KALMUS PIANO SERIES

JOHANN SEBASTIAN
BACH

TWO AND THREE PART INVENTIONS

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Translation by
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PREFACE

TWO AND THREE-PART INVENTIONS

The publication of the Inventions and Symphonies was based on two manuscripts belonging to the Berlin State Library. The first of these, inherited from the Spohr legacy, has been utilized in the Bach-Gesellschaft edition. Its literal title is as follows:

"*Auffrichtige Anleitung, Wormit denen Liebhabern des Clavires, besonders aber denen Lehrbegierigen, eine deutliche Art gezeiget wird, nicht alleine (1) mit 2 Stimmen reine spielen zu lernen, sondern auch bey weiteren progressen (2) mit dreyen obligaten Partien richtig und wohl zu verfahren, anbey auch zugleich gute inventiones nicht allein zu bekommen, sondern auch selbige wohl durchzuführen, am allermeisten aber eine cantable Art im Spielen zu erlangen, und darneben einen starcken Vorschmack von der Composition zu überkommen. Verfertiget von Joh. Seb. Bach, Hochf. Anhalt-Cöthenischen Capellmeister. Anno Christi 1723.*"

A free translation follows:

"*A proper introduction, whereby lovers of the Clavier and especially those with thirst for true knowledge, are shown a clear way not only (1) of learning to play cleanly in two voices, but (2) also with further progress to proceed with three obligato parts correctly and well—at the same time not only receiving good ideas (i.e., inventions) but also utilizing them for the development of a cantabile style of playing, and for the procurement of a thorough foretaste of composition. Completed by Joh. Seb. Bach, etc. etc.*"

Rust presents a critique of the second manuscript, which had passed through Griepenkerl's hands, in the appendix to the third series of the above-mentioned edition. Even though the representation of the note-text in this copy creates no important difficulties, still the presentation of the ornaments does awaken serious misgivings. In this respect the two manuscripts differ from one another to such an extent that some pieces contain few if any ornaments in one copy, and an altogether excessive number in the other. Moreover, there appear in both manuscripts certain subsequent additions, which do not seem to stem from Bach, although I have no definite means of determining the authenticity of some of the individual ornaments in question. In the interest of the performer's orientation I have, therefore, indicated in large type the ornaments authenticated by their appearance in both copies; those appearing in only one of the copies are printed in small type. In several instances I am unable to assume the responsibility for the completeness of the ornaments because of the difficulty in deciphering the original text. Moreover, I have in certain instances—in a particular piece or section of a piece—completely eliminated the overabundantly appearing ornamental signs of doubtful authenticity; however, this is always mentioned in our text.

For the practical utilization of the volume, it will suffice if one observes all the ornaments printed in large type, and perhaps occasionally interjects one of the others—according to one's individual taste. However, the fingerings given do not take into consideration any of the ornaments in the latter category.

Small notes are bracketed when their authenticity is doubtful. On the other hand, we have placed in parentheses those ornaments which seem absolutely necessary despite the fact that they are missing in both manuscripts; in this instance we use the term "necessary" insofar as it can be applied to matters of indubitably good taste.

In addition to the two sources mentioned above we have also perused the copies of Forkel and Gerber, also a manuscript found in the legacy of the Princess Amalie. I have also listed several important variants taken from an old Hoffmeister printing.

P.S.—A supplementary source is to be found in the autograph contained in the "*Klavierbüchlein*" of Friedemann Bach, which we were able to secure through the courtesy of Mrs. Krug, of Naumburg. However, this source reached us after the engraving of the current volume had already been completed. We, therefore, list below all the belated references to the "*Klavierbüchlein,*" indicated in the various Inventions and Symphonies by capitalized letters.

FRIEDEMANN BACH'S "KLAVIERBÜCHLEIN," begun by Johann Sebastian Bach in the year 1720, contains—among other works for teaching purposes—an almost complete compilation of Inventions and Symphonies.

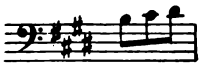
The arrangement is unusual in that the Symphonies appear before the Inventions; the sequence of the individual pieces is different from the one finally adopted by Bach in the Spohr manuscript. The countless number of corrections, the passages rewritten time and again to the point of illegibility—these definitely place the manuscript as a first draft, lacking many of the finer points of detail and maturity to be found in the two later manuscripts belonging to the Berlin Library. These latter agree on all essential points; yet the Griepenkerl autograph (we have referred to it as the second—in view of its relative value) has been prepared much more superficially; it also stands in closer relationship to the conception found in the "Klavierbüchlein" than to the one in the Spohr autograph. This is due not only to the final sequence of the compositions but also to the working out of certain details in the text.

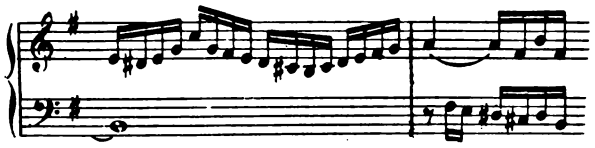
The careful revision evident in the Spohr manuscript (dating from 1723) definitely endows it with the greatest importance to an editor. In the infrequent instances where errors in script do occur, I have been compelled to reconstruct the readings of the Griepenkerl autograph and the "Klavierbüchlein."

The following collection of variants from the "Klavierbüchlein" is important only in the sense that it contributes to a clearer understanding of the tirelessly industrious character of the composer. These variants also demonstrate how rash it would be to interpret the deviations of text found in the Hoffmeister edition (these are indicated in our text) as mere arbitrary alterations on the part of the editor.

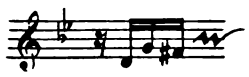
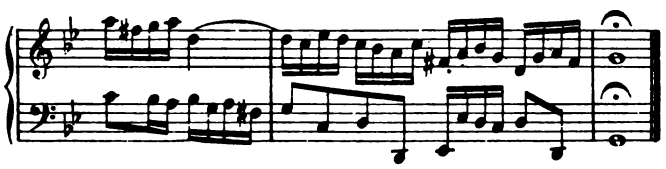
The "Klavierbüchlein" contains considerably fewer ornaments than are to be found in the later copies. However, this in itself should not cast any doubt as to the authenticity of the ornaments in the later manuscripts—unless there are other grounds for suspicion.

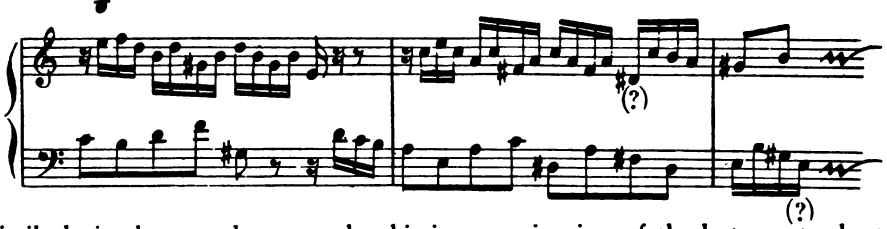
EXAMPLES OF VARIANTS FROM THE "KLAVIERBÜCHLEIN":

A) Inv. VI. The lower voice has been altered by superscription, and the figure  is discernible. Similarly in measures 7 and 23.

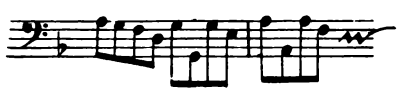
B) Inv. VII. The 3½ measures following are replaced by: 

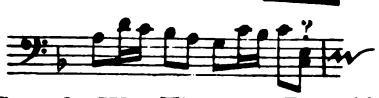
C) Inv. VIII. The 4 measures following are missing; the 5th measure commences with a **G** in the bass, the 6th with an **F**, the 7th with an **E**.

D) Inv. XI. There are many corrections. The original form of the motive appears to have been  In place of the final 2½ measures one finds: 

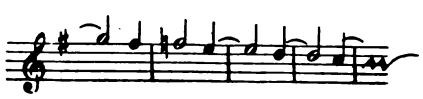
E) Inv. XIII. In place of the 6¼ measures following one finds: 

F) Inv. XV. There is an **A** natural instead of an **A** sharp—similarly in the second autograph; this is poor—in view of the last quarter beat.

G) Symph. VIII. 

H) Symph. VIII.
 The ending is unclear.

I) Symph. IX. There is a **B** double-flat instead of the **A** natural—similarly later; this is really the more correct version.

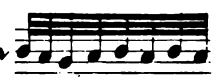
K) Symph. X. 

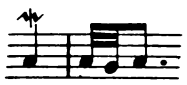
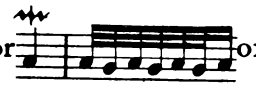
Dr. Hans Bischoff.

TABLE OF EMBELLISHMENTS

For the uninitiated performer the following indications will suffice—in reference to this volume.

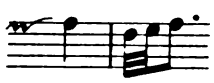
1) Grace notes, like all other embellishments, enter ON the beat—not before it. Unless indicated otherwise, they should be executed quickly.

2) The trill (tr or) generally begins on the auxiliary note. There is usually an after-beat, unless this is replaced by one or more indicated notes. The after-beat is unnecessary before a descending second. The symbol for the trill with an up-beat is or . The trill starting on the lower note and the one starting on the upper note  usually both end with an after-beat. The following symbols may also be used to indicate the same: and . The short trill is usually tied to the upper second preceding. Its symbol frequently takes the place of and tr.

