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

VIOLIN II

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.

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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

Violin II

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

10

1–10

Vla

con sordini

15

f

1

5

18–22

3

23–25

senza sord.

mf *cresc.*

27

cresc.

cresc.

2

31

f

35

39

marcato

cresc.

3

43

47

rit.

sf

p

53 **sostenuto** arco con sord. **4** *pp*

58 *dim.* 60–62 *mf*

65 **5** *ff* *sf* *ff*

69 70–71 *p* *cresc.* *ff* *p*

76 **6** **Lento** **rit.** **a tempo** 77–80 *pp* 84–87 *f* *ff*

89 **Lento** **7** *dim.* *pp*

96

100 *cresc. molto* *pp* **Allegro moderato** *mp*

106

111

115

118 8

121

dim.

cresc. molto

124

129 9

ff

3

135–137

p

144

cresc.

sempre dim.

5

147–151

largamente

154

Lento

10

159–168

rit.

senza sordini

170 10

a tempo

pp

sostenuto Più mosso

pp

176

tranquillo

p

V.S.

181

11

agitato

187

rit.

molto rit.

divisi

a tempo

2

192–193

194

con sordini

poco animando

cresc.

199

12

con sordini

animato

cresc.

204

allargando

rit.

cresc.

210

Allegro

cresc.

216

animato

13

224

230

14

236

243

250

p

cresc. molto

256

ff

261

poco rit.

Poco meno mosso

265

15

271

3

3

276

16

mf

282

cresc.

288

17

ff

mf

296

V.S.

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302
cresc.
18
310
f
316
f
cresc.
ff
324
sf
334
poco rit.
19
a tempo
f
343
cresc.
dim.
351
p
f
360
20
f
dim. e rit.
7
368–374
Moderato
6
375–380
5
382–386
pizz.
p
391
Lentissimo
con sordini arco
pp
Più mosso
senza sordini
7
399–405

Meno mosso **a tempo, moderato**

3

406–408

Vc.

mf *cresc.*

416

Allegro

f

cresc.

421

21

425

429

432

435

438

22

442

ff

447

23

animando

452
allargando
f
456
459
462
466
24
Con fuoco
ff
470
475
25
479
ff
484
Lento
Meno mosso
rit.
3
489–491
Lento
6
492–497
498
pizz.
mf cresc.
f
Slower
f
4
502–505

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506
rit.
con sordini
Lento teneramente
3
p
cresc.
512
26
f
dim.
pp
517
senza sordini
pizz.
f
2
520–521
mf cresc.
f
524
rit.
4
526–529
27
molto rit.
Lento
Vc.
535
28
animato
p
mf
p
2
540–541
542
cresc. molto
547
poco agitato
cresc.
551
Colla voce
mf cresc.
2
554–555

29

556 **rit.** **molto rit. a tempo, tranquillo**

p *pp* *dim.*

562 **rit.** **Lento maestoso**

mf cresc.

567 *tr*

30

571 *cresc. molto*

574

31 **allargando**

577 *ff* *sf* *p* *sf* *p*

Tranquillo

582 *p* *poco cresc.*

poco rit. **32** **a tempo**

589 *p*

596

602

607 **33**

613 **34** **allargando**

p

620 **rit.**

ff *mf* *cresc. molto* *ff*

629 **a tempo**

dim. *dim.*

635 **Lento** **dim. e rit.**

pp 636–639 *p* 643–646

648 **35** **a tempo** con sordini

Vc. tutti *p*

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

p *p* *p*

663 *cresc.* *cresc.* *cresc.*

669 **37**

p molto cresc. *dim.*

673 **a tempo**

dim. *pp* 676–679

680 **animando**
Vla

mf cresc.

