

The Harper Dictionary of Foreign Terms

Third Edition

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Third Edition

Revised and edited by
Eugene Ehrlich

*Based on the original edition by
C. O. Sylvester Mawson*



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Preface

English grows not only through coinage of new words and employment of existing English words in novel ways, but also through adoption of foreign words and phrases that give opportunities for colorful and precise expression. We still meet *in camera*, carry on intrigues *sub rosa*, converse *tête-à-tête*, and bid one another *adieu*, *adiós*, *arrivederci*, *ciao*, or *auf Wiedersehen*. And this is just the tip of the linguistic iceberg. People eager to undertake an activity are *gung ho*, the vengeful among us resort to *lex talionis*, amateur chefs (itself a foreign word taken into our language) know the implications of *cordon bleu*, and who does not speak of *charisma*? All this is just a sampling, a potpourri (the French spelling is *pot pourri*), of the tens of thousands of foreign terms borrowed by our flourishing language. Some of the terms are so well established in English that we sometimes fail to recognize them as borrowings, but others are used in full knowledge that they are of foreign origin. Thus, when someone says *annus mirabilis* or *post hoc ergo propter hoc* or *requiescat in pace*, it is clear that Latin is being used. In contrast, when people say "ad hoc" or "antebellum" or "sub rosa," they may well be unaware of the foreign origins of what now are standard English expressions.

From the time the *Dictionary of Foreign Terms* was first compiled in 1934, the intention of its editors has remained constant: to create a single-volume source that explains foreign phrases and words likely to be encountered in American and English literature. Many of these terms may no longer be current among today's speakers of the fifty-odd languages on which the dictionary draws. A good example of this group of phrases is the extensive Anglo-Indian vocabulary included in the dictionary. The British *raj* is long gone, but its rich legacy of terms is readily apparent to devotees of such writers as Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, and Paul Scott.

The dictionary is not intended to serve as a guide to words now recognized as English. That responsibility is left to standard

dictionaries, which usually provide etymological information along with definitions. Rather, by dealing with expressions that are foreign, the editor hopes to spare readers the trouble of searching for the meanings of word after word in a foreign-language dictionary and then attempting to put a definition together.

Aside from its utilitarian *raison d'être*, this dictionary provides other benefits. Finding out how people of other cultures express their thoughts affords insight into attitudes, prejudices, and practices—even perfunctory browsing will show that people everywhere have thoughts that are marvelously alike and astonishingly different. For this reason, the dictionary entertains and enriches the reader who discovers the variety of ways in which people express similar thoughts.

On eschewing obfuscation:

French—call a cat a cat: *appeler un chat un chat*.

German—call a thing by its right name: *das Ding beim rechten Namen nennen*.

Portuguese—bread, bread; cheese, cheese: *pão, pão; queijo, queijo*.

Spanish—call bread bread, and wine wine: *llamar al pan, pan y al vino, vino*.

On love:

French—love and smoke cannot be hidden: *l'amour et la fumée ne peuvent se cacher*.

Italian—love rules without rules: *amor regge senza legge*.

German—the illusion is brief, the repentance long: *der Wahn ist kurz, die Reu' ist lang*.

Latin—love is a kind of military service: *militiae species amor est*.

Spanish—love and prudence cannot go together: *amar y saber no puede todo ser*.

On making the most of today:

German—a sparrow in the hand is better than a pigeon on the roof: *ein Sperling in der Hand ist besser als eine Taube auf dem Dache*.

Italian—better an egg today than chicken tomorrow: *meglio un uovo oggi che una gallina domani*.

Latin—enjoy today, trusting as little as possible to what tomorrow may bring: *carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero*.

On marriage:

German—early marriage, long love: *frühe Hochzeit, lange Liebe*.

Italian—praise married life but remain single: *lauda la moglie e tieni donzello*.

Portuguese—a rich widow weeps with one eye and signals with the other: *viuva rica com um olho chora, e com outro repica*.

Spanish—marry and be tamed: *casarás y amansarás*.

