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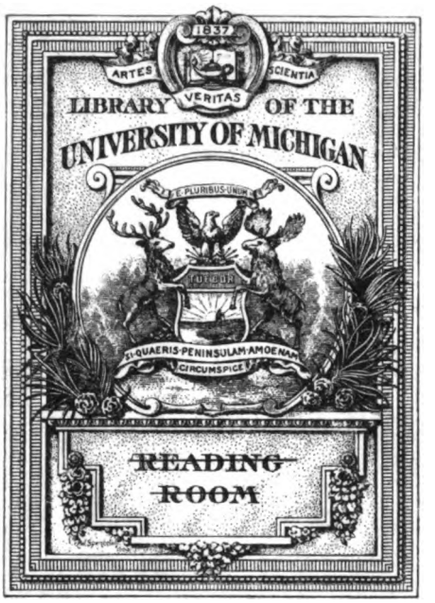
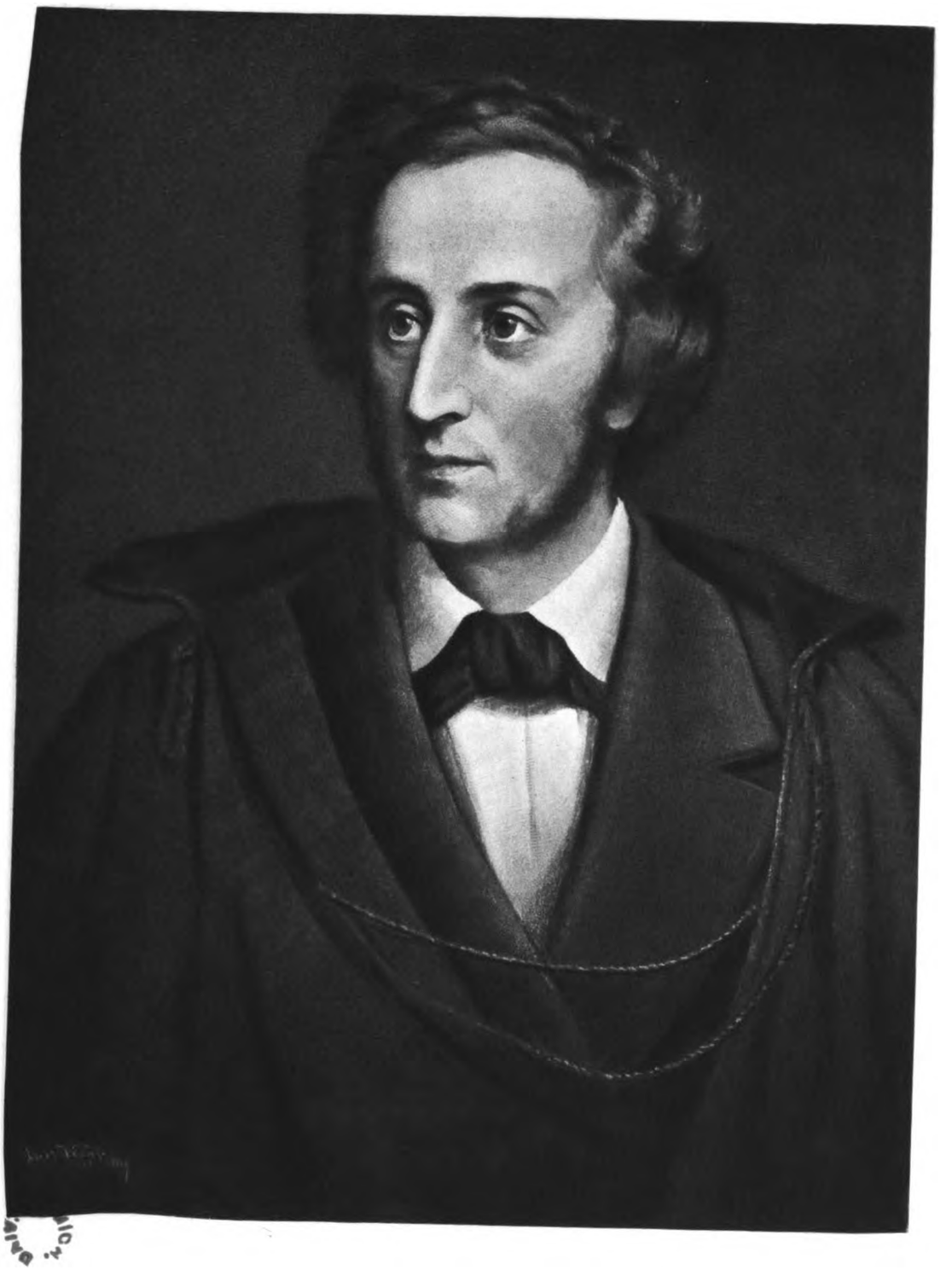
VOLUME TEN





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IN TWENTY VOLUMES
VOLUME TEN

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VOLUME X

TEXT

MUSIC

THE ONE-HUNDREDTH PSALM.

From the painting by W. Spatz.

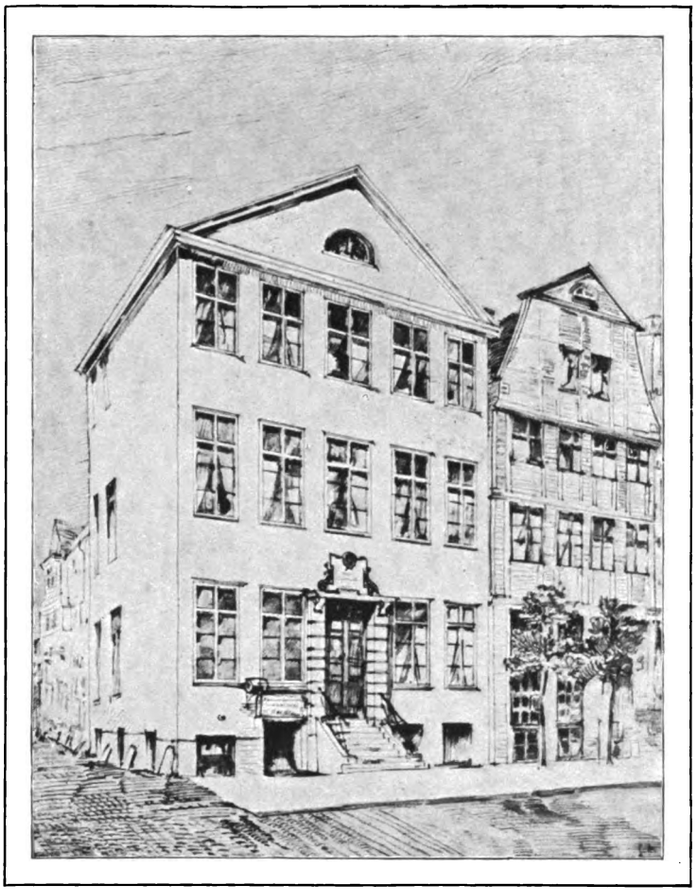
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY

BY

CARL REINECKE

Wen die Götter lieben
Dem Geben sie Gleichmass
In allen Dingen;
Zu der Phantasie
Die Erde und Himmel umfassen will
Den wägenden Verstand
Der sie gefesselt hält
Im einfach Schönen.

WHEN Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy wrote his "Paulus" he was everywhere recognized as the most famous living composer; publishers strove with each other to obtain his compositions; youthful artists thronged around him; the public bought, sang, and played his works rather than those of any one else; and, most indicative of his standing, the greatest contemporary composers recognized him without envy as their leader. Those who yielded Mendelssohn this place — Robert Schumann, Ludwig Spohr, Franz Lachner, Niels W. Gade, William Sterndale Bennett, Wilhelm Taubert, and Ignaz Moscheles — were no mean composers. But how changed it is to-day, though little more than a half-century has elapsed since the master closed his eyes forever! Then one of the noblest in the kingdom of music, Robert Schumann, dedicated with heartfelt reverence his three string quartets, Op. 44, to his friend Mendelssohn; now many a youthful artist who has struggled



HOUSE WHERE MENDELSSOHN WAS BORN.

No. 14 Grosse Michaelis Street, Hamburg.

a little with simple counterpoint thinks he may shrug his shoulders compassionately whenever Mendelssohn is spoken of. The musical press has alluded to the "tedious" Piano Concerto in G minor, and in the very sanctuary of Mendelssohn's most famous works—in the Leipsic Gewandhaus-Concerts—his name stands upon the concert programs less often than that of any one else; indeed, it almost seems as if his works were performed more with regard to his position as former director of this concert-institute than in grateful consciousness of his incontestable standing as composer.

How has it happened that in such a comparatively short time the popularity of Mendelssohn has waned to such a degree? Was he immoderately overestimated by his contemporaries? I cannot take this view. The most glowing admirer of Mendelssohn would not maintain that he equaled Bach as a church composer, Beethoven as a symphonist, or Franz Schubert as a song composer; but, on the other hand, can the coldest critic justly deny that he elevated the taste of his contempo-

raries, which had been noticeably lowered by the predominance and overgrowth of virtuosity? When Thalberg's fantasias were bought by the thousand, and the duos for piano and violin by Herz, Lanfont, Osborne, and De Bériot were the order of the day, and when Proch's hypersentimental songs with violoncello obbligato were everywhere sung with delight, then arose Mendelssohn, who by his own works opened up to the understanding of the multitude our great classics, till then greatly misunderstood. Thus his productions formed a bridge to the works of Bach and Beethoven, till then neither fully appreciated nor sufficiently cultivated. Haydn excepted, what successor of Handel had written a biblical oratorio of real importance and lasting worth before Mendelssohn's "Paulus" entered upon its triumphant march? Can any one seriously bring forward as such Graun's "Tod Jesu," Schicht's "Ende des Gerechten," Schneider's "Weltgericht," Bernhard Klein's "Jephtha," "Jacob" and "Hiob," or Spohr's "Die Letzten Dinge," "Des Heilands Letzte Stunden," "Der Fall Babylon's"? All these oratorios have vanished, to be sought out but occasionally as curiosities, because Mendelssohn's "Paulus" and "Elias" are the conquerors that overcame them all; and if any one affirms that Mendelssohn does not in his choruses show the mighty strength exhibited in the best of Handel's, let him also confess that in Mendelssohn's oratorios there are no such made-to-order solo numbers as so frequently appear in Handel's music. Indeed, Handel's solos are almost always shortened nowadays, if not left out altogether.

THE BOY MENDELSSOHN.

We ask further who, since Mozart and Beethoven, has created piano concertos in which the solo instrument and the orchestra are in just relationship, so that the latter takes an important and interesting part

without drowning the piano? With all reverence to Weber, Hummel, Ries, Moscheles, Field, and others, we must honor truth and confess that Mendelssohn was the first to accomplish this. Granted that several of Chopin's piano concertos were written at the same time as Mendelssohn's, with all due honor to the Polish master, it is obvious that Chopin treated the orchestra as secondary and found difficulty in giving it importance. This is true of Spohr's violin concertos. If Spohr and Chopin have set tasks which are more specifically interesting to the virtuoso, the Mendelssohn concertos stand indisputably higher, as works of unmixed art, because Mendelssohn does not treat the orchestra as an accompaniment merely, but gives it individuality, and always makes it take part, either alternating, supporting, or in counterpoint.

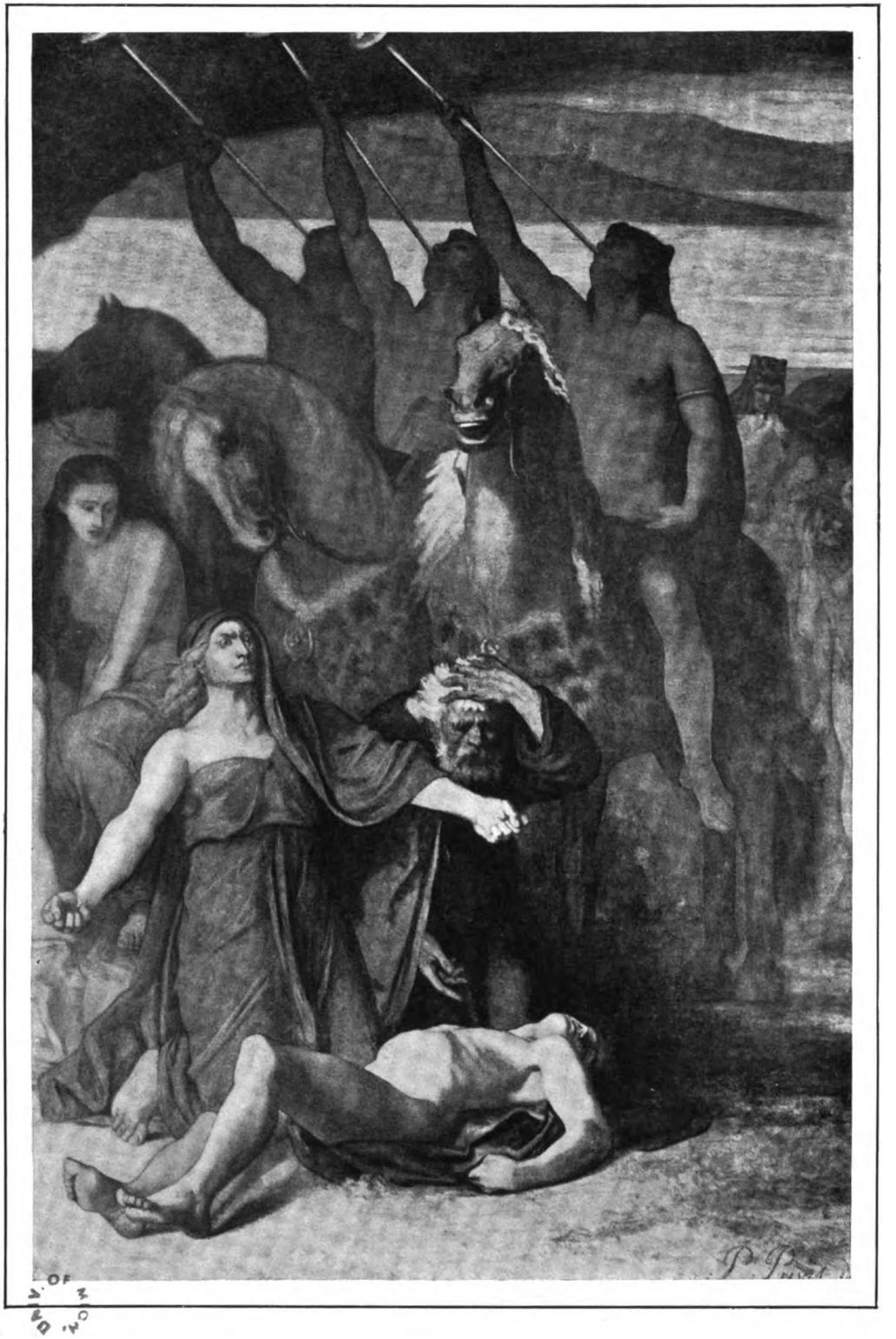
When David played Mendelssohn's violin concerto in the Gewandhaus-Concert on March 13, 1845, from the manuscript for the first time, under the composer's personal conducting, Schumann affectionately clapped the player, who was being rewarded by a roar of applause, upon the shoulder with the words, "Seest thou, lieber David, *that* is indeed the concerto which thou hast always wished to compose thyself!"

How many artists would be glad to have composed the six Piano Fugues, Op. 35, conceded to be the most remarkable piano fugues written since the day of Johann Sebastian Bach! August Alexander Klengel has been named as Mendelssohn's rival; but Klengel's fugues are really only studies in counterpoint thoroughly worked out so that the value lies in the workmanship; but in Mendelssohn's fugues the poetic, artistic whole addresses itself to the comprehension much more than the workmanship.

If we ask further, who, since Beethoven, has written sonatas for piano and violoncello which to-day can claim an honored place in current literature, Mendelssohn alone can be named — and he was but fourteen years old when he wrote a piano quartet (Op. 3 in B minor) which when composed was the only one which approached the works of Mozart and Beethoven. And, as to string quartets and piano trios, Mendelssohn alone can be classed with Franz Schubert and Cherubini. He must have far surpassed all contemporary followers of the classics, because the works of Onslow, Spohr, Kuhlau, Reissiger, and Fesca have since then, almost without exception, sunk into disuse.

All that I have said above but slightly indicates Mendelssohn's relative and historical importance; and if I be answered that though he did stand next to the classics, he has since been surpassed by others, I allow it in a qualified sense only, and with reference but to particular branches of literature.

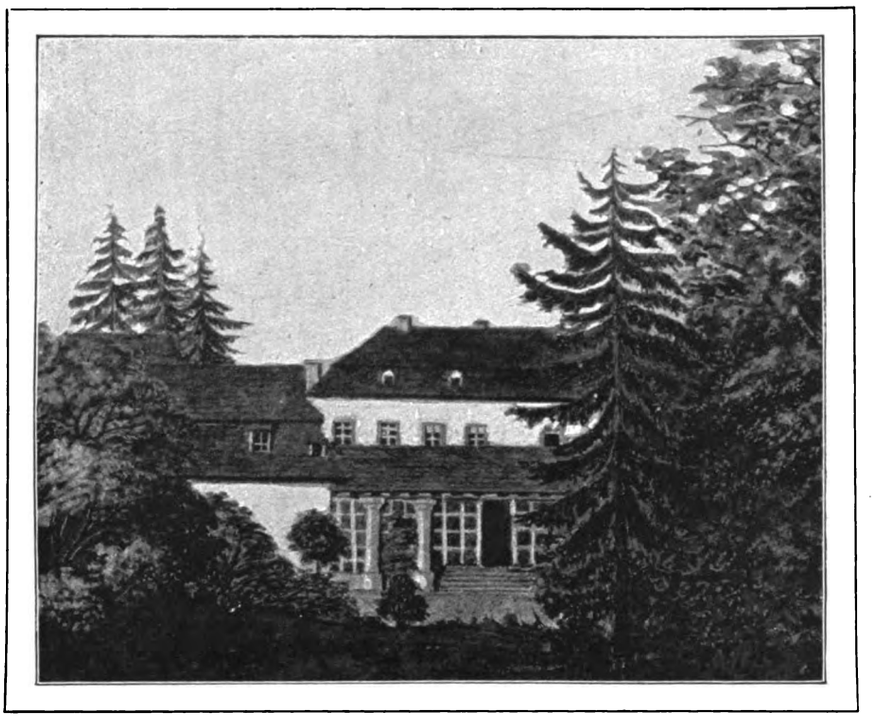
It must be conceded unconditionally as to symphonies that, although the A Minor Symphony is full of romantic enchantment and charming melody, and the A Major Symphony (the so-called Italian) is an entirely



"WAR."

DETAIL OF A PAINTING BY PUVIS DE CHAVANNES.

lovely work full of youthful freshness, there is in neither of them the inward grandeur which we admire so much in Beethoven's work, and which other masters like Schumann and Schubert, and also Brahms and Volkman, have here and there approached. In the string quartets, too, the composers just named are Mendelssohn's dangerous rivals; but who was the



THE GARDEN-HOUSE IN LEIPSIC STREET, BERLIN,
Where Mendelssohn lived while producing his earlier works.

first to write an octet for string instruments — one which up to our time has never been equaled? It was the sixteen-year-old Felix Mendelssohn, who, a year later, in the overture to Shakspere's "Midsummer Night's Dream," created a thoroughly characteristic work which no one else could have written, and which even his bitterest antagonists, though unwillingly, recognize as a masterpiece. What real strength and what real classical humor shows itself beside the elfin enchantment! And how the four chords at the beginning and end bind it so completely together that it is like a chain of rings in which not a single member is wanting! A masterpiece is a composition in which nothing can be altered without injuring it; which is an organic whole; which is created, not made. How simple are the means which the young master employed! Except the ophicleide, with which *Nick Bottom* is so drastically drawn, he had only the little Mozart orchestra to work with, while nowadays one can hardly get along

without a triple allowance of wood, trumpets, harps, and small instruments.

The younger sister of this overture, "The Hebrides," would very nearly equal it if, besides its entrancingly romantic contents, it had afforded such a happy contrast as occurs so naturally between the clowns and the elves. But Fingal's Cave is one of nature's solemn wonders, and he who would depict its feeling in music may not set glowing and smiling colors upon his palette.

Though neither "A Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage" nor "The Tale of the Beautiful Melusine" stands upon quite the same height as the "Midsummer Night's Dream," it must be unconditionally conceded that Mendelssohn is almost unrivaled in his four concert overtures.

Schumann and Schubert have given us no overtures of importance; and if in this connection Brahms, with his academic "Fest-Overture" and his "Tragischen," may be named as the sole rival of equal dignity, yet the writer of these pages believes he is not alone in the opinion that neither of the above-named works belongs to the latter master's best efforts, because in the first he did not succeed in overcoming the triviality of the excessively gay students' song, "Was kommt dort von der Höh'?" and make it fit for concert uses, and in the other he does not attain to the tragic burden of Beethoven's overture to "Coriolanus" or the "Manfred" overture of Schumann.

The works above named, however, do not by any means include all those which attest the positively high importance of Mendelssohn as a composer. Besides his two great choral works, "Paulus" and "Elias," which are often performed, there are many smaller; especially "Die Walpurgisnacht" and the 114th Psalm ("Als Israel aus Egypten zog"), for eight chorus parts and orchestra, which should be named as masterpieces of the first rank; while, on the contrary, the "Lobgesang" ("Symphonie-Cantata," Op. 52) seemed even in its time somewhat weak on account of its perceptible likeness to Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony," notwithstanding several splendid numbers: for example, the magnificent chorus, "Die Nacht ist vergangen," and the preceding recitative, "Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin?" According to the personal judgment of the writer, it would improve this work if the choruses were performed without the symphonic parts; for, apart from the fact that the latter are not to be considered as the master's happiest efforts, they rob the listener of the freshness and sympathy needed to enjoy the vocal parts, which, almost without exception, are replete throughout with the most beautiful invention and skilful workmanship.[1]

[1] Robert Schumann was certainly right when he said, in his musical "Haus und Lebensregeln," "It should be regarded as something frightful to alter or to leave out anything from the pieces of a good musician;" but if it is to be reckoned "frightful" to cut out a part of a great work, the "Springtime" or "Autumn" from Haydn's "Seasons" should not, strictly speaking, be played alone. Schumann himself, however, produced scenes from Gluck's "Orpheus" in a concert in Düsseldorf.

In the domain of music *a cappella* there is no modern who has excelled or even equaled Mendelssohn's motet for an eight-voiced chorus, "Mitten wir im Leben sind von dem Tod umfangen." But who knows this work? Who brings it out? With all the respect due to Rheinberger, Albert Becker, and others, it is incomprehensible that, while the church choruses of the masters named are, at least in Germany, so warmly cultivated, Mendelssohn's work is hardly ever heard.

Turning now to secular music, the song for mixed chorus is Mendelssohn's own original creation. The old madrigals are in quite a different style. And are not his "Lieder im Freien zu singen" unsurpassed to-day, and full of charming, noble melody, the finest harmony, and wonderful management of the voice? Moreover, they are so singable that wherever there is a group of singers they are sure to choose these lovely songs. It can likewise be said that Mendelssohn's songs for two women's voices were the first remarkable ones of that *genre*. The works of Methfessel, Bianchi, and others in this style are not to be compared with them.

The male choruses, whose general standard he raised much higher, are in the same category—their impressive melodies are not only the property of the German people, but are sung the world over. For example, the song "Wer hat dich, du schöner Wald" has become a folk-song. Of like popularity are the "Lied für die Deutschen in Lyon" and Eichendorff's "Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen."

The popularizing of a song is of course a quite peculiar thing. That a trivial melody which is almost always fused out of several phrases of long standing should be sung and whistled awhile by the crowd, and then, after a short time, should make place for some other country ballad, is nothing wonderful, and is not much to the composer's honor; but the noble, distinguished melody which lives on in the hearts of the people is a great rarity; that it does so live attests the unusual melodic strength of the composer. Franz Schubert himself hardly ranks with Mendelssohn in this respect. Robert Schumann has not achieved it, and the moderns, such as Brahms, Tschaikowsky, Liszt, Richard Strauss, and others, cannot be cited at all. But Mendelssohn won such a throw with his one-voiced song, "Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath." It is scarcely ever missing in Germany when a loved one is accompanied with music to the grave.

In estimating Mendelssohn's one-voiced songs in general, we concede, without saying anything further, that Franz Schubert is far richer in sentiment and in fine and original forms of accompaniment; that Schumann, especially in his cyclus "Frauenliebe und Leben," knew how to bring out heart-stirring and touching tones: but it would be unjust not to recognize that there are many pearls to be found in Mendelssohn's songs, which, alas! are to-day much too seldom sung. This is so much more incomprehensible as they are all written advantageously for the voice (something to be extremely thankful for), which certainly cannot

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JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH PLAYING BEFORE FREDERICK THE GREAT.

FROM A PAINTING BY KAULBACH.

be said of the over-refined songs of a Hugo Wolf or a Hans Herrman that are frequently heard in concerts. Singers will find themselves rewarded if they will turn back to Mendelssohn's songs, particularly to the earlier, almost forgotten book, Ops. 8 and 9. This contains the touching "Es ist ein Schnitter, der heisst Tod," set like an old church song, which, it may be added, plays an important rôle in a novel by August Kahlert.

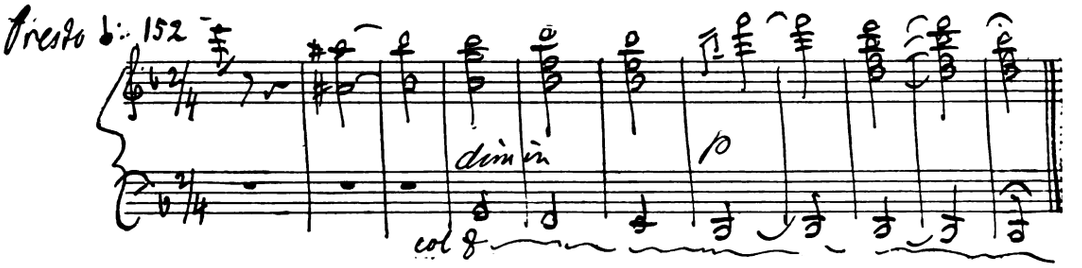
MENDELSSOHN.

From an early painting.

We have already discussed the piano compositions of our master, and his concertos and fugues; but we have not spoken of what had in his own time such an unheard of success, namely, his "Songs without Words." In these he created a remarkable form for his lyric piano pieces, and chose for them an entirely new and extremely expressive name. Neither the "Notturnos" of Field or Chopin, nor the "Bagatellen" of Beethoven, nor the "Moments Musicals" of Schubert, nor other kindred matter, may, notwithstanding their frequently cantabile contents, be compared to the "Lieder ohne Worte." The first part of Beethoven's "Sonata quasi una Fantasia" in C sharp minor might be cited as their only forerunner if it were not that here the melody is much more instrumental than vocal.

On the other hand, this *genre* of Mendelssohn's creation has had so many imitators that almost every piano composer has written "Lieder ohne Worte." Mendelssohn himself published six volumes, and among the six-and-thirty numbers in the same style there are many of less importance mixed in with the others. Far greater, however, is the number of those which are so remarkable that they inevitably impress every one who hears them so deeply that they are never again forgotten. Vol. I, No. 1; Vol. II, No. 1; Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2, are remarkable for their inward melody, strength, and deep earnestness; Vol. IV, No. 5; Vol. V, No. 3, for most lovely graciousness; and the "Venetian Gondolier's Song," the so-called "Spring Song," "Spinning Song," Vol. VI, No. 6, and Vol. I, No. 3, for youthful freshness and gaiety.

This is the reason why, to-day, in every home circle where music is loved these "Lieder ohne Worte" belong to the necessities. In public they are certainly seldom heard since Rubinstein closed his eyes. The "Variations Sérieuses" rejoice in the frequent notice of the virtuosos of our day — and with perfect right, as they are not only a brilliant and grateful task for the player, but also one of the finest sets of variations for the piano which we possess. That Bach's "Chaconne" suggested this work is evident, and will be disputed by few. It is, however, noteworthy that such an eminently practised musician as was Mendelssohn should have made a slip in the notation at the end of the work. Without any doubt those measures should be as follows:

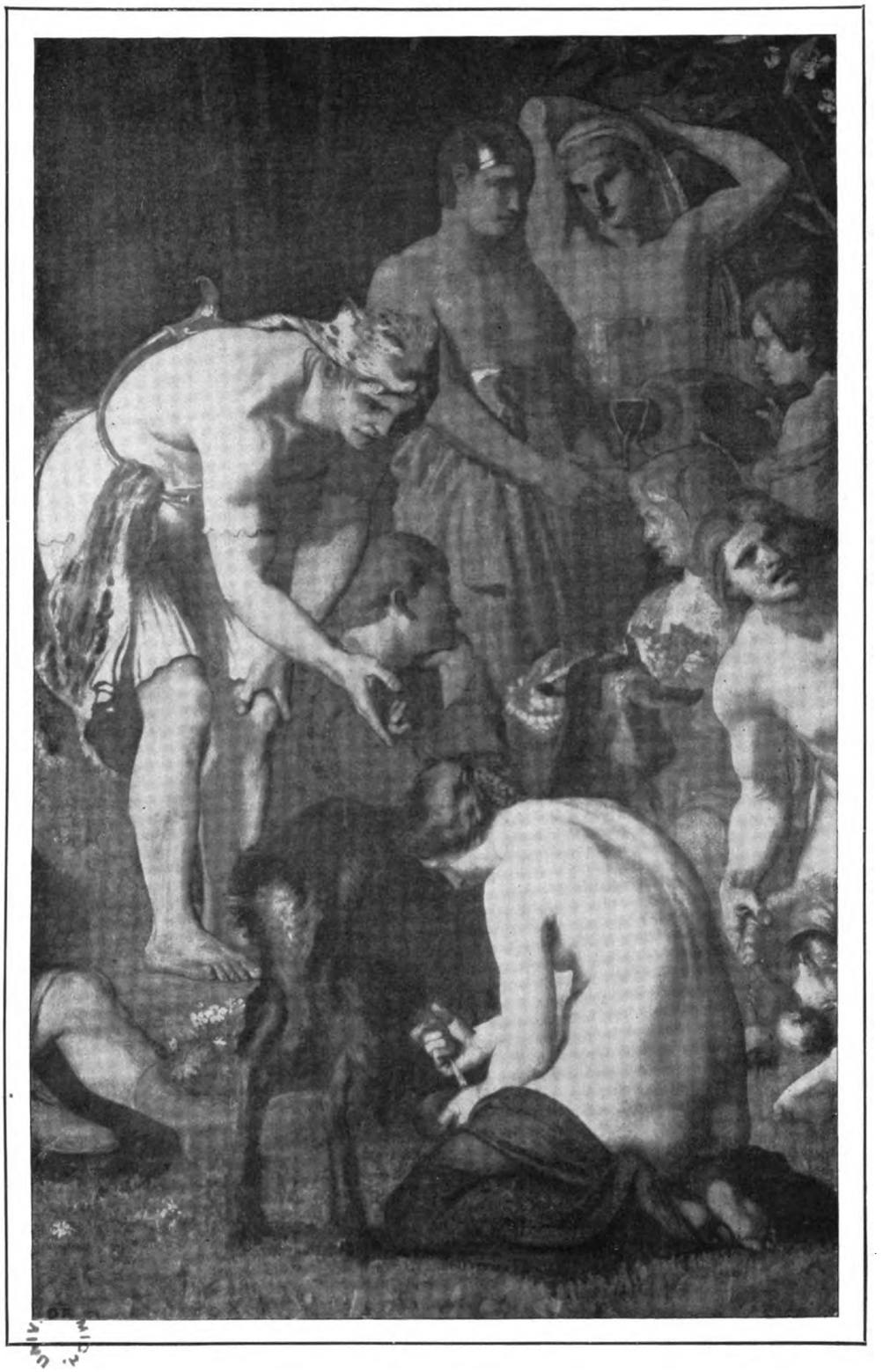


REPRODUCED FROM DR. REINECKE'S MANUSCRIPT.

The prescribed ritardando is not sufficient of itself to indicate the intention of the composer.

Of Mendelssohn's other compositions for the piano I will name, as much too little known, only the Sonata in E major, Op. 6, with its very original recitatives in fugue style.

We have sufficiently indicated in the foregoing review the positive and great productions of Mendelssohn, and shown that his importance is not merely relative. Let us seek the reasons why the present concerns itself with Mendelssohn less than is good and desirable. These arise partly from the nature of Mendelssohn's works themselves, partly from the



"PEACE."

DETAIL OF A PAINTING BY PUVIS DE CHAVANNES.

point of view at present prevailing in art, partly from the trend of taste, and finally from some incidents the consideration of which in this connection will help to explain the facts.

These different causes, however, are so connected that they are separated with difficulty. Among them the more remote cause must be counted that soon after the master's death his contemporaries felt compelled to bring out all his posthumous works, which, for the most part, were of his early youth. Mendelssohn cherished the principle, "Nulla dies sine linea"—that is, he permitted no day to pass without producing something, it might be a little song or a short piano piece. But later he was a severe critic of his own work, and much, very much, was locked up, unpublished, in his writing-desk. Even his A Major Symphony was deemed unworthy of the light of day. But after his death a multitude of chamber-music pieces, the so-called "Trumpet Overture," the "Reformation Symphony," and many others which are a detriment to his fame, were brought out with all too little criticism. Although there were many splendid things in this legacy,—as, for example, the finale to his unfinished opera "Loreley,"—yet the proportion of those which the master had thrown away to those which he himself valued was the more misleading.

Another influence proceeds from that part of the press which for some considerable time has felt it necessary to handle Mendelssohn *de haut en bas;* this has made a lasting impression upon the reading public, which takes everything printed as authoritative. More than half a century ago, when the treatise "Uber das Judenthum in der Musik" appeared, the camp of the critics split into two sharply divided parties, formed of those who could see salvation only in Richard Wagner, and of their adversaries. There were only a few who could appreciate both Wagner and Mendelssohn. Goethe once said, with reference to himself and Schiller, "People are disputing which of us two is the greater, instead of thanking God that they have two such fellows." And yet Schiller and Goethe stand much nearer to each other, and, in a way, are more akin, than Mendelssohn and Wagner. Dramatic music was certainly not advanced by Mendelssohn a hair's breadth, while Wagner, with the emphatic exception of the "Faust Overture," the "Siegfried Idyls," and the "Liebesmahl der Apostel," did nothing for concert music, absolutely nothing for chamber music, and wrote but a few songs for the home. The sonata and the polonaise of his earliest youthful period, while he was yet receiving instruction from the Cantor Weinlig, should not properly be counted as such. These masters are remarkable in entirely different spheres, and they can and should be placed and honored near together.

Few, however, are so just in their opinion as Hans von Bülow, from whom I quote an impressive remark—of course from the later years of his life. On the occasion of a visit which he made me I expressed the hope

MENDELSSOHN'S MUSE.

FROM A PAINTING BY BOUTET DE MONVEL.

that we should soon hear him again in a Gewandhaus-Concert, to which he replied: "If it is desired to have piano-playing, then call upon D'Albert, who plays better than I; but if the question is—if I may say so—of winning celebrity for a noble cause, if you perhaps wish to promote a concert for the benefit of the Mendelssohn monument fund, then call on me; I will come with pleasure. When one gets older, then one must make good the sins committed in youth, and *to that man I have very many to make good.*"[1] What a remarkable and noble utterance! A Leipsic critic, on the contrary, whom I will not name because he is now dead, did not refrain from calumniating the master even when speaking at the festival concert on the occasion of unveiling the Mendelssohn monument. The same critic once called the "Paulus" "music for a young lady's school." When such disparagements are kept up for a long time, they will of course create a strong adverse influence.

Greater, but certainly not much greater, than the influence of such criticism is that of the apprehension of art and the trend of taste thereby induced. From these last two causes the estimation of an artist greater than Mendelssohn—the immortal master of Salzburg—has also suffered. Formerly, absolute beauty was demanded as the first requirement of a work of art, and its enjoyment made one happy, rejoiced, and exalted; now, from every art the sensational is exacted, the creative artist must appear original at any price, and primarily endeavor to offer to the public something novel even at the cost of beauty. Because the public is no longer satisfied to be moved and made happy, it demands novelty and ever more novelty. Science should never shrink from what is hateful in its search for truth; but art as certainly should. Many an artist of the present, unfortunately, no longer cherishes this principle, so now we meet many an unbeautiful thing in the different arts. Many artists find contentment in painting bald cabbage- or turnip-fields, scrofulous children, or horrible fabulous beings. Others are intoxicated with color, and despise correct drawing, or paint heaven with strokes of plummet exactness, and draw hard contours in line around their figures such as are nowhere to be found in God's wide world. Many poets lead their readers into dangerous haunts where there is nothing but ruin, scandal, and foulness. In drama the preference is for troubles of the strongest possible *haut goût* in the married state, and even the better authors allow the common people of their drama to speak the ugliest low dialect, while the classics, on the contrary, confined themselves to indicating the difference between high and low by using poetry for one and prose for the other. Among the sculptors there are many who paint their figures with glaring colors, others who put a Leda with the Swan in such a small right-angled frame that she looks like a snake-woman. And how is it with much modern

[1] Although time has flown by since Bulow said this to me, yet it has remained so firmly fixed in my memory that I believe I have repeated it nearly word for word.

MENDELSSOHN'S HOUSE IN BERLIN.

music? There are composers who, with affecting consistency, against all natural feeling take the leading tone (the great major in the scale) not into the tonic, but sideways into the fifth; others who, through the minor triad of the dominant, lead it into the tonic (for example, through the G minor triad to C major). Instrumental works have been written of which absolutely nothing could be understood if there were not issued together with the program, a poetical commentary which imparts to the listener what he ought to hear in the composition. Symphonies are written nearly two hours in length. Other composers believe that they have accomplished something wonderful when they allow a series of twelve triads in parallel sequence to be blown by three trumpets, or when they write long movements in five-fourth and seven-fourth measure. Hardly any attention is paid to the obligation of holding fast to the principal key; and modulations are continually made, so that, to a musically instructed listener, the endless return to the leading key does not appear as such, but as a deceptive cadence.

There is one new opera which was copied out throughout without any signs of transposition because the composer seldom delayed long enough in any one key to make it worth while to write them in!

In short, the rules sanctioned by the greatest tone poets, and which are derived from the inmost being of music, are despised; the objects which music should strive for are pushed to one side, and instead of a beautiful symmetry we have immoderation.

While for students of art literature there are examples of all that has been said near at hand, many will call this utterance a Capuchin's sermon and will answer that standing still is stepping backward and that music must progress with the rest of the world.

I ask, in reply, if Wagner and Brahms, both of whom were considered progressive, were ever guilty of such extravagances? Just as the laws of nature are eternal, so also are the laws of art; but the musician must find them within his soul, while the artist in form finds originals for his types in objective nature. One can learn from nature that the palm does

ROOM IN MENDELSSOHN'S HOUSE IN LURGENSTEIN'S GARDEN IN LEIPSIC.

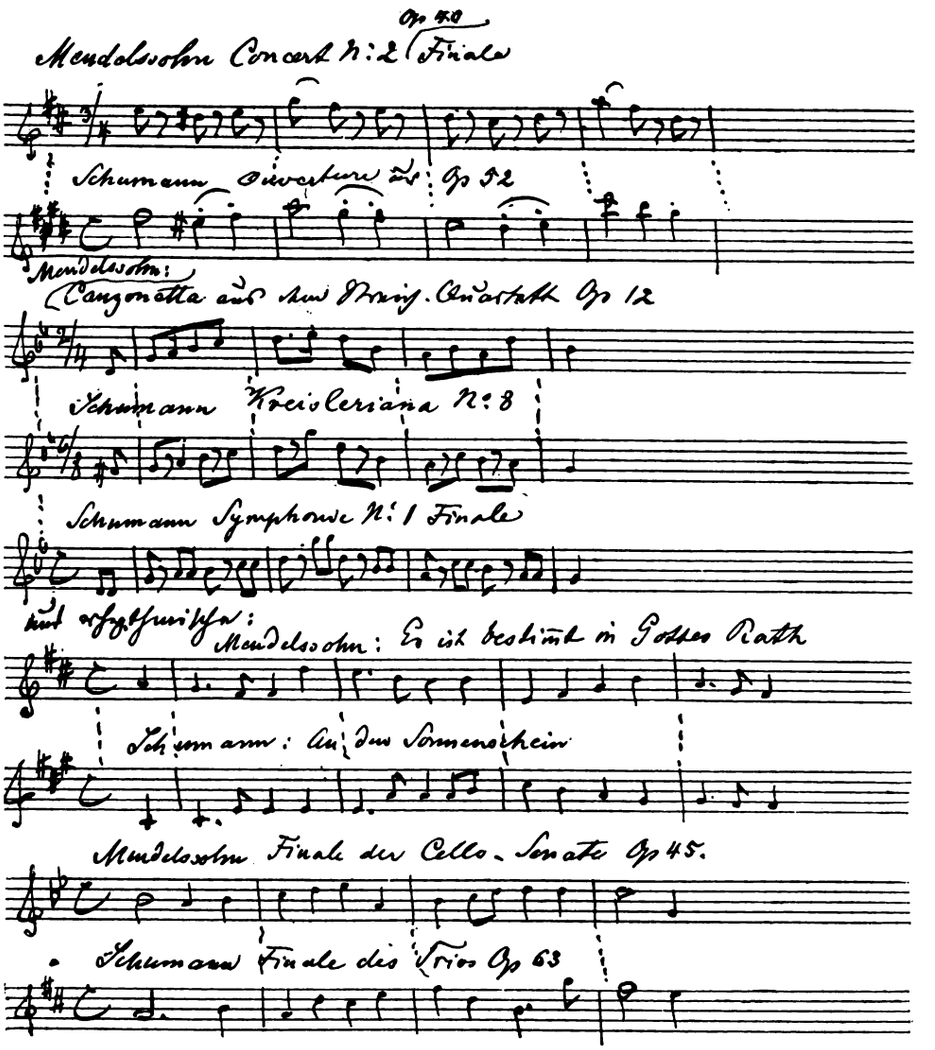
After a water-color by Mendelssohn in the possession of Geheimraths Wach.

not bear acacia leaves, and that the lion does not have five paws; but when the musician does not feel within himself how the leading tone should be resolved and which connections of chords are impossible, then he is beyond help because neither art nor nature has originals for him.

If now the young generation often, and perhaps preferably, receive their ideas from modern art and are impressed by its apparent splendor because the art of applying instruments has made such progress in the last half-century that every one can arrange his instruments in fine style, it is only too easy to understand why little taste is left for the fine lines of beauty in Mendelssohn's music.

Why, then, have the works of Mendelssohn become in some degree foreign to the present? Because, when Mendelssohn appeared with his first important creations many of his melodic and harmonic forms were

so entirely new and impressive that they exercised a strong influence upon almost all of his contemporaries—so strong that even such an original tone poet as Robert Schumann was not able to escape. It can be easily shown upon what ground many of Schumann's motives grew. There are only a few cited here:



REPRODUCED FROM DR. REINECKE'S MANUSCRIPT.

Although Schumann, in many such airs, gave much that was characteristic, there were numerous composers of the same period whose efforts were mere empty imitations.

Mendelssohn himself has suffered from this, because what with him was originality and style became, when copied by others, nothing but a manner; and as the number of these weak copies was over large, people became tired of the many peculiarities of the original, the "Mendelssohn-ish" changed places with "Mendelssohn," and the master suffered for the

sins of his followers. Returning from a music soirée, the famous theorist Moritz Hauptman exclaimed: "I have just heard a trio which was so Mendelssohnish that I thought it was by Bennett, but it was by Horsley!"

Mendelssohn's art also has estranged him from the present. However baroque it may sound, yet we venture to say that his works are too constantly beautiful to meet sufficient sympathy among those who have grown up in the modern trend of art, and who long for glaring lights and deep shadows.

Mendelssohn's adversaries call his work too "smooth,"—a dilettante expression for "flowing." It is true that his sentiment flows on in an uninterrupted stream, that he despised that breaking up of a movement by the dramatic appearance of a recitative, or by pauses and a great number of time and measure changes, now so much affected; but whoever is himself a composer knows that it is an incomparably greater art to create a movement which develops itself steadily, logically, and organically than one which spins itself off in eternally changing pictures.

Spinning is not building, and a piece of music in sublime style should be built. For instance, however interesting in its host of pictures Volkmann's overture to Shakspere's "Richard III" may be, it cannot be compared with Beethoven's symmetrical overture to "Coriolanus," or with Schumann's overture to "Manfred." It is the same with Volkmann's trio in B minor when placed beside the trios of Beethoven, Ops. 70 and 97. Beethoven's note-book shows us with what ardent zeal he always strove against the steady stream; and when Beethoven himself, sometimes (but proportionately seldom), turned aside in his latest works from his original and customary manner, we may boldly say that such a thing may be allowed to the intellectual giant that Beethoven was, but that no one may follow him upon such a path with impunity.[1]

Mendelssohn well knew that he was no Beethoven, therefore he remained within his boundaries, and these were not so very narrow. What fanaticism there is in the chorus of the priests of Baal in "Elias"! What passion in the "Loreley" finale! What splendor in the wedding march and grace in the elfin chorus in the music of the "Midsummer Night's Dream"! What a primitive wildness in the chorus "Kommt mit Zacken und mit Gabeln" in the "Walpurgisnacht"! How touching is his very last song, "Vergangen ist der lichte Tag"! Let us proclaim it, "Learn first to know the master well; do not longer ignore his work; a close acquaintance with it can but promote good taste!"

It should not be the ambition of the concert-institute to be the first to produce every fresh work of each well-known modern composer and to announce "the first performance in N. N."; but rather to offer to the pub-

[1] Even Beethoven himself erred when he wrote his great Fugue in B major for String Quartet (Op. 133), with its ten changes in measure and tempo, which in consequence is played by no one. Few know it, and those who do know it do not like it.

lic, together with the new and the newest, the works of the classics and of those masters who stand in real relationship with them. It should not be forgotten that, although concert-goers of many years' standing justly desire—a wish which is easily understood—to become acquainted with the novelties, the younger generation very rightfully demands to learn the classics and their immediate followers fully. And to the latter Felix Mendelssohn certainly belongs. Healthy nourishment is the only right thing for the bodily development of a man, and the same is true of the spiritual body. He who has been raised upon spices cannot be developed normally.

To give the most perfect picture possible of Mendelssohn, let us consider him as conductor, concert artist, and teacher.

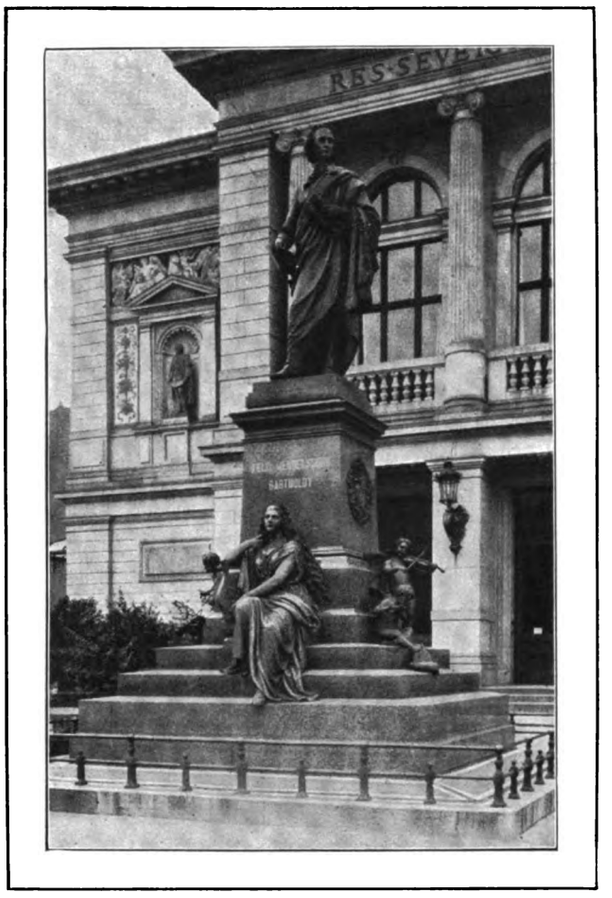
What he accomplished as conductor is worthy of admiration. Not a single refinement of beauty of the work in hand escaped him; his demeanor was free from all posing: but, though the eye of every member of the orchestra was fixed on his baton, he directed and inspirited them more with his glances than with his motions. He never allowed a work to be played down to the pendulum swing of a metronome, but he led unnoticeably into his fine shades of tempo; he never permitted himself to indulge in the arbitrary breaking-up of tempos, or in similar means of effect which unfortunately became the fashion later. It was a pleasure to be present at his rehearsals and see how everything was cleared up and the spirit put into it, and to wonder at his sharp ear and his fineness of feeling.

He knew, too, exactly what he could demand from each instrument. When he rehearsed his Scherzo in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" for the first time, the first flutist failed in the well-known and certainly difficult passage, and declared impatiently that it could not be played upon that instrument. Mendelssohn immediately said to the second flutist: "Then, if you please, Herr Haacke, you may play it." And he did!

It goes without saying that Mendelssohn's piano-playing, regarded from the spiritual side, was that of a perfect musician; his technic was always serviceable to the work which he was playing, but it was never for display, and was always beautiful in tone, wonderfully clear, and full of soul.

It can be understood why he played principally Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and his own works; but he mastered technically and in an unsurpassable manner the striking difficulties of the chromatic Fantasia and Fugue of Bach; the G major Concerto, the "Kreutzer Sonata," the Sonata, Op. 3, and the trios in B major, Op. 97, of Beethoven; and his own "Variations Sérieuses." Mendelssohn's talent for improvisation was imposing; his art in writing various themes in polyphony and melting them together was particularly astonishing. He was likewise a remarkable organ-player, and as a violinist he stood his man. The writer of these pages heard him in a public chamber-music soirée taking part in his string octet.

As a teacher of composition, Mendelssohn cast a sharp glance over



MENDELSSOHN MONUMENT.

Before the new Concert-house in Leipsic.

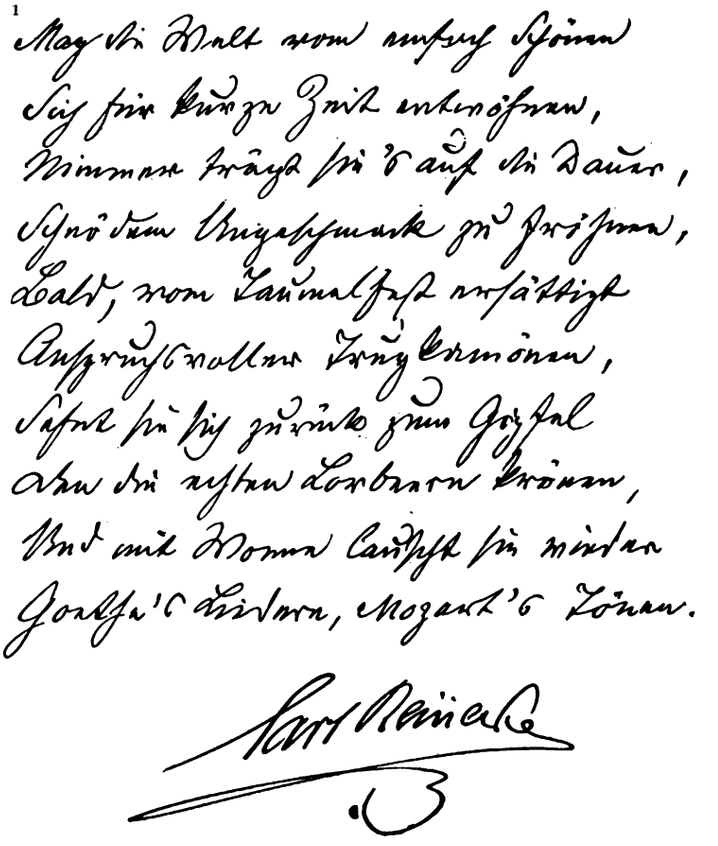
the whole work, and blamed as sharply, though often in a humorous way, as he quickly and heartily encouraged and recognized. In this lesson he often played to his pupils long excerpts from their own compositions without notes, as he had a very remarkable memory. Here is an example: An Italian virtuoso, by name Briccialdi, lived for some months in Leipsic, and was much sought after and often heard in musical circles. On one occasion Briccialdi was invited to play the rondo of one of his own compositions, but feared he would have to decline because he had not brought the notes. Mendelssohn, however, who had once accompanied him some weeks before, said: "Oh, I beg of you to play it, because I know it by heart." And, voilà! he accompanied it. It is said that Goethe once wrote to Mendelssohn's parents: "He is a heavenly, precious boy. Send him very soon to me again, that I may refresh myself in him."

When a youth Mendelssohn made a famous metrical translation of the "Andria" of Terence, which attests his scholarship.

