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

TRUMPET 2

Cover Image: "Spirit of the Summit" by Frederic Leighton, 1894

IN THE UNITED STATES

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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."

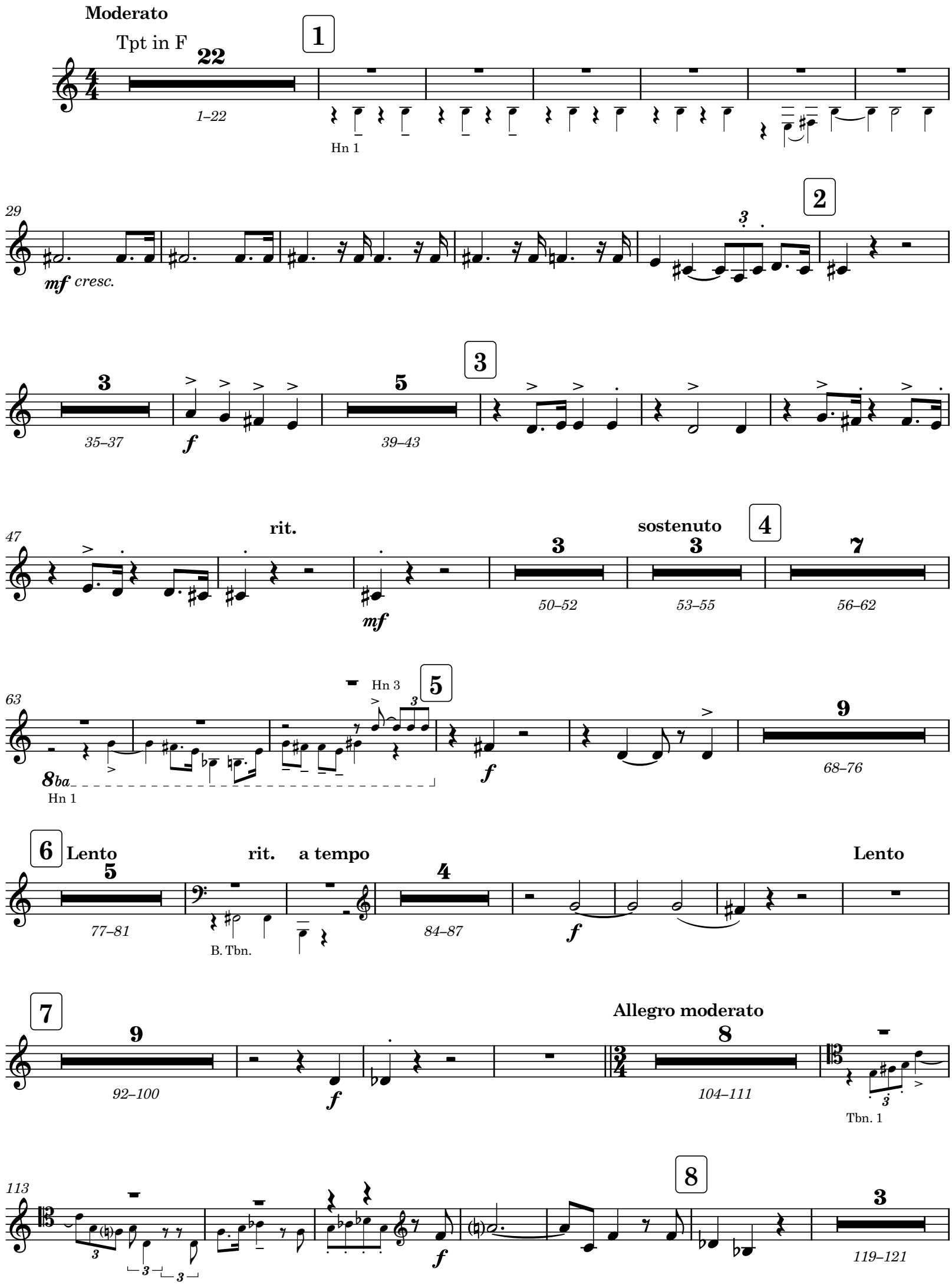
Other Sources

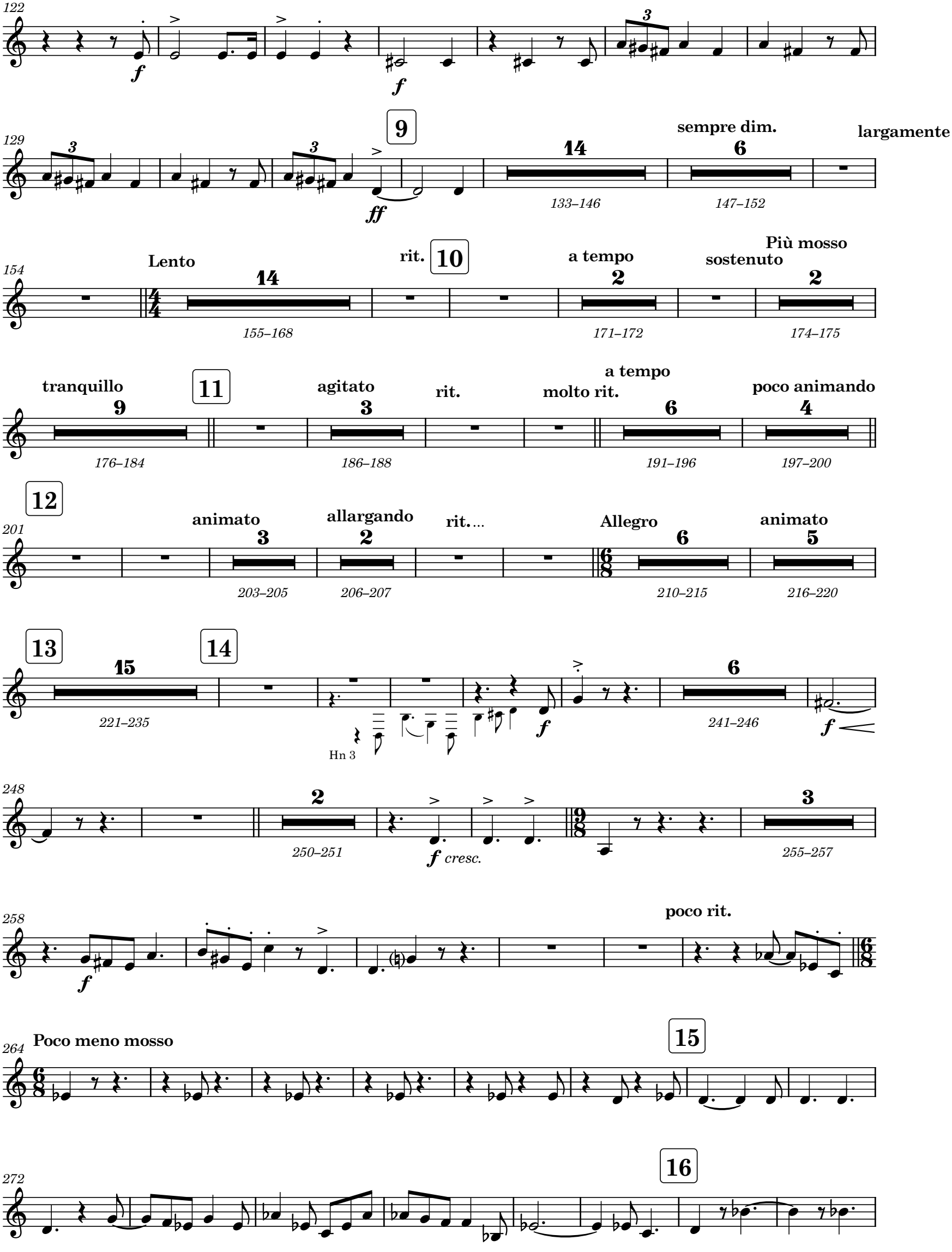
C. Hubert H. Parry—His Life and Music by Jeremy Dibble, Oxford University Press, © 1992, pp. 420-423
An Imperishable Heritage: British Choral Music from Parry to Dyson by Stephen Town, Ashgate Publishing Company, ©2012, pp. 1-36
Parry before Jerusalem—Studies of His Life and Music by Bernard Benoliel, Ashgate Publishing Company, © 1997

Trumpet (F) 2 & Trumpet (D) 2

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry




122
f
f
129
9
ff
14
133–146
sempre dim.
6
147–152
largamente
154
Lento
14
155–168
rit.
10
a tempo
2
171–172
sostenuto
Più mosso
2
174–175
tranquillo
9
176–184
11
agitato
3
186–188
rit.
molto rit.
a tempo
6
191–196
poco animando
4
197–200
12
201
animato
3
203–205
allargando
2
206–207
rit.…
Allegro
6
210–215
animato
5
216–220
13
15
221–235
14
Hn 3
f
6
241–246
f
248
2
250–251
f cresc.
3
255–257
258
f
poco rit.
264
Poco meno mosso
15
272
16

17

9 280–288

4 289–292

9 293–301

2 302–303

C. A.

307

18

3 308–310

2

2 2

2 318–319

f

2 2

327

337

poco rit.

19 **a tempo**

4 343–346

mf

f

348

356

mf

363

20

dim. e rit.

7 368–374

Moderato

6 375–380

9 382–390

Lentissimo

5 391–395

Più mosso

2 396–397

398

Vc.

Meno mosso

409

a tempo, moderato

mf *cresc. molto*

pp

415

To Tpt in D

Allegro

mf

420

21

f

ff

426

4

427–430

435

2

437–438

sf

22

443

23

449

animando

455

allargando

461

24 **Con fuoco**

467

472

25

477

Lento

2

482–483

f

486

Meno mosso

rit.

