



# THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

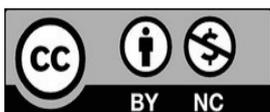
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

DOUBLE BASS

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*

Jonathan Frank, Ass’t. Librarian - jonathan.frank@rcm.ac.uk

*Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation*

David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

### 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 Harty**

“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

# The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

*p* *cresc.* *mf* *f*

7 *p* 8-9 *p* *pp* 12-18 *p*

20 *dim.* *f* *p* *cresc.* **1** *pizz.*

26 *cresc.* *arco* *cresc.* *cresc.*

31 *marcato* *cresc.* **2**

35 *cresc.* **3**

40 *cresc.* **3**

45 *rit.* *p* *sf* *p* **2** 51-52

53 *sostenuto*

4

Musical staff 53-59. The staff begins with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with a *p* dynamic. A *pp* dynamic is indicated for the subsequent notes. The staff concludes with a *pp* dynamic.

Musical staff 60-65. The staff starts with a *p* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic. The staff ends with a *p* dynamic.

Musical staff 66-70. The staff begins with a *ff* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic with a triplet. It then features a *sf* dynamic with another triplet, and ends with a *p* dynamic.

Musical staff 71-77. The staff starts with a *p* dynamic, followed by a *p* dynamic. It concludes with a *pp* dynamic.

6 *Lento*  
*pizz.*

Musical staff 78-83. The staff begins with a *pizz.* dynamic, followed by an *arco* section. It ends with a *pizz.* dynamic.

*rit.* *a tempo*

Musical staff 84-88. The staff consists of a series of eighth notes with a *pizz.* dynamic.

Musical staff 89-92. The staff starts with an *arco* section featuring a *f* dynamic and a quintuplet. It then transitions to a *pizz.* section with a *p* dynamic and a triplet, ending with a *pp* dynamic.

*Lento* 7

Musical staff 93-97. The staff features a series of eighth notes with a *pizz.* dynamic.

Musical staff 98-102. The staff begins with a *pizz.* dynamic, followed by a *cresc. molto* section, and ends with a *p* dynamic.

*Allegro moderato*

Musical staff 103-107. The staff starts with an *arco* section and a *mp* dynamic, followed by a series of eighth notes with triplets.

107

*mf*

111

115

*mf*

119

*ff*

122-124

126

*ff*

132-133

134

*mf* *p*

142

*f* *p*

149

*p*

155 **Lento**

*dim.*

160-162

163 arco *p* *p* pizz.

169 rit. **10** a tempo sostenuto Più mosso tranquillo arco *pp*

178 *p*

185 **11** agitato rit. molto rit. a tempo **6** 191-196

poco animando **2** 197-198 Vln I 8va **12** tutti animato

203 allargando rit... *sf*

209 Allegro *mf cresc.* **2** **2** animato 214-215 216-217 *f*

220 **13**

228 **14** *f*

237

246 *sf* *cresc. molto*

254 *cresc.*

259 *poco rit.*

263 *Poco meno mosso*

268 **15**

276 **16** *mf*

282

289 **17** *mf*

298

305 *cresc. molto*

311 **18**

*f* *f*

Musical staff 311-318. Starts with a box containing the number 18. The music is in bass clef, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents. Dynamics include *f* at the beginning and end.

319

2

320-321

*ff*

Musical staff 319-328. Features a double bar line with the number 2 above it, indicating a repeat. Dynamics include *ff*. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs.

329

poco rit.

Musical staff 329-337. Dynamics include *poco rit.*. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs.

338

**19** a tempo

Musical staff 338-345. Starts with a box containing the number 19 and the tempo marking *a tempo*. The music is in bass clef with eighth and sixteenth notes.

346

*f cresc.* *dim.* *mf* *p*

Musical staff 346-354. Dynamics include *f cresc.*, *dim.*, *mf*, and *p*. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents.

355

*cresc.* *f*

Musical staff 355-361. Dynamics include *cresc.* and *f*. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents.

362

**20** *dim. e rit.* **7** Moderato

368-374

Vc. 8va

Musical staff 362-375. Starts with a box containing the number 20. Dynamics include *dim. e rit.*. A box with the number 7 is placed above the staff. The tempo marking *Moderato* is present. A double bar line with repeat dots is followed by a box containing the number 7. Below the staff, the text *368-374* and *Vc. 8va* is written. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents.