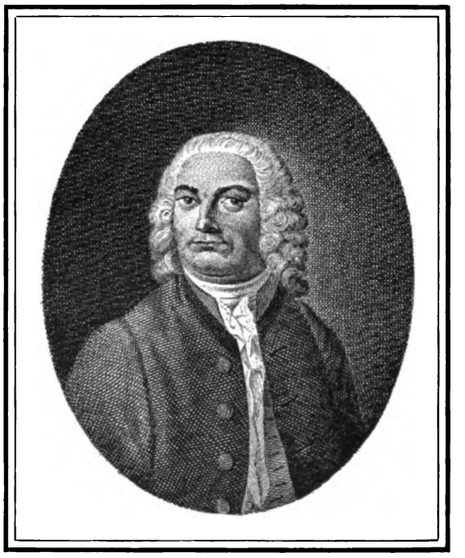
His heart was warm toward every budding talent, whose works, gener-

ally quietly and without the knowledge of the author, he recommended to the publishers, who were always pleasant to him, though rough to others; and numerous letters bear witness to his rich feeling, spirit, and wit, and mirror to posterity a rare and highly gifted artist and man. In this connection it may be added that Mendelssohn possessed also a pretty talent for drawing, and that the writer of these pages is the owner of a sketch which he once dashed off in a concert conference.

May these lines result in bringing to the artist to whom these pages are dedicated new lovers who will recognize and acknowledge his importance and worth as a composer! The beautiful lines which Emanuel Geibel wrote in the Mozart album in Salzburg might be well dedicated to Mendelssohn; for the time will certainly come when the master will be fully reverenced.



[1] Should the world of simple beauty for a brief time lose her accustomed way, she never tarries long to yield homage to aggressive bad taste. Soon satiated by the intoxicating feast, so pretentious and deceitful, she turns back with longing to her lofty heights crowned with true laurels, and listens again with delight to Goethe's songs, Mozart's music.



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

BY

SALOMON JADASSOHN

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH was born in the little Thuringian city of Eisenach. The birthday of this immortal master, though not authentically attested, is generally given as the 21st of March, 1685. The parochial registry of the city of Eisenach gives simply the 23d of March as the baptismal day of the third son of Ambrosius Bach and his wife Elisabeth Lämmerhirt. The baby received his Christian names from his godfathers Johann Koch and Sebastian Nagel. It was the custom in those days of severe piety to bring the new-born child to be baptized as soon as possible in order to assure it the blessing of the holy act as an advantage in all future emergencies. It is extremely doubtful whether it was on the 21st or 22d of March that this great master first saw the light. The improved Gregorian calendar was first adopted in Protestant North Germany in the beginning of the eighteenth century, which would make March 31, as we now reckon time, the real baptismal day.

Bach reached the age of sixty-five; he died in Leipsic, where he had lived and worked for twenty-seven years, on Tuesday evening, July 28, 1750, shortly after quarter-past eight. On Friday morning, July 31, he was buried with much solemnity on the south side of the Johanniskirche. Later, when the churchyard was separated from the church, his grave-mound, with others, was destroyed, and the graves could no longer be identified with certainty. During the rebuilding of the Johanniskirche,

which lasted for six years, the grave of Bach was discovered on October 22, 1894. Herr Dr. Wustman and Professor Dr. His succeeded through the most conscientious inquiry and investigation in finding Bach's remains and in so preserving them that they could be placed in a coffin of French lime-stone under the altar of the Johanniskirche. A memorial stone marks the place. The gifted Seffner has succeeded in making a wonderful bust after the well-preserved skull. A portrait of Bach, in good condition, painted in oil by Hausmann in the year 1747, is in the singing-room of the Thomasschule in Leipsic.

The family tree of the Bachs can be traced with certainty as far back as the times of the Reformation. It is a purely German race,[1] belonging to Thuringia, and Johann Sebastian could count four generations of ancestors who were professional musicians. Christopher Bach (1643–1703) was himself a prominent composer, whose vocal music (motets) was particularly noteworthy. Christopher's younger brother Michael (1648–1694) also is mentioned as a talented master. Besides these two men, other branches of the family spread into the Thuringian cities, Arnstadt, Eisenach, Erfurt, Gehren, Weimar, etc., as choristers, organists, and official city musicians.

The life of Johann Sebastian Bach has been fully described in many excellent biographies. The boy lost his mother in his tenth year; a year later, his father. The elder brother, Johann Christoph, who had been employed since 1690 as organist in the Stadtkirche in Ohrdruf, adopted the boy. Schooling he received at the lyceum of that place, where, together with other branches of knowledge, chorus-singing was carefully fostered. Clavichord and probably violin instruction were given by the elder brother to the younger in earnest but pedantic fashion. The little one was allowed only technical studies, while his young soul was yearning for music of quite another kind. He knew that the brother had laid away in a cross-barred chest a music-book which contained a collection of the organ compositions of the famous master Pachelbel. The boy purloined the book and copied it secretly by moonlight, but the pitiless elder brother took the copy made with such pains and locked it up more carefully than the original had been.

In his fifteenth year Johann Sebastian wandered to Lüneburg. His beautifully clear soprano voice won him a place in the Michaelisschule, which sustained an excellent chorus, whose members received instruction and expenses gratis and were paid in addition. Bach received the second highest place at once, and after his voice was gone his remarkable musical ability procured him the position of violin accompanist of the chorus-singers in their practice, and as the directing prefect of the chorus he received, according to custom, a correspondingly higher salary.

The three years that Bach spent in Lüneburg had the most important

[1] This is open to investigation.—THE EDITORS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. HERRMANN.

HOUSE IN EISENACH WHERE BACH WAS BORN.

influence upon his artistic development. The school possessed a rich and well-chosen library. Carefully prepared performances of the best masterpieces of music were given on Sundays and on every holiday. These influences and the intercourse with the excellent organist of the Johanniskirche, Georg Böhm, had an instructive and inspiring effect upon the eager youth. Böhm, himself a noted artist, was as keen-sighted as beneficent. He recognized at once the mighty genius of the youth, who was blameless, diligent, and assiduous. He was, moreover, his countryman. Full of sympathy, Böhm interested himself in him.

A real Thuringian, Bach was a vigorous pedestrian. He spent his holidays in tramps to Hamburg, where he heard the famous organists Johann Adam Reinker and Vincentius Lübeck, and to Celle, where the ducal chapel, maintained in the French fashion, gave him a chance to hear the best instrumental compositions excellently performed. Spurred on by this, he endeavored unceasingly to perfect his technic upon the violin, clavichord, and organ.

As a youth of eighteen he obtained his first installation into office in 1703, as violinist in the court chapel of Prince Ernest of Weimar. He remained there only a short time. During a visit to Arnstadt he much desired to try the new organ. Permission was granted him to act as organist at the Sunday services. His preludes, so full of imagination, and

his technic, which was already stupendous, so enraptured the burghers of Arnstadt that they offered him the place, which he accepted willingly. It answered to his desires perfectly, and besides, the new organ was in itself a very beautiful work. The position was well paid; the service made few demands upon his time and allowed him leisure enough to satisfy the always active craving of his inmost soul for composition. In this period there appeared an Easter cantata, the variations on the choral "Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'," some compositions for the clavier, and two organ fugues.

In the autumn of the year 1705 Bach asked the consistory for a vacation, and made a pilgrimage on foot to Lübeck, fifty German miles, where Dietrich Buxtehude, the famous composer and organ virtuoso of the Marienkirche, was working.

Although Bach was quite unknown to the old master of eight-and-sixty years and came to him unrecommended, he received a friendly welcome. The relations between the two grew more and more close as Buxtehude realized the mighty genius of Bach. But the gray-haired master's passionate desire to see Bach his successor in office was wrecked on the singular condition which was attached to the appointment, namely, that the successor must marry the eldest daughter of his predecessor. Anna Margarethe Buxtehude had been born in 1669, and the youth of twenty years could not persuade himself to accept the woman with her sixteen years' seniority. The whole course of Bach's life shows him as a perfectly upright, honest, and honorable man of firm character and filled full of the purest ideal intuitions and thoughts. It was impossible for such a man to sell the earthly happiness of his body and soul, even to receive a place which was both richly endowed and one of the most honorable offices in Germany.

In the first days of February, 1706, Bach set out on his return journey to Arnstadt. A few days after his arrival he received a summons before the consistory. He was met immediately with the reproach that he had stretched out his permitted four weeks' vacation into sixteen. The spiritual court also brought up other complaints against him; for example, that he treated the organ-playing, in which Bach often gave his fantasy full play, as the principal thing, and the church service as secondary; that one Sunday, in the near past, he had gone during the preaching into a wine-cellar, etc. The misunderstandings with the board continued. Bach received, eight months later, a summons in which, as before, he was requested to clear himself of the above and other accusations of irregularities.

In spite of all these troubles with the officers of the church, and the ofttimes vexatious, wearisome, and time-robbing duties of his office, Bach had, during his stay, worked on undisturbed, cultivating his power of composition. Out of this period came his organ compositions, of which the "Concertata" is decidedly the most remarkable. It is printed in the

Sebast. Bach

FROM A PRINT PUBLISHED BY HOFFMEISTER & KÜHNEL, LEIPSIC.

fifteenth year of the publications of the Bach Gesellschaft, pages 276–286, and begins with a prelude, which the editor, Dr. Wilhelm Rust, has marked "Toccata III." This is succeeded by a four-voiced, broadly treated fugue. Both parts are in E major. A short interlude in eleven measures, closing on the chord of the dominant, leads to a second, five-voiced fugue, three-quarter time, also in E major, which ends the piece.

The nobility, originality, and daring of the theme, the equally artistic, because natural, flowing of the counterpoint in the fugue, the richness of harmony, the solid form of the separate parts, the organic shaping of the whole work, reveal Bach as a perfected master of composition. The technical difficulties of the "Concertata," which he wrote for his own use, prove to us that Bach was at that time an unsurpassable organ virtuoso. Whether the work was originally written in E major or in C major is not certainly known.

From out the narrow Philistine circle of Arnstadt, Bach was called to Mülhausen to be honored with the place of organist in the St. Blasiuskirche. The installation was on June 15, 1707. The salary was a generous one for the times, and included eighty-five gulden in money, and the customary dues of corn, wood, and fish.

On June 29 Bach asked the council in Arnstadt for his dismissal. Soon after settling in Mülhausen he married, on October 17, his cousin Maria Barbara Bach, to whom he had been engaged while in Arnstadt. Here he composed, for the festivities consequent on the coming into office of a new official board, the cantata "Gott ist mein König." The composition is one of the few which were printed during Bach's lifetime. This skilful piece of work, as also the always neat and clean superscribing of the score and the voices in Bach's handwriting, has been preserved to us. The cantata may be found in the eighteenth year of the publications of the Bach Gesellschaft. Originally the composition was marked "Motetto." This work gives a most satisfactory evidence of Bach's artistic ripeness: in the outer form it does not differ from the church cantatas of Buxtehude and other earlier masters; it does differ from these in the imitative style of the voices, which is apparent even in the first part, and also in the two strong fugues, of which the one appearing in the last part, with two firmly held counterpoints, is the most remarkable part of the cantata. On this account it is epoch-making, though it is not on the same high level as Bach's later work.

As early as June 25, 1708, Bach asked the councilors for release, and, with their expressed regret, he followed a call to the ducal court of Weimar. Here were written most of his organ music and some of his most beautiful cantatas, also the affecting "Actus Tragicus"; the last-named work was composed for a funeral ceremony in 1711. All the organ compositions coming from this period are incomparably grand. Of these we consider the Toccatas and Fugue in D minor and the Passacaglia in

C minor as the most noteworthy. Among the cantatas I much prefer "Gotteszeit ist die allerbeste Zeit," which has become the best-known, and "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott," written for the two-hundred-year jubilee. But the cantata "Ich hatte viel Bekümmerniss" stands in the same rank as the two above named.

Bach's situation in Weimar was agreeable to him in every respect. In the beginning he was paid the considerable salary of 156 gulden 12 groschen, which on St. John's day in 1711 was raised to 210 gulden 12 groschen; at Easter, 1713, to 225 gulden; and in 1714 was made still

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHUS WILLIAMS, BERLIN.

PANORAMA OF THE WARTBURG, THURINGEN, EISENACH.

higher. We can see from this how much he was prized and how well his work was appreciated.

Installed at first with the title of Kammermusikus (chamber-musician), he was to furnish the organ service in the Schlosskirche. In the music chapel of the duke he filled the places of violin-player and cembalist (harpsichord-player), in the latter capacity in the rehearsals and in the performances of secular music only, as he acted as organist for church music. Later he received the title of Concertmeister. It is appropriate to say here a few words about the duties of a cembalist. All compositions of that time, whether written for chorus of voices *a cappella*, or for instruments, or for voices with instrumental accompaniment, were laid down with a bass voice as foundation, which, usually provided with a

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHUS WILLIAMS, BERLIN.

DAS MARIENTHAL, THURINGEN, EISENACH.

thorough-bass cipher, but sometimes without it, served as a sketch of the accompanying harmony. A filled-out accompaniment of the voices carrying the melody is wanting in places in the separate music movements; often it is entirely missing. The duty of the skilful cembalist consists in filling up the gaps of the instrumental accompaniment on the foundation of the indications contained in the bass voice, and particularly, when such were not at hand, in improvising a harmonious accompaniment suited in character to that of the music. The cembalist must, therefore, be a man versed in the knowledge of harmony and counterpoint, and at the same time an accomplished organ-player. Bach achieved the unsurpassable in this species of skill. Lorenz Christoph Mitzler, the author of works on music (1711–88), writes on this point: "Those who care for delicacy in thorough-bass and well understand what a good accompaniment should be must endeavor to hear Herr Capellmeister Bach, who so accompanies a solo with thorough-bass that it is as if we were at a concert; and he so uses the right hand that the melody seems as if it had been set expressly for it." Unfortunately, the accompaniments which Bach himself played at the performances of his works, and probably improvised, were never written out.

Although the duties of Bach's office in Weimar were mostly those of an organist, yet there is no doubt that he had to assist with other members of the duke's cappella (chapel) in the chamber-music at court. The cappella

possessed, besides Bach, no other prominent musician; but it must have been a good, capable body, since the duke and the whole court were extraordinarily fond of music and showed great pleasure in chamber music. The members of the cappella wore a Hungarian uniform. Bach also, notwithstanding his office of church organist, must have appeared among the chamber musicians in this servile costume. Otherwise his life was a very agreeable one. He instructed Prince Johann Ernst in violin-playing. The young prince had a capacity which was out of the common and took his studies seriously.

The best compositions at that time came from Italy, written in the form of sonatas and concertos. Bach quickly appropriated these forms and introduced them into the composition of pieces in different parts — pieces arranged for the clavichord and organ. With due regard to the character of these instruments, he filled out the new forms with appropriate contents. His style was preferably polyphonic, and many of his preludes and fugues came from this period.

Bach's fame spread abroad beyond the boundaries of his dwelling-place with ever increasing rapidity. Numerous pupils, who later became eminent musicians, came to Weimar to enjoy his instruction. Art journeys led him to the neighboring courts and the neighboring cities. Everywhere he was hailed as the greatest of organ virtuosos and composers. The Swedish hereditary prince Friedrich, who in 1714 lived at the court in Cassel, was so enraptured by Bach's organ-playing that he gave him a costly ring. In the same year Bach visited the Thomascantor Kuhnau in Leipsic; he performed there his cantata "Nun komm', der Heiden Heiland," and played the organ in the church service. The severe art critic Mattheson of Hamburg lavished the highest praises on him (1716), and asked for his biography, which indeed did appear twenty-four years later in Mattheson's "Ehrenpforte."

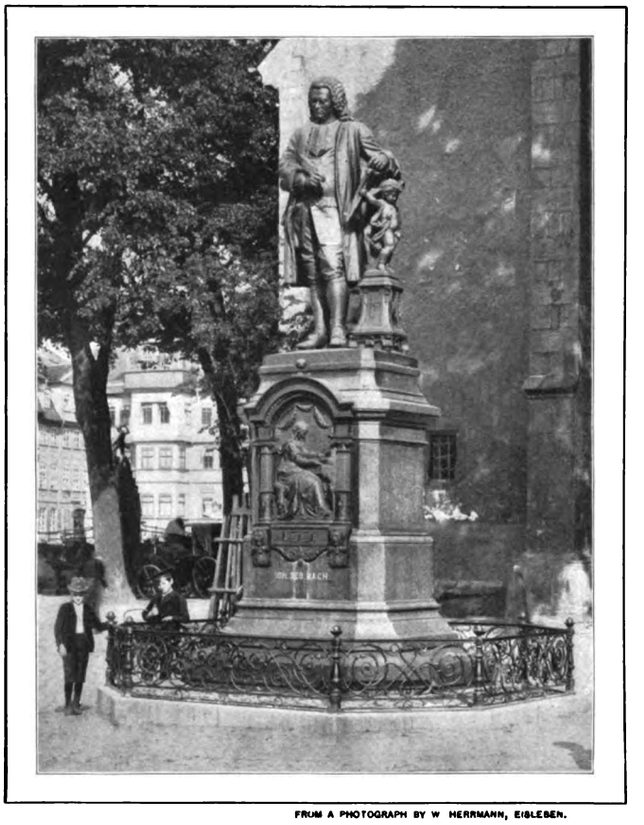
The most important event during Bach's nine years' stay in Weimar was his art journey to Dresden. There the clavier virtuoso Jean Louis Marchand, born in 1671 at Lyons, and therefore fourteen years older than Bach, was living. Marchand, who held the places of royal chamber organist and organist of St. Benedict's Church in Paris, where he was the favorite of the court and of the fashionable Parisian society, was considered, and rightly so, as an excellent organ-player and composer for the clavier. In Dresden he excited the greatest possible enthusiasm in those court circles which showed more sympathy for French than for German art. Among the musicians of the court cappella Bach possessed some acquaintances, such as the concert-master Jean Baptiste Volumier. Volumier was born in Spain in 1677, and was brought up and educated in France; but in Berlin, where he was established in 1709, and in Dresden, he seemed to have turned more to the German than to the French art. He, with other members of the cappella, invited Bach to

PORTRAIT OF BACH.

In the upper left-hand corner, the Thomas Church; right-hand corner, the Observatory at Leipsic; below, the Thomas School and Bach Memorial.

come to Dresden for a concert with Marchand. Bach came, found opportunity secretly to hear Marchand, and sent him a written challenge, in which he bound himself to write out on the spot a musical task set him by Marchand if the latter would make a similar promise. Marchand accepted the challenge. A jury of musicians was chosen, the time named, and the salon of the prime minister Flemming named as the place of

meeting. Bach was punctually on hand, but awaited his rival in vain. Undoubtedly Marchand had found an opportunity to hear Bach secretly, and had posted off in the early morning. From the first the French artist would have had to decline a contest in organ-playing, but the majority



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. HERRMANN, EISLEBEN.

BACH MONUMENT IN MARKET-PLACE AT EISENACH.

of Dresden society believed that he surpassed the German master as a clavier virtuoso.

On that memorable evening, whose date, alas! is not certain, Bach played alone, and so delighted those present that they hailed him with one voice as the greatest of all clavichord-players. It is a commendable evidence of Bach's modest disposition that he seems to have attached little importance to this brilliant success, which stood at that time for the triumph of German art over French art. Earnest, great, with his deep inward thoughts turned toward the highest ideals, he could truly feel indifferent toward such recognition from without.

Worldly frivolity was far from him; on the contrary, he possessed self-respect and manly spirit. When the church authorities suspected him of using an application for the place in the Liebfrauenkirche of Weimar only as a means of obtaining from the Duke an increase of his salary,

he wrote to the church board, in a letter dated January 14, 1714, denying this so energetically that they did not venture on a reply, and left Bach's bitter self-justification unanswered. The board must have seen their injustice, because later the injured master received an invitation from them, in the most complimentary style, to try the new organ at Easter, 1716. Bach accepted in a very polite letter written in Weimar, April 22.

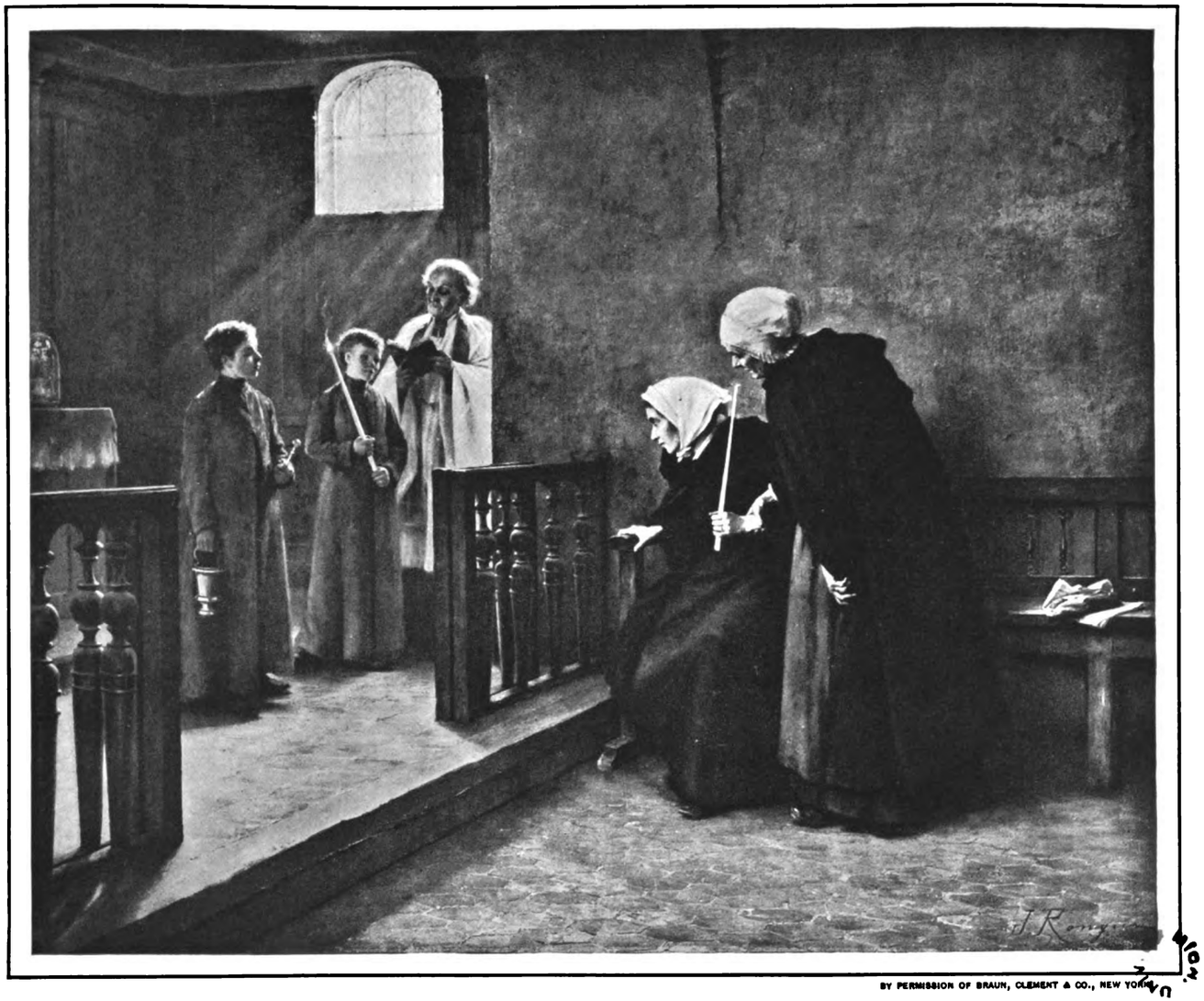
In November, 1717, Bach accepted a call from Prince Leopold (aged three-and-twenty years), and took the position of Kapellmeister and Musikdirector in Köthen. The youthful prince was highly cultivated, and had journeyed through Germany, Holland, England, and Italy. Bach said of him that he was really an excellent musician. The love of music common to both formed an ideal bond of friendship between them. It may be accepted that the pieces composed in this period for violin and bass viol were intended for the prince himself, as he played both instruments. The orchestral compositions were performed by the court musicians; Bach was always the accompanying cembalist.

We know that Bach was first installed in Weimar in 1703, and we may suppose that if he was not an eminent virtuoso he certainly was a very good violin-player. Only an artist perfectly familiar with the technic of the violin could write for it as Bach wrote. His works are not only difficult, but the fingering in the double thirds and the use of the open strings for chords show the practically experienced violin-player. Bach's liking for the polyphonic style is also evident in these compositions. We shall speak here only of the last part of the second violin suite, containing the ciaconna. I do not hesitate to characterize this wonderful composition as the most magnificent, the most beautiful and imaginative that was ever written for the violin.

Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from remarking that this style of violin composition is not suited to the real character of the instrument. The violin is preferably a melody-carrying instrument. A truly independent working out of two voices is hardly possible; all polyphony is strange to the violin. A three- or four-voiced chord can be given only as an arpeggio; and there is added the difficulty that the violin has no deeper tone than low G. Therefore in all solo violin compositions we miss the proper ground bass, upon which the pillars of harmony naturally rise.

In the autumn of 1718 Bach journeyed to Halle in order to become acquainted personally with Handel, but again the latter had left his birthplace. A peculiar fate hindered the meeting of these two heroes: in 1705 Handel had left Lübeck just before the arrival of Bach.

Bach had accompanied Prince Leopold two different times to Karlsbad. On his return from the second journey he found that his loving, faithful consort was no more among the living. She had died on July 4, 1720, a few days before his arrival. It must have been principally the anxiety for the proper care and nurture of his children that led Bach to



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THE THANKSGIVING.

FROM THE PAINTING BY JEANNE ROUGIER.

contract a second marriage, on December 3, 1721, with Jungfrau Anna Magdalena, the youngest daughter of the royal Weissenfels court- and field-trumpeter, Herr Wülkens. This marriage was also a very happy one. The bride, who was twenty-one years old, possessed an excellent soprano voice, had been thoroughly educated in music, had even studied its theory, and took an intelligent interest in Bach's work. She also helped her husband practically, and often did his copying in order to relieve him of one of his many cares.

In the house itself there was music all the time. Bach wrote in connection with this, on October 28, 1730, to his friend Georg Erdmann: "The children are all born musicians, and I can even now have a vocal and instrumental concert with my family, for my wife sings a pretty soprano and my daughter bravely joins in." Among the piano compositions written in Köthen are the "Inventions" and the first part of the "Wohltemperirte Clavier"; that is, most of the twenty-four preludes and fugues were written there. The twenty-four preludes and fugues contained in the second volume belong to a later period. Posterity may thank the genius and intelligence of Bach for the tempered tuning of the piano which was inaugurated by him. The preludes and fugues of both volumes are in a chromatically rising succession in all the twenty-four major and minor keys. In each prelude the same sentiment is expressed as in the following fugue. The forms of these pieces differ among themselves. Sometimes we find them as short imaginative pieces, apparently set together out of harmonic progressions, though the melody, which is not marked so as to be recognized, may be found in the points of the harmonic figures. This is the case in the preludes of the first part, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 15, 21, and in Nos. 3 and 6 of the second part. Sometimes we find a prelude in a simple song form, as Nos. 9 and 12 of the first part. Often the motive is carried out in the imitative style, as in Nos. 4, 7, 14, 17, 18, and 20 of the first and many others of the second part, of which I select the twentieth as the most interesting. The most beautiful preludes are those in the style of the "Passion" arias, as Nos. 8, 22, and 24, Part I, and 4, 12, and 22, Part II.

The fugues are all strong; most of them are set with one, often two, firmly held counterpoints, and even, as in the F Minor Fugue in Volume I, in four voices with three counter-themes worked in double counterpoint. They are the most magnificent fugues ever written for the piano. Different moods are expressed in them: amiable cheerfulness in No. 3, humor in No. 9, spirited jesting in No. 15, manly bravery in No. 5, earnest consecration in No. 4, quiet meditation in No. 8, deep sadness in No. 12, pathos in Nos. 18 and 22, soul anguish in No. 24, Volume I, inward piety in Nos. 9 and 22, Volume II. In all these fugues the most skilful counterpoint is only a means to an end. The close carrying out of the wonderful combinations is kept free and natural. Here

WILHELM FRIEDEMANN BACH,

Eldest son of Sebastian Bach.
A great organist and fugue-player.

KARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH,

Third son of Sebastian Bach.
Composer, director, teacher, and critic.

the contrapuntal style develops in itself a speech for the expression of Bach's own characteristic thoughts. From all these splendid fugues I select as the most important in three voices Nos. 8, 13, Volume I; 4, 6, 18, and 24, Volume II; in four voices, Nos. 12, 16, 18, 20, 24, Volume I; 7, 9, 16, and the grand Fugue in B Minor, No. 22, Volume II; the last named has a close carrying out of four voices in double counterpoint in the tenth. The work contains two five-voiced fugues, of which the first is a triple fugue; one fugue only is two-voiced.

This work, like the "Clavierbüchlein," begun in 1720, and the "Inventions," was written for instruction; the "Orgelbüchlein" and the "Kunst der Fuge" were written for the instruction of organists. In the last-named work, which I like to call the high school of contrapuntists, fourteen fugues and four canons, in all styles of counterpoint, are built up from one theme. I have thoroughly explained this work in my book, "An Analysis of the Fugues and Canons contained in Bach's 'Art of the Fugue'" (Leipsic, Breitkopf & Härtel).

The Cantorat in the Thomasschule in Leipsic had become vacant through the death of Kuhnau on June 5, 1722. Telemann and Graupner having declined the place, the council of the city, toward the end of the year 1722, sent an invitation to Bach to become a candidate. On February 7, 1723, Bach played as his trial piece the cantata "Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe." On the 5th of May it was announced to him officially that he was accepted. On Monday, the 31st of May, he was formally installed. Bach could not have exchanged with pleasure

the office of Kapellmeister in Köthen for the apparently more limited office in Leipsic, with its more modest title of "Cantor." But he knew that he ought to be working in an environment which possessed richer influences in art. Among his predecessors was Sethus Calvesius, born February 21, 1556, who had been cantor in the Thomasschule from 1594 to the day of his death, November 24, 1615. Bach must have considered it an honor to be the successor of such a famous man; besides that, he promised himself that moving to Leipsic would result in important advantages for the scientific education of his son.

Bach was not too much confined by his official duties: personally, the Thomascantor had only to lead the church music in the two principal churches of the parish; in practice and in the performances the prefects of the chorus represented him. So only is it explainable that Bach could compose the greater part of his works, among them the most important, in Leipsic, in spite of the many dissensions with the two rectors of the school, and numerous misunderstandings with the council. Among these works, which comprise the magnificent church cantatas, masses, oratorios, motets, concertos for one or more instruments, chamber music for the voice and for instruments, compositions for the piano alone and for the organ, many present themselves as unsurpassable monuments of German music. Two of these, the "Matthäus-Passion" and the "High Mass," have long been the best-known.

The "Matthäus-Passion" was performed in its first form on Good Friday, April 15, 1729. According to the score which is shown to-day, the work was brought out again by Bach in 1740, after he had revised it many times and added several parts. Until the end of the eighteenth century this Passion-music was repeated on Good Friday by Bach's successors in the Thomasschule. Since then it, like most of the works of the immortal master, has been forgotten. Only in some compositions for the piano, and in a few motets set *a cappella*, of which the most important is "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied," does the memory of Bach live on.

The first performance of the "Matthäus-Passion" in the nineteenth century took place on March 12, 1829, in Berlin. For this artistic act of the highest importance we may thank the energy and enthusiasm of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, who was then twenty years old. It is not known whether Mendelssohn brought out this work, the representation of which took fully four hours, without cutting; but to-day, as far as I know, there is only one city, Strasburg in Alsace, where, with genuine piety, the "Matthäus-Passion" is performed uncut in such fashion that on Maundy Thursday the first part is given and on Good Friday the second.

An intelligent examination and loving comprehension of the wonderful beauties of the work do not hinder me from saying that all the parts are not of equal greatness. The grandest are the introductory double

chorus, with the choral introduced as the *ripieno*, and the concluding chorus of the second part. The smaller eight-voiced chorus parts of the second part are highly characteristic and splendid in tone-quality. The figuration of the choral "O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross," following the

MEMORIAL TO JOHANN CHRISTIAN BACH.

Probably a title-page. Engraved by Bartolozzi.

powerful chorus "Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden?" is not of the same importance as the choruses mentioned above. Bach composed this chorus, which he called "choral" and had set in E sharp major, originally as the introductory chorus of the "Johannis-Passion." Later he cut it out of this, and on the second working over of the "Matthäus-Passion" transposed it to E major and placed it at the end of its first part. Its effect in this place is very impressive and heart-stirring. The recitative of the Evangelist, however, even though the words of the text

are appropriately illustrated, is tedious on account of its length, and never reaches the beauty of the recitative of the Messiah. The recitative of the Evangelist, "Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel zerriss" ("Behold, the curtain of the temple is torn"), has an overwhelming effect. Of the solo numbers, which are often set to words unpoetic, sometimes even repulsive, several are heard to-day, and they are no longer pleasing; others, on the contrary, such as the aria with chorus, "Ich will bei meinen Jesus wachen" ("I will watch by my Jesus"), the duet with chorus, "So ist mein Jesus gefangen" ("Now is my Jesus a prisoner"), the aria, "Erbarme dich" ("Have pity"), are unsurpassable in beauty.

I do not belong to those blind enthusiasts who call out, "Splendid! wonderful!" every time they hear one of Bach's works. It is certainly clear that among these (and there are many which are doubtfully his; for example, the "Lucas-Passion") there must be some of less worth than others. But even in these may be recognized the genius which, though its influence reaches far out into the works of his time, is always his child, and never can quite withdraw itself from his influence and the powerful leadership of his taste.

Of the "B Minor Mass," commonly called the "High Mass," there were at first composed only the first two parts, the Kyrie and the Gloria. Bach presented these in Dresden to the Elector Friedrich August himself, with a letter dated July 27, 1733. The other parts were written later, the Sanctus sometime between 1735 and 1737. The whole mass was finished in 1738. In sending the first two parts he had in view the appointment of court composer. The mass is not suited to the Roman Catholic Church service on account of the great length of its parts. The most important part of this monumental work is the first, and of this again the first Kyrie. After four measures, which give the sentiment, there arises a five-voiced fugue with the words "Kyrie eleïson," and accompanied by the orchestra. I do not hesitate to say that this wonderfully effective fugue has not its equal for inwardness, grandeur, and beauty; and it stands alone, unapproachable in its kind. Even Bach himself never surpassed it in any of his other works.

I refer those who wish to study thoroughly these two gigantic works to my book, "Zur Einführung in Sebastian Bach's 'Matthäus-Passion,'" and Dr. Leopold Schmidt's book on the "B Minor Mass." Both works appeared in the publications of the "Harmonie" in Berlin. The restricted length of this article does not allow me a closer examination of these or of other works of Bach. The comprehensive catalogue of the collected works of the master, in the forty-sixth year of the publications of the Bach Gesellschaft of Leipsic, gives an idea of his astonishing power of composition.

Bach took many art journeys from Leipsic into other cities. The

journey to the court of Frederick the Great is the most noteworthy. On Sunday, May 7, 1747, Bach entered Potsdam. When the king heard of his arrival he ordered his instant attendance, and Bach appeared in his traveling-costume. The king immediately had him try all his costly Silbermann pianofortes, and proposed a theme himself, which Bach carried out into a fugue. On the following day Bach played the organ in the Heiligengeistkirche before a numerous audience. In the evening, again commanded to the castle, he extemporized a six-voiced fugue upon a theme chosen by himself. The king and the whole court were filled with the greatest admiration.

Dark and full of trouble indeed was the evening of life for this immortal master. His eyes had been weak from birth, and in 1749 this weakness developed into a painful disease. Two operations in Leipsic by the resident English oculist were such failures that Bach became entirely blind. On July 18, 1750, his sight suddenly returned to him. A few hours after that he had a stroke, followed by a high fever. Ten days afterward he died.

Bach's compositions are the outcomings of his purely ideal way of looking at the world, and of his deep religious feeling. Only a mind truly pious and strong in the faith could create the sublime pictures in his church music. His religious trend of thought is recognizable also in his organ compositions, and in many works not destined for the church. I have indicated this already in considering the preludes and fugues of the "Wohltemperirte Clavier." But Bach must not be taken on that account as a pious visionary. His soul was free from every unhealthy thought and unnatural feeling. In life he was a practical man, conscientious in the fulfilment of his official obligations, true and self-denying in his family duties, and self-sacrificing for his relatives, an earnest and severe but loving teacher of his children, free from every eccentricity, an honorable citizen and frugal householder, who with narrow means had known how to raise and educate many children.

His proposals for improvements in the making of organs and claviers, his own invention of new instruments, the introduction of the tempered tuning of the clavier, his new fingering of these instruments, which is in use to-day, show him to have been a highly intelligent thinker.

At Bach's death-bed stood his wife, his daughters, his youngest son Christian, his son-in-law Altnikol, and his last scholar Müthel. Even the fever had not been able to break Bach's intellectual strength. He dictated at that time to Altnikol the choral "Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein" ("When we are in sorest need"), but had him superscribe the words "Vor deinen Thron tret' ich hiermit" ("With this I go before thy throne").

There was deep lamentation everywhere over Bach's death. His children scattered throughout the world. Four of his surviving sons became famous as composers and piano- and organ-players. These were: Wilhelm

Friedemann, born November 22, 1710, in Weimar, died July 1, 1784, in Berlin; Karl Philipp Emanuel, born March 14, 1714, in Weimar, died September 14, 1788, in Hamburg; Johann Christopher Friedrich, born June 29, 1732, in Leipsic, died in Bückeburg, January 26, 1795; and Johann Christian, born 1735, in Leipsic, died 1782, in London.

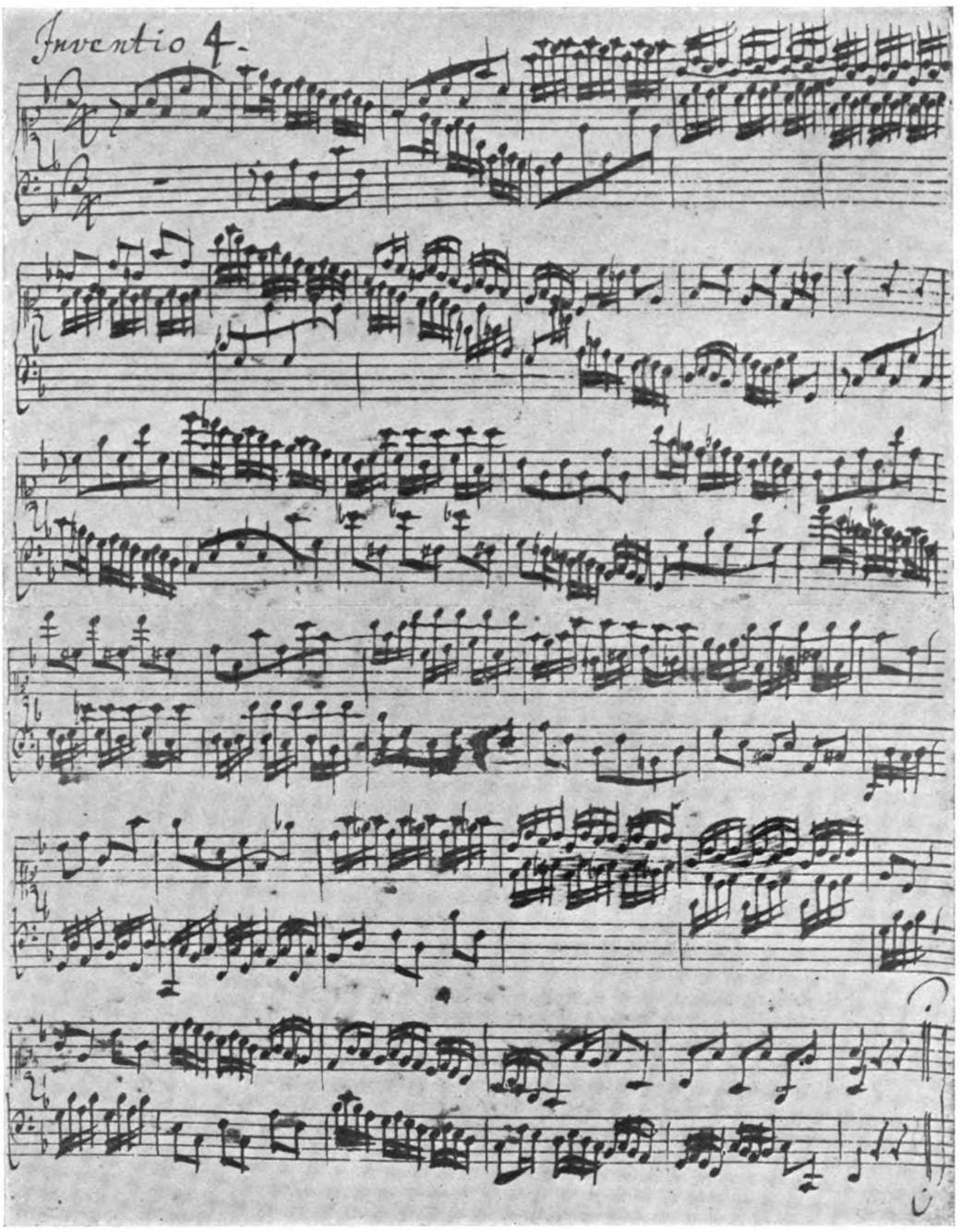
A son of Christopher Bach, Wilhelm Friedrich Ernst, grandson and last male descendant of Johann Sebastian Bach, was born May 27, 1759, in Bückeburg, and died in Berlin, December 25, 1845. He too was highly esteemed as an excellent musician. Bach's widow lived on, poor and supported mostly by niggardly public relief, and died in February, 1760, as *Almosenfrau*, in a house on the Hainstrasse in Leipsic; her grave is not known. The three orphaned daughters lived also in very narrow circumstances; the youngest of them, Regina Johanna, the last of the children, died December 14, 1809.

So did the wealthy city of Leipsic allow the family of its greatest citizen to live out their days in poverty and want.

At present it is intended to raise a monument to this immortal worker on the scene of his labors, before the Thomaskirche. The Bach Gesellschaft, formed in 1850, has already made his most beautiful monument by its edition of his works. Bach will never be forgotten: he is the milestone from which the art of German music took a new direction; he is the tree of life upon which the fruits of all later generations ripen; he is the sun whose warming, enlivening, generating beams will stream into the far-distant future.

K. P. E. BACH.

From the Royal Library, Berlin.



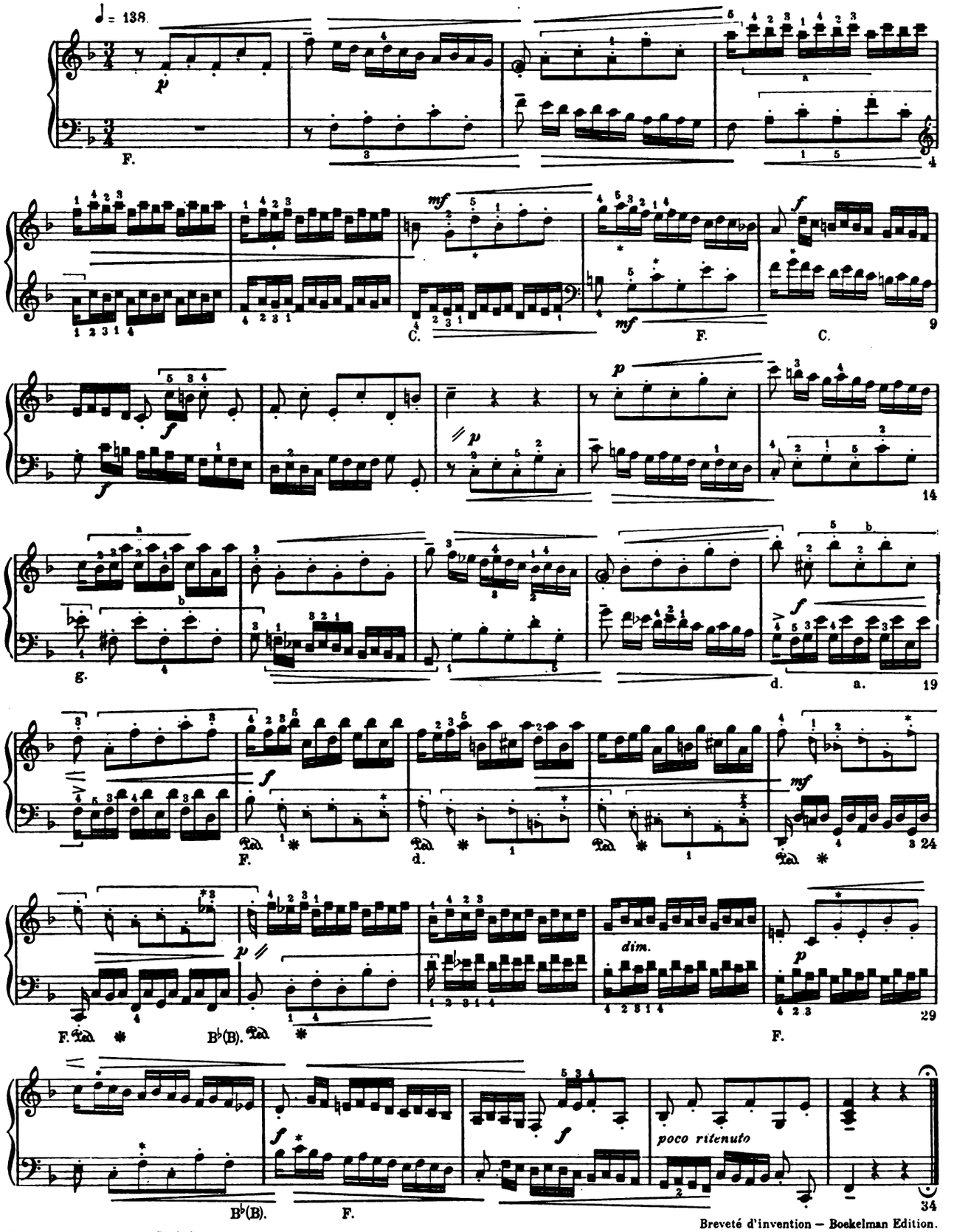
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF BACH'S EIGHTH INVENTION.

FROM THE ROYAL LIBRARY, BERLIN.

NOTE.—On the opposite page is an analysis of this composition made by Mr. Bernard Boekelman, showing the theme in red. It is probable that Bach originally intended these "Inventions" as a guide to extempore playing, since the manuscript title reads "not merely how to obtain good Inventions (ideas), but also how to develop them properly." They were written probably in 1722–23.

According to the Friedemann Bach manuscript, reproduced above, this is the Fourth Invention ("Inventio 4"), but according to the manuscript owned by Spohr it is the Eighth, and so called here.

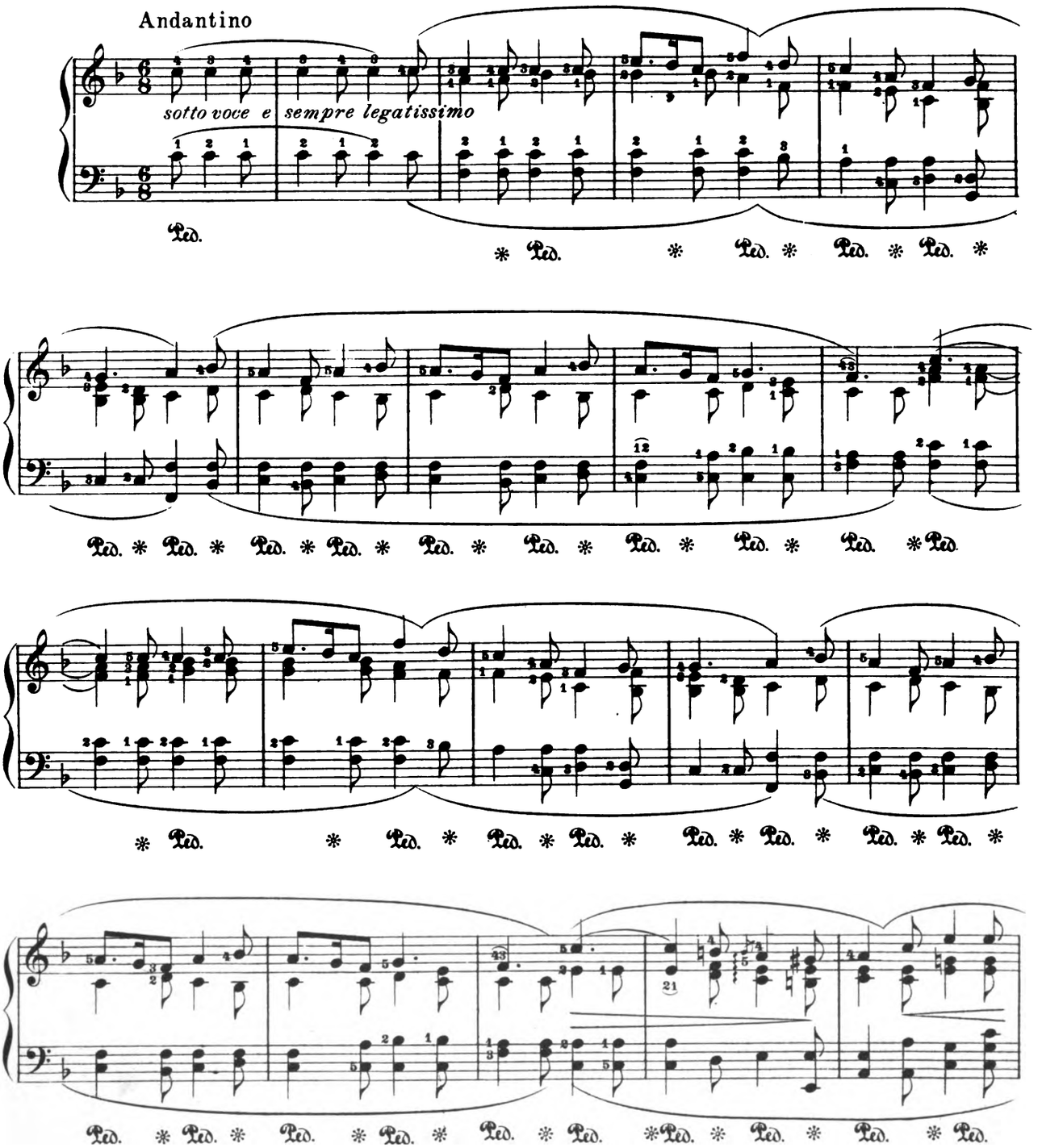
ANALYSIS OF BACH'S EIGHTH INVENTION.

