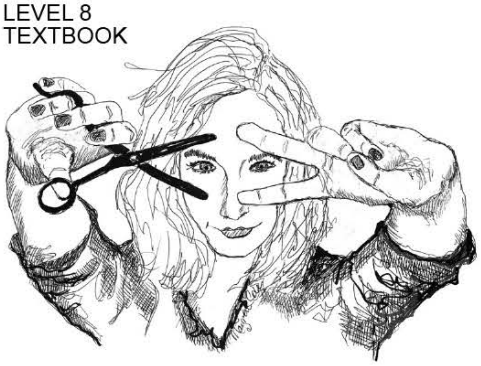


The MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD

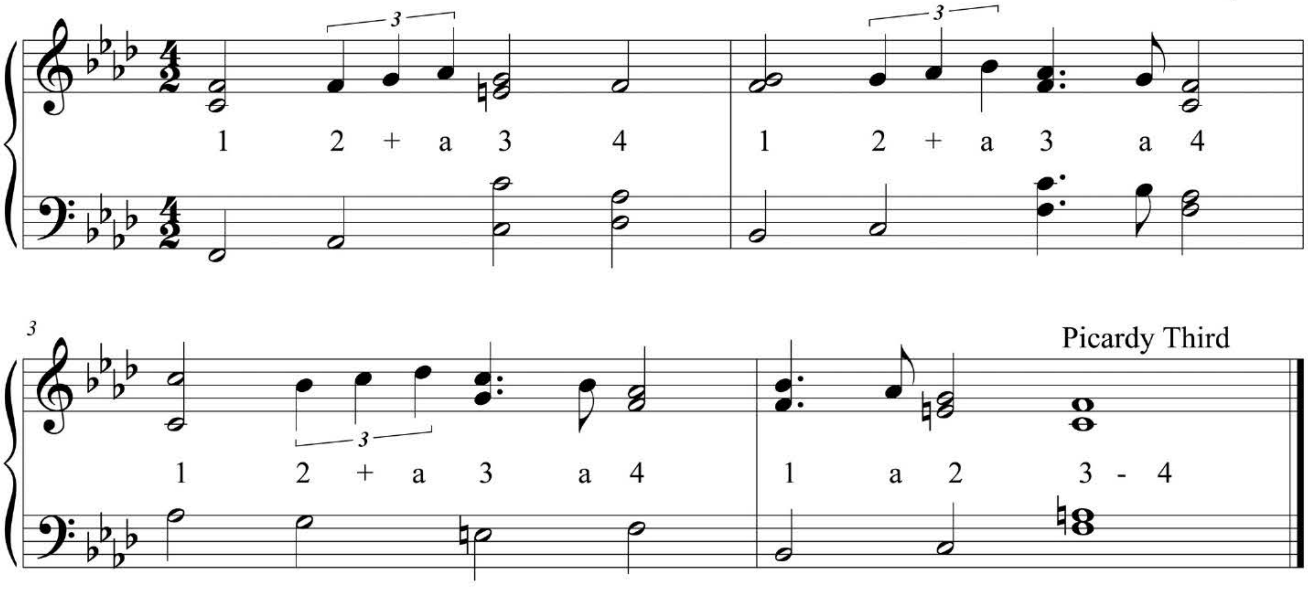
Cut Time

How to Count It When You Encounter It!

Pianists are occasionally asked to play a composition in CUT TIME which has a "2" in the bottom of the time signature. Common time signatures for cut time are $\frac{2}{2}$ (often abbreviated with the symbol ¢), $\frac{3}{2}$, $\frac{4}{2}$, etc. The half note will receive one beat when a "2" is the lower number of the time signature. When one sees that the composition is in cut time, one must cut the simple rhythm value of every note in HALF. Often the tempo marking for a composition in cut time will be ***alla breve***. ***Alla breve*** tells the performer to count the composition in cut time. The following are some hymns written in cut time for you to practice. Soon, playing in cut time will become easy for you so don't give up on this skill!

We Are Living, We Are Dwelling

Thomas J Williams, 1890



This composition is in F minor, but the last chord Is a major chord and not a minor one. The composer used a Picardy Third on the last chord to give it more power because it was thought by composers of yesteryear that a minor chord was too weak to end a composition. Often a major chord was substituted as the ending chord.

