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1929

Piano Course: Grade 4, Studies

Sherwood Music School

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PIANO — Study 401

This is a study in sustained notes with moving melody. Technically, its importance lies in the fact that in order to hold the sustained note and to play the melody at the same time, the hand must stretch considerably.

In several places (measure 5, first) the holding note has to be struck again, because the eighth-note melody includes the same note. It then continues to be held for the remainder of its duration.

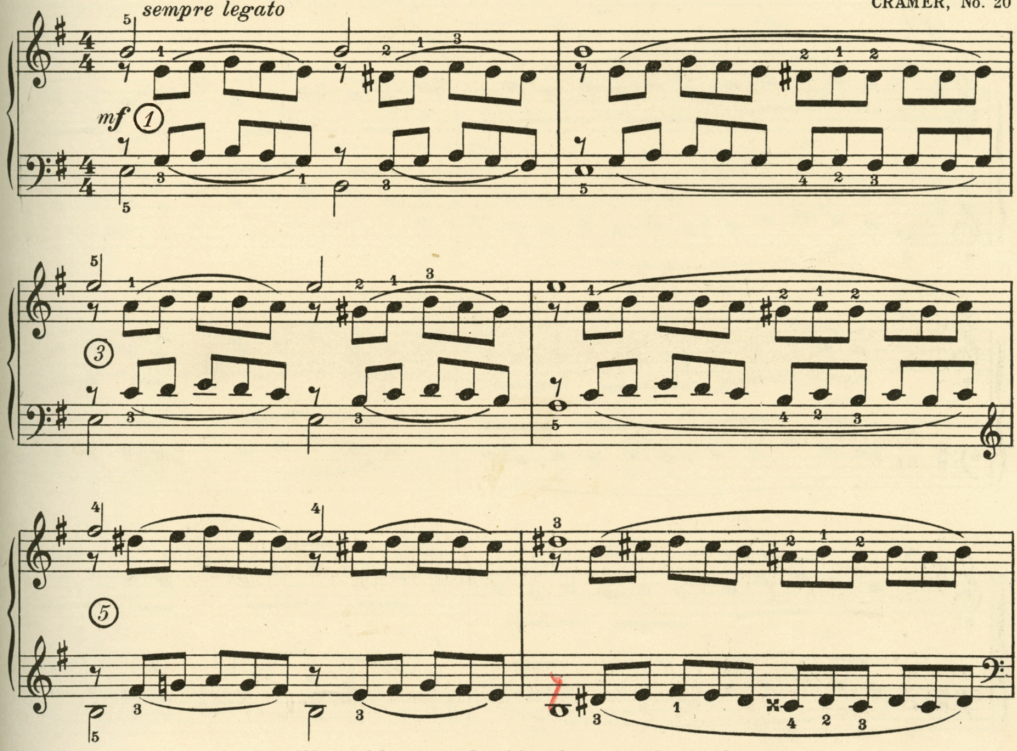
While studying the technical details, each hand should be mastered separately. Bending the left hand back towards the fifth finger, after having struck the note to be sustained, will make it easier to reach a wide interval with the third finger, as, for instance, the C in measure 3. This can be done in all similar places in the study.

Practice at first *forte,* and slowly, striking the melody notes firmly and with finger pressure. When playing in tempo, however, observe all marks of expression.

Con moto

sempre legato

CRAMER, No. 20



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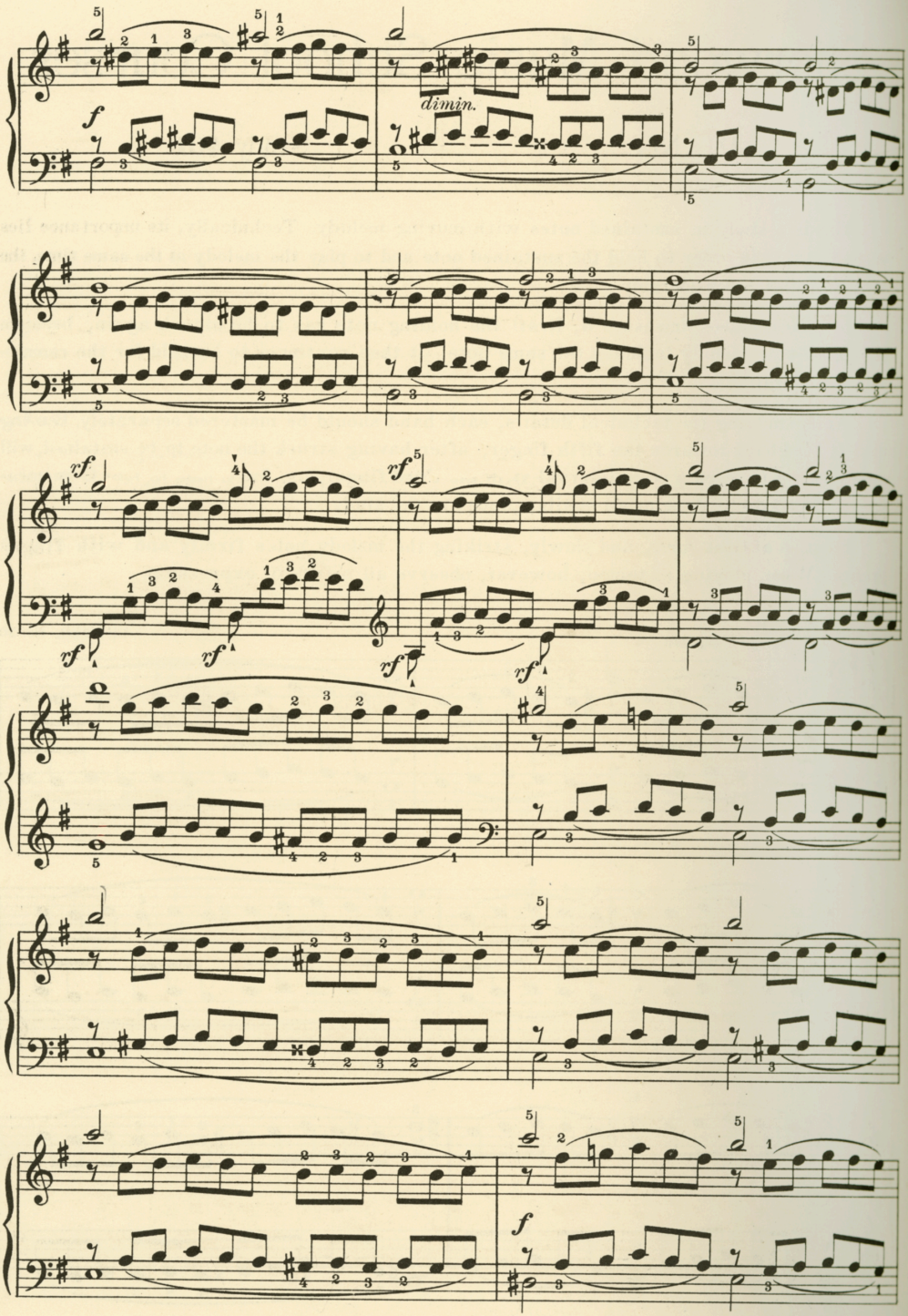
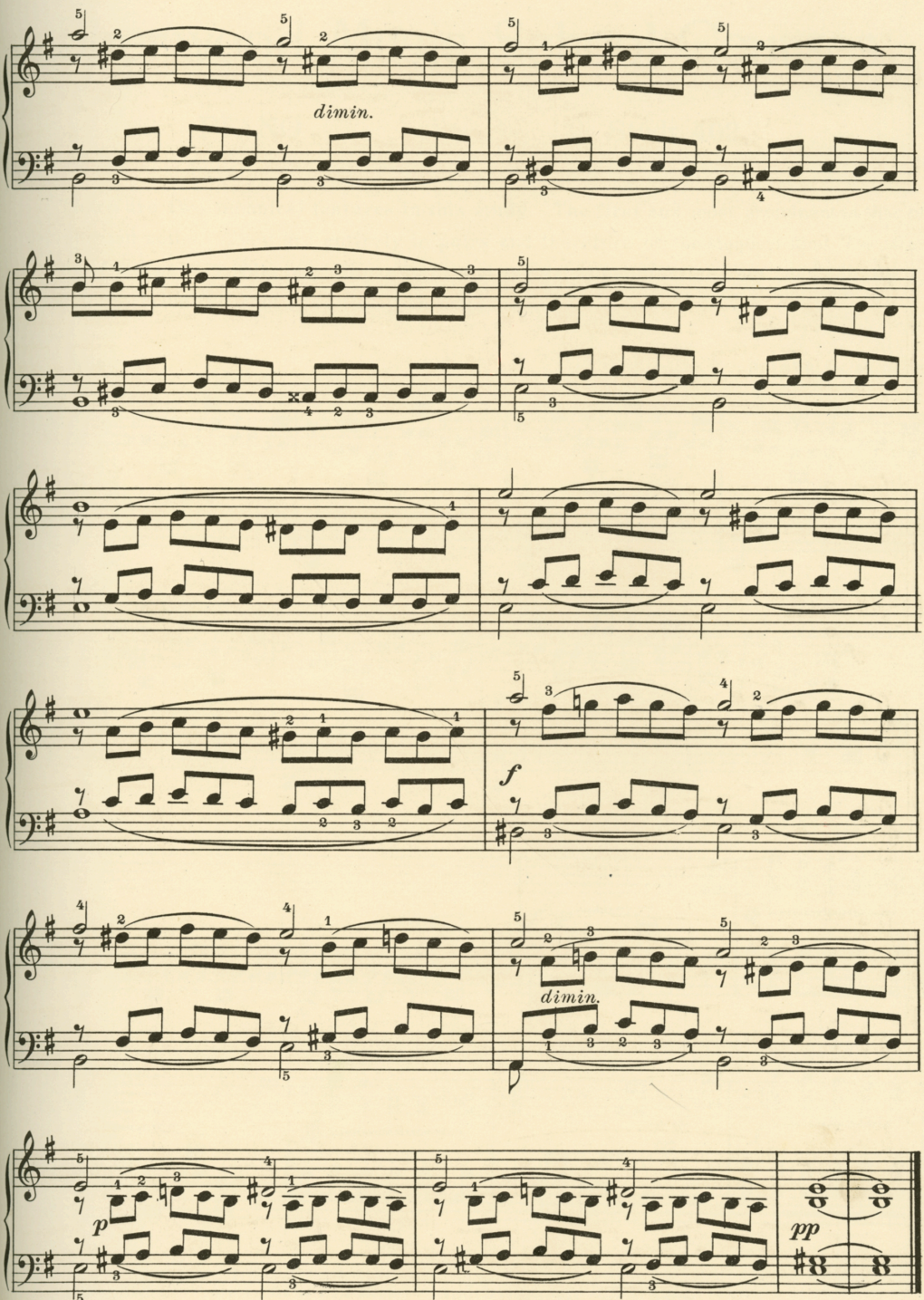

dimin.

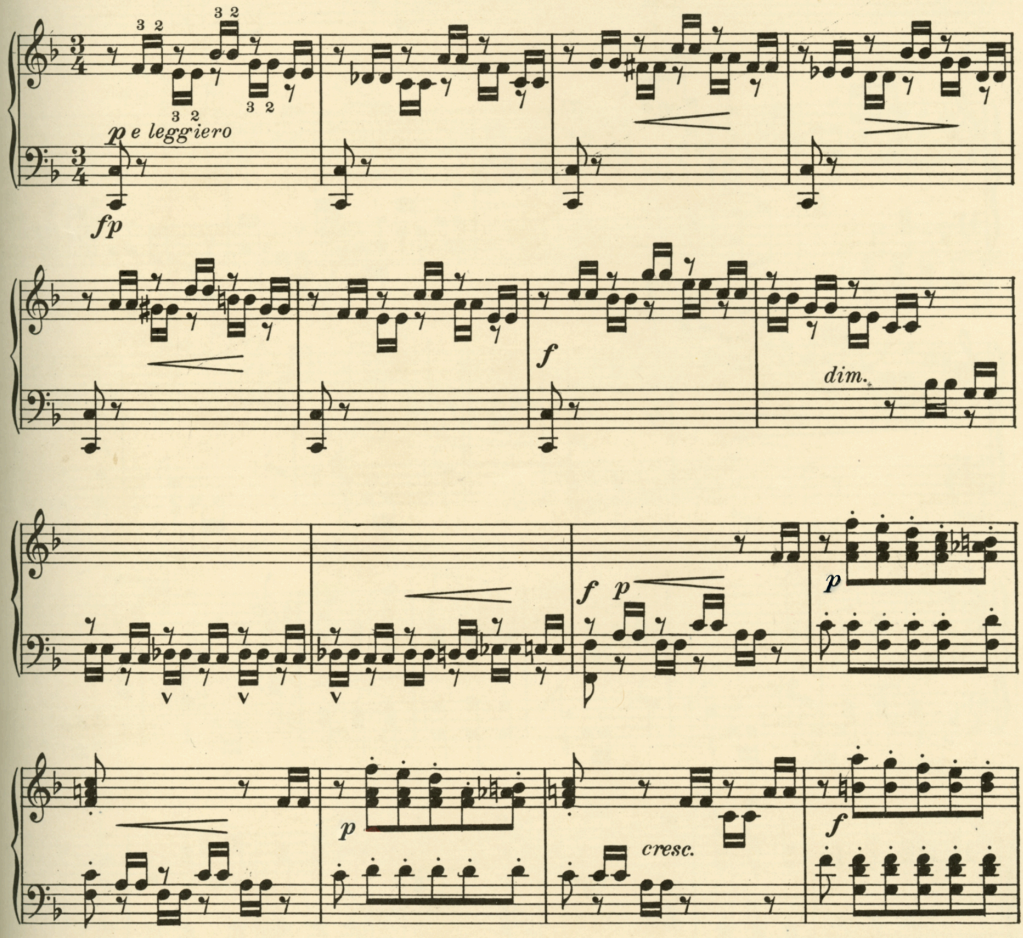

dimin.
f
dimin.
p
pp

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 402

There are two technical features in this study. The first and most prominent is that of the repeated notes. They are entirely in pairs and therefore of the simplest kind. The other is that of staccato chords, sometimes light and requiring hand action, but occasionally *f*, when forearm or full arm action may be employed.

Allegro — HELLER, Op. 45, No. 11



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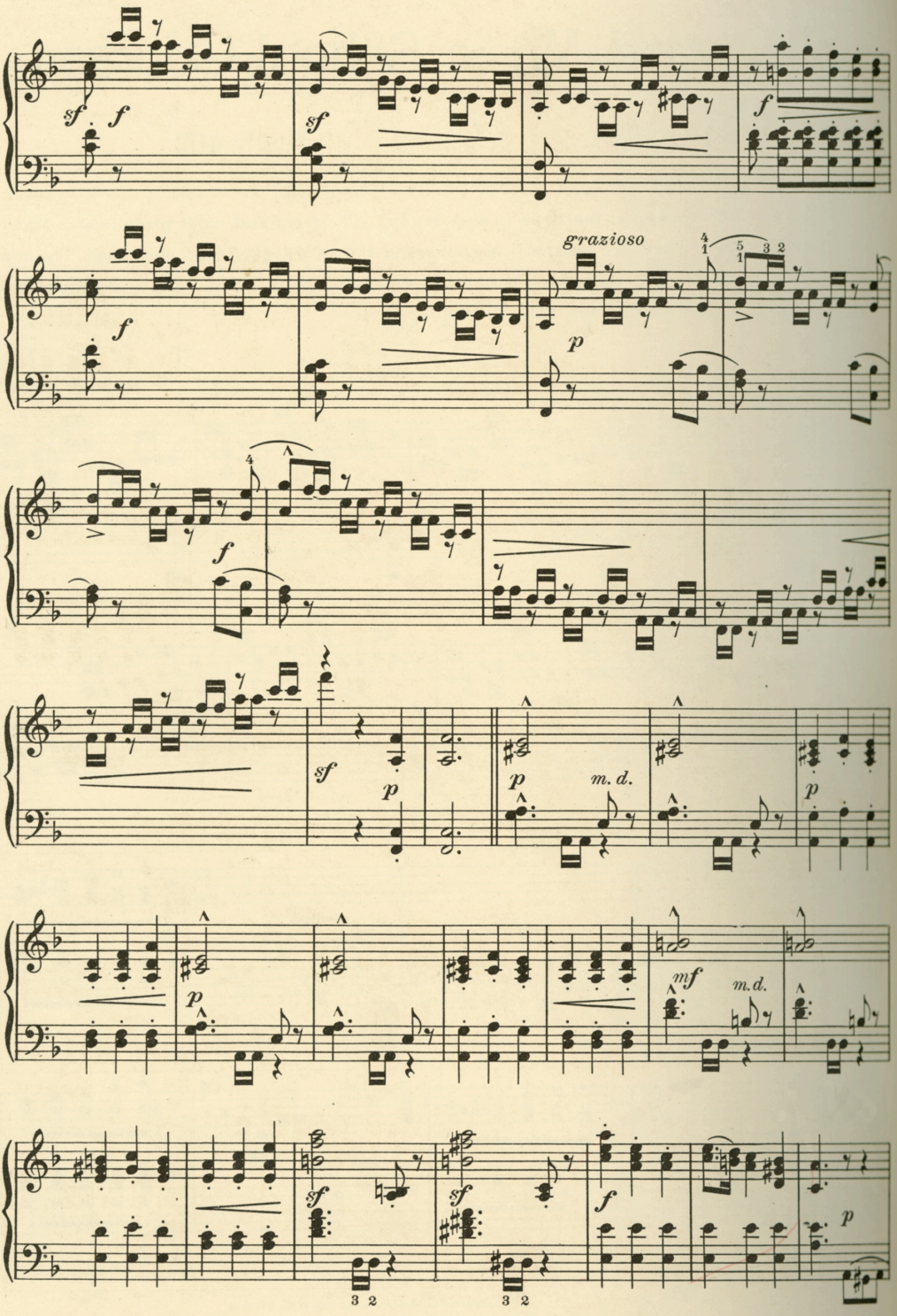
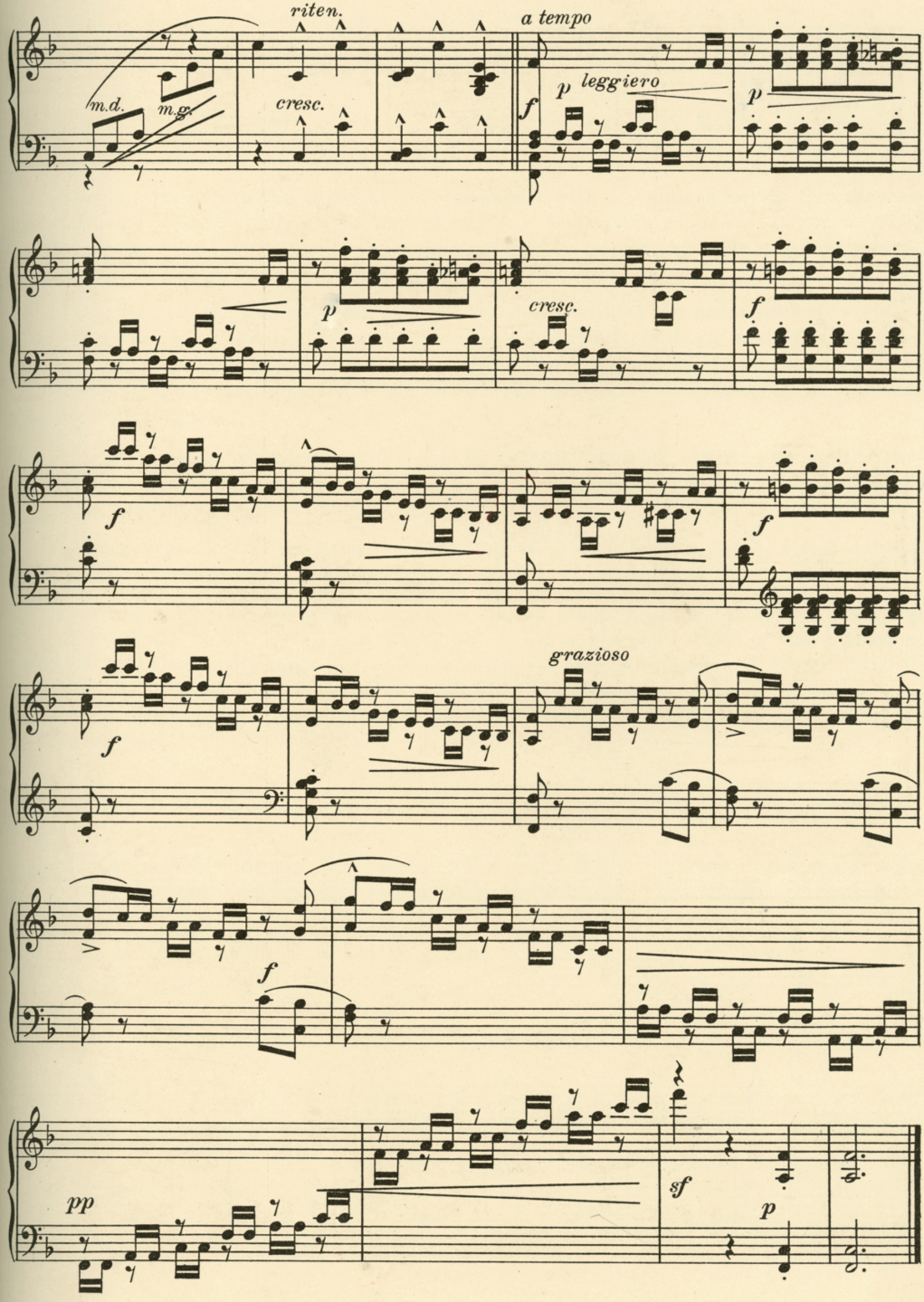

sf
f
sf
f
grazioso
f
p
f
sf
p
p
m. d.
p
p
mf
m. d.
sf
sf
f
p
3 2
3 2


riten.
a tempo
m.d.
m.g.
cresc.
p
leggiero
f
p
cresc.
f
grazioso
pp
sf
p

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PIANO — Study 403

This is a study in which slow trills are combined with a sustained melody. Such ornamentation is found in many compositions, and should be conscientiously studied. It will at first be found somewhat difficult to combine the trill and the melody, but with careful practice, the student will acquire the necessary facility.

First, practice the trill and sustained melody alone, without the accompanying right or left hand, and very slowly. This practice should be with firm touch, and high, upraised fingers. When playing the accented melody notes (for instance, the fourth beat, measure1), the stroke should be accompanied by the down wrist action, thus helping to individualize the rhythmical figure.

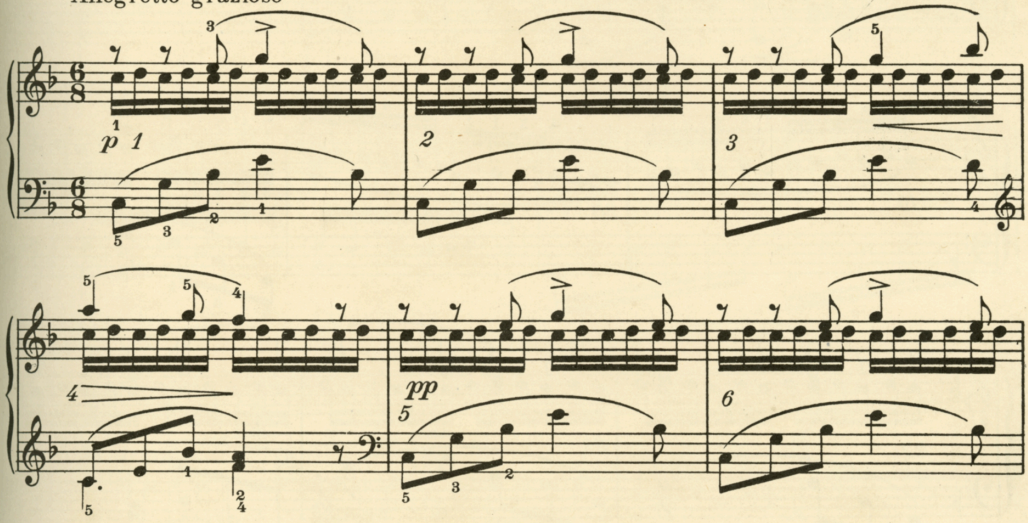
The parts accompanying the trill should be carefully phrased. When playing the two-note slurred figures in measures 11, 12 and 15, the first note of each group is to be slightly accented, and the second note shortened.

In measures 29–32, the hand is raised from the keys in order to play the accented double notes, but no break is to be evident.

It would be well for the student to practice this study by sections, namely; measures 1-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-20, 21-28, 29-32, 33 to the end. Each of these sections should be practiced many times over. The arpeggiated chords in measures 37–39 should be played so that the top note comes on the beat simultaneously with the first note of the measure in the left hand; the lower notes of the chords are therefore played in quick succession before the beat.

