"We.

The editorial "we" is in danger. The modern journalist resorts to extravagant lengths of circumlocution to avoid it. No one now-a-days, except the amateur editor of the county paper and the monarch of Europe, glories in its use. "It" has long been the candidate for the vacant office of impersonal pronoun. It is too frequently used without any election having been made. A legitimate and recognized impersonal pronoun, corresponding in our language to the French "on," would be a great relief. In its absence, awkward, periphrastic constructions, or the egotistic "I," or the affected "we," or some make-shift must be used.

The pronoun of the English language is less adapted to convenient use than any other part of speech. In point of invention, it resembles the cumbersome machinery of the ancient languages. It bears more the appearance of having been prescribed by grammarians, than of having been evolved, like the rest of the language from the necessities and accretions of daily use. No grammarian-made language can meet the wants of daily life. There is no such thing as human omniscience. Language the vehicle through which thought is conveyed must partake of all the intricacies of thought itself. Grammarians can no more prescribe invariable rules for language than John Locke could provide an amateur system of laws to suit the wants of the good people of North Carolina.

The pronoun is such a little word that the ancient grammarians seem to have been more victorious over it than over any other part of speech. After modeling, systematizing and inflicting it, they have robbed it of simplicity, and left it artificial and incomplete. In departure from the genius of the language, and its variations for case, person and number, it keeps us constantly uneasy and constrained, and imposes unnecessary burden, from which the strong common sense of the English-speaking people has freed us in the use of all other parts of speech. This incompleteness is painfully felt in the lack of an impersonal or indefinite pronoun, and of a pronoun of common gender in the third person. We are forced either to use the dual form "he or she," or "they," or to express the purpose and dodge the use of the pronoun.

The following paragraph from a learned contemporary in the grammatical city of Boston, affords an illustration: "A child of frail body will know more at twenty-five, if he or she study," etc. There was a strong disposition a few years ago to use the word "they" in place of the painfully grammatically expression "he or she." The grammarians forbade it, as not consistent with the rules of grammar. If these grammarians had let us alone, "they" would have been accepted by the people as the pronoun of common gender, third person, singular or plural number, and a great want of the language would have been supplied.

"We" has been generalized and, its signification extended beyond the office of representing the persons speaking. It has approached more nearly than any of its contemporaries to the function of impersonal pronoun. It is to be commended for two admirable qualities: First, it is short and easily pronounced; second, it is a sciolie word. In this generalized signification it has an entirely enough to touch two opposite extremes. In the month of royalty and of a few ancient authors it became the very incarnation of egotism-personality, everything else is excluded. In their conversation, and in the month of the modern author or journalist, its signification is reversed in the case of all this. It is entirely impersonal in spirit; and contains, even in form, no element of personality or pomposity, except in the highest degree.

In this sense "we" has become a sensible and courteous metaphor, gracefully including the second and third persons, and welcoming the reader to the company,