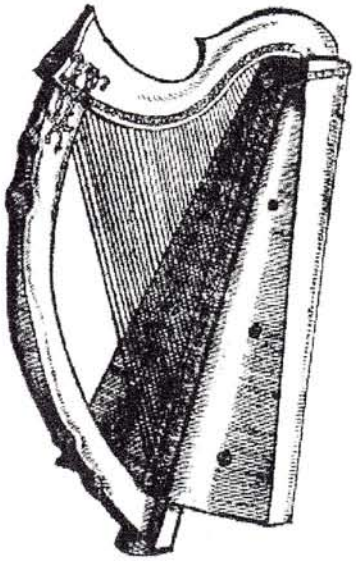


Creative Harping

Modes for Moods

and their Use in Improvisation

The Ionian Mode

Joyful, Convivial, Bright, Happy, Upbeat, Sweet Sounding

Here is some history about the Ionians. The Ionians, were a people who migrated from western Anatolia, Attica, and other Greek territories, directly following the Dorian immigration into mainland Greece (roughly 1,000 BC). They were the first Greek-speaking peoples to have reached mainland Greece and are thought to have been the precursors and creators of Mycenean Culture. The Ionians, prior to their arrival in Greece, were considered subjects of the Persian Empire in Anatolia. Once the Ionians immigrated to Greece, their position within Greek society was moderately compromised due to their former relations with Persia (a known enemy of the Greeks). Militaristically, they were considered by the vast majority of Greek society (from 450 BC onward), to be soft compared to the Dorians and other Greek militaristic factions. Whether this view was perpetuated by Ionian and Persian politics, or by the racial view of the Greeks, is debatable (more than likely a combination of both). What is known, is that by the year 450 BC, the Greeks (at the time of Herodotus), had invented a detailed ethnological theory of its people, which placed the Ionians with the aboriginal elements of ancient Greece, commonly referred to as the Pelasgoi.

