A Choice Collection of

AYRES and DANCES

selected and edited by

Frederick Moore

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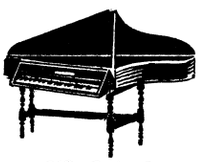

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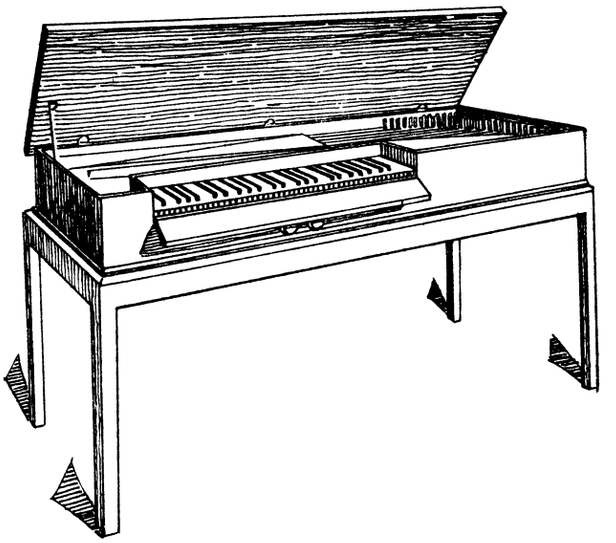

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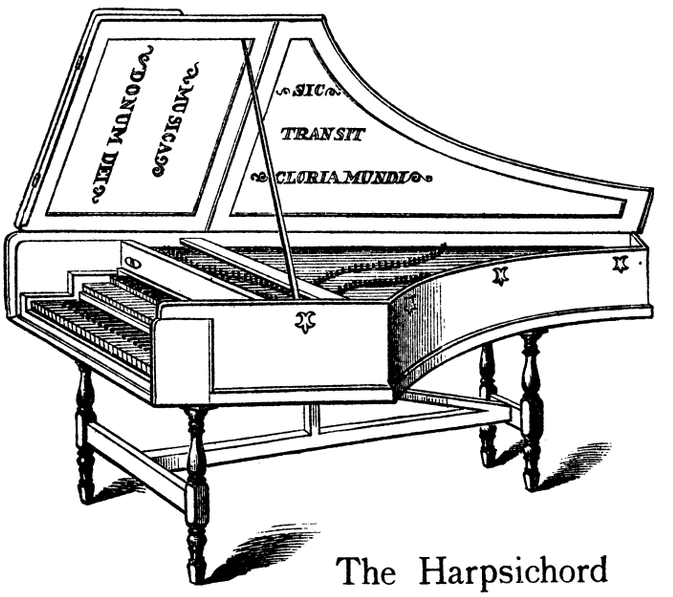

The Harpsichord

Preface.

Quite apart from the sheer beauty of the following pieces, this kind of music is invaluable for the cultivation of clean, definite, mentally controlled finger-work, while at the same time encouraging an alertness of ear for those minute details of fine phrasing, without which the effect is simply a monotonous succession of sounds.

Perhaps there is nothing which plays a more important part in the art of interpretation than the correct timing of a note's duration (sound length), as distinct from its printed value.

It should be remembered that while a long slur may show the phrase length (it fails to do even this in many of the old classic editions), the variations of sound length are exceedingly plastic, and capable of a hundred different interpretations. Nothing is more disastrous than a dull unbroken legato, which indeed only became possible when Bach, adopting the principle of equal temperament, brought the thumb into systematic use.

Minute cessations of sound are by no means inconsistent with a beautiful legato, providing these breaks are made at appropriate places, and the finger remaining in contact with its key, avoids all false accents or bumps in the tone.

A trained musical ear will suggest the use of the damper pedal at suitable points in even the earliest compositions, but it will be very different pedalling (much more subtle) to that required for music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Perhaps the best advice is.... when in doubt, leave it out.

There is such an enormous quantity of inspired music by the Early Masters to draw from, almost all of it suitable for small hands, that much of the so-called "teaching material" may be avoided, and from his earliest days the student can perform music which will prove a joy and an incentive through life, even to old age.

London 1931. *Frederick Moore.*

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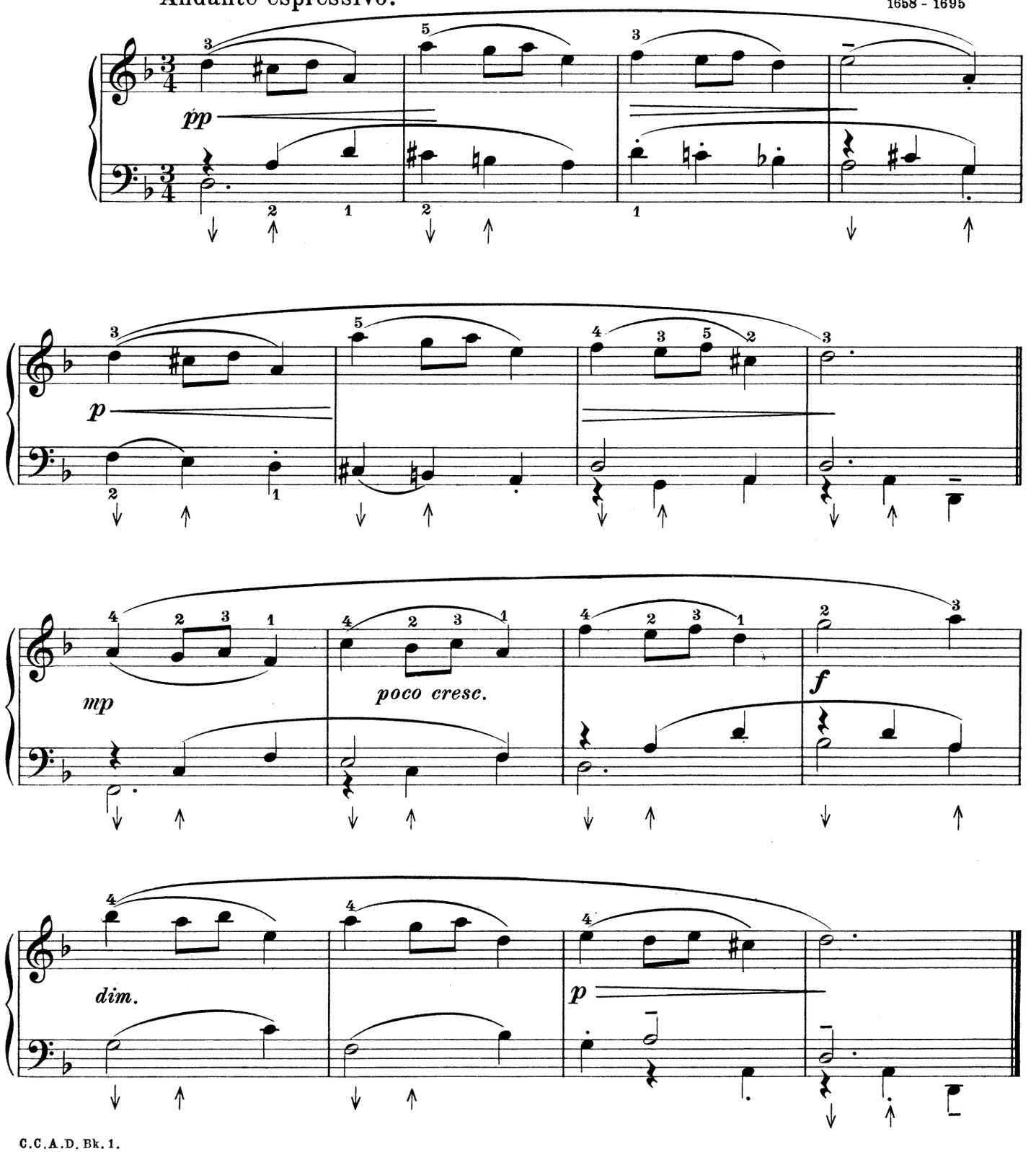
Ayre in D minor.

A real inspiration. Play it simply and without affectation. Think of the first and third beats as forming a direct slur, so:- and the two quavers forming the second beat as an ornamentation of this slur. Tone rich in quality even where *pp*. Mostly a finger touch (finger movement) with varying arm-weight behind it. More advanced players will appreciate a subtle time inflexion (rubato), but care must be taken to balance up accounts at the 8th and 16th bars.

HENRY PURCELL.
1658 - 1695

Andante espressivo.

