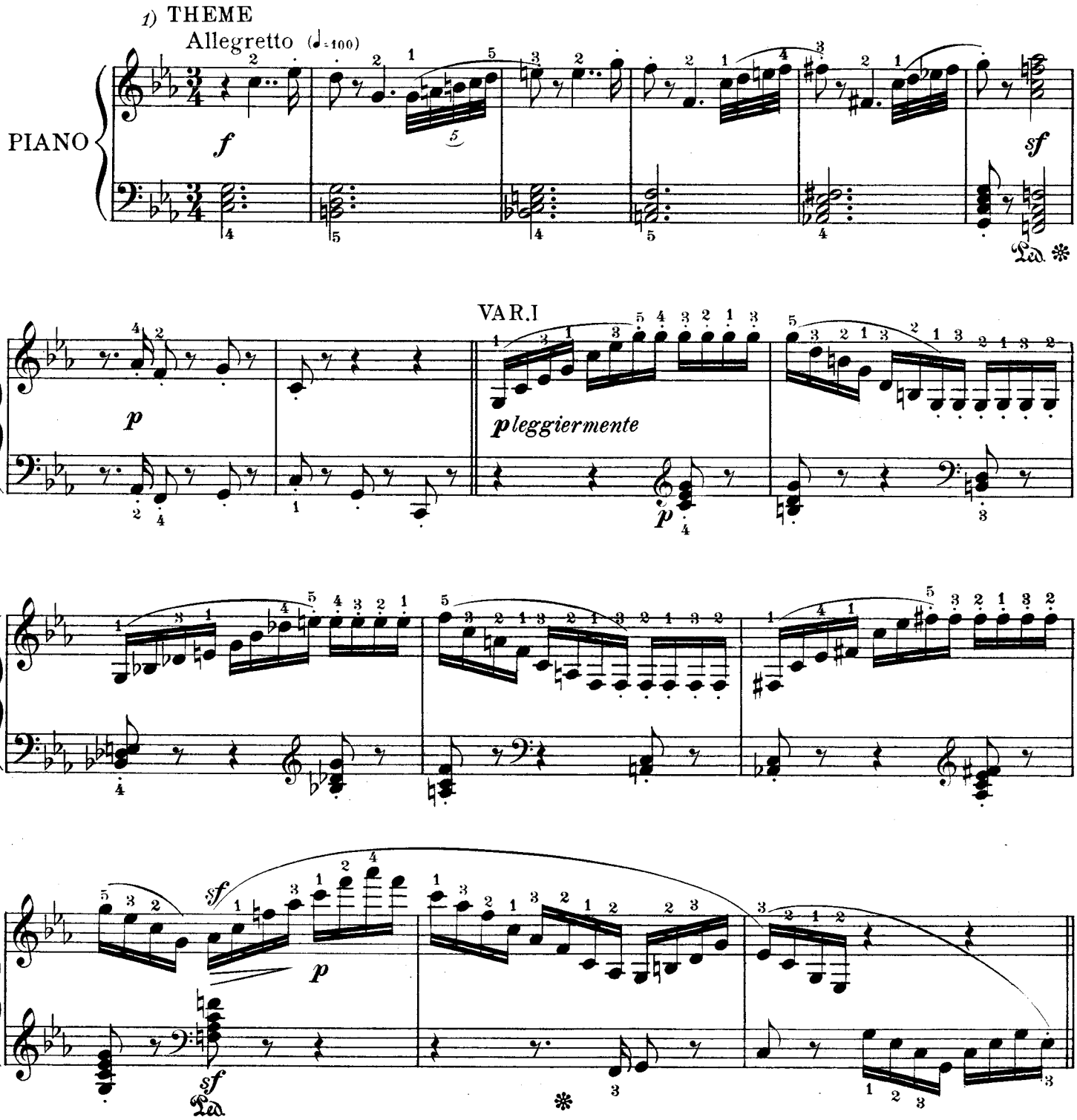
THIRTY-TWO VARIATIONS, in C minor

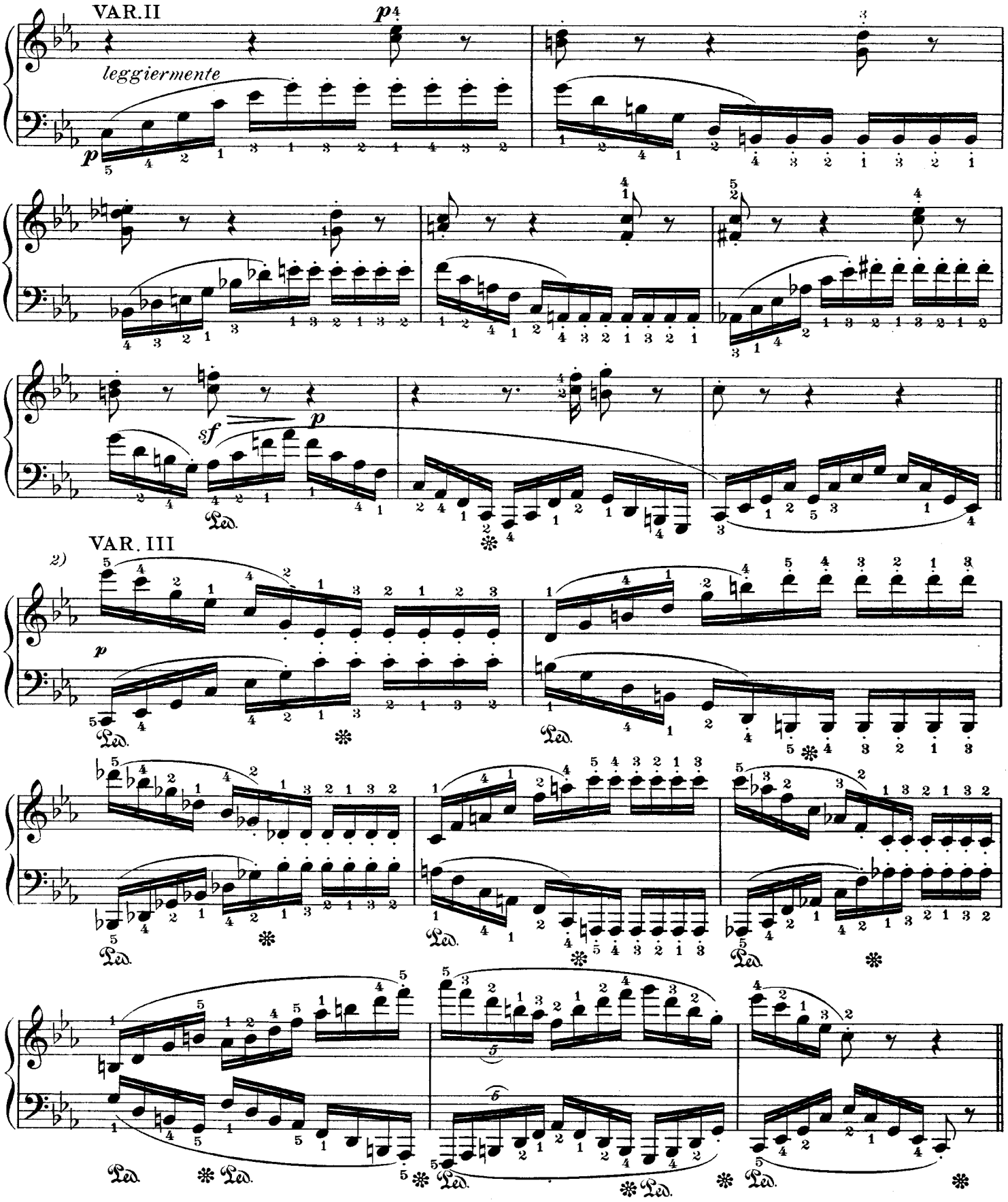
(Composed in 1806)

Edited by Eugen d'Albert

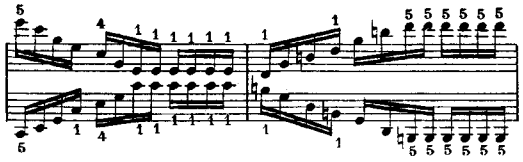
LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN

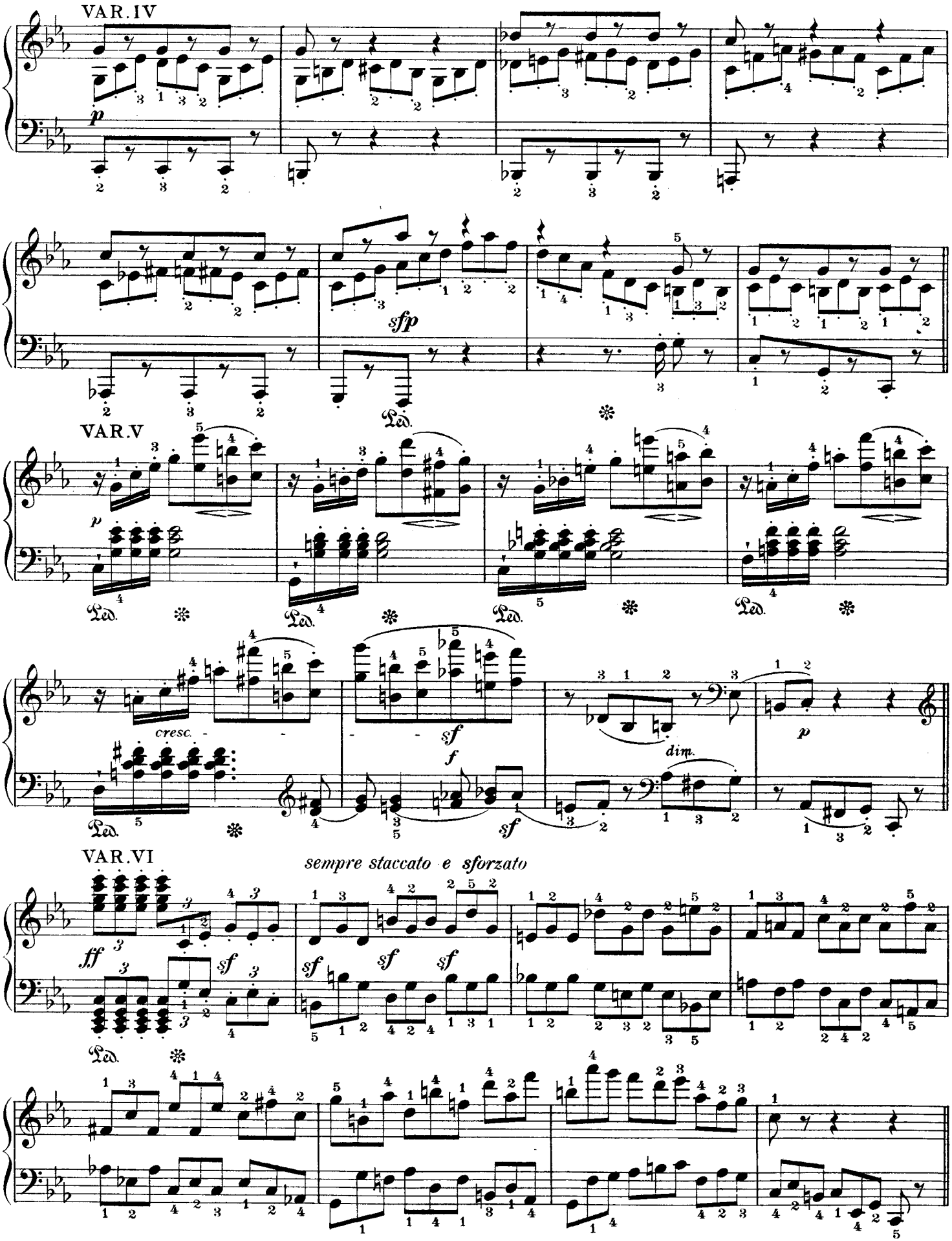


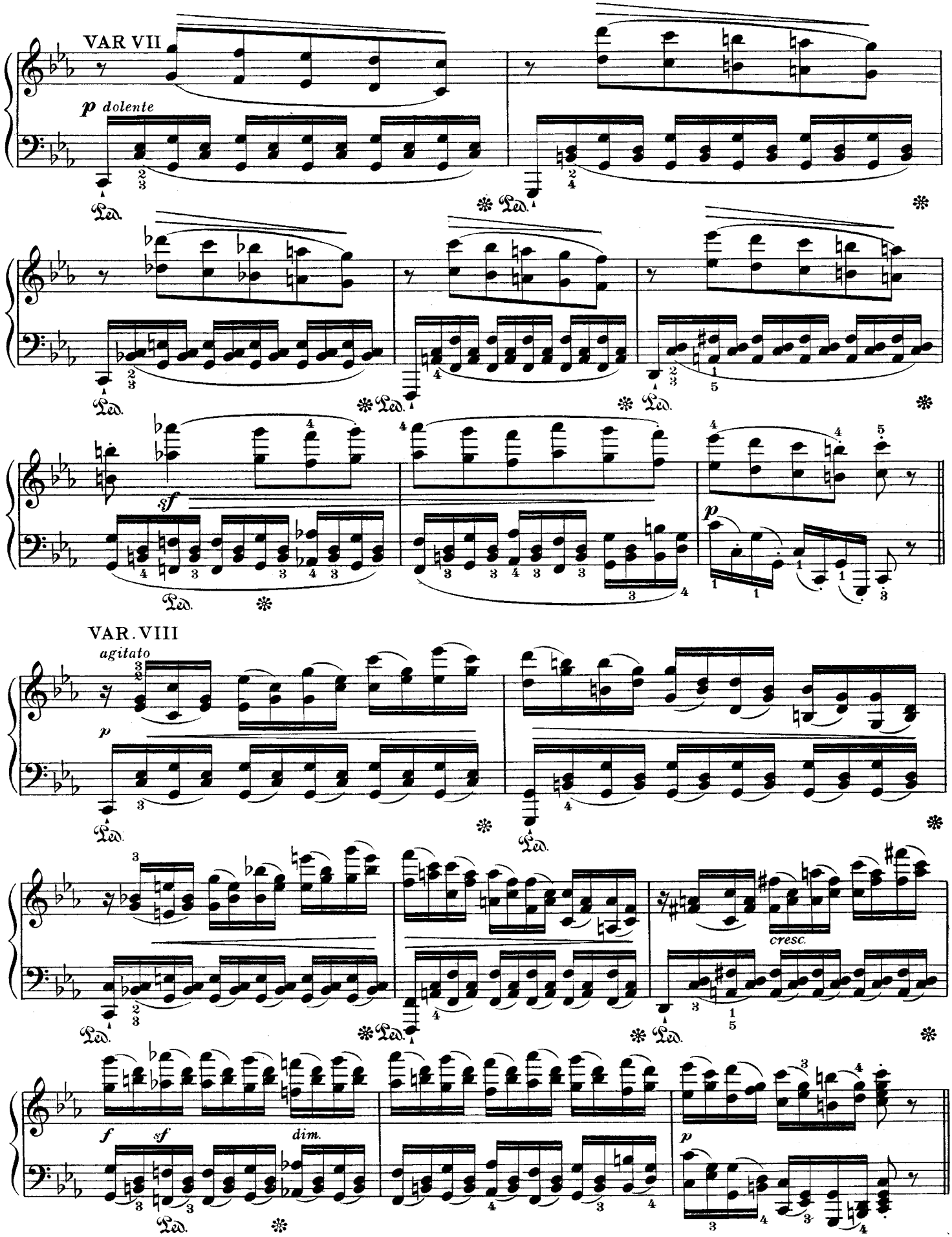
1) These Variations are a counterpart of the Passacaglia in C minor by J. S. Bach—the same fundamental grandeur, the same iron strength. They should therefore be performed in a fitting manner; and, excepting the section in C major, they must seem like molten brass. Even the *p*'s are to be regarded as merely relative. Speaking generally, a largeness of conception and a firmness of touch must be evident. All gentleness and tenderness are to be rigidly avoided, and one should strive to present a monumental structure. Unless otherwise indicated, no pauses should occur between the Variations.

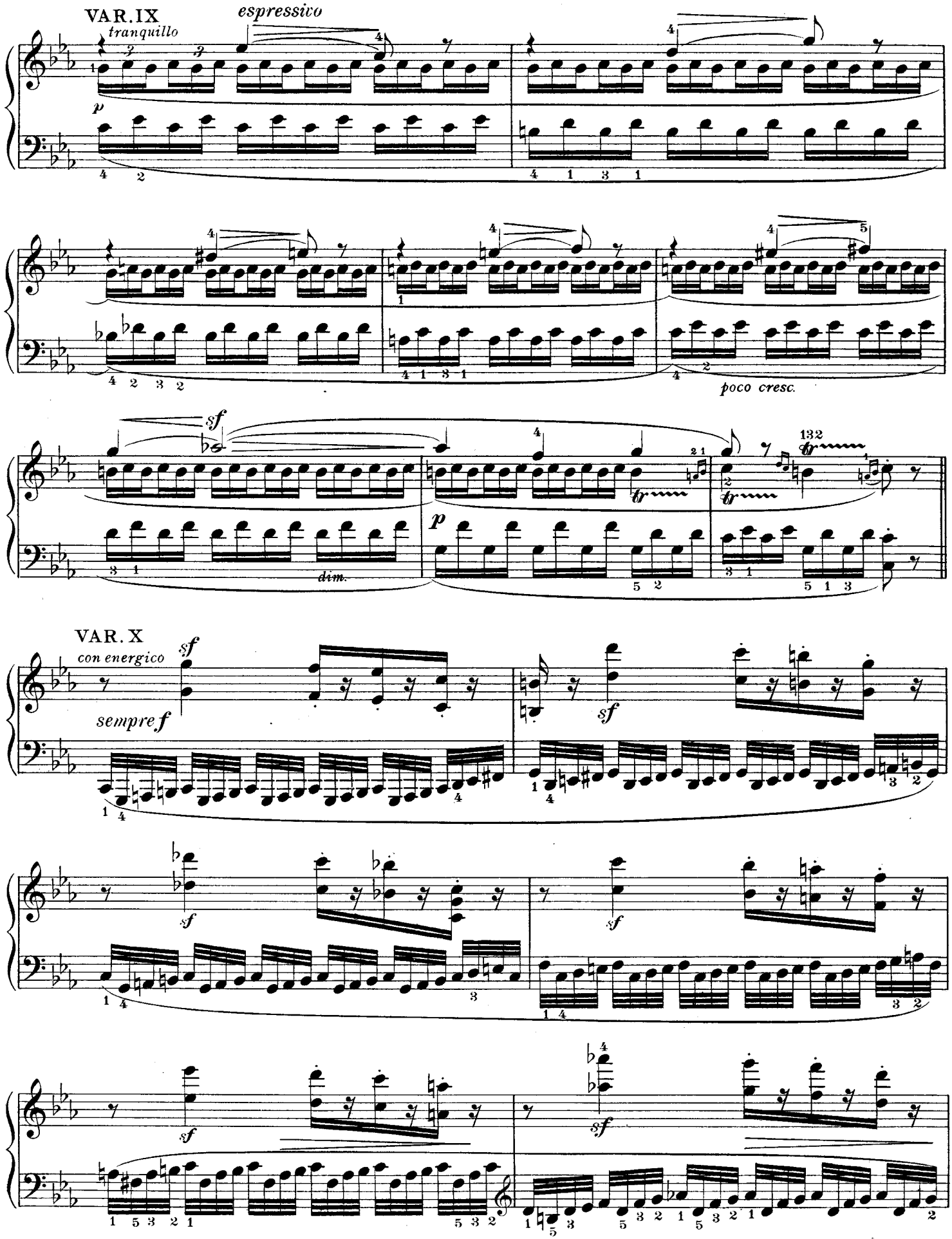


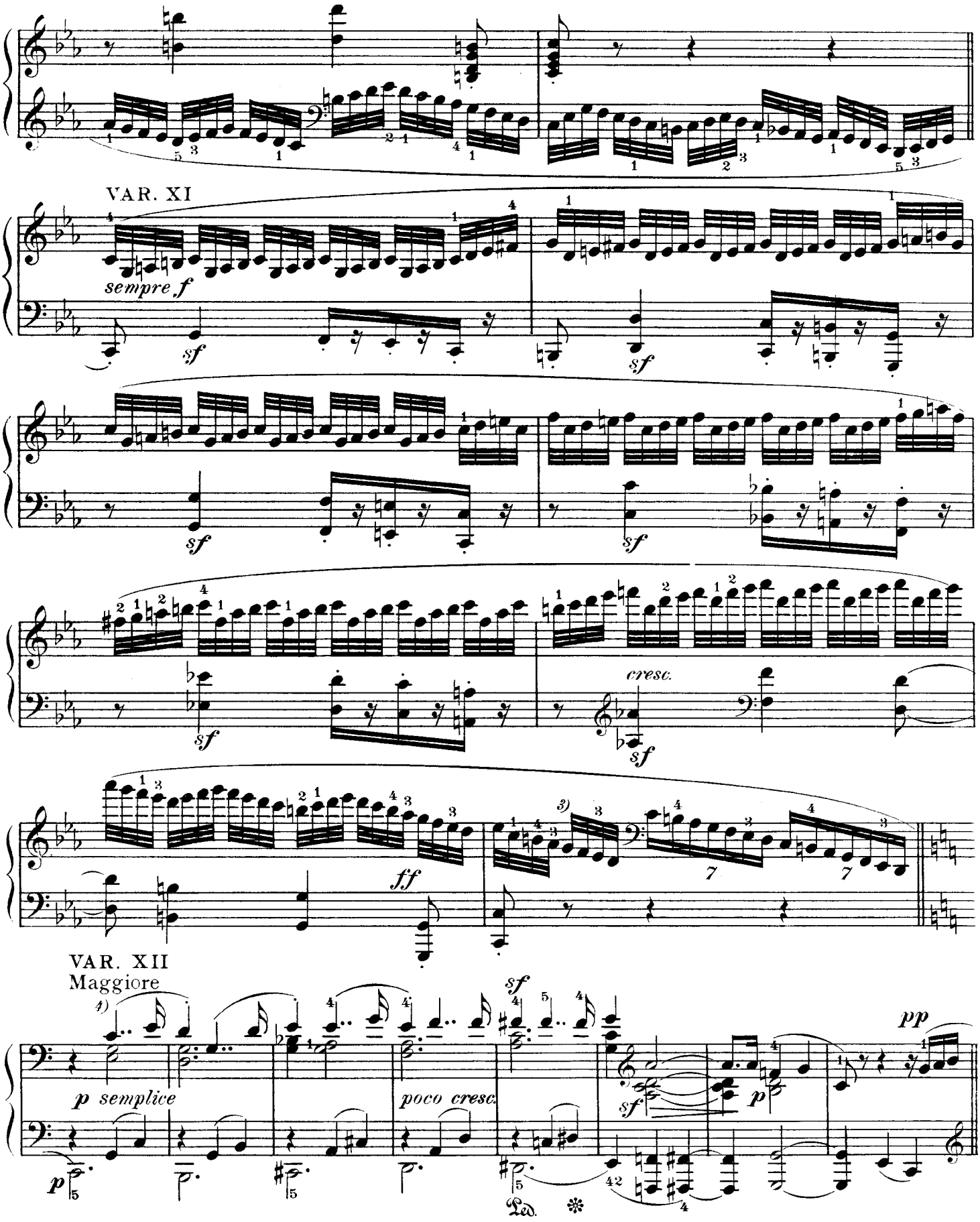
2) The editor uses the following fingering.




