

**PREPOSTEROUS**, *a.* [L. *preposterus*; *præ*, before, and *posterus*, latter.]

1. Literally, having that first which ought to be last; inverted in order.

The method I take may be censured as *preposterous*, because I treat last of the antediluvian earth, which was first in the order of nature. Woodward.

2. Perverted; wrong; absurd; contrary to nature or reason; not adapted to the end; as, a republican government in the hands of females, is *preposterous*. To draw general conclusions from particular facts, is *preposterous* reasoning.

Bacon. Woodward.

3. Foolish; absurd; applied to persons.

Shak.

**PREPOSTEROUSLY**, *adv.* In a wrong or inverted order; absurdly; foolishly.

Shak. Bentley.

**PREPOSTEROUSNESS**, *n.* Wrong order or method; absurdity; inconsistency with nature or reason.

Feltham.

**PREPOTENCY**, *n.* [L. *præpotentia*; *præ* and *potentia*, power.] Superior power; predominance. [Little used.] Brown.

**PREPOTENT**, *a.* [L. *præpotens*.] Very powerful. [Little used.] Plaifere.

**PREPUCE**, *n.* [Fr. from L. *præputium*.] The foreskin; a prolongation of the cutis of the penis, covering the glans.

Encyc.

**PREREMOTE**, *a.* [pre and remote.] More remote in previous time or prior order.

In some cases, two more links of causation may be introduced; one of them may be termed the *preremote* cause, the other the *postremote* effect.

Darwin.

**PREREQUIRE**, *v. t.* [pre and require.] To require previously.

Hammond.

**PREREQUISITE**, *a. s. as z.* [pre and requisite.]

Previously required or necessary to something subsequent; as, certain attainments are *prerequisite* to an admission to orders.

**PREREQUISITE**, *n.* Something that is previously required or necessary to the end proposed. An acquaintance with Latin and Greek is a *prerequisite* to the admission of a young man into a college.

**PRERESOLVE**, *v. t. s. as z.* [pre and resolve.] To resolve previously.

Dering.

**PRERESOLVED**, *pp.* Resolved beforehand; previously determined.

**PRERESOLVING**, *ppr.* Resolving beforehand.

**PREROGATIVE**, *n.* [Fr. *id.*; It. *prerogativo*; Sp. *prerogativa*; L. *prærogativa*, precedence in voting; *præ*, before, and *rogo*, to ask or demand.]

An exclusive or peculiar privilege. A *royal prerogative*, is that special pre-eminence which a king has over all other persons, and out of the course of the common law, in right of his regal dignity. It consists in the possession of certain rights which the king may exercise to the exclusion of all participation of his subjects; for when a right or privilege is held in common with the subject, it ceases to be a *prerogative*. Thus the right of appointing ambassadors, and of making peace and war, are, in Great Britain, *royal prerogatives*. The right of governing created beings is the *prerogative* of the Creator.

It is the *prerogative* of the house of peers in Great Britain to decide legal questions

in the last resort. It is the *prerogative* of the house of commons to determine the validity of all elections of their own members. It is the *prerogative* of a father to govern his children. It is the *prerogative* of the understanding to judge and compare.

In the United States, it is the *prerogative* of the president, with the advice of the senate, to ratify treaties.

**PREROGATIVE-COURT**, *n.* In Great Britain, a court for the trial of all testamentary causes, where the deceased has left *bona notabilia*, or effects of the value of five pounds, in two different dioceses. In this case, the probate of the will belongs to the metropolitan or archbishop of the province, and the court where such will is proved is called the *prerogative-court*, as it is held by virtue of the special prerogative of the metropolitan, who appoints the judge.

Blackstone.

**PREROGATIVED**, *a.* Having prerogative. [Little used.] Shak.

**PREROGATIVE-OFFICE**, *n.* The office in which the wills proved in the prerogative court, are registered.

Blackstone.

**PRESAGE**, *n.* [Fr.; Sp. It. *presagio*; from L. *presagium*; *præ*, before, and *sag-*io, to perceive or foretell.]

Something which foreshows a future event; a prognostic; a present fact indicating something to come.

Joy and shout, *presage* of victory. Milton.

