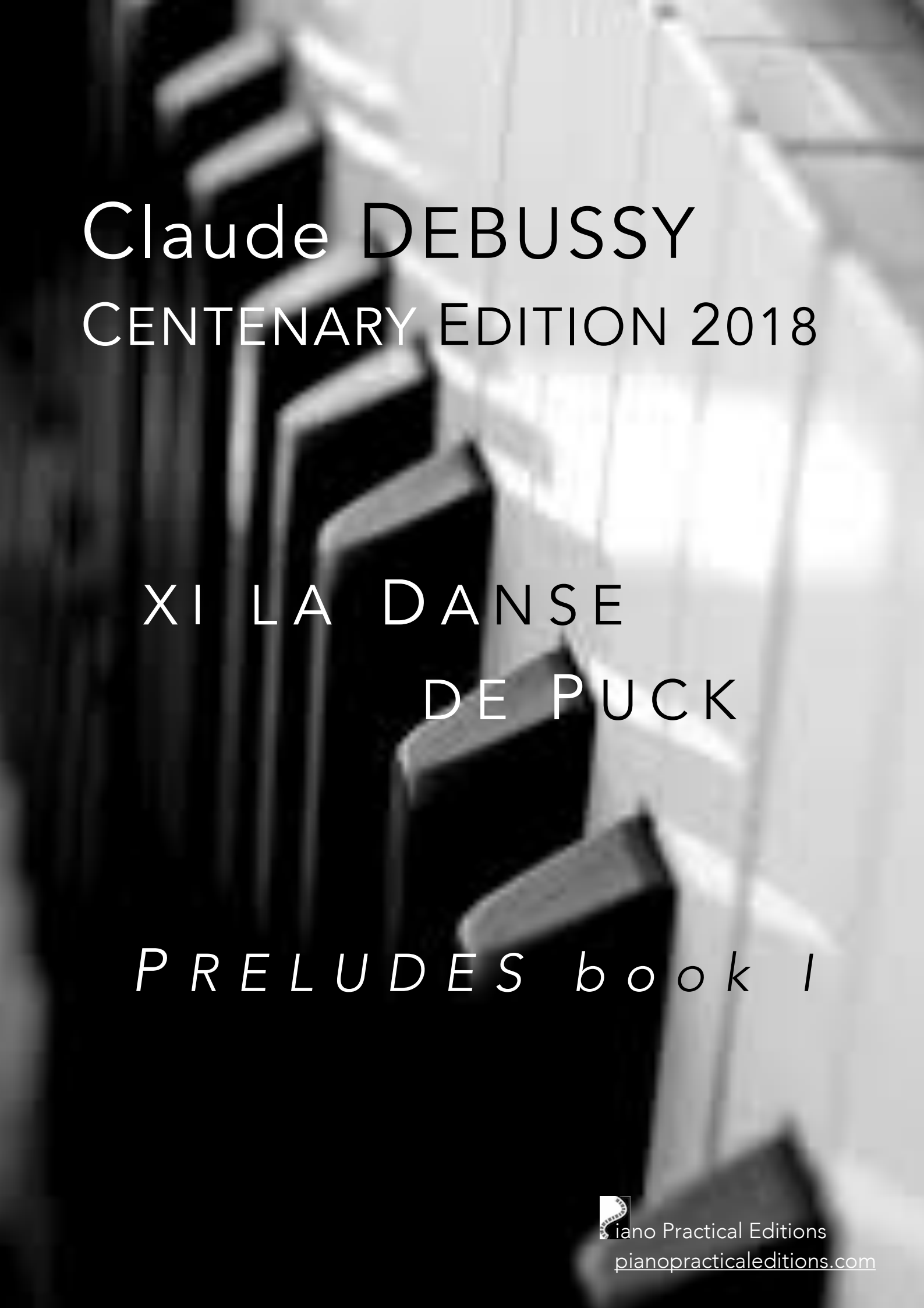

Claude DEBUSSY

CENTENARY EDITION 2018

XI LA DANSE DE PUCK

PRELUDES book I

Piano Practical Editions
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Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Claude DEBUSSY 1862 - 1918

XI LA DANSE DE PUCK

PRELUDES BOOK I

"I believe more and more that music in its essence is not a thing that can be poured into a rigorous and traditional mould. It is made of colours and rhythmical beats. Music is a mysterious mathematical process whose elements partake of infinity, capturing mysterious relations between nature and the imagination". — **Claude Debussy**

The strong influence of French piano music is surely identified with Chopin and Debussy who share a unique position as masters of an exceptional instrument; through an extensive affinity with the sustaining pedal they each created a personal language conceived to communicate their work with the greatest authenticity.

