



# THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

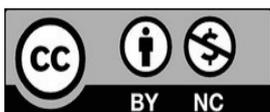
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

CONTRABASSOON

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

Contrabassoon

# The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

**1**

22 6

1-22 23-28

Hn 1 8va

33 **2**

*f* *cresc.* 3

38

43 **3** rit.

sostenuto **4**

4 3 3

49-52 53-55 56-58

Cl. 1 8va *p cresc.* <

**5** **6** Lento

4 10 5

62-65 67-76 77-81

82 rit. a tempo **7** Lento

8 12

83-90 92-103

104 **Allegro moderato** Bsn 2 8va

*mf*

111

115

119

122-124 *f*

128

132-146 147-152 *sempre dim.* **largamente**

154

**Lento** 155-168 **rit.** 171-172 **a tempo** 174-175 **Più mosso sostenuto**

176-184

**tranquillo** 186-188 **agitato** **rit.** **molto rit.** **a tempo**

197-200

**poco animando** 203-204 **animato** **allargando** **rit..**

B. Cl. Cl. 1 8va

209 **Allegro**

**mf cresc.** 214-215 216-220 221-227

228 Bsn 1 8va

*mf*



18 Contrabassoon

Fl. 1 8va

307

315

320-321

*f*

326

335

poco rit.

19 a tempo

*f*

346

354-360

361

20

dim. e rit.

*f*

368-374

Moderato 6

9

Lentissimo 5

Più mosso 4

Bsn 1 8va

375-380

382-390

391-395

396-399

402

Meno mosso

a tempo, moderato

*mf*

*cresc. molto*

*p*

412

Allegro

*cresc. molto*

*mf*

*f*

418

21

422

427

432

436

22

3

439-441

*ff*

444

23

449

**animando**

24

3

450-452

*mf cresc.*

455

**allargando**

459

463

24

**Con fuoco**

V.S.

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467

472

478

487

487

530

530

571

575

580

33 9 34 2 allargando 9 rit. a tempo 6

608-616 617-618 619-627 629-634

Lento 12 dim. e rit. a tempo 7 allargando

635-646 648-654

658 rit. a tempo 36 poco agitato 4 37 4

660-661 663-666 667-670 671-674

a tempo 5 animando 9 2 animando

675-679 680-688 689-690 Cl. 1 8va

38 695 f sf sf

704 Più mosso, allegro feroce ff f

712 f

39 721

729 sf sf

40 737 3 Vivacissimo

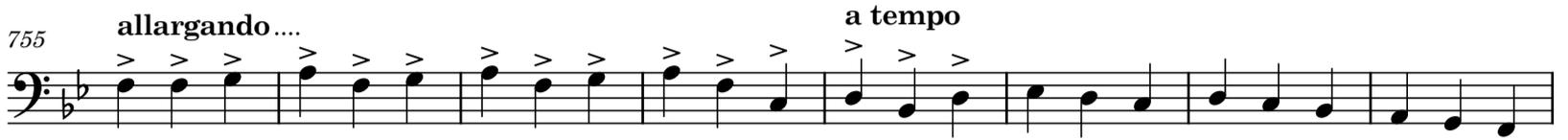
739-741

747



755

allargando.... a tempo



763



771

41



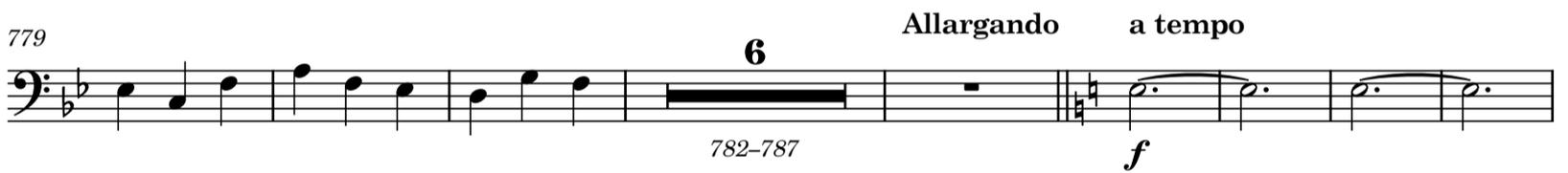
779

Allargando a tempo

6

782-787

f



793

rit.



