of Edward VL, they were deprived of their privileges. Though Hamburg and Lübeck sent ambassadors to inter­cede for them, they were not reinstated in their monopolies, but they succeeded in maintaining a footing in London till expelled by Elizabeth in 1597. Their beautiful guild­hall in Thames Street, described by Stow, was made a naval store-house. It contained two famous pictures, painted in distemper by Holbein, representing Poverty and Riches, which were presented by the Hanse merchants to Henry, prince of Wales, and came into the possession of Charles I., but are supposed to have perished in the fire which destroyed Whitehall.

STEEN, Jan Havicksz (1626-1679), subject-painter, was born at Leyden in 1626, the son of a brewer of the place. He studied at Utrecht under Nicholas Knuffer, an historical painter, and about 1644 went to Haarlem, where he worked under Adrian van Ostade and under Jan van Goijen, whose daughter he married in 1649. In the previous year he had joined the painters’ guild of the city. In 1667 he is said to have been a brewer at Delft, and in 1672 he received municipal authority to open a tavern. The accounts of his life, however, are very con­fused and conflicting. Some biographers have asserted that he was a drunkard and of dissolute life, but the number of his works—Van Westrheene, in his *Jan Steen, Étude sur l’Art en Holland,* has catalogued nearly five hundred—is sufficient in itself to disprove the charge. His later pictures bear marks of haste and are less care­fully finished than those of his earlier period. He died at Leyden in 1679.

The works of Jan Steen are distinguished by correct­ness of drawing, admirable freedom and spirit of touch, and clearness and transparency of colouring. But their true greatness is due to their intellectual qualities. In the wide range of his subjects, and their dramatic charac­ter, he surpasses all the Dutch figure-painters, with the single exception of Rembrandt. His productions range from the stately interiors of grave and wealthy citizens to tavern scenes of jollity and debauch. He painted chem­ists in their laboratories, doctors at the bedside of their patients, card-parties, marriage feasts, and the festivals of St Nicholas and Twelfth Night,—even religious subjects, though in these he was least successful. His rendering of children is especially delightful. Dealing often with the coarser side of things, his work is full of humour ; he de­picts the comedy of human life in a spirit of very genial toleration, but now and again there appear keenly telling touches of satire which recall such a pictorial moralist as Hogarth.

The National Gallery contains one picture by Jan Steen,—the Music Master ; and other excellent examples of his art are pre­served in the Royal, the Bute, the Ashburton, and the Northbrook collections, at Apsley House and Bridgewater House, and in the galleries of The Hague, Amsterdam, and the Hermitage, St Peters­burg.

STEFFANI, Agostino (1655-1730), ecclesiastic, diplo­matist, and musical composer, was born at Castelfranco in 1655, and at a very early age was admitted as a chorister at St Mark’s in Venice. In 1667 the beauty of his voice attracted the attention of Count Tattenbach, by whom he was taken to Munich, where his education was completed at the expense of Ferdinand Maria, elector of Bavaria, who appointed him “ Churfürstlicher Kammer- und Hof- musikus,” and granted him a liberal salary. After receiving instruction from Johann Kaspar Kerl, and possibly Ercole Bernabei, he was sent in 1673 to study in Rome, where, among other works, he composed six motets, the original MSS. of which are now in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. On his return to Munich in 1674 he pub­lished his first work, *Psalmodia Vespertina,* a part of which was reprinted in Martini’s *Saggio di Contrappunto* in 1674.

In 1675 he was appointed court organist, and in 1680 he was ordained priest, with the title of abbate of Lepsing. His ecclesiastical status did not, however, prevent him from turning his attention to the stage, for which, at different periods of his life, he composed works which un­doubtedly exercised a potent influence upon the dramatic music of the period. Of his first opera, *Marco Aurelio,* produced at Munich in 1681, the only copy known to exist is a MS. score preserved in the royal library at Buckingham palace. It was followed by *Solone* in 1685, *Servio* *Tullio* in 1686, *Alaricο* in 1687, and *Niobe* in 1688 ; but of these four last-named works no trace can now be discovered. *Niobe* was the last opera Steffani composed at Munich. Notwithstanding the favour shown to him by the elector Maximilian Emanuel, he accepted in 1689 the appointment of kapellmeister at the court of Hanover, where he speedily gained the goodwill of Ernest Augustus, duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg (afterwards raised to the dignity of elector of Hanover), the duchess Sophia Charlotte (afterwards electress of Brandenburg), the philosopher Leibnitz, the abbate Ortensio Mauro, and many men of letters and intelligence, and where, in 1710, he showed great kindness to Handel, who was then just entering upon his glorious career. He inaugurated a long series of triumphs in Hanover by composing, for the opening of the new opera-house in 1689, an opera called *Enrico il Leone,* which was produced with extraordinary splendour aud achieved an immense reputation. For the same theatre he composed *La Lotta d’Ercole con Achilleo* in 1689, *La Superbia d’Alessandro* in 1690, *Orlando Generoso* in 1691, *Le Rivali Concordi* in 1692, *La Liberta Contenta* in 1693, *I Trionfi del Fato* and *I Baccanali* in 1695, and *Briseide* in 1696. The libretto of *Briseide* is by Palmieri. Those of most if not all the others are by the abbate Mauro. The scores are preserved at Buck­ingham palace, where, in company with five volumes of songs and three of duets, they form part of the collec­tion brought to England by the elector of Hanover in 1714. But it was not only as a musician that Steffani distinguished himself in his new home. The elevation of Ernest Augustus to the electorate in 1692 led to difficul­ties, for the arrangement of which it was necessary that an ambassador should visit the various German courts, armed with a considerable amount of diplomatic power. The accomplished abbate was sent on this delicate mission in 1696, with the title of envoy extraordinary; and he fulfilled his difficult task so well that Pope Innocent XI., in recognition of certain privileges he had secured for the Hanoverian Catholics, consecrated him bishop of Spiga *in partibus infidelium.* In 1698 he was sent as ambas­sador to Brussels ; and after the death of Ernest Augustus in the same year he entered the service of the elector palatine, John William, at Düsseldorf, where he held the offices of privy councillor and protonotary of the holy see. Invested with these high honours, Steffani could scarcely continue to produce dramatic compositions in public with­out grievous breach of etiquette. But his genius was too real to submit to repression; and in 1709 he ingeniously avoided the difficulty by producing two new operas—*Enea* at Hanover and *Tassilone* at Düsseldorf—in the name of his secretary and amanuensis Gregorio Piva, whose sig­nature is attached to the scores preserved at Buckingham palace. Another score—that of *Arnwnio—*in the same collection, dated Düsseldorf, 1707, and evidently the work of Steffani, bears no composer’s name.

Steffani did not accompany the elector George to Eng­land ; but in 1724 the Academy of Antient Musick in London elected him its honorary president for life ; and in return for the compliment he sent the association a magnificent *Stabat Mater,* for six voices and orchestra,