M. Marchesi
The Art of Singing
Book 1, Opus 21

PREFACE

The present Second Edition of my "Art of Singing," which I have revised and enlarged in accordance with the experience of the last twelve years of my teaching, comprises the theoretico-practical part of my system. It includes Exercises and elementary and progressive Vocalises for the development of the mechanism of the voice; a series of two-part Vocalises, for practice in singing a second part; and lastly, Melodies with words, to combine articulation with vocalisation.

I embrace this opportunity to again call attention to the fact already set forth in various prefaces to my other works, namely, that in order to achieve speedy and successful results, it is necessary to set difficulties before the pupil one by one, and to assist him in overcoming them by presenting them in natural and progressive order.

Teachers and students cannot be too strongly urged to spend as much time as possible over the elementary vocal studies, and to pass on to singing with words only when the pupil's voice is perfectly placed throughout its entire compass, when the three registers are completely blended, and when the vocal organ has acquired a sufficient degree of ease and flexibility.*

* Besides the Vocalises contained in this Method, I have also published a series of special Progressive Vocalises for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Contralto, as well as Bravura Studies with words, which may be employed to advantage for the development and perfect control of the voice.

These are published by Messrs. Aug. Cranz in Hamburg, B. Senff in Leipzig, and B. Schott in Mayence and Cologne.

I assume that each teacher, before undertaking the difficult task of the formation of the voice, and the weighty responsibility for the artistic future of his pupils, will have studied anatomy, physiology and acoustics to the extent requisite for explaining and enforcing the following precepts.

1. Position of the Pupil

The position of the body, while singing, should be as natural and unconstrained as possible. The pupil should stand straight, the head erect, shoulders drawn back without effort, and the chest expanded. All stiffness in the body must be avoided in order to secure the greatest possible freedom of action to the organs concerned in voice-production.

2. Position of the Mouth

The smiling mouth recommended by so many early and modern masters is entirely contrary to the laws of the formation of tone. The pupil should open the mouth quite naturally, lowering the chin, as though to pronounce the vowel A (ah) slightly darkened, and should keep it unmoved during the continuance of the emission of the tone.

It is necessary to remind the student, that the lower jaw alone opens, the upper jaw remaining fixed; hence the necessity of lowering the chin.

3. Respiration

Normal respiration, characteristic of a healthy person, is diaphragmatic or abdominal. In the

two other ways (which we reject), namely, clavicular and lateral respiration, the lungs are but partially filled, hence the necessity of breathing more frequently and the impossibility of singing long phrases in one breath.

4. *The Attack of a Tone*

(Stroke of the Glottis)

The mechanical action which constitutes the attack, or placing of the voice, is produced by preparing the glottis and the mouth to form some particular vowel-sound. Now, the type of vowel preferable for the formation and development of the voice is the Italian A (ah), slightly darkened as indicated in § 2.—

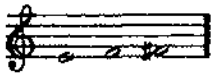
The pupil should understand clearly that the stroke of the glottis is a normal function of the vocal organ, and that he has simply to subordinate to his will the spontaneous action which was developed at his first attempt to cry as an infant. It is, in point of fact, by means of this innate aptitude that we form all vowels in speaking.

5. *The Three Registers of the Female Voice*

Female voices are classed thus:

Contralto, Mezzo-Soprano, dramatic Soprano and high, light Soprano (*sfogato*).

The upper limit of the chest-register in all female voices varies between these notes:

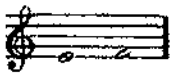


Contralto and Mezzo-Soprano voices usually have a chest-register of much greater compass than Soprano voices, extending more or less into the lower notes.

In order to equalize and blend the chest-register with the middle register, the pupil must slightly darken the last two chest-notes in ascending the scale and open them in descending. Every strain made on the upper notes of a lower register not only increases the difficulty of developing the strength of the first notes of the following register, but in the end renders the blending of the two registers completely impossible.

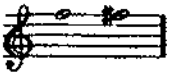
When the limits of the registers are not clearly defined, there will always be a series of uncertain, weak and false tones in singing scales with full voice, or in sustained passages.

According to the modern pitch, the highest chest-note of almost all Contralto and Mezzo-Soprano voices will vary between:

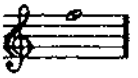


There are some Contralto voices which, on account of an unusual position of the larnyx, never succeed in developing the head-voice. Such voices of narrow compass, which use only the chest- and middle registers, are, however, rare exceptions, and can aspire only to a concert-career.

The limit of the middle register for all female voices may vary between the following notes:



The general rule, however, places *f* as the high note:



6. *Method of Practising*

Rational and progressive study is capable of developing great elasticity as well as considerable suppleness in the muscles of the sound-producing organs without ever fatiguing them; whereas, the least excess of practice produces exhaustion.

At the commencement of his studies the pupil should, therefore, not sing too long at a time, and during the first few days he should not practise more than five or ten consecutive minutes. Practice thus limited may be repeated three or four times a day at long intervals. The time devoted to exercising the voice may be increased five minutes at a time up to half an hour.

If, as happens frequently, the pupil, not taking these precepts to heart, practises at home longer than the teacher has sanctioned, the sad result, the overtaxing of the voice (of the vocal cords), will speedily ensue.

7. *Analysis*

Most pupils who study singing are not very musical. Consequently, they begin to sing the exercises and scales mechanically, guided solely by ear, without paying any attention to the length of each measure and to rhythmical division, and thus without appreciating the value of each separate note. This habit of allowing oneself to be guided by ear is very harmful, and causes an incalculable waste of

time to the pupils. Furthermore, by thus always feeling for the note, the pupil is obliged to repeat the same passage incessantly, which, instead of assisting progress, ends by fatiguing the vocal organs From the first lesson, therefore, the student should accustom himself to analyse, that is, to reflect on what he has to do; in a word, it is necessary that practical work should be preceded by mental study.

If this analytic system of study be adopted by the pupil from the beginning, it will prove very useful to him throughout the progressive stages of his studies, and also in the practice of his profession when studying new rôles.

8. Style

With the exception of national songs which have an entirely popular and local character, peculiar to each nationality, there are only two styles in the world, a good style and a bad style, just as there are but one good and one bad method of singing. It is utterly wrong, therefore, to talk of a German, French, English or Italian style or method of singing in the strict sense of the term. In all ages, in fact, we have had hundreds of examples to show that great singers of both sexes, belonging to diverse nationalities, have been received with equal enthusiasm in Rome, Paris, London, Vienna, St. Petersburg, etc.

Many teachers of singing maintain that in modern vocal music, where sustained and declamatory phrases have replaced rapid runs and graceful turns, singers do not need to develop the mechanism of the voice, as this only fatigues the vocal organs and robs the pupil of valuable time.

As regards fatigue of the voice from study, its avoidance depends entirely on the skill of the teacher and the intelligent receptivity of the pupil.

As to the technical requirements of sustained and declamatory phrases, the truth of the matter is quite the contrary of the above statements.

A singer who has learned to breathe properly, equalized her voice and blended the registers, and who has systematically developed the flexibility of the larynx, and the elasticity of glottis and resonant cavities, so as to be able to produce all possible shades of *timbre*, intensity and expression, can unquestionably sing sustained and declamatory phrases perfectly well without fatigue or effort, that is to say without exaggeration or screaming; whereas, another singer, who is struggling with her breathing and the mechanism of her voice, and who consequently exaggerates and disfigures the modern musical phrase by screaming, very soon ends by fatiguing her voice.

Every art consists of a technico-mechanical part and an æsthetic part; he who is insufficiently prepared to overcome the difficulties of the former, will never attain perfection in the latter, be he even a genius.

January, 1890.

MATHILDE MARCHESI.

Exercices élémentaires gradués pour le développement de la voix.

Progressive elementary exercises for the development of the voice.

Émission de voix.

L'élève ouvrira la bouche sans affectation aucune, en la tenant parfaitement tranquille et en aspirant lentement. Il attaquera ensuite les sons très nettement sur la voyelle A, en serrant la glotte et en évitant toute secousse ainsi que tout effort.

Emission of the voice (Attack).

The student must open the mouth without any contortion, hold it quite still and then breathe slowly. Then each note is to be clearly uttered, upon the vowel A(ah) contracting the glottis beforehand, but without spasmodic effort or jerkiness.

Lento, con forza eguale.

Canto.

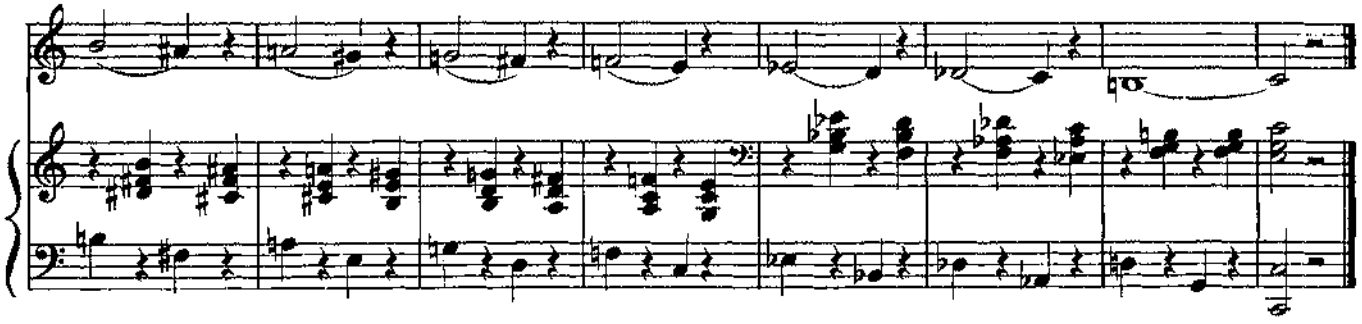
1.

Piano.

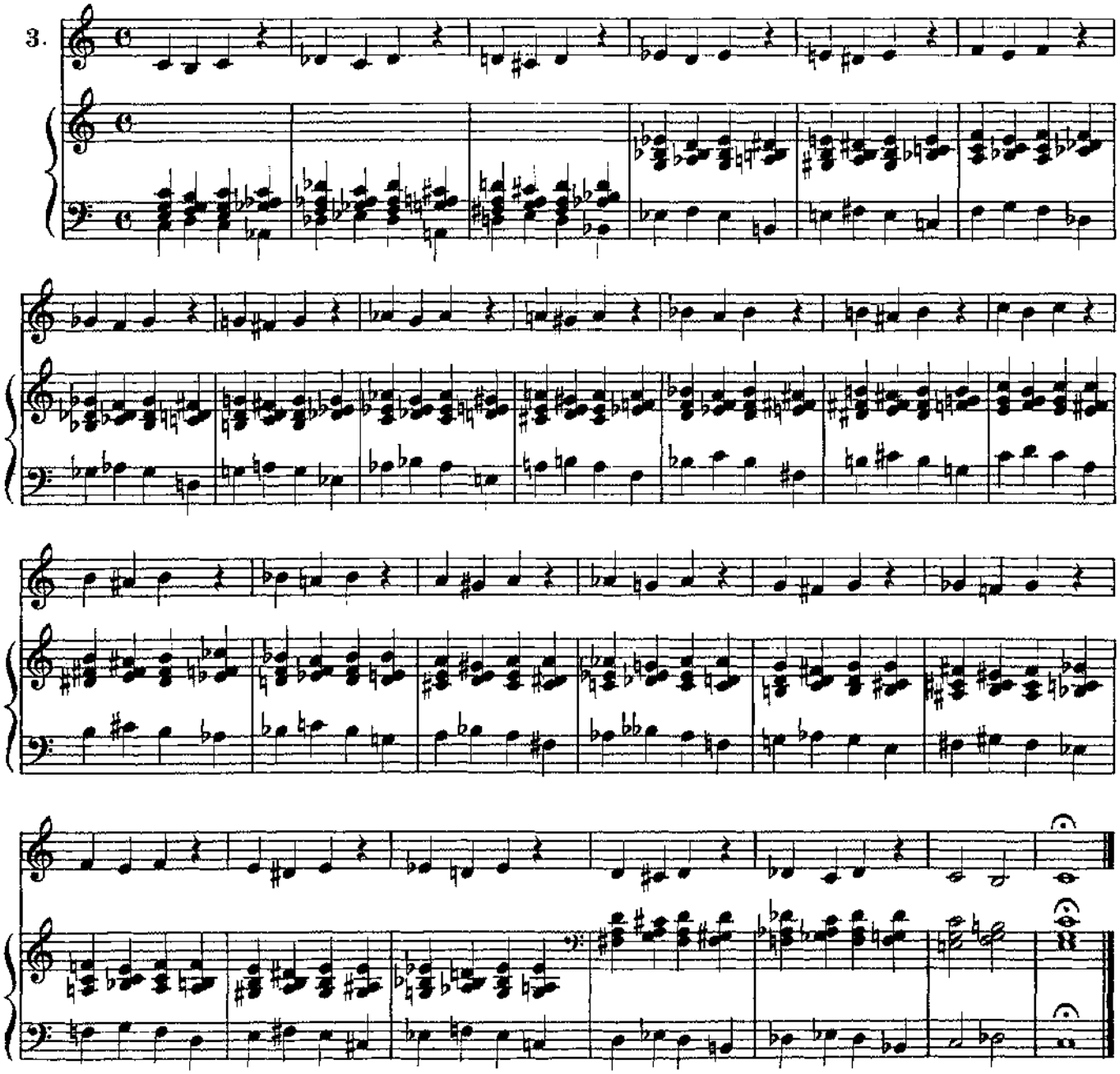
Port de voix chromatique.

Portamento in semitones.

2.

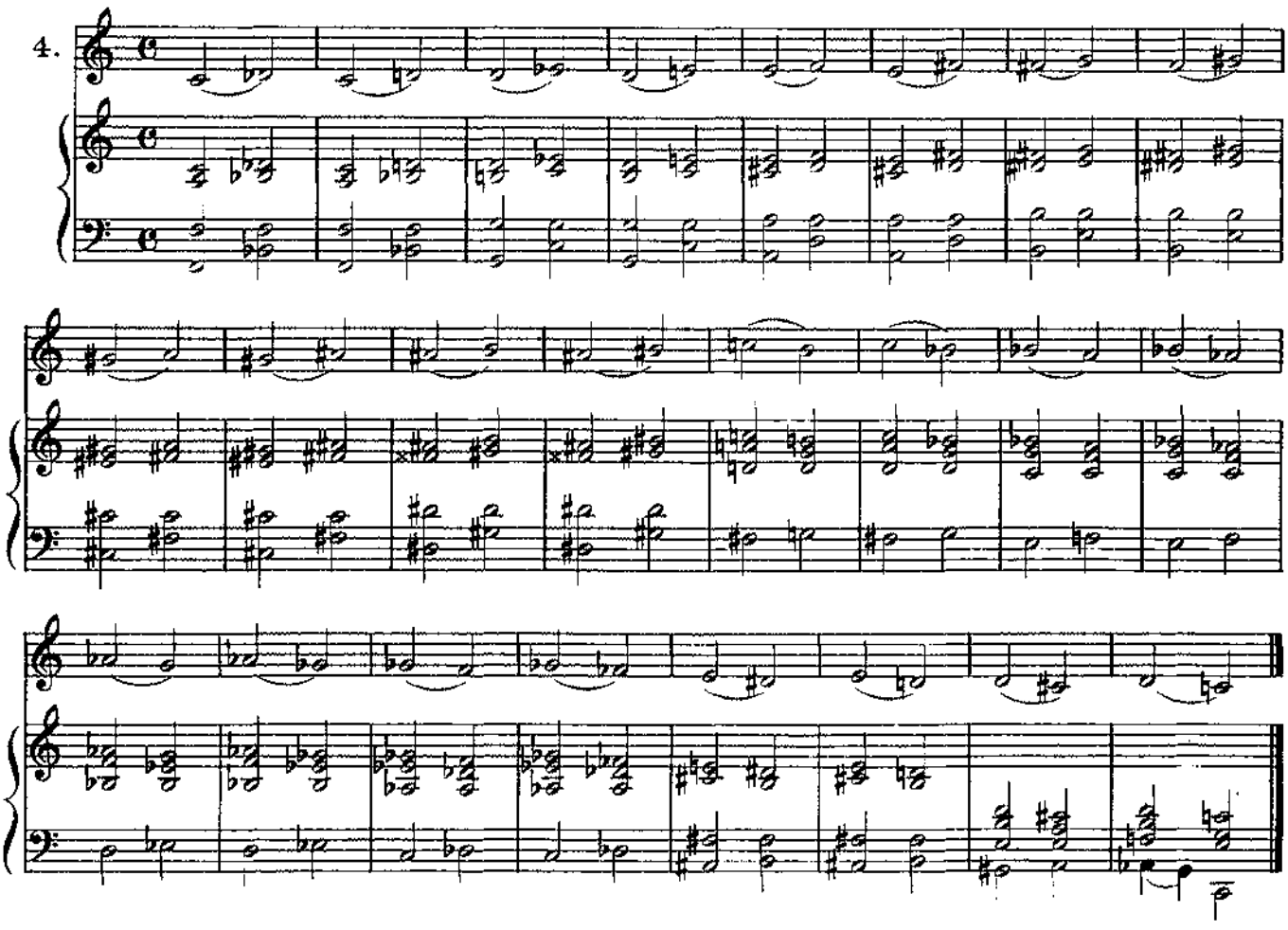


Port de voix chromatique. Portamento in Semitones.



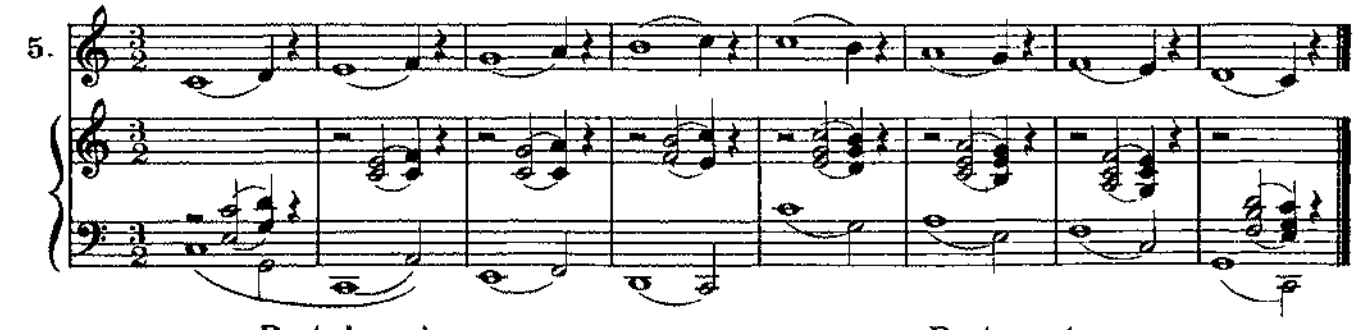
Port de voix chromatique et diatonique. | **Portamento in Tones and Semitones.**

4.



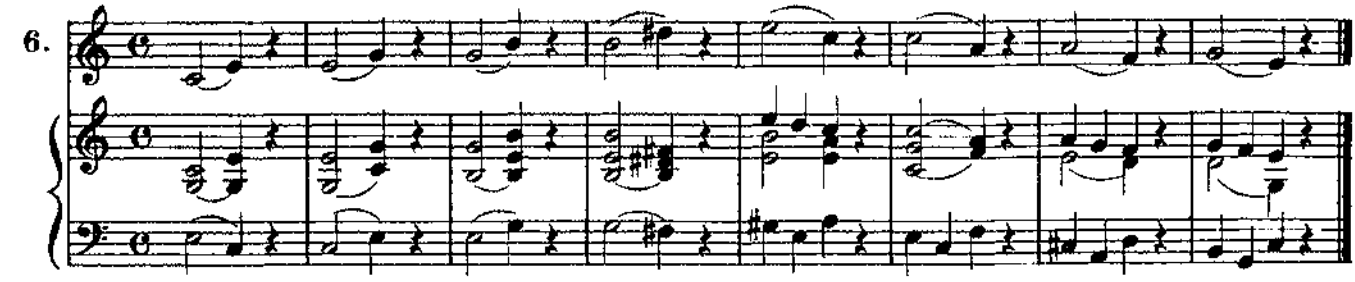
Port de voix diatonique. **Portamento in Diatonic Tones.**

5.



Port de voix. **Portamento.**

6.



7.

8.

9.

10.

Tierce chromatique.

Exercice pour la fusion des registres.

Chromatic Thirds.

Exercise in blending the registers.

11. *etc.*

etc.

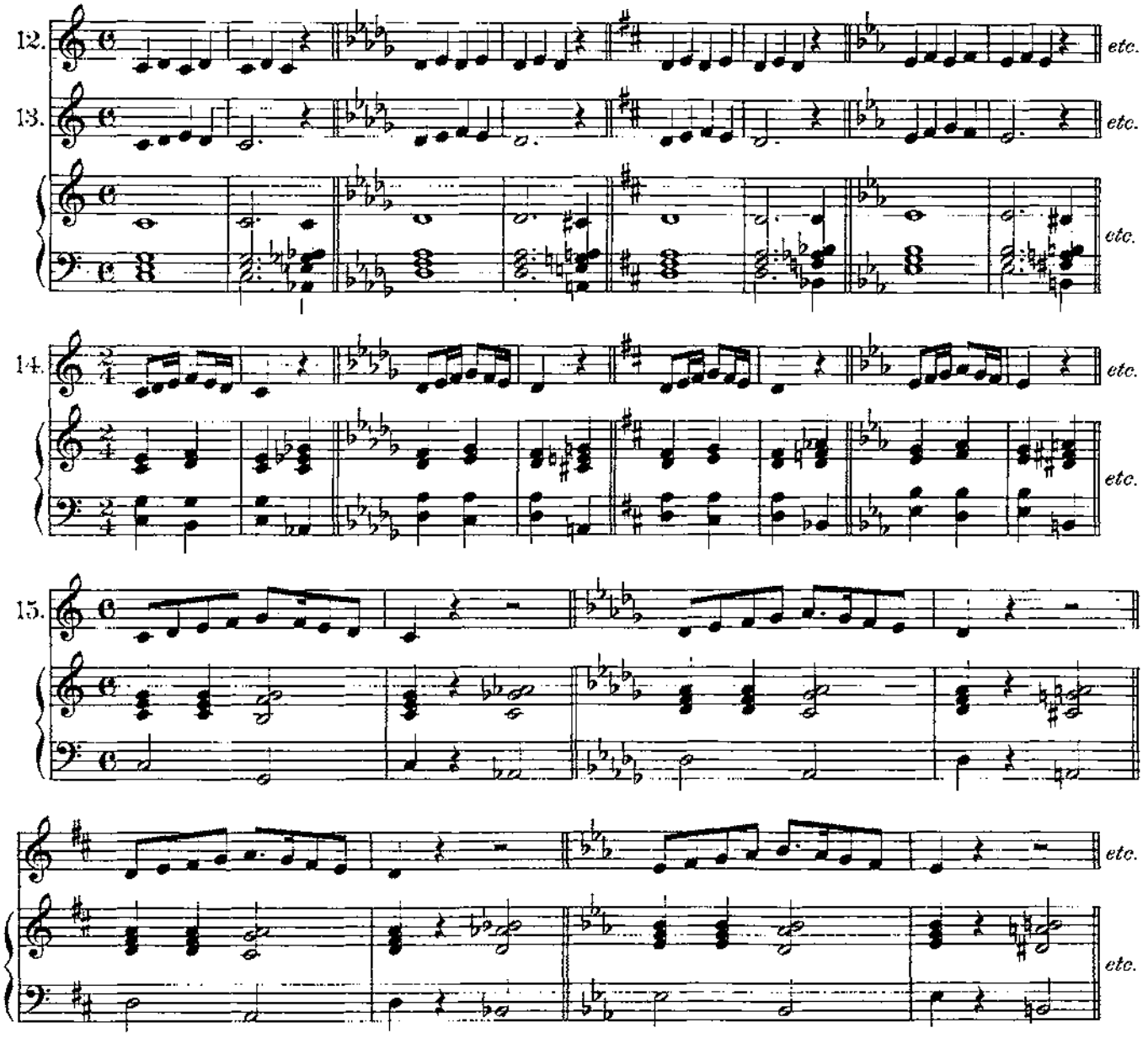
Gammes.

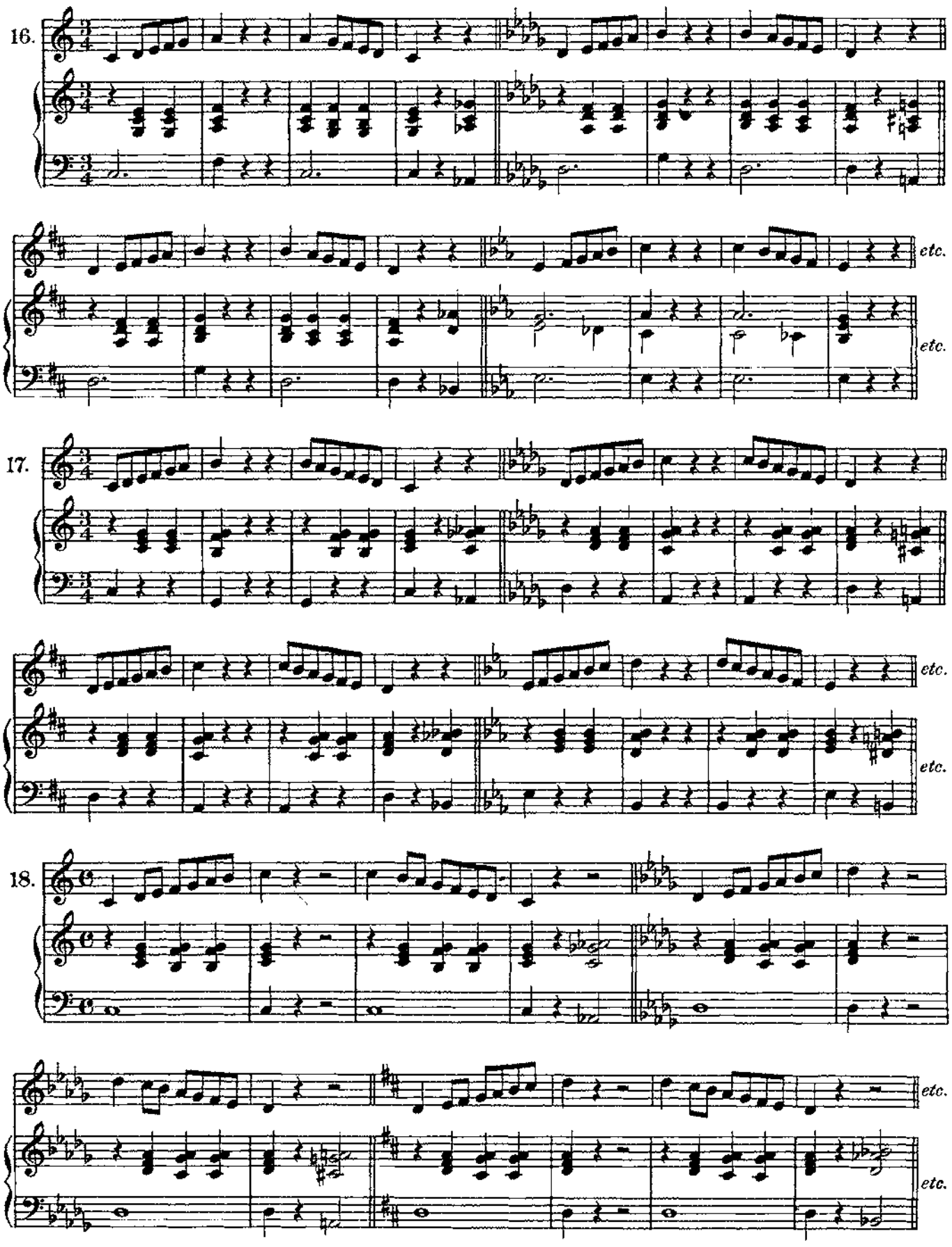
Les voix à l'état naturel sont presque toujours rudes, inégales, lourdes et peu étendues. Après avoir assuré à chaque son la justesse d'intonation par la pose de la voix, il faut viser à développer le volume, l'intensité et l'étendue de l'organe vocal, et à en fondre les registres. Celui qui voudrait arriver à chanter la gamme sans s'être exercé d'abord sur deux notes, puis sur trois, etc., courrait risque de ne jamais bien faire aucun trait. Les gammes et les exercices doivent être transposés suivant le genre de voix, en montant et en descendant par demi-tons, sans toutefois dépasser les limites que chaque voix peut atteindre.(On recommande dans la gamme l'intonation précise des demi-tons,ainsi que l'égalité la plus parfaite.)

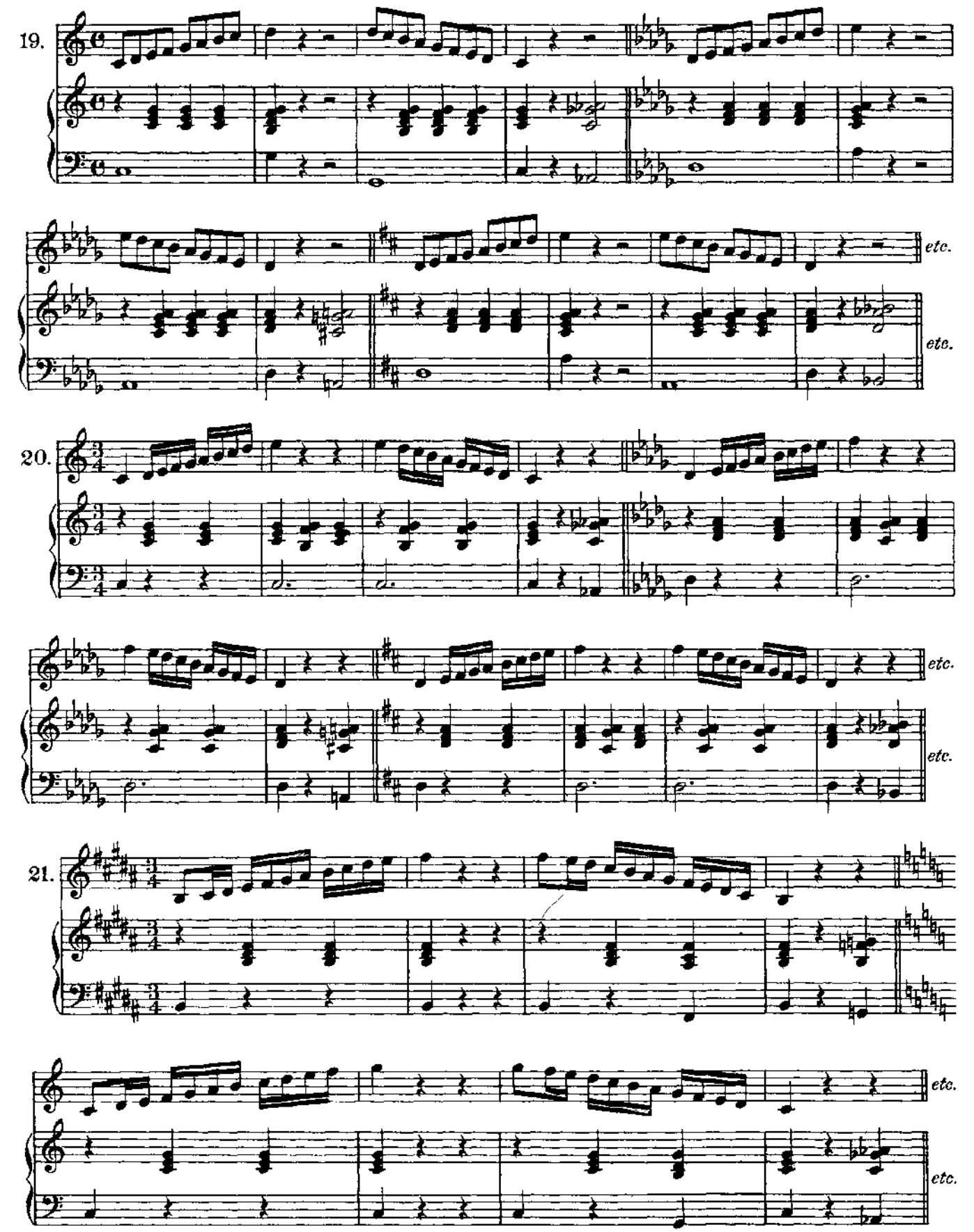
Scales.

Voices in their natural state are nearly always rough, unequal and of restricted compass and agility. When the intonation of every tone is assured by practising emission, attention must be directed towards developing the volume, intensity and range of the vocal organ, also the blending of its registers. The student who attempts to sing scales before having practised them by two and then three notes at a time, runs the risk of never being able to execute any musical figure with clearness. The scales and exercises (both ascending and descending) are to be transposed by semitones for the different kinds of voices, but care must be taken both in the highest and lowest notes not to strain the voice.

Attention must be paid to the exact intonation of the semitones, likewise to the most perfect smoothness.

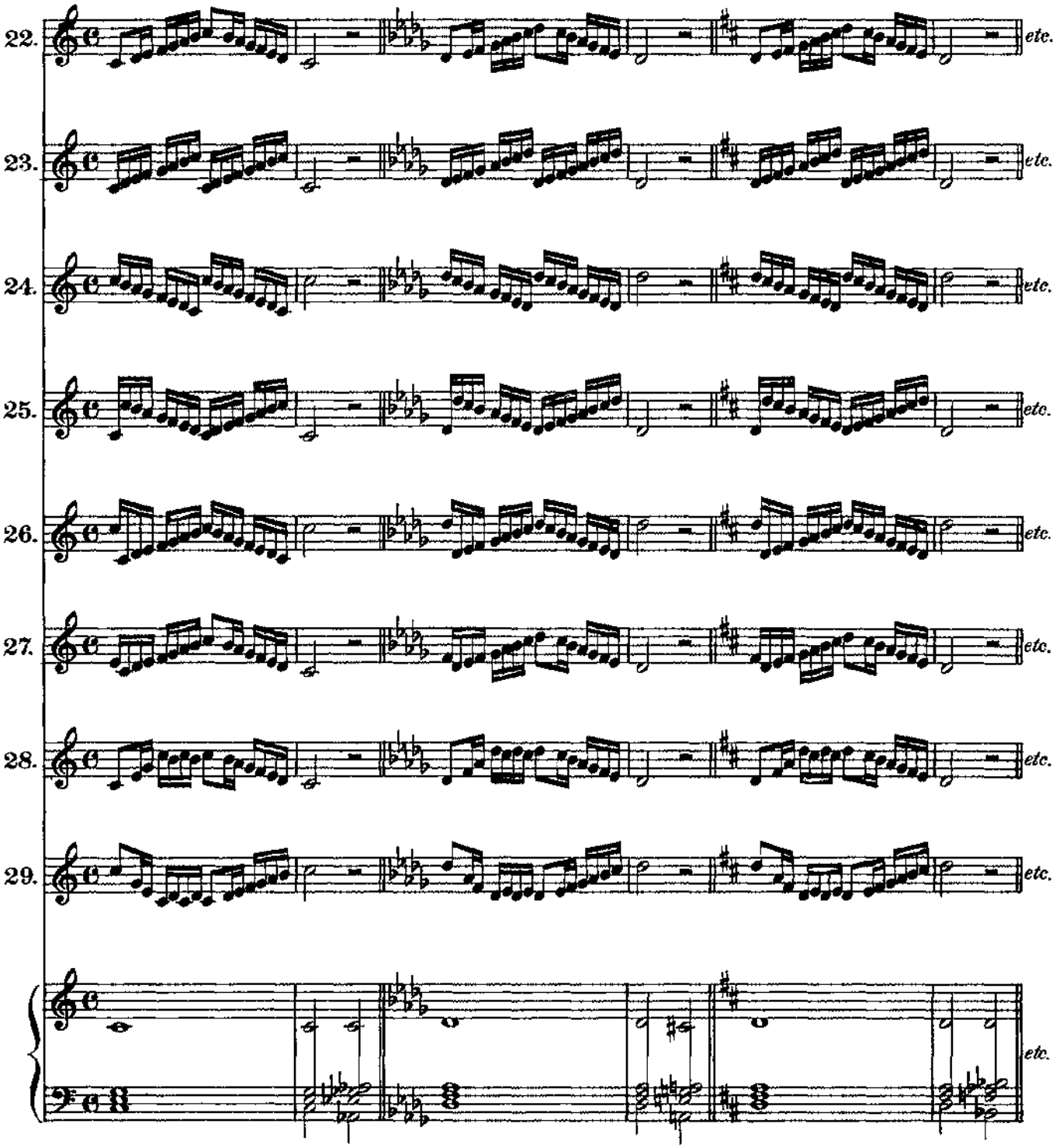



16.
etc.
etc.
17.
etc.
etc.
18.
etc.
etc.


19.
etc.
etc.
20.
etc.
etc.
21.
etc.
etc.

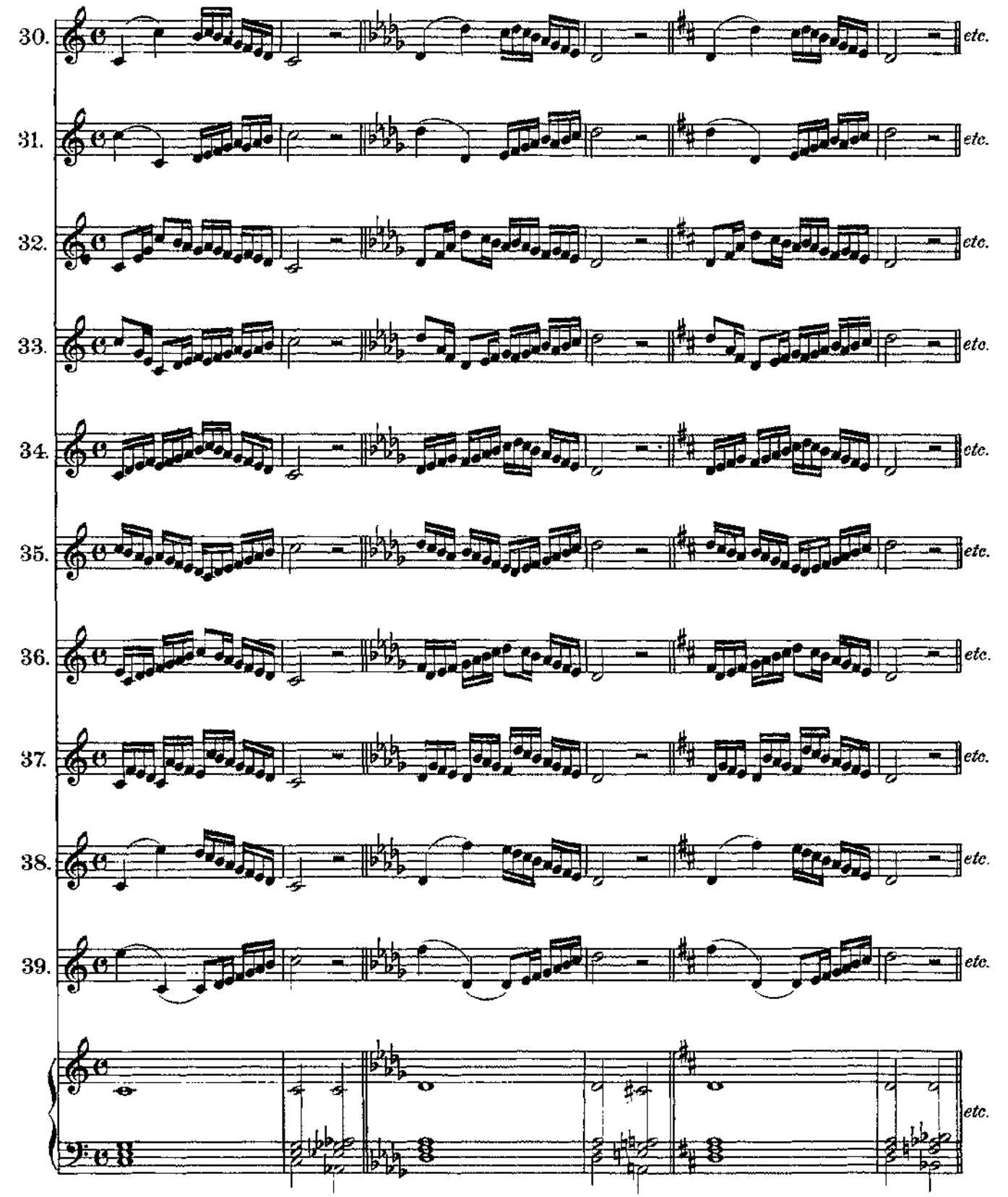
Les gammes et les exercices doivent être chantés à pleine voix, sans toutefois la forcer. En étudiant à demi-voix, la tension de la glotte ne se développera jamais, et le son n'atteindra pas l'intensité voulue. On recommande à l'élève de ne jamais travailler plus d'un quart d'heure à la fois.

