FROG LEGS RAG

BY
JAMES
SCOTT.

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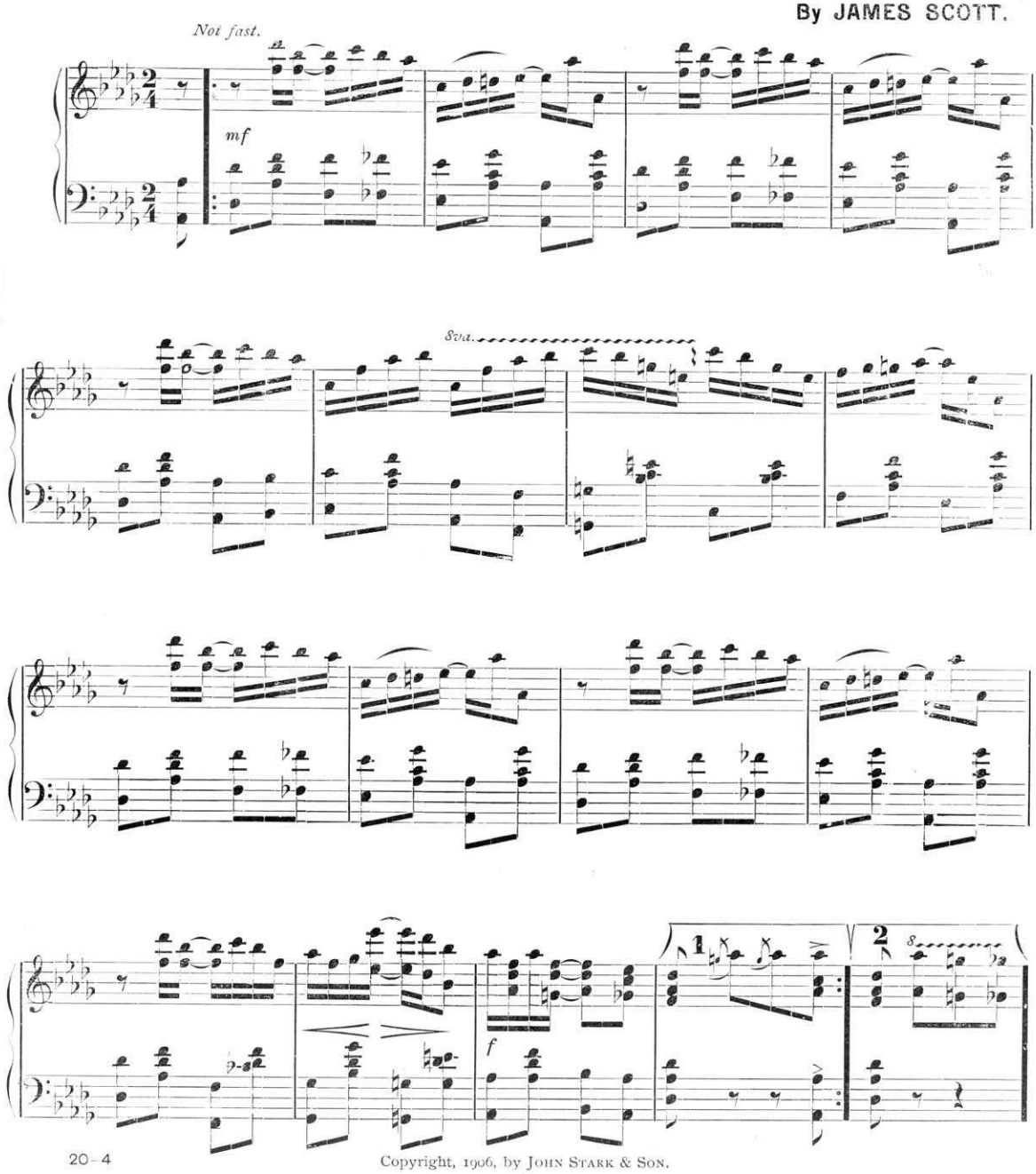

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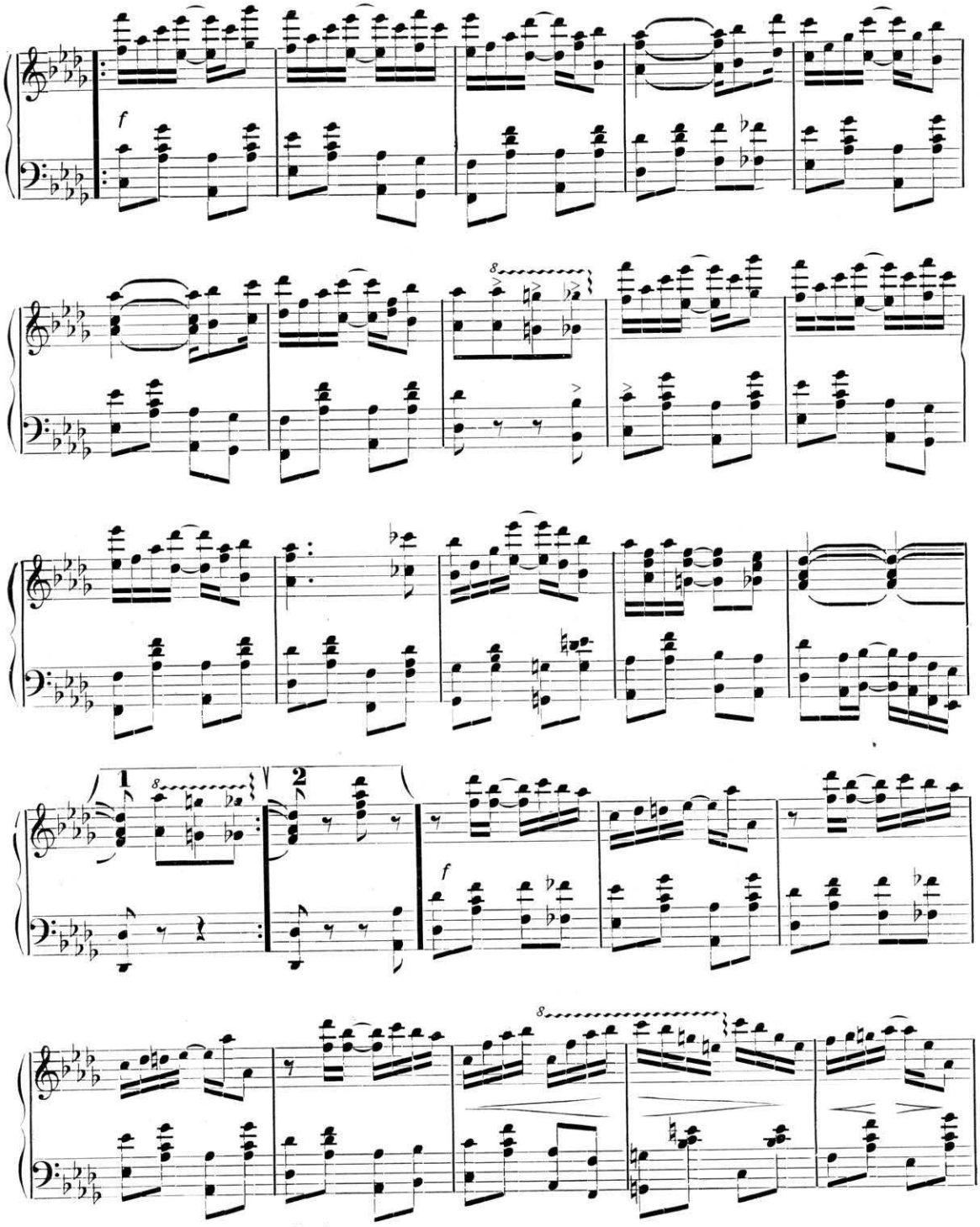
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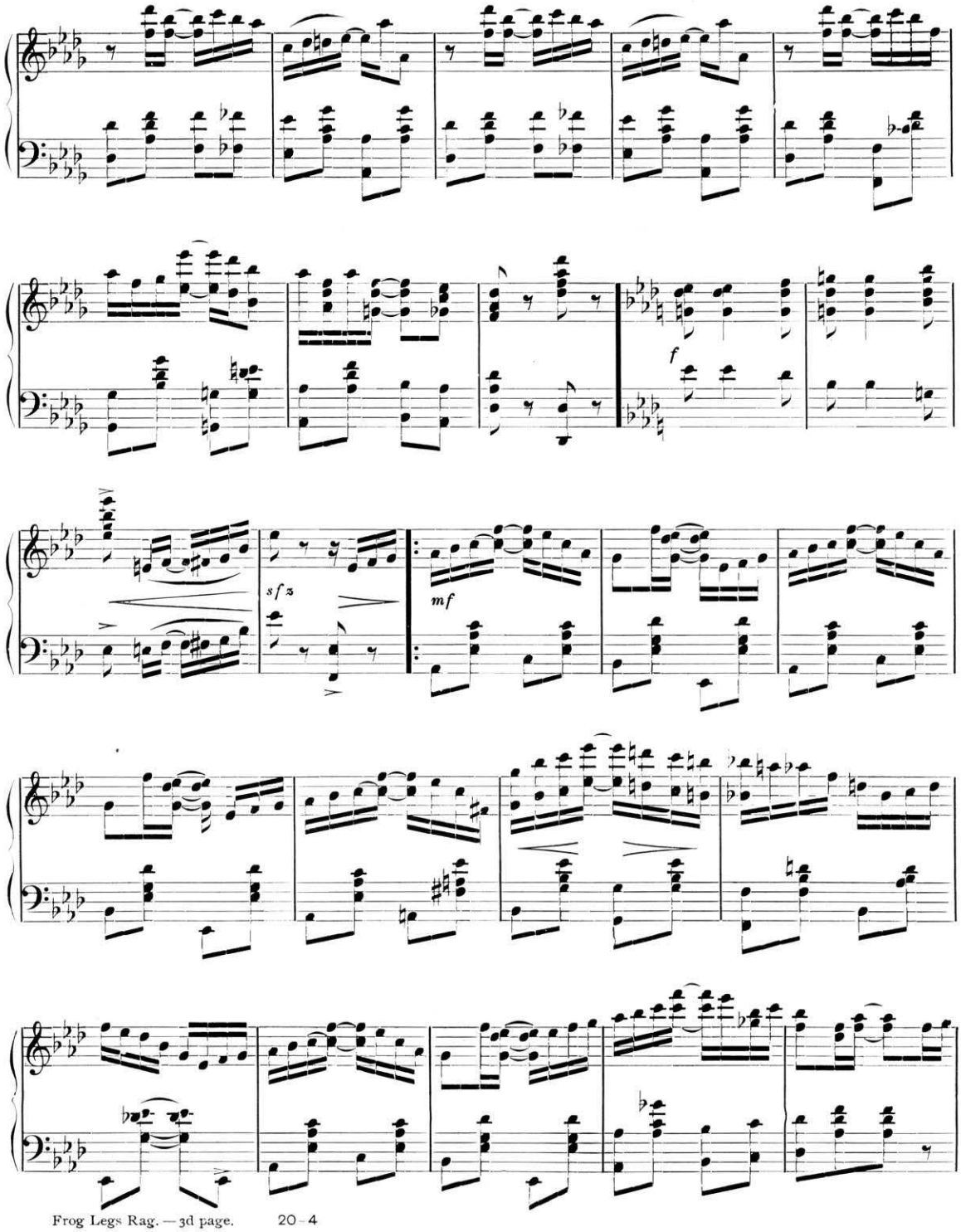
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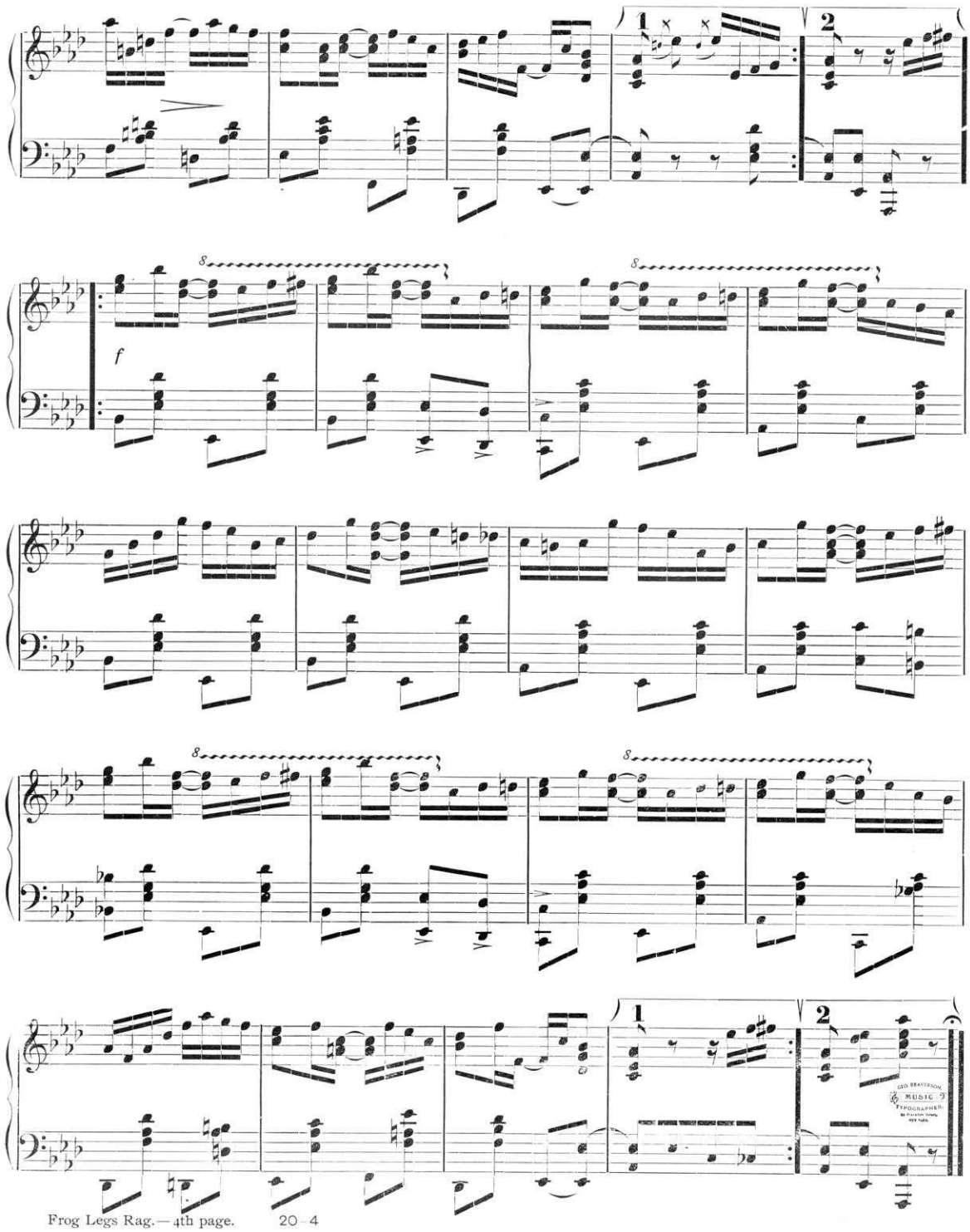
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Murder in the Second Degree!

We knew a pianist who had in her repertoire, "The Maple Leaf," "Sunflower Slow Drag," "The Entertainer" and "Elite Syncopations." She