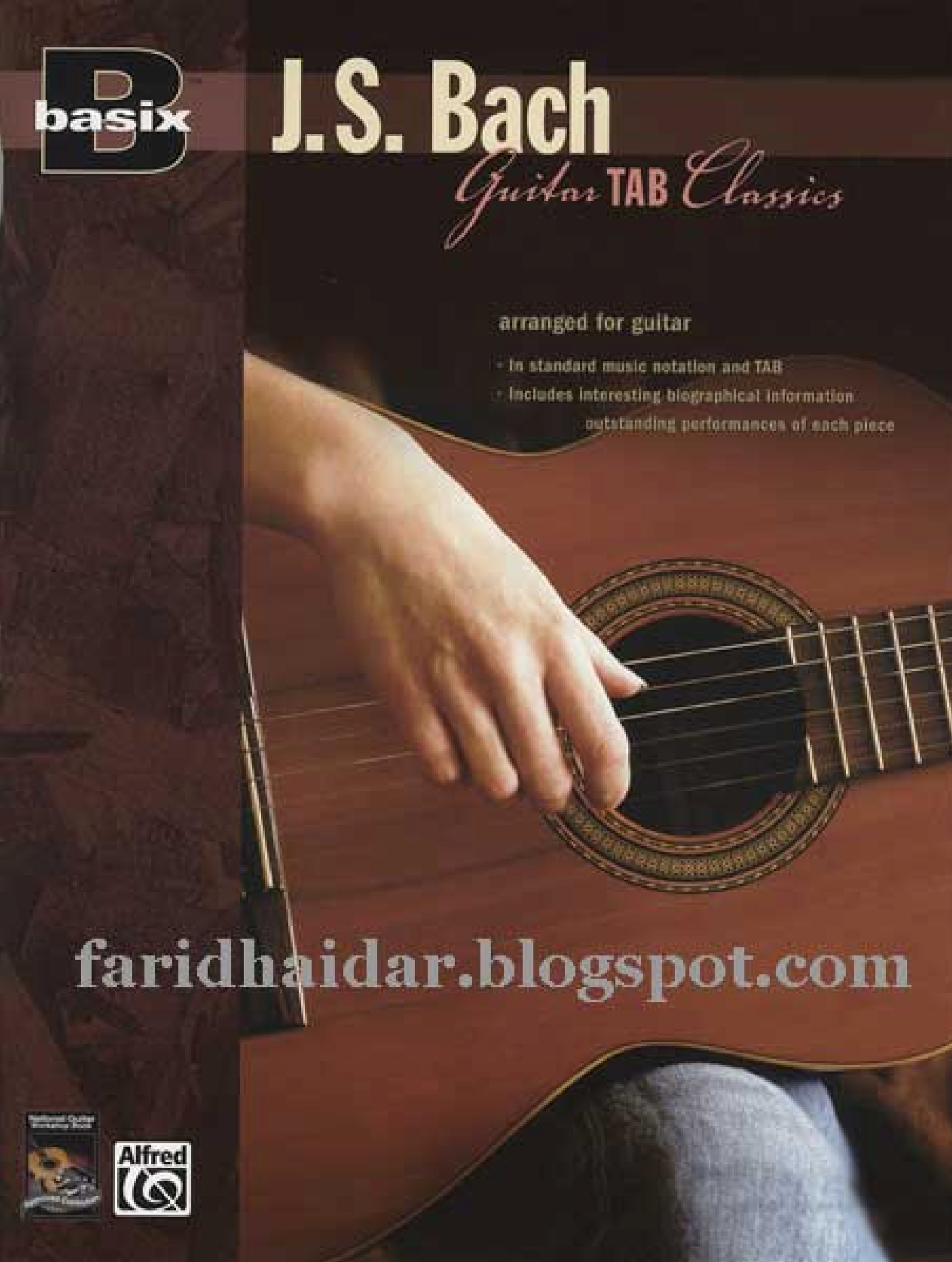
basix

J.S. Bach

Guitar TAB Classics

arranged for guitar

- In standard music notation and TAB
- Includes interesting biographical information
  outstanding performances of each piece



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Alfred

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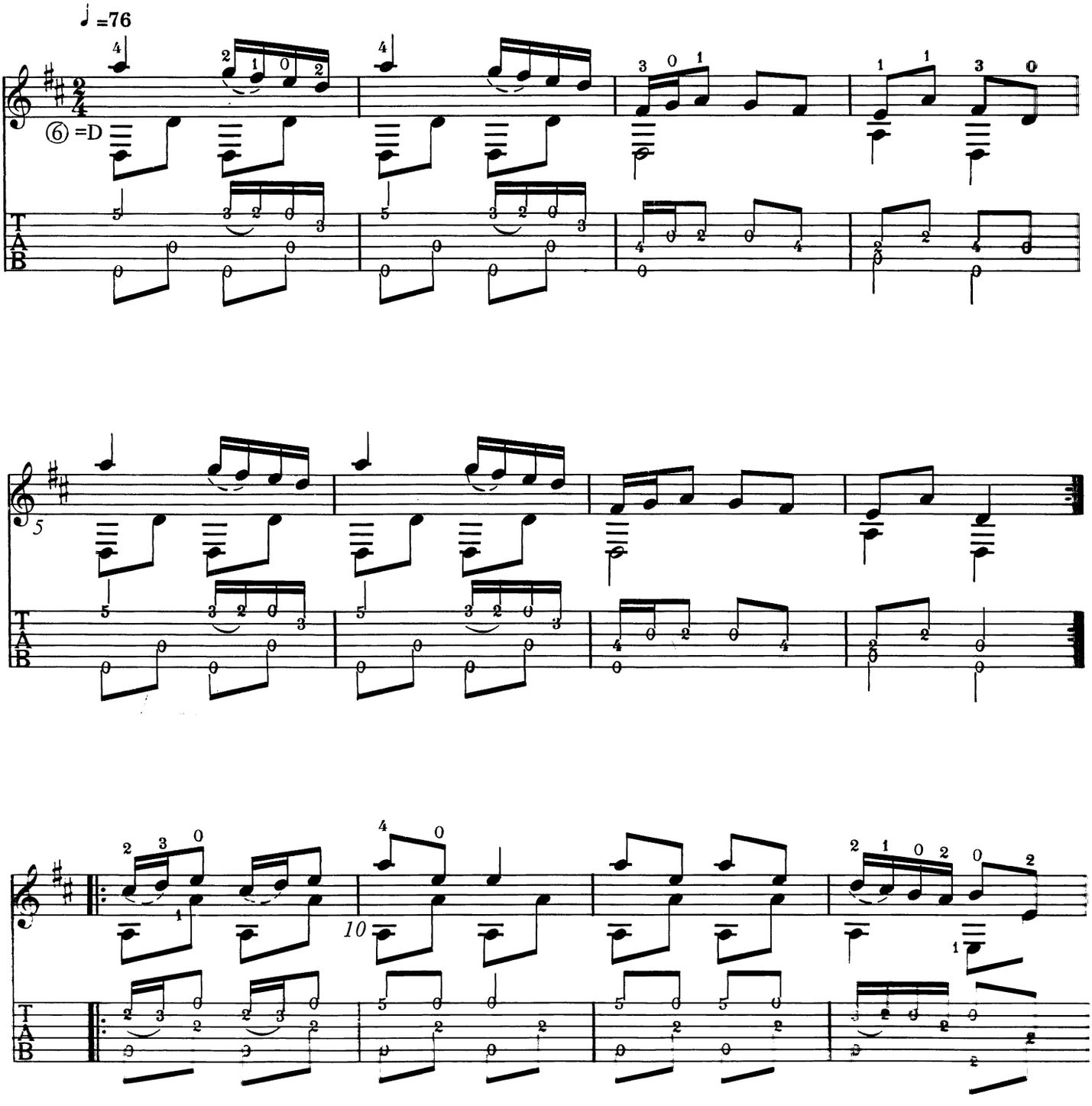
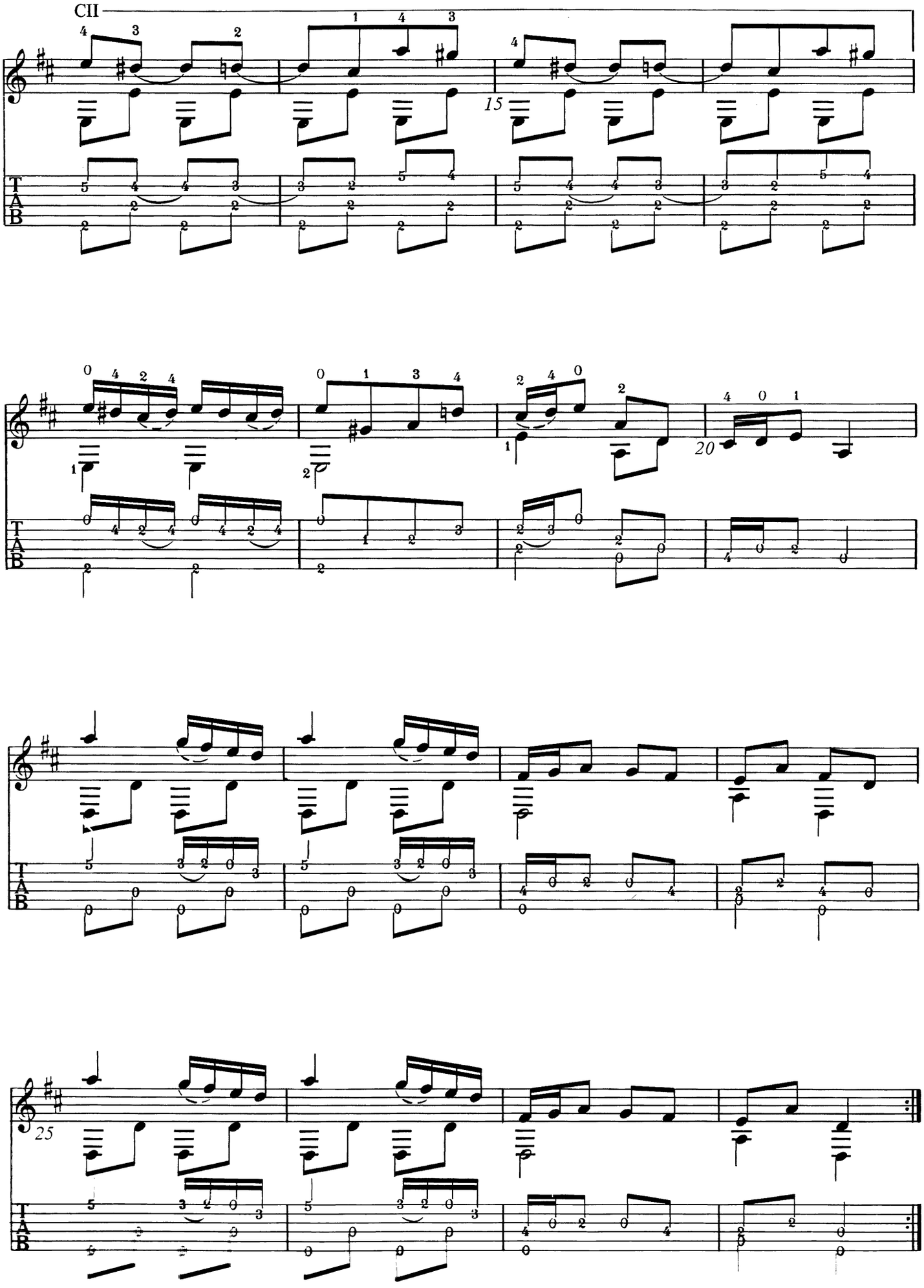
Musette

from the Notenbuch vor Anna Magdalena Bach

In this first piece, the constant sound of the bass strings is intended to suggest the drone of a French bagpipe, or *musette.* This instrument was very popular in aristocratic circles—particularly the court of Louis XIV—in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

To make sure that the alternating bass is kept up, and the drone sounded continuously throughout the piece, use a full barre across the second fret in measures thirteen through sixteen.



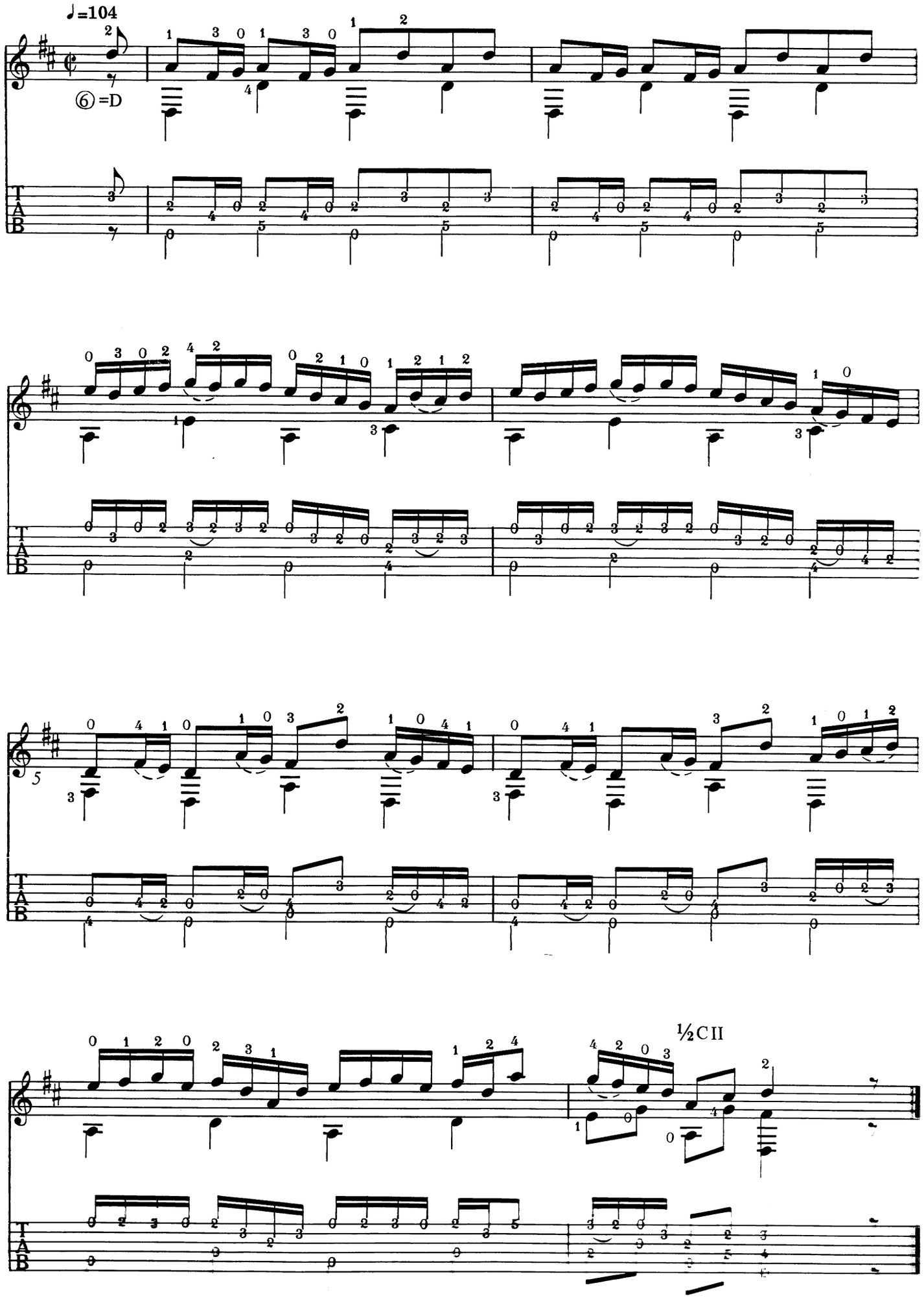

CII
15
20
25
T
A
B

Theme

from the Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major (*first movement*)

The Brandenburg Concertos are a set of six *concerti grossi* for various combinations of instruments commissioned by the Margrave of Brandenburg in 1721. At the time, this particular one was scored for flute, oboe, trumpet, and violin.

A barre used on the final beat in the third measure is an efficient way of fingering that particular phrase and allows the piece to continue in a strong, marchlike manner.