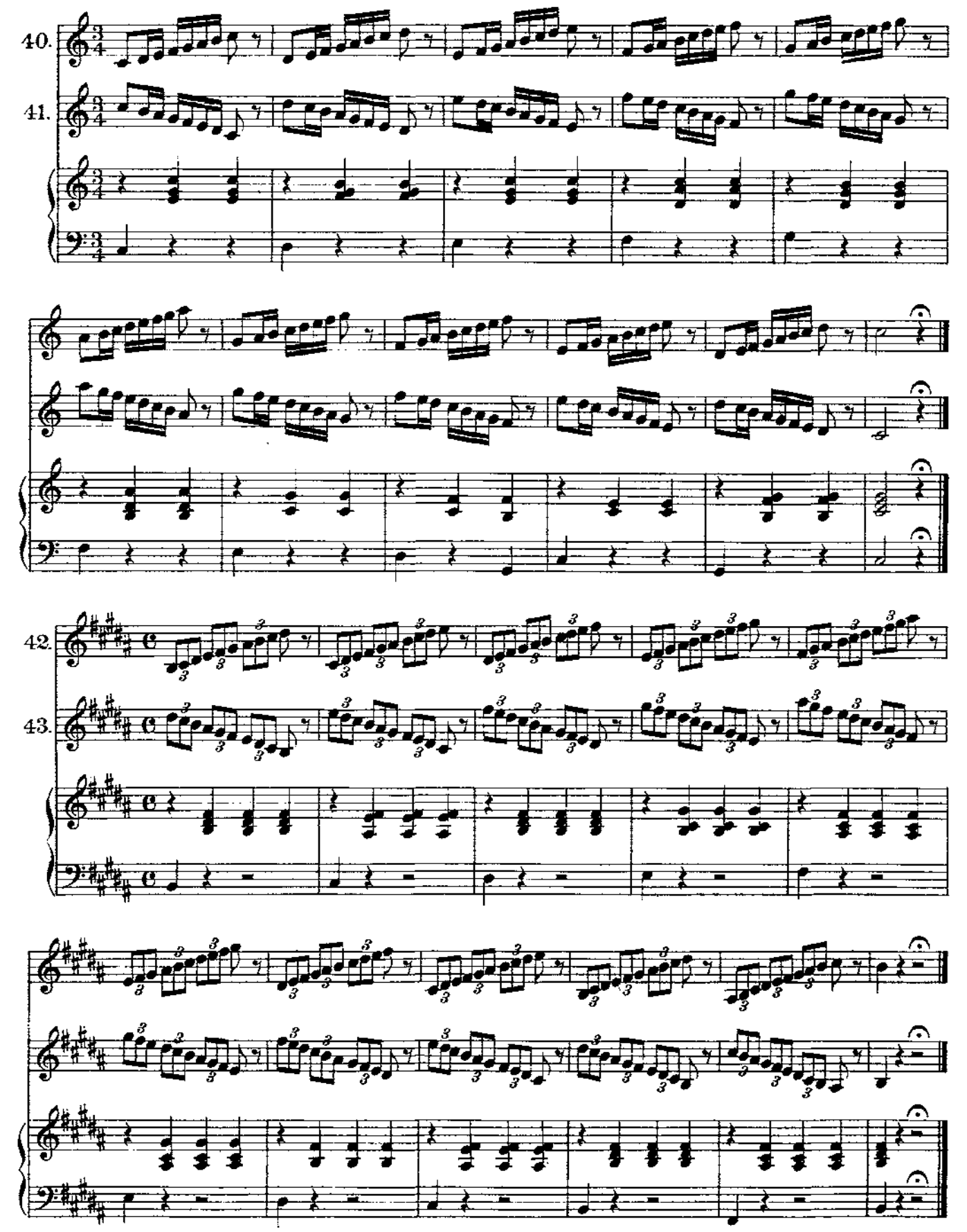
The scales and exercises must be sung with full voice, but without forcing. If the *mezza voce* is used in practising, the tension of the glottis will not be developed and the voice will fail to attain the desired intensity. The student is advised not to practise for more than a quarter of an hour at a time.



Les gammes et les exercices devront être transposés dans les tons les mieux adaptés à la voix de l'élève.

The scales and exercises are to be transposed into those keys most suitable to the voice.

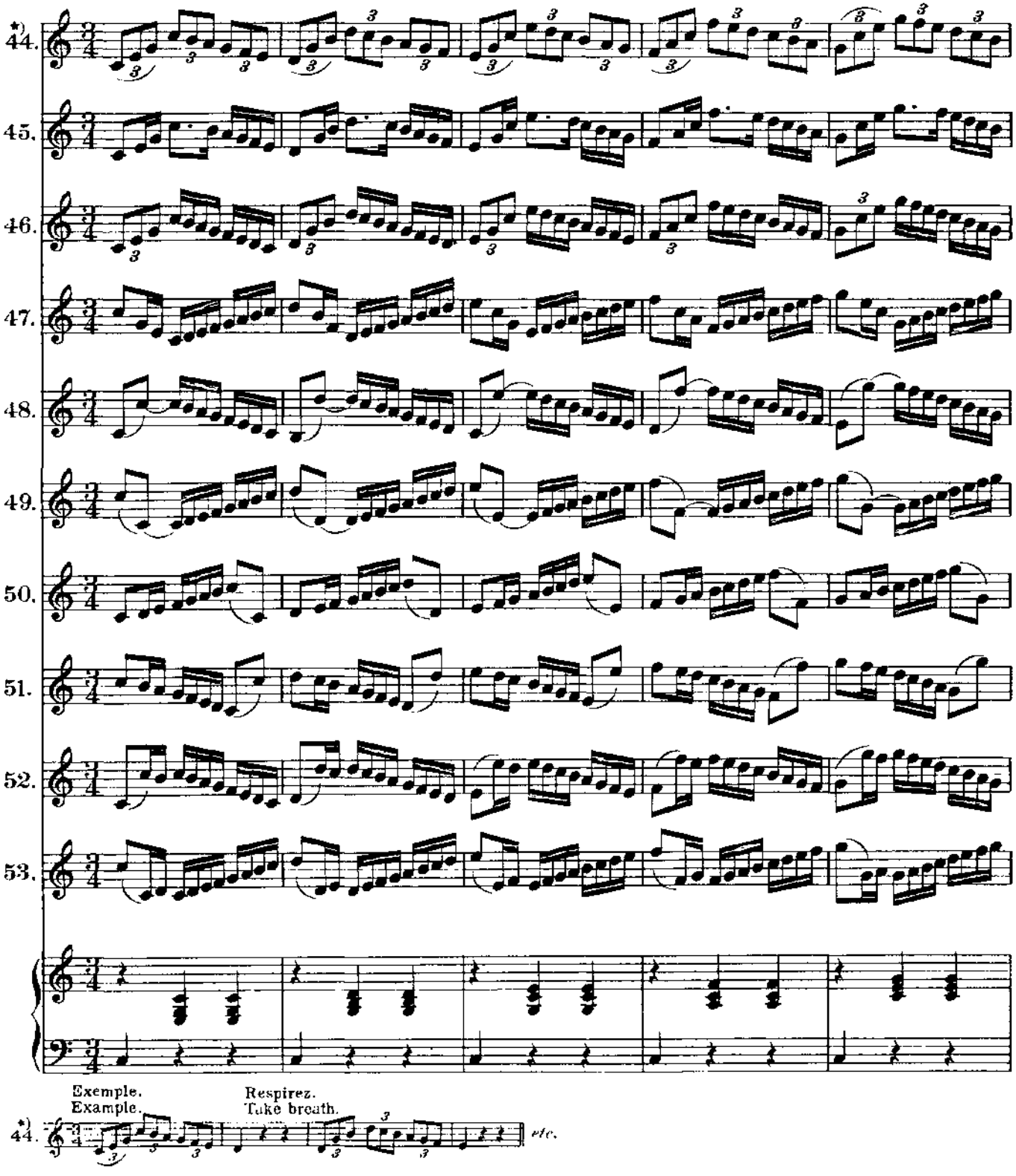



40.
41.
42.
43.

Les gammes doivent être chantées d'abord lentement et en respirant à chaque mesure, afin de bien développer la voix et d'en établir l'égalité.

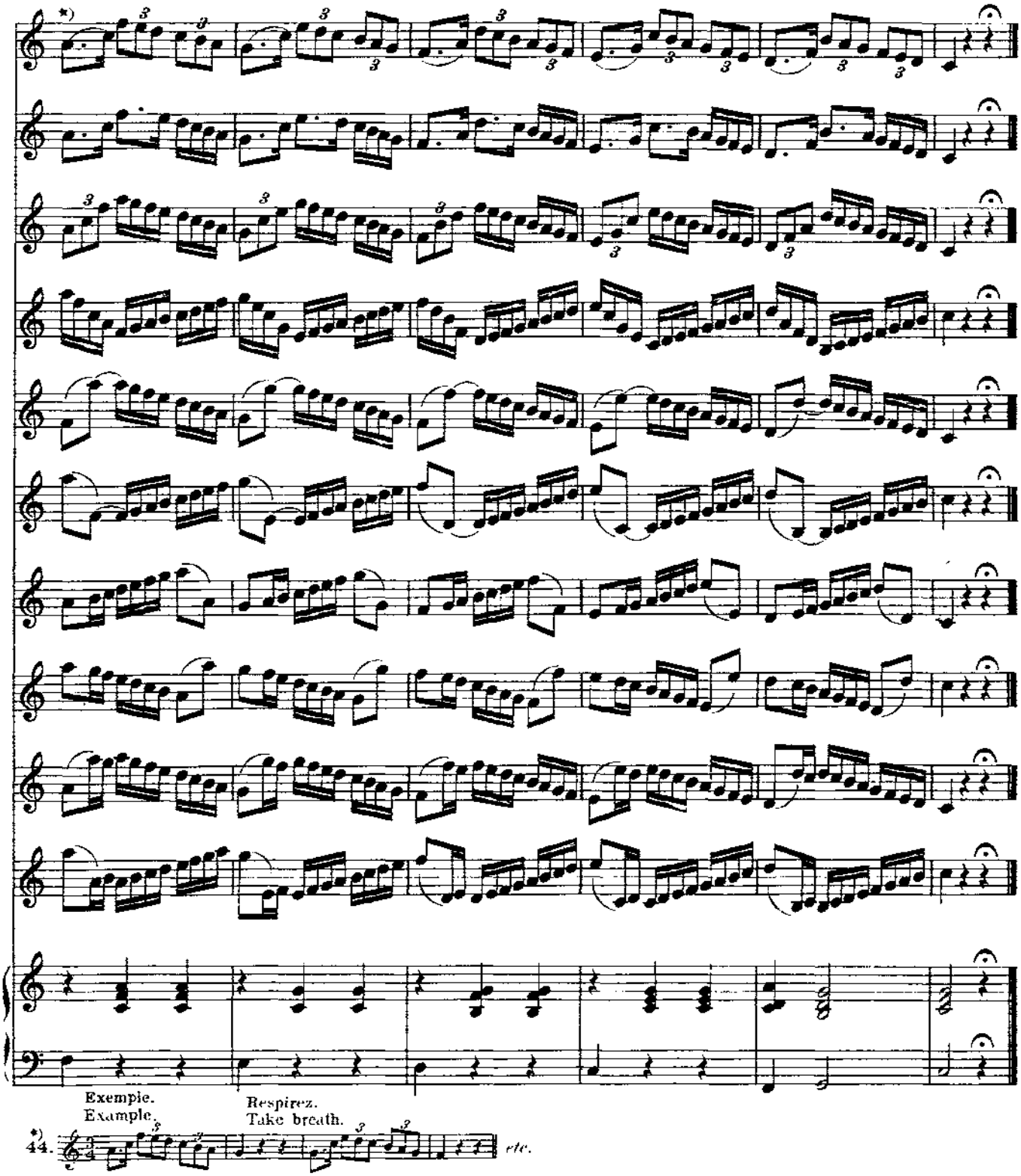
* Lorsque l'élève sera plus avancé on pourra accélérer le mouvement et réunir deux ou trois mesures dans une seule respiration.

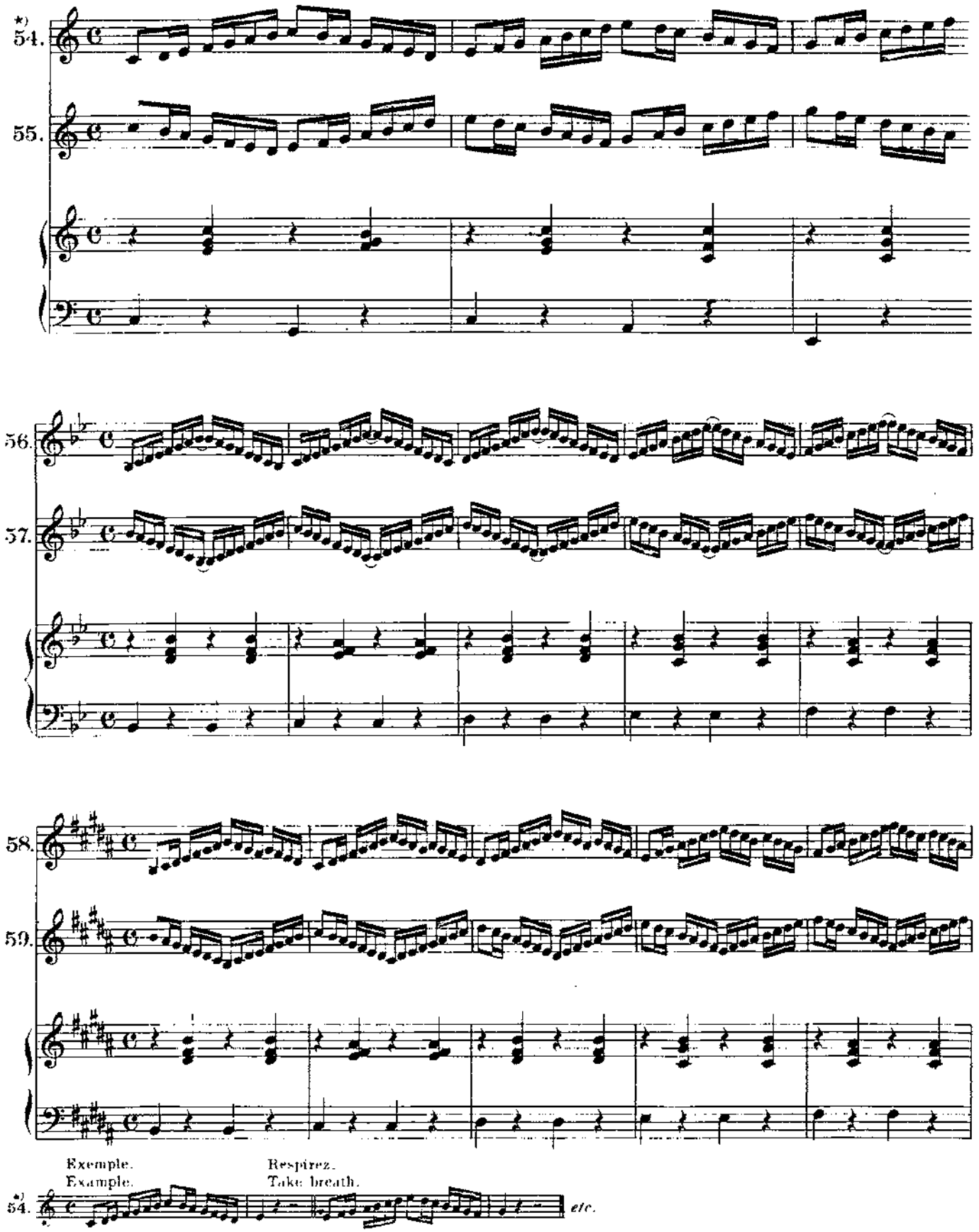
The scales are to be sung slowly at first, taking breath at each bar in order to exercise the voice and give it evenness. * When the pupil is more advanced, the tempo may be quickened, and two or even three measures sung in one breath.

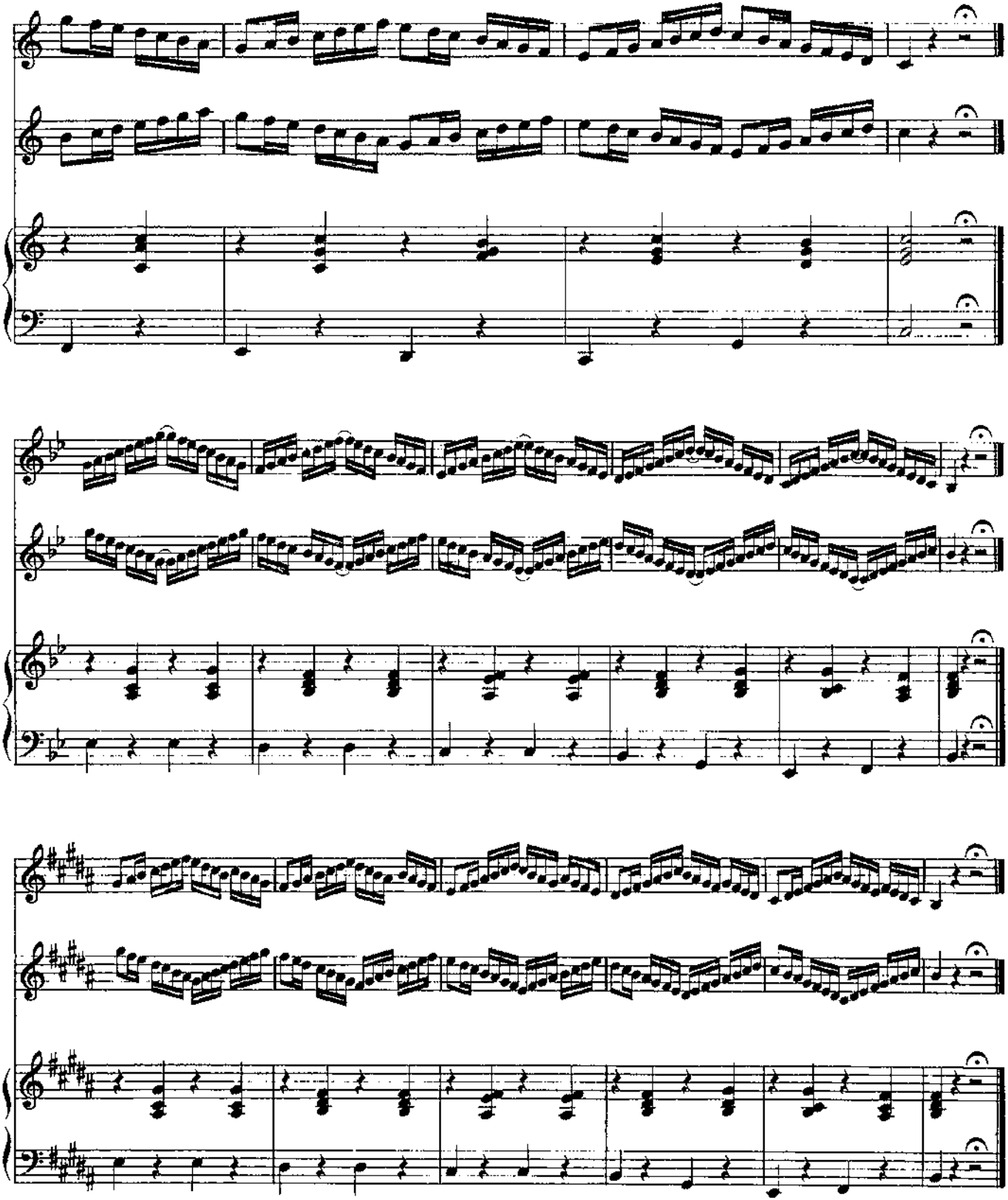


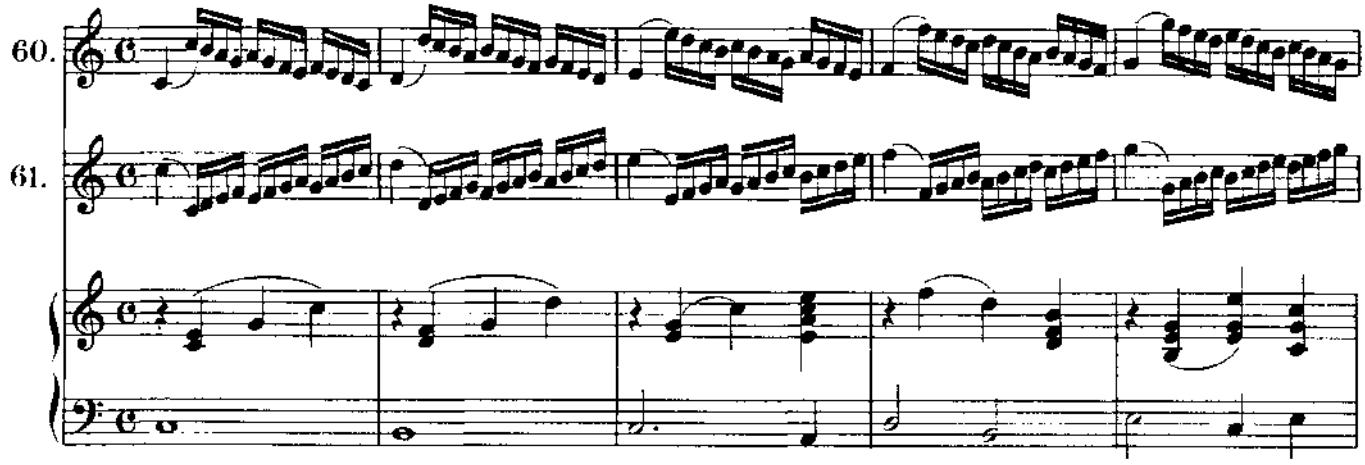
Continuation
des Exercices 44 au 53.

Continuation
of Exercises 44 to 53.



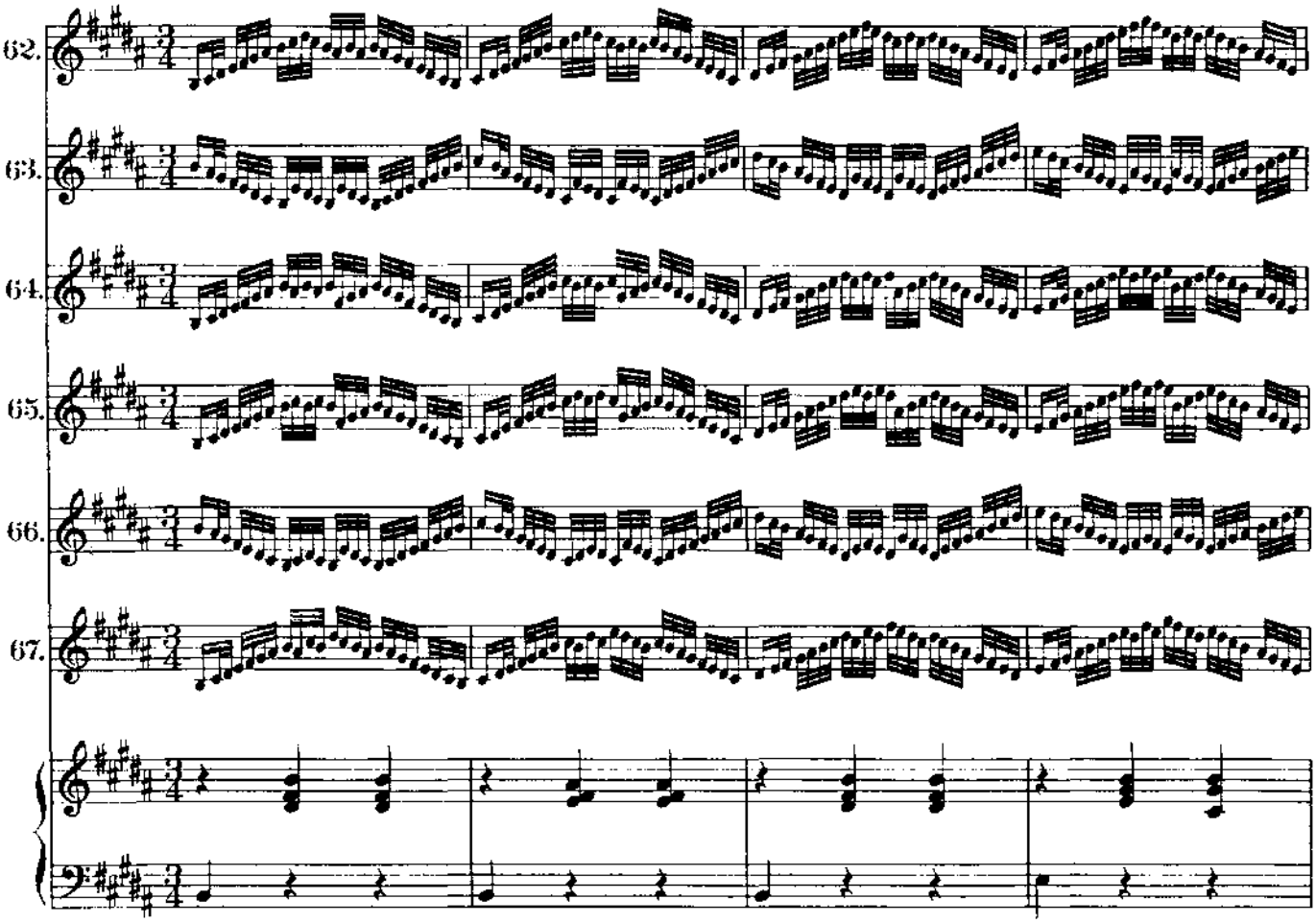

*)
54.
55.
56.
57.
58.
59.
Exemple.
Example.
Respirez.
Take breath.
*)
54.
etc.



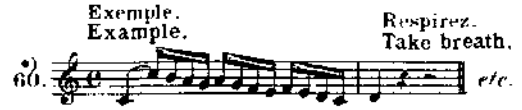


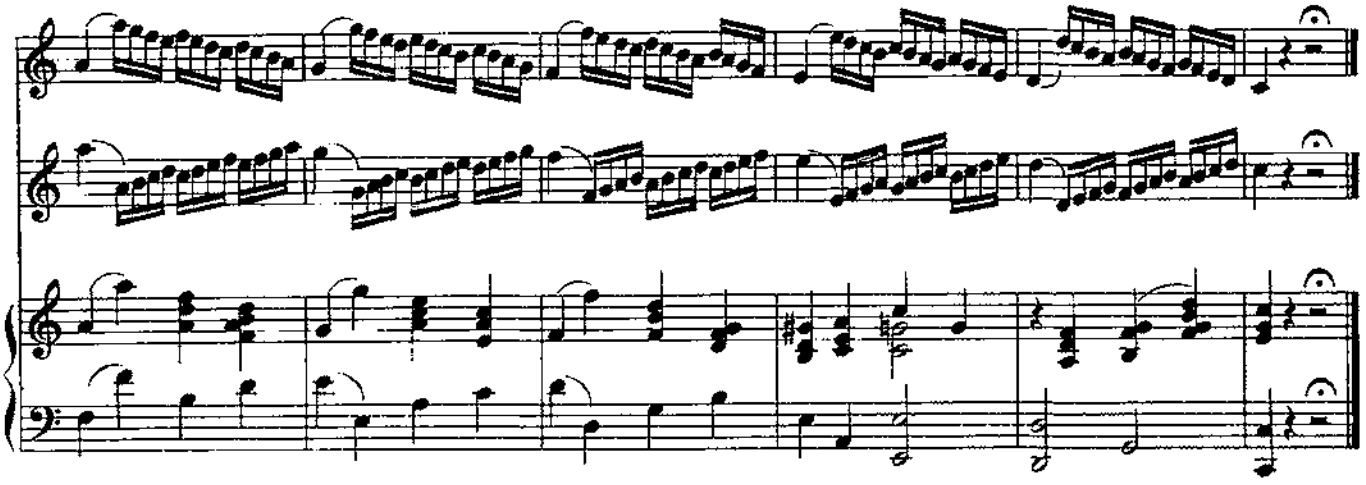
Les gammes du 62 au 73 sont surtout destinées aux Sopranos légers; il ne faut les aborder que lorsque la voix a déjà atteint un certain degré de flexibilité.

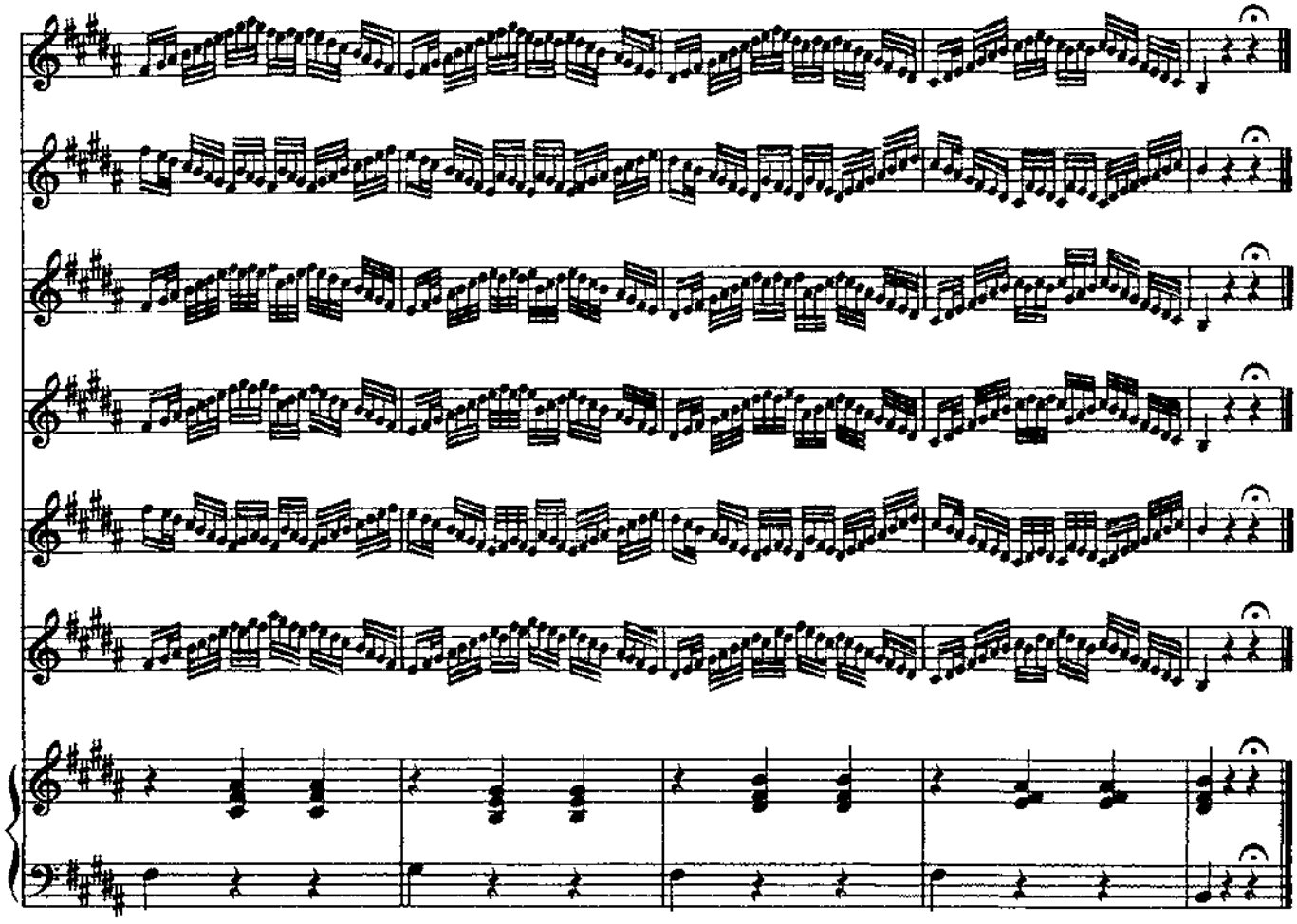
The scale-passages Nos. 62 to 73 are particularly intended for a light soprano voice; they should be practised only after the organ has acquired a certain amount of flexibility.

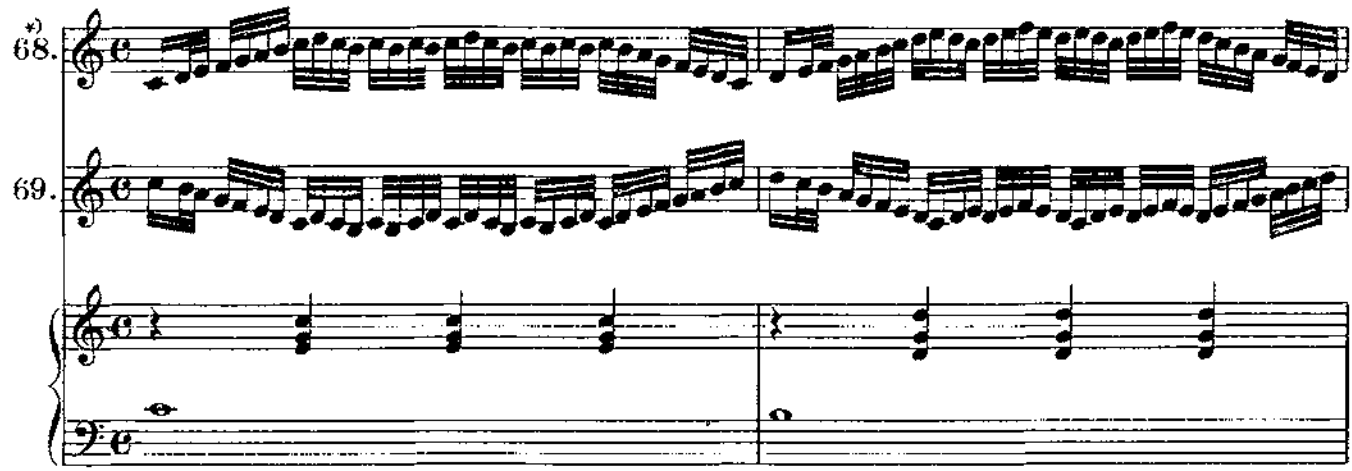


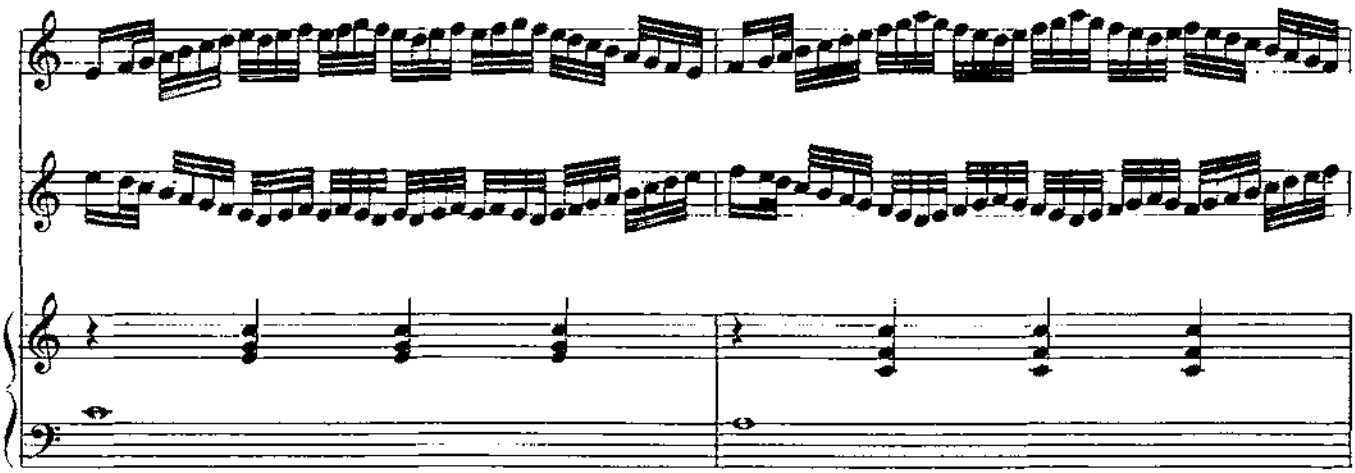
Exemple.
Example.

