

animadvertion, comment, or a series of comments.

4. The art of composing music in several parts. Descant is *plain, figurative and double*.

Plain descant is the ground-work of musical compositions, consisting in the orderly disposition of choirs, answering to simple counterpoint.

Figurative or florid descant, is that part of an air in which some discords are concerned. **Double descant**, is when the parts are so contrived, that the treble may be made the base, and the base the treble.

Bailey. Encyc.
DESCANT', v. i. [L. *descendo*; *de* and *scando*, to climb; W. *discpan*, from *cynu*, to rise, *cyn*, top; *it* descendere; Fr. *descendre*; Sp. *descender*; Arn. *disgenn*. The root *cyn* is from extending, shooting, thrusting, as *gun* in *begin*.]

1. To run a division or variety with the voice, on a musical ground in true measure; to sing. **Bailey. Johnson.**
2. To discourse; to comment; to make a variety of remarks; to animadvert freely. A virtuous man should be pleased to find people *descanting* on his actions. **Johnson.**
DESCANTING, *ppr.* Singing in parts or with various modulations; discoursing freely; commenting.

DESCANTING, *n.* Remark; conjecture. **Burnet.**

DESCEND, v. i. [L. *descendo*; *de* and *scando*, to climb; W. *discpan*, from *cynu*, to rise, *cyn*, top; *it* descendere; Fr. *descendre*; Sp. *descender*; Arn. *disgenn*. The root *cyn* is from extending, shooting, thrusting, as *gun* in *begin*.]

1. To move or pass from a higher to a lower place; to move, come or go downwards; to fall; to sink; to run or flow down; applicable to any kind of motion or of body. We descend on the feet, on wheels, or by falling. A torrent descends from a mountain.

The rains descended, and the floods came. **Matt. vii.**

2. To go down, or to enter. He shall descend into battle and perish. **1 Sam. xvi.**

3. To come suddenly; to fall violently. And on the suitors let thy wrath descend. **Pope.**

4. To go in; to enter. He, with honest meditations fed, Into himself descended. **Milton.**

5. To rush; to invade, as an enemy. The Grecian fleet descending on the town. **Dryden.**

6. To proceed from a source or original; to be derived. The beggar may descend from a prince, and the prince, from a beggar.

7. To proceed, from father to son; to pass from a preceding possessor, in the order of lineage, or according to the laws of succession or inheritance. Thus, an inheritance descends to the son or next of kin; a crown descends to the heir.

8. To pass from general to particular considerations; as, having explained the general subject, we will descend to particulars.

9. To come down from an elevated or honorable station; in a figurative sense. Flavius is an honorable man; he cannot descend to acts of meanness.

10. In music, to fall in sound; to pass from any note to another less acute or shrill, or from sharp to flat. **Rousseau.**

DESCEND, v. t. To walk, move or pass downwards on a declivity; as, to descend a hill; to descend an inclined plain. [But

this may be considered as elliptical; or, *along* being understood.]

DESCENDANT, *n.* [Fr. *descendant*; L. *descendens*.]

Any person proceeding from an ancestor in any degree; issue; offspring, in the line of generation, *ad infinitum*. We are all the descendants of Adam and Eve.

DESCENDENT, *a.* Descending; falling; sinking.

2. Proceeding from an original or ancestor. **Pope.**

DESCENDIBILITY, *n.* The quality of being descendible, or capable of being transmitted from ancestors; as the descendibility of an estate or of a crown. **Blackstone.**

DESCENDIBLE, *a.* That may be descended, or passed down; as, the hill is descendible.

3. That may descend from an ancestor to an heir; as a descendible estate.

DESCENSION, *n.* [L. *descensio*.] The act of going downwards; descent; a falling or sinking; declension; degradation.