3) The mordent  or  often takes the tone a minor second lower as the auxiliary note, although the neighboring note is sometimes a major second lower. (Compare Türk, Ch. IV p. 61.)

4) The turn placed over a note is executed , placed between two notes it is played

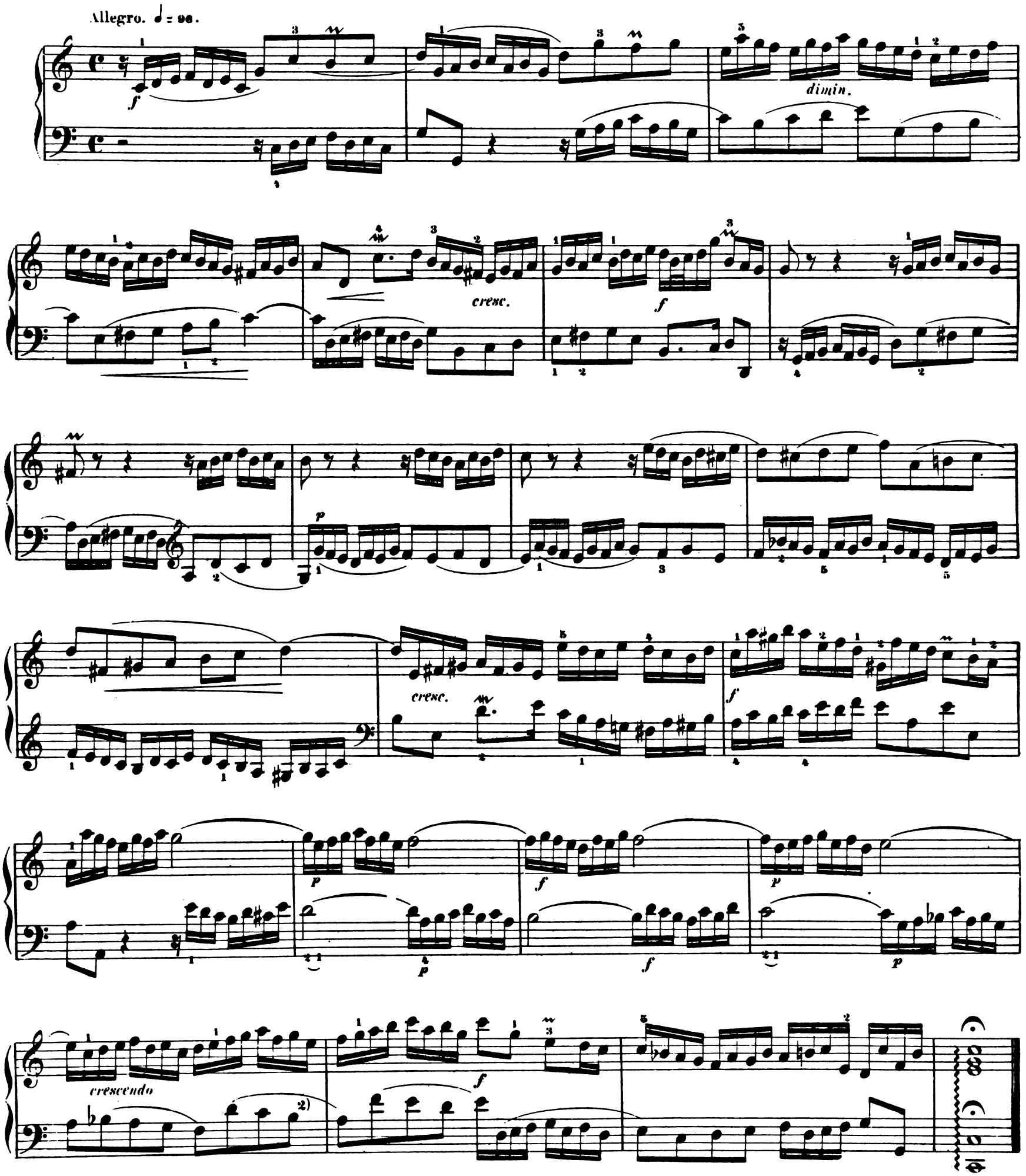
In dotted rhythm, the turn proper ends on the dot .

5) The slurred note is played 

6) Other embellishments are explained in the annotations.

DR. HANS BISCHOFF.

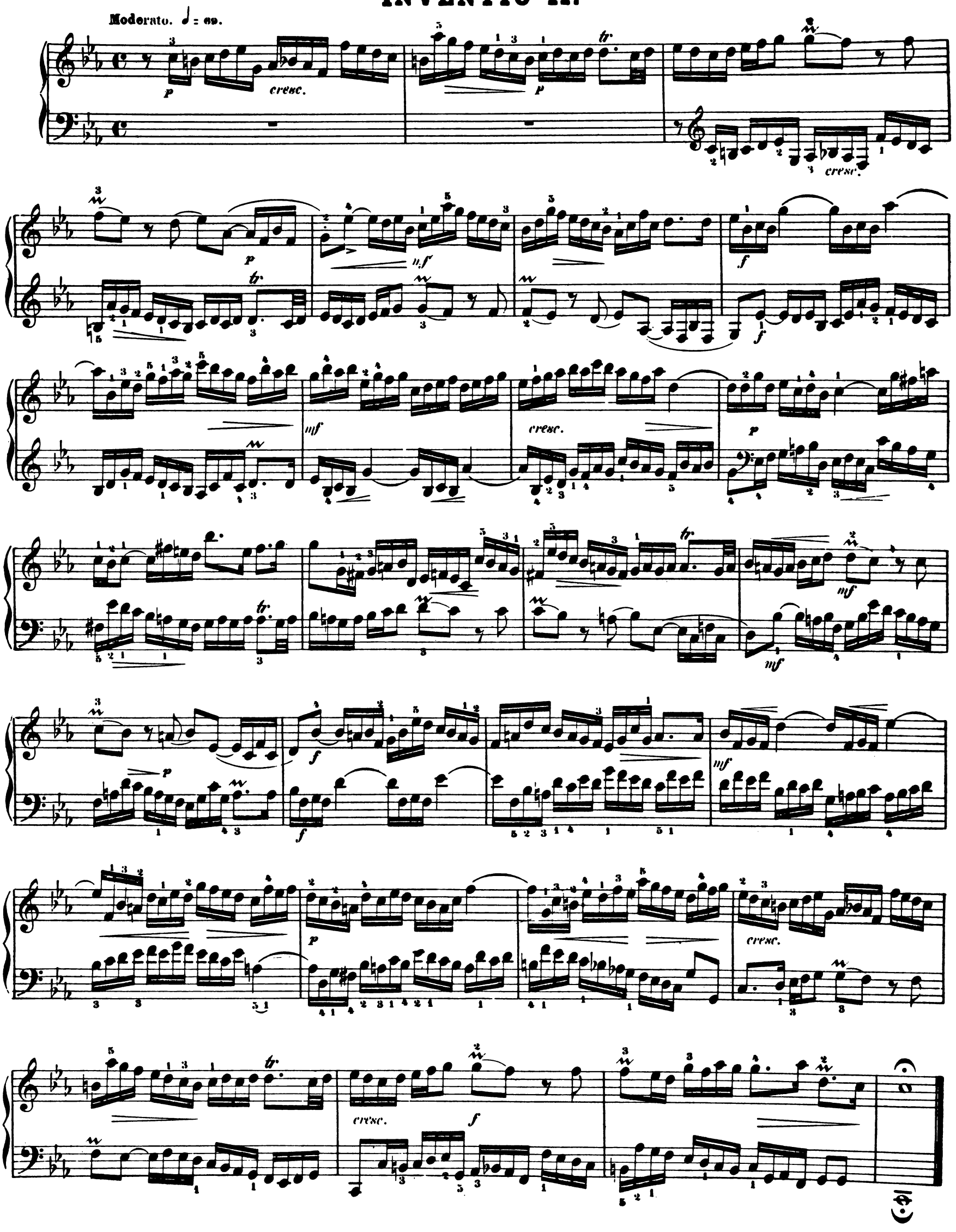
INVENTIO I.[1]



