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ANTON RUBINSTEIN

SELECTED PIECES

FOR

PIANOFORTE

IN

TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I CONTAINS A
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR BY

PHILIP HALE

NEW YORK : G. SCHIRMER
BOSTON : BOSTON MUSIC CO.
1896

ANTON GRIGOROWITSCH RUBINSTEIN was born at Wyschwatynetz, a village near Balta, in Podolia, Russia, November 28, 1830. He was the third of five children. Although the forbears of his father, Grigori Romanowitsch and his mother, whose maiden name was Löwenstein, were of Jewish blood, Rubinstein's parents were good Russians and members of the orthodox church. The father was broadminded, careless in business affairs, social to excess, given to table-pleasure, passionately addicted to cards. In 1834 or 1835 he moved to Moscow, where he established a factory for pencils and pins. He died in 1846, leaving his family in narrow straits. The mother was of the stuff that shapes the lives of heroic sons. She took upon herself cheerfully the burden of supporting and educating her children, she succeeded in clearing her husband's memory of debt. She died at Odessa in 1891.

Rubinstein's first music-lessons were from his mother, who began to teach him when he was between five and six years old. She taught him strictly, "severely" so Rubinstein himself said, without, however, any definite plan for a career. The boy studied Hummel, Herz, Moscheles, Czerny, Clementi, and other lights of those days. When he was eight years old he studied under Alexander Villoing of Moscow, who, with the exception of the mother, was his only piano-teacher. "To him and to no one else," said Rubinstein in '89, "am I indebted for a thorough, firm foundation in technique."

On the 23d of July, 1839, Rubinstein made his début at Moscow. The concert was for the benefit of the poor of the town. The boy played an allegro from a concerto of Hummel with orchestral accompaniment, an andante of Thalberg, pieces by Field, Liszt, and Henselt. His success was overwhelming. In December, 1840, Villoing took his pupil to Paris, where he expected to put him in the Conservatory; but for some reason, possibly because Villoing did not wish to part with him, Rubinstein was not admitted. He met Liszt, Chopin, Vieuxtemps, and he gave several concerts in 1841. And then the boy traveled as an infant phenomenon, playing in the Netherlands, at Vienna, in Germany, England, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, imitating the mannerisms of Liszt. Indeed, Liszt, the pianist, and Rubini, the tenor, influenced mightily his playing throughout his career. In 1844, feeling the need of more serious study, Rubinstein went to Berlin, where he studied harmony and counterpoint under Dehn. In 1846 he started alone for Vienna. There he struggled, and knew hunger and want. He gave lessons at a cheap price; he composed; he wrote literary articles; he made a tour through Hungary. The revolution of '48 disquieted him, and he thought of going to America. Passing through Berlin, Dehn persuaded him to remain there for a time. Again he struggled manfully with poverty, until, in 1849, he went to St. Petersburg. And there he became acquainted with the Grand Duchess Helen, the sister of Nicholas I., who was his faithful friend until she died in 1873. He taught, composed, saw his first operas produced, made a concert-tour through Germany, France, England (1854-1858), spent happy days at the Court of the Grand Duchess at Nice, and in 1859 he took the directorship of the Petersburg Russian Music Society. In 1862 he founded the Petersburg Conservatory, and was its first director (September 1 to 1867). In 1865 he married Wera Tschikonanoff of St. Petersburg, and by her he had one daughter and two sons. From 1867 to 1870 he again gave concerts throughout Europe. During the season of 1872-73 he visited the United States with Henri Wieniawski, appearing in 215 concerts, and receiving 200,000 francs. In 1867 he had left the Petersburg Conservatory, because he disagreed with some of the professors as to the methods of instruction, and craved time for composition. He was then his own master, devoting himself to composition and concerts. In 1887 he again took the management of the Conservatory, but he resigned it in 1890. In 1889 his official jubilee was celebrated with great pomp for six days, the jubilee of his first public appearance as a pianist fifty years before. Not the least remarkable feature of his career was the series of historical concerts given in the chief European cities in 1885-86. He died suddenly at his home in Peterhof, November 20, 1894.

Rubinstein was a devoted son, and he was tender in all his domestic relations. He was fond of society and jest. He united the characteristic extravagances of the Russian and the musician. A foe to humbug of every kind, brusque in the presence of flatterers and pretentious mediocrities, he was the generous friend of the humble, the poor, and the distressed. He was never weary in well-doing. He gave with both hands to charity. Thousands of dollars, gained at his concerts, were handed over to the poor. An accomplished linguist, he was deeply interested in science, philosophy, and belles-lettres. His "Conversation on Music", full of delightful paradoxes, is the work of a keen observer, given to reflection, endowed with the power of felicitous expression, master of gentle humor and biting wit. Honored with every honor, he remained modest, unspoiled, natural.

Although Rubinstein was not of an imposing stature, he was deep-chested, broad-shouldered, thick-set, apparently composed of bones and muscles only. His face was that of an oriental Titan, and in stormy musical

moments the Cossack would glare out of the kindly, determined eyes, with lids drooping peculiarly; the sensuous mouth would be a line of adamantine firmness; the rebellious hair would bristle; and the pianist would be as one possessed with a dæmon. His fingers were stubby, blunt, apparently without pliancy. His walk was moody, almost lumpish. "I am simply much hair and little nose," he once said of himself. Yet his leonine face reminded one of Beethoven. He was, beyond doubt and peradventure, the greatest pianist that has lived since the palmy days of Liszt. One may have excelled him in academic correctness; another may have been more constantly faithful to the accepted and traditional spirit of a composer; another may have equalled him in one particular direction: there was an elemental grandeur in his performance, a supreme nobility, a volcanic passion, a virile tenderness that placed him far above his fellows, and gave him a unique position. Years ago he was amazingly proficient in technique; and although when he last played in Vienna it was a time when technique ran in the streets, his mastery over all mechanical difficulties still excited wonder. He would, at times, fail to be in the mood; there would be false notes; there would be a singular slip of memory; but suddenly, the dæmon would enter into his soul. The melting song Rubini sang came from the fingers of Rubinstein. Pianissimi of butterfly delicacy were never inaudible in the largest hall. A fiery allegro was like unto the swoop of an army, terrible with banners. However tasking the program, there would be a steady crescendo of physical and mental strength. And the hearer, under the spell, would lose all thought of technical and academic rules.

Rubinstein was a most fertile composer, and few are the forms in which music is cast that he did not attempt. Let us consider for a moment his works for the piano. The chief of these are five concertos (the fourth of which, D minor, op. 94, in which the piano-part is treated symphonically, is among the noblest works of its class); four sonatas; five barcaroles; Etudes; many pieces, apart or in sets, ranging in merit from trivial salon-music to a height of thoughtfulness and beautiful expression; and the four-handed Bal Costumé. Then there is much chamber-music in which the piano has an important part.

There is some truth in the criticism of Mr. Beatty-Kingston: "Rubinstein plays the music of others as though it were his own, and composes his music, as though it were that of other people" The ultra Russians, although they reverence the man and the pianist, do not consider him a Russian composer; they call him a cosmopolitan, an eclectic. It is true that Rubinstein preferred the Western scale to the Eastern scale; it is true that he was influenced by Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Schumann; and yet in his best work there is a pronounced individuality with occasional suggestions of Oriental temperament. He wrote a great deal, and he wrote at too fast a pace. In many of his pieces, the opening pages are by far the best. Wild with the desire to rid himself of a haunting thought, he seldom had the patience to elaborate a fine idea; it seems as though he gladly abandoned one task for another. And yet, examining even his piano-pieces, one is conscious of the presence of an indisputable, if irregular and uncontrolled, genius. To me, this genius finds fullest and most musical expression in his songs; but in his piano-music there is much that will benefit the student and enchant the listener. The reputation of Rubinstein the pianist will undoubtedly overshadow the name of Rubinstein the composer, but it will be many years before certain of his compositions disappear from concert-halls, and attract the attention of the curious only.

PHILIP HALE.

Contents.

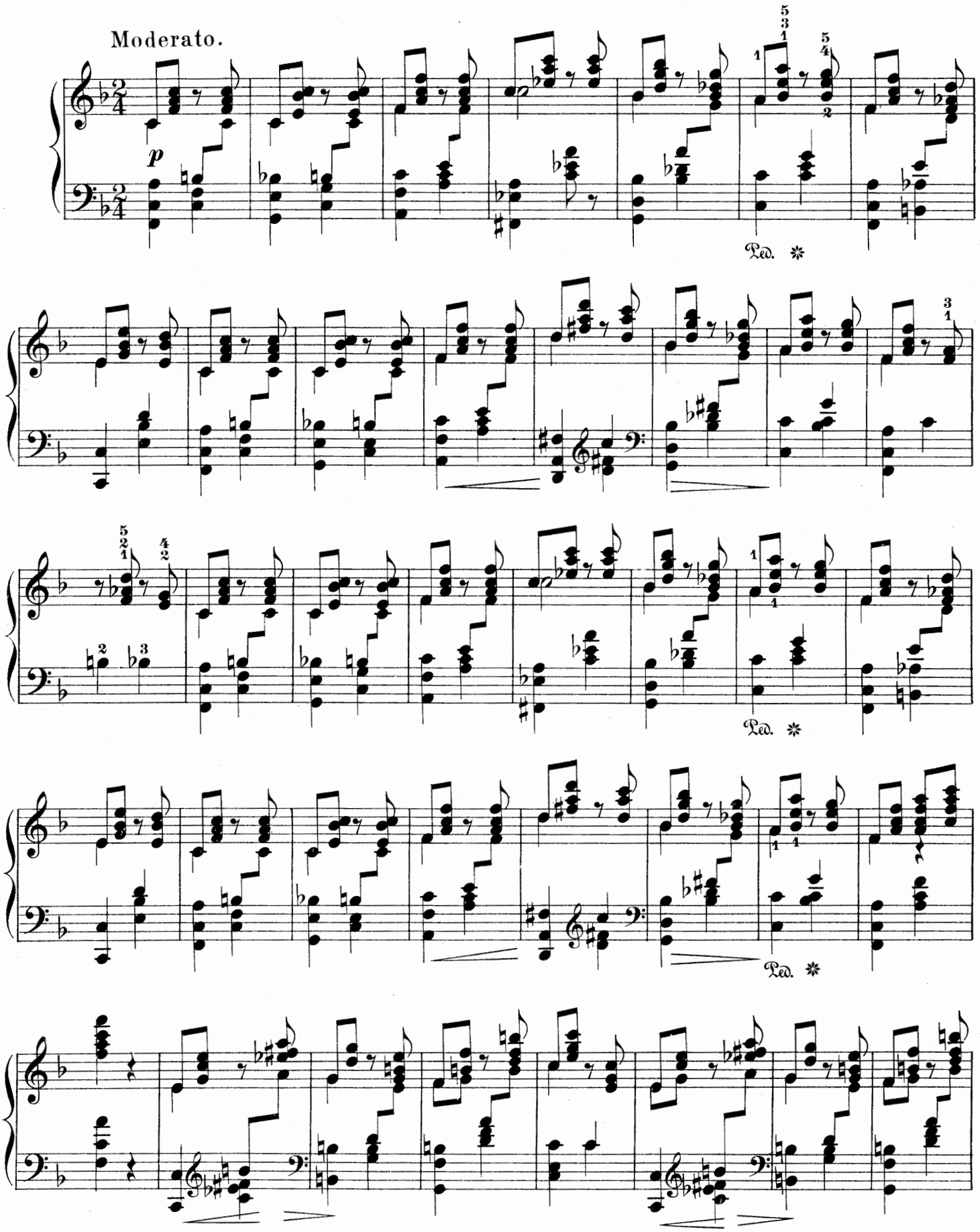
1. Melody *in F,* Op. 3, № 1 ..... Page 2
2. Barcarole *in F minor,* Op. 30, № 1 ..... " 5
3. Romance *in F,* Op. 26, № 1 ..... " 10
4. Nocturne *in G♭,* Op. 28, № 1 ..... " 13
5. Impromptu *in G,* Op. 44, № 4 ..... " 18
6. Scherzo *in A,* Op. 44, № 2 ..... " 22
7. Kamennoi-Ostrow, Op. 10, № 22 ..... " 26
8. Valse from "Miniatures" ..... " 34

Cl. Sh.
M
R896

Melody.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op.3, No. 1.



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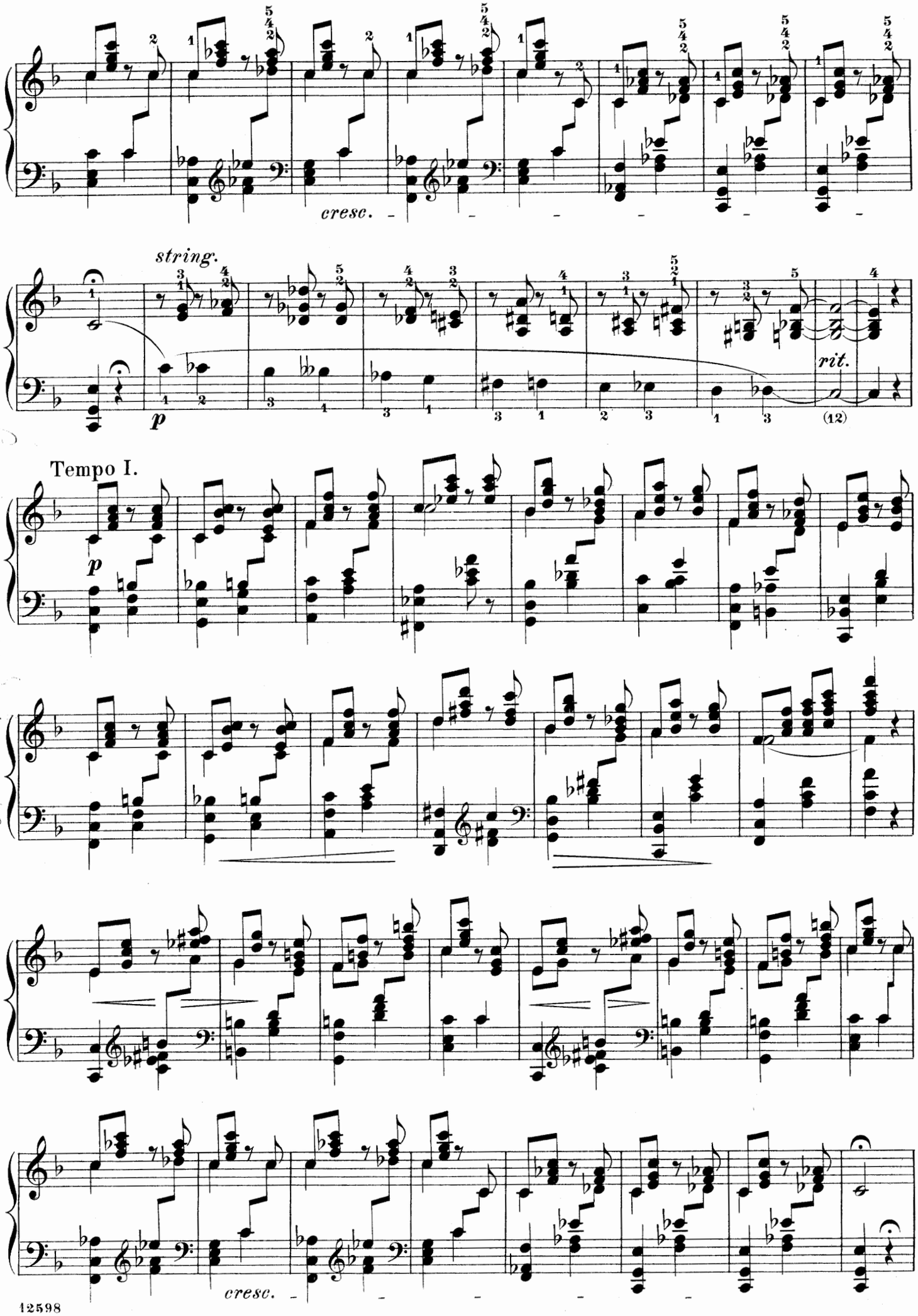
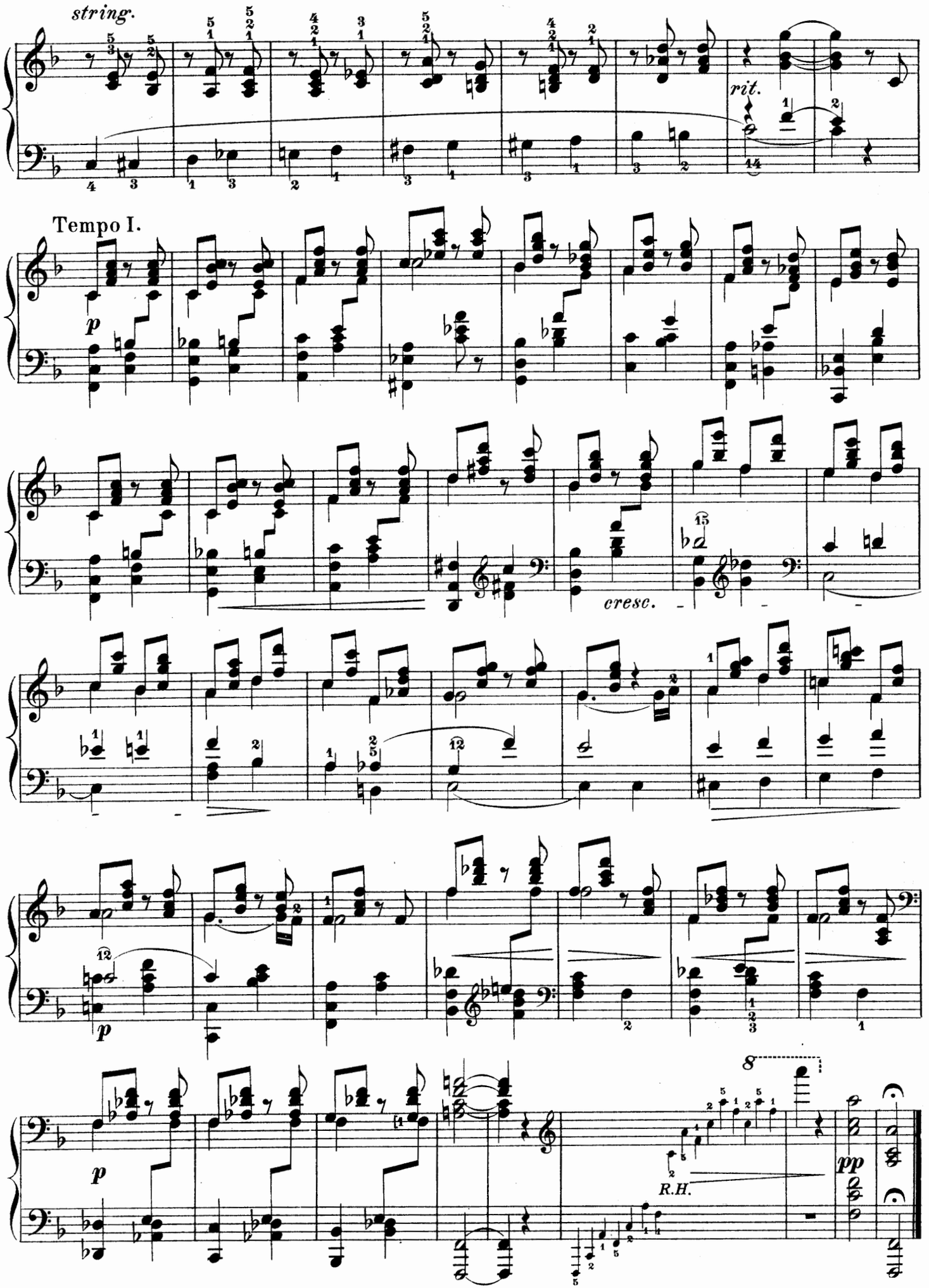

cresc.
string.
p
rit.
(12)
Tempo I.
p
cresc.

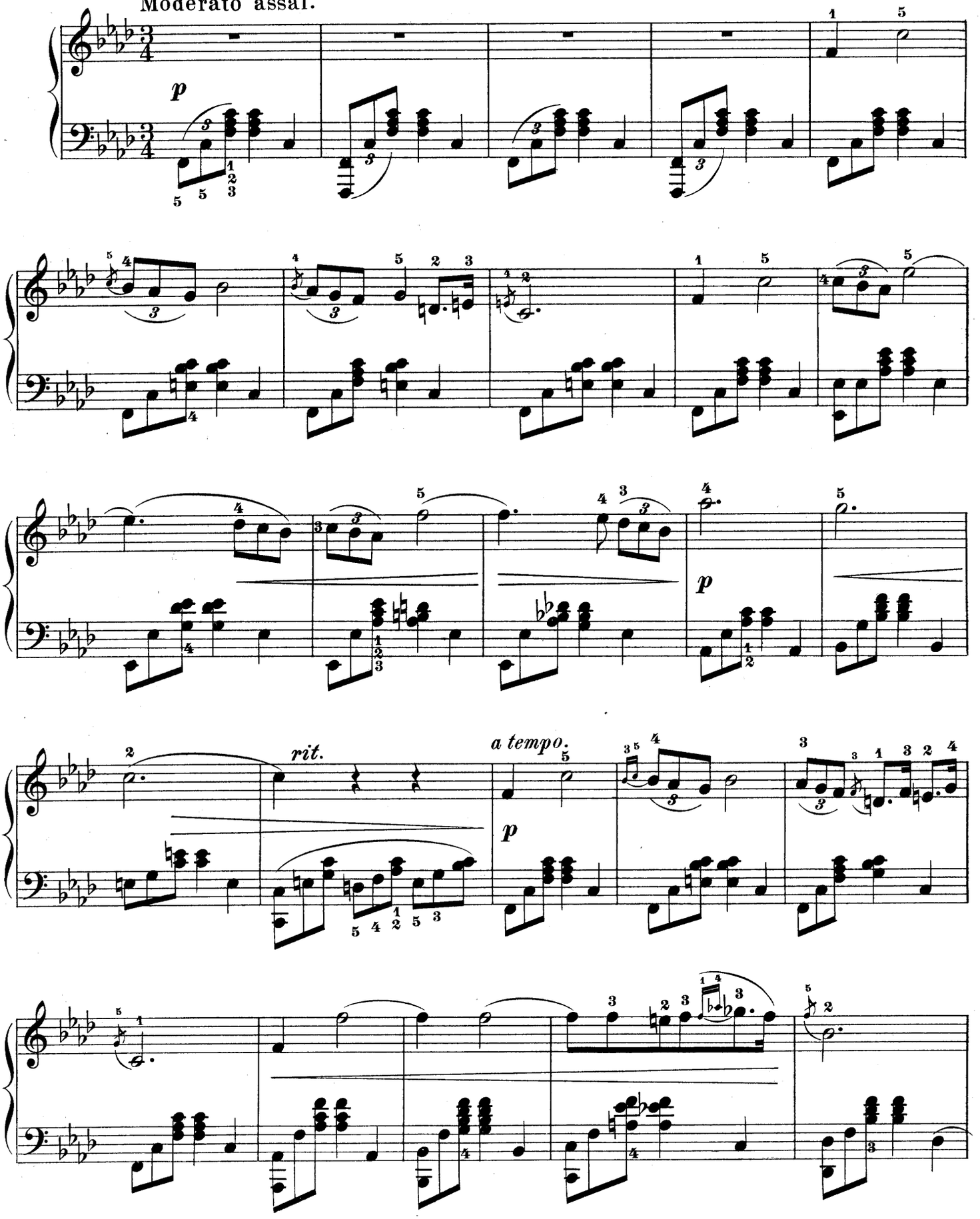

string.
rit.
Tempo I.
p
cresc.
p
p
R.H.
pp

Barcarole.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 30, No. 1.

Moderato assai.



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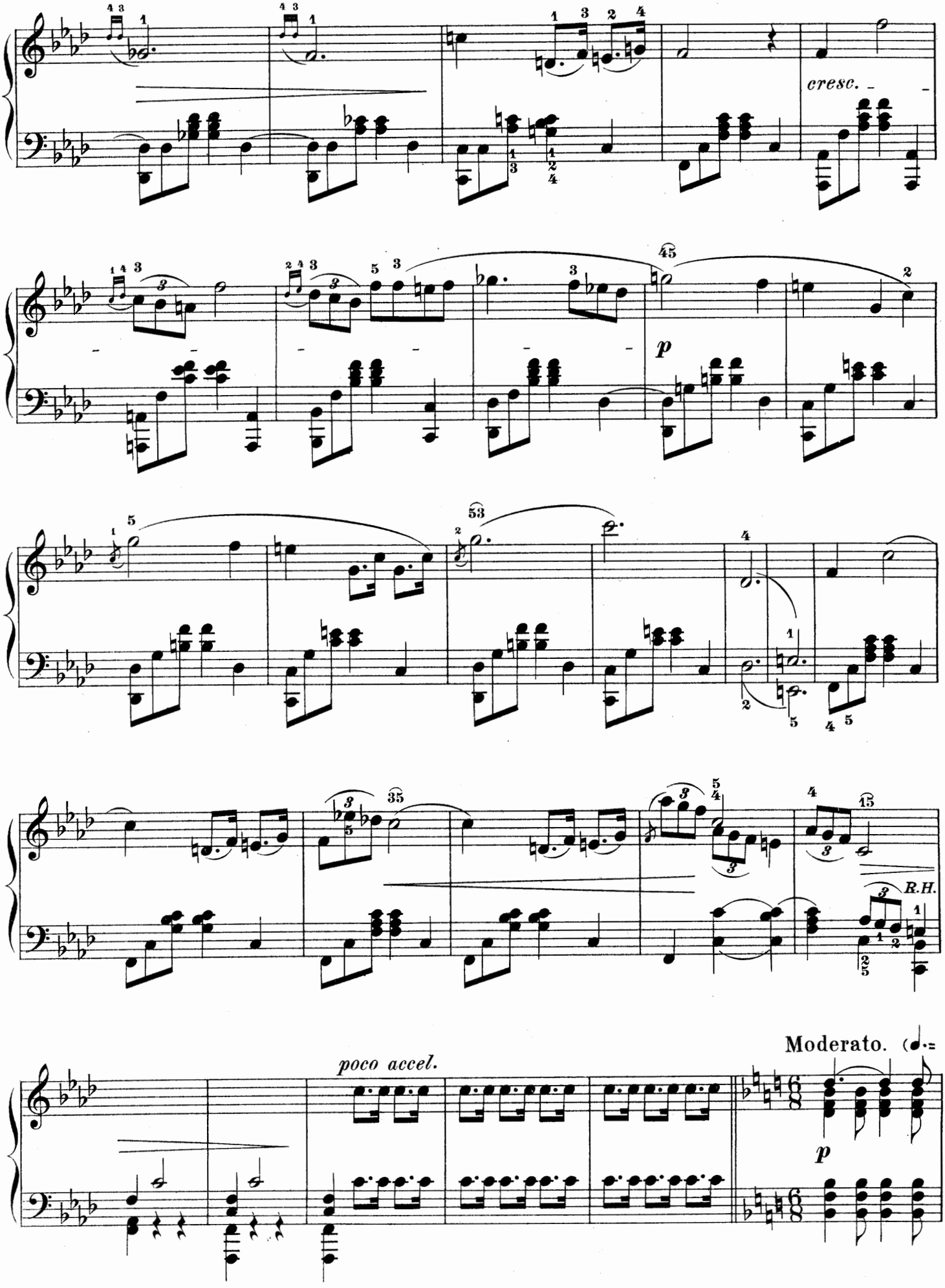
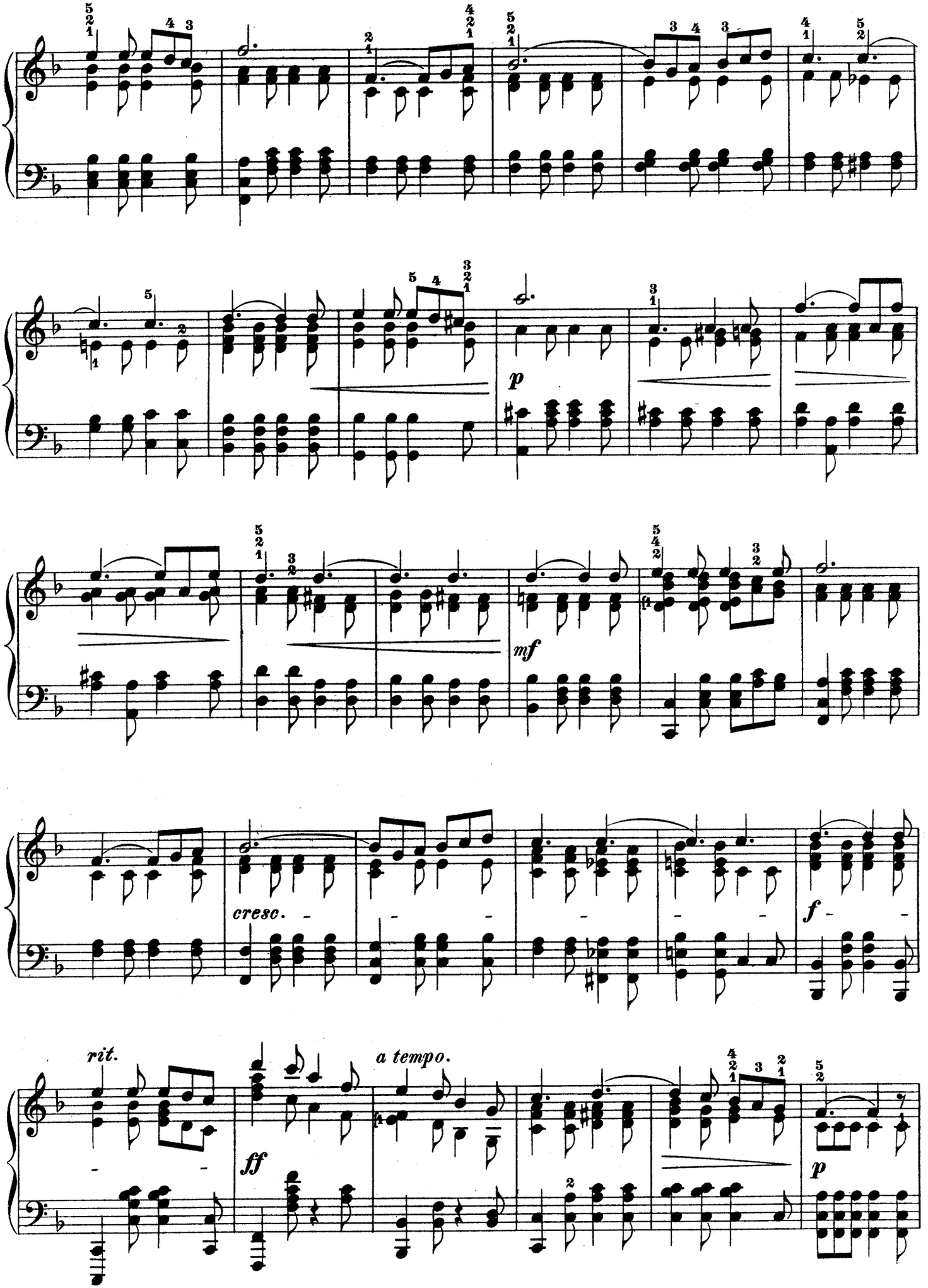
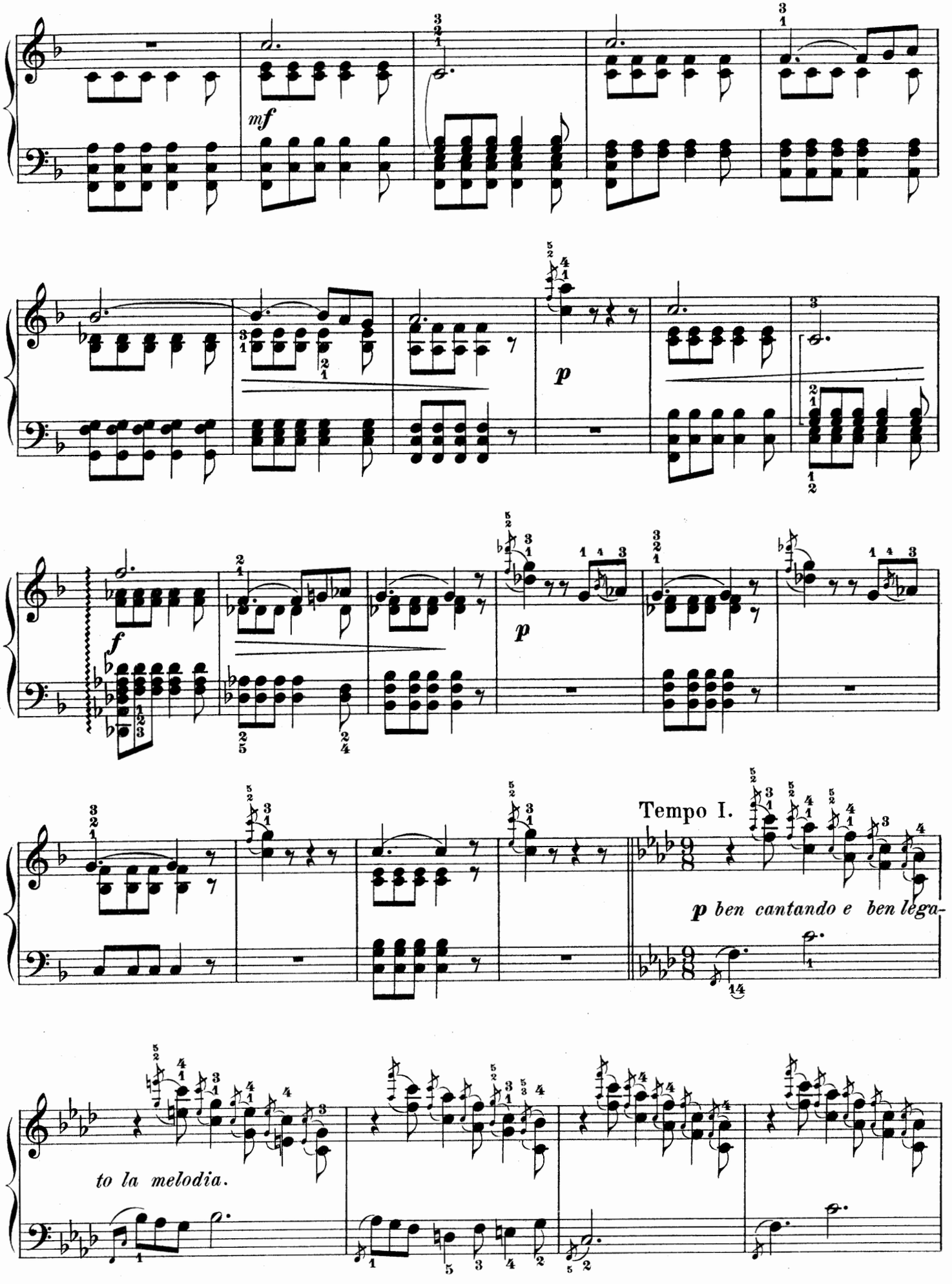
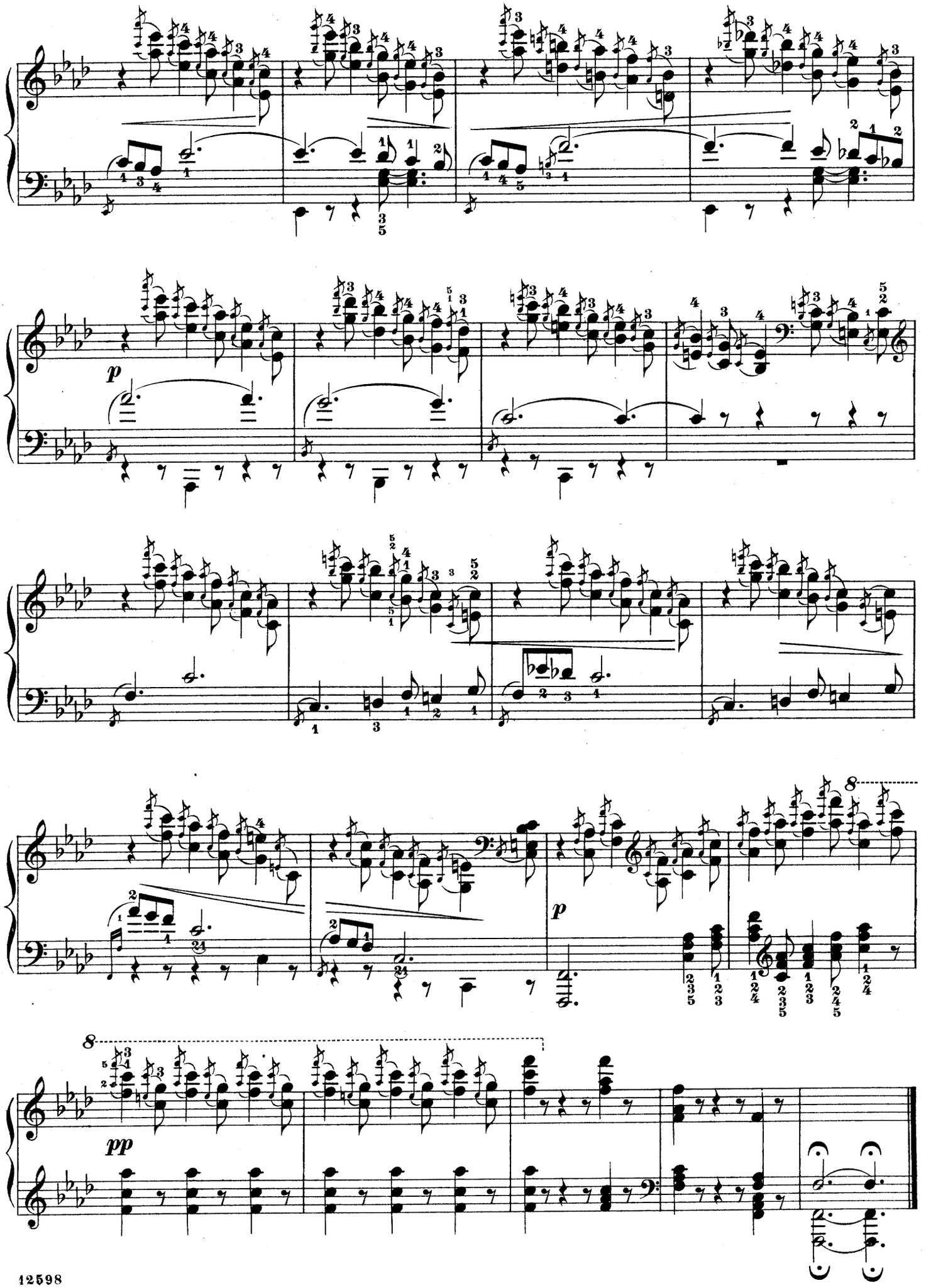

cresc.
p
poco accel.
Moderato.
p


p
mf
cresc.
f
rit.
a tempo.
ff
p


mf
p
f
p
Tempo I.
p ben cantando e ben lega-
to la melodia.

