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THE ORGANIST

A Bimonthly Journal Devoted to the Pipe Organ and Reed Organ

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EDITED BY
E. L. Ashford,
Assisted by Karl K. Lorenz

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

EDITORIAL.

EDITORIAL NOTE, - - - - - - - 1
THE DECADENCE OF ORGAN BUILDING, - 1
THE ART OF REGISTRATION, - - - - - 2

MUSIC.

TRÄUMEREI AND ROMANZE, *R. Schumann, arr. by E. L. A.*, 3
EASTER JOY, - - - *Alfred Phillip*, 6
THE ROAD TO CALVARY, *Arthur E. Godfrey*, 8
PROPTER MAGNAM, - - - *Pergolesi*, 11
IN GREEN PASTURES, - *Ira B. Wilson*, 12
PALM BRANCHES, - - - *Frank Moir*, 14
DENNIS (Hymn Voluntary), *E. L. Ashford*, 16
SLOW MOVEMENT, - - - - *Dussek*, 19
SONGS IN THE NIGHT, - *E. S. Lorenz*, 20
PRELUDE, - - - - - *J. Leybach*, 22
OFFERTORIO, - - - *Aug. Reinhard*, 23
SKETCH, - - - - - *E. L. Ashford*, 24
COMMUNION, - - - *Arthur Page*, 26
FANTASIE, - - - - *E. L. Ashford*, 27
PRELUDE IN E, - - - *E. L. Ashford*, 32

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

1. "Gebet"..... *L. Beethoven*
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2 "From Conquest Unto Conquest"..... *Ant. Ed. Batiste*
3. "Nuptial March"..... *E. L. Ashford*
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The Organist.

E. L. ASHFORD, - - - - - - - - *Editor*
KARL K. LORENZ, - - - - *Assistant Editor*
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MARCH, 1907.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

COMPTON, CAL., October 29, 1906.

MRS. E. L. ASHFORD,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Mrs. Ashford :—

The "Organist" means everything to me that is strong, helpful and beautiful in music. I have every number since its publication, and they give me more pleasure than I can tell you. I have liked especially the "Hymn Voluntaries" and am so sorry we are not having them any more. I enclose three marked pieces which are favorites of mine. Is it too much to ask voluntaries of them, written at your leisure? For a long time I have wanted "Ora Pro Nobis" as a voluntary; under your treatment it would be beautiful. Some time may we not have a voluntary especially for Communion Sunday —something that would be inexpressibly sad, tender, loving—something that would melt the hearts of people, and show them a little of what Jesus felt in those last awful days. Thanking you very much for your beautiful music, and wishing you still greater success, I am,

Yours very truly,
MRS. J. W. BLAKE.

We take the liberty of printing the above letter because we suspect that, in appreciation of Mrs. Ashford's compositions and in expressing a desire for a continuance of voluntaries based on familiar hymn tunes, this letter voices the opinion and wish of the vast majority of our subscribers; at this beginning of a new volume we wish publicly to reply to the above and outline the policy of the editors and publishers for the coming year.

In issuing the "Organist" it has always been, and will continue to be, the purpose to provide good, thoughtful grateful music, not too difficult for those, who, in the absence of better trained musicians, have generously given their talents to the church, even though these talents have not been thoroughly trained; yet scholarly and interesting enough to be useful to the finished musician. That our purpose has been in a large degree fulfilled, a large subscription list of organists, ranging in ability from beginners to professionals, goes to prove

During this coming year Mrs. Ashford's compositions will constitute a much larger proportion of the music in the "Organist" than heretofore. Many of her new compositions are already in hand, and we can promise a rich variety of practicable music in her most interesting and pleasing style. She is also at work on a new series of hymns voluntaries and these will appear regularly. While she has used a great many as the basis of her composition, there still remain a number of tunes very choice for this purpose, and as widely known and loved as most of those which she used in her previous compositions of this character. This fact should lead our subscribers to recommend the "Organist" to their organist friends even more heartily than before.

KARL K. LORENZ.

THE DECADENCE OF ORGAN-BUILDING.

Once upon a time, before the days of Apollo and Orpheus with their lyres, the great god Pan hacked and hewed with the hard, bleak steel at the patient reed as he sat by the river. Somewhere about the same time, or perhaps earlier, one Tubal Cain gained an imperishable reputation as the father of all that handle the harp and organ. Ever since then, up to only a generation or two ago, the organ has been developing as a musical instrument. But nowadays we have changed all that. The organ seems to have reached its apogee as a musical instrument, and to be rising (or falling) into a a mechanical instrument.

Let it be understood that the organ referred to is a pipe organ only.

Any one who goes into the organ loft in pursuit of art with a zealous and complaisant organist or organ builder, will be shown, first, the pneumatic or electric attachments, and the combinations and complications of manuals, pedals, and innumerous stops. He will see rows of stop handles or ivory parrallelograms fly back and forth into groups, seemingly by their own intelligence, at the touch of a button. Then he will hear all the solo stops one by one, with and without the tremulant, and be told about the ten or twenty inch pressures. Then various combinations of stops will be exploited, odd enough to almost attract the attention of the audience, and make them wonder mildly what is coming next. Then he will hear the full organ with all the couplers, octave and sub-octave, not to show how lucidly and impressively four-part counterpoint can be proclaimed, or how every corner of the building can be filled with mellow and majestic sound, but how much noise can be made; how the atmosphere can be rent without being pervaded. But of the Diapasons and the lessening ranks above them for which Bach wrote his fugues, and of the tender and unobstrusive stops by which one can hear such endless coloring given to the repetitions of a psalm tune in an English cathedral, one hears probably nothing. He will be taken behind the scenes to see certain rows of metal tubes or cables, and perhaps be told that by their means the organ can be played two or three hundred feet away. Then comes the machinery for filling the bellows, and many explanations concerning water-power and gas-power and horse powers. Thus he will depart in envy and admiration, and a possible determination to get up a subscription and go one better at his own church. So he has had a feast of Art. He has asked for bread and received a stone. This would not matter much did he not think that he has received the bread.

If such be the professional conception of the organ, what can be the popular conception of organ playing? It is even such as the people have learned to expect, and can most easily learn to like. A strongly marked melody on a solo stop, a bit of showy execution on the choir organ, a march tune or some startling progressions on the great organ, seem to the average audience to fill up most of the measure of solo organ playing. As this kind of performance is not only the easiest to listen to, but easiest to execute, it is no wonder that a style and degree of playing should be commonly heard on the organ that would not be tolerated on any other instrument. How many organists have been through a course of special training such as a pianist or violinist must undergo to gain even a hearing before an ordinarily critical audience?

It is an unhappy thing for the survival of the organ as a musical instrument that it has certain attributes that lend themselves to abuse more than any other means of producing ordered sound. It is probably the most difficult of all instruments to play a little so as to produce pretty effects. It lends itself to imitation more readily than any other, and is in consequence becoming more and more a machine for making poor simulations of every instrument in the orchestra. The last and most fortuitous use of an organ is as an imitative instrument, though this is the first and surest way in which it is abused. Imitations of trumpets, flutes, and clarinets on the organ are sufficiently close to be obvious, but imitations of voices and strings come periliously near the absurd. A conductor would not admit the best of them into his orchestra instead of the real instrument. All

these things are fit and valuable in their places, but merely degrade the organ when set in the front rank of its powers. The danger to a proper understanding of organ building and playing probably lies in the effects of such stops as Vox Humanas, Clarinets, and Oboes being looked on as substitutes for the several instruments, instead of merely their analogies. Now the fact is, the organ is not an imitative instrument. It can no more imitate an orchestra or orchestral instruments than an orchestra can imitate an organ. It justifies its existence by being something to itself apart from, and inimitable by anything else, no less than any other instrument for which musicians have written. The expense and trouble of its construction are repaid, not by succession of travesties of solo instruments and by the mechanical devices by which they are brought under control, but by the round and mellow tone of its Diapasons, the unity and polyphonious character of the Diapason superstructure, the weight of the pedal tone, the solidity and pervasiveness of the whole, and many other things, of which these, however, are the chief; but these things are becoming of less and less repute, and respect is had to valves and pistons and pressures and ear ticklings. Pure musical tone is no longer regarded, and instead we have raspiness and stridency to startle the dull appetite like musical cayenne pepper. Perhaps the organ, like the violin, has reached perfection, beyond which nothing is possible. Perhaps like the violins of Cremona, the voicing of the flue pipes could no farther go than Father Smith and Renatus Harris; and builders never at rest in search of improvement, have spent the energy of their hands and brains in bettering the machinery of that old-fashioned Father Smith, which really did not amount to much. If they only would have remembered to imitate merely his artistic qualities, like the successors of Stradivarius, we might have music mills that were really noble structures. and would need no more apology than the orchestra of Theodore Thomas. As it is, the organ seems to be degenerating as an instrument of music, while it advances as a ma chine and a maker of noise; so that its best votaries, hearing it decried as an inemotional engine by those who cannot be affected by its best and quite peculiar powers, cannot for conscience's sake defend it with the uncompromising vigor that the true organ deserves.

There are certain temperaments that are affected by the tone of the organ in a high and quite unique degree To such the organ would have a musical value that nothing could replace, if there were no solo stops and no electric attachments. When they are approached by people superior to everything but a *Gotterdammerung* orchestra or the piano technics of an intense foreign gentleman, the strength of whose fingers, like Samson's, lies in his hair, they console themselves by reflecting that Bach, Handel, and Mendelssohn wrote for the organ and to play chiefly on it. There is no doubt that they had real musical temperaments, however they may have misapplied them. The temperament that is affected by the organ in an emotional degree is probably rarer than that similarly affected by any other instrument; so the false organ building flourishes, while the true fades for want of appreciation. And it may be, after all, that the organ is essentially a musician's instrument, and caviar to the general; that its true and most valuable voice can only be heard by the elect and learned.

Lest these general remarks should be taken too particularly, it may be well to observe that all organs and their players have not been attacked by such strictures as have been made or implied. If any feel hurt by them, it is hoped that the reminder of principles obvious enough when pointed out, may more than make up to them for a temporary injury to their pride.

When organ building is looked on again not merely as an art, but as a fine art; when the first and best attention of builders who are real musicians is paid to the voicing of the pipes, the general quality and balance of tone, the acoustics of building and the scale of the whole instrument in relation to it; when the screams of the mixtures are subdued and the sweetness of the soft stops is looked to before the piercing quality of the loud ones; we may hope for the organ a place in musical art unique as the violin, important as the piano. And a new literature for it will appear—when a man shall rise great enough to write it.—H. A. CAPARN.

THE ART OF REGISTRATION.

An organist seated before the keyboard to some extent resembles the artist who holds his palette in his left hand. Here are many colors to choose from. Which combinations will produce the desired effect? There are the diapason, string, wood and reed families. What can surpass the fine, rich, honest sonorousness of the diapason stops when united for full effects? And then the strings, with their characteristic color. These combined on the different manuals seem so pure and yet so penetrating. The mellow wood or flute stops—how different they are from the metal stops! Finally the characteristic reeds with their ear-arresting quality. What beautiful sounds lie here!

In the hands of an undiscriminating, ignorant, or tasteless player, these rich resources may be rendered hideous and repelling. Careful study and close observation may cause the organist to make combinations which are safe and sane, and therefore not offensive to good taste.

But the feeling for "color"—as is the case in the art of painting—is born, not made. An organist can sit before a thirty stop, three manuel instrument hours a day for years, without exhausting its possible combinations. Of course, many of these would be inartistic or disagreeable, but it would rest with him to learn what to unite.

The organ has frequently been compared to an orchestra, but the comparison is not just to either side. While many names of organ stops are taken from orchestral instruments, yet the similarity, in a number of instances, ends with the name. It is of course radically impossible to obtain a true string effect by means of a column of air passing through a metal tube, yet the names of the entire family of stringed instruments (including a number now obsolete), are freely used by organ builders in their nomenclature of stops. Then, in regard to what is generally termed "tone color," an effect with an oboe, a clarinet, or a horn may be desired by the orchestral composer. He writes in such a manner that the special instrument called for is emphasized, but in only one note at a time. But the organist who has his oboe stop out can only make a single note prominent by playing it on a separate manual from that containing the other parts. The stop affects all other keys on the same manual. With the orchestra a variety of kaleidoscopic color effects may continually go on by means of instruments being added or dropped, but the organist cannot do this continually without injuring the flow of the music; so he must depend more upon a set registration.

He is therefore necessarily more limited in obtaining variety of color than is the orchestral conductor, and sometimes must employ stops which he would prefer to omit. Indeed, an organist is apt to have his judgment calloused by the difficulty in obtaining a variety of registration, and thus become accustomed to retaining one or more stops when he feels that they should be discontinued. The reeds are liable to be the sufferers in this respect. Their effectiveness is frequently abused by those who consider that they should employ them at every opportunity.

The present writer here takes advantage of his position to give a few points of advice on registration to those who might have occasion to profit by them:

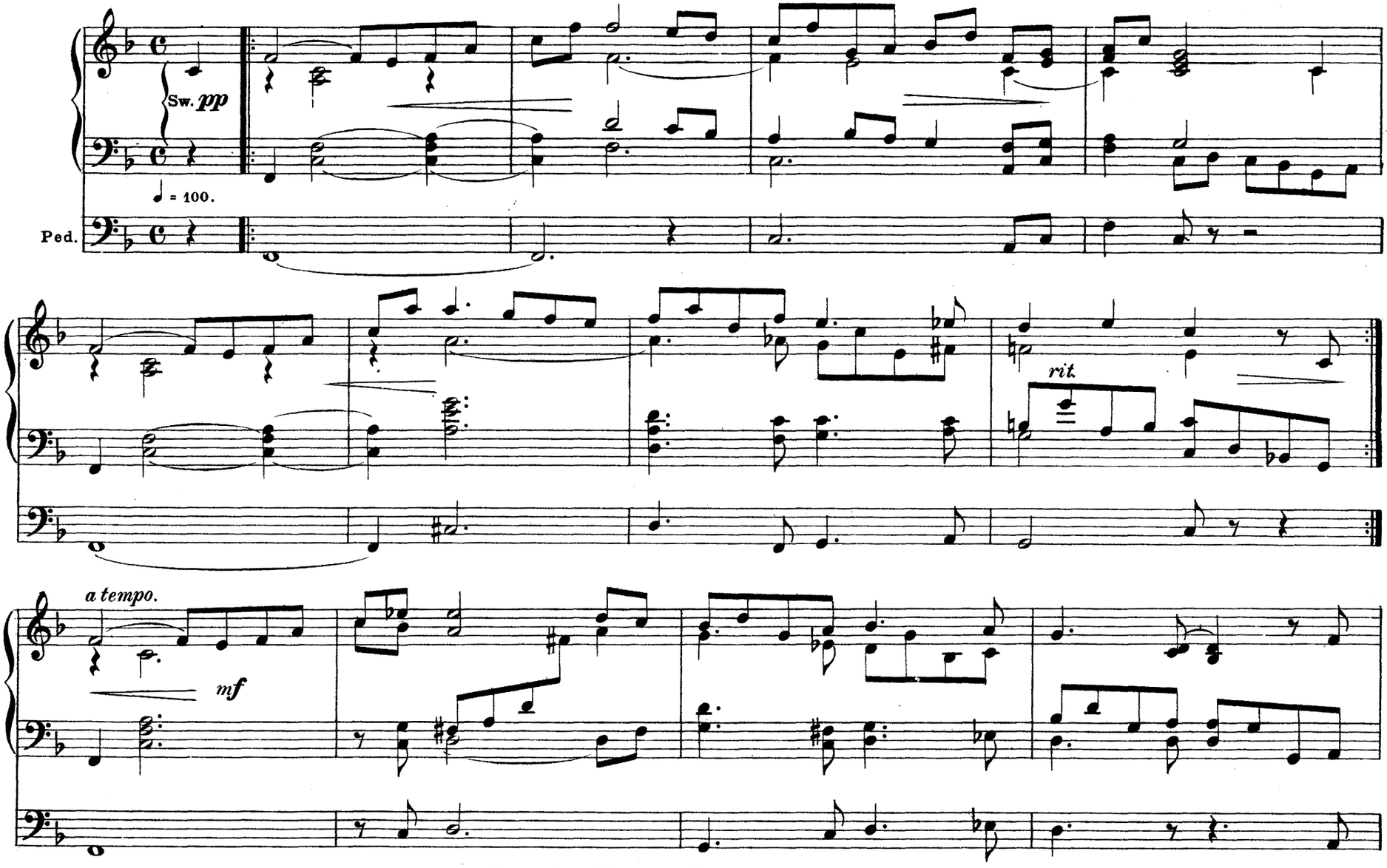
Be sparing of reeds; use the *tremolando* very seldom, and then only for some special effect; do not use much sixteen foot stops for ordinary playing—it makes the tone sound "thick;" be careful of the use of two and four stops; some may say that the organ sounds like "a box of whistles;" good, eight foot tone, besprinkled with four foot is what is reliable; combine diapasons, strings and woods with care and discrimination; avoid extravagances; do not play too loud for the choir.

A few salient features in his work such as these as a basis, with occasional legitimate departures, may give an organist a reputation as being skilful and tasteful in registration.—E. R. KROGER, *in The Etude.*

TRÄUMEREI AND ROMANZE.