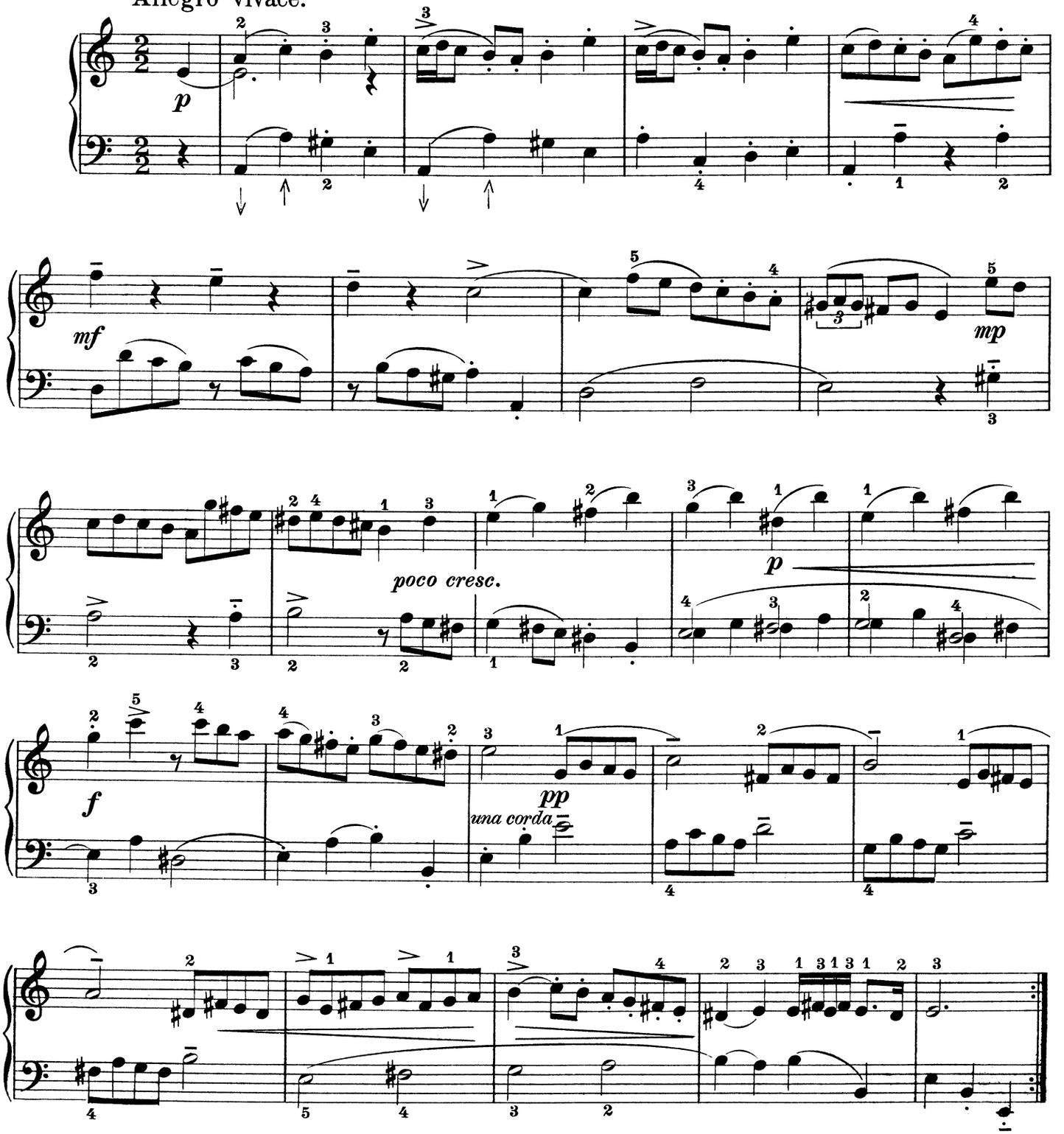


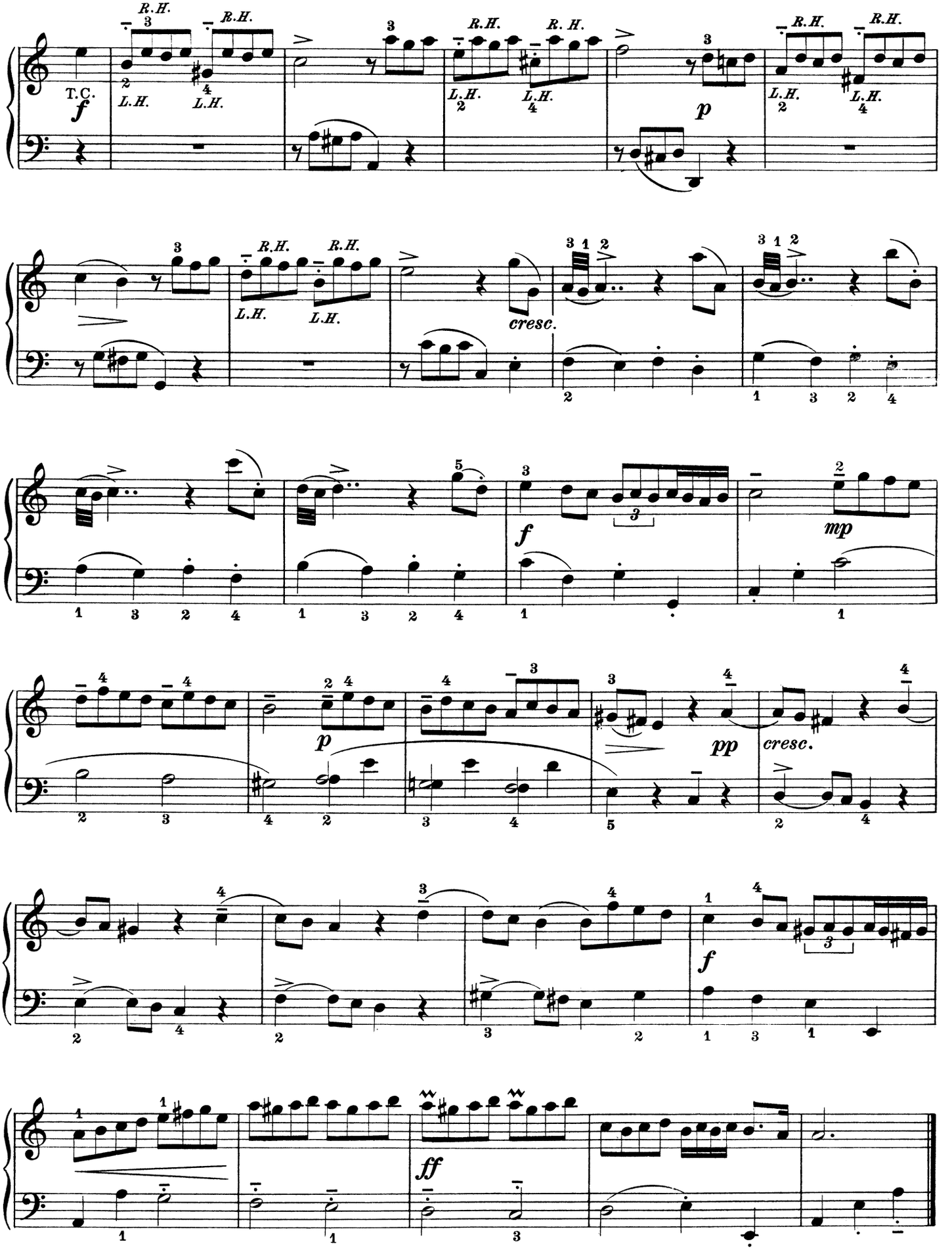
Boree.

A sprightly dance, full of vitality. Make the staccato rather light but avoid the effect of Pizzicato. Give more tone to the longer and less to the shorter notes. It is extremely helpful to remember that an accent is a note with a softer one on *each* side of it.

RICHARD JONES.
1680-1740

Allegro vivace.

