

The Olathe Cemetery.

Messrs. Editors:--I have not desired to appear before the public in this connection, but feeling satisfied that much misapprehension prevails, which perhaps may be obviated, I do come willing to lay before the public any or all of my acts as may be necessary or desirable. It is presumed by many and has been frequently remarked to me, that I "had made a good thing of it," that it "brought in lots of money" &c. I have taken the trouble to count up the receipts of the sales from the first opening of the grounds to the close of the last year and thus gratify the curiosity of the public in this matter. I am willing to make oath to this if necessary. The *work* is not included as that has been a small matter, largely hired, and for the first four of the twelve years only amounted to three dollars. The first burial was that of my sister on the 30th of April, 1865. I afterwards laid out and opened the ground to the public, because the thing was a public necessity and the authorities of Olathe, and Johnson county had neglected to make any provision for the burial of her dead. For the first few years I did what was done with no remuneration. I did *what I could*; I wish it could have been more, but yet I felt that no one knowing the circumstances could expect me to do more. I am only *one of many* citizens, and have felt from the first that it was an *unpleasant* duty, if not an *improper one*, to be *personally* responsible for the burial of the dead. I have felt that the city ought to own the cemetery and had supposed that a movement in that direction would have been made long before this.

Before I laid out the ground it was offered to the public, but no one felt inclined to move in the matter until I had set the thing agoing and several burials had been made when I was invited to share it with others which I then declined.

I received from the sale of lots and burial privileges during the

year 1865,	\$10.00 only.
" 1866	\$25.00 "
" 1867	\$85.00 "
" 1868	123.50 "
" 1869	190.00 "
" 1870	266.50 "
" 1871	195.00 "

" 1872	305.00 "
" 1873	218.00 "
" 1874	107.50 "
" 1875	129.00 "
" 1876	75.00 "

Taking one twelfth of the exp. of these receipts and we have a few cents less than \$145, for each year. Add to this if you please \$50 for work (which I think is a full average if not more, for I have not kept the price of my labor as carefully as I have the price of lots,) and then deduct the price paid for this and other labor, and improvements, fence, hedge, trees &c., what do you get to pay a man for staying at home every day in the year, even Sundays and doing such work as many would refuse, for either love or money?

But this \$100,00 or \$150 per year is after all not *income*; it is money received for the sale of real estate. Will some one show me where the profit comes in?

The cemetery of 10 acres, has been laid out into 469 lots of 21 by 24 feet. Each lot gives room for from 10 to 12 graves according to the size of the graves and their nearness to each other. A half lot giving room for 5 or 6 is all that is usually required by a family. Of these 469 lots, 135 have been sold, 4 or 5 half lots have been filled which are *not* sold; 17 more are partly filled having 1, 2, or 3 graves as the case may be, or each half; 11 others (or half lots) have one grave only making 32 unsold but partially occupied lots.

We have estimated that 20 lots were undesirable by lying lower than the others, and 25 more might be objected to by some on account of rock too near the surface, though these furnish the driest graves in the ground. Counting out these (32+20+25) 77 lots, with 135 sold, and we still find 248 good lots, more than half of the whole, entirely free, besides chances for burial on 28 more lots, partly occupied.

Supposing that the cemetery might need enlarging at some future time, a strip on the west side and a tract on the south side, together with the 10 acres now laid out, have been inclosed with a hedge some of which is now ready to "turn out" and some needs yet to grow longer. This tract supposed to contain 15 acres in all, has been offered to the city. No price has been stipulated for, indeed I do not know that the city has ever inquired for the price, certainly not of me, and in no conversation with any one have I ever given a final answer on this point. Two

individuals both interested in this matter have inquired of me what I thought it worth and I told them, and both expressed the opinion that the estimate was reasonable. At the same time I said that I would not then give a final answer.

Whether the city has ever taken any action on this matter more than the appointment of a committee to attend to it I do not know.

If they have taken action it can hardly be called an intelligent one. And why any one should say "the city council will make the purchase if the offer from Mr. B., is satisfactory, or reasonable--otherwise not" I do not know. It contains an implication, which to say the least is premature.

If the sale should be made and the additional ground opened for burial the opportunity for desirable lots, and the burial chances generally will be more desirable than at the *first opening* of the grounds and the accommodations will be greater, *as well*.

I have done, or not done, as I have, with the utmost rectitude of intention, though often I have acted with a great sacrifice of feeling, and am consoled principally by the reflection that I have in some measure at least benefited others.

W. B.