

# ENCYCLOPÆDIA AMERICANA.

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A

## POPULAR DICTIONARY

OF

ARTS, SCIENCES, LITERATURE, HISTORY, POLITICS, AND  
BIOGRAPHY,

BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME;

INCLUDING

A COPIOUS COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL ARTICLES

IN

AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY;

ON

THE BASIS OF THE SEVENTH EDITION OF THE GERMAN

**CONVERSATIONS-LEXICON.**

EDITED BY

FRANCIS LIEBER,

ASSISTED BY

E. WIGGLESWORTH AND T. G. BRADFORD.

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VOL. IV.

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NEW EDITION.

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Philadelphia:

THOMAS, COWPERTHWAIT, & CO.

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1838.

now of the true elevation of the tragic arc, but only an imitation, sometimes a happy one, of the manner struck out by Corneille. He was a man of a proud and independent character, disdained to flatter the great, and passed much of his life in a condition bordering on poverty. More fortunate circumstances might have given more amenity to his spirit; but, neglected, as he imagined, by mankind, he sought consolation in the company of dogs and cats, which he picked up in the streets (the poorest and most sickly were those which he preferred), and found a species of enjoyment in an irregular manner of living. In 1731, he became a member of the academy. Crébillon died June 17, 1762, at the age of 88. Louis XV erected a magnificent monument to him in the church of St. Gervais, which, however, was never entirely completed till it was removed to the museum of French monuments (*aux petits Augustins*). Besides the splendid edition of Crébillon's works published by the order of Louis XV, for the benefit of the author, after the successful performance of *Catiline* (*Œuvres de Crébillon, imprimerie R. du Louvre, 1750, 2 vols. 4to.*), there is another published by Didot the elder, 1812, 3 vols., in both of which, however, six verses are omitted in *Catiline*, which had been left out in the representation, as applicable to madame de Pompadour.

CRÉBILLON, Claude Prosper Jolyot de, the younger, son of the preceding, born at Paris in 1707, succeeded as an author in an age of licentiousness. By the exhibition of gross ideas, covered only with a thin veil, and by the subtleties with which he excuses licentious principles, Crébillon contributed to diffuse a general corruption of manners, before confined to the higher circles of Parisian society. In later times, the French taste has been so much changed, especially by the revolution, that such indelicacies as are found in his works would not be tolerated at the present day. His own morals, however, appear to have been the opposite of those which he portrayed. We are told of his cheerfulness, his rectitude of principle, and his blameless life. In the circle of the *Dominicains* (a Sunday society), he was a favorite, and the *caveau* where Piron, Gallet, Collé, wrote their songs and uttered their jests, was made respectable by his company. Of his works, the best are—*Lettres de la Marquise* \*\*\* *au Comte de* \*\*\* (1732, 2 vols., 12mo.); *Tanzai et Nèzarné* (less licentious, but full of now unintelligible allusions); *Les Égaremens du Cœur et de*

*l'Esprit* (Hague, 1736, 3 vols.), perhaps the most successful, but unfinished. One of his most voluptuous pieces is *Le Sopha* (1745, 2 vols.). In the same licentious strain are most of his other writings composed. It is still a disputed point whether he was the author of the *Lettres de la Marquise de Pompadour*. They are not included in the edition of 1779, 7 vols., 12mo. Crébillon held a small office in the censorship of the press. He died at Paris, April 12, 1777.

CRECY OR CRESSY EN PONTHEU; a town in France, in Somme; 10 miles N. of Abbeville, and 100 N. of Paris; population, 1650. It is celebrated on account of a battle fought here Aug. 26, 1346, between the English and French. Edward III and his son, the Black Prince, were both engaged, and the French were defeated with great slaughter, 30,000 foot and 1200 horse being left dead in the field; among whom were the king of Bohemia, the count of Alençon, Louis count of Flanders, with many others of the French nobility.

