GEORGE FRIDERIC

HANDEL

(1685-1759)

ALCESTE

Instrumental Pieces

HWV 45

CONDUCTOR'S SCORE

P R E F A C E

Handel's incidental music to "Alceste", a play by Tobias Smollet which has unfortunately been lost, was the last work he composed for the stage. The performance was originally scheduled for Covent Garden Theatre, but cancelled for unknown reasons. An old tradition, according to Chrysander, holds that the director of the theatre considered the music "too good for his people".

Handel composed the music between December 27, 1749 and January 8, 1750. It has the splendor and grandeur of his last period. He must have liked the work; for when the performance did not take place, he used a considerable number of the movements for the short oratorio, "the Choice of Hercules", which he wrote soon afterwards.

The incidental music to "Alceste" contains eight instrumental movements, an unusually large number. They are collected here with the exception of two Balli, the first omitted because of its tonality, the second since it is closely connected with the following chorus. The Larghetto is especially remarkable because it contains one of the earliest examples of a clearly indicated crescendo.

The incidental music to "Alceste" was first published by F. Chrysander in the complete edition of Handel's works. Chrysander promised in his preface that he would discuss "this work, important in several respects" more thoroughly in an article to be published in "Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft"; this article, however, never appeared.

Hans T. David

INSTRUMENTAL PIECES from ALCESTE

OUVERTURE

G. F. HANDEL

OBOE I. A. VIOLINO I.

VIOLINO II.

VIOLA

[FAGOTTI. VIOLONCELLI BASSI

[CEMBALO]

[MAESTOSO]

[MAESTOSO]

tr

[tr]

1) Originally ♩. ♪

3. ALLEGRO

ALLEGRO

tr

tr

tr

8

1)

[P]

[P]

[P]

[mezzo f]

8

12

[f]

[f]

12

[tr]

[f]

[f]

1) Slurs suggested for Oboes only

17

[f]

17

23 1)

[p]

[p]

[p]

[meno f]

23

27

[poco f]

[f]

[f]

27

1) Slurs suggested for Oboes only

[espr.]

[espr.]

33

[f]

33 [f]

[tr]

1.

LENTEMENT

LENTEMENT

ALLEGRO

2.