376

381

*pp*

Musical staff 376-382. Dynamics include *pp*. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents.

383

Musical staff 383-390. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs and accents.

390 *Lentissimo* **3** *pizz.* *Più mosso* *arco*

392-394 *p* *sf*

402 *Meno mosso* **2** *a tempo, moderato*

407-408 *mf* *molto cresc.*

410

*pp* *mf* *cresc. molto* *mf* <

416 *Allegro*

*f* *cresc.*

21

421

425

429

433

22

437

*ff* V.S.

442

447 **23** *animando*

452 *mf cresc.* *allargando*

456

461

466 **24** *Con fuoco*

475 **25** *sf* *f*

482 *sf* *Lento* *Meno mosso* *rit.*

490 *Lento pizz.* *mf* *cresc.*

496 *f* *f* *Slower*

501

Musical staff for measure 501, featuring a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes in a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

506

rit.

Lento teneramente

Musical staff for measure 506, starting with a rest followed by a key signature change to two sharps (F#, C#). The notation includes a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over several notes.

513

26

Musical staff for measure 513, featuring a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It includes a piano (*p*) dynamic, an *arco* instruction, and a *cresc.* marking.

520

rit.

divisi

Musical staff for measure 520, featuring a key signature of one sharp (F#). It includes a forte (*f*) dynamic followed by a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a *divisi* instruction.

27

529

unis.

molto rit.

Lento

Musical staff for measure 529, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It includes a *unis.* instruction, a piano (*pp*) dynamic, and a *p* dynamic at the end.

28

animato

536

Musical staff for measure 536, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It includes a *cresc.* marking and a piano (*p*) dynamic.

542

544-545

Musical staff for measure 542, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It includes a piano (*p*) dynamic and a double bar line with the number 2 above it, indicating a repeat or a specific articulation.

549

poco agitato

Colla voce

Musical staff for measure 549, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It includes a *cresc.* marking and a *Colla voce* instruction.

rit.

molto rit.

29

a tempo, tranquillo

6

Musical staff for measure 549, featuring a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It includes a piano (*p*) dynamic, a *rit.* marking, and a *molto rit.* marking. The staff is divided into sections with double bar lines and the numbers 2 and 6 above them, with measure numbers 554-555 and 559-564 below.

565 rit. **Lento maestoso**  
*p mf*

570 **30**  
*cresc. molto*

574

578 **31** allargando **Tranquillo**  
*ff sf p sf p*

585 **32** poco rit. a tempo

594 *pp*

602 **33** *p*

611 **34** allargando

622 rit. a tempo *ff*

633 **Lento** **11** dim. e rit. a tempo *pp*

650 *allargando*

tutti Solo 3

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

rit. a tempo tutti 3 36 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 *p* *cresc.*

664

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 *cresc.* *molto cresc.*

669 **37** *a tempo*

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 *dim.* *pp* *a tempo*

676 *animando*

*animando* *dim.* *cresc.* *cresc.*

688 *animando* **38**

*animando* *cresc. sempre* *sf* **38**

698

*sf* *sff*

707 *Più mosso, allegro feroce*

*Più mosso, allegro feroce*

712

V.S.

718 39

726 *sf*

734 40 *sf* **3** 739-741

803 [Silent] Lento **12** Più mosso **8** animando **4** **42** agitato

*sf* 805-816 817-824 825-828

Solo Vc. 8va

831 animando pizz. arco

*p* *cresc.*

839 Allegro

*f* *sf* *sf* *sf*

846 **43** Allegro

*sf* *ff*

857 animato

865 rit. Moderato

*f* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

872 sempre cresc. rit. a tempo animato

**5** *f*

873-877

884 **44** allargando..... agitato

*dim.* *pp*

894 animando

*cresc. molto* *ff*

poco allargando Allegro poco rit. **2**

*f* 901-902 907-908

45

909 rit. Agitato dolente poco animando

Musical staff for measures 909-917. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a *p* dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. The tempo is marked *rit. Agitato dolente*. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a sharp sign on the final note.

918 molto rit. Lento

Musical staff for measures 918-925. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It begins with a *p* dynamic. The tempo is marked *molto rit. Lento*. The music features a series of quarter notes, some with slurs, and a change in time signature to 9/8.

