A Kalmus Classic Edition

Henri

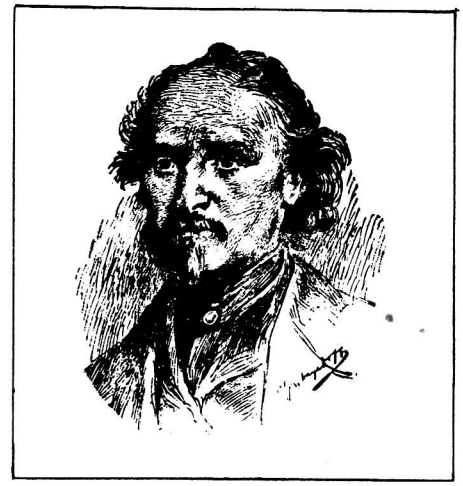
BERTINI

TWELVE LITTLE PIECES AND PRELUDES

FOR PIANO

K 03212

Kalmus



HENRI BERTINI, sometimes styled "le Jeune" to distinguish him from his elder brother Benoît Auguste, was born in London on October 28th, 1798. He received instruction in piano-playing from his father and brother, both of whom were accomplished pianists and musicians, the latter being a pupil of Clementi and a writer of some note (principal work: "Phonological system for acquiring extraordinary facility on all musical instruments as well as in singing," London, 1830). Under the stimulating influence of his musical environment, Henri began his public career as a pianist at an early age. When hardly twelve years old he undertook a professional tour with his father through the Netherlands and Germany; he was also for a considerable period in England and Scotland; but despite his remarkable successes as a public performer, and the flattering attentions paid him on all sides, he steadily prosecuted his studies under his father's tuition, devoting himself later on chiefly to composition, and, after settling in Paris in 1821, to his work as a teacher. Here he remained almost continuously until 1856 (1859?), when he retired to his country seat at Meylan, near Grenoble, having thenceforward but little to do with the world at large, and limiting his work as a composer to occasional pieces written for a society of orpheonists of which he was president. He died at Meylan October 1st, 1876.

Bertini was a finished pianist of the Clementi school as extended by Cramer and Hummel; his style was equally admirable in phrasing and execution, and he enjoyed the reputation of being one of the foremost players of his time. His remarkable talent found its perhaps most notable expression in the celebrated grand Sextets; at the present time, however, he is best known by his truly excellent course of studies, published in 29 sets, nearly all of these having been issued originally by Lemoine, of Paris, though their extreme popularity caused them to be reprinted in most of the chief cities of Europe and America. Opinion is divided concerning the value of these studies as compared with other and more recent works of the same class, and for attaining the ends of the Liszt school of technique studies of a different and more modern kind naturally have to be taken up; nevertheless, they still remain standard works of instruction, and "L'école de la musique d'ensemble," which is a collection of preludes and fugues by J. S. Bach, arranged for four hands, may be mentioned as peculiarly valuable; likewise the "Études caractéristiques," the "Caprices-Études," the "Études artistiques," etc. The above studies are still great favorites, being distinguished not only for their melodiousness and well-considered harmonic structure, but also for their eminent usefulness in building up the technique. In this connection the Études op. 100, 29, and 32 may be mentioned as preparatory, in the given order, to Czerny's op. 299. A selection of 50 of these Études, provided with excellent notes and modern fingering, has been issued by Giuseppe Buonamici.

As a composer, apart from works written for the purpose of instruction, Bertini was an outspoken adherent of the classic school, and the stand which he took in France in regard to the prevailing light musical literature and salon-virtousity has been compared with that taken by Schumann and Mendelssohn in Germany. About 200 of his compositions are extant; a complete list may be found in Fétis' "Biographie universelle des musiciens." The following are the most important: 6 Trios for pianoforte and strings (Paris, Lemoine); 5 Serenades for pianoforte and strings (*ibid.*); 4 Sextets (*ibid.*); and a Nonet for pianoforte and wind instruments. The following are posthumous works: 3 Nonets for pianoforte and wind instruments; 3 Symphonies for pianoforte and orchestra; 20 pieces for pianoforte; a *Pie Jesu* composed for and sung at Bertini's funeral. It may be said of his compositions in general that they are melodious and well-planned, although it must be admitted that on the whole they discover a decided lack of originality.

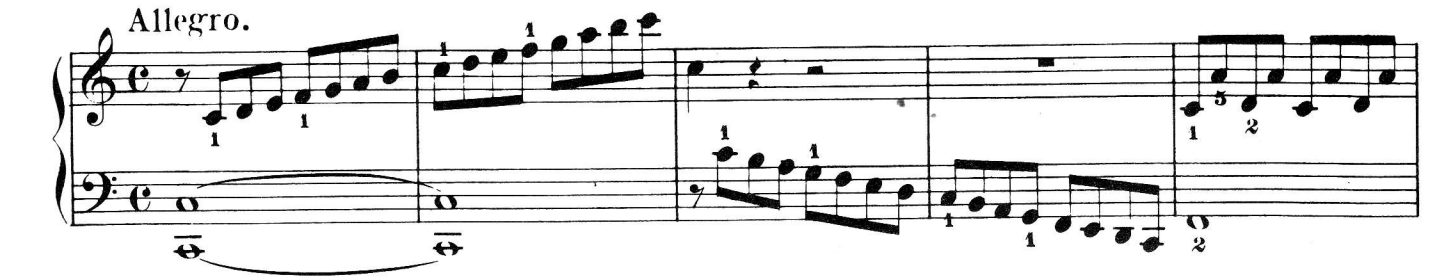
It was as a teacher, however, that Bertini won his most brilliant and enduring successes. It is reported that, when at the height of his fame, the decoration of the Legion of Honor was offered to him in recognition of his distinguished services to the cause of musical art, and that he refused to accept it.

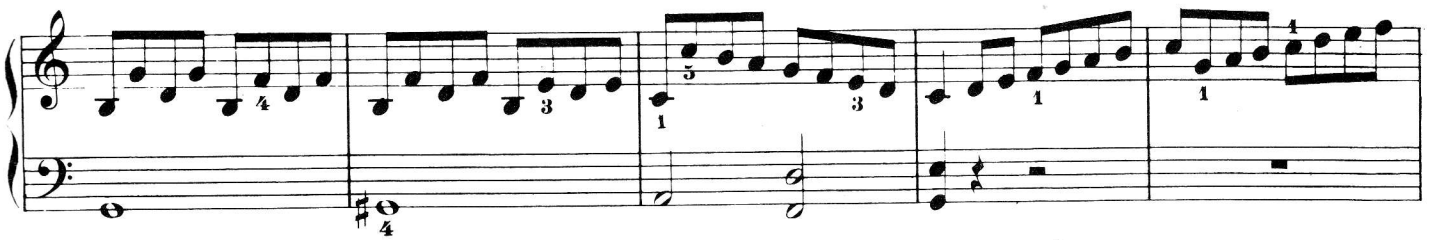
Twelve little Preludes and Pieces.

