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A
LETTER
From the AUTHOR of the
ARGUMENT
AGAINST A
Standing Army,
To the AUTHOR of the
Balancing Letter.

*A False Balance is an Abomination to the Lord, but a
Just Weight is his Delight, Prov. xi. 1.*

Vendidit hic auro patriam, Dominumque potentem
Imposuit, Leges fixit pretio, atque refixit.
Virgil. Æn. L. 6.

LONDON, Printed in the Year, 1697.

A LETTER from the Author of the Argument against a STANDING ARMY, to the Author of the Balancing Letter.

S I R,

THO the Journy-men Scriblers with all their Scurrility can't provoke me to give them an Answer, yet when I see my self levell'd at in such soft Language and Gentleman-like Behaviour, I am the more afraid; Timeo Danaos, & dona ferentes.

You have been pleas'd in your last Paragraph to own the Matter to be 'so nice and important, that it ought to 'be severely examin'd, without false Colours and popular 'Rhetorick; and you are pleas'd to give your self the Character of one 'zealous for Liberty, a great Adven- 'turer for it, and to have a great Stake in it. If you are the Gentleman I guess you to be, I believe your Stake is now considerable; but you being a great Ad- venturer in getting it, it is not worth magnifying your self for it: which gives me occasion to say I am not of

a desperate Fortune, and what Stake I have being provided for me by my Ancestors, I am more afraid of losing it than if it were my own Acquisition. And after this short Preface, I will proceed to examine into the matter *without false Colours or popular Rhetorick.*

I think your Letter has shew'd these three things.

1. What you would have.
2. How long you would have it.
3. For what Reasons.

1st. I perceive you would have us believe we have 'an Honourable Peace to the wonder of the World, and 'that nothing can hurt us but Animosities and Jealousies 'amongst our selves: And secondly, you would have 'a 'Land Force to maintain this Peace. Now, Sir, I must beg your Pardon if my Faith differs from yours; for I can't believe we have an Honourable Peace, in case we are oblig'd to keep up a Standing Force to maintain it. Peace is a Cessation of the Exercise of the use of Arms, that we may with Safety turn our Swords into Plough-shares, and Spears into Pruning-hooks; and the Prayers of the Church commanded by his Majesty for Thanksgiving for this Peace, have taken in that very Text: And if this our Peace will not answer this Character, it is not such a Peace as you would have us believe we are blest'd with. But since we have not such a Peace (for you know better than I) I will go on for Argument-sake with yours, to supply this Imperfection in it. You are pleas'd to say,

say, *Page 3.* when you seem to prepare us to consider of the Necessity of a Land Force, 'You are far from the 'thought of a STANDING ARMY. Now I'll tell you, Sir, what I apprehend a STANDING ARMY to be; Horse and Foot rais'd under Commission granted by the King, with Swords and Pistols, Pikes and Muskets, Powder and Ball to kill Men. If you by your *Land Force* mean none of all these, I am very impertinent in differing with you. But till you are pleas'd to distinguish your *Land Force* from this Description, I believe all Men will think you mean the same by a LAND FORCE, as I do by a STANDING ARMY; which if you do, then you have declar'd your Thoughts against it, and made your self guilty of the most apparent Contradiction that ever I saw wrote in so good a Stile.

The next thing you shew is, How long you would have these LAND FORCES continue, and that is from Year to Year: which puts me in mind of a Covenant us'd in conveying Lands in *Holland*, whereby the Seller warrants the Land to the Purchaser for a Year and a Day, which according to their Law, is for ever; and so, I suppose, when you say from Year to Year, you mean *in secula seculorum*, as will appear by and by.

