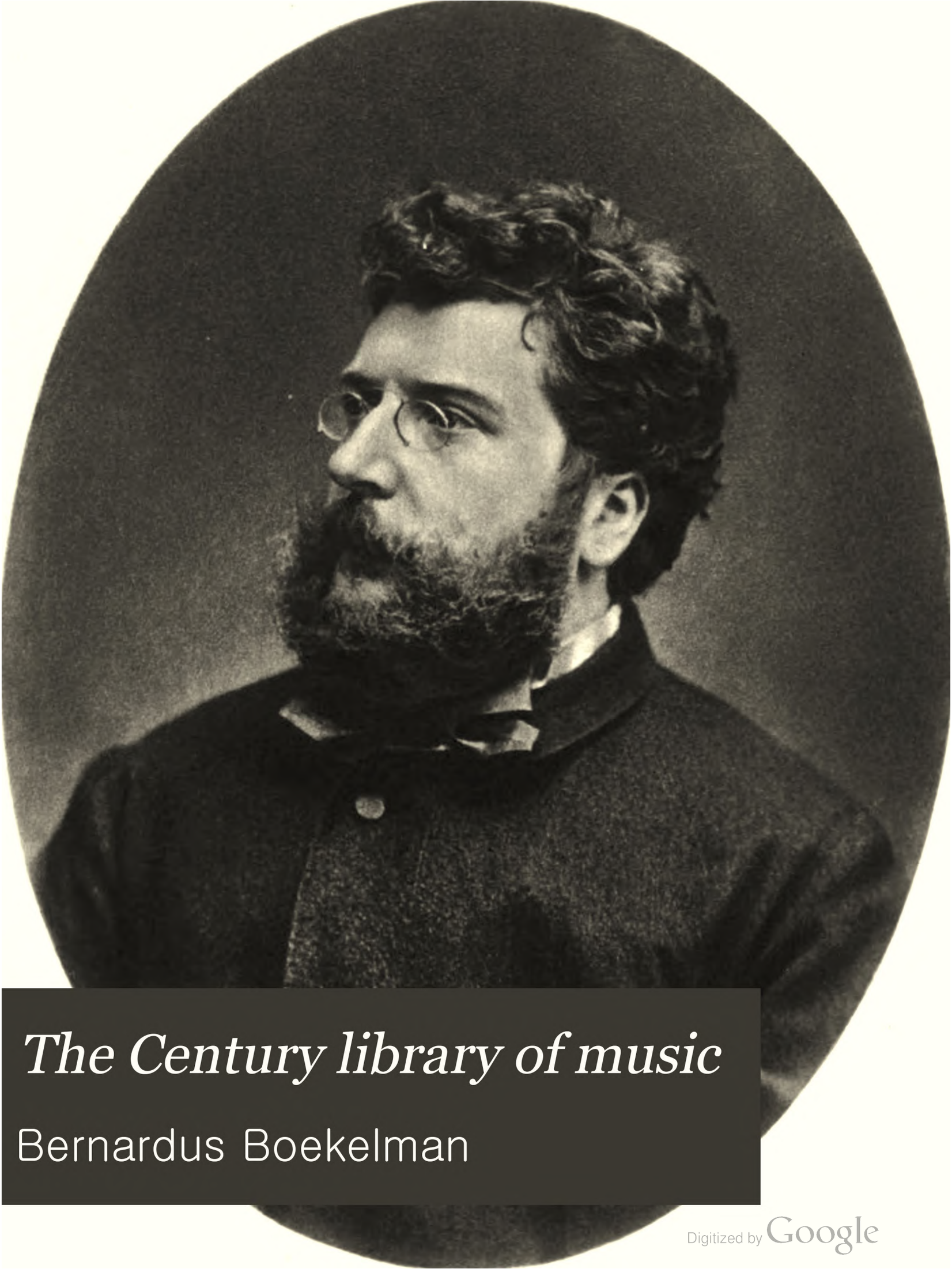

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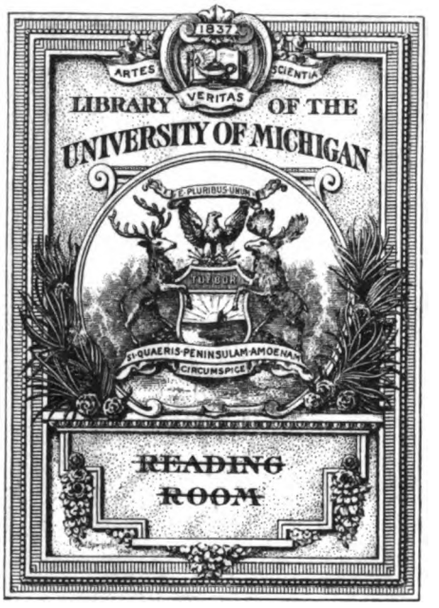

Georges Bizet

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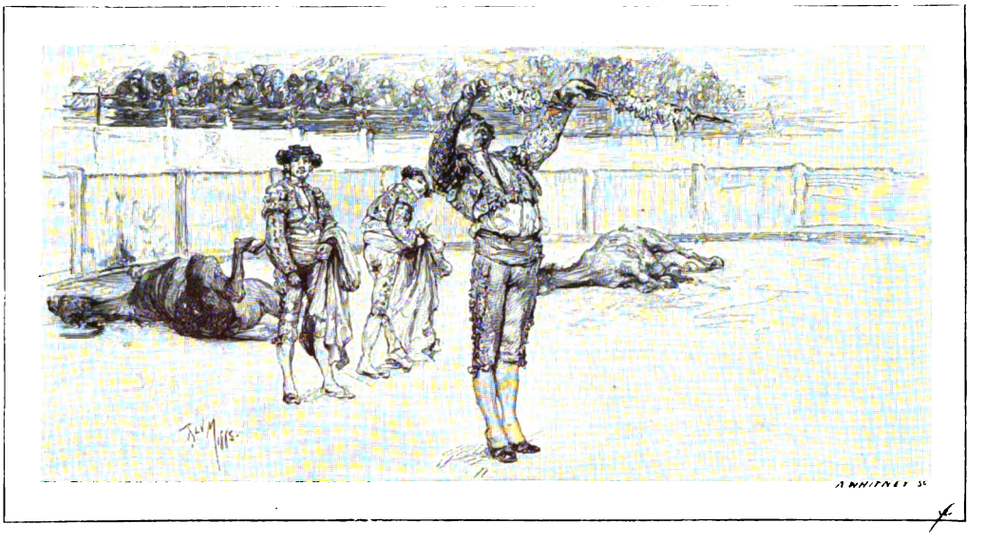


GEORGES BIZET

BY

CÉCILE CHAMINADE

SINCE the hour of triumph has come for the lamented master, snatched away in his prime,—since Bizet's work, become popular, has been acclaimed the world over, how many "prophets of the morrow" have arisen with the assurance that they first discovered the great artist! They foresaw him; they divined him! The criticisms which followed the brilliant revival of "Carmen," in 1883, afford a strangely edifying comparison with those which greeted the opera when it was first brought out. The most enthusiastic admirers of the present had been the most persistent detractors in the past.

Little has been written concerning Bizet. A few brief biographies have appeared, but only one claims attention as important and abundant in good material; this was written by Mr. Charles Pigot, from the first an admirer of Bizet's, who published, in 1886, a very excellent and complete book entitled "Bizet and his Work," wherein he depicts with impassioned eloquence the noble character of the young master.

Bizet was not only a great master: he was, above all, a great artist, a great character, a large-hearted man; this is why his work bears its peculiar imprint, its so personal, so truthful aspect. In this simple sketch, for which no claim to literary excellence is advanced, I would now rehearse, through the medium of a few biographical notes drawn from most trust-

worthy sources, the first steps in life of this rare personality—a life simple, modest, too brief, alas! and marvelously laborious.

Bizet was born in Paris on October 25, 1838. His father, a singing-teacher by profession, and his mother, an accomplished pianist, both wished to make their little Georges a musician. He was sung to rest with the adagios of Mozart and Beethoven. When but four years of age, as soon as his little fingers had sufficient strength to press down the keys of the piano, he was taught the notes simultaneously with the letters of the alphabet. Like Mozart, like Weber and Saint-Saëns, Bizet was an infant phenomenon. He possessed, as it were, a foreknowledge of all things; his progress was astounding. In his ninth year he entered the Conservatoire and carried off in succession and with surprising ease all the highest prizes. After being awarded the first prize of solfeggio,—he was then eleven,—Marmontel claimed him for his piano class, and here also, two years afterward, little Bizet bore away in sensational fashion the first prize. The virtuoso of thirteen years already stood revealed as one of the elect. His organ prize in the Benoist class and his prize for fugue in the Halévy class were taken with the same extraordinary facility, and, fitly to cap the climax of the series of youthful triumphs, he was given, in 1857, the "Prix de Rome" on the strength of his cantata "Clovis and Clotilde," which contains several pages of great and inspired beauty. So passed his school-days, bathed in the sunlight of success. He was fond of his work, which came so easy to him; his teachers worshiped him and cherished the brightest hopes of his future. Thus, equipped with all attainable testimonials, an accomplished virtuoso, possessed of the kindest heart, of a mind of uncommon *finesse*, gifted with an overflowing imagination, Bizet's dreams must have been an enchantment, a golden vista, a maddening vision of delight. He had just entered his twentieth year.

If an artistic career is of all careers the most attractive, the one that fascinates most powerfully all ardent imaginations aspiring to the ideal, it is also the one that has in reserve the largest measure of disappointment, bitterness, and despair. The creative artist, even the most modest, is born ambitious, and dreams of glory. He that feigns contentment with the sole enjoyment bestowed by the work involved in the pursuit of the Beautiful, he that parades his indifference to the approval of the public and his contempt of its applause, lacks sincerity. One hears not seldom a young musician proclaim after a failure that he is happy and proud not to have known how to please the stupid crowd; he attempts to laugh, but his merriment has a hollow ring; his heart bleeds and is full of bitterness; the man grows bad. If, later on, he succeeds, behold him transfigured; he exults and inclines to cry out with Guy de Maupassant: "Talent imposes itself upon the masses"; he loves the public which he once treated with such profound disdain, for now the public has restored him his confidence in himself. How enthusiastically he once again falls

to work! Yes, the artist has need of the opinion of the crowd. All sincere artists have an instinctive distrust of incense-bearers as well as of detractors; the competent critic is a *rara avis;* the kindly and impartial critic, a still more infrequent being; the public, the public at large, is the sole authorized judge, because of its absolute independence. If it starts

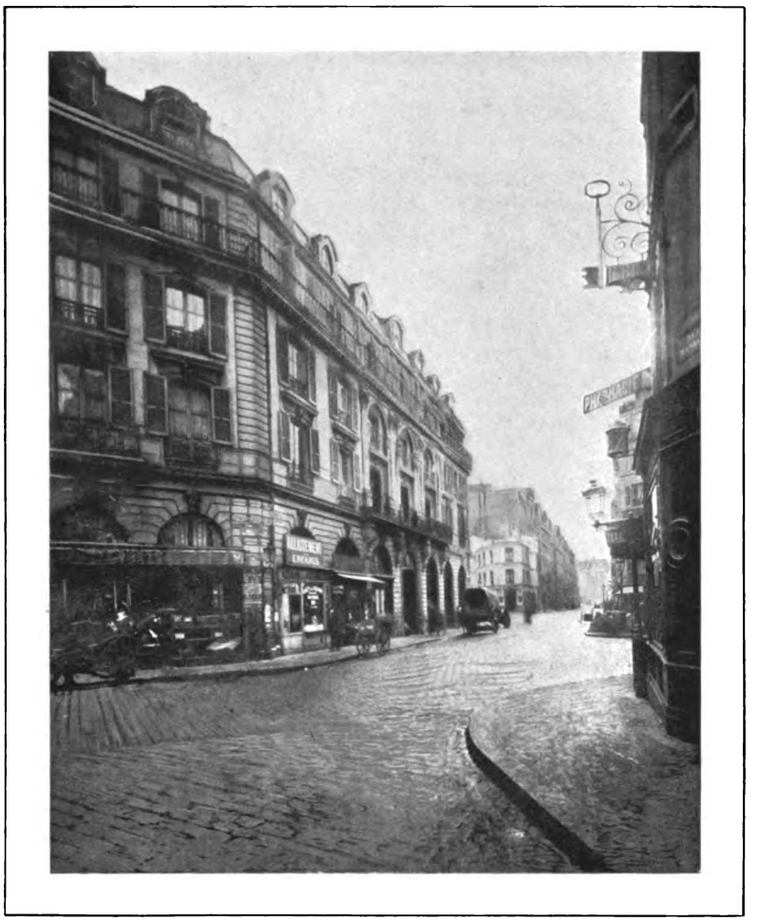
MLLE. CÉCILE CHAMINADE.
From photograph by Benque.

back at the boldness of an art work, if it hesitates at sight of too abstract an achievement; if, in brief, the public does not "understand," what can be said if those whose mission it is to guide opinion, and who consequently should be qualified so to do, do not "understand" more clearly?

The premature decease of Bizet kept from him the knowledge of his glory; he foresaw it only, but, be it noted at once, he was not wholly disregarded by the Parisian public. Except in the case of "Carmen," against which the public was somewhat prejudiced, the master's works were greeted with lively interest, and fell but little short of attaining

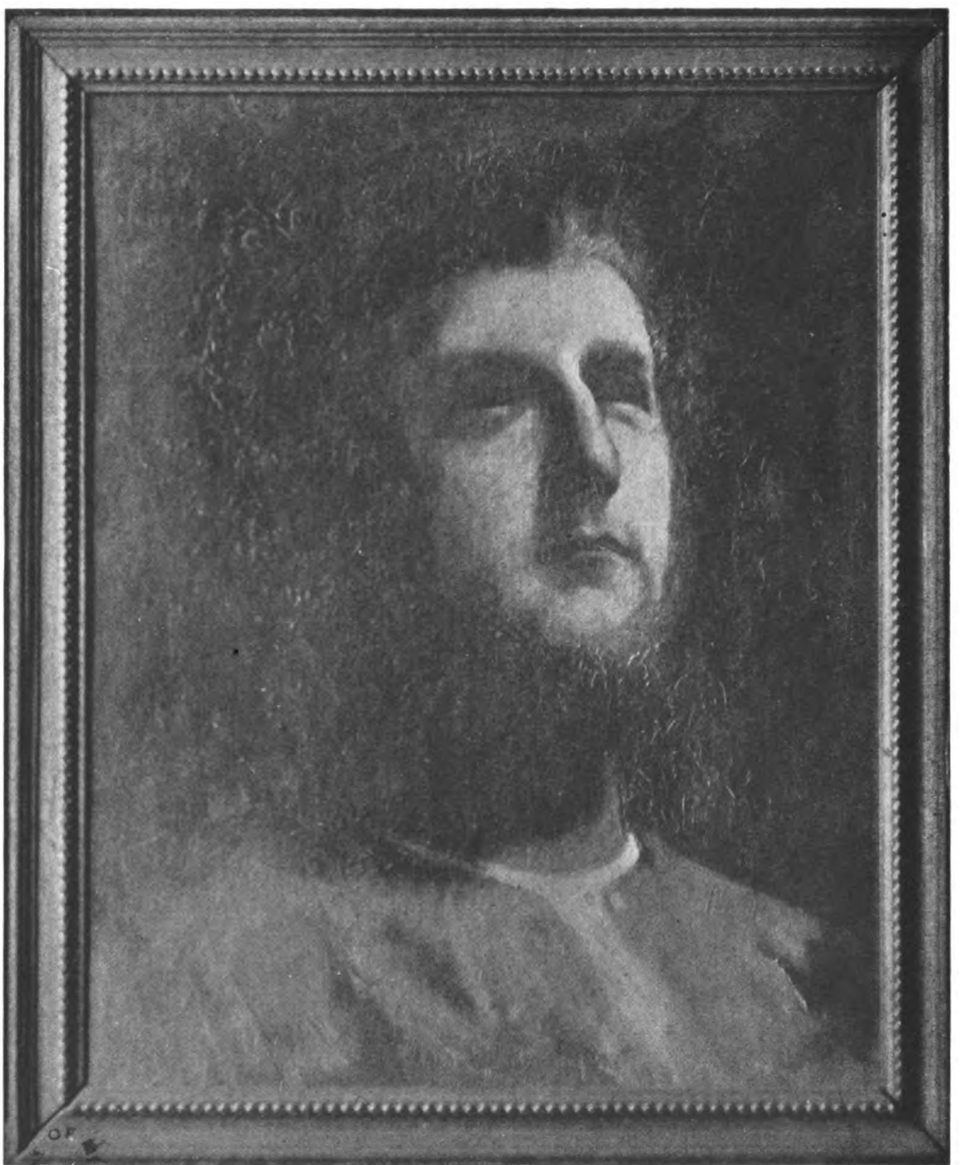
definite success. The very discordant newspaper press unfortunately brought confusion into the uncertain spirit of the public, for the public has no convictions; it feels, and feels only, and little by little the sincere but inconscient impulse of its first manifestations weakens and dies away.

While the young master is still in happy ignorance of the years of fever and strife that await him, let us follow him to Italy, through his



THE HOME OF GEORGES BIZET.
No. 22 Rue Douai.

sojourn in the Eternal City, the dream of his early youth, the supreme reward of toil and merit. Bizet did not slumber on his laurels, but fell passionately to work. His *envois* were: an Italian opera bouffe, "Don Procopio"; a symphony; an overture, "Ossian's Hunt"; and "La Guzla de l'Emir," a comic opera in one act. Little is left of these achievements of his early youth. The personality of an author seldom asserts itself in his first efforts. Bizet, a fanatic *per la musica*, steeped in the works of his favorite masters, still walked unconsciously in their



BY PERMISSION OF THE OWNER, LUDOVIC HALÉVY.

GEORGES BIZET.

PAINTED BY SCELLIER, WHO WON THE PRIX DE ROME FOR PAINTING IN THE SAME YEAR THAT BIZET WON HIS PRIZE FOR MUSIC, AND, ACCORDING TO CUSTOM, PAINTED A PORTRAIT OF HIS CLASSMATE AT THE VILLA MEDICI, IN ROME.

shadow, and his first productions were somewhat deficient in the originality that a few years afterward became so powerful.

His correspondence from Rome is delightful. His brimming enthusiasm for the masters of all schools denotes his ardent nature and his passionate fondness for his art. He addresses to his parents letters marked by innocent and touching tenderness. He writes of his fellow-students in the Villa Medici with the greatest kindliness. Some of them have won his admiration and he delights in their success. Ernest Guiraud, his classmate, his companion in arms, is to join him, for he has just borne off the "Prix de l'Institut." Bizet rejoices at thought of meeting again the friend whose musical ethics are in such perfect accord with his own. What enthusiastic *causeries*, what projects for the future, what golden dreams were to be looked forward to, as they rambled through the lovely Roman summer land!

His first great grief was brought to him by the death of his mother. He returned to Paris in hot haste, and arrived just before she breathed her last. The blow was a terrible one for his gentle soul. For a long while he was inconsolable, seeking in work, however, the strength to overcome the sorrow that possessed him.

In 1863 Bizet wrote "Les Pêcheurs de Perles," a three-act opera, ordered of him by M. Carvalho, then manager of the Théâtre Lyrique. The book of the opera was not of a character to tempt a fiery and original composer like Bizet, but he accepted it with gratitude, without even having read it, holding himself very fortunate at being able to come at once into contact with the public, without submitting to the long and depressing period of waiting in store for almost all writers for the stage. The dullness of the subject did not discourage him, and he set about his task with a hopeful heart. "Les Pêcheurs" was represented for the first time at the Théâtre Lyrique, September 29, 1863, and met with but questionable success. Some passages of the score were enthusiastically applauded: the duet between *Nadir* and *Zurga*, the tenor air, "Je crois rêver encore," and *Léïla's* aria, "Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre," called forth unanimous applause. These are, of course, the simplest pages of the opera, and hence those most easily understood on a single hearing. The score abounds in new and lovely thoughts; the orchestration denotes a skilful hand; the Eastern color is most felicitously evoked. Be it not forgotten that the composer was in his twenty-fifth year, and that a first step of this sort certainly deserved encouragement. Only here and there did some dull scene or some measures devoid of personality call down hostile criticism, and this was not spared the composer. Discord reigned in the newspaper press, and Bizet was taxed with following in Verdi's steps, in Félicien David's, in Grisar's! Some journalists attributed to him Wagnerian tendencies. All this seems astonishing, but so it was, and the journals of the period are still at hand to prove it. Berlioz, who foresaw

what Bizet might one day become, said in the "Journal des Débats": "The score of 'Les Pêcheurs de Perles' does the greatest credit to M. Bizet, whom people will be constrained to accept as a composer, *notwithstanding* his rare talent as a pianist." Berlioz stood almost alone in doing justice to the young master. The homage paid came from so exalted a fount that it might well console the musician for many onslaughts. Bizet was not discouraged by the doubtful outcome of his first battle, and valiantly set to work without delay.

Between 1863 and 1866 he undertook several works of vastly different styles and proportions: a symphony, "Roma"; a five-act grand opera, "Ivan le Terrible"; and several instrumental pieces. During this period of his life he appears to have worked feverishly and desperately, rather than under the impulse of conviction. Perhaps he was influenced unconsciously by the contradictory comments that greeted his first effort. Had self-doubt, the sharpest pang that can afflict an artist, entered his mind? At that very moment M. Carvalho intrusted to him the book of a four-act opera, "La Jolie Fille de Perth," the score of which was to be ready in six months. Bizet accepted the task. The book pleased him, for it opened a path to his straying thoughts. Then, too, arose the hope of a complete revenge, or, better still, of a definite success. He addressed himself to the new work in the heartiest manner, setting aside for the time being all the compositions he had already commenced.

He was then a resident of Le Vésinet. The tiny house on the Route des Cultures still stands, just as it was then, isolated, hidden in foliage, a veritable hermitage. Bizet was wont to lock himself up in it for weeks; strict orders were given, and a formal authorization had to be shown to gain admission to the hermit. In a letter written to a pupil and friend, M. Edmond Galabert, he thus speaks of his country abode: "I am so thoroughly at home, safe from bores, idlers, sayers of nothing — from the world, in fine, alas!" Bizet, whose frank joyousness, wit, and humor were known to all, loved calmness, silence, and solitude. His changeful disposition was alternately fiery and meditative. He came to Paris but once a week in order to give lessons, for he was poor; his music brought him but little, and he had to live. Fancy the sufferings of an artist of genius compelled to earn his livelihood by teaching — mostly uninteresting pupils — while ten operas sing in his brain! Moreover, he gave his lessons with care, patience, and resignation that seemed incompatible with his vivacious and passionate disposition. In all he undertook, in everything he agreed to do, he threw his will, his whole heart—an honest and loyal heart in the fullest sense of the word.

During this term of excessive activity, Bizet wrote the series of charming melodies, very varied in form and color, whereof many, now celebrated, have an exquisite and penetrating flavor: "Chant d'Amour," "A une Fleur," "Pastorale," "Vieille Chanson," "Ma Vie a Son Secret," "Les

IN THE DESERT.

"THIRST." FROM THE PAINTING BY GÉRÔME.

WHERE GEORGES BIZET DIED.

No. 5 Avenue de Mesmes, Bougiral (near St. Germain).

Adieux de l'Hôtesse Arabe" may be cited among the best. The latter song, especially poetic, won rare success for Mme. Carvalho, who interpreted it to perfection. He also wrote for the publishing house of Choudens numerous transcriptions for piano and some original compositions. His romances without words, entitled "Chants du Rhin" are models of form and elegance. "La Chasse Fantastique," which is very difficult in point of execution, is characterized by strange and diabolic accents suggesting ancient legends, and written with a fancy and an originality that it would seem impossible to surpass.

Bizet never consented to appear publicly as a pianist. He purposely concealed his great talent and virtuosity. Many offers had been made him, and concert tours would surely have proved less wearying and more lucrative than the work of teaching, but he invariably declined to entertain them. He no doubt dreaded the indestructible prejudice that lies in holding instrumentalists to their specialty, and denying them the gift of exalted conception. Bizet dreaded for his works, when asked to execute them, the epithet, "pianist's music," from which Liszt and Rubinstein fought themselves free with so much difficulty. Chopin, immortal

Chopin, who made the piano the sole confidant of his dreams, his sufferings, his aspirations, found it no easy task to be taken seriously by the worthies that lay down the principle, "there is no great music written, save for the stage, or in symphonic form" — which is tantamount to proclaiming that there is no great painting found, save canvases five feet by ten. Bizet shrank from destroying his growing prestige as a dramatic musician by making himself known as a pianist, and thus it came that he kept men in ignorance of his great talent as an executant. Marmontel, in his "Symphonistes et Virtuoses," supplies a glittering description of Bizet's playing, comparing him with the greatest pianists of the period and emphasizing the personality of his style, the marvelous sensitiveness of his touch and the fullness of his tone. Liszt, who had heard him before he departed for Rome, expressed his admiration to him in strong terms, and Liszt, everybody knows, was not easily stirred to admiration.

The date was at hand when Bizet, to comply with the terms of the contract, was to complete the score of "La Jolie Fille de Perth." He worked fifteen and sixteen hours a day; a less robust nature, one less steeled, would have speedily broken down. The opera was finished in due season, but months were spent in arranging the cast, and its initial performance occurred but a year later. Too much space would be required to analyze the score — a work of real importance. I confess that I prefer "Les Pêcheurs de Perles," with its charming sincerity. "La Jolie Fille de Perth" is an achievement of broad proportions, full of life and at certain points powerfully dramatic, but it impresses me as less felicitous as to inspiration, and the very Italian *vocalizzi* that frequently appear are somewhat confusing, when the advanced ideas of the young master are kept in mind.

The opera was cordially received, but its success recalled the experience of "Les Pêcheurs de Perles": it did not endure. After twenty-five representations the work vanished from the bills, nor has it up to this writing again been performed in France. The newspaper press was again very contradictory and by no means eulogistic, with the exception of the journals represented by the great musician-critics — a slender force. These writers, although recognizing in Bizet a dangerous future rival, succeeded in silencing the utterances of instinctive jealousy, and were agreed in praising the incontestable merit of "La Jolie Fille de Perth" as they had praised "Les Pêcheurs de Perles," and in classing Bizet with the musicians of whom, henceforward, account must be taken. The numberless journalists, however, who assumed the title of "musical critics" with no other claim thereto than their own good will, formed a cabal whose operations were to begin afresh whenever a new work of the composer's appeared. The hapless artist, unnerved by excessive labor, weary of a fruitless struggle, filled with bitterness, a shining mark for envy and ill will, was all but disheartened; despite the faith he still held

LA CIGALE.

FROM A PAINTING BY PIERRE HUAS.

in his powers, he was on the eve of giving up the contest. The first symptoms of the malady that was to prove fatal a few years later were disclosed at this period.

"Djamileh," a one-act opera, followed. The music of the work is very dainty, very poetical, and intensely Oriental, but the book is scarcely interesting. The interpretation, too, was inadequate; the leading rôle, that of the slave *Djamileh*, was allotted to an admirable creature whose talent unluckily bore no proportion to her beauty, and the remaining parts were quite as poorly sustained. It may be said with justice that "Djamileh," a very delicate achievement and one not easily sung, was betrayed by its performers.

We now come to "L'Arlésienne," a masterpiece of grace, poetry, and local color, every page a lifelike, luminous picture. In this work the musician reveals himself as a colorist among painters. Without resorting to the language of the day, which endows a musician with a palette, tints, and horizons, and in compensation gives the painter a scale, tones, and harmonies, one is tempted in this instance to use the terms of the studio quite as freely as those of the music-room in dealing with this work, so wonderfully truthful for all that are familiar with Provence. Daudet could have found no co-laborer more potent to depict the scene of the evolution of his simple, lovely, and touching drama. Bizet had that rarest of gifts, the power to evoke. He had caught but a glimpse of Provence on his way to Rome a few years previous. He had been fascinated by its peculiar charm. Had he not seen it, even, he would with his marvelous intuition have divined it. This he proves in "Les Pêcheurs de Perles" and in "Djamileh," wherein he summons up the East—the East which he knows not, but into which he gives a luminous insight. Later on he will do likewise with Spain, and always with that same intensity of expression which transports one into the picture-lands.

From an esthetic standpoint, "L'Arlésienne" impresses one as Georges Bizet's most complete masterpiece. Following the beautiful symphonic prelude, the chorus, "Grand soleil de la Provence," conveys a sense of happiness and light. Then we have the "Pastorale," so graceful and fresh that it exhales a perfume of lavender and thyme; the chorus, *a bocca chiusa*, so felicitously effective; the intermezzo, in minuet form, abounding in life and sparkle; the carillon, full of picturesque harmonic "finds"; the adagietto, tinged with such profound emotion that this number alone would confer immortality upon its composer; the farandole, with its satanic rhythm; and, lastly, the fine chorus, the "Marche des Rois," which is first heard at the outset of the prelude. Its motive is a Provençal song attributed by some to Lully, by others to King René. No agreement has been reached on this point, but that matters little. Bizet has treated these few measures with so admirable an art in development and scoring that he has wrought them into a symphonic page of the highest order.

Bizet, in "L'Arlésienne," is in full possession of his individuality. No trace remains of his preference for any master with whom he has been in touch in his early youth. He has reconquered his personality, and, even when he devotes himself to reproducing this or that medium, this or that atmosphere, he retains his nature, his skill, his stamp, his clear-cut, bright, and accurate style, the temperament of the Frenchmen of southern France, with its frankness, its good humor, and its sensitiveness.

The production of this admirable work was hailed with unanimous applause. This time the newspapers were eulogistic. There were heard, in truth, a few discordant notes, but they were silenced in the immense *tutti* of admirers. And yet the success was not to last. Like "Les Pêcheurs de Perles," "La Jolie Fille de Perth," and "Djamileh," "L'Arlésienne" had but a few representations. Bizet was deeply affected. In face of a spontaneous and unanimous success, he thought the game was won, and now it was to be commenced over again! To what could one attribute the general lukewarmness after the welcome of the first night? Was it that this time all the honors were borne off by the music, and that Daudet's play, touching and captivating though it was, but presented as a melodrama, a form of art-work that finds slight favor in France, failed to move the throng? Alphonse Daudet is less of a dramatic author than he is a poet, an analyst, a descriptive writer, and the public, always somewhat indolent, prefers seeing to divining.

This success without morrow would have discouraged Bizet had he not almost immediately found consolation in the transfer of his work to the popular concerts, where it was given a permanent place in the program, and where its success was definitely affirmed.

The fine overture to "Patrie" and a delicate and charming suite for orchestra were next added to the symphonic work of the young master, but the stage, whither his real vocation beckoned him, claimed him once more. "Carmen" was the song of the swan, the composer's apotheosis. The new opera was impatiently awaited, which proves that Bizet, although much discussed and contested, was nevertheless regarded as one of the most interesting personalities of the modern French school. Before the first performance occurred, footlight gossip scattered tidings that the music was "strange," the book *risqué*, the interpretation extraordinary. "Carmen" was brought out in the Salle Favart on March 3, 1875, in presence of all Paris—the world of fashion, literature, and art. The curtain rose in view of a crowded and sympathetic audience, tremulous with impatience and curiosity.

"Carmen," a work brimming with vitality and action, whose dazzling brilliancy was later on to gather and mingle in one and the same outburst of enthusiasm the public, the artists, and the critics,—"Carmen" was not understood! The listeners, astonished rather than delighted, remained cold.

"STANDING ROOM ONLY."

"CARMEN" AT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE, NEW YORK.
DRAWN BY E. POTTHAST. ENGRAVED BY PETER AITKEN.

GALLI-MARIÉ, WHO CREATED "CARMEN."

How admit such an injustice, or, rather, how explain a general error bordering upon aberration? Be it added that the book of "Carmen" is itself a masterpiece, based upon Prosper Mérimée's "Carmen," an impressive, powerfully dramatic tale. The piece taken from it by MM. Meilhac and Halévy is unquestionably the most interesting, the most passion-inspiring that has ever been intrusted to a musician. Every one knows with what vigor, originality, boldness, and charm Bizet has thrown into relief the distinct characteristics of each personage. The rôle of *Micaëla* has been felicitously added for stage purposes, and is a chaste, tender, and poetic note in the somewhat too realistic strain of the drama. To this realism, though skilfully attenuated by the authors of the play, but excessive notwithstanding, must be ascribed the well-nigh hostile reception of "Carmen" on the occasion of its first performance. The public of the Salle Favart, accustomed to the gentle emotions of the ancient French opéra comique, was shocked, alarmed even, at this bold and thoroughly human work; the piece was proclaimed immoral; the word was whispered at first by a few, then repeated by all; ere long the only theme of comment was the immorality of the performance. The dainty, dazzling, but fiendish representation of Mme. Galli-Marié dismayed the family parties. The management was attacked, indignation was expressed that the Salle Favart should be given up to such spectacles, which mothers could not permit their daughters to behold. In brief, the *tolle* became general.

All this occurred twenty-four years ago; the Parisian public is no longer so prudish, if one may judge by many plays of the modern repertoire, concerning which much might be written in a far more censorious vein; moreover, the early interpreters of the opera at least had sufficient talent and tact to constrain acceptance of certain scenes which may be violent, somewhat brutal, perhaps, but are never vulgar. Among the performers may be mentioned Mme. Galli-Marié, the matchless, the inimitable *Carmen*; M. Shéry, as *Don José*, the accomplished artist, the captivating singer and comedian; Mlle. Chapuy, an angelic *Micaëla;* M. Bouhy, the superb and arrogant *Toreador;* and Mlles. Ducasse and Chevalier, delightful in the subsidiary rôles of *Frasquita* and *Mercedes.*

Yet this complete masterpiece, sustained by the artists just enumerated, failed to impress the Parisian public—a public so enlightened, so spontaneous in its demonstrations! A few days after its production it found increased favor, but the opera reached its thirty-seventh performance with difficulty. In 1883, "Carmen," acclaimed in foreign lands, laden with laurels garnered outside of France, returned, and in the same Salle Favart where the opera failed of comprehension, in presence of the same public and of the same critics, was greeted with transports of enthusiasm.

But Bizet was no longer at hand to enjoy his glory, too long awaited, so dearly bought. He died a few weeks after the first representation of "Carmen." The heart disease that had appeared some years previous had

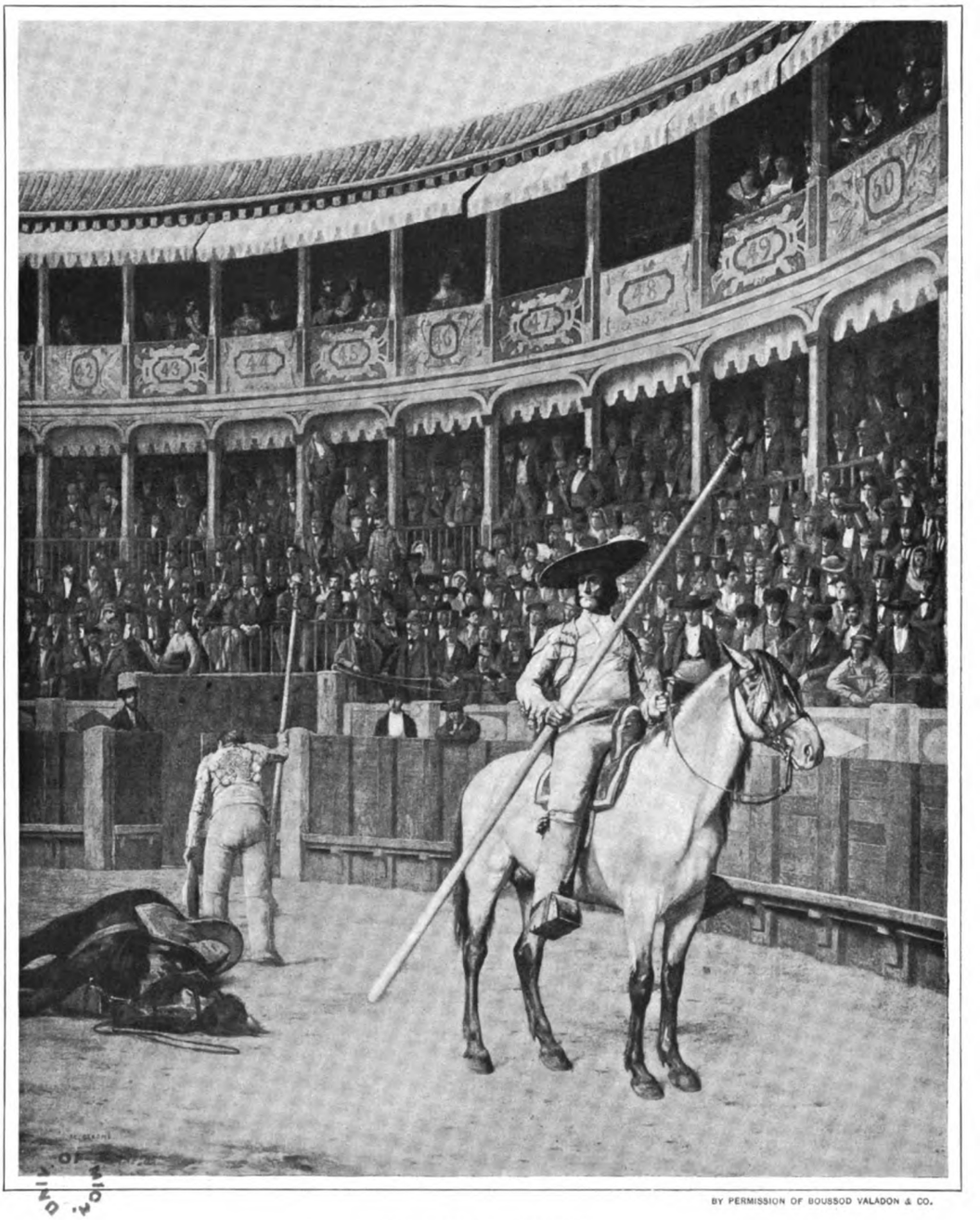
become visibly aggravated during the laborious rehearsals of his last achievement. During the long hours of study he had alternately hoped and yielded to despair; then, as the work took shape, he foresaw the success it would one day attain, and confidence was restored. He had rested in "Carmen" all his artistic faith, his whole soul; he had, so to say, breathed into it his whole life; he was certain that his work was good and must triumph; but gradually, as the date of the first representation drew near, he would again grow uneasy, and the acute anguish that overcomes the artist when the day set for these bloodless battles approaches finally broke down his robust health. The failure of "Carmen," his favorite work, dealt the last blow: Bizet passed away June 3, 1875, at Bougival, in the arms of his young wife,[1] and surrounded by the members of his family. The nature of the disease that bore him off so swiftly was never exactly understood: some say it was *angina pectoris;* others, an embolism. The saddest version of his case would appear the truest: an excess of toil, ever-renewed deceptions, and, most trying of all things, the deep wound dealt him on the gloomy night when he beheld his "Carmen," the work dear to him above all others and upon which he founded his most legitimate hopes, misunderstood, almost disdained.

After Bizet's death his apotheosis commenced. How saddening are these incomprehensible reversals of the judgment of the throng, how instructive should be the unjust charges of the critics! After Bizet was gone no one thought of discussing his tendencies, of classing him, of "labeling" him; men were willing to listen, to judge, to applaud. It was these endless comparisons that so distressed him in life,—comparisons that led one to believe that he had no character of his own, that he was but an imitator, a reflection of others. One oft-repeated epithet that infuriated him most was "fierce Wagnerian!" It is astounding that such a designation should have found an echo; one need but look into Bizet's work, from its first to its last measure, to be convinced that nothing warrants it. Bizet admired Wagner greatly, but his admiration never attained to idolatry. "Art is art," and Bizet's worship went to Mozart as to Beethoven; to Verdi as to Schumann; to Berlioz as to Gounod—"Mossieu Gounod," as our young and quite decadent musicians are wont to say.

A sworn foe to school prejudices, Bizet detested "processes." Like all great minds, like all enthusiastic and generous souls, he was an eclectic; the adjective is contemned by some authors who pretend that eclecticism implies lack of ideal. No, eclecticism in art is the love of the Beautiful, wherever it may exist. Art is of all times and all lands; happy are they whose souls are sufficiently exalted, whose minds are sufficiently open to understand and admire the eternal master-works.

But admiration is not imitation, and Bizet's eclecticism had no in-

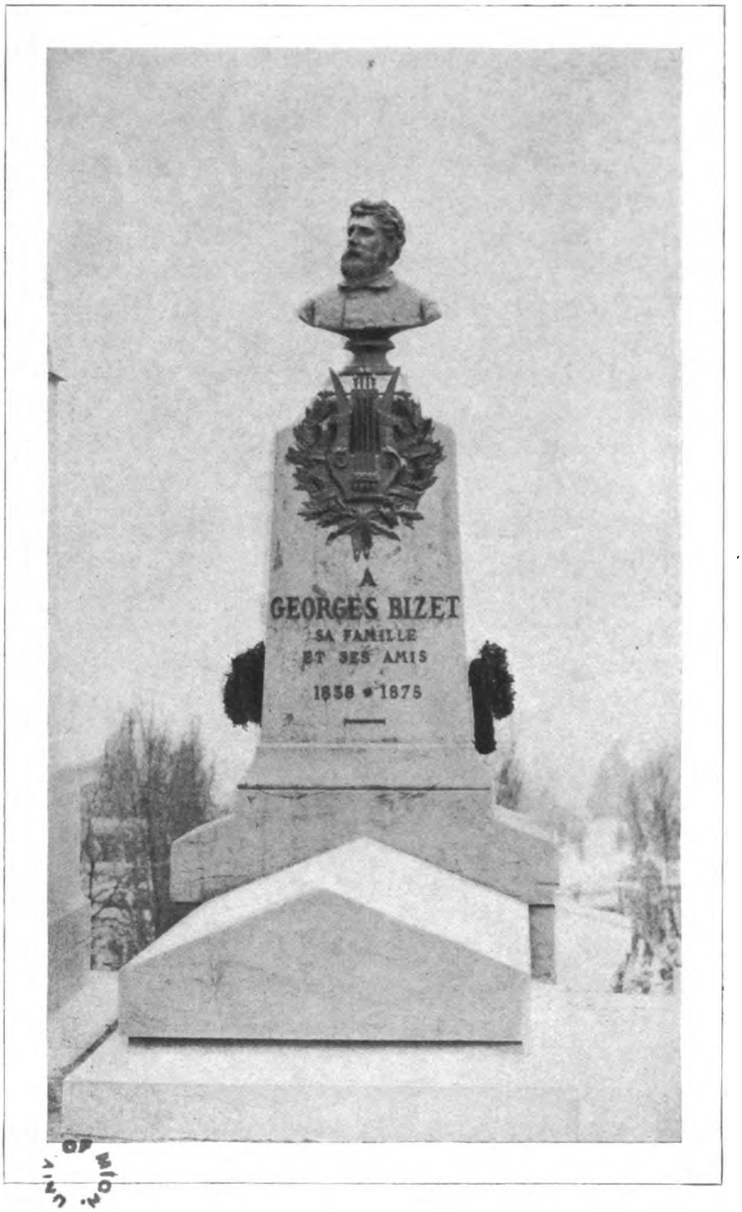
[1] Bizet married, in 1869, Mlle. Geneviève Halévy, daughter of the illustrious composer of "La Juive."