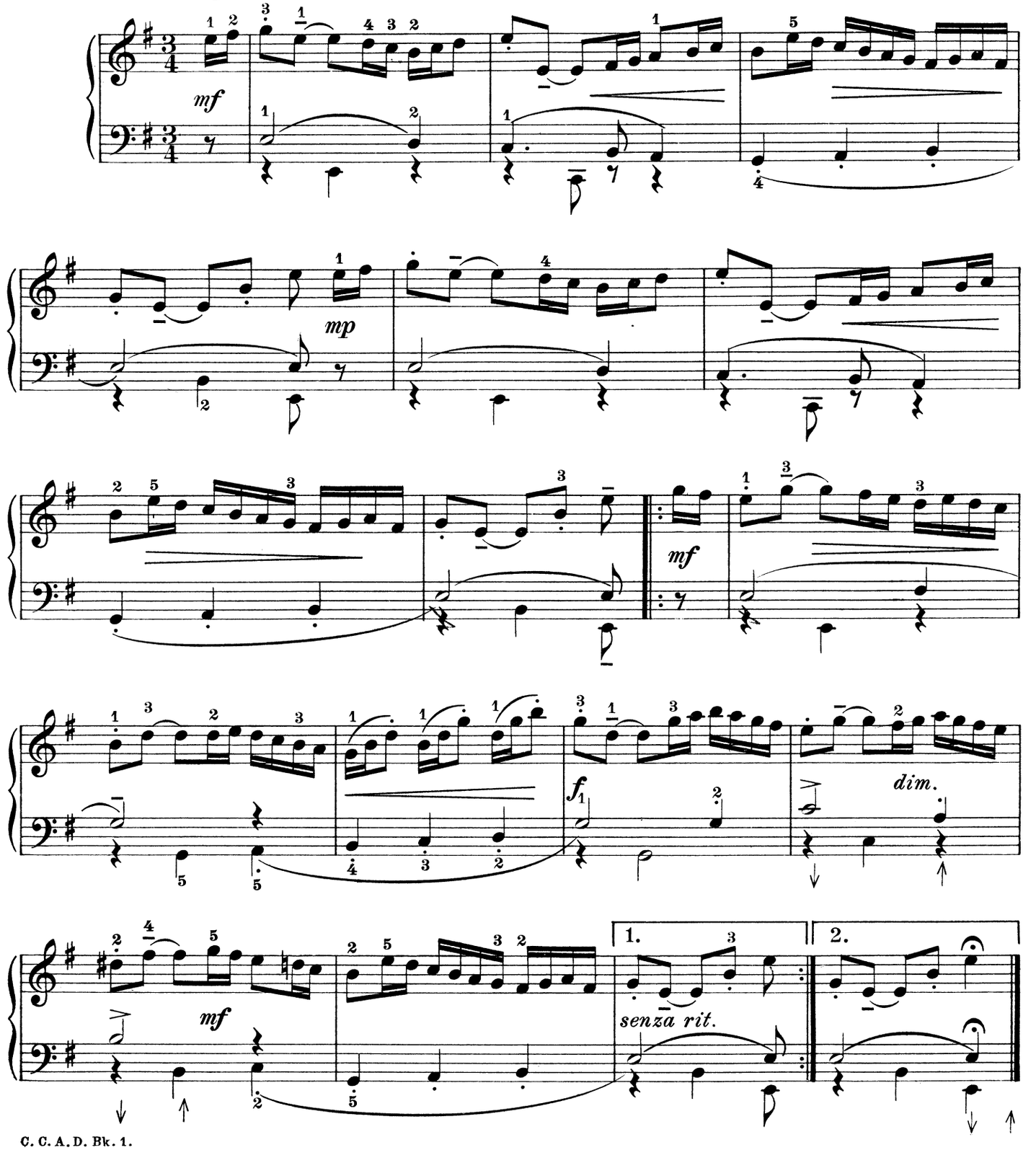



T.C.
f
R.H.
L.H.
p
cresc.
mp
pp
ff

Hornpipe in E minor.

One of the brightest and happiest little concert pieces, requiring much skill in placing and finishing of each note. Those who heard Rae Robertson play it at one of his London recitals will recall the grace and charm with which it floated over the hall. Note particularly the duration effects. Let the finger keep in close contact with the key even in Staccato,— remember a Forte in Purcell is not the same as it would be in Beethoven or even in Mozart.

Allegro. HENRY PURCELL.



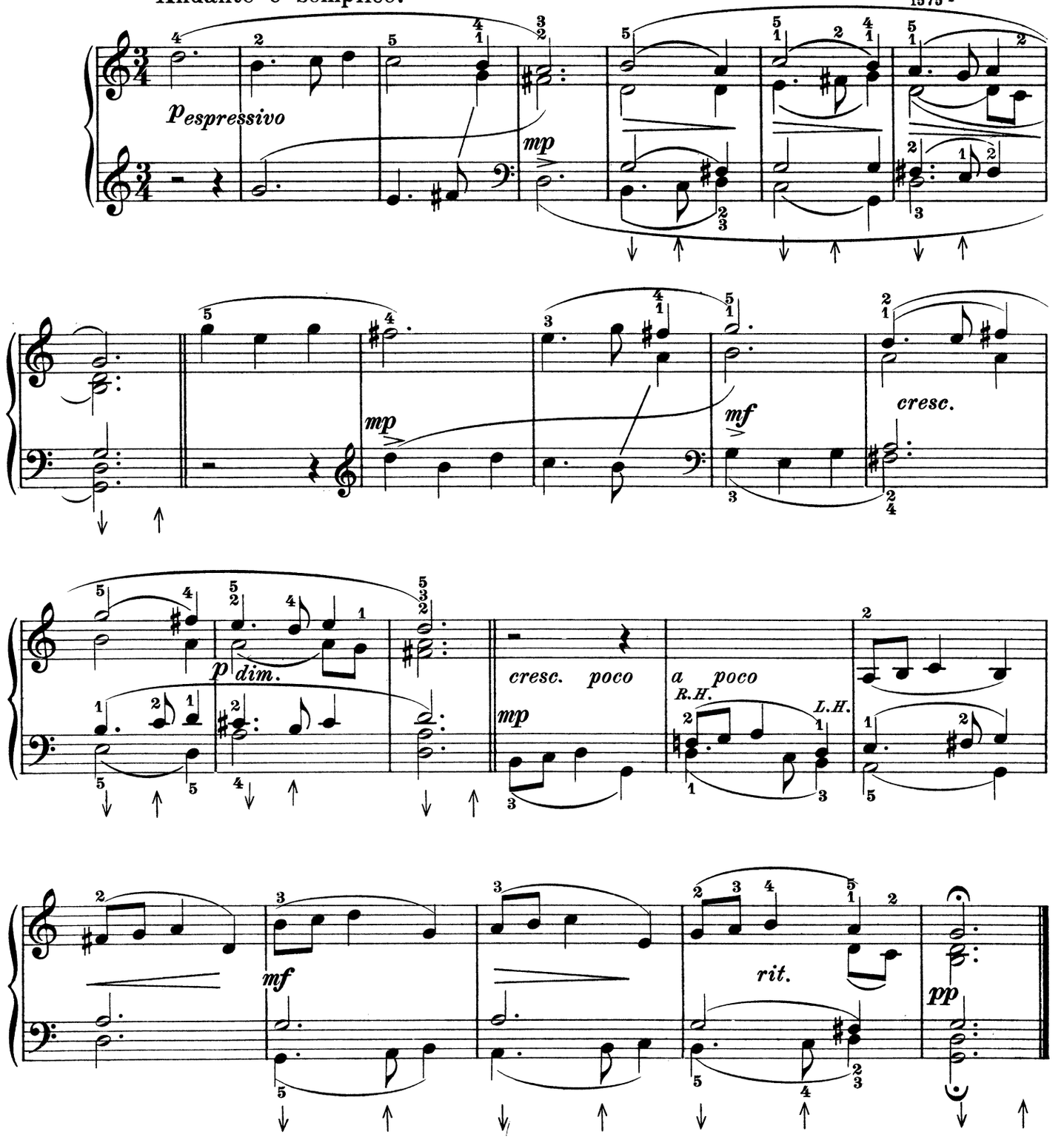
His Rest.

Galliard.

Essentially a singing piece. Play it with flat fingers, and feel the pull of the arm weight varying in amount with each note. Feel also the "bite" on the string at each imitational point, but don't allow this initial attack to spoil the progression to the end of the phrase.

