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

CLARINET 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	Jonathan Frank, Ass’t. Librarian - jonathan.frank@rcm.ac.uk
Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation	David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

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 . . . . Th e 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. Th is 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

Clarinet (B♭) 1 & Clarinet (A) 1

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

Cl. in B♭

7

1–7

pp

dim.

8

11–18

19

arco
Vc.

1

p

26

mf cresc.

cresc.

31

f

cresc.

2

36

40

44

3

48

rit.

mf

f

dim.

2

51–52

sostenuto

3

53–55

4

pp

pp

60

Solo

cresc.

f

64

5

ff

f

5

68–72

73

f

p

6 Lento

5

77–81

rit.

a tempo

8

83–90

91

Lento

7

p

2

95–96

98

p

104

Allegro moderato

cresc.

cresc.

f

110

mf cresc.

cresc.

116

8

ff

f

123

f

130

9

sf

mf

dim.

137

p

144

sempre dim.

f

pp

151

largamente

Lento

11

pp

p

156–166

167

rit.

10

a tempo

sostenuto Più mosso

p

p

175

tranquillo

2

179–180

181

11

agitato

p

p

188

rit.

molto rit.

a tempo

pp

p

194

poco animando

p

199

12

animato

allargando

3

203–205

f

rit...

Allegro

211

mf

f

animato

f

219

13

227

235

tr

14

cresc.

242

2

f

mf

249

p

cresc.

256

261

poco rit.

Poco meno mosso

266

15

f

273

16

280

287

17

294

p

301

p

309

18

315

5

319–323

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324

ff

333

poco rit.

19 **a tempo**

342

f

350

358

367

20

dim. e rit.

7

368–374

Moderato

2

375–376

Ob. 1

C. A.

382

391

Lentissimo

pp

Più mosso

sf

7

399–405

Meno mosso

2

406–407

a tempo, moderato

To Cl. in A

8

409–416

Allegro

Cl. in A

f

419

21

424

f

428

432

436

22

442

23

447

animando

452

allargando

457

460

464

24

Con fuoco

ff

470

475

25

ff

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

2 **3**

482–483 *489–491*

p

493

cresc.

498

Slower

mf

503

rit. **Lento teneramente**

p *p*

510

pp

516

26

sf

520–521

V.S.

522

To Cl. in B♭

rit.

Solo

Bsn 1

mf *cresc.*

528

molto rit.

27

Lento

Cl. in B♭

p

534

p

28

animato

539

3

543

poco agitato

4

cresc.

549–552

Colla voce

553

rit.

molto rit. a tempo, tranquillo

29

pp

p

560

3

3

rit.

espress.

565

Lento maestoso

30

31 **allargando**

571

3

572–574

f

579

Tranquillo

sf ***pp*** ***mf*** ***pp*** *dim.*

585

591

32

poco rit. a tempo

p

598

pp

f cresc.

606

33

mf

613

34

allargando

f

621

rit.

629

a tempo

To Cl. in A

5

630–634

Lento

4

635–638

Cl. in A

p

642

dim. e rit.

35

a tempo

649

654

allargando

rit.

a tempo

36

p

2

660–661

662 **poco agitato**

mf

3

668–670

671 **37**

f *p* **a tempo** *pp* *p* *pp*

679

To Cl. in B♭ **animando**

9

680–688

2

689–690

Cl. in B♭ **animando**

f

694 **38**

sf

Più mosso, allegro feroce

702

709

f

718 **39**

sf *ff*

727

735 **40**

sf

743

Vivacissimo

751

allargando....

