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Piano Course: Grade 2, Studies

Sherwood Music School

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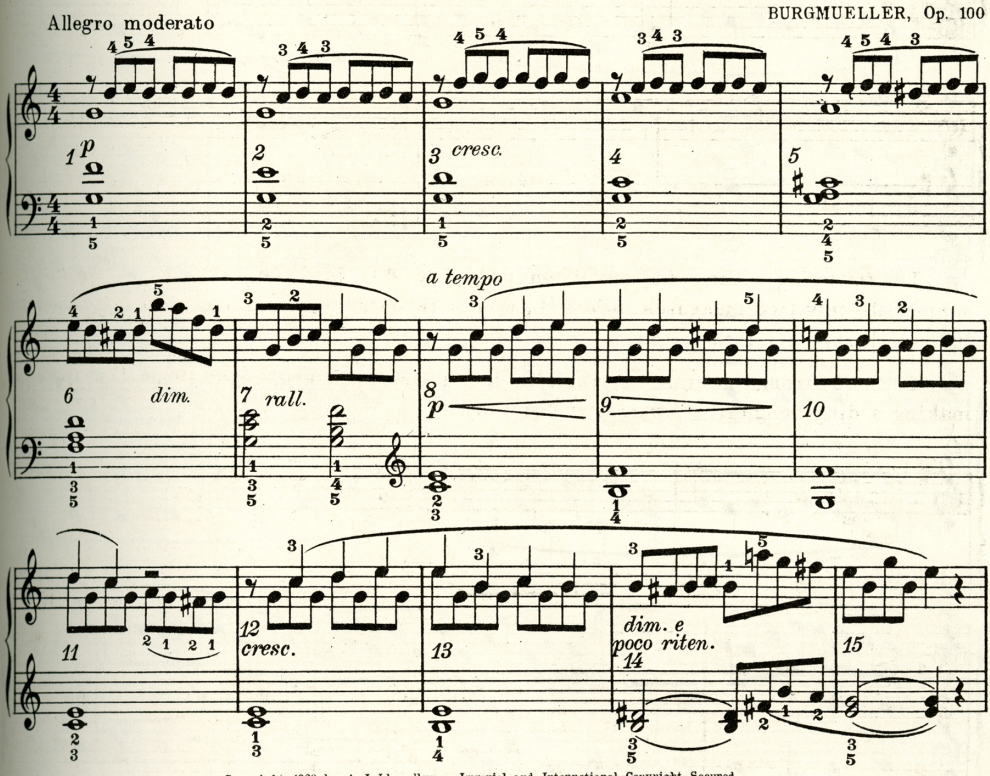
Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 201

The point to be mastered in this study is the playing of melody and accompaniment notes with the same hand, letting the melody notes sing out well, while the others are kept subdued, so as to make a background. The first seven measures form an introduction. Hold the whole notes to their full time, while playing the eighths softly.

The melody itself does not begin until the eighth measure. The melody notes are distinguished by the upward stems of the quarter notes. In the last half of measure 11, the rest shows that the melody is discontinued. It is taken up again in measure 12. In measures 14 and 15, there are no rests or double stems. The notes in these and in other similar measures may be considered melody notes.

First, play the melody notes alone, carefully transferring the weight from finger to finger, and following all the expression marks. Then play the whole right hand part complete, putting the accompaninment notes in softly with a light touch. Beginning with measure 24, the left hand has a similar problem, which should be worked out the same way. In playing both hands together, you will see that from measure 24, on, there are two melodies, one in each hand, making a duet.



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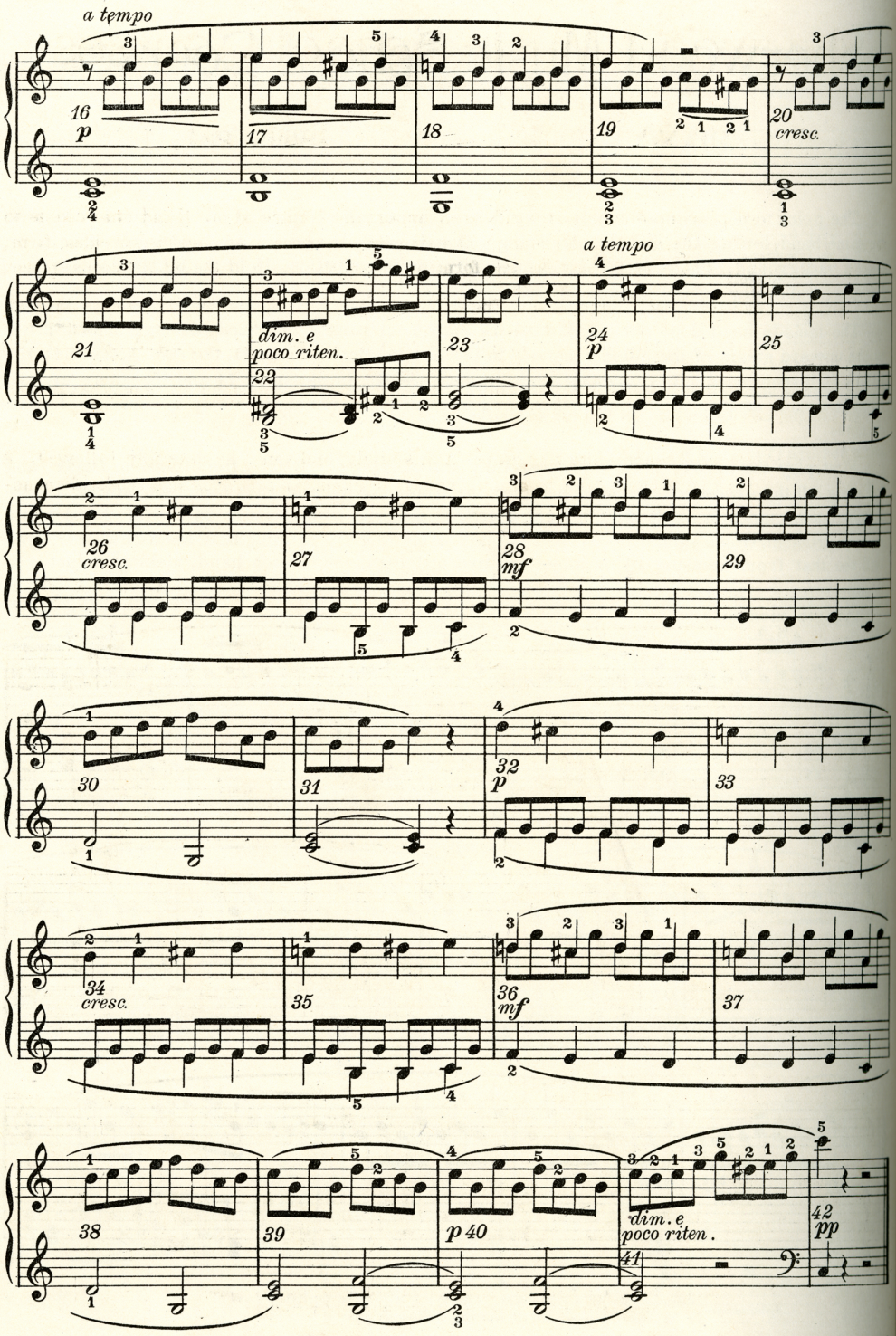
a tempo
16
p
17
18
19
20
cresc.
21
dim. e
poco riten.
22
23
a tempo
24
p
25
26
cresc.
27
28
mf
29
30
31
32
p
33
34
cresc.
35
36
mf
37
38
39
p 40
dim. e
poco riten.
41
42
pp

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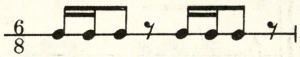
PIANO — Study 202

Staccato chord playing for the left hand is an important feature here. Hand staccato is to be used throughout. (See Lesson 14, TECHNIC.) The fingers must be curved, and the knuckles firm, so that all the notes of each chord will be struck at precisely the same time and with equal force.

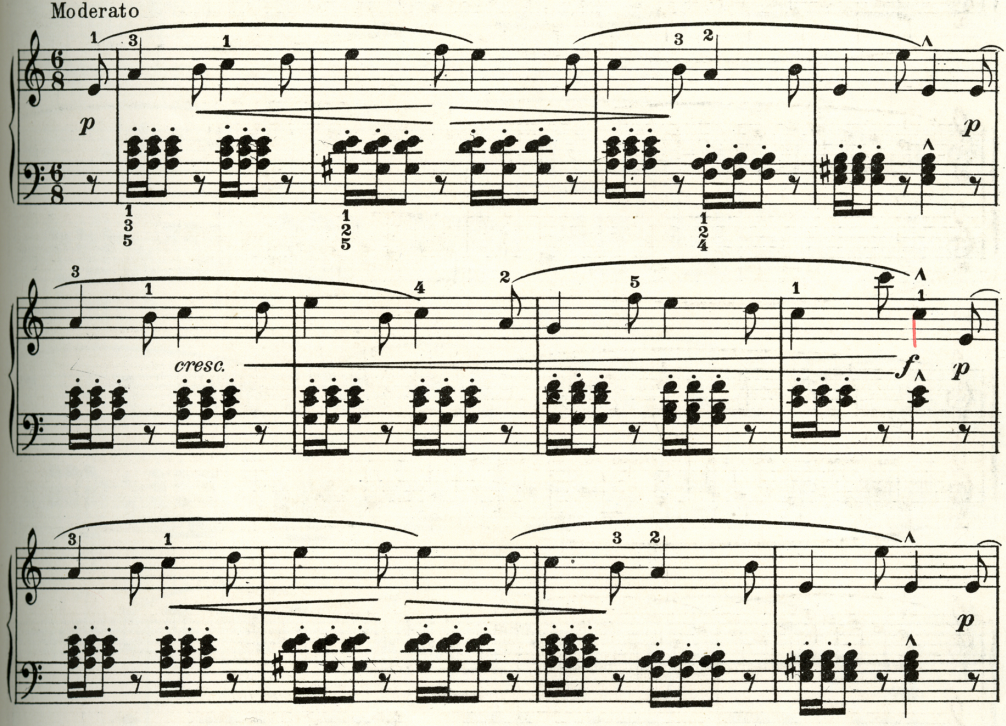
Counting aloud, at first, is important. The following rhythm in the left hand part runs through the entire study, so it should be mastered in the very first measure. 

In the meantime, the right hand has a melody to sing, and this must be extremely legato, and always clearly heard above the left hand part.

The expression marks are quite numerous in this study, and must be carefully followed. A crescendo sometimes reaches the *forte* by very gradual degrees, and extends over several measures. Such long crescendos occur in this study.

CONCONE, Op. 24

Moderato



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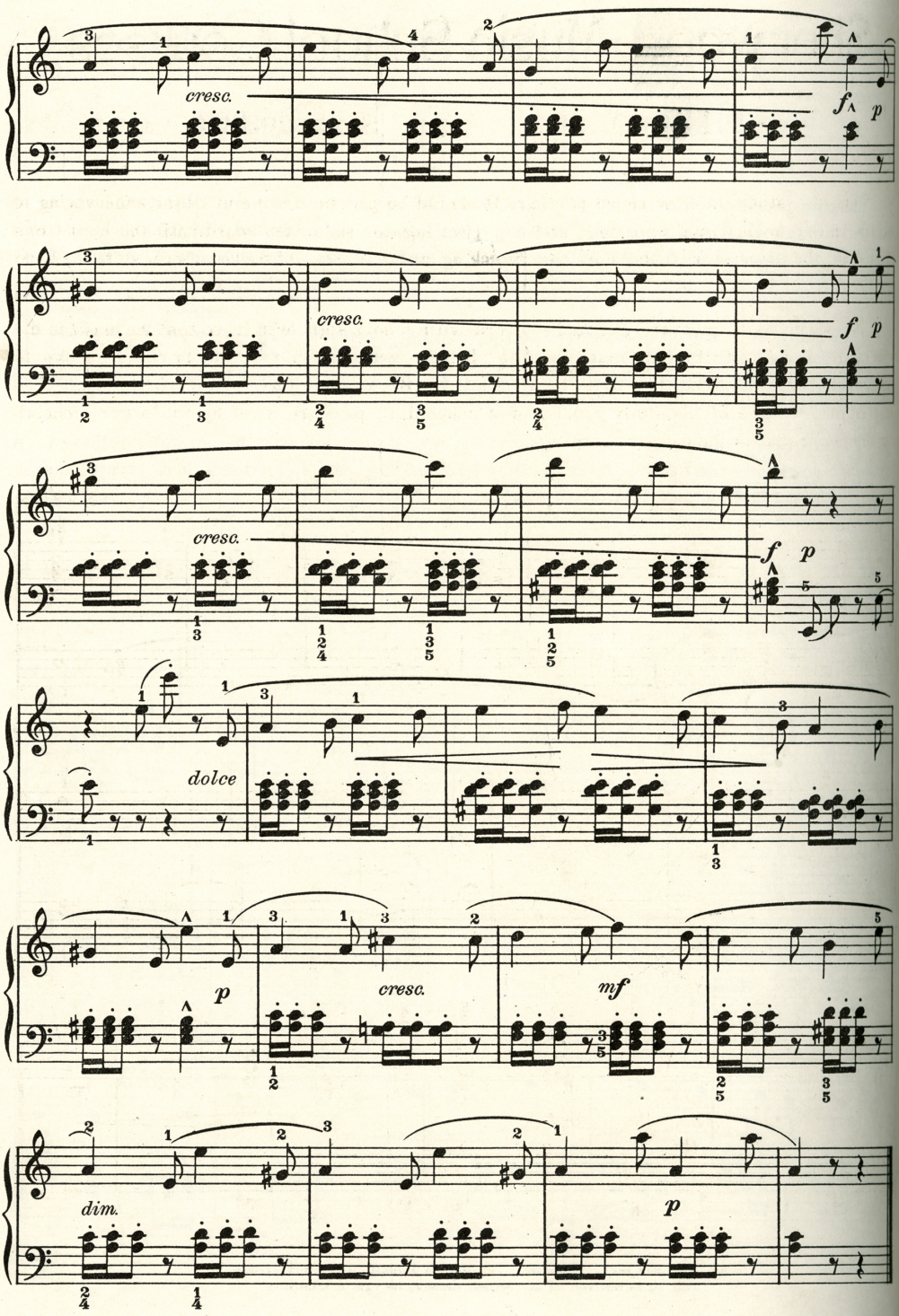
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
dolce
p
cresc.
mf
dim.
p

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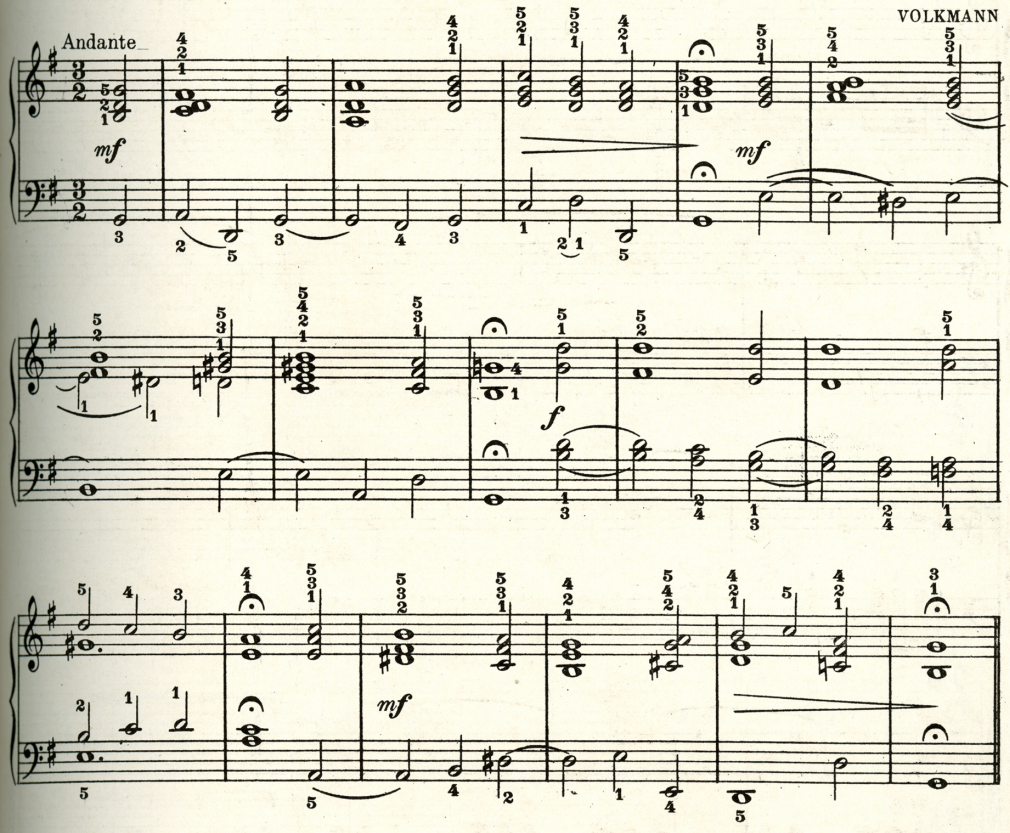
PIANO — Study 203

This is a study in slow chord playing. It should be practiced without pedal, endeavoring to obtain an organ-like quality of tone and a perfect legato. Hold each chord until the next one should be played; then, noticing both the fingering and the notes of the new chord, shift the hand quickly.