GILES FARNABY.
1575 -

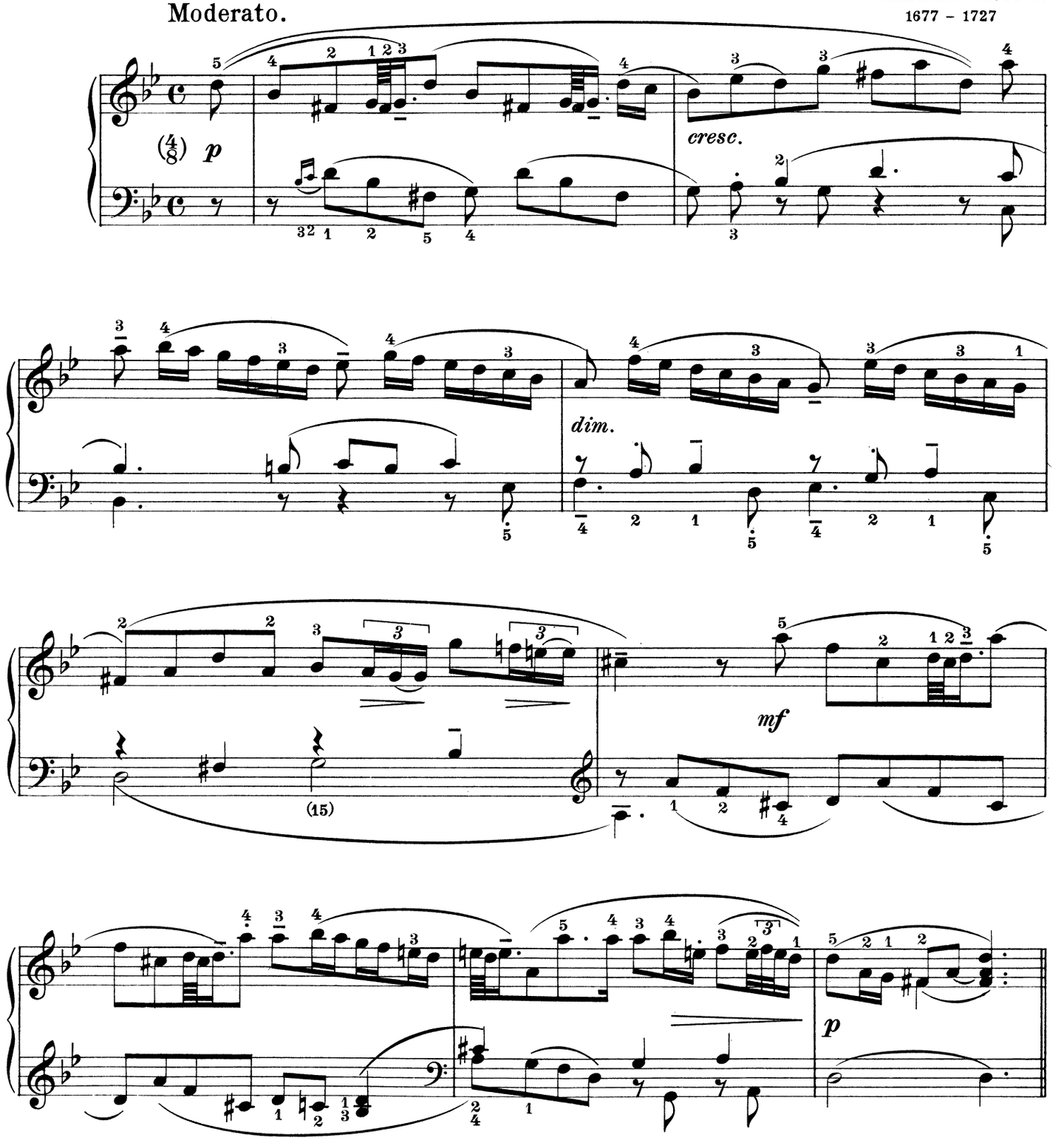
Andante e semplice.

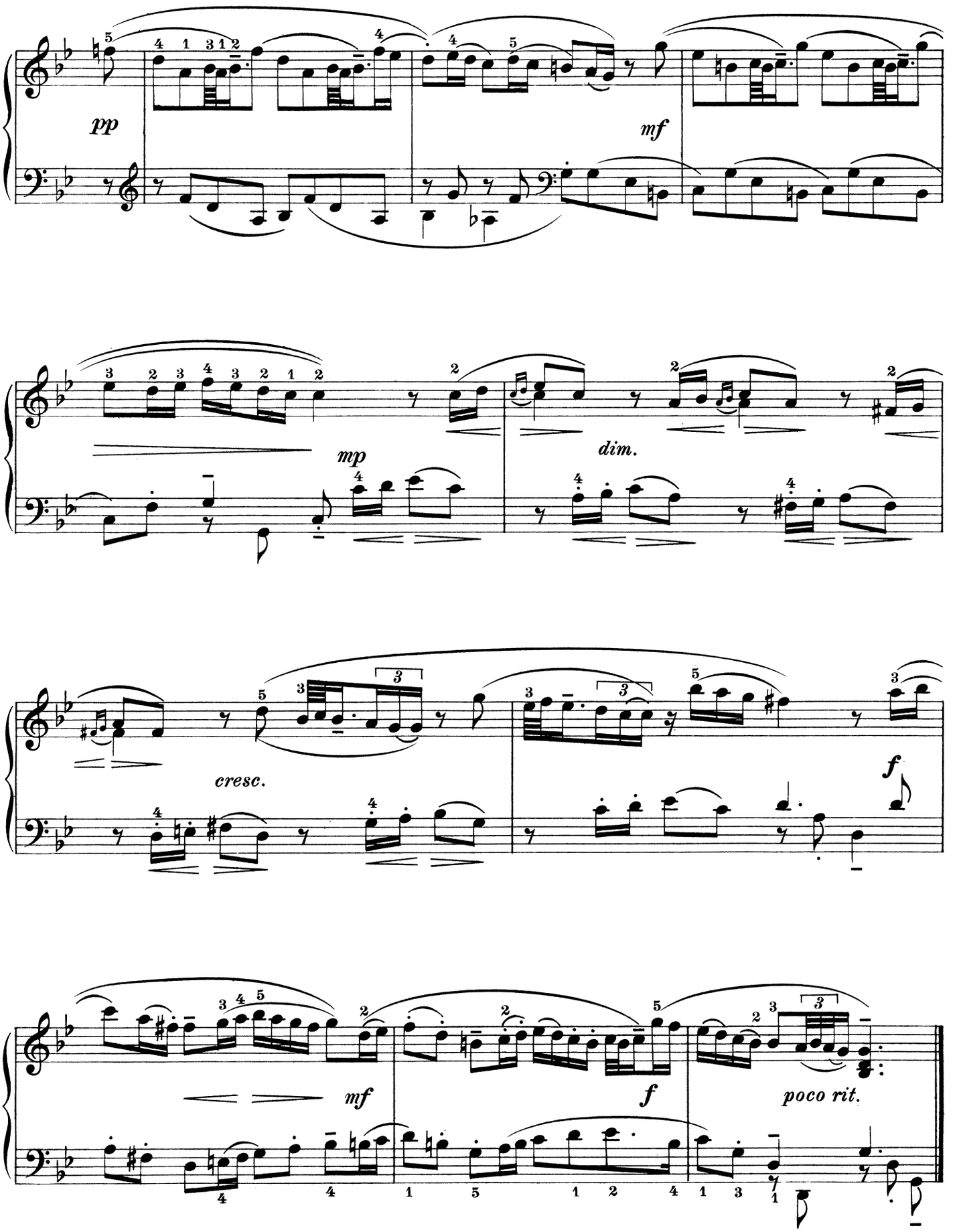


Ayre.

Another example of a genius (somewhat neglected) of our own country. Imagine it played by a string trio or (next best) a clavichord, and feel the "bite" on the string at each imitation. A cantabile tone for the first two bars: the semiquavers in bars 3 and 4 may be taken rather more lightly with arm balanced off the keys and just enough "hand" exertion behind the fingers to give the requisite contrast to the opening. The graces must not be hurried: sing them before touching the keyboard.

