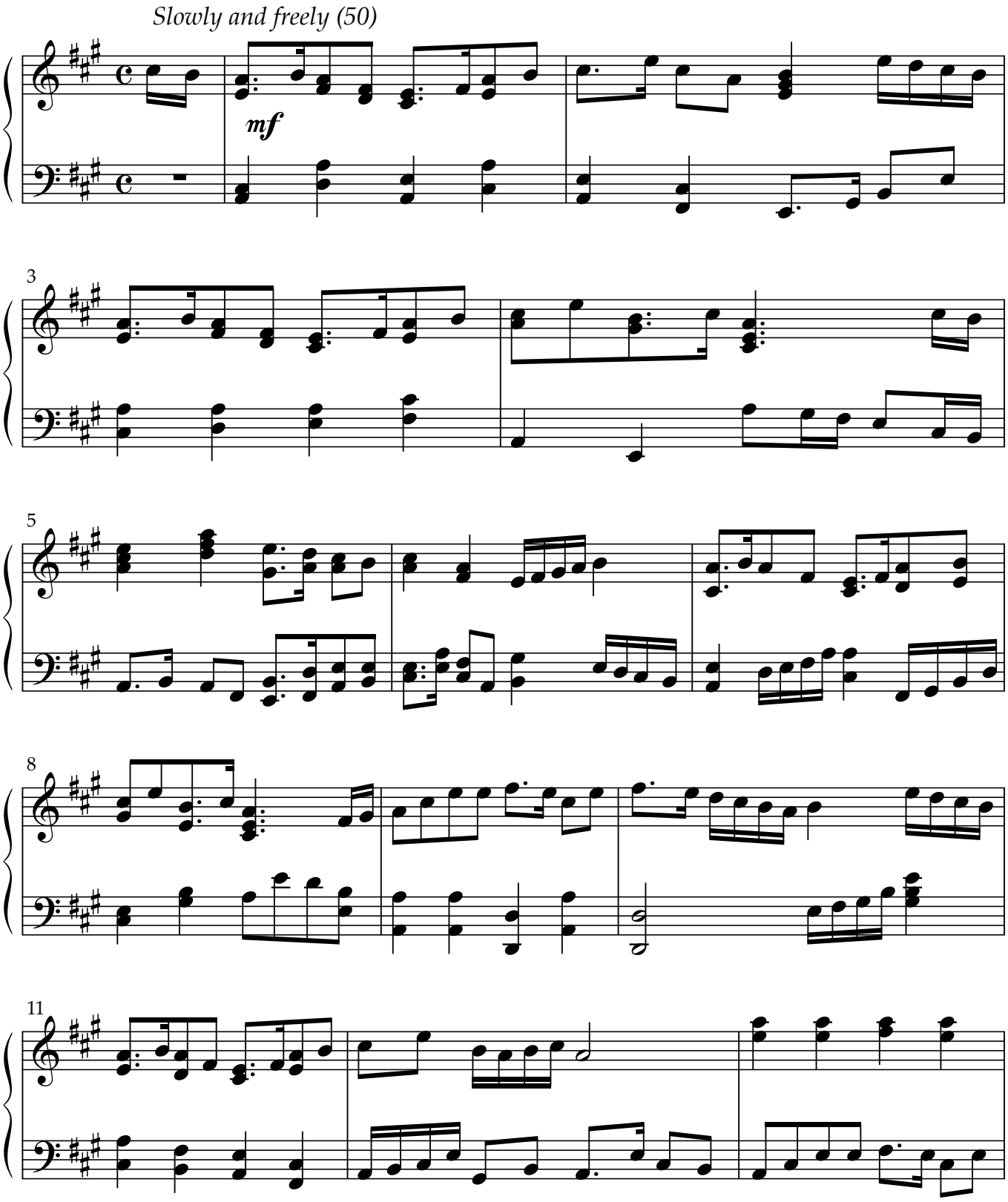
ADIEU ADIEU THOU FAITHLESS WORLD

O'Farrell collection



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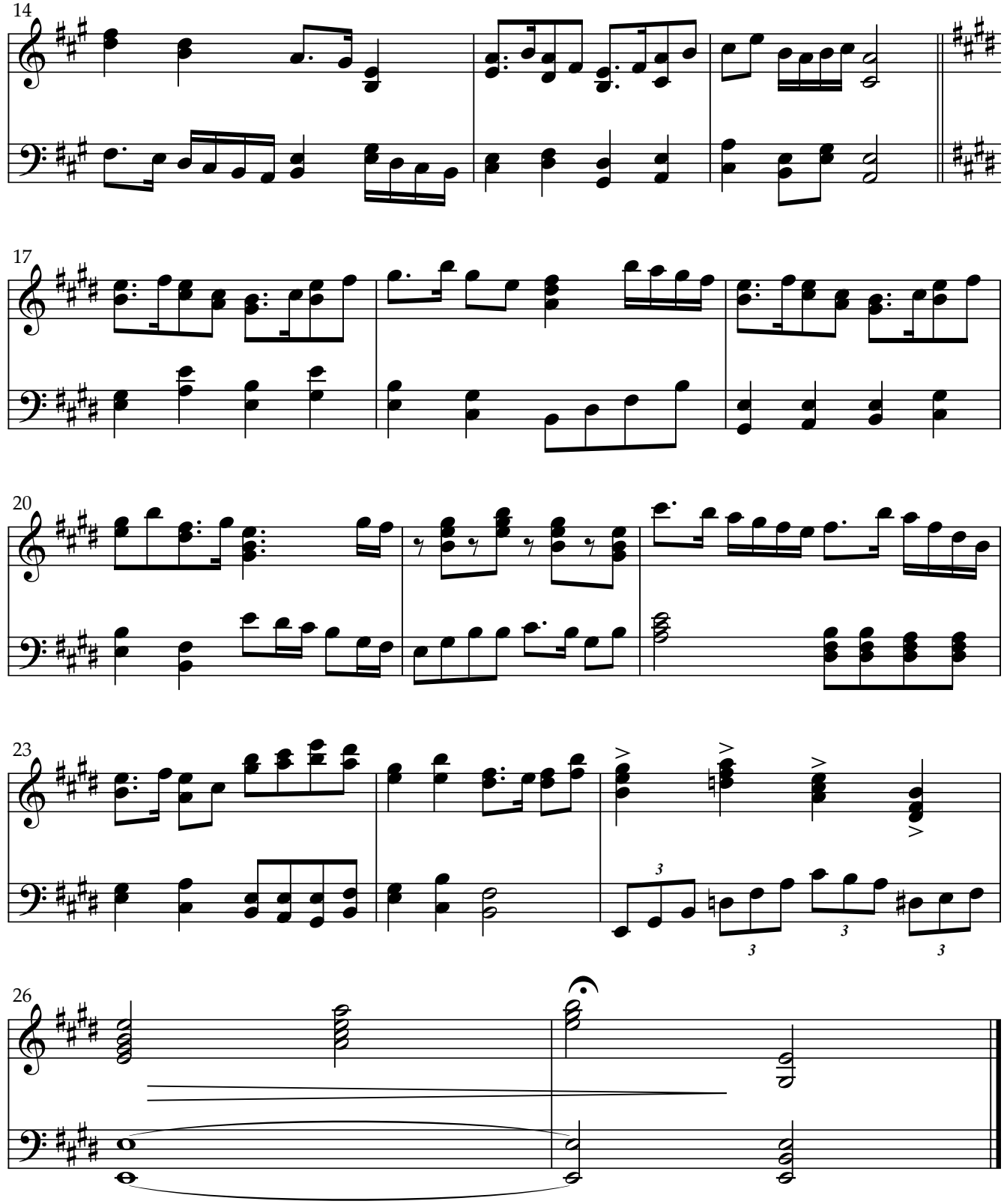

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This tune is found in Volume I of the *Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes*, a collection of tunes published c.1805 by a piper named O'Farrell.

Not much is known about Mr. O'Farrell, not even his first name (Patrick and Peter are possibilities). He was apparently from the Province of Munster (southern Ireland), possibly Clonmel in Tipperary. It is known that he spent a great deal of time in London, where he was a stage musician, pipe teacher, and instrument dealer; his presence in Edinburgh is also recorded. He might have died somewhere around 1830

Mr. O'Farrell might have remained little more than an obscure footnote in the history of Irish traditional music had not New York piper Jerry O'Sullivan decided in 2005 to record some of O'Farrell's music (or, more accurately, music from O'Farrell's collections, some of which - the percentage seems to be anybody's guess - may have been composed by him). The CD is called "O'Sullivan Meets O'Farrell", and it's a tour de force of research as well as performance. The CD comes with an excellent booklet containing as much information about Mr. O'Farrell as is evidently known at present (as they say, the research continues), plus information on the tunes and on Mr. O'Sullivan.

"Adieu Adieu" is one of the tunes in Volume I whose ancestry is unknown. It's labelled "slow" and "Irish", presumably by O'Farrell himself, but beyond this scant information and the time signature of 4/4, there's not a lot of guidance for a musician as to whether the tune is a march, slow reel, slow air, etc etc. Jerry plays it as a slow air. and that's good enough for me!

As with the other tunes in this collection (mine, not O'Farrell's), the harmony concepts that have been applied are my own (Jerry performs unaccompanied on the CD). They are based on years of experience playing this music, both as a lead instrumentalist and as a backup player. I have tried to do justice to the melody line by adhering closely to the "less is more" theory. In this particular piece I have added a few variations, but nothing like the seven and eight and more that O'Farrell occasionally employs to be "fashionable" in a late 18th century kind of way.

There's a great deal of excellent music in the *Pocket Companion,* including dance tunes that could be accommodated at a session very comfortably, Scots strathspeys, lovely airs like "Adieu Adieu", and more classically-flavored material (which Jerry refers to as "folk baroque"). I believe Jerry has a second CD is in preparation which will contain more of the latter material.