688 **animando**

695 **38**

700

704 **Più mosso, allegro feroce**

ff *ff*

710

718 **39**

726

733 **40**

sf *f*

740

746 **Vivacissimo**

sf

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

761

767

773

sf

779

ff

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

ff *sf* *sf* *sf*

794

800 **rit.**.

sf

[Silent] **Lento**

12

805–816

Puì mosso

2

817–818

B. Solo

The path - way lost, Men cry to one an - oth - er in the dark,

animando

This way, and that way,

827

42 agitato

pp

animando

836

Allegro

f

843

43 Allegro

850

858

animato

cresc. molto

864

rit.

Moderato

sf sf sf sf

872

sempre cresc.

5

873–877

rit.

f

ff

a tempo

animato

883

44

allargando

8

885–892

agitato

Sur - feit and des-

S. Solo

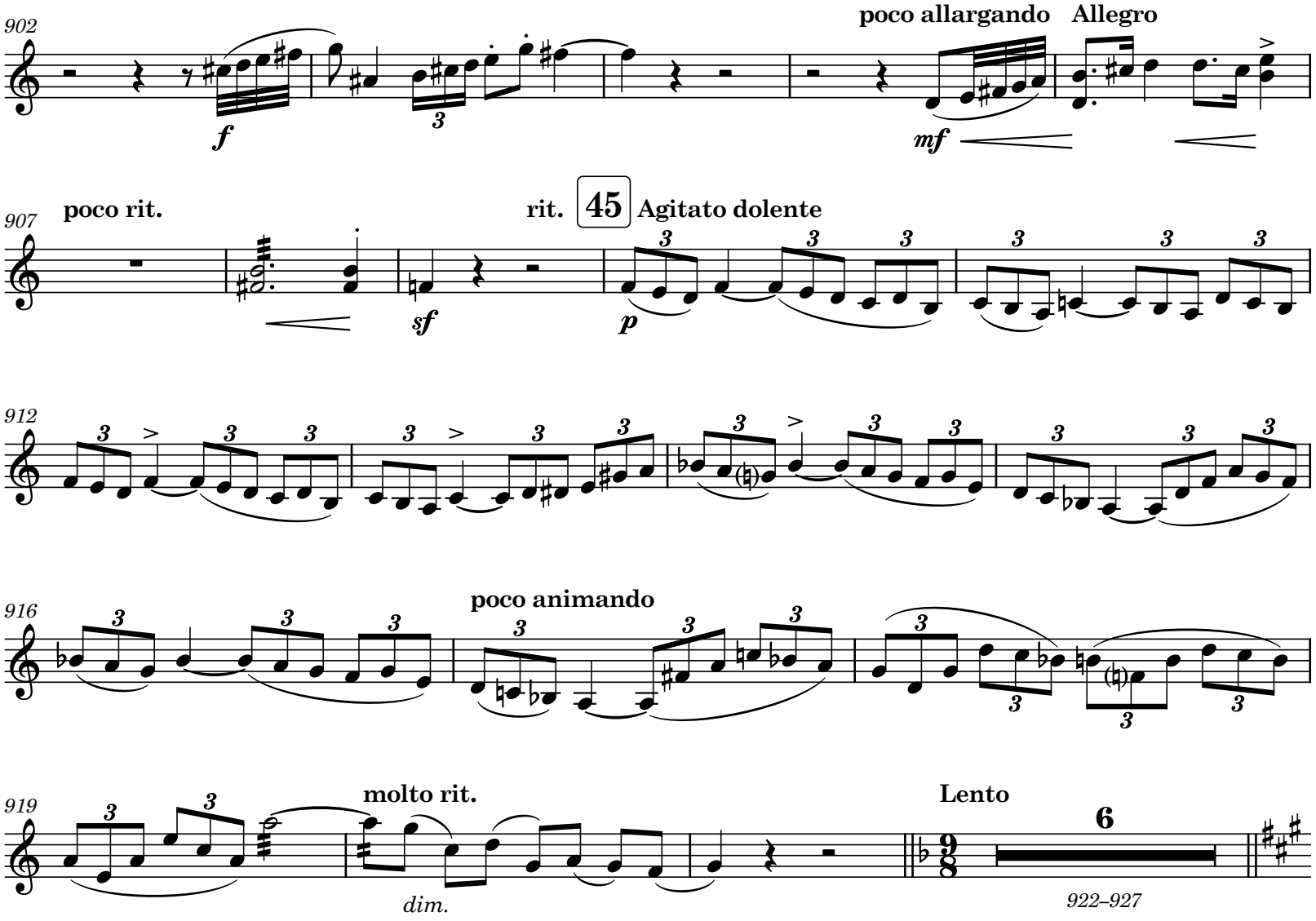
896

animando

mf

f

- pair are min - gled in the cup the vic - tor drains.


902
poco allargando
Allegro
f
3
mf
907
poco rit.
rit.
45
Agitato dolente
sf
p
912
916
poco animando
919
molto rit.
dim.
Lento
6
922–927

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928 **Più lento** **Moderato** **Moderato con anima**

mf *p*

935

943

46

cresc.

951 **rit.** **a tempo** **largamente**

3

956

cresc.

allargando

963 **rit.** **a tempo**

f

V.S.

969 **47** **a tempo**

cresc.

rit

dim.

976 **a tempo - tranquillo**

p

982

cresc.

f

poco rit.

dim.

989 **48** **a tempo - tranquillo**

pp

994

p

998

1002 **49**

1006

1010

poco animando

1014

50

1018

1022

1026

1030

1033

1035

Solenne

f

mf

cresc.

1037

allargando

rit.

cresc.

51

Tempo giusto

1041

f

cresc.

1047

ff

cresc.

1053

rit.

allargando

ff *f*

ff

52

meno mosso

1059

dim.

dim.

1066

Allegro

poco agitato

2

2

2

1067–1068

1069–1070

1071–1072

1074

f *p*

dim.

1078

