

heads the list with 286, the other chief figures being—Cavan, 206; Leitrim, 109; Galway, 96; Monaghan, 96; Tyrone, 94; Cork, 85; Donegal, 82; Kerry, 66; Roscommon, 59; Longford, 54; Tipperary 39; Fermanagh, 39; Limerick, 36, and Clare, 33.

A STRANGE LEGACY.

FROM constantly telling the story of "Uncle Peter" and his wealth, good old Captain Cogolin had come to believe in it himself. The truth really was, that the said Uncle Peter had been the despair of his family from his very childhood, and had finally embarked on an American ship as a cabin boy, after which nothing more had been heard of him.

This was the plain, unvarnished truth, but Captain Cogolin was a native of Marseilles, and had an imaginative mind, consequently this plain truth had to be embellished. One day he happened to come across a sailor who had just returned from the United States, and after drinking a glass or two of spirits together the two men became communicative. The captain happened to mention the fact that he had an uncle living out in America. He drew upon his imaginative mind, and was able to describe the said uncle. The accommodating sailor remembered having met just such an individual, and what was more, the supposed "Uncle Peter" had even confided a box of presents to the care of the sailor for distribution amongst his relations on the other side of the water. Unfortunately, on the way home there had been a terrible storm, and the box had been dropped overboard, but still the fact remained that Uncle Peter had made a fortune out in the new country, and had sent word to his friends that he should not forget them.

Two or three years went by, and at the end of that time Uncle Peter owned plantations, slaves, gold mines, petroleum mines, and everything, in fact, that an American uncle is expected to possess.

The Cogolin family became the envy of the little village where they lived; and in the evenings, when the women gathered together round the doorsteps of the steep, narrow streets for their daily gossip, the name of the famous Uncle Peter was frequently heard.

The Cogolins themselves waited patiently. "Poor fellow," the captain would say; "let him live as long as God wills; we are in no hurry."

One day a letter arrived for Captain Cogolin. It was from New York, and the envelope had the Embassy stamp. It was a heavy letter, and might have contained any number of bank notes.

There was, however, nothing more in it, and nothing less than the certificate of death of Peter Cogolin.

"He is really dead, then?" said the Captain's wife.

"Of course he is, since the Ambassador has taken the trouble to send us this."

There was a solemn silence, and then, although no one but the captain had ever set eyes on the American uncle, a few tears were shed in honour of his memory.

The wife then spoke again. "All the same your ambassador does not say a word about his money!"

"You would, perhaps, have liked him to have written about that first and then told us of his death in a second letter. No, no, they don't do like that in America, they know what's what, and they could not write to us point blank about money as though they thought we were starving. We have only to wait and as soon as he decently can, the Ambassador will write to us about the money matters."

Unfortunately, the Ambassador (no doubt through negligence), did not send another letter, and in place of the peaceful dreams with which they had deluded themselves, a fever, the money fever, seized the whole of the Cogolin family. They did nothing but dream of Uncle Peter's millions, and on Sundays when they were all gathered together in their cabin, it seemed as though the sun had lost its brightness, and as though the garlic had no flavour.

One morning the Captain announced his intention of taking a trip, "I can very well get off for a month or so," he said, "the lads will manage the boat in my absence, and I feel as though I can't rest without seeing for myself what's going on in New York."

He had to embark from Havre, which made him furious, as he looked upon money spent in railway travelling as money stolen from him.

The enormous ship, however, with all its sailors and passengers, the gilt of the saloons, and the bright, marvellous machinery threw him into an almost religious admiration.

From eight o'clock in the morning until evening he never uttered a word, but just wandered about from one end of the deck to the other, or gazed at the foaming waves.

His speech only returned to him towards the end of the journey, when he began to speculate on what he should find awaiting him in New York.

He began to be restless, and wanted to talk to some one about his errand. The steward was a compatriot, and therefore inspired him with confidence; but the steward was busy, and referred him to

two tall, lanky, sunburnt men, who were always strolling up and down the deck together, and who looked like Americans.

