



THE WORD CONTEST MANIA.

'T WAS eventide. Without darkness had fallen upon the scene which was consequently unseen, save where an electric lamp at intervals dispelled the gloom. But within all was brightness and comfort as the family of Mr. Johnson Puslinch gathered around the cheerful hearth—this is purely metaphorical, as the house was heated by hot air.

"Ah," said Mr. Puslinch cheerily, "now for a quiet comfortable evening. I've had so many engagements down town lately that I haven't had an evening at home for a long time. It's pleasant to be able to have rest in the bosom of one's family."

"Yes, Johnson," said Mrs. Puslinch abstractedly turning over the leaves of a large volume—"cat."

"What?" asked Puslinch.

"'Cat fish'—no that won't do. There's no 'h'.—'Cat's paw?'—no. 'Cat-tail.'—yes, that makes 550."

"What in the name of goodness are you talking about cat fish and cat tails?"

"I wish you wouldn't bother, Johnson. I'm trying to see how many words I can make out of the letters in 'Ottawa capital of Canada' for a prize of \$500 offered by the *Hebdomadal Hornblower*—and I've only about a week longer to work—'catacomb'—no—'catalepsy'—'catalogue'—'catalpa'—ah, that goes"

"No it don't, ma," said Miss Eugenie Puslinch. "It's not English."

"It's in the dictionary anyhow, Eugenie."

"But it's Latin."

"Anyhow, ma," said Freddy, "it's a proper name, and proper names don't count."

"Nonsense, Freddy. It's the name of a tree."

"Well, isn't the name of a tree a proper name, pa?"

"Why no, my son," replied Mr. Puslinch.

"Well now that's too bad. I'll have to go all over my list again. I'd left out all them kind of names. Johnny Higginbotham said I was doing it wrong. He's worked it as fur's 'm' on the *Terracottaville Times* word contest and got 962 words and all I could scare up was 641."

And Freddy began turning over the leaves of the dictionary. Presently he looked up.

"Say, pap."

"What's prefixes and suffixes, pap?"

"Prefixes? Oh—ah—prefixes—well they're parts of a word."

"Yes, but how do you tell 'em? The rule is that prefixes and suffixes don't count."

"Well, then, don't count 'em, that's all."

"Yes, but fi' instance—'cot,' that counts a word all right, but will 'cotter' do—'Er' is a prefix, ain't it?"

"Why, you ought to know better than that, Fred," said his sister, "'er' is a suffix."

"It's all the same, neither prefixes nor suffixes count."

"I know that—but what I want to know is if the words which has prefixes and suffixes into them goes."

"Why, no," said Mrs. Puslinch.

"Certainly they do, mother," replied Eugenie. "It's the prefixes and suffixes themselves that don't count—the words are all right."

"Then I must have missed a lot," replied Mrs. Puslinch. "But I think you're wrong."

"Why, mother, you put down 'cat-tail,' just now, and that isn't allowable."

"Why not? There's no prefixes or suffixes there."

"No, but it's a compound word—'cat' and 'tail' you know. Do they allow compound words, pa? I didn't put any in the list of 2,349 words I sent to the *Monthly Grab-Bag*."

"How do I know if they allow compound words or not?"

"Well, pa, I think you'd ought to know a thing like that," said Eugenie, looking at Mr. P. reproachfully.

"Look here," said the head of the family getting up and making for the door, "I thought we were going to have a nice quiet evening, but I'm heartily sick and tired of this nonsense about prefixes and suffixes and compound words and Latin words. What in thunder do I care whether 'cat-tail' is a suffix or not? If you don't know why don't you write out the whole blamed dictionary when you're about it? I won't be bothered out of my life with your fool questions."

And he jerked on his overcoat and went off down town as usual.

A NEW VIEW OF IT.

WEEDLETRAP—"Are you in favor of compulsory education, Mrs. Jennifer?"

MRS. JENNIFER—"Why certainly, Mr. Weedletrap. I think it perfectly disgraceful the way things are now. Here I've been trying to get Johnny and Emmie into school for the last six weeks, and they won't admit them. They ought to be compelled to—of course they should."



IS COL. DENISON LISTENING?

Burdette, having returned from a lecturing tour in Canada, was asked "What about the Annexation sentiment?" and answered as follows:

"I find the Liberal party very friendly to their neighbors, but I do not think there is a tendency toward annexation, as it is popularly supposed. The Canadians have a great deal of local pride in their Government, and I do not think they could be induced to exchange it for that of the United States. Among the Conservative faction there even remains some of the old feeling against the Vankees."