

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

SOLOMON YODER, the elder, spent the evening of his days peacefully on the old homestead. The two families, the old and the young, had learned, as we have seen, the art of living together in harmony under one roof.

But after the gloaming comes the night, and after the night the morn again. He had worked hard, but his work was now done. Old age and a general enfeeblement brought about dissolution. In Ecclesiastes 12: 6, 7 we read: "Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto the God who gave it."

The household were bowed in silent prayer around the couch upon which he lay while his spirit took its flight. How reverent is the view of these hushed heads, looking tranquillity. In such silent and impressive moments, "Deep calleth unto deep." He had crossed the bar. He had gone to be a guest on high. The blow fell heaviest on the aged partner of his joys and sorrows through many years. This is one of life's tragedies.