A

TREATISE

OF

Good Taste in the Art of

Muſick

Dedicated

To His Royal Highneſs

FREDERICK PRINCE OF WALES

by

F. Geminiani

LONDON MDCCXLIX

Edme Bouchardon in. et del. 1742.

Ravenet Sculpsit 1742.

PREFACE.

TWO Compoſers of Muſick have appear'd in the World, who in their different Kinds of Melody, have rais'd my Admiration; namely *David Rizzio* and *Gio. Baptiſta Lulli*; of theſe which ſtands higheſt in Reputation, or deſerves to ſtand higheſt, is none of my Buſineſs to pronounce: But when I conſider, that *Rizzio* was foremoſt in point of Time, that till then Melody was intirely rude and barbarous, and that he found Means at once to civilize and inſpire it with all the native Gallantry of the SCOTISH Nation, I am inclinable to give him the Preference.

But Melody, tho' pleaſing to All, ſeldom communicates the higheſt Degree of Pleaſure; and it was owing to this Reflection, that I lately have undertaken to improve the Melody of *Rizzio* into Harmony, by converting ſome of his Airs into two, three, and four Parts; and by making ſuch Additions and Accompanyments to others as ſhould give them all the Variety and Fullneſs required in a Concert.

How far I have ſucceeded in this Attempt, thoſe who are moſt converſant in the Art, are the fitteſt to judge: But how difficult it was to ſucceed in it, No-body can judge better than myſelf (not to deſtroy the Simplicity and Beauty, I found required ſome Diſcretion) But to add new Parts on the ſame Principles, and to create Harmony without violating the Intention of the Melody, required an equal Mixture of Imagination and Judgment.

The Subject of the laſt Work that I made public, was four favourite Airs, all of them *Engliſh*, *Scotch* or *Iriſh*, which I diverſify'd with a great Variety of Movements, as well with Regard to the Melody as Harmony and Modulation, which not only thoſe who aſpire to the Art of compoſing, but ſuch as would be good Performers on the Violin, Violoncello, Flute and Harpſichord, ought to be thoroughly acquainted with.

The Ingenious will diſcover, at the firſt View, that the preſent Work is wholly unlike both in Style and Manner: But then I hope they will diſcover alſo, that for the ſame Reaſon, it is likely to be ſo much the more uſeful; and ſo much the more entertaining in the Performance.

I do not pretend to be the Inventor of either: other Compoſers of the higheſt Claſs have been Adventurers in the ſame Voyage; and none with more Succeſs than the celebrated *Corelli*, as may be ſeen in his fifth Compoſition upon the *Aria della Follia di Spagnia.*

I have had the Pleaſure of diſcourſing with him myſelf upon this Subject, and heard him acknowledge the Satisfaction he took in compoſing it, and the Value he ſet upon it.

The Impoſſibility that has always been thought to attend this Undertaking: The Imputation of Negligence it may ſeem to caſt on former Profeſſors: and the Envy that generally attends every new Diſcovery in the Arts and Sciences, have hitherto deferr'd my publiſhing theſe Rules of Singing and Playing in a good Taſte. But at laſt preferring the Benefit of the Public to all Manner of other Conſiderations, I have determined no longer to conceal an Article of ſuch Importance, which will be even beneficial to ſome grumbling Profeſſors, as well as to true Lovers of MUSICK.

An

An INTRODUCTION to a good Taſte in MUSICK.

WHAT is commonly call'd good Taſte in ſinging and playing, has been thought for ſome Years paſt to deſtroy the true Melody, and the Intention of their Compoſers. It is ſuppoſed by many that a real good Taſte cannot poſſibly be acquired by any Rules of Art; it being a peculiar Gift of Nature, indulged only to thoſe who have naturally a good Ear: And as moſt flatter themſelves to have this Perfection, hence it happens that he who ſings or plays, thinks of nothing ſo much as to make continually ſome favourite Paſſages or Graces, believing that by this Means he ſhall be thought to be a good Performer, not perceiving that playing in good Taſte doth not conſiſt of frequent Paſſages, but in expreſſing with Strength and Delicacy the Intention of the Compoſer. This Expreſſion is what every one ſhould endeavour to acquire, and it may be eaſily obtained by any Perſon, who is not too fond of his own Opinion, and doth not obſtinately reſiſt the Force of true Evidence. I would not however have it ſuppoſed that I deny the powerful Effects of a good Ear; as I have found in ſeveral Inſtances how great its Force is; I only aſſert that certain Rules of Art are neceſſary for a moderate Genius, and may improve and perfect a good one. To the End therefore that thoſe who are Lovers of Muſick may with more Eaſe and Certainty arrive at Perfection, I recommend the Study and Practice of the following Ornaments of Expreſſion, which are fourteen in Number; namely,

1ſt A plain Shake (tr) 2d A Turn'd Shake (⏄) 3d A ſuperior Apogiatura (♪) 4th An inferior Apogiatura (♪) 5th Holding the Note (-) 6th Staccato (ı) 7th Swelling the Sound (⟋) 8th Diminiſhing the Sound (⟍) 9th Piano (p.) 10th Forte (f.) 11th th. Anticipation (♪) 12th Separation (♪) 13th A Beat (//) 14th A cloſe Shake (∿) From the following Explanation we may comprehend the Nature of each Element in particular.

(*Firſt,*) Of the PLAIN SHAKE.

The plain Shake is proper for quick Movements; and it may be made upon any Note, obſerving after it to paſs immediately to the enſuing Note.

(*Second,*) Of the TURNED SHAKE.

The turn'd Shake being made quick and long is fit to expreſs Gaiety; but if you make it ſhort, and continue the Length of the Note plain and ſoft, it may then expreſs ſome of more tender Paſſions.

(*Third,*) Of the Superior APOGIATURA.

The Superior Apogiatura is ſuppoſed to expreſs Love, Affection, Pleaſure, *&c.* It ſhould be made pretty long, giving it more than half the Length or Time of the Note it belongs to, obſerving to ſwell the Sound by Degrees, and towards the End to force the Bow a little: If it be made ſhort, it will loſe much of the aforeſaid Qualities; but will always have a pleaſing Effect, and it may be added to any Note you will.

(*Fourth,*) Of the Inferior APOGIATURA.

The Inferior Apogiatura has the ſame Qualities with the preceding, except that it is much more confin'd, as it can only be made when the Melody riſes the Interval of a ſecond or third, obſerving to make a Beat on the following Note.

(*Fifth*) Of Holding a NOTE.)

It is neceſſary to uſe this often; for were we to make Beats and Shakes continually without ſometimes ſuffering the pure Note to be heard, the Melody would be too much diverſify'd.

Sixth

(*Sixth*) Of the STACCATO.

This expreſſes Reſt, taking Breath, or changing a Word; and for this Reaſon Singers ſhould be careful to take Breath in a Place where it may not interrupt the Senſe.

(*7th* and *8th*) Of SWELLING and FALLING the SOUND.

Theſe two Elements may be uſed after each other; they produce great Beauty and Variety in the Melody, and employ'd alternately, they are proper for any Expreſſion or Meaſure.

(*9th* and *10th*) Of PIANO and FORTE.

They are both extremely neceſſary to expreſs the Intention of the Melody; and as all good Muſick ſhould be compoſed in Imitation of a Diſcourſe, theſe two Ornaments are deſigned to produce the ſame Effects that an Orator does by raiſing and falling his Voice.

(*Eleventh*) Of ANTICIPATION.

Anticipation was invented, with a View to vary the Melody, without altering its Intention: When it is made with a Beat or a Shake, and ſwelling the Sound, it will have a greater Effect, eſpecially if you obſerve to make uſe of it when the Melody riſes or deſcends the Interval of a Second.

(*Twelfth*) Of the SEPARATION.

The Separation is only deſigned to give a Variety to the Melody, and takes place moſt properly when the Note riſes a ſecond or third; as alſo when it deſcends a ſecond, and then it will not be amiſs to add a Beat, and to ſwell the Note, and then make the *Apogiatura* to the following Note. By this Tenderneſs is expreſs'd.

(*Thirteenth*) Of the BEAT.

This is proper to expreſs ſeveral Paſſions; as for Example, if it be perform'd with Strength, and continued long, it expreſſes Fury, Anger, Reſolution, *&c.* If it be play'd leſs ſtrong and ſhorter, it expreſſes Mirth, Satisfaction, *&c.* But if you play it quite ſoft, and ſwell the Note, it may then denote Horror, Fear, Grief, Lamentation, *&c.* By making it ſhort and ſwelling the Note gently, it may expreſs Affection and Pleaſure.

(*Fourteenth*) Of the Cloſe SHAKE.

This cannot poſſibly be deſcribed by Notes as in former Examples. To perform it, you muſt preſs the Finger ſtrongly upon the String of the Inſtrument, and move the Wriſt in and out ſlowly and equally, when it is long continued ſwelling the Sound by Degrees, drawing the Bow nearer to the Bridge, and ending it very ſtrong it may expreſs Majeſty, Dignity, *&c.* But making it ſhorter, lower and ſofter, it may denote Affliction, Fear, *&c.* and when it is made on ſhort Notes, it only contributes to make their Sound more agreable; and for this Reaſon it ſhould be made uſe of as often as poſſible.

Men of purblind Underſtandings, and half Ideas may perhaps ask, is it poſſible to give Meaning and Expreſſion to Wood and Wire; or to beſtow upon them the Power of raiſing and ſoothing the Paſſions of rational Beings? But whenever I hear ſuch a Queſtion put, whether for the Sake of Information, or to convey Ridicule, I ſhall mak no Difficulty to anſwer in the affimative, and without ſearching over-deeply into the Cauſe, ſhall think it ſufficient to appeal to the Effect. Even in common Speech a Difference of Tone gives the ſame Word a different Meaning. And with regard to muſical Performances, Experience has ſhewn that

the

the Imagination of the Hearer is in general ſo much at the Diſpoſal of the Maſter that by the Help of Variations, Movements, Intervals and Modulation he may almoſt ſtamp what Impreſſion on the Mind he pleaſes.

Theſe extraordinary Emotions are indeed moſt eaſily excited when accompany'd with Words ; and I would beſides adviſe, as well the Compoſer as the Performer, who is ambitious to inſpire his Audience to be firſt inſpired himſelf, which he cannot fail to be if he chuſes a Work of Genius, if he makes himſelf thoroughly acquainted with all its Beauties ; and if while his Imagination is warm and glowing he pours the ſame exalted Spirit into his own Performance.

Explanation of the *Acciaccature* for the *Harpſichord.*

The Acciaccatura is a Compoſition of ſuch Chords as are diſſonant with Reſpect to the fundamental Laws of Harmony ; and yet when diſpoſed in their proper Place produce that very Effect which it might be expected they would deſtroy.

No Performer therefore ſhould flatter himſelf that he is able to accompany well till he is Maſter of this delicate and admirable Secret which has been in uſe above a hundred Years : and of which a great many Examples may be found in the Book which I have compos'd for that Inſtrument.

The Example which follows, has however ſomething in it peculiar, as it ſerves to ſpecify a Signature called *Tatto*, which has a very great and ſingular Effect in Harmony, and which is perform'd by touching the Key lightly, and quitting it with ſuch a Spring as if it was Fire.

Thus I have collected and explain'd all the Ingredients of a good Taſte, and nothing remains but to caution the Performer againſt concluding, that a mere mechanical Application of them, will anſwer the great Purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a Character among the Judicious in all Arts and Sciences, ſomething muſt be left to the good Senſe of the Profeſſor ; for as the Soul informs the Body, ſo every Rule and every Principle muſt be enforc'd by the Knowledge and Skill of him who puts it in Practice.

Laſtly, as the chief End I have in view, is to contribute as far as my Abilities will permit, to the Perfection of an Art that I love, and to reſcue the Character of Muſician from the Diſgrace and Contempt which the Follies of ignorant Pretenders have brought upon it, I hope no acknowledg'd Maſter will lend his Countenance to the Miſconſtruction which thoſe Pretenders may think their Intereſt to paſs upon it.

To ſay All in few Words, the Road to Emulation is both open and wide ; the moſt effectual Method to triumph over an Author is to excel him ; and he manifeſts his Affection to a Science moſt who contributes moſt to its Advancement.

When I came firſt to *London*, which was Thirty-four Years ago, I found Muſick in ſo thriving a State, that I had all the Reaſon imaginable to ſuppoſe the Growth would be ſuitable to the Excellency of the Soil.

But I have lived to be moſt miſerably diſappointed ; for tho' it cannot be ſaid that there was any want of Encouragement, that Encouragement was ill beſtow'd.

The Hand was more conſidered than the Head ; the Performance than the Compoſition ; and hence it followed, that inſtead of labouring to cultivate a Taſte, which ſeem'd to be all that was wanting, the Publick was content to nouriſh Inſipidity.

Architecture, on the contrary, at that Time was in a very deplorable State, and yet in the ſame Interval, it has riſen to its Meridian under the Protection of a moſt noble and intelligent L O R D ; and under a Patronage yet more illuſtrious and ſublime, I have ſtrong Reaſons to flatter myſelf of ſeeing *M U S I C K* do the ſame.

GEORGE II^d.

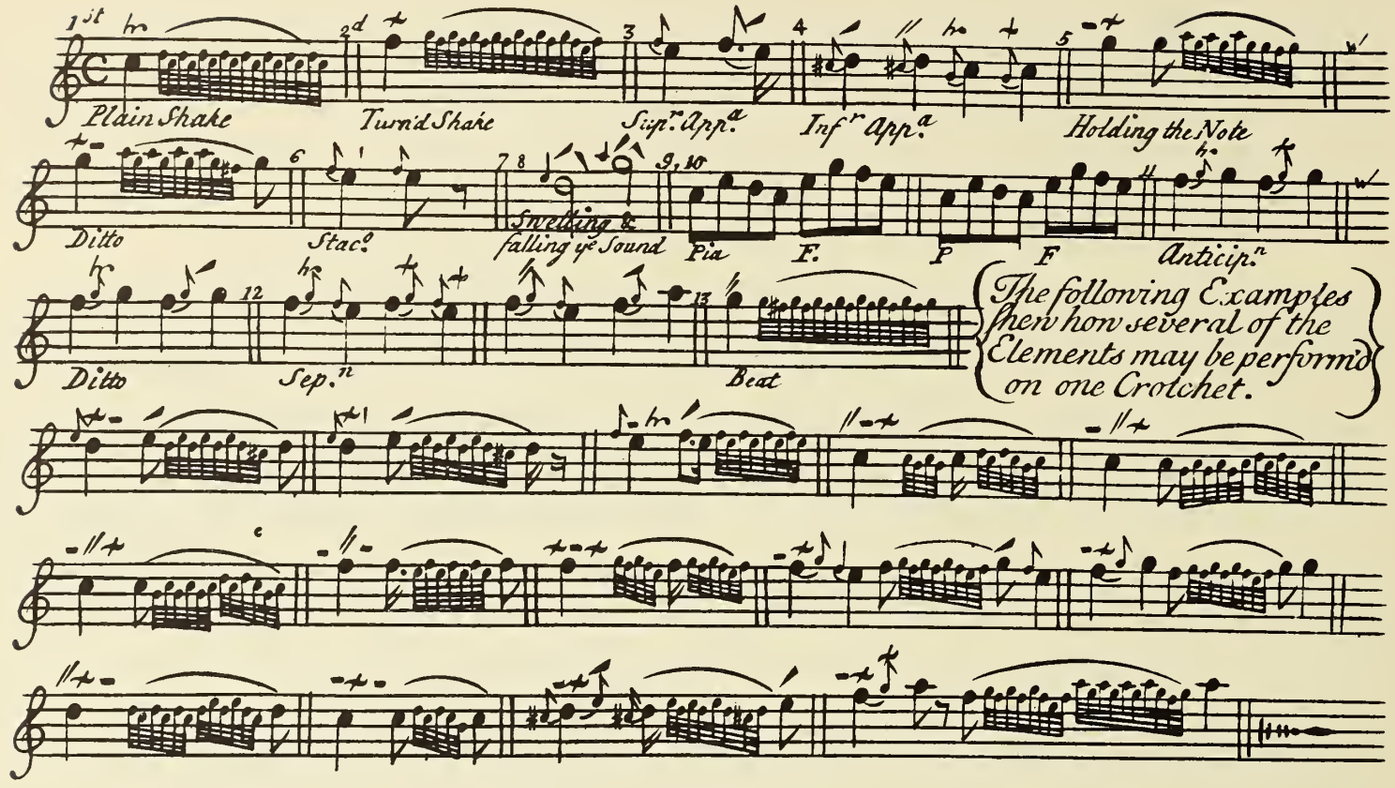
By the Grace of God King of Great Britain, France and Ireland Defender of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these Presents shall come Greeting: Whereas, Francis Geminiani, Gent. hath represented unto Us, that he hath with great Labour and Expence, compos'd several Works, consisting of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, in order to be printed and published: and hath therefore humbly besought Us, to grant unto him our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing thereof; for the Term of Fourteen Years. We being willing to give all due Encouragement to Works of this Nature, are graciously pleased to condescend to his Request. And We do therefore by these Presents so far as may be agreeable to the Statute in that Behalf made and provided, grant unto the said Francis Geminiani his Executors, Administrators and Assigns, our Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing the said Work, for the Term of Fourteen Years, to be computed from the Date hereof; strictly forbidding all our Subjects within our Kingdoms & Dominions to reprint or abridge the same, either in the like or any other Volume or Volumes whatsoever; or to import, buy, vend, alter or distribute any Copies thereof reprinted beyond the Seas, during the aforesaid Term of Fourteen Years, without the Consent or Approbation of the said Francis Geminiani, his Heirs, Executors and Assigns, under their Hands and Seals, first had and obtained, as they will answer the Contrary thereof at their Perils: Likewise the Commissioners and other Officers of the Customs the Master Warden and Company of Stationers are to take Notice, that due Obedience may be rendered to our Pleasure herein declared. Given at our Court at Kensington the 29th Day of July, 1739. in the thirteenth Year of our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

Holles Newcastle.