CREDIT, in economy, is the postponement agreed on by the parties of the payment of a debt to a future day. It implies confidence of the creditor in the debtor; and a "credit system" is one of general confidence of people in each other's honesty, solvency and resources. Credit is not confined to civilized countries; Mr. Park mentions instances of it among the Africans; but it will not prevail extensively where the laws do not protect property, and enforce the fulfilment of promises. Public credit is founded upon a confidence in the resources, good faith and stability of the government; and it does not always flourish or decline at the same time and rate as private credit; for the people may have either greater or less confidence in the government than in each other: still there is some sympathy and correspondence between the two; for a general individual confidence can rarely, if ever, take place in the midst of distrust of the government; and, *vice versa*, a firm reliance upon the government promotes a corresponding individual confidence among the citizens. The history of every industrious and commercial community, under a stable government, will present successive alternate periods of credit and distrust, following each other with a good deal of regularity. A general feeling of prosperity produces extension and facilities of credit. The mere opinion or imagination of a prevailing success has, of its own force, a most powerful influence

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an exciting the enterprise, and quickening  
the industry, of a community. The first  
requisite to industry is a stock of instru-  
ments, and of materials on which to em-  
ploy them: a very busy and productive  
community requires a great stock of both.  
Now if this stock, being ever so great,  
were hoarded up; if the possessors would  
neither use, let, nor sell it, as long as  
it should be so withdrawn from circu-  
lation, it would have no effect upon the  
general activity and productiveness. This  
is partially the case when a general dis-  
trust and impression of decay and decline  
cause the possessors of the stock and ma-  
terials to be scrupulous about putting them  
out of their hands, by sale or otherwise,  
to be used by others; and others, again,  
having no confidence in the markets, and  
seeing no prospect of profits, hesitate to  
purchase materials, or to buy or hire the  
implements, mills, ships, &c., of others, or  
to use their own in the processes of pro-  
duction and transportation. This state of  
surplusage and distrust is sure to be fol-  
lowed by a reduction of money prices;  
and every one who has a stock on hand,  
and whose possessions are estimated in  
money, is considered to be growing poorer  
and poorer every day. But when prices  
have reached their lowest point, and begin  
regularly to rise, every body begins to  
esteem himself and others as being pros-  
perous, and the opinion contributes pow-  
erfully to verify itself. Credit begins to  
expand; all the stores of the commu-  
nity are unlocked, and the whole of its  
resources is thrown open to enterprise.  
Every one is able readily to command a  
sufficiency of means for the employment  
of his industry; capital is easily procured,  
and services are readily rendered, each  
one relying upon the success of the others,  
and their readiness to meet their engage-  
ments; and the acceleration of industry,  
and the extension of credit, go on until a  
surplus and stagnation are again produced.  
The affairs of every industrious and ac-  
tive community are always revolving in  
this circle, in traversing which, general  
credit passes through its periodical ebbs  
and flows. This facility and extension of  
credit constitutes what is commonly called  
*fictitious capital*. The fiction consists in  
many individuals being supposed to be  
possessed of a greater amount of clear  
capital than they are actually worth. The  
most striking instance of this fictitious-  
ness of capital, or, in other words, excess  
of credit, appears in the immense amounts  
of negotiable paper, that some individuals  
and companies spread in the community,

or of paper currency, where the issuing  
of notes for supplying currency by com-  
panies or individuals is permitted. Indi-  
viduals or companies thus draw into their  
hands an immense capital, and it is by no  
means a fictitious capital when it comes  
into their possession, but actual money,  
goods, lands, &c.; but, if they are in a  
bad, losing business, the capital, as soon  
as they are intrusted with it, becomes fic-  
titious in respect to those who trusted  
them with it, since they will not again  
realize it. Extensive credits, both in sales  
and the issuing of paper, in new and  
growing communities, which have a small  
stock and great industry, grow out of their  
necessities, and thus become habitual and  
customary, of which the U. States hith-  
erto have given a striking example.

CREECH, Thomas, a scholar of some  
eminence for his classical translations, was  
born in 1659. He took the degree of  
M. A. at Oxford in 1683, having the pre-  
ceding year established his reputation as a  
scholar, by printing his translation of Lu-  
cretius. He also translated several other  
of the ancient poets, wholly or in part,  
comprising selections from Homer and  
Virgil, nearly the whole of Horace, the  
thirteenth Satire of Juvenal, the Idyls  
of Theocritus, and several of Plutarch's  
Lives. He likewise published an edition  
of Lucretius in the original, with inter-  
pretations and annotations. He put an end  
to his life at Oxford, in 1700. Various  
causes are assigned for this rash act, but  
they are purely conjectural. He owes his  
fame almost exclusively to his translation  
of Lucretius, the poetical merit of which  
is very small, although, in the versification  
of the argumentative and mechanical parts,  
some skill is exhibited. As an editor of  
Lucretius, he is chiefly valuable for his  
explanation of the Epicurean philosophy,  
for which, however, he was largely in-  
debted to Gassendi.