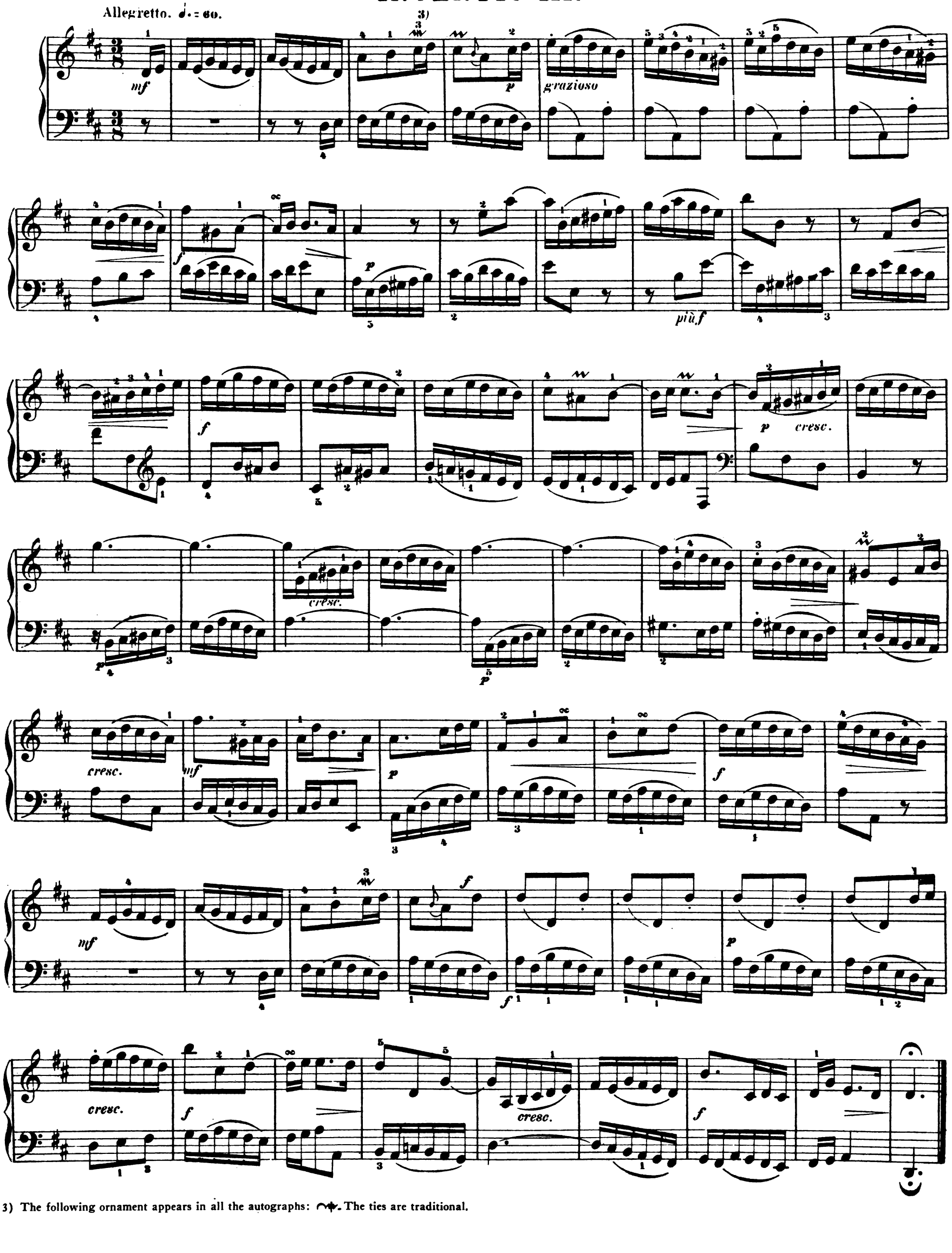
1) The Bach-Gesellschaft edition, in the appendix to its third series, contains a variant of this piece which extends the 16th note figures into 16th note triplets. The first (i.e., Spohr) autograph apparently contains the same form; yet the added notes were evidently superscribed later.

2) This note appears as a *B* natural in the second autograph and in the "Klavierbüchlein."

INVENTIO II.



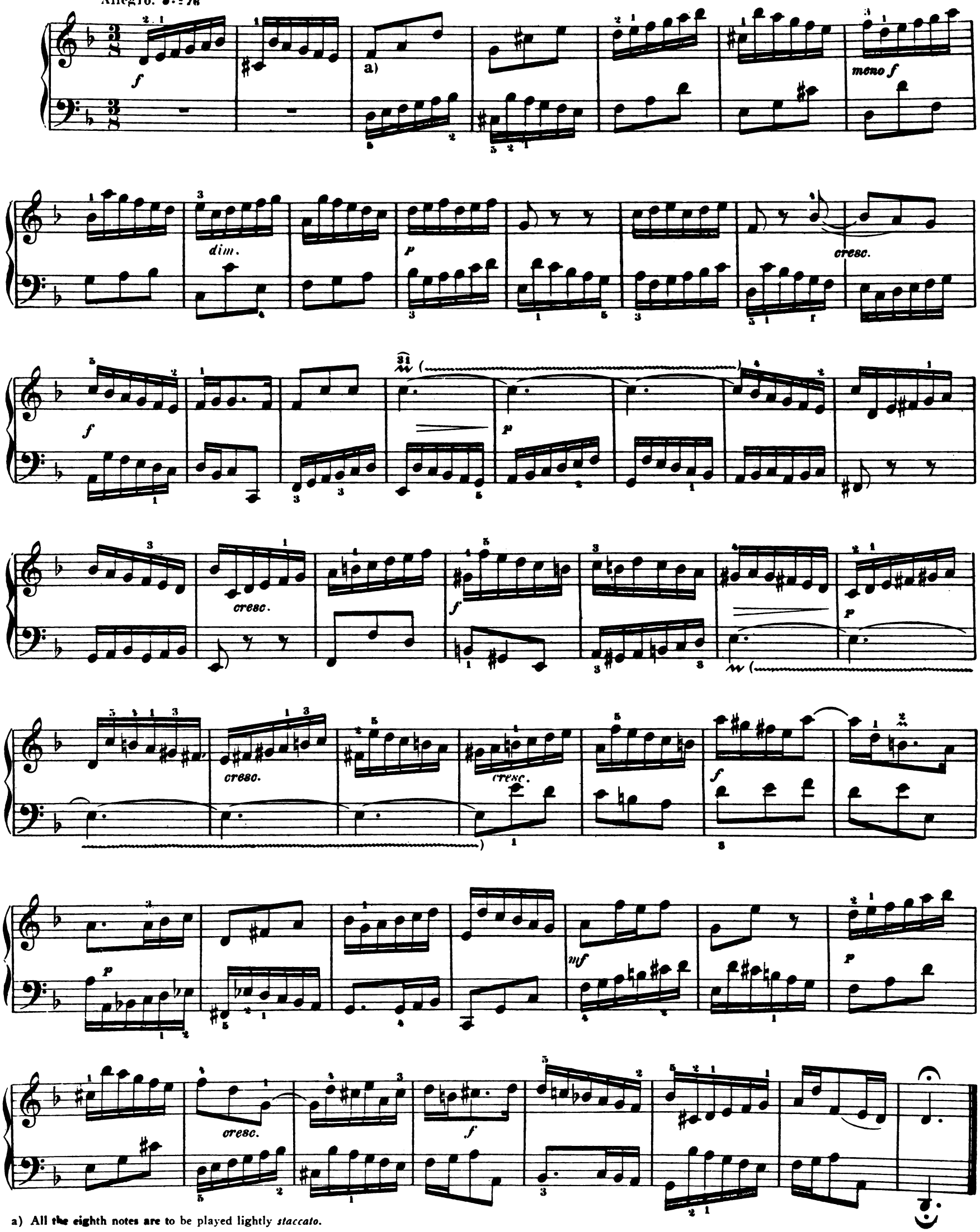
INVENTIO III.



3) The following ornament appears in all the autographs: ~. The ties are traditional.

INVENTIO IV.

Allegro. ♩. = 76



a) All the eighth notes are to be played lightly *staccato*.

INVENTIO V.

Allegretto espressivo. ♩ = 72.

p dolce

mf

più f

mf

p

più f

f

p

più f

f

mf

più p

p

4) All the ornaments, excepting the final trill, are missing in the second autograph. Moreover, the ornaments seem to have been subsequently inscribed in the first autograph; the "Klavierbüchlein," as well as the manuscripts of Forkel and Gerber, contain only the final trill. At ✥ there appear natural signs in the first half of the measure.

mf

p

mf

f

p

INVENTIO VI.

Allegretto. ♪=138.

p

A)