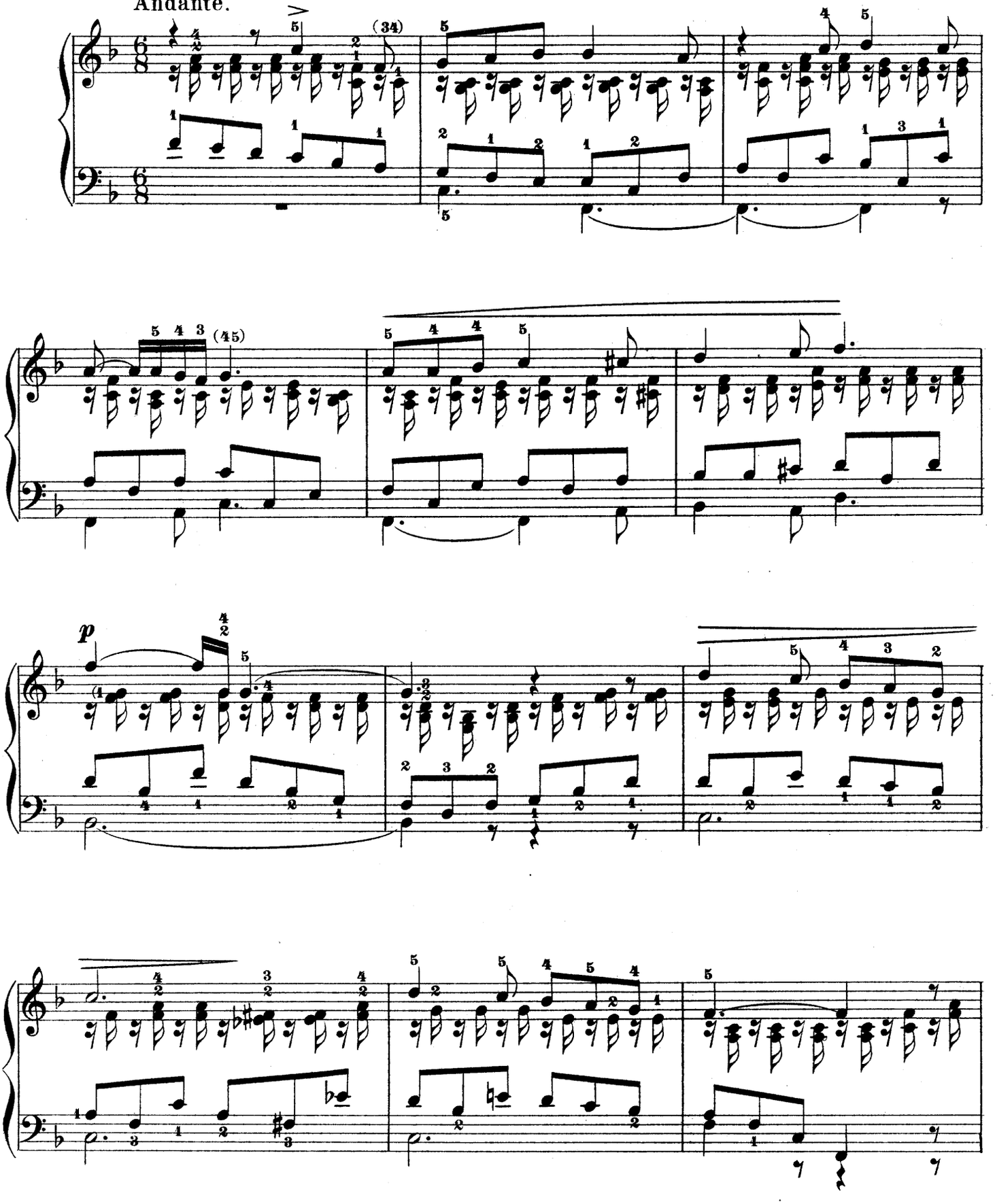

p
8
p
8
pp

Romance.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 26, № 1.

Andante.



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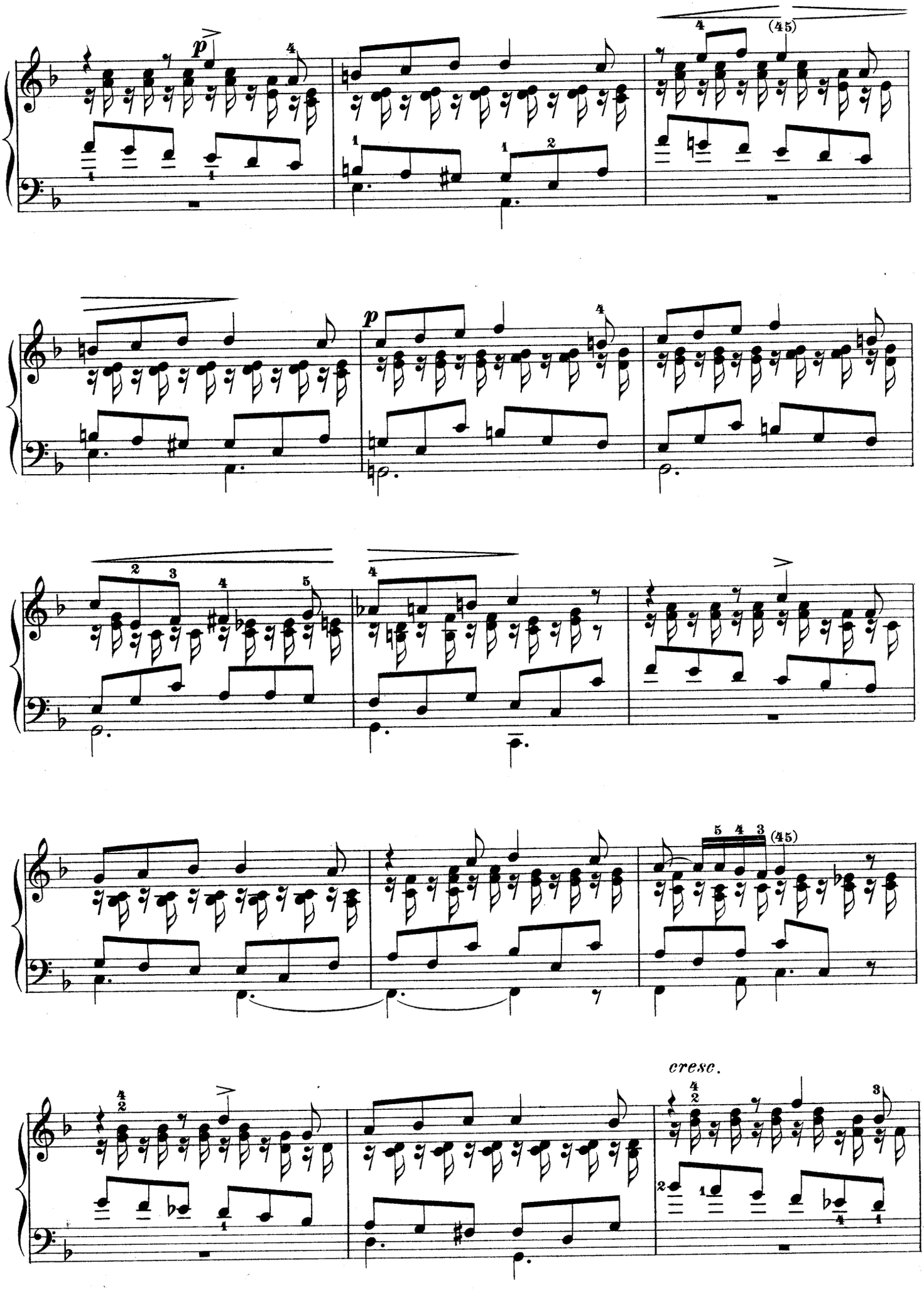
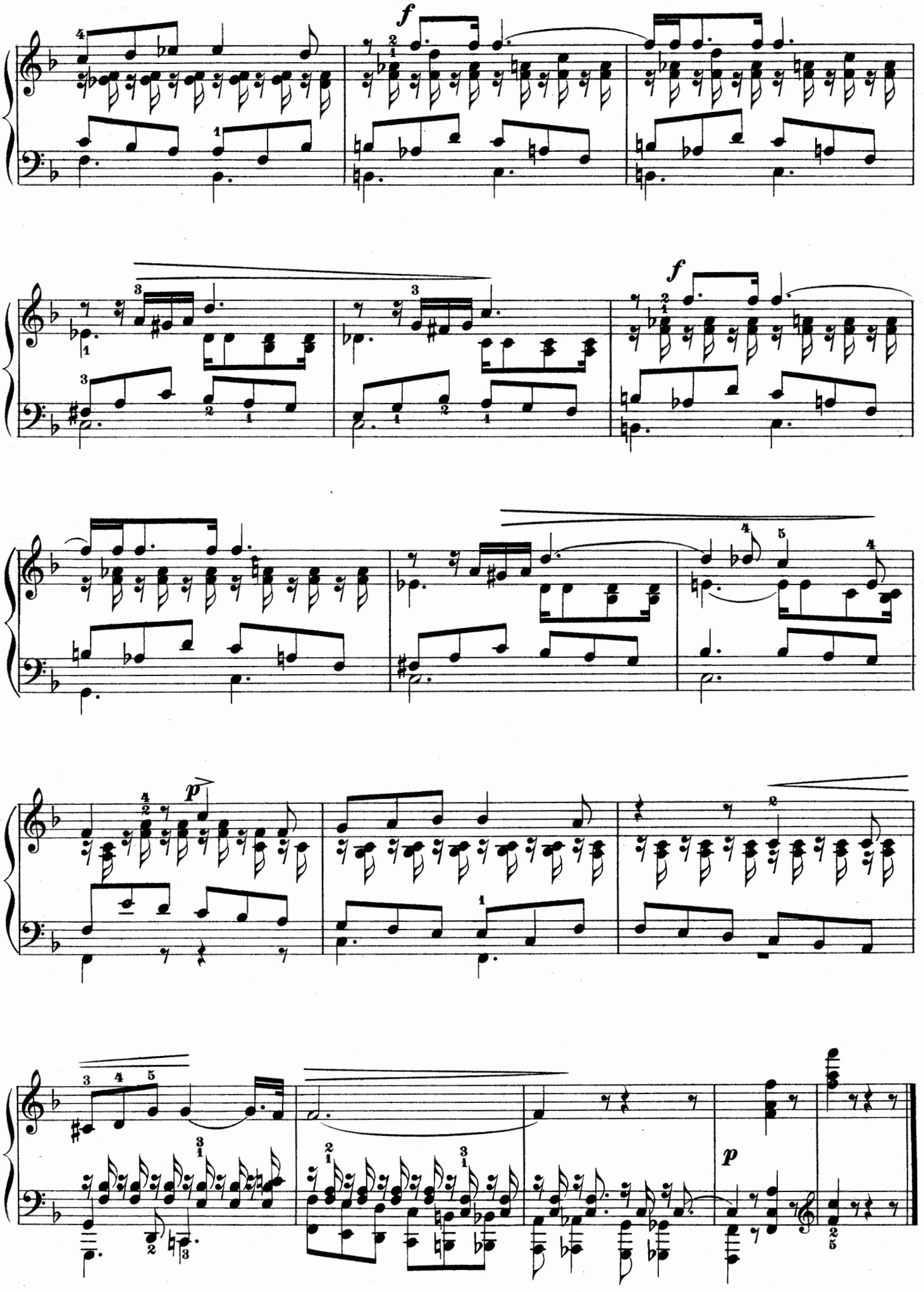

p
(45)
p
(45)
cresc.

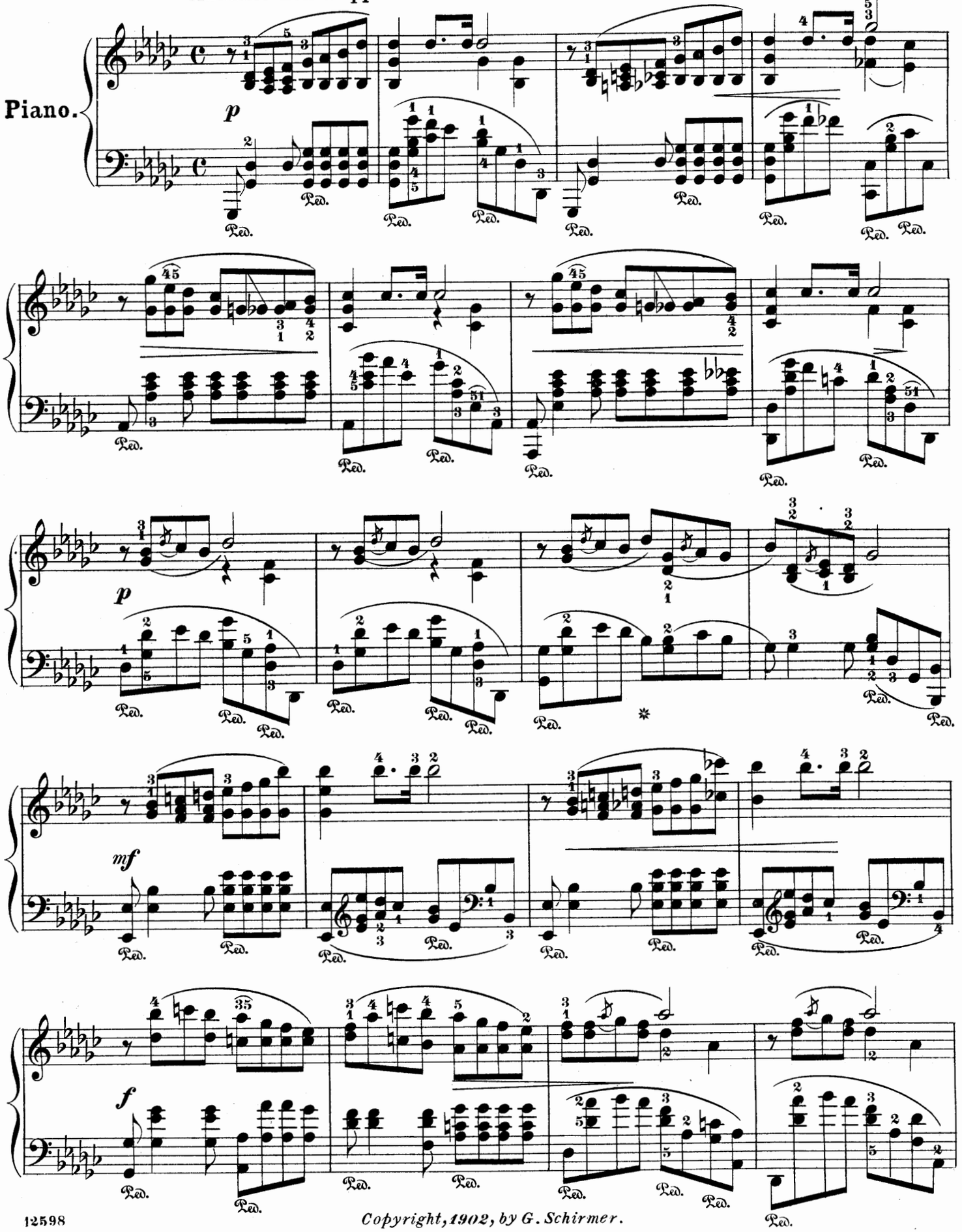

f
f
p
p

Nocturne.

Edited and fingered by
Louis Oesterle.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 28, No. 1.

Andante non troppo.



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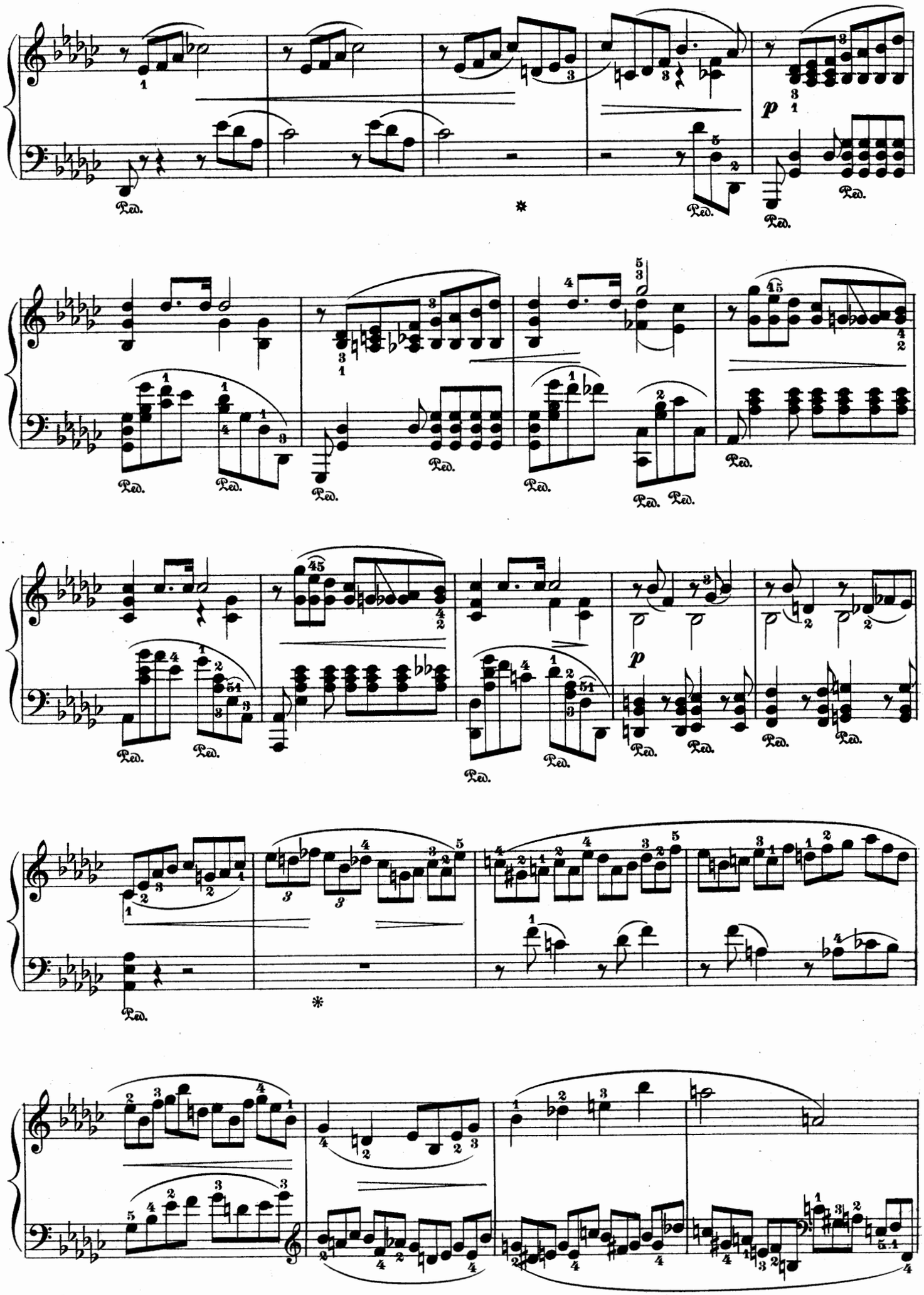
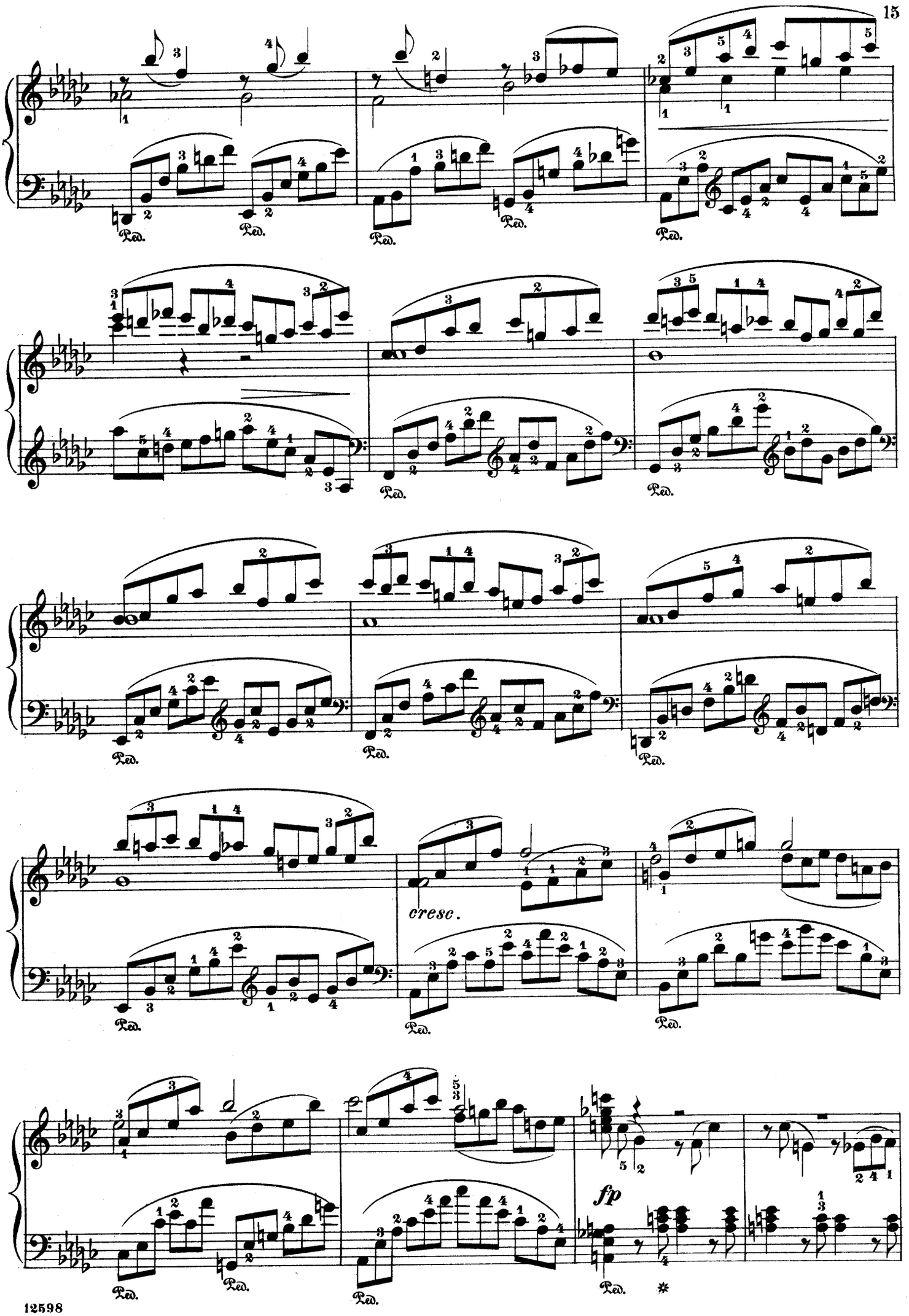
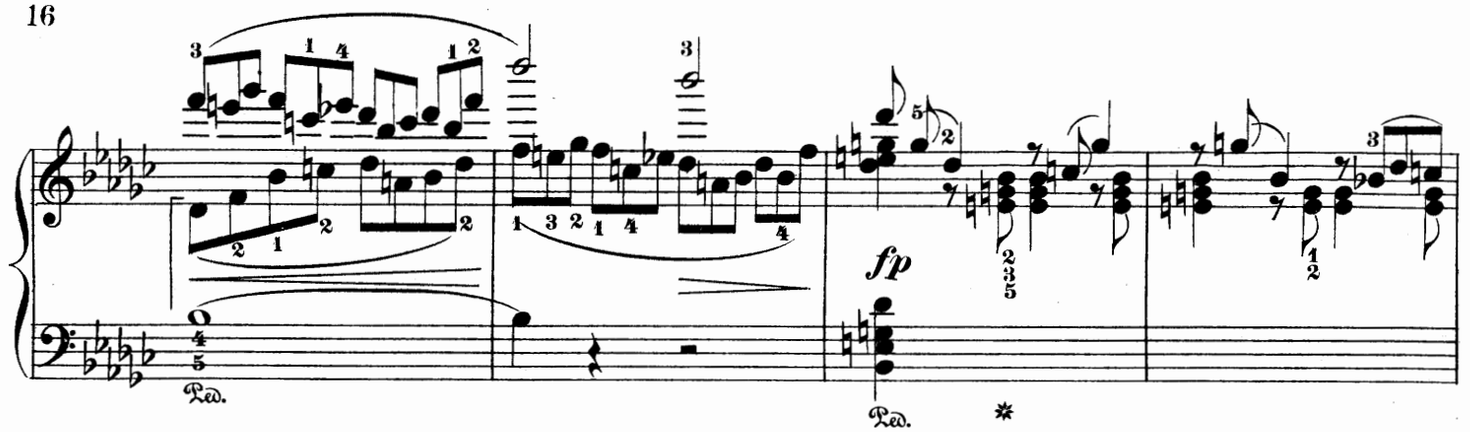
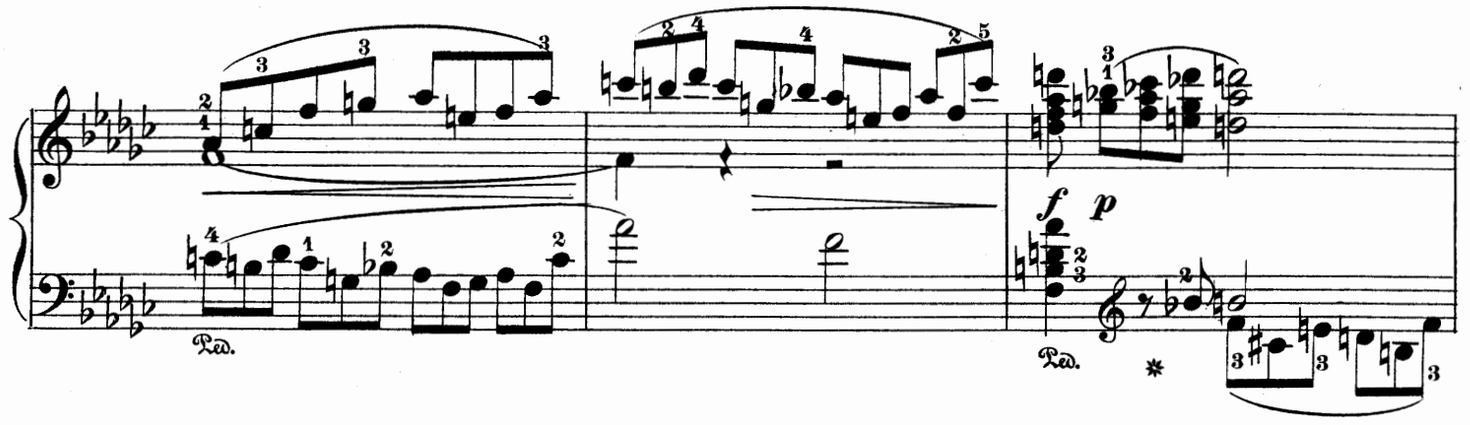
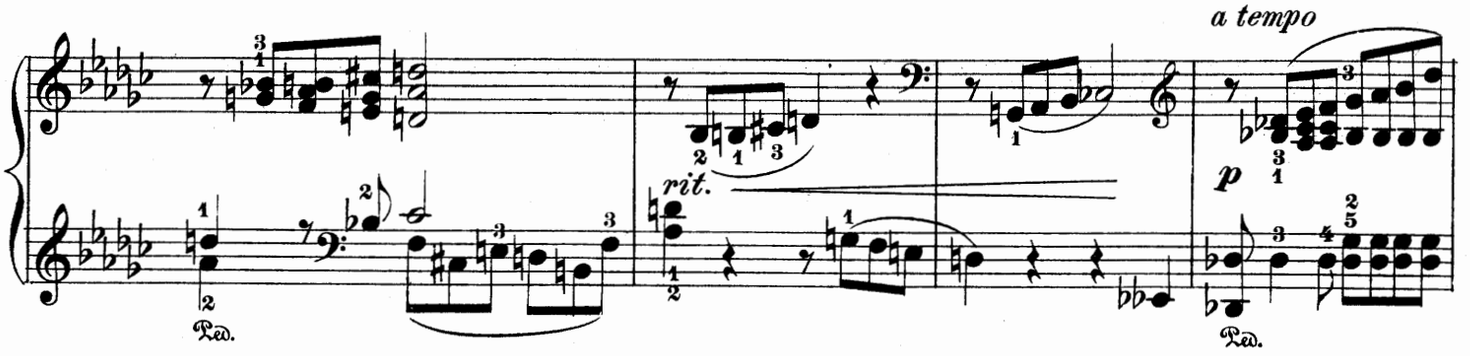
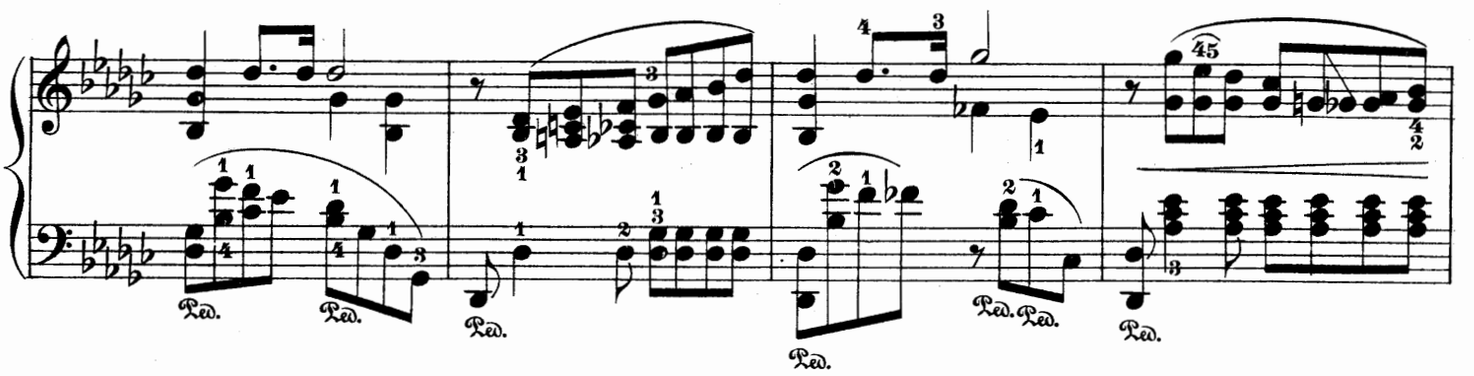


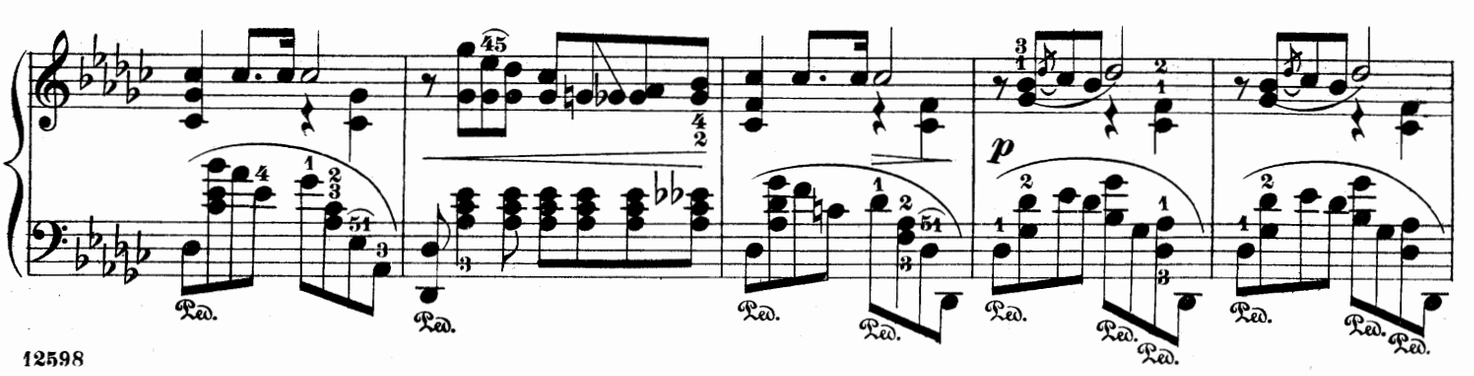

Ped.
cresc.
fp

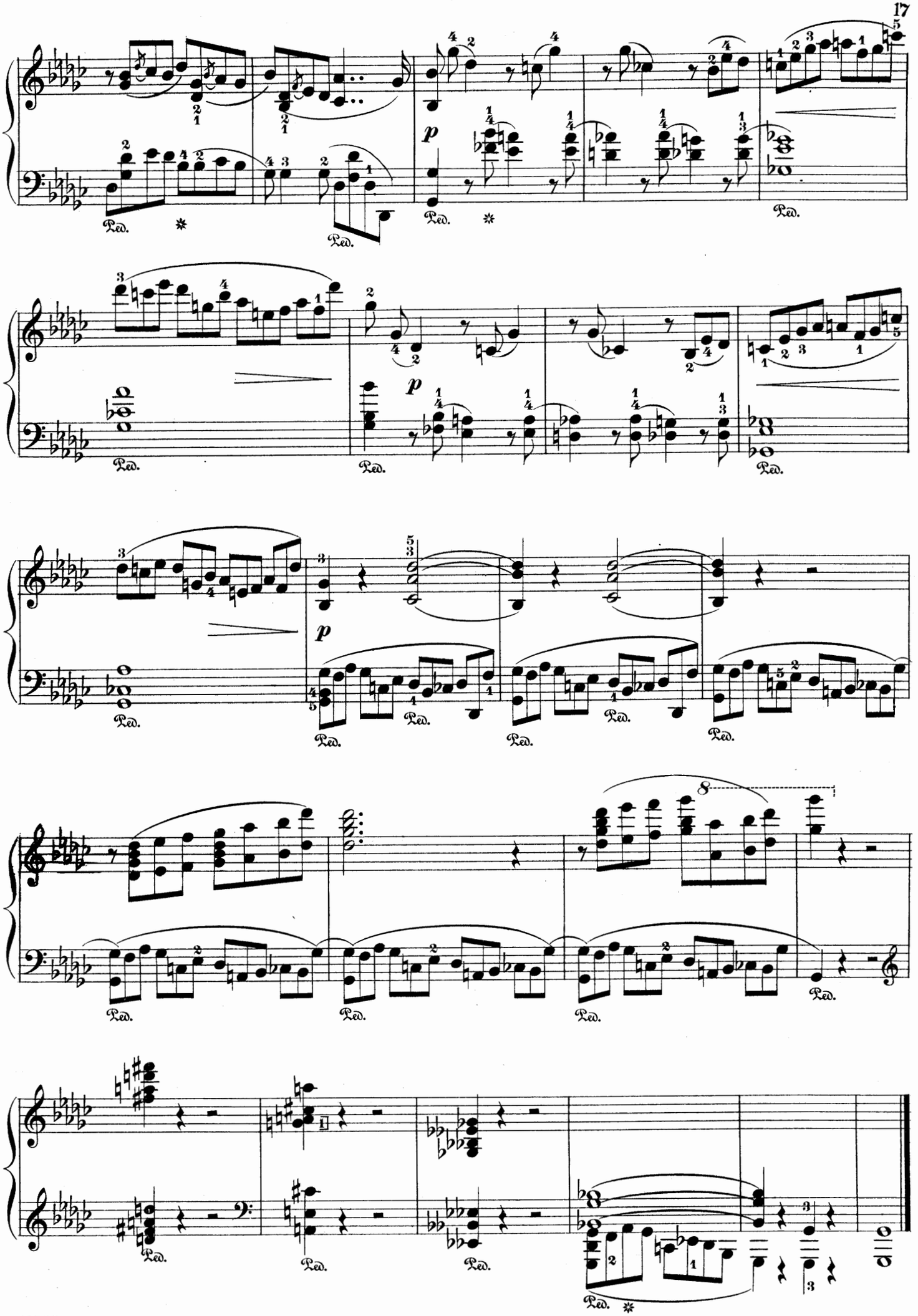

fp
Ped.


f p
Ped.


rit.
a tempo
p
Ped.


