THE

CONTEMPORARIES OF PURCELL

HARPSICHORD PIECES

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

J. A. FULLER-MAITLAND.

VOLS. I. & II.	JOHN BLOW.
VOLS. III. & IV.	WILLIAM CROFT.
VOL. V.	JEREMIAH CLARK.
VOLS. VI. & VII.	VARIOUS COMPOSERS.

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WILLIAM CROFT.

THE composer of the finest of English hymn-tunes, "St. Anne," was born in 1677 or 1678, and was therefore about nine years younger than Jeremiah Clarke, with whom he was a chorister of the Chapel Royal and a pupil of Dr. Blow. The year 1700 was an important date for him as for his master and fellow-pupils, for it saw the publication of "A Choice Collection of Ayres for the Harpsichord or Spinett," to which Blow, Croft, Piggott, Jeremiah Clarke, and John Barrett contributed. The first and second of the following Suites (pp. 2-9) are taken from this collection.

In the same year, William III. having given an organ to St. Anne's Church, Westminster, Croft became the first organist, and no doubt named his famous hymn-tune from his Church. He lived till 1727, and thus represents a later stage of keyboard treatment than was reached by Clarke.

While his manner of writing for the harpsichord is freer than that of his predecessors, his style has some affinity with that of Purcell, and the beautiful "Ground" at the beginning of the third Suite (p. 10) was printed as Purcell's in the edition of the Purcell Society, notwithstanding the fact that one of the MSS. containing it assigns it to Croft and there is no evidence of Purcell's authorship. It is a curious circumstance, as showing how indifferent musicians were in the matter of the authorship of their favourite pieces, that the ninth of the following Suites (Vol. II., p. 9) closes, in the Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 31,467, with a "Ground" in the same key, which is apparently an undoubted work by Purcell (*see* Purcell Society, Vol. III., p. 6). The "Almand" (p. 12), of the third Suite, with its queer refrain in the bass, has an amusingly pompous air about it, and the whole of the sixth Suite has the easy handling that distinguishes pure keyboard music The ninth Suite, already referred to (Vol. II., pp. 9-13), is graceful all through, and the whimsical "Gavott" of the tenth (II., p. 17) has a great deal of character. The "Aire" of the eleventh Suite (II., p. 20), with its charming imitations, and the similarly-named number of the twelfth Suite (II., p. 23), have a humorous grace that is irresistible.

WILLIAM CROFT.

LE compositeur de la plus belle des "hymnes" anglaises," Sainte-Anne," est né en 1677 ou 1678; il était donc d'environ neuf ans plus jeune que Jeremiah Clarke, qui fut comme lui un des chanteurs de la Chapelle Royale et un élève de John Blow. L'année 1700 fut pour lui une date importante, de même que pour son maître et ses camarades, car cette année-là vit la publication de la " Choice Collection of Ayres for the Harpsichord or Spinett " à laquelle Blow, Croft, Piggott, Jeremiah Clarke, et John Barrett collaborèrent. La première et la seconde Suites de ce recueil-ci (pp. 2 à 9) sont extraites de ce " Recueil Choisi d'Airs pour le clavecin ou l'épinette."

La même année, Guillaume III., ayant fait don d'un orgue à l'église Sainte-Anne de Westminster, Croft en devint le premier organiste, et sans aucun doute emprunta à cette église le nom de son hymne la plus fameuse. Il vécut jusqu'en 1727, et représente ainsi une période plus récente de l'emploi du clavier que celle de Clarke.

Bien que sa manière d'écrire pour le clavecin soit plus libre que celle de ses prédécesseurs, son style a quelque affinité avec celui de Purcell, et l'admirable "ground" du début de la troisième Suite (p. 10) fut publié comme étant de Purcell dans l'édition de la Purcell Society, quoique l'un des manuscrits qui le contiennent l'attribue clairement à Croft.

C'est une circonstance singulière et qui marque assez combien les musiciens se montraient indifférents à la question de paternité de leurs pièces favorites, que la neuvième des Suites qui se trouvera ici (Vol. II., p. 9) se termine, dans le manuscrit (No. 31,467) du British Museum par un " thême" dans la même tonalité, qui est, indubitablement semble-t-il l'œuvre de Purcell (*cf.* Purcell Society, Vol. III., p. 6).

" L'Allemande " (p. 12) de la troisième Suite, avec son étrange refrain à la basse, respire un air pompeux qui ne manque pas d'être amusant, et la sixième Suite tout entière témoigne d'une écriture aisée qui distingue la pure musique de clavier.

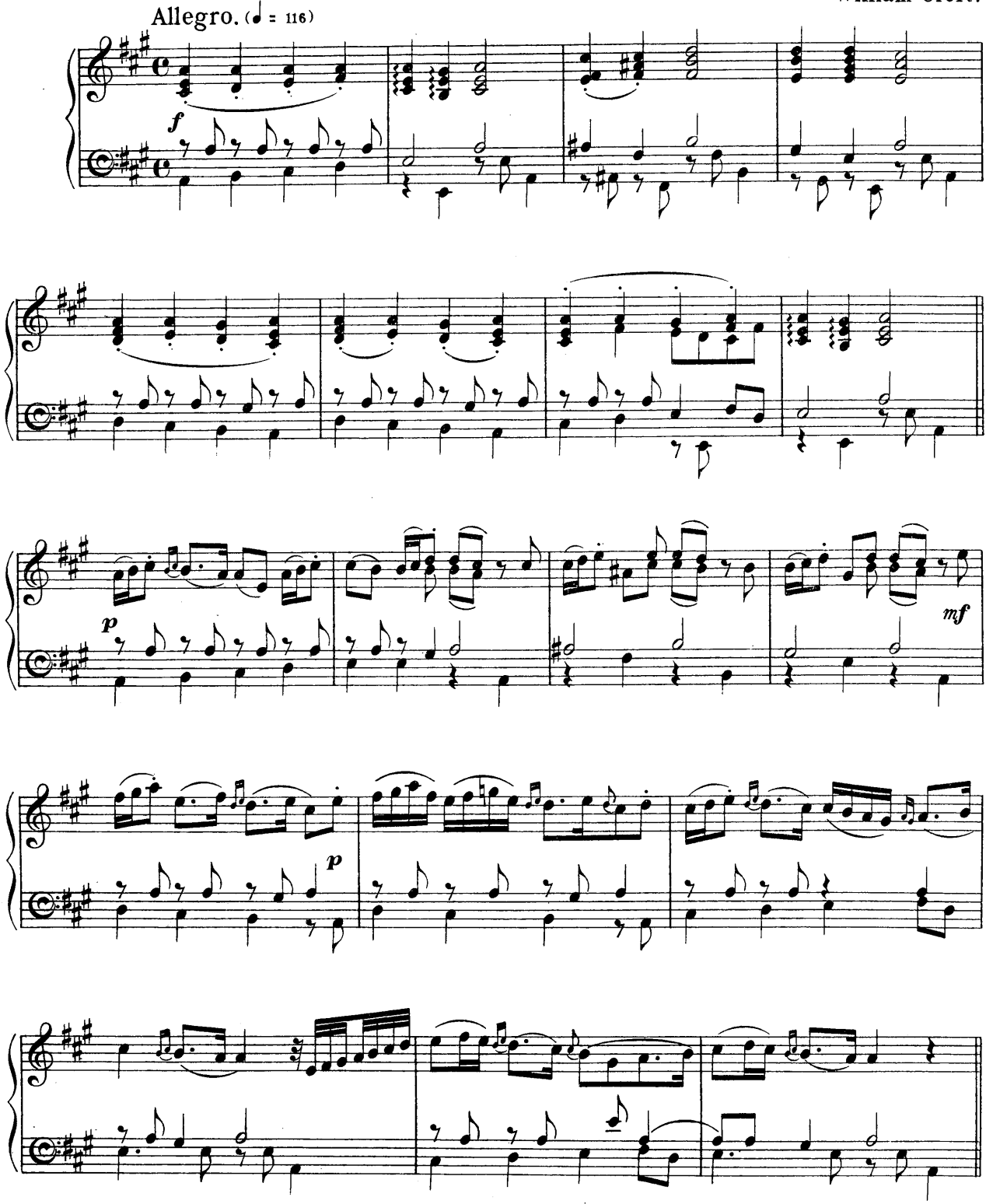
La neuvième Suite, déjà nommée (Vol. II., pp. 9 à 13) est fort gracieuse, et la spirituelle " Gavotte " a beaucoup de caractère. L'Air de la onzième Suite (II., p. 20), avec ses imitations charmantes, et celui de la douzième (II., p. 23), sont empreints d'une irrésistible grâce ironique.

SUITE VII.

Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 31,467.

GROUND.

William Croft.



