of £300 given to him by the king, to whom he dedicated it. Yet notwithstanding these ample supplies, about the year following, being reduced to the utmost extremity, he sold his share in the playhouse ; and soon after com­menced a lawsuit with the managers, which in 1726, was decided against him. Having now again, for the last time, brought himself by the most heedless profusion into a desperate condition, he was rendered altogether incapable of retrieving the loss, by being seized with a paralytic disorder, which greatly impaired his understanding. In these unhappy circumstances, he retired to his seat at Languanor near Caermarthen in Wales, where he died on the 21st of September 1729, and, according to his own desire, was privately interred in the church of Caermarthen. Among his papers were found the manu­scripts of two plays, one called *The Gentlemen,* founded upon the Eunuch of Terence, and the other entitled *The School of Action,* both nearly finished.

Sir Richard was a man of undissembled and extensive benevolence, a friend to the friendless, and, as far as his circumstances would permit, the father of every orphan. His works are chaste and manly. He was a stranger to the most distant appearance of envy or malevolence ; never jealous of any man’s growing reputation ; and so far from arrogating any praise to himself from his con­junction with Mr Addison, that he was the first who de­sired him to distinguish his papers. His great fault was want of economy; and it has been said of him, he was certainly the most agreeable and the most innocent rake that ever trode the rounds of dissipation.

STEERAGE, on board a ship, that part of the ship next below the quarter-deck, before the bulk-head of the great cabin, where the steersman stands in most ships of war.

STEERING, in *Navigation,* see Seamanship.

STEEVENS, George, the most successful of all the editors and commentators of Shakspeare, was born in the year 1735. We know nothing respecting his parents; but they appear to have been in affluent circumstances. He received the rudiments of his education at Kings- ton-upon-Thames, and had Gibbon the historian for a companion at that school. From hence he went to Eton, and in a few years was admitted a fellow com­moner of King's College, Cambridge ; but no mention is made of his peculiar course of studies. It appears how­ever that he had little relish for the mathematics, which lead at Cambridge to academical honours. On the first establishment of the Essex militia, he accepted of a commission ; but he spent the concluding years of his life in almost total seclusion from the world, seldom mingling with society but in the shops of booksellers, in the Shakspeare gallery, or in the morning conversa­tions of Sir Joseph Banks.

Although not an original writer, we cannot in justice refuse him a place among the literary characters of the age, when we consider the works which he illustrated, and the learning, sagacity, taste, and general knowledge which he brought to the task. With a versatility of talents, he was eminent both by bis pen and his pencil ; but his chief excellence lay in his critical knowledge of an author’s text; and the best specimen of his abilities is his edition of Shakspeare, in which he has left every competitor far behind him. He had studied the age of Shakspeare, and employed his persevering in­dustry in becoming acquainted with the writings, man­ners, and laws of that period, as well as the provincial peculiarities, whether of language or customs, which prevailed in different parts of the kingdom ; but more particularly in those where Shakspeare passed the early years of his life. He was continually increasing this store of knowledge, by the acquisition of the obsolete publications of a former age, which he spared no expense to obtain. His critical sagacity and observation were constantly employed in calling forth the hidden meanings of the dramatic bard, and of course enlarging the display of his beauties. This advantage is apparent from his last edition of Shakspeare, which contains so large a portion of new, interesting, and accumulated instruction. In preparing it for the press, he gave an instance of ac­tivity and perseverance without example. To this work he exclusively devoted a period of eighteen months, during which he left his house at Hampstead every morning at one o'clock, going to his friend Mr Isaac Reed's chambers in Barnard's Inn, without any consideration of the weather or the season, and there he found a sheet of the Shakspeare letterpress ready for correction. Thus, while the printers slept, the editor was awake, by which means he completed, in less than twenty months, his splendid edi­tion of Shakspeare in fifteen volumes octavo ; a labour almost incredible, and by which the energy and perse­vering powers of his mind were fully proved.

Be probably rested satisfied with being a commentator from the particular habits of his life, and his devotion to the name of Shakspeare. But at the same time he was a classical scholar of a respectable order, and well acquainted with the polite literature of Europe. He studied ancient and modern history, and particularly that of his own country. His genius was strong and original, his wit abundant, his imagination of every colour ; and his senti­ments were enlivened with the most brilliant expressions. His eloquence was logical and animated ; his descriptions were so true to nature, his figures so curiously selected, and so happily grouped, that he might be regarded as a speaking Hogarth. He scattered his wit and his humour too freely around him, and they were not lost for want of gathering.

Mr Steevens had a very handsome fortune, which he managed with discretion. His generosity was equal to his fortune ; and though not profuse of his money to sturdy beggars, few persons distributed with more libe­rality to truly deserving objects. He possessed all the graces of outward accomplishment, at a period when civility and politeness were characteristics of a gentle­man. He bequeathed his valuable Shakspeare, illus­trated with about 1500 prints, to Earl Spencer ; his Hogarth, perfect, with the exception of one or two pieces, to Mr Windham ; and his corrected copy of Shakspeare, with 200 guineas, to his friend Mr Reed. He died in the month of January 1800, about sixty-five years of age.

STEGANOGRAPHY, the art of secret writing, or of writing in ciphers, known only to the persons corre­sponding.

STELLIONATE, in the civil law, a kind of crime, committed by a fraudulent bargain, where one of the parties sells a thing for what it is not ; as if he sells an estate for his own which belongs to another, or conveys a thing as free and clear which is already engaged to another, or puts off copper for gold, &c.

STEMPHILA, a word used by the ancients to express the husks of grapes, or the remains of the pressings of wine. The same word is also used by some to express the remaining mass of the olives, after the oil is pressed out.

STEMPYLITES, a name given by the ancients to a sort of wine pressed hard from the husks.

STEMPLES, in mining, cross bars of wood in the shafts which are sunk to mines.