"Those gentlemen will tell you all about New York," said the steward, "they know the place like A B C."

Captain Cogolin was delighted at the idea of making the acquaintance of people who knew the city of his dreams so thoroughly, and he followed them about everywhere, from the stern to the bridge, up and down deck, and then into the narrow corridors of the cabins, trying all the time to enter into conversation with them.

They, however, did not seem anxious to meet his advances. Each time that the captain, with his hat in hand, approached them and commenced in his most affable manner:

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but do you happen to know—" they turned round quickly, pretending not to hear, and walked off, leaving him standing there.

"They certainly have odd manners," said the captain to himself; and then he consoled himself with the idea that, after all, every country had its own customs.

The two Americans, in their turn puzzled by the eccentricities of this man, who followed them about everywhere, questioned the steward, and as he was fond of a joke, he drew upon his imagination for their benefit.

"You know there has been a great diamond robbery in Paris?" he said, confidentially; "Well, that man is Earnest, the celebrated detective; he is on the track of the thieves, and, to avoid suspicion, has disguised himself like that."

The two Americans looked at each other, and soon afterwards went down into their cabin and shut themselves in.

They did not appear again on deck, not even when the ship sighted New York, and all the passengers were admiring the panorama. On landing, Captain Cogolin looked out for them, but in vain, they had slipped away amidst the confusion.

"The Embassy, sir; can you tell me the way to the Embassy?"

It was the captain, who, after wandering about all day in a network of streets and avenues, all exactly alike, and all mercilessly numbered, was trying for the hundredth time to get some information.

"How in heaven's name shall I ever make these hurrying, crowding, English-speaking savages understand!" he exclaimed at last in despair. "Why, in all the round world couldn't my Uncle Peter have taken himself somewhere else to die?"

Suddenly the captain caught sight of a face he knew. Yes, it certainly was one of the Americans with whom he had travelled. There could be no mistaking him, although he had changed his clothes, and his hair and beard were cropped close.

"Sir! sir!"

The other one bears and makes off. But no, (this time he shall not escape, and the captain follows him.

The American has long legs, but the Captain has strong ones.

"What?" he says, below his breath, "this fellow knows New York like A B C, and he won't just tell me where to find the Embassy."

The American cannot escape; he skims round corners, and he dodges down streets, but the captain keeps up behind him.

The chase goes on until at last the American is incapable of running another step, and he takes refuge in a restaurant. The captain follows him, and says, breathlessly:

"Excuse me, sir, but can you tell me—"

The American turns pale, pushes a chair to the captain, and says in excellent French:

"Hush! let's have no fuss, and no useless scandal. Sit down here a minute in this corner."

"Good!" thought the captain, "he's a queer stick, but he's getting more reasonable."

The American continued:

"I know what you've come to New York for. Now the question is—can we come to an understanding?"

"Why, certainly we can—certainly we can," exclaimed the captain, rubbing his hands. "It seems to me, straightforward people can always come to an understanding."

"Hang the straightforwardness, but let's come to business," said the American, desperately. "In this pocketbook there are £2,000 in bank notes. If you'll say the word, they are yours, and a thousand more shall be brought to you to-night when the Brittany weighs anchor. Is it understood that you start with the Brittany?"

"Why, certainly, on those terms," said the Captain, who was more and more bewildered at every word uttered by the American.

He tried in vain to understand it all, but it was, and ever remained, a hopeless mystery to him. He pocketed the money, and then found his way to the docks and made enquiries about the Brittany. He secured his passage, and sure enough the money promised him was brought to the boat that night, and Captain Cogolin was not sorry to set sail, for he had had enough of New York.

And so the Captain returned to the bosom of his family, but to this day it is a mystery to him why he should have received his Uncle Peter's legacy in so extraordinary a manner. It certainly was extraordinary on taking into consideration two facts that the said uncle had died insolvent in the hospital.—Exchange.