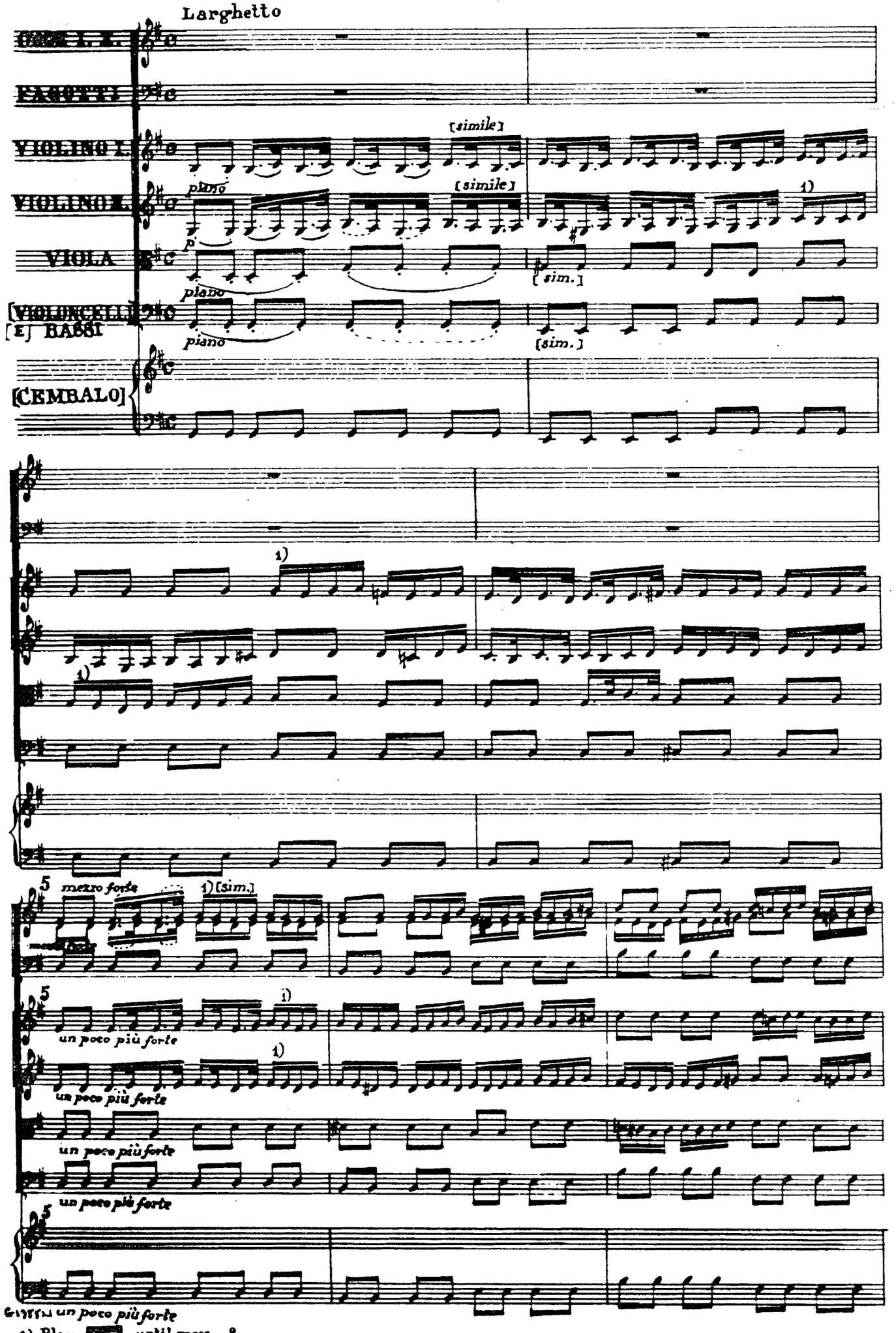
ALLEGRO

A tempo ordinario

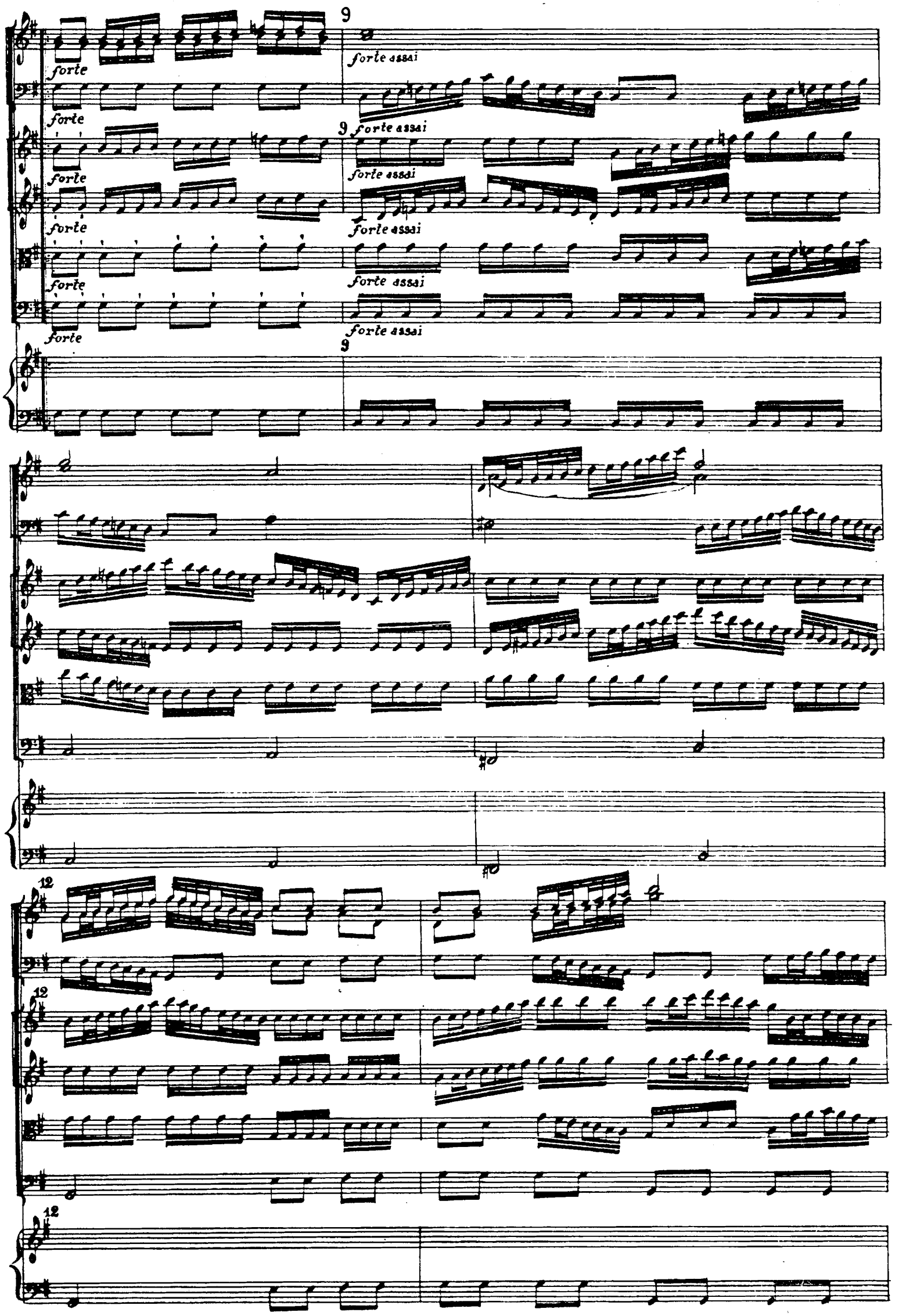
[tr]

