

# **IN SEARCH OF A RELIGION**

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In Search of a Religion by Dennis Hird

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**DENNIS HIRD**

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BY

DENNIS HIRD

(LATE RECTOR OF EASTON)

AUTHOR OF

"TODDLE ISLAND" "A CHRISTIAN WITH TWO WIVES" ETC.

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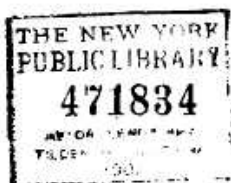
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## IN SEARCH OF A RELIGION



### CHAPTER I

"WHEN do you go down, Goode?"

"Not till next week."

"Why are you staying up so late?—I go down to-morrow."

"I have such a lot of reviewing to do, especially in comparative anatomy, that I must stay near the museum for the bones. You see, I am in the schools next May."

"You are a lucky fellow always, so you are sure to get a first. I wish I had made up my mind to read for 'Honours' in law when I came up, but it is too late now. I have just seen the Boss, and he does not seem very proud of my achievements for the term,—but, hang it all, what is a fellow to do? I did not come to Oxford to grind like a

schoolmaster. Now you won't forget you have promised to come and spend a week with us early in the New Year."

"All right, I won't forget, and I will write to you. So if I don't see you to-night, good-bye, Cooke."

This dialogue took place between two young men, about the middle of December, in Dial Quad, for they were both Commoners at Squire's College, Oxford.

Mark Goode and Frank Doubleday-Cooke had matriculated at the same time, and, though at first they had not met, for the last two terms they had seen a good deal of each other. They were unlike as two men well could be, except that they were both tall.

They belonged to the rich set at Squire's, among whom Cooke was called "All-Day-Cooke," or "No-Night-Cooke," and Mark Goode was called "Diogenes," or "Philosopher Di," for he was the only one who knew anything or who took 'varsity life seriously, or indeed any other life for that matter. It was an insoluble mystery to these youths that *any* one as rich as Goode should care a straw whether

birds and fishes were allied families or not, so long as he knew how to shoot the one and catch the other. Goode was not a bookworm or in any way a recluse. His wealth enabled him to secure the services of his fellow-men, from the books of professors to the stable-boy who brought his horse round. It is astonishing how many doors an active young man can unlock who possesses a sufficient number of golden keys. So Mark Goode was able to find time to hunt, play billiards, and take part in the Union debates, besides indulging in whist and music sometimes, and yet he pursued science with untiring zeal. At first his tutor would not believe that Goode meant to read for "a class" in science, but when he took a second in mathematics at the First Public examination, tutor, professor, and demonstrators began to take a keen interest in his career.

But remarkable as it was for a rich man to work with method, still more amazing was the fact that Goode kept his chapels with religious regularity, though he never seemed to take the least part in the service from beginning to end. The fact was, a beautiful anthem fired his imagination till it