

16. That which governs or has a tendency to rule; that which has the power of controlling.

But I see another *law* in my members warring against the *law* of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the *law* of sin which is in my members. Rom. 7.

17. The word of God; the doctrines and precepts of God, or his revealed will.

But his delight is in the *law* of the Lord, and in his *law* doth he meditate day and night. Ps. i.

18. The Old Testament.

Is it not written in your *law*, I said, ye are gods? John x.

19. The institutions of Moses, as distinct from the other parts of the Old Testament; as the *law* and the prophets.

20. A rule or axiom of science or art; settled principle; as the *laws* of versification or poetry.

21. *Law martial*, or *martial law*, the rules ordained for the government of an army or military force.

22. *Marine laws*, rules for the regulation of navigation, and the commercial intercourse of nations.

23. *Commercial law*, *law-merchant*, the system of rules by which trade and commercial intercourse are regulated between merchants.

24. Judicial process; prosecution of right in courts of law.

Tom Touchy is a fellow famous for taking the *law* of every body. Spectator.

Hence the phrase, to go to *law*, to prosecute; to seek redress in a legal tribunal.

25. Jurisprudence; as in the title, *Doctor of Laws*.

26. In general, *law* is a rule of action prescribed for the government of rational beings or moral agents, to which rule they are bound to yield obedience, in default of which they are exposed to punishment; or *law* is a settled mode or course of action or operation in irrational beings and in inanimate bodies.

*Civil law*, *criminal law*. [See *Civil* and *Criminal*.]

*Laws of honor*. [See *Honor*.]

*Law language*, the language used in legal writings and forms, particularly the Norman dialect or Old French, which was used in judicial proceedings from the days of William the conqueror to the 36th year of Edward III.

*Wager of law*, a species of trial formerly used in England, in which the defendant gave security that he would, on a certain day, make his *law*, that is, he would make oath that he owed nothing to the plaintiff, and would produce eleven of his neighbors as compurgators, who should swear that they believed in their consciences that he had sworn the truth. Blackstone.

LAW'-BREAKER, *n.* One who violates the law. Milton.

LAW-DAV, *n.* A day of open court. Shak.

2. A leet or sheriff's tourn.

LAW'FUL, *a.* Agreeable to law; conformable to law; allowed by law; legal; legitimate. That is deemed *lawful* which no law forbids, but many things are *lawful* which are not expedient.

2. Constituted by law; rightful; as the *lawful* owner of lands.

LAW'FULLY, *adv.* Legally; in accordance with law; without violating law. We may *lawfully* do what the laws do not forbid.

LAW'FULNESS, *n.* The quality of being conformable to law; legality. The *lawfulness* of an action does not always prove its propriety or expedience.

LAW'GIVER, *n.* [law and give.] One who makes or enacts a law; a legislator. Swift.

LAW'GIVING, *a.* Making or enacting laws; legislative. Waller.

LAW'ING, *n.* Expedition; the act of cutting off the claws and balls of the fore feet of mastiffs to prevent them from running after deer. Blackstone.

LAW'LESS, *a.* Not subject to law; unrestrained by law; as a *lawless* tyrant; *lawless* men.

2. Contrary to law; illegal; unauthorized; as a *lawless* claim.

He needs no indirect nor *lawless* course. Shak.

3. Not subject to the ordinary laws of nature; uncontrolled. He, meteor-like, flames *lawless* through the void. Pope.

LAW'LESSLY, *adv.* In a manner contrary to law. Shak.

LAW'LESSNESS, *n.* The quality or state of being unrestrained by law; disorder. Spenser.

LAW'-MAKER, *n.* One who enacts or ordains laws; a legislator; a lawgiver. *Law-makers* should not be law-breakers. Adage.

LAW'-MONGER, *n.* A low dealer in law; a pettifogger. Milton.

LAWN, *n.* [W. *llan*, an open, clear place. It is the same word as *land*, with an appropriate signification, and coincides with *plain*, *planus*, Ir. *cluain*.]

An open space between woods, or a plain in a park or adjoining a noble seat.

Betwixt them *lawns* or level downs, and flocks

Grazing the tender herbs, were interspers'd. Milton.