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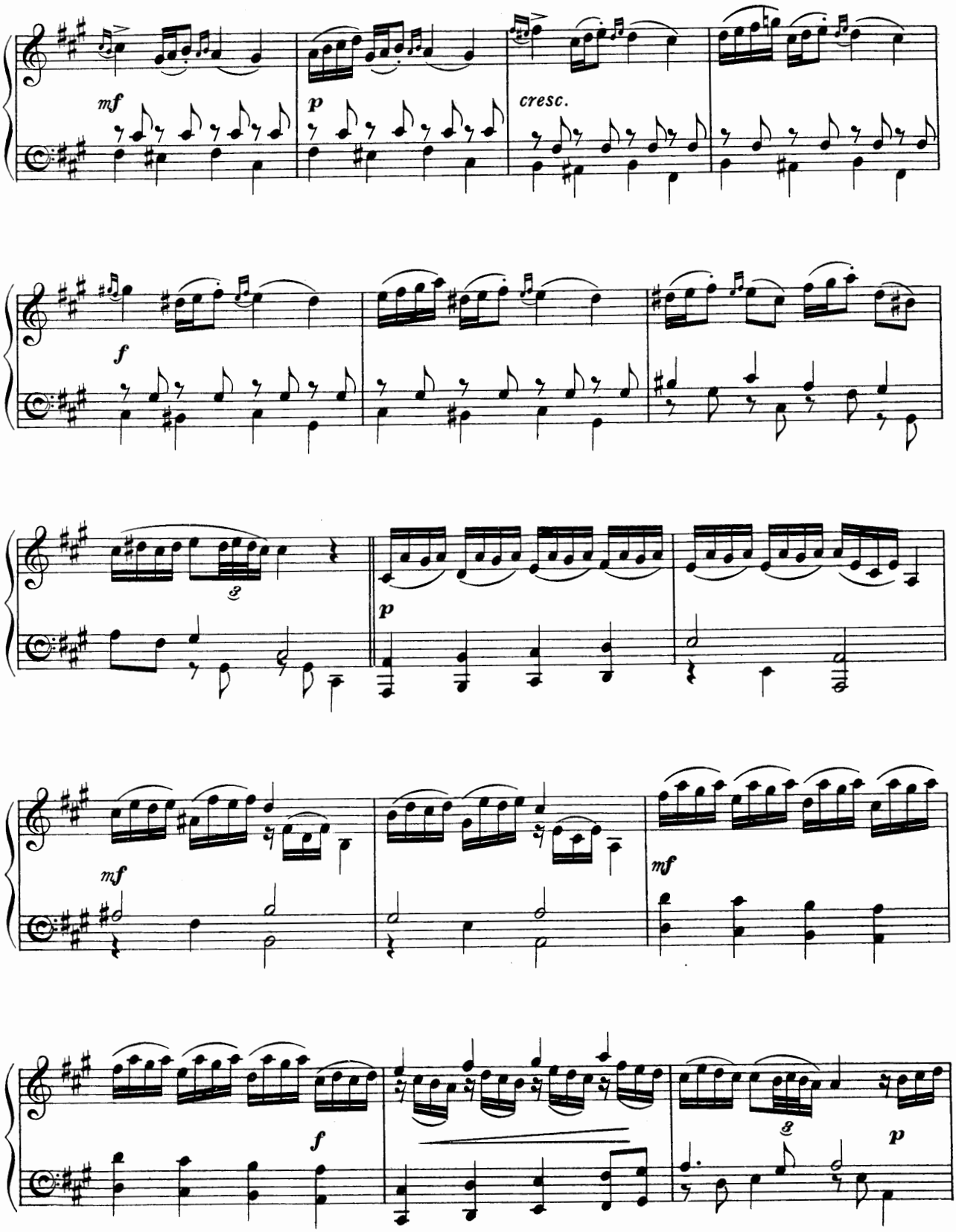
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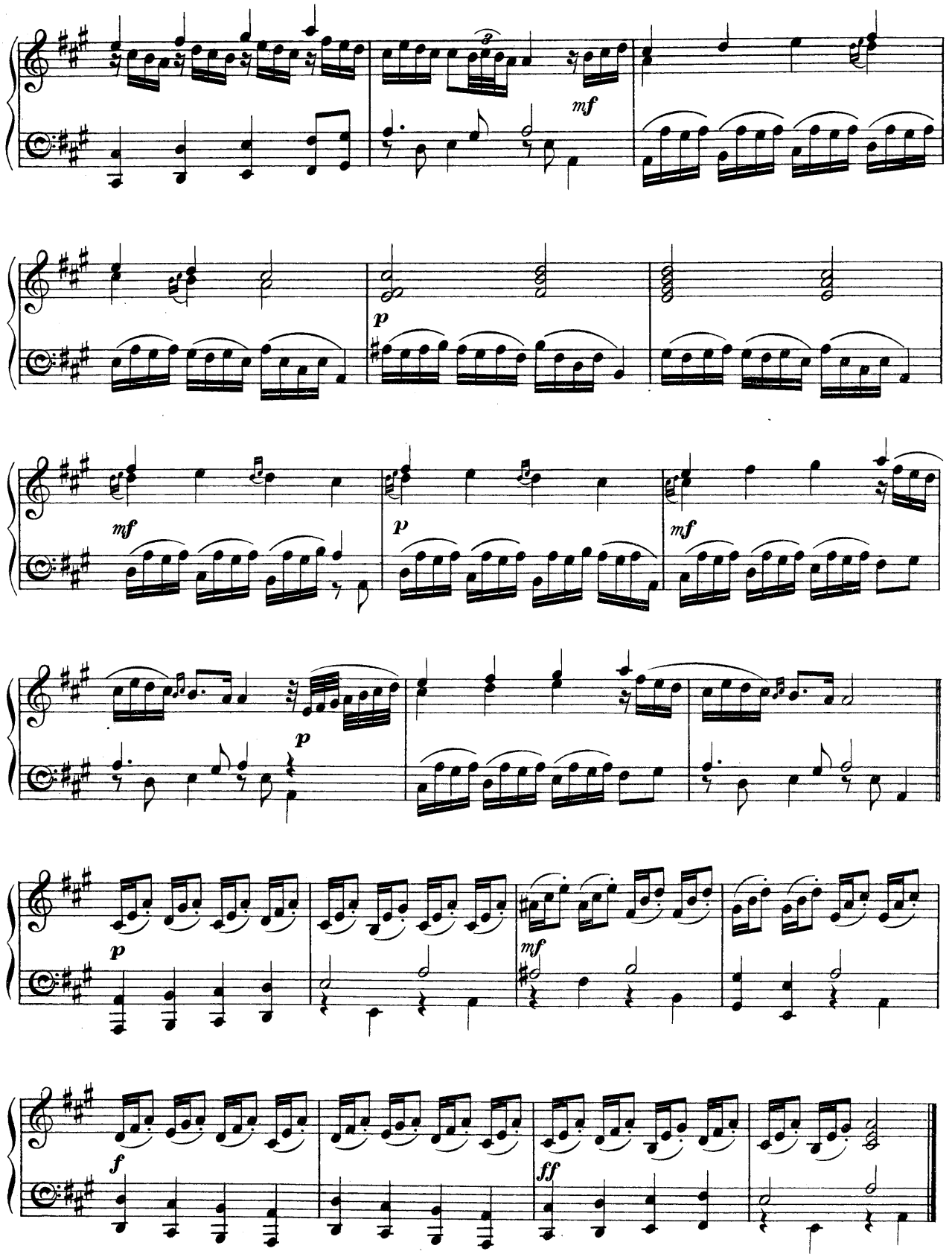
p
cresc.
f
3
p
mf
mf
f
3
p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mf
p
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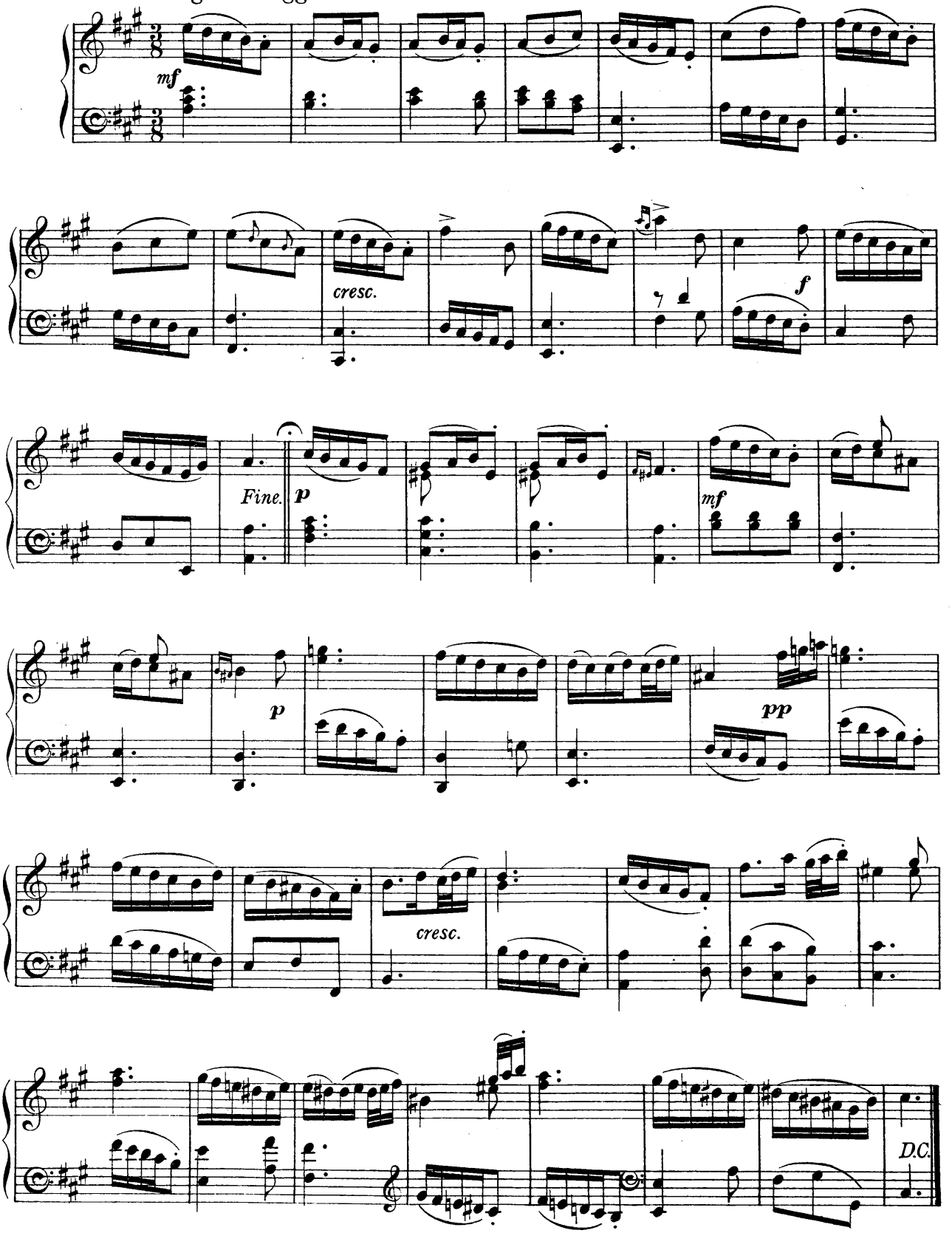
p
p
mf
f
ff

MINUETT.

Allegretto leggiero. ♩. = 63



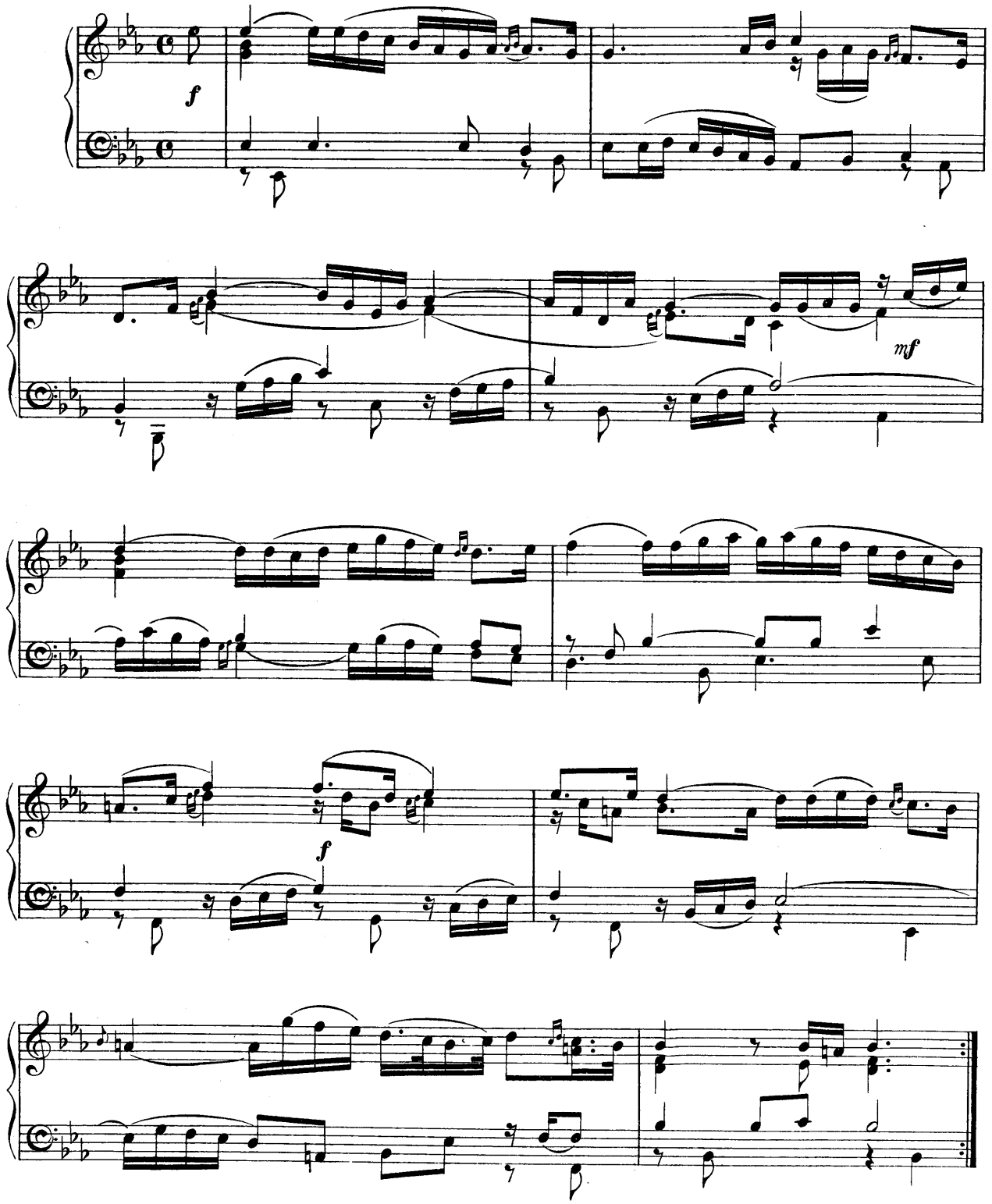
SUITE VIII.

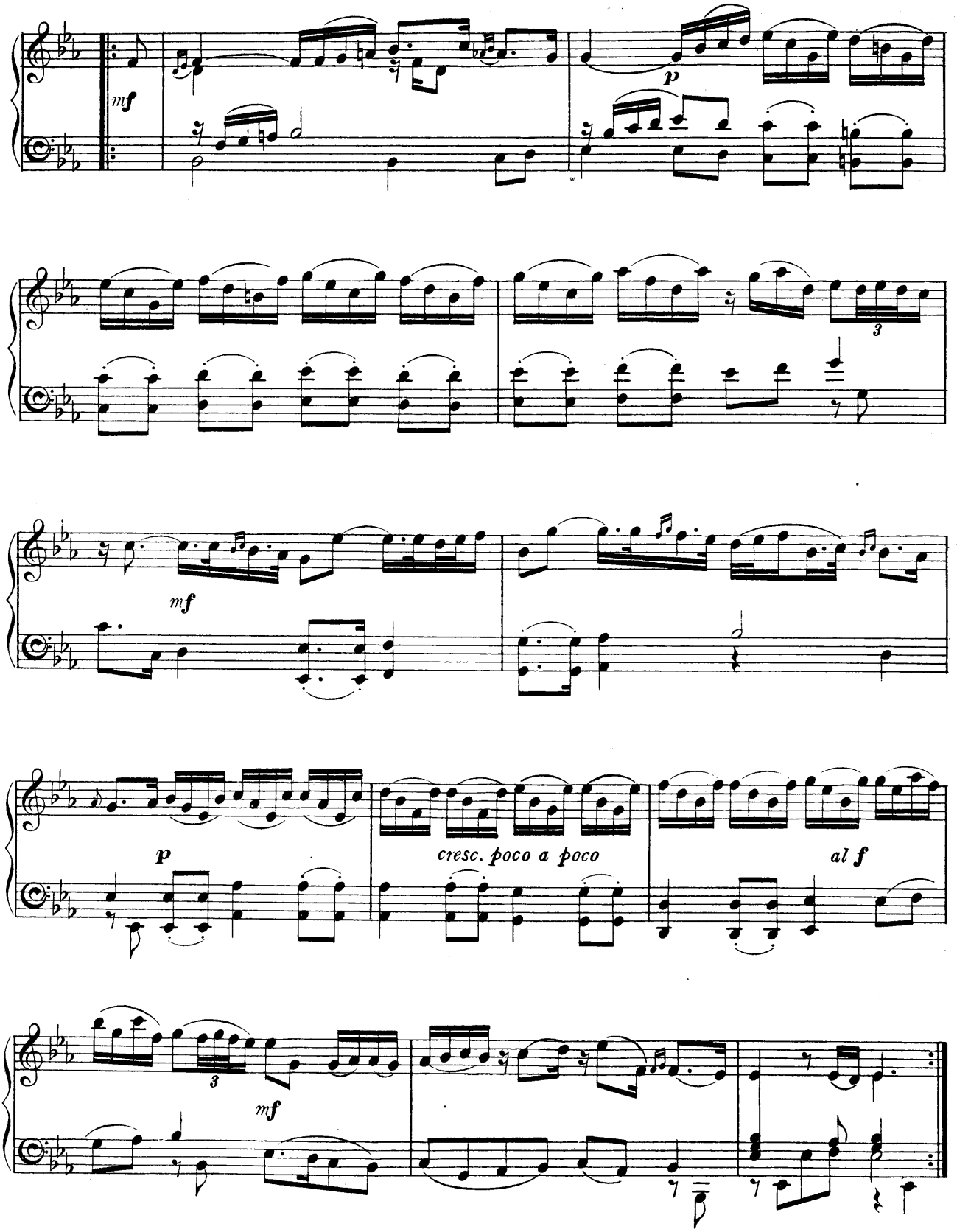
Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 31,467.

ALLEMANDE.

Allegretto. (♩ = 60)

William Croft.