Ped.


p
Ped.

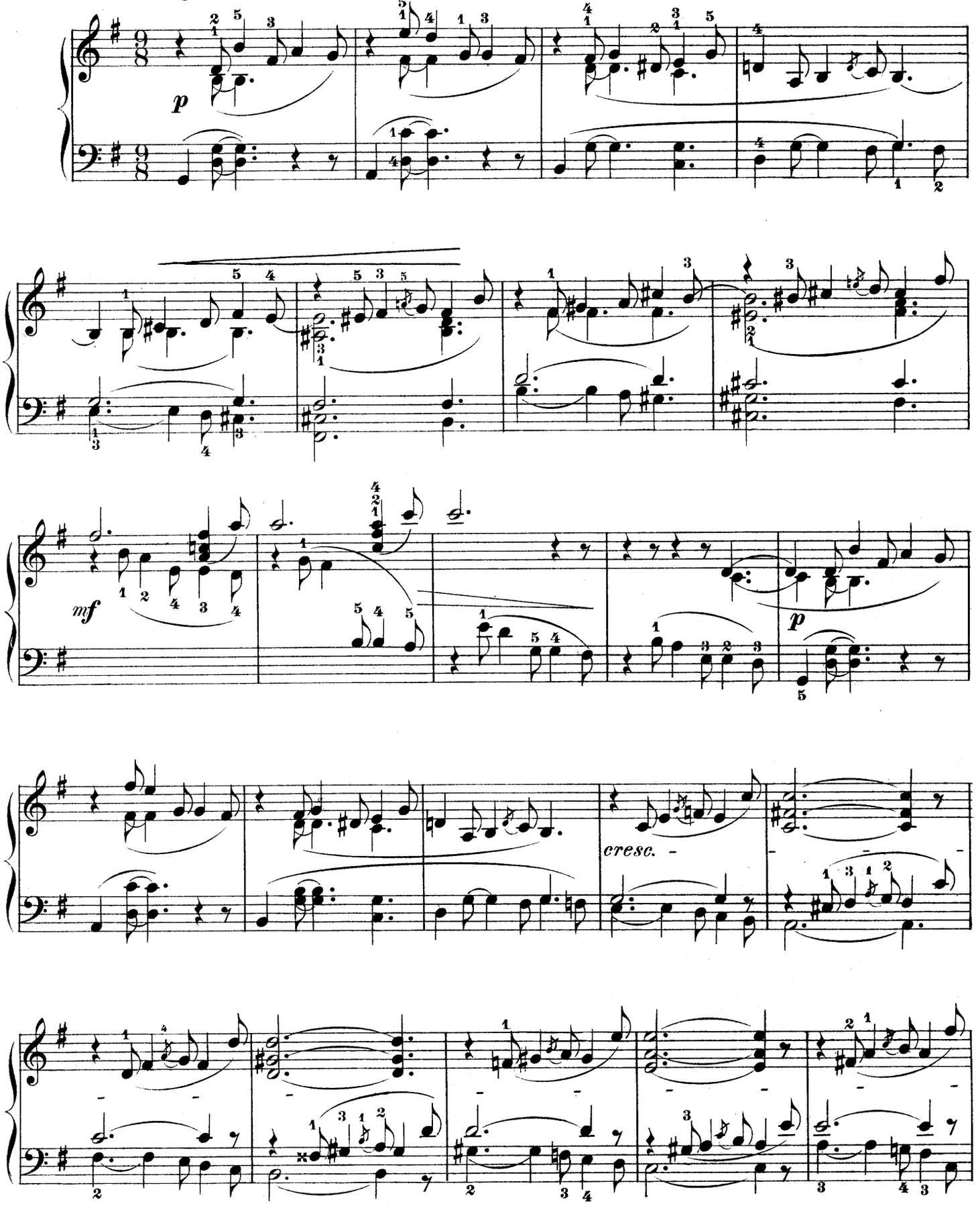

p
Ped.
8

Impromptu.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

Allegro moderato.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 44, No 4.



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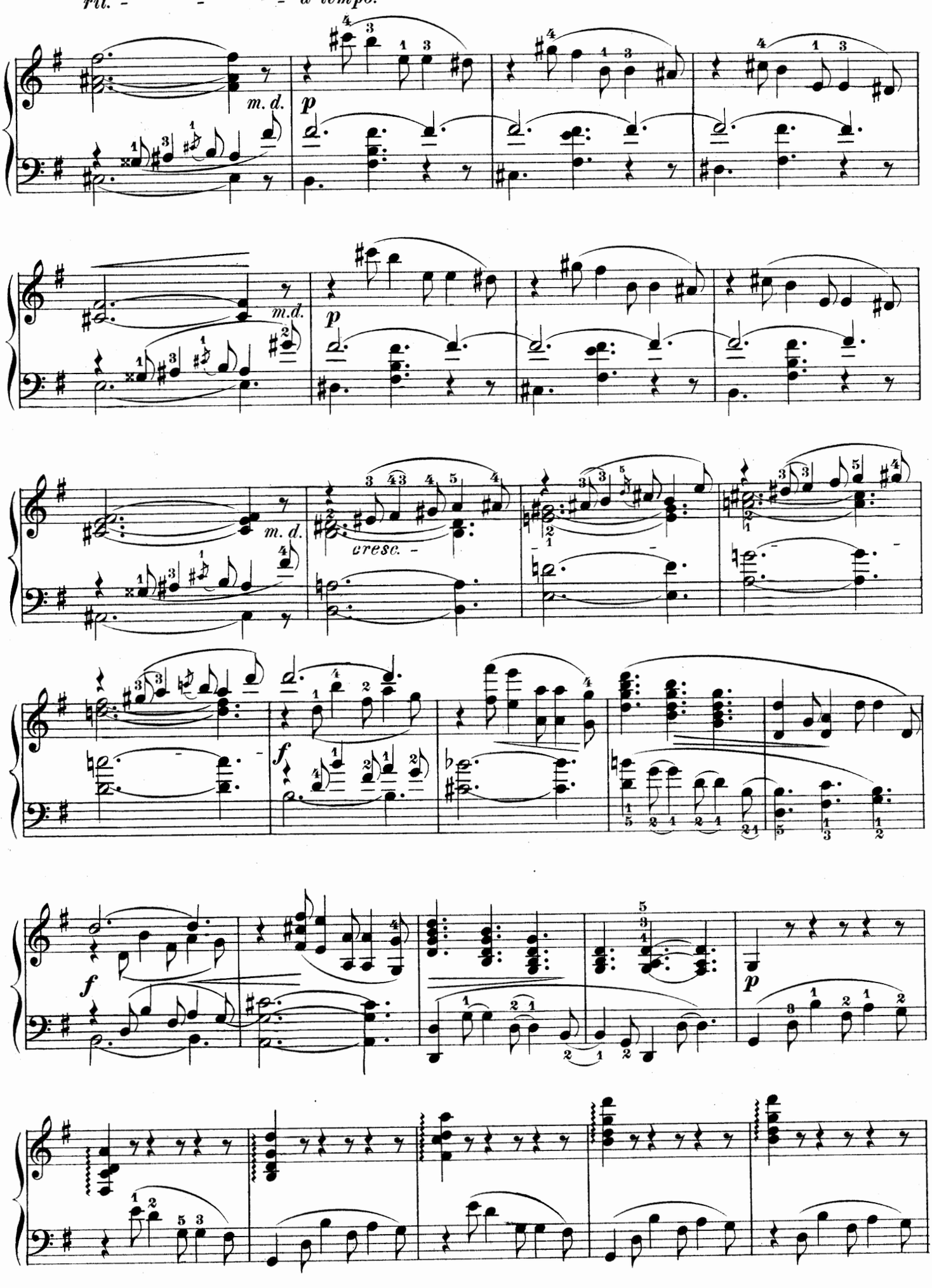
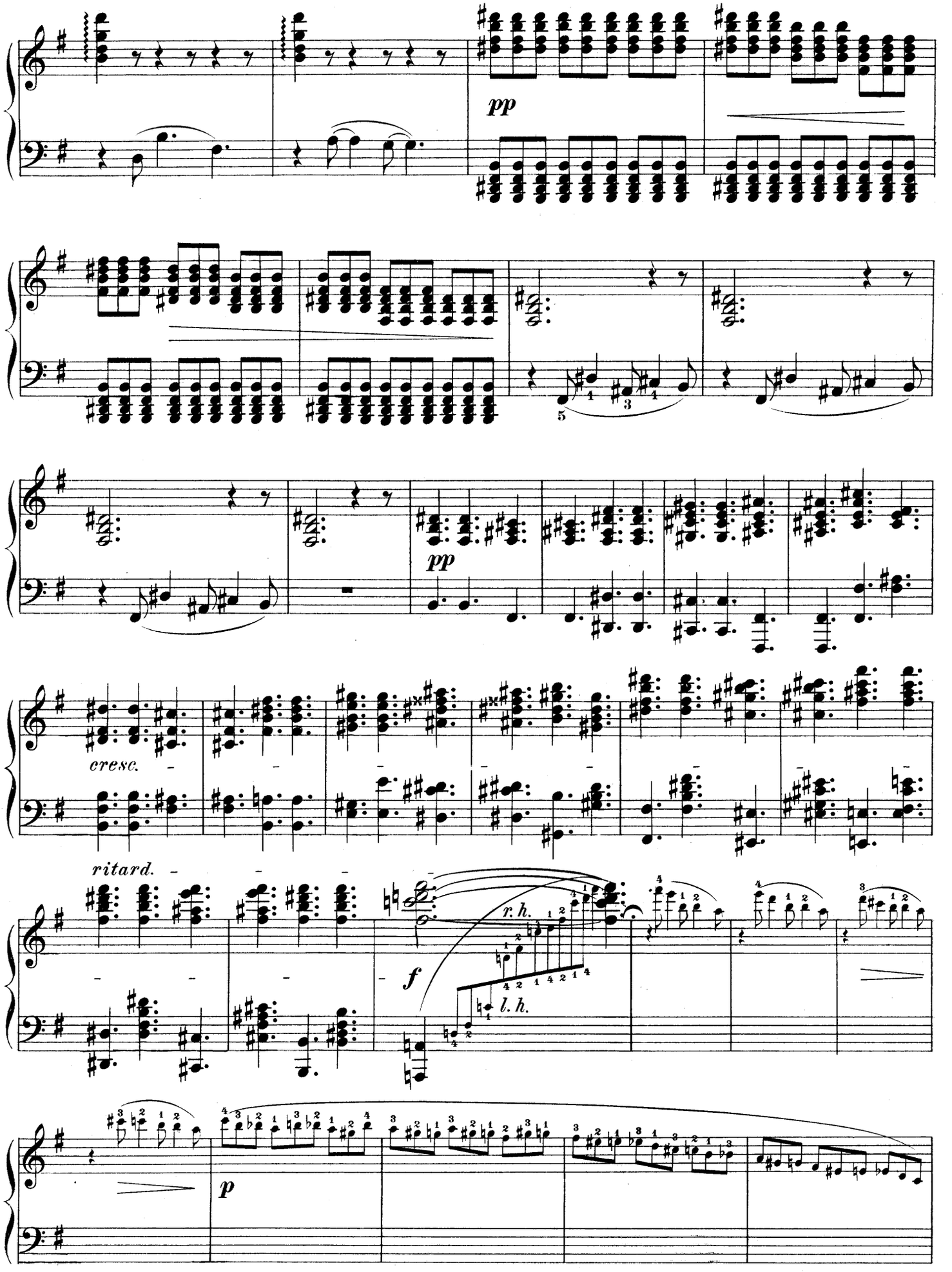
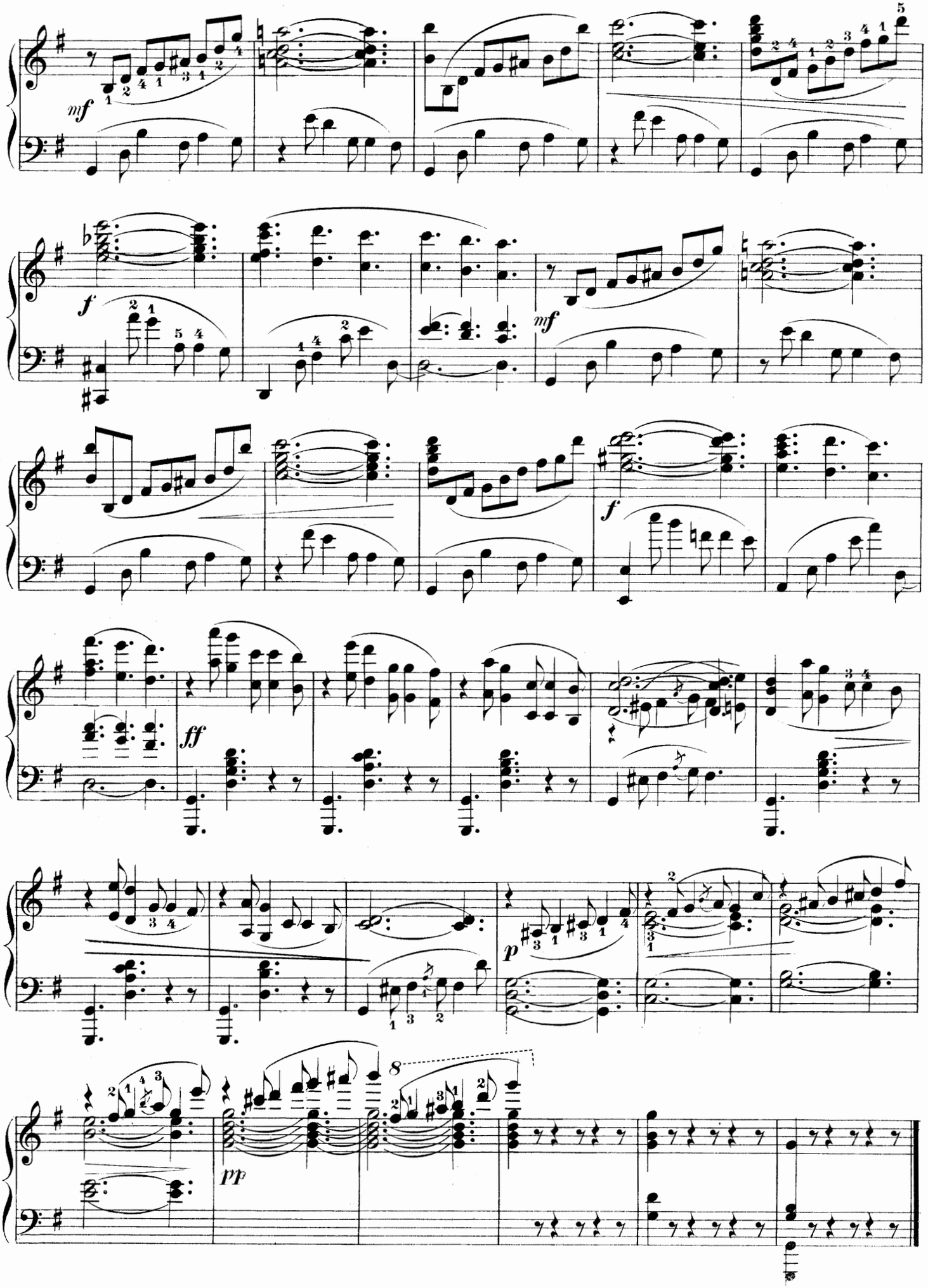

rit. - - - a tempo.
m. d.
p
m. d.
p
m. d.
cresc.
f
f
p


pp
pp
cresc.
ritard.
r. h.
f
l. h.
p

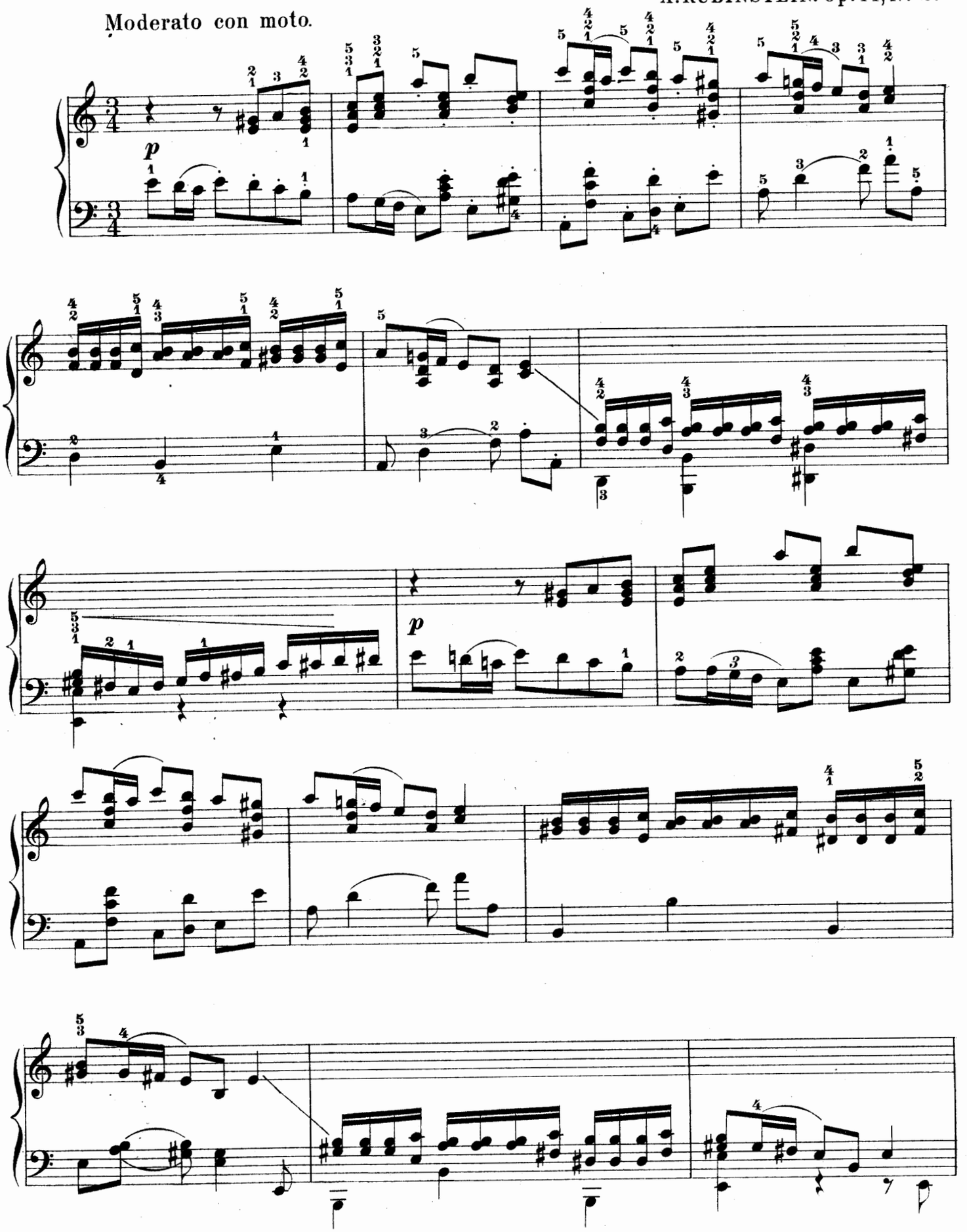

mf
f
mf
f
ff
p
8
pp

Scherzo.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 44, No 2.

Moderato con moto.



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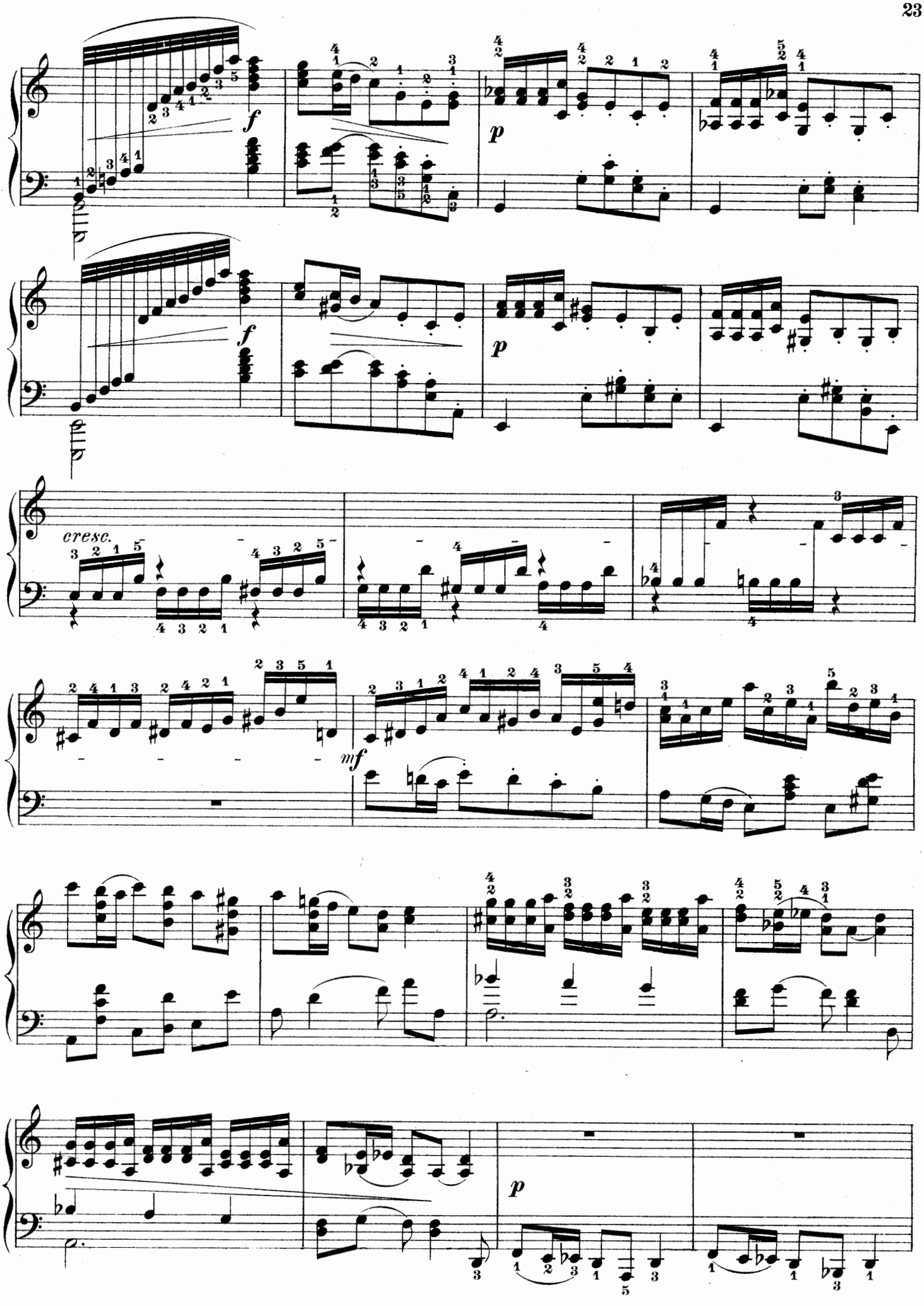
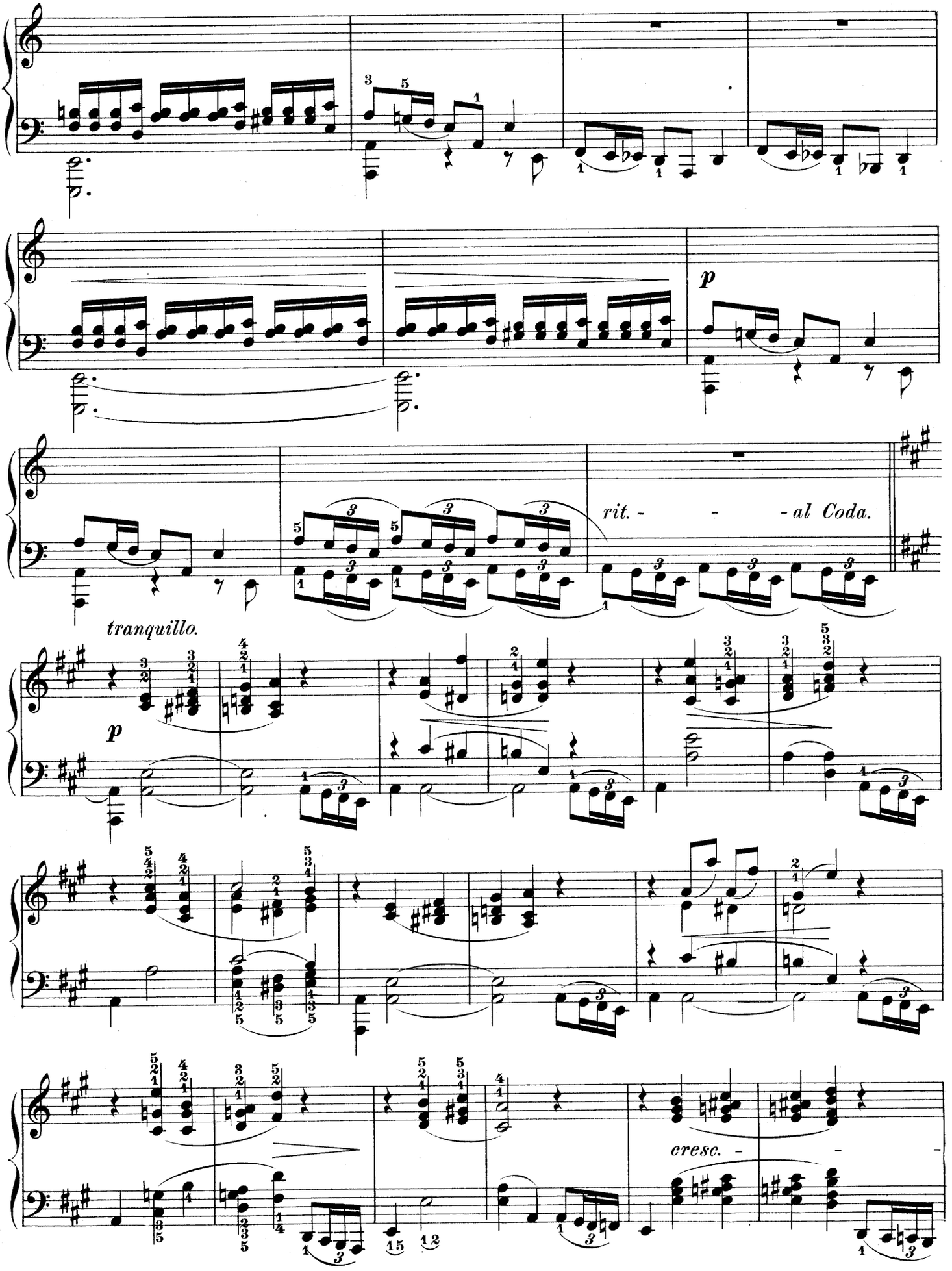
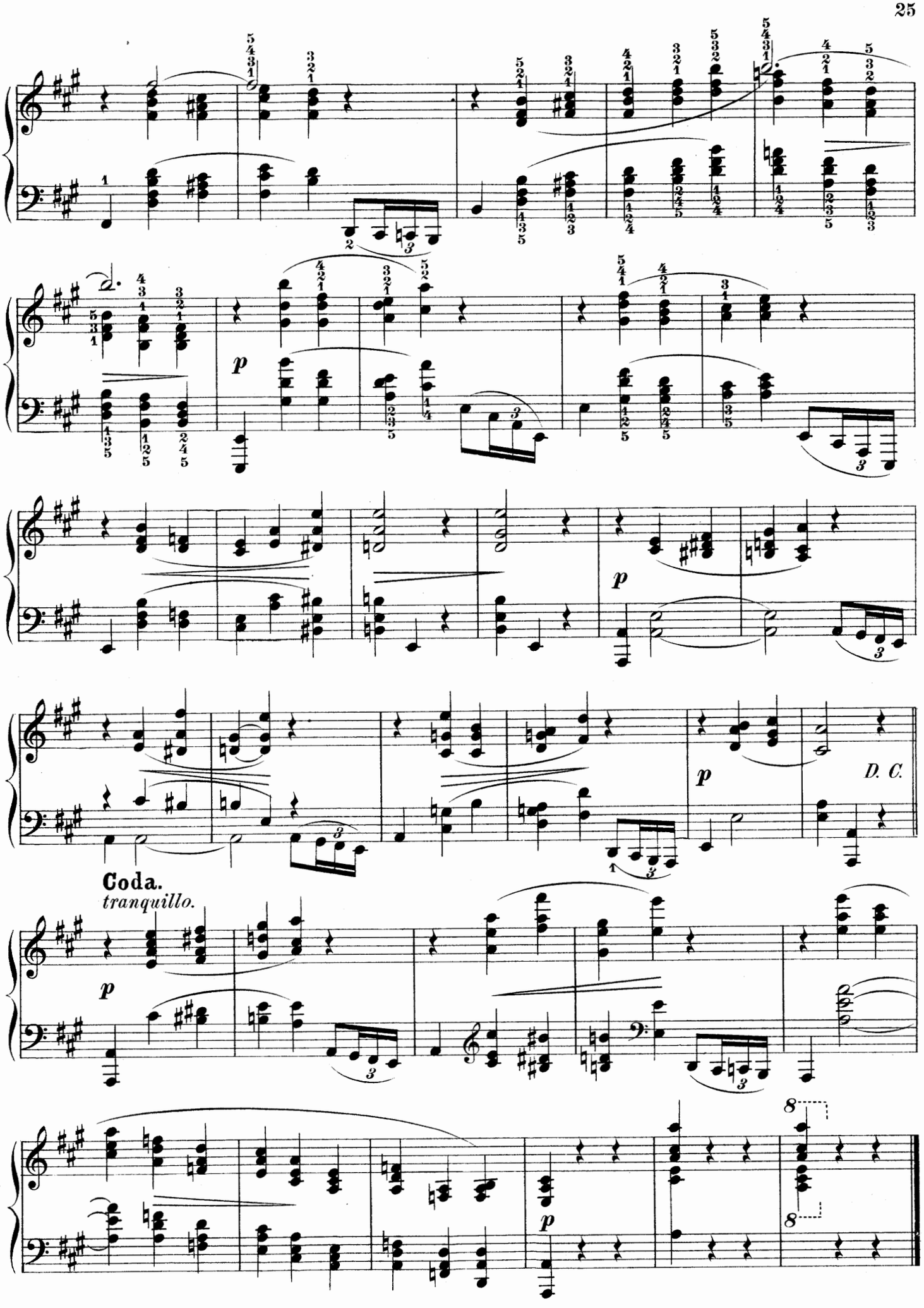

f
p
f
p
cresc.
mf
p


p
rit. - - - al Coda.
tranquillo.
p
cresc. - - -


p
p
p
D. C.
Coda.
tranquillo.
p
p

To Mademoiselle
ANNA de FRIEDEBOURG.

Kamennoi-Ostrow.

Album of 24 Portraits.

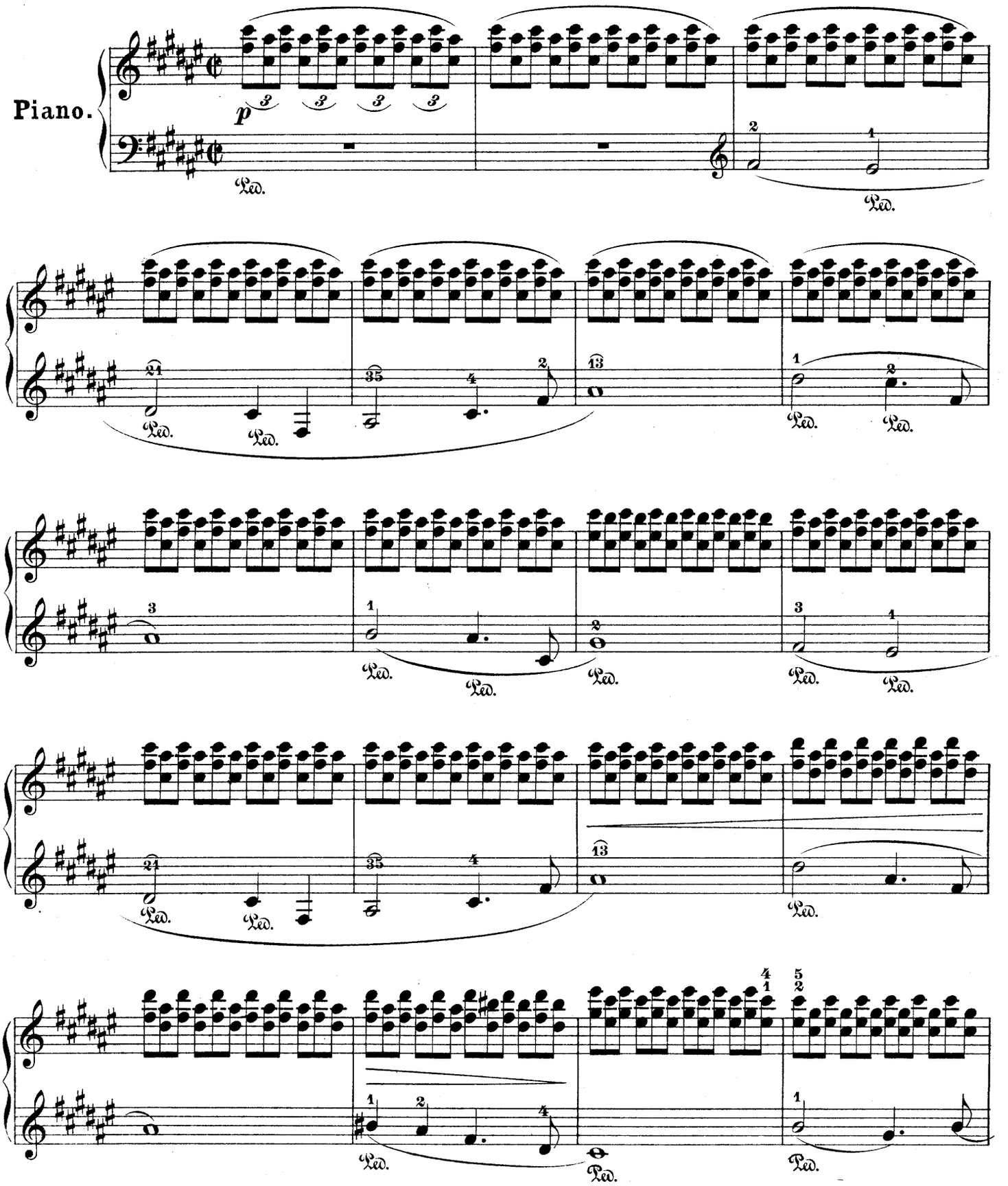
Portrait Nº 22.

Edited and fingered by
LOUIS OESTERLE.

A. RUBINSTEIN, Op. 10.

Andante. (𝅗𝅥 = 69.)

Piano.



