

St. Alban's Cathedral.

In order to enable the status of St. Alban's Cathedral to be understood, it is necessary to refer back to the first years of the existence of the Diocese of Toronto and of the episcopate of Bishop Strachan. The Bishop (who had previously been the Rector of St. James') immediately upon the Diocese being constituted projected the erection of a Cathedral, for which purpose he selected the block of land between Front and Wellington Streets and Simcoe and John Streets, upon which then stood buildings which had been, as they were again in later years, occupied as Provincial Parliament or Legislative Buildings. The seat of Government had recently been removed from Toronto, and it was believed that the removal was permanent and that the buildings would be of no further use. In September, 1841, the Governor-General, Lord Sydenham, was lying ill at Kingston, to which place the Bishop sent an Order-in-Council for a grant of the land referred to prepared for the Governor's signature, accompanied by a petition of inhabitants of Toronto, praying that the grant should be made, by the hands of two young men, Mr. McMurray and Mr. Alexander Dixon (both subsequently Archdeacons). Upon their arrival at Kingston they found that the illness of the Governor-General had become such that his medical advisers had forbidden the bringing of any business before him, and the Order-in-Council therefore remained unsigned. The arrival of a new Governor-General materially altered matters and the application for the grant was apparently not proceeded with, for then arose the much vexed questions of the Clergy Reserves, and the secularization of King's College; these, together with the erection of Trinity College in place of King's College, fully occupied the remaining years of the Bishop's active life. He, however, took measures towards raising funds for a Cathedral, which funds were subsequently in the hands of the Synod for a number of years, and ultimately, upon Bishop Sweatman's cathedral scheme taking shape, were transferred to the Cathedral Chapter and used for the requirements of St. Alban's Cathedral.

Bishop Bethune's episcopate was short, and throughout it the Church was much disturbed and torn by party spirit and party contests, under which circumstances the undertaking of any important enterprise on behalf of the Church as a whole was out of the question. Bishop Bethune looked forward with hope that a time would come when a Cathedral might again be taken into consideration, and "kept his eye" upon a site which he hoped could be obtained for the purpose, but there was no opportunity for him to make any movement.

It is well known that the erection of a Cathedral as an outward and visible sign of the essential unity of the Church, as a meeting place upon common ground of churchmen of all shades of thought, was the one great desire of the late Archbishop. This desire ever occupied his mind and hopes. He took the matter up in the early