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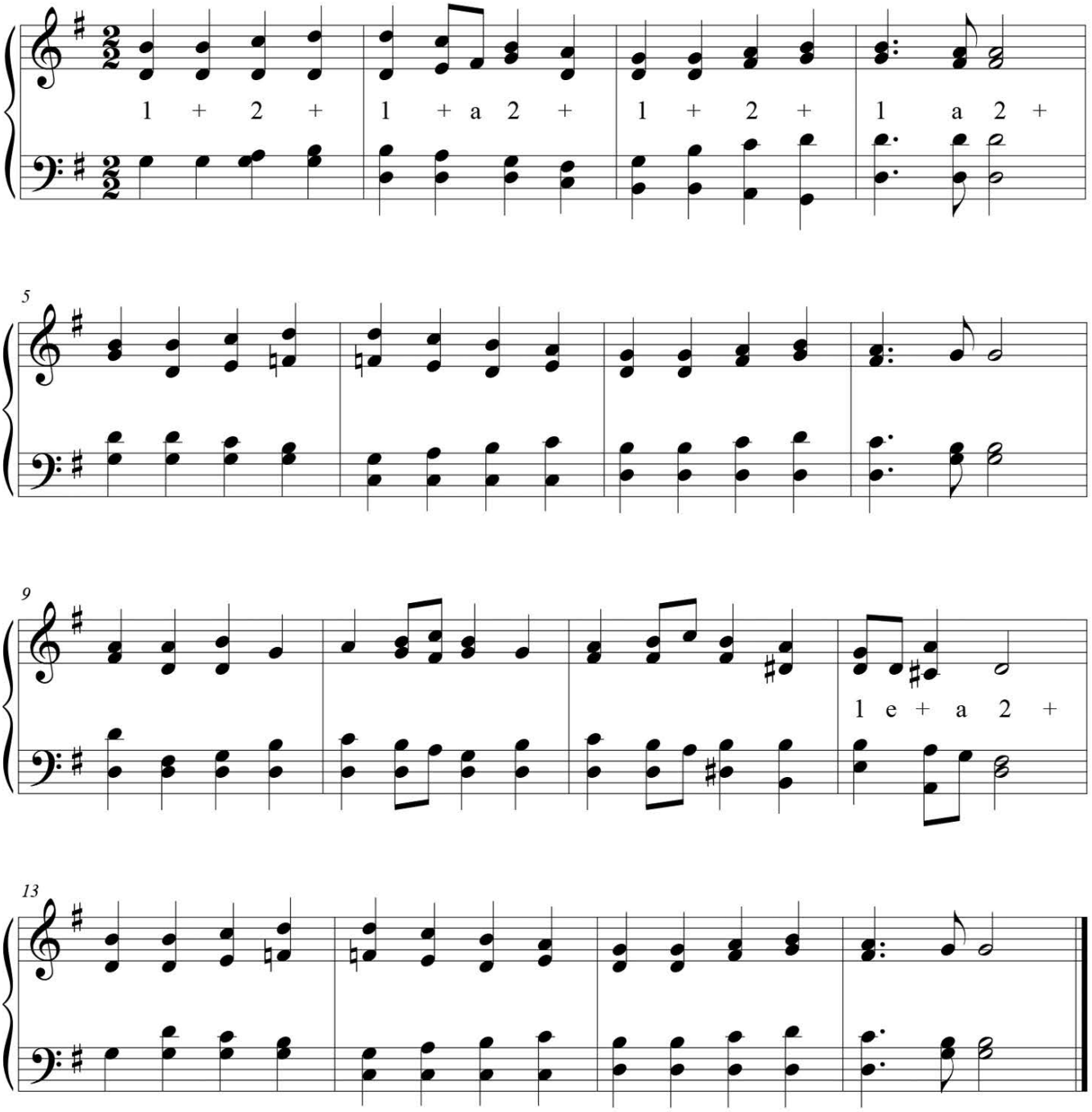
Yes, I realize that you can count this composition in 4/4 and no one will know the difference. But please resist that impulse and count this piece in 2/2 as it is indicated. You must learn to count in cut time sooner or later so let's begin your cut time "counting journey" today. - Mayron Cole

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

(orchestrated accompaniment has a 2 measure count-in)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1824)