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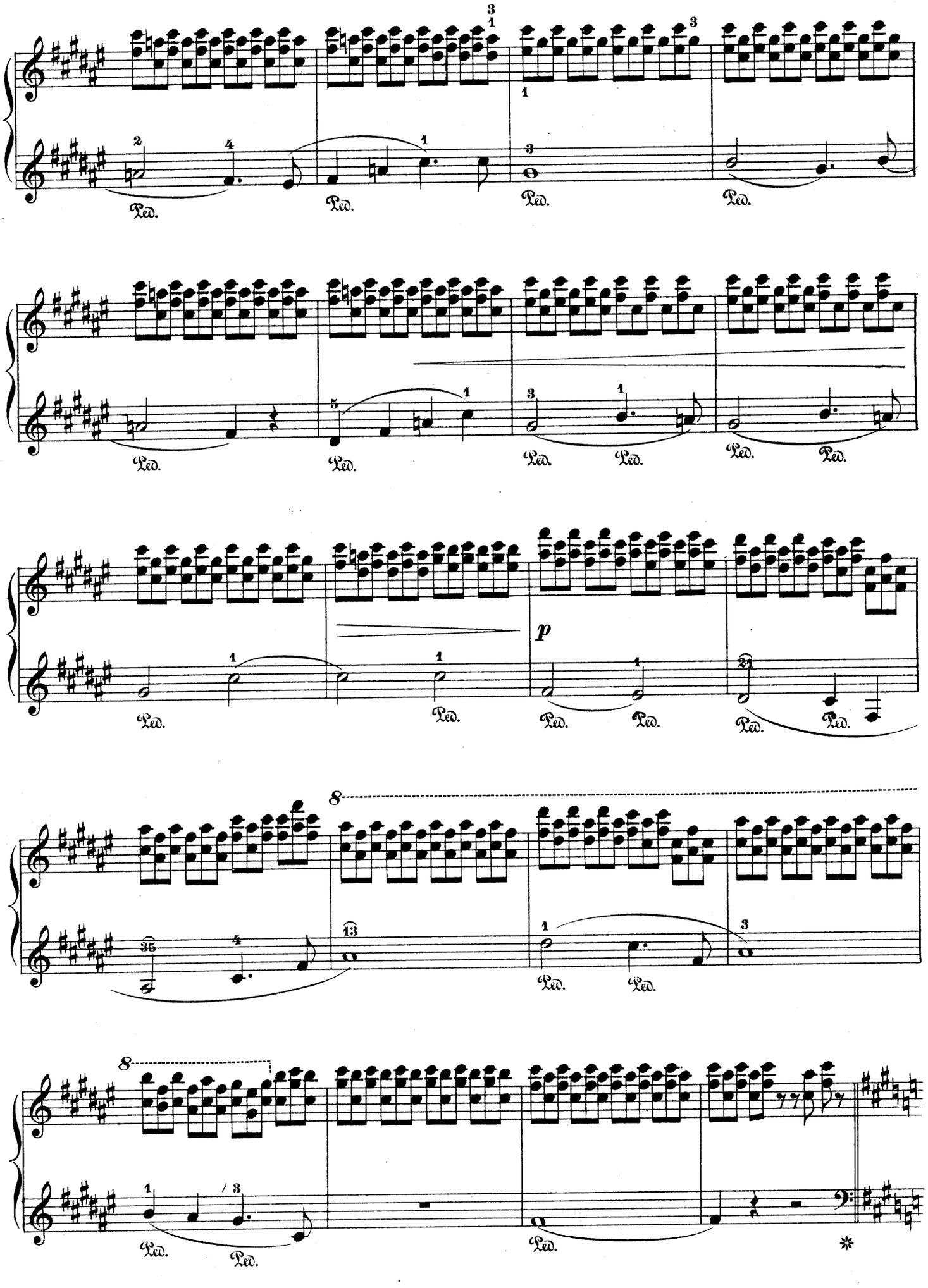
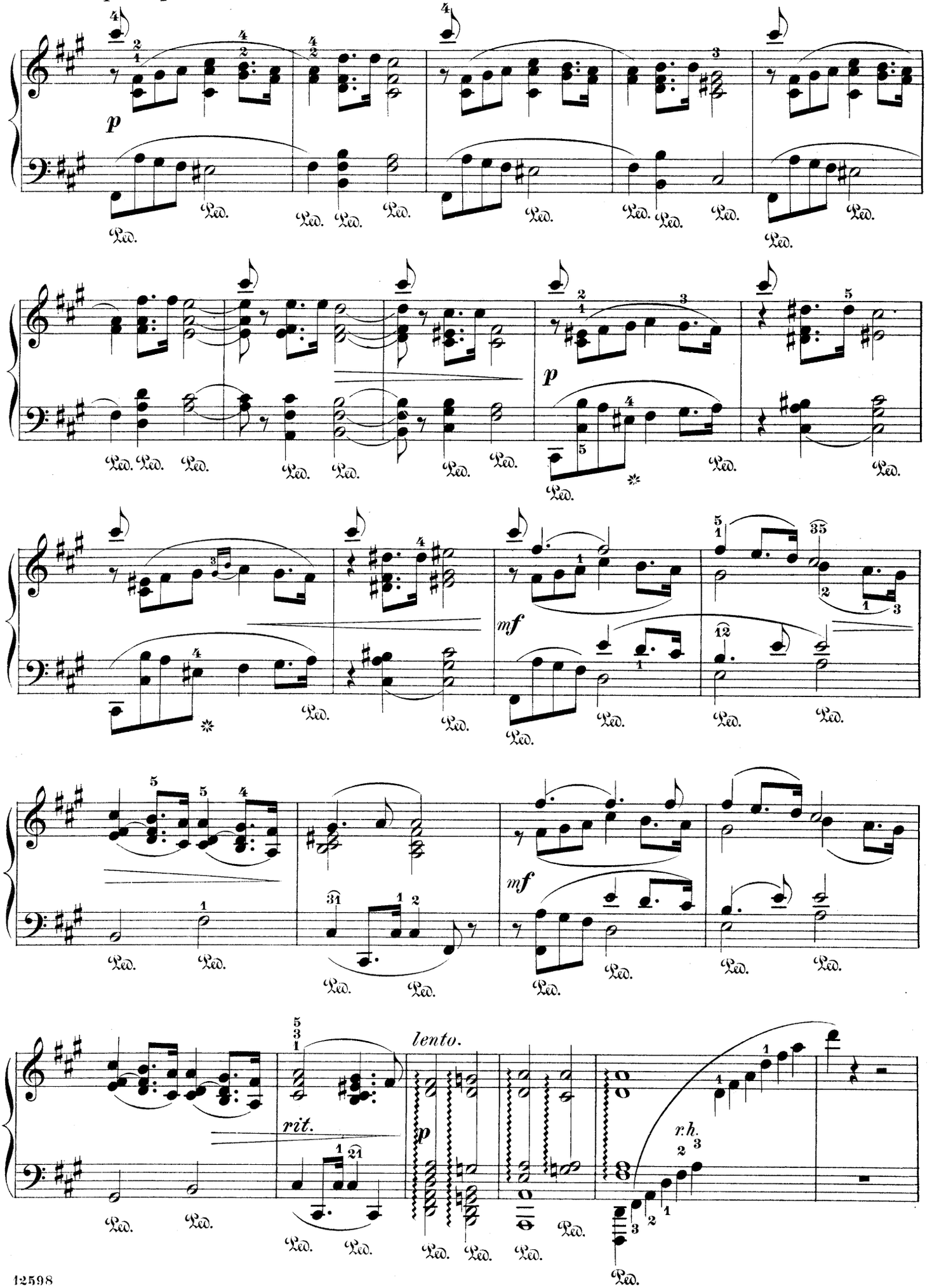
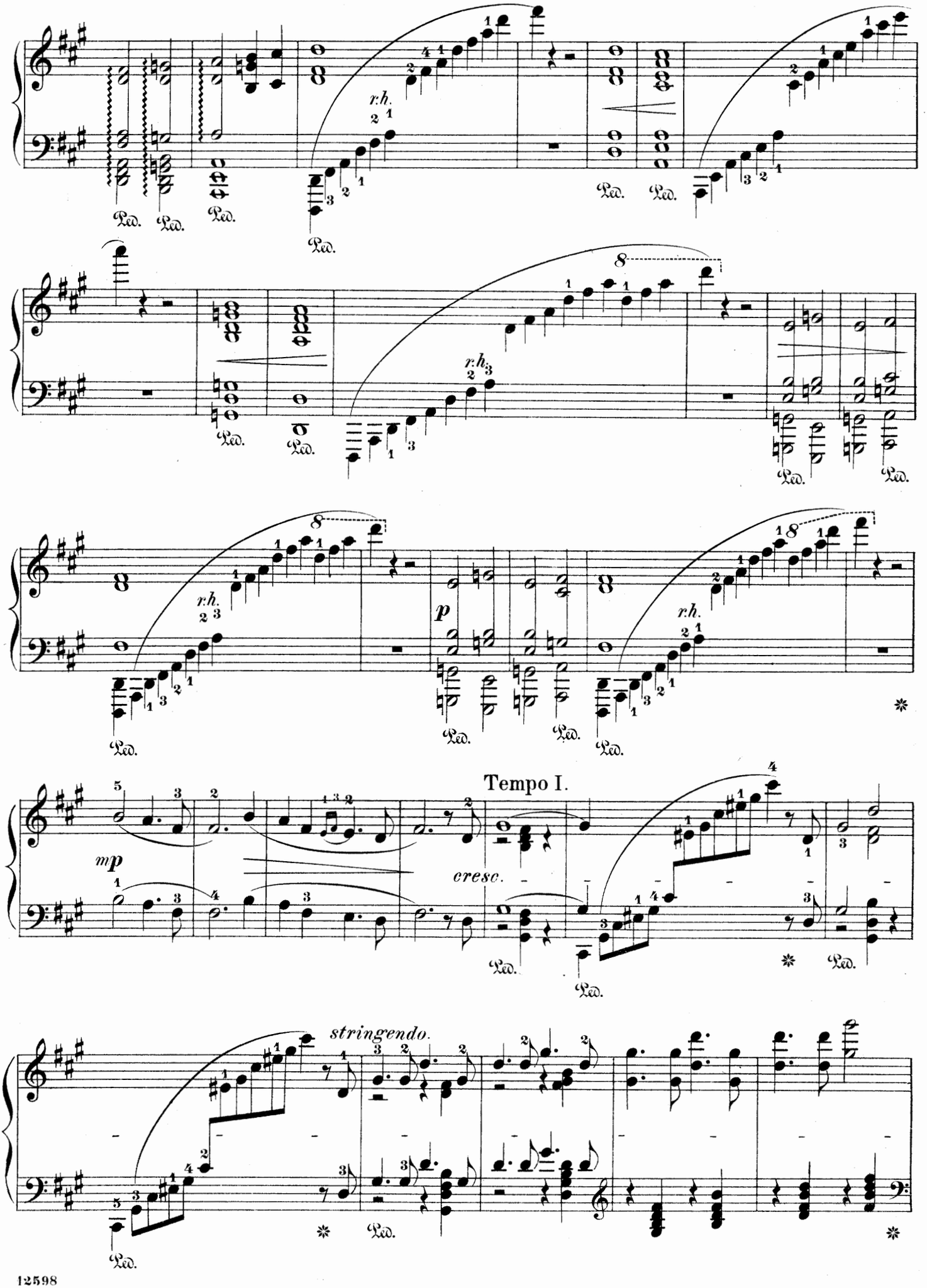
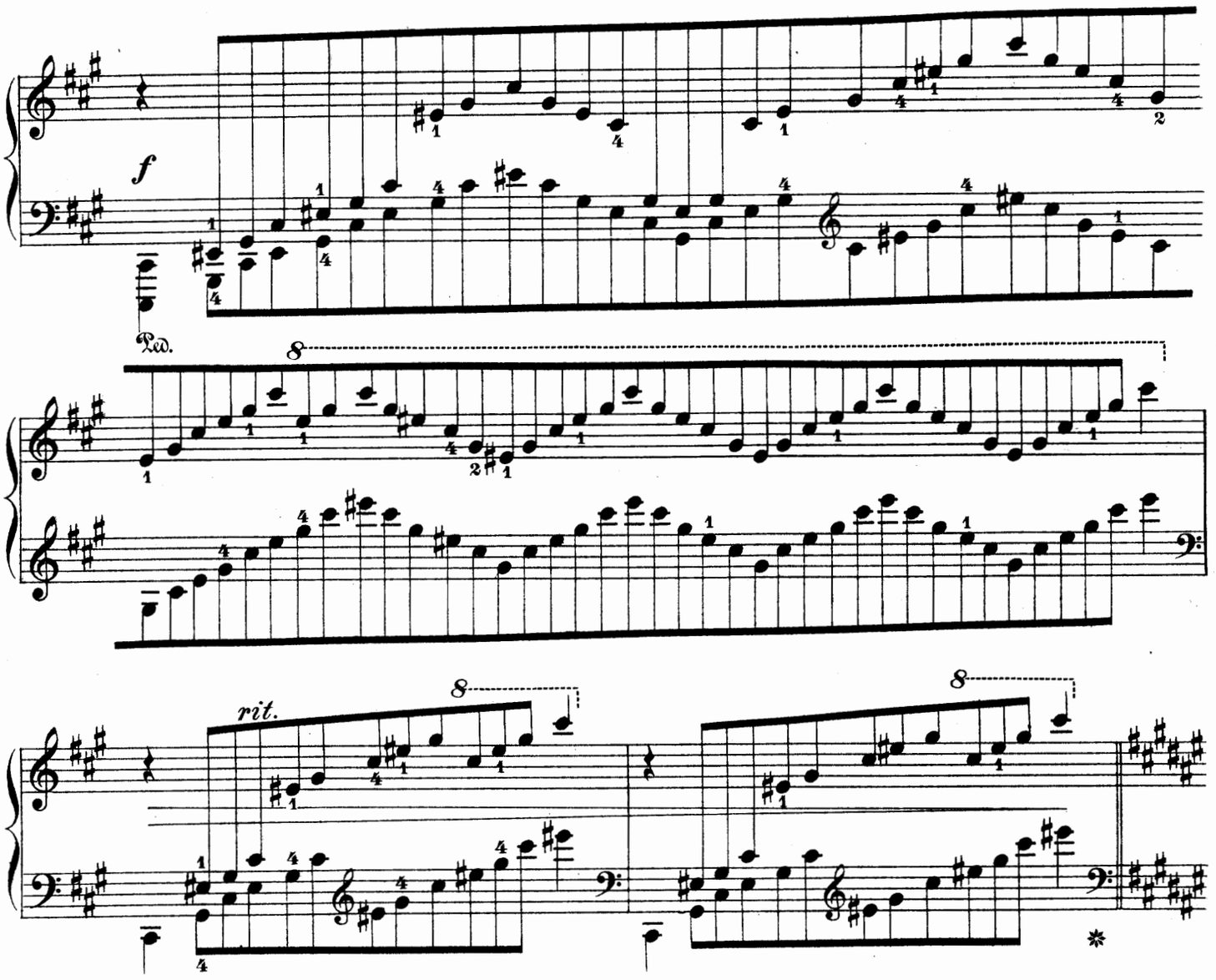
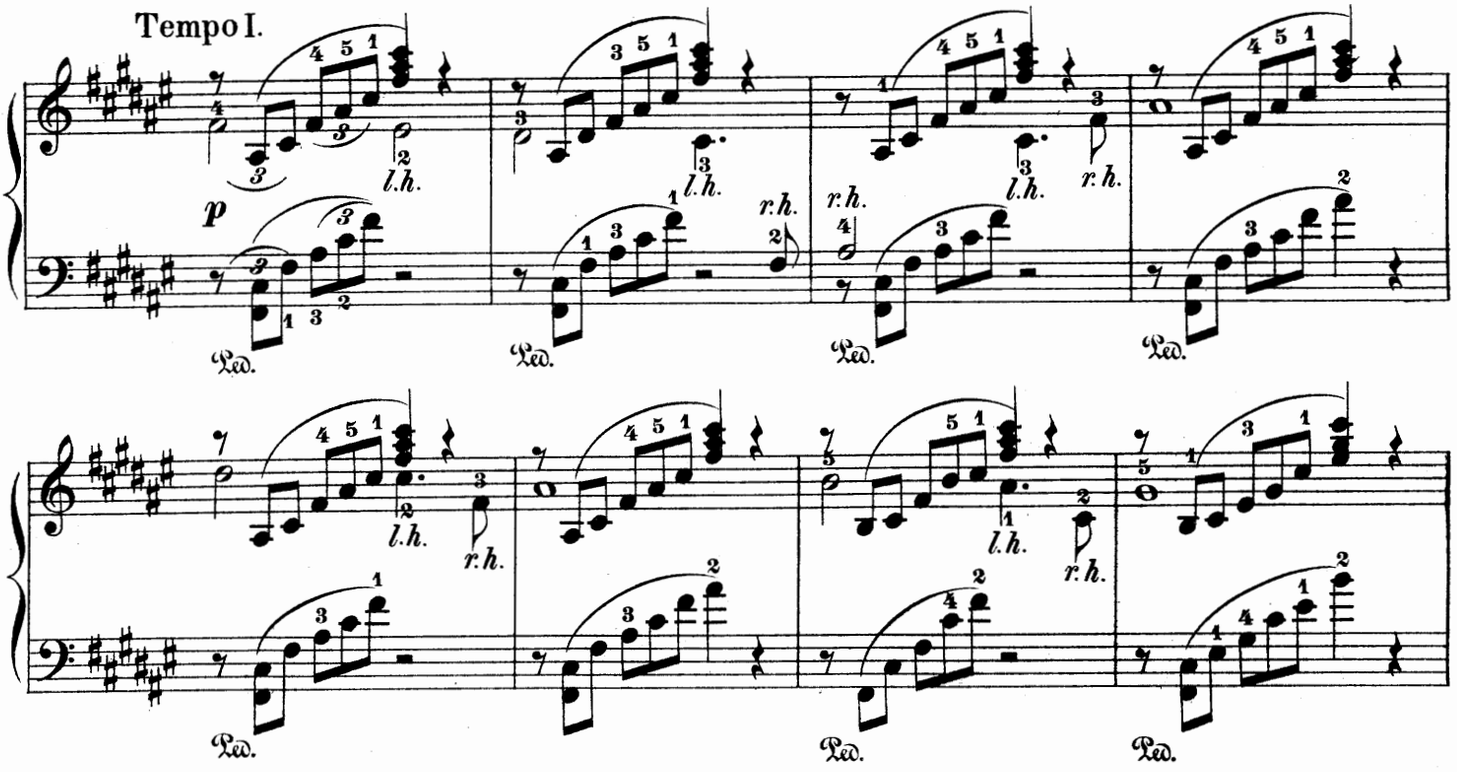

Ped.
p
8
8

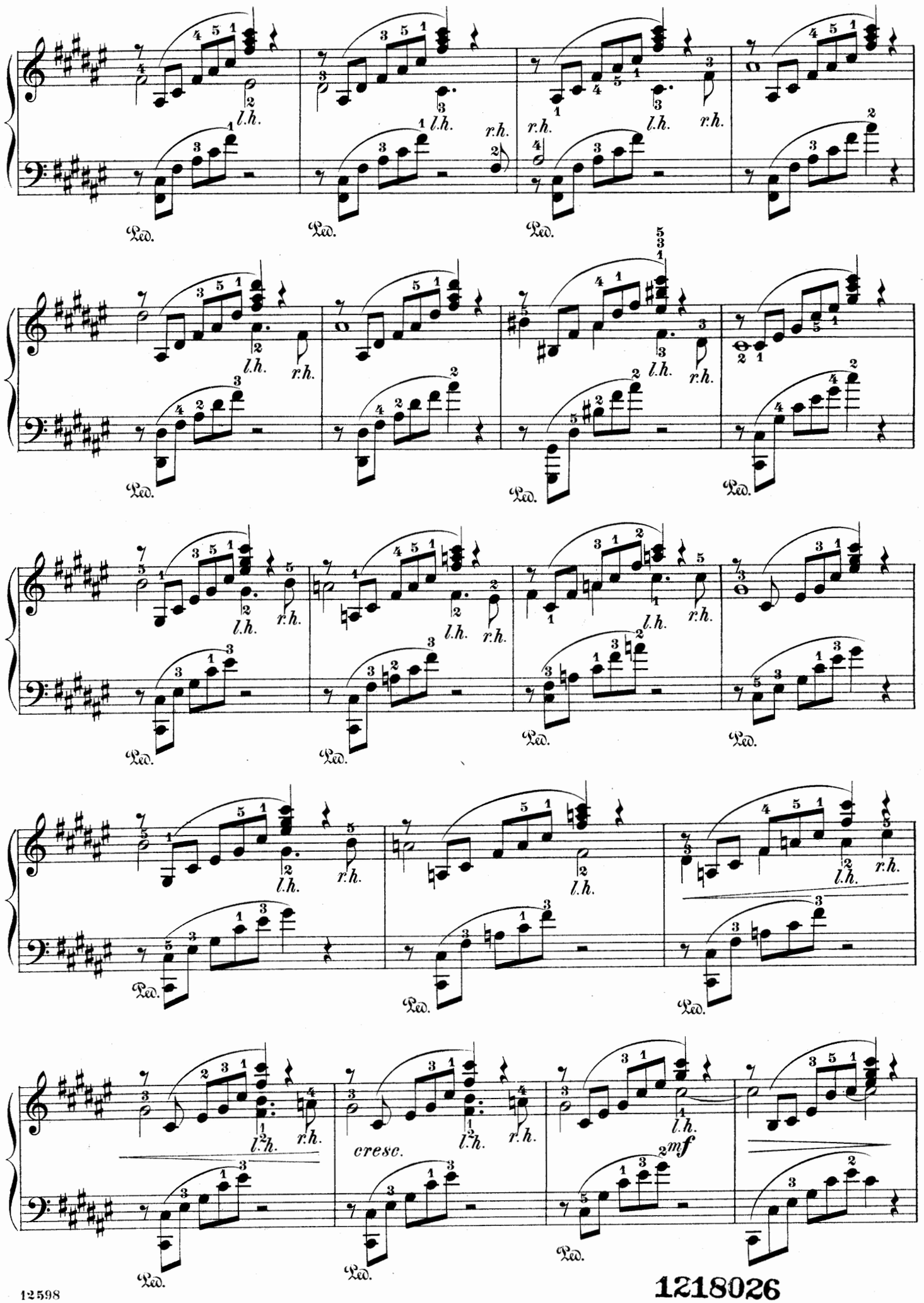
Un poco più mosso.




r.h.
Ped.
8
p
Tempo I.
mp
cresc.
stringendo.


f
Ped.
8
rit.
8
8


Tempo I.
p
l.h.
r.h.
Ped.



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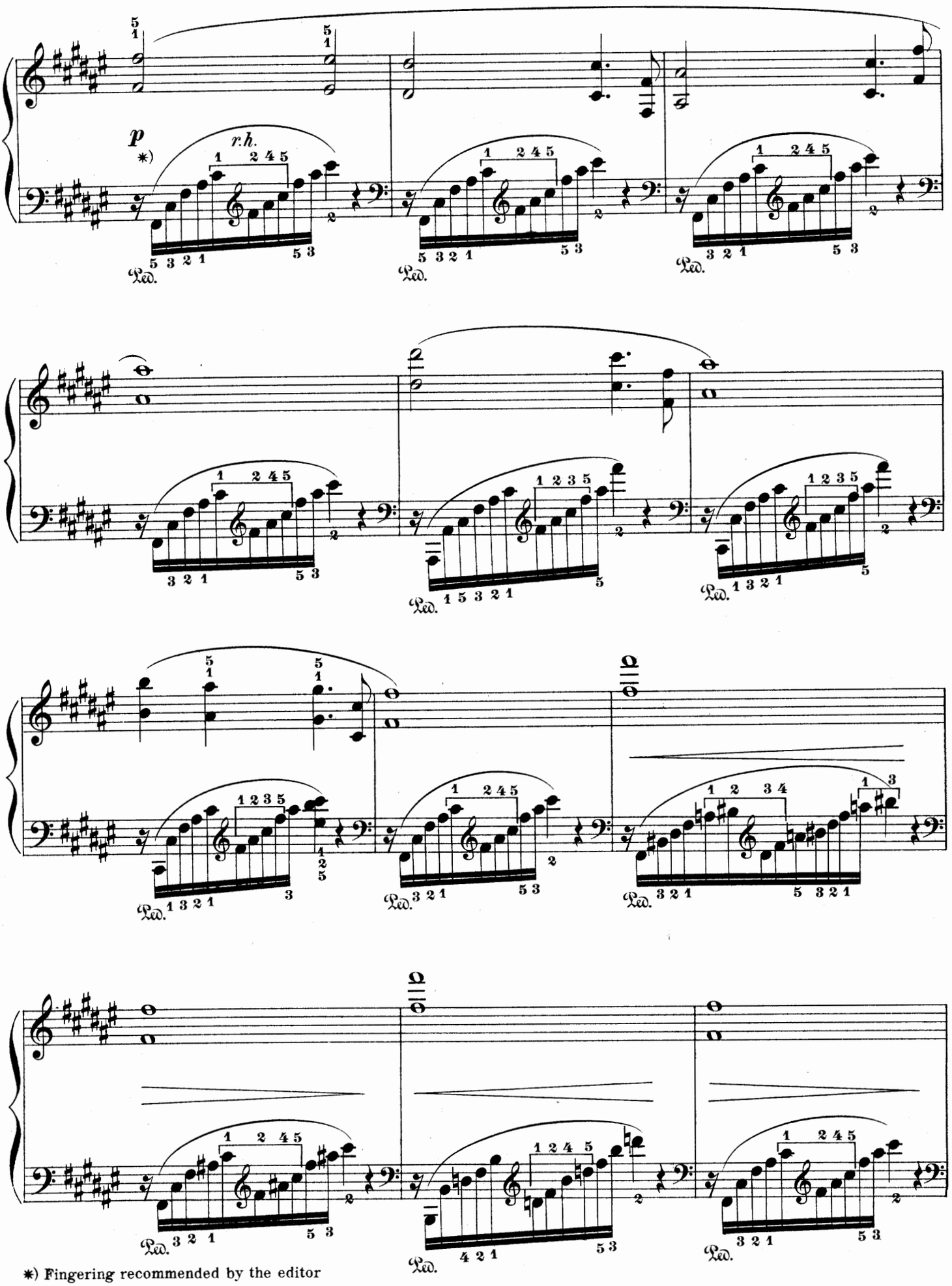
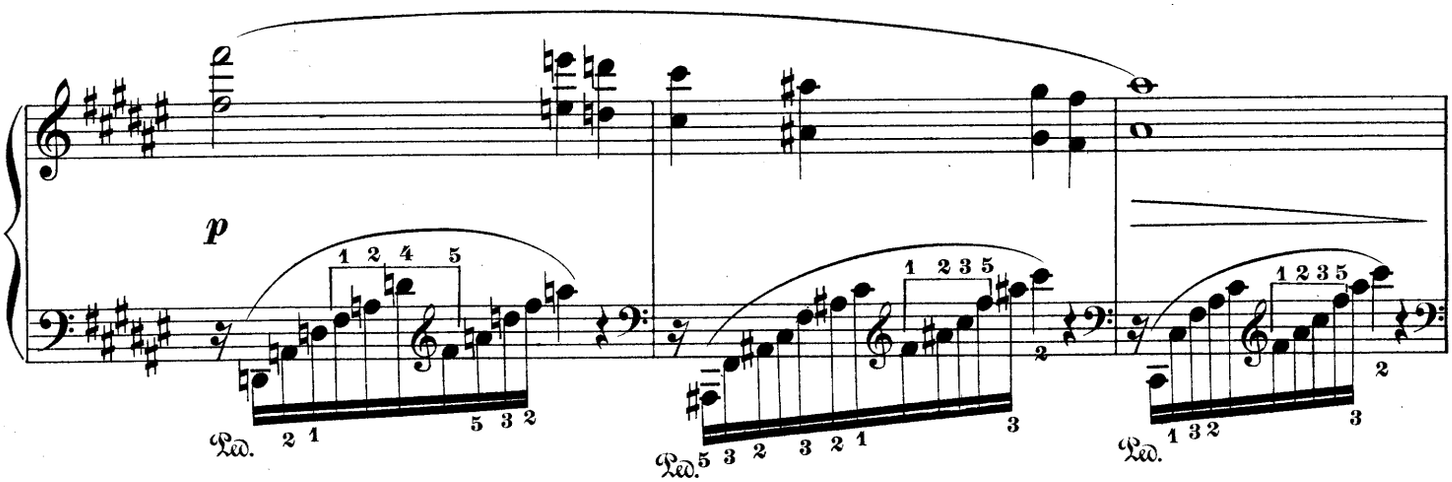


*) Fingering recommended by the editor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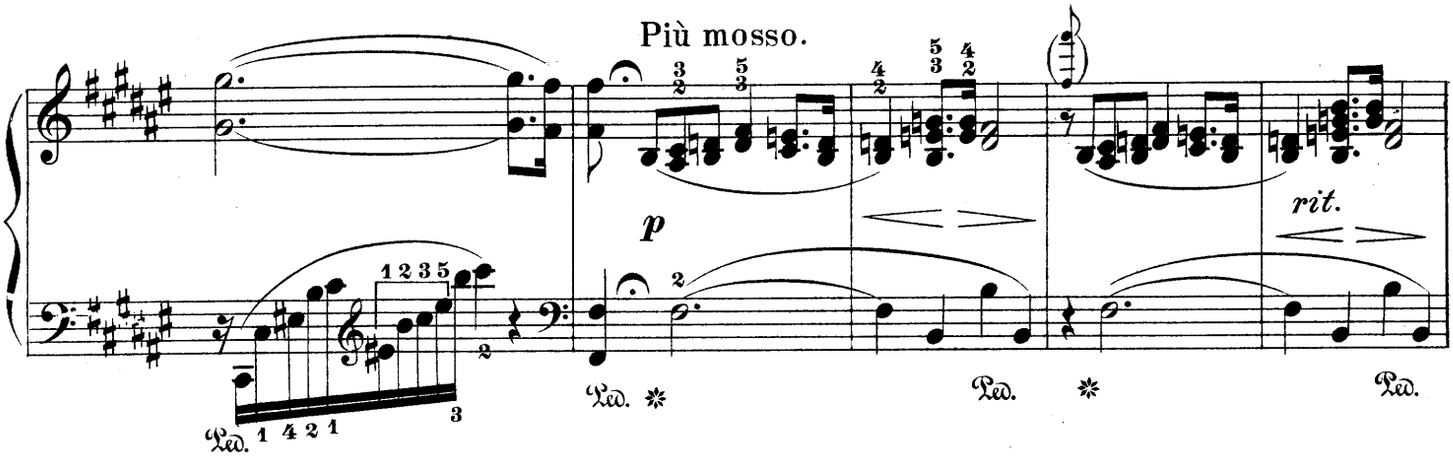
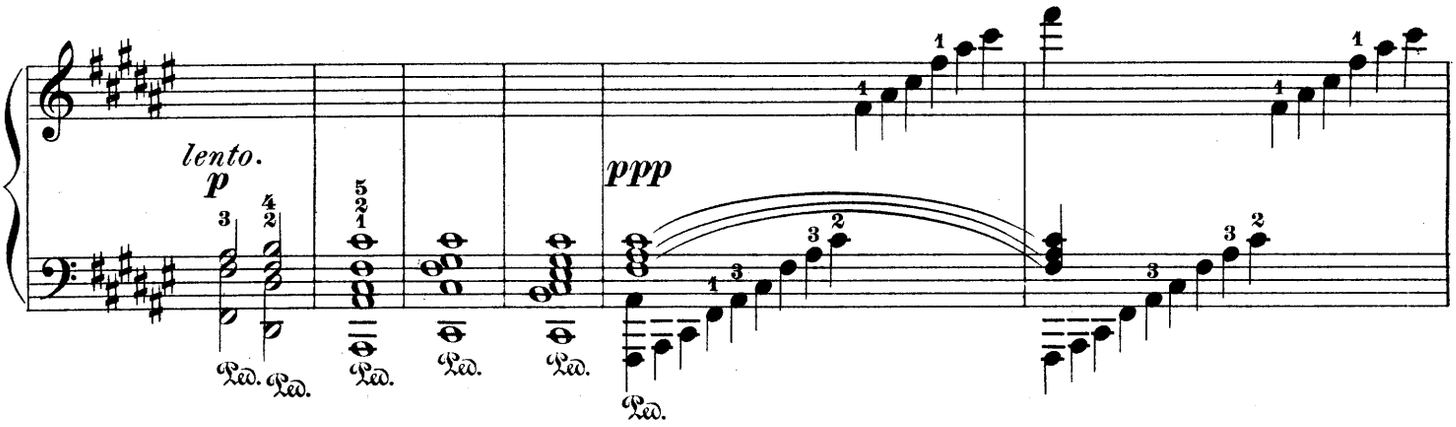
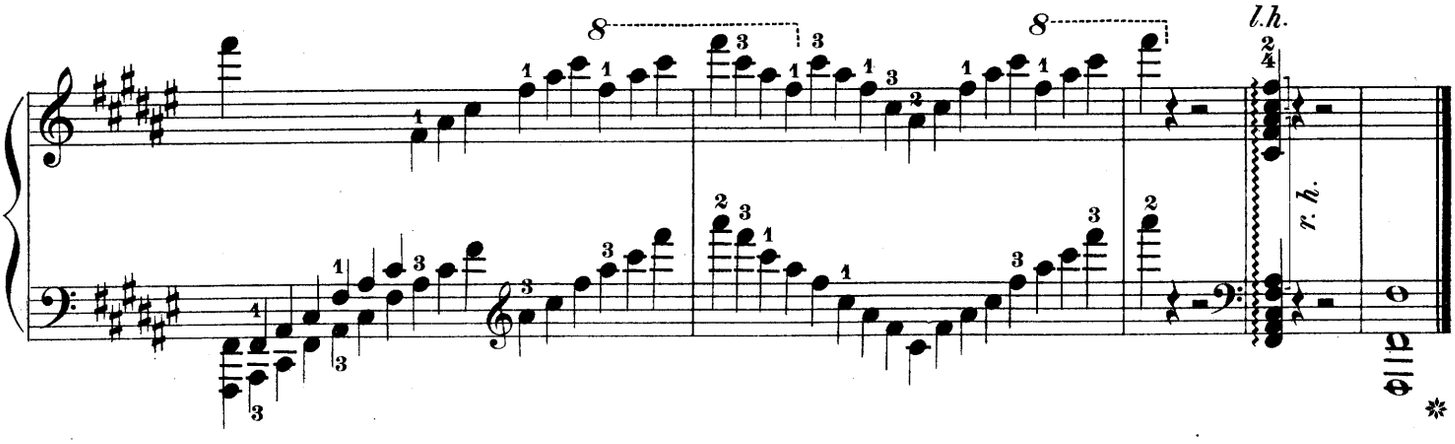
Ped.


Più mosso.
p
rit.
Ped.


lento.
p
ppp
Ped.


8
8
l.h.
r. h.

Valse.

Fingered by BERN. BOEKELMAN.

ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

Allegro non troppo.

Piano.

mf

sotto.