On money:

French—money is a master key: *l'argent est un bon passe-partout.*

German—money rules the world: *Geld regiert die Welt.*

Italian—money is the brother of money: *il danaro è fratello del danaro.*

Latin—money, like a queen, gives rank and beauty: *et genus et formam regina pecunia donat.*

Portuguese—laws go where dollars please: *lá vão leis onde querem cruzados.*

Spanish—a golden key opens any door: *no hay cerradura donde es oro la ganzúa.*

The first edition of the dictionary was the work of the distinguished lexicographer C. O. Sylvester Mawson, who was born in England in 1870. Mawson came to the United States to join the editorial staff of the *Century Dictionary*. He later was an editor of *Roget's International Thesaurus* as well as of several Merriam-Webster dictionaries and remained active as a lexicographer until his death in 1938. The second edition of the *Dictionary of Foreign Terms* appeared in 1975. It was prepared by Charles Berlitz, a writer of foreign-language textbooks, who added terms that had come into use after Mawson's time.

The present edition has three principal goals: to correct errors in the work, particularly in the English transliteration of classical Greek entries; to add terms from languages that have come into prominence since the last revision; and to furnish an English index to the thousands of terms explained in the volume. As for how well the goal of correcting errors has been met, sharp-eyed readers will inevitably judge for themselves. The languages that contribute the bulk of the many new entries are Japanese, Russian, and modern Hebrew. Finally, it is hoped that readers will find the index helpful when they have difficulty in recalling elusive foreign words, phrases, and proverbs.

A brief summary of the classes of words and other features included in this volume indicates the scope of *The Harper Dictionary of Foreign Terms*:

Classes of Words

- Foreign words and phrases from more than fifty languages frequently used in conversation or likely to be encountered in the fields of literature, law, science, politics, music, art, diplomacy, fashion, travel, food, and dining
- Words from Asian languages, particularly Japanese and Chinese, that have been brought into use in America in recent years

- Terms from languages relatively new on the international scene, such as Swahili and modern Hebrew, and currently extending their linguistic areas of influence
- Expressions adopted into English from the American Indian languages
- Classical Greek terms given in the English or Greek alphabet, depending on the form in which they are likely to appear in most texts. Entries in the Greek alphabet include a rendering in the English alphabet, employing the modern scheme of Greek transliteration. Readers unfamiliar with the Greek alphabet will find that the English transliterations are helpful in locating entries alphabetically.
- Terms of French and Spanish origin peculiar to Canada and the southwestern United States
- Quotations from classical and modern authors frequently used in literature and public addresses, with passages from the Vulgate and the Old Testament in Greek and in English transliteration
- Folk sayings and proverbs from foreign languages that give insight into other cultures while providing pithy ways of expressing universal ideas
- Translations and definitions of foreign-language mottoes of states, institutions, and prominent families

Usage and Syntactic Data

- Translations and definitions of all foreign terms used, with the secondary meanings and popular usages indicated where necessary
- Plurals of all words that might present difficulty to the reader of English
- Feminine forms of foreign nouns and adjectives
- Foreign abbreviations and contractions

Special Terms

- Naval and military terms from foreign languages
- Menu terms in French, Italian, and other languages, with descriptions of many foreign dishes
- Archaic terms and phrases, included for the convenience of readers of old texts

New to this edition is an English index to all foreign entries.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank all the people who helped in the preparation of this new edition of *Dictionary of Foreign Terms*, particularly Nina Davis, Christopher Dadian, David Graff, Cathy Guigui, Antje Munroe, and Ellen Sackelman, who assisted in checking entries for languages beyond my own grasp, suggesting new entries, and preparing certain definitions. They did their work enthusiastically and with the greatest care. As a result of their ministrations, the volume has been much improved.

In preparing the index for this volume, I had the cooperation of Felice Levy, indexer *par excellence*, who has collaborated with me many times. In her work on this volume, she was ably assisted by Barbara Gold, one of her associates. Since I was not cut out to be even an apprentice in the arcane art they practice, I especially value their contributions.

Sally Bunch served as editorial assistant for the project, as she has many times before for various projects developed at The Hudson Group, and I wish to thank her for her efforts. I wish also to express my admiration and gratitude for my colleagues Raymond Hand, Jr., and Hayden Carruth, who carefully worked around me during the many months in which the project cluttered my desk and occupied my attention completely.

Finally, I wish to extend thanks to Carol Cohen, my editor at Harper & Row, who suggested the project to me and saw it through to completion.