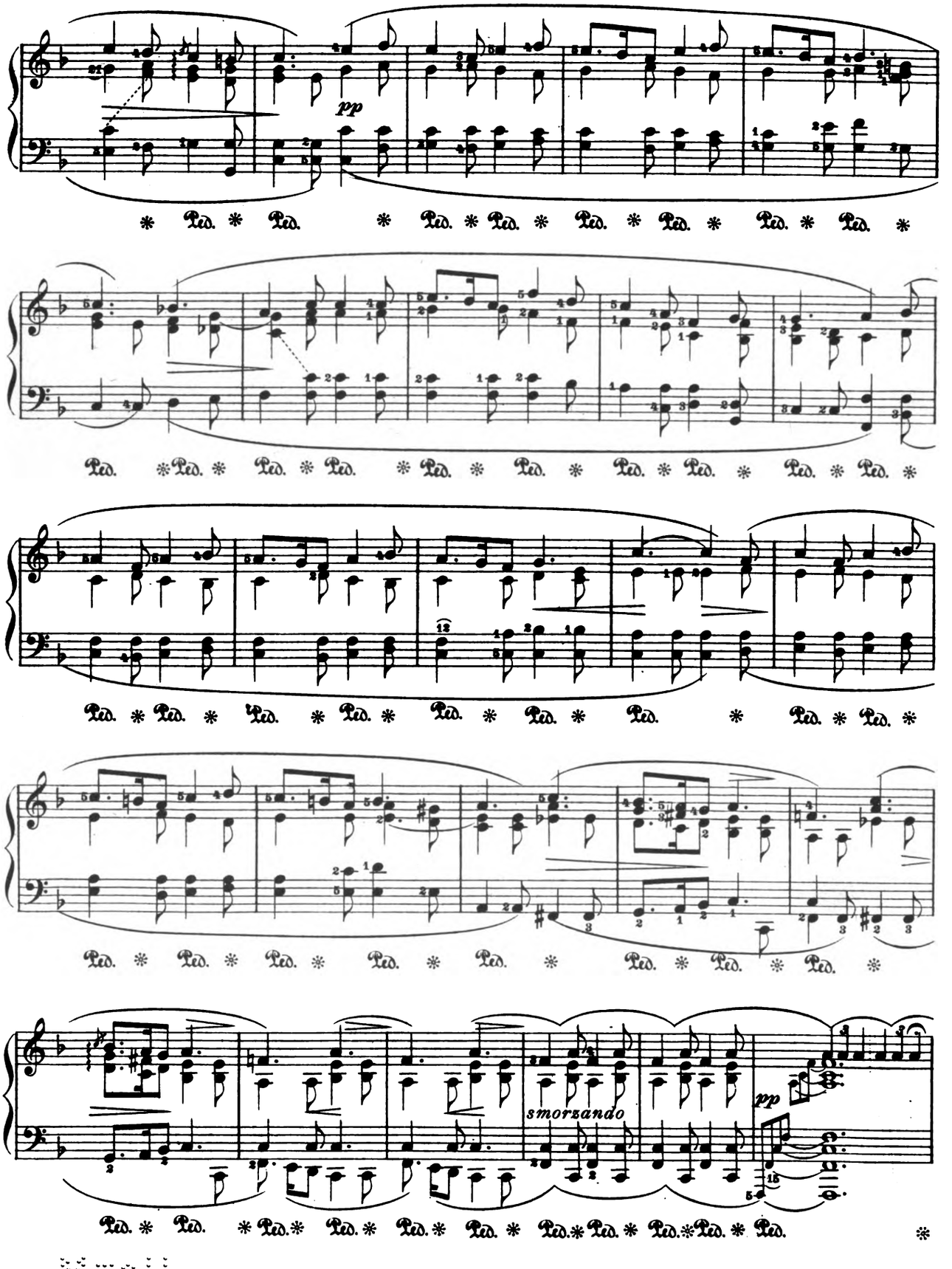


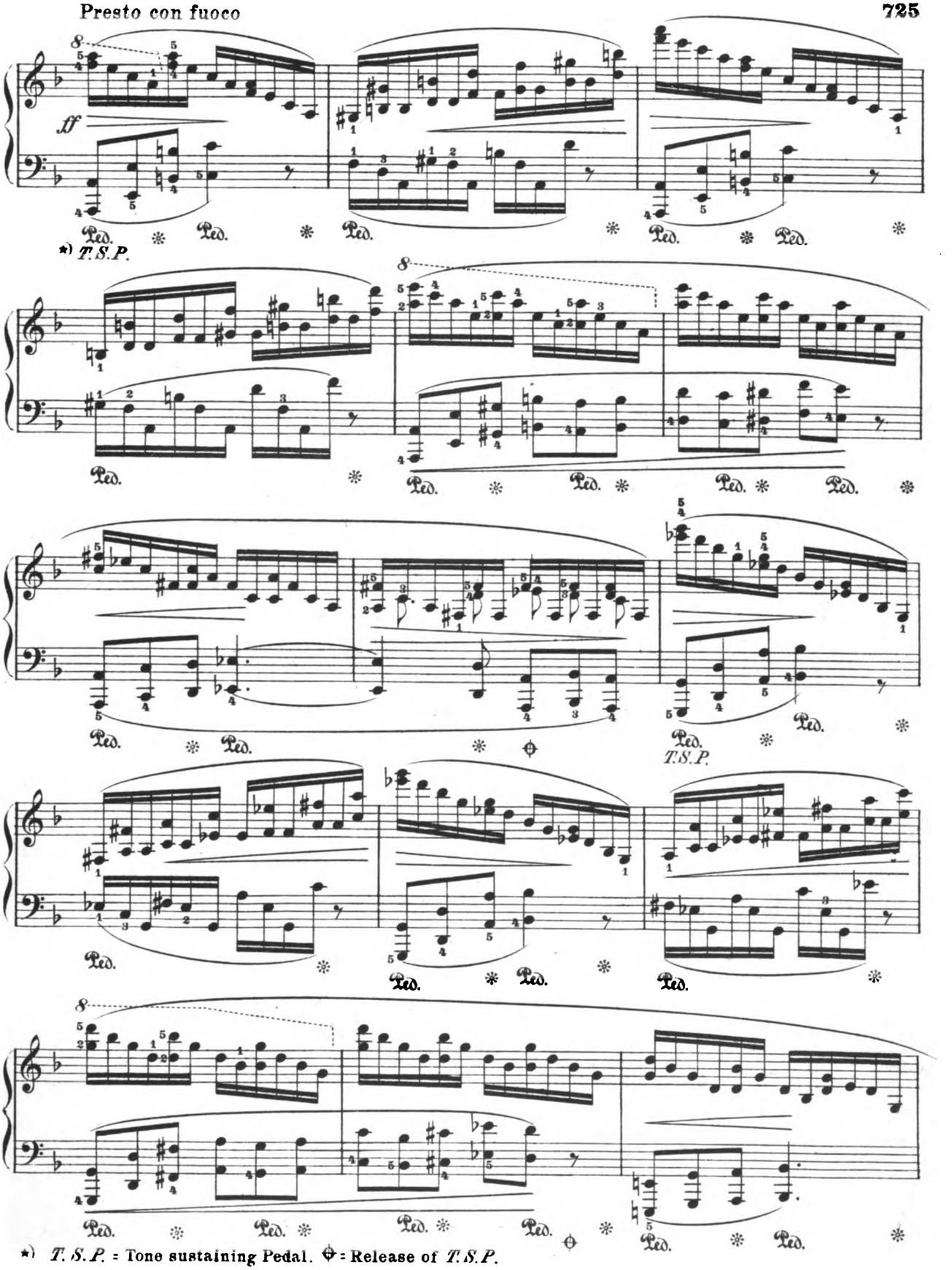
SECOND BALLADE

F MAJOR

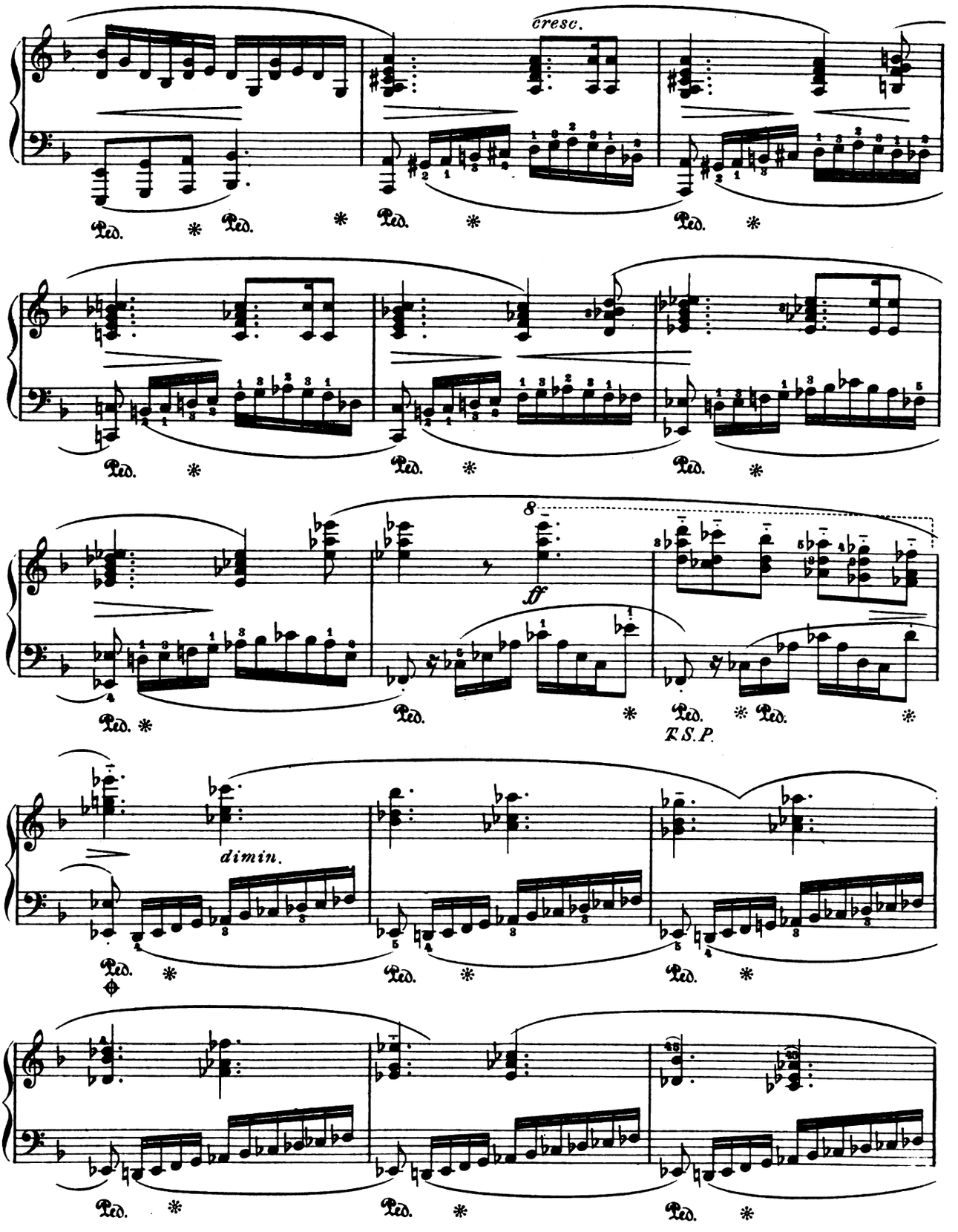
CHOPIN, Op. 38

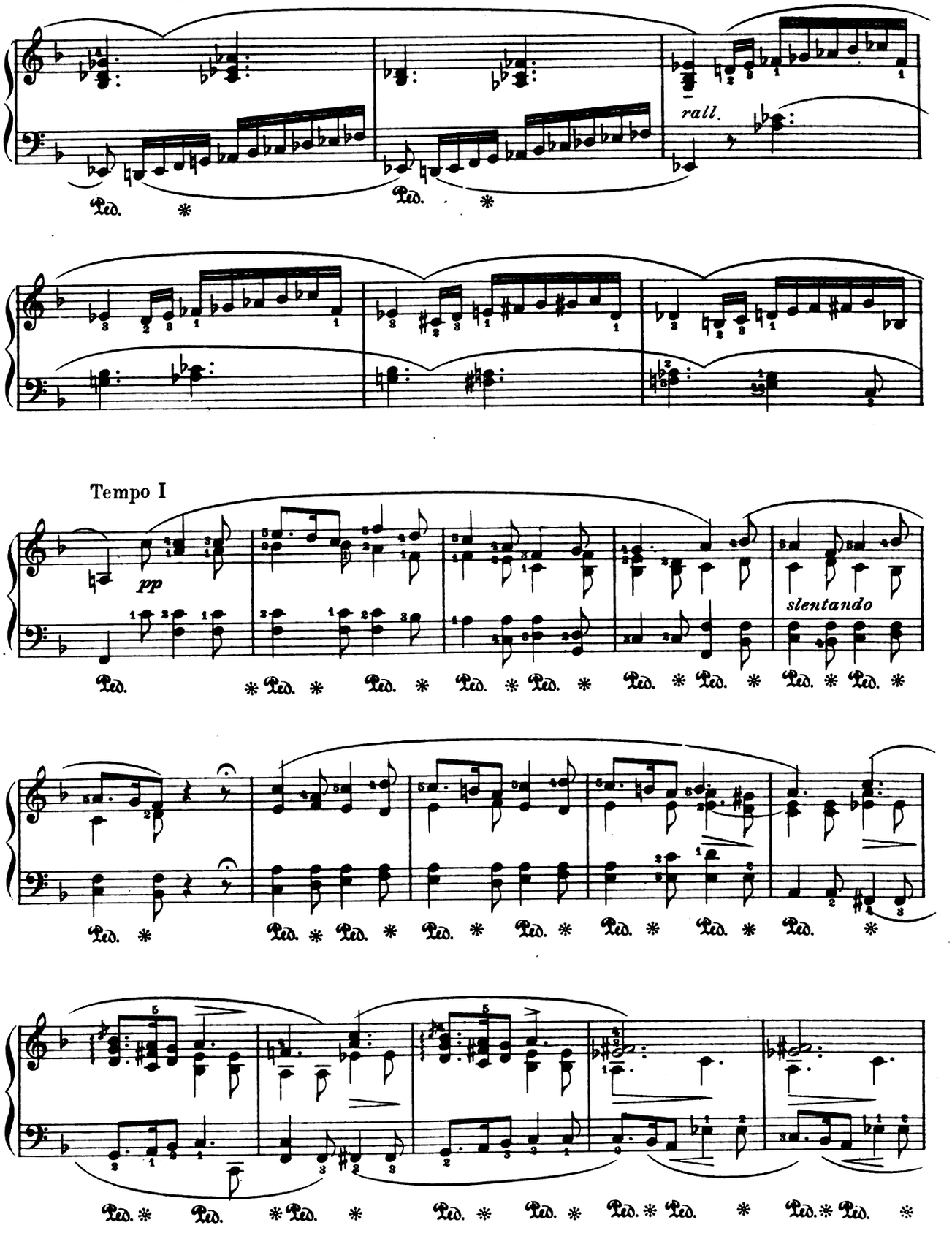


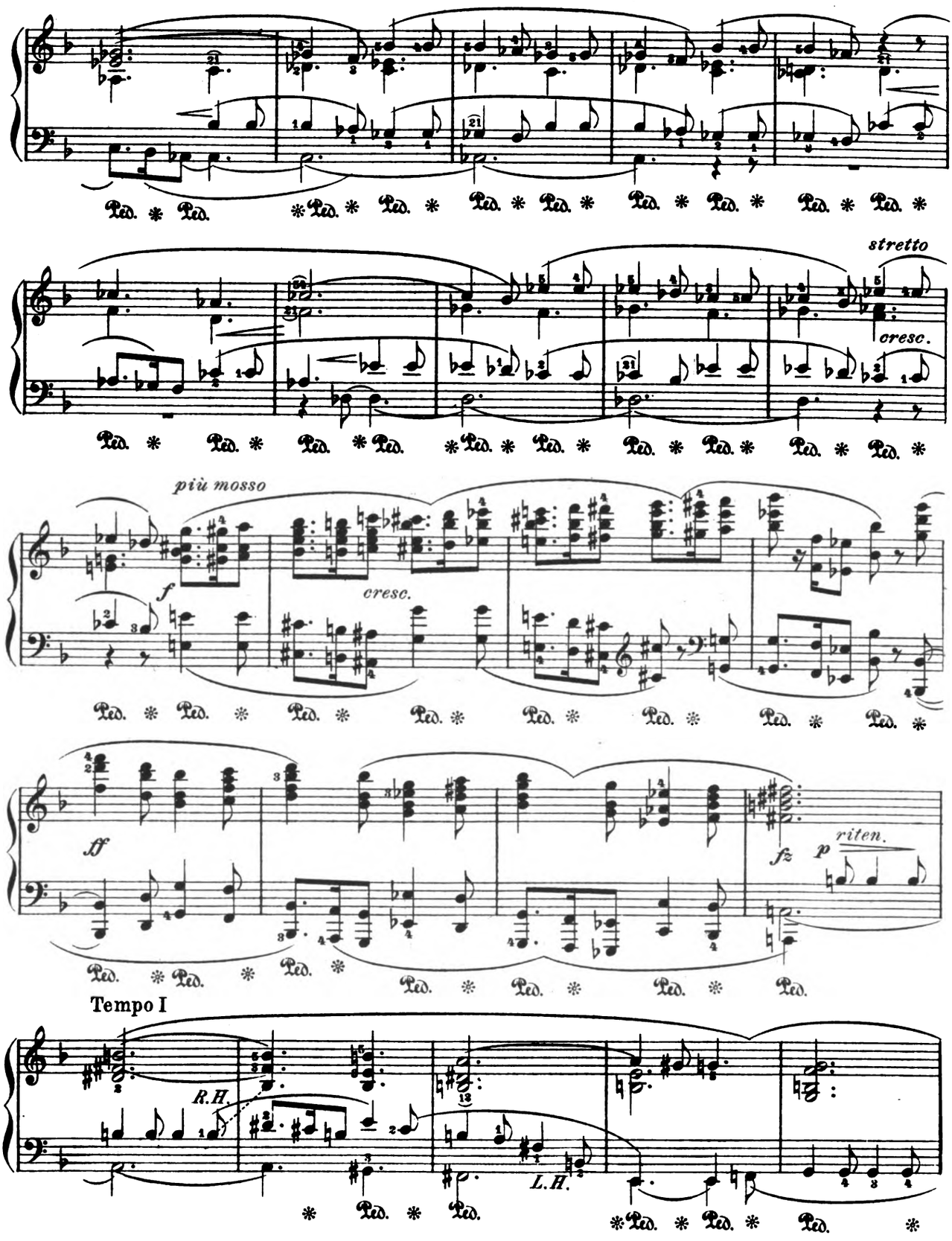


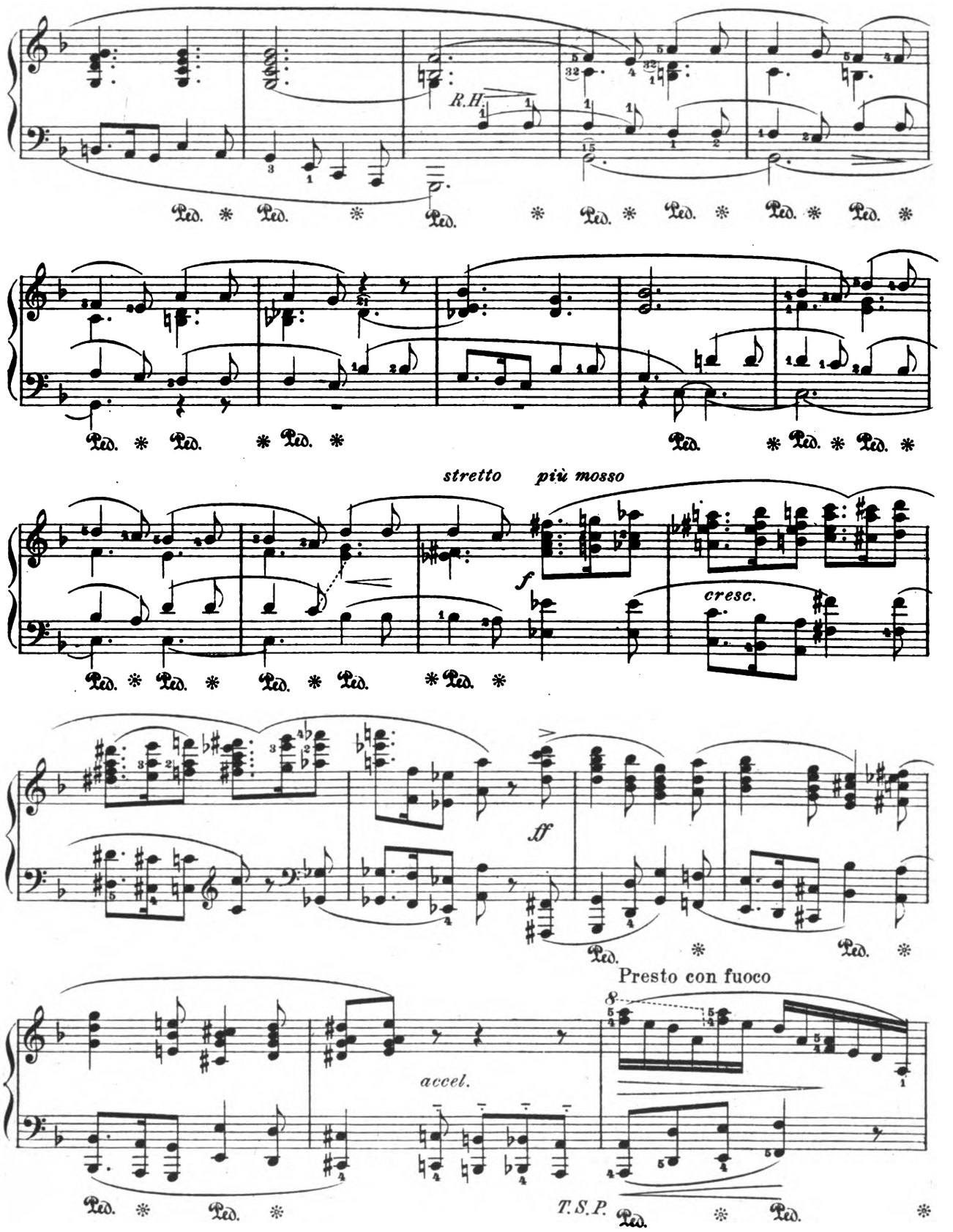


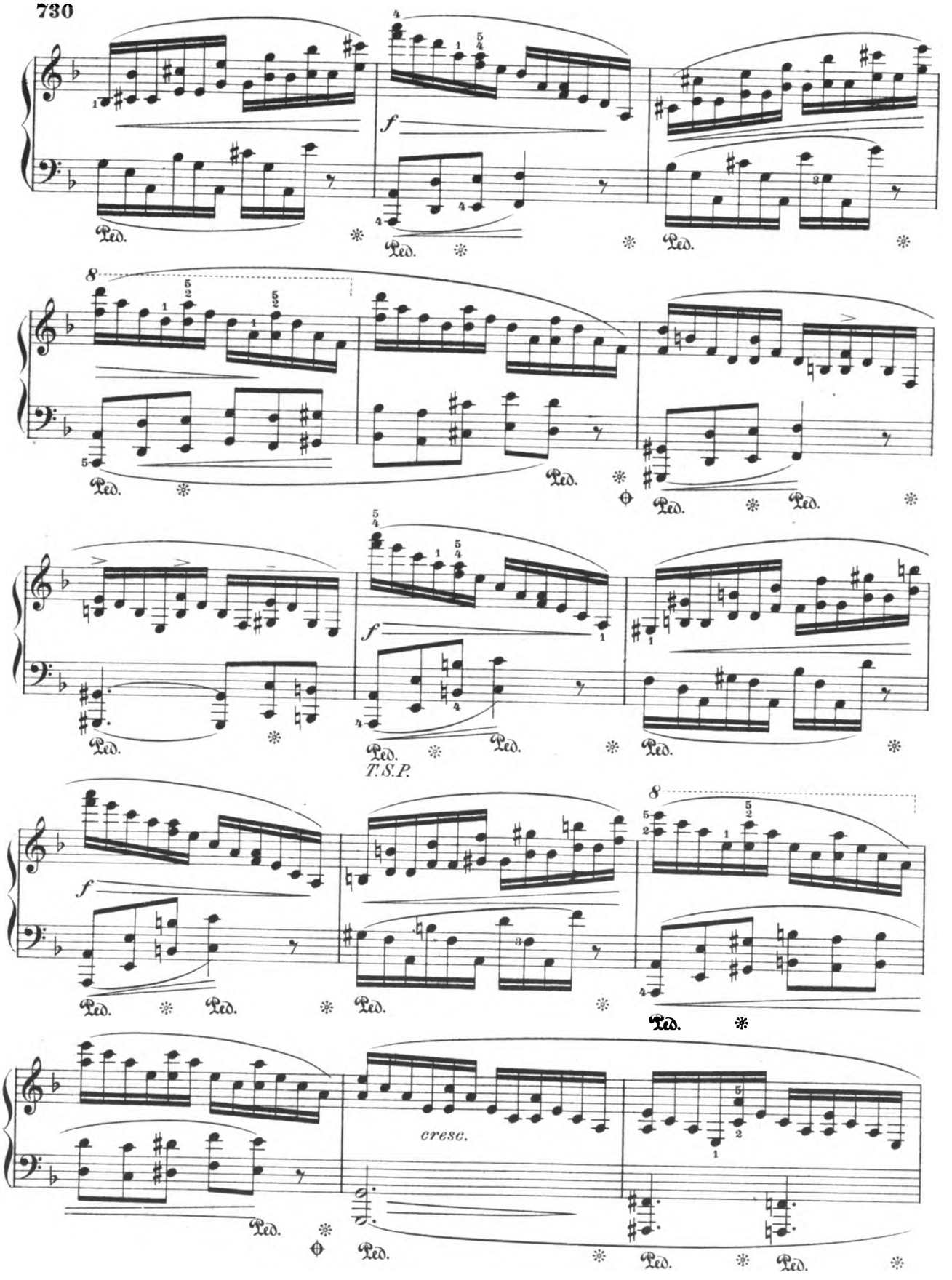
*) *T. S. P.* = Tone sustaining Pedal. ⊖ = Release of *T. S. P.*





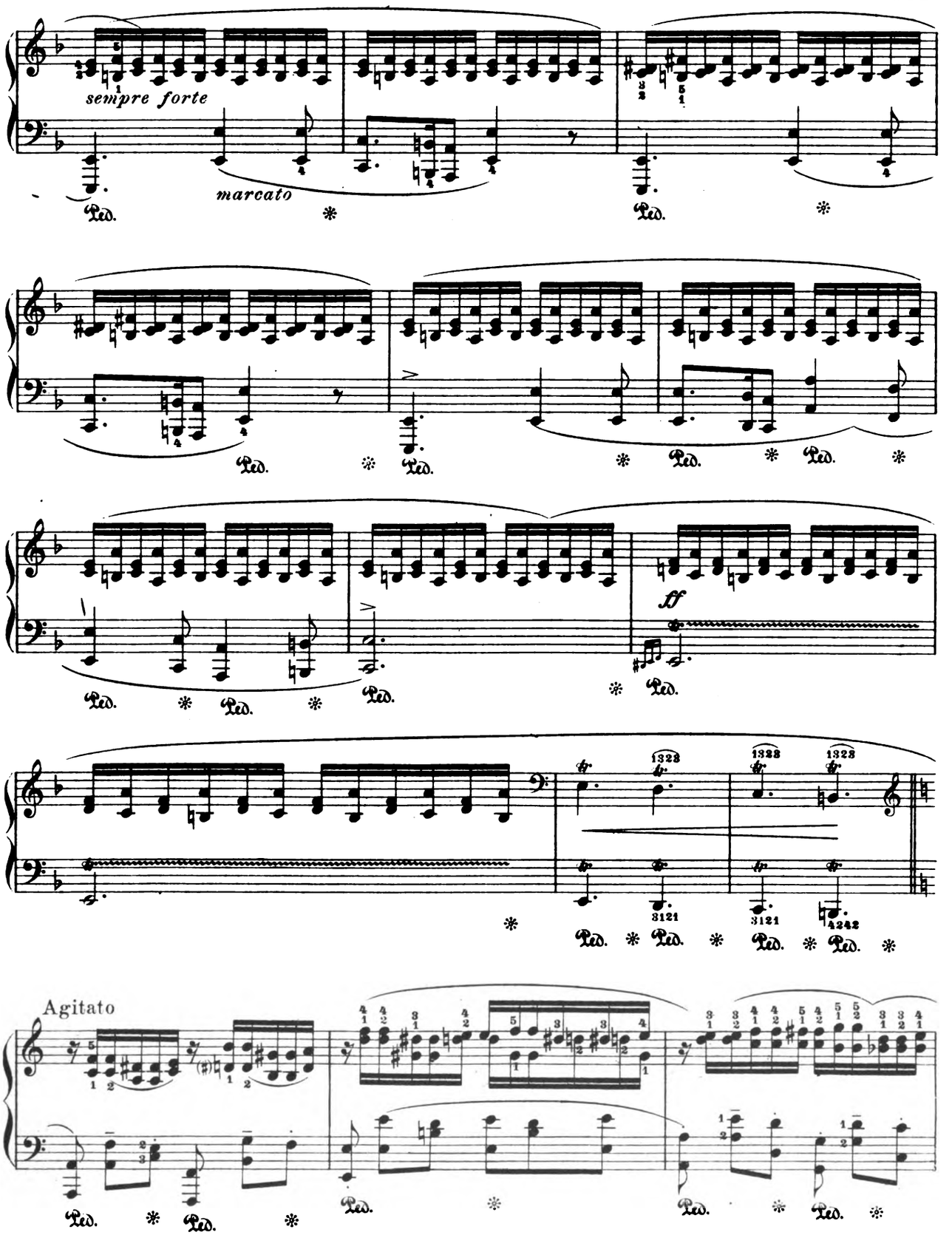


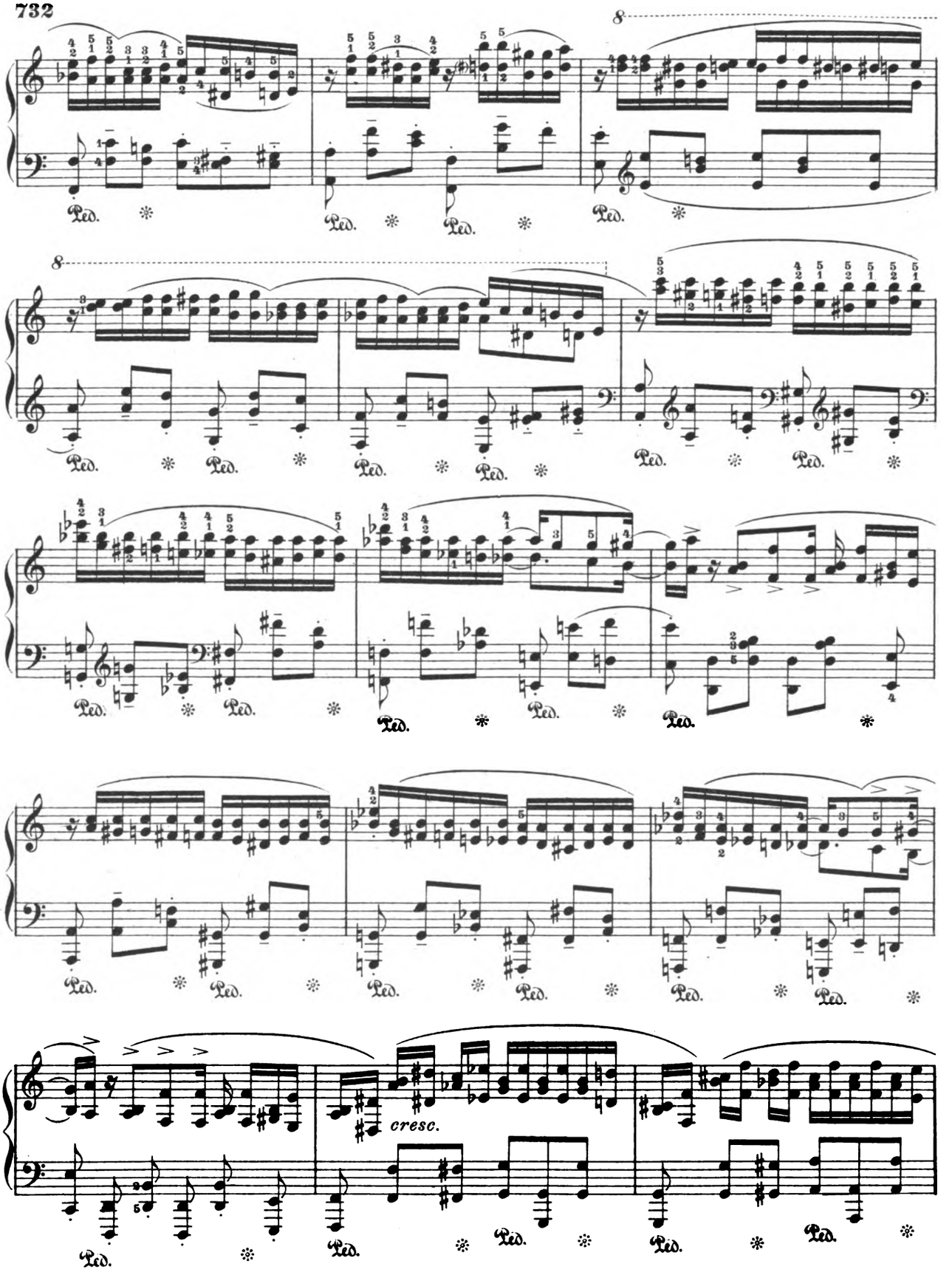


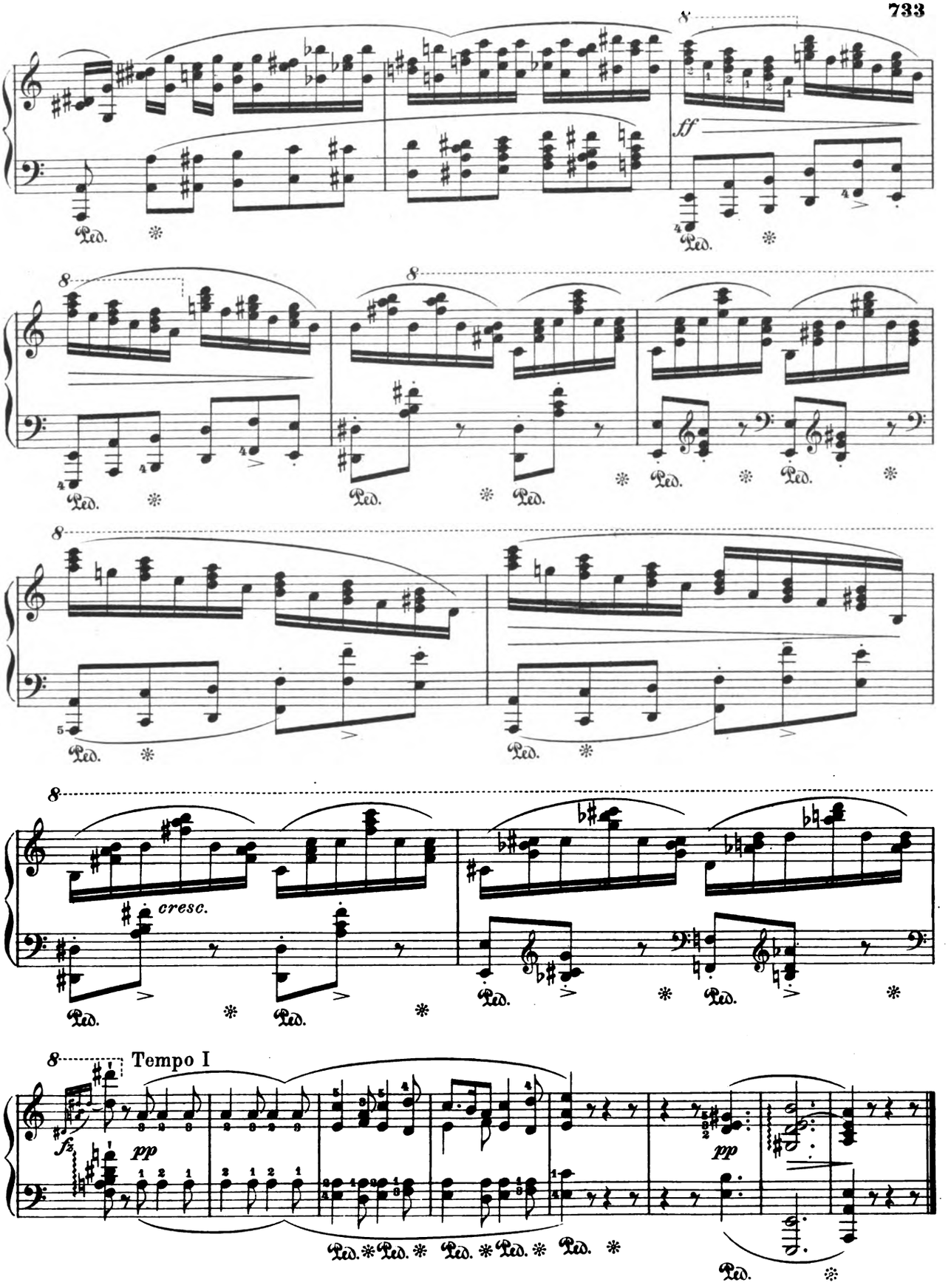


POET'S NARCISSUS.

RUBINSTEIN SAID OF THE BALLADE OF CHOPIN (F MAJOR, OP. 38) THAT IT WAS LIKE A FIELD FLOWER WITH THE WIND BLOWING IT.





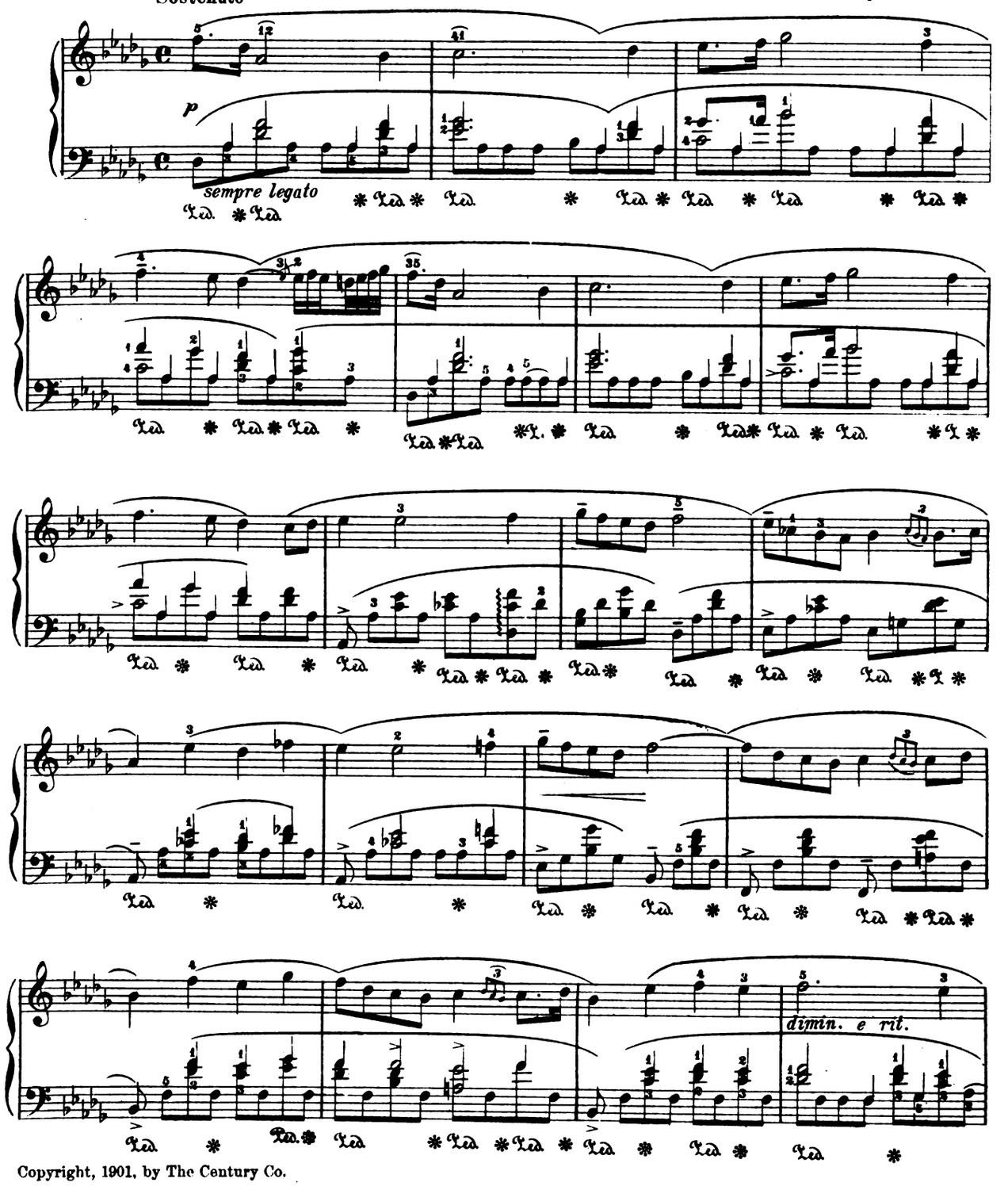


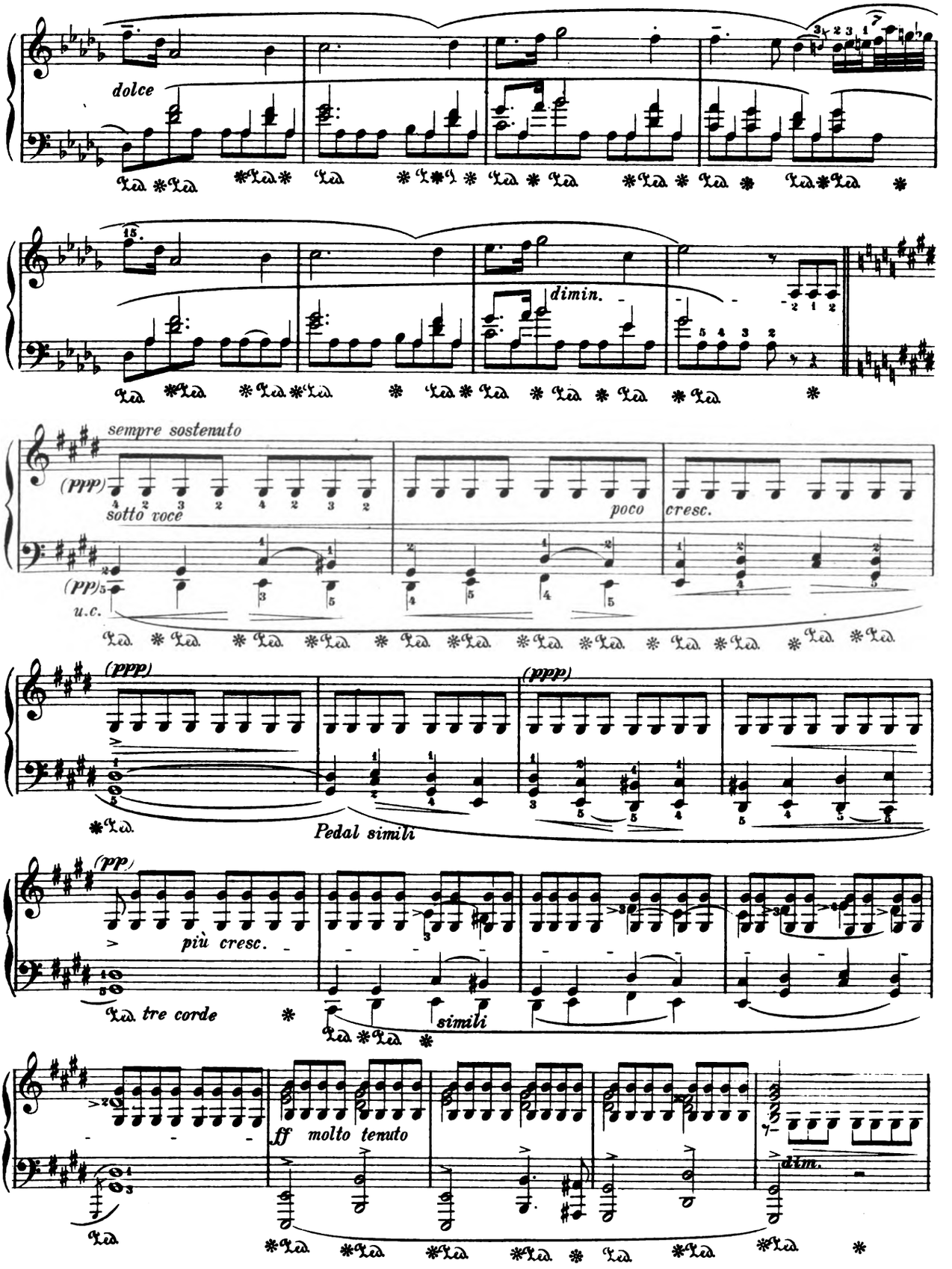
PRÉLUDE

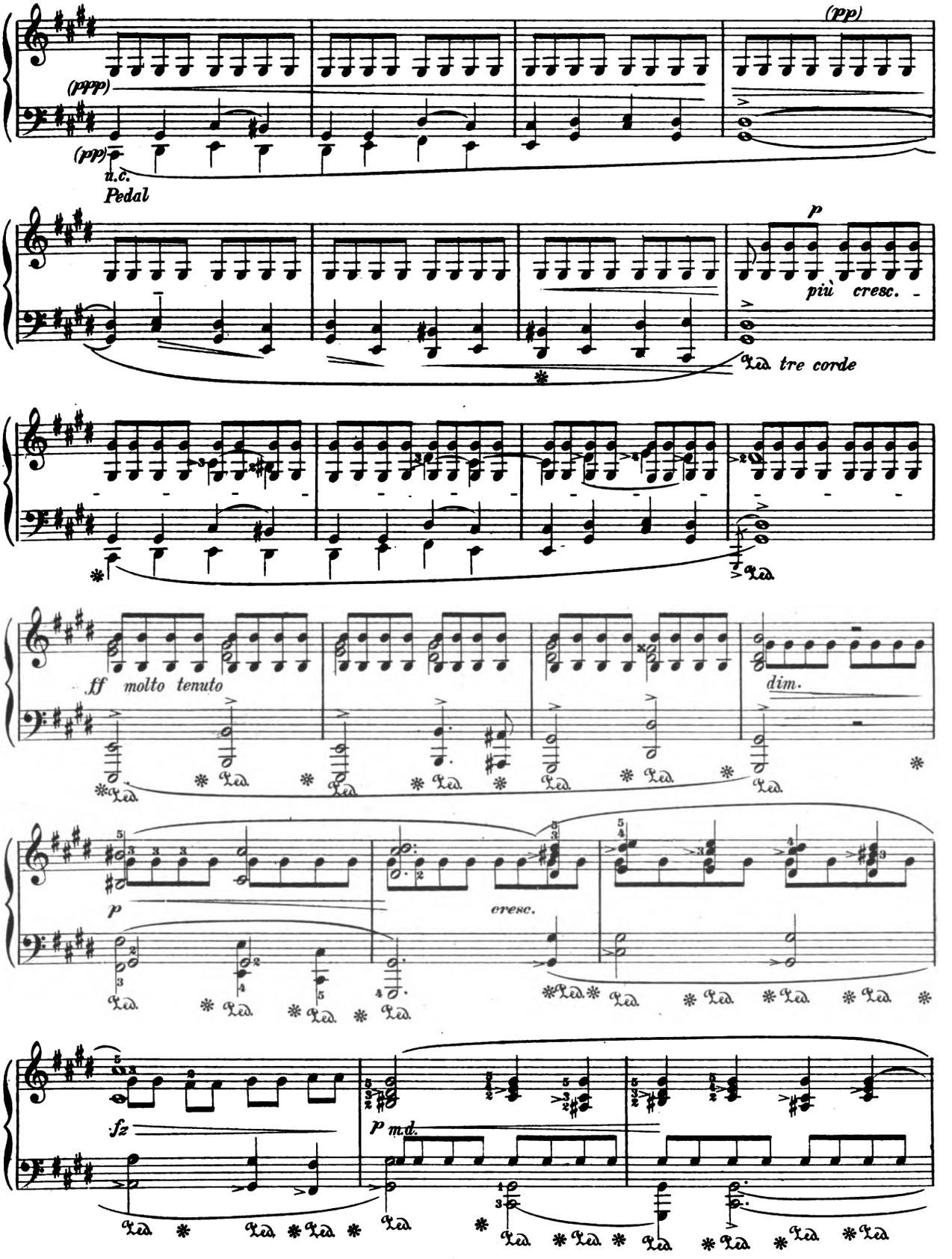
D FLAT

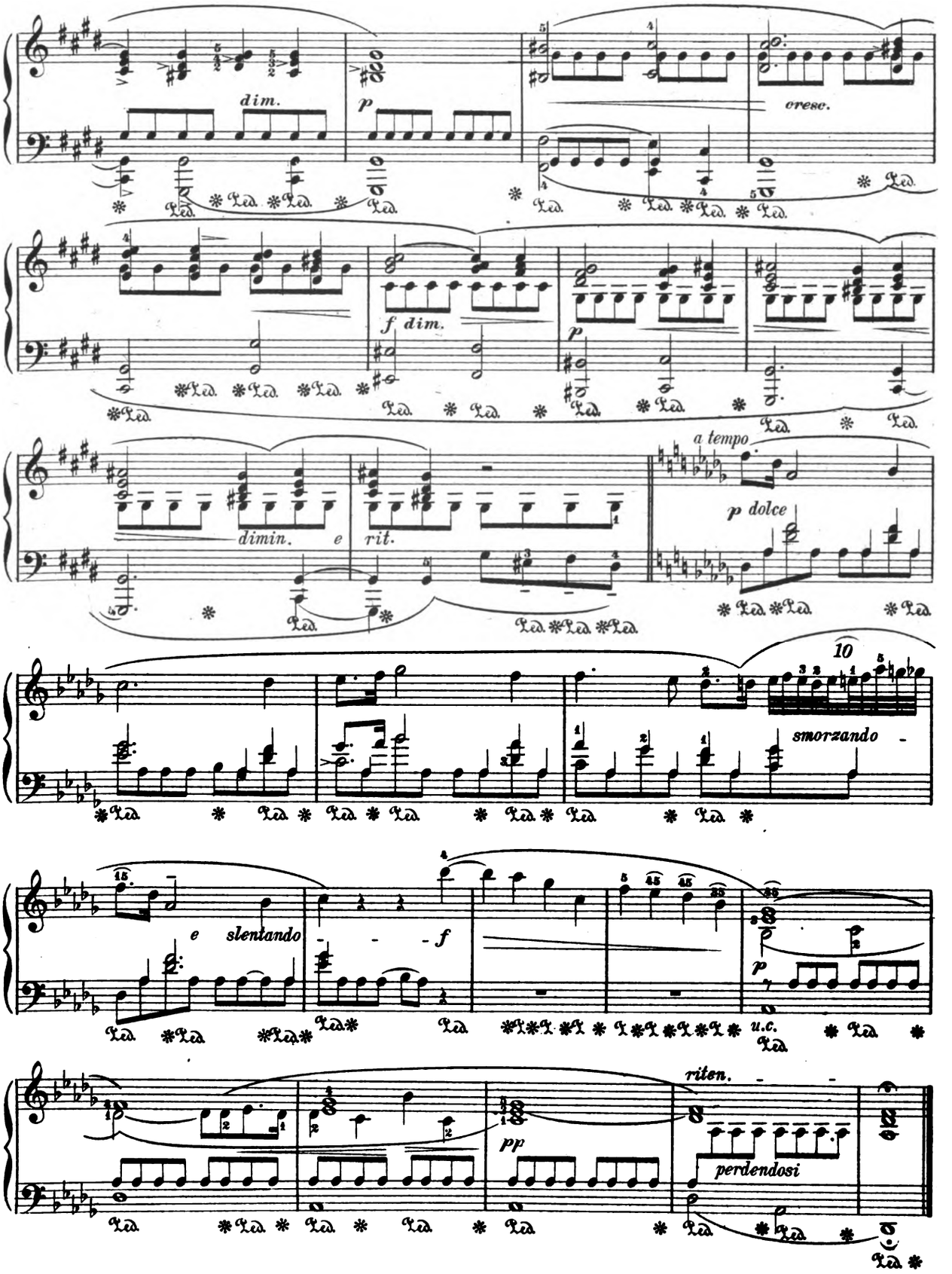
CHOPIN, Op. 28, No. 15

Sostenuto



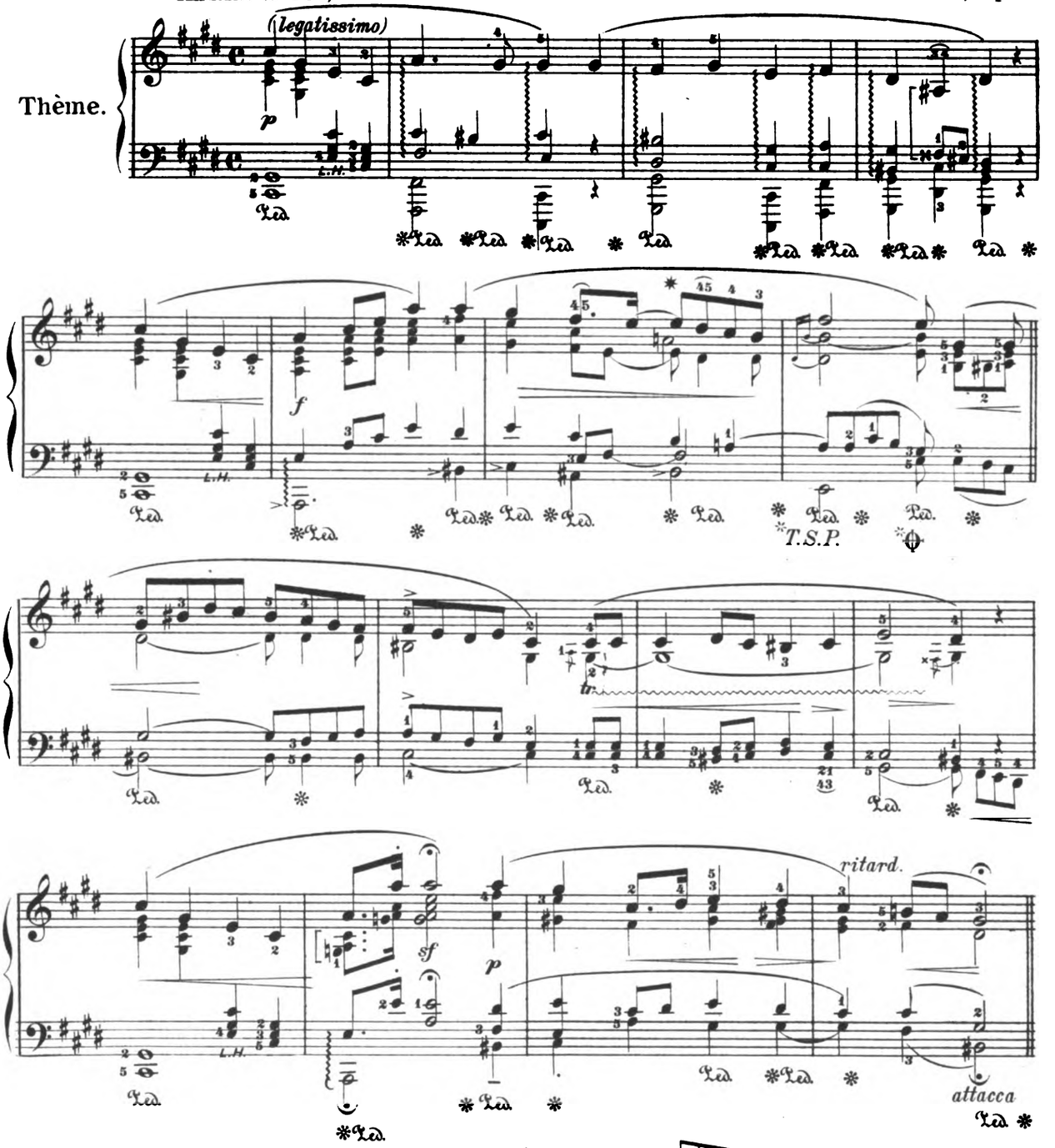






ÉTUDES SYMPHONIQUES

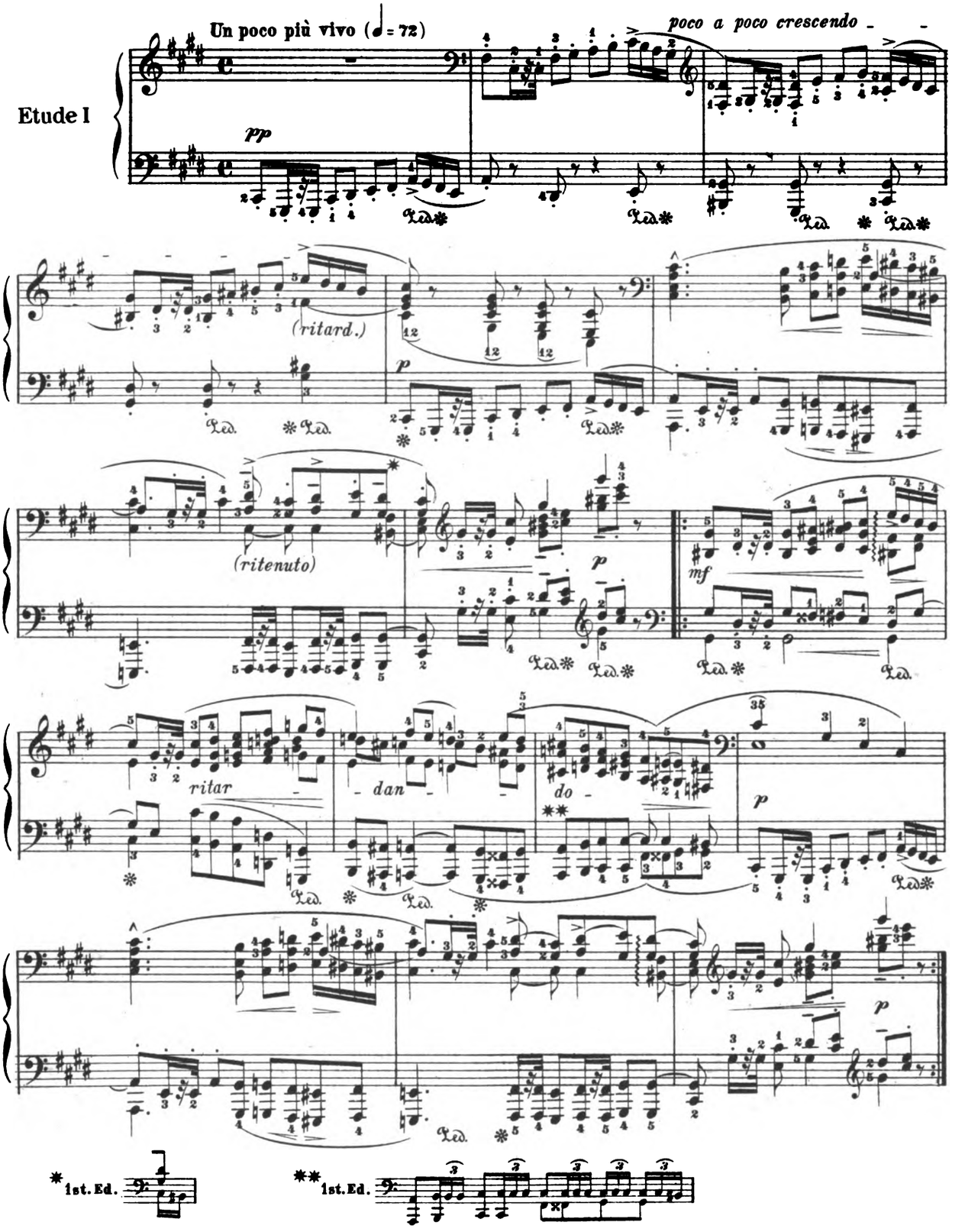
Andante (♩ = 52) SCHUMANN, Op. 13



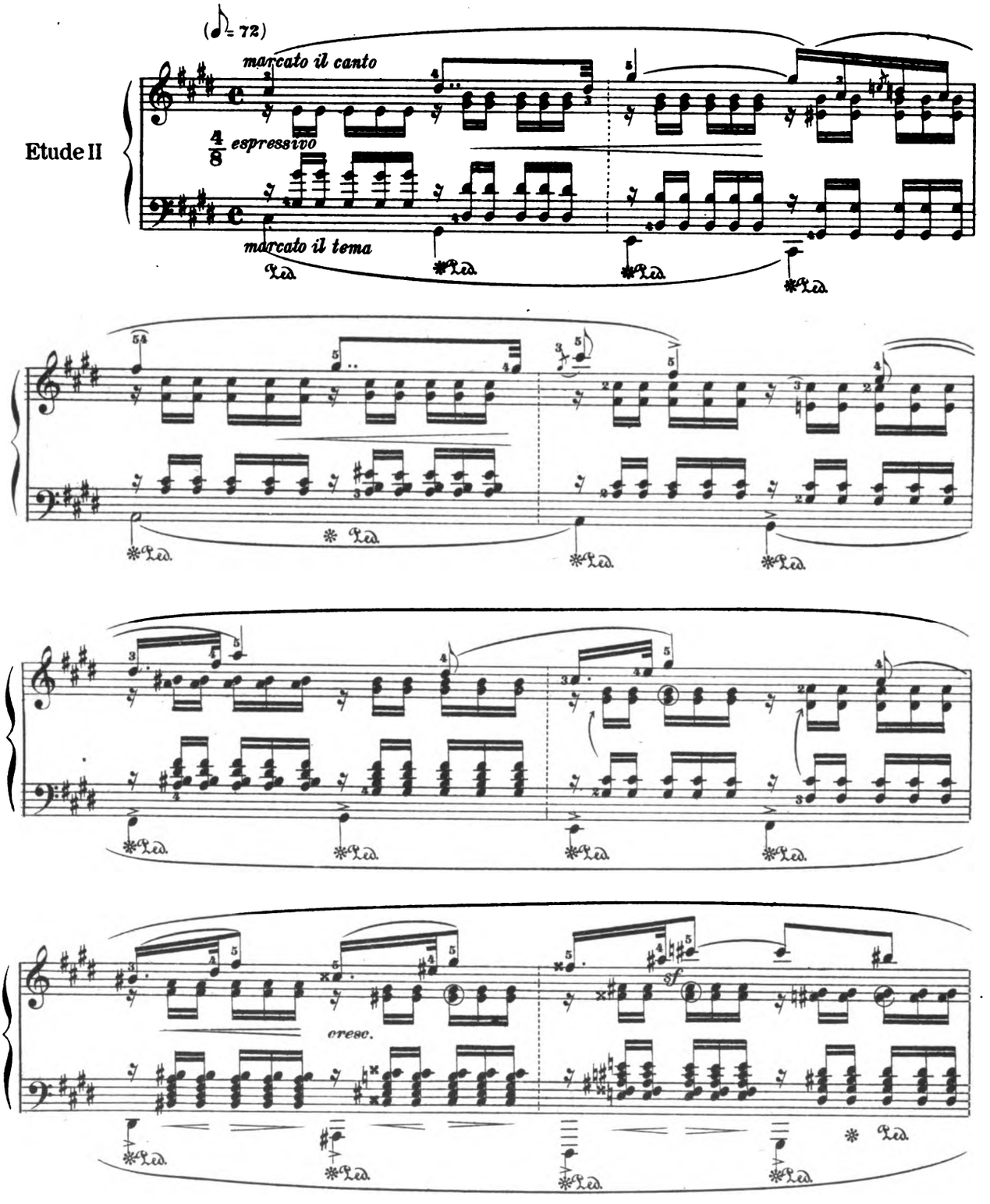
The Melody is by Hauptmann von Fricken.

