



THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

TIMPANI

Cover Image: "Spirit of the Summit" by Frederic Leighton, 1894



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ENGLISH HERITAGE MUSIC SERIES

The “renaissance” in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880. 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 were engraved, printed and are regularly performed today, performance scores for a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works were either never engraved or were engraved and printed 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, coupled with changing musical tastes, played a pivotal role in creating this void. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. In 1964, holograph and copyist scores from both Novello and from publishers it represented were offered to the British Library and the Royal College of Music Library (see The RCM Novello Library – The Musical Times, Feb. 1983 by Jeremy Dibble).

These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of engraved vocal scores, widely available through various online library sources, 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 non-engraved/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

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Source Information

Autograph Manuscript:

Royal College of Music Library MS 4213

Vocal Score:

Novello Original Octavo Edition No. 12565

Royal College of Music Library

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Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation

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Reference Material and Software

Notation Software: Dorico Version 5.1.21.2225 (1-16-2025)

Audio Software: Note Performer 4

Graphic Software: Affinity Photo 2

Document Software: Affinity Publisher 2

Music Notation Reference: Behind Bars by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARRY AND “THE VISION OF LIFE”

Sir Edward Elgar (May 18, 1909)

“I hope you are well and that you are writing. I am so delighted we are to have *Job* in Hereford Cathedral. Your Cardiff ‘Vision’ was, I conclude, too strong for the Church, but I hope we may have it soon. It’s really strong bracing stuff, and, like your Odes, some of us love it and love you for giving us these things.”

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 66

“During the first half of this year (1914) he gave much time to the revision of the score of his Vision of Life with a view to its performance at Norwich—an expectation frustrated by the War.”

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, pp. 157-158

“Hubert Parry’s ethical idealism was animated by a truly Christian spirit. The great aim of his later years was to impress on all people the need of enlarging their sphere of Religion; to consecrate his art to the service of humanity. ‘Religion,’ he wrote in one of his notebooks, ‘includes Art as well as definite devotional exercises,’ and again: ‘Art is a form of devotion. Everything that endeavours to beautify and make lovable the surroundings and the ideas of man is part of devotional religion. It is devotion to the beautiful aspect of things—the things which minister to spiritual well-being, to truth.’

Thus it came about, as Mrs. Ponsonby writes, that ‘when he spoke of some remarkable human being or act, or of Bach, or the sea, or architecture, or the country, one felt that to him the sphere of Religion was indeed without bounds. The beliefs which informs the message that he endeavoured to give to the world in his later works, and especially in *The Vision of Life*, is best defined in his own words, quoted by Miss Daymond in the memorial number of the Royal College Magazine:

There is, as it were, a limitless, unflagging, living series of variations on a great subject—and that subject is the progress towards the highest good of the race . . . The highest optimism is the belief that as man has already succeeded in controlling his destiny, and the resources of the little corner of the world with which he is concerned, by slow degrees better and better, so he will go on doing it in the future. There is no hope of a comfortable easy-going Utopia, but a reality of constant effort towards the development of the consciousness that the guarantee of Life is the fruitful expenditure of energy.

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 224

“The Vision of Life, brought out in 1907 and revised in 1914, is notable as an exposition of his philosophy of life, as an expansion of the gospel of brotherhood and love . . . it also commands admiration by its dignity and felicity of phrase and the skill with which rhymed passages are introduced to lend emphasis to a scheme of free verse. Traces are not wanting in vocabulary of the influence exerted by his familiarity with the Bible, and in the metre and use of alliteration with the old chronicles and Sagas and the libretti of Wagner. But, as it has been said of his music, so may it be repeated of this his most ambitious poem, that there is scarcely a passage that is not plainly and unmistakably Parry.”

Hamilton Hartly

“I have a personal theory—probably all wrong—that Parry was too broad and great a man to be a really first-rate genius as a musician. After all, to be a universally interested man, as he was, is better than to be a more or less narrow musician, and I can’t think of any great composer whose absorption in his art did not make him a little deaf and blind to the rest of the world and its problems.”

