

*A Word*

*Need for Agreement*

ENGLISH-speakers seem agreed  
To mess about with little need.  
With little *need*, I ought to say:  
That weeny word of everyday.

Third person singular's device,  
Uncompromisingly precise –  
Will not permit a quick *He need*,  
Unless it's negative: the speed  
With which we master this is such,  
We're not aware – at least, not much –  
That we're in line, a docile herd,  
Bending knees to *need* (the word).

We say *He needs*, as that's what's what,  
But say, unthinking, *He need not*.  
So praise the foreigners who guess  
Whether *need* may need an *S*.

\*\*\*