Allegretto grazioso

HELLER, Op. 45, No. 19



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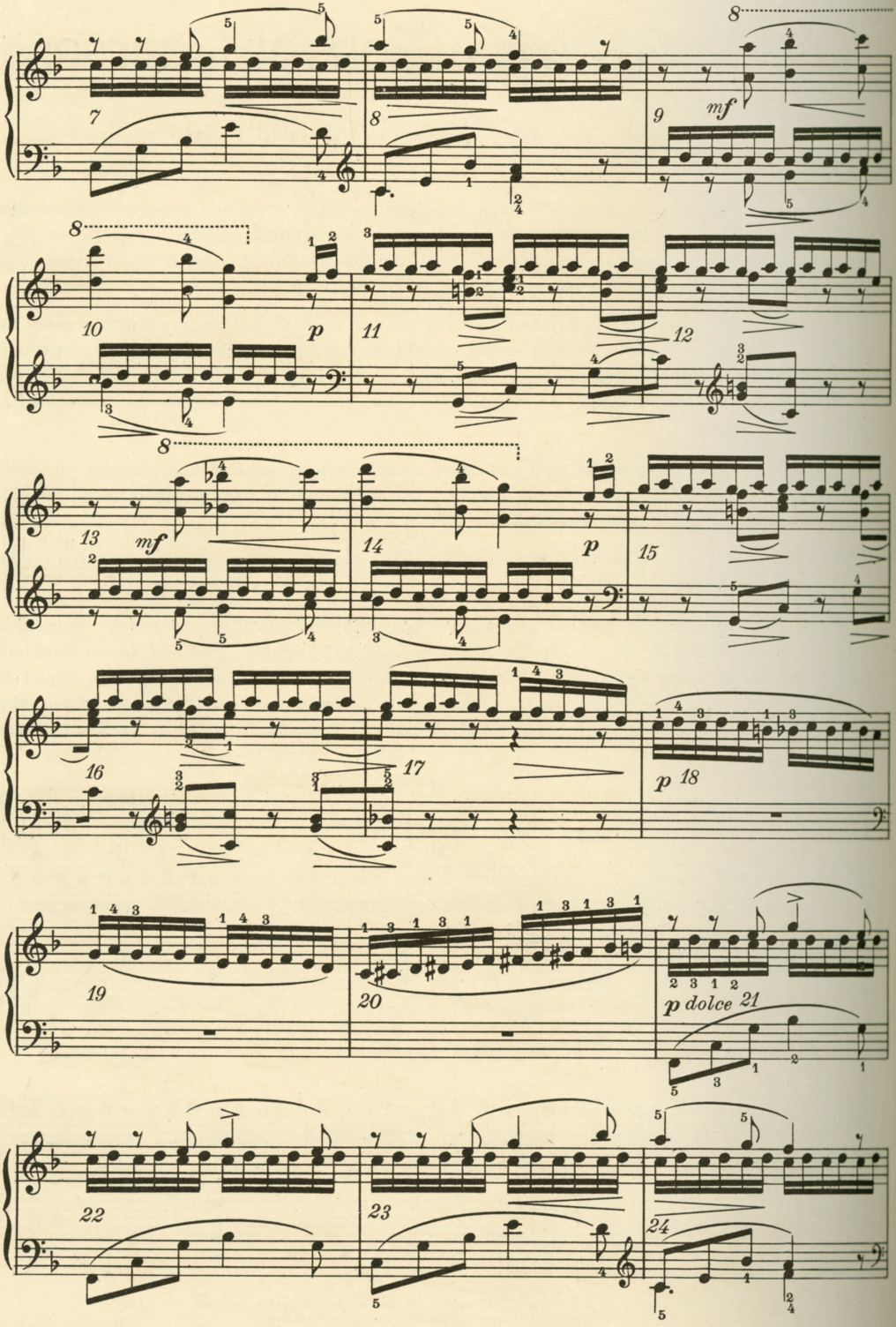
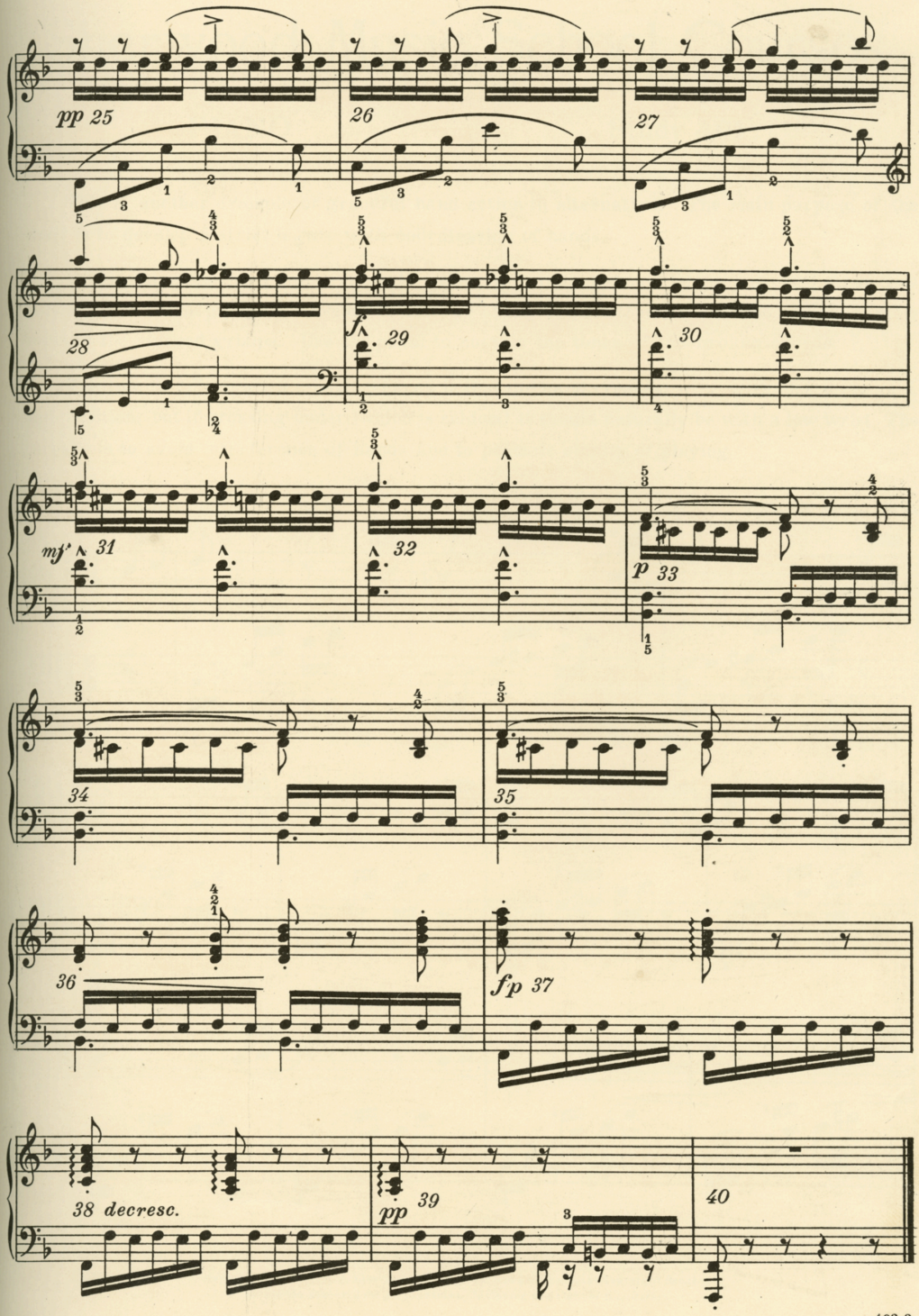

7
8
9
mf
10
p
11
12
13
mf
14
p
15
16
17
p 18
19
20
p dolce 21
22
23
24


pp 25
26
27
28
f
29
30
mf
31
32
p
33
34
35
36
fp 37
38 decresc.
pp
39
40

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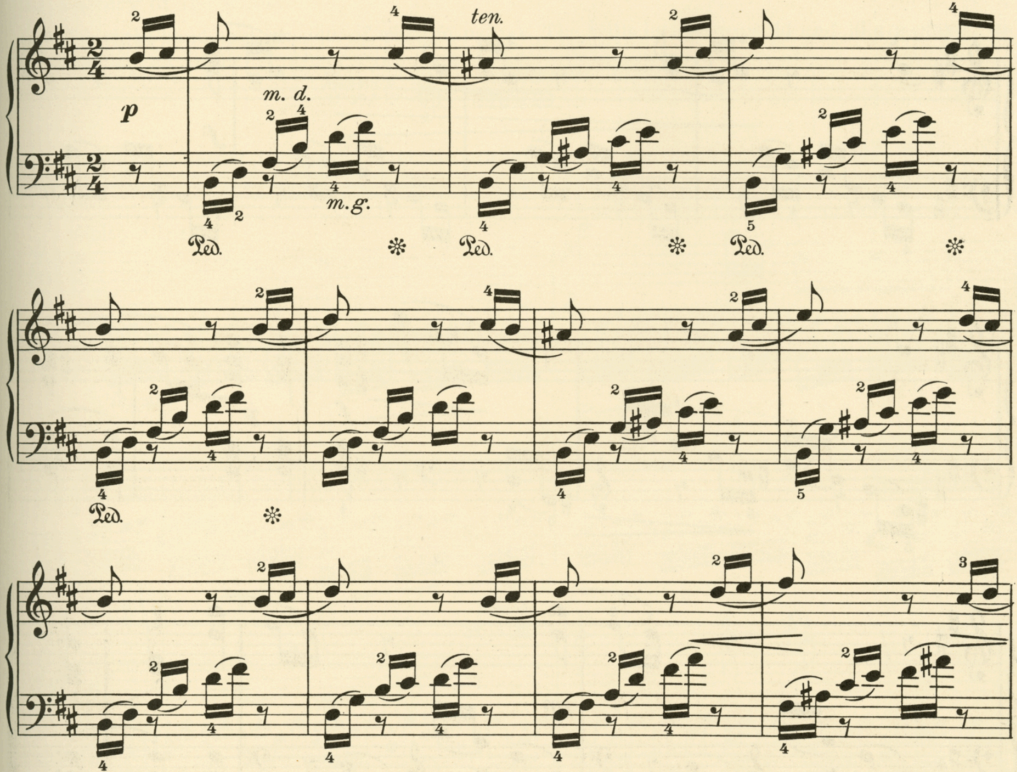
PIANO — Study 404

This is another example of graceful hand action in alternation. The main purpose of the study is to develop a strict legato with coördination of hands.

When changing from one hand to the other, the student should be very careful about connecting them. The phrasing movements must be observed, but there must be no pause audible between the slurred groups. Use the pedal to sustain the tones of the broken chords.

The rule to follow when crossing hands is that the hand crosses over with the wrist in a high position; but if crossing under (which is seldom) it should naturally be with a low wrist. The purpose is to avoid interference of hands and to promote clarity of playing.

Andantino — HELLER, Op. 46, No. 11



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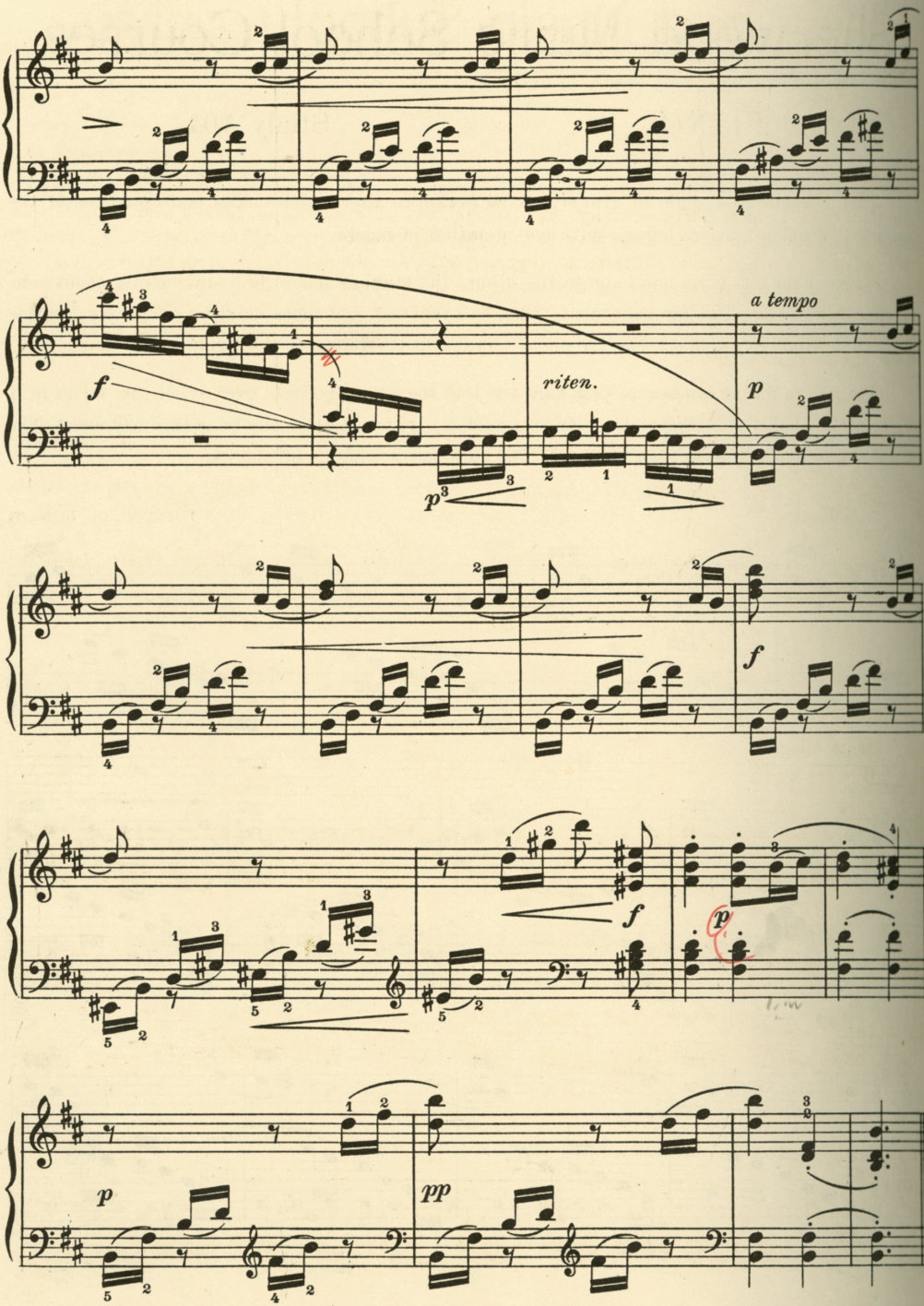
a tempo
riten.

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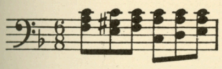
PIANO — Study 405

This study consists of a melody in the right hand, with an accompaniment of broken chords in the left hand. Technically, the left hand is of great importance, and considerable endurance is required in order to play the entire study through without fatigue. To acquire this endurance, practice the left hand figures with an absolutely relaxed wrist and forearm, using downward pressure of the wrist on the first of each four-note group, except in measures 25—28. These measures require a different method of practicing. Here, the downward wrist action may be discontinued, as the figures will best be played with quiet wrist and flexible fingers.

In order to gain resistance, practice the left hand very slowly and softly at first, accelerating by small degrees.

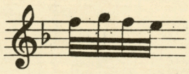
It would be well for the student to first play the left hand figures in the form of chords:



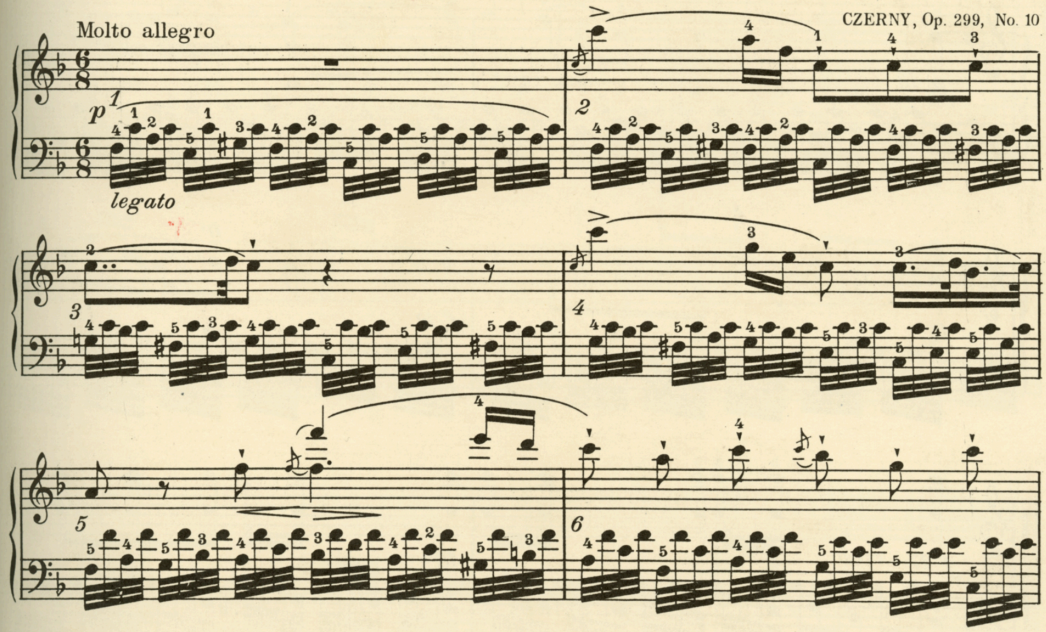
mastering their harmonic structure, and thereby helping greatly towards the mastery of the whole.

The right hand part consists of melodic matter. The trills in measures 14 and 16 are played as follows:

Measures 14 and 16



The student should pay special attention to the phrasing and marks of expression.



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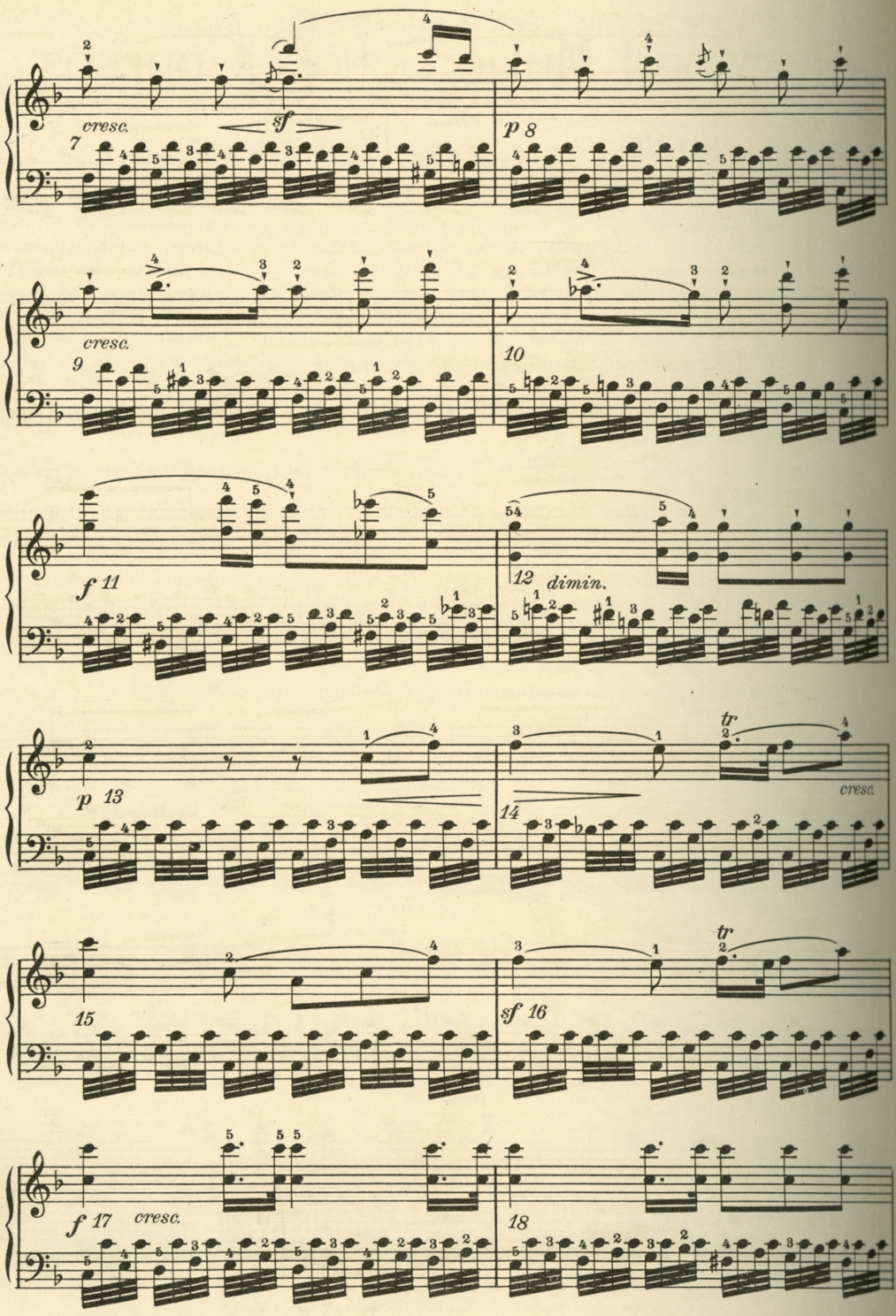
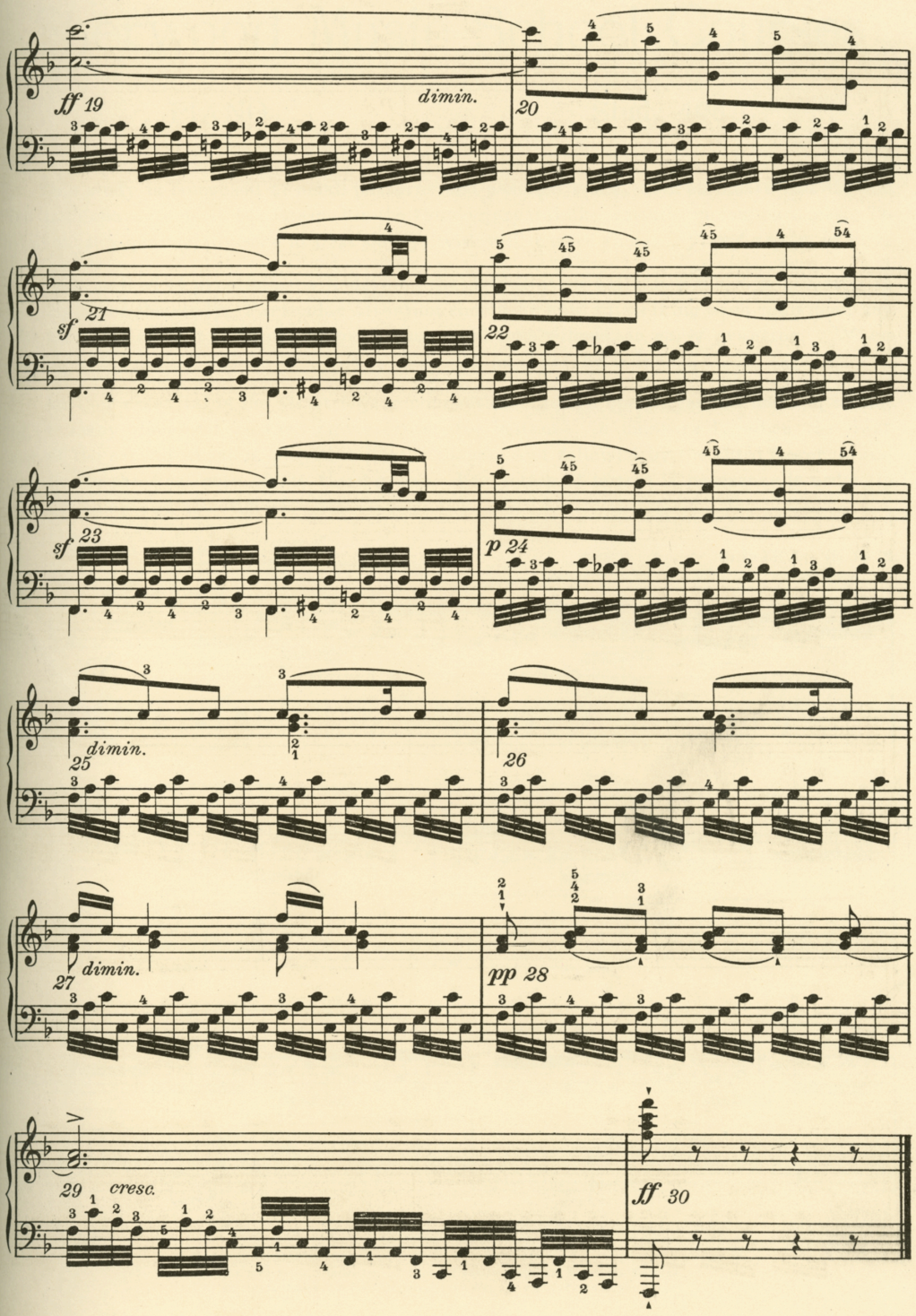

cresc.
sf
7
p 8
cresc.
9
10
f 11
12
dimin.
p 13
14
tr
cresc.
15
sf 16
tr
f 17
cresc.
18


ff 19
dimin.
20
sf 21
22
sf 23
p 24
dimin. 25
26
dimin. 27
pp 28
29 cresc.
ff 30

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PIANO — Study 406

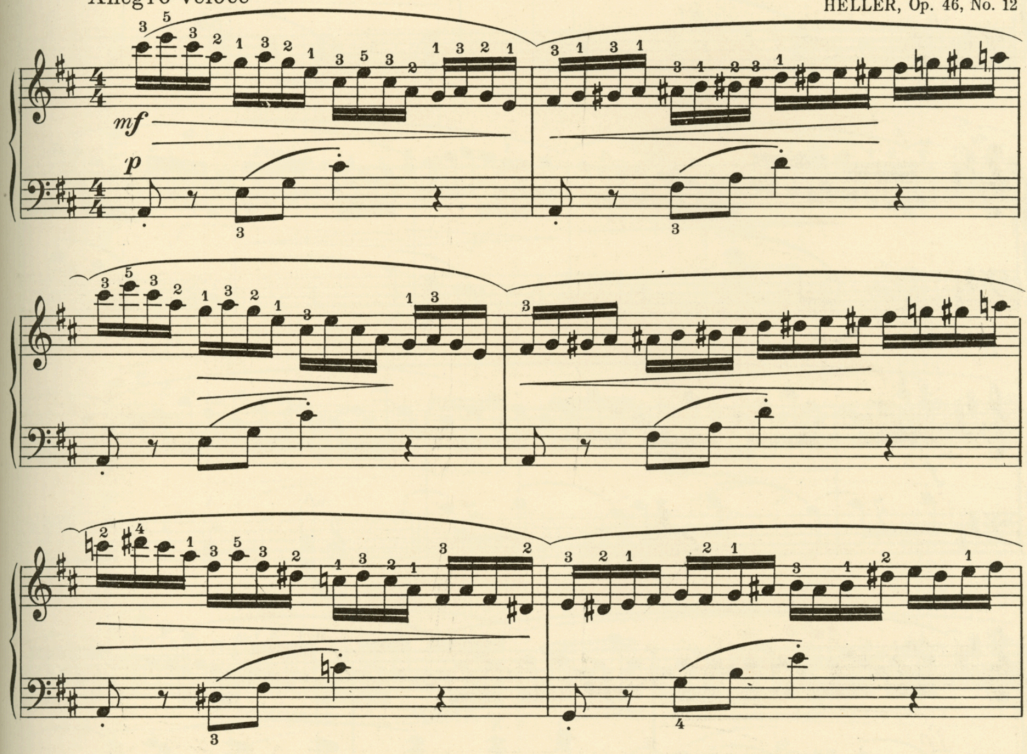
This study is composed of small patterns and passage work, both chromatic and diatonic. The main characteristic is contained in the flowing, crystal-like, smooth-running passages. To bring out this quality, practice at first slowly, with well-curved fingers, *f*, *mf* and *p*, in turn.

