

will be well worked, and a credit to the Craft.

**Richardson Lodge, No. 136, Stouffville.**

This lodge has 30 members on its register. The average attendance is 7. The W. M. opens and closes in the E. A. but does not in the F. C. or M. M., and cannot exemplify any of the degrees. He follows the example of his predecessor who could not give even the opening and closing. In fact the work has not been given by the W. M. in this lodge for years. The W. M. who preceded the I. P. M. only occupied the chair on the night of installation, and could not utter one line of the work. All these W. brethren were duly vouched for when presented for installation, although it was known that they were absolutely un instructed even in the smallest details. The lodge was not represented at last Grand Lodge, and the returns to the Grand Secretary have not been made with anything like regularity. The Grand Lodge dues were in the pocket of a former secretary for over a year. The outlook for the lodge is very poor. The W. M. elect is a P. M. but not an accurate worker; in fact he does not pretend to give correct work. The officers for 1886-'87 have never exemplified any part of the work, and except the late secretary, now J. W. elect, I do not think any more attention will be paid in the future than in the past. My impression is that the lodge, as conducted for years, has been an injury to the craft, and any usefulness it may have had, is gone forever. This unfavourable impression has existed not only amongst members of the craft in the vicinity, but with the general public. The secretary's minute book is fairly well kept for the past few months. The financial accounts are in a very unsatisfactory state, not caused, however, by the present treasurer, but by former secretaries, who have retained the funds of the lodge and given no account of their disposal to the treasurer or the lodge. The cash has not for ten years been handed over with promptitude to the treasurer. In some instances it has never reached that officer. This year there has been no work, consequently there has been but little cash to hand over. Every secretary for years has retained the funds or has not given an account of his stewardship. The books have not been audited for some years, and the audits given in the past are totally unreliable. The W. M. and officers inform me that the funds of the lodge have been appropriated by former secretaries, and that every effort to trace the matter up and have the money refunded has proved unavailing. I have paid two official visits to the lodge, and have used every exertion to cement matters; but things were even in a worse condition on the occasion of the second visit

than at the first. The treasurer's books could not be found. They were handed over to an audit committee, and that was the last seen of them. The old cash books have also disappeared, and I am informed by the W. M. and officers that it is not likely they will ever turn up. The fact is, that the lodge has been pillaged for years, and an accurate and reliable audit would reveal a state of affairs that the old officers, and some of the new ones, dare not face. The books of fifteen years ago show a record of secretaries getting into business troubles with lodge monies in their possession. These funds were kept with the general cash of the brethren, and not separate from the business account, hence heavy loss was entailed on the lodge. The members heretofore have been afraid to pay in their dues, as it was known that the cash paid in would never reach the treasurer. Members who did attend would not receive petitions from those desirous of membership, as there was considerable doubt as to whether the fees would go into the lodge cash box, or be retained by the secretaries, and still greater doubt as to whether the W. M. or any of the officers could give the smallest portion of the work. In fact this condition of matters was so well known outside the lodge that good material would not come up. The hall is leased; is suitable, in good condition; the furniture is valued at \$150; is insured, but no inventory kept. Without visitors, on many occasions, the lodge could not be opened. There have been only six meetings in the year. There was no quorum in July, August, September and December, of '86, or in February or April of '87. Even on election night the attendance was only seven. There are no brethren in arrears over one year, as all who were have been suspended. The arrears, at time of visit, were \$90, the assets \$250, liabilities nil. There is no lodge on the roll of any district in a worse condition than this one. It would be a great blessing if the warrant could possibly be withdrawn. Its retention is doing positive harm to the craft. The secretary stated, and I agreed with him, that to take fees from candidates, and give them the initiation ceremonial, such as they could get in this lodge, is practically obtaining money under false pretences. At a Masonic funeral service, held a few weeks ago, the impressive ritual for the dead was given in such a manner that turned the ceremony into a burlesque, and brought a blush to the cheeks of the members of the craft. A ten-year old school boy could have given it with better effect. Its rendition drew forth a cyclone of criticism from not only the craft, but from a large and respectable concourse of inhabitants who were present. The installation of W. M. and officers did not take