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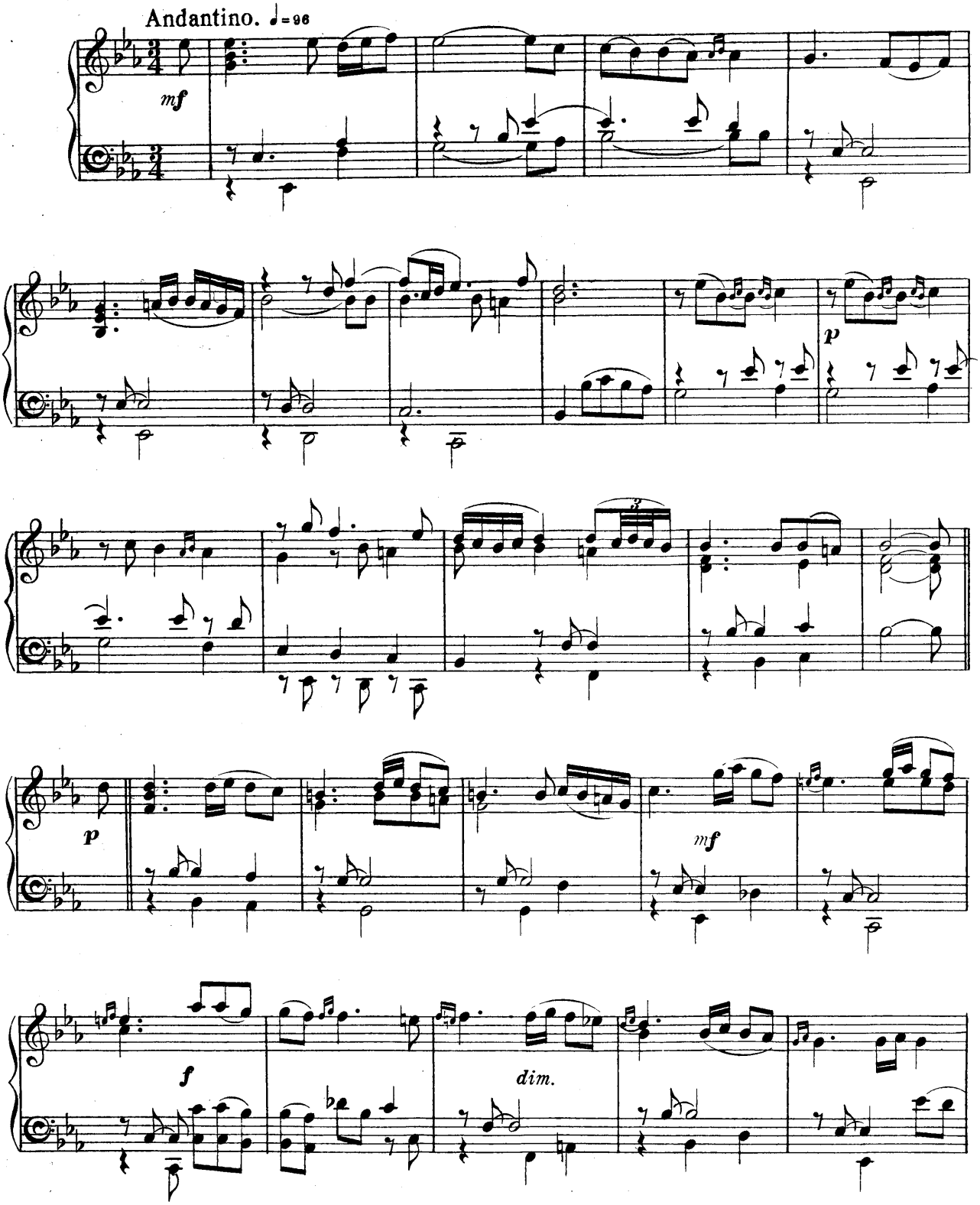
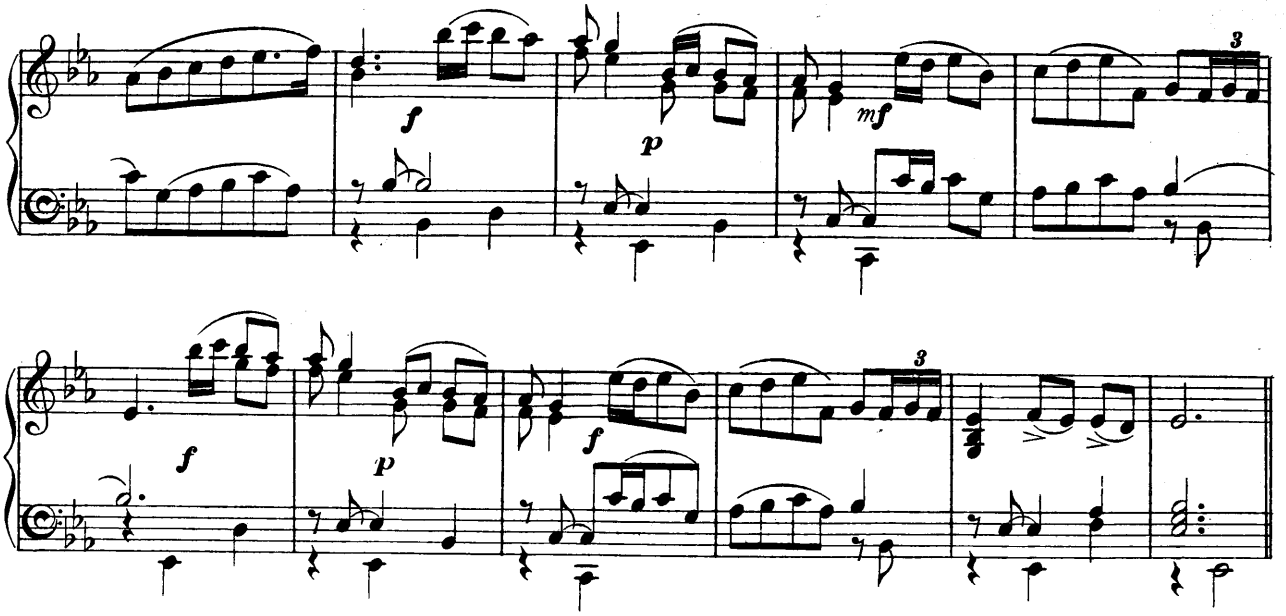
p
3
mf
p
cresc. poco a poco
al f
3
mf

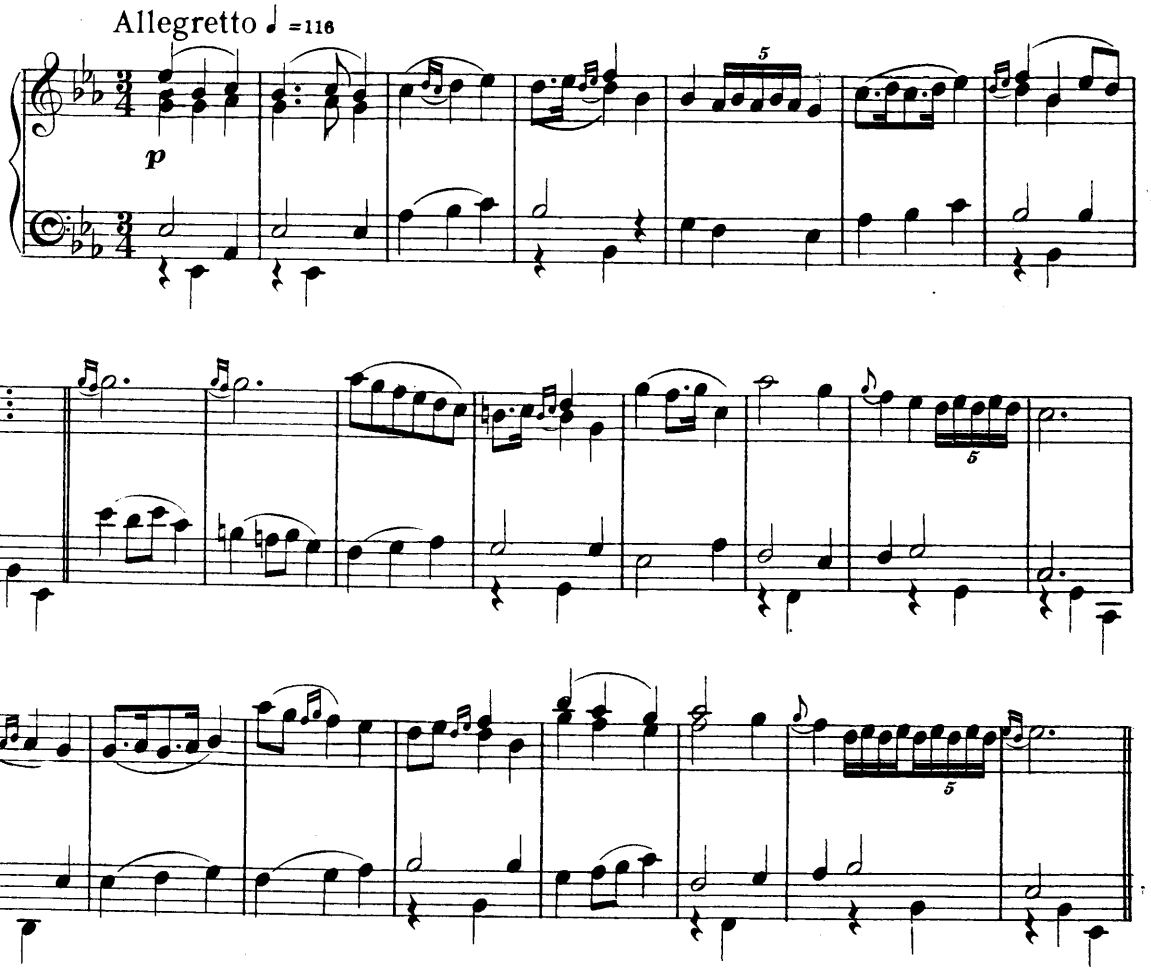
COURANTE.





MINUETT.