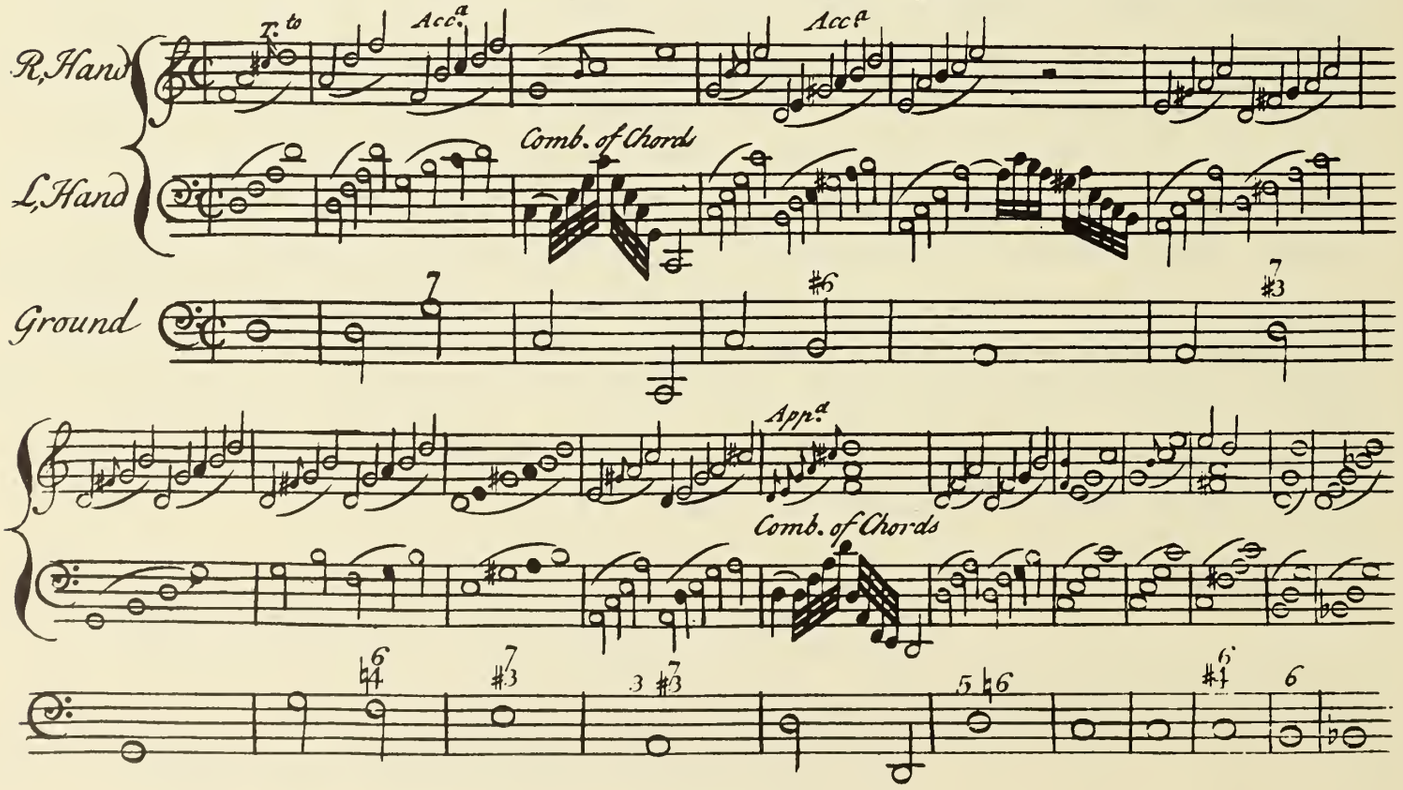
Examples

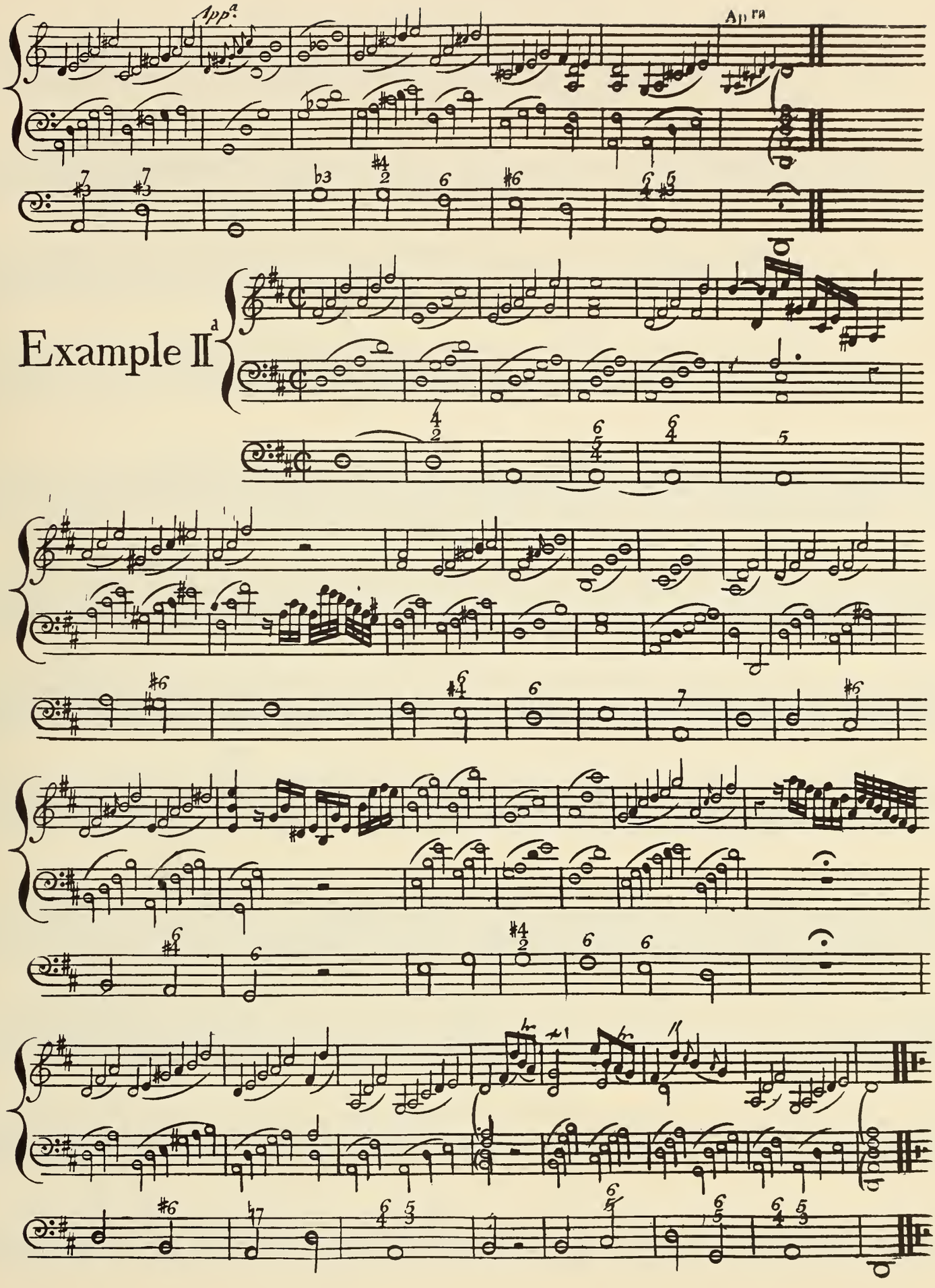
Of the Element of playing and singing in a good Taste.



Examples

of the Acciacature as Passages of Melody, Appogiature and Tacto for the Harpsichord; Observe, Those Notes with this Mark ⌒ are to be play'd with one Stroke of the Fingers or by touching the Chords successively from ye lowest Note upward.

