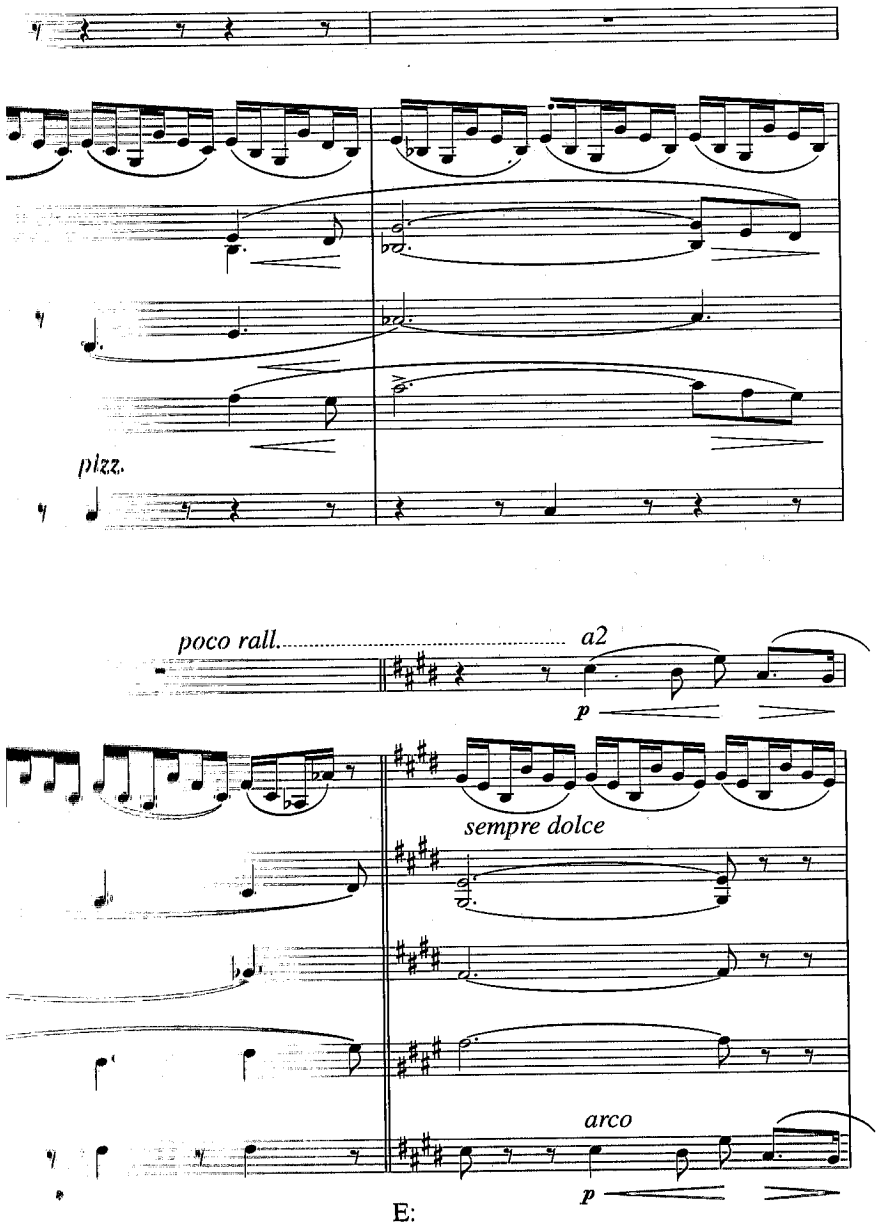
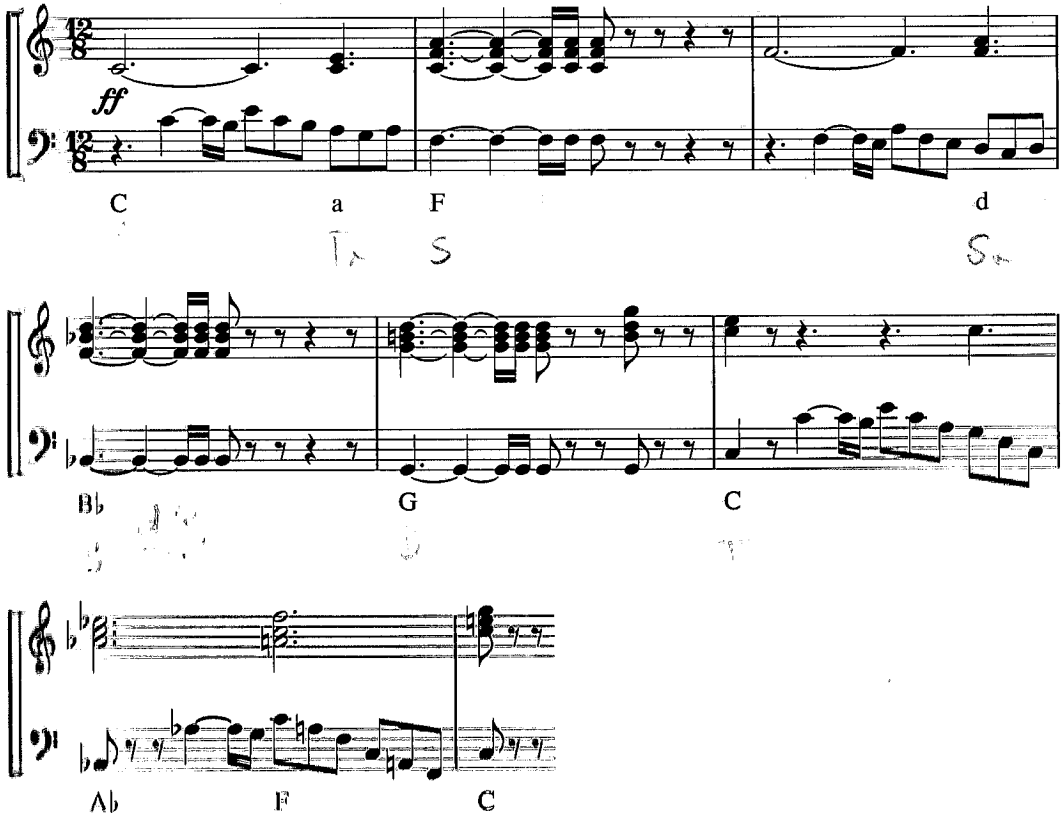
Liszt: *Les Préludes* (1854), mm. 51–54



the keys of C major and E major. Notice that this is a *direct modulation* (one that does not make use of a common chord between the two keys), but the modulation is smoothed over by the common tone (A♭/G♯) between the F minor and E major triads at the double bar.

Chromatic mediant relationships between triads in a nonmodulating passage contribute to the color and excitement of Example 1–3. The excerpt is clearly in C major, and it uses the following progression:

C–a–F–d–B♭–G–C–A♭–F–C

Certainly both the circle-of-5ths and diatonic mediant progressions are important here, but the three chromatic mediant relationships (B♭–G, C–A♭, and A♭–F) add a certain freshness and unpredictability to the harmony of the passage. Incidentally, this simplified piano reduction gives only a hint of what this music is really like; try to listen to a recording with the full score.

EXAMPLE 1–3 Liszt: *Les Préludes* (1854), mm. 35–42 (simplified texture)