



THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

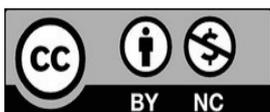
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

HARP

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

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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

Harp

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato 1 2 3 rit.

22 11 10 4

1-22 23-33 34-43 44-47

sostenuto 4 5 6 Lento rit.

4 3 10 11 5

49-52 53-55 56-65 66-76 77-81

a tempo Lento 7 Allegro moderato

8 9

83-90 92-100

8 9 sempre dim.

13 14 15 6

105-117 118-131 132-146 147-152

154 largamente Lento

8 2

155-162 167-168

169 rit. **10** a tempo sostenuto Più mosso tranquillo **11**

171-172 174-175 176-184

12 agitato rit. molto rit. a tempo poco animando animato

186-188 191-196 197-200

allargando rit... Allegro animato

203-205 206-207 210-215

13 **14**

218 221-235 236-249 250-253

poco rit.

254-257

Poco meno mosso **15** **16**

264-269 270-277 278-288

291 17 18

We learnt the lore of the heavens

9 9 26

293-301 302-310 311-336

poco rit. 19 a tempo 20 dim. e rit. Moderato B. Solo

2 28 7 6

337-338 339-366 368-374 375-380

Ye may not

382 5 **Lentissimo**

rest, O wan - der - ers, Time will not wait Nor stay the ruth - less rhytm of his march

391-395

Più mosso **Meno mosso** a tempo, moderato B. Solo

10 3 2

396-405 406-408 409-410

Hark to the harsh - er sound,

415 **Allegro** 21 22

The tramp of greed and pride!

3 18 8

418-420 421-438 439-446

23 animando allargando 24 **Con fuoco** 25

2 6 11 10 7

447-448 449-454 455-465 467-476 477-483

484 **Lento** **Meno mosso** **rit.** **Lento** **Slower**

3 8 6

489-491 492-499 500-505

506 **rit.** **Lento teneramente** **rit.**

26

9 4 5 4

507-515 516-519 520-524 526-529

530 **molto rit.** **Lento** **28 animato** **poco agitato** **Colla voce** **rit.**

27

8 10 4 3

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

29 **a tempo, tranquillo** **Lento maestoso** **30** **31** **allargando** **Tranquillo**

7 5 7 5

558-564 566-570 571-577 578-582

584 **32** **poco rit.** **a tempo**

S.1
We watch them as we wan - der on, and it is nought to us!

15

593-607

33 **34** **allargando** **rit.** **a tempo**

9 2 9 6

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

43 Allegro animato rit. Moderato

8 16 2 2

839-846 847-862 863-864 865-866

869 *sempre cresc.* rit. a tempo animato

5 5 5 5 5

873-877

44 allargando agitato animando

2 8 4 7

882-883 885-892 894-897 898-904

45 Allegro poco rit. rit. Agitato dolente poco animando

2 7 3

907-908 910-916 917-919

Lento
molto rit. **B. Solo**

Yet in the wel-ter-ing cha-os of waste words, Slow-ly the mad-ness of

920-921

Più lento

strife and of ha-tred, Yields to the spi-rit of love and of truth, Dim-ly the cer-tain-ties

925

Moderato **Moderato con anima** **46** **rit.**

wake in the hearts of men.

931-932 933-948 949-951

a tempo **largamente** **rit.** **Vln I** **a tempo** **allargando** **a tempo** **47**

wake in the hearts of men.

954-962

rit

970

a tempo - tranquillo

Hn 1

977

983

mf *dim.* *p*

988

48 **49**

poco rit. *a tempo - tranquillo*

11 **11**

991-1001 1002-1012

poco animando **50**

6 **9**

1013-1018 1019-1027

Org. Org.

1032

1034

1036

Solenne *allargando* *rit.*

2

1037-1038

51

Tempo giusto

1041

1044

1047

1052

52

1060

meno mosso

Allegro

poco agitato

meno mosso

poco animando

rit.

Lento

53

più mosso

Allegro agitato

54

Harp

1104 **Più lento (colla voce) a tempo** rit. **Andante** rit. **55** **a tempo - tranquillo**

1105-1108 1110-1116 1118-1123

allargando.... animando

56

1124-1128 1129-1130 1131-1133

57

58

1137 **animando** allargando **a tempo** **Moderato tranquillo**

1141-1143 1144-1154 1155-1164

59

1165 **poco rit.** **a tempo** **dolce** allargando **Poco meno mosso**

1167-1174 1175-1176 1177-1178 1179-1187

Tranquillo

poco rit.

Allegro - animando

cresc. sempre

60

1188-1196 1198-1200 1201-1205 1206-1210

allargando

a tempo

61

62

1214-1219 1220-1231 1232-1244

63 *agitato, vivace* *cresc. molto* *lunga* *Lento tranquillo* *molto rit.* **64**

1245 S. 1

Ye can - not stay the Sun.

1246-1247 1248-1250

poco rita tempo **65** *rit.*

1258

7 4 7

1261-1267 1269-1272 1273-1279

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

1281

2 4 4 6

1282-1283 1285-1288 1289-1292 1293-1298

68 **69** **70** **71**

4 7 11 2

1299-1302 1303-1309 1310-1320 1321-1322

animato *Org.* *animando*

1323

72 *sempre cresc. ed animando*

1330

4 2 7

1331-1334 1335-1336 1337-1343

73

rit.

10

Hn 1

Timp.

1345-1354

1361

p

1364

1367

1370

1373

poco rit.....

1376

1379

rit.

a tempo

1382

rit.

1385



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