



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

ORGAN

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.

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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

Organ

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato 1 2 3 rit.

22 11 10 4

22 11 10 4

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

sostenuto 4 5 6 Lento rit.

4 3 10 11 5

4 3 10 11 5

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

a tempo Lento 7 Allegro moderato

8 9

8 9

83-90 92-100

8 9 sempre dim.

13 14 15 5

13 14 15 5

105-117 118-131 132-146 147-151

152 **largamente Lento**

Vln I

con sordini

162 **rit. 10 a tempo sostenuto Più mosso tranquillo**

6 2 2 9

6 2 2 9

163-168 171-172 174-175 176-184

185 **11 agitato rit. molto rit. a tempo poco animando 12**

3 6 4

3 6 4

186-188 191-196 197-200

202 **animato allargando rit. Allegro animato**

3 2 6

3 2 6

203-205 206-207 210-215

Tpt 1

218

13 **14**

15 14 4

15 14 4

221-235 236-249 250-253

Tpt 1

poco rit.

4

4

254-257

Poco meno mosso

15 **16**

6 8 11

6 8 11

264-269 270-277 278-288

S. 1
We won to know - ledge and wis - dom,

291

17 **18**

9 9 26

9 9 26

293-301 302-310 311-336

We learnt the lore of the heavens,

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

Ye may not

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

382 **Lentissimo**

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

391-395

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

Ere to the longed - for haven ye win. Hark to the harsh - er sound,

396-405

Allegro **21** **22** **23**

413-416 417-420 421-438 439-446 447-448

animando **allargando**

Tpt 1

449-452 459-463

464

ff **Con fuoco**

24 25

468-476 477-483

484

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

489-491 492-499 500-505

506

rit. **Lento teneramente** **26** **rit.**

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

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

530

8 10 4 3

8 10 4 3

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

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

7 5 7 5

7 5 7 5

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

32 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

584

S. 1

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

15

15

593-607

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

9 2 9 6

9 2 9 6

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

635 **Lento**
S. Solo

legato

So near to per - fect joy and peace, Their souls full - ulled with faith and love

643

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

They lin - ger, earth - ly lures for - got,

7

7

648-654

655

allargando rit. a tempo **36** poco agitato

2 4

2 4

660-661 663-666

37

a tempo animando

4 4 9

4 4 9

667-670 676-679 680-688

Tba

animando **38**

Più mosso, allegro feroce **39**

689-690 691-694 695-706 707-720 721-736

40

Vivacissimo

allargando

a tempo

41

737-745 746-754 755-758 759-775 776-787

788

Allargando

a tempo

rit.

[Silent]

Lento

B. Solo

789-800 801-803

809

Più mosso

animando

814-816 817-824 825-828

42 *agitato* *animando* *Allegro* **43** *Allegro* *animato* *rit.*

829-832 833-838 839-846 847-862 863-864 865-866

867 *Moderato* *sempre cresc.* *rit.*

873-877

879 *a tempo* *animato* **44** *allargando* *agitato*

882-883 885-892 894-897

45

animando *Allegro* *poco allargando* *poco rit.* *rit.* *Agitato dolente* *poco animando*

898-904 907-908 910-916 917-919

molto rit. **Lento** *B. Solo*

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

920-921

Più lento

925

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

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

929

wake in the hearts of men.

2 16 3

931-932 933-948 949-951

47

a tempo largamente rit. a tempo allargando a tempo

953

9 2 2 6

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

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

6

6

977-982

986 **poco rit.** **a tempo - tranquillo**

48 49

11

11

11

11

991-1001 1002-1012

poco animando 50

3

3

3

3

1013-1015 1022-1024

1025

Tbn. 1

mf

f mf

mf

1033

Solenne

mf

1038

allargando

rit.

51

Tempo giusto

mf cresc.

molto cresc.

poco cresc.

1043

1053 rit. allargando **52** meno mosso

f *cresc.* *ff*

Allegro poco agitato meno mosso

4 3 2 3 4 5

4 3 2 3 4 5

1062-1065 1066-1068 1069-1070 1071-1073 1074-1077 1078-1082

poco animando rit. Lento **53** più mosso Allegro agitato

3 7 3 4 3

3 7 3 4 3

1083-1085 1087-1093 1094-1096 1097-1100 1101-1103

54

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

4 7 6

4 7 6

1105-1108 1110-1116 1118-1123

allargando. animando

56

animando

allargando

5 2 3 2 4 3

5 2 3 2 4 3

1124-1128 1129-1130 1131-1133 1135-1136 1137-1140 1141-1143

57 a tempo

58 Moderato tranquillo poco rit.

a tempo dolce

11 10 8

11 10 8

1144-1154 1155-1164 1167-1174

59

allargando

Poco meno mosso

Tranquillo

poco rit.

2 2 9 9

2 2 9 9

1175-1176 1177-1178 1179-1187 1188-1196

Allegro - animando

cresc. sempre

60

1198 Tpt 1 1207 Tbn. 1

1207 *allargando* *a tempo*

61 **62** **63** *agitato, vivace* *cresc. molto*

4 12 13 2 3

4 12 13 2 3

1216-1219 1220-1231 1232-1244 1246-1247 1248-1250

64 *lunga* *Lento tranquillo molto rit.* *poco rit.* *a tempo* **65**

3 2 11 4 7

3 2 11 4 7

1252-1254 1255-1256 1257-1267 1269-1272 1273-1279

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

2 4 4 6

2 4 4 6

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

68 69 70

Tpt 1

4 7 4

4 7 4

1299-1302 1303-1309 1310-1313

71

animato

1319

f

1326

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

mf

mf

1332

72

f

f

73

1338

Musical score for measures 1338-1345. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 6/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some measures containing rests.

1346

Musical score for measures 1346-1350. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 6/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some measures containing rests.

1351

Musical score for measures 1351-1355. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 6/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some measures containing rests.

1356

Musical score for measures 1356-1360. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 6/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some measures containing rests. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present above the final measure.

1360

p

1369

poco rit.

p

rit. a tempo rit.

mf

1378-1379



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