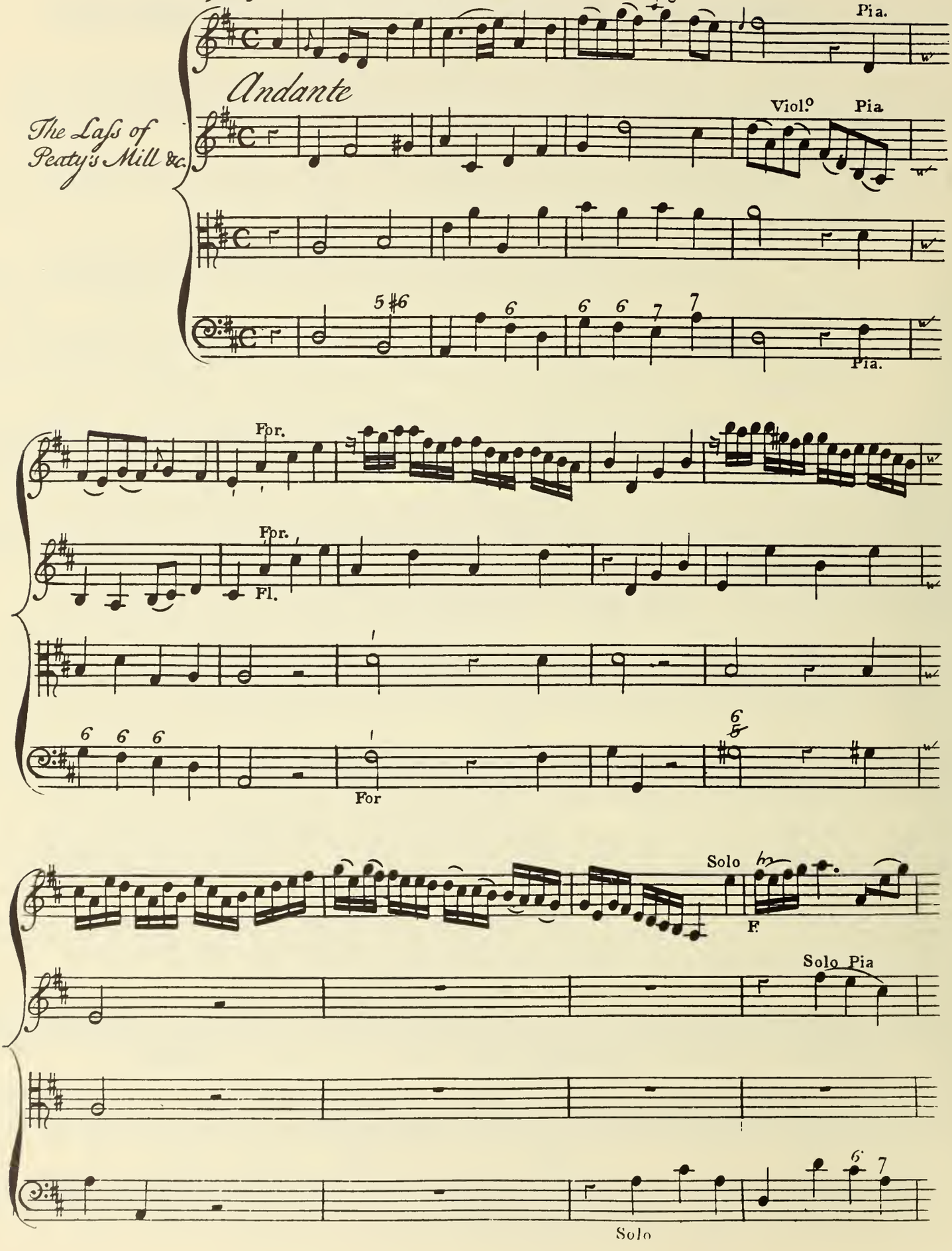


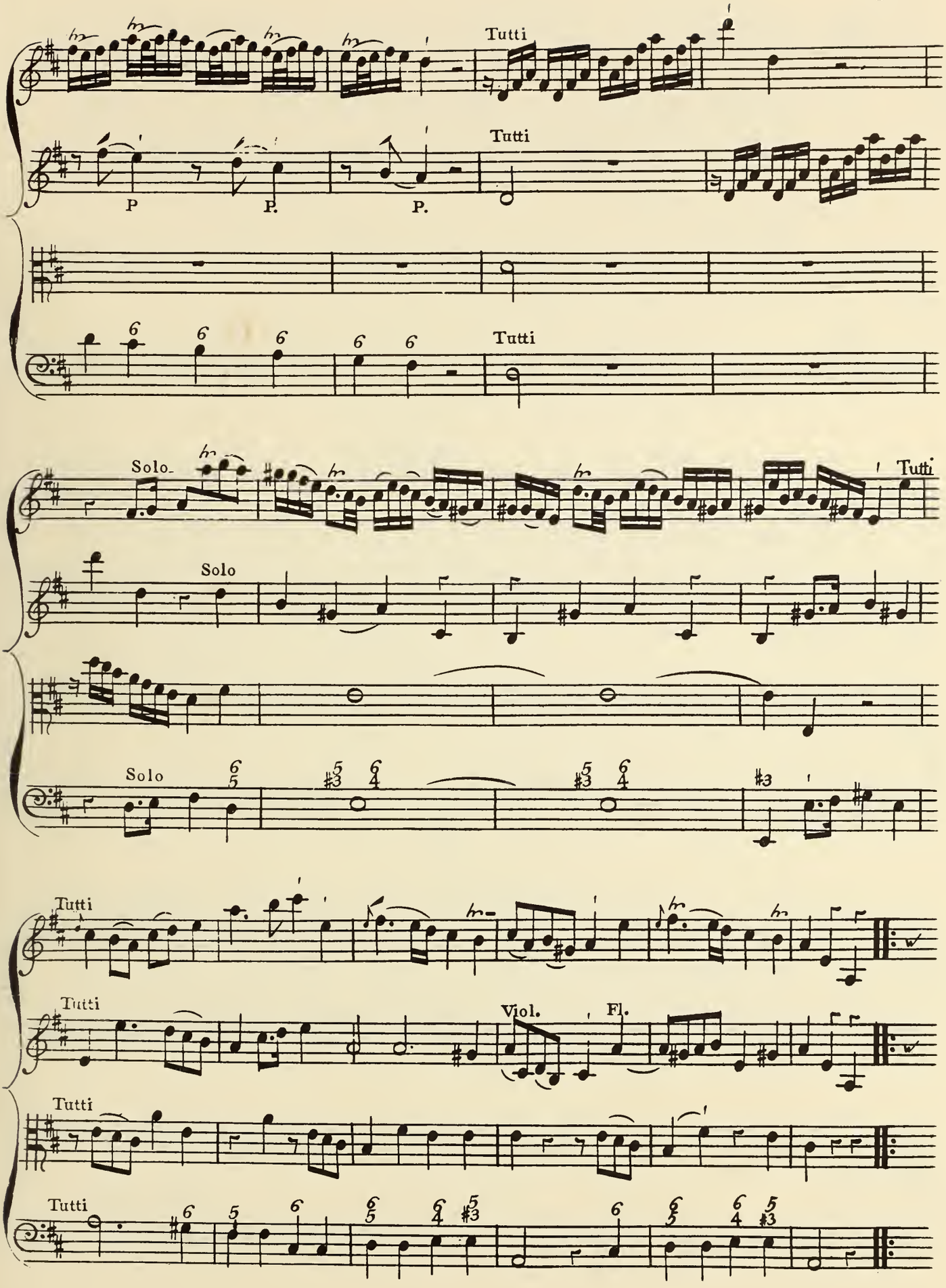

Example II

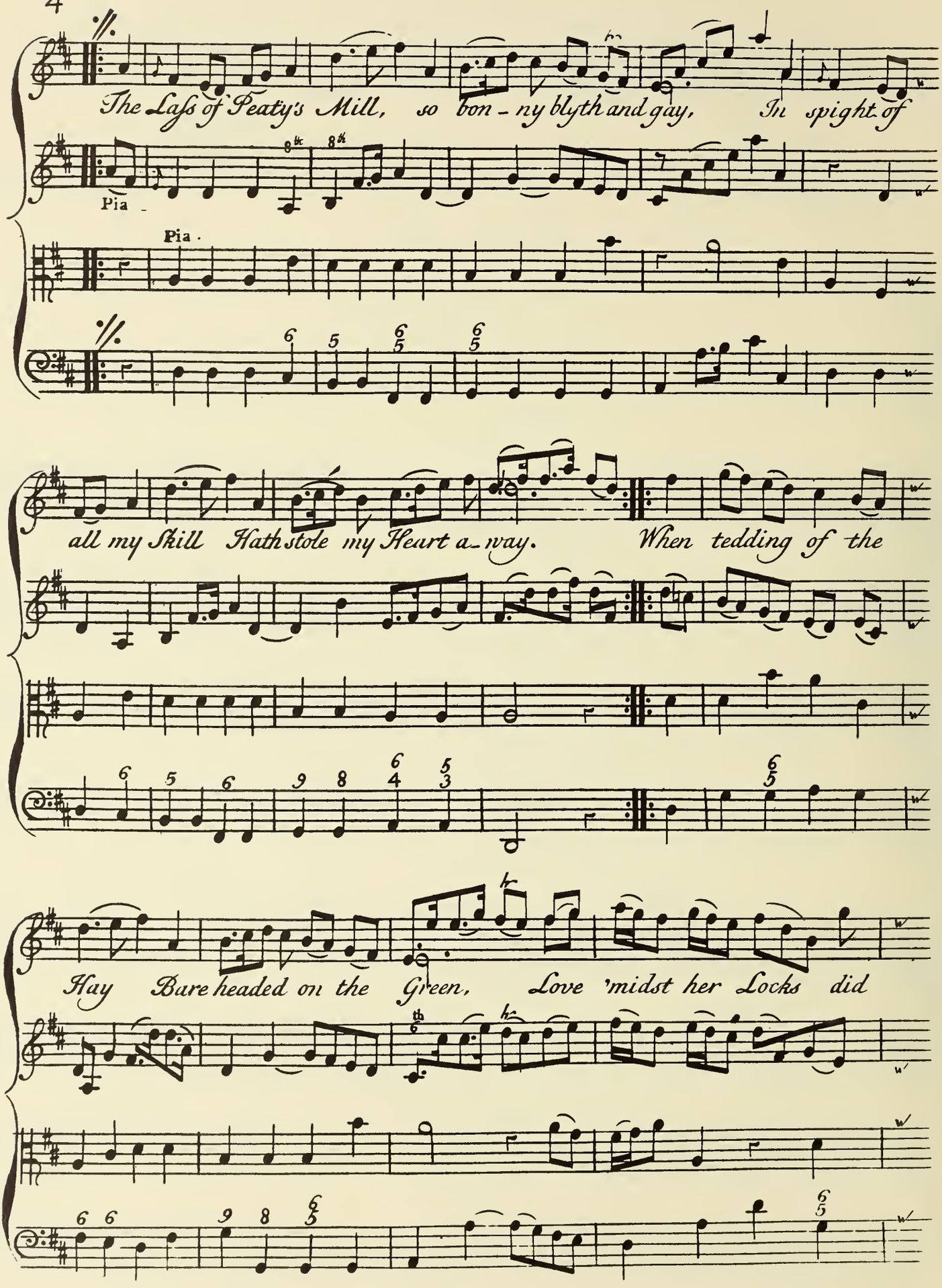
SONG I

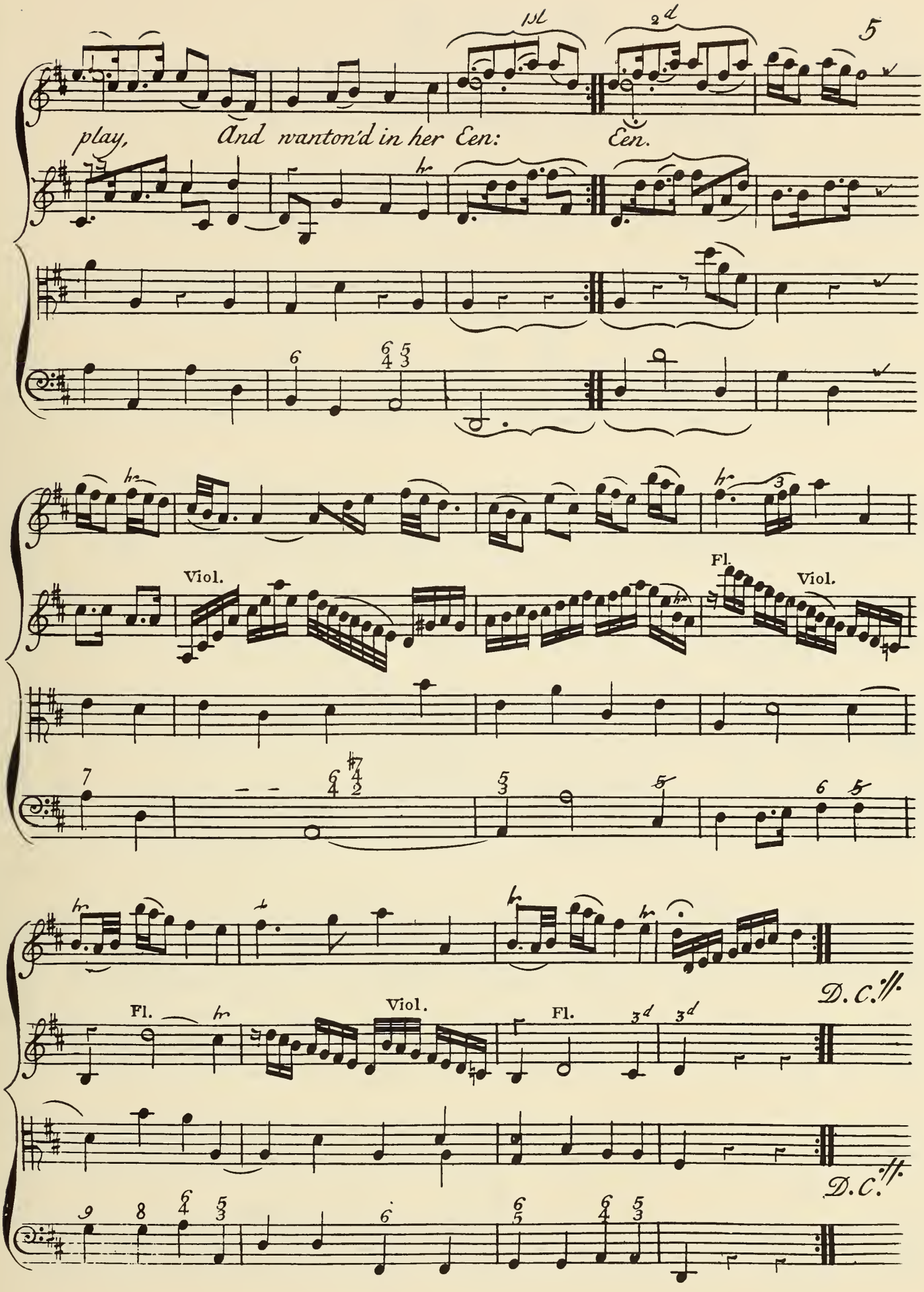
Accompany'd by two Violins two German Flutes Tenor and Thorough Bafs

The Lafs of Peaty's Mill &c.



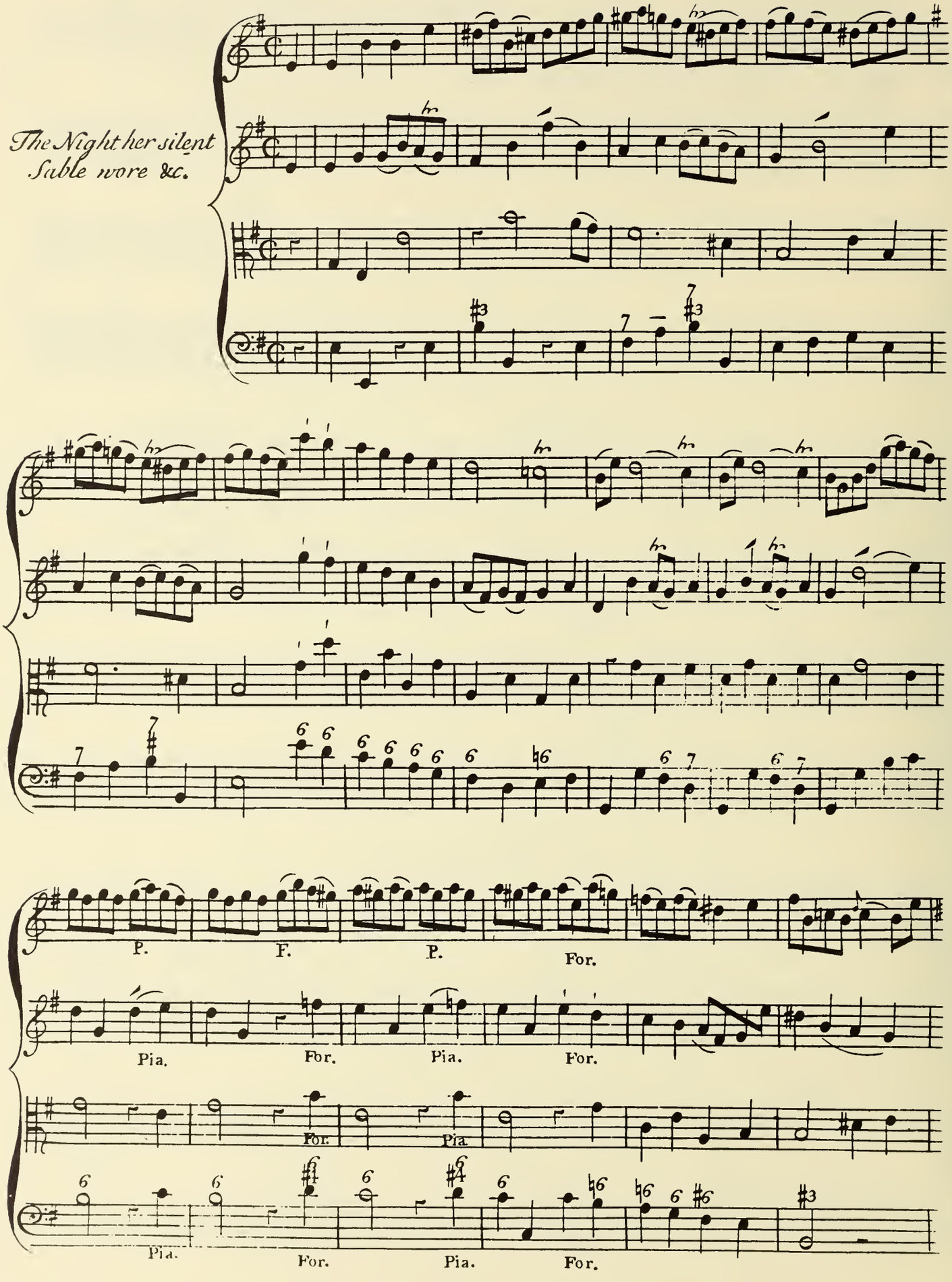

Tutti
P
P.
P.
Tutti
Tutti
Solo
Tutti
Solo
Solo
Tutti
Tutti
Viol.
Fl.
Tutti
Tutti

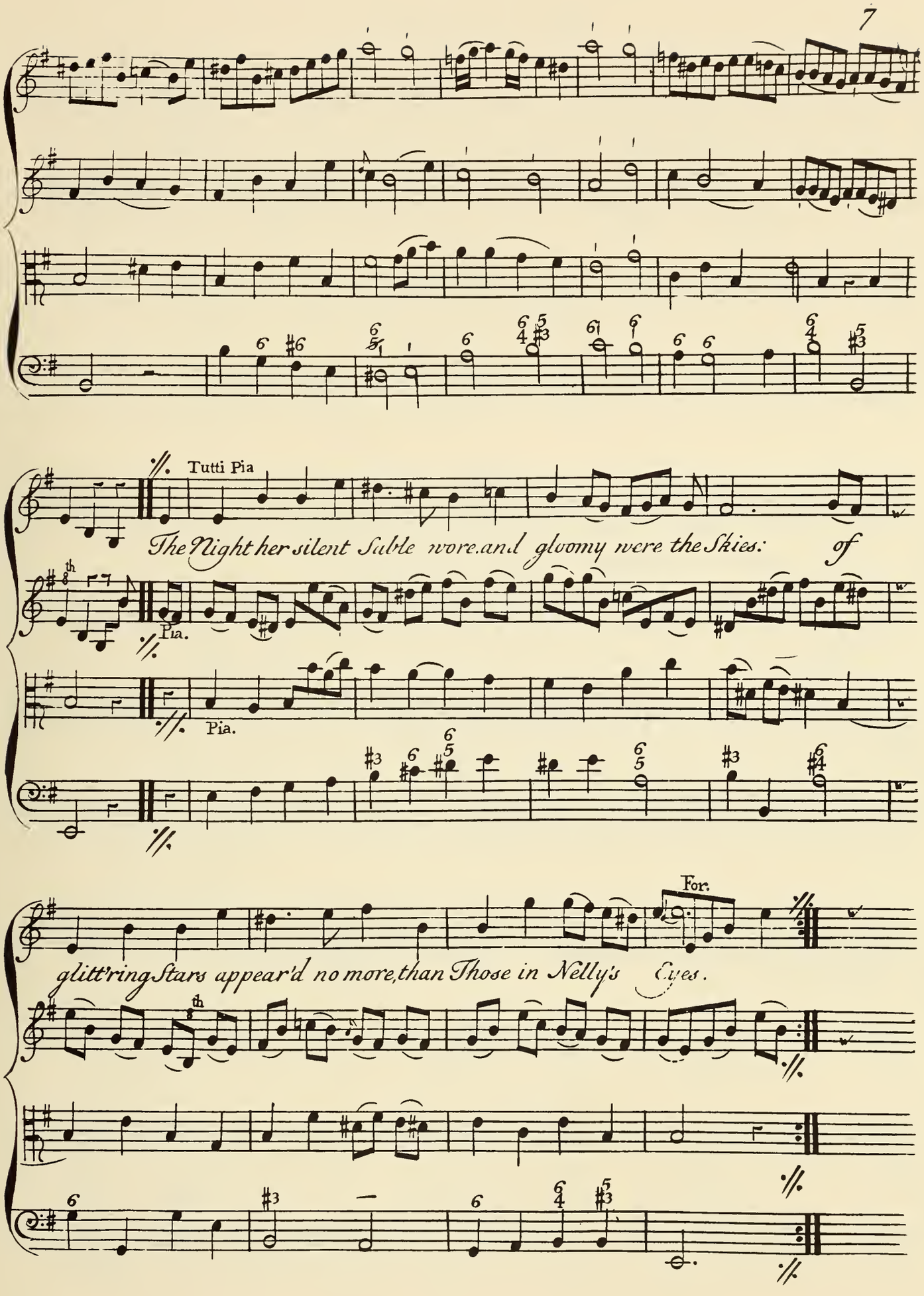

The Lass of Peaty's Mill, so bon-ny blyth and gay, In spight of
Pia.
Pia.
all my Skill Hath stole my Heart a-way. When tedding of the
Hay Bare headed on the Green, Love 'midst her Locks did

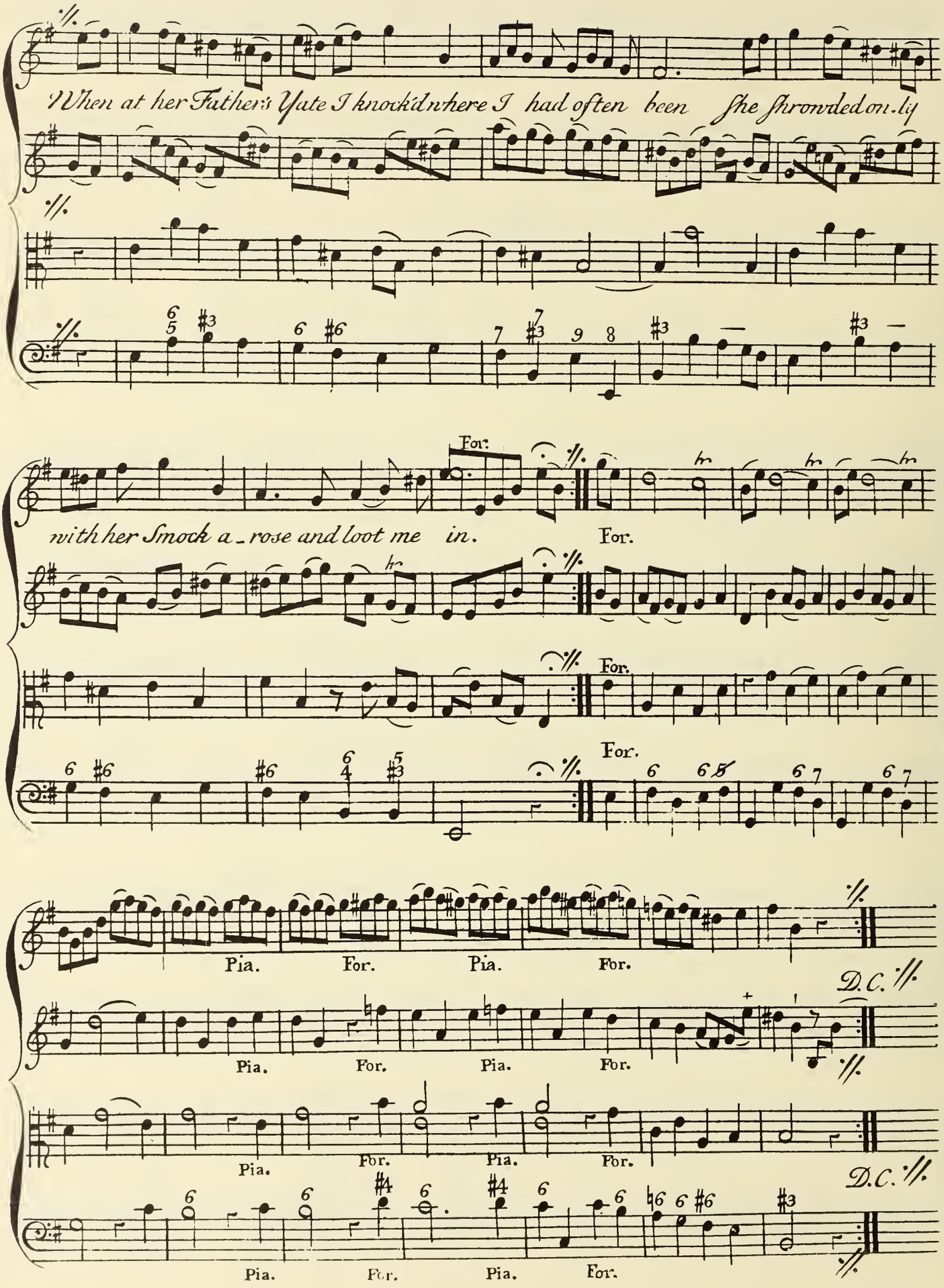

play, And wanton'd in her Een: Een.
Viol.
Fl.
Viol.
Fl.
Viol.
Fl.
D.C.
D.C.