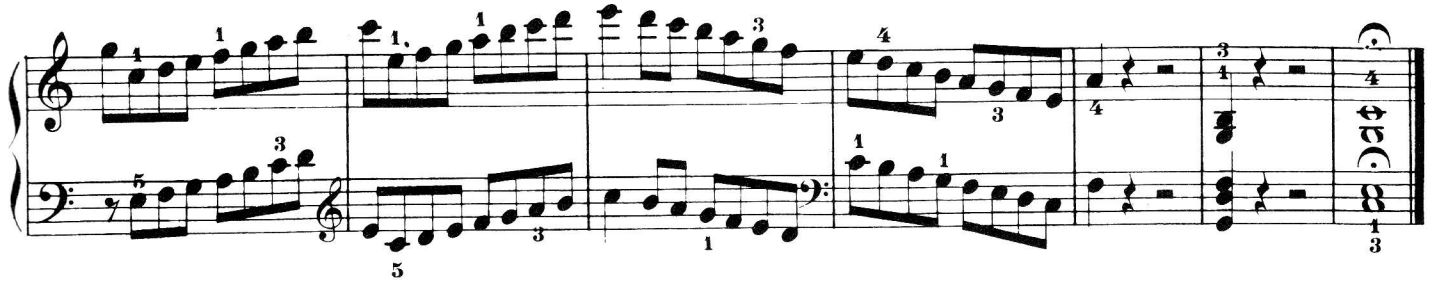
I.
Prelude.

H. BERTINI.

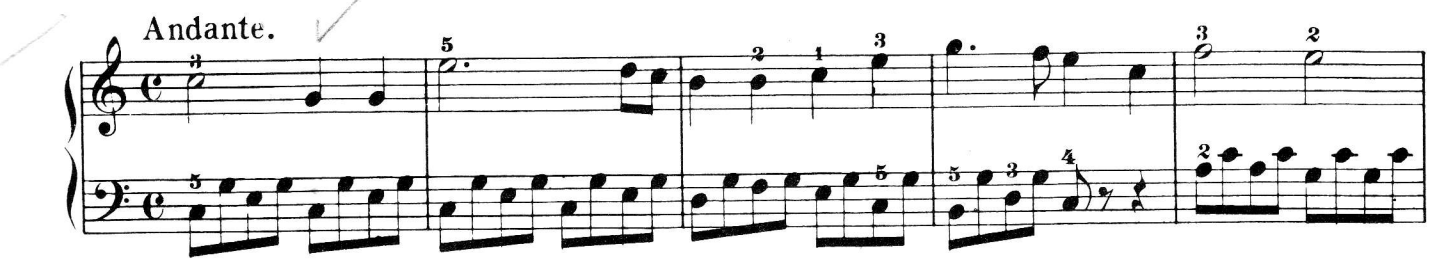
Allegro.

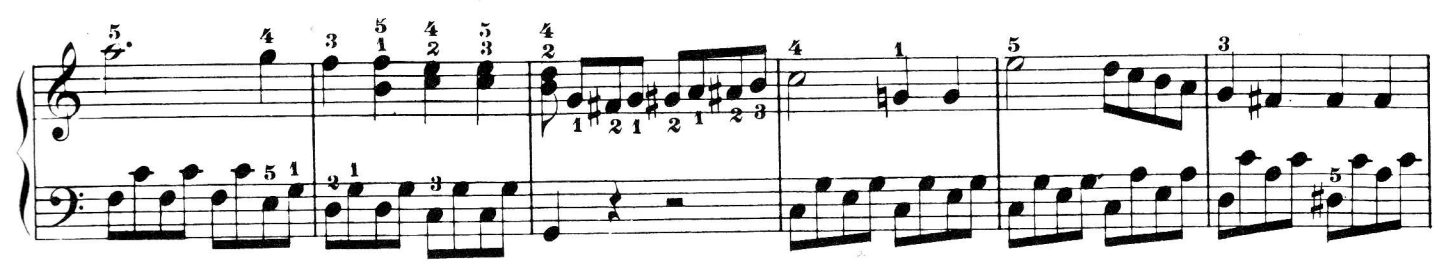


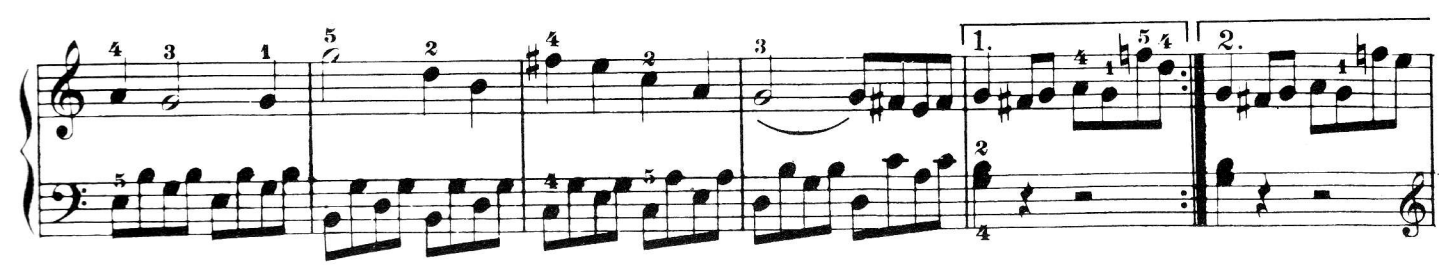




Andante.







