

A SONG OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Three Choirs Festival (Gloucester) - September 15, 1898

VOCAL SCORE



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The "renaissance" in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880, and was most notable for compositions by C.V. Stanford, C. Hubert H. Parry, Edward Elgar, Henry Walford Davies, Harold Darke and others. Public demand for major works in support of the annual choral festivals held throughout England at that time was considerable which led to the creation of many large scale works for orchestra with soloists and chorus. Although a number of those works found their way into print and are regularly performed today, a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works either were never published or were published but are no longer available in the publishers' catalogues. While the existence of these works is documented in biographies of the composers, the ability to study and, most importantly, to perform these compositions is not possible.

Changes in the International copyright laws in the mid-1970's played a pivotal role in creating this void, opening a significant number of musical compositions to public access. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. Performance score inventories of these works were eliminated. In addition, for many compositions, the only published material were vocal scores - full scores and orchestra parts were hand notated for the premiere of a work and then were 'recycled' for future performances. While full score autograph manuscripts are now accessible through the major music libraries in the UK, the hand-notated parts have long since been lost. These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of the published vocal scores are now the only resources available for studying and performing these works.

The English Heritage Music Series has been created to ensure that these compositions are preserved, are accessible for scholarly research and, most importantly, are available for performance by future generations. Its mission is to:

- Source unpublished/out-of-print English composer compositions that are in the U.S. public domain
- Preserve these compositions through the preparation of performance scores using notation software
- Provide open Internet access to the scores to facilitate study, performance and sharing of performance material (program notes, audio, reviews, etc.)

In preparing the English Heritage Music Series editions, every effort has been made to adhere strictly to the notation contained in the manuscripts. Because of the passage of time and its effect on the condition of the manuscript, the absence of clear information often times by the composer in notating divided instruments, and with emendations in the composer and other hands resulting from use of the manuscript in performance, there were numerous circumstances which required interpretation and decisions for notes, accidentals, dynamics, articulations and tempi. Should questions arise in the use of these editions, the composers' autograph manuscripts and the Novello vocal scores should be consulted for clarification.

Matthew W. Mehaffey

Editor

Professor of Music University of Minnesota - School of Music Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

Source Information

Autograph Manuscript: Vocal Score: Royal College of Music Library Oxford University, Bodleian Music Section, Weston Library Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation Royal College of Music, London MS 4205 Novello Octavo Edition No. 8287 Michael Mullen, Ass't. Librarian - michael.mullen@rcm.ac.uk Martin Holmes, Curator of Music - martin.holmes@bodleian.ox.ac.uk David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

Reference Material and Software

Notation Software: Finale v. 26 Audio Software: Garritan Personal Orchestra 5 Graphic Software: Adobe Photoshop CS5

Document Software: Adobe In Design CS5 Music Notation Reference: Behind Bars by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011

A SONG OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

(Libretto drawn from "A Hymn of Nature" by Robert Bridges)

I. MYSTERY

Power eternal, power unknown, uncreate: Force of force, fate of fate!

Beauty and light are thy seeing,
Wisdom and right thy decreeing,
Life of life is thy being.

In the smile of thine infinite starry gleam,
Without beginning or end,
Measure or number,
In the void of thy formless embrace,
Without foe or friend,
Beyond time and space,
All Things pass as a dream
Of thine unbroken slumber.

II. TERROR

Gloom and the night are thine: On the face of thy mirror darkness and terror, The smoke of thy blood, the frost of thy breath.

In silence and woeful awe
The harrying angels of death
Destroy whateer thou makest —
Makest, destroyest, destroyest and makest. —
Thy gems of life thou dost squander,
Their virginal beauty givest to plunder,
Doomest to uttermost regions of age-long ice
To starve and expire:
Consumest with glance of fire,
Or back to confusion shakest
With earthquake, elemental storm and thunder.

III. PEACE

In ways of beauty and peace Fair desire, companion of man, Leadeth the children of the earth.

As when the storm doth cease,
The loving sun the clouds dispelleth,
And woodland walks are sweet in spring;
The birds they merrily sing
And every flowerbud swelleth.
Or where blue heav'ns o'erspan
The lonely downs
When summer is high:
Below their breezy crowns
And grassy steep
Spreadeth the infinite smile of the sunlit sea;

Whereon the white ships swim,
And steal to havens far
Across the horizon dim,
Or lie becalm'd upon the windless deep,
Like thoughts of beauty and peace,
When the storm doth cease,
And fair desire, companion of man,
Leadeth the children of earth.