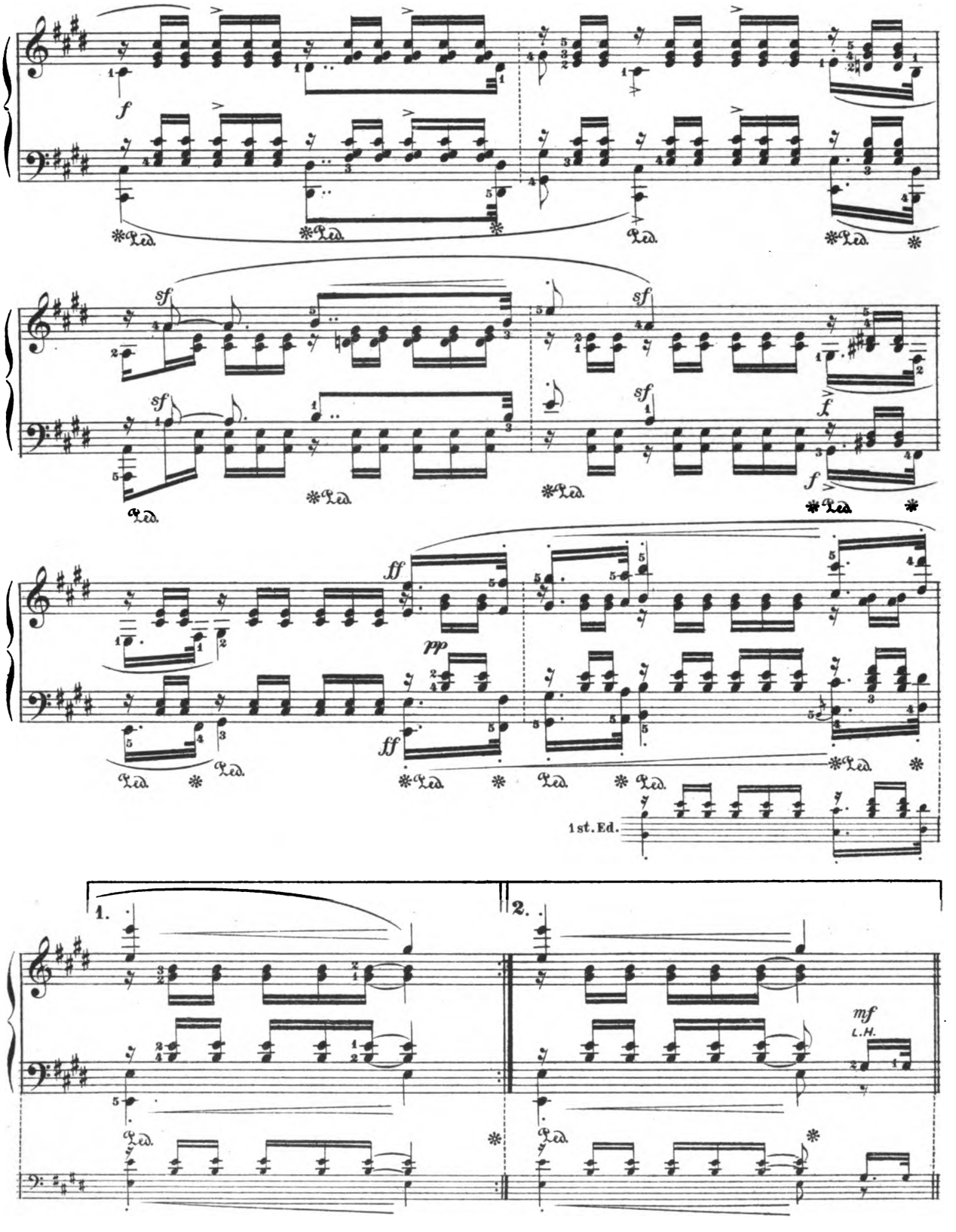
* First Edition

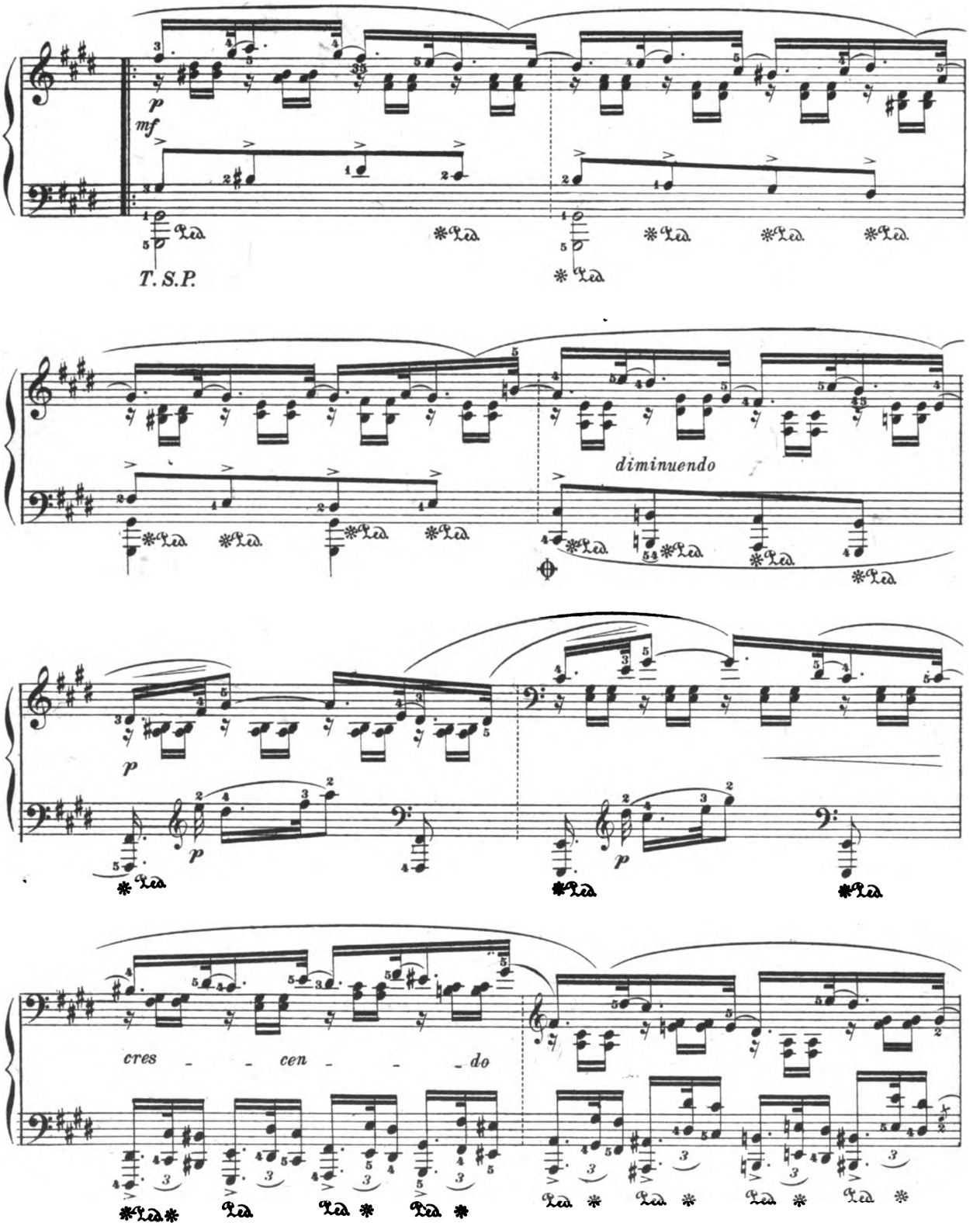
* *T. S. P.* Tone sustaining Pedal. * Release for *T.S.P.*

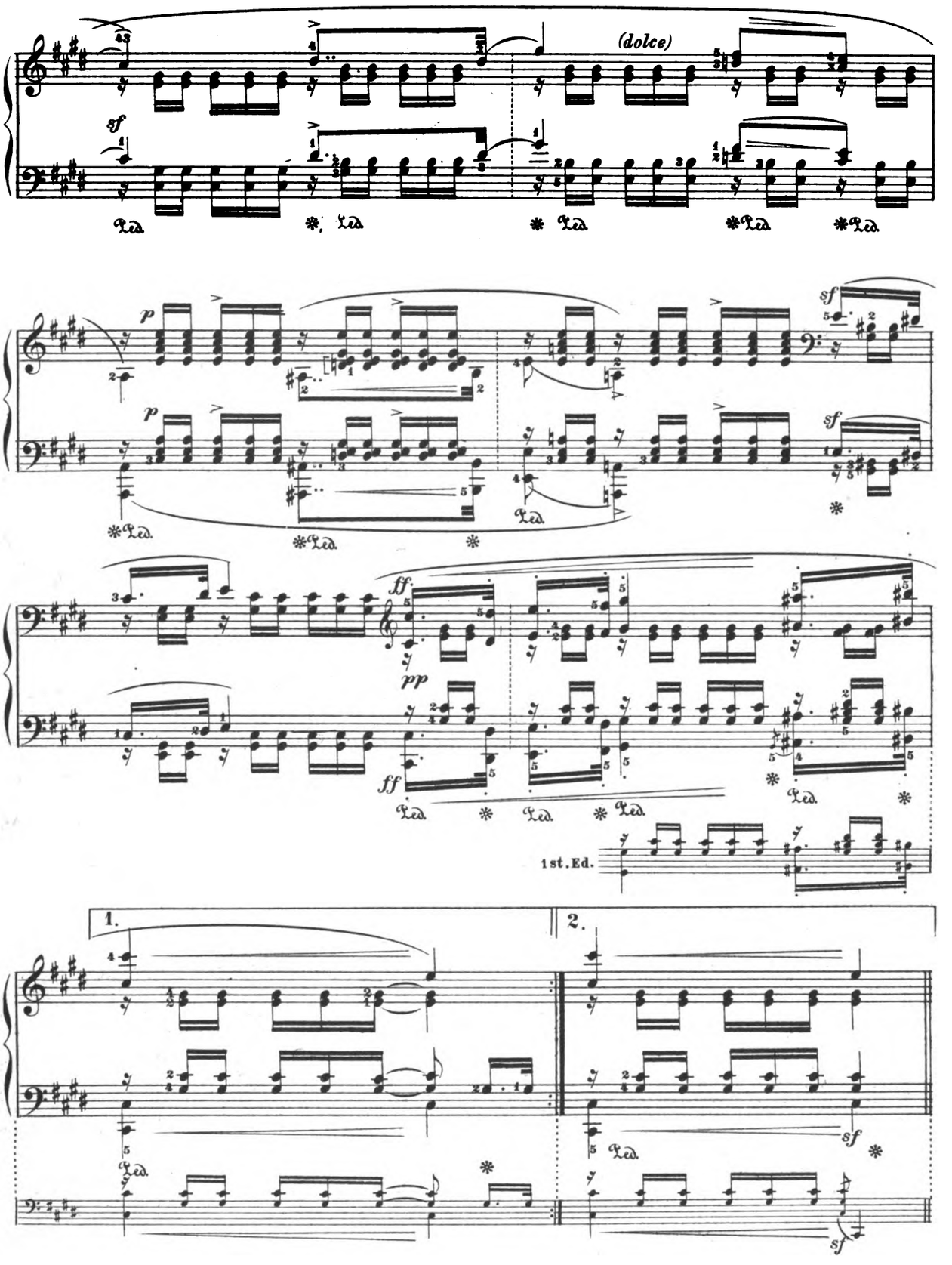


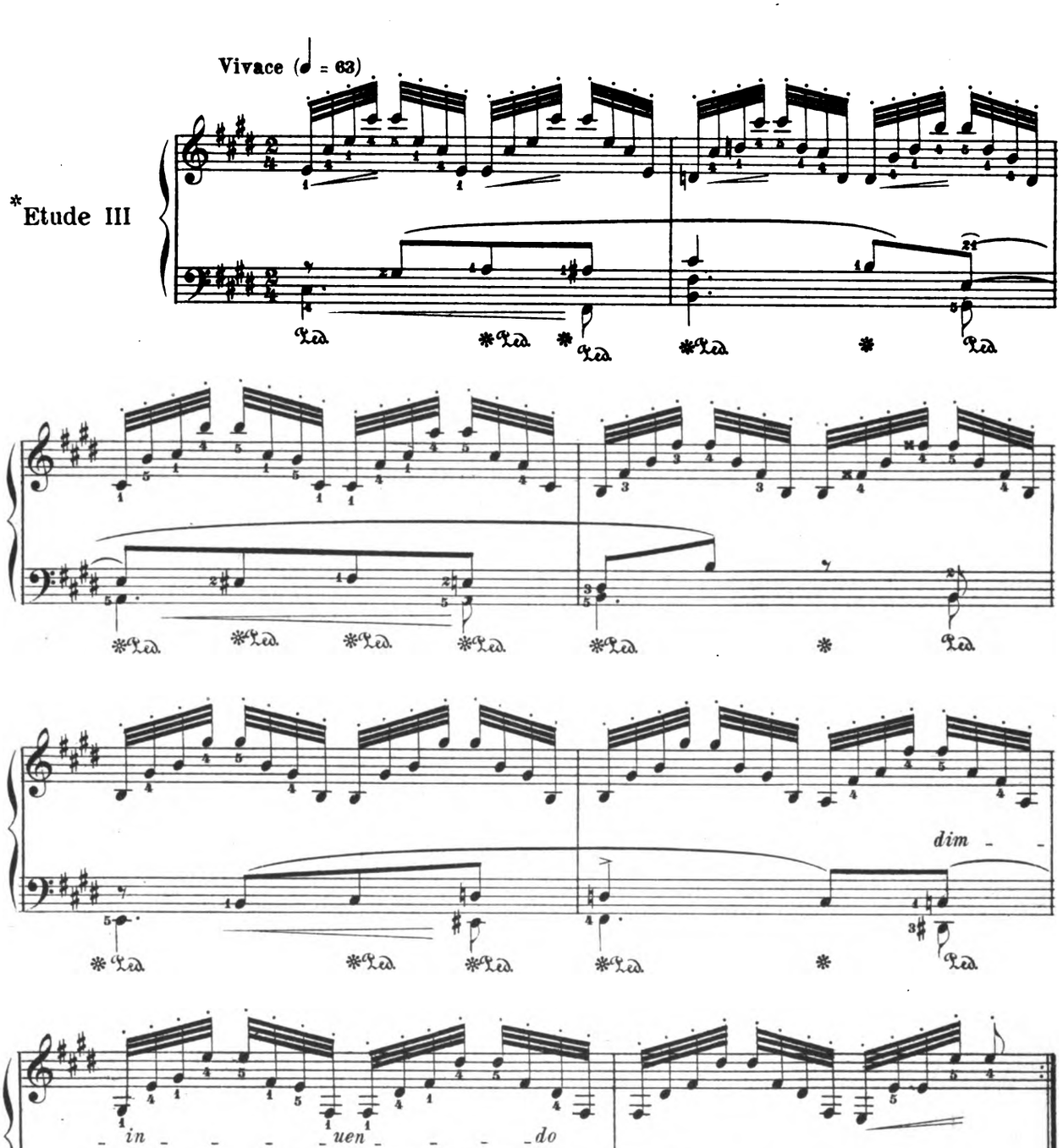
Etude II



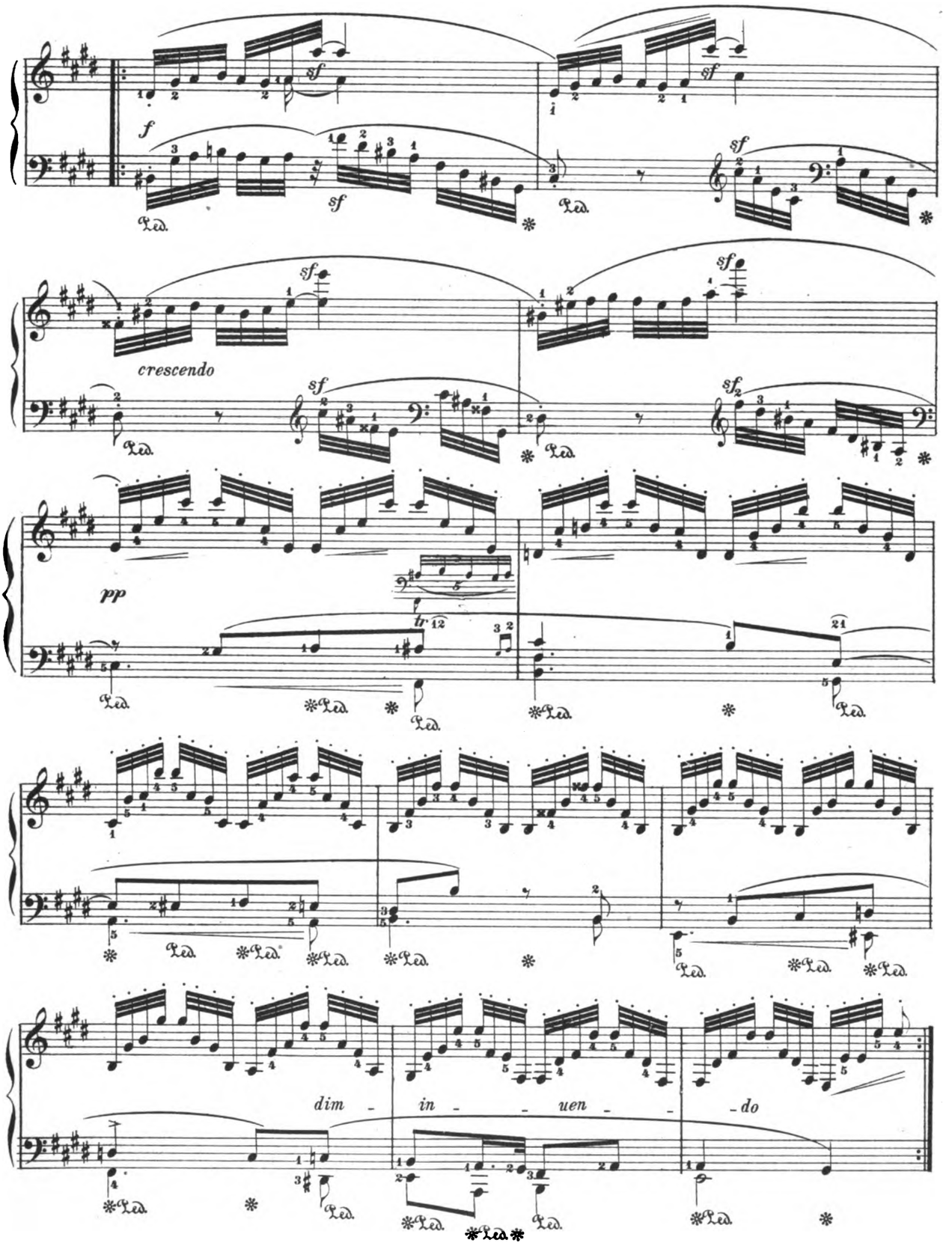


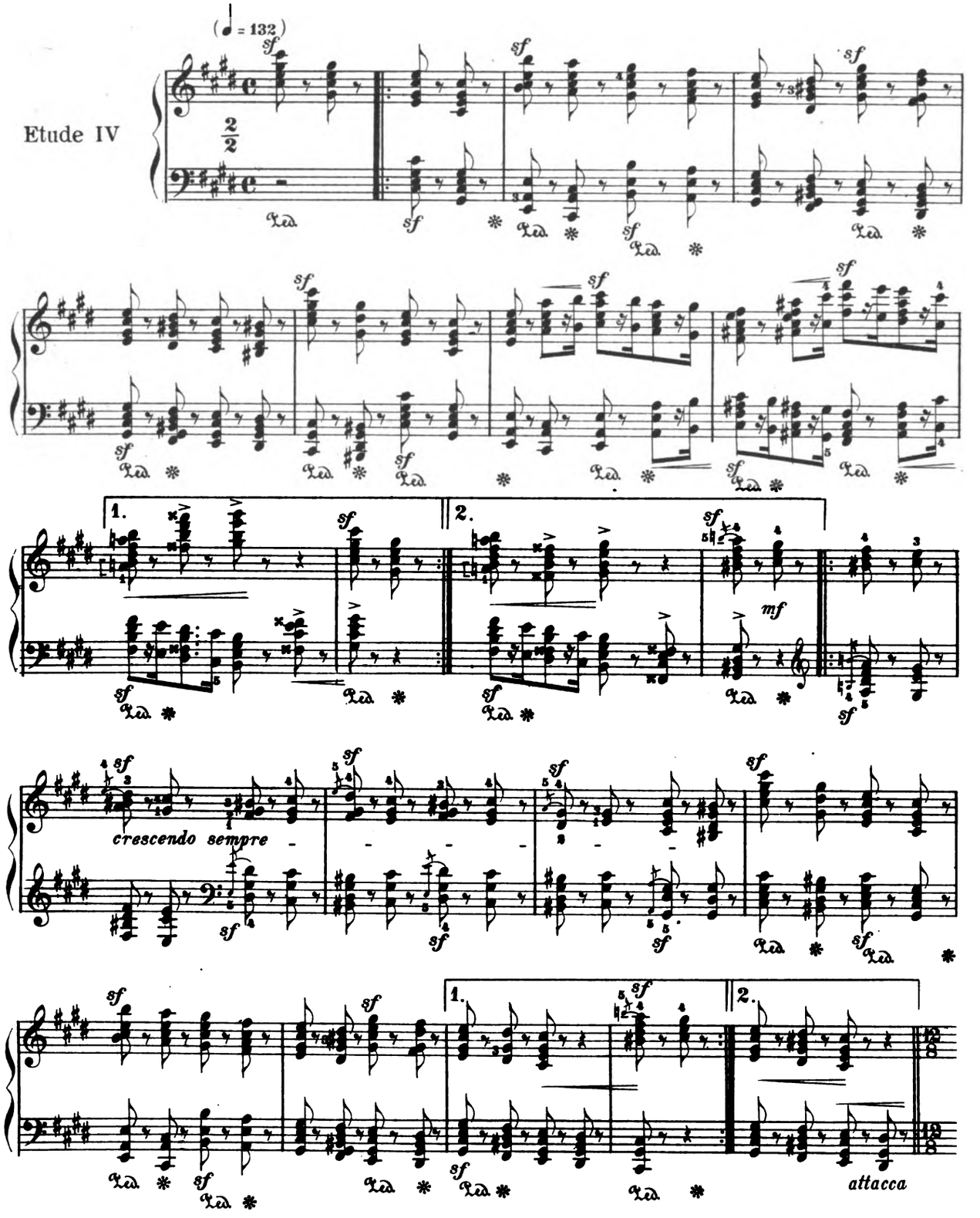


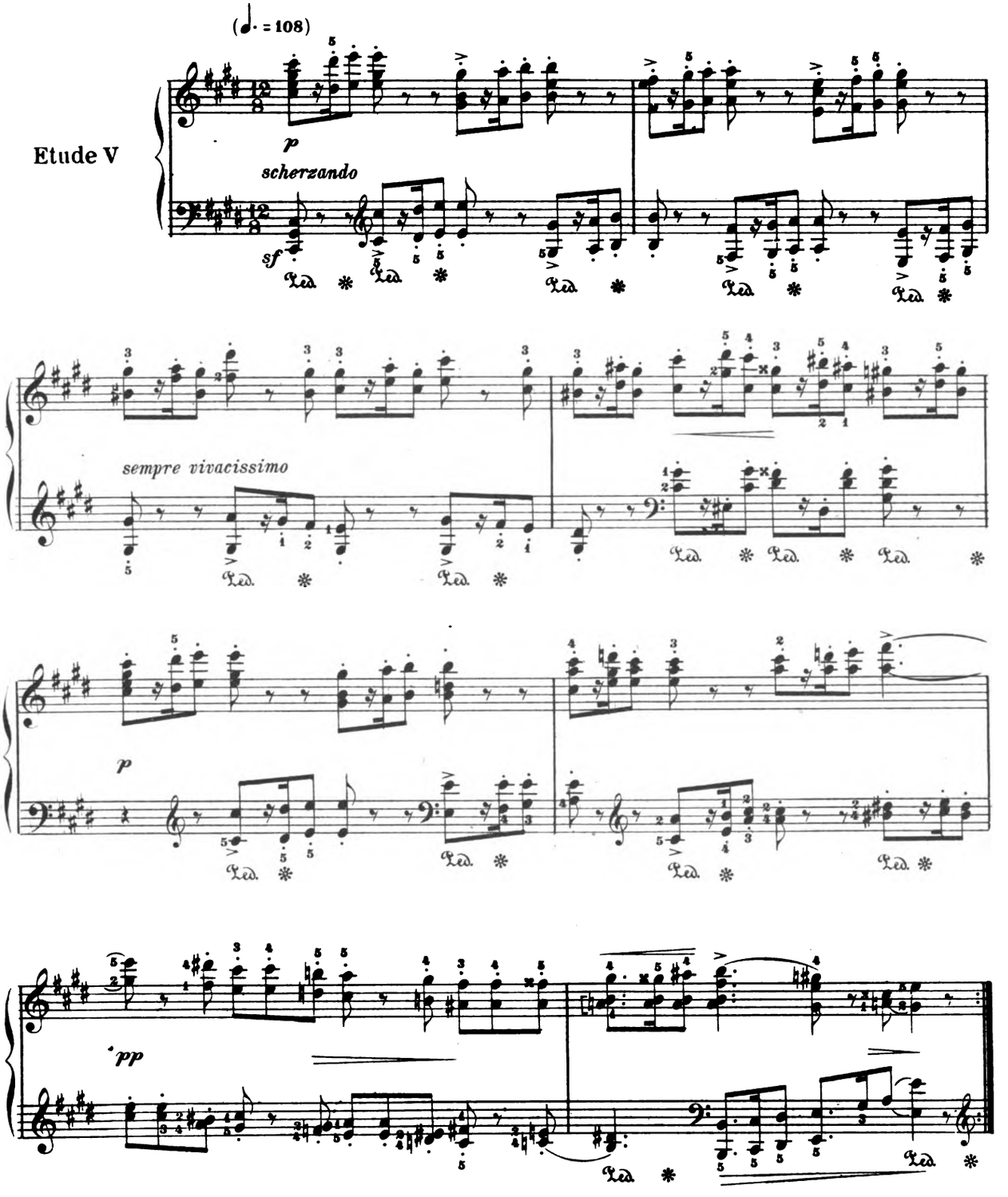


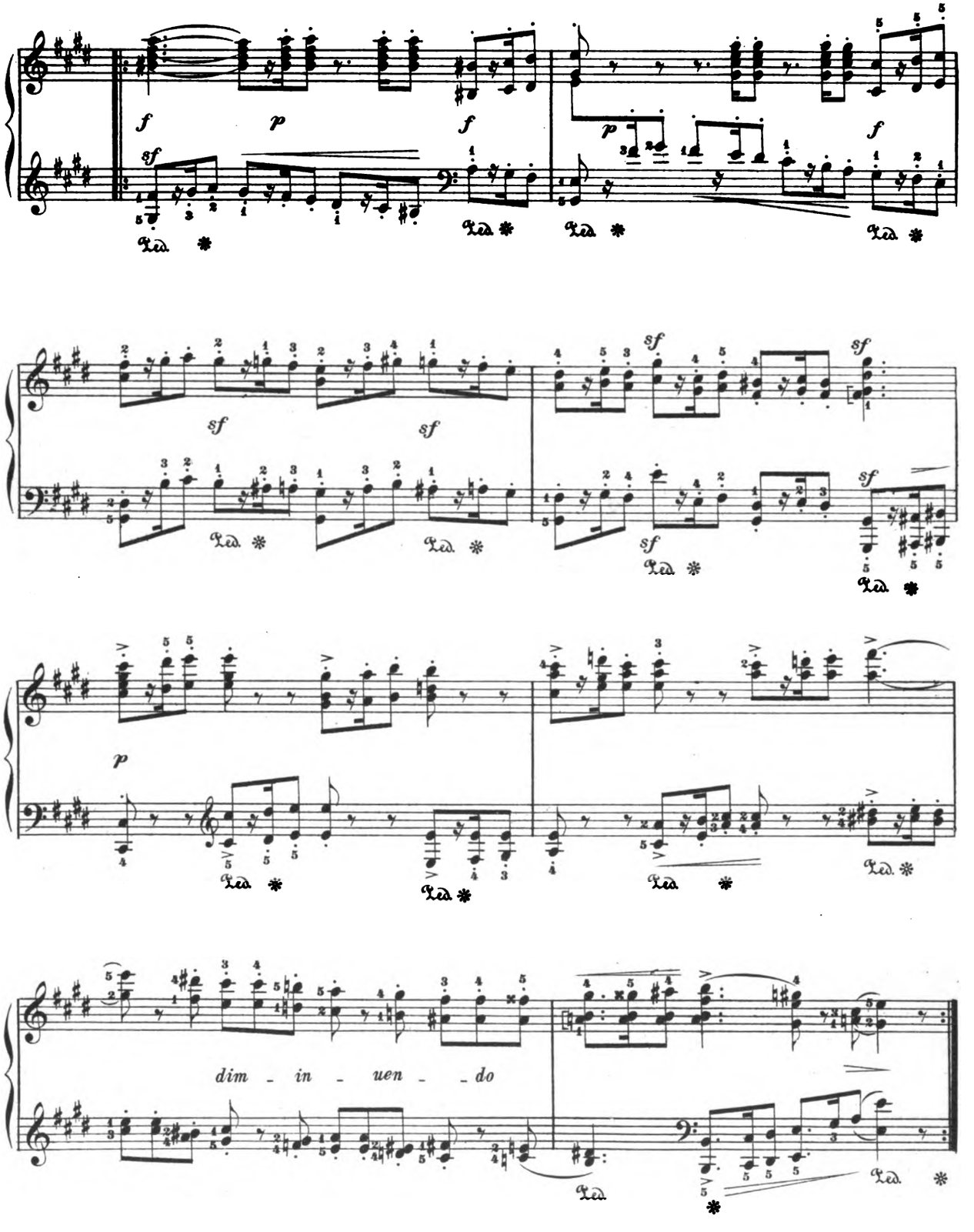


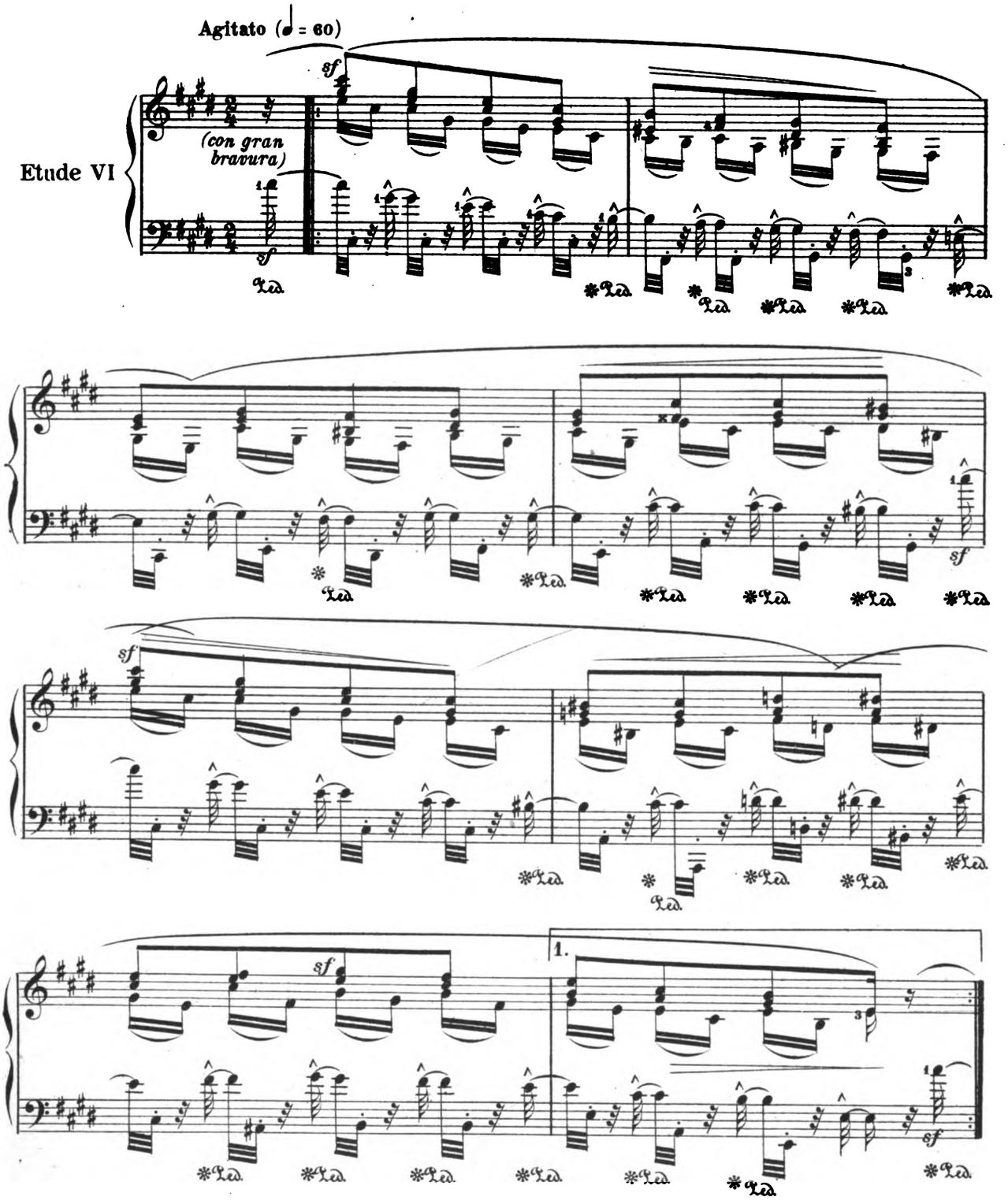
* Not in the Second Edition.