VAR. IV
p
sfp
Ped.
VAR. V
p
cresc.
sf
f
dim.
p
sf
VAR. VI
sempre staccato e sforzato
ff
sf
sf
sf
sf

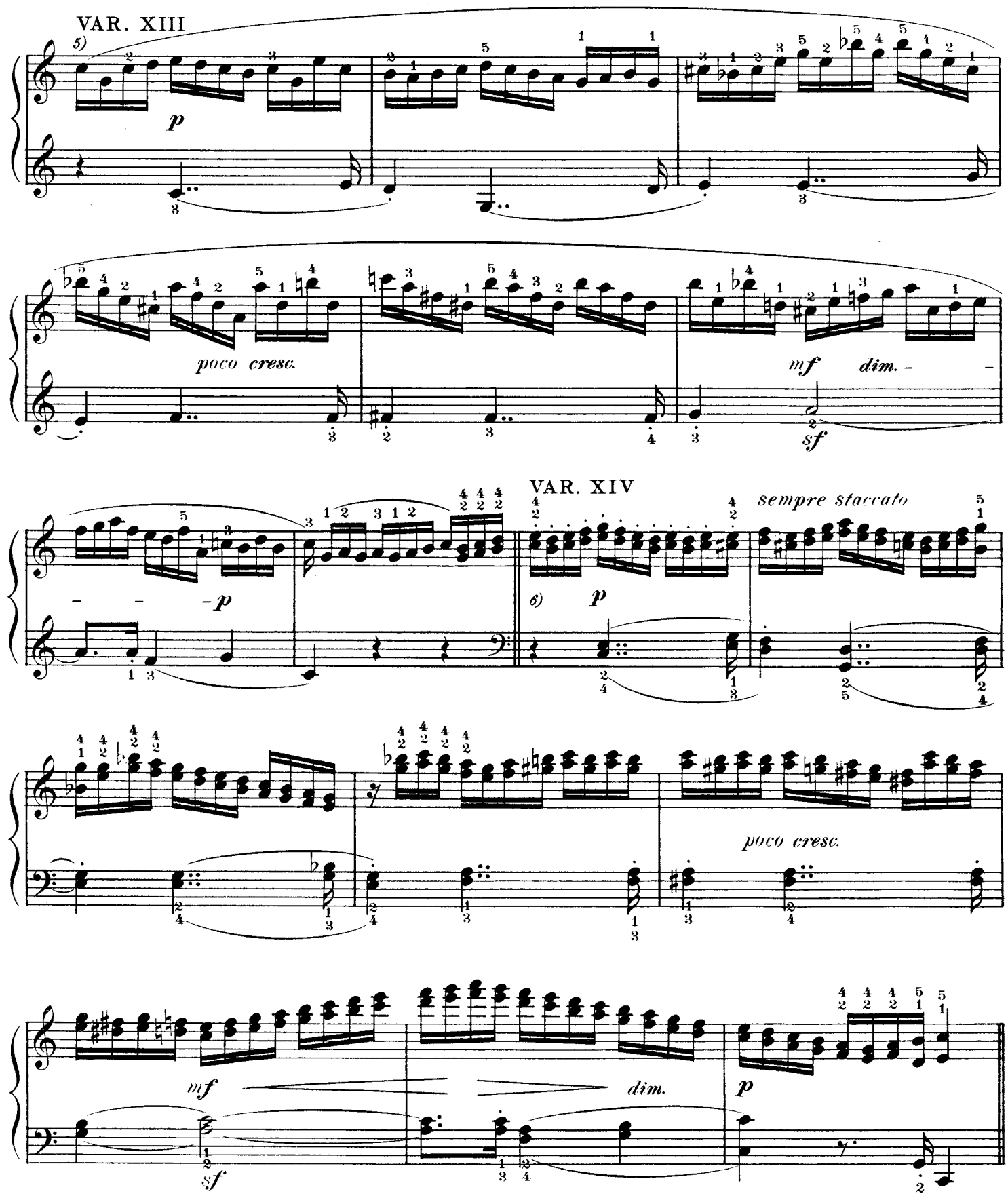

VAR VII
p dolente
Ped.
sf
p
VAR. VIII
agitato
cresc.
f
sf
dim.


VAR. IX
tranquillo
espressivo
p
poco cresc.
sf
dim.
p
132
VAR. X
con energico
sempre f
sf



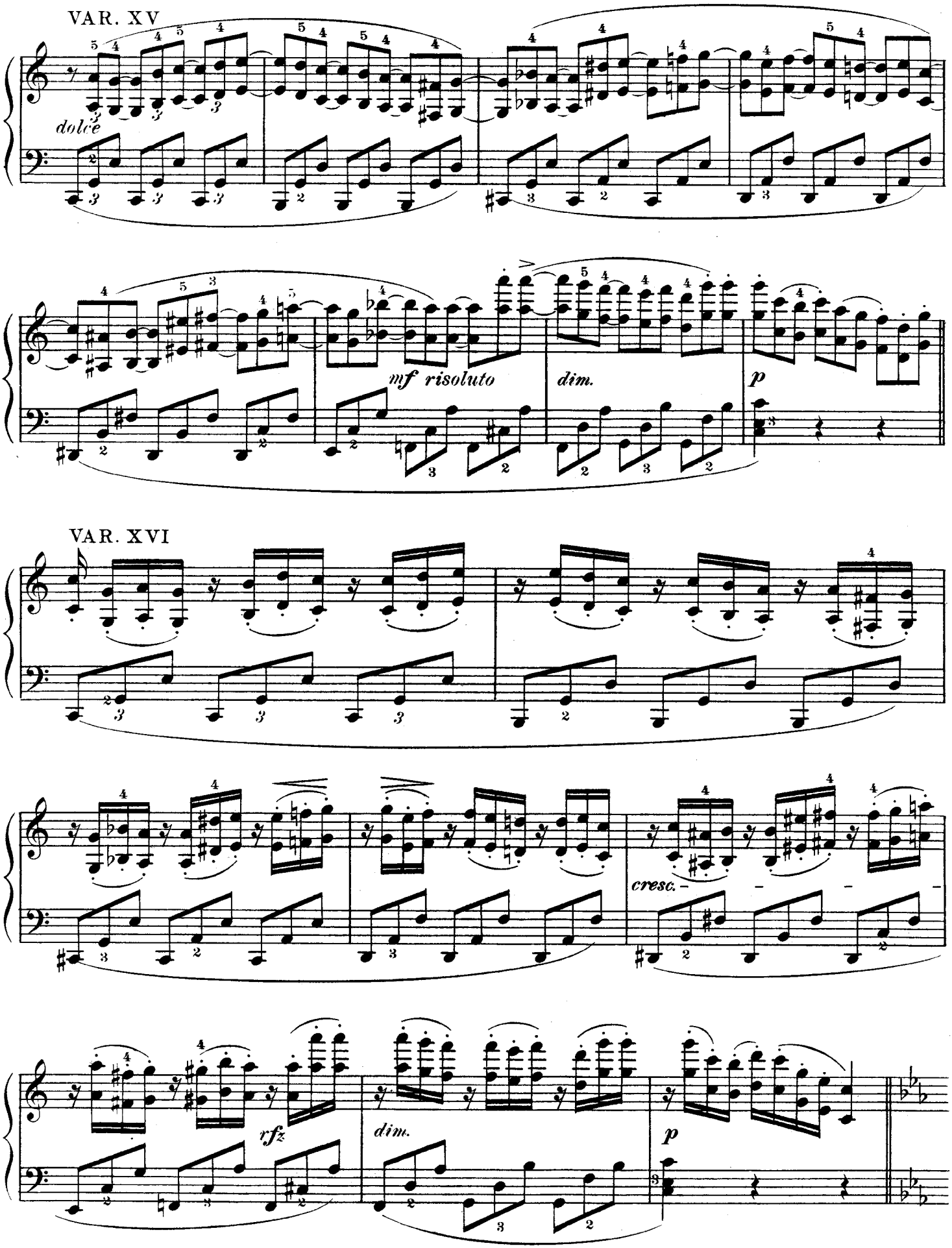
3) Becoming a little slower and quieter.