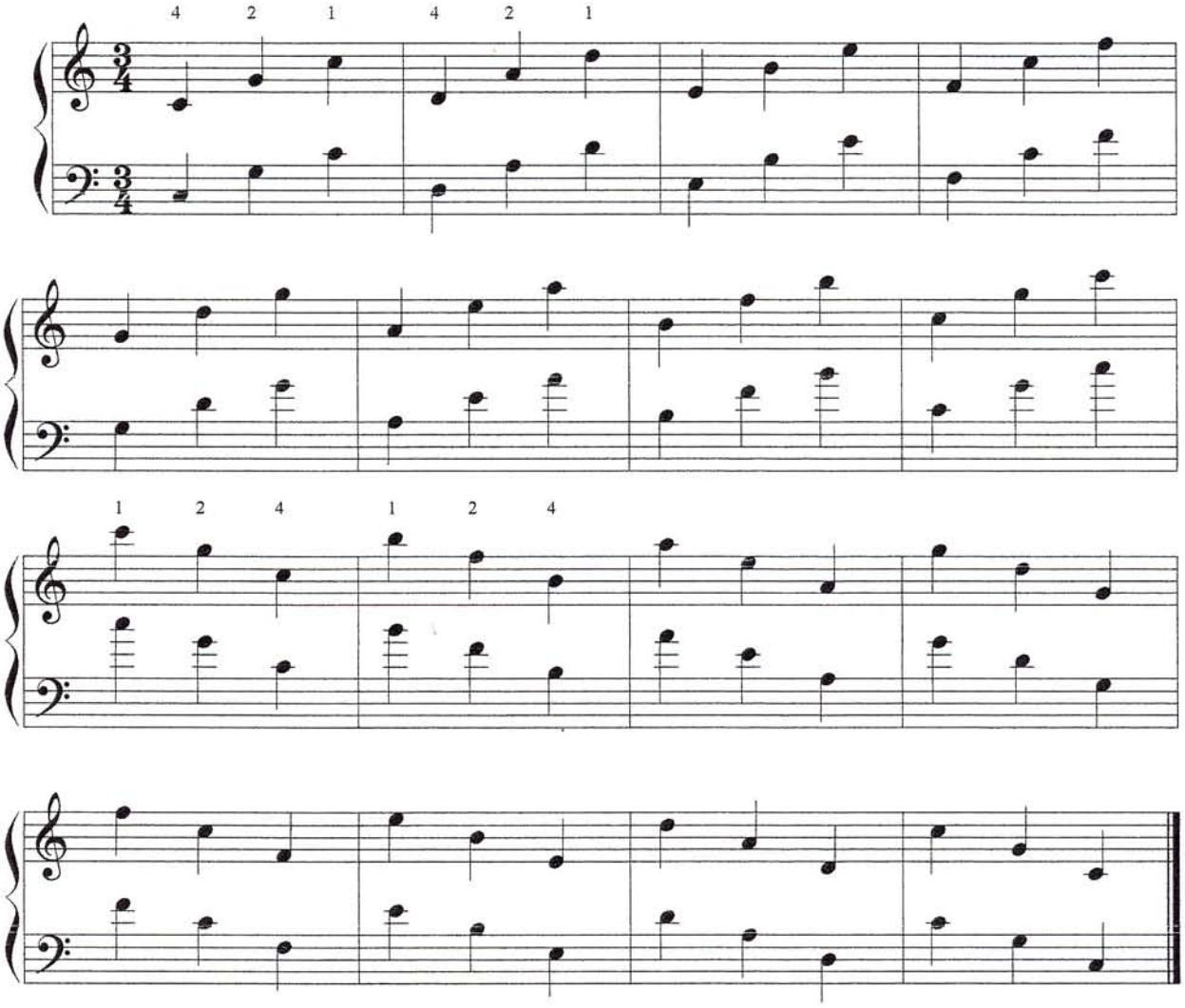
The Ionians ruled parts of Euboca, Attica, and most of the islands of the Aegean Sea, as well as the western coast of Asia Minor. Many of its cities were instrumental in setting up trade routes with such places as the Black Sea. From a cultural perspective, the Ionians added a great deal to classical Greece. From the Ionian and Attican dialects, came the introduction of the language Ionian-Attic, a combination of both dialects which permeated most of Ionia and many of the Ionian islands; and which became the almost exclusive language used by historians, writers, scientists, and philosophers of the 6th Century BC. In addition to language, the Ionians also maintained the adage of the Homeric epics, and early iambic poetry. By the 6th Century BC, the Ionians had entered areas of architecture, biology, historiography, philosophy, and many other areas of Greek culture which permeated the age of Classical Greece. (http://cmuseum.mnsu.edu/prehistory/aegean/theculturesofgreece)

The Ionian mode is widely know as the "major scale". The "Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do" that you have probably heard in the past is actually the Ionian mode. Most of our western music is written in the Ionian mode. It is the kind of scale you would want to use to write a pretty love song or a children's song. For instance, *Brahm's Lullaby, Theme from the Titannic, Love Is a Many Splendid Thing* or *Do, Re, Mi.*

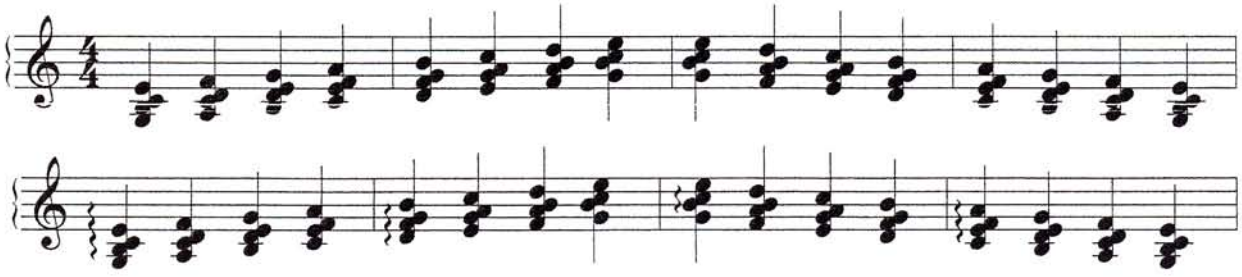
With this lesson we come to the end of our seven modes. In our next lessons we will be looking at the Pentatonic mode, the Hungarian folk/Byzantine modes and the Chinese modes. As a summary, this old saying describes the qualities of the modes very well.