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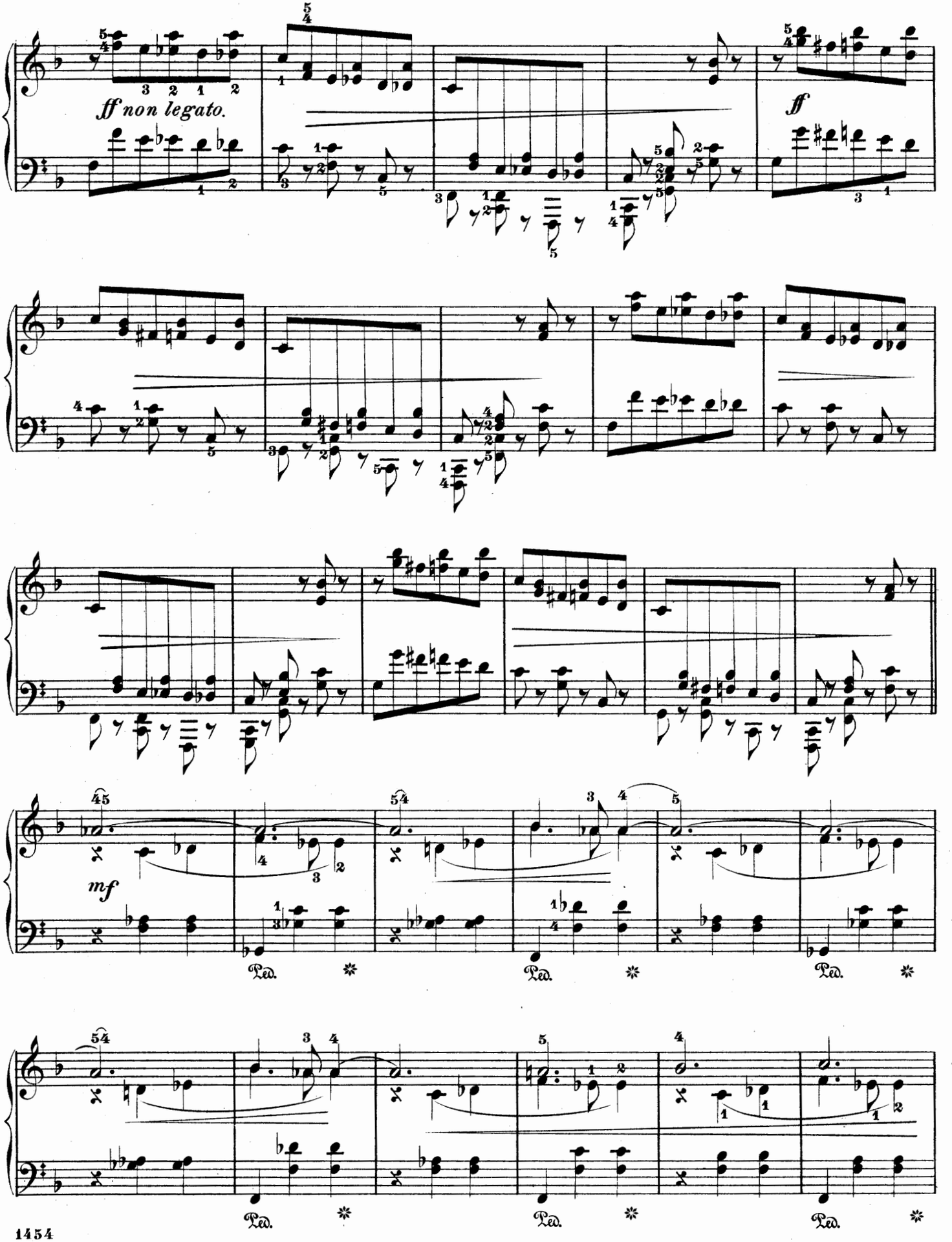
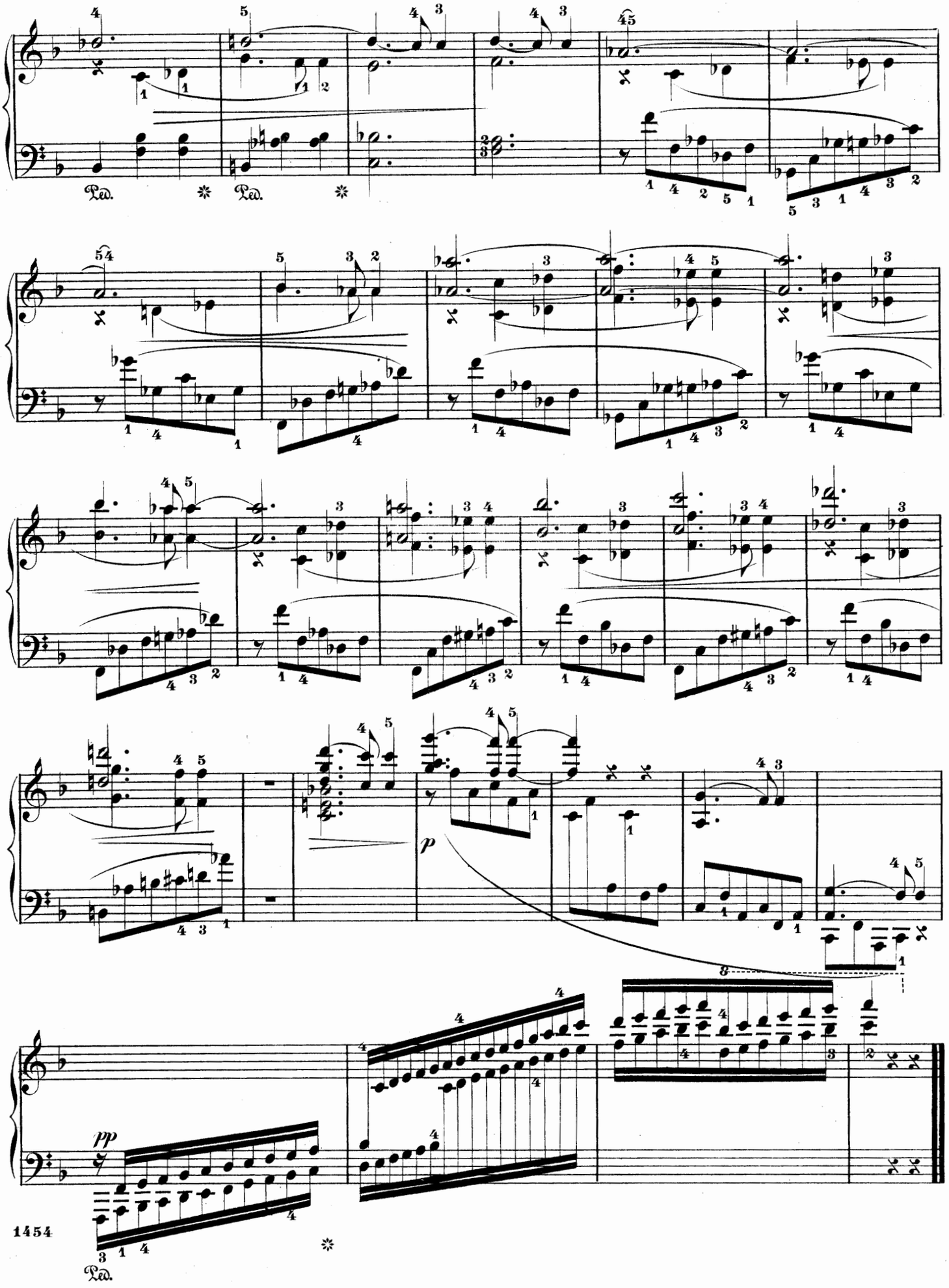

ff non legato.
ff
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.


Ped.
Ped.
p
pp
Ped.

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ANTON RUBINSTEIN

SELECTED PIECES

FOR

PIANOFORTE

IN

TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I CONTAINS A
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR BY
PHILIP HALE

NEW YORK : G. SCHIRMER
BOSTON : BOSTON MUSIC CO.
1896

Contents.

1. Marche à la Turque ..... Page 2.
2. Romance *in E flat;* Op. 44, Nº 1 ..... " 6.
3. Cracovienne, Op. 5, Nº 2 ..... " 8.
4. Tarentelle, Op. 6 ..... " 18.
5. Polka (Boheme), Op. 82. Nº 7 ..... " 30.
6. Près du Ruisseau, from "Miniatures" ..... " 34.
7. À la Fenêtre, from "Miniatures" ..... " 37.

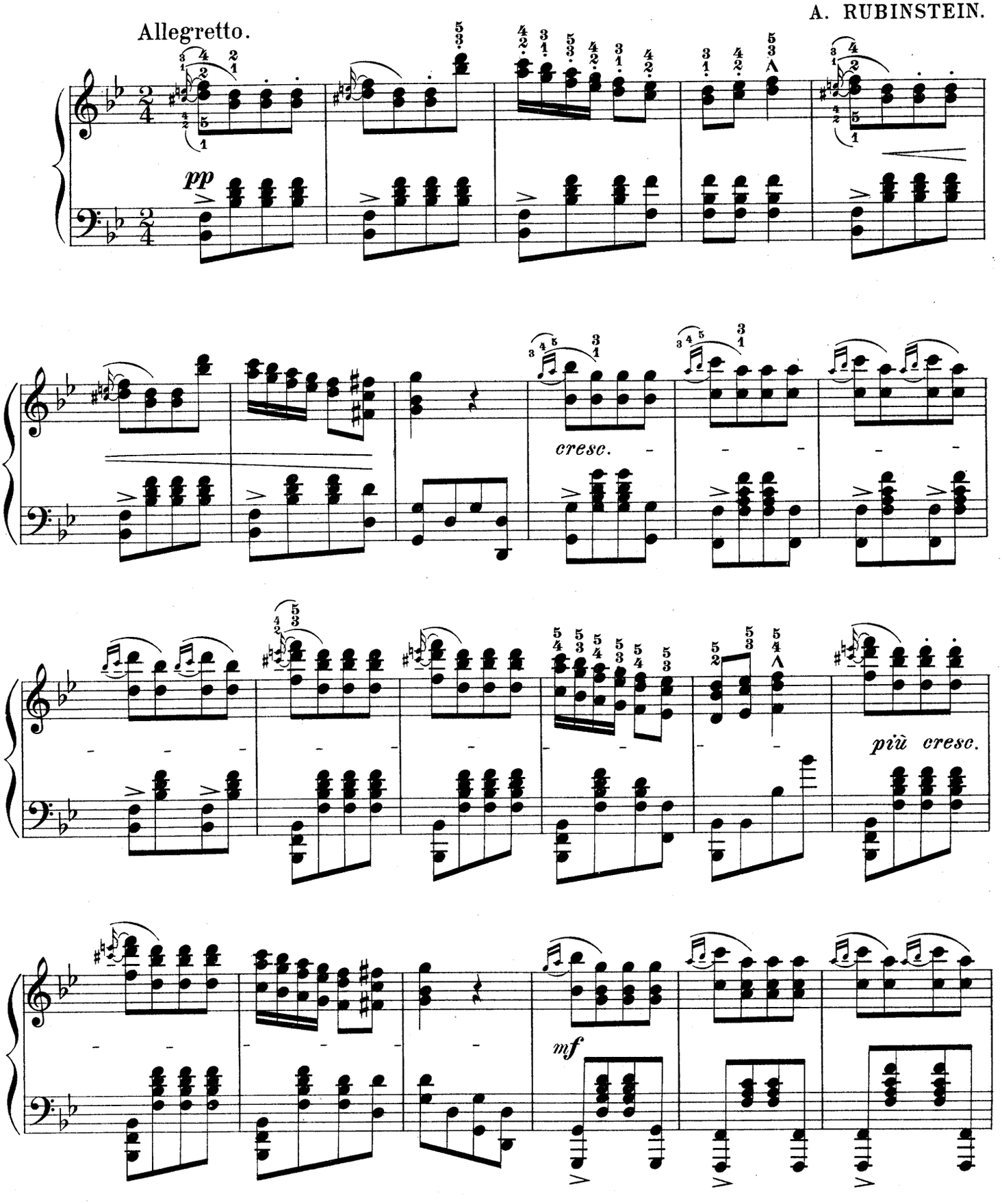
Marche à la Turque

by

L. van Beethoven.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. BASSFORD.

Transcription by
A. RUBINSTEIN.



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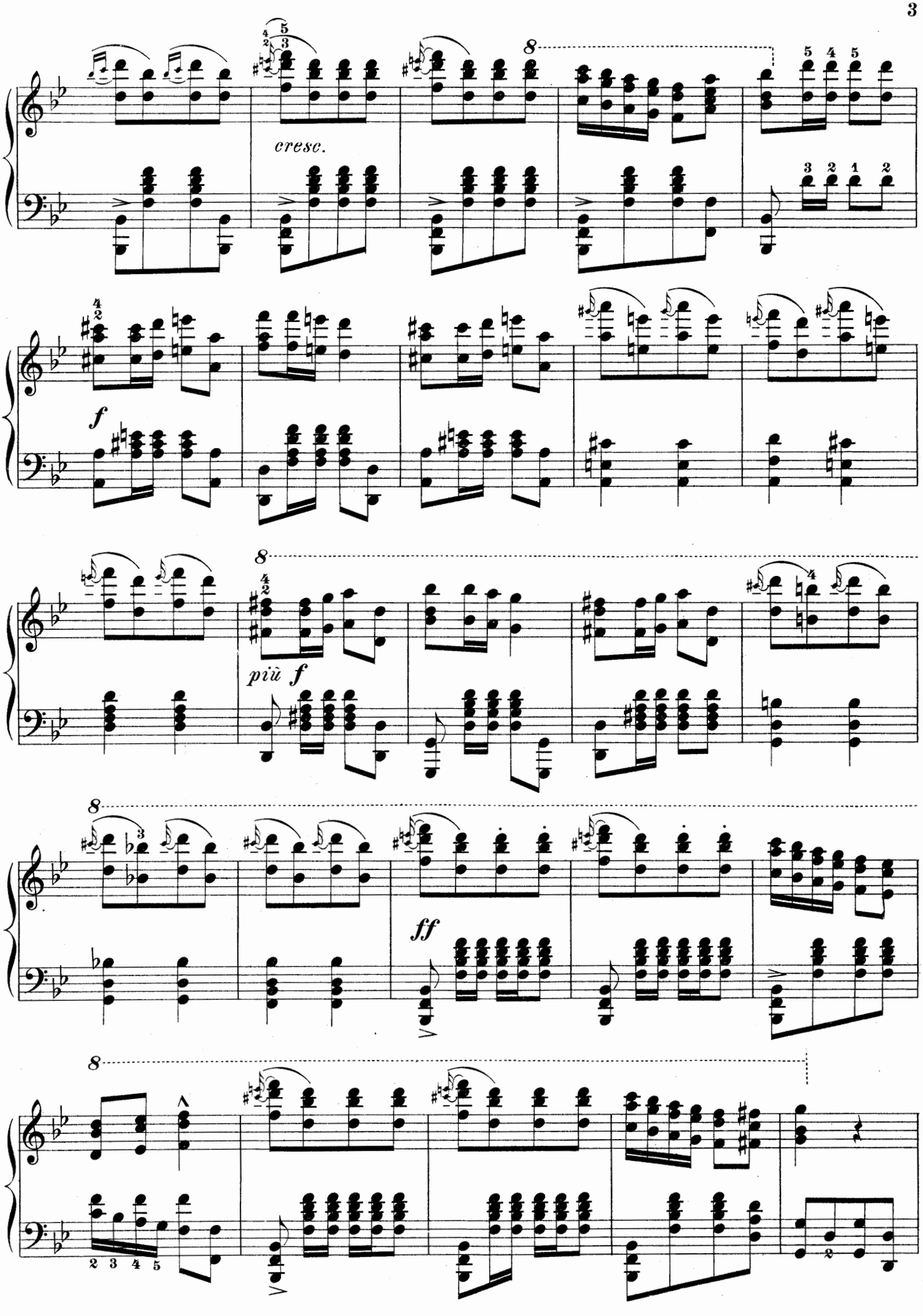
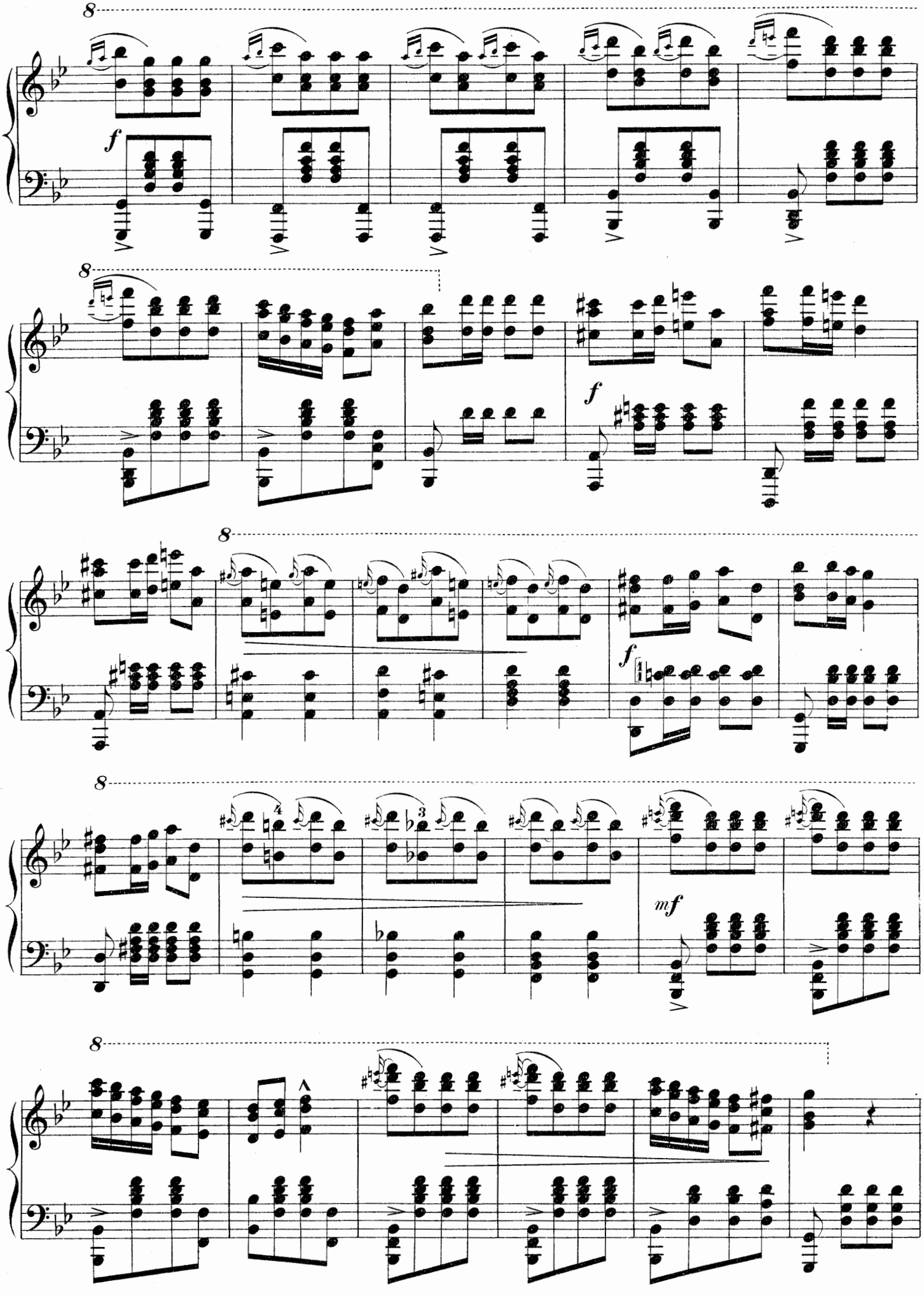
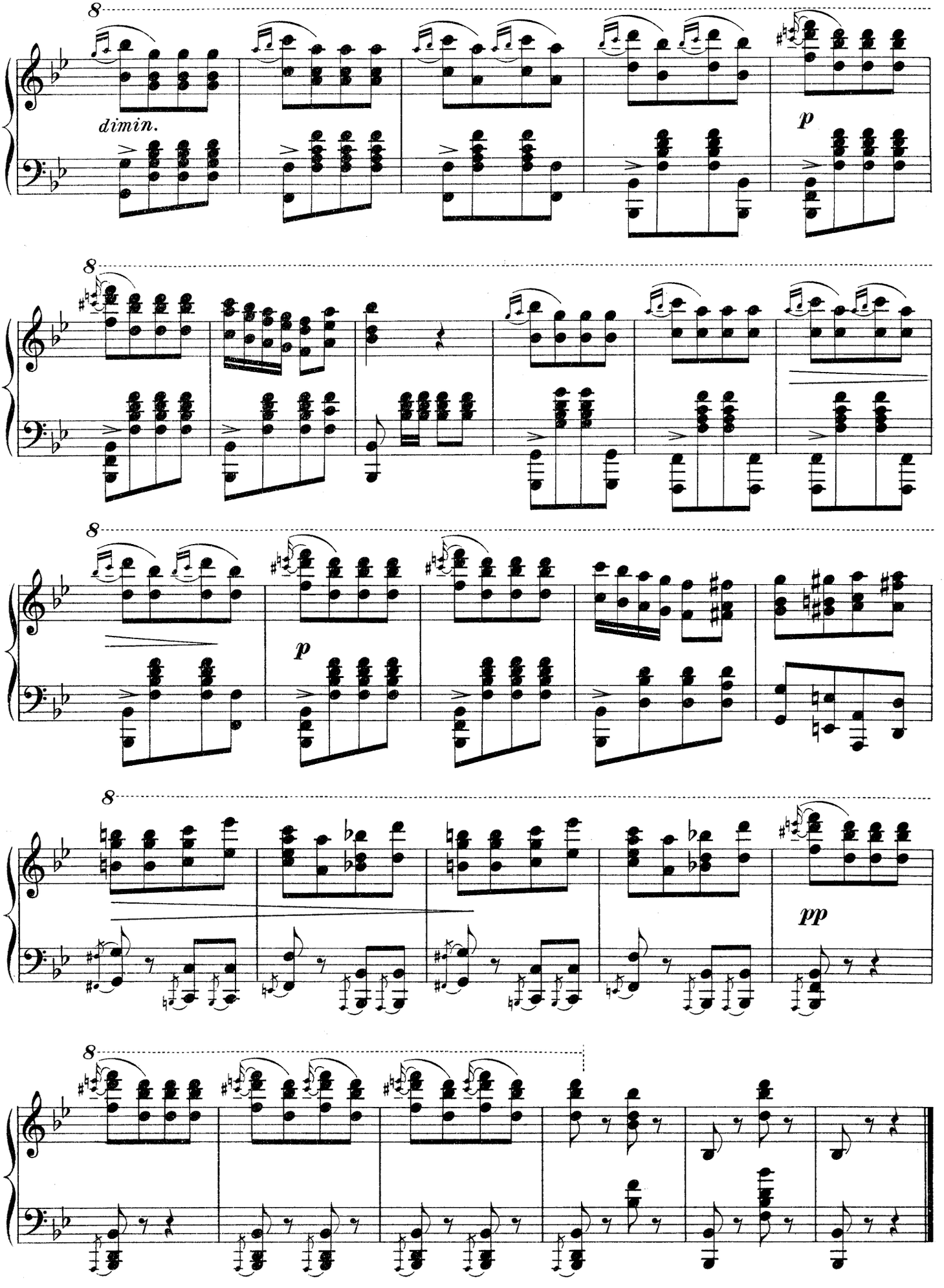

cresc.
f
più f
ff


8
f
8
f
8
f
8
mf
8

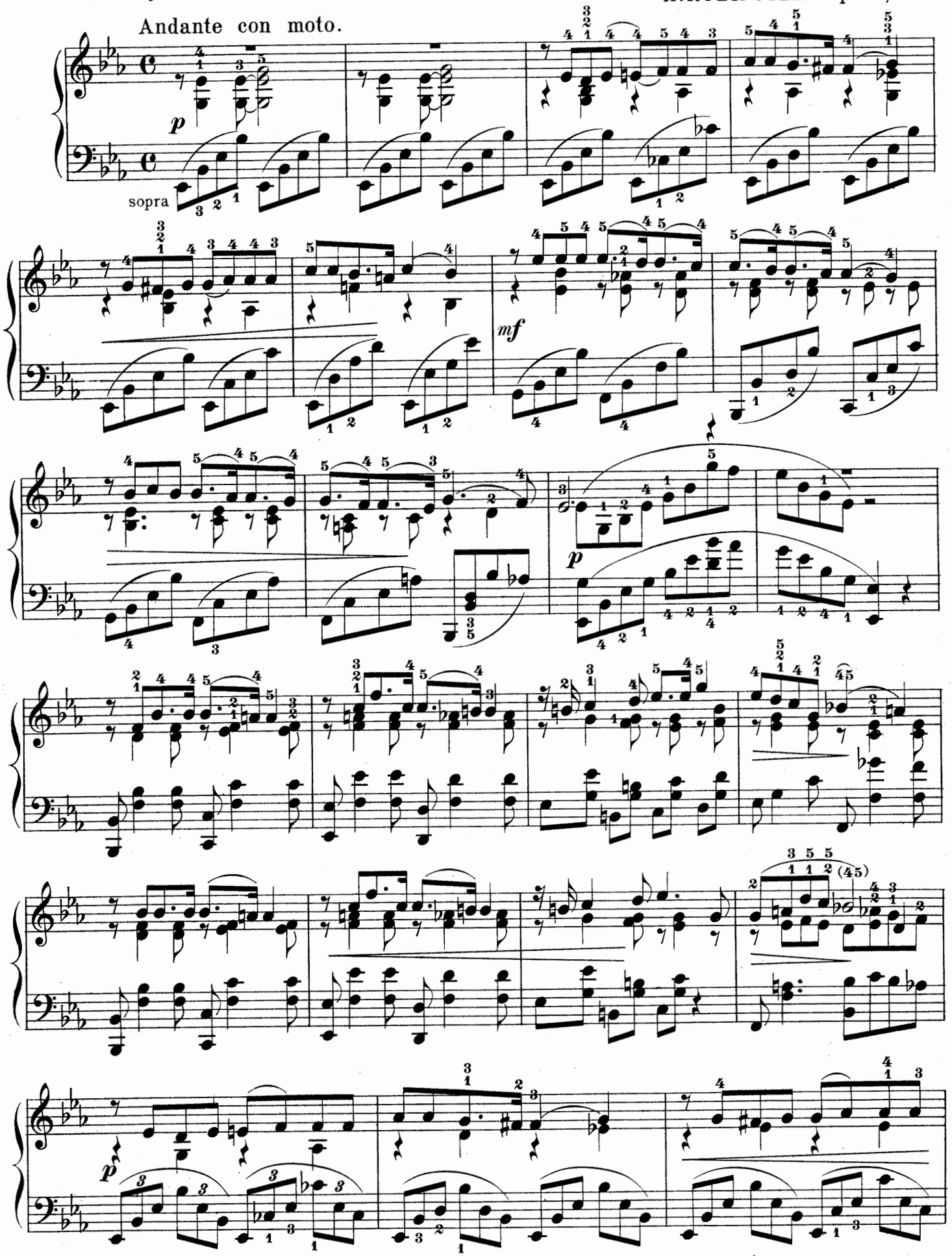

8
dimin.
p
8
8
p
8
pp
8

Romance.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 44, No. 1.

Andante con moto.



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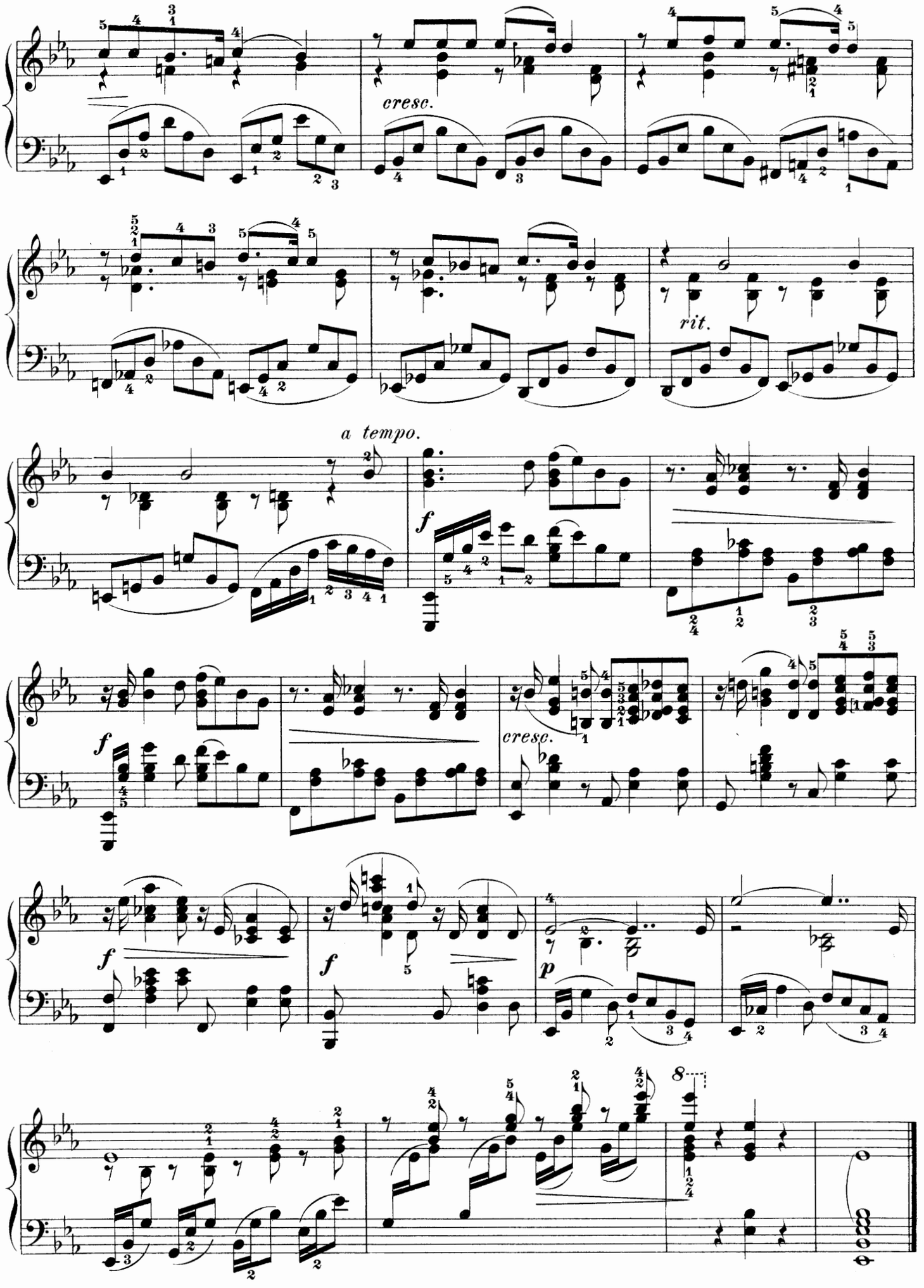
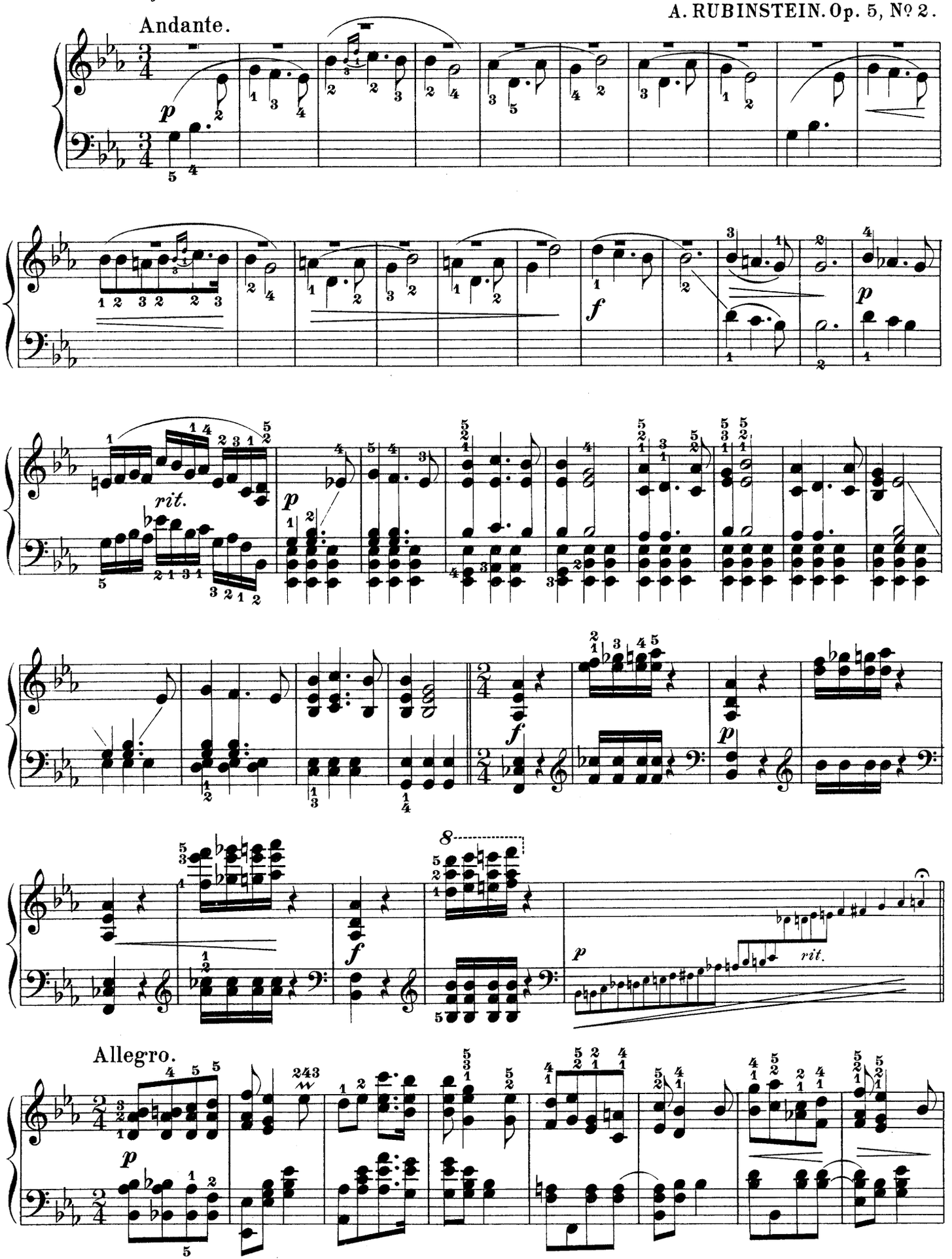

cresc.
rit.
a tempo.
f
cresc.
f
f
f
p
8

Cracovienne.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 5, № 2.

Andante.