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Abbreviations

Used in This Book

<i>abbr.</i>	abbreviation
<i>adj.</i>	adjective
<i>adv.</i>	adverb
<i>aero.</i>	aeronautics
<i>Afrik</i>	Afrikaans
<i>Algon</i>	Algonquian
<i>Am</i>	American
<i>Am Sp</i>	American Spanish
<i>anat.</i>	anatomy
<i>Anglo-Ind</i>	Anglo-Indian
<i>Ar</i>	Arabic
<i>Aram</i>	Aramaic
<i>arch.</i>	architecture
<i>arith.</i>	arithmetic
<i>Armen</i>	Armenian
<i>astron.</i>	astronomy
<i>auto.</i>	automobile
<i>Beng</i>	Bengali
<i>biol.</i>	biology
<i>Bohem</i>	Bohemian
<i>bot.</i>	botany
<i>Br</i>	British
<i>Bulg</i>	Bulgarian
<i>Can</i>	Canadian
<i>Can Fr</i>	Canadian French
<i>cf.</i>	<i>confer</i> [L, compare]
<i>Chin</i>	Chinese
<i>colloq.</i>	colloquial; colloquialism
<i>com.</i>	commerce
<i>corr.</i>	corruption

<i>Dan</i>	Danish
<i>dial.</i>	dialectal; dialect
<i>Du</i>	Dutch
<i>eccl.</i>	ecclesiastical
<i>elec.</i>	electricity
<i>Eng</i>	English
<i>engin.</i>	engineering
<i>Esk</i>	Eskimo
<i>fem.</i>	feminine
<i>fig.</i>	figuratively
<i>Flem</i>	Flemish
<i>fort.</i>	fortification
<i>fr.</i>	from
<i>Fr</i>	French
<i>Fr Am</i>	French American
<i>Fr Can</i>	French Canadian
<i>Gael</i>	Gaelic
<i>geol.</i>	geology
<i>Ger</i>	German
<i>Gr</i>	Greek
<i>gram.</i>	grammar
<i>Guj</i>	Gujarati
<i>Hawa</i>	Hawaiian
<i>Heb</i>	Hebrew
<i>her.</i>	heraldry
<i>Hind</i>	Hindi and/or Urdu (Hindustani)
<i>hist.</i>	historical; history
<i>Hung</i>	Hungarian
<i>Icel</i>	Icelandic
<i>i.e.</i>	<i>id est</i> [L, that is]
<i>Ind</i>	Indian
<i>interj.</i>	interjection
<i>It</i>	Italian
<i>Jap</i>	Japanese
<i>Kan</i>	Kanarese
<i>L</i>	Latin
<i>LL</i>	Late Latin
<i>lit.</i>	literally
<i>Mal</i>	Malay and Indonesian
<i>Mar</i>	Marathi
<i>masc.</i>	masculine
<i>mech.</i>	mechanics
<i>med.</i>	medicine
<i>Mex</i>	Mexican
<i>Mex Sp</i>	Mexican Spanish

<i>mil.</i>	military
<i>mod.</i>	modern
<i>myth.</i>	mythology
<i>n.</i>	noun
<i>naut.</i>	nautical
<i>nav.</i>	naval
<i>Nav</i>	Navajo
<i>neut.</i>	neuter
<i>n.f.</i>	noun feminine
<i>NL</i>	New Latin
<i>n.m.</i>	noun masculine
<i>Norw</i>	Norwegian
<i>OF</i>	Old French
<i>orig.</i>	originally
<i>p. adj.</i>	predicate adjective
<i>paleog.</i>	paleography
<i>Pers</i>	Persian
<i>Pg</i>	Portuguese
<i>pharm.</i>	pharmacy
<i>philos.</i>	philosophy
<i>phon.</i>	phonetics
<i>photog.</i>	photography
<i>P.I.</i>	Philippine Islands
<i>pl.</i>	plural
<i>Pol</i>	Polish
<i>pop.</i>	popularly
<i>pr.</i>	pronounced
<i>prep.</i>	preposition
<i>prob.</i>	probably
<i>psychol.</i>	psychology
<i>q.v.</i>	<i>quod vide</i> [L, which see]
<i>R.C.Ch.</i>	Roman Catholic Church
<i>rhet.</i>	rhetoric
<i>R.R.</i>	railroad
<i>Rum</i>	Rumanian
<i>Russ</i>	Russian
<i>sculp.</i>	sculpture
<i>Serb</i>	Serbian
<i>sing.</i>	singular
<i>Sing</i>	Singhalese
<i>Skr</i>	Sanskrit
<i>Sp</i>	Spanish
<i>Sp Am</i>	Spanish American
<i>specif.</i>	specifically
<i>St.</i>	Saint