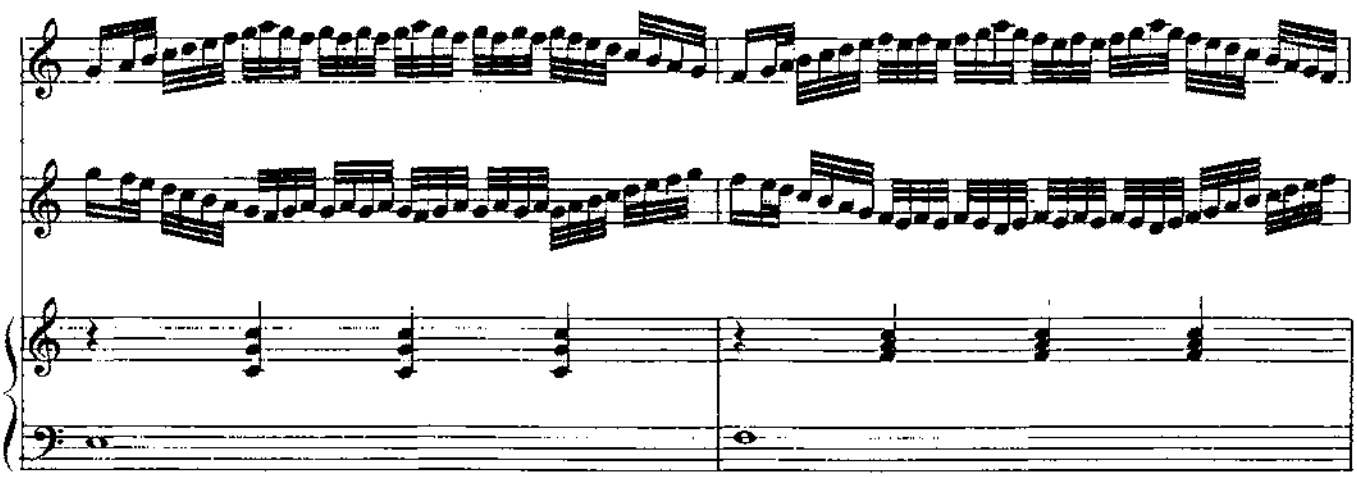






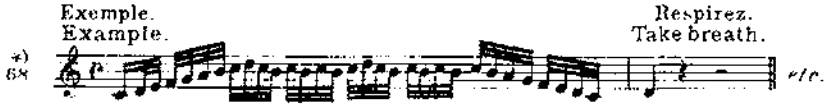


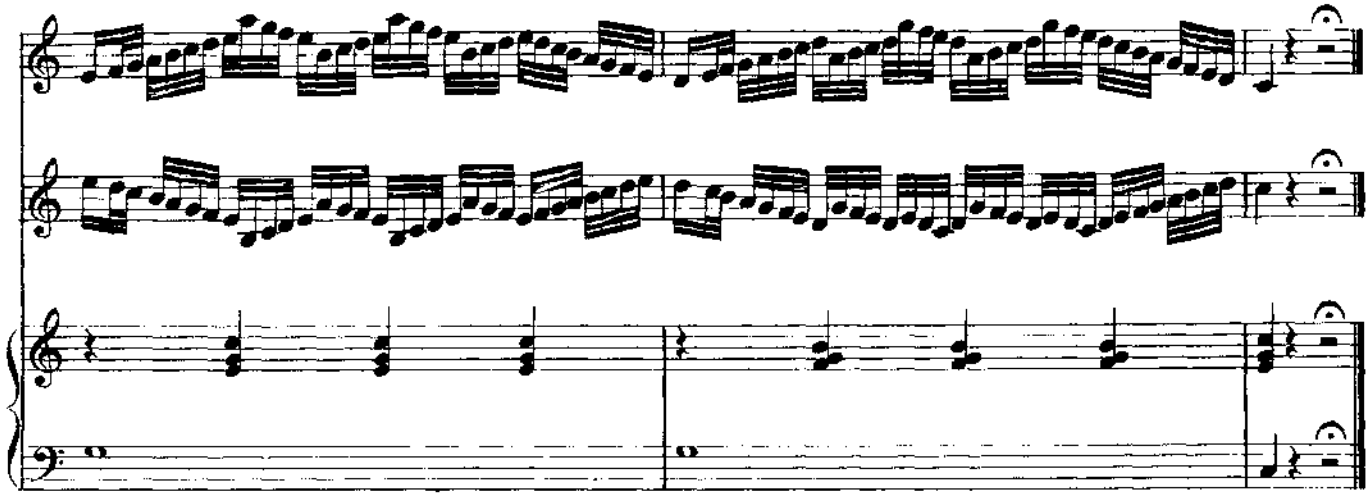


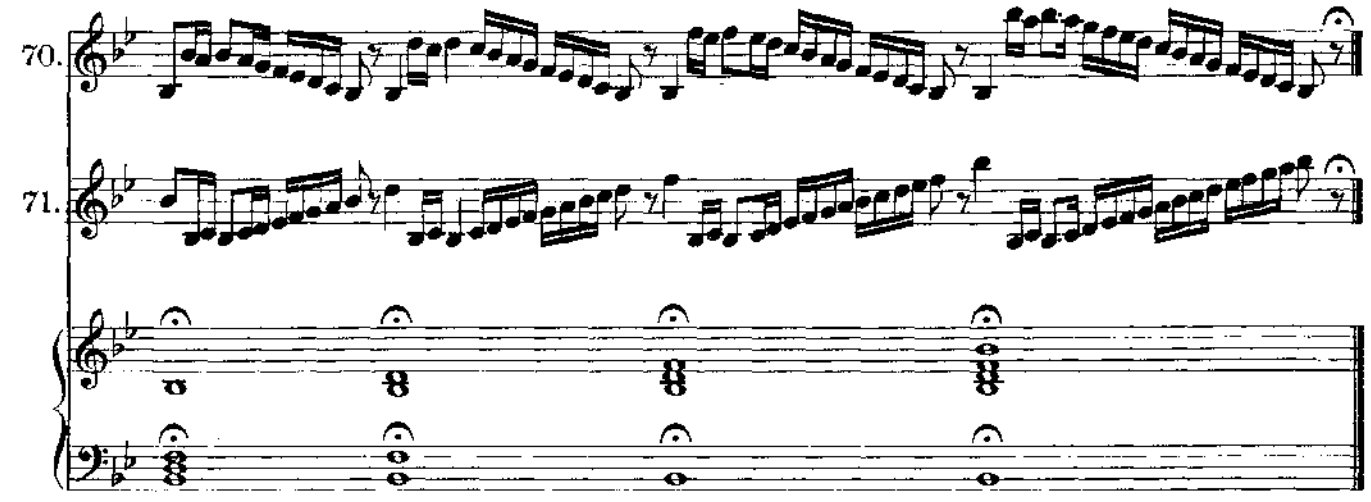


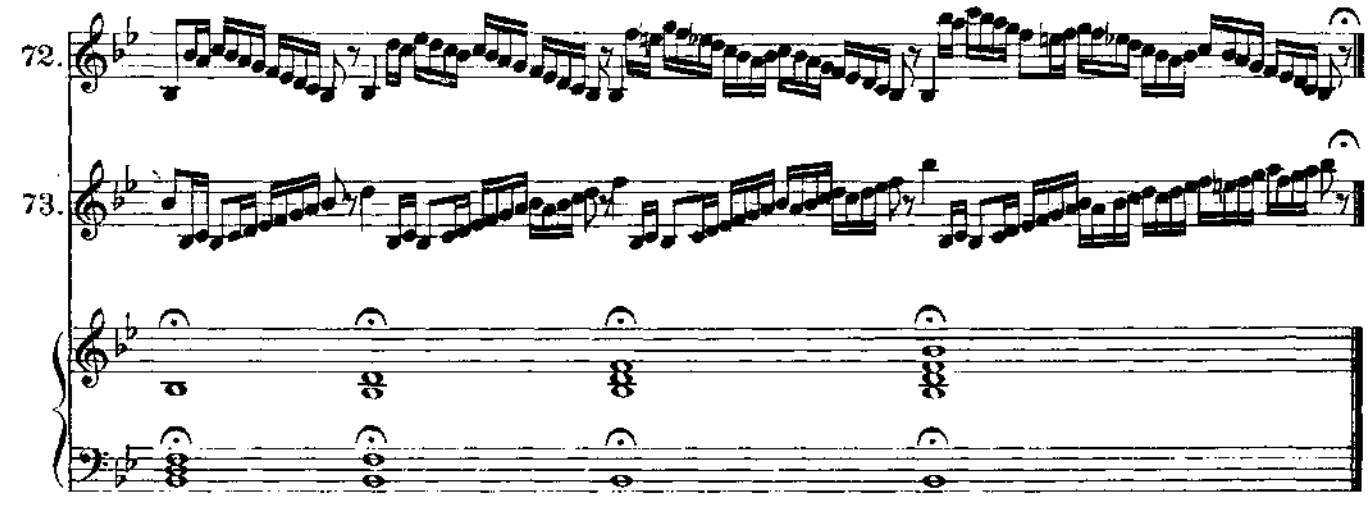
Exemple.
Example.

Respirez.
Take breath.






70.
71.


72.
73.

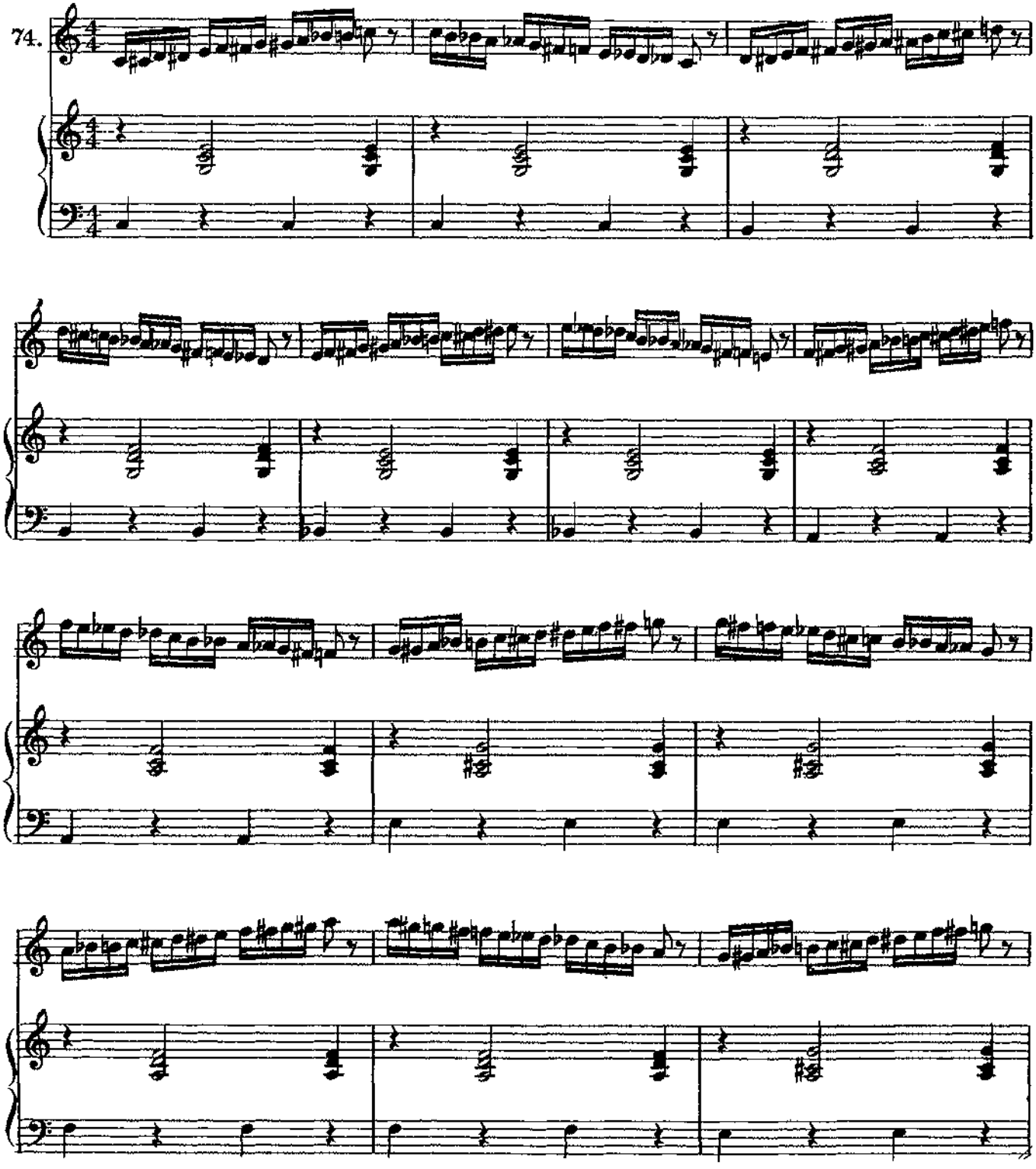
Gamme chromatique.

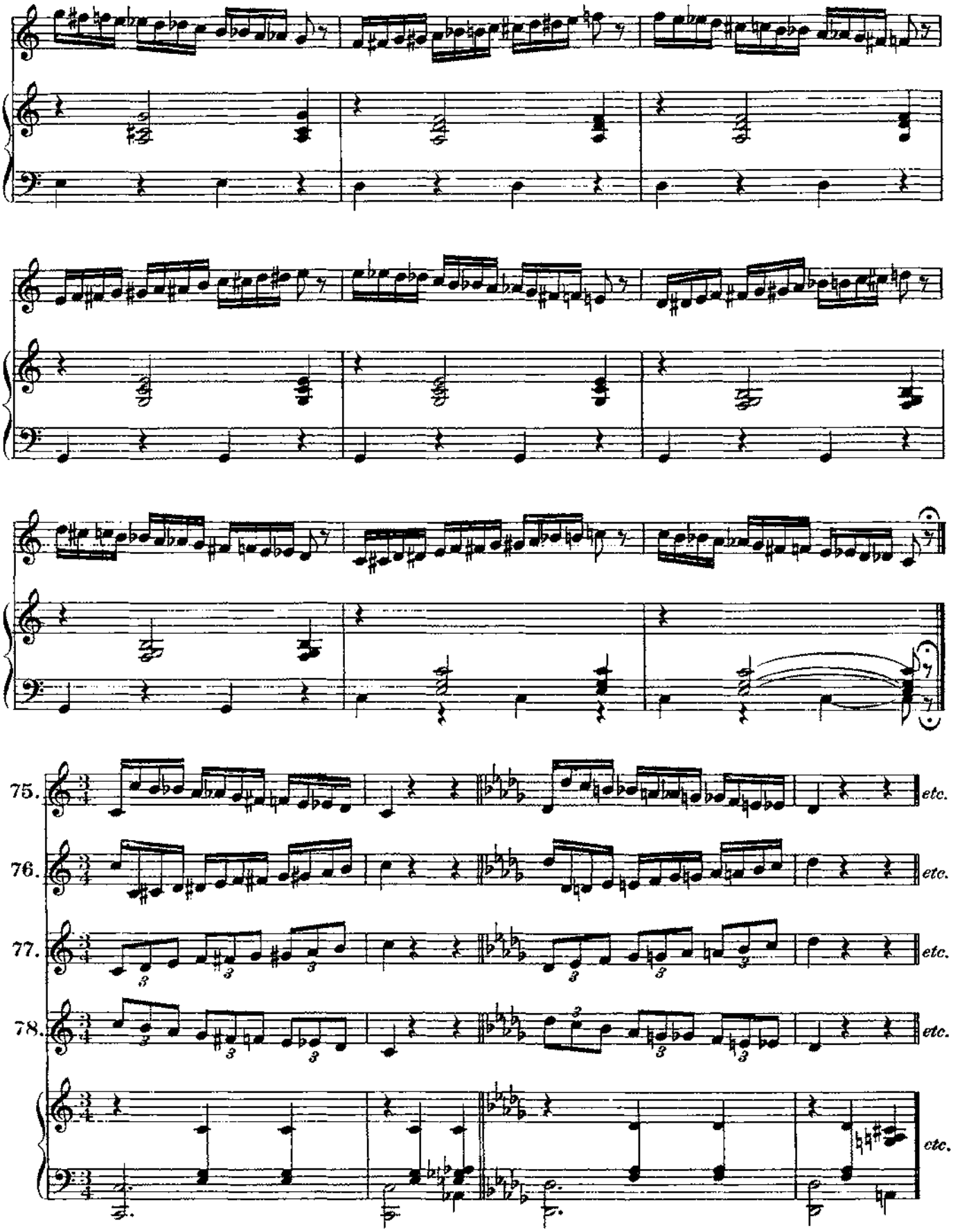
Dans les commencements on jouera la gamme chromatique au piano, en même temps que l'élève la chante, afin que l'intonation soit parfaitement juste. On transposera ces gammes comme les précédentes par demi-tons. Pour acquérir une intonation parfaite, on étudiéra les gammes chromatiques dans un mouvement très modéré.

The Chromatic Scale.

The chromatic scale must at first be played on the piano while the pupil sings the notes, so that a true intonation may be acquired. These scale-exercises must be transposed, like the preceding ones, by semitones. In order to sing the chromatic scale correctly in tune, it must be practised slowly.

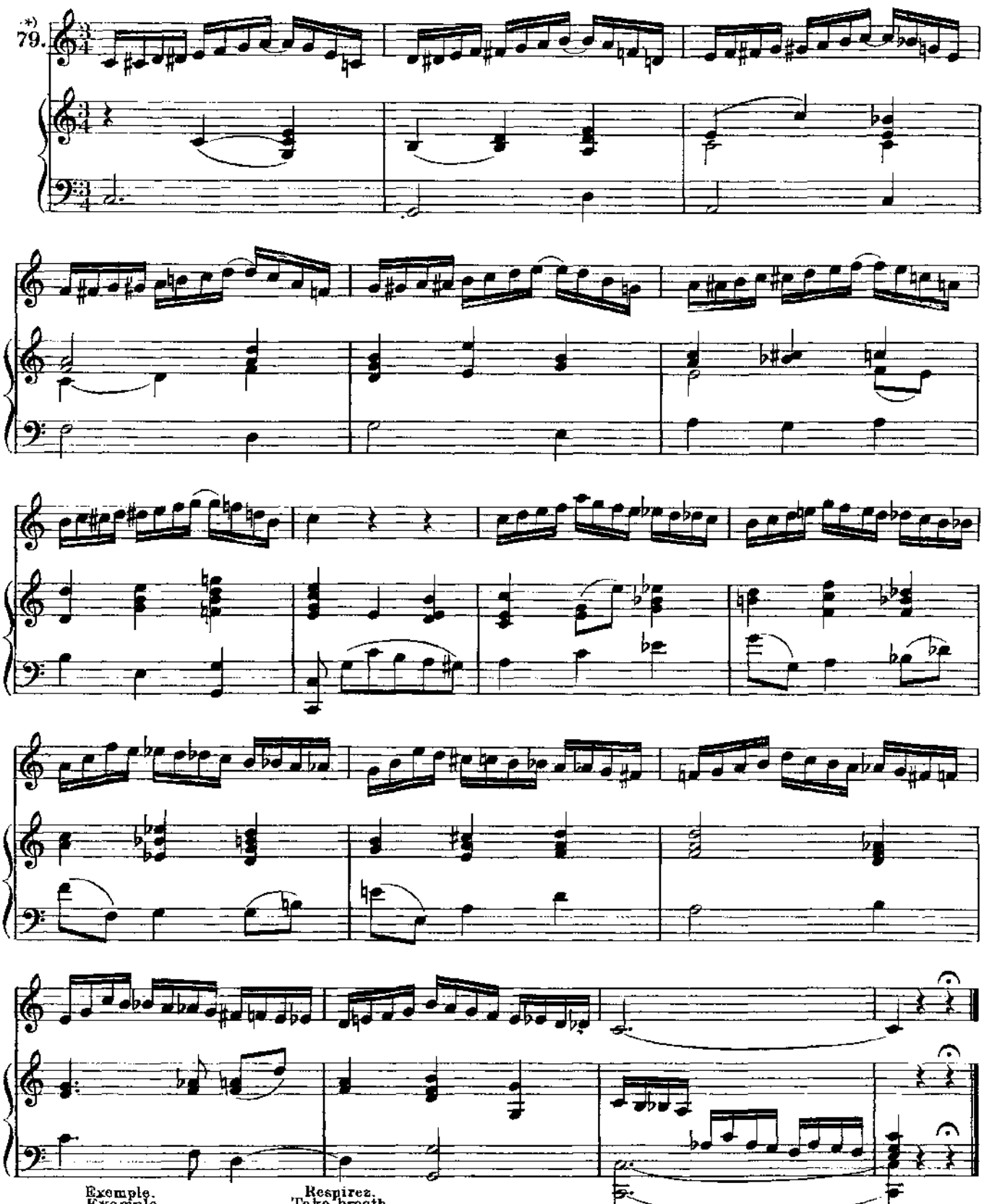
74.

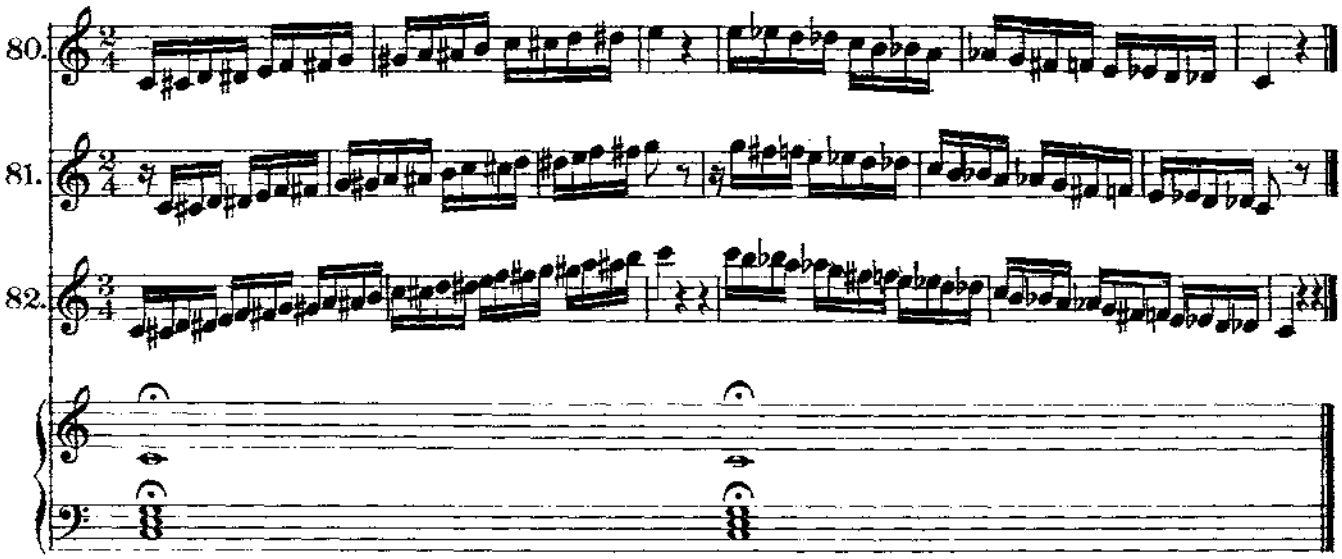



75.
76.
77.
78.
etc.

Gamme chromatique et diatonique. | Chromatic and Diatonic Scales.

79.





Gammes mineures.

On transposera les gammes mineures ainsi que les autres gammes.

Gamme mélodique.

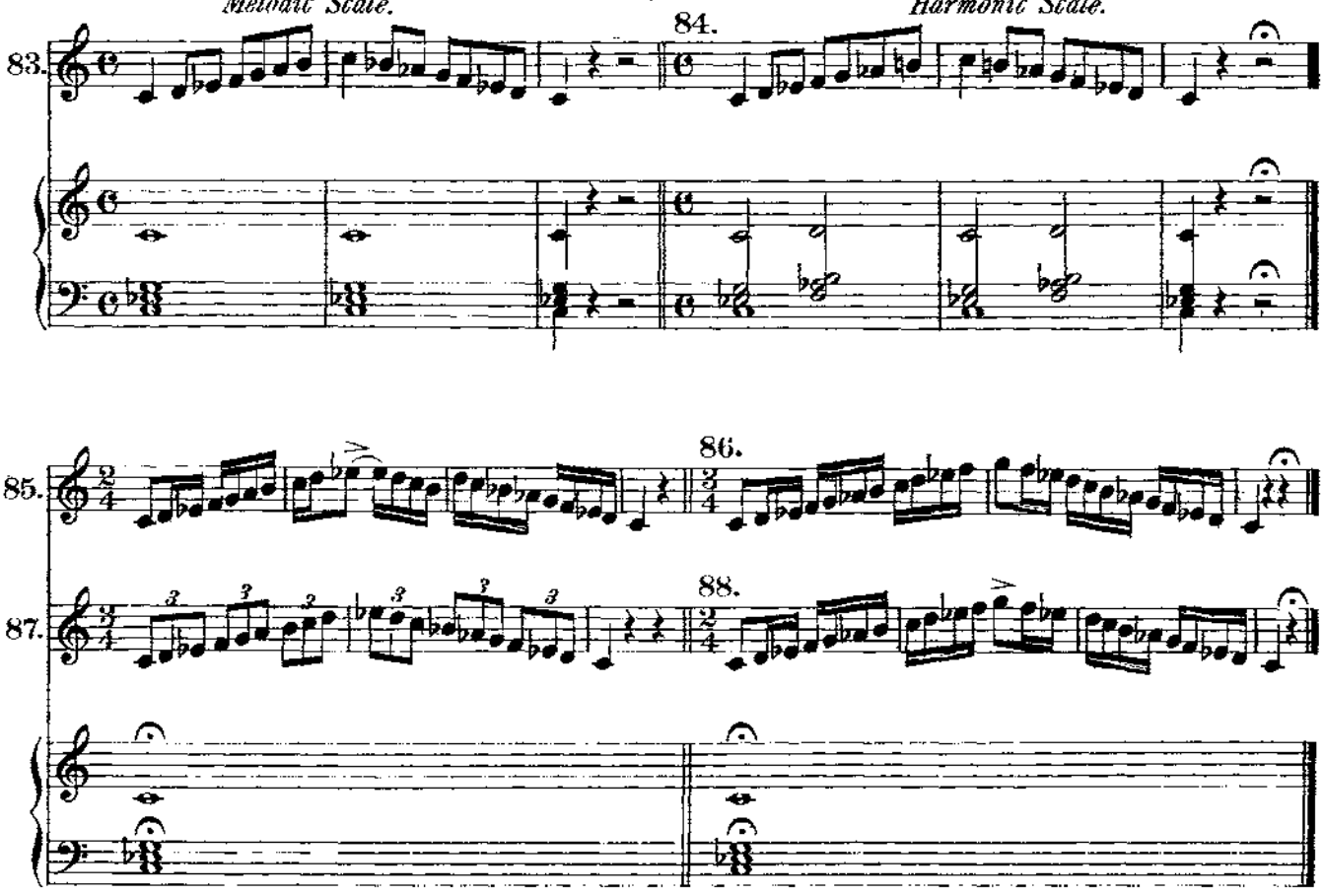
Melodic Scale.

Minor Scales.

The minor scales must be transposed in the same way as the others.

Gamme harmonique.

Harmonic Scale.

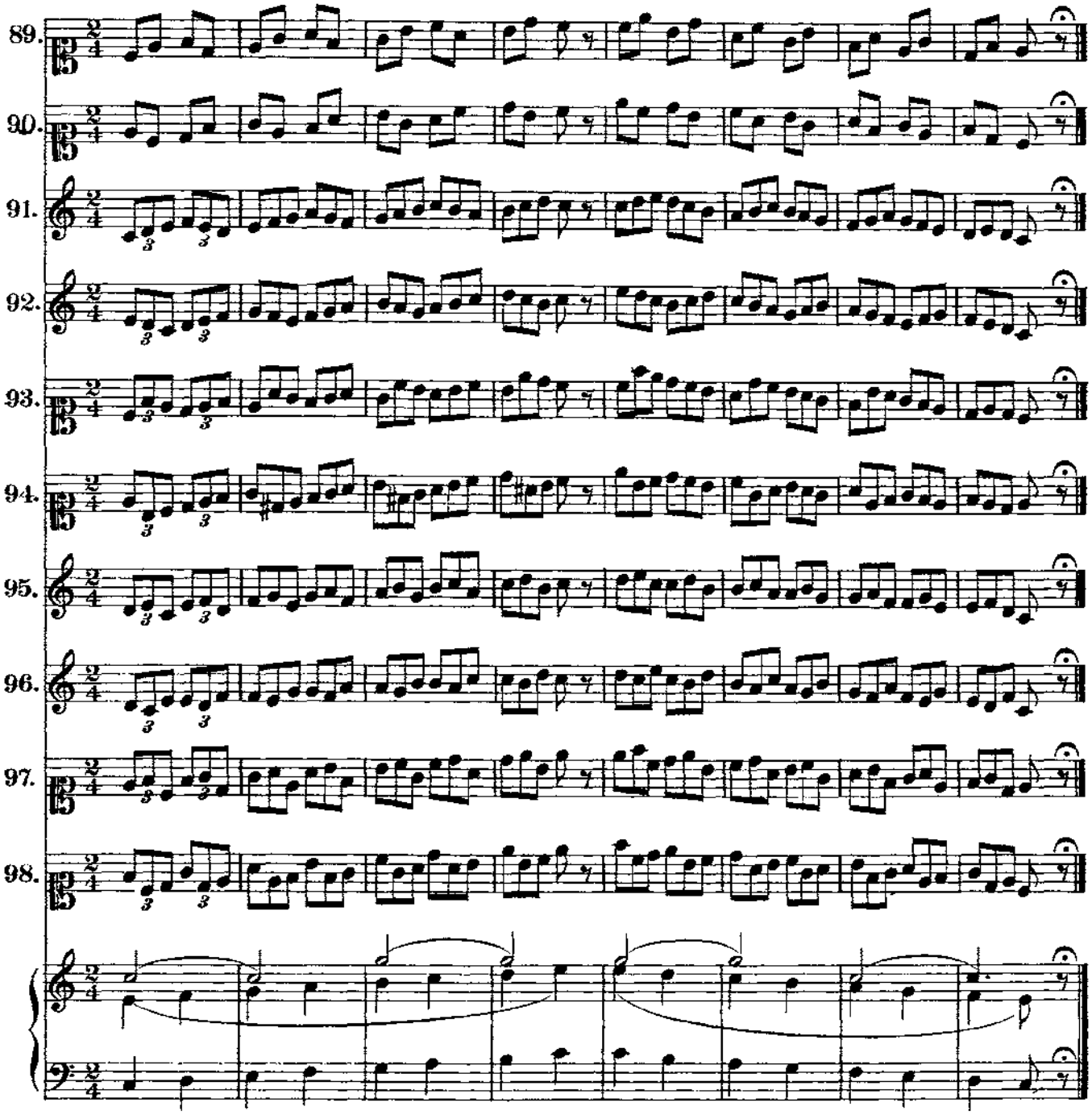


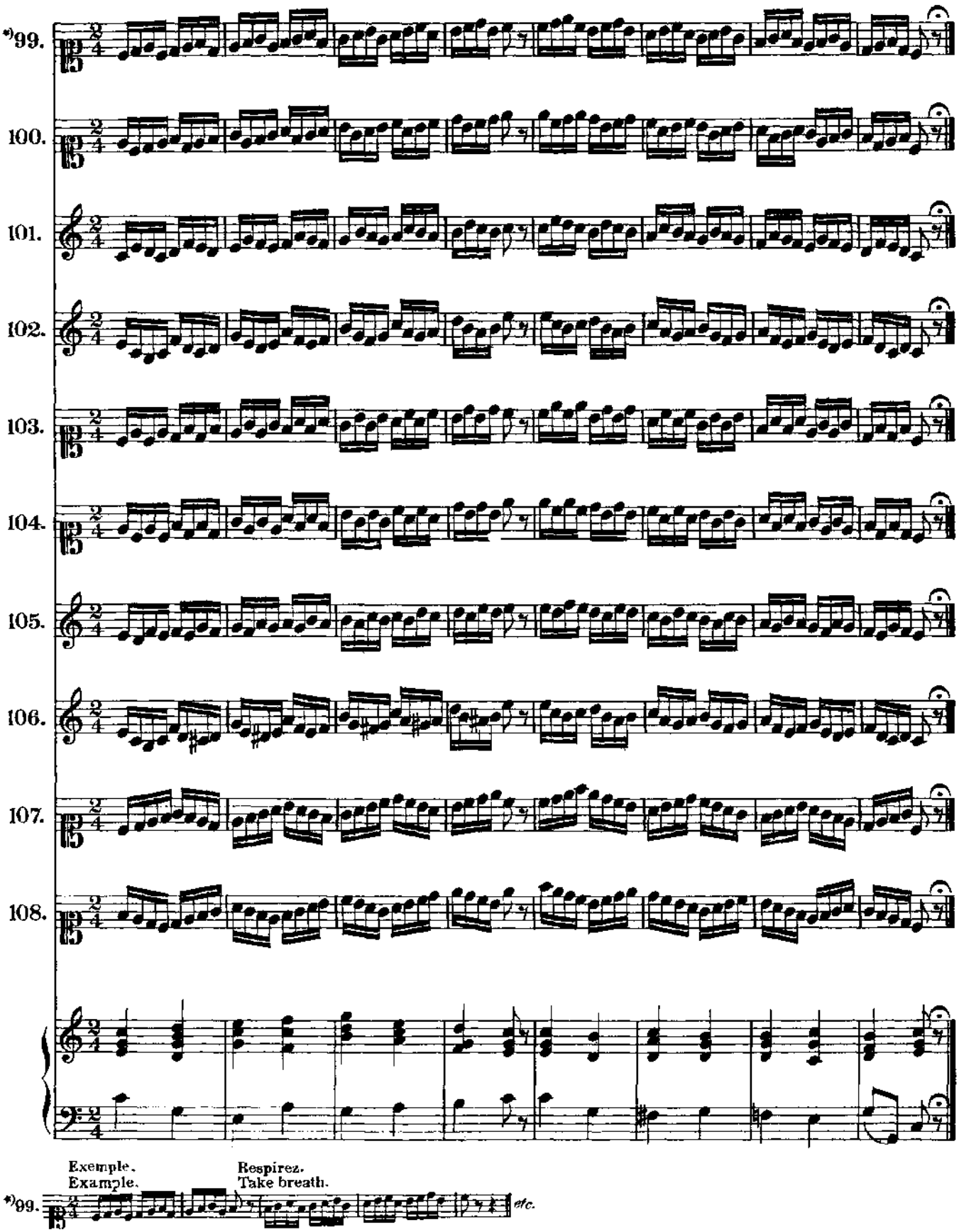
Les exercices de deux, trois, quatre, six, sept et huit notes, servent à fondre les registres, à préciser l'intonation et à perfectionner l'agilité. On chantera ces exercices comme les gammes, *lentement* d'abord, en respirant par intervalles et en les transposant, suivant le genre de voix, en montant ou en descendant d'un demi-ton; on pourra en accélérer le mouvement quand l'élève sera plus avancé.

J'ai écrit quelques exercices en clef de Soprano pour initier les élèves à la lecture de cette clef.

The exercises of two, three, four, five, six, seven and eight notes are for the purpose of blending the registers, rendering the intonation certain, and improving the fluency. They are to be sung slowly at first, like the scales, taking suitable breath, and they are to be transposed, according to the range of the voice, a semitone higher or lower. When the pupil has made some progress, the tempo may be quickened.

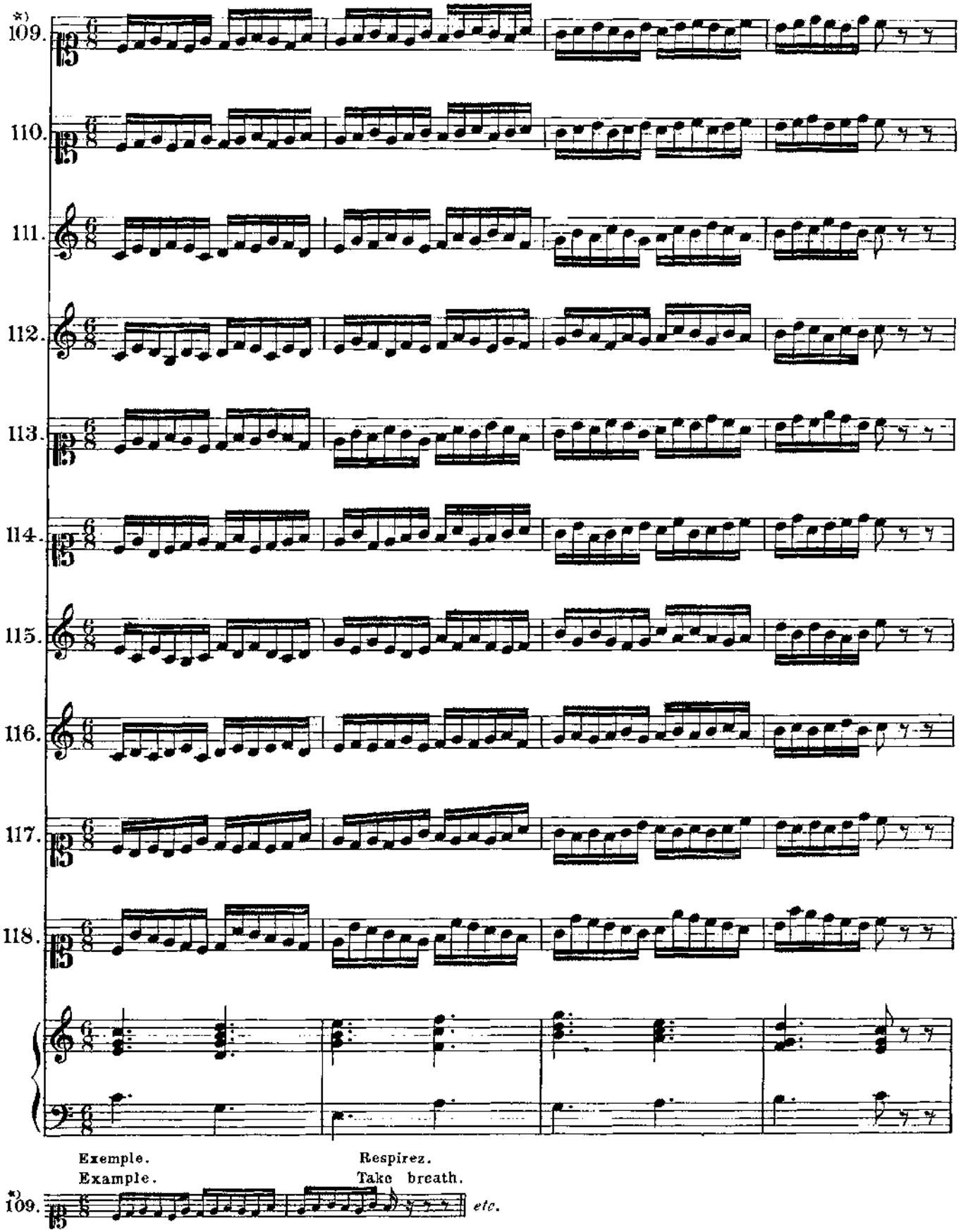
Several exercises have been written in the Soprano clef in order to render the student acquainted with it.