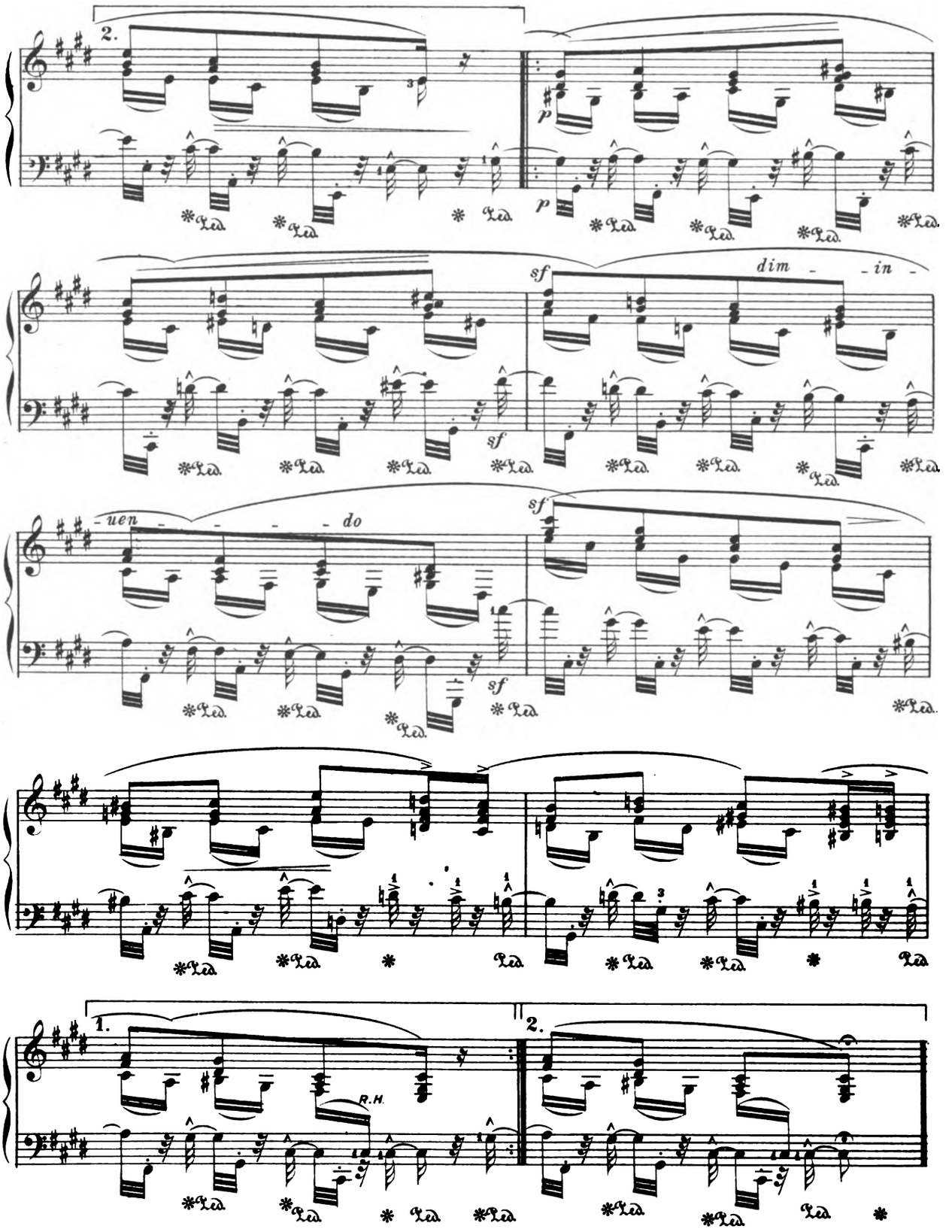




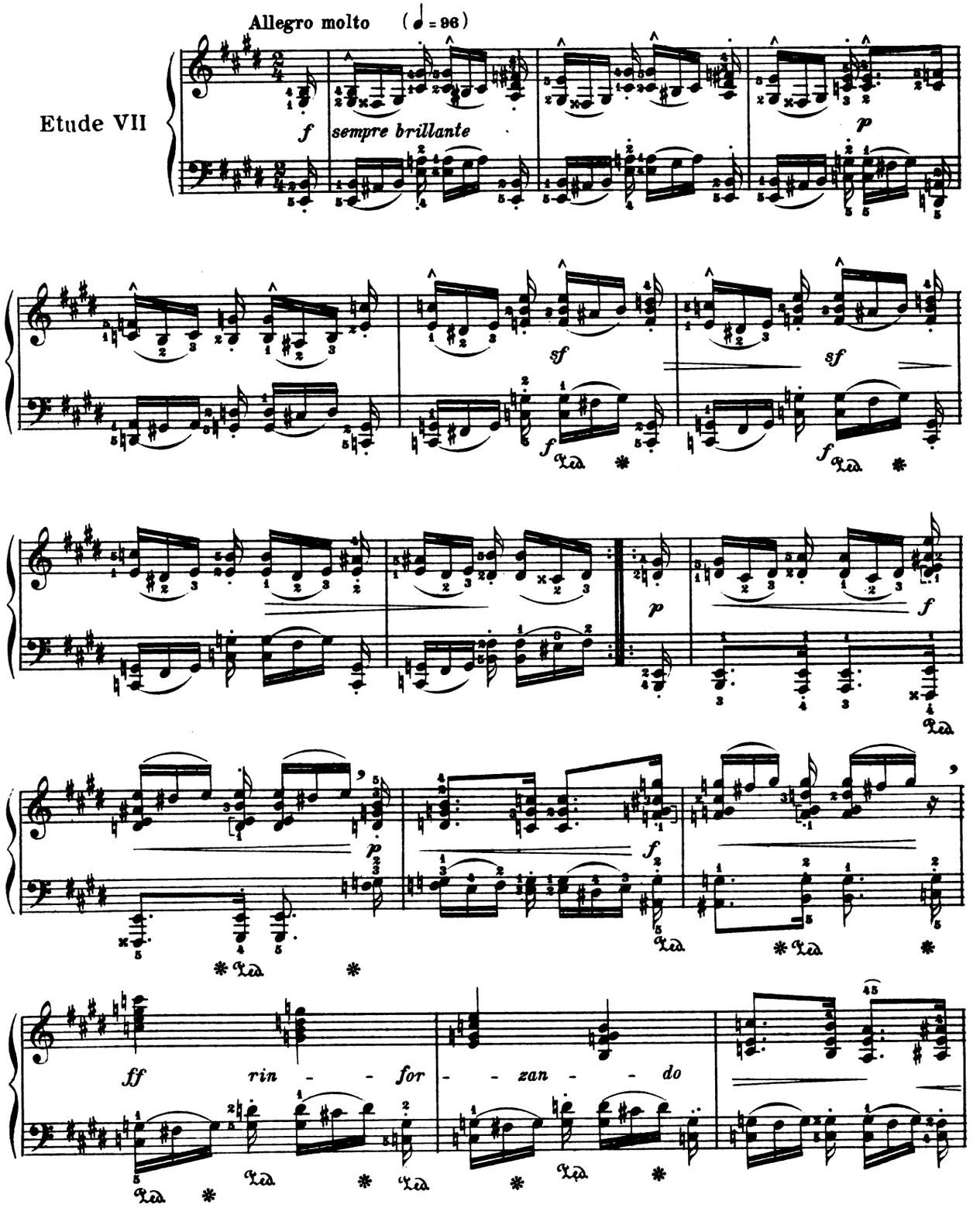


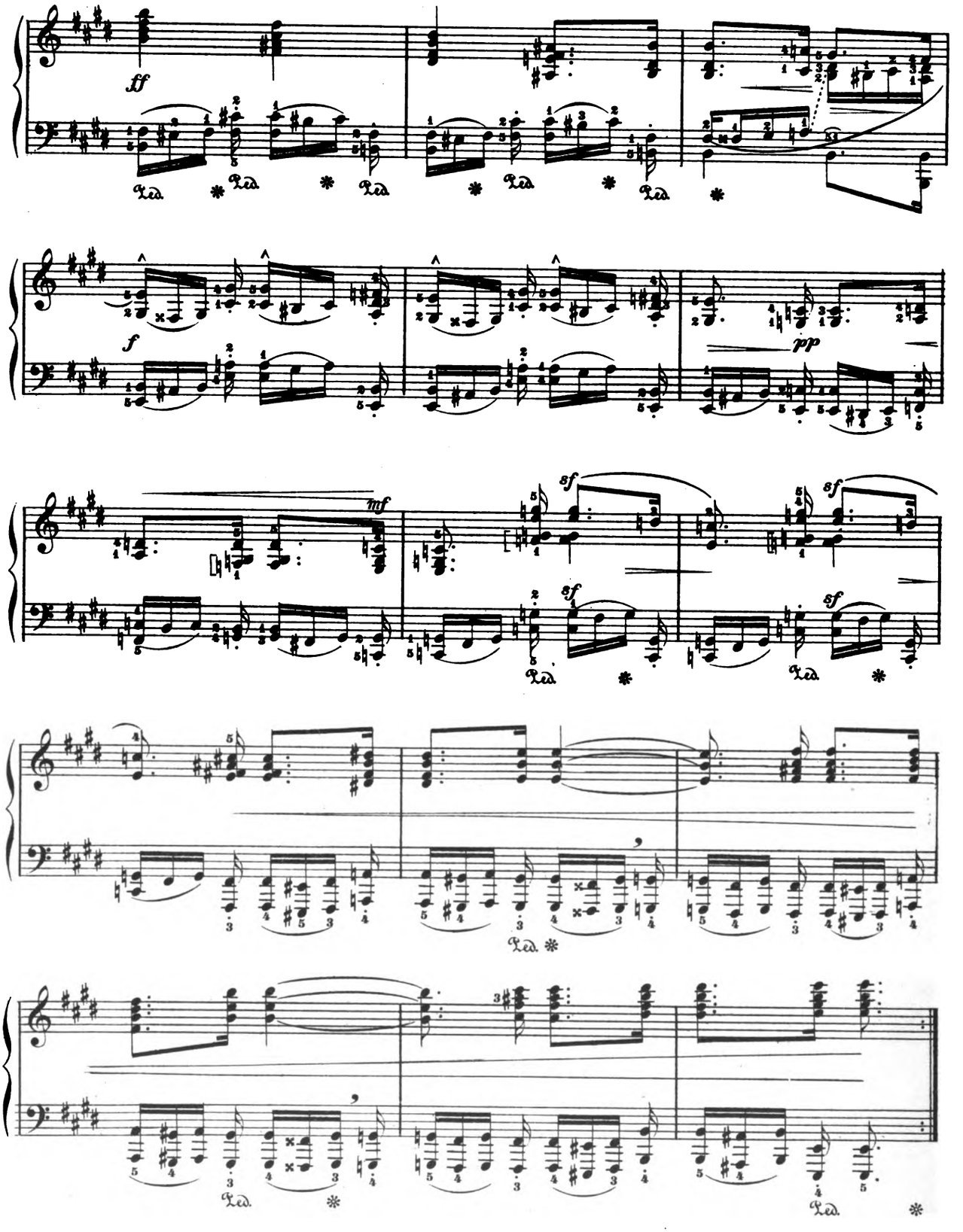


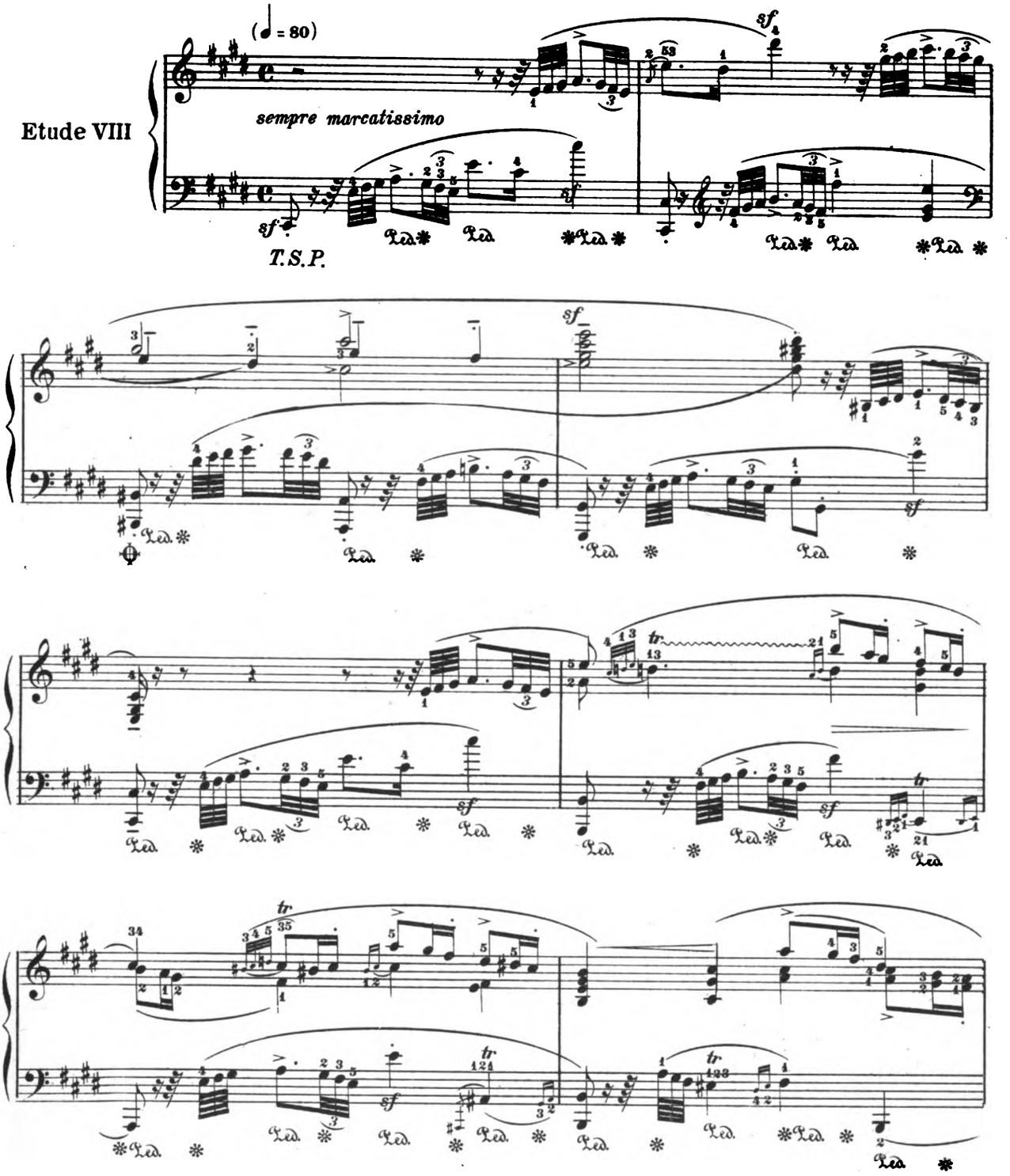


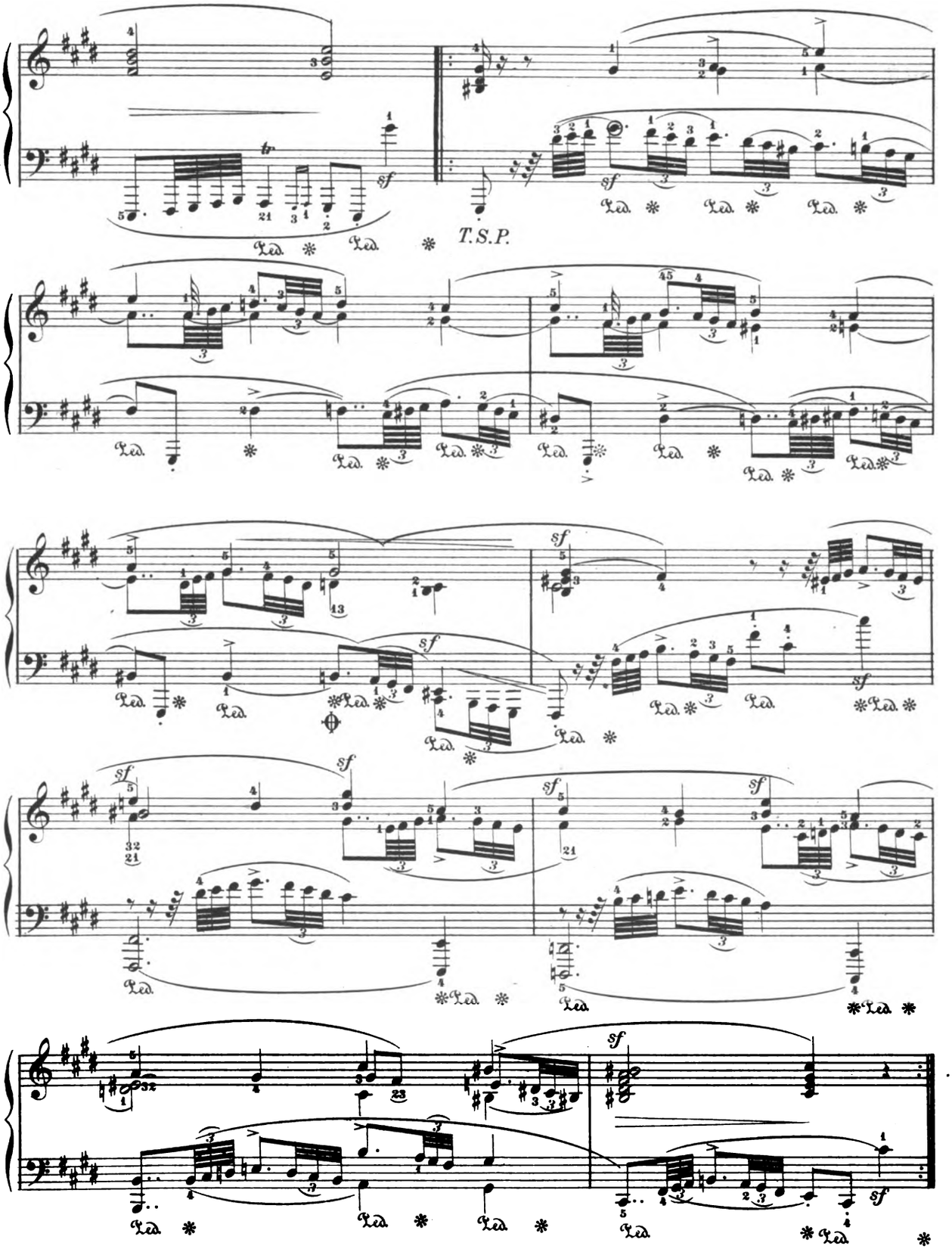


Etude VII



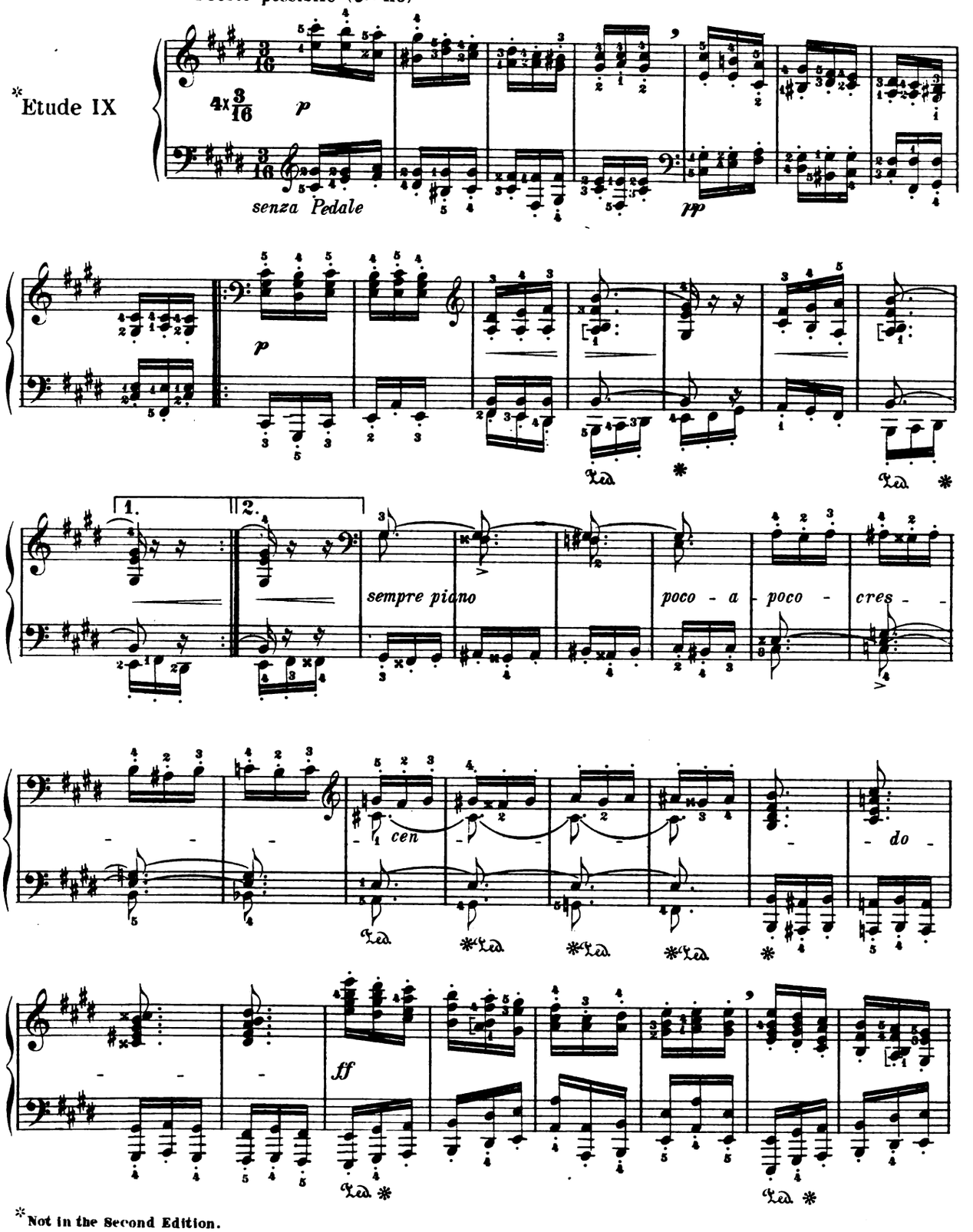




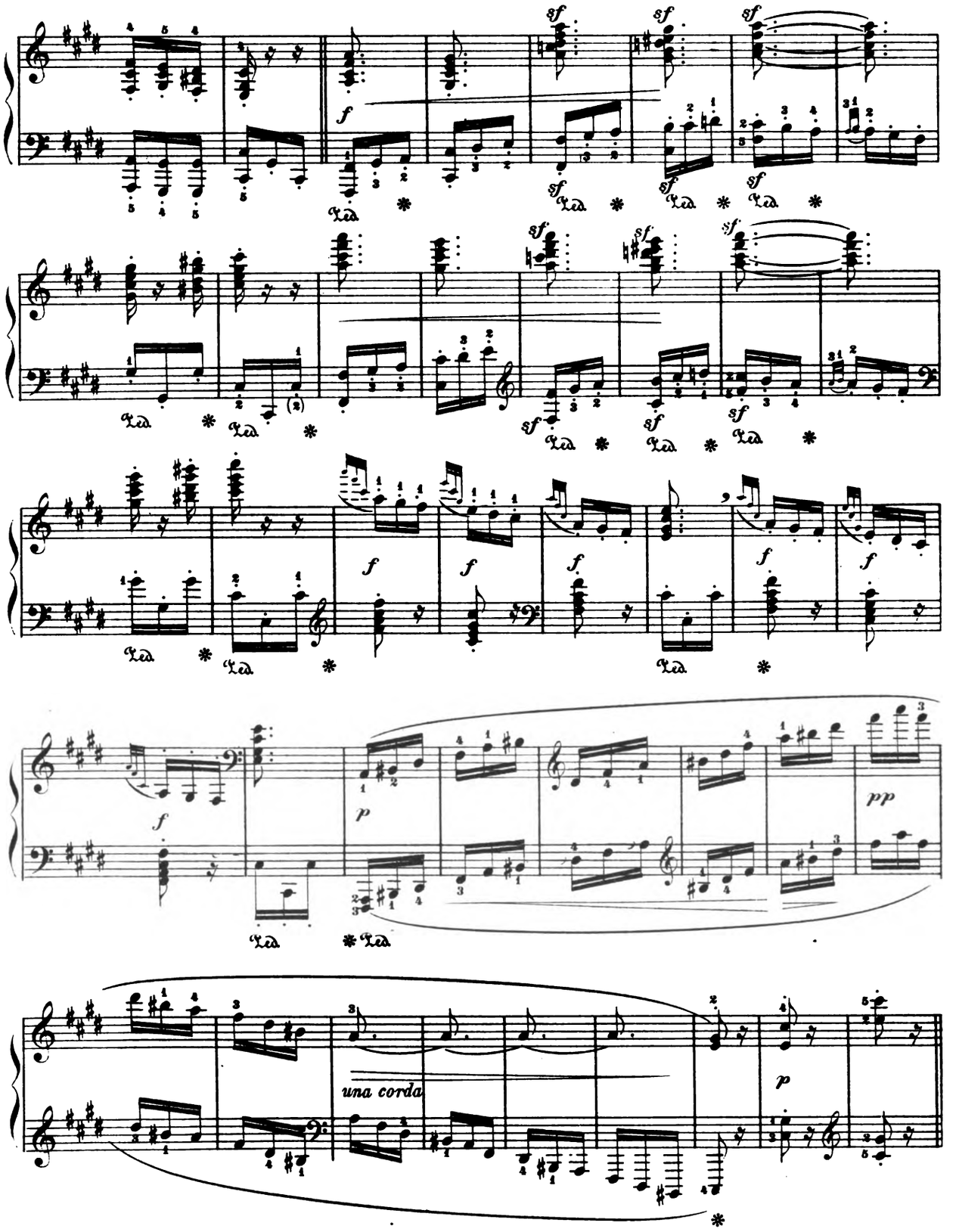


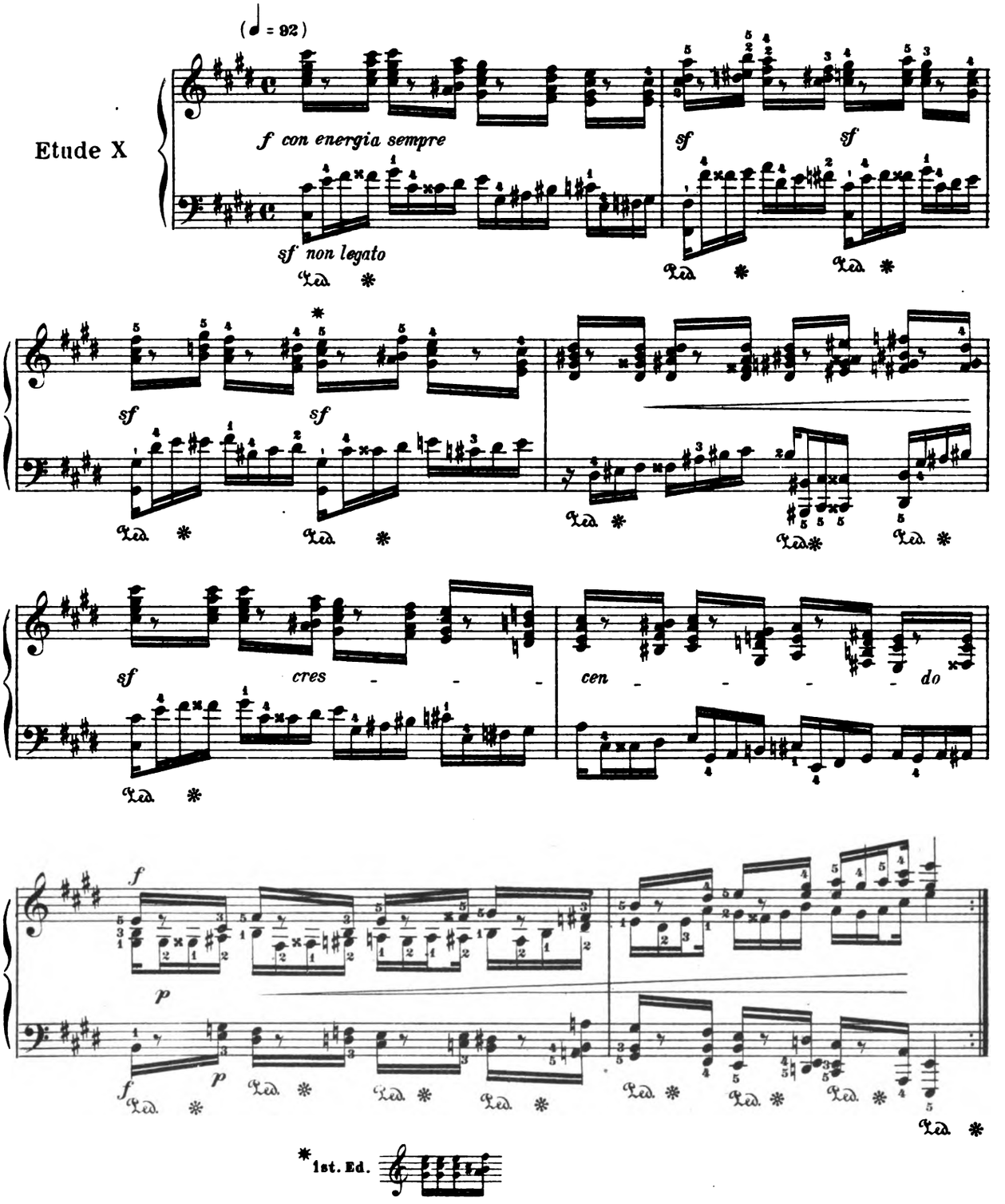
Presto possibile (♩.= 116)

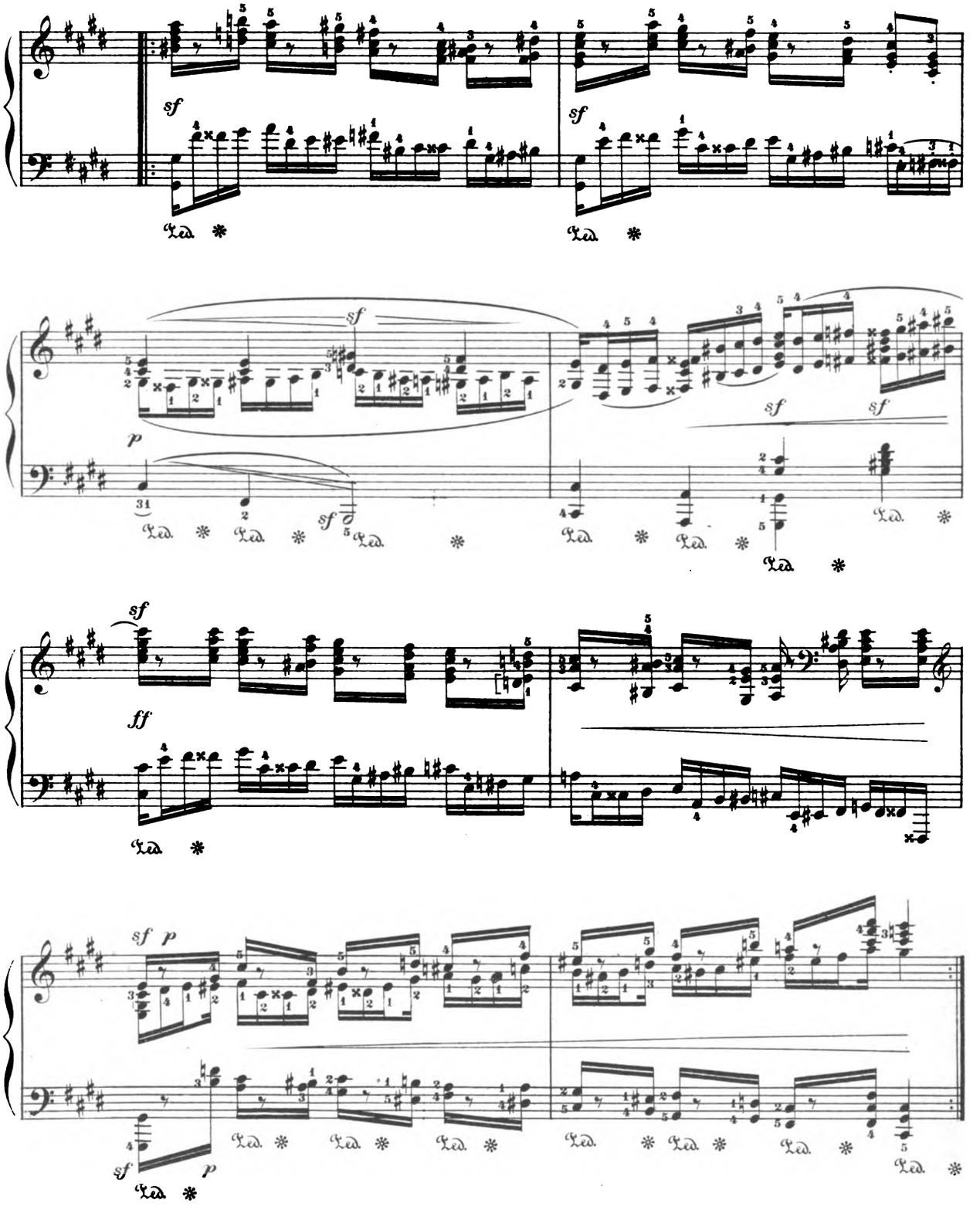
*Etude IX

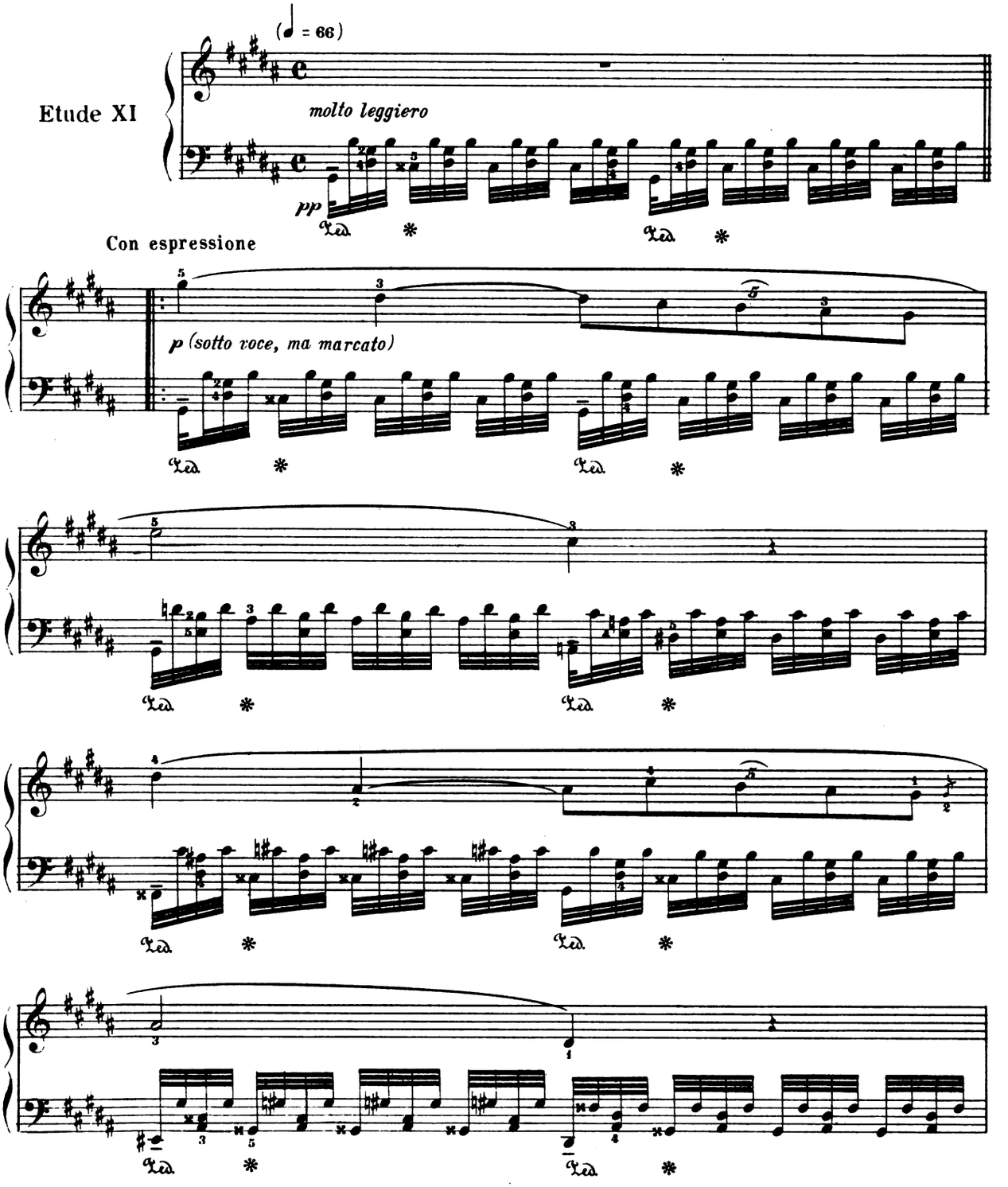


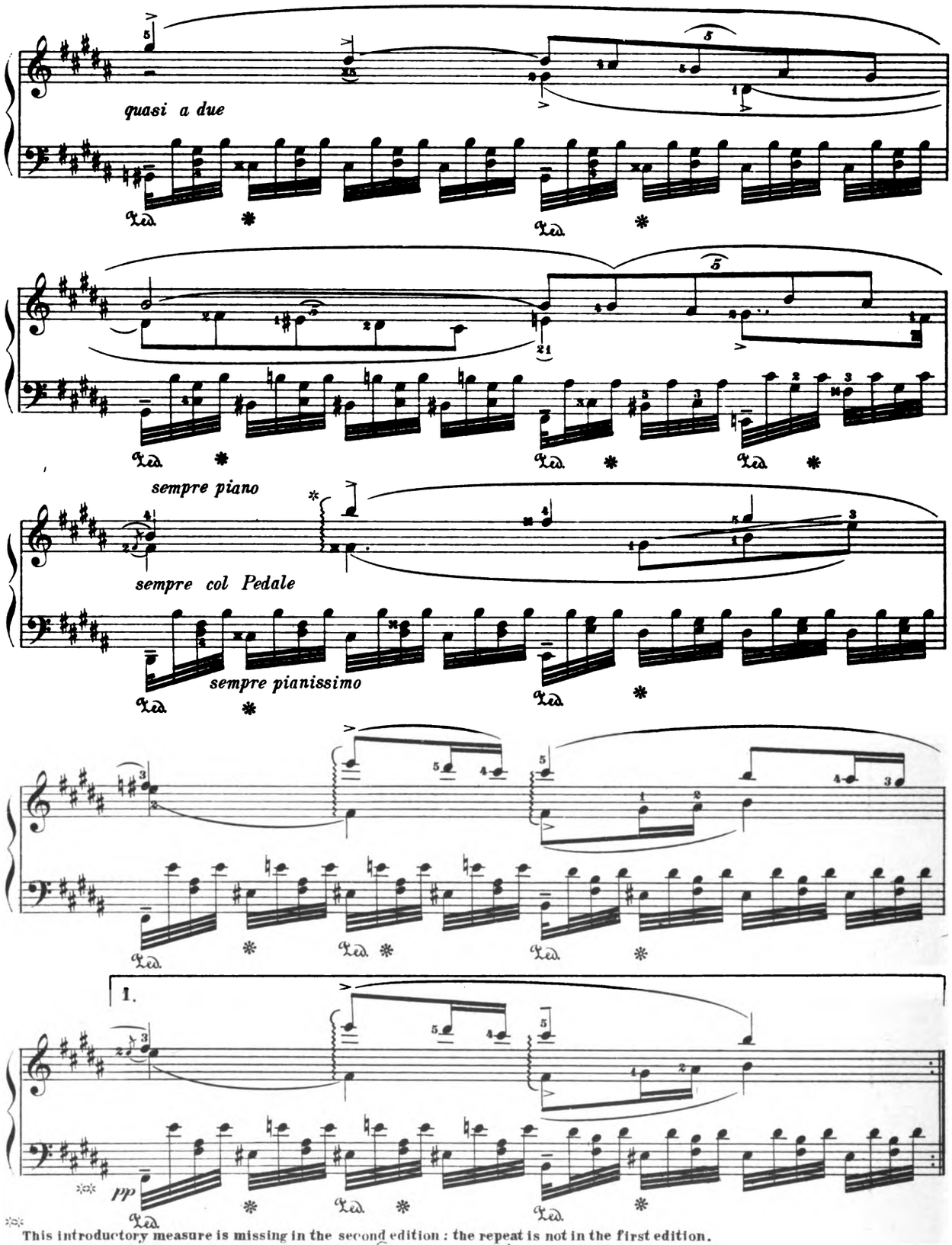
*Not in the Second Edition.





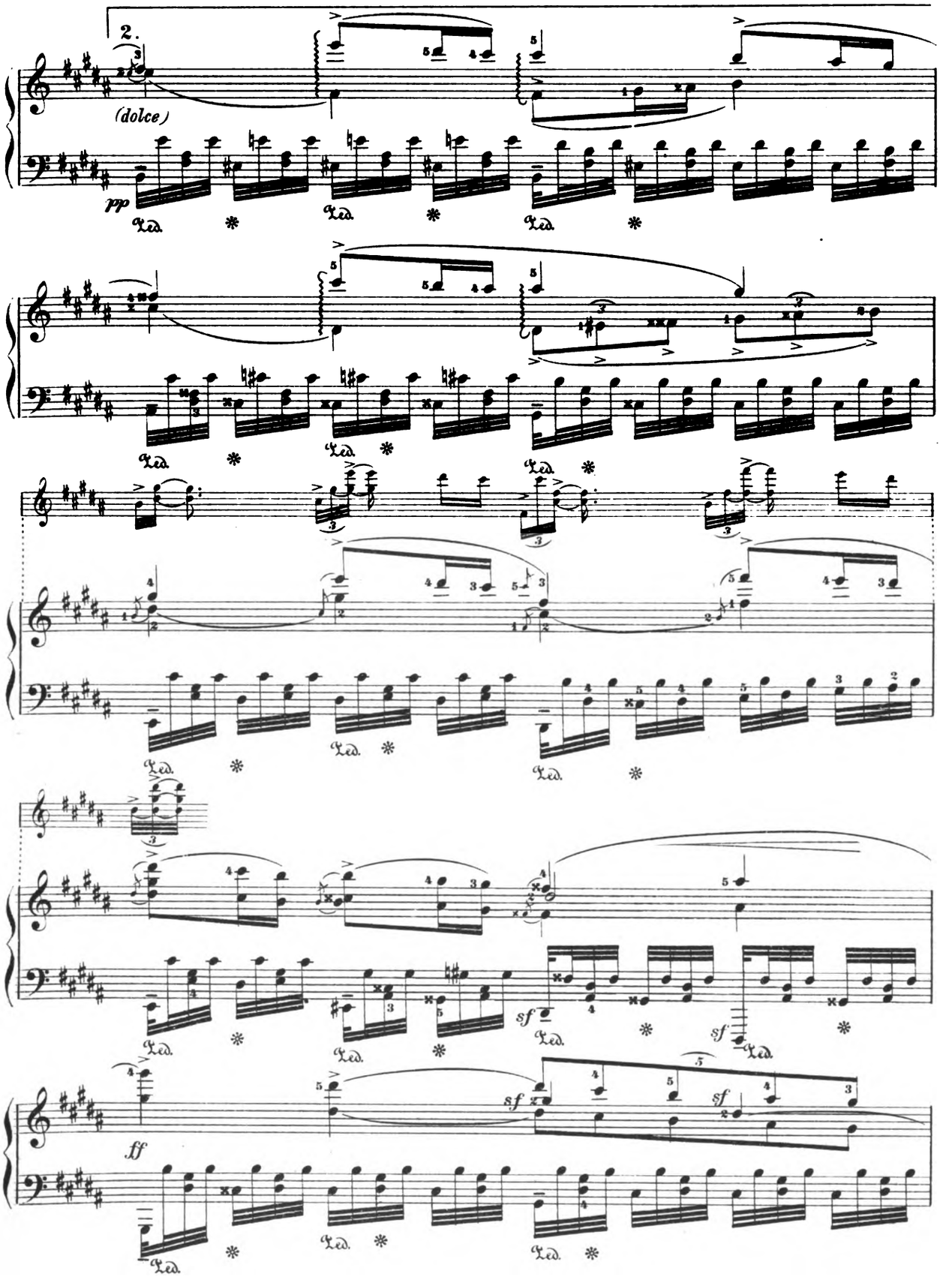


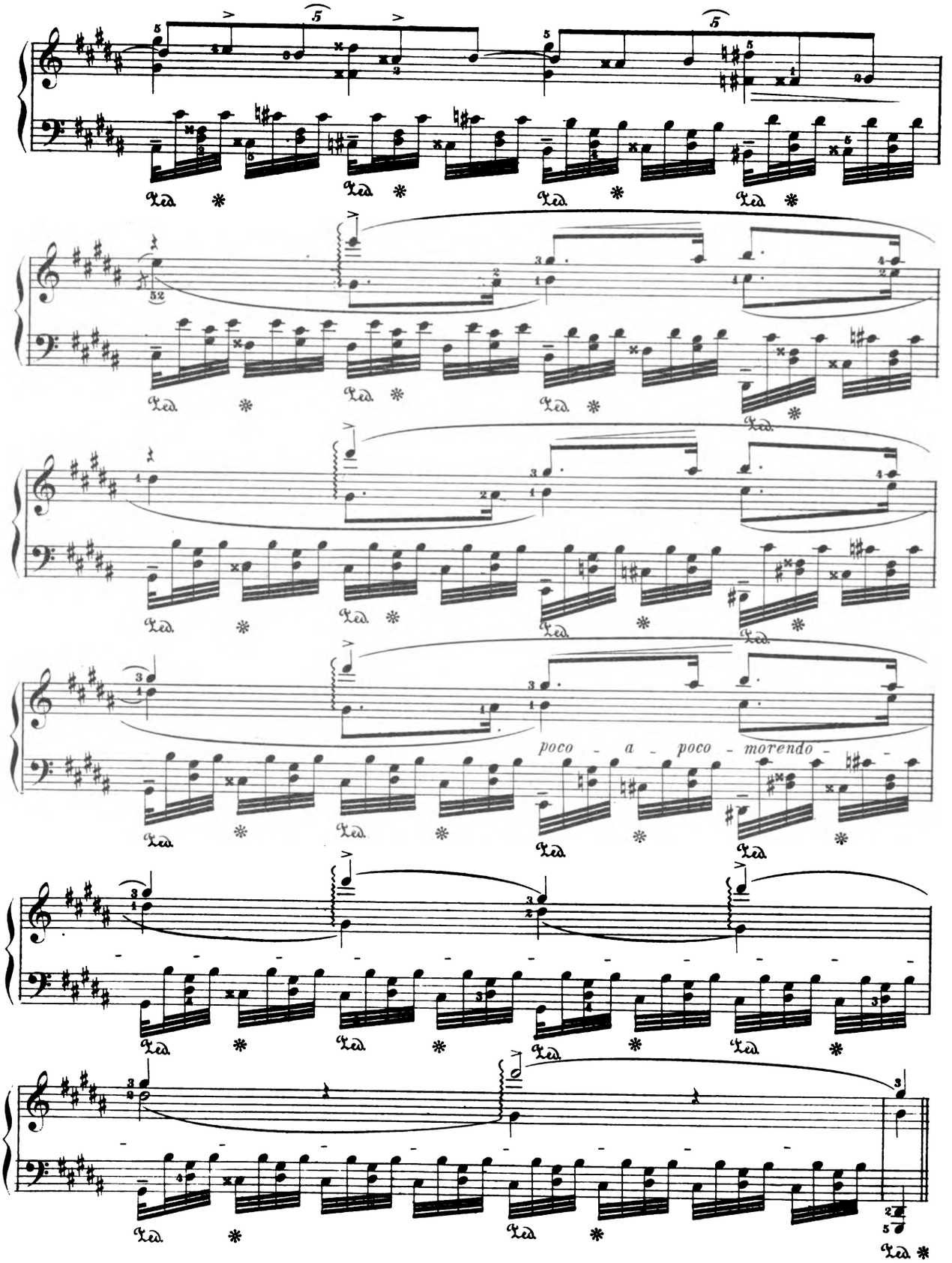


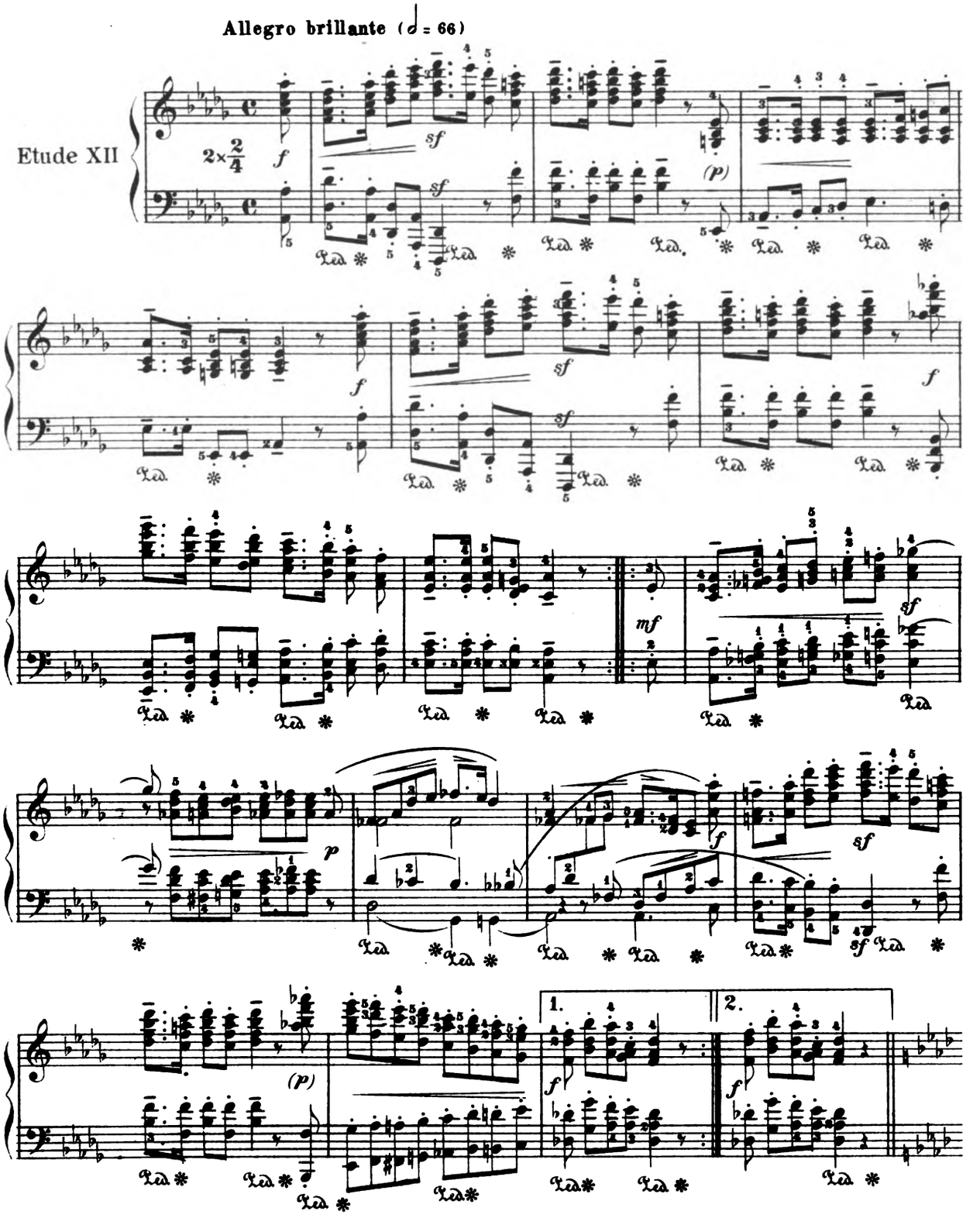


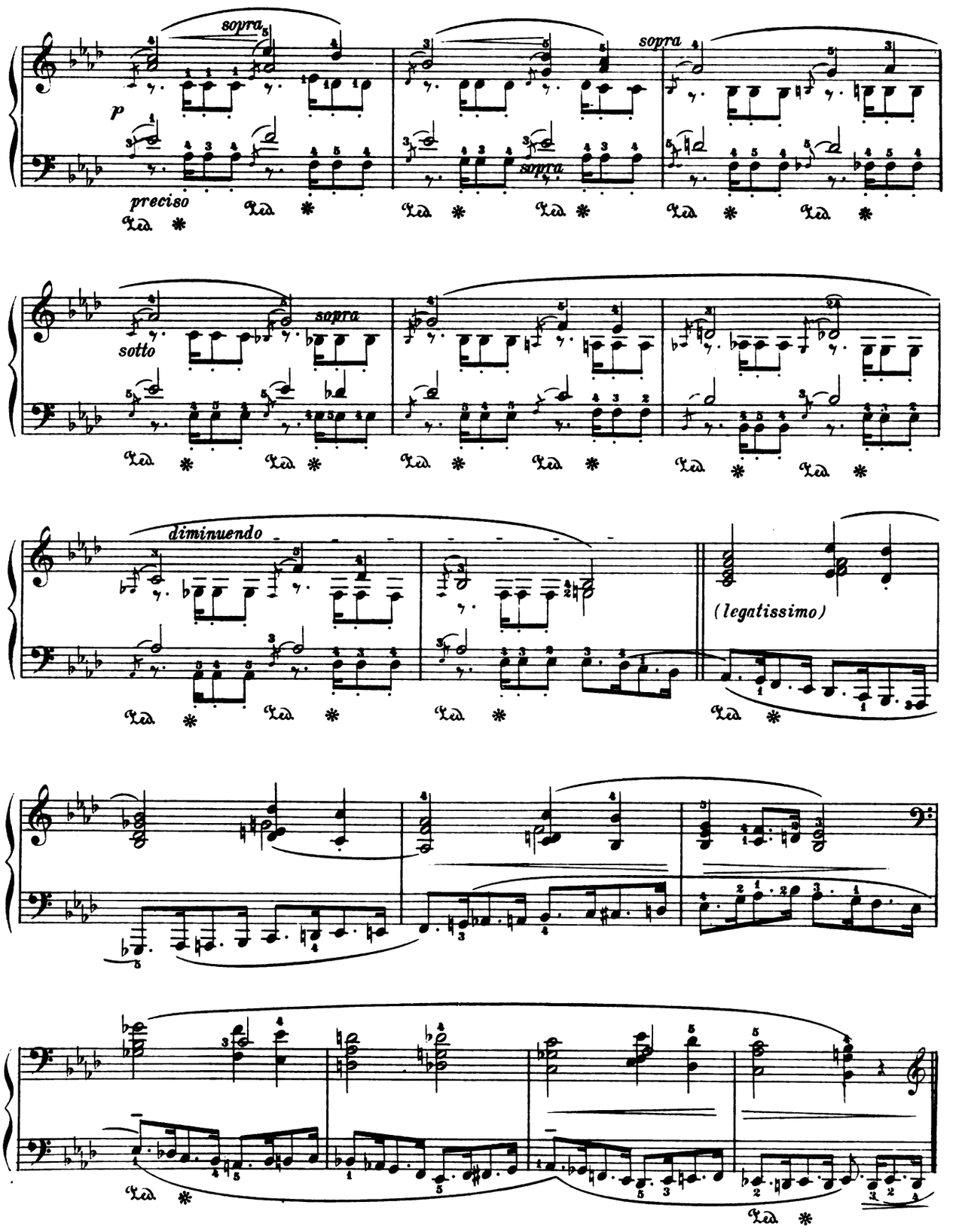
This introductory measure is missing in the second edition : the repeat is not in the first edition.

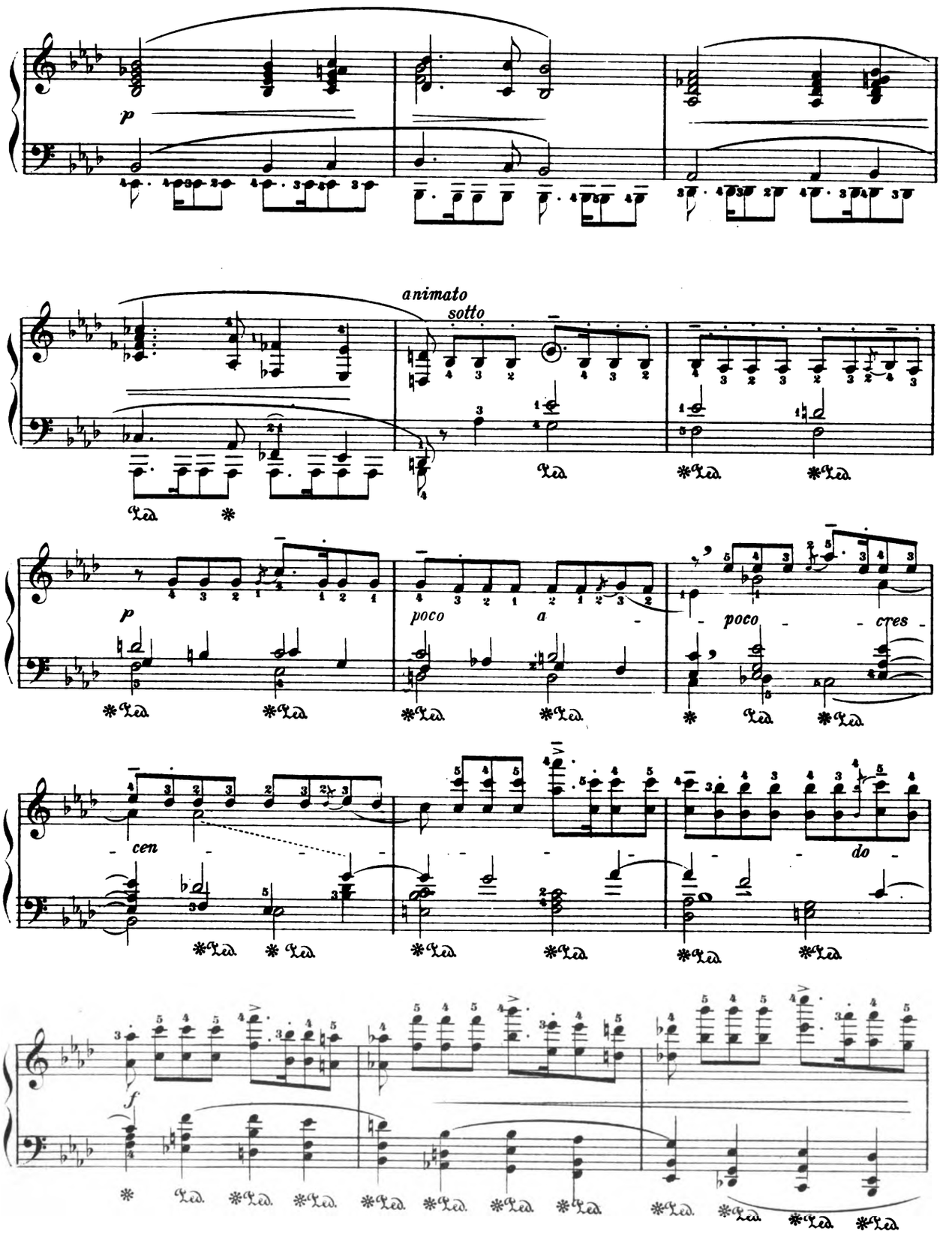
*The distinction between the arpeggio downwards and upwards should be observed.

