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The Art of Organ Playing

BY

Eugene Thayer.

Part. I.

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See inside

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MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Art of Organ Playing

Complete in Five Parts

Part 1. Manual Studies.
Part 2. Pedal Studies.
Part 3. Art of Registration.
Part 4. Church or Service Playing.
Part 5. Solo or Concert Playing.

BY

Eugene Thayer.

Introduced in the Boston Conservatory of Music.

BOSTON
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PREFACE.

In the following work the author has attempted to present a *Complete Organ School.* Although many fine works already exist, there is no one work, we believe, which treats fully of each and all of the five chief divisions of Organ playing, viz.:

MANUAL STUDIES.

PEDAL STUDIES.

THE ART OF REGISTRATION.

CHURCH OR SERVICE PLAYING.

SOLO OR CONCERT PLAYING.

These we hope to have fully treated, separately (each part being complete in itself) and collectively, from the simplest rudiments to the most advanced degree of difficulty; and with what success it is left to a practical test of the work to determine.

The materials have been drawn from every available good source, supplemented by the results of a long experience as player and teacher of this grandest of all instruments, *The Organ.*

While this school is founded mainly upon the works of the greatest of all organ players and composers,

JOH. SEBASTIAN BACH,

Other writers and schools have not been ignored, but rather presented in their most favorable light. For the true organ student should be familiar with all schools, trusting to his own taste, ripened by years and experience, and to the guiding influence of good teachers to form his musical character. And the result can be trusted; for if he be faithful and industrious he *will* come at last — and *gladly*, too, — to the great, the true, and the good.

If the student will follow this work through, studying all things *thoroughly*, he cannot fail of becoming a master of the Organ and its resources. Add to this the daily study of the works of Bach and other great masters, and all things will be possible to him so far as he has been endowed by his Creator.

All that is required is a real love of the instrument and persevering industry. These *must* and always *do* conquer when guided by proper instruction and example.

The plan of the work is as follows:—

In PART I. Manual Playing is treated separately; the pedals not being introduced, although they may be used in many of the pieces after a moderate degree of pedal execution is acquired.

We have treated the *manual only* at first — not distracting the attention with pedal playing — as we most fully believe that if a sure foundation is not laid in manual playing at the commencement of study, all future progress or the attainment of any good or desirable proficiency will be simply impossible.

In PART II. Pedal playing is treated from the rudiments to an advanced degree of difficulty; this of course, including a continued advancement in manual execution.

In PART III. the Art of Registration (making combinations) is presented in what we believe to be a new and complete system; so simple that all may understand, easily remember, and make practically useful. By this method we believe that the student can at any organ make all desirable combinations with little or no difficulty.

PART IV. presents the Art of Service Playing in its various forms, that the student may be able to play church compositions, from the plain chant to the Te Deum, or from the simple Congregational Service to the Grand Mass. Briefly, the art of accompanying as pertaining to the Organ has been illustrated.

PART V. is devoted to Solo playing, and contains a course of study and suggestions for those desiring to become public performers. This leads the student through the masterworks of Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, Thiele, and other great composers for the Organ; this completing the work. It is only necessary to add that the parts must be studied *seriatim*, as the student is only fitted for each part when the preceding ones have been faithfully studied.

Only such compositions of the author have been introduced as would assist to make the work thoroughly progressive in its character, as it was deemed much better to select from good and great works already existing than to make the work a medium of presenting original compositions; the aim being the advancement of the Art rather than personal distinction. With the exception of the preliminary exercises and studies, all of the music will be found valuable for church or concert use. This we believe will tend to encourage the student as no time will be wasted on pieces not available for some useful purpose.

Should this work be useful in assisting any desiring to study the organ, and in fitting them to contribute to the pleasure of any people, or of nobly conducting public worship, then we shall be amply repaid for all the time and effort it has cost us.

That the Art of Organ playing may in our own native land reach its highest advancement, and that many shall be its worthy disciples, is the sincere wish of

THE AUTHOR.

BOSTON, 1870.

THE

ART OF ORGAN PLAYING.

COMPLETE IN FIVE PARTS,

By . . . EUGENE THAYER. . . . op: 16.

PART FIRST.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Before commencing the study of the Organ, the piano should be studied until a tolerable execution and a degree of fluency in reading music are acquired. It is also advisable for the organ student to play daily the more solid piano studies, and such music as the Sonatas of Mozart, and pieces of a similar character. This will give a certain ease of manipulation which is desirable, and which cannot be acquired by the exclusive practice of Organ music.

THE POSITION AT THE ORGAN.

The Organ seat should be of plain wood (uncovered), and twenty-one inches high from the top of the long pedal keys, more or less according to the stature of the player. The position of the player should be opposite the centre of the manuals, the seat as *far back*, and the player as *far forward* as is consistent with a firm position and a feeling of security; that the limbs may be untrammelled by the edge of the seat, and the feet have free range in pedal playing. This position should be strictly maintained, simply *turning* to the right or left in playing high or low pedal notes, or making combinations. Only in this way can the player acquire or maintain a full and sure command of the instrument.

ORGAN TOUCH.

The Organ touch is a quick, strong, firm blow given by the fingers moving from the knuckles. The Keys should never be pressed (*i. e.* slowly *pushed* down) but *struck*—by the fingers—quickly and with decision. While down they must remain firm, and in rising, the finger must be withdrawn as quickly as possible that the Key may rise instantly. The wrist is never used in legitimate Organ playing, all chords being struck by the forearm moving from the elbow.

There must be a strong, firm *grasp* (the word *grip* seems to better express the meaning) of the manuals in order to have firmness with ease, promptness without violence, or to acquire any execution which, under all circumstances, can be implicitly relied upon.

In brief, the Keys must

GO DOWN DECIDEDLY,

STAY DOWN DECIDEDLY, AND

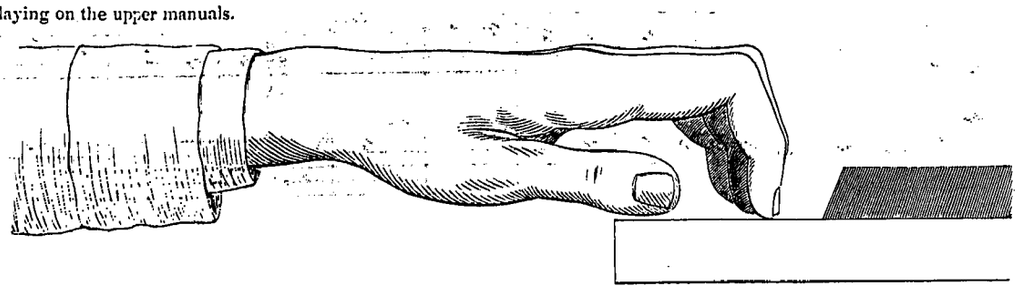
COME UP DECIDEDLY.

In no other manner can a good tone be produced, or a firm control of the organ be maintained.

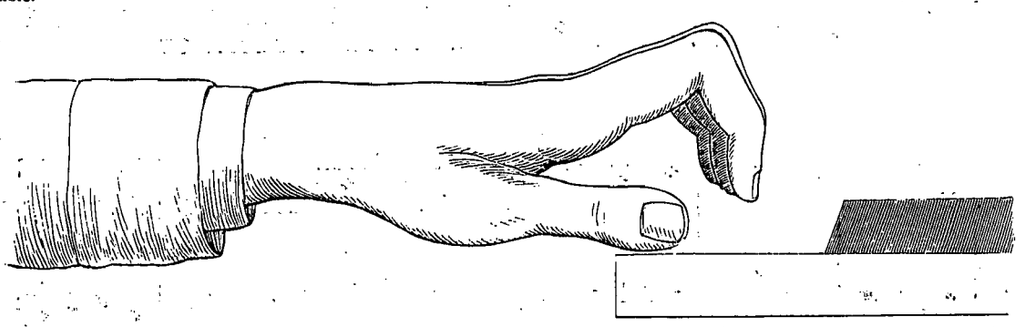
We give below three plates to illustrate the organ touch.

POSITION OF THE HAND, ARM AND FINGERS.

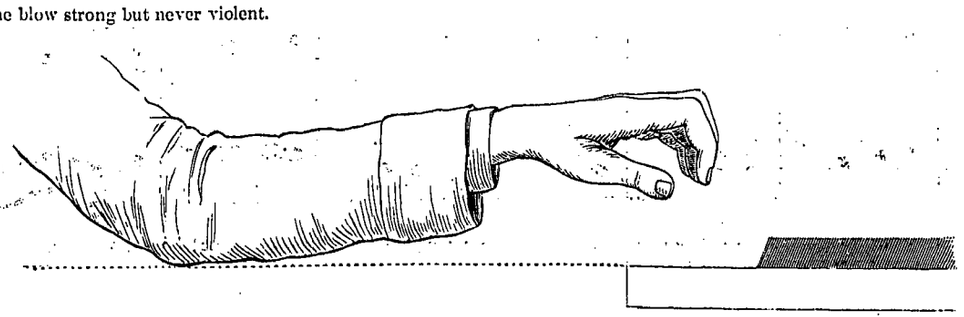
1. Correct position of the hand at rest. Level to the second joint of the fingers. The forearm to be slightly inclined downwards from the elbow except when playing on the upper manuals.



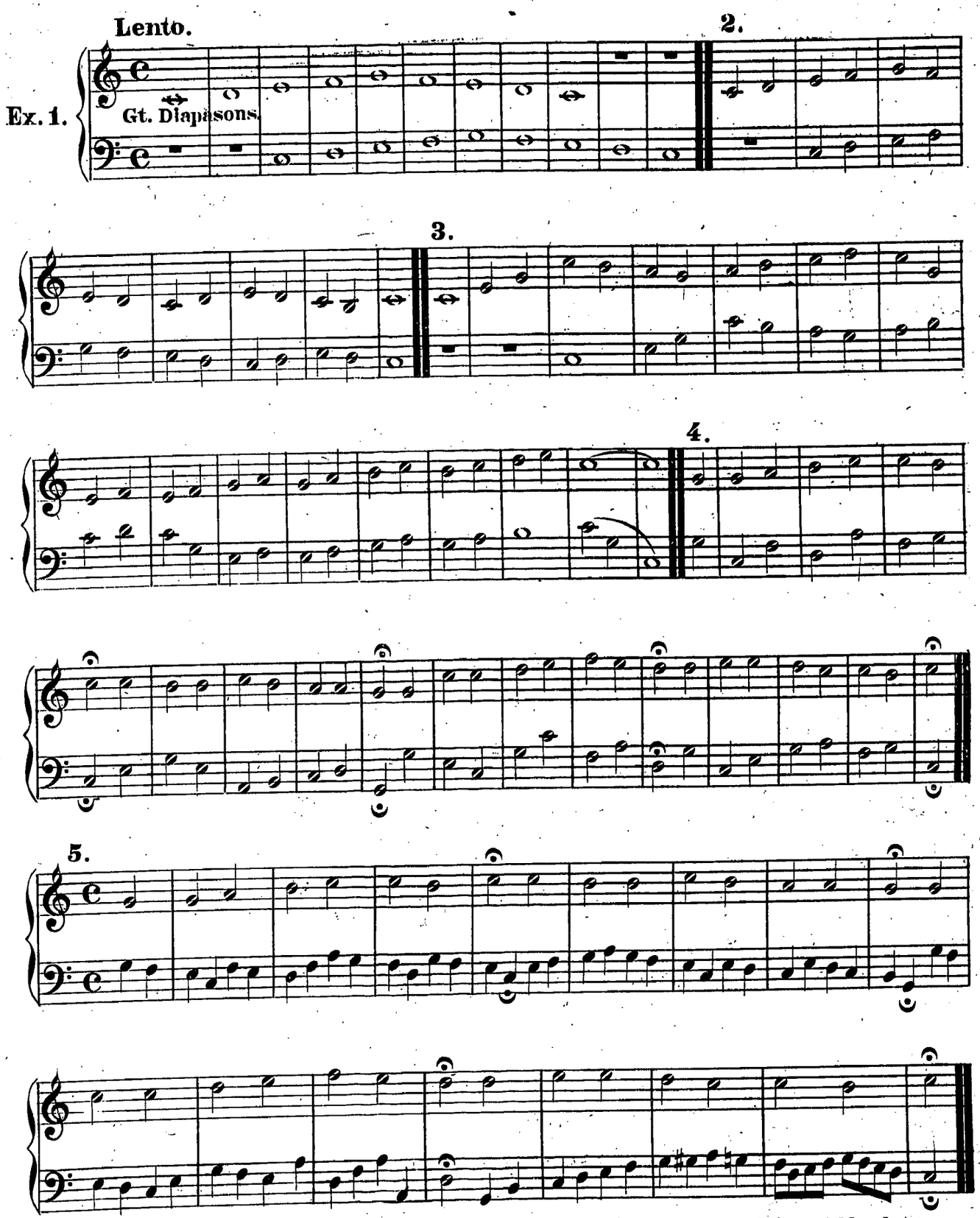
2. Fingers raised to strike. To be moved wholly from the knuckles, striking the Key squarely with the end of the finger, the hand and arm to remain immovable.



3. Forearm raised to strike chords. Motion wholly from the elbow with fingers firm and immovable. The arm to be raised from two to three inches, and the blow strong but never violent.



TWO PART PLAYING.

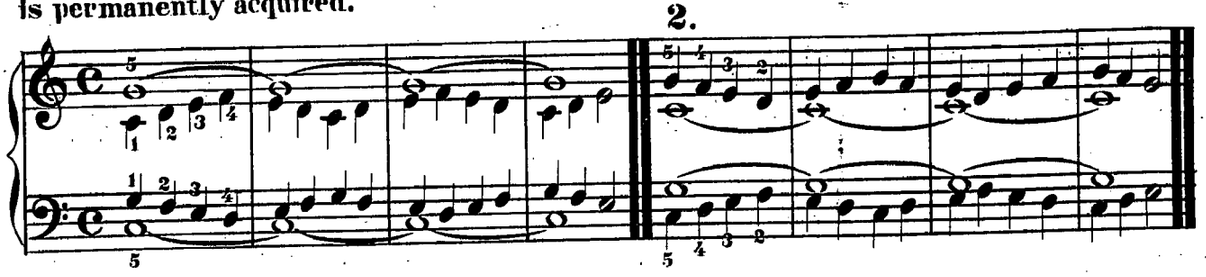


NOTE. Never play the Organ without accent and a firm, strong touch. These should be invariable, whatever the size of the instrument, or the character of the music played.