Arthur Rackham 1906

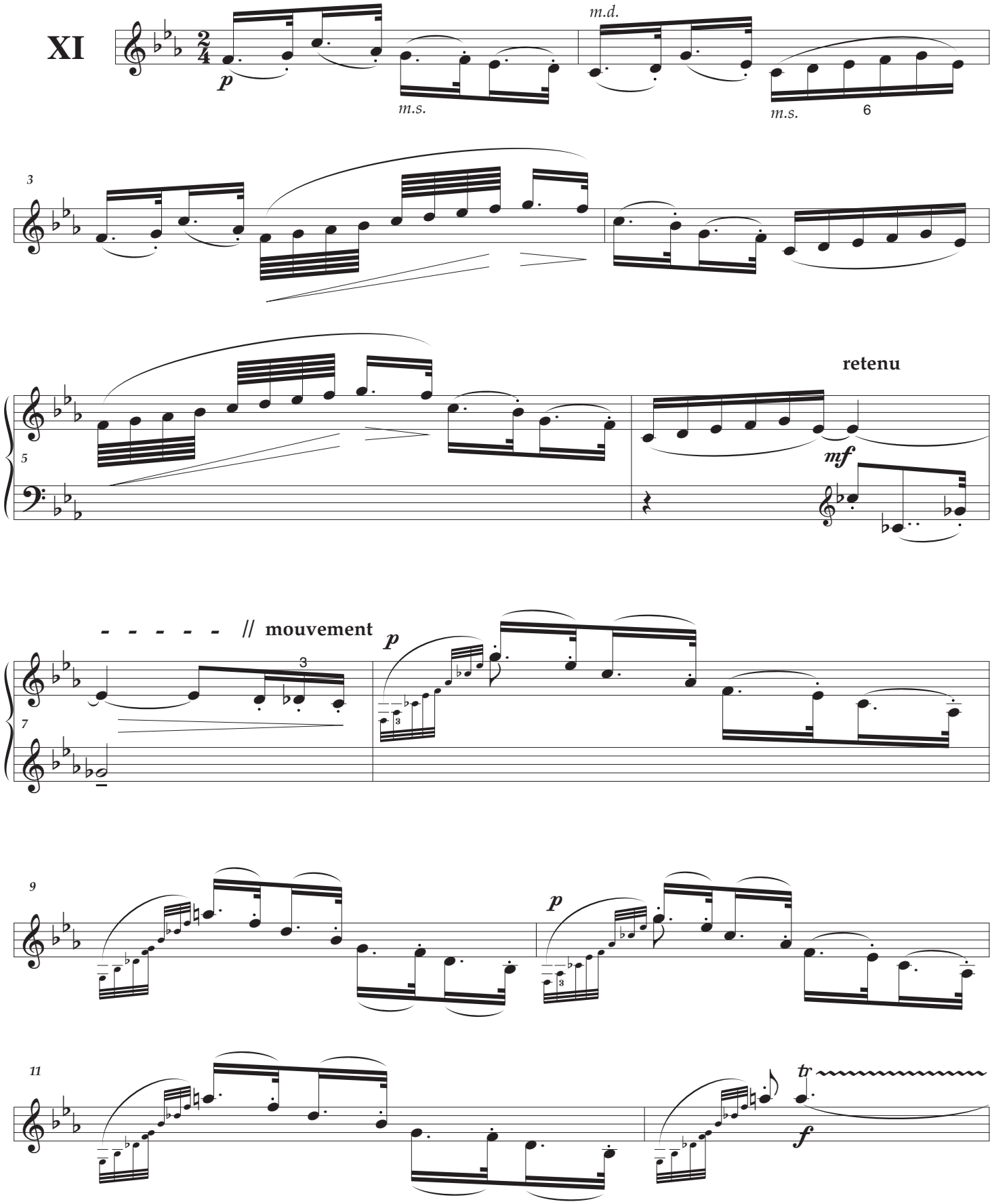
Inspired by the clever and mischievous sprite in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* much of this piece is suitably delicate and wistful, admirably capturing his impish character; a jaunty dorian theme with a Celtic rhythm that darts about, alternating with a gently sustained melody. This rather short and dramatic prelude embraces many abrupt changes of mood — from the unearthly to the beguiling, and there are quite a few appropriate horn-calls, trills and tremolos interrupting the proceedings. Finally Puck suddenly exits stage right — *Rapide et fuyant.*