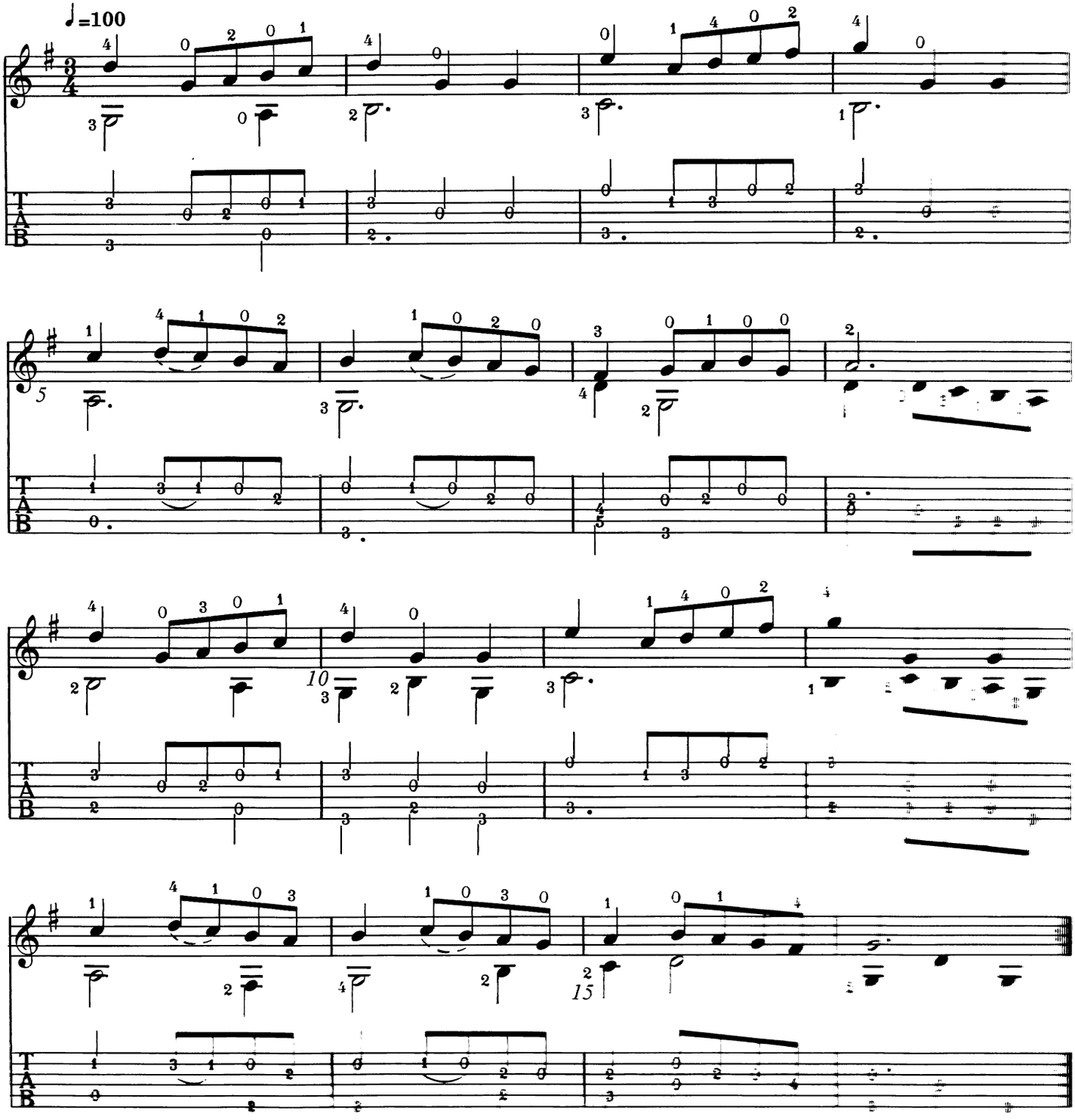

♩=104
⑥=D
½CII

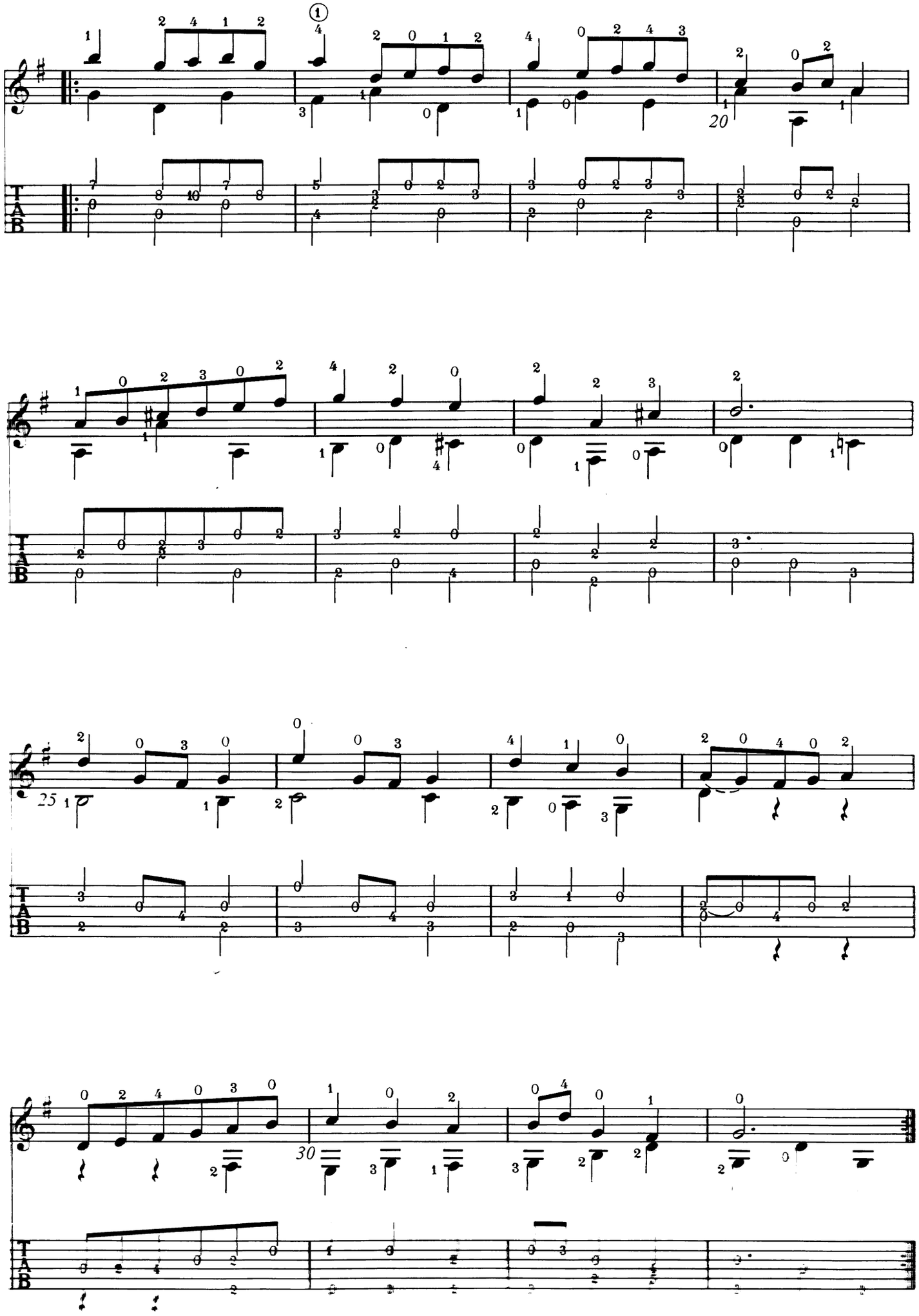
Minuet

from the Notenbuch vor Anna Magdalena Bach

The minuet was originally a rustic peasant dance that became so popular among the aristocracy that it was adopted as the official court dance in France during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

This little minuet is from the *Notenbuch* (notebook) of Anna Magdalena Bach; a collection of simple but lovely instructional keyboard pieces written by Johann Sebastian for his second wife. The bass line in the B part has been altered slightly from the original in order to enhance the harmonic movment and give it the feel of a walking bass.



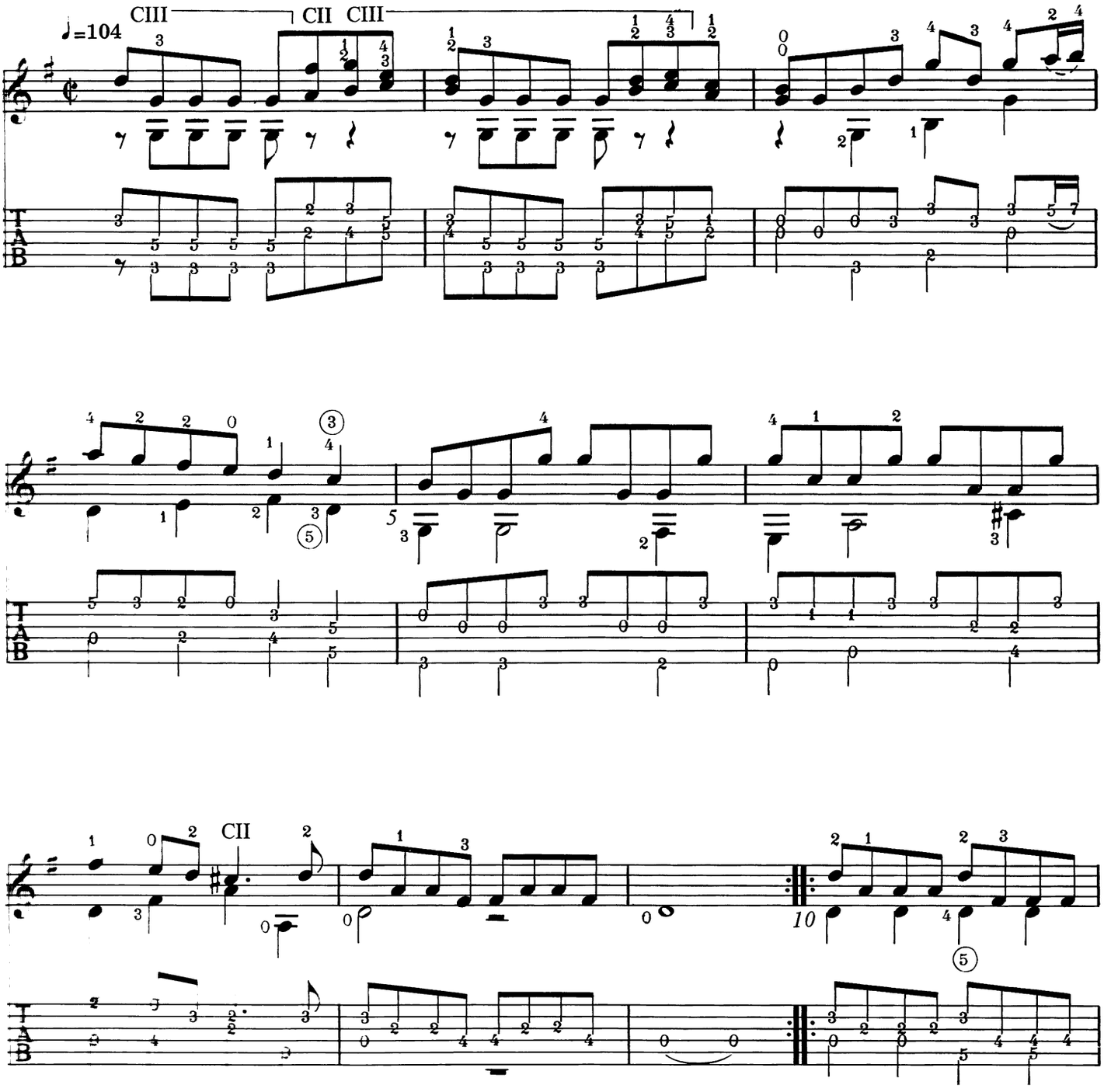

1
20
25
30
T
A
B

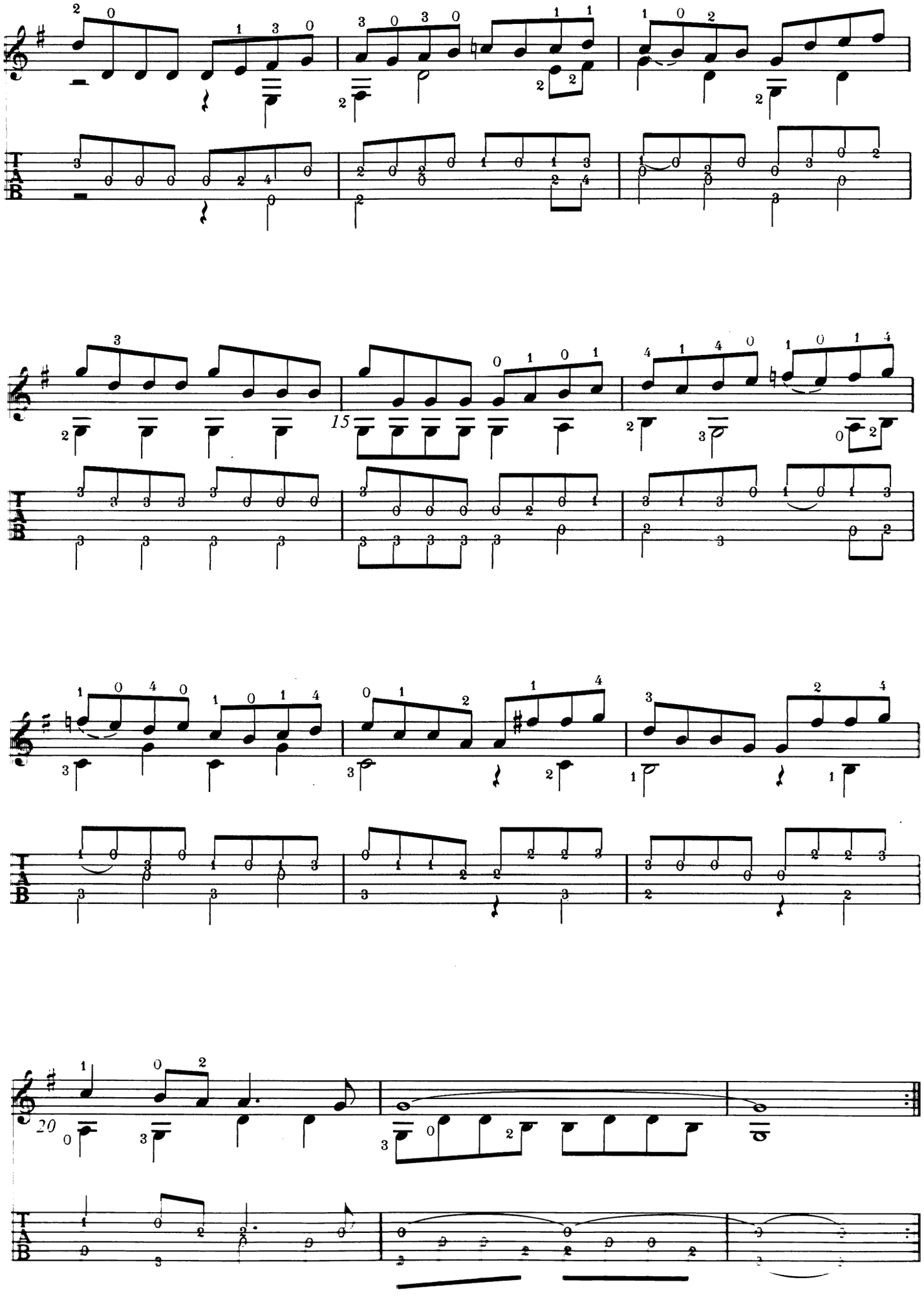
March

from the Notenbuch vor Anna Magdalena Bach

During the Baroque, the literature for harpsichord and lute were often interchangeable. As a result, this march required very little alteration from the original keyboard music, and should be played in a simple, gallant style.

For those who are learning these pieces mostly from the tablature, using barres in the first two measures will get the tempo off to a good, strong start. The Roman numerals preceded by a **C** (short for *capo*) in the music indicate exactly what frets are to be barred. In fact, if you are having difficulties coming up with a suitable fingering of your own, or if you'd like to speed up the learning process a bit, try going through and writing the fingering given with the music into the tablature. Also, thinking of the second half of the fourth measure as a C7 chord-form moved up two frets (making it a D7), might help to get the music "in your fingers," so to speak.




15
20
T
A
B

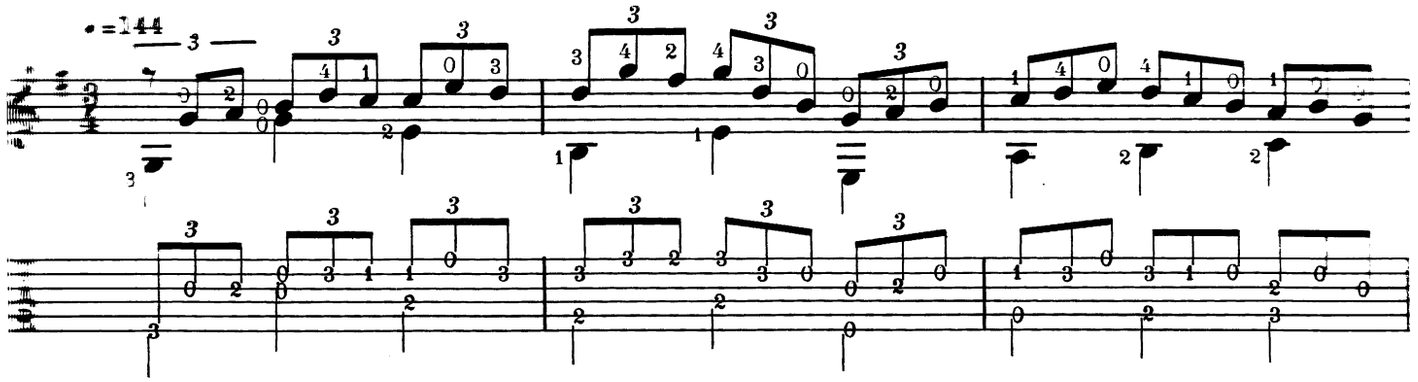
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Jesu bleibet meine Freude *from Cantata No. 147*

What is probably one of Bach's most famous compositions, *Jesu bleibet meine Freude* was written for Cantata No. 147 and scored for chorus, strings, and continuo. However, its beauty is so simple and transcendant, that arrangements have appeared for a variety of instruments and ensembles as disparate in tone and tradition as church organ, 5-string banjo, and rock-n-roll band ("Joy" by Apollo 100).

It's possible to personalize this particular arrangement, and give it more of a fingerpicking feel, by inserting more hammer-ons and pull-offs throughout.

Measures four, twelve, and thirteen will probably go easier for you if the second finger (sounding an A) is held down throughout.