Exercises in Sustained Notes.

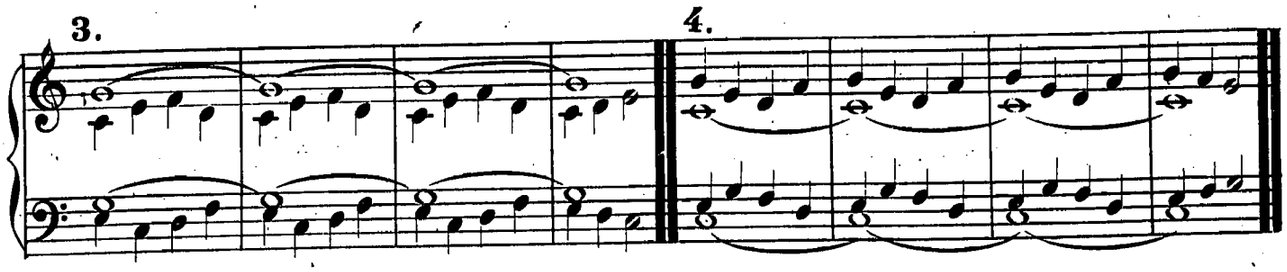
Note. It is advisable to practice much with the manuals coupled until a firm touch is permanently acquired.

Ex. 1.



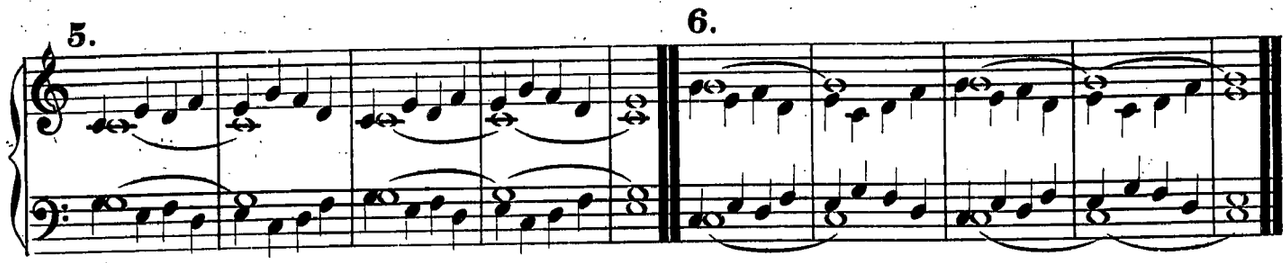
2.

3.



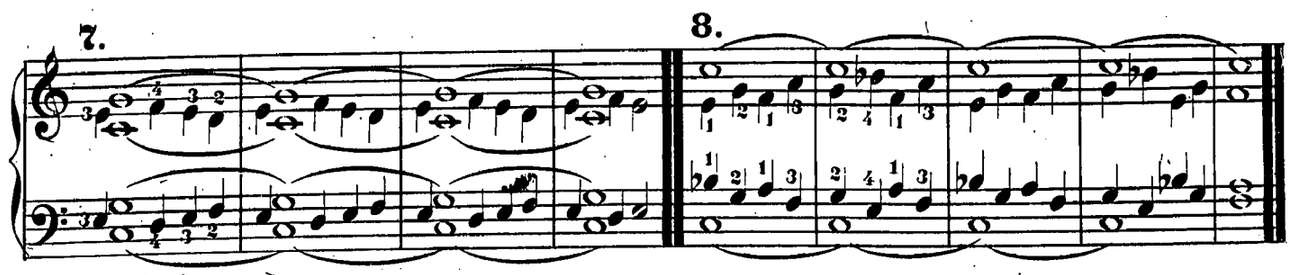
4.

5.



6.

7.



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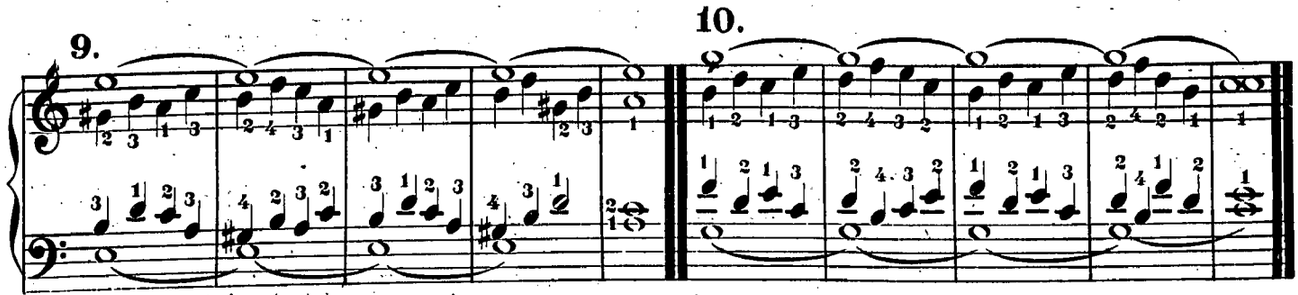


10.

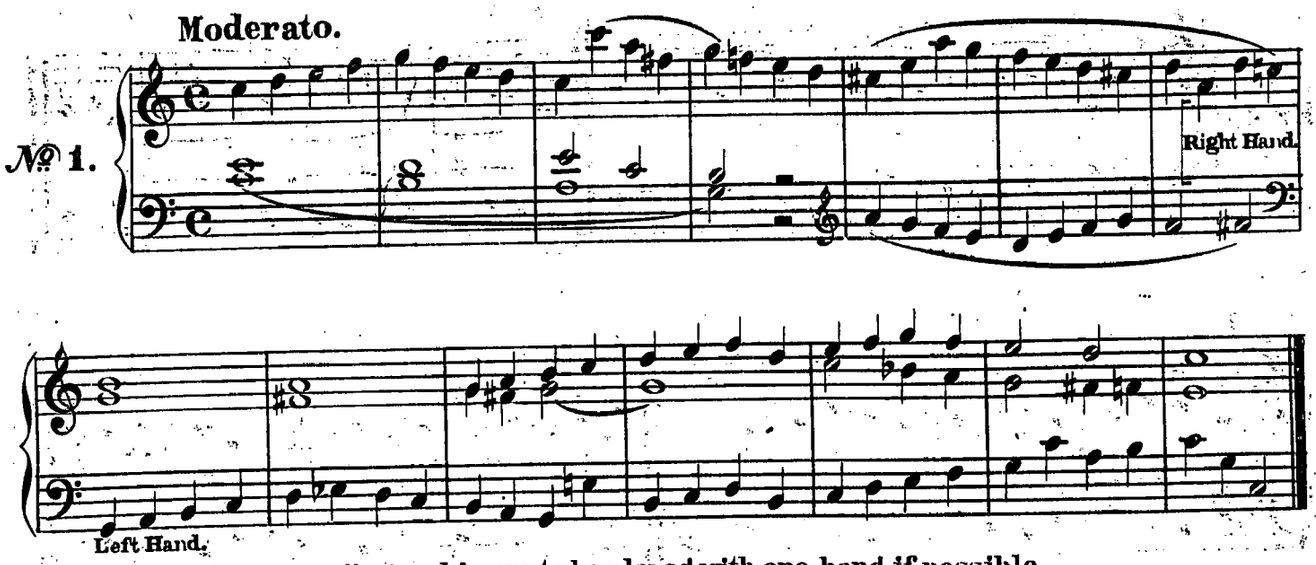
NOTE. These and all other exercises found in this work, can be practised on the piano if care is taken to firmly hold the sustained notes.

THREE PART PLAYING.

RINK.

Moderato.

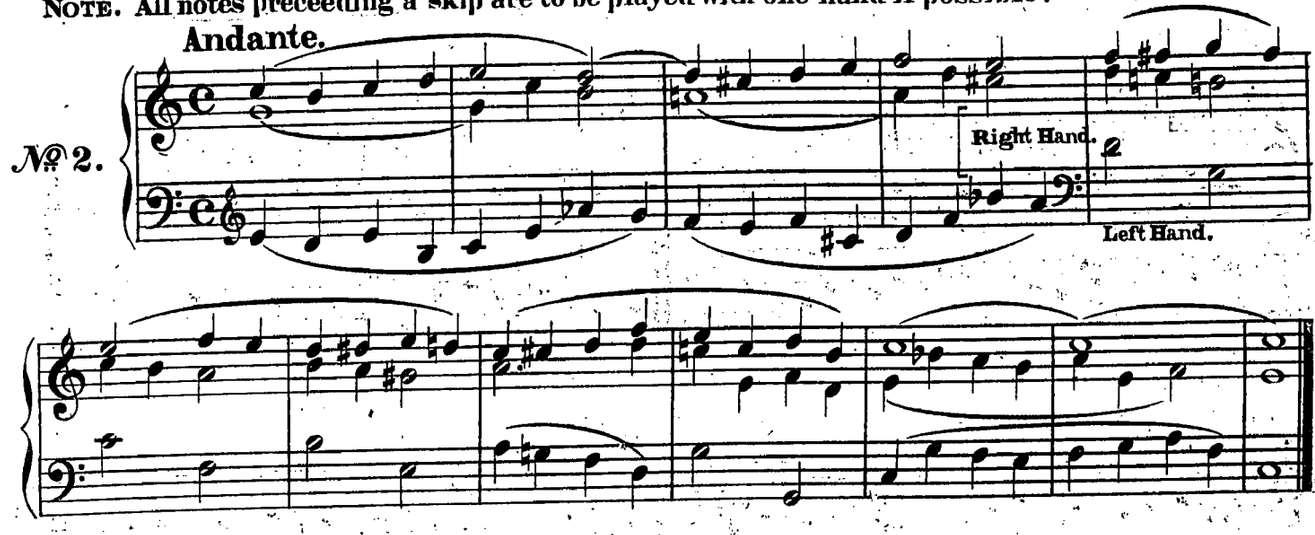
№ 1.



NOTE. All notes preceeding a skip are to be played with one hand if possible.

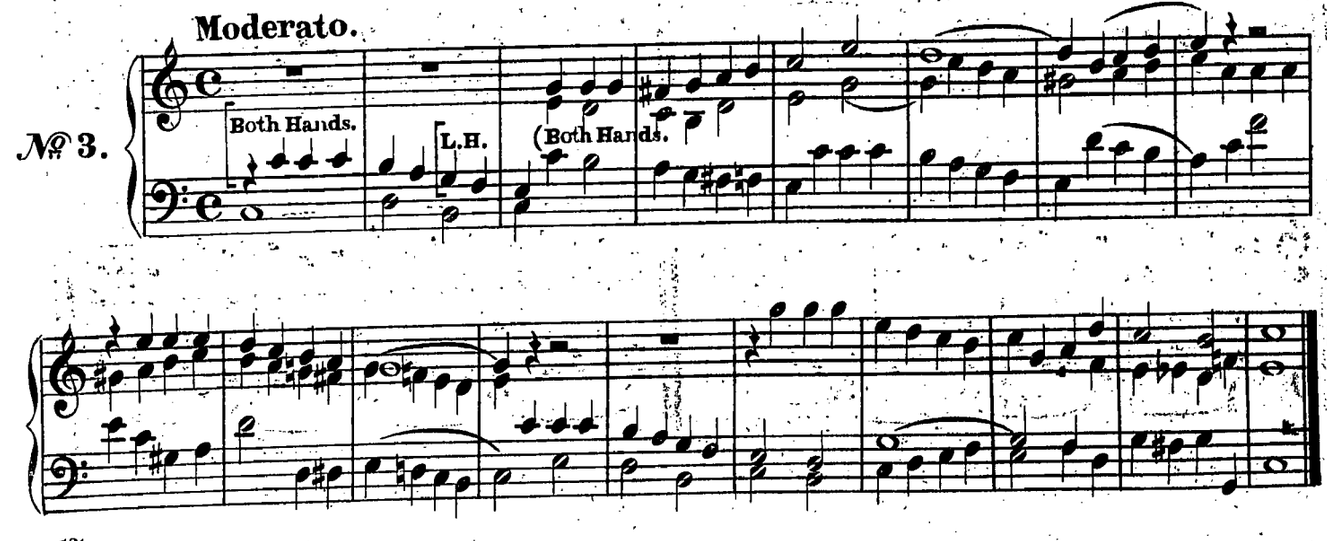
Andante.

№ 2.



Moderato.

№ 3.

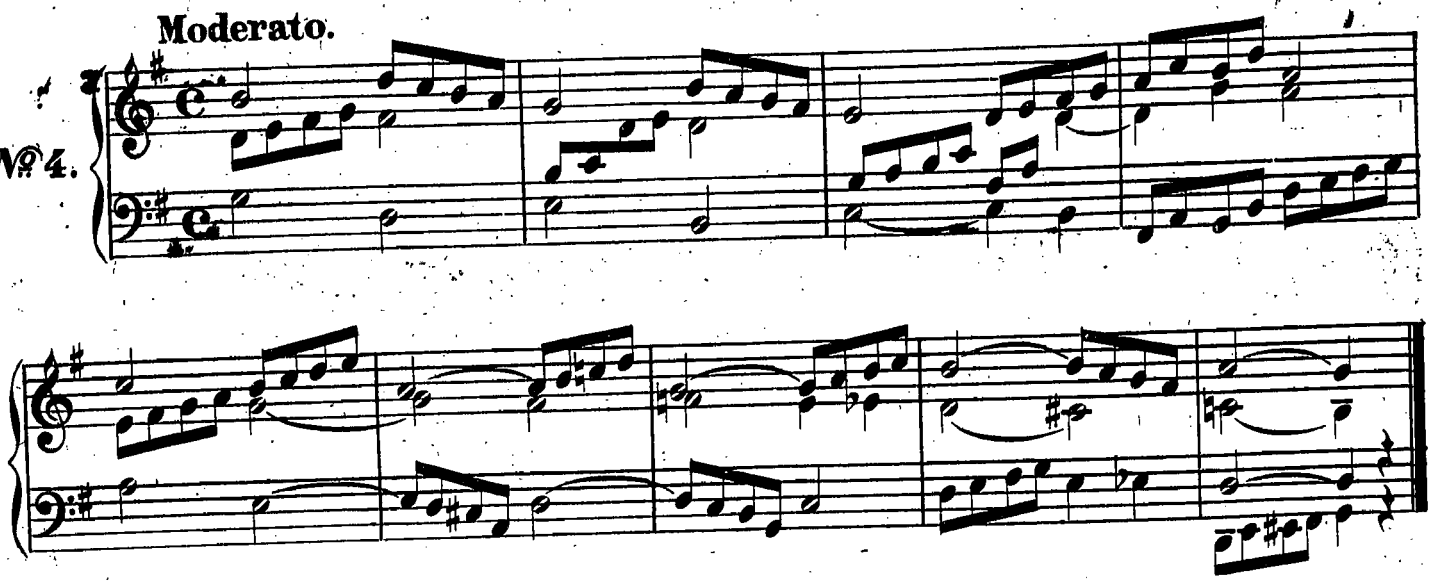


NOTE. Always divide the parts as equally as possible between the two hands.