The third thing is, for what Reasons you would have this. And, first, 'you abhor to give his Majesty 'a Jealousy of his People, as if he were not safe amongst 'them without Guards: But you say the Case at present is, 'Whether, considering the Circumstances that 'we

'we and our Neighbours are now in, it may not be prudent and necessary for us to keep up a reasonable Force from Year to Year; and so you seem to lay a great stress upon the Fashion of other Countries. You say, *Pag. 4.* 'The whole World, more particularly our Neighbours, have now got into the mistaken Notion of keeping up a mighty Force; and the most powerful of these happens to be our next Neighbour, who will very probably keep up great Armies, and we may appear too inviting if we are in an unguarded Condition.

Now, Sir, as to the Fashion of other Countries. I remember that God having declared Laws to the *Israelites*, commanded them to keep them, and not to follow or hanker after the Fashions of other Nations, either in Worship or Government. And if we are in the Fashion of our Neighbours in having an Army, we must have their fashioned Government too. It is the Fashion of the *F. K.* to have a **STANDING ARMY**, and it is the Fashion of his Subjects to be Slaves under that **STANDING ARMY**. I observe Men that are addicted to Fashions, follow them in every thing. Now to be Freemen under a **STANDING ARMY** is not the Fashion of our Neighbours. And I am afraid we shall never think our selves compleatly in the Fashion till we have got Wooden Shoes too.

But I see, Sir, you are not so much a Fop as to be in the Fashion for fashion sake, but that you think there is a necessity for it; for you are afraid of being invaded
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by our Neighbours, 'the next and greatest of whom will probably keep up great Armies. And here by the way before I forget it, I would put you in mind of your Tenure from Year to Year; for I think by this Argument you would have our Land Force to continue as long as the *French King* is in a mistaken notion of keeping up great Armies, so that from Year to Year is already become a Phrase for ever. For my part I should be unwilling to stay for any thing I wish for till the *French King* disbands his Army. Therefore, Sir, don't draw Men into your Proposals by sowing Pillows under them, by soft Language, of a *Land Force*, not Standing Army; *from Year to Year, under the Consideration of Parliament.* Let us have plain words, and then your Proposals, according to your own Reasons, must be for a Standing Army in *England*, as long as the *French King*, or any of his Successors, keep up a Standing Army in *France*: you had as good open your Matter fairly at first, for every thing else is but flourish till you come to the Point.

Now, Sir, I confess I give as little credit to the Words and Leagues of Princes as you do, and depend more upon their Interest than Integrity for the performance of them, and therefore am not for leading them into Temptations to attack us, and would always have a Defence sutable to our Danger. Nature hath armed all Creatures with Weapons to oppose those that assault them, and the Policy of Man hath found out several Artificial ones for himself. Now the sole Debate between us is, In whose Hands these Weapons should be put.

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Of this matter I have discoursed from the 18th to the 26th Page of my *Argument*, which you neither can or do pretend to answer, and therefore I refer you thither again: Indeed in your 9th, 10th and 11th Pages you tell us, ' That Regular and Disciplin'd Troops are far superiour to the best and strongest Militia in the World, admitting this Condition, that there are no Regular or Disciplin'd Troops in that Militia. But I will make bold to tell you, that a Militia may be as well Disciplin'd as any Army; nay our own Army, if they were Disbanded, will most of them be sent to the Militia; and I suppose calling them by a new Name will not make them worse Soldiers. Now as to your Instances in History, I shall only make this small Objection to them all, That you are mistaken in every particular. For the *Persian* Army was made up of Standing Troops, kept up in the several Provinces of the Empire, and not of Militia, as you falsely insinuate: and with these Armies they conquered easily the several Principalities which made up their vast Empire, and were defended by Standing Armies; but when they came to fight with the *Greek* Militia, all their mighty Armies came to nothing. Of this we have the Instances of *Xenophon*, who with ten Thousand *Greeks* marched three Thousand Miles through their Country in spight of a numerous Army observing him. Afterwards of *Agessilaus*, who with a small *Spartan* Militia had put an end to the *Persian* Empire, if the Factions of *Greece* had not call'd him home. The mighty Army of *Xerxes* was destroyed by a *Greek* Militia. Nay the better part of *Alexander's* Army was made

made up of a Militia taken out of the several Cities of *Greece*.