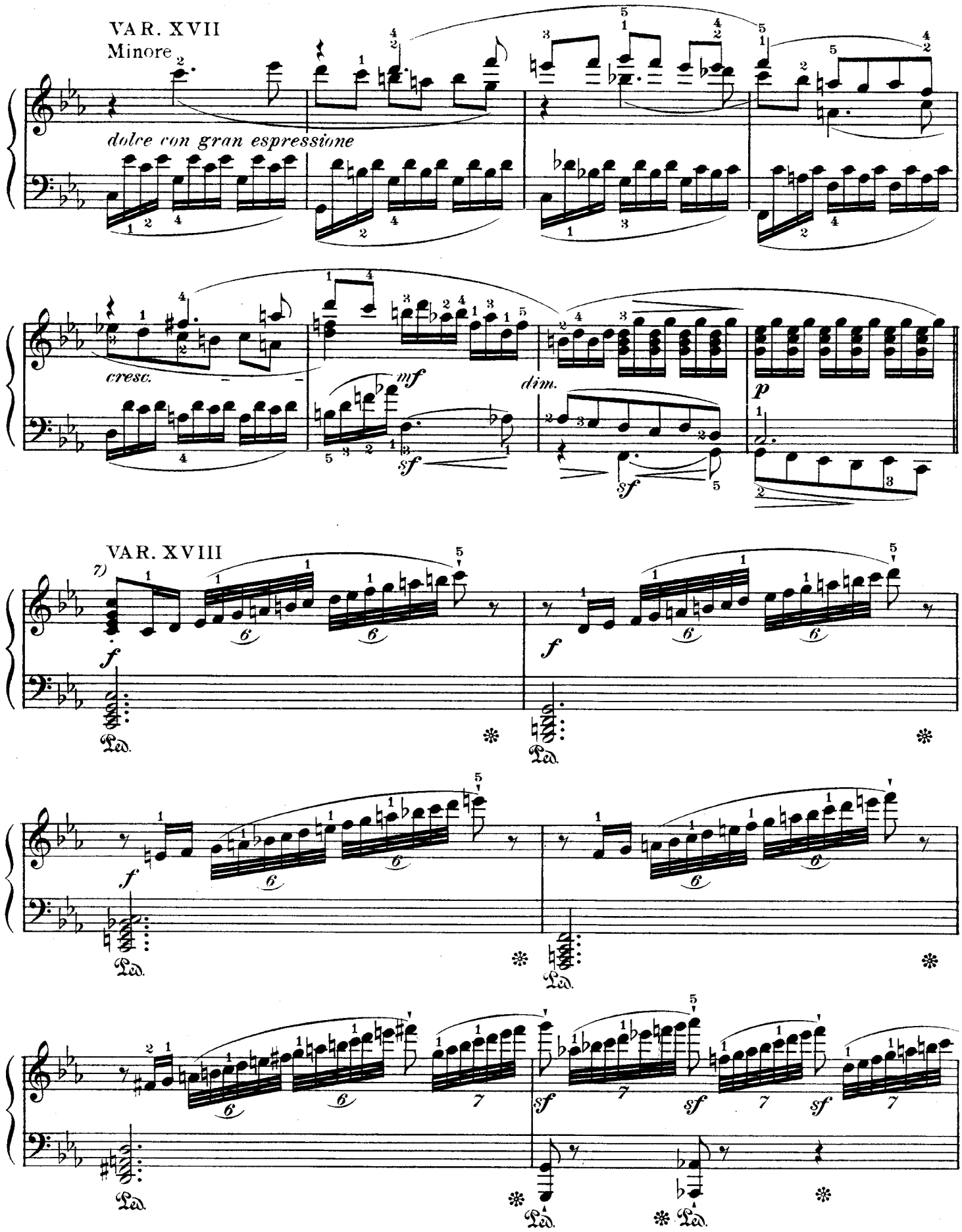
4) The 12th and 17th Variations are, as contrasting middle sections so to speak, to be given a rather more gentle and expressive interpretation. The 12th Variation must be played somewhat slower than any of those preceding it.



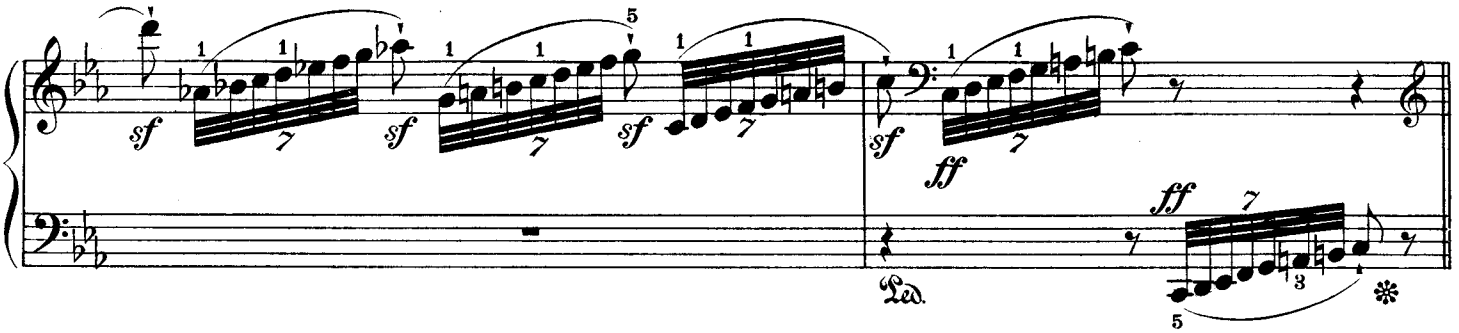
5) Again in the principal tempo. The left hand should suggest the tone of a hunting-horn, and the right hand should have the gentle murmur of violins.

6) The editor plays the thirds throughout with the fingering $\frac{4}{2}$, as resulting in the most complete evenness.

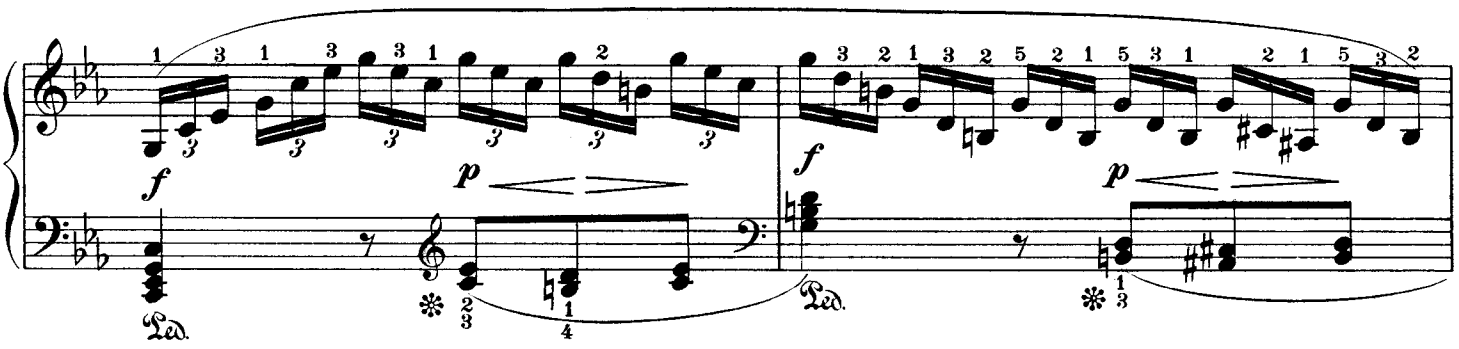

VAR. XV
dolce
mf risoluto
dim.
p
VAR. XVI
cresc.
rfz
dim.
p

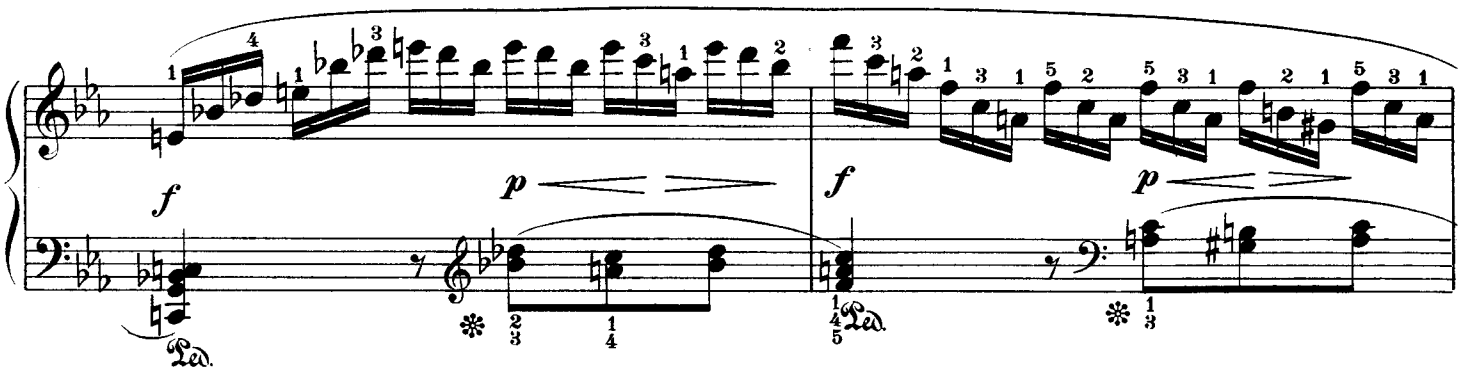


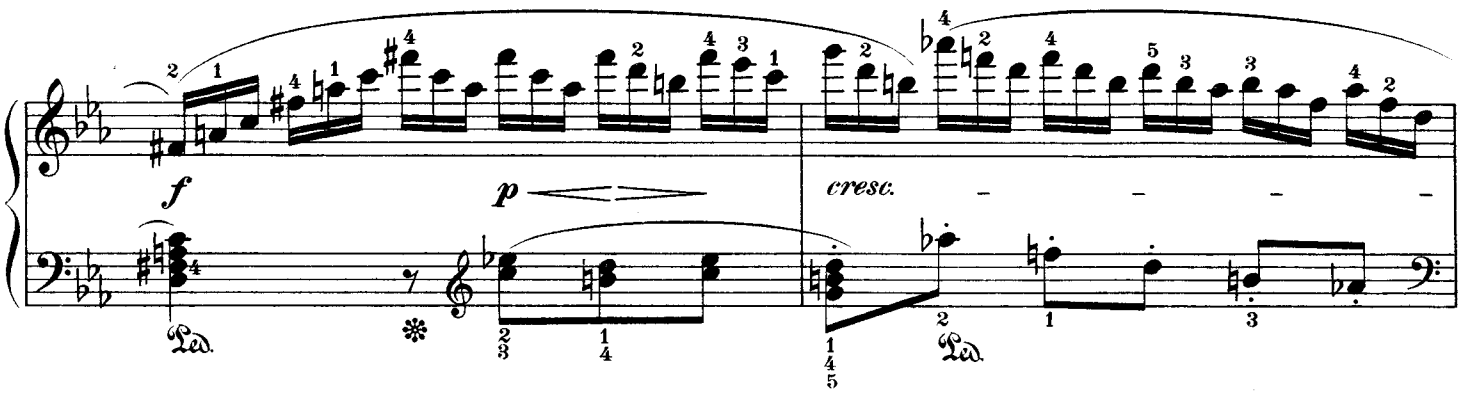
7) Here the original tempo is to be resumed, and with it the original conception.

