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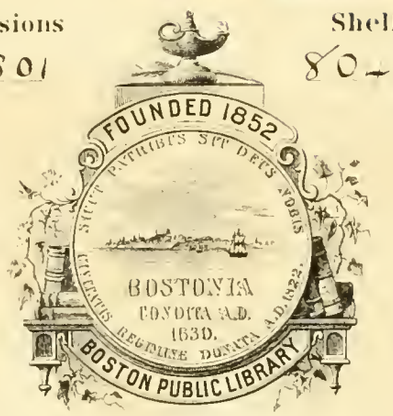

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INSTRUCTIONS

AND

PROGRESSIVE EXERCISES

IN THE ART OF

SINGING,

WITH

Scales, Solfeggios, Variations, Etc.

BY

D. CRIVELLI.

BOSTON:

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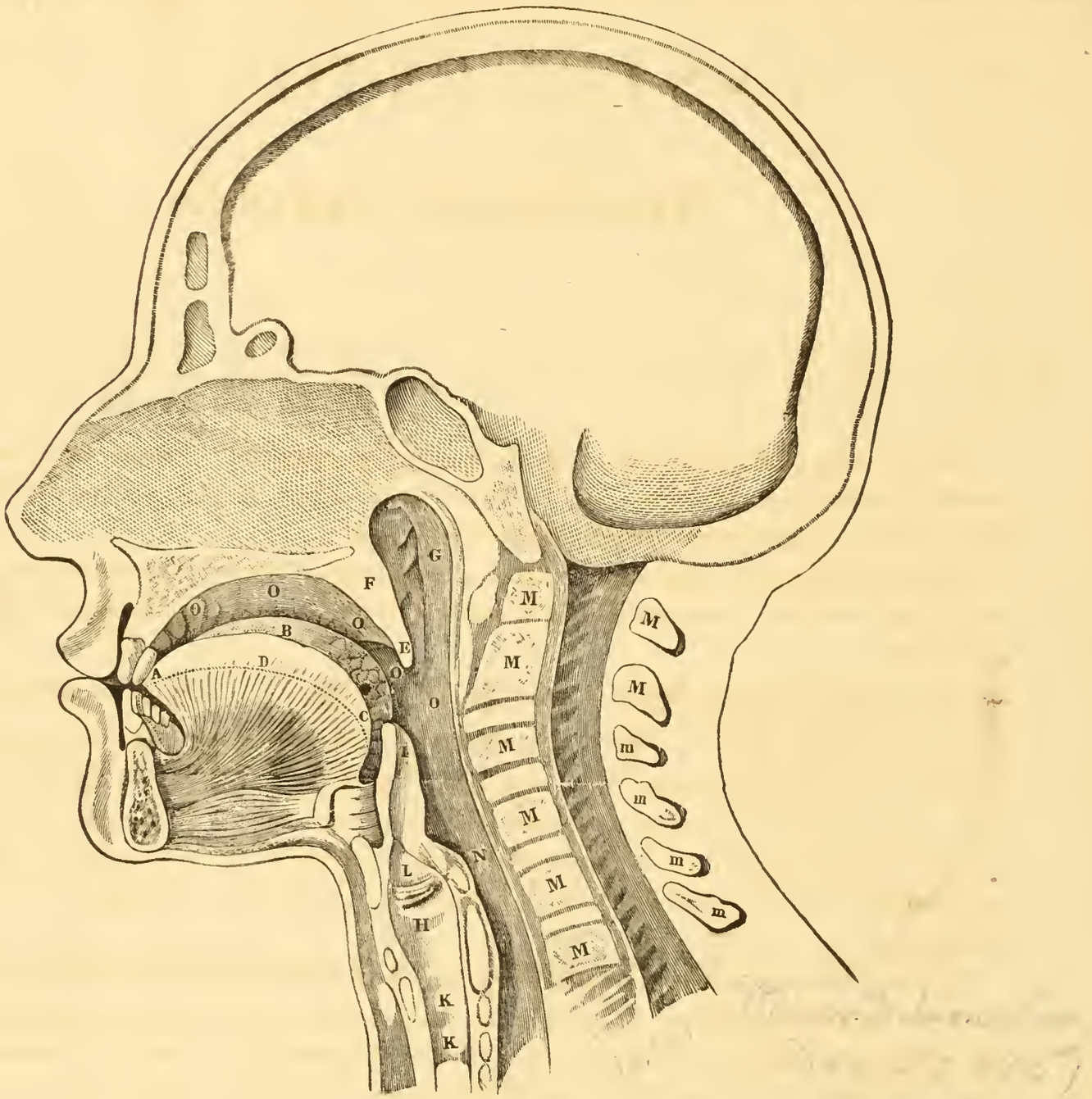
Parts of the Mouth and Throat brought into action in the Cultivation of the Human Voice.



This Plate represents all the parts of the mouth and of the throat which are brought into action in the cultivation and development of the human voice. When the mouth is shut, the tongue takes the shape of A, B, C. E is the uvula; F, the soft palate; G, the passage which communicates with the nose; H, the larynx; I, the Epiglottis; K, the Windpipe; L, the Glottis, or opening of the Larynx, passing through which the breath in ascending from the lungs, produces the vocal sounds; M, the cervical vertebræ; N, the cavity of the throat; O, the cavity of the mouth.

The windpipe has a natural elevation and depression, and therefore gives the larynx a movement either downward towards N, the cavity of the throat, or upwards towards O, the cavity of the mouth. In producing the grave sounds, the windpipe, K, descending, the larynx, H, is inclined towards the cavity of the throat, N; and in passing from the grave to the acute sounds, the windpipe gradually ascending, raises the larynx, which then inclines towards the cavity of the mouth, O; and this is the cause of those sounds to which the name of "head voice" is given. During this action, the interior muscles of the larynx dilate or contract; in dilating they produce the grave, and in contracting the acute sounds.

The elastic action of the muscles gives the glottis the power of forming itself into a variety of spaces, and as every sound requires a particular space in which to be produced, so from these various spaces are derived all the sounds of the voice. But the quality of the voice is shown by the position of the vocal organs in the throat, as I have before observed.

In pronouncing the open sound of the Italian *a*, the mouth has a pleasant, smiling appearance. The tongue lies flat, as A, D, C, The soft palate, F, and the uvula, E, stretch towards G, the passage communicating with the nose, and thus form a space sufficiently large to allow the sound to pass through it quite freely, and with a capability of expansion. This is the only position proper for practice; all others produce injurious effects and bad habits, of which I will mention the following: —

1st. The projection of the lips, as in pronouncing the vowel *o*. This position, by compressing the muscles of the throat, prevents a free expansion of the sound, which, consequently, is thick in quality, and deficient in power of vibration.

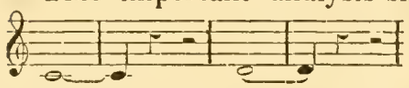
2d, Too much lateral extension of the lips, produces a weak quality of sound, because in this position the muscles of the throat become stiff, and therefore the sound has but little power of vibration, and no capability of expansion.

3d. To close the teeth too much, produces an effect almost similar to that caused by shutting the mouth. The whole space, therefore, becoming contracted, the tongue curving itself nearly as A, B, C, in the plate, and the soft palate and uvula descending, the sound is no longer able to issue freely, but introducing itself into the passage, G. which communicates with the nose, it becomes, in consequncee, nasal.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

THE following Exercises are the result of an analytical study, and of many years' experience in directing the formation of voices, and are offered to the vocal Student with much confidence, as being of the first importance in the cultivation of the voice.

By these Exercises the Master may acquire a knowledge of the vocal organs of the Pupil; and how far the functions of respiration may be rendered available to sustain with firmness the expansion of the voice

This important analysis should be made on the exercise of the scale of progressive long notes  Afterwards the Pupil should pass to the Exercises composed on the intervals, or mechanical divisions of the octave; by which may be ascertained not only the correctness of ear which the Pupil possesses, but faulty intonation, as well as impurity of tone, may be corrected, whether caused by any peculiarities in the structure of the vocal organs, or by bad habits acquired in childhood; which defects are injurious to the clearness and sweetness of the voice even in speaking.

By these Exercises may be ascertained what extent of firmness and flexibility the organs of the voice are naturally capable of; what degree of elasticity they may acquire without being injured; and whether they require particular attention in order to render them capable of resisting the pressure of the breath, during progression on the scale, without becoming tremulous.

Having arrived at a knowledge of the obstacles that are to be conquered in the formation of the voice, the most important study which should first be attended to, is the sustaining of the voice, and expanding it in such a manner as to preserve it equal, round, and clear, throughout its whole extent.

To obtain these indispensable qualifications, the best exercise is the scale of sustained semitones, by which, together with the other progressive scales as far as the shake, the voice may be rendered perfectly equal and flexible, and will, from its lowest to its highest extremity, always preserve its natural character.

It is necessary to observe that it is impossible these very important qualifications can be obtained unless the ear be perfectly formed, and accustomed to guide the production of tone; for otherwise the Pupil incurs the danger of falling into the common defects of producing the tone guttural, nasal, or dental, all which defects render the voice inharmonious and unequal. All this demonstrates of what great importance the exercise of the Scales is for the development of the vocal organs, and how

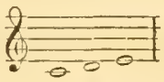
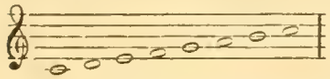
incorrect are the opinions of those who consider them unnecessary, and who, although they are the true principles of the art of singing, consider them as mere pedantry.

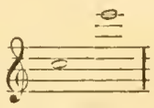
The Student then having acquired, in some degree, steadiness, equality, and flexibility of voice, he should now endeavor to obtain pure articulation, and the power of elucidating clearly the musical phrases of which a perfect melody is composed.

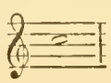
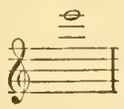
For this purpose, the ancient masters have composed not only Cantabile Melodies, called Solfeggios, but they have adapted to the sounds of the musical alphabet the monosyllables Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, both to facilitate the acquirement of good articulation, and to accustom the Student to sustain purely the accented vowels, as well in the *portamento* as in passages of rapidity.

Distinct articulation will soften voices naturally harsh, and render weak ones more firm and clear.

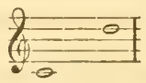
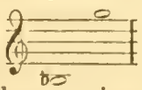
The Singing Master who has studied analytically the various qualities of voices, instead of forcing them into a character different from their natural organic construction, will by gentle means be able to make the most of even very limited powers in the Student. His experience must have shown him the obstacles that are to be overcome, in order to develop every voice in its true character, and how to form it perfect in clearness, roundness, and equality, as before stated.

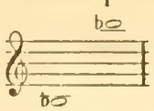
In the high Soprano and light high Tenor voices there is generally a degree of weakness which renders them almost indistinct from the Do to the Mi  and feeble to the octave. 

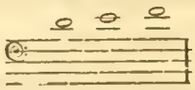
In some voices, from the same octave upwards to the Mi  the sounds are of a thin quality, produced with much closeness of the throat; while in others they are harsh and disagreeable. All these peculiarities a good Master should know how to correct in the formation of the voice.

In the light high Tenor voices the vibration from Do  to Mi  is close head tone, almost of the character of falsetto.*

In consequence of this peculiarity, these voices require much care in their cultivation, in order to render the middle and lower parts firm, equal, and round, as, from their delicate construction, by being forced, they may become tremulous, and incapable of sustaining firmly.

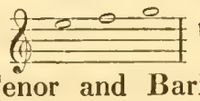
The voices of Mezzo Soprano and of full Tenor (*Ital.* tenore robusto) are distinguished by being naturally melodious and round from Do to Re  and in some cases, from Si flat to Sol 

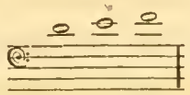
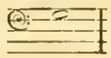
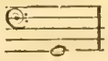
These voices when perfectly formed should possess an equality of tone from the lower Si flat to the upper one  and they require the greatest care in their formation; for should they be forced in the smallest degree upwards, they will become harsh, and often incapable of just intonation.

The Baritone voice demands, likewise, great attention in its formation, because, in consequence of the facility with which it produces the Re, Mi, Fa,  it may be mistaken by an inexperienced Master for a Tenor voice.

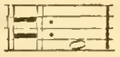
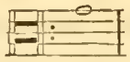
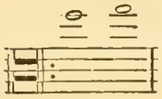
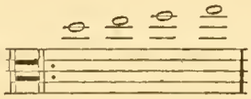
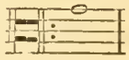
* So called when the Male imitates the voice of the Female: from the adjective *false*, that is, not natural

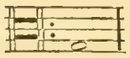
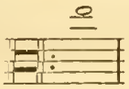
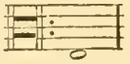
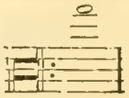
The Baritone, by being forced, instead of being gently exercised on the upper notes, may, in the attempt of the Master to render these of a more round and full quality, become harsh, or feeble and veiled, or perhaps the voice in its entire extent may remain an imperfect mixture of the two characters, of Baritone and Tenor.

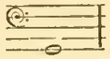
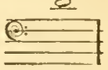
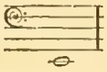
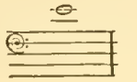
So, on the contrary, the full Tenor voice in general extends with facility to the Bass Sol and having at first some difficulty on the Mi, Fa, Sol,  the Master might, in forcing it on those sounds, destroy it, for the two qualities of Tenor and Baritone are totally different from each other.

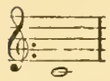
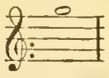
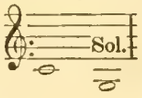
The Re, Mi, Fa  of the Baritone, instead of being produced in a tone *round, clear, and molodious*, similar to the Tenor, are of a *hollow head quality;* and from the Sol  to the octave  it is distinguished from the Tenor voice by its strength and fulness.

In the voices of Contralto and Bass, there are similar difficulties to be overcome, in consequence of their being of a quality hard, and frequently harsh.

In the Contralto voice, from the Sol  to the octave  the tone is firm, but not sufficiently flexible; and in many there is a disjunction, caused by the weakness of that part of the voice on the Fa, Sol  and the Re, Mi  or from the middle Sol  to the octave . . . . . In some it is harsh, and in others thin or veiled.

In order, then, to make this voice flexible, it is necessary to cultivate it from the Sol  to the Mi  before extending it to its two extremities, namely, from Mi  to Sol 

The same method ought to be observed with the Bass voice, in order to give it the greatest degree of flexibility this voice is susceptible of, by exercising it from the Sol  to the Re  before extending it from the low Mi  to the high Mi  preserving always its round character.

The advantages to be derived from the following Exercises are, that in the first scale from Do  to Sol  are found all the obstacles to be overcome in the development of the vocal organs, and in the formation of the high Soprano, Mezzo Soprano, light high Tenor, and full Tenor voices; and by transposing this and the other scales a fourth lower *under Do*  the voices of the Contralto, Baritone, and Bass, may also be advantageously cultivated.

It would seem that the knowledge of the theory of the art of Singing is falling into neglect, and hence arise various opinions entirely opposed to the philosophical principles upon which every art ought to be founded. It is therefore necessary to mark the great difference between those singers who are educated in the rules of the art, and those who sing only from being gifted by Nature with a certain degree of taste and a good voice. Whilst the singing of the former is more descriptive, and their voices better adapted to express with ease on modulated sounds the true sense of the words

that of the latter, on the contrary, is not only uncertain, but, being ignorant of the rules of the art, they cannot give that light and shade necessary to express the various passions, excepting, perhaps, in an exaggerated manner, passing from extreme force to an excess of softness, and the more they become animated the less capable are they of using their voices properly.