The Instance you give of the *Romans*, makes as much against you; for they found more difficulty in conquering a few little Commonwealths about them, who fought by Militias, than *Asia*, *Egypt*, and all the Arbitrary Governments they conquered, which fought against them with standing Armies. Who will deny that *Caesar's* Conquests over the *Gallick* Militia, were greater than *Pompey's* over the *Asiatick* standing Armies? And whereas you say, Page 11th, ' That nothing stood before the *Roman* Armies whilst they were kept under Discipline; but when all their Order was broke, and they became a Militia, the Northern Nations in *Europe*, as well as the *Sarazens* in the East, overrun the *Roman* Empire; I must take leave to say, the just contrary to this is true: for whilst they fought by a Militia, they conquer'd the whole World; but afterwards in the time of the Emperours, when they kept up Standing Armies of three hundred and sixty thousand Men, as *Tacitus* reckons them, they were overrun by every Barbarous Nation that invaded them.

Your Instance of *Hannibal* is nothing to the purpose, for the *Carthaginians* did not beat the *Romans*, but *Hannibal* the *Roman* General: He got no Victory but by his own single Conduct; and when the *Romans* fought against any other General, they were seldom unsuccessful.

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The *Turks* also met with much more trouble in subduing the *Hungarian* and *Epirot* Militias, than all their Empire besides. *Scanderbeg* with a small Militia came off constantly successful in two and twenty Battles against their numerous Standing Armies. *Huniades* and his Son *Mathias*, fought always with Militias against the *Turkish* Standing Armies, and performed such Actions as Posterity can hardly believe, and I am sure were never equal'd by any other Force.

And whereas you say, 'the Preservation of *England* 'in Queen *Elizabeth's* time was by accident, and we 'must not always expect to live upon Miracles: I don't find but that Excellent Princess, and her Court, were of another Opinion. We don't find her, or her Creatures, after the *Spaniards* were defeated, to use this Cant to the Parliament. " Gentlemen, you see what " a Danger you have lately escaped, we were preferred by Providence and Chance, but I hope you " will not always expect Miracles: It is necessary to " keep up a Standing Force, for I can't depend upon " the Defence of my People. She scorn'd such Trash, and would have cag'd any evil Counsellor who durst give her such Advice: She thought her self safe in the Affection of her People, though this Gentleman, at above a hundred Years distance, tells her the contrary.

But you seem very apprehensive of being surprized without notice; and mention, Page 5th, the late Attempts from *la Hogue* and *Calais*; and that 'if in a 'time

'time of War and Jealousie we were so near being fatally overrun, without warning or intelligence, it is 'much more possible to see such Designs laid in times 'of Sloth and Quiet, when we are under no Fears, 'and may have no notice of it. Sir, I have no better Opinion of our Intelligence during the War, than you have. However the business of *la Hogue* was the Talk of the *Exchange*, and in all the publick Prints, besides the *Gazette*, two Months before it happened: And as to that of *Calais*, His Majesty, by his extraordinary Care, surprized the Enemy with seventy Sail on their Coasts, which they never expected. And that our Notice should be more difficult in Peace than War, I cannot understand, since in the latter all Ports are shut, and Merchants stopt; and in the former the Ports are open, Travellers abroad, Merchants at Sea, and an Embassador at their Court.

Page the 8th, you give a great Character of Arbitrary Government, where Men 'are ruined that fail 'in performing what is expected from them, in 'keeping the Secrets that are enjoined them, by which 'the Prince can execute things in other manner than 'can be conceived by those that live in free Governments. I am sure if Impunity of those who fail in performing their Duty, and in keeping our Secrets, be the Character of a free Government, we are free with a witness. But I can't see why the punishing of them should be inconsistent with a free Government.