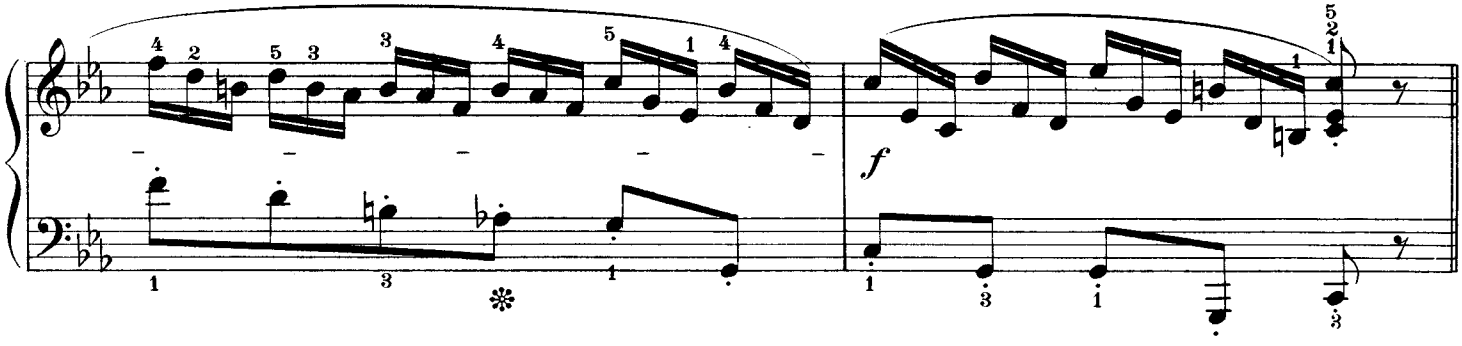


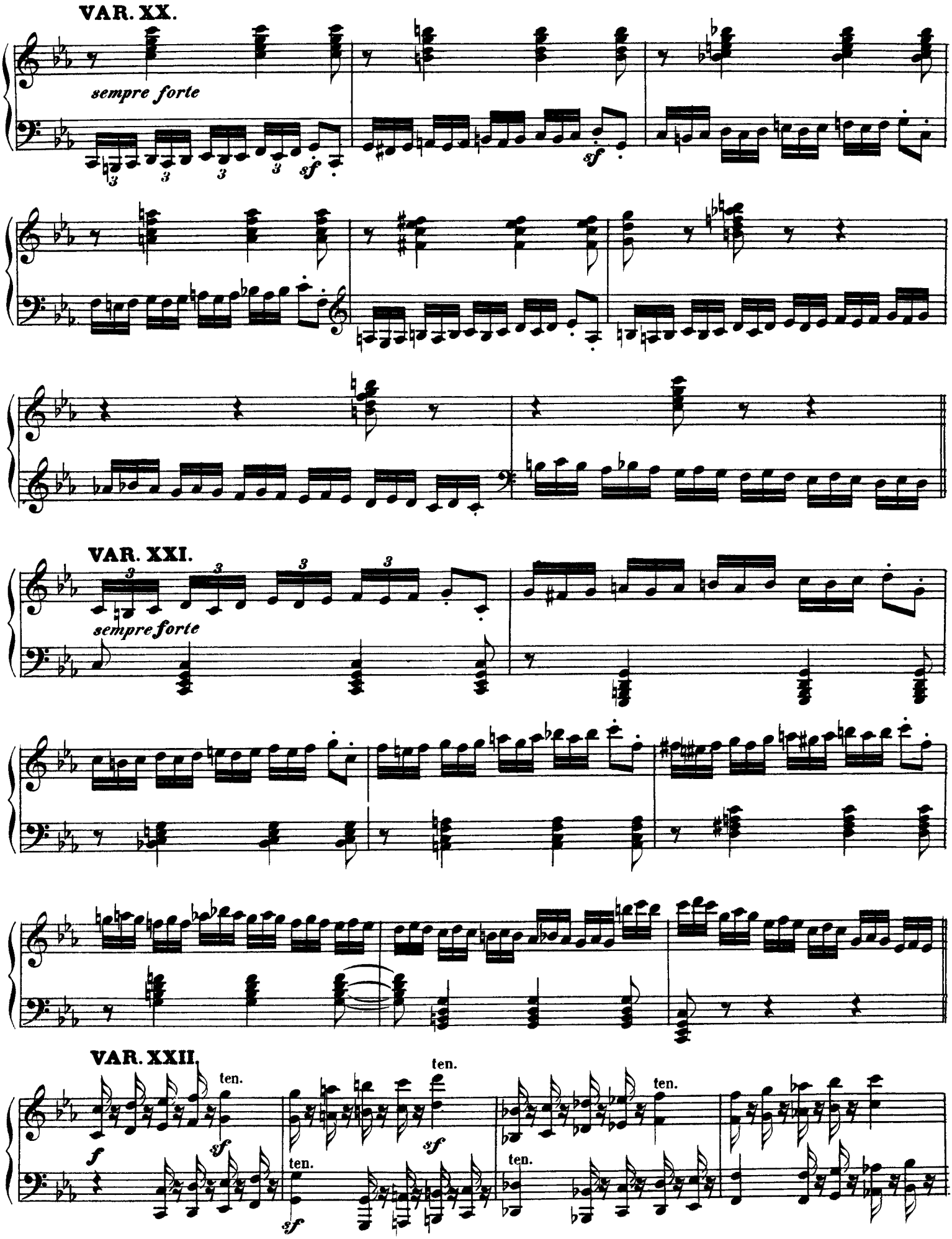
VAR. XIX



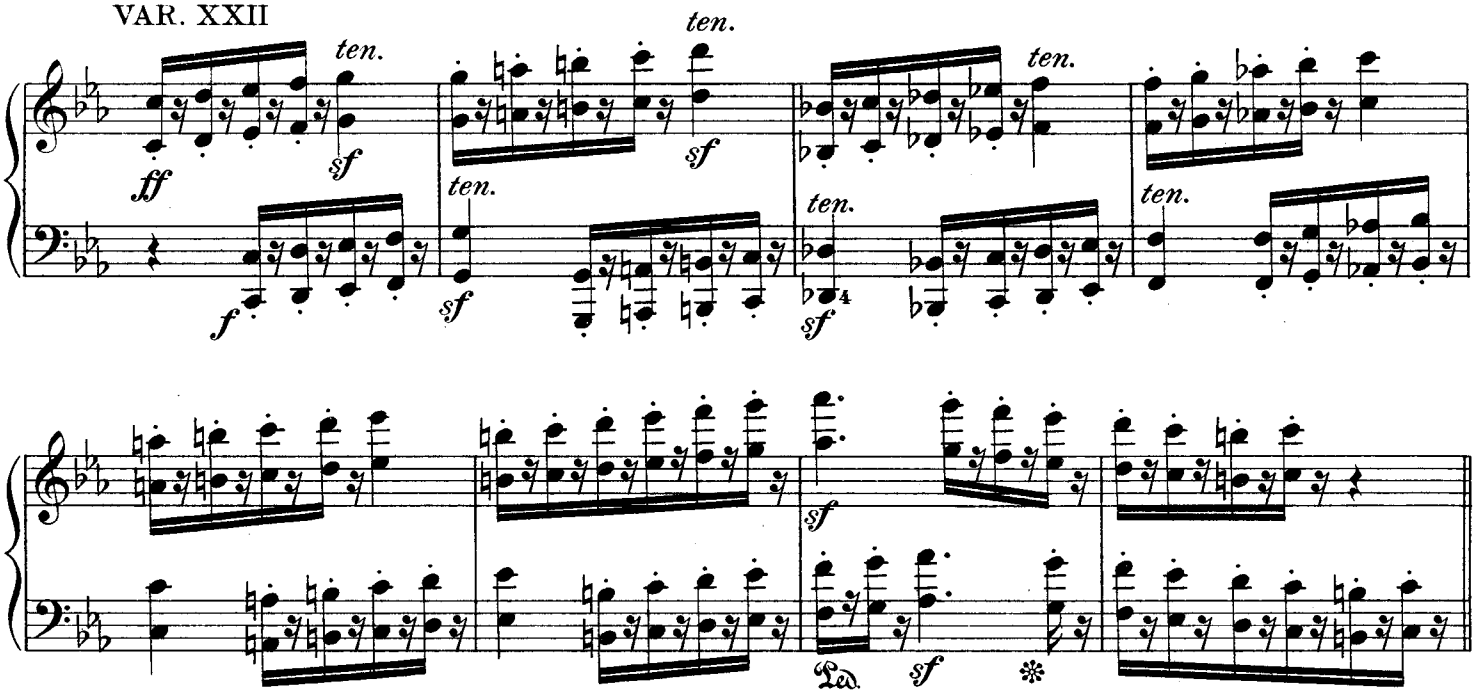




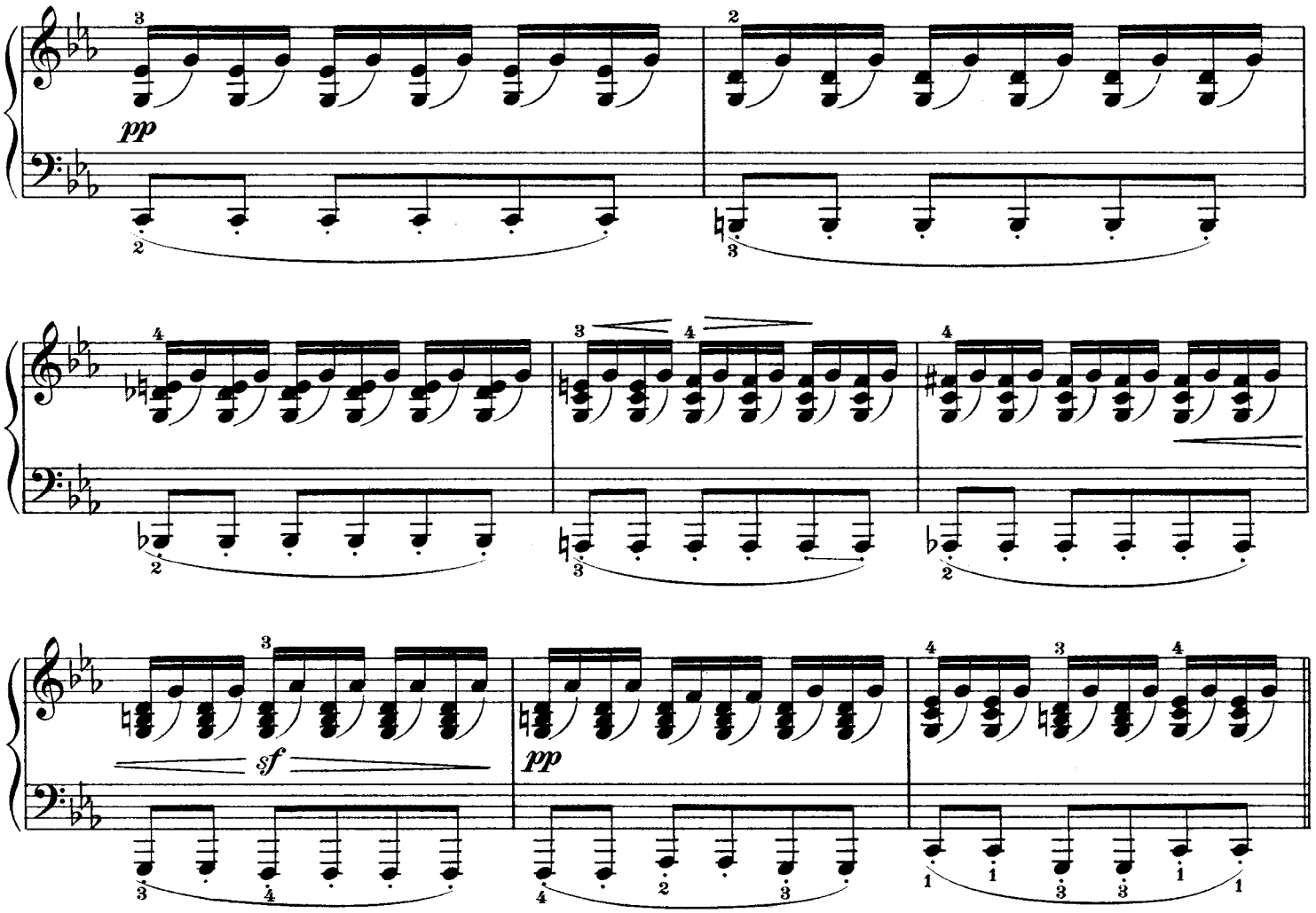



VAR. XX.