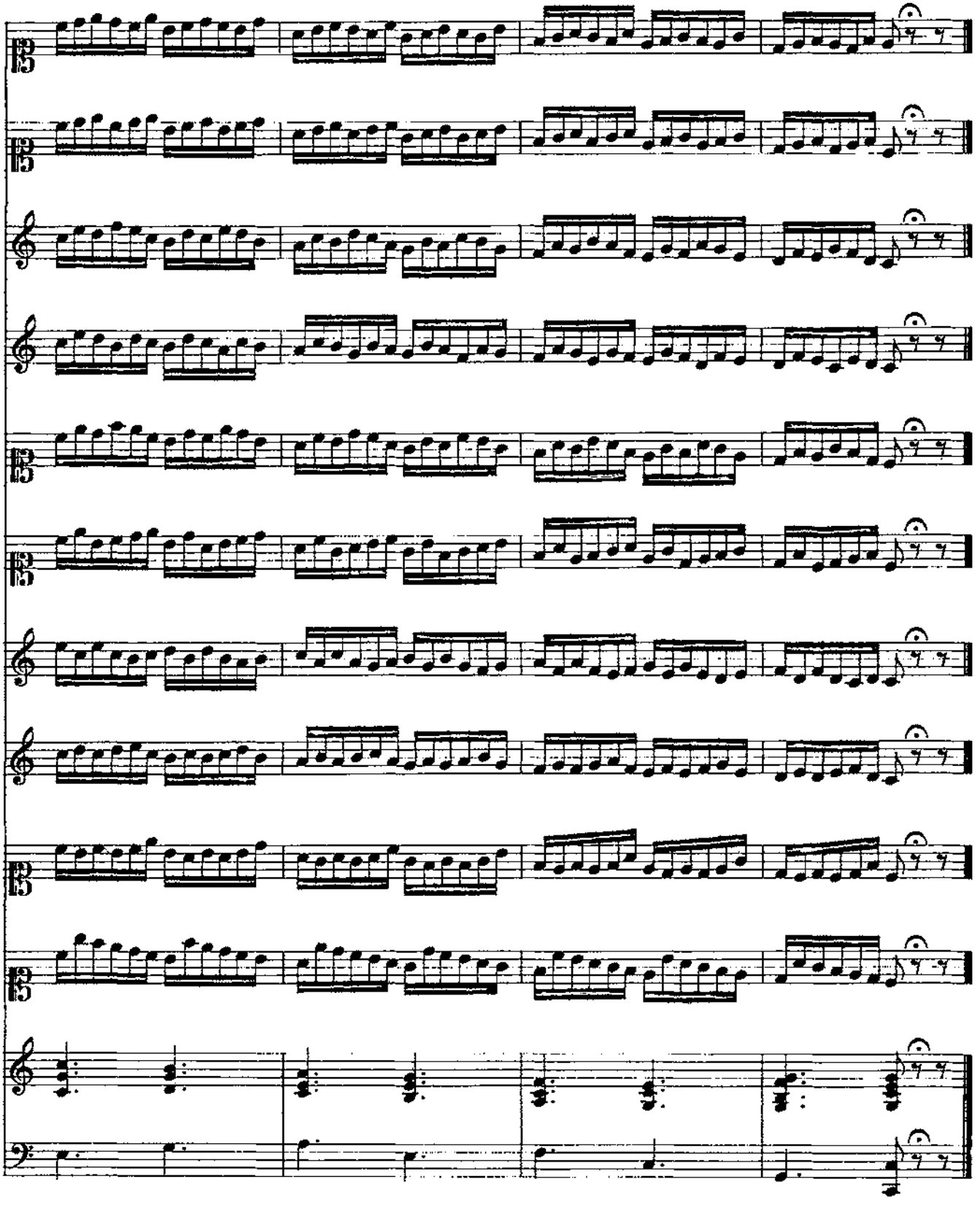


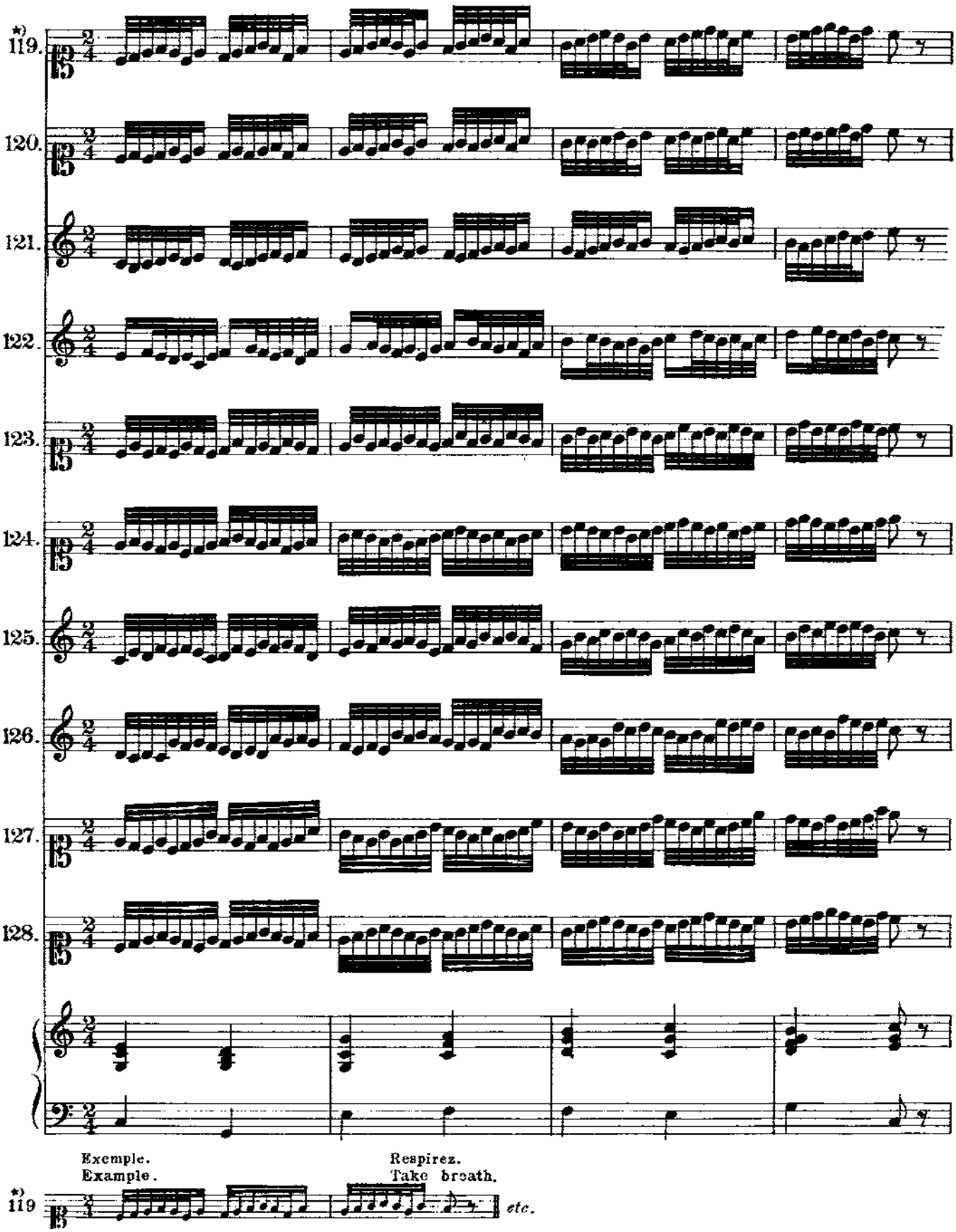


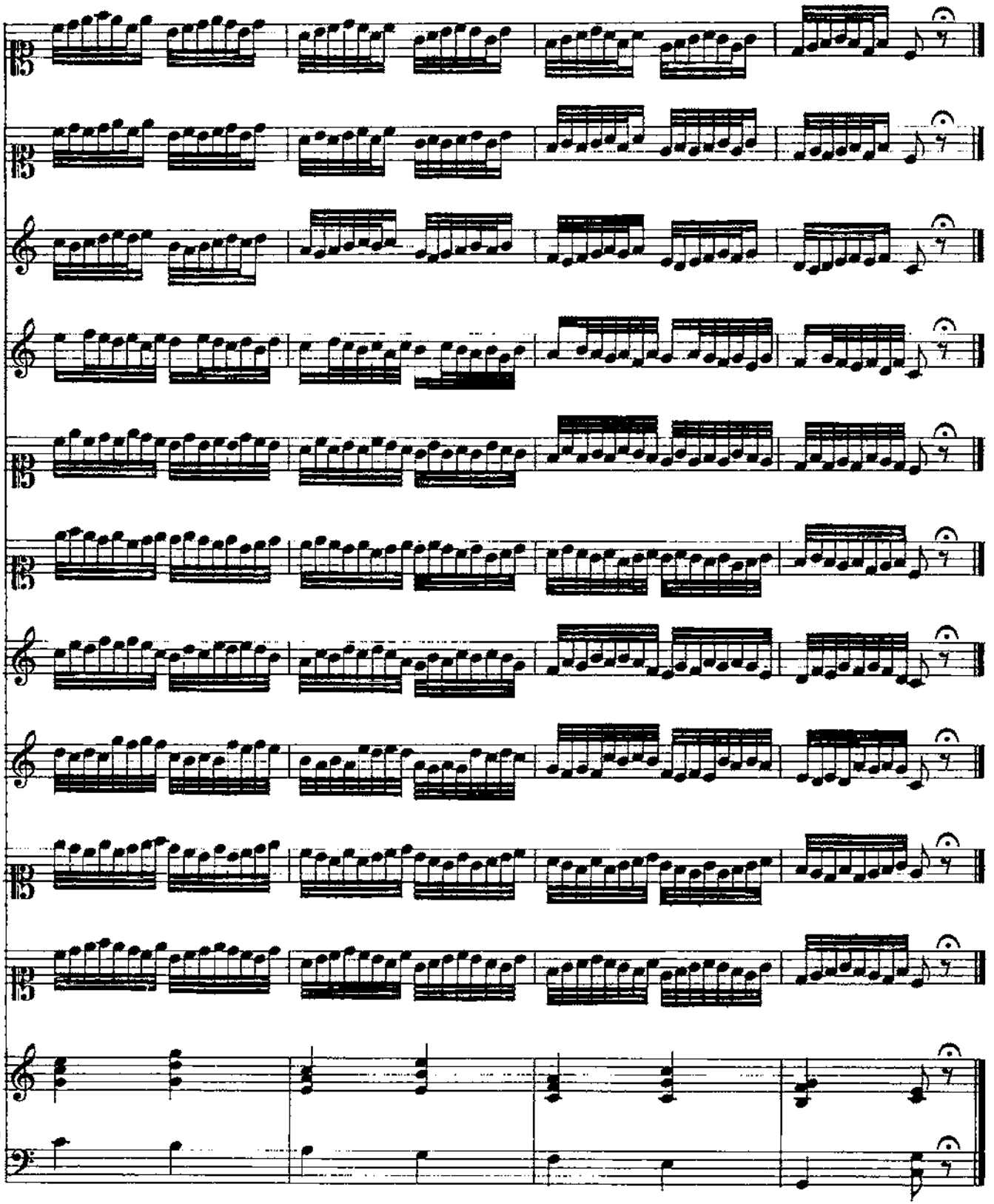
Exemple.
Example.

Respirez.
Take breath.


*)
109.
110.
111.
112.
113.
114.
115.
116.
117.
118.
Exemple.
Example.
Respirez.
Take breath.
*)
109.
etc.




*)
119.
120.
121.
122.
123.
124.
125.
126.
127.
128.
Exemple.
Example.
Respirez.
Take breath.
*)
119
etc.

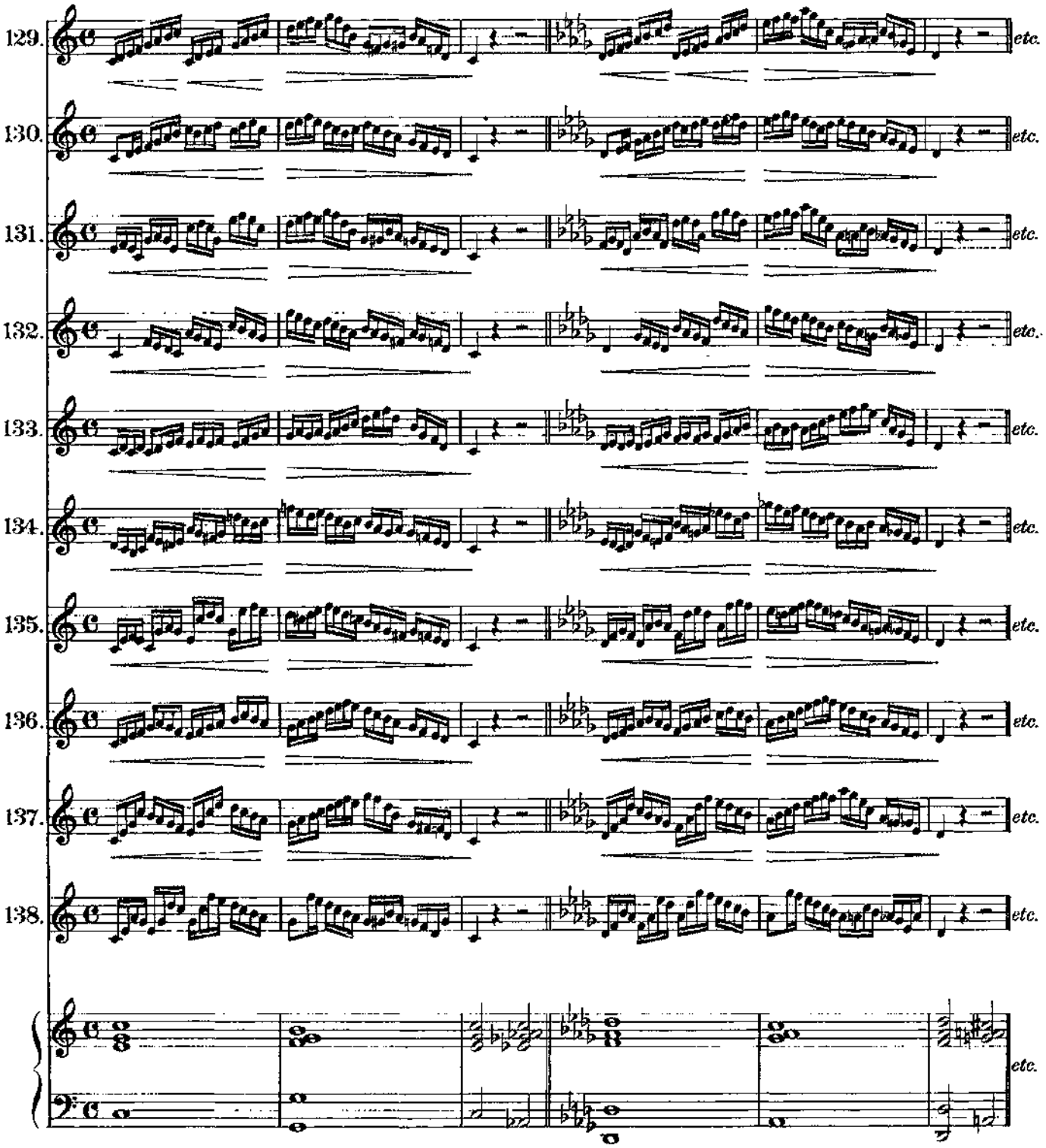


Traits d'agilité.

Les traits d'agilité devront être chantés d'une seule respiration et ne seront abordés que lorsque l'élève sera en état de les exécuter ainsi. On les transposera comme tous les exercices.

Exercises on florid passages.

These exercises must be sung in one breath and should be studied only when the student is able to execute them in this manner. They are to be transposed, like the rest.

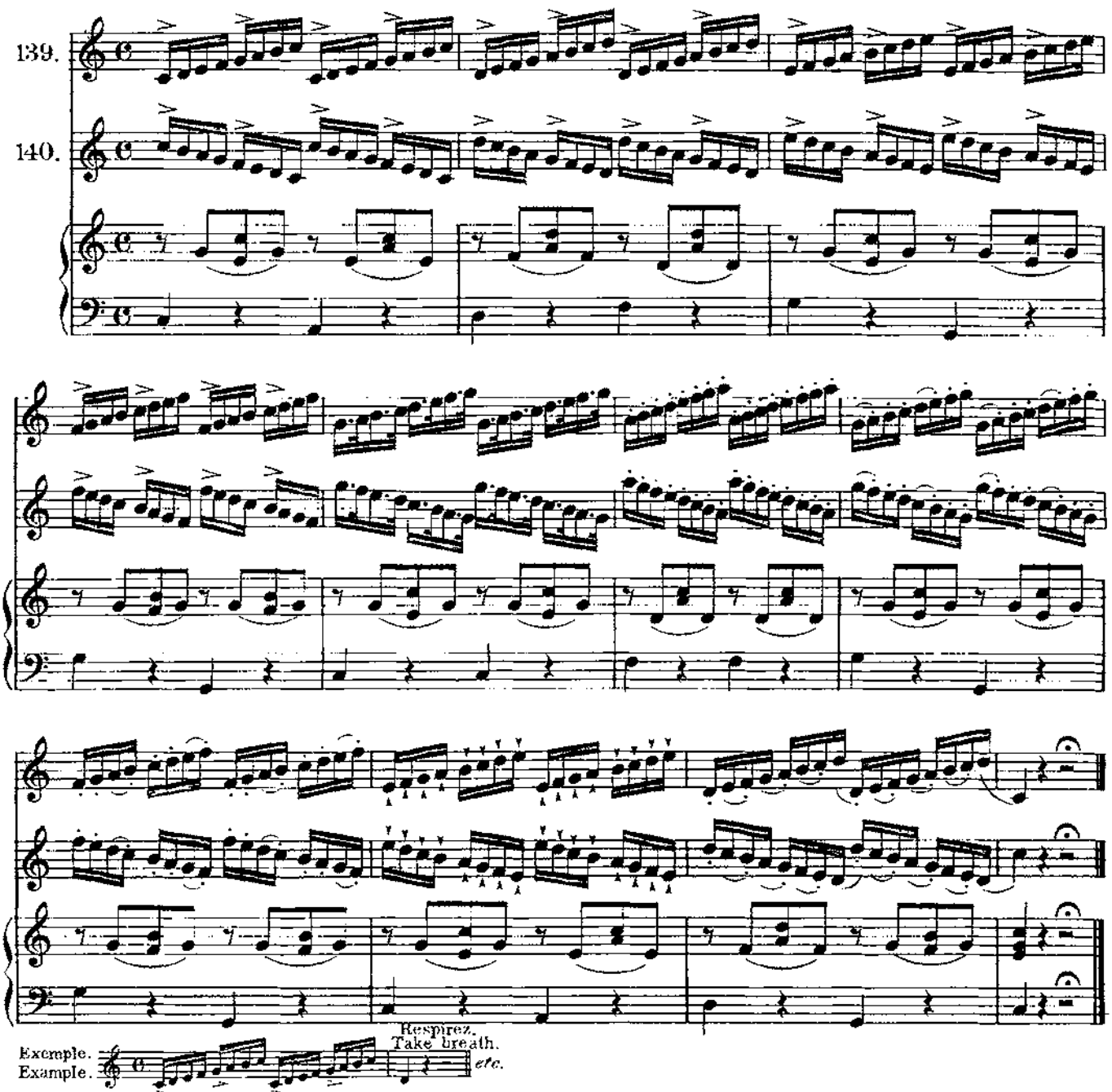


Gammes variées.

Lorsque l'agilité et l'égalité des gammes seront parfaitement établies, on pourra les chanter de différentes manières; à inflexion, pointées, piquées, liées et piquées, piquées et liées, flûtées, syncopées, crescendo et diminuendo, forte et piano. Cet exercice est specialement destiné aux voix légères. Les sons piqués se produisent en attaquant rapidement et nettement chaque note (coup de glotte.) On aura soin de ne pas exagérer l'étude des notes piquées. La répétition continue du coup de glotte fatigue la voix. Le flûté est un piqué prolongé. Les gammes à inflexion sont excellentes pour affermir l'agilité.

Scales in various ways.

When fluency and evenness in singing scales have been attained, they can be practised in various ways: With accents, dotted notes, staccato, slurred and staccato, staccato and slurred, syncopated, crescendo and diminuendo, forte and piano. This exercise is chiefly intended for a light soprano voice. In order to sing the staccato *(piqués)* notes, each separate note must be quickly and very clearly attacked. The staccato should not be too continuously practised. The rapid succession of strokes of the glottis is fatiguing to the voice. The *flûté* is a protracted *piqué*. Accented notes are an excellent exercise for improving the fluency.

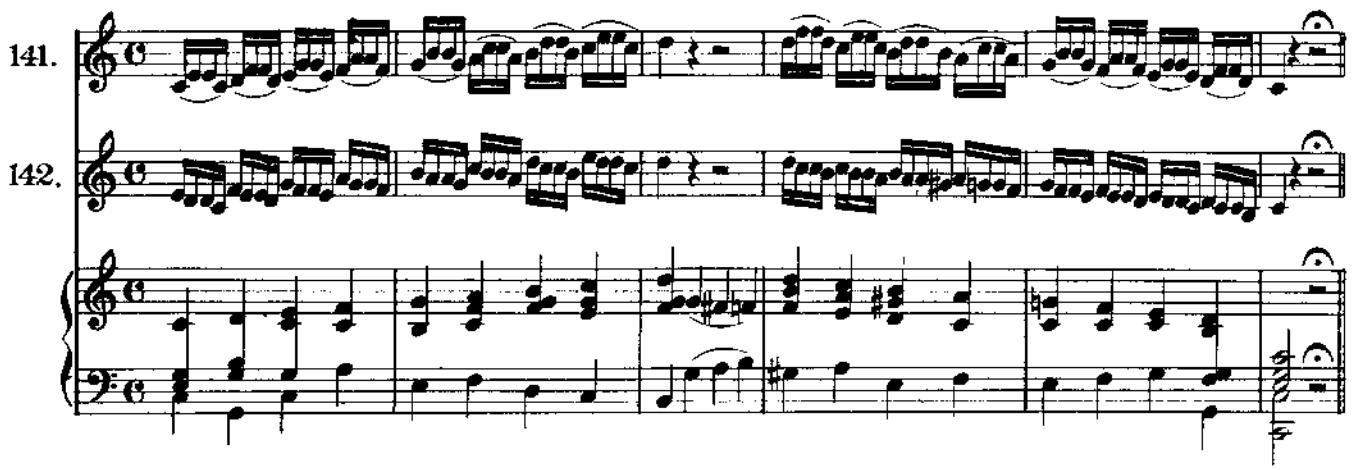


Notes répétées.

Dans ces exercices afin de faire sentir la note répétée, on fera usage d'une légère aspiration (ha, ha), sans toutefois l'exagérer.

Repeated notes.

In this exercise, in order to make the repeated notes perceptible, they must be lightly aspirated (ha, ha), but without overemphasis.

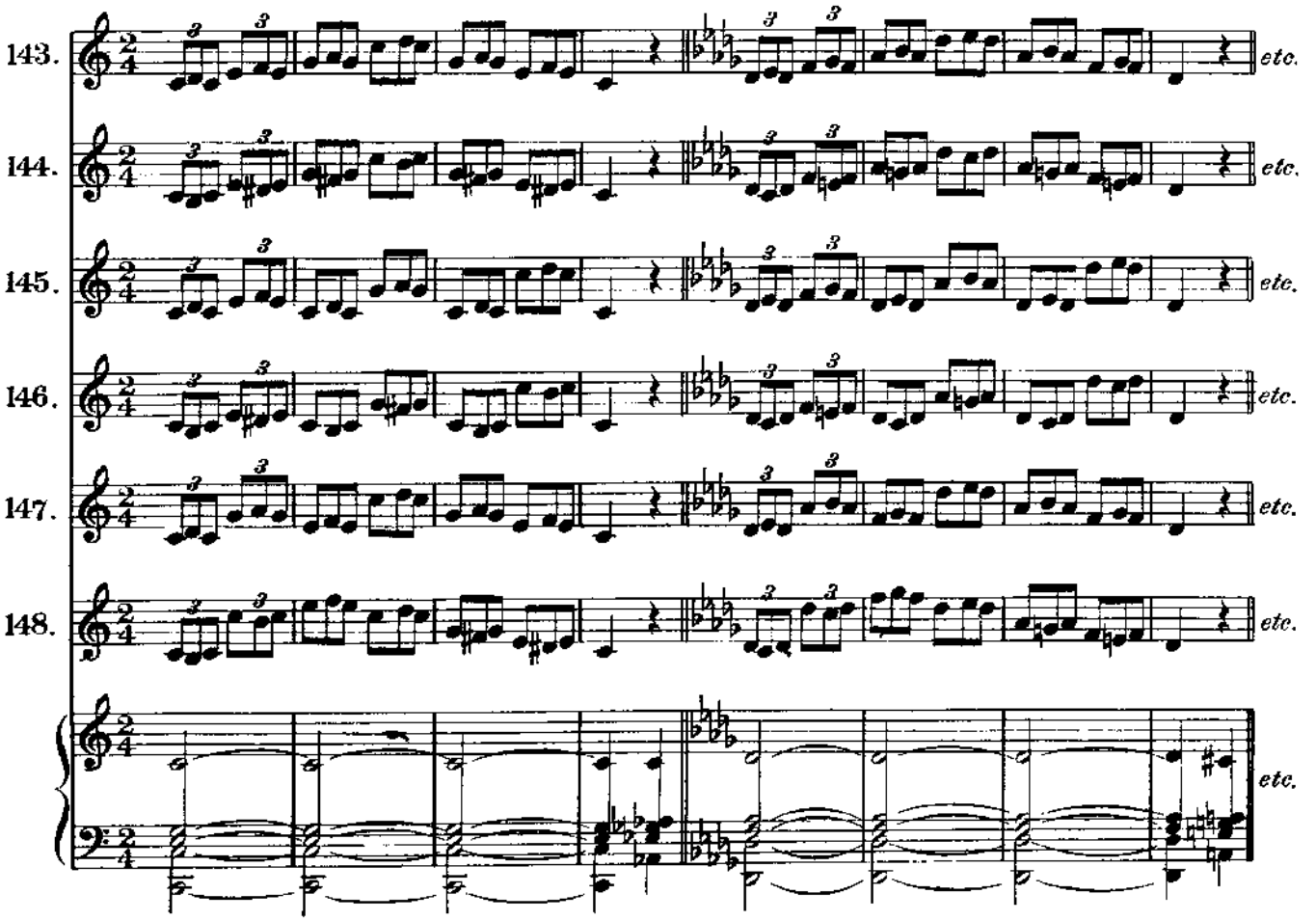


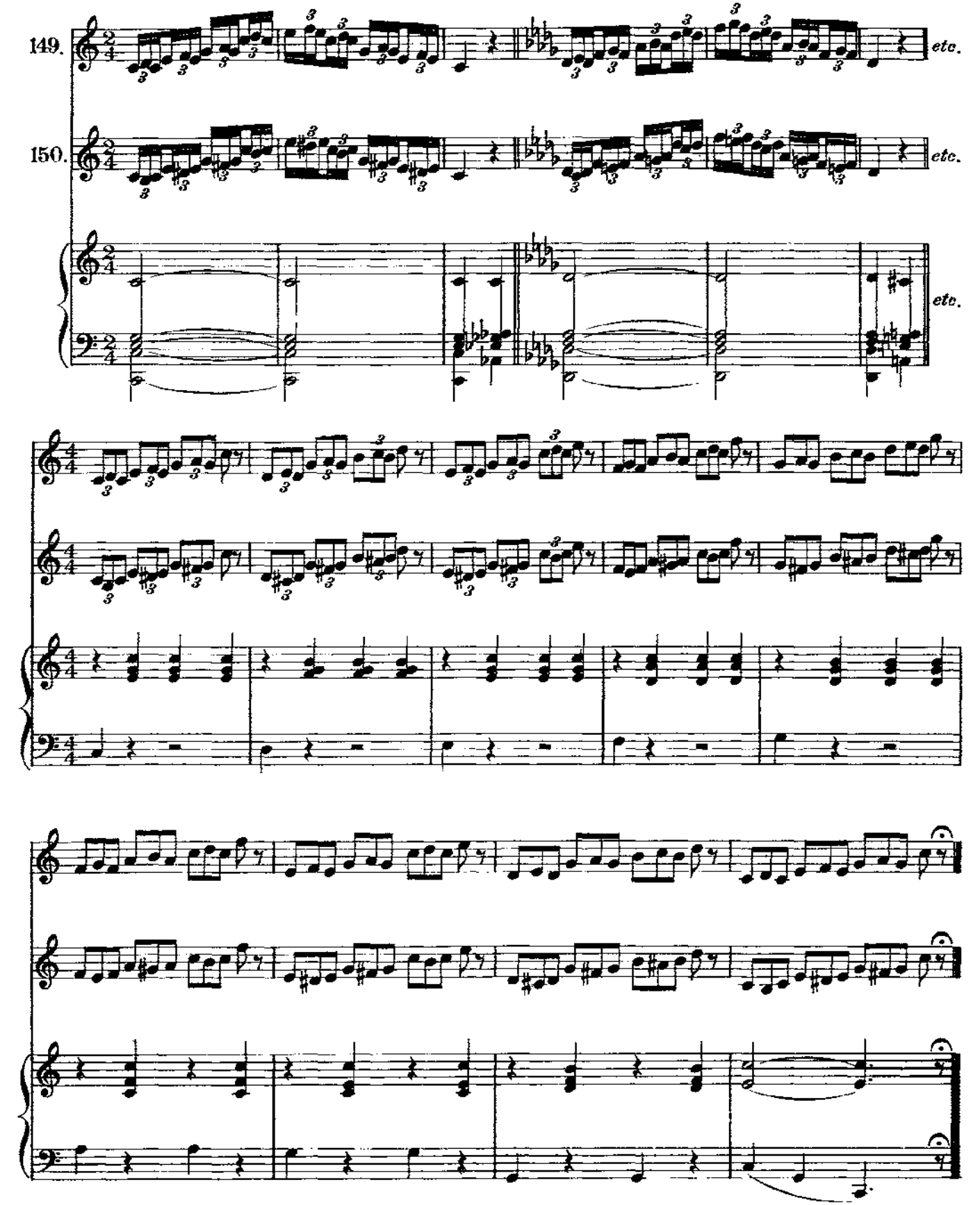
Triolet.

En étudiant le triolet, l'élève doit marquer la seconde note pour éviter l'inégalité.

Triplets.

In practising triplets the pupil must accent the second note in order to avoid unevenness.



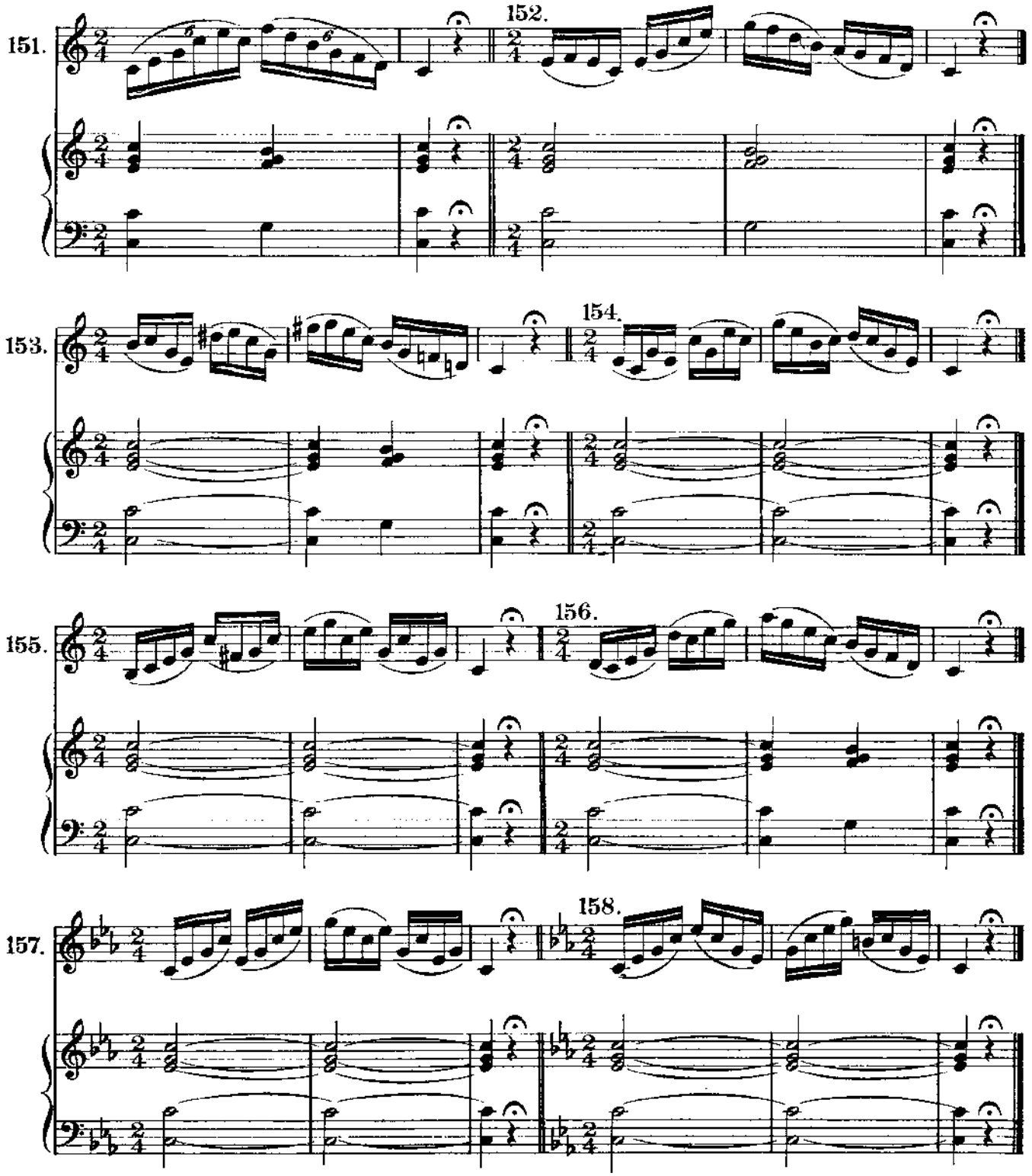

149.
etc.
150.
etc.
etc.

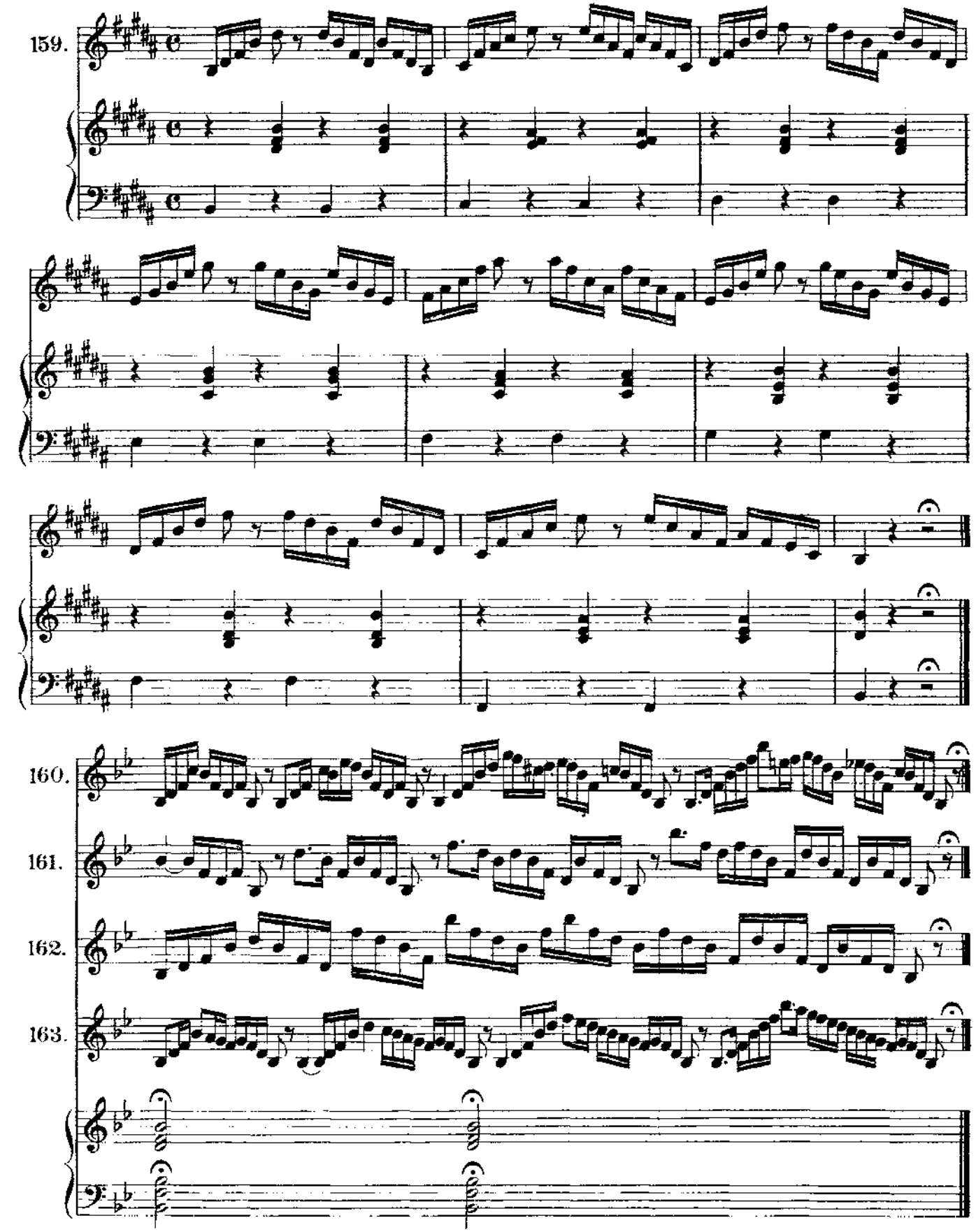
Arpèges.

On chantera l'arpège avec l'égalité la plus parfaite, en évitant surtout de donner des éclats de voix dans les notes du haut. On passera avec précision d'un ton à un autre, non pas en détachant, mais en liant légèrement les notes. On transposera les Arpèges comme tous les exercices par demi-ton.

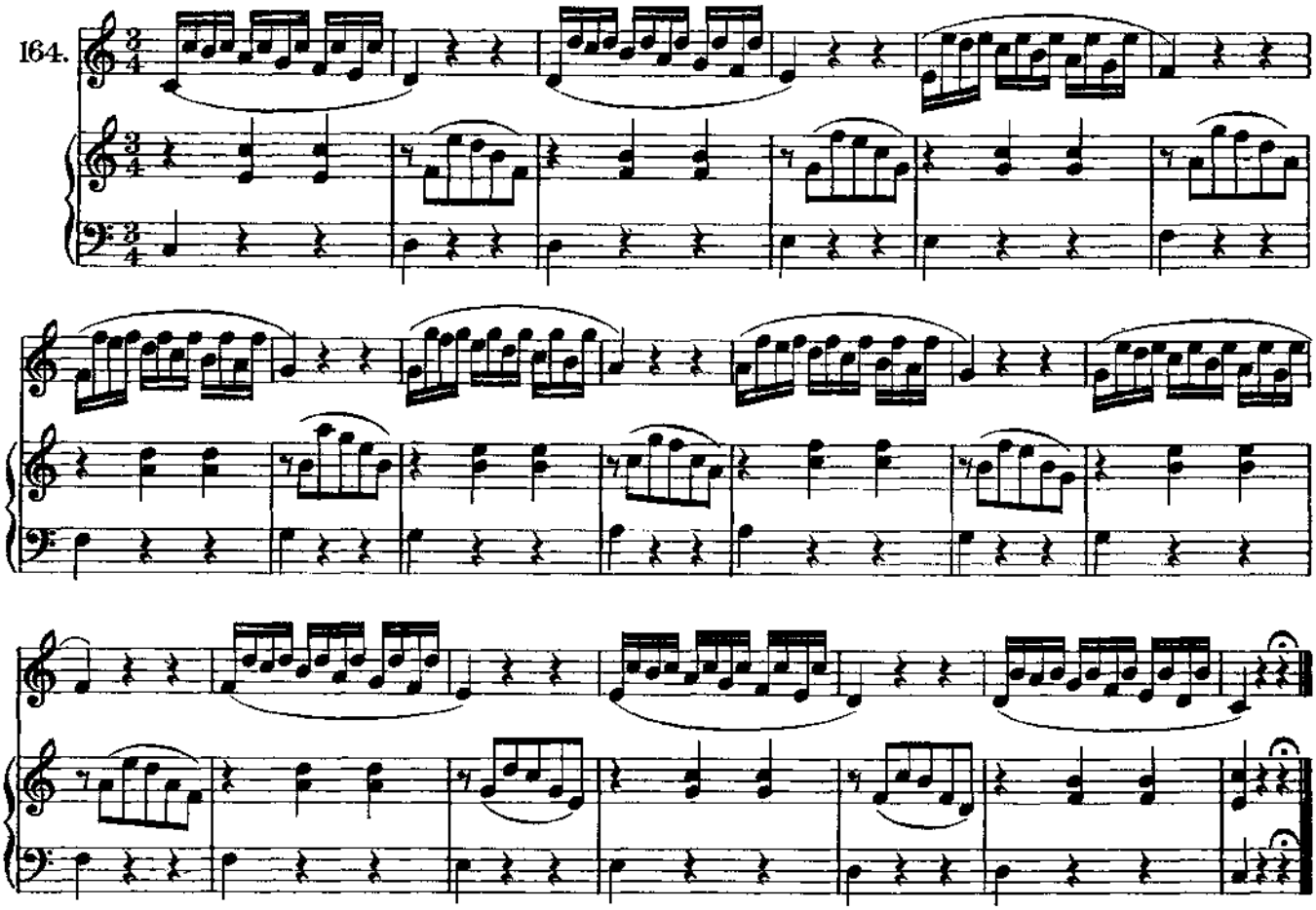
Arpeggios.

Arpeggios must be sung with absolute evenness, and all forcing of the upper notes avoided. The voice must go from one note to the next, without detaching them, but slightly slurring them together. These arpeggios are to be transposed by semitones, like the other exercises.




159.
160.
161.
162.
163.

164.