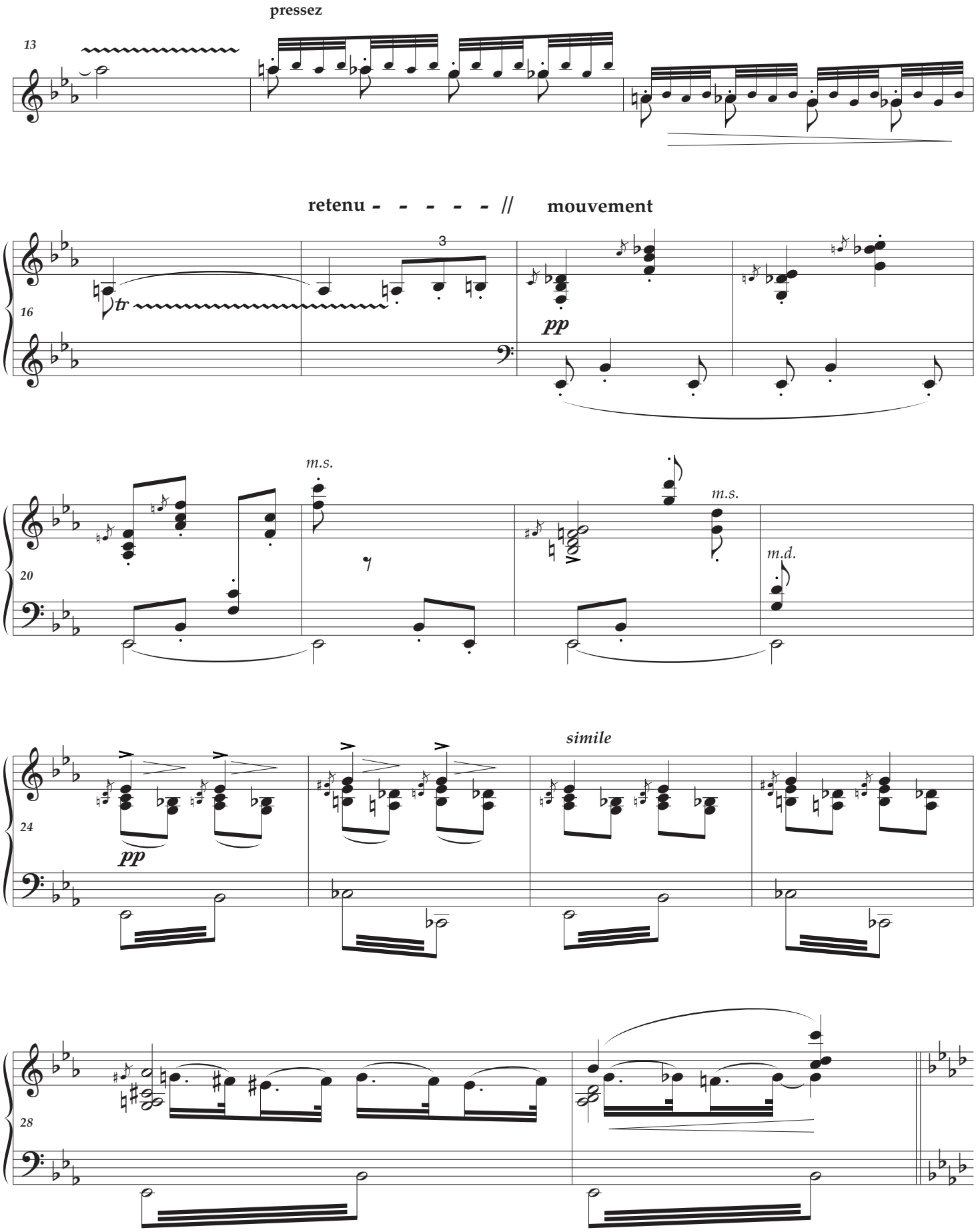
During the course of this centenary year *Piano Practical Editions* has become a creative and critical working publication; in addition to a few suggestions of fingering, hand disposition and a sostenuto pedal suggestion, you will find significant modifications to the general layout with alternative key signatures.