At every fourth measure you find a chord with a hold sign over it, so that the music is divided up, regularly, into four-measure lengths. It is, in fact, a hymn, from the beginning down to the double bar. The hymn melody is then repeated, with a little more variety of harmony. The last eight measures of the study consist of a concluding passage, as if by the organ alone, after the congregation has ceased singing.



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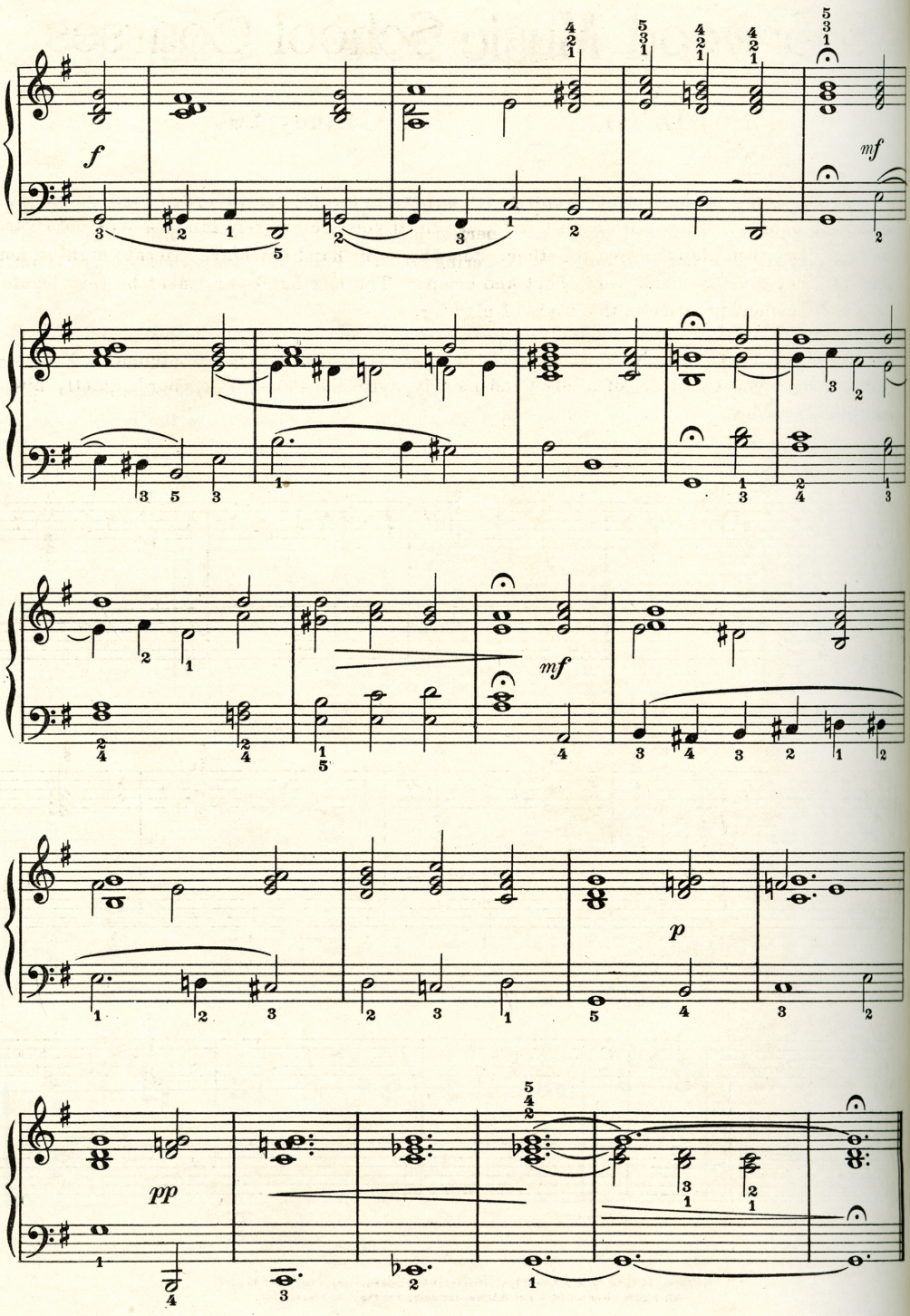
f
mf
mf
p
pp

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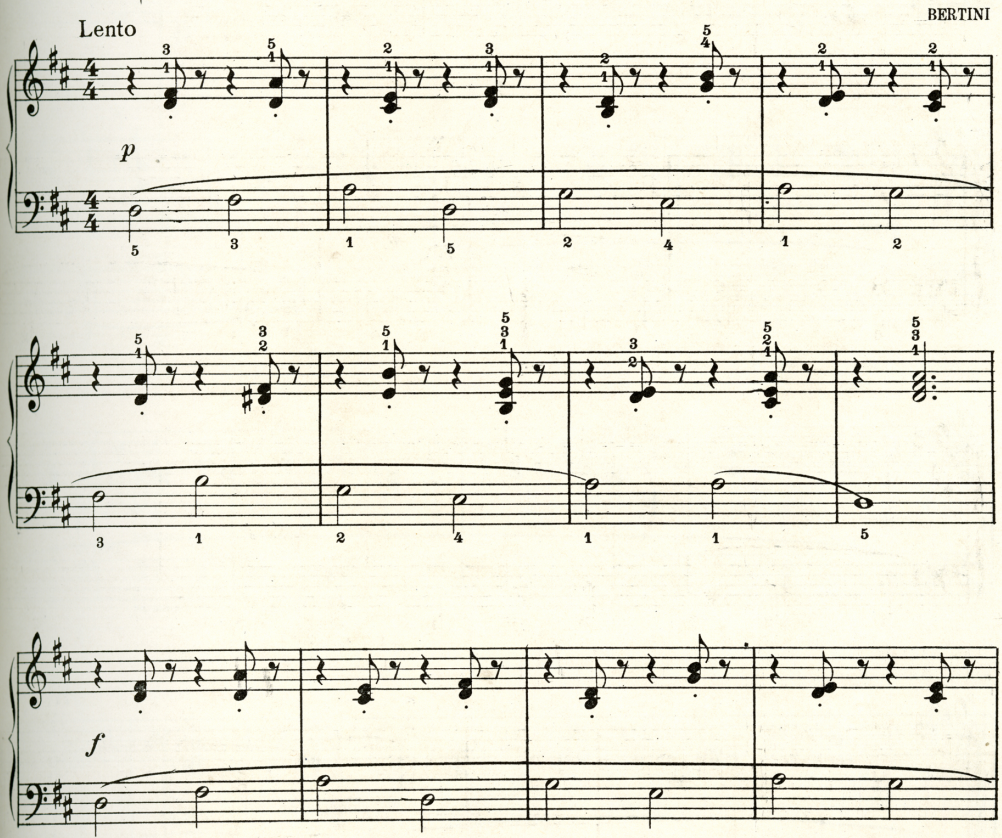
PIANO Study 204

A left hand part in sustained half notes is here in strong contrast to a right hand part in staccato chords. Play with each hand alone until you are entirely familiar with both notes and fingering, then play the two together. As the right hand notes are staccato eighths, not quarters, they must be made very short and crisp. The left hand part must be very legato, and gives excellent practice in this style of playing.

The word *Lento* at the beginning of the study indicates a very slow tempo. Musically, the piece consists entirely of a left hand melody, with the short, light chords, quietly hinting at the harmony.



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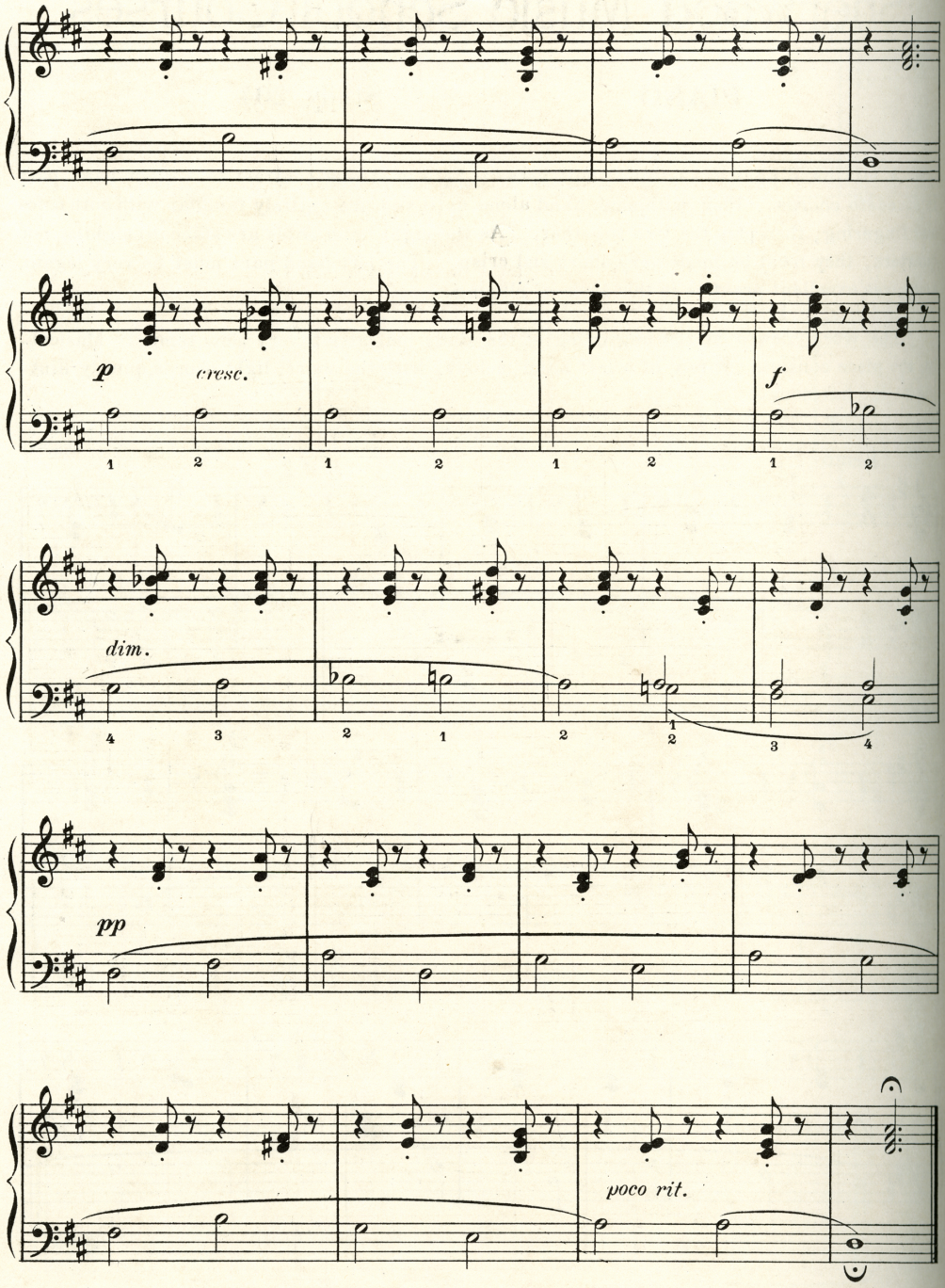
p
cresc.
f
dim.
pp
poco rit.

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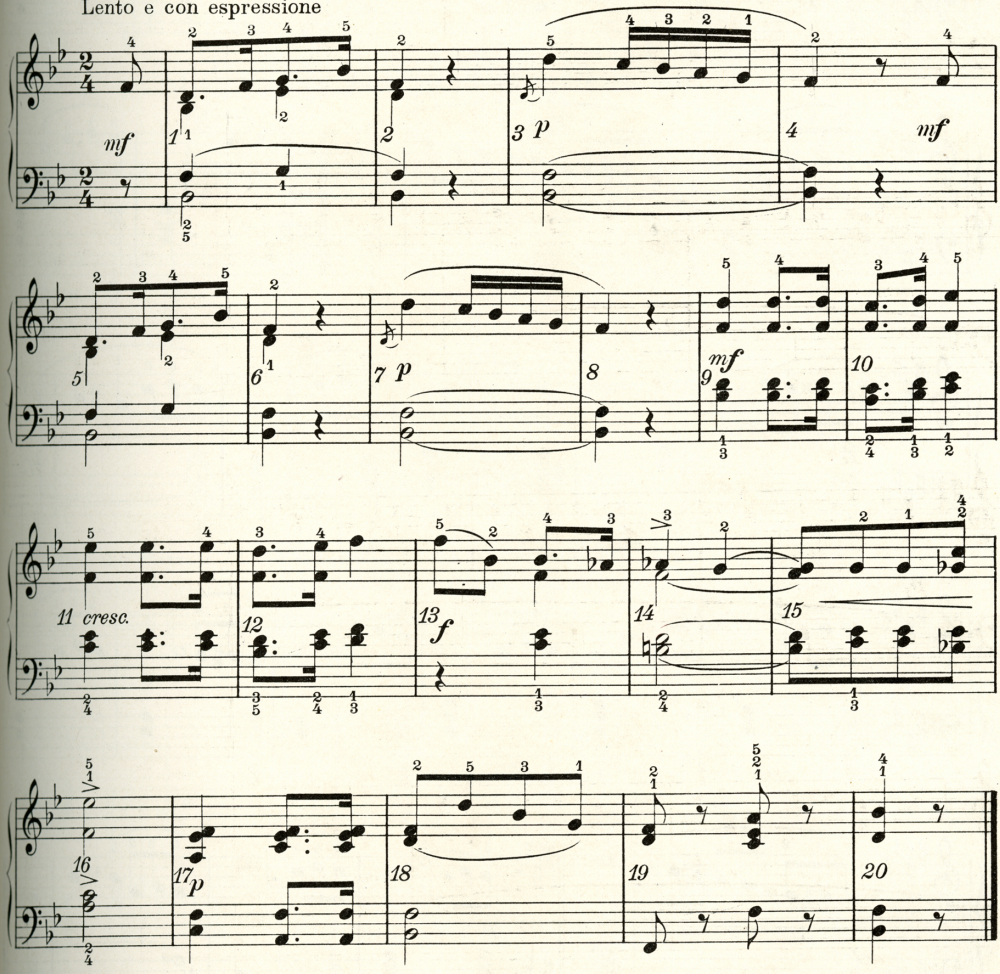
PIANO — Study 205

The strong rhythmical figure in the first two measures is an important characteristic of this study. The dotted eighth note must be given its full time, and the sixteenth must not be too long. To accomplish this, have the fingers ready to play the notes following the sixteenth, so that there will be no delay, or pause, on the sixteenth note. Play the grace note in measures 3 and 7 very short, and without accent. (See Lesson 32, GENERAL THEORY.) Observe the key, and play the required flats.

