

By Bro. S. W. Williams, Grand High Priest of Tennessee

"The MASTER'S WORD * * * is the reward of study and devotion, and has never been obtained on any other terms. It has never been conferred in the ritualistic degrees of the Lodge, and never will or can be. It is the establishment of understanding in the Soul of man between that higher self in him, and the MORE and Beyond Self from which he draws his life, and from which his intuitions spring. This is the Real Initiation: At-One-Ment." ("Mystic Masonry." by J. Buck.)

Let us see. The Blue Lodge symbolizes this Life, from the Cradle to the Grave. From our entrance upon the Stage of Life's great Drama, 'till its close, when "Exeunt Omnes" is the order of the Greatest of Stage Managers, and the "Curtain of Life" is run down. The Chapter comes next in the Masonic System--capped with the Royal Arch--formerly, and we might say correctly, termed the HOLY ROYAL ARCH, for such it surely is.

The Past Master's degree has no place in the Masonic System--being merely a complimentary degree-- a sort of enabling Act to qualify the Candidate for the Royal Arch degree. The Mark and Most Excellent Master's degrees are amplifications of the Work of the Blue Lodge and have no part in the consecutive work leading up to the Royal Arch in the position they now occupy.

Mackey and other teachers tell us that the Royal Arch degree is the symbolic representation of the state after death. Life's vanities and follies have passed away; even the first Temple, erected with such care through Life, has succumbed, and decay and desolation only appear in its stead.

Masonry is a search for Light--More and MORE LIGHT as we ascend the rounds of the Ladder--and Masonic Light is TRUTH ETERNAL. In his "Search" the Seeker will discover profound secrets of which he was previously ignorant. They had never been explained in the Lodge and NEVER WILL BE. However, they are there for all who will not only "Ask," but earnestly "Seek" for them. It must be personal, self sacrificing, painstaking and consecrated service, otherwise we shall fail in our search for these Treasures of Masonry that are never more than hinted at in the Lodge and never explained.

This is one of the things that each man "must do for himself" and if not undertaken in the proper spirit, he will find the Door securely barred against him--and he will "knock" in vain. Thus, if we do not attain the FULLNESS of Light, it will be our own fault-- we have not properly used all of the "Working Tools" that were given us in the Lodge and were there so carefully explained.