strated with him, but, finding him inflexible, ordered that he should be bound to a stake and shot to death. After the archers had left him for dead a devout woman, Irene, came by night to take his body away for burial, but, find­ing him still alive, carried him to her house, where his wounds were dressed. No sooner had he wholly recovered than he hastened to confront the emperor, reproaching him with his impiety ; Diocletian, filled with astonishment, which soon changed into fury, ordered him to be instantly carried off and beaten to death with rods (288). The sentence was forthwith executed, his body being thrown into the cloaca, where, however, it was found by another pious matron, Lucina, whom Sebastian visited in a dream, directing her to bury him in the Catacombs under the site of the church now called by his name. He is celebrated by the Roman Church on 20th January (duplex). His cult is chiefly diffused along the eastern coast of Italy and in other districts liable to visitations of plague. As a young and beautiful soldier, he is a favourite subject of sacred art, being most generally represented as undraped and severely, though not mortally, wounded with arrows.

SEBASTIANO DEL PIOMBO (1485-1547), painter, was born at Venice in 1485, and belongs to the Venetian school, exceptionally modified by the Florentine or Roman. His family name was Luciani. He was at first a musician, chiefly a solo-player on the lute, and was in great request among the Venetian nobility. He soon showed a turn for painting, and became a pupil of Giovanni Bellini and afterwards of Giorgione. His first painting of note was done for the church of St John Chrysostom in Venice, and is so closely modelled on the style of Giorgione that in its author’s time it often passed for the work of that master. It represents Chrysostom reading aloud at a desk, a grand Magdalene in front, and two other female and three male saints. Towards 1512 Sebastiano was invited to Rome by the wealthy Sienese merchant Agostino Chigi, who occupied a villa by the Tiber, since named the Farnesina ; he executed some frescos here, other leading artists being employed at the same time. The Venetian mode of colour was then a startling novelty in Rome. Michelangelo saw and approved the work of Luciani, became his personal friend, and entered into a peculiar arrangement with him. At this period the pictorial ability of Michelangelo (apart from his general power as an artist, regarding which there arose no question) was somewhat decried in Rome, the rival faculty of Raphael being invidiously exalted in comparison ; in especial it was contended that Buonarroti fell short as a colourist. He therefore thought that he might try whether, by furnishing designs for pictures and leaving to Sebastiano the execution of them in colour, he could not maintain at its highest level his own general supremacy in the art, leaving Raphael to sustain the competition as he best might. In this there seems to have been nothing particu­larly unfair, always assuming that the compact was not fraudulently concealed ; and the facts are so openly stated by Michelangelo’s friend Vasari (not to speak of other writers) that there appears to have been little or no dis­guise in the matter. Besides, the pictures are there to speak for themselves ; and connoisseurs have always ac­knowledged that the quality of Michelangelo’s unmatched design is patent on the face of them. Of late years, how­ever, some writers, unnecessarily jealous for Buonarroti’s personal rectitude, have denied that his handiwork is to be traced in the pictures bearing the name of Sebastiano. Four leading pictures which Sebastiano painted in pursu­ance of his league with Buonarroti are the Pietà (earliest of the four), in the church of the Conventuali, Viterbo ; the Transfiguration and the Flagellation, in the church of S. Pietro in Montorio, Rome ; and, most celebrated of

all, the Raising of Lazarus, now in the London National Gallery. This grand work—more remarkable for general strength of pictorial perception than for qualities of de­tailed intellectual or emotional expression—is more than 12 by 9 feet in dimensions, with the principal figures of the natural size ; it is inscribed “ Sebastianus Venetus faciebat,” and was transferred from wood to canvas in 1771. It was painted in 1517-19 for Giulio de’ Medici, then bishop of Narbonne, afterwards Pope Clement VII. ; and it remained in Narbonne cathedral until purchased by the duke of Orleans early in the 18th century,—coming to England with the Orleans gallery in 1792. It is generally admitted that the design of Michelangelo appears in the figure of Lazarus and of those who are busied about him (the British Museum contains two sketches of the Lazarus regarded as Michelangelo’s handiwork) ; but whether he actually touched the panel, as has often been said, appears more than doubtful, as he left Rome about the time when the picture was commenced. Raphael’s Transfiguration was painted for the same patron and the same destination. The two works were exhibited together, and some admirers did not scruple to give the preference to Sebastiano’s. The third of the four pictures above mentioned, the Flagellation of Christ, though ordinarily termed a fresco, is, according to Vasari, painted in oil upon the wall. This was a method first practised by Domenico Veneziano, and afterwards by some other artists ; but Sebastiano alone succeeded in preventing the blackening of the colours. The contour of the figure of Christ in this picture is supposed by many to have been supplied by Buonarroti’s own hand. Sebastiano, always a tardy worker, was occupied about six years upon this work, along with its companion the Transfiguration, and the allied figures of saints.

After the elevation of Giulio de’ Medici to the pontificate, the office of the “ piombo ” or leaden seal—that is, the office of sealer of briefs of the apostolic chamber—became vacant ; two painters competed for it, Sebastiano Luciani, hitherto a comparatively poor man, and Giovanni da Udine. Finally Sebastiano, assuming the habit of a friar, secured the very lucrative appointment,—with the proviso, however, that he should pay out of his emoluments 300 scudi per annum to Giovanni. If he had heretofore been slow in painting, he became now supine and indifferent in a marked degree. He lived on the fat of the land, cultivated sprightly literary and other society, to which he contributed his own full quota of amusement, and would scarcely handle a brush, saying jocularly that he benefited the profession by leav­ing all the more work for other artists to do. Berni, one of his intimates, addressed a *capitolo* to him, and Sebastiano responded in like versified form. One of the few subject- pictures which he executed after taking office was Christ carrying the Cross for the patriarch of Aquileia, also a Madonna with the body of Christ. The former painting is done on stone, a method invented by Sebastiano himself. He likewise painted at times on slate,—as in the instance of Christ on the Cross, now in the Berlin gallery, where the slate constitutes the background. In the same method, and also in the same gallery, is the Dead Christ supported by Joseph of Arimathea, with a weeping Magdalene,— colossal half-length figures. Late in life Sebastiano had a serious disagreement with Michelangelo with reference to the Florentine’s great picture of the Last Judgment. Sebastiano encouraged the pope to insist that this picture should be executed in oil. Michelangelo, determined from the first upon nothing but fresco, tartly replied to his holiness that oil was only fit for women and for sluggards like Friar Sebastian ; and the coolness between the two painters lasted almost up to the friar’s death. This event, consequent upon a violent fever acting rapidly upon a