The Modes: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian and Locrian
The first is meeke, devout to see;
The second sad in majesty.
The third doth rage and roughly brayth;
The fourth doth fawne: and flattry playth.
The fyfth delighteth and laugheth the more;
The sixth bewaylth: it weepeth full sore.
The seventh tredeth stoute: in forward race;
The eygthe goeth milde; in modest pace. (Anonymous)

Exercises

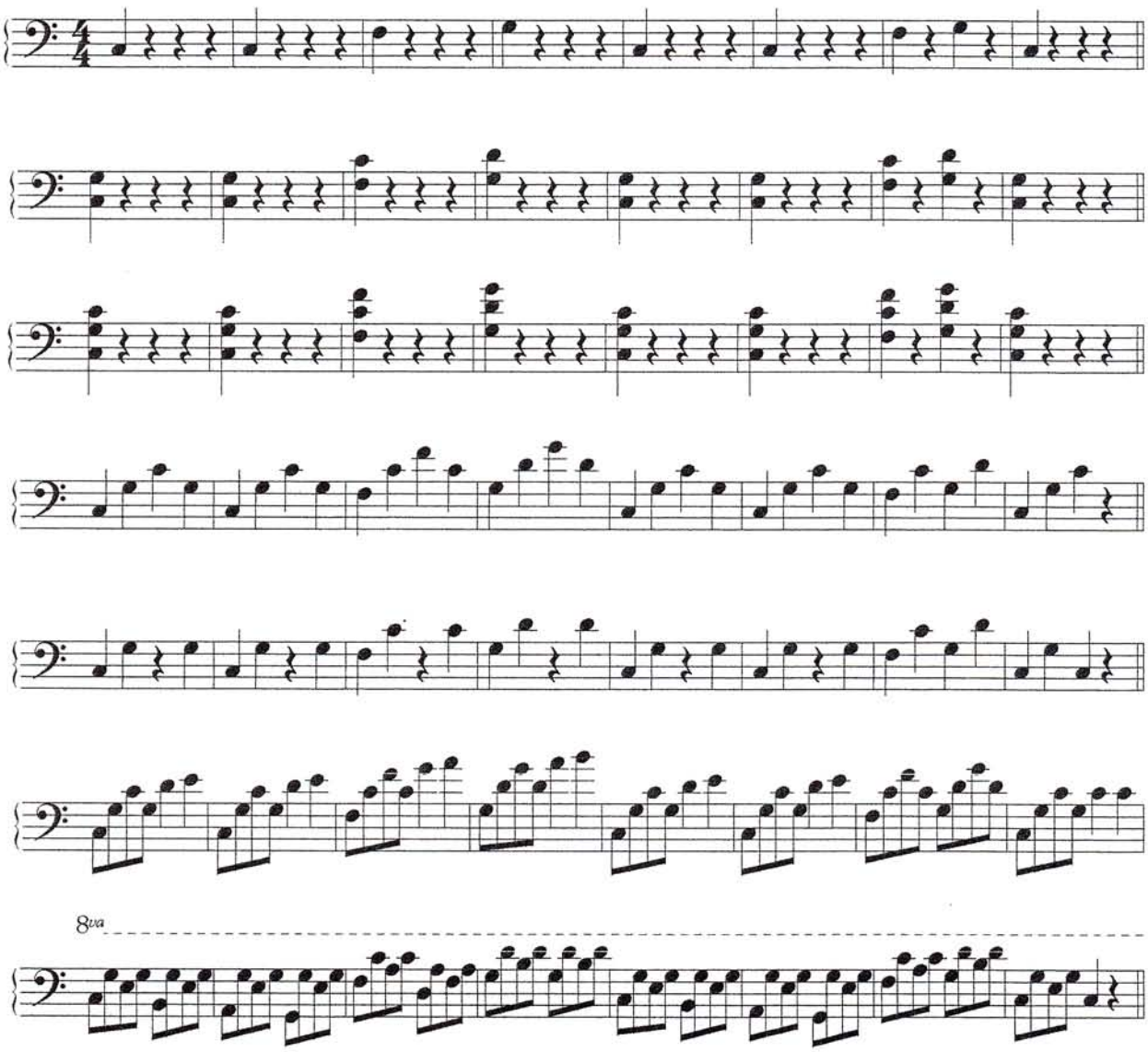


play first with R hand, then L hand, then 2 hands, always placing.