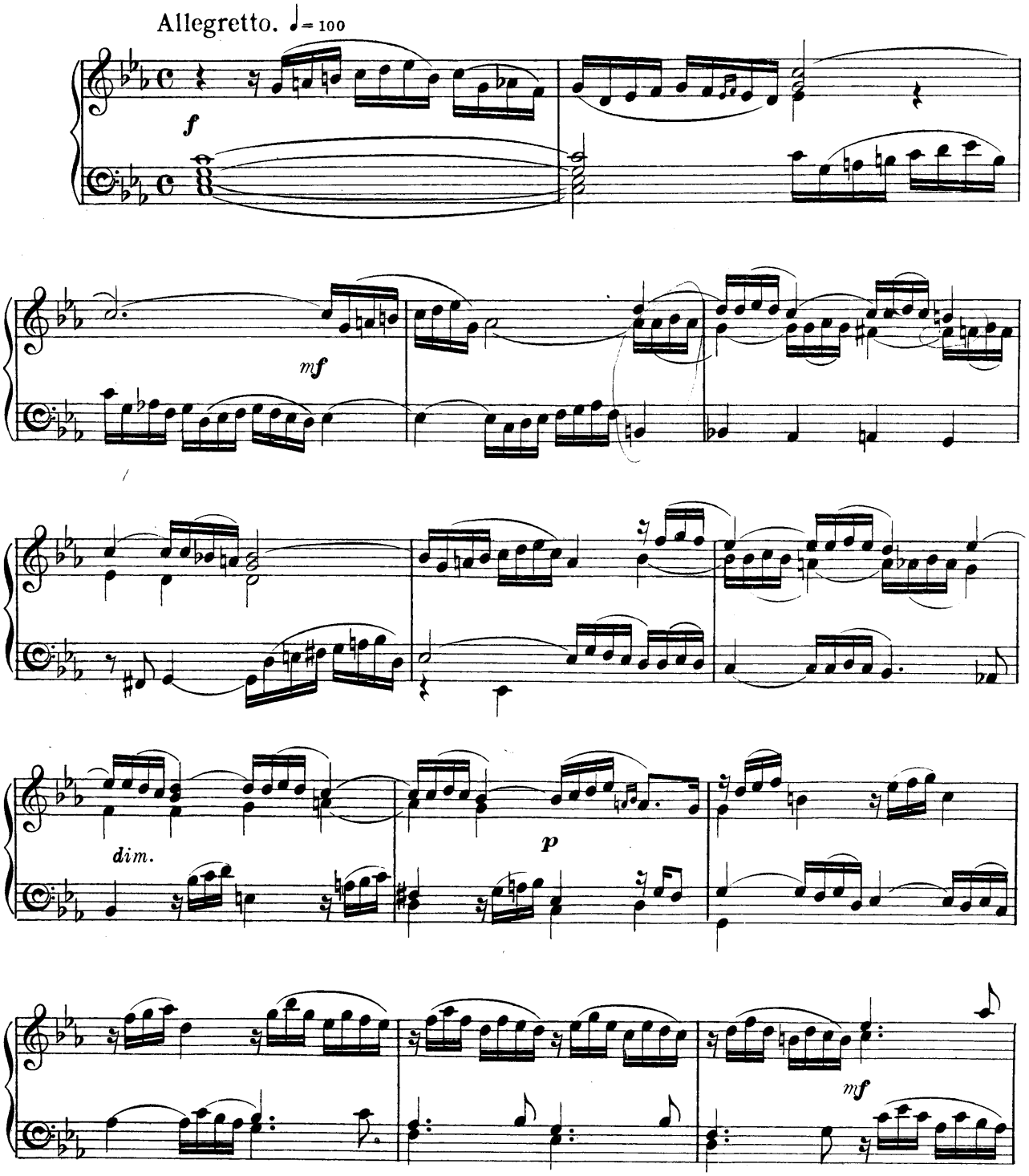
Allegretto ♩ =116

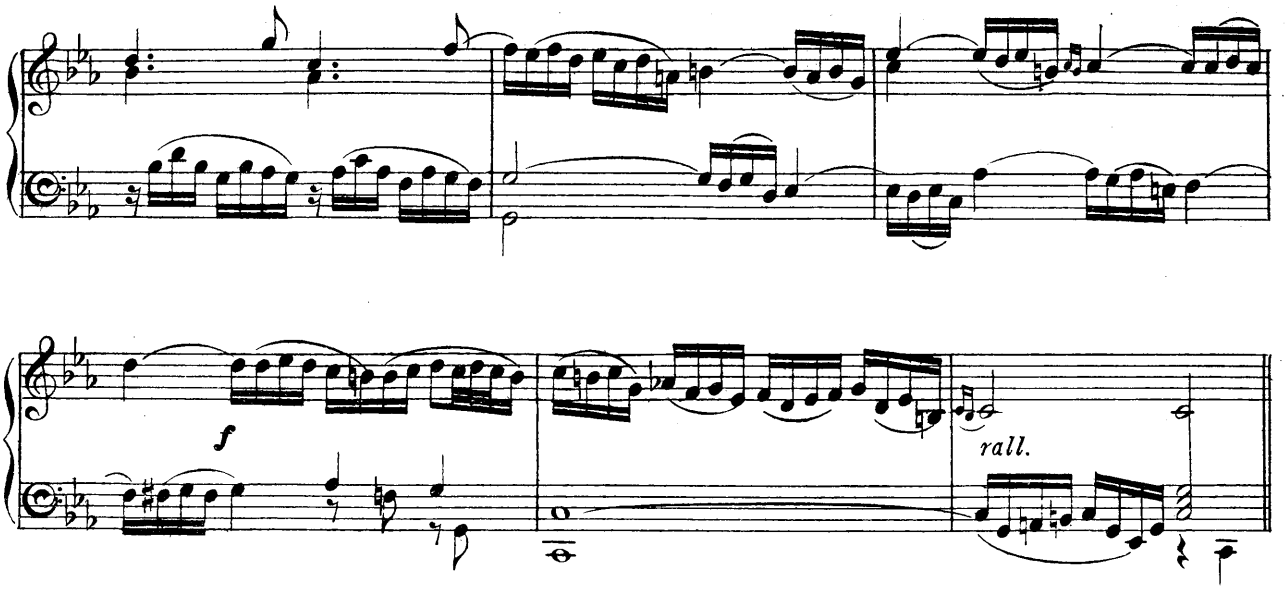


SUITE IX

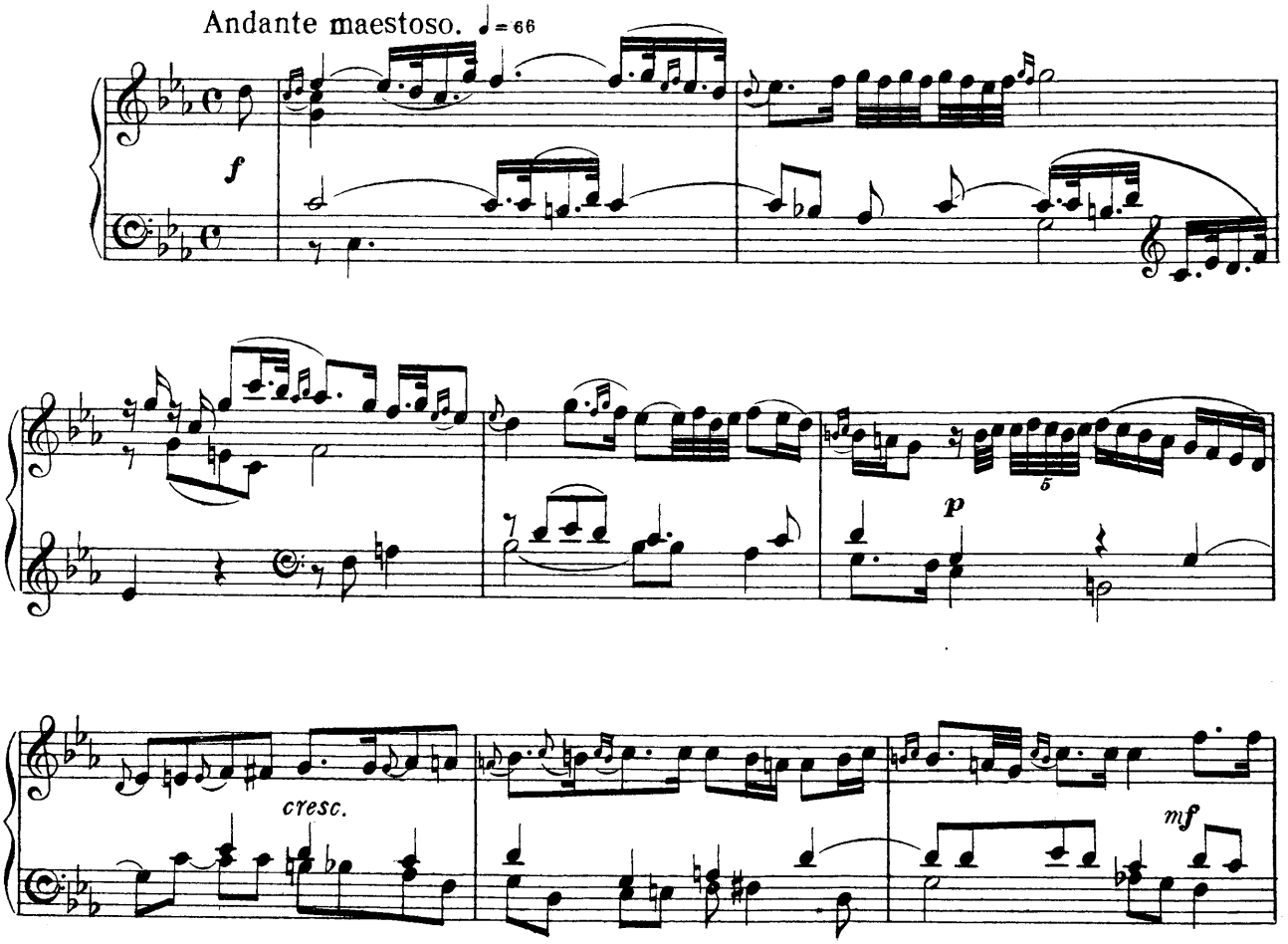
PRELUDE.

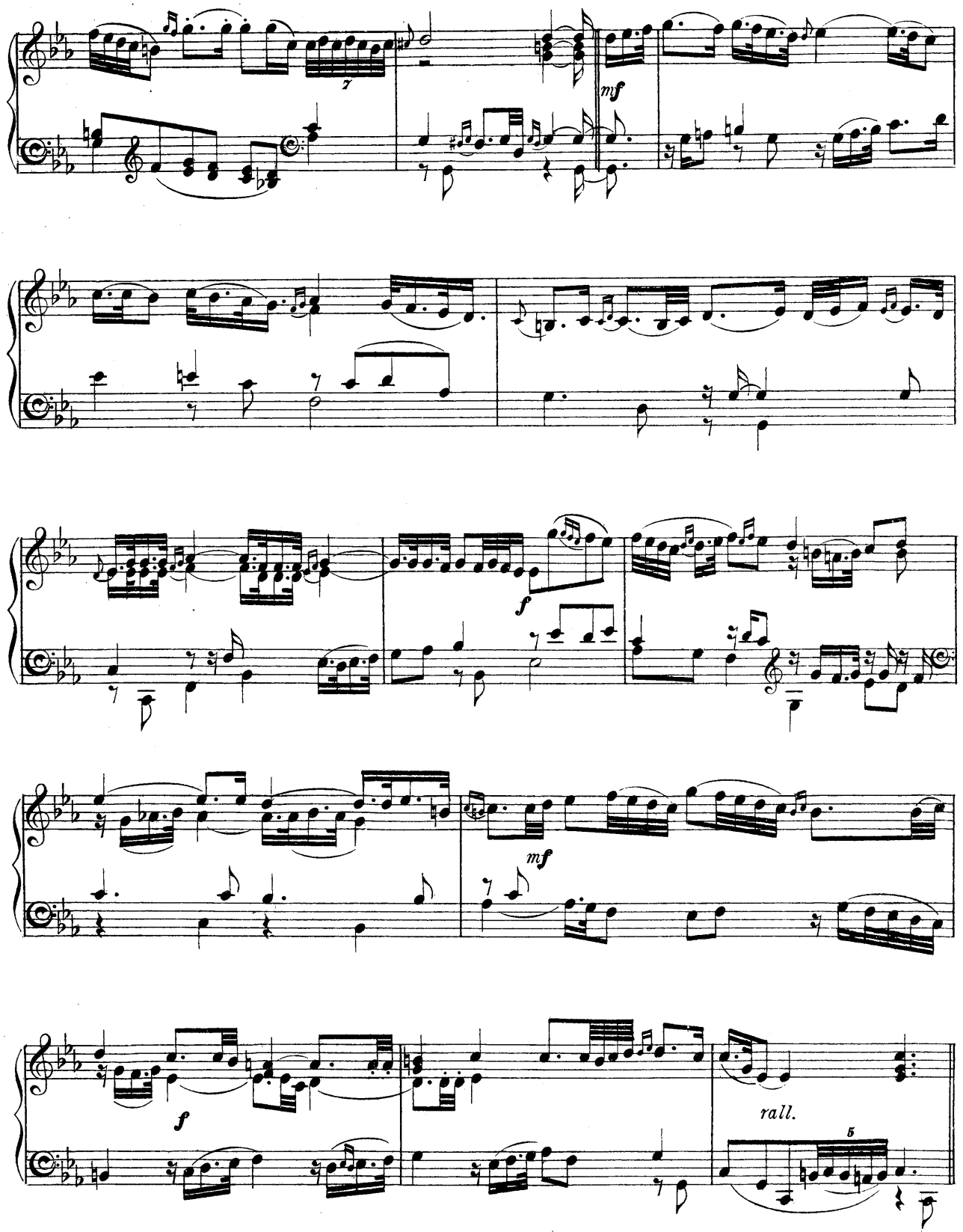
Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 81, 467



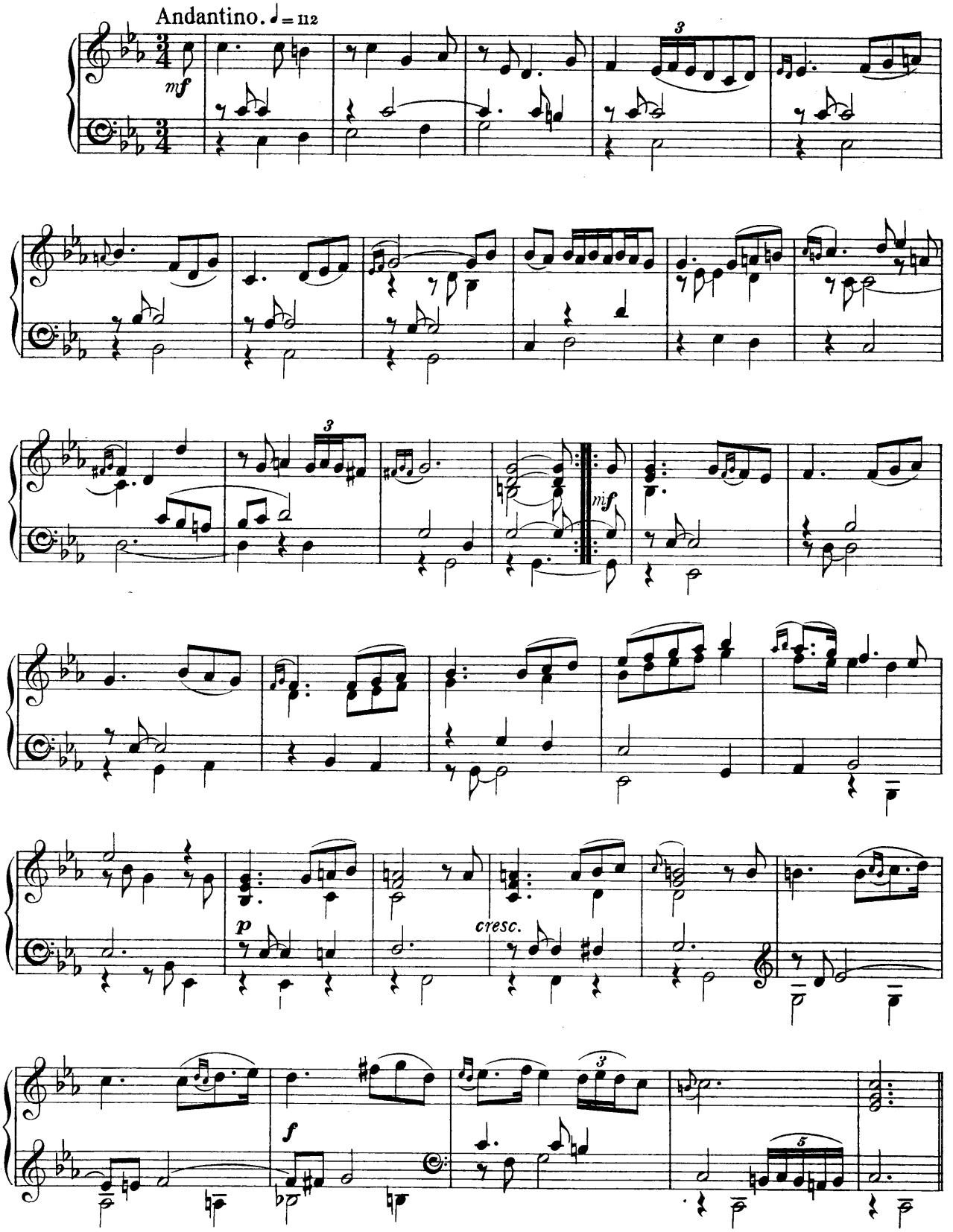


ALLEMANDE.