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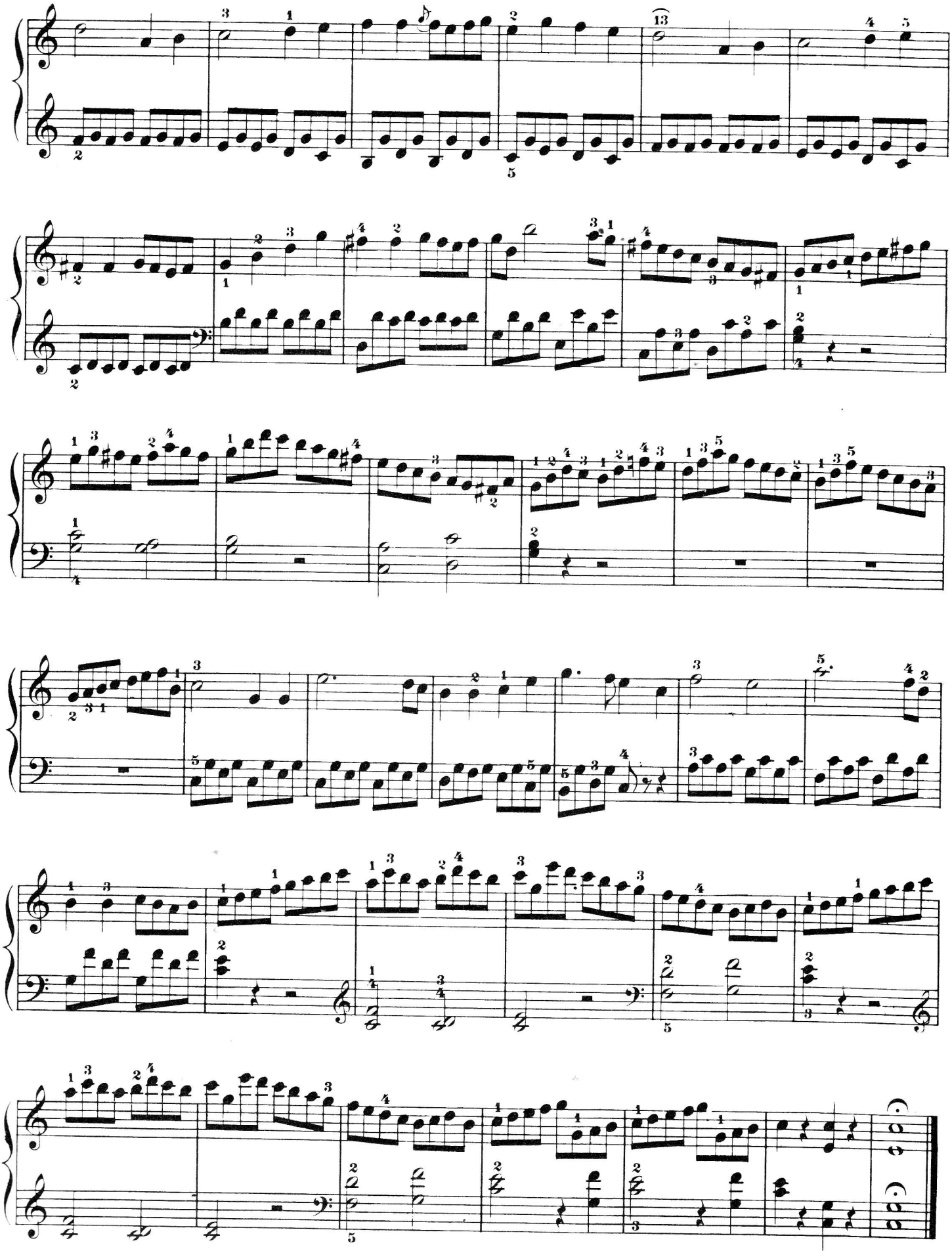
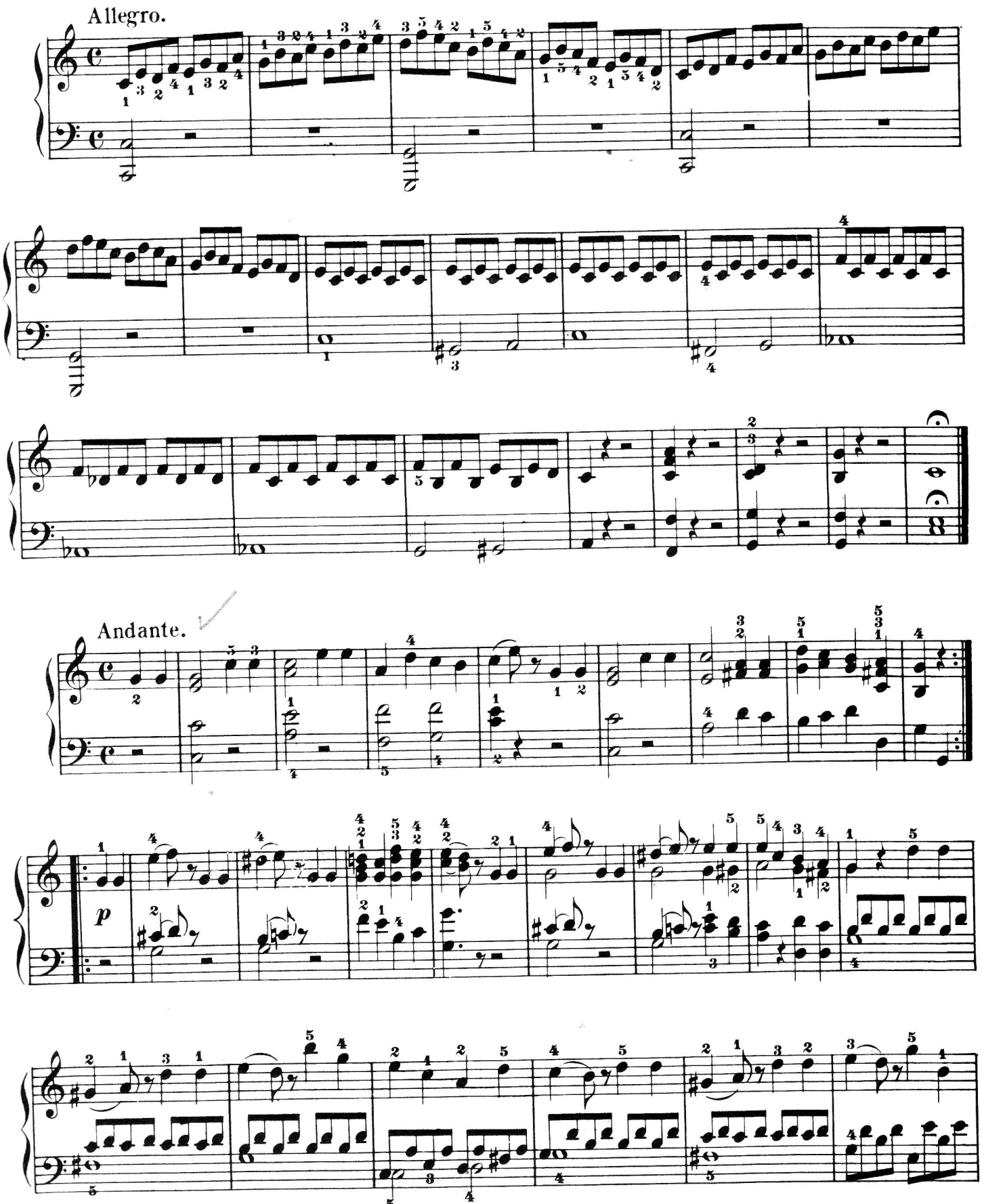
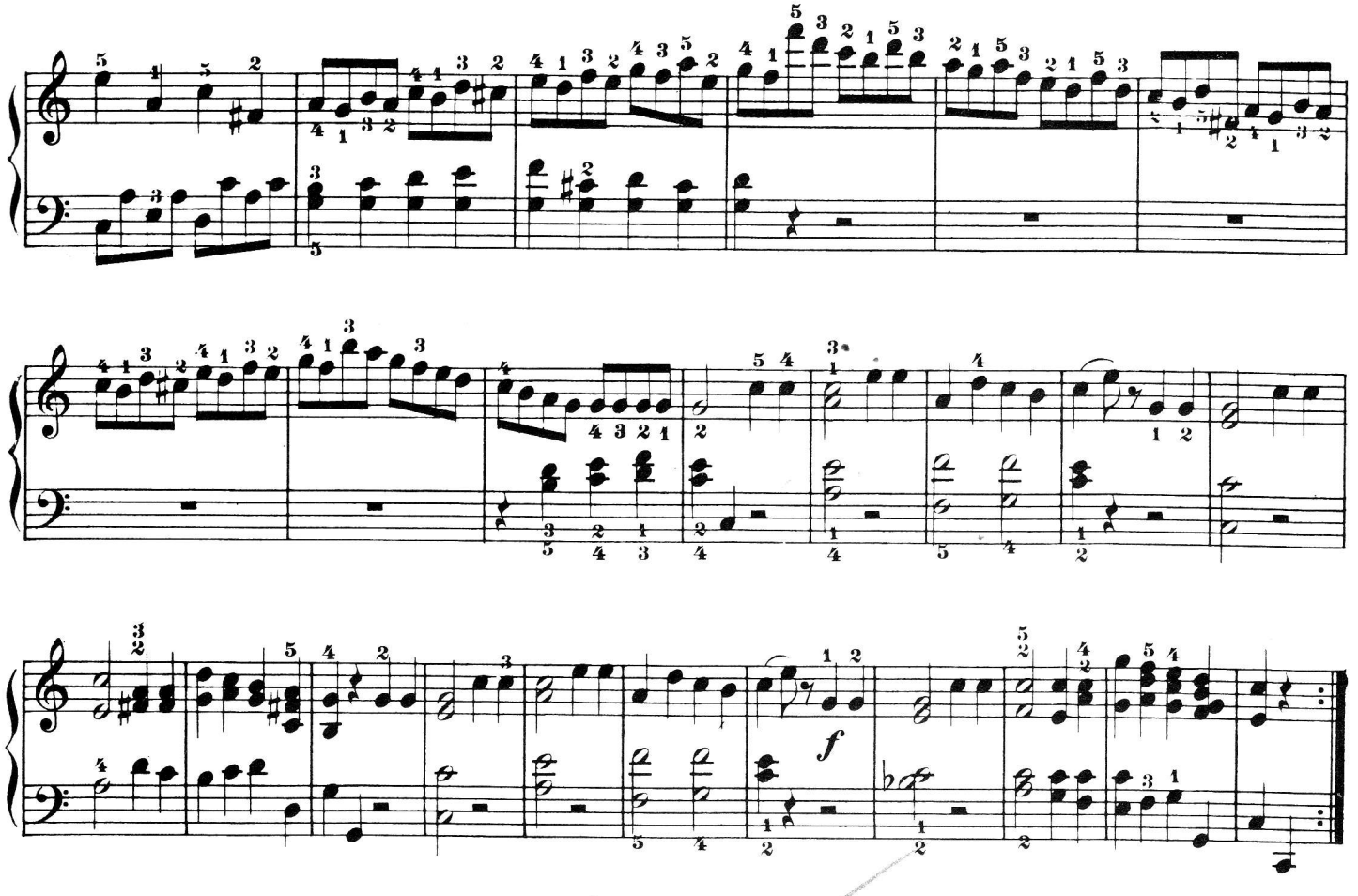