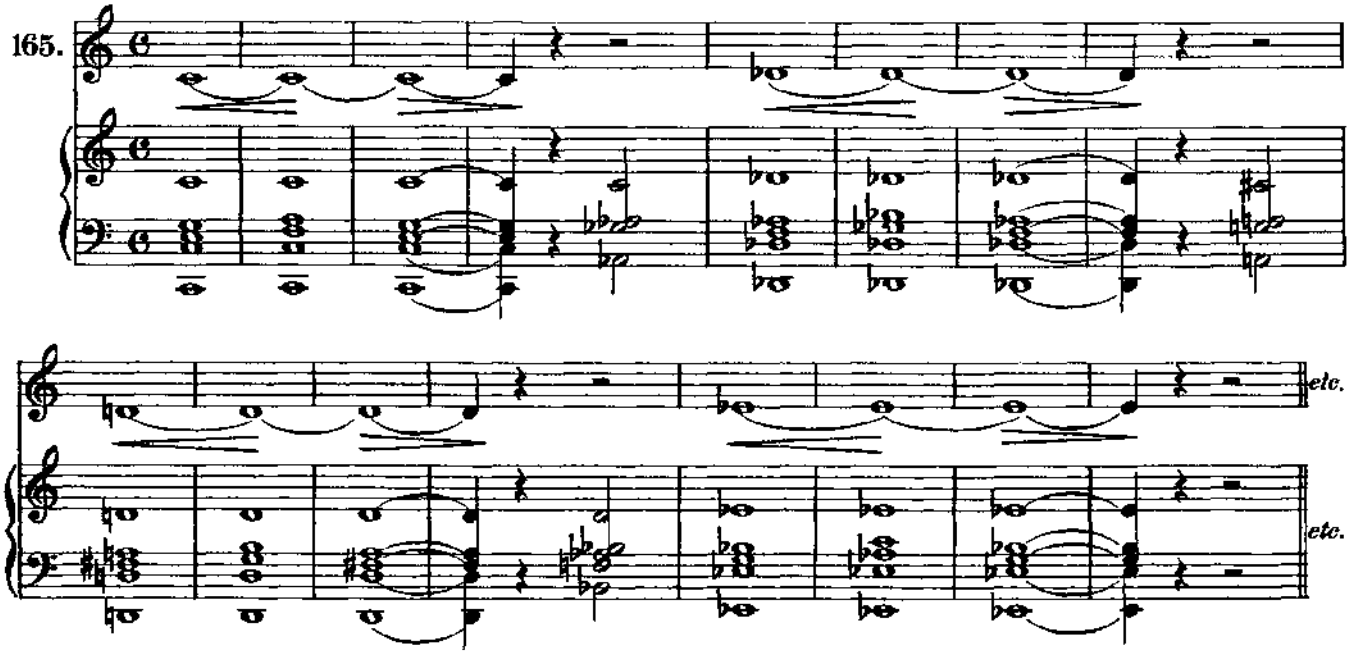
Sons filés.

On ne peut commencer à travailler les sons filés avant que la voix n'ait acquis un certain degré de souplesse et de flexibilité. Le son filé est, sans contredit, trop difficile pour les commençants.

Swelled Tone *(Messa di voce).*

This exercise should not be attempted before the voice has attained a certain amount of smoothness and flexibility. Swelling on a tone is, unquestionably, too difficult for beginners.

165.



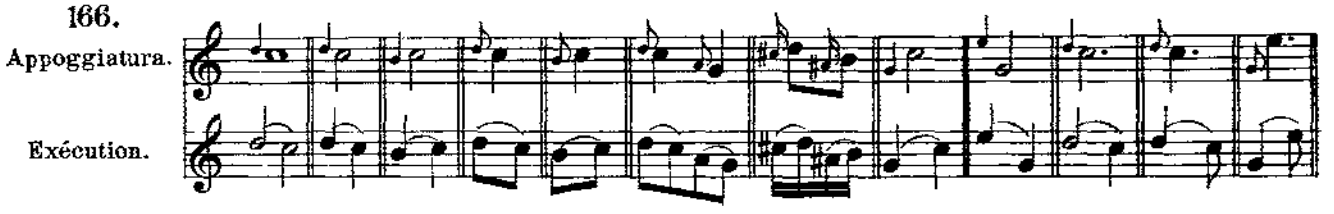
Appoggiatura.

L'appoggiature est l'ornement du chant le plus facile à exécuter; elle est, ainsi que son nom italien l'exprime, une note, sur laquelle appuie la voix pour passer ensuite à une note réelle de l'accord. L'appoggiature est généralement une note étrangère à l'harmonie. Elle peut être supérieure ou inférieure, et sa durée est très variable. Si la mesure est paire, elle s'attribue la moitié de la valeur de la note qu'elle précède; si la mesure est impaire, elle emprunte à la note principale $\frac{2}{3}$ de sa valeur. L'appoggiature peut marquer toute espèce d'intervalles, en commençant par le demi-ton. La durée de l'appoggiature dépend d'ailleurs du caractère de la phrase.

The Long Appoggiatura.

The long appoggiatura is the easiest of all ornaments to execute; it is, as its Italian name indicates, a note upon which the voice leans or rests before passing to a note of the harmony; the long appoggiatura being usually a note foreign to the chord. It may stand above or below the harmony-note and is of variable length. When the rhythm is duple, the long appoggiatura takes half the length of the note which it precedes; when the rhythm is triple, the appoggiatura takes two-thirds of the value of the large note. The long appoggiatura can be made on several different intervals, beginning with a semitone; its length is also partly dependent upon the style of the movement.

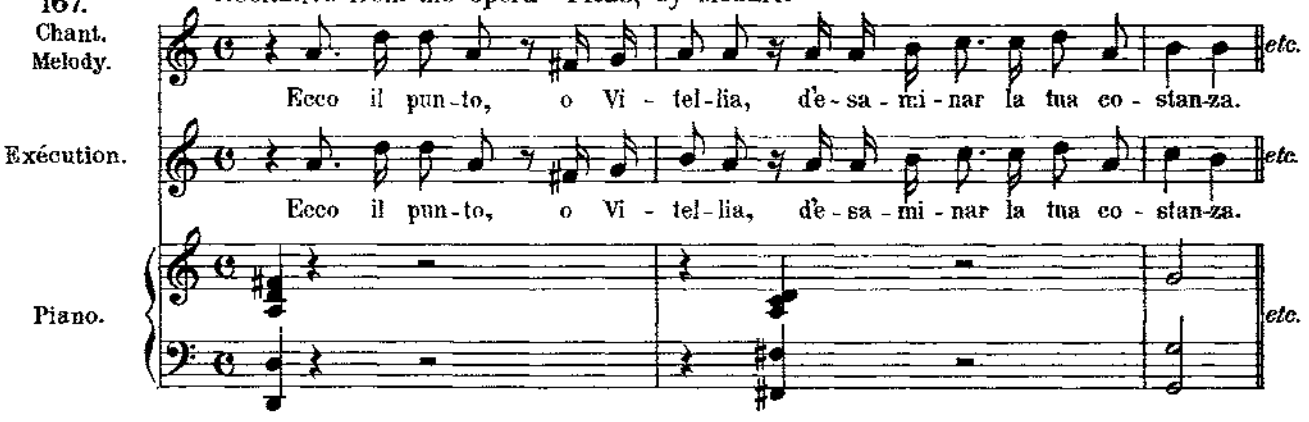
166.



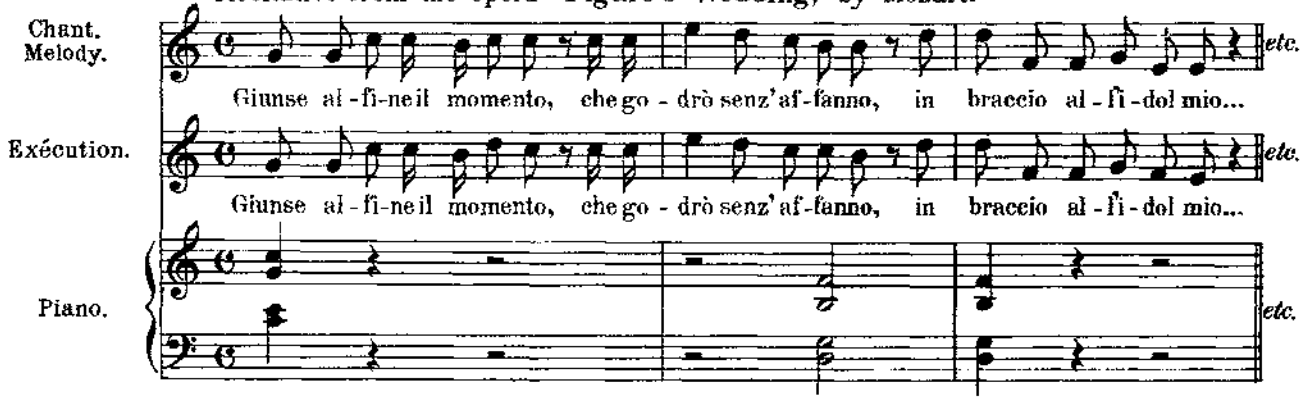
Exemple:
Example:

167.

Récitatif de l'Opéra: «Titus» de Mozart.
Recitative from the opera "Titus," by Mozart.



Récitatif de l'Opéra: «Noces de Figaro» de Mozart.
Recitative from the opera "Figaro's Wedding," by Mozart.



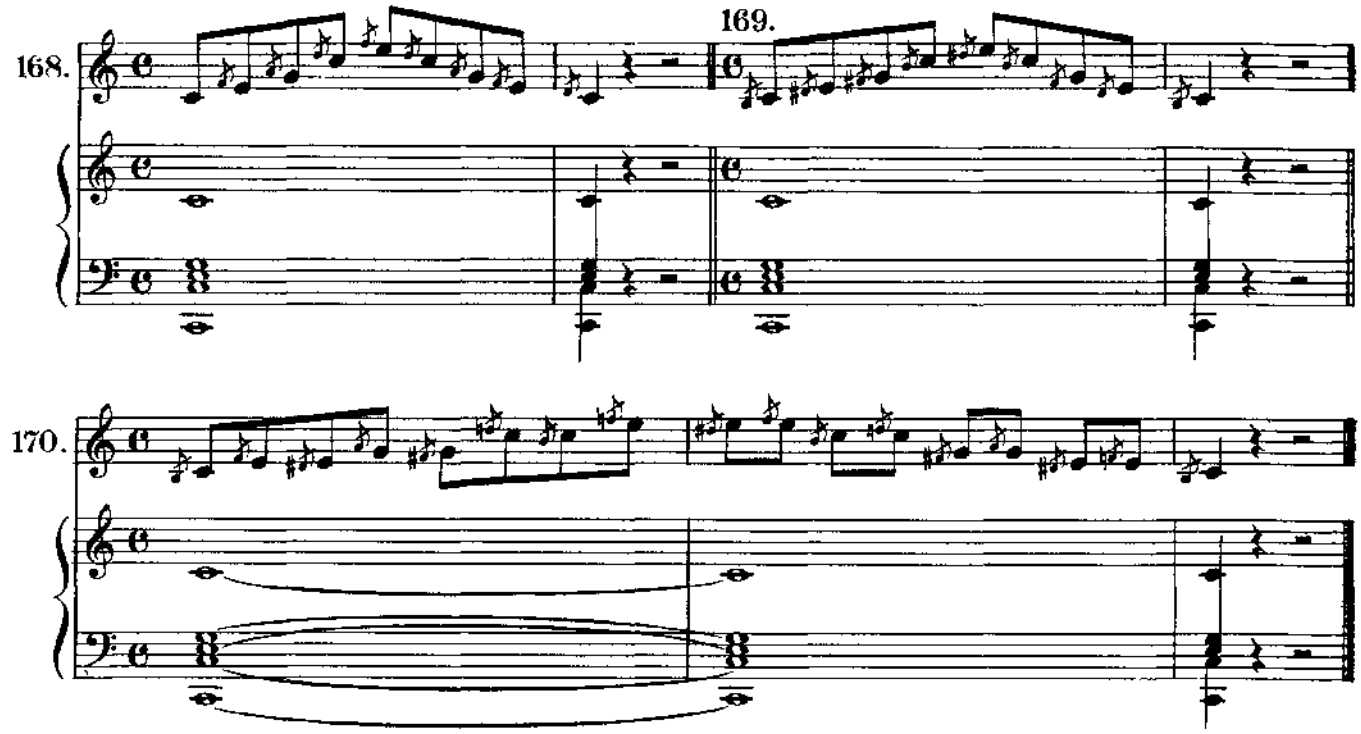
Petites notes.

L'acciaccatura est une petite note vive qui précède, a la distance d'un ton ou d'un demi-ton, une seconde note moins courte qu'elle.

The Short Appoggiatura.

(Acciaccatura.)

The short appoggiatura is a small short note which precedes a longer note at the interval of a tone or semitone.

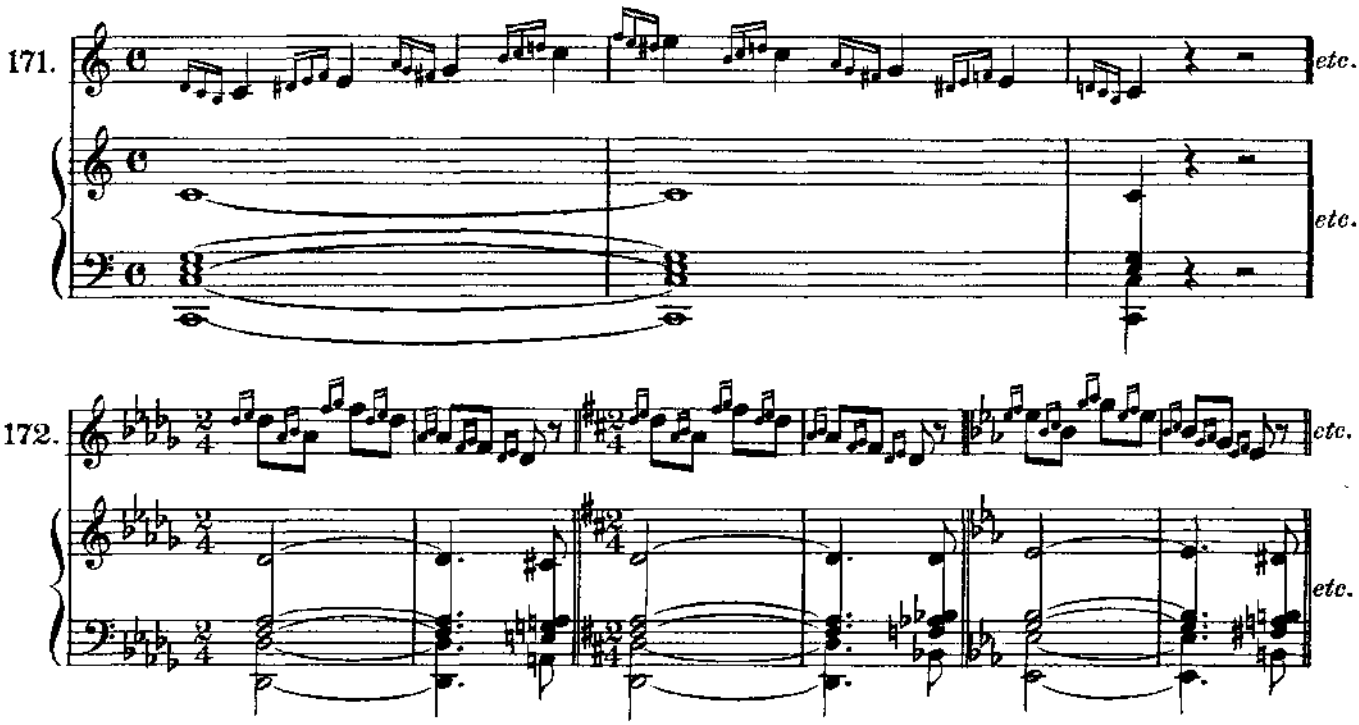


Mordant.

Le Mordant se compose de deux ou trois notes précédant la note destinée à former la mélodie. L'élève aura soin d'exécuter ce groupe de deux ou trois notes avec rapidité, toutefois en l'étudiant d'abord lentement, afin de faire ressortir nettement chaque note.

The Mordent.

The Mordent consists of two or three notes which precede a melody-note. The pupil must execute these two or three notes very rapidly, but yet must not neglect to practise them slowly at first, so that each note may be distinctly uttered.



Grupetto.

Le Grupetto est un ornement de deux, trois ou quatre petites notes, qui ne font pas partie de la mélodie. Il se compose de la réunion des appoggiatures inférieure et supérieure à la note principale.

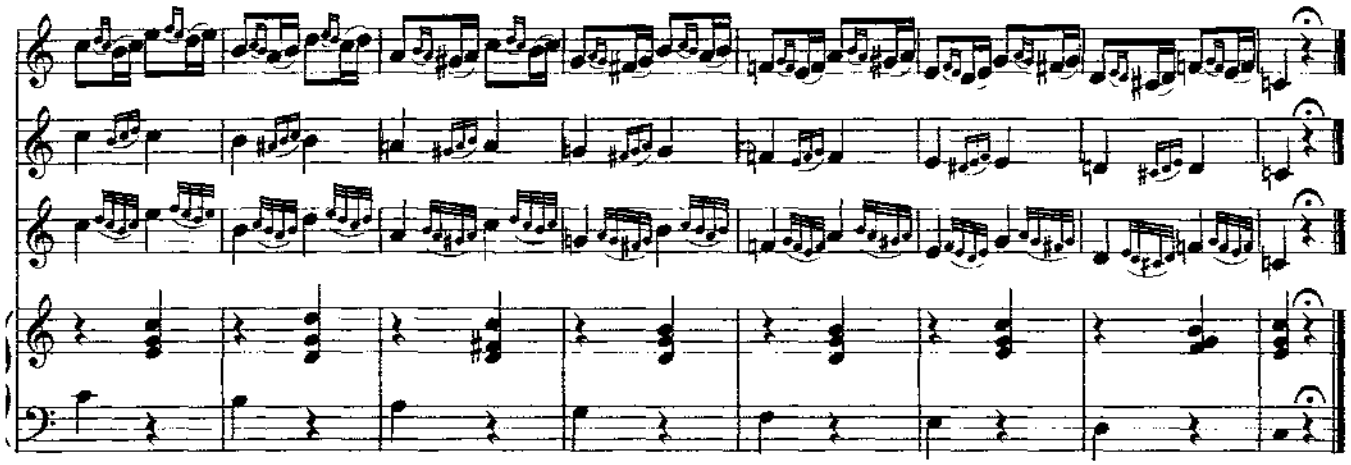
The Turn. *(Gruppetto.)*

The Gruppetto is an ornament consisting of two or three small notes which do not belong to the melody. It is formed by the addition of the lower and higher appoggiatura to the principal note.

173.

174.

175.



Trille.

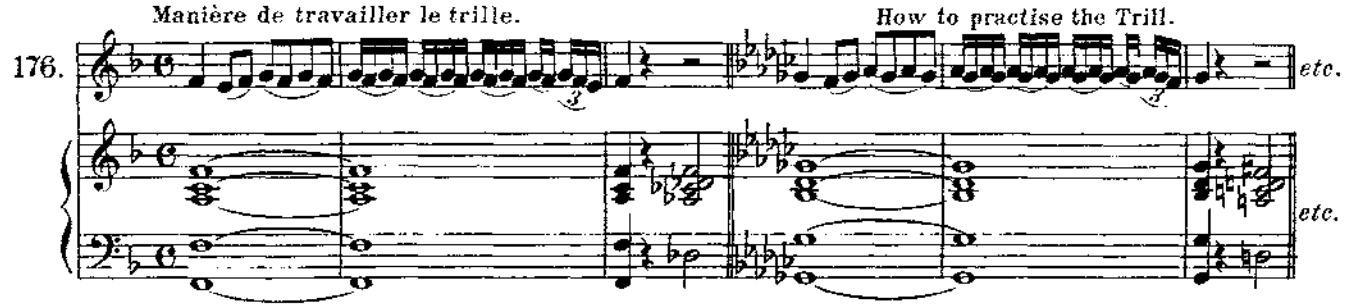
Le trille est une oscillation régulière du larynx. C'est une alternation rapide et égale de deux sons contigus à la distance d'un ton ou d'un demi-ton. Le seul moyen de parvenir à faire un bon trille est de le travailler en mesure, en comptant le nombre des battements. D'abord il faut le travailler lentement; on pourra en augmenter le mouvement au fur et à mesure que le gosier aura gagné de la souplesse. Pour éviter toute fatigue à la voix de femme, on pourra commencer l'étude du trille par le registre du médium; on aura soin de transposer l'exercice du trille ainsi que tous les autres exercices.

The Trill.

The trill is a regular vibration of the larynx. It consists of a rapid and rhythmical repetition of two notes which lie close together, at the distance of a tone or a semitone. The only method of acquiring a perfect trill is to practise it in strict time, counting the number of the notes. It must be practised slowly at first and the beats doubled in speed only when the throat has become pliant. To avoid fatiguing the female voice, the trill should be practised by beginning with the medium register. The trill-exercises are to be transposed, like the others.

Manière de travailler le trille. *How to practise the Trill.*

176.



177.

etc.

etc.

178.

179.

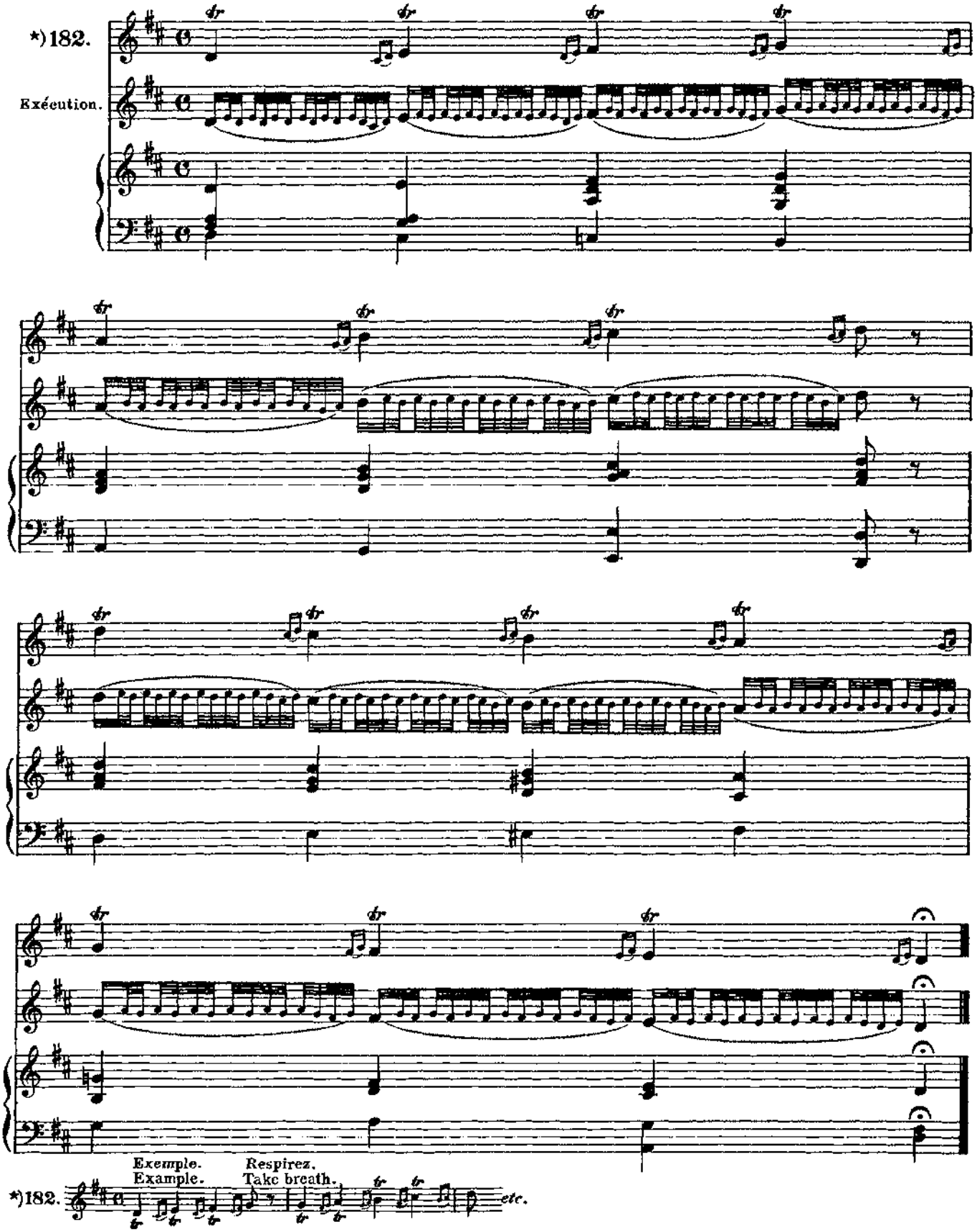
180. Différentes terminaisons du trille.
Different endings of trills.

Trille de tierces.
Trills separated by a third.

181.

Exécution.

Gammes de trilles. Chain of Trills.

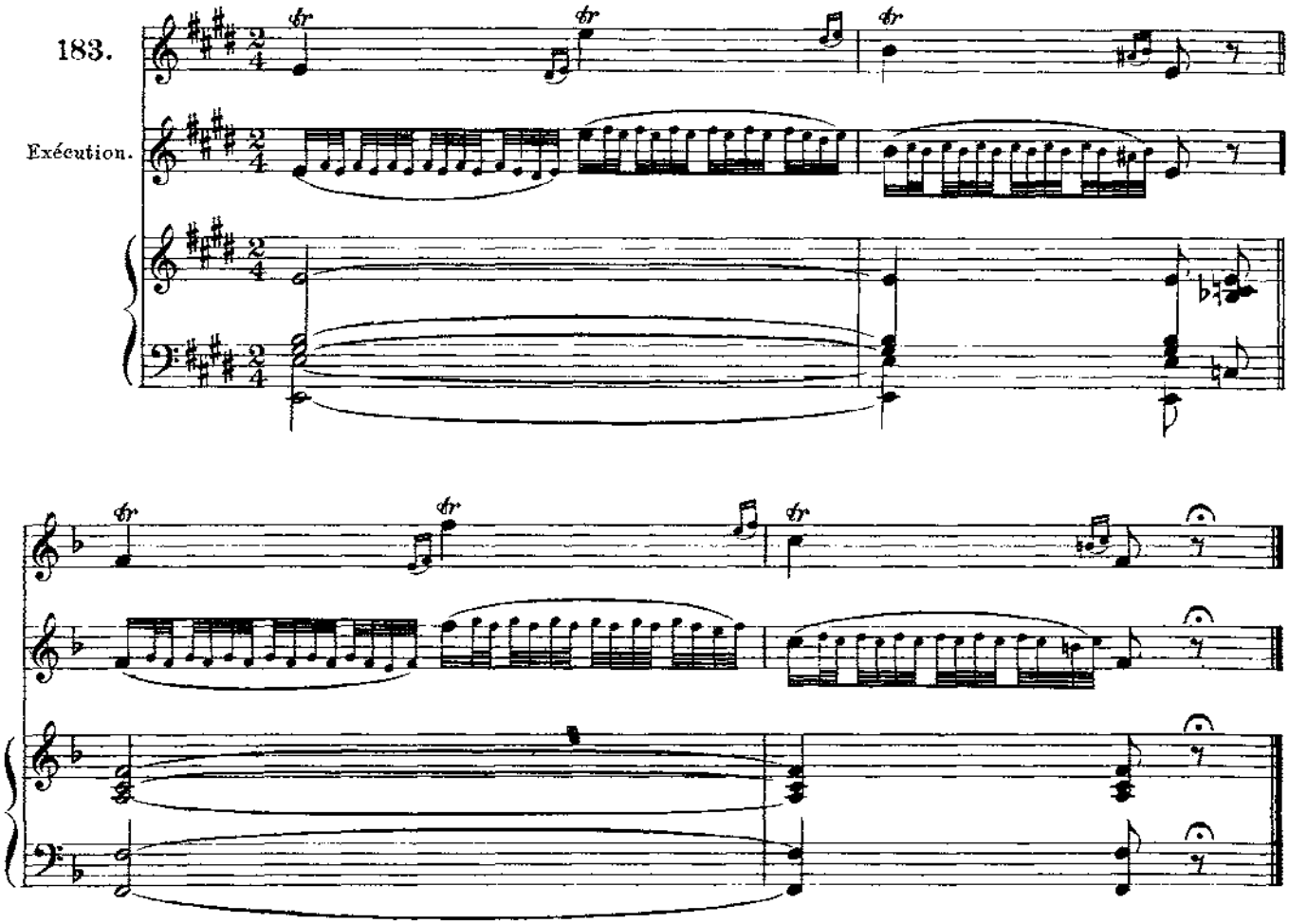


Trille d'octave.

Octave-trills.

183.

Exécution.



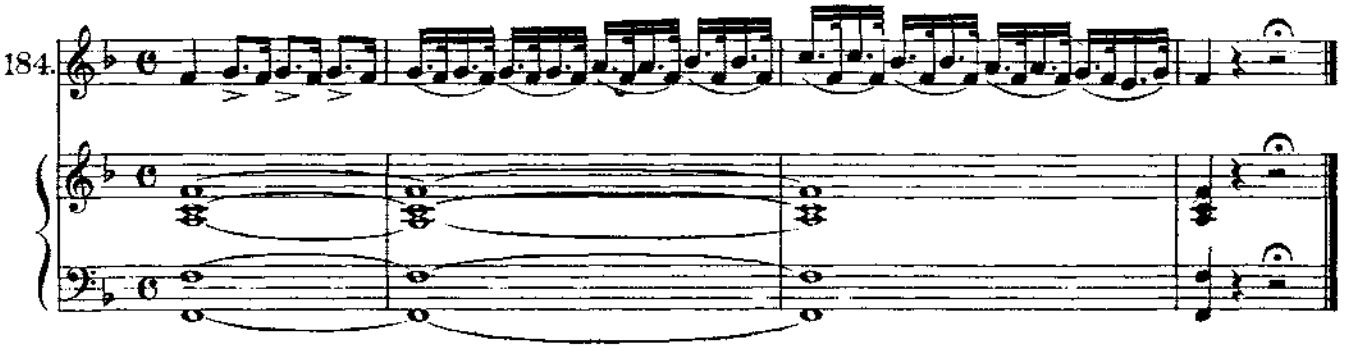
Exercice

pour faciliter l'étude du trille aux gosiers qui manquent de souplesse. À transposer comme tous les autres exercices.

Exercise

to facilitate the study of trills for a voice lacking in agility. This exercise is to be transposed like the others.

184.

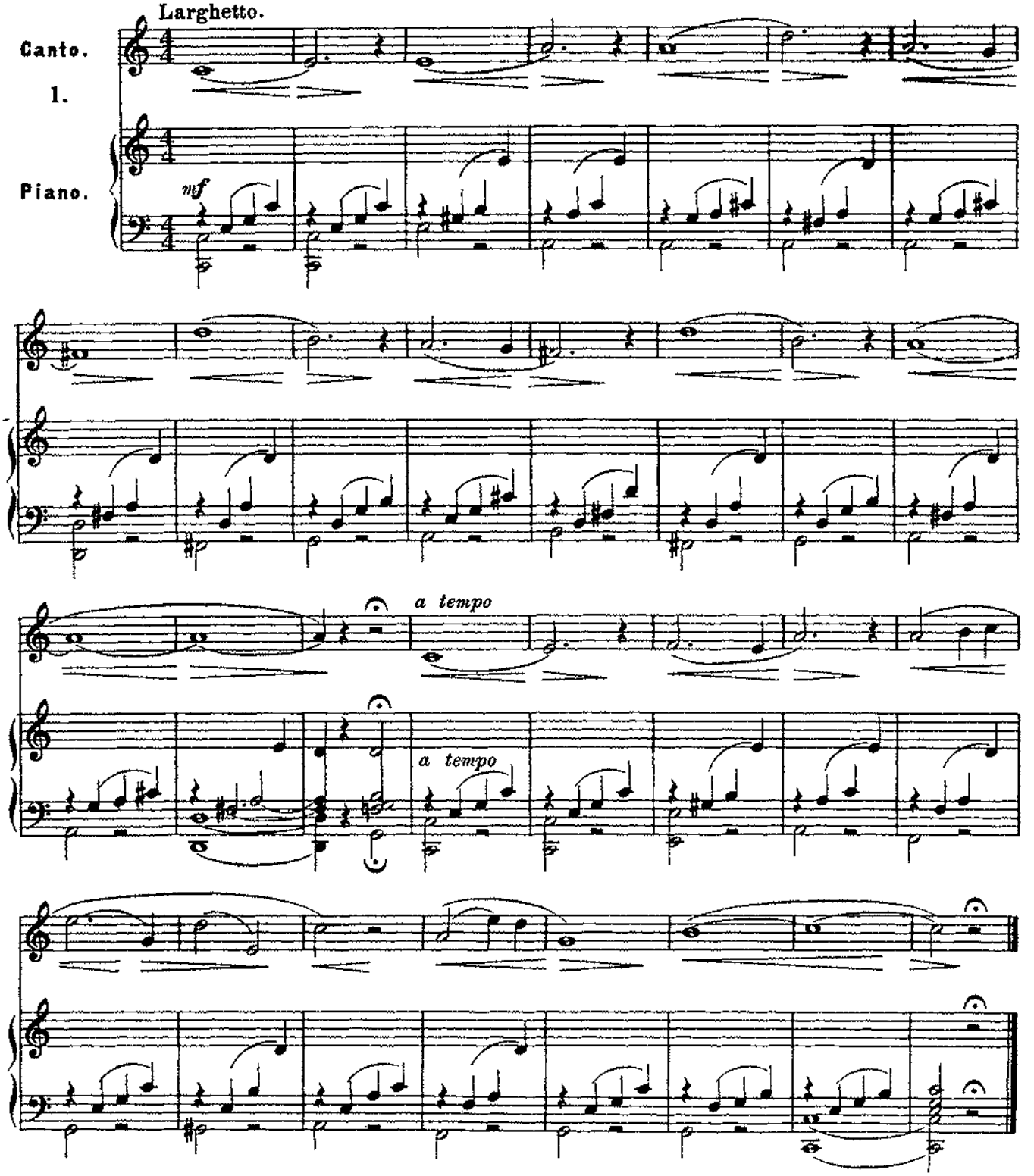


M. Marchesi

The Art of Singing

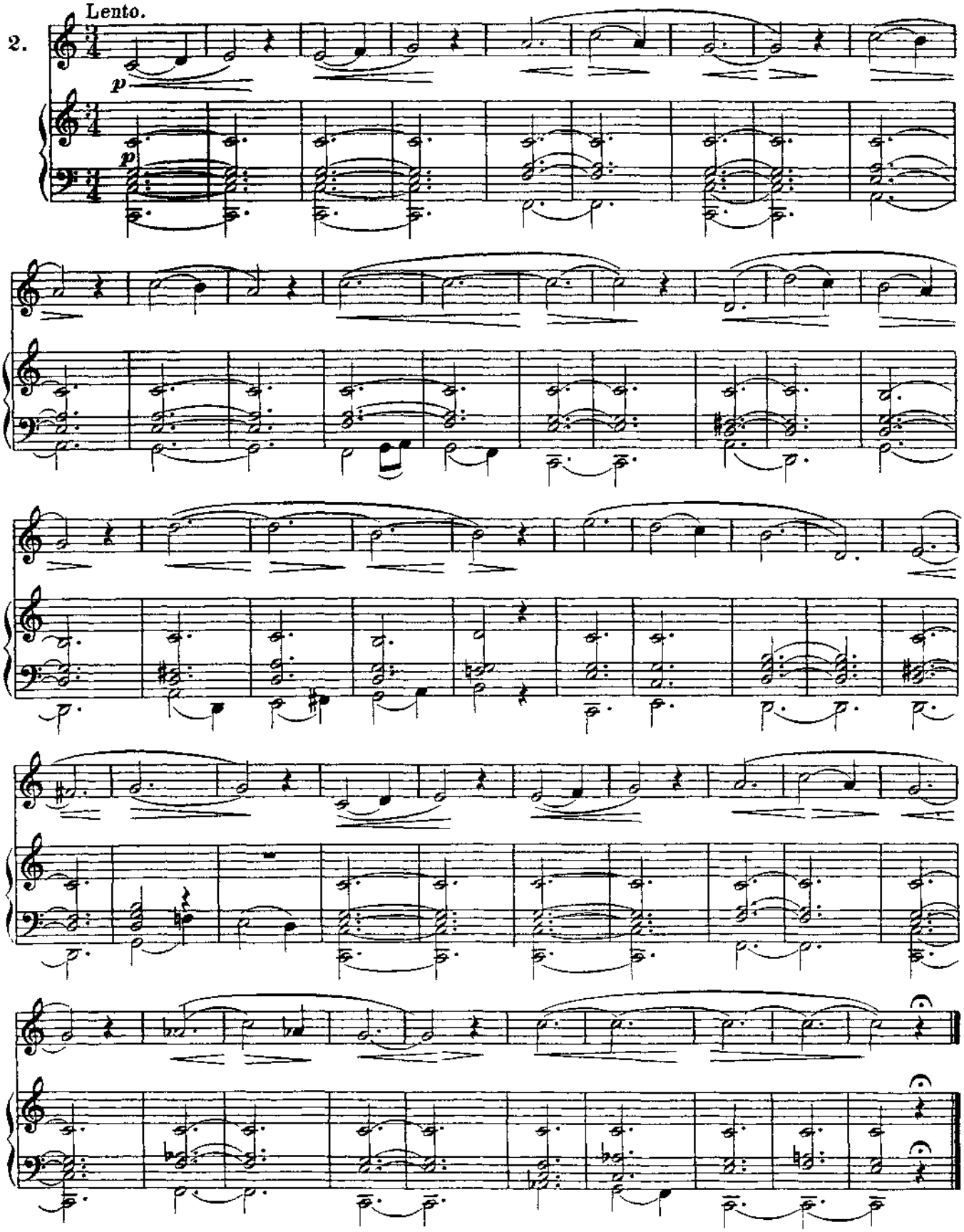
Book 2, Opus 21

Messa di Voce e Portamento.

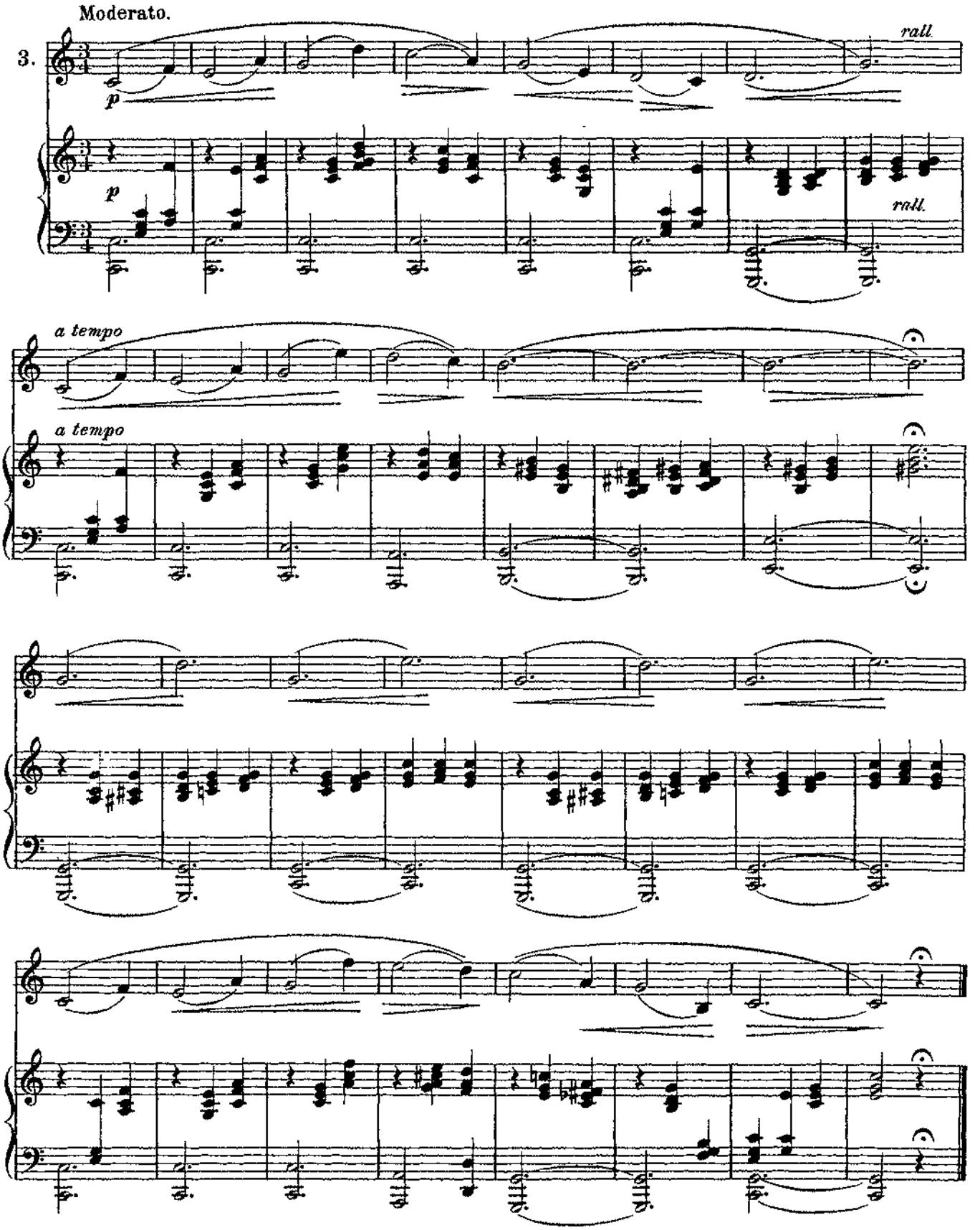


Le signe ⌒ indique où l'on doit respirer. | The sign ⌒ shows where to take breath.