WILLIAM CROFT.
1677 - 1727



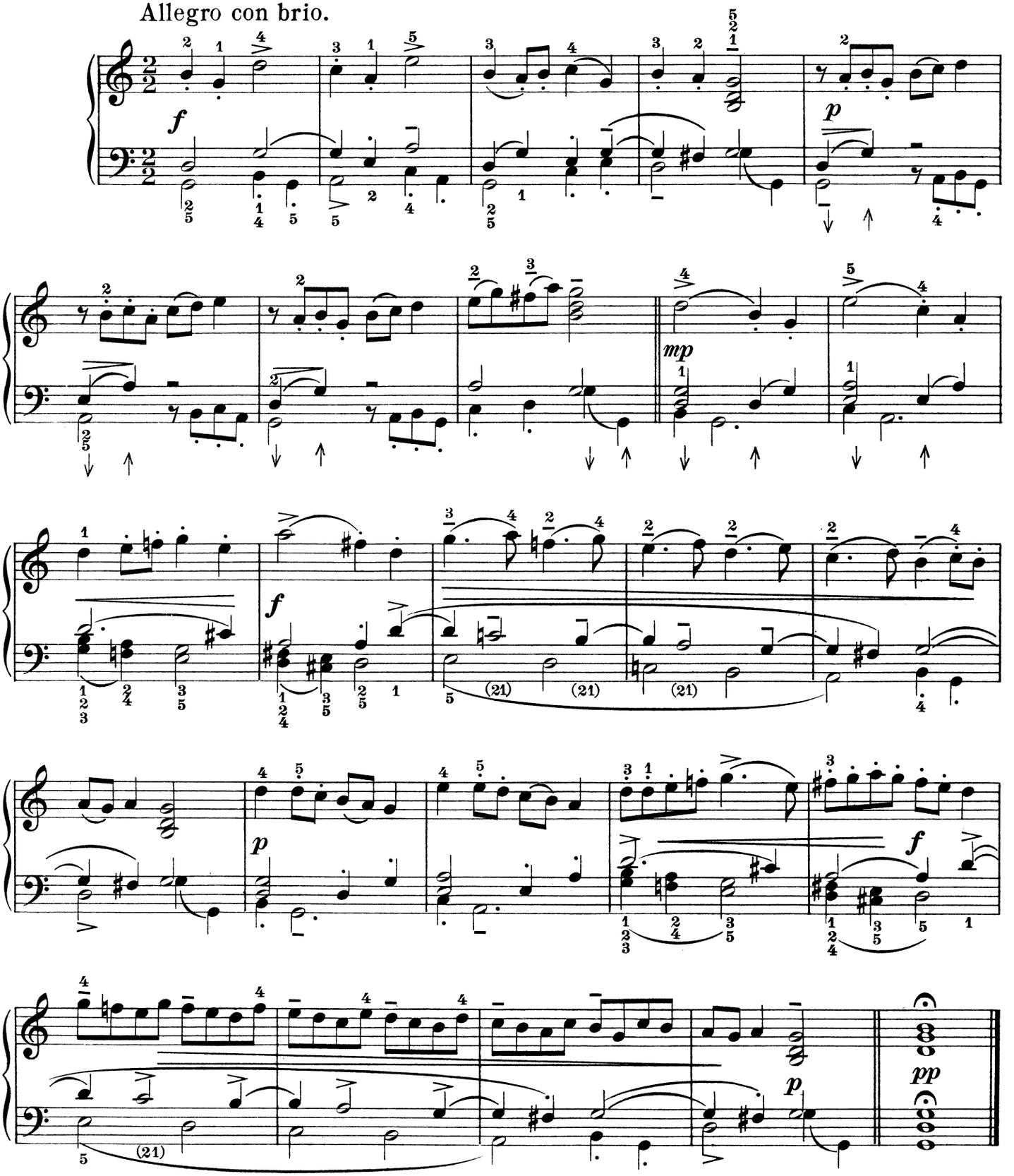

pp
mf
mp
dim.
cresc.
f
mf
f
poco rit.

Tower Hill.

A bright mood. Fingers bent, accents sharper and more definite. The staccato not too light; give the effect of bowed staccato, as distinct from pizzicato. Play the quavers mostly non-legato, (hybrid touch).

GILES FARNABY.

Allegro con brio.

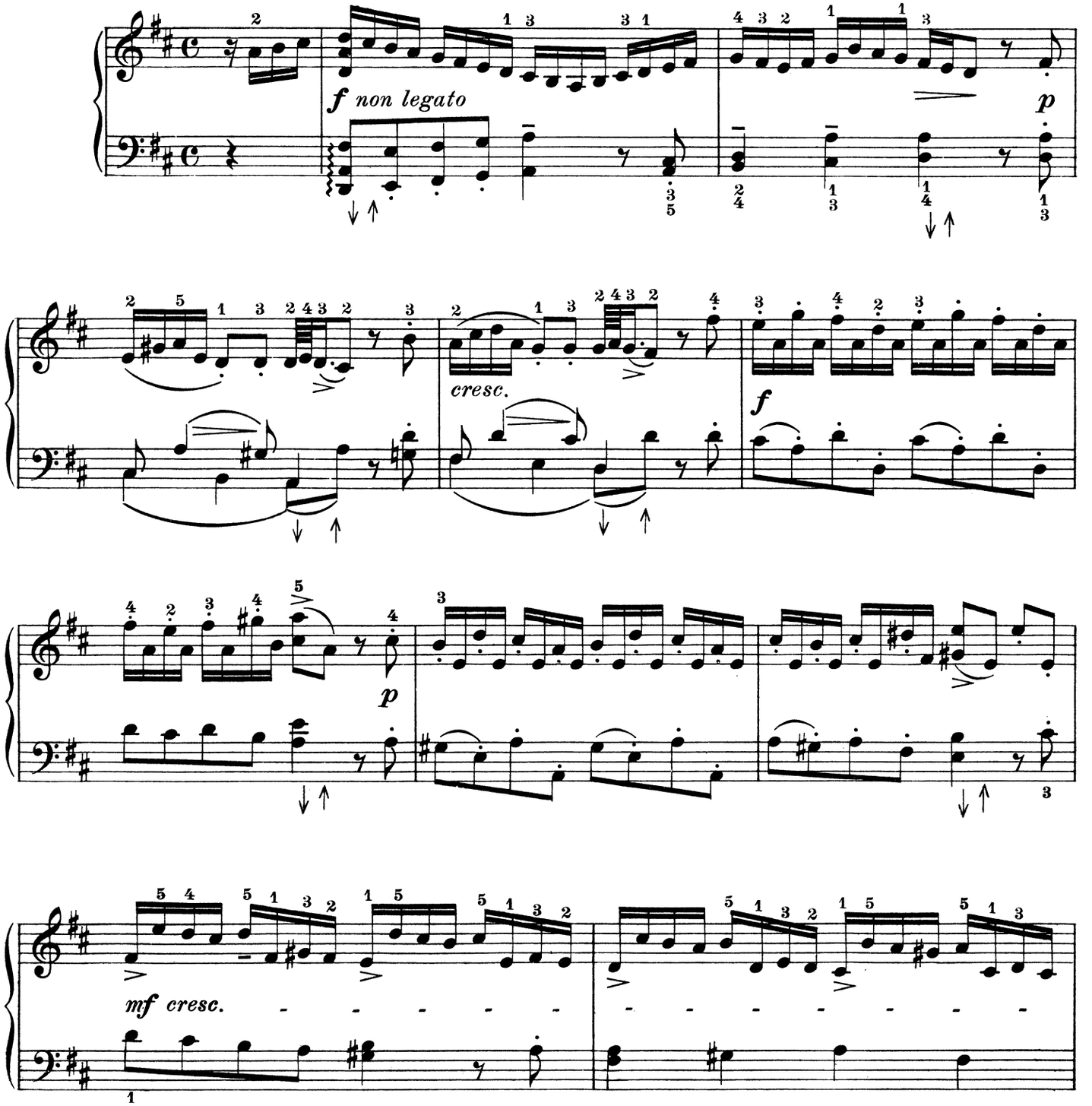


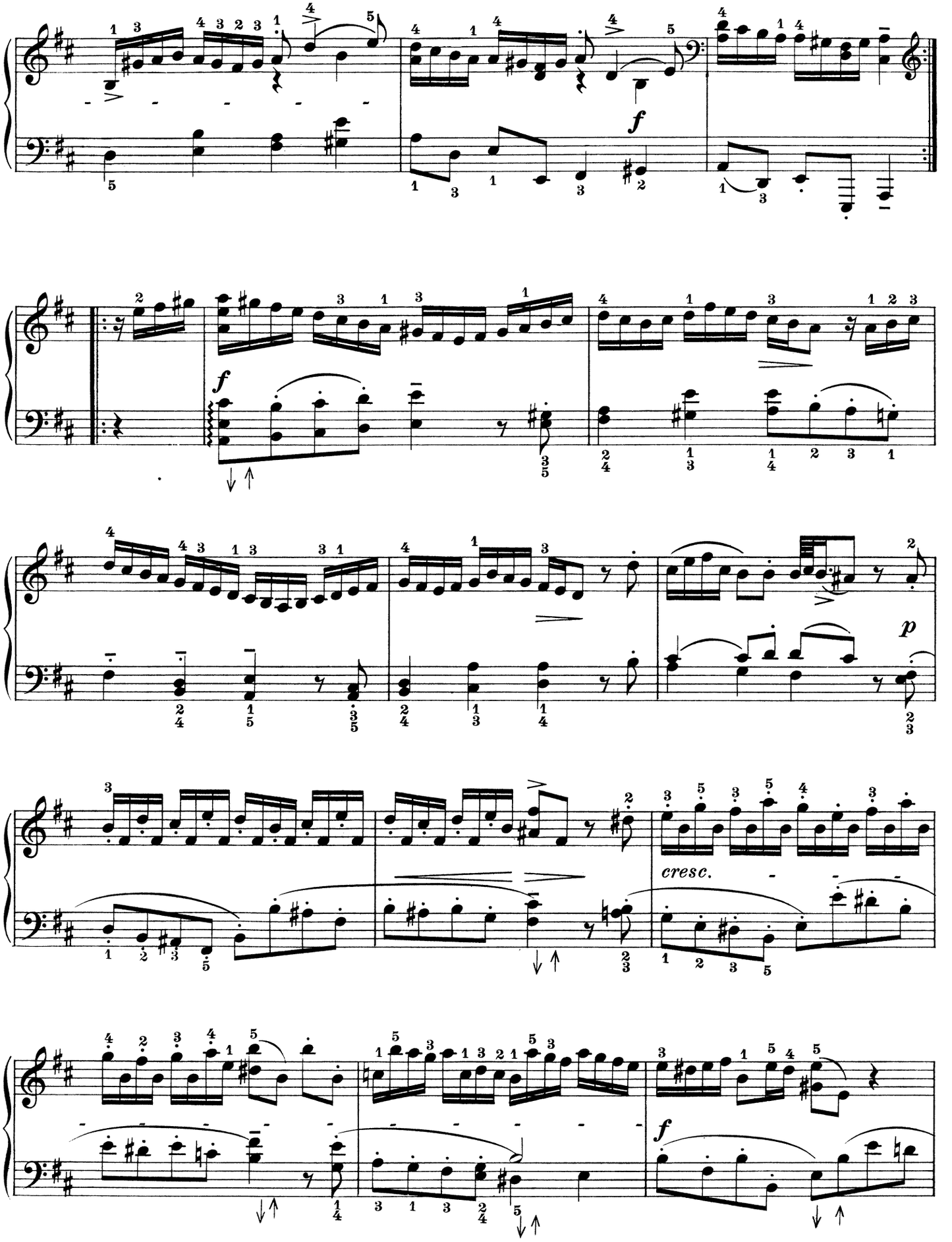
Allemande.

