

# First Symphony

## First Movement

Bars 5 and 6. First flute and first bassoon are important parts for the melody and, whilst the rest of the orchestra remains *p*, must be rendered distinctly audible, thus:



The horns, in spite of the unison with the bassoon which begins in bar 2, must be considered as harmony parts and therefore remain *p*.

Bar 12. The four demisemiquavers in the strings are generally played as grace notes, which is wrong; they must have exactly the value of a quaver. They receive their true melodic importance when the Allegro con brio which immediately follows is played in such a way that the value of a half bar corresponds precisely to that of a quaver in the preceding Adagio molto. It is true that this does not agree with the metronome marking, but it gives more character to the principal theme than if this is played at full speed at the very beginning. The speed should gradually increase until full speed is reached at the *ff*, bar 31. We must emphasize the fact that both here and in all similar observations we are concerned with fluctuations, not with any dislocation of the time of the piece. An intentionally slow beginning of the Allegro would be just as displeasing as the gentle, preparatory holding back in the first bars (which allows the chief part to grow out of the introductions, as it were) is pleasing and effectual.

Bars 25, 27 and 29. Every *sf* to be executed as *sfp*.

Bars 33-41. There is a danger here lest the imitations of the violin passages by the flutes, the clarinets and the first bassoon should be

drowned by the horns, the trumpets and the kettledrums, or even by the string section if this is numerous, so that the audience only hears emphatic brass notes and constantly recurring string chords. I therefore propose the following notation:

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for:

- Flutes
- Clarinets
- 1st Bassoon
- Oboes
- Horns
- Trumpets
- Kettledrums
- Violins
- Violas
- Violoncellos
- Contrabassos and 2nd Bassoon

The second system includes staves for:

- Violins
- Violas
- Violoncellos
- Contrabassos and 2nd Bassoon

Dynamic markings are indicated throughout the score, including *mf*, *f*, *sf*, *fp*, and *p*. The notation features various rhythmic patterns, including chords and melodic lines, with some passages marked with slurs and accents.

The strings still remain *mf* in bar 42 and are joined by the woodwinds in the passage



likewise in *mf*, thus rendering possible the *crescendo* prescribed to last during the next three bars. If, on the other hand, the whole passage reproduced in our last example but one be played *ff* as prescribed, the volume must either be suddenly lessened so as to enable us to produce a *crescendo*, or else the *crescendo* must be sacrificed altogether. The directions given above, however, not only render the bars in question clearer, but they also deliver us from the dilemma just mentioned.

Bars 53–56. To obtain a graceful rendering of this passage the following nuances are recommended, but it must be remembered that the  $\text{>}$  are to be executed in such a way as to enliven the passage in a pleasing and gentle manner; the slightest forcing of the notes would be detrimental.



What we have just said in regard to the  $\text{>}$  may be applied also to the *sf* in the four following bars. They are *sf* in *piano*, not in *forte* (a difference which must always be carefully observed), and must therefore be played very delicately. It is advisable to allow them to be followed by a short  $\text{>}$ , so that for the flutes and clarinets the passage will be as follows:



for the strings:



for the first bassoon:



and thereupon for violas, violoncellos and contrabassos:



Bars 61-64. Directions for the parts containing the melody, violins, first flute and first oboe, the same as for bars 53-56.

Bars 67 and 68. I recommend the following notation for all parts:



not however a strong *crescendo* with a startling *p subito*, but a gentle intensifying of the sound, followed by a return to the *p* which reigns in the whole of the preceding passage.

Bar 77. With this bar begins one of the most characteristic episodes of this symphony. The wonderful bass passages, the original modulations and the speaking phrases of oboe and bassoon give us a foretaste of Beethoven's later works. In order to give the expression its full due here, I believe I am justified in placing a *poco meno mosso* at the beginning of the bar in question. Then in bar 85 begins a gradual increase of speed which lasts for three bars and finally reaches the original *allegro* (tempo I) in bar 88.

