

its integrity, is capable of suffering for Christ. If you rob me of my crown, you have not saved but deceived me." The two saints, thus contending for the palm, both conquered: the crown was not divided, but given to each. St. Didymus is looked upon to have suffered under Dioclesian, in 304, and at Alexandria. The Roman Martyrology commemorates these two saints on this day.

### ST. POLLIO, LECTOR,

#### AND HIS COMPANIONS IN PANNONIA, MARTYRS.

From his genuine acts, probably extracted from the court register, though collected under the Emperor Valentinian: extant in Ruinart.

A. D. 304.

PROBUS, governor of Pannonia, under Dioclesian, in 304, having put to death St. Montanus, priest, at Singidon, St. Irenæus, bishop of Sirmium, and others, arrived at Cibales, a great town between the rivers Save and Drave, afterwards the birthplace of the emperor Valentinian, but now destroyed. The very same day on which he arrived, Pollio, the first of the readers of that church, was apprehended; a person of great virtue and of a lively faith, of which he had already given signal proofs. He was presented to the governor as he was coming out of his chariot, and accused as the most impious of the Christians, and one who spoke disrespectfully of the gods. Probus having asked his name, and if he were a Christian, inquired of him what office he bore. "I am," said Pollio, "the chief of the readers." Probus.—"Of what readers?" Pollio.—"Why, of those who read the word of God to the people." Probus.—"I suppose you mean by that name a set of men who find ways and means to impose on the credulity of fickle and silly women, and persuade them to observe chastity, and refrain from marriage." Pollio.—"Those are the fickle and foolish who abandon their Creator to follow your superstitions; whilst our hearers are so steady in the profession of the truths they have imbibed from our lectures, that no torments prevail with them to transgress the precepts of the eternal King." Probus.—"Of what king, and of what precepts do you speak?" Pollio.—"I mean the holy precepts of the eternal King, Jesus Christ." Probus.—"What do those

precepts teach?" Pollio.—" They inculcate the belief and adoration of one only God, who causeth thunder in the heavens; and they teach that what is made of wood or stone, deserves not to be called God. They correct sinners; animate and strengthen the good in virtue; teach virgins to attain to the perfection of their state, and the married to live up to the rules of conjugal chastity; they teach masters to command with mildness and moderation, slaves to submit with love and affection, subjects to obey all in power in all things that are just: in a word, they teach us to honour parents, requite our friends, forgive our enemies, exercise hospitality to strangers, assist the poor, to be just, kind, and charitable to all men; to believe a happy immortality prepared for those who despise the momentary death which you have power to inflict." Probus.—" Of what felicity is a man capable after death?" Pollio.—" There is no comparison between the happiness of this and the next life. The fleeting comforts of this mortal state deserve not the name of goods, when compared with the permanent joys of eternity." Probus.—" This is foreign to our purpose; let us come to the point of the edict." Pollio.—" What is the purport of it?" Probus.—" That you must sacrifice to the gods." Pollio.—" Sacrifice I will not, let what will be the consequence; for it is written: He that shall sacrifice to devils, and not to God, shall be exterminated." Probus.—" Then you must resolve to die." Pollio.—" My resolution is fixed: do what you are commanded." Probus thereupon condemned him to be burnt alive; and the sentence was immediately executed, at the distance of a mile from the town. Thus the acts. He suffered on the 27th of April, in 304, the same day on which, according to the acts of Pollio, St. Eusebius, bishop of the same city, had suffered several years before, perhaps under Valerian.

#### ST. CRONAN, ABBOT OF ROSCREA,

A MONASTERY which he founded in the county of Tipperary, in Ireland; which afterwards became a bishop's see, long since united to that of Killaloe. St. Cronan died about the year 640, and was honoured as titular saint of the church of Roscrea, which was possessed of his relics. See Usher's *Antiq.* p. 502.