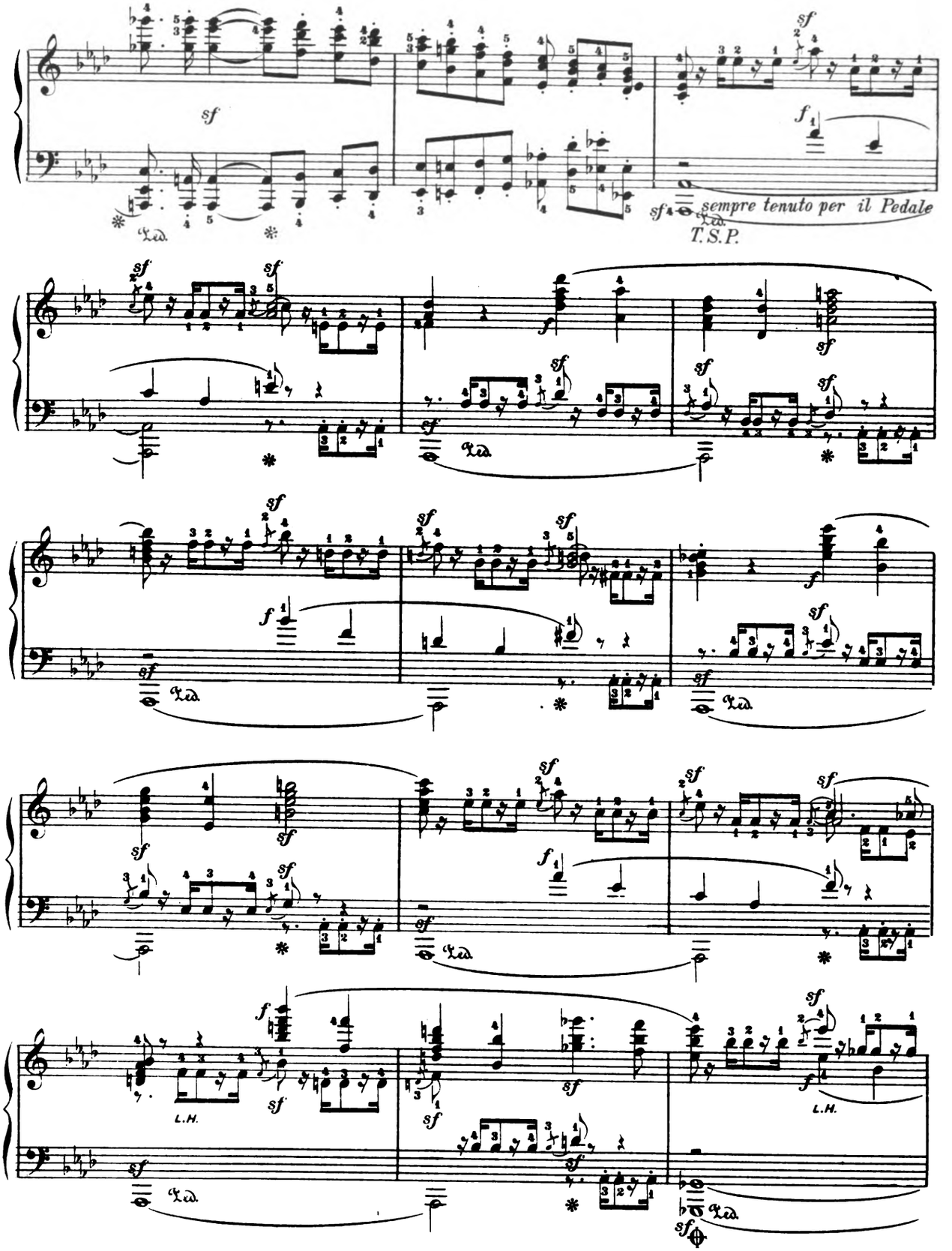


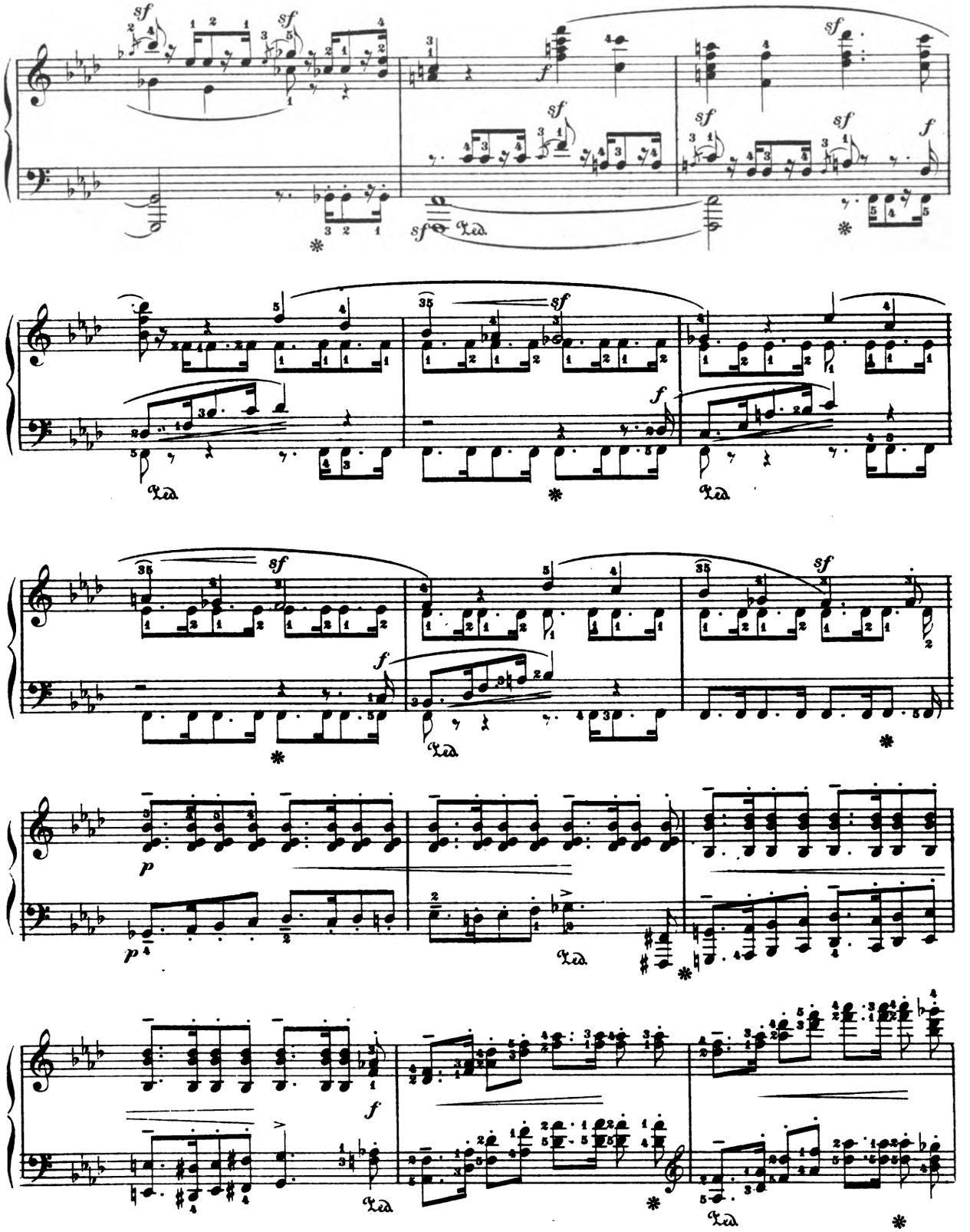


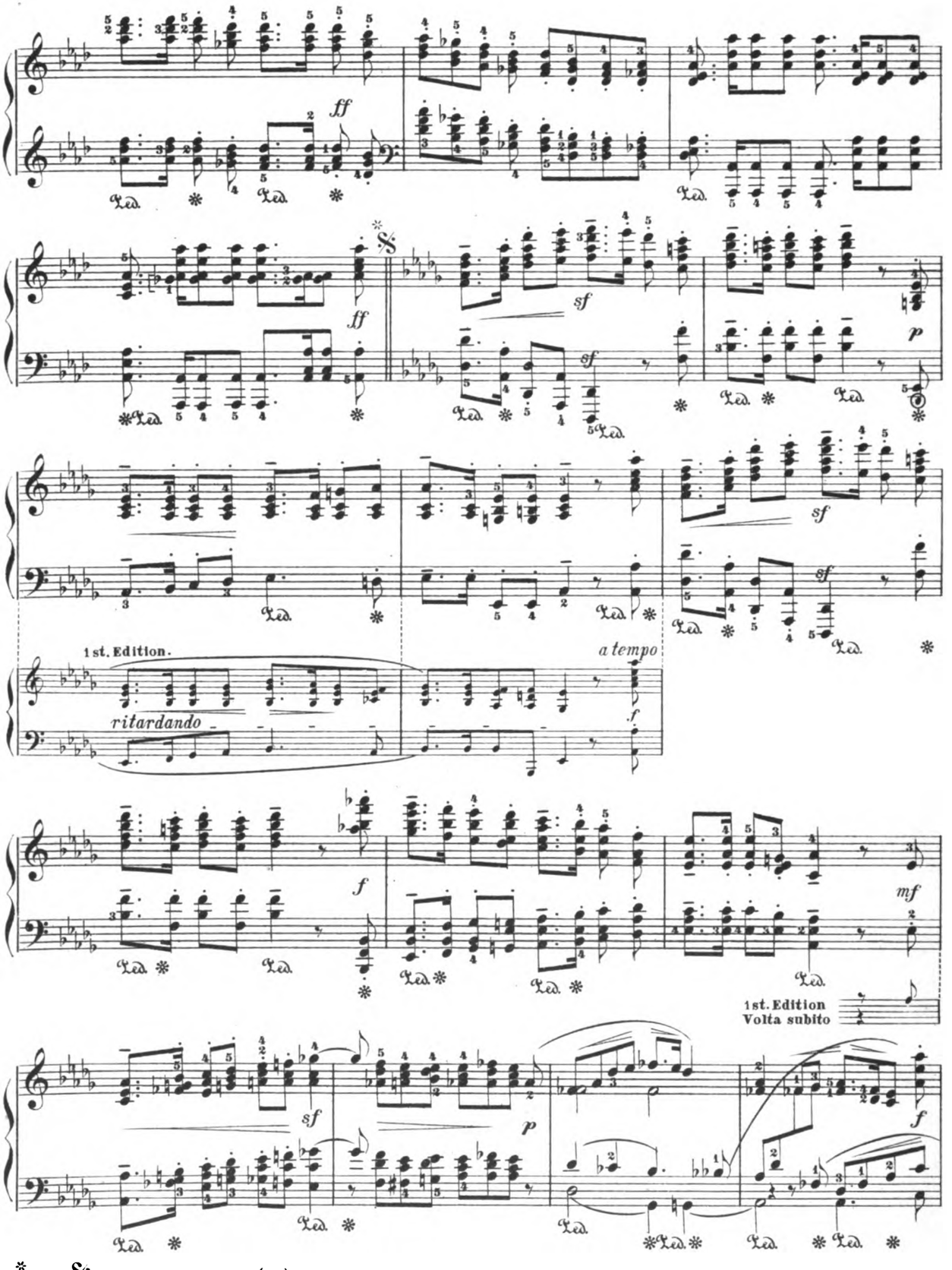




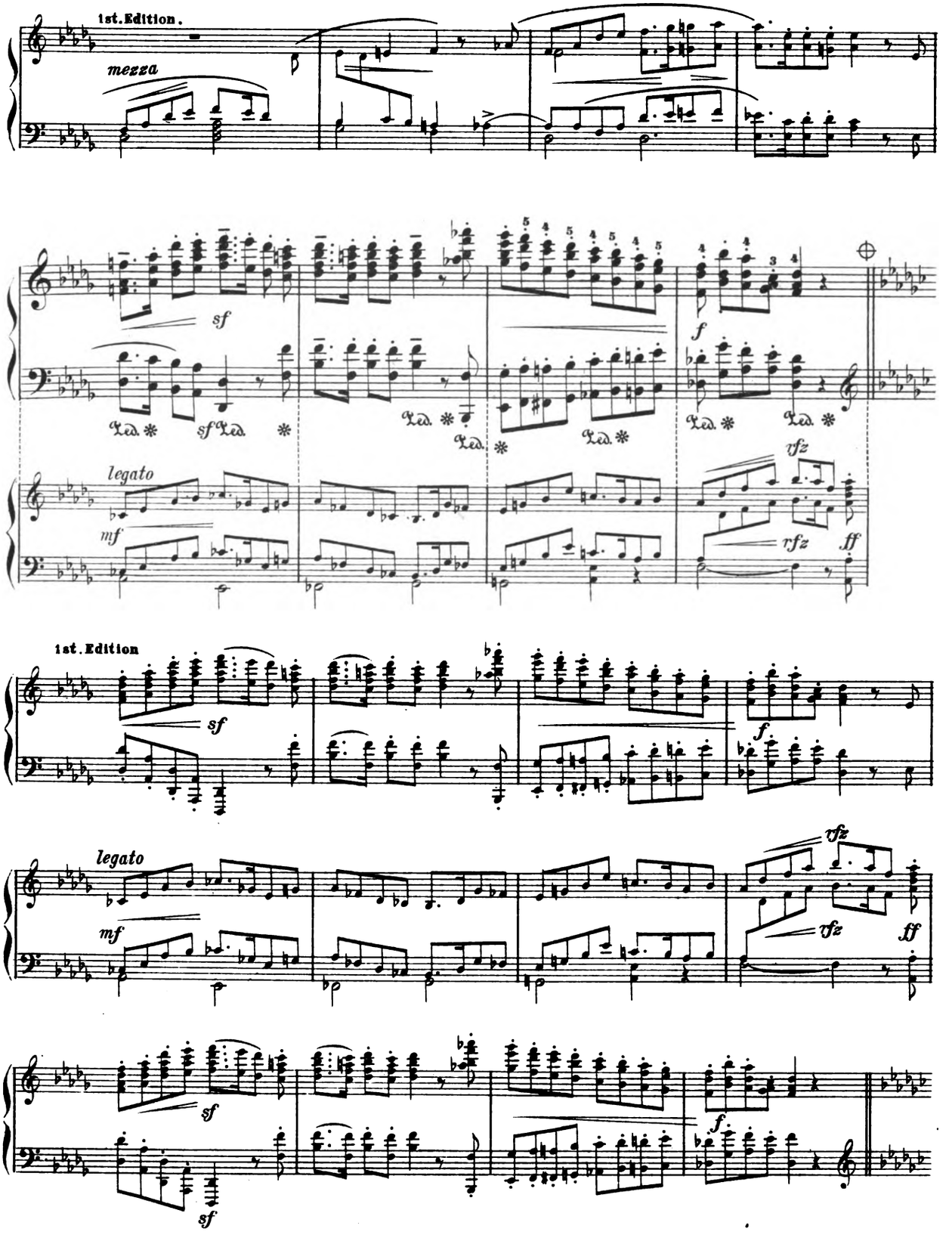


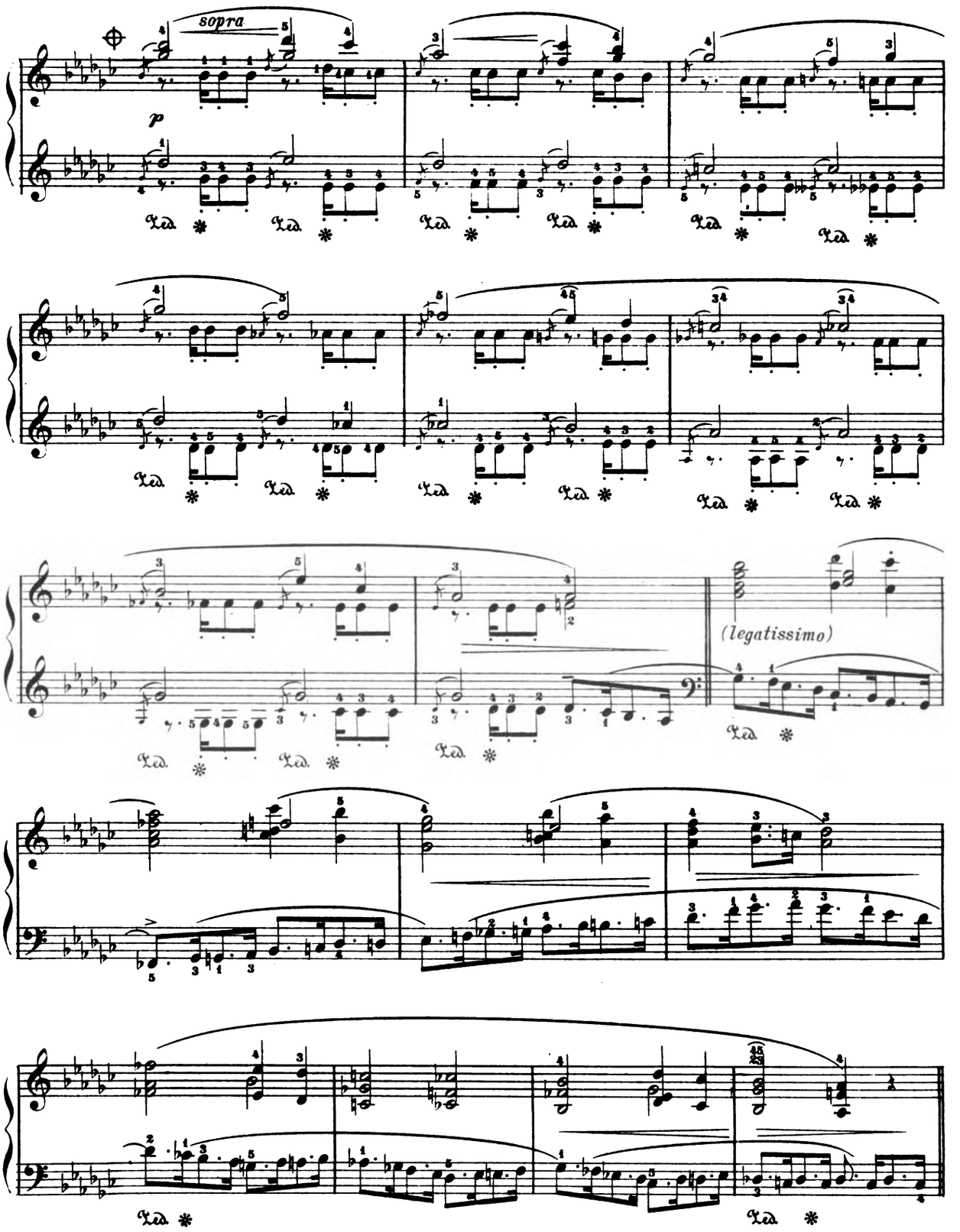


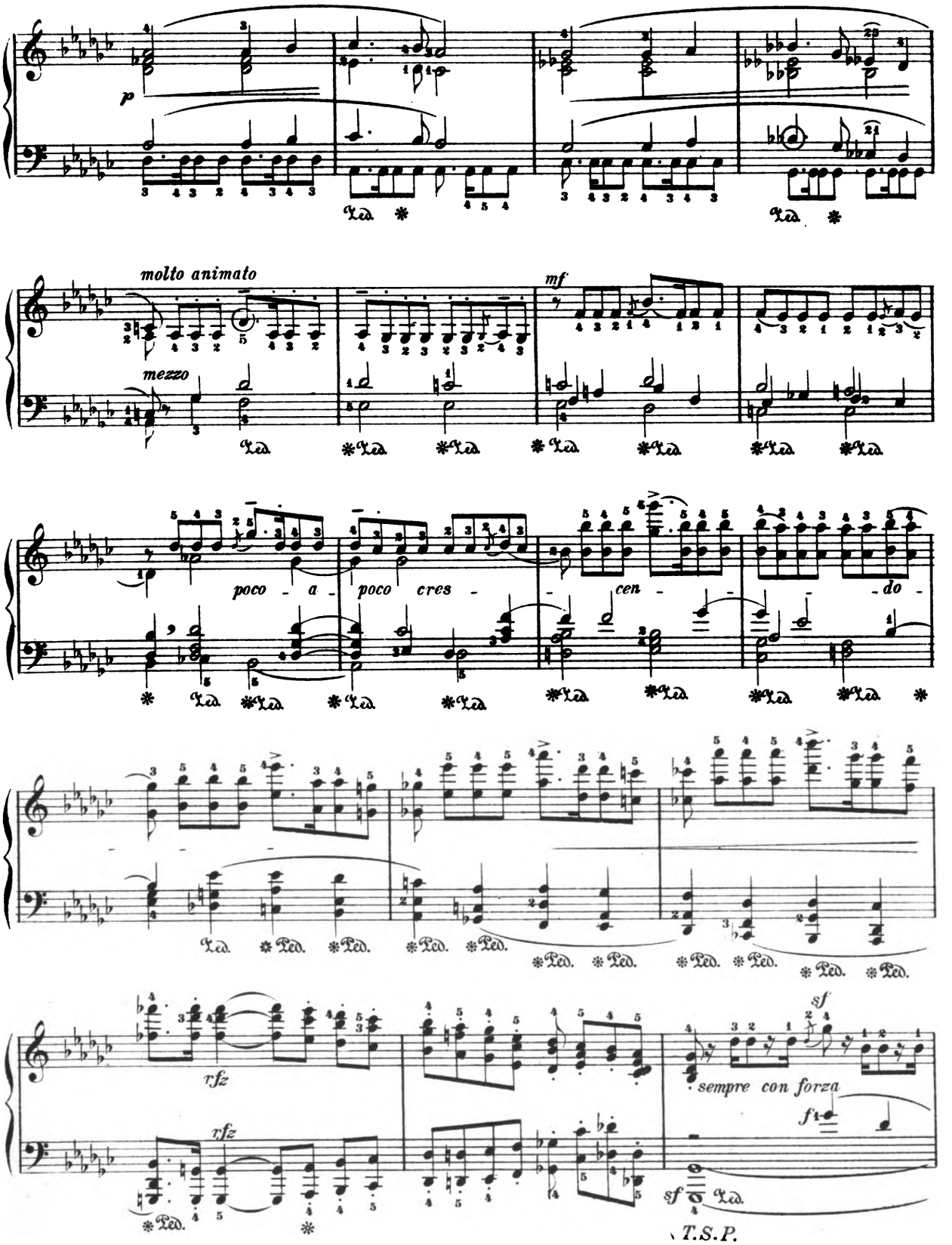


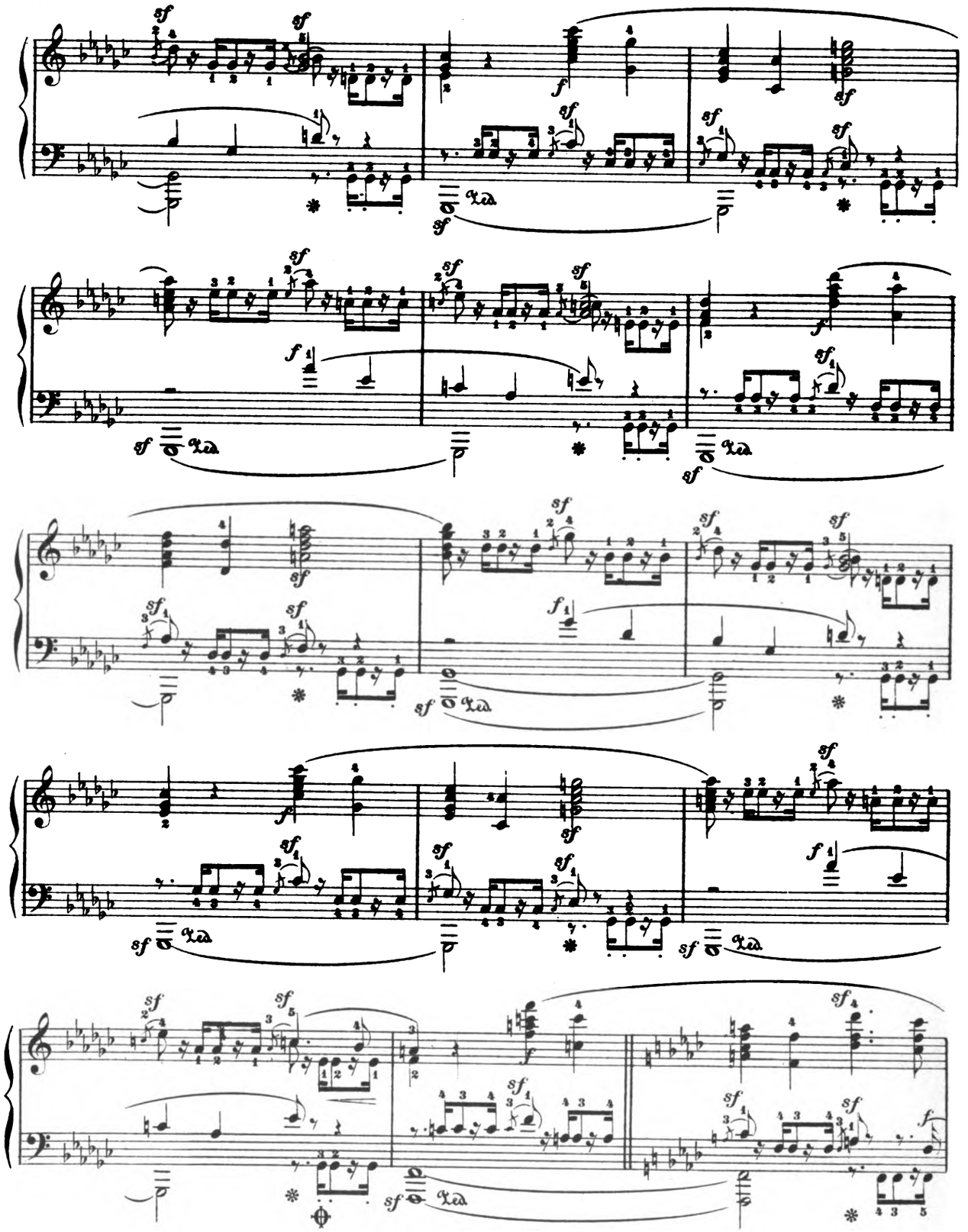


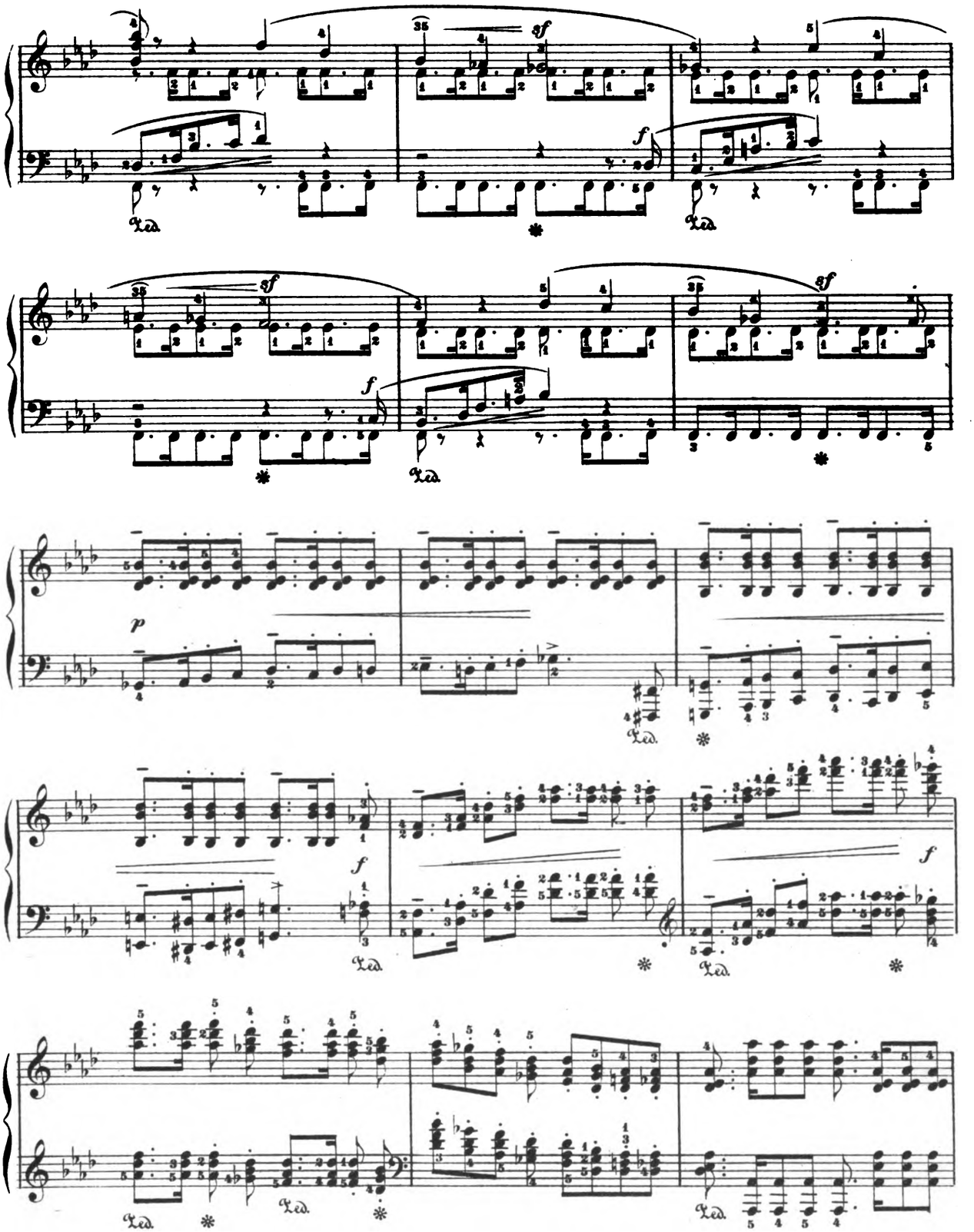
* From 𝄋 to the same sign, page(37) optional