Song II

The Night her silent Sable wore &c.

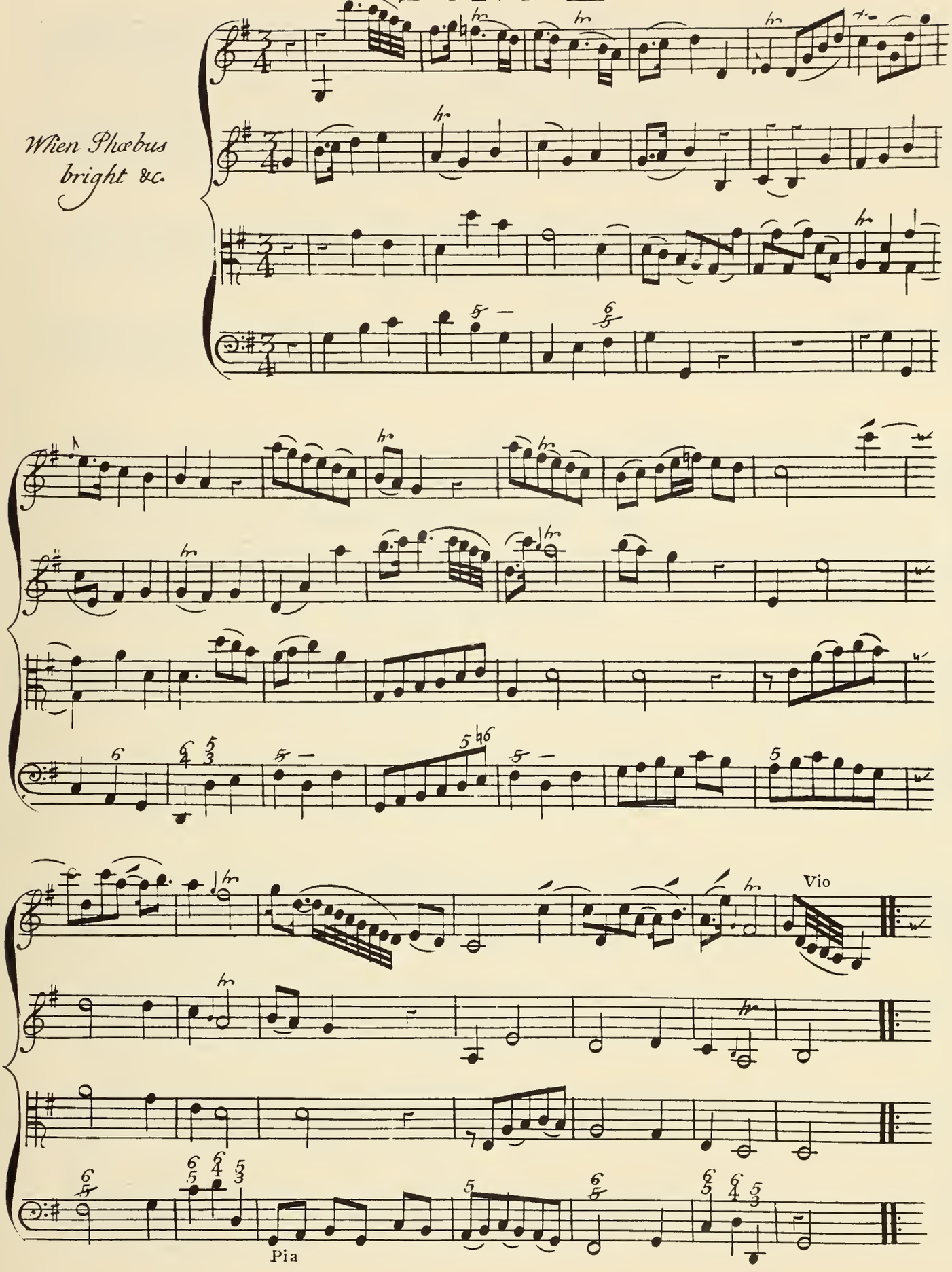


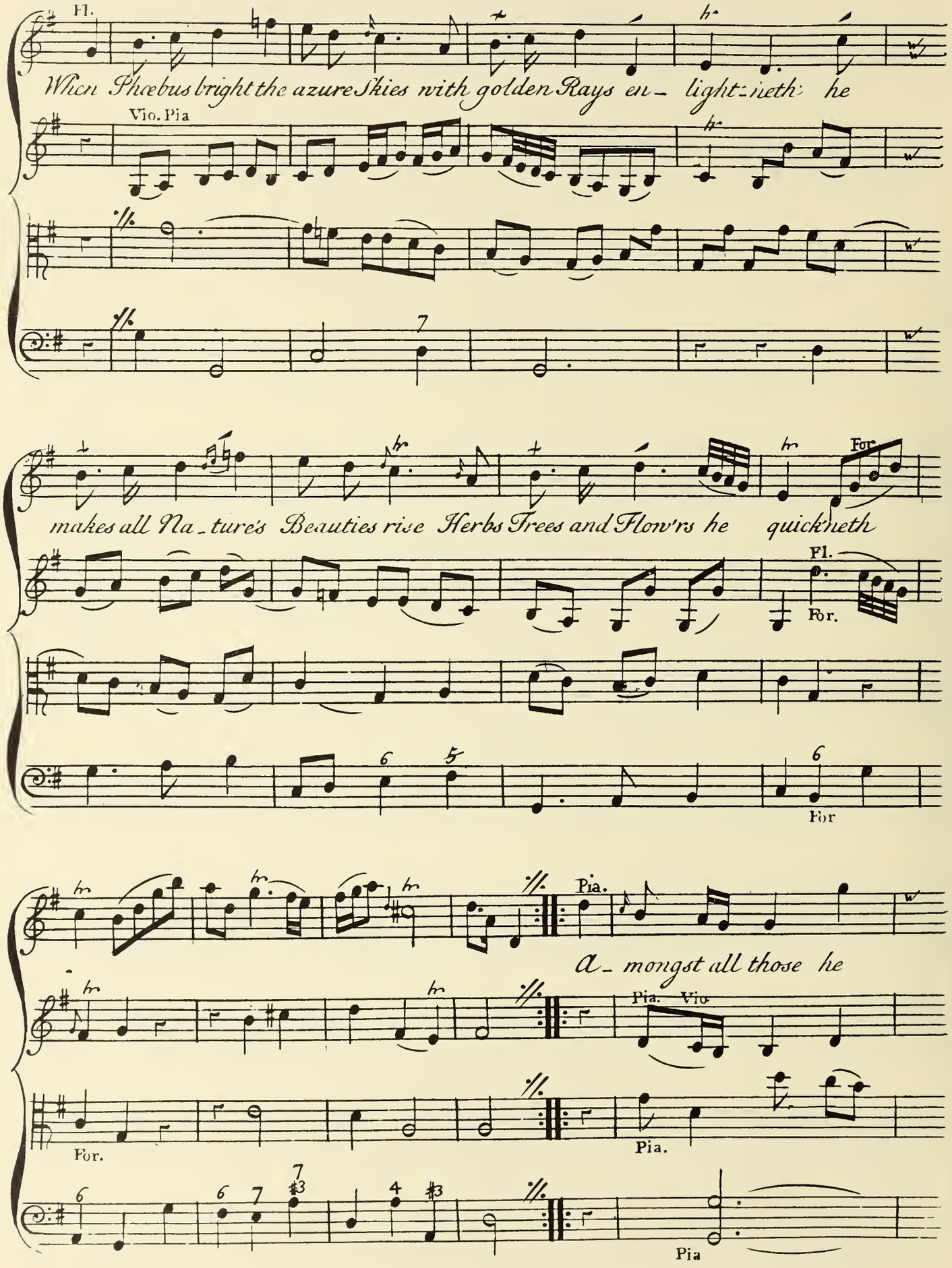

Tutti Pia
The Night her silent Sable wore, and gloomy were the Skies: of
Pia.
Pia.
For.
glitt'ring Stars appear'd no more, than Those in Nelly's Eyes.

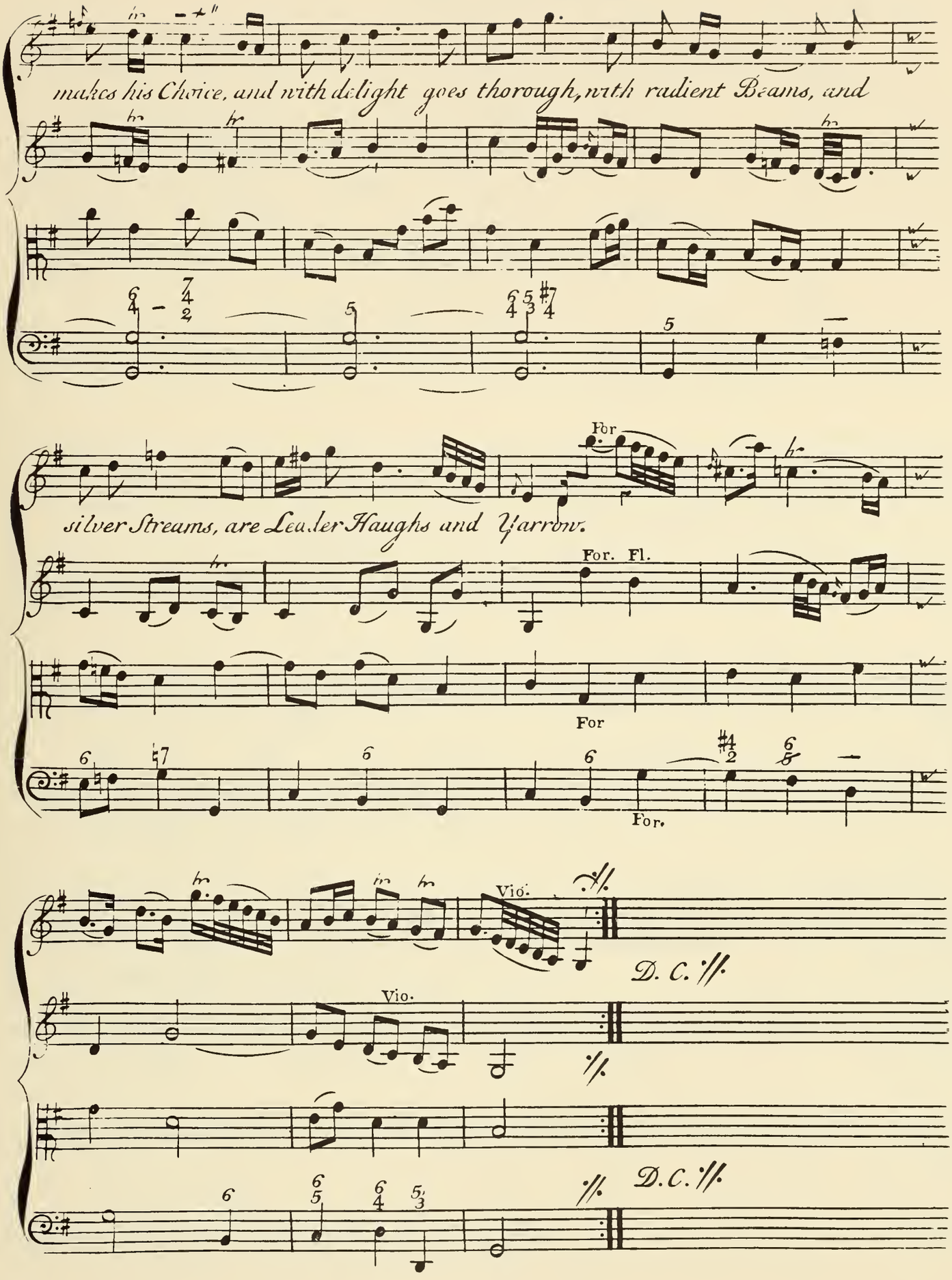

When at her Father's Yate I knock'd where I had often been She shrouded only
with her Smock a-rose and loot me in.
For.
Pia.
For.
Pia.
For.
D.C.

Song III

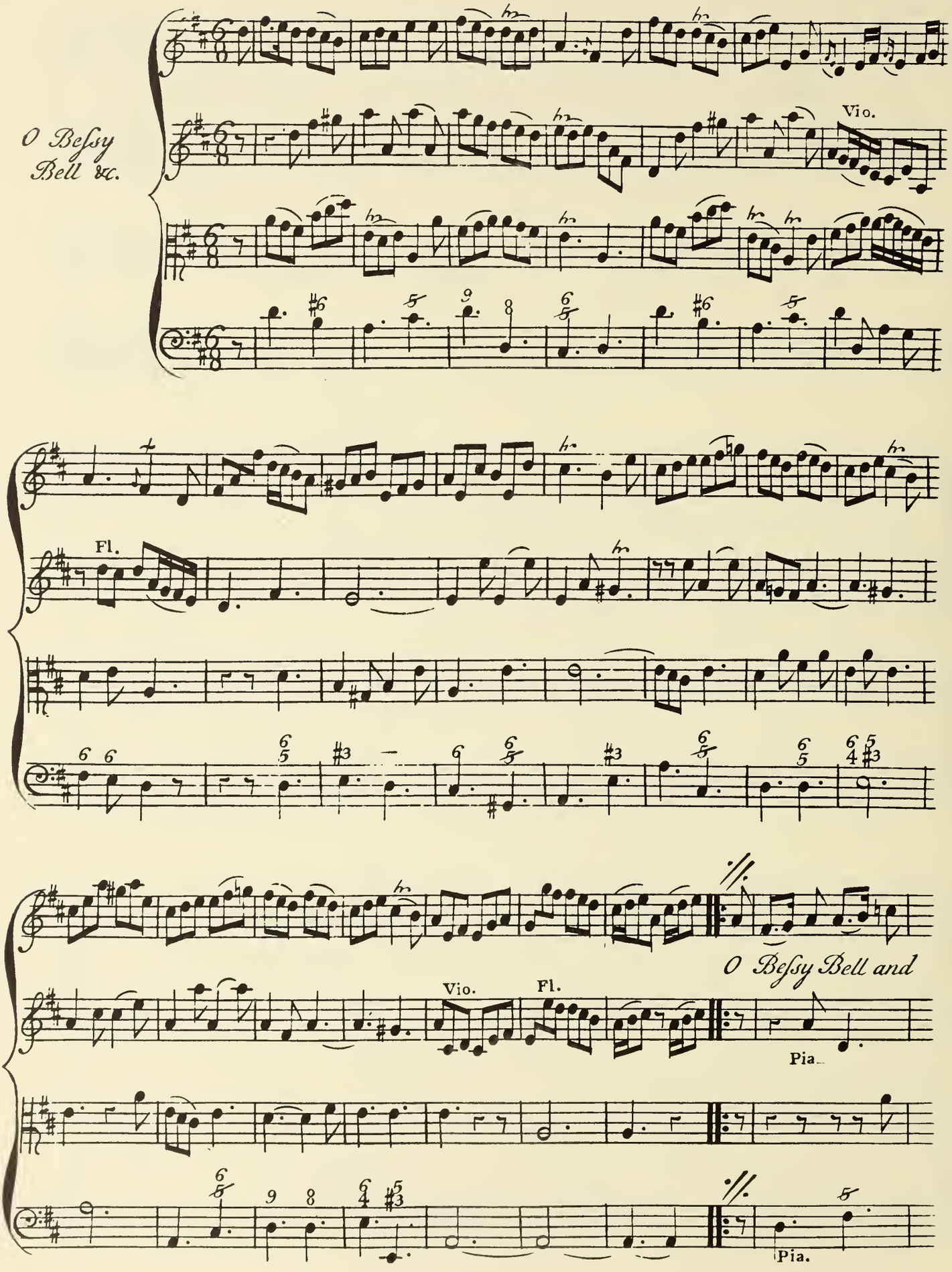
When Phœbus bright &c.