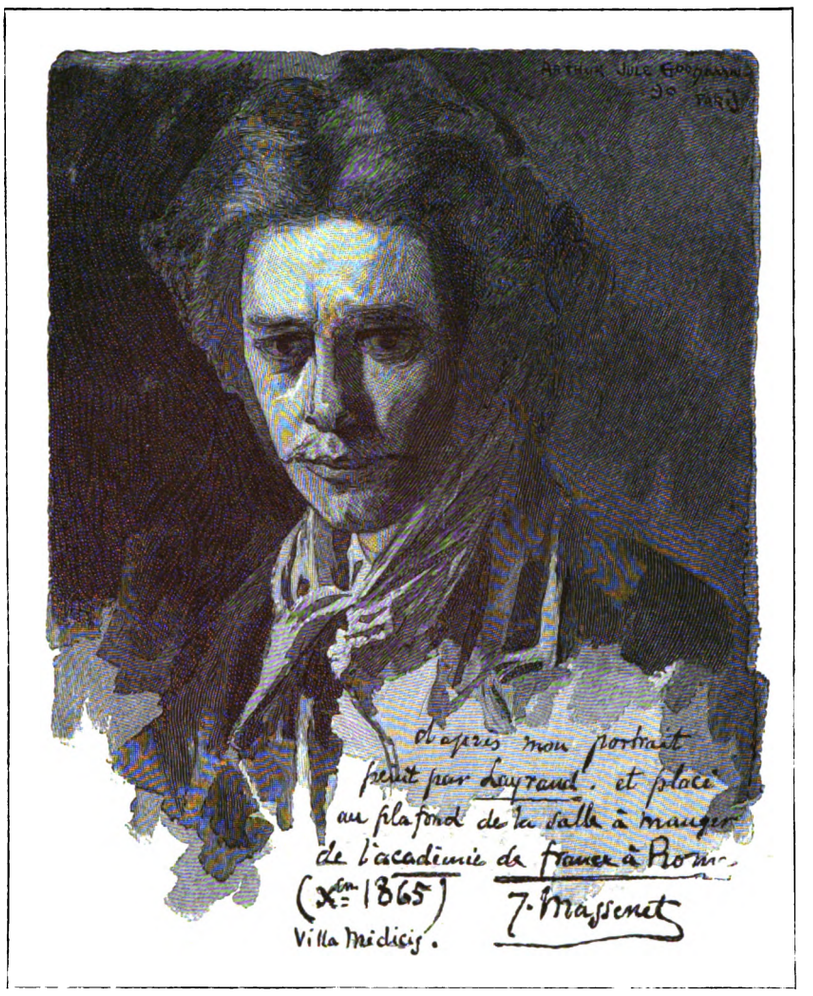
THE BULL-FIGHTER.

FROM THE PAINTING BY GÉRÔME.

fluence upon his sharply defined individuality. Art, it has been declared, has no country; but the artist has, and the true artist sets the seal of his race on all sincere work. If we claim Bizet with pride, it is because he is one of our purely national glories.



THE GRAVE OF BIZET.



AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES BY THE COMPOSER MASSENET

YOU are so kind as to write to know what was the beginning of my musical career, and you ask me, "How did I become a musician?" This seems a very natural question, but nevertheless I find it a very awkward one to answer. Should I tell you that, like many of my brothers in art, I had followed my vocation, I might seem slightly conceited; and should I confess that it caused me many a struggle to devote myself entirely to music, then you might have the right to say, "Why, then, did you become a musician?"

My father was a superior officer under the First Empire. When the Bourbons were restored he sent in his resignation. As he had been a distinguished pupil of the Polytechnic School, he devoted himself to manufactures, and started important iron-works near St. Etienne (Loire). He thus became an iron-master, and was the inventor of those huge

hammers which, crushing steel with extraordinary power by a single blow, change bars of metal into sickles and scythes. So it was that I was born to the sound of heavy hammers of brass, as the ancient poet says.

My first steps in my future career were no more melodious. One day, six years later, my family then living in Paris, I found myself in front of an old piano, and, either to amuse me or try my talent, my mother gave me my first music-lesson. It was the 24th of February, 1848, a strangely chosen moment, for our lesson was interrupted by the noise of street-firing that lasted for several hours. The revolution had burst forth, and people were killing one another in the streets.

Three years later I had become — or my parents affectionately thought I had become — a clever enough little pianist. I was admitted to the piano classes at the Imperial Conservatory of Music. To my mother I now was "an artist," and even though my education took up six hours of my day, she found time to make me work at my piano to such good effect that within a year I became "lauréat" of the Conservatory. At this period my father's ill health forced us to leave Paris, and so put a stop to my music for several years. I took advantage of this period to finish my literary studies. But the pain of separation from the Conservatory gave me courage enough to beg my parents (whom my wish distressed) to permit me to return; and I did not again leave Paris until the day when I departed for Rome with a scholarship from the Académie de France, the "first grand prize" of musical composition (1863).

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY DORNAC & CO., PARIS.

MASSENET IN HIS STUDY.

Did the progress made in these years of work really prove my vocation? I had won the "Prix de Rome," and taken prizes for piano, counterpoint, and fugue. No doubt I was what is called a good pupil, but I was not an artist in the true sense.

To be an artist is to be a poet; to be touched by all the revelations of art and nature; to love, to suffer, — in one word, to live! To produce a work of art does not make an artist. First of all, an artist must

BY PERMISSION OF FRANZ HANFSTAENGL.

MAGDALEN.

FROM THE PAINTING BY CONTI.

be touched by all the manifestations of beauty, must be interpenetrated by them, and know how to enjoy them. How many great painters, how many illustrious musicians, never were *artists* in the deepest meaning of the word!

Oh, those two lovely years in Rome at the dear Villa Medici, the official abiding-place of holders of Institute scholarships — unmatched years, the recollection of which still vibrates in my memory, and even now helps me to stem the flood of discouraging influences!

It was at Rome that I began to live; there it was that, during my happy walks with my comrades, painters or sculptors, and in our talks under the oaks of the Villa Borghese or under the pines of the Villa Pamphili, I felt my first stirrings of admiration for nature and for art. What charming hours we spent in wandering through the museums of Naples and Florence! What tender, thoughtful emotions we felt in the dusky churches of Siena and Assisi! How thoroughly forgotten was Paris, with her theaters and her rushing crowds! Now I had ceased to be merely "a musician"; now I was much more than a musician. This ardor, this healthful fever still sustains me; for we musicians, like poets, must be the interpreters of true emotion. To feel, to make others feel — therein lies the whole secret!

But a few days separated me from the hour in which I had to say good-by to the Villa Medici, to my happy life — a life full of work, full of sweet tranquillity of mind, a life such as I never have lived again.

It was on December 17, 1865, that I had to prepare for my departure; nevertheless, I could not persuade myself to bid adieu to Rome. It was Rome that bade me adieu, and this is how she did it. It was six o'clock in the afternoon. I was alone in my room, standing before the window, looking through the glass at the great city outlined in gray against the light still remaining from a lovely clear sunset. This view is forever imprinted on my memory, and at the time I could not detach myself from it. Alas! little by little a shadow crept over one corner of the sky, spreading and spreading until finally Rome had disappeared altogether. I have never forgotten those moments, and it is in remembering them that I evoke my youth.

I notice that I am saying but little of music, and that I seem to care more for what strikes the eye than for what charms the ear. Let us open together some of my orchestral scores. Thereon I am in the habit of writing the day and the hour, and sometimes an account of events of my life. Some of these have afforded me suggestions for my work. The first part of "Mary Magdalene" begins "At the gates of Magdala, evening." It was in truth of Magdala that I was then thinking; my imagination journeyed to far Judea, but what really moved me was the remembrance of the Roman Campagna, and this remembrance it was that I obeyed. I followed the landscape I had really known; therein was its accent, its exact impression. Afterward, in writing the "Erinnyes," the love that I felt for an exquisite Tanagra terra-cotta dictated to me the dances for the first act of Leconte de Lisle's admirable drama. Later, while I was arranging the score of the "Roi de Lahore," near me was a little Indian box whose dark-blue enamel spotted with bright gold continually drew my eyes to it. All my delight, all my ardor came from gazing at this casket, wherein I saw the whole of India!

Mournful recollections also take up a great part of the life of the musician whose modest beginnings were saluted by firing in the streets. In 1870 — a dismal date for my poor loved country — the Prussian cannons, answering those of Mont Valérien, often lugubriously punctuated the fragments that I tried to write during the short moments of rest that guard duty, marching around Paris, and military exercises on the ramparts left us. There the musician, in the physical weariness of this novel life, vainly trying to find a few moments of forgetfulness, did not altogether abdicate his rights. In the leaves of a finished score, but one which will never be brought before the public, "Méduse," I find annotated the patriotic cries of the people, and the echoes of the "Marseillaise," sung by the regiments as they passed my little house at Fontainebleau on their way to battle. And so in other fragments I can read the bitter thoughts that moved me when, having returned to Paris before it was invested, I was inspired by the woeful times that were upon us during the long winter of that terrible year.

"ROI DE LAHORE."

Drawn by R. D. MacKenzie, after a photograph by Johnston and Hoffmann.

Oh, the unforgettable pain and sorrow of those dismal days when our hearts plunged so quickly from comforting enthusiasm to the darkest despair! — when weeks of uncertainty and of waiting were scarcely brightened by rare letters, received one knew not how or whence, and bringing us news of ancient date concerning the far-off families and the dear friends we no longer hoped to see again! Then came the last effort, the last struggle at Buzenval; the death of my poor friend, the painter Henri Regnault; then the most terrible trial of all, whose shameful reality made us forget cold, hunger, all that we had endured — the armistice, which in our wearied but far from resigned

hearts rang the knell of our last and righteous anger! Yes, truly, during those dark days of the siege of Paris it was indeed the image of my dying country that lay bleeding in me, feeble instrument that I was, when, shivering with cold, my eyes blinded with tears, I composed the bars of the "Poëme du Souvenir" for the inspired stanzas written by my friend the great poet Armand Silvestre," "Arise, belovèd, now entombed!" Yes, both as son and musician I felt the image of my poor country imprint itself on my bruised heart in the sweet and touching shape of a wounded muse, and when with the poet I sang, "Tear off thy winding sheet of flowers," I well knew that, though buried, she would come forth from her shroud, with blanched cheeks, indeed, but lovelier and more adorable than ever!

I have already said how dear to me is, and how faithfully true remains, the recollection of my Roman years; and I should like to be able to convince others how useful it is for young musicians to leave Paris, and to live, were it but for a year, in the Villa Medici, among a set of intelligent comrades. Yes, I am thoroughly in favor of this exile,— as it is called by the discontented. I believe in residing there, for such a residence may give birth to poets and artists, and may awaken sentiments that otherwise might remain dormant.

But, you answer, genius cannot be given to any one, and if these young men be merely good students, already masters of their trade, it is not possible to give them the sacred fire they need.

Yes! I believe that being forced to live far away from their Parisian habits is a positive advantage. The long hours of solitude in the Roman Campagna, and those spent in the admirable museums of Florence and Venice, amply compensate for the absence of musical meetings, of orchestral concerts, of theatrical representations,— in short, of music. How few of these young men, before leaving France, ever knew the useful and penetrating charm of living alone in close communion with nature or art! And the day in which art and nature speak to you makes you an artist, an adept; and on that day, with what you have already learned, and with what you should already know, you can create in strong and healthy fashion. How many garnered impressions and emotions will live again in works as yet unwritten!

In order to give more weight to my personal opinions, let me have the pleasure of quoting a fragment of the speech made at one of the last prize-day distributions of the Académie des Beaux-Arts by my whilom comrade at Rome, now my colleague at the Institute of France, the celebrated engraver Chaplain:

During their stay at the Villa Medici, these young artists are far from spending all the treasure of thoughts and impressions which they there amass. What delight, and often what rare good luck, later to find a sketch made from some lovely scene, or an air noted down while traveling through the mountains! On the road from Tivoli to Subiaco, one summer day, a little band of students were on a walking excursion through the beautiful mountains which, like an amphitheater, surround and rise up around Rome. We had halted in order to contemplate at our leisure the wonderful panorama of the Roman Campagna unrolling itself before us. Suddenly, at the foot of the path we had just climbed, a shepherd began to play a sweet, slow air on his pipe, the notes of which faded away, one by one, in the silence of the evening. While listening, I glanced at a musician who made one of the party, curious to read his impressions in his face: he was putting down the shepherd's air in his note-book. Several years later a new work by a young composer was performed at Paris. The air of the shepherd of Subiaco had become the beautiful introduction to "Mary Magdalene."

I have quoted the whole, even the friendly praise given me by my dear comrade of Rome, in justification of my enthusiasm for those blessed years to which, it seems to me, I owe all the good qualities wherewith people are kind enough to credit me.

If I speak to you of Rome, it is because the Villa Medici is unique as a retreat,— is a dream realized. I have certainly been enthusiastic over other countries, and I think that scholars should travel. When I was a scholar, I left Rome during many months. Two or three friends would join forces and start off together. We would go to Venice or down the Adriatic; running over perhaps to Greece; and, on our return, stopping at

Tunis, Messina, and Naples. Finally, with swelling hearts, we would see the walls of Rome; for there, in the Academy of France, was our home. And then, how delightful to go to work in the healthful quiet, in which we could create without anything to preoccupy us — with no worries, no sorrows! What joy to return to "our villa," and to meditate under its evergreen oaks!

The ordinary traveler never can know this repose, because it is to us alone — we scholars of the Institute — that France gives such a shelter. The remembrances of my youth have almost always been my consolation for the years of struggle that have made up my life. But I wish to bring to your great country also my tribute of personal gratitude. It is to a woman of America, to Miss Sibyl Sanderson, the incomparable interpreter of "Esclarmonde," that I owe the impulse to write that lyric drama.

Yes; I acknowledge that until that moment I had been a musician through experience and through the vision. Now I have not only looked, I have listened!

J. Massenet.

DETAIL FROM THE HEMICYCLE OF THE SORBONNE.

Painted by Puvis de Chavannes.

THE METHODS OF THE MASTERS OF PIANO-TEACHING IN EUROPE

TONIC SOL-FA AS A BASIS FOR GENERAL MUSICAL EDUCATION

By Mrs. Spencer J. Curwen

THE President of the Glasgow Society of Musicians, who, some years ago, took the chair at one of my lectures on elementary pianoforte teaching, made an interesting and rather remarkable statement in the course of a conversation which I had with him the following day. He said: "If all my pupils held the Tonic Sol-fa Intermediate Certificate, I could save half their time and half their fathers' money." This expression of opinion, coming from a German, an instrumentalist with a long teaching record and an independent outlook over the battle-field of systems, may be looked upon as at least unbiased. How had he arrived at it? Doubtless by experience; by comparing the musical intelligence of those pupils who were tonic sol-faists with that of those who were not. Nothing short of this can account for such an odd statement; for here was no question of the use of Sol-fa as an introduction to sight-singing, but of its value as a basis for general musical education. To come to such a conclusion, a man must have something more than a bowing acquaintance with the method he speaks of; for he would be unable to judge of its effect upon the pupil's intelligence unless he had a sufficient knowledge of it to detect its influence and to measure the work accomplished by it from the pupil's standpoint on one side and the pedagogue's on the other.

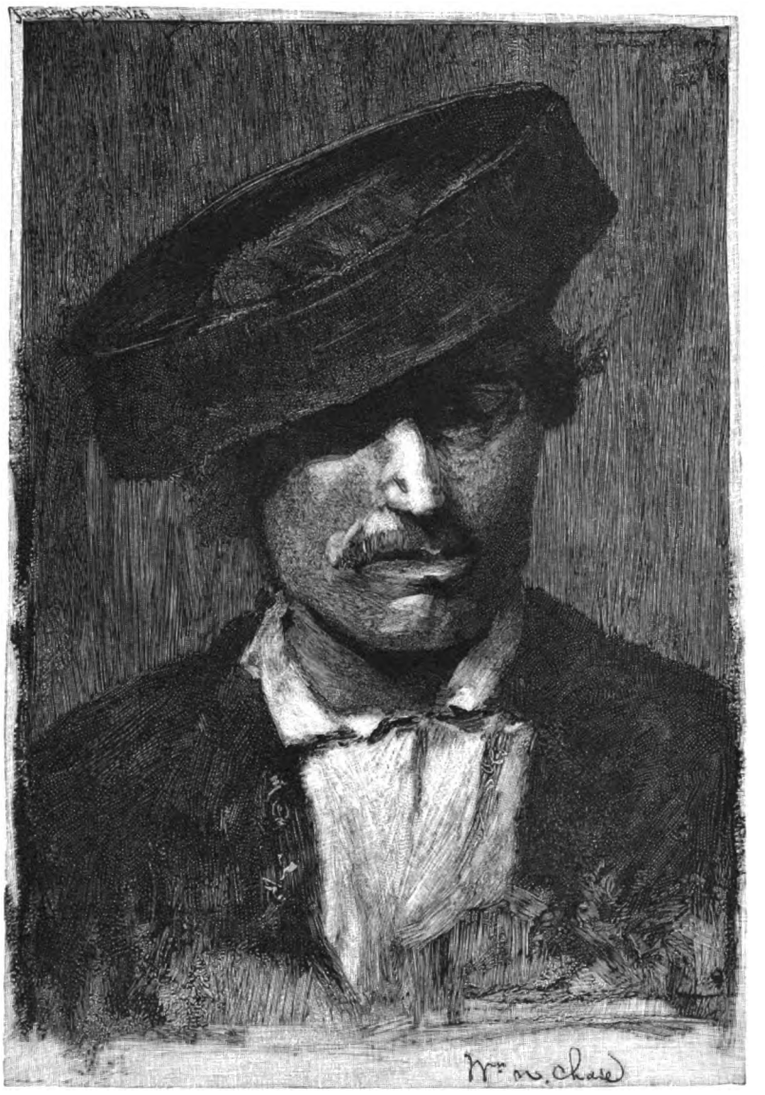
It may be that some of my readers know little more about the Tonic Sol-fa system than the fact that it employs "letters instead of notes" (that being the stage at which inquiry too often stops short), and that they have an honest desire to know more; to know how this statement could be even approximately true. Will these readers try to imagine themselves in the place of a pianoforte teacher who, thirty years ago, made the acquaintance of Tonic Sol-fa in a little village in Scotland? The ordinary training at a leading musical academy, with some subsequent years of experience and success as a teacher, had established in her the usual prejudice against all innovations and a comfortable belief in her own powers. An effort to improve the singing in the village churches in the neighborhood, however, resulted in the formation of a large singing class under a skilled tonic sol-faist. With some curiosity the lady joined the class at its start, and in a month had made at least two valuable discoveries: First, that—to use Mr. Curwen's own words—"Music in itself was easy; it was only that the grammarians had made it difficult." Secondly, that she had never mastered even the A B C of teaching—a discovery humiliating but salutary.

Those lessons were a revelation. Here was no distinction between "theory" and "practice." The pupils in this class were not told things *about* music, or expected to accept anything as true which they could not verify with their own ears. They were asked to listen to certain sounds, to observe them, compare them, form judgments about them. Music had been familiar to them; they had known it in the concrete wholes which we call *tunes*. Now it was broken up into its constituents of pitch and rhythm, and each of these was considered separately. They learned to know each sound of the scale by its character, without any consideration of interval, and to name it when heard. They observed that even, regular throb in the music, which they learned to call its "pulse," and noticed that one sound sometimes spread itself out over several pulses, but that sometimes several sounds were heard in one pulse,—all this without any notation at all at first,

THE POSADA.

FROM THE PAINTING BY J. WORMS.

only hand signs being used. It was experimental teaching, ear-training pure and simple, contact with the thing itself. Then, when these facts had to be expressed in writing, at the end of the fourth lesson, that village gathering sang at sight some simple exercises in four-part harmony, all doubts as to the need for the letter notation vanished. For



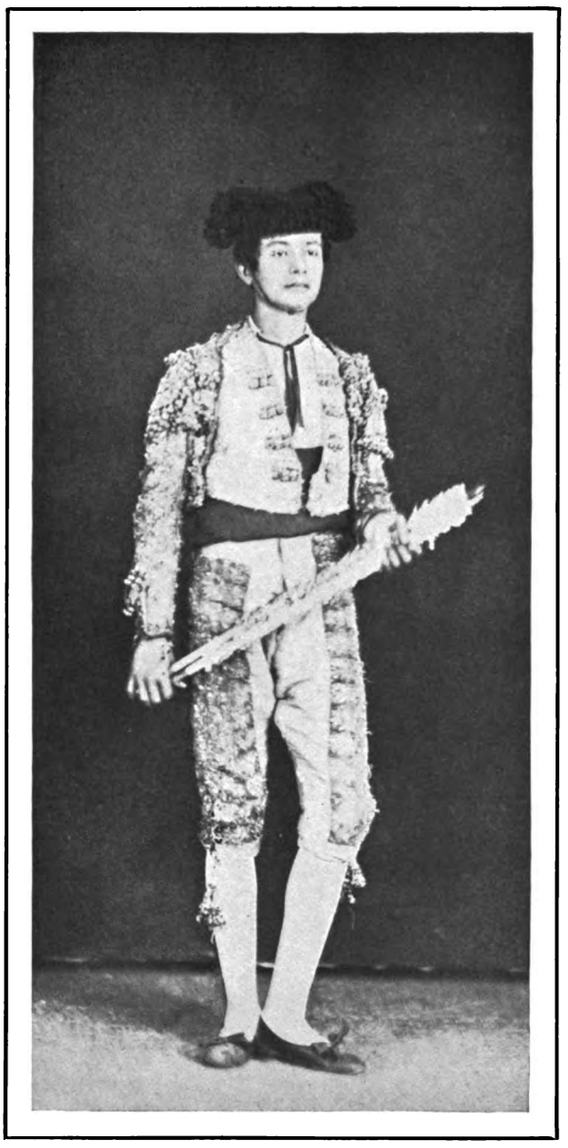
A SPANISH GIPSY.

what more natural, more direct symbol could be found than the initial letter of the names they used?

To the only musician in that assembly the old Italian scale-syllables, which in the Continental Solfège system had always seemed meaningless,—merely another way of naming the keyboard digitals,—became living, independent, suggestive; and when, these exercises were sung at any pitch given by the teacher,—which means that they were sung in any key,—and such a result could not have been obtained in the time, or in ten times the time, by any other means.

That class never got beyond the Sol-fa notation. Why should they? It was more than enough for their needs; and, taking the standard of the average amateur, they were

fair musicians at the end of their winter's work. Let us see how much they knew. They knew the formation of the scale; for the picture of the modulator was ever before their mind's eye, with its "big and little steps." They could sing any diatonic interval, and several chromatic ones, with ease and certainty. They knew that, starting in any key, the introduction of the sharp fourth led, temporarily at least, into the key of the dominant, the flat seventh into the key of the subdominant, though they did not use those terms. They knew the minor scale and its derivation from its relative major. *They never changed key without knowing it,*— those village lads and lasses; can we say the same of every pianoforte pupil? They were taught to notice which sounds of the scale harmonized with each other and made "chords"; and they were interested in observing that these chords partook of the character of their root-sounds. The clearness of the letter notation made the recognition of chords a very simple matter, and the observation of facts like these helped them to sing with greater intelligence and better intonation. Do high-school girls, after two or three years of class singing, know more than this? I should say not; for the staff notation, excellent as it is when you can see through it and behind it, does interfere with the vision of the beginner, and conceals many facts which are simple enough in themselves, which the letter notation registers most clearly, and which the constant association of sound, sign, and syllable keeps steadily before the mind.



A SPANISH DANCER.

But all this refers to singing. How does it apply to instrumental work, or give the sol-faist an advantage over the ordinary piano or violin pupil? By serving as a key to the apparent anomalies of the staff, and thus removing artificial difficulties. The anomalies of the staff notation of pitch, at which the rabid reformer rails, are unavoidable, but the difficulties they present to the learner are none the less real. They are only surface difficulties, it is true; but as the surface is the thing the beginner sees, it is the very worst place for them. Even the musician who has got beneath the surface can remember a time when he did not quite understand them. Approached from the Tonic Sol-fa standpoint, however, many of these anomalies cease to appear anomalous, and their difficulties disappear. The most effectual way of applying Sol-fa to the staff is by written translation from the one into the other, the written exercises being afterward sung or played, even those ear exercises to which the Sol-fa pupil is accustomed being written in staff notation instead of Sol-fa.

In the course of these written exercises staff difficulties will often clear themselves up quite naturally, or will never appear as difficulties at all, and the pupil will see many things which the ordinary learner is apt to overlook. In the Tonic Sol-fa notation a symbol means one thing, and one thing only. When a thing (I use the word in the psychological sense) has been apprehended, it is expressed, or "registered," by one appropriate symbol. In staff notation one thing may be expressed in several ways. For instance: the sharpened seventh, or leading note of the minor scale, is expressed in key G minor by an F *sharp*, in key C minor by a B *natural;* and if the composition has only modulated from C major into the tonic minor, the leading note, although it is the *distinguishing* sound of the modern minor scale, is not registered at all, because the B happens to be natural in the signature. This is anomalous. In the Tonic Sol-fa notation the minor leading note is always *se*, the sharp of *soh*. Now when the sol-faist comes to translate a minor passage into staff notation, or to write it when he hears it, he finds himself compelled to translate sharp *soh*, in the one case by a ♯ and in the other by a ♮; he sees the reason for the apparent anomaly, therefore it gives him no trouble. The anomalies of the time-notation — the use of three symbols (𝅗𝅥 ♩ ♪) for one thing, the pulse or beat — are best met by adopting the most commonly used ♩ as the pulse sign until the pupil is sufficiently advanced in rhythm not to be confused by a varying symbol. In fact, as every educationist knows, when once a thing is clearly apprehended, it can be as easily expressed by one symbol as another. It is when the idea is in its embryo stage that varying names and varying symbols cause mental confusion. Take another simple case. The flat seventh, which so often occurs in the most elementary music, is expressed by a *flat* in key C and in keys with flat signatures; by a *natural* in keys with sharp signatures. When the sol-faist translates *ta* — the flattened *te* — he sees why this must be; and, flat or natural, to him it is simply *ta*. Another thing he discovers, which is sometimes forgotten: that a ♮ has other functions besides the one of restoring a line or a space to its original pitch. That is its function with regard to absolute pitch (or locality on the keyboard); but the translator finds that in relation to key the ♮ sharpens and flattens as well as restores.

A SPANISH DANCER.

That key relationship is more readily grasped by one who has the modulator in his mind is evident; for to the little sol-faist there are not twelve major scales to be remembered, but one to be transposed, which makes a good deal of difference. Then, if he

can transpose the scale he can also transpose a simple diatonic melody, and should begin to do so as soon as he begins his scales. In fact, I have found that the best way to lead a pianoforte pupil up to transposition at sight is to take a book of easy school songs, and let him play the melody of one of these from the letter notation after each scale, in the key of that scale, gradually applying this to the staff. To most people, who work by interval alone, it is easier to transpose to a key half a tone or a tone higher or lower—*i. e.*, to a key "geographically" near—than to a key a fifth higher or lower, though that key would be harmonically nearer. To the tonic sol-faist it makes no difference, as he can sol-fa as easily in one key as in another. When, later on, he has to deal with compositions in full harmony, his mental process is the same, and he finds that, though interval is an additional help, the only true and reliable principle in transposition is to lift the whole composition bodily (so to speak) from one key to another.

Among the uninitiated there is a notion that though Sol-fa may be well enough for children, it is of no use for higher study. This is not so. The further we go, the more it helps. Even long after the pupil has adopted the staff as his habitual language the habit of mind remains, and he thinks more clearly always, from having first thought through a clear medium. The tonality of a doubtful chord or passage can often be determined by referring it to the letter notation, and "When in doubt sol-fa it" is always sound advice. Those who have had experience can indorse the words of an organist—a staff notationist—who said that it was worth while to learn the sol-fa notation for the sake of the light it sheds upon harmony; and of another who, when asked why he used it for his singing classes only and not for teaching harmony, replied laughingly, "My dear fellow, if we did that our pupils would go through our hands too fast; we should never get a living."

Turning from melody and harmony to rhythm, we find that the student of Tonic Sol-fa, when beginning the piano, has a good deal of knowledge that he can utilize at once, the change of symbol presenting no difficulty. He knows what "pulse," "accent," and "measure" mean, and his ear is already partly trained in rhythm. Of course under a teacher who trusts to eye and to the arithmetical explanation of notes such previous knowledge runs to waste, for learners must be helped to apply what they know; but the teacher who happens to understand the time teaching of the Tonic Sol-fa method finds his work half done. He has only to teach the staff notation symbols for facts already known, and the time-names, through which the sol-faist is taught rhythm, fit the staff time notation like a glove. Those who suppose that the Tonic Sol-fa method consists only in the substitution of syllables for lines and spaces are widely mistaken. It differs from the usual methods more perhaps in its teaching of time than in its teaching of pitch. The unit of time generally accepted is the semibreve, or whole note,—practically the four-pulse measure. The Tonic Sol-fa school, on the contrary, like the Chevé, takes the pulse as the unit, and this makes a great difference to the learner, for pulse is the central fact of rhythm, and pulse must be perceived before measure is apperceived. Besides this, instead of using an arithmetical theory, both these schools use the French time-names, which take hold of and develop that sense of rhythm which is innate in the average human being. People laugh at the time-names; we have all laughed when learning them. But that is no argument against them; for which is best, to laugh over your lesson and understand, or to cry over it because you cannot understand, as so many children do? I would say a word, and a serious word, about the *raison d'être* of the time-names. The great difficulty that teachers have had to contend with in the teaching of rhythm has been the lack of a name for the thing *heard*. They have not recognized that this is the difficulty, and as long as they teach music through the eye instead of through the ear they never will recognize it; but there it is nevertheless. The terms used in the ordinary teaching of rhythm are only the names of the symbols of fractions of the unit of time,—crotchet, minim, quarter-note, etc.,—and there is no way of getting at the rhythm except through these symbols. Aimé Paris recognized the need of naming time-*sounds* as distinct from time-*signs*, and invented those syllables which he called the

DANSE ESPAGNOLE.

FROM THE PAINTING BY JULES ROUGERON.

langue des durées, and which we in England call the time-names. These meet the difficulty completely. In this system, when the pupil has observed a new fact, he has gotten a name for it, a something with which to record his observation, which is not the name of the symbol, and which he can use before he uses the symbol. Thus we are able to follow the true psychological order in teaching—namely, first, the thing itself and its name, and then the symbol. Now I do not expect the music-teacher to see the true inwardness of this argument at once; but the educator, the psychologist, will see it at a glance.

The time-names, although Mr. Curwen incorporated them with the Tonic Sol-fa method, are quite separable from the letter notation, and teachers of instrumental music who once use them will never try to teach without them. Pitch, on a keyboard instrument, is apt to become chiefly a matter of locality; and although the reader who realizes the sounds with his mental ear before he plays them is the more intelligent reader, it is not necessary that he should do so. But time is a different matter. If the reader does not realize the patter of the rhythm as he looks at the notes, his fingers cannot translate it into sound. In this respect he is in the position of the sight-singer. Incidentally, even technic is helped by a training like this; for the sense of accent grows with the use of the time-names, and we know how the lack of this sense of accent affects phrasing and general delivery.

Is the learner of a stringed instrument helped by a knowledge of Tonic Sol-fa? Yes, even more than the pianist. For although the beginner on the violin is guided theoretically by measurement, and perhaps ought to

A SPANISH DANCE.

From the painting by Goya.

THE FANDANGO.

From a painting by Kindler.

give more attention to this than he usually does, yet the ear is the final critic, and if the measurement chances to be wrong, the ear corrects it. Now there is no use in telling a pupil to listen to what he plays, if he has nothing definite to listen for; and in practising by himself he is apt to get a little bit out in his measurements, and then a little bit more, until he is hopelessly at sea. But if he can sol-fa the exercise over with his teacher, he knows *what he ought to hear*, and he listens for that. As his music becomes more difficult, with many and perhaps remote changes of key, as in the exercises of Spohr's school, the pupil who considers accidentals from the side of interval only, and does not realize that he has passed into a new key, is at a serious disadvantage. In fact, at all times the violinist is partly in the position of the singer: he must realize his music before he plays it.

If accurate thinking is time-saving, enabling more work and better work to be done in a given time, then the statement which I quoted at the beginning may be taken in all seriousness. But that it may be true, two things are necessary. In the first place, the pupil should continue his Tonic Sol-fa lessons side by side with his instrumental work until he has at least reached the standard of the Intermediate Certificate.[1] Secondly, we must have the understanding teacher as well as the understanding pupil. A man may have a gold-mine in his back yard and be none the richer if he is ignorant of its existence or does not know how to dig it out.

In our best English kindergartens and in some secondary schools Tonic Sol-fa is taught. But there is no attempt to coördinate the music-teaching. The pianoforte teachers know nothing of what is done in the singing class. They take the child to the

[1] Familiarity with major and minor and with simple modulations.

piano as a "beginner." They are going to teach him music, but the possibility that he may already know a good deal about music never crosses their minds. They use new terms, and show the pupil new signs, without any reference to the old; for they do not know that the very first principle of education is to find out how much the pupil knows of what you are proposing to teach him, and to begin there. The idea of the importance of correlation and continuity in education has not yet reached them. The waste which results from this unconnected teaching is enormous, and pupil and teacher alike miss much. In a pamphlet by an American writer I find the following: "All, perhaps, are not prepared to accept the assertion that even in teaching instrumental music and harmony the syllable-names are better than the letter-names" (by which he means the A B C D, etc., of the keyboard) "in the proportion of a hundred to one. It is not claimed that the letter-names are not essential — they are of great value as the names of the absolute pitches of tones and the names of keys; but their meaning is limited. If I strike G on the piano, it is meaningless to you even after I tell you it is G. You do not know what key it is in, nor does its name aid you in ascertaining the key. . . . But call it *Fa*. Instantly the D major and B minor keys spring into your mind, with their signature of two sharps, . . . and you directly feel the influence of its major tonic, D. Or call it *Mi*. At once the E♭ major and C minor keys spring into your thought. Is not the syllable-name, then, far more important than the letter-name?" Further on he says: "The use of the syllable-name is especially powerful in teaching harmony;" and shows how the Tonic Sol-fa method of naming chords (though he omits to say that it is the Tonic Sol-fa method) not only decides the key of a chromatic chord, but points to its resolution. This is a sort of power that the pianoforte teacher misses by not utilizing and applying what his pupil has learned through Sol-fa; and that the pupil misses who sees no connection between the two branches of his work.

From the same pamphlet I quote again: "Music may be said to be governed by two rules, viz.: the Tonic, which rules the tonal realm, and the Pulse, which controls the rhythmic realm. . . . *So fundamental are these two principles that a clear idea of each is necessary before the first step can be taken towards understanding music.*"[1] Here is Tonic Sol-fa pure and simple. These are its two distinctive principles. If the italicized statement be true, it gives food for reflection; for the pianoforte pupil, in this country at least, never hears of either of these principles; but considers pitch from the geographical standpoint, and rhythm from the arithmetical.

And yet, slowly but surely, Tonic Sol-fa is leavening the music-teaching of the English-speaking nations, especially that of America. In England it is somewhat handicapped by the peculiarity of our English educational system, which creates a feeling that an American may find it difficult to understand. In England the primary schools only are supplied by the state, and though every ratepayer has a right to use them, they are practically the schools of the "working classes," and a strong social line is drawn between them and the secondary schools. In these government or "board" schools the Tonic Sol-fa method and notation are used almost exclusively, the staff being introduced in the higher classes only. Let me not be suspected of romancing when I say that the fact of Tonic Sol-fa's being labeled "used in board schools" goes far to shut it out of the secondary schools; just as in South Africa the fact that the missionaries have taught it to the Zulu and the Kafir makes it unpalatable to the white population. In America, where the primary and secondary schools are parts of one system and belong to the whole people, common sense dictates a unity of methods. In America, too, the educational wave has risen high enough to touch the professional musician, which it has hardly yet done in England. The English musician is conservative. He likes to think that he is in an apostolic succession, and cannot brook suggestion from a layman. The American is eclectic and cares little for tradition. He has all the systems of Europe from which to cull ideas; and if one may judge by his class-books, he has culled to some purpose from Tonic Sol-fa. He adopts its methods, its terminology, its hand signs and other devices — everything, in short, but its notation. When he opens his eyes a little wider he

[1] The italics are the author's.

will see the use of that too, and will adopt it. The American is right. The motto of the educationist should be: "When you see a good thing, take it and use it;" to which I would add, "And don't forget to mention where you got it." This was the manner in which John Curwen worked. Many minds were laid under contribution while the Tonic Sol-fa method was taking form. He had not only his Sarah Glover and his Aimé Paris, but his Macfarren and his Helmholtz, his Lowell Mason and his Jacob Abbott, his Ruskin and his Herbert Spencer. From all these and many more he culled ideas, and always with acknowledgment, as his books show. But if he had done nothing but cull ideas, the world would have been little the better. To collect material is one thing; to combine and transmute it is quite another. This mass of material he put into the crucible of his own philosophic mind; and, using the spirit of Pestalozzi and Froebel as a solvent, produced the one musical system which is at once logical and psychological, and from which men are ever borrowing, now this, now that, without any acknowledgment at all.

We tonic sol-faists would urge them to go on borrowing, to go on applying. We would also persuade them to take the notation along with the method — having taken the coat, we would give them the cloak also. We are satisfied that if they will use the letter notation for the registering of all new facts until the pupil has passed the standard of the Intermediate Certificate, introducing the staff at an earlier stage and keeping the purely sol-fa work always a little in advance of it, they will find that what they now consider "the longest way round" is truly "the shortest way home." While the mathematician uses the algebraical symbols alongside the arithmetical, and pupils study German through the Latin alphabet before they use the Gothic, it is difficult to see why the musician alone should object to a dual notation. The man who was clear-headed and philosophical enough to evolve the method was surely to be trusted about the need of the notation; and those who have trusted his judgment and followed his teaching in its entirety have never remained long in doubt as to why he was right. To the instrumental teacher especially we would say, "Learn Tonic Sol-fa; see its application to your own work; and you will not only save much of your pupil's time and your own, but find pleasure in his quicker intelligence and take a new view of your possibilities as a teacher."

BY PERMISSION OF BRAUN, CLEMENT & CO.

"THE SACRED WOOD, DEAR TO THE ARTS AND TO THE MUSES." MUSEUM OF LYONS.

Painted by Puvis de Chavannes.

THE DANCE.

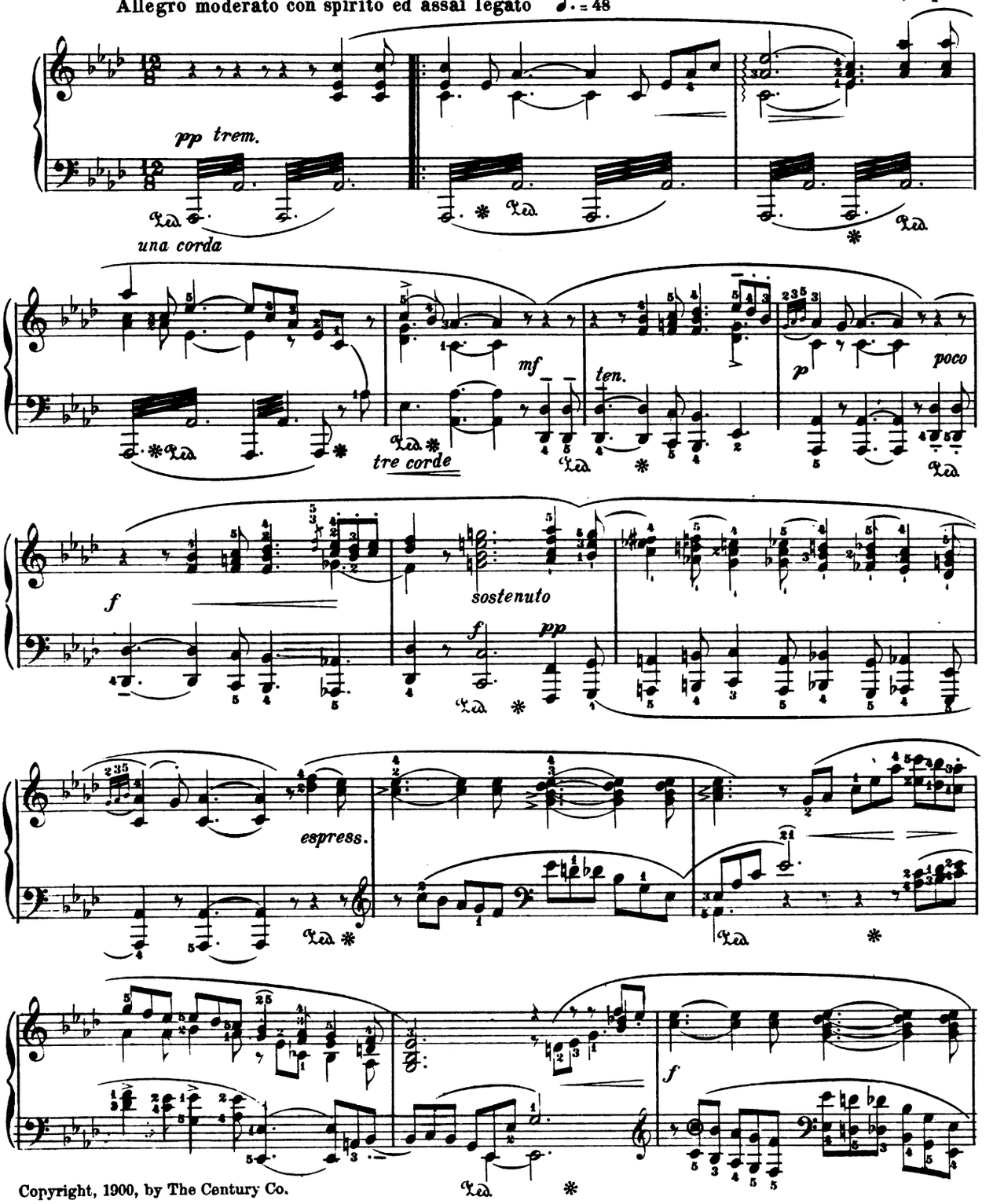
FROM A PAINTING BY MAKOVSKI.

