Foreword

How do you teach a new piece of music to your handbell or handchime choir?

- by ringing the piece again and again?
- by unrelated exercises?

Hopefully you've discovered better ways! I was fortunate to study with a wise college professor who always taught her students:

- *how to practice*
- *how to isolate* problems within the music
- *how to solve* those problems before practicing the music as written.

These techniques have served me well in teaching piano, organ, and public school music and in directing bell choirs of all ages and ringing abilities. In this book those teaching concepts have been applied to each composition.

USING THIS BOOK: The purpose of this book is to provide music for beginning bell choirs, but *it is not intended to be used in the first few rehearsals.* The ringers should know the basics of ringing and damping before learning this music, and the group should have rung slightly easier music as they began developing these skills. The book is not intended to be a methods or techniques book either. There are other excellent methods books and handbooks which will provide this information for those who need it.

As you use this material, you should not only think like a handbell/handchime director, but you should also think like a *teacher*. As *directors,* we are all *teachers!* Use the concepts in this book as a springboard to develop other exercises and activities to meet your group's particular needs.

The selections are organized in order of difficulty, and directors should have their groups learn several pieces of the same level of difficulty before learning the more difficult second settings of some pieces. For instance, the ringers might learn "Etudes #1 and #2," "Staff Sharing Etude," "English Country Dance–I," "Austria," "The Ash Grove–I," and the first 24 measures (section/verse 1) of "Native American Melody" before beginning the pieces with the simplest use of eighth notes.

FOR SCHOOL AND CHURCH: Because this collection is appropriate for use in both school and church, each piece of music has been given multiple titles. Directors may choose whichever title suits their group's needs.
The book includes:

- great classical music that incorporates folk melodies
- themes from classical compositions which are also sung as hymns or sacred songs
- secular folk tunes that have become well-known hymns
- arrangements of instrumental compositions that are appropriate for both concert and worship.

Performance notes offering useful suggestions and options are provided for some of the pieces of music.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK: The twelve chapters or units, each based on a single piece of music, are organized as follows:

The teacher's page (identified by) which includes

- Teaching and rehearsal suggestions
- Background information about the composer and the composition which follows

The ringer's page (identified by) which includes:

- Equipment needed (number of bells needed, mallets, etc.)
- Short exercises derived from the piece of music which follows

The music pages which include:

- A two-octave setting of the piece
- A three-octave setting of the piece

ABOUT THE EXERCISES:

Although each exercise is written on a five-line staff, there is no clef, so the notes are not associated with specific pitches.

- For all exercises, *all* ringers are to ring the written notes regardless of the actual pitches of the bells they have in their hands.
- The *lower-pitched* bell/chime is in each ringer's left hand.
- The *higher-pitched* bell/chime is in each ringer's right hand.
- Notes written in *spaces* are to be played by the bell/chime in each ringer's left hand (L).
- Notes written on *lines* are to be played by the bell/chime in each ringer's right hand (R).
- The counting (the beats and subdivisions) is written beneath some of the exercises to help the ringers learn the rhythmic patterns.

The purpose of these exercises is to teach rhythmic patterns and handbell/handchime techniques. Don't expect to hear beautiful chords, but be prepared for the dissonance that will occur! If traditional assignments are used and ringers are each assigned two diatonic notes beginning with C4 or G4 and continuing through G6 or C7, the note for the bell/chime in each ringer's left hand will be in a space and the note for the bell/chime in each ringer's right hand will be on a line. If alternative assignment systems are used, this may not always be true, but the ringers can *pretend* that it is.

REFERENCE PAGES:

- A list of handbell and handchime notation terms and symbols may be found on pages 6–7.
- A list of musical terms may be found on pages 8–9.

RINGER ACTIVITIES PAGES: Activity pages may also be duplicated and used for work within the classroom or the students may have them to work on at home.

Enjoy!