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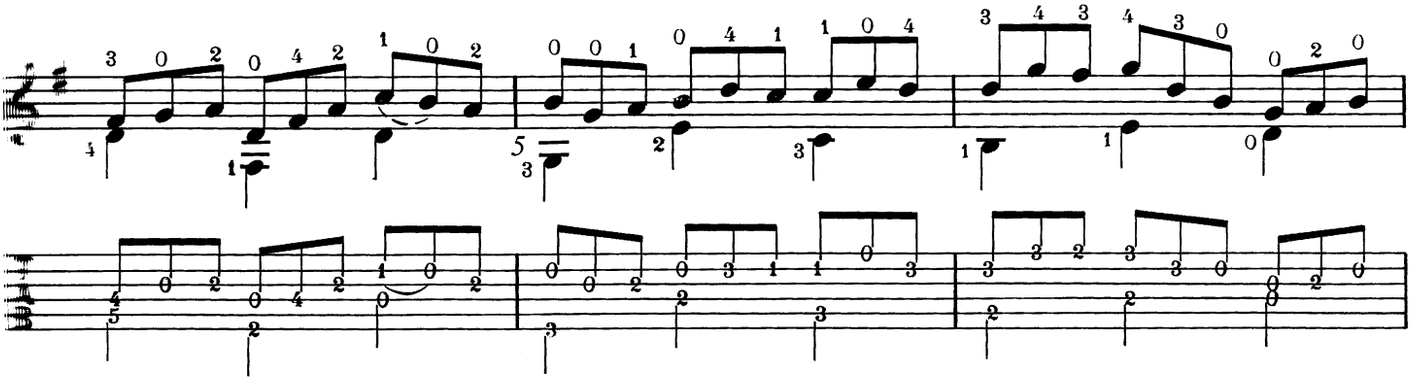

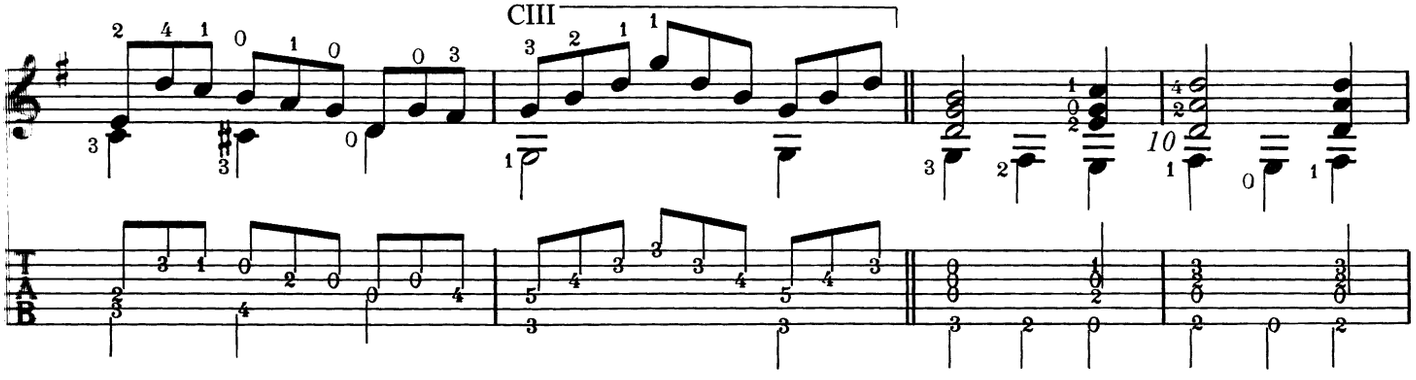

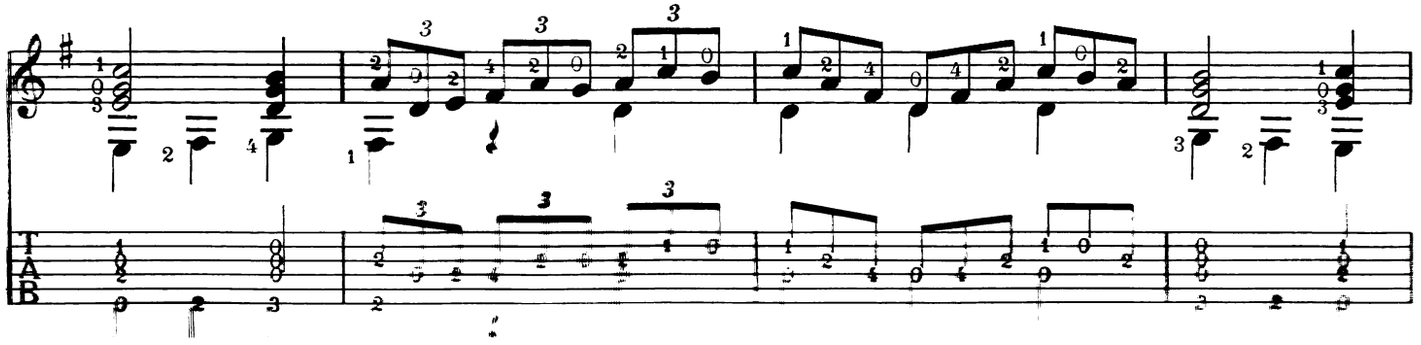

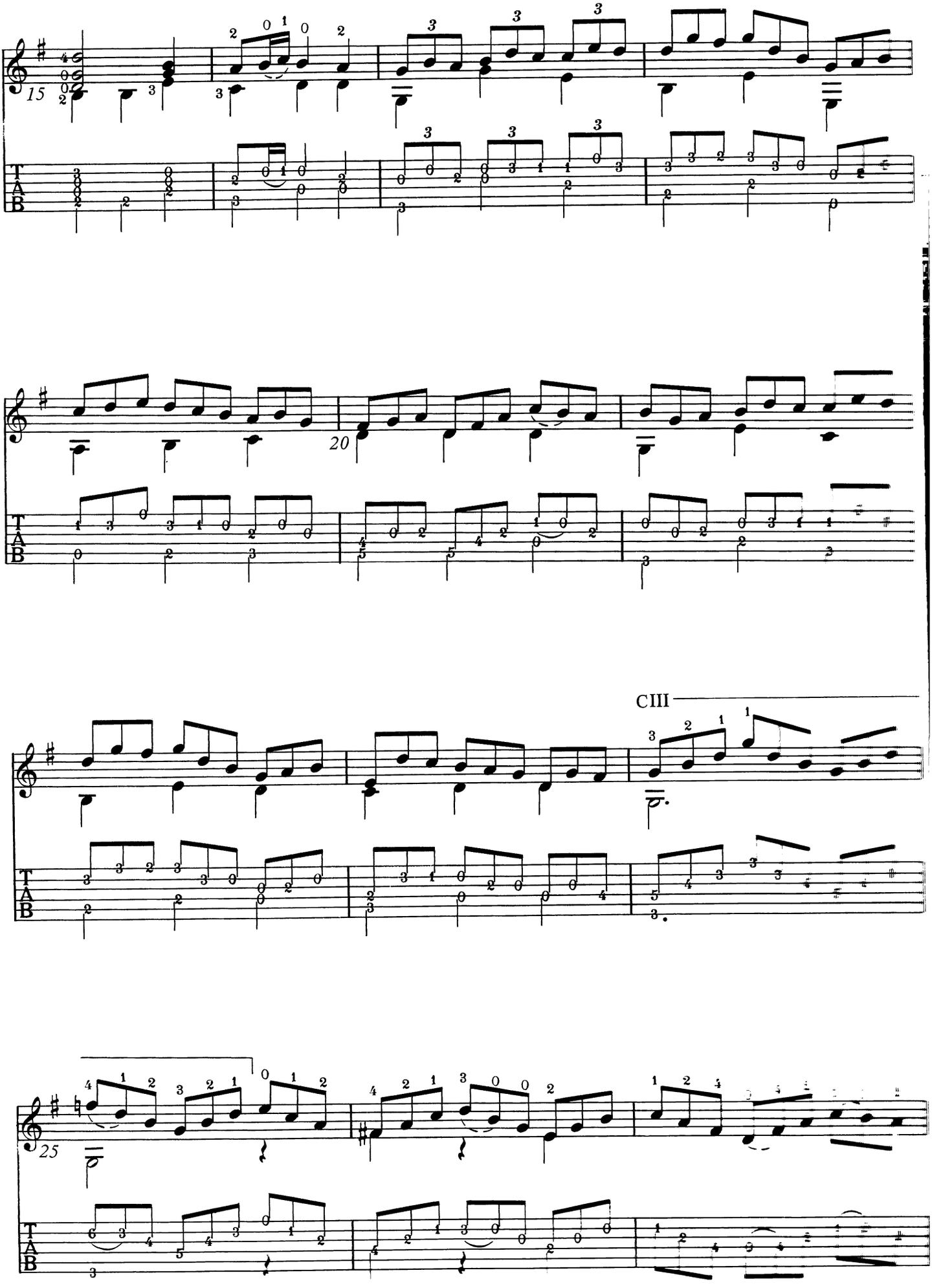
15
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CIII
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T
A
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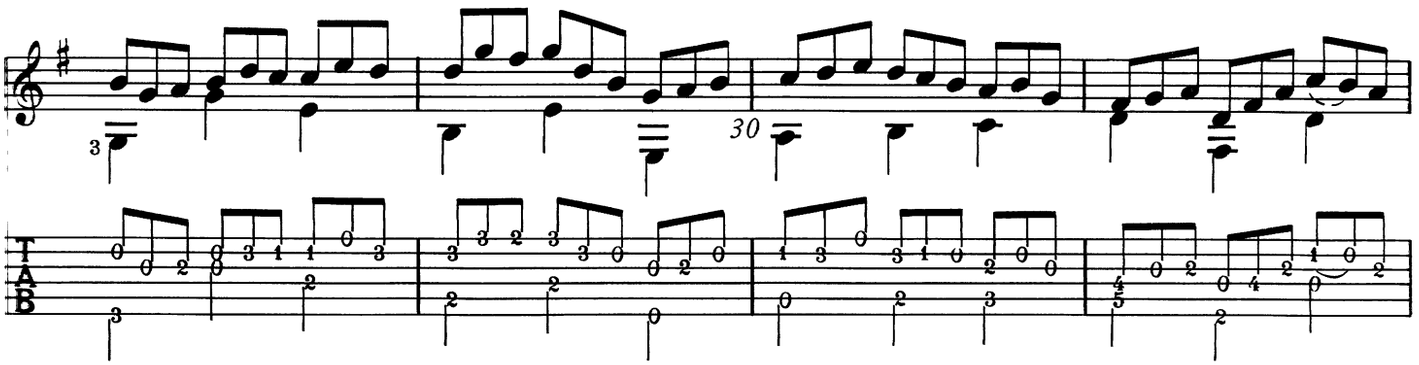
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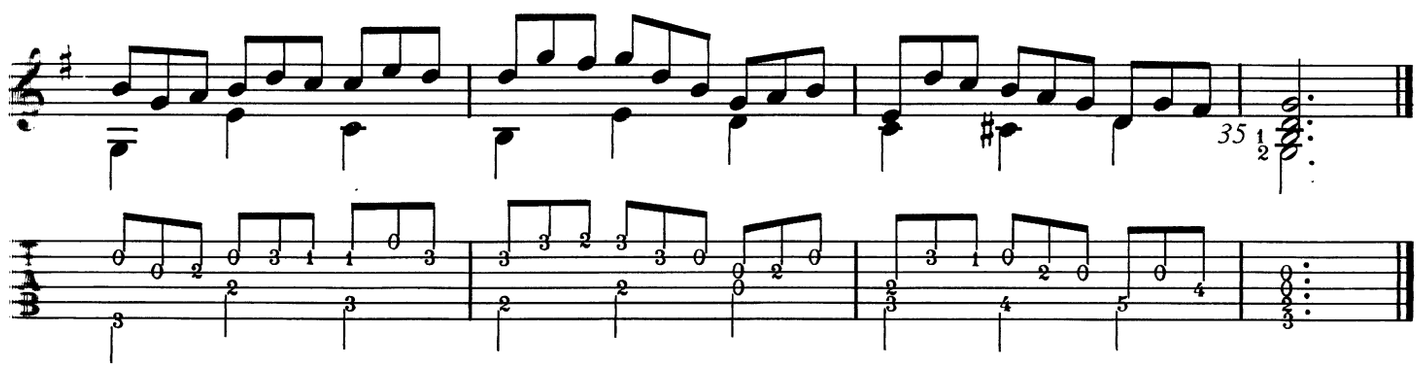
35

Gavotte I and II

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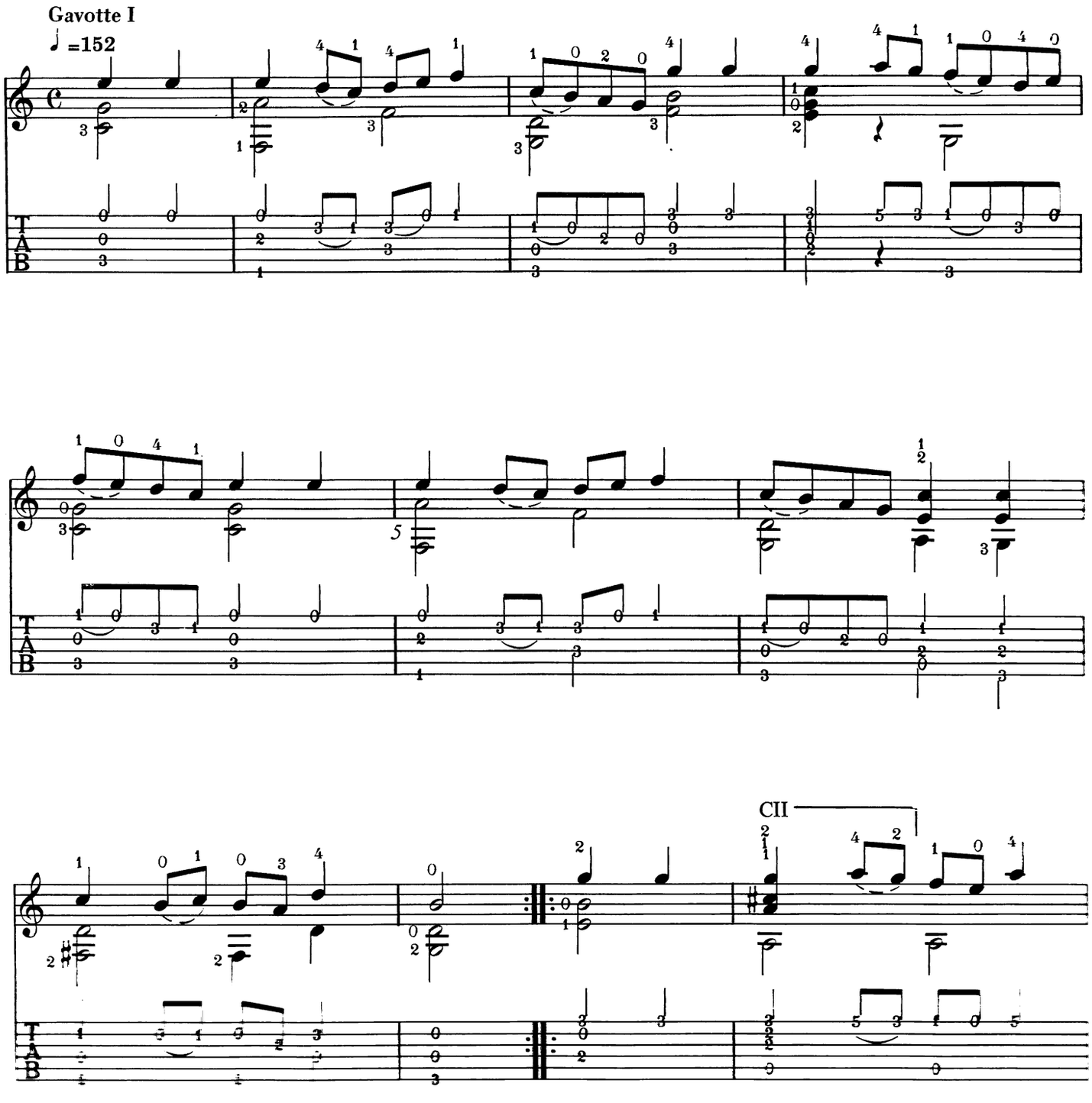
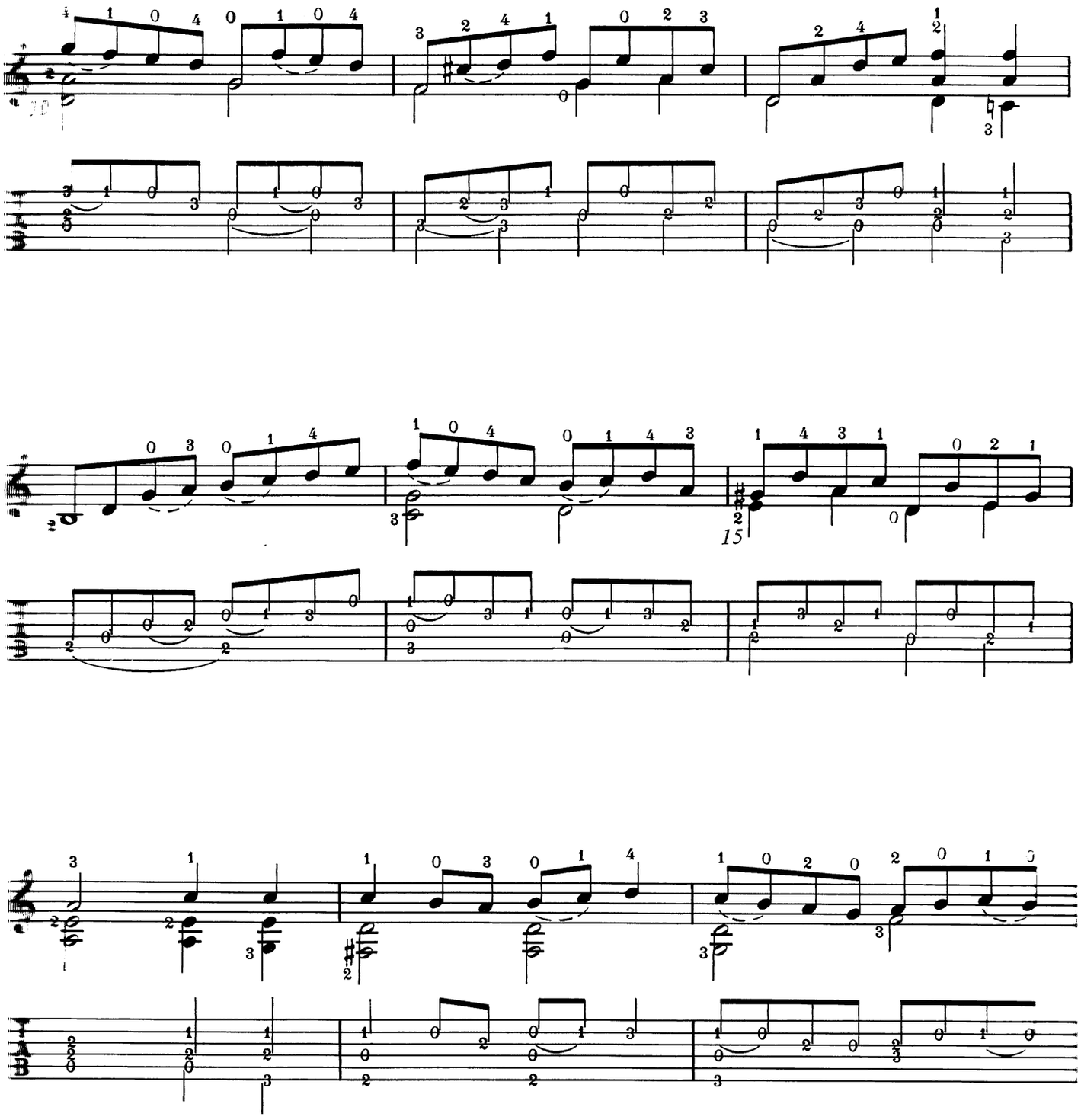
from the sixth Cello Suite

The gavotte is a lively dance written in *Da Capo* form (A A B B C C D D A B) and is usually characterized by phrases that begin and end in the middle of a measure. It is possible that its name is derived from the *Gavots*; inhabitants of the Pays de Gaps in France. The two pieces here should be played lightly, in a style similar to that of the musette. In measures two, five, and twenty-one, the pull-offs to the C can be performed more simply by holding down the low F and barring across the first fret. The same technique, while a bit more complicated, can also be used in measure twenty-five. The F♯ in measure seven is played twice, so keep that second finger down.

