Contrapunctus 14

Die Kunst Der Fuge

by J. S. Bach

completed by Donald Francis Tovey

Typeset by Peter Billam

For Keyboard

© Peter J Billam, 1998

This score may be freely photocopied, and redistributed
in paper form. It may be freely performed to live audiences;
performing rights are waived. It may not be redistributed in
electronic form, and all other rights, such as those of recording
and broadcast, remain reserved by the composer, Peter Billam,
GPO Box 669, Hobart TAS 7001, Australia.

This printing 10 April 2009.

http://www.pjb.com.au

Contrapunctus 14

This great final fugue of *Die Kunst Der Fuge* was the piece that Bach left unfinished when he died. Some editions number it as *Contrapunctus 19* or as *Contrapunctus 18*. It is not actually his last composition; that honour belongs to the chorale prelude on *Vor Deinen Thron Tret' Ich Hiermit* which he dictated to his pupil Altnikol before taking leave of his family.

As Bach left *Contrapunctus 14*, it is a triple fugue: the first exposition starts at bar 1, the second at bar 114, and the third, on the notes B-A-C-H, at bar 193. Bach had previously been very sparing in the use of the notes of his own name, probably not thinking it appropriate to sign his life's work before it was complete. The three subjects are combined at bar 234, just before Bach's manuscript breaks off in bar 239. Bach left bar 239 with all eight quavers of the tenor, the alto and bass with just their first note, and with the soprano blank.

None of the fugue's three subjects is the theme of *Die Kunst Der Fuge*, and the *Gesamtaufgabe* even suggested that this fugue should not be considered to be part of that work. In 1880, Gustav Nottebohm pointed out the solution: the theme of *Die Kunst Der Fuge*, with one small rhythmic adjustment, fits in counterpoint with the other three subjects. This combination can be seen at bar 306 in the current edition. Nottebohm's discovery made it clear that the fugue was intended by Bach as a quadruple fugue with the theme of *Die Kunst Der Fuge* as the fourth subject, and there have since been several attempts to complete the fugue on this basis.

The most spectacular completion is that of Ferruccio Busoni in his *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* of 1912, which is published by *Dover* together with the Elegies and Sonatinas. Stylistically it is sometimes pure Bach, sometimes pure Busoni, and Busoni moves freely and smoothly between these poles, demonstrating the unity of the tradition, and blurring the boundaries between composition, editing, and performance. After an introduction of 201 bars, followed by Bachs' fugue, Busoni adds 473 bars of his own, particularly favouring the eloquent second subject.

The most plausible completion is that of the English composer and pianist Donald Francis Tovey, 1875 - 1940, which was published in 1931 on C-clefs in open score by Oxford University Press and is now out of print.

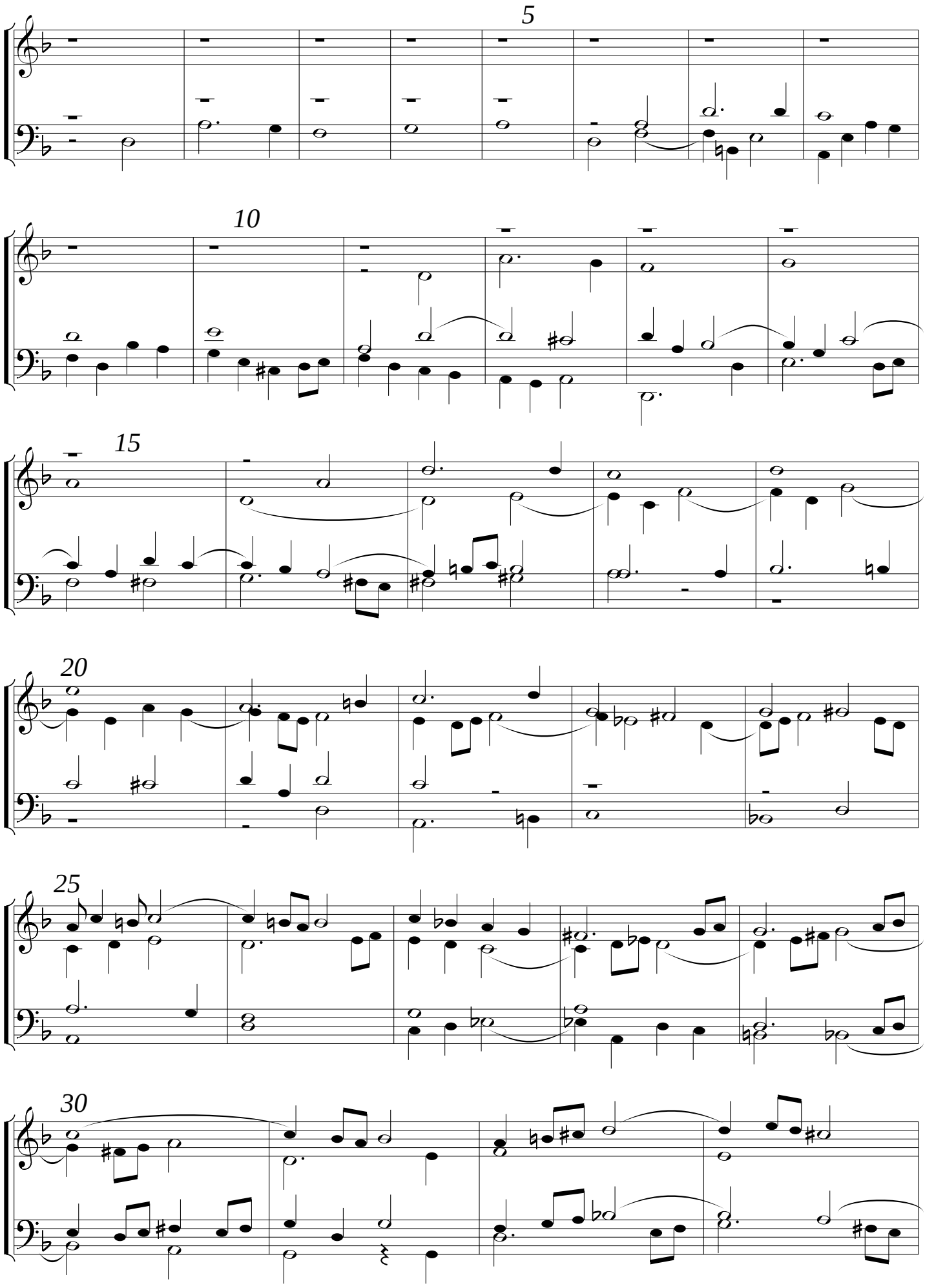
We should treat as inspiring Tovey's courage in measuring up to Bach himself on his home territory and at the height of his powers. Tovey's erudition and hard work almost achieve the stylistic authenticity that he was seeking. The set pieces, such as Nottebohm's passage at bar 306 and its inversions at bars 280 and 263, are very fine; but, especially in the free voices, one can still notice the join. In the Tovey there are longer runs of parallel thirds or sixths, more scalic passages, more voice-crossings, more extremes of register and of texture. And in the Bach there is a luminous, fluent, quaver-by-quaver, never-failing beauty that is not easily matched.

While Tovey was at work, the *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* was published, but he refrained from consulting it until his own work was finished in 1928. His completion measures 78 bars, and remains the most plausibly Bachian. For organ, Michael Ferguson's completion (1990) should be considered; it is available from Holbrook, 2402 University Ave, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114, USA.

