
TO LIGHT!

Bringing Masonic Education To Light



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THE POEM OF TRATHEL

In an old Gaelic poem called "The Poem of Trathel," there is a scene which pictures a mother playing a harp while her children gather around, entranced as they listen to the sweet strains which issue from the harp at her touch on the trembling strings. She stops. The music ceases, and she lays down the harp. The children pick it up and finger the strings in an attempt to reproduce the music which had come from the harp at the touch of their mother's fingers. In vain. A confusion of harsh discordant sounds comes forth but not the sweet music they longed to hear as a result of their own efforts. In bitter disappointment they cry out: "Oh Mother, why doesn't it answer us too? Show us the strings where the music is."

She replies, "My children, it is a secret I cannot tell you, nor can it be told except in the presence of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. Wisdom to discern the True, Strength to resist Error and Appreciation of Spiritual Beauty, qualities which you must acquire for yourselves. The music is in the strings, but the power to draw it out is not mine to give you. I can help, but you must seek and find it for yourselves. If you truly wish to acquire this power you can do so, but think not the task is easy. It will come when you have earned it, but only after long and patient search."

So it is with us. Our unaccustomed fingers wander among the wires of the harp of life. We seek the string where dwells the harmony of the soul. We seek the lost song, the lost chord, the lost word.

Yet after all it is not really lost. The sweet harmony is in the strings all the time. We must learn, by study and practice, the art of drawing it out. In like manner, the Word we call lost is near at hand, even in our own hearts. It is we ourselves who lack the power to recognize it. The harmony of the soul is in the harp of life, it is not lost, and we can acquire the power to draw it forth if we will only patiently seek and work for it.

This search for the harmony unheard by mortal ears, the harmony discerned only by the spiritual ear of the soul attuned to the divine strings of the heavenly harp, is the great purpose of Masonry. We call it the search for the Lost Word.

—Charles Clyde Hunt