



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

OBOE 1

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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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

Oboe 1

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato **18** 1

1-18 arco Vc. *p* < *cresc.* < <

24 *3* *dim.* *cresc.* *cresc.*

29 *cresc.* *f* *cresc.* *sf*

34 2 **2** *f* *3* *3* *ff*

40 3

45 *rit.* **4** *sostenuto* **3**
49-52 53-55

56-64 4 **9** Fl. 1 *3* 5 *ff* < *f* < *f* *dim.*

69 **3** *f* **3** **6** *Lento* **5**
70-72 74-76 77-81

82 rit. a tempo *p* *ff*

89 Lento **7** *pp*

96 *cresc.* *cresc.*

103 Allegro moderato *mf* *f*

109 *mf* *cresc.*

115 **8** *f*

122 *f* *f*

129 **9** *sf* **14** **6** *sempre dim.*
133-146 147-152

153 largamente Lento **8** *B. Cl. 8ba*

167 rit. **10** a tempo **2** *p* *cresc.* *sostenuto* **2**
171-172 174-175

176-179 **4** *tranquillo* *p* **11** *3* 182-184 *p* *agitato* *p*

187 *rit.* *molto rit.* *a tempo* **6** *poco animando* **4** 191-196 197-200

12 201 *Bsn 1* *animato* *allargando* *mf cresc.* *f* *Hn 1*

208 *rit..* *Allegro* *mf* *f*

215 *animato* **13**

223

231 **14** *cresc.*

238

245 *f* *p*

252

257 *ff*

262 *poco rit.* *Poco meno mosso*

268 **15** *ff*

275 **16** *sf*

283 *f*

290 **17** *9* Cl. 1 *2* *2* *2* *2*

293-301

305 **18** *mf cresc.* *2*

314 *ff*

323

332 *poco rit.* **19** *a tempo* *f* *cresc.*

341

2

5

348-352

f

cresc.

361

20

dim. e rit.

7

368-374

Moderato

2

375-376

C.A.

3

3

3

3

3

3

385

3

5

Lentissimo

4

Più mosso

7

386-390

391-394

sf

399-405

Meno mosso a tempo, moderato

3

406-408

Cbsn 8ba

415

Allegro

f

420

21

424

429

2 3 2

434

439

22

ff

444

23

449

animando

453

allargando

456

462

24 Con fuoco

467

ff

472

477

25

2

Lento Meno mosso rit.

482-483

p

491

Lento Slower

492-498

f

502

3

rit. Lento teneramente

503-505 507-510

f

513

26

2

p 516-517 *fp*

520

p 3

rit. V.S.

27

526 *p* *pp* *molto rit.* *Lento*

528-529 531-538

Detailed description: Musical staff 526-538. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. There are three triplet markings. The dynamics are *p* and *pp*. The tempo markings are *molto rit.* and *Lento*. There are two bar lines with repeat signs. The first section is 528-529 and the second is 531-538.

28 animato 10

539-548 *mf cresc.* C.A.

Detailed description: Musical staff 539-548. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *mf cresc.*. There is a 'C.A.' marking. The tempo marking is *animato*. There is a bar line with a repeat sign. The section is 539-548.

29

553 *p* *rit. espress.* *molto rit.* *a tempo, tranquillo* *rit.*

554-555 558-564

Detailed description: Musical staff 553-564. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *p*. The tempo markings are *rit. espress.*, *molto rit.*, *a tempo, tranquillo*, and *rit.*. There are two bar lines with repeat signs. The first section is 554-555 and the second is 558-564.

Lento maestoso

566 *mf*

Detailed description: Musical staff 566-570. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *mf*. There are three triplet markings. The tempo marking is *Lento maestoso*. There is a trill marking. There is a bar line with a repeat sign.

30

570 *cresc.* *f*

Detailed description: Musical staff 570-575. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *cresc.* and *f*. There are three triplet markings. There is a bar line with a repeat sign.

31 allargando

575 *ff* 3 580-582

Detailed description: Musical staff 575-582. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *ff*. The tempo marking is *allargando*. There is a bar line with a repeat sign. The section is 580-582.

32

583-586 *mf* *a tempo* *poco rit.* 4 593-596

Detailed description: Musical staff 583-596. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *mf*. The tempo markings are *a tempo* and *poco rit.*. There are two bar lines with repeat signs. The first section is 583-586 and the second is 593-596.

597 *p* *dim.* *pp*

Detailed description: Musical staff 597-604. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *p*, *dim.*, and *pp*. There is a bar line with a repeat sign.

33

604 *f* 2 606-607 4 611-614

Detailed description: Musical staff 604-614. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *f*. There are two bar lines with repeat signs. The first section is 606-607 and the second is 611-614.

34

615 *mf* *cresc.* *f cresc.* *allargando*

Detailed description: Musical staff 615-618. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The music begins with a half rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The dynamics are *mf*, *cresc.*, and *f cresc.*. The tempo marking is *allargando*. There is a bar line with a repeat sign.

623 *cresc.* *rit.* *a tempo* 5 630-634

35 *Lento* 12 *dim. e rit.* *a tempo* 7 *allargando* 635-646 648-654 B. Cl. 8ba 3

658 *rit.* *a tempo* 36 *poco agitato* 4 663-666 *mf* *f* *mf*

668 37 *f* *dim.* 3 2 5 *a tempo* 673-674 675-679

animando **7** animando

680-686 *f*

692 **38**

sf

699

706 **Più mosso, allegro feroce**

sf

714 **39**

f ff

722

730 **40**

738 *f*

746 **Vivacissimo**

754 **allargando...** **a tempo**

764



773

41



781

f



788

Allargando a tempo

ff



795

rit..