1558191

R. SCHUMANN.
Arr. by E.L.A.



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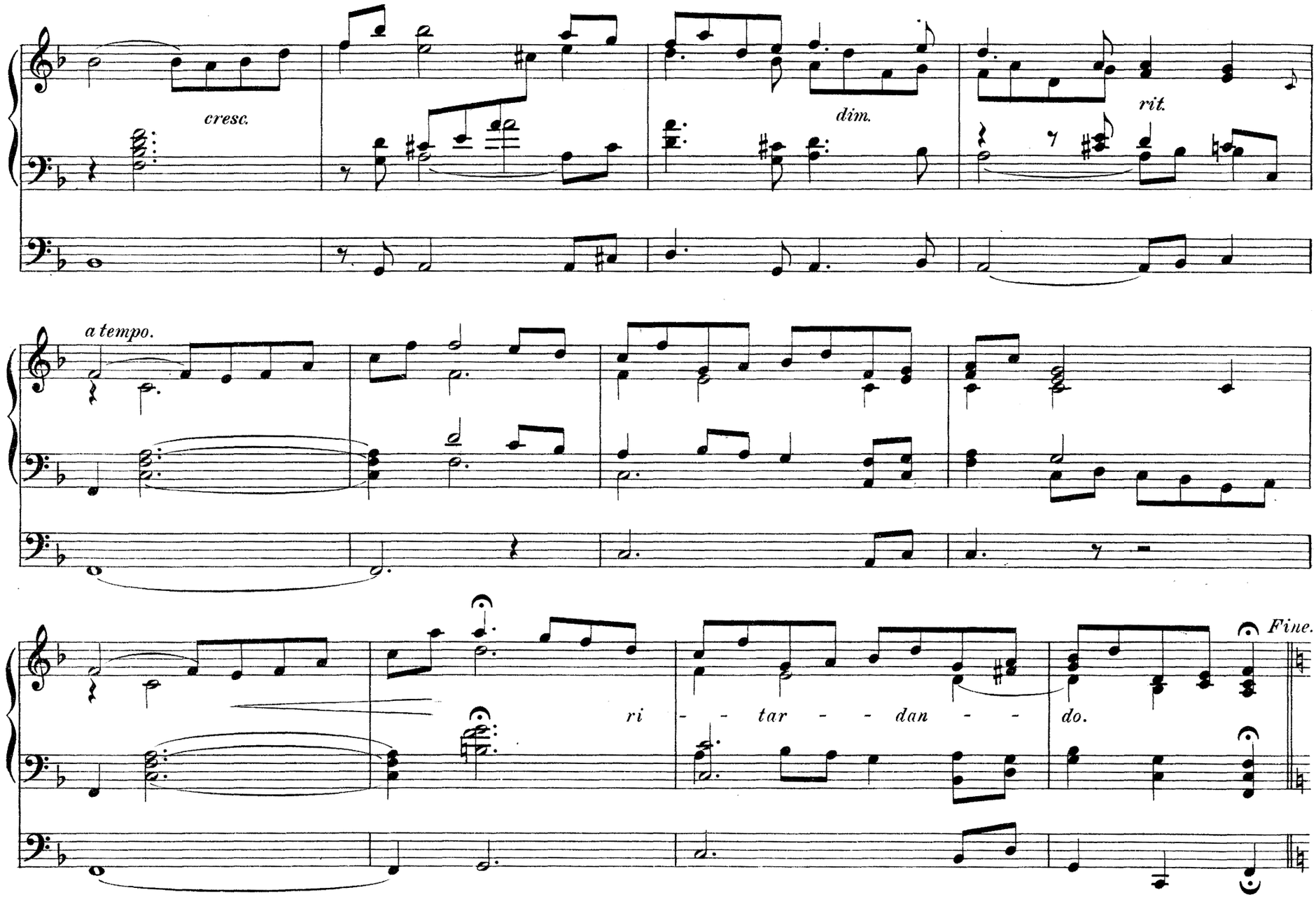
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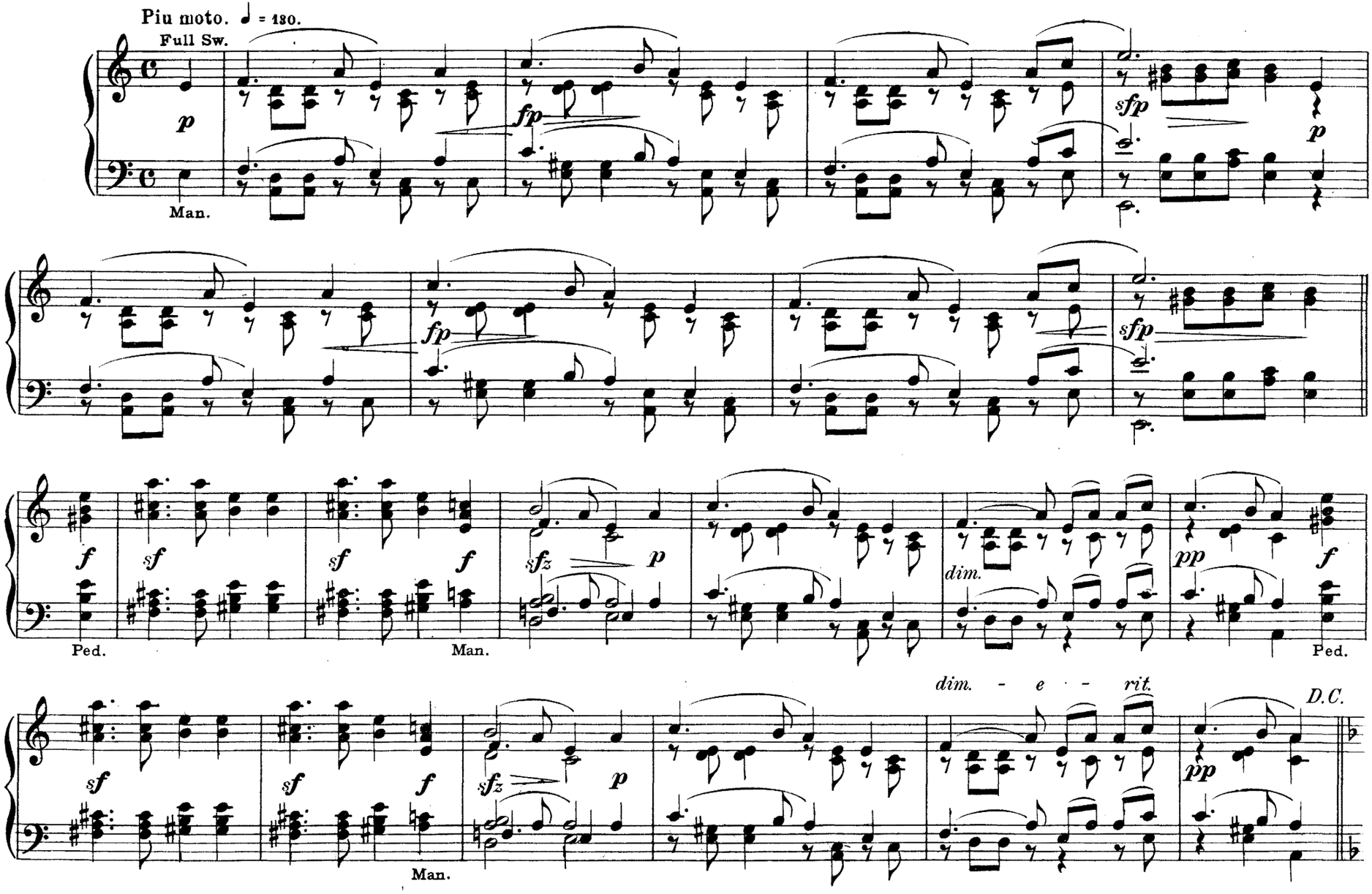
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Sw. Full.
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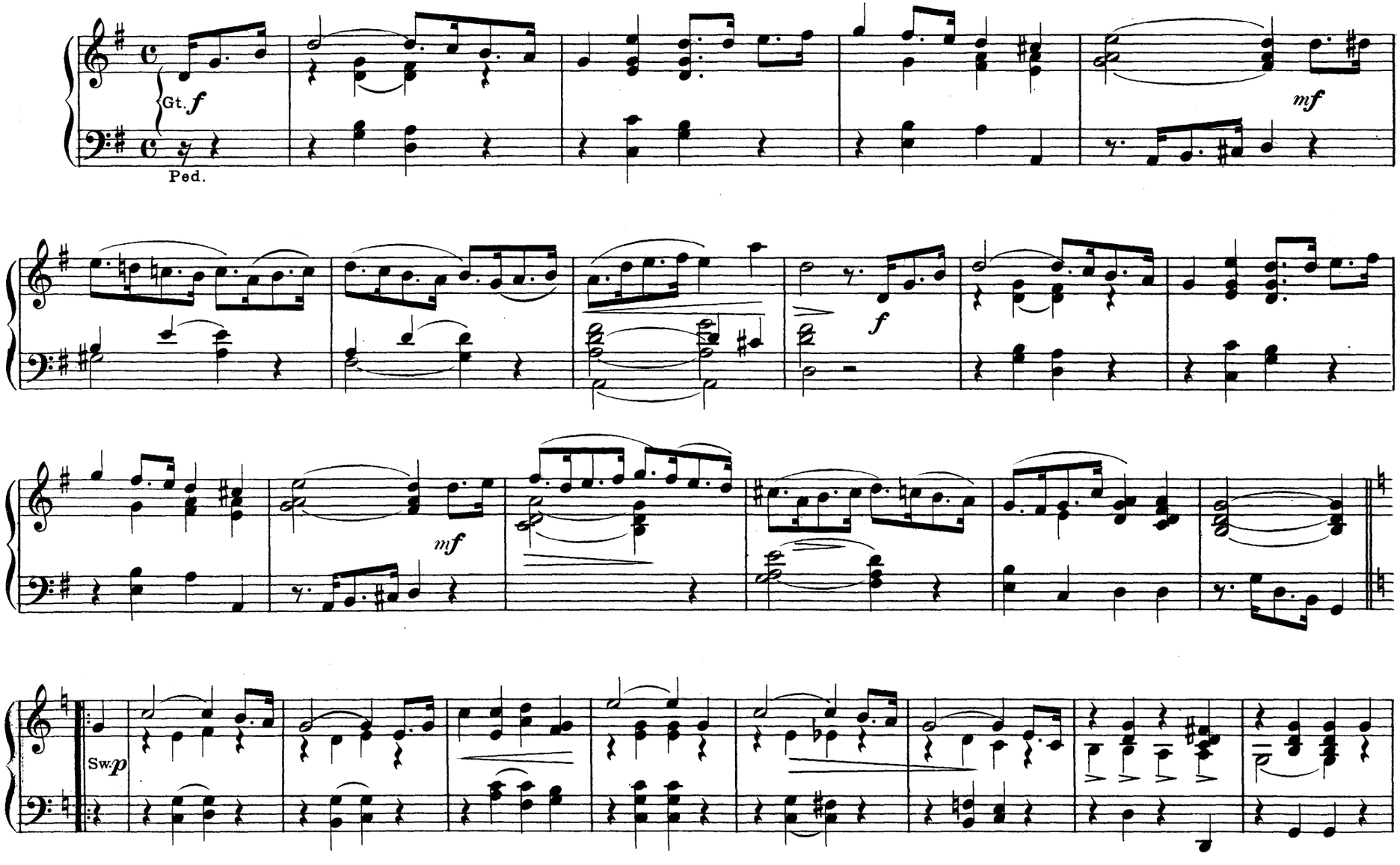
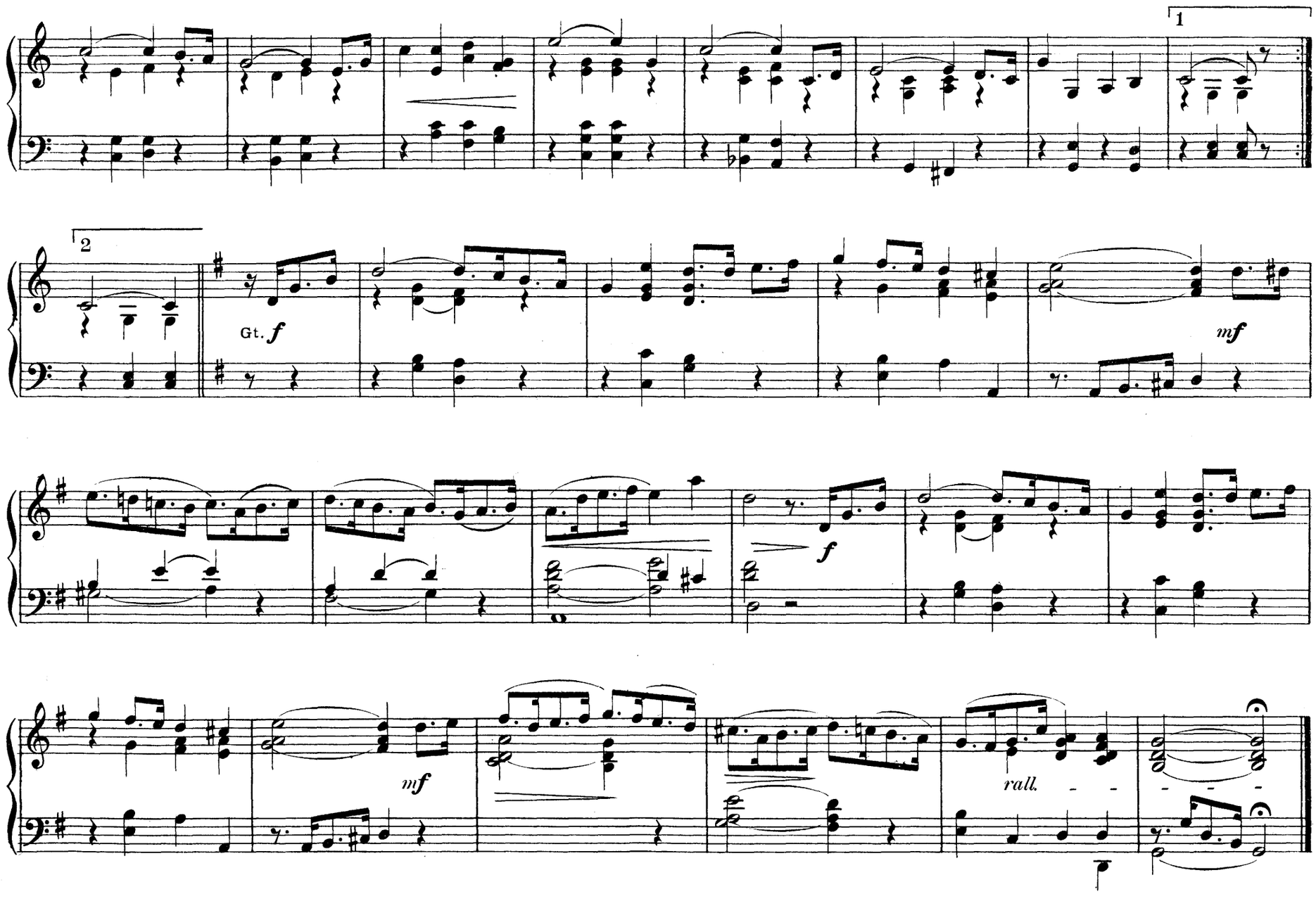
EASTER JOY.

ALFRED PHILLIP.




1
2
Gt. f
mf
f
mf
rall.

Gt. Diapasons.
Sw. Soft 8' and 4'
Ped. Bourdon.

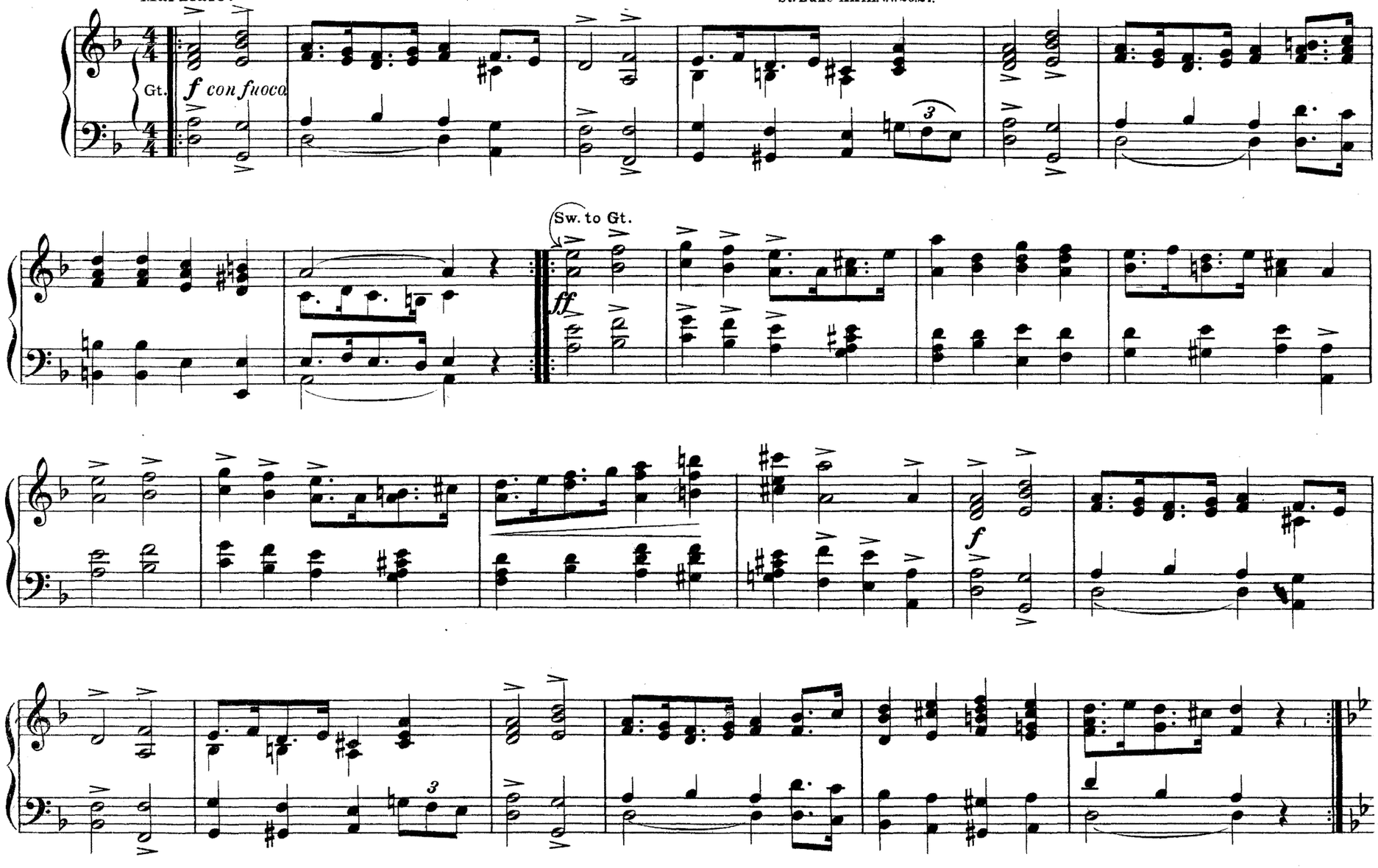
THE ROAD TO CALVARY.