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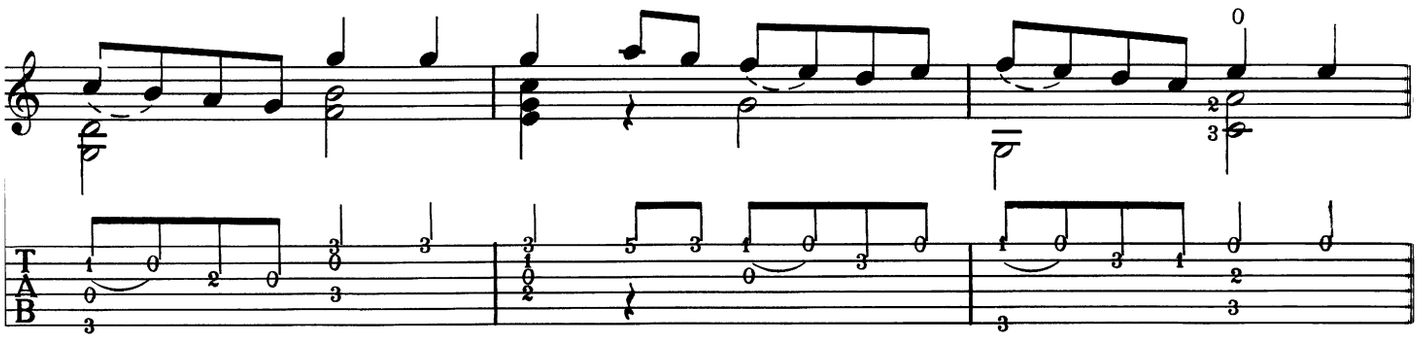
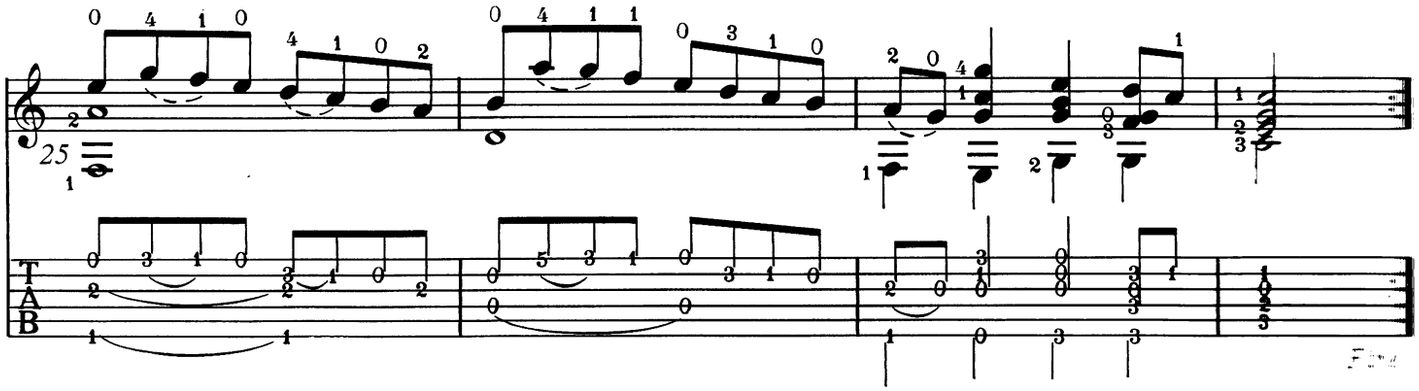
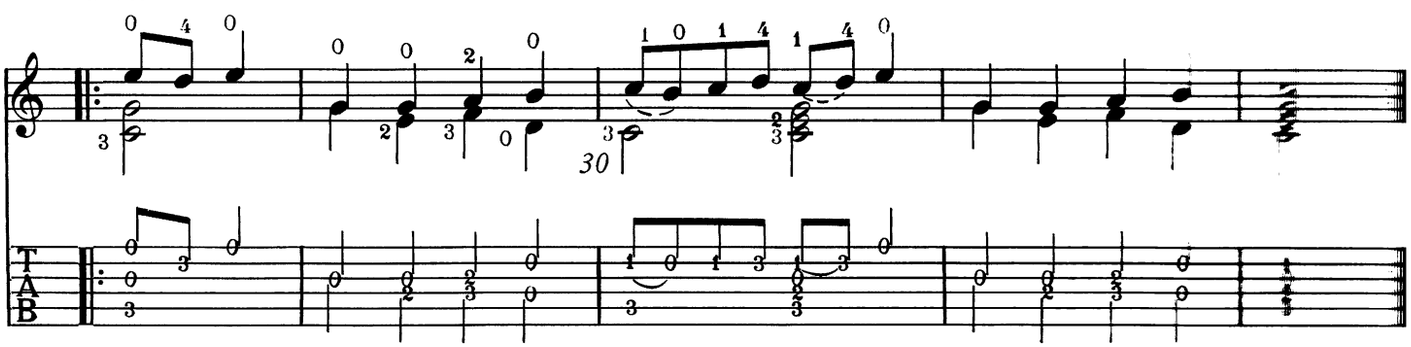
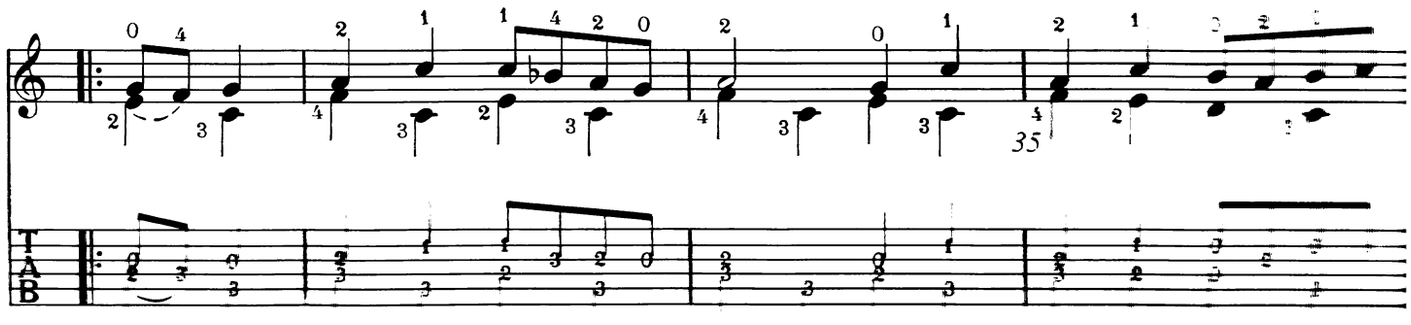
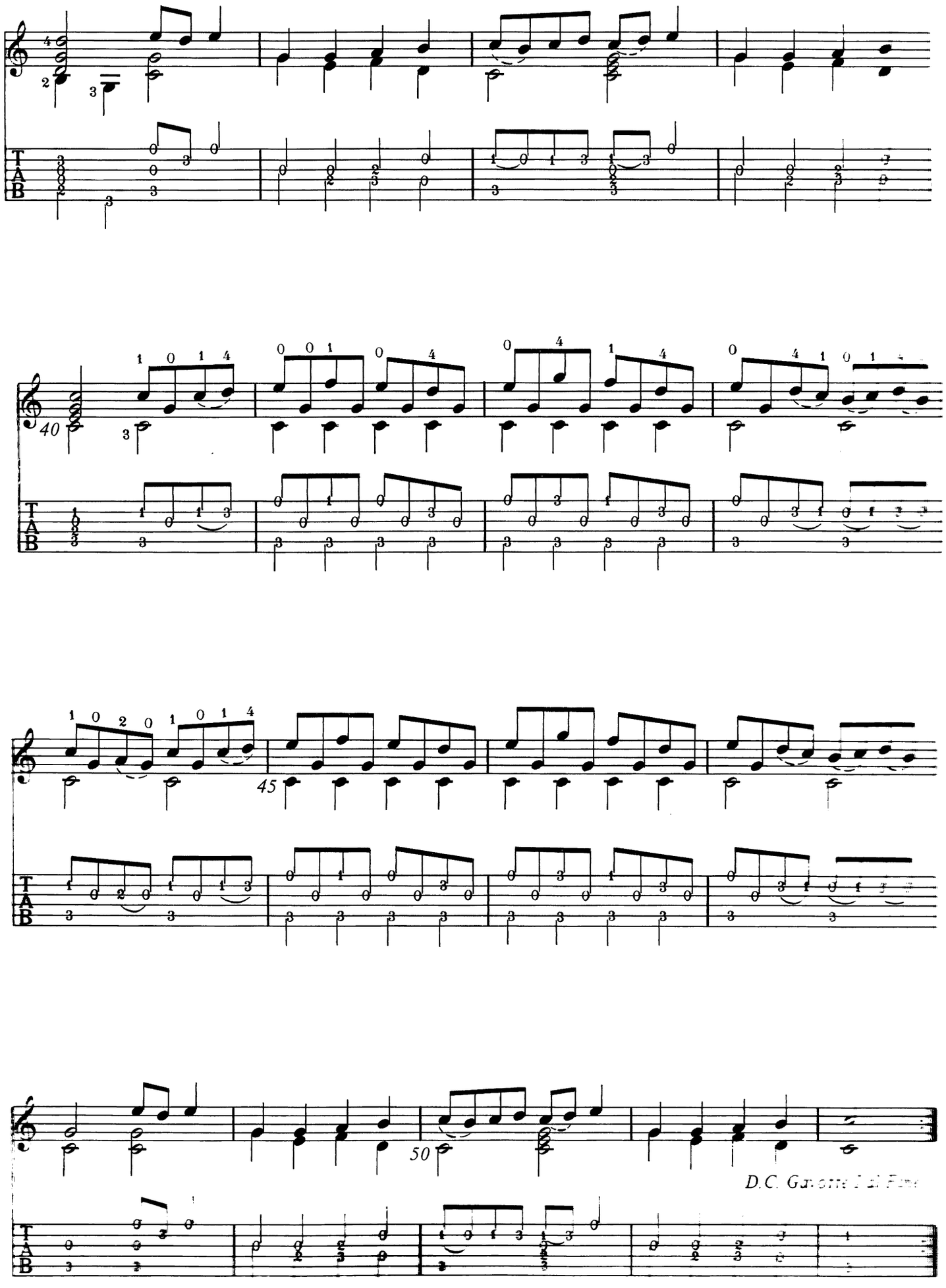




Gavotte II






40
45
50
D.C. Gavotte I al Fine

Sleepers Awake!

Wachet Auf *from Cantata No. 140*

It would be unfortunate to allow the slow, stately dignity of this piece to remind one only of the tedium of an endless graduation processional. It is taken from Cantata No. 140, written for the twenty-seventh Sunday after Trinity, and is actually a countermelody used as a setting for a hymn-tune by Philipp Nicolai which continues to be used in current hymnals and church services.

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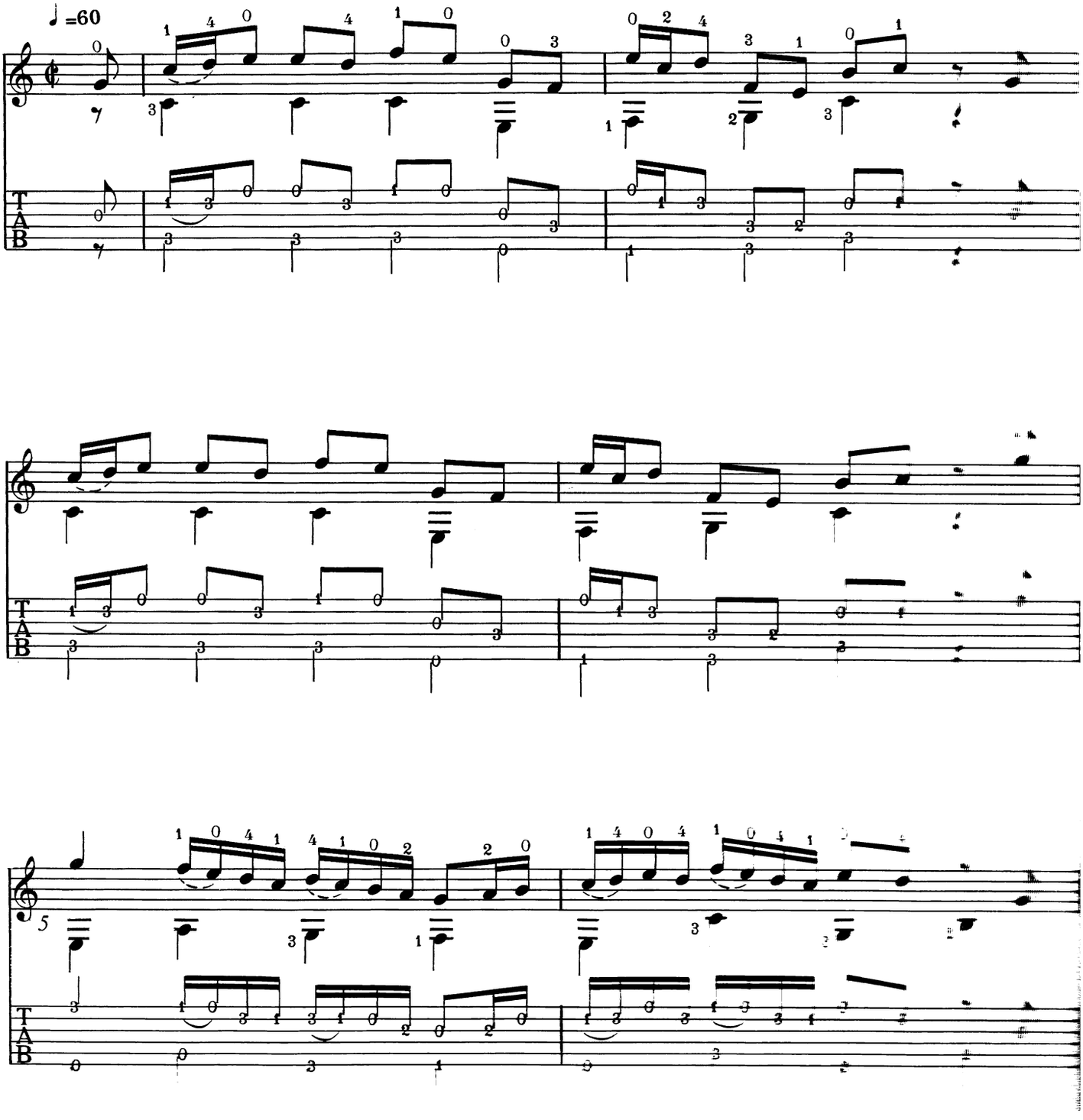
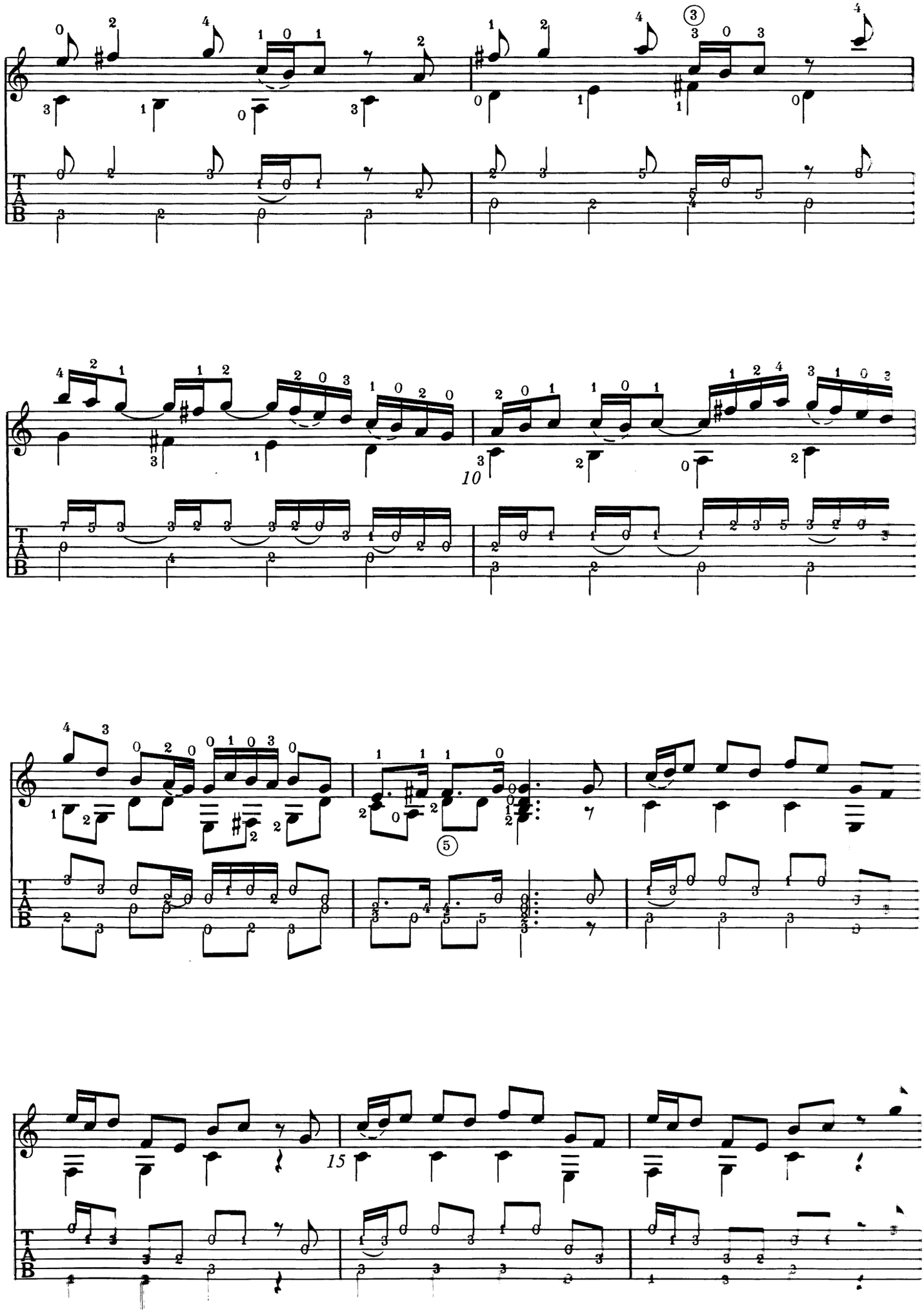
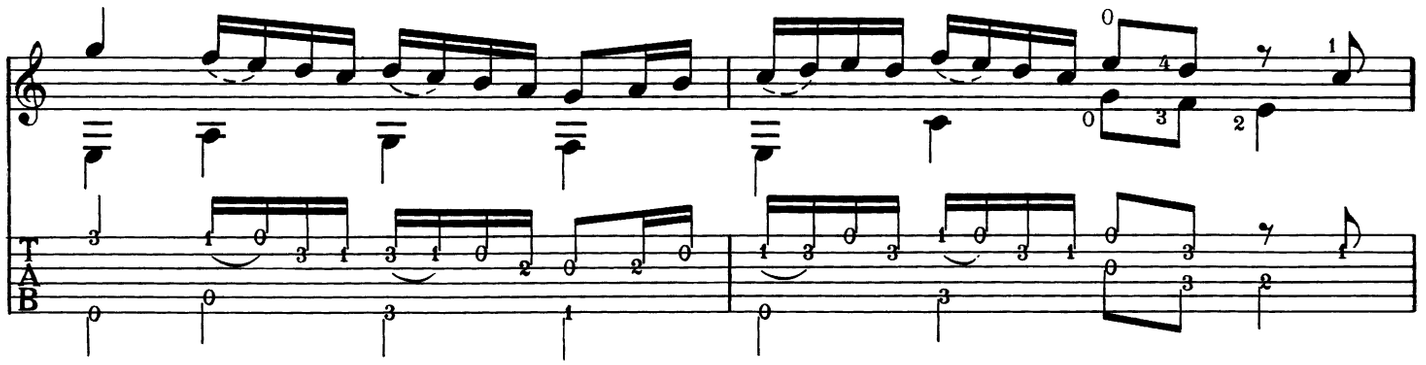
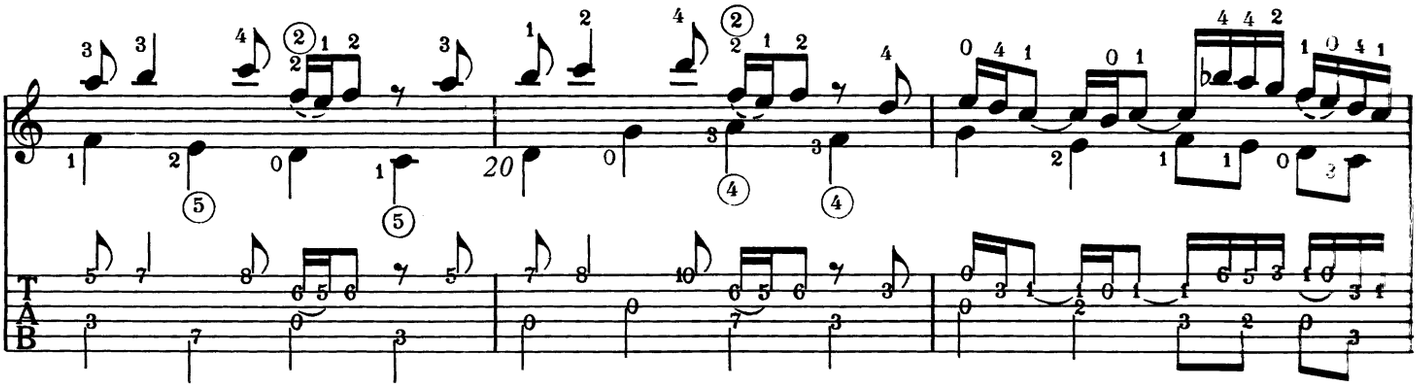



