



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

PICCOLO

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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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

Piccolo

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Musical Score for Piccolo: "The Vision of Life" by C. Hubert H. Parry

Measure 1: Moderato, 22 measures (1-22), 4/4 time signature.

Measure 2: 11 measures (23-33).

Measure 3: 10 measures (34-43).

Measure 4: 4 measures (44-47), rit.

Measure 5: 4 measures (49-52).

Measure 6: sostenuto, 3 measures (53-55).

Measure 7: 10 measures (56-65).

Measure 8: 5 measures (66-76).

Measure 9: 6 measures (77-81), Lento, rit.

Measure 10: a tempo, 8 measures (83-90).

Measure 11: Lento, 12 measures (92-103).

Measure 12: Allegro moderato, 11 measures (104-114), Fl. 1 8va, 3/4 time signature.

Measure 13: 5 measures (120-124), ff.

Measure 14: 14 measures (133-146).

Measure 15: sempre dim., 6 measures (147-152).

Measure 16: largamente, Lento, 14 measures (155-168), rit.

Measure 17: a tempo, 2 measures (171-172).

Measure 18: sostenuto, Più mosso, 2 measures (174-175).

Measure 19: tranquillo, 9 measures (176-184).

Measure 20: 11 measures (186-188), agitato, 3 measures, rit., molto rit.

Measure 21: a tempo, 6 measures (191-196).

Measure 22: poco animando, 4 measures (197-200).

Measure 23: 12 measures (203-205), animato, 3 measures.

Measure 24: allargando, 2 measures (206-207), rit..

Fl. 1 8ba

209 **Allegro** **6** **animato** **5** **13** **9**

210-215 216-220 221-229

233 **14** **9**

241-249

4 **8** **poco rit.** **Poco meno mosso** **15** **6** **8**

250-253 254-261 264-269 270-277

16 **11** **4** **17** **9** **9**

278-288 289-292 293-301 302-310

18 **26** **poco rit.** **19** **a tempo** **28** **20** **dim. e rit.**

311-336 337-338 339-366 C. A. 8ba

371 **Moderato**

380 **9** **Lentissimo** **5** **Più mosso** **10** **Meno mosso** **3**

382-390 391-395 396-405 406-408

a tempo, moderato **8** **Allegro** **4** **21** **10** **Tpt 1 8ba**

409-416 417-420 421-430

433 **22** **f** **cresc.**

440 **ff**

444 23 animando

447-448

Detailed description: Musical staff 444-448. The staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It contains measures 444 through 448. Measure 444 starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. Measures 445 and 446 feature triplets of eighth notes. Measure 447 has a whole rest. Measure 448 contains a triplet of eighth notes. A box with the number '23' is positioned above the staff. The word 'animando' is written above the staff. A '2' is written above measure 447. The range '447-448' is written below the staff.

450

Detailed description: Musical staff 450-452. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 450 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 451 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 452 has a triplet of eighth notes. The key signature remains two sharps.

453 allargando

Detailed description: Musical staff 453-455. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 453 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 454 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 455 has a triplet of eighth notes. The word 'allargando' is written above the staff. There are four hairpins below the staff, indicating a decrescendo.

456

Detailed description: Musical staff 456-458. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 456 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 457 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 458 has a triplet of eighth notes. The key signature remains two sharps.

459

Detailed description: Musical staff 459-461. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 459 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 460 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 461 has a triplet of eighth notes. The key signature remains two sharps.

462

Detailed description: Musical staff 462-464. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 462 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 463 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 464 has a triplet of eighth notes. The key signature remains two sharps.

465 24 Con fuoco

Detailed description: Musical staff 465-467. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 465 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 466 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 467 has a triplet of eighth notes. A box with the number '24' is positioned above the staff. The words 'Con fuoco' are written above the staff. A hairpin below the staff indicates a decrescendo.

468 *ff*

Detailed description: Musical staff 468-470. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 468 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 469 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 470 has a triplet of eighth notes. The dynamic marking '*ff*' is written below the staff. A hairpin below the staff indicates a decrescendo.

473 25 *sf*

Detailed description: Musical staff 473-475. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 473 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 474 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 475 has a triplet of eighth notes. A box with the number '25' is positioned above the staff. The dynamic marking '*sf*' is written below the staff. A hairpin below the staff indicates a decrescendo.

478 4 Lento Meno mosso rit.

480-483

Detailed description: Musical staff 478-483. The staff continues with eighth notes and triplets. Measure 478 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 479 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 480 has a whole rest. Measure 481 has a whole rest. Measure 482 has a whole rest. Measure 483 has a whole rest. A box with the number '4' is positioned above the staff. The words 'Lento', 'Meno mosso', and 'rit.' are written above the staff. The range '480-483' is written below the staff.

3 Lento **8** Slower **6** Lento teneramente **5**

489-491 492-499 500-505 rit. 507-511

Fl. 1 8ba

512 **26**

520 rit. **4** molto rit.

526-529

27 Lento **8** **28** animato **10** poco agitato **4** Colla voce **3** rit. molto rit.

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

29 a tempo, tranquillo **7** rit. Lento maestoso **5** **30** **7** **31** allargando **5**

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

Tranquillo **9** poco rit. **32** a tempo **15** **33** **9** **34** **2**

583-591 593-607 608-616 617-618

allargando **9** rit. a tempo **6** Lento **4**

619-627 629-634 635-638

Fl. 1 8ba

641 dim. e rit. **35** a tempo **6**

649-654

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

660-661 663-666

37 **4** **4** a tempo **5** animando **9** **2** animando **4**

667-670 671-674 675-679 680-688 689-690 691-694

38 **12** Più mosso, allegro feroce **39** **14** **16** **40** **5** Tpt 1 8ba

695-706 707-720 721-736 737-741

743 **Vivacissimo**

753 **allargando** **a tempo**

761

767

41 **sf**

774

781 **f**

787 **Allargando** **a tempo** **ff**

792 **7** **3** **rit.** **[Silent]**

794-800 801-803

Lento **12** **Puì mosso** **8** **animando** **4** **42** **agitato** **4** **animando** **6**

805-816 817-824 825-828 829-832 833-838

Allegro **8** **43** **Allegro** Tpt 1 8ba

839-846

857 **animato** **2**

863-864

TACET AL FINE



ENGLISH HERITAGE

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