2

802-803



804

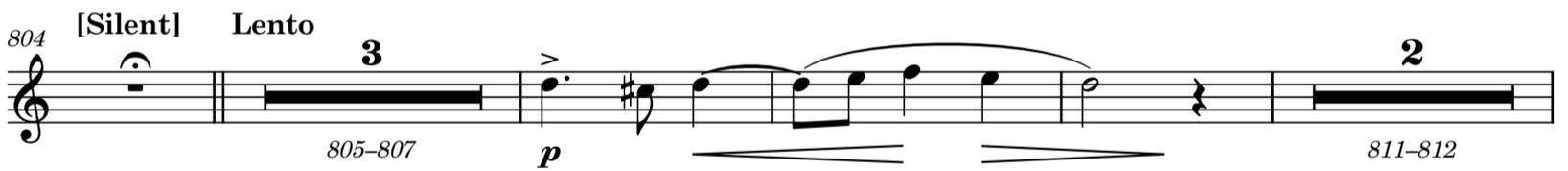
[Silent] Lento

3

p

2

805-807 811-812



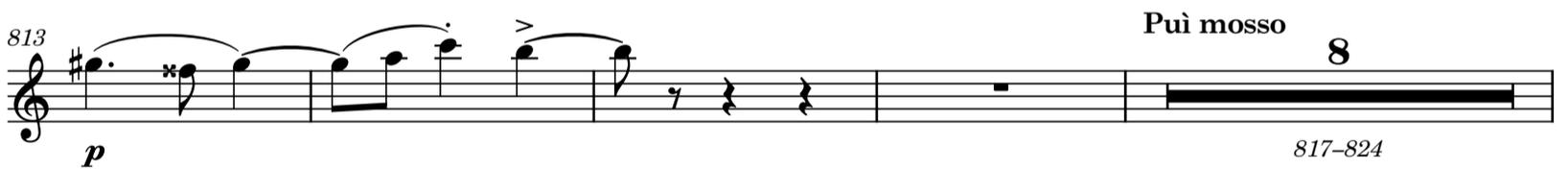
813

p

Puì mosso

8

817-824



animando **42** agitato animando

825-828

B. Cl. 8ba

835

Allegro

837-838

f

844

43 Allegro

ff

853

861

animato rit. Moderato

863-864 865-866

870

sempre cresc. rit. a tempo

873-877

f

881 animato **44** allargando agitato

885-892

Cl. 1

895 animando

sf

901 poco allargando

906 **Allegro** *poco rit.* rit. **45** **Agitato dolente**
mf

912 *poco animando*

919 *molto rit.* **Lento** **6** **Più lento**
 922-927

930 **Moderato** **Moderato con anima** **46** **3**
f 933-948 949-951

952 *rit.* **a tempo** **largamente** **3**
 954-956 Cl. 1 *mf*

963 *rit.* **a tempo** **allargando** **47** **a tempo**
cresc. *cresc.*

971 *rit* **a tempo - tranquillo** **11**
 977-987

988 *poco rit.* **48** **a tempo - tranquillo**
 Cl. 1 *mf*

997 **49** **4** **7**
 998-1001 *f* 1006-1012

poco animando

2

1013-1014

50

1022

f

1032

Solenne

p

1038

allargando

rit.

51

Tempo giusto

cresc.

cresc.

f

1043

f

mf

1050

rit.

1057

allargando

52

meno mosso

sf

mf dim.

1064

pp

Allegro

poco agitato

2

2

2

1067-1068

1069-1070

1071-1072

1073 **3** *meno mosso*
Solo *espress.*

f 1075-1077 *p* *p*

1082 *poco animando* *tutti* *rit. Lento* **53** *più mosso*

p 1087-1093 *f*

2 *Allegro agitato* *agitato accelerando*

1095-1096 *p* *p* *cresc.* *mf* *cresc.*

54 *Più lento (colla voce) a tempo*

1102 *mf*

1107 *rit. Andante* *rit.* **55** *a tempo - tranquillo*

1110-1116 1118-1123

5 *allargando.....* *animando*

1124-1128 *mf*

56 *animando* *allargando*

1135 1138-1140 *f*

57 *a tempo*

1143 1146 *mf*

1147 **5**

1150-1154 *mf*

58 Moderato tranquillo *poco rit.* a tempo

1155-1161 Cl. 1

1167 dolce

1173 59 allargando Poco meno mosso

f

1180 Tranquillo

f 3 8

1185-1187 1188-1195

1196 poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre

mf cresc. 3

Seek - ing to make it of worth to each S. 1 C. A.

1202 60

f

1210 allaargando a tempo

f ff

1217 61

f

1224 62

mf cresc.

1233

ff

1241 63 *sf* **agitato, vivace**

1248 **cresc. molto** *lunga* **Lento tranquillo** **molto rit.**

1252-1253 *p*

64 *7* **poco rit.**

1257-1263 *Cl. 1* *p*

1269 **a tempo** 65

p *mf* *p*

1274 **2** **rit.**

1278-1279

1281 66 **poco animando** **poco rit.**

p *cresc.* *f*

67

Poco animando, espressivo

animando

4
1285-1288
f *f* *mf* *cresc.*

68

1295
f

69

1301
f *cresc.*

70

1308

1315
f

71

animato

1321
f

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

1327
mf *cresc.*

72

1333
cresc.

73

1338
3 4 2 3
1340-1343 1345-1346
f

1348

1354 *rit.*

1360 *mf* *cresc.* *cresc.*

1367 *cresc.*

1374 *poco rit.* *dim.* *p*

1380 *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.* *mf* *cresc.*



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