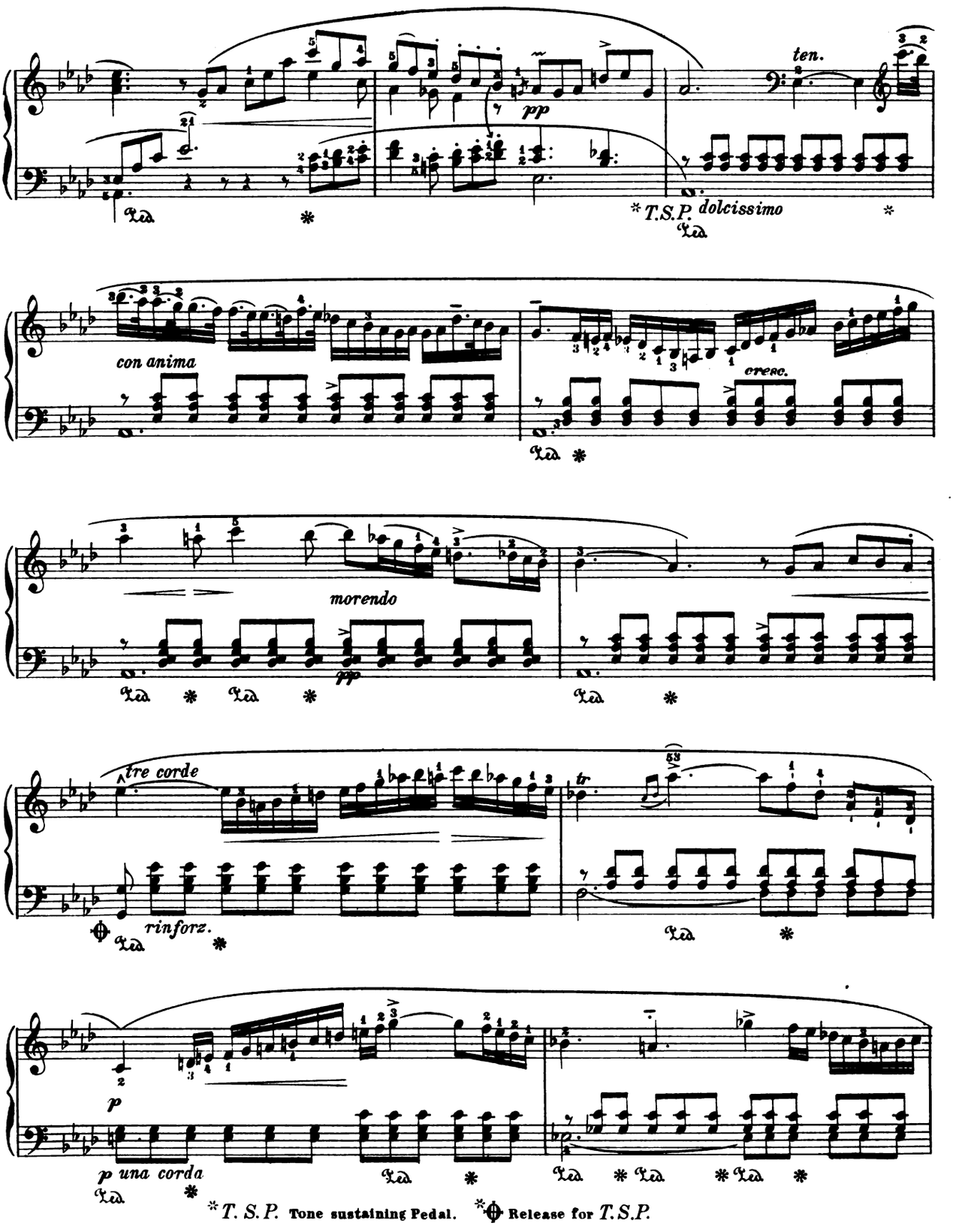
SONATA

A FLAT MAJOR

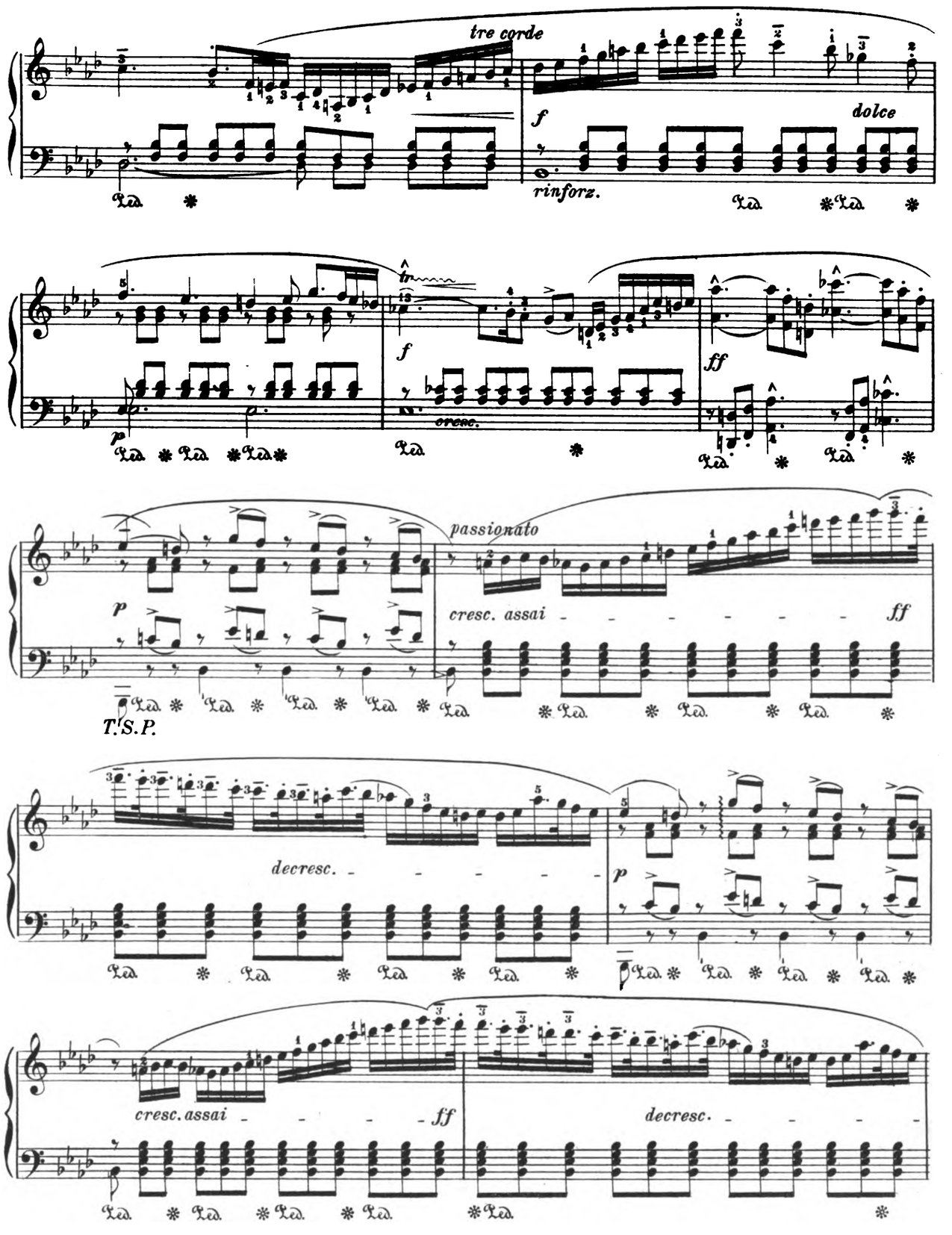
VON WEBER, Op. 39

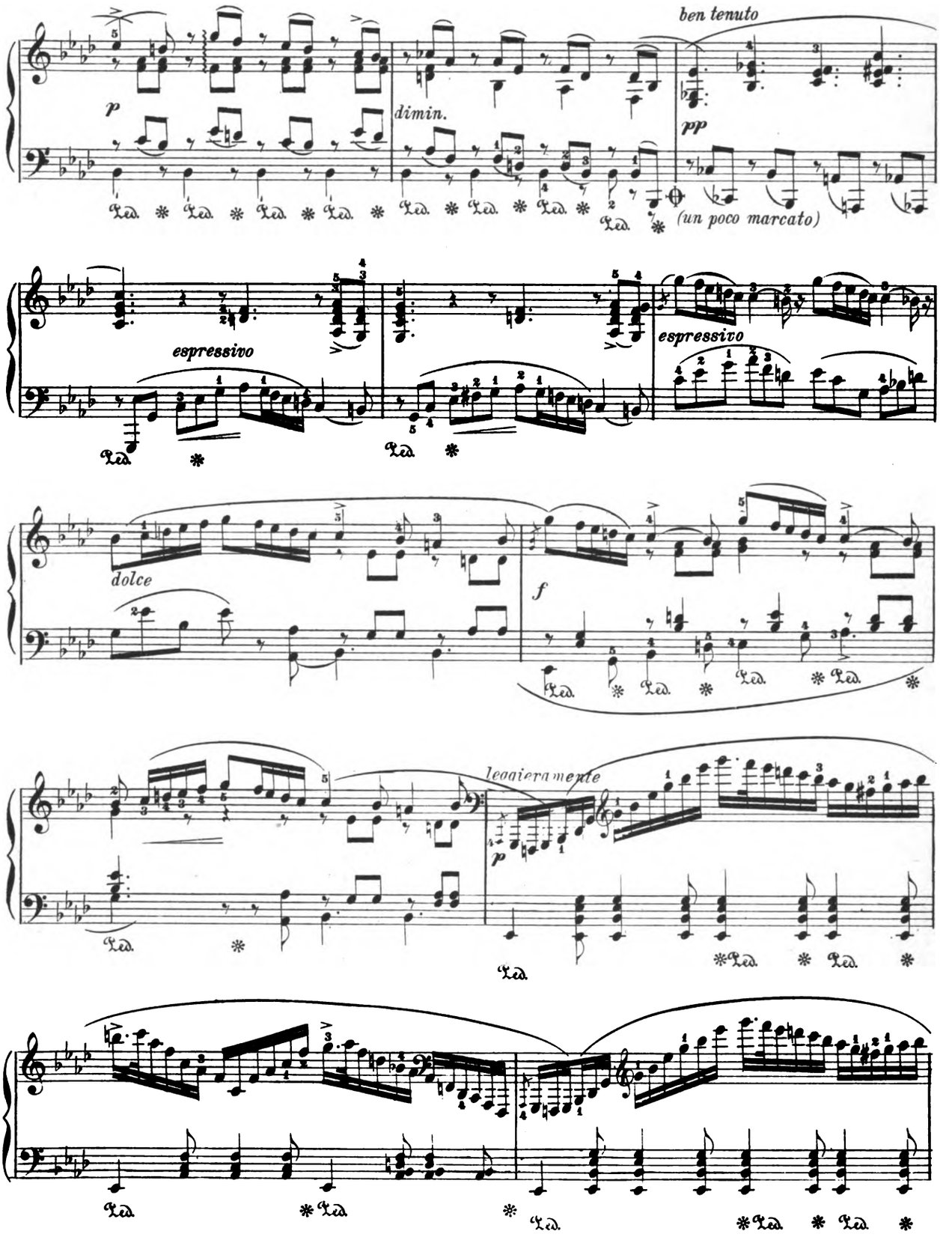
Allegro moderato con spirito ed assai legato ♩. = 48

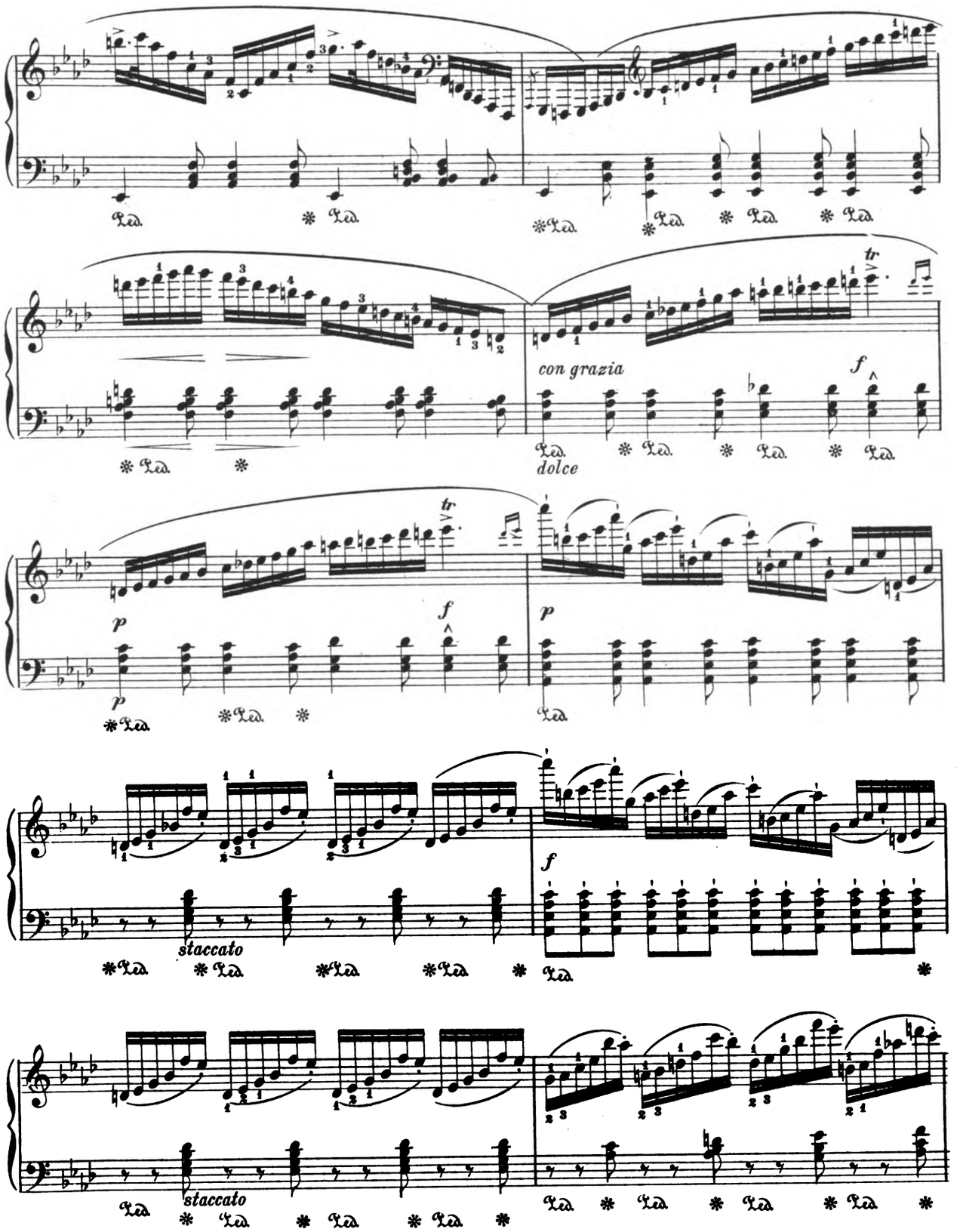


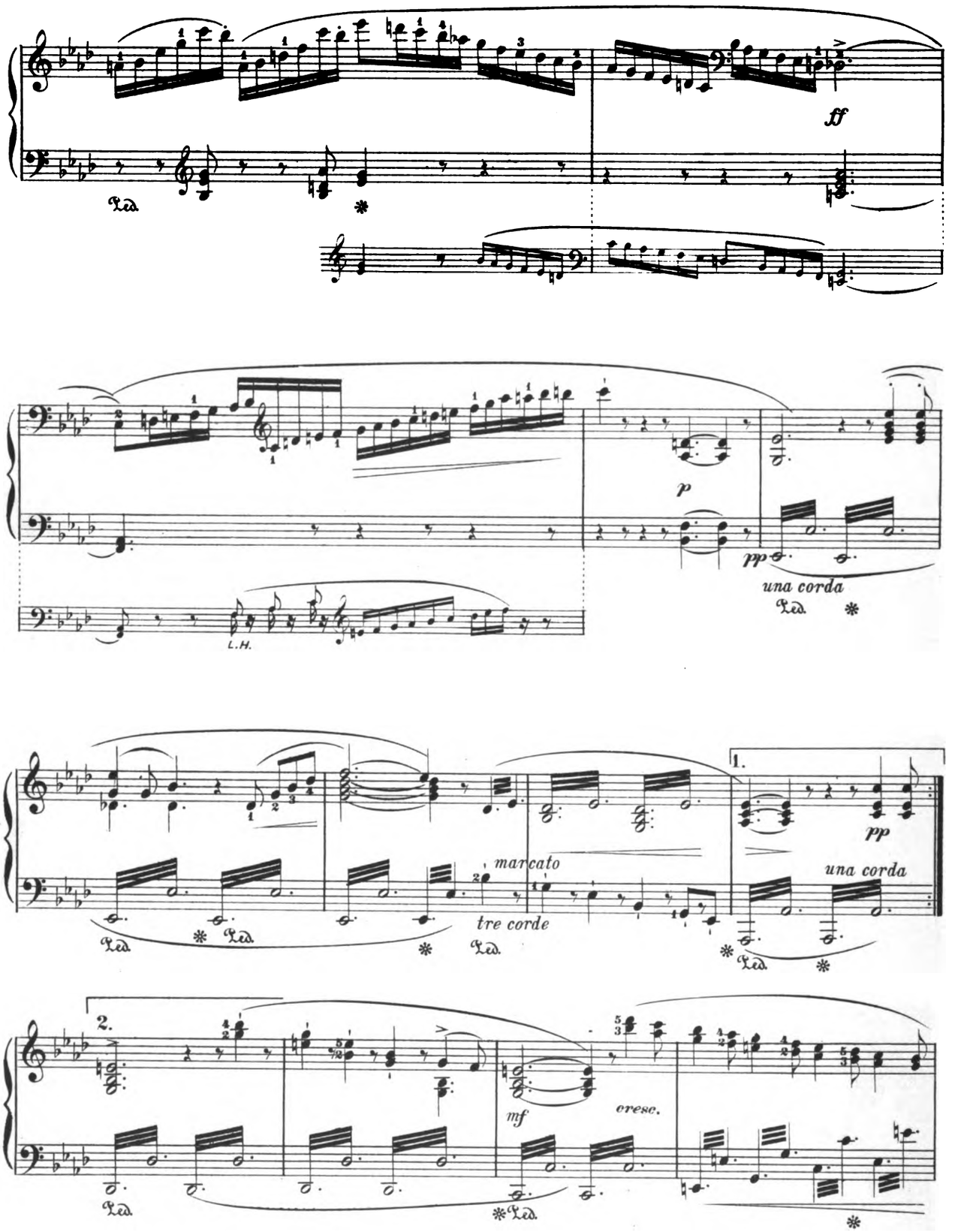


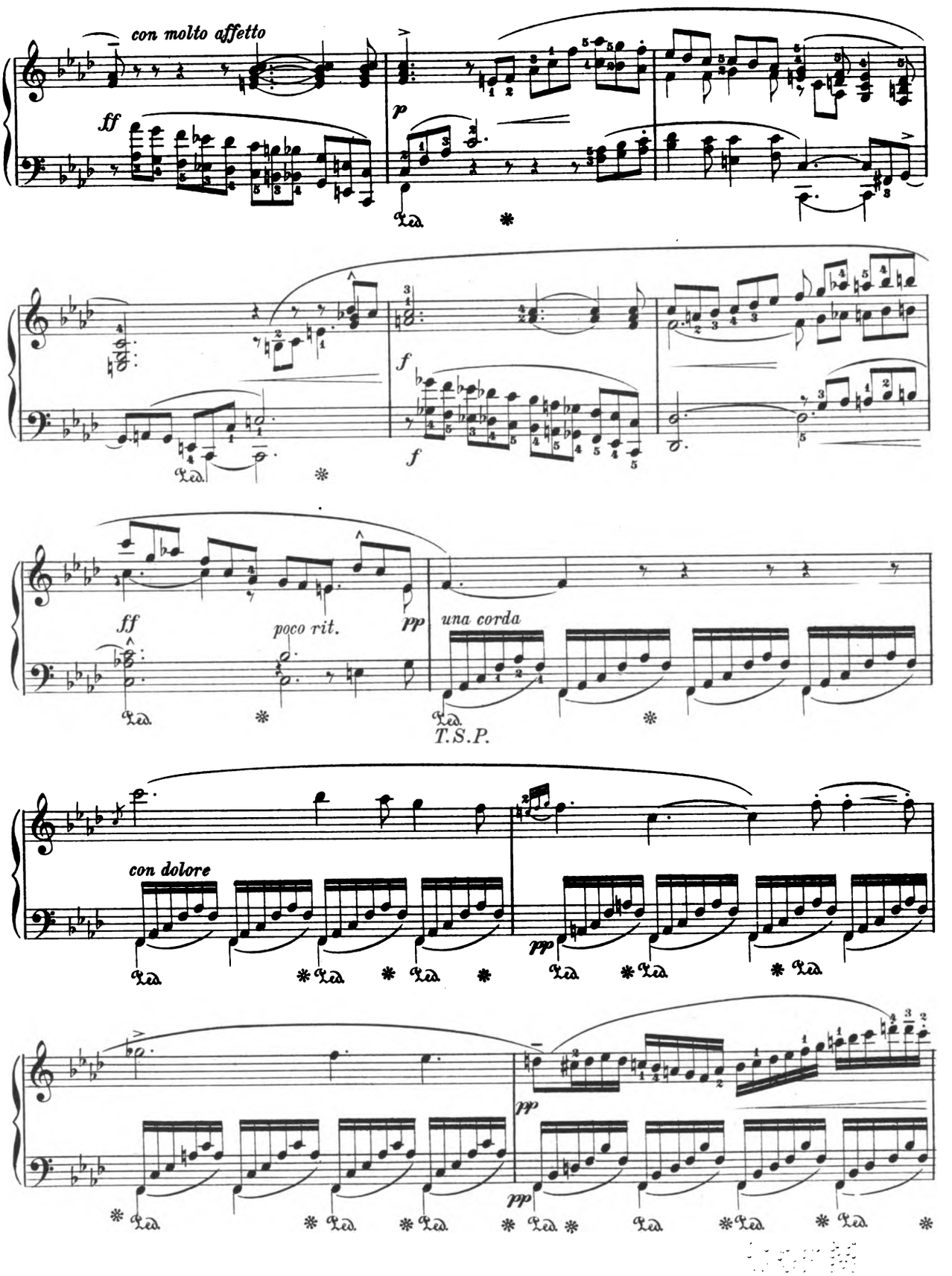
* *T. S. P.* **Tone sustaining Pedal.** * **Release for** *T.S.P.*