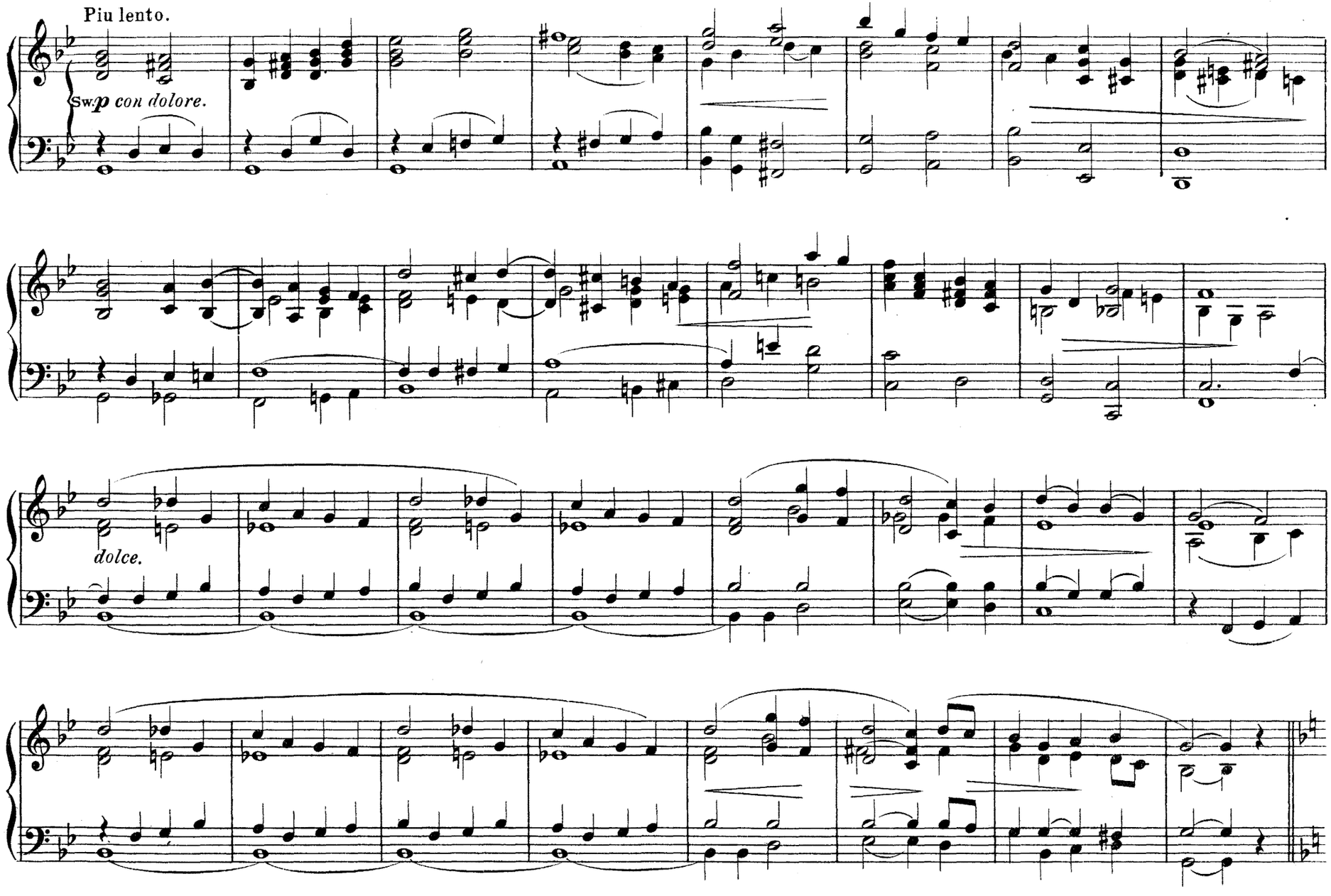
Prelude for Good Fridays.

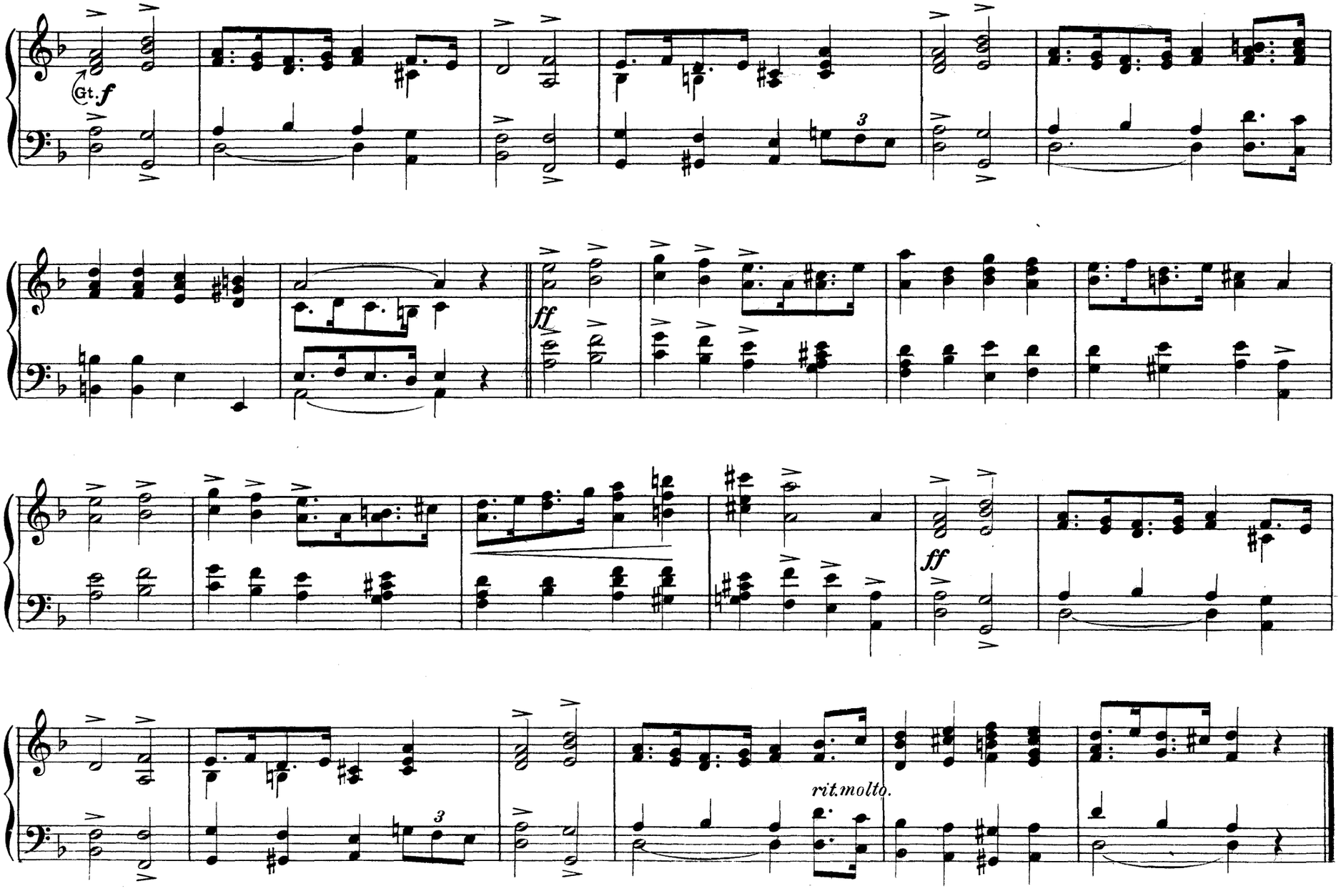
{ And they led Him away. . . . .
And there followed Him a great company of people, and of women,
which also bewailed and lamented Him. St. Luke XXIII. v.v. 26.27.

ARTHUR E. GODFREY.

Marziale.




Piu lento.
Sw. p con dolore.
dolce.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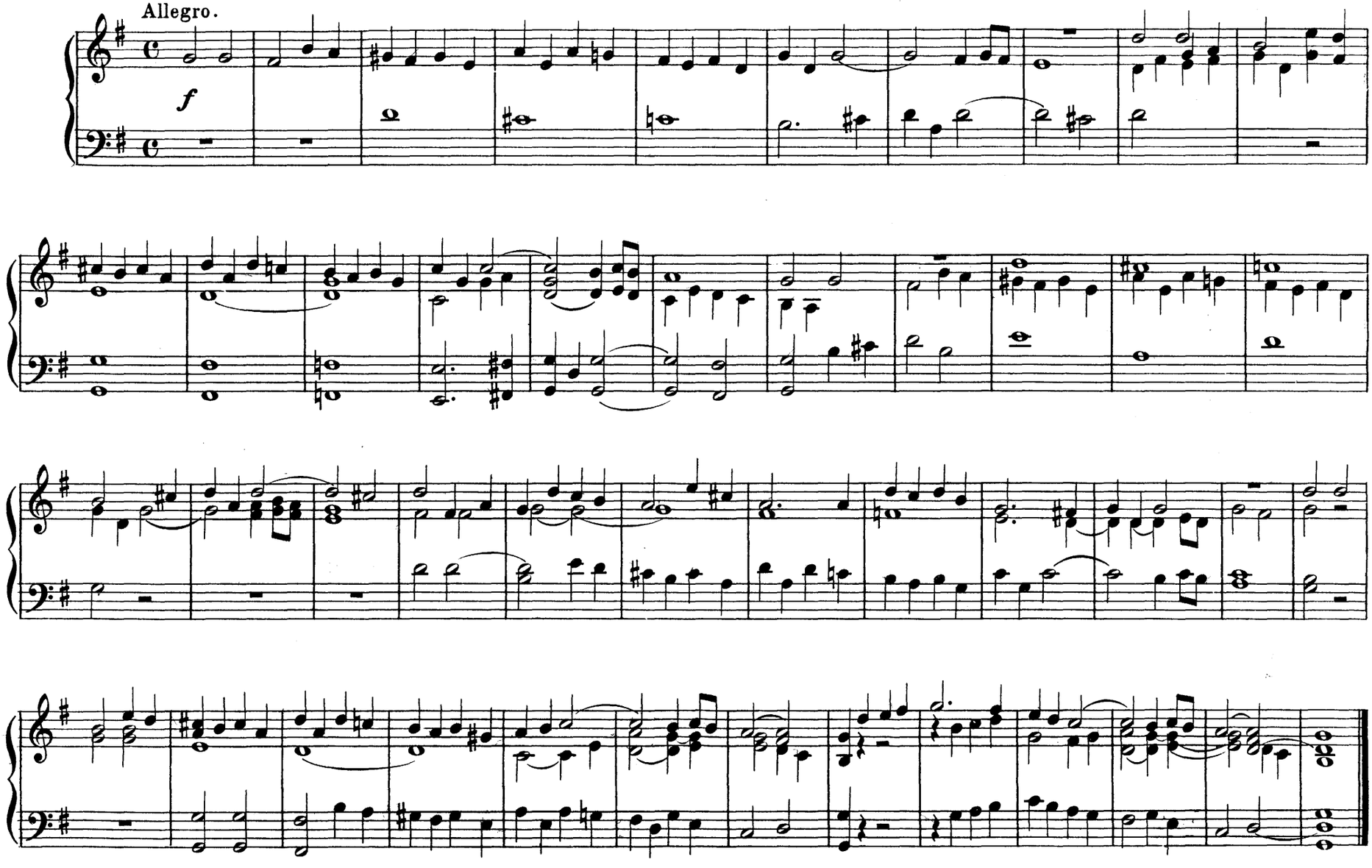
PROPTER MAGNAM.

Gt. Diapasons.

PERGOLESI.

Allegro.

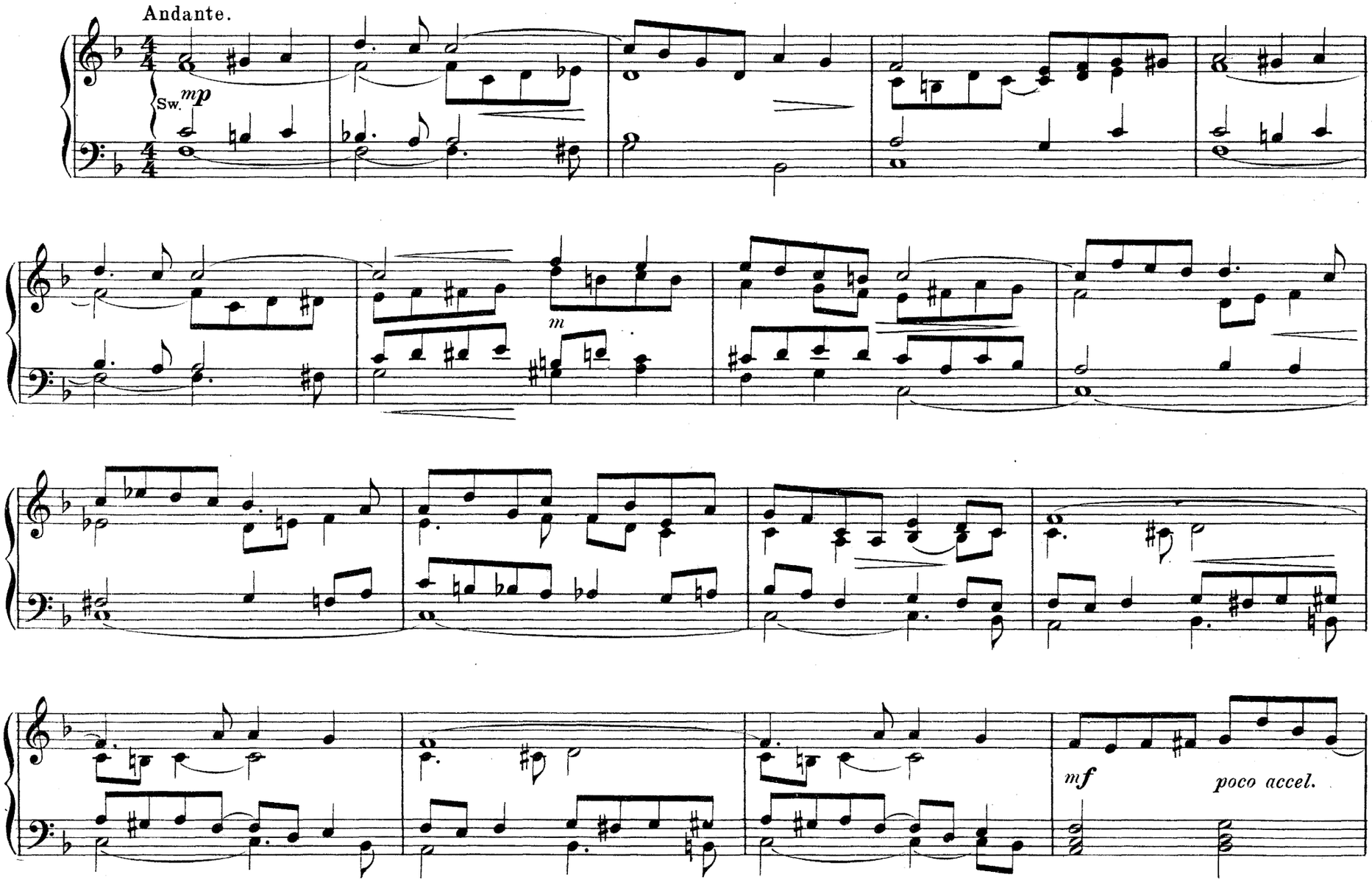
f



Sw. Stopped Dia., Bourdon, & Flageolet.
Ped. Bourdon.

IN GREEN PASTURES.

IRA B. WILSON.



