

Demonstration produces science or certain knowledge; proof produces belief, and *probability* opinion. *Encyc.*

2. Any thing that has the appearance of reality or truth. In this sense, the word admits of the plural number.

The whole life of man is a perpetual comparison of evidence and balancing of probabilities. *Buckminster.*

PROB'ABLE, *a.* [Fr. from *L. probabilis*, from *probo*, to prove. See *Prove*.]

1. Likely; having more evidence than the contrary, or evidence which inclines the mind to belief, but leaves some room for doubt.

That is accounted *probable*, which has better arguments producible for it than can be brought against it. *South.*

I do not say that the principles of religion are merely *probable*; I have before asserted them to be morally certain. *Wilkins.*

2. That renders something probable; as *probable* evidence, or *probable* presumption. *Blackstone.*

3. That may be proved. [Not in use.] *Millon.*

PROB'ABLY, *adv.* Likely; in likelihood; with the appearance of truth or reality; as, the story is *probably* true; the account is *probably* correct.

Distinguish between what may possibly, and what will *probably* be done. *L'Estrange.*

PROBANG, *n.* [See *Probc.*] In surgery, an instrument of whalebone and sponge, for removing obstructions in the throat or esophagus. *Coxe.*

A flexible piece of whalebone, with sponge fixed to the end. *Parr.*

PROBATE, *n.* [*L. probatus, probo*, to prove.]

1. The *probate* of a will or testament is the proving of its genuineness and validity, or the exhibition of the will to the proper officer, with the witnesses if necessary, and the process of determining its validity, and the registry of it, and such other proceedings as the laws prescribe, as preliminary to the execution of it by the executor.

2. The right or jurisdiction of proving wills. In England, the spiritual court has the *probate* of wills. In the United States, the *probate* of wills belongs to a court of civil jurisdiction established by law, usually to a single judge, called a judge of probate, or a surrogate.

3. Proof. [Not used.] *Skellon.*

PROBATION, *n.* [*L. probatio*.] The act of proving; proof. *Wilkins. Locke.*

2. Trial; examination; any proceeding designed to ascertain truth; in universities, the examination of a student, as to his qualifications for a degree.

3. In a monastic sense, trial or the year of novitiate, which a person must pass in a convent, to prove his virtue and his ability to bear the severities of the rule. *Encyc.*

4. Moral trial; the state of man in the present life, in which he has the opportunity of proving his character and being qualified for a happier state.

Probation will end with the present life. *Nelson.*

5. In America, the trial of a clergyman's qualifications as a minister of the gospel, preparatory to his settlement. We say, a man is preaching on *probation*.

6. In general, trial for proof, or satisfactory evidence, or the time of trial.

PROBA'TIONAL, *a.* Serving for trial.

Bp. Richardson.

PROBA'TIONARY, *a.* Serving for trial.

All the *probationary* work of man is ended when death arrives. *Dwight.*

PROBA'TIONER, *n.* One who is on trial, or in a state to give proof of certain qualifications for a place or state.

While yet a young *probationer*, And candidate for heaven. *Dryden.*

2. A novice. *Decay of Piety.*

3. In Scotland, a student in divinity, who, producing a certificate of a professor in an university of his good morals and qualifications, is admitted to several trials, and on acquitting himself well, is licensed to preach. *Encyc.*

PROBATIONERSHIP, *n.* The state of being a probationer; novitiate. [Little used.] *Locke.*

PROBATIONSHIP, *n.* A state of probation; novitiate; probation. [Little used and unnecessary.]

PROBATIVE, *a.* Serving for trial or proof. *South.*

PROBATOR, *n.* [1.] An examiner; an approver. *Maydman.*

2. In law, an accuser. *Cowel.*

PROBATORY, *a.* Serving for trial.

Bramhall.

2. Serving for proof. *Bp. Taylor.*

3. Relating to proof. *Quintilian, Trans.*

Probatum est, [1. it is proved.] an expression subjoined to a receipt for the cure of a disease, denoting that it has been tried or proved.

PROBE, *n.* [from *L. probo*; Fr. *eprouvette*, a probe; G. *probe*, proof; Russ. *probiyayu*, to pierce. The primary sense is to thrust, to drive, from straining, exertion of force.]