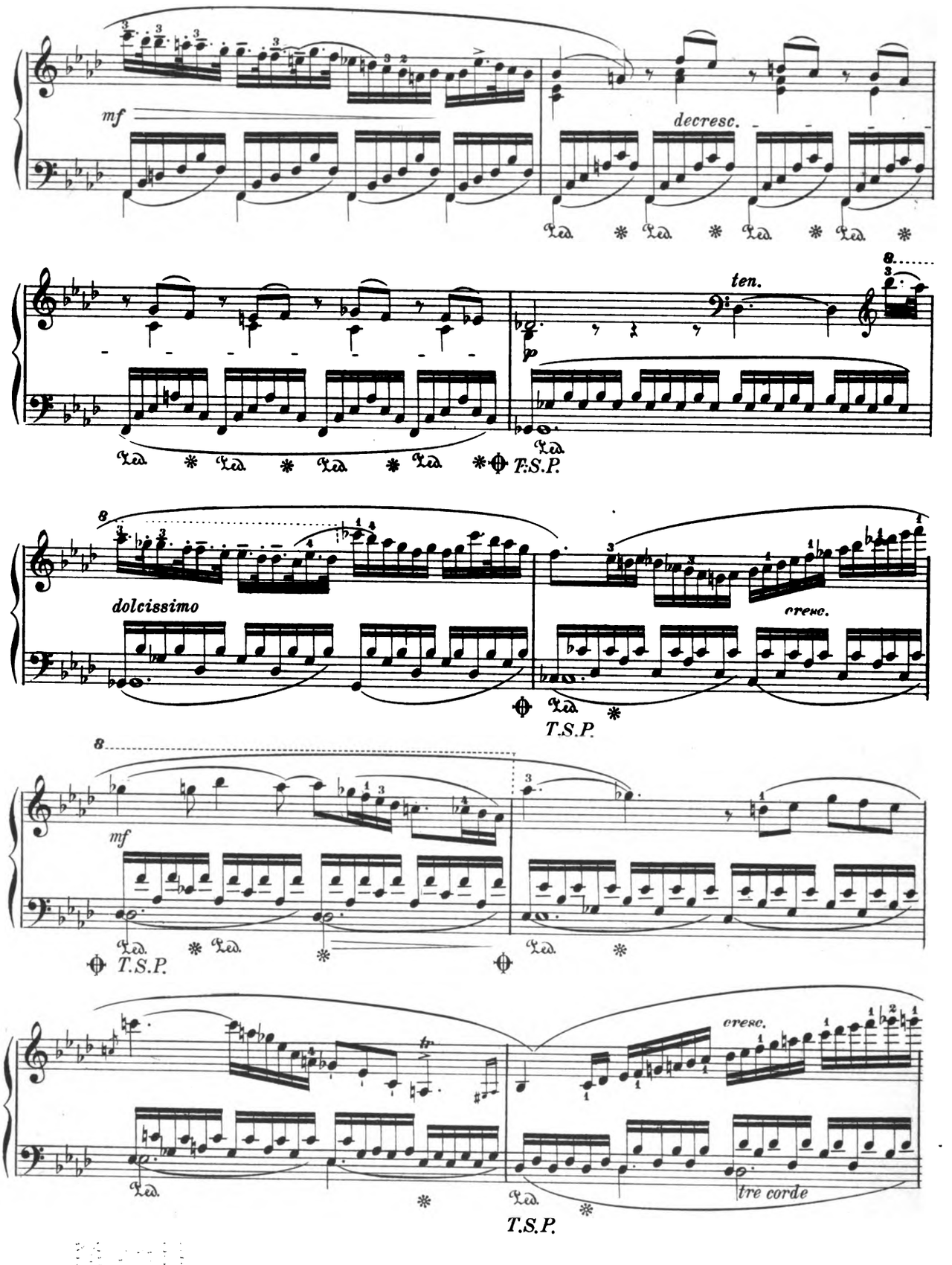


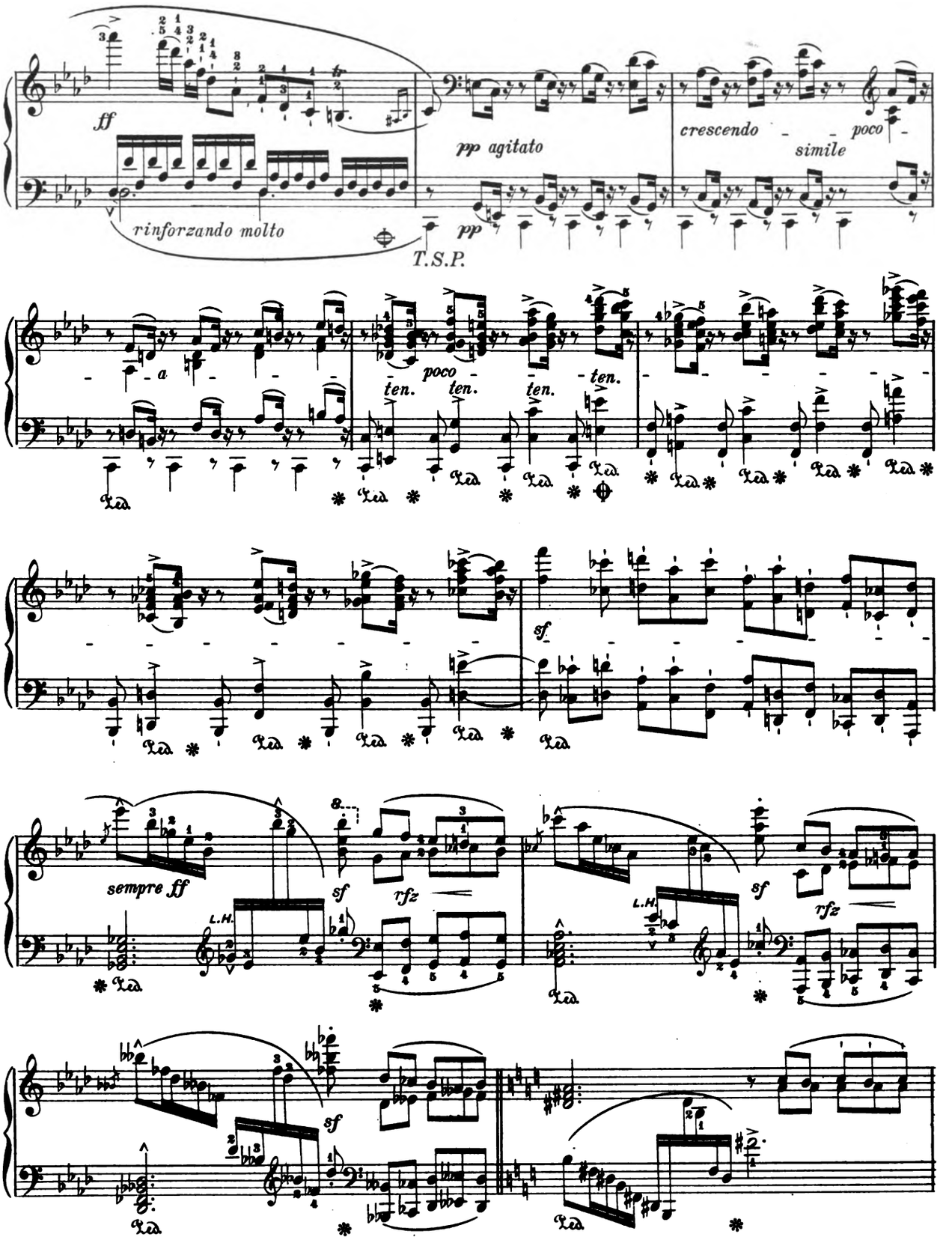


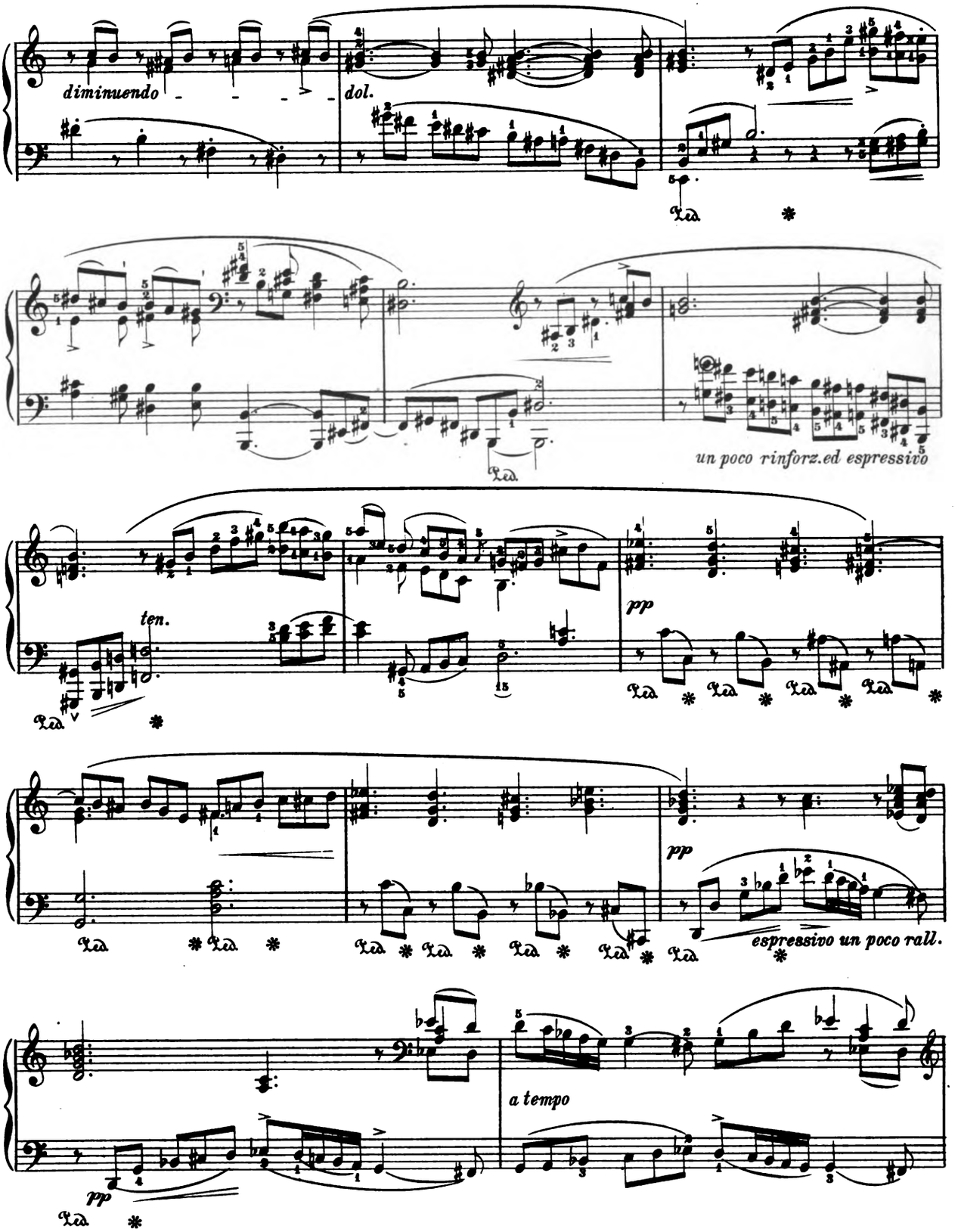


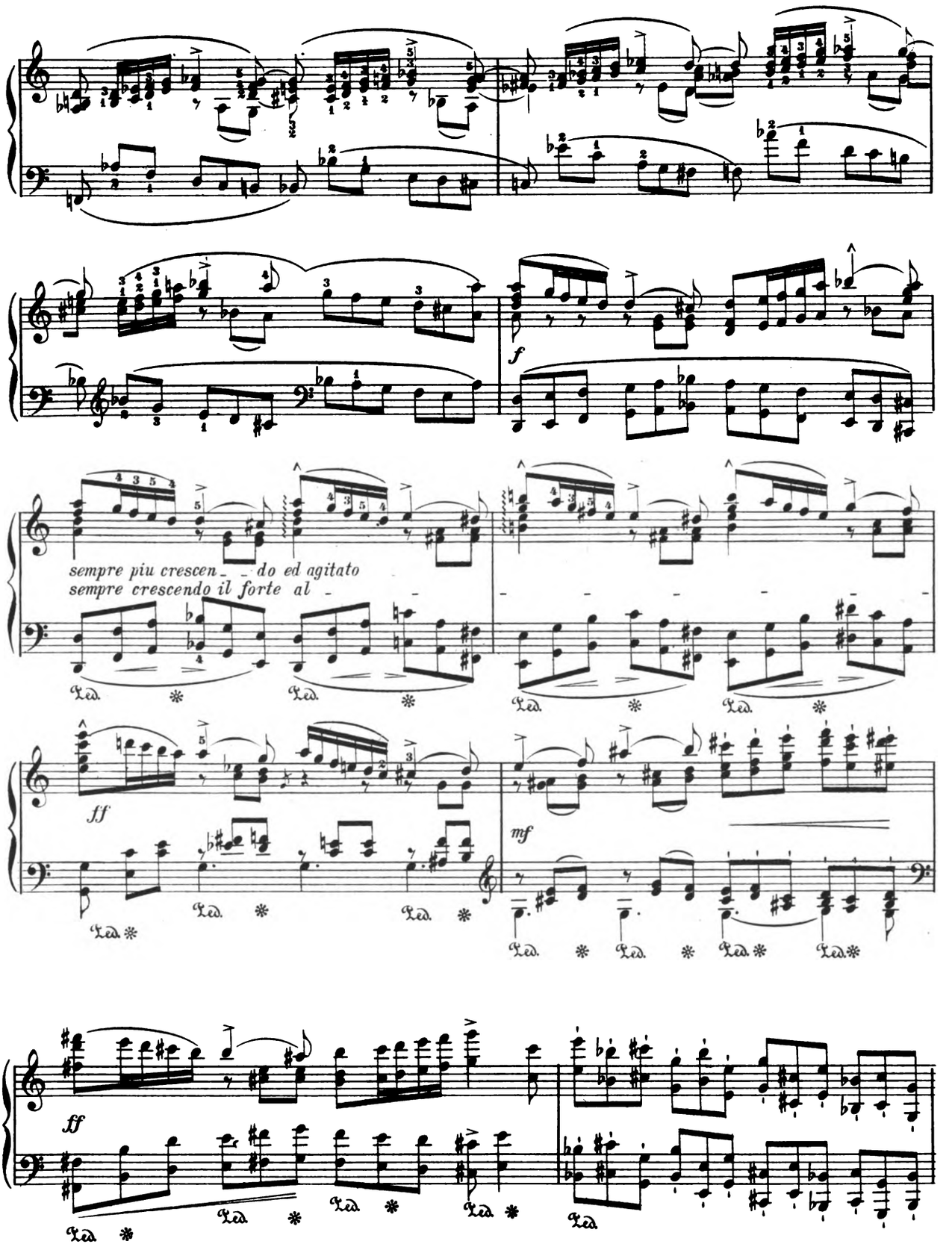


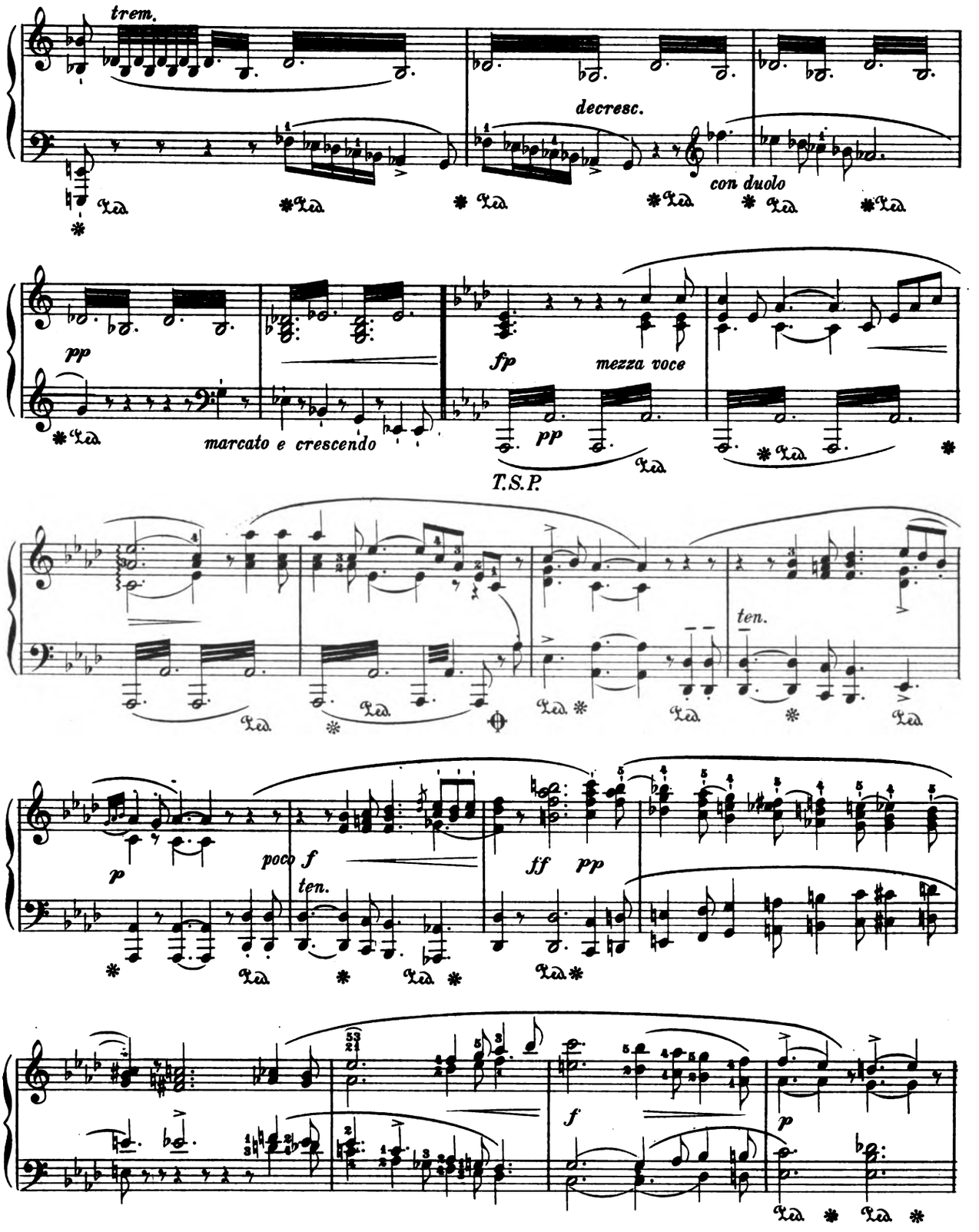


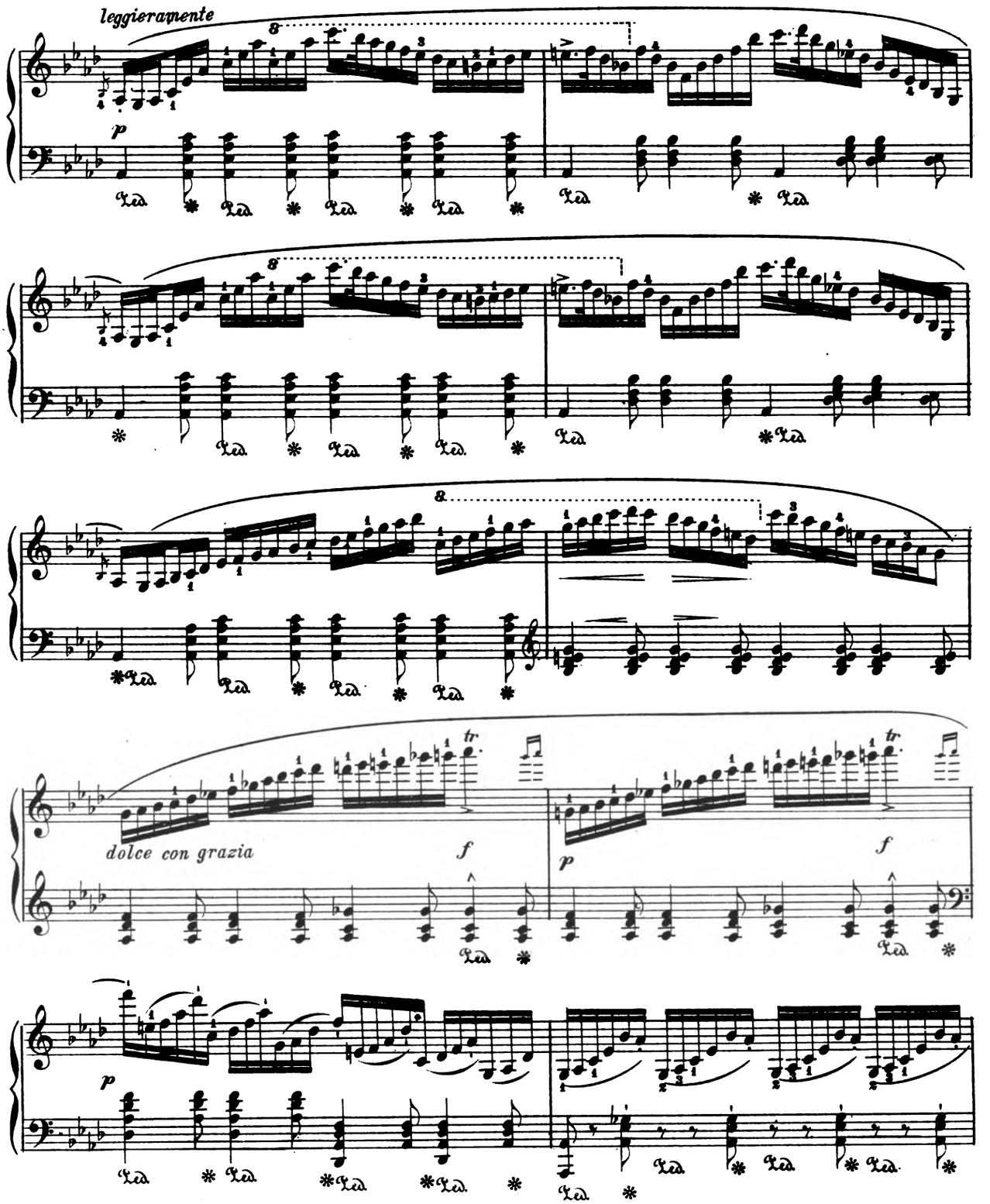


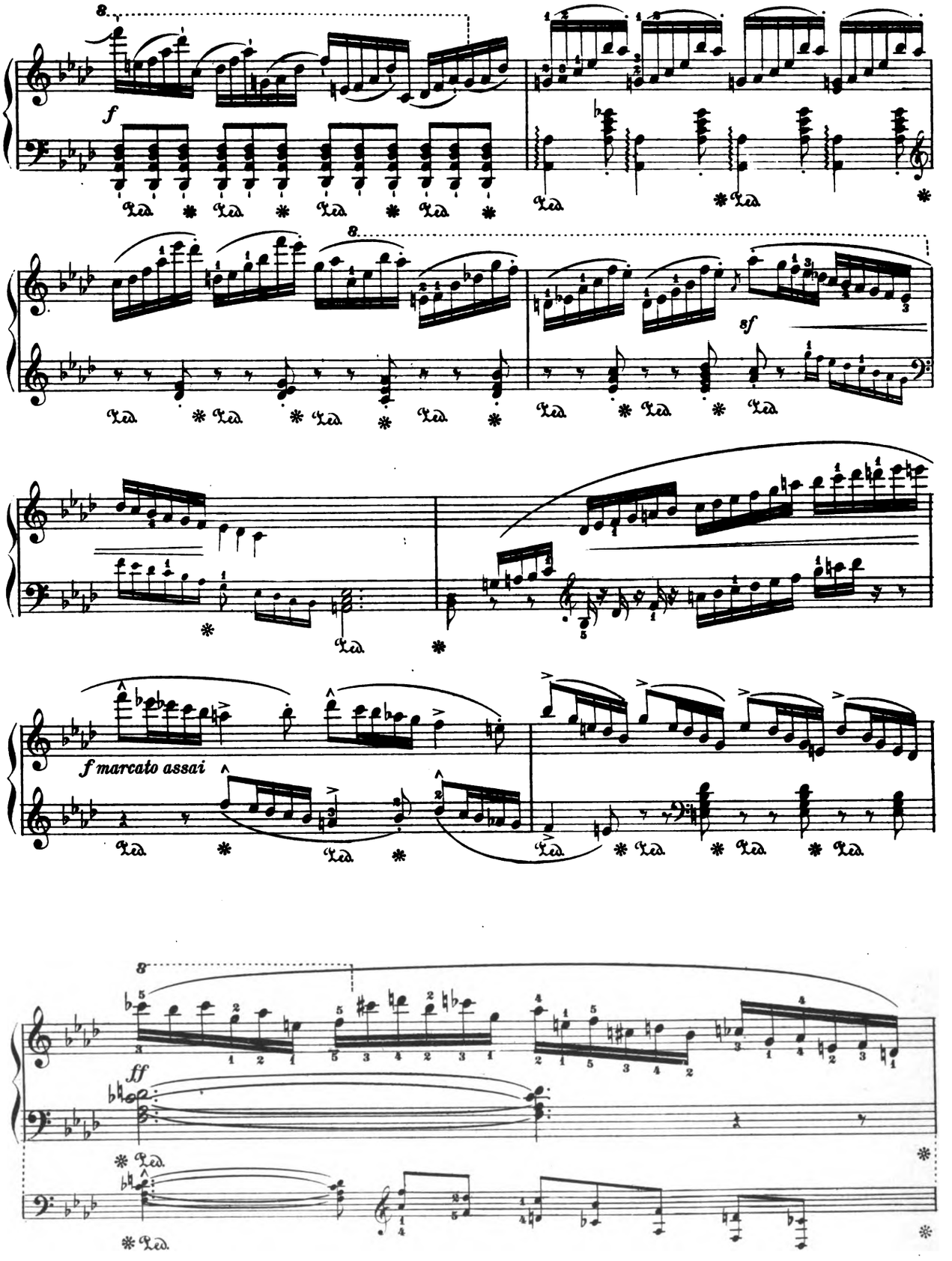


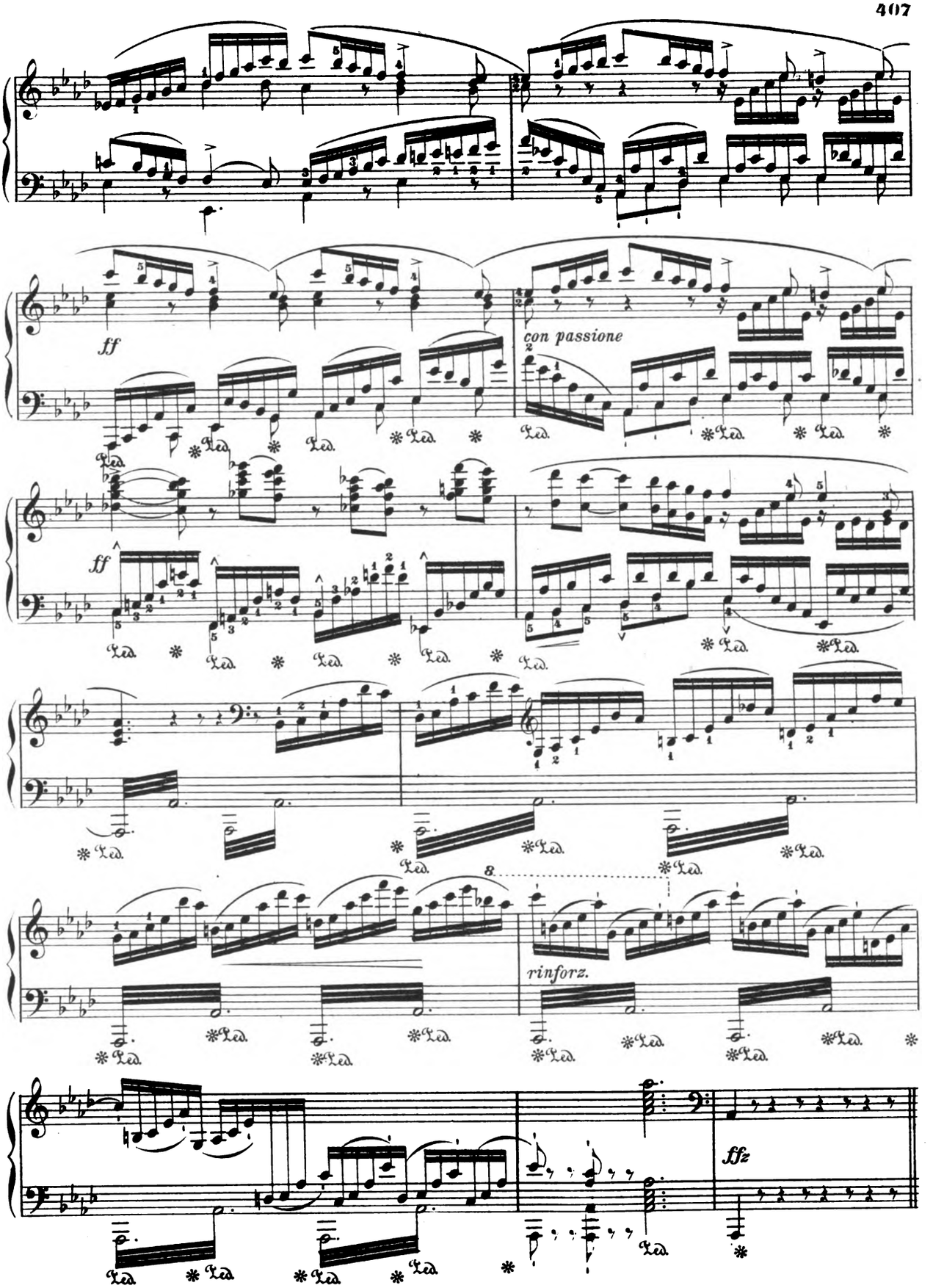












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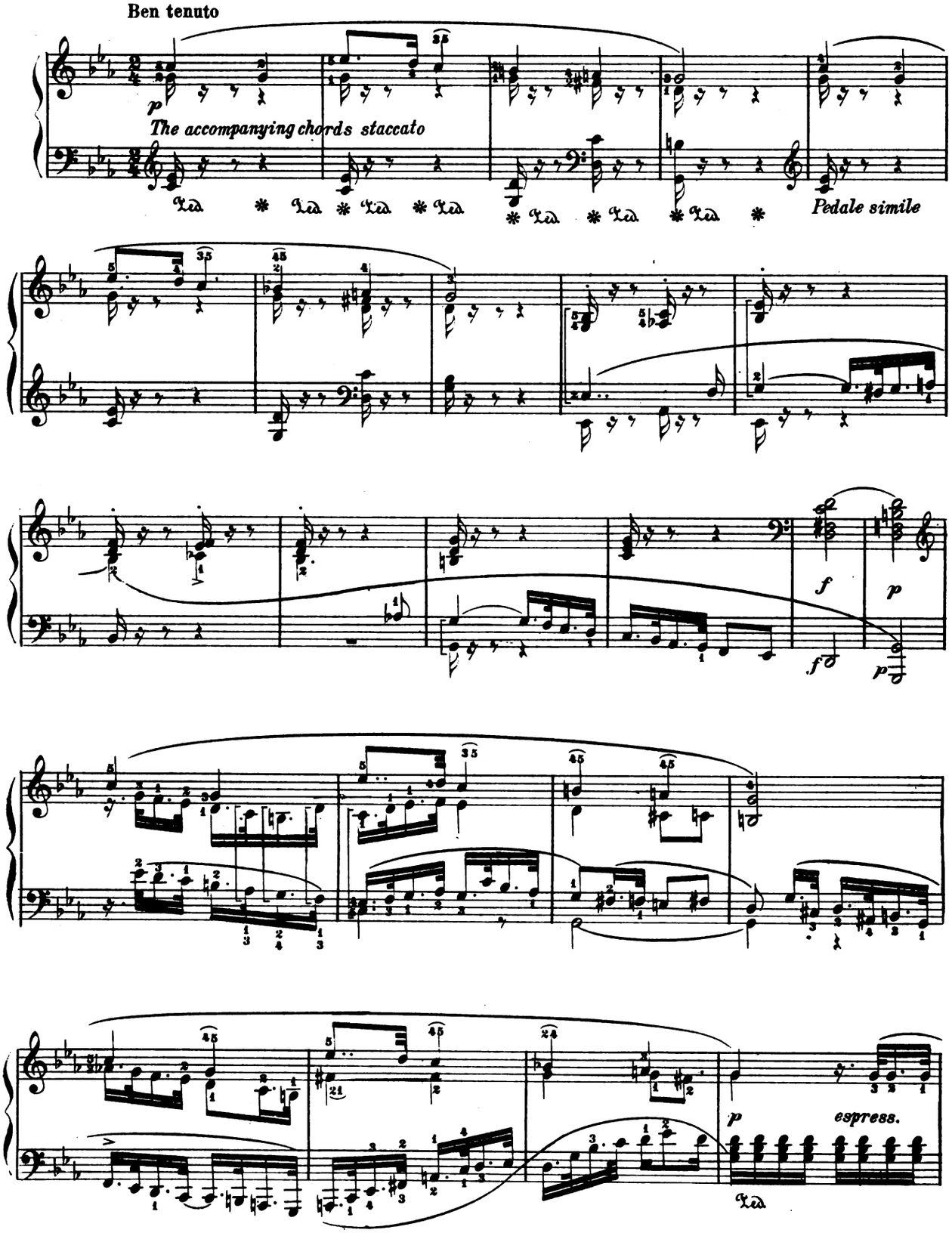
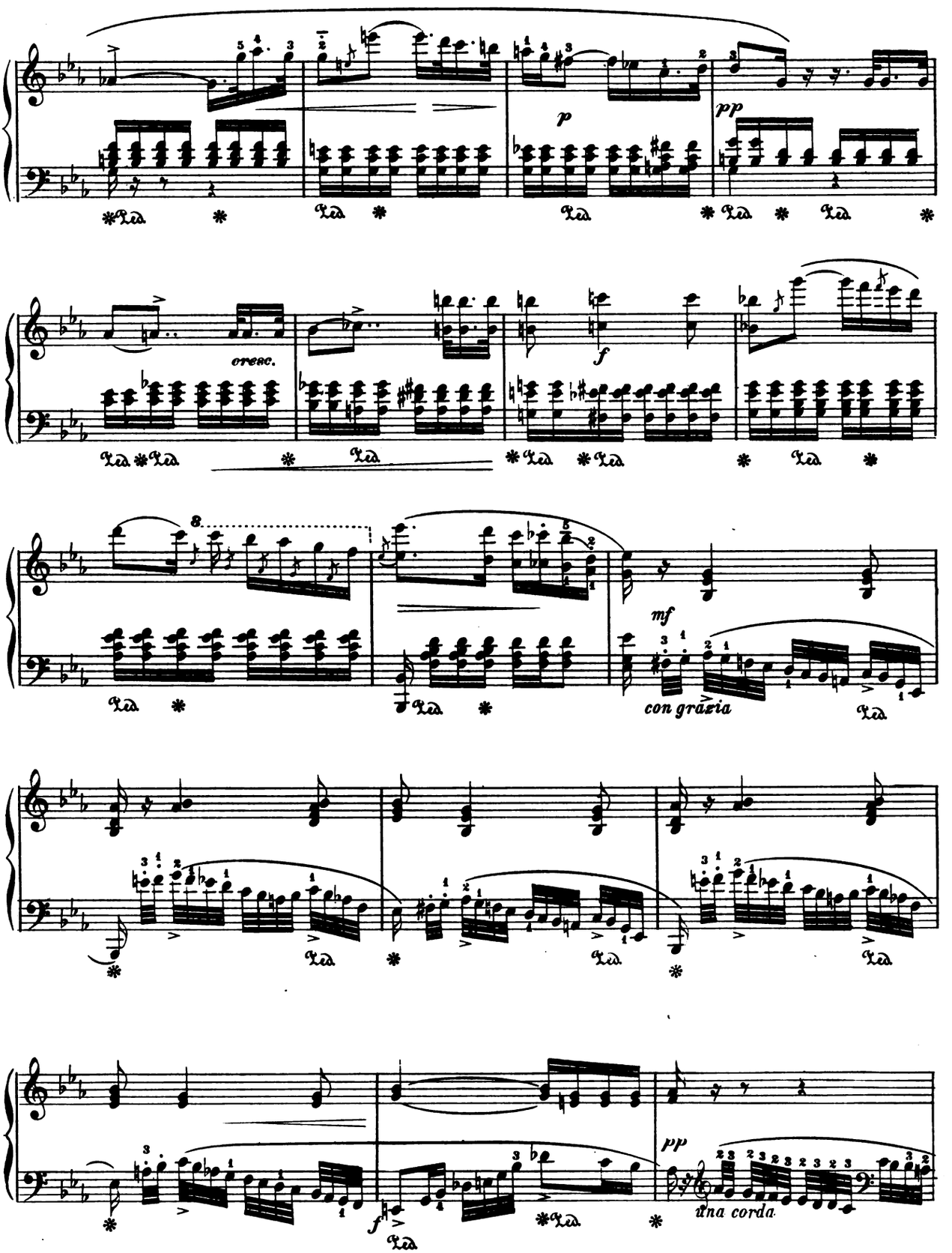
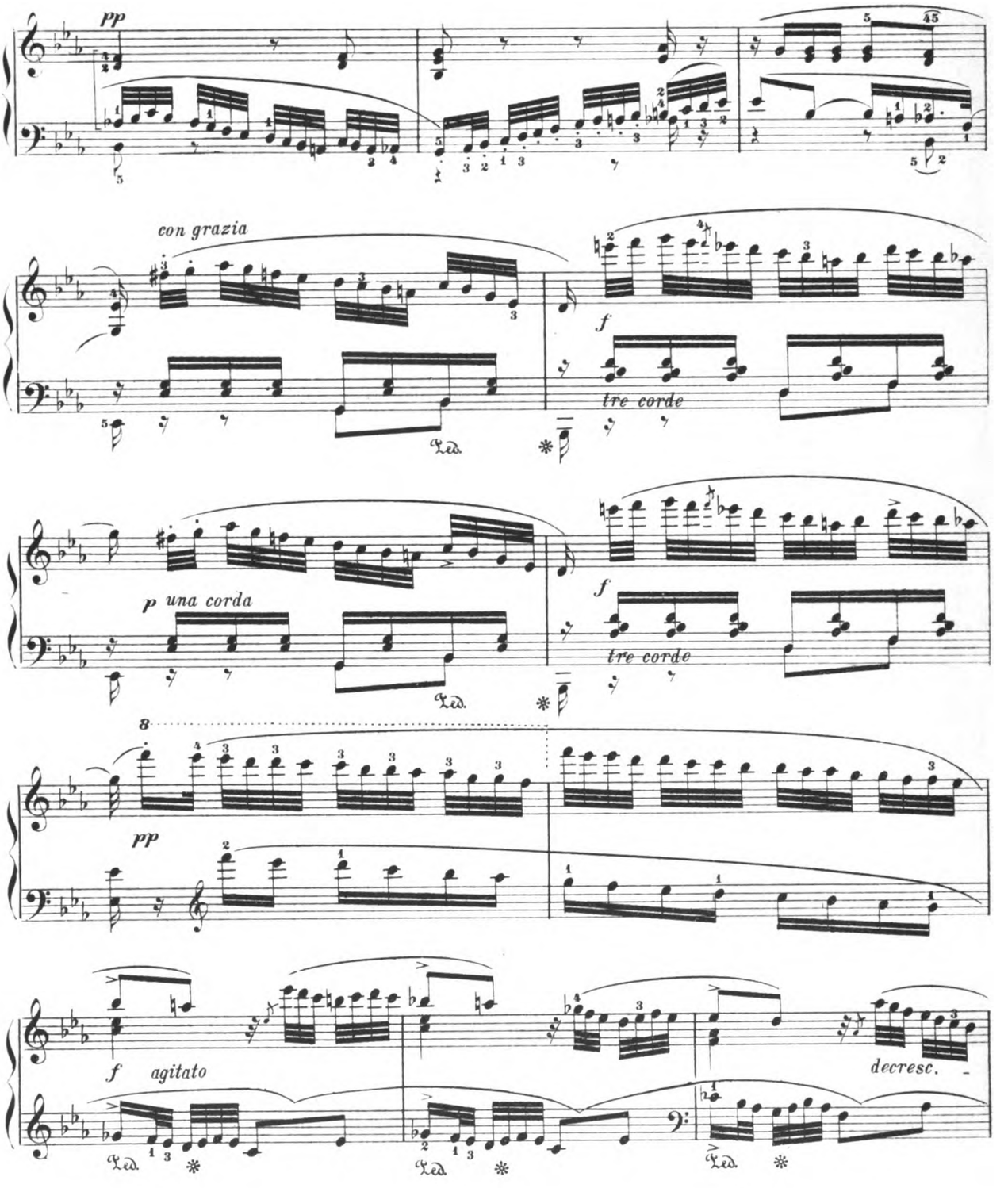
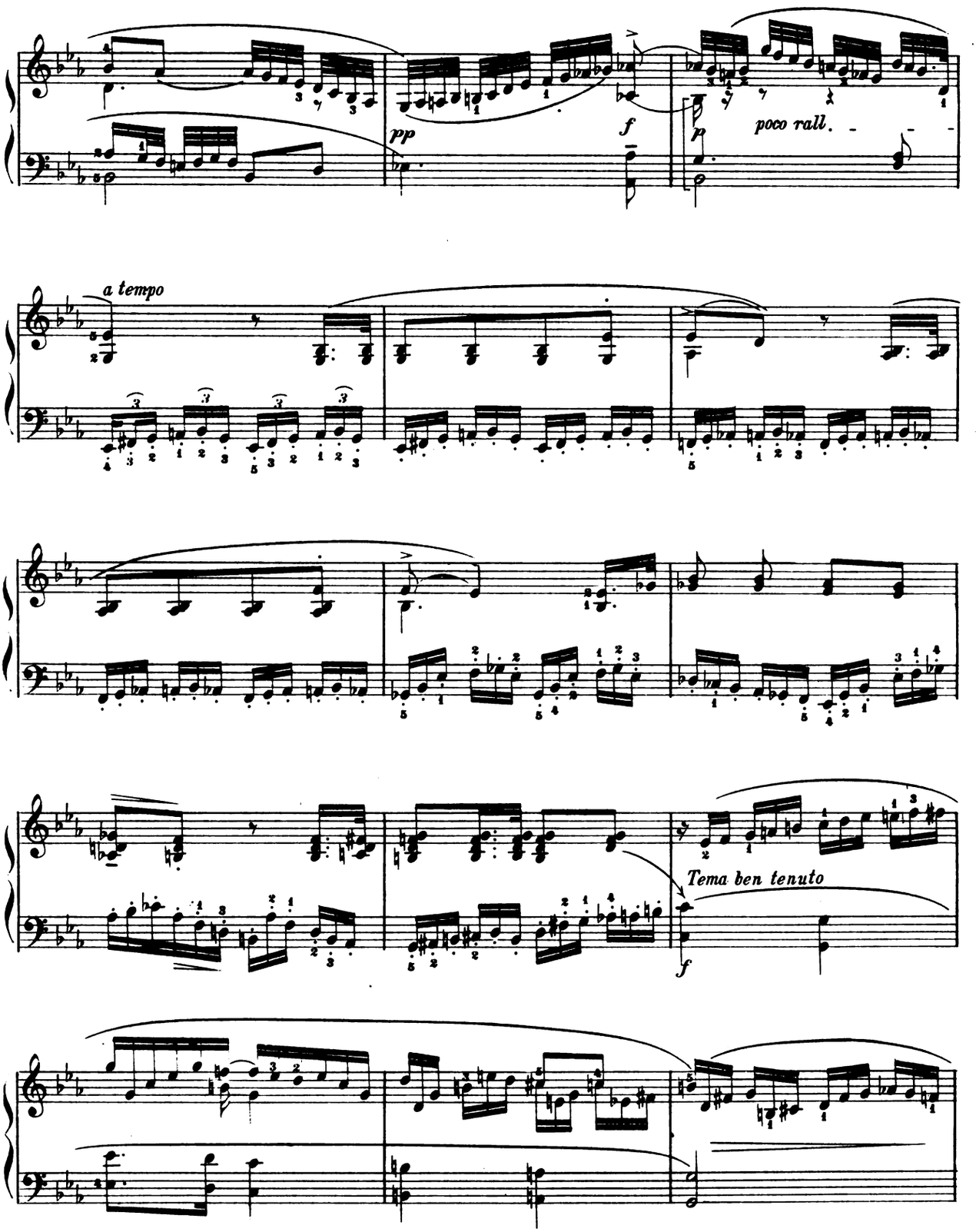
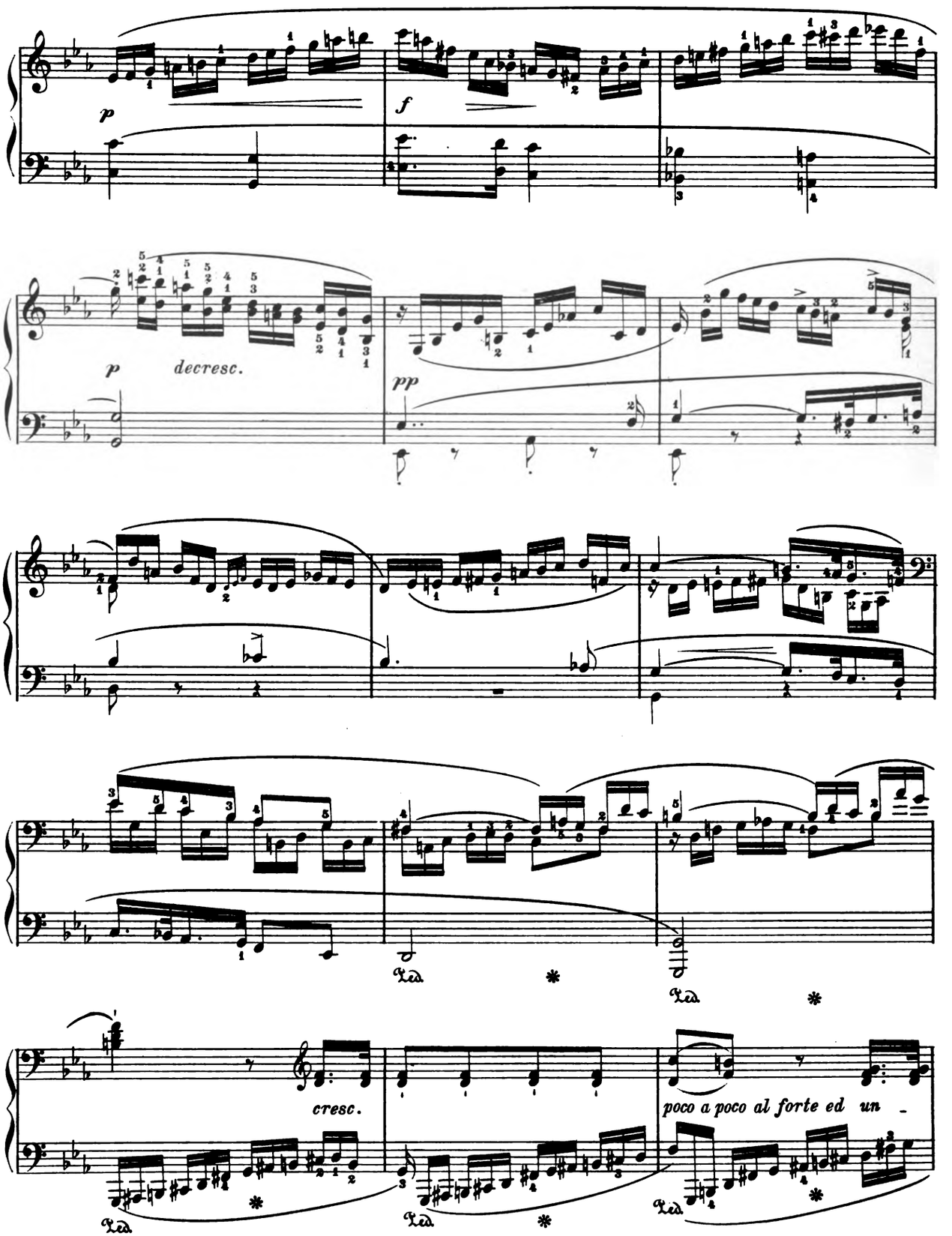
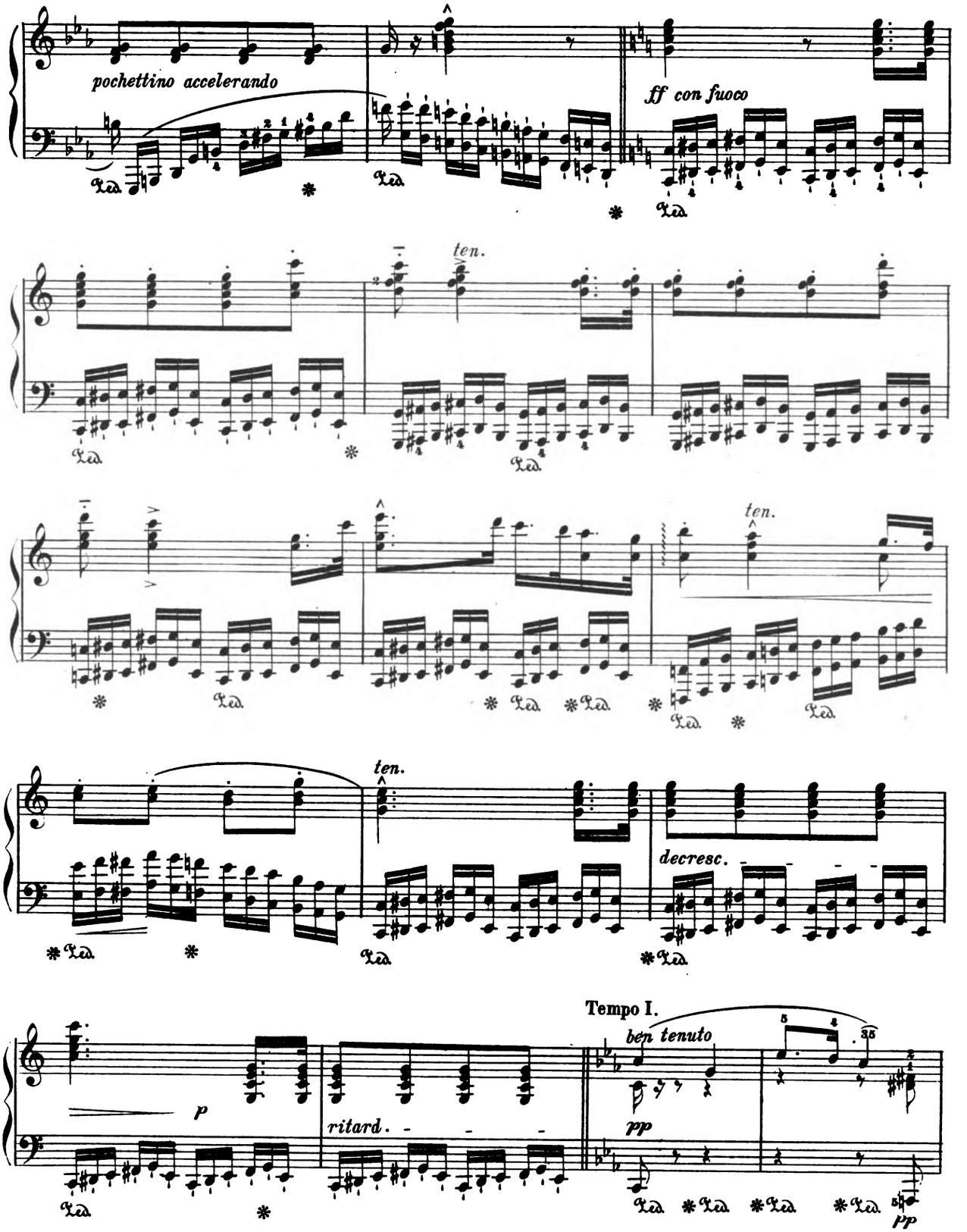