sempre forte
sf
VAR. XXI.
sempre forte
VAR. XXII.
ten.
f
sf

VAR. XXII

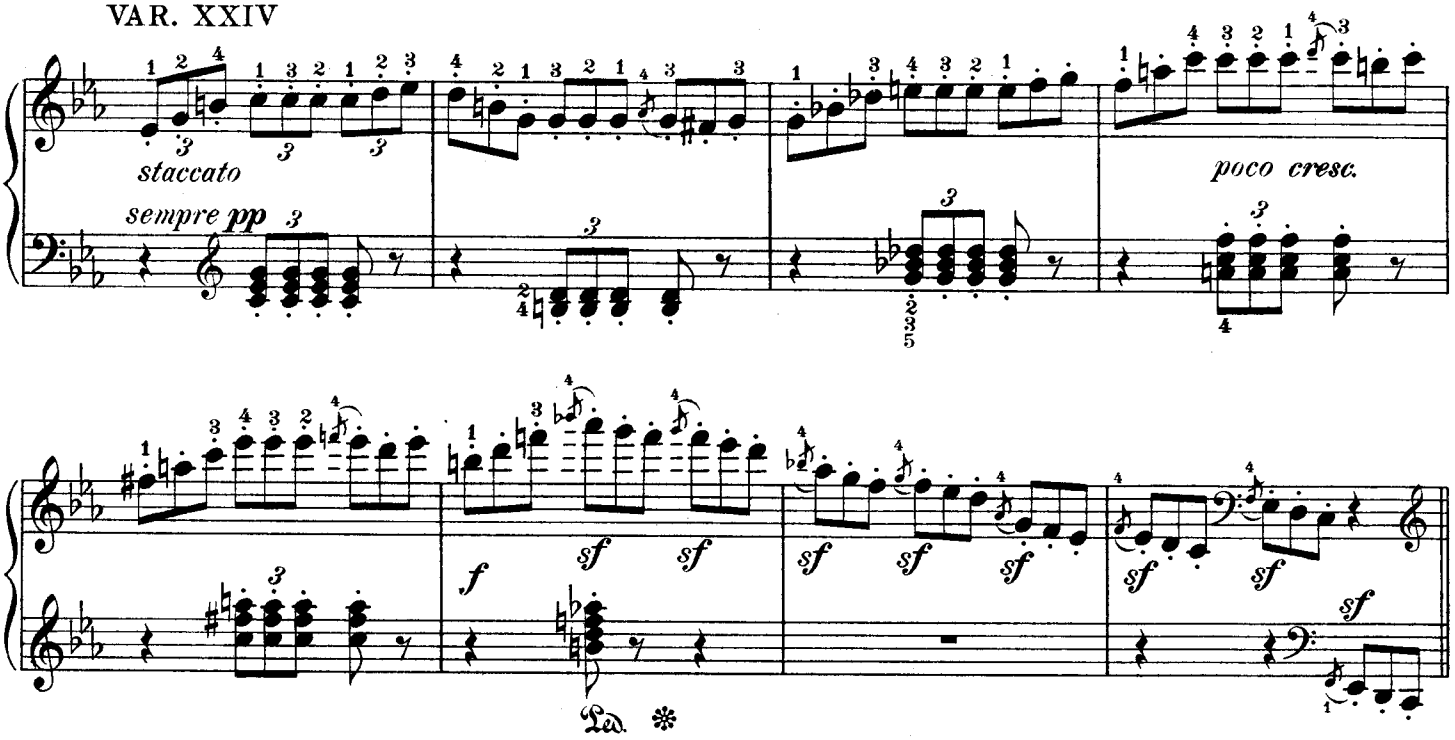


8) VAR. XXIII



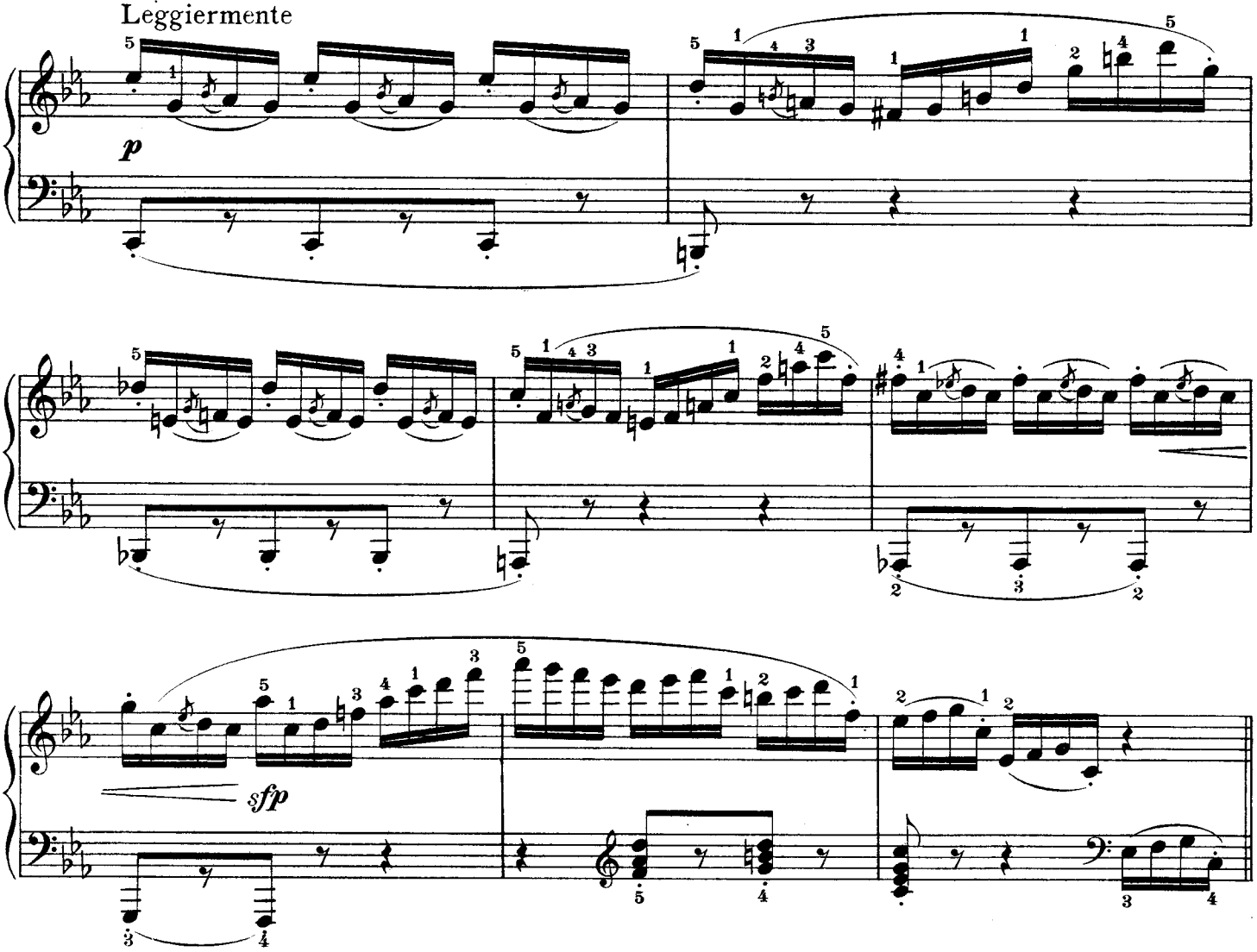
8) Agitated- pressing forward.