Martha Lynn Thompson

FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS

This book may be used in class instruction to meet the MENC National Standards for Music Educators:

1. Performing on instruments with others
2. Reading and notating music
3. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
4. Evaluating music and music performance
5. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Austria

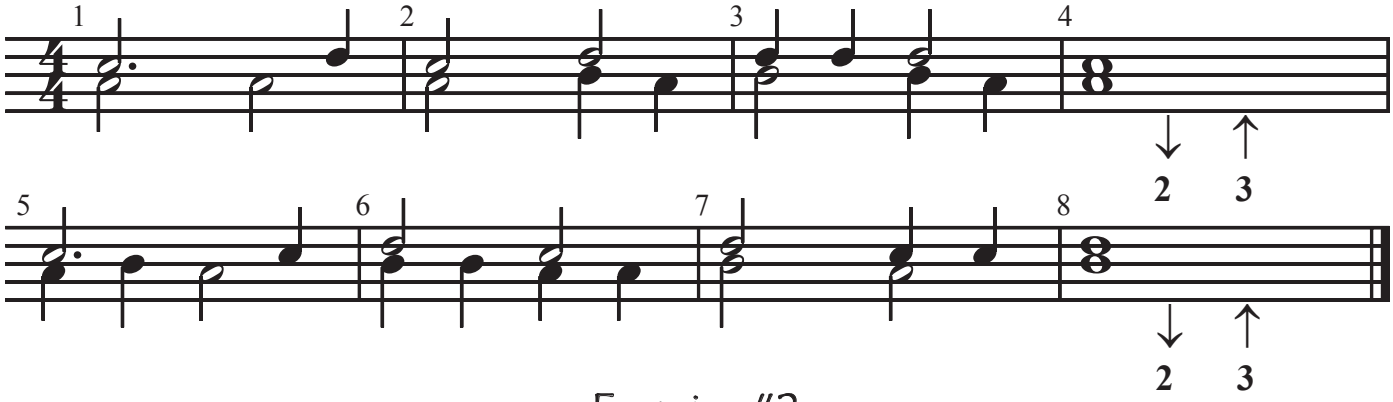
Ringers' Warm-up Exercises–#1

Exercise Equipment

These exercises have two or three parts (also called voices) on each staff.
The notes for the upper part/voice will have their stems going up.
The notes for the lower part/voice will have their stems going down.
Track your notes. Do their stems go up or down?

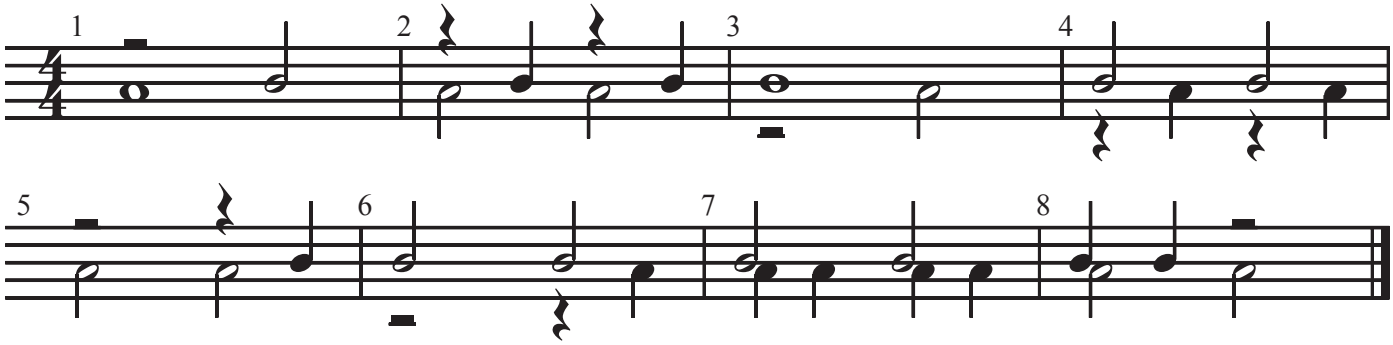
Exercise #1

(In this exercise, your notes will always be in the same part/voice—either stems-up or stems-down. Your notes WILL NOT MOVE from one part/voice to the other.)