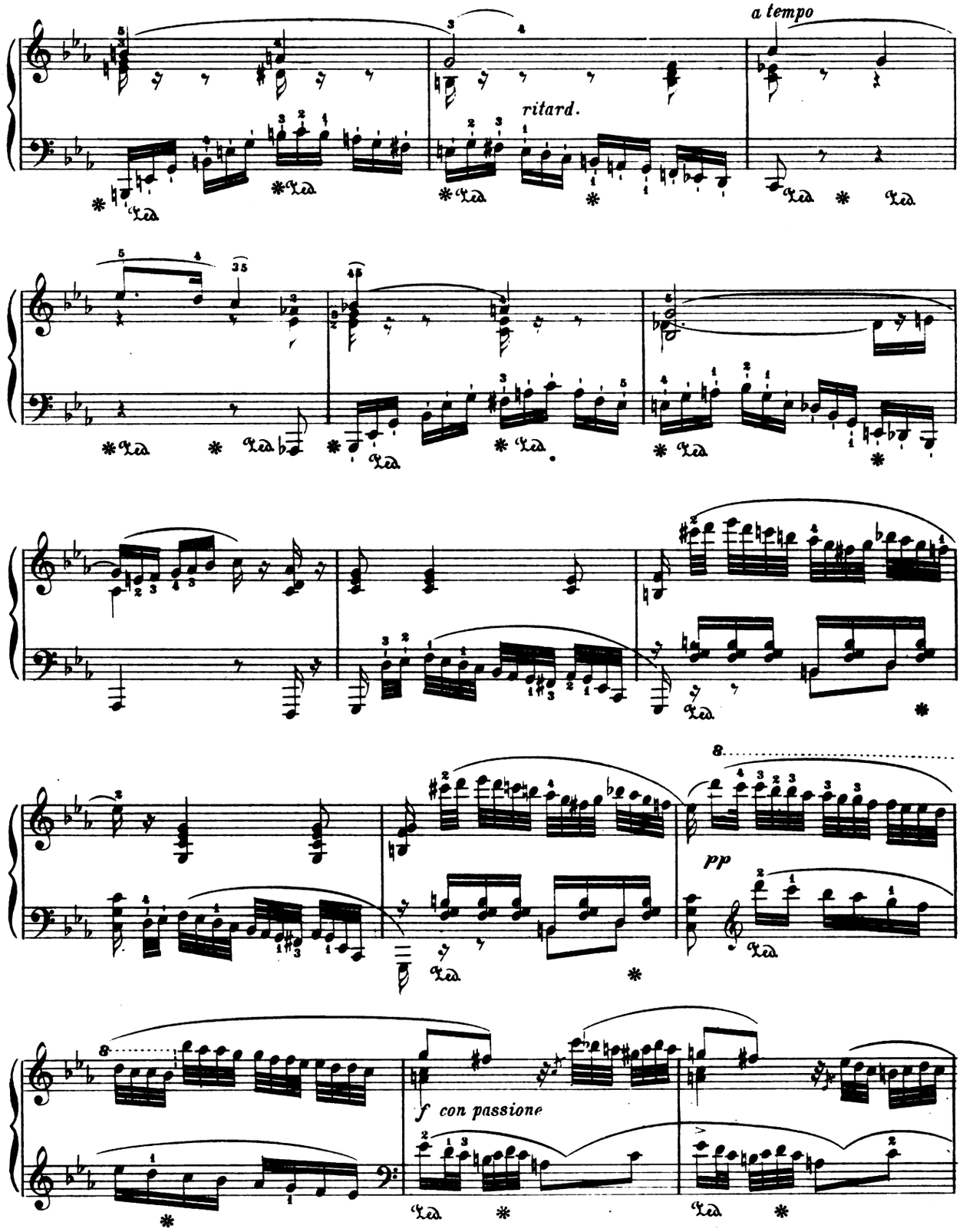


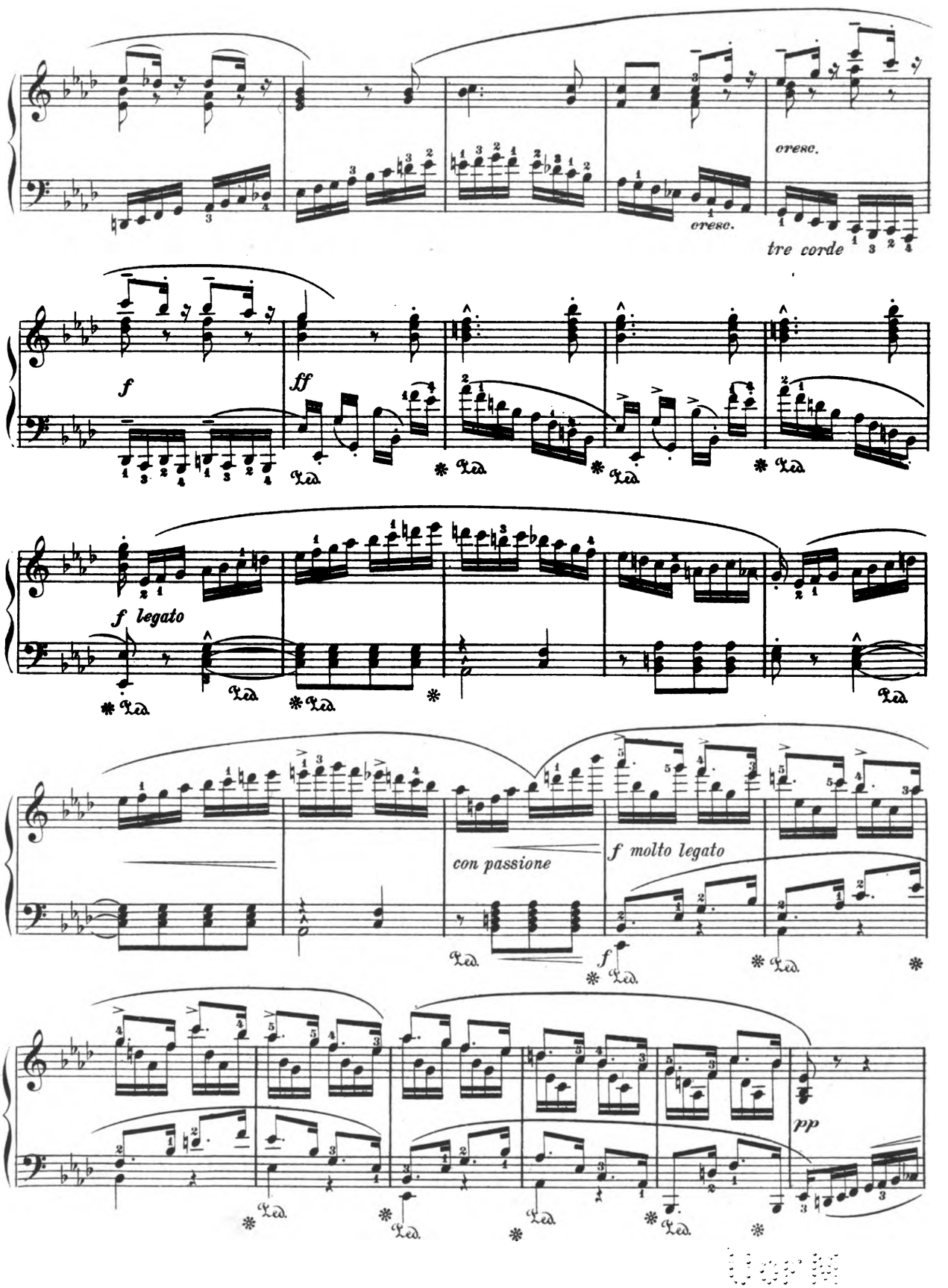


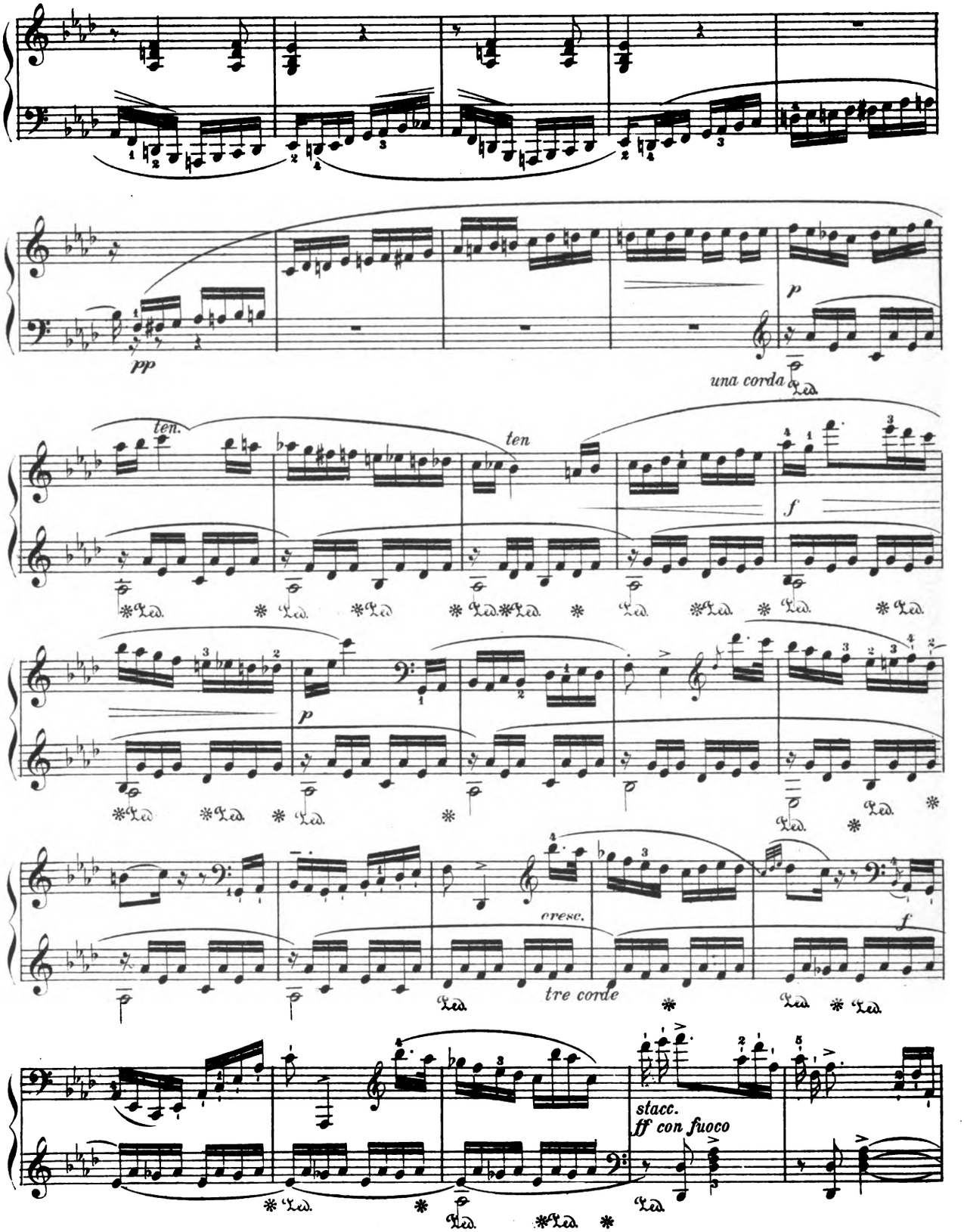


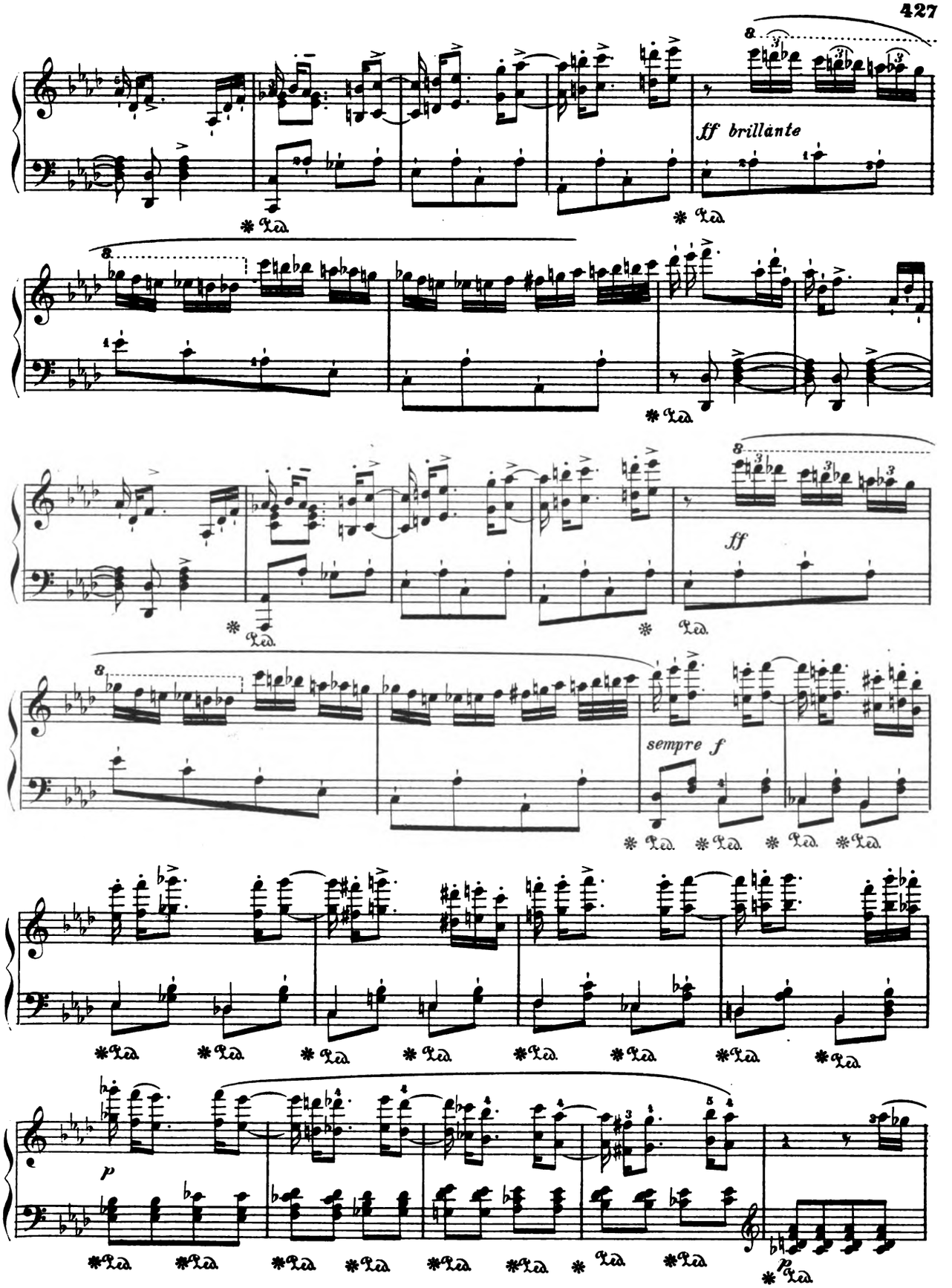


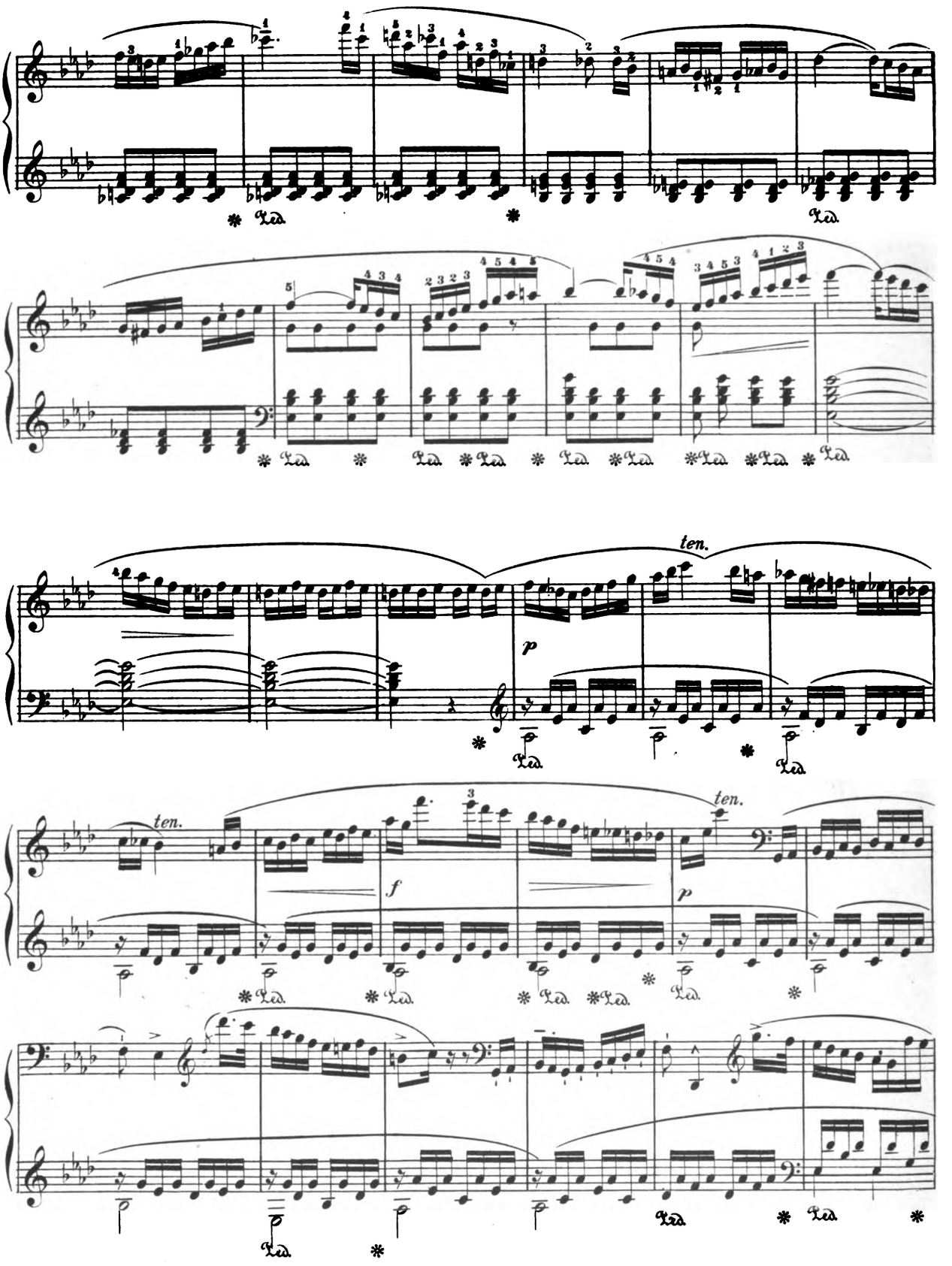


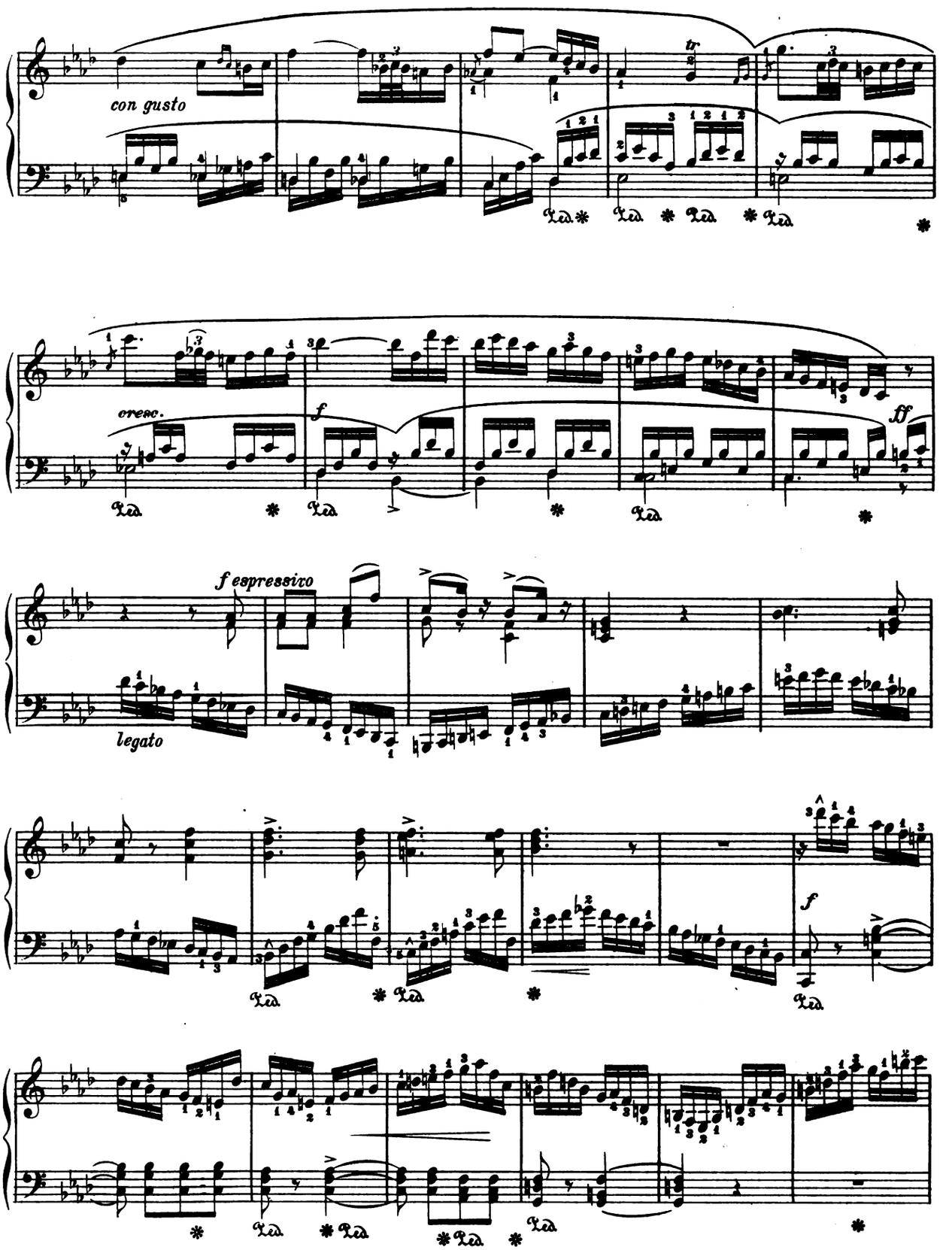


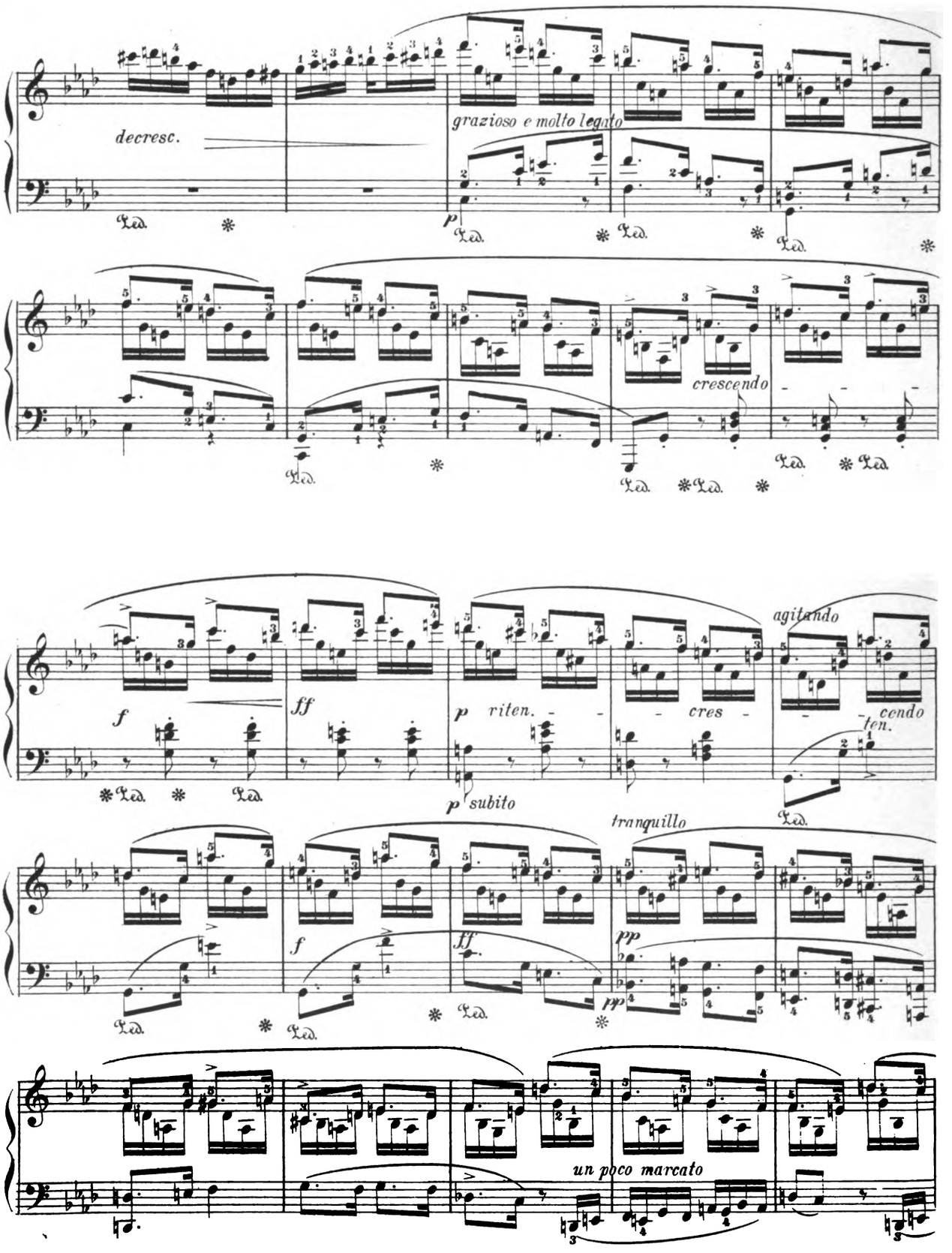


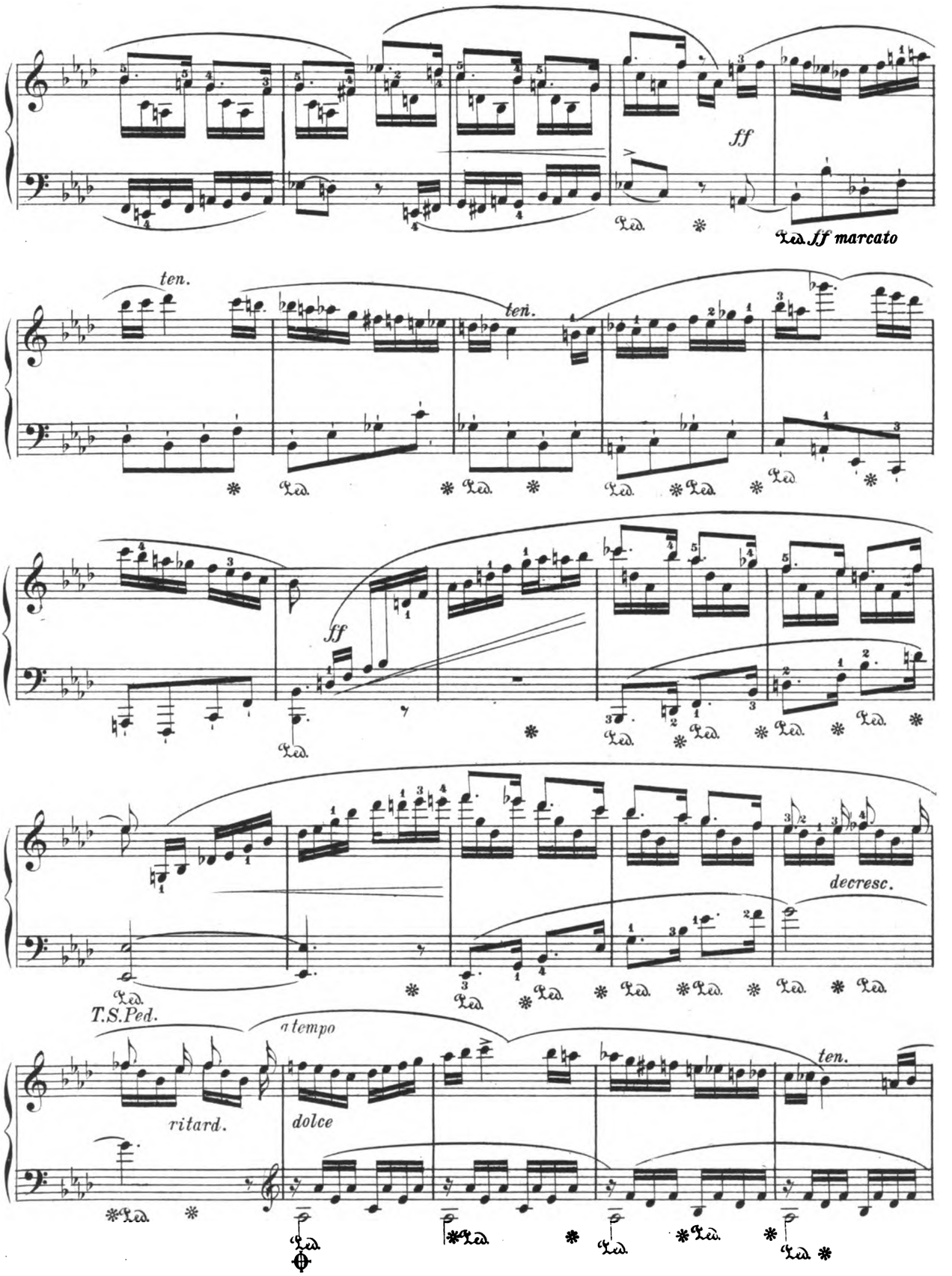


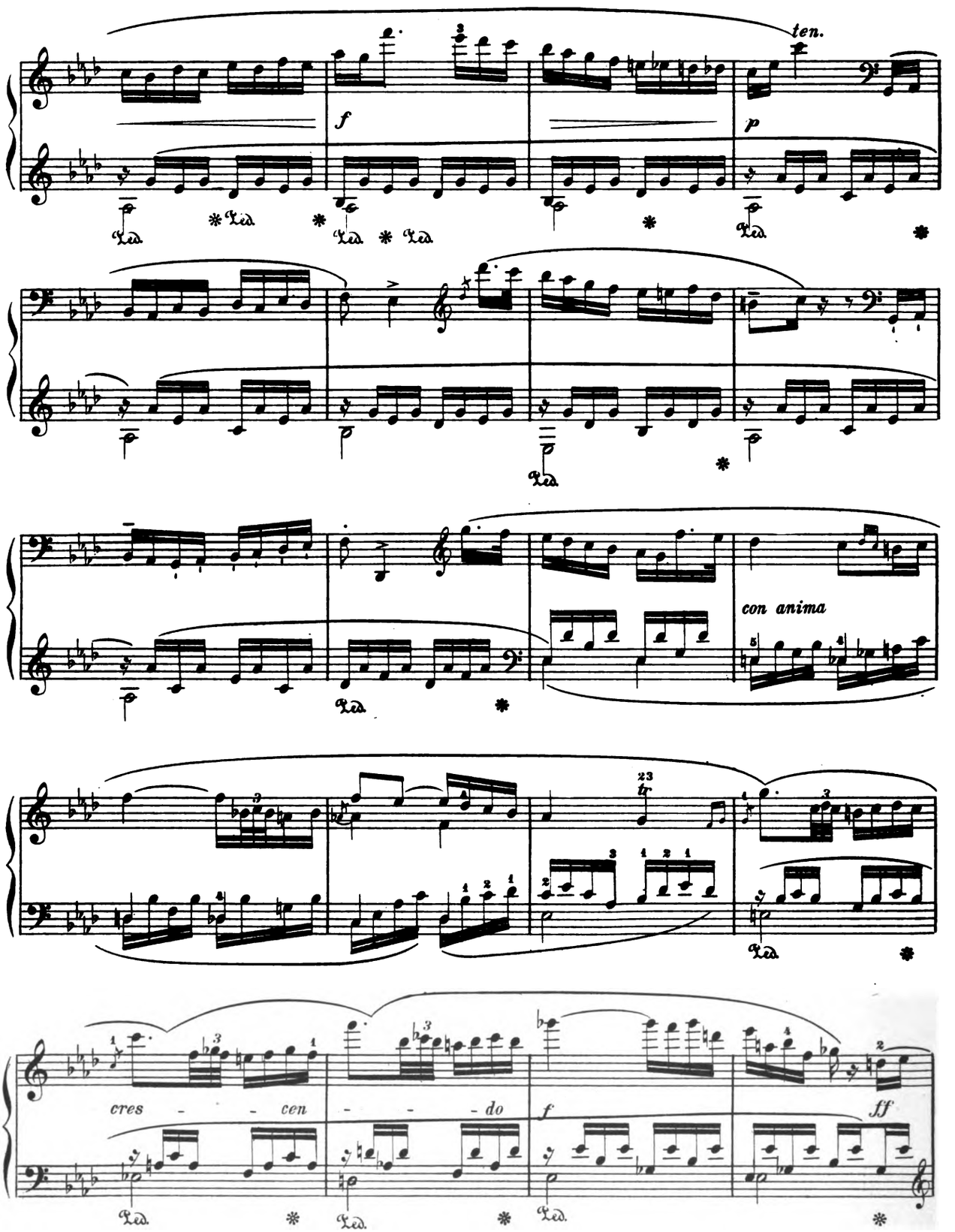


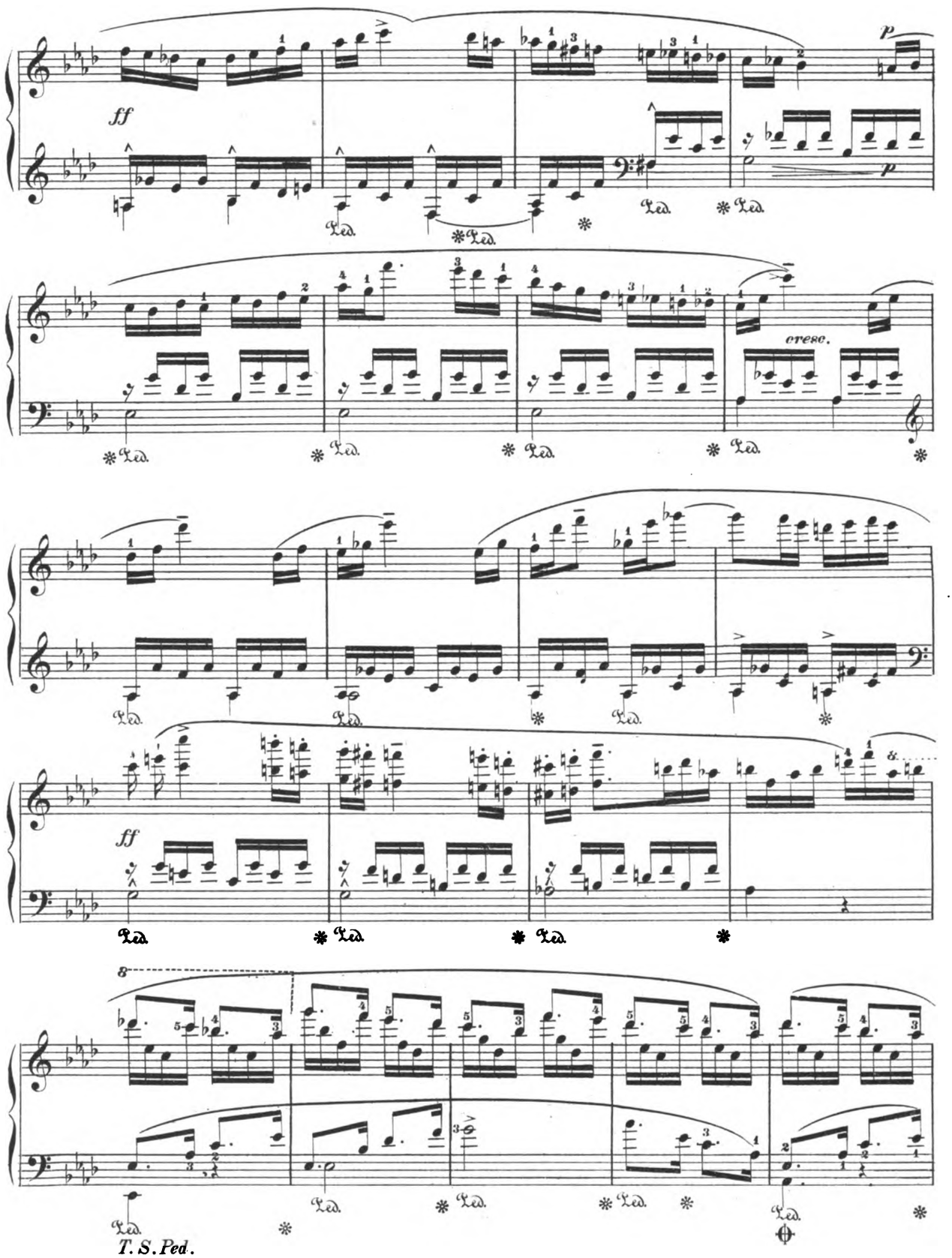


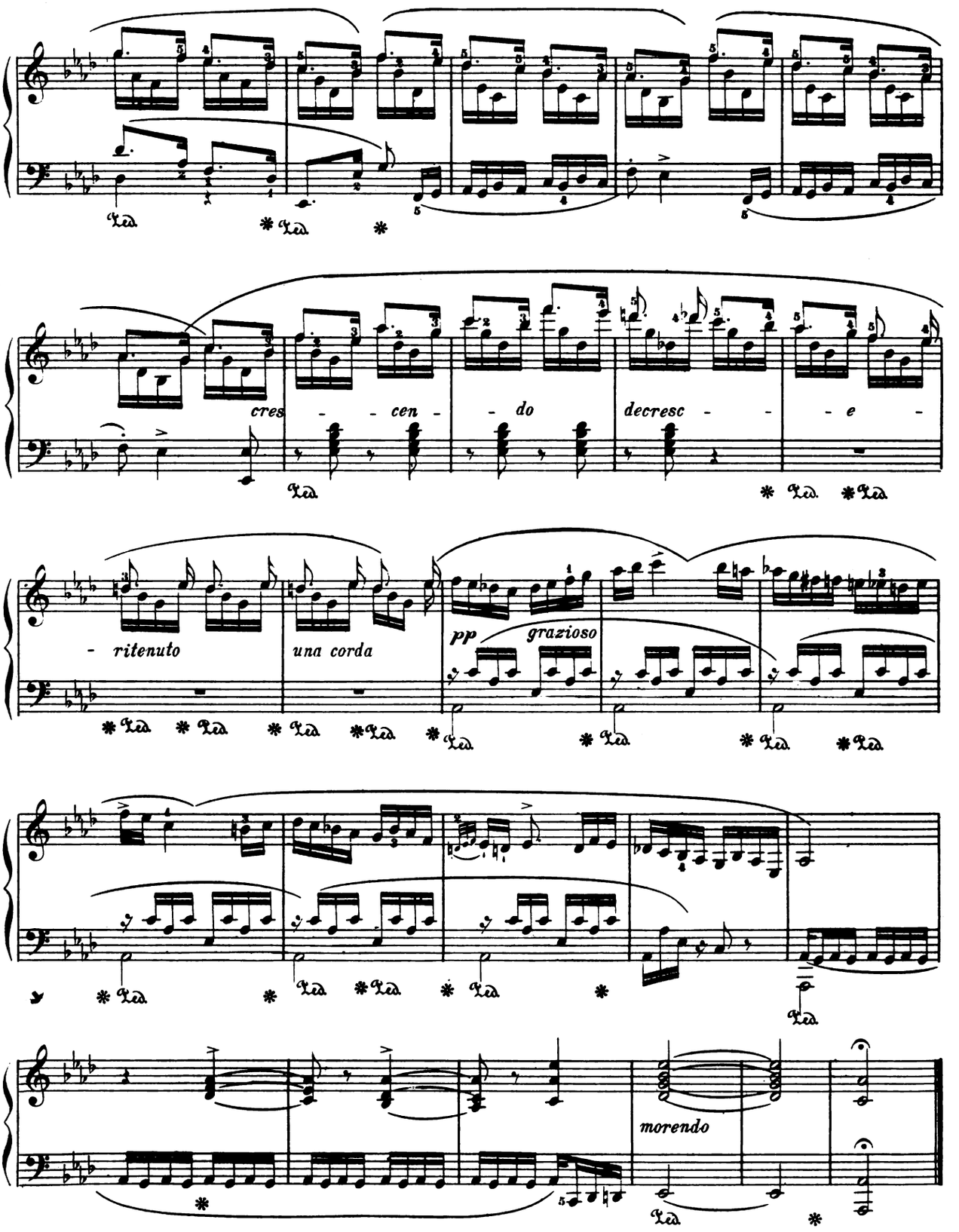








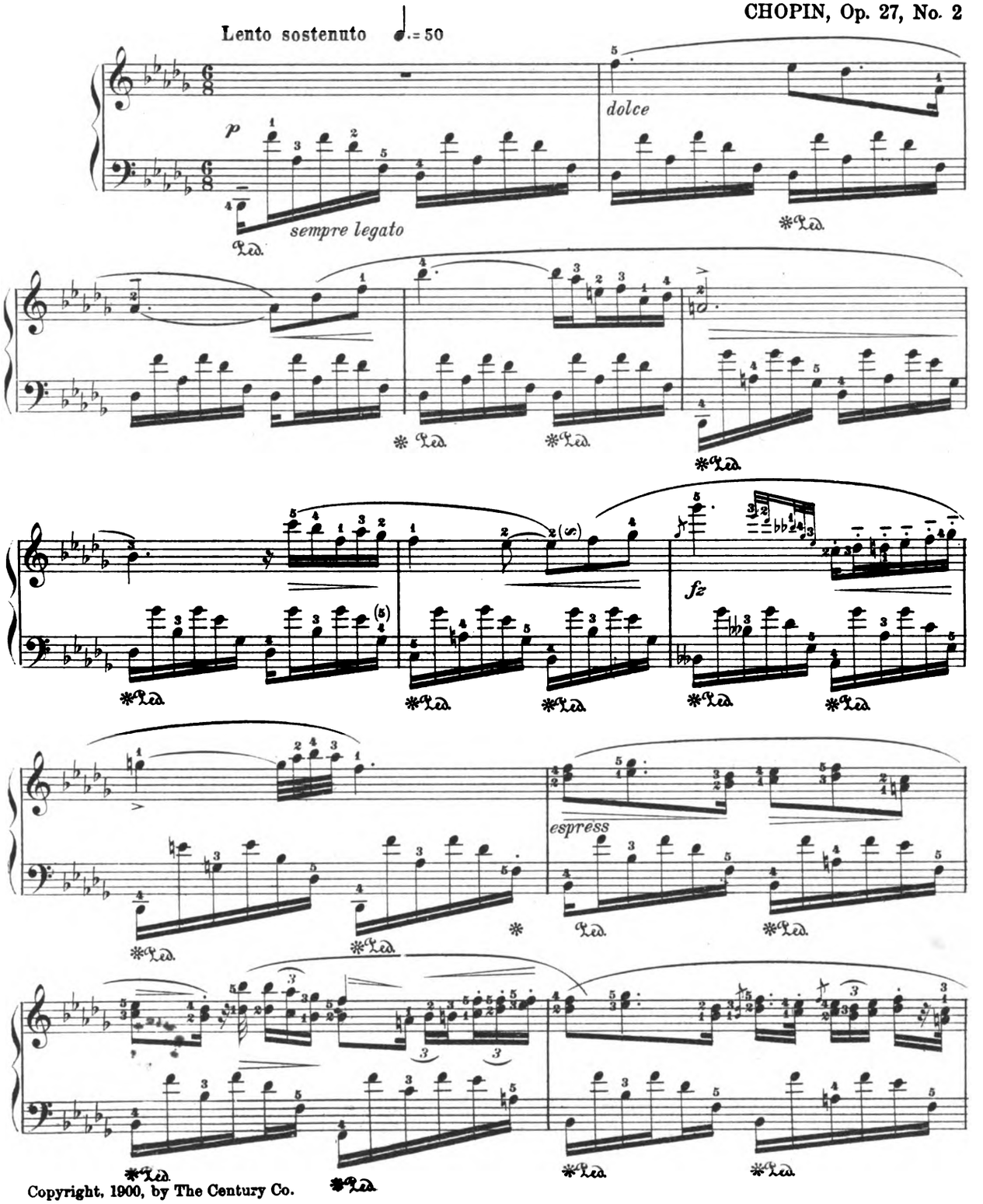


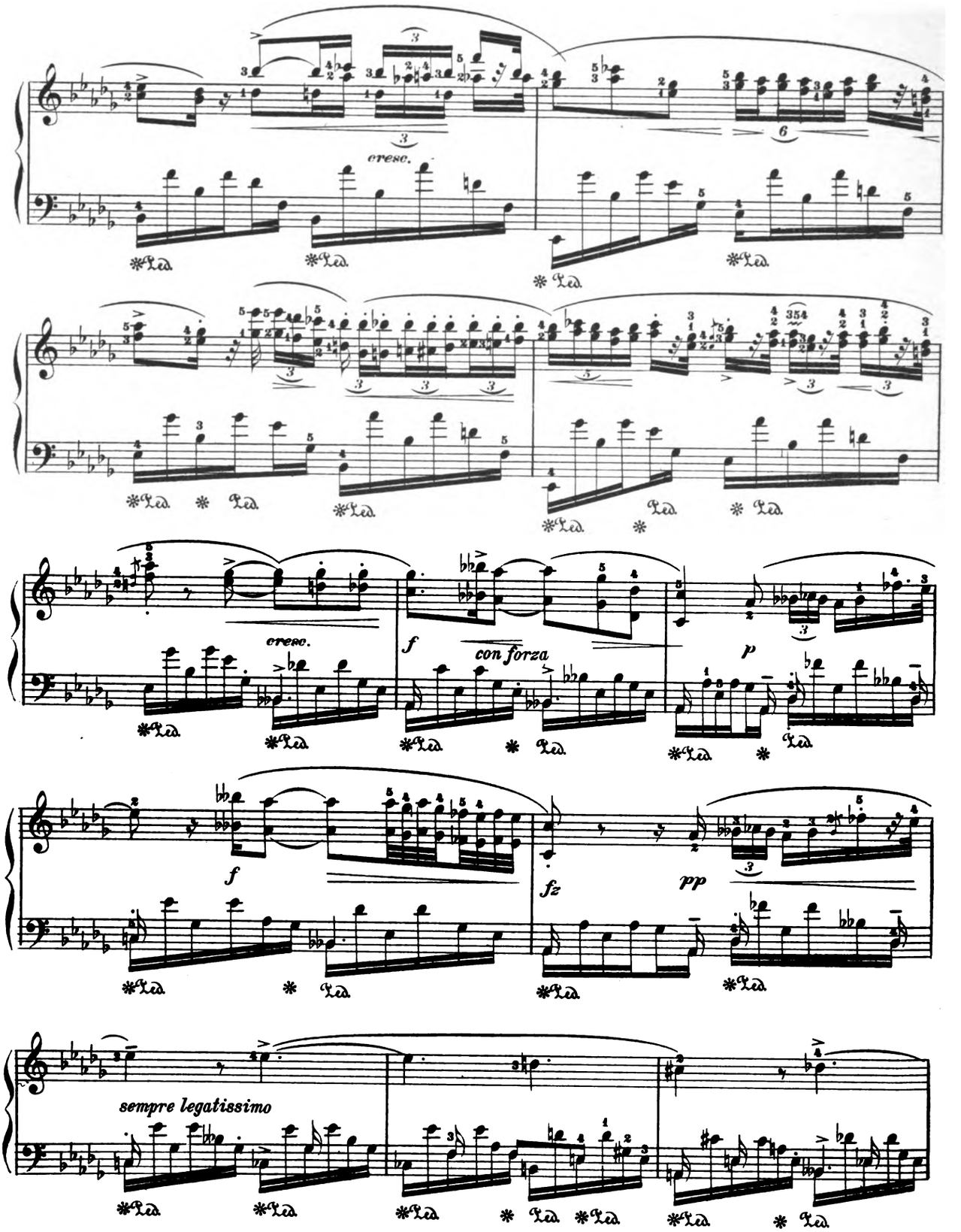


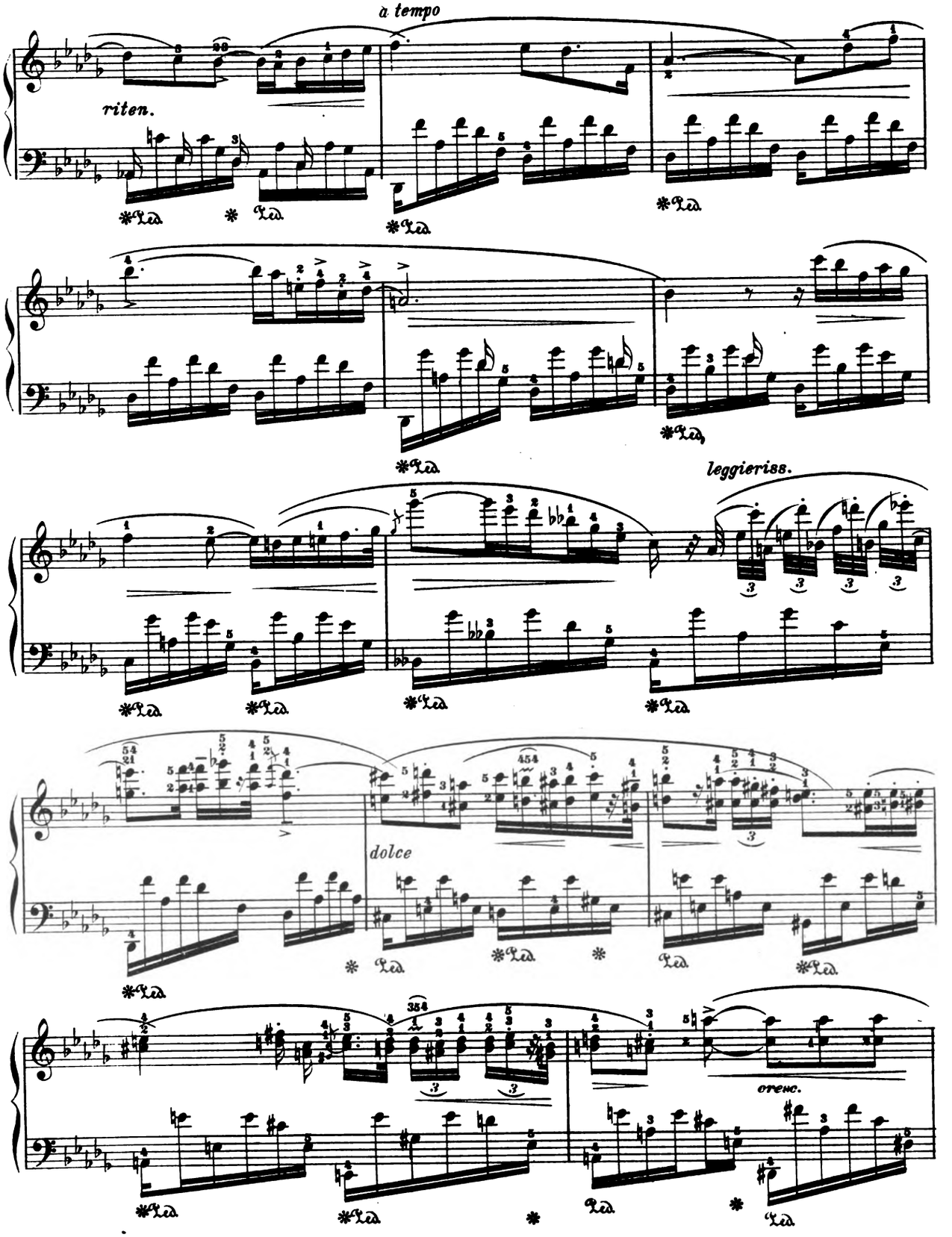
NOCTURNE

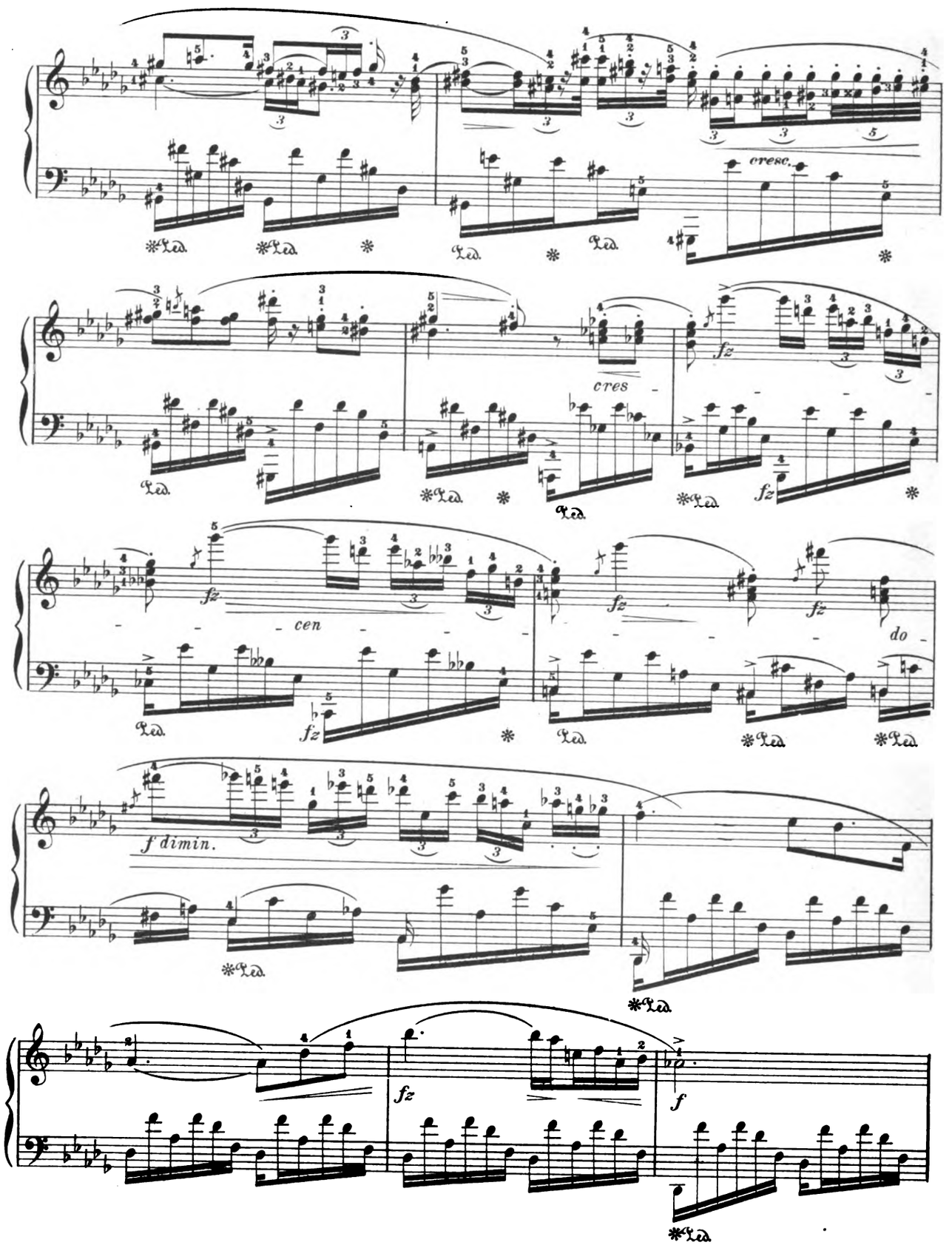
D FLAT

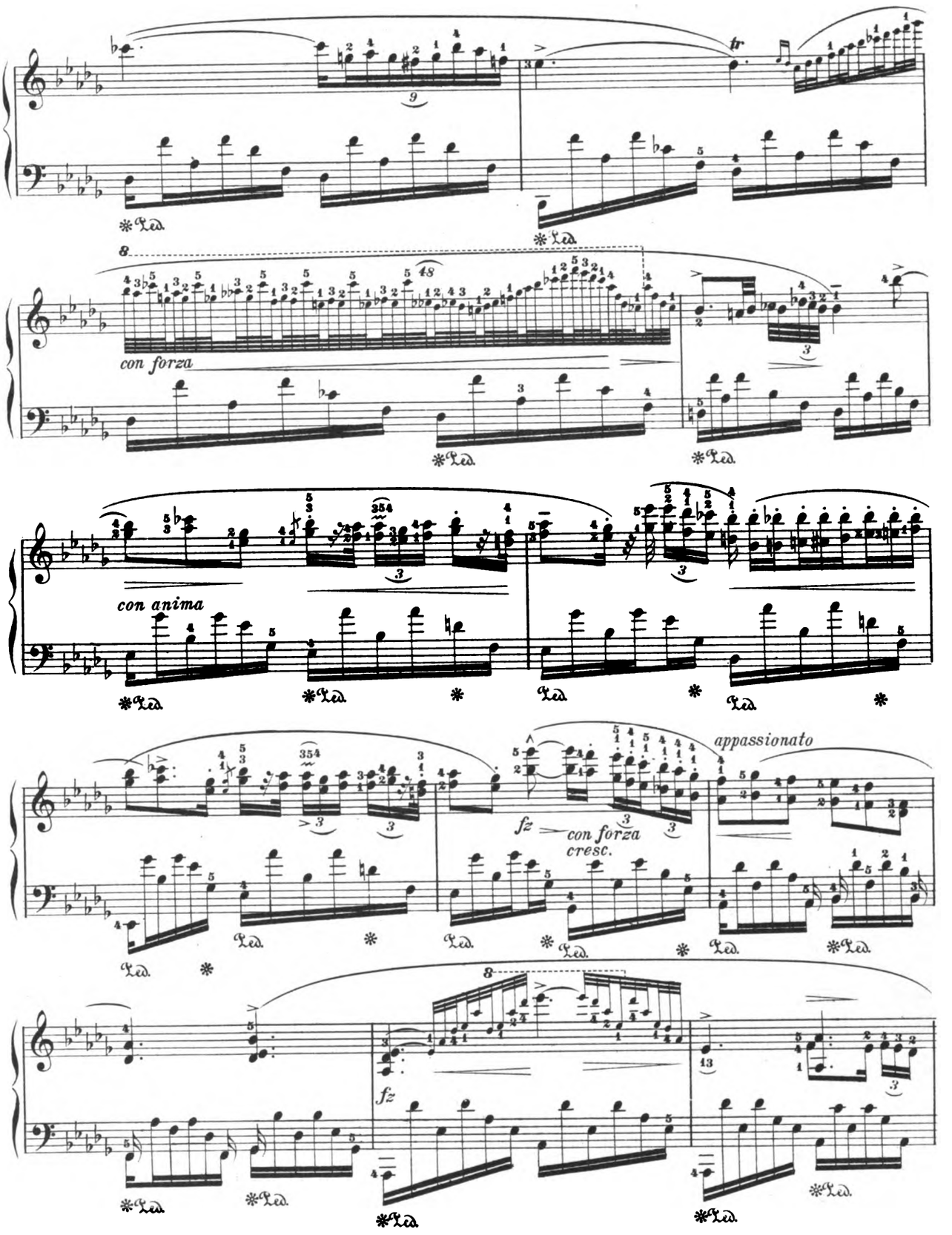
CHOPIN, Op. 27, No. 2

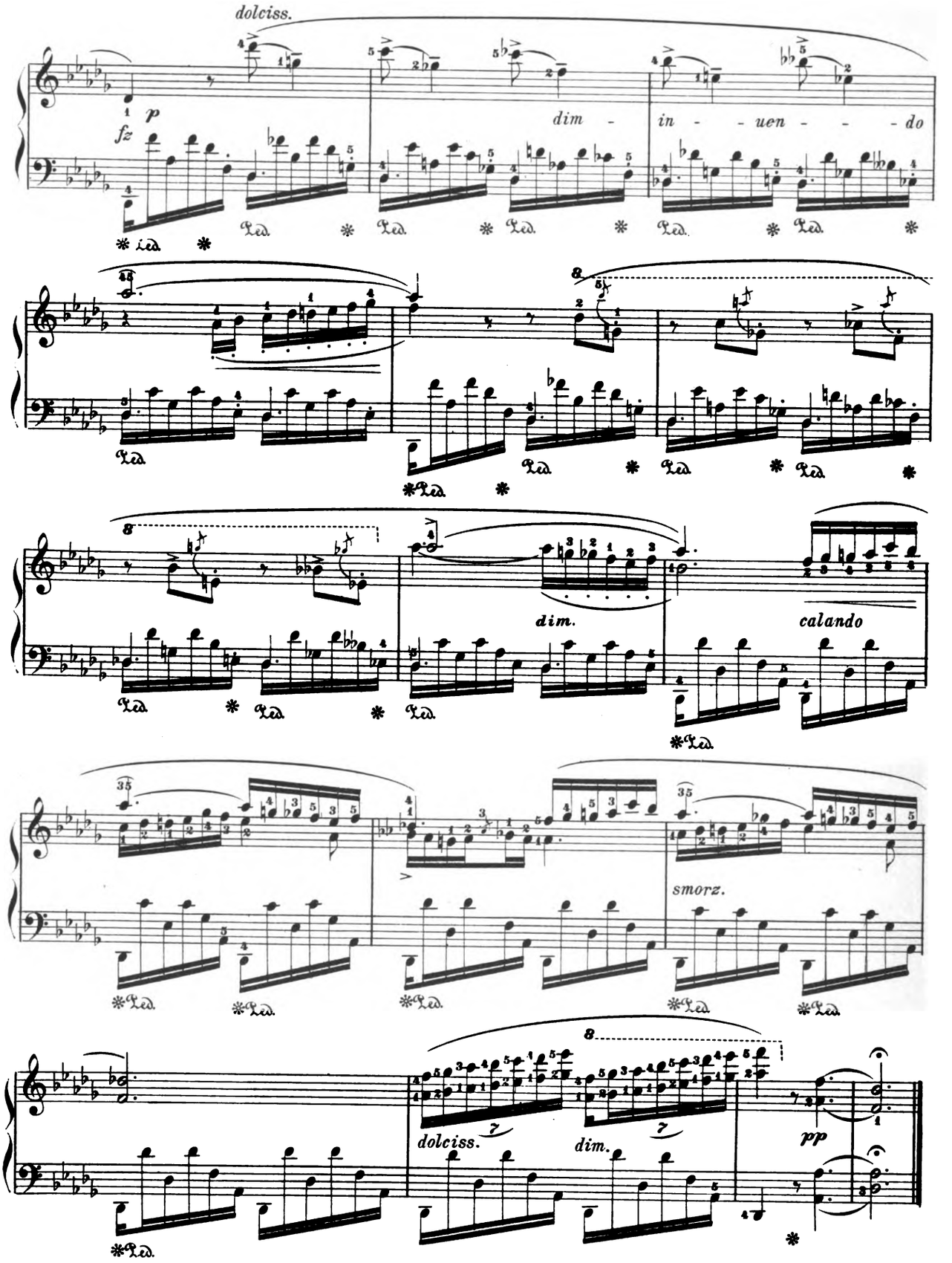












SUMMER.

