

OBSCURENESS, } [Fr. *obscurité*; L. *obscuritas*.]
 OBSCENITY, } n. *obsœnitas*.]

1. Impurity in expression or representation; that quality in words or things which presents what is offensive to chastity or purity of mind; ribaldry.

Cowley asserts plainly that *obsœnity* has no place in wit.

Those fables were tempered with the Italian severity, and free from any note of infamy or obscenity.

No pardon vile *obsœnity* should find.

Pope.

2. Unchaste actions; lewdness.

To wash th' *obsœnities* of night away.

Dryden.

OBSCURA'TION, n. [L. *obscuratio*.] The act of darkening.

2. The state of being darkened or obscured; as the *obscuratio* of the moon in an eclipse.

OBSCURE, a. [L. *obscurus*; It. *oscuro*.] 1. Dark; destitute of light.

Whoso curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in *obscure* darkness. Prov. xx.

2. Living in darkness; as the *obscure* bird.

Shak.

3. Not easily understood; not obviously intelligible; abstruse; as an *obscure* passage in a writing.

Dryden.

4. Not much known or observed; retired; remote from observation; as an *obscure* retreat.

5. Not noted; unknown; unnoticed; humble; mean; as an *obscure* person; a person of *obscure* birth.

Alterbury.

6. Not easily legible; as an *obscure* inscription.

7. Not clear, full or distinct; imperfect; as an *obscure* view of remote objects.

OBSCURE, v. t. [L. *obscurus*.] To darken; to make dark. The shadow of the earth *obscur*es the moon, and the body of the moon *obscur*es the sun, in an eclipse.

2. To cloud; to make partially dark. Thick clouds *obscur*e the day.

3. To hide from the view; as, clouds *obscur*e the sun.

4. To make less visible.

Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love, And I should be *obscur*ed.

Shak.

5. To make less legible; as, time has *obscur*ed the writing.

6. To make less intelligible.

There is scarce any duty which has been so *obscur*ed by the writings of the learned as this.

Wake.

7. To make less glorious, beautiful or illustrious.

—And see'st not sin *obscur*es thy godlike frame?

Dryden.

8. To conceal; to make unknown.

9. To tarnish; as, to *obscur*e brightness.

OBSCURELY, adv. Darkly; not clearly; imperfectly; as an object *obscur*ely seen; *obscur*ely visible.

2. Out of sight; in a state not to be noticed; privately; in retirement; not conspicuously.

There live retired,
Content thyself to be *obscur*ely good.

Addison.

3. Not clearly; not plainly to the mind; darkly; as future events *obscur*ely revealed.

4. Not plainly; indirectly; by hints or allusion.

OBSCURENESS, } [L. *obscuritas*.] Dark-
 OBSCURITY, } n. *obsœnitas*; want of light.

We wait for light, but behold *obsœurity*. Is. lix.

2. A state of retirement from the world; a state of being unnoticed; privacy.

You are not for *obsœurity* designed.

Dryden.

3. Darkness of meaning; unintelligibility; as the *obsœurity* of writings or of a particular passage.

4. Illegibility; as the *obsœurity* of letters or of an inscription.

5. A state of being unknown to fame; humble condition; as the *obsœurity* of birth or parentage.

OBSECRATE, v. t. [L. *obsecro*.] To beseech; to intreat; to supplicate; to pray earnestly.

Cockeram.

OBSECRATION, n. Intreaty; supplication.

Stillfleet.

2. A figure of rhetoric, in which the orator implores the assistance of God or man.

Eneye.

OBSEQUENT, a. [L. *obsequens*.] Obedient; submissive to. [Little used.]

Fotherby.

OBSEQUIES, n. plu. [Fr. *obseques*, from L. *obsequium*, complaisance, from *obsequor*, to follow.]

Funeral rites and solemnities; the last duties performed to a deceased person.

Dryden.

[Milton uses the word in the singular, but the common usage is different.]

OBSEQUIOUS, a. [from L. *obsequium*, complaisance, from *obsequor*, to follow; *ob* and *sequor*.]

1. Promptly obedient or submissive to the will of another; compliant; yielding to the desires of others, properly to the will or command of a superior, but in actual use, it often signifies yielding to the will or desires of such as have no right to control.

His servants weeping,

Obsequious to his orders, bear him lither.

Addison.

2. Servilely or meanly condescending; compliant to excess; as an *obsequious* flatterer, minion or parasite.

3. Funereal; pertaining to funeral rites. [Not used.]

Shak.

OBSEQUIOUSLY, adv. With ready obedience; with prompt compliance.

They rise and with respectful awe,

At the word given, *obsequiously* withdraw.

Dryden.

2. With reverence for the dead. [Not used.]

Shak.

OBSEQUIOUSNESS, n. Ready obedience; prompt compliance with the orders of a superior.

2. Servile submission; mean or excessive complaisance.

They apply themselves both to his interest and humor, with all the arts of flattery and *obsequiousness*.

South.

OBSERVABLE, a. s as z. [See *Observe*.]

1. That may be observed or noticed.

2. Worthy of observation or of particular notice; remarkable.

I took a just account of every *observable* circumstance of the earth, stone, metal or other matter.

Woodward.

OBSERVABLY, adv. s as z. In a manner worthy of note.

Brown.

OBSERVANCE, n. s as z. [Fr. See *Observe*.]

1. The act of observing; the act of keeping or adhering to in practice; performance; as the *observance* of rules, rites, ceremonies or laws.

Love rigid honesty,

And strict *observance* of impartial laws.

Roscommon.

2. Respect; ceremonial reverence in practice.

To do *observance* on the morn of May.

Shak.

3. Performance of rites, religious ceremonies or external service.

Some represent to themselves the whole of religion as consisting in a few easy *observances*.

Rogers.

4. Rule of practice; thing to be observed.

Shak.

5. Observation; attention to. [Little used.]

Hale.

6. Obedient regard or attention.

Having had experience of his fidelity and *observance* abroad. [Not used.]

Wotton.

OBSERVAND'A, n. plu. s as z. [L.] Things to be observed.

Swift.

OBSERVANT, a. s as z. Taking notice; attentively viewing or noticing; as an *observant* spectator or traveler.

2. Obedient; adhering to in practice; with of. He is very *observant* of the rules of his order.

We are told how *observant* Alexander was of his master Aristotle.

Digby.

3. Carefully attentive; submissive.

Raleigh.

OBSERVANT, n. s as z. A slavish attendant. [Not in use.]

Shak.

2. A diligent observer.

Hooker.

OBSERVATION, n. s as z. [L. *observatio*. See *Observe*.]

1. The act of observing or taking notice; the act of seeing or of fixing the mind on any thing. We apply the word to simple vision, as when one says, a spot on the sun's disk did not fall under his *observation*; or to the notice or cognizance of the mind, as when one says, the distinction made by the orator escaped his *observation*. When however it expresses vision, it often represents a more fixed or particular view than a mere transient sight; as an astronomical *observation*.

2. Notion gained by observing; the effect or result of seeing or taking cognizance in the mind, and either retained in the mind or expressed in words; inference or something arising out of the act of seeing or noticing, or that which is produced by thinking and reflecting on a subject; note; remark; animalversion. We often say, I made the *observation* in my own mind; but properly an *observation* is that which is expressed as the result of viewing or of thinking.

In matters of human prudence, we shall find the greatest advantage by making wise *observations* on our conduct.

Watts.

3. Observance; adherence to in practice; performance of what is prescribed.

He freed the christian church from the external *observation* and obedience of legal precepts not formally moral.

White.

4. In navigation, the taking of the altitude