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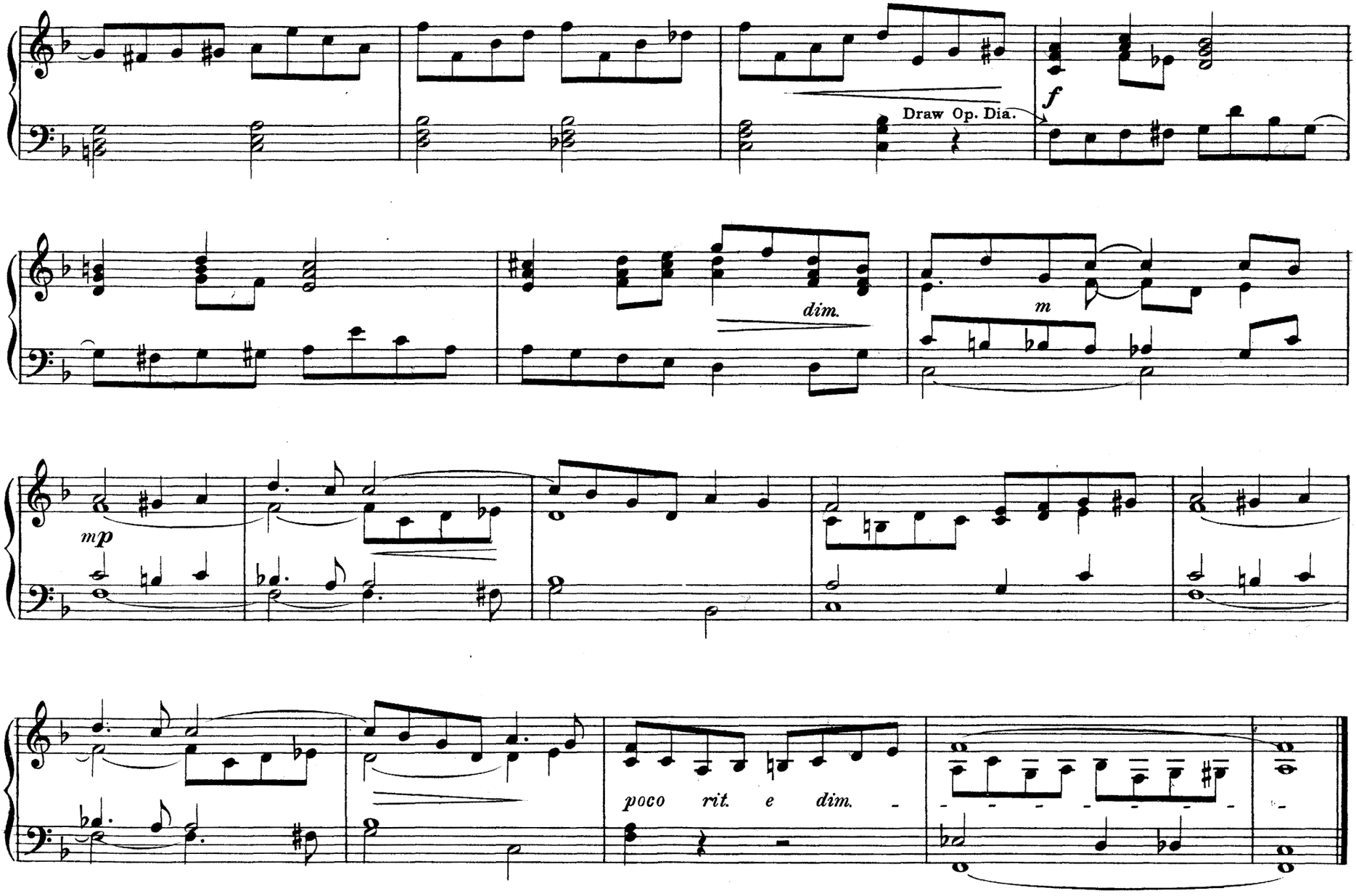
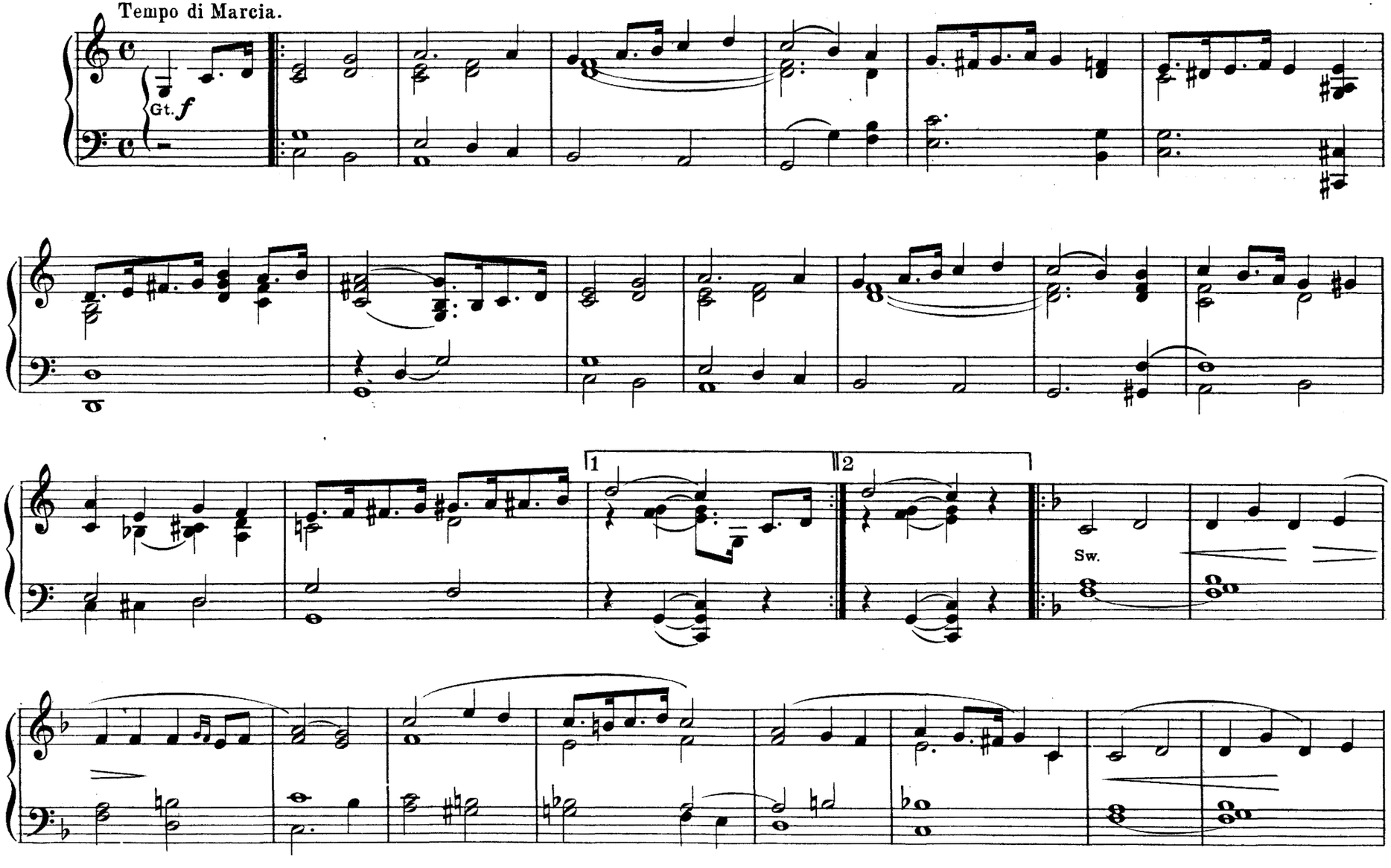

Draw Op. Dia.
f
dim.
m
mp
poco rit. e dim.

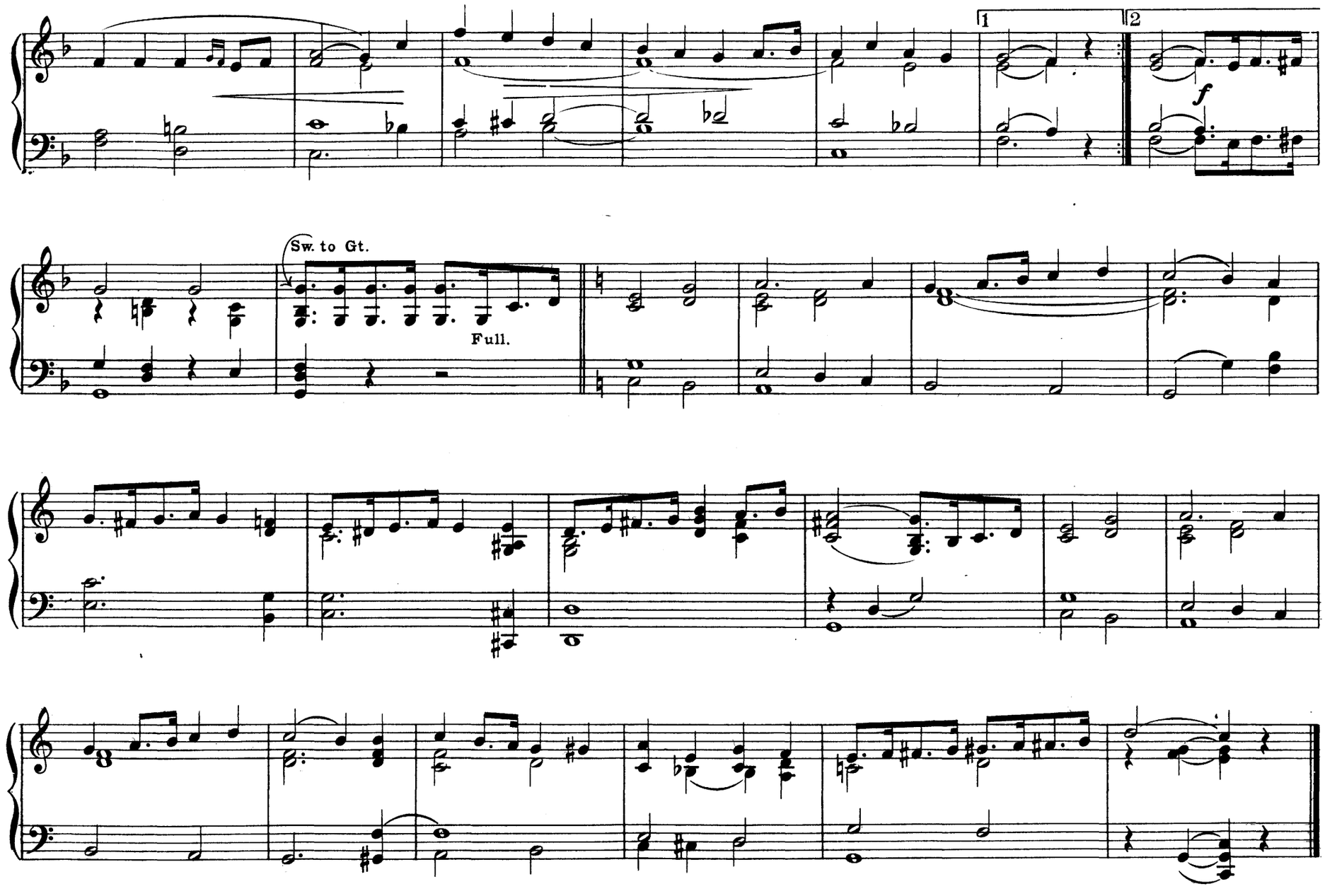
Full Organ.

PALM BRANCHES.

FRANK MOIR.

Tempo di Marcia.



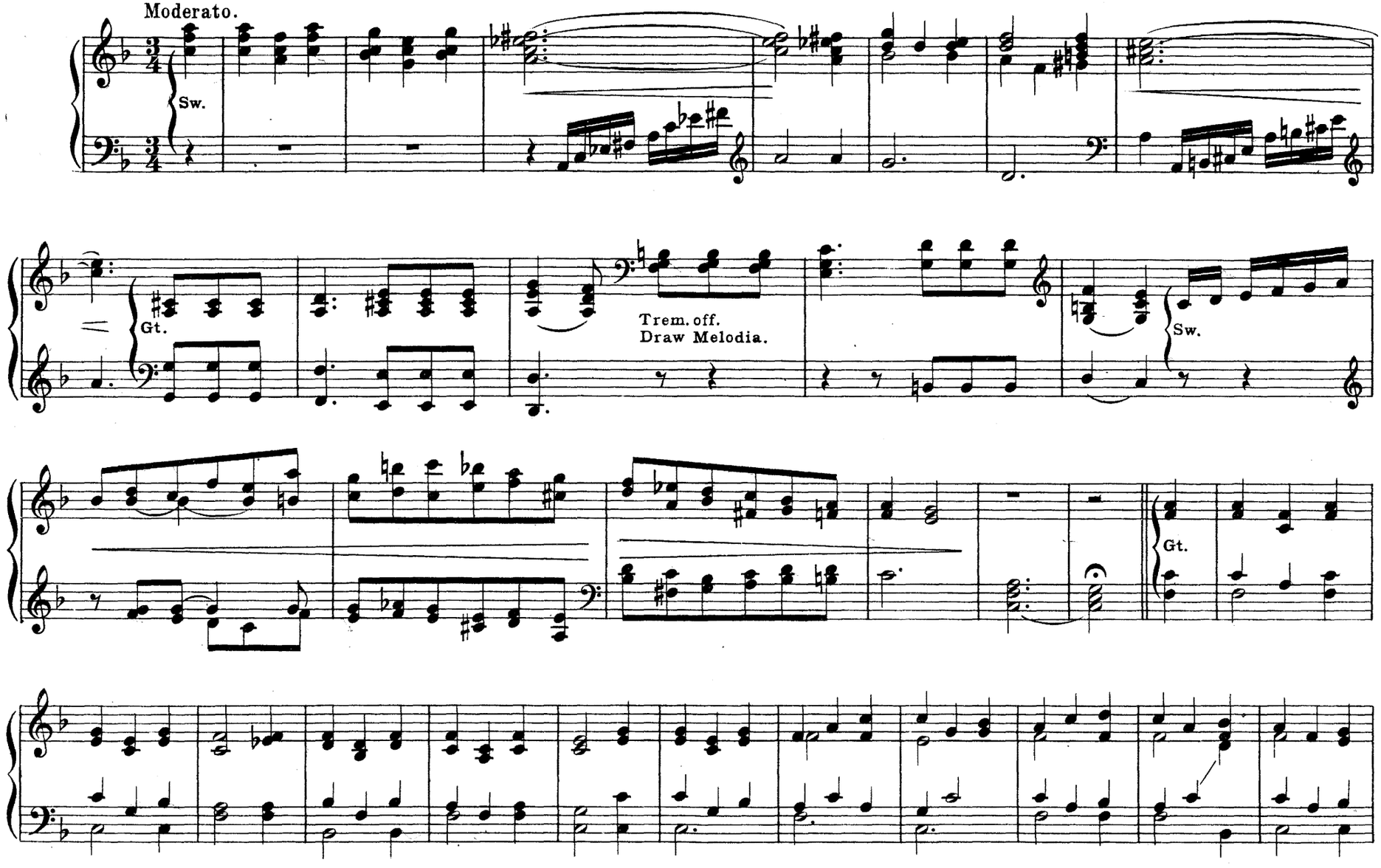

1
2
f
Sw. to Gt.
Full.

Gt. Stopped Dia., Dul. and Flute.
Sw. Salicional and Tremulant.
Ped. Bourdon.

DENNIS.

Hymn Voluntary.

