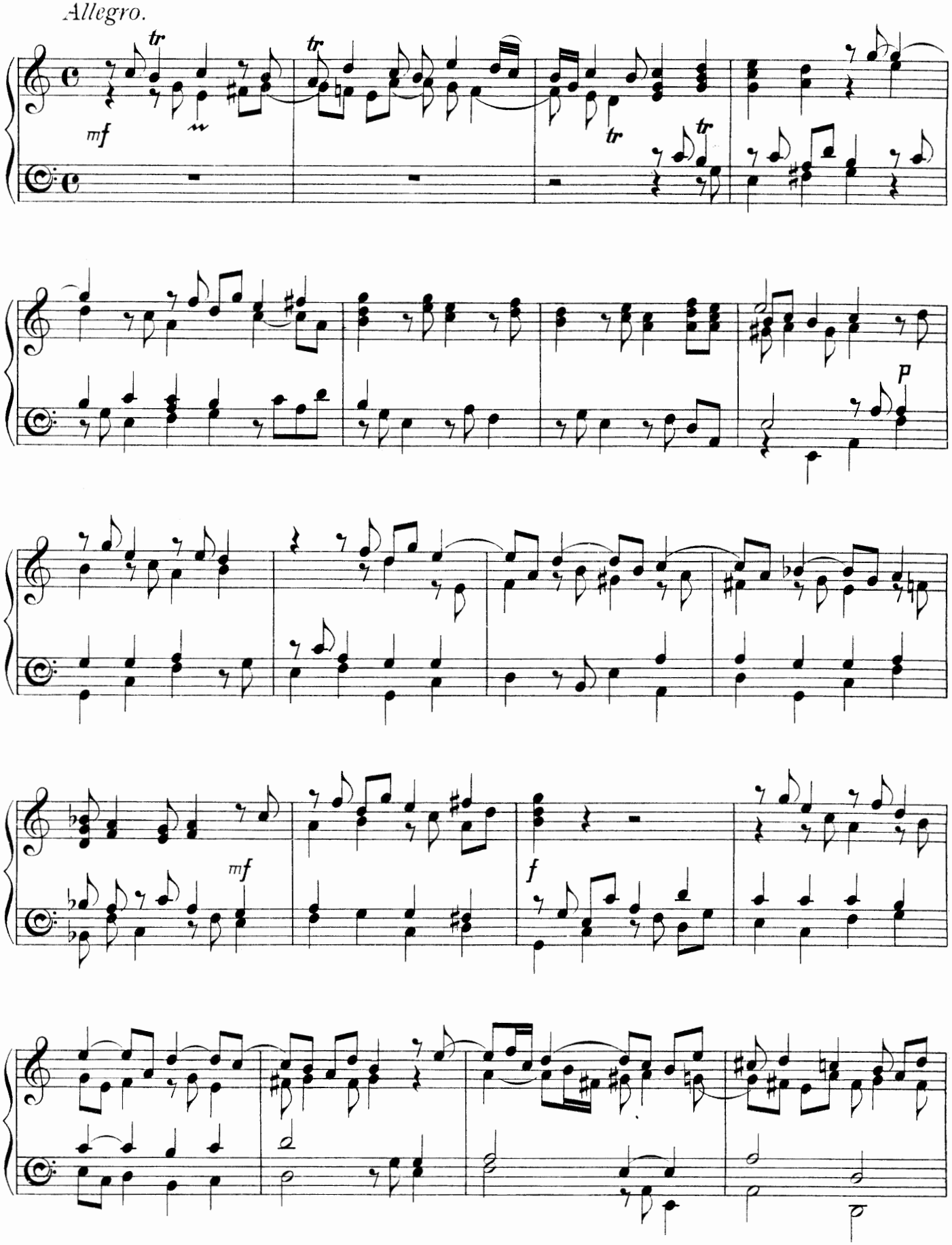
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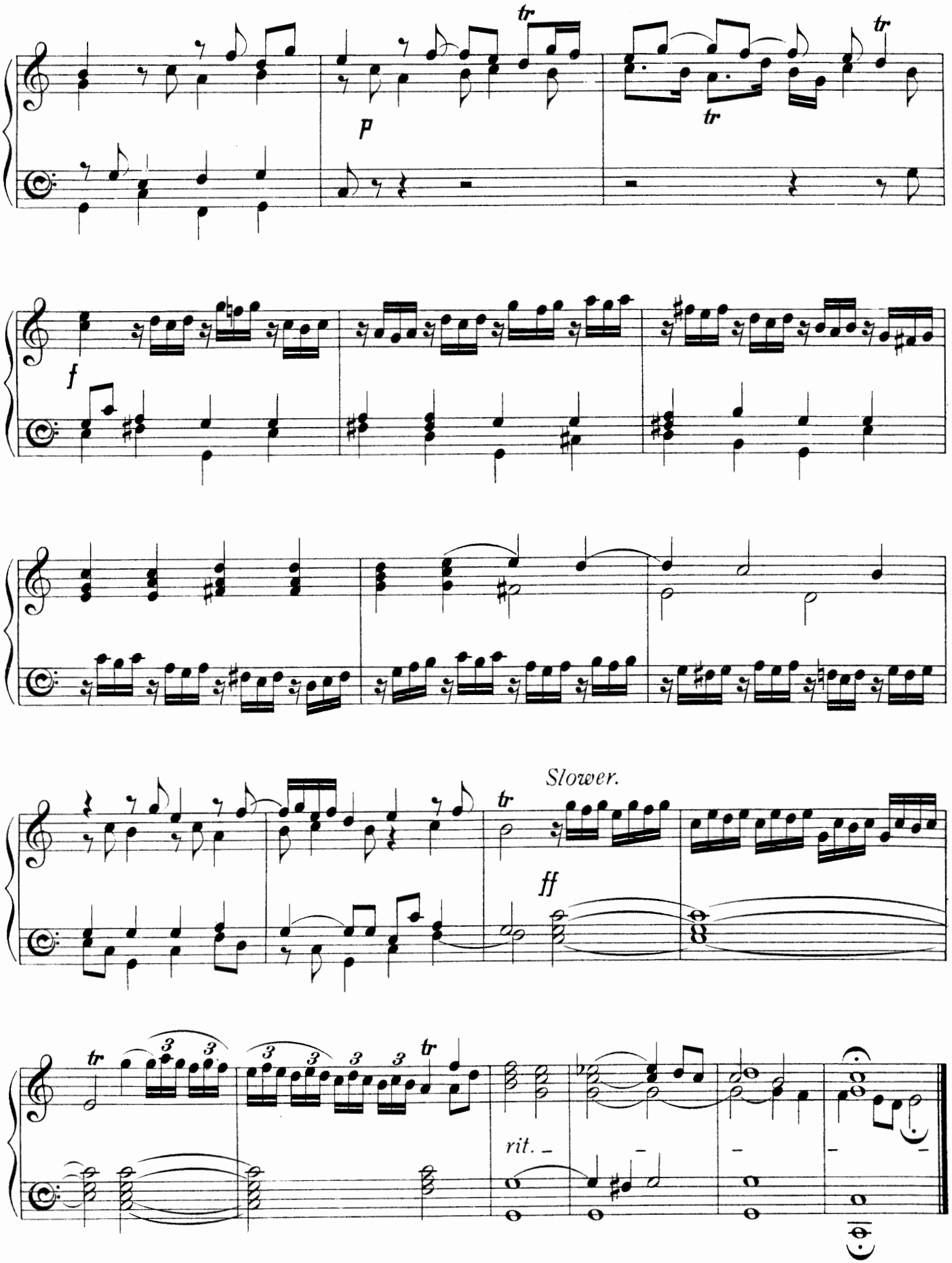
