

## Correspondence.

*We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our Correspondents.*

*To the Editor of the CRAFTSMAN.*

DEAR SIR AND R. W. BRO.,—In your last issue of *THE CRAFTSMAN*, I notice a letter from R. W. Bro. McPherson in regard to establishing a charitable fund in N. L. L., No. 93, G. R. C.

I am somewhat surprised to see the question asked, if this would be Masonic? as I understand charity is one of the principle teachings of Masonry, no matter in what form or manner dispensed.

In answer to the second question, a charitable fund and committee on the very principles indicated was established by Ontario Lodge, No. 26, at Port Hope, eleven years ago, and works admirably.

Thirdly, the amount handed over to the Charitable Committee to start with was fifty dollars. The further grants are provided for by By-Law, as follows:—"The sum of fifty cents for each resident paying member shall be handed to the Charitable Committee on or immediately after the festivals of St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist."

As to the working of this I will give the mode of proceeding. On the night of installation, the W. M. appoints a Charitable Committee of three well-skilled and experienced brethren, who live or whose business is in close proximity to each other, so that when an application is made, the members can be called easily together on the shortest notice.

No more than one new member is appointed in any one year, so as to leave two remaining on the board who have made themselves acquainted with the working, which requires a good deal of experience, as the transient applicants are, in many cases, either shrewd, cunning, or bold, etc., etc. The duties of the

Charitable Committee are also fixed by By-Law, viz:—

"The Charitable Committee shall make due and diligent enquiry into all cases referred to them, or may come under their notice, and shall make such provision and expend such sums as they deem necessary and expedient, and report at the first regular meeting in December."

All applications for relief or assistance, whether local or transient, must be made to the Charitable Committee; by them a book is kept in which every tramp (as the most of the transient prove to be) has to sign his name in full, age, residence, occupation, lodge and number, where held, and cause of distress, and the chairman will then add worthy or not, and the amount given or paid on account of railroad fares or otherwise; also a margin is left for remarks. If the applicant hails from any part in Canada, or from a not too far distant point in the neighboring Republic, he is requested to call again in a few hours, as we intend to telegraph to his lodge. This in most cases is objected to, on the ground, either that they do not wish to let their friends know their present circumstances, or they would like to reach a certain point at a certain time, and would not have time to wait for a reply. They frequently say they would rather do without assistance, if we would not take their word, or upon examination or production of certain documents. In such cases fraud is certain and the applicant often goes without receiving anything. Many a dollar has thus been saved by this simple procedure, but we find that many of the transients hail from the old country; and in such cases, where the wires cannot be made use of, the applicant has to pass a very strict and searching examination. Then we find that there are two classes,—one who are very well posted, as they have perhaps once been a good attendant of their lodge and now keep themselves well up by everyday practice in ob-