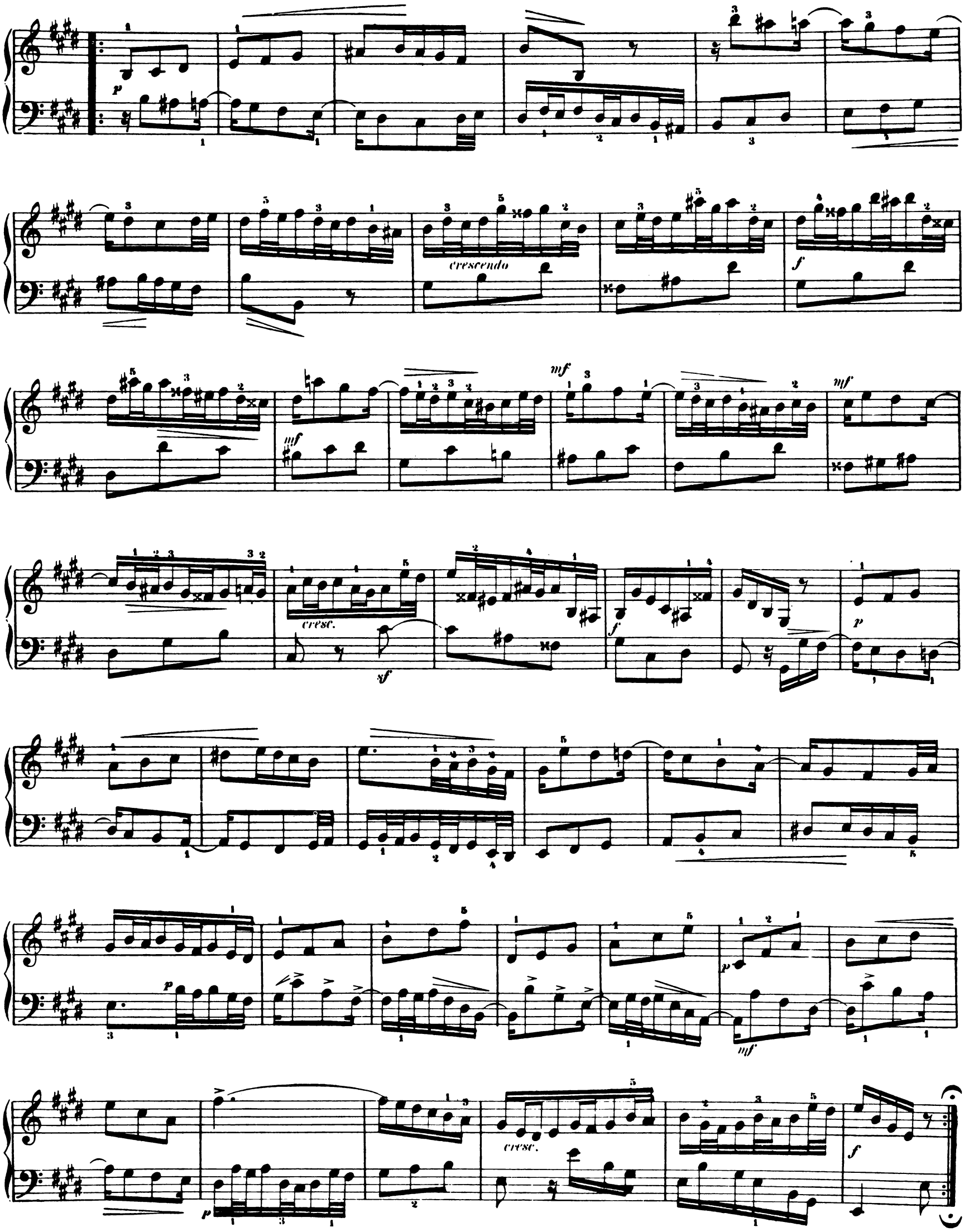
mf

mf

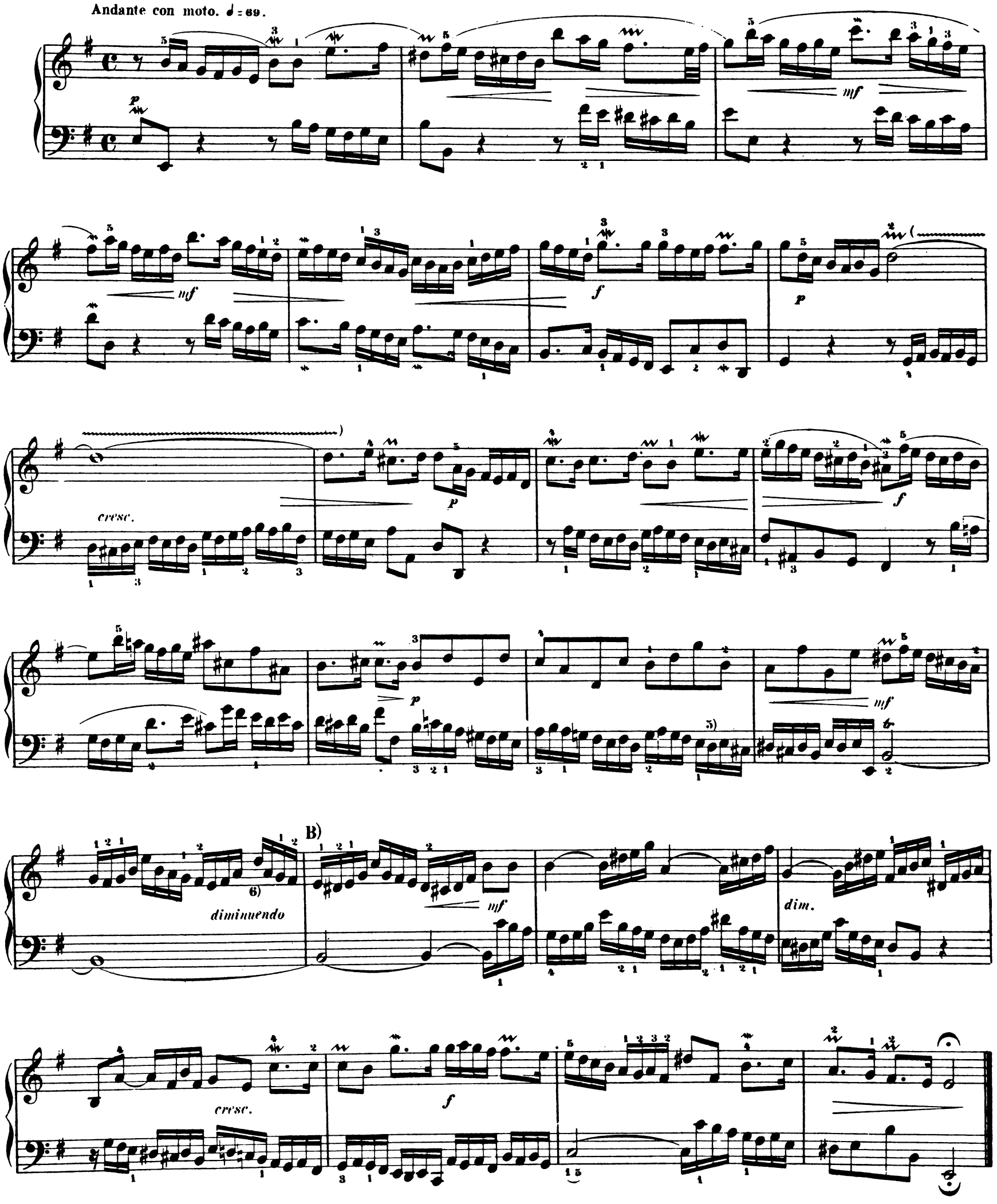
f

cresc.

f


p
crescendo
f
mf
mf
mf
cresc.
sf
f
p
p
mf
p
cresc.
f

INVENTIO VII.



5) This is a *D* sharp in the second autograph.
6) The Bach-Gesellschaft edition has an erroneous *D* sharp in place of the *D*. The *D* appears in all the manuscripts.

INVENTIO VIII.

Vivace. ♩ = 120.

f

diminuendo

p

crescendo

f

p

C)

f

f

più f

f

sf *dimin.*

sf

p

crescendo

f

INVENTIO IX.

Andantino con espressione. ♩ = 60.

p *piangendo*

mp molto espressivo

mf

cresc. *f*

f

cresc.

p

più p

cresc.

cresc. *f*

7) *D* flat and *A* flat, respectively, according to both of the Berlin autographs and Gerber. The natural signs in the Spohr autograph were doubtless subsequent additions. In the "Klavierbüchlein" the notes are *D* natural and *A* flat.

8) From this point on, both manuscripts contain many obvious errors in script—in view of the omission of accidentals. They were added later in the Spohr autograph; some of the ornaments appearing in this manuscript were also subsequent additions. The "Klavierbüchlein" contains only one single ornament.

INVENTIO X.

Allegro piacevole. ♩.=100.

mf *sf* *sf* *dimin.*

p *cresc.*

cresc. *f*

mf *p*

crescendo *f* *p*

crescendo *f*

INVENTIO XI.

Moderato. ♩ = 80.

D)

mf

9)

10)

sf *p*

cresc.

mf

p

crescendo *f*

p

cresc.

f

f

più forte

f

p

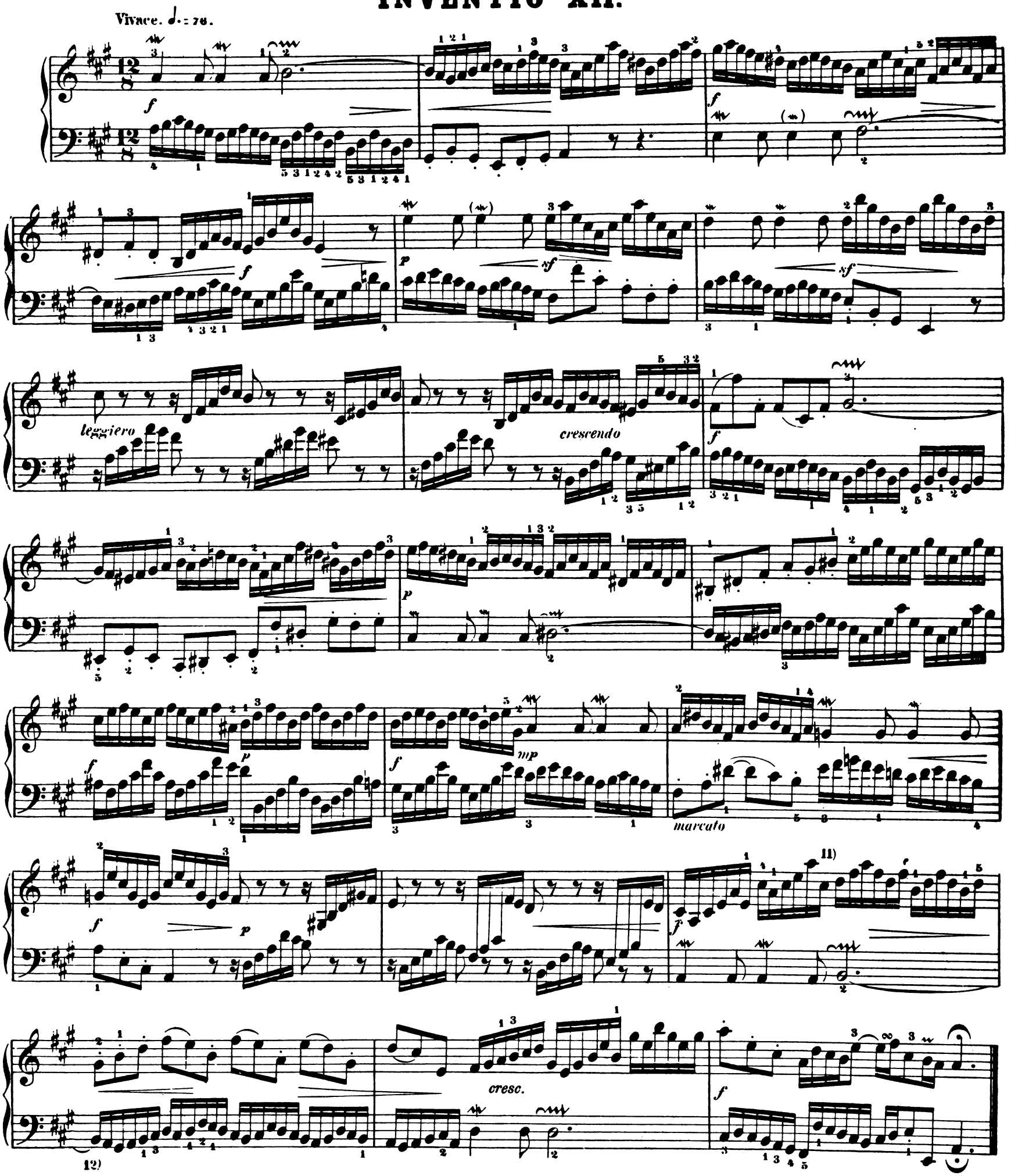
dim.