The marking  $\text{•••}$  for the violins and violas given in the first two bars only, holds good for the whole passage as far as the

*crescendo*, at which point a more vigorous bowing might be introduced.

Bar 93. All parts to be provided with a  $\sphericalangle$  leading up to the coming *ff*.

Bar 97. The modern make of the instrument allows us to write



for the flute in this bar instead of



Beethoven never ventured to write anything for the flute above the high A, and this, as we shall see presently, often led to curiously abnormal treatment of the melody.

Bar 99. The unnatural leap in the parts of the second horn and the second trumpet is simply due to the fact that the lower D was wanting in the instruments of that time. In this and in similar passages, which will be mentioned in their place, we may therefore make the correction



with full justification. The second horn in the following bars also can always take the lower D instead of the higher one until the repetition mark is reached.

I recommend the repetition of the first part in this movement, in which, as the first subject is no longer preceded by an introduction, there is now no reason for holding back the time. The repetition can therefore be begun at full *allegro* tempo, for which  $\text{♩} = 112$  is a fairly correct metronome mark.



Bar 125. All parts to be provided with a  $\sphericalangle$  leading up to the following *f*.

Bars 122–125 form a period of four beats, to which the passage of four beats immediately following corresponds. Although this second period is only a transposition of the first, it needs a different mode of execution, as it concludes *p* instead of *f* and leads to major instead of minor. I have therefore introduced the following graduation in all parts for bars 128, 129 and 130. The second horn plays the lower F during these bars, a note which did not exist in the natural instruments.



Bars 131–135. The first flute is the part which carries the melody in this passage. It is quite sufficient in itself during the *crescendo* in bars 131 and 132, but from bar 133 on, it may easily begin to seem weak as the string section has already become fairly strong and in bar 134 has reached *ff*. It is therefore advisable for both flutes to play the passage



in unison. The oboes should not make the *crescendo* on E $\flat$  G too emphatic.

Bar 136. Wagner, with special reference to Beethoven's compositions, has already pointed out the importance of a *p* following immediately upon an *f* without any intermediate *diminuendo*. I would again repeat this here, and would add that the sudden change should take place in tempo, without any separation to break the rhythm before the *p*, i.e. without any so-called "air pause" (or "breath pause"). At the same time I would declare that I consider the introduction of these "air pauses" into classical masterpieces,

and hence in Beethoven's symphonies also, as one of the most horrible examples of bad taste in the modern manner of conducting. In spite of the artistic freedom of execution, the great sequence of the time must never be broken. This is one of the very first demands which I make on every conductor, and he will educate himself to it with all his strength unless he wishes to be a mere strainer after effect. I quite admit that this sudden introduction of a *p* belongs to those difficulties of a good execution which can only be conquered by a careful training of the orchestra.

Bar 144. Even the best orchestras tend to get too fast after this bar. This must be carefully avoided. The little rhythms



scattered over the different parts like spots of light, must form a whole with perfect precision like the links of a chain, whilst all players must maintain during fifteen bars a light *piano* undisturbed by any gradation. Then the short *crescendo* in bar 159 should be executed with a so much greater degree of energy.

Bars 160–167. If the different E's in the horns, trumpets and clarinets are played *ff* throughout, the melodic phrases of the flutes, oboes and bassoons cannot possibly obtain their true value. This, however, can be effected by the following phrasing:

Clarinet

Horns and Trumpets

Two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for Clarinets and the bottom staff is for Horns and Trumpets. Both staves show a melodic line with dynamics markings: *sfp* and *sfpp* for the Clarinets, and *ff* and *sfp* for the Horns and Trumpets. The notes are connected by slurs, indicating phrasing.

Two staves of musical notation. The top staff shows a melodic line with dynamics markings: *mf*, *sf*, *mf*, *sf*, and *mf*. The bottom staff shows a supporting line with dynamics markings: *mf*, *sf*, *mf*, *sf*, and *mf*. The notes are connected by slurs, indicating phrasing.