LEMMENS.

Moderato.

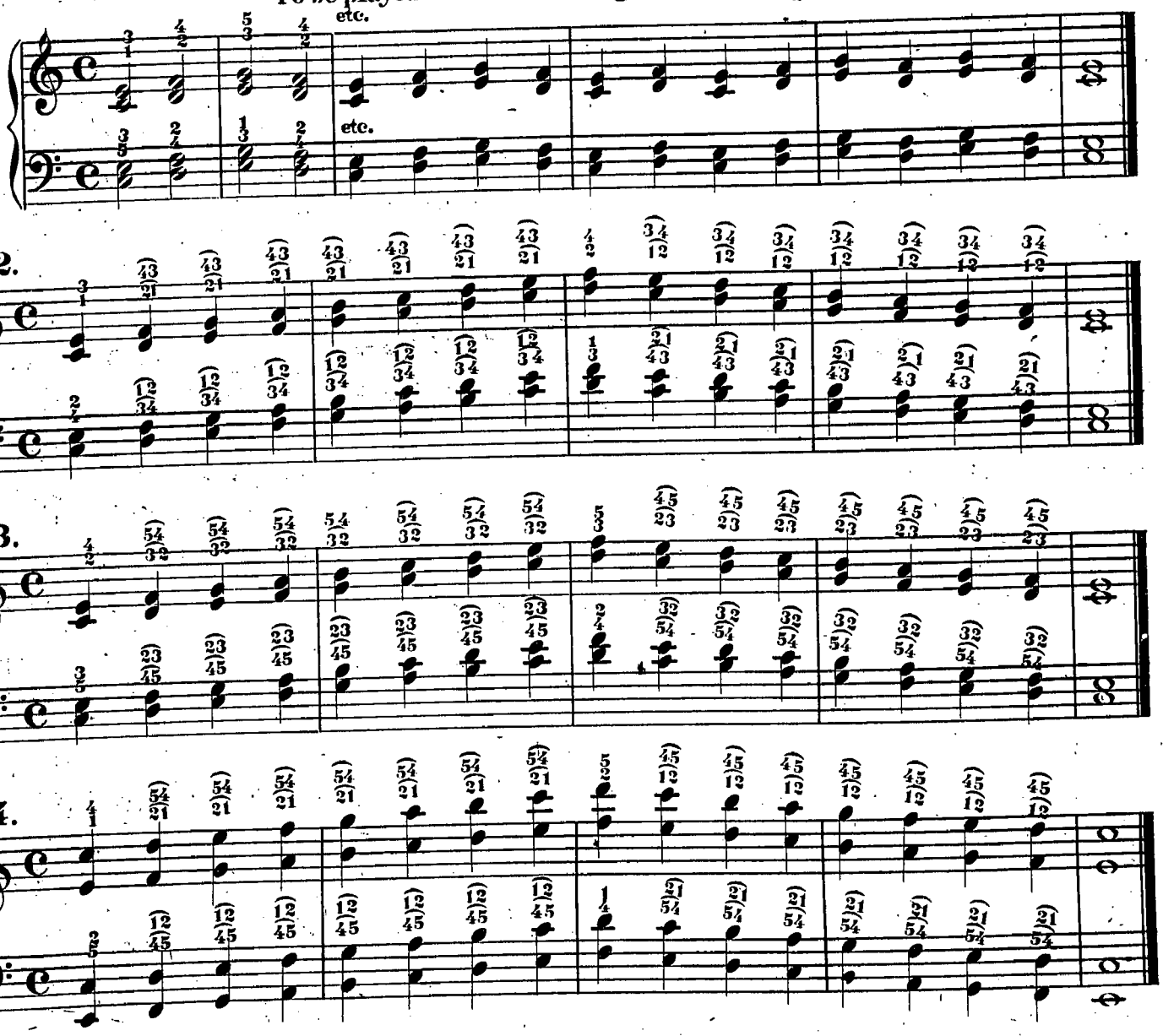
№ 4.



EXERCISES IN SUBSTITUTION & GLISSANDO.

To be played with much strength and firmness.

№ 1.



5.

6.

7.

8.

9. etc. (Right Hand.)

10. (Left Hand.) etc.

11. etc. (Right Hand.) (Left Hand.)

12.

Studies in Sustained Notes.

FOUR SHORT STUDIES.

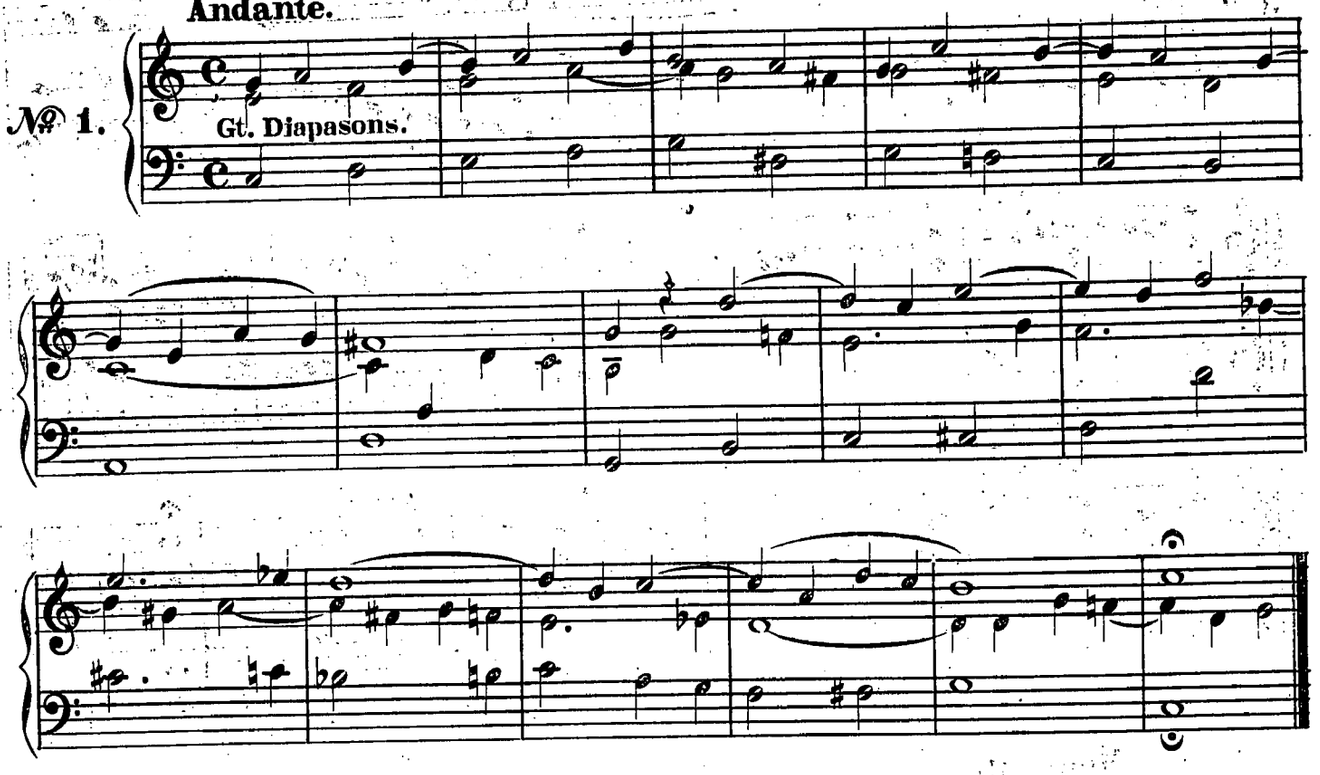
To be played strictly *legato* and with a careful substitution of fingers wherever required.

RINK.

Andante.

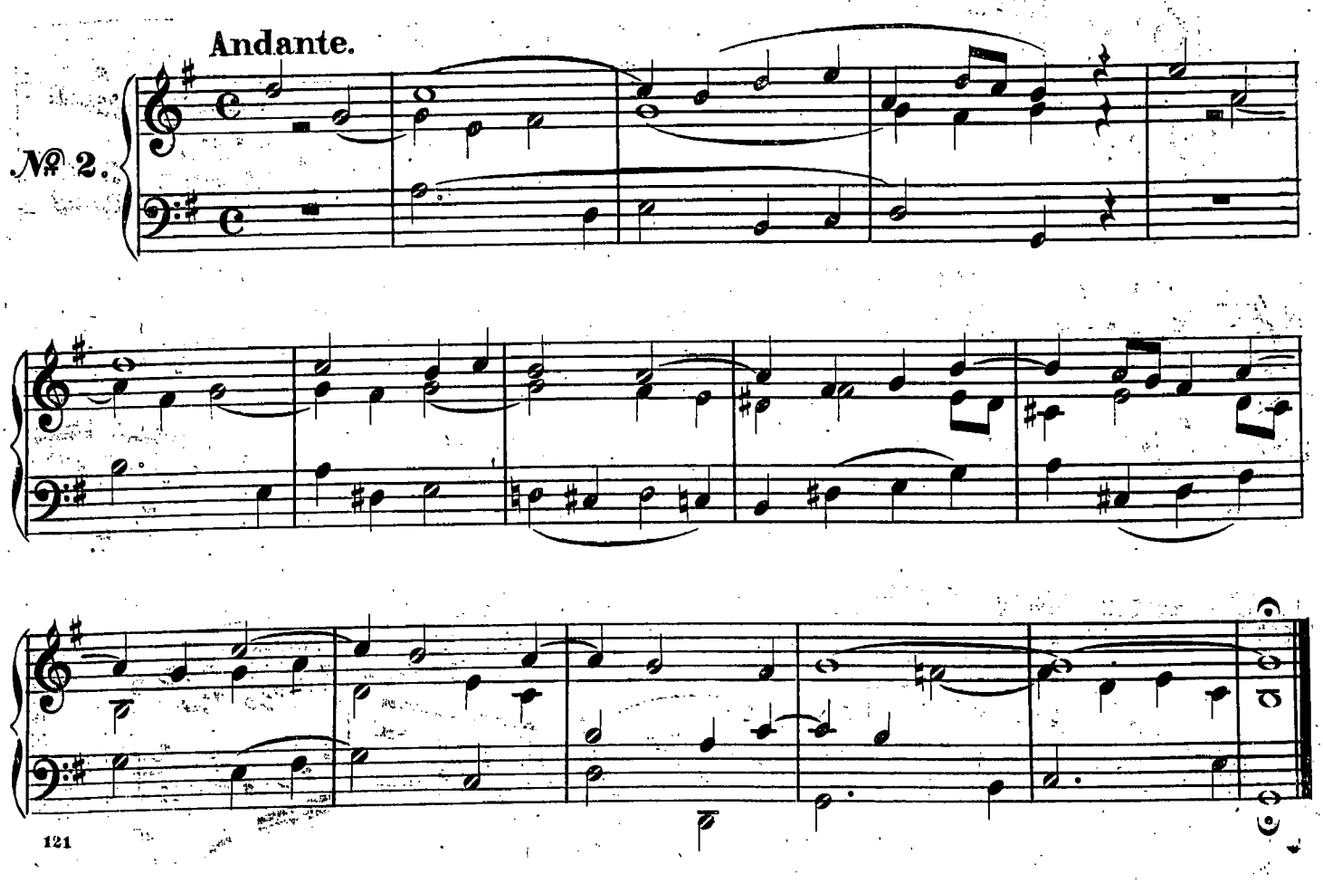
№ 1.

Gt. Diapasons.