IV. TOIL

Man, born to toil, in his labour rejoiceth; His voice is heard in the morn: He armeth his hand and sallieth forth To engage with the generous teeming earth, And drinks from the rocky rills The laughter of life.

[Or else, in crowded cities gathering close,
He traffics morn and eve
In thronging market-halls;
Or within echoing walls
Of busy arsenals
Weldeth the stubborn iron to engines vast;
Or tends the thousand looms
Where, with black smoke o'ercast,
The land mourns in deep glooms.]*

Life is toil, and life is good:
There in loving brotherhood
Beateth the nation's heart of fire.
Strife! Strife! The strife is strong!
There battle thought and voice, and spirits conspire:
Joys ever dance around the tree of life,
And from the ringing choir
Riseth the praise of God from hearts in tuneful song.

V. ART

Hark! What spirit doth entreat The love-obedient air?
All the pomp of his delight
Revels on the ravisht night,
Wandering wilful, soring fair:
[There! 'Tis there, 'tis there.]*
Like a flower of primal fire
Late redeem'd by man's desire.

Away, on wings away, My spirit far hath flown, To a land of love and peace,
Of beauty unknown.
The world that earth-born man,
By evil undismay'd,
Out of the breath of God
Hath for his heaven made.

Where all his dreams soe'er
Of holy things and fair
In splendour are upgrown,
Which thro' the toilsome years
Martyrs and faithful seers
And poets with holy tears
Of hope have sown.

There, beyond power of ill, In joy and blessing crown'd, Christ with His lamp of truth Sitteth upon the hill Of everlasting youth, And calls His saints around.

VI. TEARS

Sweet compassionate tears
Have dimm'd my earthly sight,
Tears of love, the showers wherewith
The eternal morn is bright:
Dews of the heav'nly spheres.
With tears my eyes are wet,
Tears not of vain regret,
Tears of no lost delight,
Dews of the heav'nly spheres
Have dimm'd my earthly sight,
Sweet compassionate tears.

On the face of thy mirror darkness and terror, The smoke of thy blood, the frost of thy breath.

VII. FAITH

Gird on thy sword, O man, thy strength endue: In fair desire thine earth-born joy renew. Live thou the life beneath the making sun Till Beauty, Truth, and Love in thee are one.

Thro' thousand ages hath thy childhood run: In timeless ruin hath thy glory been: From the forgotten night of loves fordone Thou risest in the dawn of hopes unseen.

Higher and higher shall thy thoughts aspire, Unto the stars of heaven, and pass away, And earth renew the buds of thy desire In fleeting blooms of everlasting day. Thy work with beauty crown, thy life with love; Thy mind with truth uplift to God above: In whom all is, from whom was all begun, In whom all Beauty, Truth, and Love are one.

* These lines are omitted in the musical setting





A Victorian who by choice remained apart from the aesthetic movements of his day, Robert Bridges was a classicist. He succeeded Alfred Austin as Poet Laureate in 1913 and was active in the Society for Pure English, which was founded largely through his efforts.

The events of the first World War, including the wounding of his son, Edward, had a sobering effect on Bridges' poetry. He composed fiercely patriotic poems and letters, and in 1915 edited a volume of prose and poetry, *The Spirit of Man*, intended to appeal to readers living in war times.

Bridges began a long philosophical poem entitled *The Testament of Beauty*, generally acknowledged as his masterpiece, which was published in October 1929, one day after his eighty-fifth birthday and six months before his death.