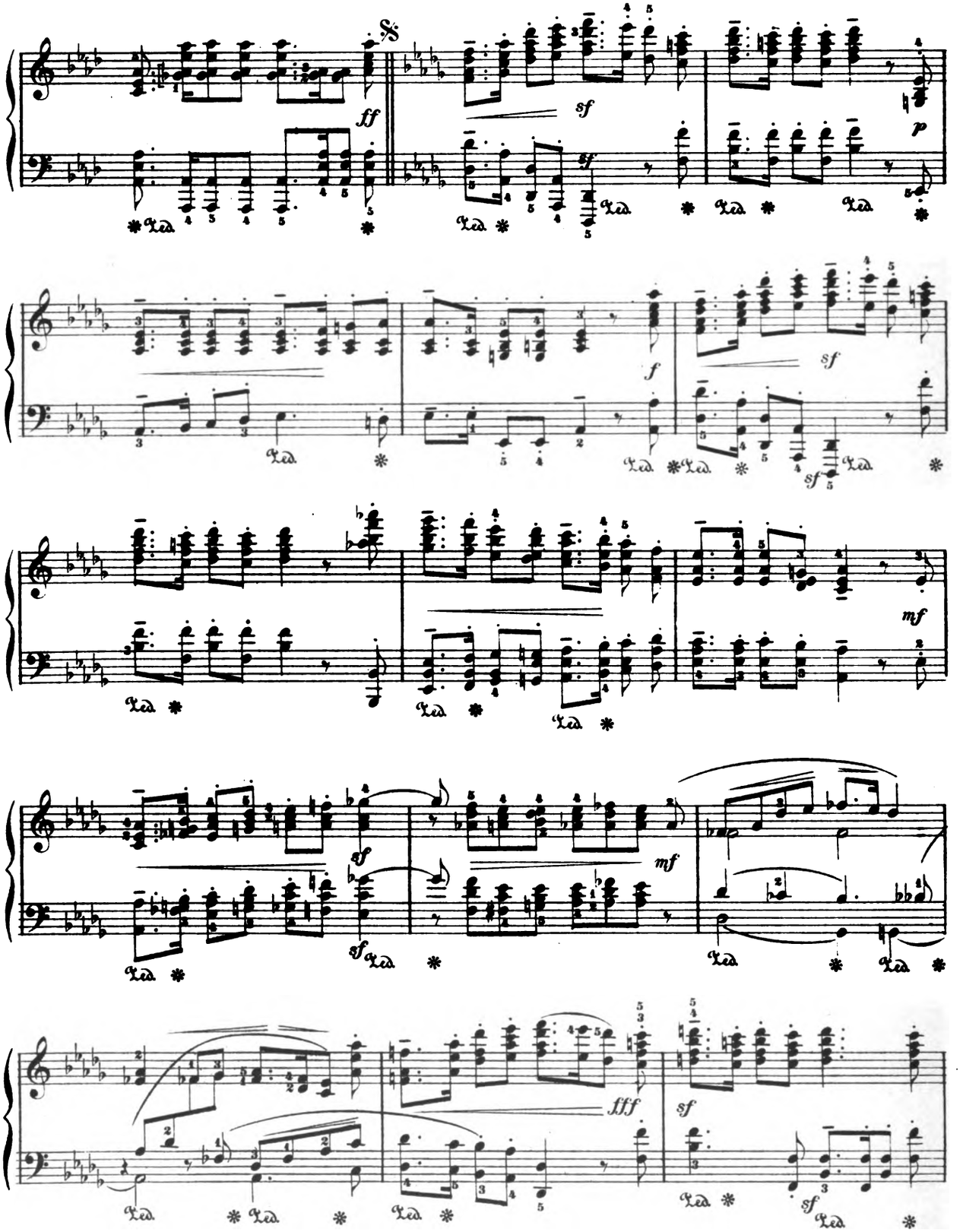


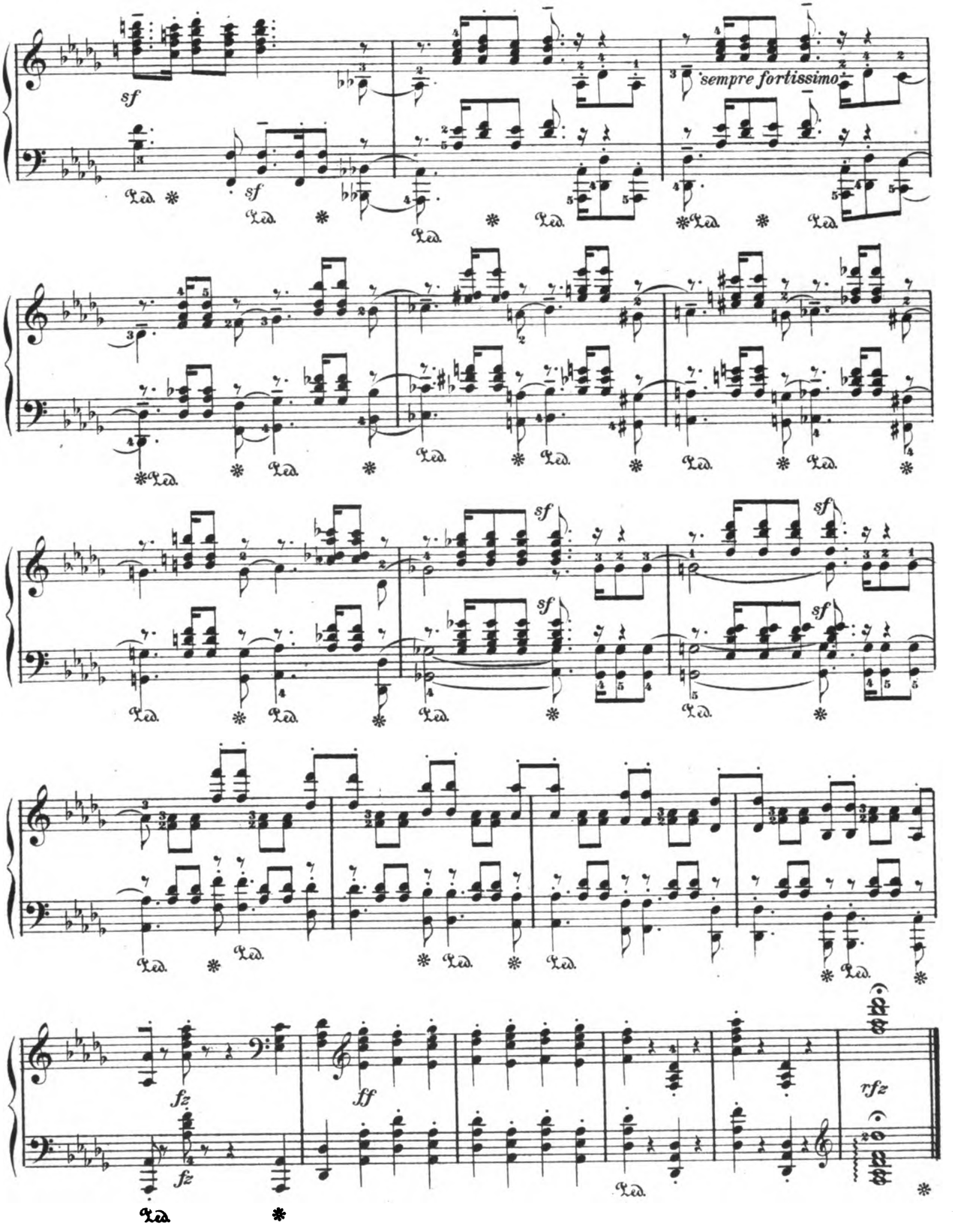








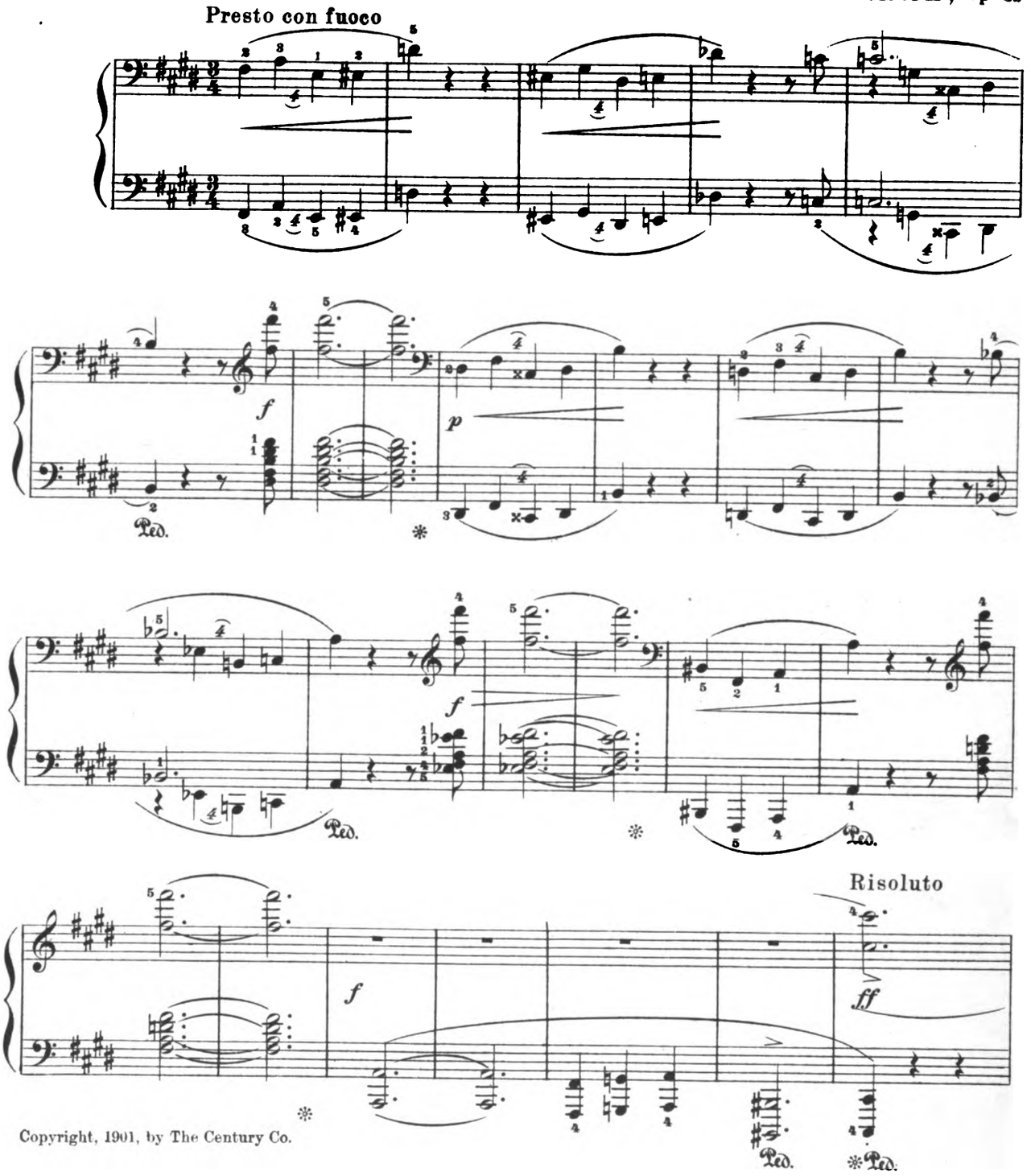


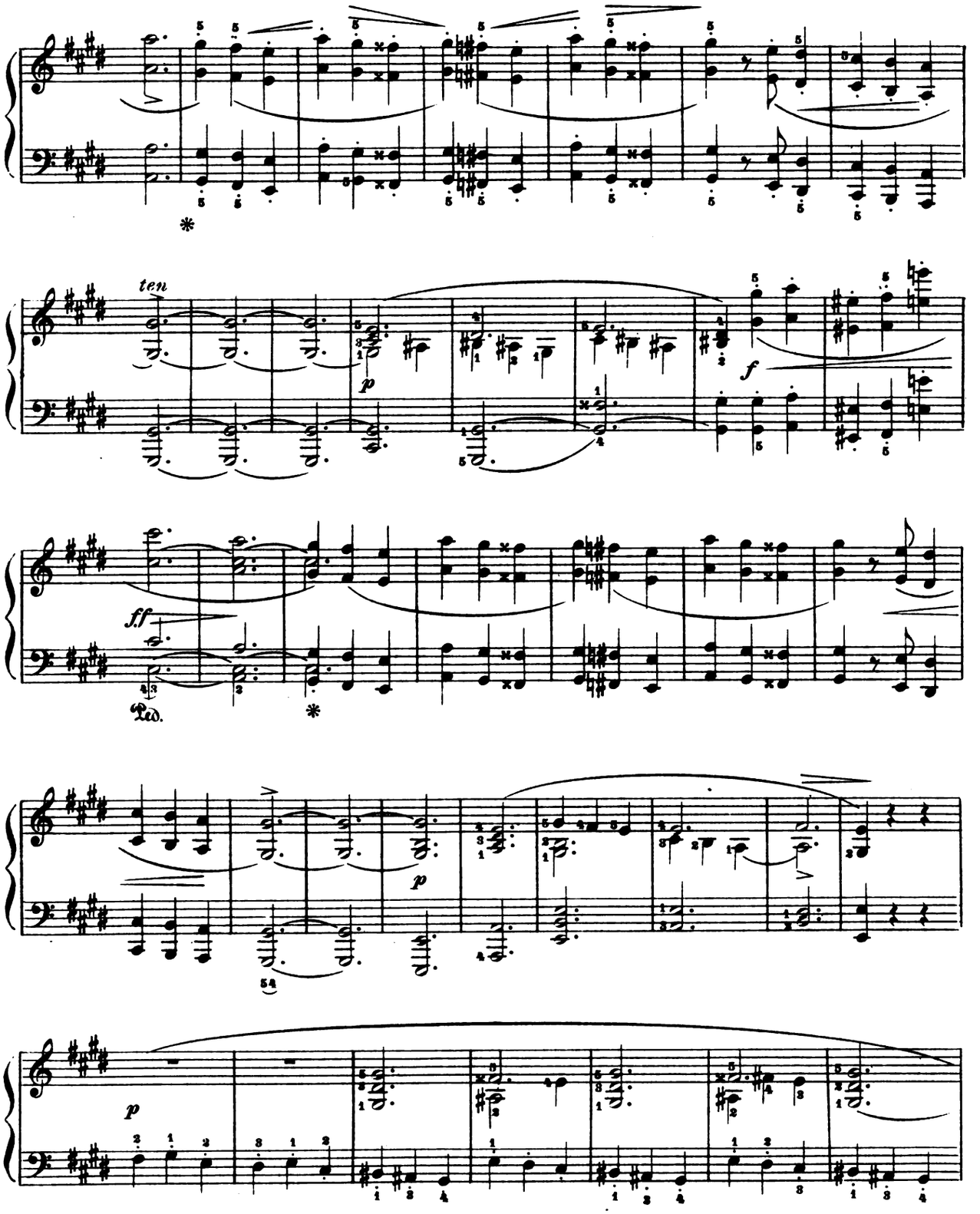


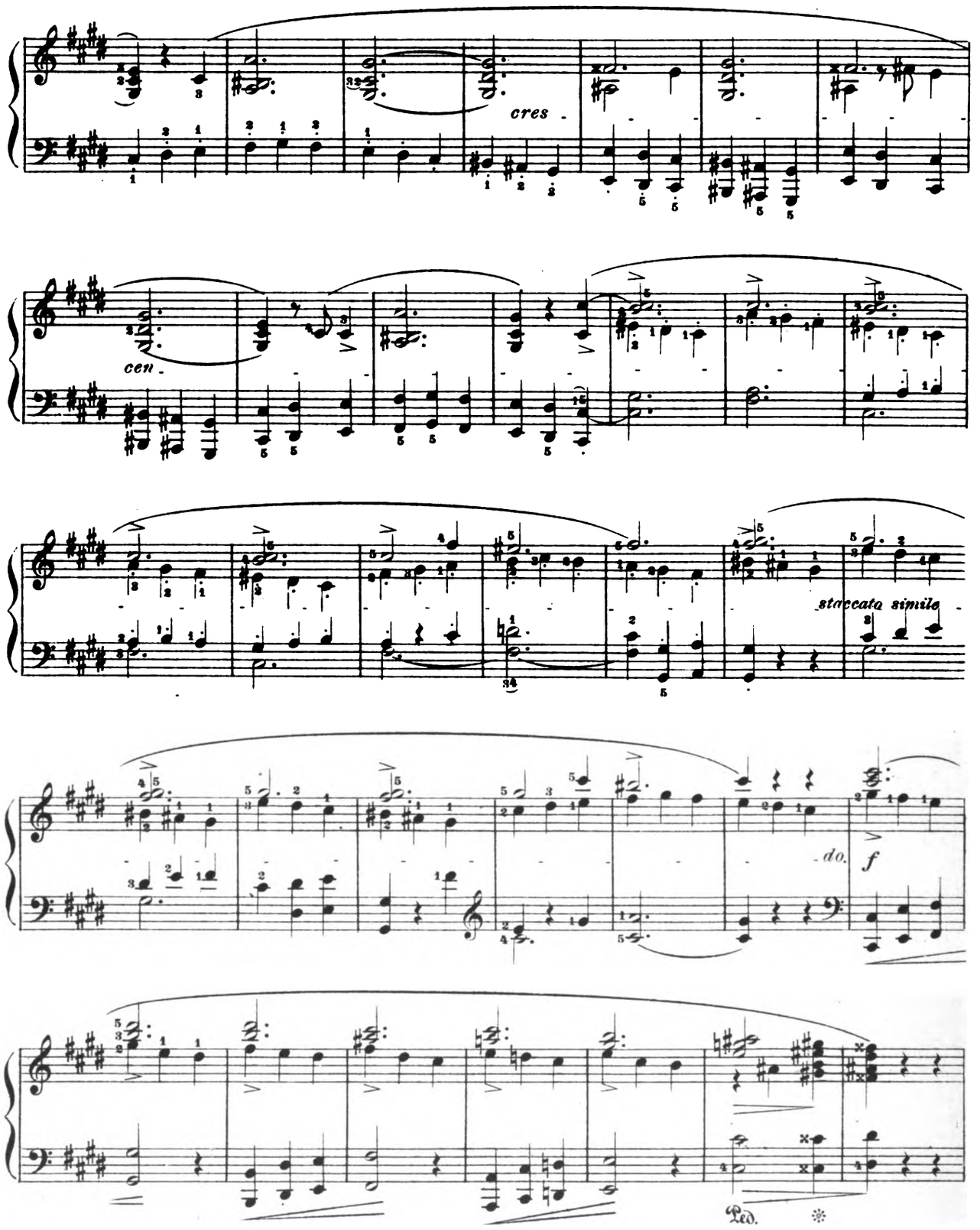
SCHERZO

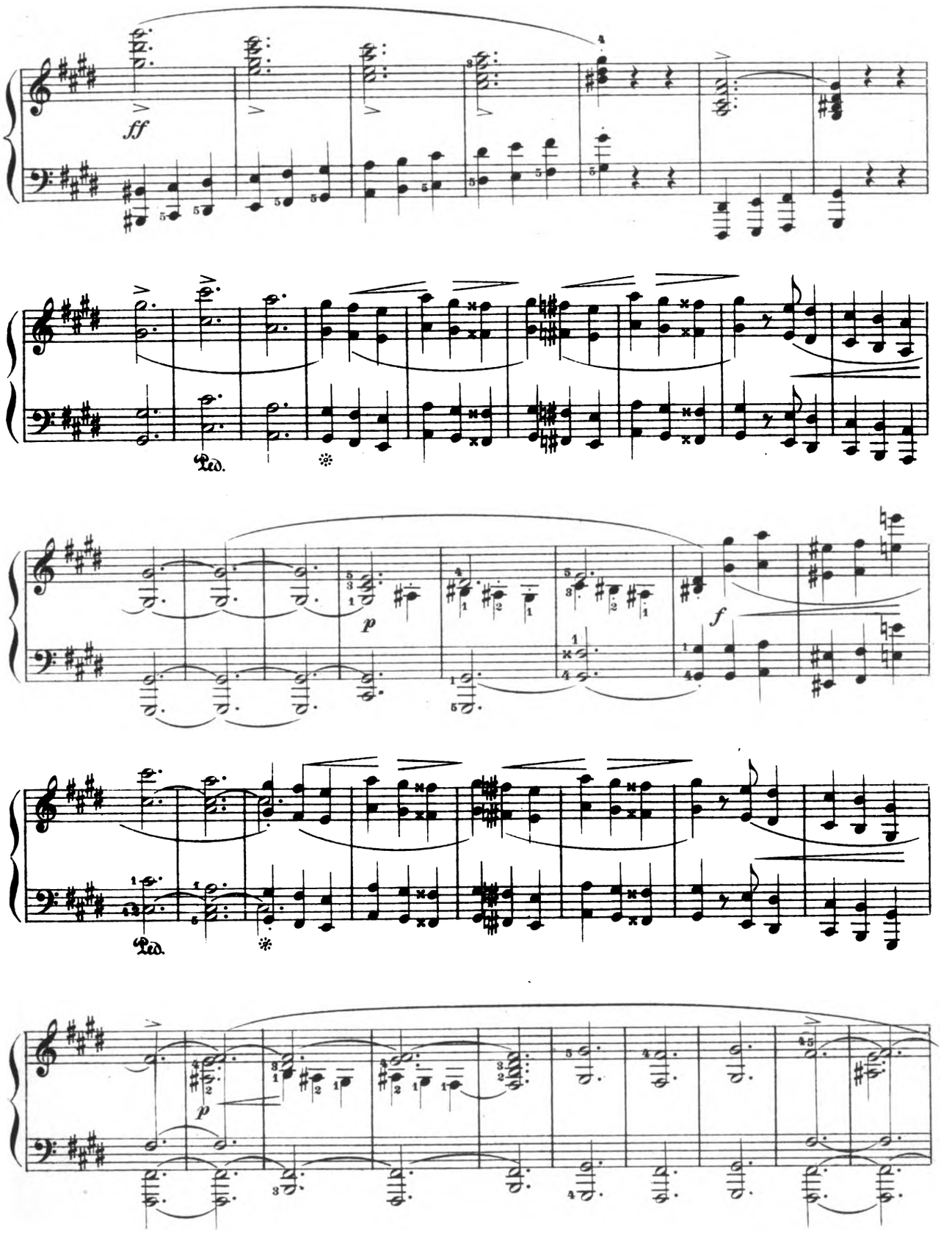
C SHARP MINOR

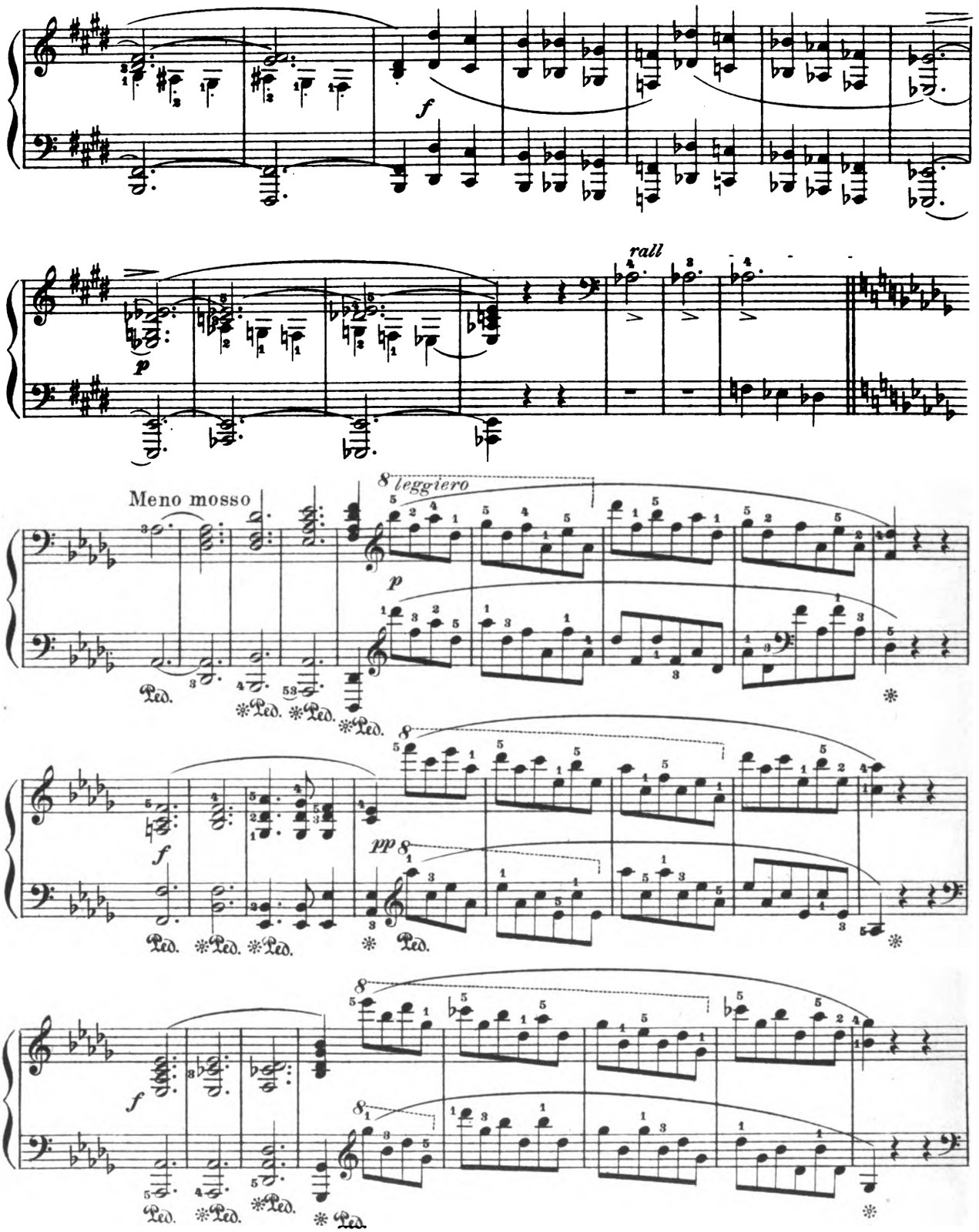
CHOPIN, Op 39

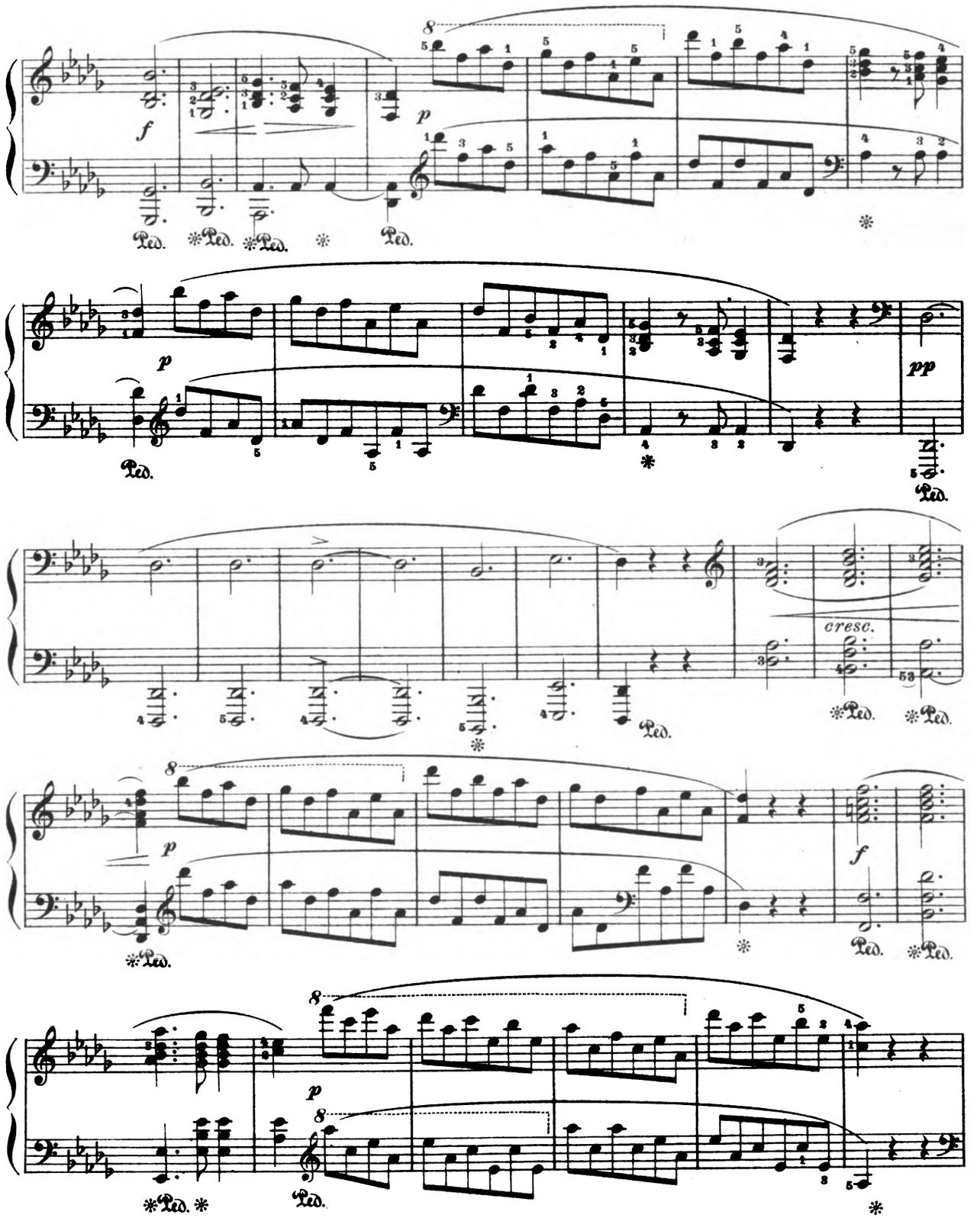


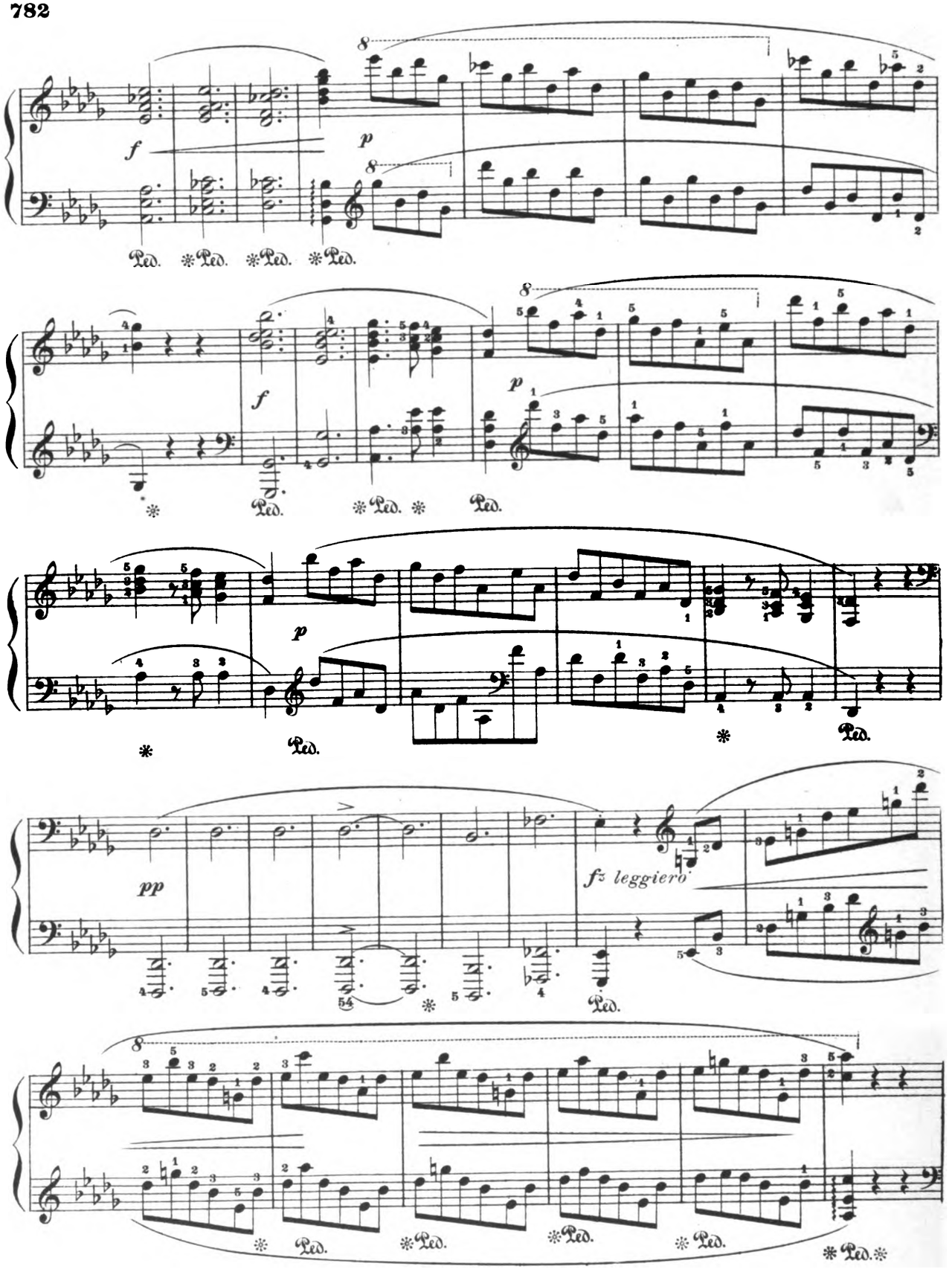


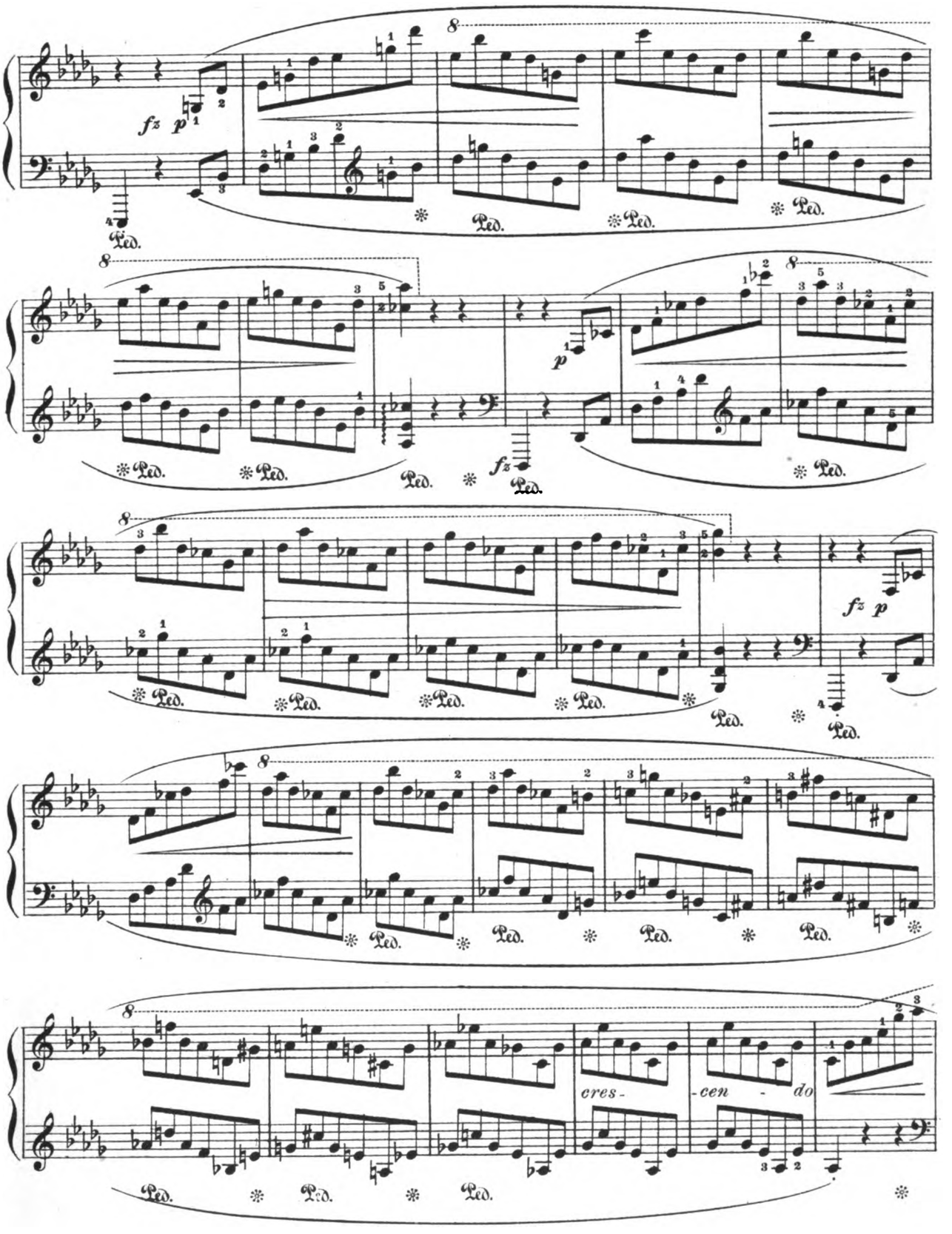


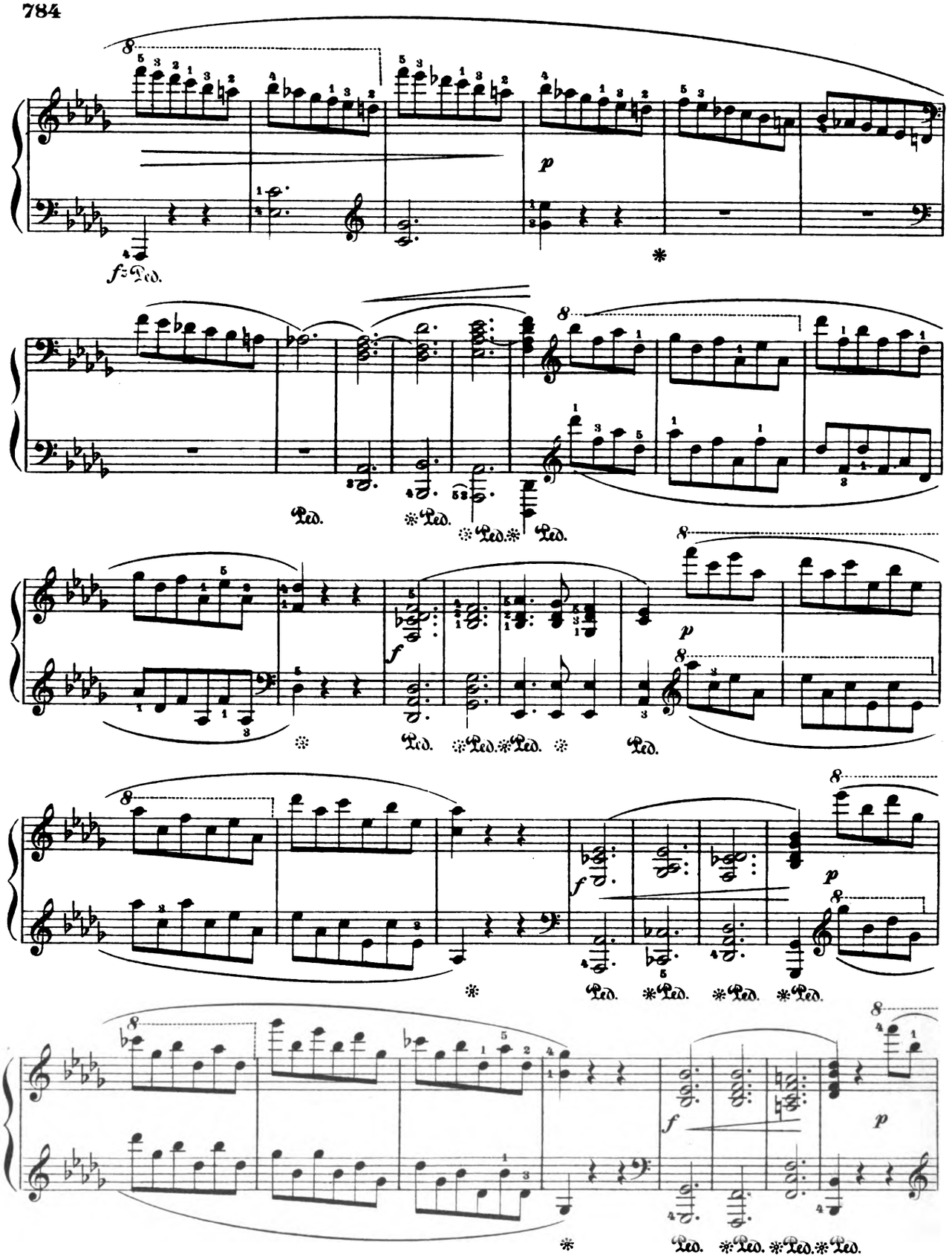


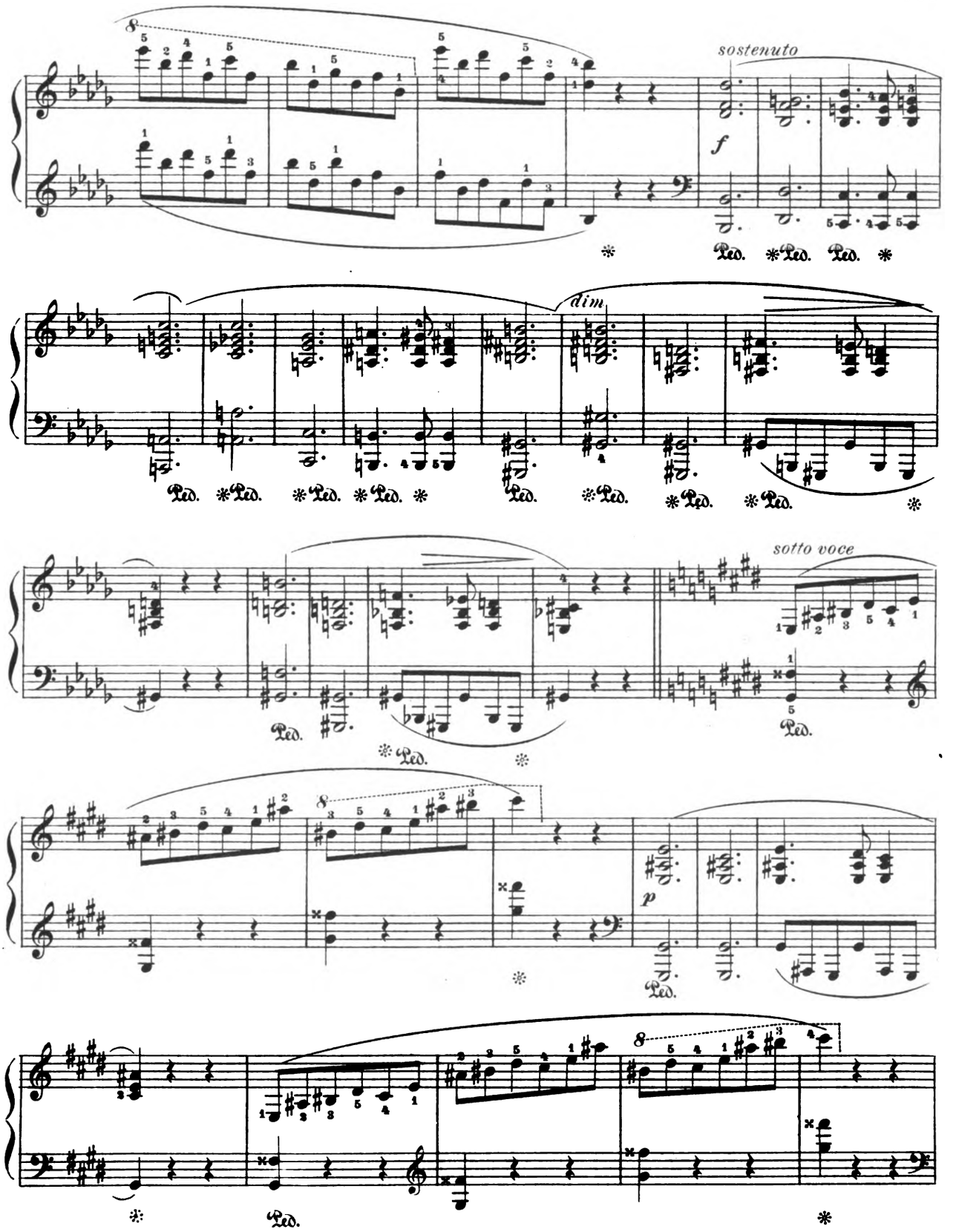


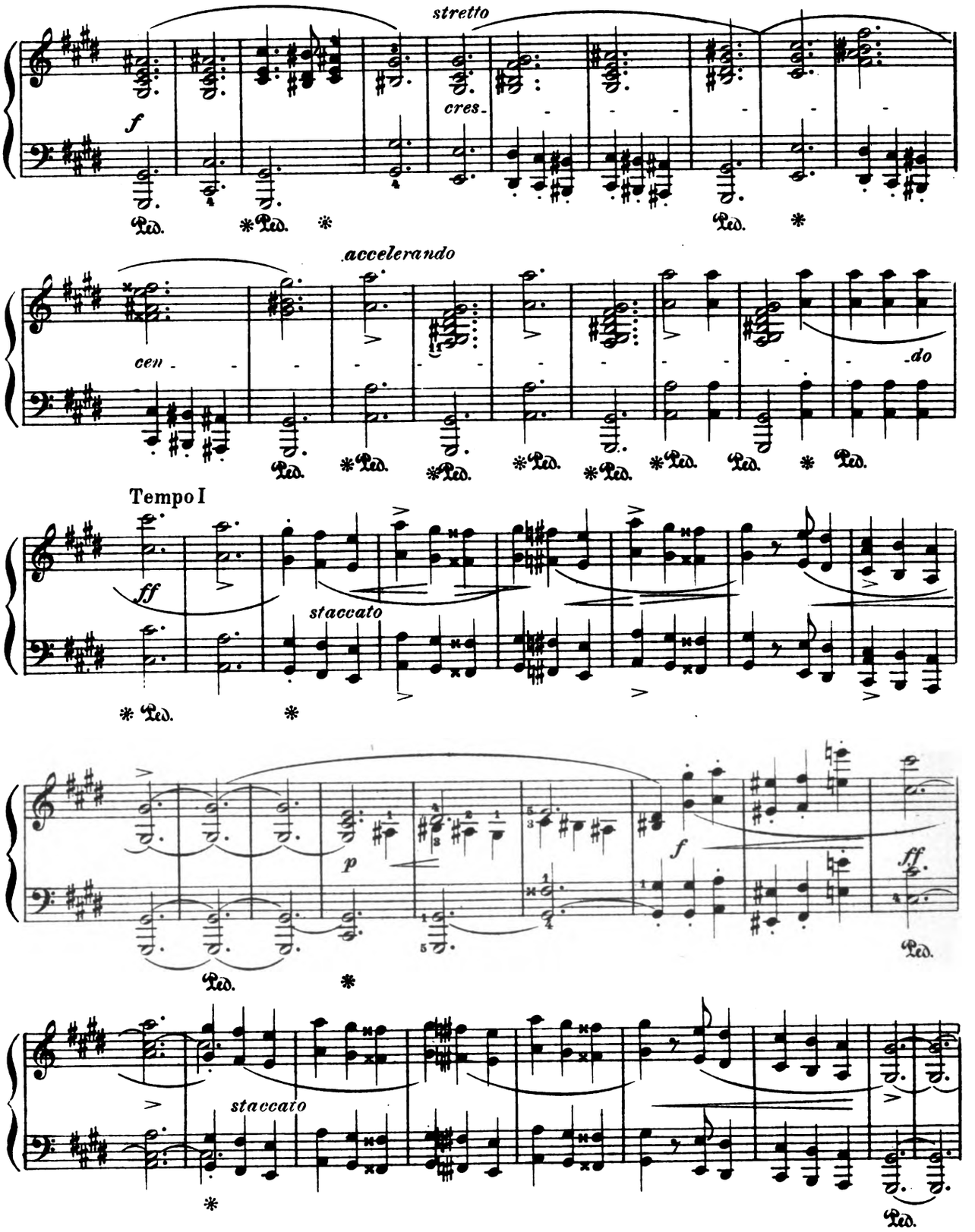


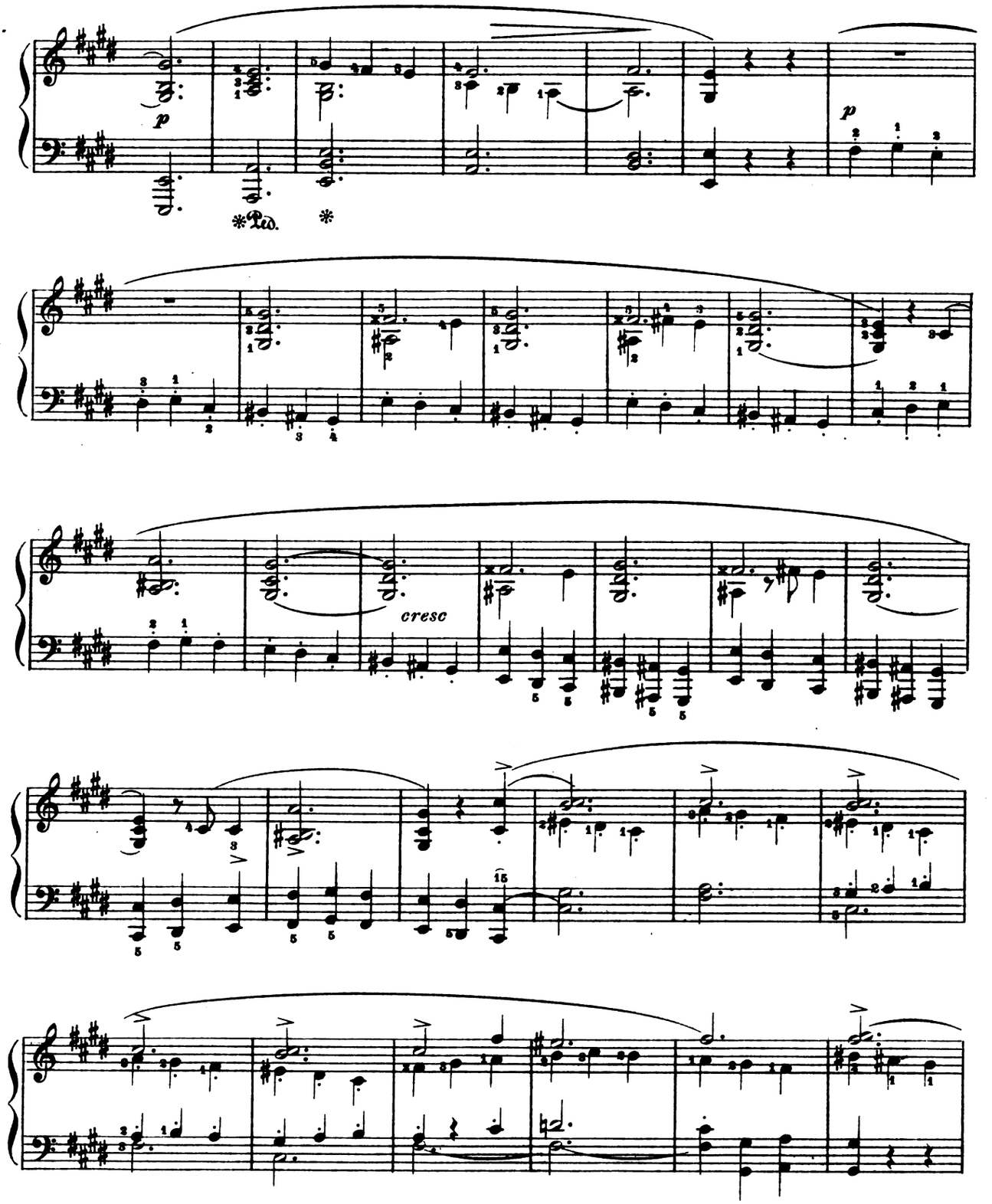


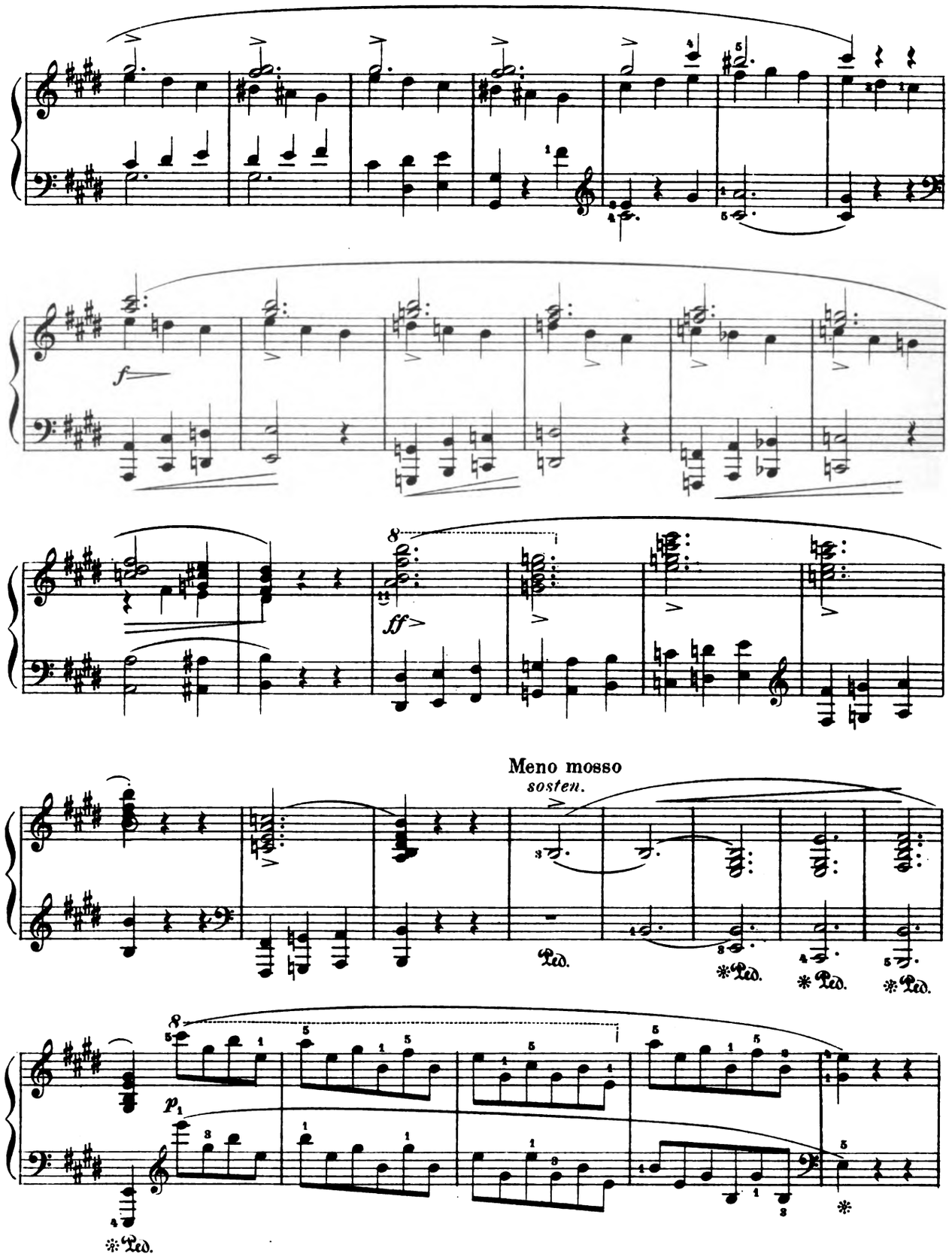


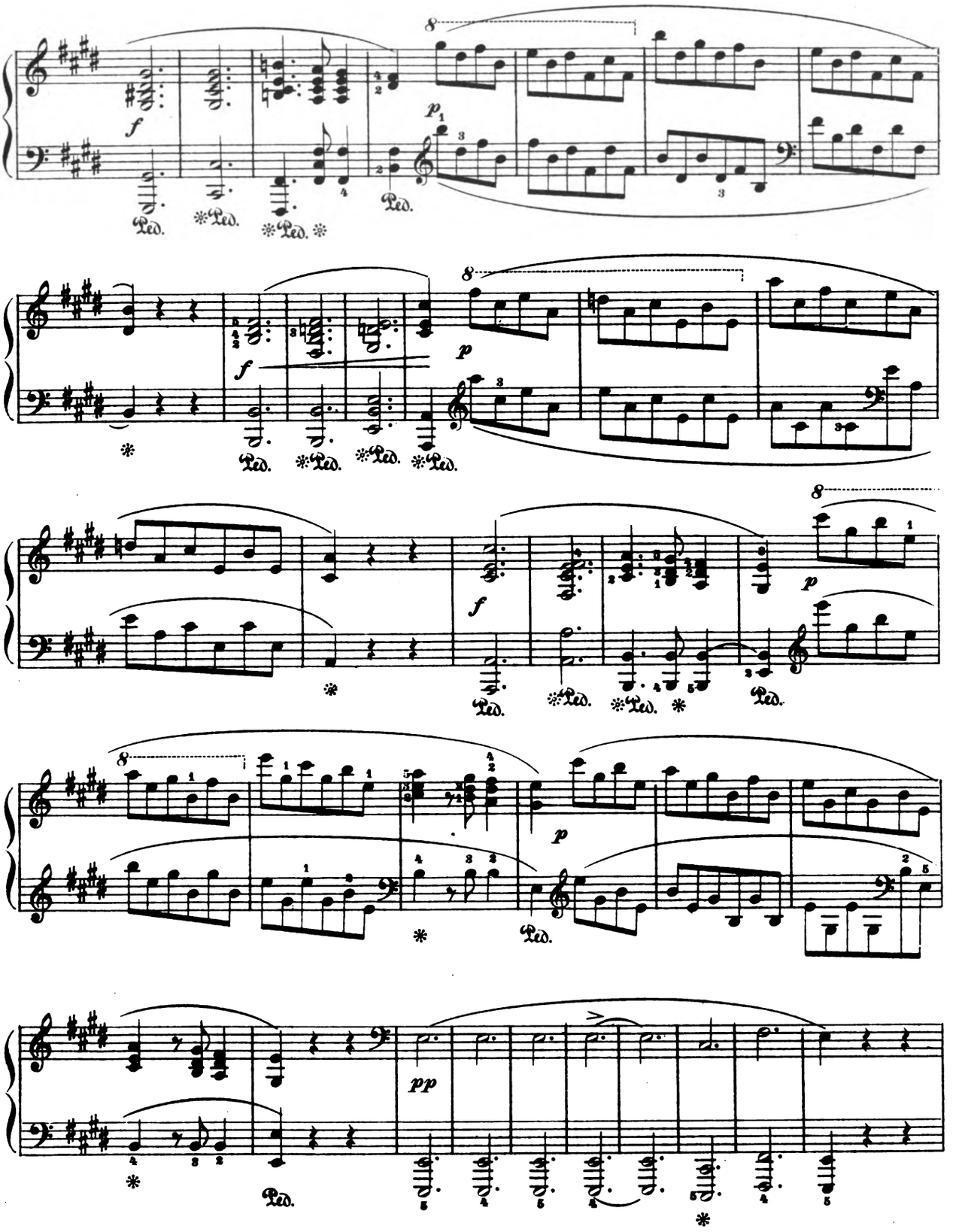


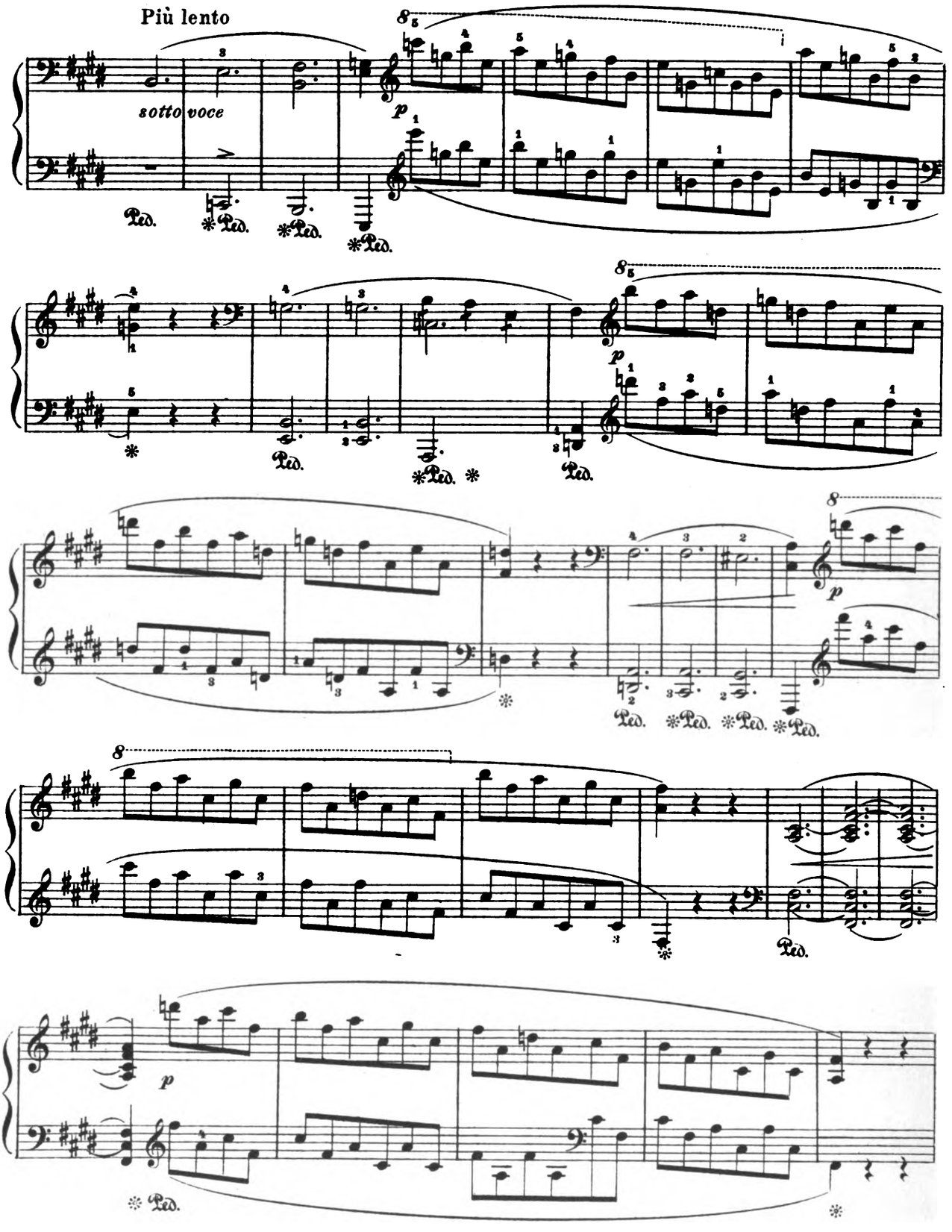


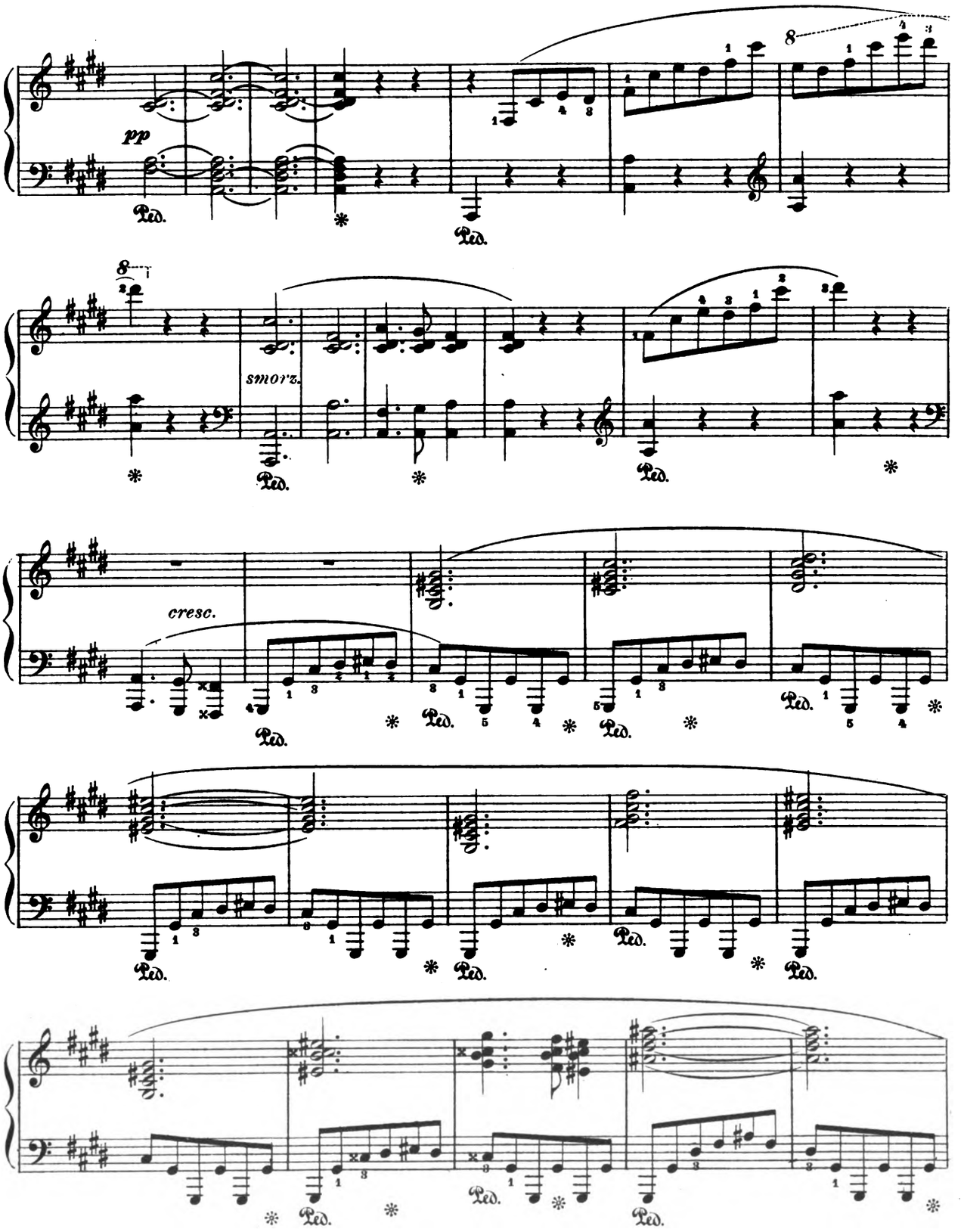


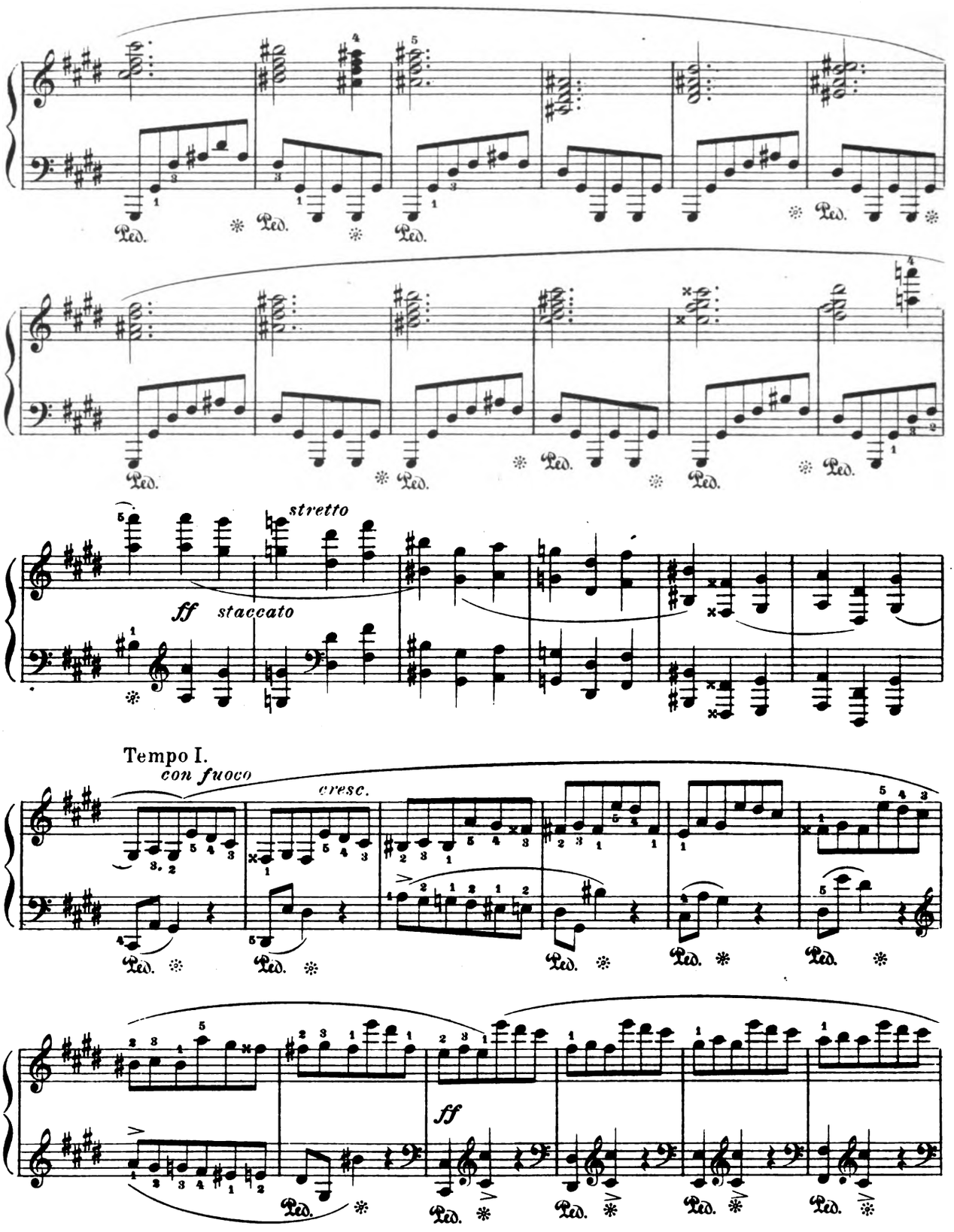


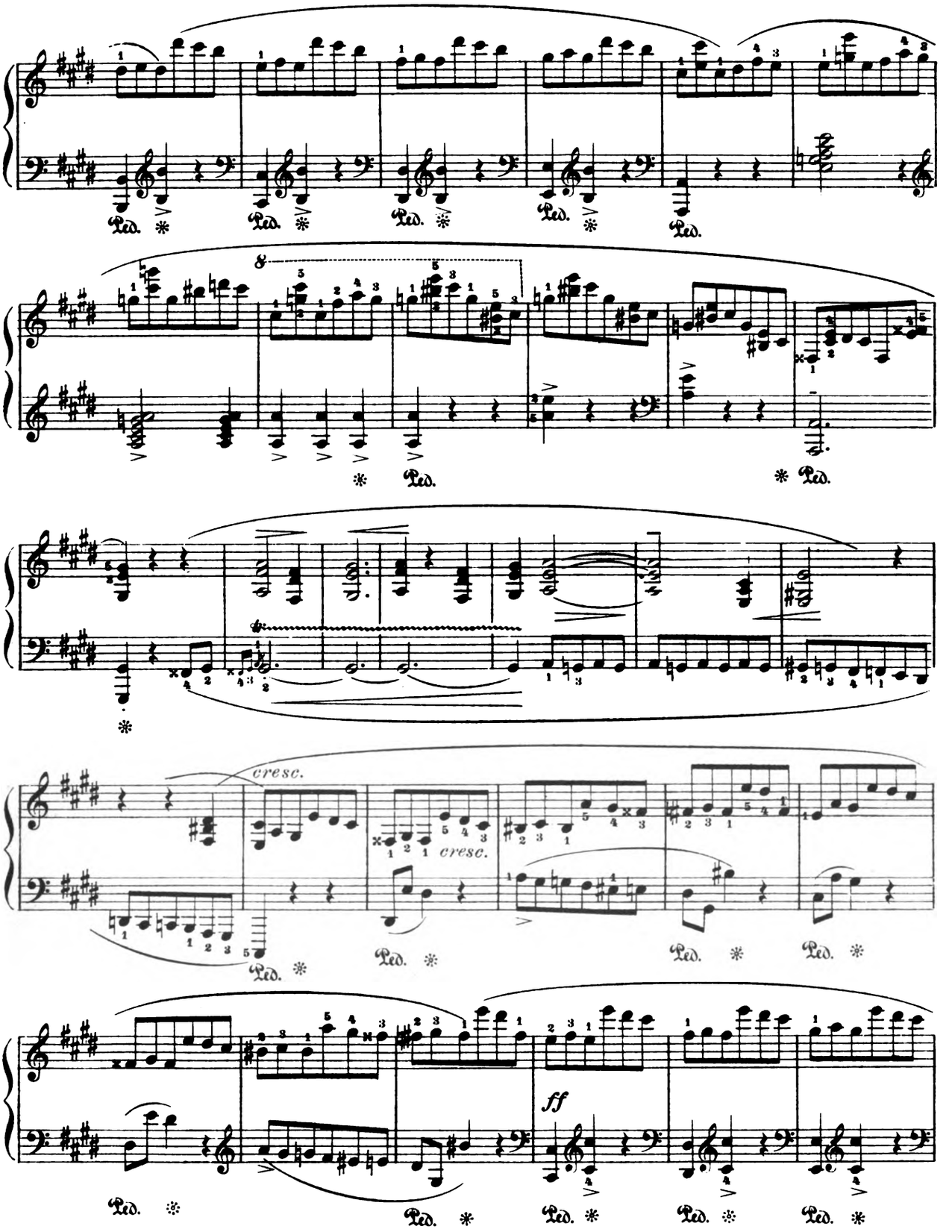


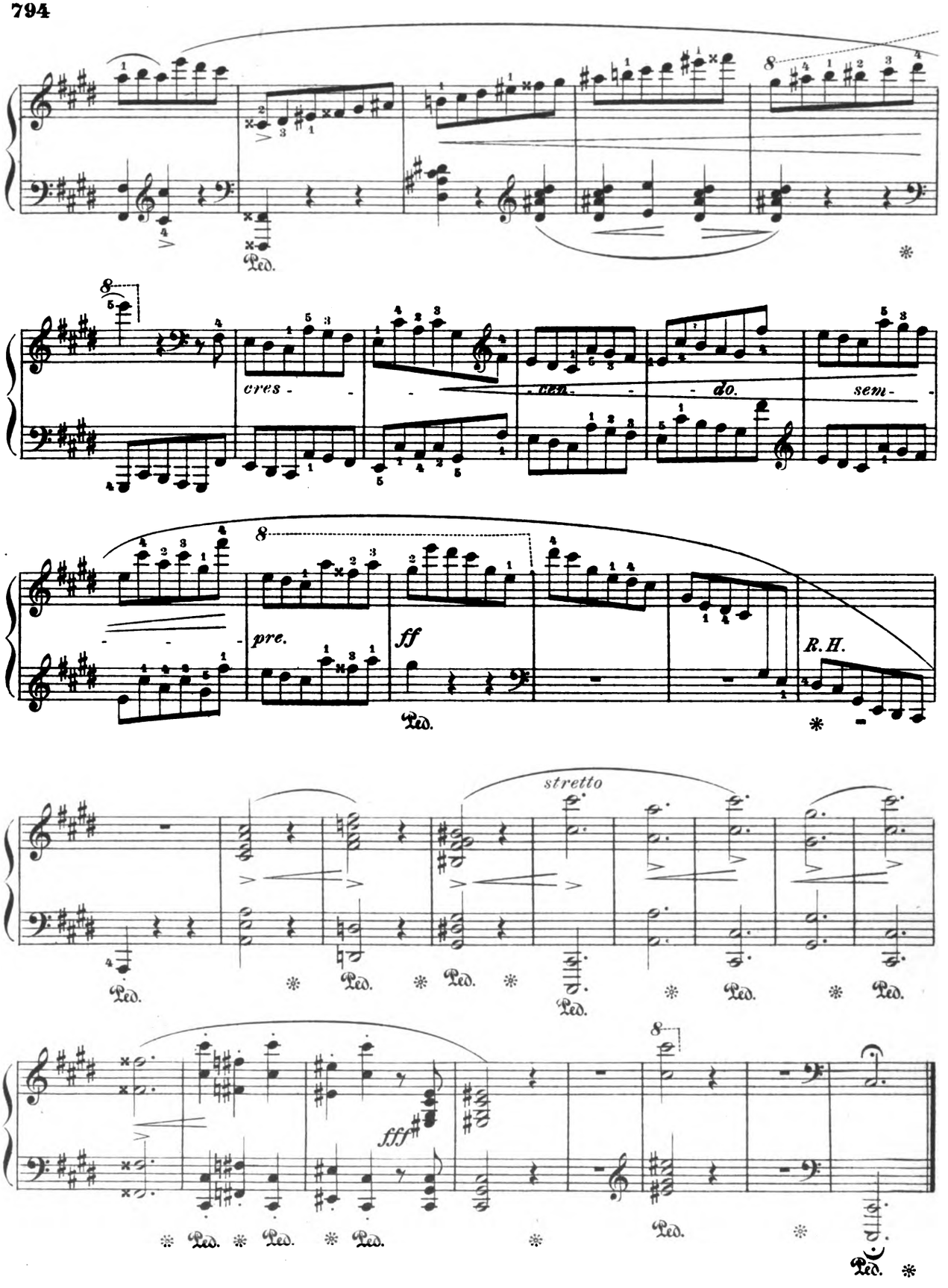










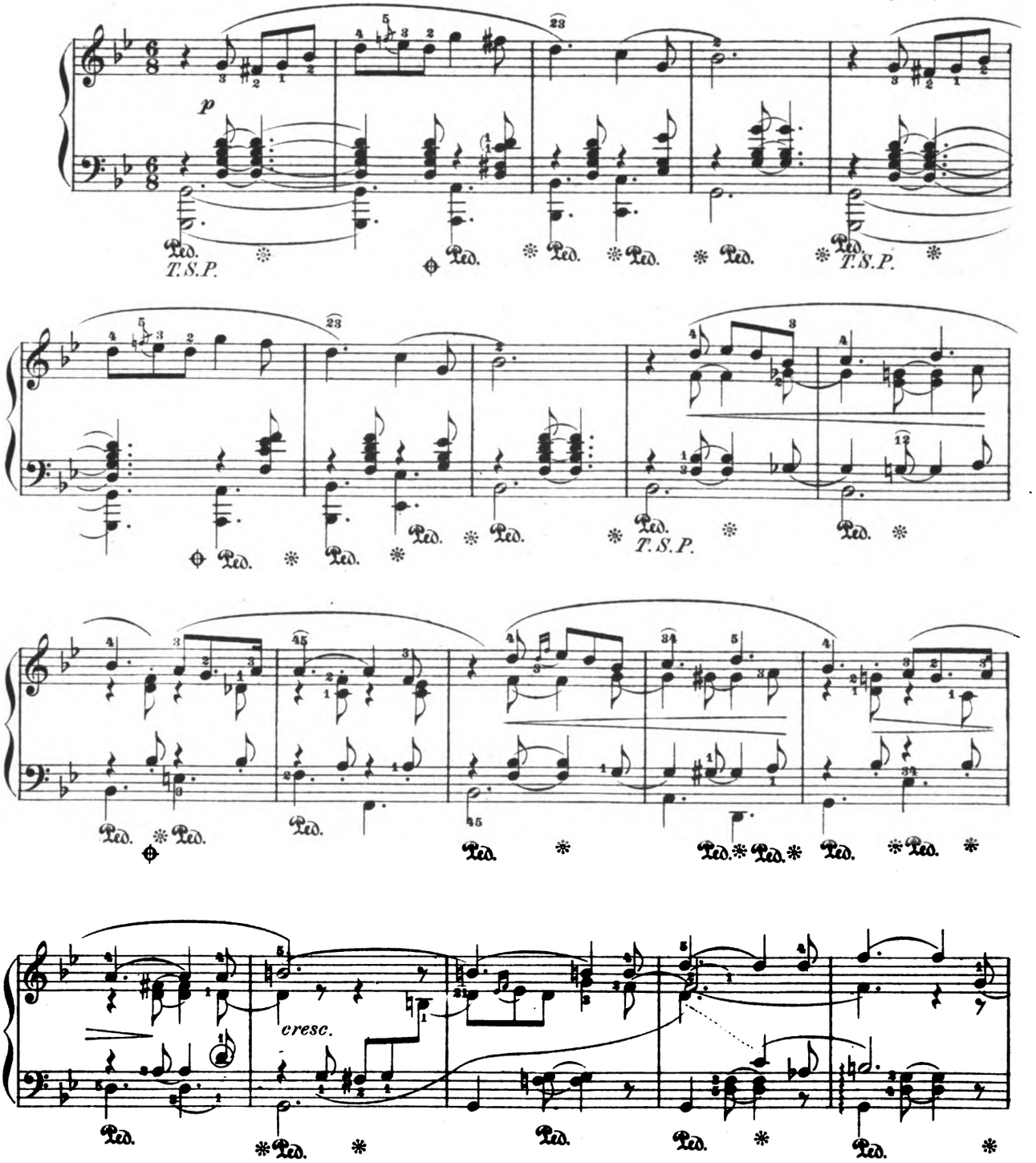


BARCAROLLE

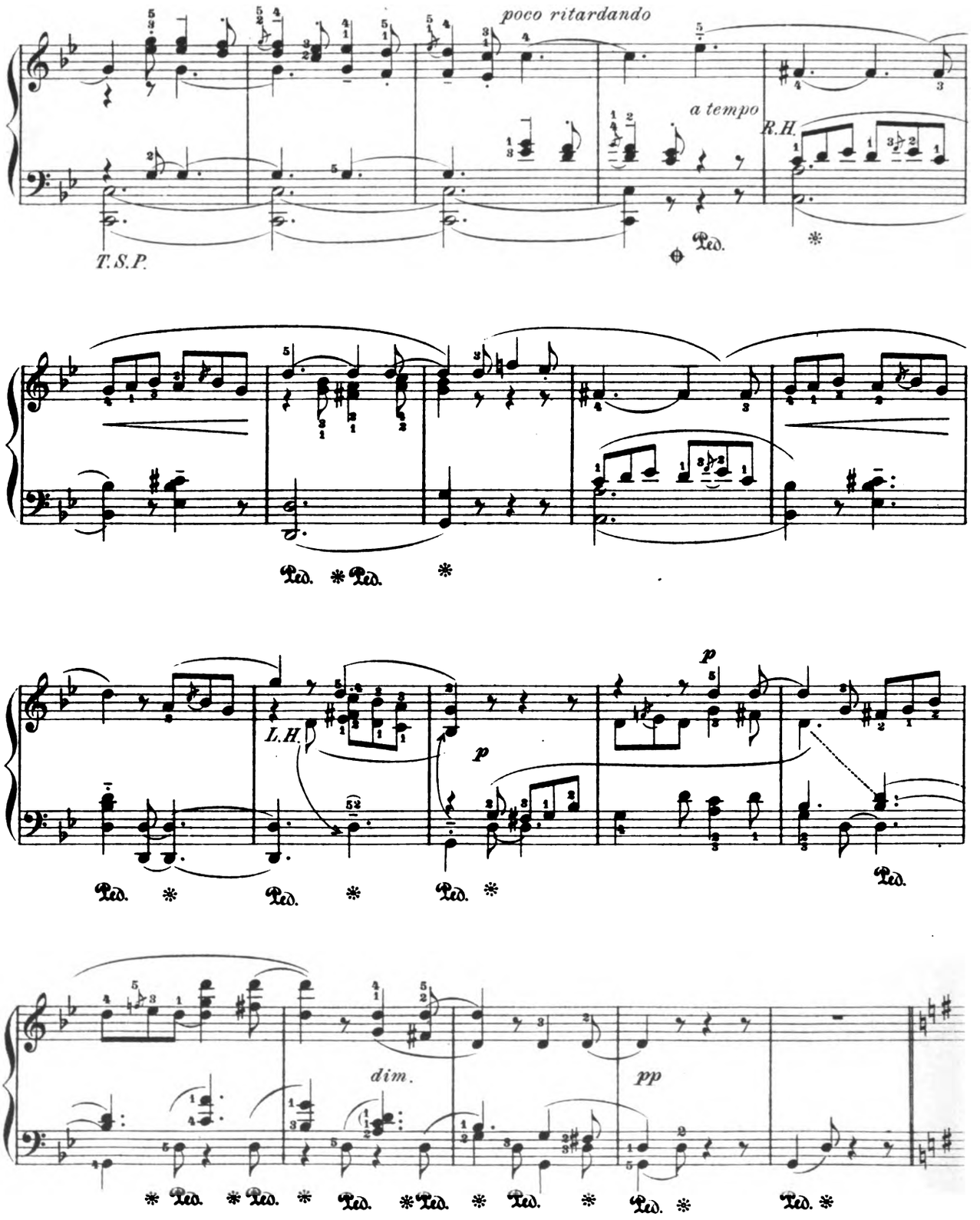
G MINOR

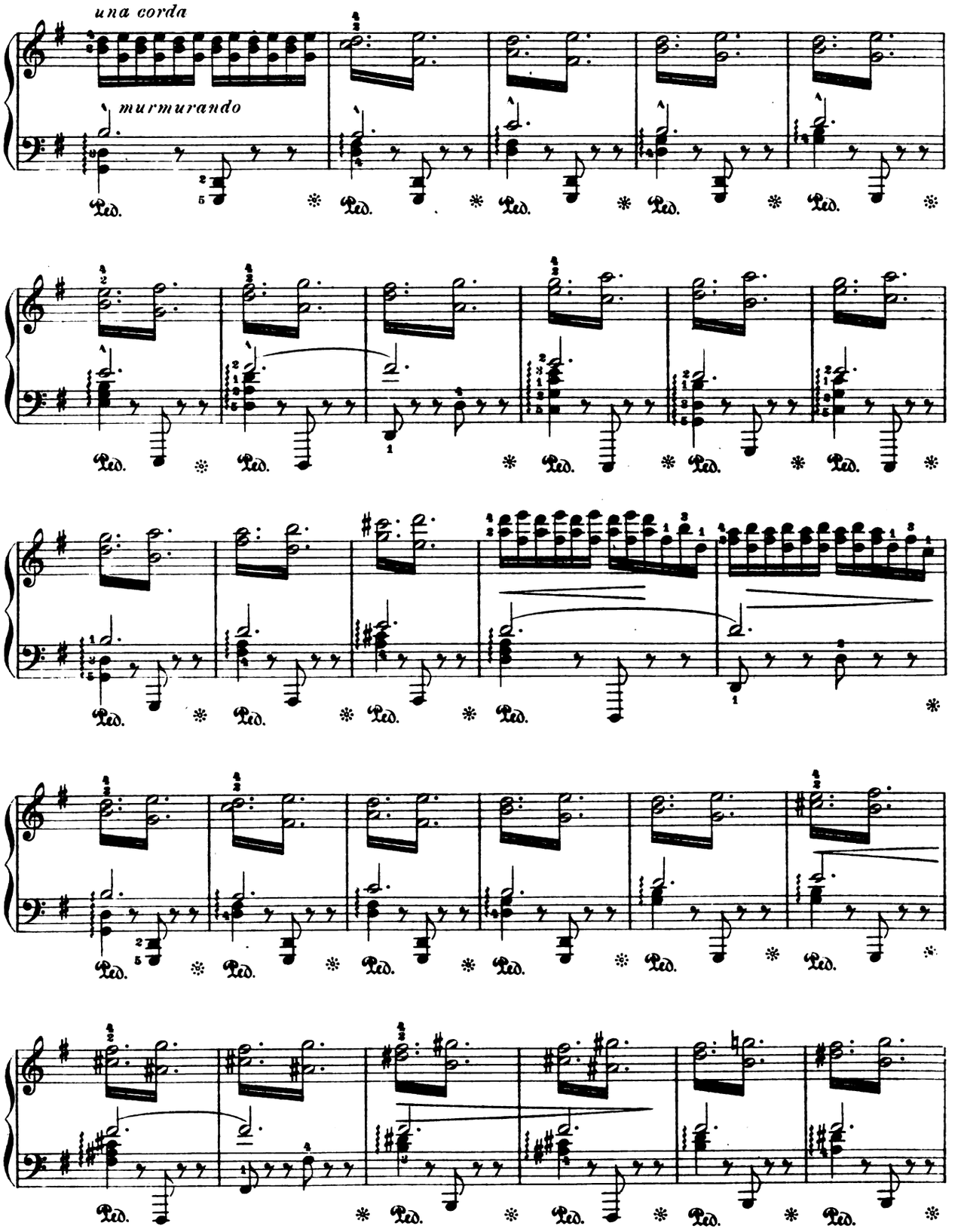
Moderato con moto

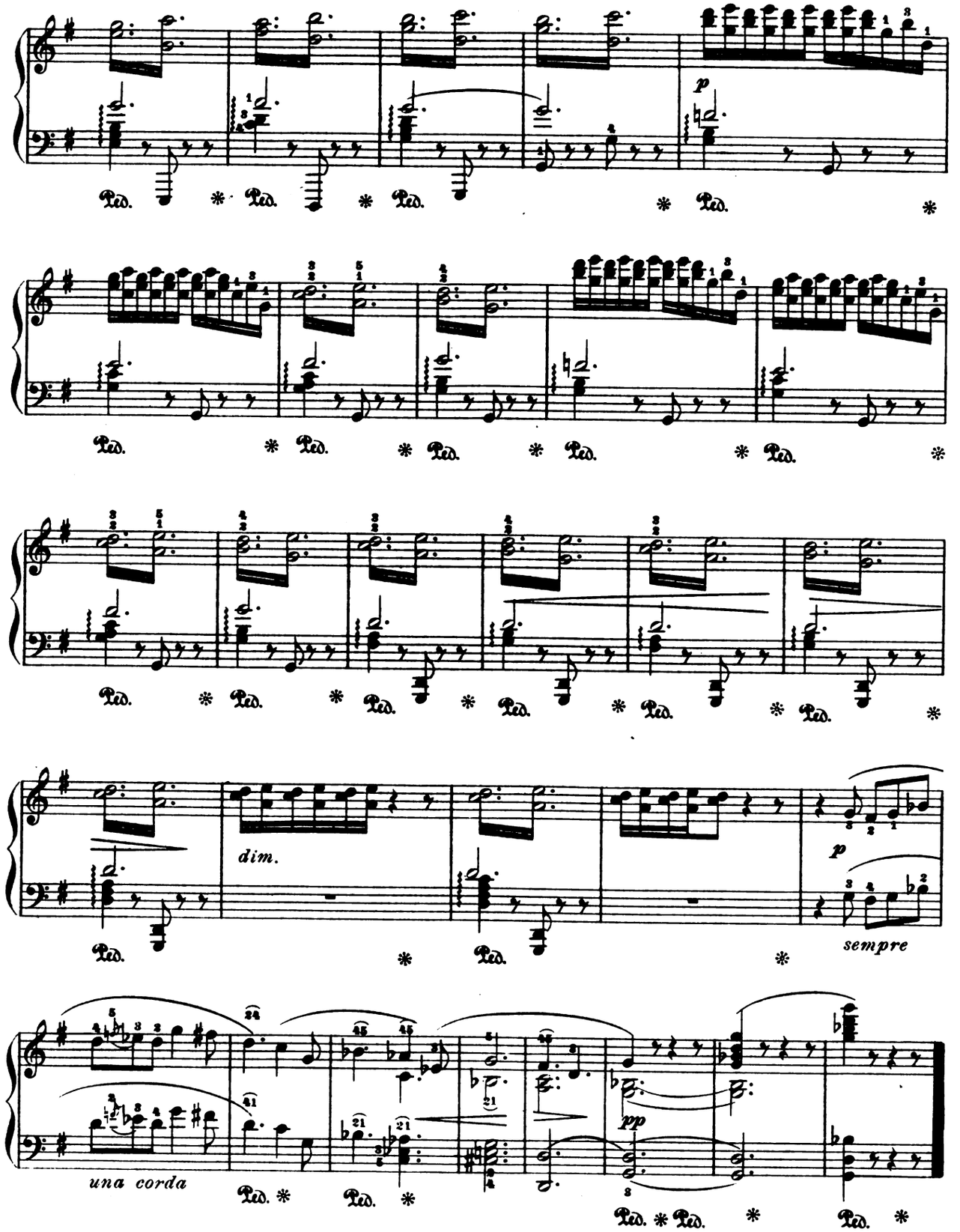
RUBINSTEIN, Op. 50, No. 3

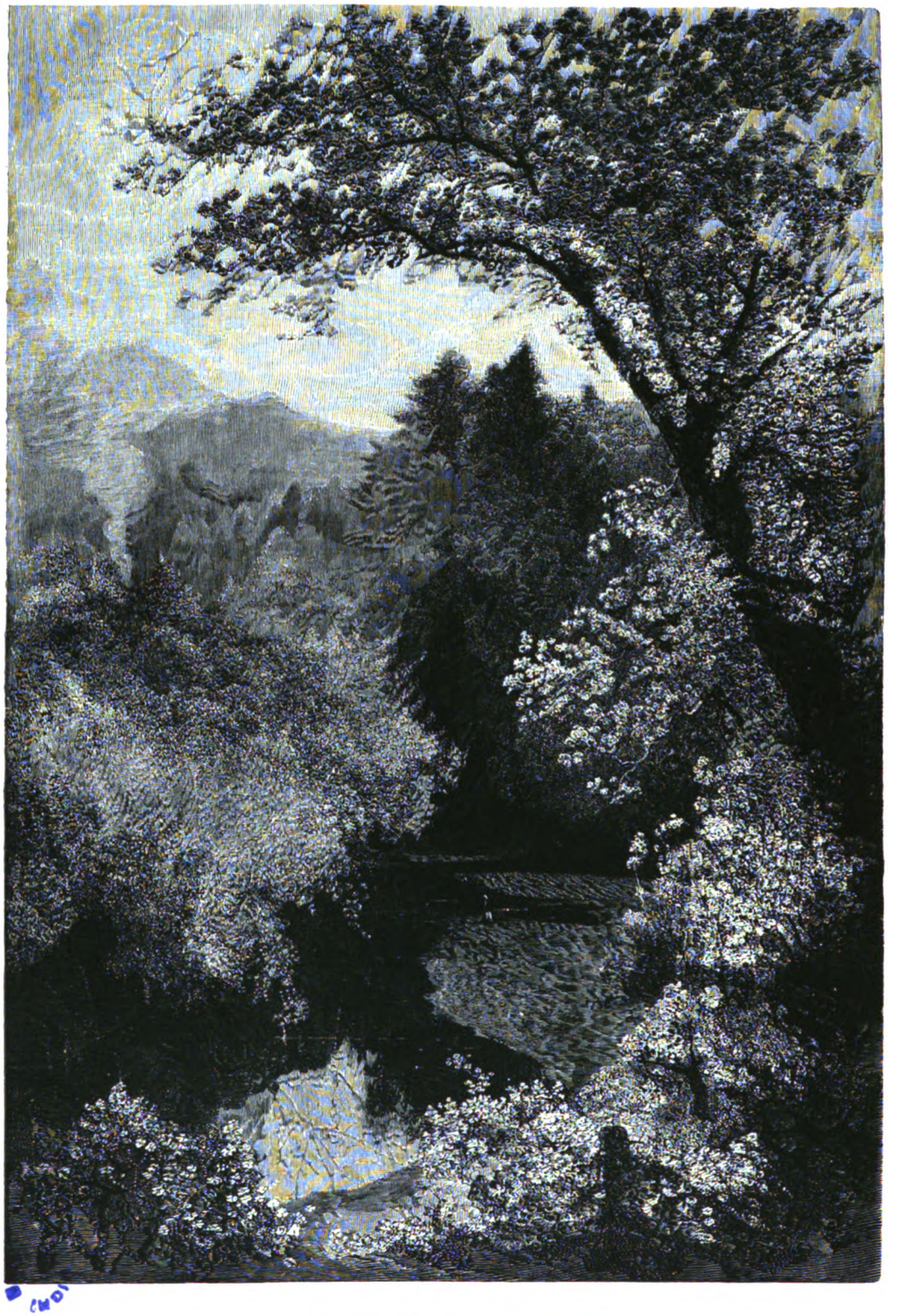


T.S.P. Tone sustaining Pedal ✦ Release for *T.S.P.*









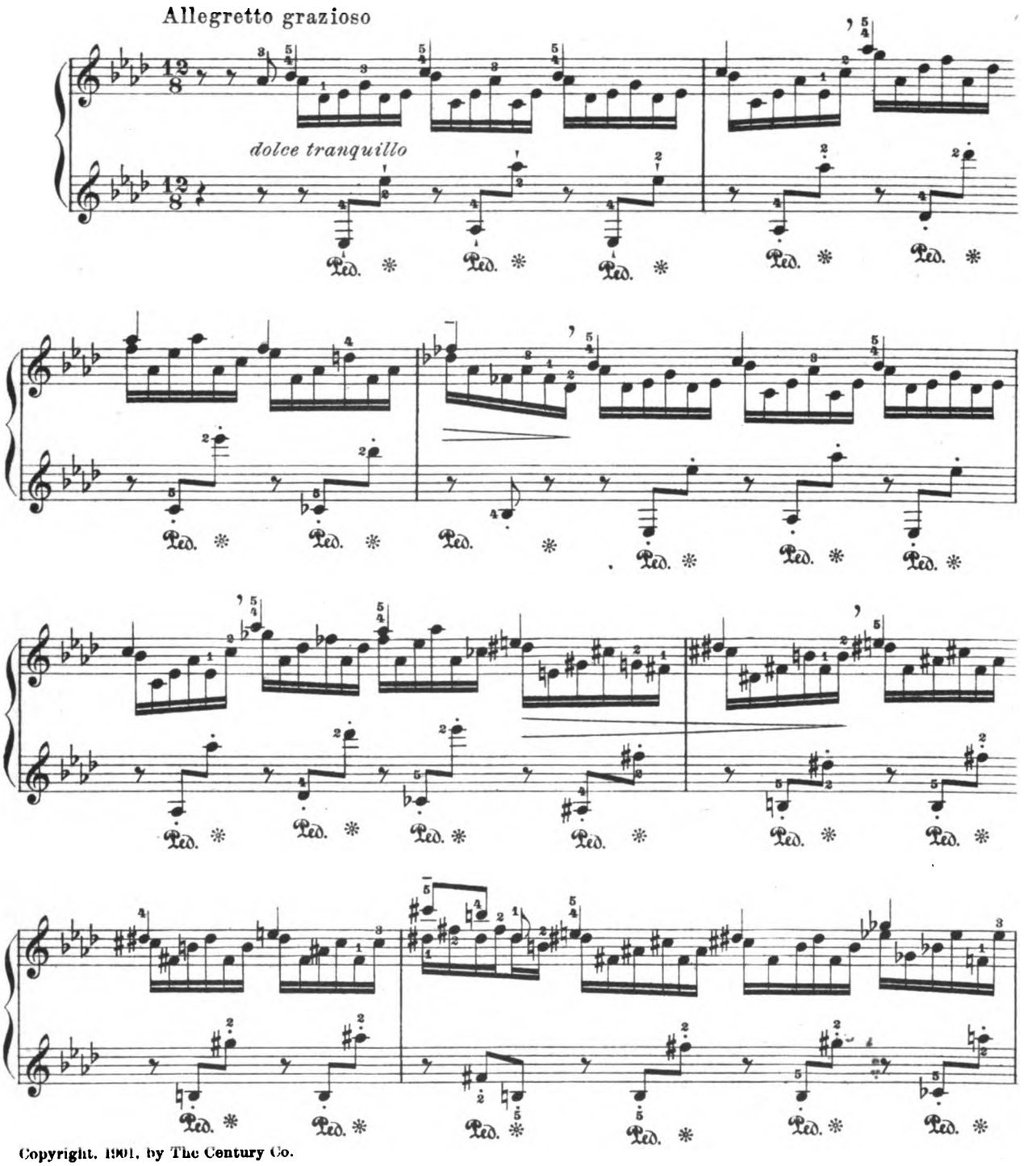