Such method of practicing will develop the scintillating brilliancy which is essential to the playing of the study. Particular attention should be paid to striking each individual key with the same amount of force, and producing equal tone volume, in early practice. When playing in tempo, all marks of expression should be carefully followed.

Another essential is the strict legato connection between one finger and another, including the many places where the fingers cross; for instance, in measure 1, when the last note of the second group is played with the thumb, and followed by the third finger crossing over to the first note of the third group. Perfection of legato is necessary in order to attain fluency and smoothness.

Allegro veloce

HELLER, Op. 46, No. 12



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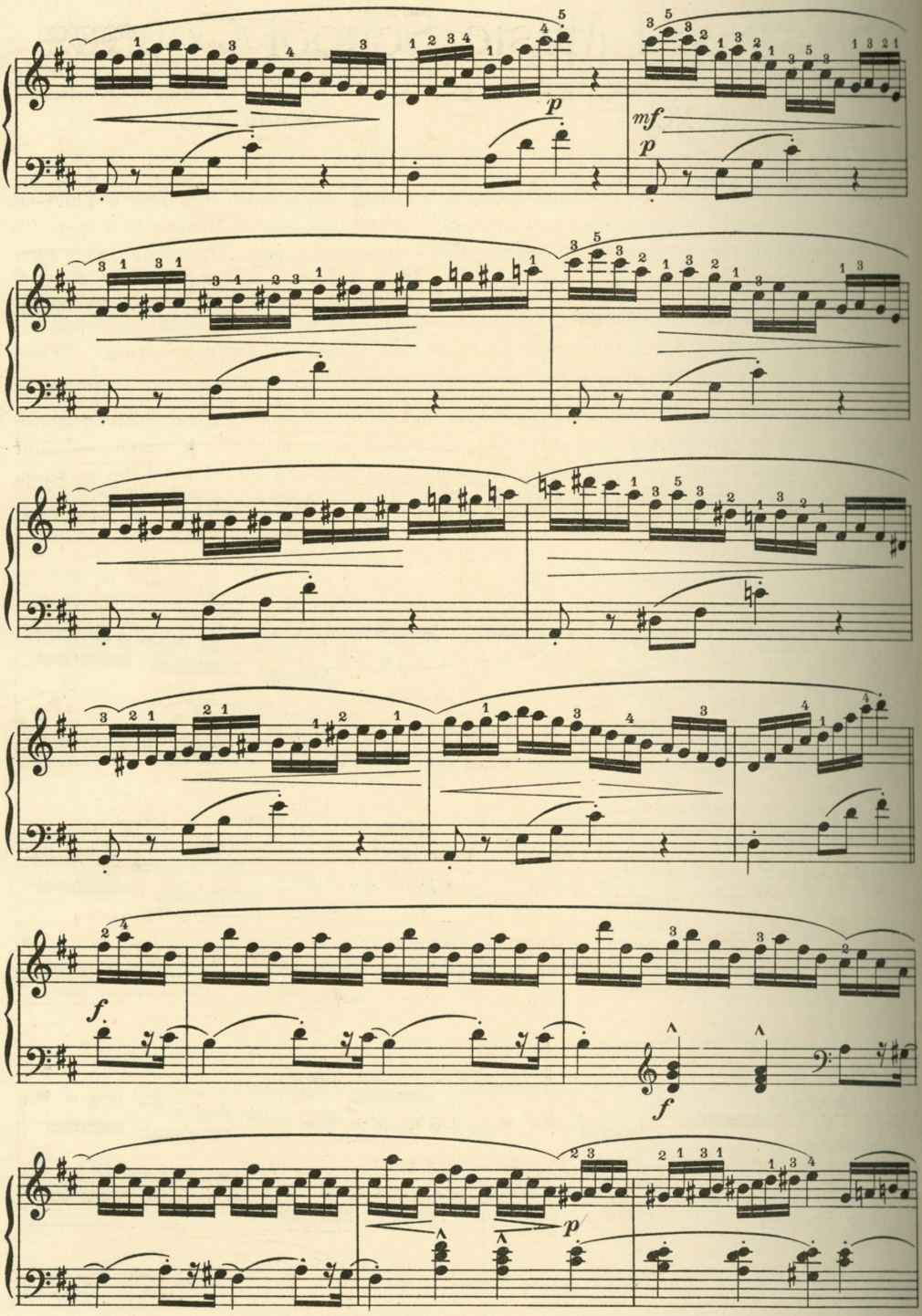
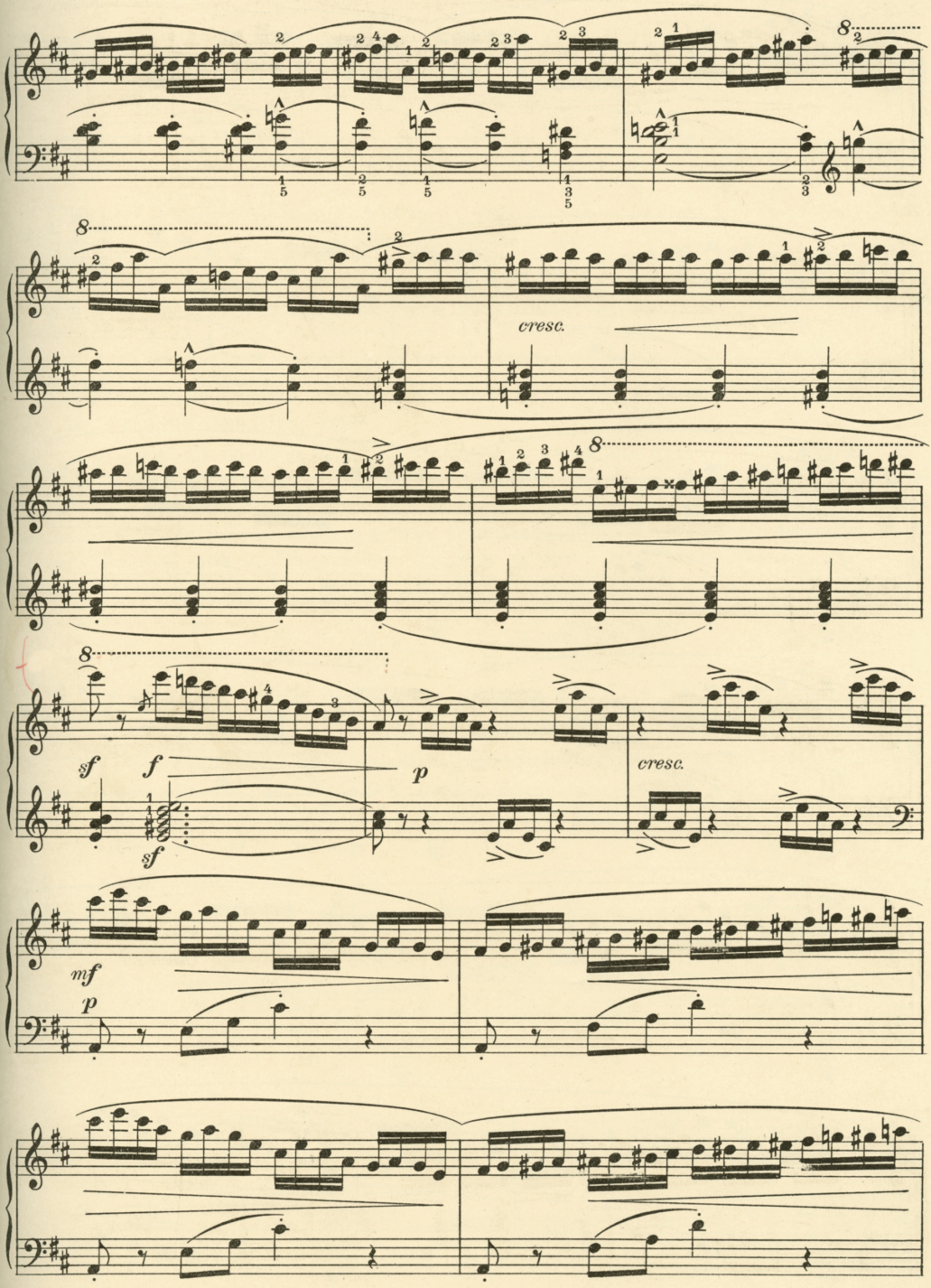
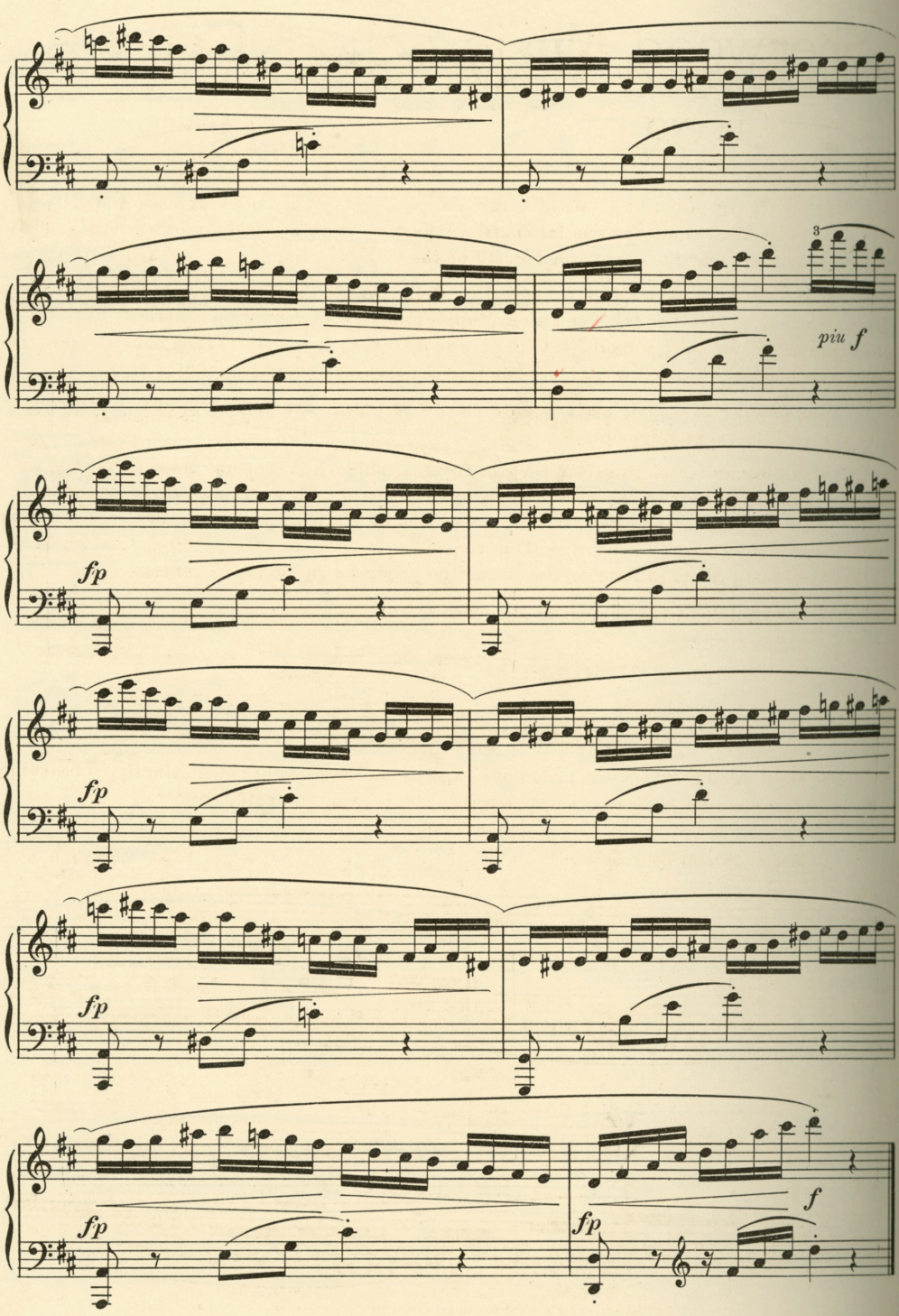

p
mf
p
f
f
p


8
cresc.
8
8
sf
f
sf
p
cresc.
mf
p


3
piu f
fp
fp
fp
fp
f
fp

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PIANO — Study 407

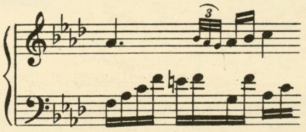
This is an ideal study for the left hand. It is both very musical and extremely useful technically, requiring the utmost dexterity of the fingers.

Before playing it as written, it would be well, for the sake of developing the necessary finger control, to play the left hand alone, applying some of the various methods of practice that have been suggested for other studies. For instance, it may be played staccato throughout, in dotted-note rhythm, and also in various degrees of dynamics, from *f* to *p*.

When playing in tempo, strict legato should be used, each finger, in turn, clinging to its key until the next finger plays.

It would be advisable to select certain figures which may appear more difficult than others, and practice them individually many times over—for instance, those in measures 6—7. Here the fourth and fifth fingers are placed in difficult positions. Practice a strong attack with these fingers, accenting them somewhat, in order to offset their natural weakness. Later, the same amount of tone volume should be produced by all of the fingers.

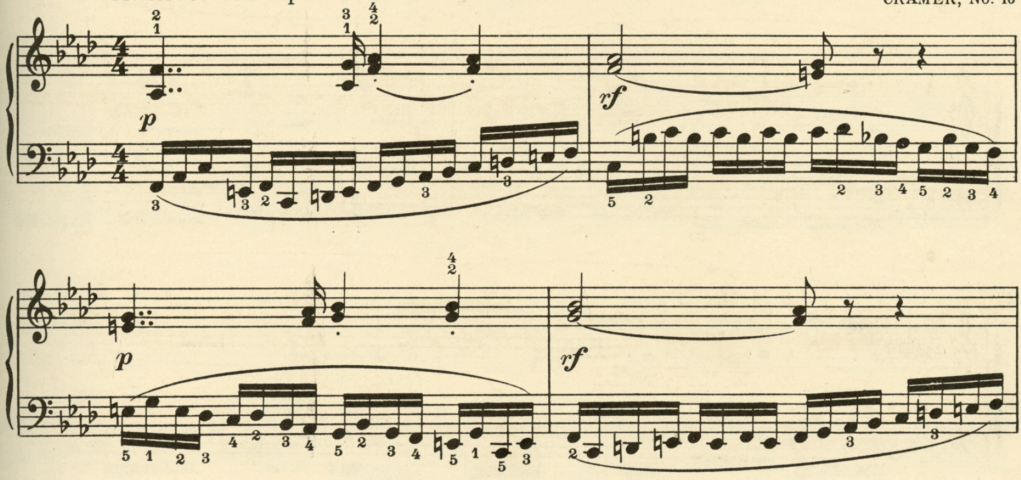
The turns in measures 13 and 29 are executed as follows:



The right hand part is very melodious, and should be brought out distinctly, observing the expression marks, accents, slurs, legato, non legato, staccato, etc.

Moderato con espressione

CRAMER, No. 16



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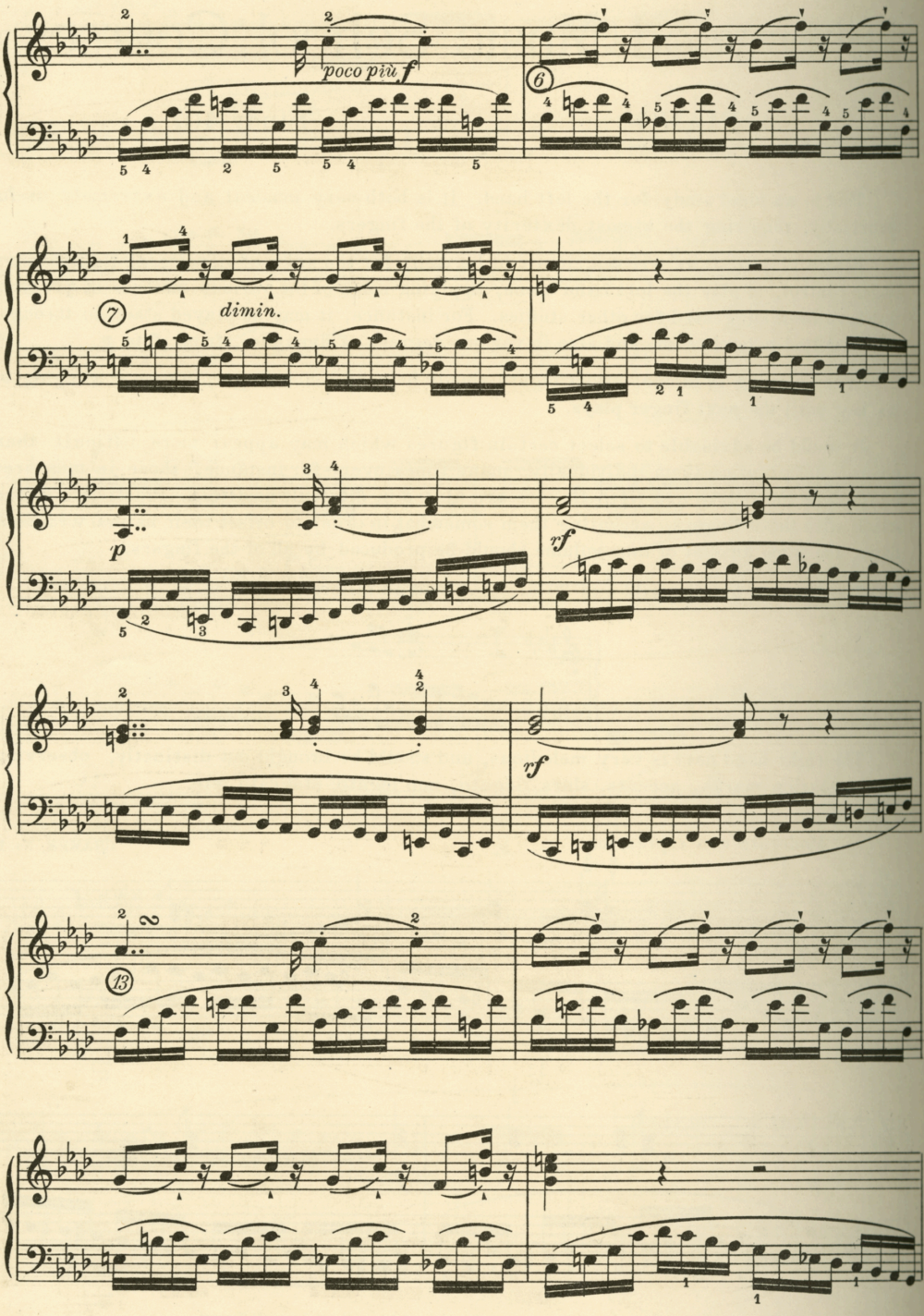
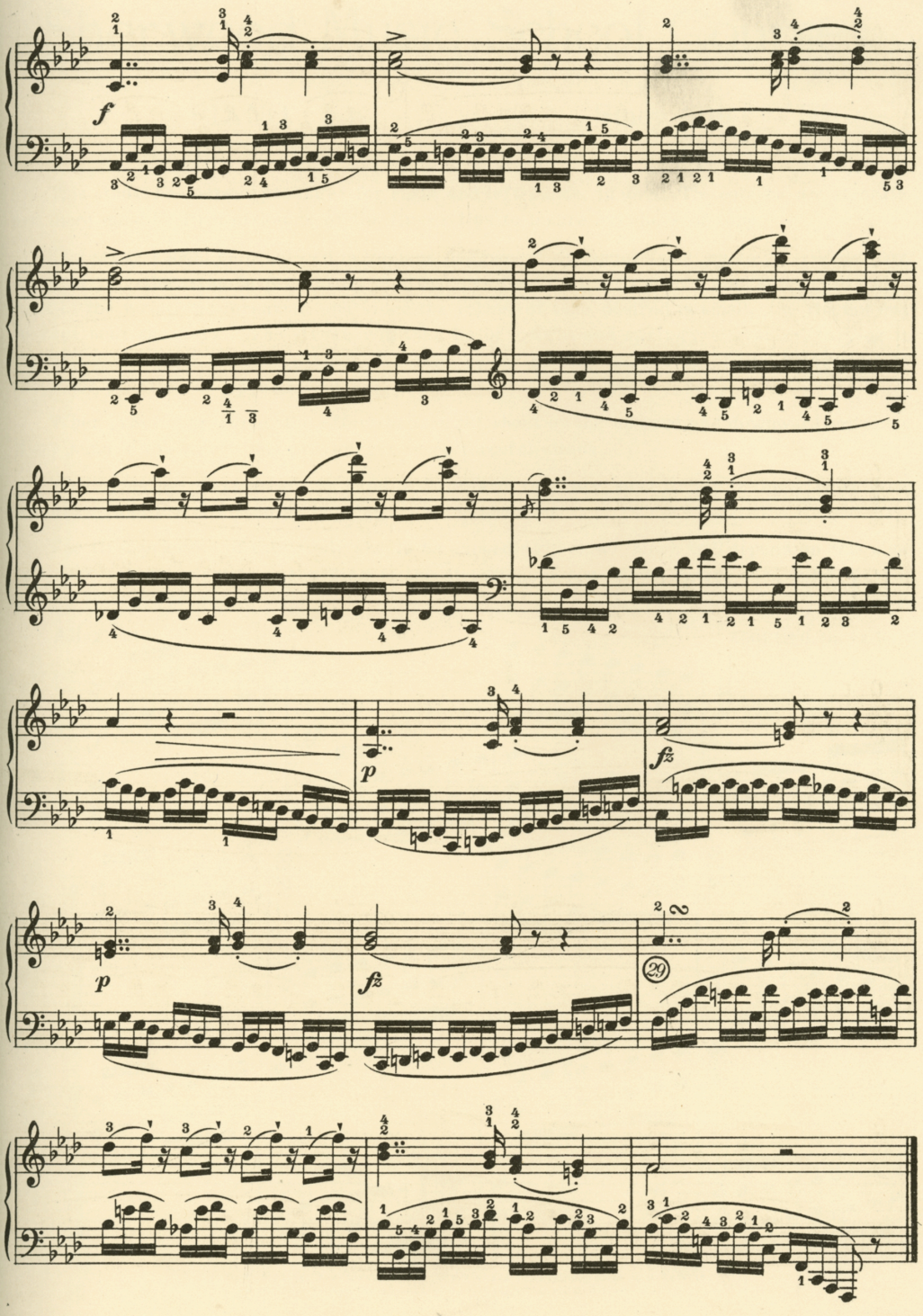

poco più f
6
dimin.
7
p
rf
rf
13


f
p
fz
p
fz
29

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO — Study 408

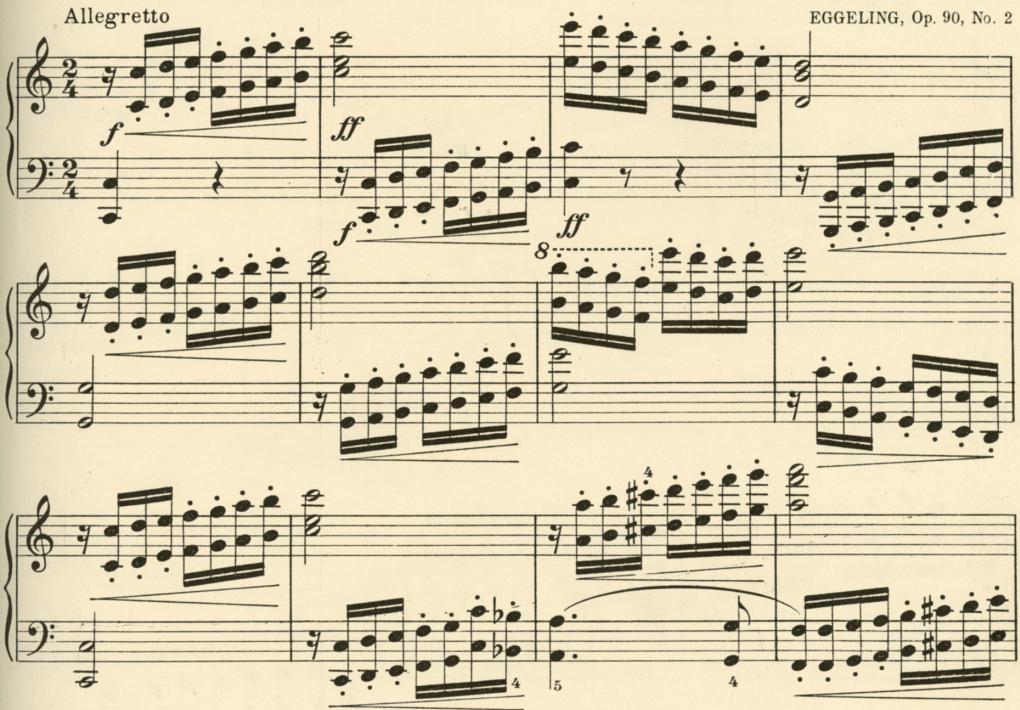
This study has octave passages for right and left hands, in turn. The octaves are staccato, and there must be firm pressure of the finger-tips to insure evenness of tone.