E. L. ASHFORD.



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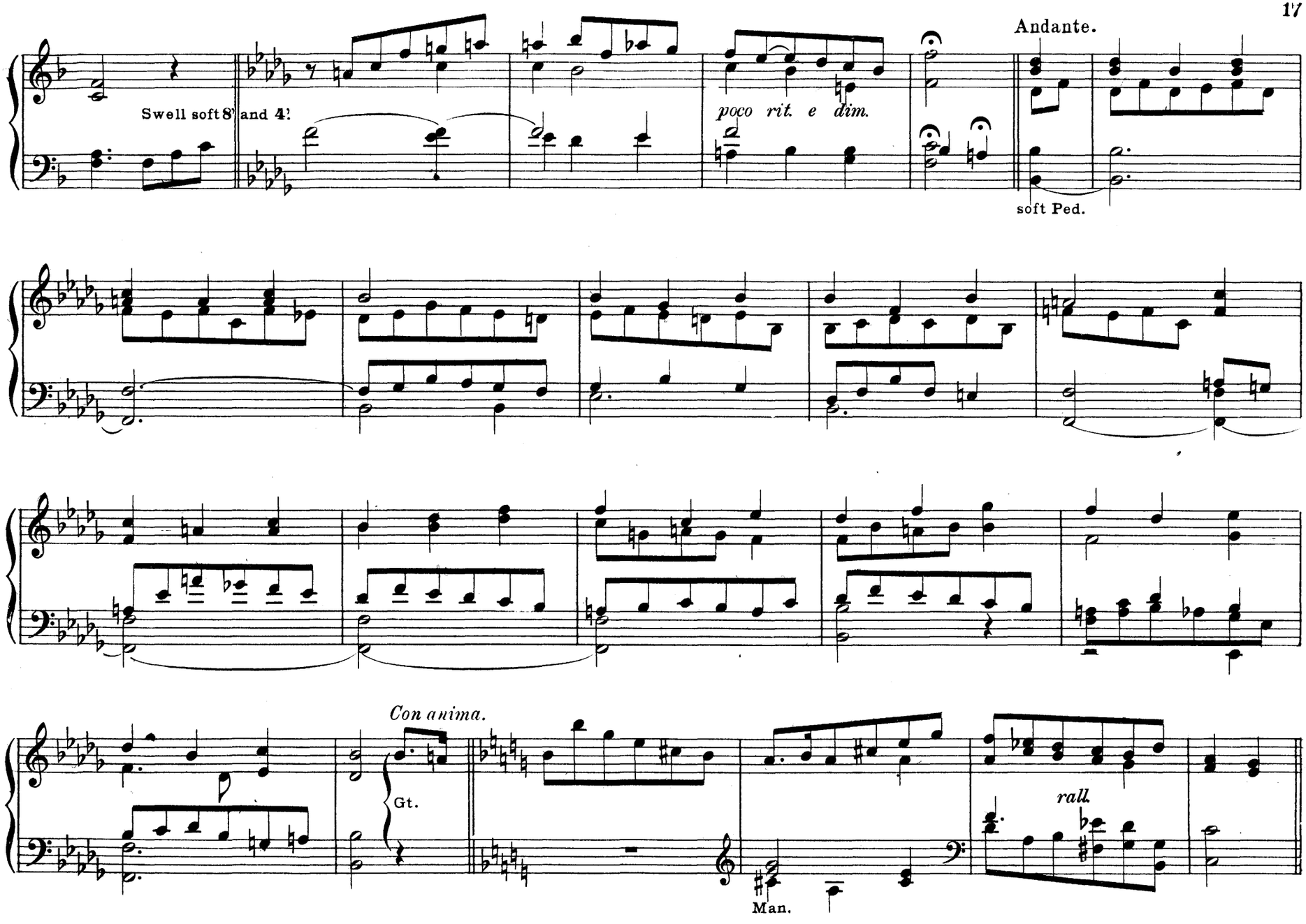
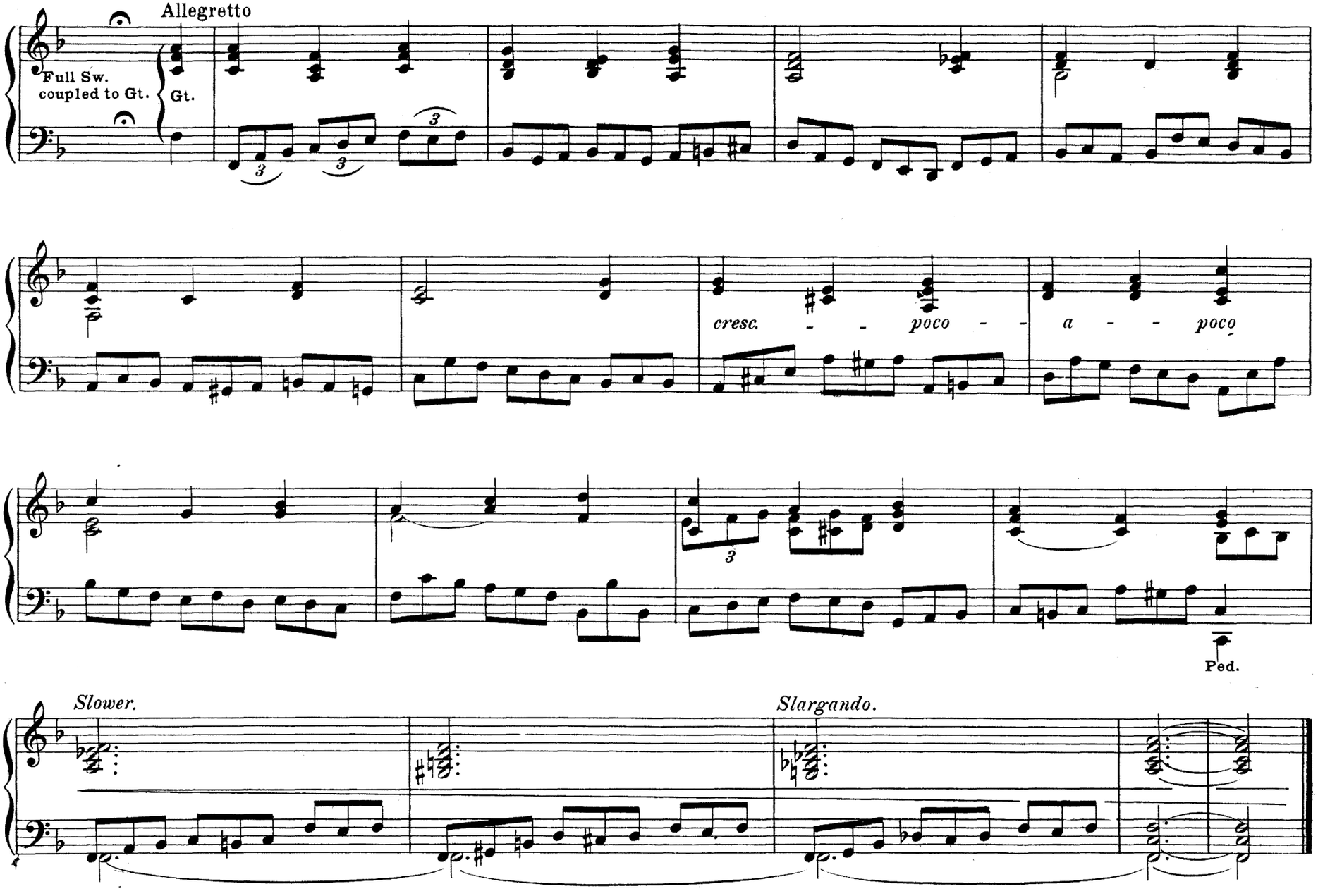
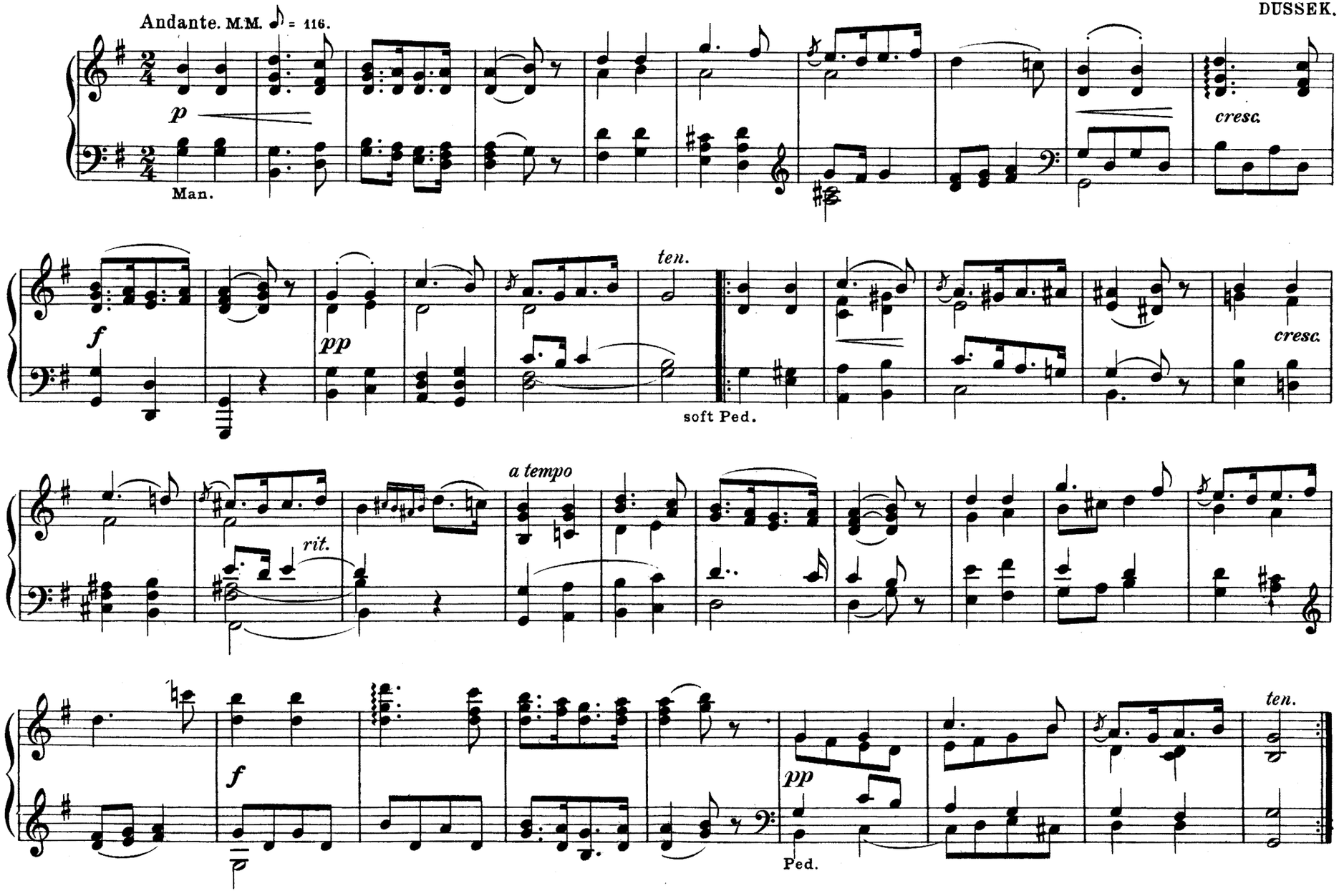

Swell soft 8' and 4'.
poco rit. e dim.
Andante.
soft Ped.
Con anima.
Gt.
Man.
rall.


Allegretto
Full Sw.
coupled to Gt.
Gt.
cresc.
poco
a
poco
Ped.
Slower.
Slargando.

SLOW MOVEMENT.

Full Swell.

DUSSEK.

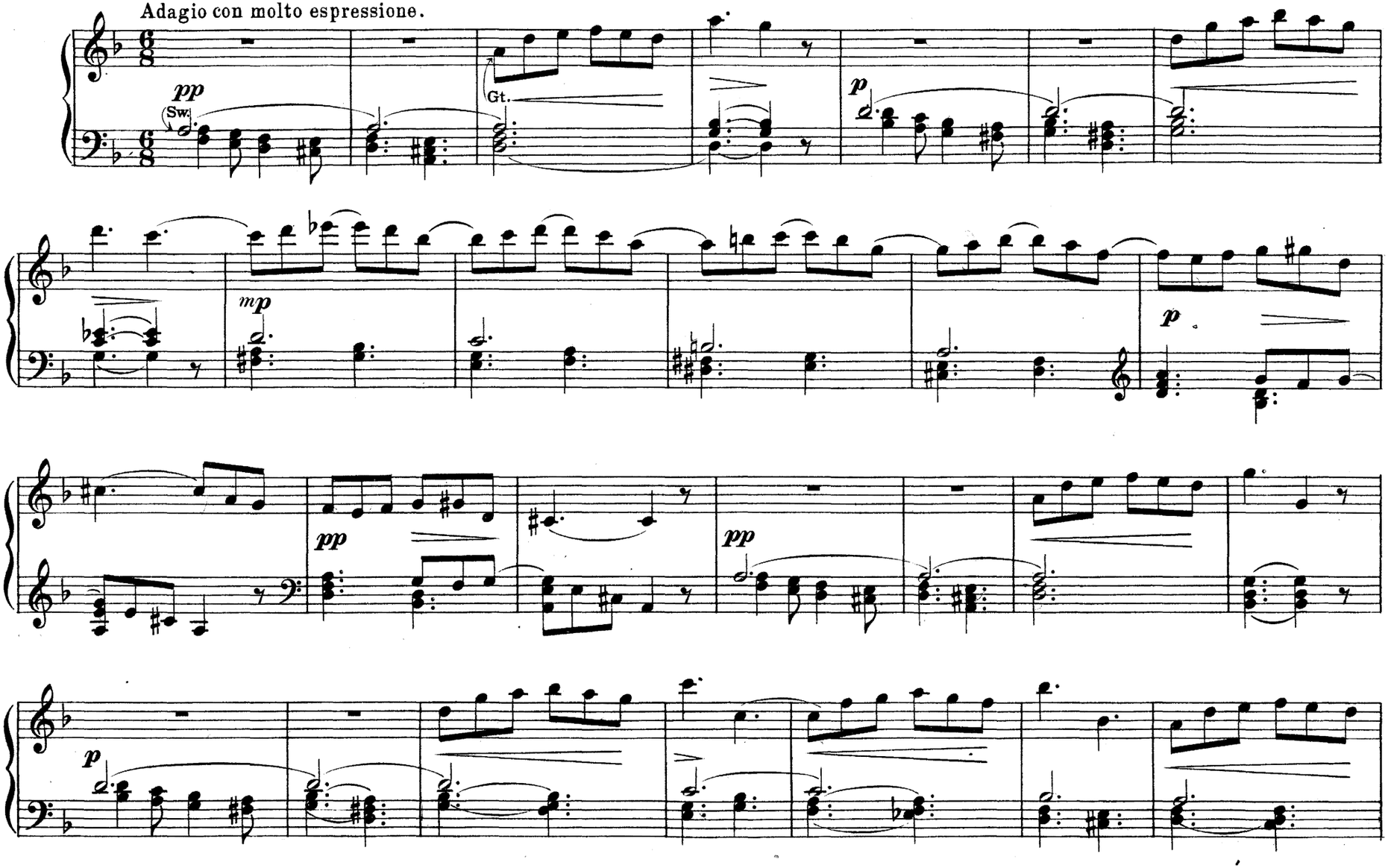


Gt. Flute d'Amour.
Sw. Vox Celeste.
Ped. Lieblich Gedacht.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

E. S. LORENZ.

Adagio con molto espressione.



