

THE ORIGIN AND POSITION OF WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE originated in the spontaneous and voluntary action of a number of earnest and loyal members of the Church of England in the Diocese of Toronto who were deeply impressed with the gravity of the present crisis in the history of the Canadian Church, the dangers which threaten it through the prevalence of sacerdotal assumptions, and the growing alienation of the great body of the Protestant laity from a large section of the clergy, who had ceased to be in sympathy with the spirit and principles of the Reformation. They recognized the urgent necessity for united action in the maintenance and propagation of those principles of Evangelical truth upon fidelity to which, they believed, the strength and efficiency of the Church depended. The conviction grew that the only adequate remedy for the evils they deplored must be found in the provision of distinctive Evangelical teaching in the training and education of candidates for the sacred ministry; and out of this conviction, deepened by thought and prayer, originated Wycliffe College. Moreover, they were of the opinion that a thorough, general, and liberal education was an essential factor in the training of theological students, and that such could not be obtained in an isolated theological college, with inadequate resources, and with the danger of falling into the groove of a narrow ecclesiasticism, devoid of sympathy with the people. Thus they were led to the fundamental positions upon which the work and methods of Wycliffe College are based, namely, distinctive Evangelical teaching in theology, and affiliation with the Provincial University.