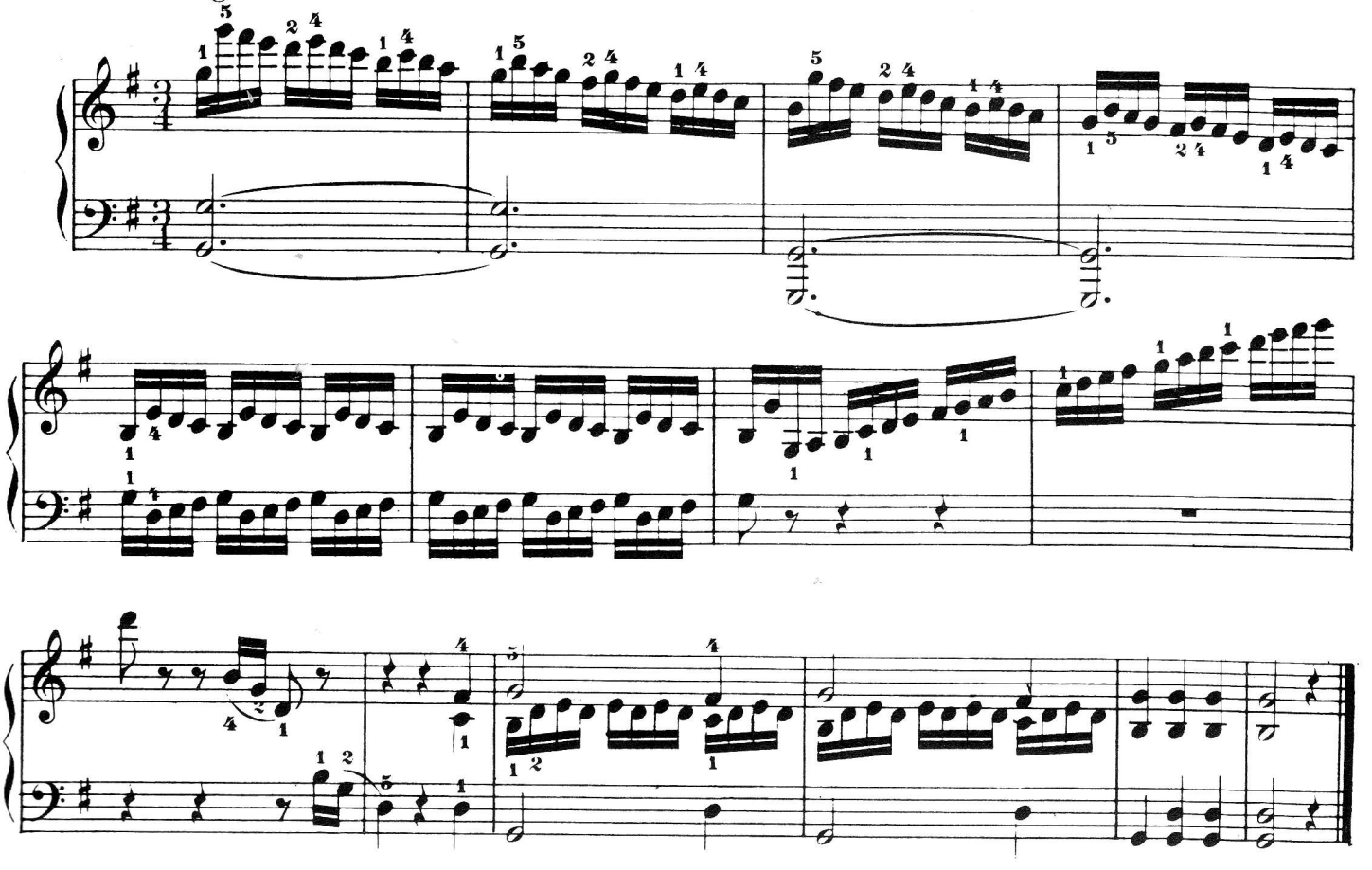
II.
Prelude.