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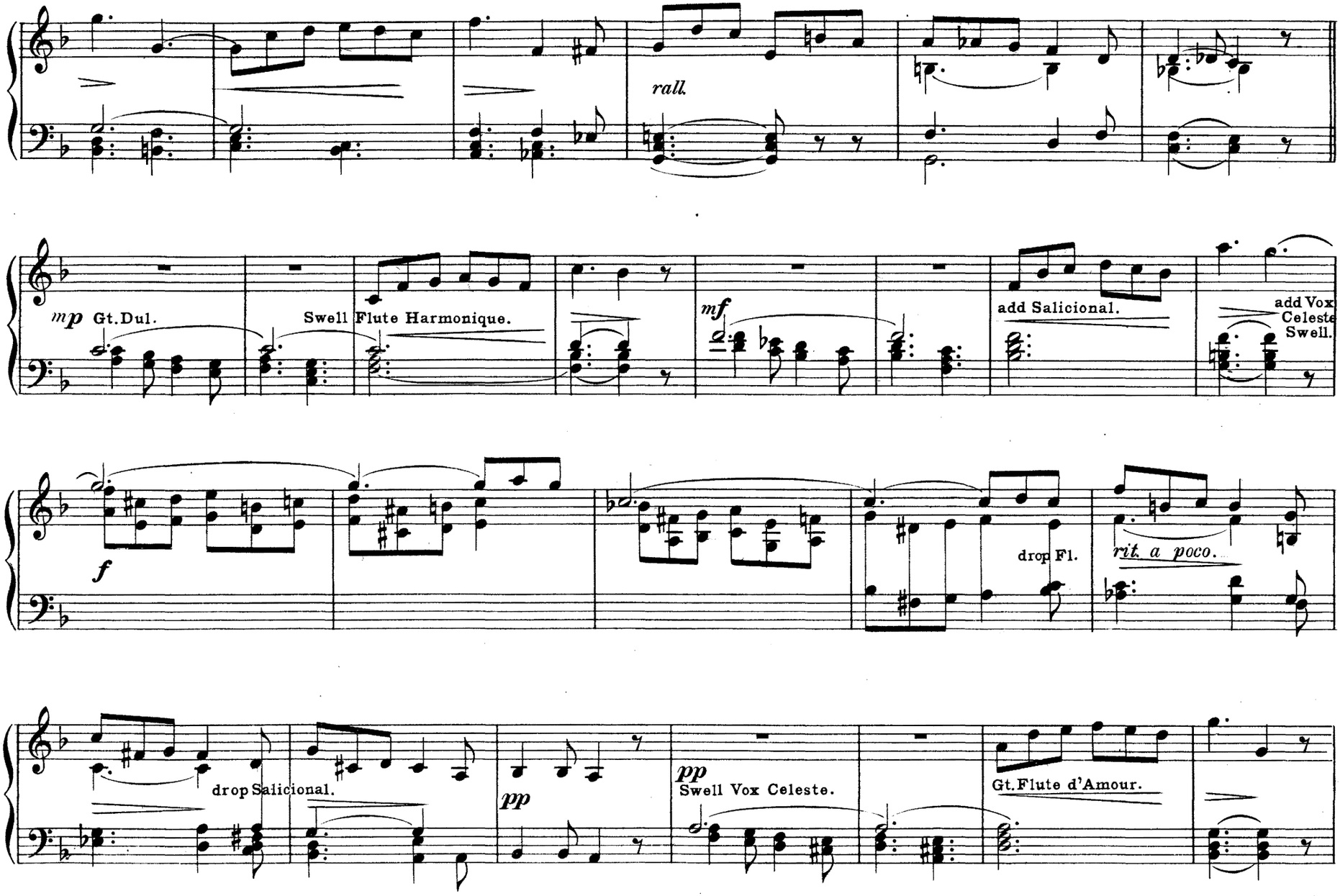
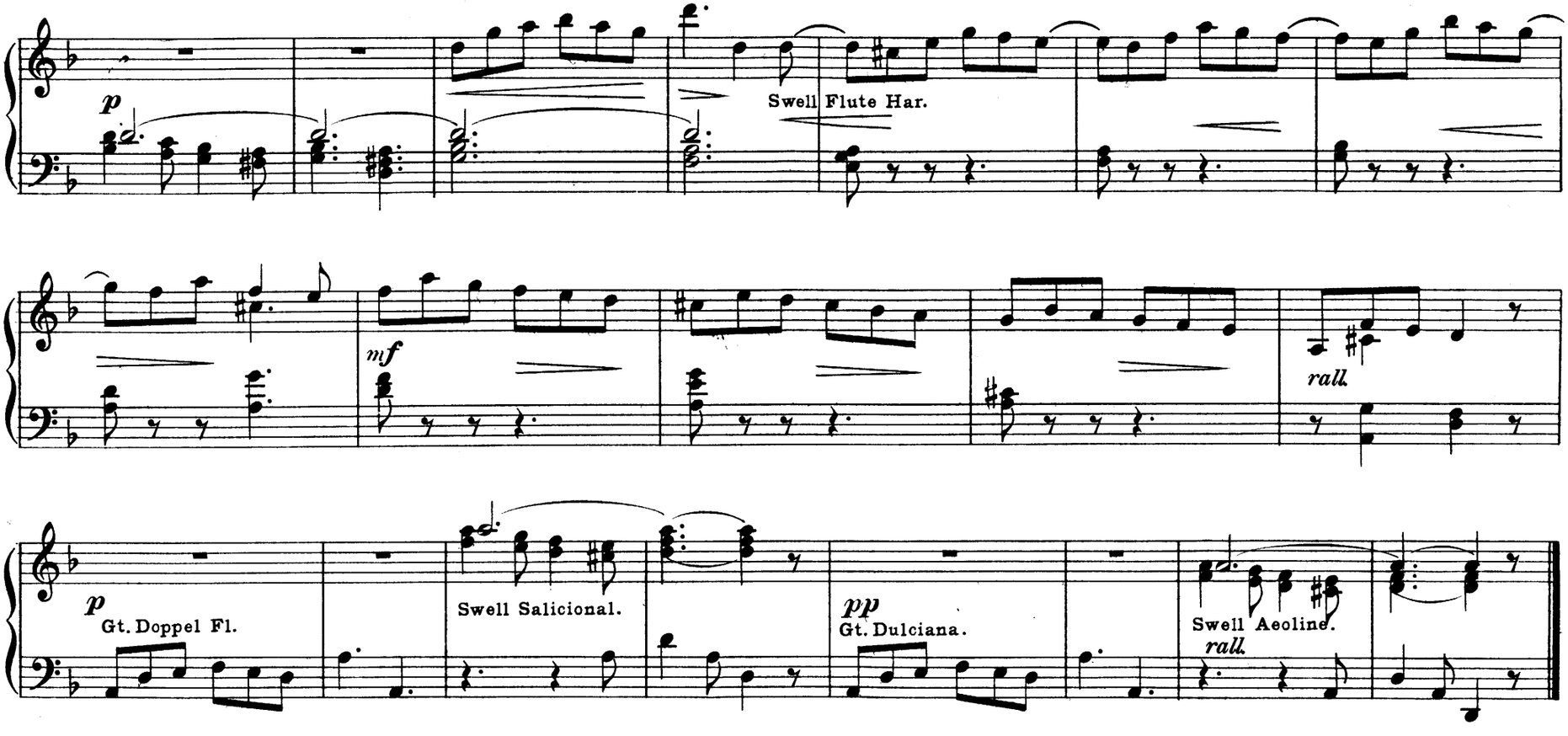
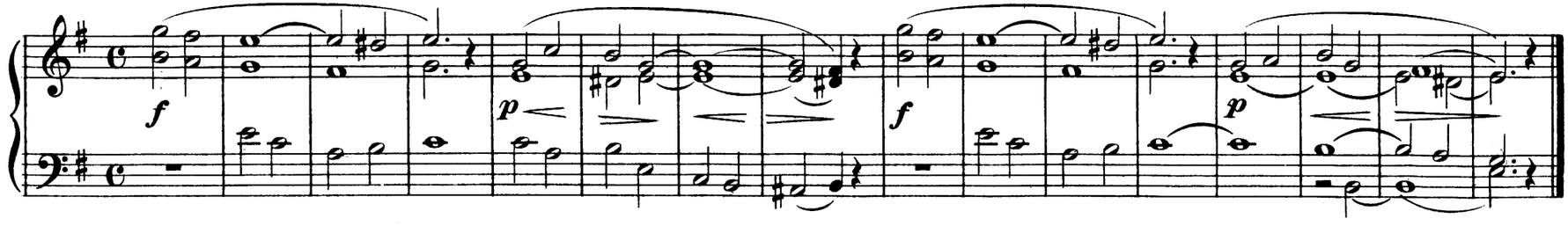

rall.
mp Gt. Dul.
Swell Flute Harmonique.
mf
add Salicional.
add Vox Celeste Swell.
f
drop Fl.
rit. a poco.
drop Salicional.
pp
pp
Swell Vox Celeste.
Gt. Flute d'Amour.



PRELUDE.

Andante.

J. LEYBACH.

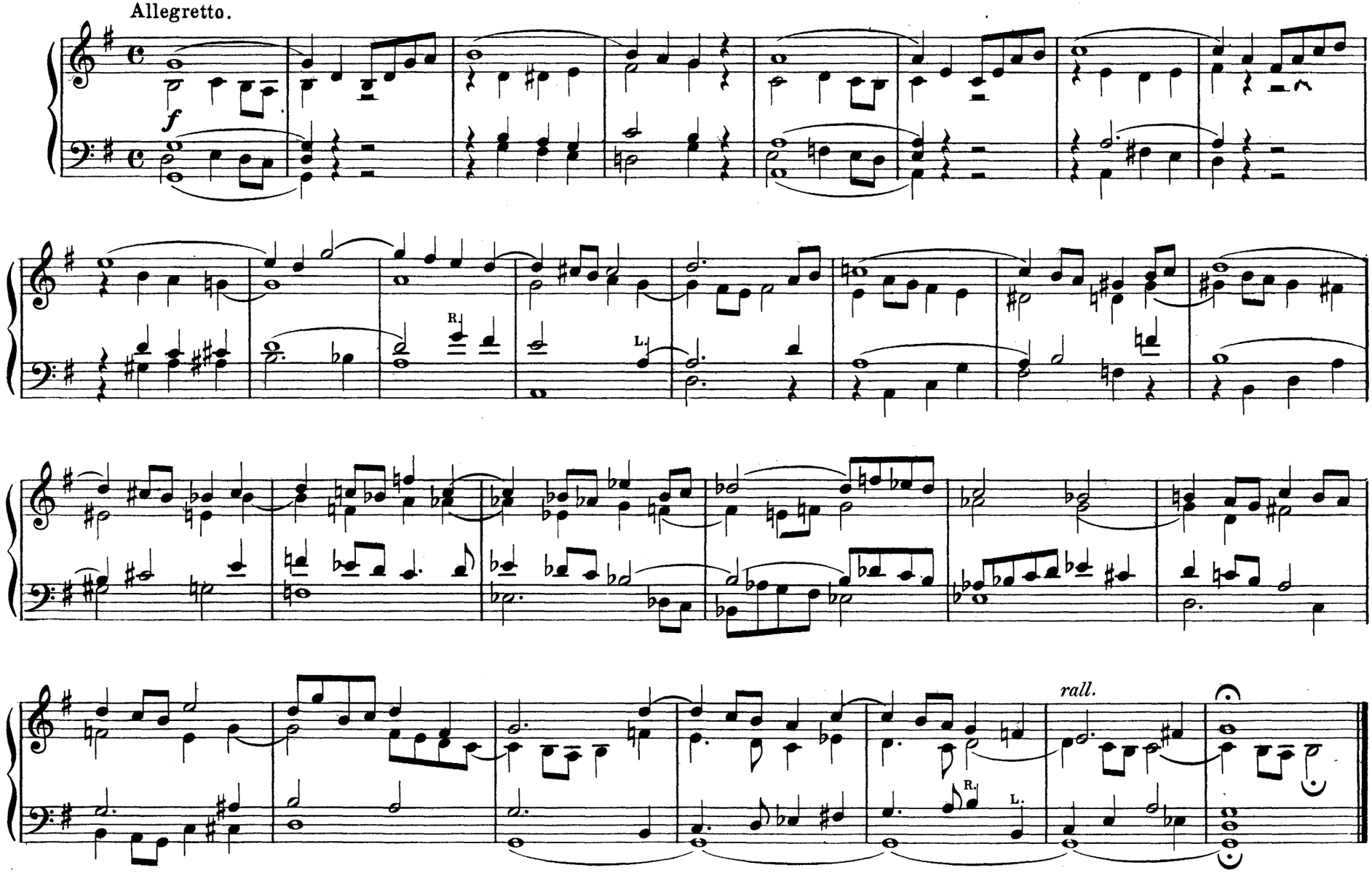


OFFERTORIO.

Gt. Full to 12th.
Ped. Bourdon, coupled to Gt.

AUG. REINHARD.

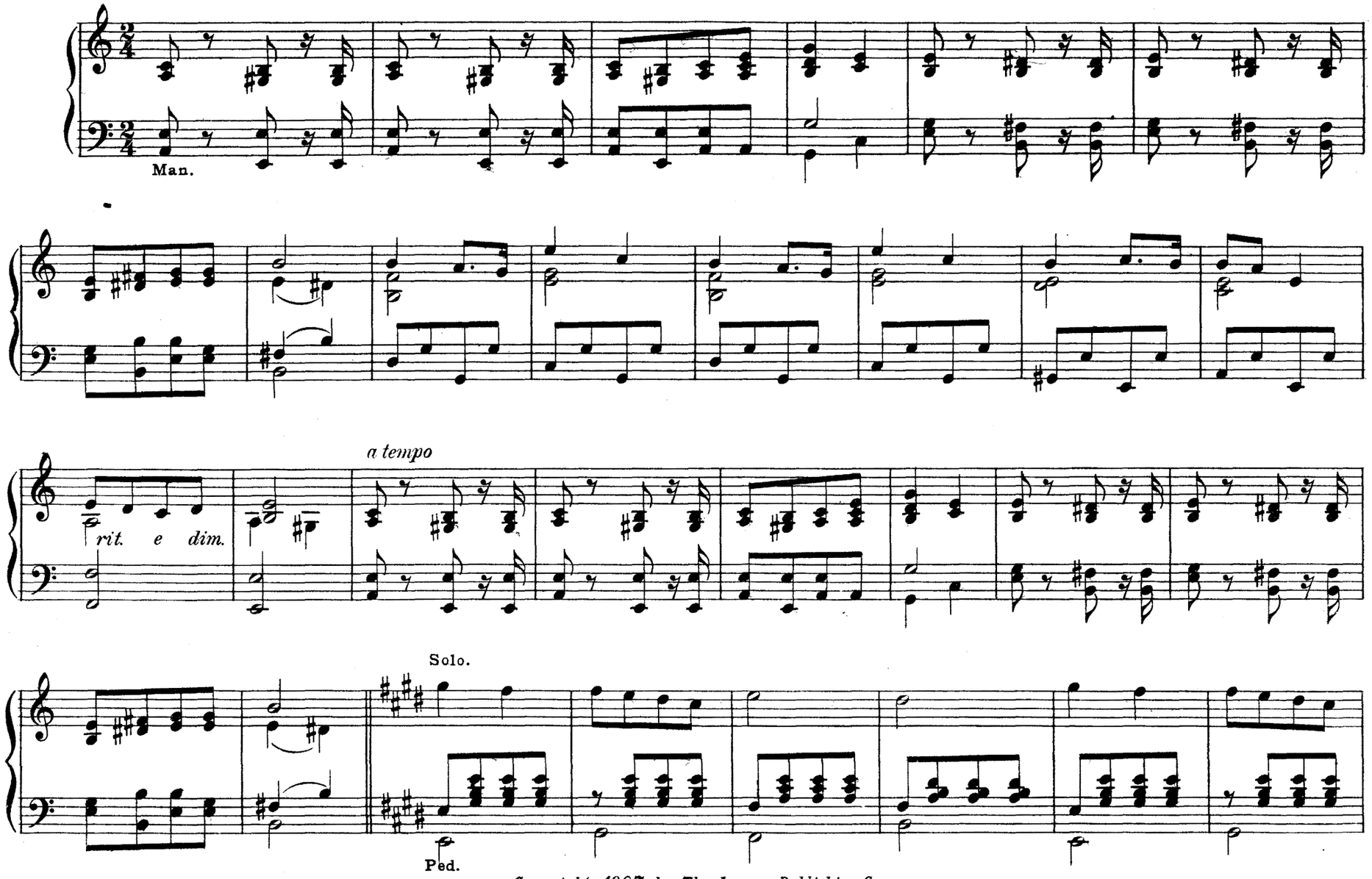
Allegretto.



SKETCH.

Sw. Soft 8, Bourdon & Violine.

E.L. ASHFORD.



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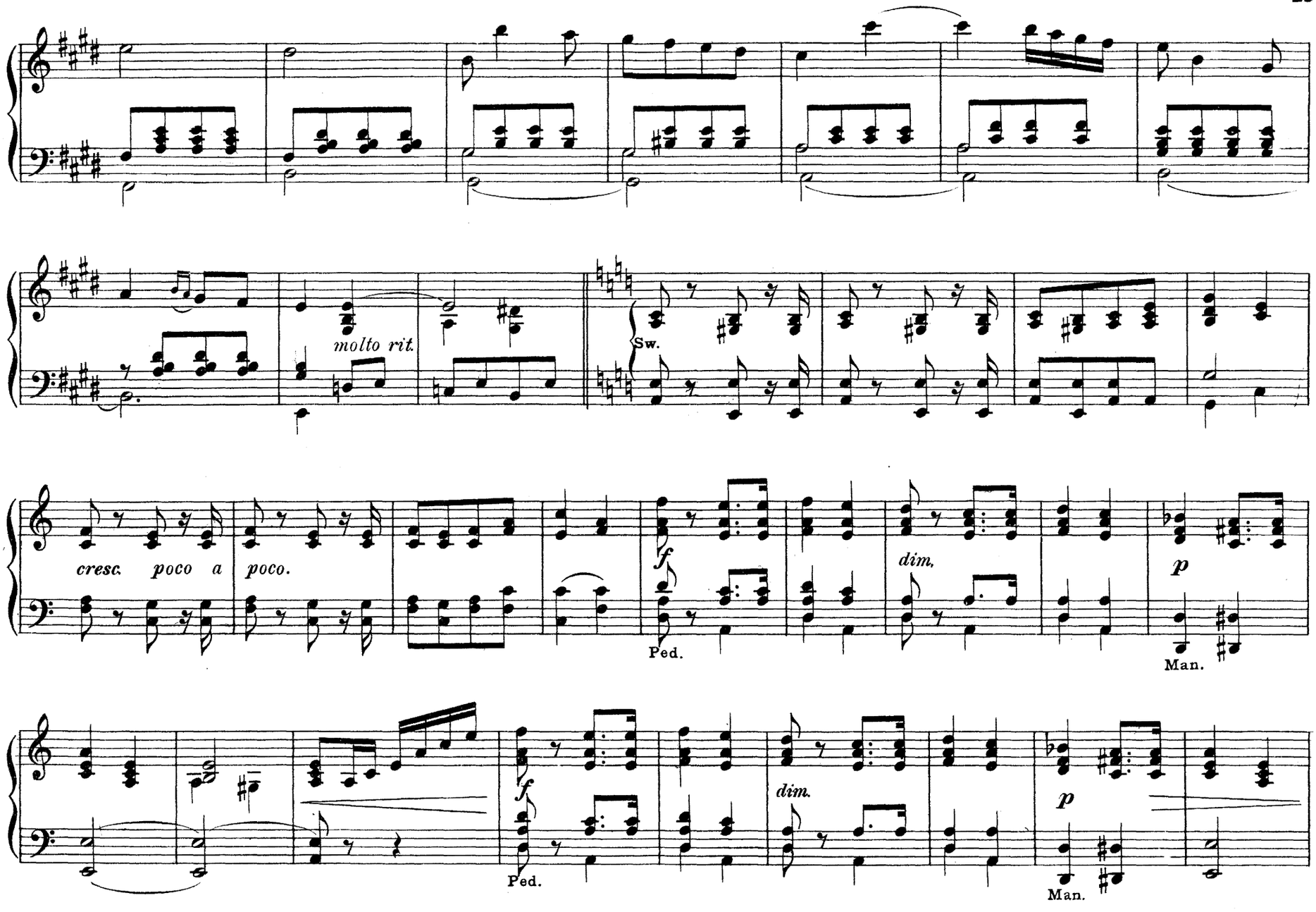
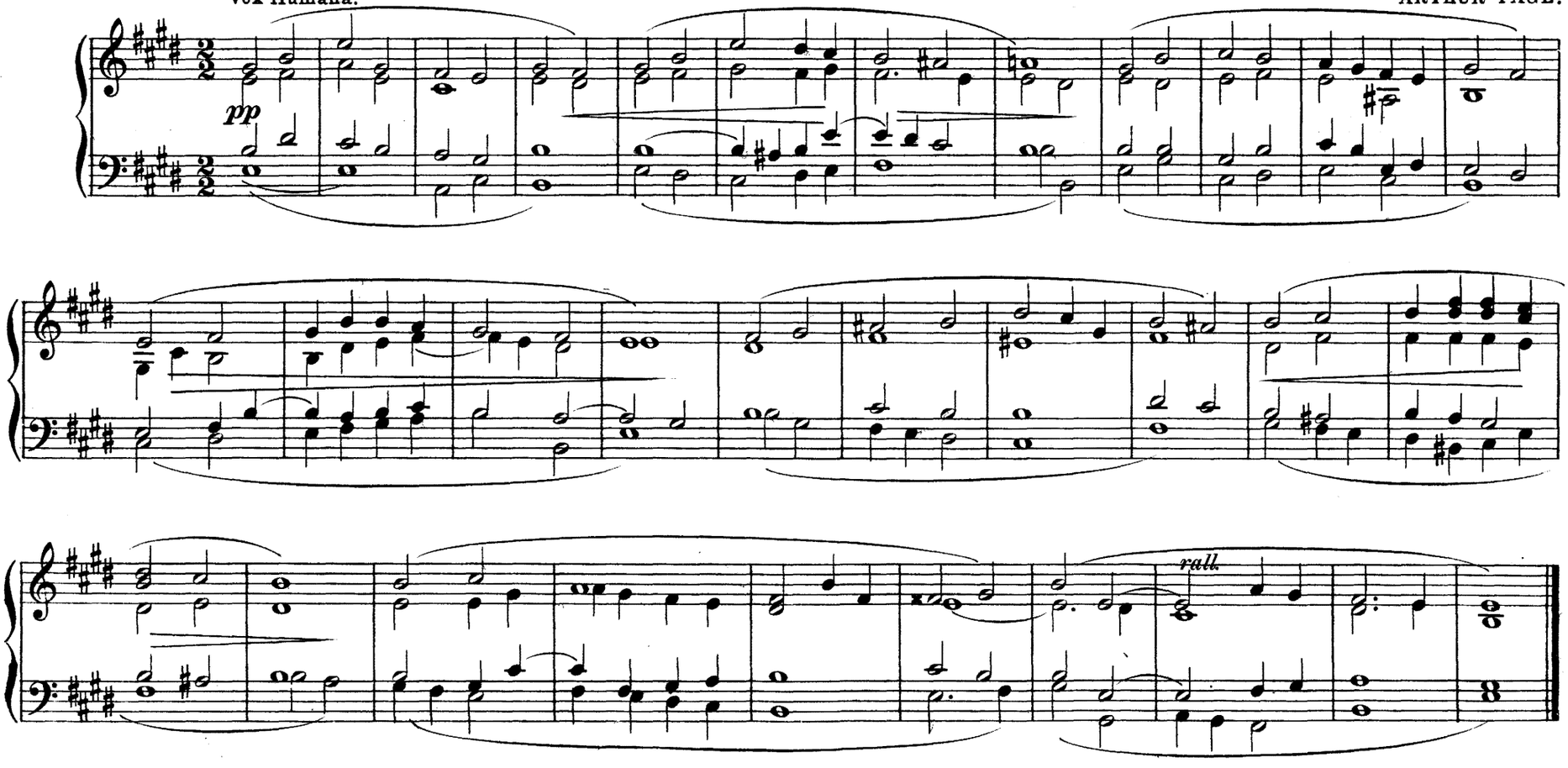