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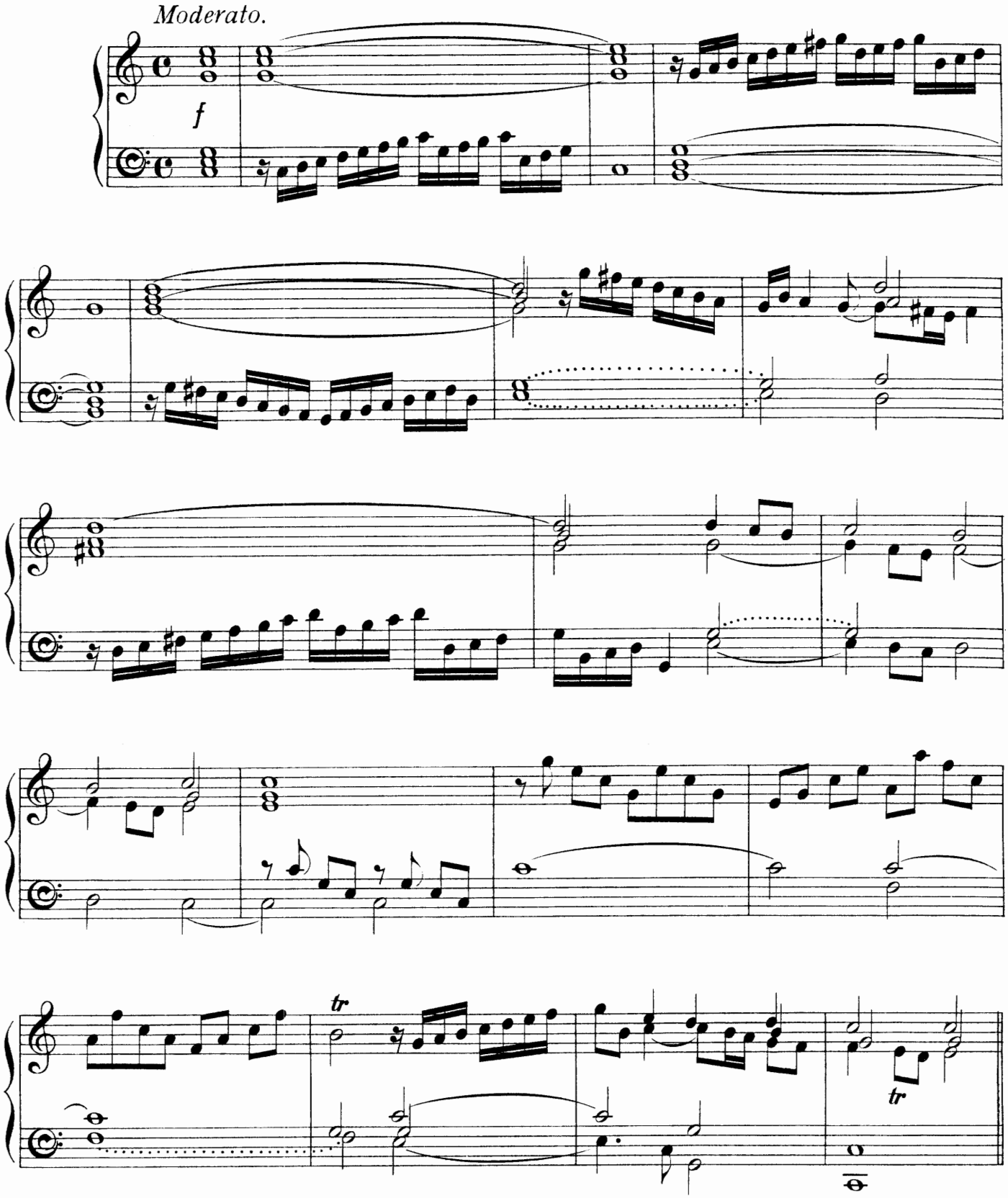

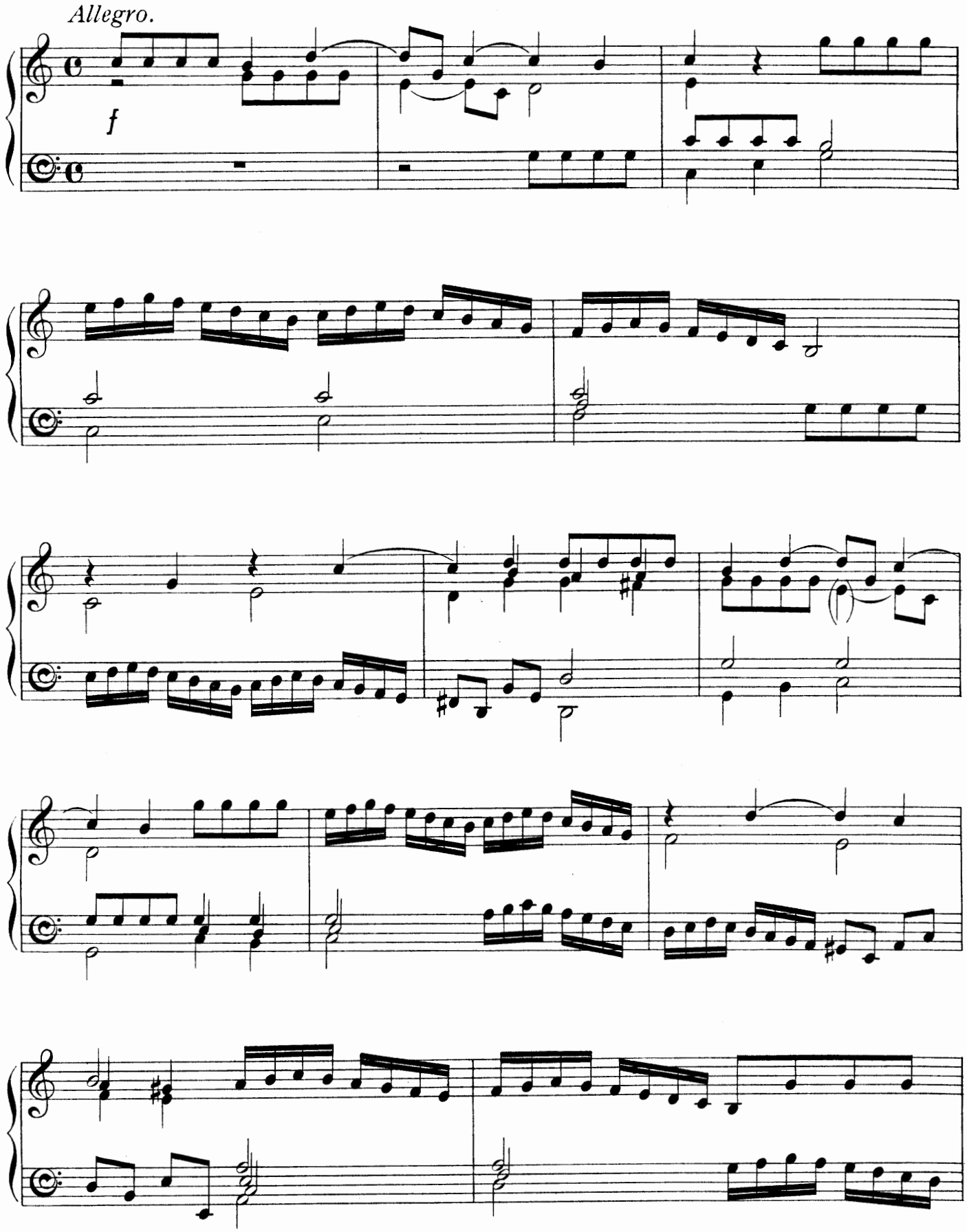
