

**PULPIT SCIENCE: IS
IMMORTALITY
A PHYSICAL
FACT? SUNDIAL, NO. 3**

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Pulpit Science: Is Immortality a Physical Fact? Sundial, No. 3 by Dennis Hird

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DENNIS HIRD

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IS IMMORTALITY A PHYSICAL FACT?

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CHAPTER I

MRS. MORETON was a widow, and lived at Spring Villa, in the parish of Thingford. She kept two servant maids, this number being the irreducible minimum of respectability; and as her only son, Bertie, had just finished at Cambridge, the Moreton family were deemed respectable enough even to attend large or select parties given by the wealthy. Mrs. Moreton's only daughter, Eva, was about two years older than her brother Bertie, and she had just turned twenty-five. She was tall, full of vivacity, with large grey eyes, which sparkled with fun behind their

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very long lashes. At a tennis party or a concert, she was a real acquisition, and not a little sought after in this rural district of Thingford.

The most frequent visitor at Spring Villa was the Rev. John Winson, the curate—always called Parson Jack. Eva Moreton filled his dreams and possessed his heart, but he had never told her so. Parson Jack had been a curate seven years, and though he was nearly thirty-one, yet preferment seemed as far away as ever; so he had to look, and love, and say nothing. He passed days of misery when Bertie brought a college friend to stay a week or two, or Eva was asked to make up the party at some house where he was not invited. The curate was a born athlete, nearly six feet high, of great manly common sense, hating the humbugs of his profession, and, in consequence, not as popular with the ladies as curates with so good an appearance usually are. He had read steadily, on many lines, since he was ten; and though not called brilliant at Oxford,

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he had taken his two "seconds" there, and now modestly thought no more about them. He was a sympathetic, level-headed man, who could sing a good song and enjoy a good dinner.

It was in October, and Bertie Moreton had his friend Tom Tate staying at Spring Villa. Tom Tate had just taken his doctor's degree at Cambridge, and as Bertie and he were like most young fellows who have just taken a degree, they did not know where to look for a corner in which to earn their living. Tom was a fair-haired, blue-eyed, merry youth of twenty-six, with a real turn for science, and almost a genius for any form of outdoor amusement.

He had been to Spring Villa before, and Parson Jack had not slept so well as usual at that time. Wherever Tom went he carried mirth and laughter with him, and Jack feared the effect of Tom's charms on Eva; consequently, under some pretext or other, the curate was at Spring Villa very often during Tom's visit.