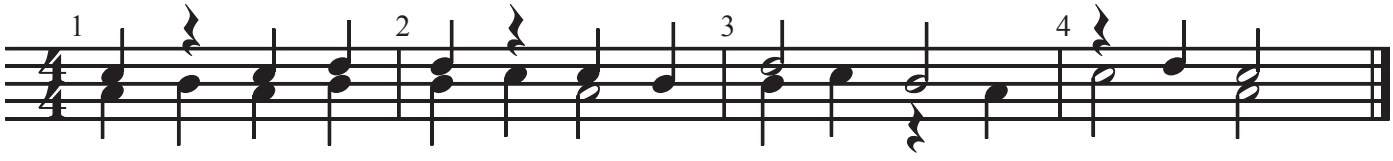
Exercise #2

(Sometimes you must ring and sustain the bell/chime in one hand while ringing the bell/chime in the other hand. You must ring all notes regardless of stem direction.)



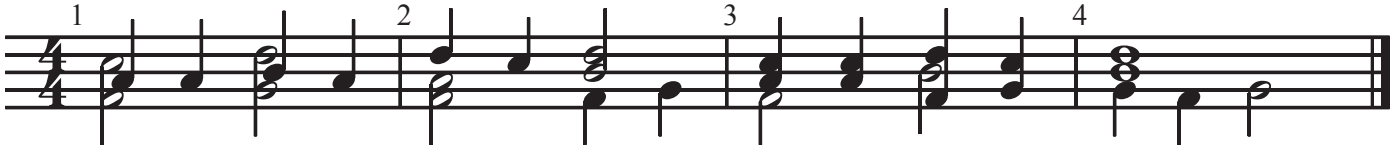
Exercise #3

(Your notes may move from one part/voice to another. Sometimes you must ring and sustain the bell/chime in one hand while ringing the bell/chime in the other hand.)



Exercise #4

(Read stem directions and note values carefully. Your notes may move from one part/voice to another.)



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Austria

Ringers' Warm-up Exercises–#2

Exercise Equipment

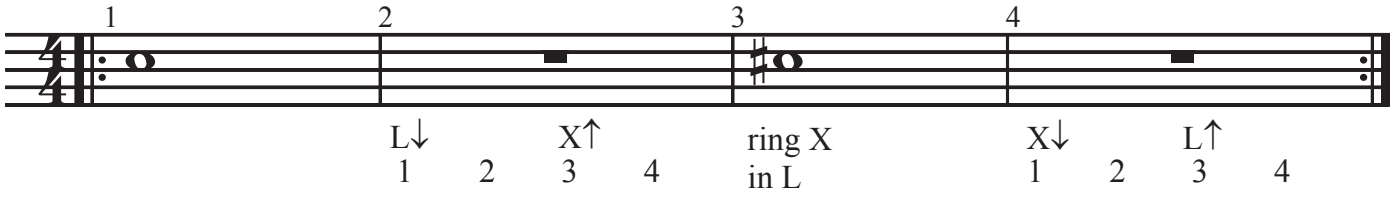
Everyone has 3 bells/chimes.
Pick up the two bells/chimes that you usually ring—the naturals.
The lower bell/chime is in your left hand (L). The higher bell/chime is in your right hand (R).
The third bell/chime (X) is on the padded table in front of you. It can be a sharp or flat, or any other bell/chime. It's just a third bell/chime which you will need for these exercises.

Symbols used in the following exercises:

L↓ left bell/chime down *(Damp it on the table)*
L↑ left bell/chime up
R↓ bell/chime down *(Damp it on the table)*
R↑ right bell/chime up
X↓ third bell/chime down *(Damp it on the table)*
X↑ third bell/chime up

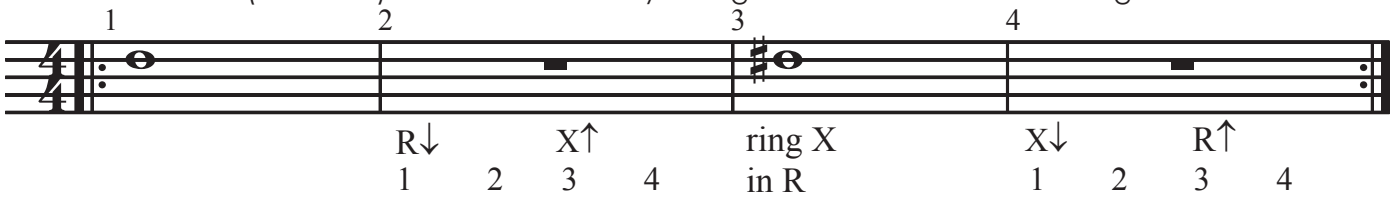
Exercise #5

You have a bell (a natural) in each hand. Only the left hand will make the changes in this exercise.



