

and their comic productions, no doubt, helped to fan the enthusiasm that then prevailed.

The following are two verses from a song called the "Volunteer Boys," to the tune of "Let the toast pass," published in 1801:—

"Here's to the squire who goes to parade,
Here's to the citizen soldier;
Here's to the merchant who fights for his trade,
Whom danger increasing makes bolder:
Let mirth appear, union is here,
The toast that I give is the Brave Volunteer.

"Here's to the lawyer who leaves the bar,
Hastens where honour doth lead, sir,
Changing the gown for the ensigns of war,
The cause of the country to plead, sir;
Freedom appears, ev'ry heart cheers
That call for a health to the Law Volunteers."

A Scotch song, published at Glasgow about the same time as the above, and called "Britain's Contest," contains the following verse:—

"The French they say are coming o'er,
To kill our king, an' a' that;
They'll kiss our sweethearts and our wives,
And slay ourselves an' a' that—
And a' that, an' a' that;
But gin they come we'll crack their crowns,
An' send them hame to claw that."

The following witty "Macaronic" lines on the same subject, supposed to be said or sung by a newly-enlisted volunteer dating from this period, have been ascribed to the pen of no less a scholar than Professor Porson:—

"*Ego nunquam audivi* such terrible news,
As at this *tempus presentis* my senses confuse;
I am drawn for a *miler*, and must go *cum Marte*,
And *cominus manu* engage Bonaparte.

"*Such tempora nunquam videbant majores*,
But then their opponents had different *mores*;
But we will soon show to the Corsican vaunter
That though times may be changed, Britons *nunquam*
mutantur."

A poem "On the Fashionable Rite of Consecrating Military Colours, particularly those of the brave Volunteer Bands," contains the stanza quoted as the motto to this chapter.

In 1806 was published "A Defence of the Volunteer System, in opposition to Mr. Windham's idea of that Force; with Hints for its Improvement." In it the writer observes:—"It has been the custom of those writers who have intended to deprecate the value of the volunteers to adduce instances from history of the inefficacy of raw troops to contend with veterans; but these illustrations have seldom given much strength to their

arguments, as, upon inspection, they will be found to bear but little analogy to the political feelings and military situations of the country. . . . It would not, however, be very difficult to select other examples from the history of any age of troops inferior to our volunteers, who have honourably distinguished themselves against old and highly-disciplined soldiers. But who that has read the history of the American War and the French Revolution, in our own time (1806), can want conviction on this head? . . . In estimating our means of defence, a strange infatuation seems to have laid hold of some men's minds, that, as one battle has decided the fate of nations on the Continent, so it must necessarily do ours. The brilliant actions of Bonaparte seem to have dazzled and confounded their imaginations. A battle of Marengo or of Austerlitz may put an end to a Continental war, or to the independence of a nation solely relying upon a standing army, but never can conquer a country like England, constitutionally defended. . . . In a country defended by the voluntary efforts of its own children, under judicious guidance, every inch of ground gained by an enemy will prove to him a sanguinary conquest. That general should be considered as guilty of little less than treason who suffered an enemy on English soil an hour's repose by night or day till he was conquered. The fresh troops that would every moment flock to his standard would enable him to undertake hourly enterprises. A war of this description would necessarily have a speedy termination. An enemy thus incessantly harassed, when it became judicious to attack him on all points, must fall an easy prey. . . . In forming a plan for the defence of the country, the worst possible circumstances that can happen should be provided against. With us, the confidence placed in our navy should be put entirely out of the question, and we should be prepared for the attack of an enemy as if no such formidable opposition to him existed. There should be no check on the exertions of our fleets: they should be ready, if necessary, to quit our shores to a ship, without fear of the consequences. . . . The question is not now whether we shall become a military nation—that is already decided—but what sort of a military nation?—whether we shall encumber ourselves with and entail on our posterity an enormous growing expense, the natural consequence of an ever-growing military establishment; or whether the same end shall be accomplished by the voluntary efforts of the people, under a plain, systematic form, conducted at a comparatively trifling charge,