A NEW
ENGLISH DICTIONARY
ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES.

DISBURDEN—DISOBSERVANT.

BY
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NOTE.

This Section contains 1396 Main words, 27 Combinations explained under these, and 127 Subordinate entries; 1550 in all. The obvious combinations, recorded and illustrated by quotations, without separate definition, number 20 more. Of the 1396 Main words, 926 are current and native or fully naturalized, 464 (33.3%) are marked (+) as obsolete, and only 6 as (§) alien or not fully naturalized. Comparison with the corresponding portion of Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary, and of some more recent lexicographical works, shows the following figures:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Casell’s ‘Encyclopedic’</th>
<th>‘Century’ Dict.</th>
<th>Funk’s ‘Standard’</th>
<th>Here.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words recorded, Disburden to Disobservant</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>1569</td>
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<tr>
<td>Words illustrated by quotations</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>502</td>
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<td>Number of illustrative quotations</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>1017</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>6990</td>
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The number of quotations in the corresponding portion of Richardson is 1005.

The words of Latin (or French) derivation in Dis-, which were entered upon in the preceding Section are here continued. They form an almost solid block, interrupted only by Dish (with its compounds and derivatives), which is the only word of Old English age included; and even this is originally from Latin, though adopted in West Germanic probably before the English conquest of Britain. Later representatives of the same Latin word are dais, desk, disk, and discus, the differentiation of which is noteworthy. The unusually large proportion of obsolete words confirms what has been pointed out before as to the classes of words that the language has discarded since the 12th century.

Of the dis- words interest attaches to the sense-history of discipline, disclaim, discount, discover, discretion, disease, disgrace, disguise, dishabille, dishovel, dislocate, with their related groups. But the most interesting word in these pages is Dismal, the full history of which is here for the first time exhibited. Contemporary evidence shows this to have been originally the Anglo-French dis mal = L. dies malus, evil or ill-omened days, the ‘Egyptian days’ of the medieval calendar; and it was so applied for more than three centuries. It is only as we come down near 1600 that we find other things than days characterized as ‘dismal’; and when Minshew, in 1617, derived the word from L. dies malus ‘an euill and vnhappie time’ (a derivation discarded by Dr. Trench as ‘one of those plausible etymologies which one learns after a while to reject with contempt’), he was doubtless going upon the use of the word within his own memory.

On January 1, 1897, will be published the Section Disobstruct to Distrustful; also Part IX, Depravative to Distrustful.