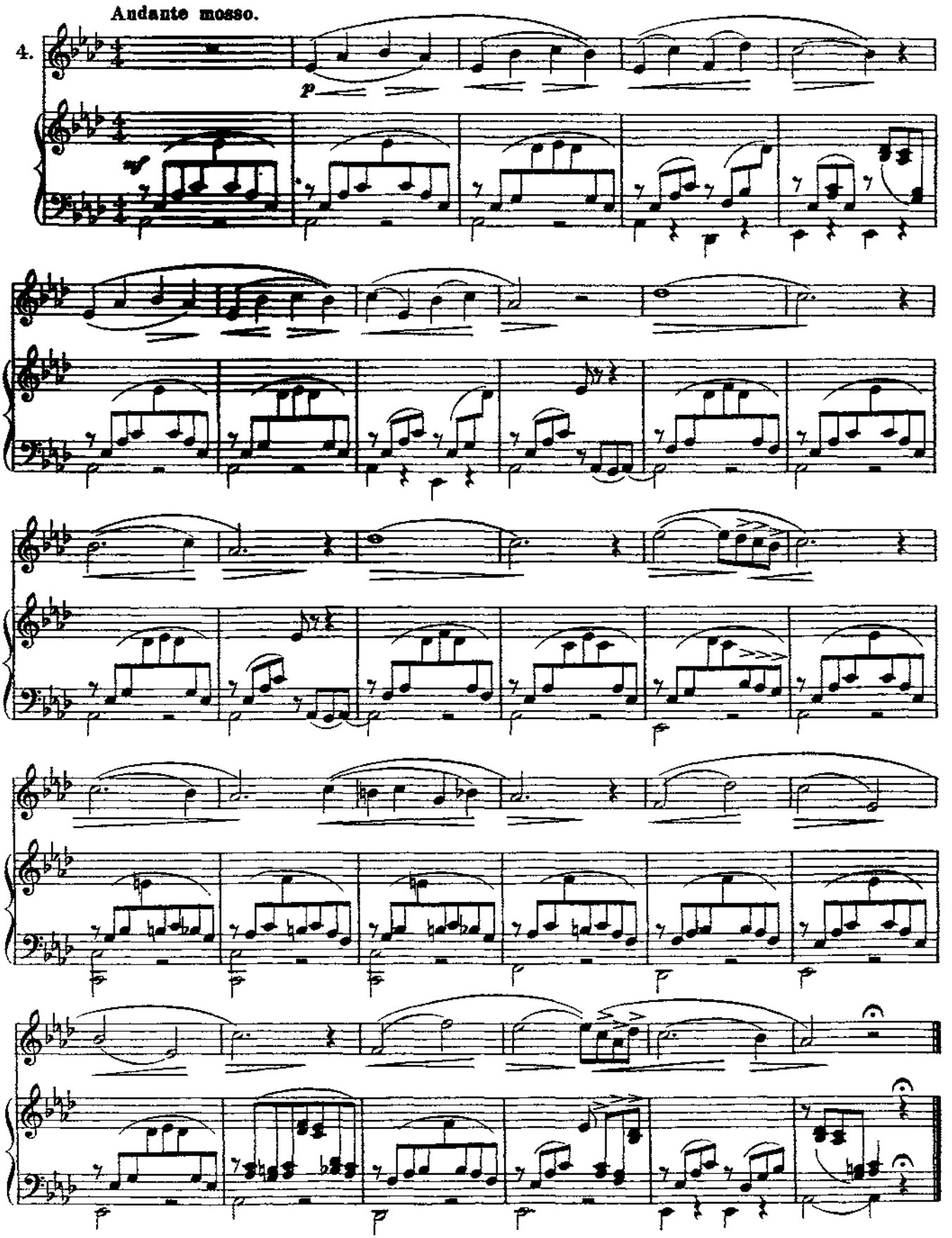
Messa di voce e Portamento.



Portamento.

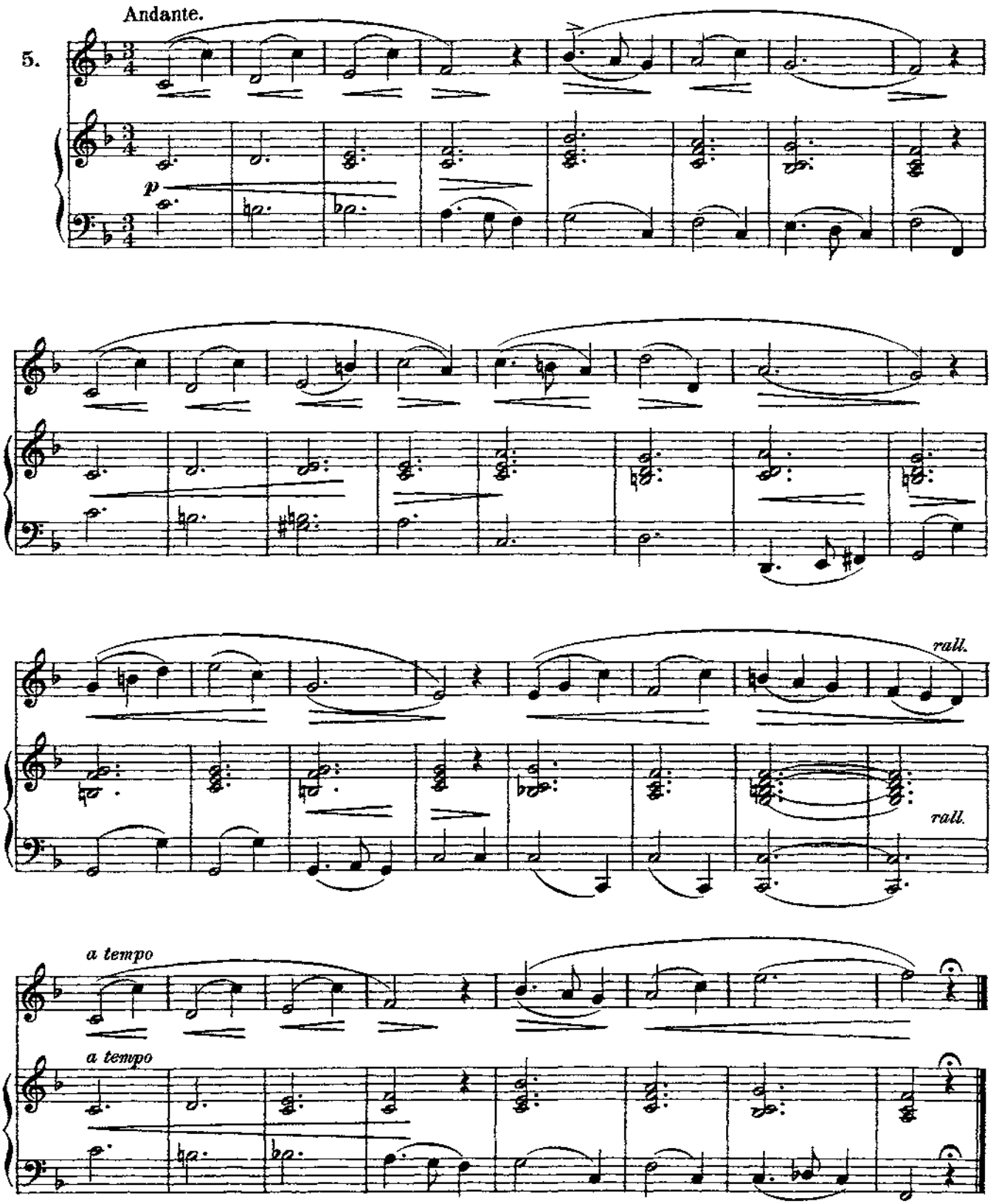


Portamento.

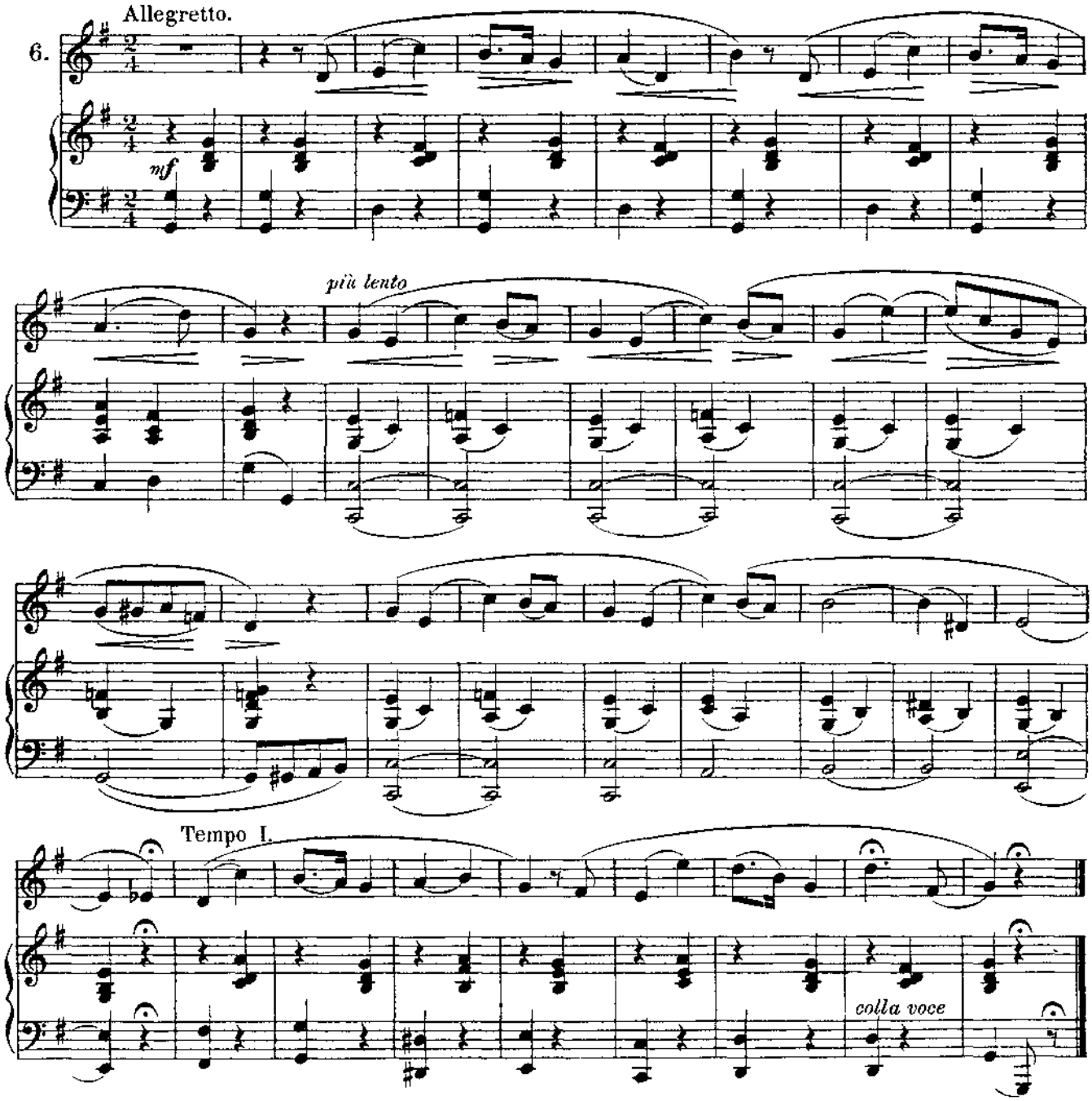


Portamento.

5. Andante.

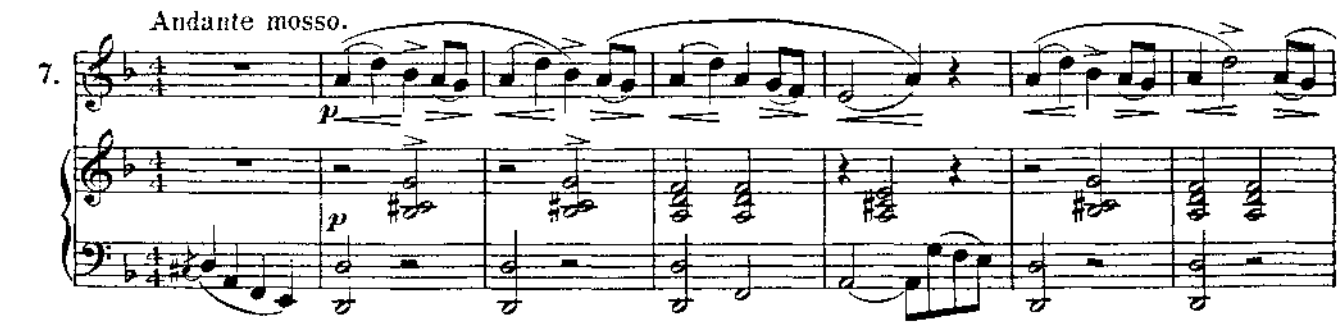


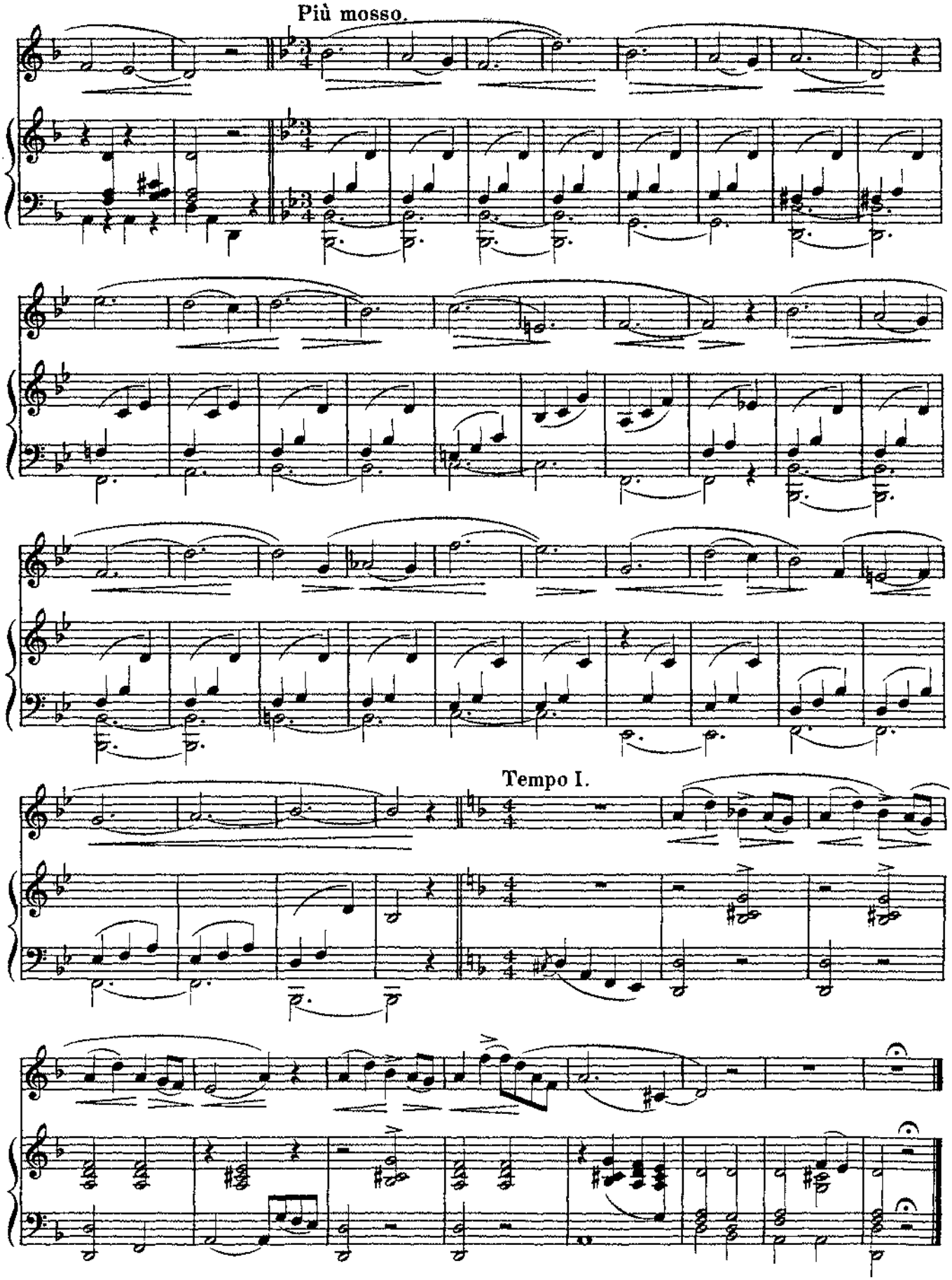
Portamento.



Canto spianato.

Chant soutenu. Sustained Melody.

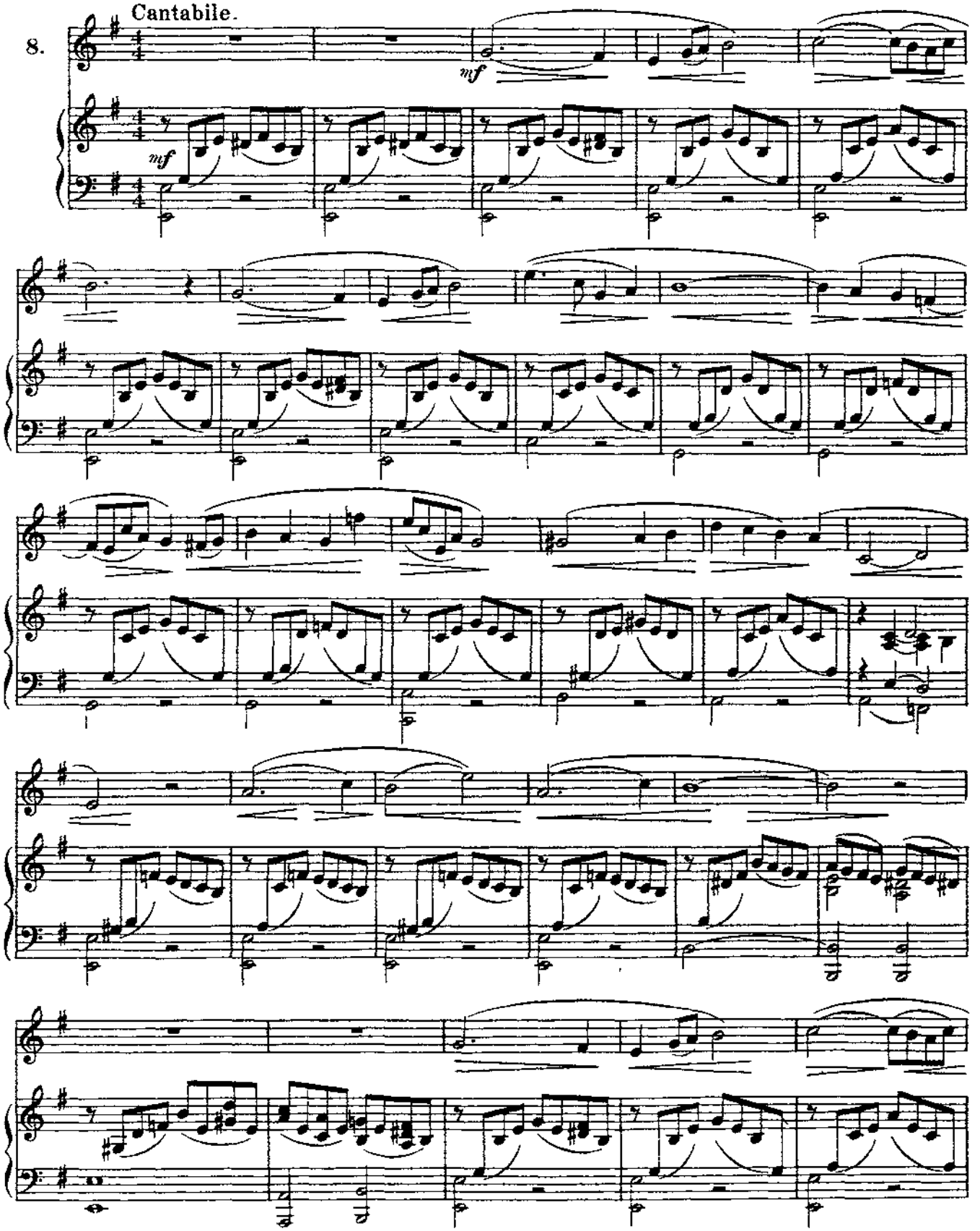


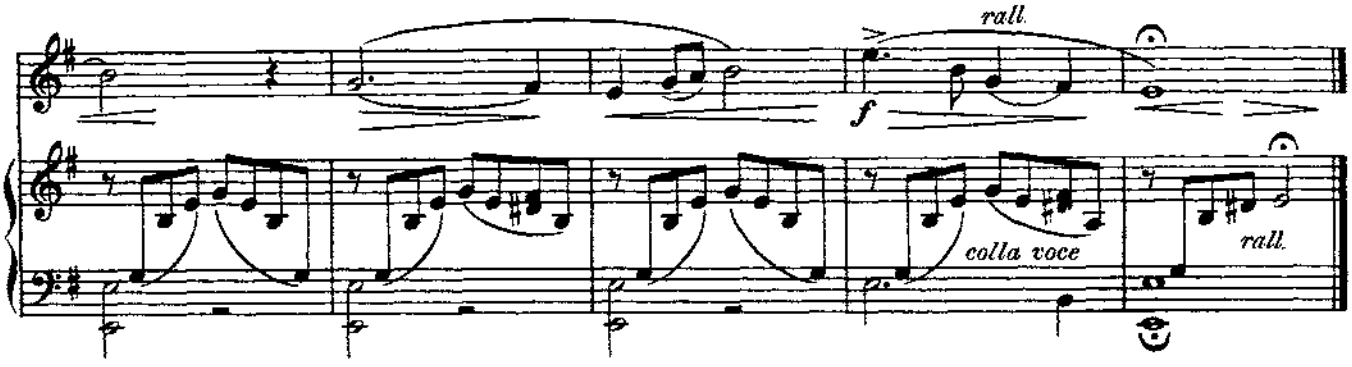

Più mosso.
Tempo I.

Canto spianato.

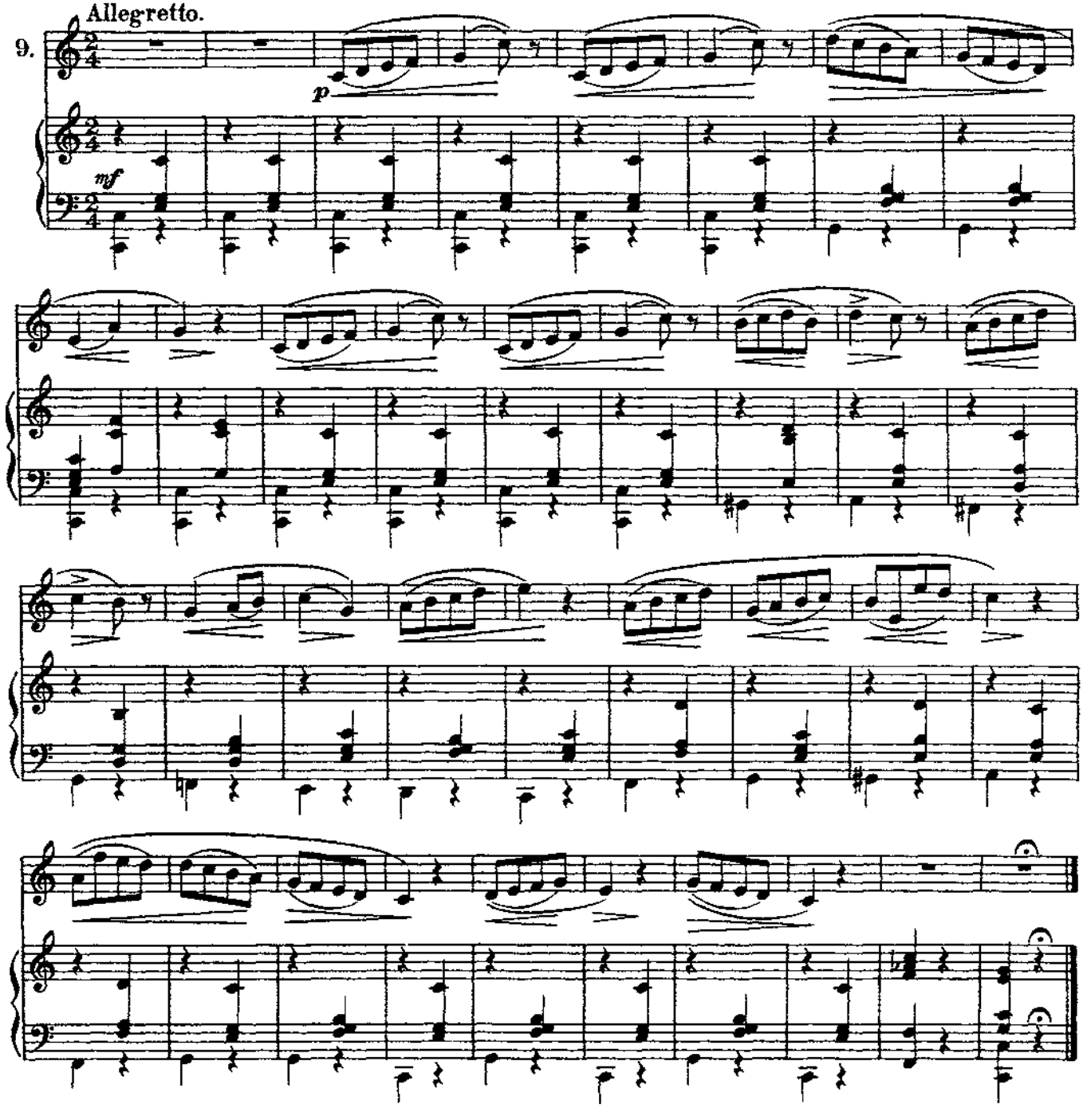
Chant soutenu. **Sustained Melody.**

8. Cantabile.





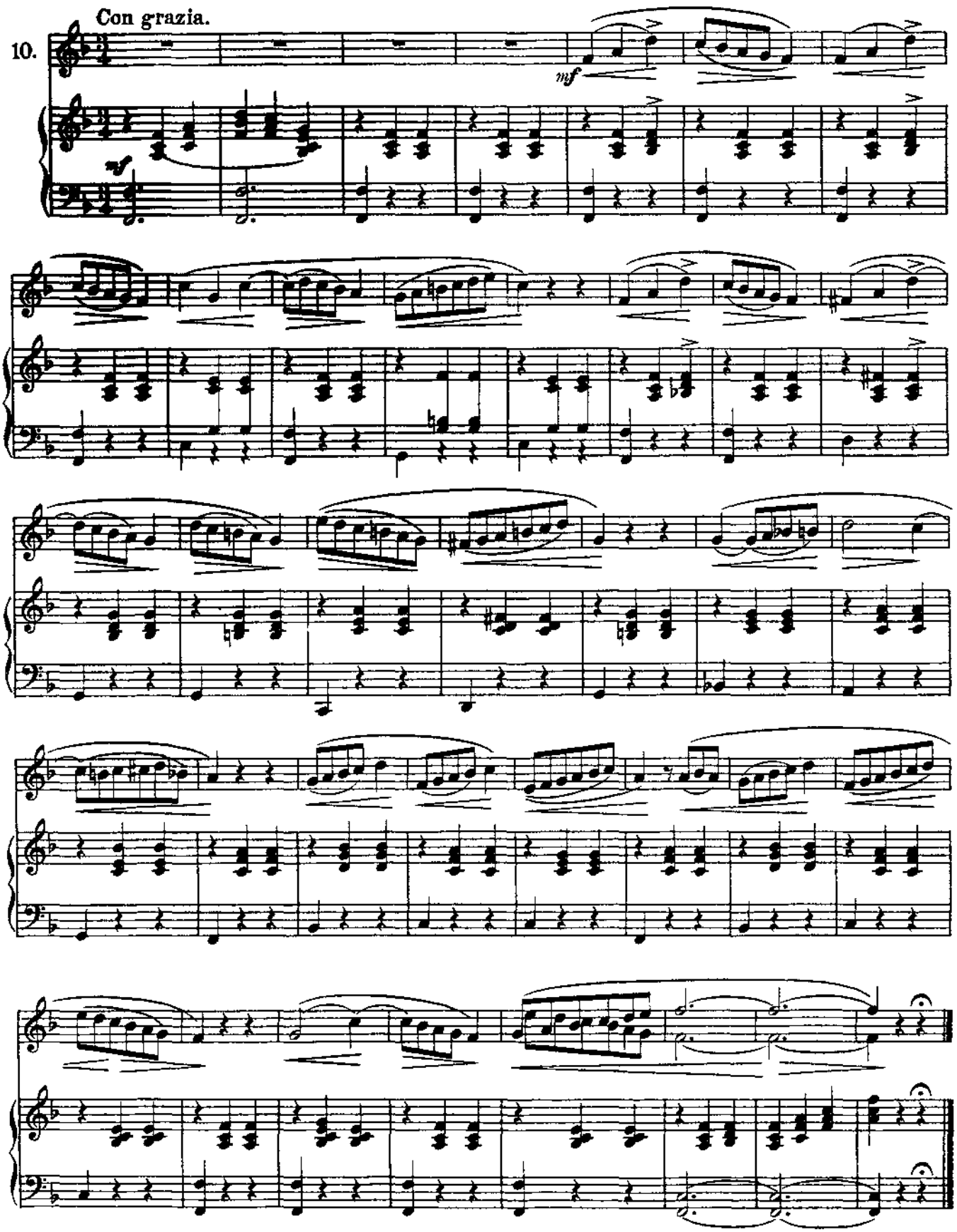
Gamme diatonique. | **Diatonic Scale.**



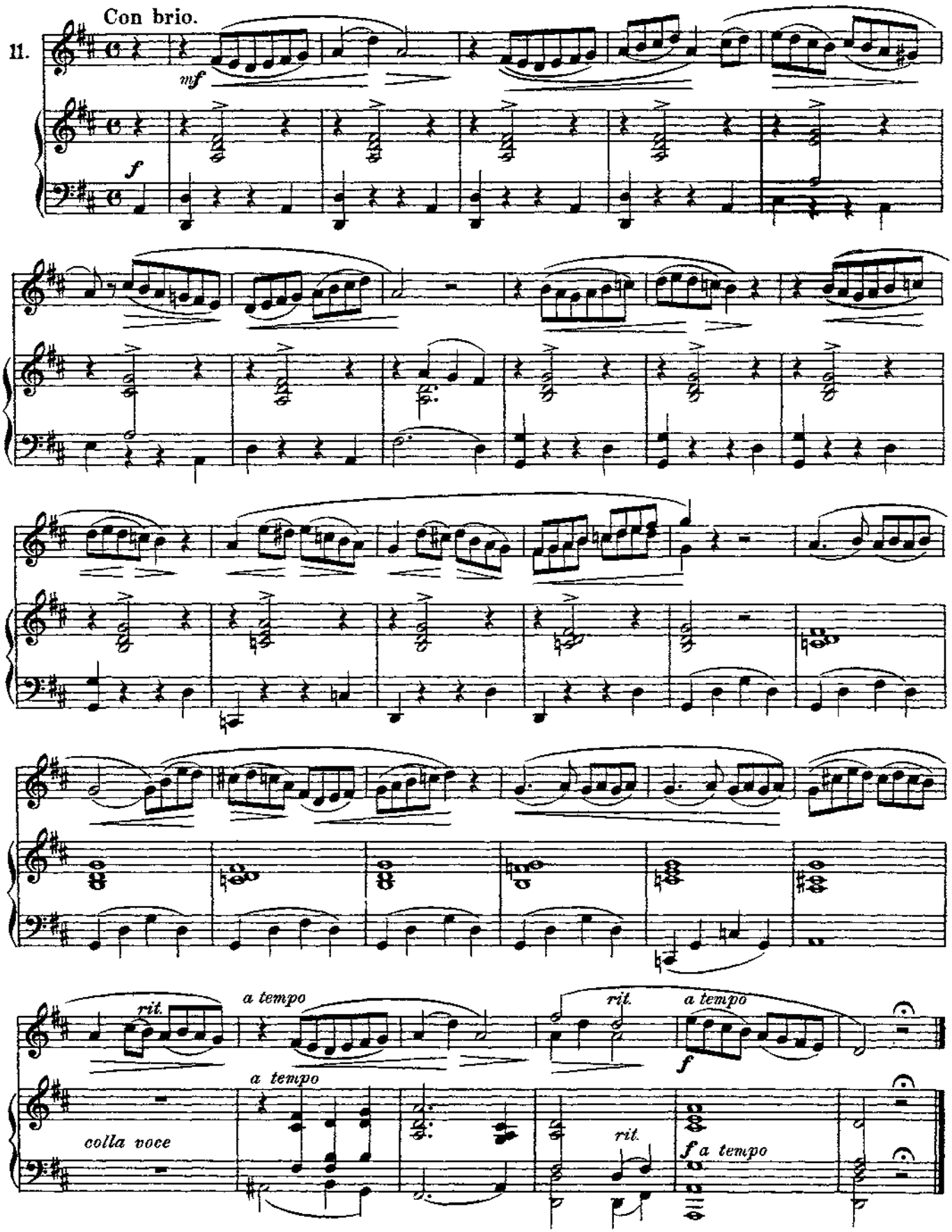
Gamme diatonique. Diatonic Scale.

Con grazia.

10.



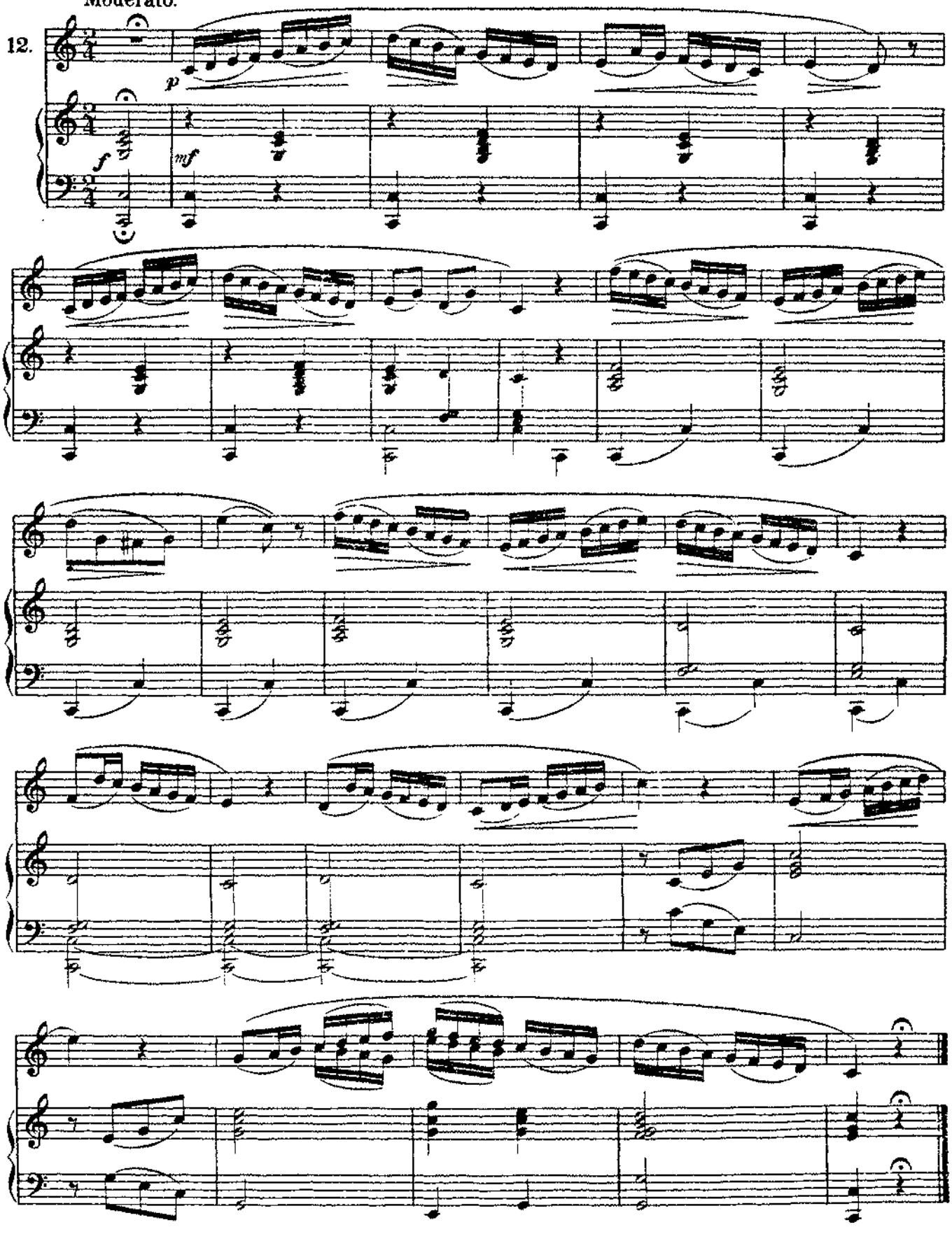
Gamme diatonique. Diatonic Scale.