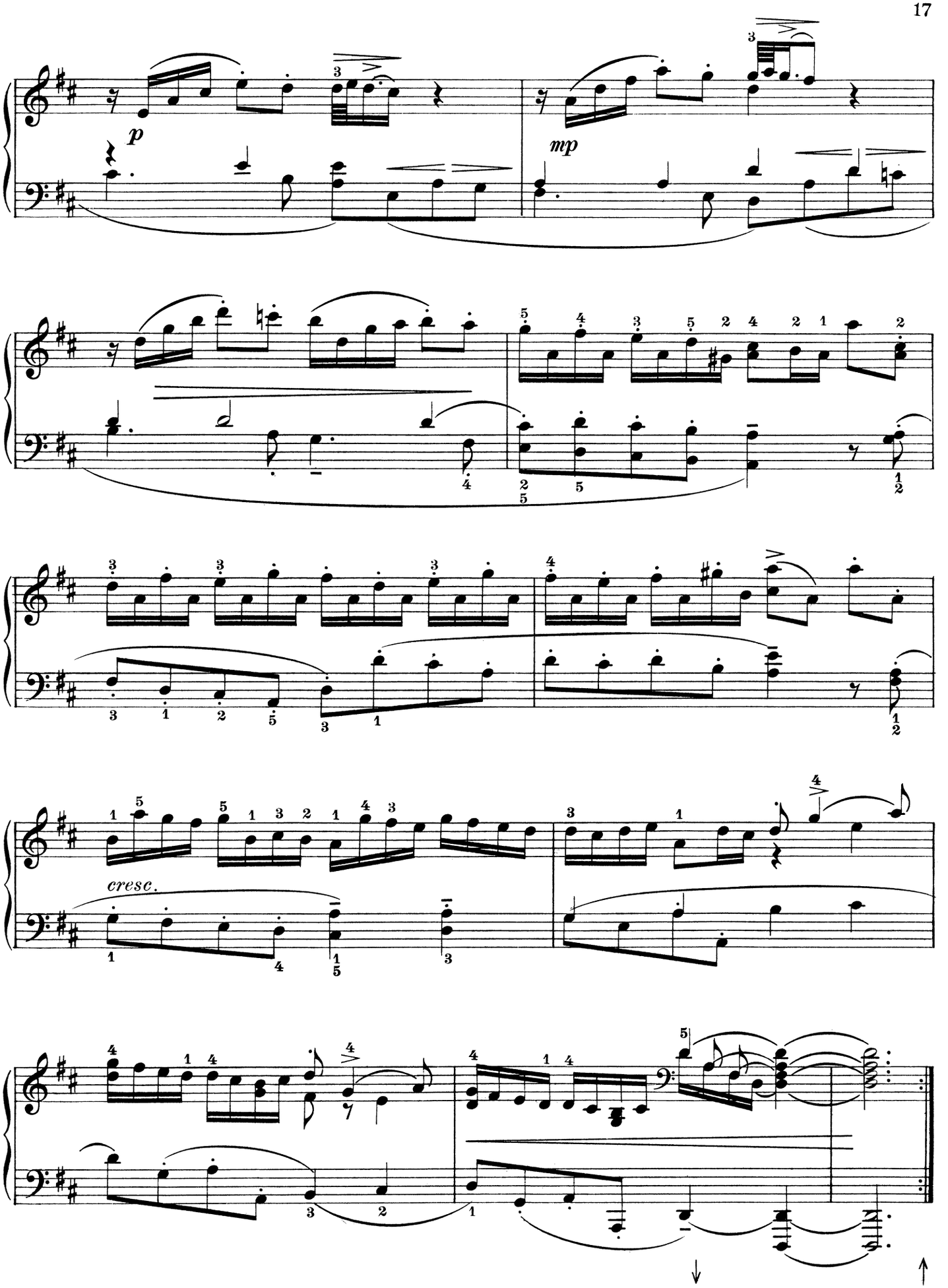
Almost an allegretto. The allemande is the only important movement of a suite which does not originate as a dance form. See that the upper part (the chief centre of interest) flows easily and naturally, with less rhythmic accentuation than that of the courante or gigue. Time precisely the three characteristic notes at the commencement of each part and remember throughout the piece (as indeed in all music) to time each and every note (*a*) To its sound spot (*b*) To the following pulse and (*c*) To the cadence.

MAURICE GREENE.
1696 – 1755

Allegro non troppo.




f
f
p
cresc.
f


p
mp
cresc.

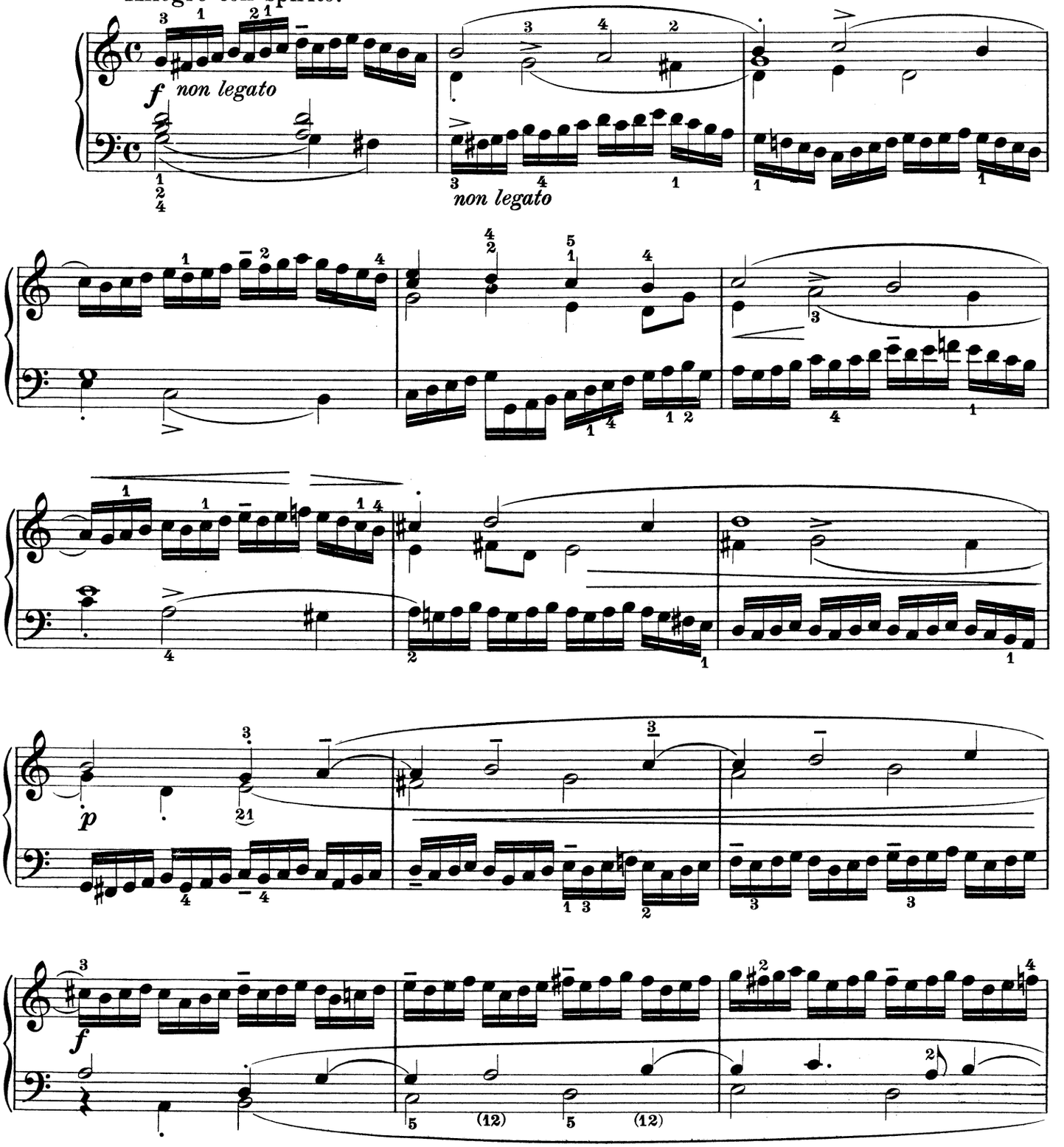
Prelude.

