



# THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

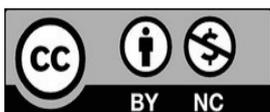
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

TUBA

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*

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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 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

Tuba

# The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

**Moderato**

1 2

22 11 4 3

1-22 23-33 34-37 39-41

42 3 rit. 4

49-52

53-55 3 *ppp* 4 *pp* 6 5 2

60-65 66-67

68 6 **Lento** B. Solo 7

70-76 *p* Lost in long night, where no light gleams, They passed, and

81 rit. a tempo Lento 7 6

84-90 92-97

passed *p* Hn 1

99 B. Tbn. **Allegro moderato**

105-111 7 Tbn. 1 3 3 3 3

115 B. Tbn. 8 6

119-124

125

*f* *ff*

**14** **6** **14** **rit.**

133-146 147-152 155-168

170

**10** **2** **2** **9** **11** **3**

171-172 174-175 176-184 186-188

189

**12** **6** **4** **3**

191-196 197-200 203-205

206-207

**2** **6** **6** **animato**

206-207 210-215

221

**13** **14** **14** **4** **4**

223-235 236-249 250-253 254-257

258

*f* **14** **poco rit.**

258-262 263-267

263

**Poco meno mosso** **15**

263-267 268-275

268

**Poco meno mosso** **15**

268-275 276-281

276

**16** **8**

281-288 289-295

4 **17** 9 9 **18** Tpt 1

289-292 293-301 302-310

313

324

333 poco rit. **19** a tempo

344 *mf cresc.*

3 **3** Tpt 1 *f*

354-356

**20** dim. e rit. Moderato 6 9 Lentissimo 5

368-374 375-380 382-390 391-395

Più mosso 2 Vc. Meno mosso 2

396-397 407-408

409 a tempo, moderato

Tpt 1 > *pp* 413-414 *mf*

416 Allegro 2

419-420

421 **21**

*f cresc.* *ff*

Musical staff 421-426: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains six measures of music. The first measure starts with a dynamic marking of *f cresc.* and a hairpin crescendo line. The sixth measure ends with a dynamic marking of *ff*. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents.

427

Musical staff 427-431: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains five measures of music, primarily consisting of eighth and sixteenth notes.

432

Musical staff 432-437: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains six measures of music, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes with accents.

438 **22** **23** animando **4**

439-444 449-452

Musical staff 438-444 and 449-452: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff is divided into two sections. The first section, measures 438-444, is marked with a box containing the number 22 and a '6' below it. The second section, measures 449-452, is marked with a box containing the number 23 and an '4' below it. The word 'animando' is written above the staff between the two sections.

453 allargando

Musical staff 453-456: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains four measures of music. The word 'allargando' is written above the staff. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals.

457

Musical staff 457-461: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains five measures of music, including eighth and sixteenth notes.

462 **24** Con fuoco

*cresc.*

Musical staff 462-467: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains six measures of music. The word 'Con fuoco' is written above the staff. The first measure has a dynamic marking of *cresc.*

468

*sf*

Musical staff 468-473: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains six measures of music. The sixth measure has a dynamic marking of *sf* (sforzando).

474 **25**

*ff*

Musical staff 474-479: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains six measures of music. The sixth measure has a dynamic marking of *ff*.

480 Lento Meno mosso

*f*

Musical staff 480-484: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains five measures of music. The first measure has a dynamic marking of *f*. The words 'Lento' and 'Meno mosso' are written above the staff.

488 rit. **3** Lento **8** Slower **6** rit. Lento teneramente **9**

489-491 492-499 500-505 507-515

**26** **4** **5** rit. **4** molto rit. **27** Lento **8**

516-519 520-524 526-529 531-538

**28** animato **10** poco agitato **4** Colla voce **3** rit. molto rit. **29** a tempo, tranquillo **7**

539-548 549-552 553-555 558-564

**30** rit. Lento maestoso **5** **3**

566-570 571-573

Hn 1

578 **31** allargando Tranquillo **8**

584-591

592 poco rit. **32** a tempo **15** **33** **8** **34** allargando **8**

593-607 608-615 615-621

Hn 3

621 rit. a tempo

621-633

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

635-646 648-654

655 allargando rit. a tempo **36** **2** poco agitato **4**

660-661 663-666

37

667 *mp* *3* *3*

The voice that called them grow - eth dumb,

S. Solo

674 *a tempo* *4* *animando* *6* Tpt 2

*pp* 676-679 680-685

690 *animando* *38*

*cresc.*

700 *Più mosso, allegro feroce* *6*

708-713

714 *f* *sf* *mf* *39*

723 *sf*

731 *sf* *sf* *sf* *40*

739 *Vivacissimo* *sf* *sf*

747

755 *allargando....* *a tempo* *ff*

763

Musical staff for measures 763-770. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets and a final measure containing a triplet of eighth notes.