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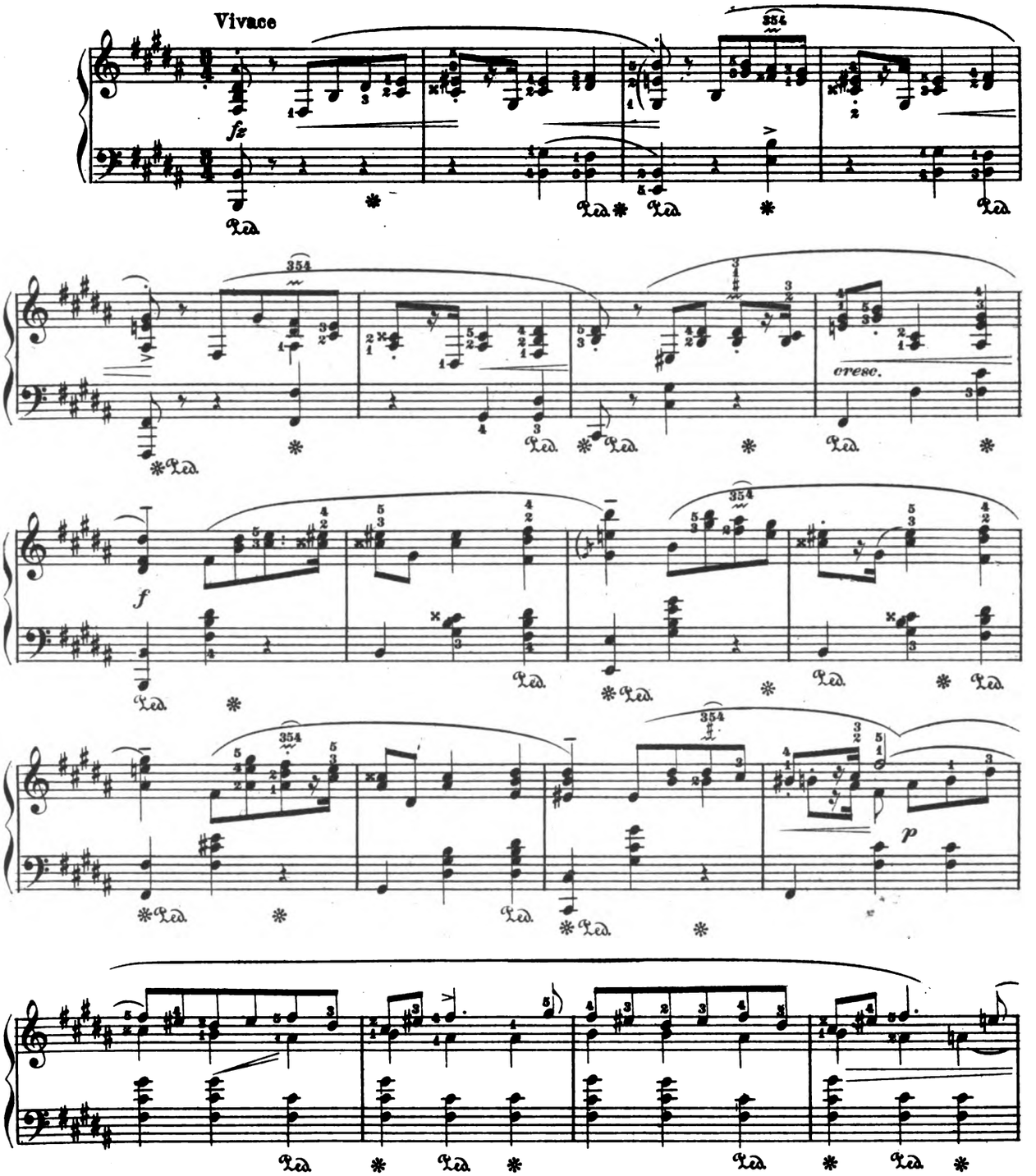
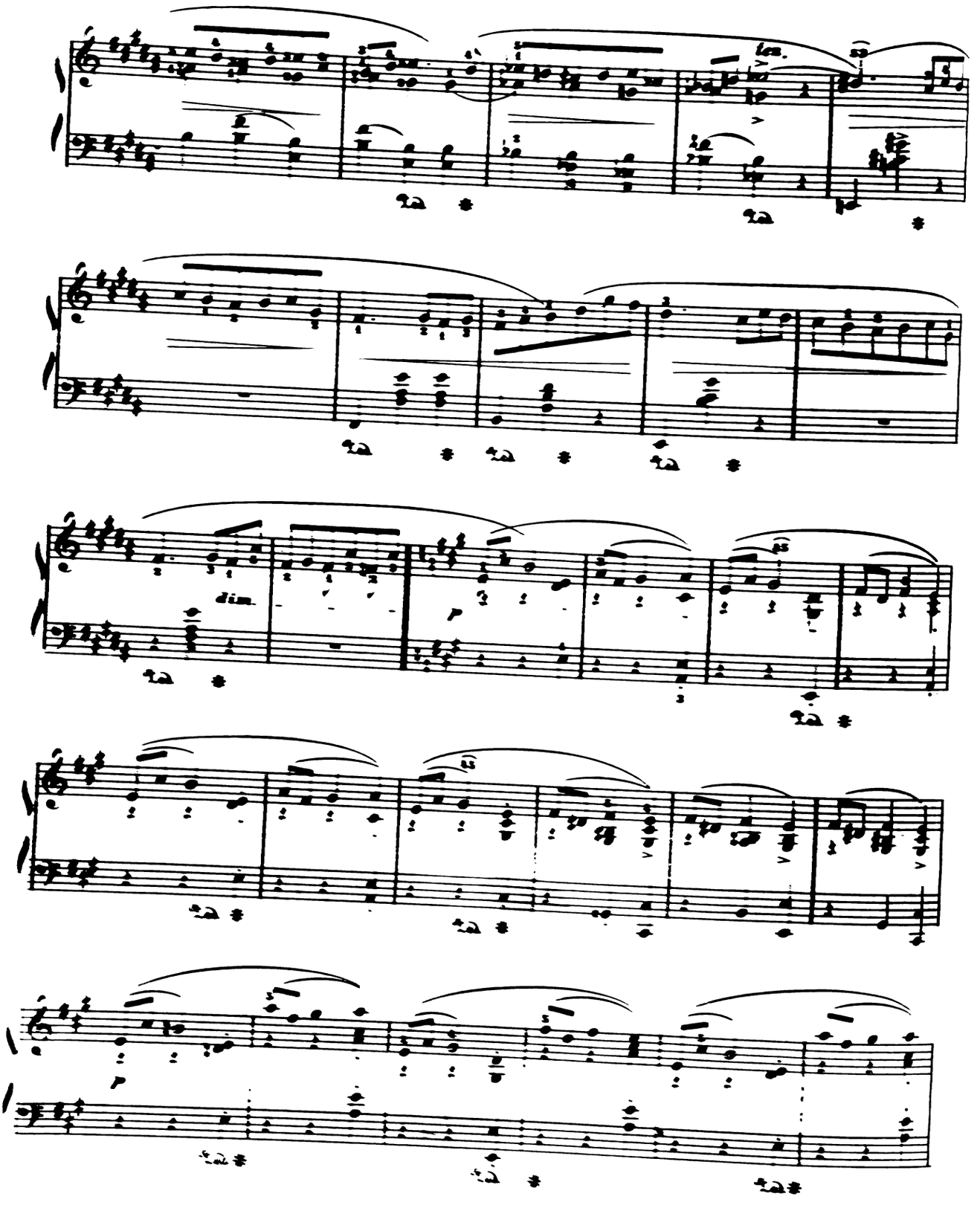
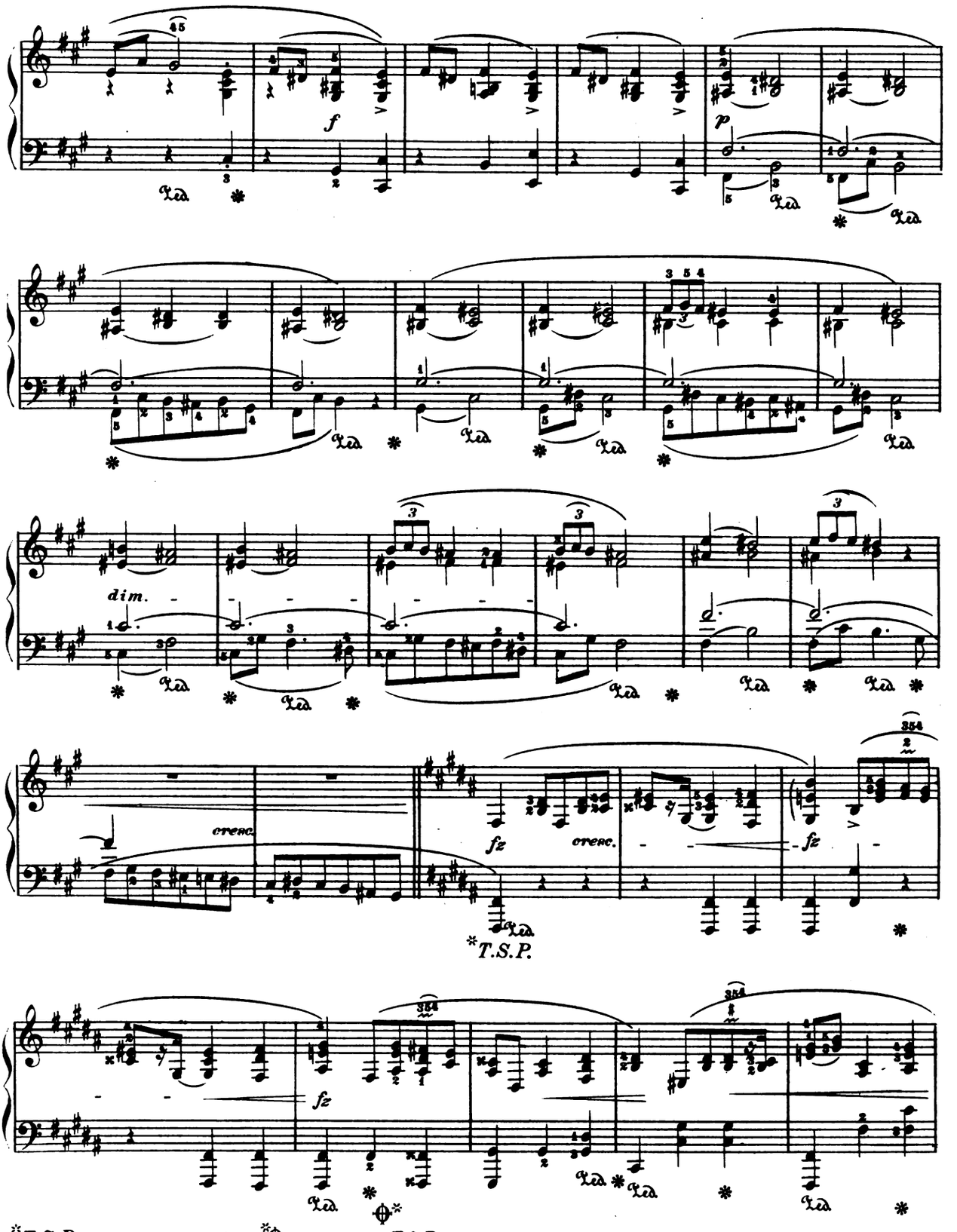
MAZURKA

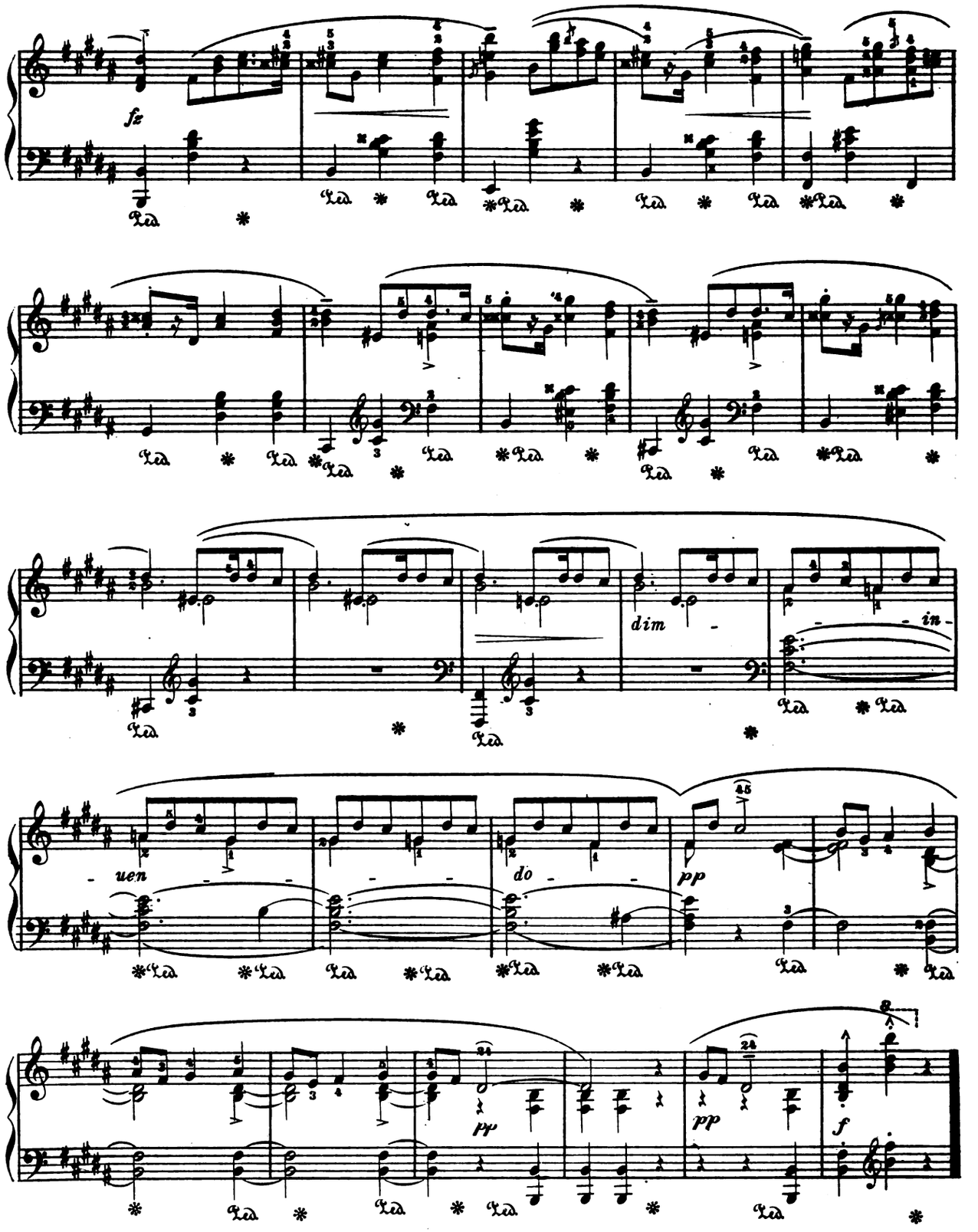
CHOPIN, Op. 63, No. 1





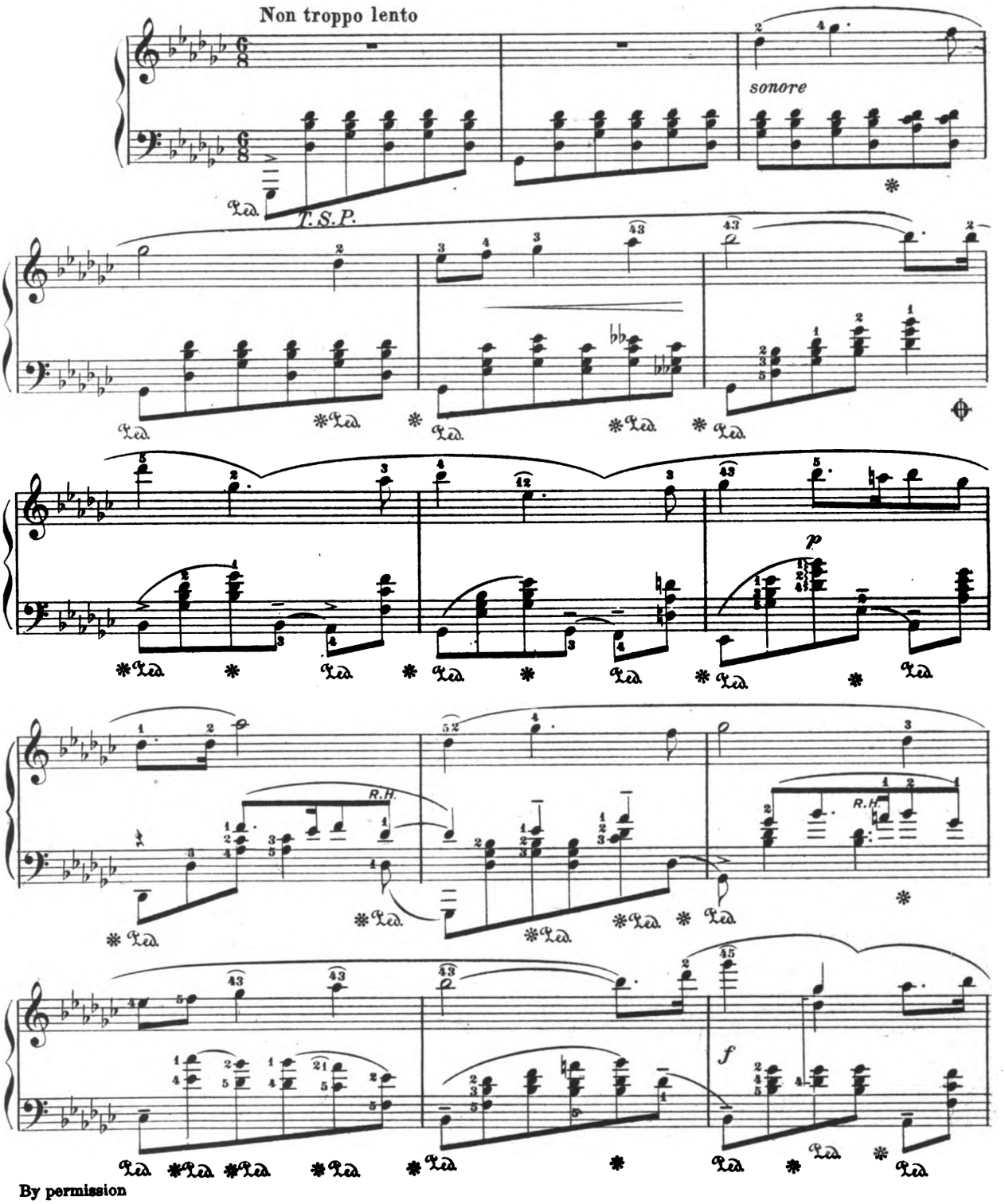


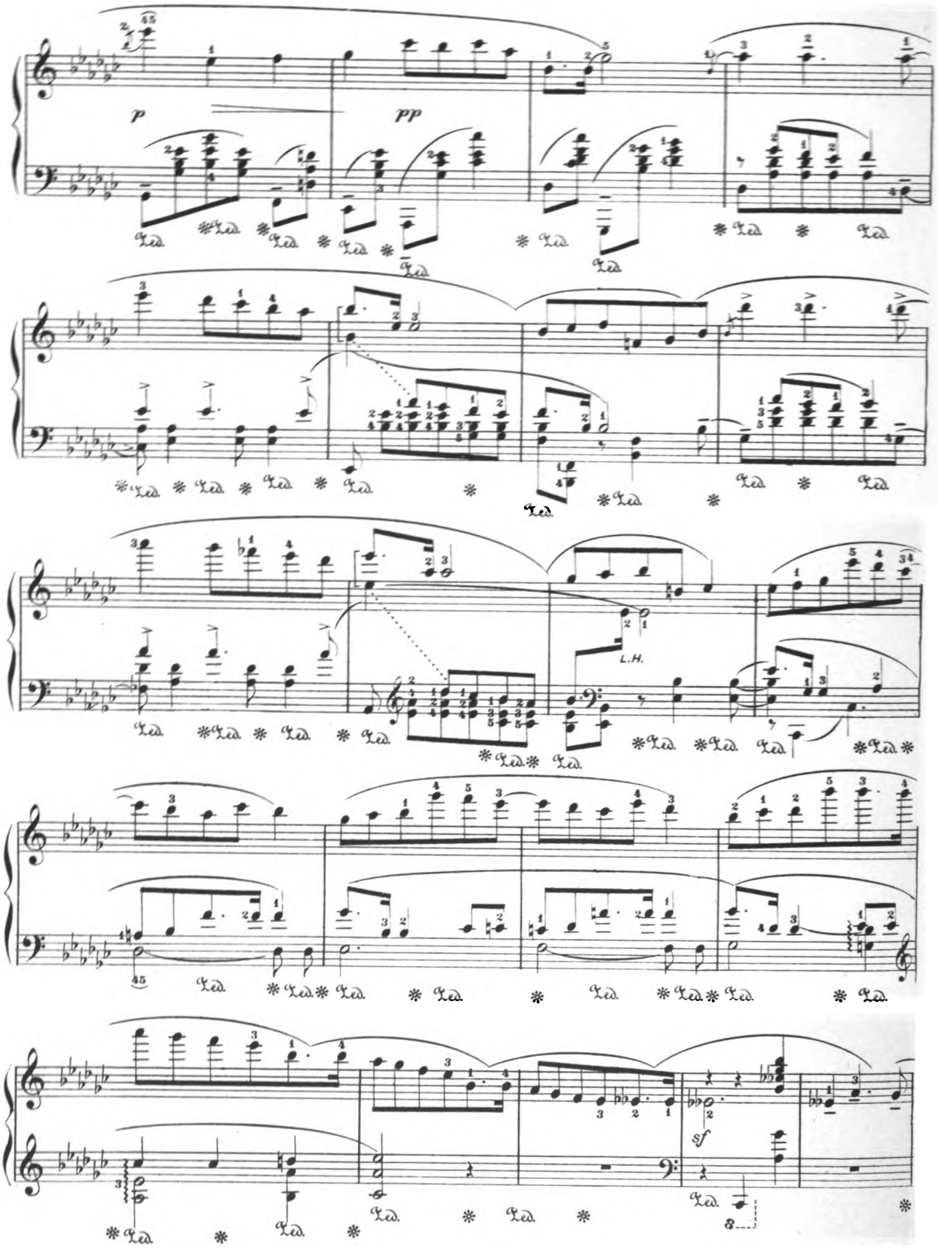
*T.S.P. Tone sustaining Pedal. *⊕ Release from T.S.P.

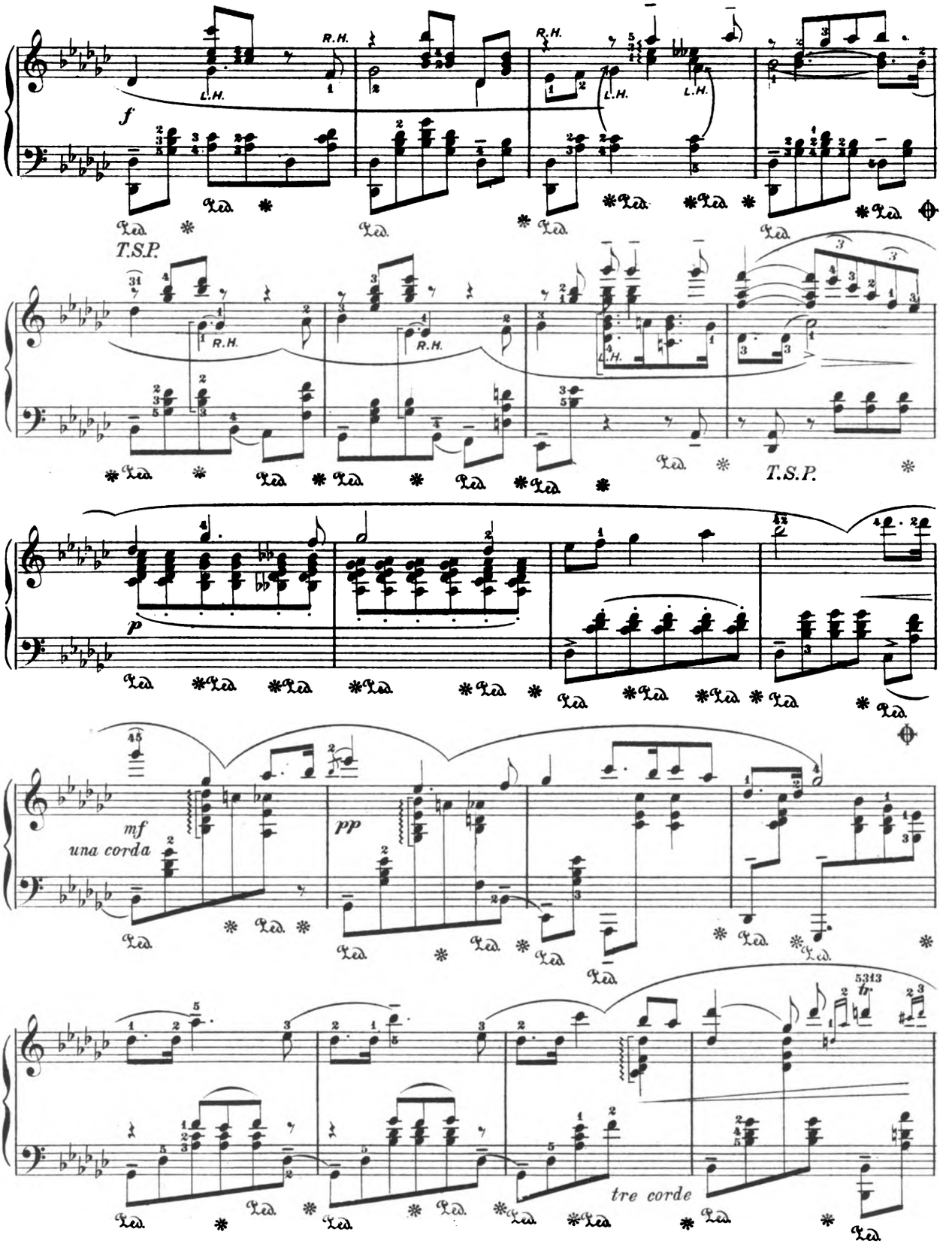


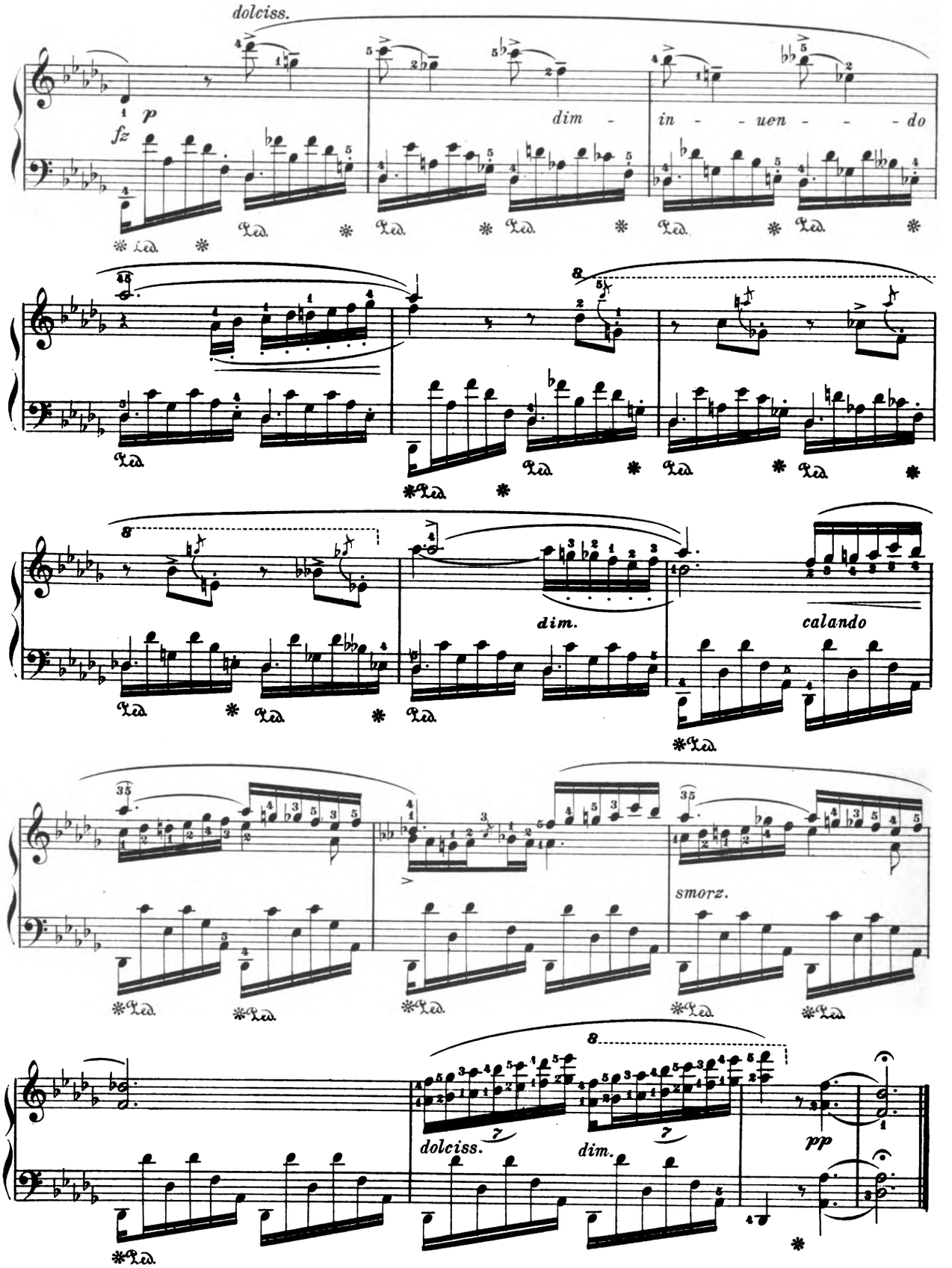
MÉLODIE

PADEREWSKI, Op. 16









SUMMER.

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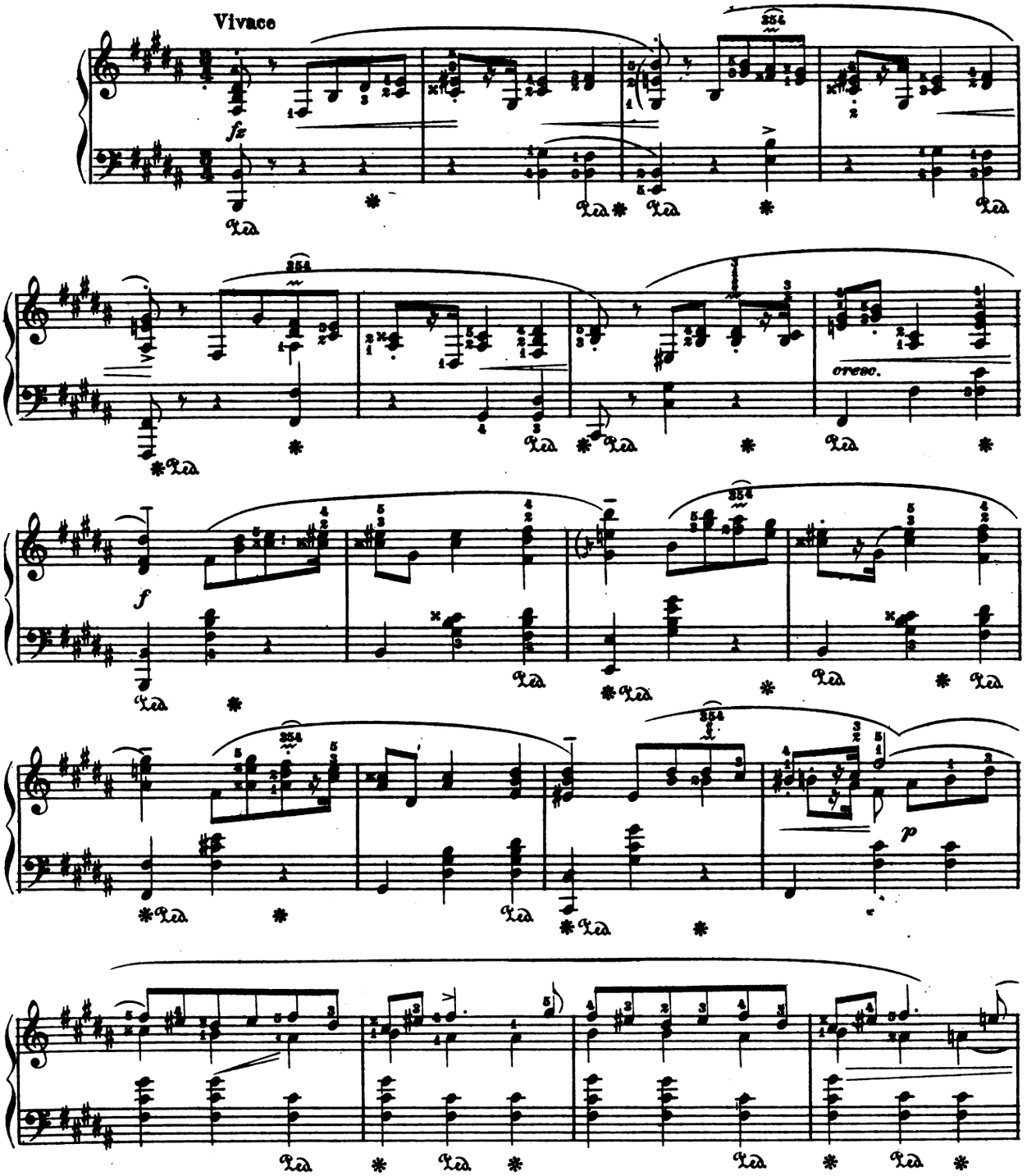
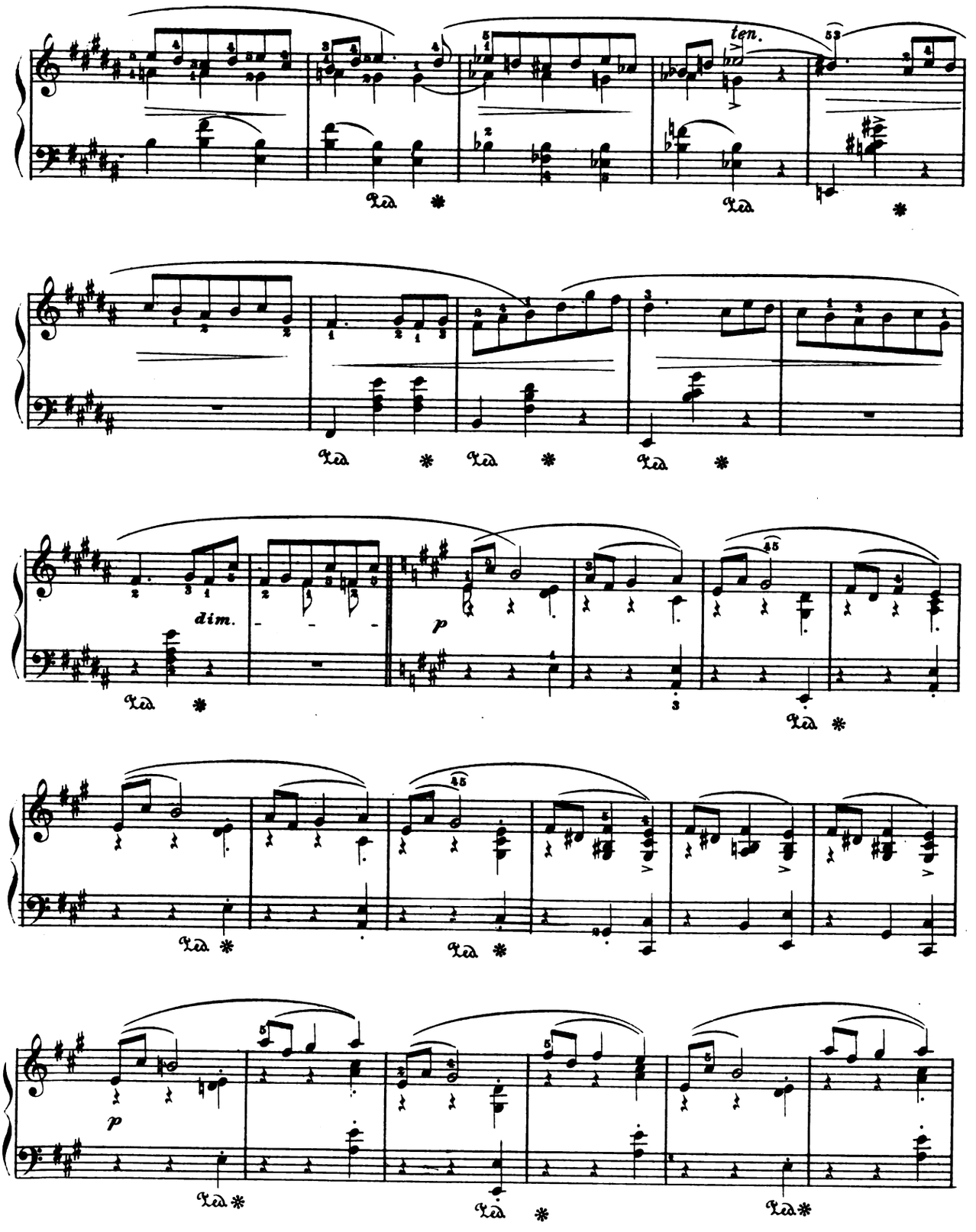
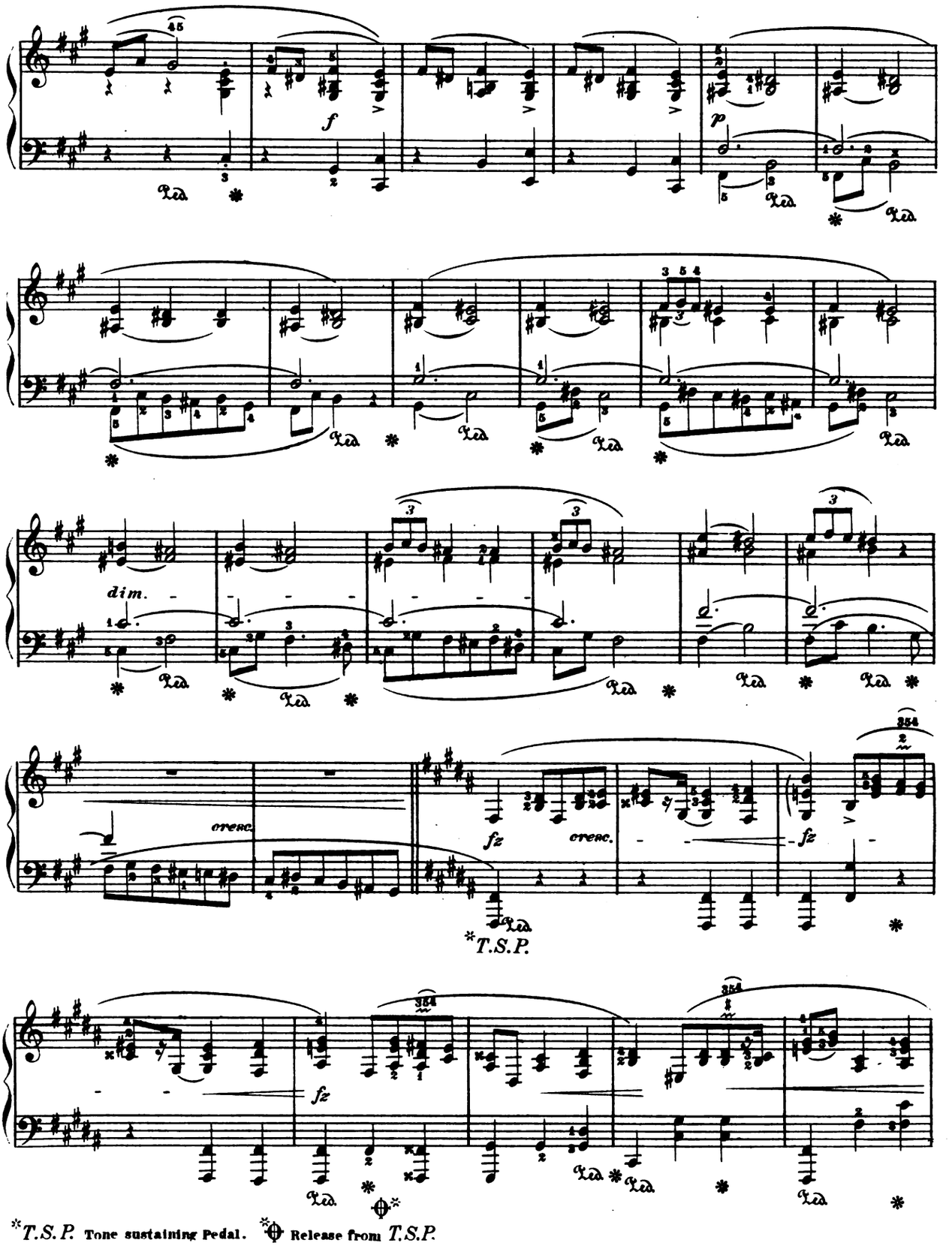
MAZURKA

