taken away my last hope of future good for Edward. I could not have blamed you, dear. You had borne and done so much and for so long, and would have been justified had you turned round to me and said, 'If Edward stays, I go.'"

"Oh, mother! I could never have said that."

"My darling, you did not, and your mother thanks you with all her heart, and prays that God will bless and abundantly reward you. A sister's love and endurance may be tried too sorely, though it seems to me that a mother cannot help forgiving the child she has nurtured."

"But, surely, mother, Christ's servant may have strength to do what would be too hard for the sister! No love but His could have constrained me and enabled me to conquer my indignation against Edward, and to say truly, 'I forgive you,' when he pleaded with me just now. Mother, dear, I had hard thoughts of you too, because I felt that you took my brother's part too much, and against me. And I had tried and worked, as I feared, all in vain. Madame Leeson showed me that I did not understand how a mother clings to the weakest, even the worst amongst her children, it may be, but in order to help and to bless. Forgive my hard thoughts, mother," sobbed Ellen, on her mother's breast.

"Forgive me also, darling. I have grieved too over the memory of——"

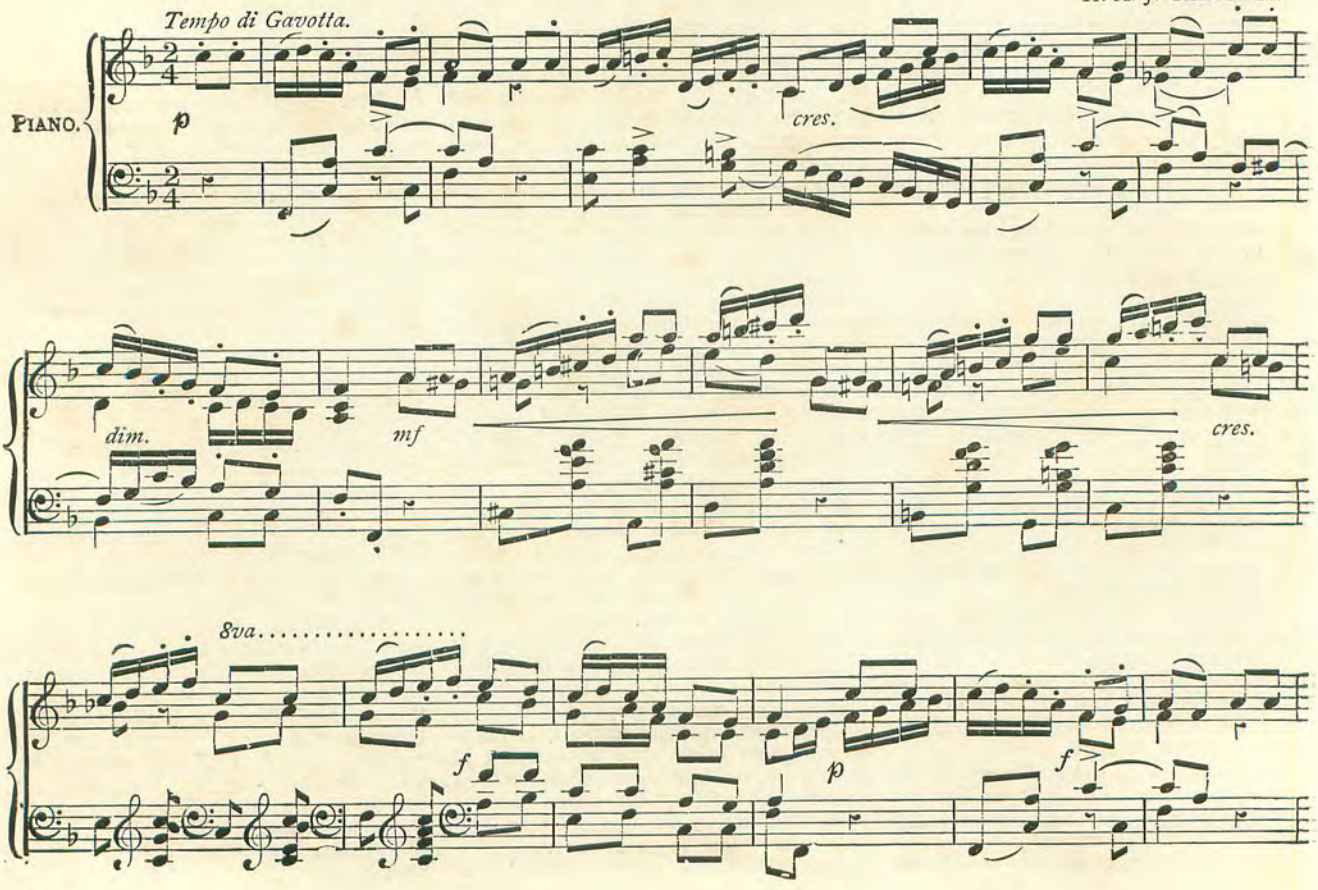
"Do not mention the past, dear; let us try to forget it. Edward looked really happy when he heard me say I forgave him. He knows I would only speak the truth. And," continued the girl, the divine light of love shining from her sweet eyes, "if it makes a wrong-doer happy to hear words of forgiveness, how much happier is the one who, by God's grace, has been enabled to say them from the heart! Is it not wonderful that Edward has been sent back in such a manner! You sigh, dear. You think that but for his bodily weakness he would not be here. You must not, you shall not be downhearted. I am determined to believe that, with careful nursing, he will grow strong, and your son shall be given back to you. Not the Edward who came with words of mockery to the door, but the son you have prayed for and who now lies upstairs, thankful to rest his weary head. I shall have a real brother, you a true son. Faith and prayer and patience for a little while. Then all praise and thanksgiving."