VOLKMANN

Lento e con espressione



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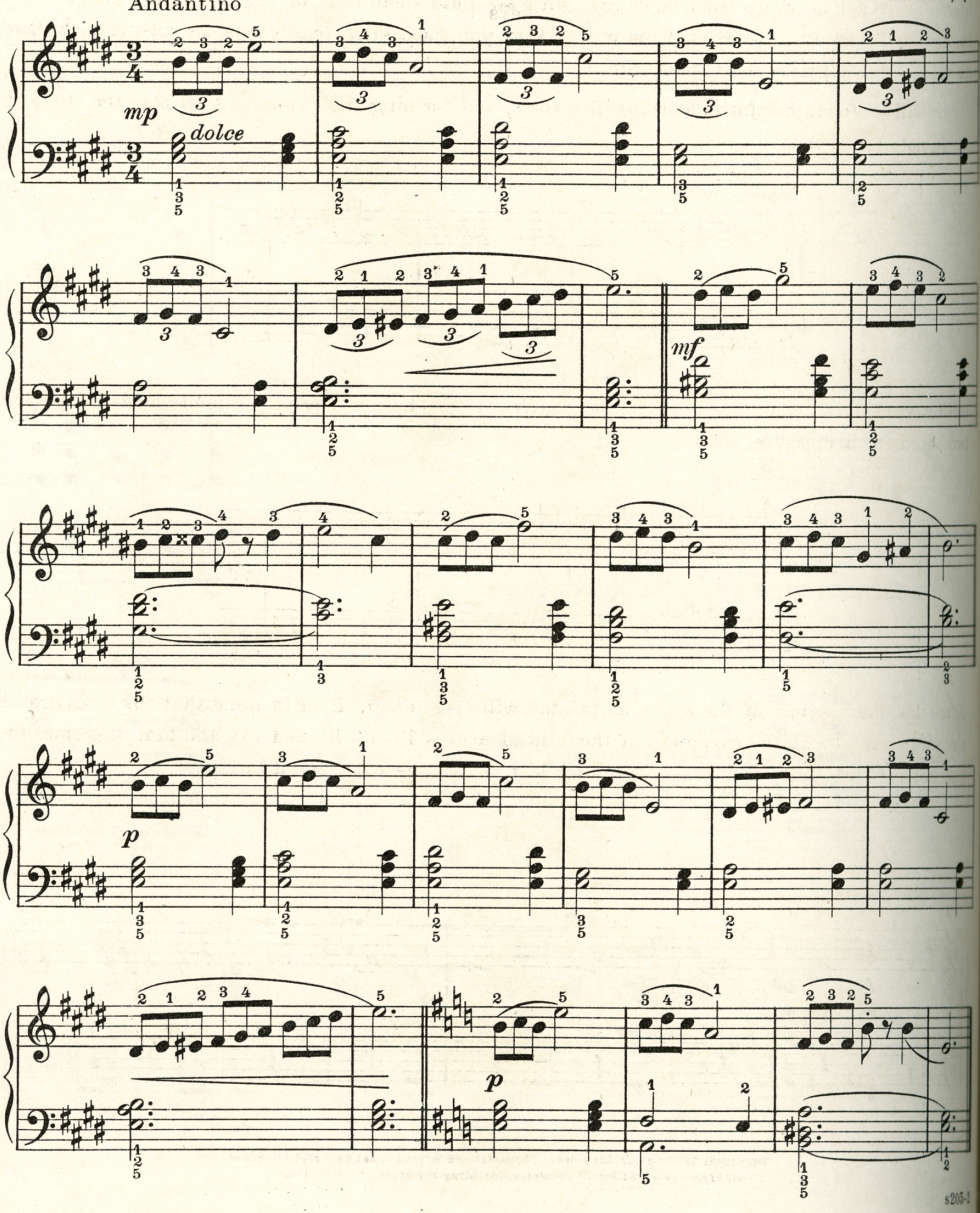
The short four-note groups in the right hand must each be played with one movement of the arm; that is, the arm descends on the first note of the triplet, and rises at the half note. Keeping the wrist in a relaxed condition helps in obtaining a free and easy arm movement. Play the triplets smoothly, giving one third of the count to each of the three notes so that they lead without pause to the note that follows. Observe the key signature, and the change to the tonic minor in the last four measures. (See Lesson 30, GENERAL THEORY.)



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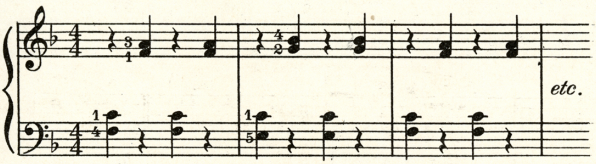
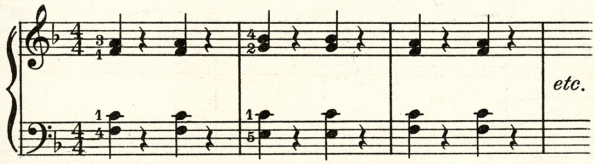
PIANO — Study 206

Broken chords divided between the hands, as in this study, require good coördination. (See Lesson 7, TECHNIC.) They must be played with absolute steadiness of rhythm, and without overlapping the notes at any point. This means that you must know in advance the notes of each chord, as well as the fingering that goes with it.

It will be found helpful in learning the notes, and forming the hands, to first play the study in double note form, thus:

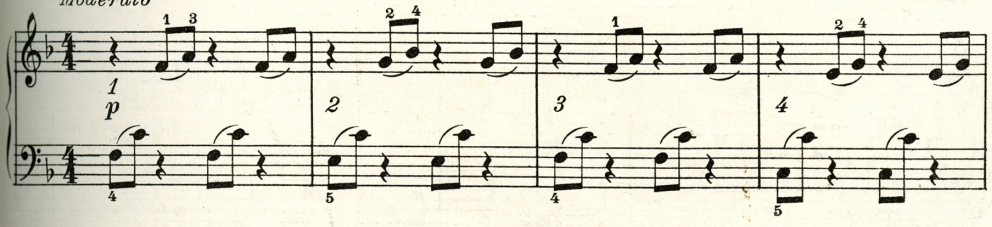


raising each hand when the other plays. Later the two hands may play simultaneously, giving two chords to a measure, thus:



After this, the playing of the study as printed will seem easy. Bear in mind that the notes are all slurred in pairs (with the exception of those in measures 10, 12, 14 and 16), and that, therefore, the last note of each pair must cease sounding just before the other hand begins.

Moderato GURLITT



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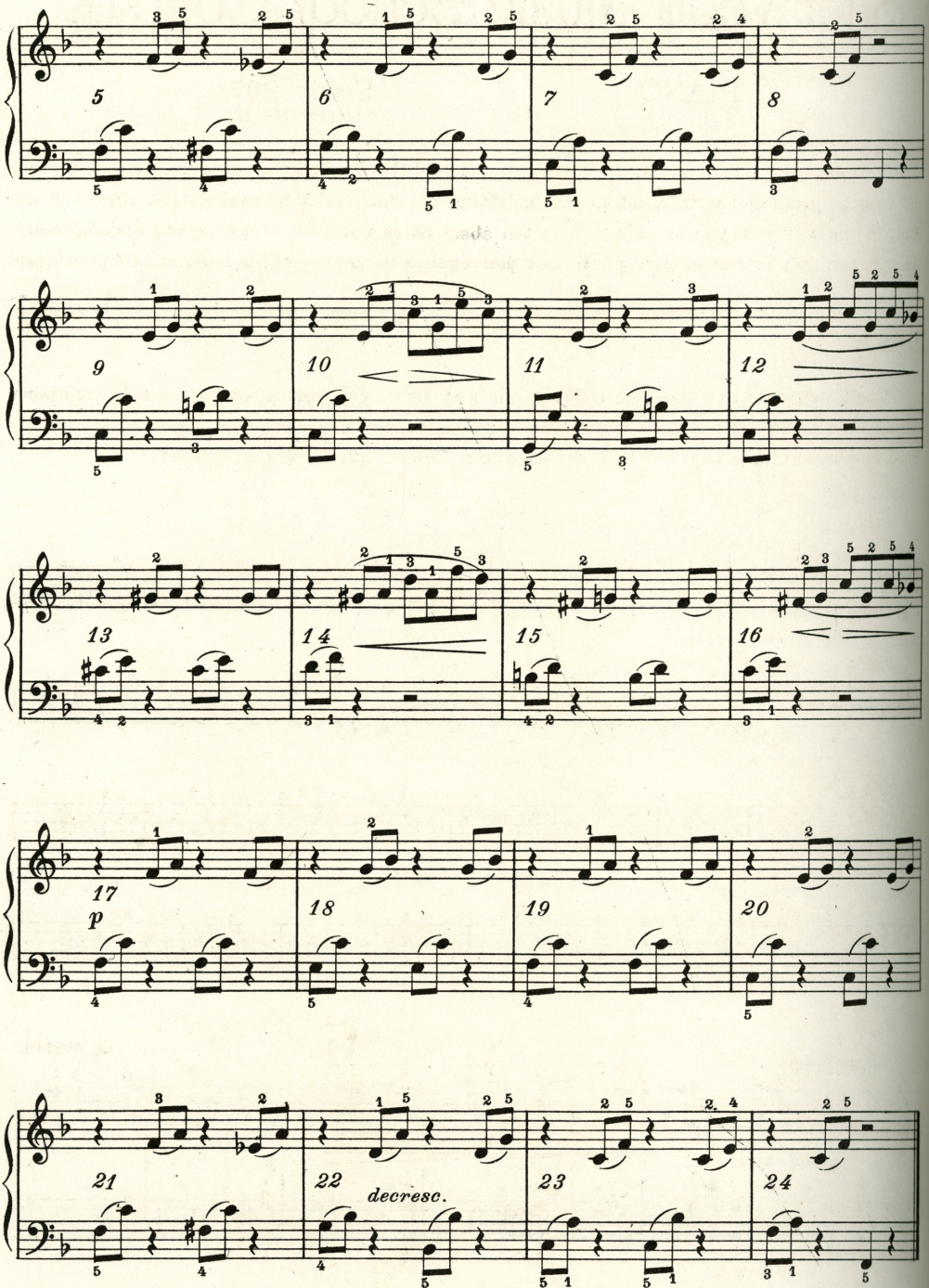
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
p
18
19
20
21
22
decresc.
23
24

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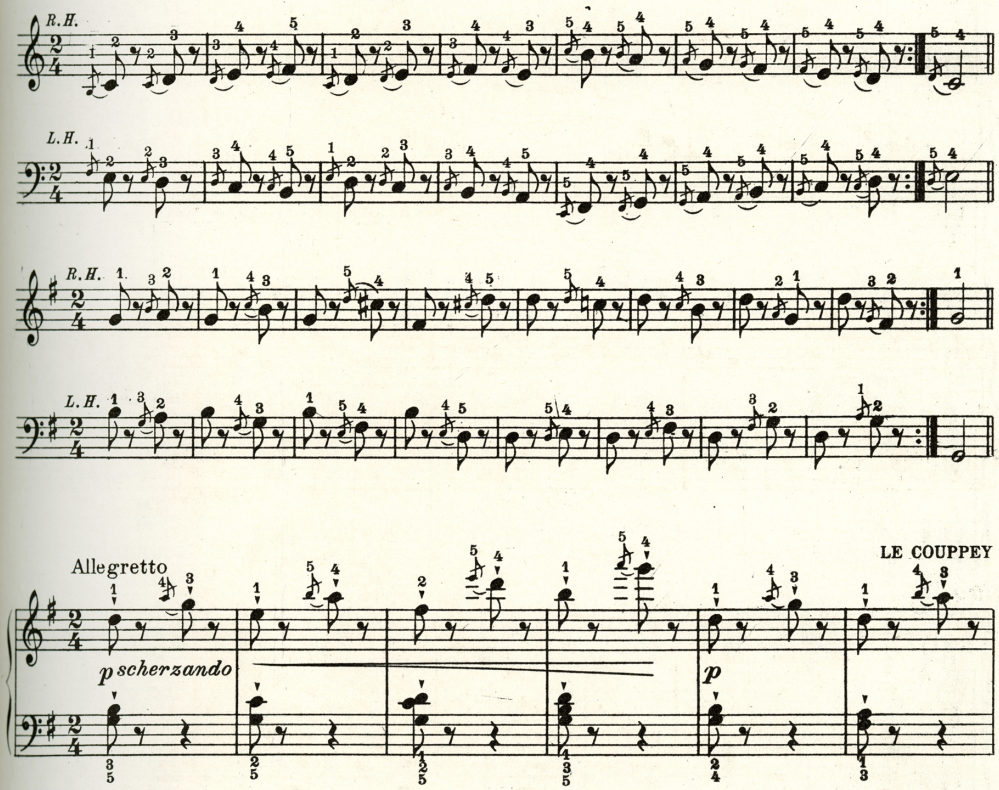
PIANO — Study 207

This study in grace notes, by Le Couppey, and the preparatory exercises which precede it, must be practiced with hand staccato, letting the hand rebound at the wrist after each note. Only in this way will you be able to play the grace notes with the proper speed and lightness. The preparatory exercises give particular prominence to the use of the fourth and fifth fingers.

The preparatory exercises must be well worked out before practice on the study itself is begun.

The grace note and the note following it may be played almost simultaneously, releasing the grace note immediately. The grace note takes its time from the note following it, and so must be played on the beat. (See Acciaccatura, Lesson 32, GENERAL THEORY.)



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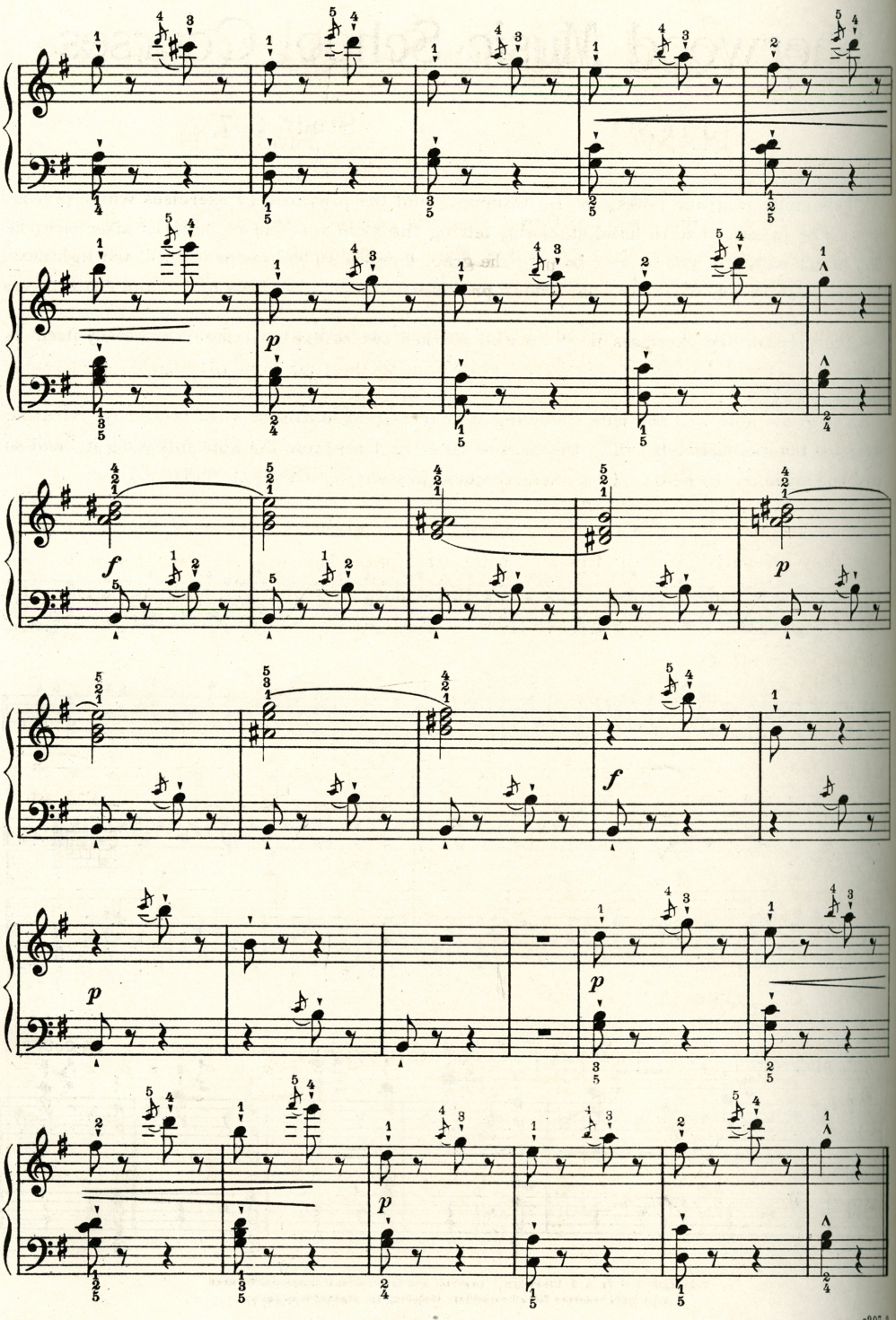
p
f
p
f
p
p