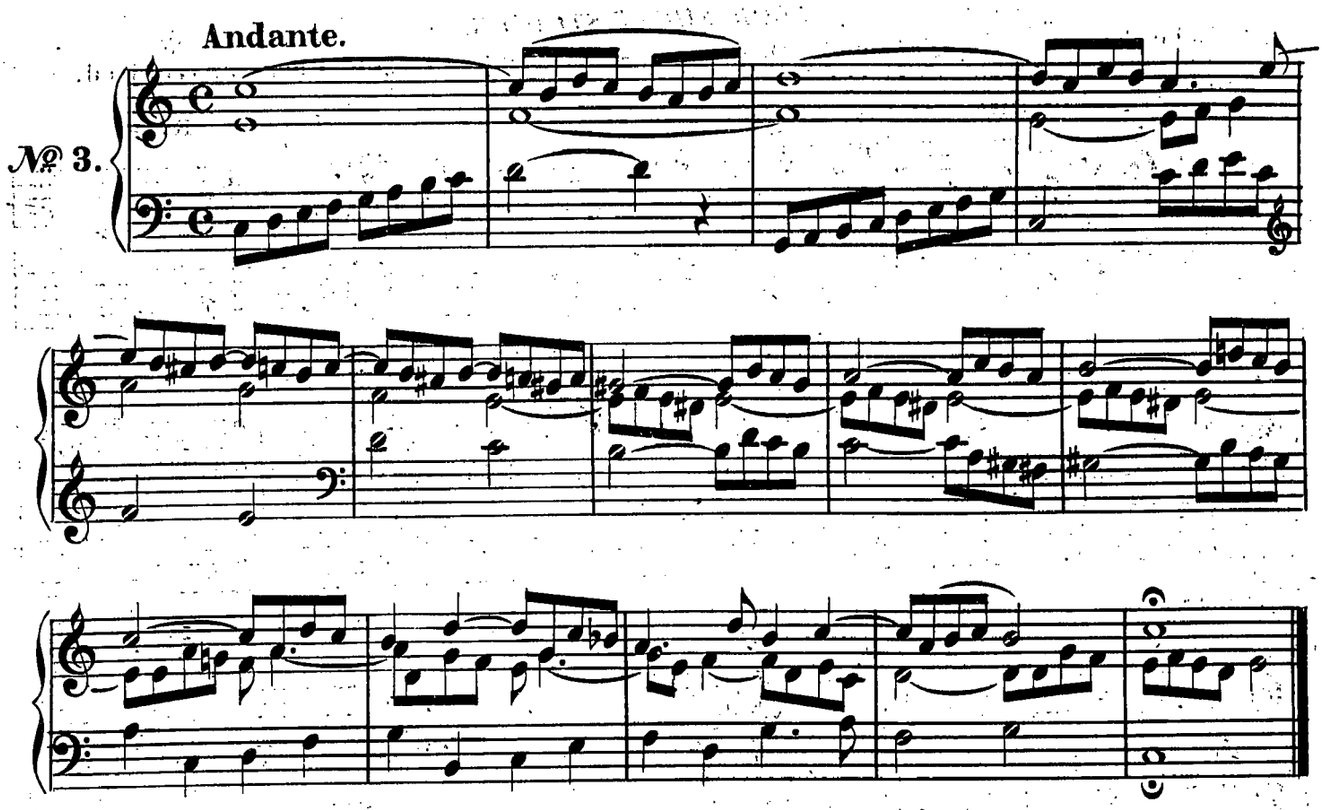
Andante.

№ 2.



Andante.

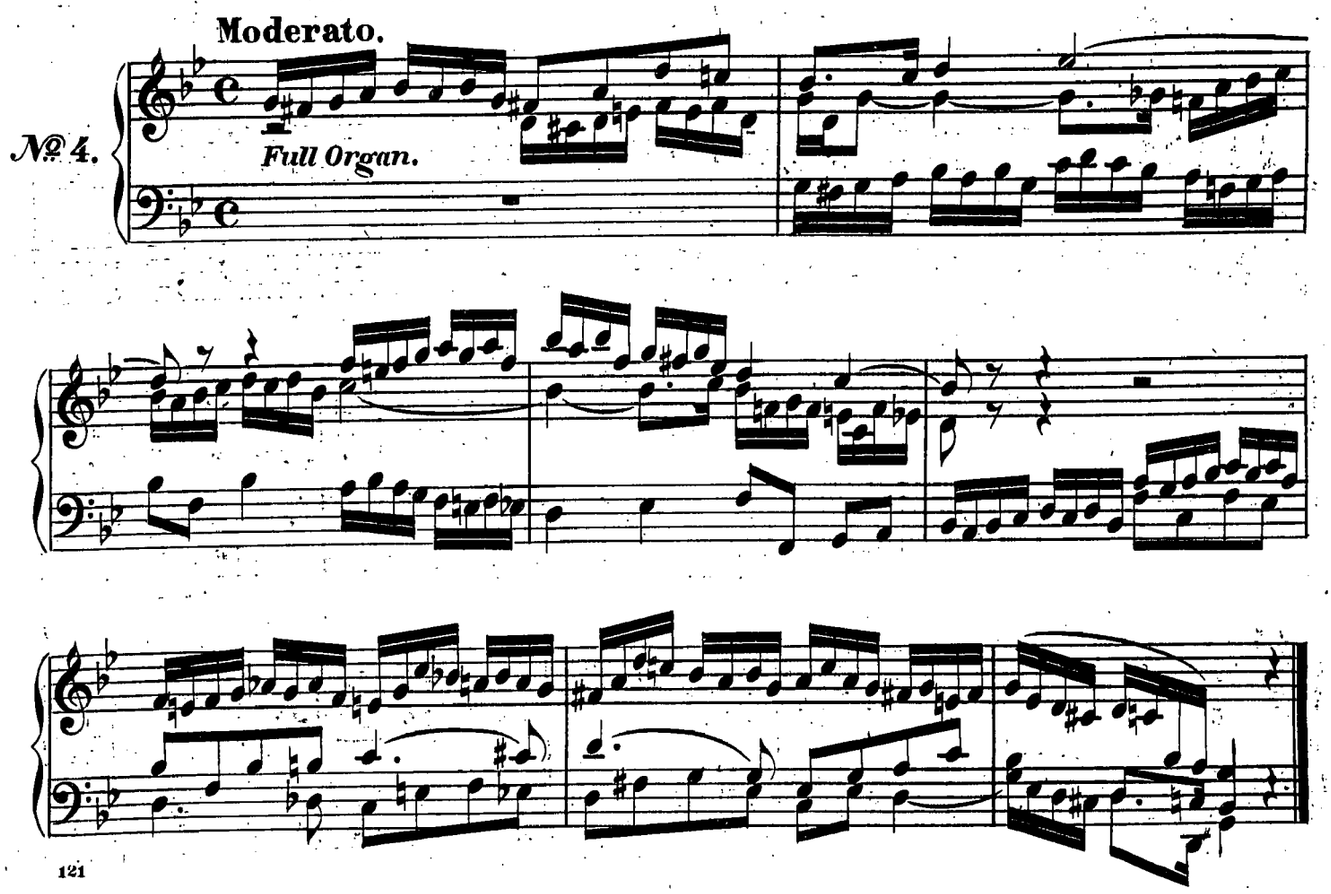
№ 3.



Moderato.

№ 4.

Full Organ.



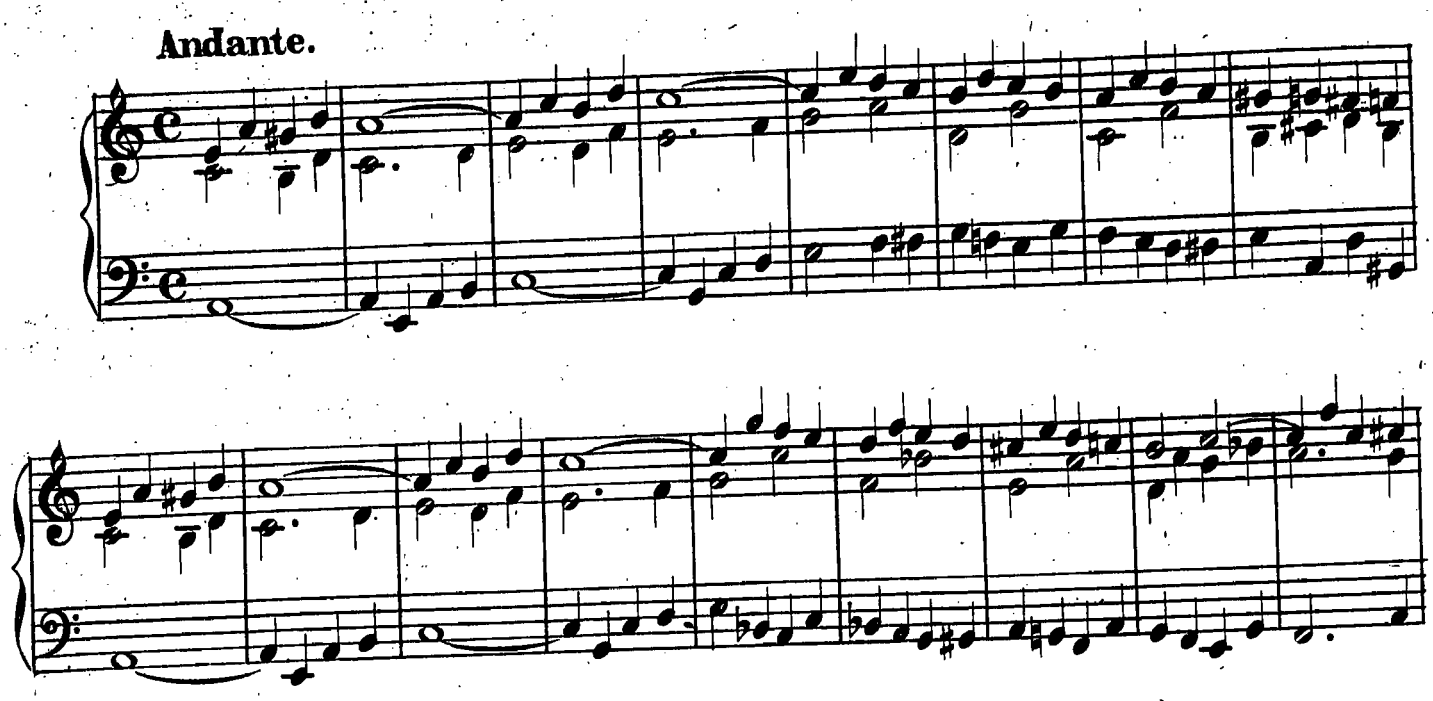
OFFERTOIRE.

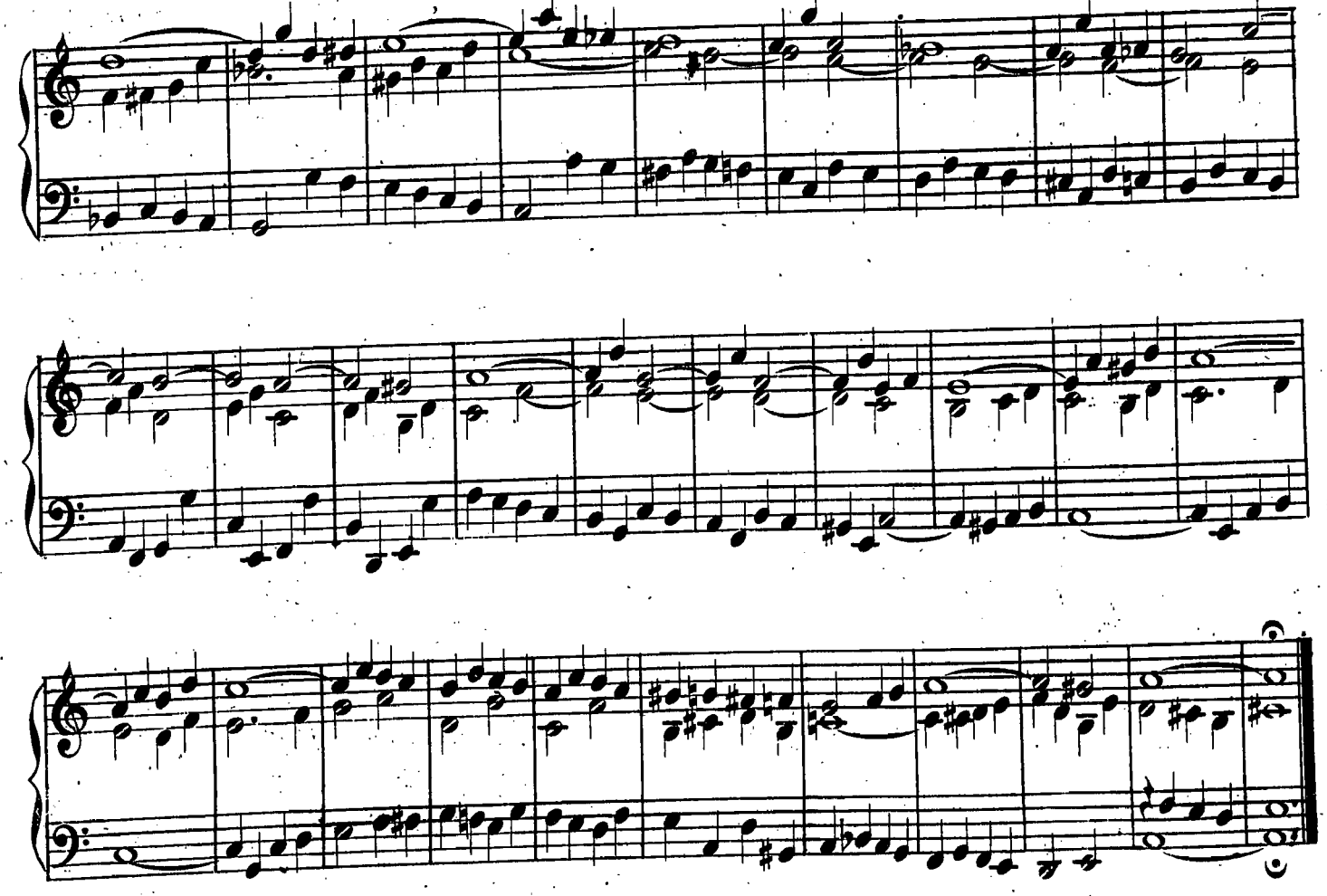
POSTLUDE.

(*Full Organ.*)

LEMMENS.

Andante.