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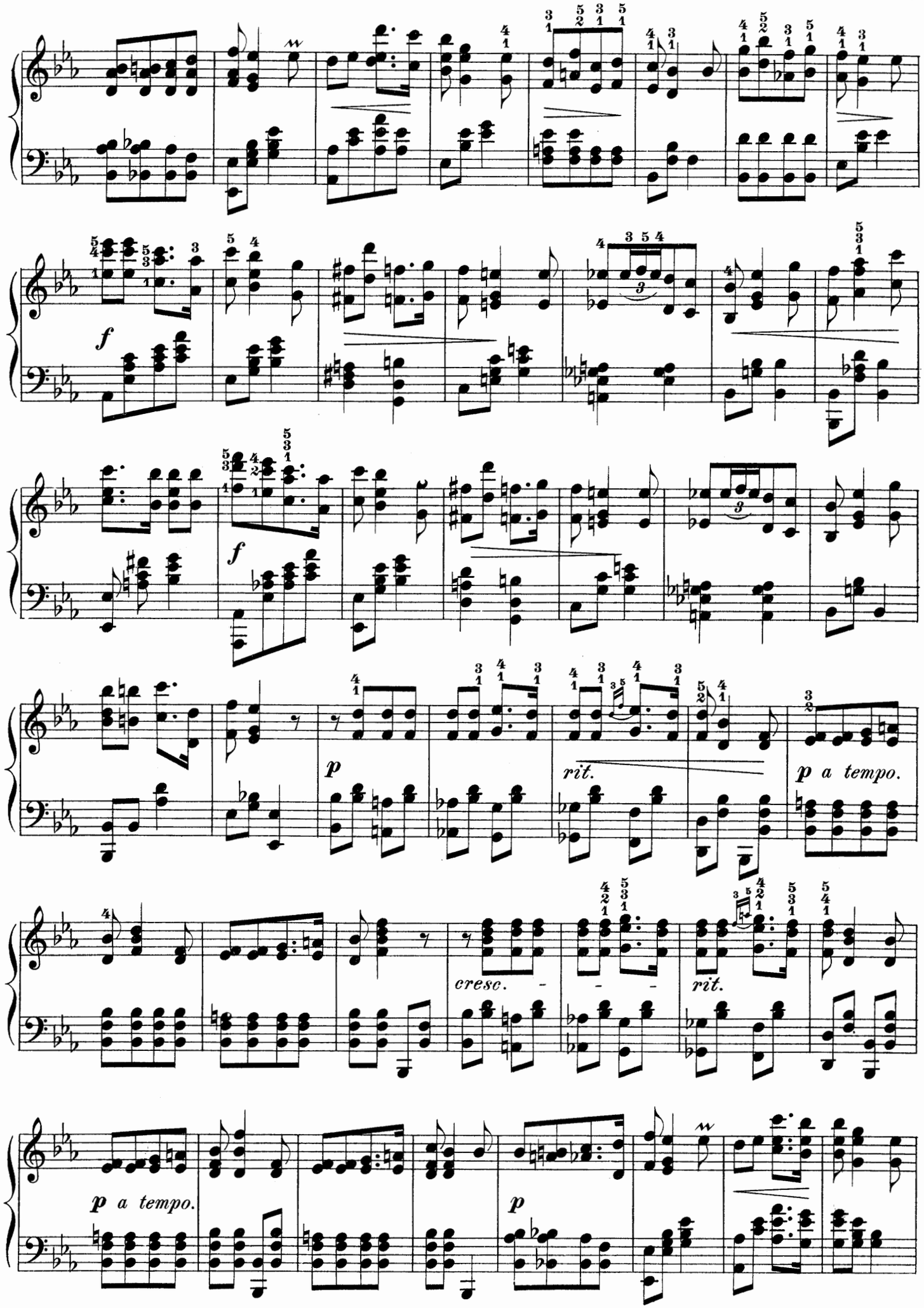
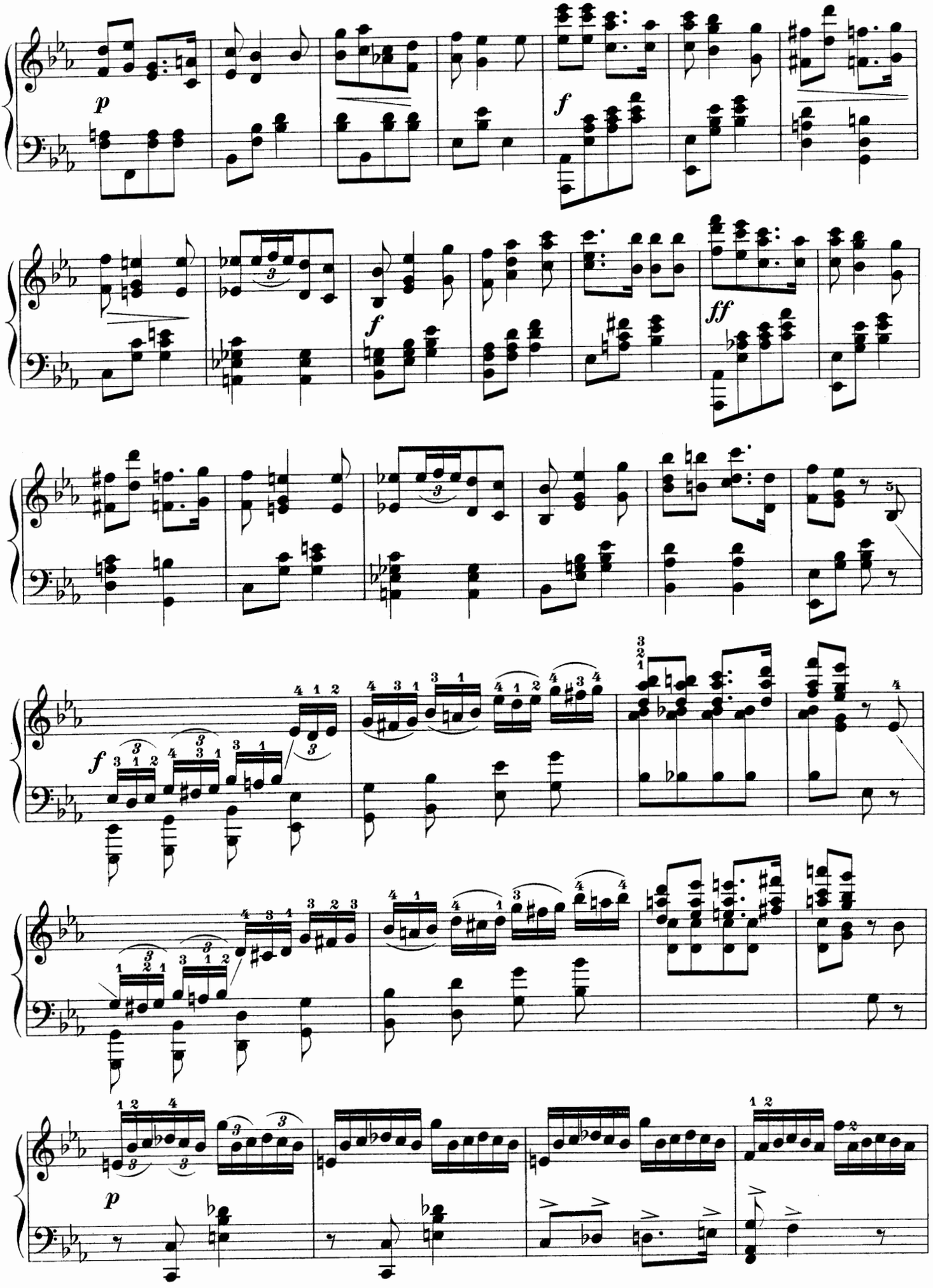
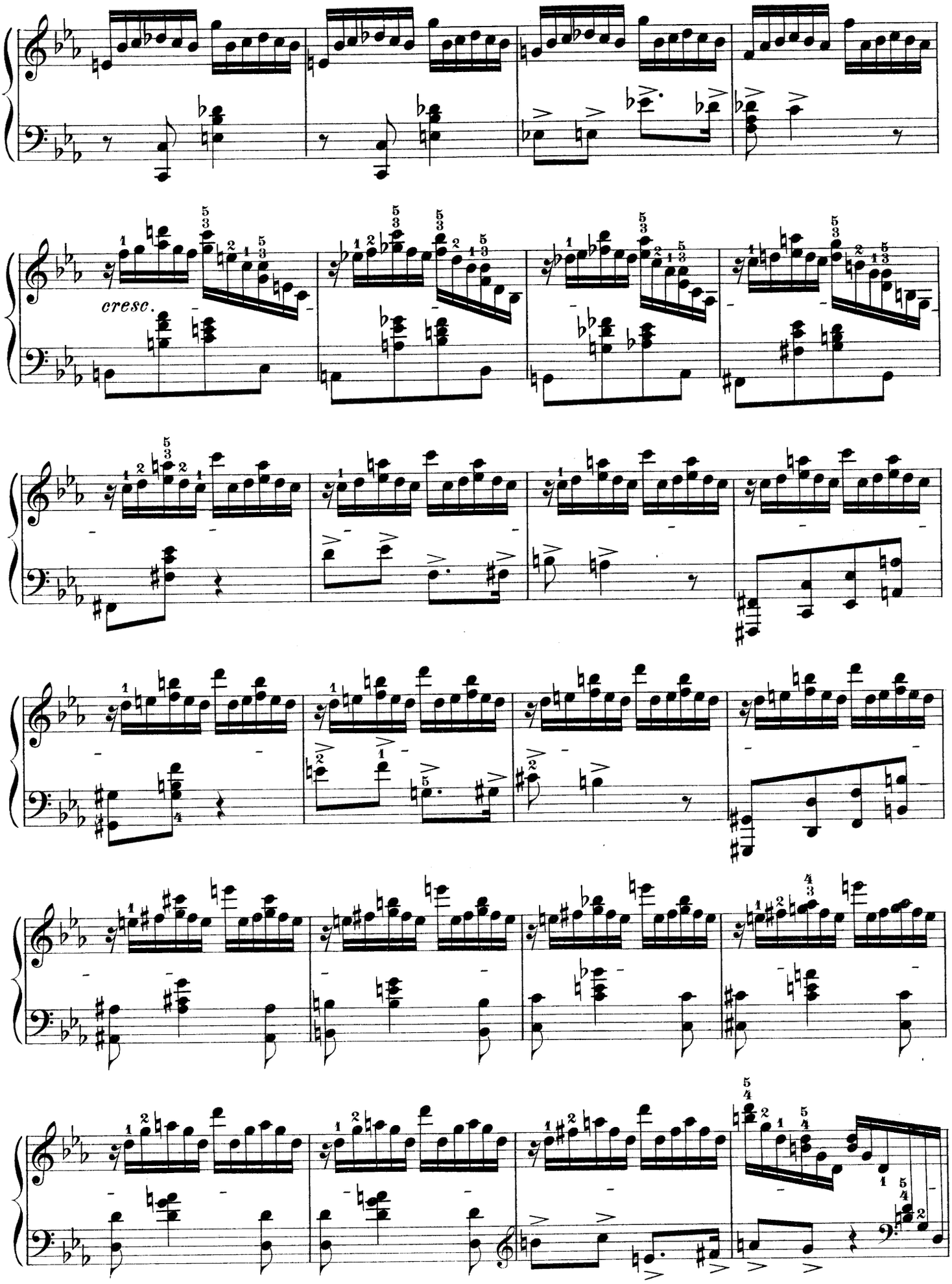
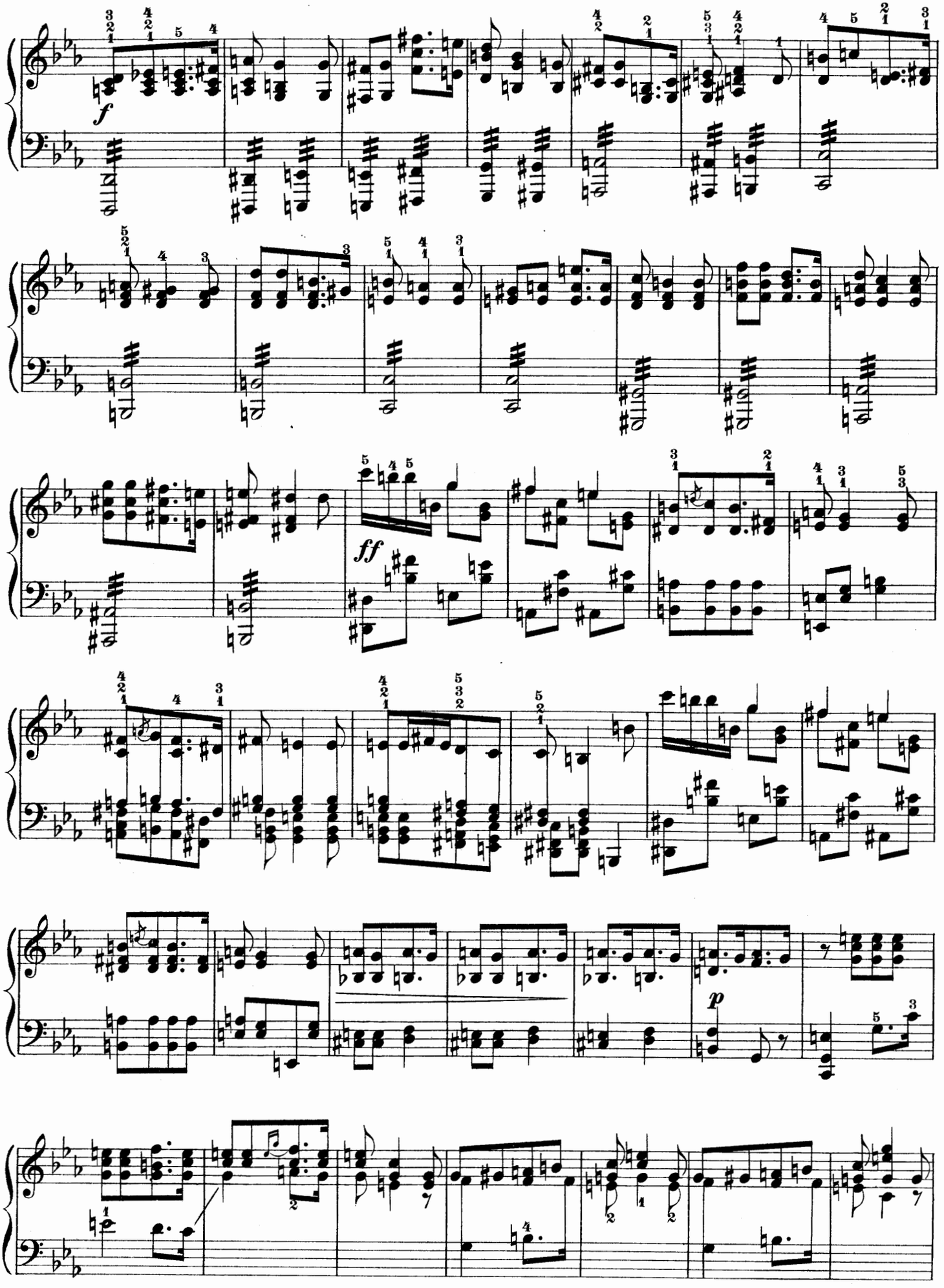
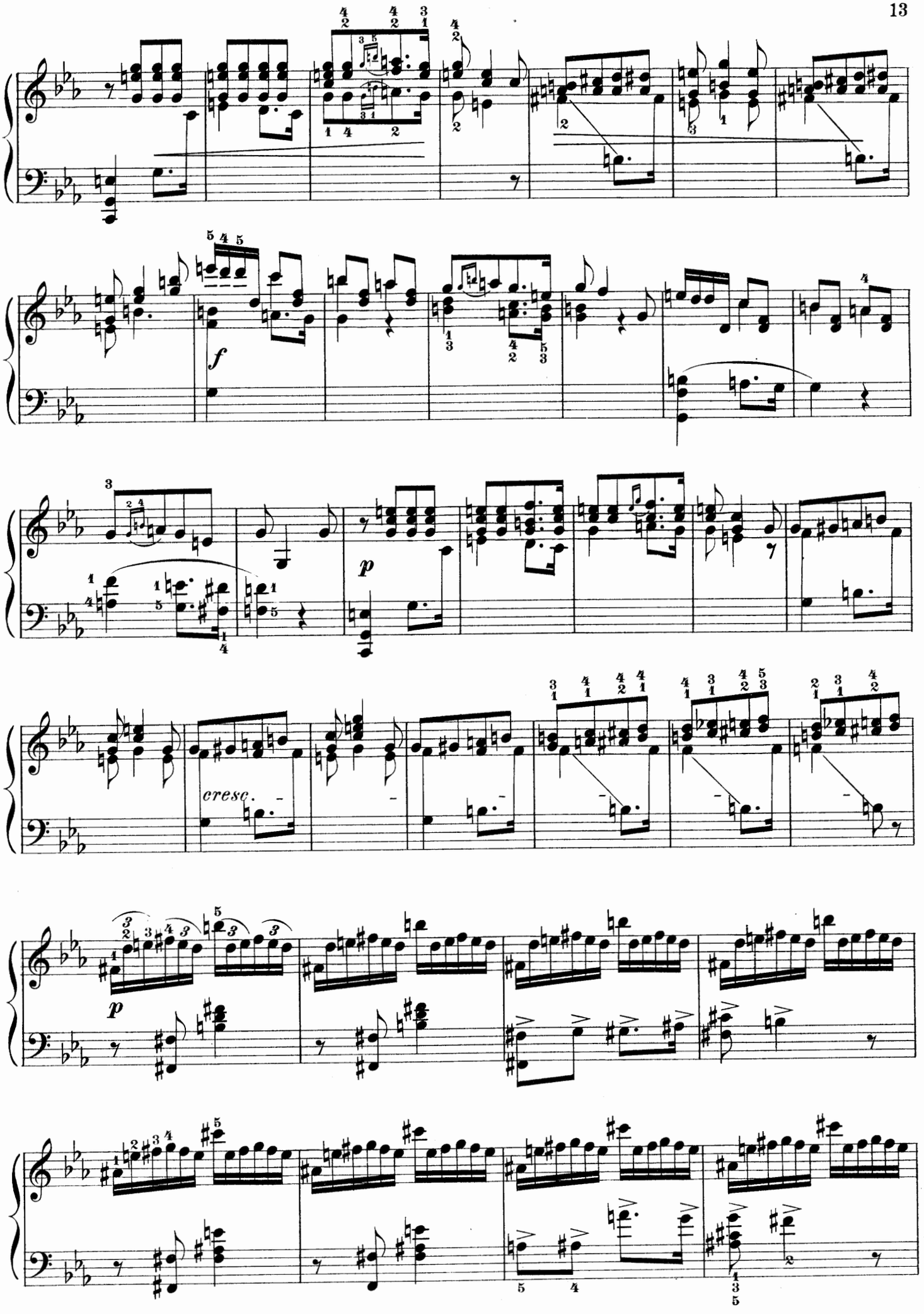
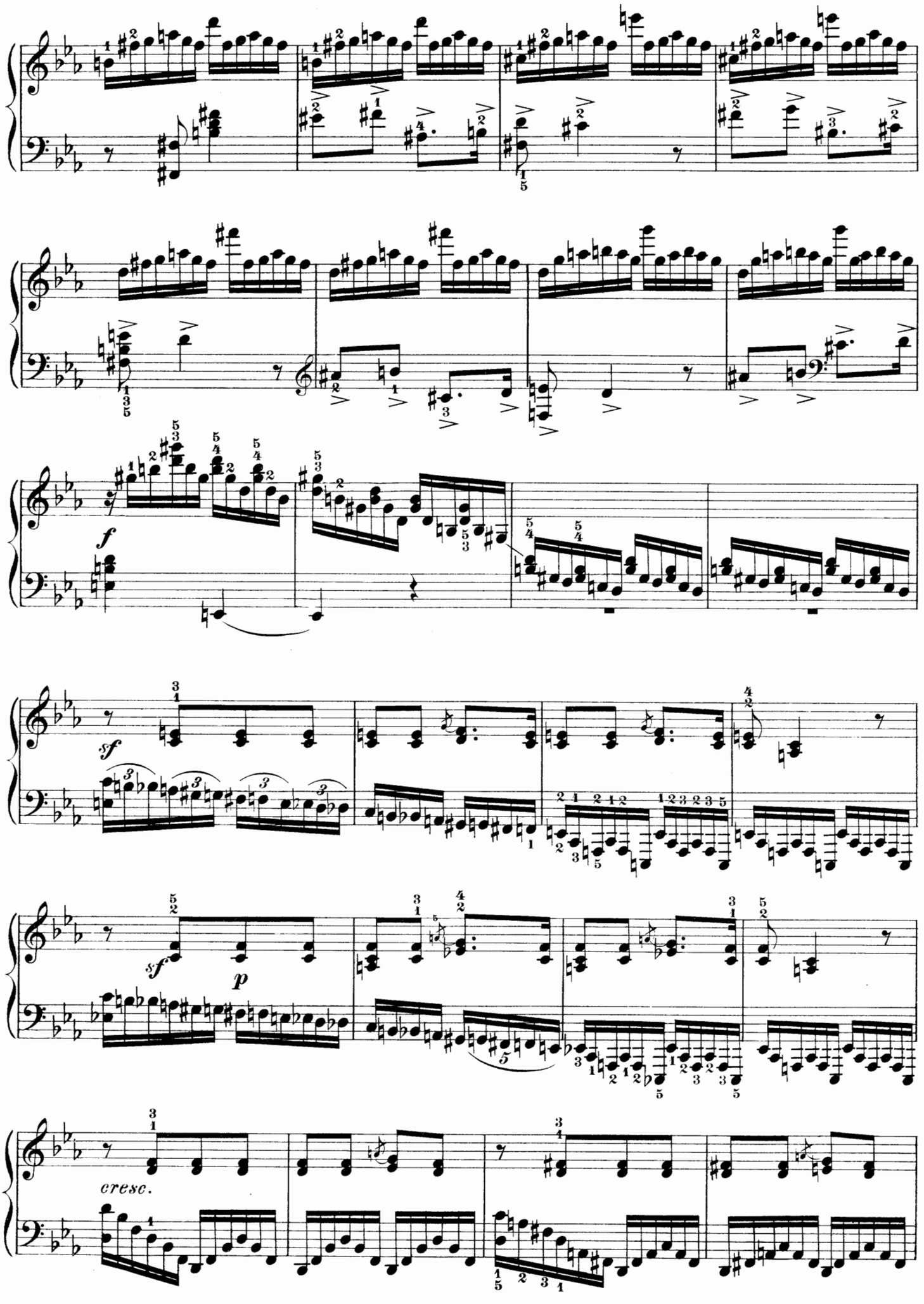

f
f
p
rit.
p a tempo.
cresc.
rit.
p a tempo.
p

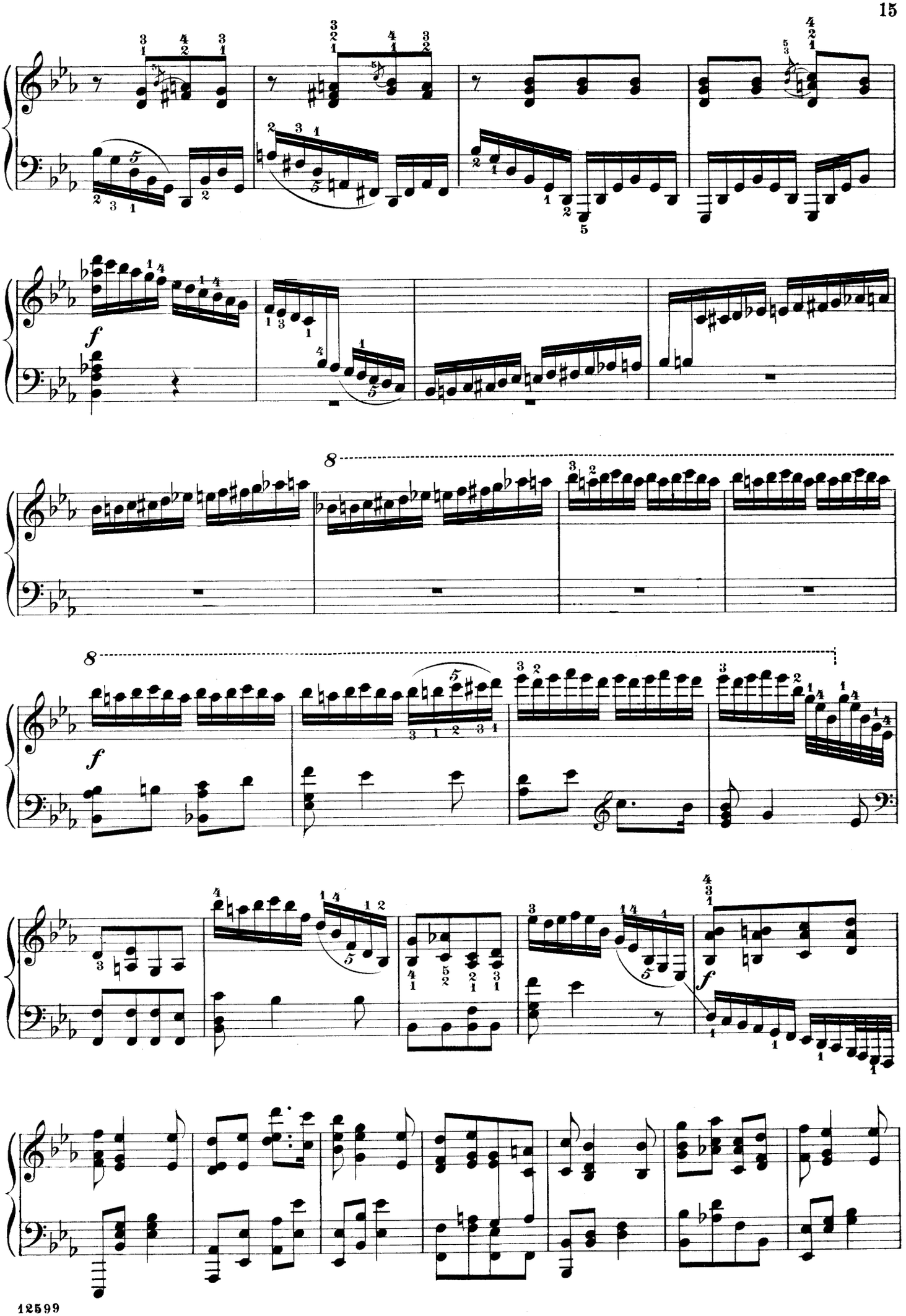

p
f
f
ff
f
p

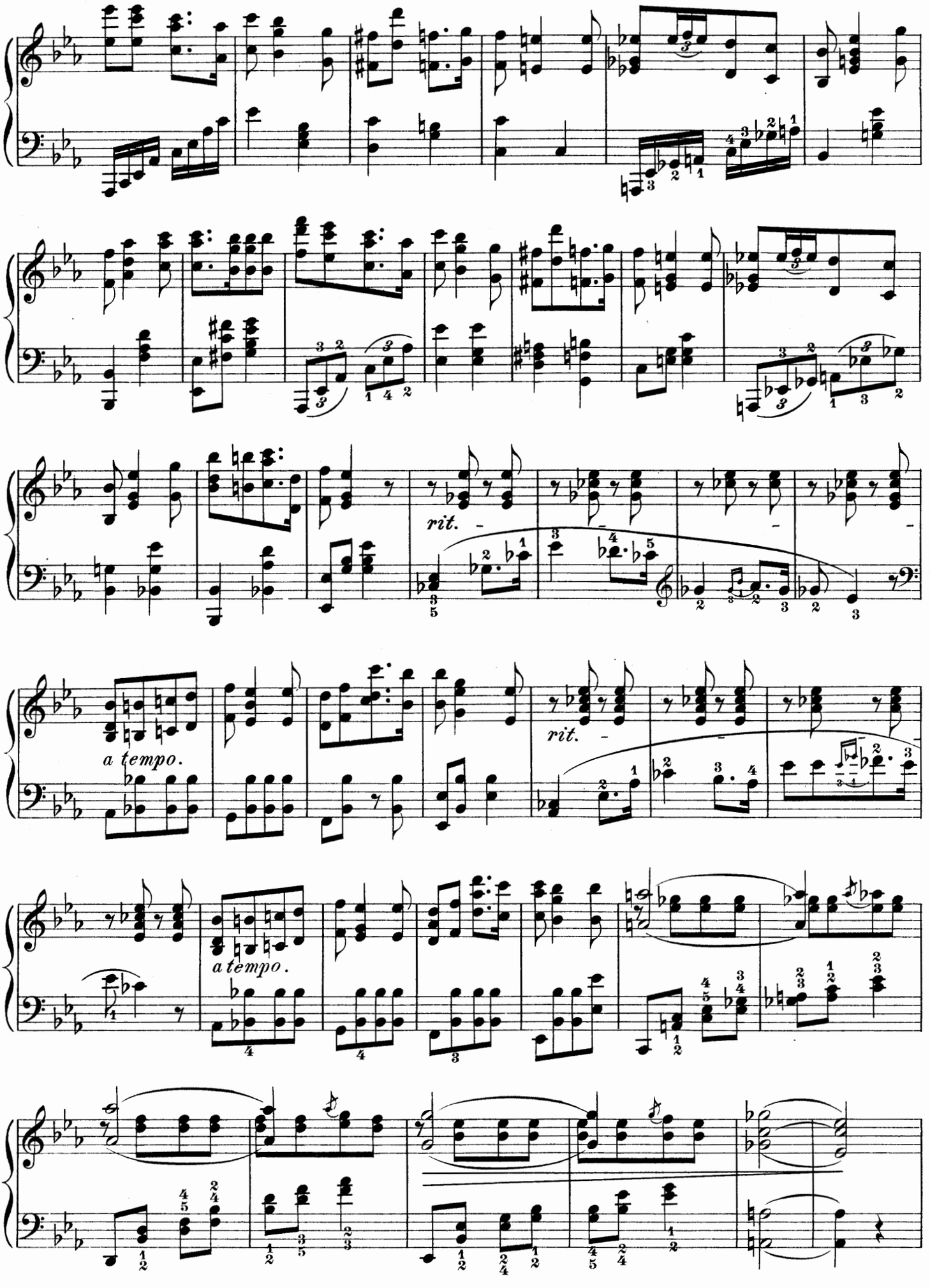

cresc.

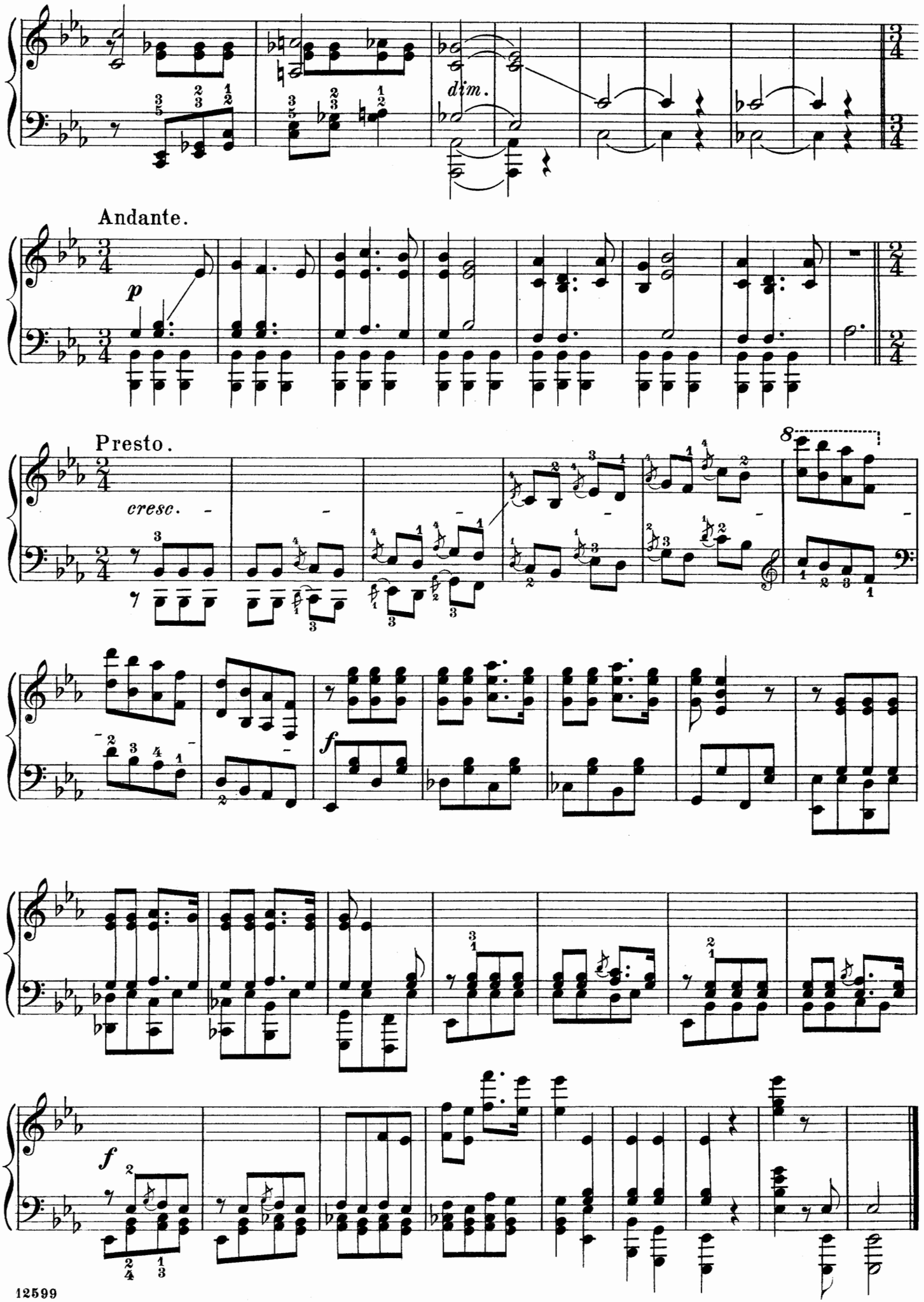

f
ff
p


f
p
cresc.
p


f
sf
sf
p
cresc.



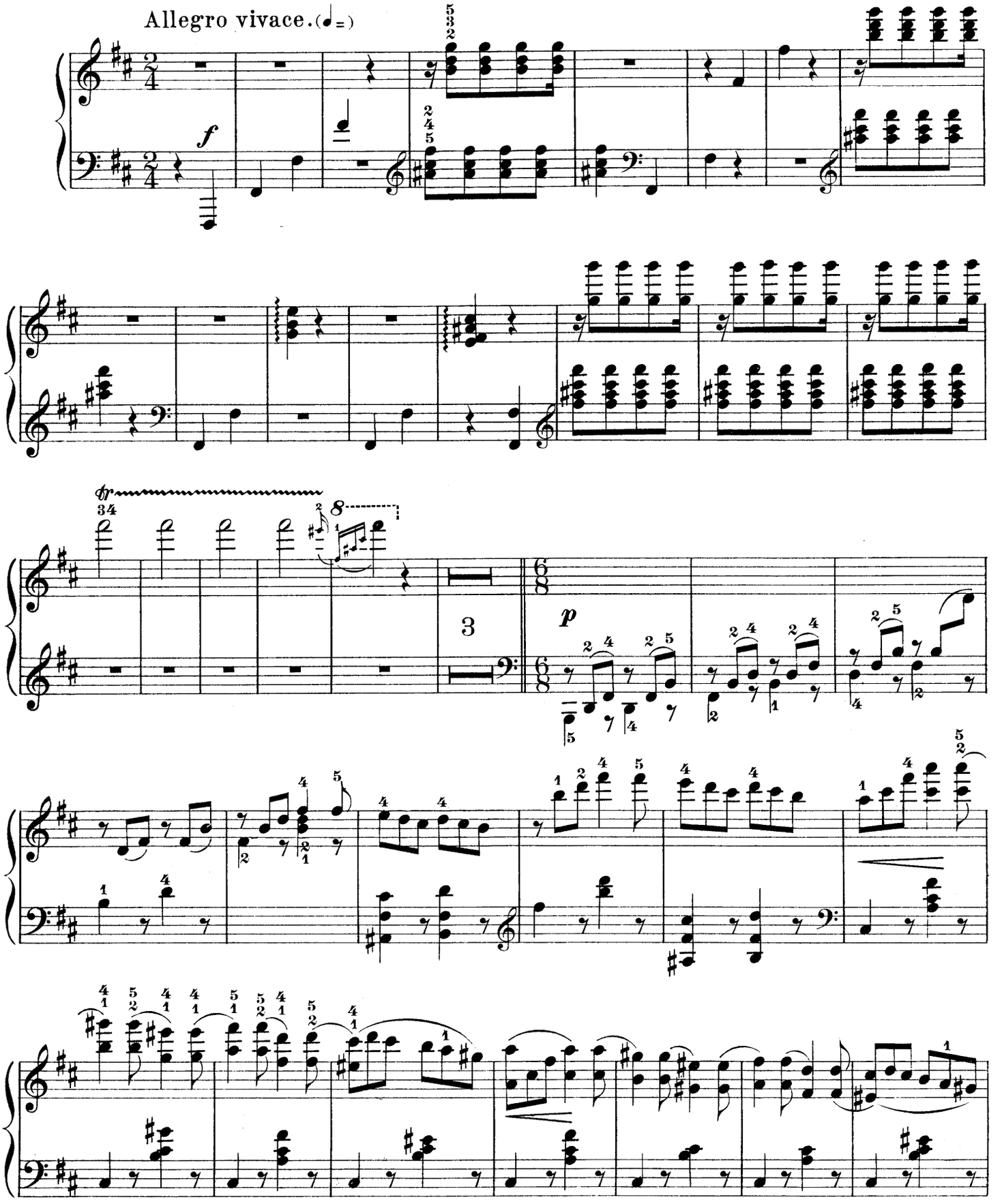

rit.
a tempo.
rit.
a tempo.


dim.
Andante.
p
Presto.
cresc.
8
f
f

Tarentelle.

Edited and fingered by
W. K. Bassford.