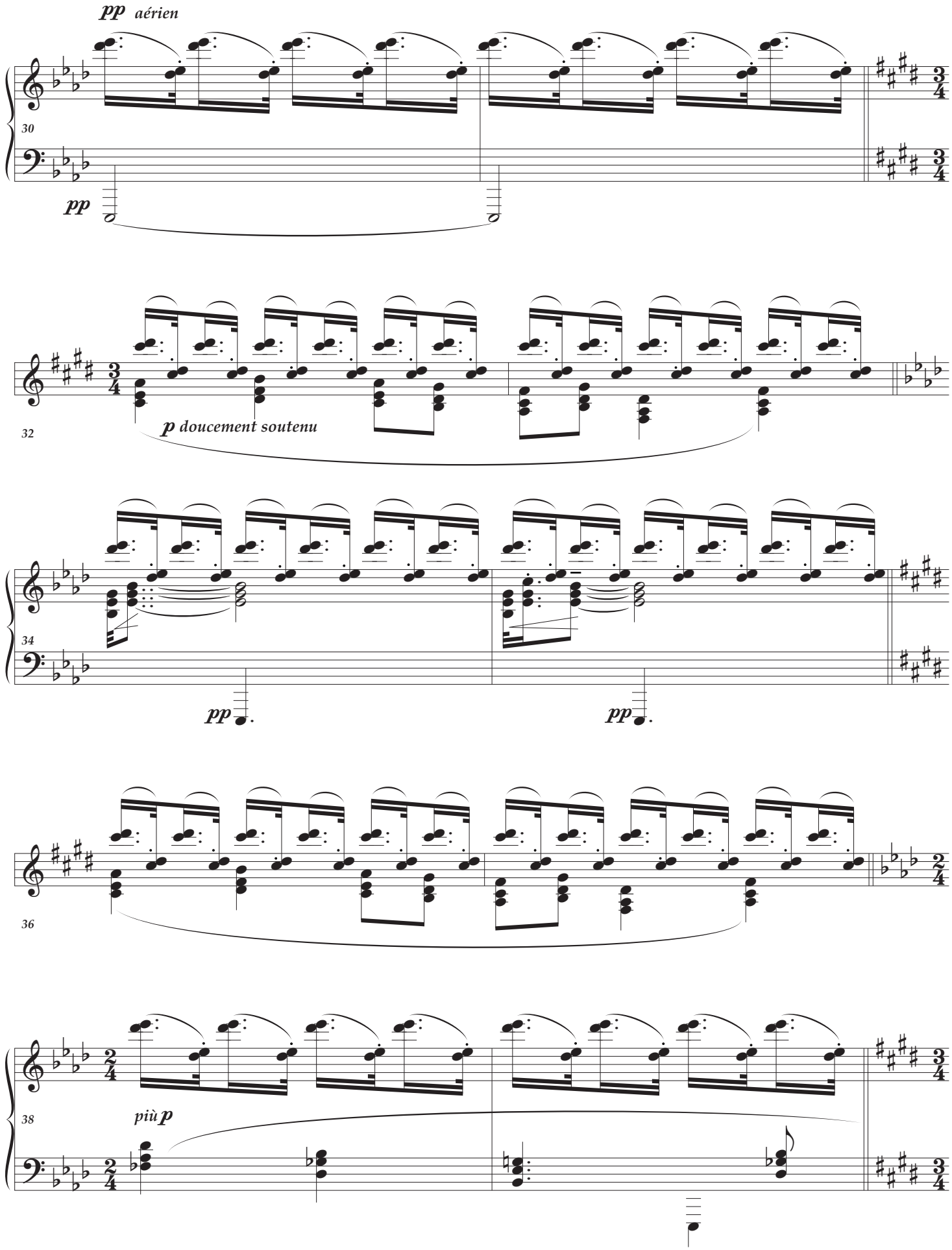
Here is an apt quotation by the composer :"Absence of fingering is an excellent exercise, negating musicians' perverse desire to completely dismiss the composer's (and