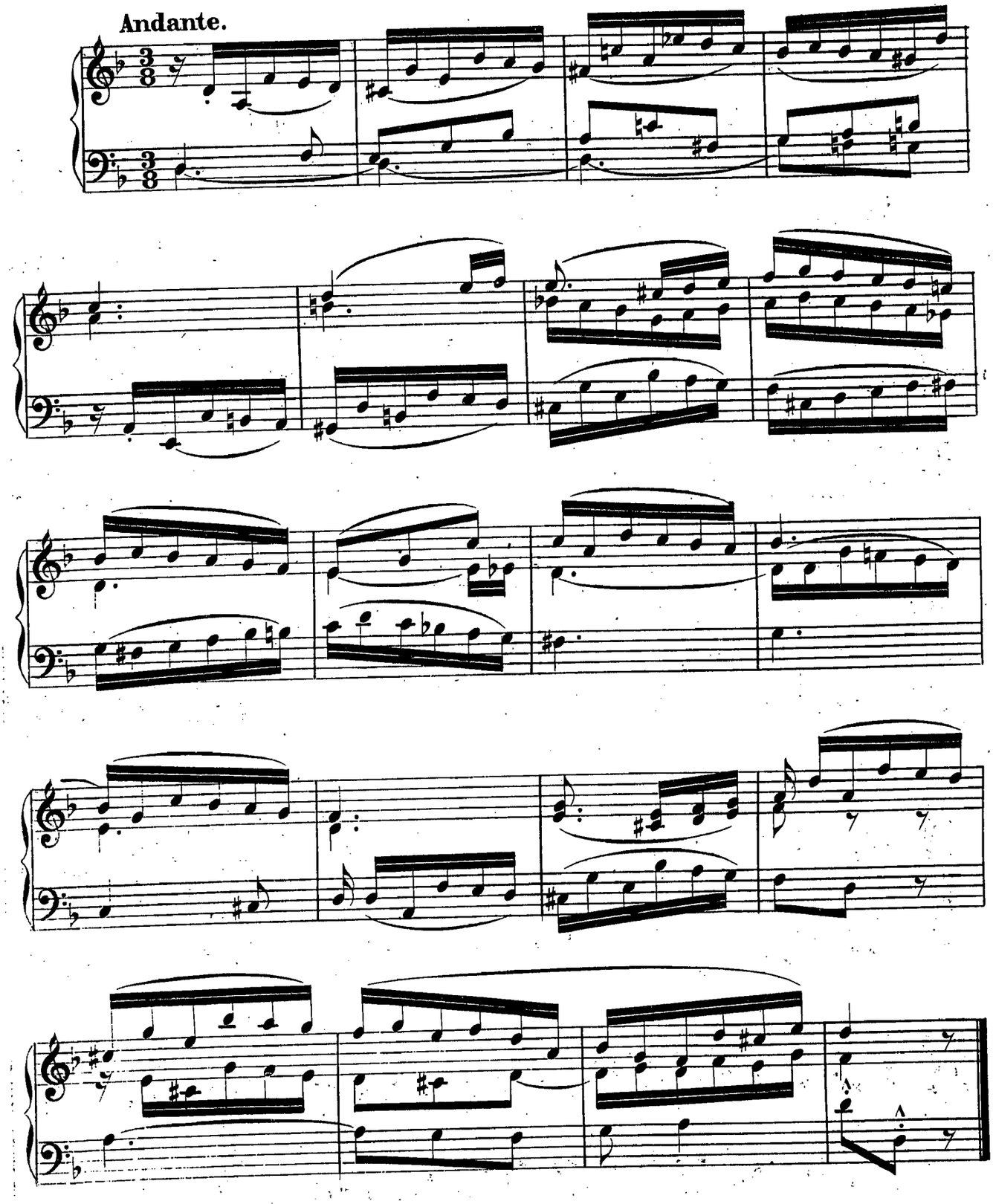
* This may also be played as a Prelude with Soft Organ.

PRELUDE.

(For Soft Organ.)

RINK.

Andante.



OFFERTOIRE.

(PRELUDE.)

(For Soft Organ.)

EUGENE THAYER.

Andante.

Rit^o molto.

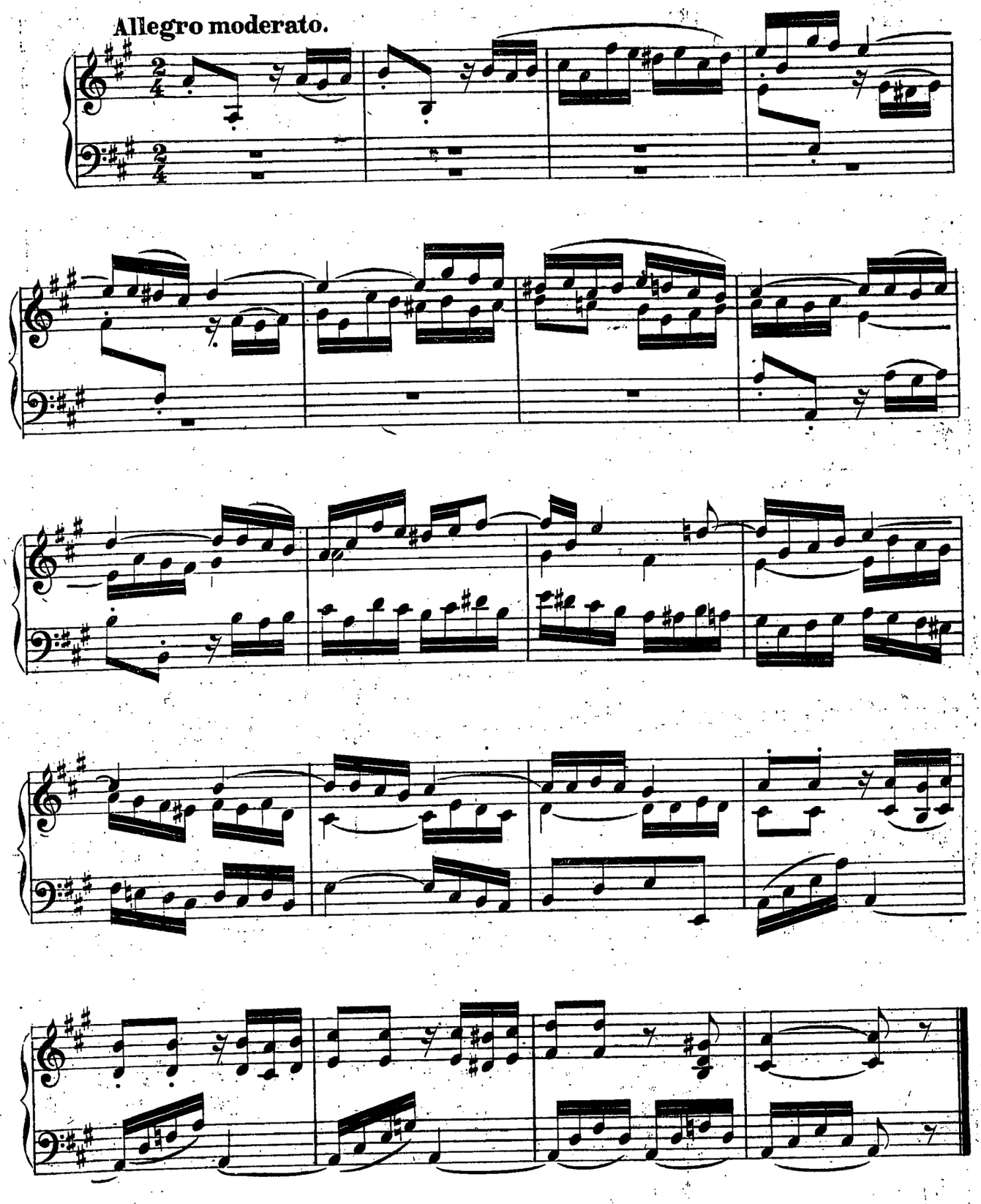
FUGHETTA.

POSTLUDE.

(Full Organ.)

RINK.

Allegro moderato.



OFFERTOIRE.

(PRELUDE.)

For Soft Organ.

LEMMENS.

Religioso.

MAN. I.

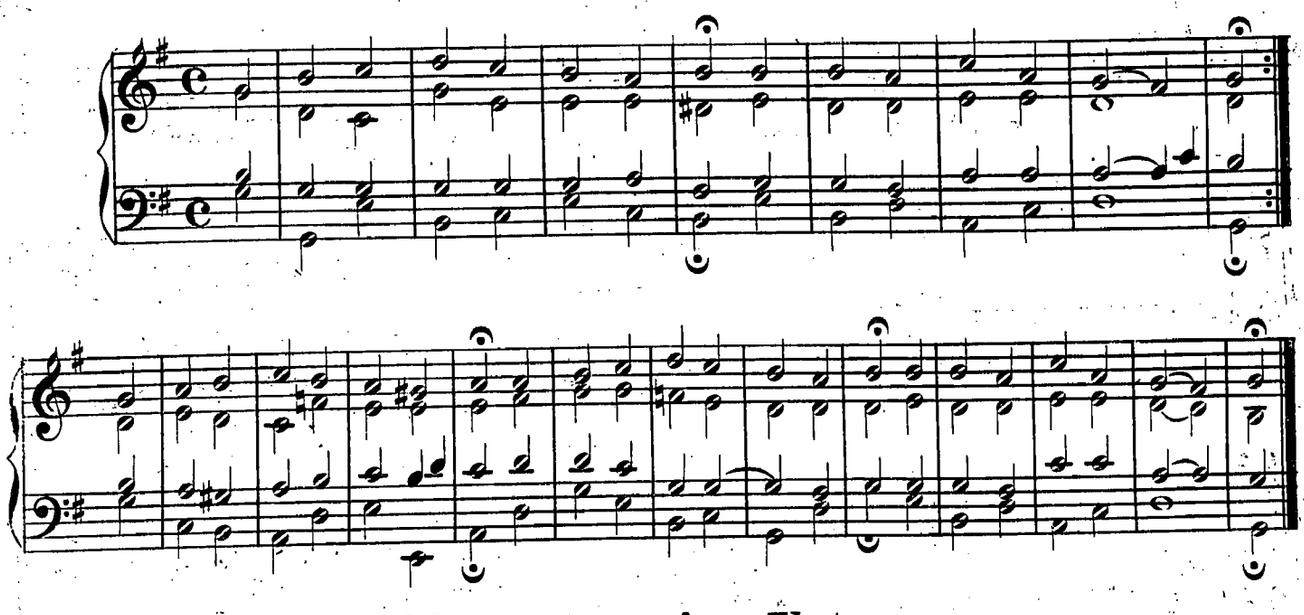
MAN. II.

FOUR PART PLAYING.

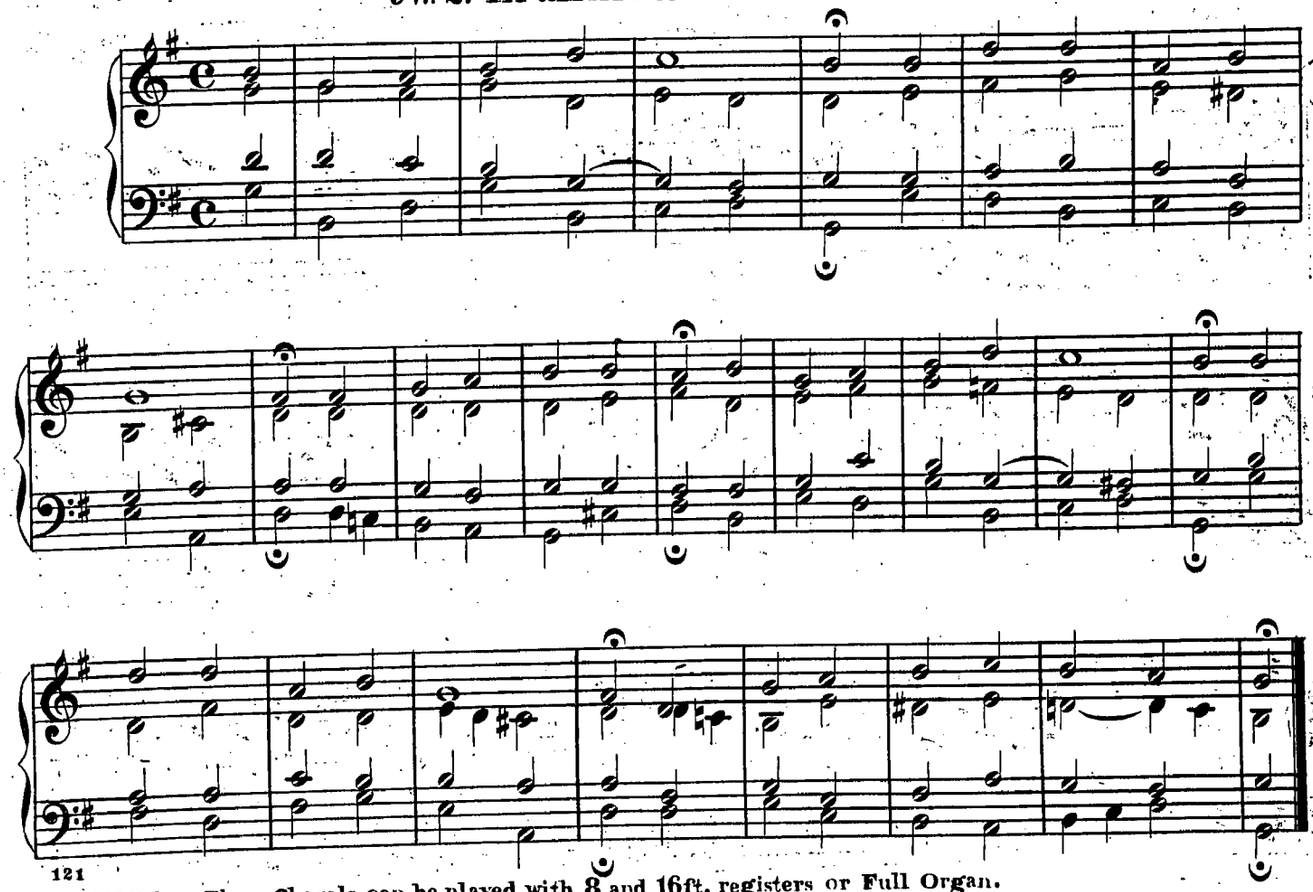
CHORALS.

The four notes composing each chord must be played with absolute precision.

№1. Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'.