A. RUBINSTEIN. Op. 6.



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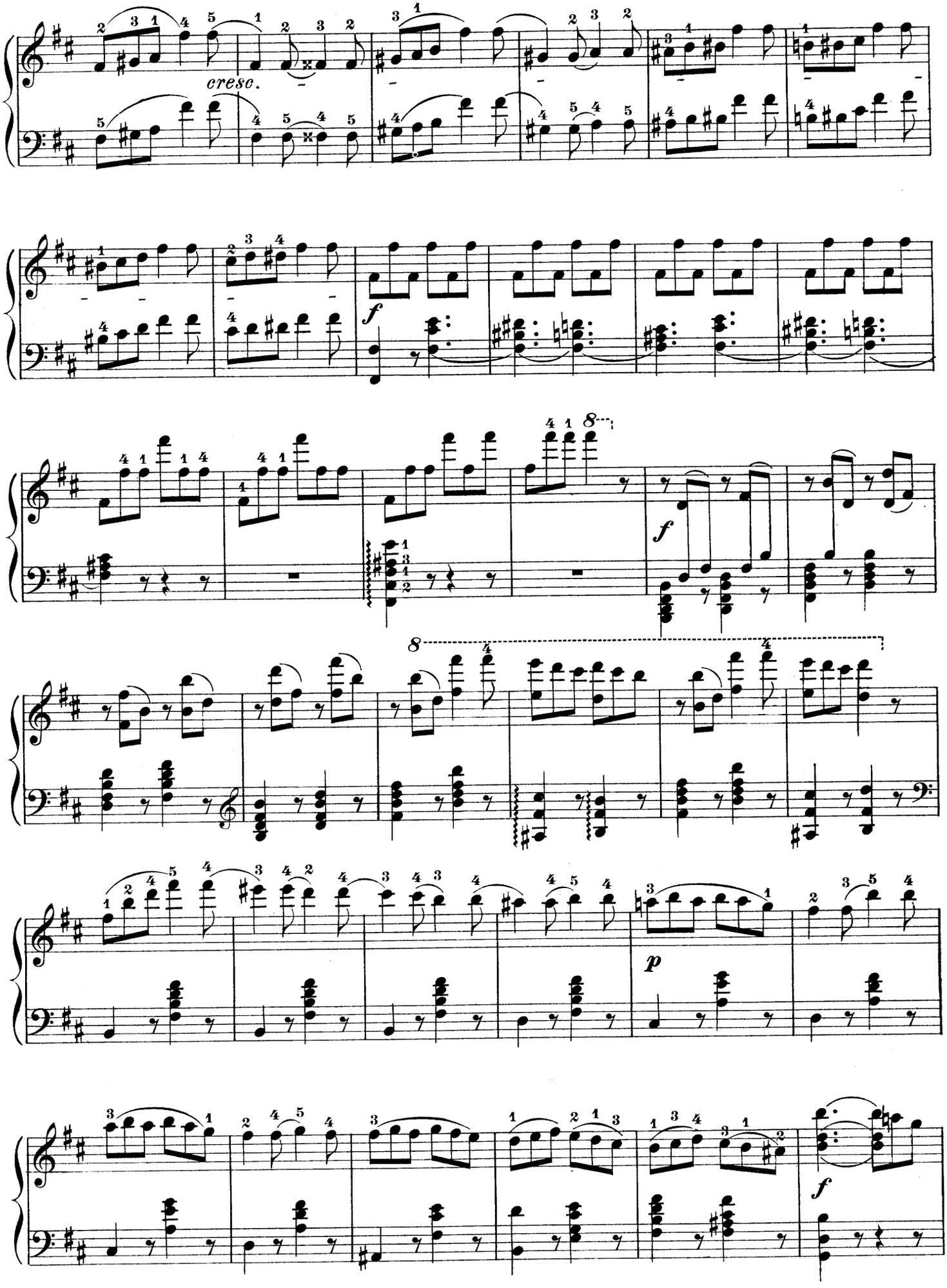
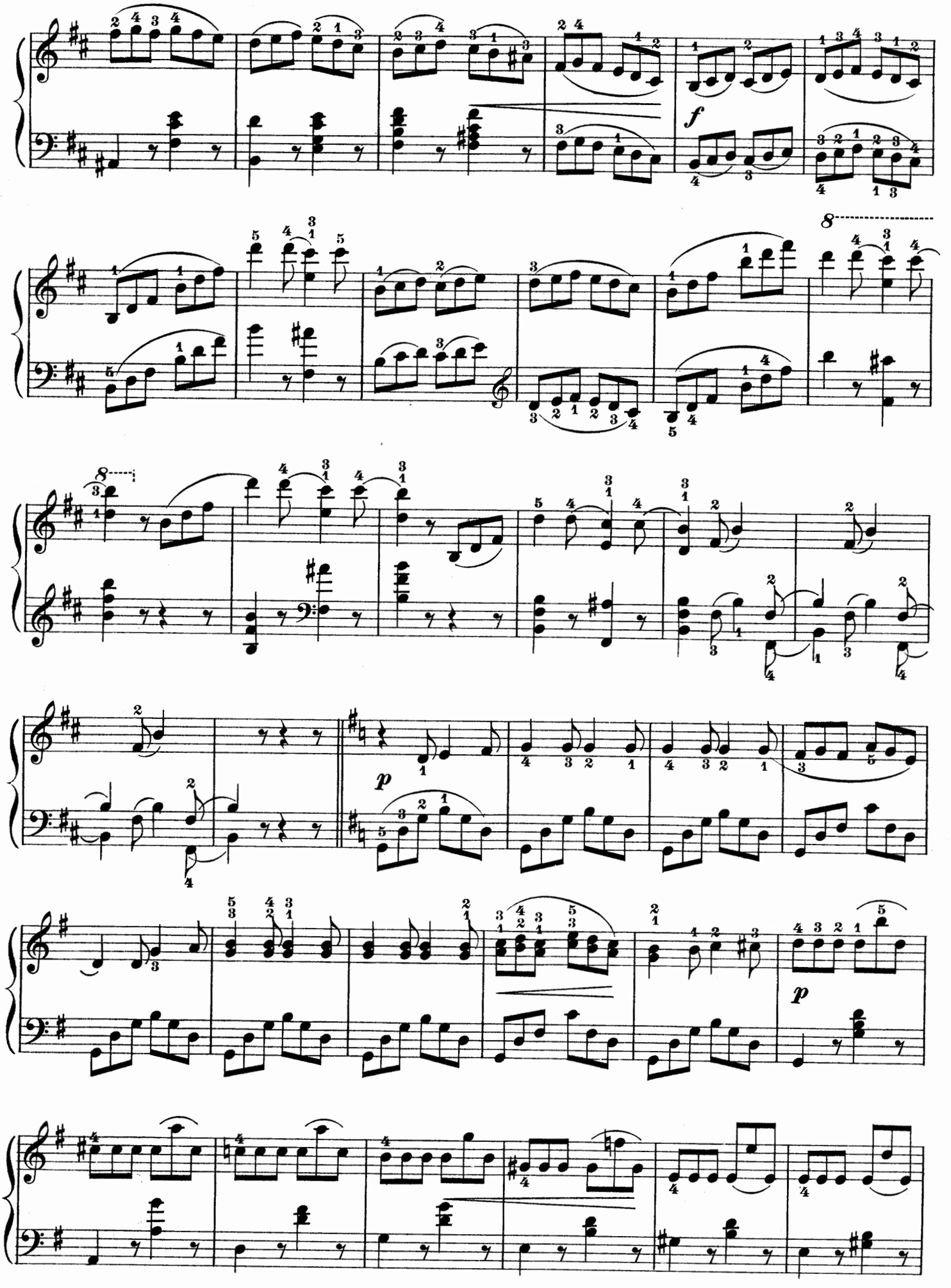
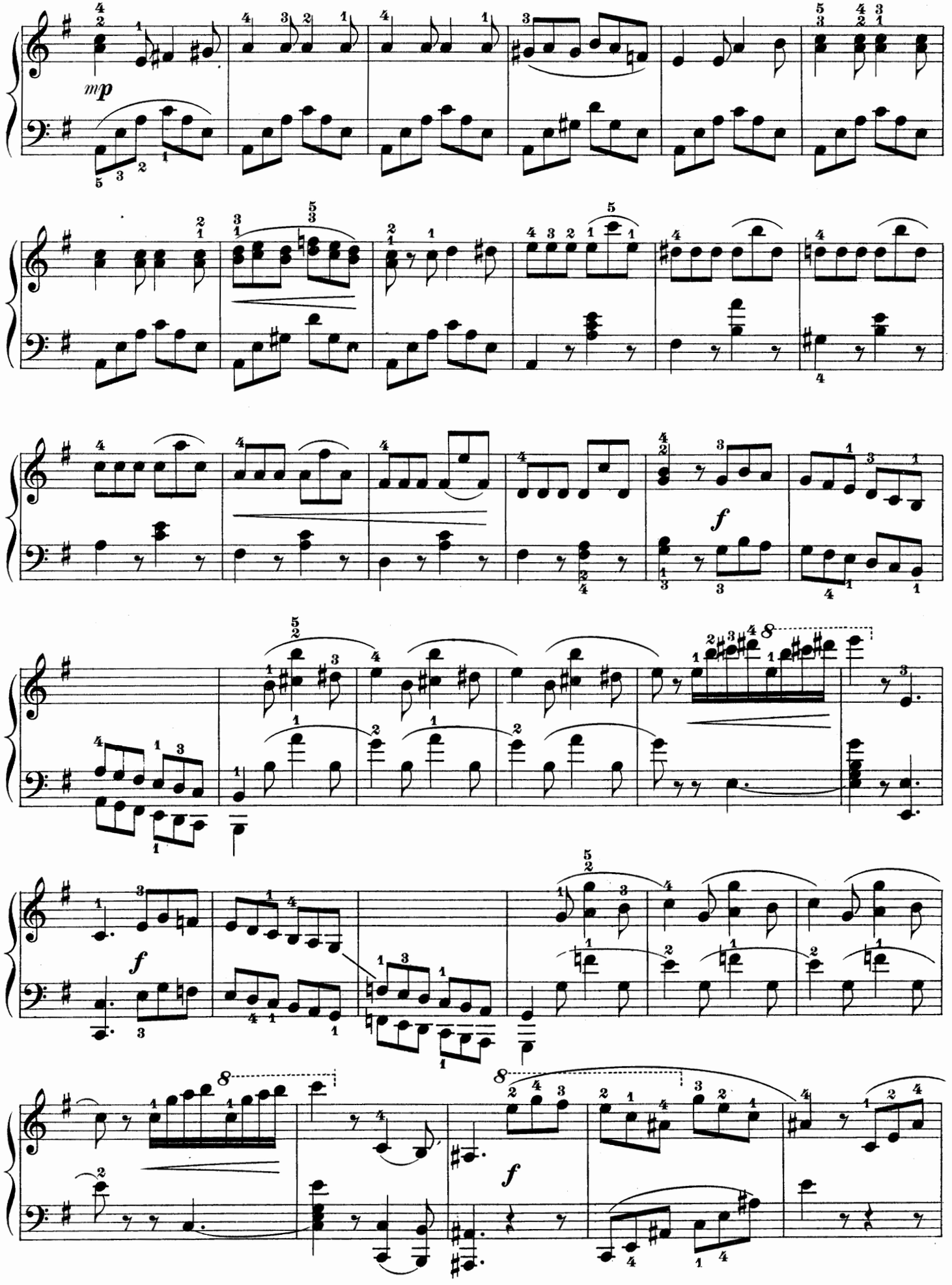
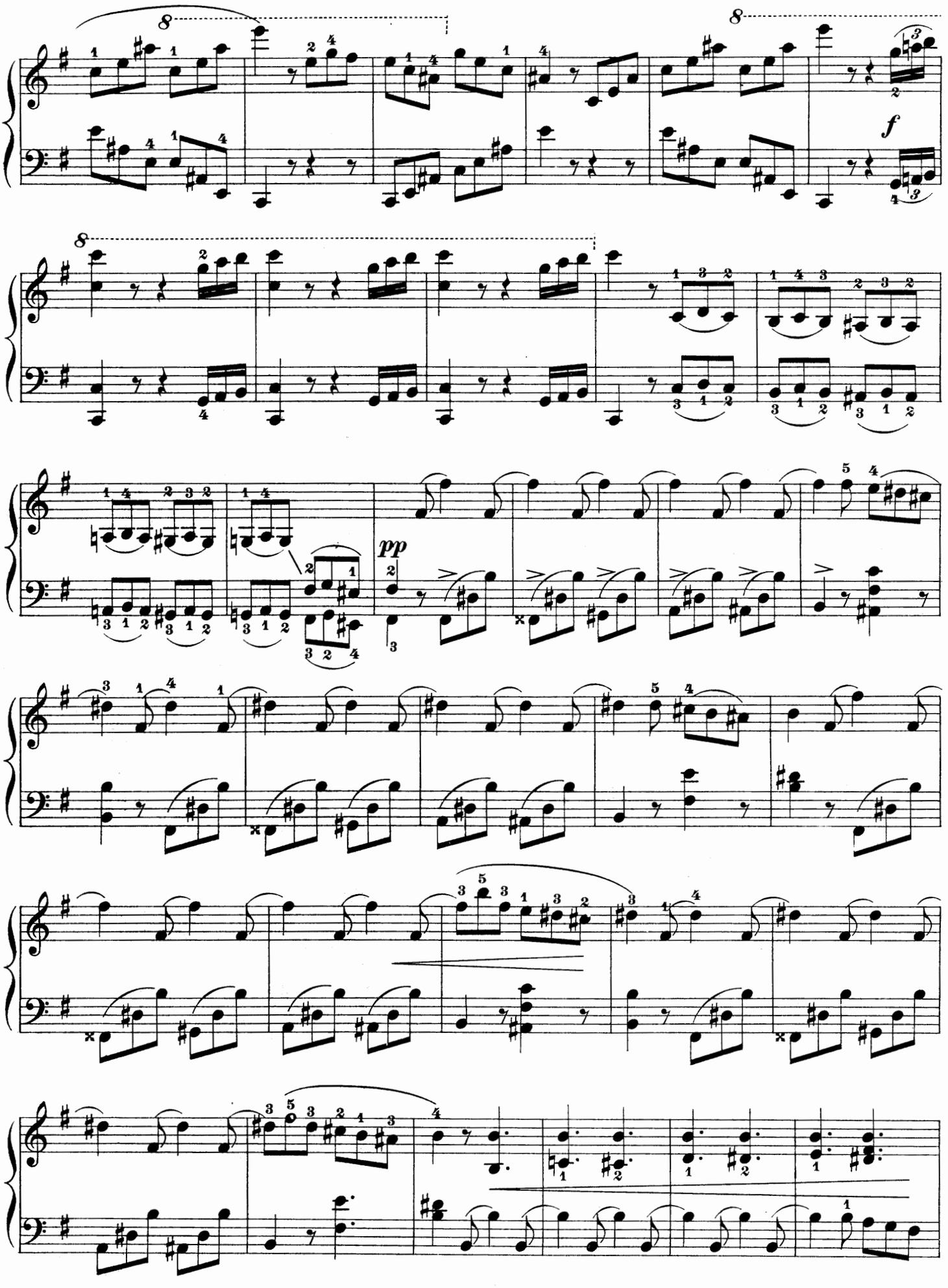
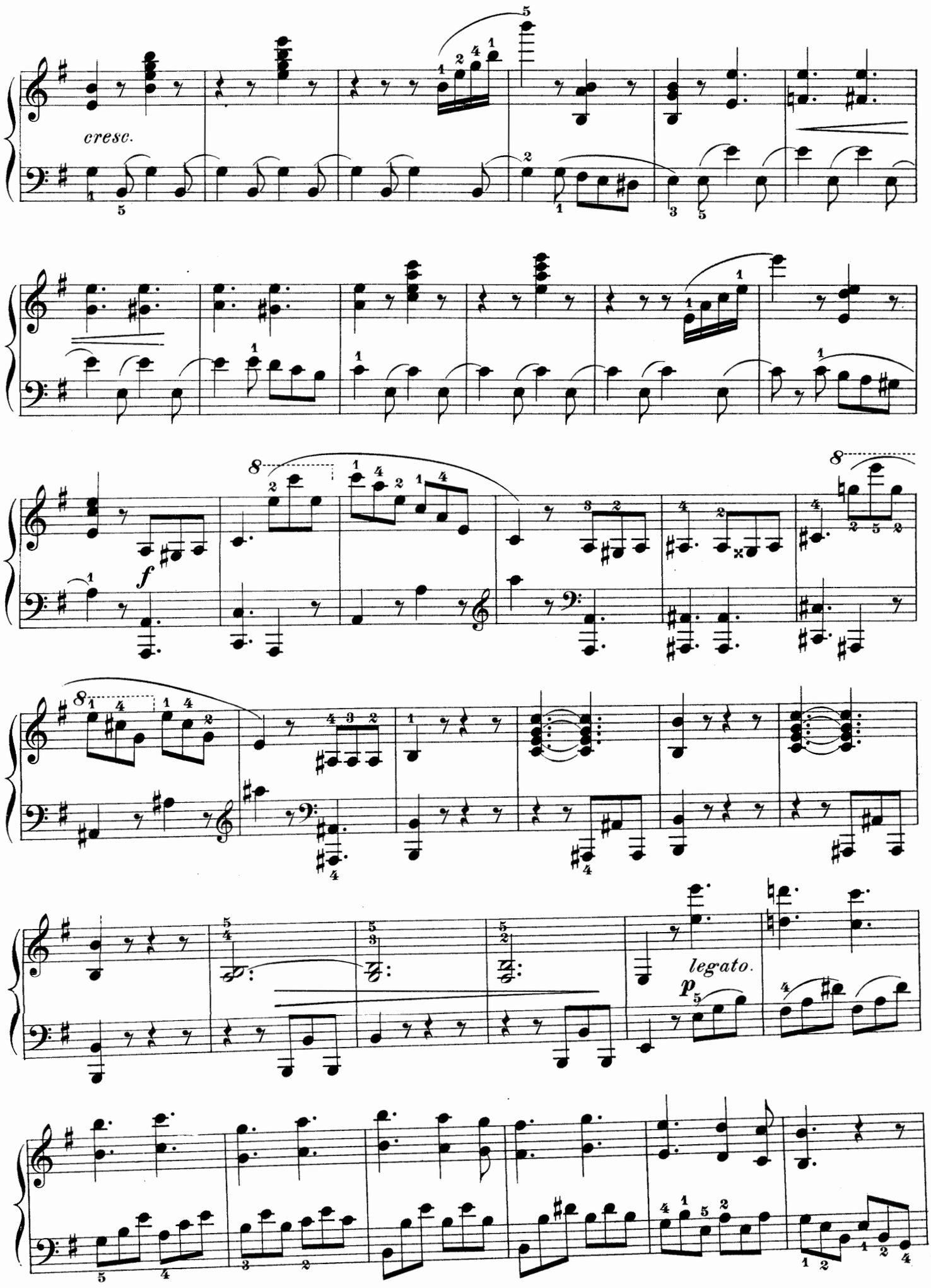
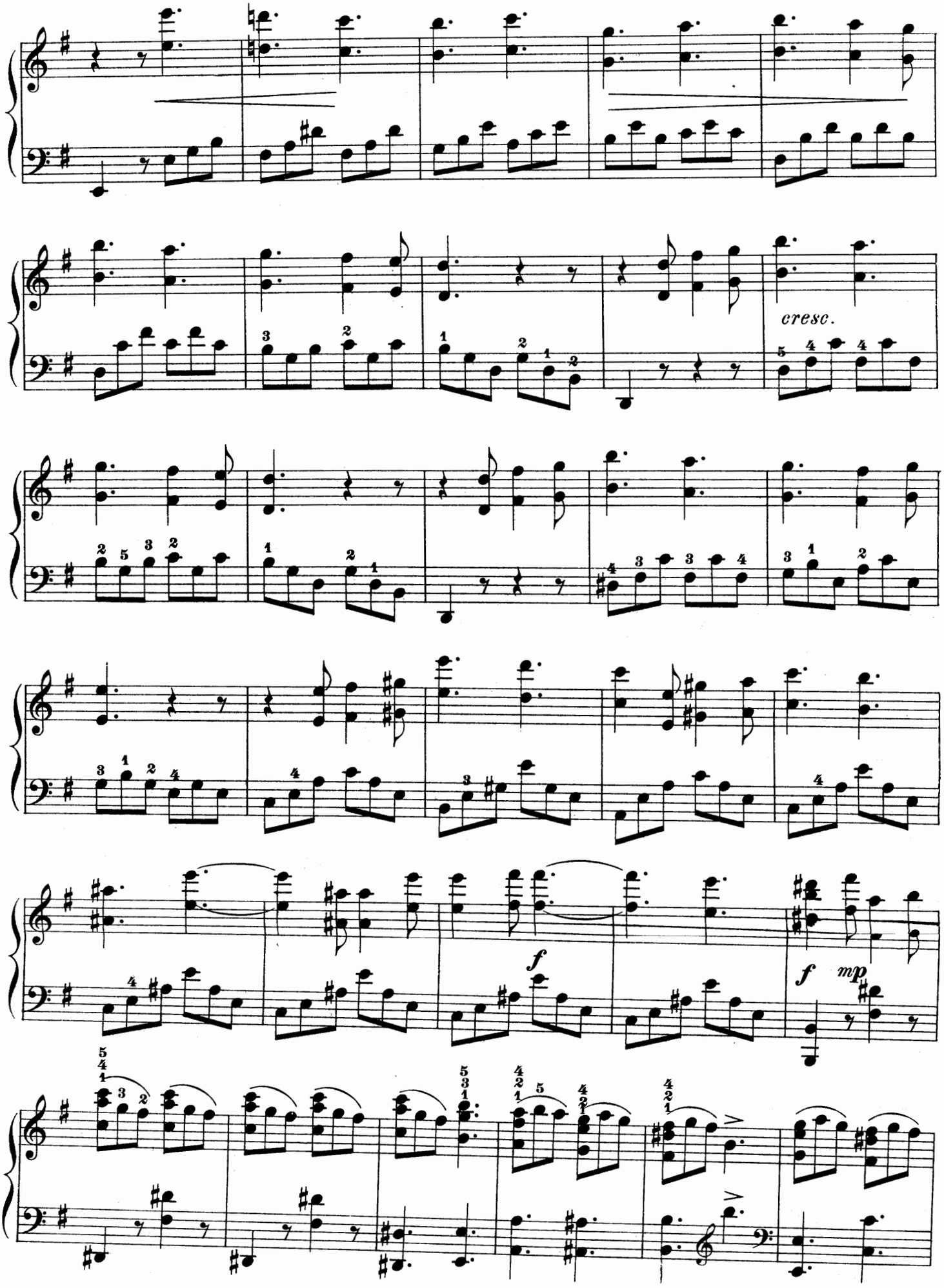

cresc.
f
f
8
8
p
f

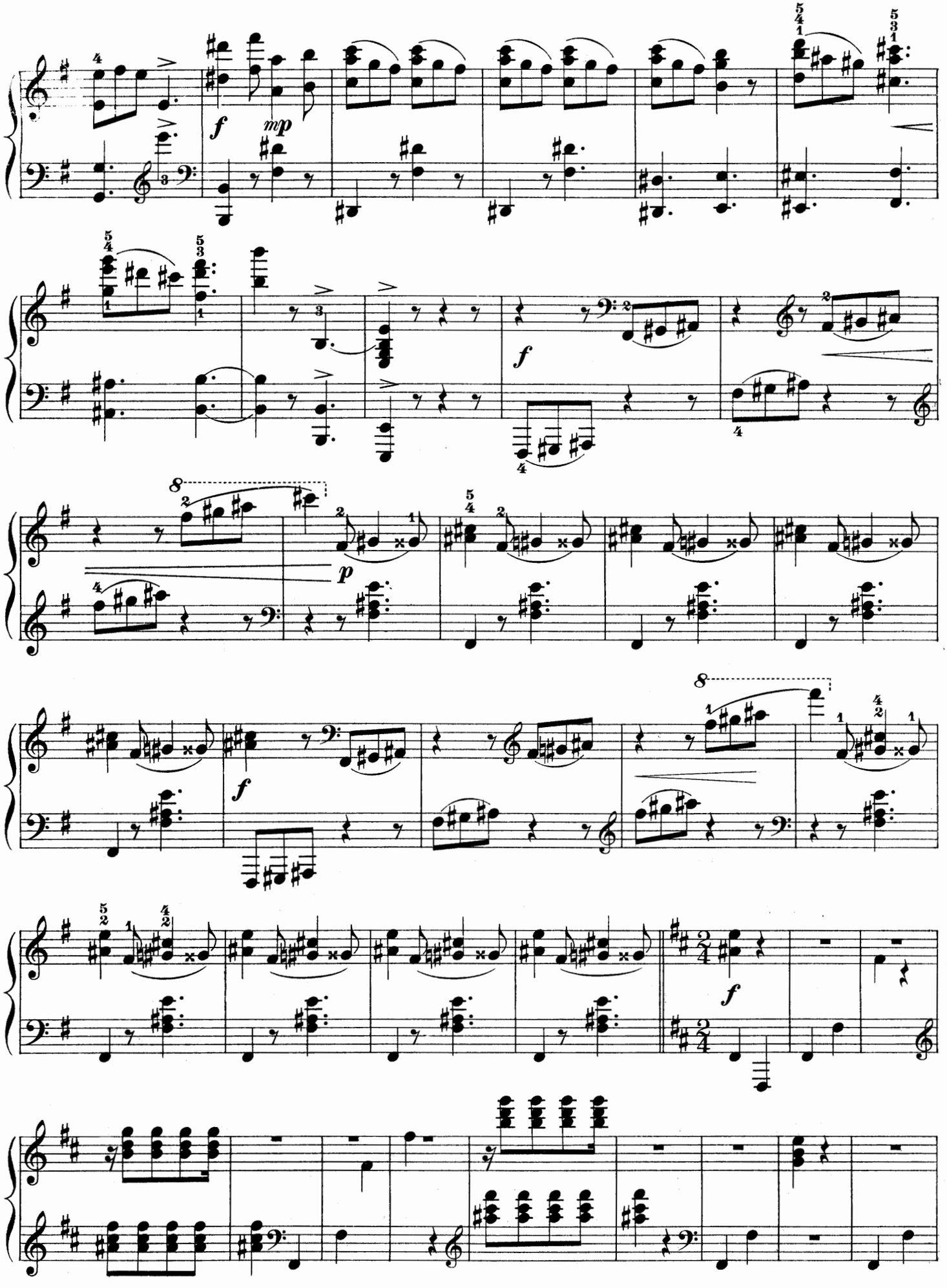

f
8
8
p
p


mp
f
f
f


8
8
f
8
pp


cresc.
f
legato.
p


cresc.
f
f
mp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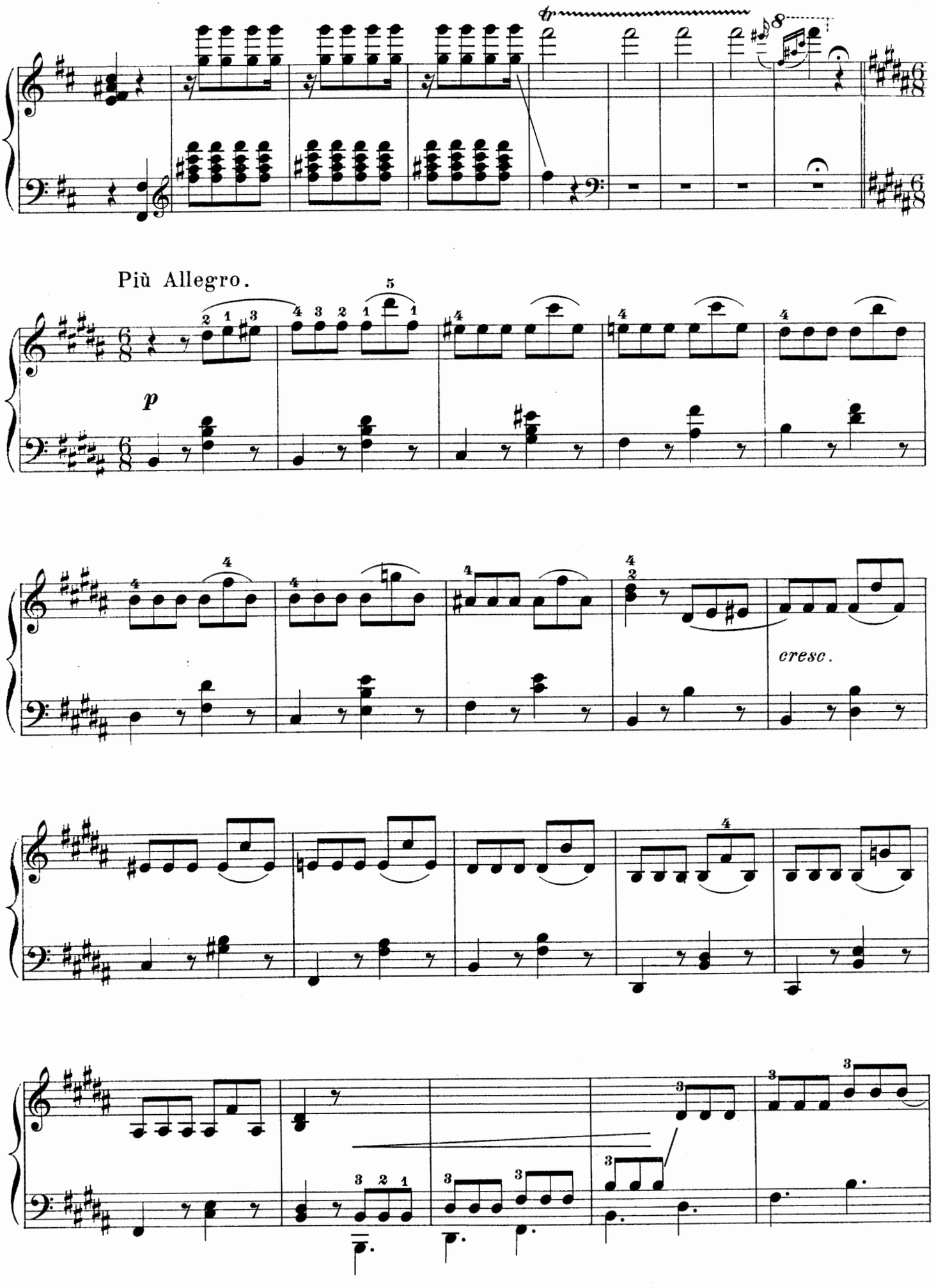
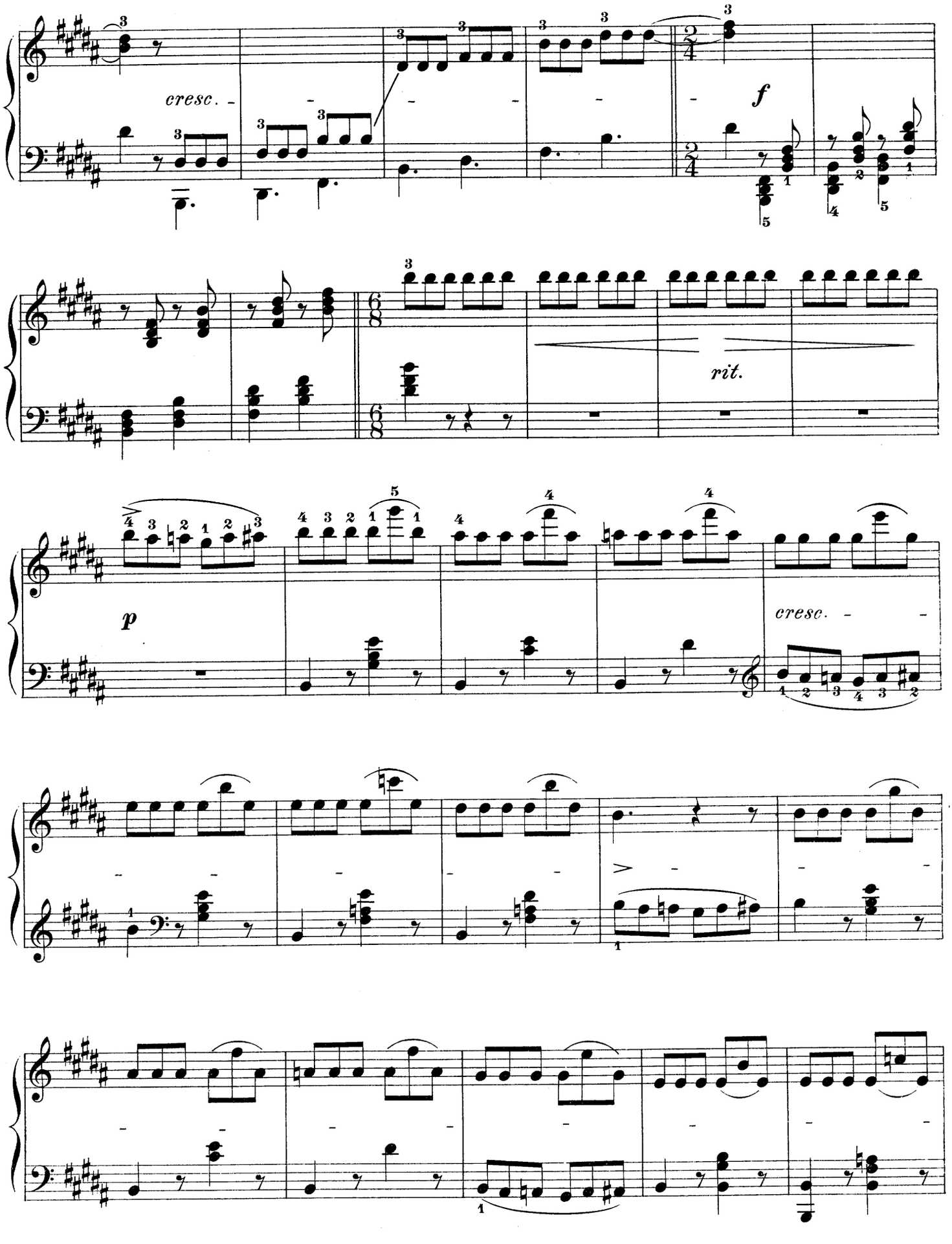
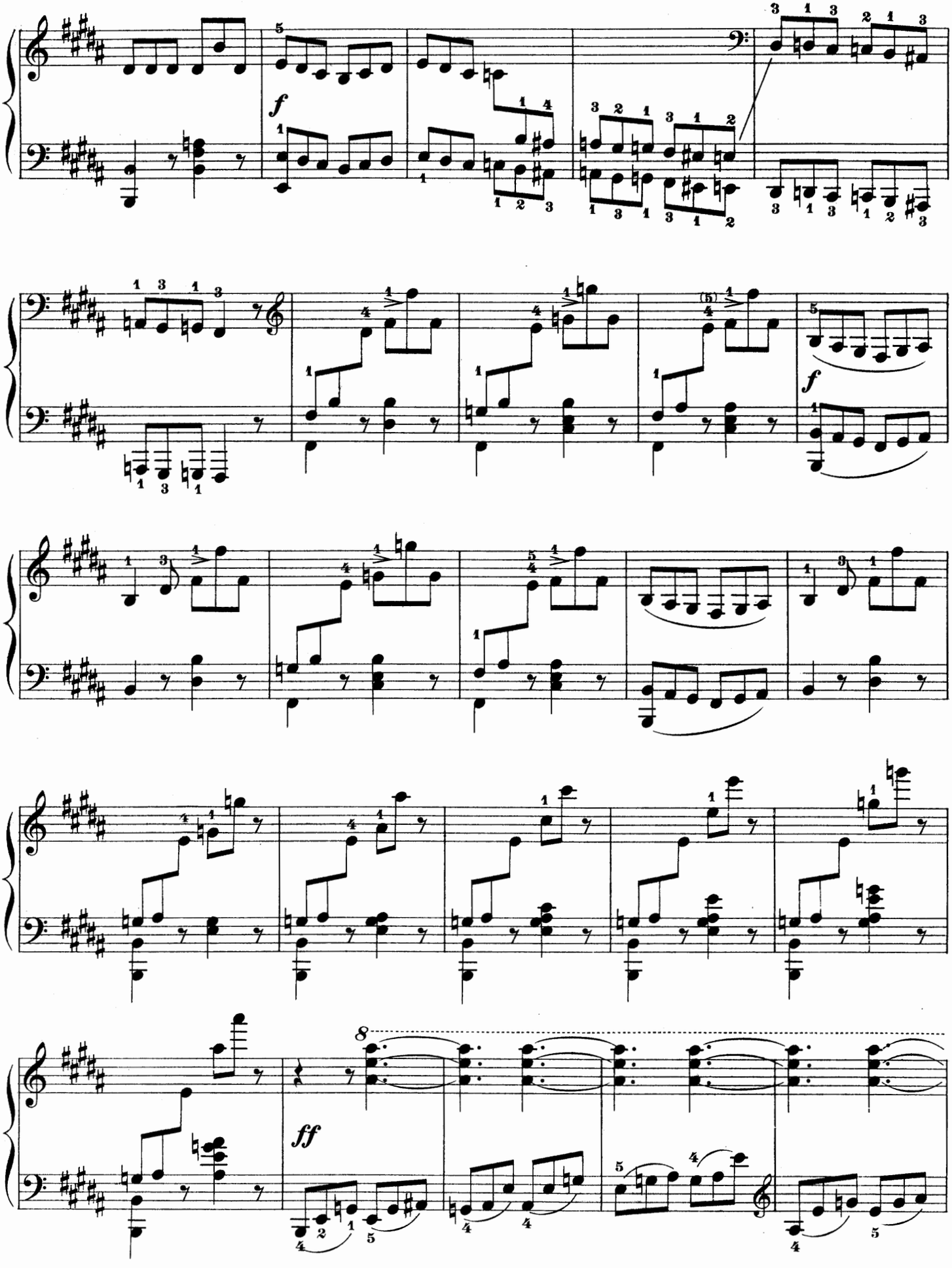
mp
f
p
f
f


Più Allegro.
p
cresc.


cresc.
f
rit.
p
cresc.


f
f
ff
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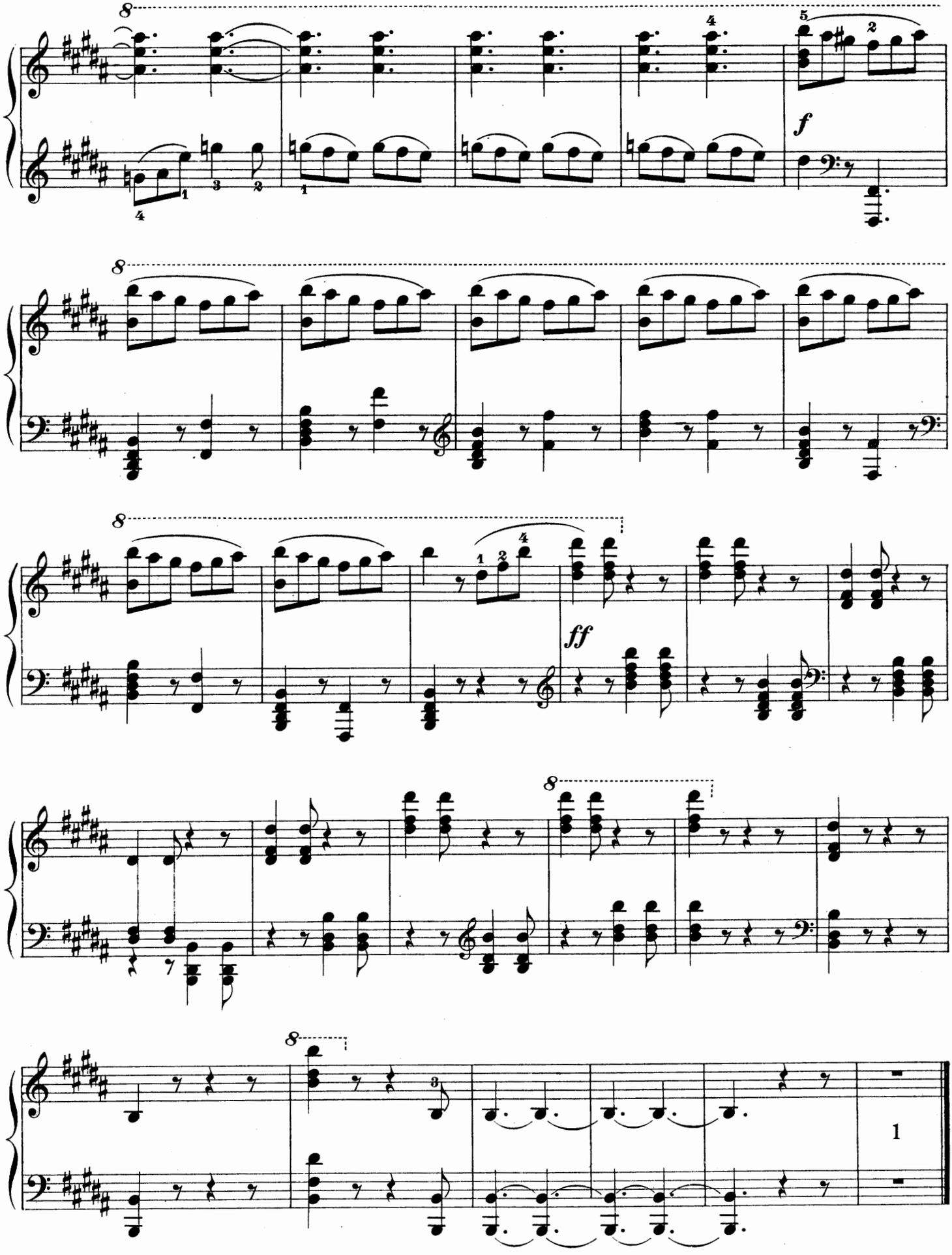

8
f
8
8
ff
8
8
1

Polka.