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More Practice with Cut Time

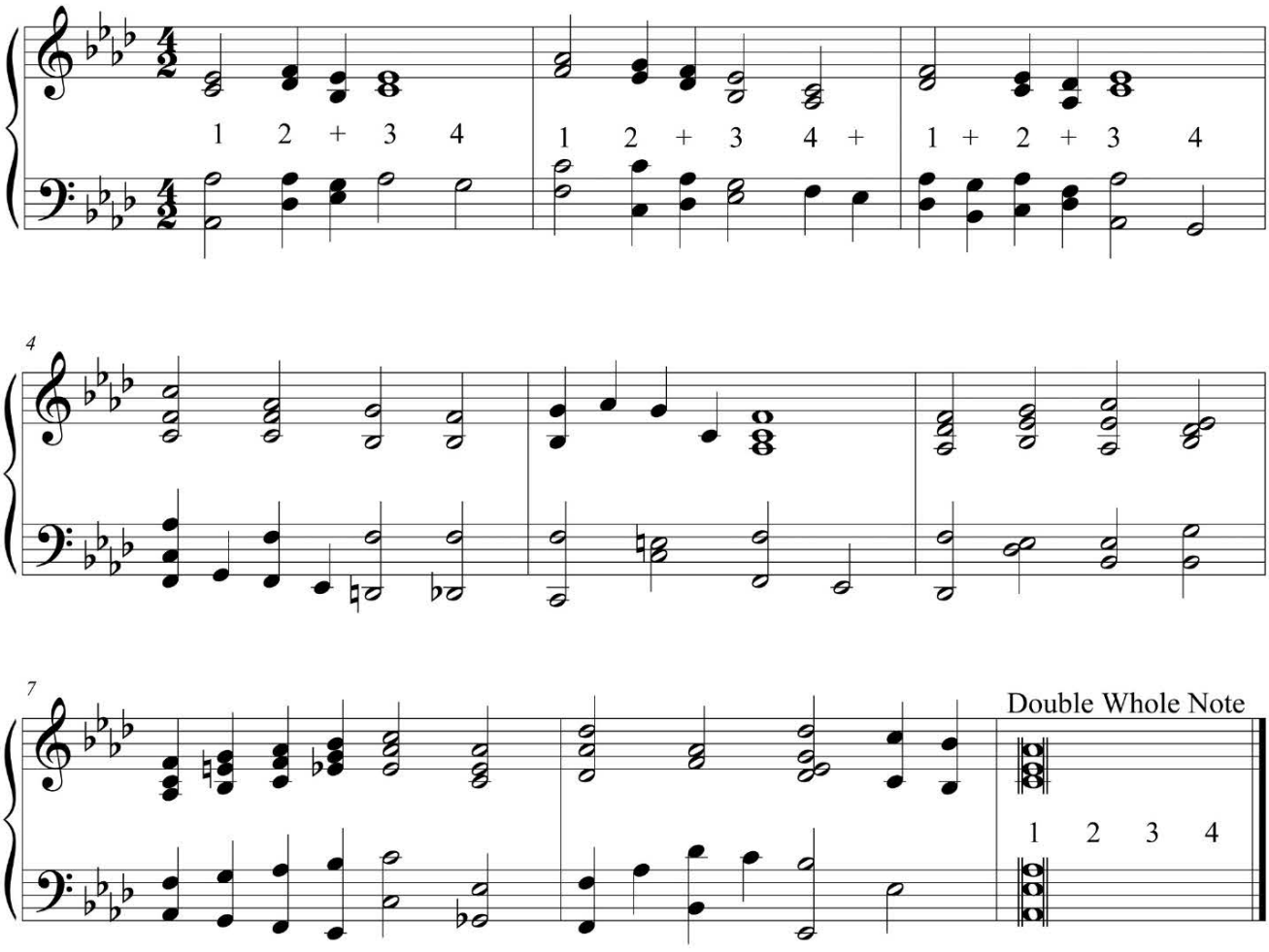
In Come, Labor On, look at the bass intervals in M. 4 to the end. You see that many of these intervals are too large to be played with the left hand. That's because the composer wrote this music for an organist, and an organist would play the low bass notes with the organ pedals. So, when the LH intervals are too large for your hand to comfortably play, play only the lowest note. We don't want any sprained fingers!

Look at M. 9. What type of note is that? It is a "double whole note". In this composition you see that the half note receives one beat. Therefore, a whole note will receive two beats, and a double whole note will receive four beats.

Come, Labor On

(orchestrated accompaniment has a 2 measure count-in)

Thomas Tertius Noble (1918-1953)



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