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PIANO — Study 208

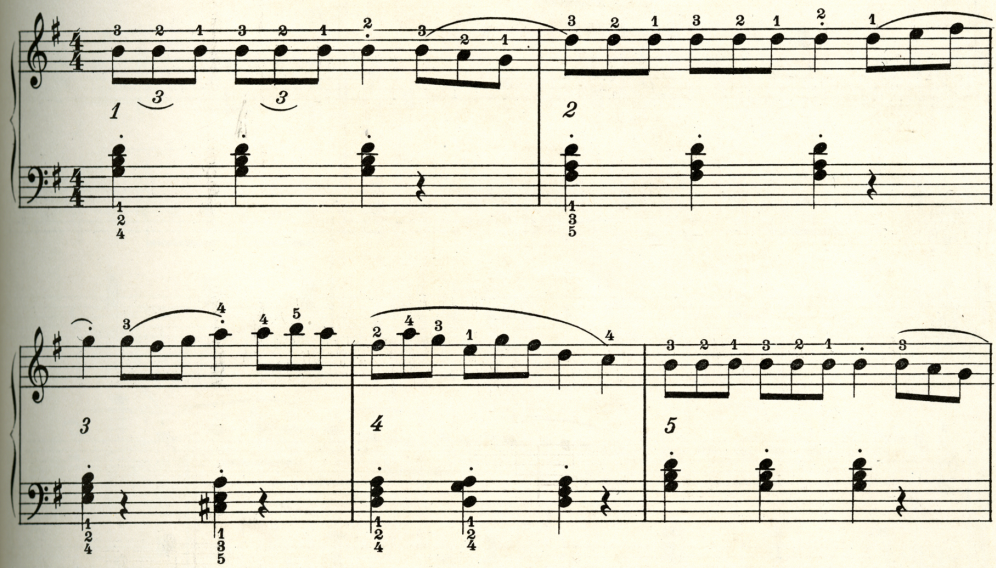
When a note is repeated, a different finger is generally used. When repeated in groups of three, as in this study, the fingers 3 2 1 are usually best. In some places, as in measures 9 and 18, fingers 4 3 2 may lead better to what follows.

Bring out phrased or slurred (legato) groups, as indicated. For example, the last triplet in measure 1 is connected by a legato sign to the first note of measure 2; the same occurs at the fourth beat of measures 2, 5, 6, 7, 20, 21 and 22.

Play the repeated chords in the bass with a light forearm action, changing the finger positions quickly in preparing for a new chord.

In construction, this study is very clear. Two four-measure phrases, the second being practically a repetition of the first, form the first part. Measures 9-16 would seem to form the second part, but the phrase is extended three more measures and ends in measure 19. The last part, then, is only four measures in length, and is a repetition of the second phrase, measures 5–8.

Allegretto moderato — CROISEZ



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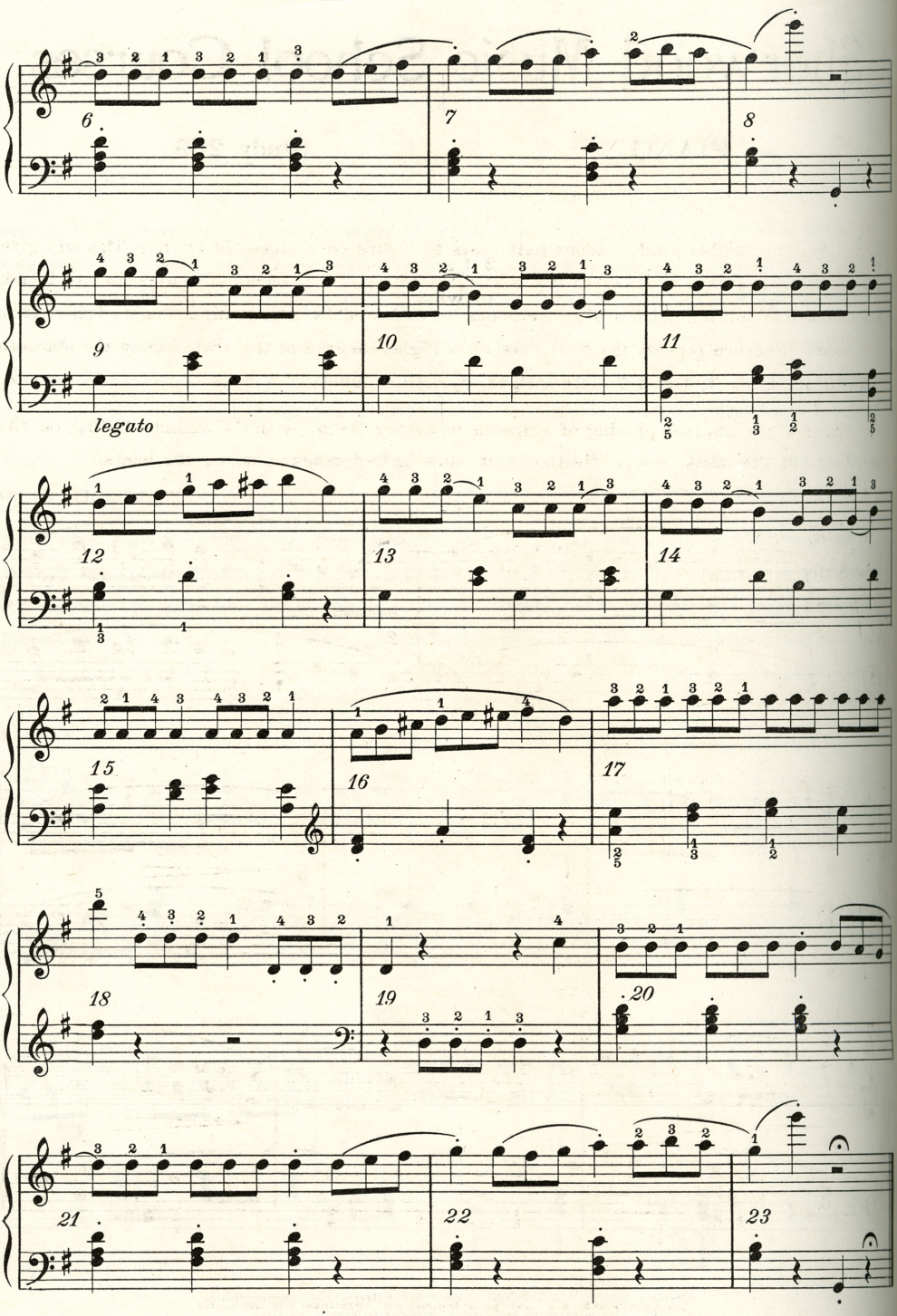

6
7
8
9
legato
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

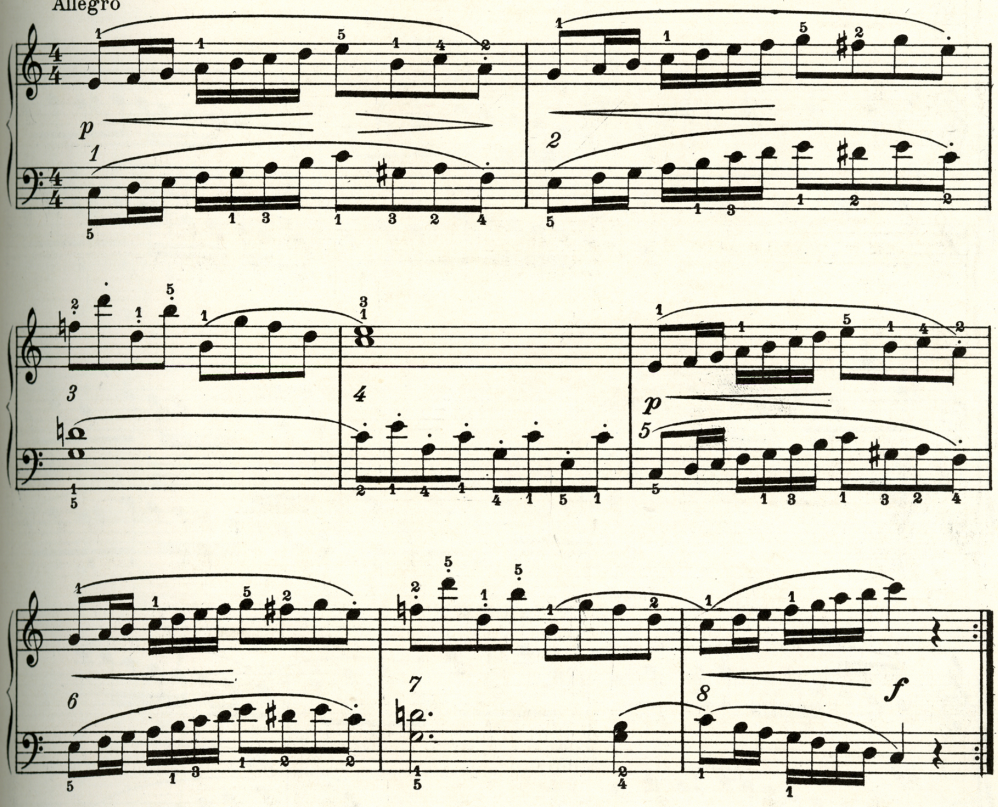
Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 209

In beginning this study, count half beats to insure correctness of rhythm. This will give a count to each eighth note, or to two sixteenth notes. The ascending scales in sixteenth notes should be played with a slight crescendo, followed by a diminuendo on the four eighths. The second measure repeats the first, but on a higher degree of the scale. Play the staccato notes in measures 3, 4 and 7 with a light, springing touch.

Observe the unusual placing of slurs in measures 9-15, with the accents falling on the half-beats of the measures, while the light, unaccented notes come on the beats.

BURGMUELLER, Op. 100



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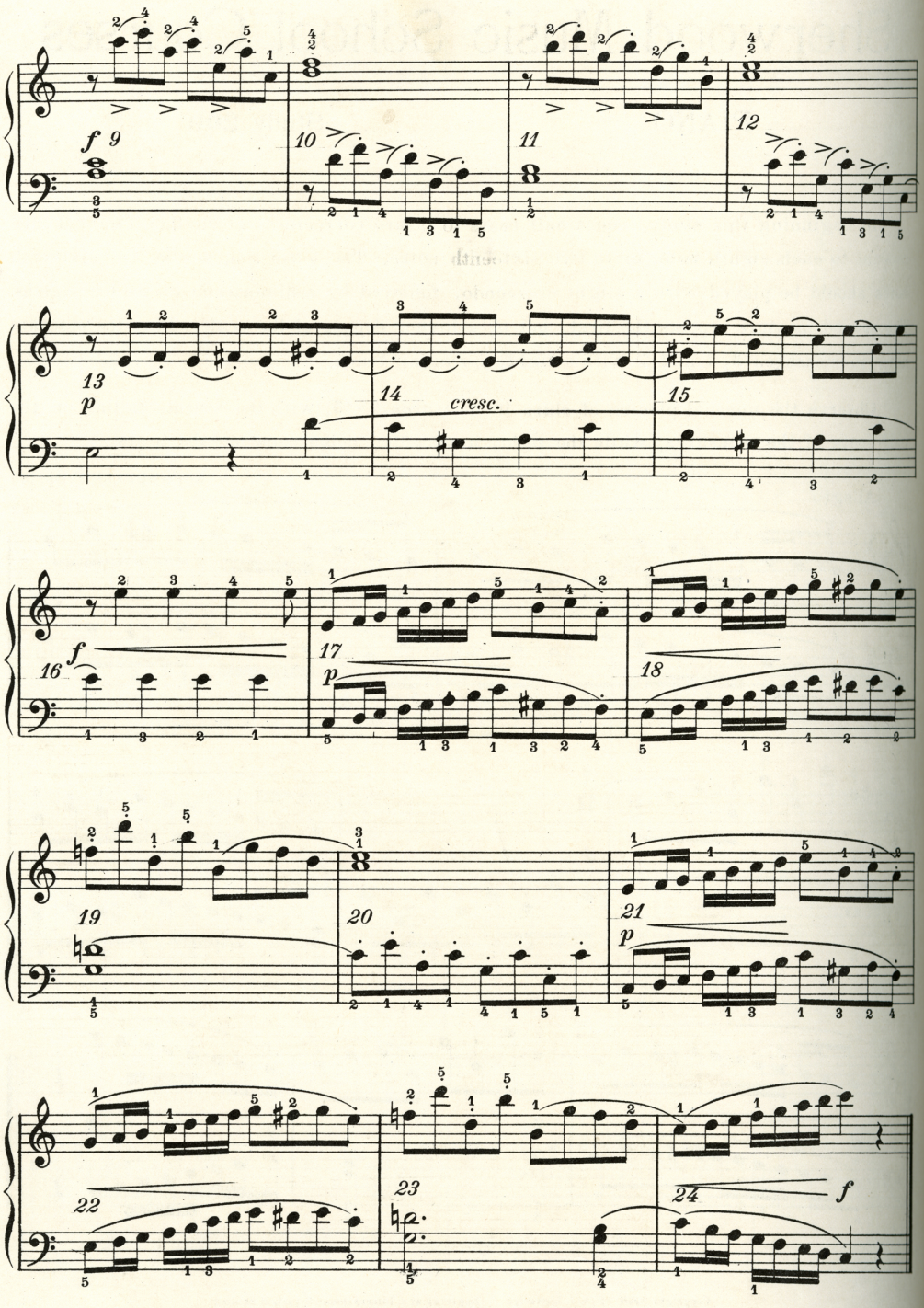

f 9
10
11
12
13
p
14
cresc.
15
f
16
17
p
18
19
20
21
p
22
23
24
f

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study **210**

Polyphony

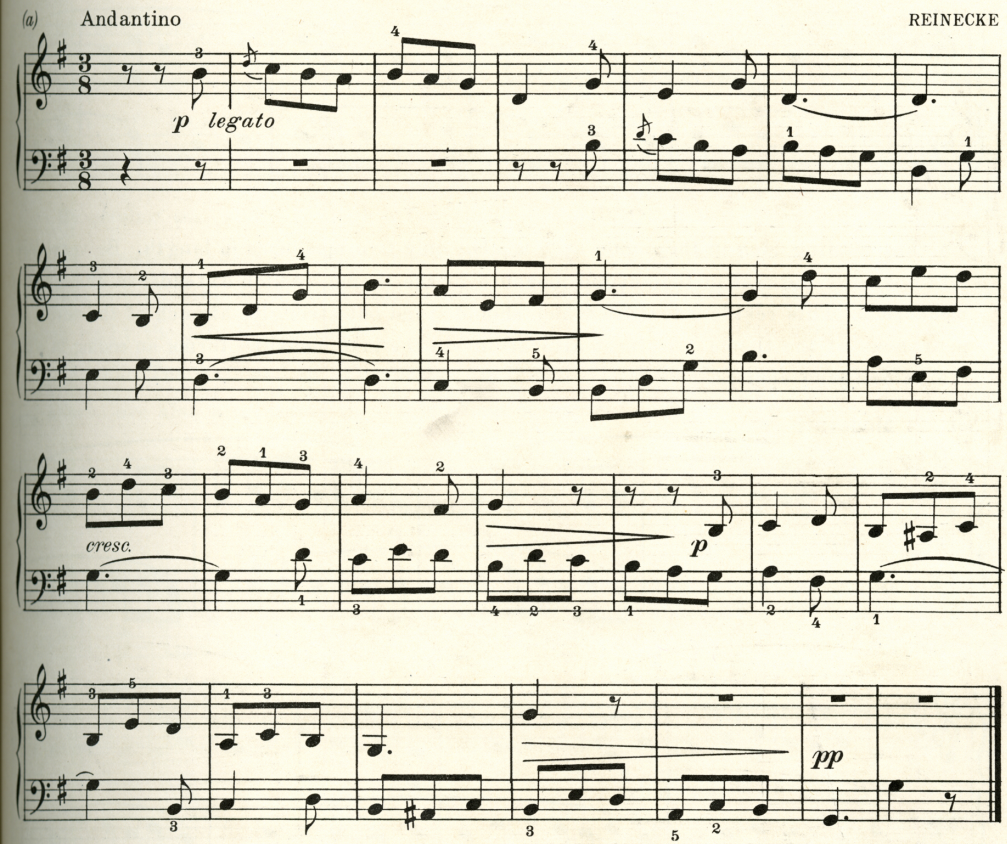
CANONS

The genial canon at *(a)* is so cleverly written that one is almost unconscious of the fact that imitation is employed.

