

more is signified by the secret vault and work therein than merely the recovering of a "lost word." The moral significance of that part of the ceremony points to the fact that truth does not always appear on the surface, and needs to be persistently sought after in the hidden recesses. There must be an enduring of toil and hardships, a brave confronting of dangers, for the sake of obtaining that knowledge which is of largest value. All this and more of moral suggestiveness is associated with the "lost and recovered word" of the Royal Arch degree.

In much the same way Cryptic Masonry, in the degrees of Royal Master and of Select Master, presses into service the symbol of the vault. There is the same search for truth indicated, together with an impressive enforcement of lessons that relate to earnest, watchful, heroic living. Then there is an additional drawing from the ancient mysteries as the vault becomes symbolic of death and the Grave—of these not as finalities, but also of what there is beyond in the unfolding of the higher life. Masonically the vault is a prophet of better things—of truth, which shall come in to take the place of error; of knowledge which shall banish ignorance; of light, which shall drive out darkness, and life victorious over death. No symbolism is more sublime and far reaching than what is thus presented by what is commonly known as the Masonry of the secret vault.

And yet the organization of the Cryptic degrees has never been strong or complete. It is only in this country that they have gained any considerable prominence, and here they have had a fluctuating and uncertain life. The degree of Select Master was worked both in Baltimore, Md., and in Charleston, S. C., during the early part of the present century, being regarded as belonging to the system of Royal Arch Masonry, though no great importance seems to have attached to the degree. The

Royal Master's degree was not recognized until several years later, when that too came to be conferred as an appellant to Royal Arch Masonry, and a little later by independent Councils organized in several of the more influential jurisdictions. It should be remembered in this connection that the Cryptic degrees originally belonged to the Ancient and Accepted Rite, or rather, that they were conferred as honorary degrees by the Inspectors of that Rite.

The first Grand Council was that of Massachusetts, instituted in 1826, Bro. Abraham A. Dame being the first Grand Master. He held the office until 1856—thirty years. Other independent governing bodies of the Rite were formed from time to time, and in some sections considerable interest was manifested in the progress of the degrees. Cryptic Masonry has never flourished, however, as its friends believe it should. A few years ago, under the lead of Bro. J. H. Drummond, who has worked efficiently in behalf of the Cryptic Craft, a General Grand Council was formed, this step being taken with the idea of bringing the Cryptic degrees and organization into a condition of greater prominence and prosperity. Whether this movement will secure the desired result remains to be seen. The Cryptic degrees are worthy of preservation and of being embodied as a distinct organization. The practical question seems to be this:—Can room be found for them without crowding upon other interests and branches of the Masonic system?—*Freemason's Repository.*

BRO. BARON FERDINAND DE ROTHSCHILD, a Liberal, on July 17th ult., was elected to the British Parliament for Aylesbury, in the place of Sir N. de Rothschild, now Lord Rothschild.

The Grand Lodge of Vermont ratified the recommendation of their Grand Master in his address to support the Grand Lodge of Quebec in its claim to exclusive jurisdiction.