It may appear extraordinary, that in Italy, the seat of vocal music, there should exist so much difference in the talents of vocal performers. But in all the schools, whether public or private, the class of singers is distinct from the other students, those of composition as well as those studying the different Instruments, as the latter study solfeggios only in reference to music in general. It often happens that in this class are found some who, in consequence of the development of a musical genius and a beautiful voice, and of being excited both by inclination and interest, leave the study they had originally undertaken, and follow the career of a theatrical or concert singer; and, being only mechanically exercised in the solfeggios, instead of studying the principles of the art, and the proper development of the vocal organs, they abandon themselves inconsiderately to their genius; and in consequence of efforts they are obliged to make to produce effect in their singing, the vocal organs become in time so much debilitated, that when they ought to become the glory and support of the art, they are compelled to stop in their career.

To avoid a result so mortifying, it is necessary that the true principles of the theory of the art of singing should be communicated to every musical student, which knowledge, even should the pupil be deprived of physical strength, or voice, would always be found extremely useful, as it would not only enable him to produce a greater effect in his instrumental performance, but he might avail himself of these principles with success, should he devote himself to the teaching of singing.

The object of the following Observations is chiefly to point out the manner of practising the Exercises contained in the present work, not only as relates to the management of the voice, but also the correct formation of the various positions of the mouth and lips.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VOICE, ETC.

RULE 1st. The chief attention of the Student ought to be directed to the manner of forming and sustaining the voice. The best means of attaining this object is by constantly practising the Scales arranged in Semibreves; taking care to begin each note in a tone firm and distinct, yet not too loud; afterwards swelling it out, though not to excess, and then gradually diminishing it to the softest piano.

RULE 2d. To produce an exact intonation requires great care; and to attain this essential point, it will be necessary to guard against the two extremes of opening the mouth too wide, or closing it too much; as the consequence will be in the one case a guttural, and in the other a nasal tone. To avoid these defects, the Student ought to practise the Solfeggios with the vowel A, shaping the mouth as if smiling; and in the occurrence of a rapid passage pay strict attention to hold it constantly fixed in the same position. By these precautions, the too common defect of inadvertently changing the vowel A into O or U will be avoided, a defect which completely destroys the equality of the tones. The Italian A, (pronounced as *a* in father,) should at first be exclusively used. In producing this sound the mouth should not be opened wider in singing than it is in speaking with distinctness the word *far*; the tongue should be slightly hollowed and touching the lower teeth, and kept perfectly motionless during the performance of even the most difficult of the Exercises. The passage from the throat into the nostrils should be closed, and the greatest care taken to avoid a guttural, nasal, or dental tone. *Most of the future progress of the Pupil depends upon this first step.* After having obtained the pure sound of the A, the Student may practise the same Exercises with the E, (as *a* in fate,) the I, (as *e* in eel,) O, (as *o* in old,) U, (as *oo* in ooze;) and when those sounds can be produced with facility through the entire compass of the voice, he may proceed with the Solfeggi at the conclusion of the work.

RULE 3d. The Pupil ought to practise the Solfeggios every day with the monosyllables Do, Re, &c., to facilitate the reading of music; and afterwards he must vocalize, to render the voice united and flexible, and at the same time familiar with the different musical periods and phrases.

RULE 4th. It is also necessary to be cautious not to force the voice from the chest beyond its natural limits, as there is nothing which more impedes the drawing out of the voice and uniting its tones with sweetness than this over exertion; and hence the best method is that of taking in the Falsetto those notes which cannot be produced from the chest, and studying the manner of uniting the two registers of the voice (viz. *voce di petto* and *voce di testa*) in such a way as to render their junction or point of union imperceptible. By practising and vocalizing the Gamut after this method, the voice will daily improve both in quality and power.

RULE 5th. During practice it is necessary to pay great attention to the attitude and carriage of the body, as well as to the proper form and position of the mouth, and to guard against the slightest movement either of the chin or mouth in executing a turn or a division; any bad habit of this description will prove not only highly prejudicial to the voice, but give to the performer a most ungraceful appearance, whether in the chamber or on the stage.

RULE 6th. Confidence and self-possession are indispensable in order to overcome the fear and embarrassment generally excited by the presence of an audience; but these are requisites only to be acquired by long and constant exercise in the solfeggios and vocalization, by which alone a readiness in the vocal organs and a certainty of execution can be acquired.

RULE 7th. The voice should never be so much strained in the higher notes as to produce a screaming shrill sound; but, on the contrary, it should always be carried to those notes with particular sweetness and softness, unless it be in passages requiring more energy of expression, or a more pointed manner in their performance.

RULE 8th. Although the shake is extremely difficult to be acquired by those who are not gifted by nature, nevertheless it ought not to be neglected, but, on the contrary, assiduously cultivated by a constant exercise of the voice in appropriate passages; and although the power to execute a shake may not be attained in an equal degree of perfection with those who possess it naturally, yet the constant practice of it will give facility to the voice, and at the same time clearness and sweetness in the manner of blending the two notes of which the shake is composed.

RULE 9th. The graces and embellishments used in singing should not be too profusely lavished, nor placed indiscriminately and without judgment; they ought to be introduced in consonance with the character of the melody, and in order to enforce the sense of the words, and penetrate the mind of the hearer with the sentiments of the poet. This observation deserves particular notice, as it is not uncommon to hear many singers who, in expressing terror, introduce embellishments better adapted to the expression of joy than any other passion, and so on, *vice versa*. It is a serious fault, and cannot be too soon corrected; it displays not only specimens of the worst taste, but efforts which can never kindle any other interest in the hearts of the auditors than that of criticising with severity. The singing master, therefore, ought to be particularly strict and attentive on these important points, or he can scarcely hope to succeed in producing an accomplished singer.

RULE 10th. In the exercise of Singing, it is necessary to be cautious that the organs of the throat do not become too dry by exertion; that the teeth be not too much closed; that the lips do not approach each other too closely, or become too much distended sideways; for hence arises not only a peculiar elongation of the chin and extension of the jaws, but also fatigue and lassitude. The voice ought not to be too much forced, but exercised often and not too long at a time; by which treatment it will become accustomed to produce its tones with facility and firmness, and to expand its powers equally without faltering or trembling. This (*) mark is used for taking breath.

RULE 11th. Consideration and management are necessary with regard to those places in the song where it is most proper to take breath; for instance, it must not be done in the middle of a word, unless in the case of a long passage or an agitated expression; but it may be done with propriety at the end of a musical phrase or period. It must always be taken when the note is to be prolonged, before a cadenza and before a close, in order to have the full command of the voice in the execution of those passages and embellishments with which it is usual to terminate a song.

RULE 12th. To attain any degree of perfection in singing, it is necessary to know something of history and dramatic poetry, that the performer may identify himself with the character he represents, and be thus enabled to give correct expression to the various affections and emotions, as tenderness, &c. In short, the mind of a singer ought to be sufficiently cultivated to enable him to declaim recitative with feeling, energy, and propriety. It is equally necessary for him to know the science of harmony, and to be qualified to accompany himself, that he may not have occasion for the assistance of a master.

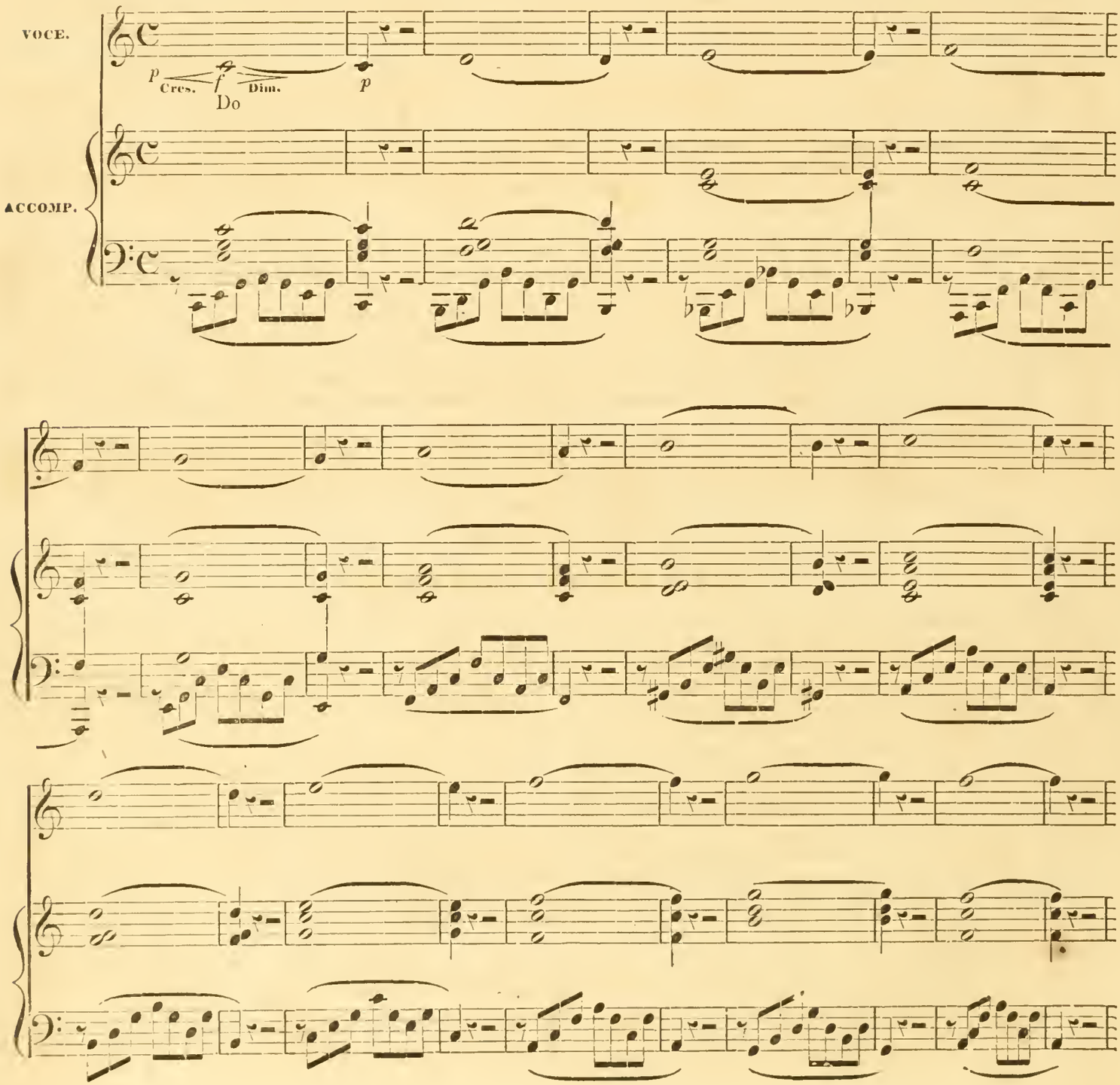
I sincerely hope that the above observations and suggestions will answer the purpose for which they have been composed; and as this publication does not originate in any other motive than the anxious desire to render myself useful in my profession as a Singing Master, I trust it will be received by the public with that indulgence which productions of the kind generally experience.

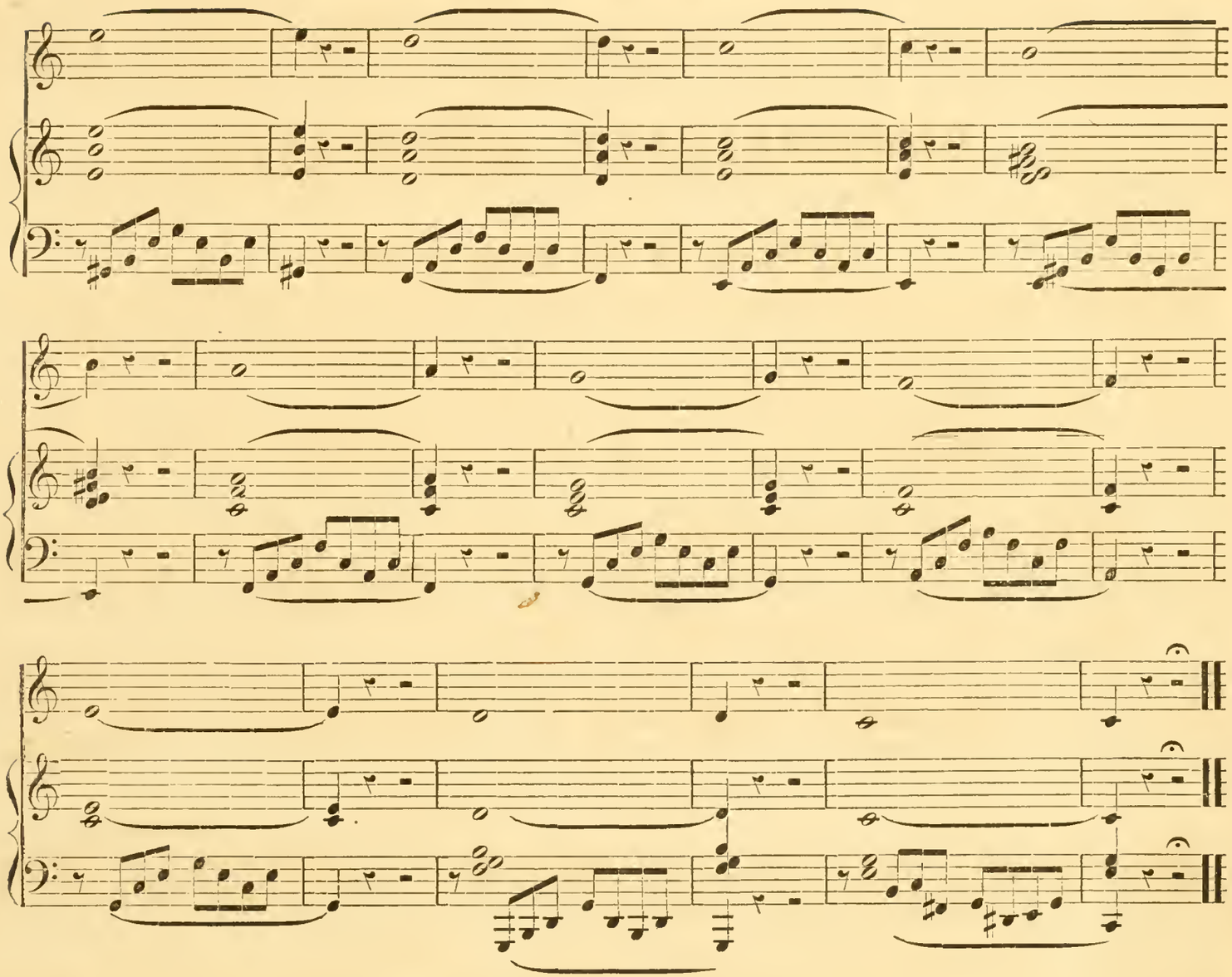
D. CRIVELLI.

PROGRESSIVE EXERCISES.

EXERCISE ON THE MESSA DI VOCE,

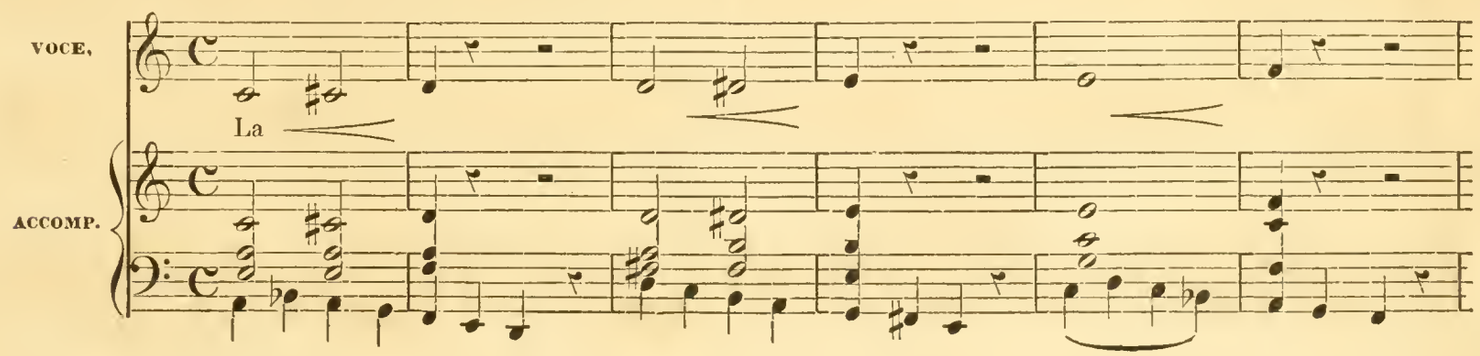
Or swelling and diminishing the sounds, with a semibreve in each bar, to accustom the voice to hold a note with steadiness, to swell and diminish gradually the sound, thereby acquiring firmness in the intonation, and guarding against faltering.