You will see that the first measure is completed with rests, so that we must begin counting on the first beat of this measure, in spite of the fact that there is nothing to play until the third beat. By so doing, the ending of the first little section on D sounds more satisfactory.

As a reminder that the tones should be connected, the word, legato, is placed at the beginning.

Note the various expression marks, and that the canon is to be played rather slowly *(andantino)*.



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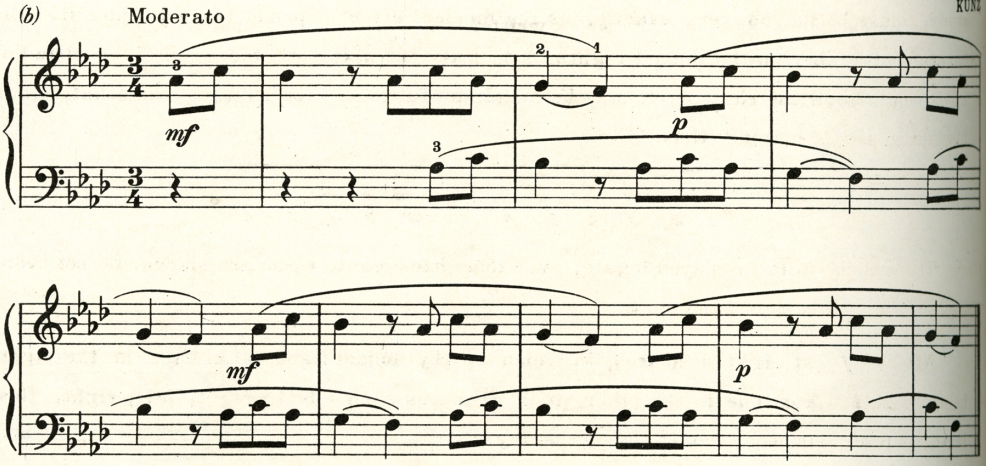
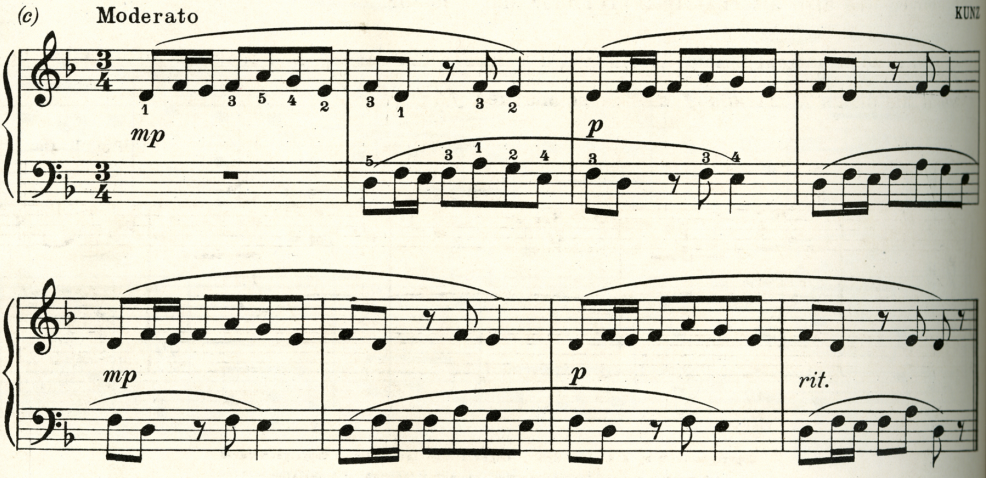
The canon at *(b)* has a two-measure theme constantly repeated, each hand starting when the other hand is half-way through the theme. This theme is divided into two distinct parts by a rest. No rests divide the separate appearances of the theme, but they should be very slightly detached from one another, and this is indicated by the phrasing marks. The F at the conclusion of one phrase is released just before striking the A♭ beginning the next. Although all of the notes might be in the key of A♭, we know the canon to be in F minor by its tonal effect, and by the frequent endings on F. The final F confirms the tonality.



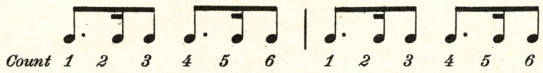
The leading idea in the canon at *(c)* is also only two measures in length. Be very careful to observe the rest in the second measure of the theme, which extends to the end of measure 2. This rest is a feature which should stand out strongly, at each of the seven appearances of the theme. A slight alteration in the last measure forms an ending in which the *ritardando* assists.



Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 251

The rhythm of a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth and another eighth, used in this study, **must be played very exactly,** as the musical effect depends largely upon it. Be careful not to shorten the dotted eighth, or to make the sixteenth too long. To equalize the notes would spoil the rhythm. It may be found helpful to tap the rhythm, and count, before beginning actual playing, thus:



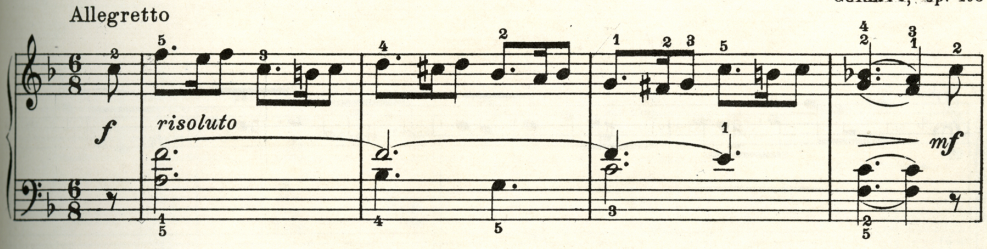
The melody is to be played legato, even though few legato signs are shown. Do not overlook the ties in the left hand part.

After the first eight measures, in which the rhythmical figure is always in the right hand, it shifts from one to the other, four measures each — left, right, left, right, this last group of four measures ending the study.

By playing the study through a few times you will notice that it divides into phrases of four measures each. There are six such phrases. The study begins in the key of F, and the first two phrases are in that key. Then in measure 9, where the rhythmical figure is taken up by the left hand, the key changes to D minor, the relative minor, (see Lesson 30, GENERAL THEORY), and the alternating right and left hand four-measure groups, spoken of above, are also alternately in D minor and F major.

Play with a firm touch, as the word *risoluto* indicates, and make a distinction between the phrases marked *f* and those marked *ff*.

GURLITT, Op. 198



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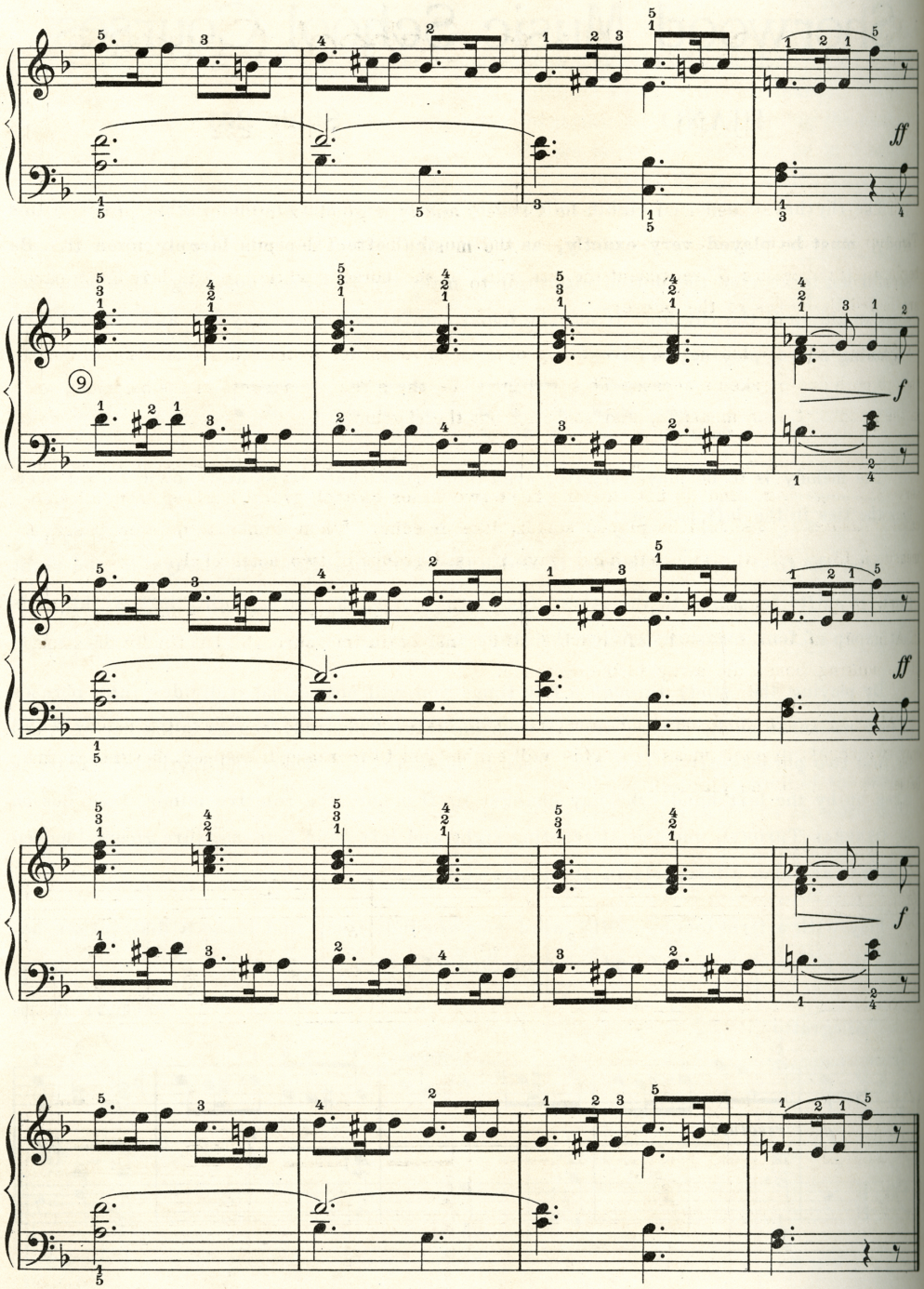

ff
9
f
ff
f

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 252

This study has been entitled "The Chase," and is a good example of descriptive music. The four introductory measures are like a call to the hunt. The rapid staccato broken octaves, beginning in measure 5, represent the galloping of the horses, while, in the left hand part, are heard the horns of the hunters.

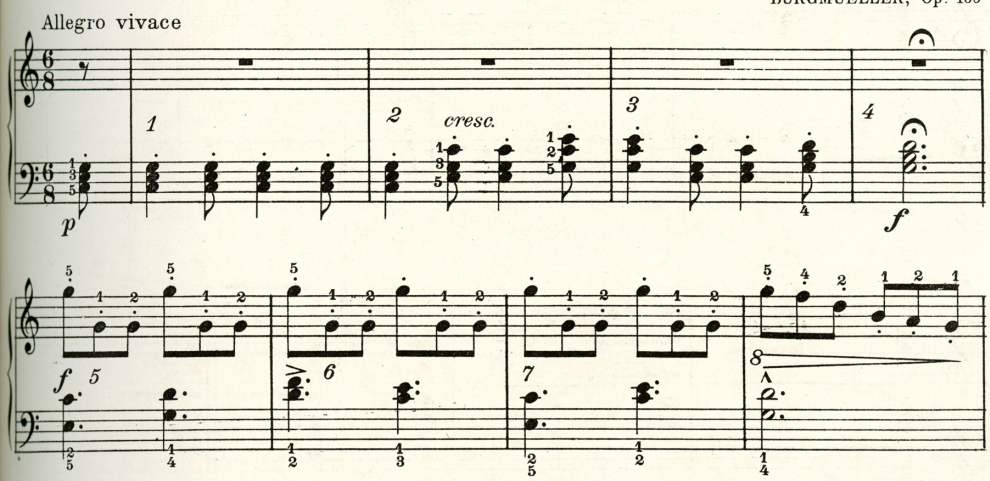
In the first four measures, give the proper relative values to the quarter and eighth notes, though both are marked staccato. This will produce the effect of accents at the beginning and in the middle of each measure, and so bring out the rhythm.

The right hand part with octave skips, measures 5-8, will need special practice. Observe the fingering, and do not slur the first two notes of each group, but keep them all staccato. Measures 9-12 should be played softer, like an echo. Then comes a quieter passage, measures 13-20, in which the left hand plays phrased groups of two notes each.

The "galloping horses" figure, measures 21-28, suddenly gives way to a plaintive melody in A minor, measures 29-44; after which it begins again (measure 45), but finally the sounds of the hunting horns die away in the distance.

After thorough work has been done, counting six to a measure, try playing the study with only two counts in each measure. This will enable you to increase the speed, besides giving better rhythm to the playing.

