



STATEMENT
REGARDING
ST. ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL
1909





STATEMENT

OF THE

REVENUE OF THE

1880



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 Simeoe 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

years of his episcopate. In the year 1881 a resolution was passed by the Synod *nem. con.*, favouring the project, and in 1883 the Bishop obtained the passing of a bill to incorporate the Cathedral Chapter (46 Vic. Cap. 63). Suggestions having been made as to the selection of some parish church to be converted into a Cathedral, Holy Trinity and St. George's being in particular named in that connection, a representative of the latter church attended before the Private Bills Committee in order to secure apt provisions for such purpose being included in the bill, which was done. At the same time a representative of St. James' appeared before the Committee for the purpose of objecting to the name which the Bishop desired to adopt, St. Philip and St. James, on the ground that the corporate body of St. James had created a debt for which they had issued bonds, and they feared that the proposed name might consequently give rise to confusion and misapprehension. This objection was allowed and the name of St. Alban's substituted and the bill passed.

Bishop Sweatman decided that neither Holy Trinity nor St. George's would be suitable for what he wanted, because of the limited areas of land in which they stood; and he entered into negotiations with the representatives of St. James' with a view to that church being considered for the purpose. So many difficulties and objections arose, however, some of which appeared to the Bishop to be wholly insuperable, that nothing came of the negotiations, which, in fact, ended in the Bishop being informed by the late Mr. Clarke Gamble in very emphatic terms that the people of St. James' would never consent to their church being constituted as a Cathedral.

The Bishop having concluded that no existing church could be made available, set about to find a site for his Cathedral, which he considered could only be procured to advantage in some outlying part of the city, more particularly as he desired to have a school attached to the Cathedral, rendering it necessary to secure a block of four or five acres, and it was also desirable that a position should, if practicable, be selected in which the intended Cathedral should not unduly interfere with any existing church. After considering such sites as were proposed to him, and after consulting with several churchmen whom he found to be disposed to assist him, the Bishop decided upon the site between Howland Avenue and Albany Avenue offered to him by a syndicate of owners who had purchased the property, and who offered the site on very favourable terms. This purchase was therefore made. Being at that time outside the city limits, application was made to the Legislature for an Act to enable the Cathedral to be located outside the city limits, which was duly passed (48 Vic. Cap. 93).

Some objection was made—by whom is not known—to this purchase, on the ground that it was a "land jobbing operation." So far as the Bishop and his advisers were concerned, there never was any ground whatever for that statement, for neither he nor any member of the Chapter had any personal interest in the lands or derived any personal benefit whatever from their purchase or by reason of its being made. The "St. Alban's Syndicate," as it was subsequently called, were no doubt influenced by the consideration that the placing of the Cathedral in their land would be of advantage to them; but if that was so, it was a matter with which neither the Bishop nor the Cathedral Chapter were in any way concerned, or from which any

advantage whatever was derived by him or them, unless it was the advantage of obtaining favourable terms in the purchase and generous treatment in their building operations. No member of the syndicate was then or at any time a member of the Chapter.

Objection was also made to the site as being remote. Some, at least, of those who were at first of this opinion, upon visiting it and fully considering it, withdrew their objections. One of such persons was the late Hon. George W. Allan. This objection has, however, been constantly urged for many years, usually by persons who did not trouble themselves to examine the matter, but gradually with less force, and it must be now regarded as wholly unfounded, for the Cathedral now stands in a closely-built district of residential character, and which will always be of that character, and in the very heart of the city, for it is very nearly equidistant between the extreme western and extreme eastern limits of the city as they now exist, and is but a short distance north of the central point between north and south of the residential parts of the city, which are also steadily extending northwards. It is central also as regards population east and west, being near the dividing line in that respect. It is also convenient of access from all parts of the city, by three street railway lines. One of these lines affords easy access to and from the Union Station, the time required for the trip being about twenty minutes, and cars running at very short intervals.