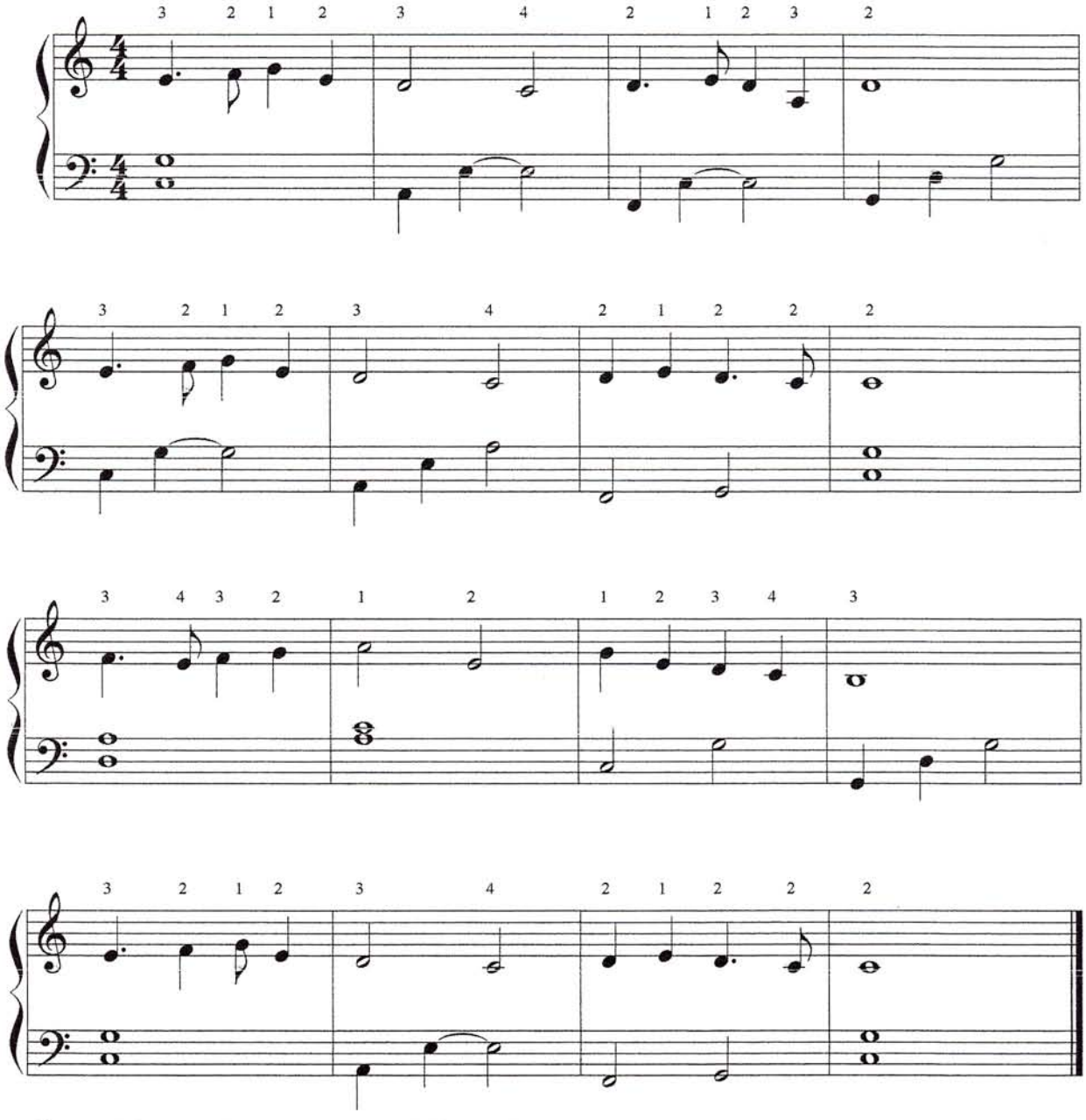
First line play as block chords, second line arpeggiate the chords.