759

a tempo

767

41

776

784

Allargando **a tempo**

791

sf

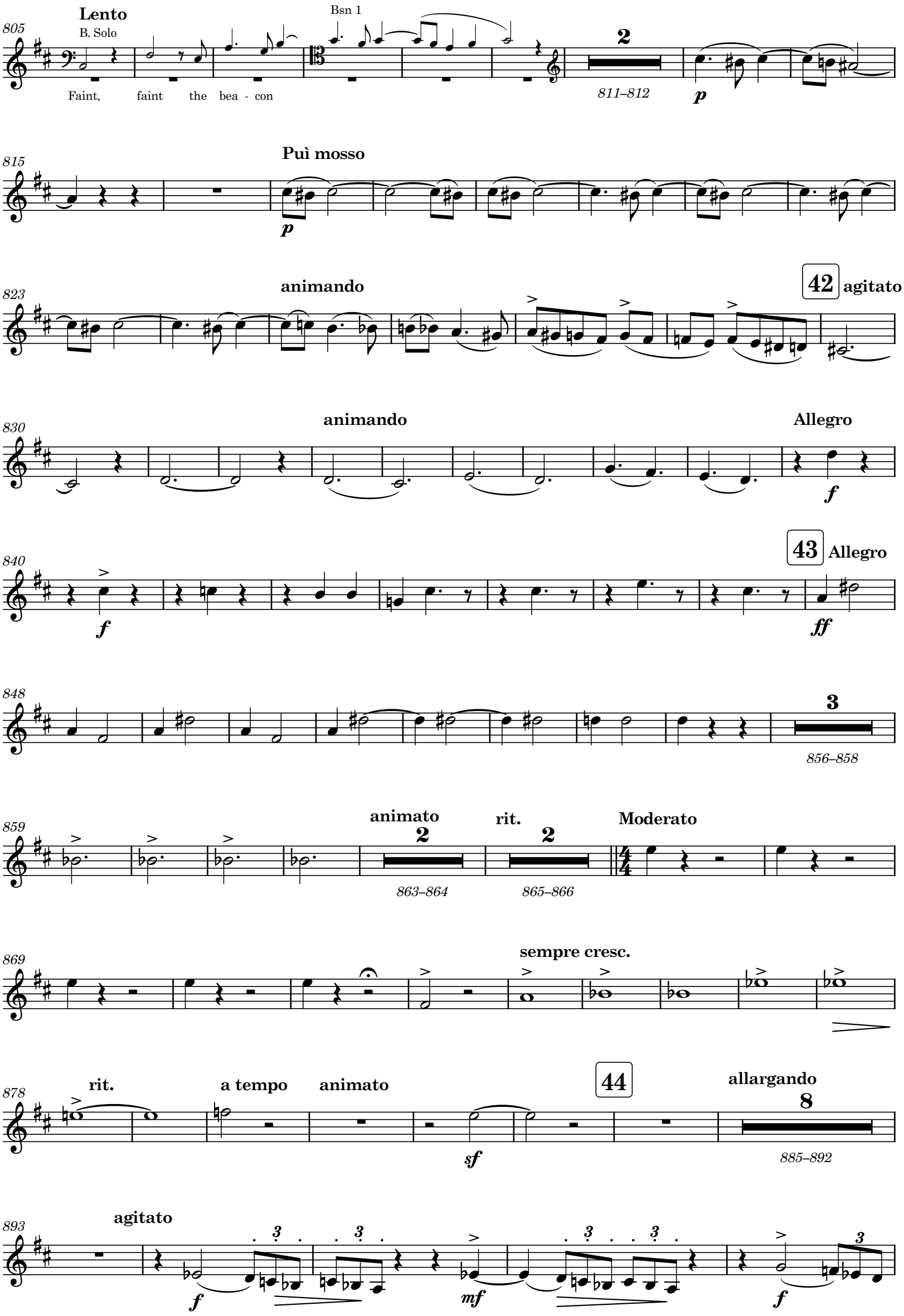
797

rit.

3

801–803

[Silent]


Lento
B. Solo
Bsn 1
Faint, faint the bea - con
811–812
Puì mosso
animando
42 agitato
animando
Allegro
43 Allegro
856–858
animato
rit.
Moderato
863–864
865–866
sempre cresc.
rit.
a tempo
animato
44
allargando
885–892
agitato

898
animando
2
901–902
45
905
Allegro
poco allargando
poco rit.
rit.
Agitato dolente
mf
mf
913
poco animando
918
molto rit.
Lento
cresc.
mf
dim.
923
Più lento
pp
930
Moderato
2
931–932
Moderato con anima
7
933–939
943
46
cresc.
950
rit.
a tempo
largamente
957
rit.
V.S.

964
a tempo allargando 47 a tempo
f
972
rit a tempo - tranquillo
p
980
poco rit.
f dim. 2 986–987
990
48 a tempo - tranquillo
pp 3 995–997 p
1000
49
cresc. f pp
1009
poco animando
f
1017
50
f cresc.
1026
1034
Solenne
mf cresc. cresc.
1039
allargando rit. 51 Tempo giusto
cresc. f f

1045

f

1051

rit.

1057

allargando

52

meno mosso

sf

dim.

Allegro

poco agitato

2 | **3** | **2**

1064–1065 *1066–1068* *1069–1070*

p

1073

meno mosso

p *1075–1077* *pp*

1080

poco animando **rit.**

1087

Lento

53 **più mosso**

pp *1090–1093* *f*

54

1096

Allegro agitato **agitato accelerando** **Più lento** **(colla voce) a tempo**

mf *1097–1100* *1101–1103* *p* *1106–1108*

1109 **rit.** **Andante** S. Solo

2

1110–1111

Nor hun - ger - ing vain - ly for com - fort ! See in the in - 0 - nite dis - tance

1116 **rit.** **55** **a tempo - tranquillo**

Where the un - bro - ken 4ood moves

pp

1120

1124 **allargando**.....

mf *cresc.*

1130 ..... **animando**

cresc.

56

1136 To Cl. in A **animando** Cl. in A **allargando**

2 **2**

1137–1138 1141–1142

mf ***mf***

57 **a tempo**

1144

f

1150

p ***pp***

58 **Moderato tranquillo**

1155

p

1161

poco rit. a tempo

cresc.

p

dolce

2

1167–1168

p

59

3

1172–1174

2

1175–1176

allargando

1178

Poco meno mosso

1183

mf

p

Tranquillo

8

1189–1196

poco rit. Allegro - animando

p cresc.

cresc. sempre

1202

60

f

1209

f

allaargando

a tempo

ff

1215

To Cl. in B♭

2

1218–1219

61

1220

Tpt 1

Cl. in B♭

f

62

1230

1237

f

63

1244

agitato, vivace

cresc. molto

sf

1251

lunga

Lento tranquillo

molto rit.

64

pp

p *dim.*

p

1261

pp

1266

poco rit. **a tempo**

p

65

1273

p

p

1280

66

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

cresc. *dim.*

f ***p*** *cresc.*

1287

67

p *cresc.* ***mf*** *cresc.* ***mf*** *cresc.*

1292

animando

1297

68

f

1302

69

1309

70

1315

To Cl. in A

2

1319–1320

71 2 animato 3 Cl. in A animando

1321–1322 1323–1325

1331 sempre cresc. ed animando 72

1337 1342–1343

73

1345 f f cresc.

1351

1357 rit. cresc.

1363 cresc. cresc. p

1370 poco rit. cresc. p

1379 rit. a tempo rit.

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