3
10
5
15

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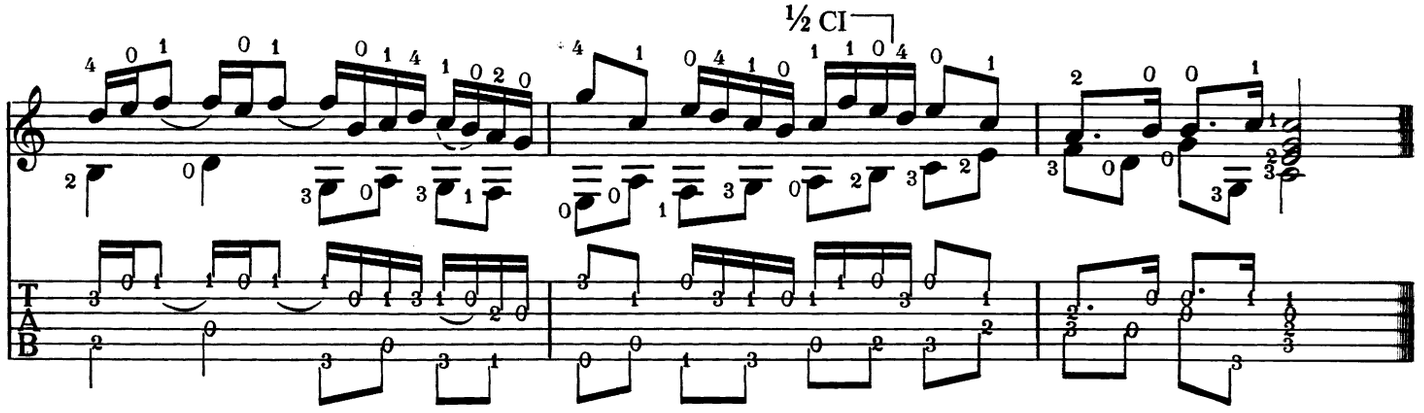
½ CI

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden *from the* Passion according to Saint Matthew

Many of you will identify this immediately as "American Tune" by Paul Simon. Originally it was used as a recurring melodic theme in the *Saint Matthew Passion.*

Before reading straight through this one, it might help to go through and find as many traditional chord-forms as possible. For example, the notes in the third and fourth beats of measure three outline a B7 chord; and thinking of measure five as a D7 changing to a C and then back to a D7 will help get it in your fingers a lot faster.

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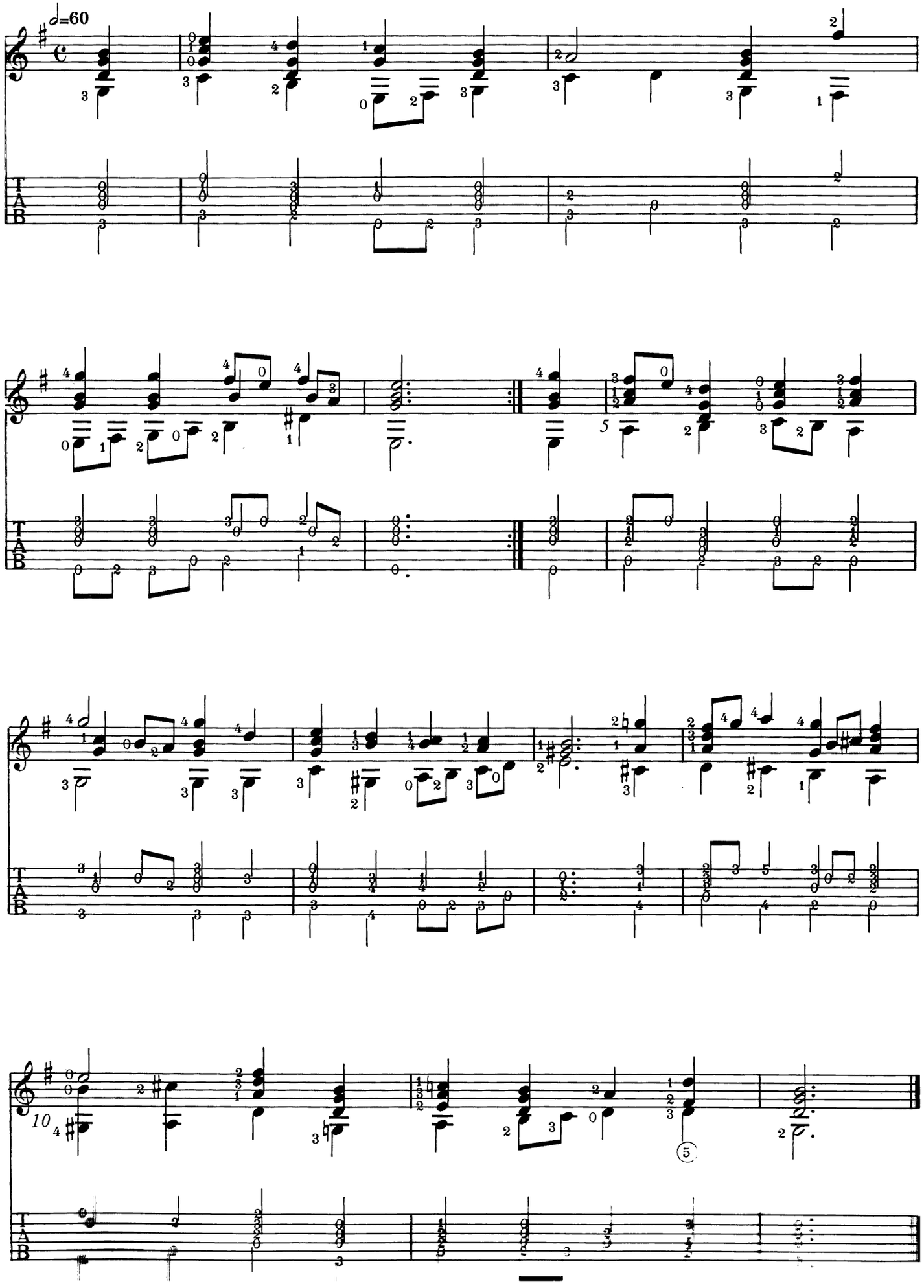

♩=60
T
A
B

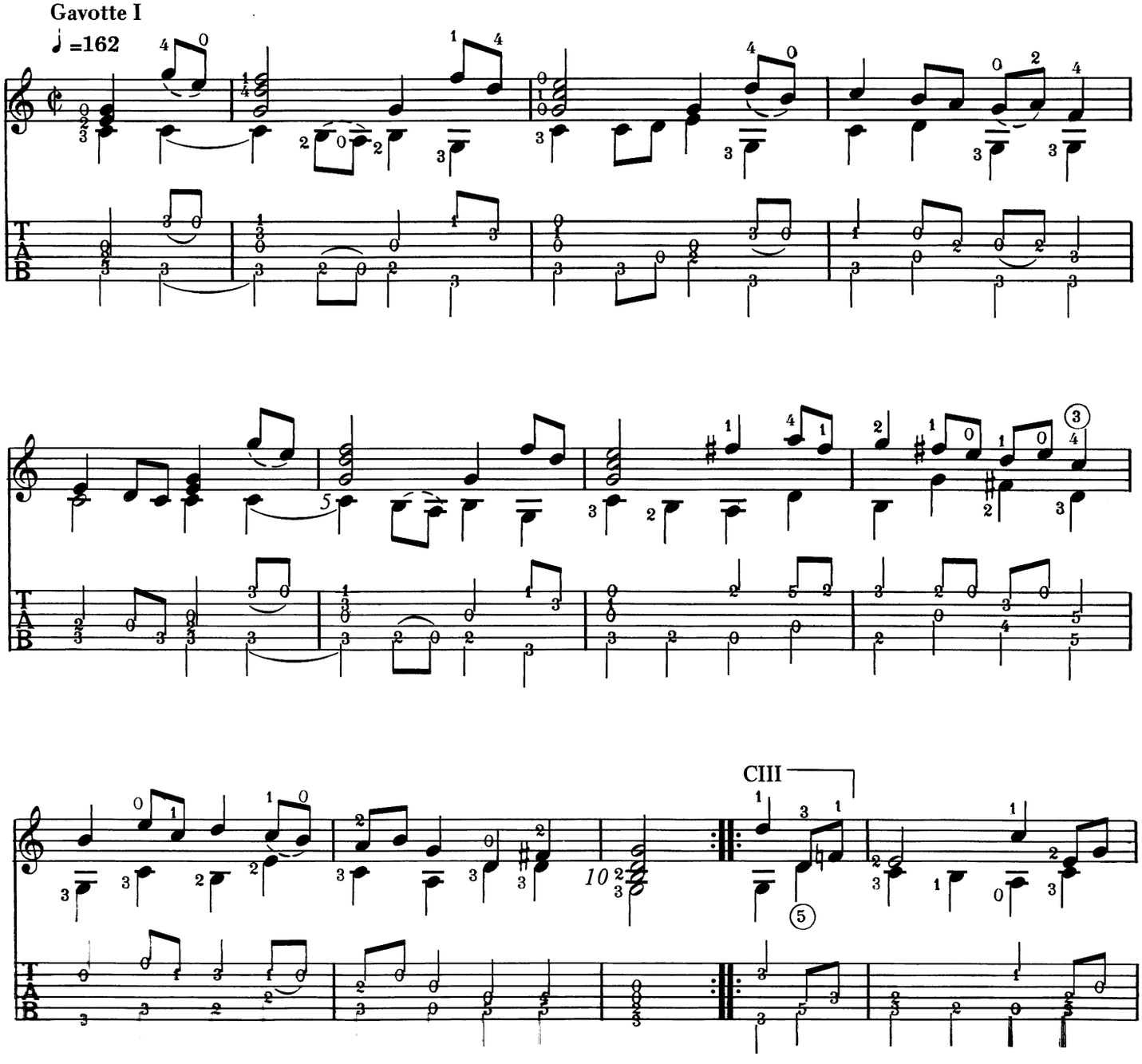
Gavotte I and II

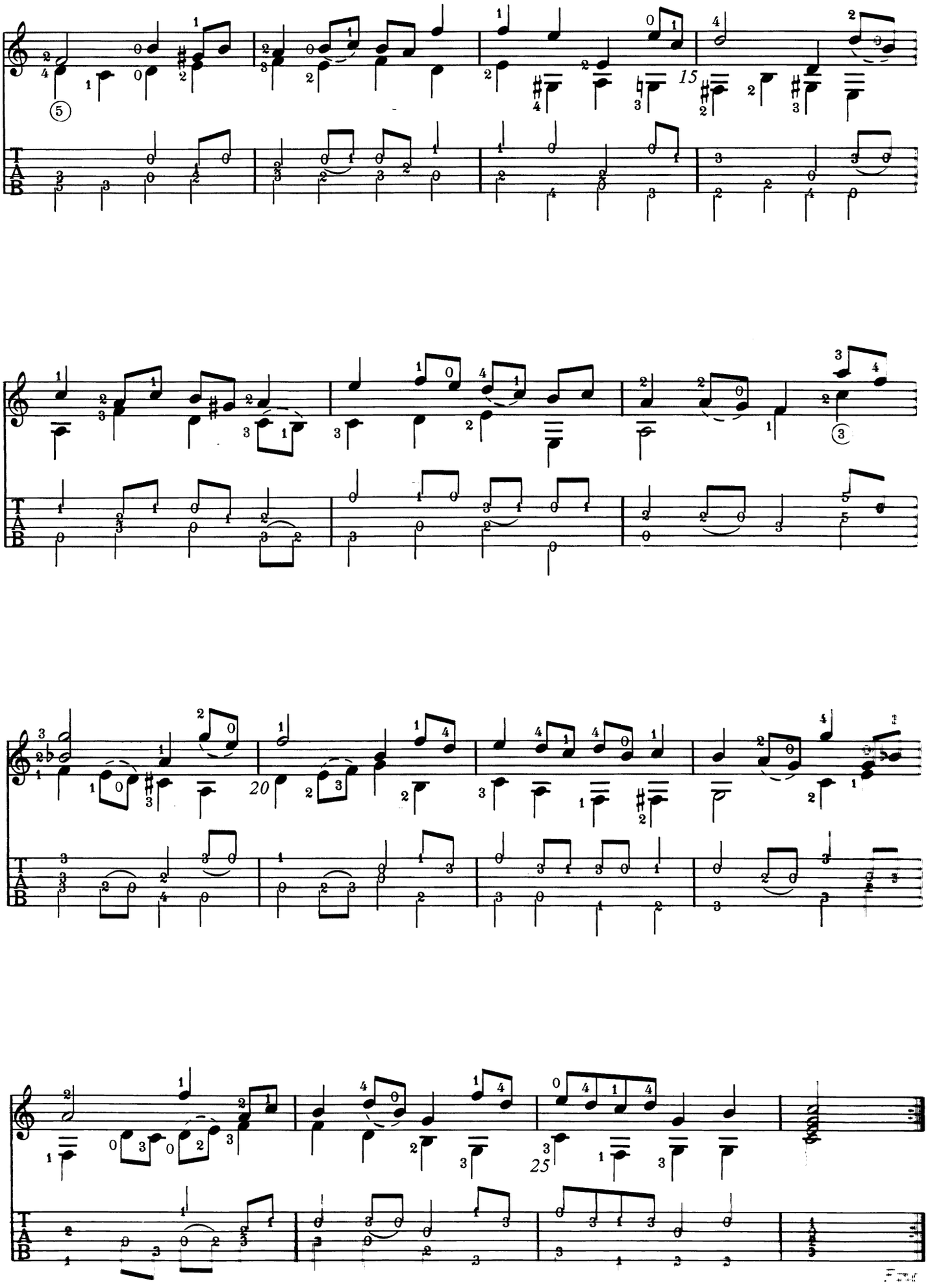
from the Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D Major

Bach wrote four Orchestral Suites, each with an overture followed by a series of pieces that are primarily dances. They were most likely written for the orchestra at Cöthen which Bach directed until his move to Leipzig in 1723.