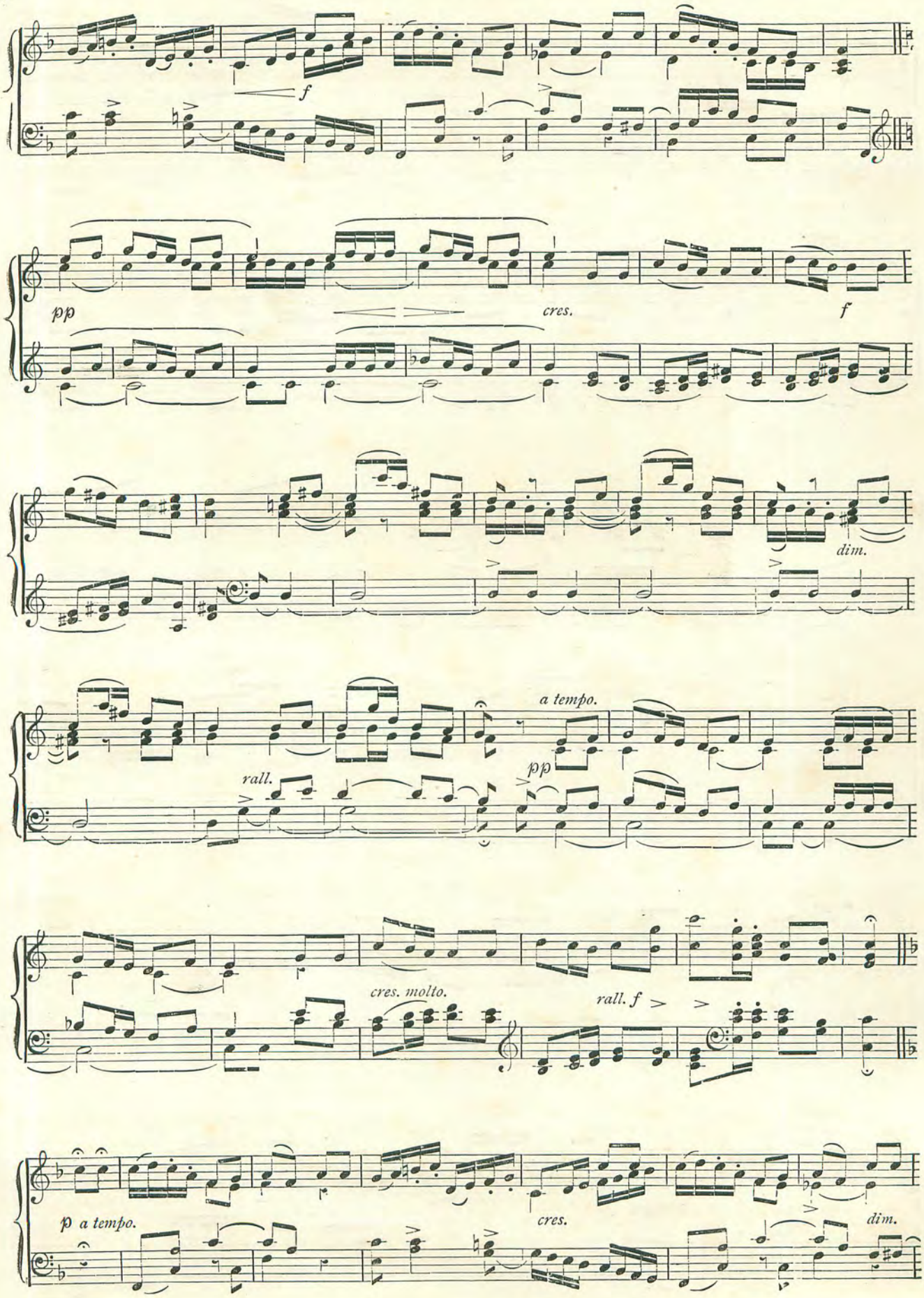
No wonder Ellen's rest was peaceful that night. With the spirit of peace in her heart and of rejoicing in her mother's joy, she slept, as a happy child sleeps. And the mother, if she did not lose consciousness so soon, sang songs of thanksgiving in her heart, and forgot past troubles in present hopes and waking dreams of better days in store for them all.