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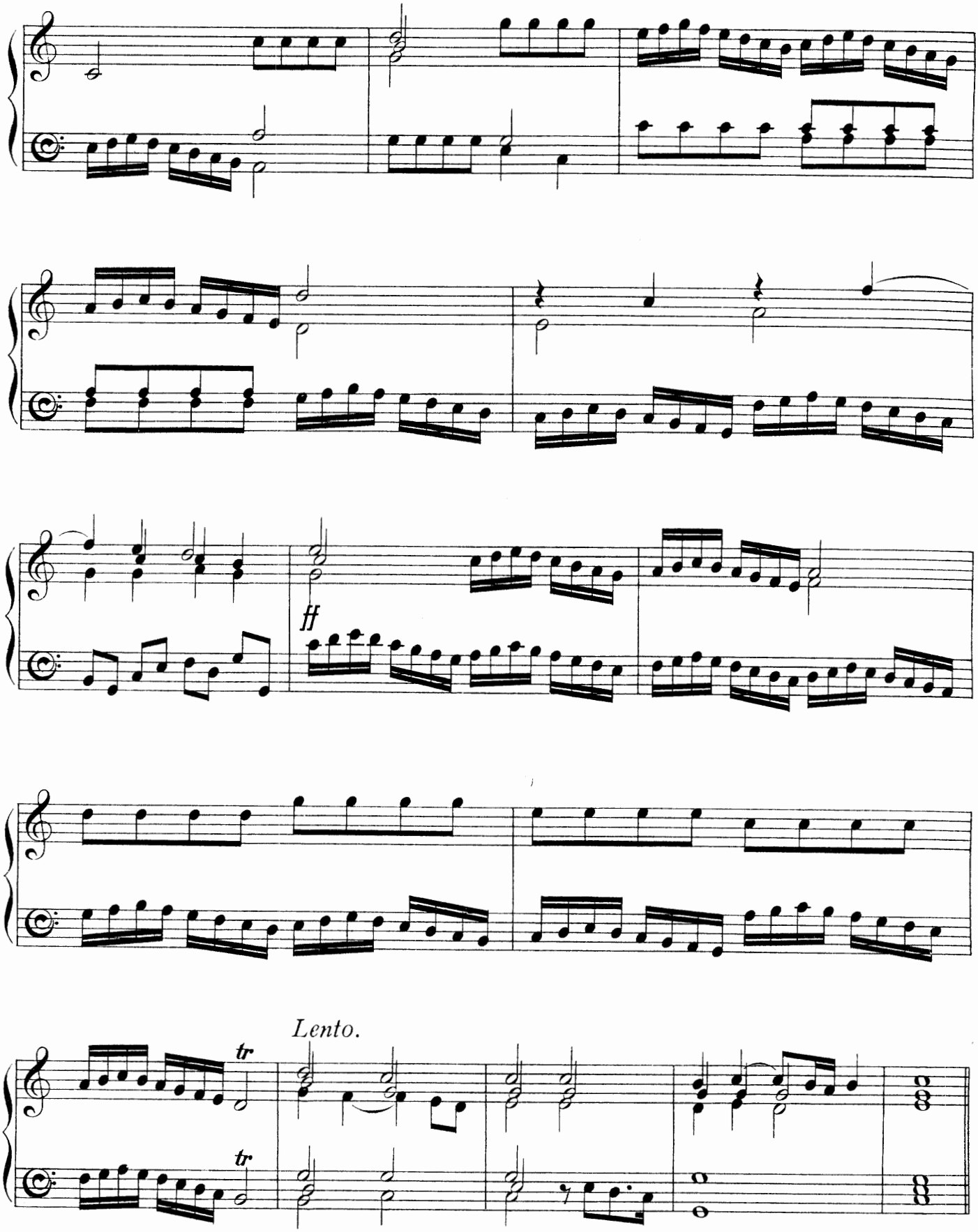
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