OBOE I. II.
VIOLINO I.
VIOLINO II.
VIOLA
[FAGOTTI,
VIOLONCELLI
BASSI
[CEMBALO]
[ALLEGRO]
[ALLEGRO]
5
5
11
11
tr
tr dolce
[tr]

*This Symphony was intended to be played: "before and during the entry of Alcides." It was originally concluded with an accompanied recitative which leads back to the tonic.



1) Play [illegible], until meas. 8.


forte
forte
forte
forte
forte
forte
9
forte assai
9
forte assai
forte assai
forte assai
forte assai
forte assai
9
12
12
12

17

17

17

[tr]

[tr]

Dal Segno &

GRAND ENTREE

[POMPOSO]

TROMBA

OBOE I. II.
VIOLINO I.

VIOLINO II.

VIOLA

FAGOTTI

[VIOLONCELLI
[E] BASSI

[POMPOSO]

CEMBALO

8

8

* The present movement originally was placed after the Ouverture

15

tr

[tr]

tr

[tr]

15

20

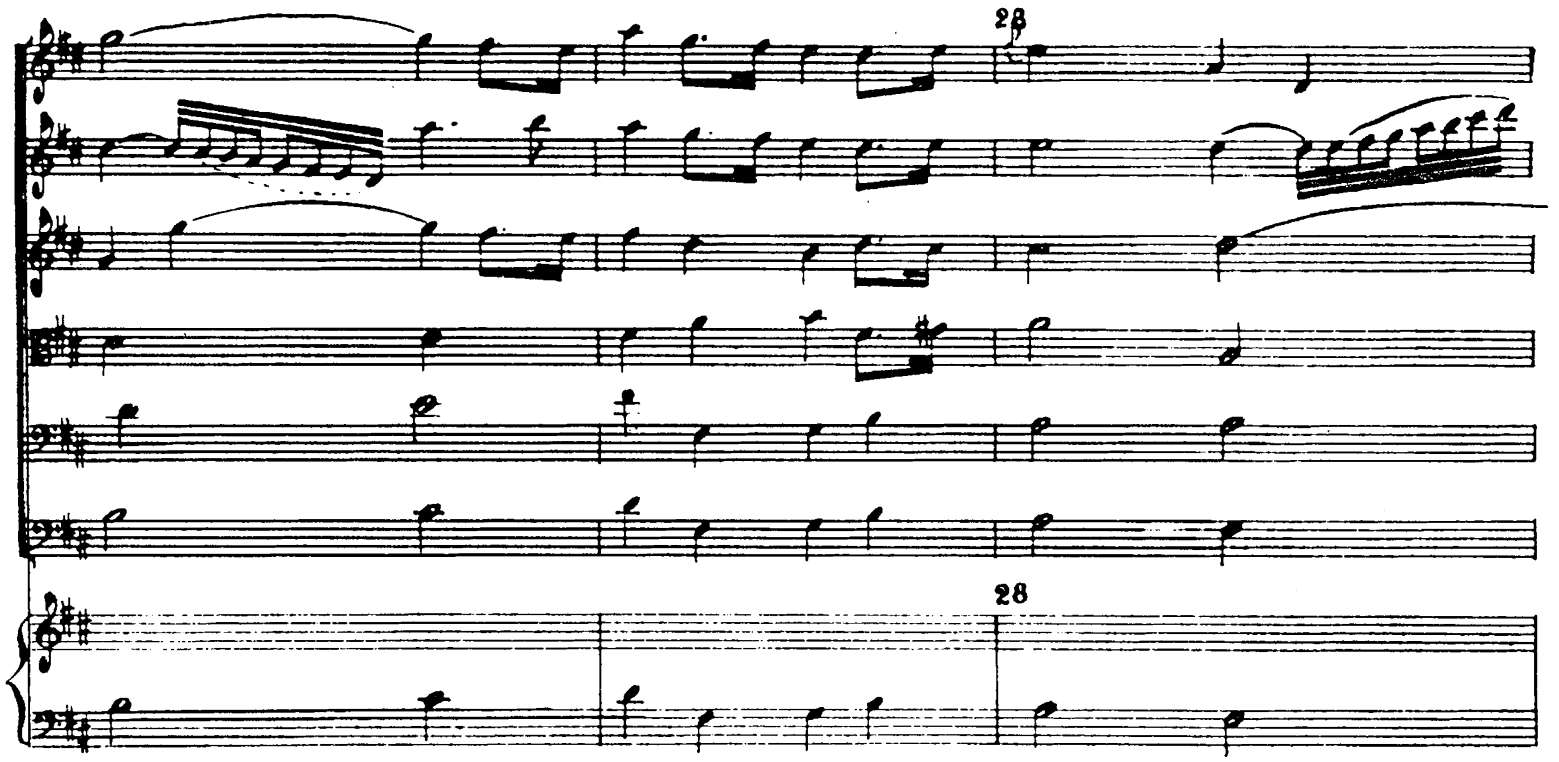
20

24

[tr]

[tr]

24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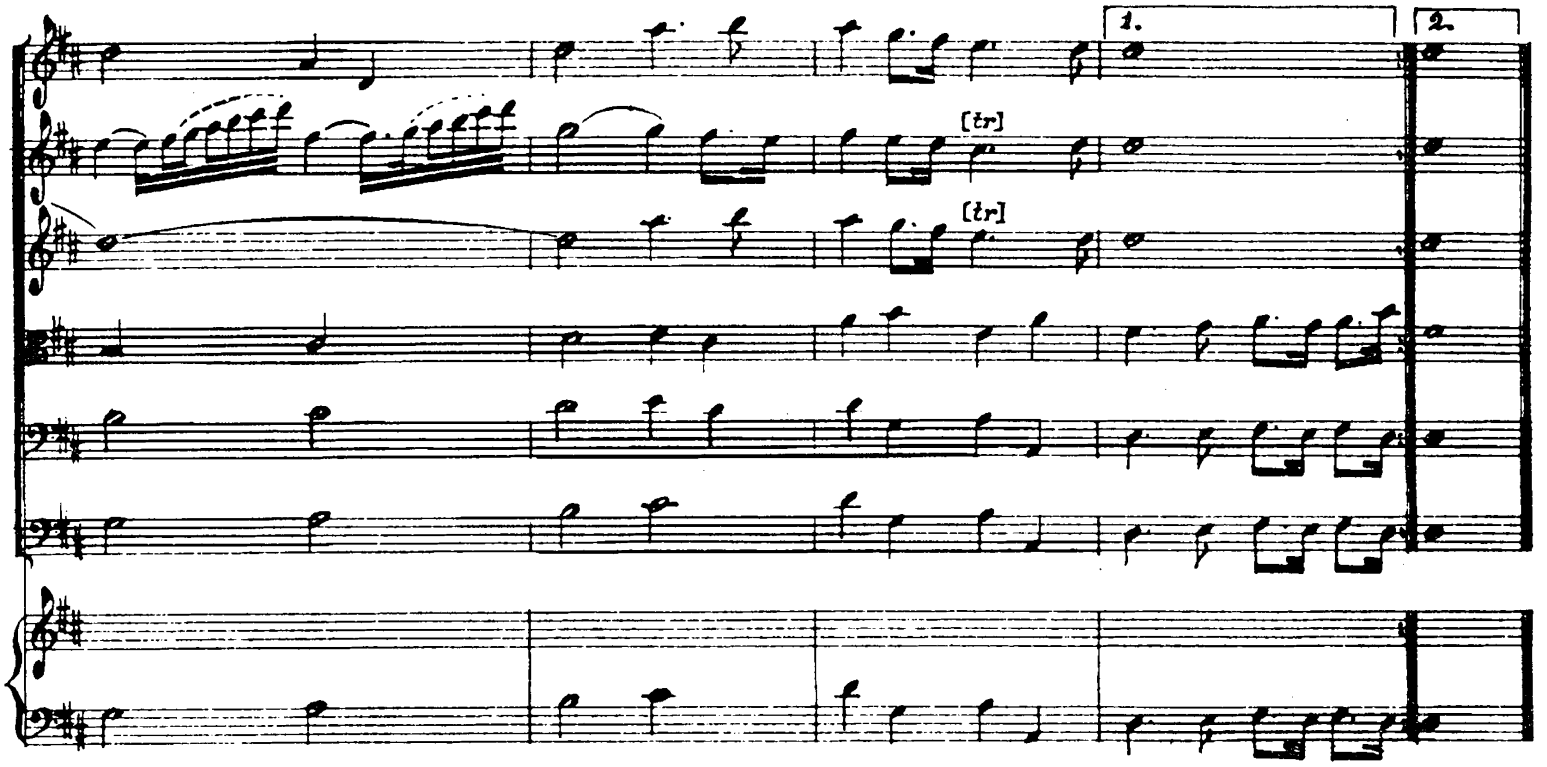
1.
2.
[tr]
[tr]