STEAM HAMMER. See Hammer.

STEARINE, in commerce, designates a solid mixture of fatty acids (chiefly palmitic and stearic) which is being produced industrially from animal fats and used largely for the making of candles. In chemistry it is a generic term for the three “ esters ” derivable from glycerin, C3H5(OH)3, by the replacement of one or more of the three (OH)’s by the residue C18H35O2, which, in stearic acid, is combined with “H.” Of these tri-stearine, C3H5(CιsH35O2)3, is the most important ; it occurs in animal fats only, largely in tallow. It crystallizes from ether in white pearly nodules, insoluble in cold but easily soluble in boiling alcohol. It can be distilled undecomposed *in vacuo.* On gradual ex­posure to higher temperatures it fuses at 55° C. ; it then resolidifies, and then fuses again (permanently) at 71°·5 (Heintz). The specific gravity of the liquid is 0·9245 at 65°∙5 C. (Duffy).

STEEL. See Iron.

STEELE, Sir Richard (1672-1729), one of the most active and prominent men of letters in the reign of Queen Anne, inseparably associated in the history of literature with his personal friend Addison. He cannot be said to have lost in reputation by the partnership, because he was far inferior to Addison in purely literary gift, and it is Addison’s literary genius that has floated their joint work above merely journalistic celebrity ; but the advantage was not all on Steele’s side, inasmuch as his more brilliant coadjutor has usurped not a little of the merit rightly due to him. Steele’s often-quoted generous acknowledgment of Addison’s services in *The Tatler* has proved true in a somewhat different sense from that intended by the writer :—“ I fared like a distressed prince, who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid ; I was undone by my auxiliary ; when I had once called him in I could not subsist without dependence on him.” The truth is that in this happy alliance the one was the complement of the other ; and the balance of mutual advantage was much more nearly even than Steele claimed or posterity has generally allowed.

The famous literary pair were born in the same year, 1672,—Steele in Dublin, the senior by less than two months. Steele’s father, who is said to have been a lawyer, died before he had reached his sixth year, but the boy found a protector in his maternal uncle, Henry Gascoigne, secretary and confidential agent to two suc­cessive dukes of Ormonde. Through his influence he was nominated to the Charterhouse in 1684, and there first met with Addison. Five years afterwards he pro­ceeded to Oxford, and was a postmaster at Merton when Addison was a demy at Magdalen. Their schoolboy friendship was continued at the university, and probably helped to give a more serious turn to Steele’s mind than his natural temperament would have taken under different companionship. Addison’s reverend father also took an interest in the warm-hearted young Irishman ; but their combined influence did not steady him sufficiently to keep his impulses within the lines of a regular career ; without waiting for a degree he volunteered into the army, and served for some time as a cadet “ under the command of the unfortunate duke of Ormonde.” This escapade was made without his uncle’s consent, and cost him, according to his own account, “ the succession to a very good estate in the county of Wexford in Ireland.” Still, he did not lack advancement in the profession he had chosen. A poem on the funeral of Queen Mary (1695), dedicated to Lord Cutts, colonel of the Coldstream Guards, brought him under the notice of that nobleman, who took the gentleman trooper into his household as a secretary, made him an officer in his own regiment, and ultimately pro­cured for him a captaincy in Lord Lucas’s fusiliers.

His name was noted for promotion by King William, but the king’s death took place before anything had been done for Captain Steele. He would seem to have remained in the army, though never on active service, for several years longer.

Steele probably owed the king’s favour to honest admira­tion of the excellent principles of *The Christian Hero,* his first prose treatise, published in 1701. The “reforma­tion of manners ” was a cherished purpose with King William and his consort, which they tried to effect by proclamation and Act of Parliament ; and a sensible well- written treatise, deploring the irregularity of the military character, and seeking to prove by examples—the king himself among the number—“that no principles but those of religion are sufficient to make a great man,” was sure of attention. Steele complained that the reception of *The Christian Hero* by his comrades was not so respect­ful; they persisted in trying him by his own standard, and would not pass “ the least levity in his words and actions ” without protest. The sensitive and hot-headed “ hero ” would seem to have been teased into fighting a duel,—his first and last, for he wounded his antagonist dangerously, and from that time was a staunch opponent of affairs of honour. His uneasiness under the ridicule of his irreverent comrades had another curious result : it moved him to write a comedy. “ It was now incumbent upon him,” he says, “ to enliven his character, for which reason he writ the comedy called *The Funeral*." Although, however, it was Steele’s express purpose to free his character from the reproach of solemn dulness, and prove that he could write as smartly as another, he showed greater respect for decency than had for some time been the fashion on the stage. The purpose, afterwards more fully effected in his famous periodicals, of reconciling wit, good humour, and good breeding with virtuous conduct was already deliberately in Steele’s mind when he wrote his first comedy. It was produced and published in 1701, was received on the stage with favour, and owing to its comparative purity helped, along with *The Christian Hero,* to commend its author to King William. In his next comedy, *The Lying Lover, or the Ladies’ Friendship,* pro­duced two years afterwards, in 1703, Steele’s moral purpose was directly avowed ; and the play, according to his own statement, was “damned for its piety.” *The Tender Hus­band,* produced eighteen months later (in April 1705), though not less pure in tone, was more successful ; in this play he gave unmistakable evidence of his happy genius for conceiving and embodying humorous types of character, putting on the stage the parents or grandparents of Squire Western, Tony Lumpkin, and Lydia Languish. It was seventeen years before Steele again tried his fortune on the stage with *The Conscious Lovers,* the best and most successful of his comedies, produced in 1722.

Meantime the gallant captain had turned aside to another kind of literary work, in which, with the assistance of his friend Addison, he obtained a more enduring reputation. There never was a time when literary talent was so much sought after and rewarded by statesmen. Addison had already been waited on in “his humble lodgings in the Haymarket,” and advanced to office, when his friend the successful dramatist was appointed to the office of gazetteer. This was in May 1707. It was Steele’s first connexion with journalism. The periodical was at that time taking the place of the pamphlet as an instrument for working on public opinion. *The Gazette* gave little opening for the play of Steele’s lively pen, his main duty, as he says, having been to “ keep the paper very innocent and very insipid ” ; but the position, made him familiar with a new field of enterprise in which his inventive mind soon discerned materials for a project of