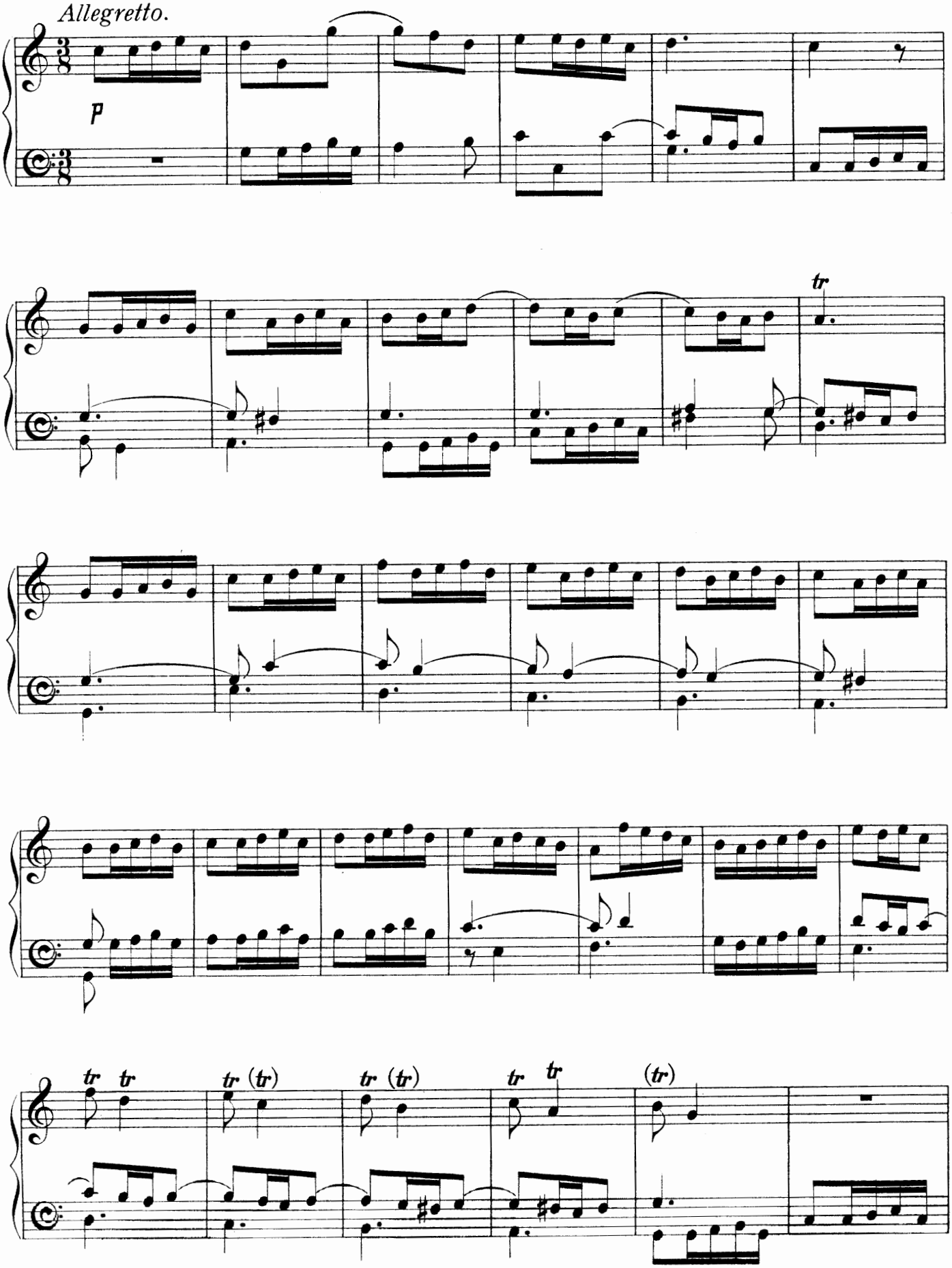
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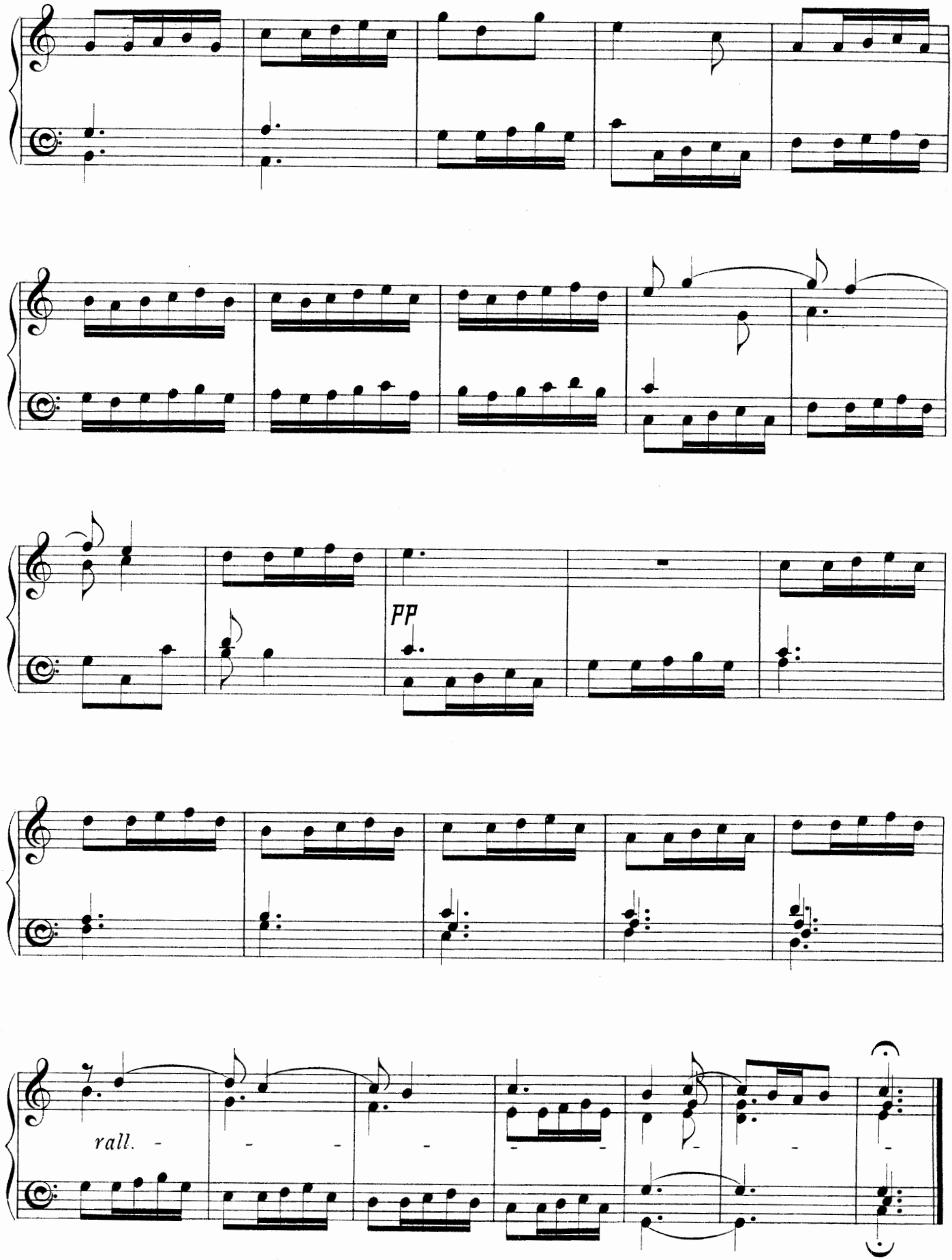