BURGMUELLER, Op. 100



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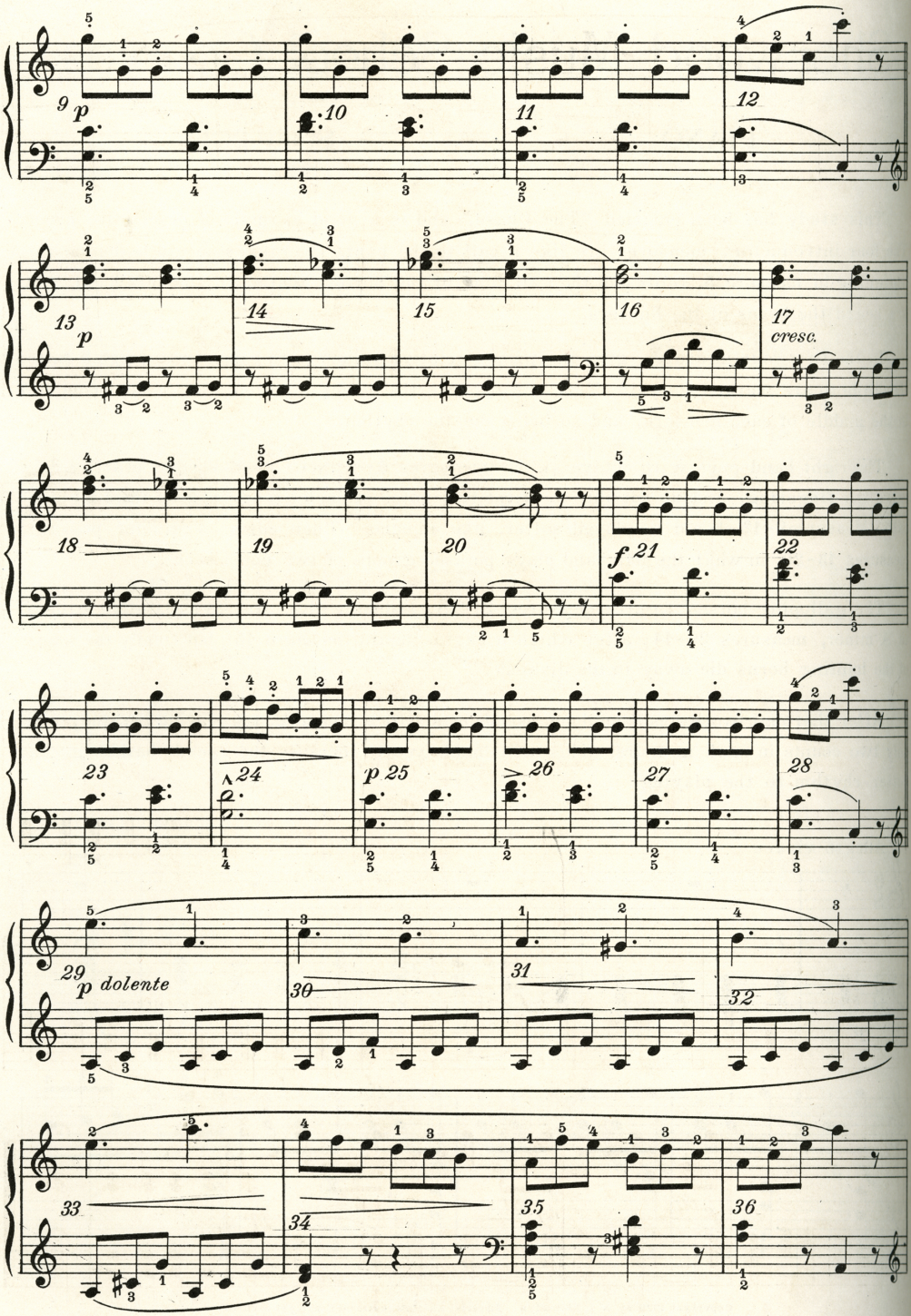
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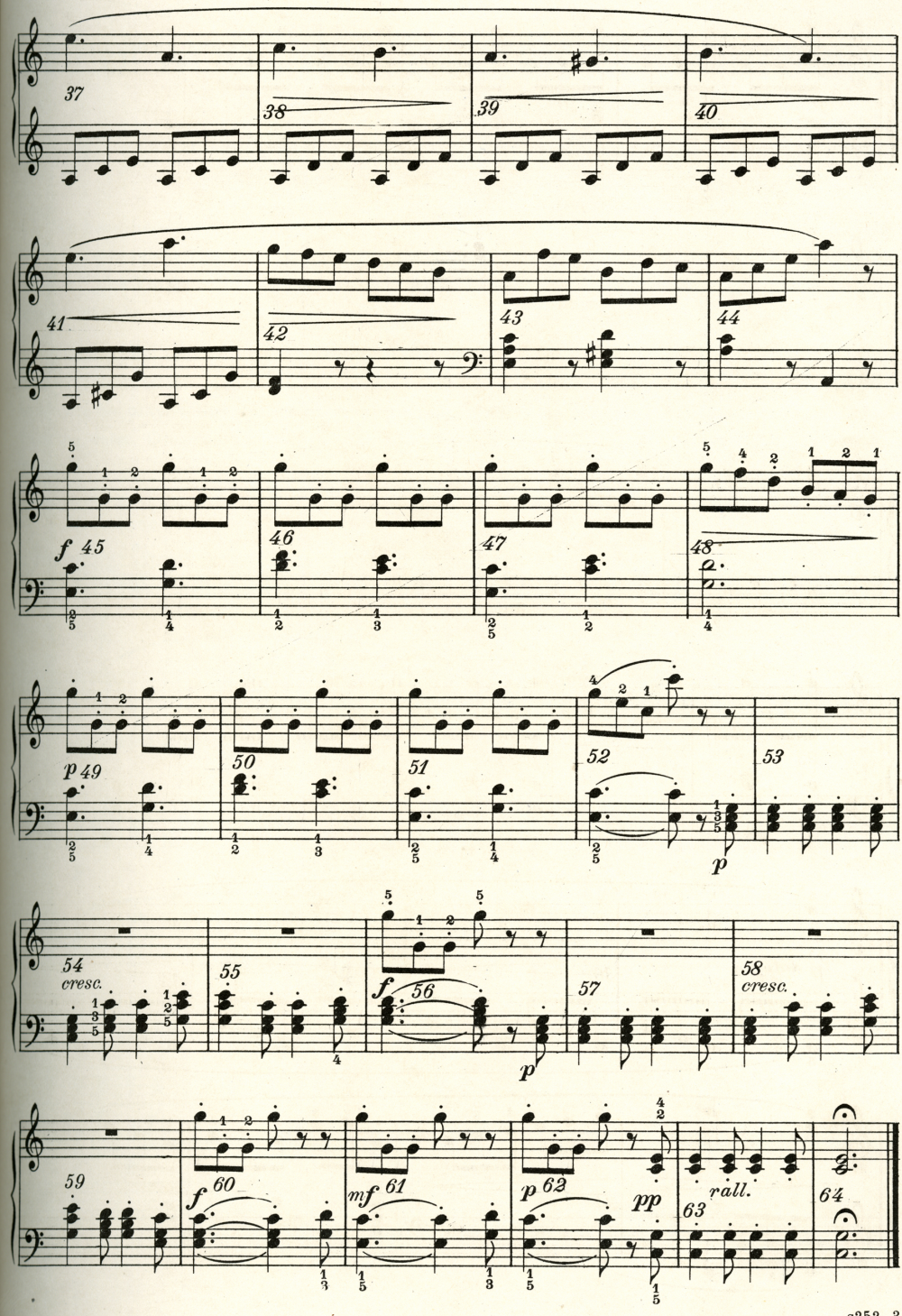
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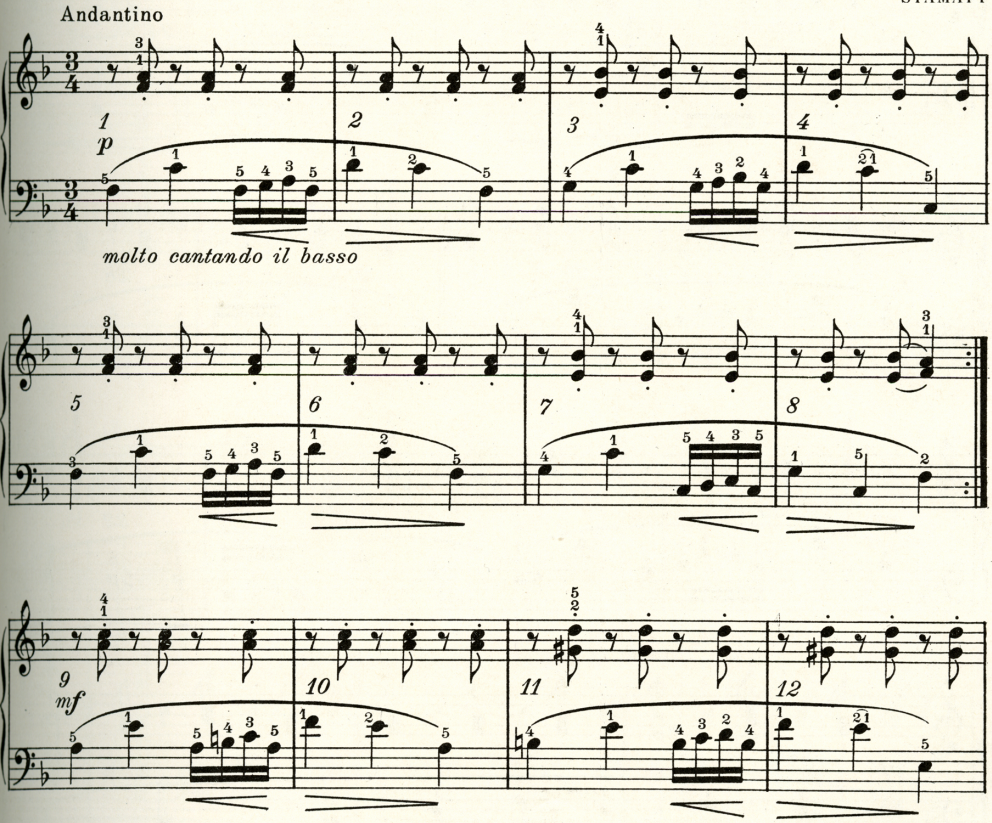
PIANO — Study 253

We have here another study with the left hand playing a melody, and the right hand having accompaniment chords. In this case the melody is rhythmically varied and attractive; and the title "The Violoncello," which has been given to the piece in some other editions, is quite appropriate, as that instrument is well suggested.

The melody must always be brought out with a singing tone, as directed by the expression indication which appears below (*molto cantando il basso*). The accompaniment in the right hand is to be played lightly but not too staccato, the action coming from the arm rather than from the wrist. Observe the mezzo staccato in measures 17-24 . . . . (See Lesson 18, GENERAL THEORY.)

STAMATY



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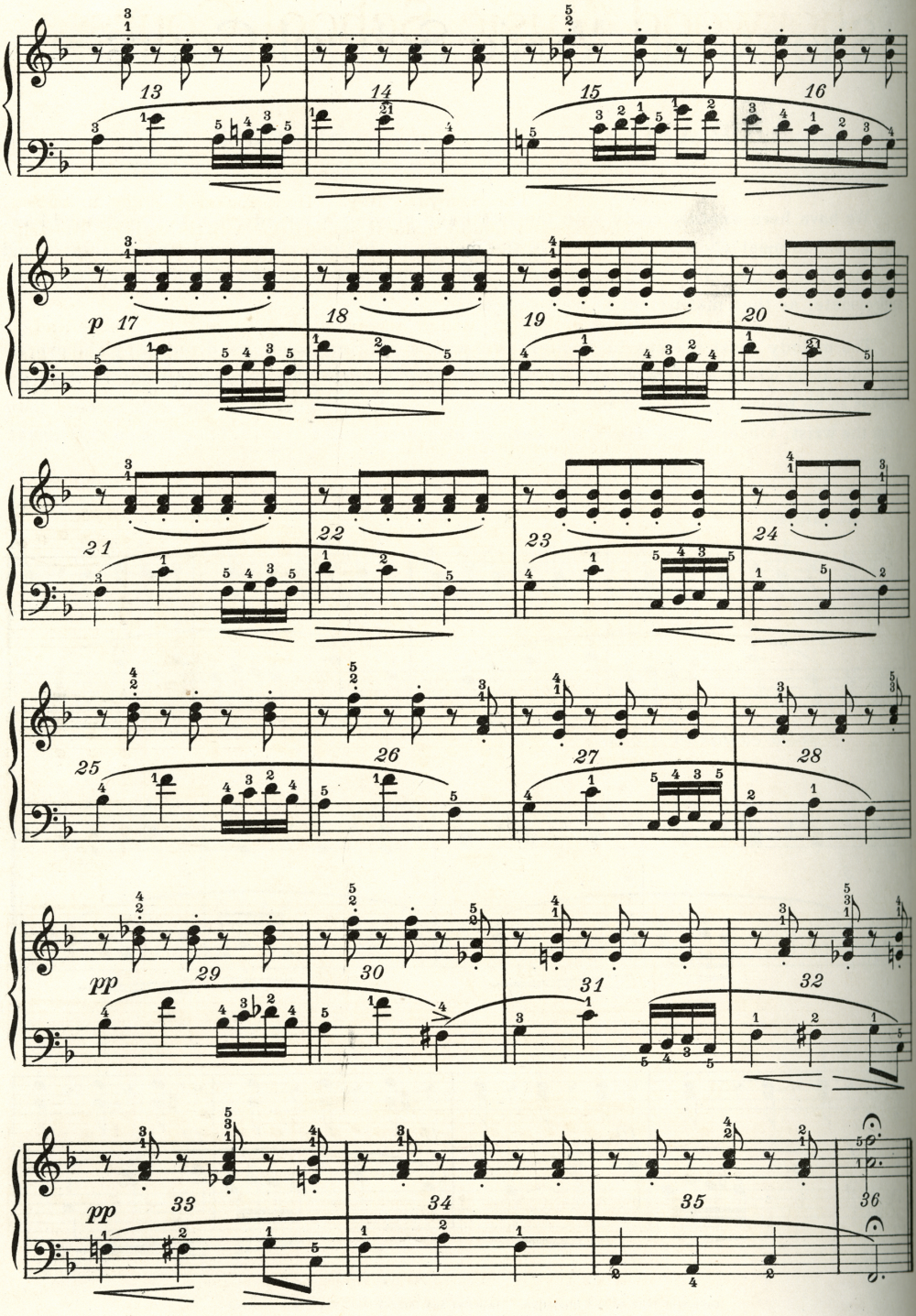
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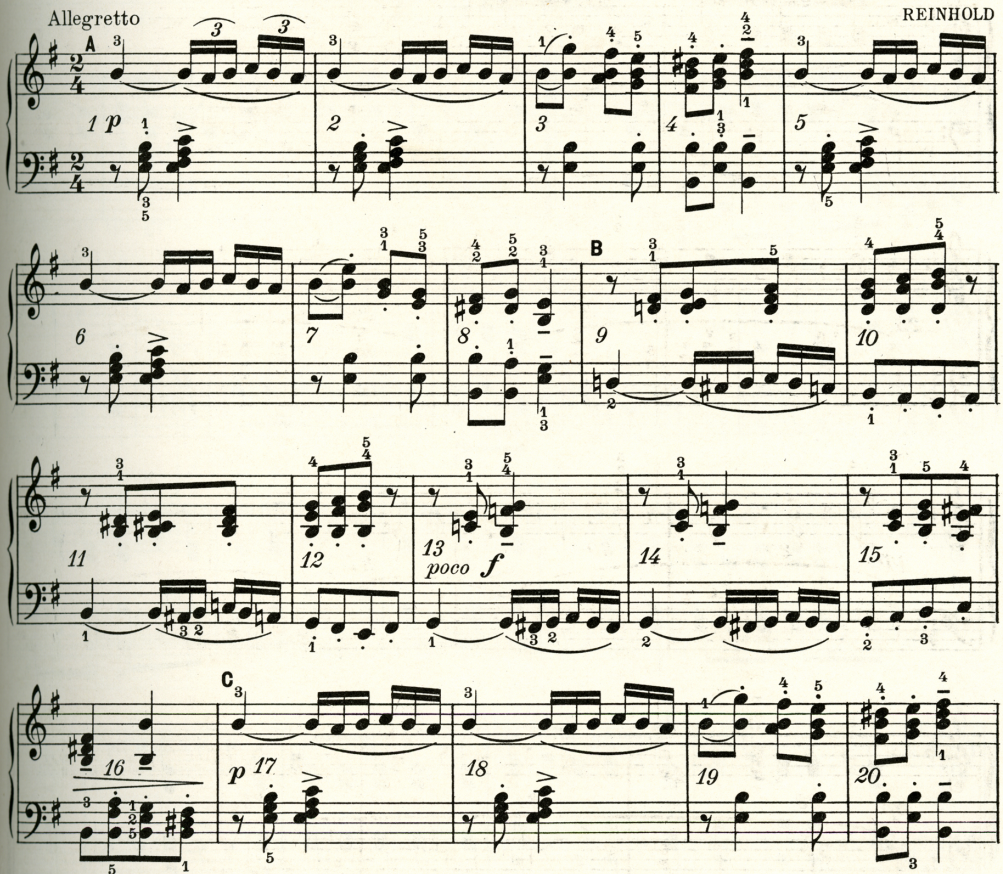
PIANO — Study 254

This study by Reinhold is called "The Savoyard Boy." It is a useful study in triplets. The key is E minor, and the rhythm and tempo make it sound like a little march. The triplets, throughout, come on the second beat and the half beat following it, that is, on counts "two" and "and"— a group on each.