The study should be practiced in various degrees of dynamics from *pp* to *ff*. When playing *p* or *pp*, the action is practically confined to the vibratory upward and downward movement of the wrist and forearm; and since the volume of tone desired is small, the fingers may be kept near the keys. The stroke will then be of a light and springy character, varying in attack according to the tone volume, whether *pp* or *p*. Any part or all of the study may be taken for practice of *pp* and *p* playing.

When practicing *forte*, the effect is brought about by the upward and downward movement of the hand at the wrist, this providing a more forceful attack.

When playing *fortissimo*, the hand and forearm together, held firmly in line, move from the elbow, and are assisted by impulse from the shoulder.

The first practice of this study should be exceedingly slow. Much will depend on this slow and conscientious practice, according to the directions given above, for the successful performance of staccato octaves.



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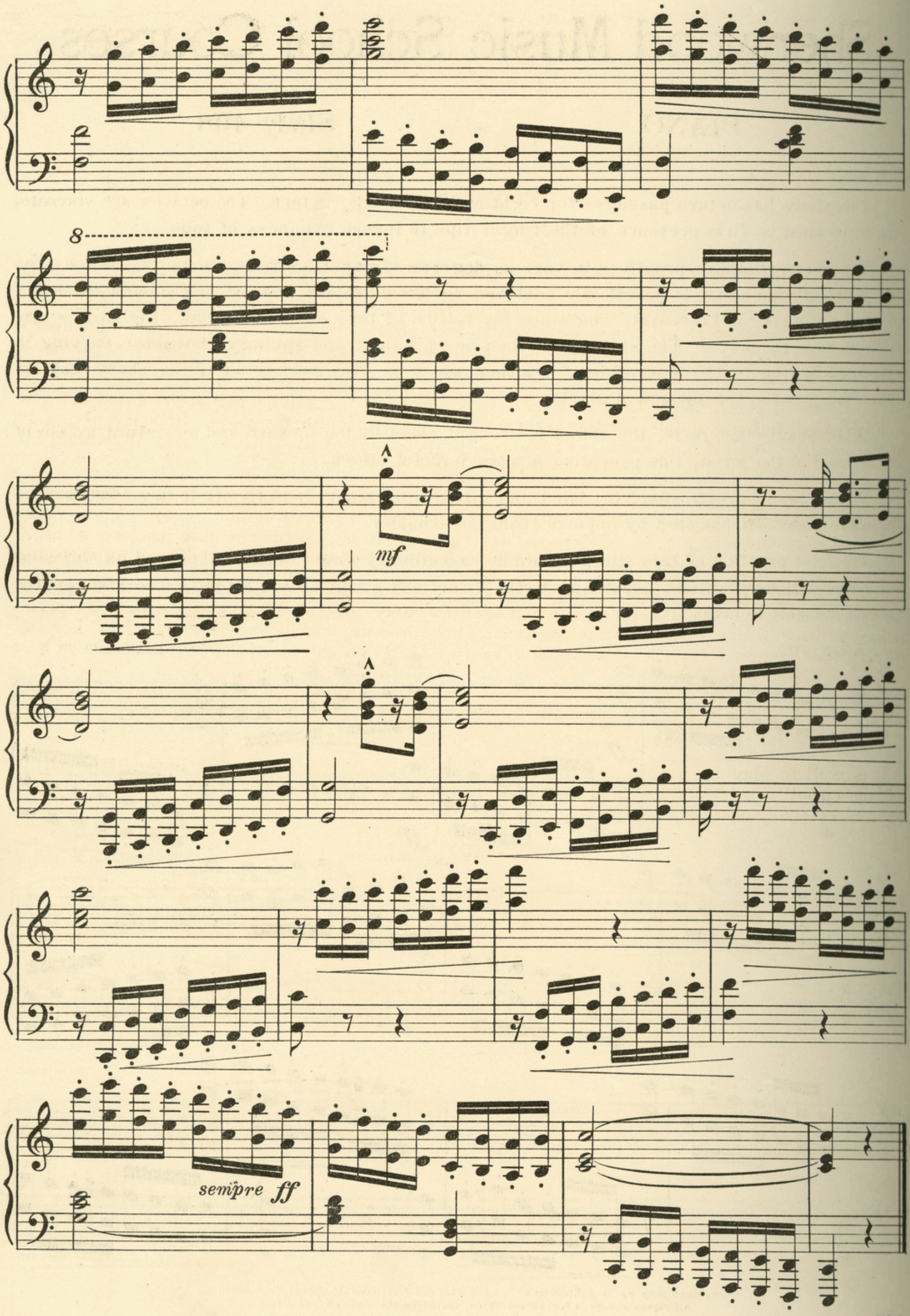

8
mf
sempre ff

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO Study 410

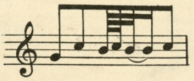
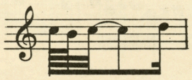
Polyphony

In Bach's two and three-part Inventions we meet with the finest studies preparatory to high musicianship. They cover a large range of charming examples in polyphonic writing. The peculiar difficulty of properly interpreting this kind of music lies in the fact that the theme, or themes, must at all times be brought into sufficient prominence to be distinctly heard. It is, therefore, clear that one should first examine and study the theme, or themes, and then listen for them in the general ensemble.

The first and chief theme in this invention is contained in the opening eight notes for the right hand. This little theme occurs, intermittently, all through the piece. In some places it is disguised by being what is called inverted, that is, played in the reverse direction, as may be seen very plainly in measure 9, right hand part.

We must never forget that the voices in polyphonic music are independent and complete melodies, in and by themselves. A good way to study and interpret them is to imagine them either sung by voices or played on stringed instruments. In this piece one may imagine a high voice answered by a baritone; or a violin by a 'cello. Play the voice parts with expression, at first singly, and then together.

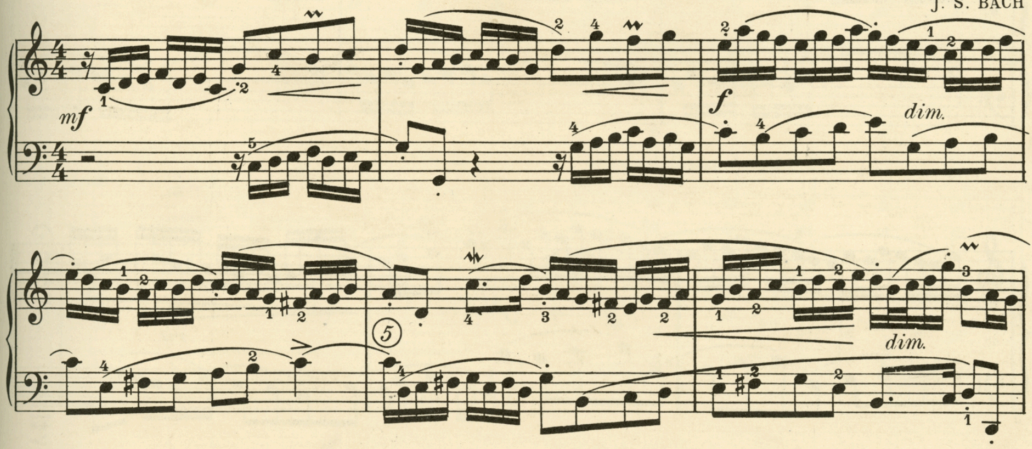
We also find two embellishments much used in early instrumental music, namely, the prall-triller or inverted mordent, and the mordent. These are explained and illustrated in Lesson 62, GENERAL THEORY. Their execution is very rapid, and on the beat; as, for instance:

 in measure 1, and  in measure 5.

It is well to play all passages containing embellishments, of whatever nature, first without the embellishments. Then play them adding the ornaments, keeping the rhythmical balance of the passage the same.

INVENTION No. 1.

J. S. BACH



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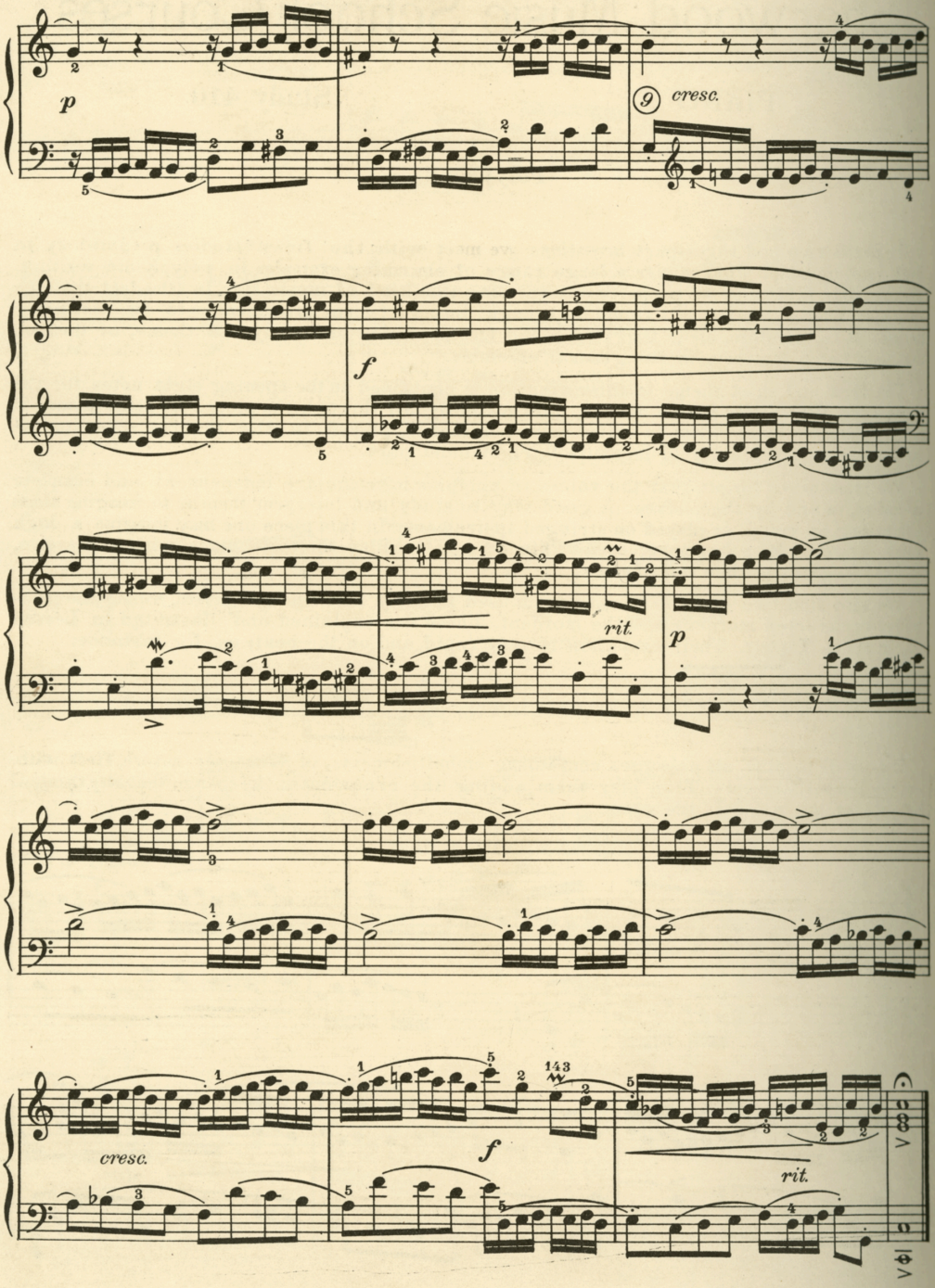

p
cresc.
f
rit.
p
cresc.
f
rit.

Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO Study 420

Polyphony

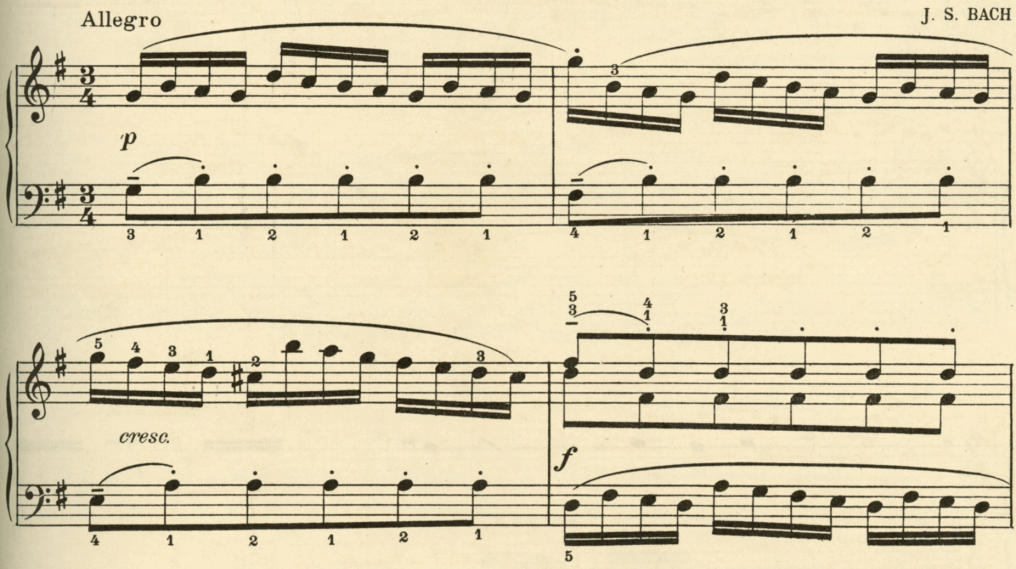
This prelude contains another of the many problems which Bach delights to offer. It demands absolute independence and ease in the delivery of a theme which appears, from time to time, in each hand. This matter of independence is of extreme importance to those who have imposed upon themselves the task of really mastering the keyboard.

The picture which pieces of this type suggest is that of two sympathetic friends taking a brisk ramble in the country, and giving expression to similar feelings of delight in viewing the wonders of Nature. The "friend" in this case is not one who merely follows, as in the canons you have been studying, or who would hold you back in any way. The problem, then, is to so prepare both hands that each is thoroughly efficient, and under complete control, in order to present this harmonious association of individual units.

Although there are only two chief parts, there is sometimes, unobtrusively added, a third, to make the harmony more complete. What this third voice represents, in our allegorical picture, may be left to the imagination. The piece continues busily on its way, in no great haste, however. It keeps going right along, without necessarily holding to one and the same pace.

An undulating movement of the wrist, with a slight downward pressure on the first of the four-note groups, will prevent fatigue and aid fluency.

PRELUDE



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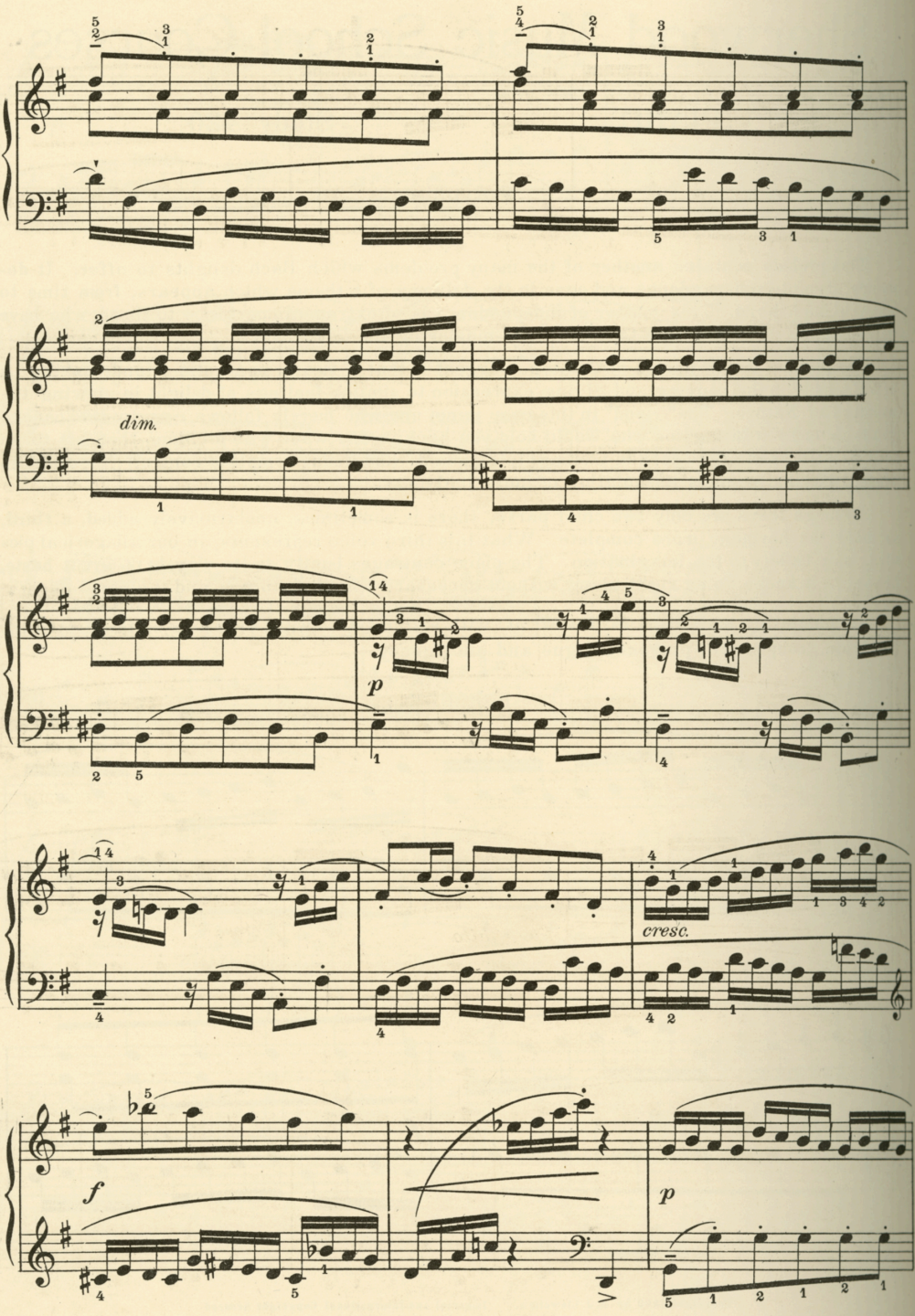
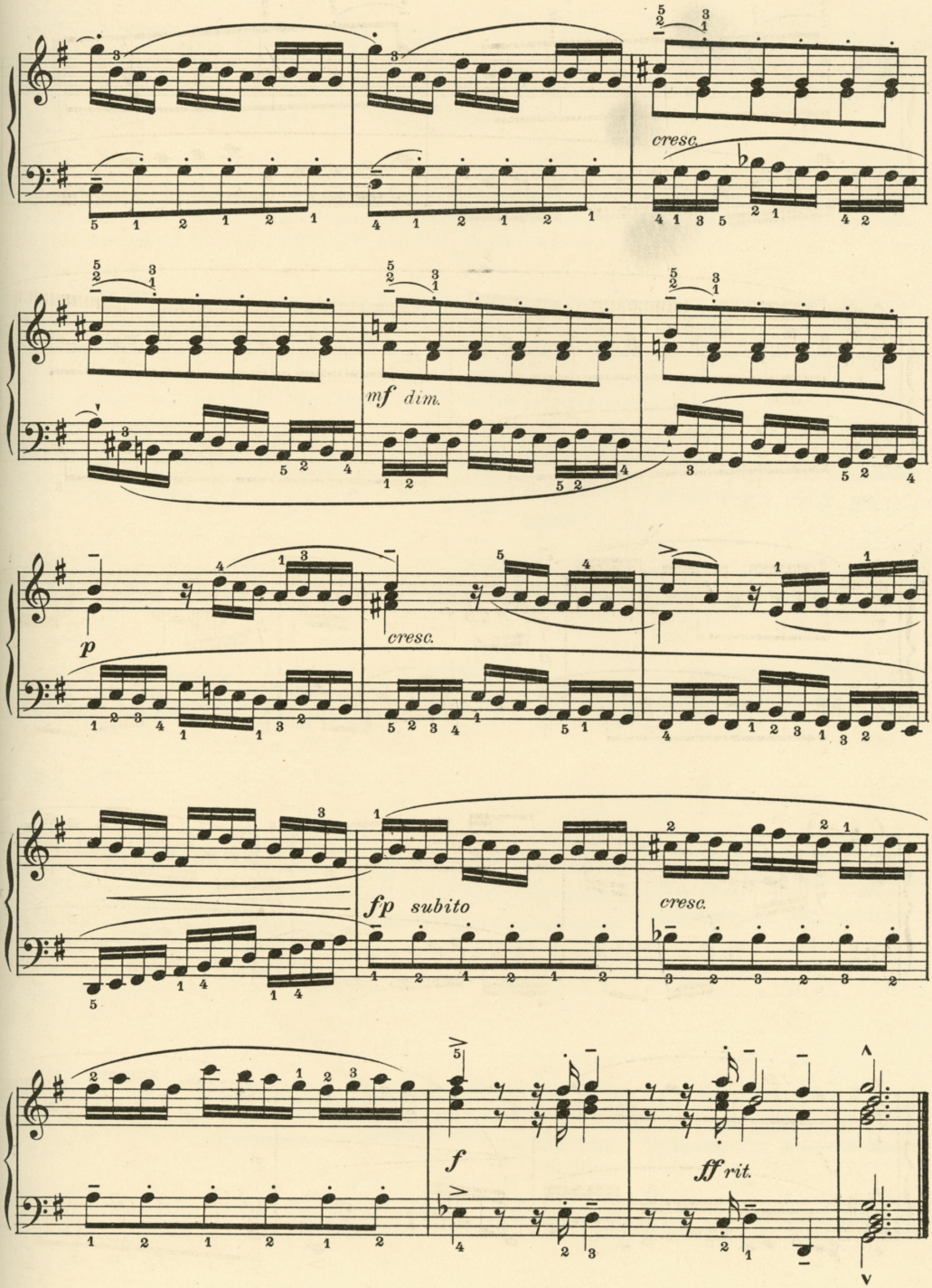

dim.
p
cresc.
f
p


cresc.
mf dim.
p
cresc.
fp subito
cresc.
f
ff rit.

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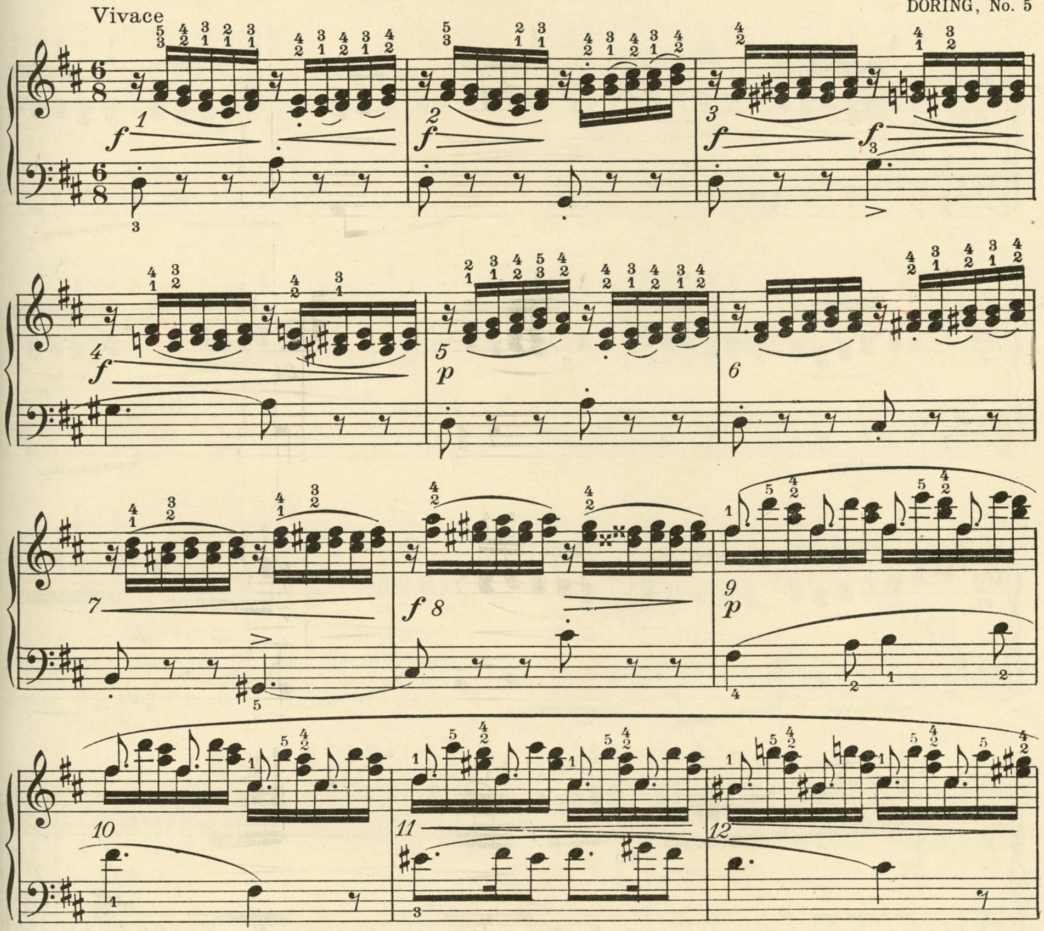
PIANO — Study 451

The playing of double thirds is a technical problem by no means easy to solve successfully. The Exercise of the corresponding number to this Study (451), together with its preliminary and preceding Exercises, 253, 305 and 353, should, however, have made the present study easy for the student.