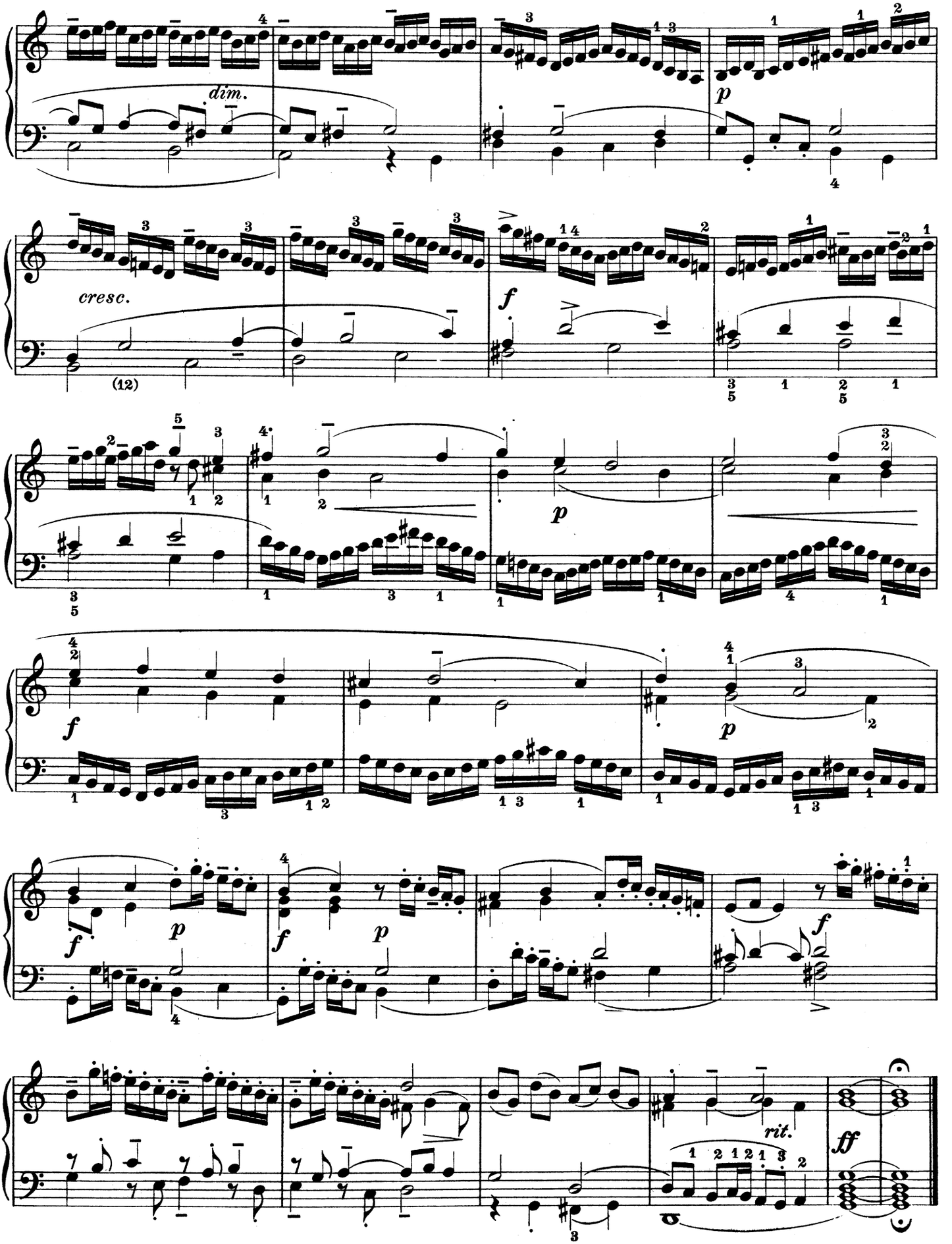
Quite a jolly toccata. Play the semiquavers with well-bent thrusting fingers (tending to push the flesh away from the nail). The touch non-legato, really a hybrid, consisting as it does of a movement of both hand and finger, together with a well-poised and vibrating arm. The accents (marked –) just sufficient to show the constantly changing progression through these semiquavers.

See to it that the 2nd and 3rd bars (R.H.) and the corresponding places throughout, are played with the requisite contrast of tone and touch.

ORLANDO GIBBONS.
1583-1625

Allegro con spirito.




dim.
p
cresc.
f
(12)
p
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
rit.
ff

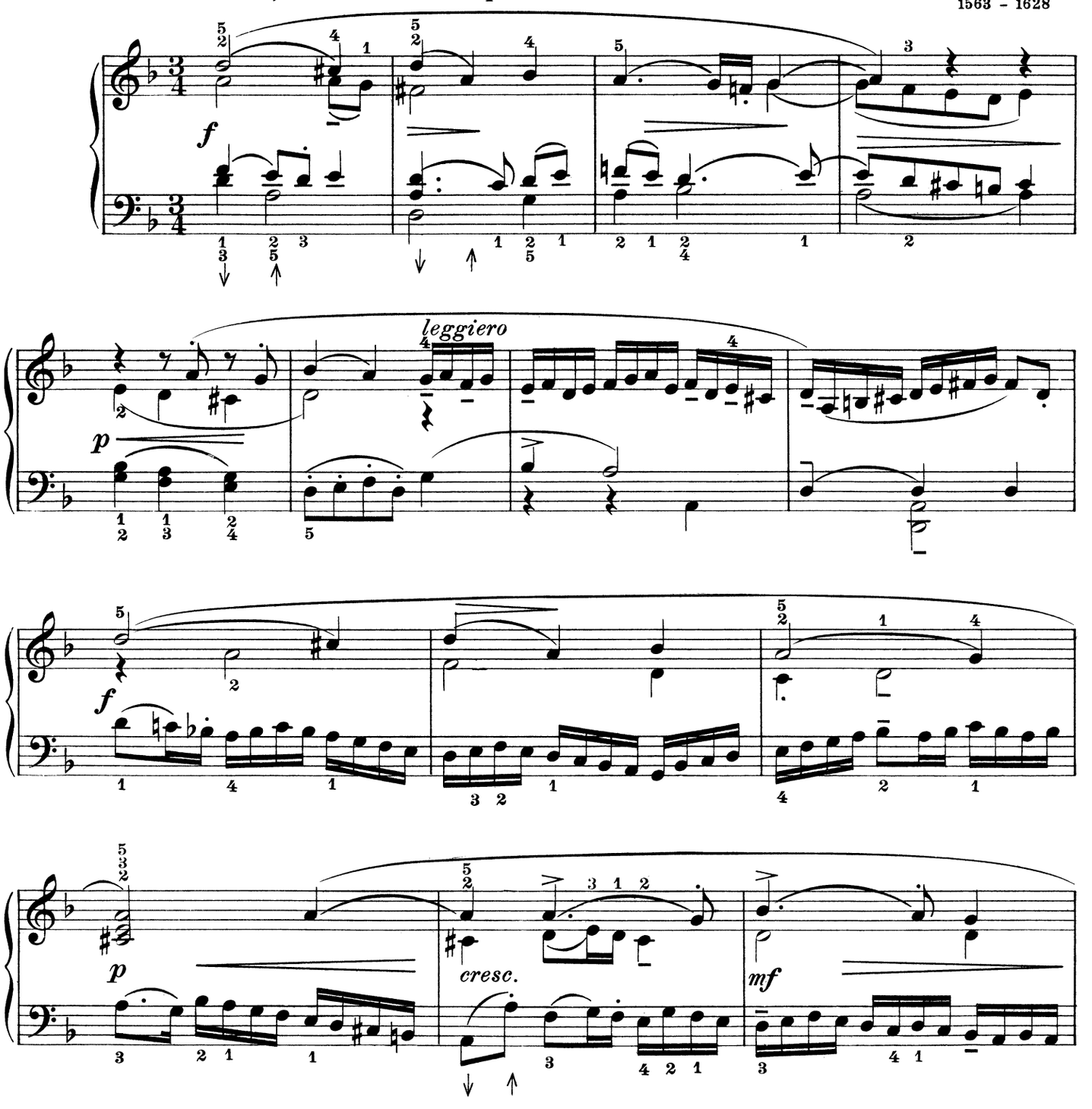
Galliard.

