

uncertainty; as, if I *should* be in town, I *would* look over the house. The modern form of this would be, if I *am* in town, I *will* look over the house. Again: if you *should* be in town, you *shall* see the house. Modern form: If you *are* in town, you *shall* see the house. It may be added here that Mr. Marsh, an English scholar, has expressed the opinion that the distinction between *shall* and *will* has little or no logical value or significance, and has ventured to predict that one of the auxiliaries be employed with all persons of the nominative. To this Richard Grant White has made a happy reply: "The distinction between *shall* and *will* is a verbal quibble, just as any distinction is a quibble to persons too ignorant, too dull, or too careless for its apprehension." So, and even yet more, is the distinction between *be*, *am*, *art*, *is* and *are*, a quibble. All these words express exactly the same thought—that of present existence. Why, therefore, should not the distinction between them, which assigns them to various persons as nominatives, be swept away, so that, instead of entangling ourselves in the subtle intricacies, of *I am*, *thou art*, *he is*, *we are*, *you are*, *they are*, which are of no logical value, we may say, with all the force and charm of simplicity, *I be*, *thou be*, *he be*, *you be*, *they be*?—as, in fact, some very worthy people do, and manage to make themselves understood. Why, indeed should we suffer a smart little verbal shock when the Irish servant says, *will* I put some more coal on the fire? And why should we be so hard-hearted as to laugh at the story of the Frenchman, who, falling into the water, cried out, as he was going down, I *will* drown, nobody *shall* help me? But those who have genuine, well-trained English tongues and ears are shocked, and do laugh.

Richard Grant White has given in the following dialogue many of the proper uses of the words, which we have been discussing "a husband is supposed to be trying to induce his reluctant wife to go from their suburban home to town for a day or two." He—*I shall* go to town to-morrow. Of course you *will*. She—No, thanks. I shall not go. I *shall* wait for better weather, if that *will* ever come. When *shall* we have three fair days together again? He—Don't mind that. You *should* go. I *should* like to have you hear Ronconi. She—No, no, I *will* not go. He—(to himself) But you *shall* go in spite of yourself and of the weather. (To her, Well, remember, if you *should* change your mind, I *should* be very happy to have your company. Do come; you *will* enjoy the opera; and you *shall* have the nicest possible supper at Delmonico's. She—No, I *should* not enjoy the opera. There