

Bede, in his Martyrology, the Roman, and those of Usuardus, Rhabanus, Ado, &c., mark the festival of St. Patrick on the 17th March. The opponent of his existence, to rid himself of such authority, rails contemptuously against calendars and martyrologies, and doubts the one of Bede, as if never written. Bede himself assures us, that he wrote a "Martyrology of the natal days of sainted martyrs, in which I have diligently studied to note down not only on what day, but in what kind of contest, or under what judge, all whom I could find were able to overcome the world." Yet with this positive assurance before him, Ledwich doubts the fact.

Nennius, in the 9th century, makes explicit mention of St. Patrick. In the interim between the death of venerable Bede, in 735, and Nennius, in the 9th century, there were few, if any, writers of history in Great Britain. As, according to William of Mahnesbury, the death of the former was fatal to learning, and particularly to history in England; hence, then, it is no wonder that little notice has been taken by English writers of St. Patrick in those days. It is assumed on the authority of Camden and Usher, that Nennius lived in the 9th century. But Gale, the last editor of his works, states, that he flourished A.D. 620. In his narrative on Irish affairs, and in his account of St. Patrick, Nennius asserts that he relied on the most learned of the Scots-Hibernians as his guides.

In the first place, then, the arguments of Dr. Ledwich to prove the non-existence of St. Patrick, are merely negative, and are inconclusive and unsatisfactory; while, on the other hand, the evidence of his existence is irresistible. He is mentioned by contemporary authors, whose works are yet extant.

Secondly,—He is distinctly mentioned by writers who flourished in the three centuries immediately succeeding, in which his early biographers lived. Such were Trechehan, Cunnian, Adamnan, Bede, Probus, and Nennius.

Thirdly,—St. Patrick's literary works are admitted by the most competent judges to have been his productions; the acts of his councils are still extant. He is also recognized by the Brehon laws, and acknowledged as the Apostle of Ireland by the whole Christian Church; and as Doctor Milner urges, "there are not only written documents which prove the existence of St. Patrick, but likewise other kinds of monuments by which the memory of persons is recorded. The churches which he built, the dioceses which he formed, the monasteries he founded, the havens where he landed, and the places in which he dwelt, have preserved his name. The very conversion of the Irish nation, and the tradition not only of Ireland, but of the whole Christian continent, are all