There are three divisions in the study, which are marked A, B and C. In A and C the right hand plays the triplets, and in B the left hand plays them. The left hand also concludes division C with a pair of triplet groups.

Observe the two chords for the left hand in the first measure, and elsewhere; the first chord is staccato, and the second accented and held.



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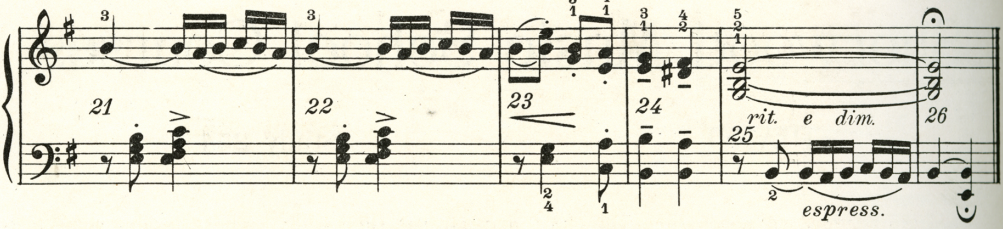
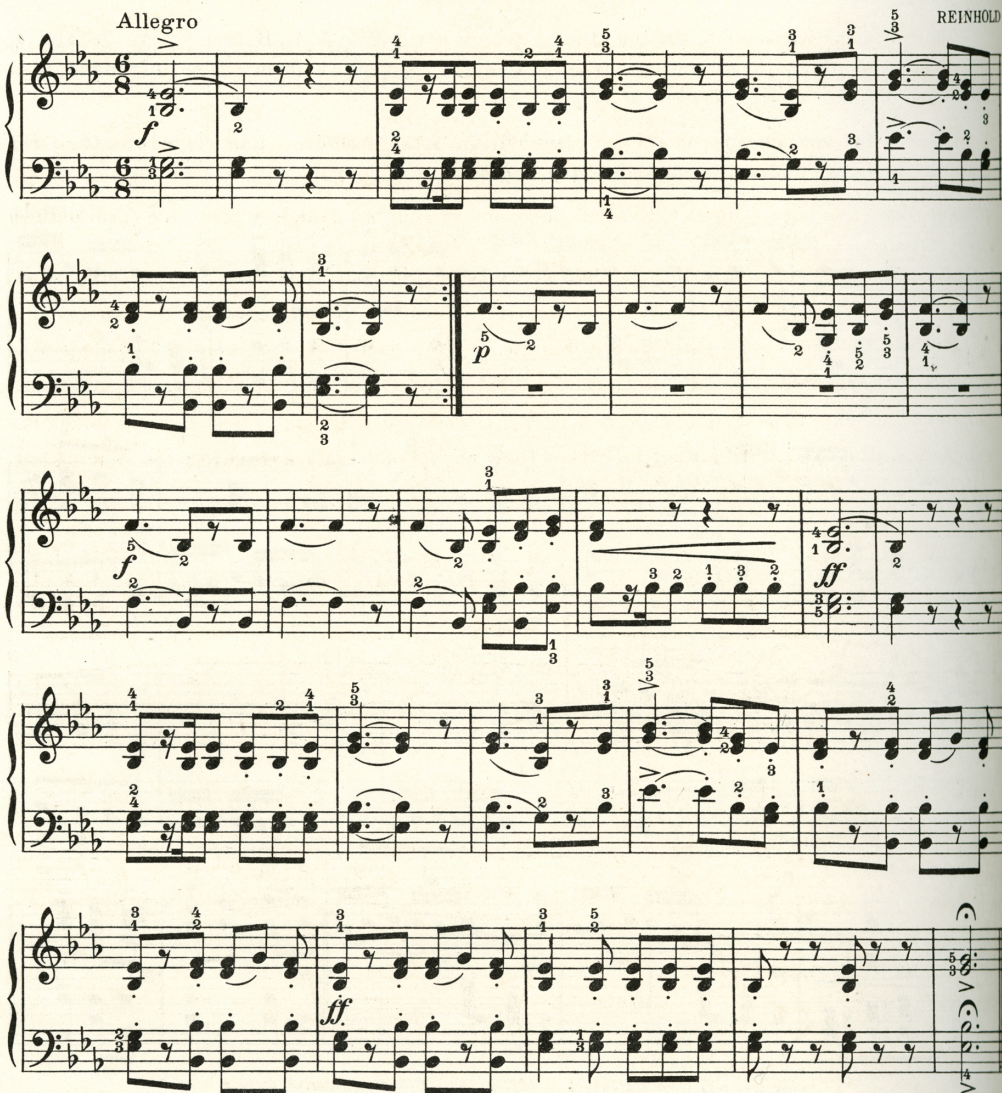


In the next study, hand staccato is required. The two hands must play as one, making the chords divided between them sound solid, with notes exactly together. Besides the general staccato, the many rests add to the effect of separated and detached chords. The composition goes by the name of "Hunting Fanfare," and imitates bugle calls.



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PIANO — Study 255

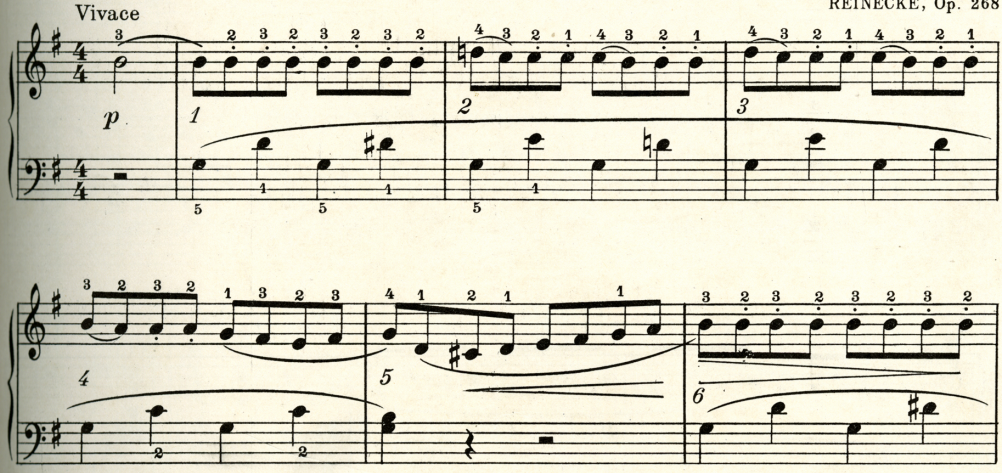
Staccato repeated notes form the chief material of this study. There is also some melody in the right hand part, which is better observed when played quickly; and the left hand, in its upper notes, joins with the right in a little duet. This applies to measures 1-10, and 15-24.

In measures 19-22, the left hand upper notes are made still more prominent by the weighty *tenuto* signs above them.

A very interesting feature of the composition is that the first part, which ends at measure 10, includes two five-measure phrases, four measures being the usual length of the phrase. The first note (the B half-note) need not be counted as belonging to the form pattern.

A regular four-measure phrase (measures 11-14) begins the second part of the study, and is followed by another regular four-measure phrase. The last phrase resembles the opening theme of the study, and such a design is often used, the material of the opening division forming also the concluding phrase, or period — for this is, in fact, the concluding phrase of the general design. Measures 19-25 constitute a Coda. (See Lesson 26, FORM AND ANALYSIS.) You will notice the effect they have, in merely extending the conclusion, with fragments taken from the earlier portions of the piece.

REINECKE, Op. 268



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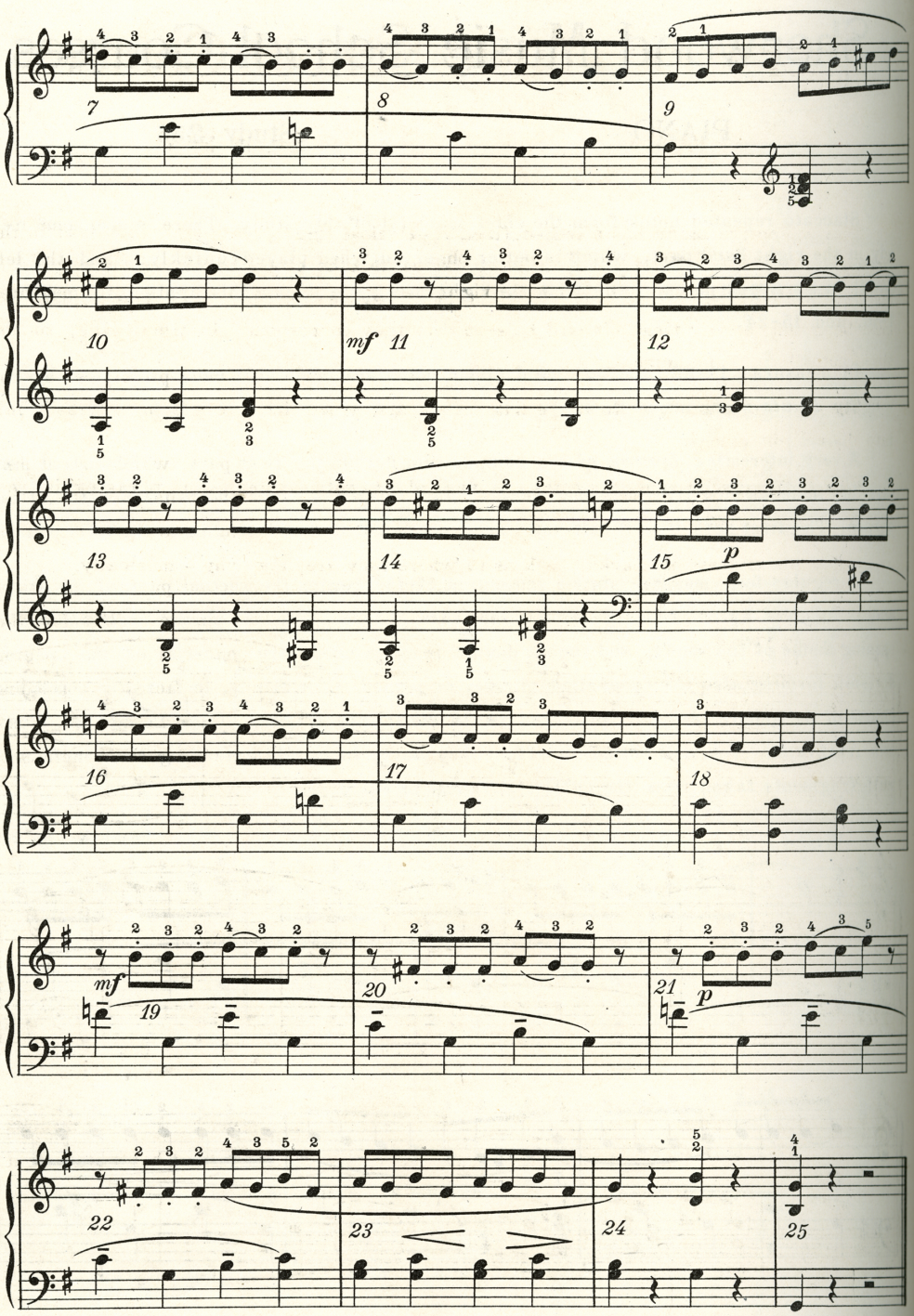
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PIANO — Study 256

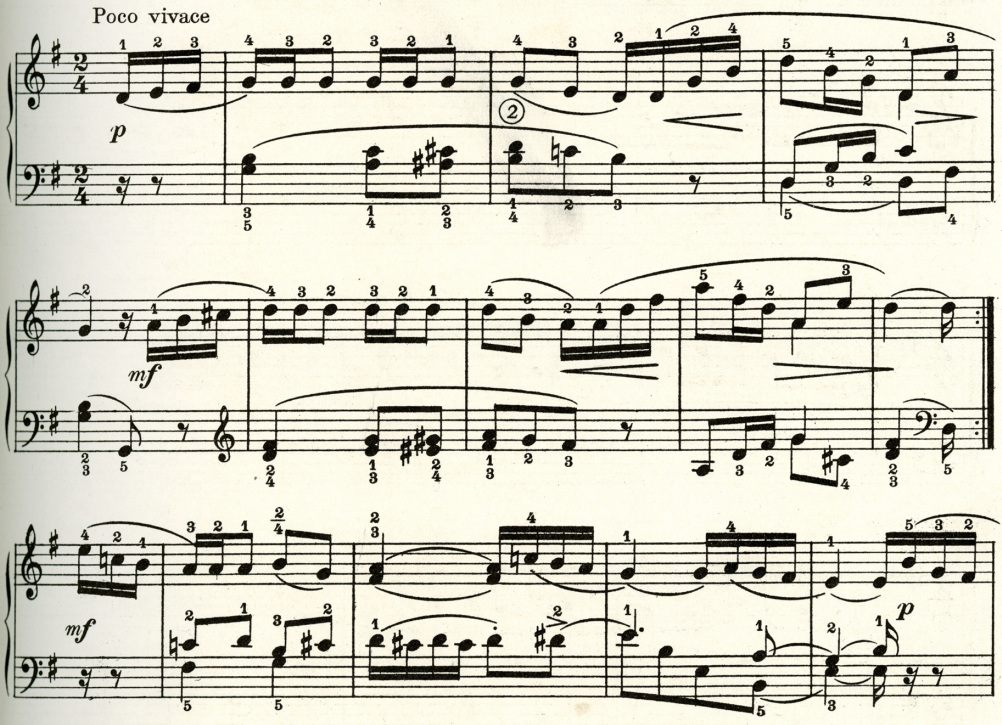
This attractive study has a well-defined rhythmical figure, or motive, contained in the first six notes, $\frac{2}{4}$. The three sixteenths at the beginning are played after "two," with which the counting should begin. They must not be played as a triplet, but must be given regular time. It will be seen that they correspond, in time value, to the three notes ending measure 2.

The counting should, at first, be with half beats, when the note groups will easily fall into their right places.

Change fingers on repeated notes, as marked. Constant attention to phrasing is necessary for both hands.

Study the expression marks, both as to where they are, and why— musically.