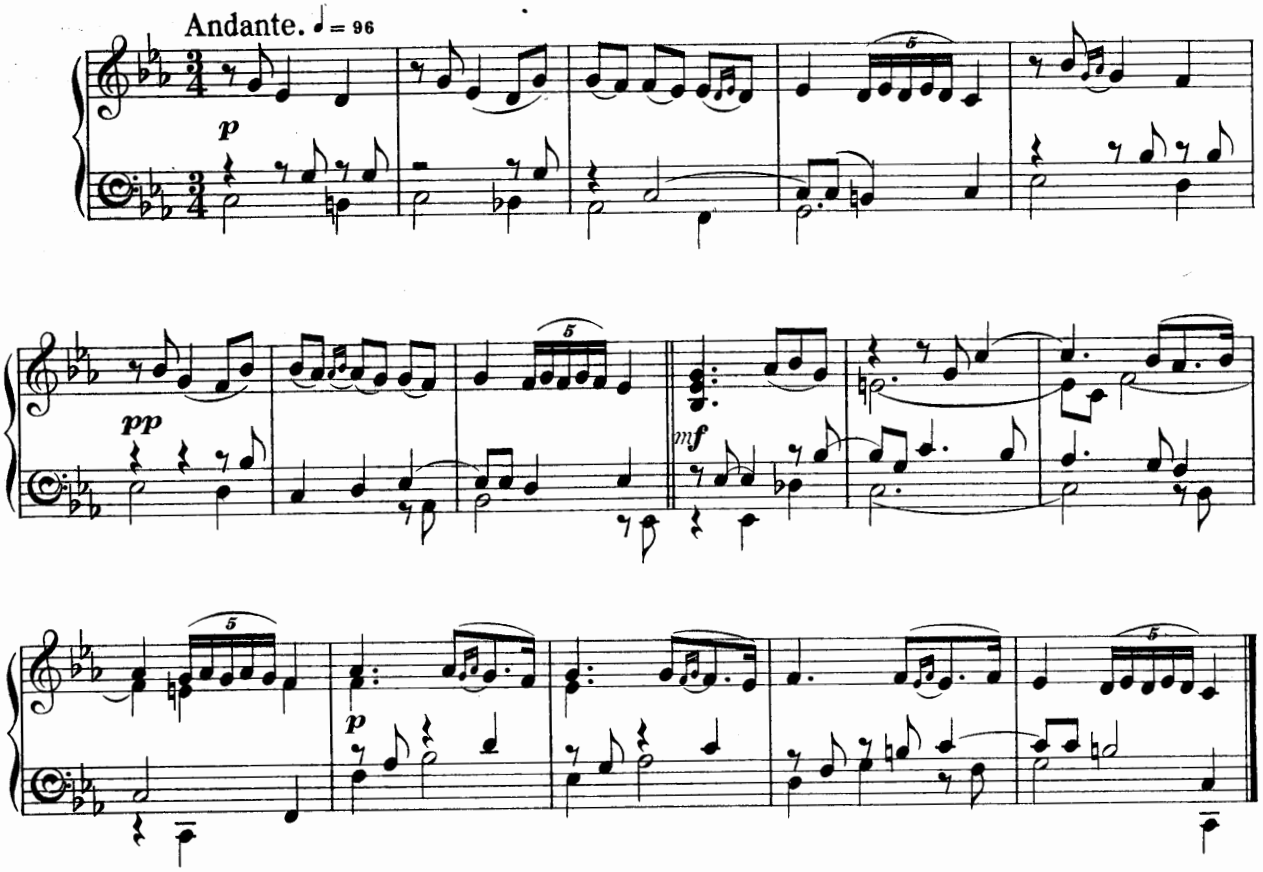



7
mf
f
mf
f
rall.
5

COURANTE.



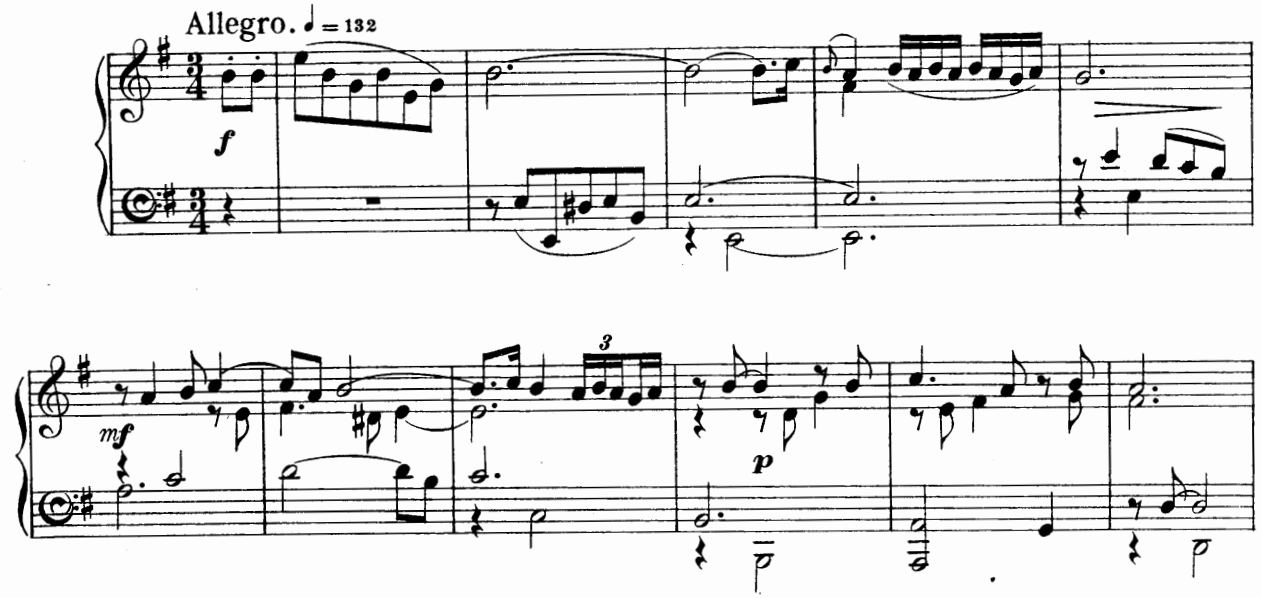
SARABANDA.*



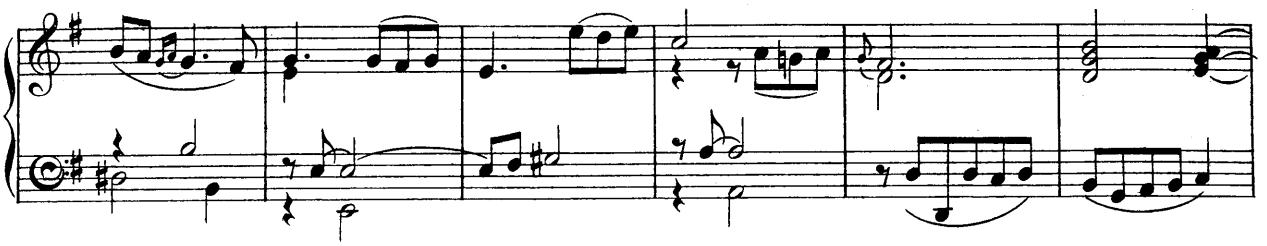
SUITE X.

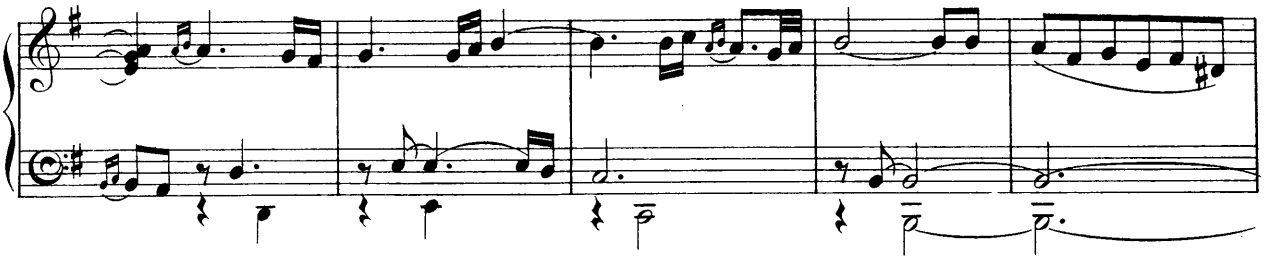
PRELUDE.

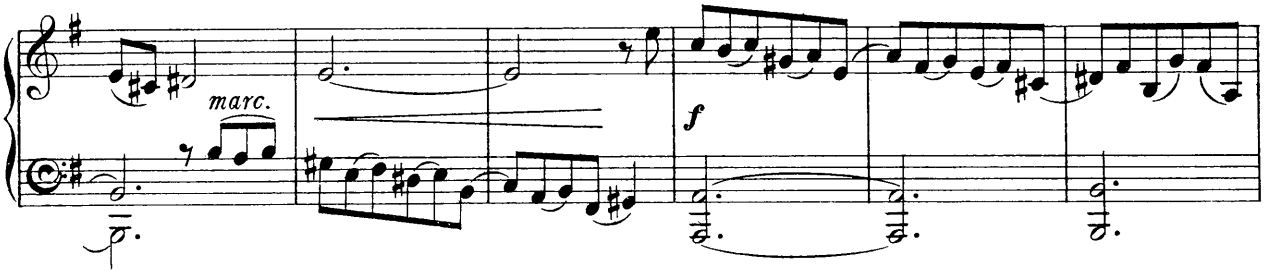
Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 31,467

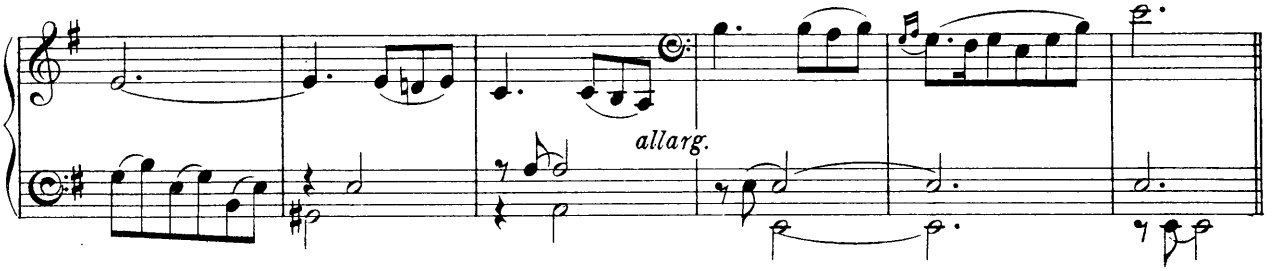


*A version of this Saraband, in the key of D minor, is in "A Choice Collection of Ayres."