CREED; a summary of belief; from the  
Latin *credo* (I believe), with which the  
Apostles' Creed begins. In the Eastern  
church, a summary of this sort was called  
*μάθημα* (the lesson), because it was learned  
by the catechumens; *γράφη* (the writ-  
ing), or *κάνων* (the rule). But the most com-  
mon name in the Greek church was  
*σύμβολον* (the symbol, q. v.), which has also  
passed into the Western church. Numer-  
ous ancient formularies of faith are pre-  
served in the writings of the early fathers,  
Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, &c., which  
agree in substance, though with some di-  
versity of expression. The history of  
creeds would be the history of the church,

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CREED; a summary of the Latin *credo* (I believe), the Apostles' Creed by the church, a summary of the *μάθημα* (the lesson), taught by the catechumen (the one being), or *κάνων* (the rule), the common name in the church, the *σύμβολον* (the symbol), passed into the Western Church, the ancient formula



to other heads. (See *Crime, Courts, and Jury.*)

**CRISIS** (from *κρίνειν*, to decide), in medicine; a point in a disease, at which a decided change for the better or the worse takes place. The crisis is most strongly marked in the case of acute diseases, and with strong patients, particularly if the course of the disease is not checked by energetic treatment. At the approach of a crisis, the disease appears to take a more violent character, and the disturbance of the system reaches the highest point. If the change is for the better, the violent symptoms cease with a copious perspiration, or some other discharge from the system. In cases where the discharge may have been too violent, and the nobler organs have been greatly deranged, or where the constitution is too weak to resist the disease, the patient's condition becomes worse. In regular fevers, the crisis takes place on regular days, which are called *critical days* (the 7th, 14th and 21st); sometimes, however, a little sooner or later, according to the climate and the constitution of the patient. A bad turn often produces a crisis somewhat sooner. When the turn is favorable, the crisis frequently occurs a little later. After a salutary crisis, the patient feels himself relieved, and the dangerous symptoms cease.—It hardly need be mentioned, that the word *crisis* is figuratively used for a decisive point in any important affair or business, for instance, in politics.

**CRISPIN**; the name of two legendary saints, whose festival is celebrated on the 25th of October. They are said to have been born at Rome, about 303 A. D., and to have travelled to France to propagate Christianity, where they died as martyrs. During their mission, they maintained themselves by shoemaking; hence they are the patrons of shoemakers.

**CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY.** (See *Kant, and Philosophy.*)

**CROATIA**; a kingdom of the Austrian monarchy, connected with Hungary. It is divided into Civil and Military Croatia. The former contains 3665 square miles,

with 414,800 inhabitants, in 6 ci market towns, and 1241 villages. inhabitants are Croats and Rascian ed with a few Germans and Hung. The Croats, a Slavonic tribe, are Catholics, and are known as go diers, but have made little prog science and the arts; nay, they b among them even all of the mechanics. Their language is th no-Horwatic dialect. In Turkish (on the Unna and near Bihatsch are Greek Catholics. Civil Cro fertile, and intersected by heights moderate elevation, extending do Styria and Carniola. Military however, towards Bosnia and D has mountains rising to the h 5400 feet; as, for instance, Well Plissivicza mountains, and the m of Zrin. The climate is health that of the neighboring Slavo mild. The country produces chie tobacco, grain of various sorts, i maize, fruits, particularly plum cattle, horses, sheep, swine, ga bees, iron, copper, and sulphur.

**CROCODILE** (*crocodilus*); a g saurian, or lizard-like reptile, sp which are found in the old a world. That inhabiting the other rivers of Africa has bee for many ages, and celebrated, remotest antiquity, for quali render it terrible to mankind. largest reptile known,\* and as ferocious and destructive of t tants of the waters, it could not mand the attention, and excite of those who were near enough t its peculiarities. Few persons the sublime book of Job, with struck with the magnificent an description of the attributes of to which alone the character crocodile correspond. It is not that the Egyptians, who deific

\* The skeletons of much larger re been discovered within the last half ce from the strata in which they were certain they had become extinct long earth was inhabited by man.