molto rit.
Sw.
cresc. poco a poco.
f
Ped.
dim.
p
Man.
f
Ped.
dim.
p
Man.

COMMUNION.

Vox Humana.

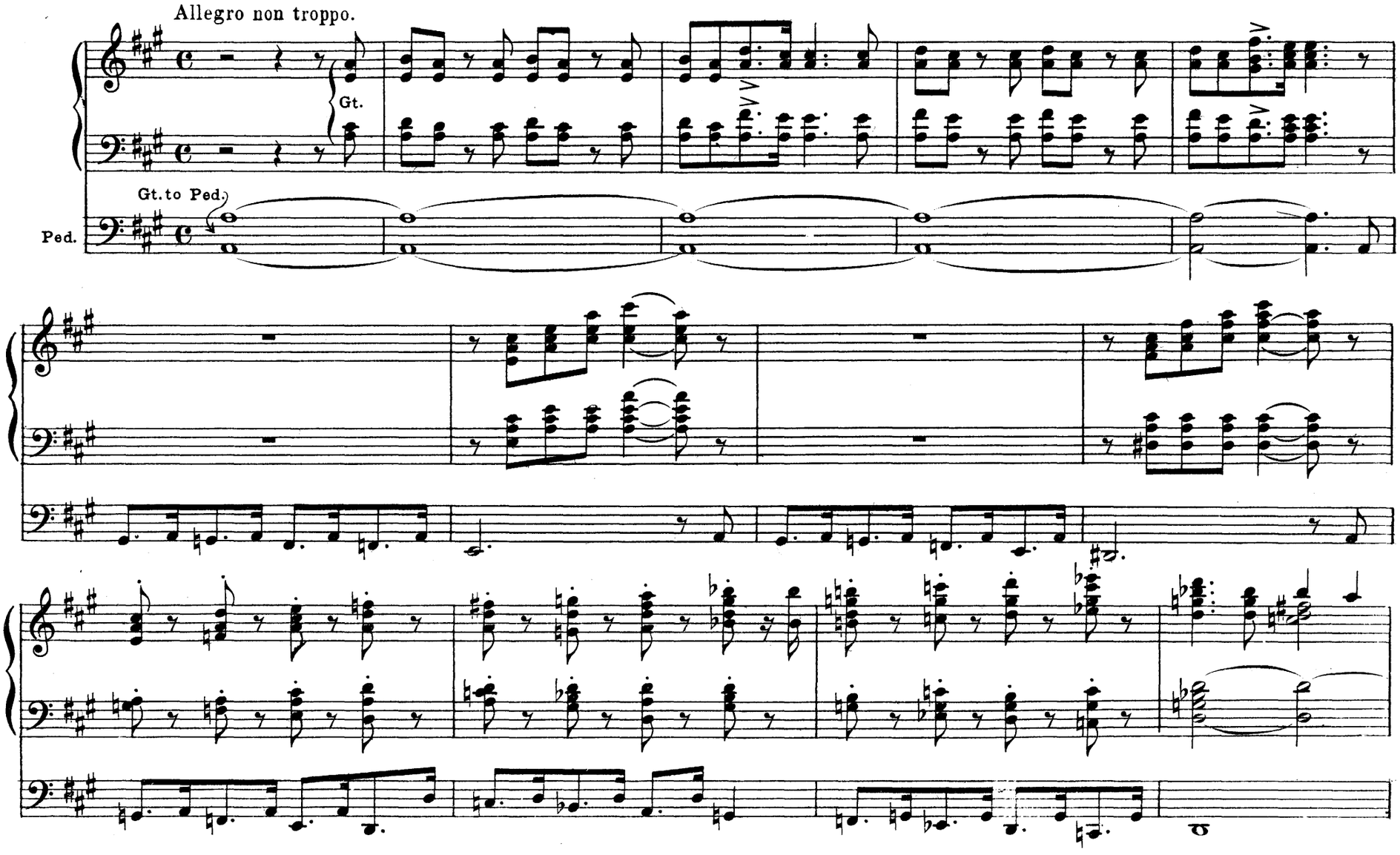
ARTHUR PAGE.



FANTASIE.

Full Organ.

E. L. ASHFORD



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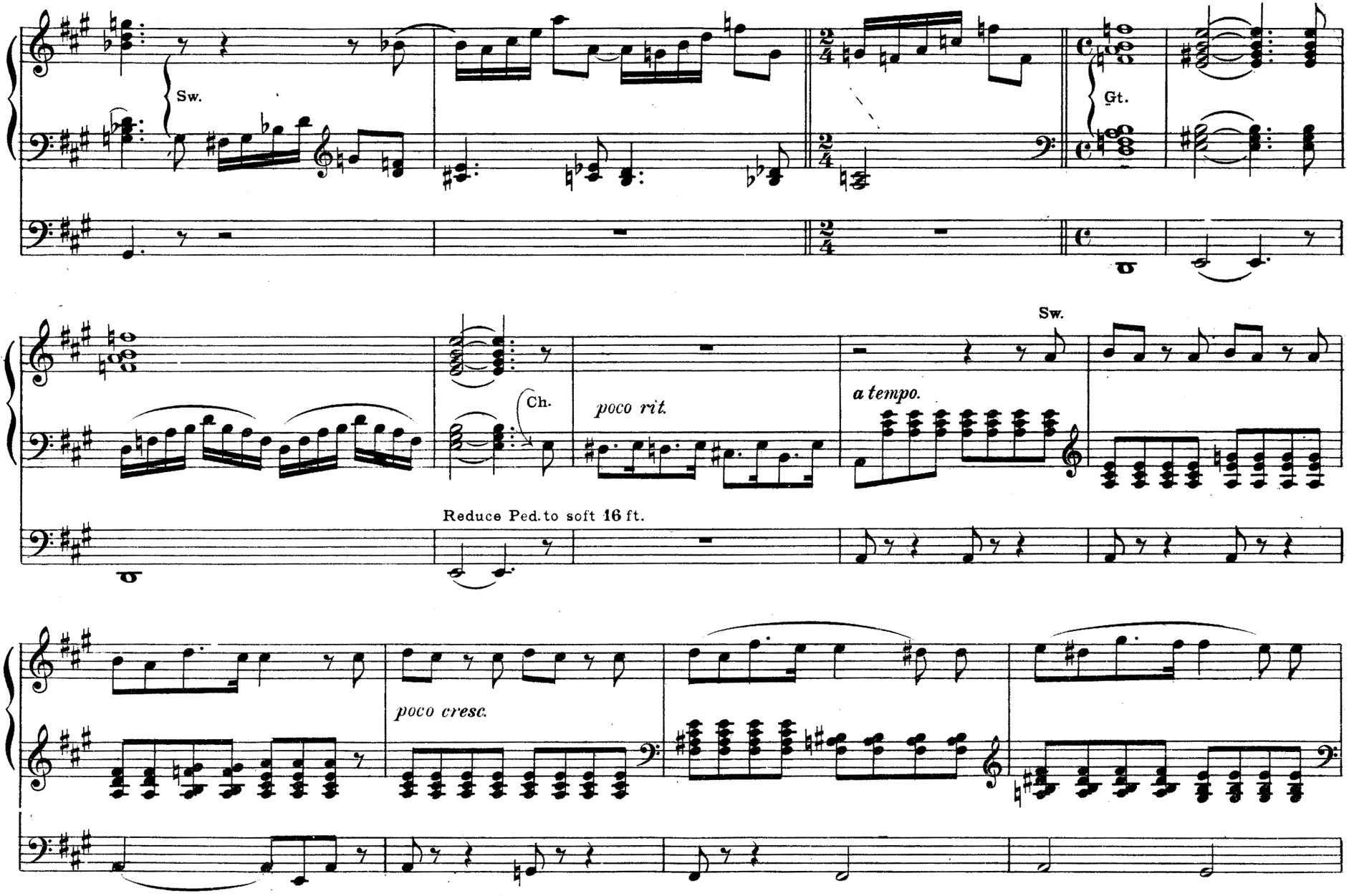
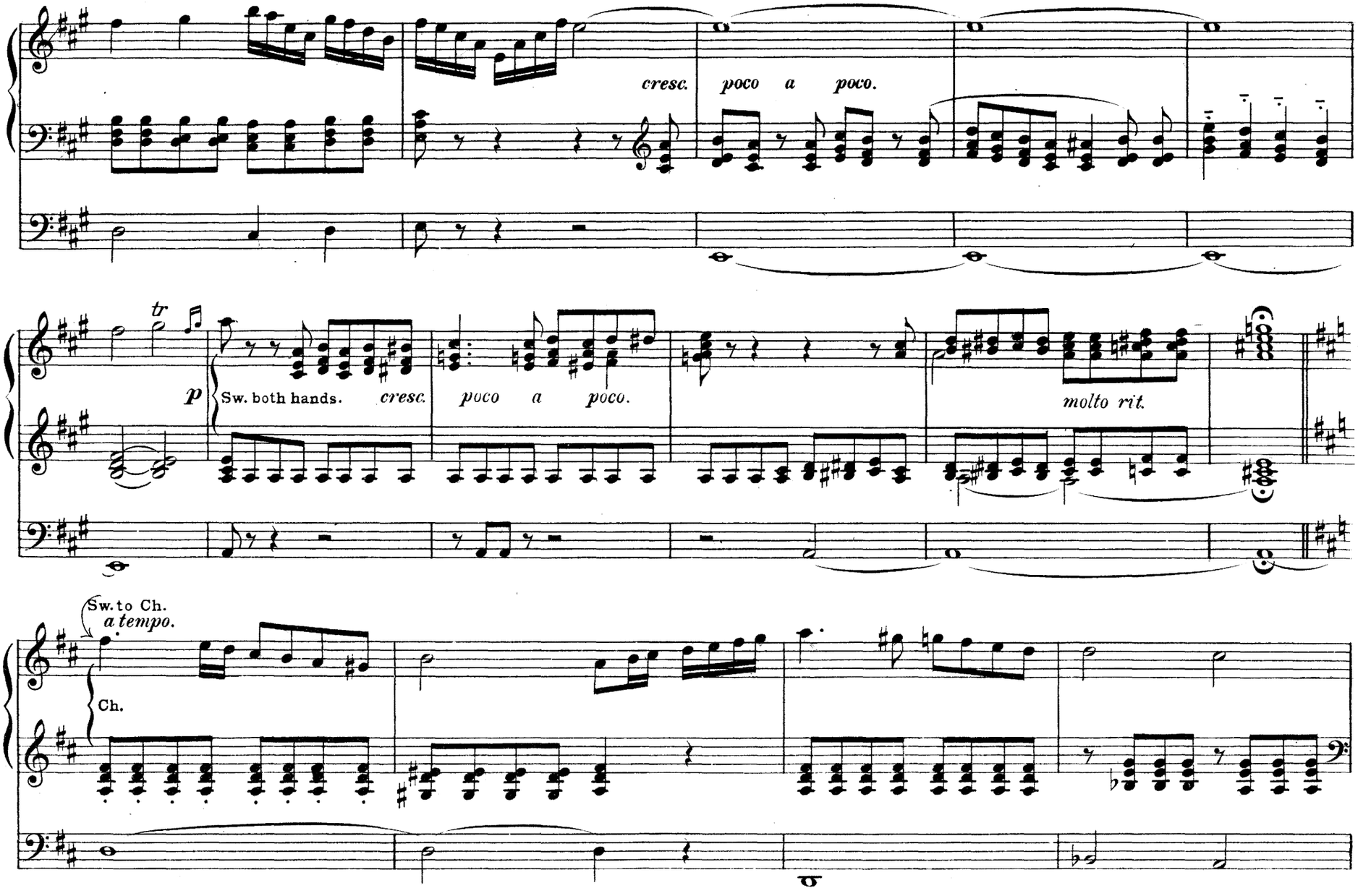
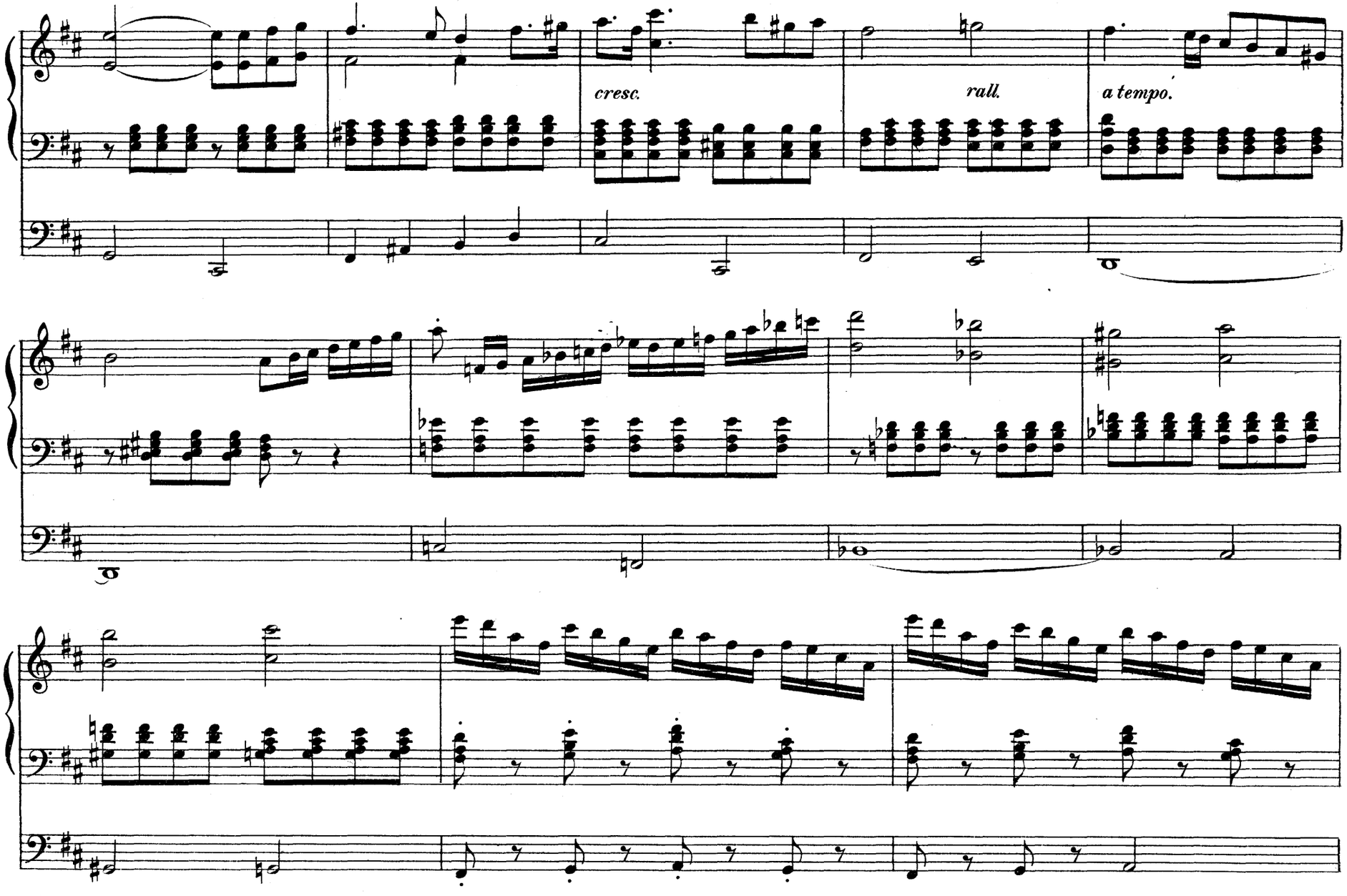
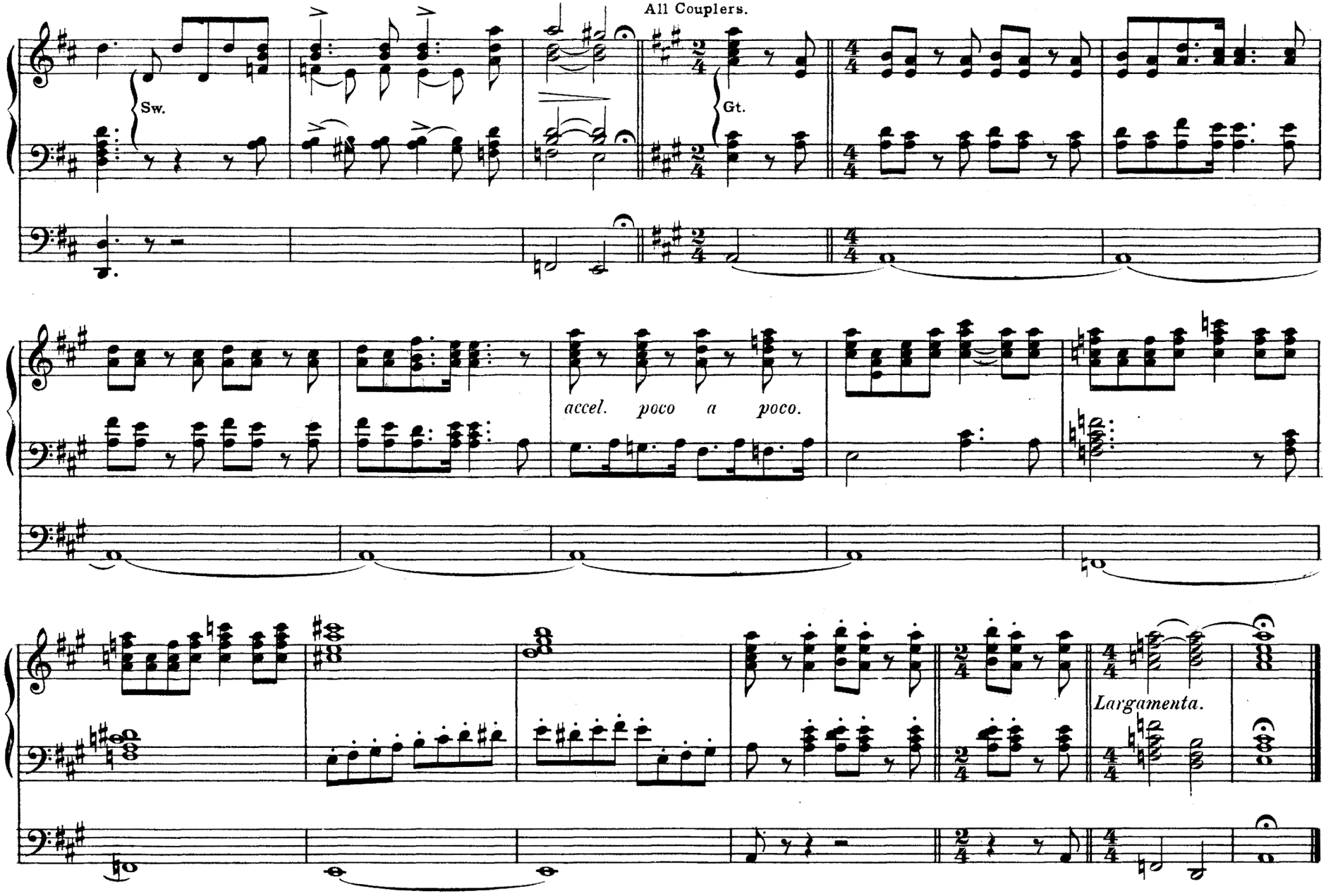