(To be continued.)

GAVOTTE.

H. A. J. CAMPBELL.

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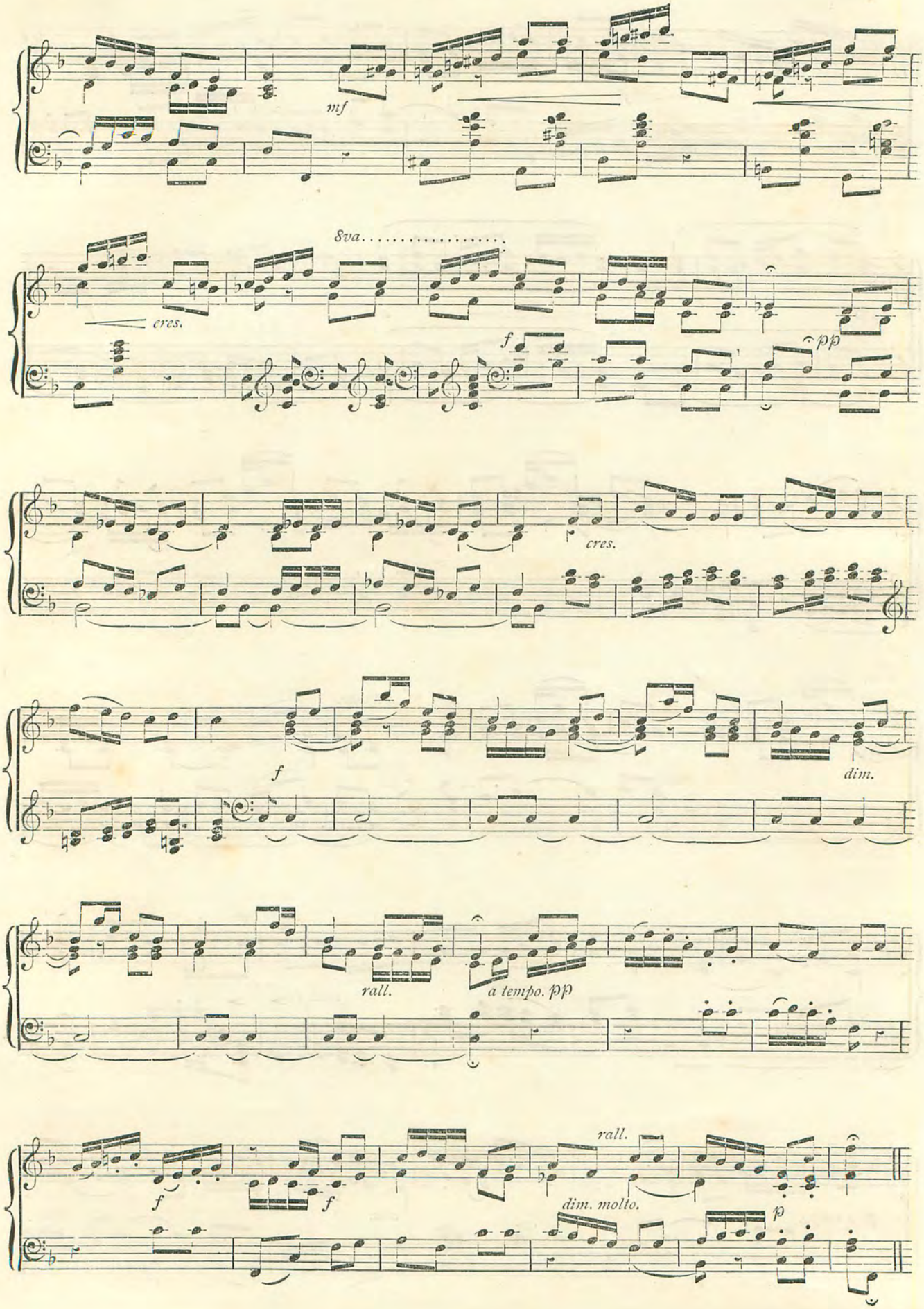
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