First play the right hand part alone, with the indicated fingering, adding the dynamics, and then the left part.

The dotted eighth notes added in the right hand part, measures 9—16, are merely intended to give a sustaining tone, and must not be allowed to divide the groups into two triplets. Each group continues to be, rhythmically, three twos, and not two threes.

DÖRING, No. 5



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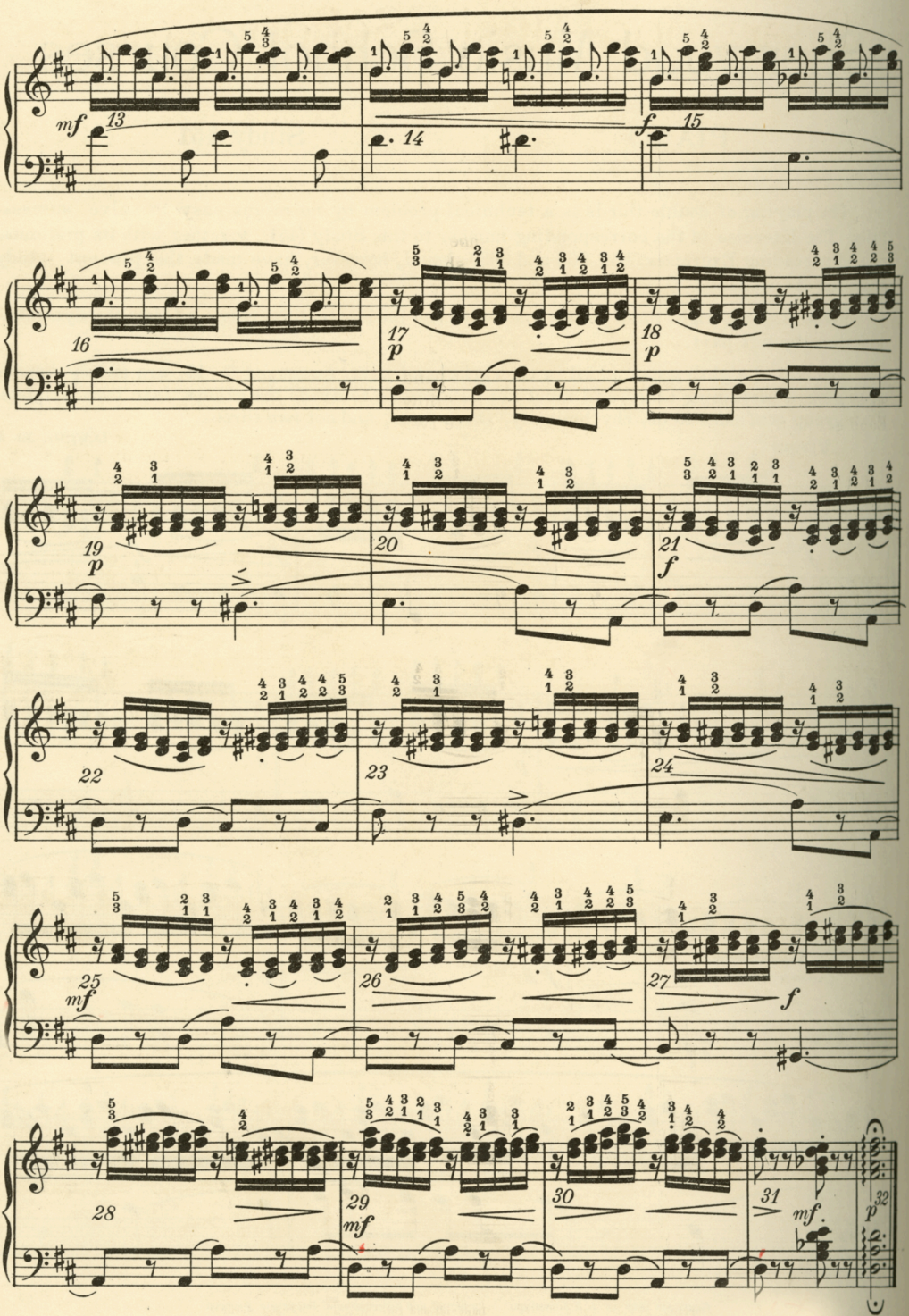
mf
13
14
f
15
16
17
p
18
p
19
p
20
21
f
22
23
24
25
mf
26
27
f
28
29
mf
30
31
mf
32
p

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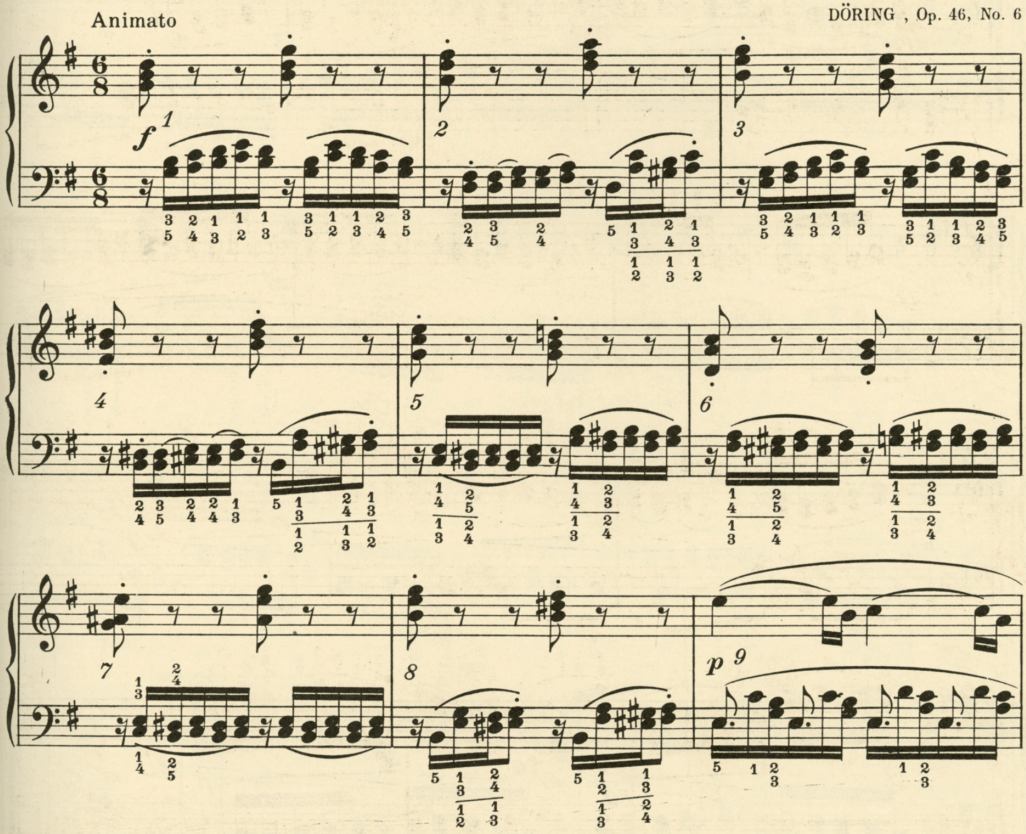
PIANO — Study 452

The left hand is now given passages in thirds similar to those given to the right hand in Study 451.

The fingering of many groups is exactly the same as the fingering for similar groups in Study 451, as they are reversed to agree with the change of hand. Some of the groups of thirds are fingered in two ways. Both should be given at least some attention, though the one preferred may be adopted and used regularly.

Care must be taken not to change the rhythm in measures 9 - 16, where the dotted eighth notes occur.

Practice the left hand part alone, at first, to learn the fingering and the dynamics.



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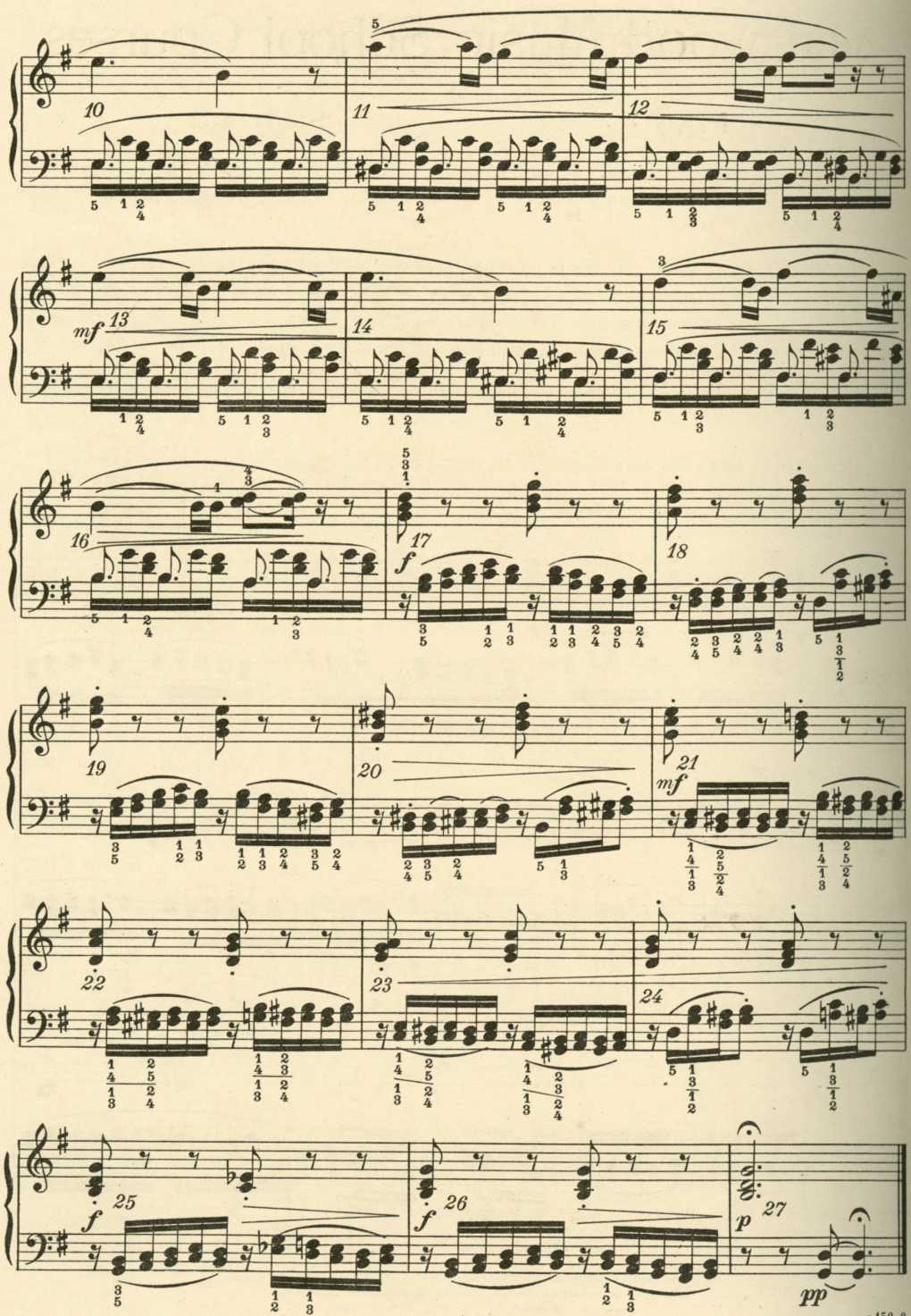
10
11
12
mf
13
14
15
16
17
f
18
19
20
21
mf
22
23
24
f
25
f
26
p
27
pp

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PIANO — Study 453

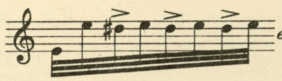
The principal requirement in this study is to maintain the wrist in a loose, flexible condition. A downward action of the wrist, when playing the first of the four-note groups, will contribute towards relaxation and endurance, and will, at the same time, bring out the natural accents.

For preliminay practice, it is helpful to employ special accents. For instance, accent, first, every alternate note. This throws the accent on the different fingers, in turn, and therefore is helpful in equalizing the tone volume.

Another form of practice which will prove benefical, is the use of a dotted-note rhythm, making every alternate note longer (beginning with the first), and the next note shorter. This may be also reversed, the short note coming on the accent.

Give careful attention to the fingering indicated, so that habits of correct fingering will be formed.

Measures 6–7 may be used as a special exercise for the fourth and fifth fingers of the right hand, by playing eight notes to each group instead of the original four, as follows:

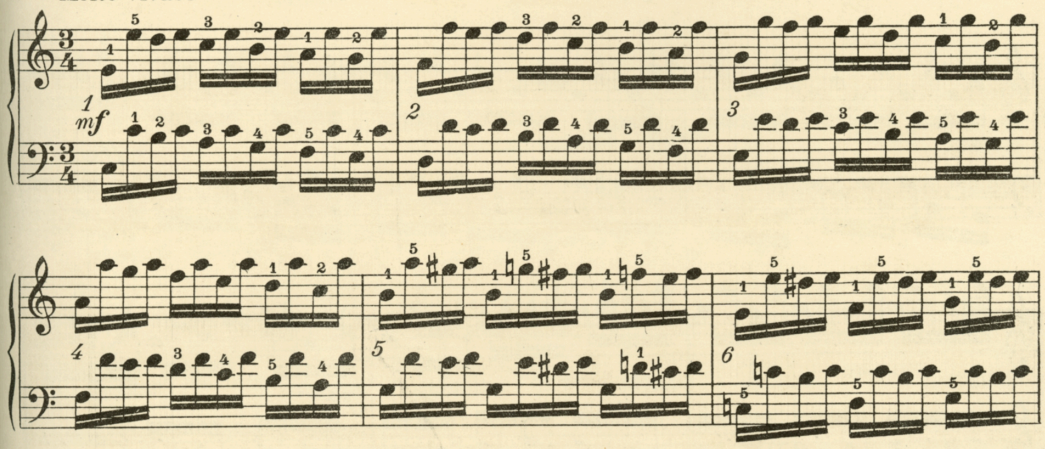


Accentuate the naturally weak fourth finger in playing this, in order to strengthen it.

Divide the study into sections, and practice each section individually.

Molto vivace

CZERNY, Op. 299, No. 20



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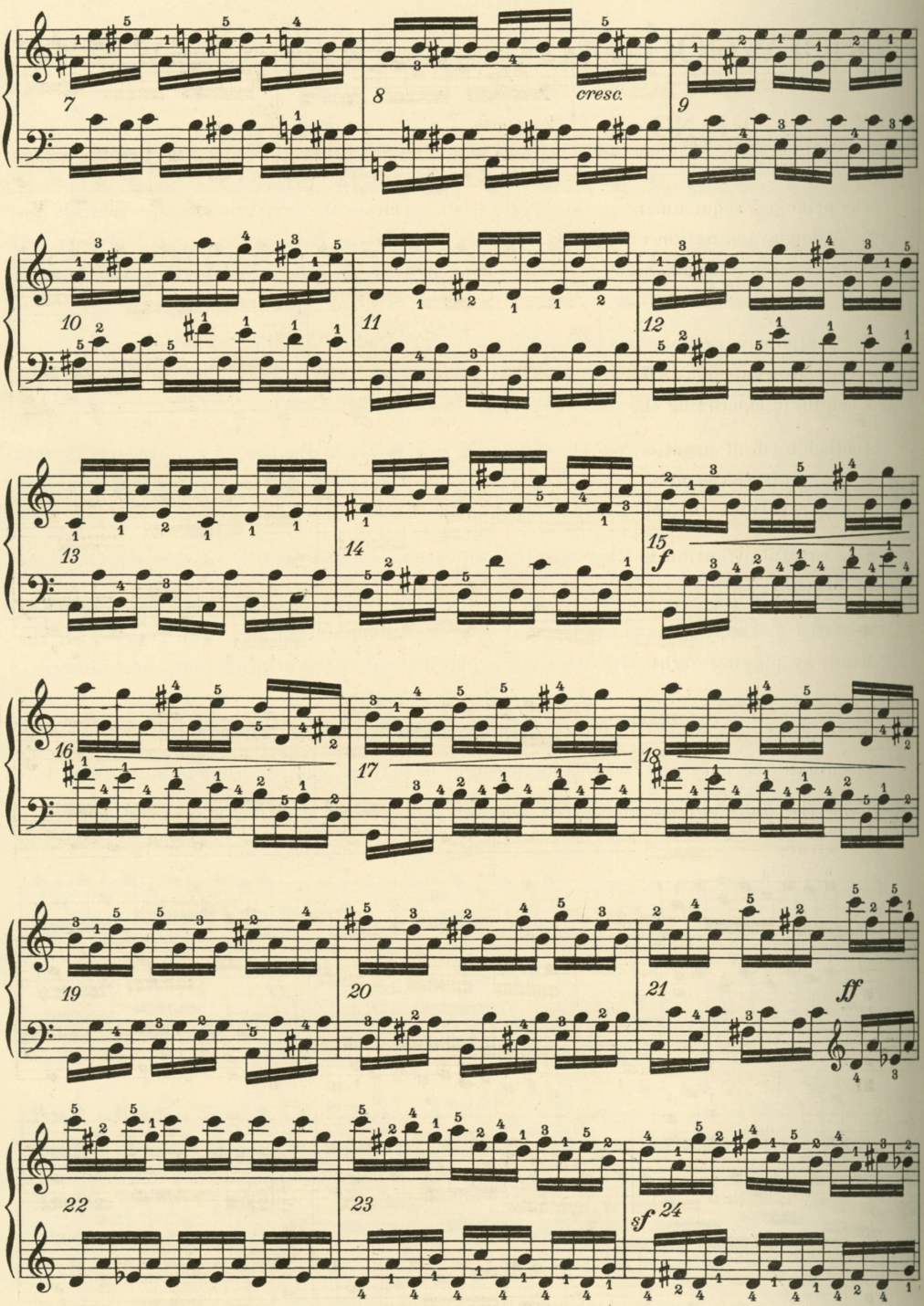
7
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cresc.
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f
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ff
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sf
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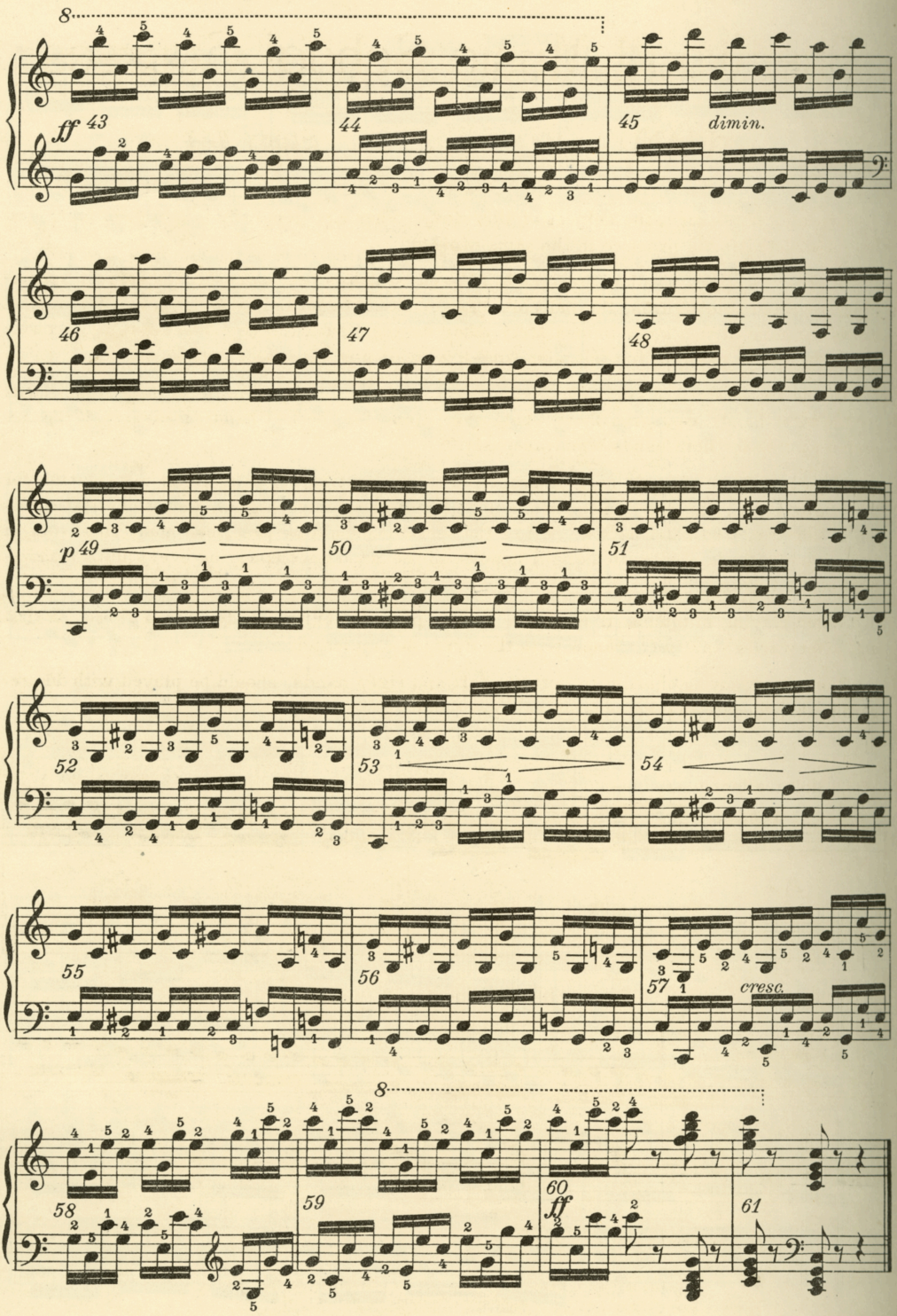
8
ff
43
44
45
dimin.
46
47
48
p
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
cresc.
8
58
59
60
ff
61

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PIANO — Study 454

Repeated notes form the subject of this study. They are generally in groups of four, and Exercise 454 affords practice in the same problem.

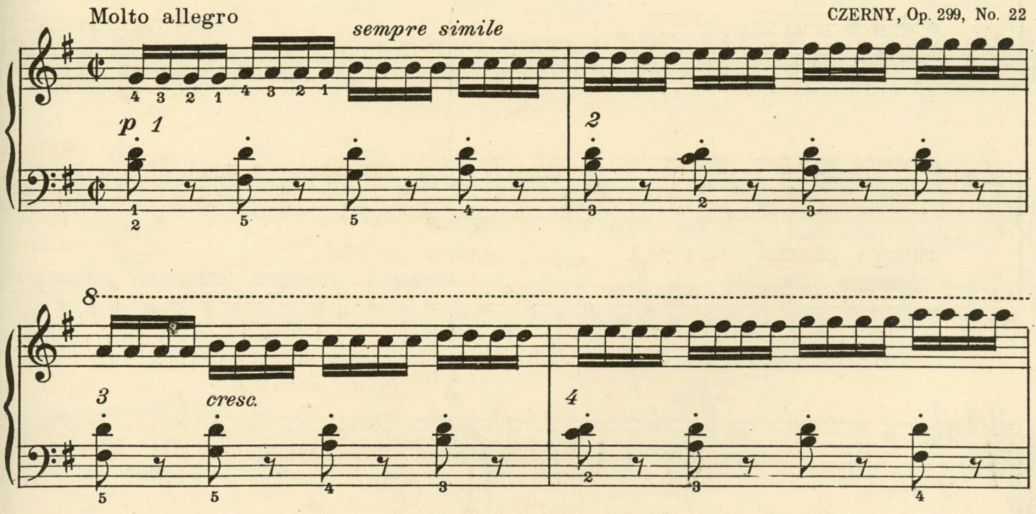
In order to attain absolute freedom of fingers, which is necessary for the correct rendering of repeated note figures, the individual finger should be jerked away from the key and towards the palm of the hand, immediately after having struck the key. The key will then rise quickly and be in position for the next finger, without any hindrance whatever.

Divide the study into sections; for instance, measures 1–8, containing note repetitions for the right hand; measures 9–16, note repetitions for the left hand; measures 17-23, repeated figures for both hands simultaneously.