Various 8 bar patterns in the 3 chord Ionian Improvisatio



In The Bleak Mid-Winter

G.T. Holst 1874-1934

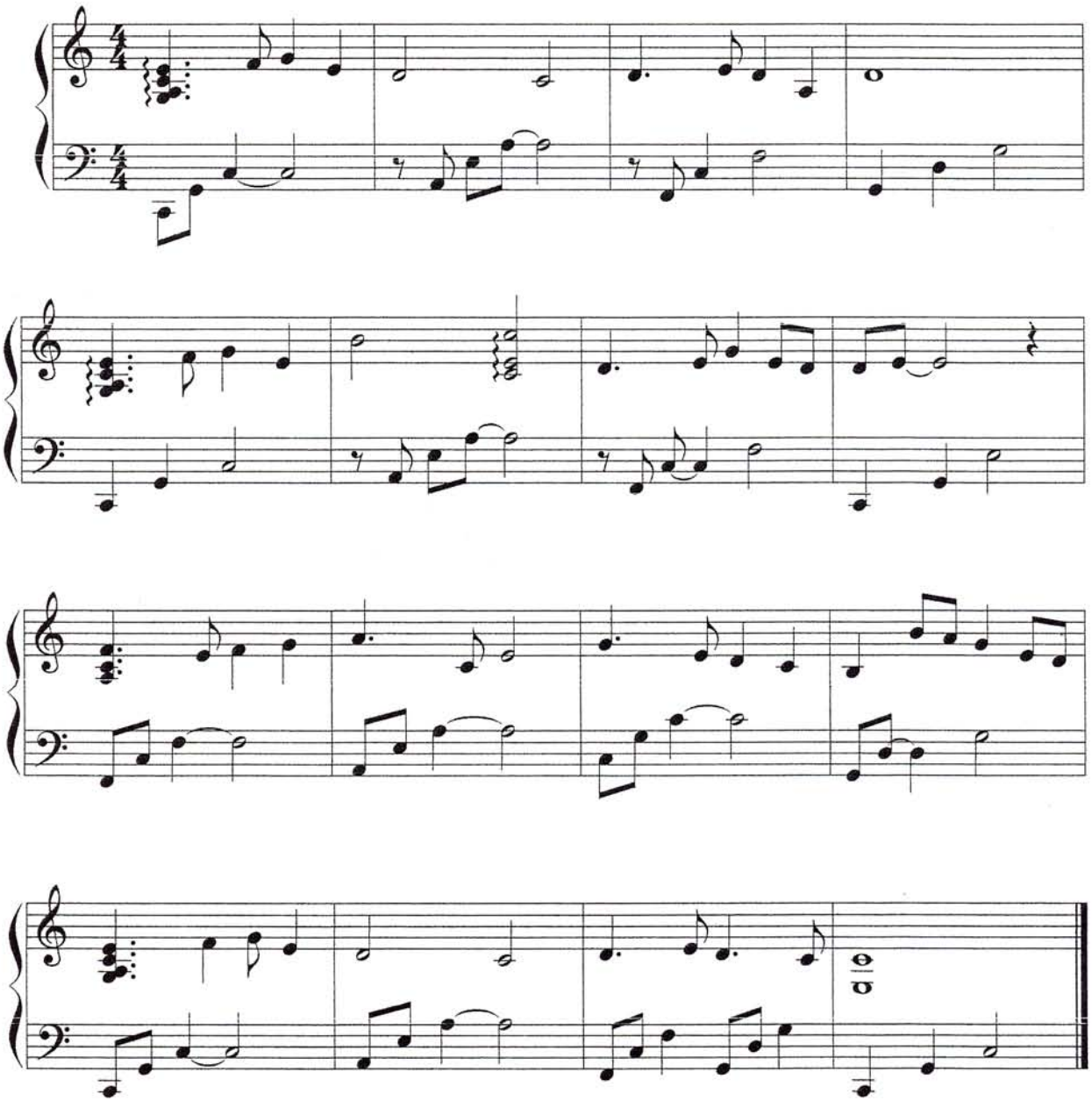


If you are playing this on a Therapy harp, play an octave higher than written.