Abbreviations Used in This Book

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<i>Sw</i>	Swedish
<i>Swa</i>	Swahili
<i>Tag</i>	Tagalog
<i>Tam</i>	Tamil
<i>tech.</i>	technical
<i>Tel</i>	Telugu
<i>theat.</i>	theatrical
<i>theol.</i>	theology
<i>theos.</i>	theosophy
<i>topog.</i>	topography
<i>tr.</i>	translated
<i>Turk</i>	Turkish
<i>typog.</i>	typography
<i>univ.</i>	university
<i>U.S.</i>	United States
<i>v.</i>	verb
<i>v.a.</i>	verb active
<i>v.i.</i>	verb intransitive
<i>Viet</i>	Vietnamese
<i>v.t.</i>	verb transitive
<i>zool.</i>	zoology
<i>Zu</i>	Zulu

A

- ab absurdo** [L], from the absurd: *geometry*.
- ¡abajo...!** [Sp], down with...! —**¡abajo el gobierno!**, down with the government!
- à bas!** [Fr], down with! off with!
- ab asino lanam** [L], lit., wool from an ass; blood from a stone.
- abatis or abattis** [Fr], giblets. —**abatis de dinde**, turkey giblets: *cooking*.
- abat-jour** [Fr], lamp shade or reflector; *arch.*, an inclined device attached to a window, for directing daylight downward; also, a skylight or sloping aperture to admit light from above.
- à bâtons rompus** [Fr], lit., with sticks broken; by fits and starts; fitfully.
- abat-sons** [Fr], a device for throwing sound downward, as in a belfry; louver.
- abattu** [Fr; *fem.* *abattue*], dejected; cast down.
- a battuta** [It], lit., by the beat; in strict time: *music*.
- abat-vent** [Fr], any device for breaking the wind, without blocking the passage of air and sound.
- abat-voix** [Fr], sounding board, as over a pulpit.
- abbacchio** [It], lamb.
- abbaye** [Fr], abbey.
- abbé** [Fr], abbot; priest, esp. one without official ecclesiastical duties.
- abbellimento** [It], embellishment; ornament: *music*.
- Abbildung** [Ger], picture; cut: *typog.*
- à beau jeu beau retour** [Fr], one good turn deserves another.
- à beau mentir qui vient de loin** [Fr], travelers from afar can lie with impunity.
- Abendessen** [Ger], supper.
- abends wird der Faule fleissig** [Ger], in the evening the lazy man becomes industrious.
- a beneplacito** [It], at pleasure; *music*, at the discretion of the performer.
- Aberglaube** [Ger], superstition, esp. in the earlier sense of excessive reverence for that which is unknown: called by Goethe the "poetry of life."
- abest** [L; *pl.* *absunt*], he (or she) is absent.
- abeto** [Sp], spruce tree; fir tree; also, their wood; spruce.
- abeunt studia in mores** [L], studies change into habits; pursuits assiduously followed become habits: *Ovid*.
- ab extra** [L], from without.
- Abhandlung** [Ger; *pl.* *Abhandlungen*], treatise; *pl.*, transactions, as of a society: *abbr.* *Abh.*
- ab hoc et ab hac et ab illa** [L], from this man and this woman and that woman; from here, there, and everywhere; confusedly.

abiit ad plures (or **maiores**) [L; *pl.* abierunt], he (or she) has gone to the majority (i.e., is dead).

abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit [L], he has departed, gone off, escaped, broken away: *Cicero* (of Catiline).

abîmé de dettes [Fr], deep in debt.

ab imo pectore [L], from the bottom of the heart.

ab inconvenienti [L], lit., from the inconvenience (involved); designating an argument designed to show that the opposite construction is untenable because of the inconvenience or hardship it would create: *law*.

ab incunabulis [L], from the cradle; from childhood: *Livy*.

ab initio [L], from the beginning: *abbr.* ab init.

ab intra [L], from within.

ab invito [L], unwillingly.

ab Iove principium [L], from Jove is my beginning; let us commence with Jupiter; let us begin with the most important person or thing: *Virgil*.

ab irato [L], lit., from an angry man; in a fit of anger; hence, not to be taken too seriously.