3

489–491

Lento

2

492–493

p

497

Slower

rit.

4

502–505

f

26

Lento teneramente

9

507–515

4

516–519

2

520–521

mf

To Tpt in F

rit.

27

Lento

molto rit.

28

animato

poco agitato

Colla voce

4

526–529

8

531–538

10

539–548

4

549–552

3

553–555

29

a tempo, tranquillo

556

rit.

molto rit.

7

558–564

rit.

Lento maestoso

30

5

566–570

3

571–573

Hn 1

31

575

Tpt in F allargando

f

sf

p

sf

p

32

poco rit.

a tempo

33

582

Tranquillo

9

583–591

15

593–607

8

608–615

Cue follows

616

34

allargando

p

Hn 3

626

rit. **a tempo**

5

630–634

Lento

12

635–646

35

dim. e rit. a tempo

7

648–654

655

allargando **rit.** **a tempo**

36

2

660–661

poco agitato

4

663–666

667

37

3

672–674

a tempo

5

675–679

8ba

mf

Hn 1

680

animando

Tbn. 1

mf

689

animando

38

cresc.

697

5

700–704

Più mosso, allegro feroce

8

708–715

sf

716

39

7

723–729

f

730

40

f

sf

738

3

739–741

Vivacissimo

sf

sf

748

allargando

756

a tempo

8

760–767

8ba

Hn 1

41

772

(8)

782

Allargando a tempo

ff

790

rit.

[Silent]

6

795–800

3

801–803

Lento

12

805–816

Puì mosso

8

817–824

animando

4

825–828

42

agitato

4

829–832

animando

6

833–838

Allegro

2

839–840

Hn 1

43

Allegro

f

850

3

853–855

862

animato

2

863–864

rit..

Moderato

3

868–870

agitato

sempre cresc.

5

873–877

rit.

f

a tempo

animato

3

881–883

44

allargando

8

885–892

5 bars

& cue follows

animando
4
894–897
Hn 1
Hn 3
f
Allegro
poco allargando
poco rit.
rit.
45
Agitato dolente
905
2
3
907–908
910–912
pp
p
poco animando
916
2
molto rit.
Lento
Più lento
6
917–918
922–927
mf
Moderato
Moderato con anima
46
rit.
a tempo
929
3
16
3
930–932
933–948
949–951
largamente
rit.
a tempo
allargando
47
a tempo
rit
9
2
2
6
954–962
964–965
967–968
969–974
49
a tempo - tranquillo
poco rit.
48
a tempo - tranquillo
976
11
12
11
977–987
990–1001
1002–1012
poco animando
50
6
2
1013–1018
1019–1020
Tbn. 1
mf
1027
Solenne
allargando
3
3
1033–1035
1036–1038
rit.
51
Tempo giusto
1040
mf
f
f
1048
cresc.

1055 rit. allargando 52 meno mosso 4

1062–1065

Allegro 3 poco agitato 2 3 meno mosso 4 5 poco animando 3 rit.

1066–1068 1069–1070 1071–1073 1074–1077 1078–1082 1083–1085

Lento 7 53 più mosso 3 Allegro agitato 4 agitato accelerando 3 54 Più lento (colla voce) a tempo 4

1087–1093 1094–1096 1097–1100 1101–1103 1105–1108

1109 rit. Andante 7 rit. 55 a tempo - tranquillo 6 5 allargando.. 2 animando 3

1110–1116 1118–1123 1124–1128 1129–1130 1131–1133

1134 56 2 animando 4 allargando 3 57 a tempo 11 58 Moderato tranquillo 10

1135–1136 1137–1140 1141–1143 1144–1154 1155–1164

1165 poco rit. a tempo dolce 59 8 allargando Poco meno mosso

1167–1174 8ba Hn 1 f

1180 3

1185–1187

Tranquillo 9 poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre

1188–1196 Tpt 1 mf cresc.

1203 60 4 allaargando

1206–1209 f

1214 a tempo 61 3 2

1217–1219 1220–1221 mf cresc. 1224–1225

1226

62

1235

2

1238–1239

f

1244

63

agitato, vivace

cresc. molto

lunga

sf

Lento tranquillo

3

1252–1254

molto rit.

2

1255–1256

64

11

1257–1267

poco rit.

a tempo

4

1269–1272

65

5

1273–1277

1278

Vla

rit.

66

poco animando

poco rit.

mf *cresc.* *f*

67

Poco animando, espressivo

4

1285–1288

4

1289–1292

animando

2

1293–1294

f

68

1299

f

69

6

1304–1309

70

mf

1311

mf

1319

71

animato

f

f

f

1326

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

mf

1332

72

f

1339

3 3 3

73

3

1345–1347

1348

mf

1355

rit.

1361

5

1362–1366

mf

pp

p

1373

poco rit.

cresc.

f

p

1380

rit.

a tempo

rit.

p

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