The mutual correspondence between poet Jakub Deml and sculptor František Bílek goes back to the years 1901–1928. It therefore covers almost thirty years of life and artistic production of both protagonists and also serves as a source for thirty years of Czech culture of the first half of the 20th century. 

In the beginning, the relationship of both correspondents was rather unbalanced – Jakub Deml was a young student at the Brno Theological Seminary while František Bílek had by then gained certain recognition in the field of plastic arts. Their first encounter was also attended by poet Otokar Březina who was to remain an inseparable part of their mutual friendship lasting the long thirty years. At the same time, Otokar Březina turned out to be an initiatory figure in both Deml’s and Bílek’s work. On having acquainted himself with Březina’s late collections of poems, Bílek’s artistic output reached a turning point: the sculptor turned away from his pessimism typical of the 1890’s towards new motives. Scholars characterize this process as a „transition to light“.

Jakub Deml was captivated by Březina’s poetry as early as during his studies at grammar school and later on transformed his experience of reading into his lyrical texts in prose that he included into his first collection of poems entitled Notantur Lumina (or First Lights) and other books. The fact that some texts in Notantur Lumina were also inspired by František Bílek and by his oeuvre has been little known so far. But this fact only acknowledges the initial disparity in their mutual relationship – while Jakub Deml found in Bílek’s oeuvre one of his first „lights“ in poetry, František Bílek at that time did not draw any inspiration from Deml’s work.