mf *f*

9) This composition contains only a single ornament in the 2nd autograph, the "Klavierbüchlein," and in Gerber.

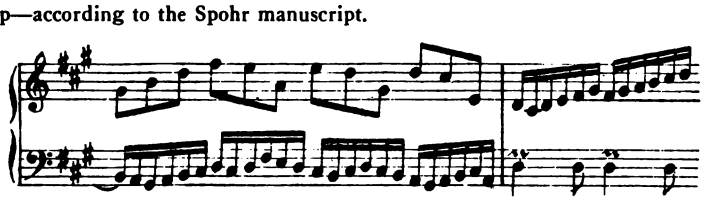
10) The first autograph has a *D* instead of the *B* flat.

INVENTIO XII.



11) *F* sharp instead of *C* sharp—according to the Spohr manuscript.

12) According to Hoffmeister:



INVENTIO XIII.

Allegro. ♩= 116.

p *mf*

diminuendo *p*

f

diminuendo

13) E)

sf *dim.* *p*

cresc. *f*

p *cresc.* *f*

13) **In all the autographs this appears as an *A* natural, not as an *A* flat.**

INVENTIO XIV.

Andante con moto. ♩ = 69.

lusingando

p *cresc.* *f*

dimin. *p*

cresc. *mf* *p* 14)

mf *p*

più f *f*

f *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *p*

mf

14) The first autograph has an *A* instead of the *D*.

INVENTIO XV.

Allegro commodo. ♩ = 96.

p

mf

leggiermente staccato

p

f

dimin.

legato

p *mf*

p

cresc.

F)

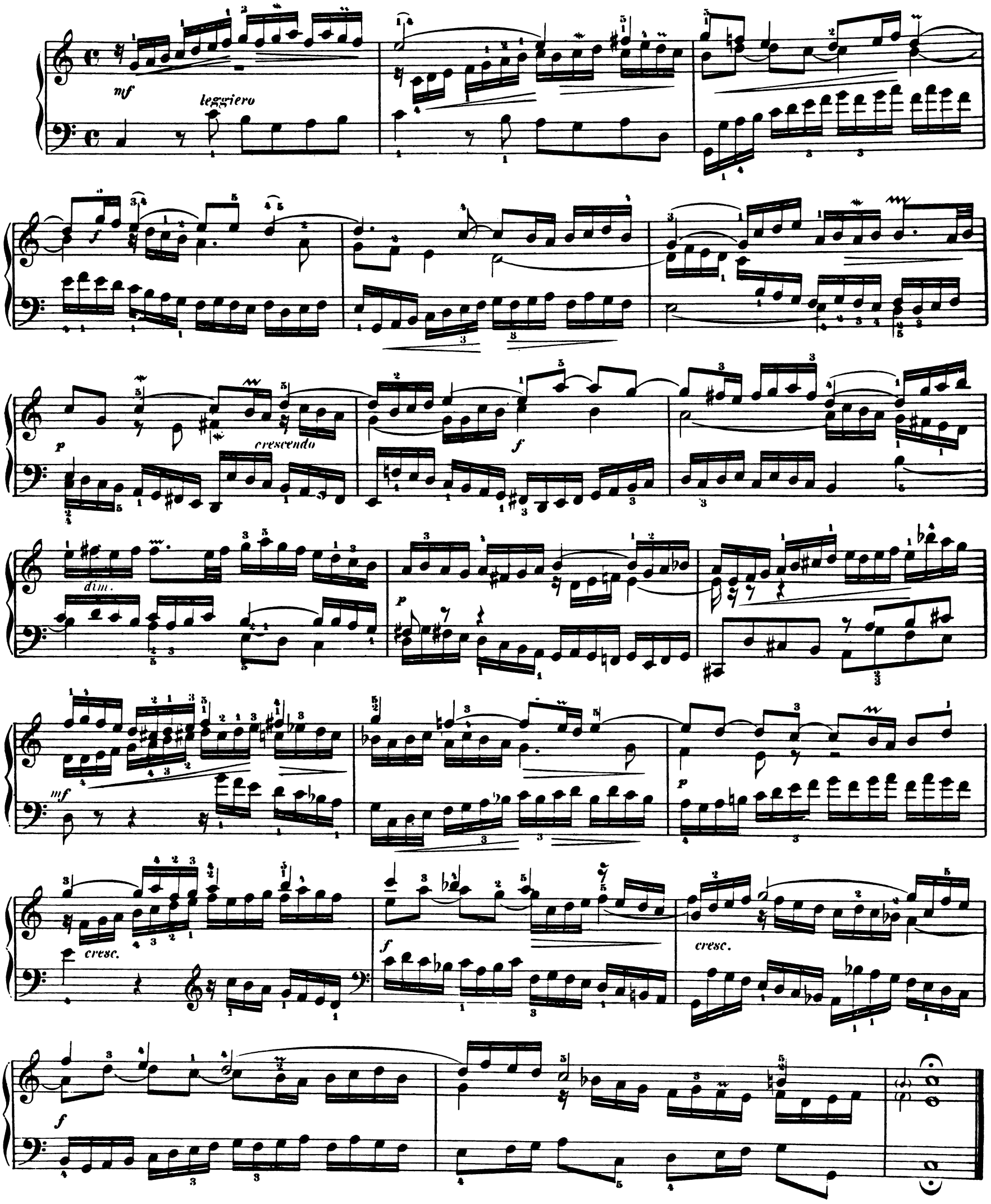
f

mf

f

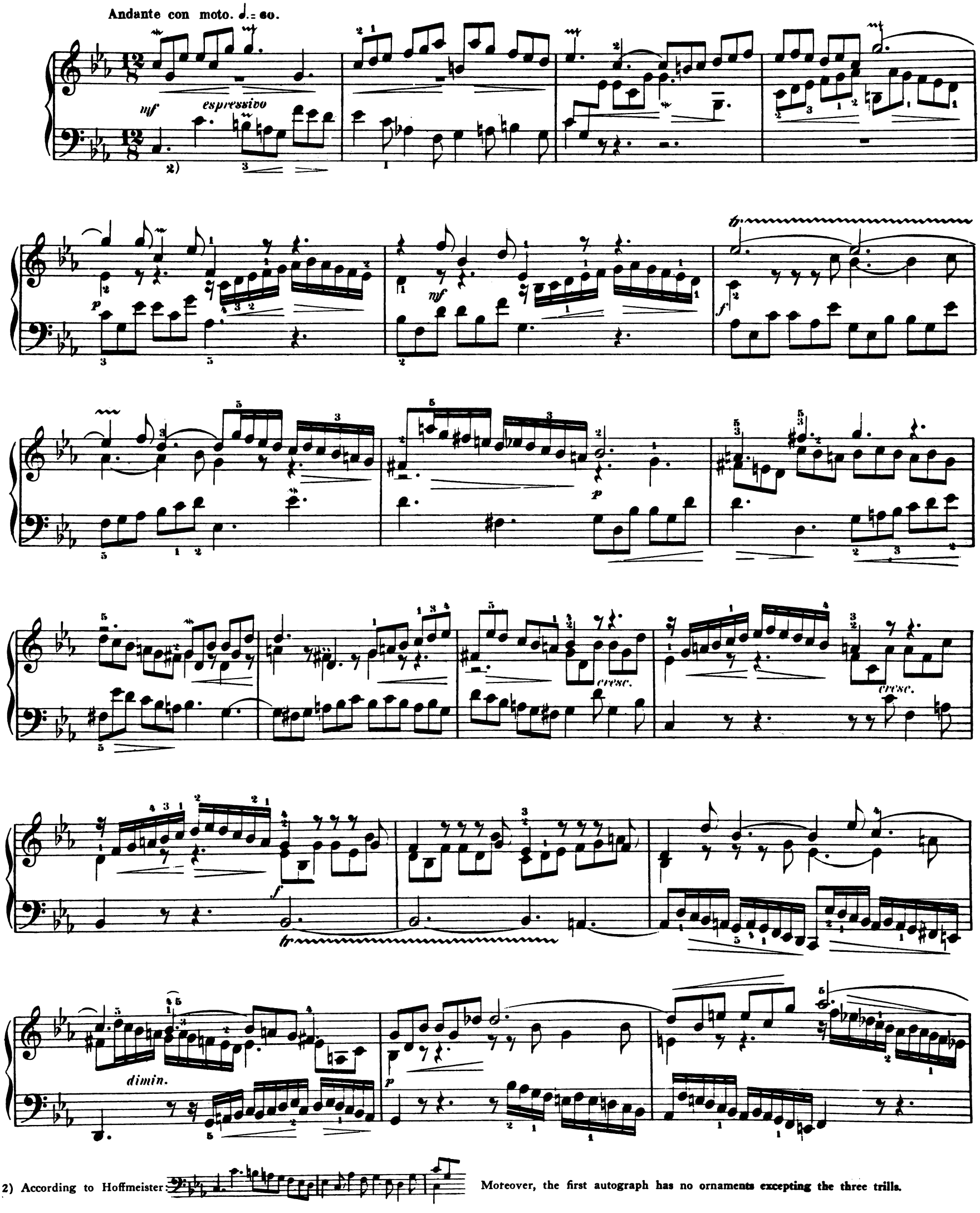
SINFONIA I.[1]