Bar 178. Here the principal theme is introduced for the first time in its full splendour. It is therefore advisable, whilst maintaining the energetic expression, to modify the time rather in the broader direction, and to prepare for this modification by an almost imperceptible slackening of the time in the four *crescendo* bars preceding the *ff*. In the following gradual *crescendo* which begins in bar 191, an opportunity presents itself of gently quickening the speed again so that with bar 198 the original time is established once more. But the conductor should see that the strings execute the short semiquaver figures with gradually increasing strength and are not already playing *f* where *crescendo* is indicated.

Bars 184-187. Second horn and second trumpet can play the lower D here. Not so in bars 191 and 192, however, because the lower D of the second horn would hinder the progress of the bass entrusted to the second bassoon. The following low E of the horns, in spite of the analogous progress of the second bassoon, has no influence on the bass leading, as this is executed here by the violoncellos and contrabassos.

Bar 205. In spite of the fact that the flute and clarinet come in gently on the fourth crotchet, I believe a  $\text{>}$  in the strings is justifiable, leading up to the *p* in the following bar.

Bars 206-222. What was said above for bars 53-68 holds good here with suitable adaptation to the altered instrumentation.

Bar 230. *Poco meno mosso* (as before).

Bars 238-240. Quicken a little (as before).

Bar 241. Tempo I (as before).

Bar 246.  $\text{<}$  in all parts (as before).

Bars 251 and 252. An attempt to treat this passage for the horns and trumpets in the same way as the corresponding passage beginning in bar 98 would be unsuccessful. The high A and the high F both stood at the writer's disposal. Moreover, a comparison of the different instrumentation of the two passages shows clearly that Beethoven saved the brass for the emphatic introduction of the dominant followed by the tonic. This one example is quite characteristic, and should serve as a warning to those who think that instrumental alterations will be helpful everywhere because in some places, as we shall see, they are indispensable.

### *Second Movement*

Bar 1. I propose  $\text{♩} = 104$  as metronome mark, instead of  $\text{♩} = 120$ .



The principal theme here easily falls a prey to the following trivial manner of execution:



I therefore recommend, in whatever part the theme occurs, to give as delicate an accent as possible to the upbeat; this can only be represented as follows:



The same holds good for several other passages in this movement, as for example the beginning of the second part:



Bars 11 and 12. For second violins, violas and violoncellos the following notation will serve to animate the execution:



Bar 16. For the sake of clearness I have changed the *crescendo*, which lasts for nine bars and thus has to be very gradually increased, to a *poco cresc.* in this bar, and have placed a *più cresc.* in bar 22.

Bars 27-34. The following notation is to be recommended in a very skilful performance, in order to enliven the execution:

1st and 2nd  
Violins



(Violoncellos uniformly *p*)



(this *cresc.* and *dim.* everywhere, except in the Horns, which remain *p*)

From the upbeat in bar 34 to bar 38 the second violins, first flute and first oboe may play *poco espressivo*, whilst the first violins give their descending semiquaver passage *pp*.

Bar 46. Oboes and bassoons begin to play *forte* at the C and do not wait for the G, which is a correction that I was once surprised to find. The same holds with reference to the F and C for all winds in bar 146.

Bar 57. In this bar a *diminuendo* can be introduced, then the four following bars may be played slightly more *piano* than the three bars which precede the *diminuendo*, thus forming a kind of softly dying echo. At the third quaver of bar 61 we return to the normal *p* prescribed, which closes the first part so gracefully.

The direction to repeat should not be observed.

From about bar 71 a slight quickening of the time will naturally occur until the original tempo of the principal theme is reached by about bar 87 through a series of gradations. For bars 97-100 I have adopted the following manner of execution:



but I always warned the first violins against a sentimental mode of expression in the last two bars. If I supported the execution of the short oboe and bassoon phrases by means of a slight *ritenuto*, I allowed the original time to come in already in the two bars in question and did not wait for the return of the principal theme.

The figurations accompanying the return, which begin in the violoncellos at bar 101, cannot be performed tenderly and gracefully enough. I have therefore inserted a *pp* also in bar 113 for the second bassoon and also for the violas, violoncellos and contrabassos.