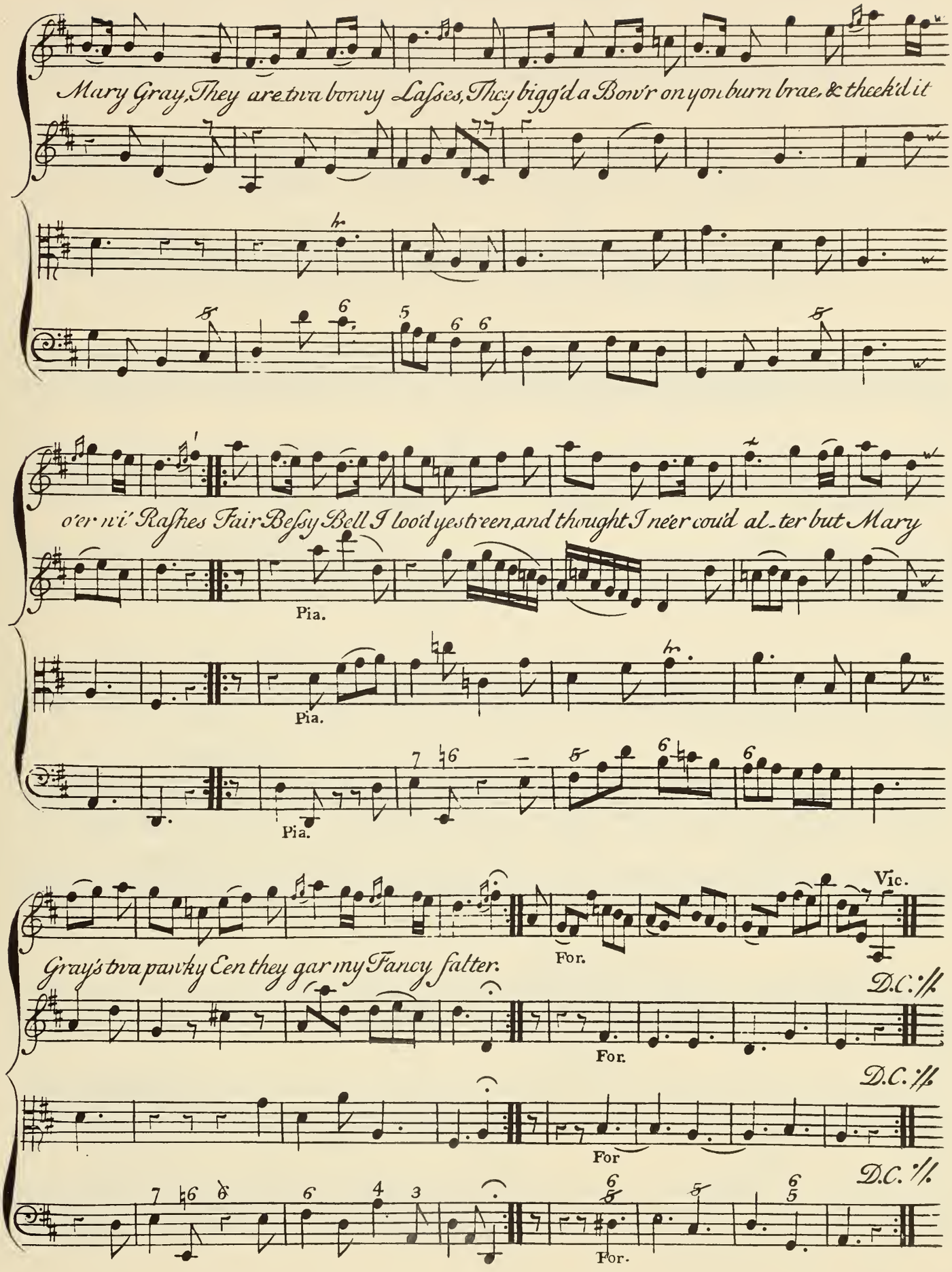



Fl.
When Phœbus bright the azure Skies with golden Rays en- light-neth he
Vio. Pia
makes all Na-ture's Beauties rise Herbs Trees and Flow'rs he quickneth
For
Fl.
For.
For
Pia.
a- mongst all those he
Pia. Vio
For.
Pia.
Pia


makes his Choice, and with delight goes thorough, with radient Beams, and
For
silver Streams, are Leader Haughs and Yarrow.
For. Fl.
For
For.
Vio.
D. C. //.
Vio.
D. C. //.

Song IIII




Mary Gray, They are twa bonny Lasses, They bigg'd a Bow'r on yon burn brae, & theek'd it
o'er wi' Rashes Fair Bessy Bell I lood yestreen, and thought I ne'er could al-ter but Mary
Pia.
Pia.
Pia.
Vic.
Gray's twa pawky Een they gar my Fancy falter.
For.
D.C. ℔
For.
D.C. ℔
For
D.C. ℔
For.

The Broom of Cowdenknows

Grave

pia

for.

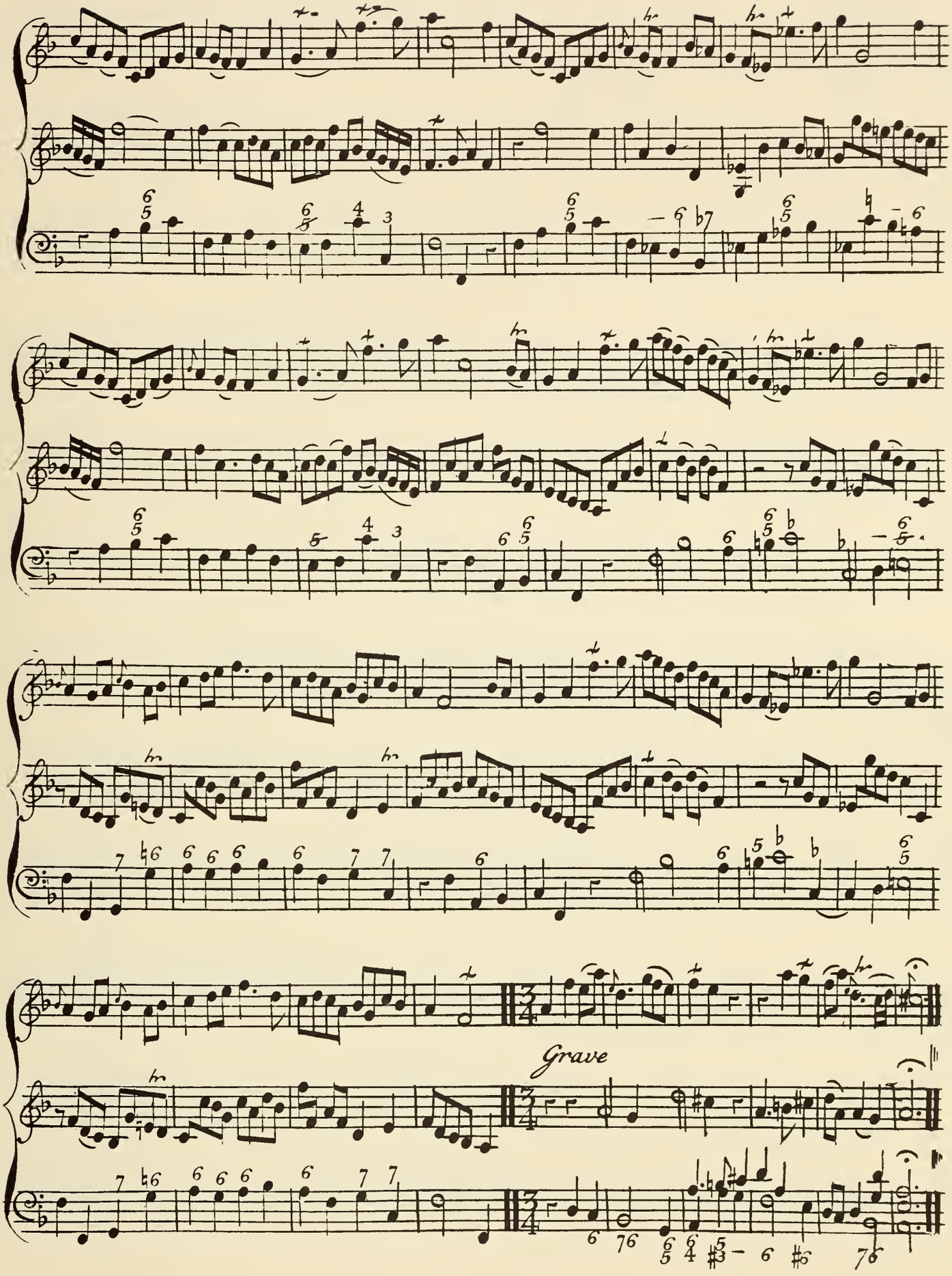
fegue

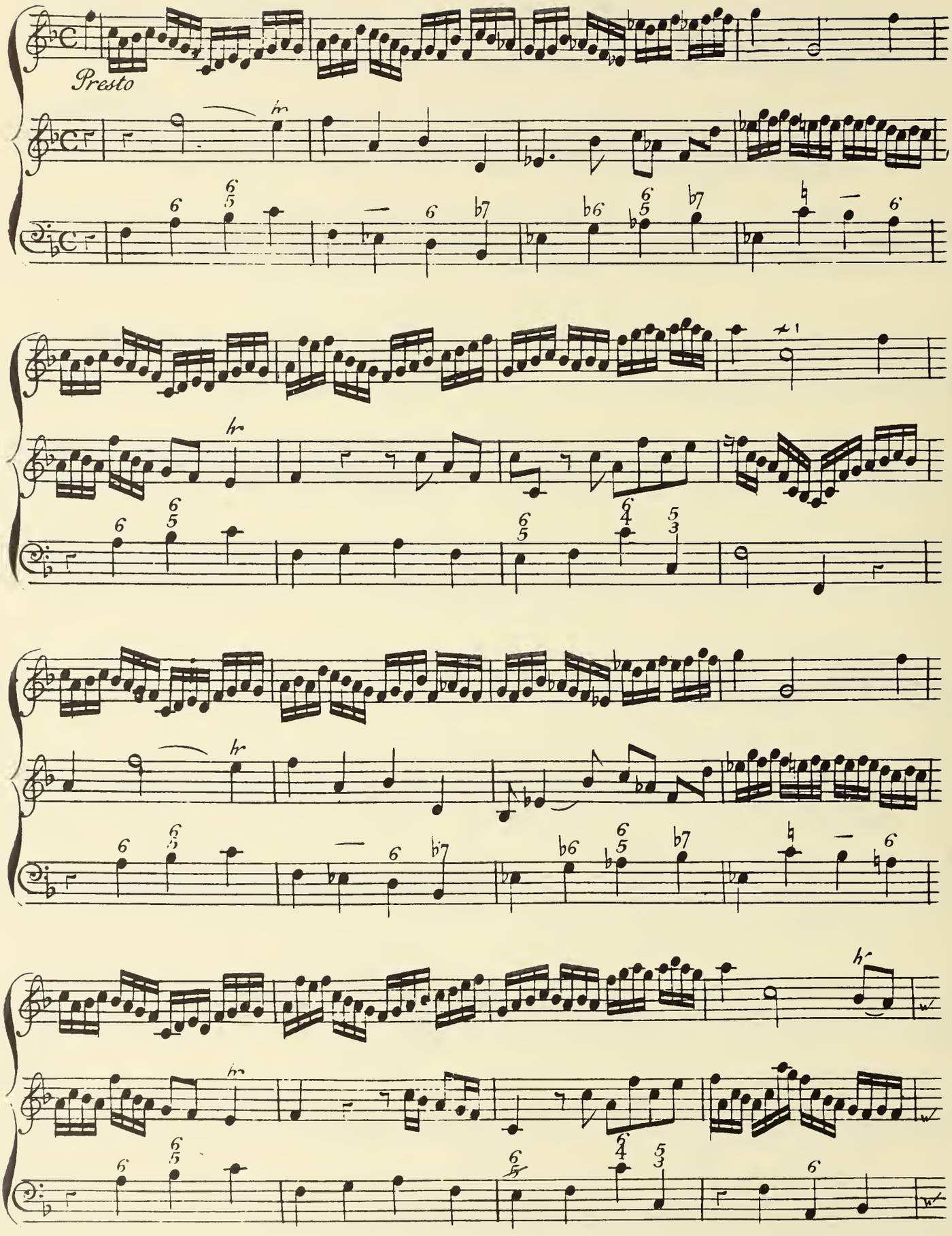
pia

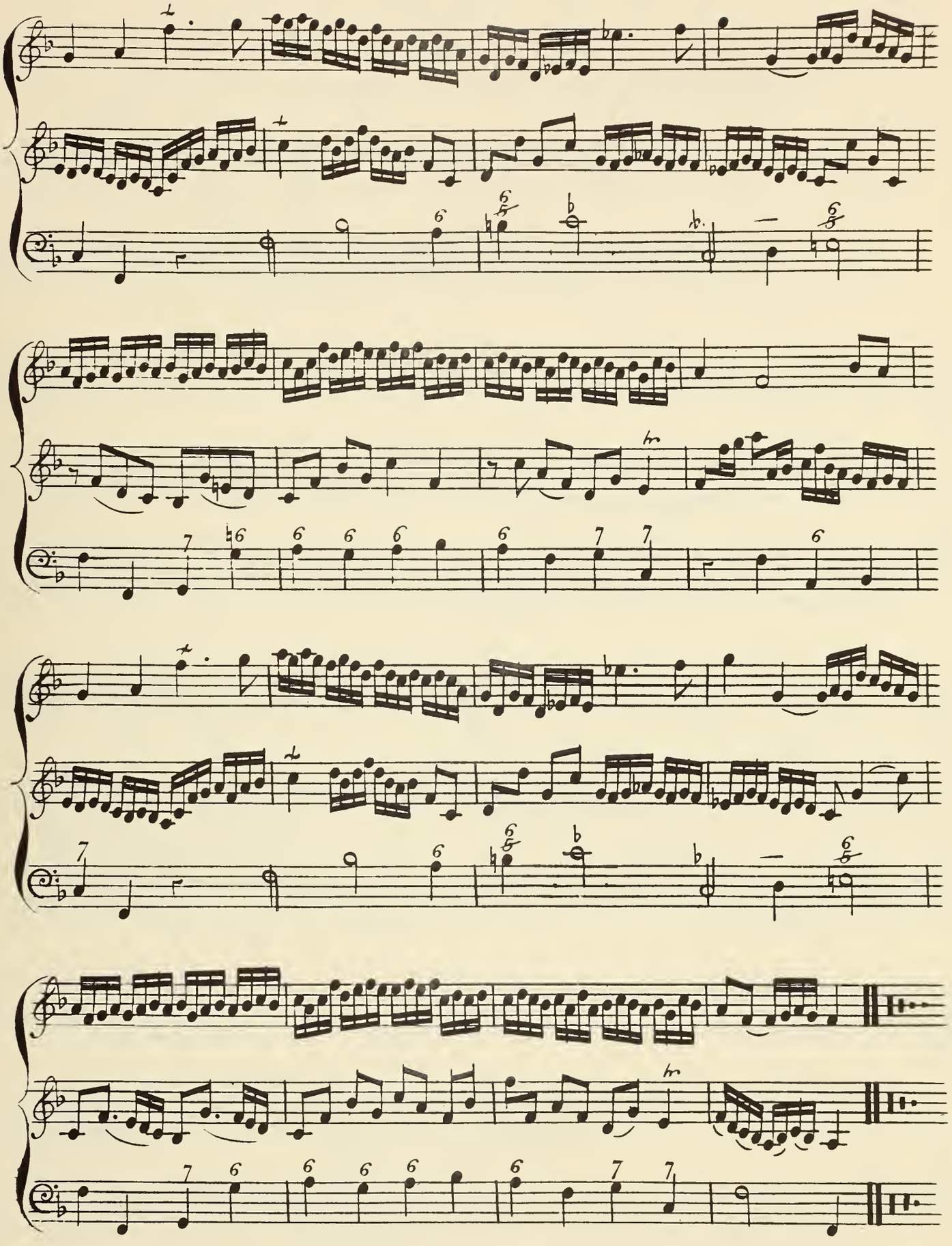
for.

