250 ducats was paid. In 1576 he presented gratis another centre-piece—that for the ceiling of the great hall, representing the “ Plague of Serpents ”; and in the following year he com­pleted this ceiling with pictures of the “ Paschal Feast ” and “ Moses striking the Rock ”—accepting whatever pittance the confraternity chose to pay. Robusti next launched out into the painting of the entire scuola and of the adjacent church of S. Rocco. He offered in November 1577 to execute the works at the rate of 100 ducats per annum, three pictures being due in each year. This proposal was accepted and was punctually fulfilled, the painter's death alone preventing the execution of some of the ceiling-subjects. The whole sum paid for the scuola throughout was 2447 ducats. Disregarding some minor per­formances, the scuola and church contain fifty-two memorable paintings, which may be described as vast suggestive sketches, with the mastery, but not the deliberate precision, of finished pictures, and adapted for being looked at in a dusky half-light. “ Adam and Eve,” the “ Visitation,” the “ Adoration of the Magi,” the “ Massacre of the Innocents,” the “ Agony in the Garden,“ “ Christ before Pilate,” “ Christ carrying His Cross,” and (this alone having been marred by restoration) the “ Assump­tion of the Virgin ” are leading examples in the scuola; in the church, “ Christ curing the Paralytic.”

It was probably in 1560, the year in which he began working in the Scuola di S. Rocco, that Tintoret commenced his numerous paintings in the ducal palace; he then executed there a portrait of the doge, Girolamo Priuli. Other works which were destroyed in the great fire of 1577 succeeded—the “ Excommunication of Frederick Barbarossa by Pope Alexander III.” and the " Victory of Lepanto.” After the fire Tintoret started afresh, Paul Veronese being his colleague; their works have for the most part been disastrously and disgracefully retouched of late years, and some of the finest monuments of pictorial power ever produced are thus degraded to comparative unimportance. In the Sala dello Scrutinio Robusti painted the “ Capture of Zara from the Hungarians in 1346 amid a Hurricane of Missiles ”; in the hall of the senate, “ Venice, Queen of the Sea ”; in the hall of the college, the “ Espousal of St Catherine to Jesus ”; in the Sala dell’ Anticollegio, four extraordinary masterpieces—“ Bacchus, with Ariadne crowned by Venus,” the “ Three Graces and Mercury,” “ Minerva discarding Mars,” and the “ Forge of Vulcan ”—which were painted for fifty ducats each, besides materials, towards 1578; in the Antichiesetta, “ St George and St Nicholas, with St Margaret ” (the female figure is sometimes termed the princess whom St George rescued from the dragon), and “ St Jerome and St Andrew ”; in the hall of the great council, nine large composi­tions, chiefly battle-pieces. We here reach the crowning pro­duction of Robusti’s life, the last picture of any considerable importance which he executed, the vast “ Paradise,” in size 74 ft. by 30, reputed to be the largest painting ever done upon canvas. It is a work so stupendous in scale, so colossal in the sweep of its power, so reckless of ordinary standards of conception or method, so pure an inspiration of a soul burning with passionate visual imagining and a hand magical to work in shape and colour, that it has defied the connoisseurship of three centuries, and has generally (though not with its first Venetian contemporaries) passed for an eccentric failure; while to a few eyes (including those of the present writer) it seems to be so transcendent a monument of human faculty applied to the art pictorial as not to be viewed without awe nor thought of without amazement. While the commission for this huge work was yet pending and unassigned Robusti was wont to tell the senators that he had prayed to God that he might be commissioned for it, so that paradise itself might perchance be his recompense after death. Upon eventually receiving the commission in 1588 he set up his canvas in the Scuola della Misericordia and worked indefatigably at the task, making many alterations and doing various heads and ∞stumes direct from nature. When the picture had been brought well forward he took it to its proper place and there finished it, assisted by his son Domenico for details of drapery, &c. All Venice applauded the superb achievement, which has in more recent times suffered from neglect, but fortunately hardly at all from restoration. Robusti was asked to name his own price, but this he left to the authorities. They tendered a handsome amount; Robusti is said to have abated something from it, which is even a more curious instance of ungreediness for pelf than earlier cases which we have cited where he worked for nothing at all.

