

# A NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES.

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PREMISAL — PROPHESIER.

BY  
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## PREFATORY NOTE.

This triple section extending from **Premisal** to **Prophesier** contains 2612 Main words, 942 Combinations explained under these, and 368 Subordinate entries of obsolete forms, etc., amounting to 3922. The *obvious combinations*, classified and illustrated under the Main words, number 459 more, raising the total to 4381. Of the Main words, 1842 (70·52 %) are now current English, native or naturalized, 623 (23·85 %) are marked † as obsolete, and 147 (5·63 %) †† as alien, or not fully naturalized. Comparison with Dr. Johnson's and some more recent Dictionaries shows the following figures:—

	Johnson.	Cassell's 'Encyclopædic'.	'Century' Dict.	Funk's 'Standard'.	Here.
Words recorded, <i>Premisal</i> to <i>Prophesier</i>	584	1597	1960	1876	4381
Words illustrated by quotations	485	755	1016	315	3388
Number of illustrative quotations	1657	1238	3062	450	20450

The number of quotations in the corresponding portion of Richardson is 1183.

This portion of P contains the second half of the words in **PRE-**, the whole of those in **PRI-**, and more than half of those in **PRO-**. The two general articles on **PRO-** explain the various uses of the prefix, and contain the less important words formed with it, nearly all of 19th c. formation. The polemic use, as in *pro-slavery*, *pro-Boer*, began with *pro-poper* about 1828, but was not frequent before 1890. As *pre-* (*præ-*) and *pro-* are great Latin prefixes, it follows that by far the most of the words in this section are of Latin origin, though often taken into our language through French. *Pro-* is also an important prefix in Greek, and most of the scientific terms in *pro-*, with many general words besides, e. g. *problem*, *proboscis*, *prognostic*, *prologue*, *prophecy*, are of Greek derivation. The words from Latin and Greek present few etymological difficulties; on the other hand, the sense-development of those from Latin is often both extensive and involved, making the average length of the articles in this section greater than in any preceding part of P. Words such as *prepare*, *prepossess*, *prerogative*, *pretend*, *prevent*, *prime*, *private*, *proceed*, *procure*, *prodigious*, *produce*, *profess*, *progress*, *prohibit*, *project*, *promise*, *promote*, *propagate*, with their multitudinous derivatives, substantive and adjective, exemplify this great ramification of sense. The connexion of *present* a gift, and *present* to give, with the adjective *present* and sb. *presence*, is an interesting point. Among the words taken through French (some of early date), are *press*, *price*, *print*, *prison*, *privy*, *prize*, *profit*, *proof*, *proper*, *property*; *prestige*, *profile*, *promenade* represent later borrowings. In **PRESS**, the ramification of meaning is almost as notable as in *board*: it is a long way from the original sense of the 'throng' or 'crowd' in the street or the melee, to the 'coffins like open presses' in *Tam o' Shanter*, or to the views of 'the newspaper press', and the 'representatives of the press', who in the 16th century would have been somewhat different persons. The development of this last sense, connected as it is with the 'freedom of the press', is an interesting chapter in sematology. Among noteworthy terms and phrases in which the history of the word involves that of the thing signified, are *pre-Raphaelite*, *president* (of a republic), to *press* (sailors), *press-gang*, *Prestier John*, the *previous question*, *price current*, *prick-song*, *prime minister*, *prince*, *prince-regent*, *privateer*, *privy council*, *privy counsellor*, *privy seal*, *procession*, *program*, *proletariate*; among legal terms and uses, are *premises*, *prepen*, *prescription*, *primer seisin*, *primogeniture*, *prise*, *prize* (at sea), *privilege*, *privy*, *prochain*, *procurator*, *procurator-fiscal*, *prolocutor*, *promovent*; among the ecclesiastical, are *presbyter*, *-ian*, *priest*, *prime*, *primer*, *prior*, *procuration*, *profess*, *profession*; among university words of interesting history are *proceed*, *proctor*, and *professor*; among scientific terms, *premisses* and *primum mobile* (both due to mediæval Latin translations of Arabic terms), *projection*, *propeller*; among plant-names, *primerole*, *primrose*, *primula*, and *privet*. Of the words that go back to Old English, *priest* and (the hour of) *prime* were introductions from Latin; *pride*, an analogical derivative of *proud* from Old French; *pretty*, *prick*, *prickle*, have cognates in other Teutonic languages, though *pretty* has wandered far from its original sense of 'tricky'. One or two later words, as *prong*, *prop*, may also have been of Low German origin; but others, such as *prig*, *prim*, *princecock*, *prink*, *prinkum-prankum*, *prod*, *prog*, which are not known outside English, seem to have arisen in the lower strata of the language itself in comparatively recent times. The words from barbarian languages in this section are singularly few: *proa*, the Malay *p(a)rāhu*, stands quite alone.