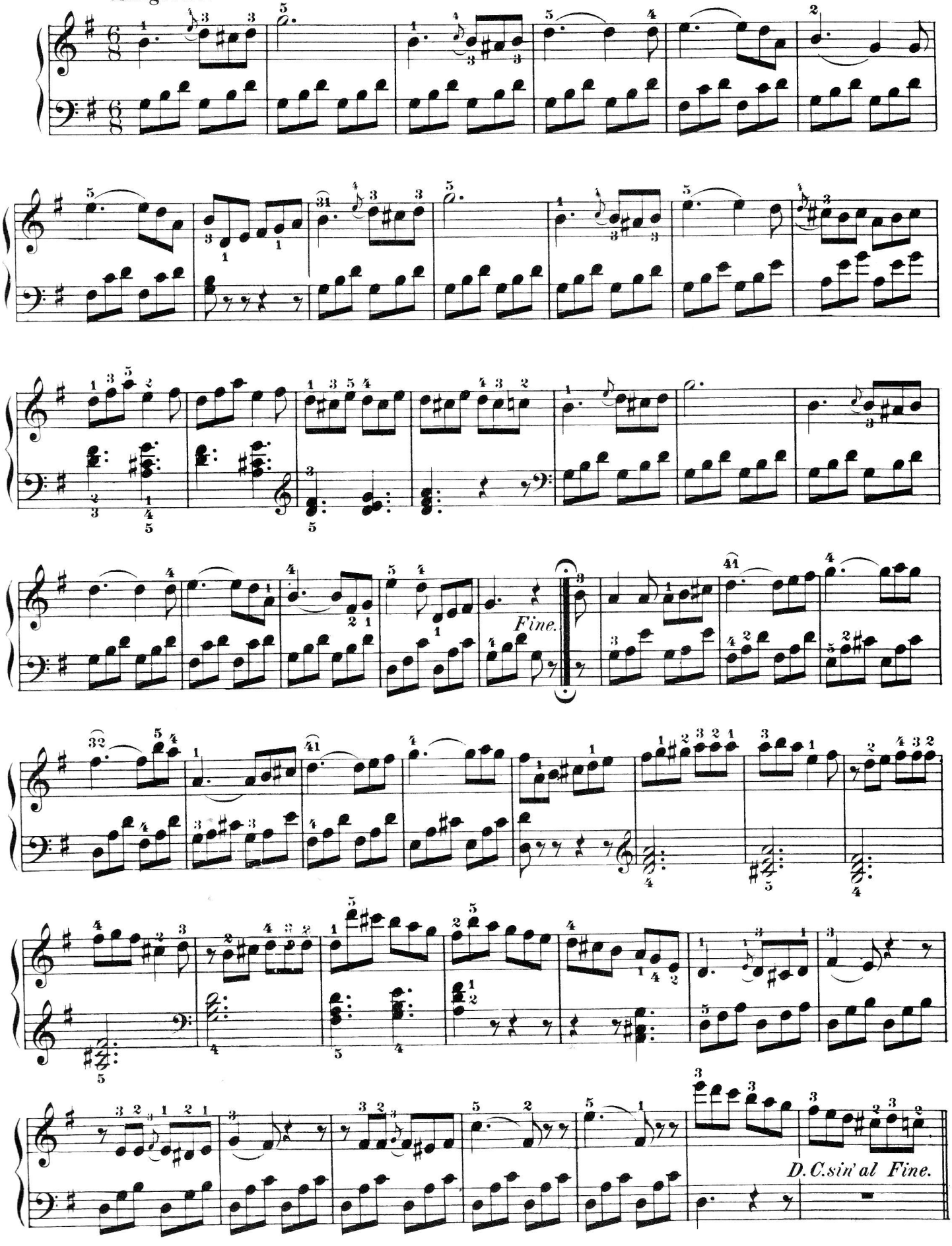
III.
Prelude.

Allegro.



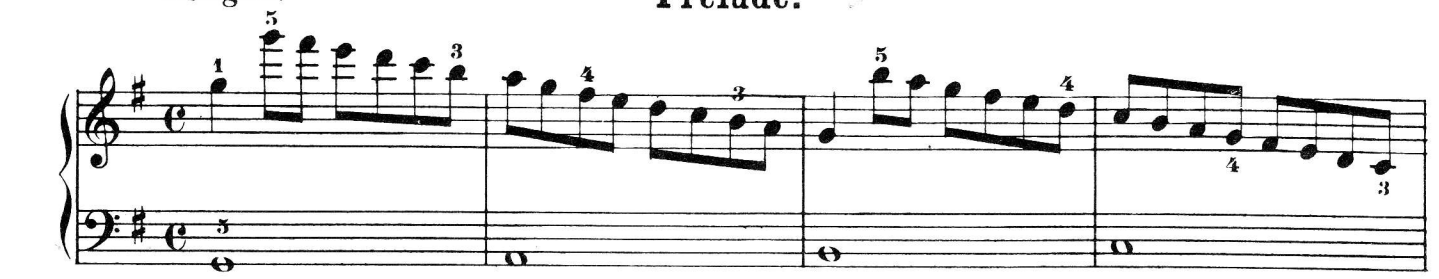
Rondo.

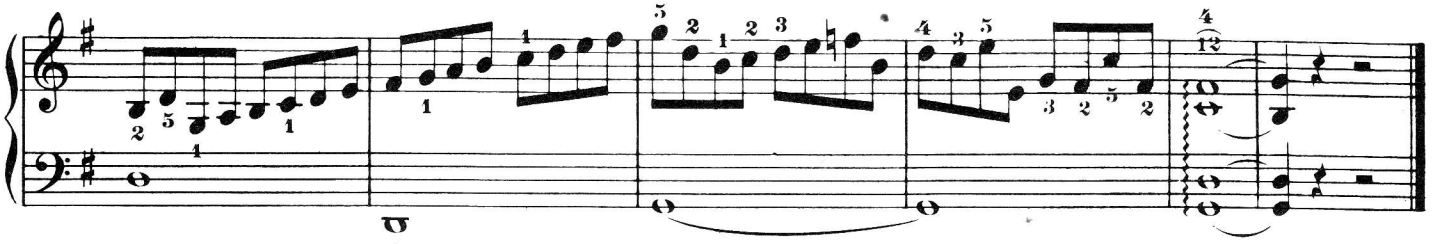
Allegretto.



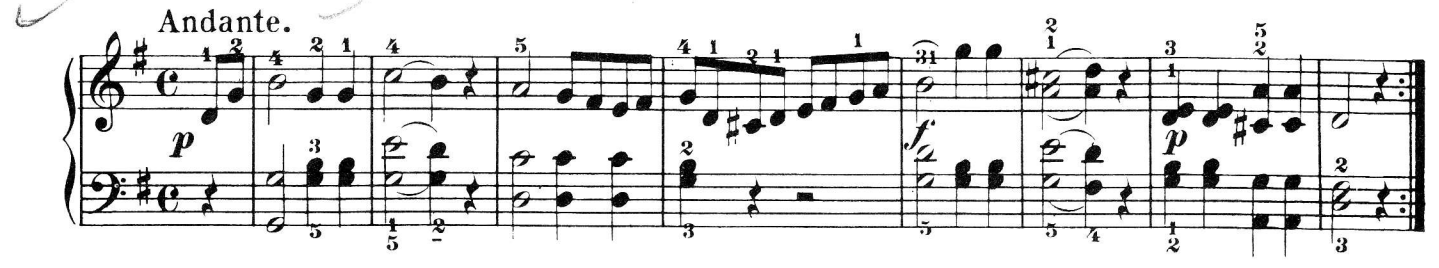
IV.
Prelude.