2. In astronomy, right descension is an arch of the equinoctial, intercepted between the next equinoctial point and the horizon, passing through the center of the object, at its setting, in a right sphere. **Encyc.**

Oblique descension, is an arch of the equinoctial, intercepted between the next equinoctial point and the horizon, passing through the center of the object, at its setting, in an oblique sphere. **Encyc.**

Oblique descension, is an arch of the equator which descends with the sun below the horizon of an oblique sphere. **Bailey.**

Descension of a sign, is an arch of the equator, which sets with such a sign or part of the zodiac, or any planet in it. **Bailey.**

Right descension of a sign, is an arch of the equator, which descends with the sign below the horizon of a right sphere; or the time the sign is setting in a right sphere. **Bailey.**

DESCENSIONAL, *a.* Pertaining to descent.

DESCENSIVE, *a.* Tending downwards; having power to descend. **Sherwood.**

DESCENT, *n.* [Fr. *descente*; L. *descensus*.] 1. The act of descending; the act of passing from a higher to a lower place, by any form of motion, as by walking, riding, rolling, sliding, sinking or falling.

2. Inclination downward; obliquity; slope; declivity; as the descent of a hill, or a roof.

3. Progress downward; as the descent from higher to lower orders of beings. **Locke.**

4. Fall from a higher to a lower state or station. **Milton.**

5. A landing from ships; invasion of troops from the sea; as, to make a descent on Cuba.

6. A passing from an ancestor to an heir; transmission by succession or inheritance; as the descent of an estate or a title from the father to the son. Descent is *lineal*, when it proceeds directly from the father to the son, and from the son to the grandson; *collateral*, when it proceeds from a man to his brother, nephew or other collateral representative.

7. A proceeding from an original or progeni-

tor. The Jews boast of their descent from Abraham. Hence,

6. Birth; extraction; lineage; as a noble descent.

9. A generation; a single degree in the scale of genealogy; distance from the common ancestor.

No man is a thousand descents from Adam. **Hosier.**

10. Offspring; issue; descendants. The care of our descent perplexes most. **Milton.**

11. A rank in the scale of subordination. **Milton.**

12. Lowest place. **Shak.**

13. In music, a passing from a note or sound to one more grave or less acute.

DESCRIBABLE, *a.* That may be described; capable of description.

DESCRIBE, v. t. [L. *describo*; *de* and *scribo*, to write; Sp. *describir*; It. *descrivere*; Fr. *decrire*; Arn. *discriva*. See *Scribe*.]

1. To delineate or mark the form or figure; as, to describe a circle by the compasses.

2. To make or exhibit a figure by motion; as, a star describes a circle or an ellipsis in the heavens.

3. To show or represent to others in words; to communicate the resemblance of a thing, by naming its nature, form or properties. The poet describes the Trojan horse. The historian describes the battle of Pharsalia. The moralist describes the effects of corrupt manners. The geographer describes countries and cities.

4. To represent by signs. A deaf and dumb man may describe a distant object. Our passions may be described by external motions.

5. To draw a plan; to represent by lines and other marks on paper, or other material; as, to describe the surface of the earth by a map or chart.

6. To define laxly. **Gray.**

DESCRIBED, *ppr.* Represented in form by marks or figures; delineated; represented by words or signs.

DESCRIBER, *n.* One who describes by marks, words or signs.

DESCRIBING, *ppr.* Representing the form or figure of, by lines or marks; communicating a view of, by words or signs, or by naming the nature and properties.

DESCRIED, *ppr.* [See *Descry*.] Espied; discovered; seen.

DESCRIFER, *n.* [See *Descry*.] One who spies, or discovers; a discoverer; a detector. **Crashaw.**

DESCRIPTION, *n.* [L. *descriptio*.] The act of delineating, or representing the figure of any thing by a plan, to be presented to the eye.

2. The figure or appearance of any thing delineated, or represented by visible lines, marks, colors, &c.; as the description of a country, or of Solomon's temple.

3. The act of representing a thing by words or by signs, or the passage containing such representation; a representation of names, nature or properties, that gives to another a view of the thing. Homer abounds with beautiful and striking descriptions. Hence,

4. A definition. All definitions must be less perfect descriptions of a material thing, than a visible figure or delineation.