Bonny Christy

Andante


Grave

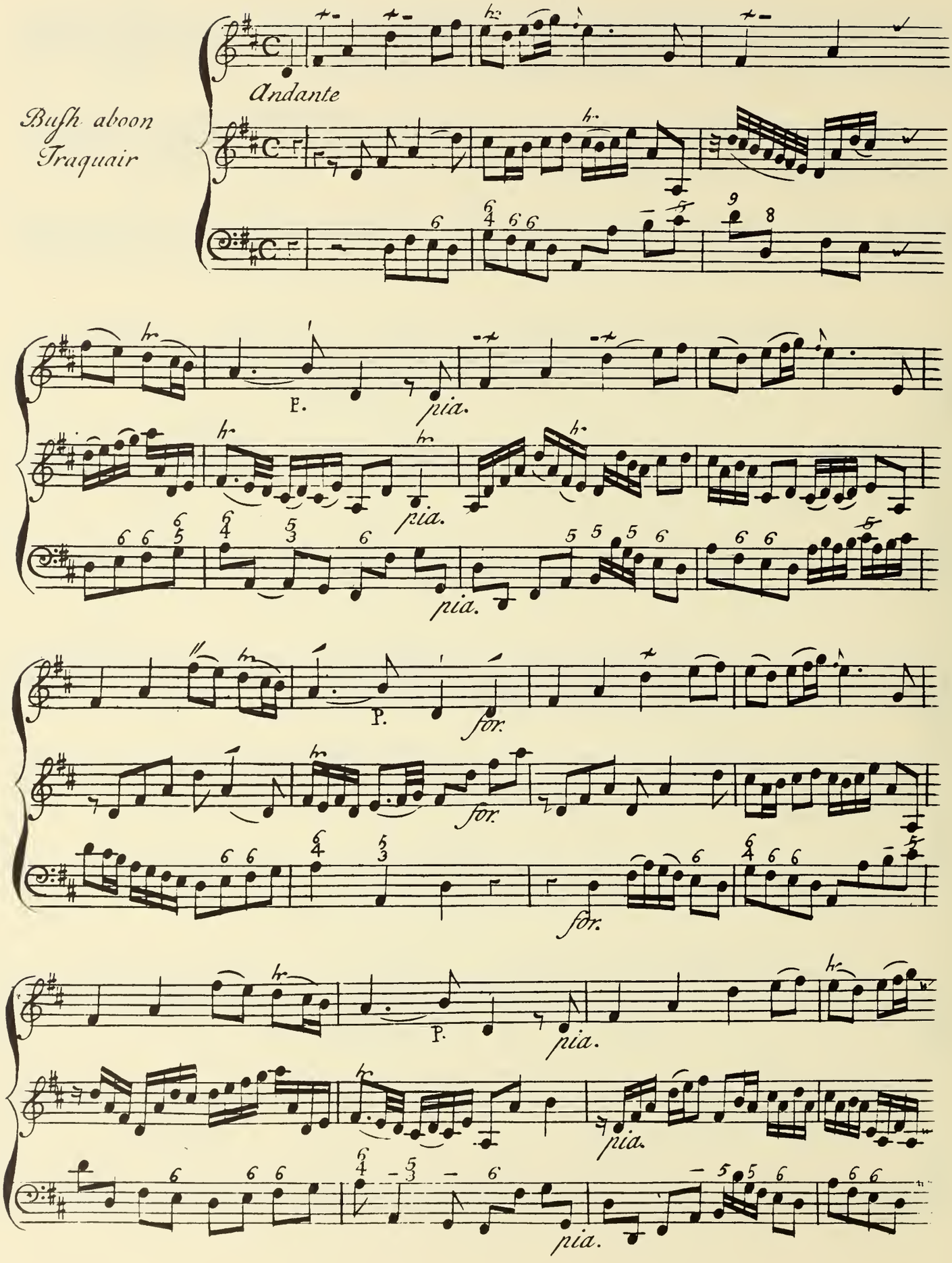

Presto

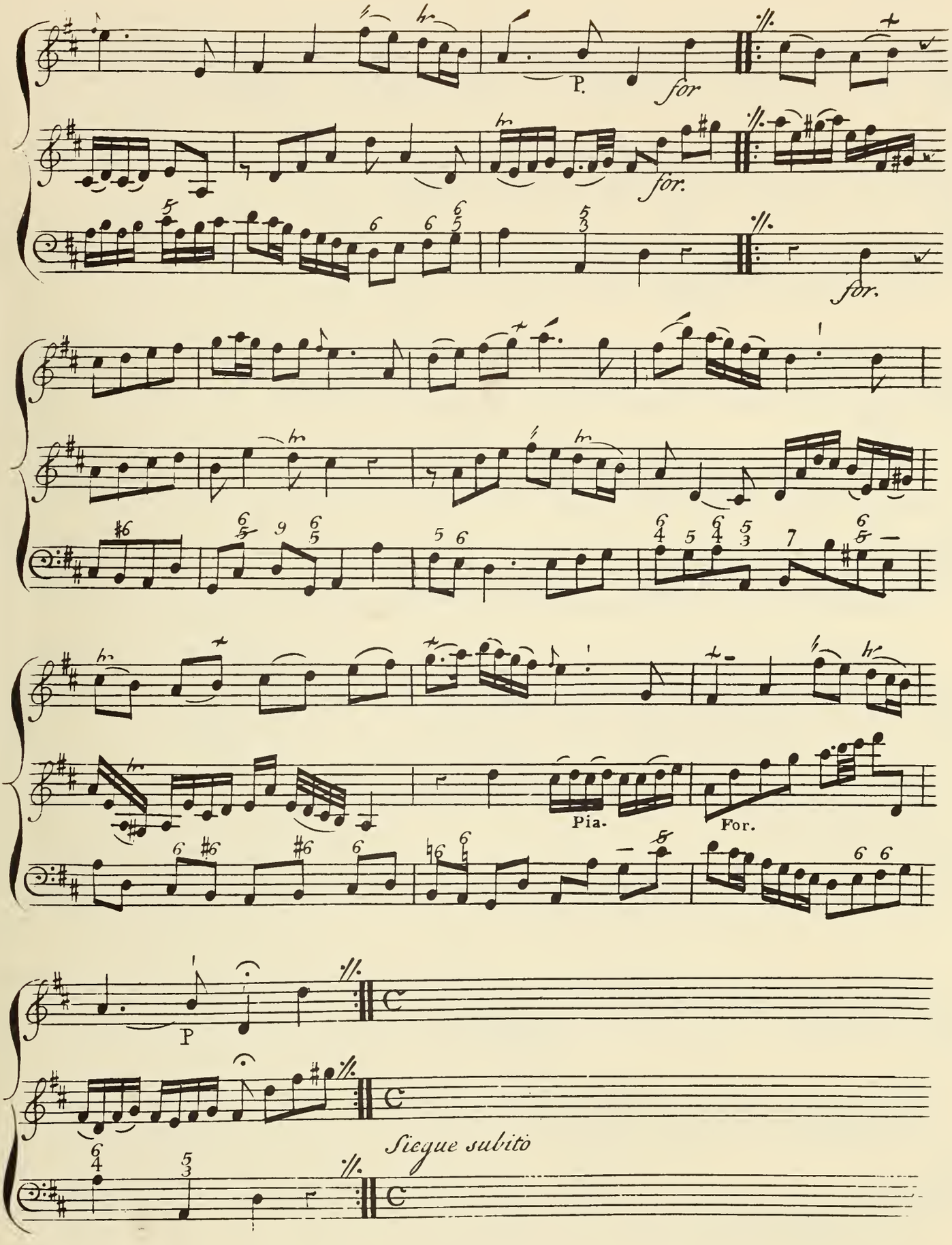


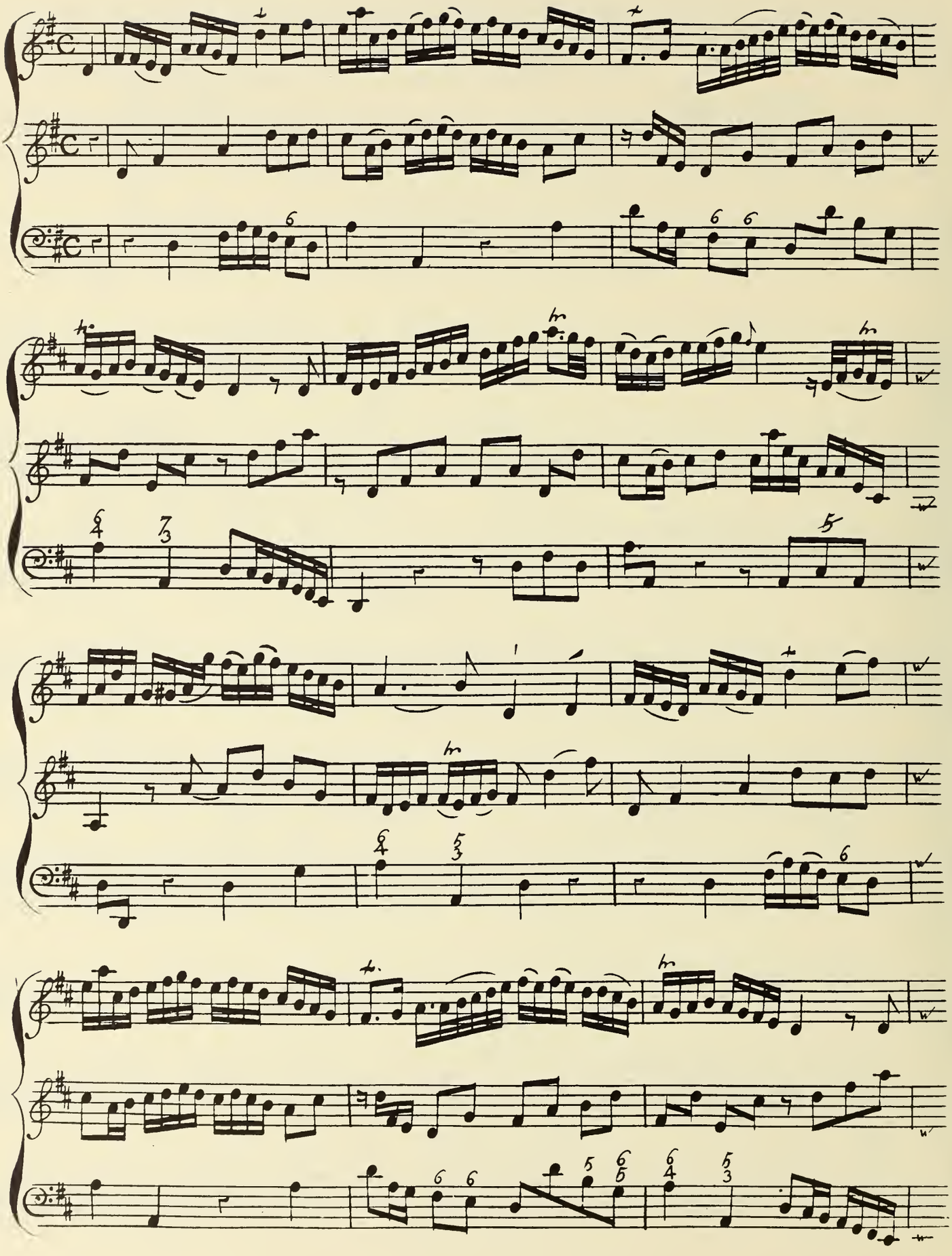
Sonata II

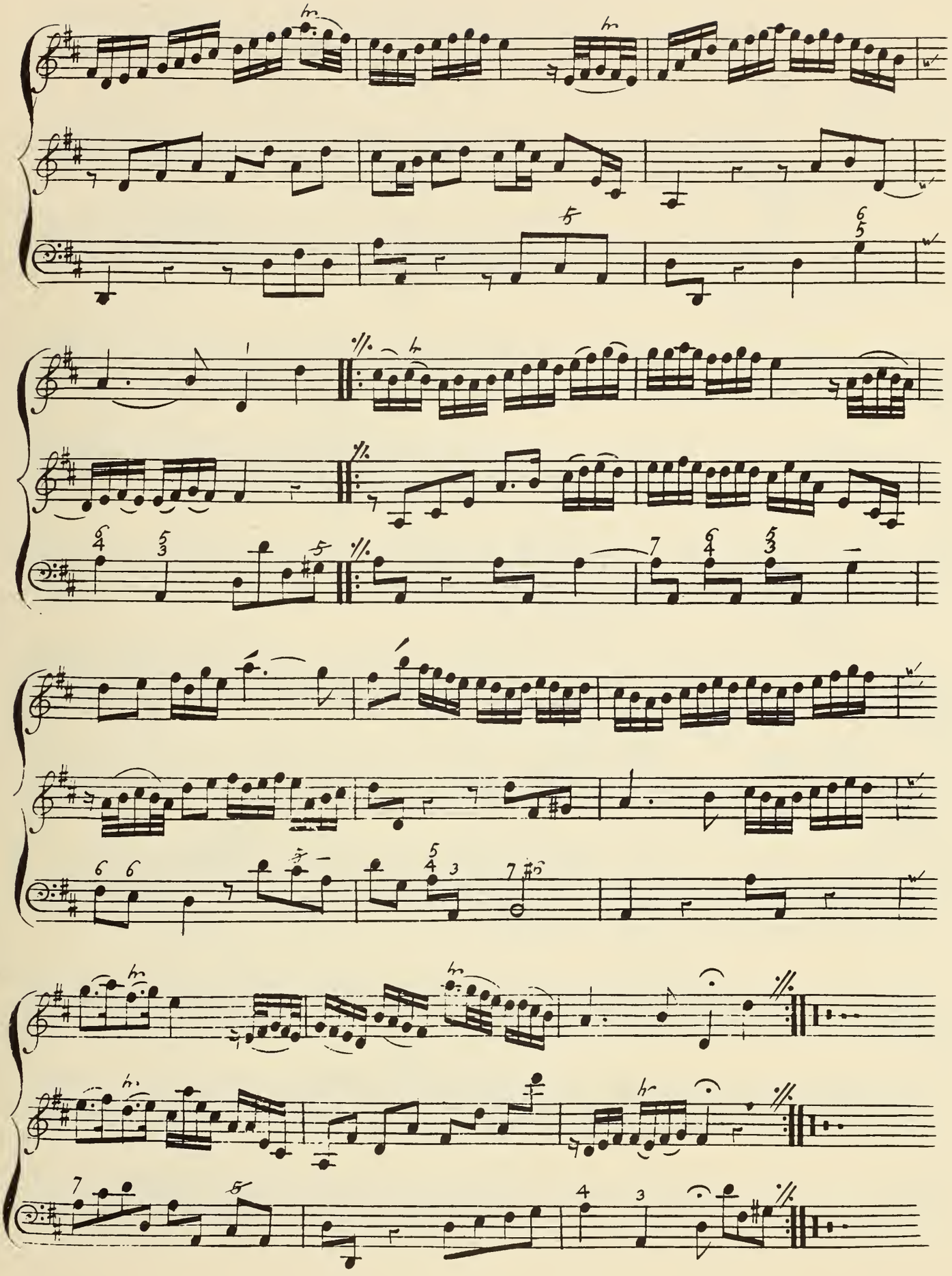
Andante

Bush aboon Traquair



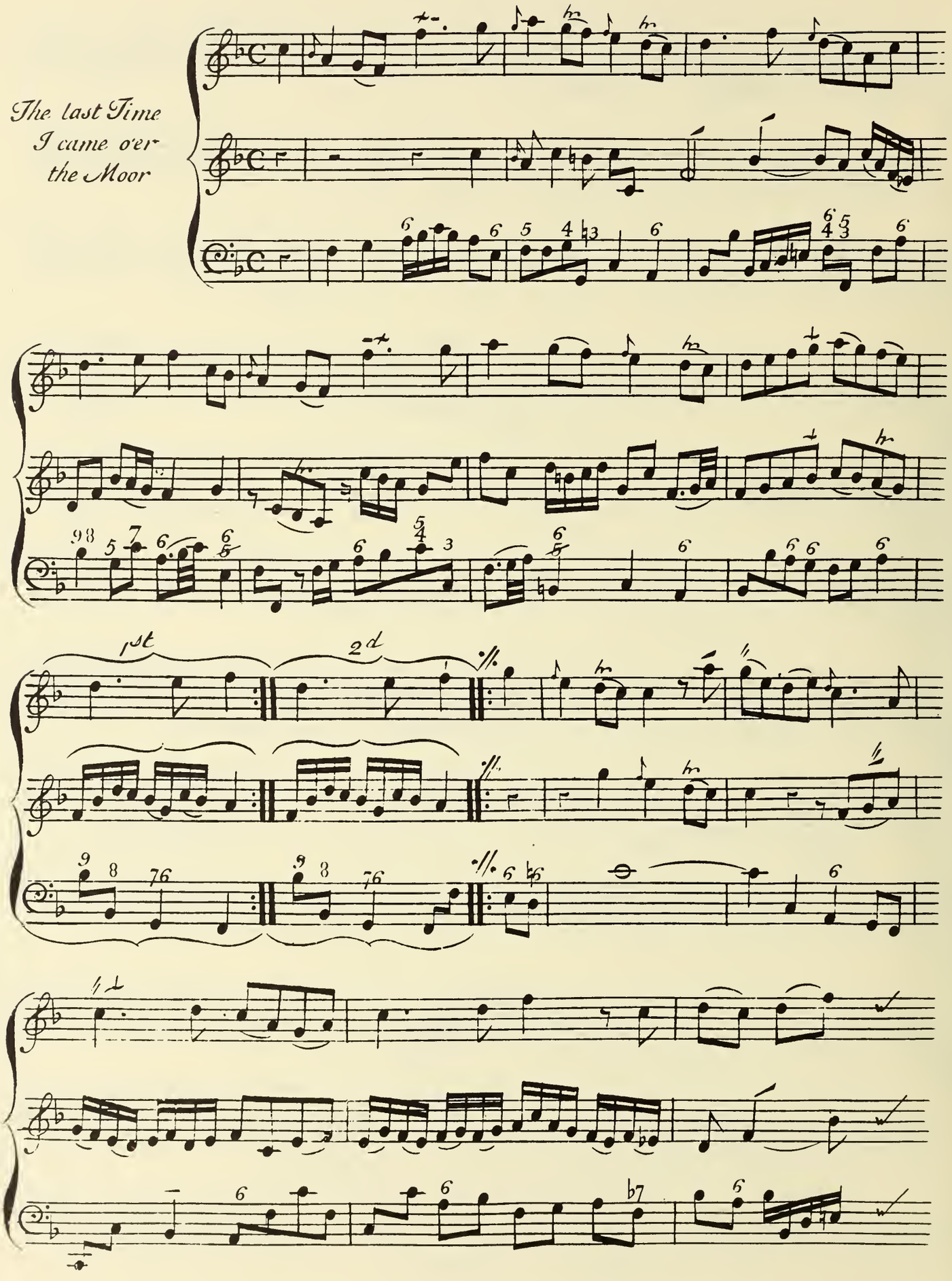

P.
for
for.
for.
Pia.
For.
P
Siegue subito