editor's), and thereby vindicating words of eternal wisdom: 'If you want something done well, do it yourself'". Let us seek our own fingering!

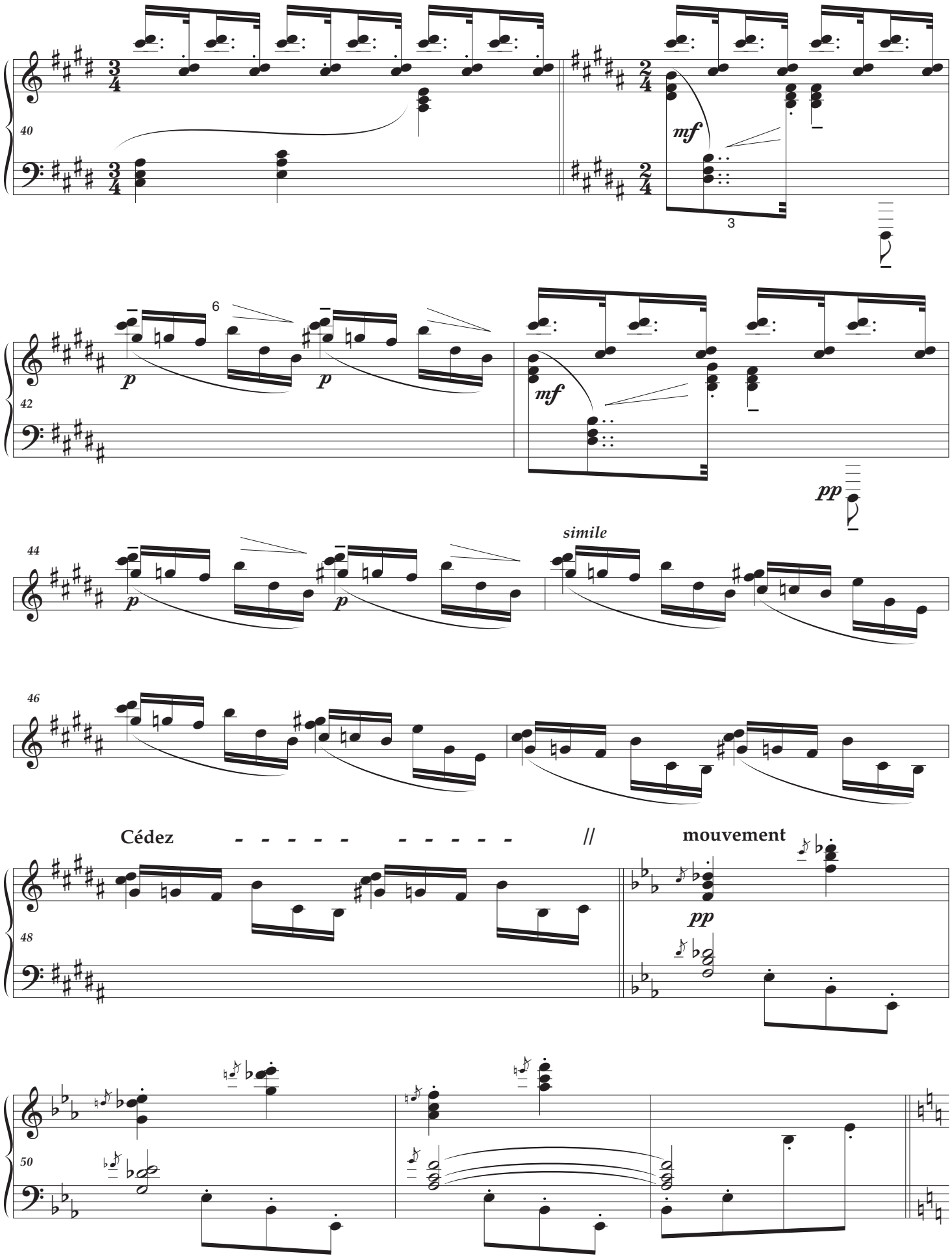
Capricieux et léger [♪ = 138]