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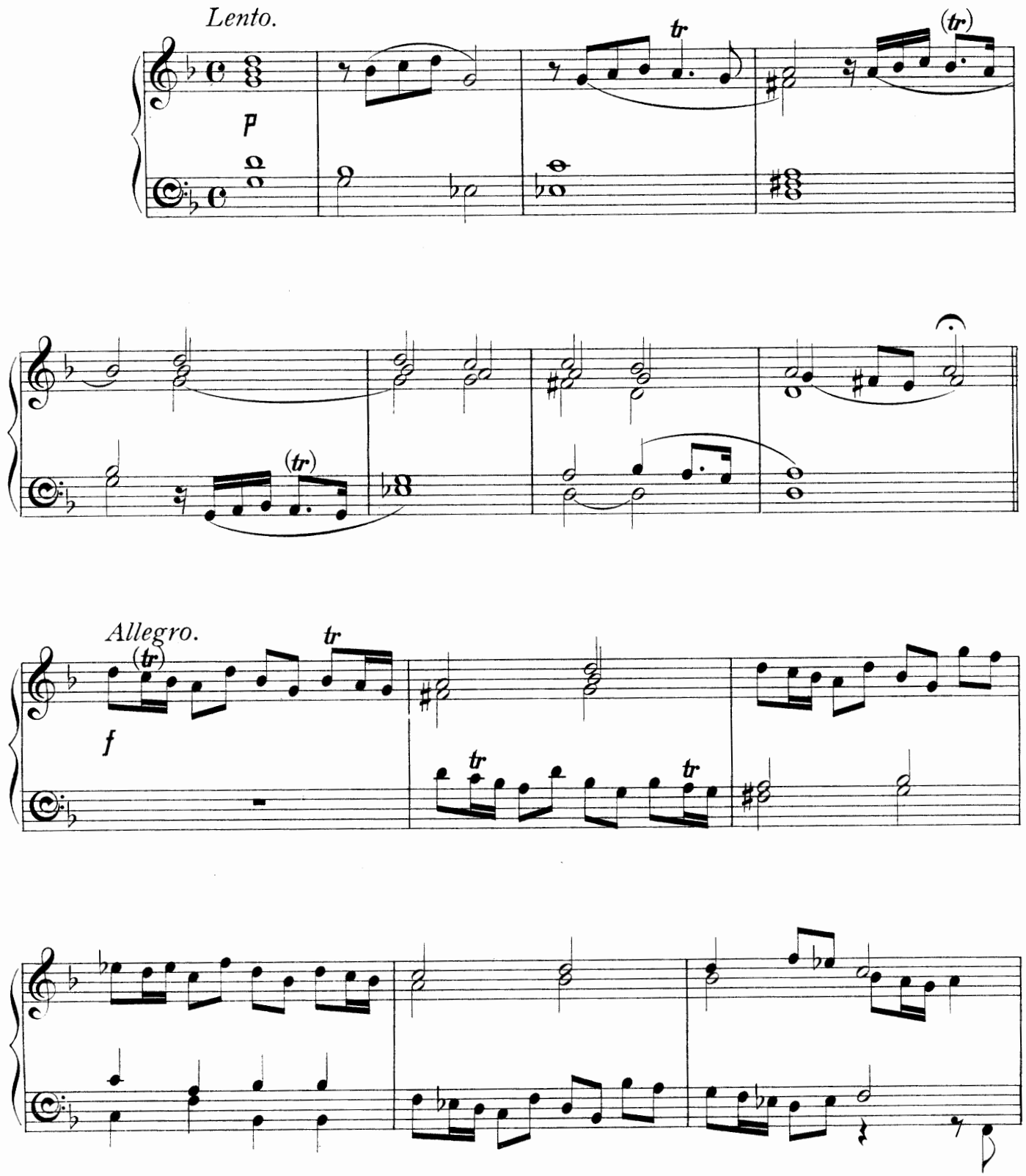

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