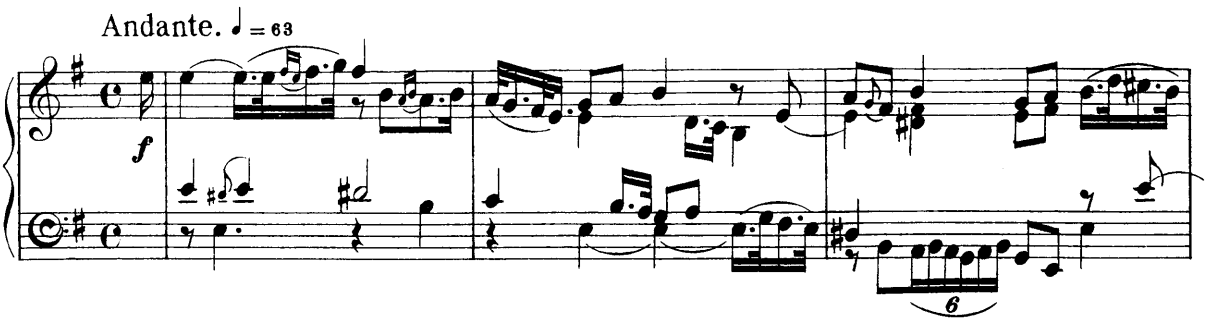


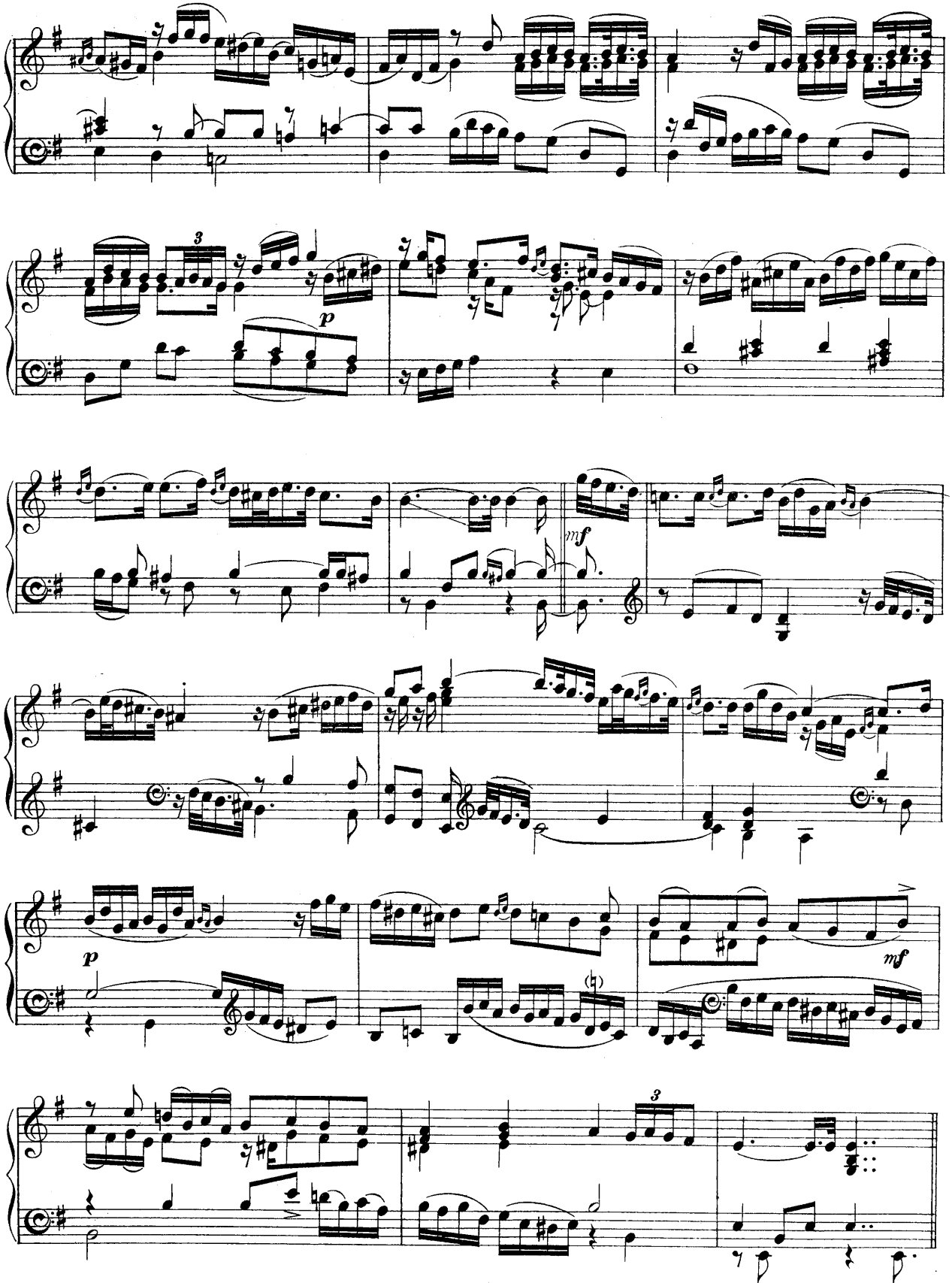






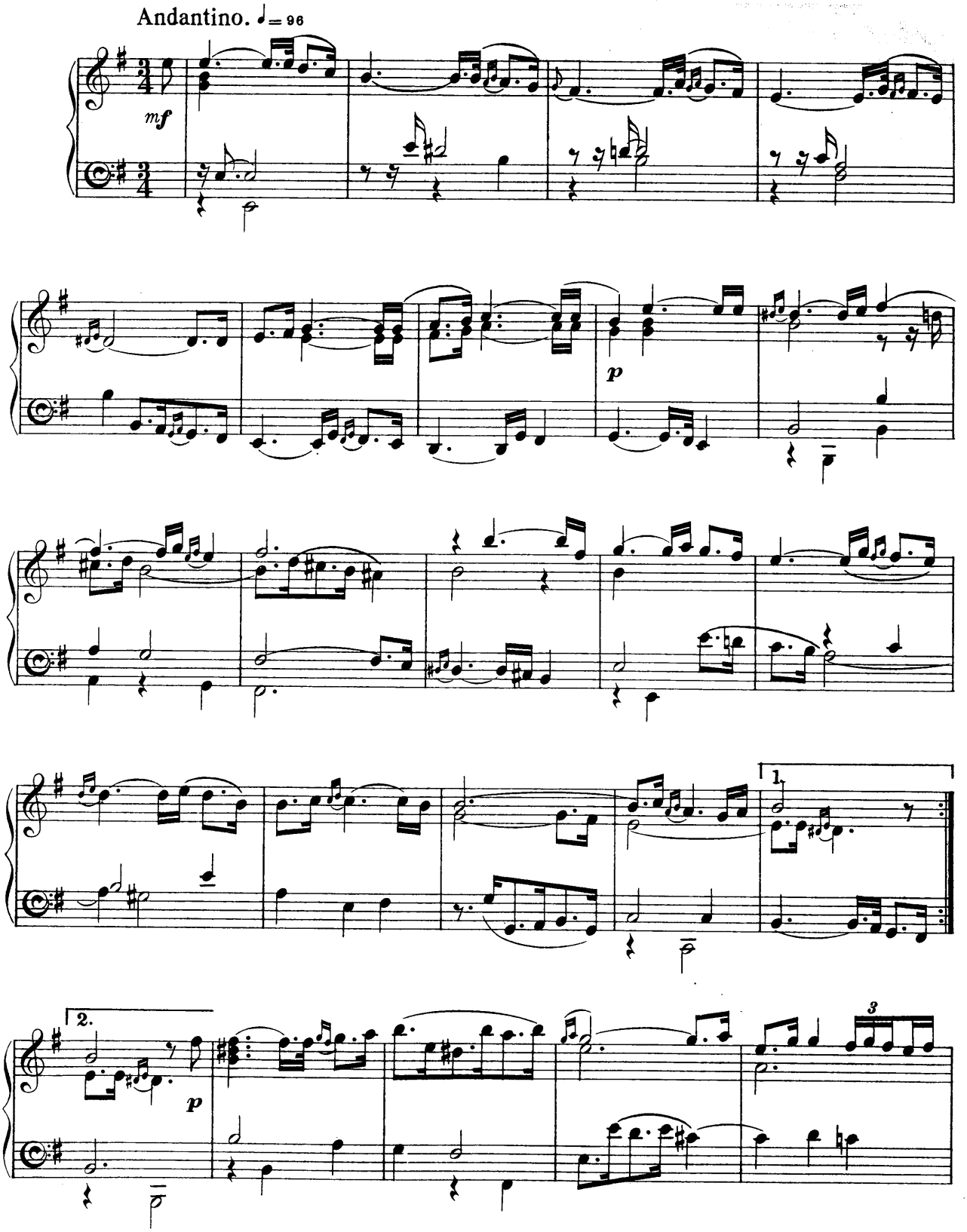
ALLEMAND.

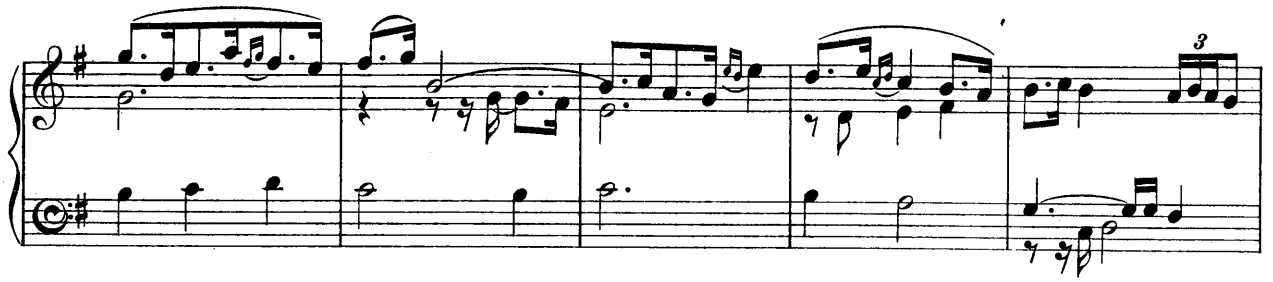


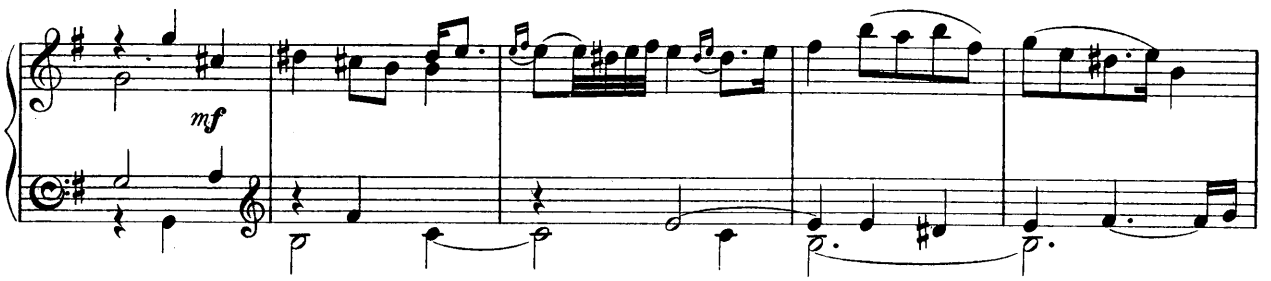

3
p
mf
p
mf
3

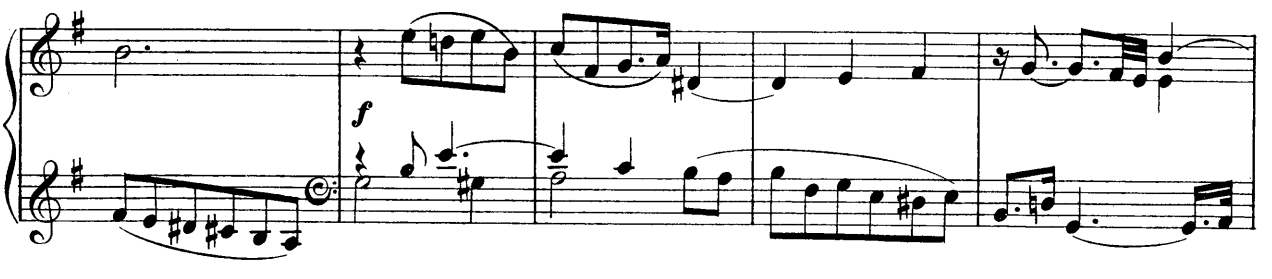
COURANT.

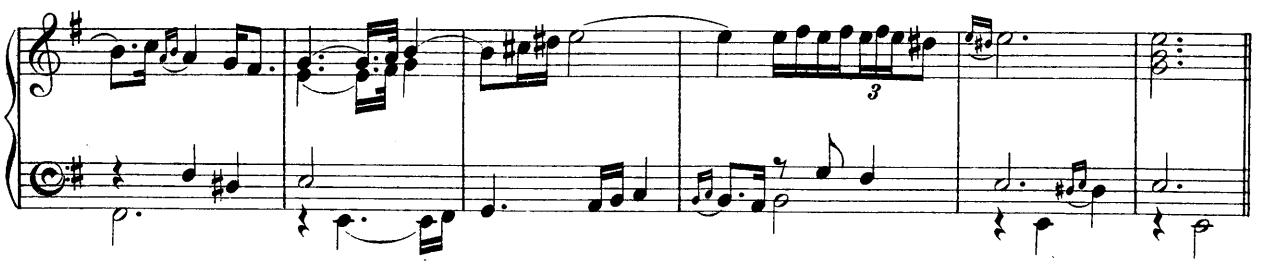
Andantino. ♩= 96



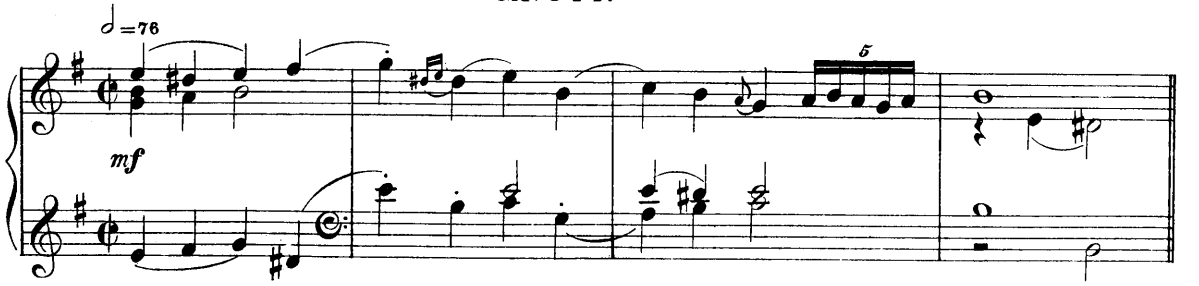


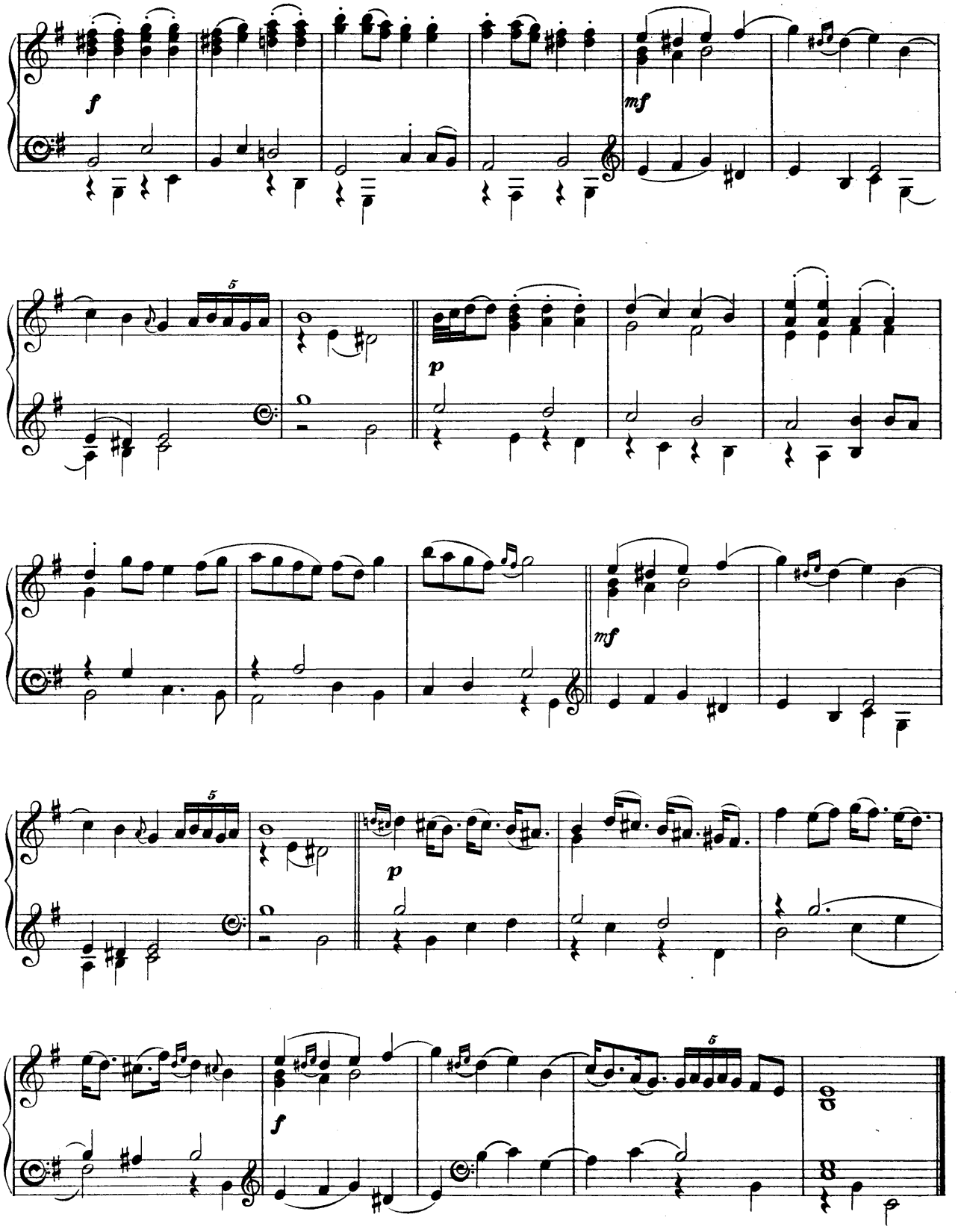






GAVOTT.