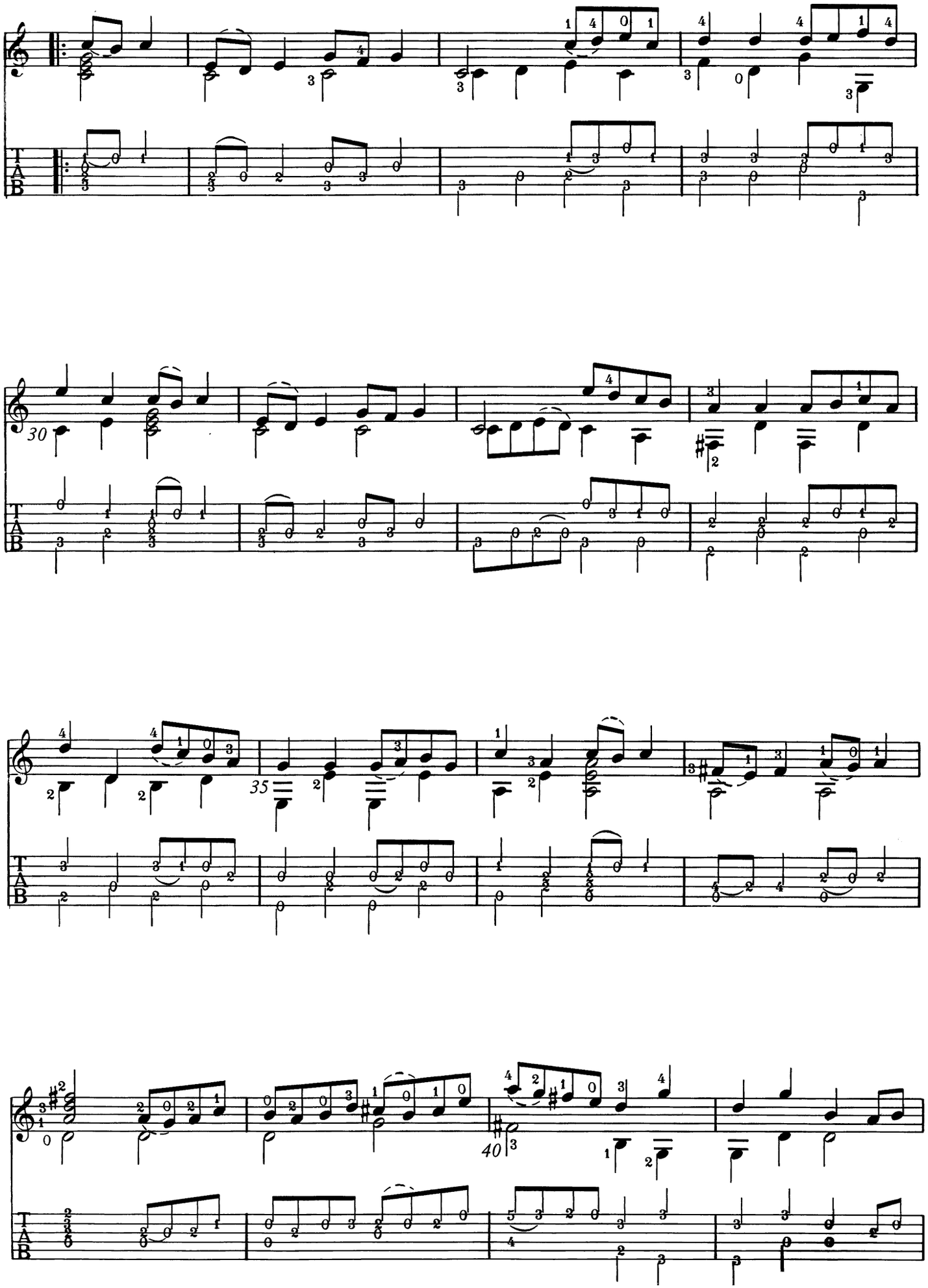
Like the arrangement for "O Sacred Head Now Wounded," there are many easily recognizeable chord-forms in the first gavotte. For example, in the last two beats of measure seven there is a D7 chord played using a C7 chord-form moved up two frets. Thinking of a B7 moved up one fret will help in understanding the second half of measure twenty-two.

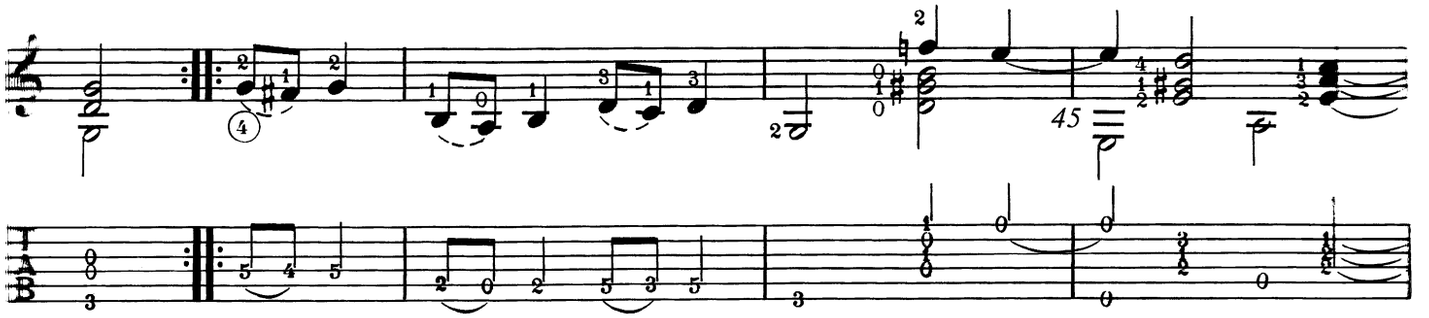
The second gavotte should be a bit more legato and laid-back than the first. If you hold your fingers down in measure thirty-three, you'll notice that most of that measure can be thought of as a D7 chord with an F♯ in the bass. Measures fifty-one and fifty-two will seem difficult at first, but work slowly and follow the fingering and it will come to you faster.

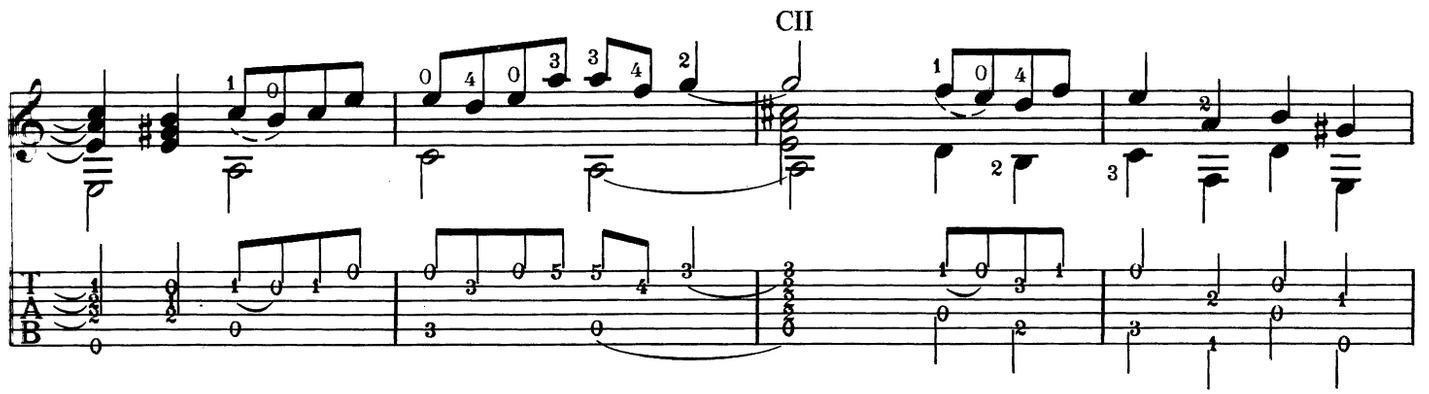


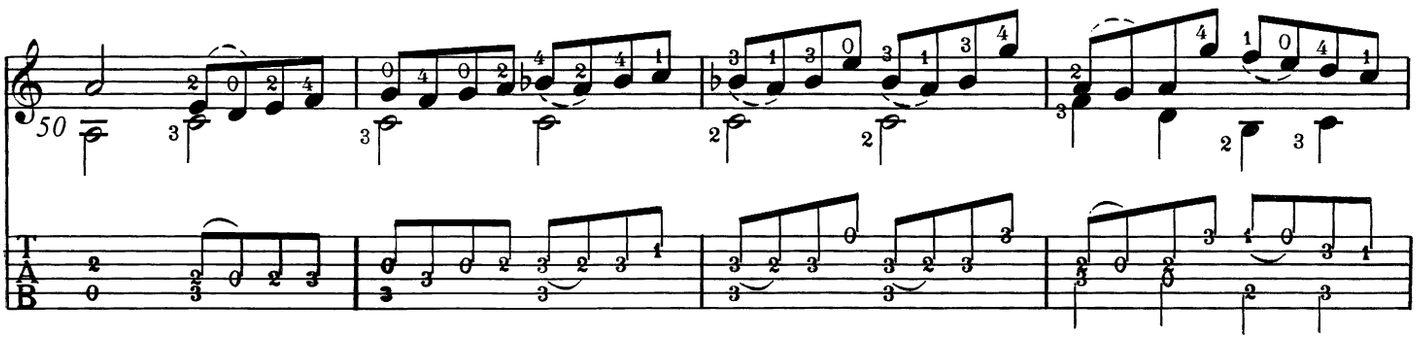

5
15
3
20
25

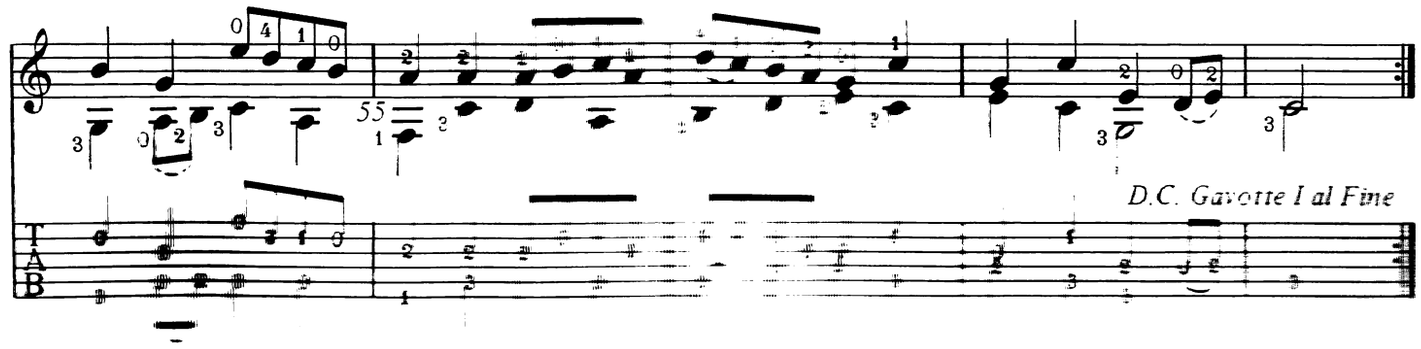
Gavotte II






CII




D.C. Gavotte I al Fine

Bourree

from the first Lute Suite

Like the minuet, the bourree began as a French peasant dance. Bourrees traditionally employ phrasing that begins on the fourth beat of the measure, and so start with a single upbeat. They are generally executed in a joyful, quick, and even manner (as opposed to the swingy version popularized by Jethro Tull).

Although this piece may sound a bit more "note-y" than some of the other pieces in the book, it is still possible to comprehend most of the phrases as chord changes. Hold the second finger down in measure three (the A) all the way through to measure four. The bass line in measures twenty-one and twenty-two can be played very effectively by using a right-hand pattern of thumb-index-thumb (*p-i-p*) for each of the two three-note phrases.

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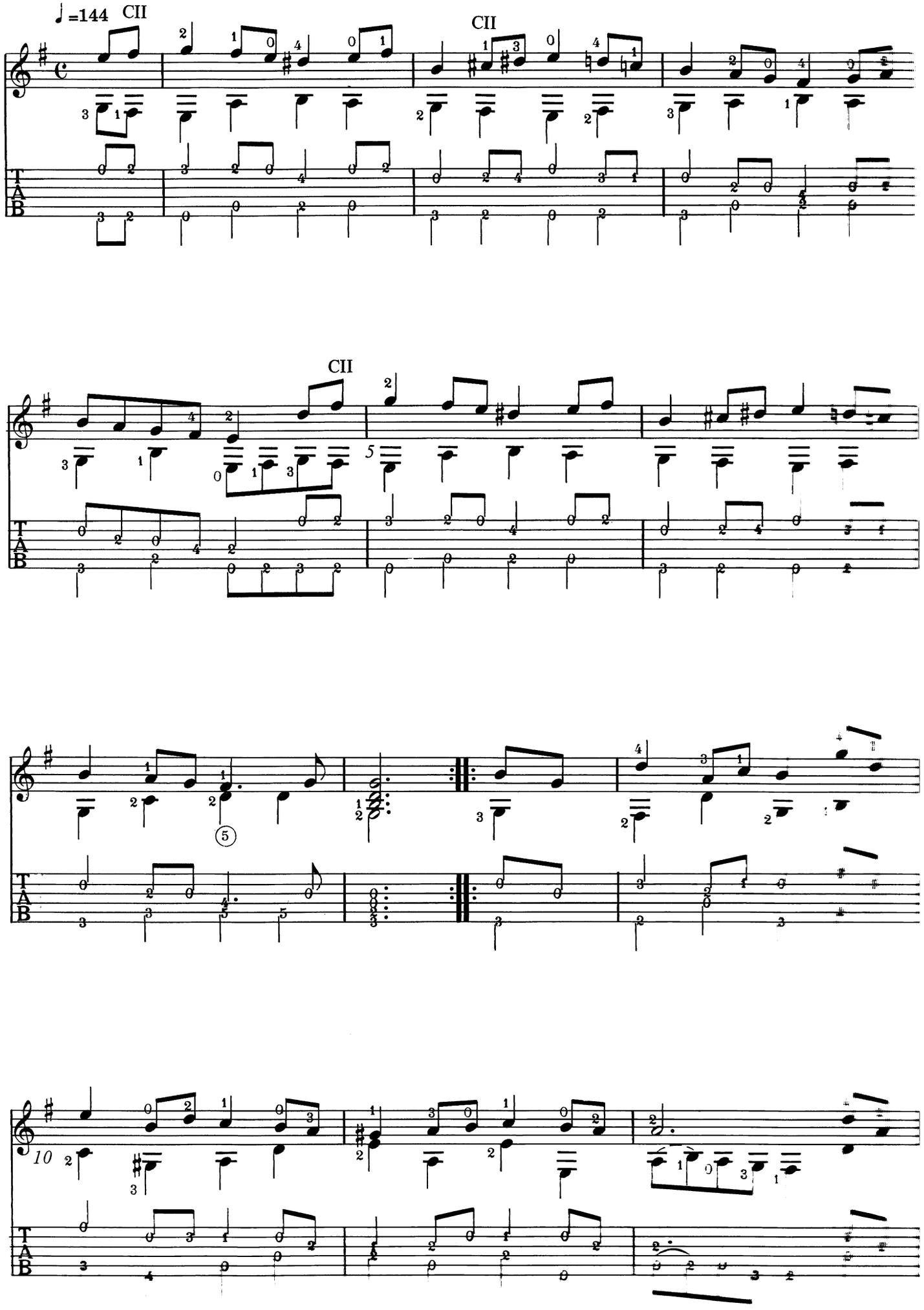
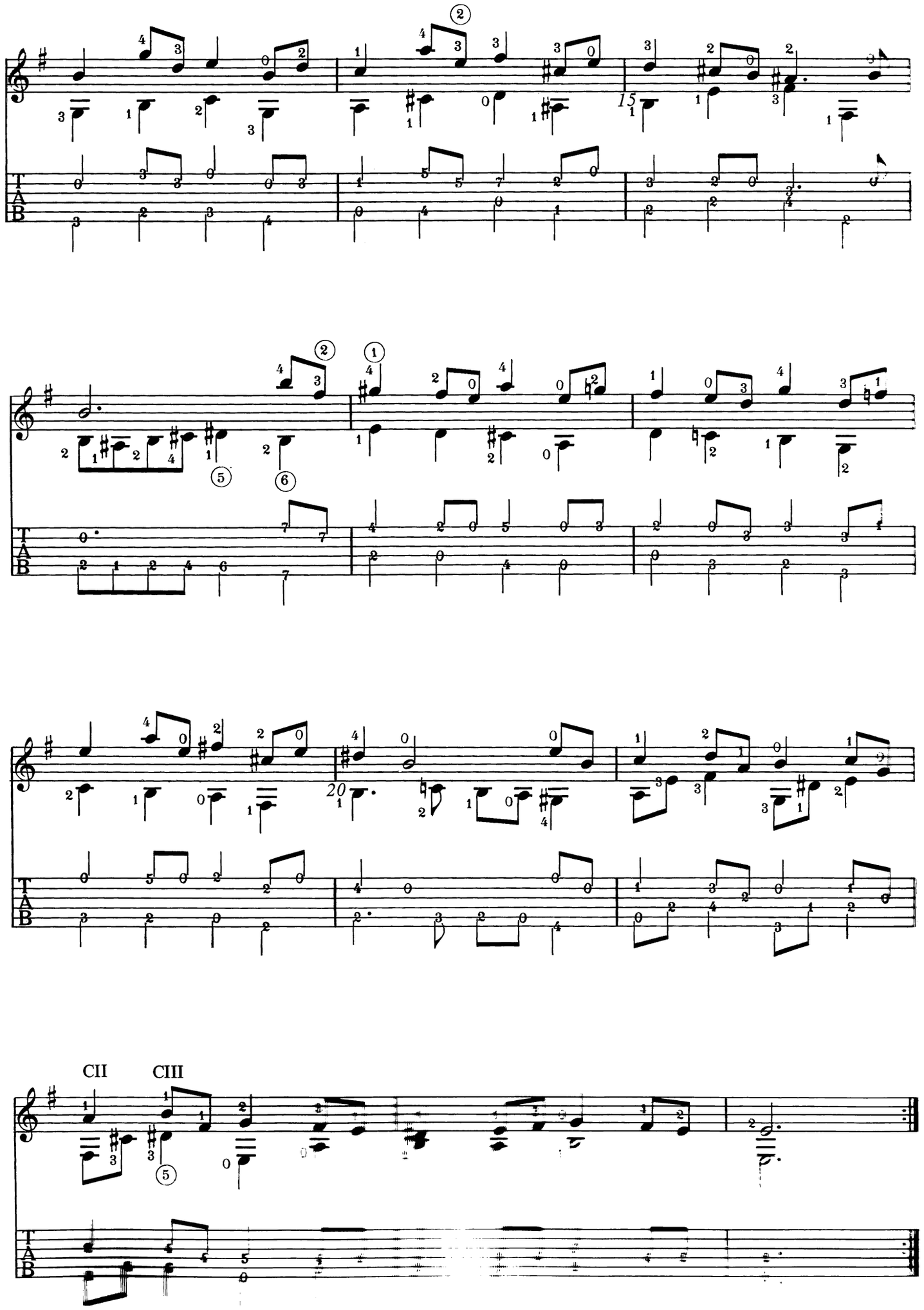