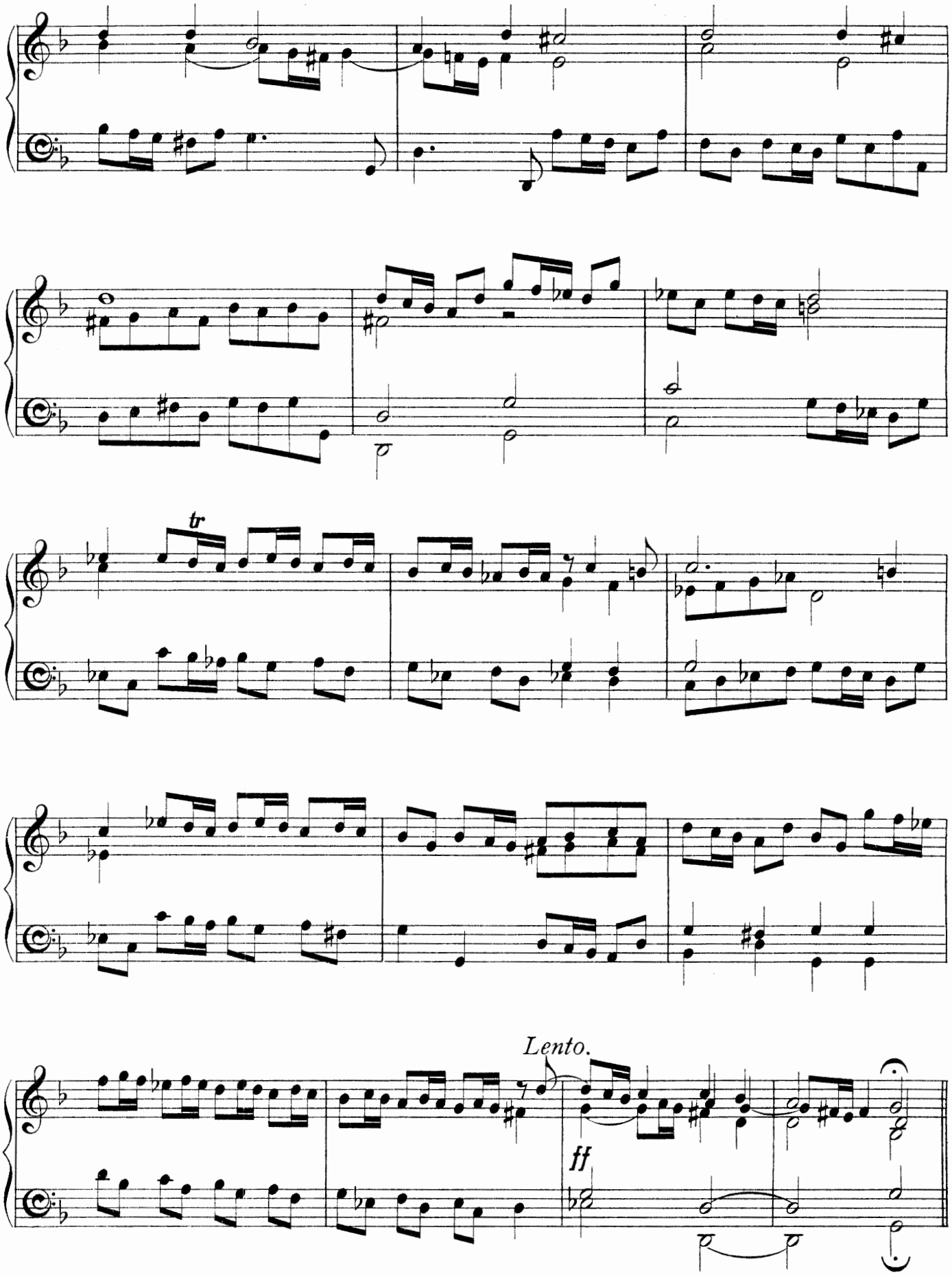
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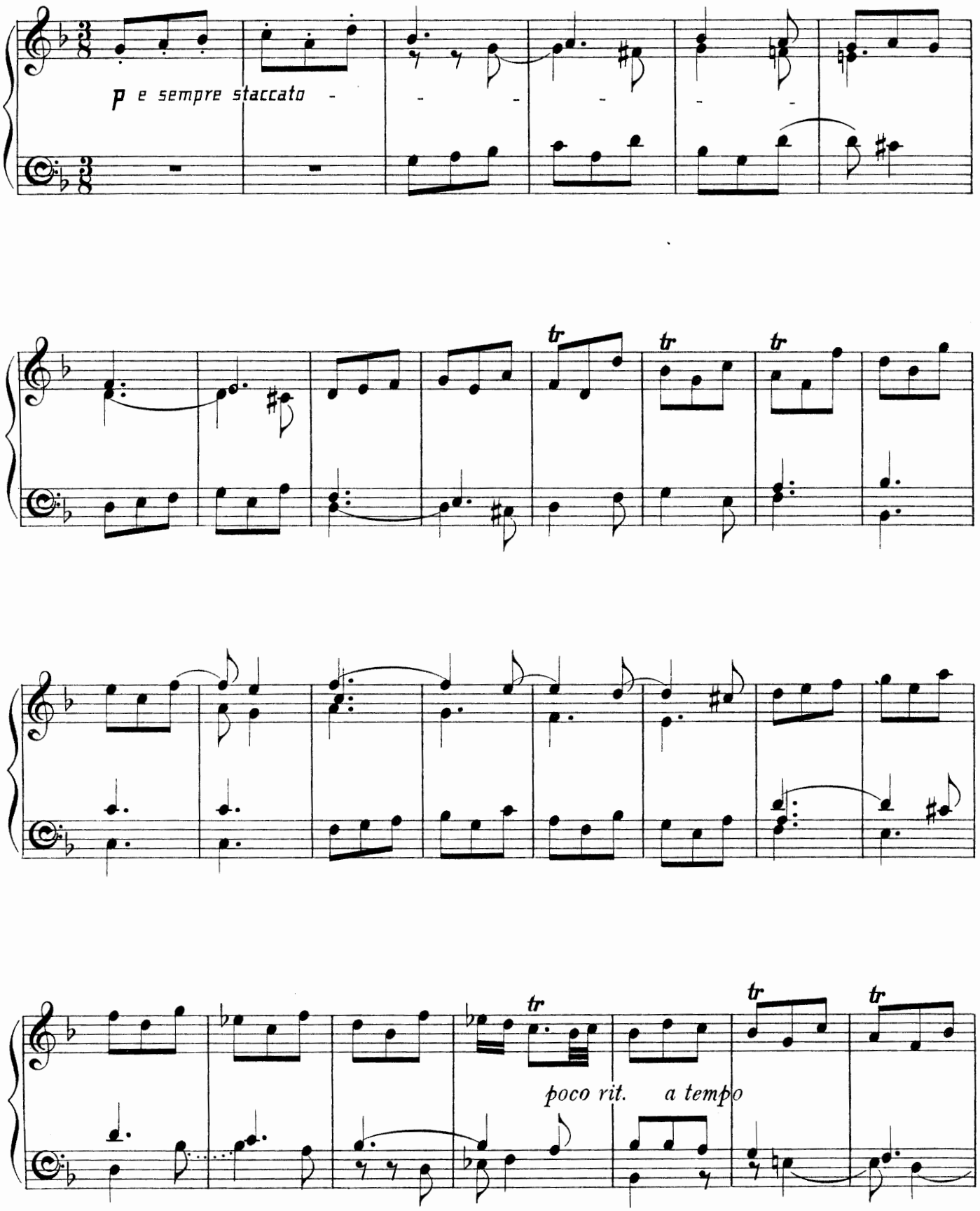