HANS HARTHAN



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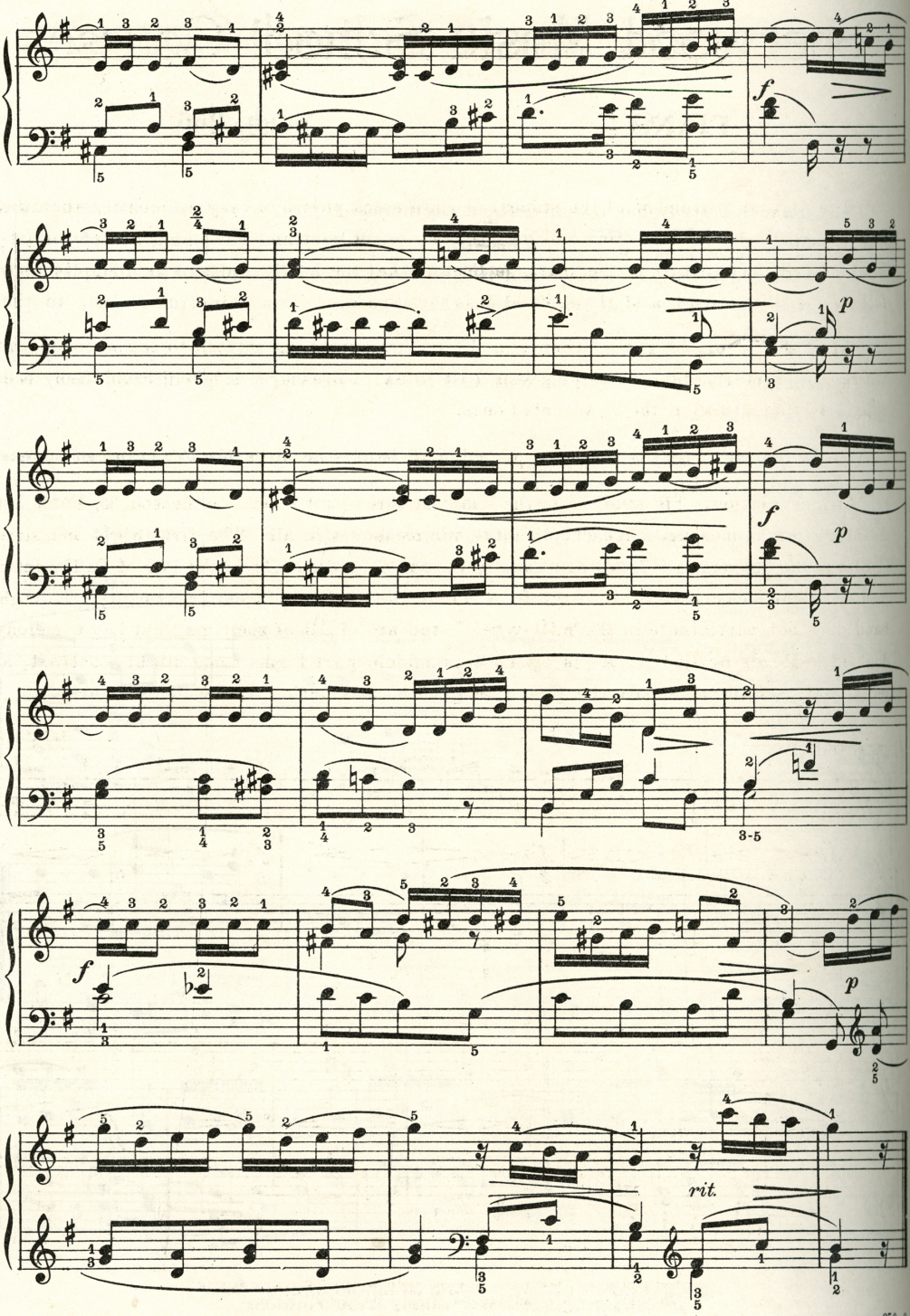
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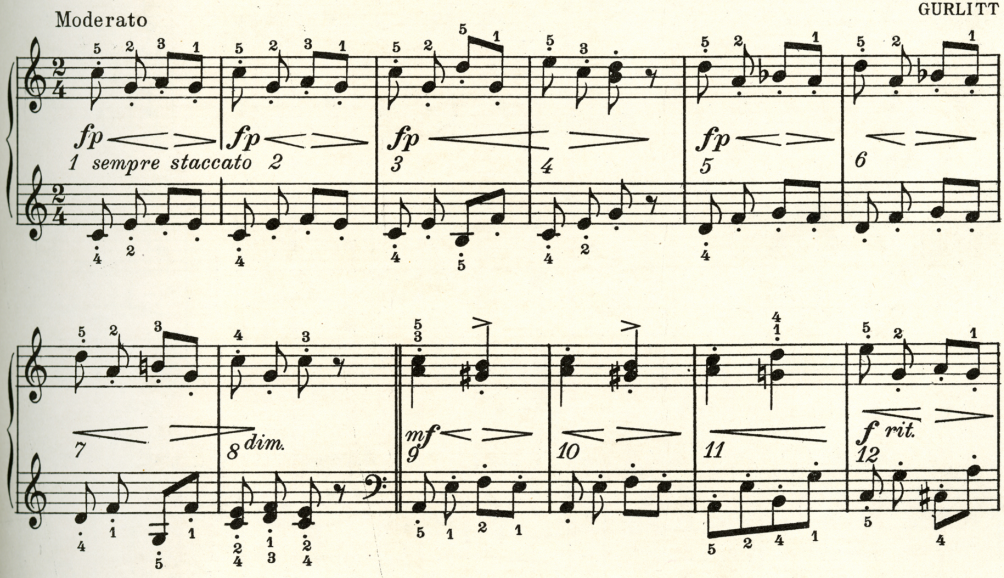
PIANO — Study 257

The regular movement of the staccato eighth notes portrays very effectively the turning of a mill-wheel. The dynamics play an important part and must be followed carefully. For instance, in measure 1, the mark *fp* means that the loudly struck first note is to be followed softly, though a slight crescendo is then made.

After the double bar, the accent, in several measures, is shifted to the second beat, where the quarter notes are to be given a little extra pressure. This will make them somewhat less staccato than the unaccented ones.

All the staccato eighths are to be played with hand staccato action. The arm remains quiet

In construction, this study is in the simplest three-part form (see Lesson 33, FORM AND ANALYSIS), eight measures in each, twenty-four measures in all. The first eight measures (1-8) and the last eight (17-24) are exactly the same, and chiefly in the key of C. The intermediate eight measures (9-16) begin in A minor, and have different treatment; the right hand does not participate in the "mill-wheel" staccato, most of the time, but has a melody, doubled in thirds or sixths. As is usual, this middle part forms some slight contrast, at least, and part three repeats the first theme with satisfaction to player and hearer.



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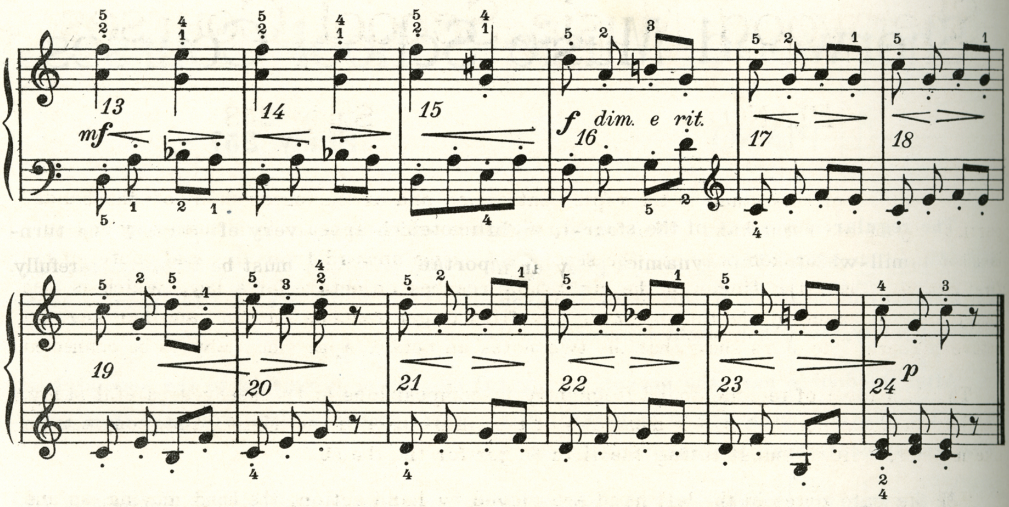
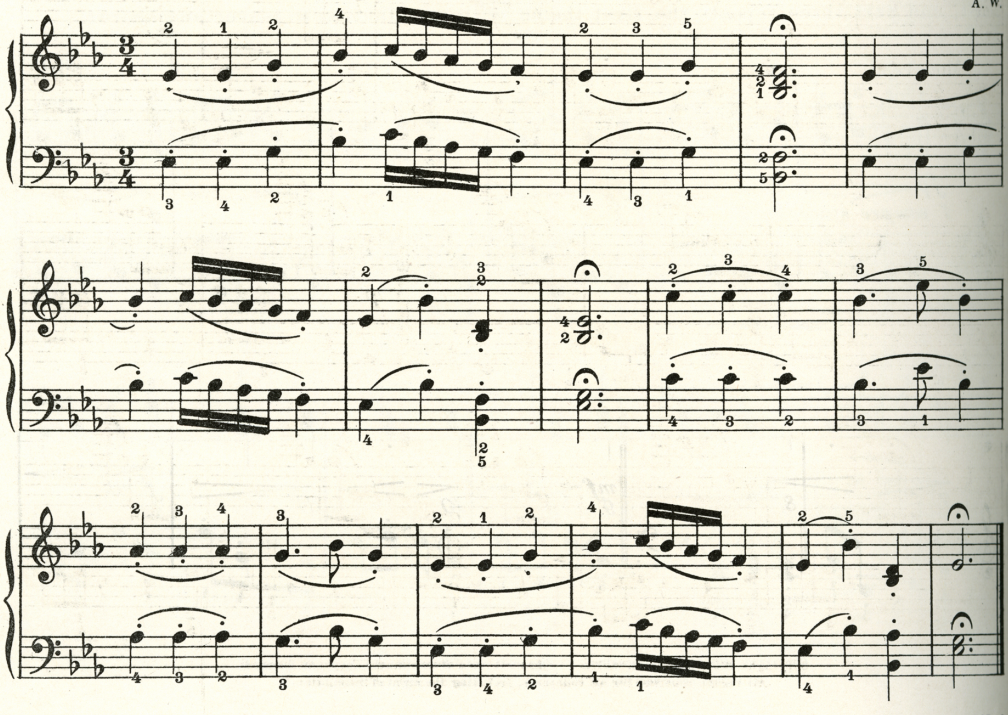


The following is a little study in mezzo-staccato and chord striking. The staccato is less than in the previous study, the notes being only slightly detached. (See Lesson 18, TECHNIC.) The sixteenth-note groups receive just one count and are played legato. There should be a slight upward motion of the wrist at the quarter note ending the phrase.

Before striking the chords, prepare the fingers by forming them in the air; that is, get the fingers into the right positions directly over the keys to be played.

A. W.



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PIANO — Study 258

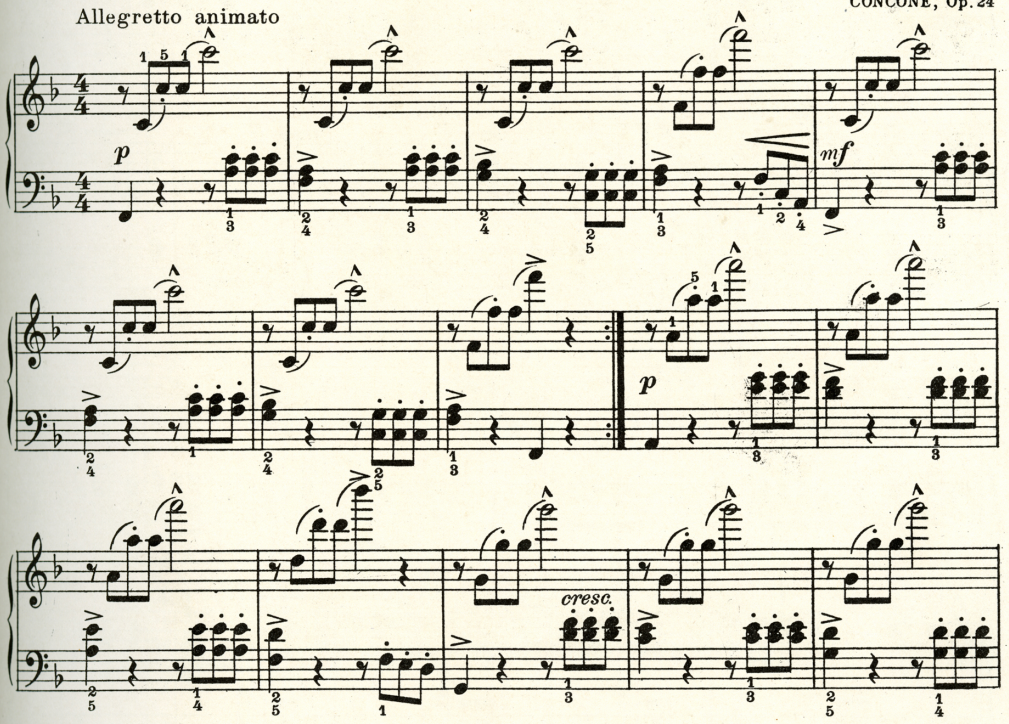
The feature of this study is the rapid contraction and expansion required of the hands, particularly of the right hand. The four-note figure which appears in almost every measure is made up of two broken octaves, the second springing upward from the last note of the first octave. The fifth finger of the right hand reaches an octave for a key, which is then immediately repeated by the thumb, while the fifth finger reaches out for another key an octave higher. The slurs show that the two notes an octave apart must always be connected.

This is a form of technic found frequently in compositions, and it deserves careful study. The left hand, which has a few measures of the figure used in the right hand, contracts in like manner, quickly substituting the fifth finger for the thumb.

The staccato notes in the left hand are played by hand action, the hand moving up and down from the wrist.

Observe the accent marks over the high notes, and also on the first beats. Close observance of dynamic marks and accents will add character and life to the composition, which should be played at a lively pace.

CONCONE, Op. 24



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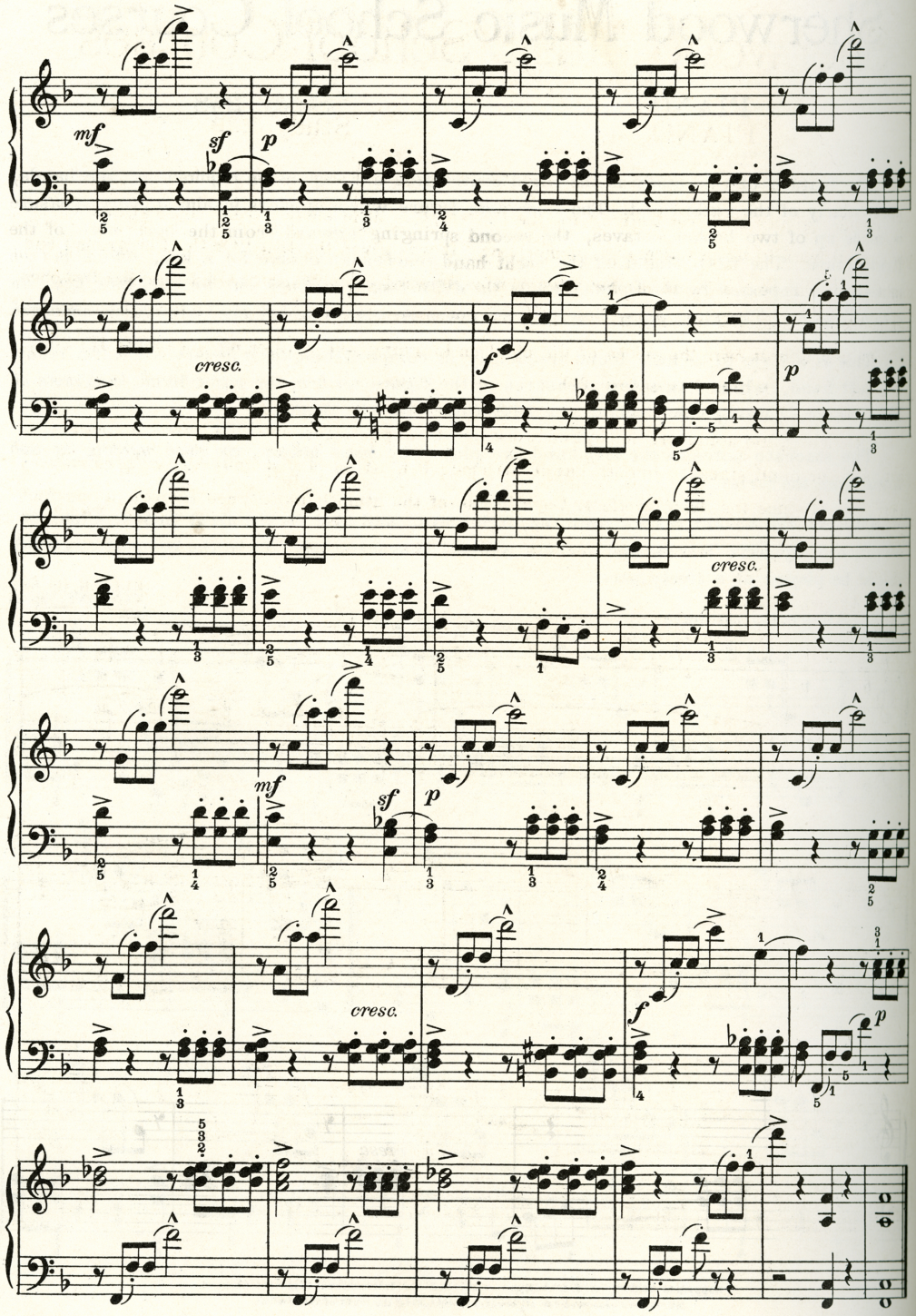
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