Bar 117. Here too only *poco cresc.* at first, and *più cresc.* not before bar 122.

Bars 127–138. See what has been said for bars 27–38.

Bars 157–161. Same as for bars 57–61.

Bars 163 and 164. The little solo for the first oboe to be played with expression and a fairly marked *crescendo*, but with no diminution of the speed.

Bars 176–180. In order to ensure the melodic domination to the woodwinds in this passage, where they play *f* throughout, it is advisable, should the strings be numerous, to adopt for the strings the notation I give here for the first violin:



Bars 186–190. This repetition of the preceding four bars is played *pp* in contrast to the preceding *p*. The *pp* begins in the flute at bar 188, in the oboes at bar 186 on the third quaver, in the clarinets and bassoons at bar 188, in the horns at bar 186, in the first violins at bar 187, in the second violins and violas at bar 186 on the first demisemiquaver, in the violoncellos and basses at bar 186 on the third quaver. In bar 190 the horns resume the customary *p* on the third quaver, whereupon the *pp* prescribed by Beethoven from bar 192 on has a particularly fine effect, especially when accompanied by a slight diminution in the speed. The *f* which immediately follows must, however, bring back the original time.

Such observations as these are intended to serve merely as hints, not as directions. It would be better not to observe them at all than to follow them unintelligently or with exaggerated effects.

### *Third Movement*

Bars 16 and 17. For the sake of the melodic structure, I had the C D-flat (upbeat and first crotchet) in the first and second violins played *p*, or at most *mf*, at all events in distinct contrast to the *f* which is introduced again on the second crotchet of bar 17. It seems to me that this must have been Beethoven's design, as otherwise he would have had no reason for prescribing *f* again in the violins at this second crotchet. The modulation into G-flat major introduced in this bar is one of the numerous striking new features of Beethoven which already distinguish this first symphony. The *ff* at the entrance

of this G-flat major (bar 19) must be played by all instruments concerned with special emphasis.

Bar 80, Trio. For the first sixteen bars of this Trio I have adopted the following notation. The first time the woodwinds and horns play as follows:



and the violins as written, in a uniform *p*. At the repetition however, these sixteen bars, as well as the following ones until the repetition mark, should be played *pp*, without the *<mf>* which I have added. The violins then, of course, also play *pp*, that is, more softly than the first time. The *sf* in bar 102, which even in the first playing only represents an accent in *p*, should be scarcely noticeable in the repetition.

I would deprecate a too frequent use of these echo effects, which I have introduced here and also once or twice in the Andante of this symphony. They easily give an impression of affectation, especially in compositions of a serious character. They do not seem to me misplaced in this cheerful work, which was evidently written under the influence of Haydn's style. But in the later symphonies we shall scarcely meet them again.

Bar 104. The passage beginning at the double bar should not be begun too quietly, in order to render possible the *diminuendo* which shortly follows.

Bars 120 and 121. I would warn against an exaggeration of the *<>*, which would have a grotesque effect.

The first part of the main section is so short that I should recommend a repetition of it even after the Trio, in order to avoid the impression of a too hasty flitting past, which seems to me unavoidable if it is only played once. This proceeding forms an exception to be allowed in this symphony only, and which should never be adopted in any other symphony, whether of Beethoven or any other master.



*Fourth Movement*

Bars 1-6. The first *fermata* on the G is maintained for a considerable length of time and then taken off, so that there is a short pause before the entry of the first violins. The following passage was apparently already executed by Bülow in the character of an improvisatory introduction. I do not know how this was done as I never heard this symphony conducted by Bülow. I have supplemented Beethoven's directions in the following way:

The musical notation consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a piano-piano (*pp*) section marked *poco rit.*, and then a piano (*p*) section marked *poco accel.* with triplet markings. The second staff continues the melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a piano-piano (*pp*) section marked *poco rit.*, and then a section marked *Allegro molto e vivace.*

In the *Allegro molto e vivace* I adopt the metronome mark  $\text{♩} = 138$  instead of  $\text{♩} = 88$ , by which means unpleasant haste is avoided.

