

PRETERNATURALNESS, *n.* A state or manner different from the common order of nature.

PRETERPERFECT, *a.* [*L. præter and perfectus.*]

Literally, *more than complete or finished*; an epithet equivalent to *preterit*, applied to the tense of verbs which expresses action or being absolutely past. [*Grammar.*]

PRETERPLUPERFECT, *a.* [*L. præter, beyond, plus, more, and perfectus, perfect.*]

Literally, *beyond more than perfect*; an epithet designating the tense of verbs which expresses action or being past prior to another past event or time; better denominated the *prior past* tense, that is, past prior to another event.

PRETEX, *v. t.* [*L. prætero; præ and tero, or tego, texui.*]

To cloak; to conceal. [*Not used.*]

Edwards.

PRETEXT, *n.* [*L. prætextus; Fr. pretexte; It. pretesto; Sp. pretexto.*]

Pretense; false appearance; ostensible reason or motive assigned or assumed as a color or cover for the real reason or motive. He gave plausible reasons for his conduct, but these were only a *pretext* to conceal his real motives.

He made *pretext* that I should only go

And help convey his freight; but thought not so. *Chapman.*

They suck the blood of those they depend on, under a *pretext* of service and kindness.

L. Estrange.

PRETOR, *n.* [*L. prætor, from the root of præ, before.*]

Among the *ancient Romans*, a judge; an officer answering to the modern chief justice or chancellor, or to both. In later times, subordinate judges appointed to distribute justice in the provinces, were created and called *pretors* or *provincial pretors*. These assisted the consuls in the government of the provinces. *Encyc.*

In modern times, the word is sometimes used for a mayor or magistrate.

Dryden. Spectator.

PRETORIAL, *a.* Pertaining to a pretor or judge; judicial. *Burke.*

PRETORIAN, *a.* Belonging to a pretor or judge; judicial; exercised by the pretor; as *pretorian* power or authority. *Bacon.*

Pretorian bands or *guards*, in Roman history, were the emperor's guards. Their number was ultimately increased to ten thousand men. *Encyc.*

PRETORSHIP, *n.* The office of pretor.

Warton.

PRETTILY, *adv. prettily.* [from *pretty*.] In a pretty manner; with neatness and taste; pleasingly; without magnificence or splendor; as a woman *prettily* dressed; a parterre *prettily* ornamented with flowers.

2. With decency, good manners and decorum without dignity.

Children kept out of ill company, take a pride to behave themselves *prettily*. *Locke.*

PRETTINESS, *n. prettiness.* [from *pretty*.]

1. Diminutive beauty; a pleasing form without stateliness or dignity; as the *prettiness* of the face; the *prettiness* of a bird or other small animal; the *prettiness* of dress.

More.

2. Neatness and taste displayed on small objects; as the *prettiness* of a flower bed.

3. Decency of manners; pleasing propriety without dignity or elevation; as the *prettiness* of a child's behavior.

PRETTY, *a. prettily.* [*Sax. præter, adorned; prætig, sly, crafty; Dan. prydel, adorned; Sw. prydd, id.; W. pryd, comeliness, beauty, also that is present, stated time, hour or season, visage, aspect; prydain, exhibiting presence or an open countenance, beautiful; prydian, to represent an object, to record an event, to render seasonable, to set apart a time, to become seasonable. This word seems to be connected with priated, appropriate, proper, fitting, whence priodi, to render appropriate, to espouse or marry, and priodverg, a bride. Hence it is evident, the radical sense is set, or as we say, set off, implying enlargement.*]

1. Having diminutive beauty; of a pleasing form without the strong lines of beauty, or without gracefulness and dignity; as a *pretty* face; a *pretty* person; a *pretty* flower.