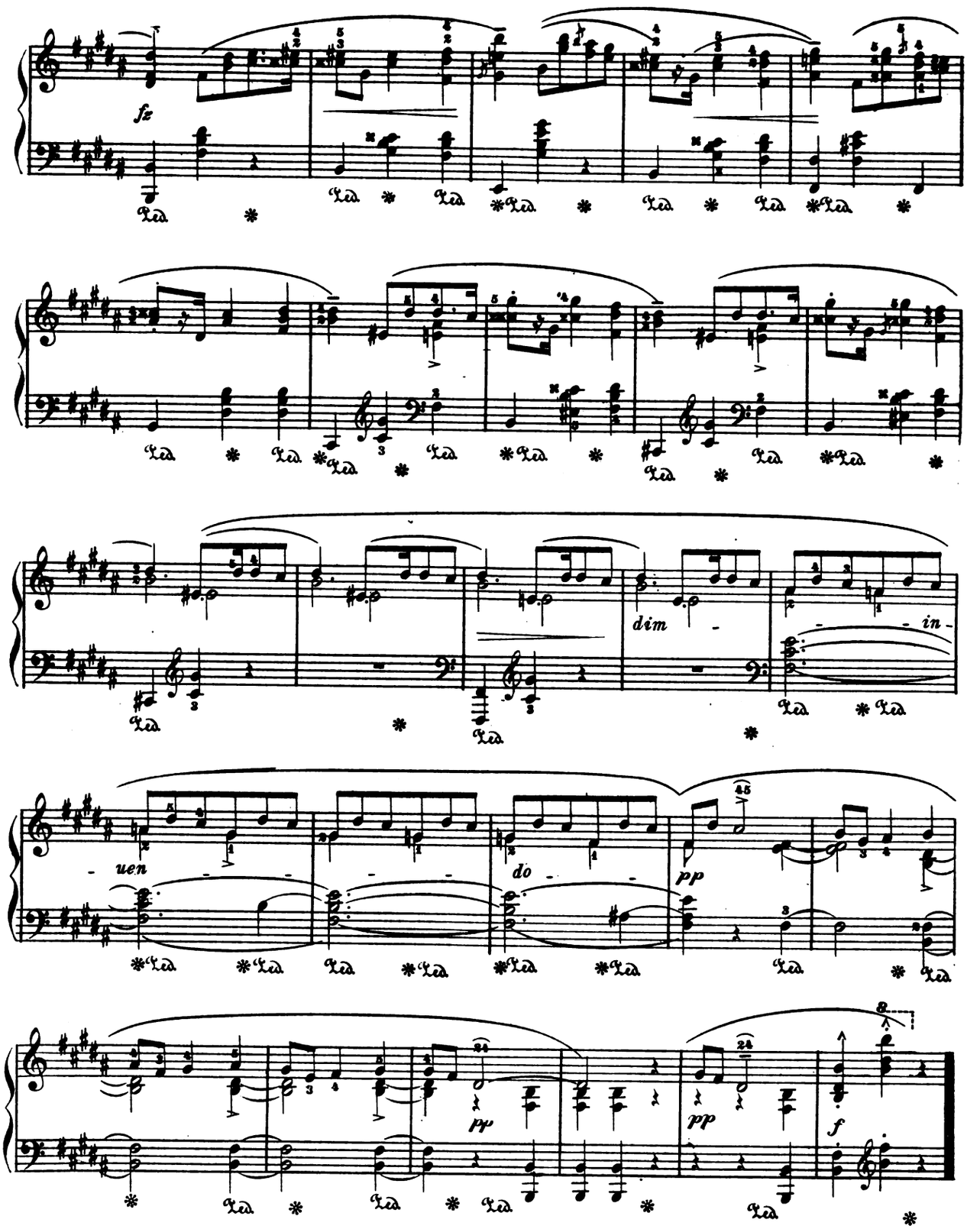
CHOPIN, Op. 63, No. 1





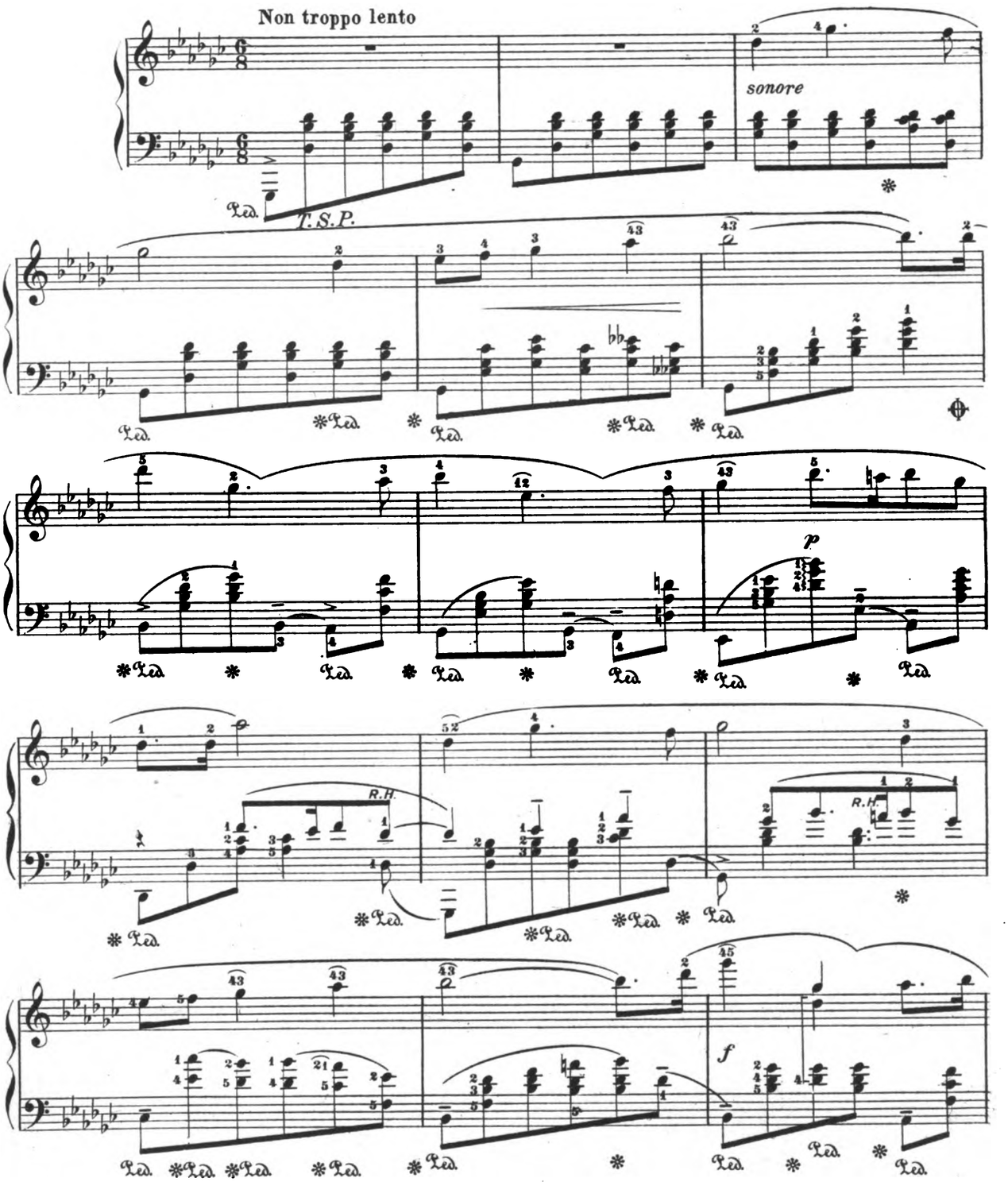


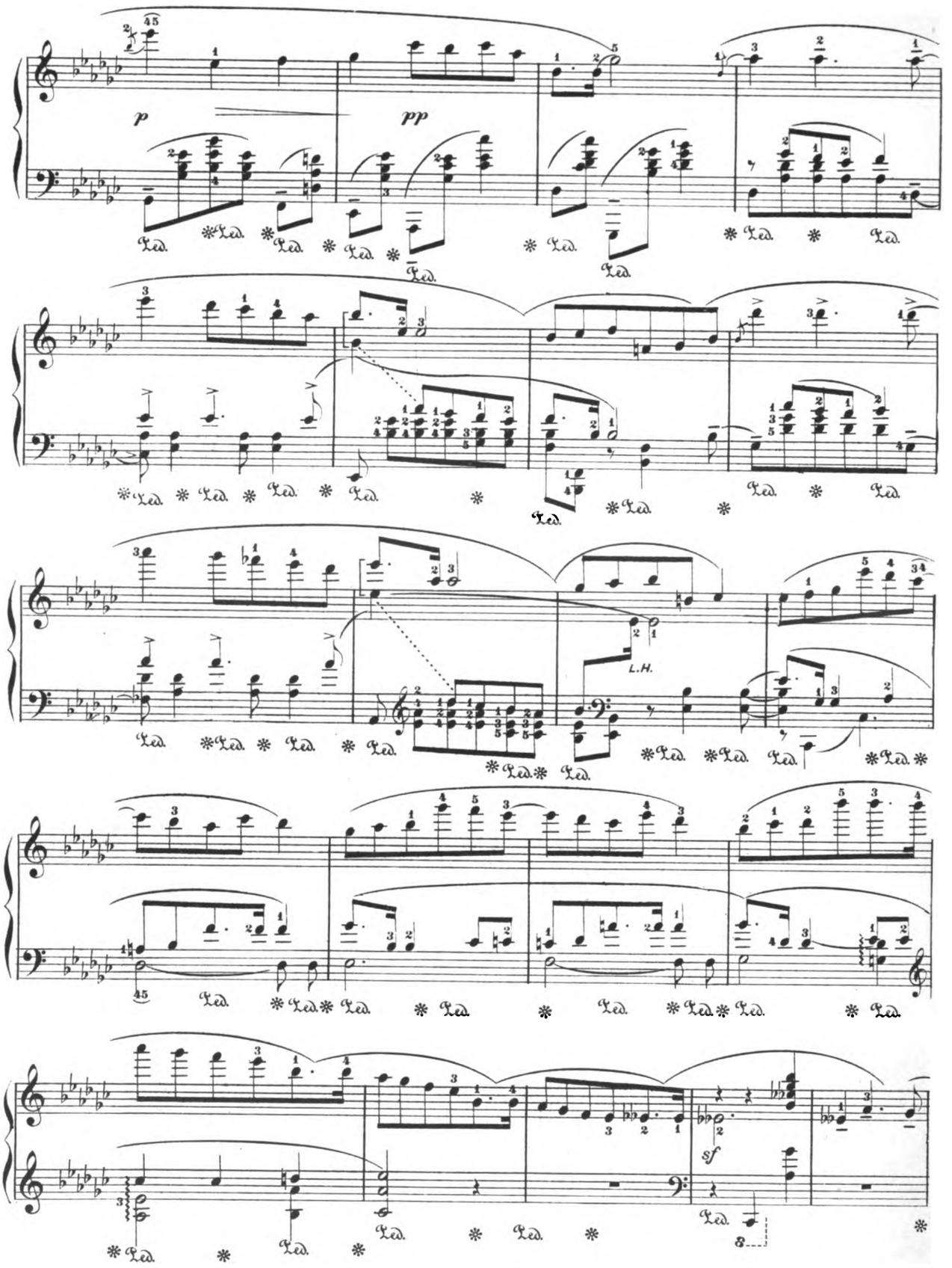
*T.S.P. Tone sustaining Pedal. ✲ Release from T.S.P.

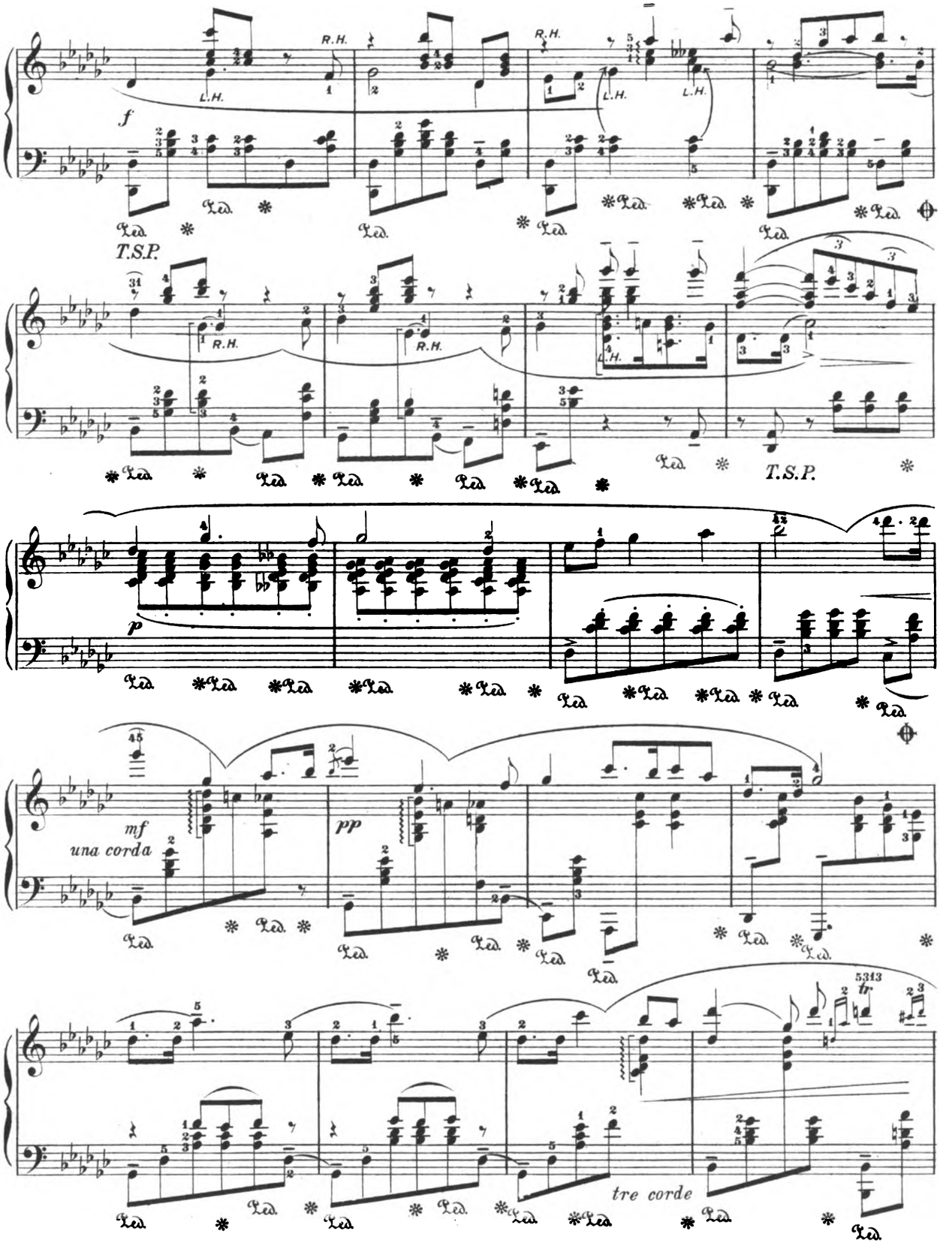


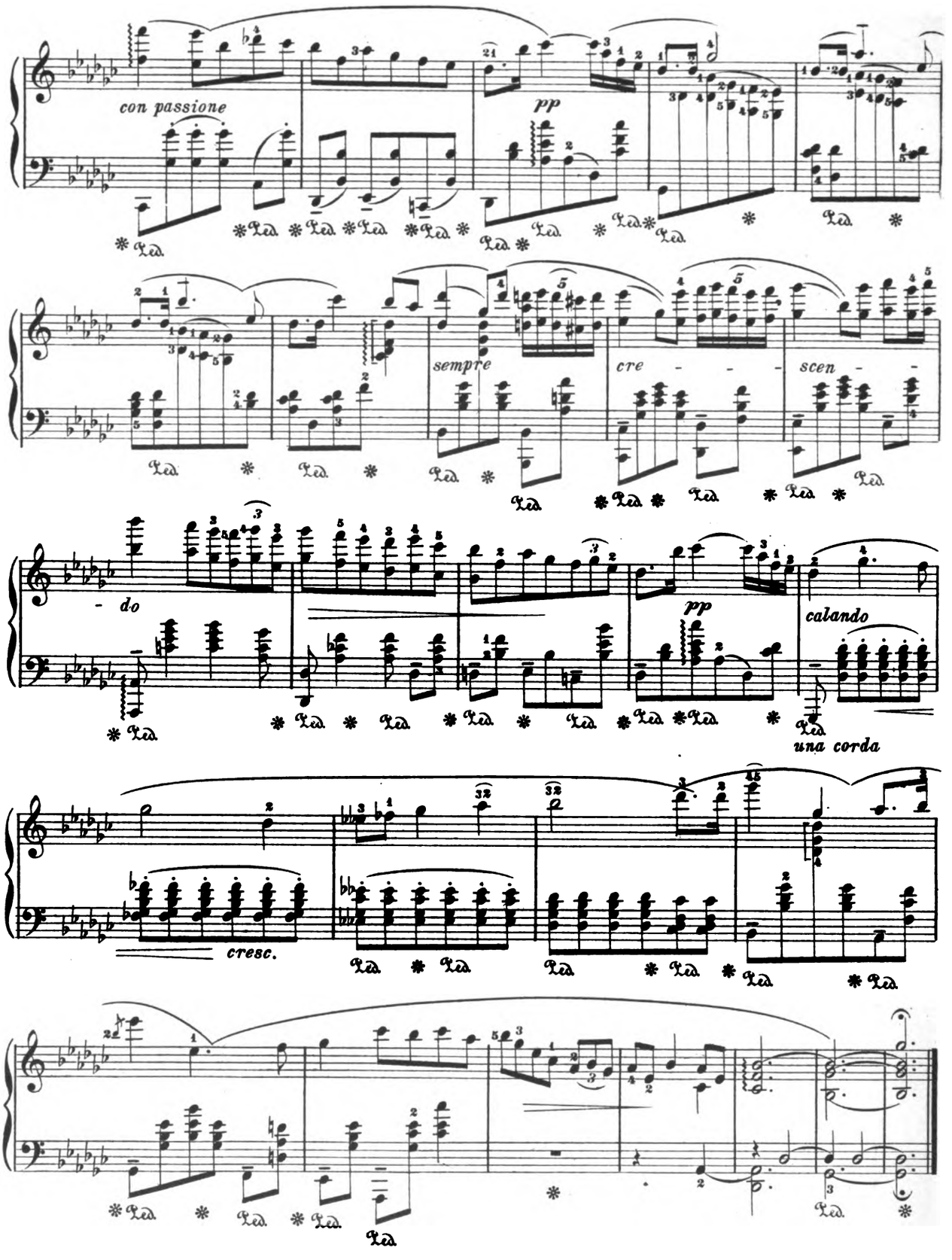
MÉLODIE

PADEREWSKI, Op. 16









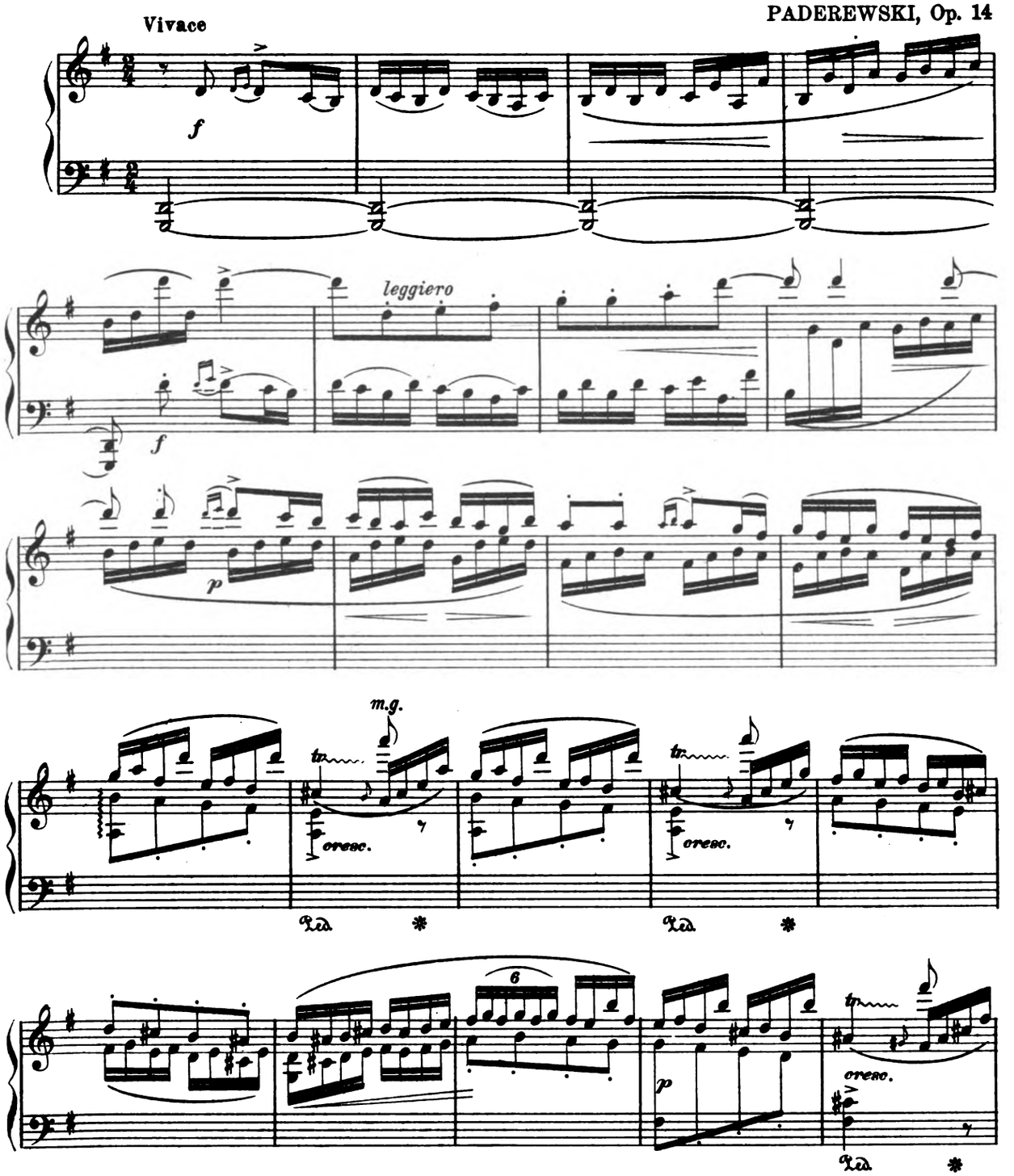
BY PERMISSION OF BOUSSOD VALADON & CO.

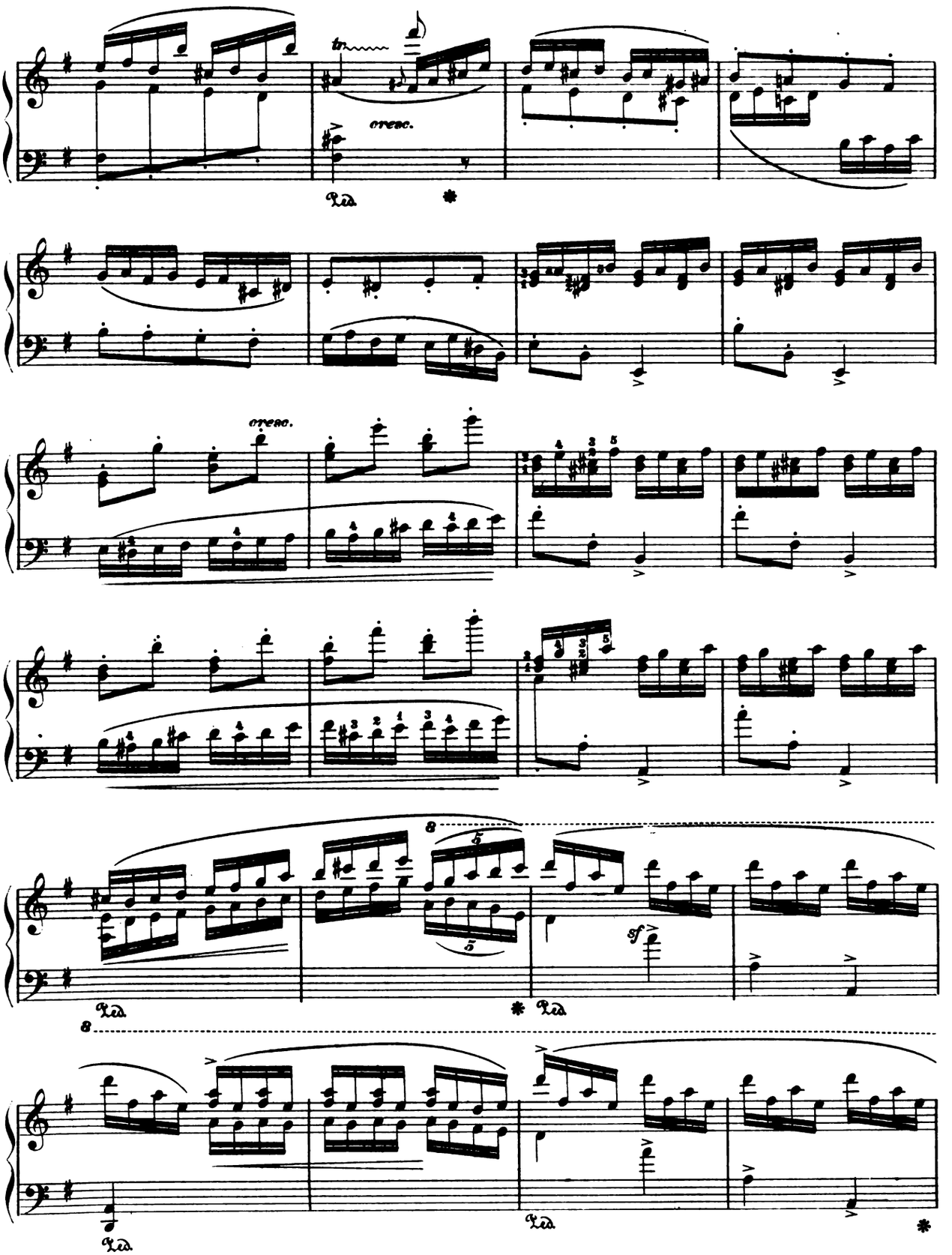
"AS THEY DANCED THEM A MEASURE ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT."

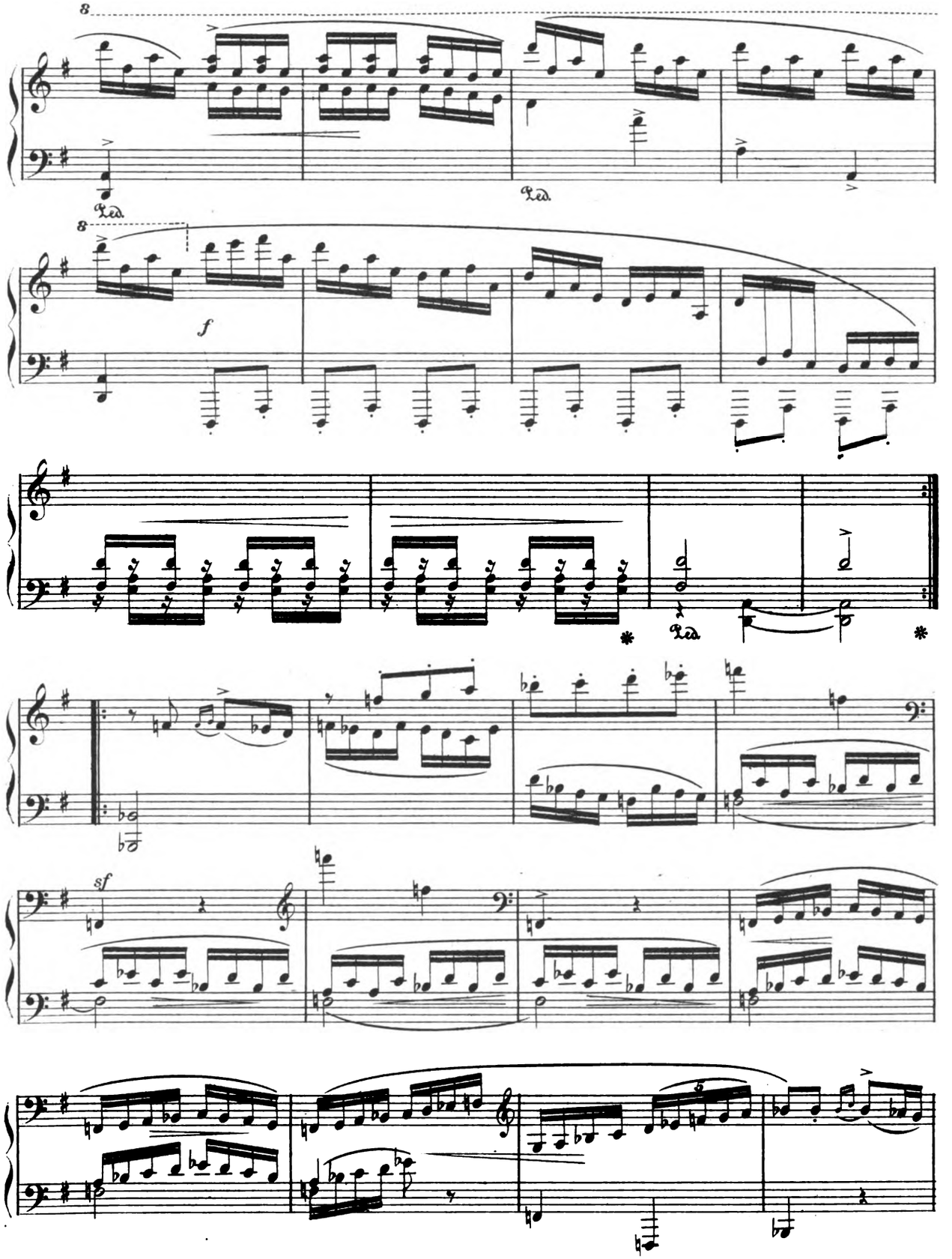
FROM A PAINTING BY TOUDOUZE.

