

SOME

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Impartial Observations

On the proposed

AUGMENTATION.

By a COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.



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PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCCLXVIII.

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Impartial Observations.

THE first Paragraph in the *Dublin* Article of the Freeman's Journal of the 26th Instant, describing the general Terror and Consternation which is said to have affected the several Parts of this Kingdom, upon hearing of the proposed Augmentation of its Military Establishment, must appear very surprising to the Inhabitants of this Metropolis, who are under no Terrors at all upon the Occasion; but, as it happens, the Intelligence is premature; tho' perhaps it may soon be too well founded, if the Emissaries of Faction succeed in misrepresenting the Nature and Design of this Measure, to the honest but credulous People of the Kingdom. That it is not hitherto an unpopular Measure, I can with some Confidence assert, as I am lately come out of the Country, where I have heard the Subject discuss'd in all Companies, and in general approved of under certain Restrictions; I might say *always*, except by such, whose Motives of Objection it was easy to trace, from their respective Interests and Connections.

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As every Man in this free Country esteems himself qualified to censure or approve the Conduct of Government, the honest and candid Patriot will be glad to be rightly informed as to those Matters on which he is to frame his Opinion, and when any interesting Business of a publick Nature is depending, will with Attention peruse the Arguments on both Sides of the Question. To such only the following Observations are addressed; which are sufficiently plain and intelligible, and only calculated to prevent the ill Effects of Prejudice, and Misrepresentation.

THE Message delivered by his Majesty's Command to the House of Commons on Tuesday last imports, a Proposal to augment the Military Establishment (which at present consists of 12,000 Men) to 15,235, on account of the Necessities of the publick Service requiring a considerable Part of the National Forces to be employed abroad, and of the Expediency that not less than 12,000 Men should always remain at home, for the Defence and Security of *Ireland*; and his Majesty further declares it to be his Intention that the above Number shall always continue here, except in Case of some extraordinary Emergency.

THE Principles upon which this Proposal is founded are too notoriously true to admit of Contradiction. The new Acquisitions to the Crown of *Great Britain* by the late glorious and successful War, demand a much more numerous Body of Forces for their Defence, than the present Establishments of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* can supply, consistent with their Security at home; and in Consequence of this Necessity, Government has been obliged to borrow (if I may use the Expression) something from the National Defence of these Kingdoms, where the Danger was less pressing and immediate, to secure those Dominions, which were surrounded by foreign Enemies, jealous of our newly acquired Power, and ready to take

take Advantage of any Occasion when we might be unprepared to repel them.

BUT tho' the apparent Remoteness of the Danger to these Kingdoms might be a very just Apology for such an Expedient being made use of for a short Time, just after a Peace was concluded; it would ill become the Wisdom of Government, to leave us always in so precarious a Situation, threatened as we are with an immediate Invasion from *France*, upon the very first Appearances of a Rupture, even before a Declaration of War. In these Circumstances I believe no one will deny that 12,000 effective Men, actually disciplined and fit for immediate Service, are a very moderate Defence for this extensive Country against so formidable an Invader, even tho' the additional Danger from our domestick Insurgents, (of whose Disloyalty we have already had some Specimens) were not taken into the Consideration.

THE Expediency therefore of some Augmentation of the Forces in *Ireland* must be admitted; and the only reasonable Objections against the present Proposal seem to be the three following.

FIRST, If the Parliament should consent to maintain an Army of 15,235 Men upon the Establishment, in order to preserve 12,000 of them at home for our domestick Security; how can we be certain that even that Force shall remain with us, if Government should think fit to employ a Part of them upon other Service?

SECOND, Admitting the Danger of our present Defenceless Situation, is not the additional Expence of the Encrease of our Establishment, the greater Evil of the two?

THIRD,

THIRD, May not a standing Army more numerous than we have at present be dangerous to our Liberties?

As to the first Objection, if there was no Provision made against it, I should readily allow it to be a very solid one. But as his Majesty has already declared by his Message that 12,000 Men shall be kept in *Ireland*, and as we have the additional Security of a *British* Act of Parliament made this Session, to repeal the 10th of King *William* III. declaring the Expediency of such a Measure; we cannot with Reason apprehend that the most daring Minister will venture to act in Opposition to such Authorities.

To the second Objection I answer, that the Expence of this Augmentation is trifling in Comparison of the Advantages that attend it; about £. 36,000 annually being the whole Amount. A small Portion of what is generously (I will not say profusely) given every Session of Parliament, among the Gentlemen of this Country towards improving their Estates, in what are called public Works, is asked to secure to them the quiet Possession of those Estates, and to their Tenants, their Liberties, their Properties and their Religion. I cannot omit observing that the whole of this Expence (small as it is) need not be an additional Burden upon the Establishment; as his Majesty has already consented to a Bill, laying a Tax of four Shillings in the Pound upon the Salaries and Pensions of Absentees, which, it is computed will raise £. 26,000 a year; and is a clear Increase of so much to the publick Revenue, however it may be appropriated. In short, if any Application for a Supply ought to stand clear of all Objections as to the Frugality of the Scheme, it is certainly the present: A Scheme of Augmentation where no new Officers are to be appointed; no Friends and Dependents to be provided for at the Expence of the Publick; no Crown Favours

vours to be distributed, in order to increase the Power and Influence of Government; but the whole Addition is intended to consist of able bodied Soldiers.

WERE this Plan liable to more Objections on the above Account, it might probably meet with fewer, as some of the most clamorous Opponents might in that Case get something to stop their Mouths, and if any Gentleman was disgusted upon other Accounts, there might be Methods of putting him into a better Temper. But as the Proposal in its present Circumstances has nothing to recommend it but its real national Utility, it may possibly be supported only by such as value the publick Interest more than their own.

As to the last Objection, concerning the supposed Danger of our Liberties from a standing Army in this Kingdom, I believe few People are so weak as to propose it seriously. Whatever may be the Case in *Great Britain*, it is otherwise in *Ireland*; our Properties and our Lives demand Security here as much as our Liberties; and of two Dangers, that which is the most pressing and urgent requires our Attention before that which is more remote. We cannot spare our Protestants from our Manufactures in sufficient Numbers to form a well regulated Militia; and fourscore Years Experience has taught us that a standing Army recruited in *England*, and commanded by Protestant Officers of our own, has hitherto preserved to us those Blessings which we still enjoy, without any Infringement upon our Liberties; of which it is to be observed, that those People who have the least to lose always pretend to be most apprehensive.

If these Observations are founded in Truth, what are we to think of those Persons, who are at present so busily employed in inflaming the Minds of the People against their Government and Representatives,
to

to excite, if possible, groundless Jealousies and imaginary Terrors. Let us not, in God's Name, be made the Tools of disappointed Ambition a second Time, by a few People who only laugh at us for our Credulity; let us not be deluded to concur with them, by our Clamours without Doors, in defeating a truly national Measure; and in exasperating the Minds of a loyal and contented People against the Government of a Prince, who has so recently granted us every Thing that we have asked, for the Security of our Liberties, and the Improvement of our happy Constitution.

April 29th, 1768.

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