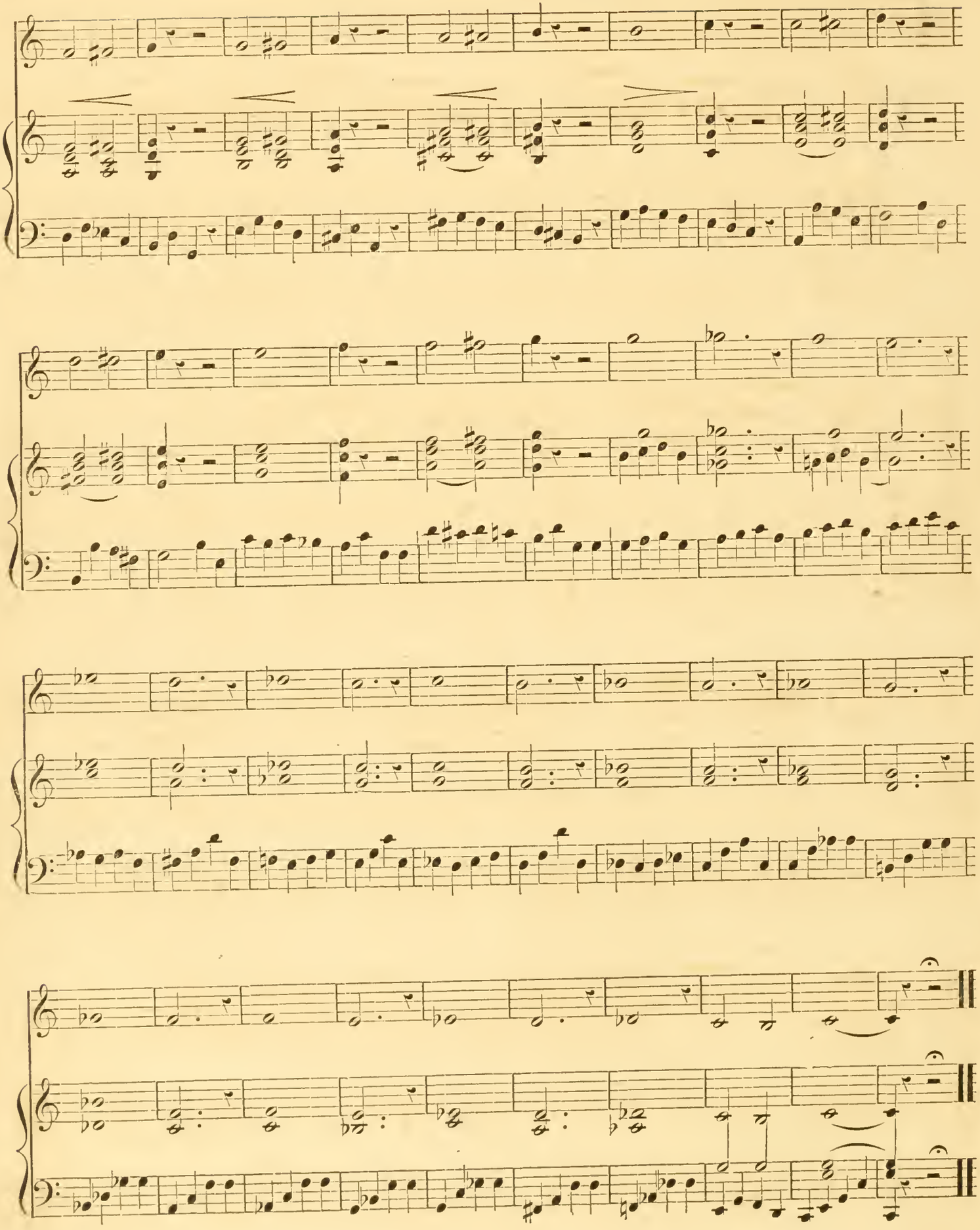




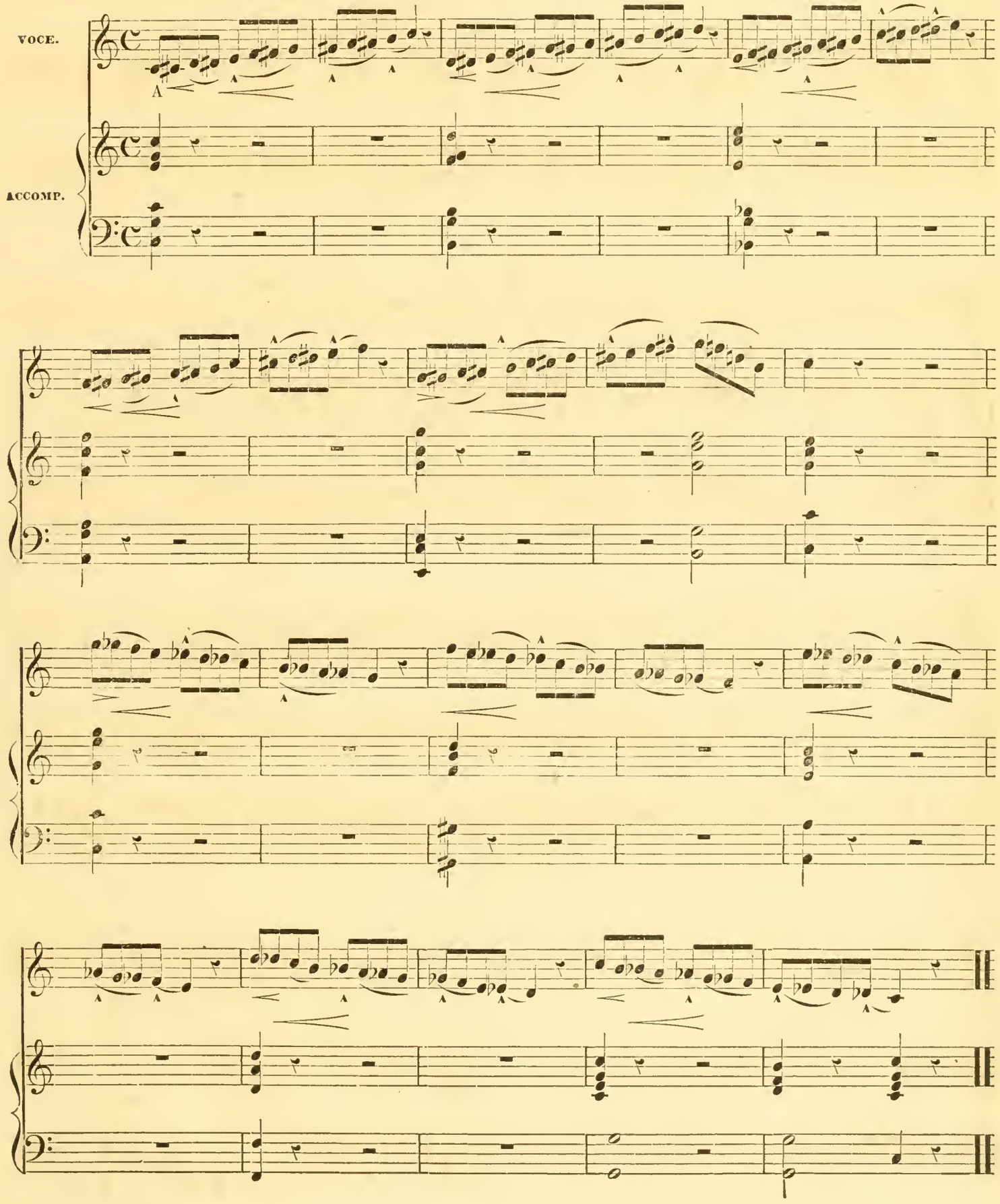
THE CHROMATIC SCALE.

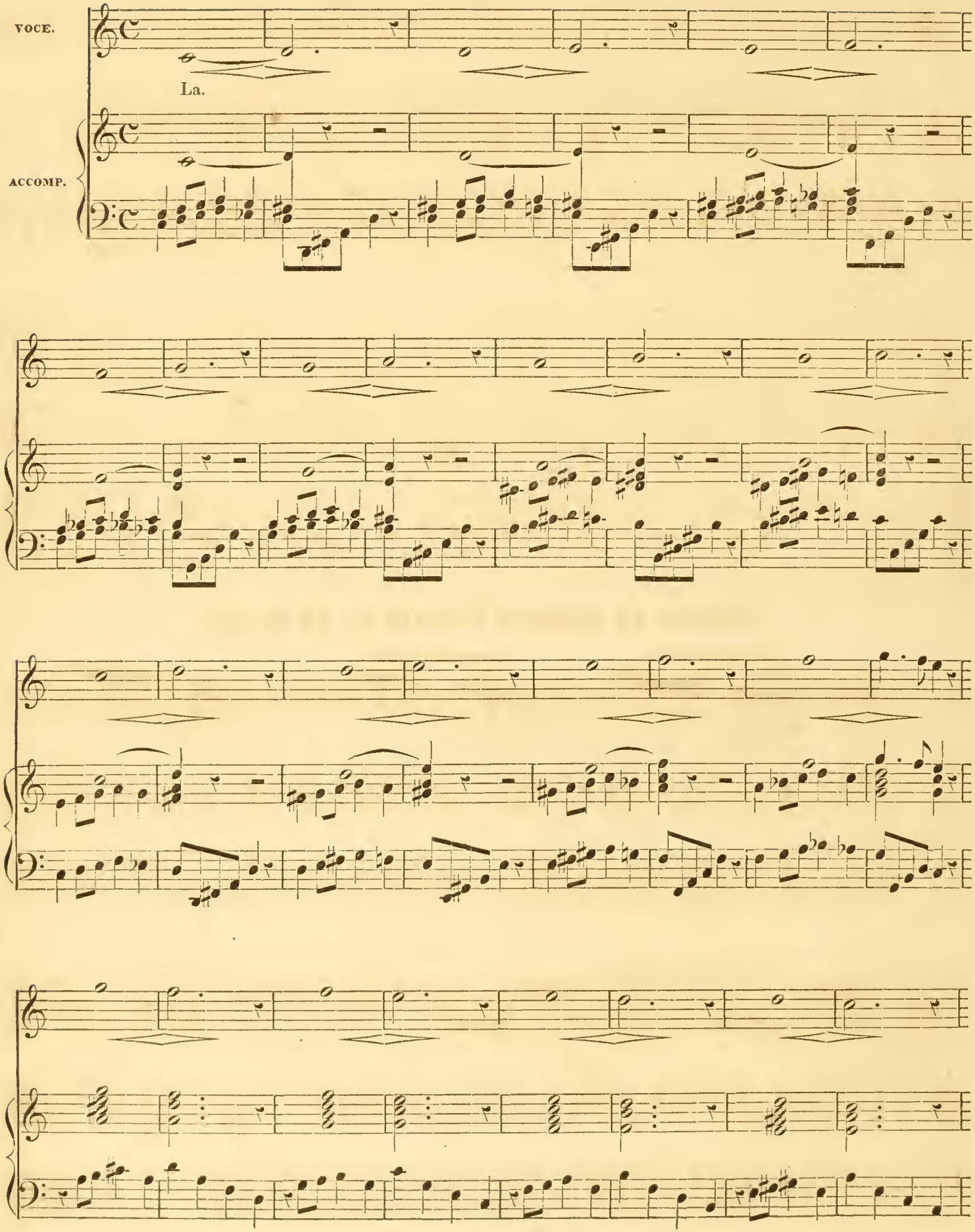
This exercise contains the elementary principles of the cultivation and development of the voice; for by the judicious commencement of its practise, is acquired a proper command of the breath to sustain and strengthen every sound without tremor: while it conduces to the correct cultivation of the ear, by which the ability is acquired to maintain the voice equal in clearness, fulness, and quality of tone, throughout the scale. The practise of this exercise likewise corrects the various degrees of weakness, found more or less in all uncultivated voices, which occasions those breaks so harsh and unpleasant in the regular progression of sound and execution; added to which, the study of this scale begins to facilitate the elasticity of action in the larynx, and accustoms the ear to the correct intonation of the most minute interval. In practising the voice upon this scale the greatest attention must be paid to deliver each sound, firm, clear, and full; sustaining the voice steadily without effort, and gradually though delicately increasing it throughout the consecutive semitones, preserving always the same quality from the commencement of the scale to the end.