Other Sources

C. Hubert H. Parry—His Life and Music by Jeremy Dibble, Oxford University Press, © 1992, pp. 420-423

An Imperishable Heritage: British Choral Music from Parry to Dyson by Stephen Town, Ashgate Publishing Company, ©2012, pp. 1-36

Parry before Jerusalem—Studies of His Life and Music by Bernard Benoliel, Ashgate Publishing Company, © 1997

Timpani

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

{D, B, G} Moderato **1**

1-22 23-25 Vln I

29 *mf* *cresc.* **2** *f*

35 *f* **3** [D to E] *f* *cresc.*

3 rit. **4** sostenuto B. Solo

45-47 49-52

From ut - most dis - tance of the dreams of thought, The long pro

56 **4** *ppp* **5** **6** Tpt 1 B. Tbn.

60-65

69 **3** *f* **3** **6** Lento **4** *pp* rit. a tempo

84 Lento

Timpani

Allegro moderato

7 [E to D] [D & G] *mf*

92-93 94-100

107 8 [B & F#] *mf*

108-117 118-119 120-121

126 9 *ff* sempre dim.

133-146 147-152

153 largamente Lento rit. 10 a tempo sostenuto Più mosso

155-168 171-172 174-175

11 tranquillo agitato rit. molto rit. a tempo poco animando

176-184 186-188 191-196 197-200

201 12 animato S. Solo allargando

Tu - mul - tuous, ea - ger, throng - ing on their way, They take and turn to joy

208 rit... Allegro animato

All that the wak - ening world can *mf*

214-215 216-220

13

221-227 Hn 1

14

236 *tr* **10** **4** **8**

240-249 250-253 254-261

15

262 poco rit. Poco meno mosso **16**

6 **8** **11** **4**

264-269 270-277 278-288 289-292

17 **9** **18** **15**

293-301 302-310 311-325

S. 1 > ring - ing, ring - ing

19 a tempo

330 poco rit. *tr* *tr* *tr*

with glad - - ness with *ff* *f*

342 *tr* **15** Tpt 1

346-360

20

365 *tr* *f* dim. e rit. Moderato **7** **6** **9**

368-374 375-380 382-390

Lentissimo **5** Più mosso **10** Meno mosso **3**

391-395 396-405 406-408

a tempo, moderato

[F#, C#, D]

6

Tpt 1

409-414

419

21

cresc. molto

424

10

427-436

Tba>

22

ff

440

23

[C# to A] animando

6

449-454

ff

allargando

3

Cl. Cym.

4

460-463

Org.

24

Con fuoco

455-457

467

[A to C#]

5

468-472

25

ff

481

Lento

Meno mosso

rit.

sf

490

Lento

8

492-499

Slower

4

500-503

B. Solo

rit.

pp

A lit - tle span and they are

507 **Lento teneramente** **26** **6** **4** **5** **4** **rit.**

510-515 516-519 520-524 526-529

27 **molto rit. Lento** **8** **28 animato** **10** **poco agitato** **4** **Colla voce** **3** **rit. molto rit.**

531-538 539-548 549-552 553-555

29 a tempo, tranquillo **7** **rit.** **Lento maestoso** **5** **30** **6** **31 allargando**

