



ENGLISH SYNONYMS

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ENGLISH SYNONYMES

EXPLAINED

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

WITH COPIOUS ILLUSTRATIONS AND EXAMPLES DRAWN
FROM THE BEST WRITERS

TO WHICH IS NOW ADDED AN INDEX TO THE WORDS

BY

GEORGE CRABB, A.M.

NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

"Sed cum idem frequentissimè plura significant quod *synonyma* vocatur, jam sunt aliis
alia honestiora, sublimiora, nitidiora, jucundiora, vocaliora."
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ACERVO DE LITERATURA

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PREFACE.

It may seem surprising that the English, who have employed their talents successfully in every branch of literature, and in none more than in that of philology, should yet have fallen below other nations in the study of their synonymes. It cannot, however, be denied that, while the French and Germans have had several considerable works on the subject, we have not a single writer who has treated it in a scientific manner adequate to its importance: not that I wish by this remark to depreciate the labors of those who have preceded me, but simply to assign it as a reason why I have now been induced to come forward with an attempt to fill up what is considered a chasm in English literature.

In the prosecution of my undertaking, I have profited by everything which has been written in any language upon the subject; and although I always pursued my own train of thought, yet whenever I met with anything deserving of notice I adopted it, and referred it to the author in a note. I had not proceeded far before I found it necessary to restrict myself in the choice of my materials, and accordingly laid it down as a rule not to compare any words together which were sufficiently distinguished from each other by striking features in their signification, such as *abandon* and *quit*, which require a comparison with others, though not necessarily with themselves; for the same reason I was obliged to limit myself, as a rule, to one authority for each word, unless where the case seemed to require further exemplification. But, notwithstanding all my care in this respect, I was compelled to curtail much of what I had written, for fear of increasing the volume to an inconvenient size.

Although a work of this description does not afford much scope for system and arrangement, yet I laid down to myself the plan of arranging the words according to the extent or universality of their acceptation, placing those first which had the most general sense and application, and the rest in order. By this plan I found myself greatly aided in analyzing their differences, and I trust that the reader will thereby be equally benefited. In the choice of authorities, I have been guided by various considerations,

namely, the appropriateness of the examples; the classic purity of the author; the justness of the sentiment; and, last of all, the variety of the writers. But I am persuaded that the reader will not be dissatisfied to find that I have shown a decided preference to such authors as Addison, Johnson, Dryden, Pope, Milton, etc. At the same time it is but just to observe that this selection of authorities has been made by an actual perusal of the authors, without the assistance of Johnson's "Dictionary."

For the sentiments scattered through this work I offer no apology, although I am aware that they will not fall in with the views of many who may be competent to decide on its literary merits. I write not to please or displease any description of persons; but I trust that what I have written according to the dictates of my mind will meet the approbation of those whose good opinion I am most solicitous to obtain. Should any object to the introduction of morality in a work of science, I beg them to consider that a writer whose business it was to mark the nice shades of distinction between words closely allied could not do justice to his subject without entering into all the relations of society, and showing, from the acknowledged sense of many moral and religious terms, what has been the general sense of mankind on many of the most important questions which have agitated the world. My first object certainly has been to assist the philological inquirer in ascertaining the force and comprehension of the English language; yet I should have thought my work but half completed had I made it a mere register of verbal distinctions. While others seize every opportunity unblushingly to avow and zealously to propagate opinions destructive of good order, it would ill become any individual of contrary sentiments to shrink from stating his convictions when called upon, as he seems to be, by an occasion like that which has now offered itself. As to the rest, I throw myself on the indulgence of the public, with the assurance that, having used every endeavor to deserve their approbation, I shall not make an appeal to their candor in vain.

ENGLISH SYNONYMES EXPLAINED.

TO ABANDON, DESERT, FORSAKE, RELINQUISH.

THE idea of leaving or separating one's self from an object is common to these terms, which vary in the circumstances of the action; the two former are more positive acts than the two latter. To ABANDON, from the German *ban*, a proclamation of outlawry, signifying to put out of the protection of the law; or, a privative, and *bandum*, an ensign, *i. e.*, to cast off, or leave one's colors; is to leave thoroughly, to withdraw protection or support. To DESERT, in Latin *desertus*, from *de* privative, and *sero*, to sow; signifying to leave off sowing or cultivating; and FORSAKE, compounded of the privative *for* and *sake* or *seek*, signifying to leave off seeking, are partial modes of leaving; the former by withholding one's co-operation, the latter by withdrawing one's society. *Abandoning* is a violation of the most sacred ties, and exposes the object to every misery; *desertion* is a breach of honor and fidelity; it deprives a person of the assistance or the countenance which he has a right to expect; by *forsaking*, the kindly feelings are hurt, and the social ties are broken. A bad mother *abandons* her offspring; a soldier *deserts* his comrades; a man *forsakes* his companions.

He who *abandons* his offspring or corrupts them by his example, perpetrates a greater evil than a murderer. HAWKESWORTH.

After the death of Stella, Swift's benevolence was contracted, and his severity exasperated: he drove his acquaintance from his table, and wondered why he was *deserted*. JOHNSON.

Forsake me not thus, Adam! MILTON.

Things as well as persons may be *abandoned*, *deserted*, or *forsaken*; things only are *relinquished*. To *abandon* may be an act of necessity or discretion, as a captain *abandons* a vessel when it is no longer safe to remain in it. *Desertion* is often a dereliction of duty, as to *desert* one's post; and often an indifferent action, particularly in the sense of leaving any place which has had one's care and attention bestowed upon it, as people *desert* a village, or any particular country where they have been established. *Forsaking* is an indifferent action, and implies simply the leaving something to which one has been attached in one form or another; a person *forsakes* a certain house which he has been accustomed to frequent; birds *forsake* their nests when they find them to have been discovered. To RELINQUISH is an act of prudence or imprudence; men often inadvertently *relinquish* the fairest prospects in order to follow some favorite scheme which terminates in their ruin.

If he hides it privately in the earth or other secret place, and it is discovered, the finder acquires no property therein, for the owner hath not by this act declared any intention to *abandon* it. BLACKSTONE.

He who at the approach of evil betrays his trust, or *deserts* his post, is branded with cowardice. HAWKESWORTH.

When learning, abilities, and what is excellent in the world *forsake* the church, we may easily foretell its ruin without the gift of prophecy. SOUTH.

Men are wearied with the toil which they bear, but cannot find in their hearts to *relinquish* it. STEELE.

We may *desert* or *forsake* a place, but the former comprehends more than the