802

[Silent] Lento

12

Puì mosso

8

animando

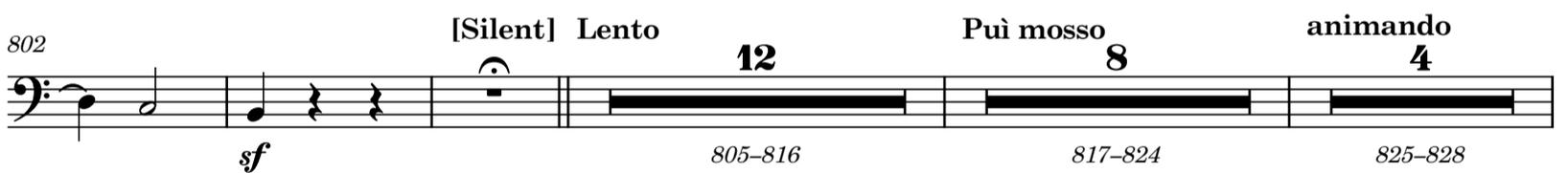
4

sf

805-816

817-824

825-828



Contrabassoon

**42** *agitato* **4** *animando* **6** **Allegro**  
Bsn 1 8va

829-832 833-838

845 **43** **Allegro**

855 *animato*

864 *rit.* **Moderato**

871 *sempre cresc.* *mf* *rit.* *a tempo animato*

882 **44** *allargando* **8** *agitato* **4** *animando* **7**

885-892 894-897 898-904

905 **45** **Allegro** *poco allargando* *poco rit.* **2** *rit.* **Agitato dolente** **7** *poco animando* **3** *molto rit.* **2**

907-908 910-916 917-919 920-921

**Lento** **6** **Più lento** **Moderato** **3** **Moderato con anima** **46** **16** **3**

922-927 930-932 933-948 949-951

952 *rit.* *a tempo* *largamente* **9** *rit.* **2** *a tempo* *allargando* **2**

954-962 964-965 967-968

**47** *a tempo* **6** *rit.* *a tempo - tranquillo* **6** **Hp 8va**

969-974 977-982

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

Hn 1 8va

990-1001 1002-1012

**3** **50** *mf*

Bsn 1 8va

1013-1015

1026 *mf*

1034 **Solenne** **allargando**

1040 *rit.* **51** **Tempo giusto** *f*

1048 *rit.* *cresc.*

1058 **allargando** **52** **meno mosso** **3** **3** **Allegro** **2**

1063-1065 1066-1068 1069-1070

**poco agitato** **3** **4** **meno mosso** **5** **poco animando** **3** *rit.* **Lento** **7** **53** **più mosso** **3**

1071-1073 1074-1077 1078-1082 1083-1085 1087-1093 1094-1096

**54** **agitato accelerando** **a tempo** **Andante**

**Allegro agitato** **4** **3** **Più lento (colla voce)** **4** *rit.* **7**

1097-1100 1101-1103 1105-1108 1110-1116

1117 *rit.* **55** **a tempo - tranquillo** **6** **5** **allargando.....** **animando** **3**

1118-1123 1124-1128 1129-1130 1131-1133

1134 **56** *Bsn 1 8va* **animando**

Hn 1 8va

1141 **57** *allargando* **a tempo** *mf* *dim.*

1149 **58** *Moderato tranquillo* **poco rit.** **2** **10**

*p* 1153-1154 1155-1164

1166 **59** *a tempo dolce* **8** *allargando* *Poco meno mosso*

*p* 1167-1174 Hn 1 8va

1181 **Tranquillo** **2** **8** *p*

*p* 1186-1187 1188-1195

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

Seek - ing to make it of worth\_ to each  
S. 1 8va

1203 **60** *f*

1211 **allaargando** **a tempo**

1217 **61**

1224 **sf**

1231 62

1238 63

1246 *agitato, vivace* *cresc. molto* *lunga* **Lento tranquillo** **molto rit.**

1252-1254    1255-1256

64 **11** *a tempo* *poco rit.* 65 **5** *Bsn 1 8va*

1257-1267                      1269-1272                      1273-1277

1280 *rit.* 66 *poco animando* *poco rit.* 67 *Poco animando, espressivo*

1285-1288                      1289-1292

1293 animando

68

Musical staff 1293-1300. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Dynamics: *mf* at the beginning, *f* at the end.

1301

69

Musical staff 1301-1306. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Dynamics: *p* at the beginning.

1307

70

Musical staff 1307-1312. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Dynamics: *p* at the beginning.

1313

Musical staff 1313-1318. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

1319

71

animato

Musical staff 1319-1325. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Dynamics: *ff* at the beginning.

1326

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

Musical staff 1326-1333. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

1334

72

Musical staff 1334-1339. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

1340

73

Musical staff 1340-1346. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

1347

Musical staff 1347-1354. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

1355

rit.

Musical staff 1355-1358. Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Dynamics: *p* at the end.

1363

Musical staff for measures 1363-1371. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It contains a series of half notes, each beamed together with the next. The notes are: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1. A *poco cresc.* marking is placed below the staff.

1372

Musical staff for measures 1372-1379. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps. It contains a series of half notes, each beamed together with the next. The notes are: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1. A *poco rit.* marking is placed above the staff. A *f dim.* marking is placed below the staff, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating a decrease in volume. A *p* marking is placed below the staff, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating a decrease in volume. A double bar line is placed after measure 1377, with a **2** above it. The text *1378-1379* is placed below the staff.

1380

Musical staff for measures 1380-1389. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps. It contains a series of half notes, each beamed together with the next. The notes are: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1. A *rit.* marking is placed above the staff. A *mf* marking is placed below the staff. A *cresc.* marking is placed below the staff, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating an increase in volume. A *a tempo* marking is placed above the staff. A *rit.* marking is placed above the staff. A *p* marking is placed below the staff, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating a decrease in volume.



# ENGLISH HERITAGE

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