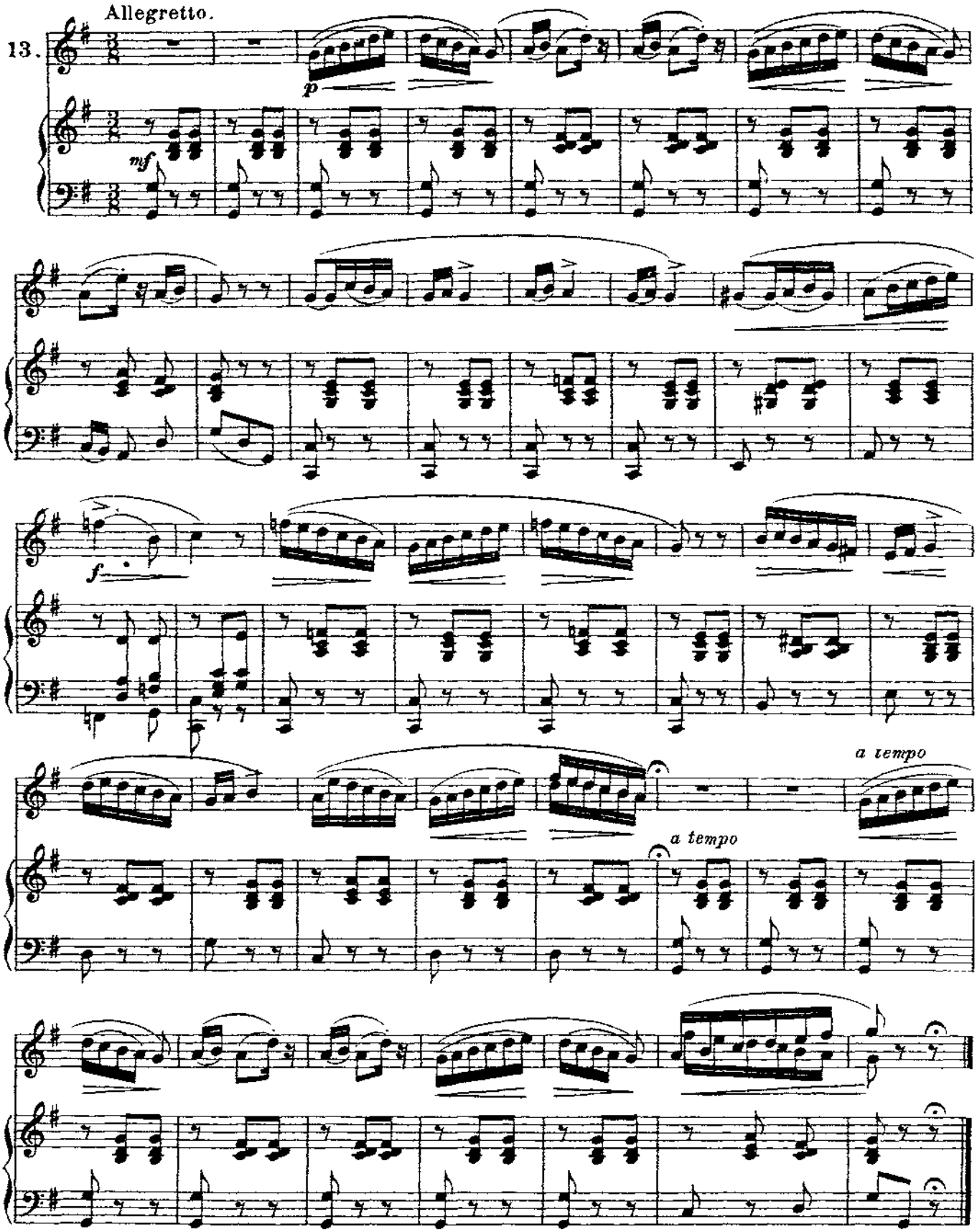
Gamme diatonique. Diatonic Scale.

Moderato.

12.



Gamme diatonique. Diatonic Scale.



Gamme pointée. Dotted Scale.

Andante amoroso.

14.

mf

mf

Con brio.

Tempo I.

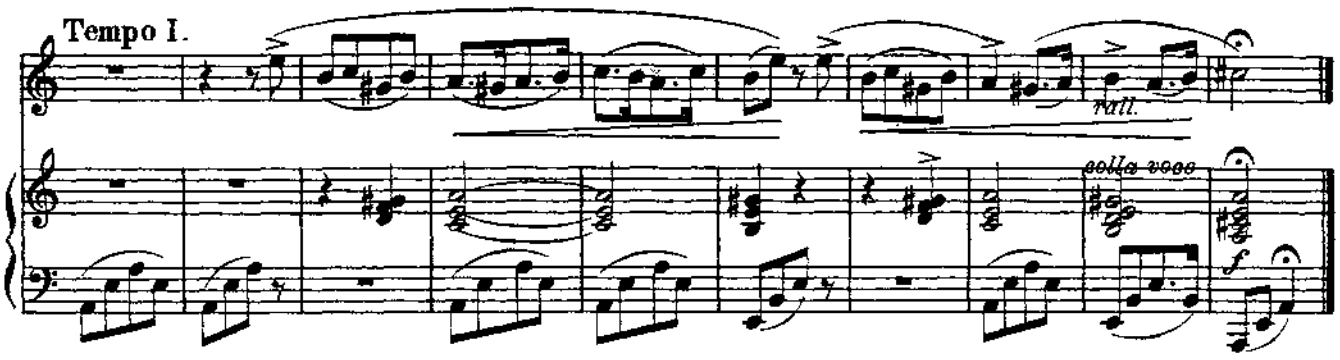
più vivo

più vivo

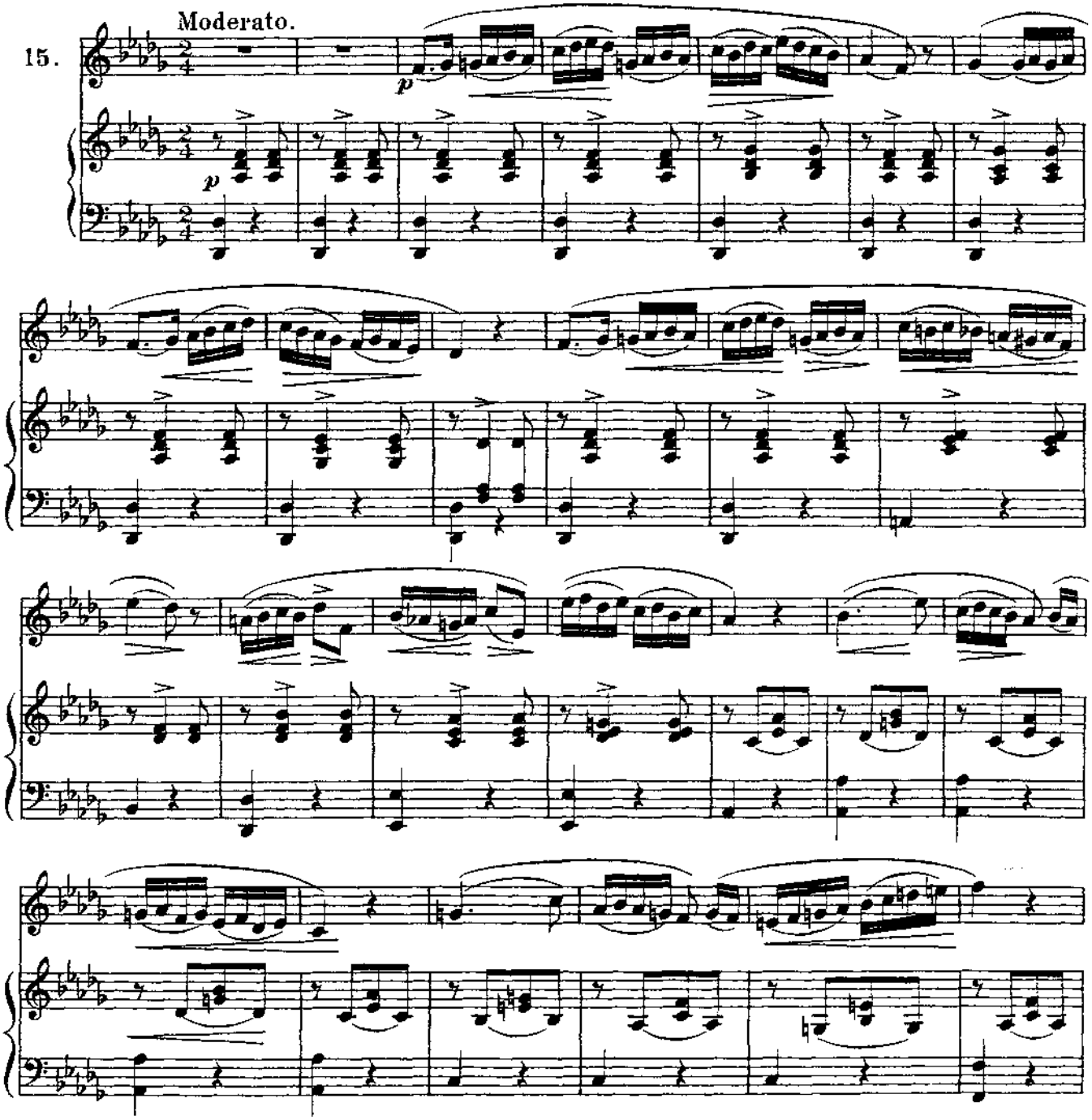
f

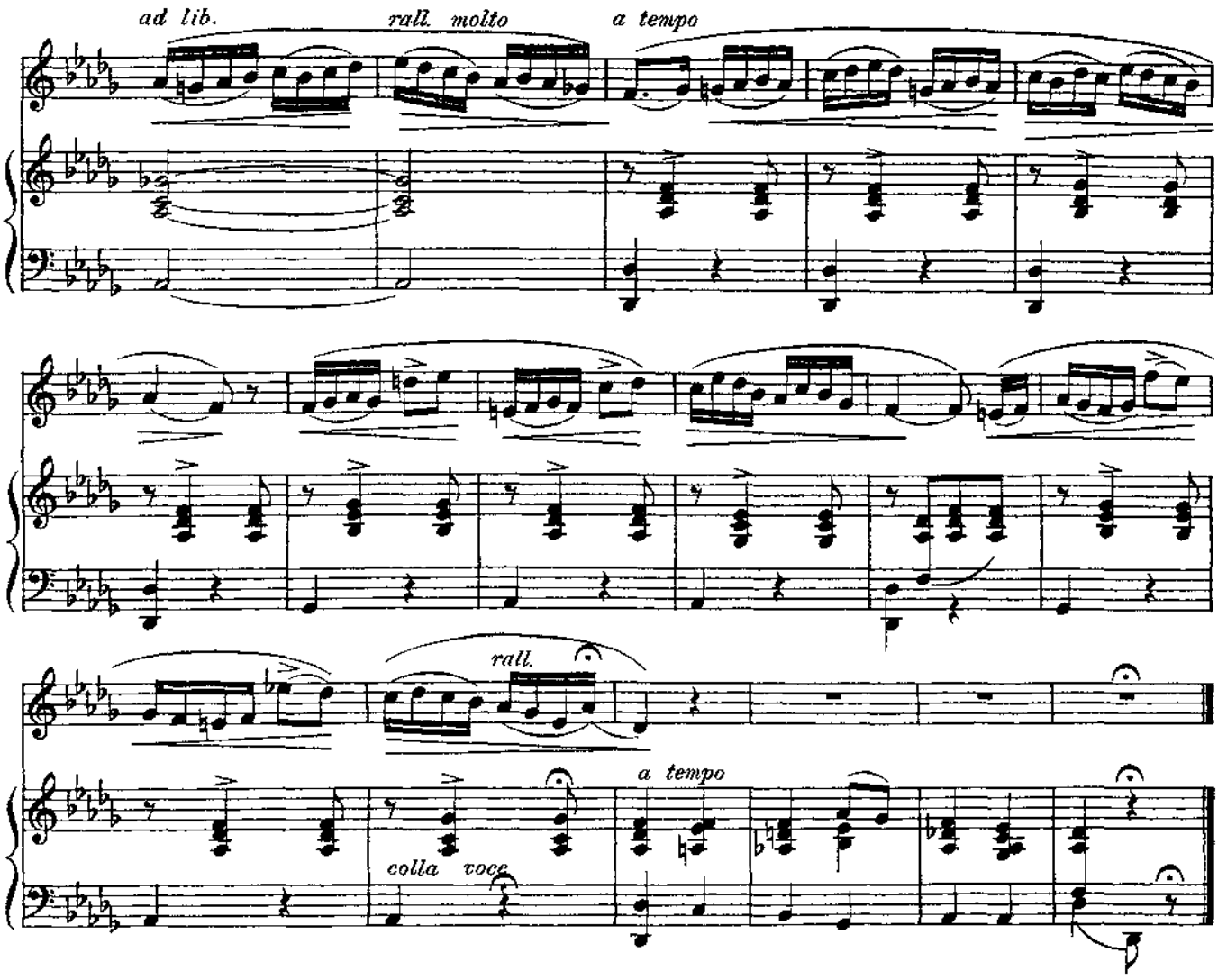
rall.

colla voce

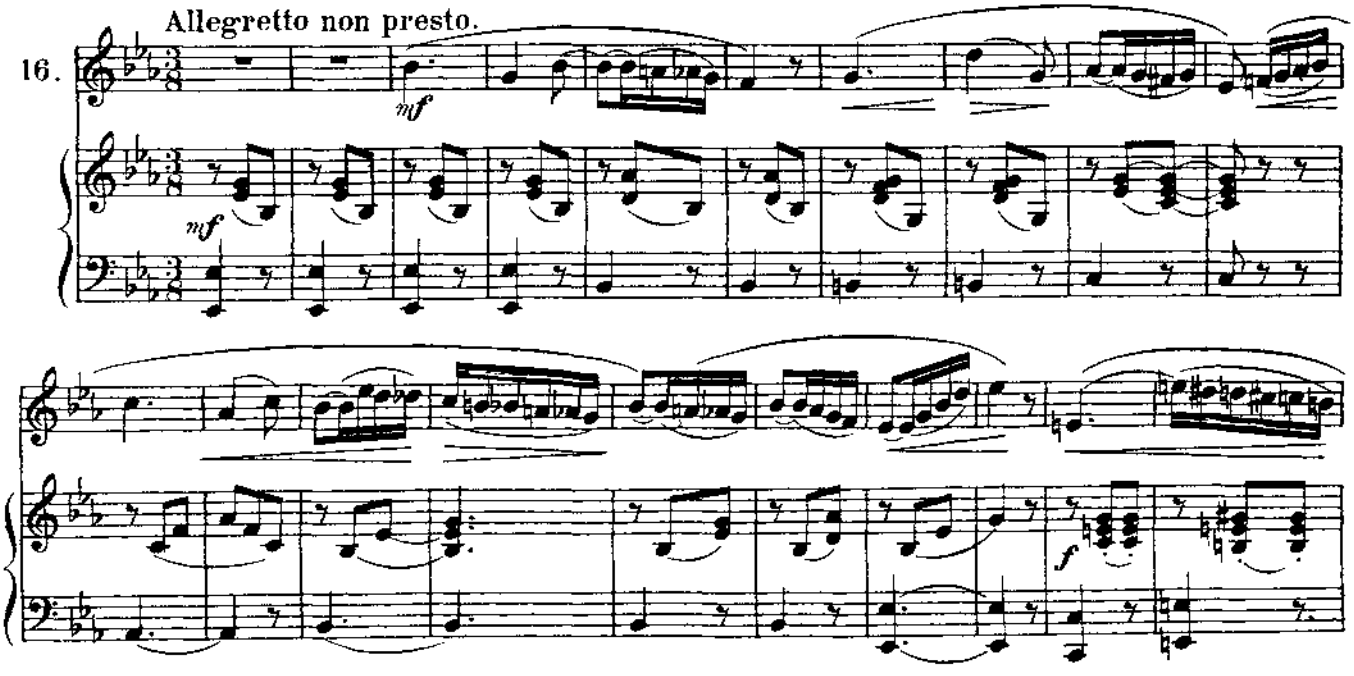


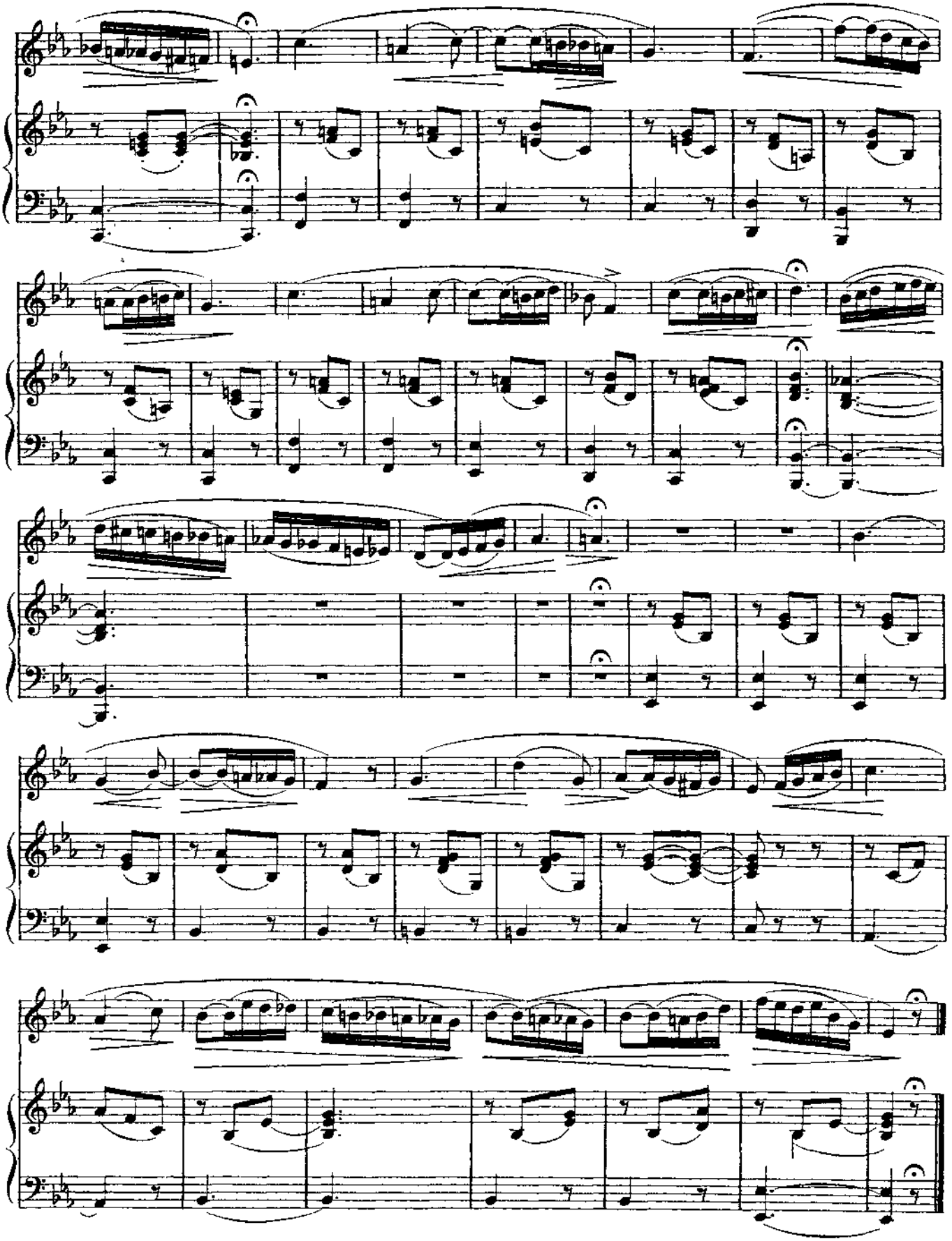
Groupes de quatre notes. | Groups of Four Notes.





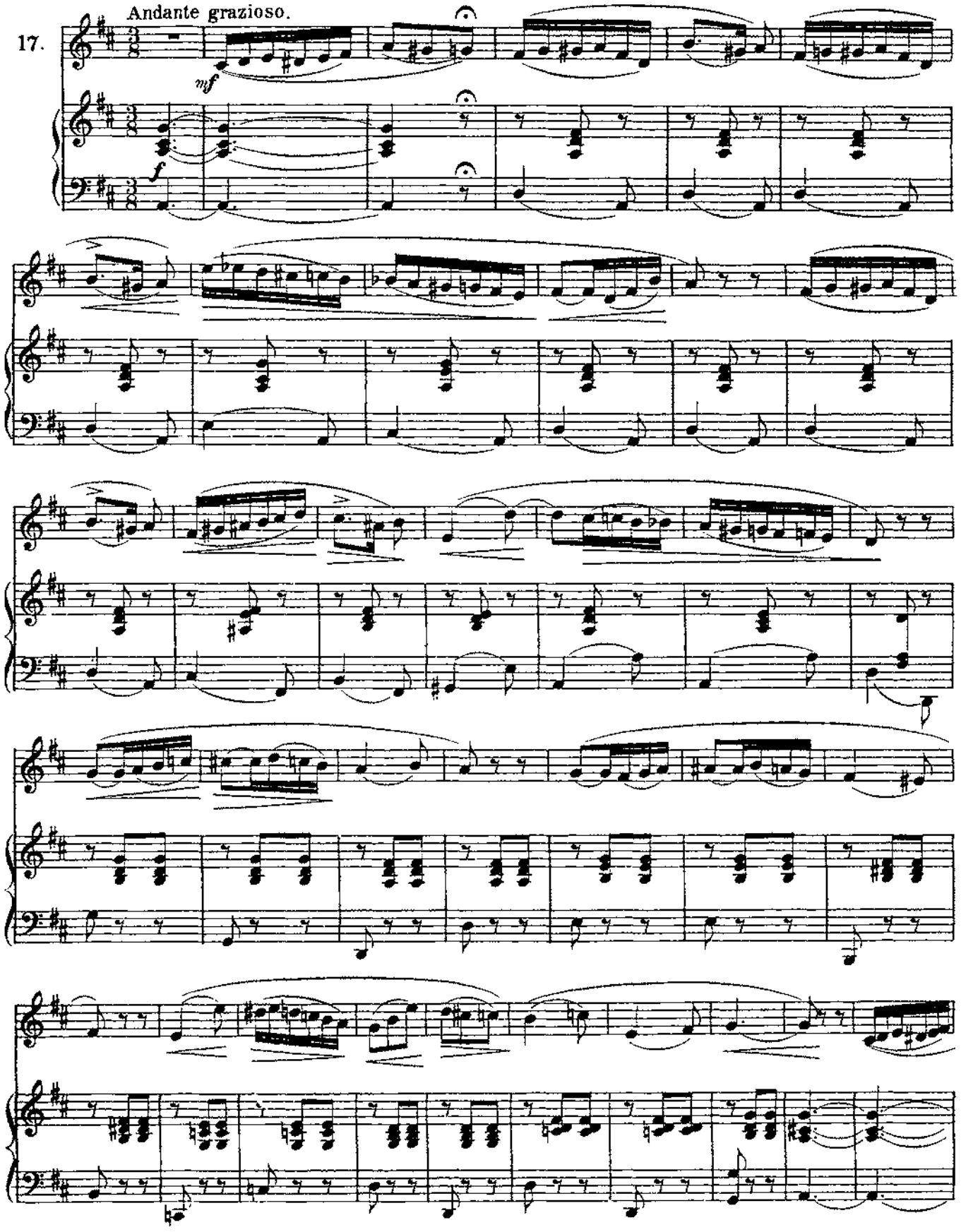
Gamme chromatique. | Chromatic Scale.

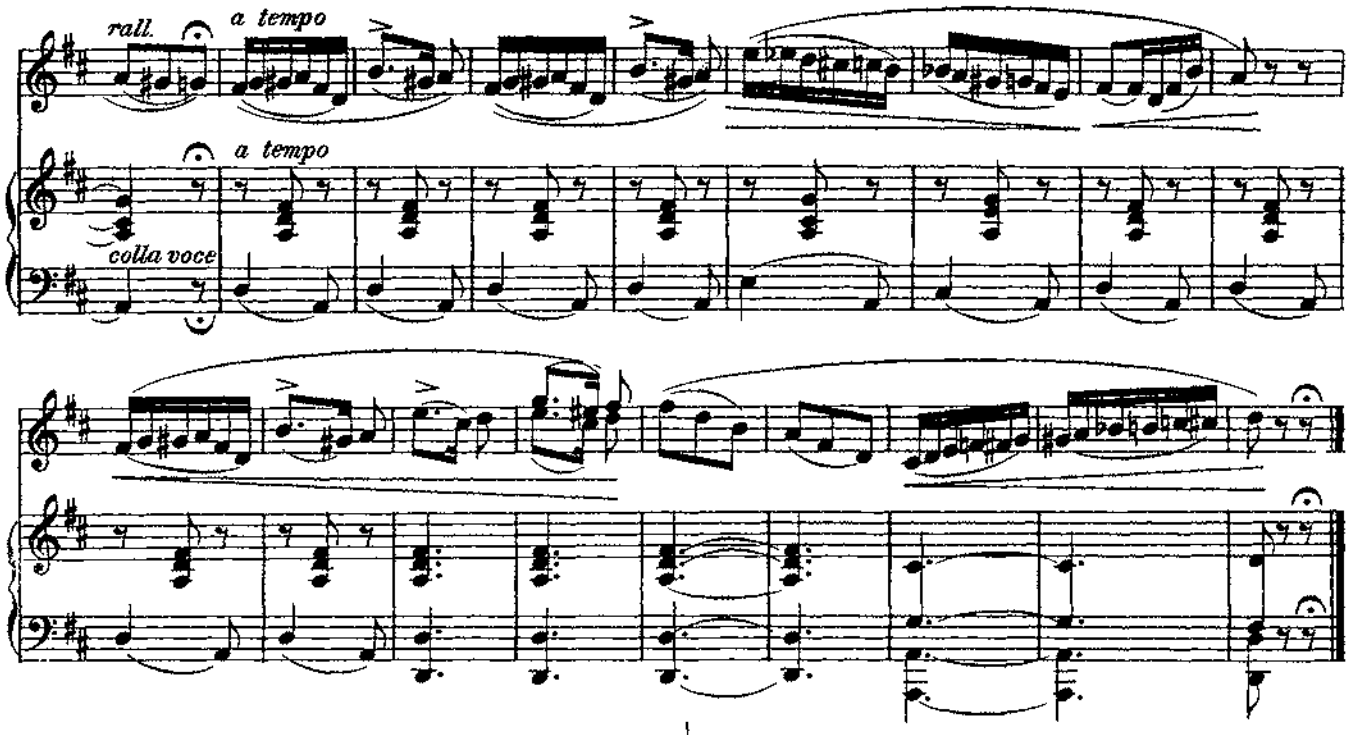




Gamme chromatique. Chromatic Scale.

17. Andante grazioso.

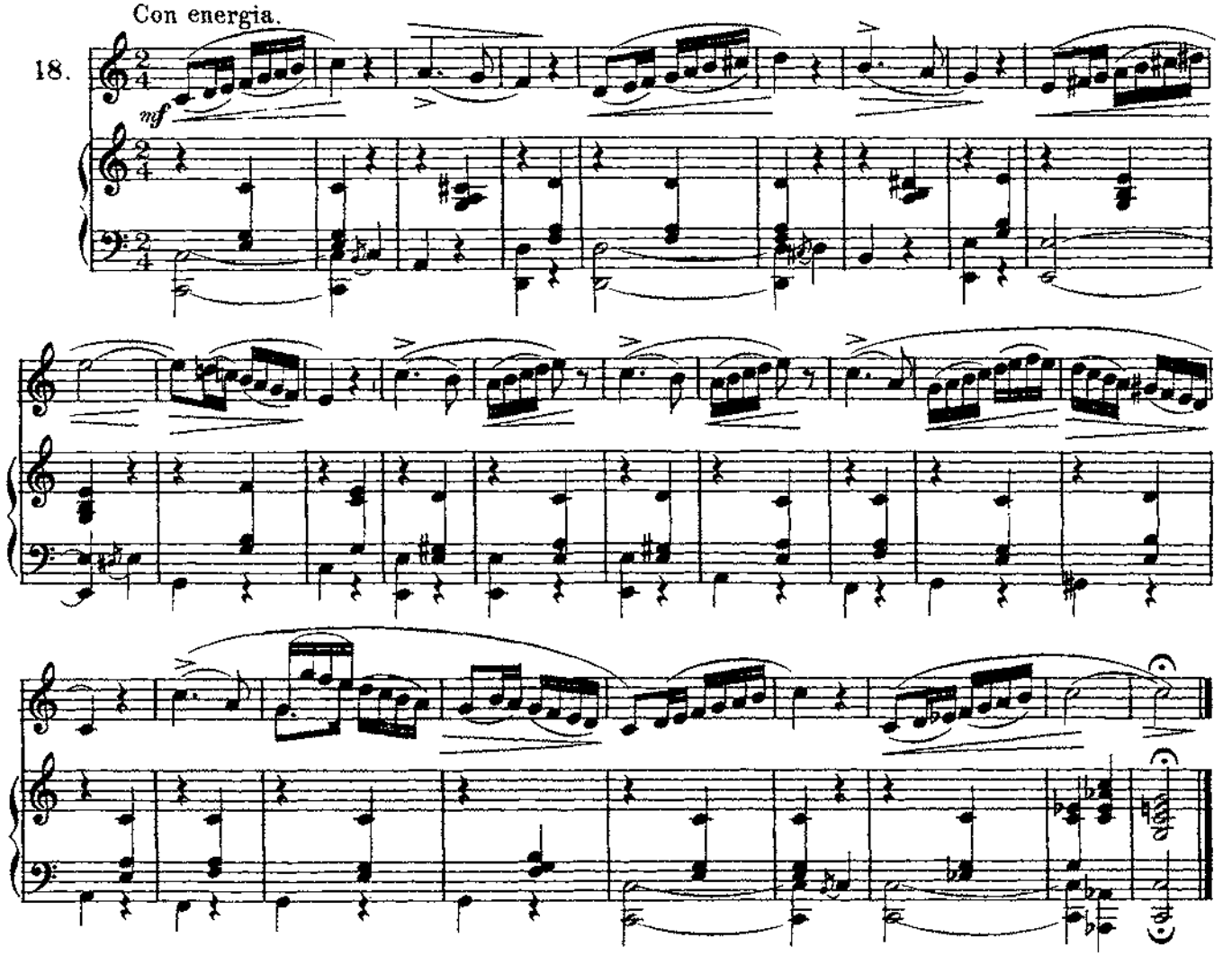




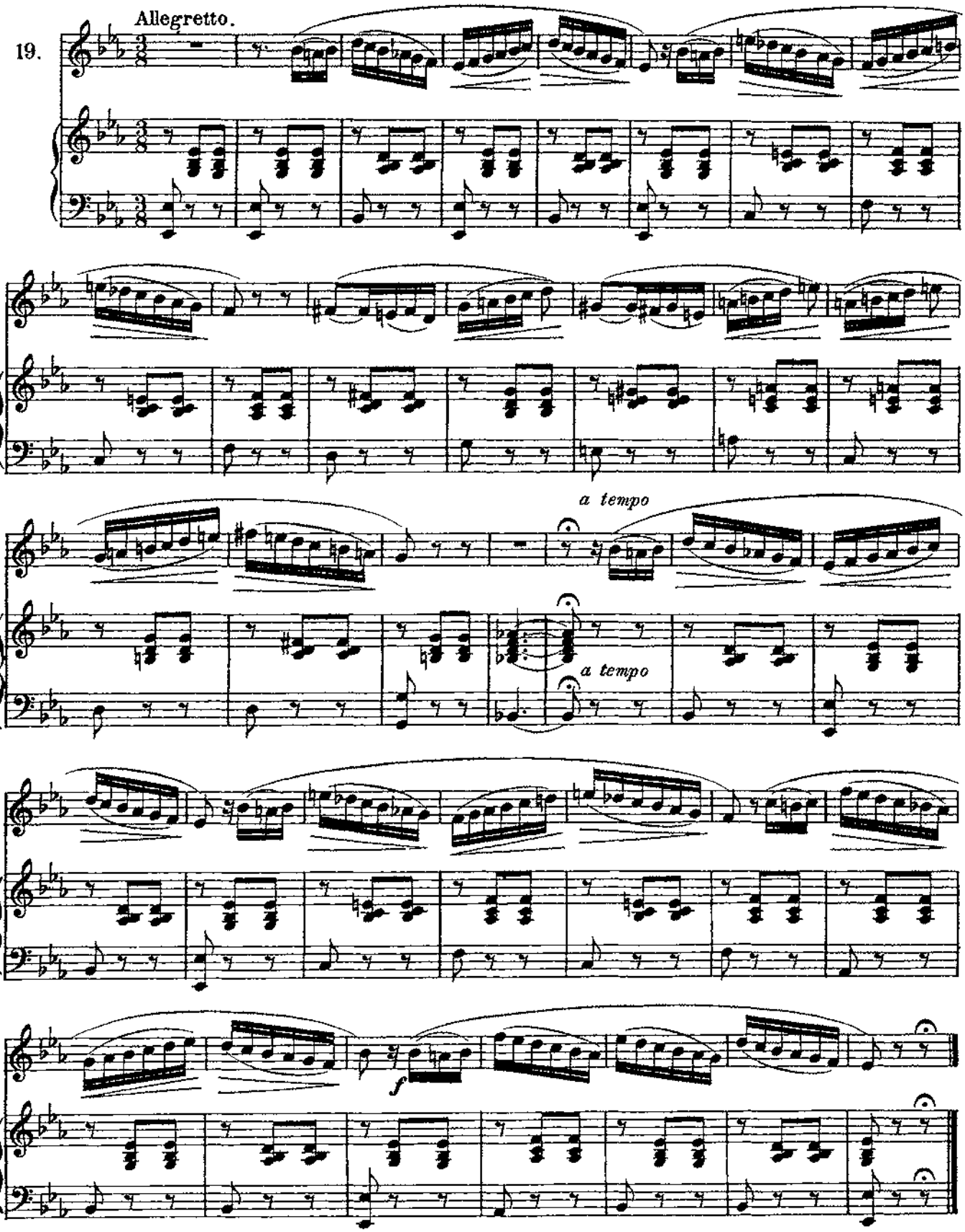
Gamme mineure et majeure. | Major and Minor Scale.

Con energia.

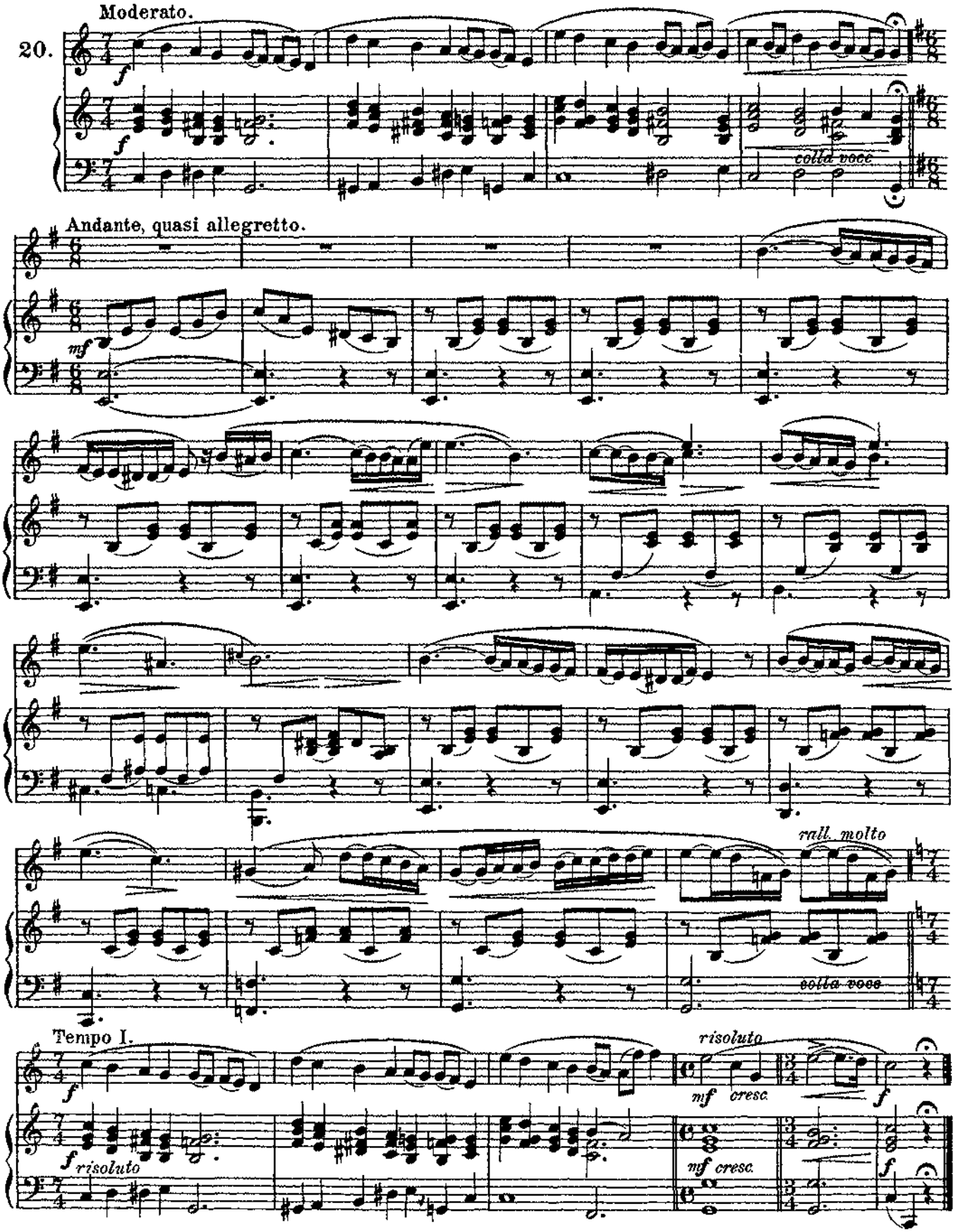
18.



Gamme majeure et mineure. Major and Minor Scale.