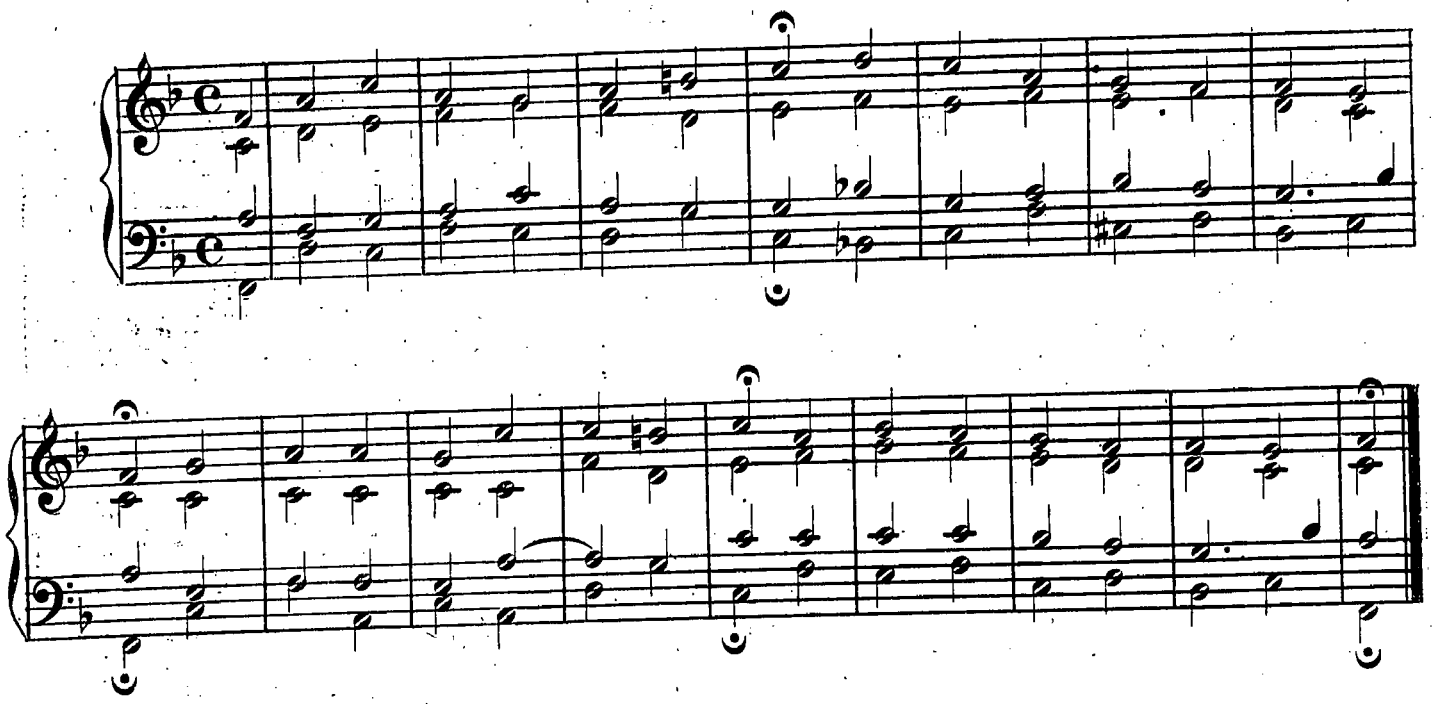


№2. In allen meinen Thaten.

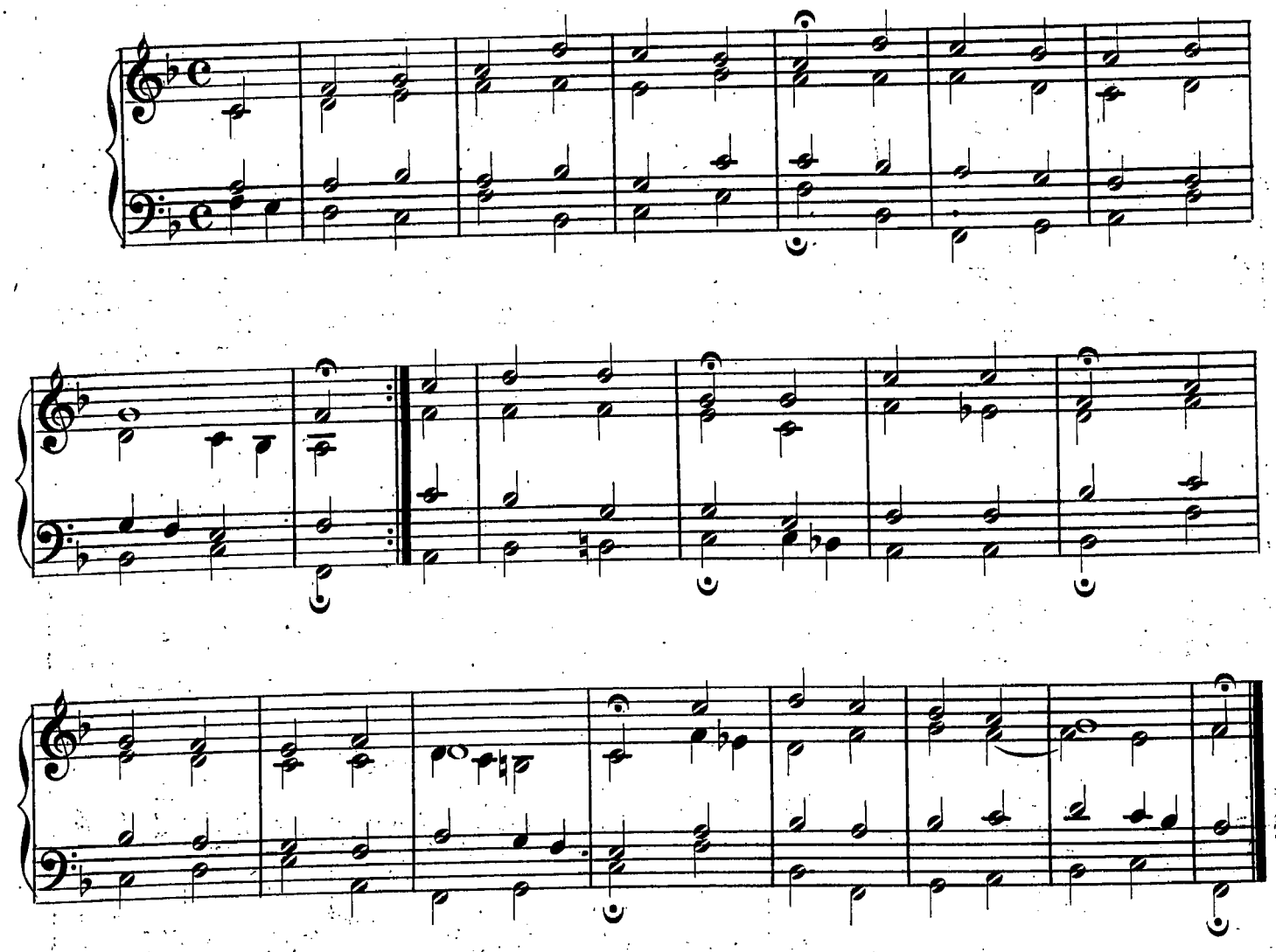


NOTE.— These Chorals can be played with 8 and 16ft. registers or Full Organ.

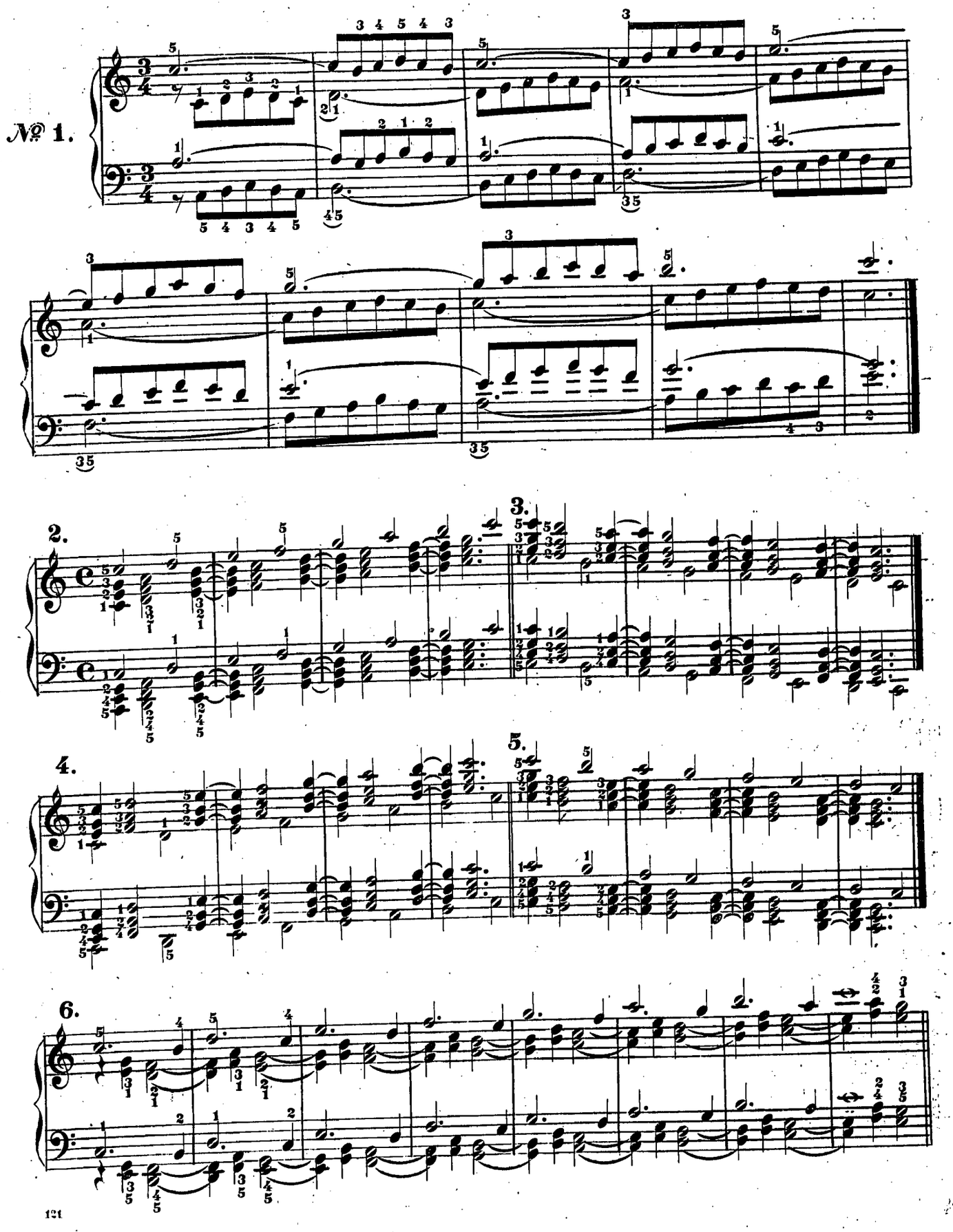
№3. 'Herr Jesu Christ dich zu uns wend.'



№4. Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgethan.



General Exercises.

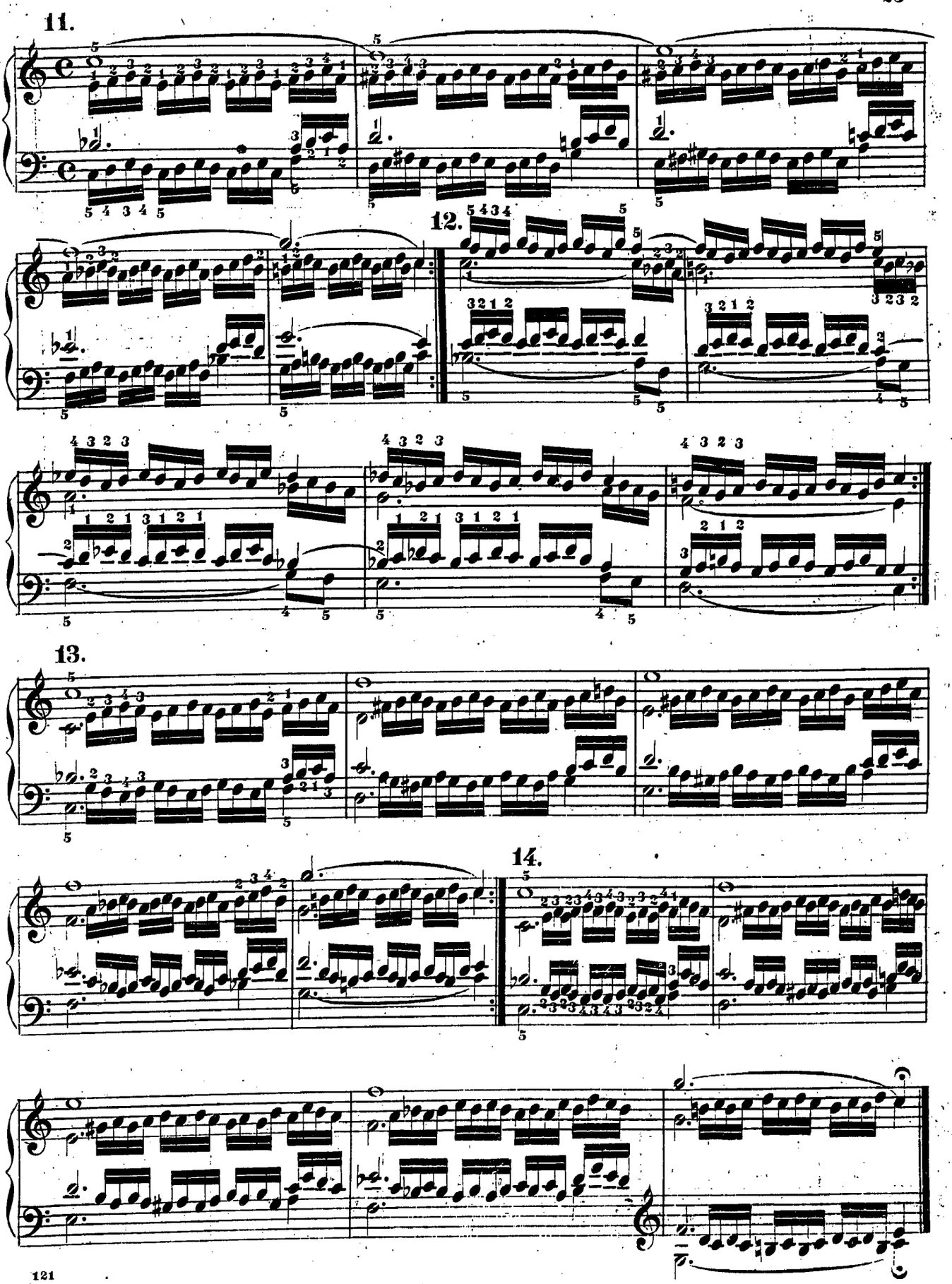


7.