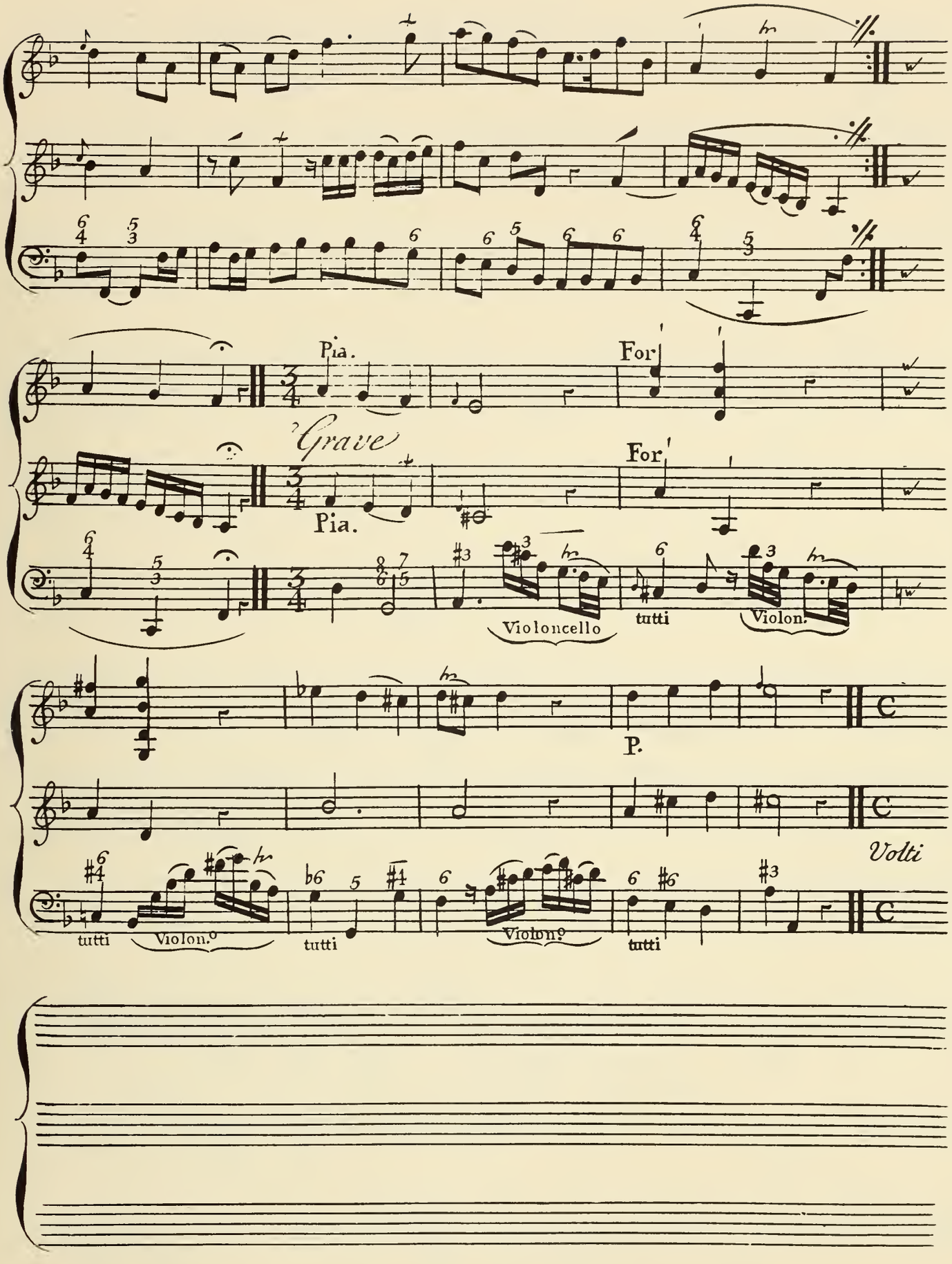


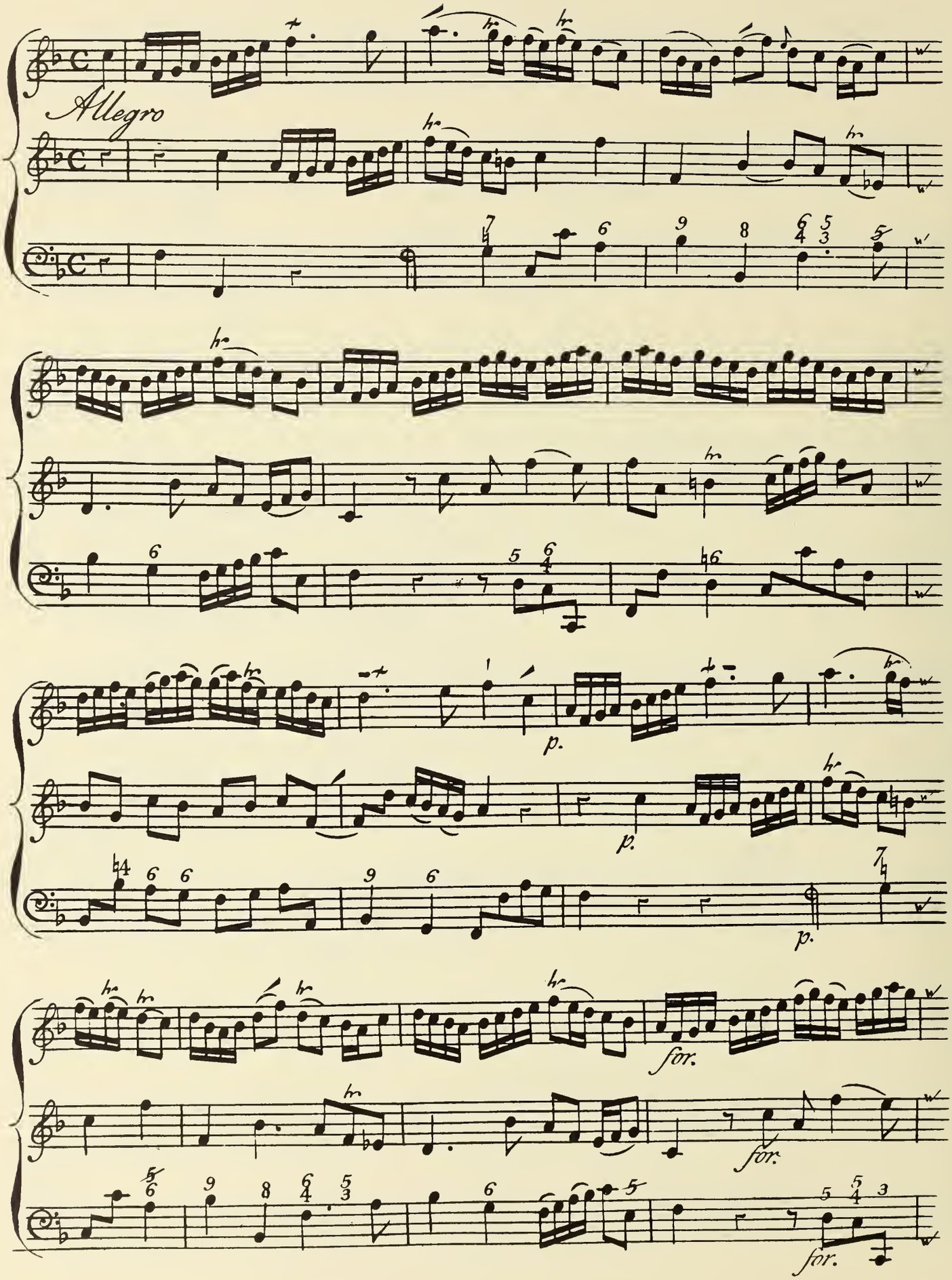


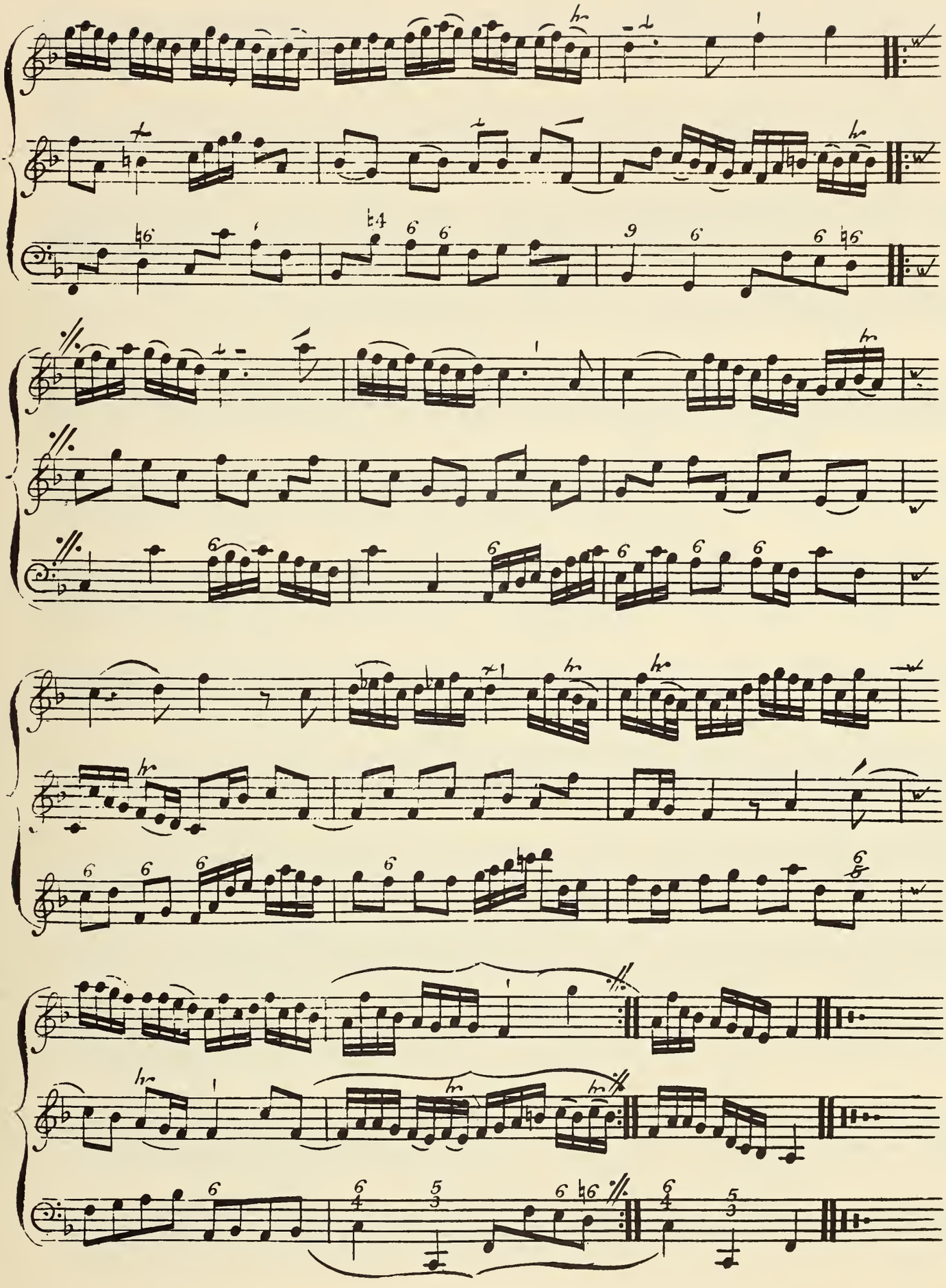
Sonata III

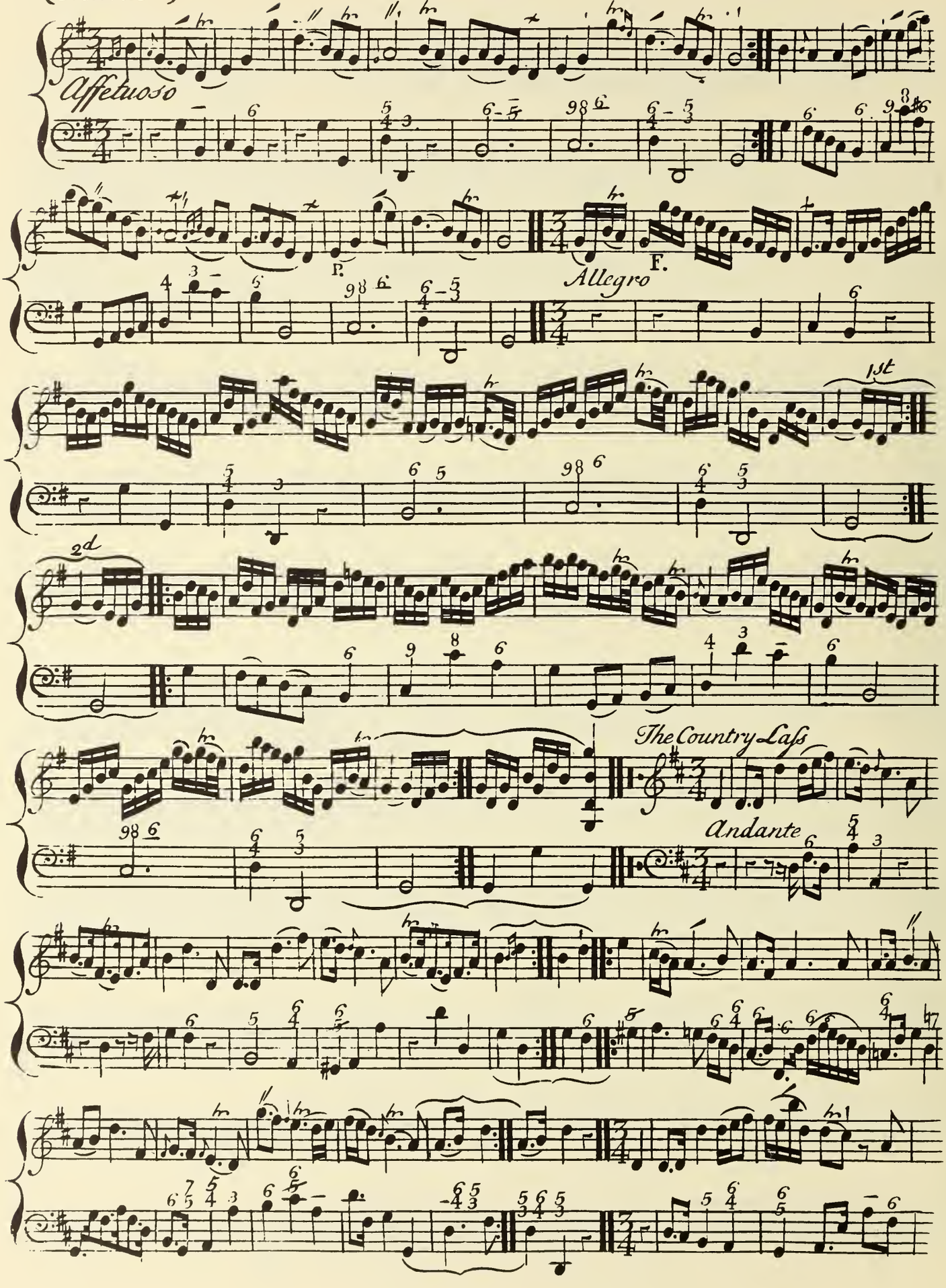
The last Time I came o'er the Moor

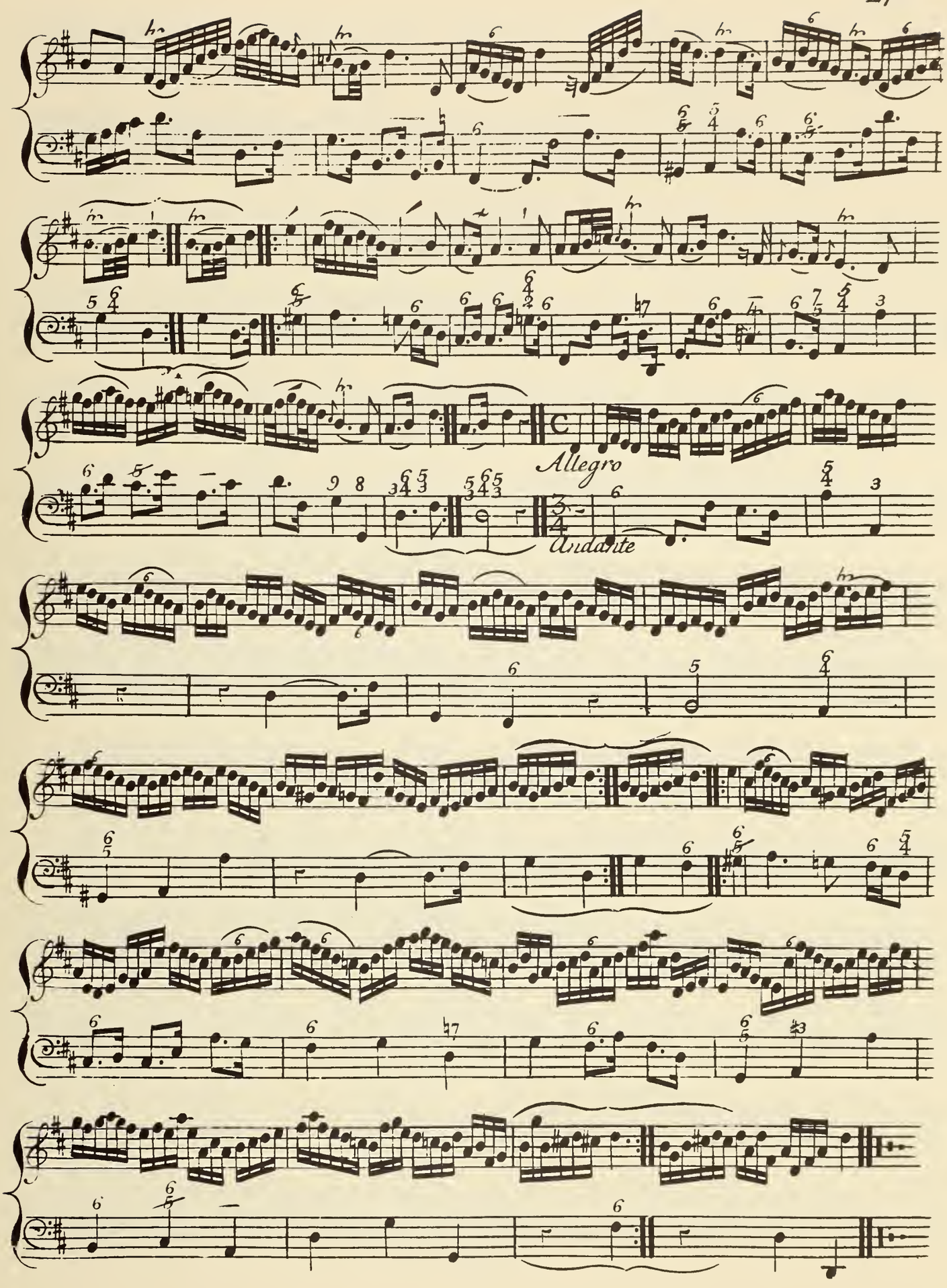


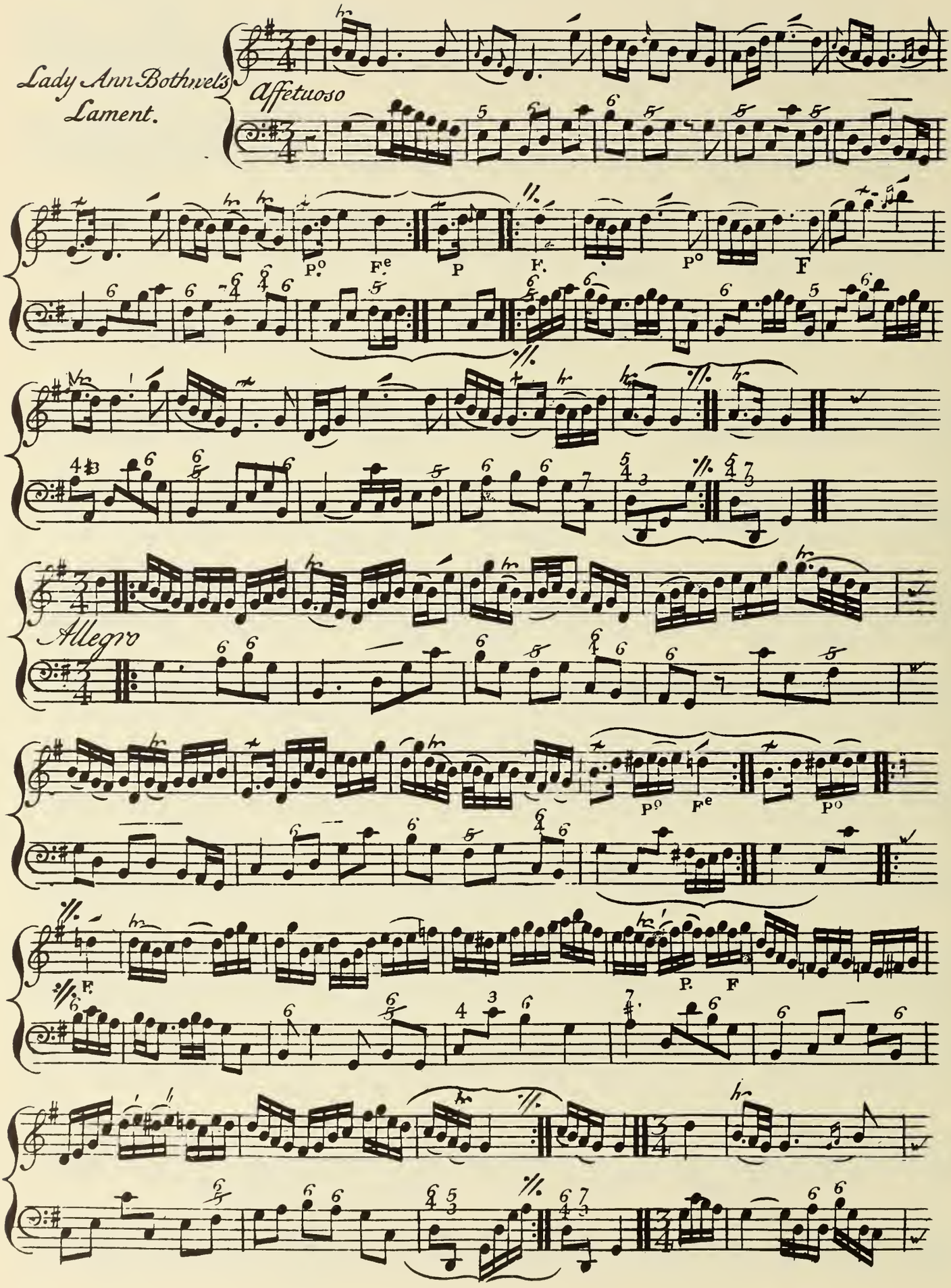

Pia.
For
Grave
Pia.
For
Violoncello
tutti
Violon.
P.
Volti
tutti
Violon.o