♩=144
CII
CII
CII
5
5
10

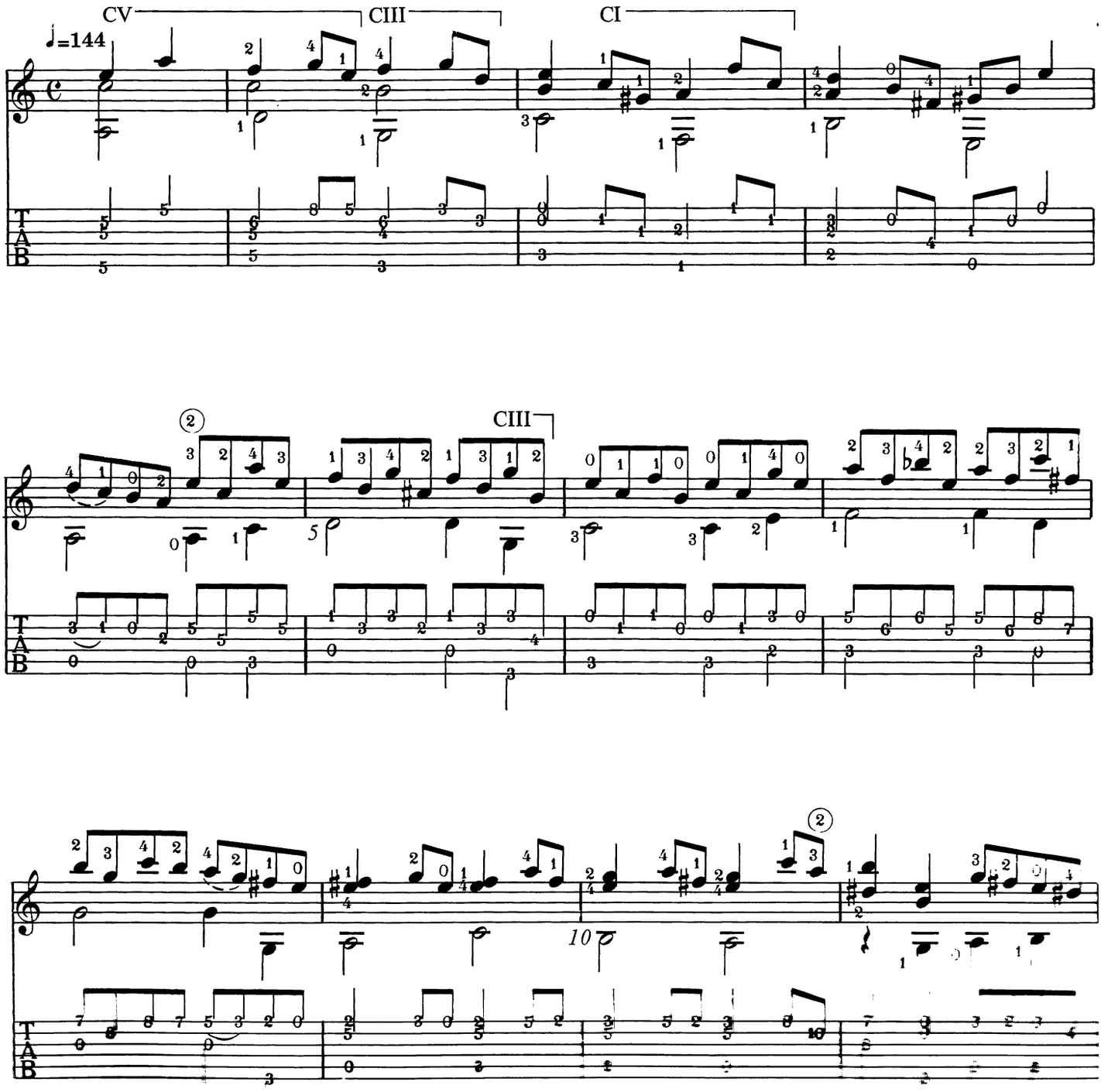

15
20
CII
CIII

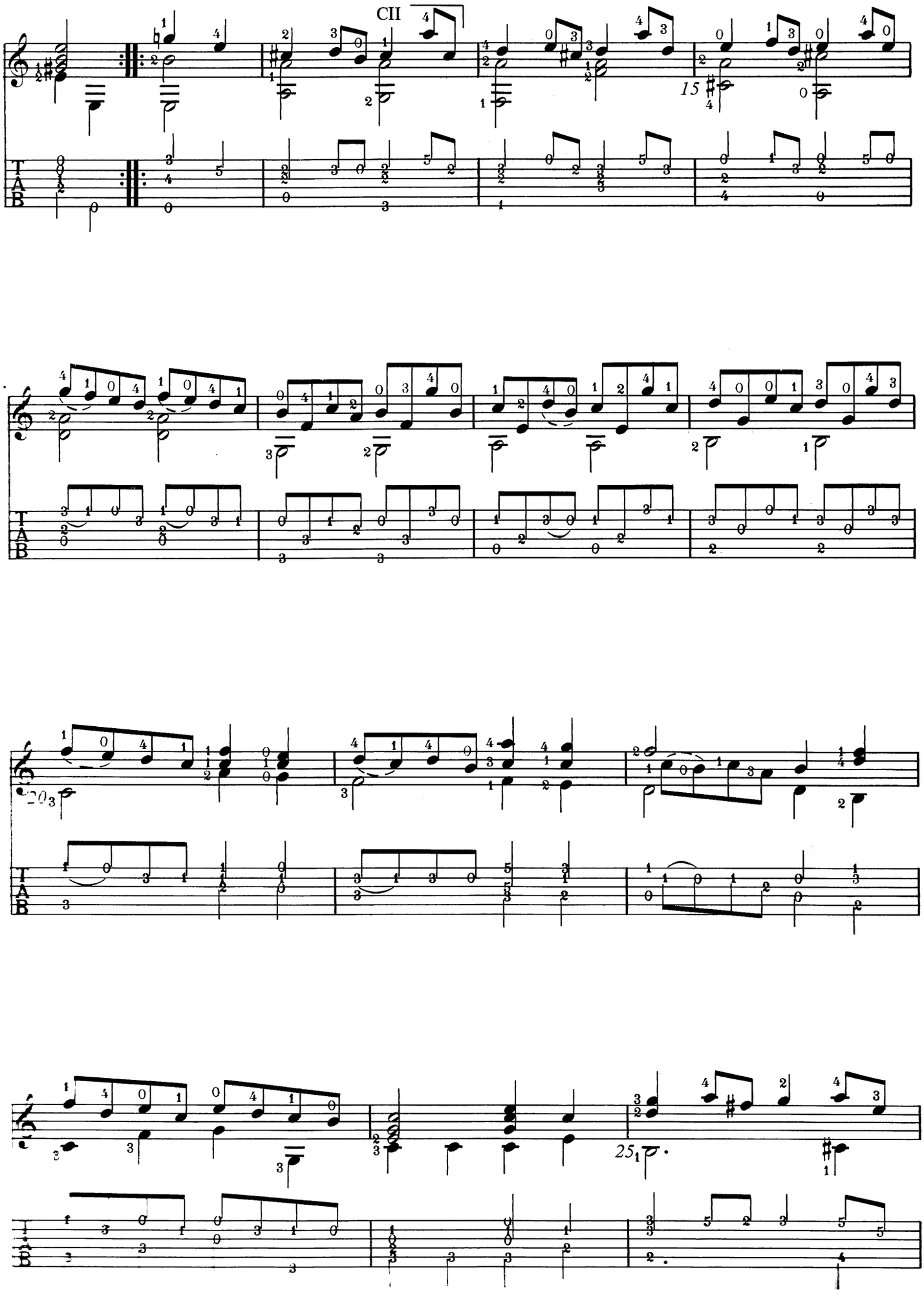
Gavotte

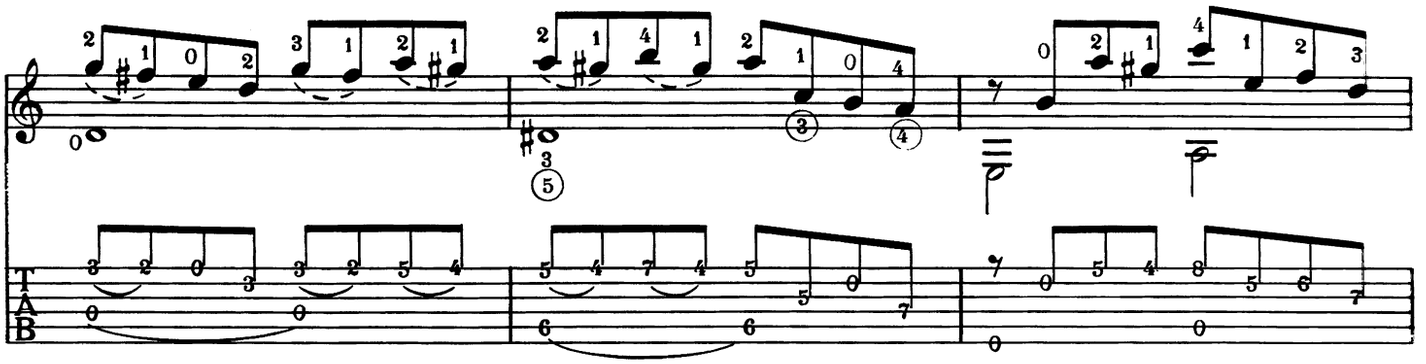
from the third Lute Suite

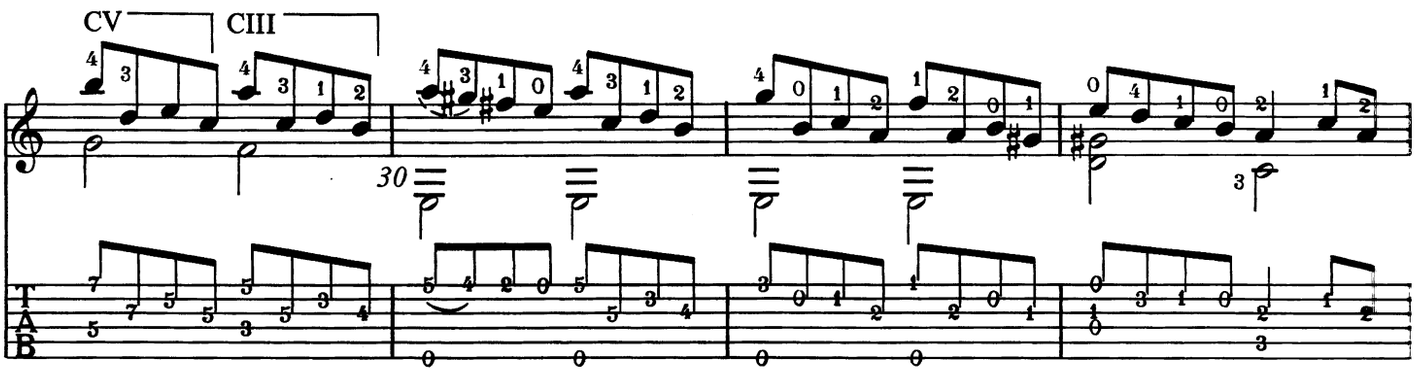
There are some surprisingly jazzlike harmonies to be found throughout this gavotte. It is from the third of the four Lute Suites which is actually Bach's own transcription of his fifth Cello Suite.

It is not absolutely necessary to hold the D♯ throughout measure twenty-seven. However, it would be helpful to hold the A through to measure twenty-eight and once again understand the last two beats of measure twenty-seven as a chord form.




CII
15
20
25




CV
CIII
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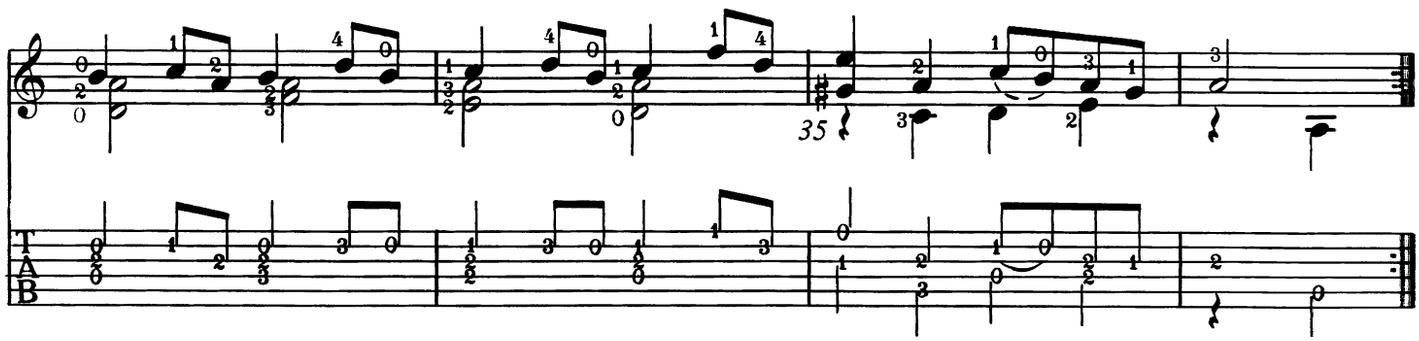
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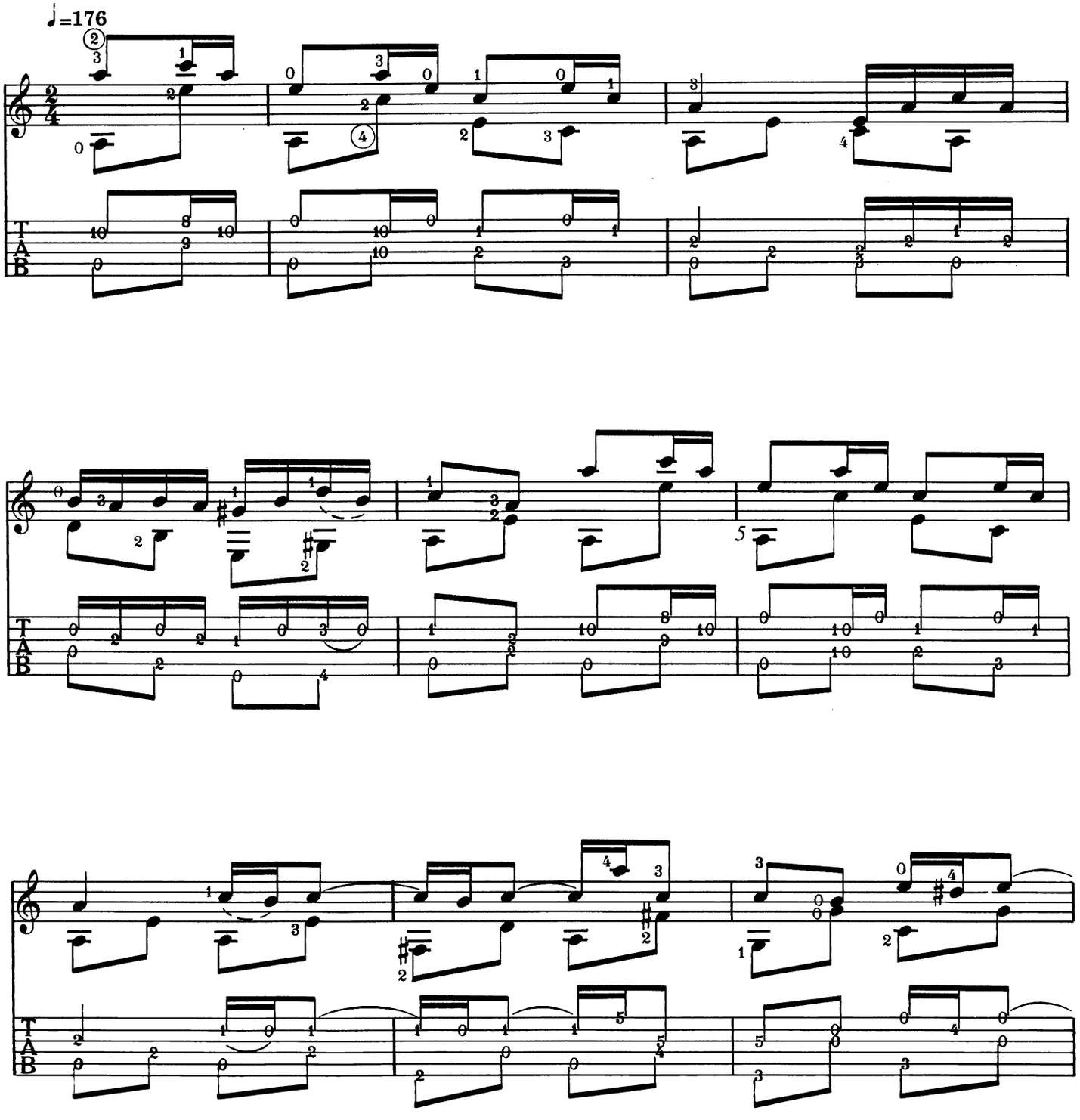
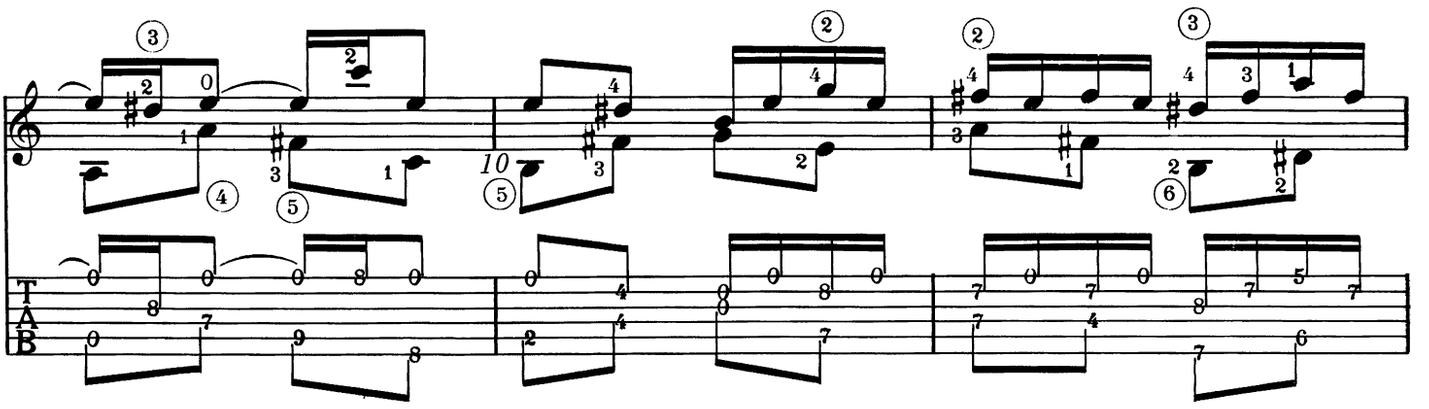
Badinerie