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And after all, you seem to apprehend as ill Consequences from a **STANDING ARMY** as I do, as *Page* the 14th, where speaking of the Dangers of it, you say, 'This is a large Field, and History is so full of Instances of this kind, that it will be easy to open copiously on the Subject. From the Prætorian Cohorts down to our Modern Armies, enough can be gathered to give a very frightful Representation of a **STANDING ARMY**. And afterwards, *Page* the 15th, 'I do not deny but several Inconveniences may be apprehended from a **STANDING FORCE**, and therefore I should not go about to persuade you to it, if the thing did not seem indispensibly necessary. Now I suppose by indispensable Necessity you mean, you are sure without this Army that our Neighbours will invade us, and that it is impossible our Fleets or Militia, however managed, can be able to defend us: whether there is such a necessity or not, I refer you to my Argument; and if there is not, you have given up the Question: For you, in effect, admit a certain Slavery on one side, and if there is but contingent Ruin on the other, it is easy to determine of which side the Balance lies. But you say that the Parliament shall overlook it; but will you be Security the Army shall not overlook the Parliament? O but that can't be if they are kept up from Year to Year! 'Caesar with all his Genius could not work his Army to it in less than ten Years.

Sir,

Sir, If that be the exact time of corrupting an Army, pray consider that ours hath been kept up nine Years already. But I am as far from any Jealousie of His present Majesty as you are, and yet I am not afraid to say, that Army which can do no hurt, can do no good.

It is impossible to consider of a **STANDING FORCE** which shall be sufficient to oppose a Foreign Power, without considering it at the same time sufficient to suppress the Subject at home: for they must beat those who you suppose can beat us; and I must confess I am unwilling to depend on their good Will.

Sir, *Page* 15. you seem to think me a Jealous, Melancholy and Timorous Man, overrun with the Spleen; but I fancy my self as free from all this without a Place, as perhaps you are with one. Come don't fear your Stake, I dare give you Land Security that you will come off a Winner.

And as for the Gallant Gentlemen of the Army, whom you fear will be Losers, I shall be as ready as you to recompense them for their Bravery. But to suppose our Fleets to be surprized and betrayed, our Militia to be recreant, and all our Intelligence, Fidelity and Courage to be lodged in a Standing Army, I must confess is out of my power.

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In Page the 8th you say, 'You can't see some Men grow all on a suddain such wonderful Patriots, so jealous of the Prerogative, such Zealots for publick Liberty, without remembring what their Behaviour was in the late Reigns. Now I must own to you, I am better pleased to see this, than to see some Men who were such wonderful Patriots, &c. in the last Reigns, act the same part now as much as in them lies, as the others are said to have done formerly.

Before I have done I must take notice of one Passage in your 10th Page. You say, 'Whenever the fatal time comes that this Nation grows weary of Liberty, and has neither the Virtue, the Wisdom, nor the Force to preserve its Constitution, it will deliver up all, let all the Laws possible, and all the Bars imaginable be put in the way to it. It is no more possible to make a Government immortal, than to make a Man immortal. When I join this to the sensible Impressions you seem to have of the Danger of a Standing Army in the next Line, and yet an indispenfible Necessity of keeping one, methinks you give broad Hints that you think our time is come. But I doubt not there is Virtue enough yet in *England* to preserve our Constitution, though a wiser Head than yours designed its Ruine.

I will conclude in telling you we have a happy Government, where the King hath all the Power necessary to execute the Laws. All Title arises upon
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an equal distribution of Power; and he that gets an over-balance of Power (for you and I are balancing) takes away the Title from the rest, and leaves them a Possession without a Right, which is a Tenure at the Will of the Lord.

Now Sir, if a Parliament should subject all the Lands of *England* to this Tenure, I make no doubt your *Stake* and mine would be as safe during His Majesty's Reign, as in our own Possession; and yet if you will promise me to bring in a Bill to that purpose, I am contented that all I have said about a standing Army shall go for nothing.

Sir, In hopes you will keep up your Correspondence, I conclude my self

Your most humble Servant.

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