"AU BORD D'UNE SOURCE."

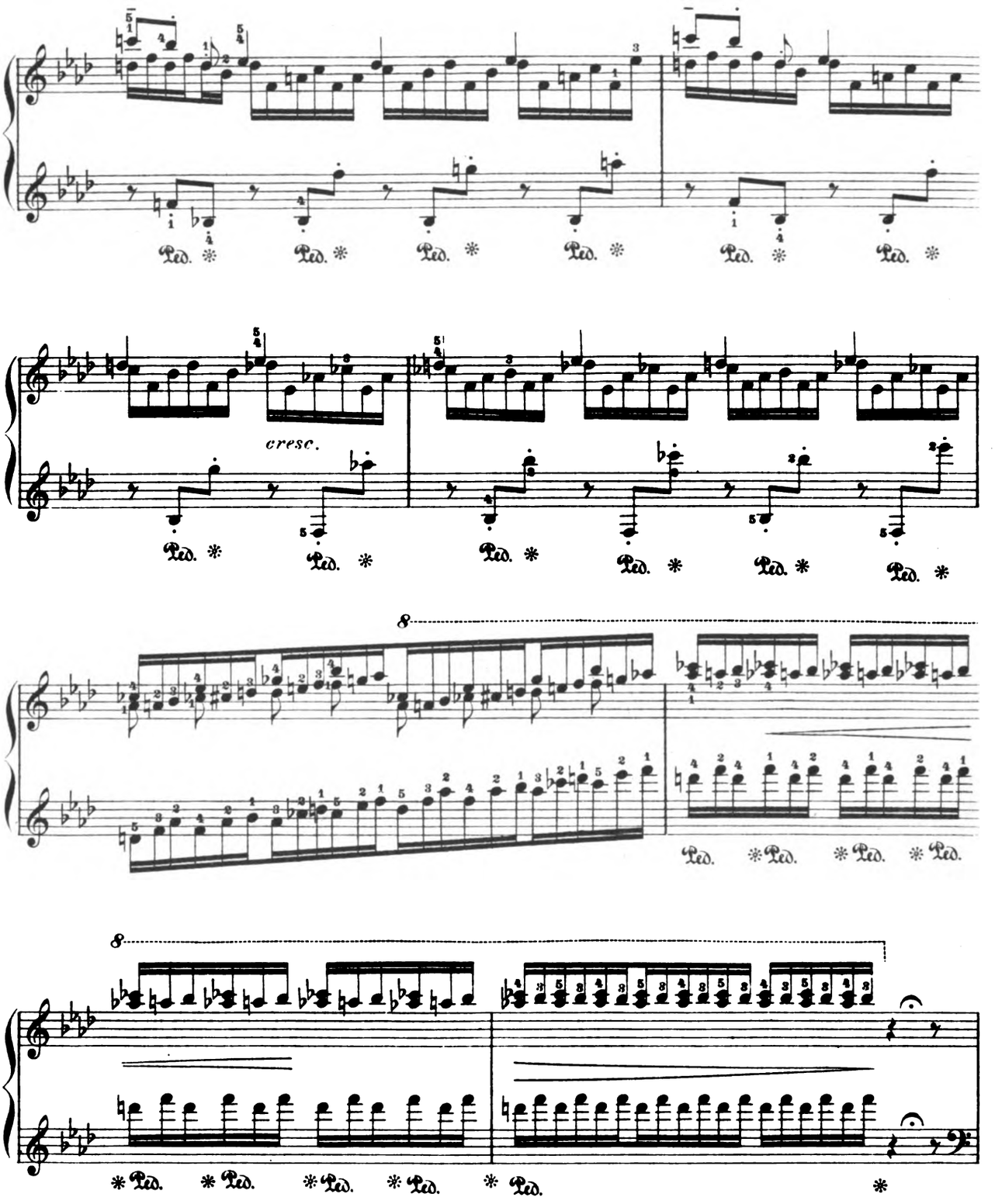
ORIGINAL ENGRAVING BY ELBRIDGE KINGSLEY.

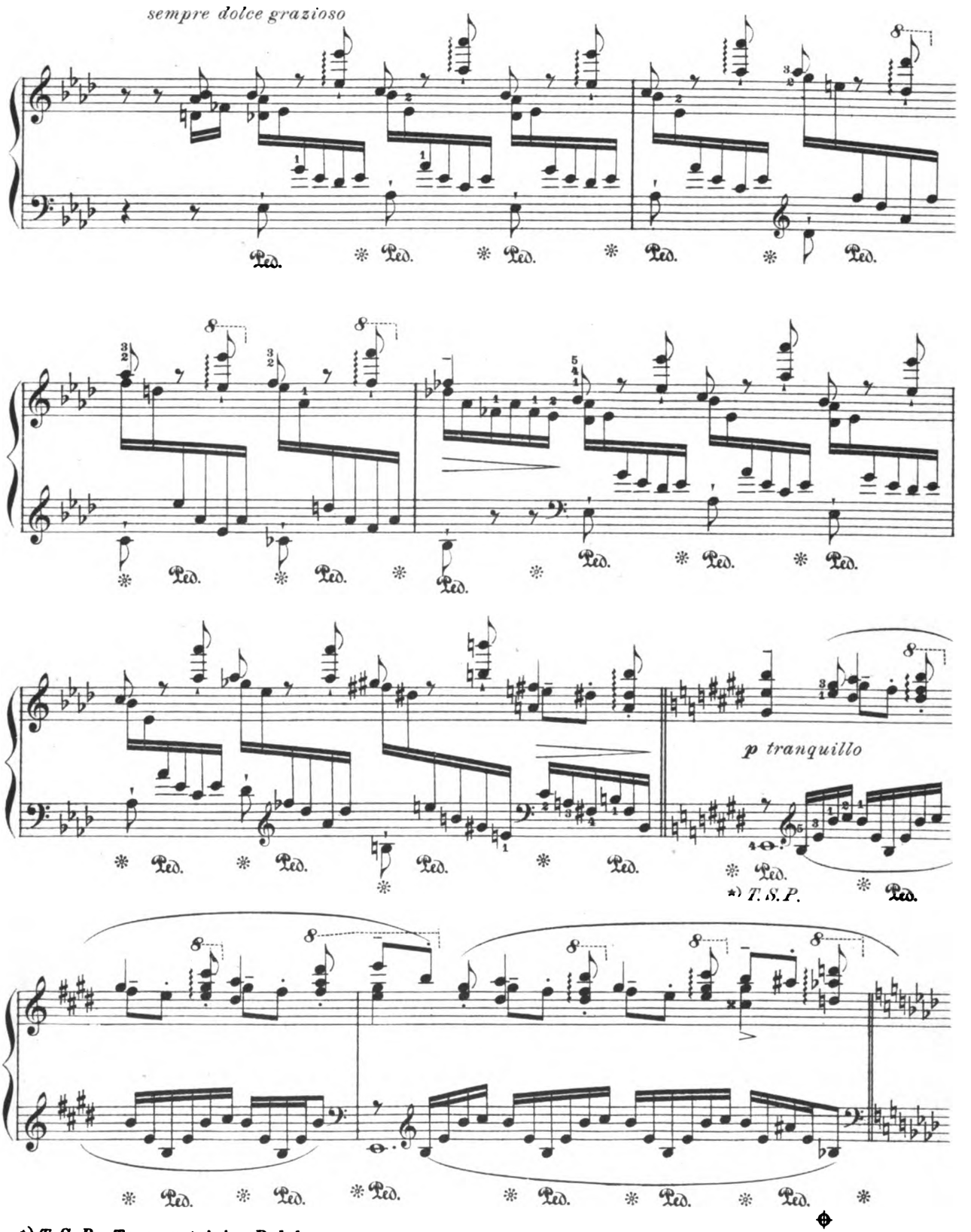
AU BORD D'UNE SOURCE

FROM "ANNÉES DU PÉLERINAGE"

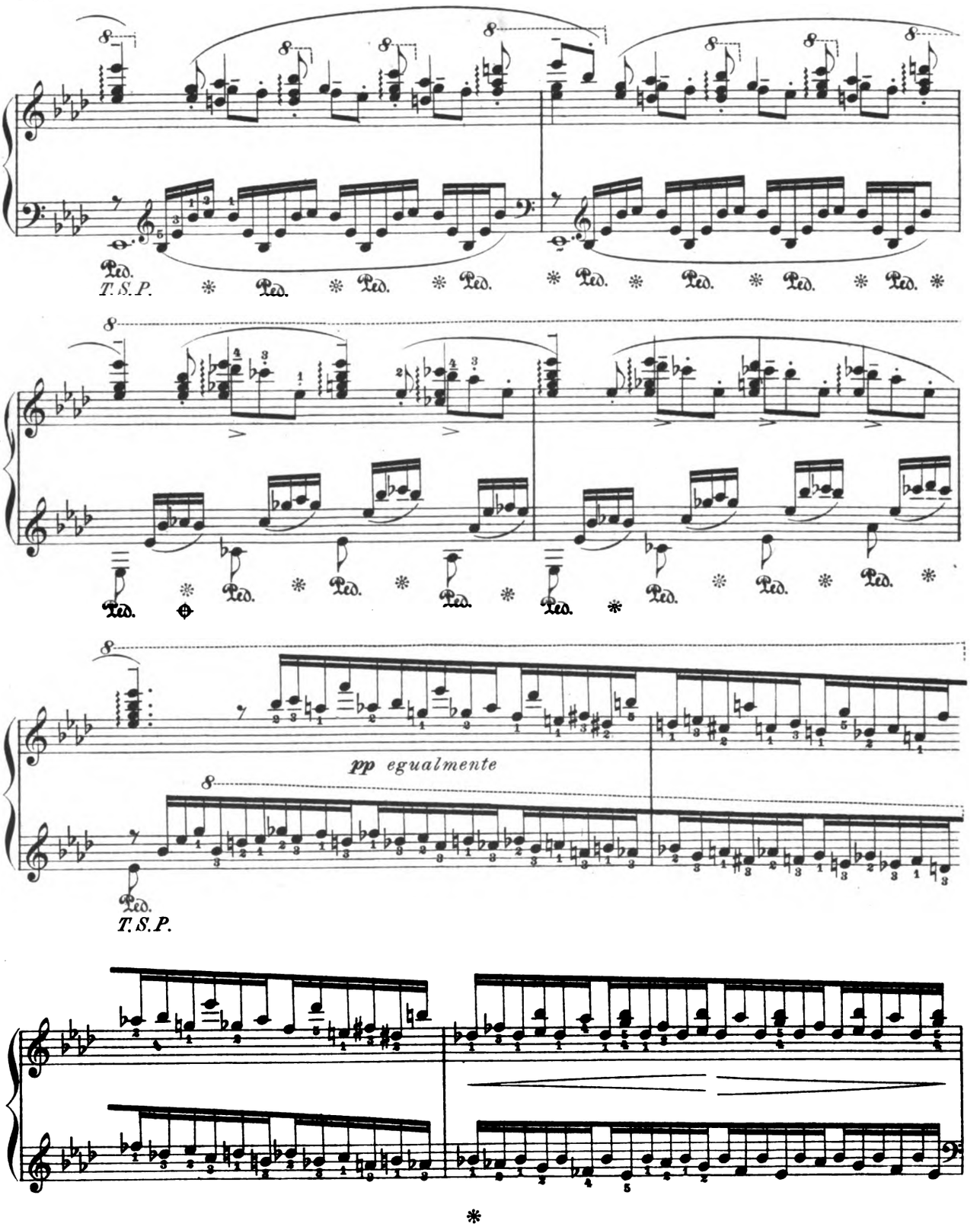
LISZT

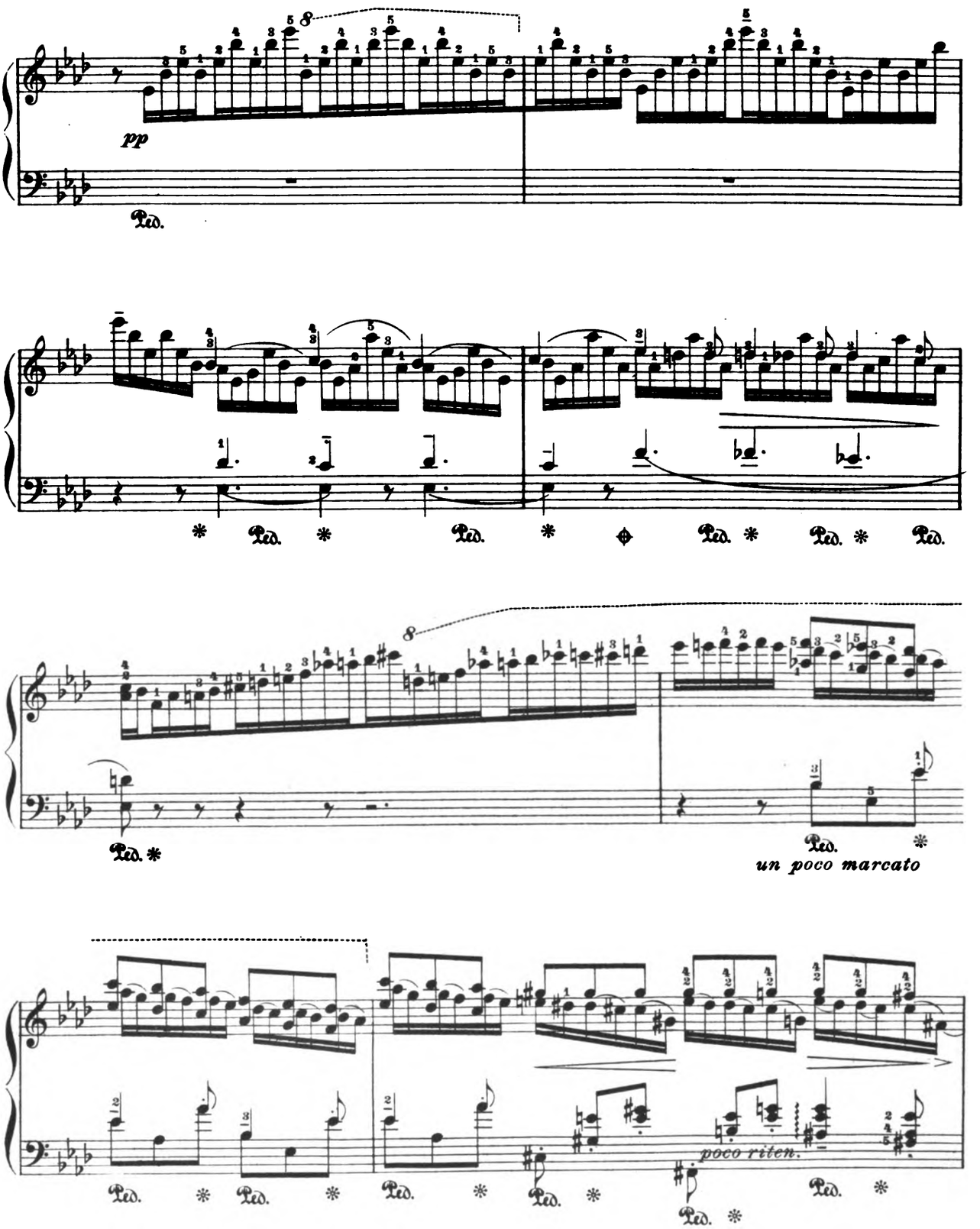


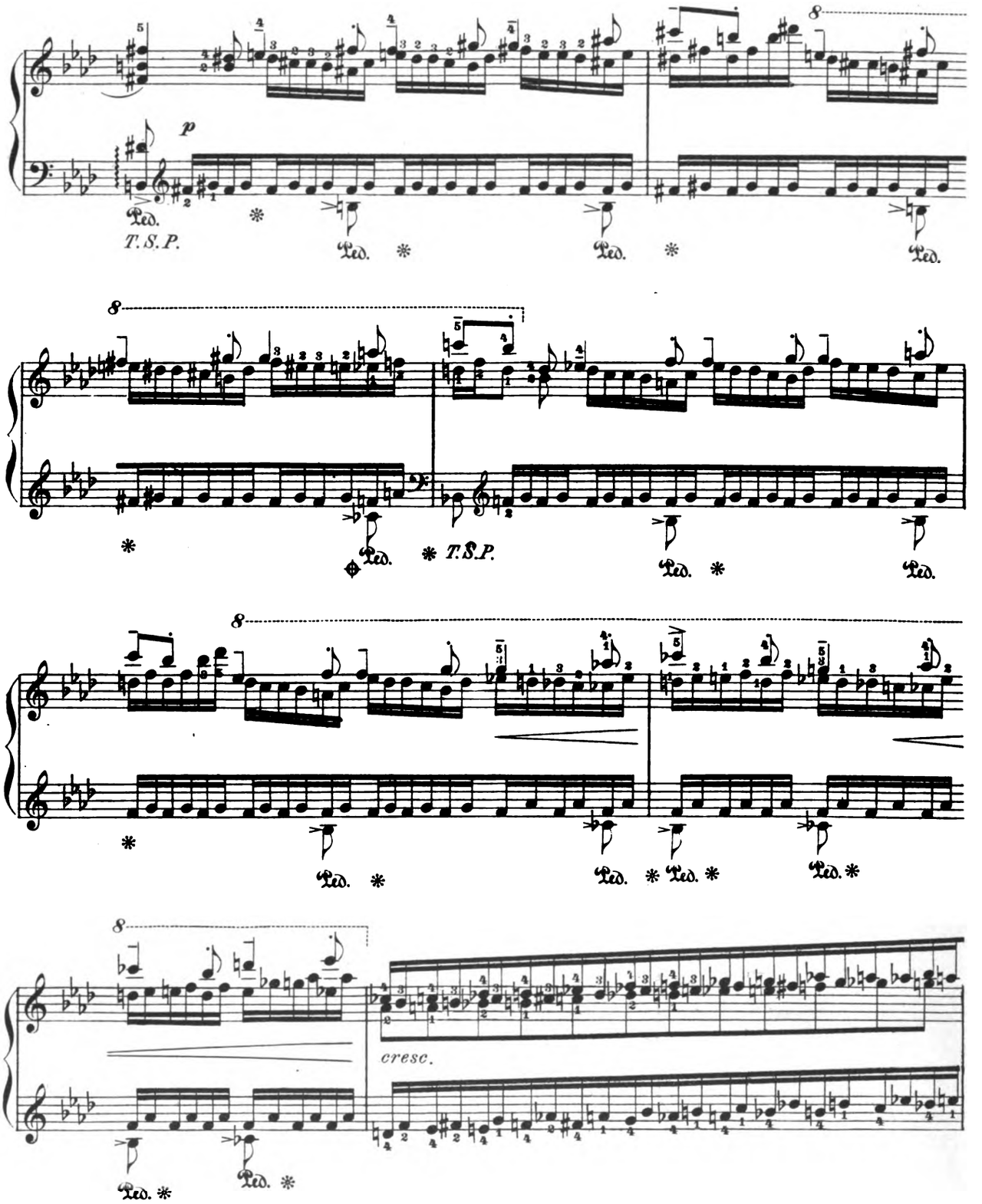


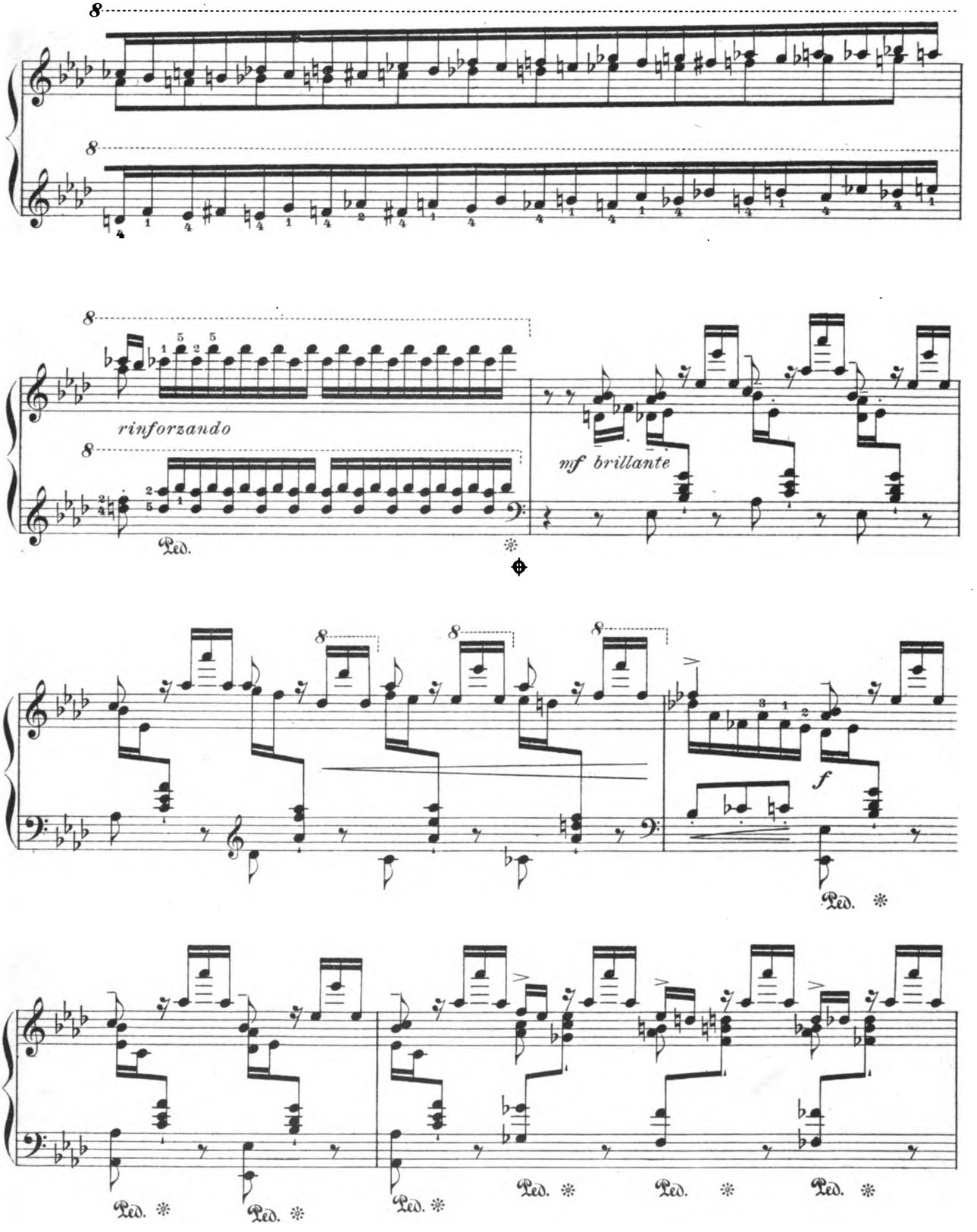


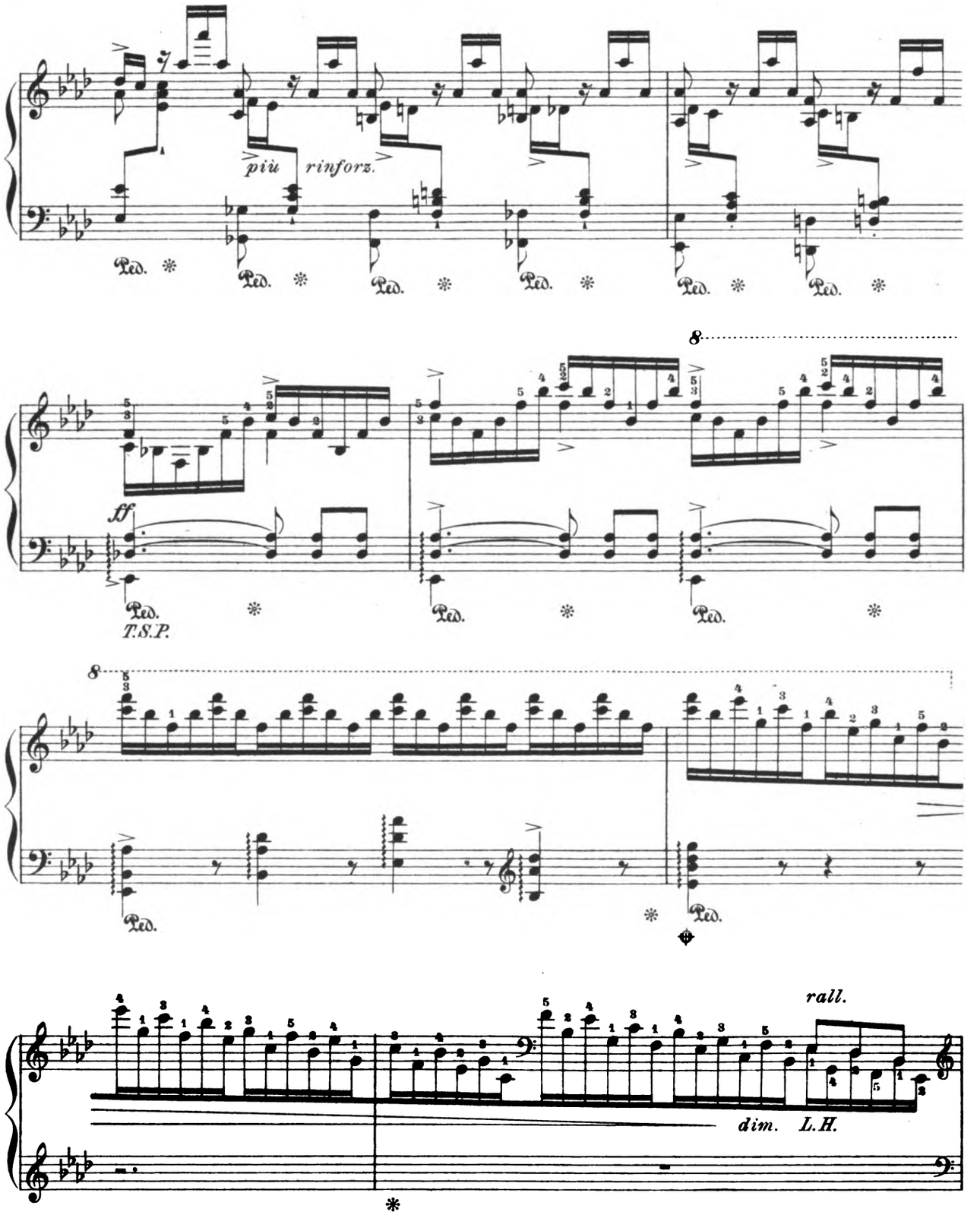
*) *T. S. P.* = Tone sustaining Pedal.
⊕ = Release for *T. S. P.*

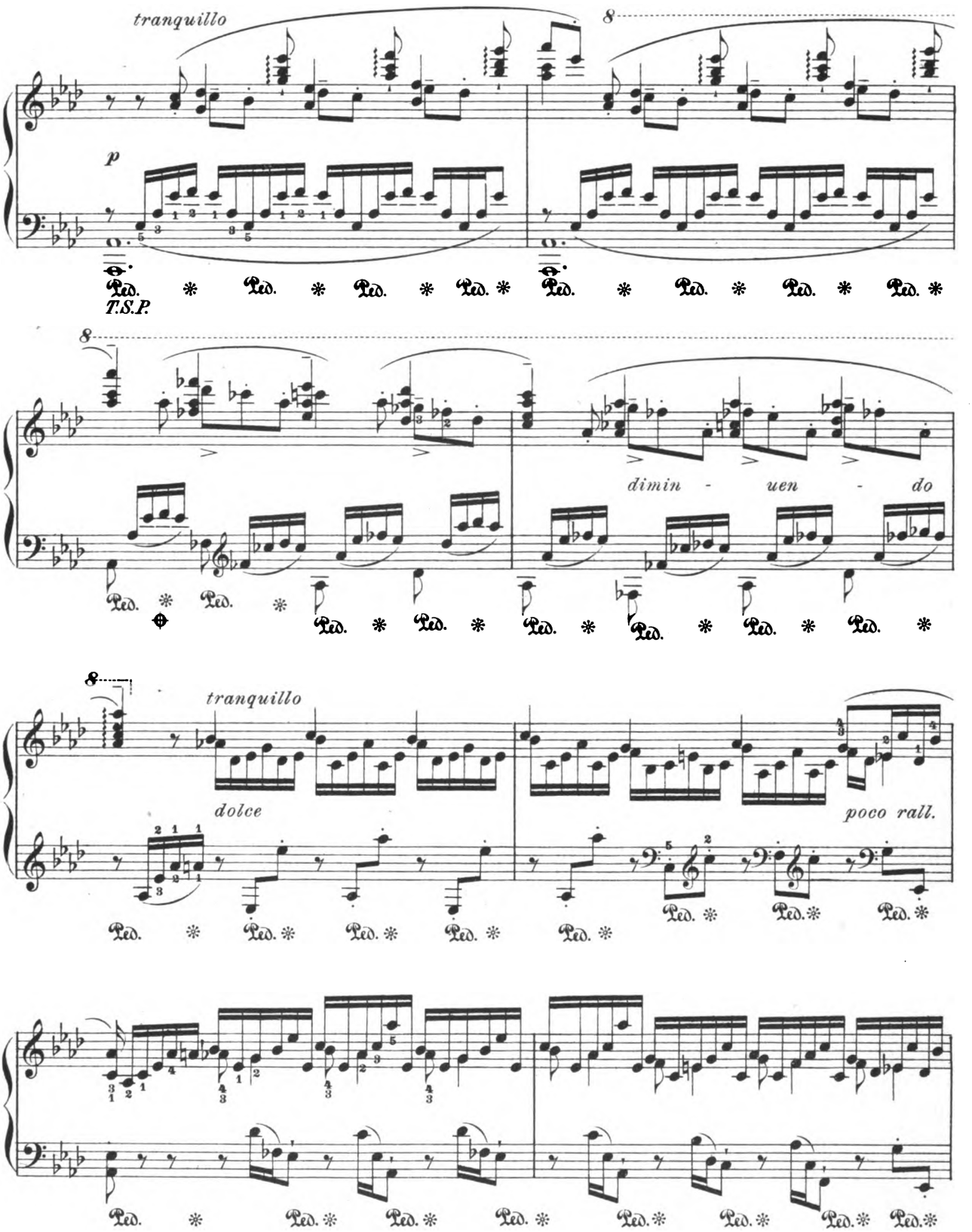


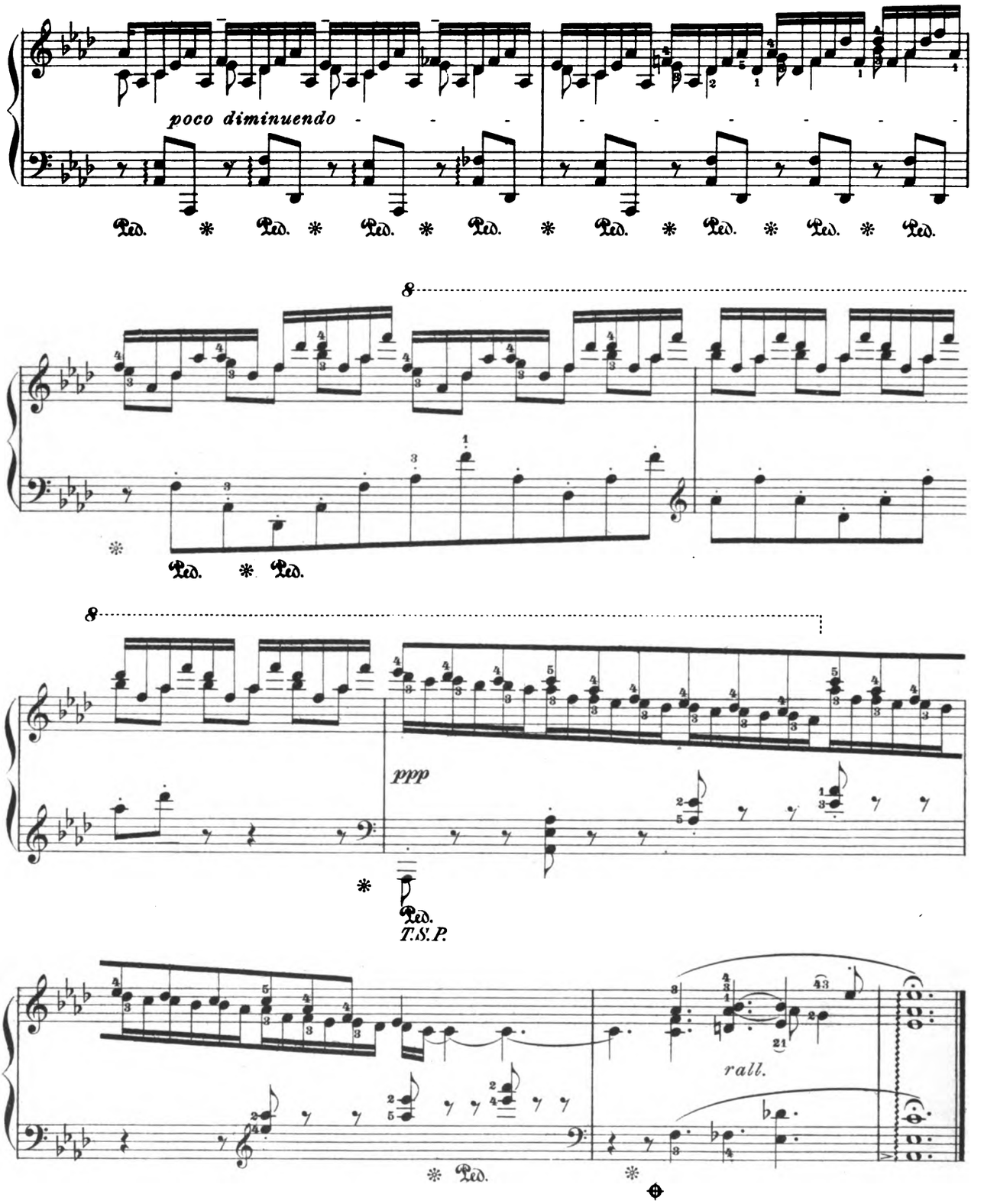












A CONCERT PROGRAM

BY

IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI

THE SELECTIONS IN VOLUMES IX AND X 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:

Fugue in E Minor	*Handel.*
Variations in E Major	*Handel.*
Sonata. A Major. Op. 101	*Beethoven.*
Songs Without Words. Op. 53, Nos. 4 and 3, Op. 62, No. 1, and Spinning Song, Op. 67, No. 4	*Mendelssohn.*
Etudes Symphoniques. Op. 13	*Schumann.*
Second Ballade. F Major. Op. 38	*Chopin.*
Prélude. D Flat. Op. 28, No. 15	*Chopin.*
Scherzo. B Flat Minor. Op. 31	*Chopin.*
Barcarolle. G Minor. Op. 50, No. 3	*Rubinstein.*
Au Bord d'une Source, from "Années du Pélerinage"	*Liszt.*
Etude de Concert. F Minor	*Liszt.*
Polonaise. E Major	*Liszt.*