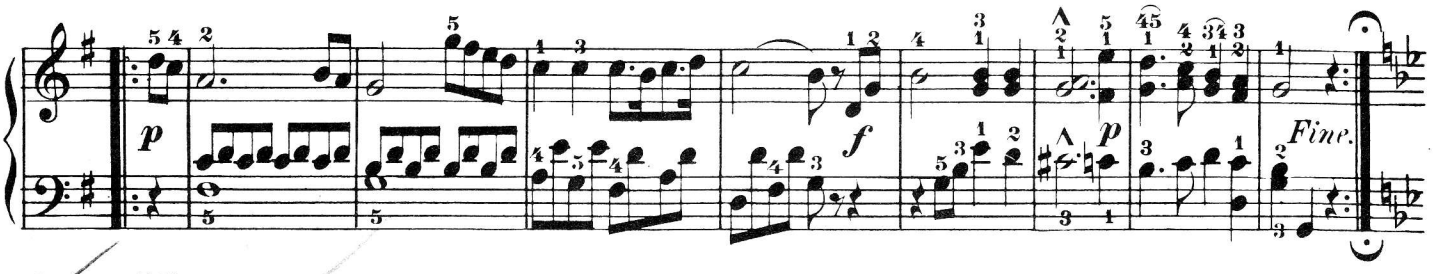
Allegro.





Andante.