LAWN, *n.* [Fr. *linon*, from *lin*, flax, L. *linum*.]

A sort of fine linen. Its use in the sleeves of bishops, explains the following line.

A saint in erape is twice a saint in lawn. Pope.

LAWN, *a.* Made of lawn.

LAWN'Y, *a.* Level, as a plain; like a lawn. Bp. Hall.

LAW'SUIT, *n.* [See *Suit*.] A suit in law for the recovery of a supposed right; a process in law instituted by a party to compel another to do him justice.

LAW'YER, *n.* [that is, *lawyer*, contracted from *law-uer*, *law-man*.]

One versed in the laws, or a practitioner of law; one whose profession is to institute suits in courts of law, and to prosecute or defend the cause of clients. This is a general term, comprehending attorneys, counselors, solicitors, barristers, serjeants and advocates.

LAW'YER-LIKE, *a.* Like a real lawyer.

LAW'YERLY, *a.* Judicial. Milton.

LAX, *a.* [L. *laxus*; Sp. *laso*; It. *lasso*; Fr. *lache*, for *lasche*.]

1. Loose; flabby; soft; not tense, firm or rigid; as *lax* flesh; a *lax* fiber.

2. Slack; not tight or tense; as a *lax* cord.

3. Not firmly united; of loose texture; as gravel and the like *laxer* matter. Woodward.

4. Not rigidly exact; as a *lax* moral discourse. Baker.

5. Not strict; as *lax* morals.

6. Loose in the bowels; having too frequent discharges.

LAX, *n.* A looseness; diarrhæa.

2. A species of fish or salmon. [Sax. *læx*.] [Not in use.]

LAXA'TION, *n.* [L. *laxatio*.] The act of loosening or slackening; or the state of being loose or slackened.

LAX'ATIVE, *a.* [Fr. *laxatif*, from L. *laxo*.] Having the power or quality of loosening or opening the bowels, and relieving from constipation.

LAX'ATIVE, *n.* A medicine that relaxes the bowels and relieves from costiveness; a gentle purgative. Core.

LAX'ATIVENESS, *n.* The quality of relaxing.

LAX'ITY, *n.* [L. *laxitas*.] Looseness; slackness; the opposite of *tension* or *tension*.

2. Looseness of texture. Bentley.

3. Want of exactness or precision; as *laxity* of expression.

4. Looseness; defect of exactness; as *laxity* of morals.

5. Looseness, as of the bowels; the opposite of *costiveness*.

6. Openness; not closeness.

LAX'LY, *adv.* Loosely; without exactness. Rees.

LAX'NESS, *n.* Looseness; softness; flabbiness; as the *laxness* of flesh or of muscles.

2. Laxity; the opposite of *tension*.

3. Looseness, as of morals or discipline.

4. Looseness, as of the bowels.

5. Slackness, as of a cord.

LAY, *pret. of lie*. The estate *lay* in the county of Hartford.

When Ahab heard these words, he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his head, and fasted and *lay* in sackcloth. 1 Kings xxi.

LAY, *v. t.* pret. and pp. *laid*. [Sax. *leggan*, *legan*; D. *leggen*; G. *legen*; Sw. *lugga*; Dan. *legger*; Russ. *loju*; L. *loco*, whence *locus*, W. *lle*, place, Eng. *ley* or *lea*; W. *lleau*, to lay. Hence Fr. *lieu*, Arm. *lech*, a place; Ir. *legadh*, Arm. *lagaal*, to lay.

The primary sense is to send or throw; hence this word is the L. *lego*, *legare*, differently applied; Gr. *λεγομαι*, to lie down;

Eth. *ለአለ* lak, to send, whence *lackey*.

Class Lg. No I. and 21. It coincides with *lodge* and with *lie*.]

1. Literally, to throw down; hence, to put or place; applied to things *broad* or *long*, and in this respect differing from *set*.

We *lay* a book on the table, when we place it on its side, but we *set* it on the end. We *lay* the foundation of a house,

but we *set* a building on its foundation.

He *laid* his robe from him. Jonah iii.

Soft on the flowery herb I found me *laid*. Milton.