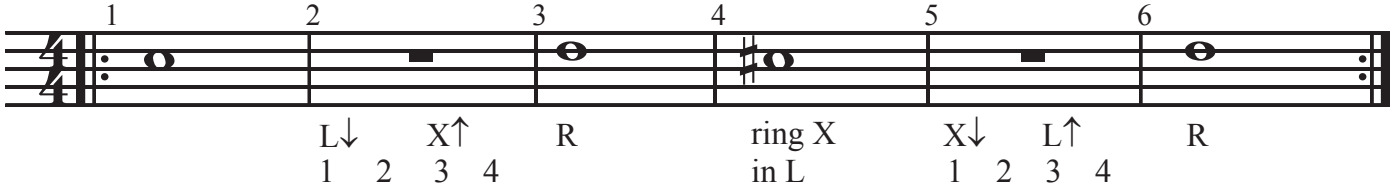
Exercise #6

You have a bell (a natural) in each hand. Only the right hand will make the changes in this exercise.



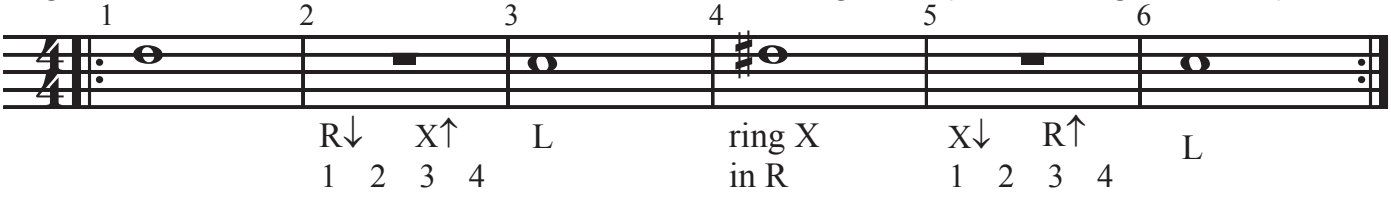
Exercise #7

Begin with a natural in each hand. The LH will make the changes, but you'll also ring the bell in your RH.



Exercise #8

Begin with a natural in each hand. The RH will make the changes, but you'll also ring the bell in your LH.



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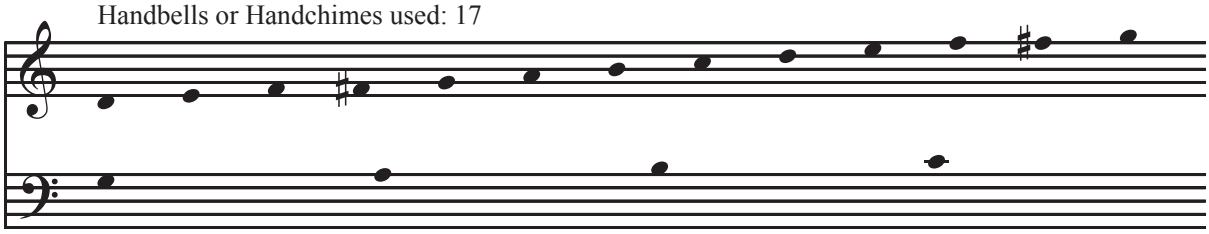
Austria