Allegro moderato. ♩ = 96.



1) The ornaments in small type are derived mainly from the second autograph. The "Klavierbüchlein" contains but few of the ornaments appearing in large type; moreover, it has additional ornaments only in very rare instances. The Symphonies (Nos. 1-15) are also known as "Three Part Inventions."

SINFONIA II.



2) According to Hoffmeister: Moreover, the first autograph has no ornaments excepting the three trills.

mf

p

poco più f

crescendo

f

SINFONIA III.[3]

Allegretto grazioso. ♩ = 76.

dolce

mf

3) The ornaments are missing in the first autograph and in the "Klavierbüchlein."

p

più f

f

più p

dimin.

p

f

mf

p

SINFONIA IV.[4]

Andante mesto. ♩ = 56.

p espressivo *crescendo*

mp *mf*

p *cresc.* *f*

diminuendo

cresc. *nf*

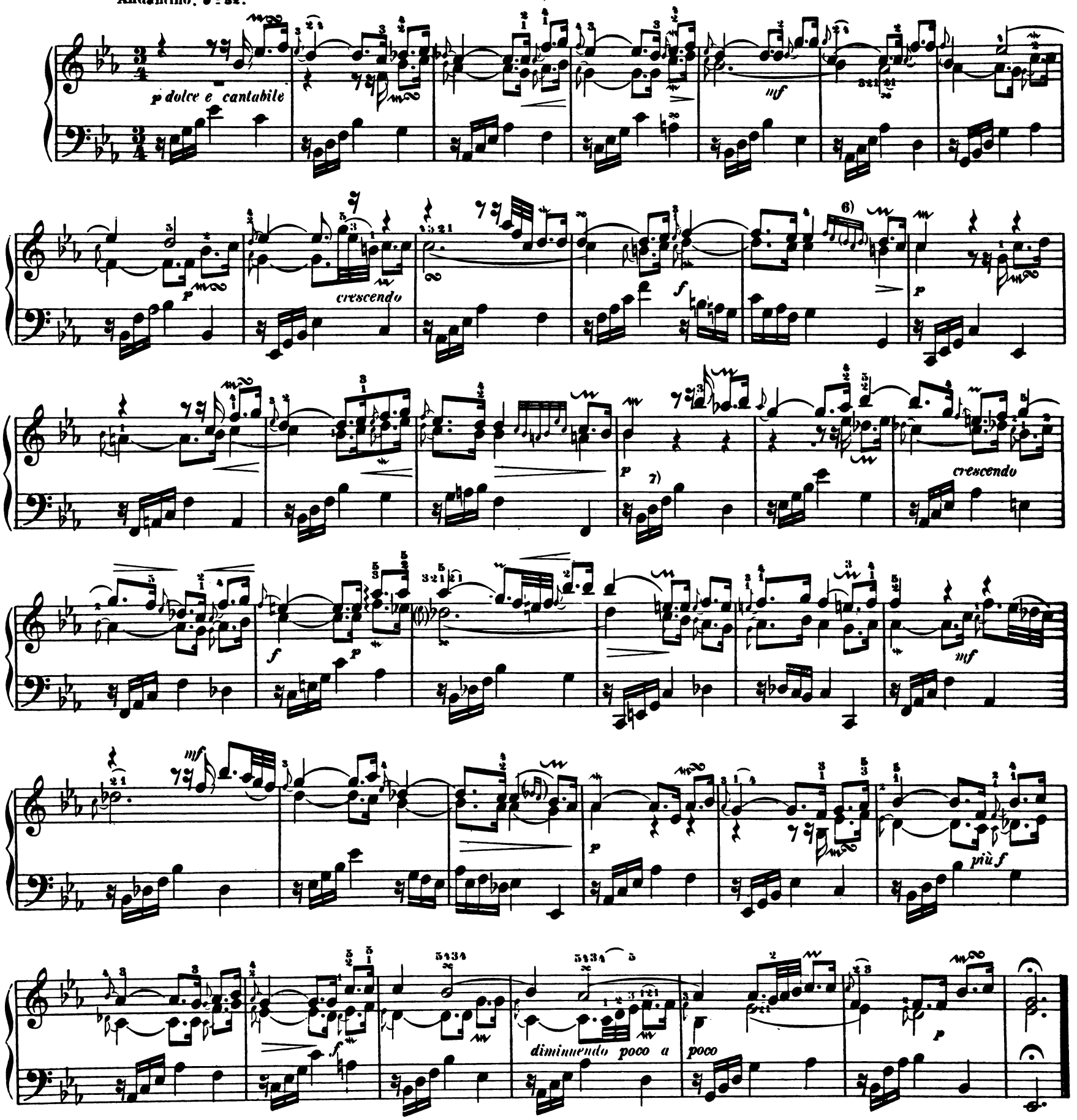
p

crescendo *f* *diminuendo* *ril.* *p*

4) All the ornaments in small type are derived from the second autograph.

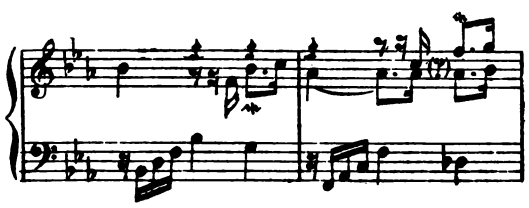
SINFONIA V.[5]

Andantino. ♩ = 52.



5) It is neither possible nor worthwhile to list all the deviations in both manuscripts in the appearance of the ornaments in this composition. The three 32nd note groups should be played not as triplets, but so as to give the preceding dot the value of a 32nd note. e.g. to be played ; compare Rust's prefaces to the 22nd and 23rd Series of the Bach-Gesellschaft. Moreover, the first note of the group appears in the text originally as a sixteenth; the two notes following were added subsequently. The grace-notes may, in keeping with the tempo, be played as sixteenth notes. The "Klavierbüchlein" contains no ornaments at all; of the three 32nd note groups, only the first note appears—as a sixteenth note.

6) The notes in parentheses are missing in one of the autographs.

7) In place of the next four measures Hoffmeister has the following variant:  The same version appears in the "Klavierbüchlein." At the ? there is a *G* instead of an *A* flat.

SINFONIA VI.

Allegro. ♩. = 104.

p *leggiero*

mf

f

diminuendo

p

cresc. *poco a poco*

f

diminuendo

p *più forte*

sf

mf

f

8) The 3rd finger is meant for larger hands.

SINFONIA VII.[9]

Andante molto espressivo. ♩ = 56.

p

10)