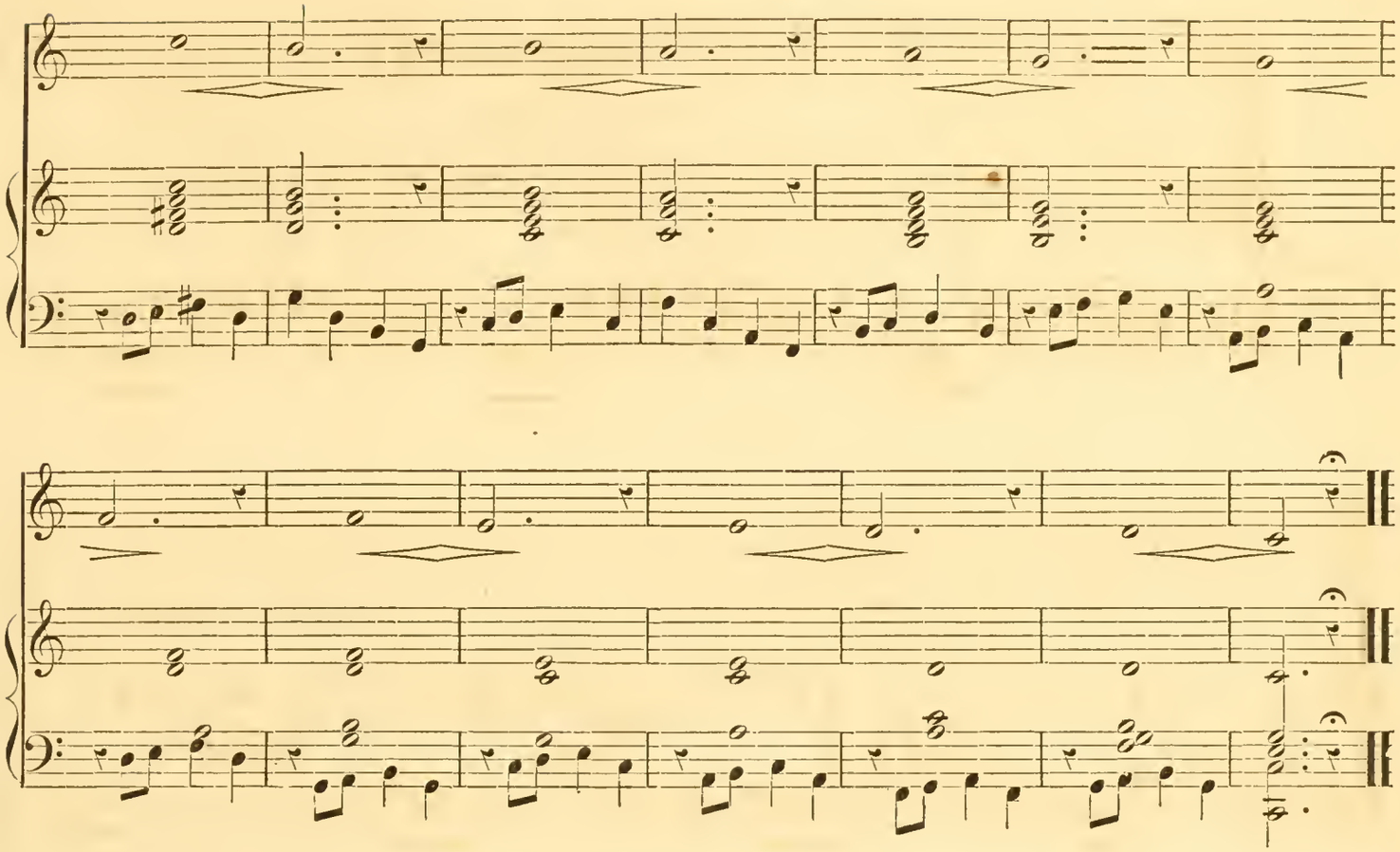




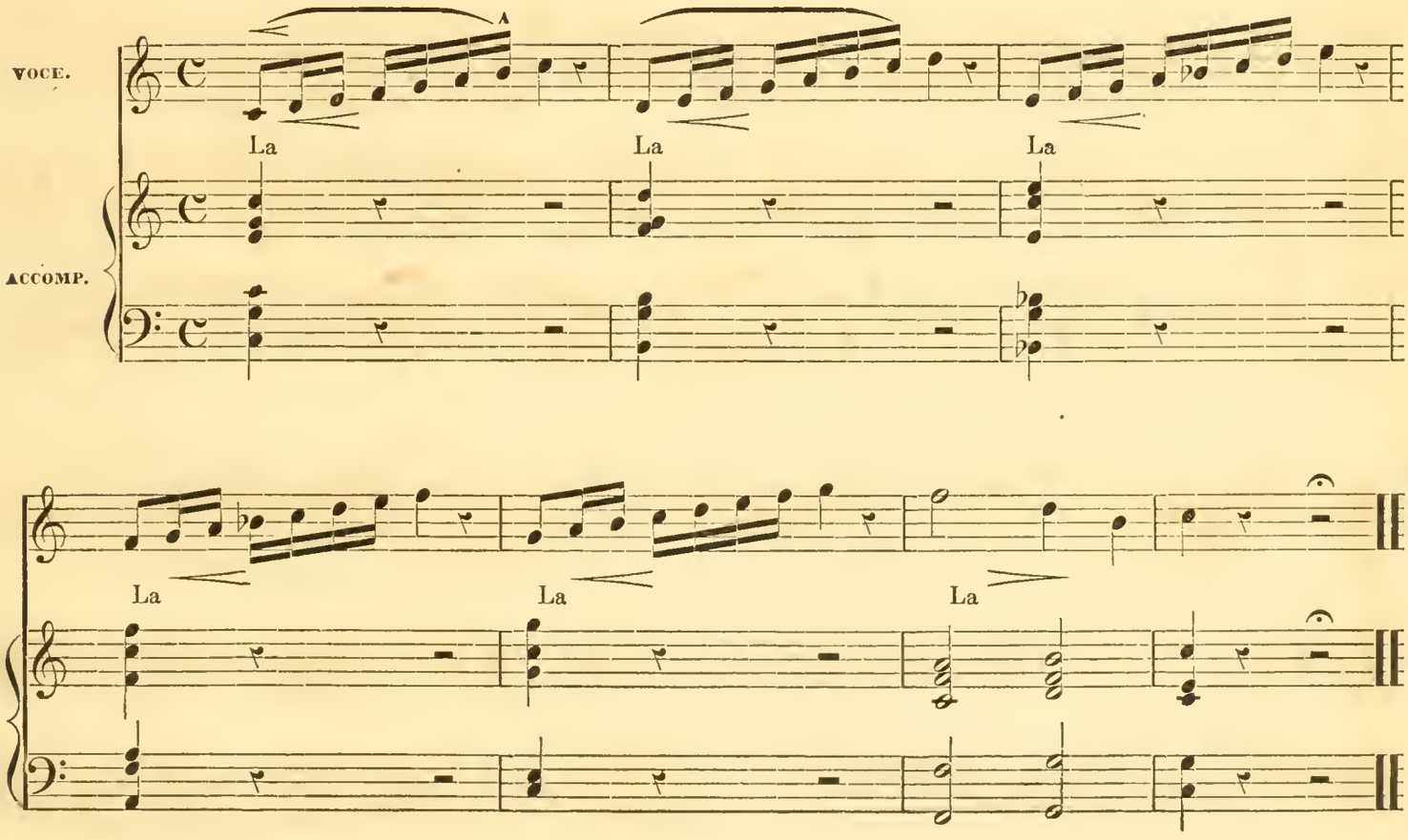
This scale must be exercised slowly at first, so that when increased in quickness it may have the greatest correctness both of intonation and accent. After which, follow various scales containing all the necessary ornaments to express words with proper sentiment, and to sing with grace and elegance.



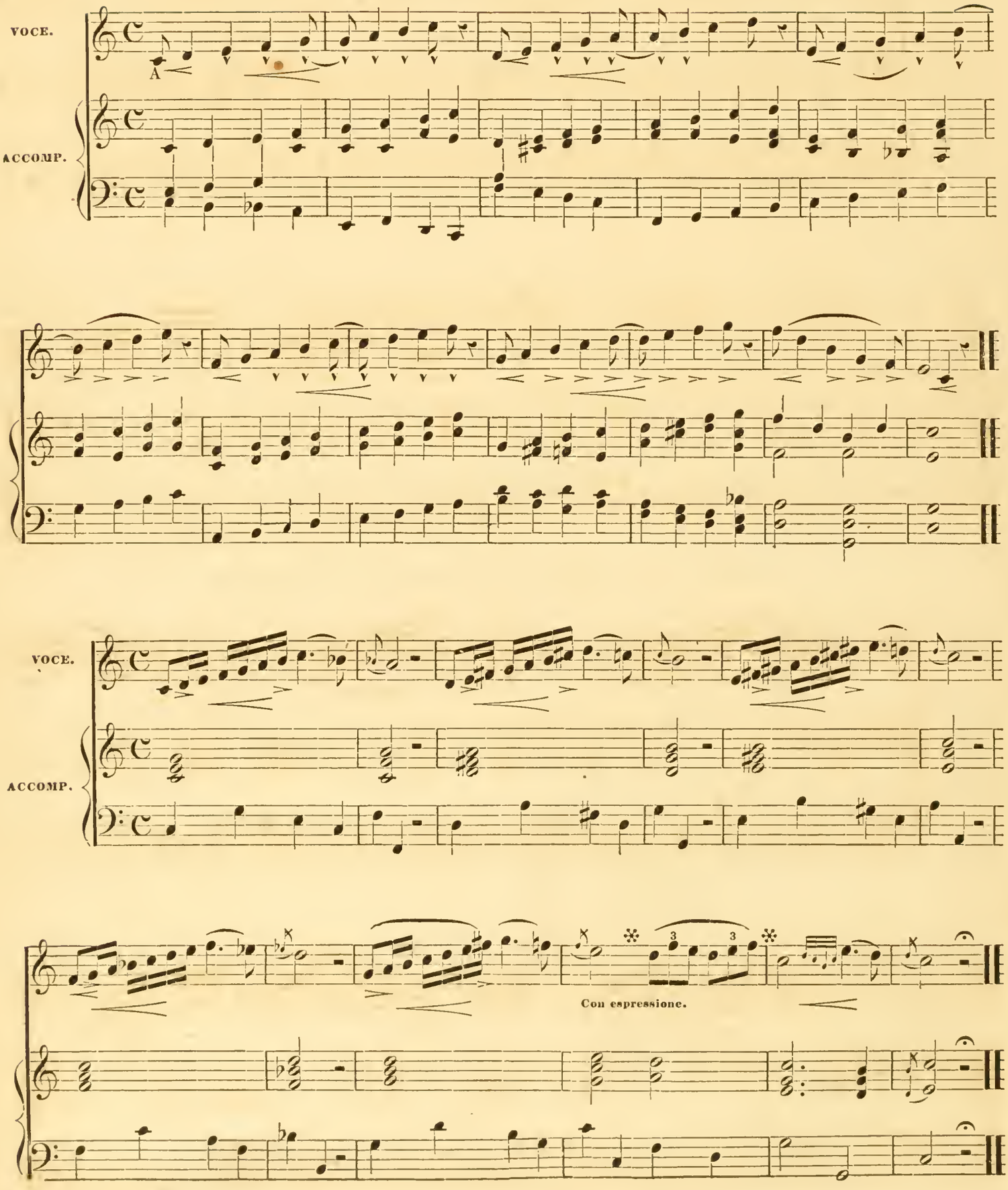

VOCE.
La.
ACCOMP.

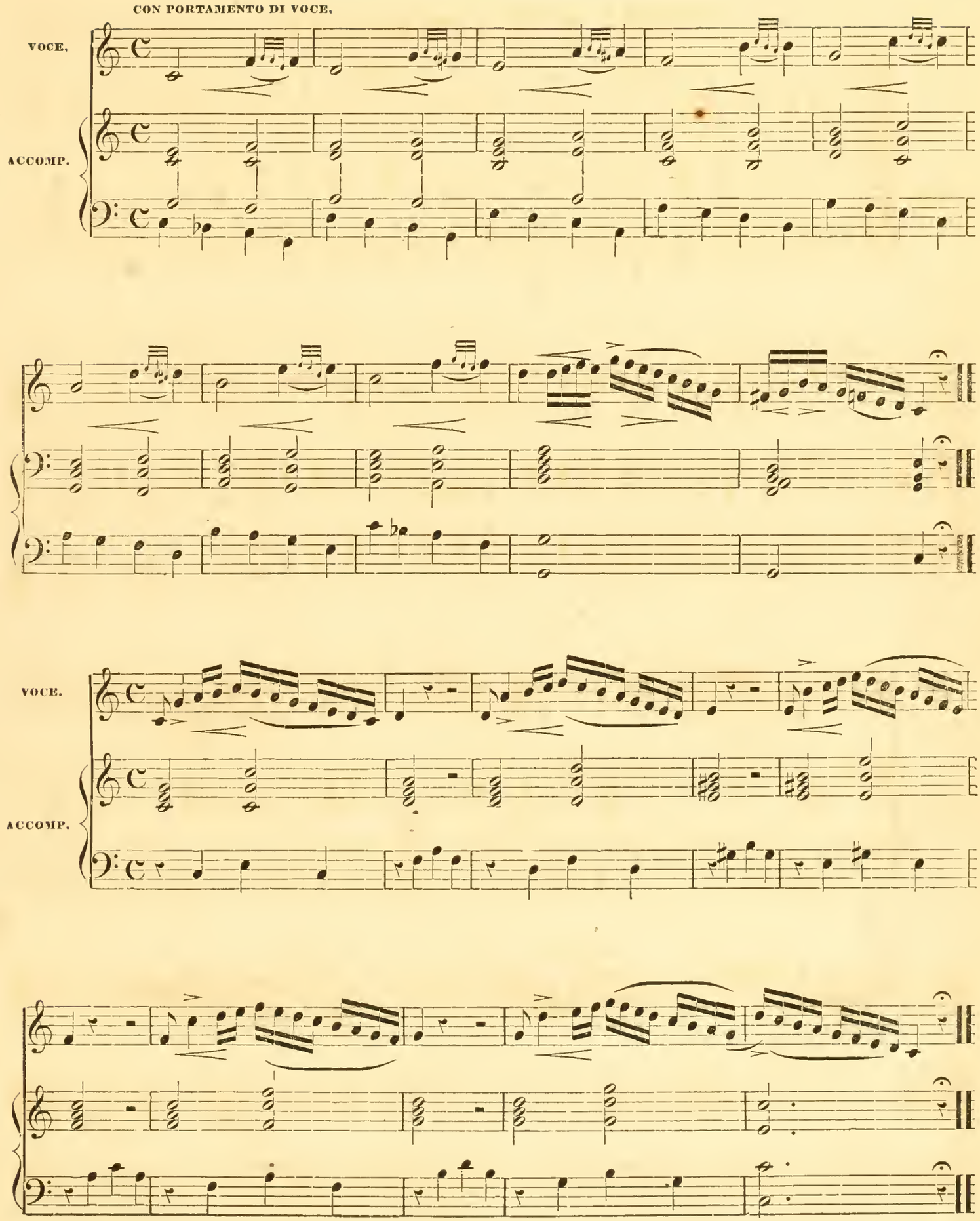


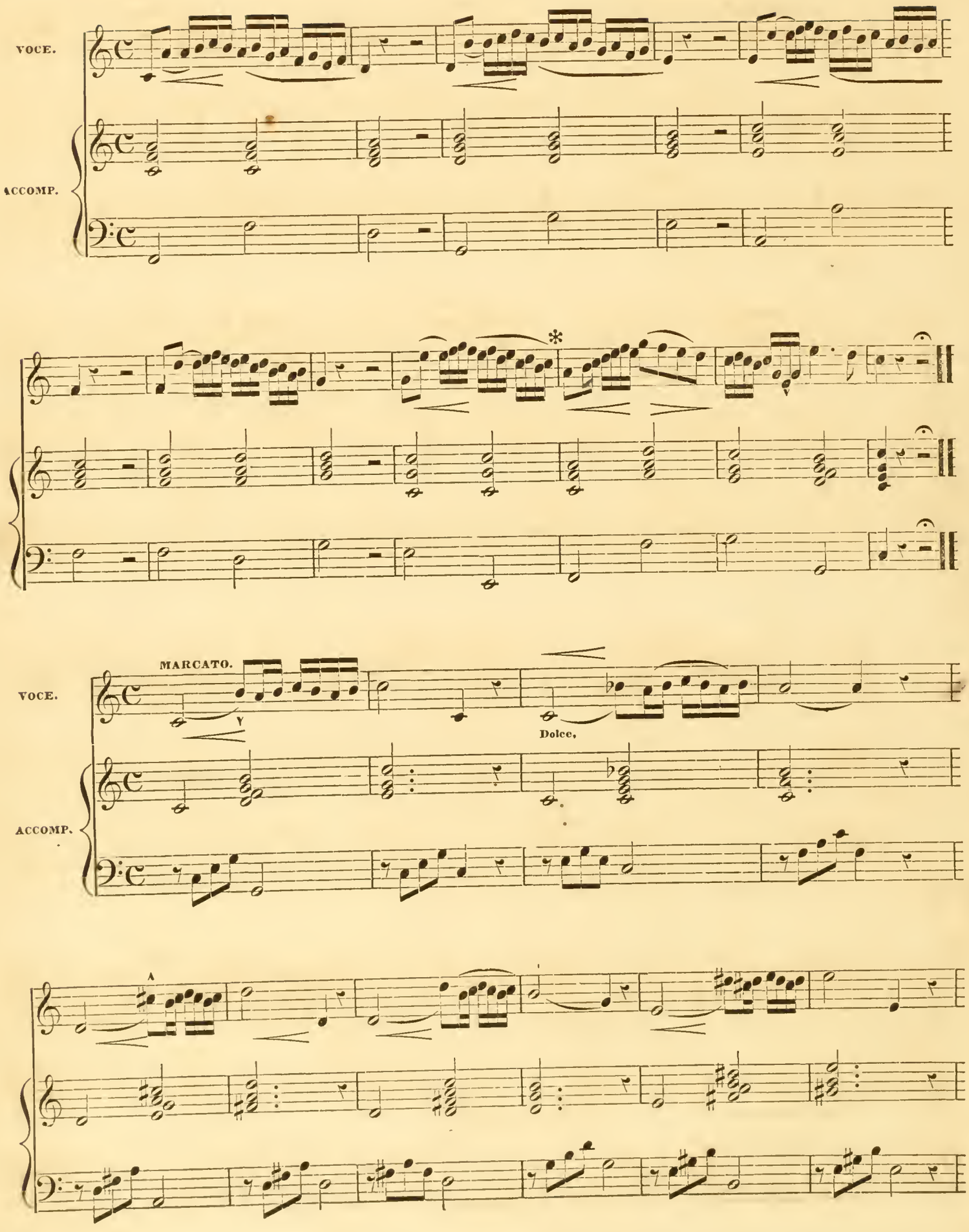
VOLATA, OR RUNNING PASSAGE OF AN OCTAVE.