f
mf
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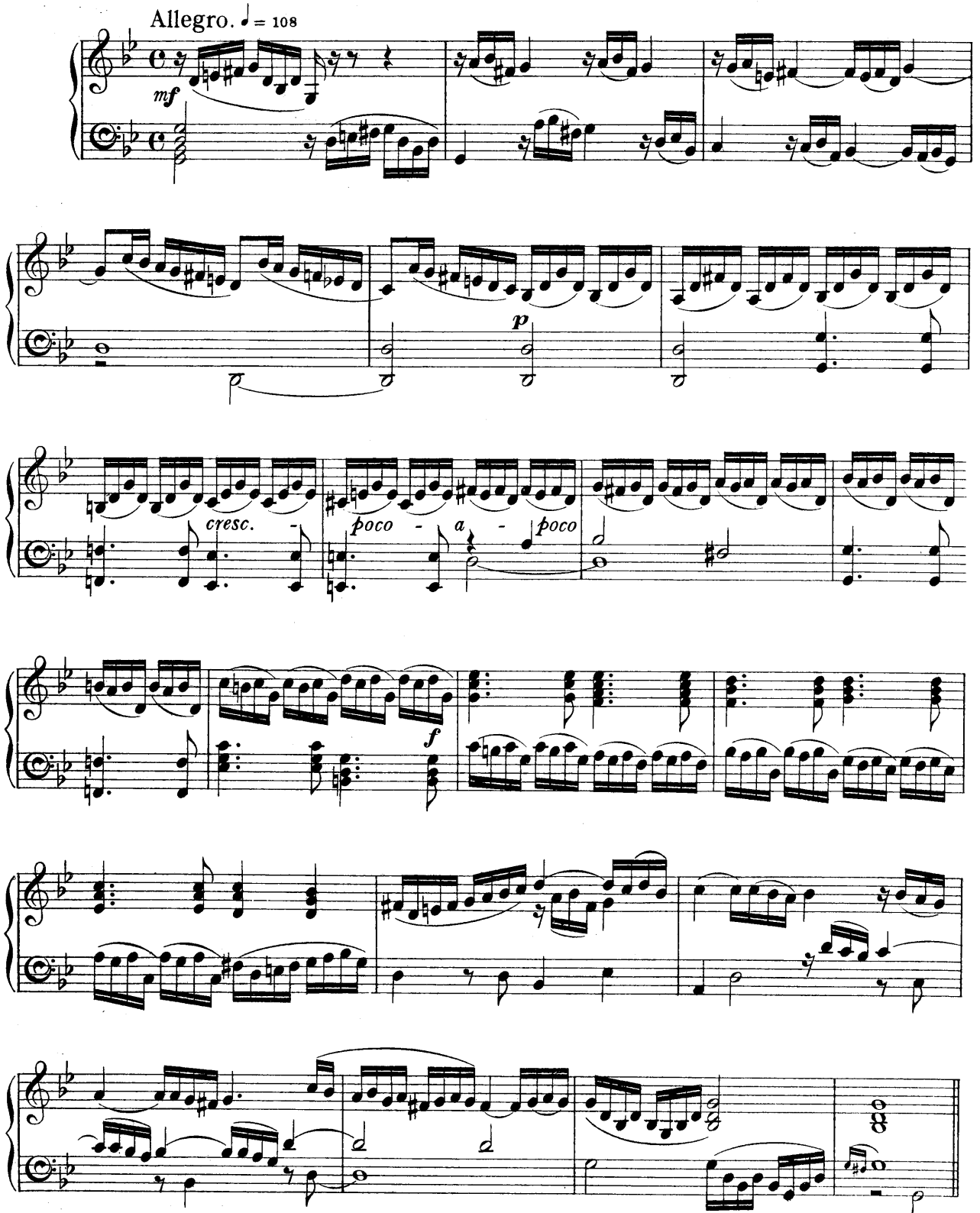
mf
5
p
f

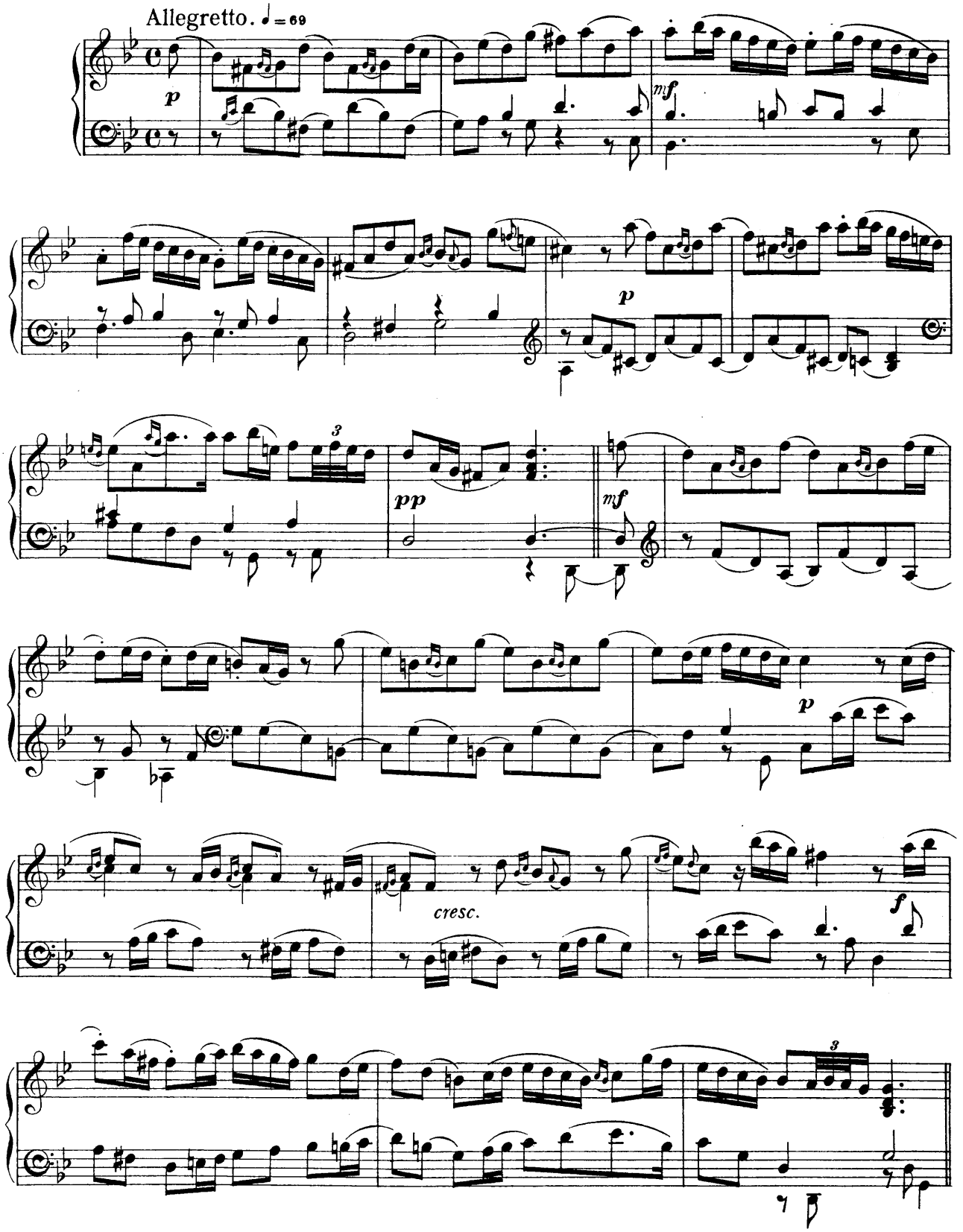
SUITE XI.

Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 31,467.

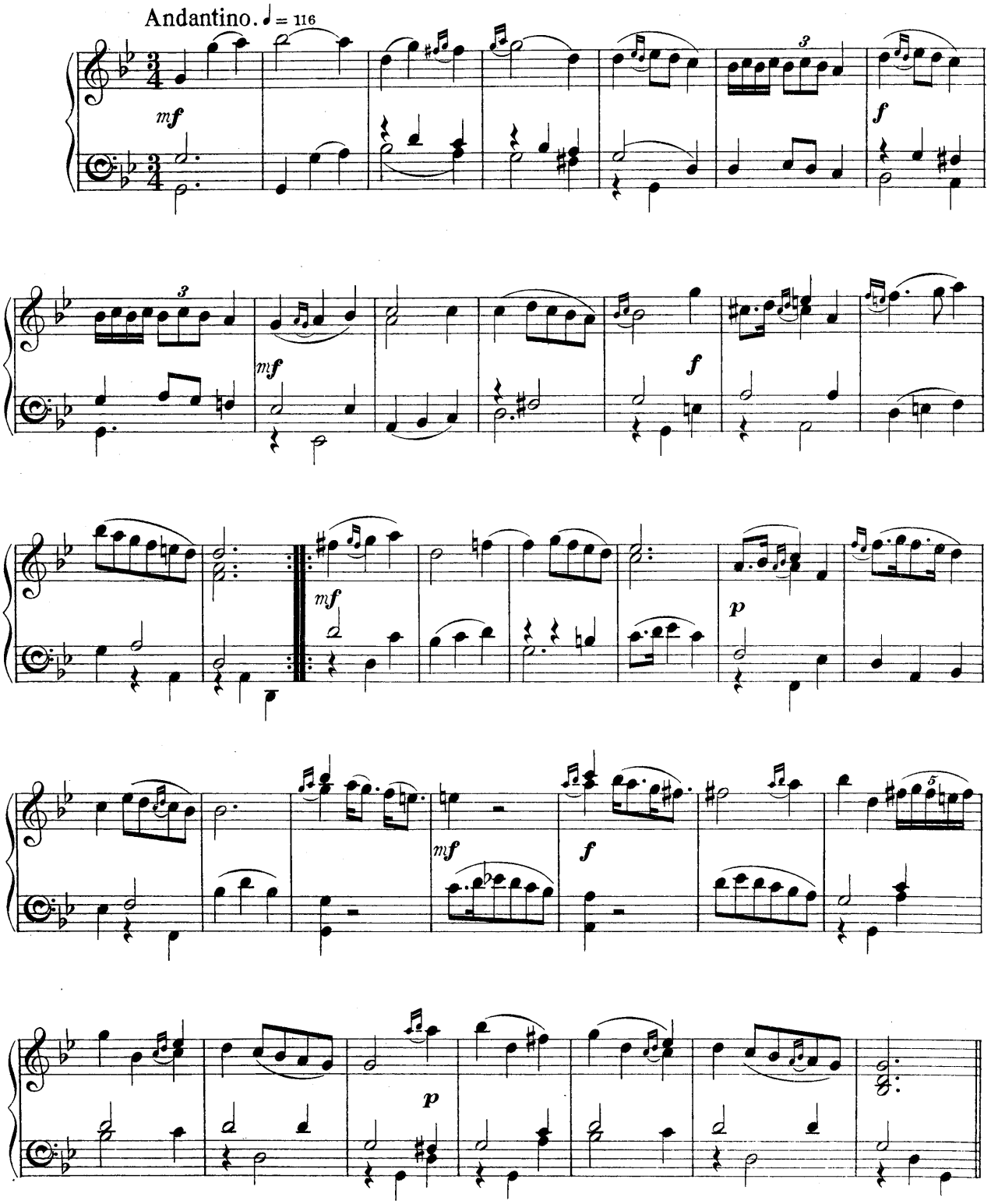
PRELUDE.



AIRE.



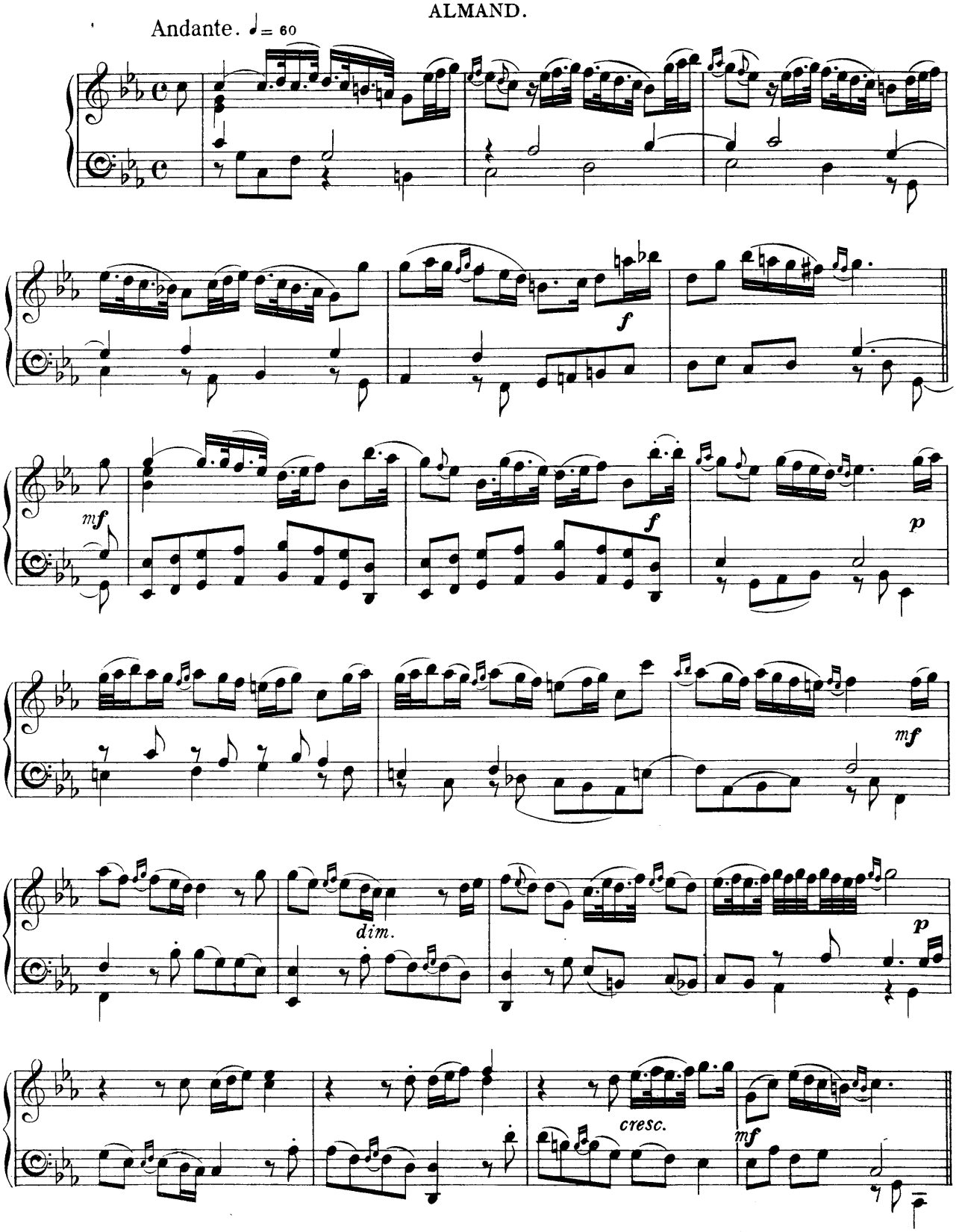
MINUETT.