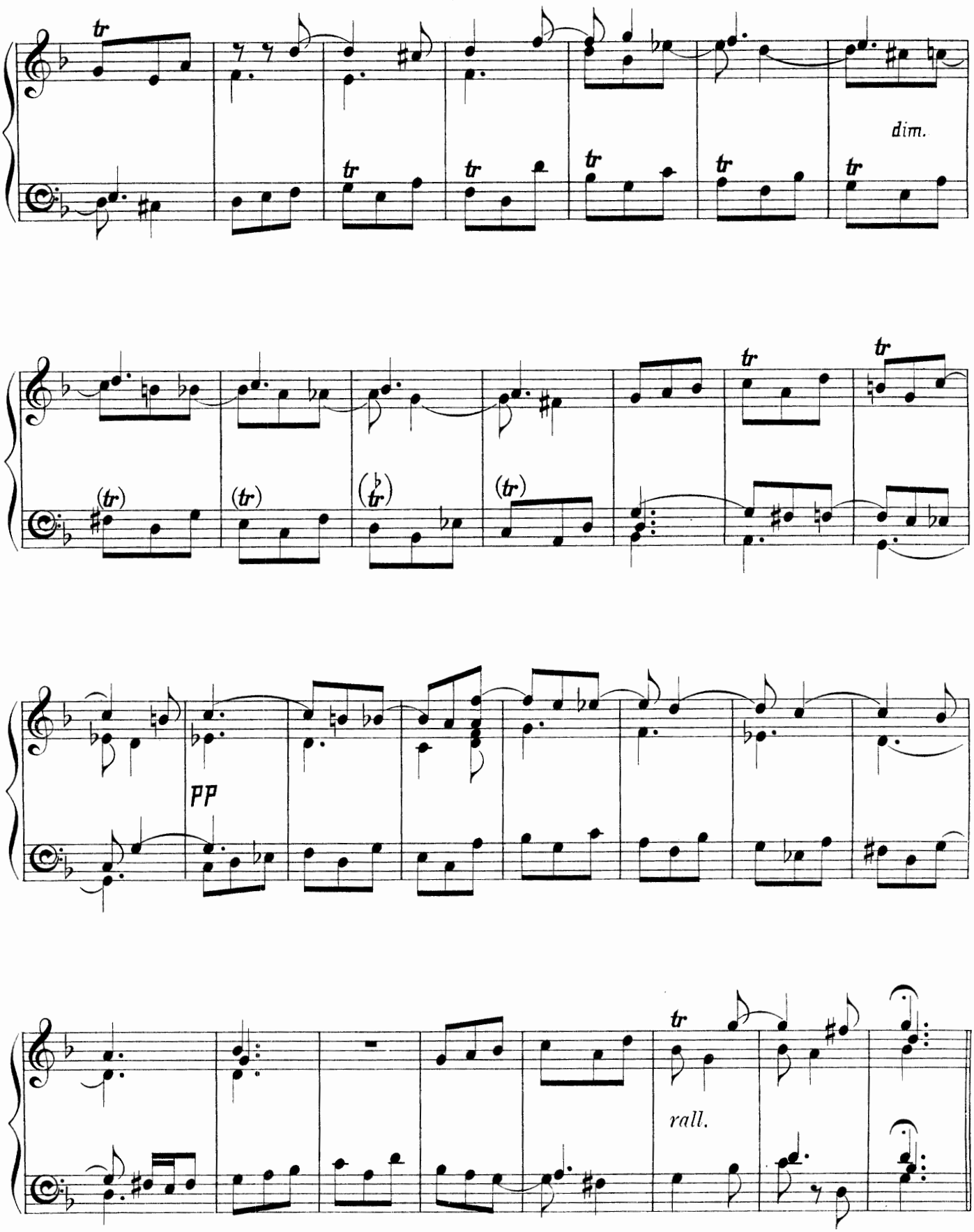
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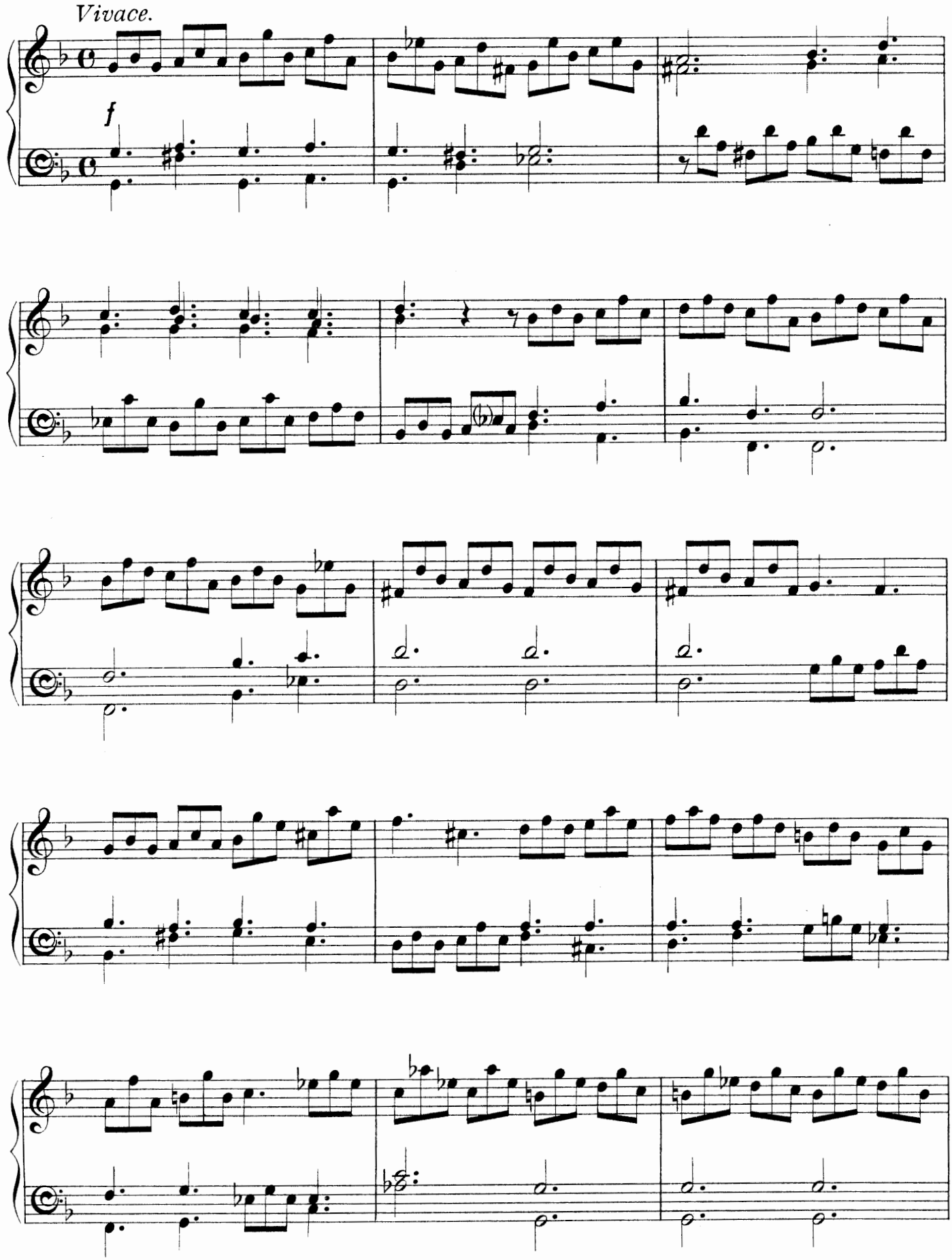