Measures 23 to the end may be practiced as one section. Here there is a variation of the original idea, the third sixteenth being played one octave higher, and necessitating different fingering and hand action. All of the sections should be practiced many times over, at first slowly, *forte,* and with a slight impulse of the hand accompanying every inward movement of the finger.

When playing in tempo, it would be best to play the entire study *mezzo forte* at first, and afterwards in accordance with the dynamics indicated.

The accompanying chords, in both the left and right hands, should be played with due regard to the staccato marks, sustained notes, and legato.



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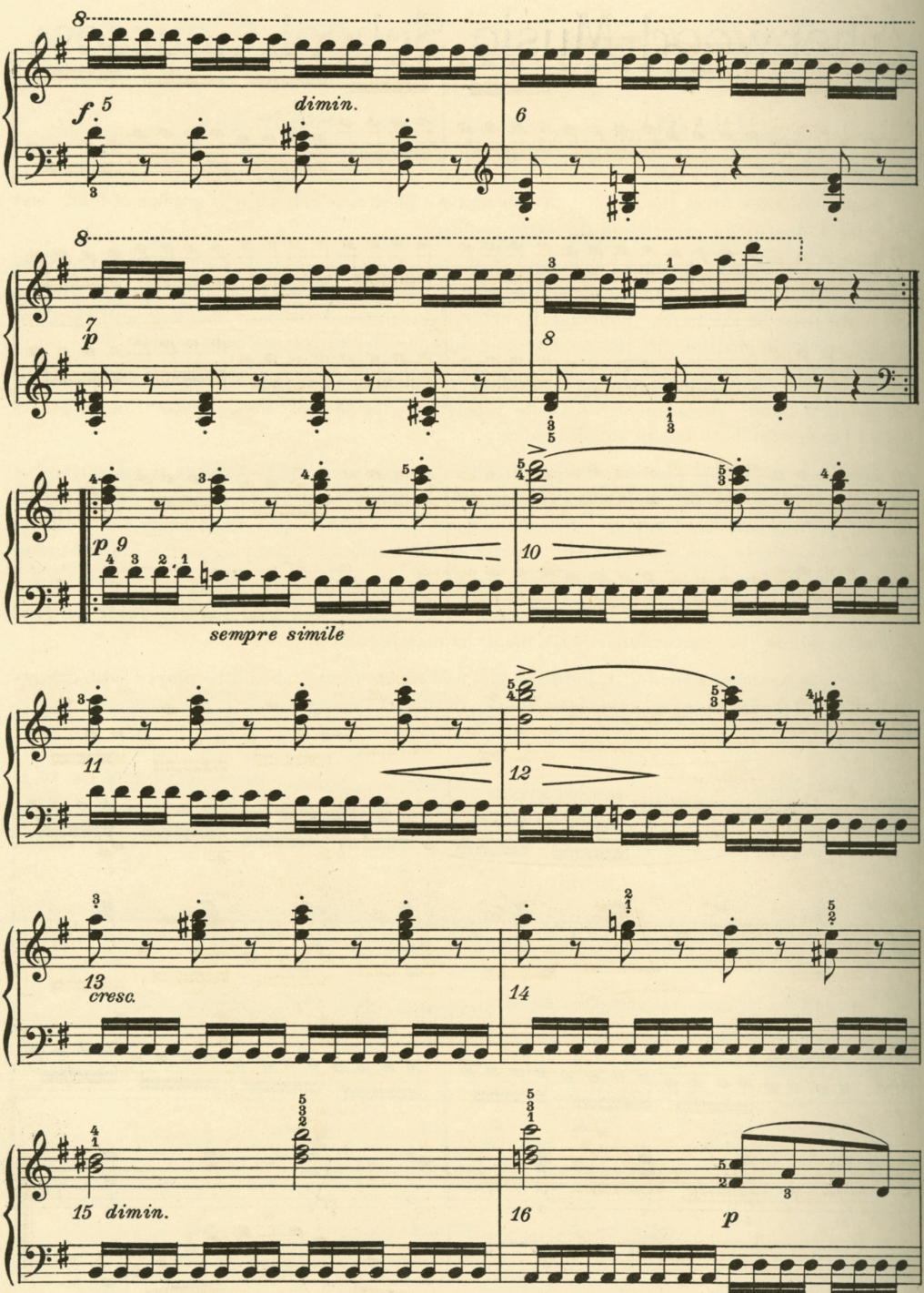
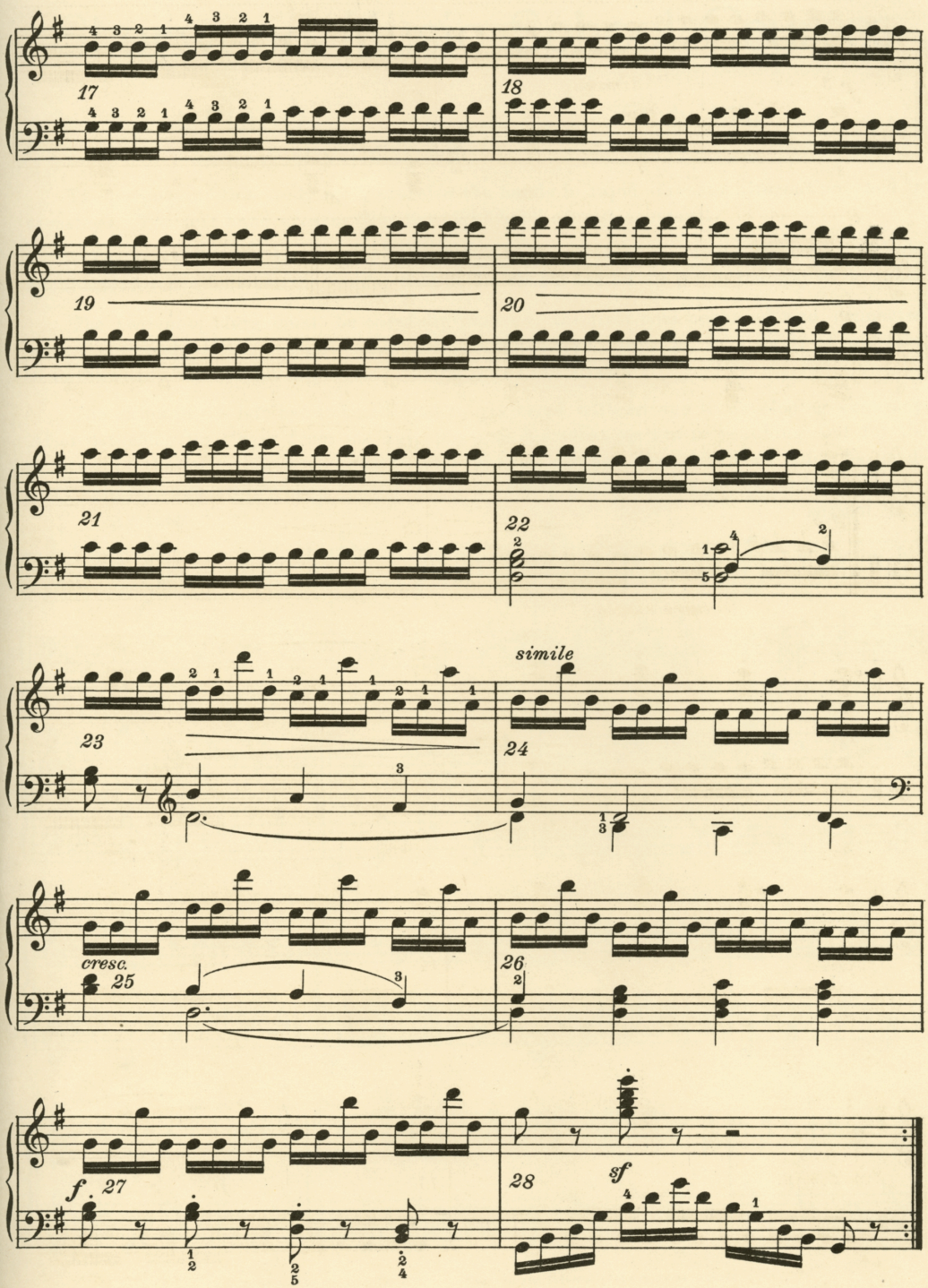

8
f
5
dimin.
6
8
7
p
8
p
9
10
sempre simile
11
12
13
cresc.
14
15
dimin.
16
p


17
18
19
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21
22
simile
23
24
cresc.
25
26
f
27
28
sf

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PIANO — Study 455

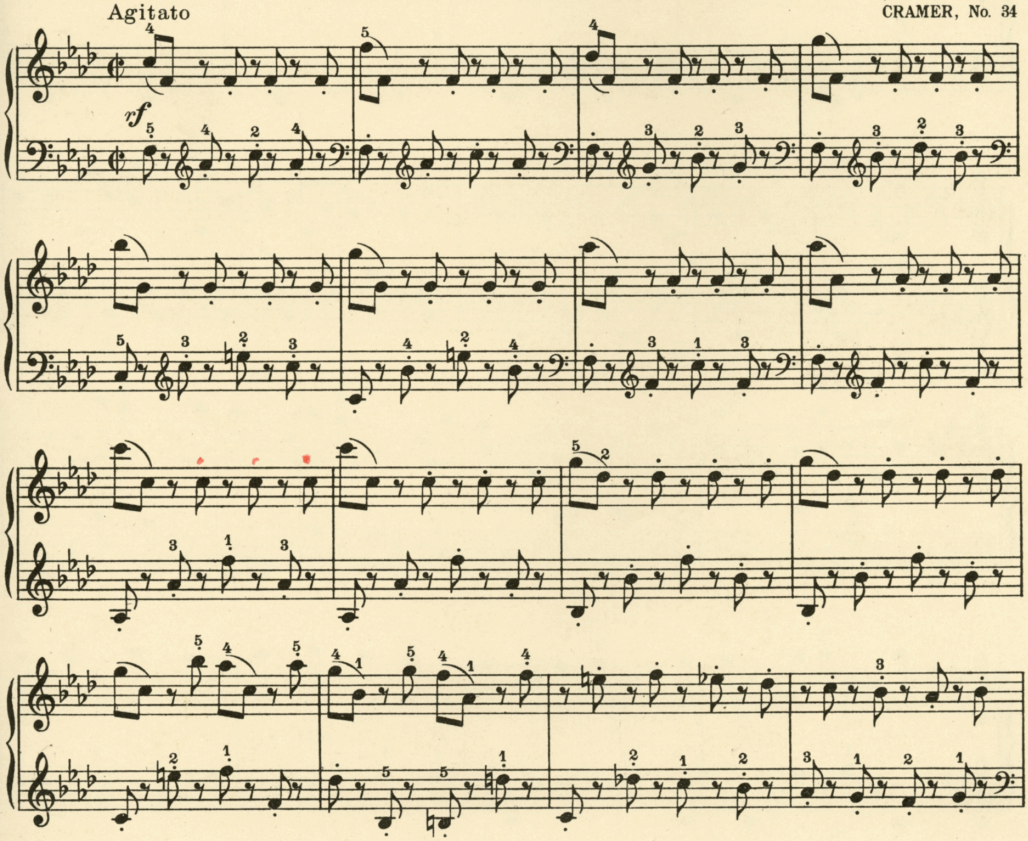
The purpose of this study is to exercise the hands in rapid staccato alternation, and in crossings. The left hand crosses over the right hand almost constantly.

When practicing the crossing of the left hand over or under the right, the student should avoid interference between the hands, that is, he should not let one get in the way of the other.

The two-note slurs must be carefully phrased, the first note accented and connected with the second. If the student cannot connect the larger intervals, he should, at any rate, reach towards the second key before letting go of the first.

The skips in the left hand should also be practiced with an eye to developing accuracy. After detaching the finger from the key, the arm describes an arc in reaching out for the position of the following key, or next interval to be played. The movement must be made very quickly, and will require careful practice before the necessary dexterity is acquired.

Agitato — CRAMER, No. 34



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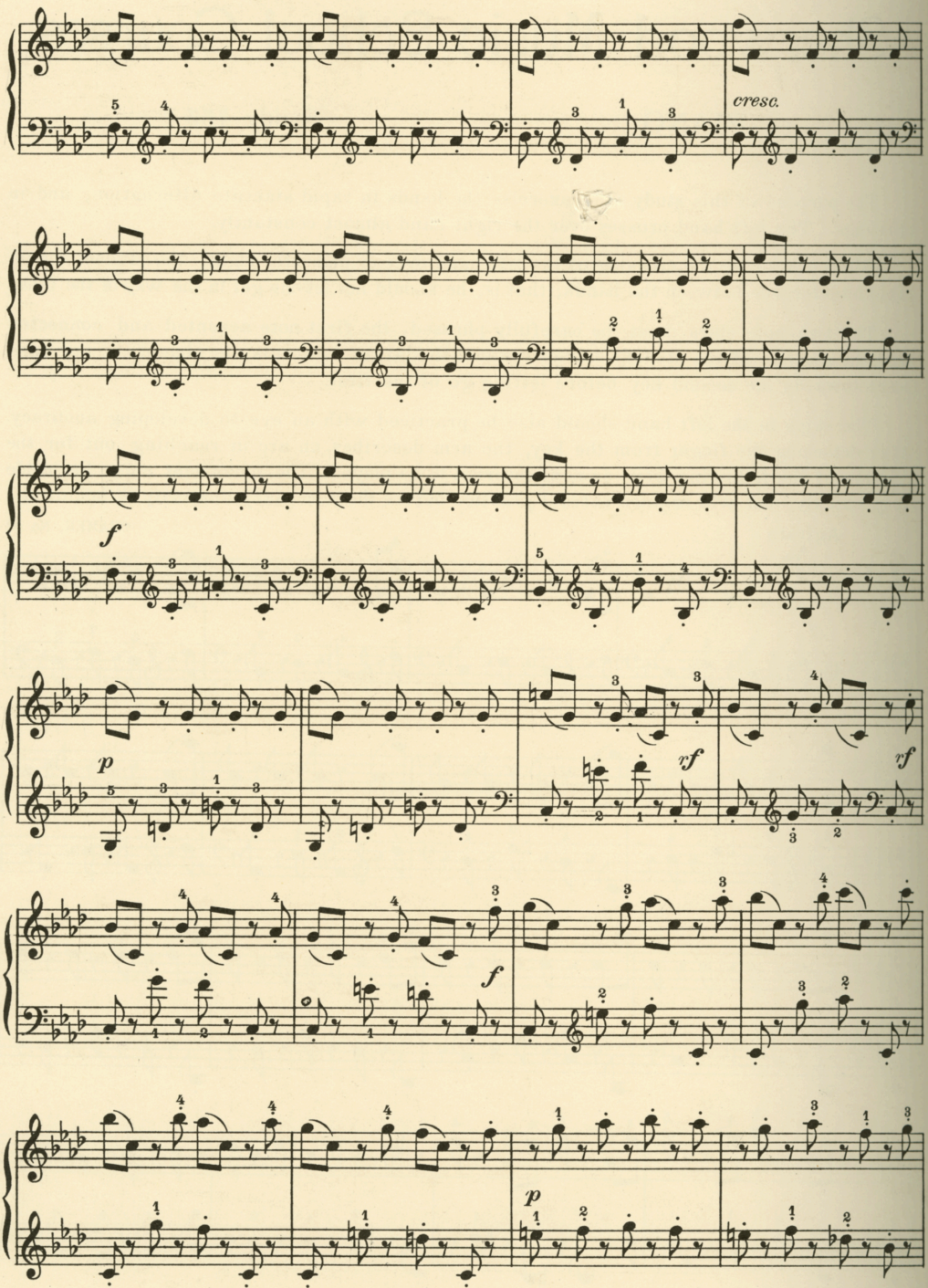
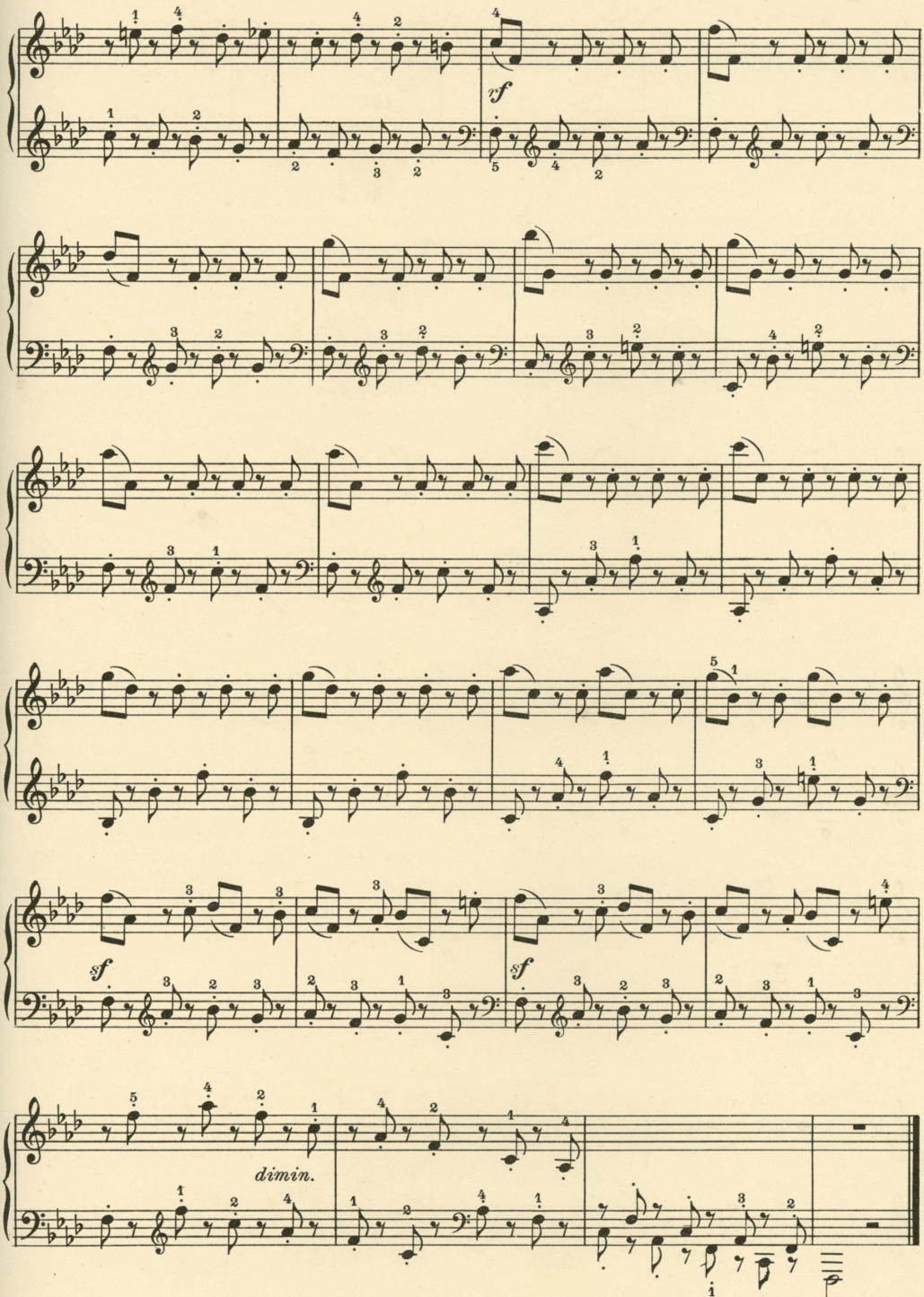

cresc.
f
p
rf
rf
f
p


sf
sf
sf
dimin.

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PIANO — Study 456

The light staccato required in this study is brought about by a springy flexibility of the wrist, the fingers being quickly removed from the keys after striking. The sections containing sixths should be practiced with well-formed hand positions; that is, with the hand and fingers shaped for striking.

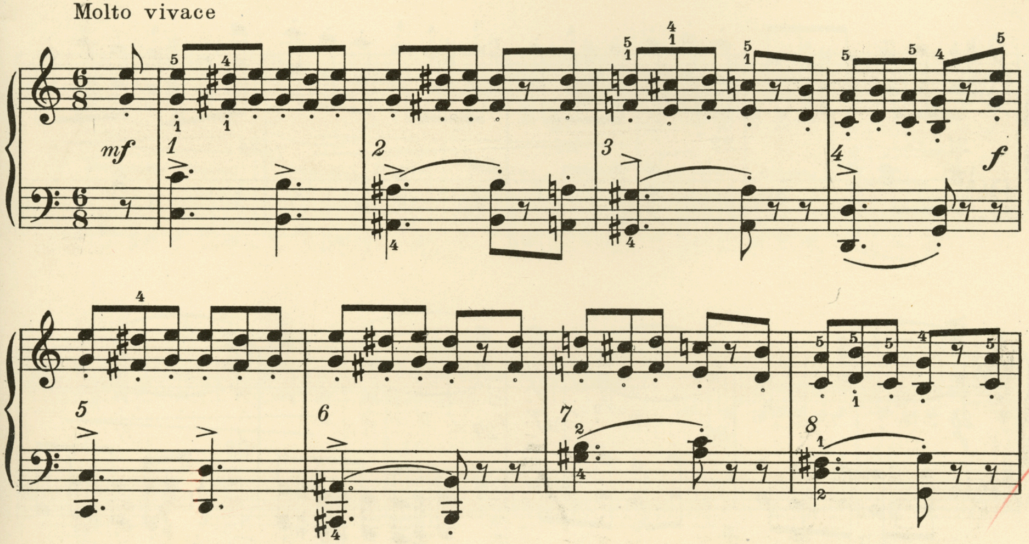
The staccato octaves, after the passages in sixths, are played with the same hand and forearm movement as the staccato sixths. Great flexibility of wrist is required; and this study is a very important factor in the development of wrist control, without which it would be impossible to handle the modern technical problems which confront the student.

Of added technical interest is the fact that the naturally weak fourth and fifth fingers are given ample opportunity for exercise, and this should be utilized to the fullest extent. For practice, the student should slightly emphasize these fingers, thus helping to strengthen them, and to develop their ability to produce the same amount of tone volume as the naturally stronger fingers.

After mastering the study technically, the student should follow all the marks of expression, and bring out its musical possibilities. The phrasing, accents, etc., of the accompaniment, whether in the right or left hand, should be carefully observed.

