

DRAINING THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY.

£46 GRANTED FOR THE PURPOSE.

Some considerable time ago Mr. Carl Weber directed the attention of Mr. Archibald Campbell, M.P., to the fact that a natural water-course in the locality ran right through the Roman Catholic portion of the public cemetery, at Wollongong, and inundated the whole ground on all flood occasions. Mr. Weber pointed out that not only was that the case, but that large pools of water remained nearly always along the route of the water-course within the ground, some of which pools at certain points were not very far distant from graves. He said he had been employed professionally as an engineer in connection with the matter, and had estimated the cost of improving the cemetery in several ways required, including the proper draining of the ground by diverting the water-course or creek round the north-western corner of the enclosure into Swan-street, whence it would flow down to Tom Thumb Lagoon. His estimate of the total expenditure required amounted to between £200 and £300. Of that sum the church authorities had raised among the congregation, and expended on the ground in one way and another, about £200. A further amount of £46 was required, however, to drain the cemetery as indicated. Mr. Campbell inspected the ground personally and found a chain of ponds through it, as stated by Mr. Weber. And, considering that the Government either should not have set apart such an unsuitable site for a cemetery, or, having done so, that they should render it fit for the purpose intended artificially, he at once applied to the Minister for Lands (Mr. Carruthers) for a grant of £46 to drain the ground, as estimated by Mr. Weber. After a good deal had been done regarding the application in the way of correspondence, the Surveyor-General was sent down to inspect the ground and report upon it to the Minister. Further correspondence ensued, and eventually a letter of which the following is a copy came to hand granting the £46 as asked for. The signatures of the Rev. Father Byrne, Messrs. J. A. Beatson and E. Richards were forwarded in due course to the Lands Department to draw cheques for the required work to the amount stated. Appended is the letter :—

"Department of Lands,
"13th Feb., 1896.

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"SIR,—Referring to your letter of the 3rd instant on the subject of the drainage of the Roman Catholic burial ground, at Wollongong, I have the honor to inform you that the Minister for Lands has approved of the £46 being granted for that purpose, and I am requested to ask that you will be good enough to furnish on the enclosed form the signatures of three trustees, capable and willing to see to the expenditure of the money.

"W. Houstoun,

"Under-Secretary.

"Archibald Campbell, Esq., M.P.

"Wollongong."