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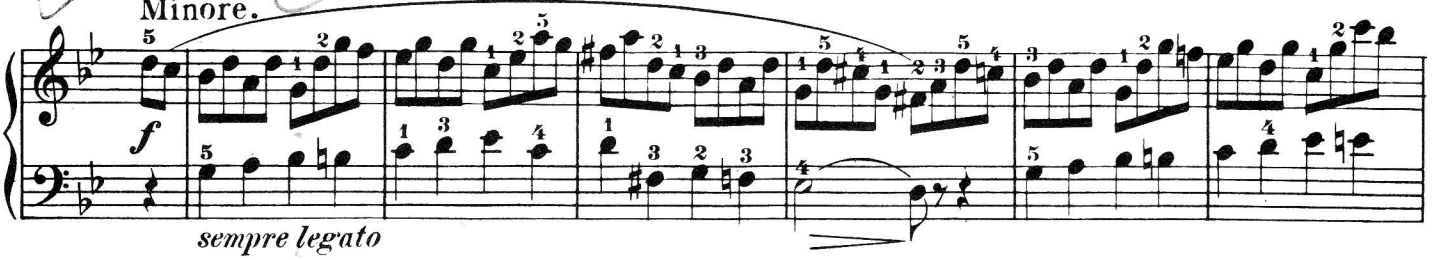
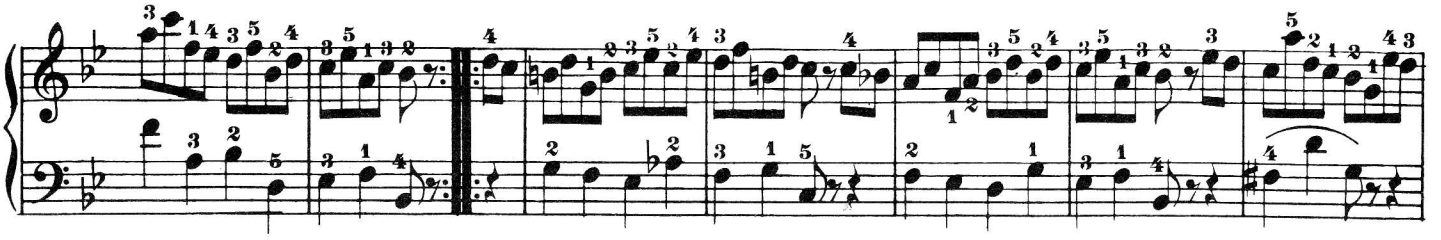
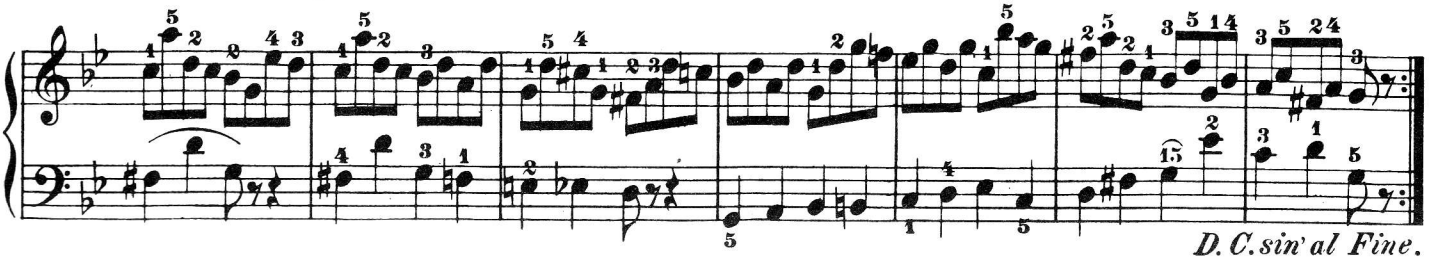
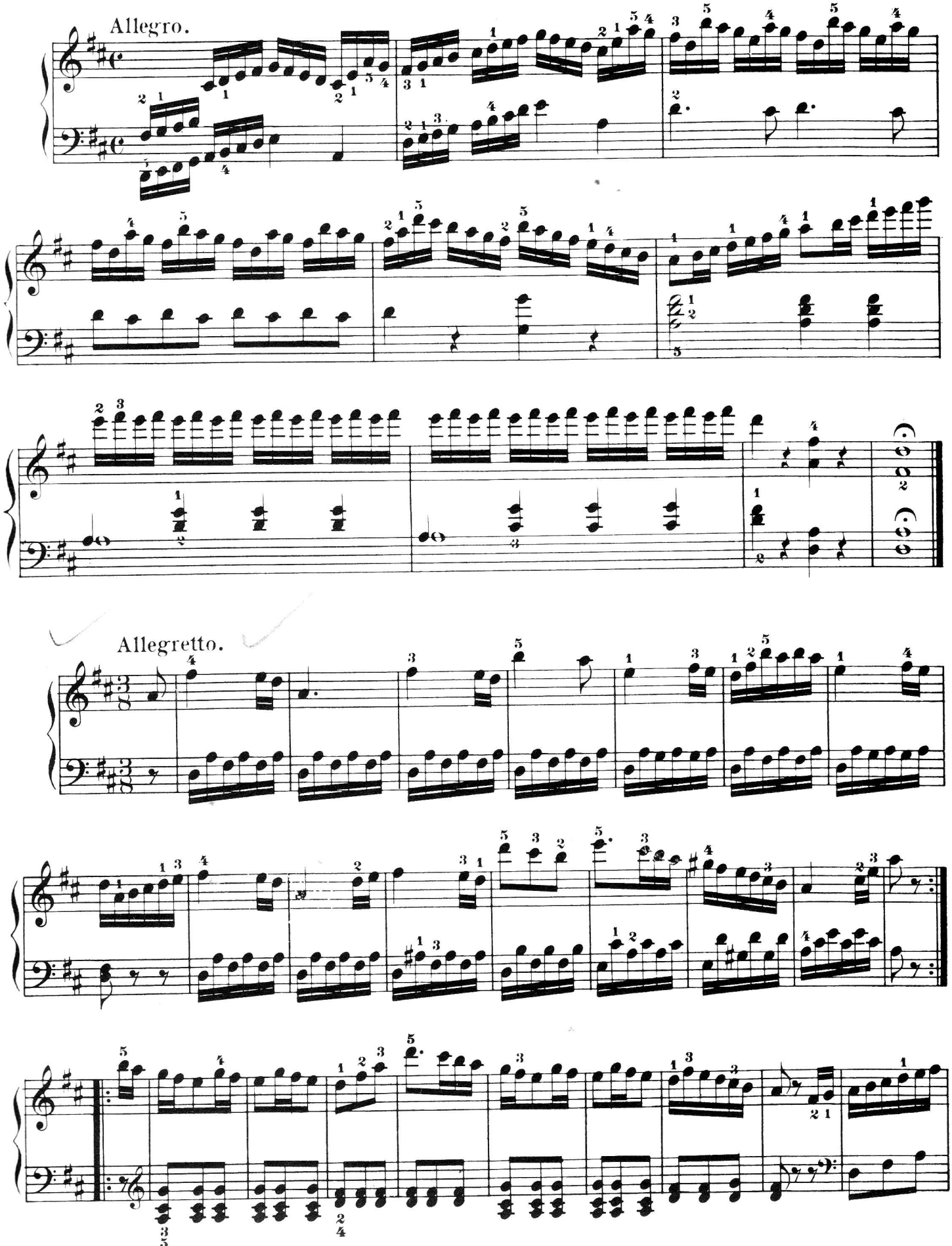
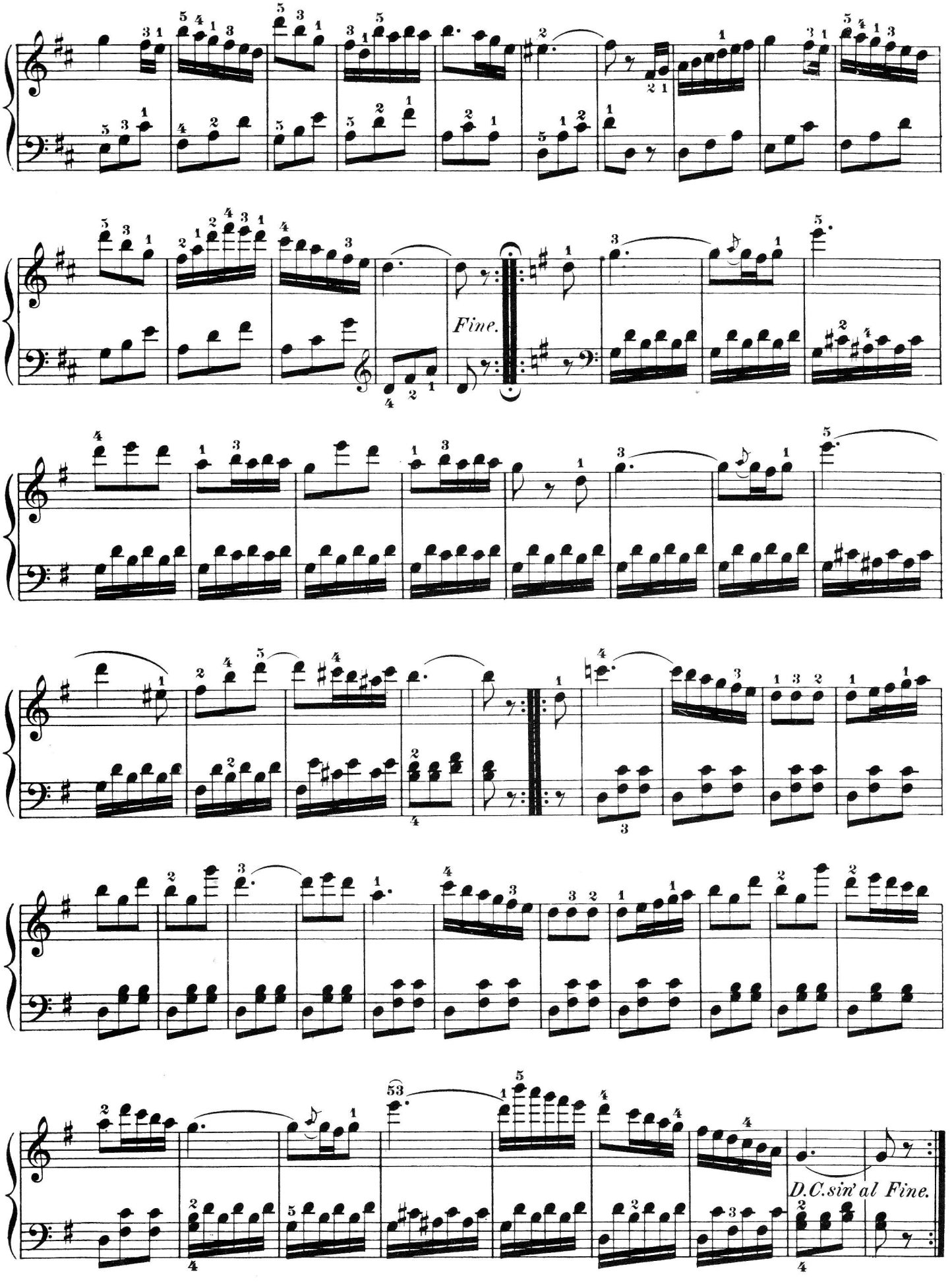