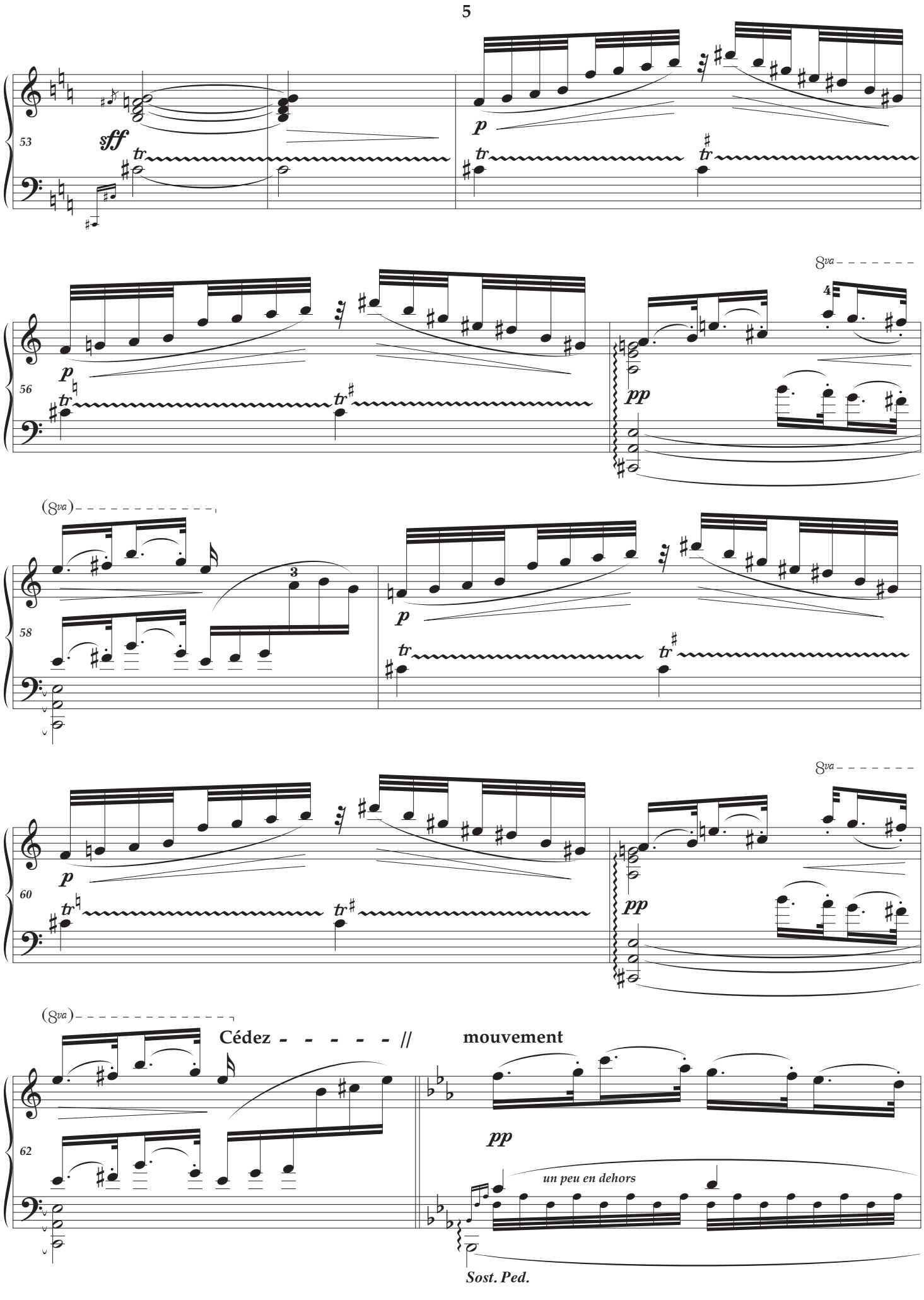
XI

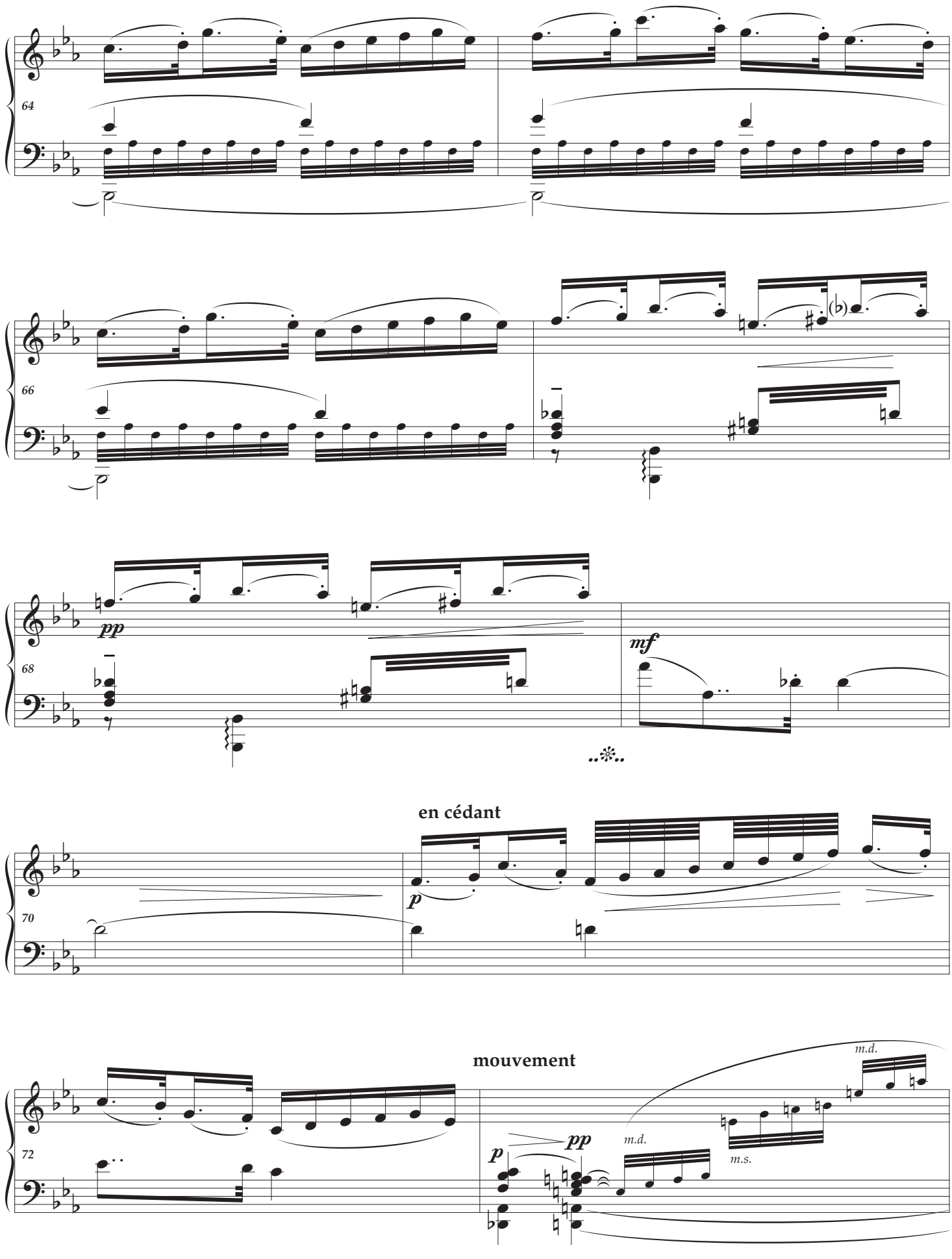