LÖW

Molto vivace



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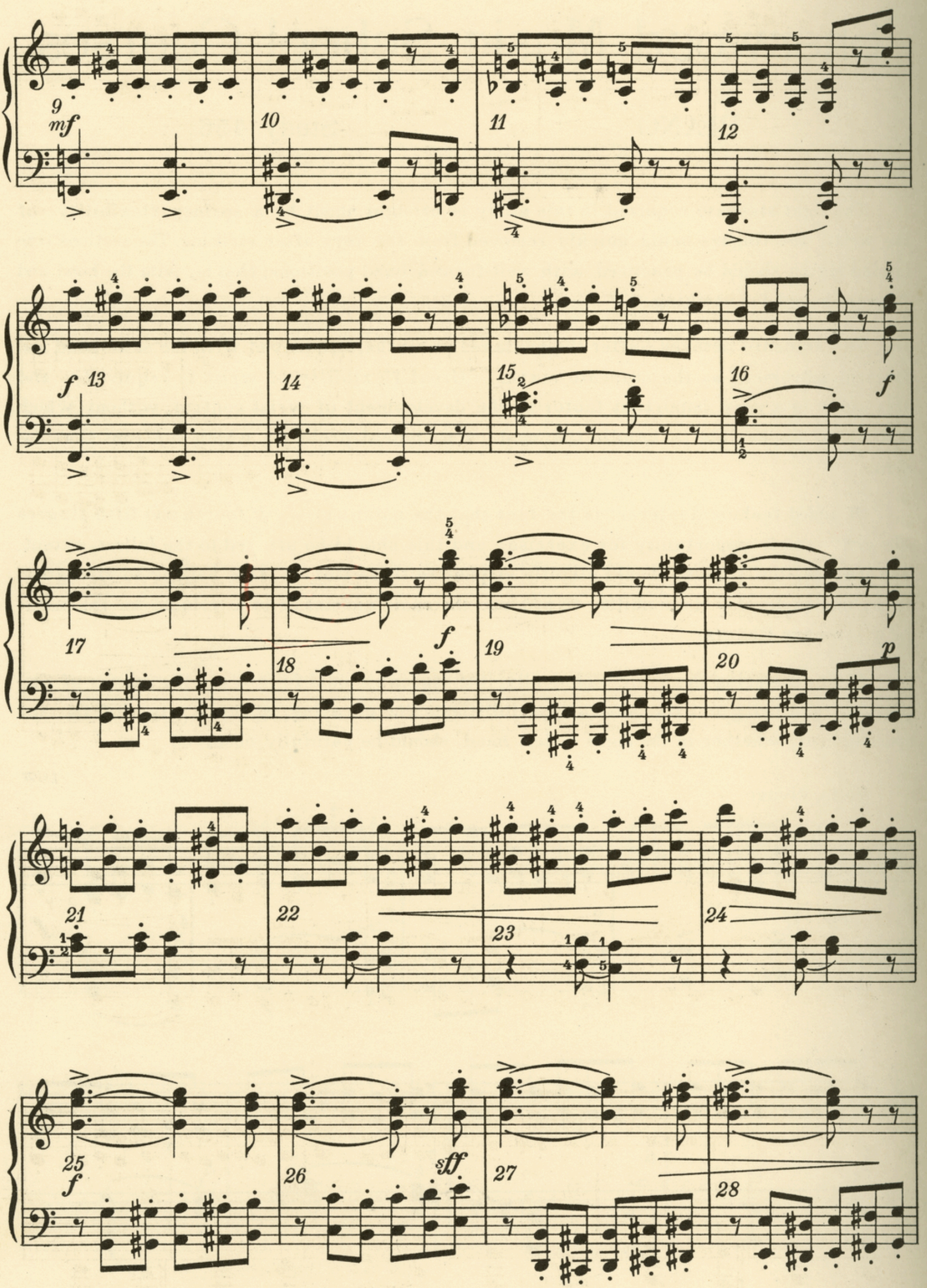
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mf
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f
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f
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p
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f
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sff
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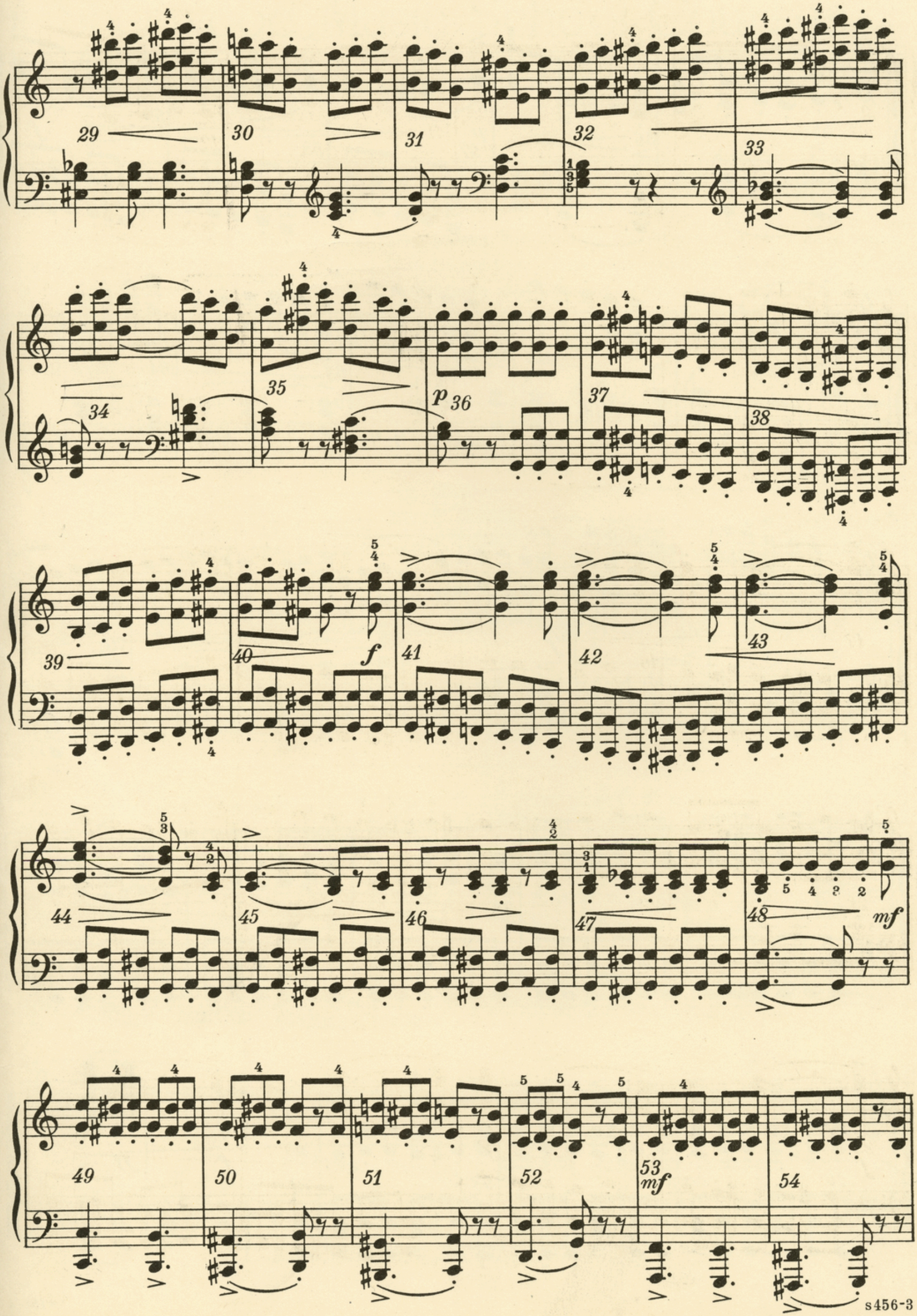
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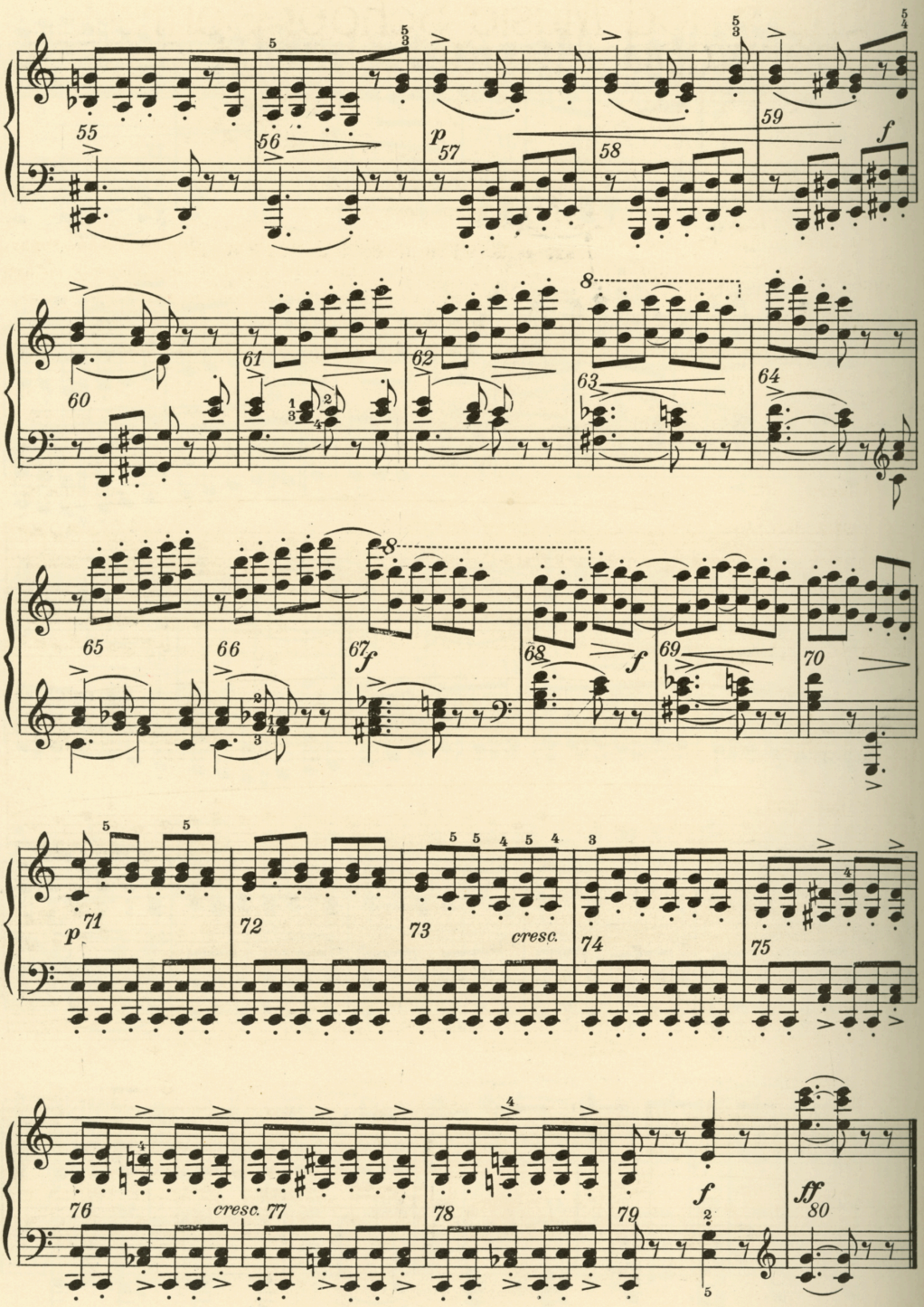
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p
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66
67
f
68
f
69
70
p
71
72
73
cresc.
74
75
76
cresc.
77
78
79
f
ff
80

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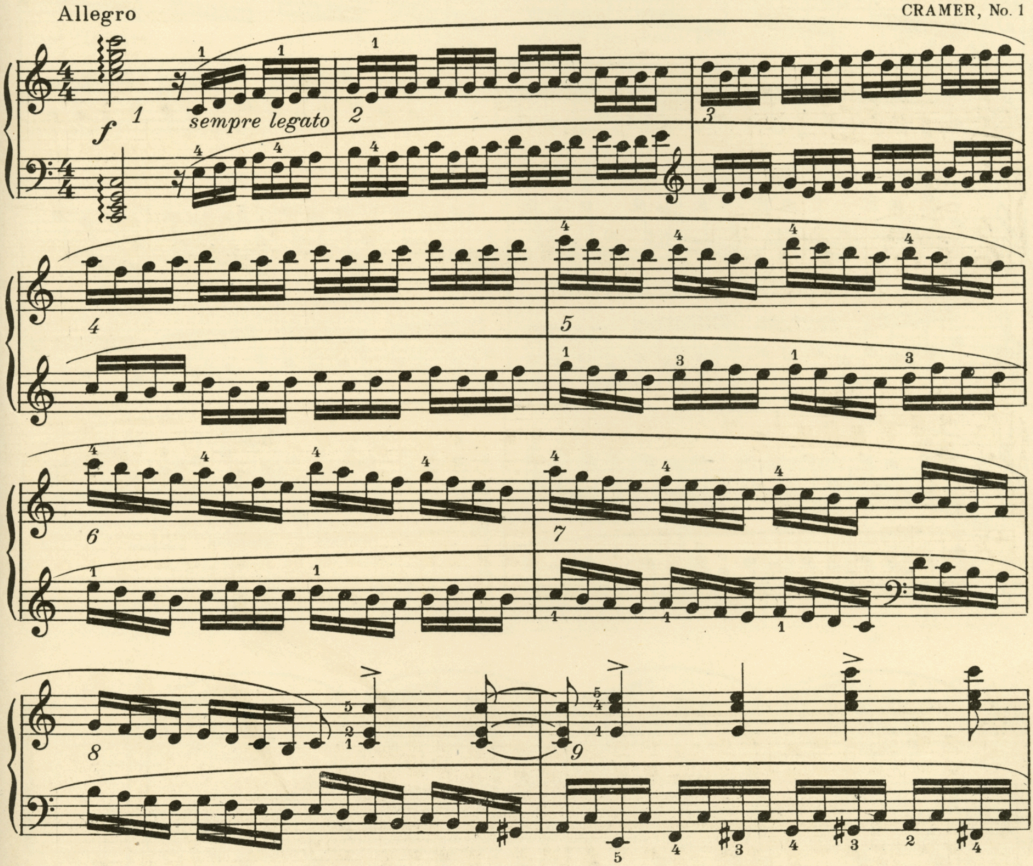
PIANO — Study 457

This study is one of the most important and useful of those designed for the uniform development of the fingers, so essential in the playing of close passages.

In order to benefit from it to the fullest extent, the student should practice each hand separately, slowly at first, with upraised and firm finger tips. This slow practice should be *f*, *mf* and *p*, in turn. Practice with a dotted-note rhythm may also be used to advantage, thus helping towards the development of finger control. The wrist must be free, and ready to assist the fingers. The accents on the first note of the sixteenth-note groups are brought about by wrist impulse—a downward wrist movement.

For practice purposes the study may be divided into sections; for instance, measures 1-9, measures 10-19 and measures 20-22.



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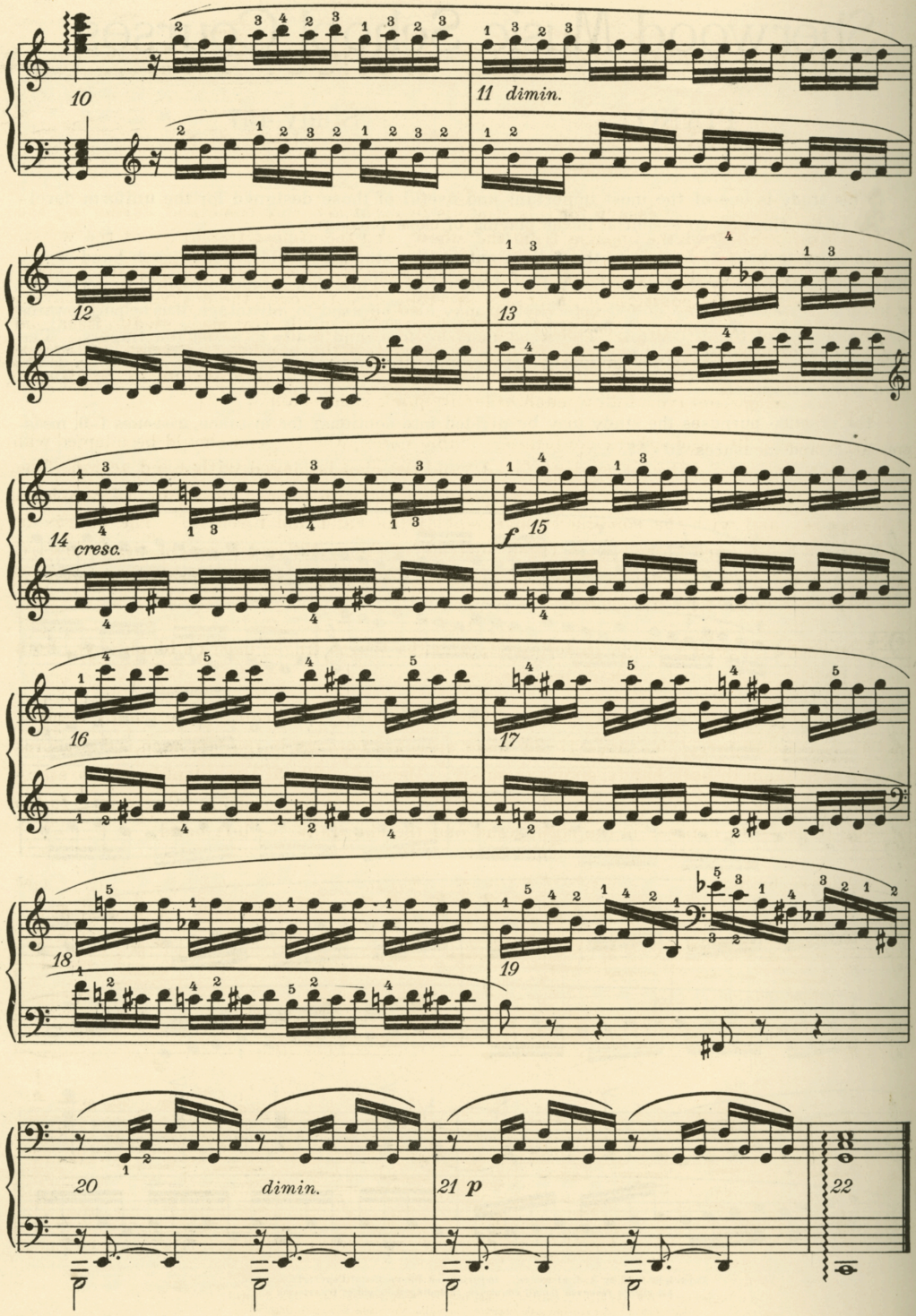
10
11 dimin.
12
13
14 cresc.
f 15
16
17
18
19
20
dimin.
21 p
22

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PIANO — Study 458

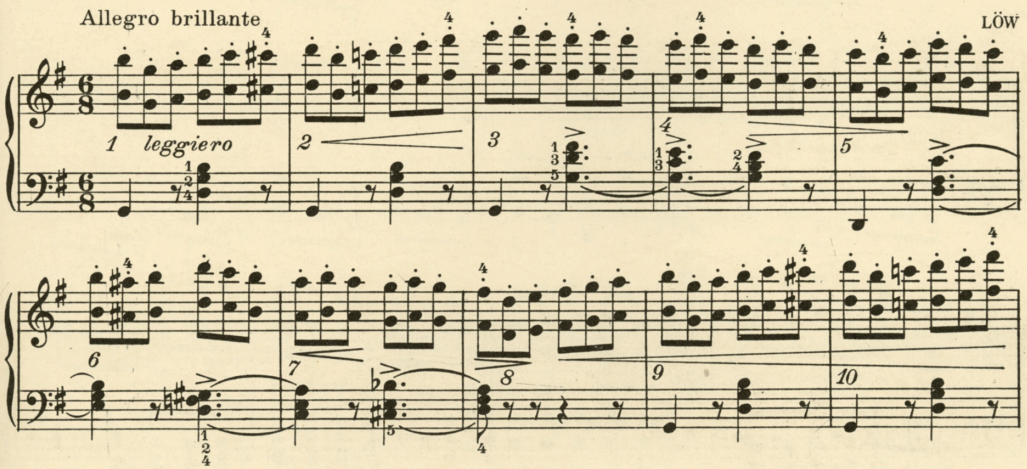
The light staccato necessary for this study is brought about by combined action of the hand and forearm, with the impulse from the elbow, and the utmost flexibility of the wrist.

When practicing slowly, the following instructions should be carefully observed. First, place your hand in the position of an octave stretch, directly over the octave to be played; then, after striking, remove it quickly from the keys. The quick movement away from the keys is accomplished by an upward, springy movement of the hand at the wrist, and an upward movement of the forearm simultaneously with the hand. This action is continued throughout, where octaves follow each other in quick succession.

In measure 19, and others containing double notes, the fingers should be adapted with exactness to the size of the interval required, and the chords played with hand action. The staccato chords in the left hand should be played with well-formed position of the hand and fingers, and with the combined movement of the hand and forearm. The chords in measures 84–87, are played with fixed position of the wrist and forearm, the downward stroke coming with the impulse from the shoulder. The hand should be prepared (shaped for the chord) before the keys are played.

The exact fingering should be followed, and the fourth finger used on black keys, both in the right and left hands, where indicated.

For practice, divide the study into sections. Measures 1–16 contain staccato octaves in the right hand part. Measures 17-33 have staccato octaves in the left hand, and measures 26–28 have them in both hands simultaneously. Measures 39–51 have double notes staccato in both hands, with a few interspersed octaves; and so on, measure 60 returning to the opening theme—the octaves in the right hand and the chords in the left hand.



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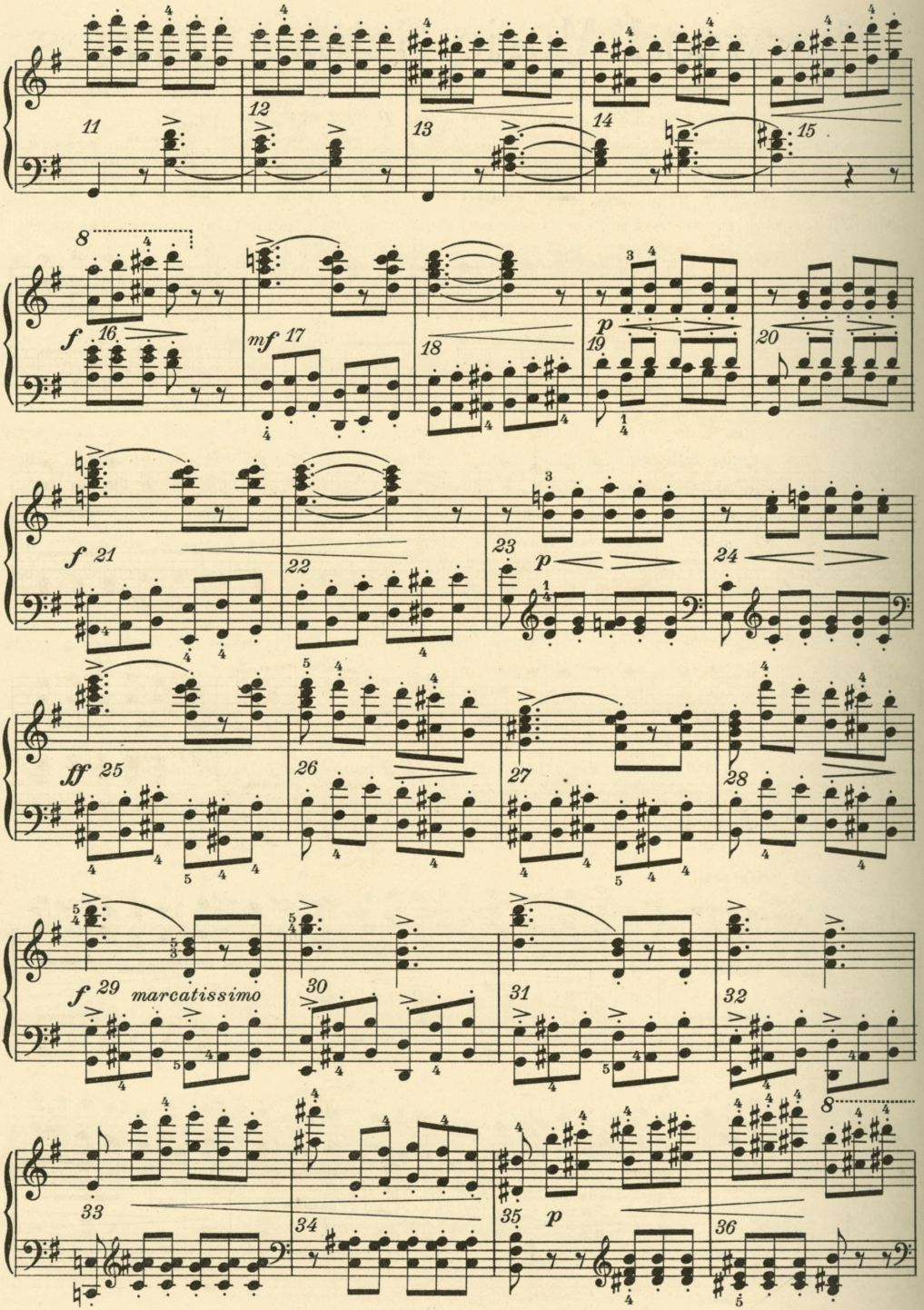
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f 16
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marcatissimo
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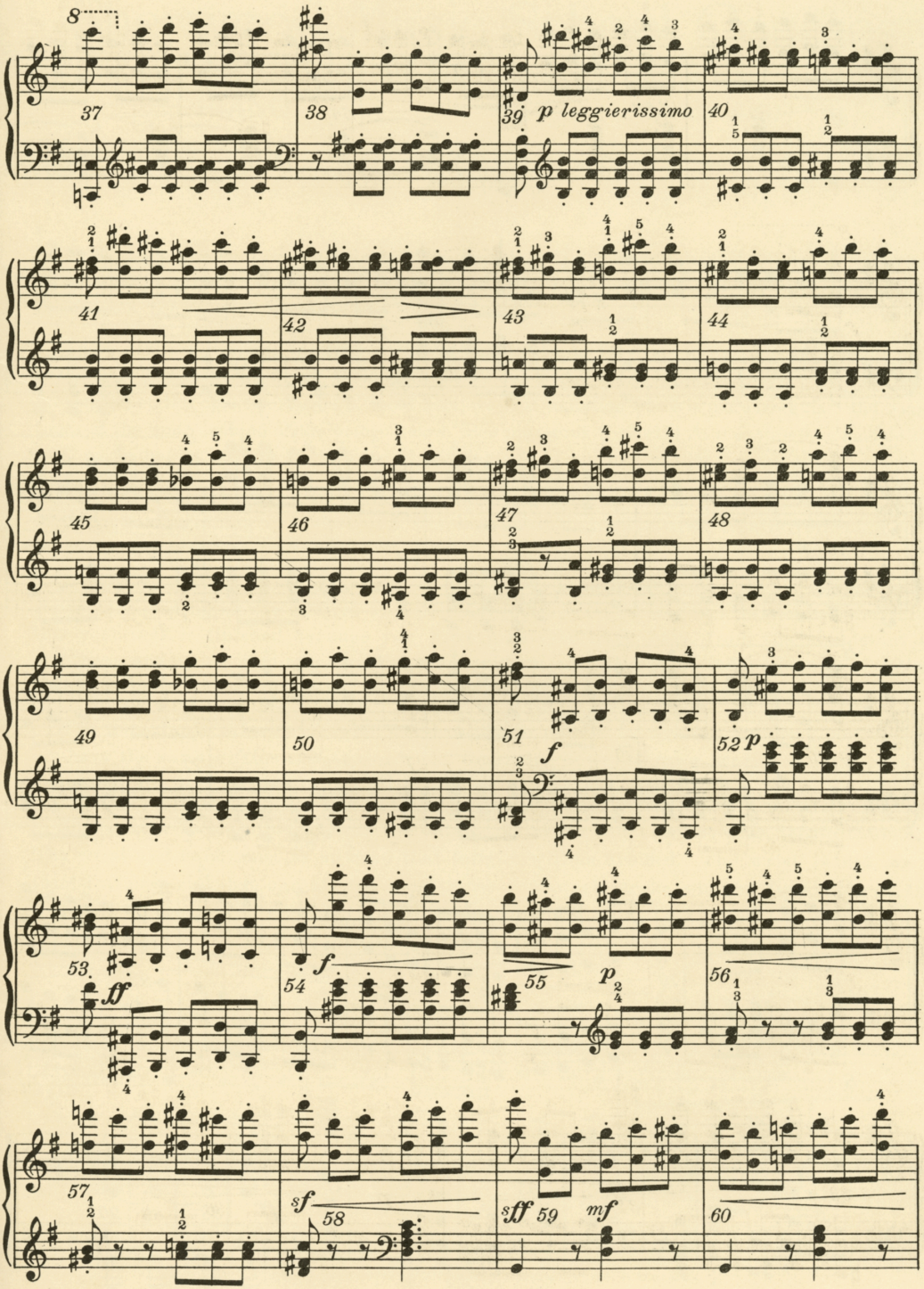
8
33
34
35
p
36


