SHALL WE HAVE A NEW PRONOUN?

The English language lacks a pronoun for the third person, singular number, common gender. Professor Henry G. Williams, in the new edition of his "Outlines of Psychology," has introduced a new pronoun for this place in the language. It is the word thon. The opening sentence of his book, speaking of the importance of an ability on the part of the student to outline knowledge acquired, says: "Every student should acquaint thon self with some method by which thon can positively correlate the facts of thons knowledge." Here we have the three forms of the word all used in the same sentence. Declined: Nominative, thon; possessive, thons; objective, thon; compound nominative and objective, thonself.

Without the word thon we would have to say: "Every student should acquaint himself or herself with some method by which he or she can positively correlate the facts of his or her knowledge."

The new pronoun here suggested makes it possible to avoid much circumlocution, and it is quite true that such a word is needed, and the possibility of inventing one that should serve has been much discussed.

Whether Professor Williams has solved the riddle satisfactorily remains to be seen. We admit that the proposed word is not euphonious to our ear, but that may be because of its strangeness. Familiarity may make it better liked.—The Editor.