A surgeon's instrument for examining the depth or other circumstances of a wound, ulcer or cavity, or the direction of a sinus, or for searching for stones in the bladder and the like. *Encyc. Parr.*

PROBE, *v. t.* To examine a wound, ulcer or some cavity of the body, by the use of an instrument thrust into the part. *South.*

2. To search to the bottom; to scrutinize; to examine thoroughly into causes and circumstances.

PROBE-SCISSORS, *n.* Scissors used to open wounds, the blade of which, to be thrust into the orifice, has a button at the end. *Wiseman.*

PROBITY, *n.* [*L. probitas*, from *probo*, to prove; It. *probità*; Fr. *probité*.]

Primarily, tried virtue or integrity, or approved actions; but in general, strict honesty; sincerity; veracity; integrity in principle, or strict conformity of actions to the laws of justice. *Probity* of mind or principle is best evinced by *probity* of conduct in social dealings, particularly in adhering to strict integrity in the observance and performance of rights called *imperfect*, which public laws do not reach and cannot enforce.

PROBLEM, *n.* [Fr. *probleme*; L. It. Sp. *problema*; Gr. *προβλημα*, from *προβαλλω*, to throw forward; *προ* and *βαλλω*, to throw, L. *pello*.] A question proposed.

1. In logic, a proposition that appears neither absolutely true nor false, and consequently may be asserted either in the affirmative or negative.

2. In geometry, a proposition in which some operation or construction is required, as to divide a line or an angle, to let fall a perpendicular, &c. *Encyc.*

3. In general, any question involving doubt or uncertainty, and requiring some operation, experiment or further evidence for its solution.

The *problem* is, whether a strong and constant belief that a thing will be, helps any thing to the effecting of the thing. *Bacon.*

PROBLEMATICAL, *a.* Questionable; uncertain; unsettled; disputable; doubtful.

Diligent inquiries into *problematical* guilt, leave a gate wide open to informers. *Swift.*

PROBLEMATICALLY, *adv.* Doubtfully; dubiously; uncertainly.

PROBLEMATIZE, *v. t.* To propose problems. [All formed and not used.] *B. Jonson.*

PROBOS'CIS, *n.* [L. from the Gr. *προβοσκis*; *προ*, before, and *βοσχω*, to feed or graze.]

The snout or trunk of an elephant and of other animals, particularly of insects. The proboscis of an elephant is a flexible muscular pipe or canal of about 8 feet in length, and is properly the extension of the nose. This is the instrument with which he takes food and carries it to his mouth. The proboscis of insects is used to suck blood from animals, or juice from plants.

PROCA'CIOUS, *a.* [*L. procax*; *pro*, forward, and perhaps the root of It. *cacciare*, Sp. *cazar*, to chase, that is, to push forward.] Pert; petulant; saucy. [Little used.] *Barrow.*

PROCAC'ITY, *n.* [*L. procacitas*.] Impudence; petulance. [Little used.] *Burton.*

PROCATARE'TIC, *a.* [Gr. *προκαταρτητικός*; *προ*, *κατα* and *αρχω*, to begin.]

In medicine, pre-existing or predisposing; remote; as *procataretic* causes of a disease, in distinction from *immediate* or *exciting* causes. Thus heat may be the *procataretic*, and extreme fatigue the *immediate* or *exciting* cause of a fever.

PROCATARN'IS, *n.* [Gr. *supra*.] The predisposing cause of a disease. *Quincy.*

PROCEDURE, *n.* [Fr. See *Proced.*] The act of proceeding or moving forward; progress; process; operation; series of actions; as the *procedure* of the soul in certain actions. But it is more generally applied to persons; as, this is a strange *procedure* in a public body. The motions of physical causes are more generally denominated *operations*.

2. Manner of proceeding; management; conduct. *South.*

3. That which proceeds from something; produce. [Not in use.] *Bacon.*

PROCEED, *v. i.* [Fr. Sp. Port. *proceder*; It. *procedere*; from *L. procedo*; *pro*, forward, and *cedo*, to move.

The more correct orthography is *procede*, in analogy with *precedi*, *concede*, *recede*, *procedure*.]