When the site had been purchased and building was about to be proceeded with, the scheme seemed to be generally popular among churchmen excepting such as were influenced by the objections stated and did not make enquiry as to whether they were well founded or not, or in some cases by local interests or indifference to any enterprise of a general diocesan character. The amount required to make a beginning was readily subscribed. Additional subscriptions were obtained freely from persons of all classes and schools of thought in the Church, and probably representing every parish in the city. But after a time, when the enterprise seemed to be proceeding successfully, it was found that very determined efforts to hinder it and to prevent its being carried through were being made, and consequently it became very difficult to obtain further contributions to the required funds. The difficulties thus created and their results are well known and need not be enlarged upon.

A serious set-back to the work was also caused by the setting in of a period of great financial depression, which rendered many friends of the Cathedral unable to render the support to it which they wished to do. Although this period of depression has long since passed away, its results as regards the Cathedral are still felt, for it is well known that an undertaking of this kind, if hindered, takes a long time to recover its ground.

In this memorandum it is not intended to offer observations on the desirability or necessity of a Cathedral, but it is assumed that a properly constituted Cathedral is a requisite part of diocesan equipment, and the purpose of this paper is simply to state the history and circumstances of the Cathedral as now existing in this Diocese.

In the resolution of Synod, to comply with which this paper is written, St. James' Cathedral is referred to. It is not proposed here to refer to St. James'

further than to express a difficulty to understand why it should be mentioned in this connection, as it is and always was a parish church, and was never constituted as a Cathedral, nor can it be, so long as its seating accommodation is in the possession of pew-holders and pew-owners, the latter class being one which cannot be disposed of. The circumstance that Bishop Strachan continued to attend there after ceasing to be Rector, could not at the most make it more than what is usually called a "Pro-Cathedral," that is, a church in which a Bishop temporarily occupies a place when he has no Cathedral. If Bishop Bethune ever attended at St. James', it was for but a short time, for in the later years, at least, of his life he attended the services in another church. That Bishop Sweatman regarded St. James' as a Pro-Cathedral only is well known. The position of St. James', however, as the Mother Church of the Diocese, is one of honour and dignity, which is only belittled by the application to it of the entirely inappropriate term "Cathedral."

The financial status of the Cathedral, greatly misunderstood and misrepresented time and again, notwithstanding all efforts made to have it properly understood throughout the Diocese, has been formally made known to the Synod and does not now require to be further referred to, except perhaps to point out that it is now so far as it is unprovided for, being about \$20,000, a light burden upon a property of the value of \$100,000. But it requires, with taxes to run for a fixed number of years, some \$1,800 a year to carry it. For this the only source of income is the "Bishop's Envelope Fund," consisting of quarterly contributions of 25 cents each, and offerings at Confirmations. If this fund received the support which might be reasonably expected, the debt would be extinguished within two years. It is therefore manifestly a debt which is no heavy burden upon the Diocese. But if it should be supposed by any person that it should be carried by the Cathedral congregation, it must be considered that for them it would be a crushing burden. The most that they can do is to maintain the Cathedral building and its services, which they do willingly and efficiently. They cannot do more, for the reason that the space available for seating is, under existing circumstances, so limited, that only a small congregation can be housed—this, too, in a populous district most inadequately provided with church accommodation. The existing debt, if it does not prevent enlargement of the building, makes it somewhat difficult for any movement for that purpose to be undertaken. Furthermore, while the district is a populous one, its people are for the most part persons of moderate or limited means; it is not a "millionaire" district, but it is one which contains many faithful and true-hearted sons and daughters of the Church, upon whom the Cathedral can rely with confidence for such support as it is their part to furnish, but whose financial ability is not great enough to enable them to perform the part for which all persons in the Diocese are responsible.