8.

9.

10.


11.
12.
13.
14.

VARIOUS PIECES.

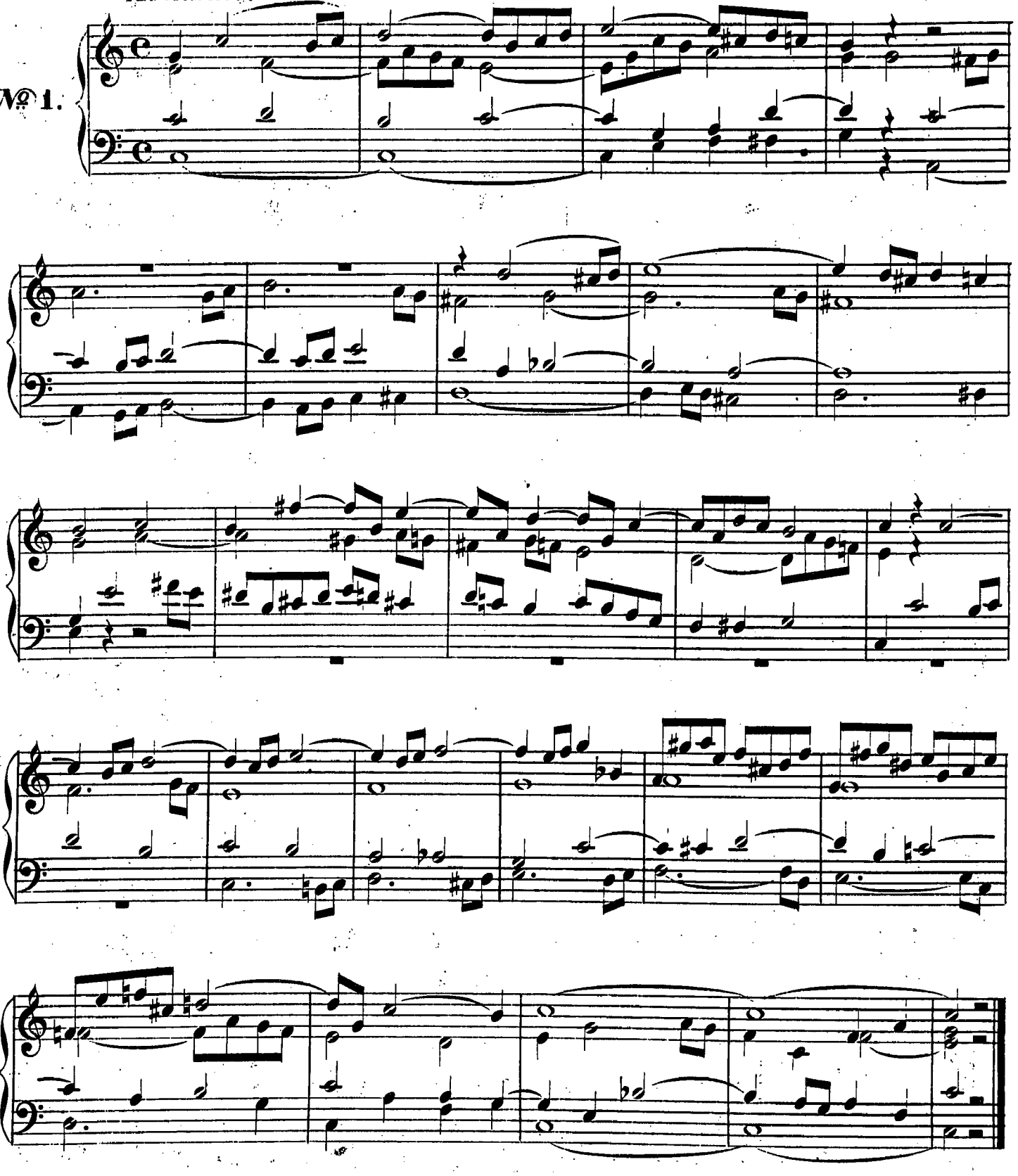
NOTE. The Pedal may be used in all of the following pieces after PART II of this work has been studied.

POSTLUDE.

(Full Organ.)

Moderato. RINK.

№ 1.



OFFERTOIRE.

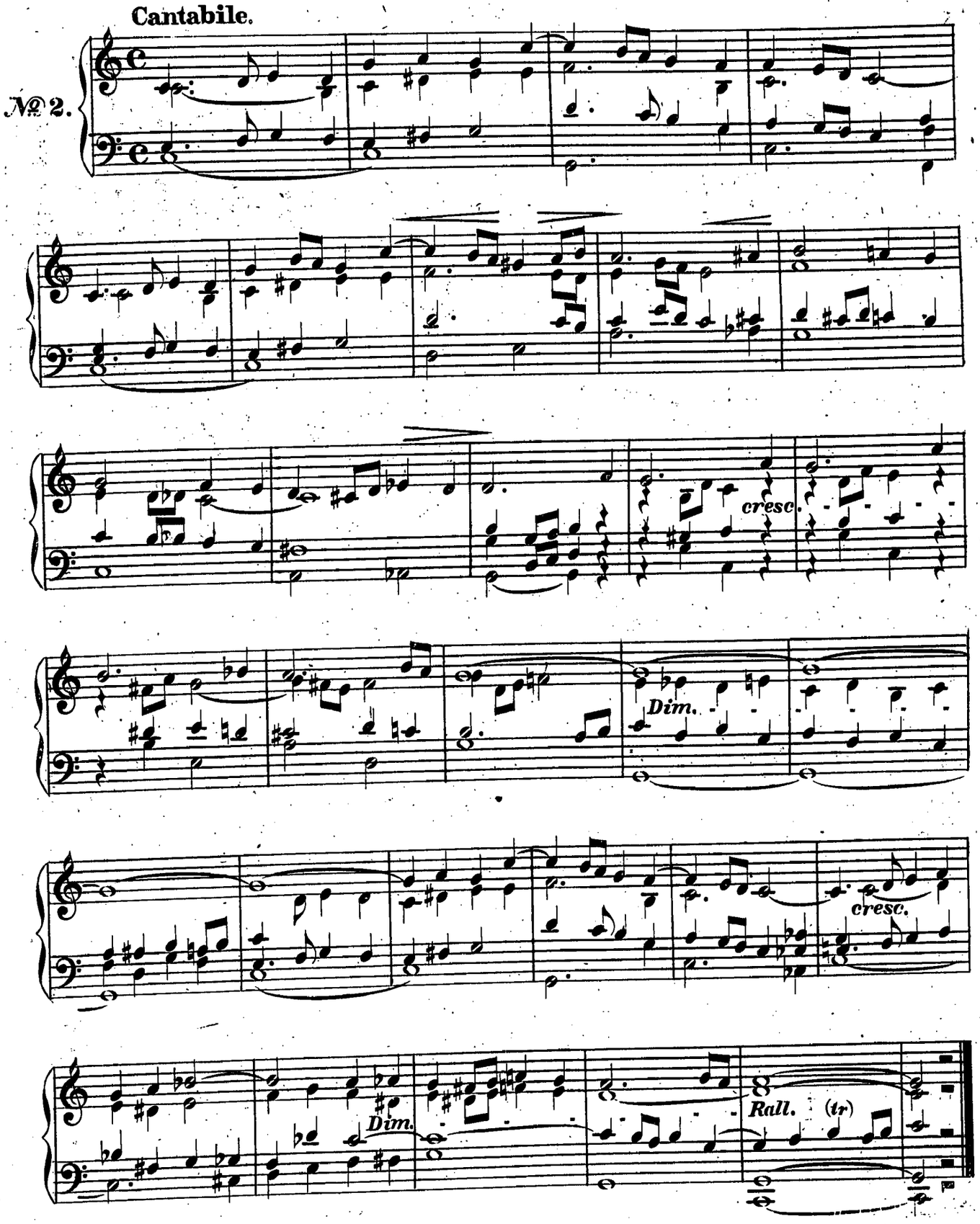
(PRELUDE.)

(For Soft Organ.)

LEMMENS.

Cantabile.

№ 2.



OFFERTOIRE.

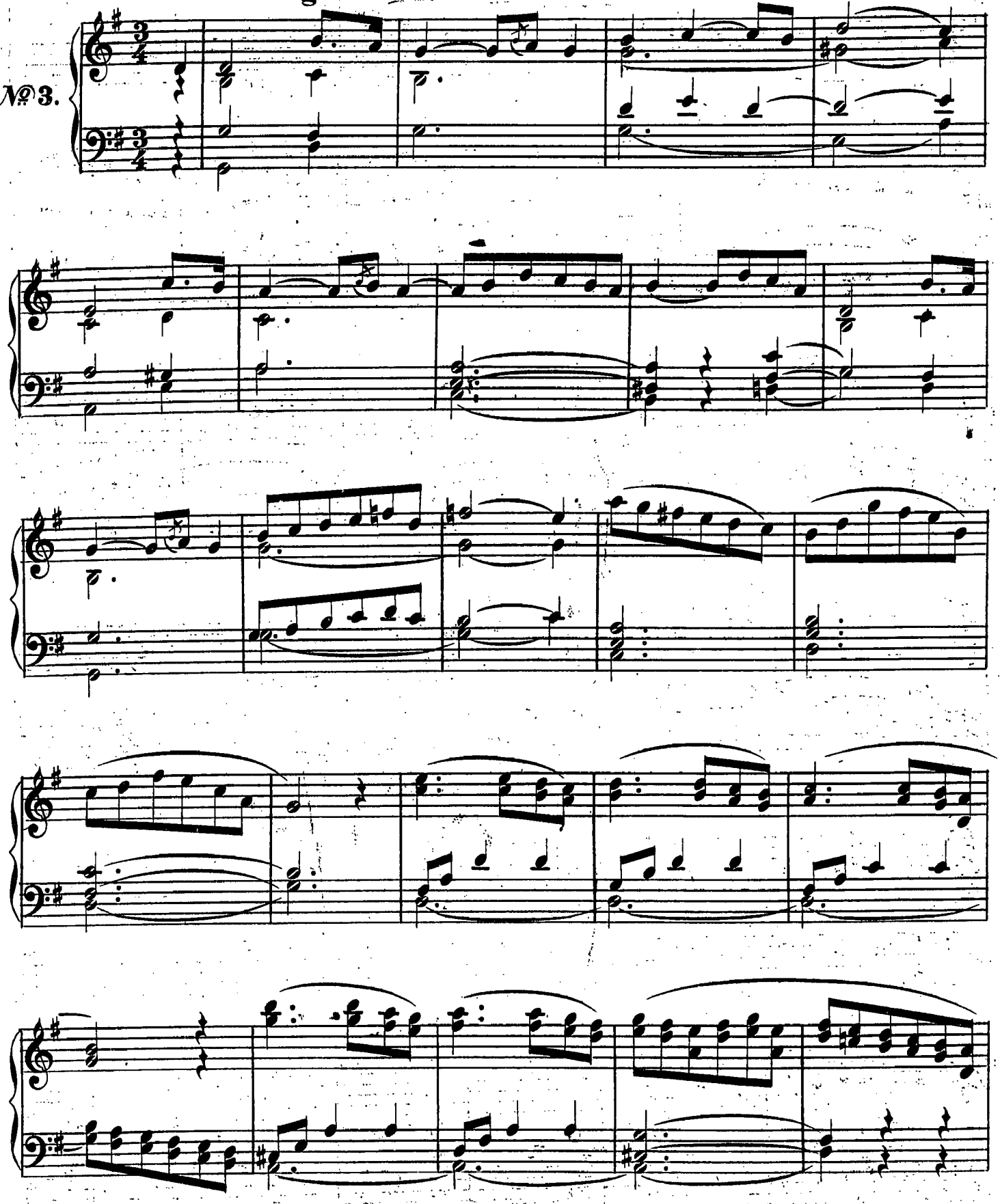
(PRELUDE.)

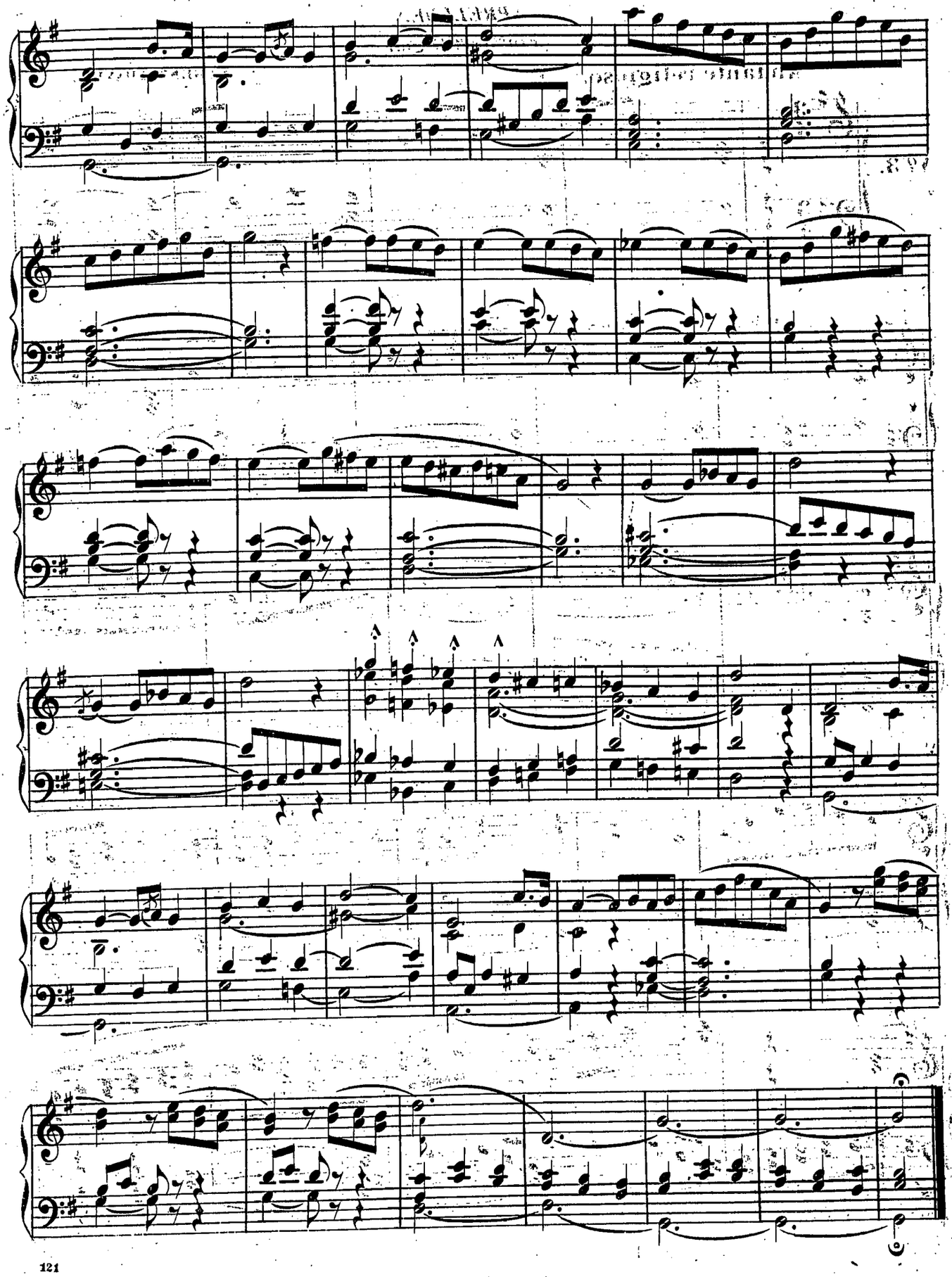
For Soft Organ.