più f

mf

più f

f

mf

crescendo

f

mf

più p

p

crescendo

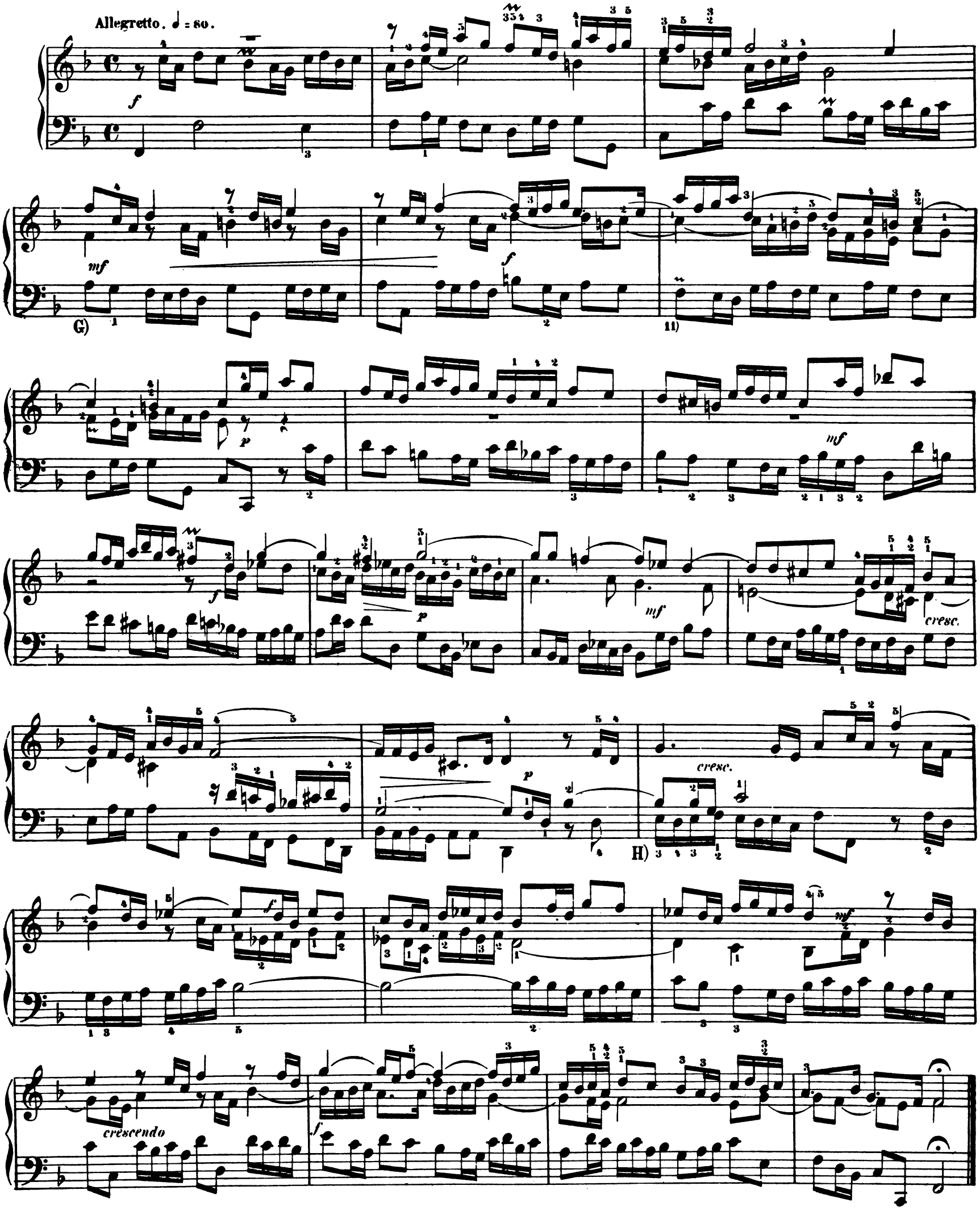
f

9) The ornaments appear only in the second autograph.

10)

SINFONIA VIII.

Allegretto. ♩ = 80.



11) The editor deems it advisable to retain the inverted mordent in the theme throughout the composition, although it appears in the autographs only at the beginning. The Gerber copy repeats the mordent several times, but the ornaments in other places deviate from the versions in the autographs.

Largo. ♩ = 50.

p sempre espressivo *mf* *p m.s.* *cresc.* *f*

tranquillo *p* I) 13) *cresc. poco*

a poco *f* *p* *mf*

mf *p* *espressivo*

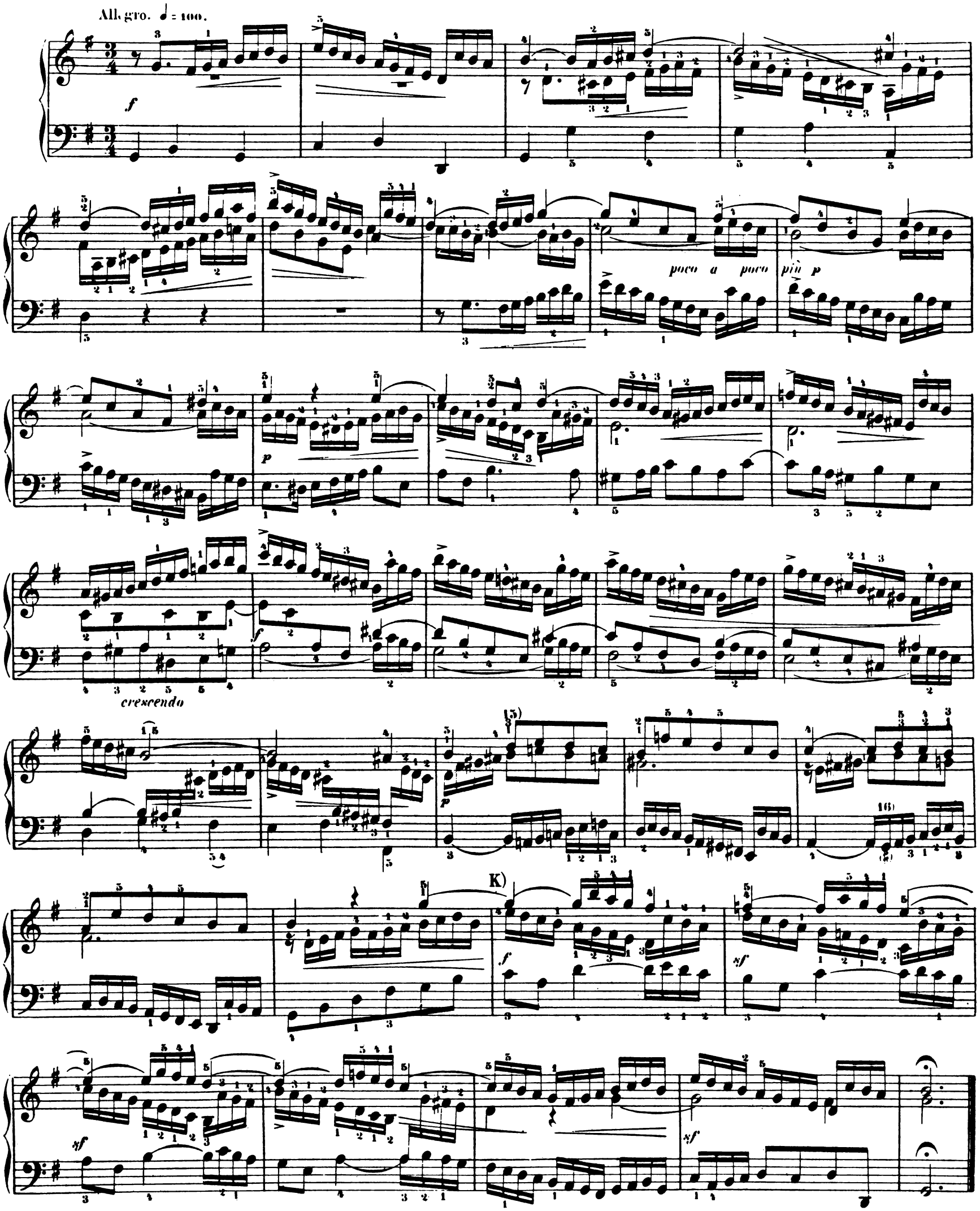
14) *più forte* *p* *cresc. poco* *a poco* *f* *mf* *p*

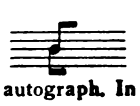
12) In view of the fact that the numerous ornaments appearing in the second autograph have already been published by Dr. Rust (Appendix to the 3rd series of the Bach-Gesellschaft edition), I shall disregard them—since they are of no value to the performer.

13) The Bach-Gesellschaft edition has a *G* flat. This contradicts not only the three autographs and the Gerber copy, but is also at variance with the appearance of the theme in the 11th measure. The copy of the Amalien Library also contains our text. The *G* flat is evidently an arbitrary version of the editor.

14) The Bach-Gesellschaft edition has a *C* flat instead of *C*. Compare the previous note.

