

mar-worried pedant said: "Well, after all:

" 'Je m'en vais' ou 'je m'en vas.' L'un et l'autre 'se dit' ou 'se disent.' "

And so he died—leaving the second, at least, unsettled to this day; and a puzzle, in some cases, indeed. Then, again, there are differences, which are not kept, it may be; yet which, in a sort of recognized theory, the languages keep; which even good writers may neglect in practice, but which they would be more or less glad to keep, were their errors or imperfections pointed out.

Take the "shall" and "will," misused amongst us. "If he insists or it—though I hate it—I will be there. Q. E. A.[bsurdum]. For that speaker doth not comprehend the true meaning of what he is saying.

Would it not be a pity to lose the distinction between "shall" and "will," because the use thereof is a difficulty to Canadians, Americans, Scotchmen and Irishmen?

But even in matters less important.

The best of English writers sometimes say "try and" for "try to." But I am sure if they went to school to us, they would not say anything so loose.

Nearly all Englishmen, indeed, have changed "different from" into "different to." But if there is yet room for repentance, tell them to repent.

"Averse from" is gone, perhaps. Sir John Seeley used it. Perhaps even later writers dare to use it. "Rime" has come back. Perhaps the less accurate "rhyme" will be killed by it.

Now, whatever one may say about details, surely the spirit that wishes for better and best, and thinks things matter—O, nice distinguishing Frenchmen, ye modern Greeks, to think that it is your people who

have given this shock to every hard-working boy and girl, and to every enjoyer of well-knit language! And remember we prescind from details; it is the bad spirit you will foster.

Let us have Pope's emendations of Shakespeare's "too short" lines:

"Long time stayed he so"

"will do" just as well as

"Long stayed he so,"

and it is more regular.

We really do not mean to declaim, but merely to suggest that this is not the way to manage this old world, with it hankering after the Fall in moral and in intellectual.

Revenons à nos moutons.

We may compare, in French, such distinctions as *commencer a* and *commencer de*. I think of another in English—"each other" for two; "one another" for more than two. Now certainly if such distinctions were kept, it were better so. How can anyone but a barbarian deny that? As soon as you know or care more about a matter, you add words, you define, you distinguish. It is inevitable; as soon as knowledge of any sort replaces ignorance, and "commencer à" for a habit and "commencer de" for a particular act is a real distinction. True it is not always kept. "Il semble" with subjunctive; "il me semble" with indicative; that expresses something. Shades of meaning depart with rough and ready "that'll do well enough." Of course, but that only proves your speech is rough and ready.

And so for our participles.

Will it be permissible to write

il est aimé		il est bon
elle est aimé	and	elle est bon
ils sont aimé		ils sont bon
elles sont aimé ;		elles sont bon ;

il va	je suis	I am
and elles va ;	and tu suis,	and thou am
	etc.;	he am?