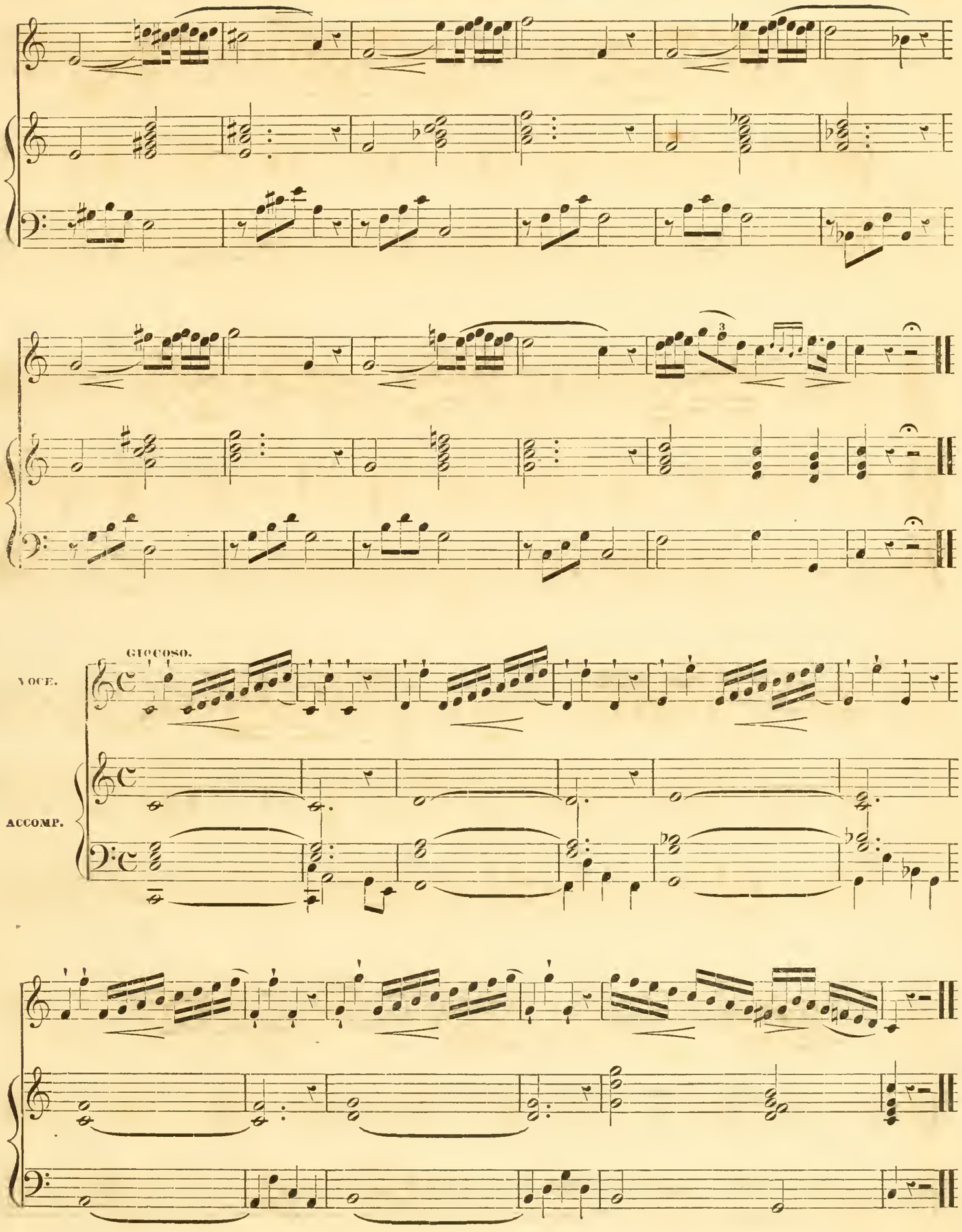


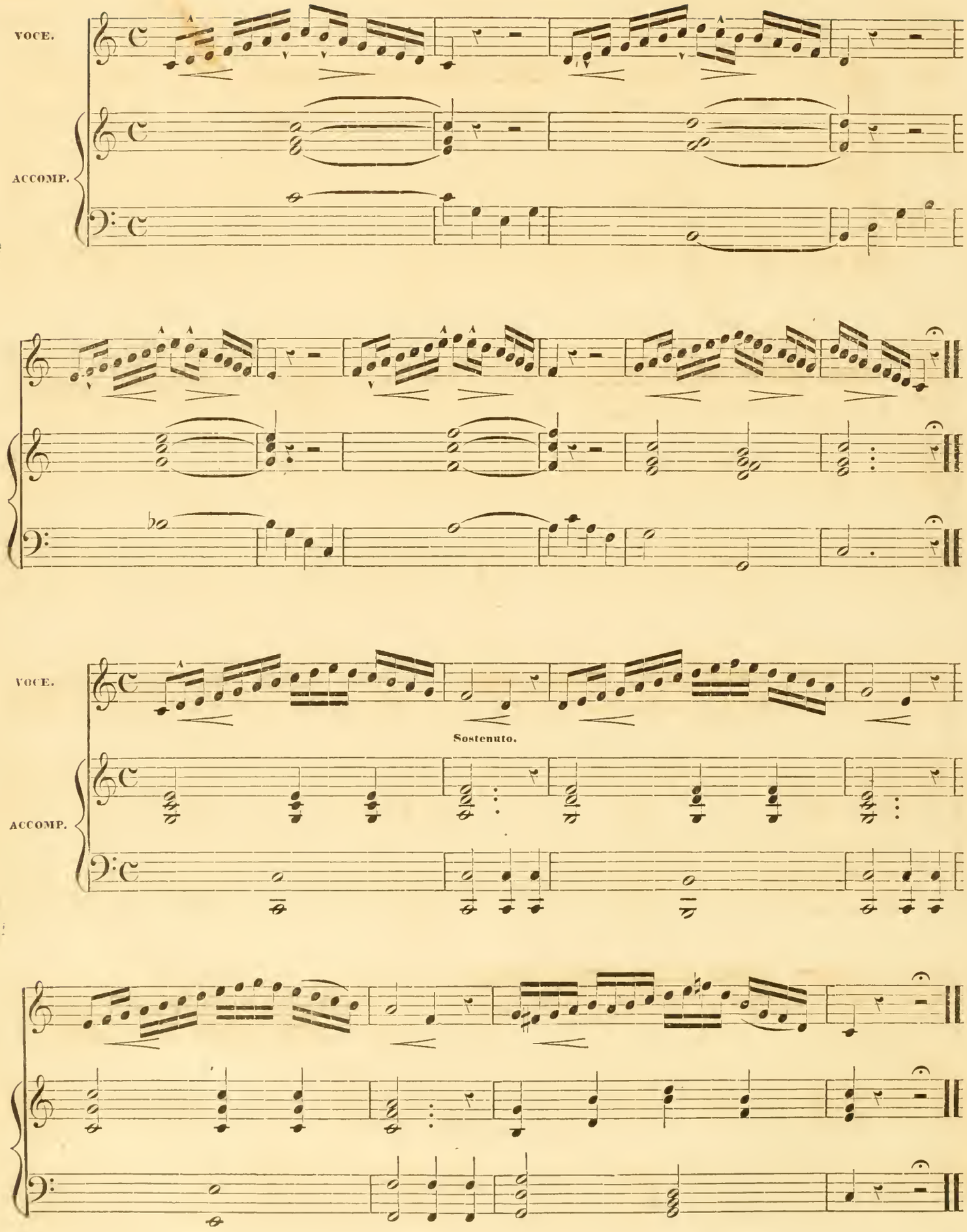
SCALE WITH SYNCOPATIONS.



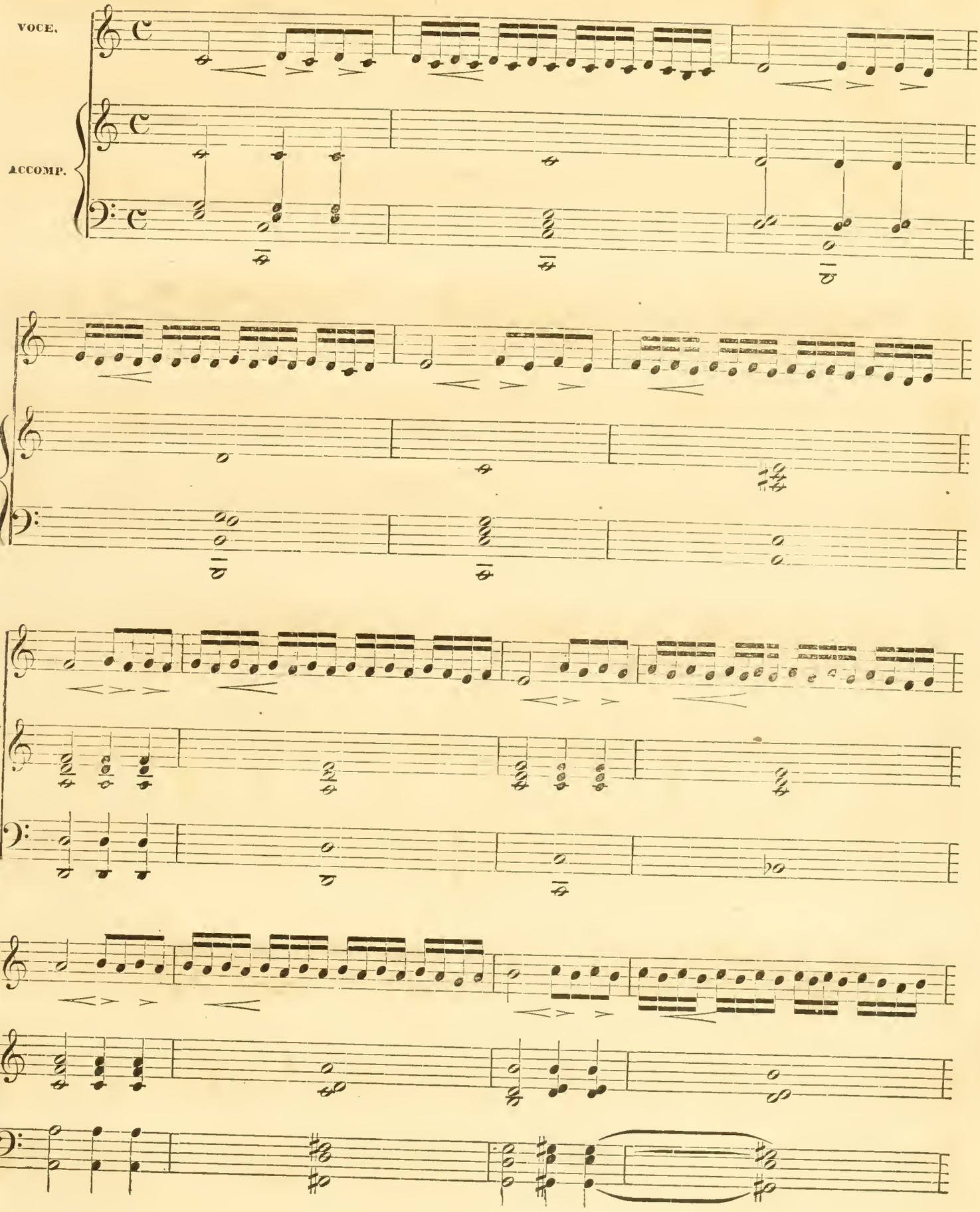

CON PORTAMENTO DI VOCE.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.

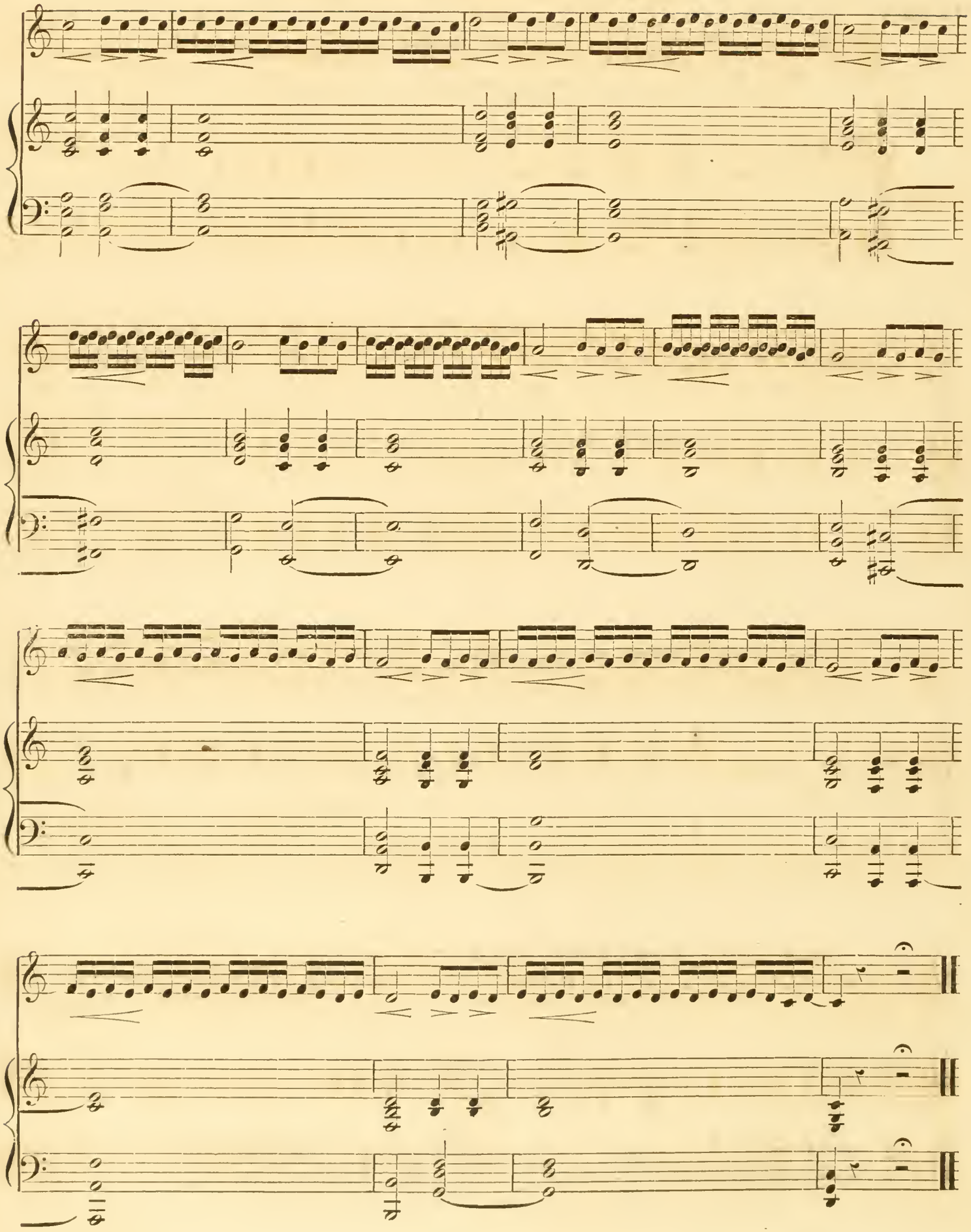

VOCE.
ACCOMP.
MARCATO.
Dolce.


GIOCOSO.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.