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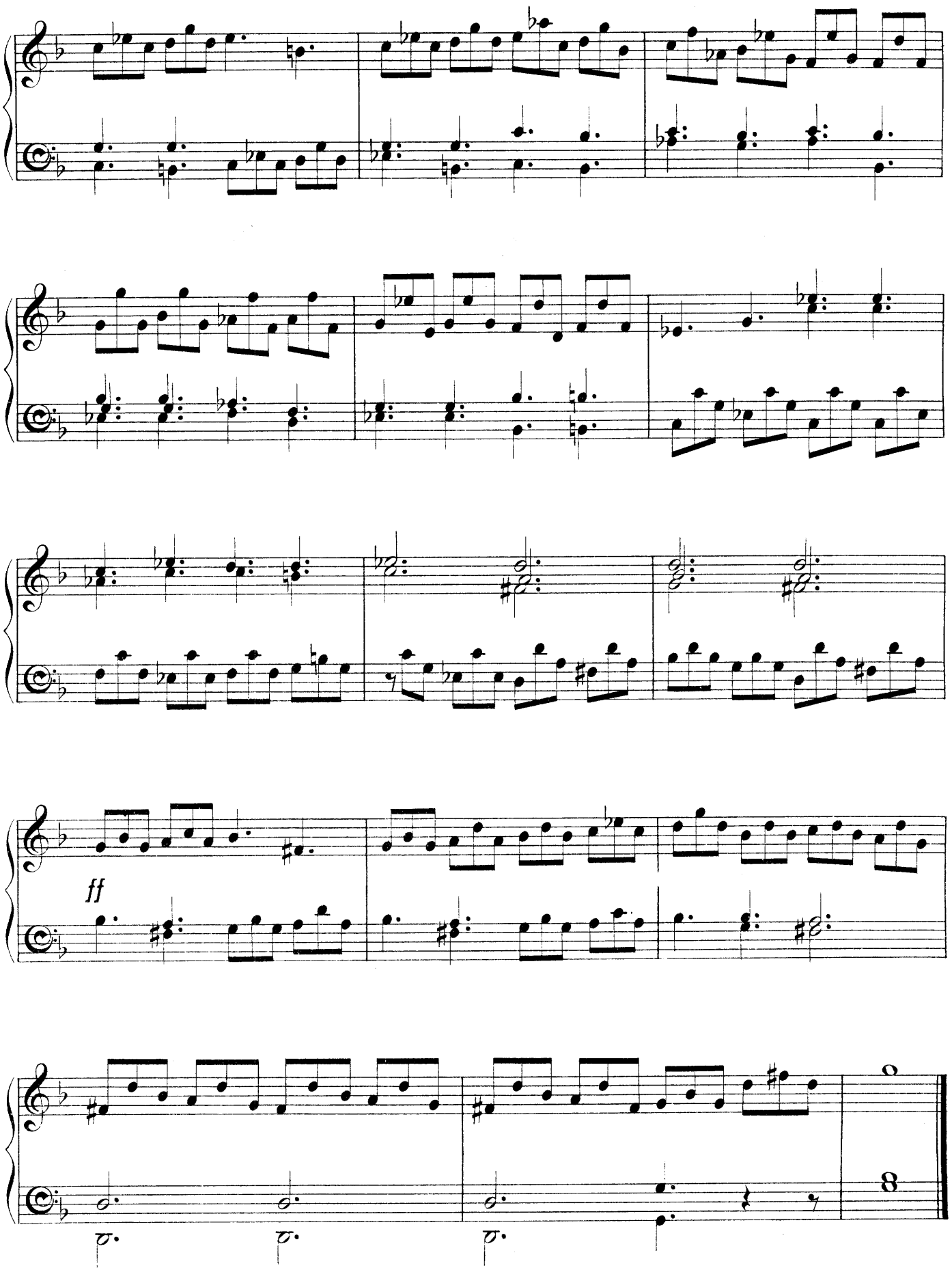

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