

ST. ANDREW.

The feast of St. Andrew has usually been considered as coming at the beginning of the Christian year, and is perhaps so placed because the apostle thus commemorated was the first called disciple of our Lord. The festival is of very ancient date, being one of the most ancient of the Apostles' festivals, and one of the nine (on six days) provided in the Lctionary of St. Jerome.

Little has been told us of his history. Most of the apostles except St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John labored among nations, of whose records at that time, very little remains; and in the wild and lawless times which attended the breaking up of the Roman Empire, even lingering traditions would soon pass away. He was brother of St. Peter, and therefore son of Jonas or John. The ancients gave him the name of Protocletos, or first called; and having been a disciple of John the Baptist, he was one of those prepared to receive Christ by the teaching and Baptism of His Forerunner. There are only two other circumstances of his life mentioned in the Gospels: the first in St. John xii. 21, where it is St. Andrew and Philip who tell Jesus of the inquiring Greeks; and the second in St. Mark xiii. 8, when Andrew and his brother, with the two sons of Zebedee, ask Christ privately concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. We are told in subsequent history that this Apostle was engaged in evangelizing what is now called Turkey in Asia, and that part of Russia near the Black Sea; so that he was the founder of the Russian church. Sinope and Sebastopol are especially connected with the name of St. Andrew. He afterwards returned to Europe, consecrated the "beloved Stachys," first Bishop of Constantinople, then called Byzantium, and after travelling about Turkey in Europe, at last suffered martyrdom at Patras, a town in the North of the Morea, nearly opposite to Lepanto.

The narration given of his martyrdom is very affecting. At a great age, he was called before the Roman viceroy at Patras (Patras), and required to leave off his Apostolic labors. Instead of consenting, he proclaimed Christ before the judgment seat; and after imprisonment and submitting patiently to a seven times repeated scourging upon his bare back, he was at last fastened to a cross by cords, and so left exposed to die. The cross on which he suffered was different from our Lords', like the letter x, and is called the *cross decussate*. It is the distinctive symbol of the Scotch order of St. Andrew; the Apostle being always especially revered in connection with the Scottish, as with the Russian Church. "Hail, precious cross!" said the aged Apostle as he came to it, "that hast been consecrated by the Body of my Lord, and adorned with His limbs as with rich jewels, I come to thee exulting and glad; receive me with joy into Thy arms. Oh, good cross, that hast received beauty from our Lord's limbs; I have ardently loved thee; long have I desired and sought thee; now thou art found by me, and art made

ready for my longing soul; receive me into thy arms, taking me from among men, and present me to my Master, that He who redeemed me on thee may receive me by thee." For two days the dying martyr exhorted the people from the cross, after His example who stretched out His arms all the day long to an ungodly and gainsaying people. At the end of that time, he prayed to the Crucified One that he might now depart in peace; when his prayer was heard, and his spirit went home on the day of his festival, A.D. 70.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN CONFERENCE.

The seventh session of this Conference began on the 10th ult. at Wells, under the presidency of the Bishop. In addition to much that was of local interest the Bishop, Lord Arthur Hervey, remarked that it was of importance to note the immense strides that elementary education had made in our own day. Fifty years ago, a working man unable to read or write was the rule, now it is the exception. He did not impute the change entirely to a feeling that it was a duty to impart knowledge: it arose also from the necessities of our growing population. The railways had created a large demand for clerks, men who could read and write well; and so have our post office and electric telegraph offices, as well as the offices connected with our enormous trade and commerce. He also adverted to the astonishing growth of education in India since Macaulay first went out, when he wrote:—"We are attempting to train up a large class of enlightened natives. I hope twenty years hence, there will be hundreds, nay thousands of natives familiar with the best models of composition, and well acquainted with Western Science." His biographer commenting on these words, says:—"Twice twenty years have brought into existence hundreds of thousands of natives who can appreciate European knowledge. Our colleges have more than six thousand students on their books, and two hundred thousand boys are receiving a liberal education, in schools of the highest order. For the improvement of the mass of the people nearly seven thousand young men are in training as certificated masters." Lord Hervey thought we might derive a powerful motive to exertion by contemplating the melancholy effects upon humanity of an entire absence of education; and he asked whether these atrocious deeds of blood and outrage, which had made the heart of England sore for the last four months, could have been perpetrated by men whose minds and moral natures had been enlightened and elevated by humanizing and civilizing culture. At the same time the immorality and crime, still so extensive, should make us feel that much remains to be done in bringing the masses under the influence of intellectual light and Christian goodness.

The subject however, in which we feel the greatest interest, which was

brought before the Conference, was that of "Lay help in Church work," on which a paper was read by Mr. W. F. Ross, Vicar of Worle, who moved a resolution that it was for the best interests of the Church that her lay members should be associated with the clergy in doing her work. Considerable discussion followed the reading of the paper, in the course of which Prebendary Nicholson advocated "the licensing of Lay Preachers, remarking on the fact that noblemen and others sometimes left the church because they thought that, in some mysterious way, God had called them to the practice of preaching. An instance was mentioned by Prebendary Neville, in which a devoted and humble minded man preached God's word in a school chapel, the clergy from time to time visiting it as priests to administer the Holy Communion. It was remarked by Major Boget that among the humble orders there were many who had the gifts of speech, and who by the system of the Church were shut out from her, while the Nonconformist ranks were open to them. If there was a man with the power of speech, where did he go? He became a Dissenting Preacher; whereas he believed that by some change in our system, we might avail ourselves of the enormous strength and power which now goes to other channels. We perfectly agree with the gallant Major on this point, and we have a very strong and decided conviction that the Church would do far more good by retaining and utilizing the means, the talents, and the energies she has, than by any excessive effort to recover those who have been alienated from her worship, and who have no heart to appreciate either the grandeur of her position or the truthfulness of her teaching. Canon Bernard said he knew from experience the benefit of having a Lay Preacher in his parish, and he thought much schism might be prevented by the understanding that the Church recognized more generally Spiritual Lay Work. The Bishop expressed himself very much pleased with the discussion. We trust that now the subject has again been taken up, it will not be allowed to rest until some definite and systematic plan for Lay work in the Church has been authorized, which can be generally adopted.

PAN ANGLICAN SYNOD.

The meeting of the Pan Anglican Synod has, it appears, been postponed till July in the year 1878; the reason assigned being the fact that such a multiplicity of subjects will probably be introduced, that the autumn of 1877 will be too early to get them all arranged by that time. It is not improbable that the Archbishop may be a little alarmed at the attitude assumed by the United States Bishops, and the prospect of a programme rather more extended than that on the former occasion. The previous Pan Anglican gathering was prevented from expressing any opinion or taking any action at all in regard to