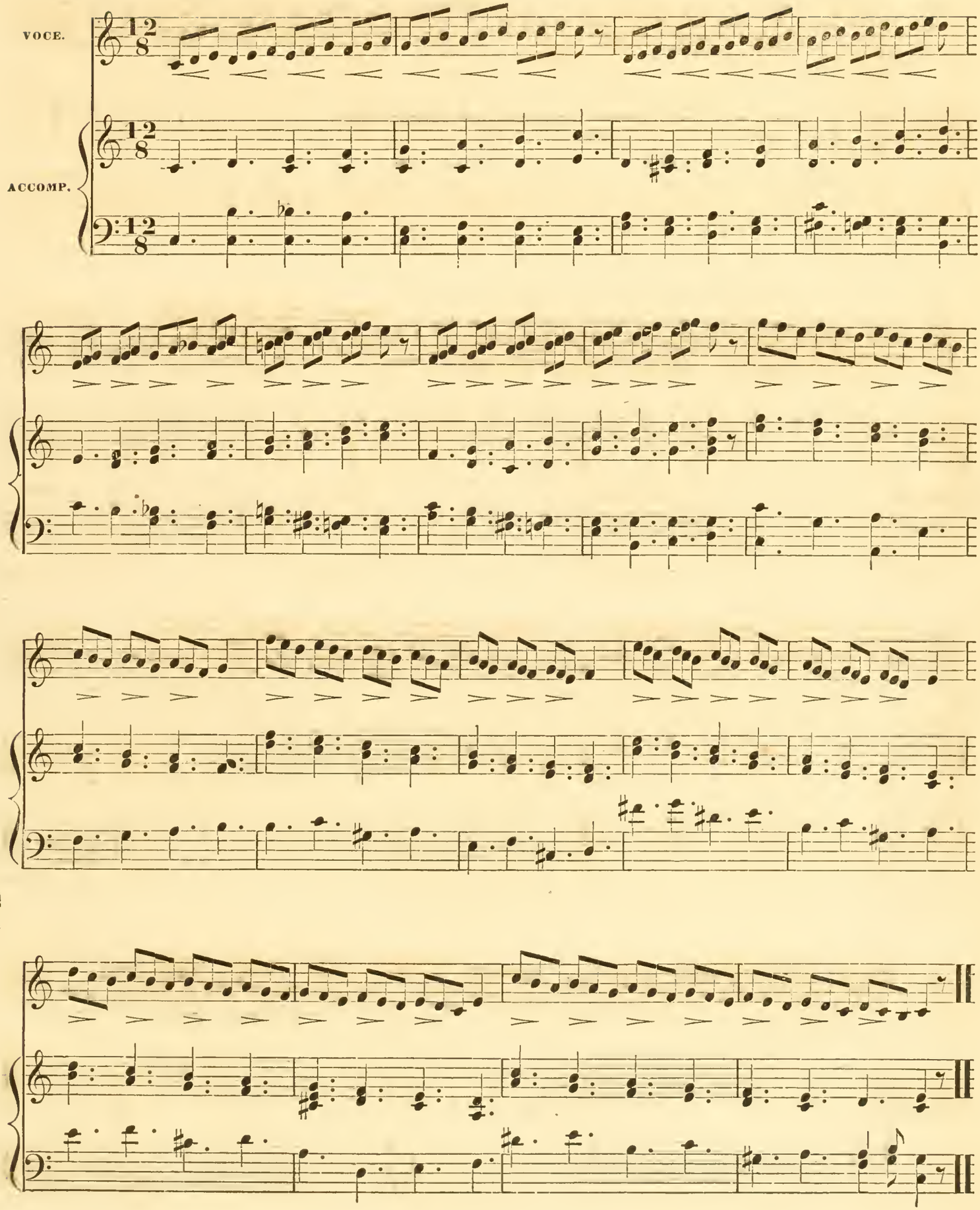

VOCE.
ACCOMP.
VOCE.
Sostenuto.
ACCOMP.

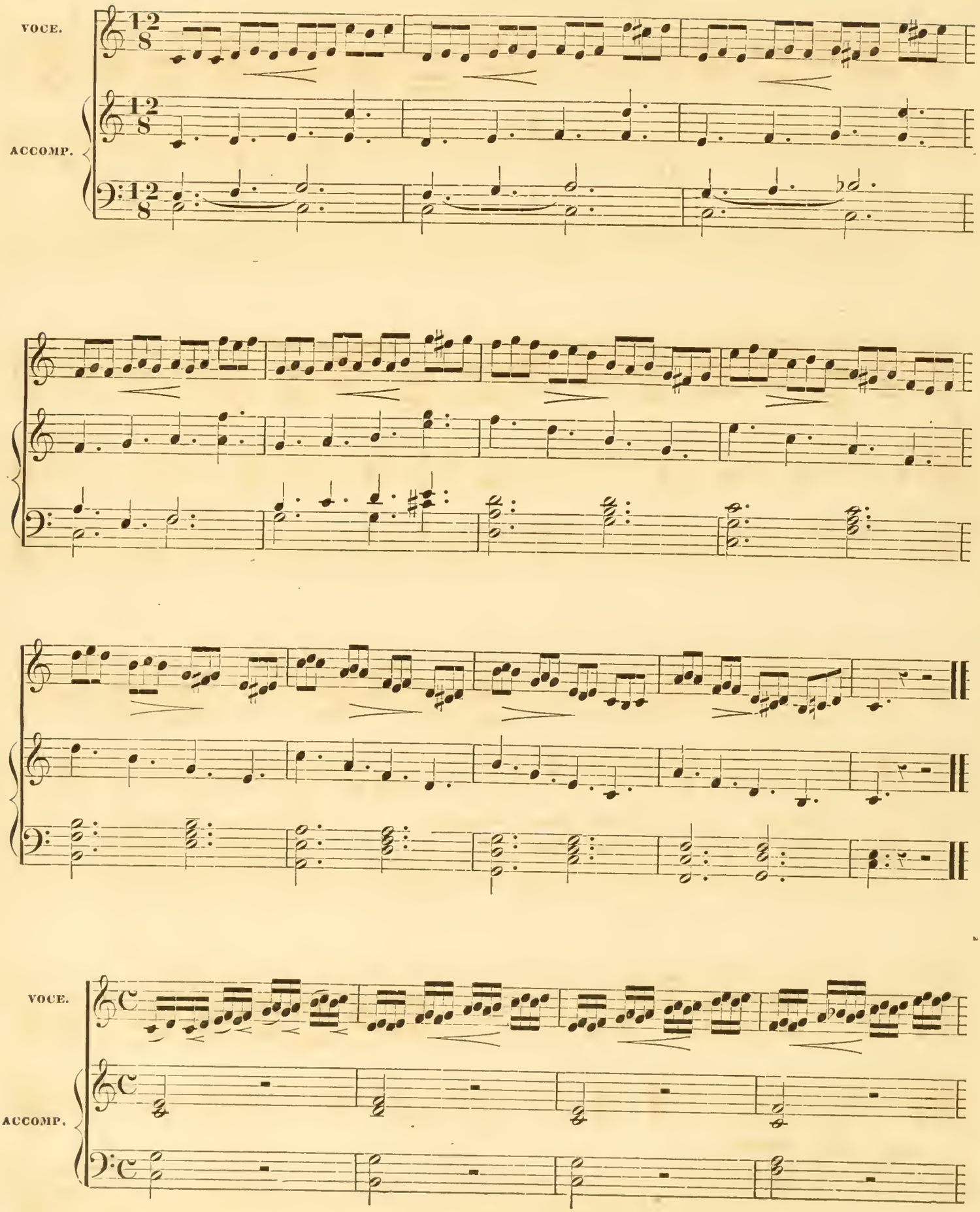
Scale formed of short Shakes to accustom the Voice to unite, with precision and sweetness, the two notes which form the Shake.