The current edition is the first to make Tovey's work available in practical formats. It is available for keyboard, and there are parts for SATB recorders, for violin, viola and two 'cellos, for saxophone quartet, and for oboe, cor anglais and two basoons. In the recorder version, the Bass should preferably be doubled by a Great Bass. The Alto and Tenor lines divide in the penultimate bar. There is no separate score; the keyboard edition is recommended instead. All these are available from *http://www.pjb.com.au/mus*

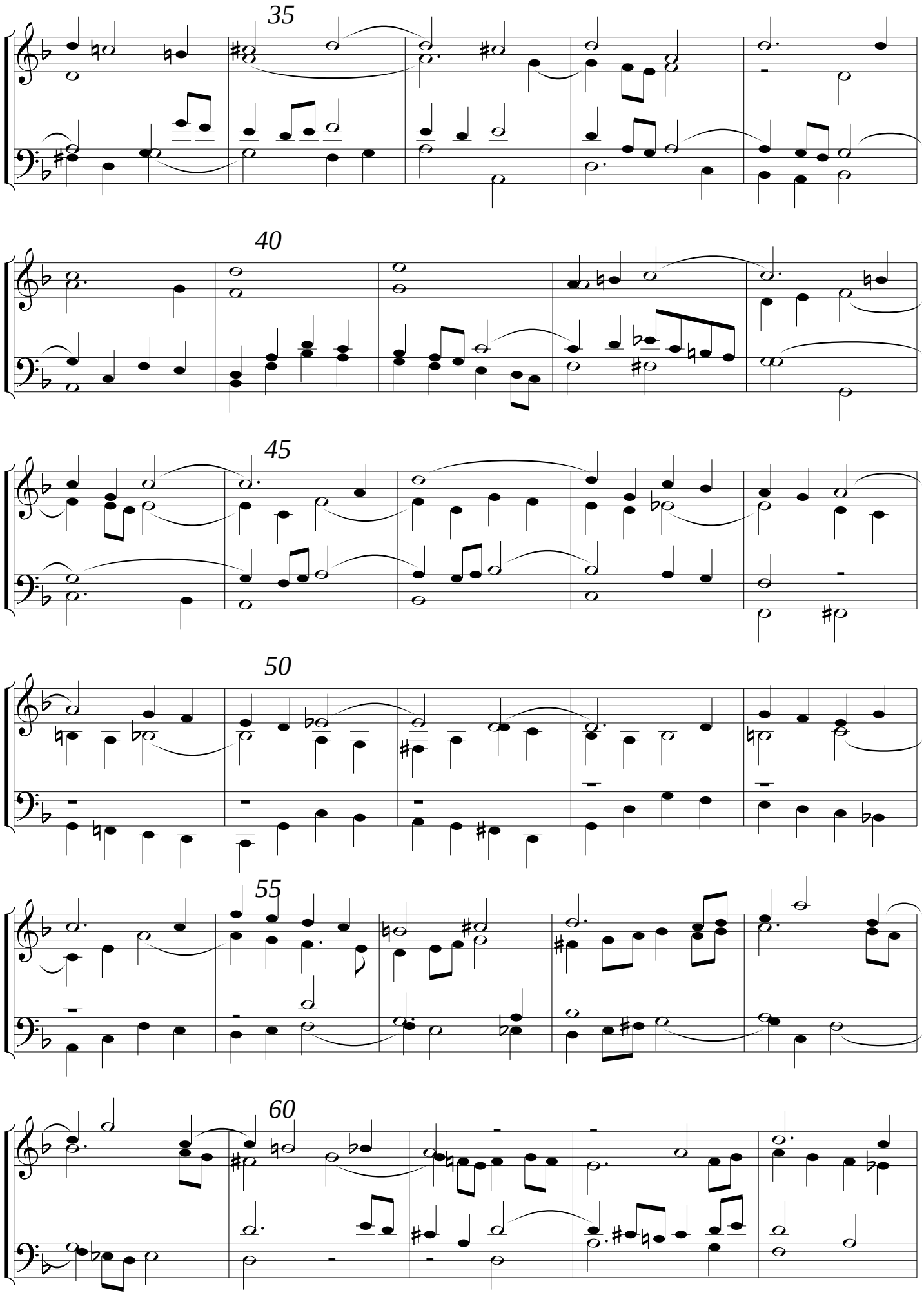
Peter J Billam

Contrapunctus 14

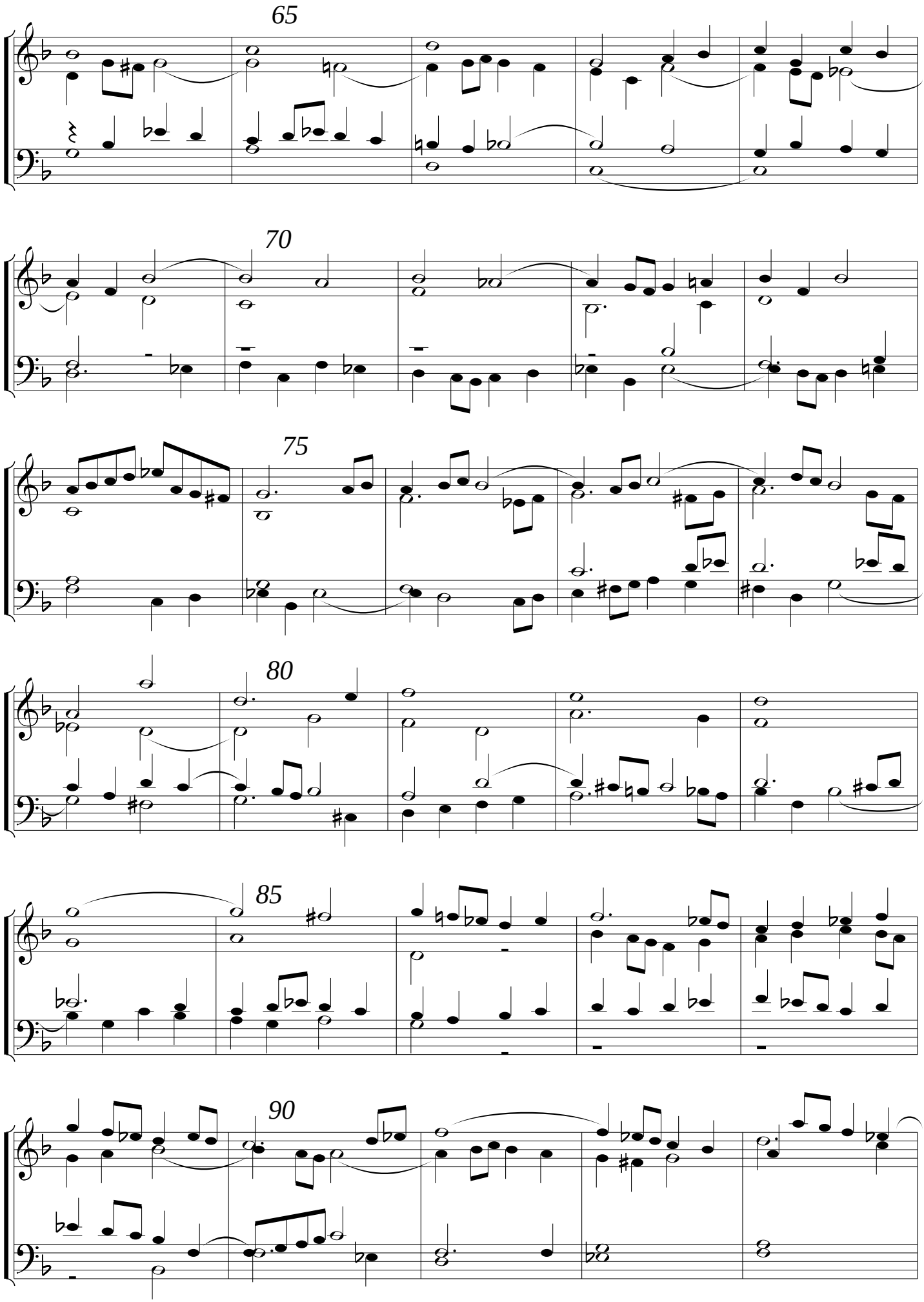


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam

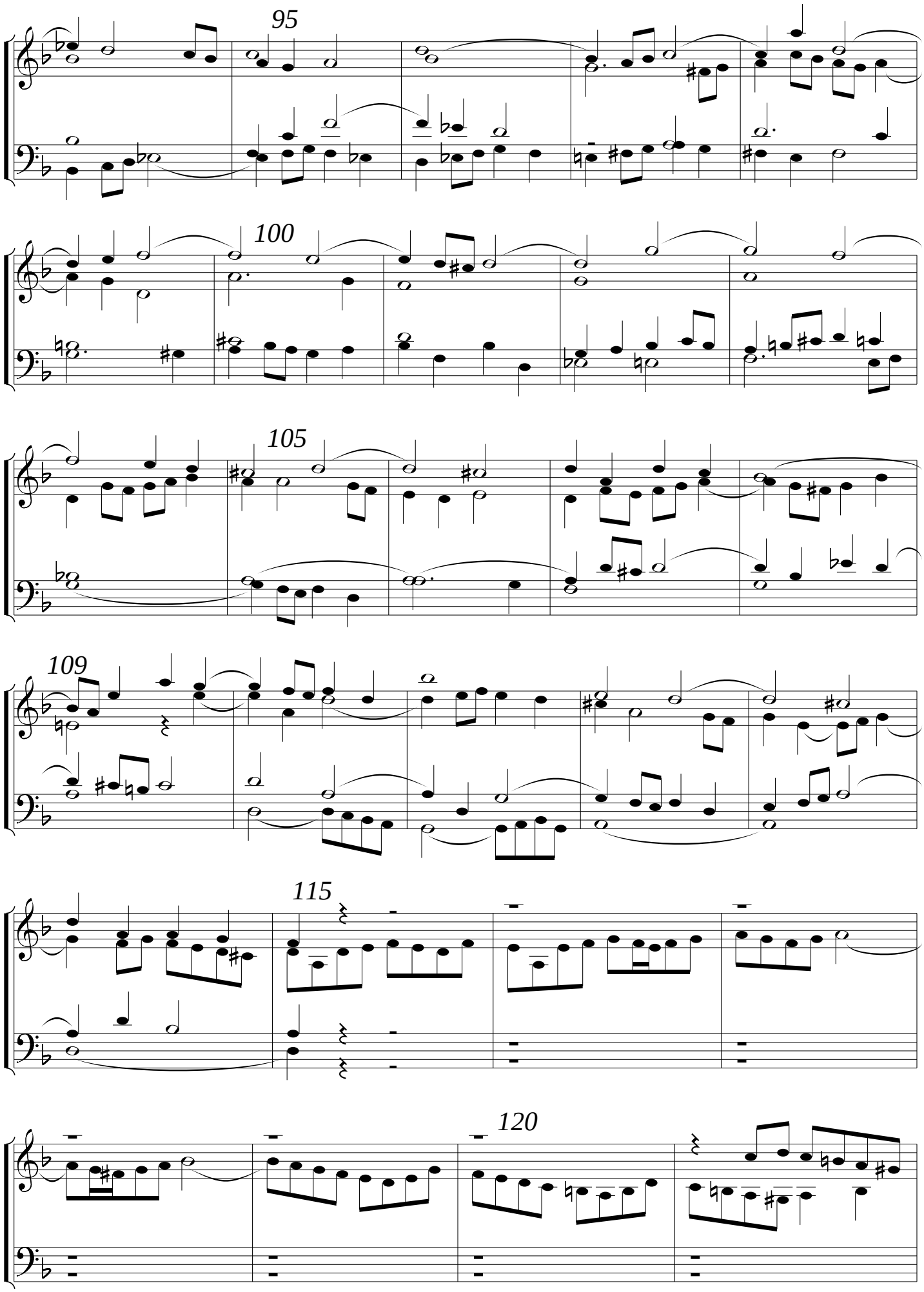
Free from www.pjb.com.au !



typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

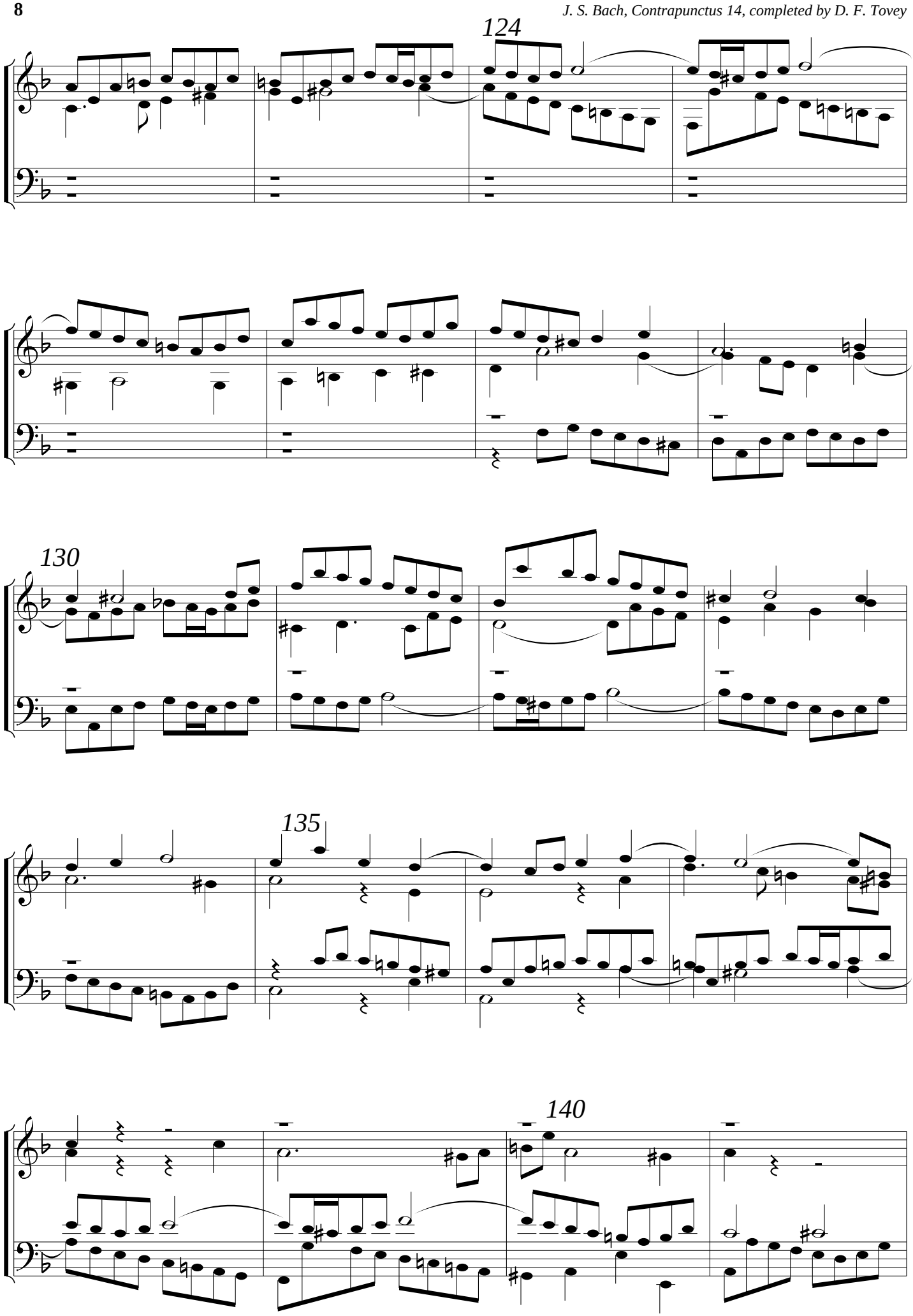


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

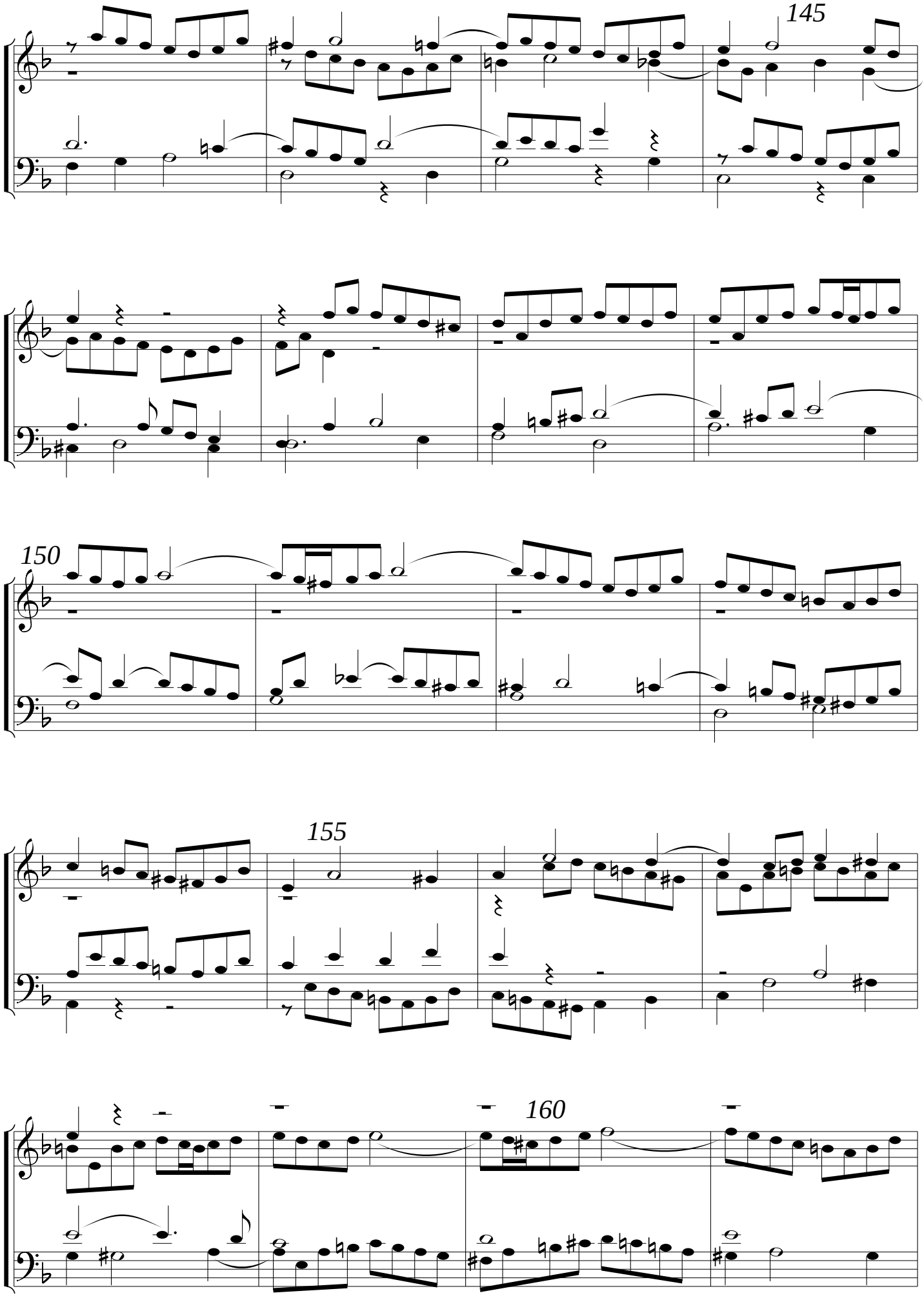


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam

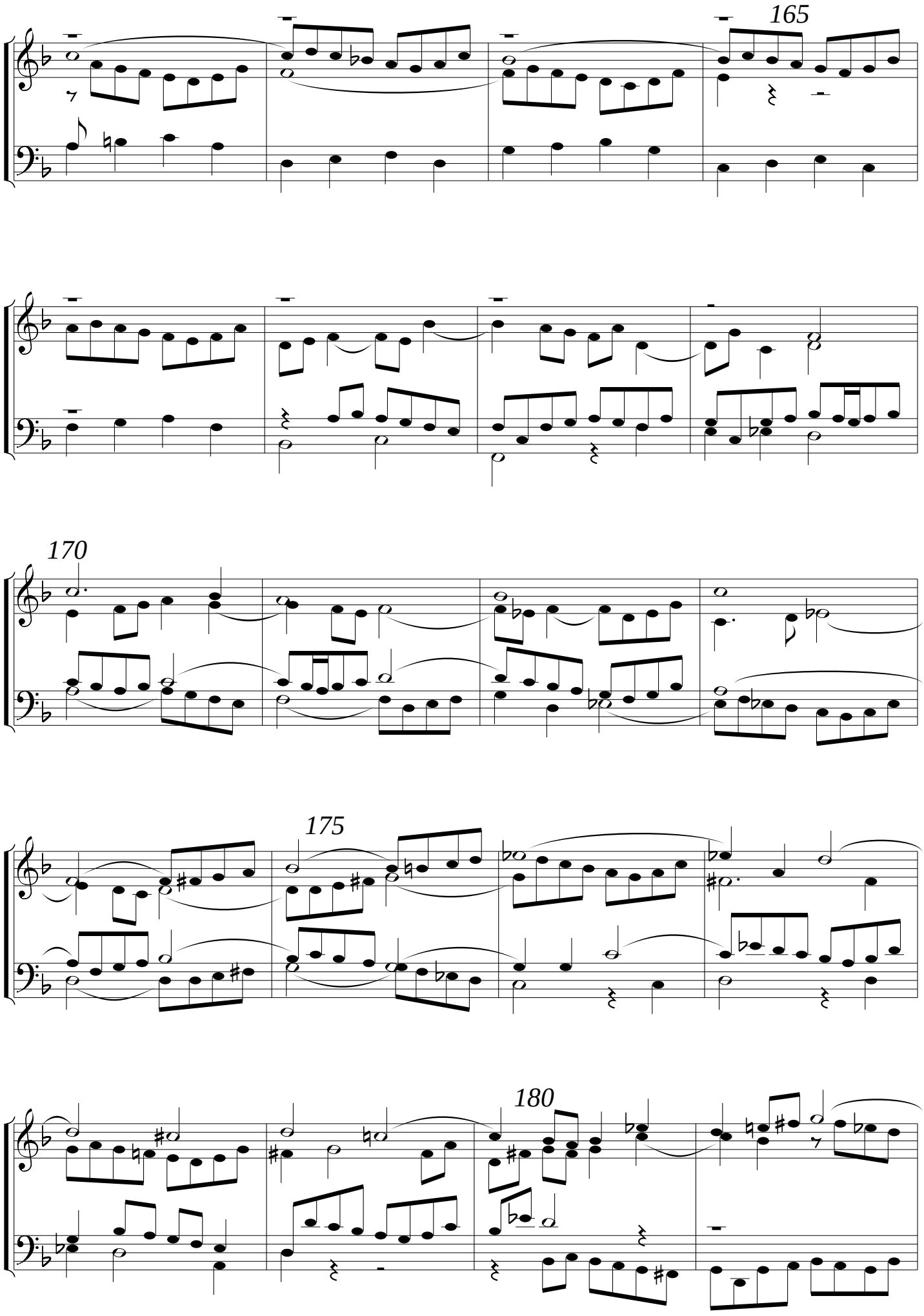
Free from www.pjb.com.au !



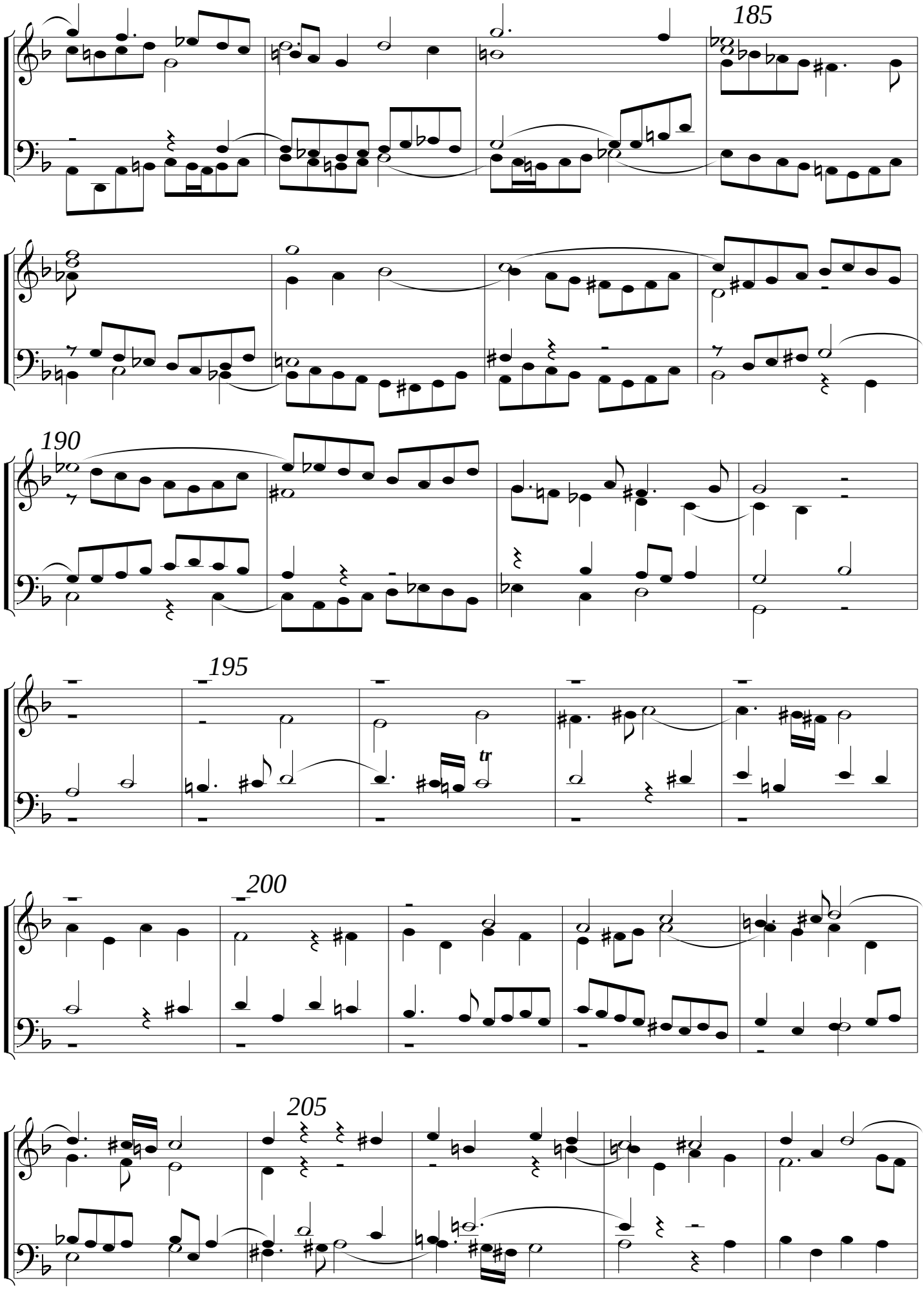
typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam Free from www.pjb.com.au !



typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

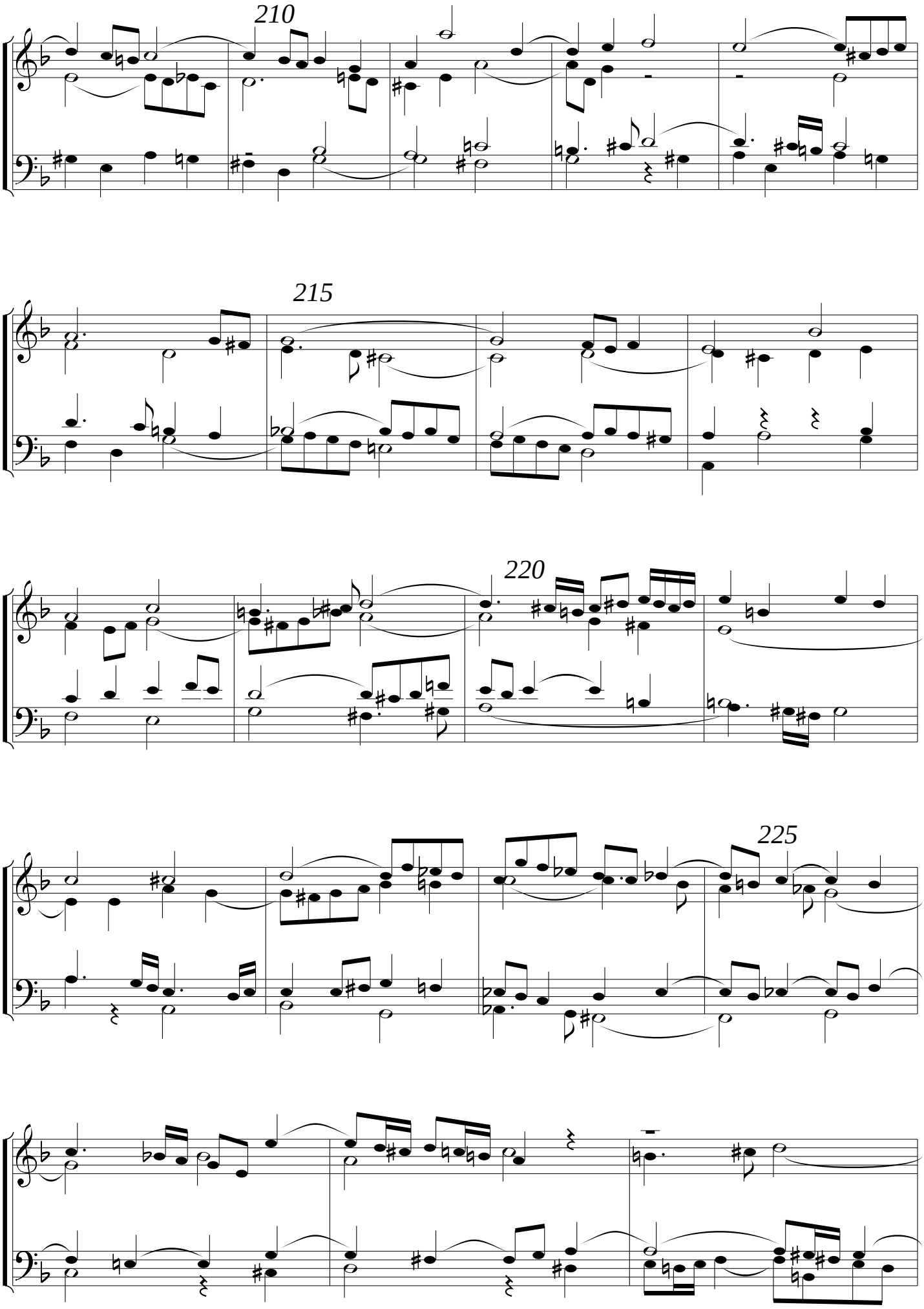


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

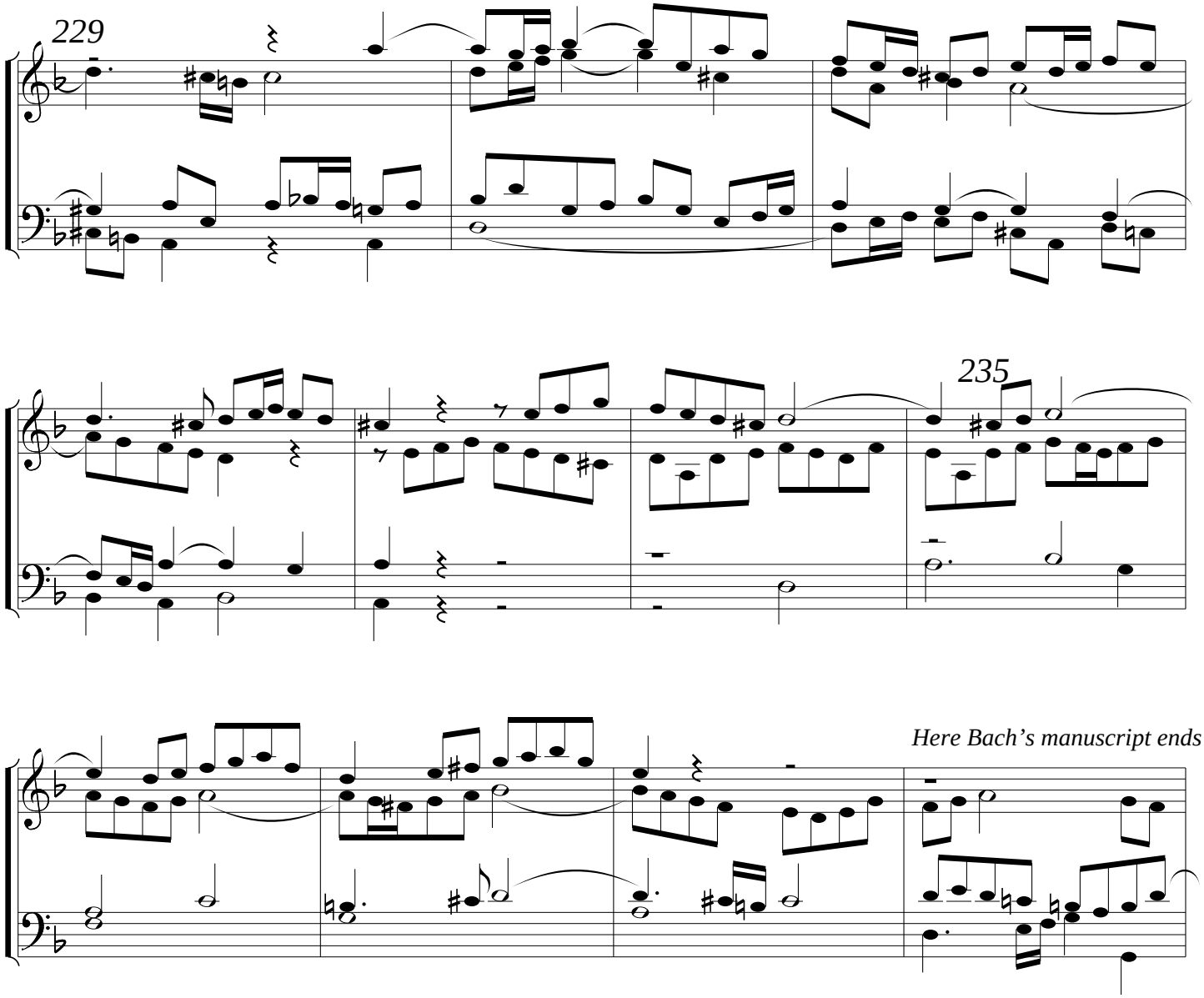


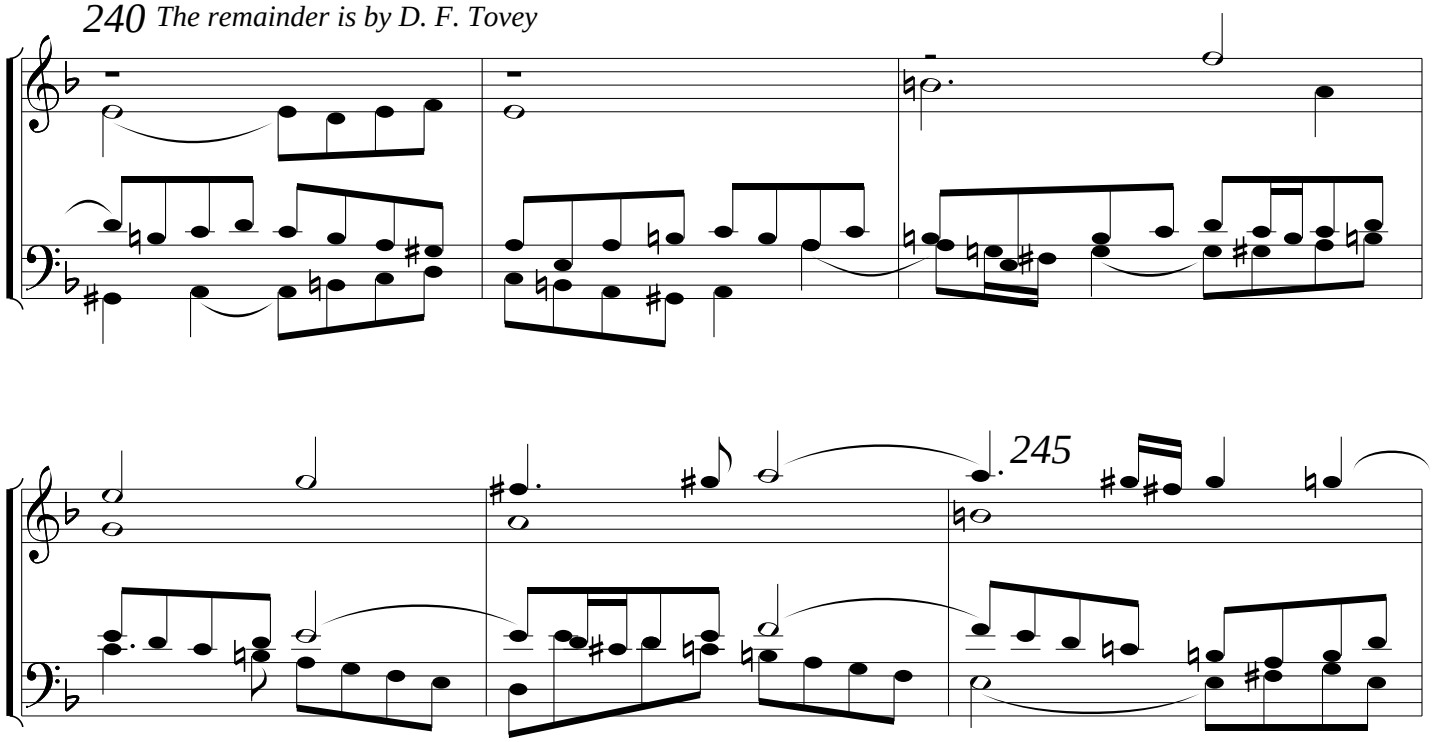
typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam

Free from www.pjb.com.au !



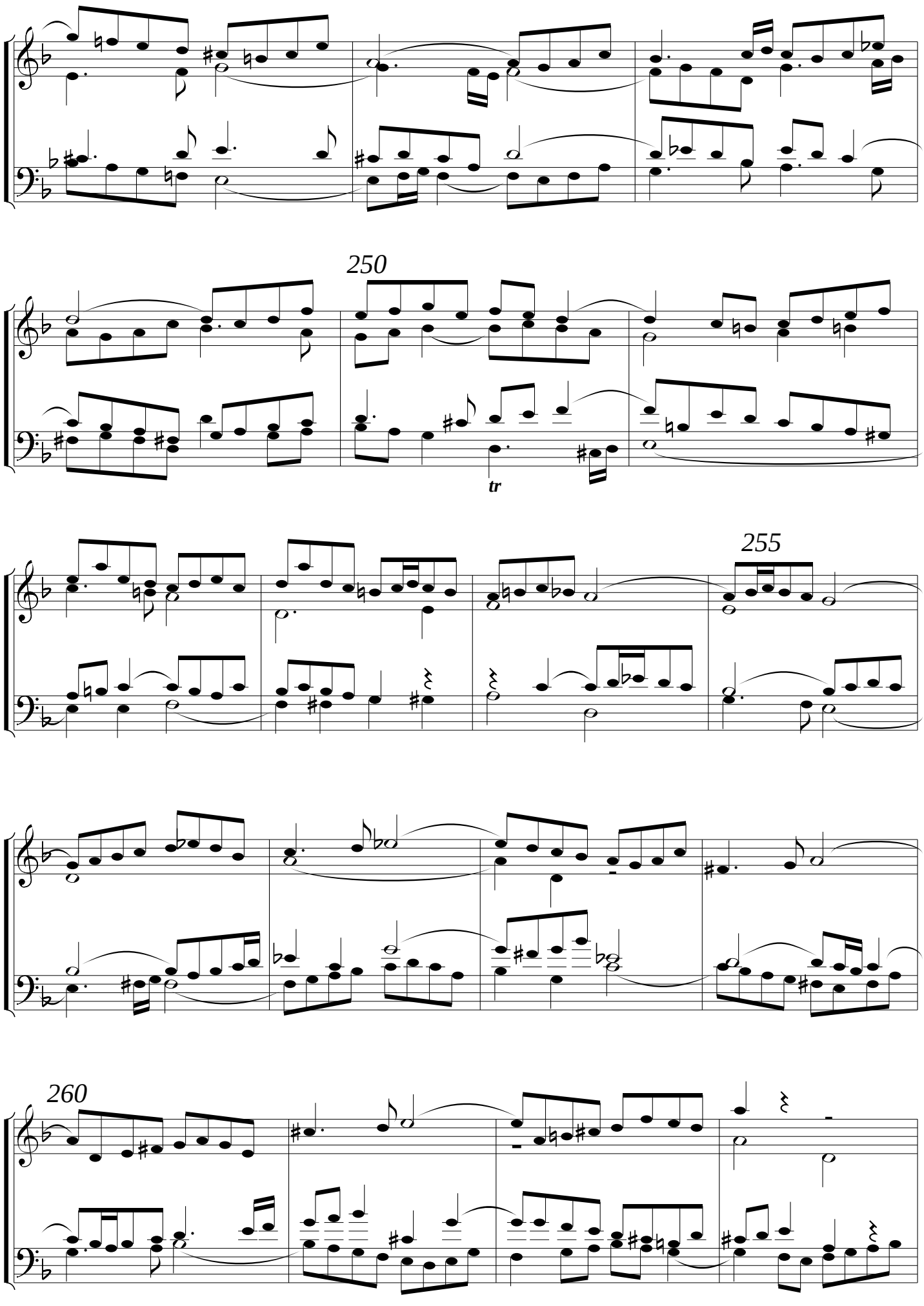
typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam Free from www.pjb.com.au !