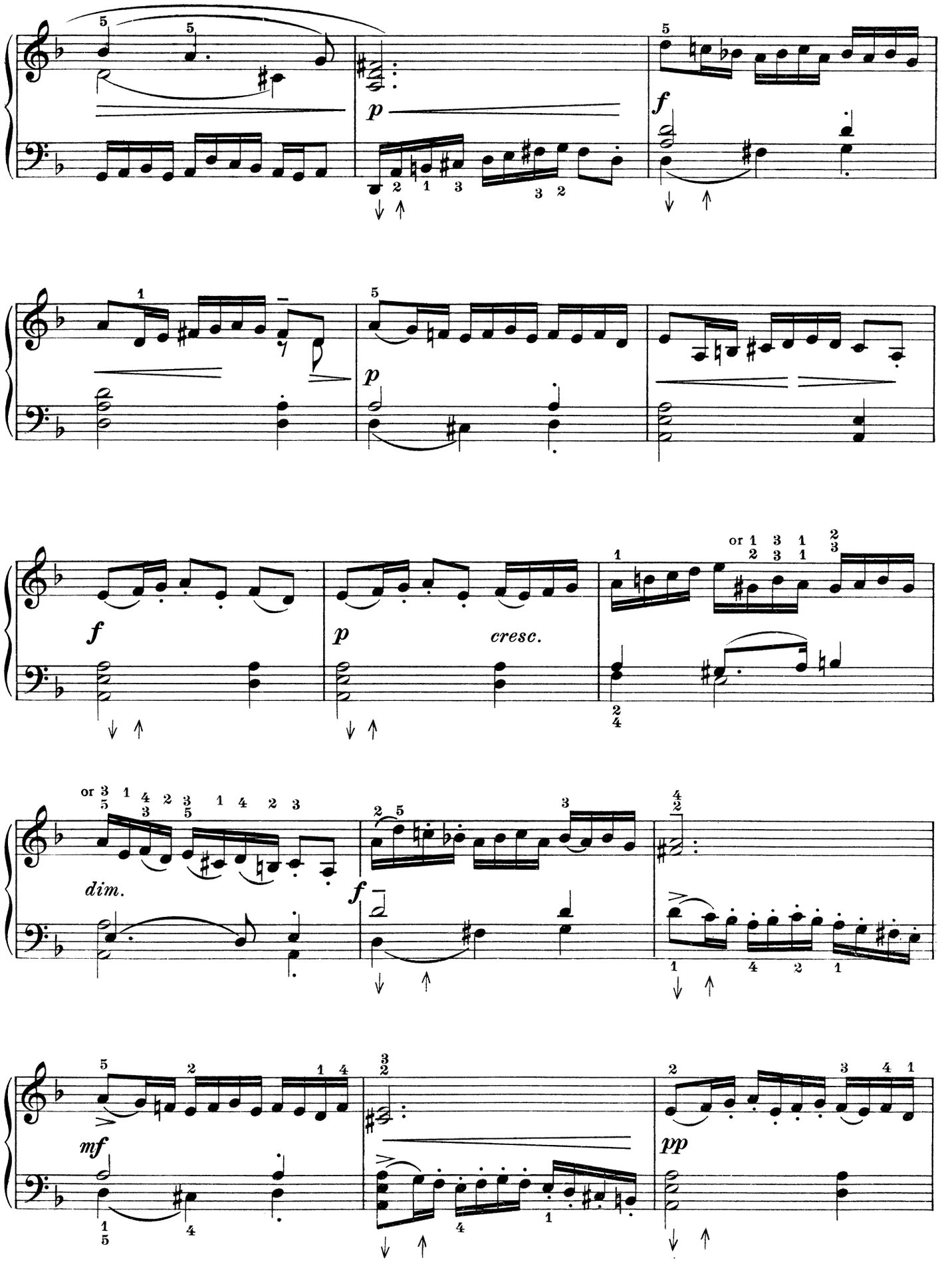
A stately movement. Don't drag it, but avoid any suspicion of haste. In many compositions in 3/4 time, it is helpful to sub-divide the bar into two — 2/4 and 2/8, or 2/8 and 2/4, acc ding to the context. The opening bars show the former, which is fairly obvious throughout, while good examples of the latter may be seen in the sarabands of Bach.

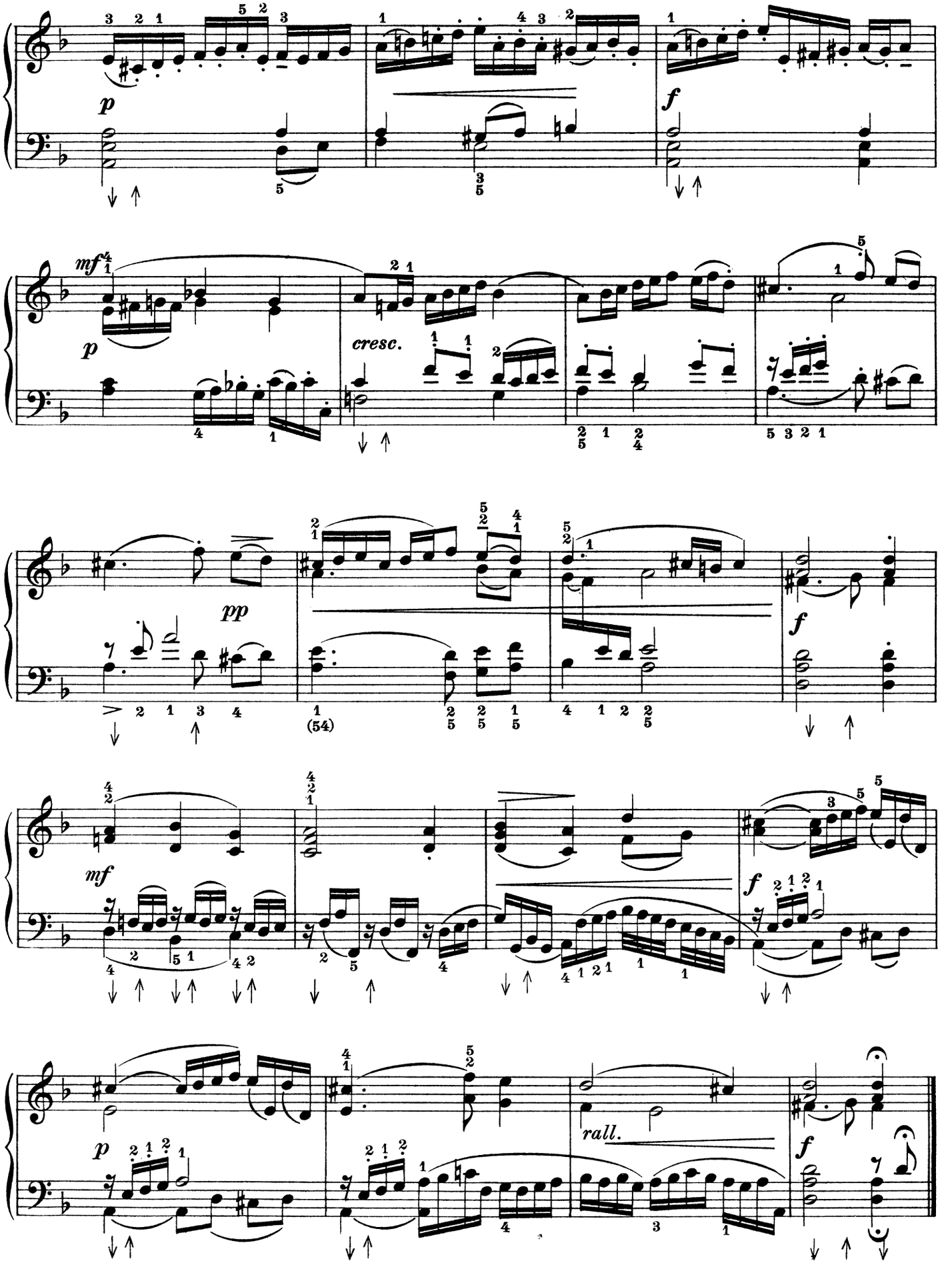
Notice the characteristic figure in bar 9 (L.H.) and the subsequent use made of it. Play it somewhat lighter, in contrast to the main theme. From bar 33 the phrasing becomes more intimate. Place each note carefully, and see that it gets its exact duration, no more and no less.

Andante, nobilmente semplice.

JOHN BULL.
1563 - 1628




p
f
p
f
p
cresc.
or 1 3 1 2
2 3 1
dim.
f
mf
pp


p
f
mf
p
cresc.
pp
f
mf
f
p
rall.
f

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Gigue, ———
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Gigue, ———

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