

CHAPTER XLV.

THE Vaterland was advertised to sail at one o'clock, and it wanted but fifteen or twenty minutes of the hour. After assuring himself that his belongings were all together in his state-room, John made his way to the upper deck and leaning against the rail, watched the bustle of embarkation, somewhat interested in the people standing about, among whom it was difficult in instances to distinguish the passengers from those who were present to say farewell. Near him at the moment were two people, apparently man and wife, of middle age and rather distinguished appearance, to whom presently approached, with some evidence of hurry and with outstretched hand, a very well dressed and pleasant looking man.

"Ah, here you are, Mrs. Ruggles," John heard him say as he shook hands.

Then followed some commonplaces of good wishes and farewells, and in reply to a question which John did not catch, he heard the lady addressed as Mrs. Ruggles say, "Oh, didn't you see her? We left her on the lower deck a few minutes ago. Ah, here she comes."

The man turned and advanced a step to meet the person in question. John's eyes involuntarily followed the movement, and as he saw her ap-

proach his heart contracted sharply: it was Mary Blake. He turned away quickly, and as the collar of his ulster was about his face, for the air of the January day was very keen, he thought that she had not recognized him. A moment later he went aft around the deck-house, and going forward to the smoking-room, seated himself therein, and took the passenger list out of his pocket. He had already scanned it rather cursorily, having but the smallest expectation of coming upon a familiar name, yet feeling sure that, had hers been there, it could not have escaped him. Nevertheless, he now ran his eye over the columns with eager scrutiny, and the hands which held the paper shook a little.

There was no name in the least like Blake. It occurred to him that by some chance or error hers might have been omitted, when his eye caught the following:

William Ruggles..... New York.

Mrs. Ruggles..... " "

Mrs. Edward Ruggles.... " "

It was plain to him then. She was obviously traveling with the people whom she had just joined on deck, and it was equally plain that she was Mrs. Edward Ruggles. When he looked up the ship was out in the river.