à bis ou à blanc [Fr], in one way or another; by hook or by crook.

abito [Can Fr]. Same as ABOIDEAU.

abnormis sapiens [L], a natural-born philosopher: *Horace*.

abogado [Sp], advocate; lawyer.

aboideau or aboiteau [Can Fr], a sluice or tide gate in a dike: *eastern Canada*. Called also *abito* and *bito*.

à bon appétit il ne faut point de sauce [Fr], a good appetite needs no sauce.

à bon chat, bon rat [Fr], lit., to a good cat, a good rat; tit for tat; diamond cut diamond; set a thief to catch a thief.

à bon cheval point d'éperon [Fr], a good horse needs no spur; do not spur the willing horse.

à bon chien il ne vient jamais un bon os [Fr], lit., a good bone never comes to a good dog; merit rarely meets with its reward.

à bon commencement bonne fin [Fr], a good beginning makes a good end.

à bon compte [Fr], cheaply; at a low cost.

abondance de biens ne nuit pas [Fr], opulence (lit., abundance of good things) does no harm.

à bon droit [Fr], with good reason; justly.

à bon marché [Fr], at a good bargain; cheap.

abonnement [Fr], subscription.

à bonne raison [Fr], with good reason.

à bonnes enseignes [Fr], deservedly; on sure grounds.

à bon vin point d'enseigne [Fr], lit., good wine needs no signboard; good wine needs no bush.

ab origine [L], from the origin (*or* beginning).

a bove maiori discit arare minor [L], from the older ox the younger learns to plow; as the old cock crows, the young one learns.

ab ovo [L], lit., from the egg; from the beginning.

ab ovo usque ad mala [L], lit., from the egg to the apples (i.e., from the first to the last course of a Roman dinner); from beginning to end: *Horace*.

abra [Sp], orig., a bay; mountain gorge or pass; mouth of a canyon; a break in a mesa, as in Texas: *southwestern U.S.*

à bras ouverts [Fr], with open arms.

à brebis tondue Dieu mesure le vent [Fr], God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

abrégé [Fr], abridged; epitomized; also, a summary.

abri [Fr], shelter; cover; protection.

abricot [Fr], apricot.

abricot-pêche [Fr, *pl.* abricots-pêches], peach-apricot.

Abschied [Ger], dismissal; departure; leave; farewell.

Abschnitt [Ger; *pl.* Abschnitte], paragraph; section; division (*abbr.* Abs.): *typog.*

abscissio infiniti [L], lit., the cutting off of the infinite (*or* negative part); the systematic comparison and rejection of hypotheses till the true conclusion is reached: *logic*.

absence d'esprit [Fr], absence of mind.

absens haeres non erit [L], the absent one will not be the heir; out of sight, out of mind.

absente reo [L], the defendant being absent (*abbr.* abs. re.): *law*.

absent le chat, les souris dansent [Fr], when the cat's away, the mice will play.

absichtlich [Ger], intentional; intentionally; on purpose.

absit invidia [L], let there be no ill will; take it not amiss; envy apart.

absit omen [L], may the omen (as in a word just used) augur no evil.

absitzen! [Ger], dismount!: *mil.*

absque [L], without. —**absque hoc**, without this (a term used in a formal denial): *law*.

a buen bocado, buen grito [Sp], for a good morsel, a good groan; indulgence exacts its toll.

a buen entendedor media palabra basta [Sp], to the good listener half a word is enough.

ab uno ad omnes [L], from one to all.

ab uno disce omnes [L], from one learn all; from one sample judge the rest: *Virgil*.

a buon vino non bisogna frasca [It], good wine needs no bush.

ab urbe condita [L], from the founding of the city (i.e., Rome, founded about 753 B.C.): *abbr.* A.U.C.

abusus non tollit usum [L], abuse does not take away use; abuse is no argument against proper use.

a caballo [Sp], on horseback.

a capella [It], in the style of old church music; unaccompanied: *music*.

a capite ad calcem [L], from head to heel.

a capriccio [It], at the performer's pleasure; at will: *music*.

acariâtre [Fr], peevish; crabbed; cross-grained.

accablé [Fr; *fem.* *accablée*], crushed; overwhelmed; depressed; dejected.

accademia [It], academy.

accedas ad curiam [L], you may approach the court; a commonlaw writ to remove a cause to a higher court: *Eng. law*.