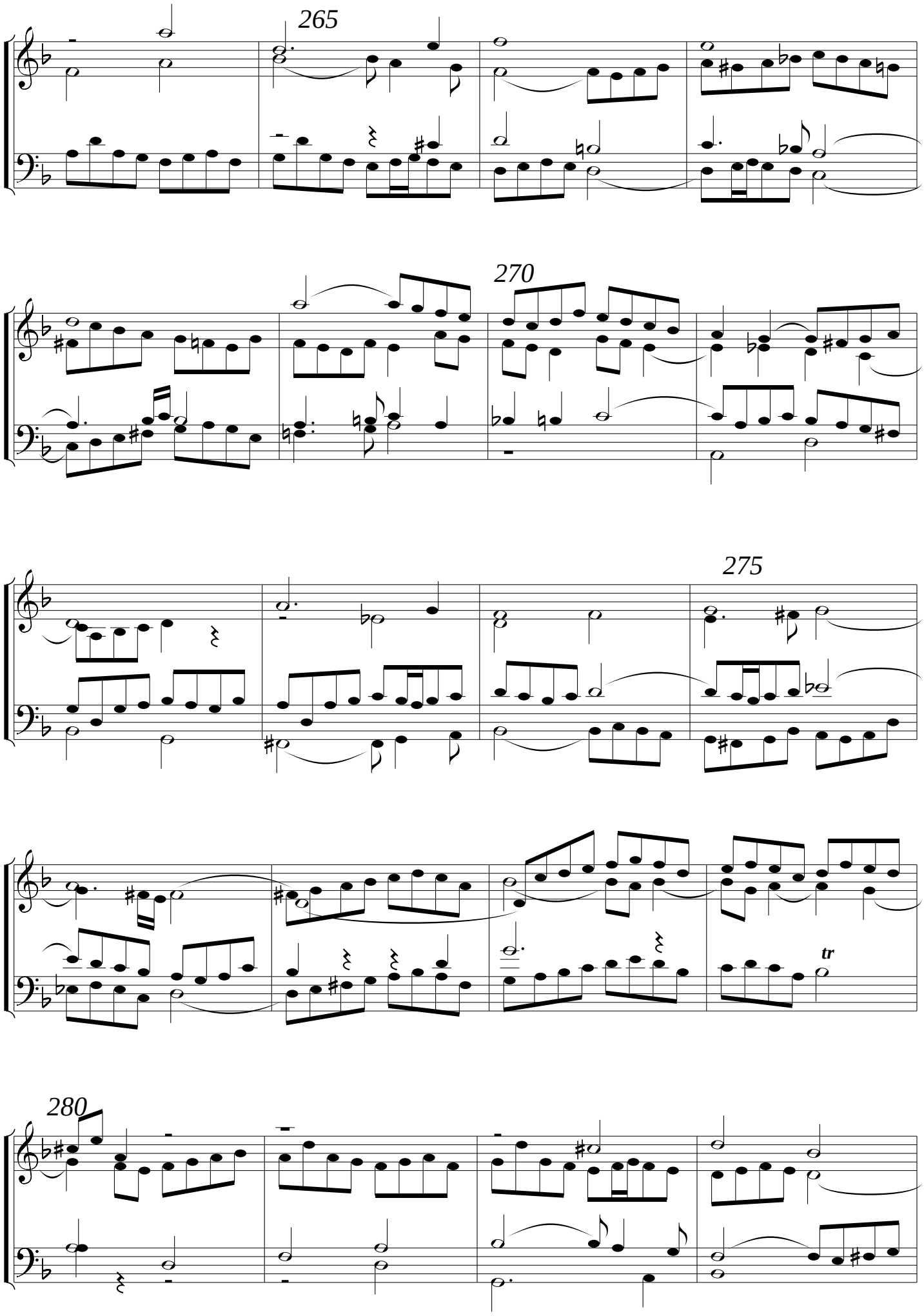


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam

Free from www.pjb.com.au !