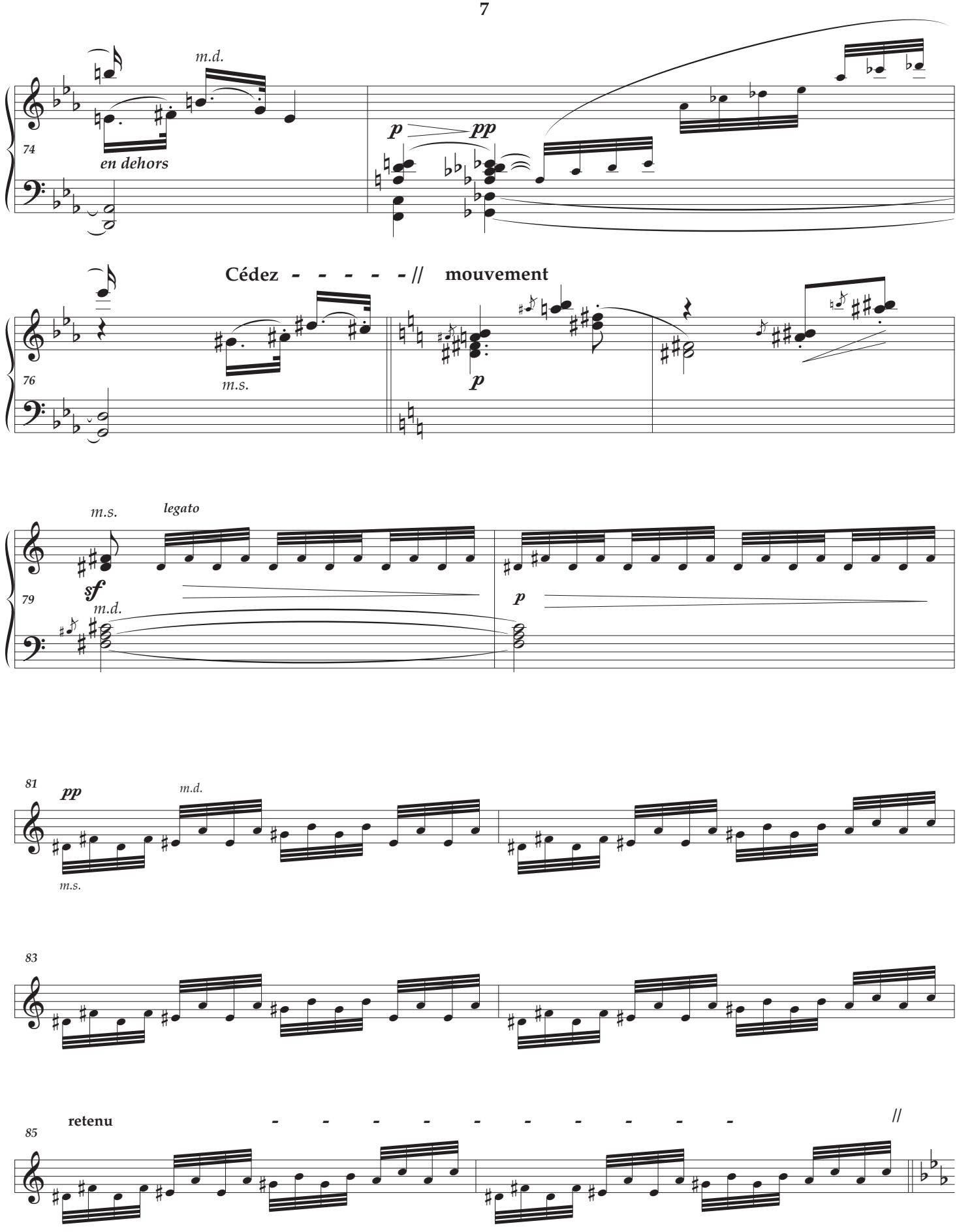

pressez
13
retenu - - - - - // mouvement
16
tr
3
pp
20
m.s.
m.s.
m.d.
24
pp
simile
28