926 Più lento Moderato

Musical staff for measures 926-932. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It begins with a *pp* dynamic. The tempo is marked *Più lento Moderato*. The music includes a change in time signature to 4/4 and features a series of quarter notes.

933 Moderato con anima

Musical staff for measures 933-940. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It features a series of quarter notes with slurs, in a tempo marked *Moderato con anima*.

Musical staff for measures 941-948. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It features a series of quarter notes with slurs, in a tempo marked *poco cresc.*

949 46 rit. a tempo largamente

Musical staff for measures 949-956. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It begins with a *f* dynamic. The tempo is marked *rit. a tempo largamente*. The music features a series of quarter notes with slurs.

Musical staff for measures 957-961. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It features a series of eighth notes with slurs, in a tempo marked *cresc.*

962 rit. a tempo allargando

Musical staff for measures 962-967. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It begins with a *f* dynamic. The tempo is marked *rit. a tempo allargando*. The music features a series of eighth notes with slurs.

968 47 a tempo rit a tempo - tranquillo S. 18va

Musical staff for measures 968-978. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It features a series of quarter notes with slurs, in a tempo marked *a tempo*. There are two measures of whole rests, labeled 971-974 and 977-978. The text "S. 18va" is written above the staff.

Musical staff for measures 980-987. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It features a series of quarter notes with slurs, in a tempo marked *poco rit.*. There is a measure of whole rest labeled 986-987. The text "broth - ers To the mu - sic of the" is written below the staff.

989 48 a tempo - tranquillo

997

1002 49

1011 poco animando 50

1023

1032 Solenne

1038 allargando rit. 51 Tempo giusto

1044

1053 rit. 52 allargando meno mosso

1062 pizz. Allegro 2

**poco agitato** **3** **meno mosso**

1071-1073 *f* *p* *pp*

**2** **poco animando** **rit. Lento** **3**

1081-1082 *cresc.* *cresc.* *f* 1087-1089 *pp*

1092 **53** **più mosso** **Allegro agitato** **agitato accelerando**

*sf* *sff* 1097-1100 1101-1102 *f*

1104 **Più lento (colla voce)** **54** **a tempo** **rit. Andante**

*p* *pp* 1110-1113

1114 **rit. 55 a tempo - tranquillo**

1119-1122

1124 **allargando..... animando**

*f* *cresc.*

1133 **56 animando**

1141 **allargando 57 a tempo**

*f* *cresc.*

1148 **58 Moderato tranquillo**

*dim.* *sempre dim.* *pp*

1157

Musical staff 1157: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes with accents (>) and a crescendo marking (*cresc.*) at the end.

1165

*poco rit.*      *a tempo*      *dolce*

Musical staff 1165: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of notes with a dynamic marking of *f* at the beginning and a *M* marking below the first few notes.

1171

59

*allargando*

Musical staff 1171: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of notes with a dynamic marking of *p cresc.* at the end.

1178

*Poco meno mosso*

Musical staff 1178: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of notes with accents (>) and dynamic markings of *f* at the beginning and end. The staff concludes with the marking *V.S.*

1185 *pizz.* **Tranquillo**

1190

1193

1196 *poco rit.* **Allegro - animando**

1201 *cresc. sempre* **60**

1208 *allaargando* **a tempo**

1215 **61**

1221

1228 **62**

1234

3 *sf sf sf sf*

1241

**63** *agitato, vivace* *cresc. molto*

*sf sf sf*

1250

*lunga* *Lento tranquillo* *molto rit.* **64**

1252-1254 *pp* *p*

1261

1267

*poco rit.* *a tempo*

1273

**65**

*cresc.* *cresc.* *p* 1278-1279



73

1340

Musical staff 1340: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes with various accidentals.

1346

Musical staff 1346: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes.

1352

Musical staff 1352: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes, ending with two triplet markings over eighth notes.

1358

Musical staff 1358: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of notes with triplet markings and a *rit.* marking above. A *mf* dynamic marking is present below the staff. The staff ends with a 4/4 time signature change.

1365

Musical staff 1365: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes with a *cresc.* marking below.

1372

Musical staff 1372: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes with a *poco rit.* marking above.

1379

Musical staff 1379: Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The staff contains a sequence of notes with *rit.*, *a tempo*, and *rit.* markings above. The staff ends with a double bar line and a fermata.



# ENGLISH HERITAGE

MUSIC SERIES

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