

Chapter Five

THE following evening, at the same time that John Belden, with Adam and Jane in attendance, was partaking of his evening meal, in blissful ignorance of the pregnancy of the hour, the idol of his dreams stood the center of an admiring group.

Mrs. Strong, putting a few finishing touches here and there, viewed her with critical satisfaction, and Elizabeth and Jo, who had been admitted to witness the completion of the bridal array, with feelings of awe and childish delight, while Margaret, whose admiration completely absorbed her German mentality, sat mechanically by, holding as in a vise the ten-months-old Henry Strong, Jr. He divided his attention between vicious attacks on a rubber rooster and soulful appeals to Barbara to take him.