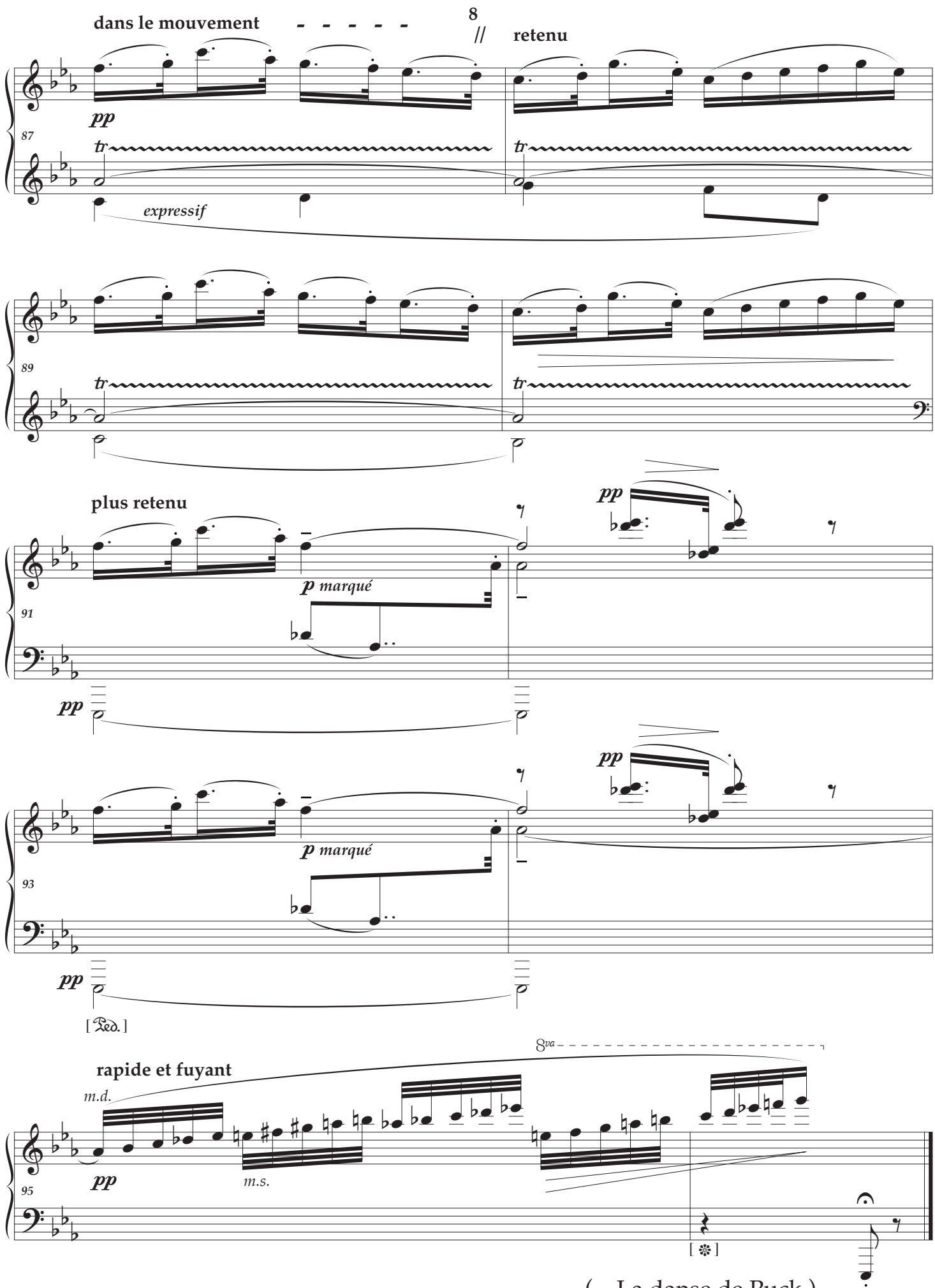

pp aérien
30
pp
32
p doucement soutenu
34
pp
pp
36
38
più p


40
mf
3
42
6
p
p
mf
pp
44
simile
p
p
46
Cédez
//
mouvement
48
pp
50


53
sff
tr
p
tr
tr
56
p
tr
tr
8va
4
pp
58
(8va)
3
p
tr
tr
60
p
tr
tr
8va
pp
62
(8va)
Cédez - - - - - //
mouvement
pp
un peu en dehors
Sost. Ped.


64
66
68
pp
mf
70
en cédant
p
72
mouvement
p
pp
m.d.
m.s.
m.d.


74
m.d.
en dehors
p
pp
76
Cédez - - - - - - // mouvement
m.s.
p
79
m.s.
legato
sf
m.d.
p
81
pp
m.d.
m.s.
83
85
retenu
- - - - - - - - - - -
//



(... La danse de Puck)

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Appendix

Comments, afterthoughts & French vocabulary

Duration: 3'25

- In the first book of Preludes, the composer indicated metronome speeds in brackets, and once wrote: *"as a rose which might only last for one morning, a metronome speed might only work for one bar."* Might this explain why there are no metronome speeds in the second book?
- **8-12** arpeggiated chords slightly "rearranged"
- **16** commence the trill with the first note in LH
- **20** bass E♭ tie missing in the original
- **30-31, 34-35, 38-40** presented in A♭
- **32-33, 36-37** presented in E
- **41-48** presented in B
- **63-68** sostenuto pedal editorial suggestion
- **93-95** pedal editorial suggestion

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capricieux et léger	*capricious and light*
retenu	*held back*
pressez	*rush*
aérien	*etherial*
doucement soutenu	*gently sustained*
cédez	*holding back*
en cédant	*gradually holding back*
dans le mouvement	*in tempo*
rapide et fuyant	*swift and fleeting*