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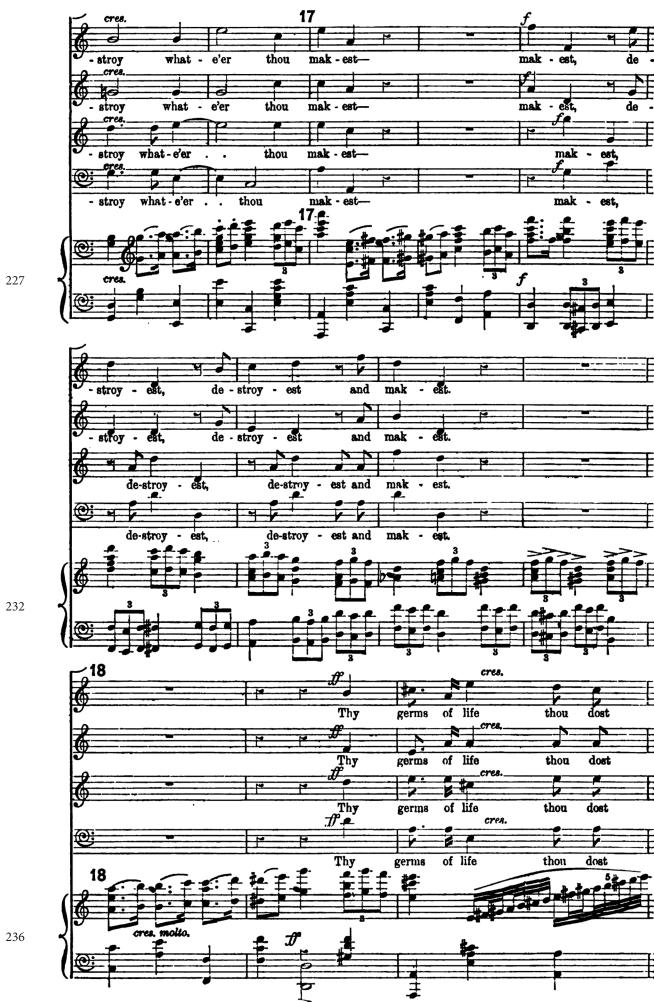


























































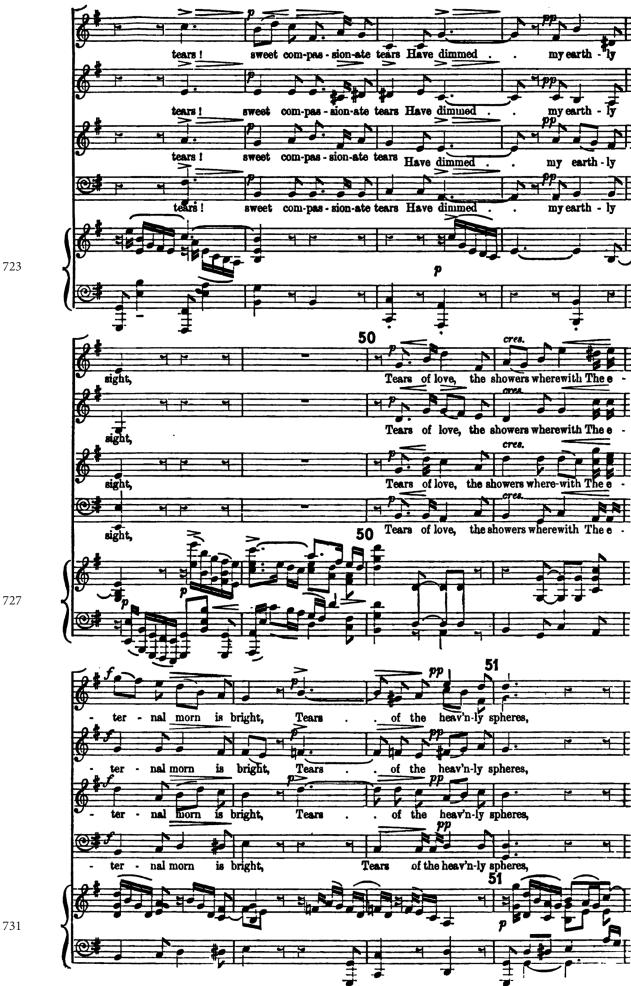






























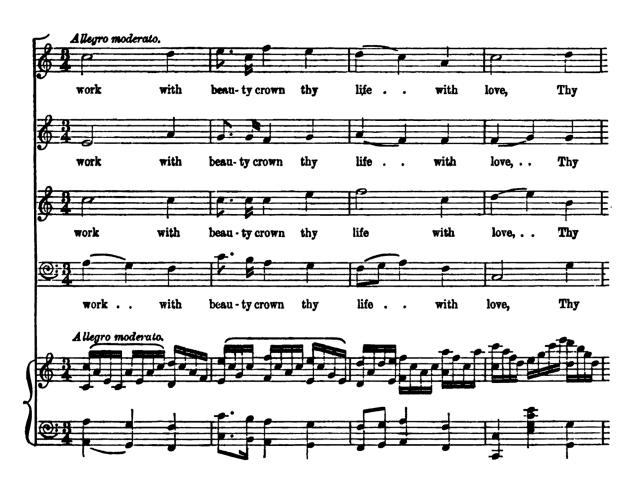
























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