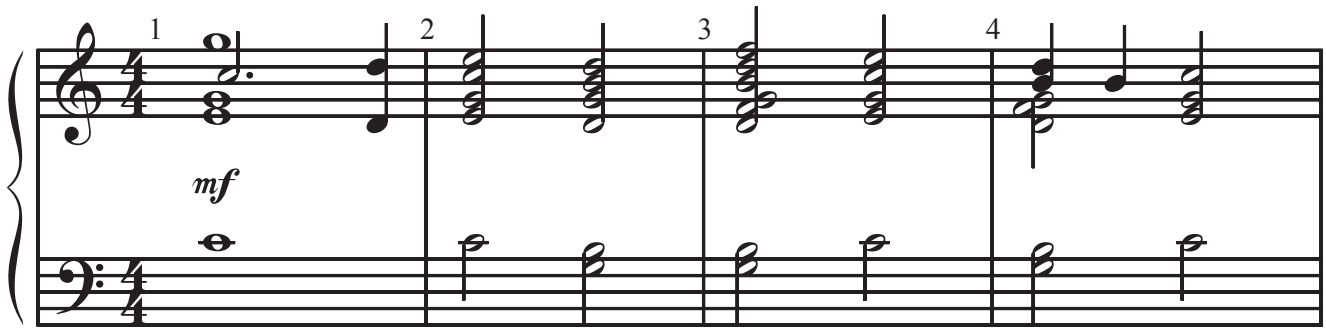
Theme from Haydn's String Quartet in C, Op. 76, No. 3, *Emperor Quartet*
National Anthem of West Germany, *Das Lied der Deutschen*
Austrian Imperial Anthem
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

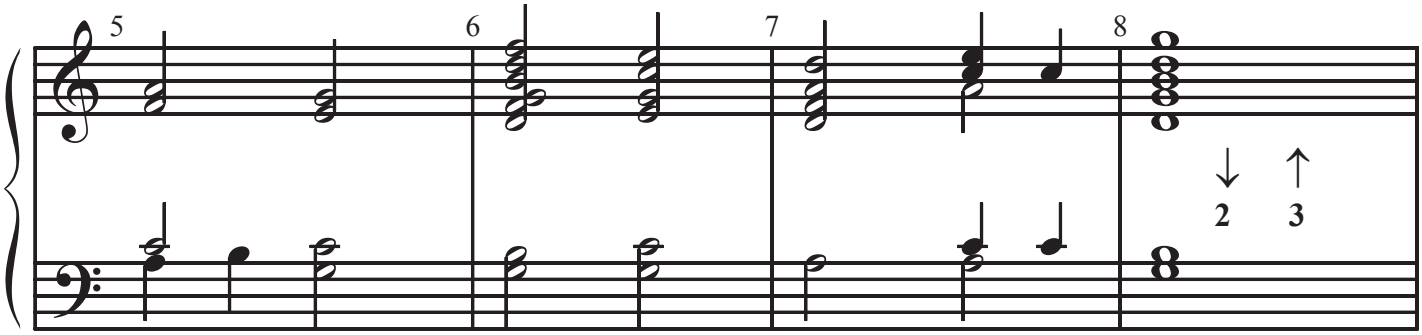
2 Octaves
Handbells or Handchimes used: 17

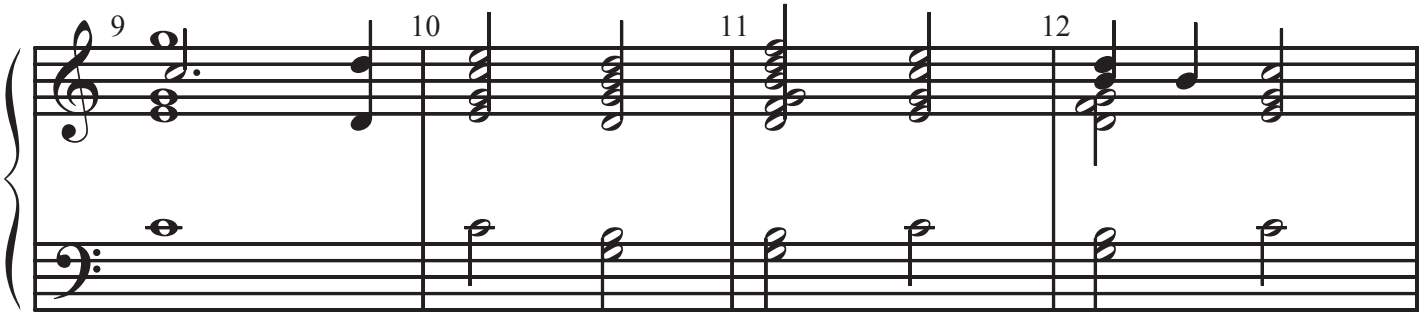


FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
Arranged by Martha Lynn Thompson

