

## CHAPTER XIX

### A MERE BIT OF GOSSIP

THE Ministers' Meeting of the following Tuesday was pleasantly enlivened with gossip—retained, of course, within seemly bounds. There was absent the Reverend Dr. Linford, sometime rector of St. Antipas, said lately to have emerged from a state of spiritual chrysalis into a world made new with truths that were yet old. It was concerning this circumstance that discreet expressions were oftenest heard during the function.

One brother declared that the Linfords were both extremists: one with his absurdly radical disbelief in revealed religion; the other flying at last to the Mother Church for that authority which he professed not to find in his own.

Another asserted that in talking with Dr. Linford now, one brought away the notion that in renouncing his allegiance to the Episcopal faith he had gone to the extreme of renouncing marriage, in order that the Mother Church might become his only bride. True, Linford said nothing at all like this;—the idea was fleeting, filmy, traceable to no specific words of his. Yet it left a track across the mind. It seemed to be the very spirit of his speech upon the subject. Certainly no other reason had been suggested for the regrettable, severance of this domestic tie. Conjecture