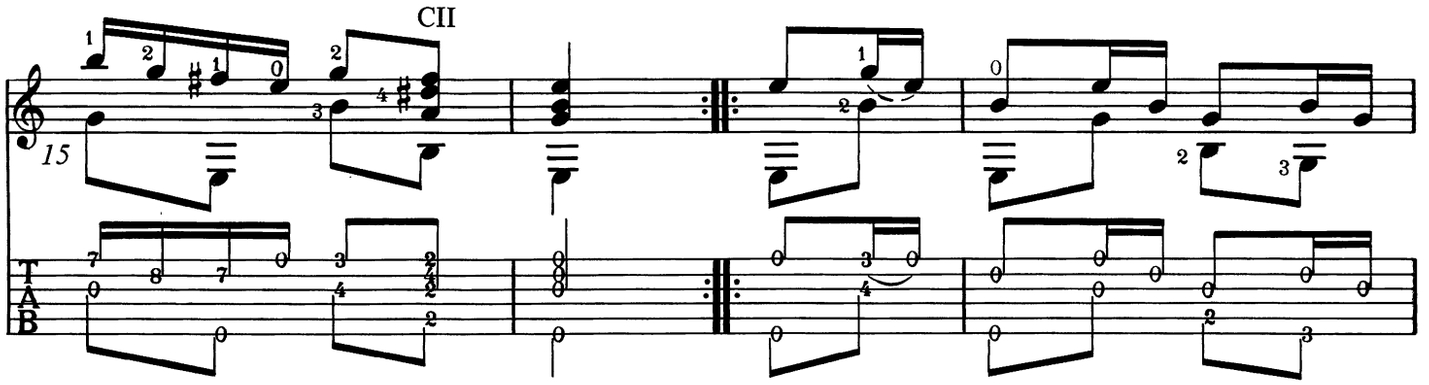
from the Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B Minor

Originating from a French word meaning alternately playfulness, banter, or teasing, this badinerie is from the *Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B Minor,* and is most famous as a bravura flute composition. It has been fingered with many open strings, in order to make it flow. You'll find that hammer-ons, pull-offs, and other fingerpicking techniques adapt nicely to its overall sound.

If the extreme shifts up and down the neck seem a bit intimidating, try working them out as chords. For example, the very first measure is simply a D-minor chord-form played on the eighth fret.



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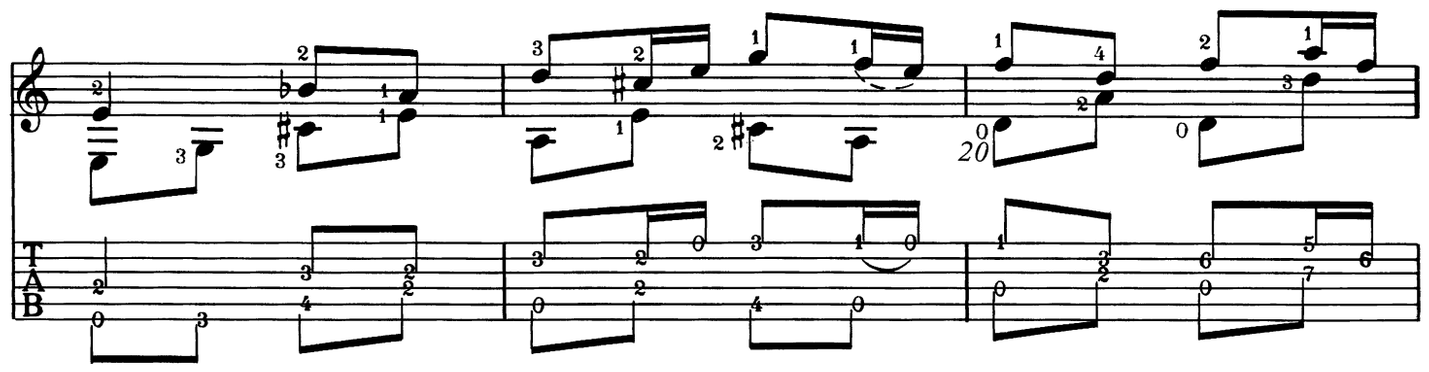

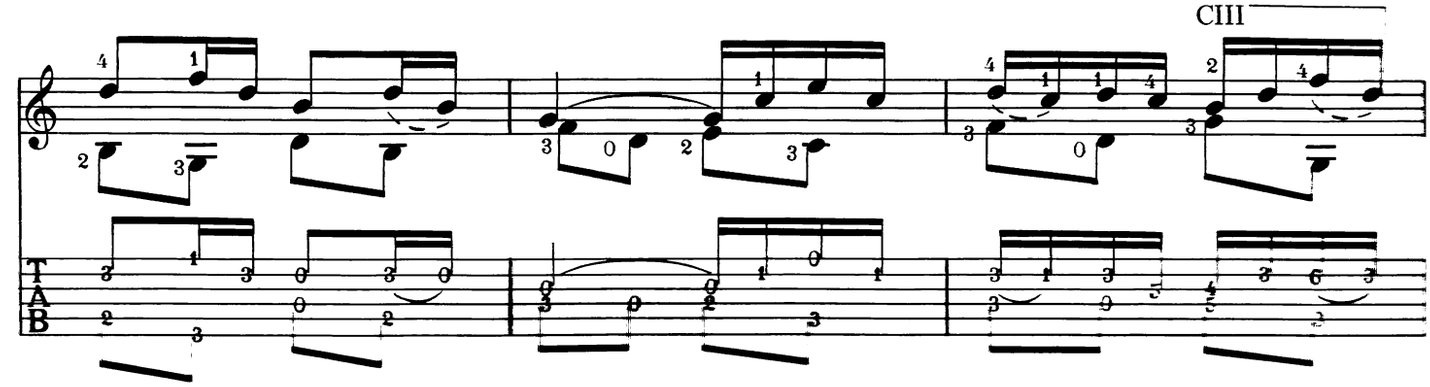
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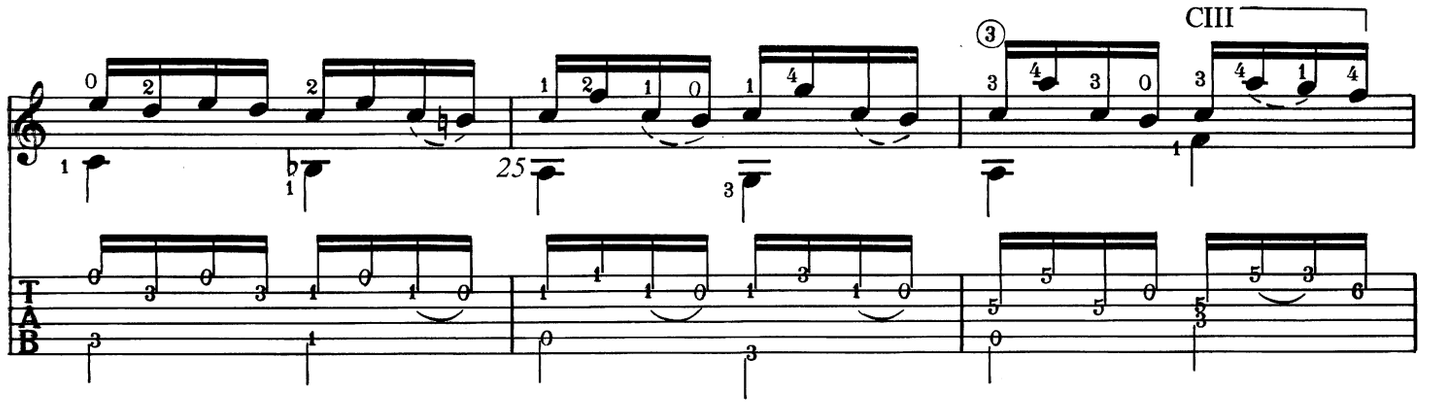
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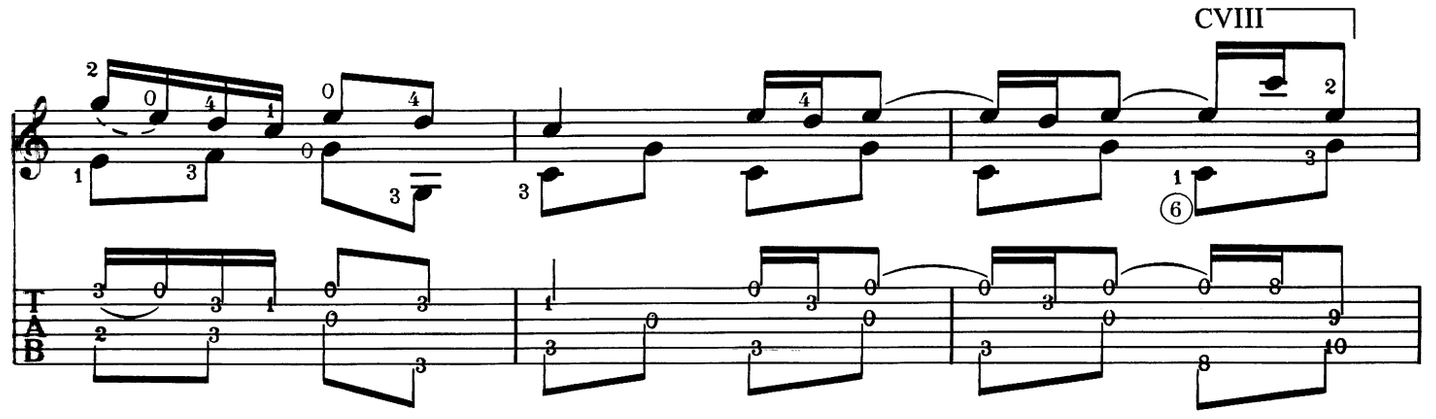
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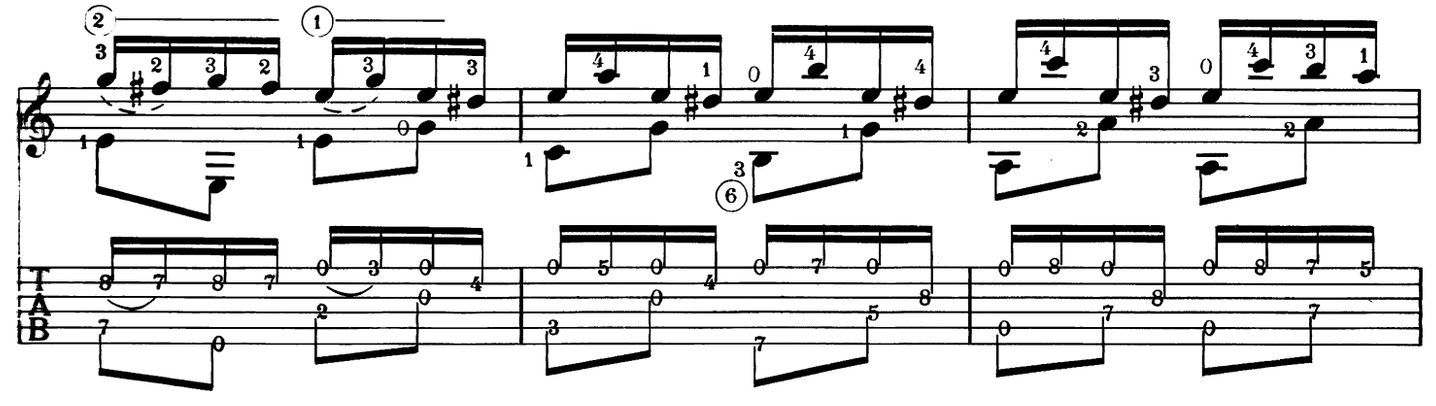

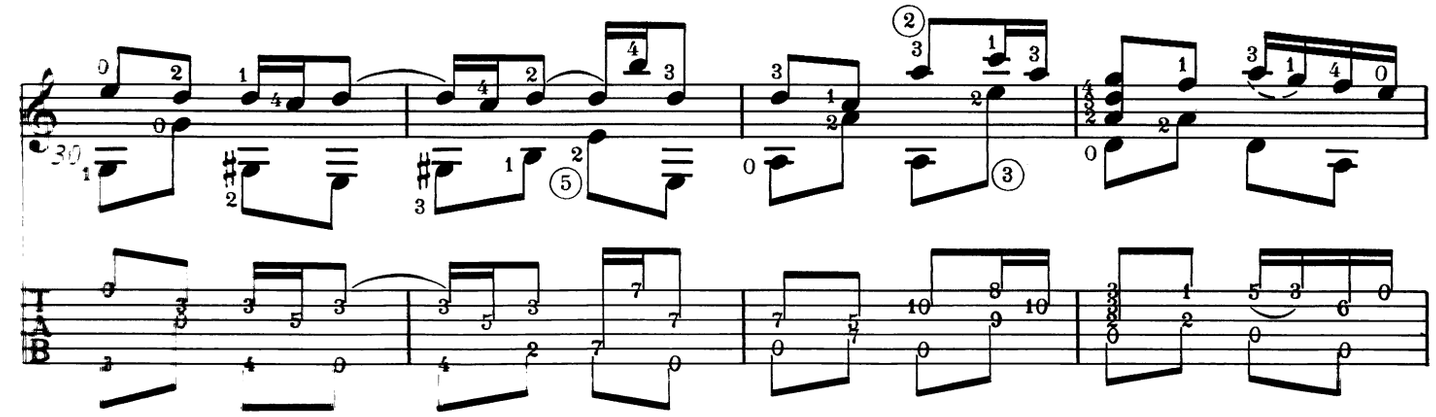
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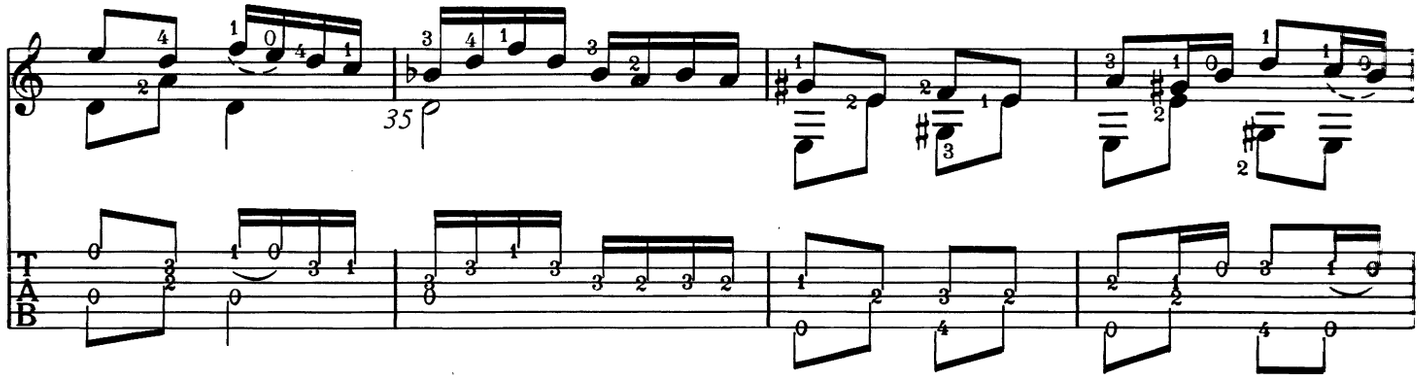
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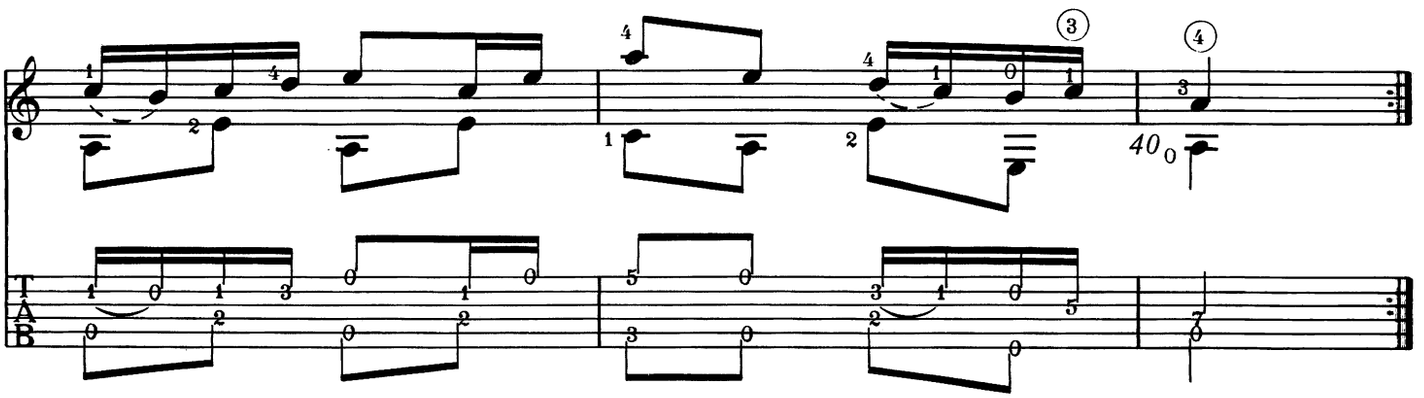
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