Sw.
Gt.
Ch.
poco rit.
a tempo.
Sw.
Reduce Ped. to soft 16 ft.
poco cresc.

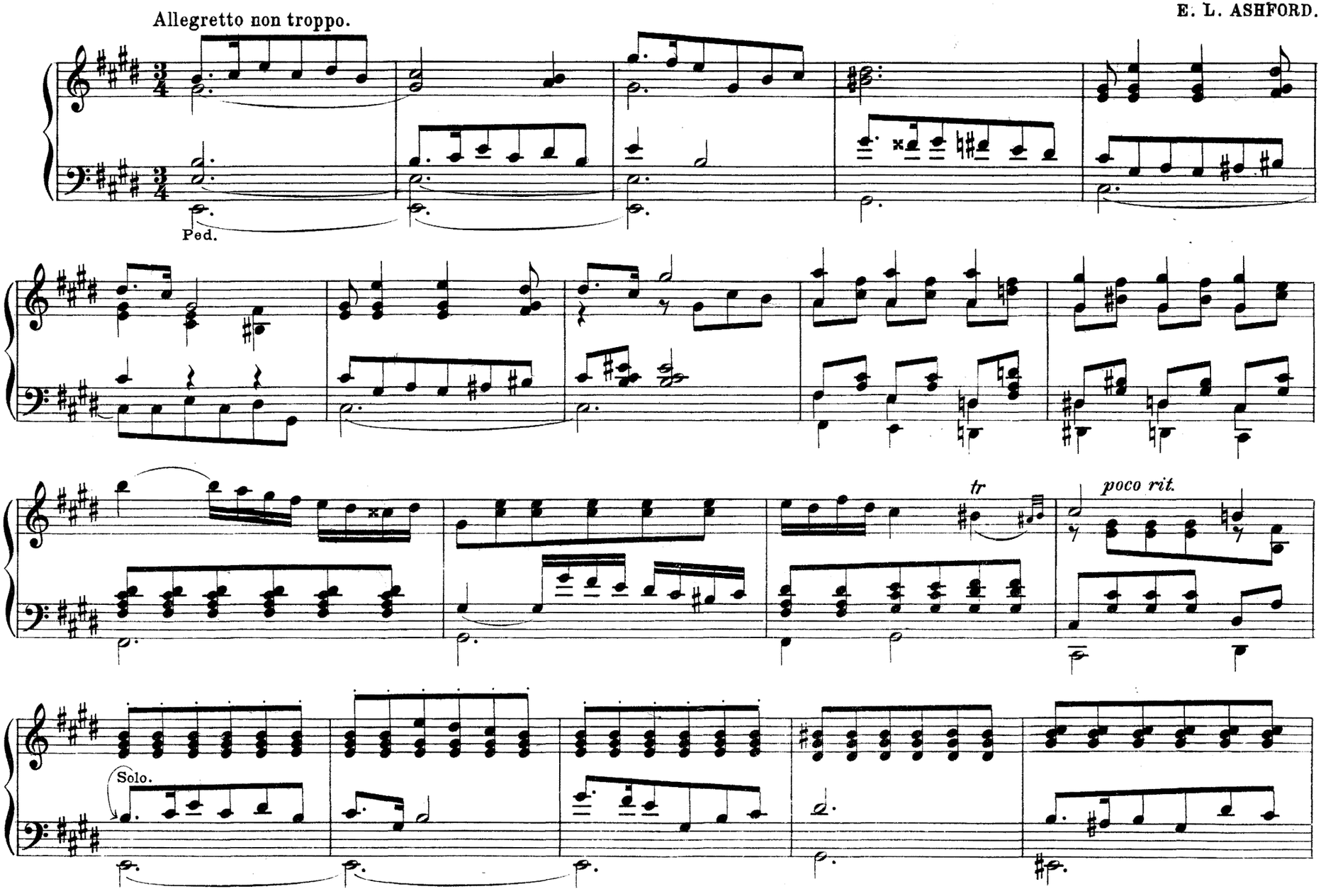

cresc.
poco a poco.
tr
p
Sw. both hands.
cresc.
poco a poco.
molto rit.
Sw. to Ch.
a tempo.
Ch.


cresc.
rall.
a tempo.


All Couplers.
Sw.
Gt.
accel. poco a poco.
Largamenta.

PRELUDE IN E.

E. L. ASHFORD.



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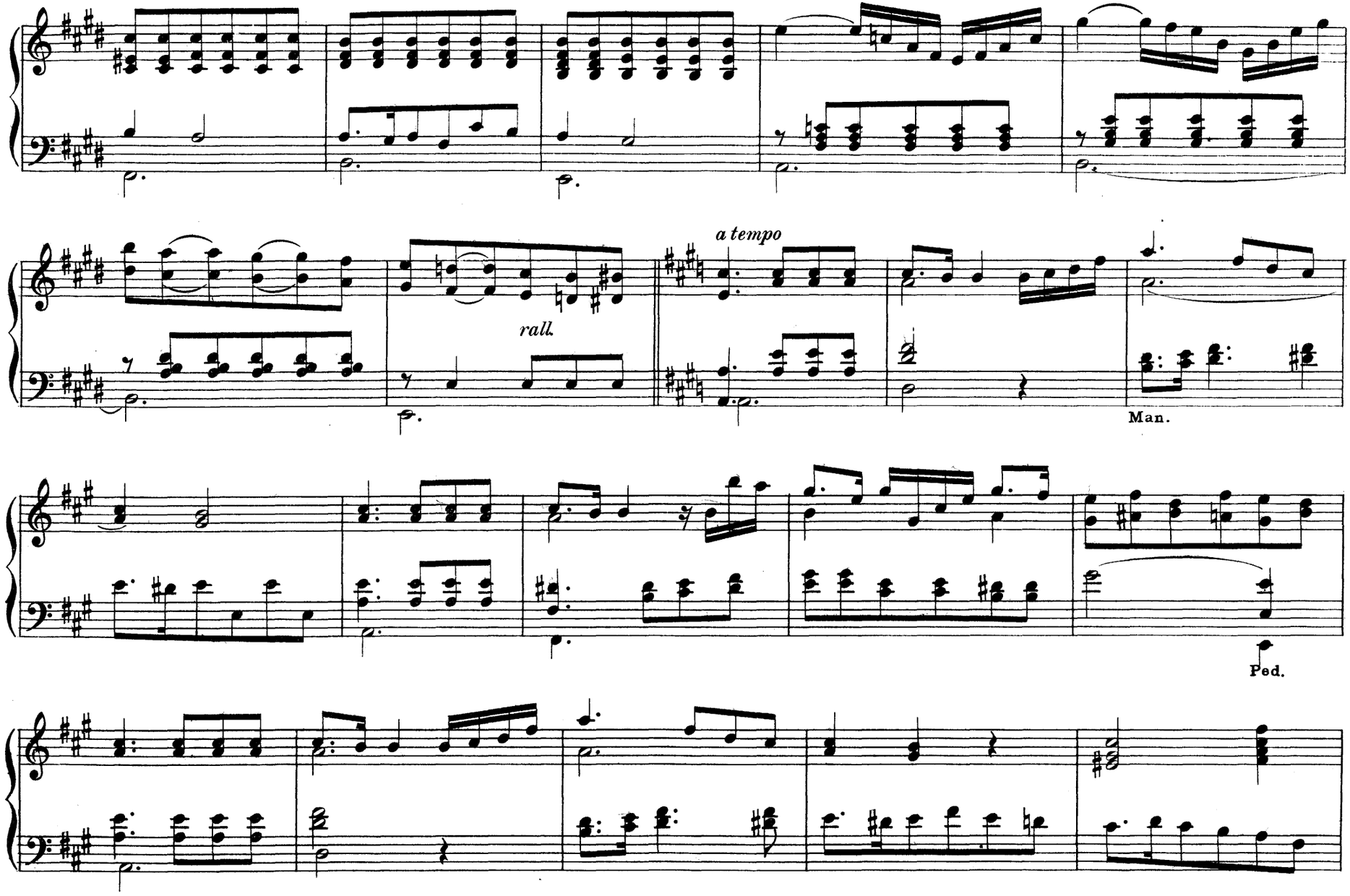
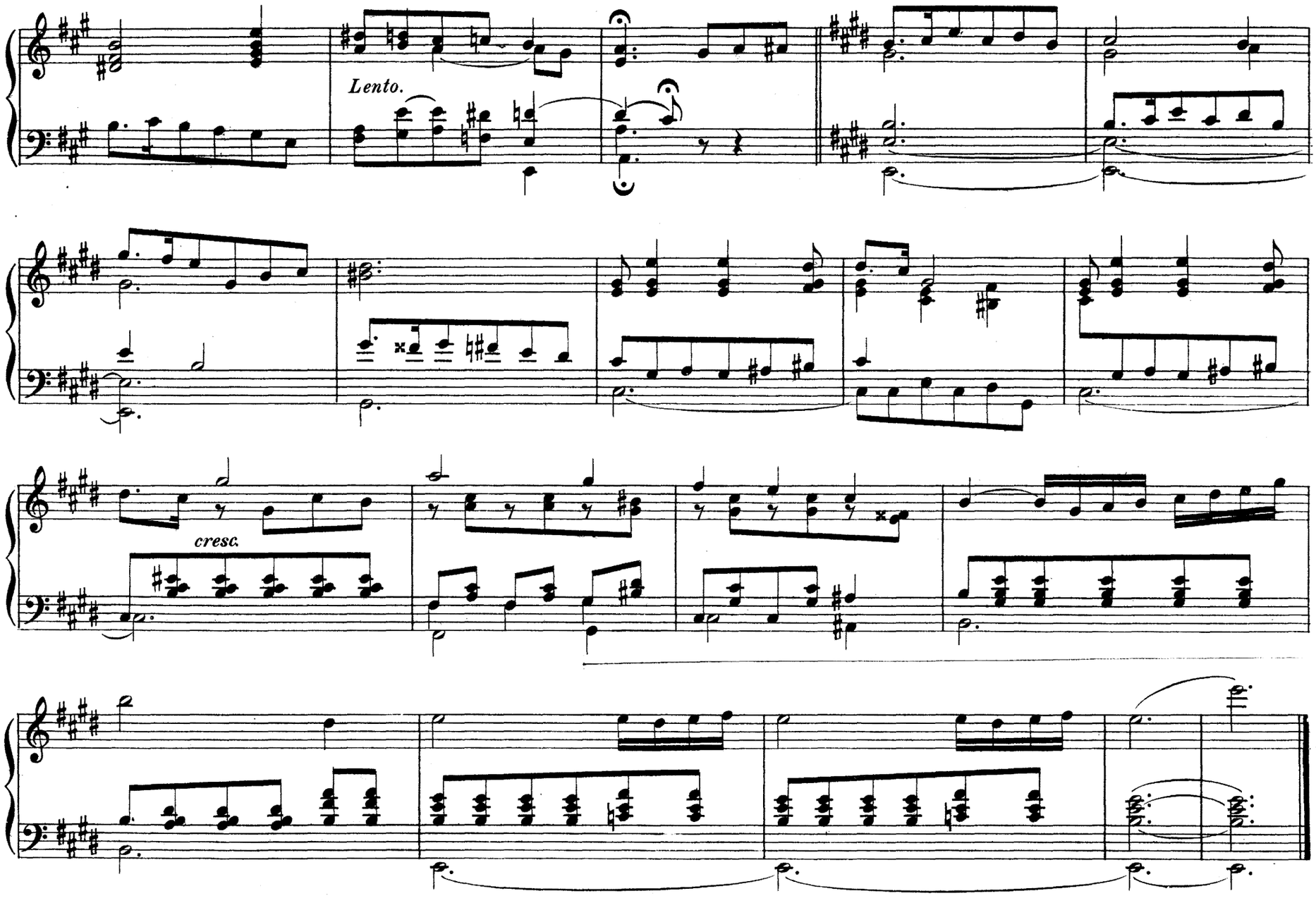

a tempo
rall.
Man.
Ped.



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Evening Hymn.
From Greenland's Icy Mountains.
God Be with You.
Holy, Holy, Holy.
I Love to Tell the Story.
I'm a Pilgrim.
Jerusalem, the Golden.
Joy to the World. (Christmas.)
Just as I Am.
Lead, Kindly Light. (Funeral.)
Lenox.
Lord, Dismiss Us.
My Faith Looks up to Thee.
Nearer, My God, to Thee.
Nun Danket Alle Gott.
Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful. (Christmas.)
Onward, Christian Soldiers.
Pass Me not.
Refuge. (Jesus, Lover of My Soul.)
Rock of Ages.
Softly Now the Light of Day. (Seymour.)
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