

**LIFE OF JAMES GREEN,
DOCTOR OF DIVINITY, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Life of James Green, Doctor of Divinity, in Two Volumes, Vol. I by A. Theodore Wirgman

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A. THEODORE WIRGMAN

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James Franck

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LIFE OF JAMES GREEN

DOCTOR OF DIVINITY

RECTOR AND DEAN OF MARITZBURG, NATAL
FROM FEBRUARY, 1849, TO JANUARY, 1906

BY

A. THEODORE WIRGMAN, D.D., D.C.L.

LATE FOUNDATION SCHOLAR OF S. MARY MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
ARCHDEACON OF PORT ELIZABETH, CANON OF GRAHAMSTOWN
AND HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE KING

AUTHOR OF

"THE ENGLISH CHURCH AND PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA"; "THE DOCTRINE
OF CONFIRMATION"; "THE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OF BISHOPS"
"THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND ALL THE COMPANY OF HEAVEN"
"THE SEVENFOLD GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT"; ETC.

"Et suscitabo tibi sacerdotem fidelem . . . et edificabo ei
domum fidelem"

Lib. I. Regum, iii. 35

IN TWO VOLUMES

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PREFACE.

THE life of Dr. James Green, in its external and ecclesiastical aspect, is interwoven with the history of the Church of the Province of South Africa from its founding to the present day. His striking personality and the force of his character, informed as it was with profound learning as a theologian and canonist, would have left a deep impress upon whatever portion of the Catholic Church his life work had enriched. Had he remained in England, he would have been numbered with such veterans of the Tractarian epoch as Dean Randall, Archdeacon Denison and George Rundle Prynne. These men led the van of the Catholic movement, and moved with it, instead of being left behind as some of their contemporaries were, when the movement ceased to be academic, and became the mainspring of the practical and devotional energies of the renewed and transformed life of the "Ecclesia Anglicana". But he was given to South Africa; and the work he was there called upon to do, as a leader, an organiser, and a champion of the Faith reacted upon the Mother Church and upon the Anglican Communion as a whole. To most Churchmen who know South African Church history his name stands prominently forward on one great occasion. They know Dean Green as the protagonist in the Colenso controversy with its wide and far-reaching issues. What they do not realise is that, had not God made him what he was, the Colenso controversy would have been narrowed down to a mere question of Biblical criticism, and to the measure of ecclesiastical discipline which the "Ecclesia Anglicana" was prepared to mete out to a Bishop who

shocked the susceptibilities of religious men in the early "sixties".

That was merely the surface issue of the Colenso controversy. But behind it was the whole question of the Catholic Faith, expressed in the Creeds and life of the Catholic Church as a Visible Body. The Incarnation of our Lord was called in question. The Sacramental Life of the Church, with its gifts and powers, the orderly succession of the Apostolic Ministry, the principles of Ecclesiastical Order and Jurisdiction, and the vital and fundamental principle of Authority, based on Divine Revelation, were equally at stake. It needed a theologian and canonist with wide learning and deep spirituality to realise and grasp all this. Bishop Gray was at Capetown, some 800 miles away from the unhappy and distracted Diocese of Natal. Dean Green was the man on the spot, and the Senior Priest of the Diocese, who had ministered there since 1849, some years before the Diocese was founded. Bishop Gray had made him his Commissary in Natal soon after he was appointed Rector of Maritzburg in 1849; and the Metropolitan trusted him implicitly in all Church questions that arose from time to time in that colony. Bishop Gray has always been regarded as the central figure in the Colenso controversy. This naturally resulted from his position as Metropolitan, and from the heroic courage with which he faced the manifold difficulties and perplexities created by the heresies of his Suffragan, and the complex meshes of the net of Tudor Erastianism which had entangled the Colonial Church and its "Letters Patent" Bishops. But it is no derogation from the great gifts and powers and the indomitable courage of the Metropolitan (so fitly called "the Athanasius of the South") to recognise the fact, which Bishop Gray himself would have been the first to admit, that Dean Green was from the very first the wise counsellor, the trusted adviser, the mainspring of action, the far-seeing ecclesiastical statesman, who could discern wider issues to the whole Anglican Communion than the mere personal question of the errors of Dr. Colenso, and their