It may be well to refer also briefly to recent matters. In November, 1907, the mortgagees of the Cathedral property called upon the Chapter to pay off the mortgage, or at least to get it put upon a more satisfactory basis. The late Archbishop thereupon called a meeting of laymen whom he expected would come to his assistance, at which meeting a resolution as follows was passed: "Moved by Mr. A. R. Boswell, K.C., seconded by Mr. E. D. Armour, K.C., That this meeting of Anglican churchmen desire to express their loyal sympathy with His Grace the Archbishop of

Toronto in his noble effort to provide a Cathedral worthy of so important a Diocese, and hereby pledge themselves to stand by him to the fullest extent of their power and influence," and a committee was appointed, who spent a good deal of time and took a good deal of trouble, with a view to raising a fund towards paying off the mortgage. Before the committee had got very far in their work a proposal was made by members of the Board of Education for the purchase of the school property for a site for a new technical school, which practically stopped the work of the committee, but which proposal, after much time had been spent in negotiations, came to nothing. The committee thereupon came to the conclusion that it was desirable that the school field should be sold, and the Chapter having concurred, a sale was effected for a good price. In order to enable that to be done it was necessary to procure the surrender of their leases by the School Corporation, which was done upon terms favourable to the Chapter. The sale of the lands is being carried out according to the agreement made with the purchaser, and the mortgage is being reduced. There is, however, still an amount remaining upon the mortgage not provided for, which it will be necessary to pay off by subscriptions. This is easily within the powers of the Diocese, and can be done without at all interfering with parochial requirements or missionary calls, if the members of the Church throughout the Diocese will take up the matter in earnest. The sale of the school field leaves the church in the possession of a very valuable block of land, 300 feet by nearly 350, with three frontages, upon which are situate the unfinished Cathedral building, the See House (title to which is vested in the Synod), and the building lately the school house, but which is now a very convenient Chapter House, and provides also greatly needed accommodation for various activities and organizations connected with the local work of the Cathedral congregation. Much regret has been felt by the Chapter and many others at the sale of the school field, involving the removal of the school and its dissociation from the Cathedral, but it should be considered that, however desirable it may be to have a school carried on in close connection with a Cathedral, it is not a necessary part of Cathedral work, and especially so under the conditions affecting educational matters in this country.

To the above may be added a copy of a resolution passed by the Chapter upon the Bishop of Niagara having preached in the Cathedral on the Sunday after the death of the late Archbishop, as follows:

"That the thanks of the Chapter be tendered to the Lord Bishop of Niagara for his excellent sermon preached in the Cathedral on Sunday, the 31st of January last, and in particular for his reference to the Cathedral and his suggestion that the same should be proceeded with as the most fitting monument to the memory of the late Archbishop, and such as would be above all others consonant with His Grace's known wishes."

With regard to building, the Chapter have never proposed to build in advance of reasonable requirements. It has always been in contemplation that the building of the Cathedral would be spread over a long period. The position in that respect is now that requirements have outgrown the present building and an extension has become necessary. The Chapter, however, have not as yet taken the matter into consideration, but the probable course likely to be proposed is the erection on a permanent

foundation of a superstructure, partly or perhaps chiefly of a temporary character, capable with the present building of accommodating ten or twelve hundred people. This would probably be sufficient for several years to come. A good part of the probable cost of such a building has already been secured, and no difficulty is anticipated in obtaining what further amount may be necessary. It is not proposed to incur any debt, but to expend only moneys actually in hand or subscribed.

The Cathedral Chapter is a corporation constituted under the Statutes already referred to, which consists of the Bishop and a body of Clergy representative of the Archdeaconries and Rural Deaneries of which the Diocese is composed, who are appointed by the Bishop; also the Chancellor of the Diocese and the Registrar of the Diocese, and eight other lay members, of whom four are elected by the clerical members of the Synod and four by the lay members of the Synod. The lay members of the Chapter have no authority to deal with spiritualities, but only with temporalities, which latter are dealt with by them in conjunction with certain of the clerical members who are resident chiefly in Toronto.