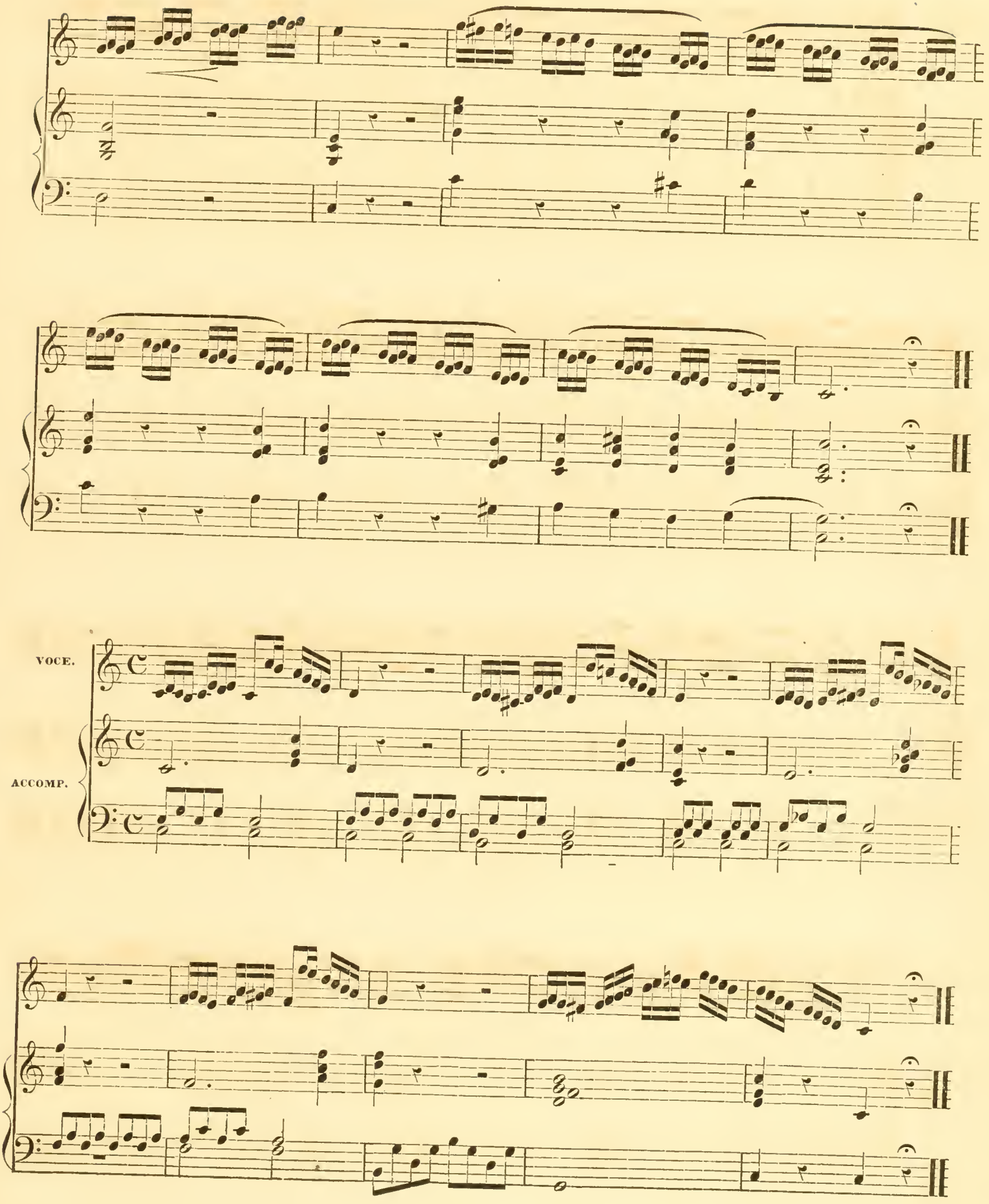


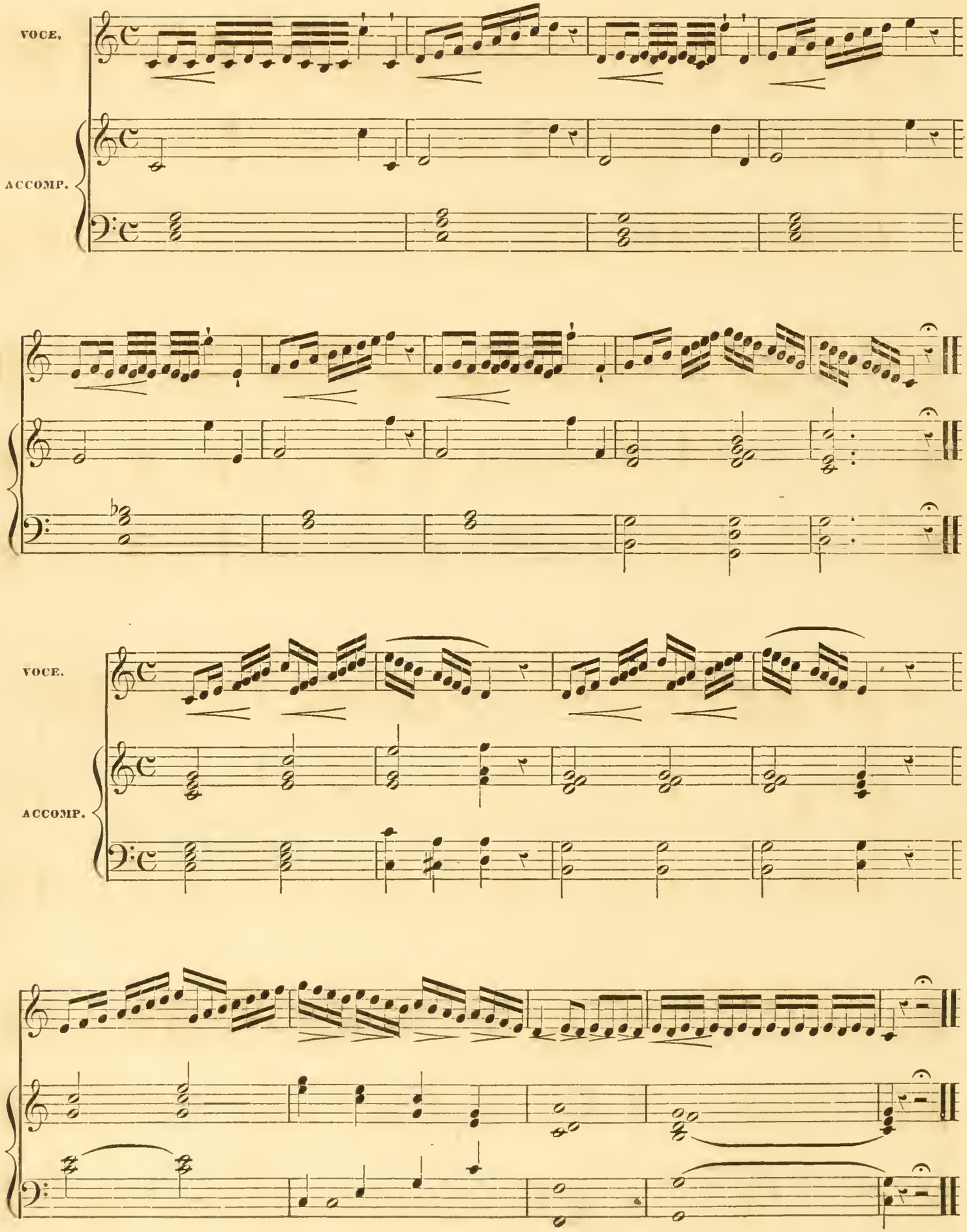


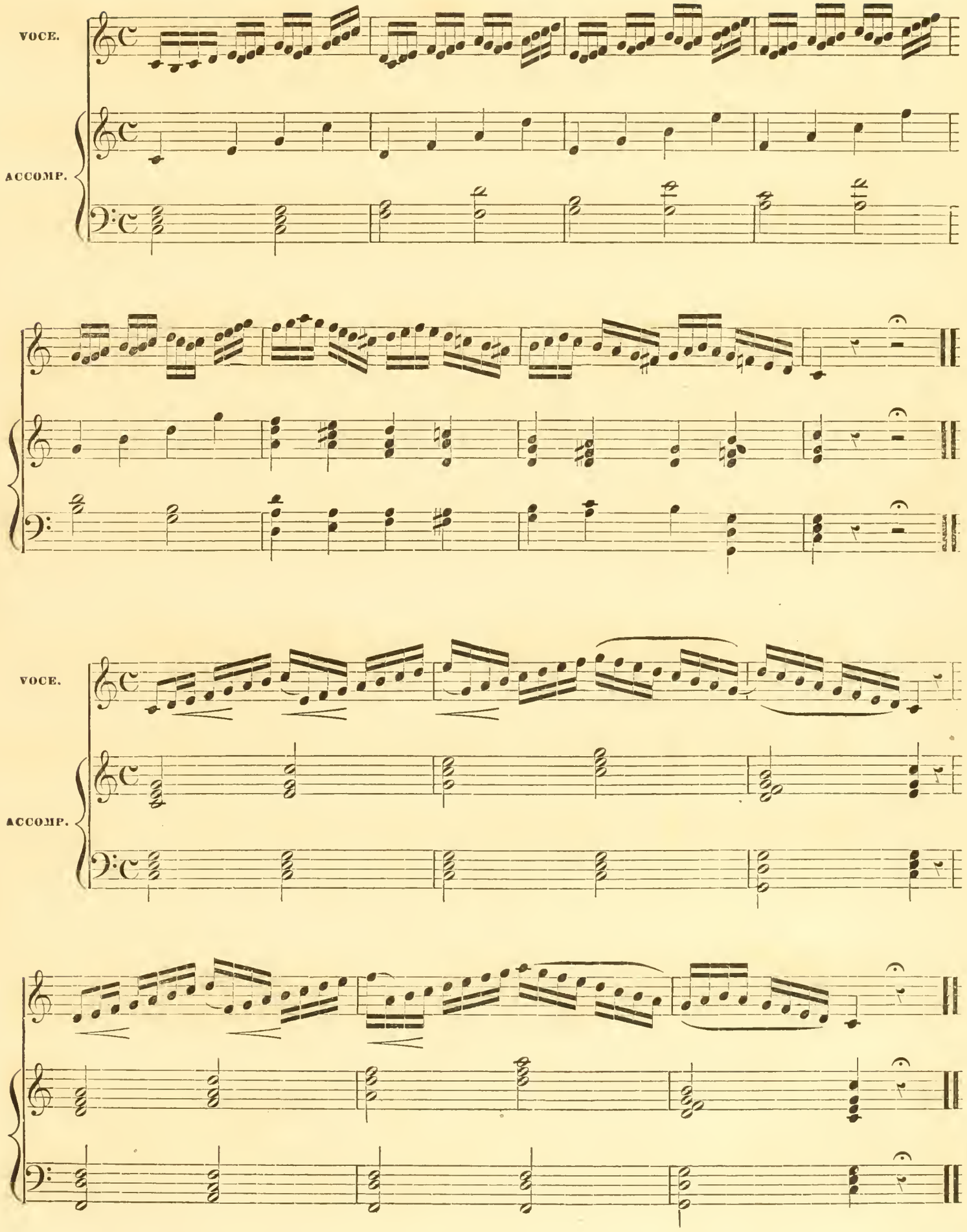
EIGHT VARIATIONS ON THE SCALE.




VOCE.
ACCOMP.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.

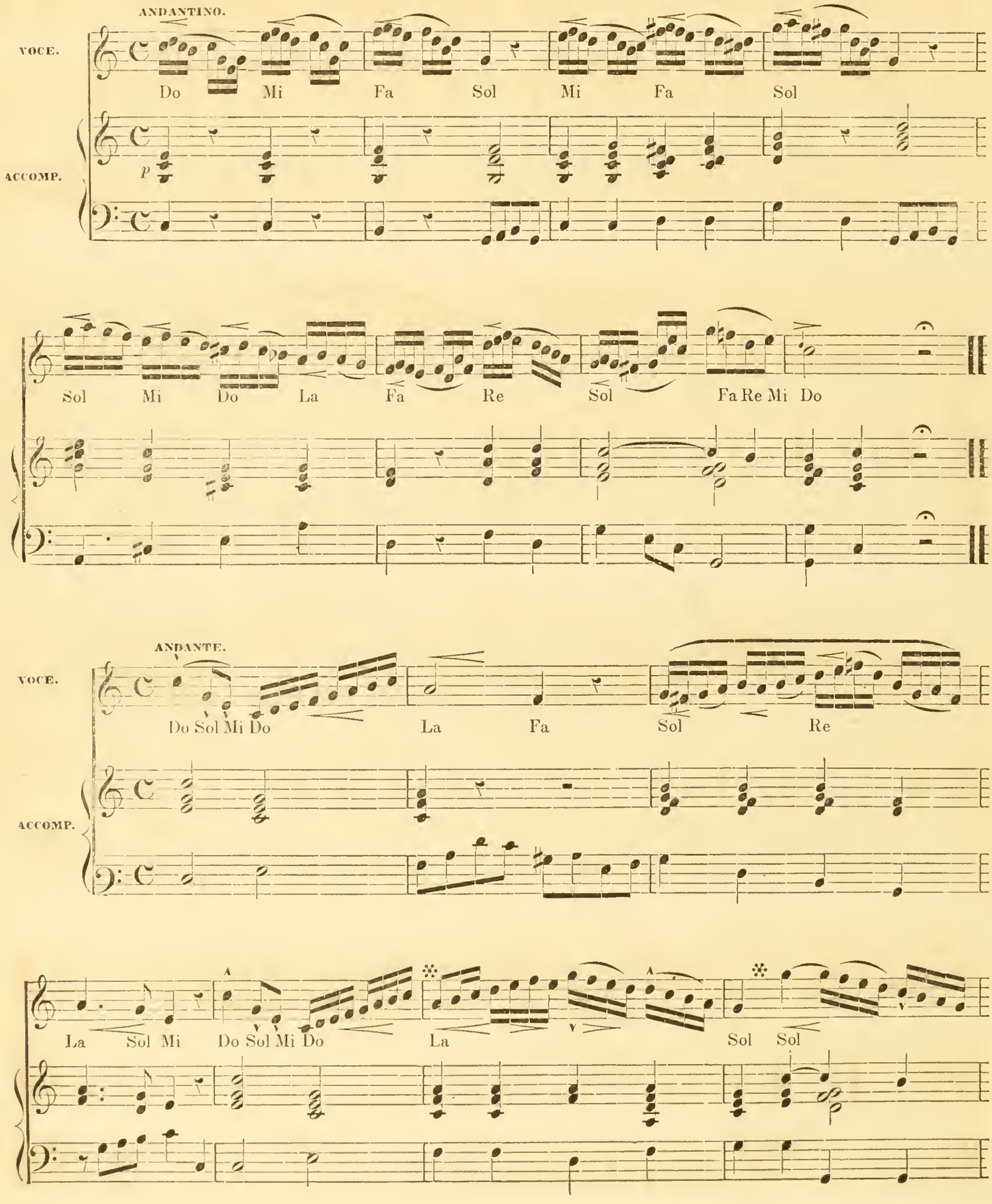

VOCE.
ACCOMP.

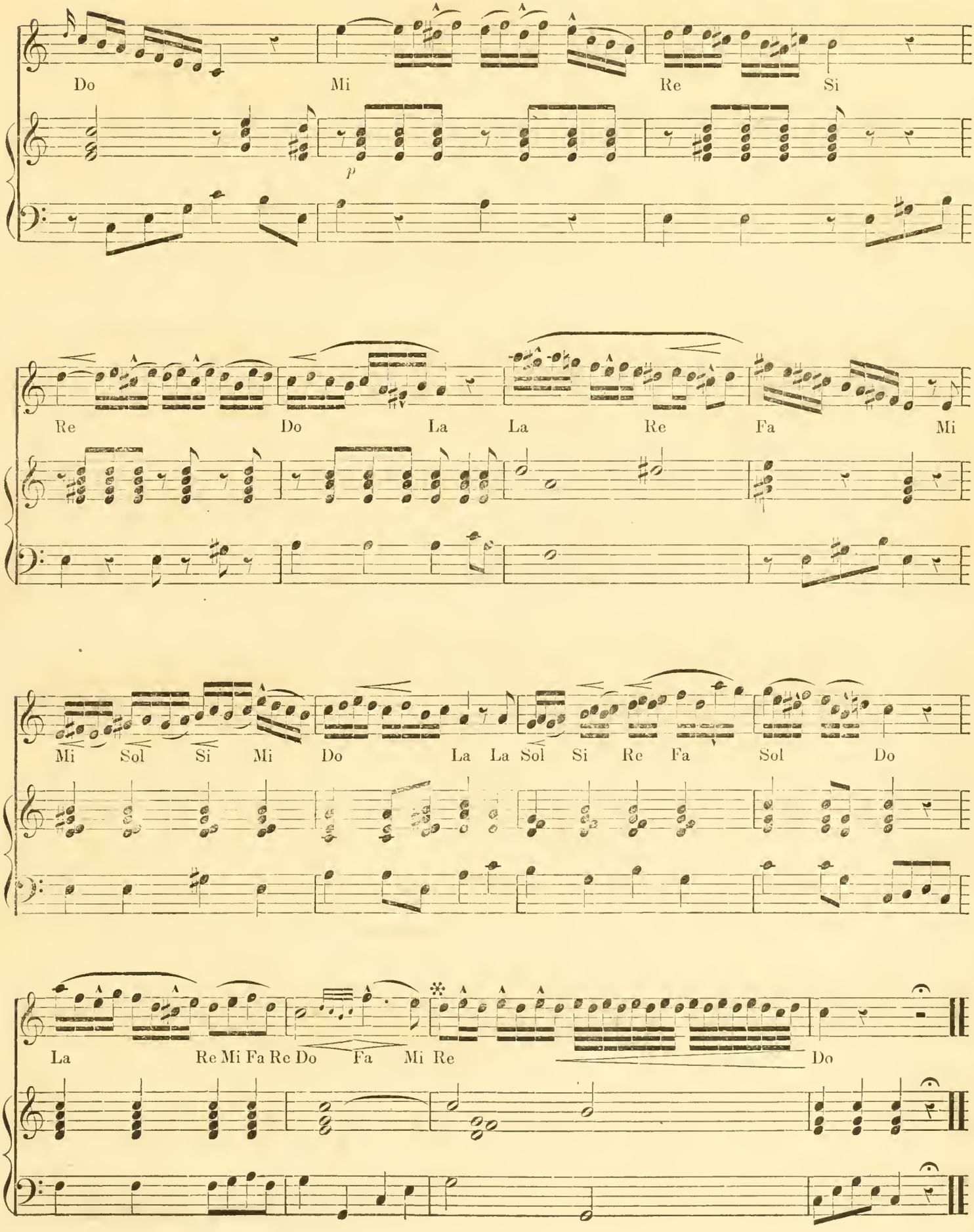

VOCE.
ACCOMP.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.

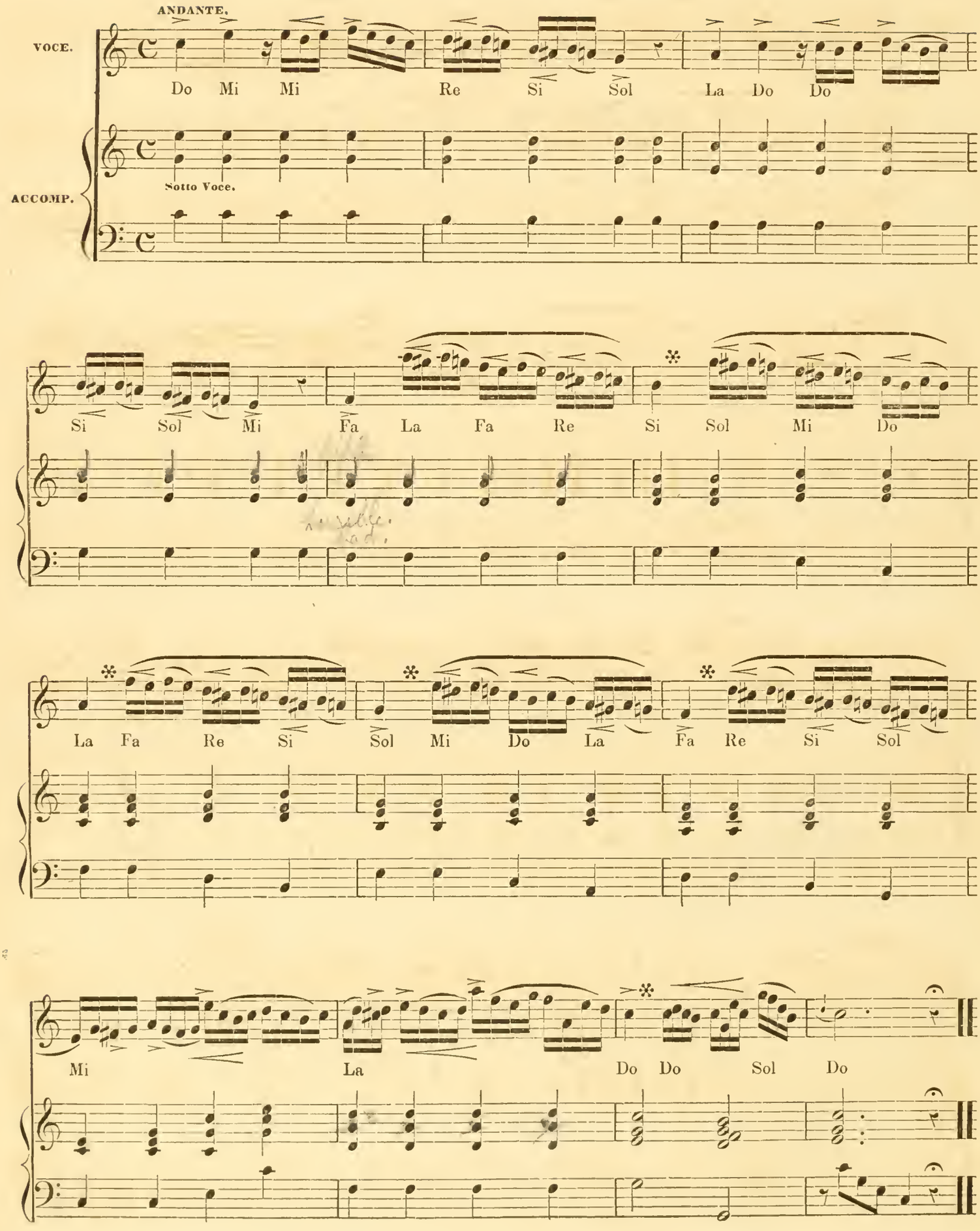

VOCE.
ACCOMP.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.

