

"There was nothing more to say. The initiated extended his hand which was warmly grasped by the other, and uttered with thrilling accents, deep emotion mellowing his voice. 'Friend! Brother! You have taught me a lesson I shall never forget. This is a little ray of Masonic light. No language is so eloquent as the silent throbbing of a heart full of joyful tears.'

"While this kind of cement is used in our moral edifice, should it not be enduring? Who can wonder that it is so strong?"—*Michigan Freemason*.

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### VAGRANCY.

WE have often said in these pages, that Masonry has no affinity for vagrancy. It teaches the brotherhood to be industrious and self-reliant, to sow in seed-time, that they may reap in harvest. But it also teaches us to practice charity, and give to the worthy poor when through sickness or misfortune they are found needy of the necessities of life. Now on account of the known charity of Craftsmen, there are many unworthy vagrants wandering up and down in the land without occupation, and asking alms from the fraternity. And we are sorry to say that among these are often to be found *women*, who present letters from their friends or perchance forged papers, as the case may be, and in the name of Masonry ask for charity. This they most generally obtain, whether they are entitled to it or not. Most of the brethren say they would prefer to give to the unworthy rather than leave the worthy poor unfed, and most of them have not the time to make an investigation into the merits of each case which presents itself. As a result, many unworthy, lazy, ill-famed men and women, who are entitled to no respect or sympathy, get funds, and often drive quite a paying business in the dollar and cent point of view.

Now we do not wish to dissuade our brethren from being charitable—far from it. But we do wish to have them *investigate*, and not give to unworthy vagrants, who will not work for their living when able to do so, what is needed for the support of the virtuous poor whom we always have with us, who are too respectable and modest to beg from door to door. For our own part we have rarely found one of *this class of beggars* who was entitled to the smallest share of sympathy or aid.

We are glad to learn that our Brethren are already becoming more cautious. Bro. Green, of Three Rivers, recently had a call for Masonic charity, by a wandering female who could not tell a straight story, who was perfectly horrified at the idea of his sending a telegram of inquiry! The Dowagiac Brethren, we understand, have recently had a call for Masonic aid, with like results. Your course is right, Brothers. Do not give your charities till you are convinced that the subjects on whom you confer them are unworthy. While you treat strangers whom you know not, with all due courtesy, yet when they come *begging* Masonic aid, be sure that they are *worthy*. Nothing is more truly mortifying to a pure-minded, charitable person than to know that he has bestowed charities which he intended for the worthy poor on unworthy renegades.—*Michigan Freemason*.