

GHOULISH WORK.

DISTURBING THE ASHES OF A PAST GENERATION

TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE EDUCATION OF
THE CHILDREN OF TO-DAY.

Opening Rows of Graves in the Old Cemetery.

A NIGHT THAT MAKES ONE SICK A HEART.

The day after our city fathers had re-considered their action in locating the public school building for the whites on the hill rear of the North-Eastern depot, and decided to build in the old cemetery, a large gang of workmen at once began excavating for the foundation of the house. The only thing to be said in favor of the first site selected was that it was equally inconvenient and inaccessible to every portion of our city, while the new location is convenient at least to the first ward. We were in favor of building near the centre of the city, but a suitable lot could not be found. Shortly after the hands began their work, the news spread like wildfire over the city that graves were being opened by the same, and human bones exposed to the curious gaze of the public. A B.-W. reporter at once visited the scene, and found it just as rumor had reported. The site selected for the building is near the centre of the old cemetery, on Jackson street, and a spot where there are no tombstones, but a number of unmarked graves, now only deposed by sunken places in the earth.

This spot was an Indian burying ground even before the whites settled here, and the dust of two races of people now mingle in the same soil. Our oldest citizens cannot give any account of when this grave-yard was started, and there are a number of tombstones bearing dates of sixty years and more back. This cemetery once embraced all that land now occupied by the campus, as well as Jackson street and the adjacent houses. The street hands while at work frequently excavate human bones, and only a few years ago after a washing rain, we saw an exposed skeleton in a gully. The houses on the campus are built on graves, and the gardens the professors work fertilized by the ashes of a generation long since dead. The cemetery once extended down through Broad street, and you cannot remove any of the dirt on these grounds without exposing human bones or breaking into a grave. When the new cemetery was opened a number of our citizens removed thereto the remains of their friends and relatives, but a number still sleep beneath imposing and enduring shafts of granite, but in a desolate and neglected spot. In reading the epitaphs on many of the monuments we found the names of distinguished Athenians, honored and revered in the memory of the present generations.

When the reporter reached the ground he found long trenches dug for the foundation of the building, while here and there among the red earth excavated the black, rich spots showed where a grave had been struck. The bones had been gathered together and thrown into a sunken grave near by, and when the work is finished they will be covered in one common mound. Many of the bodies had been buried so long that the bones crumbled at the touch, while others were sound. We saw mingled together the remains of men, women and children. From its great thickness there was evidently the skull of a negro, as also the skeleton of a man who must have been a giant in life. Mr. Dave Kenney had charge of the hands employed in excavating, and he was at once sought out for an interview.

Jackson
Street

Jackson
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Cemetery