meno mosso

poco animando

pp

pp

cresc.

mf

cresc.

1086

rit.

Lento

7

53 più mosso

Allegro agitato

4

1087–1093

ff

1097–1100

1101

agitato accelerando

Più lento (colla voce)

54 a tempo

f

p

rit. Andante rit.

3 4

1106–1108 1110–1113

p

55 a tempo - tranquillo allargando

6 3

1118–1123 1124–1126

dim.

1130

animando

p

56 animando

1134

dim.

1138

cresc. f

57 a tempo

1142

f

1146

dim.

1149

mf sempre dim.

58 Moderato tranquillo

1154

6

1157–1162

1163

poco rit. a tempo dolce

1169

59

1175

allargando Poco meno mosso

mf *p cresc.* *f*

1181

Tranquillo

3 3

1185–1187 *1188–1190*

1191

Pass - ing on life from one to an - o - ther Seek - ing to solve it, Seek - ing to know it,

S. 1

1196

poco rit. Allegro - animando cresc. sempre

Seek - ing to make it of worth to each

p *molto cresc.* *sf* *cresc.*

1202

60

1208

allaargando

f *f* *cresc.*

1213

a tempo

ff

1218

61

ff

1224

1230

62

1237

1243

63

agitato, vivace

cresc. molto

1249

64

lunga

Lento tranquillo

molto rit.

1252–1254

1255–1256

1259

1263

1266

poco rit.

a tempo

1270

65

cresc.

1274

1278–1279

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1280

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

mf *cresc.* *f* *dim.*

1285

Poco animando, espressivo **67**

espress.

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

1290

animando

f *mf cresc.* *cresc.* *mf* *f*

1295

mf *f* **68** *ff* *f*

1301

69

mf

1306

1309

70

mf cresc.

1312

mf

V.S.

1316

mf

molto cresc.

1321

71

cresc.

animato

1326

animando

1330

sempre cresc. ed animando

f

1335

72

1338

1342

73

1346

1350

1355

rit.

1360

mf

mf

1366

1370

poco rit.

1376

p

p

rit.

1381

a tempo

rit.

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