

derate their enthusiasm in the conspiracy, but materially influenced the character of the rebellion that followed;—and this was the growing apprehension, both upon political and religious grounds, with which the more scrupulous among the Presbyterian republicans regarded that alliance, which the organization of the Catholic counties was now admitting into their league. Already had there, for some time, existed among the lower orders of Catholics, associations known by the name of Defenders, half political, half predatory, to which the Chiefs of the Union had always looked as a sort of nursery for their own military force,—the hardy habits of these freebooters (for such they had now become), and their familiarity with the use of arms, appearing to offer the kind of material out of which good example and discipline might succeed in making soldiers.

In the North the United Irishmen and the Defenders, though concurring in fierce enmity to the state, had been kept wholly distinct bodies, as well by the difference of their religious tenets, as by the grounds, but too sufficient, which the latter had for