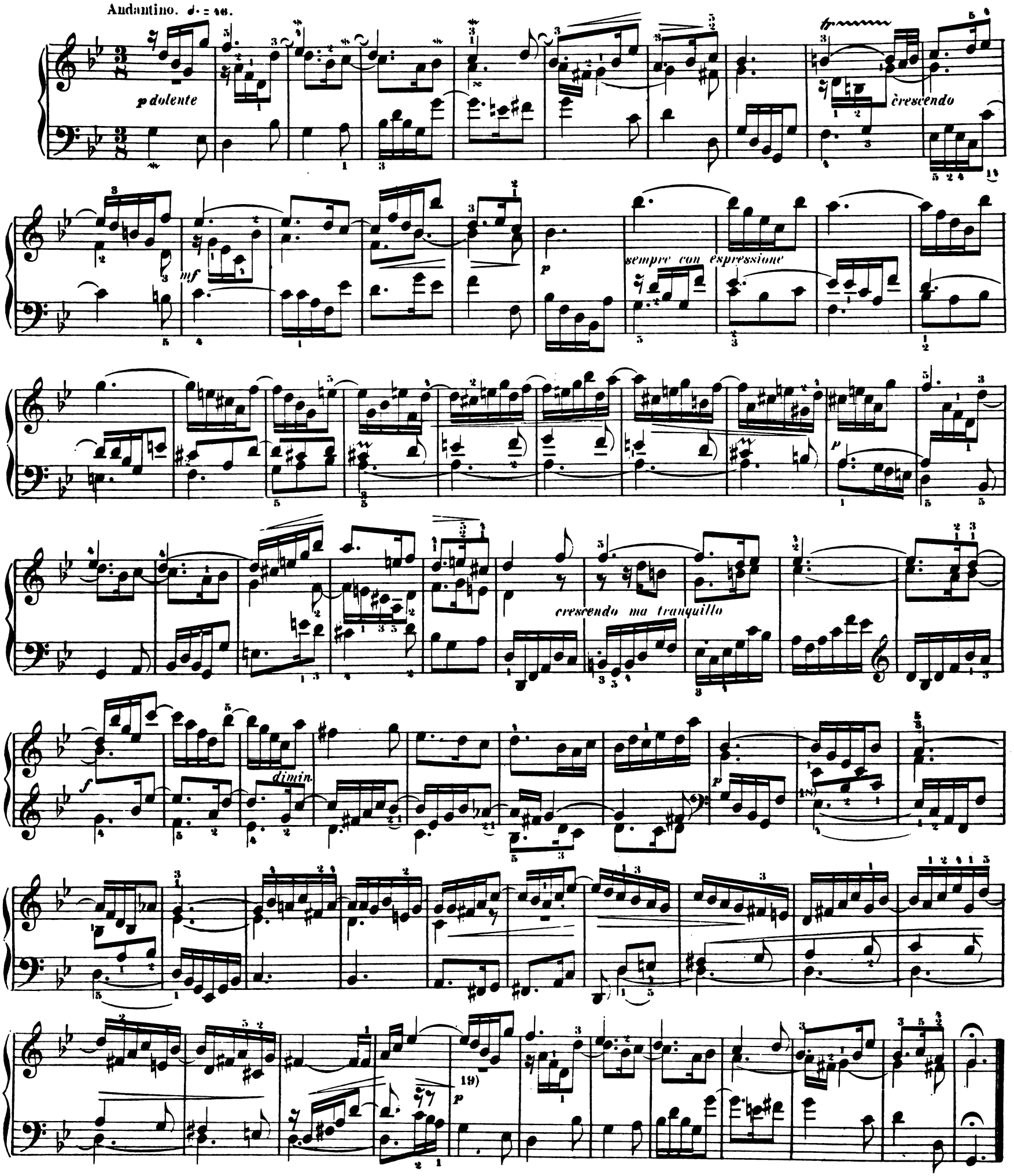
SINFONIA X.



15) According to the second Berlin autograph: 

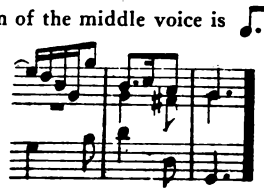
16) *G* sharp instead of *G* in the second Berlin autograph. In the "Klavierbüchlein" there is also a *G* sharp, with a slightly different figuration.

SINFONIA XI.[17)]



17) The ornaments appearing in the first few measures give an adequate idea to the reader of their overabundance in the second autograph.

18) According to the second Berlin autograph, the rhythm of the middle voice is

19) The ending is abbreviated in Hoffmeister as follows: 

SINFONIA XII.[20)]

Allegro. ♩ = 104.

p leggiermente accentuato

mf

dim.

f

p

crescendo

f

p

21)

20) The ornaments are taken from the second autograph. If one wishes to play the double turn at ⌘ (p. 35), one can take the *D* with the left hand.

21) The reading *B* sharp and *D* sharp in place of *B* natural and *D* natural contradict all the autographs.

crescendo

f

p

crescendo

f

diminuendo

p

più f

p

SINFONIA XIII.[22)]

Andante pensieroso. ♪ = 108.

p cantando

cresc.

mf

p

mf

p un poco leggiero

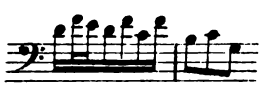
23)

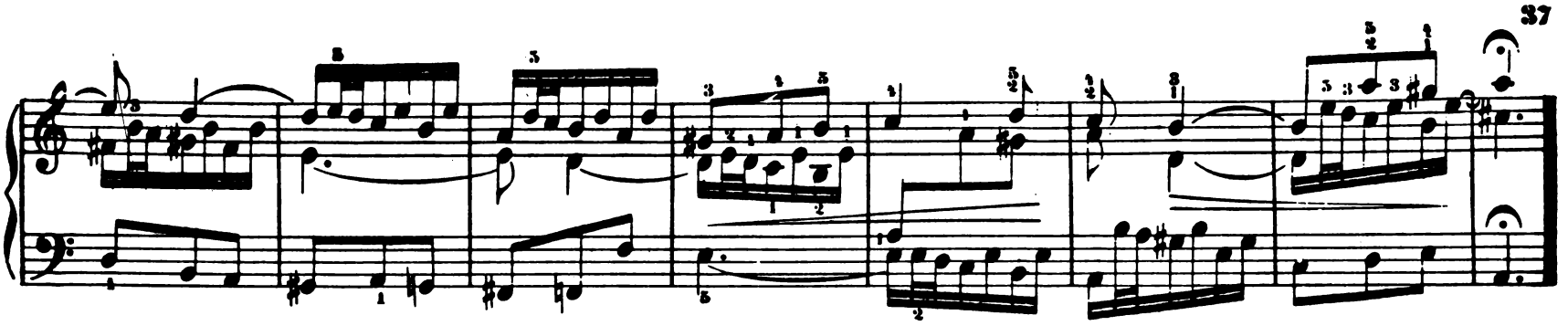
mf

f

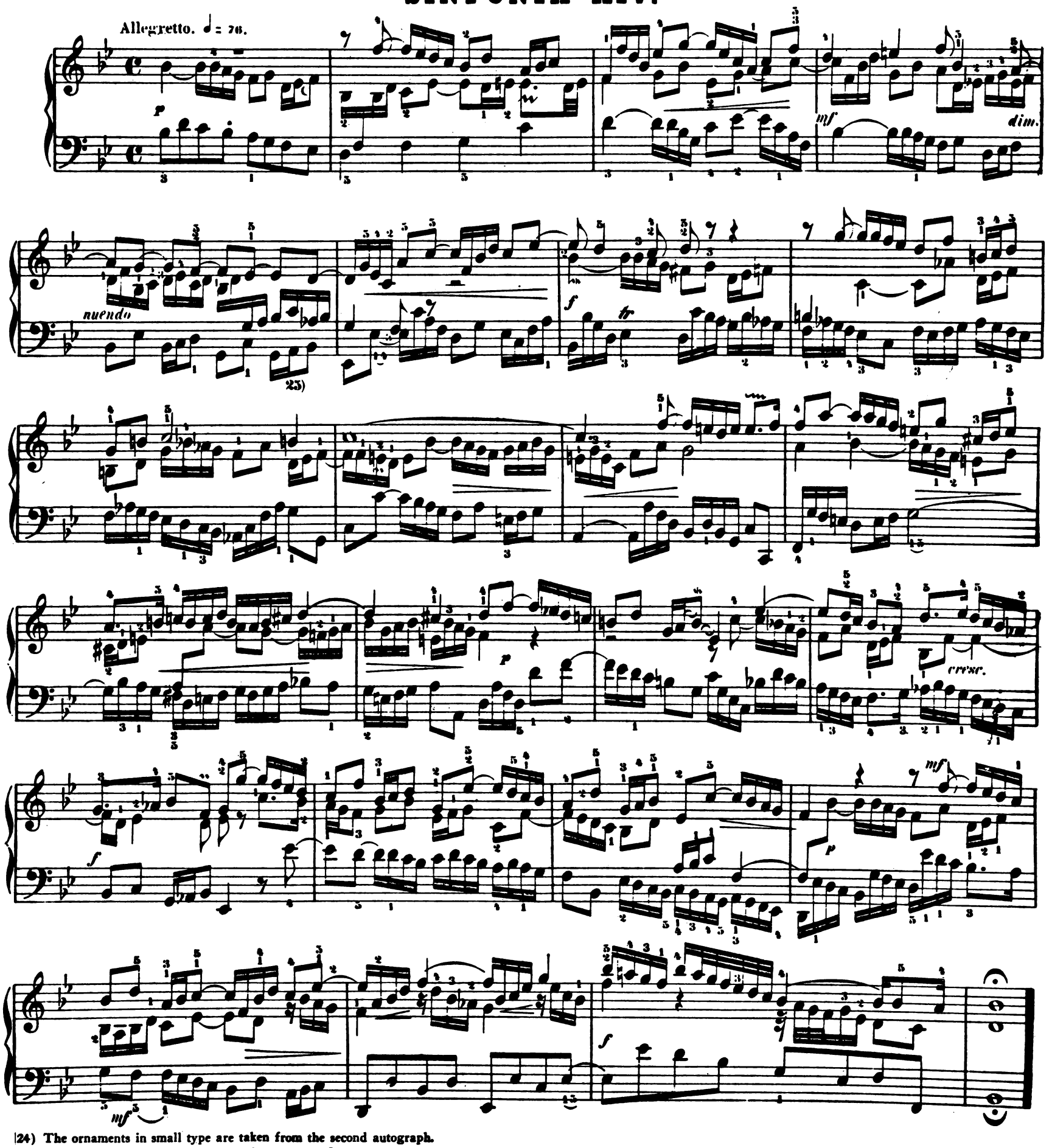
p

22) The ornaments in small type are taken from the second autograph.

23) The second autograph has: 



SINFONIA XIV.[24]



24) The ornaments in small type are taken from the second autograph.
25) In the autographs, this note is an *A*—not an *A* flat.

SINFONIA XV.

Allegro vivace. ♪. = 100

f

sfp leggierissimo

f

sfp

mf

p

mf

p

f

crescendo

sf p

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

f *p* *mf* *f*

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