tutti
Violon.o
tutti

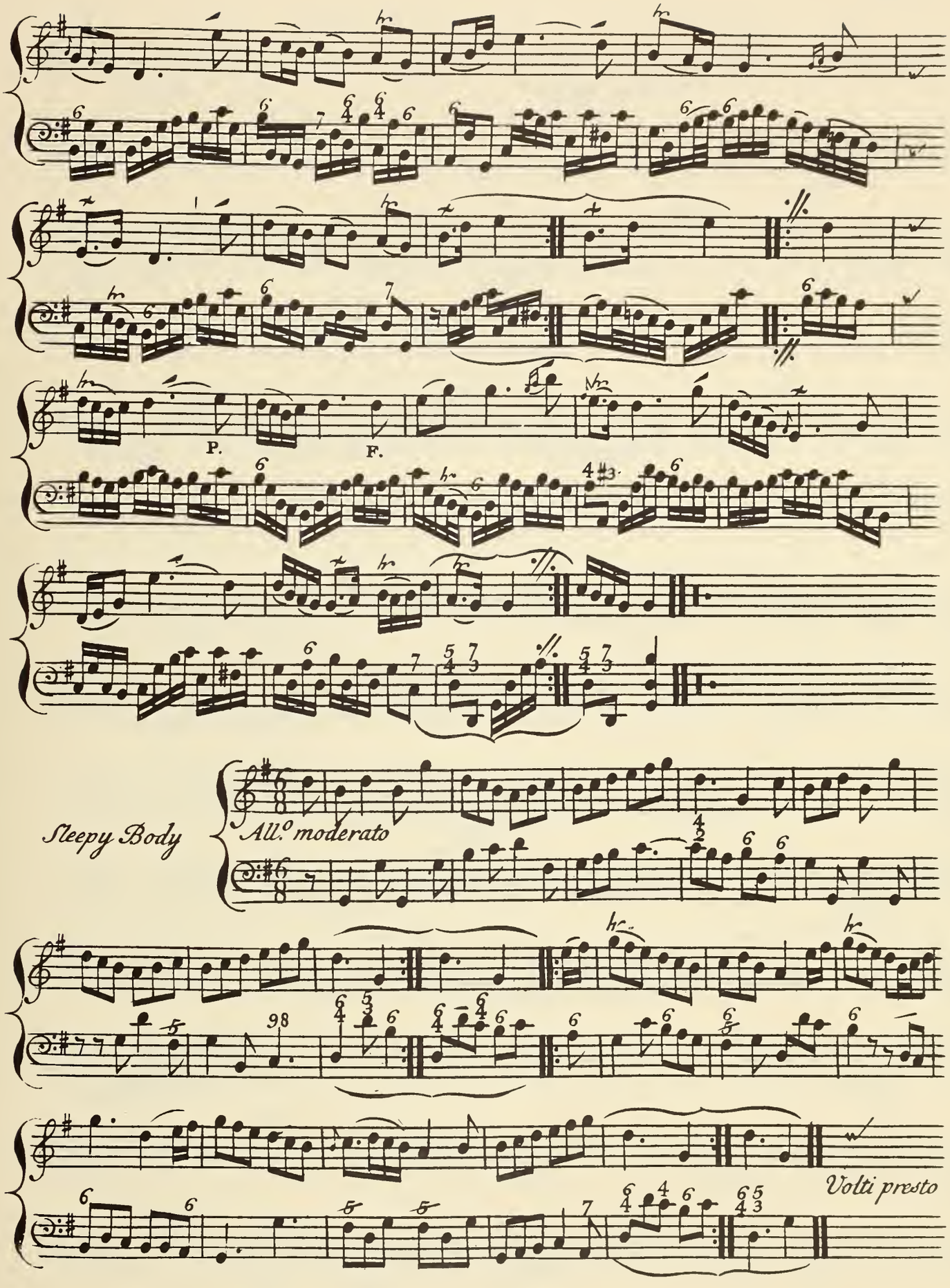

Allegro
p.
p.
p.
for.
for.
for.

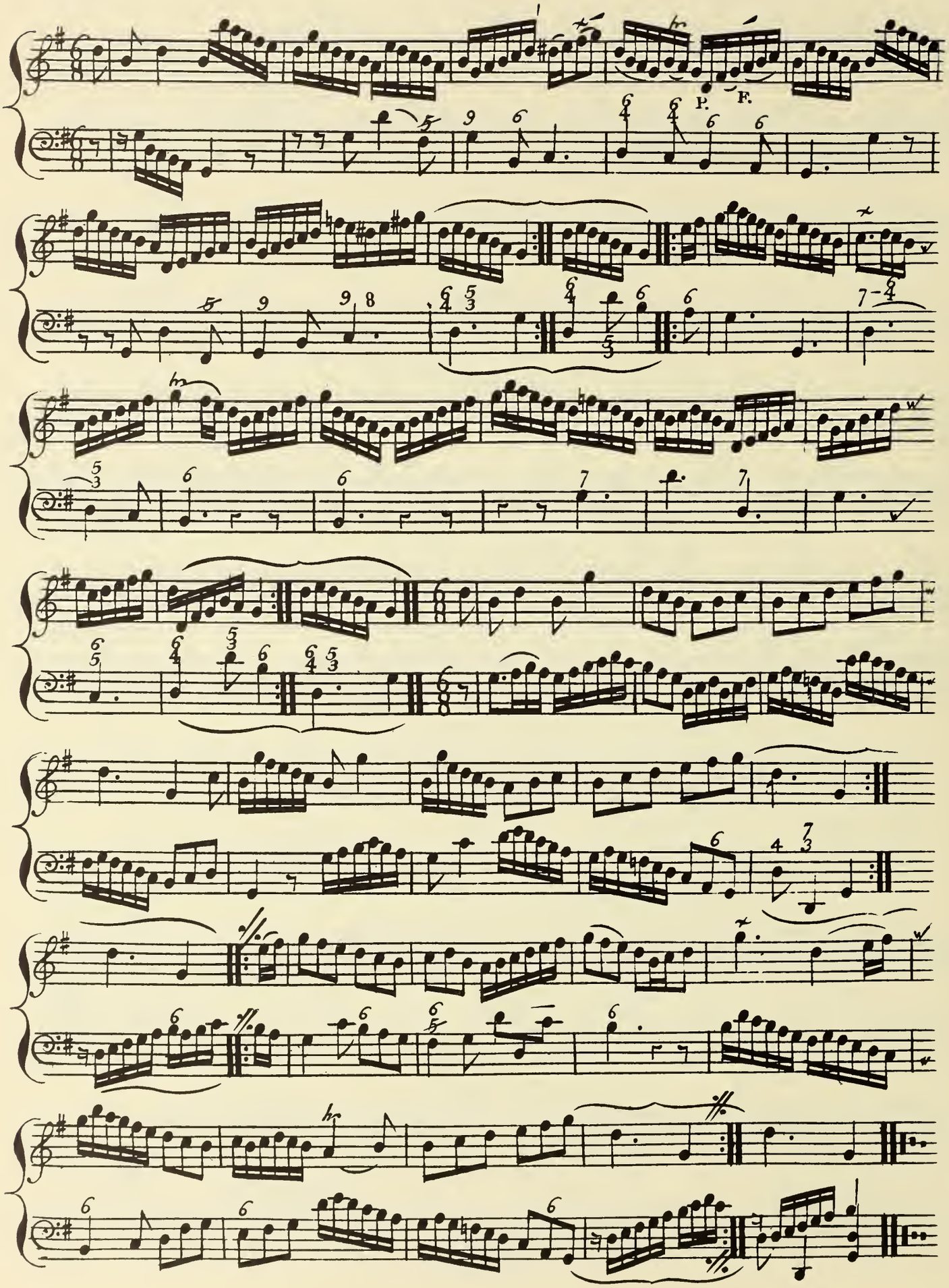



Affetuoso
P.
F.
Allegro
1st
2d
The Country Lass
Andante


Allegro
Andante


Lady Ann Bothwel's
Lament.
Affetuoso
P.o
Fe
P
F.
Po
F
Allegro
Po
Fe
Po
F.
P.
F


P.
F.
Sleepy Body
All.o moderato
98
Volti presto


P.
F.