**PRESAGE**, *v. i.* To forebode; to foreshow; to indicate by some present fact what is to follow or come to pass. A fog rising from a river in an autumnal morning *presages* a pleasant day. A physical phenomenon cannot be considered as *presaging* an event, unless it has some connection with it in cause. Hence the error of vulgar superstition, which *presages* good or evil from facts which can have no relation to the future event.

2. To foretell; to predict; to prophesy.

Wish'd freedom I *presage* you soon will find.

Dryden.

**PRESAGE**, *v. i.* To form or utter a prediction; with *of*. We may *presage* of heats and rains. [Not common nor elegant.]

Dryden.

**PRESAGED**, *pp.* Foreboded; foreshown; foretold.

**PRESAGEFUL**, *a.* Full of presages; containing presages.

Thomson.

**PRESAGEMENT**, *n.* A foreboding; foretoken.

Wolton.

2. A foretelling; predierion.

**PRESAGER**, *n.* A foreteller; a foreshower.

Shak.

**PRESAGING**, *ppr.* Foreshowing; foretelling.

**PRESBYTER**, *n.* [Gr. *πρεσβυτερος*, from *πρεσβυς*, old, elder.]

1. In the primitive christian church, an elder; a person somewhat advanced in age, who had authority in the church, and whose duty was to feed the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made him overseer.

2. A priest; a person who has the pastoral charge of a particular church and congregation; called in the Saxon laws, *mass-priest*.

Hooker.

3. A presbyterian.

Butler.

**PRESBYTERIAL**, } *a.* Pertaining to a  
**PRESBYTERIAN**, } *a.* presbyter, or to  
ecclesiastical government by presbyters.

2. Consisting of presbyters; as *presbyterian* government. The government of the church of Scotland is *presbyterian*.

**PRESBYTERIAN**, *n.* One that maintains the validity of ordination and government by presbyters.

2. One that belongs to a church governed by presbyters.

**PRESBYTERIANISM**, *n.* The doctrines, principles and discipline or government of presbyterians.

Addison.

**PRESBYTERY**, *n.* A body of elders in the christian church.

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*. 1 Tim. iv.

2. In ecclesiastical government, a judicatory consisting of all the pastors of churches within a certain district, and one ruling elder, a layman, from each parish, commissioned to represent the parish in conjunction with the minister. This body receives appeals from the kirk-session, and appeals from the presbytery may be carried to the provincial synod.

Encyc. Scotland.

The presbytery of the churches in the United States is composed in a manner nearly similar.

3. The presbyterian religion.

Taller.

**PRESCIENCE**, *n.* *pres'ience* or *pre'shens*. [Low L. *præscientia*; *præ*, before, and *scientia*, knowledge; Fr. *prescience*; It. *prescienza*. The common pronunciation of this word, *pre'shens*, obscures the sense.]

Foreknowledge; knowledge of events before they take place. Absolute *prescience* belongs to God only.

Of things of the most accidental and mutable nature, God's *prescience* is certain.

South.

**PRESCIENT**, *a.* *pres'ient* or *pre'shent*. Foreknowing; having knowledge of events before they take place.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood, *Prescient*, the tides or tempests to withstand?

Pope.

**PRESCIND**, *v. t.* [L. *præscindo*; *præ* and *scindo*, to cut.]

To cut off; to abstract. [Little used.]

Norris.

**PRESCINDENT**, *a.* Cutting off; abstracting.

Cheyne.

**PRESCIOUS**, *a.* [L. *præscius*; *præ* and *scio*, to know.]

Foreknowing; having foreknowledge; as *prescious* of ills.

Dryden.

**PREScriBE**, *v. t.* [L. *præscribo*, to write before.]

1. In medicine, to direct, as a remedy to be used or applied to a diseased patient. Be not offended with the physician who *prescribes* harsh remedies.

2. To set or lay down authoritatively for direction; to give as a rule of conduct; as, to *prescribe* laws or rules.

There's joy, when to wild will you laws *prescribe*.

Dryden.

3. To direct.

Let streams *prescribe* their fountains where to run.

Dryden.

**PREScriBE**, *v. i.* To write or give medical directions; to direct what remedies