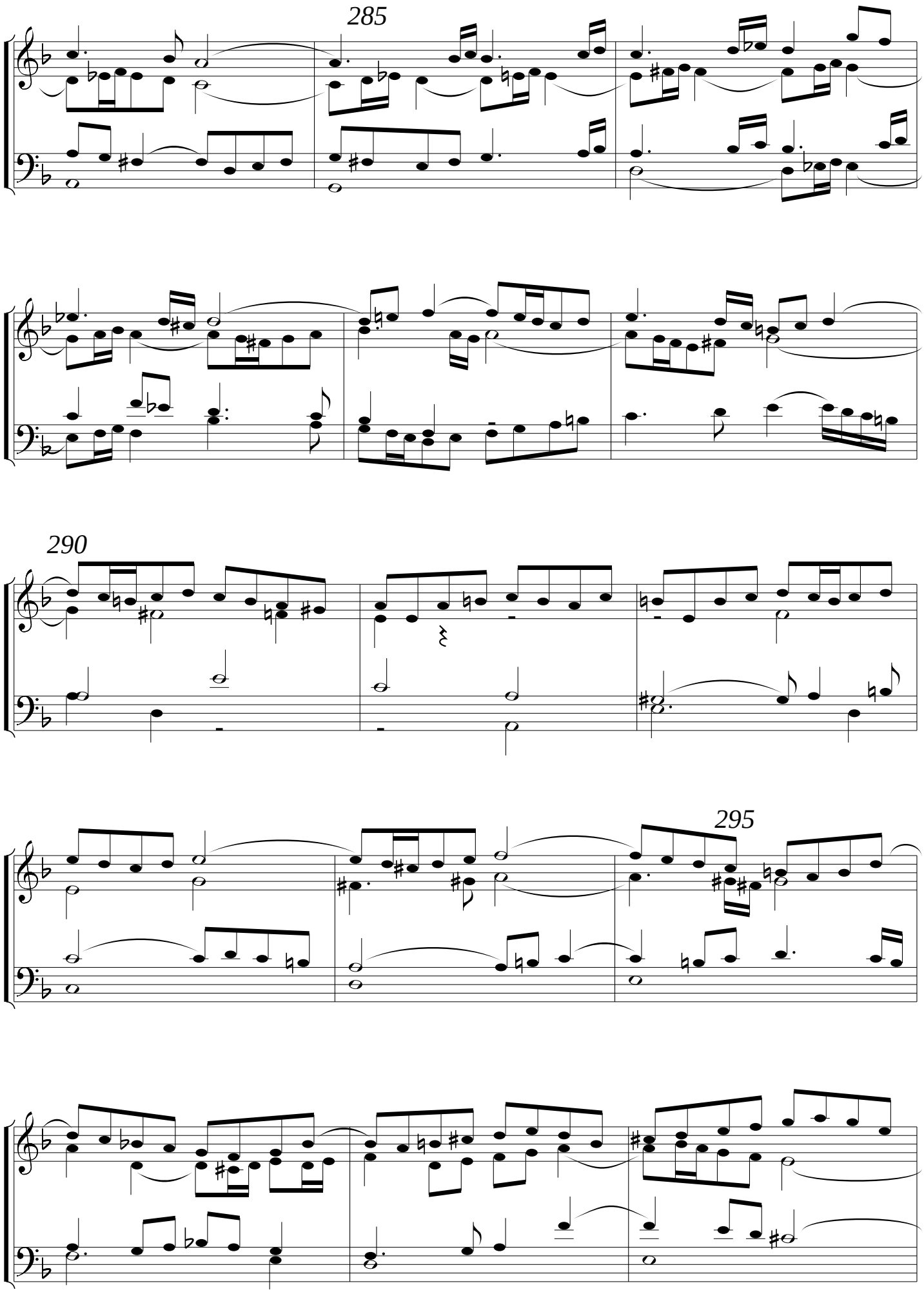


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

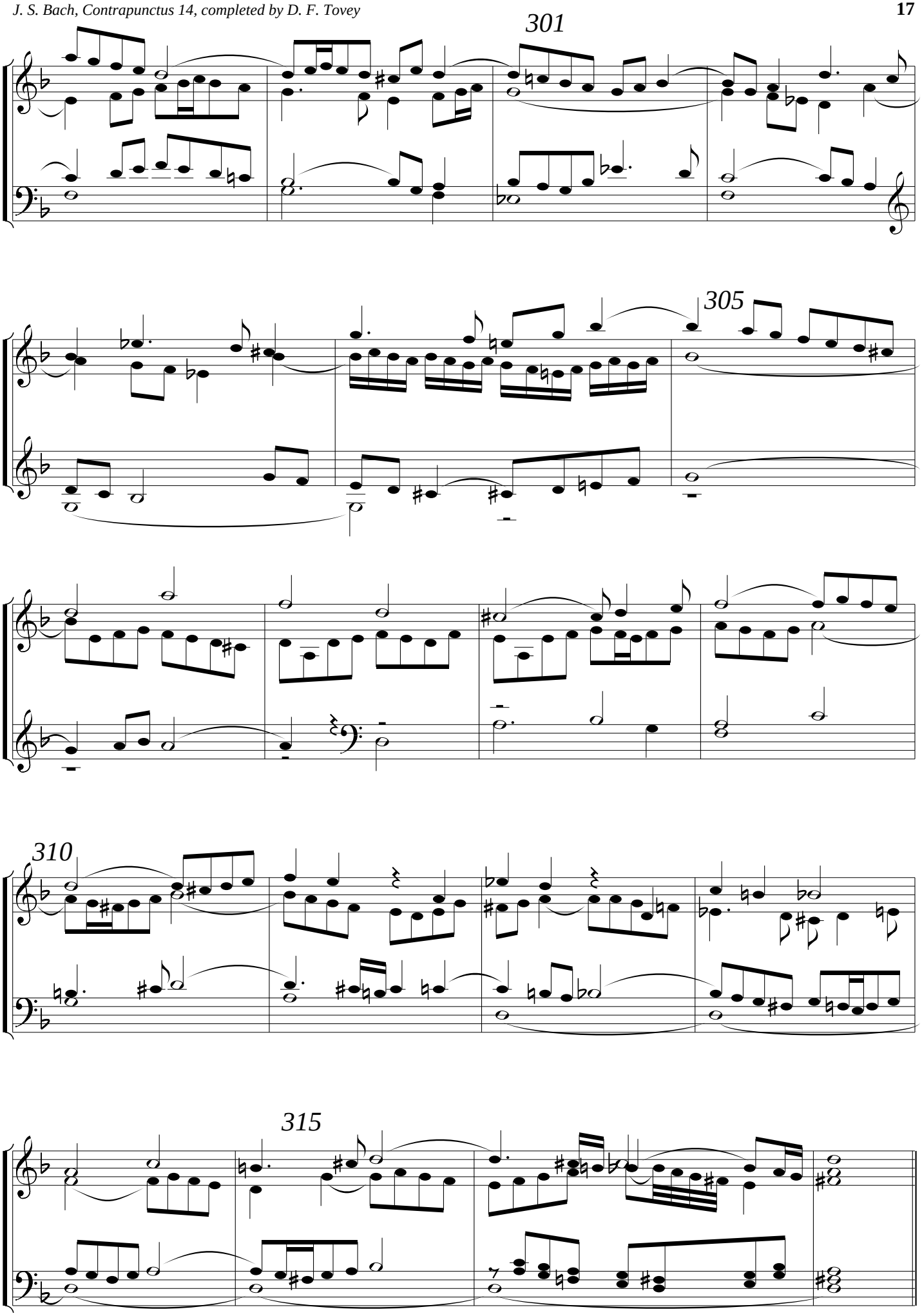


typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam

Free from www.pjb.com.au !



typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*



typesetting (c) 1998 Peter Billam *Free from www.pjb.com.au !*

Peter Billam was born in London in 1948, studied piano, and lived in Switzerland from 1973 to 1983, where he studied composition, classical guitar, flute and voice, worked as Musical Director of the *Théâtre Populaire Romand*, and as recording engineer, record producer and computer programmer. He moved to Tasmania in 1983, lectured in composition at the Conservatorium, conducted recorder ensembles and choirs, studied recorder, voice and harpsichord. He founded **www.pjb.com.au**, becoming the first composer to sell scores on-line, with on-line delivery, taking scores from Composer to Performer in one immediate step. *Www.pjb.com.au* offers a new approach to music publishing. These pieces are **written to be read, made to be played !**

Compositions at *www.pjb.com.au* include: *Five Short Pieces*, guitar, 1979; *Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute and guitar, 1980; *Five Rounds*, choir, 1986; *Go Forth and Multiply*, choir, 1986; *Three Violin Duets*, 1987; *Fable*, for piano, 1987; *To Erich Jantsch*, SAATTB recorders, 1988; *A Suite of Curves*, trombone (or horn) and piano, 1990; *Two Recorder Duets*, alto recorders, or other melody instruments, 1991; *Trombone Quintet*, trombone, flute, piano, bass, and percussion, 1994; *Three Songs*, on poems by Jack Kerouac, Vikram Seth and Dylan Thomas, voice and piano (only the first and third of these are available), 1994; *Piano Study*, piano, 1994; *Four Dances*, various ensembles including recorder quartet, string quartet, 1995; *The Poet in the Clouds*, on a poem by S. T. Coleridge, SATB choir, 1995; *Tres Casidas del Diván del Tamarit*, on poems by Federico García Lorca, voice and piano, 1997; *Three Suites*, for the solo line, piano, and piano and a solo line, 2000; *Die Zeiten*, on poems by Kästner, Bachman and Jünger, choir (only the second and third of these are available), 2000; *Three Duets* for flutes, 2001; *For Four Hands* for piano four hands, 2002; *Three Preludes* for piano, 2003; *Second Solo Suite* for flute, violin, viola or cello, 2003; *Guitar Duet* for two guitars, 2006; *We Who Mourn* for choir, 2007; *Trio With Guitar* for guitar and two clarinets or two recorders or two violas, 2008.

Arrangements include: By J. S. Bach: *Trio BWV 655*, piano and flute; *Vor deinen Thron BWV 668*, piano; *Fugue in F minor BWV 689*, SATB recorders; *Flute Sonata BWV 1031* transposed into G major for alto recorder and keyboard; *Flute Sonata BWV 1032* completed by Peter Billam for flute and keyboard, also in C major for alto recorder, and in G major for descant; *Ricercare a 3, from the Musikalisches Opfer* for keyboard; *Ricercare a 6*, for sSATBG recorders, or strings, or two keyboards; *Fuga Canonica in Epidiapente* for keyboard and melody instrument; from the *Art of Fugue*: *Contrapuncti 1* and *4* for keyboard, and *Contrapunctus 14* as completed by D. F. Tovey, for keyboard, or for SATB recorders, or for strings; *Passacaglia and Fugue in c* for piano four hands; *Chorales with Descant* for melody instrument and piano; *Cello Suites I*, *II* and *III* for flute or alto recorder, *Forty Chorales* for piano, *Der Geist hilft* for SATB-SATB recorders. By Johannes Brahms: *Fugue in Ab minor for organ*, for SATB recorders and gamba, in A minor; *Choralvorspiele for organ* with previous settings by Isaac, Bach, Praetorius, recorders. By Franz Schubert: *Four Songs*, voice and guitar; *Schubert Dances*, recorders and guitar, *Schubert Dances*, piano 4 hands. By G. F. Händel: *Concerto Grosso in A minor* op 6 no 4, harpsichord and recorders; *Recorder Sonata in Bb* no 5, in G for tenor recorder and keyboard. By other composers: *Claudio Monteverdi, Ecco Mormorar l'Onde*, SSATB recorders; *Twelve Italian Songs*, voice and guitar; *John Wilbye, Draw on sweet Night*, SSATTB recorders, and for flute choir; *Telemann, Twelve Flute Fantasias*, recorder; *John Carr, Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute or recorder and guitar; *Fourteen Folk Dance Tunes*, recorder and guitar; *Easy Classical Pieces*, Bb trumpet and piano.

Www.pjb.com.au offers innovative and unusually **generous and useful licensing conditions**:

- You may not redistribute the piece in electronic form
- You may print out or photocopy as many copies as you wish
- You may give these copies to whoever you want
- You may freely perform the piece to live audiences; performing rights are waived

These are extremely practical and generous copyright conditions, and have been devised so as to be as useful to you as possible. Feel free to visit . . .

www.pjb.com.au