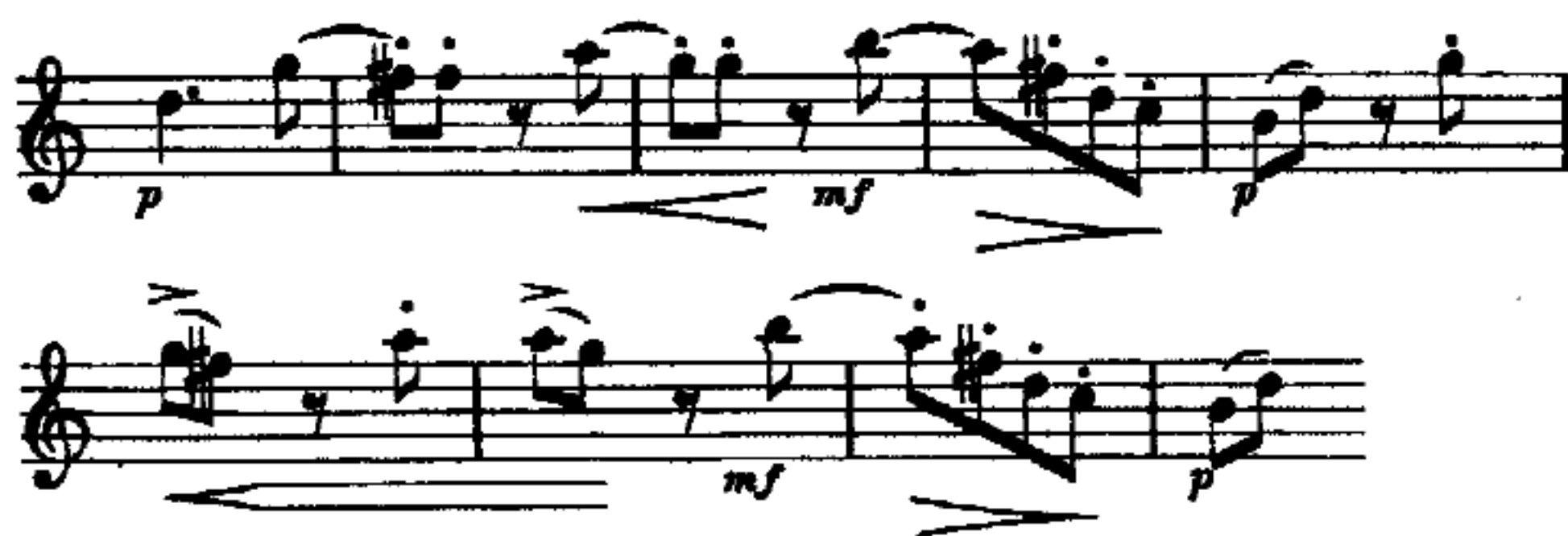
Bars 34-36. The short phrase in the first flute, first clarinet and first bassoon

The musical notation is a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It shows a short melodic phrase consisting of several notes and rests.

is not sufficiently in evidence if the trumpets, kettledrums and oboes play *f* as prescribed. It would be contrary to the whole character of the passage, however, to weaken this *f*, and yet it is most important that the merry, almost comic figure of the woodwinds should be distinctly heard. I have therefore allowed the second flute, second clarinet and second bassoon to accompany the first parts in unison and all six instruments to blow *ff*; by this means the effect evidently desired is obtained.