VAR. XXIV

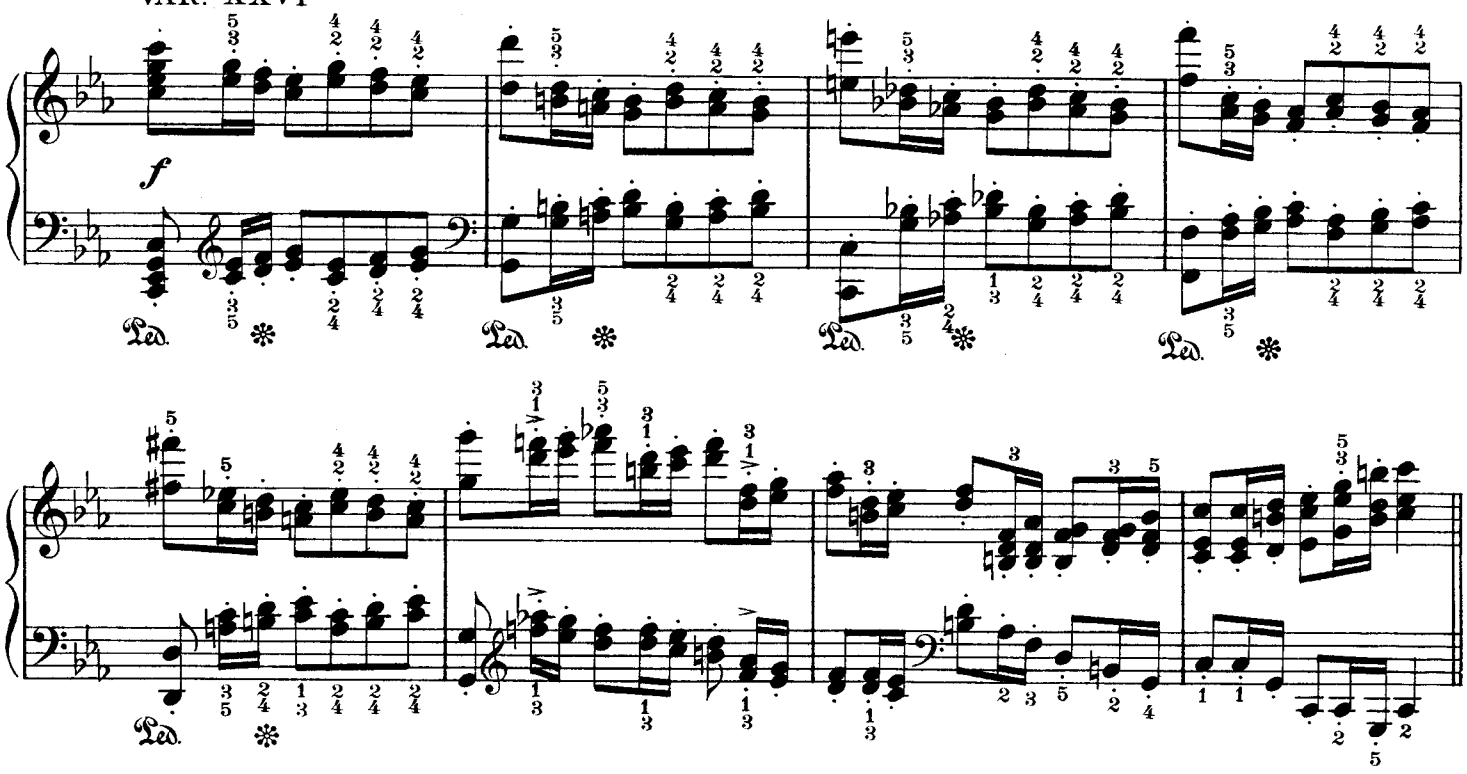


VAR. XXV

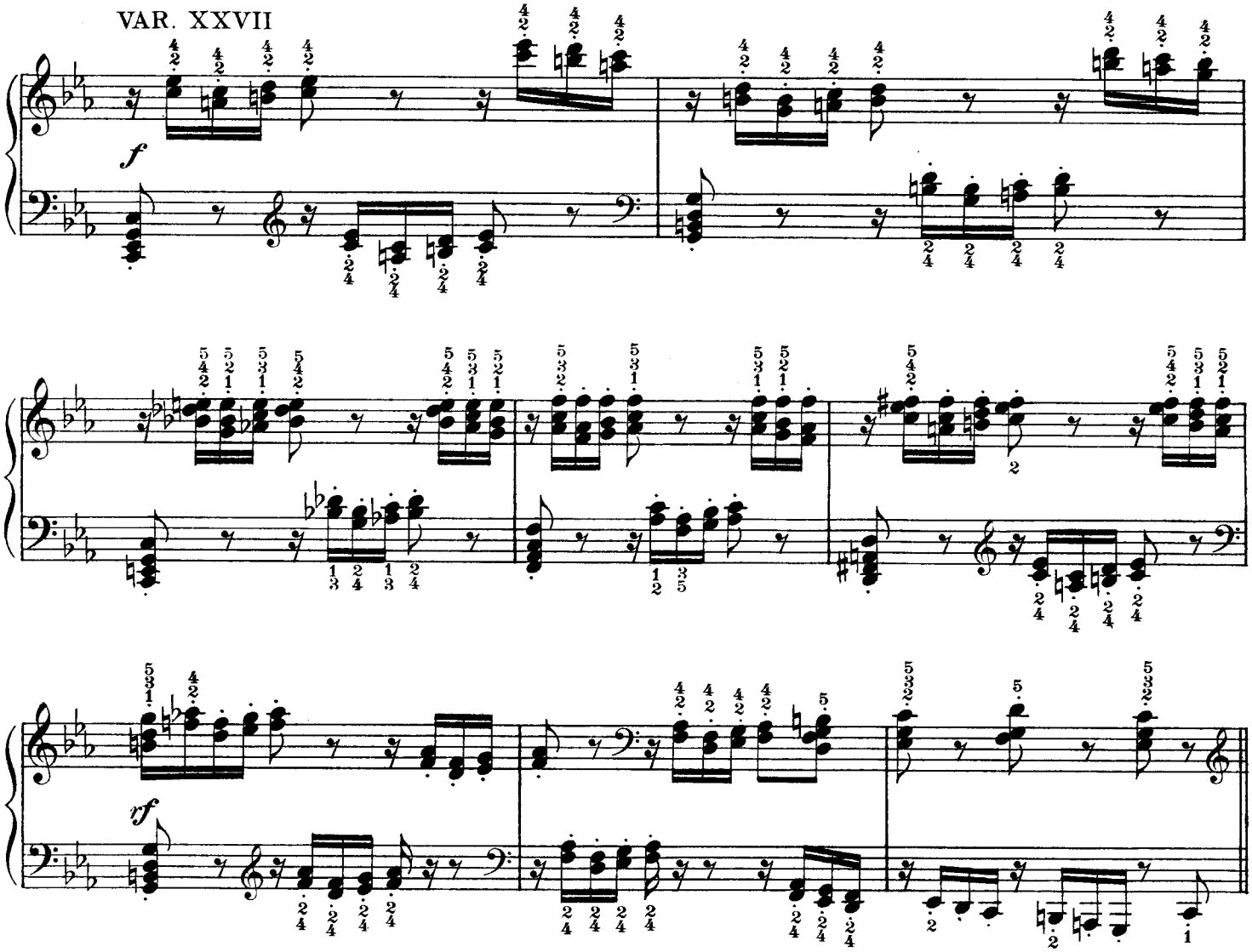
Leggiermente



VAR. XXVI



VAR. XXVII



VAR. XXVIII

9)

p semplice

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

VAR. XXIX

ff

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

f *cresc.*

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

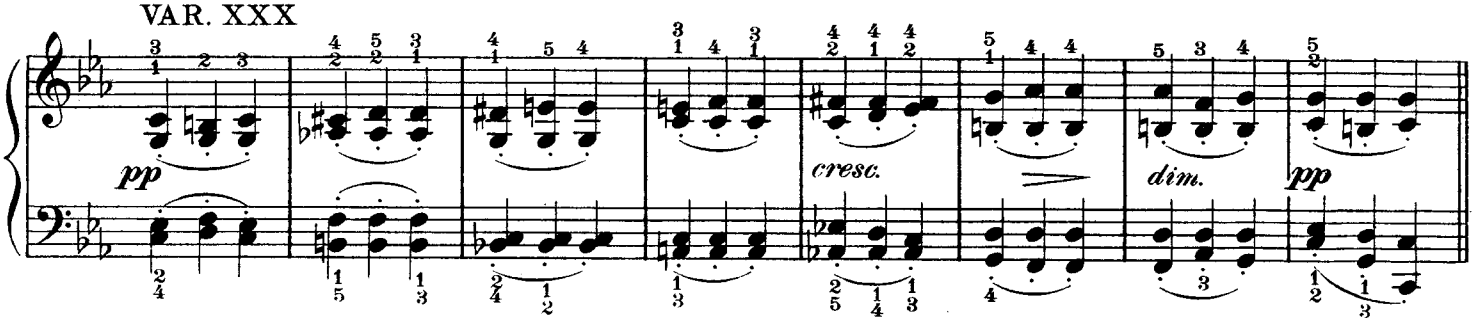
ff

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

9) This Variation is to be regarded as a brief point of repose, and is to be played without dragging or sentimentality.

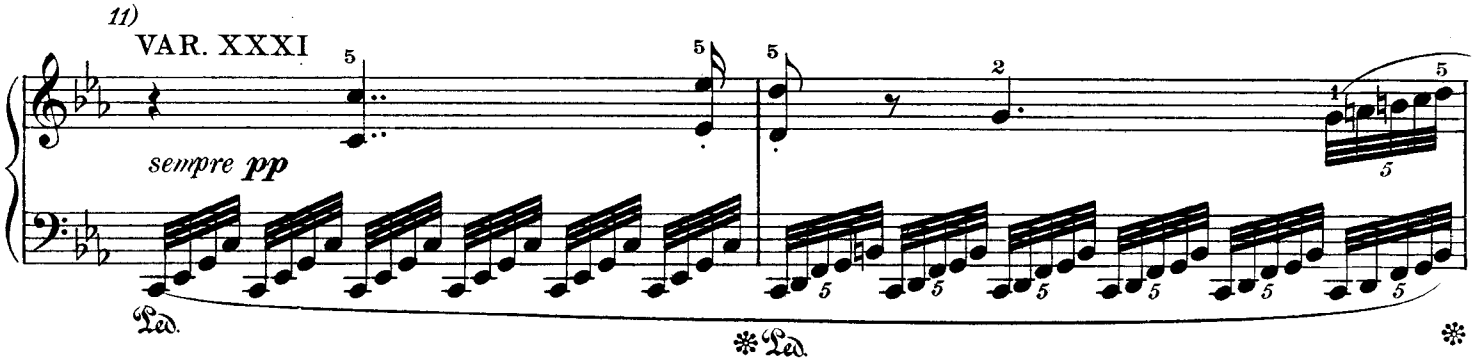
10)