41

771

Musical staff for measures 771-778. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music features a steady eighth-note pattern that concludes with a triplet of eighth notes.

779

Musical staff for measures 779-786. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music consists of a steady eighth-note pattern.

787 Allargando a tempo

Musical staff for measures 787-824. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a section of dotted eighth notes, and ends with a triplet of eighth notes.

Performance markings for measures 798-828. The markings are: 3 (798-800), rit. 3 (801-803), [Silent] Lento 12 (805-816), Più mosso 8 (817-824), and animando 4 (825-828).

42 agitato 4 animando 6 Allegro 2

Musical staff for measures 829-840. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. A horn part (Hn 1) is indicated for measures 839-840.

43 Allegro

846

Musical staff for measures 846-855. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music begins with a *ff* dynamic marking and consists of a steady eighth-note pattern.

Performance markings for measures 856-864. The markings are: 6 (857-862), animato 2 (863-864), rit., and Moderato.

Musical staff for measures 869-878. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music features a series of notes with dynamic markings: *p*, *mf*, and *f*. The staff includes a *sempre cresc.* instruction and a *rit.* instruction.

879 a tempo animato 3 44 allargando.... 5

Musical staff for measures 881-892. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The music consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. A *mf* dynamic marking is present. The staff includes a *mf* dynamic marking and a *mf* dynamic marking.

893 **agitato** **4** **animando** Hn 1

894-897

Hn 3 *f*

904 **Allegro** **poco allargando** **poco rit.** **rit.** **45** **Agitato dolente**

907-908

915 **poco animando** **molto rit.** **Lento** **6**

*p* *mf cresc.* 922-927

928 **Più lento** **Moderato** **Moderato con anima** **46** **3** **16** **3** **rit.**

930-932 933-948 949-951

953 **a tempo** **largamente** **rit.** **a tempo** **allargando** **a tempo** **47** **9** **2** **2** **6**

954-962 964-965 967-968 969-974

975 **rit** **a tempo - tranquillo**

Hn 1 *mf*

985 **poco rit.** **48** **a tempo - tranquillo** **49** **2** **12** **11**

986-987 990-1001 1002-1012

**poco animando** **4** **50**

1013-1016 *f*

1027

*poco cresc.*

1035 **Solenne** **allargando** **rit.**

*mf cresc.* *cresc.*

51

Tempo giusto

1041

Musical staff for measure 1041 in 4/4 time. The staff contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a hairpin crescendo.

1051

rit.

allargando

Musical staff for measure 1051 in 4/4 time. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamic markings of *cresc.* and a hairpin crescendo.

52

meno mosso

Allegro

1060

Musical staff for measure 1060 in 4/4 time. It features a 4-measure rest for measures 1062-1065, followed by a melodic line starting with a dynamic marking of *p*.

poco agitato

3

2

B. Solo

meno mosso

Musical staff for measures 1071-1076 in 3/4 time. It features a 3-measure rest for measures 1071-1073, followed by a melodic line with lyrics: "The form of each is clear. There a dear fa - mi - liar face!". Dynamic markings include *fp*.

poco animando

rit.

Lento

2

1081

Musical staff for measure 1081 in 2/4 time. It features a melodic line with lyrics: "There a friend long lost! A child, a". Dynamic markings include *mf*.

53

più mosso

1089

Musical staff for measure 1089 in 4/4 time. The staff contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *pp*.

54

Allegro agitato

agitato accelerando

Più lento (colla voce)

a tempo

1096

Musical staff for measure 1096 in 4/4 time. It features rests for measures 1097-1100 (4 measures), 1101-1103 (3 measures), and 1105-1108 (4 measures). Dynamic markings include *pp*.

rit.

Andante

7

rit.