In The Bleak Mid-Winter

Intermediate

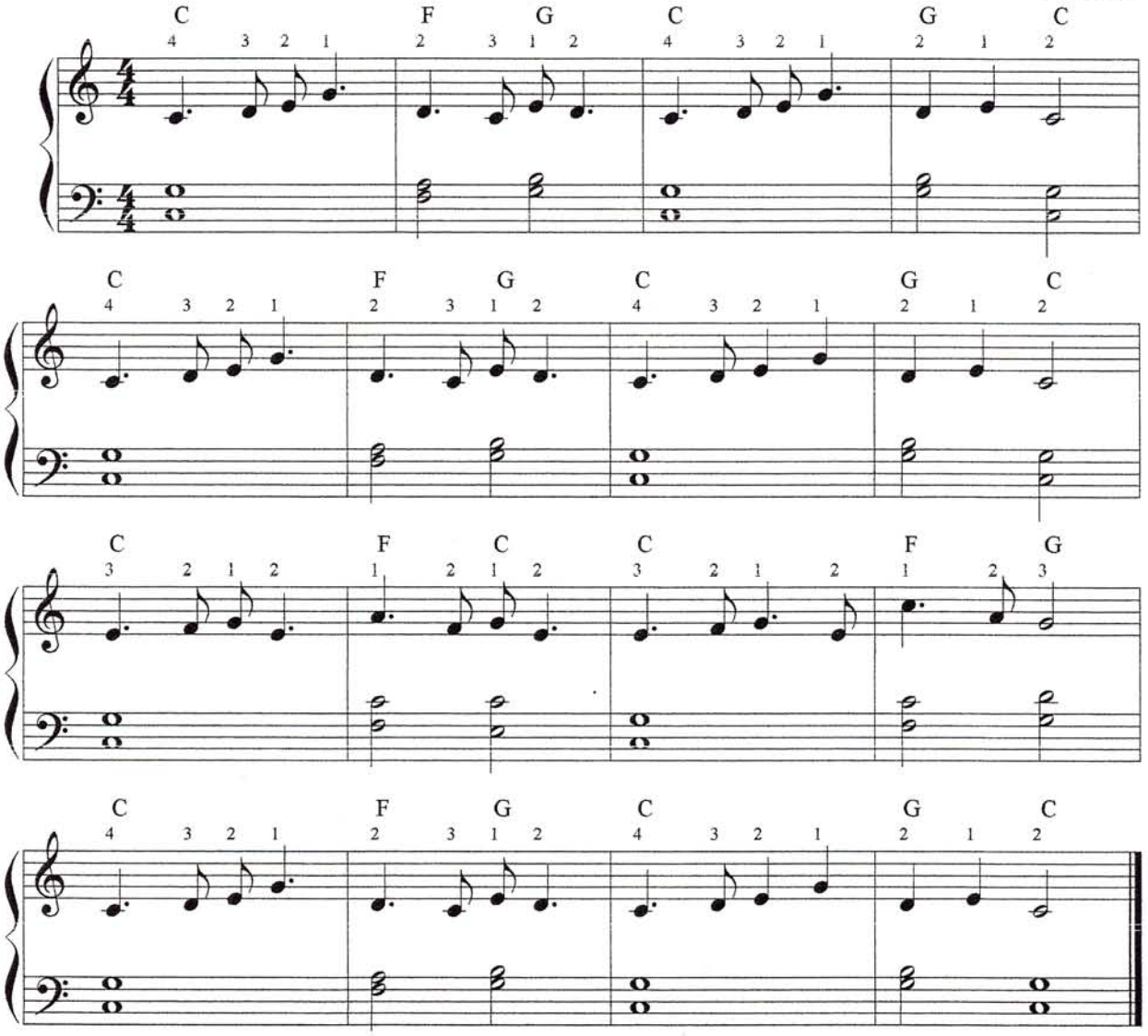
G.T. Holst 1874-1934



Suo-Gan

Beginner

Welsh Lullaby



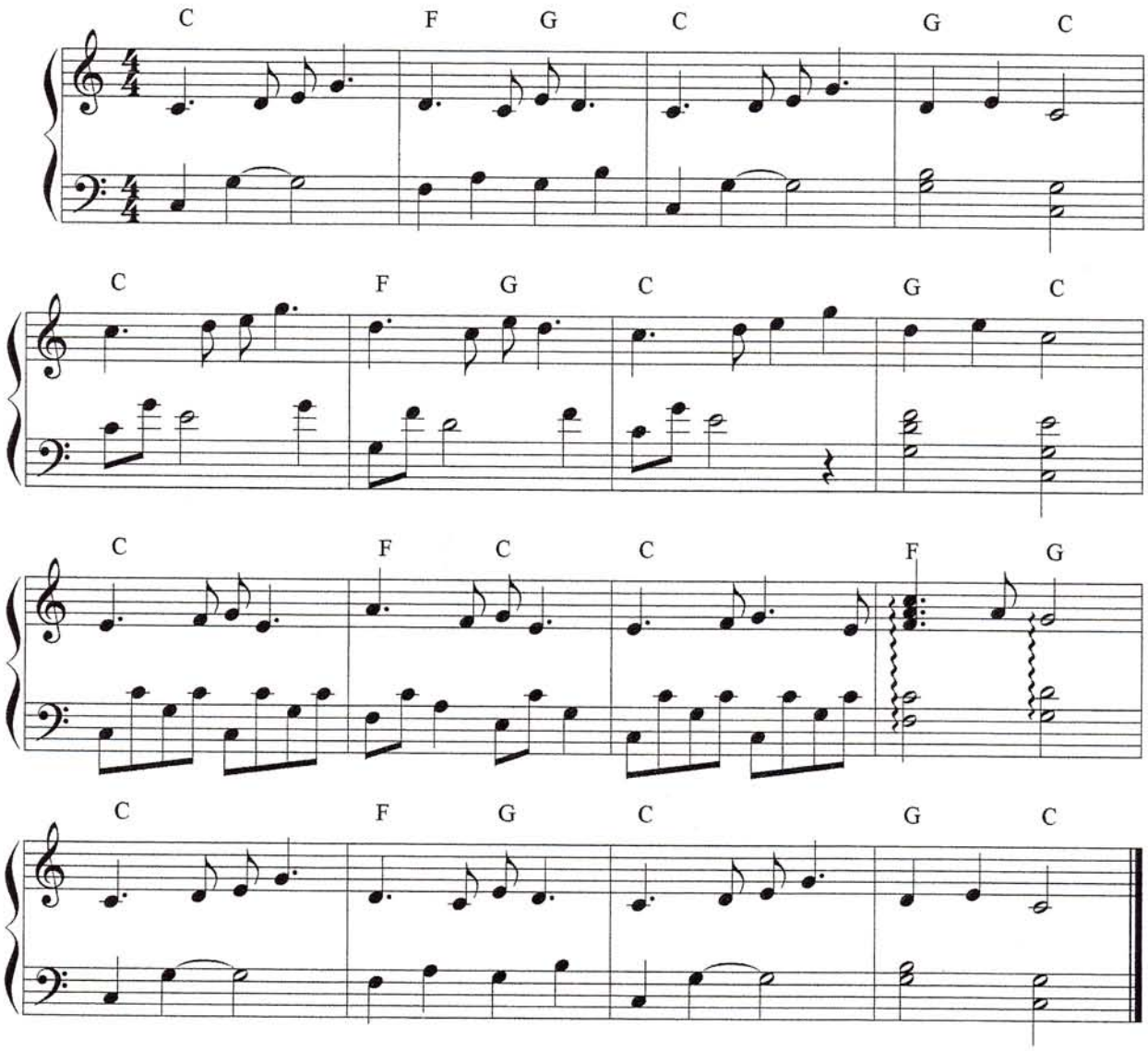
An Improvisation for the Ionian Mode

C234 **C**234 **F**234 **G**234

C234 **C**234 **F**2**G**4 **C**234

Suo-Gan

Intermediate
Welsh



An Improvisation pattern for the Ionian Mode
C234 **C**234 **F**234 **G**234
C234 **C**234 **F**2**G**4 **C**234