Maestoso (♩ = 120-128)







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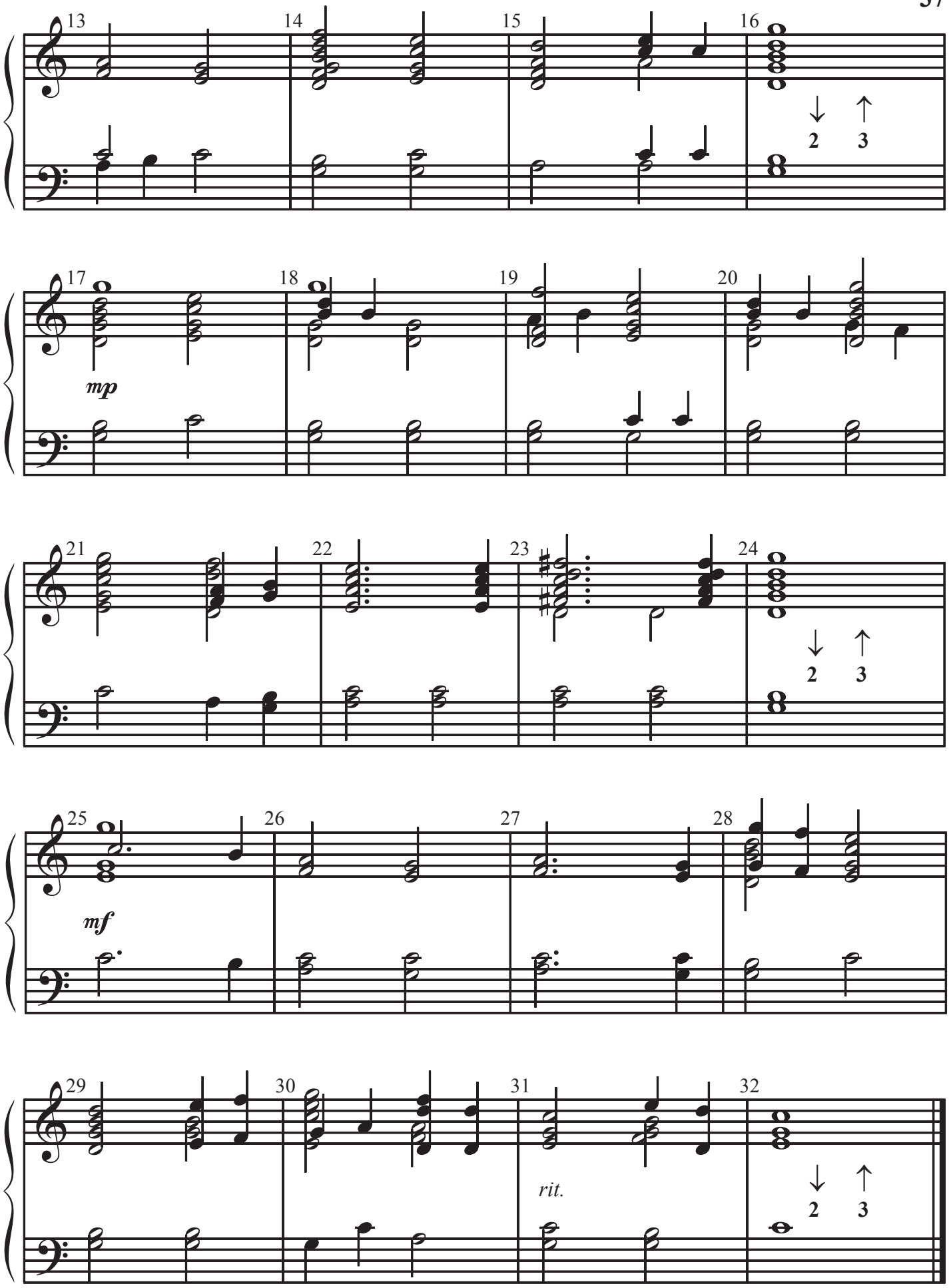
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