55

a tempo - tranquillo

6

1109

Musical staff for measure 1109 in 6/8 time. It features rests for measures 1110-1116 (7 measures) and 1118-1123 (6 measures).

allargando..... animando

5

2

3

56

2

Musical staff for measures 1124-1136 in 2/4 time. It features rests for measures 1124-1128 (5 measures), 1129-1130 (2 measures), 1131-1133 (3 measures), and 1135-1136 (2 measures).

animando **2** allargando **57** a tempo

1137-1138 Hn 3 Hn 1 mf

1146

dim. p pp pp

1155 **58** Moderato tranquillo

1155 p

1162 poco rit. a tempo dolce **59** 8

1162 poco rit. a tempo dolce 59 8 mf

1176 allargando Poco meno mosso

1176 allargando Poco meno mosso poco cresc. f

1183 Tranquillo 8

1183 Tranquillo 8 p pp 1189-1196

1197 poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre

1197 poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre p cresc.

1205 **60** allargando

1205 60 allargando 3 3 3

1213 a tempo **61** 3

1213 a tempo 61 3 1217-1219 3

1222

1222 3 sf 3

1230 62 **3**  
 1232-1234 *sf*

1240 63 *agitato, vivace* *cresc. molto*  
*f*

1249 *lunga* *Lento tranquillo molto rit.* 64  
 1252-1254 **3** 1255-1256 **2** 1257-1262 **6** *Hn 3*

1264 *poco rit. a tempo*  
*p*

1272 65 **2** 66 *rit. poco animando*  
 1273-1274 *p* 1278-1279 *p*

1282 *poco rit.* *Poco animando, espressivo* 67  
 1285-1288 **4** 1289-1290 **2** *p*

1292 *animando* **2**  
 1297-1298

68

1299

69

Musical staff for measures 1299-1305. The staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music starts with a dynamic marking of *f*. It features a series of eighth notes, followed by a melodic phrase with a dynamic marking of *mf cresc.* and a final phrase with a dynamic marking of *mf dim.* and a fermata over the last note.

1306

70

Musical staff for measures 1306-1311. The staff continues with a bass clef and one sharp. It starts with a dynamic marking of *p*, followed by a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The staff ends with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata.

1312

Musical staff for measures 1312-1317. The staff continues with a bass clef and one sharp. The music consists of a series of eighth notes, with a key signature change to two flats (Bb) in the final measure.

1318

71

animato

Musical staff for measures 1318-1325. The staff continues with a bass clef and two flats. It features a melodic phrase with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a key signature change to three sharps (F#, C#, G#) in the final measure.

1326

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

Musical staff for measures 1326-1333. The staff continues with a bass clef and three sharps. It features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* and a key signature change to two flats (Bb) in the final measure.

1334

72

Musical staff for measures 1334-1339. The staff continues with a bass clef and two flats. It features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* and a key signature change to one sharp (F#) in the final measure.

1340

73

Musical staff for measures 1340-1347. The staff continues with a bass clef and one sharp. It features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* and a key signature change to two flats (Bb) in the final measure.

1348

Musical staff for measures 1348-1356. The staff continues with a bass clef and two flats. It features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* and a key signature change to one sharp (F#) in the final measure.

1357

rit.

10

Musical staff for measures 1357-1371. The staff continues with a bass clef and one sharp. It features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *p* and a key signature change to two flats (Bb) in the final measure. The staff ends with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *p*.

1372

poco rit.

Musical staff for measures 1372-1378. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Measure 1372 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The melody consists of a series of eighth notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. A crescendo hairpin leads to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic at the start of measure 1373. Measure 1374 continues with a decrescendo hairpin to a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Measure 1375 has a fermata over the note G3. Measure 1376 has a fermata over the note F3. Measure 1377 has a fermata over the note E3. Measure 1378 has a fermata over the note D3.

1379

rit.

a tempo

rit.

Musical staff for measures 1379-1384. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Measure 1379 has a fermata over the note D3. Measure 1380 has a fermata over the note C3. Measure 1381 has a fermata over the note B2. Measure 1382 has a fermata over the note A2. Measure 1383 has a fermata over the note G2. Measure 1384 has a fermata over the note F2. The dynamic markings are mezzo-forte (*mf*) and piano (*p*).



# ENGLISH HERITAGE

MUSIC SERIES

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