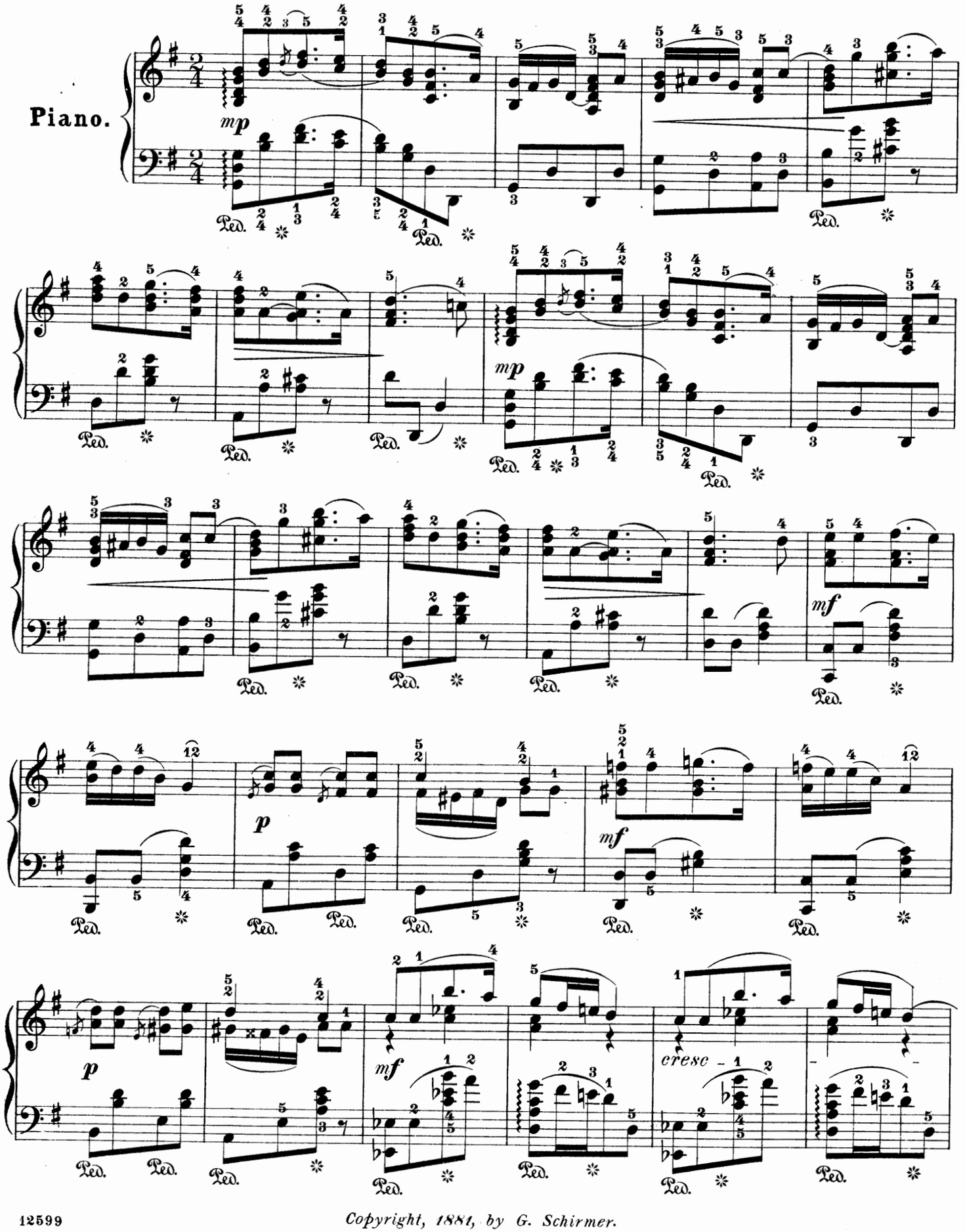
(Bohème.)

Edited and fingered by
Wm Scharfenberg.

A. RUBINSTEIN Op. 82. No 7.

Moderato

Piano.



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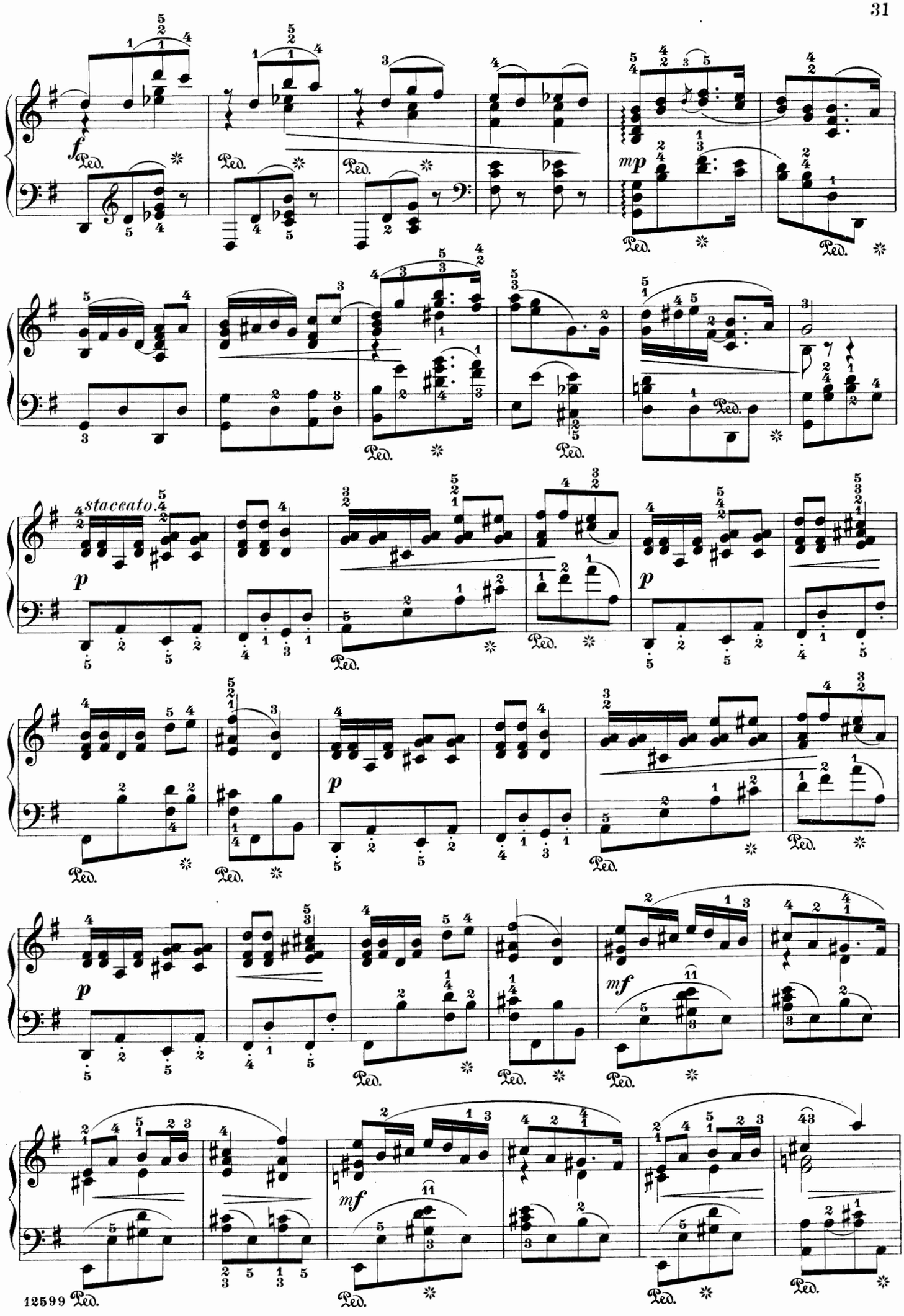
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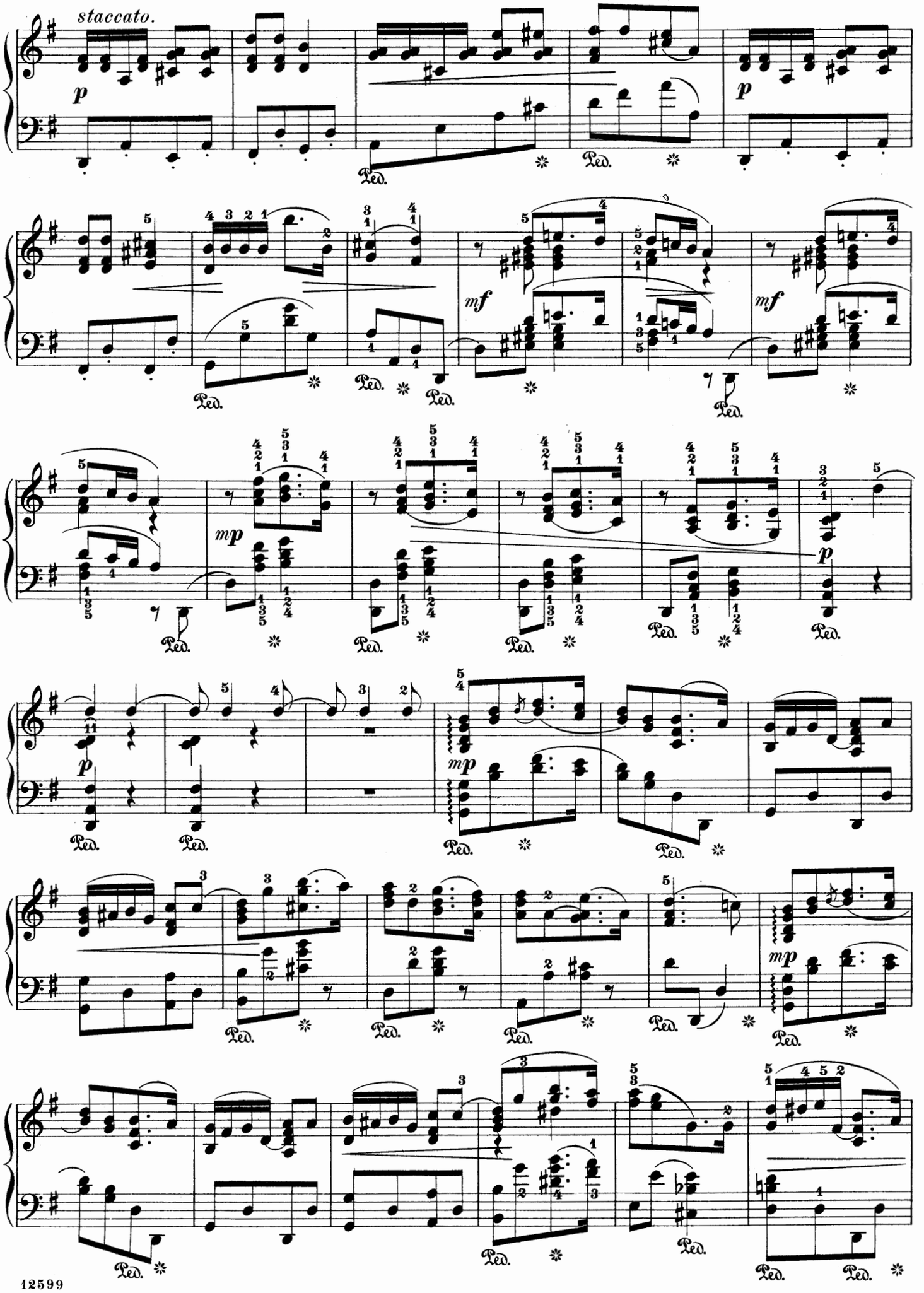
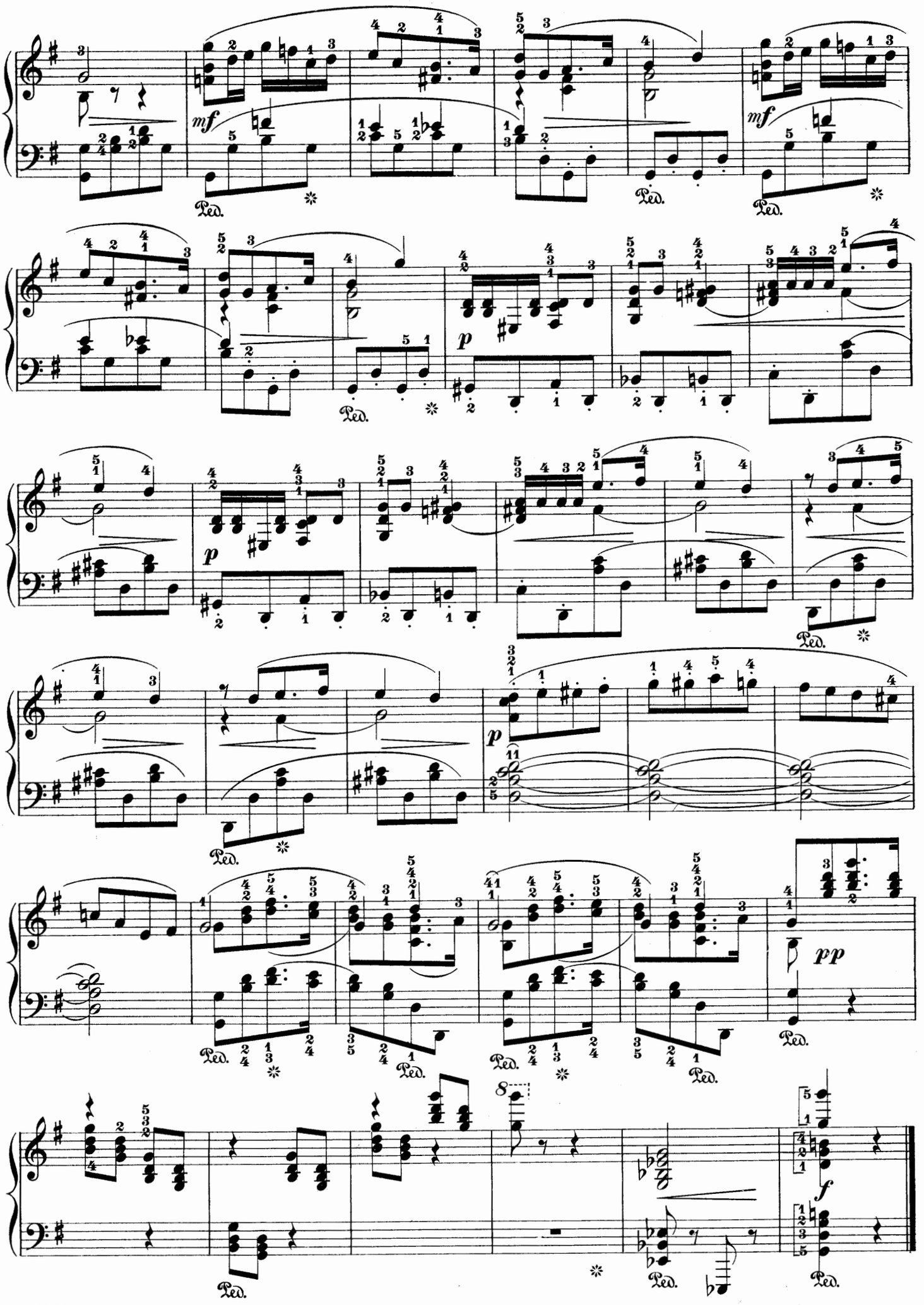
Ped.


staccato.
p
Ped.
mf
mp


mf
Ped.
mf
Ped.
p
Ped.
p
Ped.
p
Ped.
pp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
8
f
Ped.
Ped.

Près du Ruisseau.

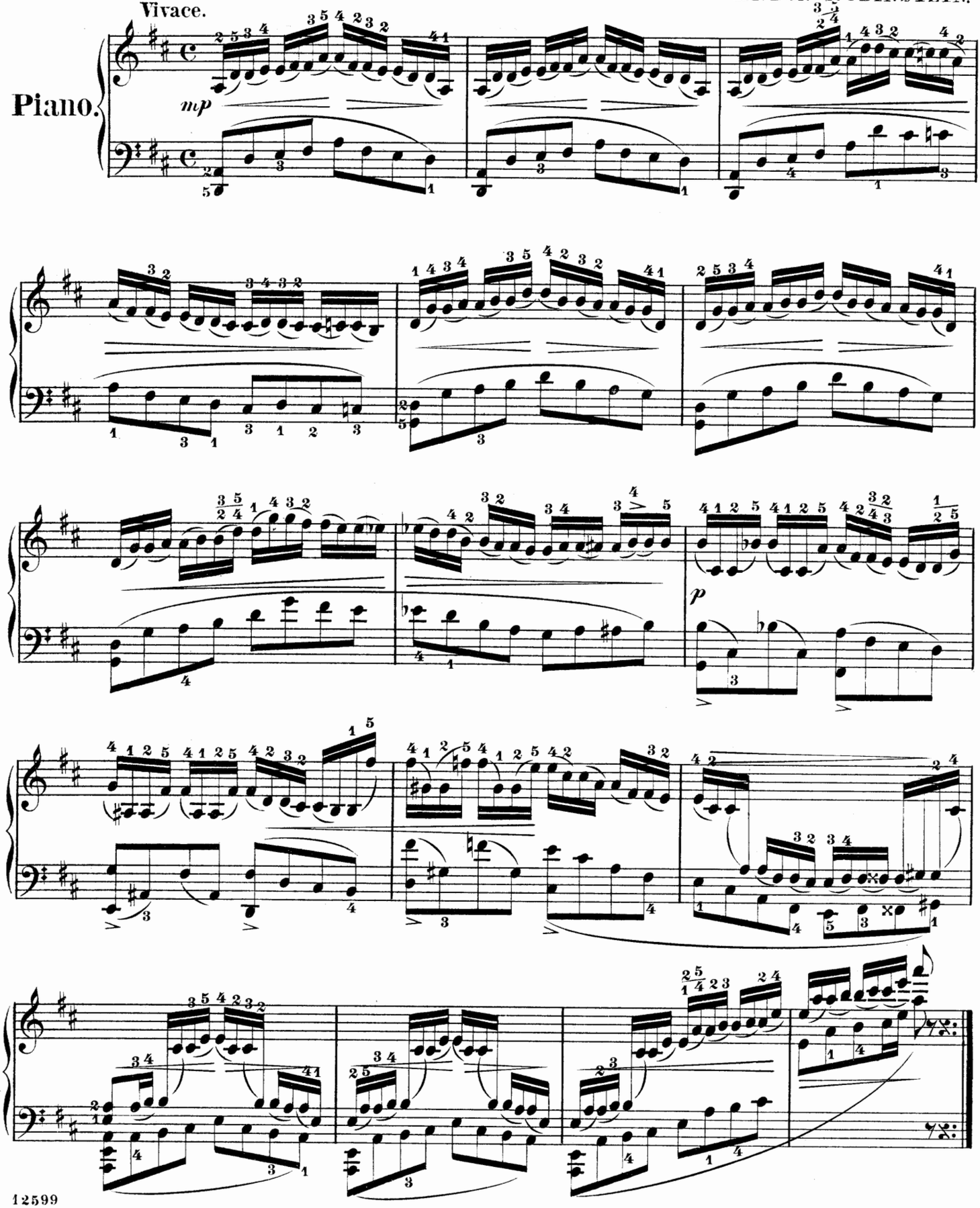
(BY THE BROOKSIDE.)

Fingered by
BERN. BOEKELMAN.

ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

Vivace.

Piano.



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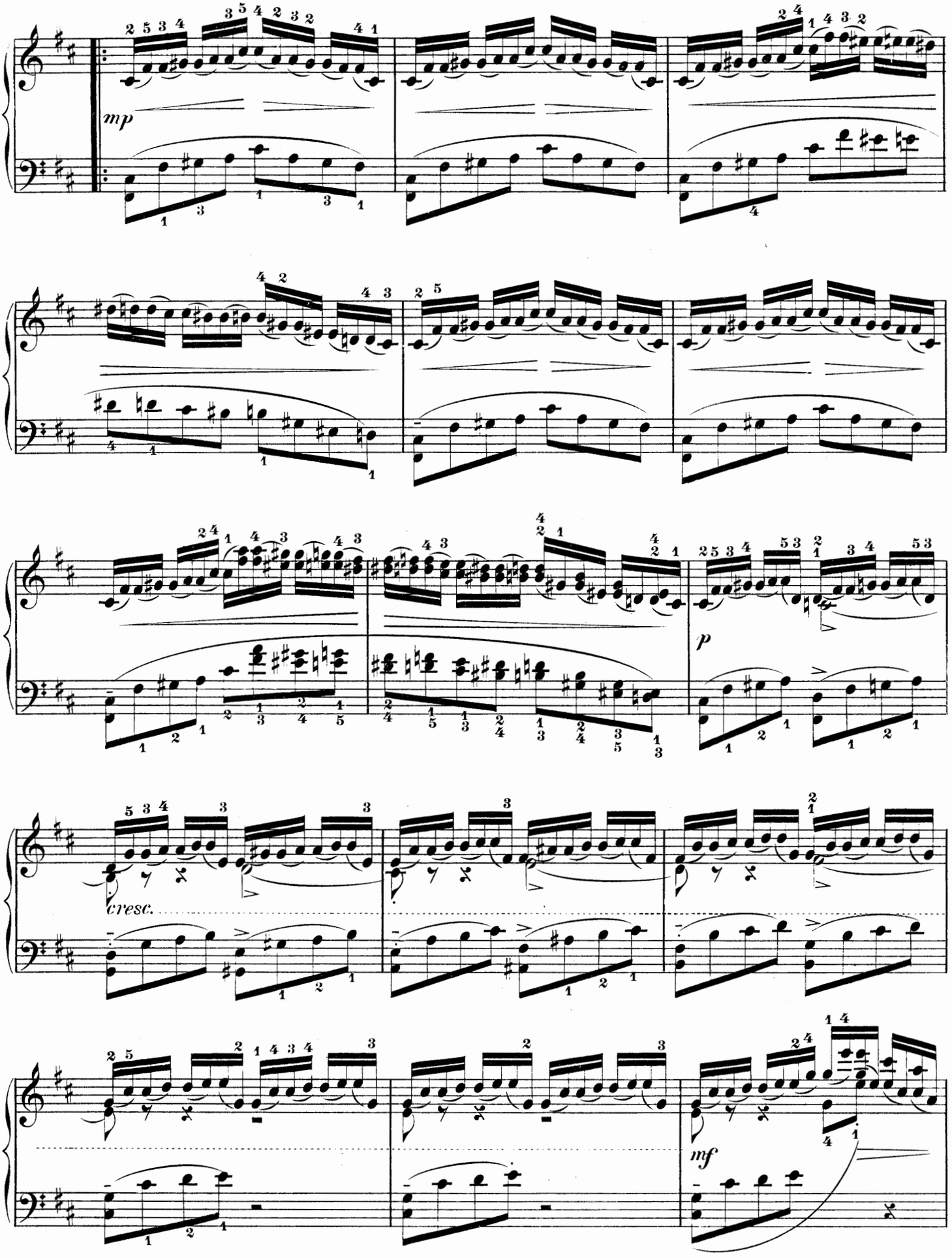
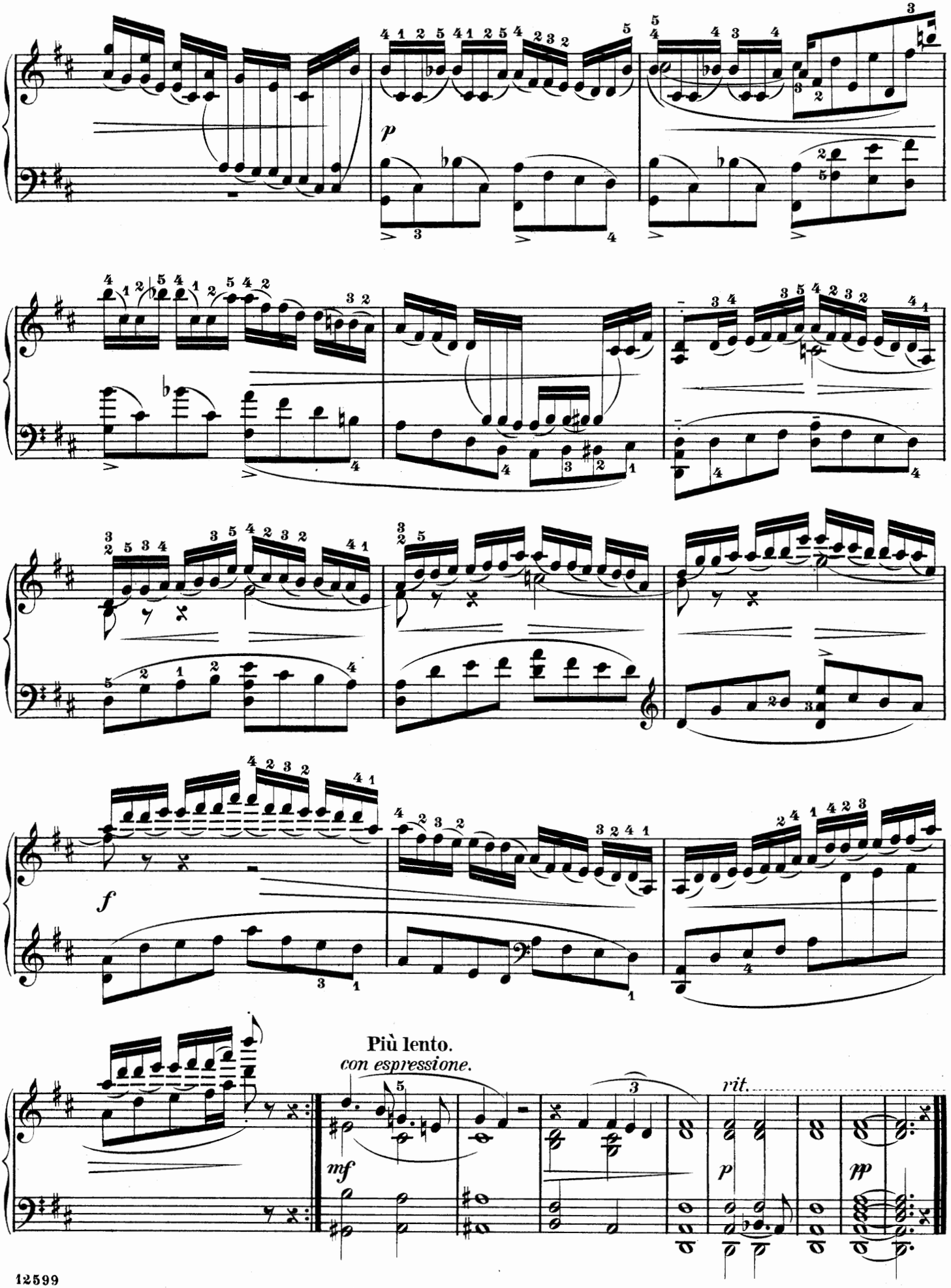

mp
p
cresc.
mf


p
f
Più lento.
con espressione.
mf
rit.
p
pp

À la Fenêtre.

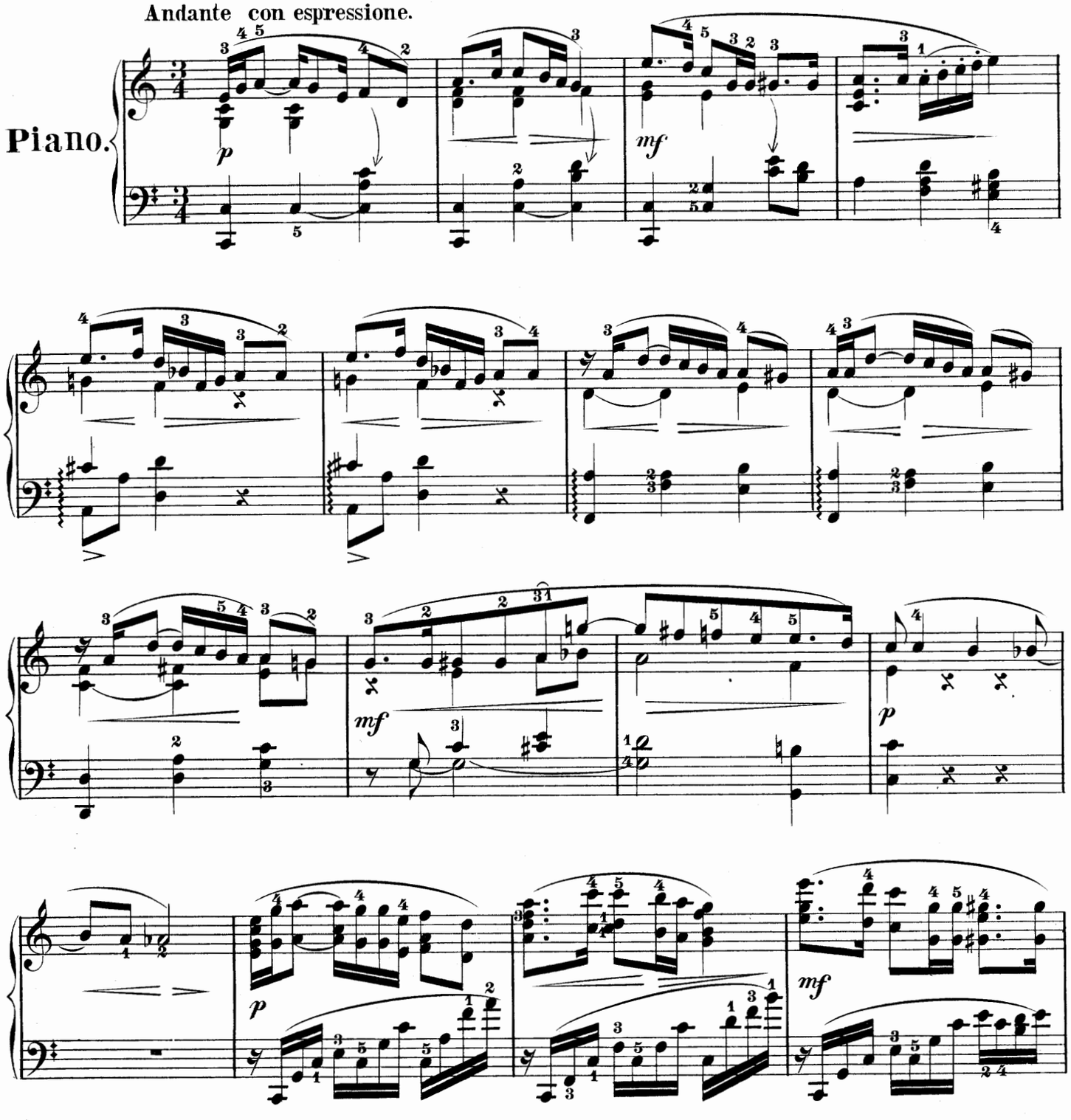
(AT THE WINDOW.)

Fingered by BERN. BOEKELMAN.

ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

Andante con espressione.

Piano.



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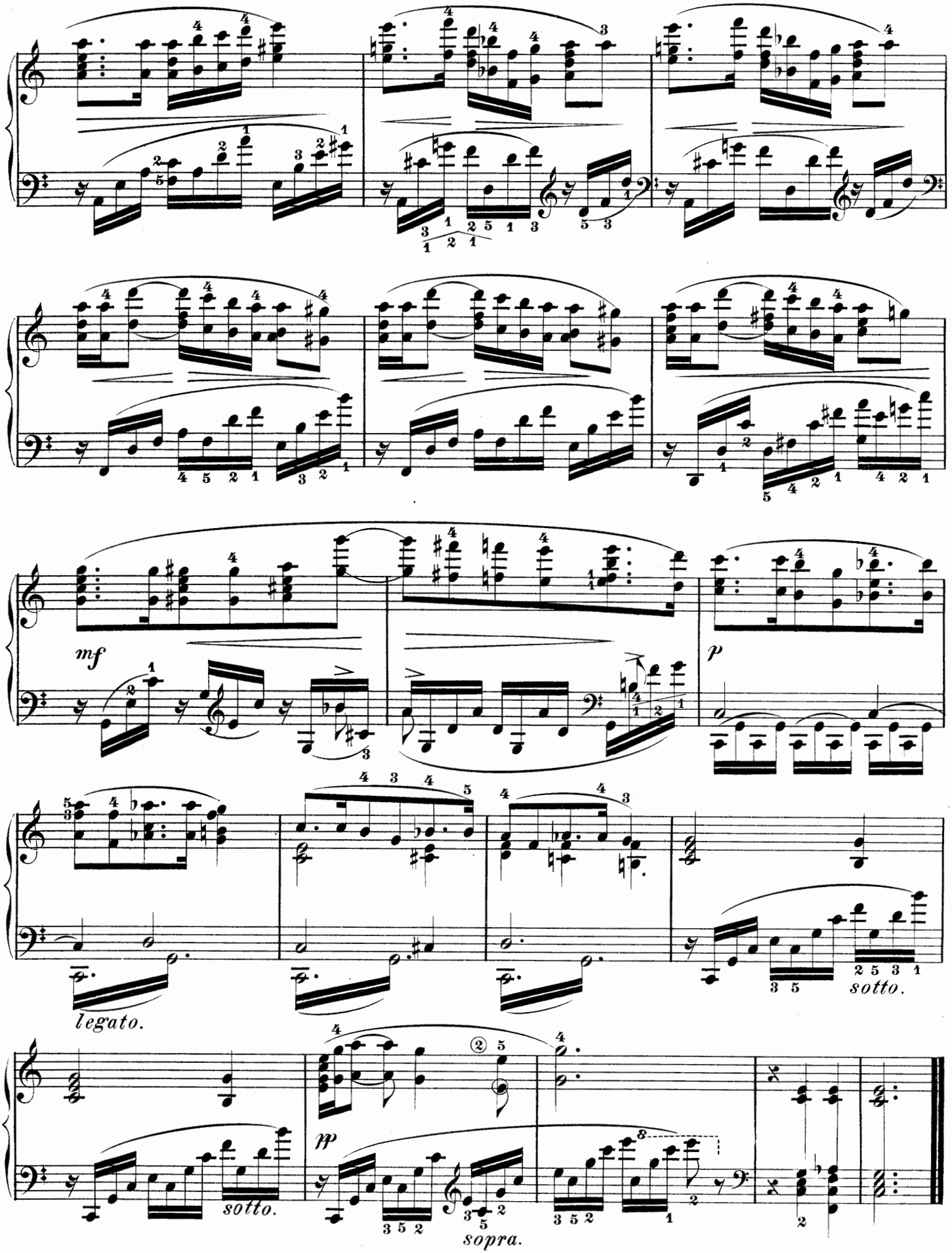
mf
p
legato.
sotto.
sotto.
pp
sopra.