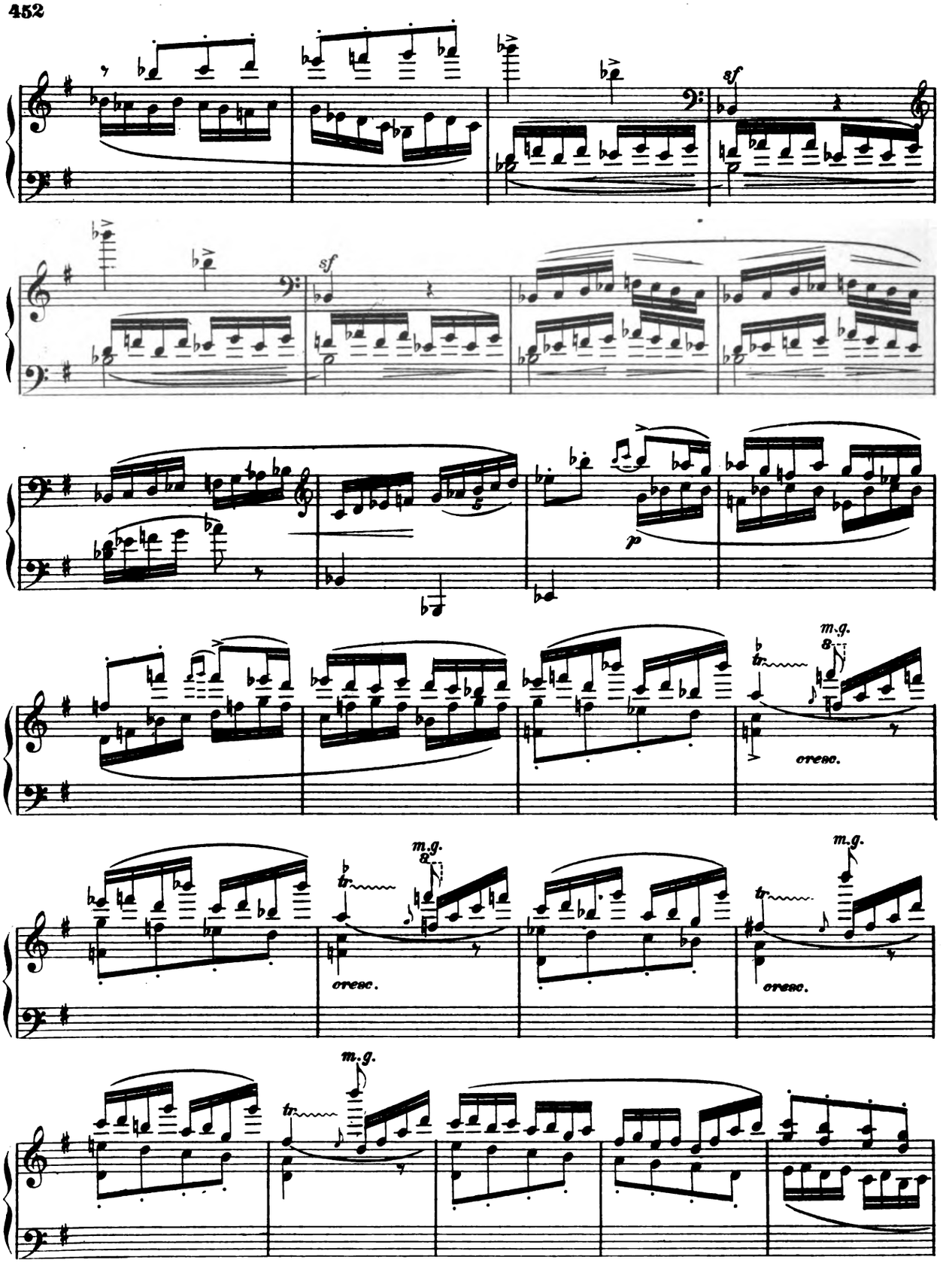
CAPRICE A LA SCARLATTI

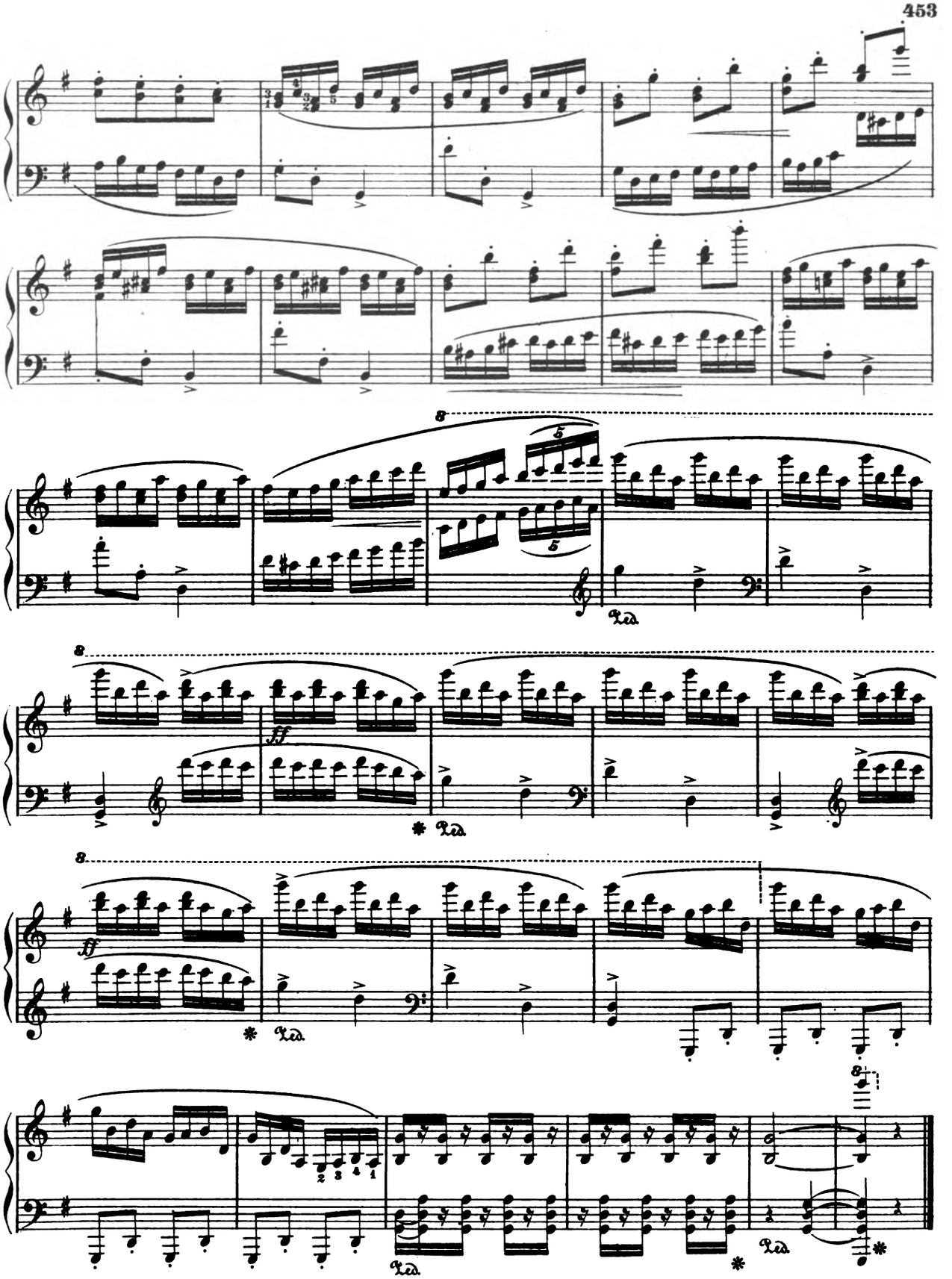
PADEREWSKI, Op. 14







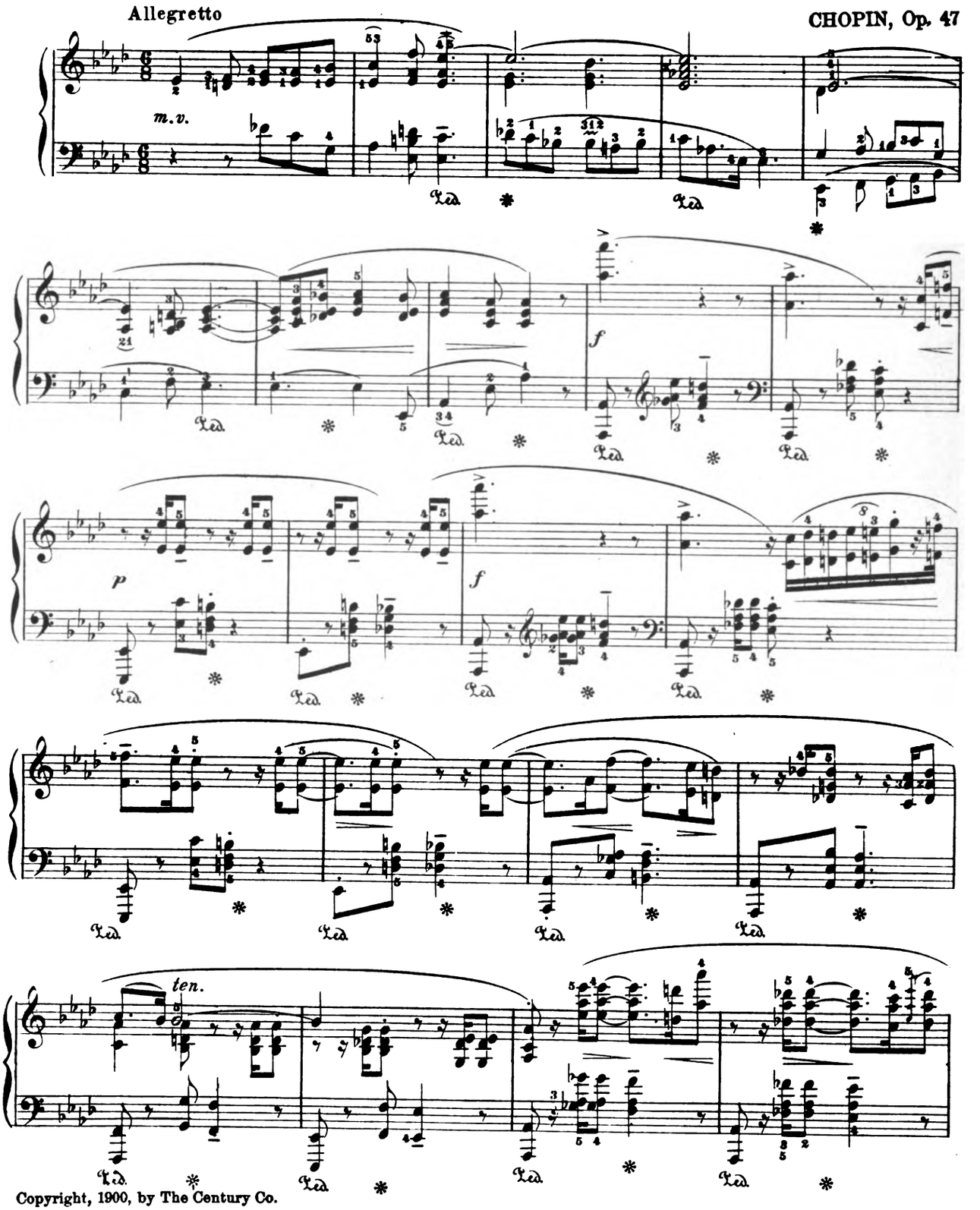


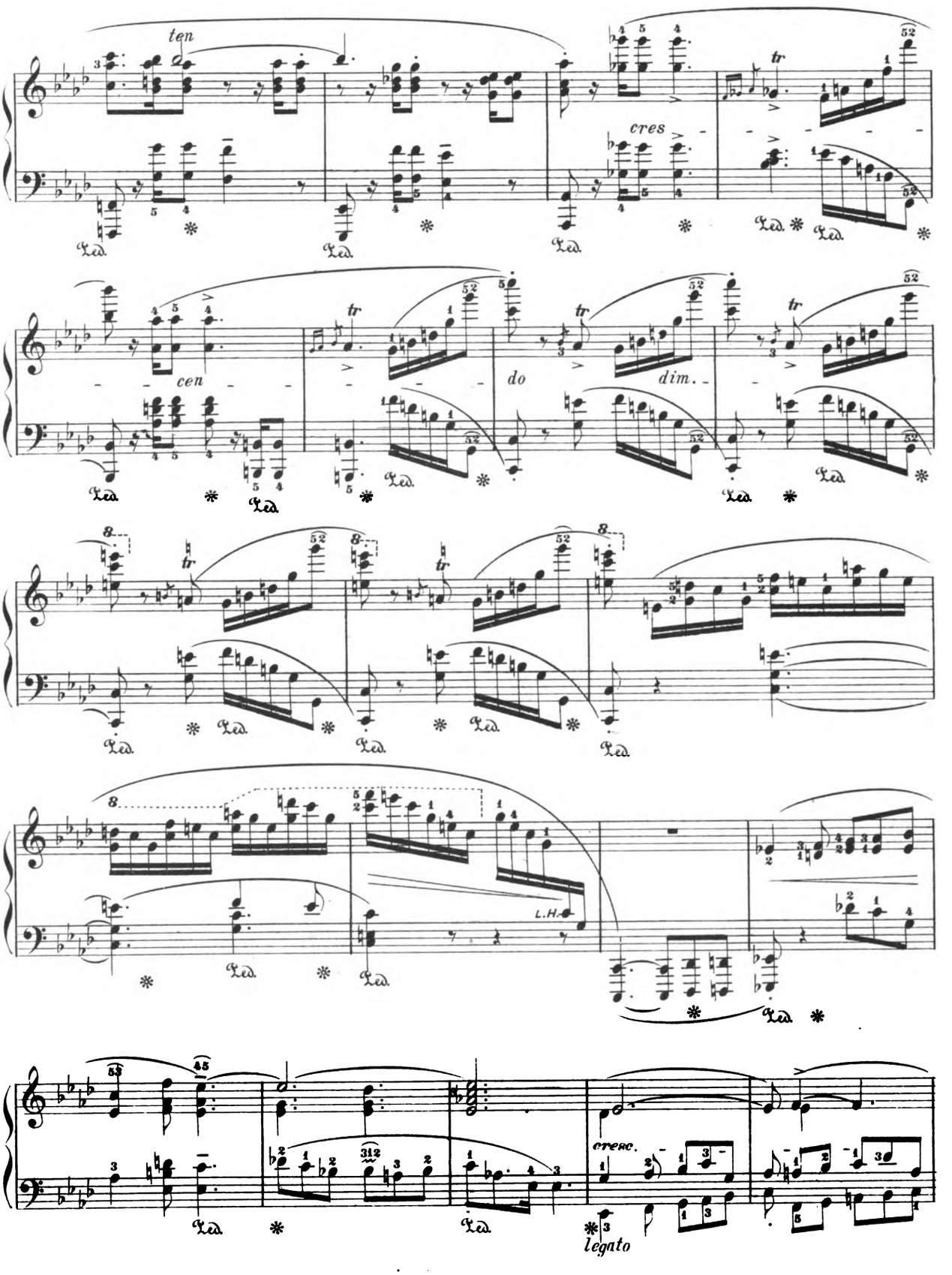


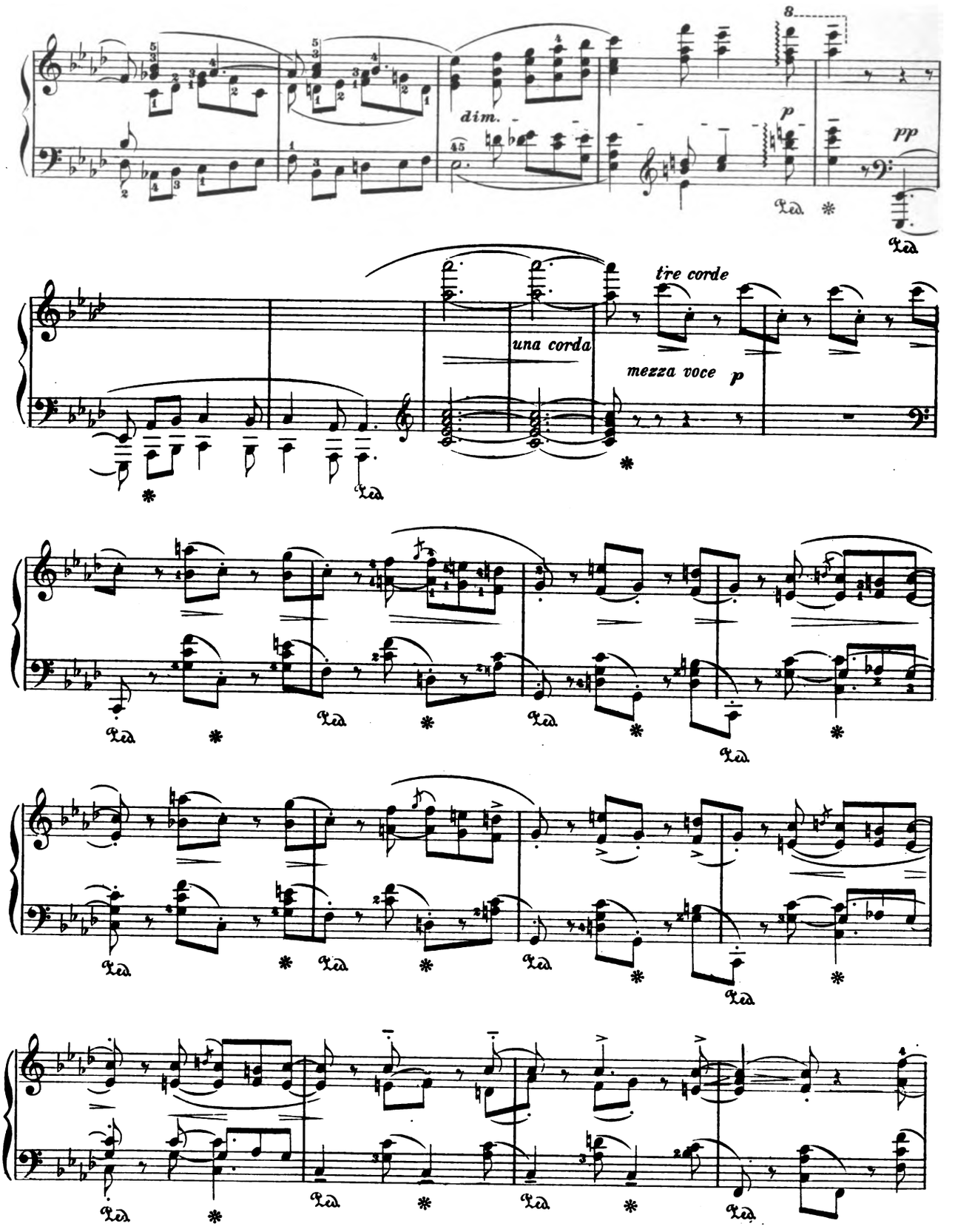
BALLADE

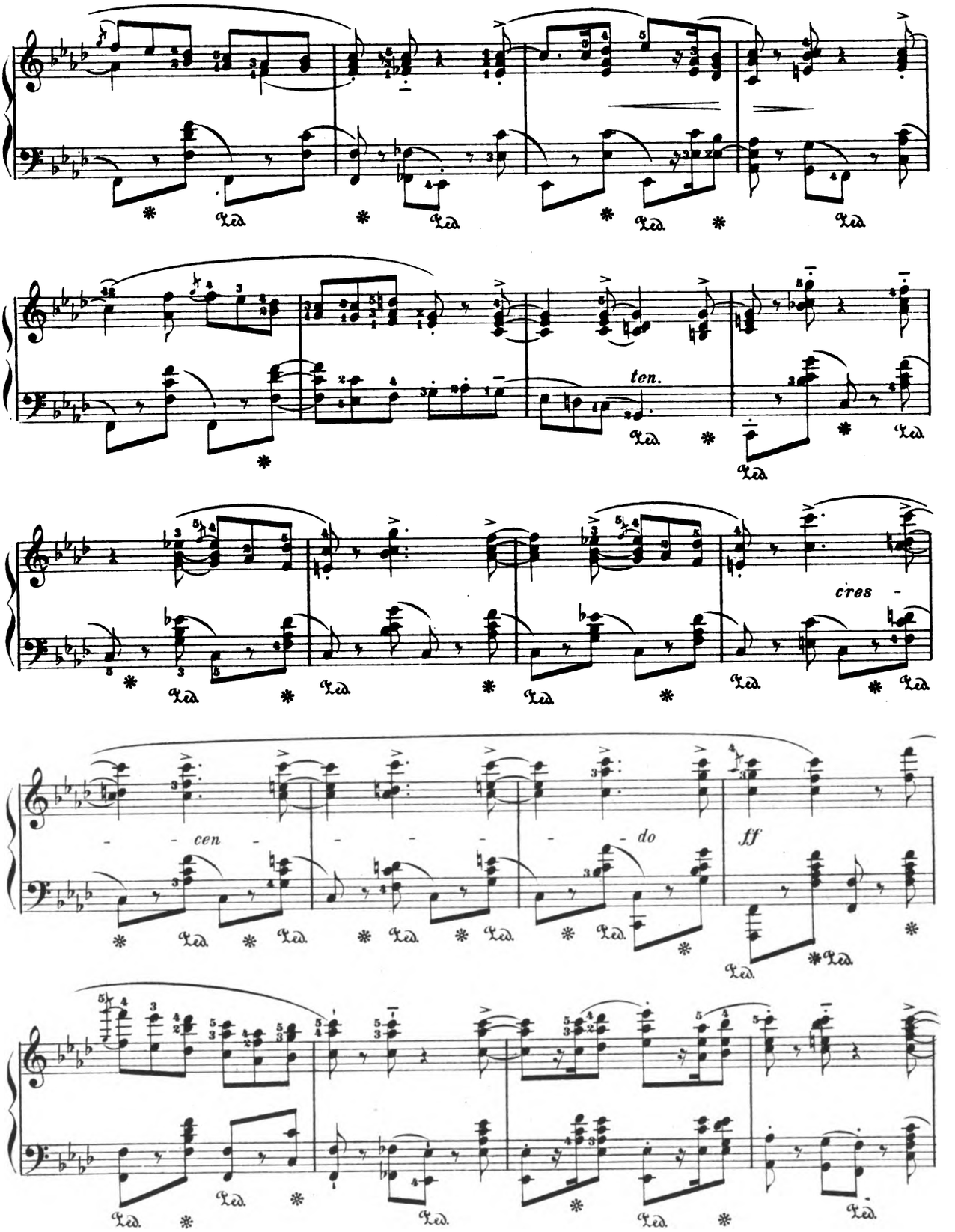
Allegretto

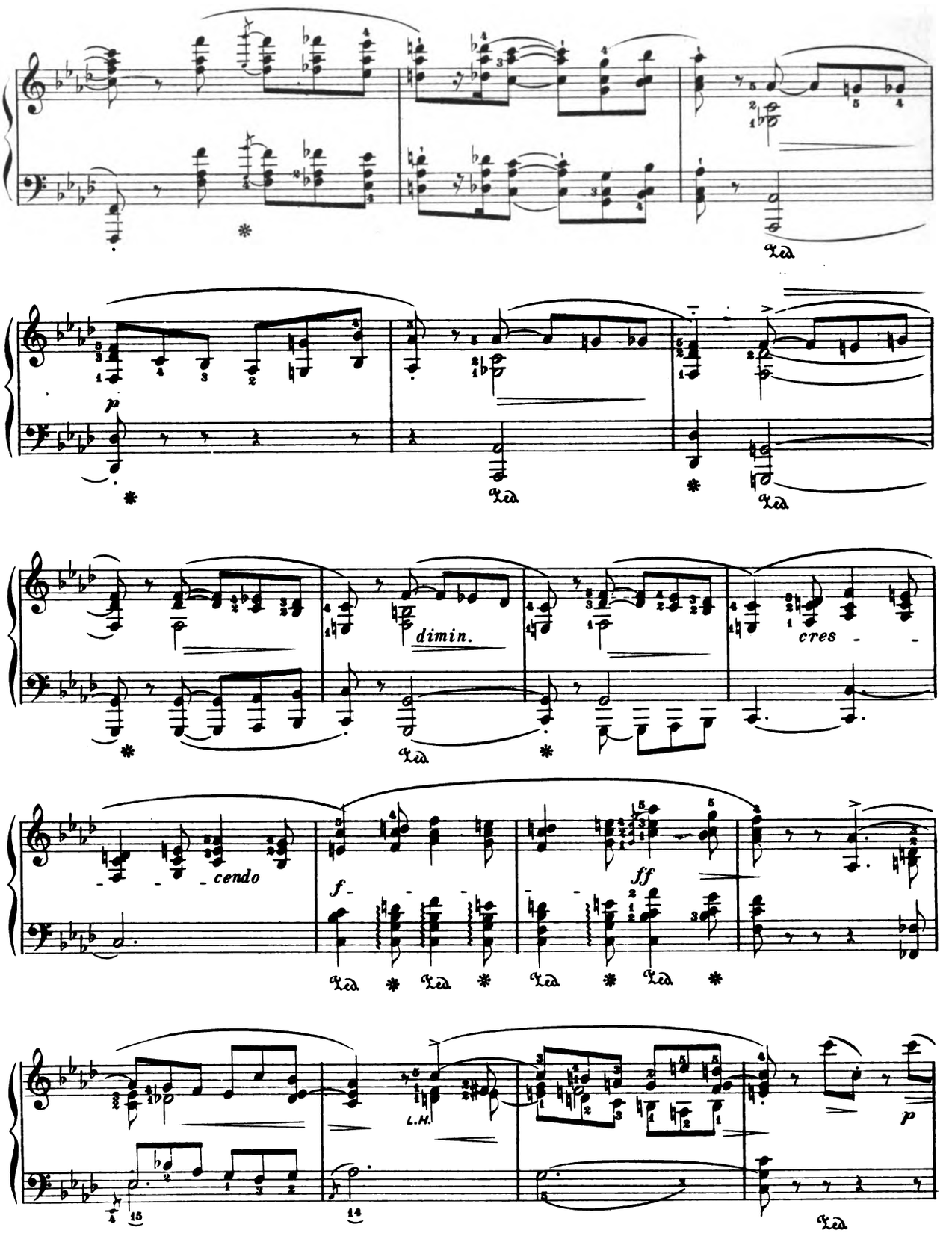
CHOPIN, Op. 47

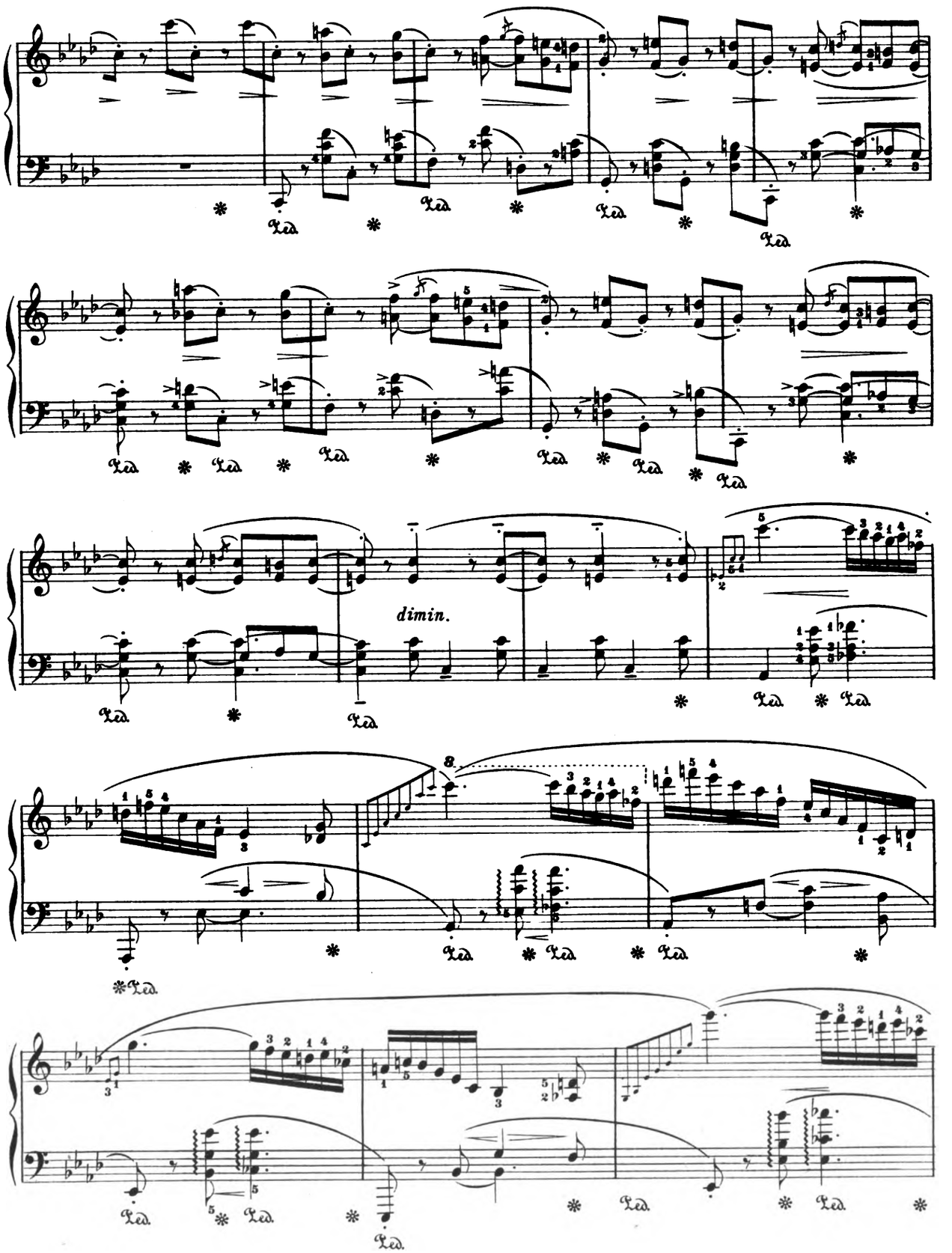


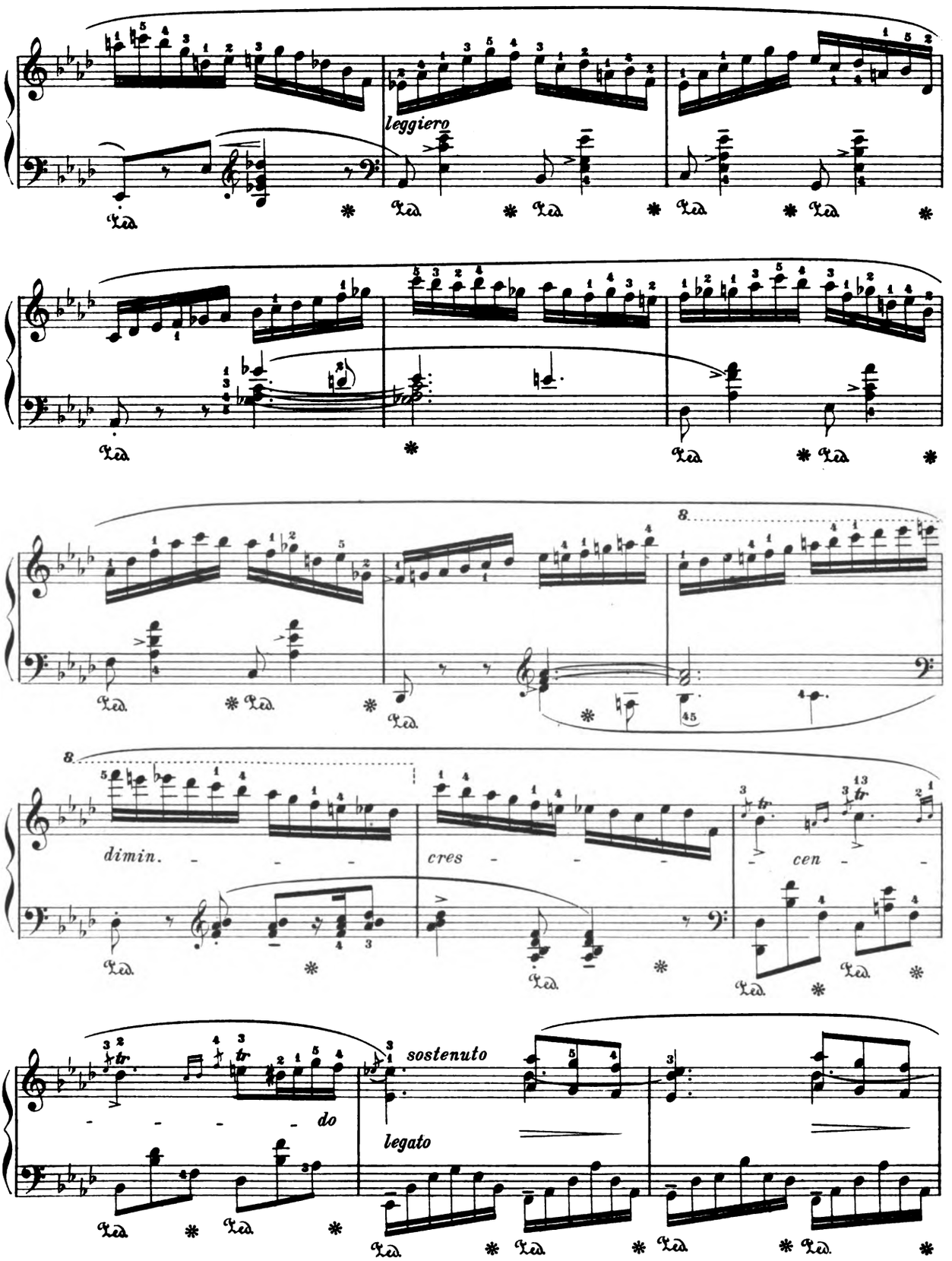


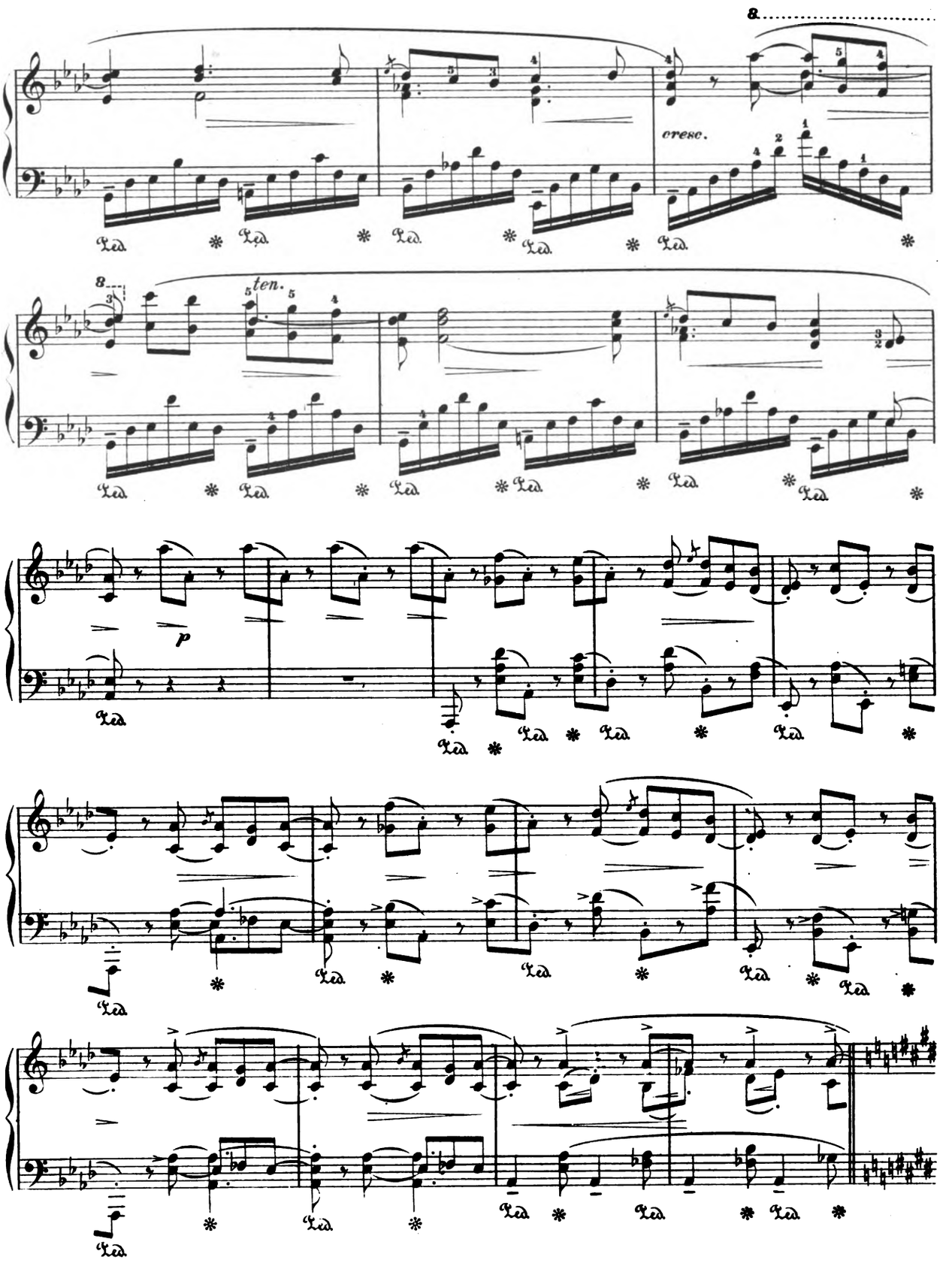


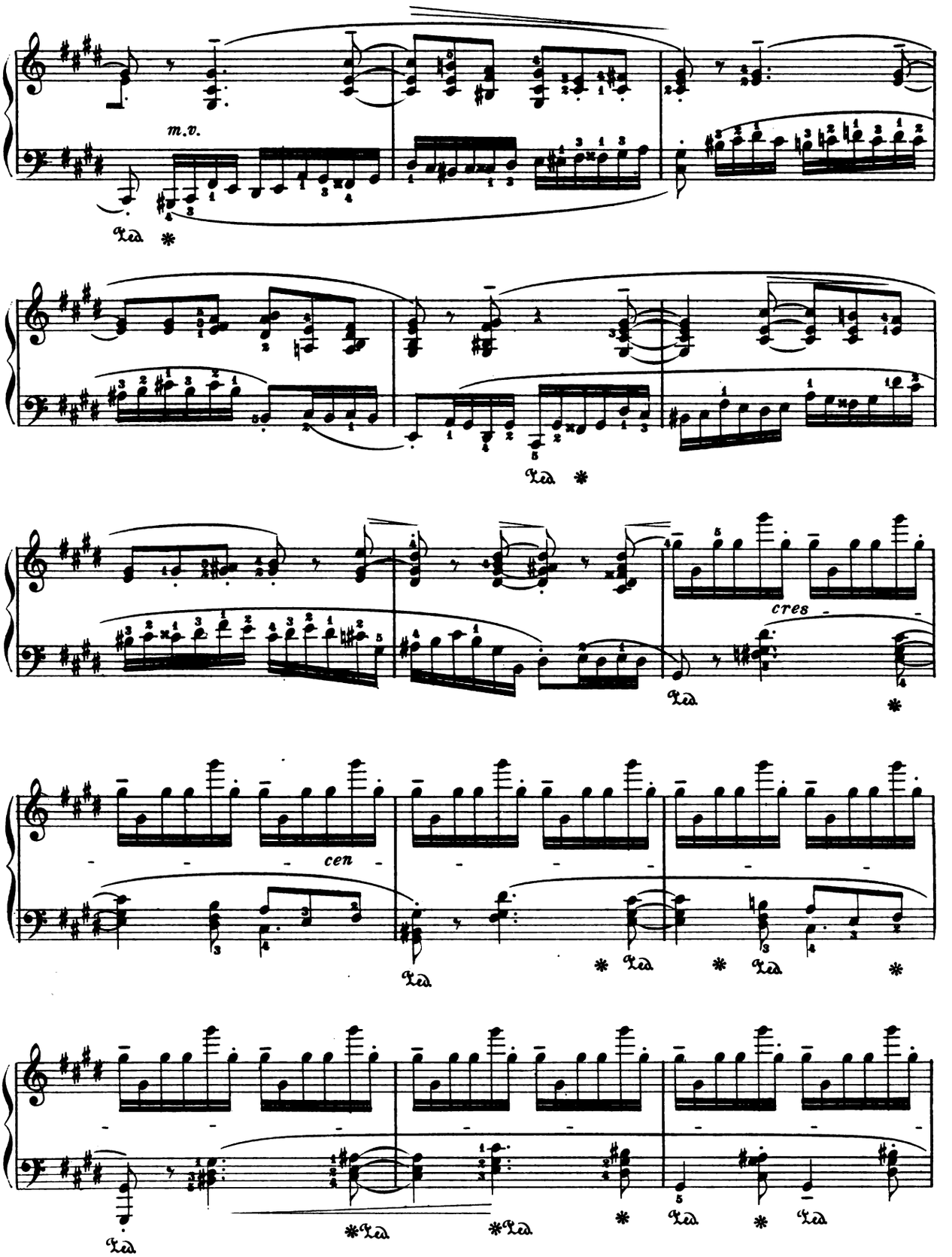


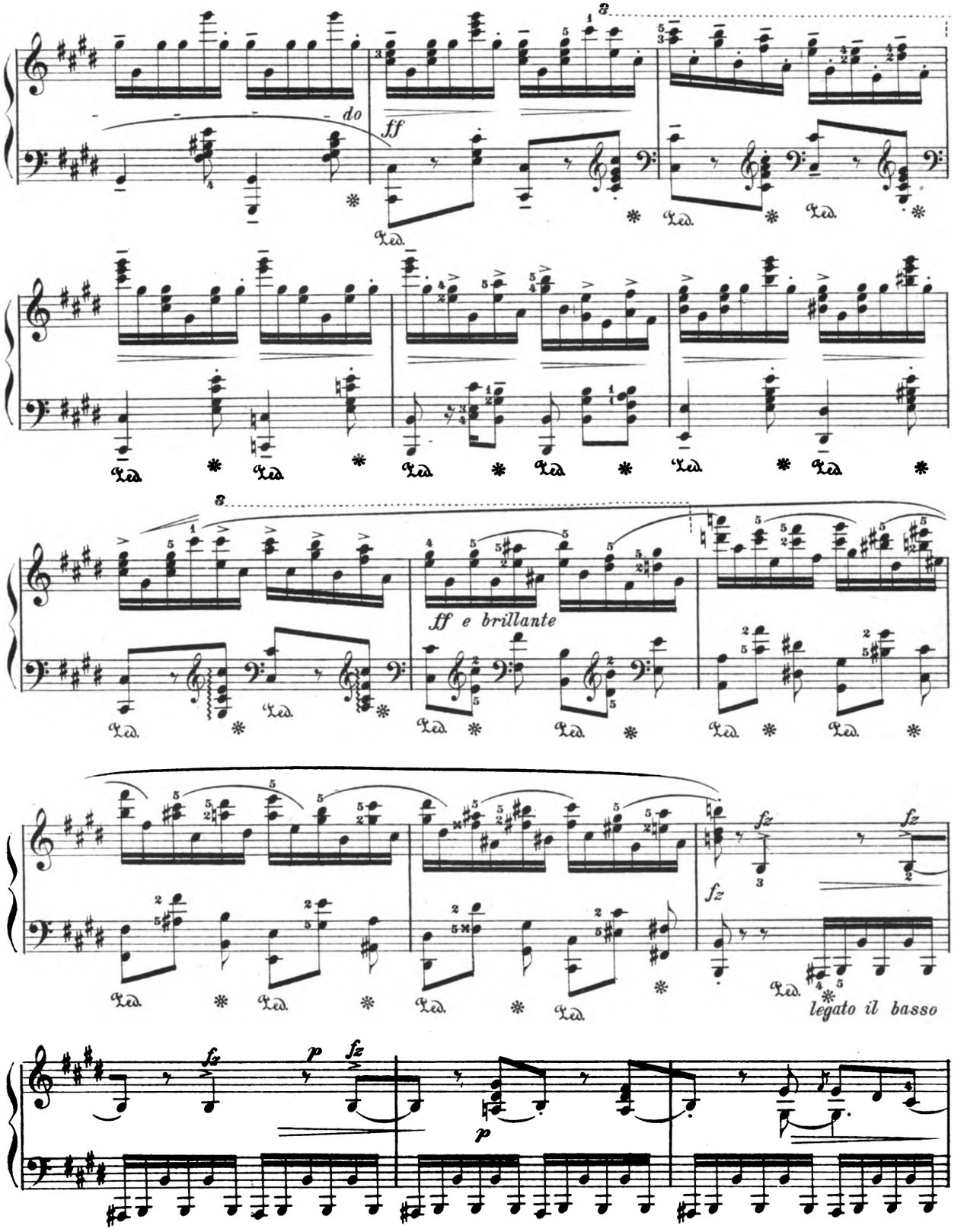


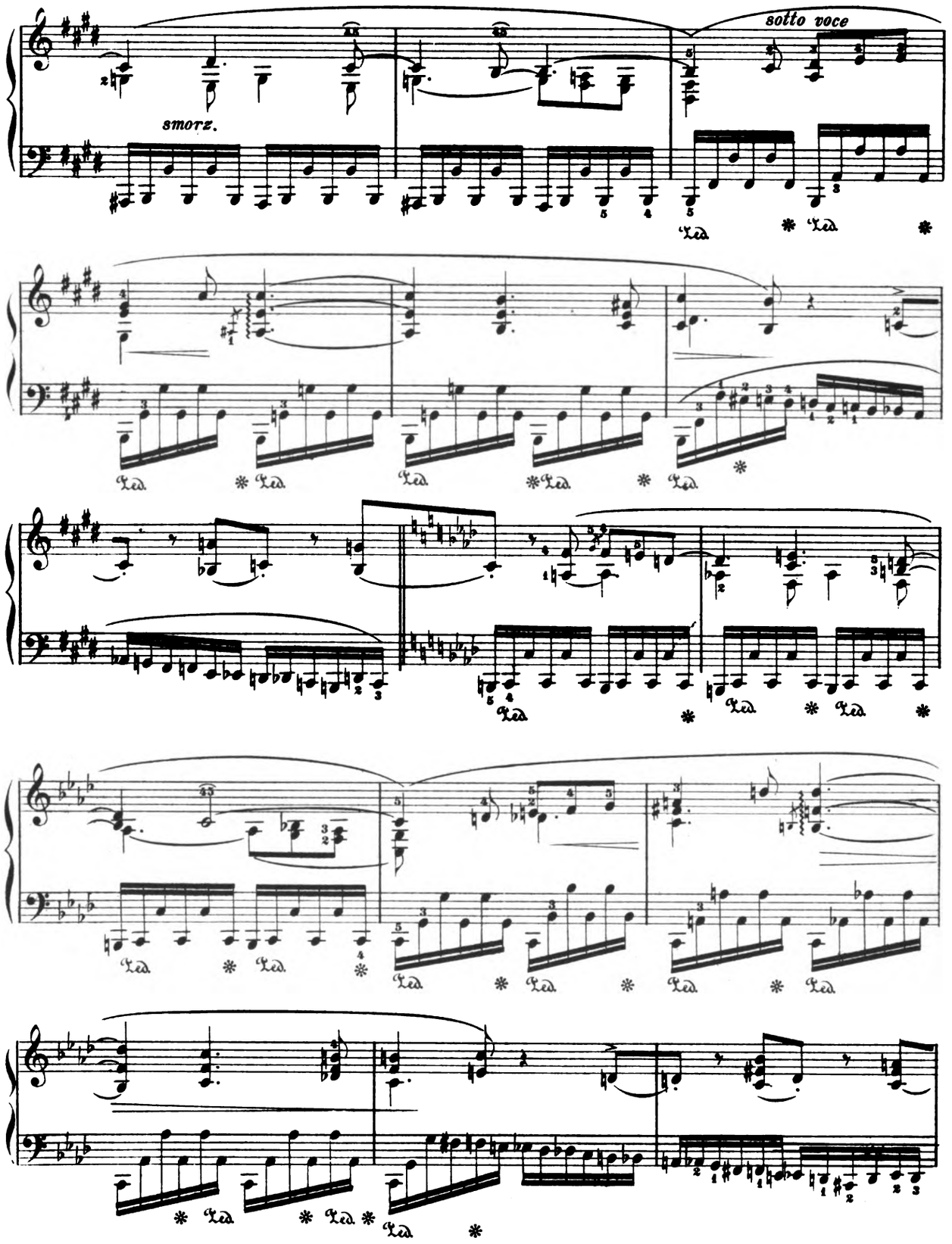


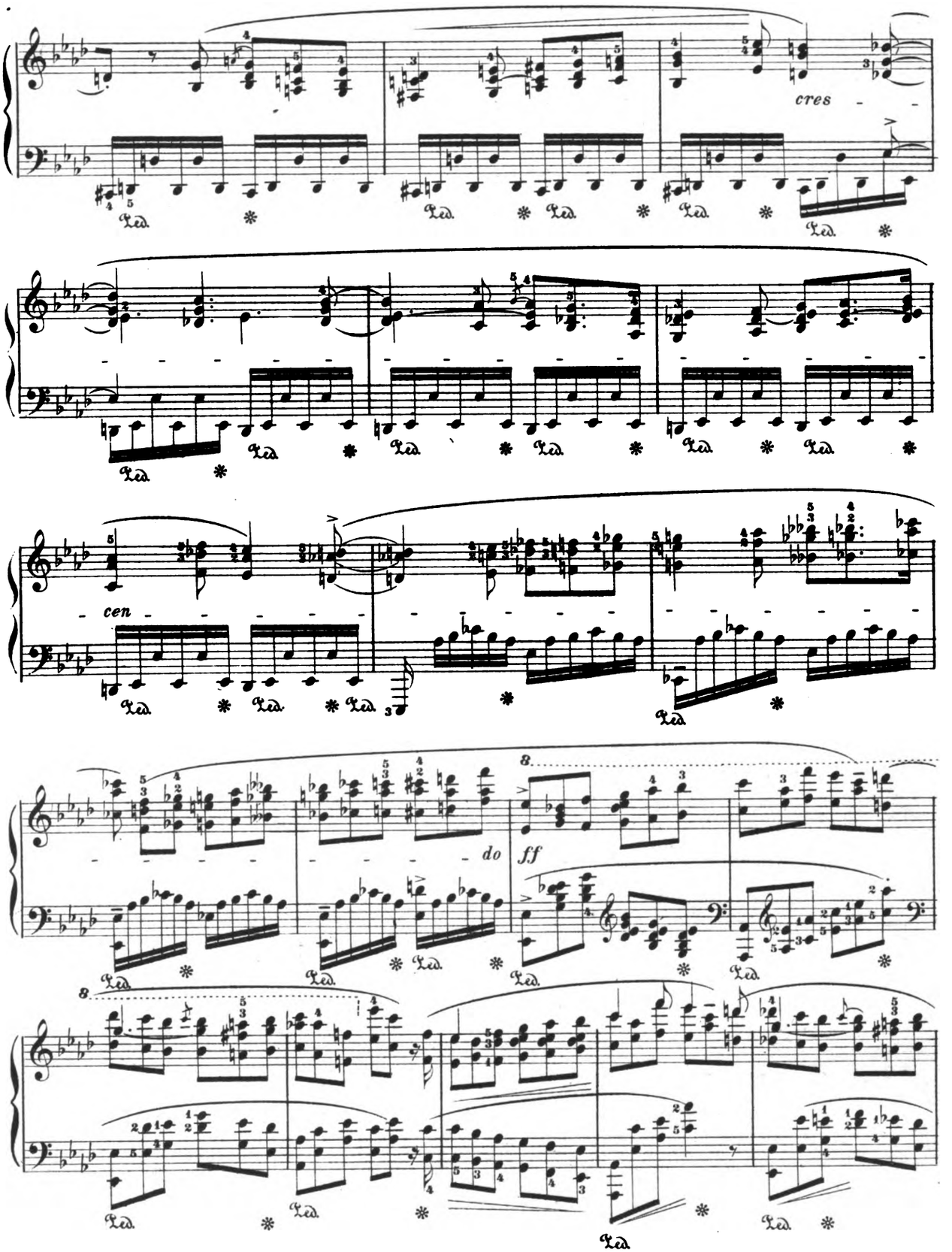


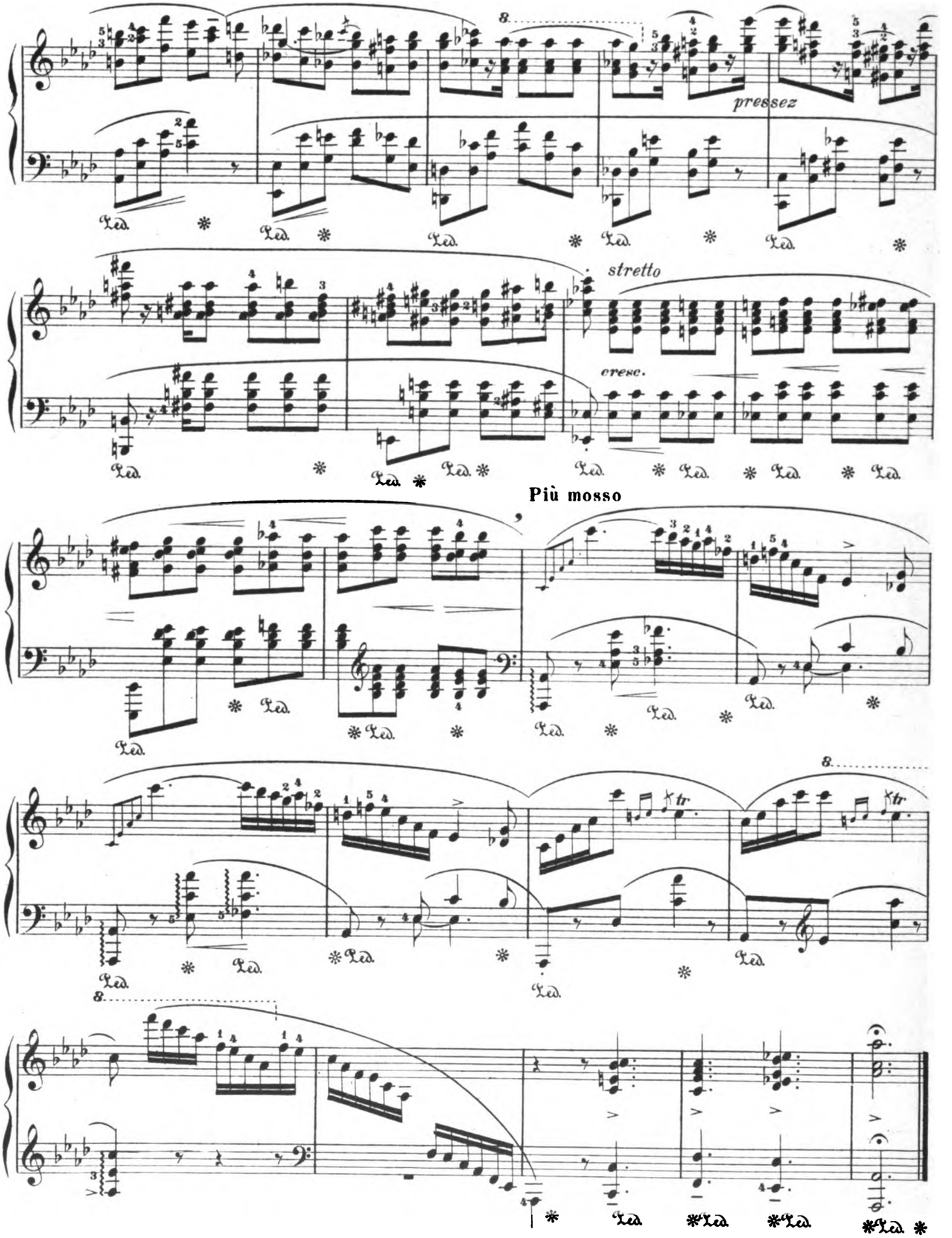












A CONCERT PROGRAM

BY

IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI

THE SELECTIONS IN VOLUMES V AND VI FORM A COMPLETE CONCERT PROGRAM AS PLANNED FOR THE CENTURY LIBRARY OF MUSIC BY THE EDITOR. WHEN USED AS A PROGRAM THEY SHOULD BE PLAYED IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:

Prelude and Fugue. E Minor	*Mendelssohn.*
Variations Sérieuses. Op. 54	*Mendelssohn.*
Sonata. A Flat Major. Op. 39	*Von Weber.*
Des Abends. Op. 12, No. 1	*Schumann.*
Warum? Op. 12, No. 3	*Schumann.*
Traumeswirren. Op. 12, No. 7	*Schumann.*
Vogel als Prophet. Op. 82, No. 7	*Schumann.*
Aufschwung. Op. 12, No. 2	*Schumann.*
Nachtstücke. Op. 23, No. 4	*Schumann.*
Toccata. Op. 7	*Schumann.*
Nocturne. D Flat. Op. 27, No. 2	*Chopin.*
Ballade. Op. 47	*Chopin.*
Mazurka. Op. 63, No. 1	*Chopin.*
Mélodie. Op. 16	*Paderewski.*
Caprice à la Scarlatti. Op. 14	*Paderewski.*
Marche Militaire	*Schubert-Tausig.*