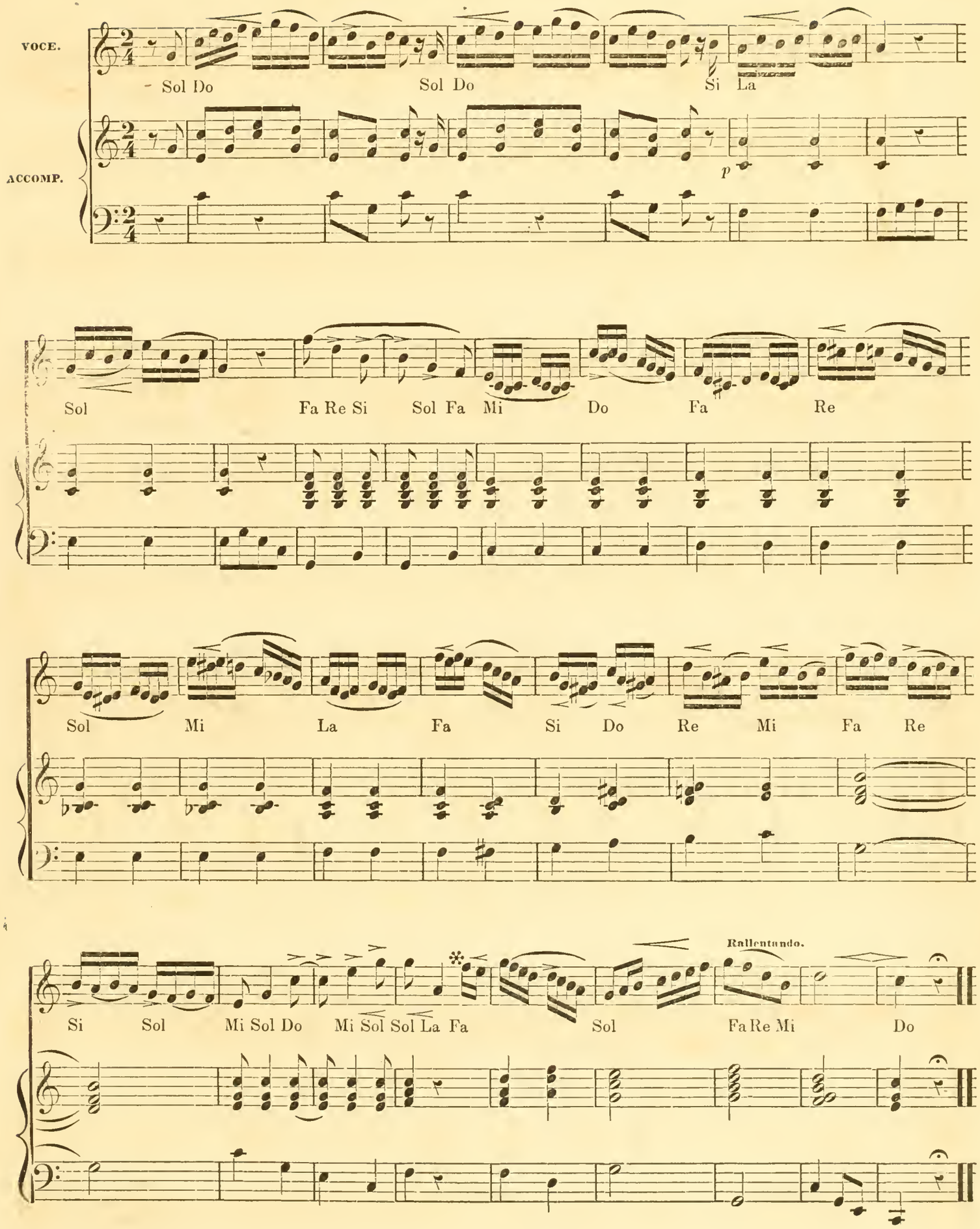
Six Exercises to be practised in those keys which are best adapted to the voice of the student.

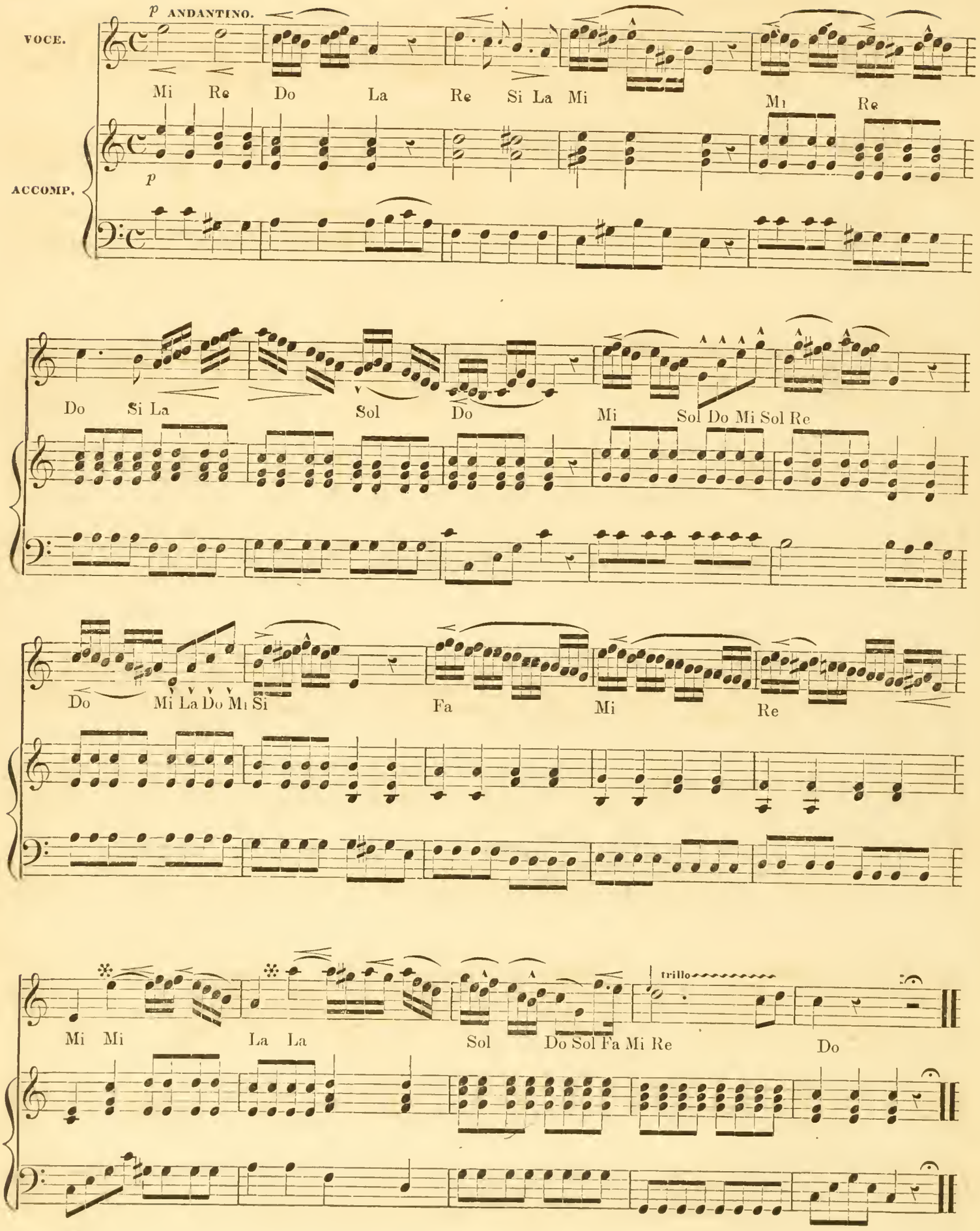
To render these exercises suitable to a Bass, Baritone, or Contralto voice, it will be necessary to transpose them into the key of G, for that of Tenor into the key of B flat, &c., &c.

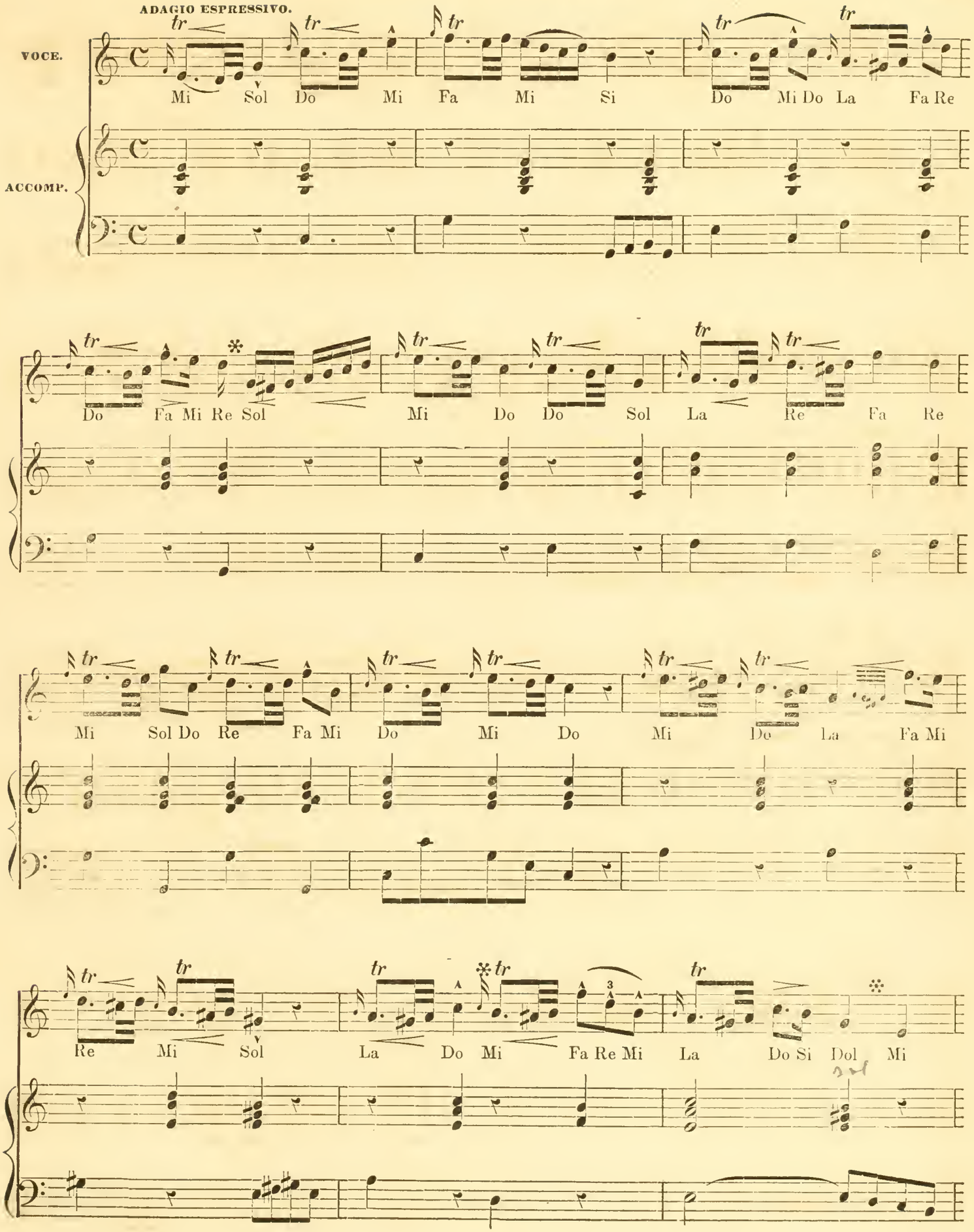


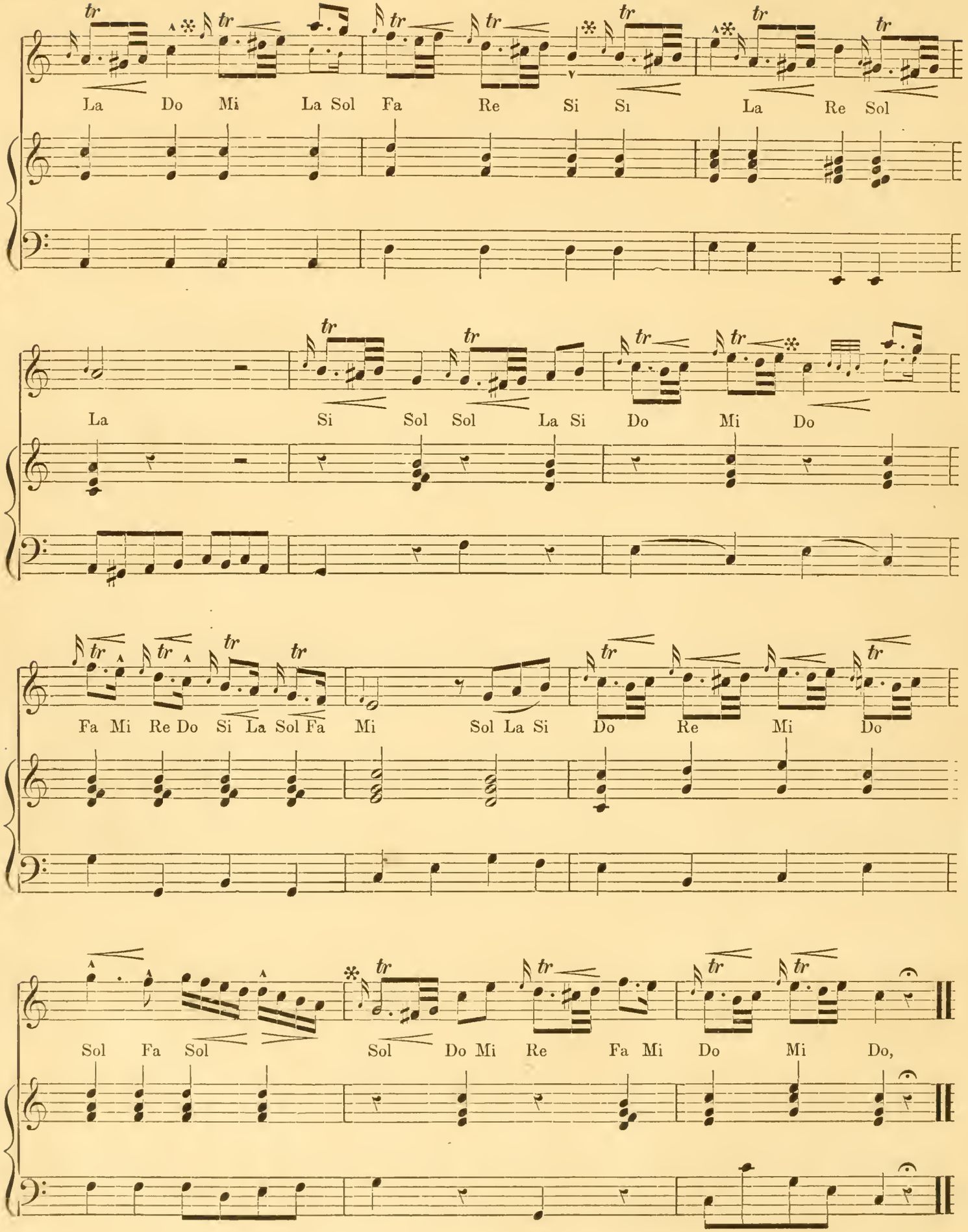

Do Mi Re Si
p
Re Do La La Re Fa Mi
Mi Sol Si Mi Do La La Sol Si Re Fa Sol Do
La Re Mi Fa Re Do Fa Mi Re Do


ANDANTE.
VOCE.
Do Mi Mi Re Si Sol La Do Do
ACCOMP.
Sotto Voce.
Si Sol Mi Fa La Fa Re Si Sol Mi Do
La Fa Re Si Sol Mi Do La Fa Re Si Sol
Mi La Do Do Sol Do


VOCE.
ACCOMP.
Sol Do Sol Do Si La
p
Sol Fa Re Si Sol Fa Mi Do Fa Re
Sol Mi La Fa Si Do Re Mi Fa Re
Rallentando.
Si Sol Mi Sol Do Mi Sol Sol La Fa Sol Fa Re Mi Do


p ANDANTINO.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.
Mi Re Do La Re Si La Mi Mi Re
Do Si La Sol Do Mi Sol Do Mi Sol Re
Do Mi La Do Mi Si Fa Mi Re
Mi Mi La La Sol Do Sol Fa Mi Re Do
trillo


ADAGIO ESPRESSIVO.
VOCE.
ACCOMP.
Mi Sol Do Mi Fa Mi Si Do Mi Do La Fa Re
Do Fa Mi Re Sol Mi Do Do Sol La Re Fa Re
Mi Sol Do Re Fa Mi Do Mi Do Mi Do La Fa Mi
Re Mi Sol La Do Mi Fa Re Mi La Do Si Dol Mi


La Do Mi La Sol Fa Re Si Si La Re Sol
La Si Sol Sol La Si Do Mi Do
Fa Mi Re Do Si La Sol Fa Mi Sol La Si Do Re Mi Do
Sol Fa Sol Sol Do Mi Re Fa Mi Do Mi Do,

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