After the completion of the “ Paradise ” Robusti rested for a while, and he never undertook any other work of importance, though there is no reason to suppose that his energies were ex­hausted had his days been a little prolonged. He was seized with an attack in the stomach, complicated with fever, which prevented him from sleeping and almost from eating for a fortnight, and on the 31st of May 1594 he died. A contemporary record states his age to have been seventy-five years and fifteen days. If this is accurate, the 16th of May 1519 must have been the day of his birth; hut we prefer the authority of the register of deaths in S. Marciliano, which states that Tintoret died of fever, aged seventy-five years, eight months and fifteen days—thus bringing us to the 16th of September 1518 as the true date of his birth. He was buried in the church of the Madonna dell’ Orto by the side of his favourite daughter Marietta, who had died in 1590, aged thirty; there is a well-known tradition that as she lay dead the heart-stricken father painted her portrait. Marietta had herself been a portrait-painter of considerable skill, as well as a musician, vocal and instrumental; but few of her works are now traceable. It is said that up to the age of fifteen she used to accompany and assist her father at his work, dressed as a hoy; eventually she married a jeweller, Mario Augusta. In 1866 the grave of the Vescovi and Robusti was opened, and the remains of nine members of the joint families were found in it; a different locality, the chapel on the right of the choir, was then assigned to the grave.

Tintoret painted his own portrait at least twice, one of the heads being in the Uffizi Gallery of Florence and the other, done when his age was advanced, in the Louvre. It is a very serious face, somewhat blunt and rugged, but yet refined without the varnish of elegance—concentrated and resolute, its native ardours of frankness and energy welded down into lifelong laboriousness, with a pent look as of smouldering fire. The eyes are large, dark and round; the grizzled hair close and compact. The face has been held to bear some resemblance to that of Michelangelo, but this does not go very far. Robusti appears also as one of the figures in the two vast pictures by Paul Veronese— the “ Marriage in Cana ” and the “ Feast in the House of Levi.”

Audacious and intrepid, though not constantly correct, as a draughtsman, majestically great as a colourist, prodigious as an executant, Tintoret was as absolute a type of the born painter as the history of art registers or enables us to conceive. Whatever he did was imaginative—sometimes beautiful and suave (and he was eminently capable of painting a lovely female countenance or an heroic man), often imposing and romantic, fully as often turbulent and reckless, sometimes trivial, never unpainter-like or prosaic. When he chose—which was not always—he painted his entire personages characteristically; but, like the other highest masters of Venice, he conceded and attended little to the expression of his faces as evincing incidental emotion. Tn several of his works— as especially the great “ Crucifixion" in S. Rocco—there is powerful central thought, as well as inventive detail ; but his imagination is always concrete: it is essentially' that of a painter to whom the means of art—the form, colour, chiaroscuro, manipulation, scale, distribution—are the typical and necessitated realities. What he imagines is always a visual integer, a picture—never & treatise, however thoughtfully' planned or ingeniously detailed. Something that one could see—that is his ideal, not something that one could narrate, still less that one could deduce and demonstrate. In his treatment of action or gesture the most constant peculiarity is the sway and swerve of his figures: they bend like saplings or rock like forest-boughs in a gale; stiffness or immobility was entirely foreign to his style, which has therefore little of the monumental or severe character. Perhaps he felt that there was no other way for combin­ing “ the colour of Titian with the design of Michelangelo.” The knitted strength and the transcendent fervour of energy of the supreme Florentine might to some extent be emulated; but, if they were to be united with the glowing fusion of hue of the supreme Venetian, this could only be attained by a process of relaxing the excessive tension and modifying muscular into elastic force. In this respect he was a decided innovator; but he had many imitators, comparatively feeble if we except Paul Veronese.