The *pretty* gentleman is the most complaisant creature in the world. *Spectator.*

That which is little can be but *pretty*, and by claiming dignity becomes ridiculous. *Johnson.*

2. Neat and appropriate without magnificence or splendor; as a *pretty* dress.

3. Handsome; neatly arranged or ornamented; as a *pretty* flower bed.

4. Neat; elegant without elevation or grandeur; as a *pretty* tale or story; a *pretty* song or composition.

5. Sly; crafty; as, he has played his friend a *pretty* trick. This seems to be the sense of the word in this phrase, according with the Saxon *prætig*. And hence perhaps the phrase, a *pretty* fellow.

6. Small; diminutive; in contempt. He will make a *pretty* figure in a triumph.

7. Not very small: moderately large; as a *pretty* way off.

Cut off the stalks of cucumbers immediately after their bearing, close by the earth, and then cast a *pretty* quantity of earth upon the plant, and they will bear next year before the ordinary time. [*Not in use.*] *Bacon.*

PRETTY, *adv. prettily.* In some degree; tolerably; moderately; as a farm *pretty* well stocked; the colors became *pretty* vivid; I am *pretty* sure of the fact; the wind is *pretty* fair. The English farthing is *pretty* near the value of the American cent. In these and similar phrases, *pretty* expresses less than *very*.

The writer *pretty* plainly professes himself a sincere christian. *Atterbury.*

PRETYPIFIED, *pp.* [from *pretypify*.] Antecedently represented by type; prefigured.

PRETYPIFY, *v. t.* [*pre and typify.*] To prefigure; to exhibit previously in a type. *Pearson.*

PRETYPIFYING, *ppr.* Prefiguring.

PREVALE, *v. i.* [*Fr. prevaloir; It. prevalere; Sp. prevalecer; L. prævalco; præ, before, and valeo, to be strong or well. Valco seems to be from the same root as the Eng. well. The primary sense is to stretch or strain forward, to advance.*]

1. To overcome; to gain the victory or superiority; to gain the advantage.

When Moses held up his hand, Israel pre-

vailed; when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. Ex. xvii.

With *over* or *against*.

David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone. 1 Sam. xvii.

This kingdom could never prevail against the united power of England. *Swift.*

2. To be in force; to have effect, power or influence.

This custom makes the short-sighted bigots and the warier seepies, as far as it prevails. *Locke.*

3. To be predominant; to extend over with force or effect. The fever prevailed in a great part of the city.

4. To gain or have predominant influence; to operate with effect. These reasons, arguments or motives ought to prevail with all candid men. In this sense, it is followed by *with*.

5. To persuade or induce; with *on* or *upon*. They prevailed on the president to ratify the treaty. It is also followed by *with*. They could not prevail with the king to pardon the offender. But *on* is more common in modern practice.

6. To succeed. The general attempted to take the fort by assault, but did not prevail. The most powerful arguments were employed, but they did not prevail.

PREVAILING, *ppr.* Gaining advantage, superiority or victory; having effect; persuading; succeeding.

2. *a.* Predominant; having more influence; prevalent; superior in power. The love of money and the love of power are the prevailing passions of men.

3. Efficacious.

Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers. *Roué.*

4. Predominant; most general: as the prevailing disease of a climate; a prevailing opinion. Intemperance is the prevailing vice of many countries.

PREVALEMENT, *n.* Prevalence. [*Little used.*] *Shak.*

PREVALENCE, *n.* Superior strength, influence or efficacy; most efficacious force in producing an effect.

The duke better knew what kind of arguments were of prevalence with him. *Clarendon.*

2. Predominance; most general reception or practice; as the prevalence of vice, or of corrupt maxims; the prevalence of opinion or fashion.

3. Most general existence or extension; as the prevalence of a disease.

4. Success; as the prevalence of prayer.

PREVALENT, *a.* Gaining advantage or superiority; victorious.

Brennus told the Roman ambassadors, that prevalent arms were as good as any tide. *Raleigh.*

2. Powerful; efficacious; successful; as prevalent supplications.

3. Predominant; most generally received or current; as a prevalent opinion. *Woodward.*

4. Predominant; most general; extensively existing; as a prevalent disease.

PREVALENTLY, *adv.* With predominance or superiority; powerfully.

The evening star so falls into the main

To rise at morn more prevalently bright. *Prior.*