had played them as she thought, over and over for her own pleasure and other's, until at last she had laid them aside as *passe*. But it chanced that she incidentally dropped into a store one day, where Joplin was playing the "Sunflower Slow Drag." She was instantly struck with its unique and soulful story, and—what do you think! She asked someone what it was. She had played over it and around it for twelve months and had never touched it. She went home and began to practice it, as though she had never seen it before. It breathed a new life and spoke a new language, as did also the other three pieces. Mark this—the besetting sin is in trying to play these classics too fast—there is nothing in common with these inventions and the flood of Rags, Drags and Jags on the market. We want to speak here especially of the "Sunflower Slow Drag": this piece came to light during the high temperature of Scott Joplin's courtship, and while he was touching the ground only in the highest places, his geese were all swans, and Mississippi water tasted like honey-dew; his exuberance made Monroe Rosenfeld's most effervescent moods appear but "gloomy weather," and Sam Speck—but never mind. If ever there was a song without words this is that article; hold your ear to the ground while someone plays it, and you can hear Scott Joplin's heart beat. It has been said by many that there will never be another "Maple Leaf," but we say to you with all the assurance that was ours in springing that sensation, that the "Sunflower Slow Drag" has it bested in a finer continuity, a more ingenious treatment of a theme that is heart searching. These pieces will repay the most painstaking study and practice; they will not go out of style or fashion while Chopin lasts; they are as permanent as the everlasting hills, at least as far as this generation is concerned.

Get the "Sunflower Slow Drag."