Bars 56-63. The first and second violins play this graceful and spirited theme with the following gradation:



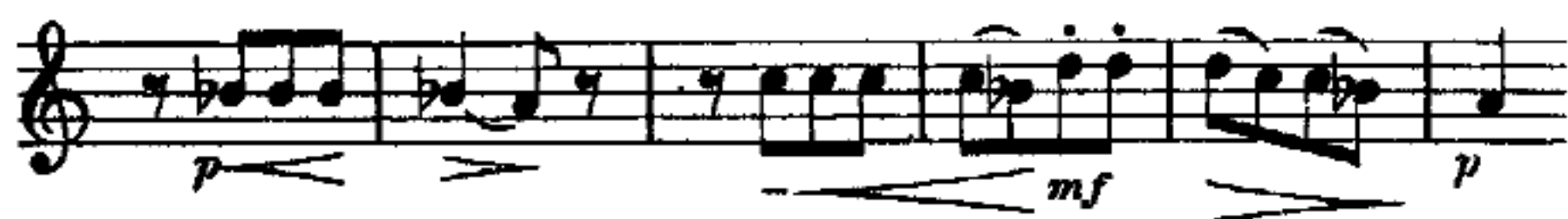


Bar 85. Second horn and second trumpet take the lower D.

Bar 96. The first part of this movement should be repeated.

Bars 106 and 107. Attention should be called to the difference between the *pp* of these bars as a noticeable weakening of the preceding *p*, also to the fact that the violins ought on no account to prepare by means of a  $\lessdot$  the *ff* which is introduced quite suddenly in bar 108. In order, however, to render these fine and yet strong differentiations absolutely distinct, it is of the utmost importance to avoid a too great hastening of the time, which is a point against which I would warn here expressly, in the interest of the charming gracefulness of this whole movement.

Bars 117–121. For the first violins the following mode of execution may be recommended:



The following passage, with its attractive alternation of *legato* and *staccato* runs, only produces its proper effect when it is faithfully executed *sempre p* without the slightest attempt at a *crescendo*. But then the *crescendo* should come in at bar 138 as prescribed with all the more force.

Bars 160–163. It is of great importance that the *p* in the woodwinds should make its entry here suddenly. If we prepare for it by a *diminuendo* in the first two bars the whole effect is spoilt, although that is easier for careless wind players. In order to avoid any error, I have written *ff* in bar 160 for flutes, clarinets and bassoons, and have added a *subito* to the *p* in bar 162. To my surprise, not only once but several times the compliment has been paid me that I had

really "made" something quite special out of this passage. I have never understood what there was "special" in faithfully carrying out an instruction, and still less have I been able to understand how any other mode of execution than the one described could have been adopted in this passage. This fine stroke, that the *ff* of the whole orchestra has a sort of echo for two bars more in the woodwind instruments and then gives way suddenly to the *p* of the returning principal theme, is so absolutely characteristic of Beethoven that it cannot possibly be misunderstood.

Bars 183-188. Although it is a temptation here for the second trumpet and second horn to take the lower D, I would decidedly dissuade from it. Especially in conjunction with bar 189, I find the leaps



too characteristic to justify any weakening process.

Bars 192-199. See bars 56-63. The following four bars will then of course also be played



and possibly, in accordance with the melodic character, with even more decided emphasis than the eight preceding ones.

Bars 234-237. The series of chords



represents a closed melodic and harmonic complex; hence the second *fermata* should be taken off, but not the first, which should also be held on for a short time in order to avoid an unsuitably strong interruption.

Bar 246. This entry of the *f* on the last but one note of the theme, which thereby receives a sudden and quite inexplicable jerk, almost makes me believe in a slip of the author's; I think therefore that I may venture on the following alteration in the notation for bars 246 and 247, which I feel to be in keeping with Beethoven's intention.

1st Violins and Flutes

2nd Violins, Violas, and Basses

The musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff, labeled '1st Violins and Flutes', is in treble clef and shows a melodic line. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The melody consists of several notes, with a final note that is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic, indicating a sudden increase in volume. The lower staff, labeled '2nd Violins, Violas, and Basses', is in bass clef and shows a harmonic accompaniment. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and features a crescendo leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic marking.

Bars 275 and 277. It should be specially mentioned that both the *sf*'s in the oboes and horns are here only "accents in *p*" and should therefore be very delicately executed. The wind players concerned must remember that bars 274-277 are a *piano* repetition of the preceding identical *forte* passage. It is just these two *sf*'s which so easily mislead them into playing these four bars loud also.