EUGENE THAYER.

Andante religioso.

№ 3.





PRELUDE.

(Full Organ.)

ANDRÉ.

Maestoso.

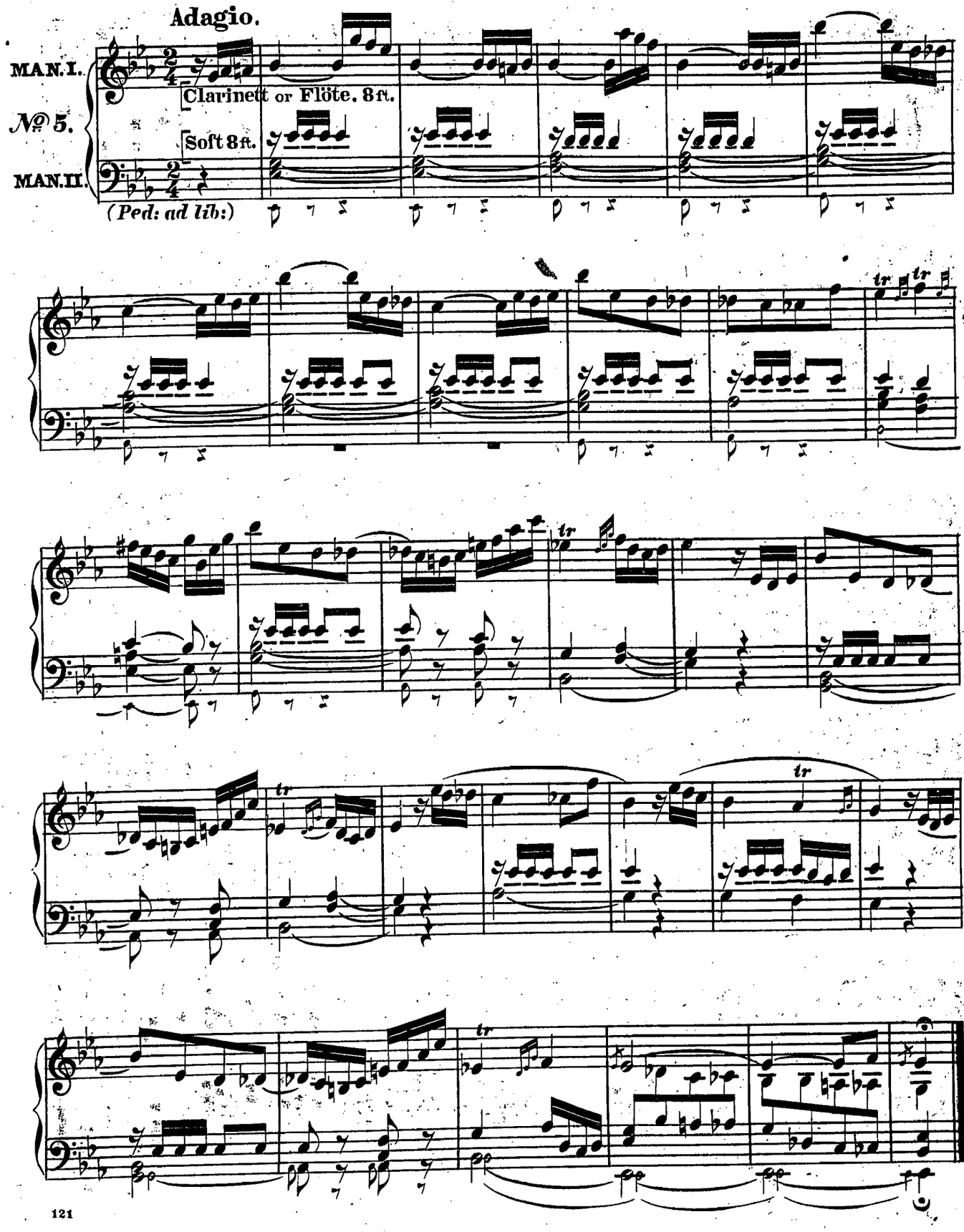
No 4.

stringendo.

OFFERTOIRE.

(PRELUDE.)

EUGENE THAYER.



OFFERTOIRE.

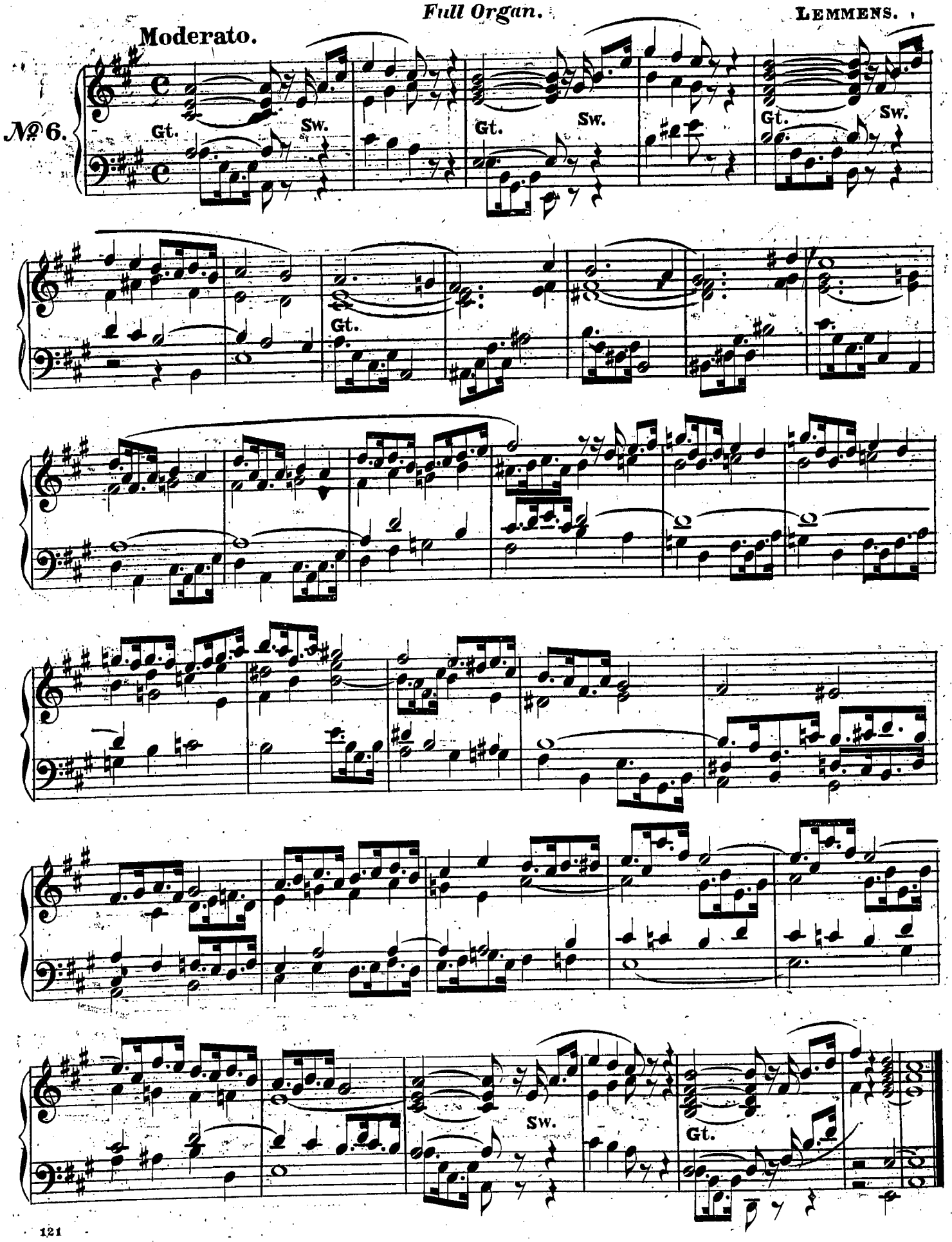
(POSTLUDE.)

Full Organ.

LEMMENS.

Moderato.

№ 6.



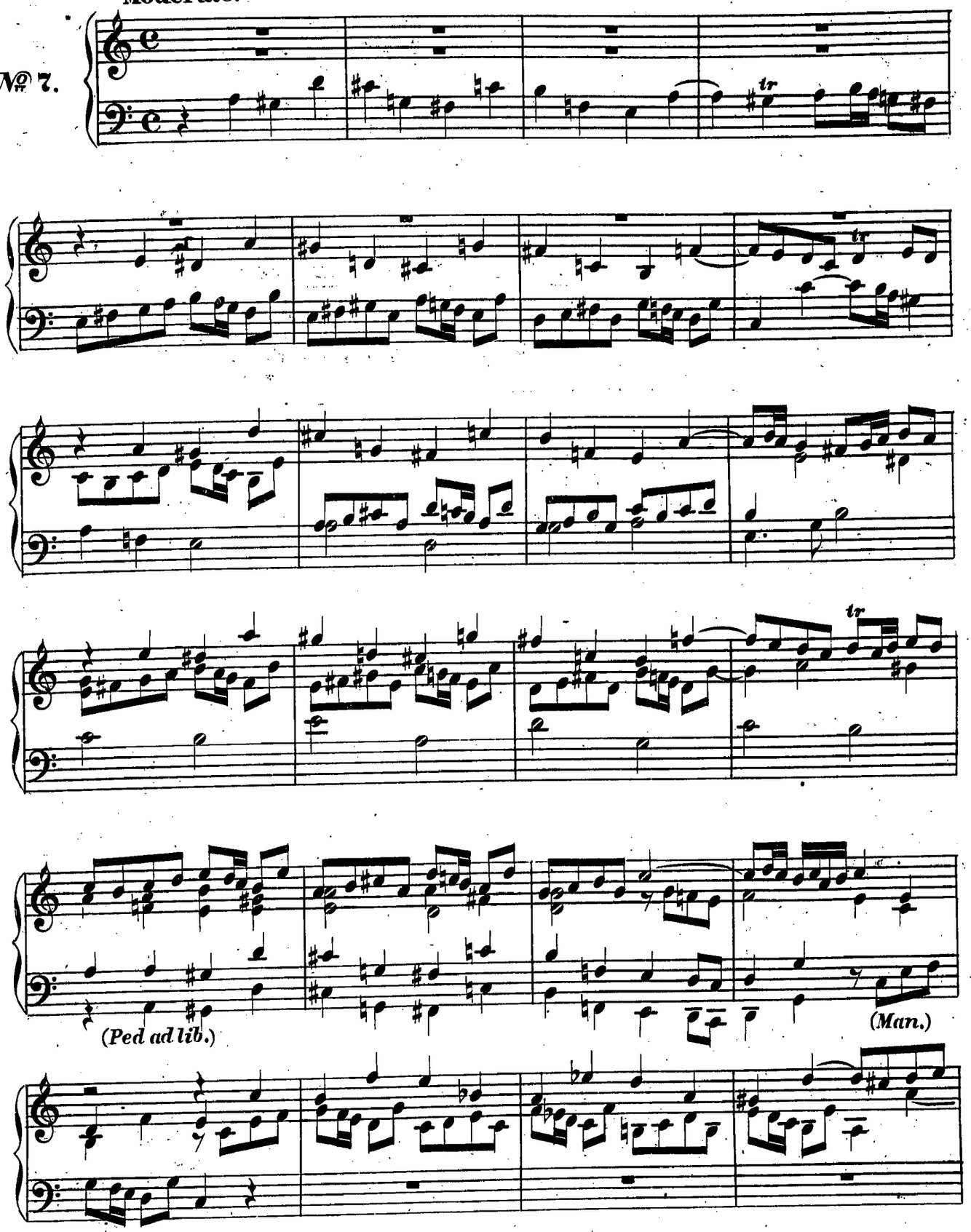
FUGUE
(in A minor.)

Full Organ.

BACH.

Moderato.

№ 7.



(Ped. ad lib:)

(Man:)

(Ped. ad lib:)

Adagio.

121 * NOTE.— In Organ music, wherever the motion is wholly in one voice, and the other voices form chords with notes of equal length, the chords are played with a firm staccato; indicated the sign ∧ throughout this work.

VORSPIEL.

(Vater unser im Himmelreich.)

BACH.

With Diapasons, 8ft.

№ 8.

(*Senza Pedale.*)