accelerando [It], gradually faster (*abbr.* *accel.*): *music*.

accentus [L], part of a ritualistic church service chanted or intoned by the priest and his assistants at the altar: distinguished from *concentus*.

accepta [L], receipts; credits.

accessit [L; *pl.* *accesserunt*], he (she, it) came near.

acciacatura [It], a short grace note, one half step below a principal note: *music*.

accolade [Fr], lit., an embrace; *typog. & music*, brace; a congratulatory embrace; an award.

accompagnamento [It], accompaniment: *music*.

accompagnatore [It; *fem.* *accompagnatrice*], accompanist: *music*.

accordez vos flûtes [Fr], lit., tune your flutes; settle it between you.

accordo [It], agreement; harmony; *music*, chord.

accouchement [Fr], delivery in childbed; confinement.

accoucheur [Fr; *fem.* *accoucheuse*], obstetrician.

accroché [Fr; *fem.* *accrochée*], lit., hooked; deadlocked.

accueil [Fr], reception; welcome.

accusare nemo se debet, nisi coram Deo [L], no one is bound to accuse (or incriminate) himself, unless before God: *law*.

aceite [Sp], oil; lubricant; also, an edible oil.

aceituna [Sp], olive (fruit).

aceituno [Sp], olive tree.

a cembalo [It], for the piano: *music*.

acequia [Sp], canal; irrigation trench. —**acequia madre**, main canal or *acequia*: *Sp. Am. & southwestern U.S.*

acera [Sp], sidewalk.

acerbus et ingens [L], fierce and mighty.

acervatim [L], in heaps; summarily.

ac etiam [L], and also.

à chacun son fardeau pèse [Fr], everyone thinks his own burden heavy.

à chaque fou plaît sa marotte [Fr], every fool is pleased with (or rides) his own hobby.

à chaque oiseau son nid est beau [Fr], every bird thinks its own nest fine.

à chaque saint sa chandelle [Fr], to each saint his candle; honor to whom honor is due.

achar [Hind & Pers], pickles; any salt or tart relish: *India*.

acharné [Fr], bloodthirsty; infuriated; enthusiastic; rabid; *hunting*, fleshed.

acharnement [Fr], ferocity; blind fury; rage; *fig.*, gusto.

achcha [Hind], good; well; opposite of *kharab*. —*bahut achcha*, all right; very well.

Acheruntis pabulum [L], food for Acheron; marked for death (said of a corrupt and depraved man): *Plautus*.

à cheval [Fr], on horseback; astride. —à cheval, to horse!

a chi vuole non mancano modi [It], where there's a will, there's a way.

Achtung! [Ger], attention!

à clin [Fr], clinker-built; lapstreak: *naval*.

à coeur joie [Fr], to one's heart's content.

à coeur ouvert [Fr], with open heart; unreservedly.

à compte [Fr], on account; in part payment.

à contre coeur [Fr], reluctantly; against the grain.

à corps perdu [Fr], lit., with lost body; impetuously; headlong; with might and main.

à corsaire, corsaire et demi [Fr], set a thief to catch a thief. Cf. A FRIPON, etc.

à coups de bâton [Fr], with blows of a stick (*or cudgel*).

à coup sûr [Fr], lit., with sure stroke; surely; assuredly; unerringly; without fail.

à couvert [Fr], under cover; sheltered; secure; safe.

acqua [It], water. —acqua cheta rovina i ponti, stagnant water ruins bridges; still waters run deep. —acqua lontana non spegne fuoco vicino, distant water does not extinguish a nearby fire.

acquista buona fama e mettiti a dormire [It], acquire a good reputation and go to sleep.

acquit [Fr], receipt; discharge. —pour acquit, paid; settled: written on receipted bills, etc.

âcre [Fr], tart; biting; acrid.

a cruce salus [L], salvation by (*or from*) the Cross.

acta est fabula [L], the play is over; words used at the close of a dramatic performance in the ancient Roman theater; the dying words of the Emperor Augustus. Cf. LA FARCE EST JOUÉE.

acte d'accusation [Fr], bill of indictment.

actionnaire [Fr], shareholder; stockholder.

actio personalis moritur cum persona [L], a personal action dies with the person: *law*.

actualité [Fr], passing event; question of the hour.

actualmente [Sp], at the present time.

actuel [Fr; fem. actuelle], real; present.