558-564 566-570 571-576 Tpt 1

580 **Tranquillo** **9** **32 a tempo** **poco rit.** **15**

583-591 593-607

33 **[G, B \flat , F]** **8** **34** **allargando** **Tpt 1**

608-615 Hn 3

624 **mf cresc.** **rit.** **a tempo** **[B \flat to B \natural]** **5**

630-634

Lento **12** **dim. e rit.** **35** **a tempo** **7** **allargando**

635-646 648-654

658 **rit.** **a tempo** **36** **2** **poco agitato** **4** **4**

660-661 663-666 667-670

Timpani

671 **37** *a tempo* *tr* *animando*

Tba *pp*

682 **38** *animando*

[B to C] **3** **2** **4**

686-688 689-690 691-694

Tba

698 *tr* *ff* *Più mosso, allegro feroce* **13**

708-720

39 **16** **40** **9** *Vivacissimo* **9** *allargando* **4** *a tempo* **17**

721-736 737-745 746-754 755-758 759-775

41 **9** *Vln I* *8^{va}* *Allargando* *a tempo* *tr* *ff*

776-784

794 *tr* **3** *rit.* **3** *[Silent]* *Lento* **12**

798-800 801-803 805-816

Più mosso **8** *animando* **4** **42** *agitato* **4** *animando* **6** *Allegro* **2**

817-824 825-828 829-832 833-838 839-840

Hn 1

842 **43** *Allegro* *tr* *ff*

853 *fr* **7** **animato** **2** **rit.** **2** **Moderato** **4**

856-862 863-864 865-866 867-870

872 **sempre cresc.** **rit.** **fr** **a tempo** **animato**
1(-15) 2 3

Tba

44 **allargando** **agitato**

883 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

dim. pp

3 **animando** **5** **ff** **Allegro** **poco allargando** **poco rit.** **2** **rit.**

895-897 898-902 907-908

45 **Agitato dolente** **poco animando** **molto rit.** **Lento** **6** **Più lento**

910-916 917-919 920-921 922-927

Moderato **3** **Moderato con anima** **46** **3** **rit.** **a tempo** **largamente** **9**

930-932 933-948 949-951 954-962

rit. **B. Solo** **a tempo** **allargando** **47** **a tempo**

963

Ev - er and al - ways, Mar - vel - lous, o - be - dient, faith - ful and *mf* *cresc.*

48 **a tempo - tranquillo** **poco rit.** **a tempo - tranquillo**

973

977-987 990-1001

49 **11** poco animando **6** **50** **13** **4** Solenne B. Tbn.

1002-1012 1013-1018 1019-1031 1032-1035

1037 allargando rit. **51** Tempo giusto

1044 *fr* *fr* *fr* [G to Ab, C to Eb] 1(-4) 4 2 3rit. **f**

1049-1052

1056 1(-9) allargando **52** meno mosso 4 5 6 7 8 9 **3** dim. 1066-1068

Allegro poco agitato [F# to F#, Eb to Eb] 2 3 *fr* *f* dim. *pp* meno mosso 5 poco animando 3 1069-1070 1071-1073 1078-1082 1083-1085

1086 rit. Lento **53** più mosso Allegro agitato agitato accelerando 7 3 2 7 B. Solo No word of sol - ace, Nor a

1087-1093 1094-1096 1097-1098

1102 Più lento (colla voce) **54** a tempo 1(-5) *fr* 2 3 4 *p* dim. word of greet - ing an - y - where To one left dream - ing here a

1109 rit. Andante **55** a tempo - tranquillo allargando animando 5 6 5 2 3 1110-1116 1118-1123 1124-1128 1129-1130 1131-1133

1134 Bsn 1 56 animando allargando

mf cresc.

57 a tempo 58 Moderato tranquillo poco rit. a tempo

[F# to E] **2** **9** **10**

1142-1143 *mf* 1146-1154 1155-1164

dolce 59 allargando Poco meno mosso

8 **2** **2** Tpt 1

1167-1174 1175-1176 1177-1178

1183 *ff* [F# to Gb, B, E] Tranquillo 1(-9)

2 **2** **3** **4**

1186-1187 *p*

1193 *p* poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre

5 **6** **7** **8** **9**

p *molto cresc.*

1203 60 allargando a tempo

4

1206-1209 *f*

1216 61 Tpt 1

3 **6**

1217-1219 1220-1225

1230 62 *f* **5**

1237-1241

1355 [E \flat , B \flat , F \sharp] *rit.* 1(-16)

Hn 1 *ff* *mf*

1364 *poco rit.*

cresc.

1376 *rit.* **2** *a tempo* *rit.*

1378-1379



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