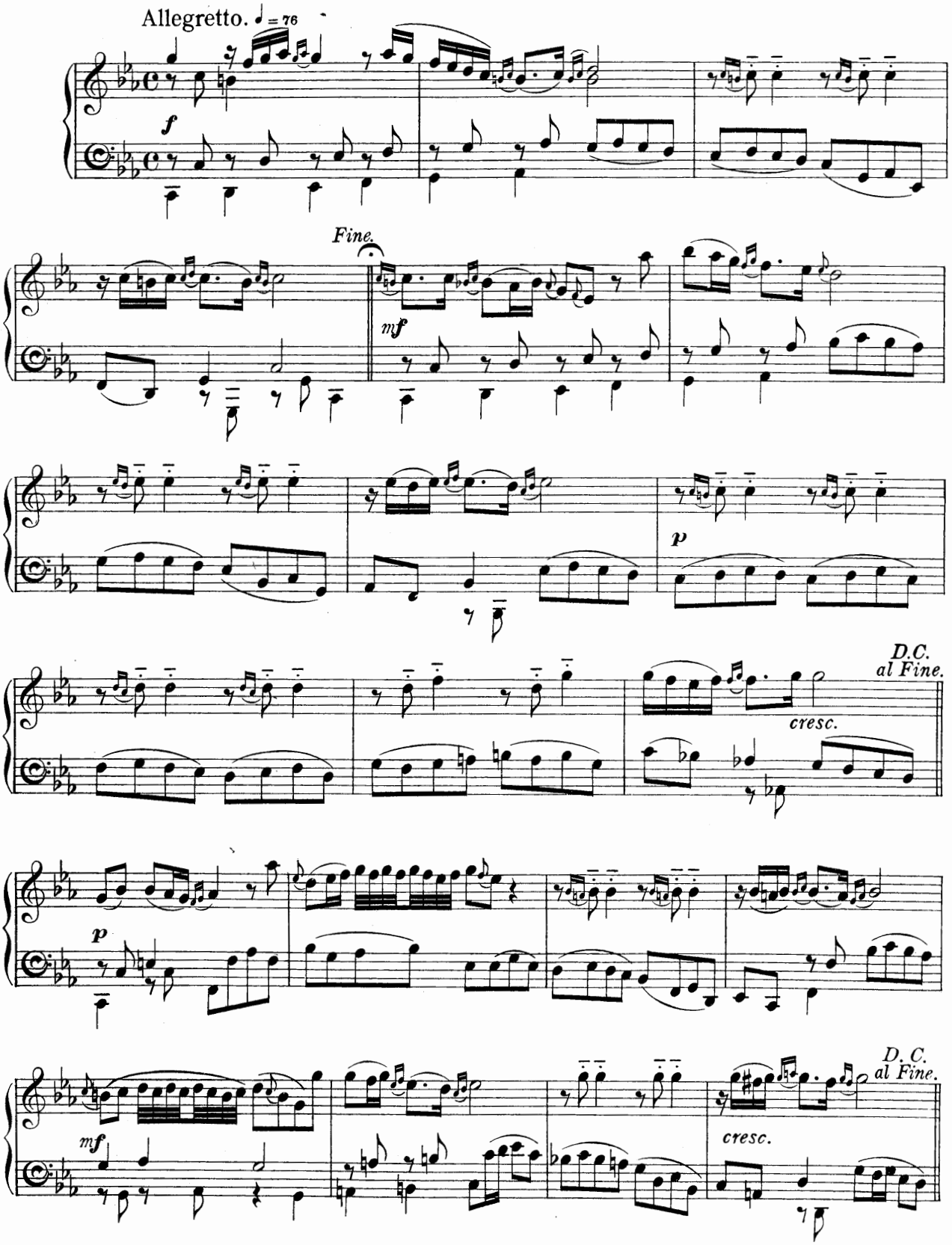
SUITE XII.

Brit. Mus. Add. 31,467.

ALMAND.



AIRE.



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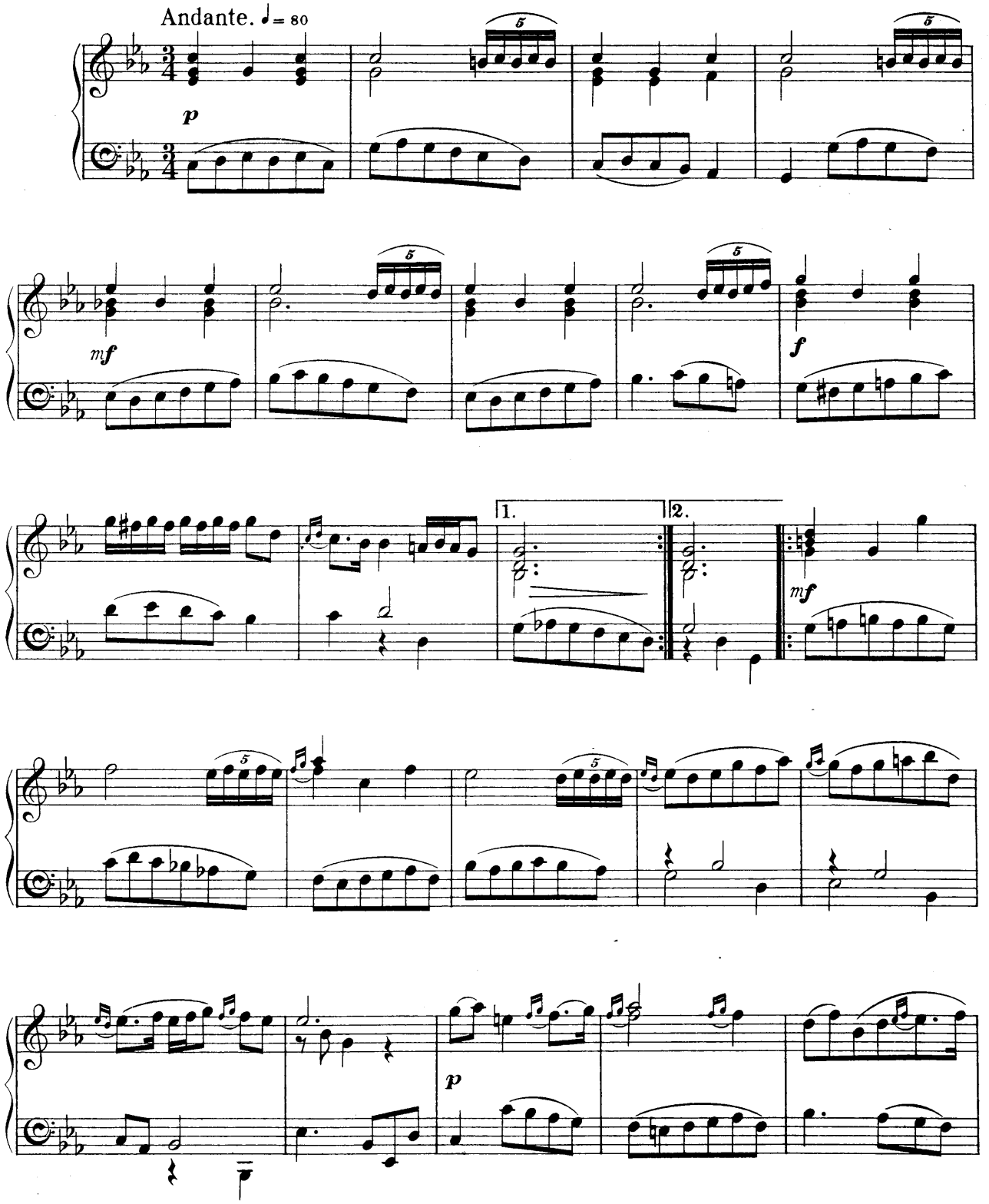

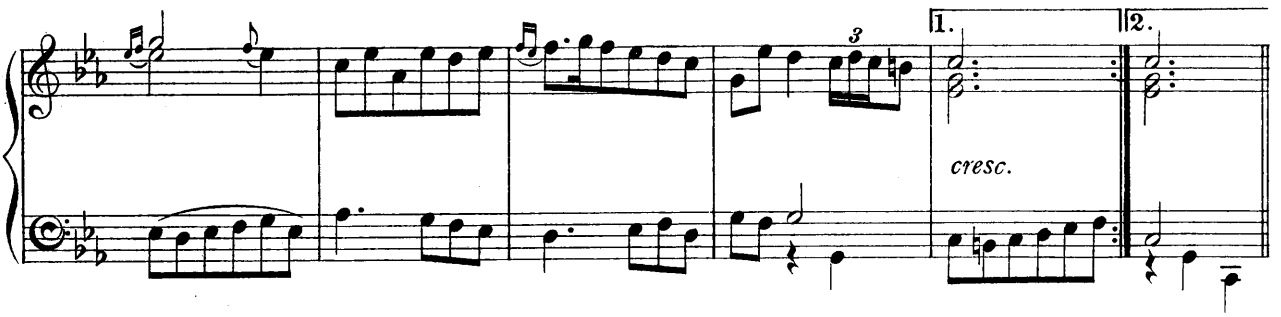

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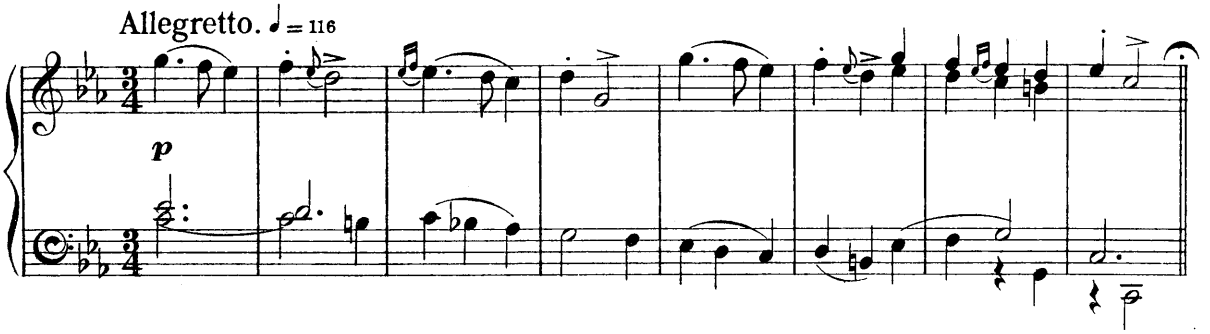

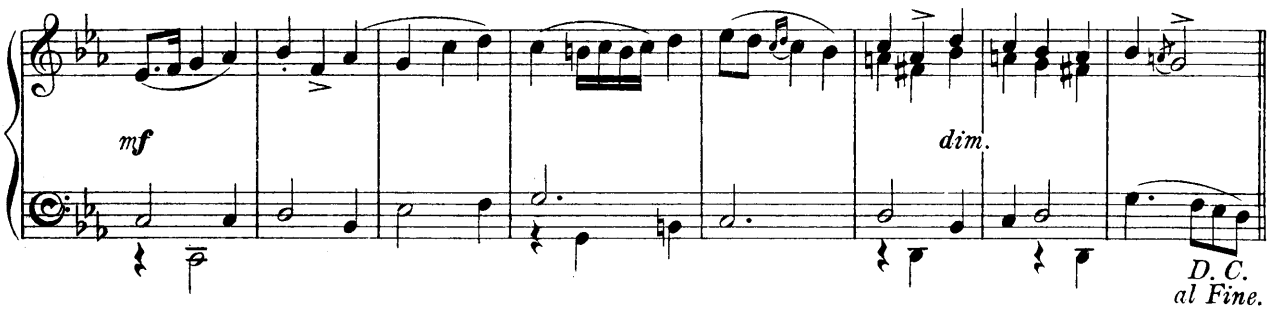

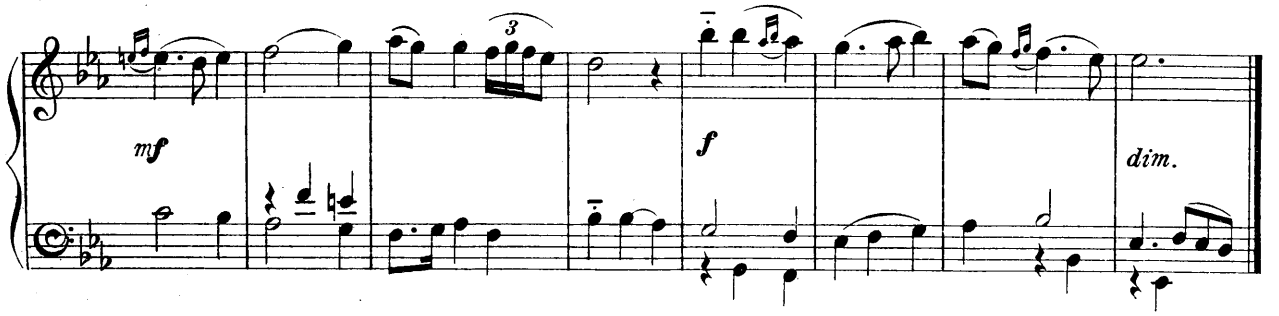

D.C. al Fine.