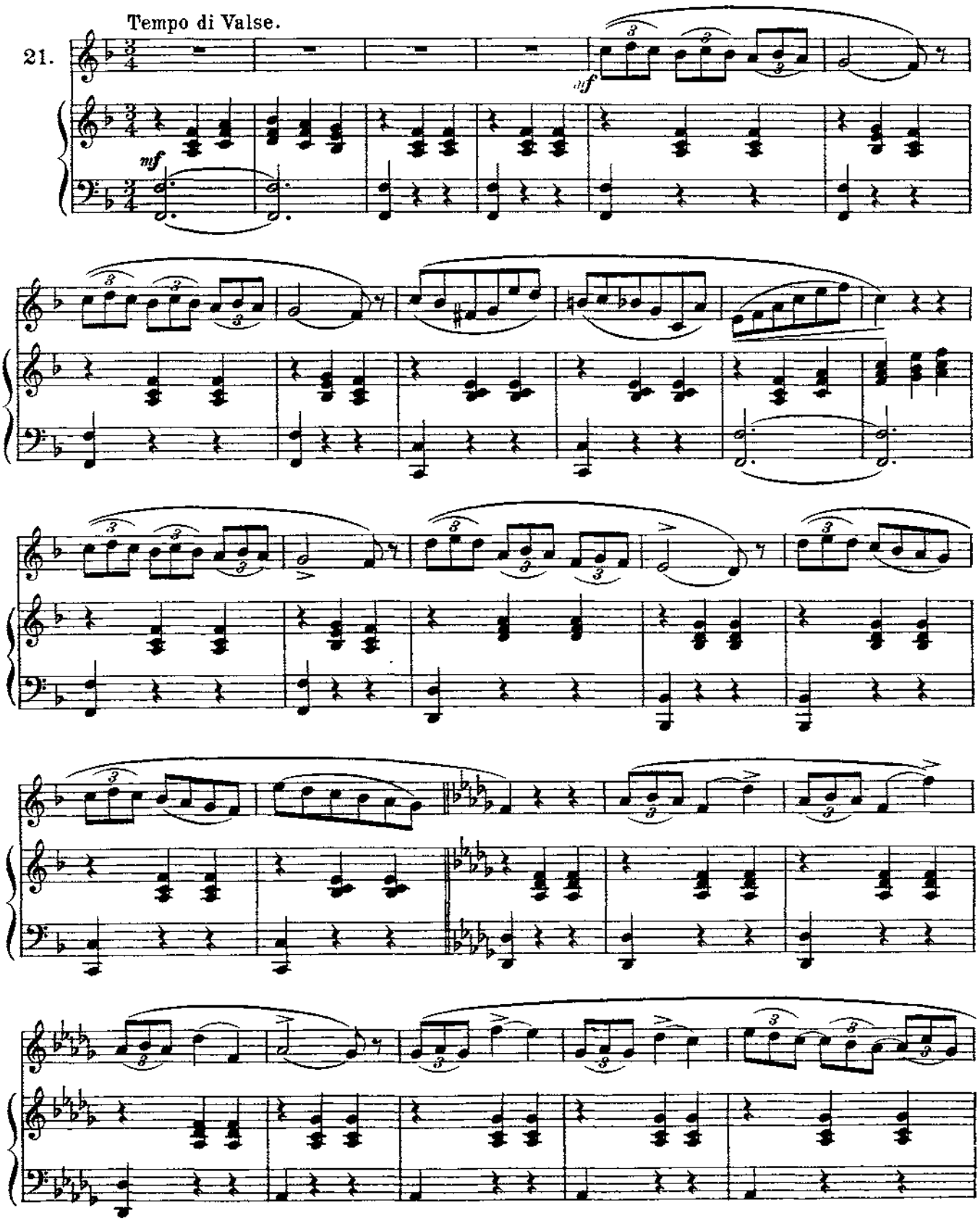


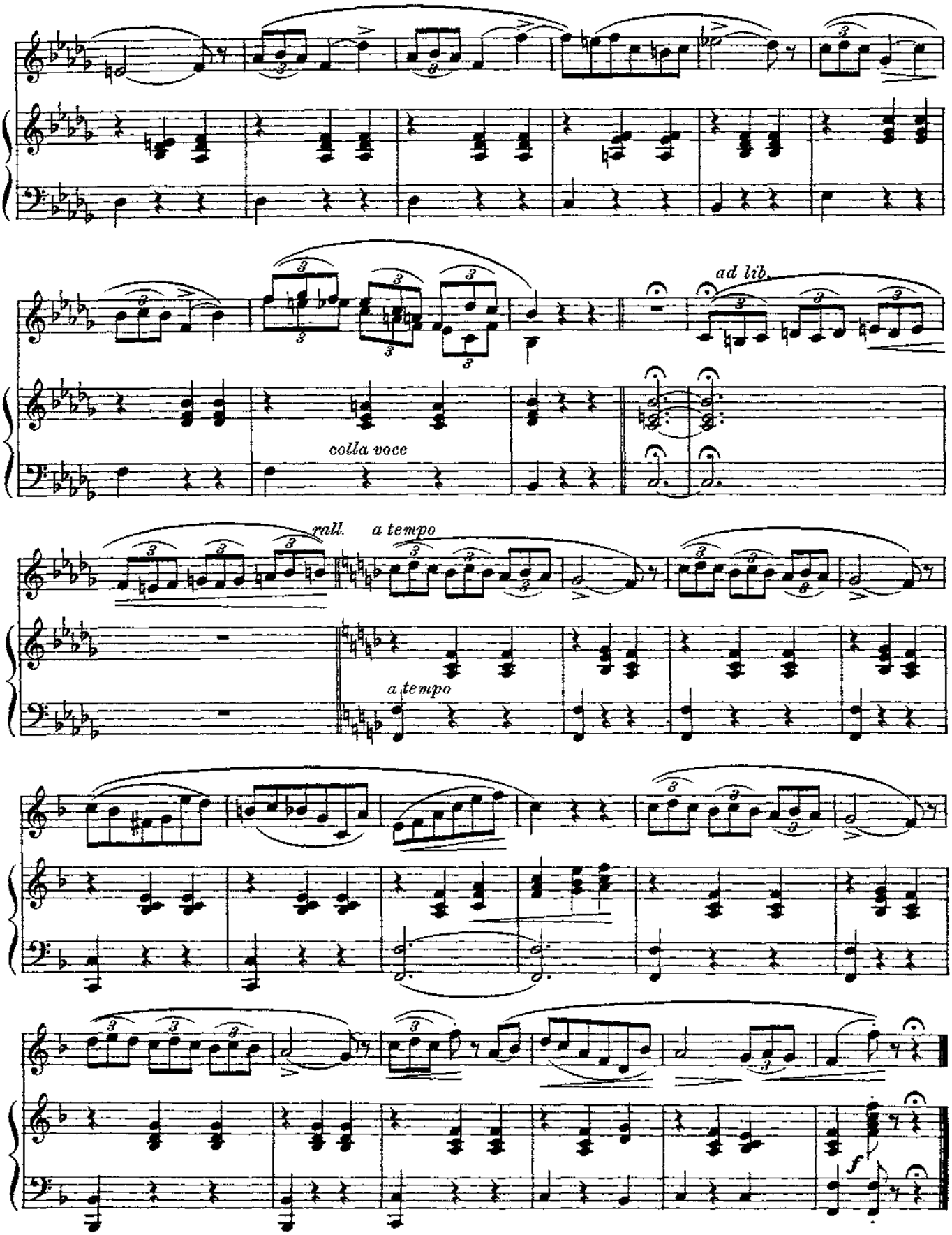
Notes répétées. Repeated Notes.



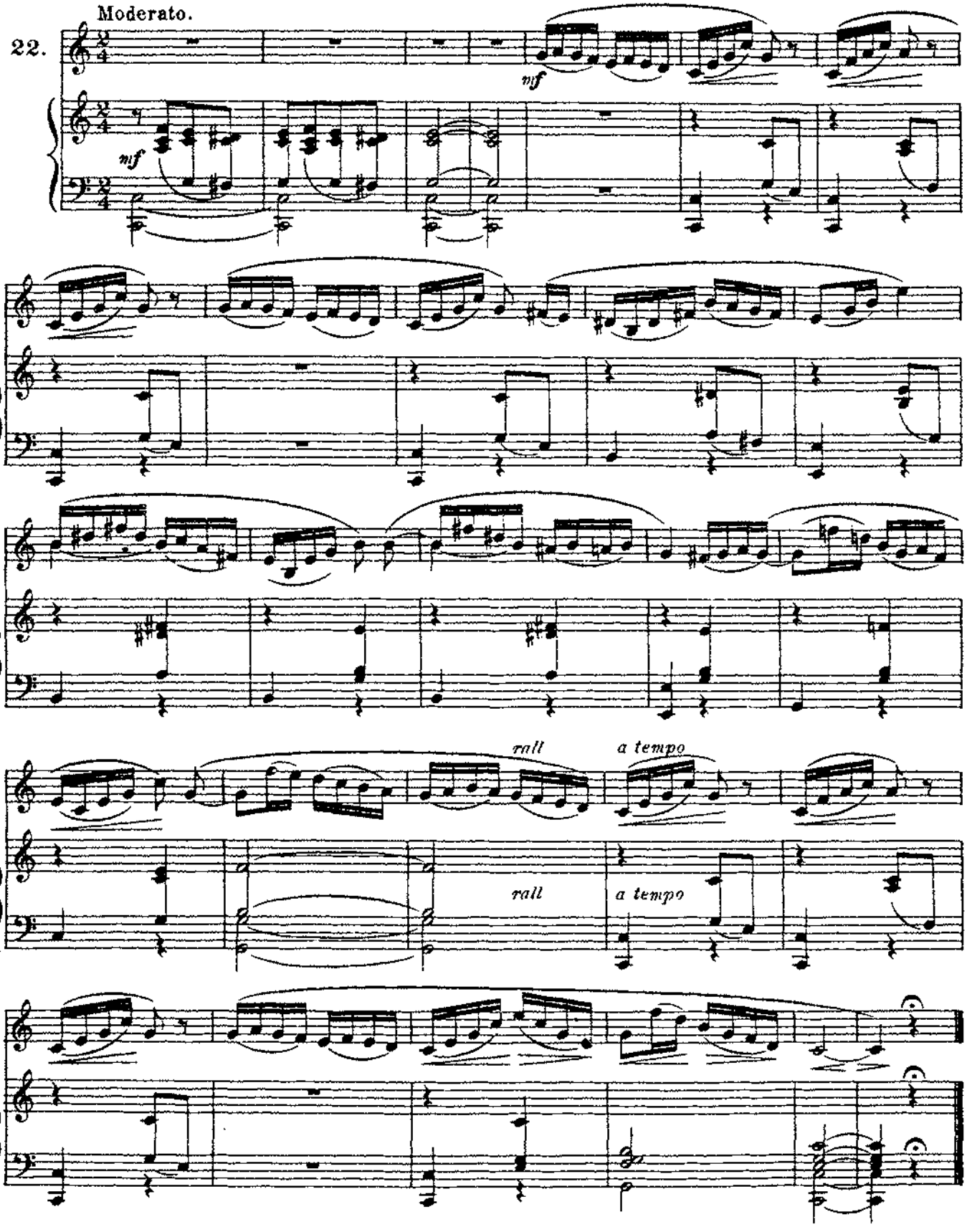
Triolets. **Triplets.**

21. Tempo di Valse.




ad lib.
colla voce
rall.
a tempo
a tempo
f

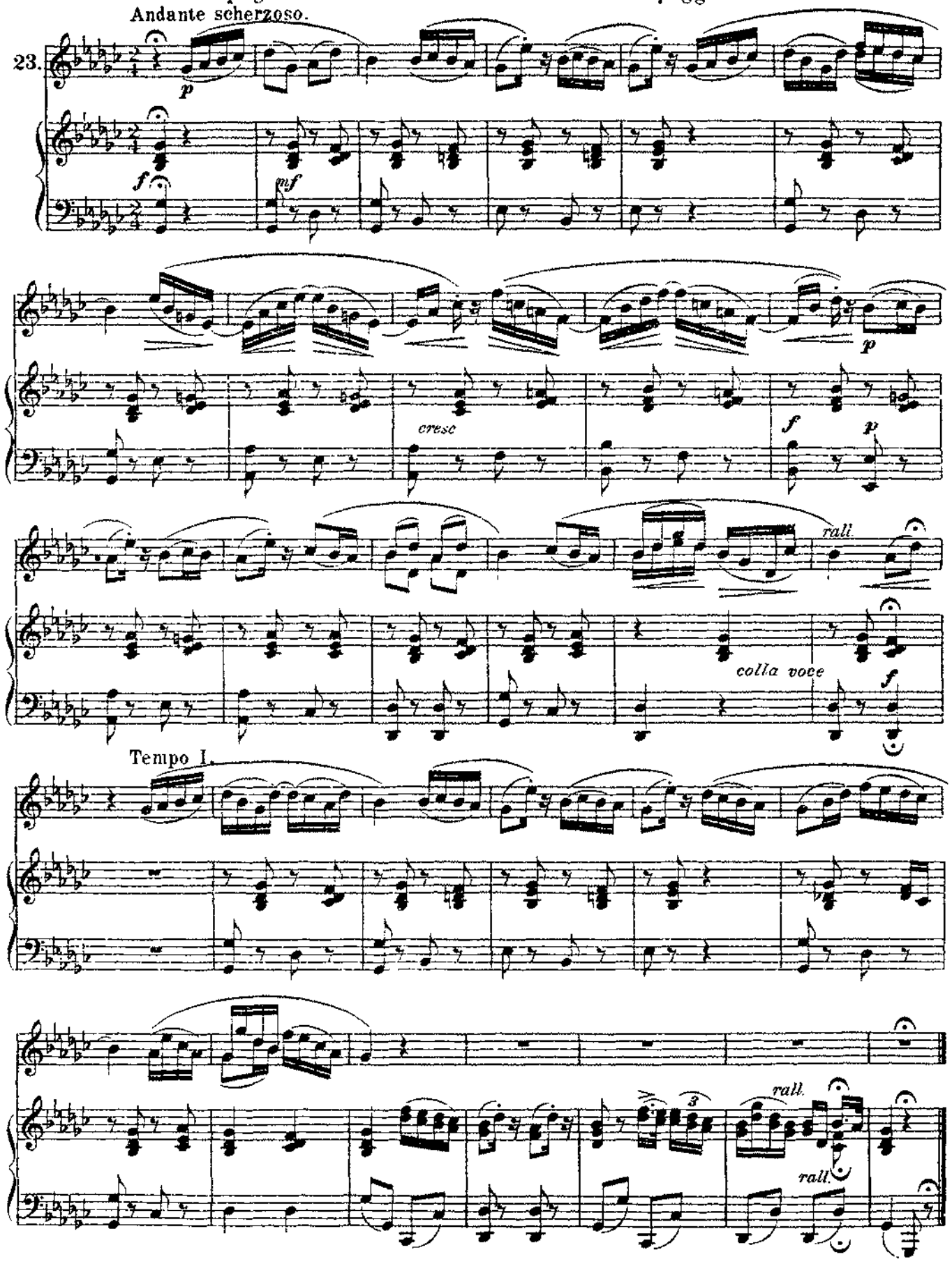
Arpège. Arpeggio.



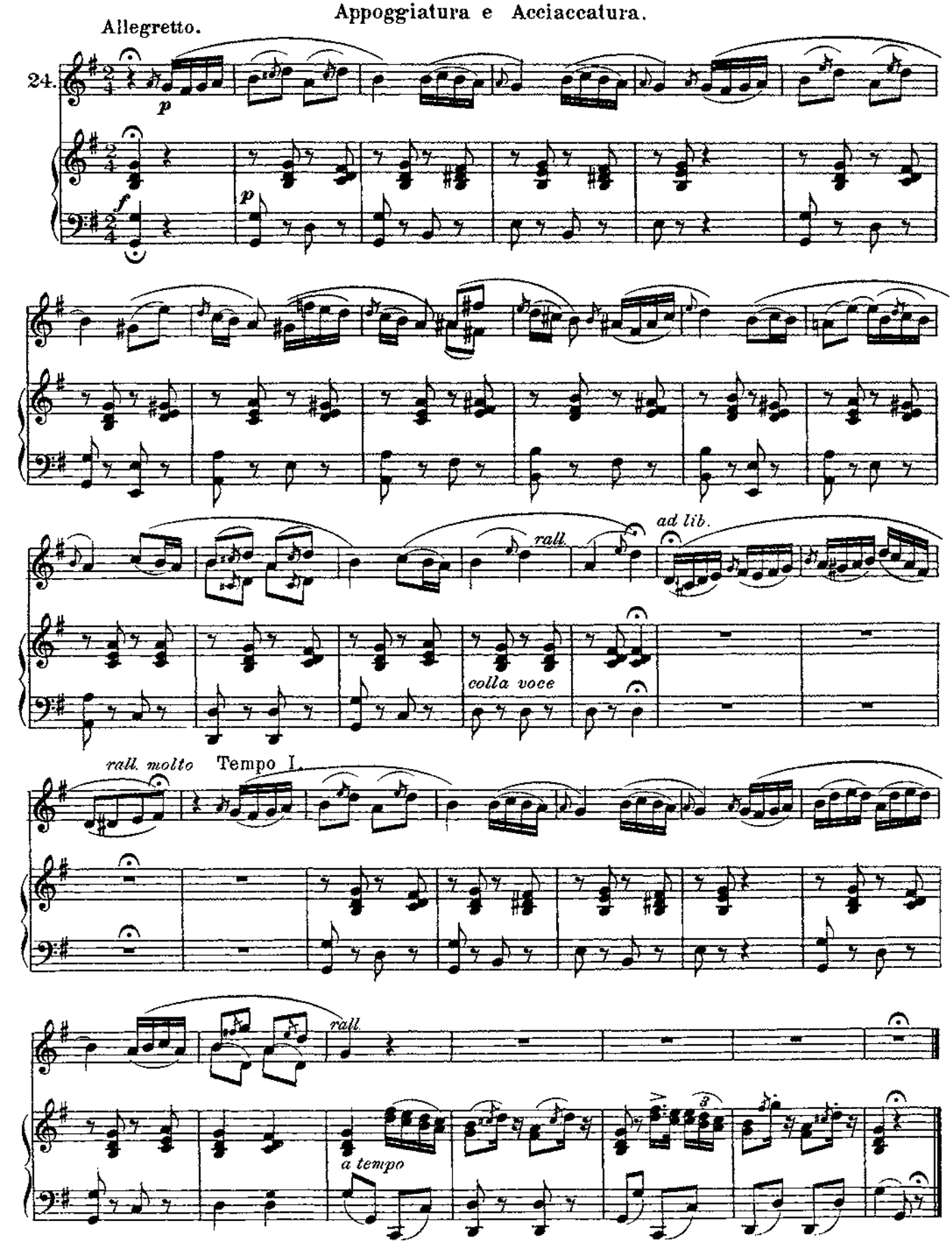
Arpège. Arpeggio.

Andante scherzoso.

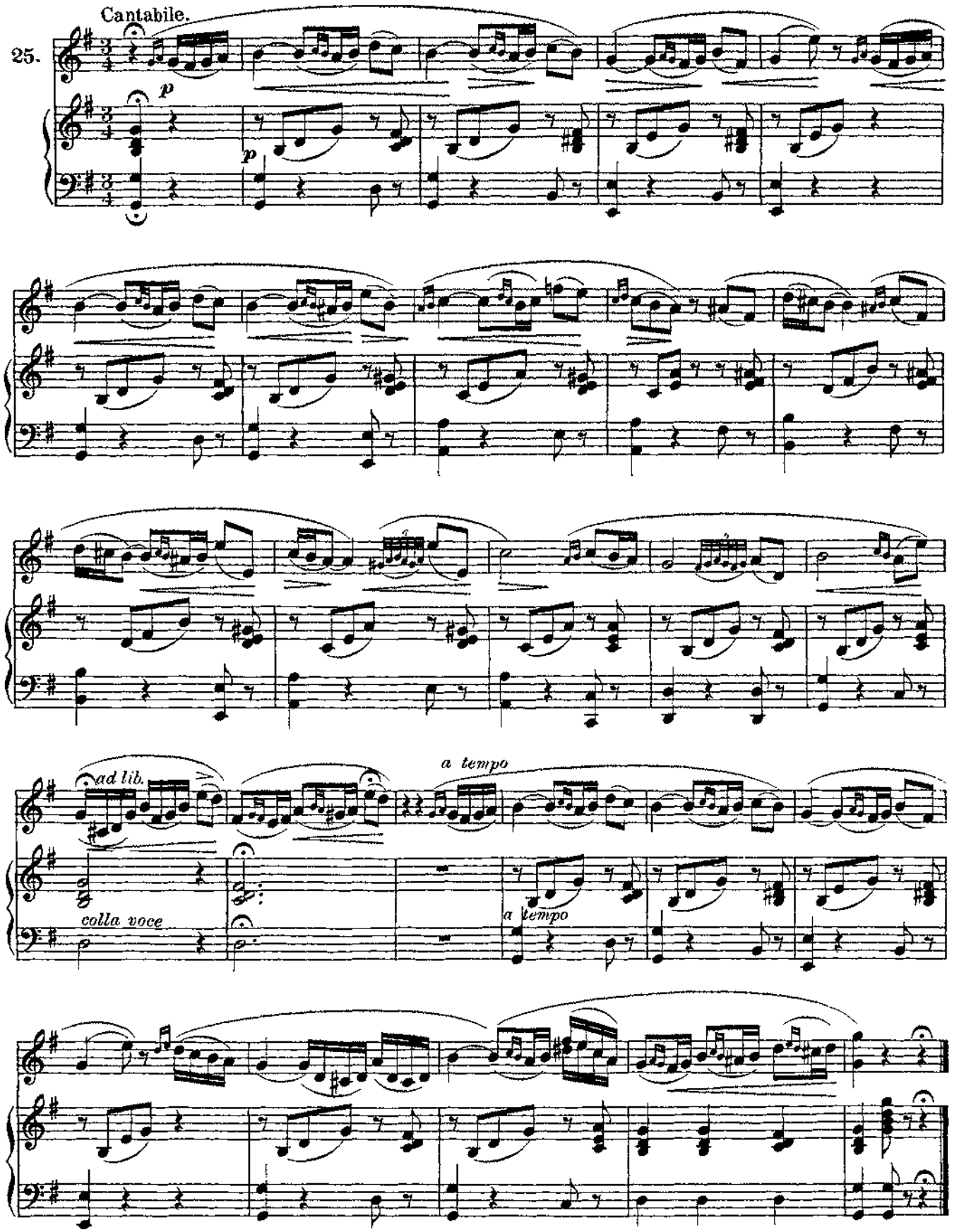
23.



Appoggiatura e Acciaccatura.



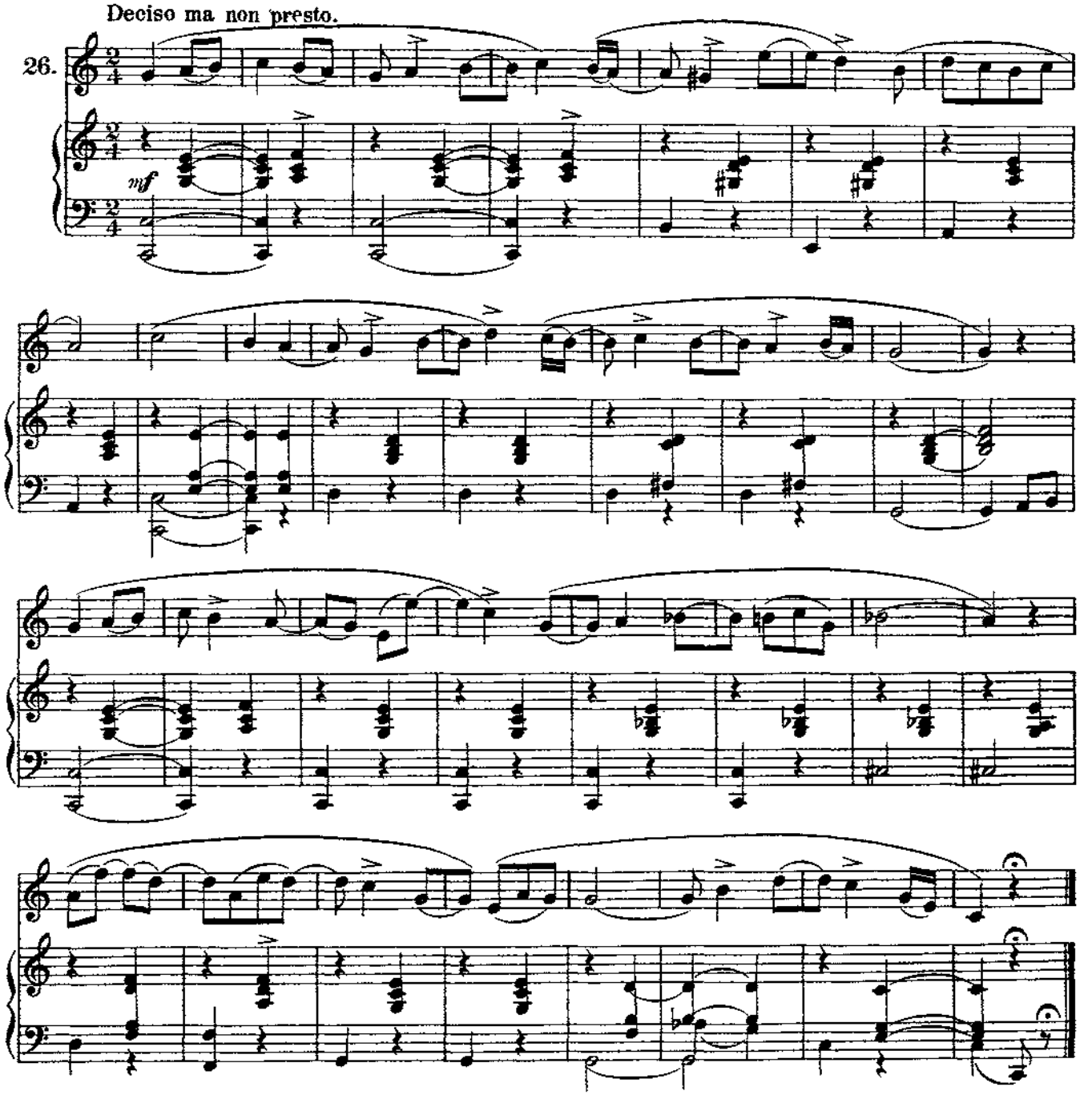
Grupetto et Mordant. Turn and Mordent.



Syncope. Syncopation.

Deciso ma non presto.

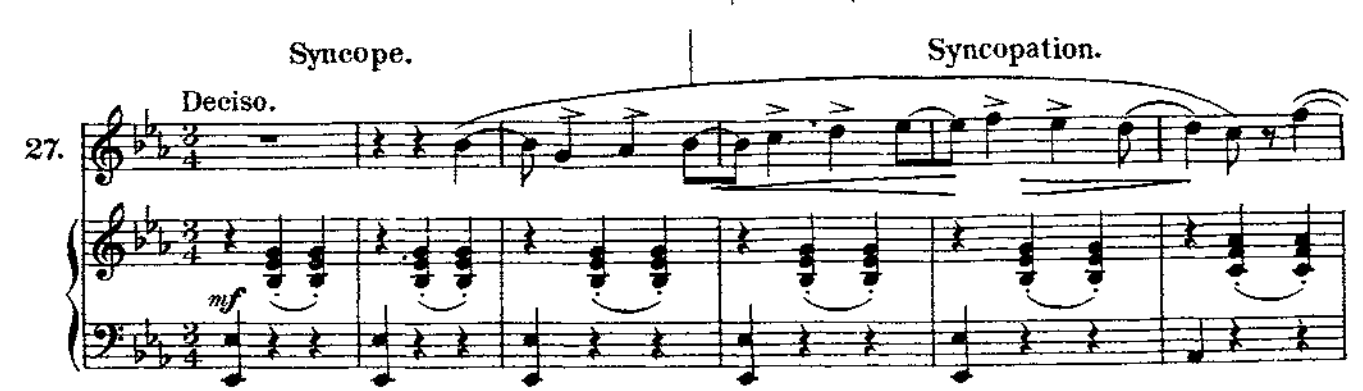
26.

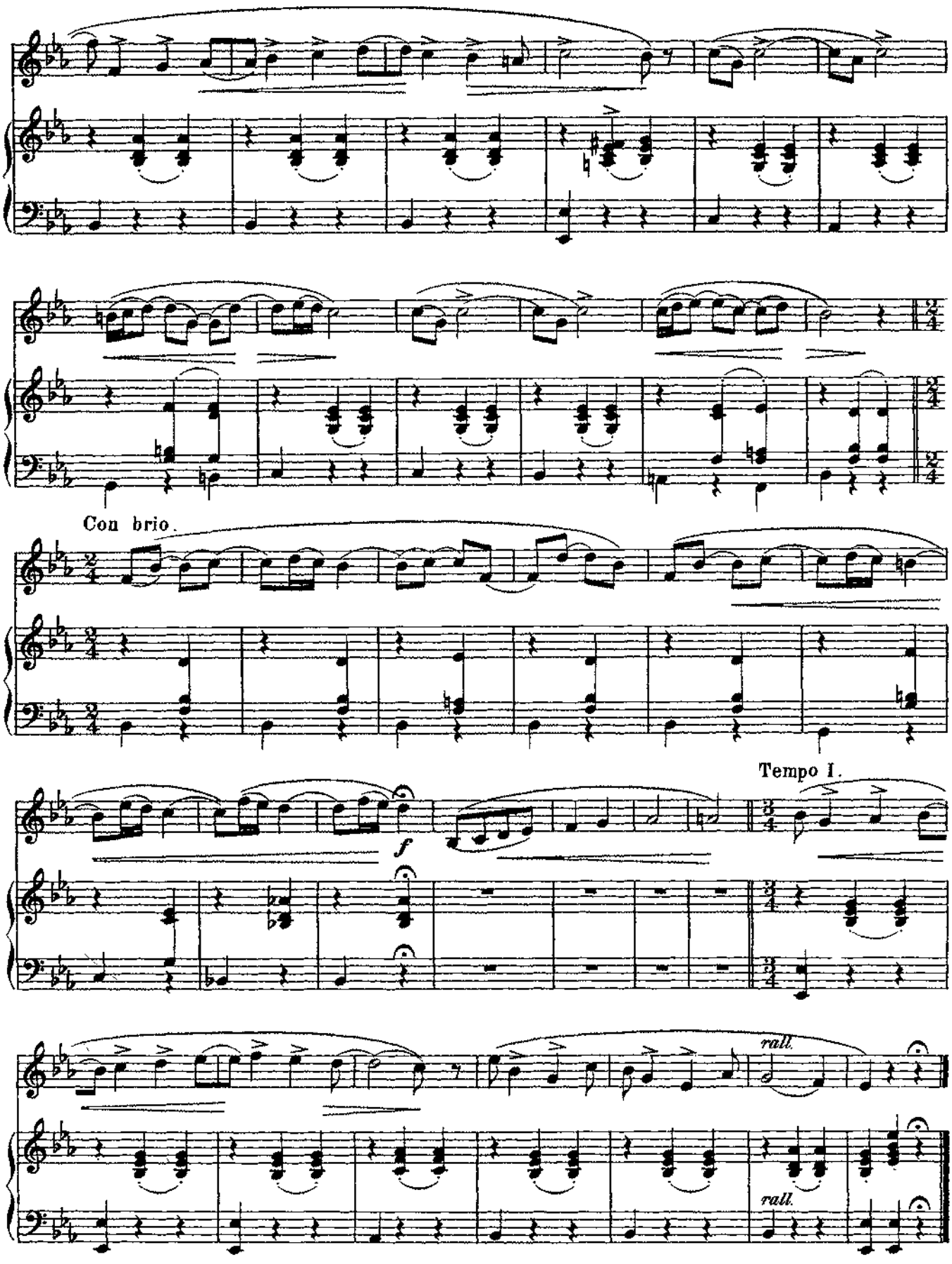


Syncope. Syncopation.

Deciso.

27.




Con brio.
Tempo I.
f
rall.
rall.

Sauts. Long Intervals.

28.

Con energia.

f

f

Cantabile e legato.

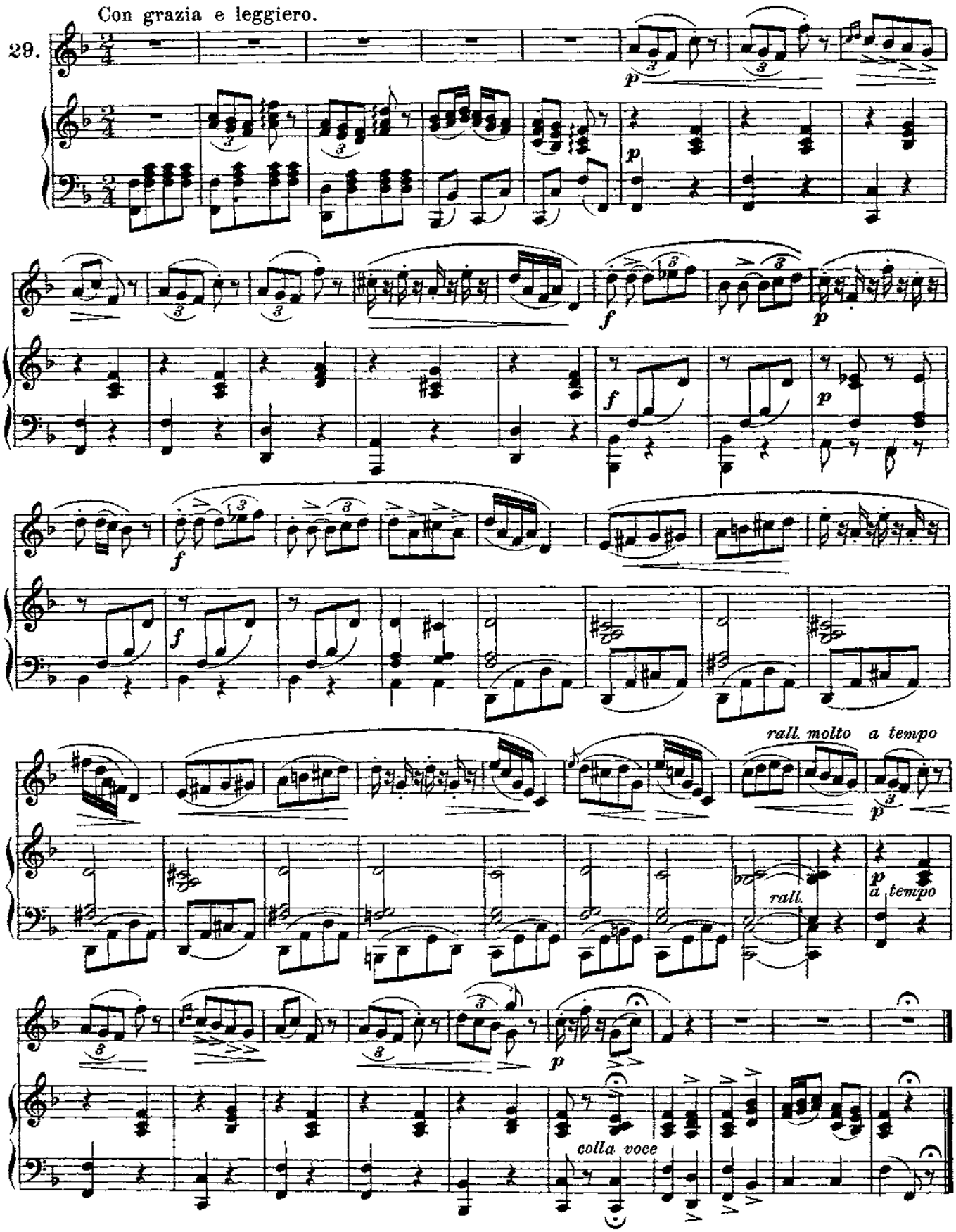
rall. *a tempo*

rall. *a tempo*

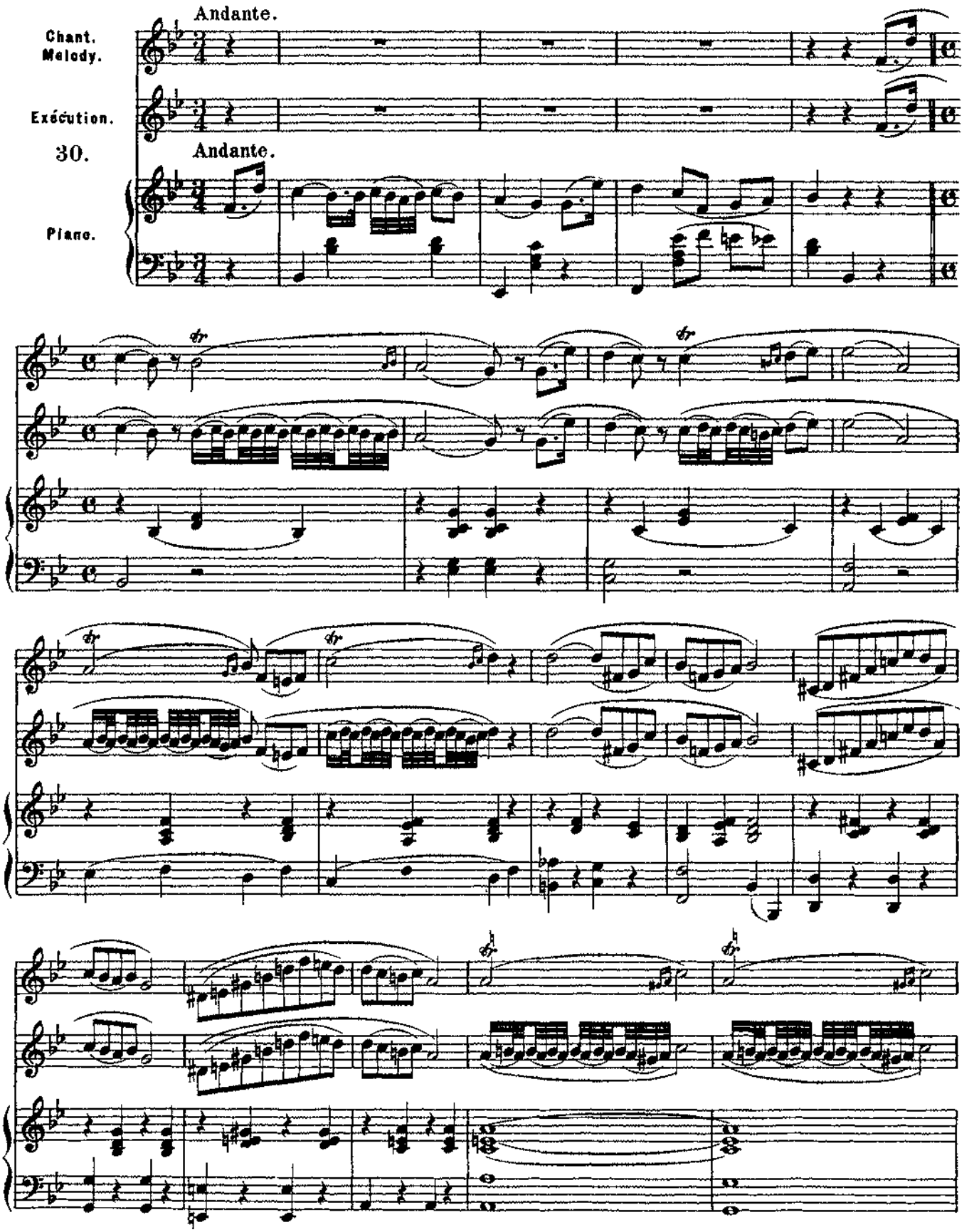
Tempo I.

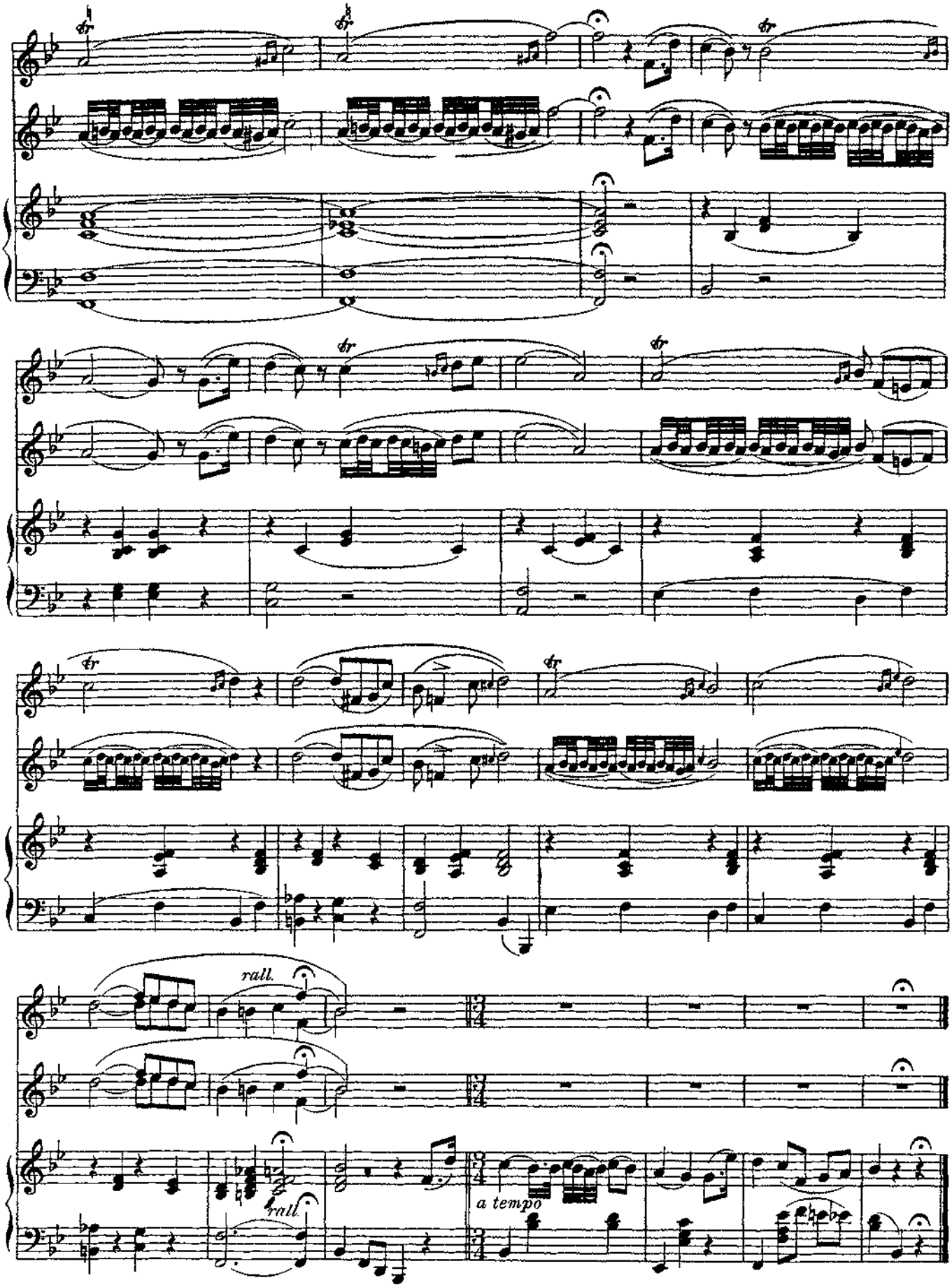
Tempo I.

Picchettato e Marcato.



Trille. **Trill.**




rall.
rall.
a tempo