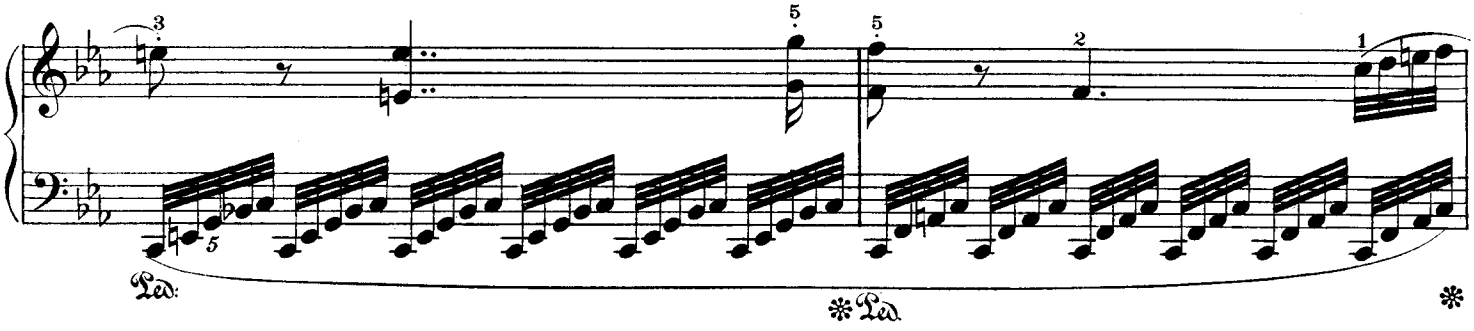
VAR. XXX

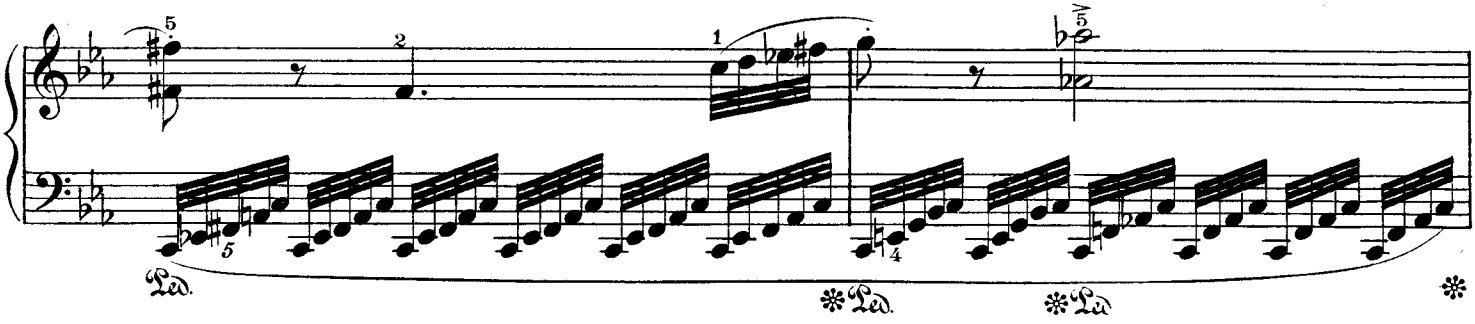


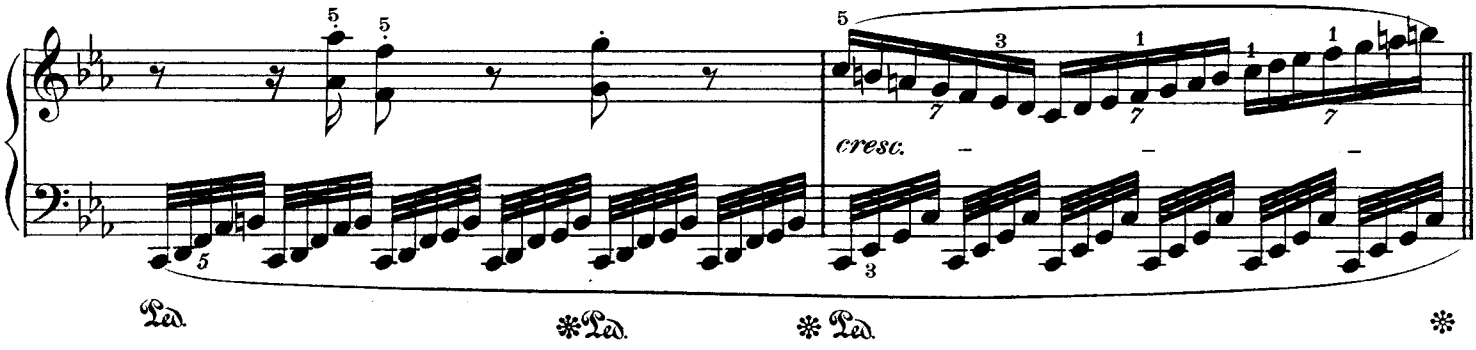
11)

VAR. XXXI









10) Always agitated and pressing forward.

11) The bass a gentle murmur, but the theme standing out prominently as if played *pp* on a trumpet.

VAR. XXXII

12)

più cresc.

ff

13)

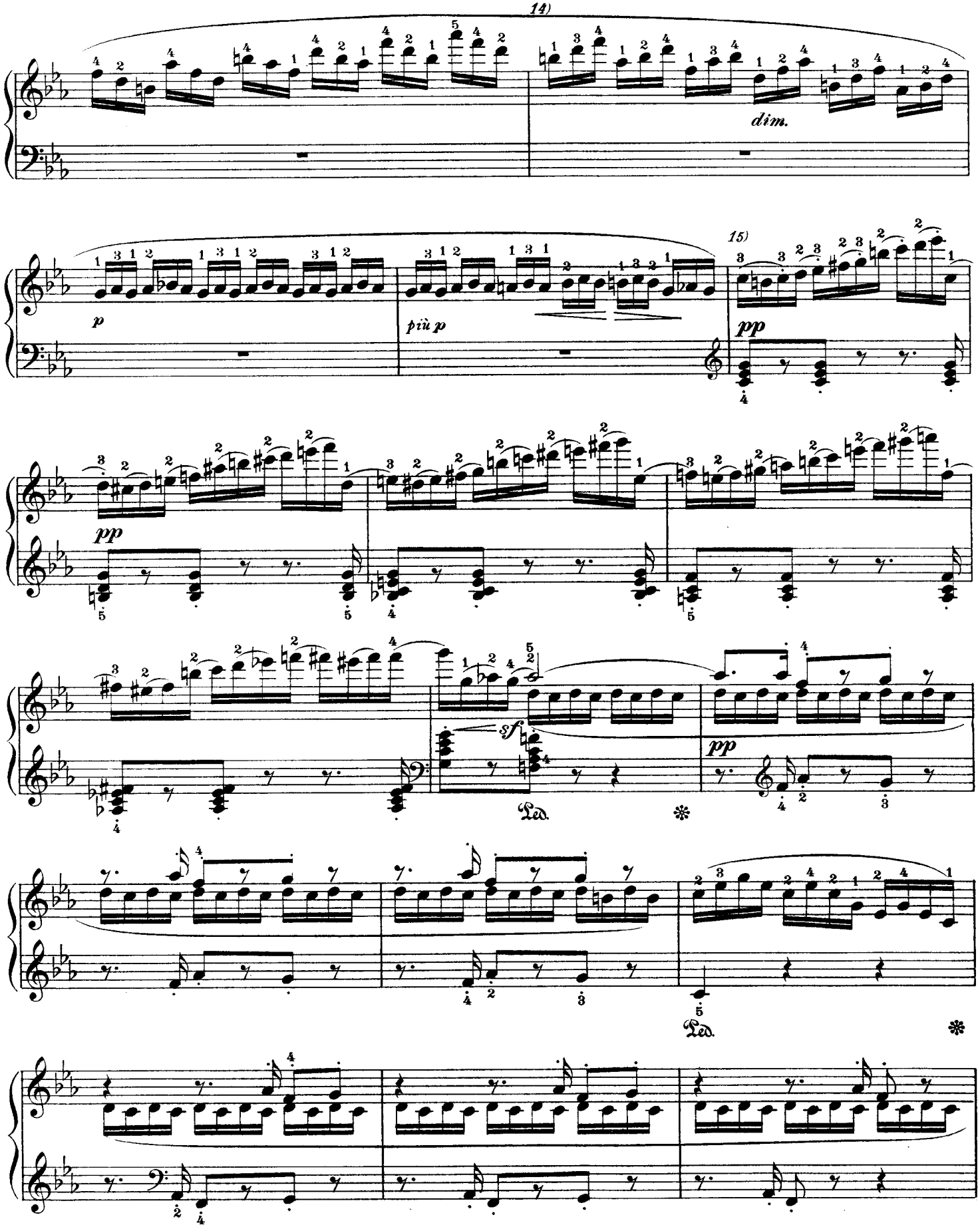
ff

sf

sf

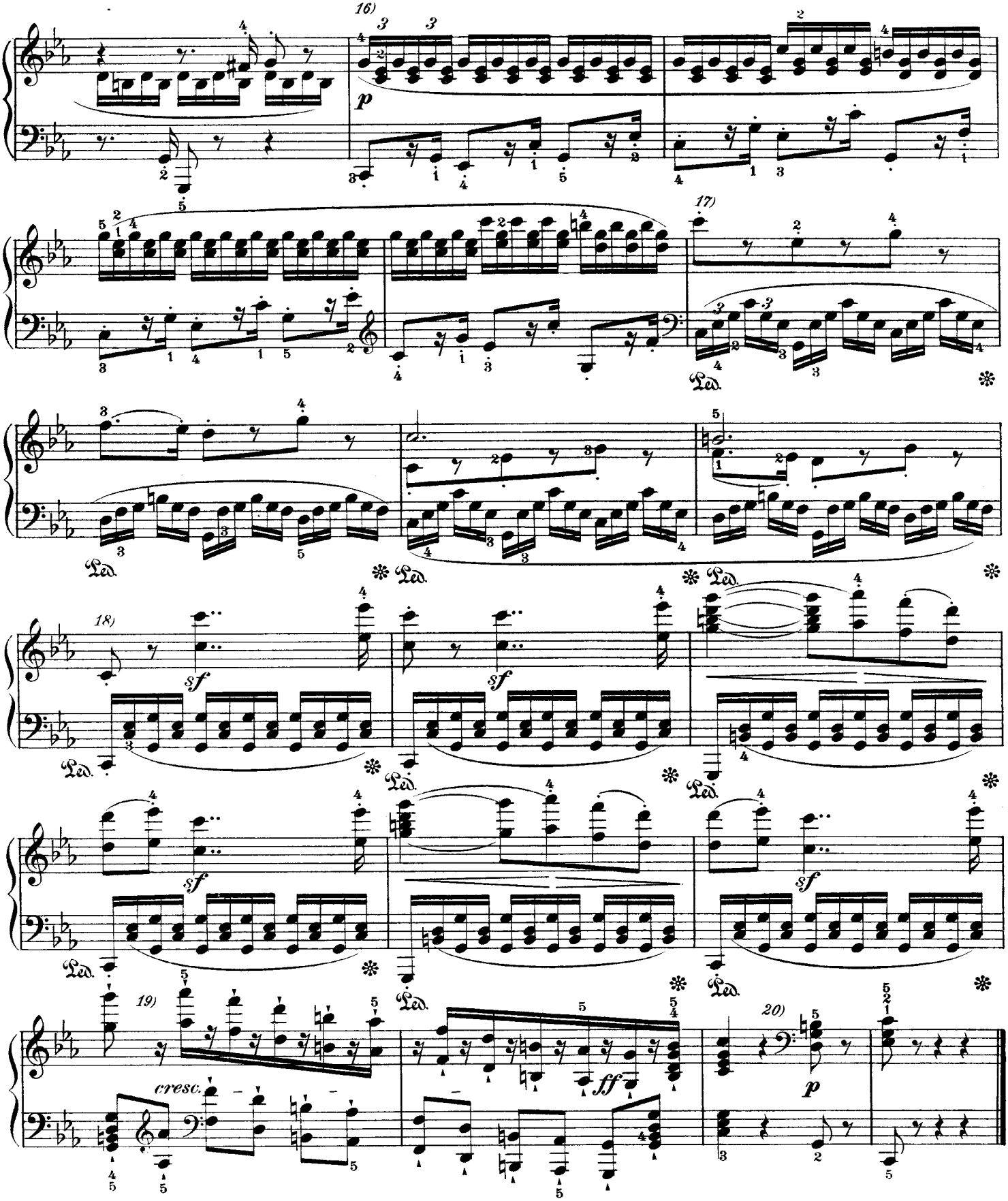
12) Commencing at this point the tempo must be greatly accelerated.

13) A much faster tempo begins here.



14) Becoming somewhat calmer, and gradually returning to the original tempo.

15) Tempo of the original theme, but never dragging.



16) Agitato – The tempo must be hastened during these four measures.

17) Quiet again, more like the original tempo.

18) With great expression, in the tempo of the theme.

19) Accelerando.

20) In strict time, and in the tempo of the theme.