8
37
38
39
p leggierissimo
40
41
42
43
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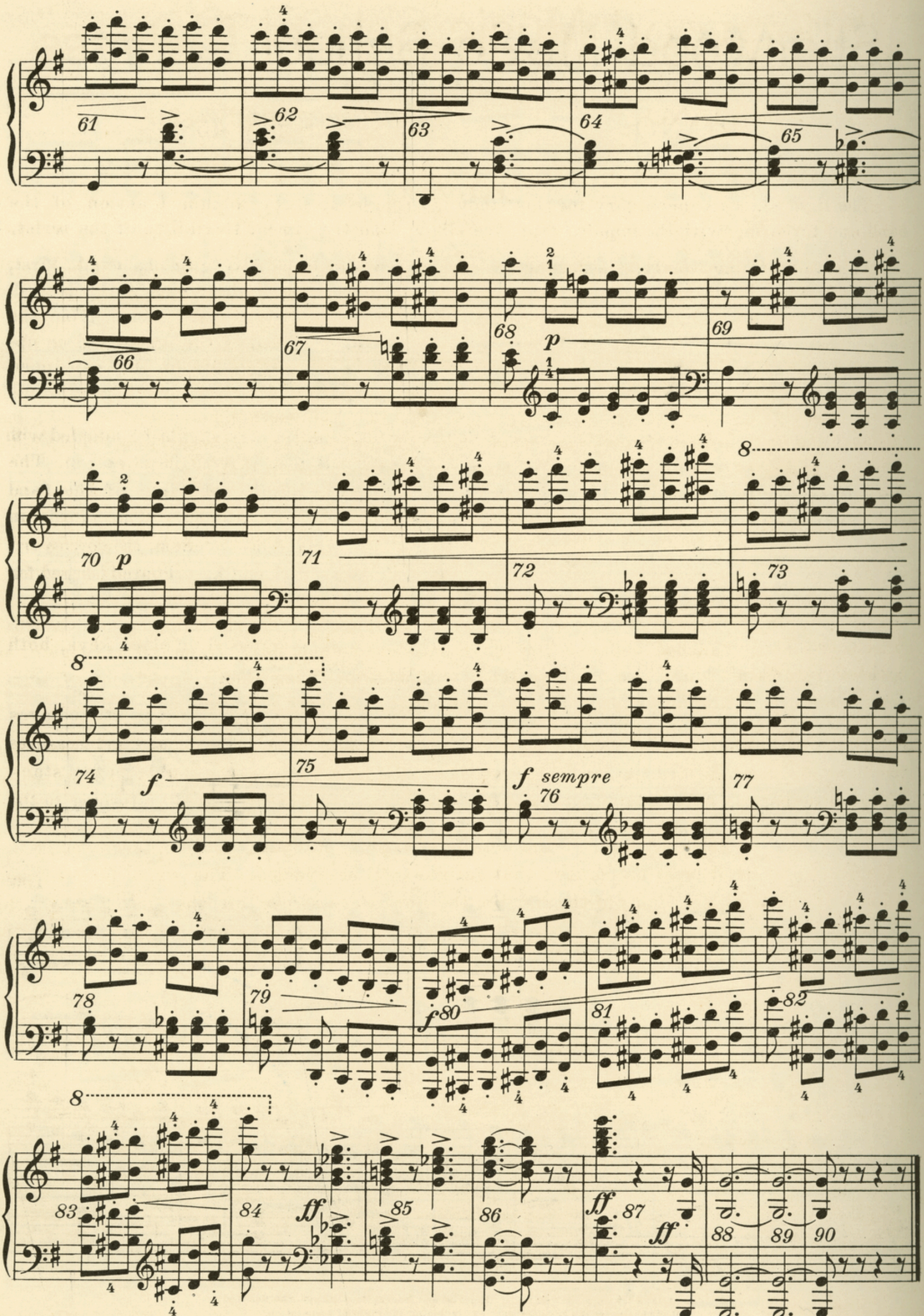
61
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67
68
p
69
70
p
71
72
73
8
74
f
75
f sempre
76
77
78
79
f
80
81
82
83
84
ff
85
86
ff
87
ff
88
89
90

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PIANO Study 460

Polyphony

This jolly invention develops independence and ease in the simultaneous playing of legato and staccato. The eighth notes in both hands are, for the most part, played staccato, with a light hand touch, while the sixteenths are played legato.

There are two divisions, the first ending at measure 12, and the second extending from this point to the end. The piece opens with a canon at the octave below, which continues in strict imitation up to the second eighth note of measure 8. From here, we find imitation which is more irregular, and sometimes at the ninth instead of the octave below. (See measures 8-10, etc.) At measure 9, a modulation to C major begins, ending at measure 12 with a perfect cadence in that key.

The left hand now opens the second division by announcing the original motive in the key of C major. Beginning at measure 15, there are various modulations, finally returning to F major in measure 29.

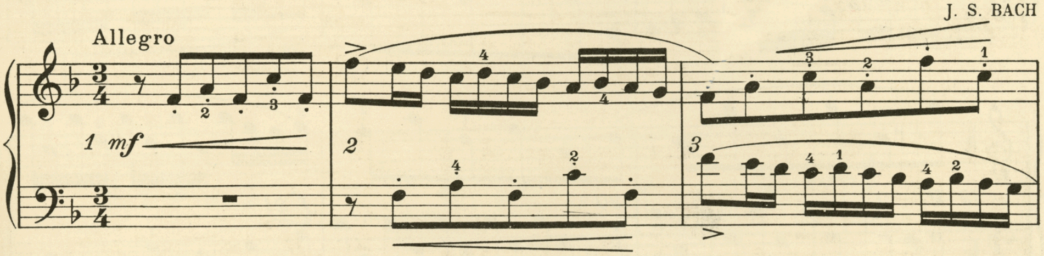
A good way to practice this ingenious little piece is to master the right and left hand parts separately, playing slowly at first and increasing the speed by degrees. Do not, however, think that your task is finished because you have mastered each part, from the standpoint of clearness and speed, and can combine them without sacrificing the independence of either. Unless there is a fine adjustment of light and shade, the work is incomplete.

The importance of practice with separate hands cannot be stressed too much. No two players have the same difficulties to overcome. Generally, however, more work will have to be done with the left hand, and this should, therefore, receive watchful care.

There must be close attention to the details of legato, staccato, accents, tenuto marks, etc. The wrist and hand must be so used that fatigue will be avoided. The wrist is not maintained at one level, but can aid the hand in the downward stroke on the first note of the four-note figures. This will also help to bring out the accents in a natural way.

INVENTION No. 8.

J. S. BACH



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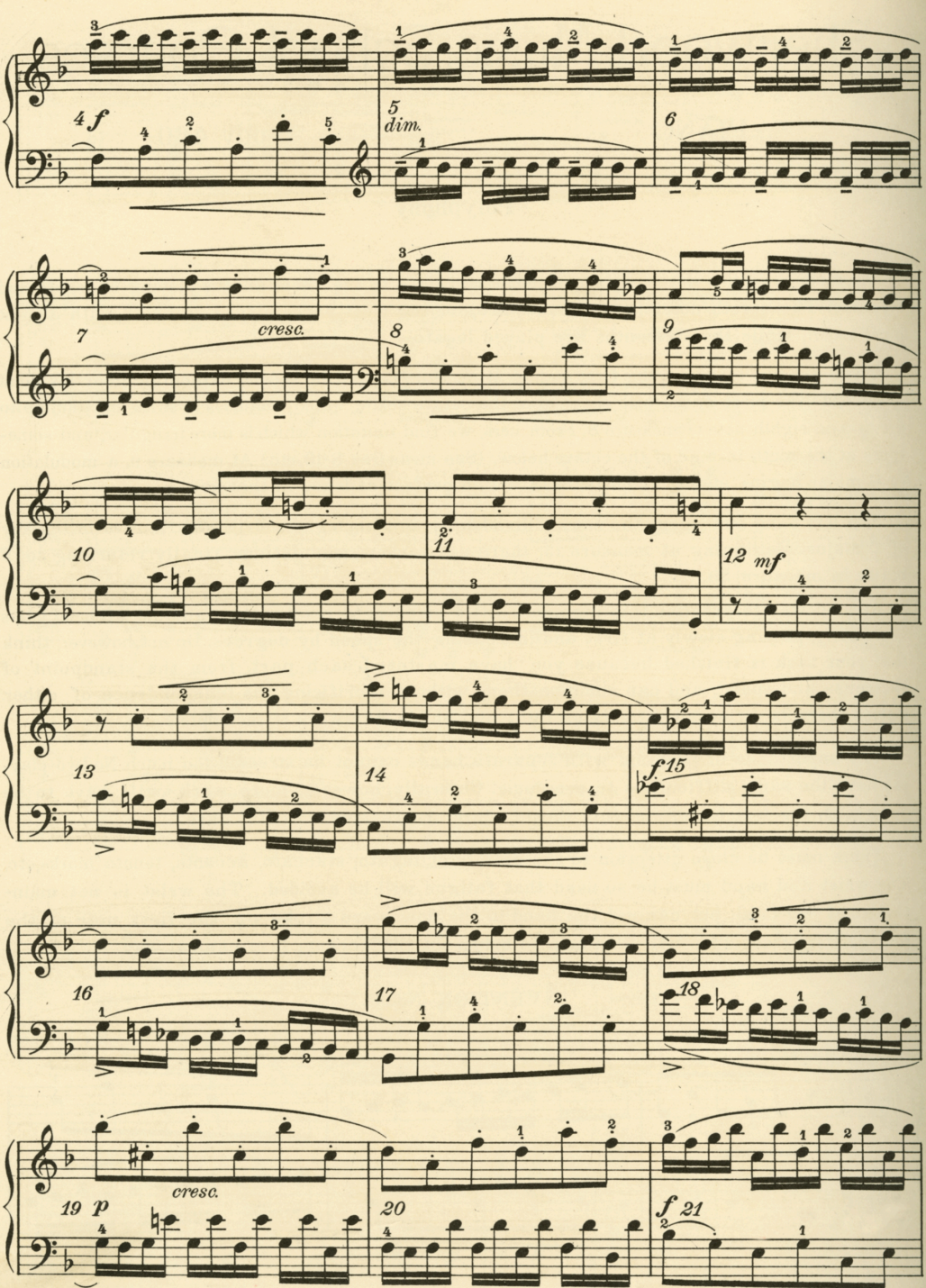
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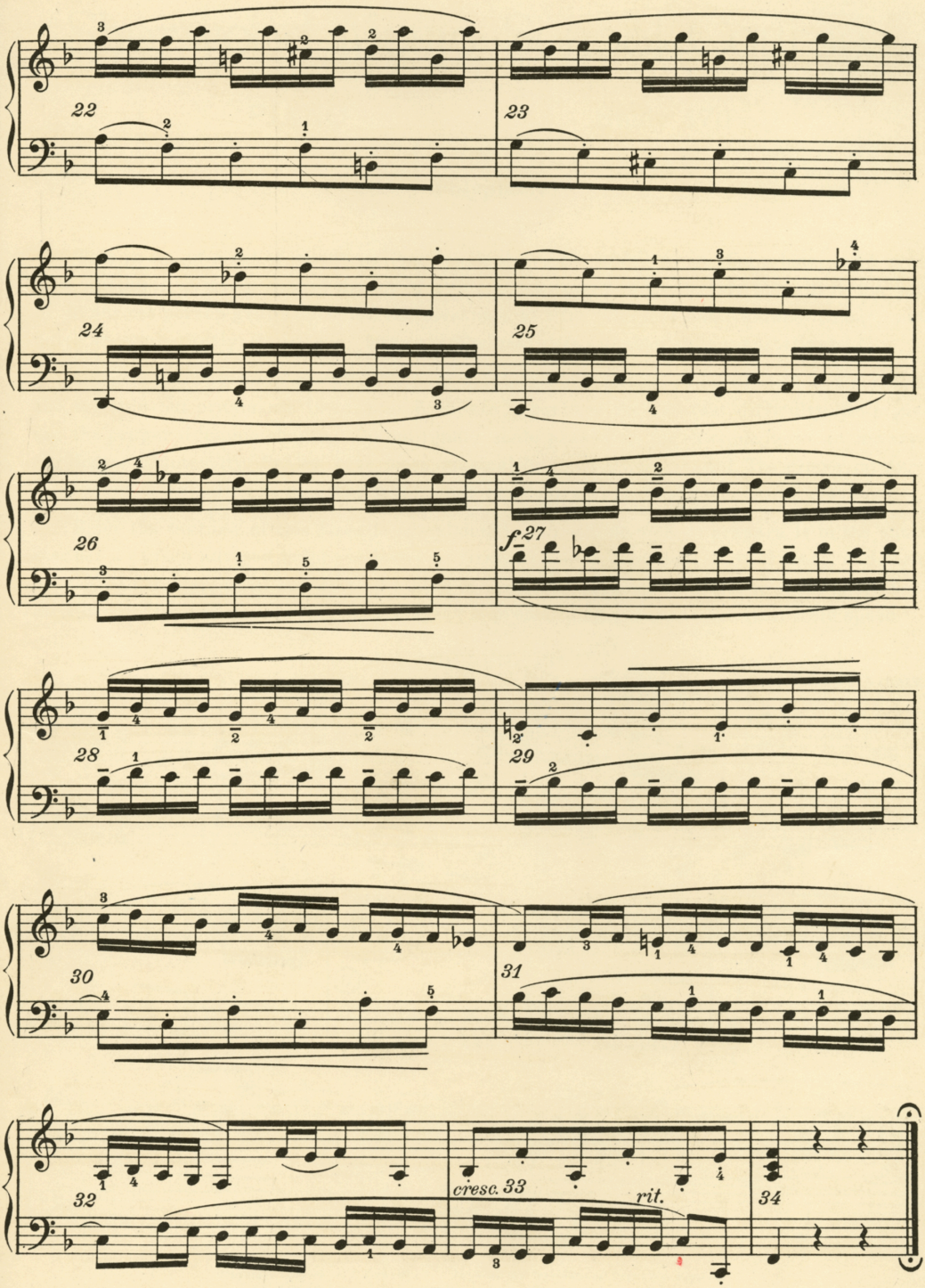
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Sherwood Music School Courses

PIANO Study 470

Polyphony

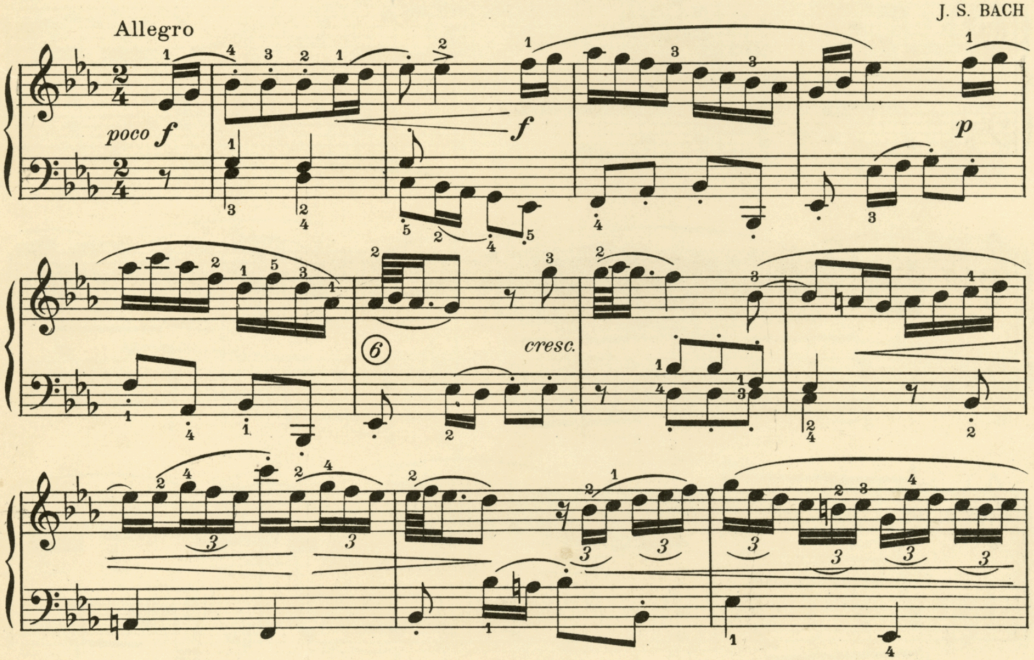
This is one of a set of pieces written by Bach for his wife, Anna Magdalena, who was also his pupil. A great deal of the joy of living is expressed in the melody line. It is the joy of a normal person grateful for all the blessings of life. The left hand ambles along, not quite so exuberantly, it is true, but nevertheless with considerable sprightliness.

Despite the rhythmic complications of triplets, syncopation (measures 13 and 14), and the written-out ornaments (measures 6, 15, etc.), perhaps the greatest difficulty lies in giving the proper dynamic shading. Do not render scale passages, for example, with an unvarying degree of intensity. Scales have more musical interest when shaded. The proper mixture of rhythm and shading is required to produce the desired effect and charm in music.

Since the texture of this piece is complicated, you will do well to prepare it in the same manner as often advised before—slowly at first, to insure clearness and accuracy, and then, by degrees, faster, until the desired tempo is reached. *Allegro* does not so much mean "fast" as it means "lively;" and liveliness in playing is produced by other factors than mere speed.

HARPSICHORD PIECE

J. S. BACH



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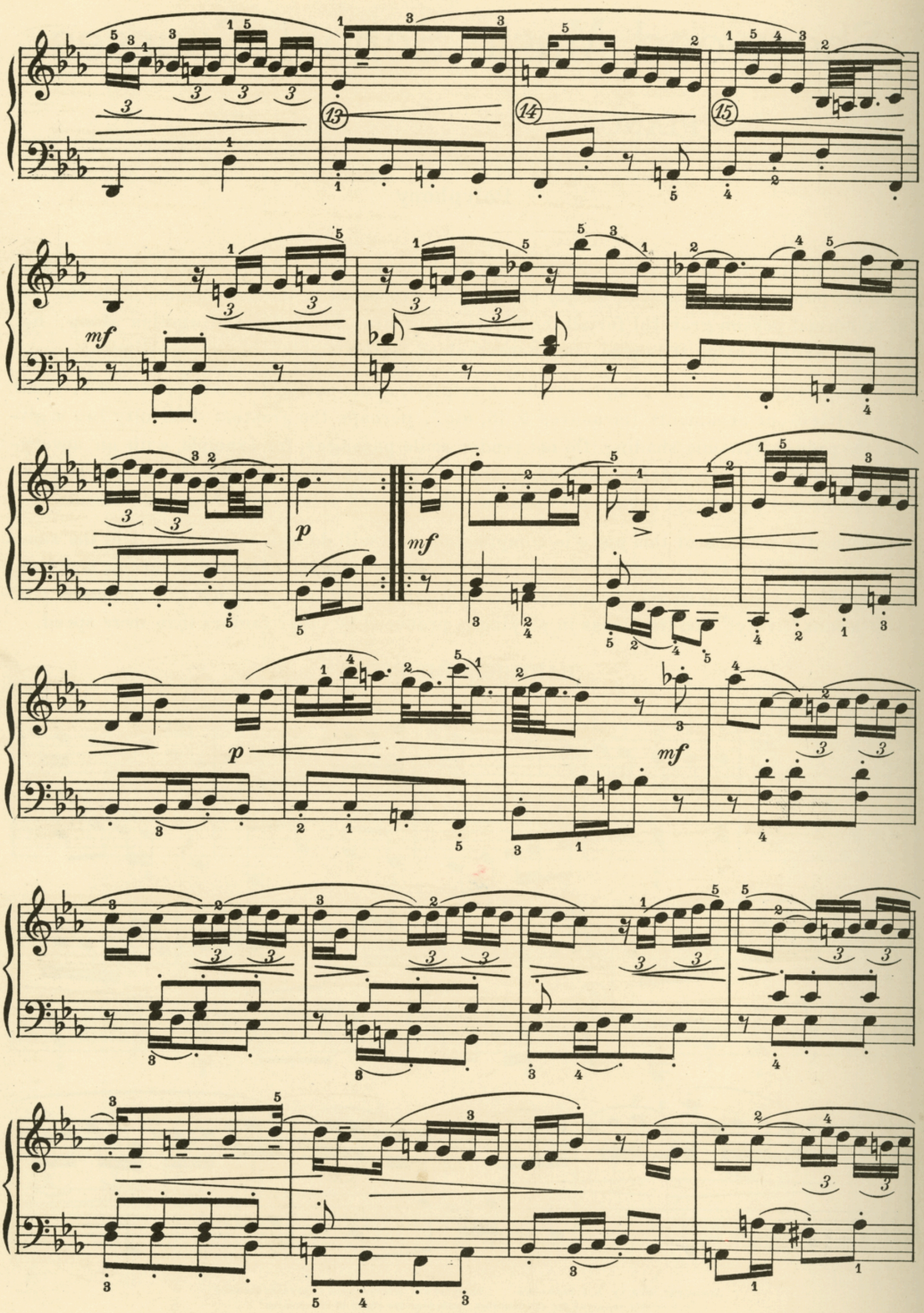
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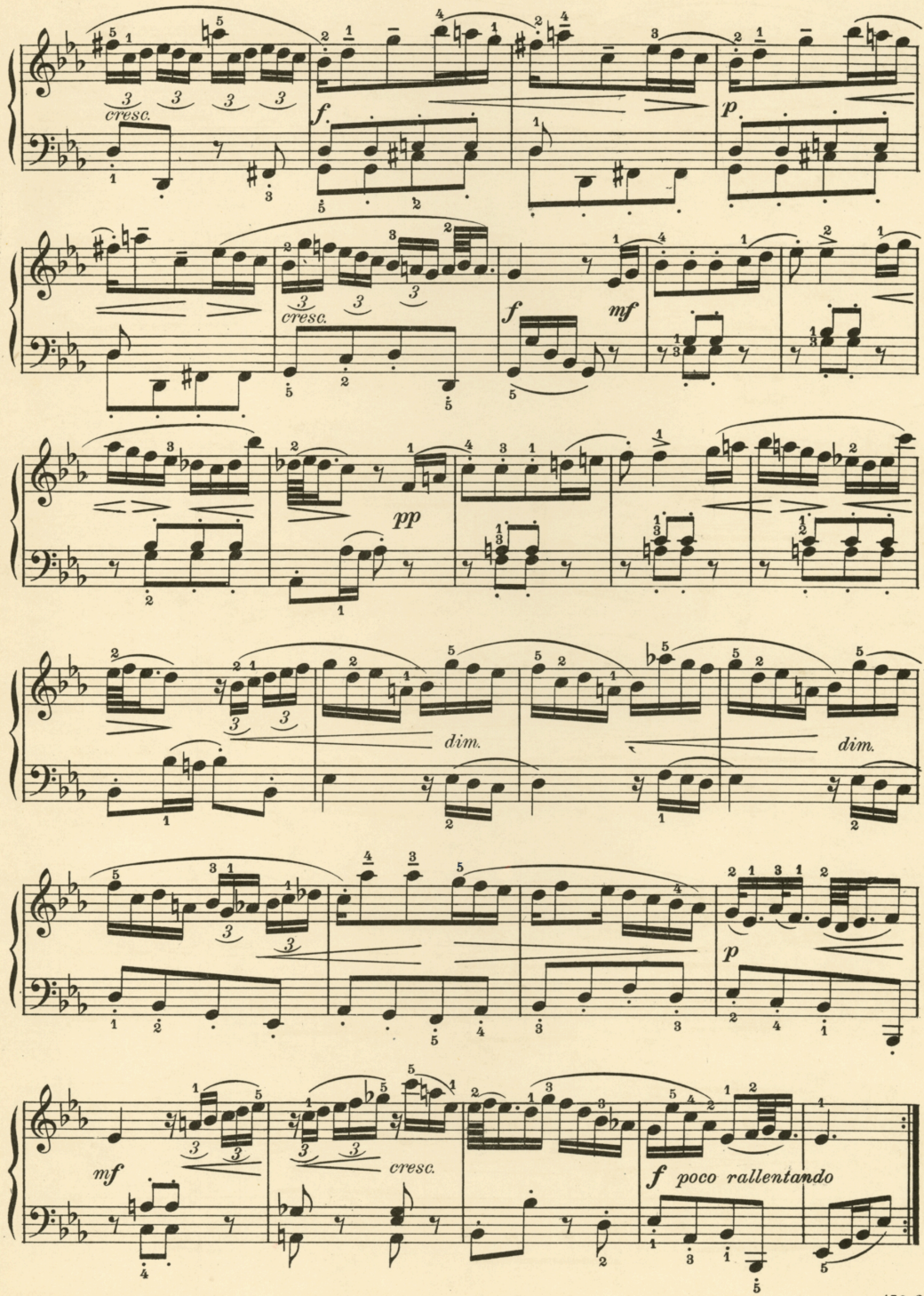
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