V.
Prelude.

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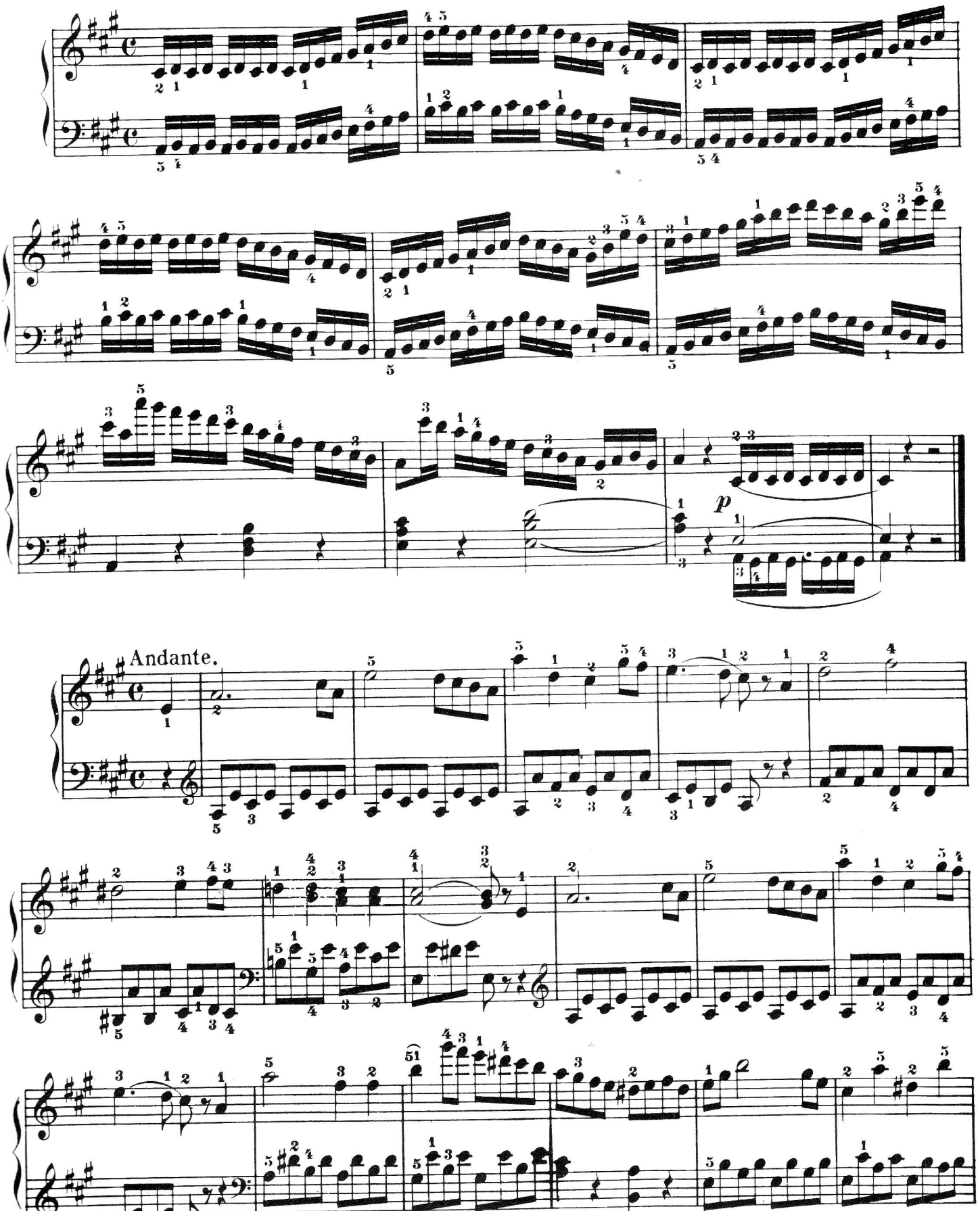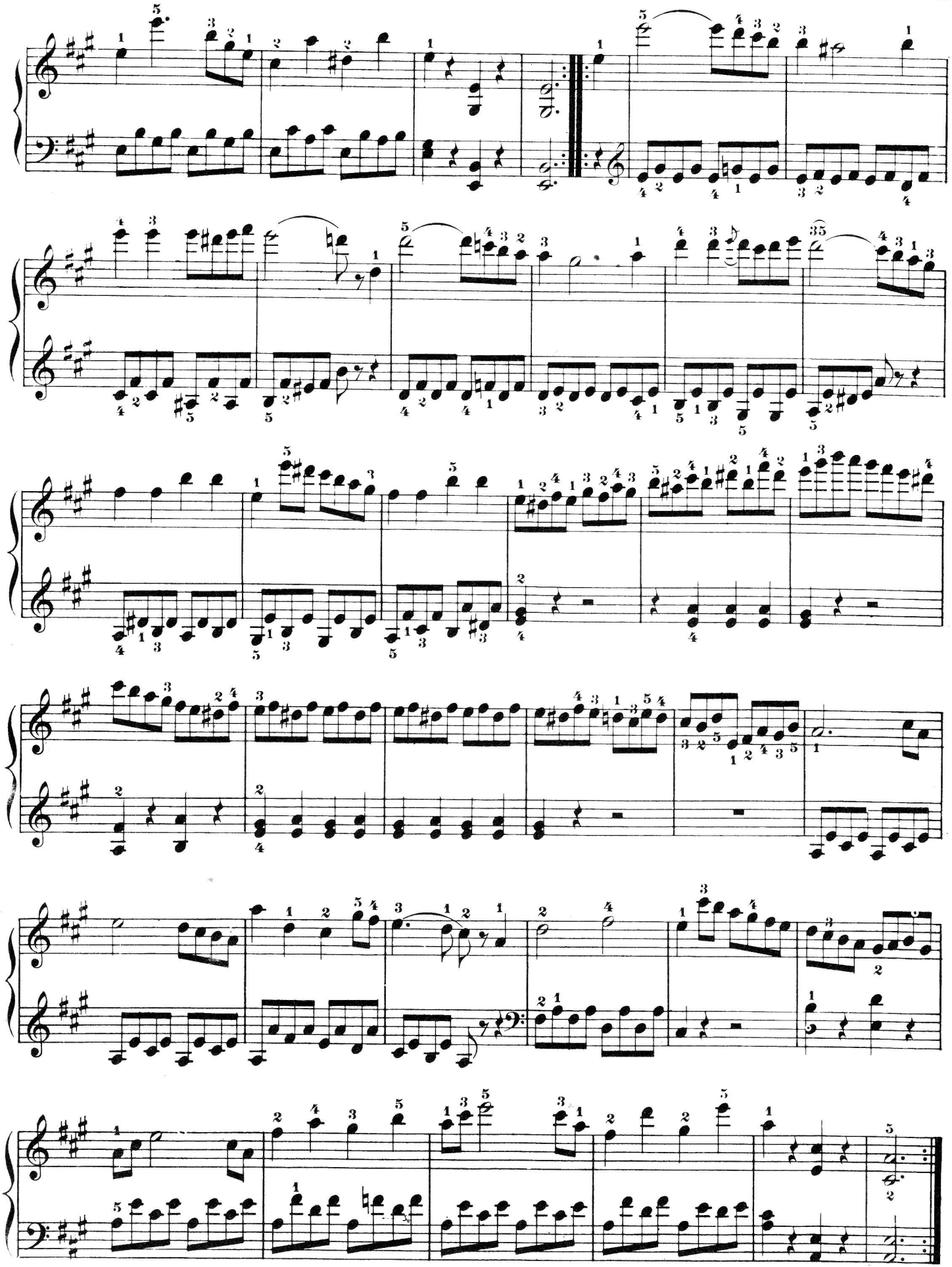
VI.
Prelude.